

City Council Goal Setting Session Agenda

**Wednesday, November 20, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.
Police Department Training Room**

Goal Setting Summary Memo

- 1. Advertising on community event sign**
- 2. Business Alliance and Community Events Coordinator**
- 3. Finance director position**
- 4. Strategic plan implementation**
- 5. Council review of the survey**

CITY OF DARIEN

MEMO

TO: Mayor Marchese, City Council, City Clerk, and City Treasurer

FROM: Bryon D. Vana, City Administrator

DATE: November 13, 2024

SUBJECT: Goal Setting Agenda Topic Summary– Wednesday, November 20
6:30 p.m.

Listed below are the agenda topics and overview for the goal setting session scheduled for Wednesday, November 20

1. Business Advertising on Community Marque Sign

The marque sign at the sw corner of Cass and Plainfield is now advertising community events, not for profit group events, and the businesses at the sign location. During the project approval by the council, there was discussion about allowing local businesses to buy advertising on the sign. Prior to any additional business advertising, the council would need to approve a policy and fee amount. Attached in the packet is a draft policy and request form. Please note it would be virtually impossible to limit certain Darien businesses from advertising.

2. Business Alliance and Community Events Coordinator

This proposal is to incorporate a new staff position responsible for special events and business outreach. This is similar to the concept discussed at the City Council's goal setting in 2022.

3. Finance Director Position

The council will discuss a recommended staff reorganization relating to the city's financial management responsibilities. In summary, the change includes promoting Julie Saenz from the position of accounting manager to a newly created position of finance director. It also includes creating a part time accountant position (estimated at 1000 hours per year) under supervision of the Finance Director.

4. Strategic Plan Implementation

This discussion will be a review of moving forward with the implementation of the city's recent strategic plan.

5. Elected official survey

The council will review the results of the recent city council survey. Each council member can provide an overview of their responses/ideas and respond to questions regarding their responses.



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DIGITAL MARQUEE SIGN REQUEST FORM

Name of Organization or Business: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Message display date(s): _____

Sign Location: Southeast corner of Cass Ave and Plainfield Rd

Subject of requested message:

- By checking this box and signing below, I acknowledge that I have read and agree to the City's Marquee Sign policy.
- I further acknowledge that I understand the City has the sole authority to remove my message from the Marquee Sign at any time.
- I have enclosed the required documentation demonstrating my organization's status as a public entity, non-profit status or a business license registered to Darien.
- By checking this box, I am requesting to receive design assistance at an additional cost.

Print Name

Position/Title

Signature

Date

DIGITAL MARQUEE SIGN POLICY

Section 1 – Purpose

This policy establishes the City of Darien’s guidelines for the use of the Marquee Sign. This policy applies to all employees and officers for the City, and applicants requesting to post a message to the Marquee Sign.

Section 2 – Objective of the Marquee Sign

The goal of the Marquee Sign is to convey information about Darien programs, events, services, and initiatives, provide emergency alerts and other important City information, and to allow local businesses to advertise.

Section 3 – Guiding Principles

All Marquee Signs are subject to the following rules and guidelines:

1. All Marquee Signs will be maintained and monitored by authorized users during normal business hours. During an emergency event, designated personnel may post outside of normal business hours to keep the public informed.
2. The Marquee Sign will not be used to:
 - a. Directly or indirectly endorse any person or organization that is not directly associated with the City or other Darien public agency.
 - b. Endorse or promote a political campaign, candidate, or ballot measure.
3. Messages posted to the Marquee Sign must comply with applicable federal, state, county, and City laws, ordinances, regulations, and policies. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright or plagiarism, records retention, the Freedom of Information Act, privacy and information security policies and protocols established by the City or imposed by existing laws.
4. Reservation dates will be issued on a first-come, first-served basis. The City retains the right to deny any request inconsistent with this policy. In the event that the advertisement period is disrupted due to technical difficulties, the City will ensure a full four-week period of advertisement when the sign is operational. No refunds will be given.
5. Content that is graphic, obscene, explicit, abusive, threatening, harmful, inflammatory, intended to defame anyone or any organization, compromise the safety or security of the public or public facilities, or suggest or encourage illegal activity will not be permitted.
6. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, age, gender, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability, gender identity, or sexual orientation, will not be permitted.



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Section 4 – Submission Policy

1. Members of the public that wish to post to the Marquee Sign must submit the Digital Marquee Sign Request Form, and meet the following requirements:
 - a. Requests for use of the Marquee Sign must be submitted at least one week in advance to the City by completing the attached form, which can be obtained on the City’s website www.darien.il.us or at City Hall.
 - b. Message run time is limited to no more than four (4) weeks (28 calendar days) per event or advertising reservation, unless otherwise authorized by City Staff.
 - c. The City reserves the right to limit the number of messages displayed at any one time to keep the sign board relevant, at its sole discretion.
 - d. Messages should be concise and should contain basic information about the event or advertisement. The City reserves the right to edit the requested message as they see fit.
2. Requests for use of the Marquee Sign for the promotion of Community Events must meet the following additional requirements:
 - a. The requestor must represent a Darien not-for-profit organization that is sponsoring an event, which is open to the Darien community and not for commercial purposes.
 - b. Reservation requests must be submitted with the appropriate application form. Documentation evidencing the organization’s non-profit status will be required.
 - c. Events must meet one or more of the following criteria to be eligible:
 - i. City event or activity
 - ii. City sponsored or funded
 - iii. Local governments within the City of Darien’s corporate limits or serving Darien’s residents
 - iv. Not-for-profit community events open to the public and not exclusionary in nature
 - v. Darien new business grand opening events
3. Requests for paid advertisements to be displayed on the Marquee Sign must meet the following additional requirements:
 - a. Reservation requests must be submitted with the appropriate application form. Documentation evidencing a business license registered to Darien will be required.
 - b. Each advertisement period will cost \$550. If the requested advertisement should last less than the four-week advertising period (i.e., a limited time promotional deal, specials at a grocery store, etc.), price will be adjusted accordingly.

CITY OF DARIEN

Memorandum

TO: Mayor Marchese, City Council, Clerk, and Treasurer
FROM: Bryon D. Vana, City Administrator
DATE: November 11, 2024
RE: **Goal Setting – Special Events and Chamber of Commerce**

Mayor Marchese and I propose to incorporate a new staff position responsible for special events and business outreach. The job description for this position is attached. This is similar to the concept discussed at the City Council’s goal setting in 2022. The consensus of the council at that time was supportive and wanted to review more details at a later date. That plan was not implemented at that time. Instead, the council approved a chamber grant agreement with the goal of strengthening and improving the chamber and business membership. This proposal also includes \$5,000 for a PT employee to help with special events and certain business outreach duties.

This change would allow the city to have direct oversight of local business engagement such as special business events, communications, and programing. Combining additional duties of special event management also makes sense since the city is more involved in community events such as concerts, Darien Fest, and fall fest. It is also a benefit since the business community is an important part of our community events.

The city would most likely maintain a number of events that that would generate revenue, or reduce current expenses including:

<u>REVENUES</u>	AMOUNT
Darien Fest	\$40,000
Darien Dash	\$10,000
Memorial Day bash	\$20,000
Sponsorships	<u>\$4,000</u>
	\$74,000
<u>EXPENSE REDUCTION</u>	
Event MGT fee	\$8,000
Chamber grant	<u>\$35,000</u>
	\$43,000
Net to City	\$117,000
<u>EXPENSES</u>	
FT with benefits	\$99,840
Event/Outreach Temp	<u>\$5,000</u>
TOTAL EXP	\$104,840

If the council would like to approve this plan, I will schedule formal approval at an upcoming council meeting with an effective date in early January of 2025.

DRAFT-DISCUSSION ONLY

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: Business Alliance and Community Events Coordinator

DEPARTMENT: Administration

FLSA STATUS: EXEMPT

JOB SUMMARY

The Business Alliance and Community Events Coordinator will carry out citywide special events and be the primary liaison between the city and business community.

PRINCIPAL DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES

The position will be responsible for special events including:

- Manage the overall development, planning and coordination of city special events
- Prepare RFPS and negotiate terms and conditions of contracts
- Supervise contracted event labor/personnel
- Provide information for social media, develop and maintain a timeline for festivals and events, develop budgets, event layouts and operational needs
- Request procurement of supplies and equipment related to event production
- Research, identify, and recruit fest and event participants, prepare RFPs and contracts related to special events.

The position will also be responsible for business liaison activities:

- Maintain a cohesive relationship between the city and local businesses with the goal of promoting members business activity.
- Develops and calls upon the Business Alliance Committee and local businesses in an advisory capacity for unique business promotions and event planning.
- Staff liaison to Business Alliance Committee
- Plans events that provide educational and business training to businesses.
- Plans and maintains the master event calendar for major city sponsored events.
- Secures sponsorships for city events.
- Assesses efforts to engage and provide value to chamber membership.
- Promotes business and service groups' special events such as sidewalk sales, craft shows, holiday events, etc.
- Participates in regional business groups

REQUIRED EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

- Bachelors degree in a related field is preferred;
- At least 4 years of experience in a position-involving liaison with the business community and conducting public events, or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

DESIRABLE KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE, REQUIRED TRAINING AND SKILLS

Outstanding public speaking and presentation skills

Excellent written communication skills

Outstanding time management and event planning skills

Strong executive and supervisory skills, including ability to set expectations and manage performance, plan, organize, lead, delegate, and monitor

Demonstrates a passion for collaboration and networking

Ability to work a wide and flexible range of business hours

Strong business acumen, including demonstrated ability to manage a budget, analyze organizational performance and project financial performance

Strong customer service skills

Ability to lead by personal involvement and example, but uses delegation wisely

Ability to motivate others to be champions of the business and city initiatives

Excellent skills in community consensus building

CITY OF DARIEN

Memorandum

TO: Mayor Marchese, City Council, Clerk, and Treasurer
FROM: Bryon D. Vana, City Administrator
DATE: November 11, 2024
RE: Goal Setting – Finance Director Position

I am proposing a staff reorganization relating to the city's financial management responsibilities. Over the years, I have recommended a number of staffing changes to the city's personnel structure, which included both eliminating, restructuring, and creating positions.

In part, the recommended change aligns with the strategic issue (**Financial Responsibility**) recently adopted by the city council. In summary, the change includes promoting Julie Saenz from the position of accounting manager to a newly created position of finance director. It also includes creating a part time accountant position (estimated at 1000 hours per year) under the supervision of the Finance Director. Job descriptions for both positions are attached.

This recommendation focuses on the city's financial management looking forward. The city's finance structure has remained lean over the years. Even with the lean staff, our financial management has remained very strong. However, this recommended change would accomplish the following:

- Provide stability in the finance department by providing growth to retain employees. Without this opportunity, whoever serves as our accounting manager would seek career growth as a finance director position in another organization
- Increase internal controls
- Provide financial backup by having a second employee able to perform payroll, accounting transactions and journal entrees, etc.
- Allow the finance director to accomplish specific goals outlined in our strategic plan and future goals
- Provide a second employee to expand knowledge of financial duties and provide backup to the city administrator regarding budget and tax levy preparation, ongoing budget management, expenditure approval
- Improve direct supervision of certain office positions and improve coordination among those positions

The estimated increased expense for this plan totals \$65,000.

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: FINANCE DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT: ADMINISTRATION

FLSA STATUS: EXEMPT

POSITION SUMMARY

Under the general supervision of the City Administrator, the Finance Director administers, directs, and controls municipal fiscal and accounting operations, payroll, AP/AR, annual audit, supervisors related staff members as assigned by the City Administrator, annual budget assistance, tax levy, cash/treasury management, financial analysis and financial reporting.

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

- Manage the assets, liabilities, revenues, and expenditures of the City.
- Manage and prepare annual audit (CAFR), complex journal entries, audit schedules, statistical schedules, treasurer's report and management discussion and analysis (MD&A) report, for both annual and supplemental financial reporting.
- Supervise part-time accountant, accounts payable/receivable clerk, receptionists, and clerk's office receptionist, including hiring recommendations, training, assigning work, evaluating performance and recommending disciplinary action when necessary.
- File all Federal, State, and County fiscal reports in addition to preparing and submitting monthly financial reports to the Board.
- Manage financial transaction recording ensuring accuracy and compliance, including accounts payable and receivable, correcting errors, preparing W-2's, 1099's, and 1096's forms, and reviewing and editing final warrants.
- Maintain fixed asset system.
- Maintain and reconcile general ledger accounts including preparing operating reports, analyzing financial transactions and posting entries in general and subsidiary ledgers.

- Manage fund investments, analyze cash flow, make short-term investments per guidelines, and make necessary money transfers needed to meet the obligations of the City's expenditures.
- Assists in the development of the entire budget process.
- Prepare regular and special reports, analyses and projections summarizing budget status in relation to revenues and expenditures.
- Interacts with City personnel in all departments, elected officials and vendors to resolve questions and problems relating to accounting activities.
- Oversee the establishment and maintenance of proper internal controls throughout the City.
- Prepare and maintain grants and report to appropriate agencies.
- File annual certification reports with GATA, FESA, and Justice Web among others.
- Perform other duties as assigned by the City Administrator

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university in finance, accounting, public management, or related field. CPA beneficial but not required.

Five or more years progressively responsible experience in governmental accounting, with a minimum of 3 years in a supervisory capacity; or any combination of education and experience which provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Experience within a municipal organization or not-for-profit organization that uses fund accounting system.

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL

- Professional knowledge of accounting principles, practices, and procedures
- Knowledge of governmental accounting requirements and procedures
- Knowledge of applying supervisory principles
- Knowledge of principles of management
- Proficient use of a personal computer, database, and accounting software
- Skill in financial analysis
- Skill in dealing with subordinate staff as well as senior level managers
- Ability to operate various types of office equipment, including fax machines, copy machines, and postage machines

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL ABILITY

Limited amount of physical effort required; associated with walking, standing, stooping, and lifting and/or carrying light to moderately heavy objects (less than 35-lbs.)

Ability to sit for long periods of time and sustain mental concentration at a personal computer.

Good vision is required, either uncorrected or corrected through the use of lenses.

Moderate mobility is required, because duties are usually performed by a combination of sitting, standing, and walking on a frequently changing basis.

Distance of travel is usually within the same building; although some travel outside of the City Hall is required (Police Station, Public Works Facility, or the Bank, etc.)

These physical requirements may be accommodated for an individual with disabilities requiring and requesting such accommodation.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Works in a normal office environment where there are little or no physical discomforts associated with changes in weather or discomforts associated with noise, dust, dirt and the like.

This job description should not be interpreted as all-inclusive. It is intended to identify the major responsibilities and requirements of this job. The incumbent(s) may be requested to perform job-related responsibilities and tasks other than those stated in this specification.

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JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE: PART TIME ACCOUNTANT

DEPARTMENT: ADMINISTRATION

FLSA STATUS: EXEMPT

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Under supervision of the Finance Director, the Part-Time Accountant is responsible for accounting tasks requiring thorough knowledge of City finances, including direction and coordination of day-to-day financially related electronic data processing operations of the City.

EXAMPLES OF WORK

1. Performs employee orientations in regards to payroll and other financial benefits.
2. Coordinate use of computer for payroll, accounts payable, water billing, cash receipts and other financial functions.
3. Inputs journal entries prepared by others and self to record financial transactions.
4. Perform many varied computer tasks and operations, including backup. Work closely with computer consultant on program changes instituted by City.
5. Solve program problems related to accounting operations.
6. Maintain detailed ledger to correspond with banks; calculate and allocate interest on investments.
7. Assists independent auditors in the annual audit by preparing schedules, locating requested records, and providing information for the audit.
8. Preparation of bi-weekly payroll including related summary reports
9. Preparation of monthly operating reports such as the general ledger, revenue and expense report and various supporting reports
10. Maintain manual cash ledger providing daily cash balances for various city bank accounts

11. Enforce collections on city accounts

REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

Graduation from a four (4) year college with a degree in accounting or related field and at least three years experience in general bookkeeping and payroll preparation and data processing operations or an equivalent combination of training and experience. Thorough knowledge of accounting principles and practices is required as well.

DESIRABLE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

Education supplemented by courses in accounting/bookkeeping, financial management and data processing programming, applications and operations is desirable. Experience within a municipal organization or an organization that used a fund accounting system is desirable as well.

REQUIRED TRAINING AND SKILLS

Requires ability to analyze and solve minor programming and operational problems.

Requires ability to maintain balances and subsidiary accounting ledgers.

Requires ability to interact with all other City departments.

Requires the ability to maintain a financial filing system.

Requires the ability to interact with independent auditors.

Requires the ability to work in a safe manner and operate City owned equipment responsibly.

Requires the ability to serve the public within a customer service oriented organization.

DESIRABLE TRAINING AND SKILLS

Desirable training and skills include the following:

- Ability to use personal computer technology
- Use of Computer Databases
- Use of Excel spreadsheets
- Operation of other types of office equipment, including fax machines, copy machines, personal computers, and postage machines.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Fiscal Responsibility



GOAL

The City will regularly review financial policies and practices in light of emerging local governmental trends and best practices and improvements from the use of new technology.



OBJECTIVE

Review and update established infrastructure plans for any updates recognizing technology available and process improvements that have been implemented.



KEY ACTIONS

- Develop a policy manual for current financial issues (i.e. operating reserve, transfer after audit, etc.)
- Implement more in-depth financial review by the Administrative/Finance Committee.



TIMEFRAME

- Review of Financial Policies and Practices Completed By: Q1, 2025
- Development of Policy Manual Completed By: Q1, 2025
- Implementing more in-depth financial review by Admin/Finance Completed By: Q1, 2-25

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Park District/Service Groups



GOAL

Initiate meetings with the Darien Park District that focus on common goals and shared core values.



OBJECTIVES

Invite the Darien Park District Board and Staff to a meeting with City elected officials and staff to develop a list of common goals and interests. If needed, utilize an outside consultant to facilitate the discussions between the city and the park district.



KEY ACTIONS

- Identify two to three areas of interest and establish partnership goals.
- Hold discussions with the park district in the development of joint programs that include the participation of other Darien service and social groups.
- Bring the Park District into the planning and implementation of the Darien Fest and Oktoberfest celebrations.
- Explore the potential for the development of an outdoor entertainment pavilion with the park district.



TIMEFRAME

- Meeting and establishing partnership goals Completed By: Q2, 2025
- Discussions regarding the development of joint programs Completed By: Q2, 2025
- Park District involved with Darien Fest and Oktoberfest Completed By: Q4, 2025
- Development of an Outdoor Pavilion/Entertainment Complex Completed by: Q1, 2026

Legend: Q1(May, June, July), Q2 (August, September, October), Q3 (November, December, January, Q4, January, February, March).

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Economic Development



GOAL

The City will engage in efforts to enhance its Economic and Community Development



OBJECTIVES

City Staff will initiate efforts to work with center owners to determine their needs and to promote redevelopment efforts.

The City Staff will examine the Old Lace School Property as a possible development site with unique marketing opportunities.

The City Staff and elected officials will examine fiscal resources and financial tools for accomplishing redevelopment goals.

The City Staff and elected officials will develop a plan to offer economic incentives for redevelopment in a fiscally prudent manner.



KEY ACTIONS

- The City will work with the new Chestnut Court Center owner to explore his plans for redeveloping the center.
- The City will explore redevelopment possibilities with the Brookhaven ownership group.
- The City will explore economic incentives that may assist in the redevelopment of businesses within the city.
- The City will facilitate a meeting with the District #61 administration and board to discuss the potential for redevelopment of this property as a city center.
- The City will examine fiscal resources for accomplishing redevelopment goals.



TIMEFRAME

- Interaction with Chestnut Court owner regarding center redevelopment
Completed By: Q2, 2025
- Plan for developing economic incentives Completed By: Q3, 2025
- Discussion with District #61 regarding redeveloping property Completed By: Q4, 2025
- Re-examine fiscal resources available for accomplishing redevelopment goals
Completed By: Q3, 2025

Legend: Q1(May, June, July),Q2 (August, September, October), Q3 (November, December, January, Q4, January, February, March).

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Support and Enhance Communication, Service Groups, and Community Building

GOAL

The City will work to engage the community through modern communication tools and personal contact

OBJECTIVE

Increase engagement between the city and public and personalize communication through public service announcements and interaction with the elected officials.

KEY ACTIONS

- Produce public service announcement (PSAs) videos of the services offered by the police department and municipal services department to increase engagement between the city and its employees
- Each Alderperson to hold a “town hall” type meeting annually
- Mayor to host bimonthly podcast to discuss city issues and add personal touch to the broadcast.

TIMEFRAME

- PSAs to be completed and broadcast by :Q4, 2026
- Annual Town Hall meetings will be held annually by: Q1, FYE 26
- First podcast to air by : Q3, FYE 2026

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Promoting Darien



GOAL

The City will promote Darien to non-residents.



OBJECTIVE

Promoting Darien to influence residential and commercial community growth and improve the City's attractiveness to new residents of all ages.



KEY ACTIONS

- Update Darien, IL: A Nice Place to Live video
- Create a new page on Darien's web site dedicated to future residents
- Advertise living in Darien on Zillow, Realtor.com, Red fin, etc., thereby attracting new residents to Darien.
- Conduct advertising campaign for local business community in Chicago Tribune, Daily Herald, Clipper Magazine, Valpak, etc. Thereby attracting new customers to Darien.



TIMEFRAME

- Update Darien, IL: A Nice Place to live video by: Q4, FYE 27
- Future resident page on Darien web site by: Q4, FYE 28
- Advertising to attract new Darien residents by Q4, FYE 28
- Advertise business community by Q3, FYE 2028

- Promoting Darien can positively influence community growth and the City's attractiveness to new residents of all ages.
- Promoting Darien can bring new visitors and businesses, providing additional tax revenues. (See Identified Issue 1)

Legend: Q1(May, June, July),Q2 (August, September, October), Q3 (November, December, January, Q4, January, February, March).

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

Goal Timeline

Review of Financial Policies	Quarter 1, 2025
Development of Policy Manual	Quarter 1, 2025
In Depth Admin./Finance Review	Quarter 1, 2025
Meet and Establish Goals w/ Park Dist.	Quarter 2, 2025
Discuss Develop. Of Joint Projects	Quarter 2, 2025
Interaction w/ CC Developer	Quarter 2, 2025
Plan for Economic Incentives	Quarter 3, 2025
Examine Fiscal Resources for Redevelopment	Quarter 3, 2025
Discuss Dist. 61 Land for Redevelopment	Quarter 4, 2025
Discuss Remodel of City Hall	Quarter 4, 2025
Park Dist. Involvement in Darien Fest and Oktoberfest	Quarter 4, 2025
PSA's Developed and Broadcast	Quarter 4, 2025
Development of Outdoor Pavilion	Quarter 1, 2026
Annual Town Hall Meeting	Quarter 1, 2026
First Podcasts	Quarter 3, 2026
Update City Videos	Quarter 4, 2027
Advertise Business Community	Quarter 3, 2028
Future Resident Web Page	Quarter 4, 2028
Advertise to Attract New Residents	Quarter 4, 2028

Each Goal focuses on the overall City Strategic Priorities. These goals align with the following five City Strategic Priorities:

- Maintain Fiscal Responsibility, Oversight and Planning

- Work with the Park District to Enhance Amenities and Improve Relationship. Develop a Method for Integrating Services by Groups
- Strengthening Community and Economic Development Efforts
- Support and Enhance Communication, Service Groups and Community Building
- Promoting Darien



Conclusion

The City of Darien has many strengths, chief among them its dedicated, thoughtful elected officials and staff. The heart of the community is found in the residents who care deeply about the City of Darien and want it to grow and thrive.

By investing in this Strategic Plan, Darien's leaders and key staff have collaborated both with each other and - most importantly - with the community. This collaboration resulted in new vision and mission statements, reflections on Darien's core values and identification of 12 strategic issues. Over the next four years, City leaders and key staff, in concert with Darien residents and business representatives, will address these strategic issues in a thoughtful, proactive manner according to each issue's priority ranking.

This commitment, focus and ongoing work promises to result in a thriving, engaged, aligned Darien into 2029 and beyond.

2024 Goal Setting Survey Results

Resident Communication

	Schauer	Stompanato	Kenny	Leganski	Sullivan	Gustafson	Belczak	Coren	Marchese
Direct Connect	A	A	A	A	B+	A	B	A	A
Website	A	B	A	B	B-	A	B		B
Newsletters	A	A	A	B	A	A	C+		A
Cable Station	C	B	B	C	B	B	n/a	A	C
Staff Customer Service	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	A	A
FaceBook	A	A	A	n/a	B+	B	C		A
Twitter	A	B	A	n/a	B	B	n/a		B
NextDoor	A	C	n/a	n/a	n/a	A	C		C
Event Postcard	A	A	A	C	C	A	C	D	A

Coren – more alternatives does not equate to better communication, only costs. Should be reviewed and consolidated to be most effective.

Sullivan – event postcard arrives late and info is outdated or changed – visually very nice. Direct Connect need to compress more.

Schauer – I believe our communications have gotten a lot better. I believe we need to continue to improve and change with social media needs. Cable has been an issue. I would like to see feedback on new microphone system and if residents can hear it okay.

Stompanato – Overall, I believe we do a good job with communications but we certainly have room for improvement as we have no newspapers in our town and our residents rely on online publications, which appear slanted at best. Police texts have been a great benefit. Maybe re-visit allowing residents to sign up for community event texts.

Leganski – I do not use FB, Twitter or Next Door. Our cable station is moving in the right direction but for a while had dated info and EV section. Postcards were sometimes late and I think lacked some information (park locations for movies). The police texts have been well received.

Belczak – Nothing is perfect. Direct Connect is the best option for giving current information to the Darien residents.

Kenny – Cable “B” – have resident looking for council meetings late at night

Municipal Services

	Schauer	Stompanato	Kenny	Leganski	Sullivan	Gustafson	Belczak	Coren	Marchese
Street Repair	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Storm Water Management	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Street Cleaning	B	A	A	B	B	A	B	A	B
Parkway Tree Care	A	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Snow Removal	A	A	A	A	A++	A	A	A	A
Brush Pick Up	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Sidewalk Maintenance	A++	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	B
Multi-Year Planning of Municipal Capital Projects	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Property Maintenance Enforcement	A	A	A	B	B	A	B	B	B

Sullivan – property maintenance – new online system good but people still call. Still need to be more pro-active. Do more street cleaning.

Schauer – only thing I would look into is making sure street cleaning is done more times in late fall/early winter because of leaves.

Stompanato – the sidewalk grinding project really seemed like a great addition. Had two spots in front of my house that came out great and work done was quick and clean.

Leganski – evaluate the grinding program from previous year. How much was done and see if it is possible to increase. Pension shortfall has mandated council to explore all areas to save money throughout the city budget.

Belczak – outstanding job; I never receive complaints.

Administration and Finance

	Schauer	Stompanato	Kenny	Leganski	Sullivan	Gustafson	Belczak	Coren	Marchese
City Audit Process	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	n/a	A
Monthly Financial Reports	A	A	A	A	A	A	B	n/a	A
City Budget Process	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	n/a	A
City Financial Management	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	n/a	A

Coren – no comments here. I will let others judge.

Sullivan – Outstanding!

Schauer – no issues - keep doing it.

Stompanato – I feel this is one of the strongest areas of the city and has been for all the years I have lived here. My only concern is that we have back up staff to avoid disruption if anyone leaves or needs to go on a long-term leave.

Leganski – the accounting department does a great job. The financial information I receive is very helpful.

Belczak – I would still like to see more transparency, possibly adding reports to direct connect. I would like to see a Quarterly “State of the Budget” report so we can see how our budget is going.

Police Services

	Schauer	Stompanato	Kenny	Leganski	Sullivan	Gustafson	Belczak	Coren	Marchese
Responding to Emergency Calls	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Promoting Police Community Engagement	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	A
Proactive Crime Prevention	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Traffic Enforcement	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Police Staffing Level	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Information Provided to the Public	B	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

Marchese – we have by far one of the most efficient and administered public safety programs in DuPage County. Our officers are well trained and employ the use of technology in carrying out their responsibilities.

Sullivan – love library sessions; great tips from chief on direct connect; add more – integrate chief tips to direct connect once a month. Add information provided to public to direct connect.

Schauer – I would use text messages more – not just for accidents but community engagement for all things in Darien.

Stompanato – texting has been very popular with the residents I have spoken to. The interactions I have been told of have always received positive comments on the attitude, professionalism of our officers

Leganski – last year I gave “info provided to the public” a ‘c’. The police text have been a great communication tool for our residents. Well received in my ward.

Belczak – no complaints

Miscellaneous Items

	Schauer	Stompanato	Kenny	Leganski	Sullivan	Gustafson	Belczak	Coren	Marchese
Staff Responsiveness to your Questions	A+	A	A	A	A+	A	A	A	A
Agenda Memos & Back Up Material Distributed for Council and Committee Meetings	A	A	A	A	A+	A	B	A	A
Strategic Planning Process	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	A
Summer Concert Series	A	A	A	B	A	A	B	A	A
Darien Fest	B	A	A	A	A	A	B	n/a	A
Oktoberfest	A	A	A	A	n/a	A	B	n/a	A

Marchese – the addition of community activities has provided our residents with a social setting where they can meet one another, talk with one another and develop a comradery with one another. It also allows our service groups an opportunity to join together in developing programs that assist and enhance our community.

Coren – would like to see more local business participation in the fests.

Sullivan – So glad with did strategic plan; loved seeing Darien Fest back in park; could not attend Oktoberfest but heard positive feedback

Schauer – reason it is a ‘B’ for Darien Fest, is because of the park district. Glad we moved it this year. I would like to see it back at Darien Community Park but it is up to park district.

Stompanato – I am always impressed at how much work gets accomplished by our very lean staff. Everyone has always been more than helpful with concerns I have brought to them.

Leganski – Combining EDC with PZC is a step in the right direction. Utilizing the county data is critical to grow our tax base. Council needs to evaluate the concert series and possibly reduce number. Darien Fest and Oktoberfest were hits in my estimation. Using local vendors a big plus too.

Belczak – hopefully reach a permanent solution/agreement with park district over event spaces

Business Community

	Schauer	Stompanato	Kenny	Leganski	Sullivan	Gustafson	Belczak	Coren	Marchese
Staff availability to the business community	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	B
Responsiveness to business concerns	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	A	B
Reputation with the business community	A	B	n/a	B	B+	A	A	A	B
Diversity of the businesses of in Darien	A	B	A	B	B	A	B	A	B

Sullivan – like the idea of changing to business alliance & consolidate with EDC

Schauer – should look into ordinance of smoke shops limits in Darien. No more smoke shops.

Kenny – I haven't heard anything negative or positive about reputation with business community

Top Priorities

Marchese – 1) continue to forge working relationships with other governmental bodies such as Darien Park District, DuPage Mayors and Managers, in an effort to make known the city's agenda and to enhance programs for our residents, both financial and recreational. 2) Examine our strategic plan on a quarterly basis to assess our progress at meeting our Strategic Initiatives. 3) Per our Strategic Plan, we need to enhance our efforts at economic development throughout the city, even if it involves our purchase of property and development by the city. This should include the District #61 property at the corner of 75th & Cass.

Coren – 1) long term financial stability – with larger pension obligations we must review all costs & revenue sources 2) maintaining our high level of police & public works personnel as well as our office staff

Sullivan – 1) City's fiscal sustainability matched with continued excellent services, staffing and rising police pension 2) community center/downtown concept - work with park district to achieve 3) redevelopment of Chestnut Court & with hopeful change over to business alliance, continue to strengthen relations with businesses to sustain & attract

Schauer – 1) replacing all municipal service vehicles – only with gas vehicles 2) look into acquiring land for a possible new muni services building. Who owns property at Nantucket and Frontage Road – north of I55 – are these wetlands? 3) Continue funding police pension at 100% but do NOT raise a bond until absolutely necessary!

Stompanato – 1) re-development of outdated malls 2) more emphasis on establishing a central focal point for Darien

Gustafson – develop property at Lace School

Kenny – 1) police pension liability to keep from raising the levy again in the future 2) training future administrative staff to be ready for future retirement 3) municipal service facility to protect our capital

Leganski – 1) police pension liability – line-by-line budget review 2) growing city’s tax base of businesses & areas to develop/annex 3) work jointly with real estate community to know why families are moving to or out of Darien.

Belczak – 1) budgeting police pension 2) growing business 3) adding younger families

Suggestions

Marchese – 1) continue to seek ways of modernizing our public works facility as well as our PW equipment 2) develop an EV fleet for our secondary vehicles.

Coren – I cannot think of any – all departments are very proactive and responsive

Sullivan- 1) down road have Dan Gombac replacement identified 2) do further work on website – continually upgrade 3) code enforcement – be more proactive

Schauer – 1) improve text messaging that includes not only police but also things happening in Darien – events, concerts, etc.

Stompanato – 1) always check in with resident when performing work at someone’s house 2) I know we started this, but more interaction with current businesses to see how they are doing and what they feel is needed to support their establishments 3) leverage the DuPage organization we joined to help attract resident friendly businesses.

Gustafson – increase street sweeping

Kenny – 1) mental health awareness – police officers have a higher propensity to commit suicide than die in the line of duty 2) create a mayor pro temp role. The process becomes awkward during the start of the meetings 3) create law explorer program for teens to possibly become interested in law enforcement with the intent of hiring future police officers

Leganski – 1) use media to let residents see projected being completed and equipment being utilized – possibly use short videos through our cable station 2) inform residents of all crime prevention equipment and techniques being utilized to protect our residents and keep our community safe.

Belczak – 1) continue to work on ways to improve communications with residents