

**CITY OF ADEL, IOWA  
MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL GOAL SETTING REPORT  
2024-2025**

**Mayor:**

**James F. Peters**

**City Council**

**Rob Christensen**

**James West**

**Shirley McAdon**

**Bob Ockerman**

**Jodi Selby**

**Dan Miller (2023 Council)**

**City Clerk:**

**Carrie Erickson**

**City Administrator:**

**Anthony Brown**

**Library Director:**

**Trever Jayne**

**Public Works Director:**

**Kip Overton**

**Police Chief:**

**Gordy Shepherd**

**Deputy City**

**Administrator/Finance**

**Director:**

**Brittany Sandquist**

**Code Compliance Officer:**

**Steve Nichols**

**Fire Chief:**

**Braden Nemechek**

**Parks & Recreation Director:**

**Nick Schenck**



**Facilitated by:**

**Patrick Callahan**

**Callahan Municipal Consultants, LLC**

**November 16, 2023**

# City of Adel, Iowa

## Mayor & City Council Goal Setting Session

### 2024-2025

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#### **Introduction**

The City of Adel requested assistance from Patrick Callahan in August, 2023, for a Mayor and City Council goal setting process. Mr. Callahan agreed to organize and facilitate a process that involved the following steps:

1. Prepare a questionnaire to identify department needs, capital projects, accomplishments, programs, issues, trends and team building suggestions.
2. Prepare a list of the overall capital projects and suggested initiatives and programs based upon the comments of the elected officials and city department heads.
3. Conduct a strategic planning and goal setting session with the elected officials.
4. Preparation of this final report.

#### **Goal Setting Work Session**

City Council Members and the Mayor held an informal non-binding work session that was conducted by Mr. Callahan on November 16, 2023. The City's elected officials and department heads were asked to do the following:

1. Identify the major accomplishments of the City in 2022 and 2023, as listed by the Mayor, Council Members, and the City Department Heads. **(Exhibits A-1 & A-2)**
2. Review the list of most important issues, concerns and trends facing the City in 2024, as listed by the Mayor and Council Members and by the City Department Heads. **(Exhibits B-1 & B-2)**
3. Review and revise the list of potential initiatives, policies, and programs. **(Exhibit C)**
4. Indicate those initiatives and programs that are the most urgent or important at this time.
5. Review and revise the list of potential capital projects. **(Exhibit D)**
6. Indicate those capital projects that are the most urgent or important at this time.
7. Provide comments and suggestions regarding teamwork objectives. **(Exhibits E-1 & E-2)**

**Note:** The Letter of Introduction, the Agenda for the Goal Setting Session, and the Preliminary Questionnaire are attached to this report as Appendix A, Appendix B and Appendix C, respectively.

## **THE CITY COUNCIL'S LIST OF "GIVENS"**

After reviewing the list of proposed programs and policies, the Mayor and City Council Members concluded that the City was already committed to the completion of the following programs, policies, and initiatives:

1. Establish timetable and proceed with annexation efforts to east & south.
2. Develop & hire Community & Economic Development Director position.
3. Make sure water and sewer rates are sufficient to repay our debt.

Since the City Council had already committed to the completion of these items, it was agreed that the Mayor and City Council would not need to rank or prioritize these suggestions.

The City Council also reviewed the goals and objectives that were identified and started in 2021. The Council reaffirmed their commitment to continue the following programs and policies that were selected in 2021:

1. Expand/evolve staffing to better meet the needs of a growing community.
2. Create & maintain a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).
3. Develop Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Government (COOP/COG) Plan, including update to Emergency Response Plan.
4. Improve and implement technology across City departments.
5. Update Parks & Trails Master Plan.
6. Develop & implement department wide IT and security plan.

## **INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS – 2024-2025**

**The Mayor and City Council identified the following initiatives and programs as the most urgent or important.**

1. Develop a plan for the implementation of the pavement management program or streets maintenance study.
2. Water Tower Park 2 to 10 year written plan \$20M +/- . The Park Board has established a fundraising group.
3. Fire Department Projects
  - Determine needs for new fire department.
  - Transition from volunteer fire department to full-time department – 5-year plan.
  - Create job description and hire full-time Fire Chief using SAFER Grant - 3 years - \$100K per year.
  - Start discussion with Van Meter and DeSoto to merge fire departments.
  - Determine budgetary impacts of a new fire station operationally and whether the General Fund has the capacity.
4. Transition South Dallas County Landfill to a city department by July 2025.
5. Employee Retention and Attraction
  - Update job descriptions and wages to remain competitive.

- Continued focus on employee attraction & retention.
- Consideration of City “match” for employee deferred compensation plan in addition to IPERS contribution.

**NOTE:** A complete list of all programs and initiatives, as ranked by the Mayor and City Council Members is attached as **Exhibit C**.

### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS – 2024-2025**

**The Mayor and City Council identified the following capital projects and equipment purchases as the most urgent or important.**

Top Priority Capital Projects & Equipment Purchases:

1. Use the Pavement Management Plan for street construction and repair and street rehab project - \$5,000,000.
2. Phase one of Water Tower Park/construct new recreation complex.
3. New fire station by 2025 - \$5,000,000 +/-.
4. Rapids Street - \$4,000,000 +/- - 2025.
5. Since the school bond issue passed, develop a plan to both improve Meadow Road and the feeder streets from the west side of the school property onto Meadow Road west of Highway 169.

Note: A complete summary of the rankings of all capital projects and equipment purchases is attached as Exhibit D.

### **TEAM BUILDING AGREEMENTS**

The Mayor and City Council reviewed a list of ideas and suggestions relating to team building and building a better working relationship. The list of team building suggestions is identified as **Exhibit E-1 & E-2**.

### **FUTURE PLANNING SUGGESTIONS**

It is recommended that the city staff and management team prepare an “action plan” for the capital projects, and the initiatives & programs. The action plan for each goal would define the steps needed to accomplish the various tasks or objectives. This action plan could then be presented to the Mayor and City Council for review and approval and made a part of this Goal Setting Report.

It is recommended that the goals and objectives be posted in the Council Chambers at City Hall. The posting of the City Council’s goals and objectives will serve as a reminder to the City Department Heads and Staff Members as to the priorities that were established by the Mayor and City Council.

It is recommended that the City Council review the lists of capital projects and equipment purchases, and initiatives, programs, and monitor the progress that is made on each item on a quarterly basis. The City could use a format that shows the project or item side by side with a comment that updates the City Council and the residents of the City on the progress that has been made on each item at the end of each quarter. The tentative dates in 2024 for the quarterly updates are: March 12, June 11, September 10, and December 10.

It is important to note that the prioritizing of all the capital projects and various initiatives is not “cast in stone.” The two lists can be modified as new circumstances may dictate. Hopefully, the Mayor and City Council will repeat this process in late 2025, which may result in some additional modifications.

It is recommended that the City continue to review and update the capital improvements plan to identify the City’s capital projects over the next four to six years. The plan could include cost estimates, descriptions of the projects, the justification, and sources of funding. An example of a capital improvements plan has been made available to the City Administrator.

### **COMMUNICATION OF COUNCIL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES TO CITIZENS**

Since the citizens of Adel are basically the “stockholders” or owners of the City, it is important that they are informed about the goals and objectives that have been established by the Mayor and City Council. The following is a brief summary of various activities that have been used in other cities to communicate the City Council’s goals and objectives to local residents.

1. ***City Website.*** After the Mayor and City Council have reviewed and formally adopted the Goal Setting Report, a copy of the report can be placed on the City’s website for review by the citizens of Adel.
2. ***Town Hall Meeting.*** The City Council could schedule a town hall meeting or public forum to present a summary of the City’s goals and objectives and to seek comments and observations from local residents.
3. ***City Hall Posting of Goals.*** The Council’s goals and objectives could be posted in the lobby area at City Hall for interested residents to review.
4. ***Open Houses – City Facilities.*** Annual “open houses” at various City buildings, such as City Hall, Fire Station, Police Station, Library, or Public Works Shop, could be held to inform the citizens about the upcoming city projects and programs that have been proposed.
5. ***Community Leaders’ Meeting.*** The Mayor and City Council could schedule an annual or semi-annual meeting with the School Board and the Adel Chamber/Economic Development Board of Directors, to review and discuss the City Council’s goals and objectives. These meetings could also provide an opportunity to learn more about the projects, programs, and objectives under consideration by these same organizations.
6. ***Presentations to Service Clubs.*** The Mayor, Council Members, and City Administrator could make brief presentations to local services clubs and organizations outlining the goals and objectives.

7. ***Public Places –Reading Material.*** A copy of this goal setting report or a brief summary of the City’s goals and objectives could be made available in public places, or where local residents could read this report.

**FINAL COMMENTS**

It was a pleasure to assist the City of Adel with this goal setting process. We were impressed with the level of cooperation of the city staff and the elected officials.

Once again, thanks to the Deputy City Administrator, the City Clerk, the Mayor, the City Council Members, and all the City Department Heads for the great cooperation and timely response during this process.

Patrick Callahan  
Callahan Municipal Consultants, LLC

November 24, 2023

**EXHIBIT A-1  
ADEL, IOWA  
GOAL SETTING SESSION 2024-25**

**Major Accomplishments - Mayor & Council Members Responses**

1. Completed a preliminary study of the Southwest Basin.
2. Made significant progress in improving employee compensation and benefits for employee retention.
3. Developed a plan to provide continuity of service during the medical leave of the City Administrator.
4. Purchased two new fire trucks with ARPA funds.
5. Kept the development of Water Tower Park on the priority list.
6. Revised the Trails Project to meet budget restraints.
7. Updated insurance values of City facilities.
8. Dealt with a nuisance abatement issue that spurred discussion regarding future issues.
9. Completed force main and lift station for Southbridge.
10. Completion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant & related projects.
11. Completion of Water Department projects.
12. Approved additional residential development plats.
13. Approved additional commercial plats.
14. Updating of various sections of City Code of Ordinances.
15. Worked with the County on building additions on the Square.
16. Worked with the School District on opening of new school.
17. Hiring of new police chief.
18. Hired/created additional necessary staff positions – Administrative Clerk and Deputy City Administrator.

19. Hired 4 new employees for Parks, Public Works and City Hall.
20. Approved Community & Economic Development Director position and job description.
21. Improved City Hall hours for residents and staff.
22. Had HR Green complete a Street Improvement Study/CIP.
23. Cemetery records management system implemented.
24. Completed study on the cost of water production.
25. Completed removal of city owned ash trees.
26. Completing performance appraisals for city staff.
27. The Parks Department hired out for the creation of wood carving sculptures.



**EXHIBIT A-2  
ADEL, IOWA  
GOAL SETTING SESSION 2024-25**

**Major Accomplishments – Department Heads’ Responses**

1. New building at salt shed.
2. Wastewater plant completed.
3. Southbridge Lift Station completed.
4. Removal of all city-owned ash trees – 297 trees.
5. Purchase of two firetrucks utilizing ARPA funds.
6. Water & wastewater infrastructure improvements.
7. Completion of HR Green’s pavement management study.
8. Great strides on employee retention initiatives.
9. Approval of major budget requests which have allowed additional staffing.
10. New water treatment plant.
11. Addition of third Parks Maintenance position.
12. Completed Adel’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
13. Awarded two trail grants.
14. Park restroom renovations.
15. Re-purposing of old water plant to Park Department Shop.
16. Island Park tree plantings – Eagle Scout Project.
17. New ADA compliant sidewalks to park shelters.
18. Security cameras in city parks.

**EXHIBIT B-1  
ADEL, IOWA  
GOAL SETTING SESSION 2024-25**

**Issues and Concerns – Mayor & City Council Responses**

1. Actions by the Iowa Legislature that negatively affect funding streams and property taxes.
2. Negative public perceptions of government.
3. Obstacles to orderly growth through annexation – annexation to the South, annexation to the East of the River to square off boundaries, and annexation of new school grounds.
4. Loss of additional local control.
5. Ability to meet the needs of growth.
6. Preparing for new high school.
7. Potential traffic concerns on Nile Kinnick Drive.
8. Ability to staff properly to meet demands of growing needs of the City.
9. High dollar project plans (streets, fire station, Water Tower Park) vs property tax expectations of the public and the budget.
10. Additional city professional services and/or staff (Community & Economic Development Director).
11. Extending boundaries of water services/making a deal with Xenia.
12. State Highway 169 and increasing traffic.
13. Continue to update subdivision ordinance to match the City's Comp Plan 2040.
14. Additional SRO officer for new school.
15. The need for a new fire station and staff.
16. Street projects.

17. The different needs of a younger population and how to meet those needs.
18. Attracting and retaining commercial businesses.
19. How to best leverage the City's LOST money and address any state-imposed changes.

**EXHIBIT B-2  
ADEL, IOWA  
GOAL SETTING SESSION 2024-25**

**Issues and Concerns – Department Heads’ Responses**

1. Water service territory – take over Xenia territory within City limits.
2. Aging roadways – implement pavement study CIP and stay committed to it.
3. Annexation - need to annex south and east.
4. Need to finish wage adjustment for non-union employees - budget raises.
5. Legislative decisions surrounding property tax, local option sales tax, & tax increment financing.
6. Highway 169 traffic concerns.
7. Current pressure on General Fund given HF718 Property Tax Reform.
8. Awareness of the LOST fund’s subsidization of the Parks & Recreation budgets.
9. Ability to hire and retain qualified candidates.
10. Police Department space constraints with additional growth in coming years.
11. Need for additional staff to compensate for growth of population.
12. Need to consult with employees prior to City Council meetings regarding concerns or issues.
13. Loss of property tax “backfill” funds from the State of Iowa.
14. Impact of inflation on employee wages and compensation.

**Exhibit C – FINAL  
CITY OF ADEL, IOWA  
STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION 2024-2025**

**Significant Initiatives, Programs & Policies – Mayor & City Council Members Rankings**

| Significant Initiatives, Programs & Policies   | Top Priority | Second Priority | Total Score |
|--|--------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. Develop a plan for the implementation of the pavement management program  | 6            | 0               | 12          |
| 2. Water Tower Park 2 to 10 year plan \$20M +/- . The Park Board has established a fundraising group   | 5            | 1               | 11          |
| 3. Fire Department Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine direction of needs for new fire department</li> <li>• Transition from volunteer fire department to full-time department – 5-year plan</li> <li>• Create job description and hire full time Fire Chief using SAFER Grant 3 years - \$100K per year</li> <li>• Start discussion with Van Meter and DeSoto to merge fire departments</li> <li>• Determine budgetary impacts of a new fire station operationally and whether the General Fund has the capacity</li> </ul> | 4            | 2               | 10          |
| 4. Transition South Dallas Co. Landfill to a city department by July 2025  | 4            | 2               | 10          |
| 5. Employee retention and attraction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update job descriptions and wages to remain competitive</li> <li>• Continued focus on employee attraction &amp; retention</li> <li>• Consideration of City “match” for employee deferred compensation plan in addition to IPERS contribution</li> </ul>  | 2            | 4               | 8           |
| 6. Nuisance abatement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish plan to address nuisance properties and include the funding to accomplish the task</li> <li>• Evaluate “junk property”/nuisance ordinances and make sure they can be enforced</li> </ul>  | 0            | 3               | 3           |
| 7. Determine needs for quality-of-life items – parks, trails & library   | 0            | 3               | 3           |
| 8. Creation of the discussed staffing plan   | 0            | 2               | 2           |
| 9. Update sewer connection fees for the east annexation area and Southbridge area.   | 0            | 2               | 2           |
| 10. Evaluate the subdivision ordinance to make sure it addresses the necessary issues  | 0            | 1               | 1           |
| 11. Examine and update employee handbook to represent current needs  | 0            | 1               | 1           |
| 12. Establish job description for “Community & Economic Development Director” and proceed with filling the position. Restructure Building Inspector/Code Compliance Officer position once previous position is filled.   | 0            | 0               | 0           |

**EXHIBIT D – FINAL  
CITY OF ADEL, IOWA  
STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION 2024-2025**

**Capital Projects & Equipment Purchases – Mayor/City Council Members Ranking**

| <b>Capital Projects &amp; Equipment Purchases</b>  | <b>Top Priority</b> | <b>Second Priority</b> | <b>Total Score</b> |
|--|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Use the Pavement Management Plan for street construction and repair and street rehab projects - \$5,000,000   | 5                   | 1                      | 11                 |
| 2. Phase one of Water Tower Park/construct new recreation complex  | 4                   | 1                      | 9                  |
| 3. New fire station by 2025 - \$5,000,000 +/-  | 4                   | 1                      | 9                  |
| 4. Rapid Street reconstruction - \$4, 500,00 +/-   | 4                   | 1                      | 9                  |
| 5. Since the school bond issue passed, develop a plan to both improve Meadow Road and the feeder streets from the west side of the school property on to Meadow Road of Highway 169. | 3                   | 3                      | 9                  |
| 6. Replace public works equipment/ plan for new city snowplows.  | 0                   | 4                      | 4                  |
| 7. Start engineering study to replace main sewer lift station 5 years - \$14,000,000   | 0                   | 3                      | 3                  |
| 8. Improve both the Public Works and Parks buildings or build new facilities to match the demands of a growing community – coordination with the County and School District          | 0                   | 3                      | 3                  |
| 9. Greene Street Project – 2025 – do at same time County does their work - \$1,000,000 +/-   | 1                   | 0                      | 2                  |
| 10. Continue trail & bike path expansion projects partially funded through CIRTPA  | 0                   | 2                      | 2                  |
| 11. Sidewalk – Highway 169 to City limits  | 1                   | 0                      | 2                  |
| 12. New aerial view truck for fire department 2026 - \$1,000,000 +/-   | 0                   | 1                      | 1                  |
| 13. Plan for space optimization for staffing space at all city buildings   | 0                   | 1                      | 1                  |
| 14. Infrastructure requirements spurring from growth & annexation  | 0                   | 1                      | 1                  |
| 15. Improve Island Park roads  | 0                   | 0                      | 0                  |
| 16. Update public safety equipment   | 0                   | 0                      | 0                  |
| 17. 3 years – new street sweeper - \$300,000   | 0                   | 0                      | 0                  |
| 18. 2 years – new backhoe - \$150,000  | 0                   | 0                      | 0                  |
| 19. Additional office hardware, PC, server migration to cloud based  | 0                   | 0                      | 0                  |
| 20. Office remodeling – lighting upgrade, furniture, etc.  | 0                   | 0                      | 0                  |
| 21. Pavement project – City Hall/Library   | 0                   | 0                      | 0                  |
| 22. Eagle Vista Park Development 2025-26   | 0                   | 0                      | 0                  |
|  |                     |                        |                    |
|  |                     |                        |                    |

**EXHIBIT E-1  
ADEL, IOWA  
GOAL SETTING SESSION 2024-25**

**Teamwork Suggestions – Mayor & City Council Responses**

1. Implement good use of technology to access to resources (i.e. Teams, etc.)
2. Consider capital & financial planning “retreat” to develop 3 to 5 year plan for City’s big capital projects.
3. Continue with the monthly Committee of the Whole meetings.
4. Continue the use of the City Council committee structure – water & sewer budget, public safety, streets & alleys, and personnel.
5. Council Committees meet with City Department Heads on a quarterly schedule.
6. Be open to compromising.
7. Schedule budget workshops.
8. Establish timelines for goals and objectives and consistently review progress.
9. Council commitment to follow the plan set forth in the goals and objectives and not go off the plan.
10. Encourage and empower city staff to develop a strategic plan for their departments.
11. Ensure that the City Council has adequate time to review council packets and ask questions so as to reduce the need to delay action or table items.

**EXHIBIT E-2  
ADEL, IOWA  
GOAL SETTING SESSION 2024-25**

**Teamwork Suggestions – Department Heads Responses**

1. Once goals and objectives are established keep them at the forefront. Make certain the goals & objectives are obtainable as a whole and not too hefty.
2. Continue meeting as committees to ensure productive and efficient City Council meetings.
3. Focus on specific tasks and complete the task before moving on to the next item.
4. Pare down initiatives to prioritize realistic goals only.
5. Make decisions on agenda items so that projects can be completed.
6. More frequent city department head meetings.