January 31, 2017

Village of Oswego
100 Parkers Mill
Oswego, IL 60543

RE: 2017-2020 Strategic Plan- Village of Oswego

Dear Village President Johnson,

On behalf of the Center for Governmental Studies at Northern Illinois University, I am pleased to present this 2017-2020 Strategic Plan and Summary Report to The Village of Oswego.

The plan reflects the organization’s commitment to strategic planning, and to delivering measurable results. I appreciate the dedicated effort put forth by you, the Board of Trustees, and senior staff.

I also want to thank Village Administrator Daniel Di Santo and Assistant Village Administrator Christina Burns for their assistance and support during the process.

Yours truly,

Craig R. Rapp
Senior Associate
President, Craig Rapp LLC
Executive Summary

The Village of Oswego engaged in a strategic planning process over three sessions on November 29, December 20, 2016, and January 6, 2017. The sessions yielded a draft strategic plan for the three-year period 2017-2020.

The strategic plan consists of five strategic priorities, which are the highest priority issues for the next three years; a series of desired outcomes, which provide a vision of success, key outcome indicators, which will be monitored to determine success; and a set of performance targets, which define the successful outcome.

The Board and senior staff engaged in two major efforts to examine their operations, and the needs and expectations of their customers. The first, an environmental scan, conducted by staff, examined the current conditions of Village operations and the external influences affecting those operations. The second was a strategic planning retreat held over two meetings—November 29 and December 20, 2016.

On November 29, the leadership team began the process of developing the strategic plan. The group reviewed the environmental scan, and examined the organization’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis). They identified the major challenges facing the Village.

On December 20, based upon the challenges facing the community, the group adopted a set of five strategic priorities. They then developed a set of desired outcomes, key indicators and performance targets for each priority, which established the desired performance for the next three years.

On January 6, the senior management team met and developed a set of strategic initiatives. The initiatives are the projects and programs that will be necessary to achieve the outcomes identified.

The Village Board reviewed the revised plan at its January 17 Committee of the Whole Meeting, providing final input. The Strategic Plan was adopted at the February 7 Regular Village Board Meeting.

The strategic priorities, key outcome indicators, targets and initiatives are summarized on the following page.
Vision
Oswego will continue to be a friendly, caring, and forward-thinking community that provides a high quality of life based upon sustainable growth and a respect for our rich heritage and environment.

Mission
It is our mission to responsibly grow our community and maintain the public’s trust. We do this through the innovative and collaborative delivery of public services that meet the community’s quality of life expectations.

Values
Integrity: We are honest, ethical and we honor our commitments.
Accountability: We take responsibility for our actions, and are transparent in the fulfilment of our public duties
Innovative: We value creative thinking and problem solving in our service to the public
Pride in work performed: We value a commitment to excellence and pride in the performance of our work
Community: We believe in contributing to something greater than ourselves
# Village of Oswego Strategic Plan Summary 2017-2020

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<th>Strategic Priority</th>
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| **Financial Sustainability**       | Meet our fund balance policy in General Fund                                     | Fiscal year fund balance-General Fund                              | Revenues exceed expenditures in the General Fund                                                 | a) Conduct analyses-megaprojects  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | b) Create a revenue strategy  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | c) Analyze programs for cost-effectiveness  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | *focus on public engagement                                                      |
| FINANCE                            | Reduced reliance on sales tax                                                    | Revenue sources                                                   | Sales tax reduced by ___% of total revenue                                                      |                                                                                     |
|                                    | Clarity on mega projects                                                        | Financial analyses                                                | Funding options identified for megaprojects by ____                                           |                                                                                     |
| **Infrastructure Maintenance and Expansion** | Sustainable water source                                                       | -Analyses -Project schedules                                      | Sustainable water source connected in 2026                                                      |                                                                                     |
|                                    | Safe and efficient Wolf’s Crossing                                              | -Analyses -Milestones, plan                                       | Secure funding -$14M for Section 1 by 2020                                                      | a) Water source decision process  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | b) Water plan implementation  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | c) Master plan –Wolf’s Crossing  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | d) Funding strategy-Wolf’s Crossing  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | e) Funding strategy-CIP  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | f) Phase I- Metra study  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | g) Metra lobbying strategy                                                      |
| OPERATIONS                         | Metra service to Oswego                                                         | CMAP plan project schedule                                        | Oswego is a high priority project by 2018                                                       |                                                                                     |
|                                    | Safe and efficient infrastructure                                               | Maintenance plan                                                  | CIP funding in place to meet current needs                                                      |                                                                                     |
| **Community Engagement**           | Recognized as a regional destination                                            | RPP implementation schedule                                       | - ___% increase in online visits - ___% increase in H/MT visits                                | a) Complete and Implement Regional Positioning Plan  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | b) Implement tourism plan  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | c) Develop marketing plan-Village services  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | d) Create internal service response to citizen feedback  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | e) Conduct community survey  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | f) Marketing and promotion program for community events  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | *focus on metrics                                                            |
| CUSTOMER                           | Positive public perception of services                                          | Village survey, citizen feedback                                  | ___% increase in public satisfaction with services                                            |                                                                                     |
|                                    | Well-attended events that enhance connectedness                                  | -Attendance -Community survey results                             | - ___% increase in attendance /yr. - ___% report feeling connected                              |                                                                                     |
| **Effective Growth and Development** | Expanded downtown Redevelopment Agreements                                     | - Two ground-breakings by July 2019 in TIF District               | - ___% increase in TIF                                                                          | a) 59 S. Adams St. project plan  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | b) Old Village Hall Block plan  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | c) TIF District marketing plan  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | d) Residential development strategy  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | e) Economic development strategic plan                                        |
| GROWTH                             | Growth in residential units                                                     | -Existing & new developments                                     | =/> 100 new residential units under permit/year                                                 |                                                                                     |
|                                    | Expand commercial investment                                                     | -Building permits -EAV                                           | New commercial investment of $___/ year                                                          |                                                                                     |
| **Productive and Engaged Workforce** | Staff sized to meet growing community’s needs                                  | Workload indicators                                               | Develop a long-term projection for service delivery and staffing                               | a) ERP implementation-establish best practices-operating processes  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | b) Shared services initiative  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | c) Create leadership development program  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | d) Conduct employee survey  
                                 |                                                                                  |                                                    |                                                                                                                  | e) Connect strategic plan to evaluation system                                |
| WORKFORCE                          | Highly qualified workforce                                                       | Internal hiring rate                                              | 50% or > of non-entry level positions filled from                                              |                                                                                     |
|                                    | Empowered employees                                                            | Opinions/employee feedback                                       | ___% or > report feeling empowered, supported                                                  |                                                                                     |
|                                    | Accountable organization                                                        | -Results achieved, bonuses, surveys                              | ___% goals achieved                                                                             |                                                                                     |

* Some targets are blank intentionally, to enable development of baseline measures
Village of Oswego Strategic Planning Process

Strategic planning is a process that helps leaders examine the current state of the organization, determine a future course, establish priorities, and define a set of actions to achieve desired outcomes. The process followed by the Village of Oswego was designed to answer four key questions: (1) Where are we now? (2) Where are we going? (3) How will we get there? and (4) What will we do?

Environmental Scan—Assessing the Current Environment
To begin the strategic planning process, the senior staff conducted an environmental scan, which is a review of elements in the external and internal environments that impact performance. Included in the scan was a detailed review and summary of finance, operations, staffing, facilities and equipment. The scan revealed the most difficult challenges facing the Village overall, as well as in each of the departments. The scan was presented to the Village Board, and used as foundation and background for the strategic planning retreat.

Strategic Plan Development—Reviewing the Environment, Setting Priorities
On November 29, 2016, the leadership team—the Board of Trustees and senior staff—held the first of two meetings to develop a strategic plan. As part of the exploration of “Where are we now?” the group was challenged to define the current organizational culture and its value proposition—understanding that an organization’s culture, and the value proposition it puts forth provide the foundation for the way in which services are delivered and strategic direction is set.

The group engaged in an extended discussion regarding the value proposition and its relationship to the culture. While there were a variety of different perceptions regarding the value proposition, it was generally believed that customer intimacy reflects much of the current approach, however, operational excellence is important and will continue to be important for operational stability, therefore it should be the primary value proposition, with customer intimacy as a secondary focus.

The team then conducted a brief review of their Mission, Vision and Values statements. The team felt that each needed slight adjustments to reflect current reality, and they worked on new ideas for each. They brainstormed key concepts, which were used to create draft statements. The proposed statements, along with the originals, are listed below:

Mission Statement (2012-2017 Strategic Plan):
The Village of Oswego provides a vibrant, sustainable community, rich in heritage, prosperity and genuine partnership, for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.
Brainstormed Mission Statement concepts: Partnership, collaboration, responsibly grow the community, preserving heritage, enhancing qualities of life, growing together, being innovative, building confidence, creative, imaginative, public trust

Mission Statement (draft):
It is our mission to responsibly grow our community, and maintain the public’s trust. We do this through the innovative and collaborative delivery of public services that meet the community’s quality of life expectations.

Governance and Municipal Services
Elected officials and staff partner effectively to guide and serve our community

Prospering Economy
Innovative industrial, professional and commercial growth advances and sustains our economic vitality

Community Enrichment
Quality development and use of public and private space, culture and entertainment make Oswego a sought-after destination

Environmental Sensibility
Plans, decisions and practices are environmentally conscious and honor the natural environment

Culture of Partnership
People eagerly participate in community life and enjoy creating a Village that works for all

Strategic Infrastructure
Highly effective public facilities and modes of transportation keep pace with community needs

Brainstormed Vision Statement concepts: Enlightened, friendly, engaged, thriving, diverse, successful, collaboration, responsible, sustainable, safe, caring people, respectful, curious, forward-thinking, tradition, heritage, vibrant, stewardship, playful, neighborly, optimistic, connected

Vision Statement (draft):
“We envision Oswego to be a friendly, caring, and forward-thinking community that provides a high quality of life based upon sustainable growth and a respect for our rich heritage.”

Values (2012-2017 Strategic Plan):
In Oswego, we:
- Demonstrate integrity, respect and goodwill
- Focus on the well-being of the whole community
- Are open-minded and listen well to the ideas, beliefs and opinions of others
- Trust that the intentions of others are good
- Are accountable, transparent and fiscally responsible
- Serve with dedication and unwavering commitment
Brainstormed Values: *Integrity/ethical, accountability, collaboration, creativity, innovative, engaged, pride in work, passion, community-commitment to something greater than ourselves, results-oriented, loyalty, public service*

Values (draft):

**Integrity**
*We are honest, ethical and we honor our commitments.*

**Accountability**
*We take responsibility for our actions, and are transparent in the fulfillment of our public duties*

**Innovative**
*We value creative problem-solving and original thinking in our service to the public*

**Pride in work performed**
*We value a commitment to excellence and pride in the performance of our work*

**Community**
*We believe in contributing to something greater than ourselves*

**SWOT Analysis**
Following the mission, vision and values discussion, the group assessed the Village’s operating environment. This was done via a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis—a process that examines the organization’s internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities and threats in the external environment. To facilitate this, a SWOT questionnaire was distributed to all participants in advance of the planning session. The results of the questionnaire revealed the most frequently mentioned characteristics in each area:

**STRENGTHS**
- Collaboration (internally/externally), Leadership (unified Board/strong management), Financial Stability, forward thinking culture--professional development, CIP, ERP

**WEAKNESSES**
- Staffing is stretched thin (high-level projects), employee recruitment/retention, communication, staff engagement, wage dissatisfaction, succession planning, staff afraid to take risks

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Growth/development—residential, commercial, downtown, infrastructure—Metra, Wolf’s Crossing, natural resources—environmental conservation, Fox River, demographics

**THREATS**
- Taxes, Springfield issues, transportation (lack of), growth-stagnation, water

The group engaged in an exercise using the summarized SWOT data. They compared strengths with opportunities and weaknesses with threats, to determine which opportunities would
maximize strengths, and which weaknesses would be exacerbated by the threats. This crystalized the current challenges and opportunities facing the community. The results are listed below:

STRENGTHS-OPPORTUNITIES
(Make good things happen)
• Forward thinking-culture
• Leadership
• Financial stability
• Collaboration
• Infrastructure
• Natural resources

WEAKNESSES-THREATS
(Keep bad things from happening)
• Staffing stretched too thin/growth stagnation—serving future growth, planning for growth
• Taxes/wages/Springfield
• Transportation/recruitment

A discussion ensued regarding the two lists. A broad set of issues and challenges facing the Village emerged:

ISSUES/CHALLENGES
• Growth and development
• Infrastructure – building and paying for it
• Natural resources
• Staffing
• Communications—risk taking
• Recruitment
• Springfield/State
• Tax burden
• Demographic changes—challenges of diversity—embracing and welcoming
• Engagement-community
• Revenue/financial sustainability

The group agreed that to successfully address these challenges, they would need to focus and prioritize their efforts. From that discussion, a set of six Strategic Priorities emerged:

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
1. Financial Sustainability
2. Infrastructure—Maintenance and Expansion
3. Community Engagement
4. Effective Growth and Development
5. Productive and Engaged Workforce

**Defining the Strategic Priorities**
To clarify the meaning of each priority in the context of The Village of Oswego, the group identified key concepts for each. These will be used to develop final definitions.

**Financial Sustainability**
Pensions, diversification of revenues, sustainable revenue sources, high reliance on sales tax, Springfield issues, fee structures, financing for mega projects

**Infrastructure—Maintenance and Expansion**
Underground—streets, sewer, water, storm sewer, mass transit, facilities, streetscape, capital equipment-rolling stock, appropriate/timely expansion, adequate funding

**Community Engagement**
Greater involvement/caring, regional positioning, bond with new community, conversation—not dialogue, welcoming and engaging all groups and segments (marginalized), customer service/problem solving practices

**Effective Growth and Development**
Residential development, commercial growth, meets needs, downtown redevelopment, environmentally responsible

**Productive and Engaged Workforce**
Recruitment, retention, training, capable of meeting changing needs, succession planning/leadership training, managing outsourced services, appropriate staffing ratios, continuous improvement, competitive compensation

**Determining Success: Defining the Desired Outcomes, Indicators, Targets**
On December 20, the group defined a set of desired outcomes for each strategic priority. Once the outcomes were established, Key Outcome Indicators (KOI’s) were identified and Performance Targets were developed. KOI’s are measures that will be tracked to reveal progress toward the desired outcomes. Performance Targets define successful outcomes, expressed in measurable terms.

The alignment created between Strategic Priorities, Outcomes, KOI’s, and Targets is important, not only for clarity, but also for maintaining a disciplined focus on the desired results.

**Implementing the Vision: Developing Strategic Initiatives and Action Plans**
To successfully address the strategic priorities and achieve the intended outcomes expressed in the Targets, it is necessary to have a focused set of actions, including detailed implementation steps to guide organizational effort. The Village of Oswego will accomplish this through strategic initiatives developed for each priority. Strategic initiatives are broadly described, but narrowly focused activities that are aligned with the priorities, and targeted to the achievement of outcomes expressed in the Targets.

**Strategic Planning Participants**

The strategic plan was developed with the hard work and dedication of many individuals. The Board, elected officials and senior staff worked collaboratively, defining a direction and a set of outcomes that are important to the Village. The entire group spent time engaged in new ways of thinking to come up with a set of plans that will help the Village successfully measure and achieve the outcomes they defined.

**Board of Trustees**

*President*  
Gail Johnson

*Trustees*  
Ryan Kauffman  
Karin McCarthy  
Pam Parr  
Luiz Perez  
Judy Sollinger  
Joe West

**Senior Management Team**

*Village Administrator*  
Daniel Di Santo

*Assistant Village Administrator*  
Christina Burns

*Community Development Director*  
Rod Zenner

*Community Relations Manager*  
Michele Brown

*Building and Zoning Manager*  
Jay Hoover

*Finance Director*  
Mark Horton

*GIS/IT Coordinator*  
Joe Renzetti

*Police Chief*  
Jeff Burgner

*Public Works Director/PE*  
Jennifer Hughes

*Village Clerk*  
Tina Touchette

*Economic Development Director*  
Corinna Cole