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City of Monticello  
Piatt County, Illinois  
Five Year Strategic Plan  
2015 – 2020

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MSA Project No. 12806008

Prepared by:  
MSA Professional Services, Inc.  
201 West Springfield Ave., Suite 400  
Champaign, Illinois 61820

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Communities today are faced with the difficult task of allocating limited resources among a seemingly unlimited number of demands and needs for public services. In many instances, local officials must determine the merits of one project over another without the benefit of comparison, which may result in misjudgment and further limit the community's ability to act precisely on major budget allocation decisions. One method available to local units of government to help manage and systematize the prioritization process is through a Strategic Plan.

The City of Monticello has taken the next steps in defining itself as an economically stable, viable and sustainable community. By undergoing the strategic planning process, Monticello's leaders are becoming proactive, rather than reactive, thus lessening the need to manage crisis by crisis. The strategic planning process assisted the City in creating a vision, developing a mission statement and defining its long and short term goals. Next, the goals were organized and prioritized through which action steps were created. The intention of this process is to make implementation of the vision and goals easier and more effective for the City.

To begin, a link to an online community survey was distributed via the City's website, Facebook page, and newspaper. This effective, low cost tool was an easy way to reach the entire community. Additionally, information was collected from the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, the Downtown Enhancement Plan Steering Committee, Stakeholder interviews, and from high school students. The information gathered from the survey was then organized and presented to the Council during an evening workshop.

The Council spent an evening discussing the assets and liabilities of the community. From these assets and liabilities, the Council formed long term goals for the community.

This short, but effective process resulted in the following Strategic Plan. Key elements of this plan are ***Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Land Use and Housing, Public Infrastructure and Utilities, Economic Development, Downtown, and Quality of Life***. Once the goals were established, an implementation plan was outlined which included responsible parties, action items, timeframes, and potential funding sources—all of which were prioritized.

## ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

The Council was presented with the assets and liabilities defined by the community survey, the steering committees of the Comprehensive Plan and the Downtown Plan, City Staff, Stakeholder Interviews, and the High School Students. From these, the Council prioritized their assets and liabilities. The following section summarizes the Council's discussion.

### PARKS & RECREATION

- Haven for health – Individual and Team Activities
- Want vs. Need (Ensure priorities across the board)
- Collaboration – Education and Awareness
- Learning Opportunities/Participation
- Economic Development Opportunities with Sporting Events (hotel stays, food/beverage, etc.)
- Tourism Opportunity

### TRANSPORTATION

- Need to continue collaboration with Railroad and IDOT
- Need to have a plan for rising transportation costs (high commuter population)
- Need well maintained roads
- Continue to investigate and add curb and gutter in older parts of town, where feasible
- Encourage continuation of Railroad for economic development

### LAND USE & HOUSING

- Incentives for development costs
- Lower price homes come from within City Limits → rehab of older homes
- Focus on existing housing stock, maintain assets, encourage walkability
- Promote infill and redevelopment
- Collaborations (Habitat for Humanity)
- Maintain Historic Character of Older Neighborhoods
- Continue housing code enforcement
- Downtown Upper Residential (Good quality and maintained)

### PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES

- Keep up with technology
- Continuous monitoring and updates
- Asset Management
- Should not negatively affect residents or disrupt the high quality of life
- Identify potential funding sources for ongoing maintenance
- Public education and awareness
- Ensure flooding does not affect residents

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Attract high tech industry development
- Currently a reactionary process, become proactive instead of retroactive
- BUY LOCAL
- Currently have an educated workforce
- Analyze community indicators to kick start attracting potential industries
- Retain youth with jobs
- Family Oriented
- Focus on community development instead of economic development?
- Incubators
- Competition with surrounding communities
- Promote fiber optic cables
- Find “unique” factor and exploit
- Telecommuters?
- Promoting fiber optic for residents and potential businesses –additive of high quality of life

## DOWNTOWN

Due to time constraints, the Council was unable to directly discuss the Downtown at the first meeting, although it was brought up in relation to other topics regularly.

## QUALITY OF LIFE

Throughout the process, one phrase kept appearing whether it referred to current conditions or about future conditions: “High Quality of Life”. Council agreed that every decision they make should ensure that the result will reinforce the high quality of life expected by the residents.

## GOALS & ACTION STEPS

From the assets and liabilities, goals were then formed to help eliminate the liabilities and to maintain/enhance Monticello's assets.

### PARKS & RECREATION

#### GOAL: PROVIDE ACCESS TO FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AGES OF THE COMMUNITY.

1. *Continue to facilitate and improve park and recreation facilities, programs, amenities and special events.*
2. *Study feasibility of a Community Indoor Recreation Facility.*
3. *Improve supply of information (uniform interpretive signage, websites, online forms, maps, etc.) at and for community facilities and key attractions.*
4. *Pursue grants to update community facilities.*
5. *Evaluate parks for compliance with ADA standards and prepare a transition plan to make necessary changes over time.*

### TRANSPORTATION

#### GOAL 1: ENSURE ALL RESIDENTS ARE ABLE TO SAFELY GET AROUND THE CITY VIA VEHICLE, BICYCLE, OR FOOT.

1. *Analyze future road extensions and connections for future development areas to maintain proper street connections and traffic flow.*
2. *Require sidewalks for all new development and major redevelopment projects, whether sidewalks currently exist adjacent or not. Encourage neighboring properties to install sidewalks.*
3. *Install sidewalks where none currently exists.*
4. *Assess need for bike racks throughout the community.*
5. *Initiate a trail system and interconnectivity of parks.*
6. *Work with IDOT to ensure safe and proper crossings on 105 in the Downtown.*
7. *Increase accessibility throughout the community by the continued installation of ADA curb ramps.*
8. *Adopt Bicycle Master Plan.*

#### GOAL 2: ENSURE EFFICIENT AND SAFE TRANSPORT TO AND FROM SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES.

1. *Explore the effectiveness/need of a Ride Share Program via the City's website to ensure residents can effectively commute to neighboring communities.*
2. *Continue dialogue with the Illinois Department of Transportation as they explore alternative transportation modes through Illinois.*

3. *Continue to coordinate with PiatTran and their efforts to transport residents to surrounding communities.*

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**GOAL 3: ENSURE ALL TRANSPORTATION ROUTES ARE DESIGNED WITH AN AESTHETIC QUALITY WHICH DOES NOT COMPROMISE SAFETY OR EFFICIENCY.**

1. *Construct and maintain uniform interpretive wayfinding signage at key attraction locations to further promote the assets of the community.*
2. *Create and enhance entry features to the community and to the downtown (e.g. landscaping, signage, banners, gateways, monuments, etc.).*

## LAND USE & HOUSING

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**GOAL 1: THE CITY WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE PROCESSES AND GUIDELINES TO ALLOW QUALITY HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS.**

1. *Continually analyze zoning and subdivision ordinances to ensure quality housing that meets current standards and needs.*
2. *Update land development ordinances to require components of traditional neighborhood design and consideration of existing neighborhood context. Greenspace, trails, landscaping and well design hardscape should all be considered.*
3. *Evaluate surrounding communities' incentive programs and types/styles for residential development to ensure Monticello remains competitive in housing development.*

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**GOAL 2: NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL BE CONTIGUOUS TO THE CITY.**

1. *Update land development ordinances to require components of traditional neighborhood design and consideration of existing neighborhood context. Greenspace, trails, landscaping and well design hardscape should all be considered.*

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**GOAL 3: NEW DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT WILL MEET HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS.**

1. *Explore incentives to promote rehabilitation of existing housing within a historic preservation context.*

## PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES

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**GOAL: PROVIDE ENOUGH QUALITY AND ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENSURE RESIDENTS A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE.**

1. *Conduct regular review of sewer/water capacities to serve future growth and development.*
2. *Pursue shared services among governmental agencies as opportunities arise. Especially around I-72.*
3. *I and I Program Implementation.*
4. *Create Stormwater Management Plan.*

5. *Use good retention/detention methods for new development and ensure methods are used in redevelopment projects.*

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### GOAL: PROVIDE AN INVITING ENVIRONMENT FOR INDUSTRIES AND BUSINESSES.

1. *Identify funding sources and mechanisms for public realm and capital improvements to support economic development.*
2. *Identify target business types and offer incentives to businesses in those sectors to locate or expand in Monticello.*
3. *Develop and implement an internship and summer job programs to encourage residence of youth after college.*
4. *Coordinate with local educational institutions to identify employment growth opportunities.*
5. *Continue to develop the easy to understand “one-stop-shop” for economic development on the City website, with links to partner resources.*
6. *Participate in monthly communications with key stakeholders to discuss the future of the area and maintain an open dialogue among entities.*

## DOWNTOWN

### GOAL 1: MONTICELLO WILL BE AN “OVER NIGHT DESTINATION” BRINGING A FULL DAY OF SHOPPING, DINING, SIGHTSEEING, AND RECREATING TO VISITORS.

1. *Market to a developer to open a Bed & Breakfast in or near Downtown Monticello.*
2. *Implement a Downtown “Trolley”/Train Program which connects key areas of the region.*
3. *Implement an interactive, multi-functional wayfinding system/plan at and to key destinations within the Monticello region.*
4. *Rebuild the Tourism Board to make it a collaborative force.*
5. *Encourage updating existing overnight facilities.*

### GOAL 2: MONTICELLO WILL HAVE A WELL-DEVELOPED, HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WHICH IS AESTHETICALLY PLEASING AND MULTI-FUNCTIONAL.

1. *Adopt and Implement Design Guidelines to preserve and enhance the historic character.*
2. *Educate building and business owners on guidelines and standards.*
3. *Take a field trip with business and building owners to cities with adopted and enforced guidelines.*
4. *Create a recognition program for good design and maintenance within Downtown Monticello.*
5. *Create incentive programs to encourage appropriate (re)development within Downtown Monticello.*
6. *Improve streetscape along Route 105 (Market) through the downtown.*
7. *Install monuments at key entries into the downtown.*

**QUALITY OF LIFE**

Throughout the process, one phrase kept appearing whether it referred to current conditions or about future conditions: “High Quality of Life”. It is with this in mind that the following overarching goal was created:

**GOAL 1: CONTINUALLY ENSURE ALL RESIDENTS HAVE HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE CITY.**

1. *Create Wi-Fi spots at key community facilities, including parks.*
2. *Adopt and Implement Downtown Enhancement Plan.*
3. *Continuously update the City website and all social media outlets to emphasize the assets of Monticello as a vibrant, modern community with a rich history and an exceptional quality of life not found in surrounding communities.*
4. *Encourage businesses to be accommodating toward elderly and families - i.e. automatic doors.*

**GOAL 2: THE CITY WILL SUPPORT THE ARTS AND THE BEAUTIFICATION OF MONTICELLO.**

1. *Develop a Public Art/Cultural Master Plan.*
2. *Include a public arts component in development Requests for Proposal for City-owned sites.*
3. *Continue to support the development of Historic Preservation and consider a Historic Preservation Action Plan.*

**ACTION PLAN**

**PARKS & RECREATION**

	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
PROVIDE ACCESS TO FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL AGES OF THE COMMUNITY.				
	Parks and Recreation City Staff/Council, Main Street, Private Clubs	Continue to facilitate and improve park and recreation facilities, programs, amenities and special events.		IDNR
	City Staff/Council, School District	Study feasibility of a Community Indoor Recreation Facility.		
	City Staff/Council, School District, Businesses	Improve supply of information (uniform interpretive signage, websites, online forms, maps, etc.) at and for community facilities and key attractions.		
	City Staff/Council	Pursue grants to update community facilities.		
	Parks and Recreation, City Council	Evaluate parks for compliance with ADA standards and prepare a transition plan to make necessary changes over time.		IDNR

TRANSPORTATION

	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
ENSURE ALL RESIDENTS ARE ABLE TO SAFELY GET AROUND THE CITY VIA VEHICLE, BICYCLE, OR FOOT.				
	City Staff/Council	Analyze future road extensions and connections for future development areas to maintain proper street connections and traffic flow.		
	City Staff, Plan Commission, City Council	Require sidewalks for all new development and major redevelopment projects, whether sidewalks currently exist adjacent or not. Encourage neighboring properties to install sidewalks.		
	City Staff, City Council	Install sidewalks where none currently exists.		Safe Routes to School, TIF
	City Staff/Council	Assess need for bike racks throughout the community.		Community Foundation of East Central Illinois, TIF
	Parks and Recreation	Initiate a trail system and interconnectivity of parks.		ITEP, IDNR, TIF
	City Staff/Council, IDOT	Work with IDOT to ensure safe and proper crossings on 105 in the Downtown.		IDOT, ITEP, SRTS, TIF
	City Staff/Council	Increase accessibility throughout the community by the continued installation of ADA curb ramps.		Safe Routes to School, TIF
		Adopt Bicycle Master Plan.		
ENSURE EFFICIENT AND SAFE TRANSPORT TO AND FROM SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES.				
	City Staff/Council	Explore the effectiveness/need of a Ride Share Program via the City's website to ensure residents can effectively commute to neighboring communities.		
	City Staff/ Council, IDOT	Continue dialogue with the Illinois Department of Transportation as they explore alternative transportation modes through Illinois.		
	City Staff/Council	Continue to coordinate with PiatTran and their efforts to transport residents to surrounding communities.		
ENSURE ALL TRANSPORTATION ROUTES ARE DESIGNED WITH AN AESTHETIC QUALITY WHICH DOES NOT COMPROMISE SAFETY OR EFFICIENCY.				
	City, Main Street, Chamber	Construct and maintain uniform interpretive wayfinding signage at key attraction locations to further promote the assets of the community.		TIF, ITEP
	City, Main Street	Create and enhance entry features to the community and to the downtown (e.g. landscaping, signage, banners, gateways, monuments, etc.).		ITEP; TIF

LAND USE & HOUSING

	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
THE CITY WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE PROCESSES AND GUIDELINES TO ALLOW QUALITY HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS.				
	City Staff, Plan Commission, City Council	Continually analyze zoning and subdivision ordinances to ensure quality housing that meets current standards and needs.		
	City Staff, Plan Commission, City Council	Update land development ordinances to require components of traditional neighborhood design and consideration of existing neighborhood context. Greenspace, trails, landscaping and well design hardscape should all be considered.		
	City Staff, Realtors	Evaluate surrounding communities' incentive programs and types/styles for residential development to ensure Monticello remains competitive in housing development.		
NEW DEVELOPMENT WILL BE CONTIGUOUS TO THE CITY.				
	City Staff, Plan Commission, City Council	Update land development ordinances to require components of traditional neighborhood design and consideration of existing neighborhood context. Greenspace, trails, landscaping and well design hardscape should all be considered.		
NEW DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT WILL MEET HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS.				
	City Staff, Historic Preservation Commission, Plan Commission, City Council	Explore incentives to promote rehabilitation of existing housing within a historic preservation context.		Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Community Development Assistance Program

**PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE & UTILITIES**

	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
PROVIDE ENOUGH QUALITY AND ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENSURE RESIDENTS A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE.				
	Public Works, City Council	Conduct regular review of sewer/water capacities to serve future growth and development.		CDAP - Public Infrastructure, IEPA State Revolving Loan Fund, TIF
	City Council	Pursue shared services among governmental agencies as opportunities arise. Especially around I-72.		
	Public Works, City Council	I and I Program Implementation.		CDAP - Public Infrastructure
	Public Works, City Council	Create Stormwater Management Plan.		TIF
	Public Works, City Council	Use good retention/detention methods for new development and ensure methods are used in redevelopment projects.		

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
PROVIDE AN INVITING ENVIRONMENT FOR INDUSTRIES AND BUSINESSES.				
	City Staff	Identify funding sources and mechanisms for public realm and capital improvements to support economic development.		TIF
	City Staff	Identify target business types and offer incentives to businesses in those sectors to locate or expand in Monticello.		TIF
	City Staff, U of I Extension, Local Businesses	Develop and implement an internship and summer job programs to encourage residence of youth after college.		
	City Staff, Illinois Workforce Development	Coordinate with local educational institutions to identify employment growth opportunities.		
	City Staff	Continue to develop the easy to understand “one-stop-shop” for economic development on the City website, with links to partner resources.		
	Chamber, City, Main Street, Local Developers	Participate in monthly communications with key stakeholders to discuss the future of the area and maintain an open dialogue among entities.		

**DOWNTOWN**

	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
MONTICELLO WILL BE AN "OVER NIGHT DESINATION" BRINGING A FULL DAY OF SHOPPING, DINING, SIGHTSEEING, AND RECREATING TO VISITORS.				
	City, DCEO, Developers, Allerton (U of I)	Market to a developer to open a Bed & Breakfast in or near Downtown Monticello.		
	Allerton, Downtown, Railway Museum, PiatTran, Eli Field, The Trail Blazers	Implement a Downtown "Trolley"/Train Program which connects key areas of the region.		
	City, Chamber, Main Street, Allerton, Railway Museum, Eli Field, The Trail Blazers	Implement an interactive, multi-functional wayfinding system/plan at and to key destinations within the Monticello region.		IDOT
		Rebuild the Tourism Board to make it a collaborative force.		State of Illinois
	Hotels, Motels, City, Developers	Encourage updating existing overnight facilities		
MONTICELLO WILL HAVE A WELL-DEVELOPED, HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WHICH IS AESTHETICALLY PLEASING AND MULTI-FUNCTIONAL.				
	City, Developers, Main Street	Adopt and Implement Design Guidelines to preserve and enhance the historic character.		Tax Incentives, IDOT/ITEP
	Main Street, City, Business Owners	Educate building and business owners on guidelines and standards.		IHPA, Main Street incentives via City
	Main Street, Business Owners, City	Take a field trip with business and building owners to cities with adopted and enforced guidelines.		
	Main Street, City	Create a recognition program for good design and maintenance within Downtown Monticello.		Incentives
	City, Main Street, Chamber	Create incentive programs to encourage appropriate (re)development within Downtown Monticello.		
	City, IDOT	Improve streetscape along Route 105 (Market) through the downtown.		IDOT, TIF
	City, IDOT	Install monuments at key entries into the downtown.		IDOT, TIF

QUALITY OF LIFE

	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	ACTION ITEMS	TIME FRAME	POTENTIAL FUNDING
CONTINUALLY ENSURE ALL RESIDENTS HAVE HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE IN ALL ASPECTS OF THE CITY.				
	Parks and Recreation, Forest Preserve	Create Wi-Fi spots at key community facilities, including parks.		
	City, Main Street	Adopt and Implement Downtown Enhancement Plan.		TIF
	City Staff	Continuously update the City website and all social media outlets to emphasize the assets of Monticello as a vibrant, modern community with a rich history and an exceptional quality of life not found in surrounding communities.		
	City Staff, Business Owners, Developers	Encourage businesses to be accommodating toward elderly and families - i.e. automatic doors.		
THE CITY WILL SUPPORT THE ARTS AND THE BEAUTIFICATION OF MONTICELLO.				
	Arts Council, Developers, Main Street, MTA	Develop a Public Art/Cultural Master Plan.		
	City Staff, Developers	Include a public arts component in development Requests for Proposal for City-owned sites.		
	Historic Preservation Commission	Continue to support the development of Historic Preservation and consider a Historic Preservation Action Plan.		