



City of Pekin Conceptual Plan, 2006-2011



Our Mission

The mission of the elected officials and the staff of the City of Pekin, in partnership with the community, is to provide leadership in delivering necessary, effective, and fiscally responsible municipal services in a manner which promotes a safe and prosperous community.



Our Vision

- ▶ We will enhance the quality of life by providing excellence in leadership, support, and services for all who live, work, visit, and invest in our community.
- ▶ We aspire to be the city of choice for ourselves and future generations—beautiful, clean, and safe.
- ▶ We will achieve our vision through a healthy economy, strong businesses, vital neighborhoods, excellent schools, and extensive recreational opportunities.
- ▶ We will foster our City's friendly atmosphere and celebrate the resourcefulness of its people.
- ▶ We recognize the importance of continuing to work with other units of government at all levels to achieve our vision.
- ▶ We require an innovative City government that is accessible, accountable, and efficient with a system of funding that is fair, affordable, and stable.



Our Values

► **Transparent, Open, and Honest Government.** This value reflects our first and most important responsibility. Our competence is measured and, in fact, reinforced through active engagement of those we serve. We maintain an organizational reputation for openness, honesty, and integrity.

► **Outstanding Service.** Our primary duty is to the people we serve. We are accessible, responsive, consistent, and understanding. We provide assistance beyond our customers' expectations, and we find effective solutions to problems that they bring to our attention.

► **Fiscal Responsibility.** Proper use of public resources is a trust which we continually guard. In our management of this trust, we must avoid even the appearance of impropriety. In our management of public funds, we constantly strive for the greatest possible efficiency.

► **Personal Honesty and Integrity.** Each of us demonstrates the highest standards of personal integrity, truthfulness, honesty, and fortitude in our public activities. In this way, we inspire public confidence and trust in our government.

► **Excellence.** We continually pursue excellence by being creative, professional, taking risks, showing initiative, and being committed to our community and team. In this pursuit, we support continuing education and training for all team members.

► **Teamwork.** We are a team that emphasizes high levels of trust and cooperation and a commitment to excellent communications within the organization. We encourage employees to exercise independent judgment in meeting customer needs through professional behavior that is consistent with our values.

► **A Humane and Diverse Organization.** We are a humane organization that honors diversity and protects individual rights. Open communication, respect for others, compassion, and a sense of humor contribute to our positive work environment. We make it possible for every employee to achieve his or her full potential. We value the cultural and social diversity that is reflected in our community, and we welcome the changes and new perspectives that this diversity brings to us. We protect those individuals whose basic rights are placed in jeopardy.



The Conceptual Plan, 2006-2011

“What results are most important to Pekin’s residents and how can we best spend our limited resources to produce those results?” The City’s Council members and department heads answered this question in a series of planning sessions. [See Appendix One for a description of the City’s planning process]. Five themes emerged from those discussions and form the basis for the conceptual plan:

▶ **A Prosperous Community**

To promote and sustain a balanced economy that supports the expansion and retention of family-wage jobs

▶ **A Safe Community**

To protect community life and property by providing effective, principled police and fire services

▶ **A Strong Foundation**

To improve and maintain existing infrastructure and leverage opportunities for new infrastructure

▶ **A High Quality of Life**

To support or provide services that improve the quality of life for Pekin’s residents

▶ **An Effective Government**

To deliver effectively the services that Pekin’s residents want, need, and are willing to support



A Prosperous Community

The City recognizes that three initiatives will lay the groundwork for Pekin’s future prosperity.

▶ First, the Council places a high priority on selecting a method to manage **the economic development function**. Primary options include hiring an Economic Development Director or a Planning and Economic Development Director, or using a team approach led by the City Manager.

▶ Second, the Council has identified three geographical areas on which to focus economic development efforts. Taken together, these areas hold the most promise to deliver a diverse economic base that blends service, retail, commercial, and light industrial jobs, jobs that pay family living wages.

The **Veterans Drive corridor** has long been a focus of the City’s attention. Immediate priorities include completing construction of Veterans Drive (the

highest priority under A Strong Foundation and the top-rated project overall), attracting businesses to occupy the East Court Villages, and developing a long-term land use plan for the property adjacent to the Drive.

Riverway Business Park, where current businesses provide over 500 jobs, offers these advantages for development: approximately 185 developable acres; access to road, rail, river, and air transportation; completely furnished with public utilities; situated within the boundaries of a state certified Illinois Enterprise Zone; within 1 or 2 days driving time of nearly all mid-America markets.

The Council recognizes that the **Southside** deserves renewed attention in the near term. The City will explore various methods to bring economic development to Derby Street and nearby areas. Among the development strategies to be evaluated will be incentives including but not limited to a Tax Increment Financing District and Special Service areas.

► Third, the City will also consider a more aggressive approach to **property annexation** as a strategy to improve its tax base.

Several programs warrant continued investment and attention even though they are not among the most important economic development priorities. Examples include annexation of Crystal Lake, creating an economic development fund in cooperation with local financial institutions, pursuing economic development downtown, and expanding support for tourism activities. With these “second-tier” projects, the City will attempt to sustain them at current levels but will not increase its investment of time or funding unless circumstances change significantly.

The Council has decided not to pursue building a dam at the south end of Pekin Lake, annexing land on the West side of the Illinois River, developing the riverfront for retail or commercial uses, or providing incentives for West Campus.



A Safe Community

The first obligation of City government is to ensure a safe community by protecting people and property. Often, the most obvious examples involve enforcement—inspectors citing code violations, police officers writing traffic tickets or investigating crimes, fire fighters battling structural fires.

Looking to the future, the Council believes that investments in prevention offer a greater return than investments in enforcement. Accordingly, the city will attach increasing importance to crime, accident, and fire prevention measures while continuing to provide effective and necessary enforcement.

The two highest rated projects to ensure a safe community are (1) to review and update the City's **Emergency Management Plan**, and (2) to increase **staffing in the Police Department**.

Examples of less highly ranked safety-related initiatives include relocating Fire Station 3 on Pekin's Southside and combining it with a regional training facility, increasing Fire Department staffing, building a fourth fire station in the Northeast part of Pekin, and acquiring the emergency transport service. These projects will not be developed within this planning period unless unanticipated opportunities arise.



A Strong Foundation

What we call the Strong Foundation focus is commonly known as infrastructure. The highest rated project by both Council and department heads was to complete **Veterans Drive**, which will involve securing funding, selecting the preferred alignment, acquiring land, and designing and building both the northerly and southerly sections.

The Council identified several other top priority projects, including increased efforts to replace and upgrade curbs and sidewalks, street seal-coating, etc; improvements to the infrastructure in the City's older neighborhoods; repairs to Court Street; and expansion of the Wastewater treatment plant (which is mandated by the Environmental Protection Agency).

Although important in their own right, the City lacks the capacity to expand its commitment to the following projects at this time: purchase of the water company, separating the combination sewers, and adding staff to the Inspections and Solid Waste Departments. The City intends to sustain its interest or investment in these projects at basically current levels during this planning period.

The Council gave a low priority to increasing taxes or imposing user fees to fund capital and maintenance projects, although it recognized that new sources of revenue may be required for unfunded mandates.

The Council has little interest in such projects as restoring the remaining brick streets to their original state or increasing investment in the municipal airport.



A High Quality of Life

We believe that actions taken to build a strong foundation, to create prosperity based on a diverse economy, and to ensure a safe community also improve the quality of life for Pekin's residents.

But there are specific projects that have the potential to do that, too. The Council favors more vigorous enforcement of current codes to **clean up blighted property** and enactment of a **housing code for landlords**.

In addition to immediate attention to those two initiatives, the Council understands that the Pekin Public Library may require substantial financial assistance in some form from the City in order to complete its renovation and expansion. While not a top priority at this time, assistance to the Library joins such other projects as efforts to end chronic homelessness, providing a more effective animal control function, and establishing an alley maintenance program as worthwhile endeavors to be sustained or evaluated during the planning period.

Such initiatives as providing land for non-profit organizations or operating the municipal bus services at a substantial financial loss did not make the list of priority items.



An Effective Government

The City of Pekin operates under the city manager form of government. Effective government requires that members of the Council and staff members understand and respect their differing roles. The Council has responsibility for setting policy, approving a budget, and evaluating results. The City Manager has responsibility for conducting the day-to-day operations of the City.

To enhance the effectiveness of city government, Council members identified the following as examples of high priority initiatives: **coordinate the budget and planning cycles**; **expand the size of the Council** from five to seven members; and **increase the level of financial reserves** to the equivalent of six months of expenses.

About Taxes and Fees. The effectiveness of government services depends in part on the ability to generate revenue. The Council prefers for the City to live within its means. But it understands that increased taxes or user fees may be necessary to comply with mandates, with citizens' expectations for high levels of service, and to cope with changing economic conditions. In planning discussions, the reluctance to increase the financial burden on residents was unmistakable, but the Council's ultimate responsibility to assure the City's financial health means that it is open to future discussions about a variety of options to increase income as well as to control expenses.



Appendix 1: Our Approach to Planning

Conceptual and Operational Planning

In the city manager form of government, the Council's responsibility is to produce a **conceptual plan**; the City Manager and his staff produce the **operational plan**. Think of the Council's role as to set broad objectives, to describe where the City wants to go. The staff's job is to figure out how to get there. Neither works without the other. Taken together, the conceptual and operation plans constitute the City's **strategic plan**.

The entire planning process requires clearly defined goals, thoughtful strategies, committed leadership, and effective management. Above all, it requires managing the forces of change. Those forces include changing community demographics, new state and federal mandates, fiscal constraints, changing economic conditions, emerging technologies, and many other forces that affect our ability to provide high quality services.

Successful organizations are those that learn to anticipate and adapt to these changes by creating value for those we serve (Pekin's residents) and motivation and meaning for those who serve them (the Council and city staff). The best tool for accomplishing these overarching objectives is conceptual planning.

What Does a Conceptual Plan Do?

The City's conceptual plan

- ▶ Communicates the City's mission, vision, and core values.
- ▶ Guides the City Council members and staff so that decisions made to meet today's challenges are made with a clear vision in mind.
- ▶ Suggests a framework for long-term departmental planning so that day-to-day activities move the city toward its desired future.
- ▶ Establishes a measure of accountability so that Pekin's residents will know if we have been successful.

The conceptual plan allows the City to make wise use of limited resources, assures continuity from year to year, and assists in making better informed decisions. Conceptual planning will tell us both what we can and cannot do successfully. It acknowledges that there will always be more worthwhile projects for the City to do than it has the capacity to do.

Conceptual planning began with a series of meetings conducted by the Mayor with the City Manager and department heads. Each individual was asked to list the five most important projects for the City to accomplish and the three least important

programs currently active. City staff then placed each of the resulting sixty projects into one of three categories.

- 1 = Highest priority, crucial to the City's success
- 2 = Worthwhile but does not warrant increased investment of time or money
- 3 = Worthwhile but the City lacks the capacity to continue it, or not worthwhile

The next conceptual planning phase repeated this process with the City Council. They were presented with the list of projects compiled in the staff sessions, but the ratings were not shared with Council members. Council members added a dozen projects to the list before rating all 73 projects according to the scale above.

In essence, conceptual planning addressed this question: *"What results are most important to Pekin's residents and how can we best spend our limited resources to produce those results?"*

Council's deliberations resulted in the five themes which organize the conceptual plan.

What Does an Operational Plan Do?

The Council has provided the broad outline of the keys to achieving the mission and vision for Pekin. Operational planning tells us how realistic (or unrealistic) we have been in our conception of Pekin's future. It offers options for getting from here to there. It describes specific goals, objectives, and strategies and actions to move Pekin toward our vision of the future. It takes into account the financial capacity of the City.

In an important sense, then, the document you are now reading is incomplete. It lacks operational detail. That will come after further study by City staff and will take the form of program proposals and action plans associated with each of the high-priority programs or projects.

Many of the resulting strategies and actions are likely to require public involvement and City Council action. Many more strategies and actions will be developed at the department level to align the entire organization with the goals and objectives presented in this conceptual plan.

The Future of Planning

The City's strategic plan is intended as a work in progress. While the mission, vision, values, and major planning themes should remain constant, the operational strategies and actions will need periodic review and refinement. We will track progress through regular reporting on the measures. The annual budget cycle, for example, will be grounded in the plan.

No plan can account fully for the future with complete confidence. The Council realizes that unanticipated opportunities may arise which will alter our stated

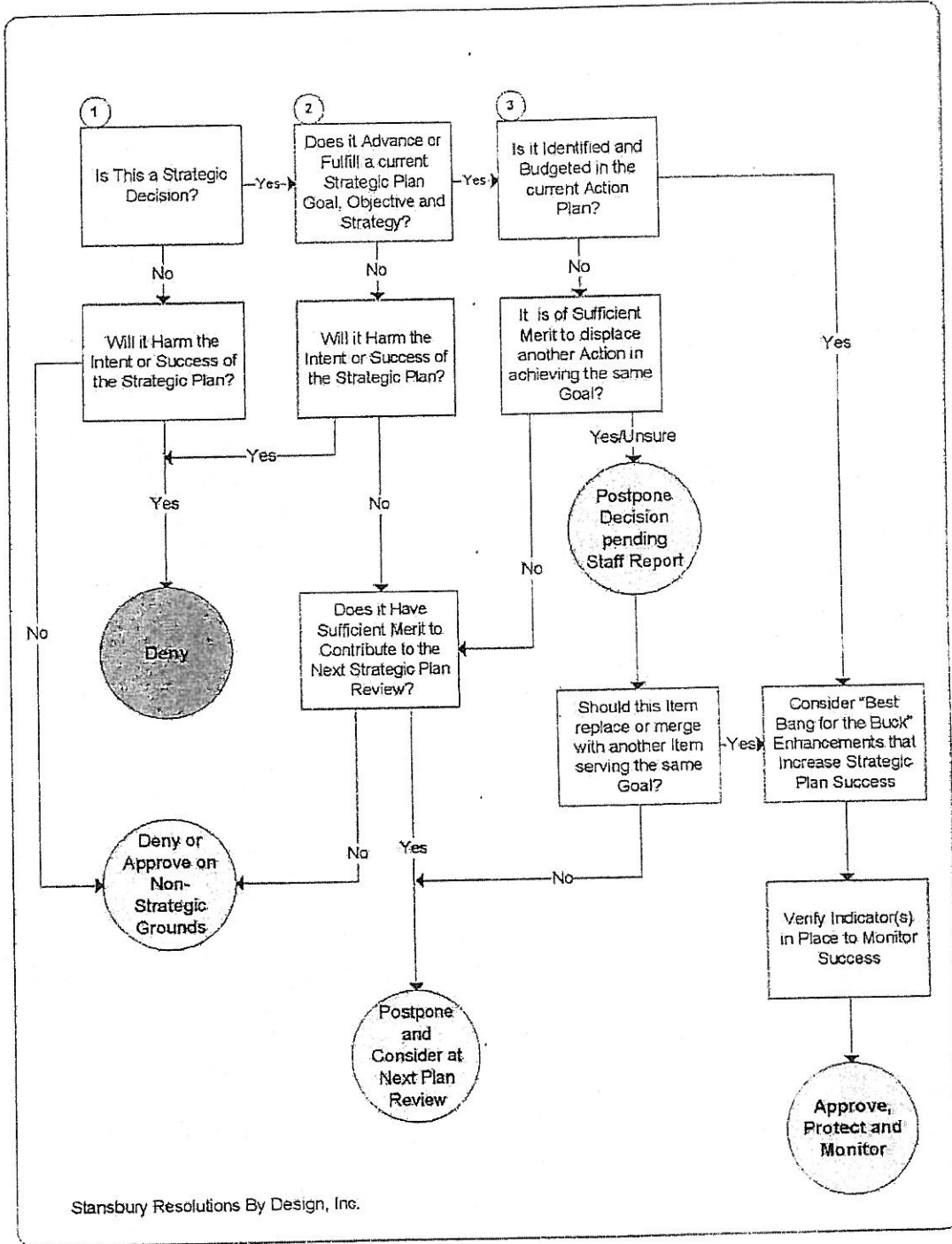
priorities. Appendix 2 presents a “decision tree” by which the City can place a new project within the conceptual plan or alter the status of a current project.



Appendix 2: The Decision Tree

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Strategic Decision Tree





Appendix 3: The List

Council members and department heads were asked to list the five most important projects for the City to accomplish and the three least important. This exercise, a form of "structured brainstorming," did not identify all that the City does, of course. It was meant to focus attention on the most important initiatives and those we lack the capacity to continue.

- 1 Select a method to manage the economic development function (e.g., full-time director, collaborative team approach)
- 2 Expand Riverway Business park to allow for continued industrial growth
- 3 Sell all remaining property in Riverway Business Park even at reduced cost in return for a commitment to create jobs
- 4 Pursue a TIF district for Pekin's Southside
- 5 Pursue economic development of the Veterans Drive corridor
- 6 Pursue economic development at the riverfront as recommended by URS
- 7 Pursue economic development downtown
- 8 Market and sell all city assets which are non-earning keeping in mind alternative costs of keeping them
- 9 Improve the retail mix to include up-market options for such items as soft goods
- 10 Annex property aggressively to improve tax base
- 11 Annex property to acquire access to Crystal Lake
- 12 Consider financing more rapid development through borrowing
- 13 Expand the GIS program to cover everything that the City has in the way of assets
- 14 Work with local banks to assist with development fund and to reduce the use of tax dollar incentives
- 15 Annex land on the west side of the river
- 16 Expand support for tourism activities
- 17 Limit growth so as not to tax public safety services
- 18 Construct a fourth fire station
- 19 Relocate Station 3 and combine with a regional training facility
- 20 Acquire the emergency transport service
- 21 Review and update the City's Emergency Management Plan
- 22 Coordinate Inspection Department work with Fire Department on items relating to fire codes
- 23 Increase staffing in the fire department
- 24 Increase staffing in the police department
- 25 Offer competitive benefits for staff
- 26 Complete Veterans Drive project
- 27 Expand the Wastewater Treatment Plant
- 28 Separate the combination sewers
- 29 Widen Route 9
- 30 Prepare infrastructure for the expansion of residential housing along the Broadway corridor
- 31 Increase taxes or impose user fees to fund capital and maintenance projects

- 32 Ramp up replacements and upgrades to curbs and sidewalks, street seal-coating, etc.
- 33 Complete brick street work
- 34 Continue to operate the airport
- 35 Add a civil inspector to the Inspections Department to cover street, sidewalk, storm sewer, sanitary sewer main lines, and grading projects
- 36 Add staff to the Solid Waste Department
- 37 Purchase the water company
- 38 Issue bonds to expand and revitalize Pekin Public Library
- 39 Support the Heart of Illinois Homeless Continuum of Care plan to end chronic homelessness
- 40 Enforce current codes to clean up blighted property (requires additional staff)
- 41 Expand solid waste to include apartments and commercial properties
- 42 Continue to support the Municipal Band
- 43 Continue to operate the municipal bus service
- 44 Add an animal control service
- 45 Reorganize City departments
- 46 Create a budget process that is more anticipatory
- 47 Define and abide by roles of Council and staff
- 49 Pursue appropriate alternative service models through the use of partnerships, private contractors, volunteers, and other innovative methods to reduce the overall tax burden
- 50 Produce a reader-friendly annual report for broad distribution
- 51 Increase the sales tax
- 52 Enact a garbage fee
- 53 Enact a tax or fee to support wastewater plant improvements
- 54 Place less emphasis on the tax rate (i.e., when EVA expected to increase, be less conservative with the levy)
- 55 Increase the level of financial reserves to the equivalent of six months of operating costs
- 56 Continue the DARE program
- 57 Revise salary administration to eliminate across the board increases
- 58 Consolidate bargaining units where possible
- 59 Use a labor attorney in future labor negotiations
- 60 Purchase Dragon's Dome alone or in partnership
- 61 Use City-backed incentives to develop West Campus
- 62 Work with Heartland Water Resources Council to develop the "Marsh Creek Project"
- 63 Support continued participation in the Nature-based Tourism effort
- 64 The Mayor and Council members should be involved in labor negotiations
- 65 Partner to build a dam at the South end of Pekin Lake
- 66 Provide land for the Historical Society
- 67 Pursue alternative financing for redevelopment and improvement of Pekin's southside
- 68 Increase crime prevention efforts
- 69 Enact a housing ordinance for landlords
- 70 Create the position of City Ombudsman and staff with volunteers
- 71 Create an alley maintenance program
- 72 Improve the infrastructure in the City's older neighborhoods

73 Work with the state to designate Veterans Drive south as Route 9 and repair and upgrade Court Street



Acknowledgments

During the planning process, mission statements, vision statements, values statements, or strategic plans from the following towns and cities were consulted:

Albany, New York
Alpharetta, Georgia
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Carlsbad, California
Champlin, Minnesota
Cincinnati, Ohio
Cleveland, Ohio
Colorado Springs, Colorado
Des Moines, Iowa
Escanaba, Michigan
Fremont, California
Gainesville, Florida
Grand Junction, Colorado
Indian Wells, California
Kissimmee, Florida
Northville, Minnesota
Oxnard, California
Pasadena, California
Sarasota, Florida
Sioux City, Iowa
South Jordan, Utah
Temecula, California
Upper Arlington, Ohio
West LaFayette, Indiana
Woodland, California
Yuba City, California