DUPAGE COUNTY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2019

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DUPAGECOUNTY

OVERVIEW

DuPage County government contracted with Northern Illinois University's Center for Governmental Studies (CGS) to facilitate the strategic planning process and assist in collecting and analyzing needed information. Guidance and input was sought from the County Board, Countywide elected officials, County staff, citizens, and community partners. The result of this process is a strategic plan that provides direction for the County over the next several years by influencing departmental actions, guiding budget priorities and resource allocation, and providing a framework for ongoing accountability.

Planning Overview

In the fall of 2014, a group of County senior staff and CGS met to lay out the steps in the strategic planning process. It was agreed that the 2007 strategic plan and subsequent implementation reports would serve as a foundation upon which to build, and that every effort would be made to take advantage of the resident perception data being collected through other County surveys as to not duplicate efforts. This information was used to shape a basic survey that was sent to DuPage County Board members, Countywide elected officials, and senior County staff. The survey results were used to draft a strategic planning framework that reflected three core components:

- DuPage County government's organizational mandates, mission, and principles;
- An assessment of the internal and external environments; and
- Strategic imperatives for DuPage County government.

In the first three months of the project (September – December 2014), input was gathered from County Board members, Countywide elected officials, and DuPage County senior staff through online surveys that collected feedback on the principles that should guide all County governmental action; the main functions of County government and the most important issues associated with each; and ways in which County Board members and staff can help each other function more effectively. Resident responses to three other significant DuPage County surveys were obtained, analyzed, and summarized.

A DuPage County government senior staff retreat was held to review all information collected, including a presentation by the DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform on trends affecting DuPage County. Staff identified five Strategic Imperatives at the retreat that would provide the outline for the strategic planning process. Following the senior staff retreat, a departmental kick off meeting was held to introduce the imperatives and a process for departmental planning to identify high-level strategies for meeting the imperatives and operational strategies to guide the departments in implementation of the Strategic Plan. Each significant layer of the plan was reviewed and approved by the County's Strategic Planning Committee throughout the entire process and is detailed in the following framework.

Strategic Planning Framework

The framework presented below builds on the Strategic Plan for DuPage County Government approved by the DuPage County Board on May 22, 2007. That document identified 13 strategic issues and 30 related goals that generally aligned with County government responsibilities, and another four Countywide goals (communicate, partner, respond, and lead) that represented cross-cutting activities considered crucial to achieving the County's mission.

Since adopting the 2007 Strategic Plan, DuPage County has made substantial progress toward addressing key priorities. For example, in the area of transportation, the County has completed a variety of congestion relief improvements, helped expand public transit options for seniors and people with disabilities, and was instrumental in closing the $300 million funding gap for the Elgin-O'Hare Western Access project. Economic development efforts have been boosted by the creation of Choose DuPage and partnerships to strengthen job training across the County. DuPage County leaders have focused on fiscal responsibility by holding the property tax levy flat for seven consecutive years, forging a variety of shared service agreements, and dissolving several units of government. A centerpiece of these efforts was the launch of the DuPage ACT Initiative (Accountability, Consolidation/efficiency, and Transparency) aimed at reducing the size, scope, and cost of local government. Reforms made under the ACT Initiative are projected to save taxpayers tens of millions of dollars. A variety of other initiatives have been launched to enhance customer service and increase operational efficiency, engaging taxpayers in setting budget priorities, changing how services are delivered to an increasingly diverse and aging population, addressing heroin prevention and education, completing numerous stormwater projects that reduce flooding, and engaging in award-winning environmental practices.

Discussions between County senior staff and CGS led to two refinements to this framework: the core County government responsibilities were reduced from 13 to 10 and given short definitions, and 8 principles embedded in the 2007 plan were added and also defined. This new framework was the basis of the online surveys sent to County Board members, Countywide elected officials, and County senior staff. Information obtained from the surveys helped to further refine the framework provided below and contains DuPage County government's organizational mandates, mission, principles, internal and external environments, strategic imperatives, high-level strategies, operational strategies, and implementation planning.

A. Organizational Mandates. Clarity about what an organization is formally required to do by external authorities, as well as what it is expected to do by key stakeholders such as elected officials or taxpayers, provides the foundation for strategic planning. Ten such mandates proposed in the surveys and validated by the respondents are listed below. It is important to note that the role of County government in each varies greatly in regard to how much control it exercises over how services are delivered and their impacts.

- Transportation and traffic. Building and maintaining County roads and infrastructure.
- Taxation. Levying and collecting property, sales, and motor fuel taxes.
- Health and human services. Behavioral and physical well-being, social and community services, and the Convalescent Center.
- Criminal justice and public safety. Law enforcement, County jail, legal and judicial services (Sheriff, State's Attorney, Chief Judge, Circuit Court Clerk, and Coroner).

- Homeland security and emergency management. Campus security, emergency planning/ incident preparedness services, and animal control.
- Economic development. Regulatory, planning, waste/recycling/green initiatives, business promotion, and workforce development activities.
- Stormwater management. Watershed management, water quality, flood mitigation, and regulatory services.
- Educational services. Regional Office of Education services and programs.
- Public works. County facility maintenance, water and sewer services.
- General government and support. Auditor, County Clerk, Recorder, Treasurer, finance, information technology, and human resources.

B. Mission. The mission of DuPage County government was articulated in the 2007 strategic plan and remains relevant for this planning process:

To ensure that DuPage County's communities will always be desirable places to live, work and raise families where all are welcomed, accepted, and valued, by providing innovative, cost-effective services, promoting a high quality of life for all residents, and acting as a leader with its local and regional partners in anticipating issues and developing solutions.

C. Principles. Principles are beliefs that influence action. They guide DuPage County government in attaining its mission and setting priorities. Eight original principles were combined into five through the strategic planning process. These include three that have been widely embraced throughout County government and represent the County's ACT Initiative: Accountability, Consolidation/Efficiency, and Transparency. Two other principles have been added, quality and leadership, which speak to other core cross-cutting aspects of County governance. Short working definitions of all five principles have been developed to help promote a shared understanding of how each one is relevant to DuPage County government.

- Accountability. Ensuring that County government through its decisions and actions is responsible for creating and achieving standards of performance.
- Consolidation/Efficiency. Seeking opportunities and partnerships to share resources, increase efficiency, and achieve economies of scale.
- Transparency. Providing clear, timely, and useful information about the decisions and actions of County government.
- Quality. Offering effective, accessible, and efficient services by well-trained personnel that respond to new and emerging constituent needs.
- Leadership. Expanding collaborations with regional governments and nongovernmental partners to anticipate issues and develop innovative solutions.

D. Internal and External Environments. Local governments must understand changes in their internal and external environments to develop effective strategies that create enduring public value. Three sources of information have been used to identify important strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges for DuPage County government's strategic planning process.

- Survey results that asked County Board, Countywide elected officials, and County staff to identify important issues that will face the County over the next five years;

- Citizen perception data from three other survey efforts (Impact DuPage, Neighborhood Needs, and the annual County budget survey) addressing various aspects of County services; and
- A presentation to senior staff by the DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform that addressed five major trends affecting DuPage County, including:
    - » Growth of poverty
    - » Increased diversity
    - » Aging of the population
    - » Effects of trauma on health and well-being
    - » Deterioration of the safety net

Discussion of this information occurred at a County senior staff retreat held on October 30, 2014. The main outcome of the retreat was the identification of strategic imperatives that serve as the focus of this strategic plan.

E. Strategic Plan Organization. This strategic plan is made up of three central components, which together establish a hierarchy for implementation. The three components of the strategic plan are:

- **Strategic Imperatives**. A strategic imperative is a basic policy challenge affecting an organization's mandates, mission and values, products or services, customers, cost, financing, organization, or management. Five strategic imperatives resulted from the County senior staff retreat. Each issue is framed as a statement and is supported by a short description.
- **High-Level Strategies**. In order to address the imperatives, the County developed high-level strategies which provide structure for departments to direct their operational plans. While directly supporting the five strategic imperatives, the high level strategies also provide context for each operational strategy, and cross multiple departments and policy areas.
- **Operational Strategies**. Each high-level strategy in the strategic plan is supported by various operational strategies which serve to guide departments in implementation of their operational plans. Operational strategies provide structure for each department and connect back to both a corresponding high-level strategy and strategic imperative. At the departmental level, operational strategies are pursued through designated tasks and are complemented by performance targets where applicable.

F. Implementation and Accountability. Consistent implementation of the strategic plan is critical to its long-term viability and requires the continued commitment of all departments and County leaders to ensure success. Implementation of the strategic plan will be an ongoing responsibility for each County department and will require deployment of department-specific operational plans. The strategic plan will be implemented in stages. DuPage County leaders will prioritize implementation while carefully reviewing the viability and financial impact of each proposal.

The parent committee, to which each department regularly reports, will monitor implementation of the strategic plan. Parent committees will receive periodic updates from the reporting departments regarding progress in implementation. The committee chairs, in consultation with

the department heads, will determine the frequency with which departments provide strategic plan updates. When providing an update to a parent committee, department heads should identify the operational strategy, high level strategy and strategic imperative which they are working to impact.

The Strategic Planning Committee will monitor the overall progress in implementation of the strategic plan and may from time-to-time initiate an inter-departmental review of the strategic plan to determine if modifications are necessary.

Updated: 11/20/19

STRATEGIC PLAN

IMPERATIVE 1: QUALITY OF LIFE

1. The County must define and fulfill its role in supporting and enhancing the quality of life for County residents. Growth in low income and senior residents in DuPage County coupled with an increasingly diverse population has increased the potential for gaps in basic health and human services. County government must also continue to ensure that its citizens are safe in their communities and that public safety remains a high priority. Additionally, the County must continue addressing the maintenance of its aging infrastructure while remaining responsible stewards of the environment. County government must ensure that citizens have the services they need despite limited funding and overlapping responsibilities among public agencies for providing such services.

1.1. Keep people safe in their homes and provide a safe environment for all who live and work in DuPage County.

1.1.1. Provide community programs and services that keep residents safe in their environments, homes, and relationships.
1.1.2. Comprehensively review code enforcement processes and regulations.
1.1.3. Ensure comprehensive, countywide emergency operations plans are in place.
1.1.4. Increase public disaster awareness and preparedness.
1.1.5. Provide an efficient and effective countywide framework for animal care and control.
1.1.6. Provide a safe environment for the County's employees and all visitors on campus.
1.1.7. Provide clean water and sanitary sewer services to DuPage County residents.

1.2. Maintain the countywide safety net to help people escape poverty, maximize independence, and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

1.2.1. Ensure the highest quality community services by following evidence-based practices and industry standards.
1.2.2. Provide services that help residents escape poverty, maintain independence, and achieve economic self-sufficiency.
1.2.3. Provide connections between those in need and the resources to support them.
1.2.4. Continue to monitor and identify the long-term care needs of the aging and disabled population who require subsidized care and housing.
1.2.5. Review and adjust operational plans in conjunction with the fluctuating needs of the population served by the Convalescent Center.
1.2.6. Continue combating the County's heroin crisis by working with local officials and community partners.

1.3. Protect and enhance our natural resources and infrastructure by coordinating and improving planning, conservation, management, and communication efforts with the public and across County departments.

1.3.1. Ensure a safe and reliable transportation system that provides modal choices and

is sensitive to the environment.

1.3.2. Facilitate the goal of reducing greenhouse gas levels by 20% by 2030 and other Cool DuPage goals through education efforts.

1.3.3. Develop recycling and disposal options for hard to manage items in the residential waste stream.

1.3.4. Enhance the environment by creating and restoring wetlands, improving water quality, and expanding floodplain capacity.

1.3.5. Help residents understand and manage their flood risk.

1.3.6. Maintain flood control facilities to ensure operations that positively impact the lives of residents.

1.3.7. Target known deficiencies in water quality through regulations, incentives, and strengthening existing programs.

IMPERATIVE 2: COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL PLANNING

2. The County must undertake comprehensive financial planning to ensure a sound and sustainable fiscal future. Long-term budget planning – including program prioritization, cost containment, and potential revenue enhancement – will be needed to ensure adequate resources are available for basic County services and to address these strategic imperatives. As public safety accounts for a very significant portion of the County's annual budget, County leaders should consider how to best prioritize and fund these essential services. County Board leadership will be instrumental in choosing from among various approaches and ensuring that annual budget planning is aligned with five-year budgeting and capital improvement planning.

2.1. Plan and prioritize for the short- and long-term to meet current and future operating and capital needs.

2.1.1. Maintain a long-term focus on County operating and capital needs to facilitate informed decision-making.

2.1.2. Develop a long-range transportation plan.

2.1.3. Continue to take action to reduce the County's flood insurance rating to help reduce insurance rates for residents.

2.1.4. Develop a plan to meet future anticipated court expansion needs.

2.1.5. Create and maintain a strategic technology plan.

2.1.6. Improve the Animal Control facility.

2.1.7. Update long-term stormwater maintenance and operation plans.

2.1.8. Evaluate the need to construct and maintain facilities proposed in watershed plans.

2.2. Optimize cost containment while maximizing service levels and quality.

2.2.1. Develop objective recommendations regarding financially sustainable options for operation of the Convalescent Center.

2.2.2. Control costs through cost-effective use of technology, updated policies and procedures, efficient organizational structures, and enhanced reporting.

2.2.3. Identify areas of departmental overlap where resources can be shared.

2.3. Identify, assess, and secure funding opportunities to support the County's strategic priorities.

2.3.1. Continue to work with departments, County-wide elected officials, and community partners to identify and secure a range of funding sources.
2.3.2. Advocate for County programs, services, and funding at the state and federal level.
2.3.3. Diversify General Fund revenue base and develop or maintain self-supporting Special Revenue Funds.
2.3.4. Maintain self-supporting funding status for Animal Care and Control.
2.3.5. Identify a permanent funding source for the Drainage Division.
2.3.6. Identify a range of funding sources and establish a financing plan for continued development and ongoing stormwater operations.

IMPERATIVE 3: EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

3. The County must continue to enhance a culture that promotes excellence in customer service to an increasingly diverse population. Taxpayers expect and deserve the highest level of customer service. DuPage County can meet these expectations by using human capital and available technology to their fullest extent. As the first and often only point of contact with the public, County government personnel must have clear workplace expectations and have the technological and management supports they need to do their jobs well. A culture that values excellence in customer service addresses issues of diversity, morale, compensation, motivation, and opportunities for advancement and professional development.

3.1. Improve access to County resources including programs, permits, technical and language support, and information.

3.1.1. Ensure all residents of DuPage County have maximum access to community services.
3.1.2. Use technology to simplify/enhance processing of all permits and information requests.
3.1.3. Strengthen network security and improve customer access to information.
3.1.4. Improve the ability to communicate and provide services to non-English speaking citizens.
3.1.5. Provide animal control support and assistance to municipalities, veterinarians, and the public.
3.1.6. Increase the scope and depth of public assessment records provided online.

3.2. Provide standards-based customer service training and professional development to County staff and volunteers.

3.2.1. Provide County departments and agencies with clear customer service standards/expectations to be followed by employees.
3.2.2. Provide employees with information about County initiatives, opportunities, news and events to deepen engagement with the County's mission, vision, and values.
3.2.3. Ensure an efficient and well-trained workforce to meet responsibilities and customer needs.

3.2.4. Leverage technology to advance professional development.
3.2.5. Provide continuous professional development regarding customer service, conflict resolution, and other essential competencies.
3.2.6. Focus on succession planning and identifying future leaders.
3.2.7. Provide and facilitate standardized training for large scale spontaneous and Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management planned events.
3.2.8. Ensure security officers are trained to serve as the front line in customer service and security for the County campus.
3.2.9. Provide additional trade-specific technical and general customer service related training to all staff within the Supervisor of Assessment's Office.
3.2.10. Continue to measure levels of internal and external customer satisfaction.

3.3. Enhance outreach and education to the public.

3.3.1. Educate residents about County services and initiatives impacting their quality of life.
3.3.2. Develop specific public awareness and community outreach initiatives based on County strategic and departmental objectives.
3.3.3. Develop public awareness of volunteer opportunities available as part of County programs and initiatives.

IMPERATIVE 4: BUILD ON SUCCESSES OF ACT PLUS QUALITY AND LEADERSHIP

4. The County must build on the successes of the ACT Initiative and implement the other two principles of quality and leadership across government. The five principles identified through this strategic planning process – accountability, consolidation/efficiency, transparency, quality, and leadership – are core to the County's ability to fulfill its mission. Over the past two years the ACT Initiative has been an effective vehicle for implementing local government reforms which produce greater efficiency (shared services, joint procurements, intergovernmental cooperation, and consolidation). The ACT Initiative also educates the public, elected officials, and County staff about the importance of the initiative and its practical application. This momentum must be continued, expanded, and diffused internally and externally.

4.1. Pursue operational efficiencies by streamlining planning, minimizing duplication, and sharing and consolidating resources.

4.1.1. Engage with community partners to ensure social services are delivered at the appropriate level and by the most suitable provider.
4.1.2. Evaluate current Convalescent Center operations to enhance revenues and improve operations.
4.1.3. Explore additional cooperative purchasing opportunities and review internal operations against best management practices.
4.1.4. Consolidate the DuPage County Health Department's Office of Risk and Emergency Management (OREM) with the DuPage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (OHSEM).
4.1.5. Build upon internal and external partnerships to ensure watershed plans highlight

water quality improvement.
4.1.6. Consolidate and align water quality planning and maintenance efforts with DuPage County communities.
4.1.7. Work with other County departments to understand flood control needs and resources.
4.1.8. Improve coordination between departments providing related services.
4.1.9. Provide departments with Lean tools and training to empower employees, enable process improvements and enhance customer service delivery.
4.1.10. Modernize IT systems to improve accountability and transparency.
4.1.11. Reengineer IT Operations' approach to business process management.

4.2. Work with local and regional partners to expand and promote the principles of the ACT Initiative beyond County government.

4.2.1. Continue applying ACT Initiative principles to County government and the appointed agencies.
4.2.2. Initiate creation of discussion groups to identify best practices and promote consistent standards.
4.2.3. Initiate a collaborative GIS effort across taxing bodies.
4.2.4. Coordinate with municipal partners to advance and identify opportunities for shared services.
4.2.5. Provide training with our County and regional partners for managing large scale spontaneous and planned events.

IMPERATIVE 5: FOSTER CONTINUED GROWTH OF THE DUPAGE ECONOMY

5. The County must foster the continued growth of its economy. Although the County has little direct control over economic growth, it can create a climate and provide the supports that business and industry find attractive. Business location decisions are influenced by a skilled workforce, an effective business intermediary such as Choose DuPage, affordable and desirable housing stock, high performing schools, and attractive work environments. Attracting and retaining employers translates to improved economic vitality for the region.

5.1. Ensure that DuPage County residents have the competitive skills necessary to create and maintain a high quality workforce.

5.1.1. Continue the partnership with Choose DuPage to strengthen the County's business retention, expansion, and attraction initiatives while attracting, retaining, and engaging a talented workforce.
5.1.2. Further expand relationships between workforce development and partner businesses regarding talent management/referral, skill development/needs, education and experience.

5.2. Pursue sound and sustainable economic growth and development practices.

5.2.1. Engage with municipal partners and property owners in short and long-term land

use planning efforts on major transportation corridors to facilitate coordinated development efforts.

5.2.2. Review DuPage County's Impact Fee Program to ensure that it continues to reflect a balance between development and transportation.

5.2.3. Continue maintenance of flood control facilities to ensure they offer maximum protection.

5.2.4. Make land in DuPage County more conducive to development and better utilized through incentives and flood reduction.

5.3. Promote and support new development by providing accurate data to developers, streamlining the permitting and regulatory processes, and championing DuPage County as a desirable area in which to live and work.

5.3.1. Work with Choose DuPage to promote regional economic development while making DuPage County a top destination for entrepreneurs and small businesses/startups.

5.3.2. Periodically review and update the County Building Codes to facilitate consistency among municipalities and the County and to minimize the burden for new development.

5.3.3. Streamline permitting to reduce delays and promote development.

5.3.4. Provide accurate stormwater and floodplain-related regulatory and zoning information to support effective and efficient development in DuPage County.

5.3.5. Continue a regional collaboration to improve truck permitting processes.

IMPERATIVE 6: DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

6. The County must build upon existing initiatives and expand opportunities for our diverse population and for adults with disabilities, to promote inclusivity among our employees, businesses and residents. As leaders, we value the diverse makeup of our communities and recognize our greatest asset is our dedicated, talented, and diverse workforce. The County will embrace and prepare for further demographic changes and promote programs that help disabled adults gain independence. In order to accomplish a primary goal of DuPage County government, to deliver the most cost-effective and efficient public services, requires the contributions of all qualified individuals, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation. By prioritizing diversity and inclusion, the County will build upon existing efforts to ensure the County's workforce, procurement process, and community outreach programs embrace both cultural diversity and the inclusion of all individuals.

6.1 Build upon operational procedures to foster our County's workforce to better engage our County's increasingly diverse population and to provide additional employment opportunities among our disabled population.

6.1.1 Continue to attract a diverse county workforce that is inclusive of all levels of skills, knowledge, abilities and backgrounds, and provides the necessary ongoing support to employees.

6.1.2 Identify potential career paths, educational requirements and potential barriers to employment to ensure employees countywide are able to remain successful in their employment endeavors and take advantage of promotional opportunities.

6.1.3 Continue and expand outreach and recruitment efforts in collaboration with professional associations, nonprofit organizations, the business community, and with other units of government to find the best talent that reflects our diverse region.
6.1.4 Coordinate with key employer and business development stakeholders to ensure that best practices and appropriate policies are in place to cultivate and train a diverse workforce that includes all job levels and promotes an inclusive workplace culture.
6.1.5 Develop professional development and training of County employees on team building, conflict resolution, acceptance and diversity in the workplace.

6.2 Develop programs and policies that expand opportunities for our diverse population to be a vital part of the County's procurement process.

6.2.1 Develop and sustain changes in the County's procurement policy and practices to provide a fair opportunity to disadvantaged-business enterprises so they can compete to provide goods and services to the County.
6.2.2 Provide outreach to community partners to advise them of contracting opportunities and to help remove potential barriers toward participation in County projects.
6.2.3 Conduct and participate in outreach measures for vendors and suppliers to expand procurement opportunities.
6.2.4 Ensure that only firms that fully meet eligibility standards are permitted to participate as women-owned, minority-owned, and veteran-owned firms.
6.2.5 Ensure nondiscrimination in all awards and administration of County-awarded contracts and develop the County's women-owned, minority-owned, and veteran-owned program to comply with applicable laws.

6.3 Enhance community outreach to the public and develop local leaders to serve their communities.

6.3.1 Continue to seek diverse candidates for County appointed agencies to ensure everyone has an opportunity to represent their community.
6.3.2 Engage community partners to disseminate County messaging that reaches out to all cultures and to those for whom English is a second language.
6.3.3 Create effective communications and outreach to communities who may benefit from County programs and services.

6.4 Sustain existing programming and develop new initiatives that provide educational and employment opportunities for diverse and disabled segments of our workforce.

6.4.1 Continue federally-funded workforce development programs that place an emphasis on individuals who face barriers to employment, which typically include: disabled workers, at-risk youth, the homeless, the formerly incarcerated, individuals recovering from addiction, refugees and immigrants, and all other underrepresented populations.
6.4.2 Create innovative and effective new models to connect diverse and disabled populations to quality vocational training and career pathway development that will allow for personal and family sustaining employment and independence.
6.4.3 Develop employer-driven initiatives that increase the diversity of workforces Countywide and lead to a more inclusive community.