

*The Mission of the City of Sturgis is to deliver high-quality services in a professional, efficient and nondiscriminatory manner to its residents and businesses; to continue to strengthen the economy and quality of life; and to ensure that the expression of views by citizens are recognized and responded to by the City.*

# Strategic Plan CITY OF STURGIS

## Sturgis 2022

Particularly during difficult economic times, communities often default into survival mode and focus on the daily struggles of funding the operations of an organization. Successful communities take the time to conduct long-term planning and implement strategies accordingly. The Sturgis City Commission will be conducting a long-term planning process named *Sturgis 2022*. *Sturgis 2022* will make great efforts to engage the public and determine four areas for long-term improvement. Measurements will be defined to analyze performance including data collected from the 2020 census.

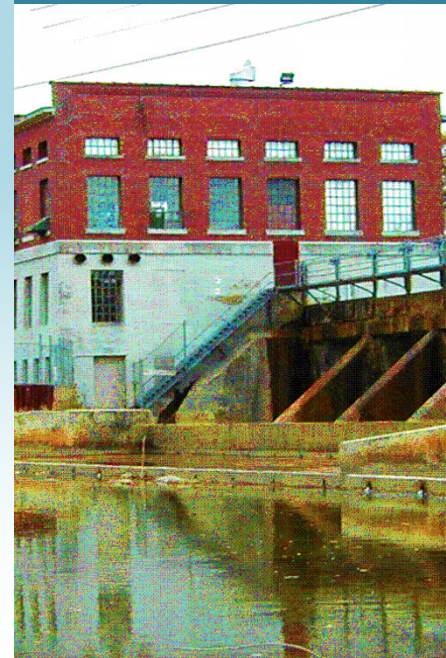
## Strategic Focus Areas

Starting with the 2009-2010 budget year, for the purposes of planning, the Sturgis City Commission developed four areas of strategic focus with specific actions for implementation. This process is updated annually in order to maintain attention on achieving goals established by the Commission. Along with each strategic focus area are values that the Commission uses when making policy decisions. These stated values are also expected to change on an annual basis to reflect the evolving needs of the community.



### Economic Vitality

The premise of this strategic focus area is that individuals should be able to be self-sufficient and have access to opportunities for advancement. All development opportunities,



### Economic Vitality Values

The City's economy should provide quality jobs and the tools to increase quality of life. Importance is placed on providing a diverse economic base to avoid reliance on one employer or industry.

Each business endeavor or development possibility is approached with openness regardless of experience or financial wherewithal. Correspondingly, the City's expectation is that citizens abide by planning and zoning standards to protect property values and private investment. The Business Development Team facilitates prospects in a business-friendly, professional manner.

The City embraces its history of innovation and promotes and supports entrepreneurs through the Generate Sturgis initiative.

Investing in assets that support and encourage growth is valued in policy making decisions.

Collaboration with surrounding local governments is critical to facilitating a healthy economy. Acknowledgement and support of regional partnerships are vital to long-term economic success.



## Quality of Life Values

There is a strong recognition that the success of Sturgis is dependent upon lifestyle, community attributes and available amenities. Policy decisions will consider how Sturgis is positioned as a community of choice.

High value is placed on developing Sturgis as a community of choice. This means Sturgis provides a unique sense of place, diverse recreation opportunities that promote healthy and active lifestyles, a variety of arts and cultural opportunities, a connectedness within neighborhoods and environmental stewardship.

## Best Practice Government Values

Each City Department strives to provide effective, responsible and responsive services. Taking calculated risks and attempting new practices and delivery methods is encouraged in pursuit of constant improvement.

The City of Sturgis is committed to open processes for citizen input and integrates opportunities for input into decision making.

particularly of local entrepreneurs, are possible avenues to a more diverse and stable economy and should be approached with openness. The core of a healthy community lies in its ability to provide viable work opportunities for its residents. In 2010 the City of Sturgis entered a partnership with Michigan State University's Land Policy department. The program, Creating Entrepreneurial Communities, seeks to facilitate success of entrepreneurs. The areas of concentration are culture, social networking, policies and resources. A committee of community members was formed to focus on enhancing these areas and branded the initiative as Generate Sturgis. The Generate Sturgis committee is evaluating the feasibility of an incubator/business accelerator to assist entrepreneurs and small businesses.

2011 was also an important year for the City in terms of offering adequate infrastructure for economic growth. After several years of assembly of funding, the Dresser Industrial Park infrastructure project began with completion of water, sewer and road reconstruction slated for summer of 2012. The provision of infrastructure will make Dresser Industrial Park more attractive for expansion and attraction opportunities.



## Quality of Life

The Quality of Life strategic focus can be allusive, but

possibly the most important.

Traditionally relegated as an outcome of a healthy economy, experts now tell us over and over that a community's quality of life is critical in participating in the new economy. If we ignore quality of life, we are ignoring the emergence of human capital as a valuable and powerful asset.

As American society transitions to a knowledge-based economy, quality of life becomes more relevant given the mobility and interests of the knowledge worker.

Sturgis is known for its impressive community facilities such as Sturgis Public Schools, the Sturges-Young Auditorium and the Doyle Community Center. Sturgis also boasts impressive youth recreation facilities like Wall Field, a youth baseball complex, and Franks Park, a soccer/rocket football complex. Other unique amenities include the Open Door Art Gallery and the Sturgis District Library.

At its core, Sturgis' strength is its small town charm -- a safe and rich environment for families to be nurtured.



## Best Practice Government

The Best Practice Government strategic focus seeks to provide a culture that promotes efficient and effective delivery of municipal services. Constant attention to improving services is expected. This is accomplished through data driven decision making, the idea of thoroughly understanding processes and systems of service delivery,

continuing education and training of staff and the sharing of best practices with other organizations. Comparison of performance is encouraged in the pursuit of improving operations accepting that the risk of failing is part of constant improvement.

Sturgis is a “full-service city”. It provides a wide variety of “core” services related to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of its constituents. Some of these services include public safety; public infrastructure and utilities; economic and community development; and recreation, parks and culture as well as legal and administrative functions to support these services.

The City prides itself on taking a solution-oriented approach to citizen concerns. While not every citizen concern can or should be addressed by local government, City staff’s approach is to listen and offer solutions that are in the best interest of the community and its taxpayers. The City Commission seeks innovative ways to solicit input from the community including “open house” forums, public meetings, and surveys. Additionally, the City Commission makes great efforts to provide useful information about City issues and projects via the City’s website, a City Facebook page, *Sturgis Wire* newsletter, and the *eWire* a weekly electronic newsletter.

Technology is vital to maintain effective and efficient services. Administration is constantly exploring new technologies and innovations to improve the cost effectiveness of service delivery. City staff takes great pride in delivery of excellent customer service and is constantly seeking improvement through training opportunities.



## Fiscal Stewardship Values

The City of Sturgis is committed to providing quality services at the lowest tax obligation practical. This means that constant scrutiny of service delivery is examined with consideration of privatization, consolidation, municipal partnerships, technological advances, etc.

Investment and replacement of assets in a fashion that minimizes exposure to extraordinary costs and maximizes life cycles is critical to asset management.

Adequate reserves for operating and replacement of assets is imperative to responsible financial management of the City.

Service delivery solvency is essential especially in context of diminishing revenues. The types and level of services are modified so that the quality of service delivery is not sacrificed.



## Fiscal Stewardship

Fiscal Stewardship represents the City’s commitment to prudently manage the City’s resources and maintain a stable economic environment. Given the challenging economic times, this focus area will obviously deal with responsibly addressing short and long-term fiscal issues. It is essential that the City provide core services for citizens within the budgetary parameters of the City’s present condition.

Part of responsible Fiscal Stewardship is providing the community’s expectation of services for the lowest tax obligation practical. The City of Sturgis has an outstanding tradition of providing a full range of services at one of the lowest tax rates in the State of Michigan.

The City Commission is dedicated to delivery of services in the most efficient and effective manner possible so that service levels are maintained. However, the inherent conflict with diminishing revenues and increasing costs requires difficult decisions about the types and level of services provided to citizens. The City Commission’s annual challenge is to establish, through its operating budget, the services that residents are willing to purchase. In order for local governments to provide services in the future, a menu format is the most likely – constituents specifically choose the service and the associated funding mechanism.

Properly maintaining current assets to avoid the added cost of deferred maintenance is part of the Fiscal Stewardship focus. Further, reinvesting in infrastructure and providing stability to the annual operating budget conveys to the private sector a favorable investment environment.

# Strategic Focus Actions

The following are the Sturgis City Commission's goals and associated actions for the Strategic Focus Areas.



## Economic Vitality

### **Goal #1: Provide a sustainable, growing economy that offers a diverse supply of quality employment opportunities**

**Action #1:** Design and implement business accelerator services to support existing businesses and entrepreneurs (i.e. Generate Sturgis initiative)

**Action #2:** Continue business retention program

**Action #3:** Partner with St. Joseph County Economic Development Corporation and Southwest Michigan First for economic development services

### **Goal #2: Promote and facilitate redevelopment of vacant or blighted properties**

**Action #1:** Administer Kirsch Prospect Brownfield Redevelopment Grant/Loan

**Action #2:** Administer EPA grant for cleanup of Paramount Property.

### **Goal #3: Provide appropriate infrastructure for growth development opportunities**

**Action #1:** Complete Dresser Industrial Park water and sewer project

**Action #2:** Pursue shovel ready certification for the Dresser Industrial Park

**Action #3:** Design and construct Shimmel Corridor transmission line and rural substation

### **Goal #4: Facilitate proper planning and growth of community**

**Action #1:** Implement Master Plan of Future Land Use update



## Quality of Life

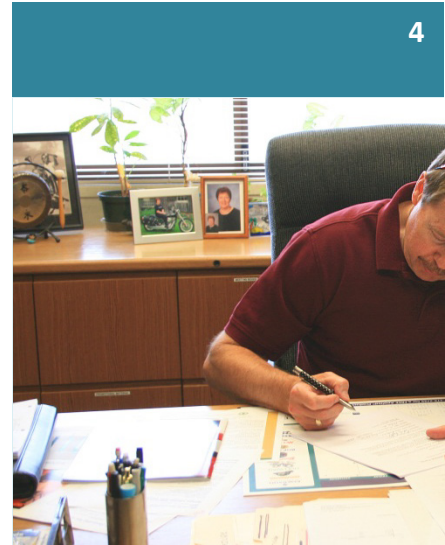
### **Goal #1: Create and maintain vibrant neighborhoods**

**Action #1:** Eradicate blight through increased code enforcement efforts and best practice property maintenance rules and regulations

**Action #2:** Implement "Better Buildings for Michigan" grant program to conduct residential energy grant audits

**Action #3:** Partner with Sturgis Neighborhood Program in their efforts to purchase and redevelop housing for single-family homeownership

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## Quality of Life (continued)

### Sturgis City Commission



Mayor Kenneth Malone  
Precinct 3



Vice-Mayor Robert Hile  
Precinct 4



Commissioner Michael Gay  
At-Large



Commissioner Karl Littman  
Precinct 4



Commissioner Robert Sisson  
Precinct 1



Commissioner David G. Smith  
Precinct 1



Commissioner Karen Stephens  
Precinct 2



Commissioner Ina Taulbee  
Precinct 2



Commissioner Michael Wilson  
Precinct 3

#### Goal #2: Provide contemporary recreation opportunities consistent with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

**Action #1:** Develop biking/walking trail master plan in partnership with Burr Oak Township, Fawn River Township, Sturgis Township and Sherman Township, Sturgis Hospital and the Sturgis Area Community Foundation

#### Goal #3: Promote environmental stewardship

**Action #1:** Provide ongoing education on recycling and City's curbside recycling program

**Action #2:** Continue participation with Tree City USA award

#### Goal #4: Promote historic preservation

**Action #1:** Pursue funding for repairs of Depot building



## Best Practice Government

#### Goal #1: Provide efficient and effective government services

**Action #1:** Evaluate Michigan Local Government Benchmarking Consortium 2011 Annual Report and identify potential opportunities for service improvement

**Action #2:** Implement *Sturgis 2022*, a citizen driven, long-term planning process

**Action #3:** Continue leadership meetings with surrounding townships to discuss ways to collaborate

**Action #4:** Comply with Governor's Economic Vitality Incentive Program

**Action #5:** Review and update Right of Way ordinance

**Action #6:** Review and update Utility Terms and Conditions

**Action #7:** Review and update Wellhead Protection Ordinance

**Action #8:** Review contracting out green space mowing of various City properties

## Best Practice Government (continued)

### **Goal #2: Communicate effectively on City issues to achieve an informed citizenry**

- Action #1:** Continue eWire and city newsletter
- Action #2:** Continue Community Calendar website
- Action #3:** Continue Facebook
- Action #4:** Update city website
- Action #5:** Complete Governor's dashboard and citizen's guides reports

### **Goal #3: Provide opportunity for citizen input on City issues to achieve ideal community decision making**

- Action #1:** Develop online surveys to receive specific information
- Action #2:** Utilize "open house" formats to receive public input on City projects or issues

### **Goal #4: Utilize information technology in a way that improves efficiency and effectiveness of administrative services**

- Action #1:** Implement GIS system including database conversion and electric system inventory
- Action #2:** Implement BS&A software upgrade used for assessing, building and tax administration
- Action #3:** Improve the availability of electronic delivery of utility bills via online enhancements or email delivery

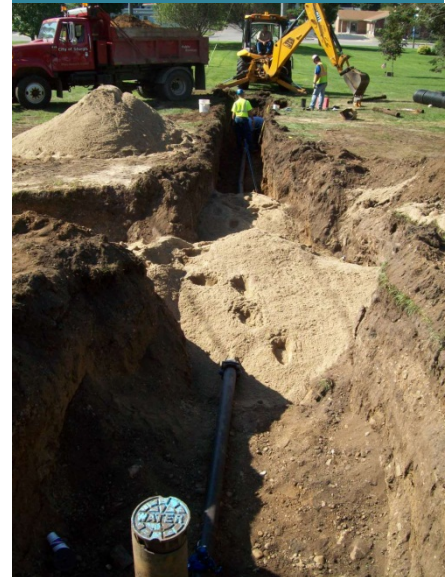


## Fiscal Stewardship

### **Goal #1: Provide for appropriate and timely replacement of assets**

- Action #1:** Complete police/fire building improvements
- Action #2:** Update 10 year capital plan as part of Sturgis 2022 project
- Action #3:** Develop street improvement program and pursue a dedicated revenue source for funding
- Action #4:** Reestablish sidewalk repair program
- Action #5:** Complete street repair and maintenance program

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### City of Sturgis

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### City Manager

Michael L. Hughes

**E-mail:** [mhughes@sturgismi.gov](mailto:mhughes@sturgismi.gov)



**Goal #2: Maintain high standard of financial performance**

**Action #1:** Achieve clean unqualified audit

**Goal #3: Ensure service delivery solvency**

**Action #1:** Review and update fees for service

**Action #2:** Conduct cost of service study for utility enterprise funds

**Goal #4: Provide competitive, market driven compensation packages for employees**

**Action #1:** Review employee and retiree pension plan design to align with contemporary market and employer trends

**Action #2:** Review employee benefits