



Organizational Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2024 - 2029

Prepared by
Story County Elected Offices and Departments

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
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In the spring of 2023 the Story County Board of Supervisors invited leadership across all County Offices and Departments to participate in developing a new strategic plan to serve as the County's priority and resource road map over the next five years.

Input was gathered through a survey to identify strengths, opportunities and weaknesses. We then met in two, half-day planning sessions to identify priorities which were aligned to the County's mission and values. This work led us to six focus areas:

- Community wellbeing
- Quality of life infrastructure
- Recruitment, development and retention of Story County team members
- Communication and information on services and programs
- Leveraging technology
- Fiscal responsibility

What you will see reflected in this plan is our shared dedication to our residents and communities through transportation, broadband, housing, childcare and climate initiatives and a focus on communication and reducing barriers to services regardless of physical, financial or language differences or abilities. Economic development, public safety, conservation and recreation remain high priorities with an emphasis on data-driven decision making.

As we look ahead to the next five years these action steps will guide and inform our program and budgetary decisions. They will be the foundation for how different functions within county government work together under a shared vision, to achieve consistent and measurable progress for the benefit of all people in Story County.

With gratitude and appreciation to all who contributed time and energy to this effort.

Latifah Faisal, Chair



Mission Statement for Story County

Engaging our diverse communities to responsibly provide quality opportunities and services that matter.

Core Values Cross-Check for Plan Implementation

Our Core Values

Accountability

- Are we being honest and transparent while holding ourselves to a higher standard?

Collaboration

- Are we working together with all citizens, entities, and agencies to provide the best government possible?

Environment

- How can we better nourish a welcoming, encouraging environment for people to thrive in, while also preserving our natural environment and working towards a sustainable future?

Equity

- Are we treating everyone respectfully and courteously, with fair opportunity and outcomes for all?

Inclusivity

- Do we seek participation, welcome differences, and ensure perspectives are heard?

Innovation

- How are we embracing positive change, while continuously pursuing new horizons and creative solutions?

Wise Use of Resources

- How can we more efficiently and effectively manage our County resources?

Strategic Plan Focus Areas

Wellbeing and Enjoyment of Community

Quality of Life Infrastructure

Recruitment, Development, and Retention of Story County Team Members

Communicating Awareness and Educating on Services and Programs

Leveraging Technology to Improve Story County Operations

Funding Story County Operations and Programs





Wellbeing and Enjoyment of Communities

EMPHASIZING VALUES

- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Inclusivity
- ✓ Innovation

Goal 1: Inspire a countywide culture of growth, inclusion and innovation and increase support and recognition of community-level quality of life initiatives, including diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging

Action Steps	Responsible
1.1 Develop and maintain an inventory of ongoing community development related initiatives in Story County, e.g. housing and childcare projects in individual communities	Board of Supervisors Director of External Operations and County Services
1.2 Host an annual or bi-annual community development leadership exchange of best practices. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold event in different community each year • Agenda will include topics such as achieving sustainable growth, uniform codes, implementation of the housing action plan and resiliency planning 	Board of Supervisors Director of External Operations and County Services
1.3 Establish a program that serves to formalize Story County Board of Supervisors’ recognition of communities engaging in efforts to improve their quality of life.	Board of Supervisors
1.4 Create a countywide DEIB Council (advisory) to research and share strategies for welcoming diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging into Story County communities	Board of Supervisors Director of External Operations and County Services
1.5 Develop a disability (advisory) council to advise Story County government.	Board of Supervisors General Assistance Human Resources

Goal 2: Identify quality of life needs and gaps and build partnerships to create innovative solutions

Action Steps	Responsible
2.1 Create an action plan that identifies the needs and gaps by utilizing the findings from existing studies, e.g., Community Needs Assessment prepared by the Story County Quality of Life Alliance (SCQLA)	Director of External Operations and County Services
2.2 Monitor the shelf life of existing reports, research and findings to determine the timeline and funding needed to keep data current, accurate and impactful	Director of External Operations and County Services
2.3 In partnership with Polk County and other jurisdictions in central Iowa, develop a climate resiliency action plan and identify implementation steps and greenhouse reduction goals	Director of External Operations and County Services Go Green Team



Goal 3: Maintain and enhance county-provided recreational assets and programs to create competitive advantages for retaining and attracting residents

Action Steps	Responsible
3.1 Conduct an evaluation of recreational assets and opportunities to determine use and value	Conservation
3.2 Continue to seek grants and identify funding sources for new and enhanced recreational amenities identified	Conservation

Goal 4: Elevate the awareness of county-level resources, offices, departments and programs designed to sustain and improve community safety

Action Steps	Responsible
4.1 Strengthen residents’ understanding of the County’s role in public safety by providing information about the agencies and programs available	Sheriff’s Office Attorney’s Office Emergency Management Agency
4.2 Continue to promote the Story County Iowa Alerts System	Emergency Management Agency
4.3 Educate residents and public officials on the role of the Story County Emergency Management Agency and the responsibilities of local jurisdictions	Emergency Management Agency
4.4 Develop property maintenance and building codes and standards for unincorporated Story County	Planning and Development Environmental Health Assessor’s Office
4.5 Conduct annual reviews of the COOP/COG Plan and conduct exercises every three years	Elected Officials and Department Heads



Quality of Life Infrastructure

EMPHASIZING VALUES

- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Inclusivity

Goal 5: Improve the knowledge and availability of transportation resources, including all modes of transportation, for residents in rural communities of Story County

Action Steps	Responsible
5.1 Form a countywide transportation committee charged with understanding the barriers and gaps in the current network and available data by using existing studies and findings to develop action steps towards achieving this goal	Board of Supervisors Director of External Operations and County Services
5.2 Increase awareness of transportation resources throughout the county	Board of Supervisors



Goal 6: Ensure 100% of Story County residents, businesses and organizations have access to broadband service with upload/download speeds and capacity capable of accommodating current usage and future demand

Action Steps	Responsible
6.1 Proactively communicate with Federal officials, OCIO, and broadband providers to ensure accurate information about needs and to troubleshoot challenges that may slow implementation	Board of Supervisors Broadband Working Group
6.2 Research and pursue new funding opportunities to expedite implementation	Board of Supervisors Broadband Working Group



Recruitment, Development, and Retention of Story County Team Members

EMPHASIZING VALUES

- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Environment
- ✓ Inclusivity
- ✓ Innovation

Goal 7: Increase the number of qualified applicants and reduce turnover rate of County employees

Action Steps	Responsible
7.1 Conduct exit interviews and an annual employee satisfaction survey	Human Resources
7.2 Support Team Story efforts and encourage staff engagement	Elected Officials and Department Heads
7.3 Enhance benefit package where needed to improve recruitment and retention	Human Resources Board of Supervisors
7.4 Evaluate options for flexible scheduling to enhance work/life balance	Human Resources
7.5 Continue to conduct annual reviews of the employee compensation plan, with a full study every five years	Human Resources Board of Supervisors
7.6 Continue to enhance the onboarding process to make it more comprehensive, including awareness of all county-wide offices and departments, job shadow and mentoring opportunities	Human Resources
7.7 Engage local schools and community colleges for job shadowing and apprenticeship opportunities and provide educational events	Human Resources

Goal 8: Promote continuous training and professional development of County staff

Action Steps	Responsible
8.1 Continue to provide comprehensive training for all County employees	Human Resources



8.2 Establish a policy requiring a minimum number of annual training hours for all employees	Human Resources Elected Officials
8.3 Prepare County staff for possible impact(s) to business operations of a more Internet connected population and expectations of online services	Elected Officials Information Technology



Communication, Awareness and Education of Services and Programs

- EMPHASIZING VALUES
- ✓ Collaboration
 - ✓ Equity
 - ✓ Wise Use of Resources

Goal 9: Enhance communication strategies to inform individuals inside and outside of Story County of the offering and impact of County offices, departments, and programs and to increase feedback on usefulness and effectiveness of County services

Action Steps	Responsible
9.1 Implement the Story County Communication Plan and schedule annual plan updates	Board of Supervisors Director of External Operations and County Services
9.2 Increase Board of Supervisors and staff attending community meetings and discussion groups to raise the profile of the County and to collect frontline input from local leadership	Board of Supervisors
9.3 Provide and enhance access to interpretation and translation for countywide programs and services	Board of Supervisors Director of Internal Operations and Human Resources DEIB Committee
9.4 Conduct an accessibility audit to determine the technology related needs of those with disabilities related to receiving County programs and services	Information Technology Board of Supervisors Director of Internal Operations and Human Resources DEIB Committee
9.5 Review and assess signage needs on County properties	Facilities Management Conservation Secondary Roads
9.6 Develop and implement a leadership training program for boards and commission members	Board of Supervisors Director of External Operations and County Services



Leveraging Technology to Improve Story County Operations

- EMPHASIZING VALUES
- ✓ Equity
 - ✓ Wise Use of Resources
 - ✓ Accountability

Goal 10: Make strategic investments in critical Information Technology (IT) infrastructure to enhance the delivery of County services and programs to its constituents



Action Steps	Responsible
10.1 Conduct a needs assessment evaluating hardware, software and IT infrastructure opportunities and challenges	Information Technology
10.2 Develop a plan to address internal technology improvements and upgrades	Board of Supervisors Information Technology

Goal 11: Protect Story County governmental services from cybersecurity risks

Action Steps	Responsible
11.1 Continue to provide ongoing training for all County employees including the implications of cybersecurity threats	Information Technology Human Resources
11.2 Plan for and implement cybersecurity protections	Board of Supervisors Information Technology

Goal 12: Convert the County to a paperless system to free up physical space and improve recordkeeping

Action Steps	Responsible
12.1 Identify “forever records” within offices and departments, and use the Space Needs Study and Records Retentions guidelines to develop policies and procedures and an implementation plan	Elected Officials and Department Heads
12.2 Identify County records of historical importance and work with local and state curators to develop means for archival and storage of materials as appropriate	Elected Officials and Department Heads



Funding Story County Operations and Programs

EMPHASIZING VALUES

- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Wise Use of Resources

Goal 13: Identify opportunities to reduce expenses and increase efficiencies

Action Steps	Responsible
13.1 Emphasize data-driven decision making in the budgeting process and develop a framework for connecting the budget with strategic planning and priorities	Elected Officials and Department Heads
13.2 Develop a program to recognize innovation that improves efficiency and saves money	Board of Supervisors

Goal 14: Support countywide economic development efforts

Action Steps	Responsible
14.1 Continue to support the Story County Economic Development Group	Board of Supervisors Director of External Operations and County Services



14.2 Update Chapter 6 Economic Prosperity of the C2C Plan with an Economic Development Framework	Board of Supervisors Director of External Operations and County Services Planning and Development
14.3 Continue implementation of the Housing Action Plan	Board of Supervisors Planning and Development Director of External Operations and County Services

Goal 15: Continue advocacy efforts on behalf of Story County and its communities within the Iowa Legislature and Federal government

Action Steps	Responsible
15.1 Participate in NACO and ISAC advocacy efforts to continue to evolve and expand legislative priorities to accomplish County goals and mission	Elected Officials and Department Heads
15.2 Provide an annual briefing/how to guide/what is permissible related to advocacy and communication with lawmakers for County staff	Board of Supervisors
15.3 Provide a weekly summary of potential legislation to County staff during each session of the Iowa Legislature	Director of External Operations and County Services

