



CITY OF MCHENRY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

HEART OF THE FOX RIVER



A Strategy to Preserve the Quality of Life for the Citizens of
McHenry

CITY OF MCHENRY

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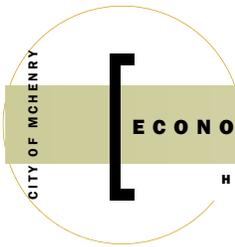
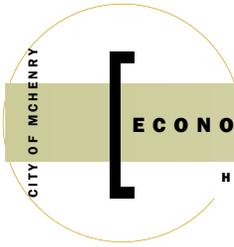


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Introduction

McHenry is a unique community. We are located in one of the fastest growing counties in the United States, but have a distinctive, small-town charm. We are near the urban centers of Chicago and Milwaukee yet have easy access to recreational and agricultural opportunities. We have a traditional downtown overlooking a scenic river but have several newer shopping areas to serve our growing population. These assets make McHenry a desirable place to work, live and play.

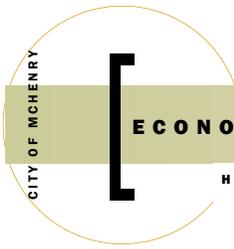


In terms of economic development, the city has been fortunate. Major industrial users including Medela, Follett Library Resources, Fabrik Industries and Plaspros have located in the City's business parks. Centegra's Northern Illinois Medical Center (NIMC) campus calls McHenry home and provides emergency, in- and out-patient health care services to the City and surrounding areas. Steady residential growth has resulted in significant commercial development. The north Richmond Road corridor has become a destination for shoppers in the northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin areas with numerous "big box" retailers and smaller chains.

City leaders now face the challenge of maintaining this prosperity while protecting and enhancing the assets that make McHenry so attractive in the first place. This will not be an easy task. Transportation concerns including traffic congestion, lack of available funding for new roads, and inconvenient public transportation continue to plague the region. The availability of sanitary sewer in adjacent communities means that the City faces the threat of losing existing businesses looking to expand or modernize and must now compete for new development. And finally, the demand for city services continues to increase, stretching the City budget to its limits.

These challenges are not unique to McHenry. Throughout the Chicago-Metro area and the nation, suburban communities are struggling with the same issues and are looking to create advantages that will make their town stand out from the rest. The McHenry Economic Development Commission is aware of these challenges and decided to face them head on with the preparation of this Economic Development Plan. The Plan will help the City to focus its resources on actions that can be most effective in promoting a more prosperous economy for the 21st century, while maintaining a hometown atmosphere.

It is important to remember that this Plan is a living document to be reviewed annually to determine progress and/or be adjusted in response to changes in the economic development environment.



Plan Process

The Economic Development Commission agreed upon a 8-step process for preparing this plan:

- 1) Create an Economic Vision for McHenry. An Economic Vision is the formal expression of what a local government and its citizens want their community to be in the future.
- 2) Compile Background Information. To have a successful plan, you need to understand what you have and what forces are affecting land use and development decisions. What are McHenry's assets and liabilities? What attracts residents and businesses to McHenry? What is the make-up of our residents (young/old, wealthy/poor, educated/uneducated, etc.) and workforce?
- 3) Establish Economic Development Goals. Goals are "Big Picture" ideas. However, they should be clearly defined rather than "apple pie" statements such as "provide good jobs for all residents."
- 4) Establish Objectives. Objectives provide standards and methods to meet the stated goals.
- 5) Develop Specific Actions. Actions are the specific steps that must be taken to meet the stated goals and objectives. These are very detailed and focused and are where most of the leg work occurs.
- 6) Develop an Implementation Strategy. An implementation strategy states how will things get done. It will identify roles and responsibilities, assign tasks and establish deadlines and milestones.
- 7) Measure Success/Failures. As strategies are implemented, you must evaluate what strategies are working and why. Celebrate successes and get the word out. Analyze and make adjustments to strategies that are not working.
- 8) Monitor Plan on a Regular Basis. The plan need to be frequently evaluated because markets, technology and other factors are constantly changing.

After agreeing on the process, the Commission decided to hold a retreat to talk about the various steps in the process and to begin discussing specific components of the Plan. Participants conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis, discussed their vision for McHenry, and started to identify possible goals and objectives for the Plan (see appendix).

Community Profile

Overview

McHenry is situated along the Fox River, about 50 miles northwest of Chicago. Just minutes away from Interstates 90, 94, 43 and 39, McHenry is served by METRA, the Chicagoland commuter rail service, and PACE suburban bus service.

McHenry is a vibrant community of 25,000 people. Since 2000, the City has issued permits for 2,133 new housing units averaging a 3-4% growth rate per year. With this expanding population base, the City has been able to attract over 750,000 square feet of new retail development, making it a shopping destination for northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin consumers. McHenry's industrial job base is also strong and is home to several large employers, including: Follett Library Resources, Follett Software, Medela, Inc., Fabrik Industries, and several plastic injection molding companies. McHenry is also home to Centegra Northern Illinois Medical Center, a Level II Trauma Center, a brand new state of the art heart surgery center and the highly-respected Sage Cancer Center.



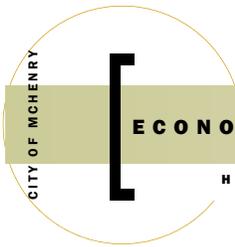
Location Map



Despite this growth, McHenry has been able to retain its small town character. Veterans Park, in McHenry's downtown, continues to draw in crowds during the summer band concert series, farmer's market and various special events. Petersen Park, McHenry's community park site, hosts several festivals during the year, including the annual Fiesta Days celebration. The Soap Box Derby, Miss McHenry Pageant and Antique Tractor Show have become annual events attracting persons from throughout the county, state and nation. As part of the City's commitment to the downtown, the first phase of the McHenry Riverwalk has been completed. When all phases are completed, the riverwalk will stretch for nearly a mile along the Fox River and Boone Lagoon.

The City of McHenry offers the following:

- Full-Time City Administrator with professional planning and building staff
- Municipal sanitary sewer and water service
- 633 acres of local parks, municipal pool and special event/recreational programming
- Police Department with 51 sworn officers
- Fire Protection District with 151 Firefighters and a Class "4" Fire Insurance Rating
- Public Library Facility, 28,000 sf.



Population

The last full census was conducted in 2000 and the City’s population was 21,501. The under 15 age group accounted for 24% of the City’s population, while 18% were over the age of 55 (see Table 1). Of the total population, white was the predominant race of persons living in McHenry (94.2%). Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin accounted for 7.1% of the total population (see Table 2).

Age Classifications (2000)		
Age Group	Total Population	
Under 15	5,151	24%
15-19	1,496	7%
20-24	1,168	5.4%
25-34	3,211	14.9%
35-44	3,828	17.8%
45-54	2,778	12.9%
55-64	1,502	7%
65 and Over	2,367	11%
Total	21,501	100%

Table 1.

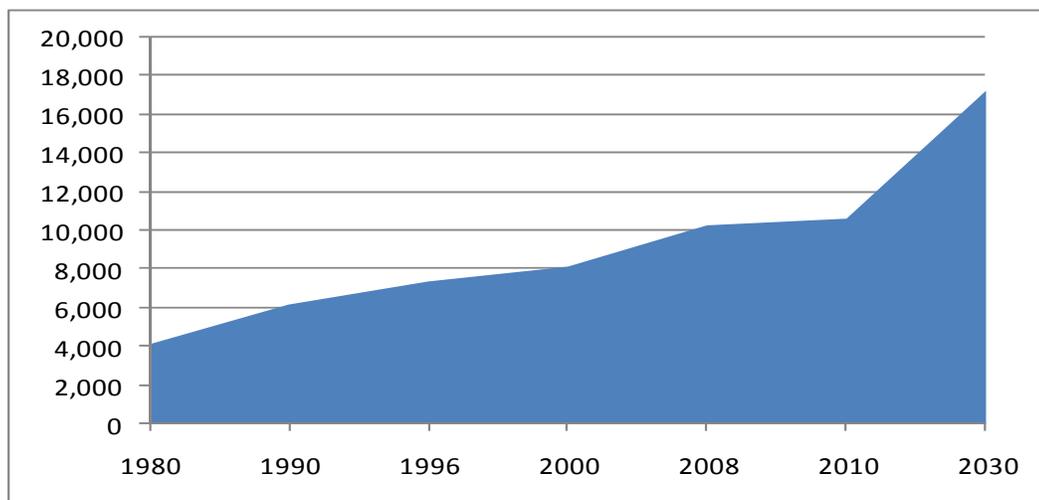
Racial Classifications (2000)		
Race	Total Population	
White	20,250	94.2%
Black	75	0.3%
American Indian, Alaska Native	45	0.2%
Asian/Hawaiian	200	0.9%
Other Race	711	3.3%
Hispanic Origin Of Any Race	1,527	7.1%

Table 2.

A partial special census was taken in 2004 and the population of McHenry grew by 14% to 24, 493. To capture the additional growth occurring since 2004, the City again conducted a partial special census in 2008.

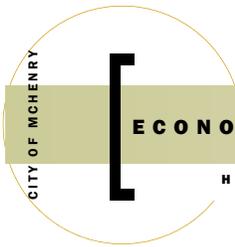
Housing

In recent years, McHenry has seen significant housing growth. From 2000 to 2008, the number of housing units in the City increased by 26% (see Table 3).



City of McHenry Housing Units - 1980-2030

Table 3.



Housing, cont.

The majority of the housing stock in McHenry is detached single-family homes (71%). In recent years, the number of townhome units has increased significantly and now makes up about 11% of the total number of housing units. According to 2000 census figures, over 76% of units were owner-occupied and the homeowner vacancy rate was 1.2%. Over 70% of households were family households. The average household size was 2.70 persons and the average family size was 3.25 persons (see Table 4).

Type	Total Households	
Family	5,560	70.6%
Married-couple	4,592	57.2%
Female HH	749	9.5%
Non-Family	2,312	27.4%
HH living alone	1,942	24.7%
Vacant	255	2.0%
Avg. HH Size	2.70	
Avg. Family Size	3.25	



Table 4.

The majority of McHenry’s housing stock (75.6%) was constructed after 1970. However, the City has several historic older homes in the downtown areas that date from the 1800’s and early 1900’s.

Type	Price
2-Bedroom	\$146,361
3-Bedroom	\$199,140
4-Bedroom	\$269,122

The average sale price of a single-family home in McHenry in 2007 was \$240,557.

Type	Number
2-Bedroom	83
3-Bedroom	236
4-Bedroom	106

Income

Income information for both the City of McHenry and McHenry County is as follows:

Table 5.

Income	% of Total
\$14,999 & Under	7.7
\$15,000 to \$34,999	20.4
\$35,000 to \$49,999	14.8
\$50,000 to \$74,999	25.3
\$75,000 & Over	31.7

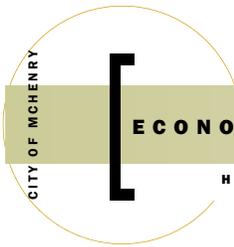
Table 6.

City of McHenry	\$55,759
McHenry County	\$71,945*
Nation	\$41,349

City of McHenry	\$23,272
McHenry County	\$29,699*
State of Illinois	\$23,267
Nation	\$21,690

* estimate, in 2006 inflation-adjusted dollars

Table 7.



Education

McHenry is served by McHenry Elementary School District 15, McHenry High School District 156 and Community College District 528.

McHenry Elementary School District 15

McHenry Elementary School District 15 serves 4,851 students, grades K through 8. The district is composed of 6 elementary schools and 2 middle schools covering a geographical region of 41 square miles. The district employs 261 teachers to work with its current student enrollment. The mobility rate for the district is 10.1, while the rate of low-income students is 17.2 and limited English proficiency is 5.7. The attendance rate was 95.2 in 2007.

McHenry High School District 156

McHenry High School District 156 serves 2,458 students in two campuses. The district has 140 full-time teachers. The mobility rate is 14.3, while the rate of low-income students is 4.9 and limited English proficiency is 2.1. The attendance rate was 93.2 in 2007.

City of McHenry-Educational Attainment (2000)

Age 25+ Level	% of Total
Less Than 9th Grade	4.2
High School, No Diploma	8.6
High School Graduate	32.1
Some College, No Degree	26.4
Associates Degree	6.7
Bachelors Degree	16.3
Graduate Degree/Prof. Deg.	5.7

Table 8.

School District Statistics (2006/2007)

<u>Elementary District 15 (K-8)</u>	
Pupil Teacher Ratio	22.6:1
\$ Spent per Pupil	\$4,315
Total Enrollment	4,851
<u>High School District 156 (9-12)</u>	
Pupil Teacher Ratio	20:1
\$ Spent per Pupil	\$5,538
Avg. ACT Score	20
% Graduated	93.5%
Total Enrollment	2,458

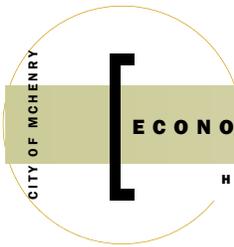
Table 9.

McHenry County College District 528

McHenry County College (MCC) was founded in 1967, just two years after the community college system was established in Illinois in 1965. MCC provides credit and non-credit educational and training opportunities as well as special events for close to 60,000 participants annually. The college serves the fifth most rapidly growing county in Illinois and offers six associate’s degrees and 17 Associate of Applied Science degrees. MCC also offers free adult education (including ESL and literacy classes), and free GED classes.

Workforce

The industry mix in McHenry County is led by manufacturing (21%), trade, transportation and utilities (20%) and education and health services (18%). There are over 70 manufacturing companies headquartered in McHenry County. Some of the cluster industries include plastics, electronics and mining. The McHenry County labor force is 177,370, with a 4.8% unemployment rate as of June 2007. The city of McHenry (60050 area code) has a total employment of 17,473 persons (2005 estimate).



Workforce, cont.

A sampling of median wages for businesses in McHenry County is found in the following table:

McHenry County Median Wages (2006)			
<u>Occupational Title</u>	<u>(Hourly Wage)</u>	<u>Occupational Title</u>	<u>(Hourly Wage)</u>
General Office Clerk	\$11.06	Accountant	\$26.74
Salespersons, Retail	\$9.81	Registered Nurses	\$45.99
Cashiers	\$8.85	Drafters	\$16.95
Bartenders	\$6.82	Librarians	\$22.11
Pharmacy Technicians	\$11.89	Machinists	\$12.66
Child Care Workers	\$9.77	Automotive Mechanics	\$16.41
Recreation Workers	\$10.12	Carpenters	\$22.97
Hand Packers	\$10.92	Counselors	\$28.58
Cooks, Short Order	\$8.90	Mechanical Engineers	\$32.12
Cooks, Restaurant	\$8.21	Lawyers	\$39.36
Receptionists	\$9.85	Pharmacists	\$42.03
Nursing Aides	\$10.73	Cost Estimators	\$22.14
Production Workers	\$13.72	Computer Programmer	\$24.63

Table 10.

City Services

The City of McHenry has a part-time Mayor and seven-member City Council. The City is divided into seven wards and has a full-time City Administrator to handle the day-to-day operations. McHenry has 160 full-time employees and a budget of \$40,404,268 (FY08-09).

Construction and Neighborhood Services

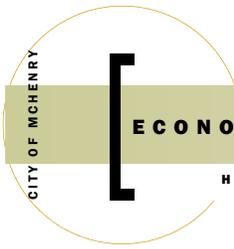
The Construction and Neighborhood Services Department reviews new development, issues building permits and conducts inspections on all construction activity in the City. Since 2002, the department has issued over 1400 building permits annually. The number of permits issued for new residential dwelling units over that same time period totals 1669, an average of 334 per year.

Finance Department

The Finance Department handles the day-to-day monetary functions of the City.

Parks and Recreation Department

The City operates 35 local parks and playgrounds, consisting of 633 acres, including a municipal swimming pool, freshwater lake/beach, McHenry Zone Skate/Bike Park and lighted tennis courts. The City also coordinates special events and recreational programming (preschool, dance, swimming, horseback riding, organized athletic leagues) for children and adults in McHenry and the surrounding area.



City Services, (cont.)

Police Department

The McHenry Police Department has 51 Sworn Officers (2.61 officers per 1,000 residents) and two Community Service Officers. The Department's budget for FY 2008-09 is \$7,735,331.

Public Works Department

The Public Works Department maintains the City's infrastructure system including two waste water treatment plants (4.5 mgd capacity), 4 water plants with a 5th being planned, four (4) water storage tanks ranging in size from 500,00-1,000,000 gallons, hundreds of miles of pipe and approximately 130 miles of roads.

McHenry Township Fire Protection District

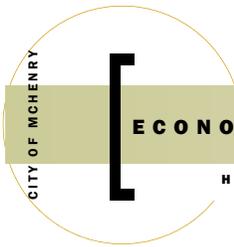
The City of McHenry is served by the McHenry Township Fire Protection District, which includes fire protection and ambulance services. The McHenry Township Fire Protection District currently operates out of three stations including one in McHenry on Illinois Route 120 at Richmond Rd. They also operate out of stations in Johnsborg and Lakemoor and recently finished constructing a fourth station which is located on Dartmoor Drive immediately west of Curran Road in the Legend Lakes Subdivision. In addition, the district owns property east of the railroad tracks on the north side of Bull Valley Road adjacent to the Kresswood Trails Subdivision.

Commercial Activity

Since 2000, the City has seen the construction of nearly 1 million square feet of new retail development, including numerous "big-box" stores and national retailers and restaurants. The City's major highway commercial corridor is Route 31 (Richmond Road). Many shopping centers are located all along this corridor adding to the City's sales tax revenue base.

Industrial Activity

The City has 5 business and industrial parks throughout town. Many major employers are located within those parks, including: Medela, Inc., Follett Library Resources, Fabrik Industries and many others. In addition, the Northern Illinois Medical Center (NIMC) is located within the City and employees approximately 3,500 people.



Community Self Assessment

To be successful with an economic development program, a community must understand its strengths and weaknesses. Without knowing these characteristics and narrowing its focus, a community will struggle and not meet its full potential. Conversely, a community that understands its characteristics and knows what businesses fit those characteristics will be more focused and successful. Less time, both the community's and a businesses, will be wasted working with a business that just doesn't fit in with the community's characteristics.

The previous chapter discussed specific facts and figures for the City. That information is important for understanding the current make-up of McHenry - what we are and what we have. It is relatively easy to evaluate this information and determine certain strengths and weaknesses based on established criteria. For example, based on the amount of park acreage, the City may be strong in the provision of park land for its residents. Or, perhaps the ratio of police officers to residents is in line with recommended standards. Another important factor in determining strengths and weaknesses is perception. How is McHenry perceived by its residents, employers and elected officials? What are it's attributes and what are it's shortcomings? While many of these comments may be subjective, they offer important insight and are useful in developing goals and objectives for this plan.

S.W.O.T. Analysis

One of the first steps taken in the development of this plan was to conduct a S.W.O.T. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis. During the EDC Retreat in February of 2007, participants were asked to identify McHenry's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Strengths and Weaknesses. The most frequently identified strengths were the Fox River, the special events held in the City, Centegra/NIMC Hospital/medical professionals and the METRA commuter rail service. The most identified weakness had to do with traffic - the road system., flow of traffic, and capacity. A list of all responses can be found in Table ___.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

City of McHenry

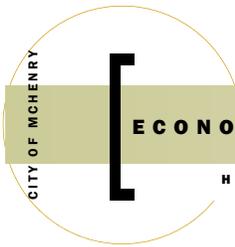
Items most frequently identified at the February 2007 EDC Retreat

Strengths

Fox River
 Special Events
 Hospital , medical professionals
 Rail Service – commuter
 Available land for development
 Natural Resources – City Parks,
 State Parks
 Recreational opportunities
 Affordable housing
 Strong retirement communities/
 senior population
 Job market opportunities

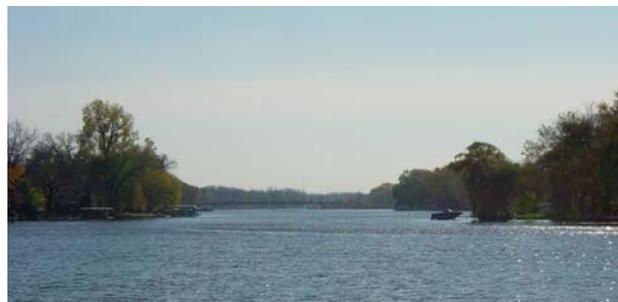
Weaknesses

Road system/traffic flow/traffic capacity
 Three downtown areas
 Lack of public transportation
 Lack of grocery store on south/
 west sides
 Gateways into City are lacking
 Public swimming pool too small
 Downtown Parking



Strengths and Weaknesses Identified at the EDC Retreat

Strengths	Weaknesses
River (3)	Road system/traffic flow/traffic capacity (3)
Special Events (3)	Three downtown areas (2)
Hospital (3), medical professionals	Lack of public transportation (2)
Rail Service (3) – commuter	Lack of grocery store on south/west sides (2)
Available land for development (2)	Gateways into City are lacking (2)
Natural Resources – Parks (2), State Parks	Public swimming pool too small (2)
Recreational opportunities (2)	Downtown Parking (2)
Affordable housing (2)	Downtown parking visibility
Strong retirement communities/senior population (2)	Lack of directional and informational signage
Job market opportunities (2)	Lack of pedestrian-ism
Location - proximity to Chicago, Milwaukee, Rockford	Pride of ownership of buildings
Proximity to major transportation hubs (O’Hare, Mitchell Field)	Building facades – eclectic architectural styles
Small town feel	WW Treatment Plant located in downtown
Hometown pride, loyalty to community	No anchors on Riverside Drive
Friendly people	No bed and breakfast establishments
Strong business commitment to community	School system reputation
Housing options	Schools – classroom size, financial responsibility, feedback and participation
Service organizations	Lack of input from school board on development issues
Taxing bodies work together	High schools
Progressive leadership	Lack of participation by Hispanic community
Strong Fire Protection District	Storefront vacancies
Chamber of Commerce	Isolated shopping areas
Retailers-Restaurants – national chains, Shopping Hub	Lack of banquet facility
Business Parks/Clean Industry	Diversity of restaurants, lack of family restaurants
Strong banking presence	No specialty clothing stores
Hotels	No Super Wal-Mart
Riverwalk	Overabundance of banks
Downtown	Excess of office space
Population diversity and stability	Inadequate amount of affordable housing
Low crime rate	Lack of community involvement
Good financial reserves - City is fiscally sound	Lack of tourism draw
Controlled growth	City park is too small
Churches, multiple denominations	Lack of indoor rec facilities, no rec center
Infrastructure	Lack of entertainment for teens
	Safety on bike path (Bull Valley Rd./RR crossing)



The Fox River is considered one of McHenry’s many strengths.

Opportunities and Threats

Participants were also asked what they saw as opportunities and threats to the City. The theme surrounding most of the opportunities identified by the participants was the river (the Riverwalk, tourism a public boat launch and pier parking for boats). The major threats identified were the lack of funding from the State of Illinois for projects especially roads, competition and growth in other communities and major employers leaving the City.

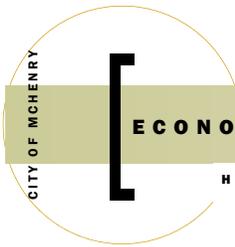
Opportunities and Threats Identified at the EDC Retreat

Opportunities	Threats
Riverwalk – ability to tie downtown’s together	Funding from State, especially roads
Tourism – draw people to City of McHenry	Competition from other towns
Vacant land offers ability to plan and avoid past mistakes	Growth in other communities
Public boat launch	Schools – involvement, perception and lack of information
Pier parking for boats	Major employers leaving City of McHenry
Metra service increase	Rising housing costs
Marketing	Rising oil/gas costs
Financial incentives for façade improvements	Loss of Metra service
Better utilizing volunteerism	Changing demographics
	Complacency



The McHenry Riverwalk and it’s potential to bring in tourism dollars is a great opportunity for the City.





Vision for McHenry

The vision statement answers the question, “What do we want McHenry to be in the future?” and provides the foundation for the goals and objectives of the plan. When discussed at the EDC retreat, respondents had similar themes:

- Create a vibrant downtown.
- Encourage strong economic growth while preserving a sense of community.
- Maintain a small-town feel while having big city amenities.
- Create a place you go to feel at home.
- Encourage growth without additional taxes for services and infrastructure.
- Attract quality merchants (committed to the community) that attract quality customers.
- Become a destination.

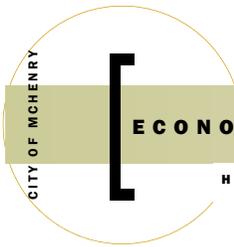
With these themes in mind, the vision statement for McHenry is:

VISION STATEMENT FOR THE CITY OF MCHENRY

***A thriving city that promotes smart, sensible growth
while preserving and enhancing its small-town charm.***



McHenry Municipal Center



Economic Development Strategy

Now that we know what we want McHenry to be in the future, how do we get there? This is one of the most important questions this plan will answer. To realize the future vision of McHenry, we must have a strong, yet realistic strategy for getting there. A strategy that will build upon the City’s strengths and work to eliminate weaknesses. A strategy that will capitalize on the many opportunities available and minimize threats to our success.

Goals

The first part of a successful economic development strategy is to formulate goals. Goals are the end result toward which all effort is directed. Goals must be specific, measurable and realistic. This plan has eight (8) goals it seeks to have accomplished:

GOAL 1.0: CREATE A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN

McHenry already faces the challenge of having three distinct downtown areas. Keeping these areas alive and vibrant is critical to the economic success of the City. What can the City do to ensure that the downtown areas thrive in the face of current development pressures?

GOAL 2.0: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO RETAIN EXISTING BUSINESSES IN THE CITY

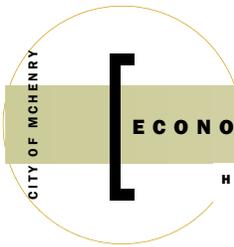
McHenry has strong industrial, healthcare and retail sectors. Because of ever-changing economic conditions, businesses in these sectors must stay lean and watch the bottom line in order to stay competitive in the global economy. Relocation, consolidation and closings of struggling businesses are all possibilities. What can the City do to increase the likelihood that these business sectors stay in McHenry and what can be done to prepare ourselves in the event a major player leaves?

GOAL 3.0: ENHANCE THE EXISTING RETAIL BASE

McHenry is fortunate to have a substantial retail base, with several big-boxes stores, numerous national retailers and vehicle dealerships. Are there retailers that the City is lacking or other retailers that might complement existing businesses? How can the City entice these businesses to locate in McHenry?

Goal:

from Merriam-Webster Dictionary
Pronunciation: 'gOl, chiefly Northern especially in 1b and 3a also 'gül
Function: noun
Etymology: Middle English *gol* boundary, limit
1 a : the terminal point of a race **b** : an area to be reached safely in children's games
2 : the end toward which effort is directed : [AIM](#)
3 a : an area or object toward which players in various games attempt to advance a ball or puck and usually through or into which it must go to score points **b** : the act or action of causing a ball or puck to go through or into such a goal **c** : the score resulting from such an act



GOAL 4.0: ENCOURAGE RETAIL DEVELOPMENT ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE CITY

The north side of McHenry has emerged as a shopping destination for City residents as well as for northern McHenry County and southern Wisconsin residents. Although the City has enjoyed the increased sales tax revenues from this development, residents on the south side of the City are left with the choice of fighting traffic to get to the stores on the north side or going south to other communities. What can the City do to encourage retail growth on the south side of town and keep sales tax dollars in the City?

GOAL 5.0: MARKET MCHENRY AS A CHARACTER COUNTS! COMMUNITY AND A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK PLAY AND VISIT

McHenry is a great place to live, work and play. We know this because we experience it first hand. But how do we get the word out to others? What marketing strategies can we use to attract new residents and new businesses, and how can we attract more people to the numerous special events held in the City each year?

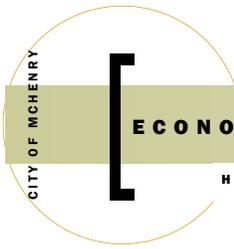
CHARACTER COUNTS! is a framework centered around basic values called the Six Pillars of Character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. The City of McHenry fully supports and embraces these values and should utilize this way of life as a marketing strategy to others wishing to live and visit the City.

Tourism is considered one of the largest untapped revenue sources. Tourists can spend significant dollars in a community with little impact on public services. While McHenry on its own is unlikely to become a tourist destination, there are specific facilities (i.e., the Riverwalk) and special events that can attract tourists. What can the City do to attract tourists to McHenry?

GOAL 6.0: CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDUSTRIAL, JOB GENERATING DEVELOPMENT AND WORK TO LOCATE A FACILITY FOR LARGE-SCALE MEETINGS AND EVENTS IN THE CITY

McHenry has a strong industrial base. What can be done to ensure that there is adequate land for new industrial development and what new industrial development is appropriate for the City?

Lack of a large banquet/meeting hall in the City has long been identified as a shortcoming. Having a local facility would allow local businesses to stay in town when having banquet/meeting events and would provide an alternative location for larger private events. What can the City do to make construction of such a facility happen?



Action Plan

Now that the City's goals have been identified, specific objectives and actions items are needed to ensure that the goals can be met. The objectives and actions listed after each goal are more specific and focused and provide the nuts and bolts for being successful.

GOAL 1.0: CREATE A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN

Objective 1.1 - Complete the Remaining Phases of the Riverwalk.

Action Items:

- a. Continue with the preparation of construction plans and prepare legal documents necessary to secure the land for future phases of the Riverwalk in order to minimize potential delays.
- b. Recruit developers for mixed-use projects near the Riverwalk. Focus recruitment efforts on developers of successful downtown redevelopment projects and establish a list with contact names and numbers.
- c. Promote the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District to potential developers as a financial incentive.
- d. Work closely with the Riverwalk Foundation to identify potential funding sources and donors to fund future construction phases.
- e. Promote the Riverwalk through the City's website, newsletter and marketing brochures.

Objective 1.2 - Provide Additional Public Parking for Downtown Businesses.

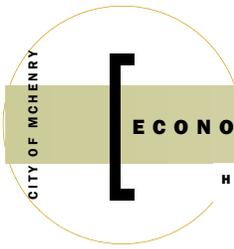
Action Items:

- a. Compile an inventory of existing parking spaces, including number, location and limits/restrictions. Prepare and maintain a map delineating this information.
- b. Inventory existing development square footage and determine parking needs based on current zoning ordinance requirements. Use this information to determine areas with high or low concentrations of parking as they relate to existing/planned development.
- c. Identify parcels suitable for additional public parking and protect those parcels from private development.
- d. Maintain existing on-street parking where feasible.
- e. Encourage new development to utilize underground parking or parking structures that have spaces designated for public use.

Objective 1.3 - Encourage Quality Businesses and Attractions that Draw a Critical Mass to the Downtown Areas.

Action Items:

- a. Inventory downtown uses to determine the existing business mix.
- b. Analyze the existing business mix to identify strong/weak sectors and use the information to develop a list of opportunities for new businesses.



GOAL 1.0: CREATE A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN, cont.

- c. Survey property owners, residents and general public as to what types of businesses they would like to see in the downtown areas.
- d. Recruit businesses that will compliment existing businesses, fill a niche or create a new specialty market.
- e. Recruit uses that will contribute to the vitality of the downtown by bringing in persons at varying times during the day and night. Large employers and entertainment uses are encouraged.
- f. Continue to utilize Veteran's Park for special events, festivals and farmer's markets and promote special events by creating a special events brochure listing annual activities, dates, etc.

Objective 1.4 - Encourage New, Multi-Family Housing in the Downtown.

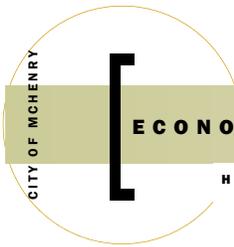
Action Items:

- a. Identify sites suitable for new, multi-family housing and market these sites to housing developers.
- b. Higher densities (20-25 units per acre, not to exceed five stories) must be accommodated in order to provide a population base that will support downtown businesses.
- c. Transit-oriented design guidelines, as published by Metra, the American Planning Association and Urban Land Institute, should be used in the design of new multi-family housing.
- d. All new development must be sensitive to the historic character of the downtown areas and meet established design guidelines. Historic structures should be maintained, where feasible.

Objective 1.5 - Create, Implement and Market Financial Incentives and Technical Assistance to Encourage Reinvestment in Downtown Buildings.

Action Items:

- a. Research programs that can provide financial incentives to downtown property owners reinvesting in their property, such as low-interest loans and grants.
- b. Explore and evaluate opportunities to fund financial incentives (grants, loans, TIF, general fund, etc.). Implement programs only when there is an adequate means to fund the program for an extended time period.
- c. Refer property owners to the Landmark Commission for input on proposed improvements to maintain historic integrity of structures.
- d. Maintain an architect or local architectural historian on retainer to provide additional input to property owners.
- e. Promote the City's existing façade improvement grant program through the City Newsletter and website. Develop a brochure for handout/ mailing.



GOAL 1.0: CREATE A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN, cont.

Objective 1.6 - Work to Reduce the Number of Storefront Vacancies.

Action Items:

- a. Maintain an inventory of vacant storefronts in the downtown areas and market these sites to suitable tenants as indicated in Objective 2.3.
- b. Maintain an inventory of vacant and underdeveloped sites in the downtown areas and market these sites to developers.

Objective 1.7 - Keep in Close Contact with Metra as they Plan for Future Changes to the Union Pacific Line.

Action Items:

- a. Monitor Metra's discussions and progress on expanded service.
- b. Encourage the provision of additional train service to McHenry.
- c. Enhance and improvement he train station parking lots.
- d. Train Station improvements

Objective 1.8 - Tie the Main Street, Green Street and Riverside Drive Downtowns Together.

Action Items:

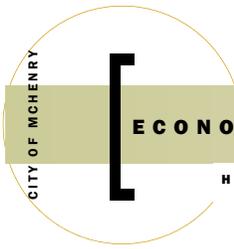
- a. Install uniform directional signage to direct persons to downtown areas such as Veteran's Park, Riverwalk, public parking, etc. and to tie the three downtown areas together.
- b. Consistent materials for sidewalks, landscaping
- c. Locater kiosks
- d. Historic district

GOAL 2.0: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO RETAIN EXISTING BUSINESSES IN THE CITY

Objective 2.1 - Inventory Existing Businesses in the City.

Action Items:

- a. Develop a database of existing retail businesses in the City. Update semi-annually.
- b. Develop a database of existing industrial businesses in the City. Update semi-annually.



GOAL 2.0: DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES TO RETAIN EXISTING BUSINESSES IN THE CITY, cont.

Objective 2.2 - Identify Strong and Weak Market Sectors.

Action Items:

- a. Analyze the business inventory to identify strong and weak market sectors.
- b. Direct recruiting efforts at businesses that compliment strong market sectors.
- c. Review weak market sectors to determine continued viability in the City, where appropriate, direct recruiting efforts at businesses that can bolster and enhance weak sectors.
- d. Identify at-risk businesses and contact monthly to stay abreast of potential closings or layoffs.

Objective 2.3 - Establish a Dialogue with Existing Businesses.

Action Items:

- a. Meet semi-annually with retailers to discuss issues, needs and concerns. Compile a list of retail contact persons to establish an on-going dialogue.
- b. Contact ten industrial businesses per month to discuss issues, needs and concerns. Compile a list of industrial contact persons to establish an on-going dialogue.
- c. Work to provide solutions to address identified issues, needs and concerns and provide follow-up with business contacts.

Objective 2.4 - Identify Available Economic Development Tools That Can be Used for Business Retention.

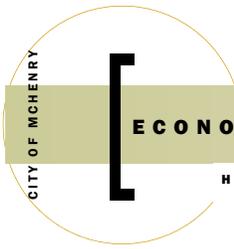
Action Items:

- a. Contact MCEDC as-needed or at a minimum every month to share information.
- b. Contact Illinois DECO as-needed or at a minimum every three (3) months to stay abreast of available grants and programs for businesses.
- c. Become familiar with and provide support for programs to assist small and start-up businesses.

Objective 2.5 - Increase Awareness of Existing City Businesses.

Action Items:

- a. Develop marketing brochures to promote various retail sectors in the City (restaurant guide, specialty business guide, downtown business guide, etc.).
- b. Install locator kiosks providing information on downtown businesses.
- c. Recognize the contribution of existing businesses to the City by acknowledging milestone anniversaries and expansions at City Council meetings, in City Newsletter and on website.



GOAL 3.0: ENHANCE THE EXISTING RETAIL BASE

Objective 3.1 - Recruit New Retail Uses to in the City.

Action Items:

- a. Survey residents thru the City newsletter and other means to determine the types of retail businesses residents would like to have.
- b. Evaluate the business inventory to determine over served and underserved markets.
- c. Identify and Actively Market Locations in the City where population is under-served by retail.
- d. Plot out existing retail centers in the City to determine distances from existing subdivisions.

Objective 3.2 - Develop a Creative Marketing Approach to Attract New Retailers

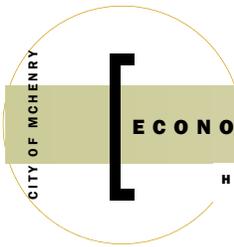
Action Items:

- a. Contact five new retailers each month to let them know the qualities of McHenry and to establish a dialogue with the City.
- b. Create a clever marketing slogan for McHenry to reach out to retail uses not currently located in the City

Objective 3.3 - Work with the Chamber of Commerce to identify needs and wants.

Action Items:

- Meet with the downtown merchants groups and other established retail groups on a quarterly basis to discuss wants.



GOAL 4.0: ENCOURAGE RETAIL DEVELOPMENT ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE CITY

Objective 4.1 - Identify Potential Parcels Suitable for Large Retail Developments.

Action Items:

- a. Inventory parcels 20 acres or larger along major roads south of the McHenry/Nunda Township line and maintain a database with parcel information, utility information and contact name.
- b. Review parcels for potential environmental, topographical or other concerns that may impact ability to develop site.
- c. Compile demographic information within 1-mile, 5-mile and 10-mile radius of potential retail sites.

Objective 4.2 - Identify Potential Retailers Suitable to Locate on the South Side.

Action Items:

- a. Survey south side residents, major employers and commuters to determine wants.
- b. Evaluate existing retail inventory to determine what retail uses are appropriate in new developments (grocery store, restaurants, auto dealers).

Objective 4.3 - Market Parcels to Brokers and Anchor Retailers.

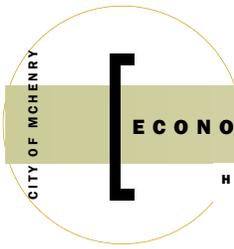
Action Items:

- a. Place relevant parcel information on City's website.
- b. Contact brokers and retailers and provide parcel information and demographics.

Objective 4.4 - Ensure Adequate Infrastructure is Available when new Development is Ready for Construction.

Action Items:

- a. Contact IDOT and/or MCDOT to identify necessary roadway improvements and access possibilities for new developments. Coordinate planned improvements to reduce
- b. Consult City's Master Plan for Utilities to determine needed improvements for sanitary sewer and water.
- c. Work with state and local officials to obtain funding for needed infrastructure improvements.



GOAL 5.0: MARKET MCHENRY AS A CHARACTER COUNTS! COMMUNITY AND A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE, WORK PLAY AND VISIT

Objective 5.1 - Develop an Integrated Campaign to Effectively Market McHenry as a Great Place to Live, Work and Play.

Action Items:

- a. Advertise good school systems.
- b. Promote affordable housing.
- c. Advertise strong work force.
- d. Market good shopping opportunities.
- e. Promote McHenry through various media.

Objective 5.2 - Develop an Integrated Campaign to Effectively Market McHenry as a Great Place to Visit and Spend a Weekend.

Action Items:

- a. Promote the Riverwalk as a Tourist Destination.
- b. Promote the Historic District as a Tourist Destination.
- c. Market and Promote Special Events Held in the City.
- d. Encourage a Variety of Nighttime Activities.
- e. Actively Pursue CABA or Other Regional/National Organizations to Hold Events in the City.
- f. Continue Participating in the McHenry County Tourism Bureau.

GOAL 6.0: CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDUSTRIAL, JOB GENERATING DEVELOPMENT AND WORK TO LOCATE A FACILITY FOR LARGE-SCALE MEETINGS AND EVENTS IN THE CITY

Objective 6.1 - Designate, Zone and Protect Industrial Land to Ensure that an Adequate Supply Exists.

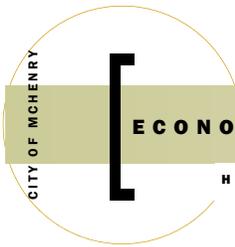
Action Items:

- a. Annex land adjacent to existing industrial developments for new industrial development.
- b. Discourage rezoning of existing industrial zoned property unless there is a valid reason for such change.

Objective 6.2 - Identify Strong and Weak Industrial Sectors

Action Items:

- a. Review City's industrial database to identify strong and weak sectors.
- b. Review county manufacturing trends to determine.



Objective 6.3- Target and Recruit New Development in Those Sectors that will Diversify the Current Workforce and Compliment Existing Sectors.

Action Items:

- a. Determine what new industries are appropriate.
- b. Develop relationships with industrial brokers.
- c. Develop marketing brochures to advertise City/location.
- d. Partner with MCEDC, MCC and High School District 156 to support workforce development programs.

Objective 6.4 - Work to locate a facility for large-scale meetings and events in the City.

Action Items:

- a. Secure a Multi-Use Meeting and Entertainment Facility that can Accommodate 400-500 Persons to Locate Within the City.
- b. Provide the demographics to show the need for such a facility.