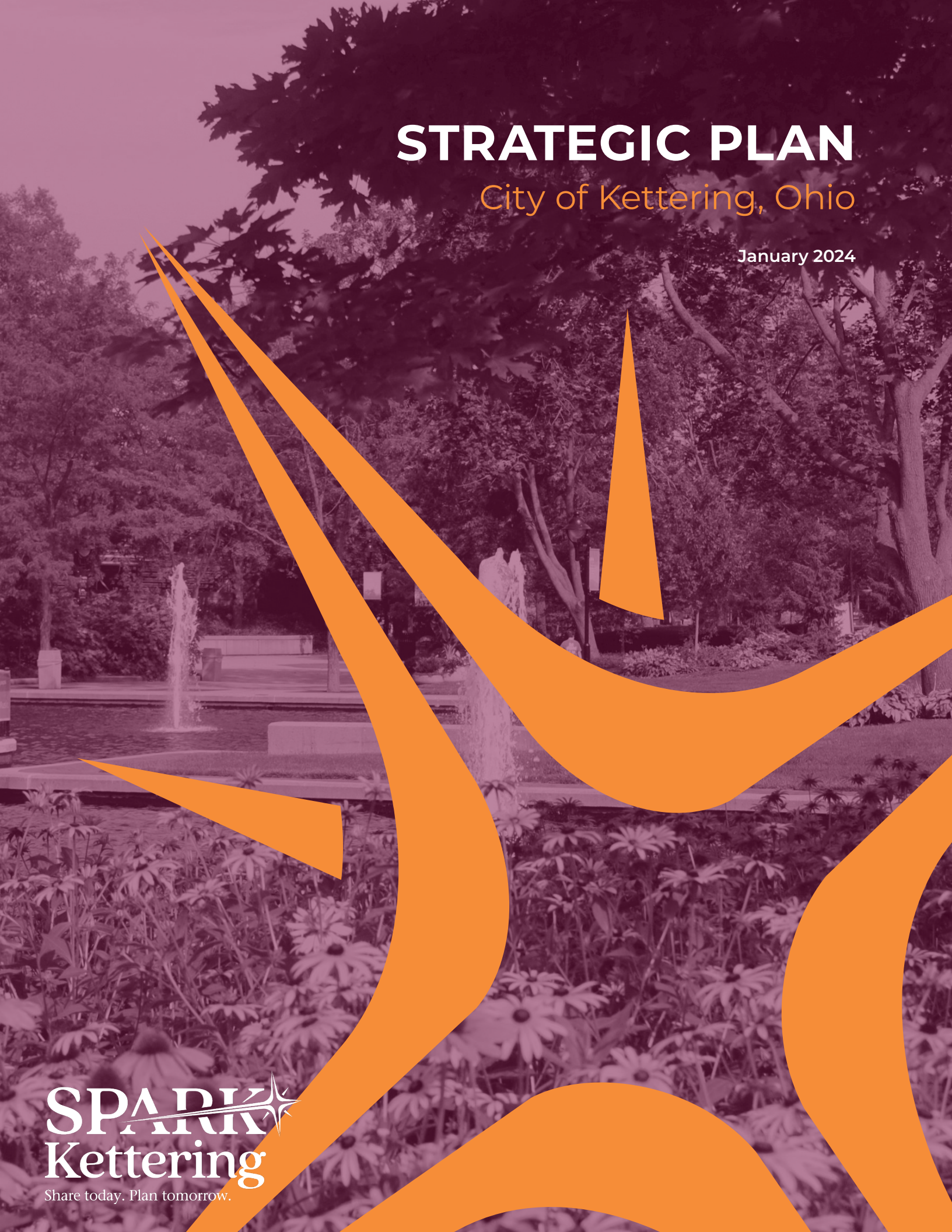

STRATEGIC PLAN

City of Kettering, Ohio

January 2024

SPARK Kettering

Share today. Plan tomorrow.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Many thanks to all the City of Kettering employees and citizens for their input and participation throughout the planning process.

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Special Thanks To

Charles I. Lathrem Senior Center
Dayton Metro Library - Wilmington Stroop Branch
Kettering Fire Department
Kettering Recreation Complex
Polen Farm

KETTERING
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KETTERING

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INTRODUCTION

Spark Kettering is an ambitious, citywide initiative to create a new Strategic Plan for the City of Kettering. The City is well known for providing residents with a high standard of living, including a strong sense of community, varied opportunities for recreation and broad public services. New challenges have arisen from economic changes and a shift in work habits following the pandemic. The City is also faced with the need to re-imagine community assets to continue to best serve Kettering. To ensure continued success as the City grows and evolves, it is important to establish a clear strategy to address those challenges, optimize current assets, develop wisely and positively position the community for the future.

WHAT IS A STRATEGIC PLAN?

A strategic plan is a long-term framework, outlining the city's priorities for the coming years. The City's vision, mission and values provide the foundation for the strategic plan, setting the tone for how the organization will evolve and providing strategic goals to move the city forward. This plan is based on input from both internal and external members of the community and truly reflects the aspirations of City Council, City staff, businesses and residents.

Strategic planning is a best practice to help manage challenges being faced by city government. It is not about the day-to-day operations the City already performs, rather, the Strategic Plan is a moment to pause, take stock and define – as a community – what Kettering should be in the future and how to get there. The Strategic Plan will address potential challenges and provide a path forward for the community, prospective residents, investors, businesses and more. With Kettering's strong day-to-day operations as the foundation, the Strategic Plan constructs a high-level framework to cultivate a dynamic city that continues to be a best-in-class place.

WHY DOES KETTERING NEED A STRATEGIC PLAN?

In general, planning represents good stewardship. Kettering is a one-of-a-kind city with a rich history. The City is uniquely positioned to take on new challenges and be proactive in preparing for the future. New leadership in the City Manager's Office and on City Council also provides a rare opportunity to determine a shared outlook for the city. Undertaking a strategic planning process is a bold step in chartering a path forward for internal operations and the community. The Strategic Plan will help ensure Kettering's success for decades to come.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

As part of the process, an environmental scan was conducted to understand the existing conditions of the community. Highlights of crucial external and internal conditions and trends affecting Kettering can be found below. The findings were used to inform the basis of the Strategic Plan.

POPULATION

- The population of Kettering has been stable since 2000.
- Like many American cities, Kettering's population is aging. The 55–64-year age ranges have increased the most since 2010. The 45–54-year age ranges have decreased the most since 2010.

POPULATION BY AGE (2020)

DIVERSITY

- Kettering is growing more diverse.
- African American, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander and Hispanic and Latino have increased in population since 2010.

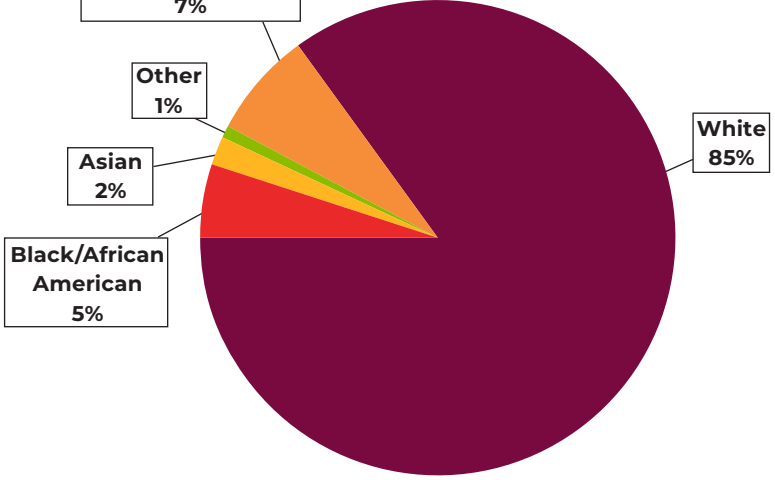
67% African American

50% Asian

275% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander

67% Hispanic & LatinX

POPULATION BY RACE (2020)



HOUSING

- Renter occupied housing units have increased over the last decade.
- Kettering's housing stock is older, with the majority of units built before 1980.
- Kettering has a higher median income than the county or state.

EMPLOYMENT

- Major employers in the city are from diverse economic sectors.
- Most Kettering residents work outside the city.
- The majority of employees commute in from outside the city.
- Kettering has experienced the loss of three major employers since 2020, Synchrony and L Brands permanently shifted their employees to work from home and Tenneco permanently closed in 2023, resulting in the loss of 2,700 jobs.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2020)

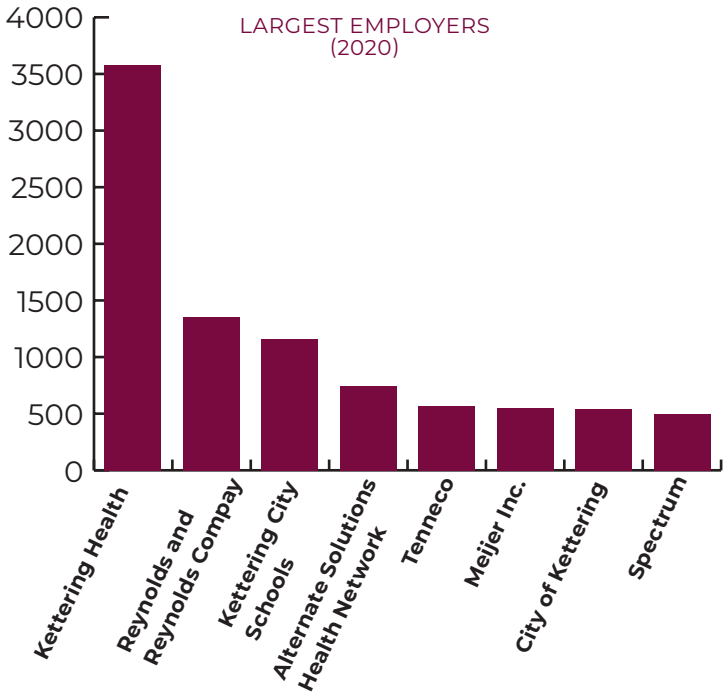
$65,054
City of Kettering

$56,471
Montgomery County

$61,938
State of Ohio

COMMUTE HABITS (2020)

LARGEST EMPLOYERS (2020)



1
Quality
Services
1
Quality
Services

PROCESS

Spark Kettering kicked off in January 2023, and included an inclusive, diverse and effective engagement process to gather input from the community, City staff and other stakeholders.

ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The strategic planning process involved robust engagement from both the City and the community.

Public Engagement

Two rounds of community engagement were conducted:

- **Round 1: Summer 2023.** The first round of community engagement was oriented around the launch of the strategic planning process. The goal was to introduce the planning process to the community and gather their big ideas for the future of Kettering. Two in-person workshops were held, and the activities were also available online for those who could not attend an in-person workshop. Input gathered during this round helped the planning team to develop the vision statement, values and goal areas for the Strategic Plan.
- **Round 2: Fall 2023.** The second round of community engagement shared the draft plan recommendations for review. The framework of the plan, including the vision, goals and strategies, was shared with members of the community for their comments. Participants were also asked to choose the top two strategies in each goal area that they felt were most important for the City to focus on first. This round of engagement consisted of an open house, a road show (where boards were displayed with the plan information in multiple locations throughout the community)and an online survey.

- **Steering Committee** A 30 person Steering Committee was formed with diverse representatives from a variety of neighborhoods, professions, ages and more. The Steering Committee served as community advocates who promoted the process and engagement opportunities through their networks. They also acted as a sounding board on the topics and ideas of the plan, bringing insight and feedback to the process.

Kettering City Staff Engagement

Spark Kettering engaged multiple layers of Kettering's City staff in a variety of formats throughout the process. They provided knowledge and expertise into their departments and the city's organization, functions and services. Staff also provided insight into trends identified within the Kettering community or their own field – and how City services may be required to adapt.

- **Department Directors.** All department directors participated in a workshop in the beginning of the process to kickoff the project. Each director also did a one-on-one interview with the planning team to provide insight into goals and needs of the department. Department directors also attended a joint meeting with the Steering Committee to review and finalize the goals and strategies of the plan.
- **Professional Series Employees.** The directors and professional series employees attended a workshop in the middle of the planning process to craft the City's Mission Statement, assist in the development and review of the Plan Framework and critically review internal City services for opportunities to enhance current offerings or remove duplicative or obsolete services.
- **Staff Survey.** The City Manager's Office, directors of all City Departments and professional series employees participated in a survey identifying challenges and opportunities facing the community. The survey results, along with responses from community engagement, informed the contents of the plan.
- **All Employees.** During an employee summer gathering, all employees were provided an opportunity to share their big ideas and learn about the Strategic Plan process - similar to the first round of community engagement.

Kettering Elected Officials

Members of the City Council participated in one-on-one interviews during which they shared their aspirations for the community. They were engaged throughout the process with regular briefings from City Staff and Steering Committee co-chairs on the status of the plan.

FRAMEWORK

The Strategic Plan framework is organized by hierarchal elements: vision, mission, values, goals and strategies. These elements were derived from public input and were refined with input from the Steering Committee.

VISION

The vision is the highest level—and therefore most general—expression of a community's future. It reflects the community's values and sets the tone for more specific recommendations.

The City of Kettering is...

A nationally-recognized community where people are safe and feel welcomed with accessible resources for a healthy, active lifestyle.

MISSION

To guide the internal organization, a mission statement was created that describes the City's purpose for being and serves to energize staff in their role of implementing the overall vision for the community and moving the community forward through the Strategies.

City of Kettering Mission:

We are dedicated to protecting and enhancing the Kettering community through strong, collaborative leadership and a committment to fiscal responsibility, innovation and community engagement.

VALUES

Values reflect, at a high level, what the community cares about.

The People of Kettering value...

1. Strong community pride where neighbors feel connected and support each other.
2. The community being recognized as a great place to call home.
3. Diverse, quality amenities and activities that are inclusive and accessible for everyone.
4. A safe community to live, work, navigate, explore and enjoy for people of all ages and abilities.
5. High quality government services delivered through internal collaboration and partnerships within the community.

GOALS

A goal is a desired outcome expressed in simple terms.

1. **High-quality Services:** Provide high quality government services that are sustainable, effective, innovative, collaborative and respectful.
2. **Economic Opportunity:** Foster a healthy and diverse local economy that provides opportunities for employment, attracts new businesses, supports existing businesses and creates prosperity for the community.
3. **Engaged and Active Lifestyle:** A vibrant and welcoming community for all people, through activities, creativity and opportunities to be engaged.
4. **Livability:** A safe and livable community with a high quality of life, active transportation networks and housing options for all residents with opportunities for education, enrichment and engagement.
5. **Sustainability:** A healthy, sustainable environment where decisions are made with an understanding of how they will affect the environment, people and communities today and in the future.
6. **The Kettering Story:** An intentional and coordinated communication strategy sharing Kettering's many assets to a broad audience consisting of existing and potential residents, businesses, employees, visitors and decision makers.

PLAN FRAMEWORK SUMMARY

The plan contains 44 strategies organized under the six goals.

VISION

VALUES

GOALS

Public Input

1,100+

ideas and comments contributed to the development of the vision, values and goals

MISSION

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Song and Dance

STRATEGIES

The strategies contain the specific ideas that will be implemented to achieve the overall vision and supporting goals. The strategies are not organized in priority order. The City will prioritize the strategies during the implementation phase.

GOAL 1

High Quality Services...

Provide high quality government services that are sustainable, effective, innovative, collaborative and respectful.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

1.1 Evaluate fiscal trends and develop specific strategies to maintain an excellent level of services.

1.2 Identify future needs and develop financially responsible and transparent plans to achieve desired outcomes.

EFFECTIVENESS

1.3 Assess and align the City organization to meet the goals of the Strategic Plan.

1.4 Evaluate opportunities for achieving more effective operations through collaborations, partnerships, contracting and other creative solutions.

INFRASTRUCTURE

1.5 Ensure Capital Improvement Program funding remains fiscally sustainable and meets community expectations.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1.6 Promote and enhance opportunities for the public to engage and collaborate with City government.

1.7 Introduce opportunities for young people to become involved in city government.

1.8 Review and update existing codes, policies, programs and approaches to eliminate unintentional bias, inequality and inequity.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

1.1 Evaluate fiscal trends and develop specific strategies to maintain an excellent level of services.

Develop budgetary direction and internal procedures to uphold the exceptional public services that are highly regarded by the community, including the core service of public safety.

1.2 Identify future needs and develop financially responsible and transparent plans to achieve desired outcomes.

Continue to be forward looking by anticipating the potential future needs of the municipality and developing strategies to meet those needs. Continue to utilize a 10-year financial forecast and a 5-year Capital Improvement Program to influence fiscally responsible budgeting. Review and follow up on the goals and recommendations in the Strategic Plan on a regular basis.

EFFECTIVENESS

1.3 Assess and align the City organization to meet the goals of the Strategic Plan.

Review the municipal organization chart with a focus on providing each department with the necessary staff and resources to achieve the goals in the Strategic Plan. Work towards ensuring there is an adequate number of staff to implement the Strategic Plan and not place undue burden on any one department.

1.4 Evaluate opportunities for achieving more effective operations through collaborations, partnerships, contracting and other creative solutions.

Be intentional about hiring, retaining, training and supporting employees to generate an optimal work environment that provides the highest level of service. Make diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging core values of the City culture when hiring, training and retaining employees; and, improve the employee onboarding program to feature a citywide approach. Look to enhance external relationships with organizations and service providers that will strengthen and streamline operations.

INFRASTRUCTURE

1.5 Ensure Capital Improvement Program funding remains fiscally sustainable and meets community expectations.

Kettering residents value well-maintained infrastructure and the variety of community facilities. Enhance efforts to fund and maintain infrastructure at a high level and explore significant infrastructure projects that are not currently featured in Capital Improvement Programming such as the Kettering Ice Arena and Fraze Pavilion. Explore avenues to diversify funding mechanisms to sustain capital improvement investments.

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1.6 Promote and enhance opportunities for the public to engage and collaborate with City government.

Residents should have effective communication channels to do business with the City of Kettering. To achieve this, continuously explore, pursue and implement ways to modernize systems and processes to advance access to residents and allow them to adequately engage with the City. Make enhanced training for city staff at all levels on customer service, collaboration and strategies to improve resident interactions an ongoing priority.

1.7 Introduce opportunities for young people to become involved in city government.

Establish and promote learning opportunities that engage and inspire young people to become involved in their city government. These include youth advisory committees, internships and scholarships that will invest young Kettering residents with a meaningful stake in their community and nurture the leaders of the future.

Some tactics for implementing this strategy are:

- Develop partnerships with local youth groups that focus on service such as Key Clubs, Boy and Girl Scouts, and others.
- Connect with local schools to create opportunities for students in government classes.

1.8 Review and update existing codes, policies, programs and approaches to eliminate unintentional bias, inequality and inequity.

Review City codes, policies and programs to help create a unified City of Kettering and advance all people in the community.

GOAL 2

Economic Opportunity...

Foster a healthy and diverse local economy that provides opportunities for employment, attracts new businesses, supports existing businesses and creates prosperity for the community.

SUPPORT A HEALTHY ECONOMY

2.1 Promote Kettering as an attractive place to invest and do business.

2.2 Function as a referral gateway for business resources.

2.3 Utilize a variety of incentive programs to attract and retain high value jobs and encourage investment in the community.

2.4 Advance the economy of the future by identifying opportunities for technological infrastructure and new policies to support business development.

ATTRACTION

2.5 Strengthen collaborative relationships with state and regional economic development organizations, site selectors and developers to attract new businesses.

2.6 Support efforts to develop local entrepreneurs.

2.7 Promote existing buildings and shovel-ready sites (new or redevelopment) to attract new employers.

RETENTION

2.8 Strengthen collaborative relationships with state, regional and local business organizations and partners to retain current businesses and enhance relationships among the local business community.

2.9 Engage with community organizations to provide meaningful programming and enhanced communication with local business.

REDEVELOPMENT

2.10 Identify opportunities and corridors for creative and adaptive reuse of underutilized properties and where resource support and infrastructure investment can foster economic revitalization.

2.11 Create programs that encourage and support commercial property reinvestment.

SUPPORT A HEALTHY ECONOMY

2.1 Promote Kettering as an attractive place to invest and do business.

Develop marketing materials and initiate a campaign to showcase city amenities and promote Kettering's assets as an attractive business site. Employ strategies that promote Kettering to regional and national business leaders, site selectors, and employers.

2.2 Function as a referral gateway for business resources, information, and services.

Continue to connect Kettering businesses to organizations that are subject matter experts on various topics (international trade, financing, certifications, workforce, etc.) Host programming and events to bring these experts to a wide group of Kettering businesses and look for opportunities to develop a more robust business services network.

2.3 Utilize a variety of incentive programs to attract and retain high value jobs and encourage investment in the community.

Continue to utilize and promote Kettering incentive programs (such as KIP, façade improvement, demolition, etc.) to eligible businesses and recommend companies for consideration of economic development funding programs (such as Montgomery County's EDGE program and JobsOhio incentives). Consider opportunities to add or expand local incentives programs.

2.4 Advance the economy of the future by identifying opportunities for technological infrastructure and new policies to support business development.

Encourage fiber and Wi-Fi service providers to bring new service options to Kettering and explore opportunities to utilize technology to give Kettering businesses a competitive advantage in the market. Identify policies and programs that support new ways people work.

ATTRACTION

2.5 Strengthen collaborative relationships with state and regional economic development organizations, site selectors and developers to attract new businesses.

Maintain memberships and serve in leadership roles with regional and state economic development organizations. Continue to advocate for Kettering businesses to state and federal legislative leaders and statewide elected officials and attend programming provided by organizations such as the Ohio Economic Development Association, the local NAIOP organization, Dayton Development Coalition and JobsOhio.

2.6 Support efforts to attract and support local entrepreneurs.

Develop and promote business mentoring programs as a priority. Continue to work in collaboration with the community development department to bring training, networking and financial assistance to microenterprises in the City. Work in collaboration with The Entrepreneurs' Center, the Kettering-Moraine-Oakwood Chamber of Commerce, and local universities' entrepreneurial programs to ensure a wide array of programs and services are available to business owners.

Some tactics for implementing this strategy are:

- Support opportunities for co-work space and other efforts to develop local entrepreneurs.
- Establish programs that promote small businesses, such as Small Business Saturdays and Restaurant Week.

2.7 Promote existing buildings and shovel-ready sites to attract new employers.

Continue to work in conjunction with the Kettering Development Corporation to identify underutilized sites and explore public and private partnerships to develop these sites. Work with the Dayton Development Coalition to ensure that the few remaining vacant sites in Kettering are appropriately listed on statewide site inventory programs and effectively marketed to businesses and site selectors. Pursue state and federal programs to fund demolition of vacant buildings, invest in infrastructure improvements, and then encourage the reuse of these sites.

RETENTION

2.8 Strengthen collaborative relationships with state, regional and local business organizations and partners to retain current businesses and enhance relationships among the local business community.

To make real progress as an economic driver, the community must understand the level of risk acceptable for incentivizing jobs. In doing so, the City's economic development team should consider current workforce needs to diversify the economy and evaluate the City's criteria for current and future use of economic development funds to allow for competitive strategies that attract, create and retain high-wage jobs and opportunities. In addition, the City will need to provide a sufficient supply of growth-enabling infrastructure to attract new and continued investment.

2.9 Engage with community organizations to provide meaningful programming and enhanced communication with existing local business.

Work with the Entrepreneurs' Center, Small Business Development Center, area not-for-profits, and local chambers of commerce to provide training opportunities. Promote the Kettering Leadership Academy to local businesses to ensure their employees have access to this professional development program.

REDEVELOPMENT

2.10 Identify opportunities and corridors for creative and adaptive reuse of underutilized properties and where resource support and infrastructure investment can foster economic revitalization.

Incentivize redevelopment of strategic properties and utilize the Kettering Development Corporation to purchase and prepare these sites for redevelopment. Focus on target areas for the development of specific redevelopment strategies, as identified in the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Utilize public-private partnerships to help move redevelopment efforts forward as well as support from Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission.

2.11 Create programs that encourage and support commercial property reinvestment.

Look for ways to expand the City's Wilmington Pike Façade & Site Improvement program city-wide and seek approval of new Community Reinvestment Areas for neighborhoods needing reinvestment. Communicate with owners of commercial shopping centers to seek their partnership for neighborhood and corridor redevelopment.

GOAL 3

Engaged and Active Lifestyle...

A vibrant and welcoming community for all people, through activities, creativity and opportunities to be engaged.

ACTIVE AND HEALTHY

3.1 Identify trends in parks and recreation to meet the activity needs of current and future residents.

3.2 Further identify and develop collaborative healthy living efforts with community partners.

ENGAGED

3.3 Promote opportunities for people of all ages to be engaged with the community.

WELCOMING

3.4 Celebrate diversity of cultures in Kettering.

3.5 Improve accessibility for people with disabilities at City facilities, programs and events.

ACTIVE AND HEALTHY

3.1 Identify trends in parks and recreation to meet the activity needs of current and future residents.

Update the Parks Master Plan with a focus on ensuring that the parks and recreational assets and amenities are of high quality and offer unique programming to serve current residents as well as attract future residents.

3.2 Further identify and develop collaborative healthy living efforts with community partners.

Explore creating relationships with local and regional non-profits, healthcare systems, K-12 schools, higher education institutions, safety personnel, older adult facilities and other community groups that focus on and specialize in health and wellness and seek out partnership opportunities. Through partnering the City can provide more resources and access to health and wellness opportunities for residents.

ENGAGED

3.3 Promote opportunities for people of all ages to be engaged with the community.

The City of Kettering has a positive reputation for being a community that gives back and is civically engaged. Focus on continuing to create outreach activities in the community to facilitate engagement with residents and community partners. Focus on providing opportunities for residents to learn and develop skills, experience the value of service, and help others through direct involvement opportunities. Coordinate with K-12 schools to incorporate service learning into curriculum and create specific youth volunteer activities to help ensure the next generations are civically minded. Look for opportunities to develop partnerships with universities and Career Technology Centers to increase service-learning opportunities, mentorship and internship opportunities. Be intentional about seeking out private sector partners for volunteer opportunities so that there is alignment with community needs.

Some tactics for implementing this strategy are:

» Conduct a community survey/focus group to determine potential volunteer opportunities and ensure those opportunities are impactful.

» Engage and expand upon senior services to encourage activities for older residents outside.

WELCOMING

3.4 Celebrate diversity of cultures in Kettering.

Part of Kettering's vision is to be a welcoming place. Explore ways to celebrate the diversity of cultures of Kettering. In order to be a truly welcoming place, provide resource materials in multiple languages and develop more festivals and events to celebrate different cultures. Ensure that the diversity of cultures be highlighted in programs and communications materials.

3.5 Improve accessibility for people with disabilities at City facilities, programs and events.

It is important that everyone in the community be able to participate in all the opportunities offered and enjoy a robust civic life. Again, to promote the vision of being a welcoming place, prioritize greater implementation of the City's ADA Transition Plan and work to provide more accessible opportunities throughout the City.

GOAL 4

Livability:

A safe and livable community with a high quality of life, active transportation networks and housing options for all residents with opportunities for education, enrichment and engagement.

PLACEMAKING AND COMMUNITY SPACES

4.1 Prioritize the development and marketing of a town center.

4.2 Foster an improved sense of place within redevelopment priority areas.

SERVICES FOR LIVABILITY

4.3 Develop intentional strategies to support families with children and older adults.

4.4 Work with community partners and the private sector to assess the needs of and identify ways to support working parents and caregivers.

STRONG COMMUNITY

4.5 Identify housing needs and develop strategies for the future.

4.6 Increase neighborhood identity and pride through expanded programming.

4.7 Strengthen property maintenance standards, programs and policies to ensure compliance with community and legal standards are upheld.

4.8 Ensure regulations promote innovative, efficient, and sustainable (re) development and strong neighborhoods.

CONNECTIVITY

4.9 Expand active transportation connections and amenities to support redevelopment and connections between neighborhoods, commercial districts and community.

4.10 Work with RTA to promote and expand transit ridership.

PLACEMAKING AND COMMUNITY SPACES

4.1 Prioritize the development and marketing of a town center.

Develop a Kettering town center to provide the city with a central gathering place and greater sense of place. Focus on creating a central heart of the city, expanding and connecting Kettering's already great places (I.e. Town & Country, Far Hills, Shroyer, Lincoln Park and Civic Commons). Ensure the town center's character is cohesive with current city design, albeit amplified, allowing for residents and visitors to clearly observe when they are within the town center. Feature unique design characteristics throughout the town center, including but not limited to expanded streetscape projects, active transportation improvements, expanded entertainment districts, promotion of community event and gathering spaces and unique food and beverage establishments.

4.2 Foster an improved sense of place within redevelopment priority areas.

Ensure new development or redevelopment throughout the city follows design standards that enhance Kettering's sense of place. Building upon existing community assets and commercial districts, make living, working and traveling through Kettering a distinctive, memorable and positive experience within the Miami Valley.

SERVICES FOR LIVABILITY

4.3 Develop intentional strategies to support families with children and older adults.

Build Kettering into an age-friendly community, providing for the needs of youth, older adults and everyone in between. Develop strategies to ensure that Kettering is a community where multiple generations can thrive. Specific services to allow the growing older adult population to age in place are necessary. Ensure items such as transportation, senior service coordinators, as well as the promotion and support of the Charles I. Lathrem Senior Center (CIL) and other services provided by the City and County are affordable and flexible to best serve the senior population. The expansion of services fostering healthy youth such as parks programming is an important factor in continuing to attract young families to Kettering.

4.4 Work with community partners and the private sector to assess the needs of and identify ways to support working parents and caregivers.

Maintain existing partnerships and cultivate new ones with community organizations such as the YMCA to develop robust childcare infrastructure that is high quality and affordable to families of varying incomes.

STRONG COMMUNITY

4.5 Identify housing needs and develop strategies for the future.

Conduct a housing study with the goal of understanding Kettering's present and future housing demands. The study will outline strategies for the City to follow to provide solutions to these demands. The study will gather data on a range of housing topics, such as supporting those working from home, offering a variety of housing types, and making home ownership possible at a variety of incomes.

4.6 Increase neighborhood identity and pride through expanded programming.

To promote Kettering pride, develop a sense of place specific to the city. Strategies such as developing neighborhood identity, including signage and the creation of character standards and the promotion of events, such as block parties, are important tools in cultivating Kettering's identity.

Some tactics for implementing this strategy are:

» Support and encourage public art that is unique to each neighborhood, such as murals and sculptures.

» Connect community assets into a "string of pearls" that are unique to the city.

4.7 Strengthen property maintenance standards, programs and policies to ensure compliance with community and legal standards are upheld.

Property maintenance standards and their enforcement are crucial to ensuring that Kettering is a great place to live. Explore and develop strategies to enhance property maintenance enforcement tools that reflect the standards of the community. Build upon and promote existing programs to assist residents physically or financially unable to maintain properties.

4.8 Ensure regulations promote innovative, efficient, and sustainable (re)development and strong neighborhoods.

Hold (re)development in Kettering to a high standard that promotes innovation, while also maintaining a competitive development culture. Employ a variety of tools and strategies to balance competition and innovation. Updating the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and aligning the zoning code accordingly to ensure that development is not only innovative, but efficient and sustainable is imperative to the creation of strong neighborhoods. Special programs designed to target neighborhoods in need of investment for beautification and clean-up will improve quality of life and property values. City neighborhoods will benefit from improvement and maintenance of the city's housing stock, as it will boost the quality of neighborhoods. To employ design, character and maintenance standards, develop programs for physical and financial assistance to ensure code enforcement changes are implemented with consistency and fairness.

CONNECTIVITY

4.9 Expand active transportation connections and amenities to support redevelopment and connections between neighborhoods, commercial districts and community.

Increase the quality (I.e. following the ADA plan, making all stops accessible) and quantity (I.e. ensuring first and last ¼ mile connections) of city bus stops to allow all residents to utilize convenient, quality public transportation. Thoroughfare and residential sidewalk connectivity, curb and sidewalk improvements, curb repairs and multi-use paths in the Capital Improvement Program will coincide with bus stop improvements. Work to increase the City's designation level for being a Bike-Friendly Community.

4.10 Work with RTA to promote and expand transit ridership.

Expand transportation connections, frequency and quality to offer an alternative to private vehicle transportation. Additional tools such as developing new transportation mode options in redevelopment opportunities, incentivizing and promoting RTA membership, and enhancing bus stop amenities will attract and support increased ridership.

GOAL 5

Sustainability:

A healthy, sustainable environment where decisions are made with an understanding of how they will affect the environment, people and communities today and in the future.

ENGAGE

5.1 Develop programs to further educate and share resources enhancing the City's sustainability goals.

SUPPORT

5.2 Support programs and initiatives to reduce the carbon footprint of homes and businesses within the city.

IMPLEMENT

5.3 Develop a sustainability plan for the City that determines baseline data and promotes annual review of progress and updated best practices for each department.

5.4 Participate in local, regional and statewide initiatives for sustainability.

ENGAGE

5.1 Develop programs for all ages to further educate and share resources enhancing the City's sustainability goals.

Answering the "Why" is key to motivating people towards a common goal. Develop multiple tools to share the "Why"; and offer tips to encourage the community to adopt sustainable best practices. An online portal dedicated to sustainability could offer project ideas, "how to" videos and provide a list of resources (I.e. materials, vendors and contractors) for further information and reading. In-person programming may include demonstrations, workshops, and volunteer service projects to provide hands on learning and further illustrate the benefit of sustainable practices.

SUPPORT

5.2 Support programs and initiatives to reduce the carbon footprint of homes and businesses within the city.

Review existing programs to improve, expand or initiate new opportunities for the community (both businesses and residents) to reduce, reuse and recycle waste streams, reduce energy usage, reduce vehicle emissions and improve water and air quality.

Some tactics for implementing this strategy are:

- Incentivize remodeling older homes to be more energy efficient.
- Provide increased recycling options for residents and businesses.
- Partner with a local landscaper to provide new native trees to residents.

IMPLEMENT

5.3 Develop a sustainability plan for the City that determines baseline data and promotes annual review of progress and updated best practices for each department.

Strive to be a role model for the community, examining all aspects of its operations (I.e. service delivery, equipment, facilities, technology and codes) to identify short- and long-term opportunities to incorporate sustainable best practices. Identify opportunities in each department's strategic plan of operation, catalogued in the multi-year capital improvement and operating budget outlooks and reviewed annually for progress. Celebrate significant achievements toward sustainable goals and share with the community through publications and the online portal (particularly achievements resulting in financial savings or that are highly visible to the public).

5.4 Participate in local, regional and statewide initiatives for sustainability.

Throughout Ohio, many initiatives are underway to create cities, universities, organizations and businesses that are financially and environmentally sustainable. Strive to be a strong voice and model of sustainability in the Miami Valley region, as well as Ohio, supporting efforts that reduce carbon footprints and create healthy resilient communities. Demonstrate its commitment to sustainable practices and development for existing and future generations through the online portal, City publications and participation in sustainable-focused conferences.

GOAL 6

The Kettering Story...

An intentional and coordinated communication strategy sharing Kettering's many assets to a broad audience consisting of existing and potential residents, businesses, employees, visitors and decision makers.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

6.1 Update and unify the City's communications strategy and branding.

6.2 Develop a centralized communications team charged with leading citywide communication efforts.

6.3 Promote the Kettering brand and the community.

6.4 Enhance community engagement efforts.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

6.5 Develop a recognizable aesthetic to enhance Kettering's visible identity and sense of place.

6.6 Update and implement a standard sign design for all City facilities and parks. events.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

6.1 Update and unify the City's communications strategy and branding.

Kettering has a unique and exciting story to share. All City communications (internal and external) will "speak" with one design template and one voice to share the story. A refresh of the brand and the creation of a brand guide would enable all communications from the City, in any format, to be uniquely and easily identified as the City's. Update and unify communications strategies to meet the needs of all residents.

6.2 Develop a centralized communications team charged with leading citywide communication efforts.

A well trained and collaborative communications team will be a tremendous asset to the City, coordinating both the internal and external sharing of information. Assess and align the communications' organizational structure to meet the goals of the Strategic Plan and to further develop and promote the City's brand across all communications mediums (website, social media platforms, publications, news releases). Lead efforts to coordinate the distribution of information, promote the City's events and success stories, and solicit feedback in order to improve service delivery.

6.3 Promote the Kettering brand and the community.

Distribute the brand guide and host internal workshops to share how and when the brand might be best used. Examine opportunities to use the brand to share Kettering success stories and promote the community's attributes to a wider audience. Update marketing materials to enhance and support economic development efforts. Promote an updated brand through its adoption and permitted usage by the City's community partners.

Some tactics for implementing this strategy are:

- Advertize city amenities with entities known state and nation-wide such as Kettering Health and the Cincinnati Bengals.
- Develop a visitor's guide for Kettering, sharing key points of interest.

6.4 Enhance community engagement efforts.

Residents are engaged with City government and benefit from a variety of communication platforms that best suit their lifestyle. Continue to monitor which communication platforms are reaching the intended audience and continuously enhance and refresh these efforts. Both the City and the residents may benefit from an annual or biennial consolidated survey effort to track progress and service delivery satisfaction.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

6.5 Develop a recognizable aesthetic to enhance Kettering's visible identity and sense of place.

Residents and visitors should be able to clearly distinguish Kettering from the city's built environment alone. Create and implement design standards for the City's entrances and streetscape to greet new visitors, provide wayfinding and a sense of community, and welcome home residents.

6.6 Update and implement a standard sign design for all City facilities and parks.

Develop a standard sign design and associated landscaping for all city facilities and parks to allow residents and visitors to immediately recognize the facility as being affiliated with the City and further coordinate and communicate the City's brand and welcoming image.

ETTERING
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Miami Valley

IMPLEMENTATION

This section describes the recommended approach for how best to use the plan for successful implementation. Ultimately the plan must be institutionalized by the City Manager's Office and the City Council for successful implementation to occur.

IMPLEMENTING

The strategic plan will not only be used as a guide for the City staff and elected officials, but it will also identify critical partners and coordination necessary to realize the recommended actions. Management of the strategic plan's implementation will be led by the City Manager's Office with support from all City departments. Execution of the plan will be shared between City staff, the City Council, and key partners.

It is important to acknowledge that it will take time to fully institutionalize the plan and nurture a culture of using the strategic plan. Through time, collaboration, and an iterative process that includes periodic updates, the plan will become a useful tool to serve the needs of the community.

Members of the community and City staff shared many creative and specific ideas they wanted to see in the Strategic Plan. Due to the high level of the plan, participants may not see the specifics of their input reflected. However, specifics from the engagement were used to develop tactics that will be instrumental to the City during implementation of the plan.

Overview

Staff should create departmental work plans to ensure the successful and ongoing implementation of the strategic plan. These work plans should be consistent across the organization, but still allow for departmental customization. The work plans should outline the departmental mission, essential core services, and specific strategic plan actions being worked on for the upcoming fiscal year, along with budget requests to accomplish both the essential core services and the strategic plan actions. It is recommended that each department reconcile their core services with future needs as outlined in the strategic plan. In addition, the strategic plan should be an opportunity to help organize staff reports (i.e. report out on actions that are ongoing, complete, or future actions) and department head goals (i.e. tie department goals back to the strategic plan).

The strategic plan should be actively managed on a regular basis and monitored for implementation effectiveness and relevancy. This review should happen on a formal basis no less than once per year. A status report should accompany this review and be promoted throughout the community, such as through the City website. An annual public meeting—perhaps with a noted speaker or tied to the state of the city address—could take place to share progress and attract additional participants to move the community forward.

Reporting and Monitoring

Several methods can be undertaken to report and monitor the strategic plan's progress to the community. An implementation matrix will be provided to support this plan. The matrix is a tool that connects each recommendation with a timeframe for completion, effort leader and supporting entities (e.g., departments and organizations), and potential funding sources. It is anticipated that the implementation steps may change over time based on annual review, new developments, or successes in other areas.

Other methods for reporting and monitoring include:

» Presenting an annual or bi-annual report card to the City Council

» Reporting City actions that support the strategic plan

» Illustrating completed or ongoing actions through the use of infographics on the City website

Updating the Plan

A formal review of the strategic plan should be considered every ten years to incorporate new decennial Census data and other relevant changes and planning work going on in the community.

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

This is intended to be a ten-year strategic planning document. The plan should be used on a daily basis as public and private decisions are made concerning the community's future. The following is a summary of how decisions and processes should be institutionalized to align with the vision and actions.

Annual Work Programs and Budgets

City staff should be cognizant of the recommendations of the plan when preparing annual work programs and budgets. This also includes considering the plan when making important policy and financial decisions that impact the community.

Community Planning

Community planning efforts, including those of the City, community organizations, and the school district should be aligned with the vision, values, goals, and recommendations of the plan.

Capital Improvement Program

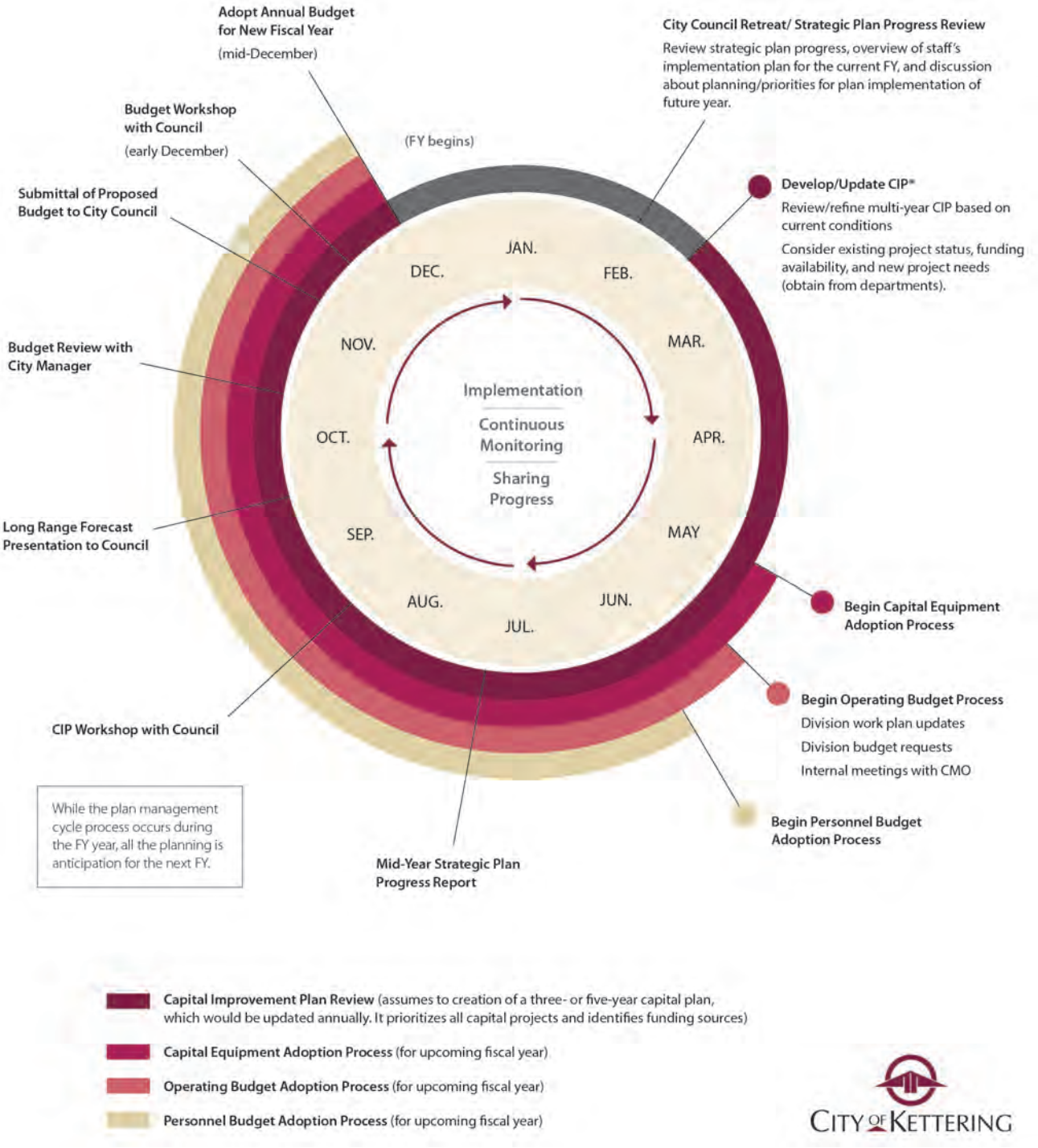
The City's capital improvement Program (CIP) should be consistent with the plan's recommendations.

Private Investment Decisions

Property owners, developers, and other private entities should consider the plan's recommendations in their planning and investment decisions. Public decision-makers will be using the plan as a guide in their deliberations about proposals, projects, and funding requests. Property owners and developers should be cognizant of and complement the plan's recommendations.

Civic and Social Engagement

All civic and community groups should create opportunities to explore solutions to issues of concern to the community. They should seek alignment with the recommendations of the plan and collaborate across interests, missions, and constituencies.

PLAN MANAGEMENT CYCLE

This plan should be integrated into annual City processes including bedgeting and capital improvements planning. It should also be regularly tracked for progress and assessed for effectiveness. The diagram below illustrates the recommended plan management cycle. It begins with the start of the fiscal year (FY) and includes various steps that lead to the adoption of a budget for the following fiscal year.