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# Strategic Priorities



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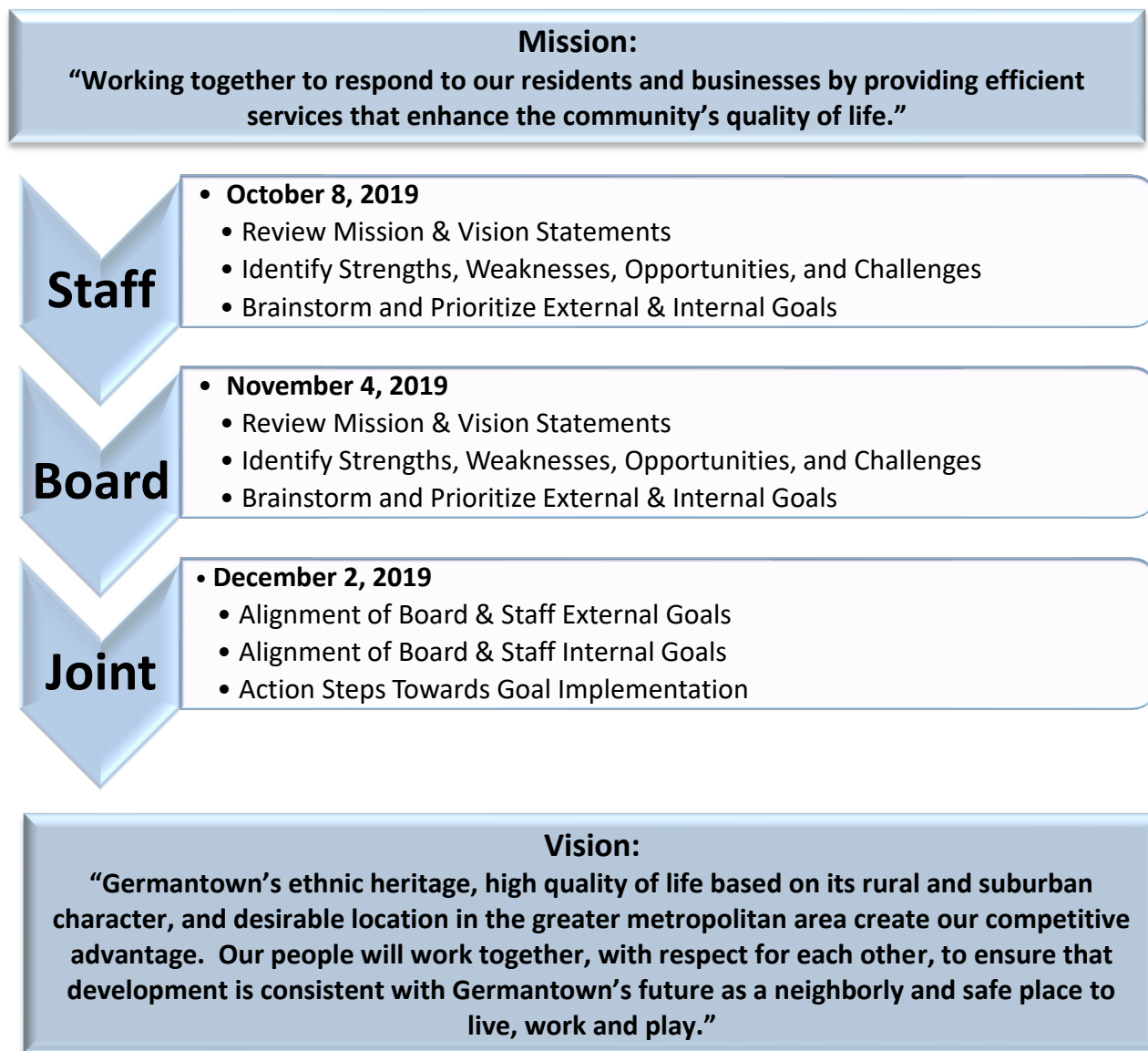
## BACKGROUND

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The Village of Germantown contacted Paul Roback, Community Development Educator at UW-Madison Division of Extension Washington County, to facilitate a process to identify strategic priorities for the Village board and staff. A pre-planning meeting was held with Village Administrator and Support Services Manager. As a result of this conversation, a planning process was designed using the Village’s existing mission and vision statements as a framework to identify goals that would provide direction for Village board members and staff in future decision-making.

## PROCESS OUTLINE

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## SUMMARY OF STRATEGIC GOALS:

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1. Planning- Complete the Comprehensive Planning process with public input that develops a unified community vision that addresses community growth (residential, commercial, and industrial), while balancing the desires of current residents and future generations.
2. Infrastructure- Develop a capital improvement plan for current and future infrastructure needs (e.g. roads, public works building, police department...).
3. Public Engagement- Build public trust through communication and transparency. Develop new strategies to engage the public; improve internal communications to create efficiencies and improved customer service.
4. Inter-Agency Relationships- Collaborate with civic groups, businesses, other government entities, including the Germantown School District, to provide community-focused services

## STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND CHALLENGES IDENTIFICATION

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A number of internal and external forces affect the ability of an organization to carry out its mission through action plans. Positive forces (strengths and opportunities) should be built upon and hindering forces (weaknesses and challenges) should be proactively addressed in action plans. A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Challenges (SWOC) Identification is a participatory activity that assists in the identification of these forces.

On October 8, 2019, nine Village staff identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges within Village government and within the greater Germantown Community (outside of Village Government). On November 4, 2019, eight Village board members participated in a similar process. Responses are recorded in the tables below. For each table, an attempt was made to align similar staff and board responses in the same row. Generally, responses further down the table are less similar between board and staff. There were numerous responses that were consistent between the board and staff in each of the tables, except for the last table related to challenges within the community. Board and staff may want to discuss this table to understand each perspectives on community challenges.

### STRENGTHS

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#### Strengths within Village Government

Identified by Village Staff	Identified by Village Board
Collaborative environment	Collaborative Village Board
Employees- experienced staff with longevity, history, and knowledge	Employees- outstanding, longevity, good backgrounds/experience
In very good fiscal health with reserves	Board and staff understand conservative fiscal nature- all on the same page
Board is supporting staff more- they are respectful even if they disagree	Board's respect for each other
Leadership and becoming more professional	Financial background of Village Administrator
Village staff works together and communicates quickly	Board and staff commitment to public service
Communication	Strong contingency fund
Minimally political Village Board	Strength of Police and Fire services

#### Strengths within the Community

Identified by Village Staff	Identified by Village Board
Open space with room to grow	A lot of desirable land that could be developed
Service groups and organizations willingness to volunteer	Civic groups- Library (two groups), Chamber, Kiwanis, Historical Society
Good schools	High quality school system

Location- easy access to transportation and proximity to Milwaukee, Fox Valley, and Madison	Location for businesses- freeway access, access to Milwaukee, close to urban area
Shared vision and values for community	Likeminded individuals with a conservative mentality
Good mix of residential, commercial, and industry	Strong tax base
Community pride	Good German events
Friendly	Desired area to live and raise a family
Engagement- residents will come out on some issues	Closeness of many of the neighborhoods
Recreation and parks	Rural character
Safe / public safety	Business friendly

**WEAKNESSES**

**Weaknesses within Village Government**

Identified by Village Staff	Identified by Village Board
Growing pains- transitioning from small town to mid-size city	Infrastructure needs as community grows- public works building, police, fire, and library
Staff levels too low	Staff shortages in some departments- challenging to respond to residents in a timely fashion
Compensation	Keeping pace with staff salaries compared to neighboring communities
Budgeting challenges- competition for limited resources	Limited revenue sources, revenue doesn't match demand for services, and limited to how much budget can increase
Differing visions due to management and staff turnover	Not following Comprehensive Plan
Communication- different styles between staff and communication across village government buildings	Inability to share government information with all residents
Lack of knowledge transfer and succession planning	Infrastructure is aging
Location- in corner of four counties, difficult for communication with various entities	
Lack of employee engagement- trying to break down historical barriers	
Lack of written policies and code updates	
Systems- each department runs as separate entity on autopilot	

Lack of understanding of what staff do-between staff and between staff and Board	
Mentality of “we’ve always done it this way”	

### Weaknesses within the Community

Identified by Village Staff	Identified by Village Board
Aging infrastructure	Continuing to fund road maintenance
Disconnect between Village Board and School Board	Not able to work with other public groups
Communication- people have opinions without the facts; trying to balance between the old and new ways to communicate (e.g. paper verses electronic)	No local paper reporting on a daily basis- lack of media focused on stories that are important to the residents
Reliance on other communities- need to leave the community for hospitals and restaurants	Inability to attract additional commerce, such as sit down restaurants
Lack of identity	Bedroom community- lack of a community identity and central downtown main street
Growing pains- differing ideas between long-term residents verses newer residents	Lack of some services- walking and biking lanes, a community center
Many levels of government- residents are unsure of where to go for services	Residents mistrust of the Village government
Lack treatment options for substance abuse and mental health issues	Difficult cell service in the Northeast portion of the Village
Tension between staying the same and the reality of change	

## OPPORTUNITIES

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### Opportunities within Village Government

Identified by Village Staff	Identified by Village Board
Monumental development- hard to keep up; clashes with vision; good tax base	Developable land for business and residential growth
Expanding economy- business, sub-divisions, and residents	Favorable interest rates and bond ratings
Other communities are also expanding	Proximity to freeway and Milwaukee
New staff as people retire	2050 land use plan
Change of management styles	Lower tax rate compared to Milwaukee
People want to work here, which is a positive	To develop conservation subdivisions
Growing openness of Village Board to new ideas	Growth of multi-family housing
Intergovernmental Agreements with other communities	

School district has expanded facilities, which is an opportunity to collaborate	
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### Opportunities within the Community

Identified by Village Staff	Identified by Village Board
Housing market and new residential development- single family, retirement/senior, and hipster apartments	Residential growth- ability of families to grow here is a community asset
Amenities- parks, playgrounds, golf course, recreation department, schools	To take advantage of natural resources (e.g. Menomonee River), scenic areas, close proximity to Kettle Moraine State Forest
Room for growth and open space	Growth and land available for development
Growth of manufacturing in Southeastern Wisconsin	Share borders with communities that are also experiencing growth
Access to cultural attractions	Proximity to Menomonee Falls and their retail
Changing demographics (e.g. school referendum passed)	
Longevity of residents	

## CHALLENGES

### Challenges within Village Government

Identified by Village Staff	Identified by Village Board
Levy limits	State levy limits and mandates
Government mandates	State Government over-reach
State law changes	State eliminated home rule- impacted and limited our decisions by changing the rules
Shrinking labor force	Competing for talented staff with neighboring communities
Increase in demand for services	Balance growth with public service needs
Distrust of government	Current relationship with school district
Attracting businesses- restaurants and industry	Economy
Post office- new Briggs building has a Richfield address	Other taxing entities within the Village with differing goals
Reputation- perception that we may be anti-development	
Phone numbers have multiple exchanges	



### Challenges within the Community

Identified by Village Staff	Identified by Village Board
Communicating (getting the word out) regarding new state laws	Getting people to participate in government
Potential for recession	Economic Development- competition with using incentives
Unrealistic expectations- want an immediate response to problems	Managing quality of life issues with growth and businesses near residential
Declining civility- more people having trouble working through issues with neighbors, level of anger	Keeping up with road repairs
Increasing diversity and number of people- some have difficulty with change (e.g. age, race, income)	Business competition from neighboring communities
Drugs	Managing emerald ash borer
Changing family structures- effects on schools and village government	
Aging demographics	

## GOAL IDENTIFICATION & ALIGNMENT

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Goals are broad statements of what the organization hopes to achieve in the next few years. They focus on outcomes or results and are qualitative in nature. Staff identified goals at the October 8<sup>th</sup> session and then grouped the goals into themes. A survey was sent to Village board members soliciting their response on the question, “What do we need to accomplish over the next 2-3 years in our community?” Staff and board goals are located in Appendix A. Similar responses were then grouped into common themes and the following four goals were presented to board and staff at the December 2<sup>nd</sup> Village board meeting.

#### **Strategic Goal Alignment between Board and Staff:**

5. Planning- Complete the Comprehensive Planning process with public input that develops a unified community vision that addresses community growth (residential, commercial, and industrial), while balancing the desires of current residents and future generations.
6. Infrastructure- Develop a capital improvement plan for current and future infrastructure needs (e.g. roads, public works building, police department...).
7. Public Engagement- Build public trust through communication and transparency.
8. Inter-Agency Relationships- Collaborate with civic groups, businesses, other government entities, including the Germantown School District, to provide community-focused services.

## STRATEGIC QUESTIONS AND ACTIONS

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At the December 2<sup>nd</sup> Village Board meeting, participants reviewed and discussed

1. Recognizing current fiscal constraints, how do you anticipate paying for infrastructure improvements?
  - a. Encourage development that helps pay for improved infrastructure?
  - b. Slow development and cut services?
  - c. Borrow more money than has occurred in the past?
  - d. Encourage infill development at sites with existing infrastructure?
  - e. Increase taxes through a referendum?
  - f. Use surplus reserves?

Action:

- Continue development and implementation of Affordability Model for the development of the capital improvement plan that prioritizes infrastructure needs and identifies funding strategies.
- Use common sense approach to each project to identify priorities and fund what is needed in order to reduce expenditures and redirect funds to other priority needs.

2. Recognizing current staff time and resource constraints, how do you anticipate addressing public engagement and inter-agency relationships?
  - a. Allow flexibility to redirect current resources to accomplish (this may require changing organizational structures and processes)?

Action:

- Research successful public engagement strategies used by other municipalities including the effectiveness (outcome measurements) of these strategies.
- Implement public engagement survey and promote with homeowner associations, library, and tax receipts.
- Continue to implement changes to public hearing process and notifications.
- Engage in proactive communication and shared decision-making with Washington County.

Additional Action Steps Identified by President Dean Wolter on 1/20/20

- Board and staff need to find ways to broadcast information out to the community, following the example of Community Development's recent efforts.
- Staff's primary focus needs to be on communication because other goals will become easier to meet once we have better communications internally, with the board and with the community.

3. Recognizing the Village is currently undertaking a Comprehensive Planning process, how do you anticipate balancing competing visions (e.g. growth vs. no growth)?

Action:

- Through public engagement process, provide rationale for decisions for infrastructure improvements and new developments.

Additional Action Steps Identified by President Dean Wolter on 1/20/20.

- Village Board reviews status of strategic priorities quarterly.

- Committees provide additional information at Board meetings (e.g. agenda items, major discussions, differing opinions, decisions...).
- Village Board is more specific with goals (e.g. which specific streets need to be a higher priority for repairs).

## APPENDIX A: GOAL IDENTIFICATION

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### **Staff Goal Identification (grouped into themes): October 8, 2019**

#### Planning

- Create a plan to move forward with
- Community participation with comprehensive planning process
- Planning for next generations- we have been baby boomer centric
- Plan to update infrastructure and facilities
- More funding for services- more diversified funding sources
- Growing staff levels to meet current and future demands, and to sustain service levels
- Proactive planning for development- resistance to change has led to lack of planning, but development will occur anyway
- A more unified vision of who and what we are as a community (change vs. no change)

#### Collaboration

- Collaboration with other communities for shared resources- needs to be smart, responsible, and community focused. The process for collaboration is important. It needs to be community service focused, not money focused.
- Intergovernmental Agreements with school district needs to be more collaboratively-based (current agreement expires in two years)
- More diversity and involvement with government and civic groups
- More collaboration between government, business, and residents (e.g. Gehl, JW Speaker)
- A more unified vision of who and what we are as a community (change vs. no change)

#### Communication

- Better engagement and communication with public, build trust, and share challenges that we face
- A more unified vision of who and what we are as a community (change vs. no change)

### **Village Board Goal Identification Survey Responses: November 2019**

A survey was sent to Village Board members on November 5, 2019 asking members to reflect on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges that were identified on November 4<sup>th</sup> and then respond to the following question: What do we need to accomplish over the next 2-3 years in our community?

The survey was closed on November 26<sup>th</sup> and had five (5) responses, for a response rate of 56%. In order to assist with prioritizing the identified goals, the responses have been grouped into themes.

#### Planning

- A primary focus on neighborhoods
- Complete and implement 2050 Plan
- Develop a comprehensive plan to address the large expense of near future infrastructure costs
- Stop industrial expansion into the downtown neighborhoods
- Designate Downtown area for entertainment or provide direction on Germantown identity
- Protect neighborhoods from crime, nuisances (noise, traffic, industrial activities, smells, etc.)
- Celebrate neighborhoods by highlighting unique characteristics and promoting each area

#### Infrastructure

- Better Roads
- Capital spending needs to be within our ability to pay
- New Police Station
- New Public Works building
- Accelerate road resurfacing in neighborhoods
- Infrastructure plan for long range build up & maintenance, sewer & water, streets

#### Public Engagement

- Provide more transparency to the public
- Need to listen and work with residents on the development of this Village
- Notify neighborhoods about plans under discussion for their area and the larger community
- Need to develop a method of communicating what is happening that reaches a minority of residents
- Need to be open and transparent

#### Fiscal

- We do not spend more than we take in
- Cultivate or maintain a cautious fiscal outlook especially as things are going very well
- More money for road repair coming from general fund & not borrowing
- More competitive salaries for Village employees

#### Inter-Agency Relationships

- Cooperation with the School District for the betterment of all residents
- Stop any “us v/s them” nonsense with the school board and start working together for Germantown

## APPENDIX B: EVALUATIONS

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### October 8, 2019 ~ 9 Responses ~ 9 Participants

1. Conducting a SWOC Analysis assisted in the identification of internal strengths & weaknesses and external opportunities & challenges.

Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5
0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (22%)	7 (78%)

**Average: 4.8**

**Comments:**

- Required employee input and fleshing out problems and areas to be improved
- Very helpful to get everyone's input and ideas
- Paul is very professional and an excellent communicator, facilitator and presenter
- Good general collaborative process

2. The process of identifying and prioritizing goals increased our ability to identify issues and set priorities.

Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5
0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (22%)	7 (78%)

**Average: 4.8**

**Comments:**

- Very useful

3. Overall, how would you rate my facilitation of today's session?

Poor		Neutral		Excellent
1	2	3	4	5
0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (11%)	8 (89%)

**Average: 4.9**

**Comments:**

- Great job getting everyone involved
- Excellent job, repeat of number 1

### November 4, 2019 ~ 8 Responses ~ 8 Participants

1. Conducting a SWOC Analysis assisted in the identification of internal strengths & weaknesses and external opportunities & challenges.

Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5
1 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6 (75%)	1 (13%)

**Average: 3.8**

**Comments:**

- Help to brainstorm for ideas

2. Overall, how would you rate my facilitation of today's session?

Poor		Neutral		Excellent
1	2	3	4	5
0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (50%)	4 (50%)

**Average: 4.5**

**Comments:**

- Paul always does a great job facilitating

3. Additional Remarks:

- Good start to the process. I look forward to the next step