



**GRINNELL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2025, AT 6:15 P.M.
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON THE 2ND FLOOR OF CITY
HALL AND VIA ZOOM**

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TENTATIVE AGENDA

ROLL CALL: Bly (Chair), Wray, Karjalahti.

PERFECTING AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

COMMITTEE BUSINESS:

1. Consider resolution approving an agreement with Caldwell & Brierly, PLLC for legal services on code enforcement and abandoned property (See Resolution No. 2025-12).
2. Review strategic planning document from last meeting.

INQUIRIES:

ADJOURNMENT:

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-12

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN CALDWELL & BRIERLY, PLLC, NEWTON, IA AND THE CITY OF GRINNELL FOR LEGAL SERVICES FOR CODE ENFORCEMENT AND ABANDONED PROPERTY

WHEREAS, the City desires enter into an agreement with Caldwell & Brierly, PLLC, Newton, IA for legal services for code enforcement and abandoned property; and

WHEREAS, Caldwell & Brierly, PLLC, Newton, IA has experience in dealing with code enforcement and abandoned property and is willing to represent the City in these matters; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the terms and conditions of said agreement; and

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GRINNELL, IOWA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City Council of Grinnell, Iowa, approves the agreement with the Caldwell & Brierly, PLLC, Newton, IA; and

Section 2. The Grinnell City Council authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City of Grinnell.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED on 6th day of January 2025.

Dan F. Agnew, Mayor

Attest:

Annmarie Wingerter, City Clerk

CALDWELL & BRIERLY, PLLC
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

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Dennis F. Chalupa (1944 – 2013)
* * *

Gilbert R. Caldwell, III (Retired)

December 26, 2024

City of Grinnell
Mayor and City Council
520 4th Avenue
Grinnell IA 50112

Re: Employment Agreement

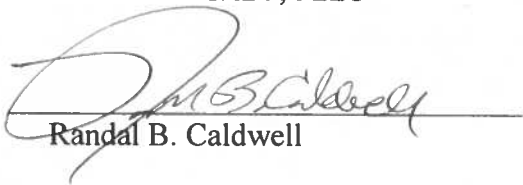
Dear Folks:

Enclosed is a renewal of the Employment Agreement between the City of Grinnell and our firm. The agreement is for the period January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025. Our rates remain the same as 2024. Please review and upon City acceptance, please sign and return the original to us.

We are pleased to be able to continue to offer our services to the City of Grinnell. If you have any questions, please call. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

CALDWELL & BRIERLY, PLLC

By: 

Randal B. Caldwell

RBC/ds
Enc.

EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

CITY OF GRINNELL

And

**CALDWELL & BRIERLY, PLLC
ATTORNEYS AT LAW**

THIS AGREEMENT is for the retention of legal services for the CITY OF GRINNELL to be performed by CALDWELL & BRIERLY, PLLC, ATTORNEYS AT LAW.

THIS AGREEMENT is for the period beginning January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025.

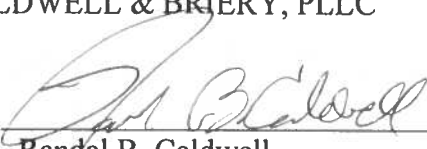
Any legal services rendered by CALDWELL & BRIERLY, PLLC to the CITY OF GRINNELL will be billed at an hourly rate. The rate is herein specified at \$200.00 (Two Hundred) per hour for out-of-court services, \$225.00 (Two-Hundred Twenty-Five) per hour for in-court services, and \$180.00 (One-Hundred Eighty) per hour for legal assistant services. Costs advanced on behalf of the City will be itemized in the monthly statements.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

CALDWELL & BRIERY, PLLC

CITY OF GRINNELL

By:


Randal B. Caldwell

By: _____

CITY OF GRINNELL, IOWA

2025 LEADERSHIP - GOAL SETTING –

STRATEGIC PLANNING WORK SESSION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**Executive Summary Written by
Elizabeth Hansen, President**

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**CITY OF GRINNELL, IA
2025 LEADERSHIP – GOAL SETTING – PLANNING WORK SESSION**

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CITY OF GRINNELL, IA

2025 LEADERSHIP – GOAL SETTING – PLANNING WORK SESSION

I INTRODUCTION

The City Council of the City of Grinnell held a Leadership – Goal Setting – Strategic Planning Work Session on December 9, 2024. The work session was held at the Drake Community Library. The work session was facilitated by Elizabeth Hansen, president of Midwest Municipal Consulting, LLC of Ankeny, Iowa.

Participants at all or part of the session were:

Dan Agnew	Mayor
Julie Davis	Council Member
Jo Wray	Council Member
Rachel Bly	Council Member
Matt Karjalahti	Council Member
Jim White	Council Member
Byron Hueftle-Worley	Council Member
Russ Behrens	City Manager
Ann Wingerter	City Clerk/Finance Director
Alyssa Devig	Assistant City Clerk/Finance Director
Adrienne Hardin	Communications & Community Development Specialist
Tyler Avis	Building & Planning Director
Patrick Duffey	Assistant Fire Chief
Michael McClelland	Police Chief
Karen Neal	Library Director
Carl Eggermont	Public Services Director
Jordan Allsup	Recreation Director
Keagan Richmond	Water Director
Greg Roth	City Engineer
Dan Nieland	POW 1-80 Director
Sarah Smith	Grinnell College
Melissa Stovers	Build A Better Grinnell
Jennifer McAlexander	Interested Citizen

The primary objectives of the session were:

- 1) To provide the opportunity for all members of the city leadership team to be part of the planning process
- 2) To enhance communication and develop renewed team spirit among the participants
- 3) To review progress being made by the city
- 4) To discuss changes that are likely to impact the city
- 5) To develop consensus on issues and opportunities facing the city (1 to 3-year perspective)
- 6) To develop an updated goals program for the city (1 to 3-year perspective)
- 7) To review the roles of the City's leadership team
- 8) To be an educational and enjoyable day

This report summarizes the results of the session and includes recommendations for follow-up actions to be taken.

II INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Mayor Dan Agnew opened the public work session strategic goal-setting session and introduced the meeting facilitator, Elizabeth Hansen.

III COMMUNICATION ENHANCEMENT

After introductory remarks were made, the facilitator reviewed the agenda and went over some ground rules. She then explained the importance of having a goal-setting – strategic planning session and indicated that one of the primary objectives of the retreat was to enhance communication among the participants. The first activity began the communication process by providing participants the opportunity to share backgrounds, perspectives on the greatest challenges facing the city, and expectations for the session.

The facilitator pointed out that there is passion, dedication, loyalty, and skills among the group; that they are serving for all the right reasons.

Many of the challenges cited were incorporated into later discussions on Issues and Opportunities facing the city. The refreshment breaks, meals, and group discussion provided additional opportunities to further enhance communication.

**See attachment A for the
Greatest Challenges Facing the City
and Expectations for the Session**

IV REVIEW OF YEARS 2022 - 2024 ONGOING PRIORITIES AND NEW INITIATIVES

The first review was of the previously adopted strategic plan for fiscal years 2022 - 2024. The facilitator reviewed the responses to the questionnaire to affirm which ongoing priorities were completed and ones that should remain on the list. Next, the facilitator did the same with the previously approved New Initiatives.

**See attachment B for the Review
of Years 2022-2024**

V REVIEW OF PROGRESS BEING MADE

The next activity focused on a review of the progress being made by the city over the last year or two. It was agreed that significant progress has been made in several areas. Participants agreed there have been numerous successes. The facilitator suggested reviewing and celebrating these accomplishments and including the comprehensive list in an upcoming City Newsletter, on the website, on continuous social media posts, and/or in the local newspaper.

**See attachment C for the Review
of Progress being made by the City**

**VI CHANGES THAT HAVE, AND ARE EXPECTED TO, IMPACT THE CITY:
ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING THE CITY**

Participants discussed significant changes that have impacted the city over the past five years, and those anticipated changes that are expected to impact the city in the next five years.

**See Attachment D for a Listing of Issues
Facing the City**

VII UPDATING THE CITY’S GOALS: POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Participants identified several issues and opportunities facing and City from a 1 to 3-year perspective. The listing provided a fresh update and consensus on issues, both external and internal, to be addressed by the city.

**See Attachment E for a Listing
of Significant Initiatives (Solutions)**

VIII THE GOALS PROGRAM

The identified issues and opportunities were then converted into a proposed goals program for the city. It was pointed out that department Directors met before the City Council work session, on November 13, 2024, and provided a recommendation to help the elected officials determine what the top five goals should be. The facilitator provided a copy of the results before the participants voted anonymously. The proposed goals program needs to be further discussed and refined, agreed upon, and then implemented.

**See Attachment F for the Proposed
Goals Program for 2024-2026
and Department Director Recommendations**

IX ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Participants reviewed the major roles and responsibilities of the City Council, individual council members, the Mayor, City Manager, Department Directors, city employees, and citizens. The facilitator recommended the group refer to the city’s organizational chart, code of ordinance for further clarification, and job descriptions, which can specify additional roles and responsibilities.

**See Attachment G for the Listing
of Major Roles and Responsibilities**

X CLOSING REMARKS

The session concluded with the facilitator challenging the participants to make a positive impact in their leadership roles. She pointed out the interdependency of the City Council and staff, and the need to be mission and goal driven. She further

challenges participants to be continuous learners, to accept, and appreciate diversity, to be team players, and to focus on the “big picture.”

The facilitator thanked the participants and wished them well in their tenure serving Grinnell.

XI RECOMMENDED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

It was agreed that considerable progress was made at the work session and that follow-up actions are needed.

A recommended sequence of actions is:

- 1) The City Manager reviews the Executive Summary of the session
- 2) The City Manager fine-tunes the prioritized issues and the suggested goals program
- 3) The City Manager reviews the Executive Summary with the City Council
- 4) The City Council acts on the proposed goals program, including the action plan
- 5) Action plans be developed for each goal under the direction of the City Manager
- 6) The City Council and City Manager monitor progress on achievement of the goals regularly
- 7) A follow-up work session be scheduled in two years to evaluate progress and update the goals program

CHALLENGES FACING THE CITY AND EXPECTATIONS FOR THE WORK SESSION
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(From the Enhancing Communication Worksheet)

CHALLENGES

- 1) Changing demographics and modest population growth. Losing population at the county level. Aging population.
- 2) Recruitment and retention of police officers.
- 3) Balancing inflation and demands for services with pressure to keep fees and taxes as low as possible.
- 4) State legislative changes have reduced available funding for city services such as police, fire, EMS, parks, library, and assistance to other partners.
- 5) Downtown will require consistent and constant attention to maintain and improve vitality.

EXPECTATIONS

- 1) Prioritize the City's goals for the next few years
- 2) Provide a road map to follow and show constituents
- 3) Learn and build consensus
- 4) Listen and discover
- 5) Long-term planning

REVIEW OF FISCAL YEAR 2022-2024 ON-GOING PROJECTS AND NEW INITIAIVES WORK PLAN
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From this list of ongoing priorities provided from your 2022-2024 Goal Setting Report, which items have been completed and should be removed? Which ones need to remain to continue work?

	On-Going Priorities	Completed/Remain
1.	Continue with the Development of the Zone of Confluence and Iowa Reinvestment Act programs. Progress is being made as dorm planning is advancing. Development agreement executed with Merge Urban Development. Financial tools established. If the Merge project moves forward at 1020 Main Street this will be a significant step in the development of the Zone of Confluence. This would allow us to then focus our attention on 1021 Main Street for a mixed-use site.	Remain
2.	Continue active Participation in the Development of Mental Health Solutions in Grinnell. This is the type of work that will require assistance from many others and anyone with a passion for this work should be encouraged to participate. Both emergency fund and long-term endowment created. Mental Health Liaison hired with the Grinnell Police Department. Work will be ongoing.	Completed
3.	Build a new water tower in south Grinnell. The site has been acquired, the final design is complete, financing is in place, and the construction contract has been executed. The only remaining work is for the contractor to build the tower.	Remain

4.	Continue investigating options to improve existing sidewalks and expand sidewalks into all areas of Grinnell. Focus first on city properties, school properties, and other public and quasi-public properties—these should be addressed in the 2018 construction season. Expand recreational trail in city limits—Industrial Avenue to GMRC. We have a verbal commitment from the school to address their missing sidewalk segments. The city has made progress on performing evaluations and improving our sidewalks. The next step will be to work with private property owners. Most want to see this remain as a work item. Program implementation. May remove in the future once established because it will be ongoing	On Going
5.	Continue examining options to perform community marketing in a cooperative manner to promote utilization of many assets in the community such as Central Park, Hotel Grinnell, the downtown, dining, trails, sports and recreation facilities, Grinnell College, historic buildings, aquatic center, library, businesses, and events. The community has made significant investments that need to be utilized and promoted. This item also included development of events that utilize our facilities and appropriate promotion of these events with emphasis on Central Park. There was little mention of this as an ongoing priority. Hired a Communications Specialist to help support Chamber functions.	Remove

From this list of Management in Progress provided from your calendar year 2023 and 2024 Goal Setting Report, which items have been completed and should be removed? Which ones need to remain to continue work?

	Management in Progress	Completed/Remain
1.	Mental Health Assistance: To improve our response, we have developed a five-step process going forward: • First, every Grinnell police officer be certified in Crisis Intervention Team response (CIT). • Second, create a “co-responder” program, in which certified mental health professionals’ team up with police officers and provide a joint response to mental health calls. Mental Health Liaison position for both City and County LE. We have received a part-time employee from CAPSTONE, Faith Repp, from the Jail Diversion program. She works in our office three days a week and has been of tremendous help with response to persons in crisis and follow up care.	Completed

	• Third, a new mobile crisis response team (CRT), rather than police officers, to low-level mental health calls for service when there is no weapon present or indication that violence may occur. Current MCRT takes up to 90 mins to respond. • Fourth, identify dispatch as the hub for intaking and triaging these types of calls. We provide additional training to make sure they are asking the right questions. • Decision trees built out, so they can delineate between CRT calls and co-responder calls. • Look for alternative ways of funding responses to mental health issues and substance abuse, along with funding for training & education.	
2.	Training- • Training funds for FY 23-23 were increased for steppingstone schools for supervisors. • Bring training to the area when possible. We have the facilities to do so. • Enhancing mutual aid training with other municipalities and county agencies. If a major incident were to happen, we would rely on response of mutual aid agencies to assist. • Need more training scenarios and tabletop exercise to be more prepared and to identify processes and equipment shortages. • On-line training- Police One, Police Legal Sciences, Daigle Law Group	Remove
3.	CALEA- Initial enrollment has begun for this program. The purpose of CALEA's Accreditation Programs is to improve the delivery of public safety services, primarily by: • Maintaining a body of standards, policy overview and updating developed by public safety practitioners, • Covering a wide range of contemporary public safety initiatives, • Establishing and administering an accreditation process and recognizing professional excellence. • Specifically, CALEA's goals are to: ○ Strengthen crime prevention and control capabilities. ○ Formalize essential management procedures. ○ Establish fair and nondiscriminatory personnel practices.	Remain

	○ Improve service delivery, accountability, and transparency ○ Solidify interagency cooperation and coordination; and Increase community and staff confidence in the agency.	
4.	MINE Task Force- Staffing allow us to place officer/ investigator back into the Mid Iowa Narcotics Enforcement Team (MINE) after several years of non-participation. Meth & Fentanyl are evident in Grinnell and growing. Not staffed.	Remove
5.	Community Outreach programs- • Sent officer to DARE Instructor School in order to start the program up again at Middle School. No curriculum designed to help kids make better choices when it comes to drugs & alcohol. • Citizen & Teen Police Academy- Trying to get word out and recruit students for these programs. • Public forums- Virtual or in person, to receive feedback from community on what they believe our problems are in community...develop solutions to fix. This could also be done with on-line surveys. • Video Blogs- streaming updates on YouTube or other media outlet • Coffee with a Cop- local restaurants, coffee shops, retirement communities, etc. Develop open and trustworthy communications with the public. • Continue to build trust and communication with Grinnell College, eliminating the fear and threat of police with its students. • More foot patrol activities- officers need to get out of the cars and out on foot to communicate face to face with business owners and community members. • Things we have lots coming with new building downtown and keeping public informed and what is happening Better way to communicate to town about problem if something happens.	Remove
6.	Incentivize city lots (buy land and offer lots at a reduced cost).	Remove
7.	Dental & vision insurance for employees?	Completed
8.	Our downtown events enhance however we can get more people in them really like free events.	Remove

9	Our police to be free to stop and talk and make friendships with people easier to feel relaxed and willing to talk to them openly and not feel they are police and cannot police be getting bad press as not our friends and they are!	Remove
10.	We are open to ideas and not just our way; share your thoughts.	Remove
11.	Keeping an open-door policy to hear people's side of problem and what can we do to fix it?	Remove
12.	Continue recruitment of new business that are attractive for tourism and employment opportunities in the community. See new initiative.	Remove
13.	Continue to be a partner with the School district in finding a solution to upgrade those facilities.	Remove
14.	EMS Solution for City.	Completed
15.	Establish a Veterans monument in Central Park. The Veterans Memorial Building has been removed, site graded, and necessary infrastructure installed. Final design of the monument has been completed along with cost estimate. Nearly \$1 million in funding in hand and will need to raise an additional \$700,000 through private donations and grants. The project will be implemented over the next 18 months.	Remain
16.	Review of our Water Infrastructure Vulnerabilities and move forward with remediation as immediately as possible. Establish Contingency plan if the existing Water Treatment Facility has a critical failure. (S)Design Water Treatment Plant (S)	Completed
17.	Review Water Tower project and construct an appropriately sized tower for Grinnell's demands. Same as #1	Remove
18.	I-80 and Hwy 146 interchange corridor is there anything that can be done to spark improvements/new businesses to come. See new initiative.	Remove
19.	Redevelop RC Industries property into a solar energy system that will offset 100% of city governments electrical demand.	Completed
20.	Work with engineering consultants to design a new water plant, assess all aspects of the distribution system, develop a plan, and implement that plan.	Completed
21.	Continue to prepare and implement a five-year CIP	Remove
22.	Seeking funding sources for infrastructure improvements, such as the CDBG for sewer rehab.	Completed

From the list of New Projects, Programs, Policies, and Initiatives provided in your Strategic Priorities Plan, these items have been completed, thus will be removed and some will be moved to the On-going Priorities list in order to continue work.

	New Projects, Programs, Policies, and Initiatives	Completed/Remain
1.	Recruiting & Retention- Has the city recently looked at benefits that other cities offer permanent part-time employees? If so, how do our policies compare? Flex schedule for those whose jobs would allow. Example: work from home 1 day a week. Look into employee recruitment issues (living distances, lack of dental insurance etc.).	Completed
2. (Tie)	Economic Development Coordinator. Someone to cold call businesses to spark the idea of them potentially coming to Grinnell, among other things. Lead an effort to develop an effective solution for community and economic development efforts. Consider a Community Development and Communications Department for the city of Grinnell – however complete item #2 first to see if another solution develops that would improve this work for the city also. (S) Consider reviving the Grinnell Renaissance concept for downtown development. Community Outreach programs - Things we have lots coming with new building downtown and keeping public informed and what is happening.	Completed
2. (Tie)	Incentive program to assist private water/sewer line replacement.	Completed
4. (Tie)	New Technology and replacement schedule implementation.	Remain
4. (Tie)	Work with developers to develop more single-family housing. Create new incentive.	Completed
5.	Endorse a “service line” insurance company to allow homeowners the opportunity to better “insure” their service lines (water and wastewater). Same as #2	Completed
6. (Tie)	Increase funding. Begin another round of Water Main Replacement project as soon as feasible. Invest more in the distribution system (new mains, new valves, new fire hydrants, etc.) both through significant projects as well as “minor” projects (below public bidding). End goal to reduce the number of main breaks that occur and increase fire flow/capacities.	Completed
6. (Tie)	Cost-share program for sidewalk replacement.	Completed

REVIEW OF PROGRESS BEING MADE BY THE CITY: WHAT IS WORKING WELL?

THE SUCCESSES

Strategic, Reliable, & Sustainable Infrastructure – Projects and Improvements

Significant progress made on street improvements including sidewalk installation/replacement.
All necessary repairs from recent severe weather have been completed resulting in new roofs on every city building.
Substantial progress on water system infrastructure. Wastewater treatment plant is operating smoothly.
Development of the Scout Subdivision at 11 11 th Avenue.
Development of the 6 th Avenue Solar Field with project partners.
Water distribution system improvements – emergency connection complete, transmission main nearing completion, well drilling in progress, water tower under contract, and water plant construction under contract.
Water wells have been rehabilitated improving system reliability and water source reliability.
Commitment to continued Central Business District maintenance.
Secured Safe Routes To Schools grant for Washington Avenue to improve sidewalks serving Davis School and the Grinnell Middle School.
Iowa DOT and Grinnell are partnering on the rehabilitation of the Iowa 146 Corridor project including sidewalk improvements, trail installation, lighting, a wide variety of infrastructure improvements, safety enhancements, and surface rehabilitation.
Poweshiek Co and Grinnell are partnering on reconstruction of 16 th Avenue to improve pedestrian traffic safety.
Sanitary sewer lining projects completed rehabilitating the sanitary sewer collection system in nearly all of south Grinnell.
Reconstruction of Park Street 5 th to 6 th Avenues in partnership with Grinnell College.
2024 Street Reconstruction Project.
Significant street patching, crack sealing, and sealcoat work completed.
Stormwater quality projects completed – received recognition for this work.
Multiple airport improvements (hangar, apron, taxiway, etc.).
Planned and implemented a municipal EMS solution successfully expanding response capacity and service quality.
14 th Avenue, Spencer, Reed, and Prairie Streets reconstruction projects with sidewalks.
Reconstruction of 4 th Avenue from Pearl St to just west of the new culvert including sidewalks and water main replacement.
Progress on lead service line replacement – congressional funding assistance. Planning and design of replacement program underway. New replacement policies have been adopted.

Fiscal Responsible Governance - Finance

New information technology assistance with Heartland Business Solution (HBS).
Complete analysis and restructuring of city property insurance policy.
Added the solar project on the 6 th Ave W which brings in monthly lease payments along with revenue from the sale of some of the property to other entities.
Iowa DOT funding Iowa 146 rehabilitation project with 3 year no interest paybacks.
Significant revenue from investment of funds.
Local Option Sales Tax, Hotel/Motel, and Utility Franchise revenues remain strong and provide flexibility.
Tax Increment Financing is being used properly and effectively.
Adequate fund balances.
Audits remain 'clean.'
Grinnell College and county financial support for the EMS.

Community and Economic Vitality - Community & Economic Development/Housing/Parks & Recreation/Library

Addition of several new housing units such as the Reserves at South Lake and The Stella. Scout Subdivision will add new duplex options and single family lots.
New commercial franchises are coming/coming back: Scooters and Pizza Hut.
The second round of downtown façade program completed on more than 10 storefronts.
Solution for Veteran's Building – plan for monument and de-construction of building.
Central Park inclusive playground completed in fall of 2024.
Completion of the Grinnell Lakes Feasibility Study for Arbor Lake and Lake Nyanza. Working with IDNR on schedule, cost share/grants, and implementation.
Program in place for the redevelopment of 915 Main Street.
Navigated litigation and arrived at an amicable solution for façade repairs on Broad Street building.
New Indian restaurant.
Grin City Bakery was enhanced.
All aspects of the Merge Urban Development Project under our control have been completed.
Worked with Hotel Grinnell to improve their business operations.
Partnered on the development of the School of Music.
Partnering with Grinnell College on projects like the Grinnell Visitor Experience Study and the Zone of Confluence resulted in the design and construction Renfrow Hall.
Provided funding for capital improvements at the Drake Community Library and Grinnell Mutual Family Aquatic Center.
Investments in our parks has improved accessibility and access for both Grinnell residents and visitors.
Realigning the Economic roundtable has created space for discussions and brainstorming on upcoming economic investments and projects.
Communication has greatly improved with the hire of a Communications & Community Development Specialist.

While not the city's hire, the new POW I-80 director has been active and working at bringing new businesses to Grinnell – working with the City Manager and our staff.
The Beyer Building on 4 th Avenue has been rehabilitated.
Progress has been made on abandoned and nuisance properties. Redevelopment of those lots continues.
City's commitment to partially fund and house new Poweshiek Iowa Development Economic Development Director.
Library's completion of five-year strategic plan.
City's financial and staff contribution to the Build A Better Grinnell (BABG) 2030 Visioning Project.
In BABG research, when research participants were asked, "what makes you glad to live in Grinnell," respondents identified "Amazing Park" in the top 5 attributes.
In BABG research many pointed out that Grinnell has a strong set of social services, foundations and support networks, and there are many ongoing collaborative efforts to address housing and food insecurity. The city is listed among the list of collaborators.

Effective, Efficient & Strategic Government – City Operations/Human Resources/Policies

Dental and vision insurance added.
Recruitment incentive program designed and implemented.
Residency policy for employees relaxed significantly.
Cooperation between departments has been excellent. We are at our best when openly communicating and assisting each other.
Succession plan/hired new City Clerk/Finance Director.
We have a 'deep bench' of qualified employees in most departments.
We completed a deep dive into our property insurance, and we understand it better, it is tailored for our needs, and we will slowly move to greater/partial self-insurance.
Hail damage repairs have been completed.
Above average cost of living wage increases for all employees.
Program in place to get employees at or above the 60 th percentile of wage scale.

Safe and Secure - Public Safety

EMS program/Ambulance Service. Our capacity for all emergency response has increased significantly with the addition of staff for EMS.
Police officers are stepping up and covering during staff shortages.
Public Safety Building has been maintained well – recent maintenance complete.
Equipment is in excellent condition and a schedule for future replacement.
Hiring of Faith Repp as Mental Health Liaison – full-time city employee.
CALEA accreditation in process.
DARE program active again.
BABG research indicated, when research participants were asked, "what makes you glad to live in Grinnell," respondents identified Grinnell as being "Safe" in the top 4 attributes.

According to BABG research, “City and Police department responded clearly and firmly to the incidents in 2020 and 2021” and there have been already some efforts to organize and collaborate across key institutions – BABG Priority #6 Reduce Racism.

**CHANGES THAT HAVE IMPACTED AND ARE
EXPECTED TO IMPACT THE CITY:
ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

WHAT IS NOT WORKING WELL?**WHAT IS THE CITY CURRENTLY DOING THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE DOING?**

The following were identified as issues, concerns, trends, and opportunities that may affect future city services, policies, finances, or operations:

Item
Aging population, changing demographics, and population loss in the area.
Recruitment and retention of police officers has been difficult.
Provide support as requested to the Grinnell Newburg School District to encourage new school facilities and enhanced education opportunities for children.
Development of I-80 interchange.
Continue working on communication to reach all citizens.
Nuisance properties.
Code enforcement.
Schedule maintenance to maximize the usefulness of infrastructure and equipment. Plan for replacement and reconstruction once maintenance is no longer a viable solution. Extend the life cycle as much as possible without compromising the reliability of the infrastructure.
We need to better understand potential water loss in our distribution system.
We cannot be everything to everyone – mental health solutions for example.
We need to be creative to improve police officer retention.
It would help to have bilingual staff at city hall, particularly Spanish speaking.
We tend to be at the mercy of contractors to do collection/distribution repairs, Grinnell has enough work that it may make sense to have a concrete/repair crew to perform system repairs.
The city has a lot of activities, parks, and trails to use during the warmer months but has limited options for the colder months. Grinnell College is generous with access to their indoor pool and other facilities; however, scheduling can be difficult. There has been interest in an indoor play center with an all sports/activities turf surface for many years.
Employee retention.
Cost of living/inflation.
Equipment/vehicle rising costs.
Review of use of the NeoGov site to determine if it is worth the cost.
Increased chances of natural/man-made disasters.
Pedestrian safety between Grinnell College, Renfrow Hall, and the downtown area will require careful consideration. Grinnell College and the city must assess vehicle and pedestrian traffic patterns, as more students are expected to cross 6 th Avenue.

Legislative challenges in budget process.
Be more aggressive with economic development.
If the current environment continues to defend the police etc., may have to consider options to better support and provide law enforcement.
Newer employees with medical issues do not have enough sick leave built up to cover being off.
We seem to focus on the north side of town for street repairs, etc. The south side of town (south of 1 st Ave) seems to be overlooked, which makes it appear that the lower income housing areas are not as important. We are working on sidewalk and water connection projects focused on the south part of town which is nice.
Transportation is still a problem. PeopleRides does not entirely fill the need, so Grinnell College has started a program for their staff and students.
Some businesses have volunteer days where staff can work on a project and get paid. It would be a great way for city staff to bond and get to know others in other departments.
Need to be more proactive in setting aside funds for equipment/software & computer replacement. We tend to focus on Water, Wastewater, and Public Services for equipment, but need to think about financial software replacement and updating computers and servers.
Consider separating City Clerk/Finance Director position – having the City Clerk focus on the council items, overseeing administrative staff, dealing with personnel issues. The Finance Director could then oversee the finances only so that more time is spent focusing on them.
Obtain a vehicle that administrative staff could use for completing city business in town and to take for training.
Being more proactive on City Hall maintenance – carpet cleaning, window cleaning, windowsill staining, painting exterior, etc.
Do annual team building events/trainings with department heads promote working together and help departments look at things from a city-wide perspective not just their department's? Separate from strategic planning.
Develop maintenance plans for all city buildings. Except for City Hall and the Water Resource Recovery Facility, all buildings are over ten years old.
Legislation designed to shift money or limit funds to cities.
Lack of speed on the Merge project (not directly city related, but we need the housing).
Grinnell Households are struggling to make ends meet (12% poverty, 44% live below ALICE) identify top areas of concerns as food/groceries, housing, daycare/childcare, gasoline, property taxes and utilities.

MANAGEMENT - IN PROGRESS

1.	Rental Inspection Program
2.	Update to Master Parks & Recreation Plan.
3.	Water Plant and Water Tower.
4.	New transmission line.
5.	New well/well upgrades.
6.	Service line project.
7.	Water main projects.
8.	New lead and copper requirements.
9.	EMS and fire training for our new employees.
10.	Volunteer recruitment and retention (fire department and EMS)

THE GOALS PROGRAM – MANAGEMENT – IN PROGRESS AND NEW INITIATIVES

NEW INITIATIVES

	Item (What is the solution?)	New Initiative (Action Needed) Or On-Going
1.	Asphalt patching after sewer/water repairs – can equipment be purchased so that public service workers can complete these repairs in a timelier manner vs waiting for a group to them to be done by a contractor	New
2.	City celebration – the 4 th of July and homecoming are celebrated but no town celebration. When other towns hold their town/city celebrations it creates an attraction and gives people something to do.	New
3.	Continue to recruit new businesses to Grinnell that create job opportunities to bring in others to the community. Same as #5 and 14.	New
4.	Start a conversation with the school district to help better position themselves to be successful in passing a bond issue to update our school facilities.	On-Going
5.	Recruit businesses to develop I-80 interchange. Understand that the property prices in that location are high, but having come more retail would help pull vehicles off the interstate to Grinnell. Same as #3 and 14.	New
6.	Electronic payroll system.	New
7.	Consider allowing employee access to other benefits such as Short Term Disability and other insurance (Aflac or Global Life).	New
8.	Evaluate programs/software departments are using for process improvement.	On-Going
9.	Plan major water main projects.	On-Going
10.	Develop a maintenance plan for water equipment.	New
11.	Continue investigating water loss.	On-Going
12.	Build a planned/mixed use community around a community asset – new school, park, water, large lots, green community, etc. to set attract high income families that may otherwise locate in urban areas or acreages.	New
13.	Review emergency preparedness and response capabilities – use mitigation strategies where possible. Include our key partners – Alliant	New

	Energy, ITC, State of Iowa, IDOT, key businesses (Manatt's for example), other public safety agencies, etc.	
14.	Now that we have made progress on housing – create and implement an economic development plan with our partners. We have significant capacity and ability to enhance our strong economic foundation. Same as #3 and 5.	New
15.	BBGP – Complete and implement street assessment. Continuing to invest in critical infrastructure – streets have been identified as an area residents want to see more investment. Work completed has been well received and supported. Maintain the facilities we have – most are 10 years young or newer – if maintained well much of our large capital infrastructure will last 30+ years.	New
16.	Renew LOST – we have some room there to do something fun/big/impactful.	New
17.	Review housing incentives and see how they compare with other cities.	On-Going
18.	As the cost of living increases it would not be a bad idea to go over wage rates and benefits of surrounding cities.	New
19.	City Hall has a separate fund for building maintenance. We could develop separate funds for all the other buildings to transfer funds to in order to have money set aside for future maintenance needs, especially if there is an emergency.	On-Going
20.	Implement any important items that have to do with the city from the Build a Better Grinnell project.	On-Going
21.	Comprehensive public education/communications plan – identifies what, where and how community is provided and can access information (proactive/road closures, start/end dates) – BABG #2 and #5 – Improve Water and Roads and Road Maintenance.	New
22.	Arbor and Nyanza Lake	New
23.	Update our housing assessment.	New

THE CITY'S PROPOSED ON-GOING PRIORITIES FOR FISCAL YEARS 2025 AND 2026

ON-GOING PRIORITIES

1.	Continue with the Development of the Zone of Confluence and Iowa Reinvestment Act programs. If the Merge project moves forward at 1020 Main Street this will be a significant step in the development of the Zone of Confluence. This would allow us to then focus our attention on 1021 Main Street for a mixed-use site.
2.	Build a new water tower in south Grinnell. The site has been acquired, the final design is complete, financing is in place, and the construction contract has been executed. Designed and financing plan in place. Implementation is yet to be done. The only remaining work is for the contractor to build the tower.
3.	CALEA Certification. Establish and administer an accreditation process and recognize professional excellence.
4.	Establish a Veterans monument in Central Park. The Veterans Memorial Building has been removed, site graded, and necessary infrastructure installed. Final design of the monument has been completed along with cost estimate. Nearly \$1 million in funding in hand and will need to raise an additional \$700,000 through private donations and grants. The project will be implemented over the next 18 months.
5.	New Technology and replacement schedule implementation.

MANAGEMENT – IN PROGRESS

1.	Rental Inspection Program
2.	Update to Master Parks & Recreation Plan.
3.	Water Plant and Water Tower.
4.	New transmission line.
5.	New well/well upgrades.
6.	Service line project.
7.	Water main projects.
8.	New lead and copper requirements.
9.	EMS and fire training for our new employees.
10.	Volunteer recruitment and retention (fire department and EMS)

THE CITY'S PROPOSED NEW INITIATIVES FISCAL YEARS 2025 AND 2026
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of VOTES

		Item (What is the solution?)
0	1.	Asphalt patching after sewer/water repairs – can equipment be purchased
0	2.	City celebration – the 4 th of July and homecoming are celebrated
17	3.	Continue to recruit new businesses to Grinnell that create job opportunities to bring in others to the community. (S) Recruit businesses to develop I-80 interchange. Understand that the property prices in that location are high, but having more retail would help pull vehicles off the interstate to Grinnell. (S) Now that we have made progress on housing – create and implement an economic development plan with our partners. We have significant capacity and ability to enhance our strong economic foundation. (S)
6	4.	Electronic payroll system. (S)
2	5.	Consider allowing employee access to other benefits, Short-term disability and other ins
4	6.	Develop a maintenance plan for water equipment
7	7.	Build a planned/mixed use community around a community asset – new school, park, water, large lots, green community, etc. to set attract high income families that may otherwise locate in urban areas or acreages.
13	8.	We need to go above and beyond with emergency preparedness and response capabilities – use mitigation strategies where possible. Include our key partners – Alliant Energy, ITC, State of Iowa, IDOT, key businesses (Manatt's for example), other public safety agencies, etc.
9	9.	BBGP – Complete and implement street assessment. Continuing to invest in critical infrastructure – streets have been identified as an area residents want to see more investment. Work completed has been well received and supported. Maintain the facilities we have – most are 15 years young or newer – if maintained well much of our large capital infrastructure will last 30+ years.
15	10.	Renew Local Option Sales Tax – we have some room there to do something fun/big/impactful. We are planning to use 25% of future revenues for water system improvements. Street improvements were identified by the BABG planning process as a community priority. This funding may help with projects identified in the Master Parks Plan and the Grinnell Lakes Restoration Feasibility Study. We also recommend building in some flexibility to cover future budget deficits. This tax generates \$1.6 million annually and we anticipate 2% annual growth.
2	11.	As the cost of living increases it would not be a bad idea to go over wage rates and benefits of surrounding cities.

8	12.	Comprehensive public education/communications plan – identifies what, where and how community is provided and can access information (proactive/road closures, start/end dates) – BABG #2 and #5 – Improve Water and Roads and Road Maintenance.
10	13.	Implementation of the Grinnell Lakes Restoration Feasibility Study.
6	14.	Update our housing assessment.

**DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS RECOMMENDED
NEW INITIATIVES CALENDAR YEARS 2025 AND 2026**

of Votes

2	Asphalt patching after sewer/water repairs – can equipment be purchased
0	City celebration – the 4 th of July and homecoming are celebrated
6	Continue to recruit new businesses to Grinnell that create job opportunities to bring in others to the community. (S) Recruit businesses to develop I-80 interchange. Understand that the property prices in that location are high, but having more retail would help pull vehicles off the interstate to Grinnell. (S) Now that we have made progress on housing – create and implement an economic development plan with our partners. We have significant capacity and ability to enhance our strong economic foundation.
6	Electronic payroll system.
1	Consider allowing employee access to other benefits, Short-term disability and other ins
2	Develop a maintenance plan for water equipment
2	Build a planned/mixed use community around a community asset – new school, park, water, large lots, green community, etc. to set attract high income families that may otherwise locate in urban areas or acreages.
7	We need to go above and beyond with emergency preparedness and response capabilities – use mitigation strategies where possible. Include our key partners – Alliant Energy, ITC, State of Iowa, IDOT, key businesses (Manatt's for example), other public safety agencies, etc.
5	BBGP – Complete and implement street assessment. Continuing to invest in critical infrastructure – streets have been identified as an area residents want to see more investment. Work completed has been well received and supported. Maintain the facilities we have – most are 10 years young or newer – if maintained well much of our large capital infrastructure will last 30+ years.
6	Renew LOST – we have some room there to do something fun/big/impactful. We are planning to use 25% of future revenues for water system improvements. Street improvements were identified by the BABG planning process as a community priority. This funding may help with projects identified in the Master Parks Plan and the Grinnell Lakes Restoration Feasibility Study. We also recommend building in some flexibility to cover future budget deficits. This tax

	generates \$1.6 million annually and we anticipate 2% annual growth.
2	As the cost of living increases it would not be a bad idea to go over wage rates and benefits of surrounding cities.
0	Clothing policy has not been updated in 20+ years. Newton for example offers 3x what we as a city offer our employees.
4	Comprehensive public education/communications plan – identifies what, where and how community is provided and can access information (proactive/road closures, start/end dates) – BABG #2 and #5 – Improve Water and Roads and Road Maintenance.
5	Implementation of the Grinnell Lakes Restoration Feasibility Study.
1	Update our housing assessment.

**MOST SIGNIFICANT
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

1. To provide leadership, direction, and long-range planning for the city
2. To determine policy for the city
3. To hire and monitor the performance of the city manager (Manager to manage city operations)
4. To adopt an annual budget for the city
5. To represent the collective best interests of the city and the citizens of the city
6. Determine vision, values and set the “tone” for the city

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL MEMBERS
(Most Significant)**

1. To represent the citizens and be accessible to them
2. To make a leadership and policy decisions for the greater good of the city
3. To be prepared for, and participate in, council meetings
4. To act professionally and listen respectfully to other council members, staff, and citizens
5. To share information and communicate openly with the city manager and other council members (Manager to share with staff)
6. Listeners, educators, promoters, supporters

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF THE MAYOR
(Most Significant)**

1. To conduct orderly and effective city council meetings
2. To represent the city at for public functions
3. To facilitate discussions on agenda items and help resolve conflict among council members
4. To make advisory committee appointments
5. To sign the city's legal documents

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF THE CITY MANAGER
(Most Significant)**

1. To prepare and provide information for the council, make policy recommendations based on the information, and implement adopted policies
2. To be a liaison between the council and staff
3. To provide leadership and foster a positive work environment for the city's employees
4. To develop and administer the city's annual budget
5. To recommend the appointment and terminate (when necessary) of city employees
6. Mediates and resolves conflicts, negotiator, timer, educator, evaluator, and cutter

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEPARTMENT DIRECTORS (Most Significant)

1. To provide leadership and goals for their departments
2. To manage the day-to-day operations of their departments
3. Analyses issues, evaluate services and develop professional recommendations as experts
4. To prepare and administer the department's annual budget
5. To communicate and cooperate with other entities in the city
6. To keep the city manager/manager and department staff informed
7. To provide training and development opportunities for department employees
8. To recommend new hires to the city manager
9. Researchers, planners, preparers, cutters, shock absorbers

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF ALL CITY EMPLOYEES AND CITY OFFICIALS
(Most Significant)**

1. To understand the relationship between the Mayor, Council, Administration and Staff
2. To act in accordance with defined roles
3. To have a positive attitude towards their job and when dealing with the public
4. To be team players
5. To be fiscally responsible
6. To be a positive representative and ambassador of the city
7. To have a strong work ethic
8. To be receptive to, and participate in, training and development opportunities
9. To be innovative problem solvers

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF THE CITIZENS
(Most Significant)**

1. To vote in city elections
2. To provide fiscal support for city services and operations; I. E., to pay their taxes
3. To keep informed on issues that affect the city and to communicate their concerns to the city's elected officials and staff
4. To be involved in community affairs
5. To be positive contributors to the community