



**City of Aledo
Community Vision and Strategic Plan
August 2006**

Introduction

During the spring of 2006, the Aledo City Council, city employees, Mayor, key community stakeholders, businesses, organizations supporting community and economic development and visionary citizens came together three times to develop a strategic vision for the community of Aledo. The process engaged the participants in a number of processes to study, learn, and discuss the possible futures of Aledo.

The process began with the group identifying who was a part of the visioning and strategic planning process. This demonstrated the real reach of this process. The group then identified prouds and sorries for the community. The prouds demonstrate a source of competence and strengths for the community to build upon while the sorries indicate possible areas of improvement.

The next part of the process was to scan the horizon for events, trends, and developments that could affect Aledo's future. During this work the group reviewed community demographics, market research, and review of the strategic intent of nearby organizations and communities. This is particularly important because the awareness of the current events in the community, state, nation and world, and the trends and developments taking shape may affect Aledo in the future.

The next step was the participants to develop a preferred future that integrated the previous steps into the vision. This is very important, because it requires the community to see beyond the present and be able to communicate clearly what it wants to become in the future. The last and most challenging step was to develop an action plan and establish goals, objectives and timelines. The participants identified key goals with objectives and timelines. These will be reviewed periodically to ensure the proper prioritization.

What follows is the collective input and deliberations of the participants who participated throughout the three sessions. In closing it is important to remember the purposes of a community vision and strategic plan. **VISION:** The end result of what you want your community to look like. It's a future oriented, detailed description of outcomes you want to accomplish. Ideally what you want to exist, or have happen in a community as a result of your planning efforts. **Strategic Plan:** A plan of action defining how a community will use it's resources to gain a competitive advantage in the larger environment (Cummings and Worley, 2005) and The results of a planning process in determining the primary objectives of a community and then adopting a course of action and allocating resources to achieve those objectives (Boone and Kurtz, 1999).

The next step in the process will be to distribute the document widely in the community, solicit feedback and ask for involvement of individuals and organizations who will work to advance the vision and goals of the strategic plan.

City of Aledo Strategic Plan

Vision

Aledo is a complementary, engaged and proud community for

Individuals, families and seniors seeking quality education, healthcare, housing, and recreation in clean and safe surroundings with access to large city amenities.

Individuals, business, industries and organizations seeking to integrate (align) with agric ulture, distribution, entrepreneurs, historic downtown shopping experiences, hospitality, manufacturing, tourism, renewable fuels and warehousing.

Mission

The City of Aledo through local governance and fiscal accountability collaborates with local and regional entities to positively promote, retain and expand Aledo's economic, population, services and social vitality.

Goals:

Increase available housing across price levels through the construction of 50 new homes and promotion of the assisted living community by 2011.

1. City commits \$200,000 per year for infrastructure, marketing and interest subsidies.
 - A. Identify funding sources or revenue streams for this work
 - B. Currently \$60,000 budgeted by city
2. Demonstrate success and identify barriers in the process through a pilot basis
3. City creates housing development submission criteria and expectations based on existing or updated comprehensive land use plans and policies by December 1, 2006.
 - A. Develop an urban plan with identified home values and their location within the city.
4. Cultivate relationships with potential developers
 - A. Create a housing task force with banks and builders providing leadership.
 - B. Builders want interest subsidy to cover cost of carrying loan. Not as much concern about roads, sewers and etc.
5. Identify future housing development options
 - A. Need for lower cost subdivision.
6. Inventory existing housing stock and lots available by their attributes by March 1, 2007.
 - A. Savoy Example Census Data -Age of Homes, Building permits etc.

7. Promote assisted living community to targeted groups as a strategy to increase availability of existing housing stock by October 30, 2006.
 - A. 66 assisted living units could make 40 houses available.

Increase viable industrial development through integration with existing employers/industries to increase employment by 10 jobs per year.

Total expected 50 jobs by 2011

1. Identify satellite opportunities through vertical integration with existing employers with flow of products or consumables by July 1, 2007.
 - A. Trucking/Warehousing Hub
 1. Industrial
 2. Agriculture
 - B. Heat treating business
 - C. Bio-diesel production
 1. DDG by product can be used as livestock feed alternative.
 - D. Work with County Board goal of improving county road system
2. Utilize best technology to create state of the art facility
3. Develop strategic alliances with key groups in the area to accomplish this goal and identify specific roles for each group based on mission of respective organization by January 1, 2007.
 - A. Key groups to align with County Board, Mergo, Chamber of Commerce, Aledo Mainstreet, GREDA, QCDG, and Bi-State Planning Commission.
 - B. Develop an economic development team and systematic protocol for industrial development and attraction. (Lay out step by step decision tree for various stages of process ie. Who do you talk to, who needs to be apprised, where do you meet, contingencies, confidentiality etc)
4. Identify incremental enterprise development to the proposed transportation/distribution hub by January 1, 2008.
 - A. Cooperative grain trucking
 - B. Full load returns

Increase tourism and hospitality industries to Aledo by marketing the community as tourism/travel destination March 2007

1. Identify domino business in line with this goal ie hotel, restaurants, conference center.
2. Market Aledo as an experience
3. Develop consistent marketing package and plan with cross promotion of community by January 1, 2007.
 - A. Develop central information/tourist center.
 - B. Identify tourism niche and brochure.
 - C. Develop community ambassadors program
 - D. Develop relocation packet for potential new residents

- E. Provide booth at Rhubarb Fest
 - Provide booth at Local Events
 - Provide booth at Friday Football Games
 - F. Be present in Quad City Market
4. Assess tourism potential utilizing standard assessments and benchmark in community by December 30, 2008.

Promote Aledo is an elder friendly community to attract additional residents by January 1, 2009

1. Market to seniors as consumers of housing and health care
2. Utilize data that demonstrates Aledo has 8/10 assets necessary for seniors
3. Recognize, plan for and adjust environmental infrastructure appropriate/necessary for seniors.
4. Promote Aledo's attributes for seniors.
 - A. Safety
 - B. Convenience
 - C. Proximity to larger metro area with not much high speed traffic.
 - D. Access to Social (i.e. Church, Events, YMCA, Senior Center) services.
 - Access to Physical services
 - Access to Recreation services
 - Work with financial institutions to offer trips
 - Access to Health Care
 - E. Affordability
 - F. Senior housing condominium, private, assisted, dependent care.
5. Entertainment
6. Need for access to formal and informal transportation systems
 - A. Potential entrepreneurial business opportunity.
7. Respite Care

Promote Aledo as a family friendly community and retain young workers and professionals by January 1, 2008.

1. Market assets of school system
 - A. Technology
 - B. Academic/Career Success and Graduation rate
 - C. Entertainment/Indoor Outdoor Recreation
 - D. Entrepreneurs
2. Positively promote and market with purpose this concept for Aledo.
 - A. Utilize Search Institute – Assets.
 - B. Social Capital
 - C. Identify opportunities

- Promote churches
 - Promote community learning
 - Promote community warmth
 - Promote pace of life
 - Promote cultural opportunities (band shell)
 - Promote water recreation.
 - D. Idea – Create an Aledo ombudsperson.
 - E. Utilize testimonials from successful young people.
3. Identify complimentary industries to this concept – a rising tide raises all ships.
 4. Identify what keeps young people in a community.
 - A. Activities
 - B. Identify what research says families want.
 - C. Provide youth with part time jobs when they (youth) are available.
 5. Create community clearinghouse for jobs and information.

Increase Tourism, Promotion and Marketing with distribution of materials by March 1, 2007.

1. Develop consistent marketing package and plan with cross promotion of community
 - A. Develop central information/tourist center
 - B. Identify tourism niche and brochure
 - C. Develop community ambassadors program
 - D. Develop relocation packet for potential new residents
 - E. Provide booth at Rhubarb Fest
 - Provide booth at Local Events
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 - F. Be present in Quad City Market
2. Create a list of community contacts by July 1, 2006
3. Hold informational meeting for groups interested in promotion and marketing
4. Explore and identify a marketing agency
5. Secure funding to support marketing products
 - A. Grants
 - B. Department of Economic Opportunity (DECO)
6. Compile community information and develop ads
7. Distribute marketing products by March 1, 2007

Retain and expand retail and service opportunities

1. Develop business visitation program to identify needs and plans of existing businesses. (Community consciousness and succession planning)
 - A. Explore utilizing SCORE (Senior Core of Retired Executives) Blackhawk has

- a chapter.
- 2. Carefully explore and assess retail opportunities
 - Satellites of QC businesses
 - Sportsmen, Hunting, Fishing
 - Market research (See Augustana Report)
- 3. Cross promote business
 - Develop/revise shopping guide.
- 4. Help community understand the impact of retail development.
- 5. Meet elderly/consumer retail needs for convenience and time constraints.
- 6. Identify/diversify retail opportunities utilizing market research.
 - Secure accurate pull numbers.
 - Diversify retail opportunities based on
 - Partnering
 - Satellites
 - Service
 - Personal shopping
- 7. Conduct business owner education and develop display.

Increase the understanding of and amount of Historic Preservation by January 1, 2008

- 1. Improve communication among groups on topic
 - A. City
 - B. Museum
 - C. Aledo Main Street (AMS) has the committee of 7 formed
 - 1. Meets 4 times a year.
 - 2. Projects
 - a. Water Tower
 - b. Historic Walking tours, self and fully guided
 - c. Development of a historic district.
- 2. Develop a marketing partnership with a consistent message
- 3. Develop a funding/financial partnership.
 - A. Community Re-investment Act CRA.
- 4. Provide community education on historic preservation.
 - A. Why we save historical buildings and landmarks.
 - B. Historic guidelines
- 5. Explore possible city sponsorship/endorsement with historical activities.
- 6. Secure city/community designation on his toric registry.
 - A. Qualifies others to secure grants.
 - B. Utilize to promote tourism.

Healthcare Expansion

1. Niche
 - A. Only one of three county hospitals in Illinois.
 - B. Niches
 - Hospital sees their role as health care broker.
 - Hospital sees their role as health care leadership.
 - Supply and desire for specialties – dialysis, ambulance.
 - C. Opportunities include
 - pediatrics
 - advanced procedures – surgery
 - express care
 - wellness center
 - cardiac rehab with YMCA
2. Community education.
 - A. Importance of hospital to community
 - B. Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) Education
 - C. Counter bad information
 - D. Critical access hospital
 - E. Primary care and referrals.
3. Explore possible durable medical equipment provider as a retail opportunity.

Integrate Education and Technology into community planning by December 1, 2006

1. Leverage: Youth with technology experience
2. Schools must be on the cutting edge of technology
 - Internet café
 - Wireless capability
 - Develop funding partnership with school to supply all freshman with laptop computers within three years.
3. Develop community technology infrastructure
 - WIFI Grant
 - Community Connect Grant.
 - Make Aledo a WIFI Community
4. Encourage schools to develop state of the school report to be delivered to the community and city annually, within the next year.
5. Consider how school reorganizations could play a part in these topics.

Recommendations

Transorganizational development is a process to help organizations join into partnerships with other organizations to solve problems that are too complex for single organizations to solve. Cummings and Worley, 2005, identified the following stages in the process: identification, convention, organization and evaluation. For a community these stages mean the following tasks.

Identification Stage: This step involves identifying existing and potential member organizations best suited for achieving the collective objectives.

- Stage is usually carried out by one or few organizations
- Establishes criteria for network membership and identifying organizations that meet criteria
- Networks are formed to perform specific tasks so criteria for membership should be based on how the organization can contribute to performance
- Potential members can be identified and judged in terms of skills, knowledge and resources they bring to tasks
- Involve key stakeholders as well as organizations
- Professional or leadership group needs to educate groups about the benefits of joining together and structuring face-to-face opportunities for sharing information and exploring possibilities

Convention Stage: This step involves bringing people together to determine whether formalizing a network is desirable and feasible. In these face-to-face sessions the groups work to establish motivation for the work and consensus on tasks

- Conveners must be perceived as credible, legitimate and working on behalf of the total system (community)
- Conveners mediate conflicts and explore diverse views and interests to develop agreement among groups and stakeholders

Organization Stage: Organizations and stakeholders organize themselves for performance during this stage.

- Group develops structures and mechanisms that promote communication and interaction among members
- Organizational roles will be identified
 - Connectors - people who have ability to tap into many network audiences. Quick ability to alert and connect with a wide variety of people in many organizations
 - Mavens – people who pursue knowledge and tell others about it. Key is trust and that people who speak to them know they are getting factual unbiased information
 - Sales people – people who are the champions of change and able to influence others to try new ideas, do new things, and consider new options
- Develop control system for decision making and monitoring progress

Evaluation Stage: This stage is where the network assesses how well it is performing

- Assess performance outcomes and member satisfaction
- Enables group to make necessary modifications and adjustments

Systems Approaches

1. Develop transition plans for housing, industrial and downtown development.
2. Move ideas to mobilization.
3. Economic Developer needs to carry Aledo's plans forward.

Draft Example Community Systems Approach or Who Does What?

	Entity	City	Chamber	Main Street	County Board	Mergo	Private	Schools	Hospital
Function									
Increase available housing									
Increase industrial development									
Increase tourism and hospitality									
Promote Aledo with consistent message									
Retain & expand retail									
Increase Historic Preservation									
Expand Health Care									
Integrate Education & Technology Into Community Planning.									

L = Lead. Has primary responsibility for developing and implementing component

A = Assist. Has active role in component, but other entity has primary responsibility

S = Support. Does not have active role in component but will provide periodic assistance when requested.