



Executive Summary

Northfield Township 2023 Strategic Plan



In June 2022, Northfield Township engaged the Northern Illinois University Center for Governmental Studies (NIU-CGS) to facilitate its strategic planning process and help create its strategic plan. This process included broad stakeholder feedback ranging from community focus groups and interviews to a statistically significant, community-wide survey, the results of which were shared at the township's strategic planning leadership workshop and were designed to focus leadership and energize the organization.

From August through November 2022, the NIU-CGS team collected stakeholder input and captured relevant data to share with the board at a strategic planning workshop held on December 6, 2022. These findings were used during the workshop to assist township leaders in making informed decisions related to the township's future services, policies, and programs. Ultimately, workshop participants created strategic goals centered on where the township wants to go as an organization and as part of a community, in both the short- and long-term.



Illinois townships are charged with three basic functions: 1) general assistance for the indigent; 2) the assessment of real property for the basis of local taxation; and 3) maintenance of all roads and bridges outside federal, state, and other local jurisdiction.



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Strategic Goals and Priority Areas

At the leadership workshop, thematic stakeholder input from the focus groups and survey was shared to help inform a series of discussions on leadership's visions for the future and the township's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (S.W.O.C.). Participants were ultimately asked to use the workshop discussions to inform and identify short- and long-term goals.

Strategic Priority Areas

Four high-level strategic priorities for Northfield Township were identified as part of the collective process. These priority areas highlight the activities and initiatives that the township will focus on in both the short- and long-term. Full definitions, rationale, and goal alignment can be found in the full report.

A graphic of a clipboard with a dark blue border. At the top, a white tab with a blue border contains the word "PRIORITIES" in blue capital letters. Below the tab, there are four items, each consisting of a blue checkmark inside a dark blue square box, followed by the item name in a light blue rounded rectangle. The items are: "Connector & Convenor", "Innovative Service Delivery", "Sustainability & Organizational Advancement", and "Communication & Outreach".



Strategic Goals

The Northfield Township Board was asked to delineate, via an online ranking exercise, which goals should be given the highest priority. In total, the group developed **seven short-term routine goals, 11 short-term complex goals, three long-term routine goals, and six long-term complex goals.** The top three goals from each category are offered as a process “snapshot” representing the most important strategic goals for the board and staff to address in the months and years ahead.

Top Three Short-term Routine Goals

Develop multi-channel communication strategies to increase understanding of what the township does and does not do

Routine

Not simple, but could be accomplished with current resources

Evaluate programs/services offered to ensure long-term financial sustainability

Short-Term

1-3 years timeframe

Update all policy and procedure manuals at the township

Top Three Short-term Complex Goals

Expand the township’s physical space by either securing a new building or purchasing and redesigning the current space


Work with community partners/businesses to explore additional job training programs improving workforce development and opportunities for clients

Evaluate transportation options to improve client experience including improving the Dial a Ride program





Top Two Long-term Routine Goals

 Consistently maintain cash reserves in line with fiscal norms

 Ensure the entire township office has a well-trained staff that can provide outstanding service to residents


Complex

Complicated, multi-layered, or require outside expertise


Long-Term

4-8+ years timeframe

Top Three Long-term Complex Goals

 Through training programs and assistance provided by the township, help to reduce poverty in all areas of the township

 Create/redesign a state-of-the-art community/township building

 Work toward a more inclusive, welcoming environment within the township



Process facilitated by:
Mel Henriksen, Assistant Director, NIU-CGS
Alli Hoebing, Research Specialist, NIU-CGS



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

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Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development