



## **CITY COMMISSION VISION 2022-2027**

SUBMITTED TO THE  
MUSKEGON CITY COMMISSION

**JUNE 2022**

## OVERVIEW

In April 2022, the City Commission convened with division and department heads to discuss a five-year vision for the City. This document summarizes the process used and goals selected for focus in the coming 5 years.

Prior to the April meeting, commissioners completed an analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges, and staff provided input on their top challenges and goals for their individual departments as well as top goals for the city at large.

On Friday, April 15, 2022, the leadership team of the City of Muskegon, consisting of the Mayor, City Commissioners, City Manager, and Department Heads, met to create a shared vision of the future with major goals, key objectives, and one-year tasks. The following summary reflects the discussion's main points that take the City forward.

## VISION TOUR

Commissioners and staff worked together to develop a vision for the future of Muskegon. Three small groups captured ideas and then met as a whole to refine a shared vision. In 2027, a visitor touring the City of Muskegon will see the following:

- Diversity – neighborhoods, businesses, and city staff are reflective of the larger community
- Economic opportunities – a wide variety of jobs are available for current and future residents; developers see the community as a good and safe place to invest
  - Youth-focused – the community is dedicated to helping youth reach their potential
  - Seasonal balance – community activity and commerce is balanced across all seasons
  - Creating micro commercial areas to fit into each neighborhood
- Communication – neighbors, workers, businesses owners, and visitors have easy access to information
- Blight is cleaned up – all neighborhoods are improving and attractive
- Events and activities throughout the city, providing diverse options and through all seasons
- A train from Chicago to Muskegon – progress toward passenger transit service between Muskegon and Chicago
- Improved public access to Muskegon Lake – public access exists throughout the shoreline with a variety of ways to interact with the lake
- Additional retail incubators – small retail spaces (much like those at the Western Market) are available near the NOAA station at Pere Marquette Park

- Community connection – additional sources of communication between the residents and the City including better use of technology and development of a city newsletter
- Increased election engagement – more residents are voting, running for office, working on campaigns, working at the polls, or otherwise engaged in election processes; additional use of election trailer
- Improved connectivity between downtown and the waterfront and between downtown, other commercial corridors, and the beaches – idea for water taxis, implementation of the Imagine Muskegon Lake Plan
- Progress on the current economic development projects
  - Windward Pointe
  - Harbor 31 Business Park
  - The Docks
  - Hartshorn Marina Village
  - Adelaide Pointe
  - The Leonard Phases II & III
  - Lakeview Lofts Phase II
  - 1144 Third Street
  - Ameribank Building (880 First St)
  - Watermark Building
  - Huntington Bank Building
  - former McDonald's (122 W. Muskegon)
  - Catholic Charities Building (1095 Third Street)
  - 790 Terrace
  - 902 Pine Street
  - Morris St lot redevelopment
  - Port City Industrial Park Expansion
  - Infill Housing with continued focus on attainability for all residents
- More integrated community – reduce segregation based on economic status and ethnicity
- Education and engagement in neighborhoods – all neighborhood associations are active and work together with city staff
- Improved perception of and partnership with Muskegon Public Schools as an institution
- Develop and support other commercial corridors outside of the downtown

- Western Avenue is full and diverse – there are no remaining vacant lots, and the residents and businesses better reflect the diverse community
- Infill housing – greatly reduce the number of buildable vacant lots in neighborhoods
- Improved housing at all levels – more housing options, better living conditions
- Decrease the burden on residents to support infrastructure – secure more federal resources

## MAJOR GOAL AREAS

It is the City Commission’s desire to ensure that all goals, projects, programs, and practices are implemented in ways that improve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.

### **2027 GOAL 1: DESTINATION COMMUNITY & QUALITY OF LIFE**

*Create an environment that puts an emphasis on improving amenities and investing in the traits that positively affect residents’ quality of life and attract visitors.*

#### Key Focus Areas

- Improved access to the waterfront
- Improved connections between downtown and the beaches
- Passenger transit service to Chicago
- Blight cleanup
- Enhanced Parks and Recreation Department and Services
- Events and activities
- Public transportation options (tram, scooters, trolley, biking network)
- Public restrooms that remain open

#### Goal 1 Action Items

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|------------------------|---|
| Action Item 2022 – 1.1 | Set meetings for conversation with Amtrak and Greyhound                       |
| Action Item 2022 – 1.2 | Investigate water taxi and other downtown to Lake Michigan circulator vendors |
| Action Item 2022 – 1.3 | Establish a robust Park and Recreation improvement plan                       |
| Action Item 2022 – 1.4 | Proceed with events and activities  |
| Action Item 2022 – 1.5 | Increase grant assistance to neighborhoods to reduce blight                   |
| Action Item 2022 – 1.6 | Allocation of funds for tram and restrooms                                    |

## **2027 GOAL 2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING, AND BUSINESS**

*Create an environment that effectively attracts new residents and retains existing residents by filling existing employment gaps, attracting new and diverse businesses to the city, and expanding access to a variety of high-quality housing options in Muskegon.*

### Key Focus Areas

Diverse housing types  
Diversity reflected in businesses and business owners  
Improved reputation for inspections department  
Micro-commercial areas in neighborhoods  
Retain youth within the city  
Neighborhood commercial center development  
Progress toward completion of ongoing economic development projects

### Goal 2 Action Items

Action Item 2022 – 2.1	Include neighborhood commercial center development in master plan update
Action Item 2022 – 2.2	Pursue funding for food hall at farmer’s market
Action Item 2022 – 2.3	Increase variety of housing types
Action Item 2022 – 2.4	Develop subsidies to improve housing affordability
Action Item 2022 – 2.5	Begin engagement and discussion about chalets at Pere Marquette Park near NOAA and per the Imagine Muskegon Lake plan
Action Item 2022 – 2.6	Complete Adelaide Pointe public improvements
Action Item 2022 – 2.7	Investigate options for assisting minority owned businesses

## **2027 GOAL 3: COMMUNITY CONNECTION**

*Create an environment of mutual respect and trust between local government and the community we serve. Increase communication with residents, workers, business owners, and visitors to inform, educate, and create opportunities for input.*

### Key Focus Areas

Enhanced internal and community communication  
Focus on neighborhood associations  
Foster strong ties among government and community agencies  
Help increase public participation  
More integrated community  
Increased range of options for communications  
Staff reflective of the diverse community  
Increased election turnout

### Goal 3 Action Items

Action Item 2022 – 3.1	Monthly communication with neighborhood associations
Action Item 2022 – 3.2	Increase education and outreach to voters
Action Item 2022 – 3.3	Update and implement internal communication policies
Action Item 2022 – 3.4	Develop a community newsletter
Action Item 2022 – 3.5	Create media content to assist with community engagement
Action Item 2022 – 3.6	Modernize the recruitment strategy

## **2027 GOAL 4: FINANCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

*Create an environment that naturally affects the city's revenues in a positive manner, with a focus on reclaiming city investments in housing, nurturing startup projects proposed throughout the city, and exploring staff recommendations related to new revenues.*

### Key Focus Areas

Decrease infrastructure burden on residents  
Sustainability in financial practices and infrastructure  
Increase revenue

### Goal 4 Action Items

Action Item 2022 – 4.1	Identify specific major capital projects across all departments
Action Item 2022 – 4.2	Take advantage of external revenue sources
Action Item 2022 – 4.3	Complete study of sewer and water rates
Action Item 2022 – 4.4	Improve the budget process to maintain focus throughout the year
Action Item 2022 – 4.5	Investigate options to improve environmental sustainability for projects within the city

## IMPLEMENTATION

Once adopted, the leadership team will discuss the vision and goals at regular intervals to confirm that the action plan is guiding decision making. A more formal review of the plan will take place with commissioners near the end of each calendar year, and appropriate revisions will be made. In annual increments, commissioners and leadership staff will review progress made on the action items in the previous year and develop new action items for the coming year. Decisions by commissioners and staff should be guided by this strategic action plan.