



# **Implementation Plan Proposed Draft**

## **2015-2019**

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### **Reader's Guide**

# Section 1

## 1 | Introduction

### Overview

The City of Rockford adopted the 2020 Comprehensive Plan in 2004 to help guide the growth and development of the City. Smart growth principles are embedded within the plan to provide a framework for achieving long-term land-use, transportation, economic development and related planning through the year 2020. A 10-year review of the 2020 plan was recommended in the approved document. In fall 2013 the City Council Planning & Development Committee and members of City Staff launched a review process to evaluate current strategies toward achieving the plan's vision. At the end of the review process in 2014, City staff recommended updating strategies to align with current conditions in the City of Rockford and continue alignment with other regional plans developed since the original plan adoption and the most recent amendments.

### Comprehensive Plan 10-Year Review Process

The 2015-2019 Implementation Plan was developed by the 2020 Plan Update Steering Committee under the direction of the City Council Planning & Economic Development Committee. Committee members included representatives from the Departments of Community & Economic Development, Public Works, Human Services, and the Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning (RMAP). The strategies and tactics reflect community input received the Strategy Alignment Work Groups and community input sessions held in October 2014. A working draft of the strategies was made available for public review and comment from October through December 2014.

### Plan Core Values & Principles

The Implementation Plan is designed to be the ongoing evaluation mechanisms to implement the policies and goals of the 2020 Plan in sync with the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan/2015 Annual Action Plan, Capital Improvement Program and partner agency plans. The 5-year plan helps to focus strategies to:

1. Improved public safety
2. Maintain and promote commerce and economic opportunity
3. Create a sense of well-being within the community.

### Strategy Alignment

The recently completed Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (RPSD) by the Rockford Metropolitan Agency for Planning (RMAP) was used as a framework to guide

Plan Alignment Goals

Goals and Principles  
Overview

Plan Alignment Matrix

# Section 2

## 2 | Existing Land Use and Zoning

### Land Use

The City's comprehensive plan shows anticipated land demand to accommodate future growth. The 2015-2019 Implementation Plan does not recommend changes to the Comprehensive Plan, last amended in 2011 (see Figure 2.1). Strategies and initiatives identified in the implementation plan dedicate significant focus on infill development and underutilized land. While most areas are built out there remain opportunities within all five planning areas for infill development for residential, commercial and industrial uses.

### Vacant and Underutilized Land

As of the 2014 property assessment, more than 5,255 acres of land are identified as vacant. Approximately 4,400 acres of land is listed as vacant or underutilized exempt and non-exempt commercial, industrial and vacant farmland. Over 730 acres of land zoned residential is identified as vacant. Larger tracts of underutilized land are ideal for redevelopment to strengthen employment opportunities and neighborhood livability throughout the City. Infill and adaptive reuse may be more appropriate on sites adjacent to residential areas while site and building demolition is an appropriate strategy for areas ripe for higher impact end users.

Current Long Range Land Use Map

Current Zoning Map

# Section 3

2015-2019 Implementation Plan

## 3 | 2015-2019 Implementation Strategies



### Framing the Next Five Years

Plan Element 13 of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan provides direction for plan implementation, monitoring and revising. Additionally, a full review of the 2020 Plan was recommended for years 2014-2015. The 2015-2019 Implementation Plan maintains the City's current policy goals and principles adopted in 2004. The 5-year plan, balancing plan vision and current conditions, includes 77 strategic objectives and recommended initiatives to implement over the next 5 years.

### Strategic Outcome – Housing and Neighborhoods

Rockford neighborhoods are diverse in character, style, and culture. The City's goal is to sustain and grow the number of livable and walkable neighborhoods where people want to live, work and play. Neighborhoods are diverse and at the same time share common social, environmental and economic assets for sustainability. The following strategies are designed to continue our progress toward improving neighborhood livability in all planning areas:

#### Strategic Objectives & Initiatives:

<p><b>1.1 Continue to create opportunities for rehabilitation.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Promote and expand housing preservation and rehabilitation incentive programs.</li> <li>b. Develop a vacant housing online database and market incentives available for property repurposing to young adult professionals.</li> <li>c. Provide housing options that support aging-in-place and accessory housing units.</li> <li>d. Align resources for residential property landscaping beautification.</li> <li>e. Maintain a housing inspection program that can identify housing trending toward decline or identifiable substandard housing issues.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.2 Continue demolition of abandoned properties.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identify demolished properties suitable for public art projects and urban agriculture/community gardens.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.3 Enable a range of housing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Target new senior housing development with high connectivity and access</li> </ul>

Highest ranked strategies selected by work group participants

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Initiatives identified by Steering Committee to achieve Objectives



# Section 4

2015-2019 Implementation Plan

Key Strategic Themes	Strategic Objectives	Indicators	Lead Agency & Other Partners	Implementation Tools/ Funding Sources	General Timeline
<b>Housing &amp; Neighborhoods</b>					
<b>Improving housing stock supply and conditions</b>	1.1 Continue to create opportunities for rehabilitation.	Permits Issued for Improvements Total Vacant Housing Units	COR-CED / COR-L CBO	City Operating CDBG	2015-2018 ongoing
	1.2 Continue demolition of abandoned properties.	Owner Vacancy Rates Distressed Buildings by Vital Signs District		Other State/Federal Funding	
<b>Sustainable housing capacity for all income levels</b>	1.3 Provide a range of housing affordability within existing and new neighborhoods.	Median Home Price Median Rent of 2 Bedroom Units Percent of Renters Spending more than 30% of income on housing Combined Housing and Transportation Cost Burden Distribution of Affordable Housing Units	COR-CED CBO CDC RHA	City Operating CDBG New Market Tax Credits State/Federal Funding	2016-2018 ongoing
	1.4 Reduce number of absentee-ownership properties.	Total Vacant Properties Abandoned Properties	COR-CED / COR-L CBO	City Operating CDBG	2016-2017
	1.5 Develop parks and open space within existing and new neighborhood developments.	Number of Parks by Vital Signs District Open Space per Capita	RAEDC RPD		
	1.6 Improve access and availability of essential services within neighborhood commercial corridors and centers.	Child Population by Vital Signs District Households within 1 mile of Grocery Retail Services Households within 1 mile of Laundry Facilities Households within 1 mile of Childcare facilities			
1.7 Increase community engagement opportunities in neighborhood and focus area planning.	Percent of Residents involved in local planning Social Media platforms participation rate				
<b>Safety</b>					
<b>Lowering crime and perceptions of safety</b>	2.1 Develop and implement programs to decrease crime and improve actual and perceived public safety.	Property Crime	COR-MO / COR-P	City Operating	2015-2017
		Violent Crime	CBO	State/Federal Funding	ongoing
		Incidents of domestic violence	RHA		
		Total Active Neighborhood Associations			
		Total Active Business Associations			

Strategic Themes capture the desired outcome

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Maintaining and enhancing neighborhood livability	1.4 Reduce number of absentee-ownership properties.	Total Vacant Properties Abandoned Properties	COR-CED / COR-L CBO	City Operating CDBG	2016-2017
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Strategic Objectives are measurable approaches

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22

How to measure progress / inform decisions

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Recommended lead facilitators

Funding Source Options

Implementation timeframe