

City of Eldridge
Strategic Plan
December 2010

Introduction

The following plan is an update to the 2004 Eldridge Strategic Plan. The City held a public meeting on July 13, 2010 to receive input on community assets and priorities for a five-year period the result of that input are in the Appendix of this Plan.

Attendees of the public meeting also commented on the Mission, Vision and Value Statements of the City which were first identified in the 2004 process. Revisions were suggested and the resulting wording of those statements follows in this Plan.

The City then held focus group meetings with three groups regarding priorities related to recreation, City administration and infrastructure, and economic development and marketing. At the focus group meeting city stakeholder and officials provided input on proposed actions and strategies to accomplish those actions. The strategy matrices' make up the balance of this document. Many of the suggested activities will require volunteer committee efforts. It is intended that these volunteer committees will work with appropriate standing City appointed Boards and Commissions, based on the activity.

A final public review session for the Plan was held on November 9, 2010.

Insert Adopting Resolution Here

Eldridge Mission

The mission of Eldridge, our peaceful home town with a vision, near a metropolitan area, is to meet the diverse needs of the community by providing planned growth and excellent services in a climate of friendly cooperation.

City of Eldridge Belief/Value Statements

1. We believe that a safe, wholesome environment is essential
2. We believe in the importance of community support for educational, recreational, spiritual, cultural, and business activities
3. We believe it is crucial to maintain a sound infrastructure
4. We believe community involvement is essential for positive change and community pride
5. We believe in the importance of a friendly, respectful, and ethical community
6. We believe in demonstrating fiscal responsibility for delivering high value to citizens at reasonable costs

Vision for Eldridge – 2015

Eldridge, Iowa is a diverse community—racially, ethnically, and religiously—where people live in mutual respect. Population growth is planned and appropriate for a small to medium-sized community. From an economic standpoint, the town has many clean, small to medium size industries that give this town a commercial/residential ratio of 60:40. This positive environment, where community needs are paramount to special interests, has created an atmosphere for aggressive business recruitment, moderate cost single-family homes, a thriving business district, and the need to consider an expanded four-lane south entrance to the city. Among the newer businesses are expanded daycare opportunities, a “family café” featuring moderately priced meals, and a destination restaurant, as well as an improved and fully occupied “downtown.”

Well-maintained parks exist in every neighborhood providing beautiful green space and paved parking to enhance living. In conjunction with a full-time parks and recreation department and other partner organizations, extensive use of an indoor and/or outdoor pool/aquatic center is organized. A boys/girls club program, a community band, and many activities for teens, families, and retired citizens are available. Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy the bike path that connects Eldridge to Long Grove, Park View, Davenport, and Bettendorf; others may enjoy the local movie theatre and activities for the arts.

In Eldridge, beautification efforts go beyond the parks. A beautification group is actively involved in providing for the design and maintenance of an enticing entrance to the city on LeClaire Road and all major entry roads into the town along with eye-catching welcome signs. Overhead utility lines are buried and all streets are paved. An active “welcome wagon” organization exists to continue the outreach.

Eldridge is a self-contained community with modernized infrastructures and many services, including a cemetery, assisted living center with a nursing home, a continuing care facility, and expanded low-cost housing. The North Scott schools along with Scott Community College, the community center, and the library have established additional opportunities for all ages to expand learning, and local schools accommodate the current population as it expands in the city. Public safety has also become an area of expanded service for the citizens of Eldridge. There is a second and quite reliable source of power to the town. A beautiful new city hall and police station includes facilities that house the chamber and mayor who help to guide the city’s maintenance as well as its growth.

A state-of-the-art website and marketing initiative with colorful brochures have insured that Eldridge is widely known as a progressive, welcoming hometown with vision.

Eldridge Strategic Plan Recreation Component

<i>Objective 1: Develop a pool in the city</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Develop a pool committee to research and report on pool options	City Council/Mayor	Citizens	First Year
2. Survey public interest in a pool and willingness to subsidize the project	City	Citizens	First Year
3. Gather prior pool plans and research additional information needs	Pool Committee	City	First Year
4. Evaluate business structure for pool; stand alone/with community center/ with school	Pool Committee	Fitness Center, Community Center, School Representatives	2 Years
5. Visit other pool/fitness and community center developments in like-sized communities, gathering information and photographs	Pool Committee/ Fitness Center Committee	City Staff	First Year
6. Investigate funding options including grants for pool development alternatives	Pool Committee	City Staff	2 Years
7. Conduct a market survey of potential users: teams/ elderly/rehabilitation services/etc.	Pool Committee	City Staff/School/Grand Haven/Fitness Center Representatives	2 Years
8. If feasible, identify appropriate sites for the pool and/or combined complex	Pool Committee	City Staff	2 Years
<i>Objective 2: Review Community and Fitness Center needs</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Continue use of operations budget and review ongoing equipment replacement needs	City	Community Center Representatives	Ongoing

2. Replace equipment annually to keep up with maintenance needs	City		Ongoing
3. Through the comprehensive plan, survey the public on their use of the fitness and community centers	City		
4. Schedule all public meetings in both facilities to encourage interest in their use	All City Boards and Committees		Ongoing
5. Offer group enrollment rates to corporations such as John Deere, Genesis, R.R. Donnelly, Olson Uniparts, etc.	Fitness and Community Center Boards		
6. Expand weight room and add more cardiovascular equipment if funding can be gathered	City		3-5 Years
7. Offer joint concurrent activities at the Community and Fitness Centers to address family needs such as roller skating during racquetball and exercise classes	Fitness and Community Center Boards		
8. Develop a fitness center committee to work with the pool committee and the Community Center Board to conduct research on a joint facility	Fitness Center and Pool Committees and Community Center Board	City	First Year
a. Visit like-sized communities with joint fitness/pool/community center facilities and determine how they were developed			First Year
b. Review prior fitness center plan and update information as needed			First Year
c. If through the survey there is significant community interest, consider consolidation options such as combining the Boards, hiring one director, developing a mission and list of activities that could be provided by a joint facility			First Year

<i>Objective 3: Determine what to do with property on Buttermilk Road</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Determine community opinion on parks and recreation in a community survey as part of the comprehensive plan	City		First Year
2. Appoint a committee to develop alternative uses and/or sale options for Buttermilk Road property	City Council/Mayor/ Buttermilk Committee		
3. Determine market value of land	City	College Student Project	First Year
4. Research land trade options	Buttermilk Committee		First Year
5. Research type of potential development: dog park, cemetery, Frisbee golf, soccer, ball diamond, skating, off-road biking	Buttermilk Committee		First Year
<i>Objective 4: Improve “other” city parks and general city park development needs</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Provide city definition of neighborhood park and function in comprehensive plan	Park Board/City		First Year
2. Define ratio of parks to population	Park Board/City		First Year
3. Identify existing park features in comprehensive plan	Park Board/City		First Year
4. Identify future park needs based on population and neighborhoods and identify potential land availability with implementation through the plan and zone process	Park Board/City	Plan and Zone Commission	2 Years
5. Determine funding alternatives for parks development – local/state/federal	Park Board/City		2 Years

6. Officially form Friends of the Park Committee for volunteer projects	City Council/Mayor		First Year
7. Investigate costs for a waterplay area a. Assemble photographs of examples of other waterplay areas	Friends of the Park	City	First Year
8. Maintain playground equipment	Park Board/City	Friends of the Park	Ongoing
<i>Objective 5: Further develop Sheridan Meadows Park</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Gather prior park plans and update as needed a. Review need for and add more shelters b. Install driveway gates c. Install lights for the ball diamonds d. Construct a modern concession stand if funding is available e. Dredge and update the pond area if funding is available	Park Board Park Board Park Board Park Board Park Board	City City City City City	First Year 1-5 Years 2 Years 1-5 Years 1-5 Years 5 Years
2. Research opportunities to expand park through purchase of 80 acres to the east a. Determine cost of property b. Identify potential funding options including proceeds from sale of Buttermilk (if sold) c. Identify potential development projects for property and their general costs such as 8-12 plex ball diamonds with play ground and lights; soccer; football; minigolf; driving range; disc golf; new parking	Park Board Realtor City Park Board and City	City City Park Board	5 Years First Year 2-5 Years 2-5 Years

<i>Objective 6: Research need for indoor batting and pitching facility</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Identify interest facility in community survey as part of comprehensive plan	City	Park Board	First Year
2. If interest is determined, research costs, funding, and location	Park Board	City	
<i>Objective 7: Continue to develop bike system</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Continue to submit grants to fund new trail segments	City	Park Board	Ongoing
2. Work with Trees Forever and other groups to plant trees and install benches and trash receptacles along the paths	City	Park Board / Trees Forever/ Volunteer Groups	Ongoing
3. Develop multi-purpose trail and on-street bike path plan initially through the comprehensive plan including connections to parks and trails around the perimeter of the city	City	Park Board	First Year
4. Begin to implement the trail connection along the railroad south to the Duck Creek Trail through easements and/or ROW purchase	City		5 + Years
<i>Objective 8: Enhance park and recreation programming</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Define and/or redefine park and recreation function in the city through a mission statement in the recreation section of the comprehensive plan	City/Park Board		2-3 Years
a. Identify current usage rates of programs and facilities and project future needs through comprehensive plan process	City/Park Board	Schools/Churches	
2. Develop/continue development of a park brochure on park programs with potential advertising from schools/churches			

3. Print part of park brochure in the newspaper or have a park section in the news	City/Park Board	North Scott Press	2-3 Years
4. Place updated parks brochure online	City/Park Board		2-3 Years

**Eldridge Strategic Plan
City Administration Component**

<i>Objective 1: Thoroughly investigate the feasibility of constructing a joint police station/city hall</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Appoint a committee to be in charge of gathering information on project needs and issues	City	Appointed Committee	First Year
a. Review need through interviews with city staff	Committee		1.5 Years
b. Visit other cities that have recently built joint police stations and city halls	Committee		1.5 Years
c. Research types of funding used for such facilities including grants/TIF/city funds and recommend a funding strategy	Committee		2-4 Years
d. Explore potential sites for a joint facility that would be prominent, user friendly, and centrally located, including feasibility of old Happy Joe's	Committee		2-4 Years
e. Use an architecture firm to prepare an initial design of a joint facility based on need, potential for growth, and adequate parking, and provide cost estimates	Committee		3-5 Years
<i>Objective 2: Review needs, costs, and interest in other miscellaneous city development objectives</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Through the community survey, determine the need for additional early childhood care	City		First Year
2. Through the community survey, determine the need for a "skilled care" facility for the elderly	City		First Year

3. Research costs for a skilled care facility through an appointed committee	City	Appointed Committee	First Year
a. Gather information from current developer of Grand Haven	Committee		First Year
b. Research interest in facility from surrounding area outside of the city	Appointed Committee		First Year
c. Research potential sites with Grand Haven and similar facilities	Appointed Committee		First Year
4. Through the community survey as part of comp plan to determine the need for a public cemetery	City		First Year
a. Designate land in comp plan for a cemetery and preferably currently owned by the city	City		First Year
b. Research pros and cons through contact with communities with cemeteries	City		First Year
c. Research cemetery design requirements	City		First Year
5. Determine viability and requirements for WiFi service	City		First Year
a. Contact other cities with WiFi to learn about requirements, costs, etc.	City		1.5 Years
b. Investigate interest of private sector in providing WiFi	City		1.5 Years
<i>Objective 3: Continue to maintain and improve city infrastructure</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Maintain sewage system through continued monitoring of DNR regulations	City	City Engineer	Ongoing
2. Consider establishing a sidewalk maintenance program to cost share new/or improved sidewalks with property owners	City		3-5 Years

a. Review sidewalk needs throughout the city, identify gaps and maintenance needs, and construct/reconstruct sidewalks during road improvements	City		
3. Maintain city stormwater system including sewers, swails, ditches, and detention areas	City		1-3 Years
4. Develop a fund for pavement upgrade and replacement along roads	City		1-5 Years
a. Research grant and funding opportunities to bury power lines along roadways	City	Alliant/MidAmerican	1-2 Years
b. Consider an “adopt the city project” program for volunteers to beautify and/or do “bite size” projects along city street system	City	Chamber/Business Groups/Rotary, Etc.	
5. Review connections of road, rail, and trails by holding an annual meeting with the City of Davenport	City	City of Davenport	Ongoing
<i>Objective 4: Expand city outreach to citizens</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Conduct community survey as part of comprehensive plan and provide electronic version and integrate responses into the community’s action plan	City		First Year
2. Consider development of a neighborhood watch program and measure interest through the community survey	City		First Year
3. Consider development of a Youth Volunteer Corps to work on city projects and potentially use for service learning	City/Schools	Youth, Parents	2-3 Years
a. Review examples from other communities that include youth volunteers, such as Davenport’s Weed and Seed program	City/Schools	Youth, Parents	2-3 Years

b. Seek the opinion of youth leaders on the structure of a program by working with the schools or the newspaper	City/Schools/Newspaper	Youth, Parents	2-3 Years
4. Continue to improve and expand the use of the city's website	City		1-2 Years
a. Appoint one city staff person to oversee updates and improvements	City		1-2 Years
b. Review ways to optimize site so it rises to the top in a search engine	City		1-2 Years
c. Research potential to use a volunteer(s) to assist with website updates if security can be maintained	City		1-2 Years
<i>Objective 5: Continue to develop and strengthen interagency and intergovernmental relationships</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Create a joint Councils and Mayors Group of North Scott Communities, which would meet periodically, to work on common issues and share information	Mayor/Council	North Scott Committee	1-2 Years
2. Work with North Scott Schools to keep all school buildings open, and determine location for new grade school	City	School System/North Scott Community Council	1-5 Years
3. Encourage Scott County to locate branch offices for treasurer and recorder in Eldridge	City	Scott County	1-5 Years
<i>Objective 6: Continue to maintain and update city ordinances as needed</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Consider adoption of a diversity ordinance for the city	City	City Attorney	1-3 Years

2. Review the city ordinance related to sidewalks and enforce installation requirements	City	City Attorney, Plan and Zone Commission	Ongoing
3. Review and enforce ordinances related to noise, including barking dogs	City	City Attorney	Ongoing
4. Review and enforce ordinances related to nuisance properties and property maintenance	City	City Attorney	Ongoing
5. Review and enforce ordinances related to maintenance stormwater ponds, swails, and detention areas etc., and send letters to violators and warn need to reimburse city for clean-up costs	City	City Attorney	1-2 Years

**Eldridge Strategic Plan
Economic Development and Marketing Component**

<i>Objective 1: Attract additional restaurants to the city</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Through community survey, research type of restaurants residents would like including breakfast, destination, café with homemade items, etc.	City		First Year
2. Depending on restaurant interests of residents, identify potential sites and begin to promote them for restaurant development	Eldridge Chamber		2-5 Years
<i>Objective 2: Continue to take steps to attract business and industrial development in the city</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Continue the use of the Business Connection survey and meetings to determine business needs and barriers to development	City	Eldridge Chamber/Businesses	Ongoing
a. Through Business Connection and community survey in comprehensive plan, determine types of existing businesses in the city and those needed in the city and work to attract them if feasible	City	Eldridge Chamber	1-5 Years
b. Through Census and other data, determine available workforce and document in comprehensive plan	City		First Year
2. Review zoning and building regulations and adjust if necessary to support businesses while maintaining safety	City/Plan and Zone Commission	Eldridge Chamber/Businesses	1-2 Years
3. Continue to partner with the Eldridge Chamber and Quad City First to assist existing and to attract new businesses	City	Eldridge Chamber/Quad City First	Ongoing
4. Use marketing on website and other existing venues, such as newspapers, to highlight community strengths like schools, safety, affordability, vicinity, etc.	City	Eldridge Chamber	1-2 Years

<i>Objective 3: Improve city signage</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Contact Iowa DOT to determine signage options and locations along DOT right-of-way and funding availability	City	Signage/Marketing Committee DOT	First Year
2. Improve exit and entrance signage to the city at all interchanges with U.S. 61	City/DOT		First Year
3. Consider monument-type signage for welcome signs and research costs and potential locations	City	Signage and Marketing Committee	First Year
<i>Objective 4: Develop and implement a plan for affordable housing for all ages and socio-economic groups</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Attract families to Eldridge by providing affordable, multi-family housing opportunities for beginning families	City & Realtors		Ongoing
a. Meet with potential developers to discuss concerns/barriers to building in Eldridge	City & Realtors		1-2 Years
b. Research opportunities to assist families including the potential for a rebate of city taxes or discuss other alternatives	City		3-4 Years
2. Continue to encourage refurbishment of all types of housing including a landlord program	City & Landlords	Scott County Housing Council	1-5 Years
<i>Objective 5: Research the potential for and promote a market for locally grown foods</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Meet with the local growers and the Northpark Farmer's Market to discuss potential for partnering in a local foods market and address issues	City/Chamber	Grocery Store	1-2 Years

<i>Objective 6: Expand number of events in the city</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Form an events committee	City	Events Committee	First Year
2. Research historic events and attendance	Events Committee	City	2-3 Years
3. Consider development of a new destination event such as "Octoberfest" and winter events	Events Committee	City	3-5 Years
4. Work to secure business support of new events	Events Committee	City/Eldridge Chamber	3-5 Years
<i>Objective 7: Expand available types of recreation and amusement activities in the city</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Through community survey, identify types of additional amusement activities of interest to citizens, such as a drive-in, bowling, mini golf, and theaters, and discuss with developer the feasibility of those the majority would like	City	Eldridge Chamber/Developer	1-2 Years
<i>Objective 8: Build on the city's aesthetics appeal</i>			
Key Strategies and Activities	Lead Role	Key Partners	Time Line
1. Re-activate Trees Forever Committee and contact prior committee members and add new members	City	Trees Forever Committee	First 2 years
2. Encourage residents to update exteriors of building and yards, possibly through contests, etc.	City/Park Board	North Scott Press	2-3 Years

Appendix

Input

Public Meeting Session Eldridge Strategic Plan

July 13, 2010

Eldridge Community Center City Administration Related Comments (Number of Votes in Parentheses)

Opportunities

- (18) Develop an indoor pool (maybe expand to outdoor) with a community center and potentially through collaboration with the North Scott Schools and or Grand Haven
- (10) Continue improvements at Sheridan Meadows Park possibly as a destination for non residents with potential facilities for large tournaments, silt detention, a bike path, ice skating and or fishing
- (7) Build a water play feature in one of the parks
- (5) Create a top-notch pool & fitness center as a destination (ex: Burlington)
- (4) Develop open space/recreation neighborhood parks as growth occurs including in Rustic Ridge, Fox Ridge, Townsend Farms
- (3) Develop a green space at Hawkeye Garage location/1st & LeClaire
- (2) Finish bike path
- (1) Develop Weiss Park as a gathering spot possibly including White House outdoor performances
- (1) Develop 60 acres on Buttermilk Road for recreation
 - Install new equipment in community gym
 - Create a water feature at the detention area by the schools or fish pond
 - Plant trees along bike path
 - Sell Buttermilk Park land/open space and expand Sheridan Meadows – soccer/band shell potentially with school
 - Program movies on the lawn in the parks or at schools indoor/outdoor
 - Program more winter community activities

City Administration Related Comments

Opportunities

- (12) Construct a new city hall/police station
 - (7) Encourage energy efficient development and investigate use of renewable energy with the Utility Board
 - (7) Encourage development of a skilled care facility
 - (5) Develop a cemetery in the City
 - (4) Provide sidewalks throughout the City
 - (4) Update website with information related to garbage, landscape waste, and other services
 - (4) Address storm water management issues
 - (4) Work with Davenport on airport, trail connections, streets (South First/Price/Cody Road) and west end of town
 - (2) Provide access to public transportation in QC
 - (2) Work with the school board to address need for additional schools to serve additional children
 - (2) Enforce community ordinances at apartments for lawn mowing, working with landlords, and related to dumpsters
 - (1) Establish community events/or project committees for each specific project and or event
 - (1) Continue to maintain entire infrastructure
 - (1) Involve youth in more City activities
 - (1) Expand early childhood center
 - (1) Develop City-wide wi-fi
 - (1) Conduct new community survey potentially on the website and with youth volunteer assistance
- Upgrade storm sirens and connect to the county
- Work with other cities in the North Scott School District
- Create a neighborhood watch program
- Use more green energy practices maybe in conjunction with the school
- Develop a speaker system for the central business district – Dewitt, Geneseo

Marketing and Economic Development Related Comments

Opportunities

- (8) Attract a good family restaurant with good service
- (5) Develop a “destination” quality restaurant (such as the former White House Restaurant)
- (4) Promote the industrial park through marketing
- (1) Conduct more community marketing
 - Attract a breakfast restaurant/coffee shop
 - Attract industry for manufacturing working class jobs and white collar jobs
 - Encourage more development of affordable housing for beginning families – maybe through developer incentives
 - Encourage development of a Whole Foods
 - Create an amusement area such as mini golf etc.
 - Create a destination event (Geneseo Victorian Days)
 - Market the US 61 corridor with City of Davenport
 - Encourage people to come into the City – improve signage – bigger/bolder
 - Encourage development at Blackhawk Trail & 61 signage – maybe a large development like IKEA
 - Attract a commercial theatre

City Assets

Location

Diverse tax base

School system all three grade systems (Elementary, Junior High and High Schools)

Baseline of established facilities for all residents

Great library system

Rural setting

City is committed to planning

Variety of services – doctor, dentist, stores

City-wide events ex. garage sales

Thoughtful citizens, planting well-maintained yards, neat and clean

Great, responsive Public Works Department

Combination of city and rural setting

Pride and support in the community such as athletics and arts

Low property tax rates

Self-contained community

Community theatre

Access to transportation corridors US 61 and I-80

Great place to raise kids and safe environment

Affordable housing

Small town atmosphere

Great parks

Friendly neighborhoods

Caring community

School facilities and outdoor facilities

Community boards

Response rate of police/fire

Healthy community

Green spaces

Thriving business community

Low debt

Weekly newspapers

Assisted living facility – Grand Haven

People of the city

Good chamber of commerce

Good civic groups: UFW, American Legion, Rotary, Food Pantry etc.

Churches

Police department and emergency volunteers

Planned power system – fewer power failures and low power costs

Community center and fitness center and its utilization

Room for various types of expansion

Proximity for walking/biking

Safe community

Walkability to schools