

CITY OF WHITEHALL
2024 GOALS



The Whitehall City Council establishes a list of prioritized goals following a fall general election. The goals will guide limited staff and financial resources over the next two years towards a shared vision. A brainstorming work session to solicit any and all ideas begins the process. Members of the various authorities, boards, commissions, committees, and the general public are invited. After this session, staff develops a report to be used by the council for voting. The report combines similar goals, groups them by general activity, provides estimated costs, and identifies potential funding sources. Council members vote during a subsequent work session by placing a dot adjacent to a goal. The goals are listed on a series of flip charts. They are limited to ten dots, but may place multiple dots on a single goal to indicate a higher level of support. These extra dots do not count towards a goal's final ranking. Seven votes from seven council members is the highest number a goal can achieve. Goals with four or more votes are considered high priority. Those with one to three votes are medium priority.

HIGH PRIORITY GOALS

- 6 out of 7
 - Improve and expand on the *downtown holiday decorations*. TIFA currently spends \$2,000 per year replacing decorations. A capital increase of \$20,000 along with another \$10,000 for additional labor for installation and utility costs would require \$30,000.

- 5 out of 7
 - Continue *street improvements*. Over the last 22 years, the City has spent \$13.8M to repair 36% of the roads. Plans are in place to invest another \$3.2M over the next five years.

MEDIUM PRIORITY GOALS

- 3 OUT OF 7
 - Install a *pedestrian crossing* on Colby at Franklin with flashing lights. DPW is currently working with MDOT on this project. An estimated \$7,000 for flashing lights and the annual \$500 utility cost would likely be a City expense.
 - Re-establish the spring *curbside junk pickup* program by contracting with a local waste hauler. Based on the actual costs for the last two years the program was used and adjusting for inflation, this program would cost an estimated \$21,000 per year.
 - Add *tables to the North Mears Promenade*. Three top class tables would cost \$6,600.

- Increase the *maintenance on the Slocum Switchback*. The original design was for very low maintenance vegetation. The Muskegon County Conservation District and volunteers have helped in the past. Increased routine maintenance by the Public Works Department will cost an additional \$2,000 per year for labor and equipment.
- Develop a *public access site at Tannery Bay*. A parcel has been donated to the City along with \$30,000 for development costs.

➤ 2 OUT OF 7

- Install a *bicycle station* at Covell Park. The station would include an air compressor, repair tools, changing area, and drinking fountain for an estimated cost of \$30,000.
- Build a *pavilion at Covell Park*. A pavilion with picnic tables would be an estimated \$272,000.
- Build a *restroom at Covell Park*. The estimated construction cost is \$125,000 with annual maintenance and utility costs of \$8,000.
- Develop a *beautification plan* for the downtown and along Colby Street. In house cost would be \$5,000. Contracting a professional, based upon the cost of the 2015 master plan plus inflation, would be in the \$15,000 range.
- Install *dog waste stations* at Funnell Field. The cost of three waste stations is \$1,000 with an installation cost of \$300. Annual maintenance would be \$2,200.
- Increase the *maintenance on Lake Street*; pulling weeds and opening up site views. A lot of the current vegetation is part of the green street project and designed to grow tall. Additional labor and equipment cost would be estimated at \$5,800 per year.
- Allow *remote public comments* during city council meetings. Doubling the current live stream monthly costs to allow this capability would require an additional \$3,600 per year.
- Build a small *pavilion at Slocum Park*. Purchase price \$15,000; installation cost of \$3,300.
- Build a *skate park at Slocum Park*. An in-ground skate park build by contractors would cost an estimated \$720,000
- Install *lights on the Slocum Switchback*, possibly solar to reduce costs. Based on the light project at Goodrich Park, this will cost \$22,000 plus \$500 per year in utilities.
- Install more *wayfinding signs* and parking lot signs. Adding five of each will cost \$15,000.

➤ 1 OUT OF 7

- Rebuild **Benston Road** from Warner Street to the city limits. This stretch is not in the current short term plan. Rough estimate of \$980,000.
- Install a **pedestrian crossing across Thompson** at Covell Park with flashing lights. This would require MDOT approval. The estimated cost is \$7,000 for flashing lights and \$500 per year for utilities.
- Build a **downtown community market** either in the North Mears Promenade or on a vacant city lot located at the corner of Division and Hanson streets. A community pavilion with public restrooms was included in the North Mears Promenade project but removed following strong opposition from the public and some members of the city council. With inflation, the pavilion would carry a current price tag of \$739,000.
- Install a **downtown sound system** for public announcements and background music. Based upon costs spent by a similar sized community, a sound system would be \$24,000 with annual management and utility costs estimated at \$500.
- Add cooking **grills** to Goodrich Park. Three grills, one of which would be a large size “family” grill will run \$2,500. Installation costs would be minimal.
- Install a **zip line** at Goodrich Park. The catalog price for a medium length zip line is \$66,000. Installation would add another \$1,300.
- Conduct a **greenhouse gas audit** of city operations which would then lead to the development and implementation of reduction goals. The City could retain the services of local college students for a cost of \$5,000.
- Clear vegetation at **Norman Park to enhance the views**. DPW labor and equipment cost estimate is \$10,000.
- Increase funding for **sidewalk maintenance**. Typical costs have run \$3,600 per year. Over \$136,000 was spent over the last two summers. Another \$90,000 is needed for further improvements. Annual maintenance would fall back to \$5,000 per year.
- Build a **dog park at Slocum Park**. While only needing one acre, designers recommend two fenced areas – one for small dogs and a second for large dogs. Fencing, seating, waste stations, and a drinking fountain are estimated at \$54,000. It would cost \$9,000 per year to maintain.

- Paint and maintain the *Warner Street bike lanes*. Street sweeping is done on a regular basis along with all other curbed roads in the City. Sweeping along with annual painting of the bikes lanes would cost an estimated \$5,800 per year.
- Upgrade and optimize the *city website*. The website is currently managed in-house on a shoestring budget and is comparable to other similar sized community websites. A dart board estimate on additional costs lands at \$5,000 per year.

NON-PRIORITIZED GOALS

➤ ○ OUT OF 7

- Initiate *adult sports leagues* at the Viking Athletic Center. White Lake Area Community Education would be a better organization to implement this goal, pulling participants from all five public school districts that they represent. Facility rental, game management, officiating, and equipment would run an estimated \$5,000 per sport, per league. Costs could be covered by player fees, local government subsidy, sponsorships, or any combination.
- Collaborate with the Arts Council of White Lake and Whitehall District Schools to establish a relocated *art wall*. Maintenance, signage, and management would cost an estimated \$2,000 per year.
- Collaborate with MDOT and Whitehall Township to provide *pedestrian access* to the east side of USBR31. This area is outside the City's jurisdiction and should be left to MDOT and the Township. Based on recent costs per foot of new sidewalk, this would carry a \$55,000 price tag.
- Install a *traffic light* at the intersection of Colby and Warner. Based upon the cost estimates for new single mast arm traffic lights in the downtown, plus inflation, this would cost \$79,000. Without this being an MDOT initiated project, the State would likely place this expense plus annual utility costs of \$500 on the City.
- Install a *downtown kiosk* for advertising, posting community events, and providing location mapping. Mid-range catalog prices are \$5,000 per unit with another estimated \$500 per year for utilities.
- Replace some downtown on-street parking with *street tables* to enhance the Social District. Higher quality catalog prices for three tables would cost \$6,000.

- Conduct *energy audits* of city buildings. The City recently employed a private consultant. The preliminary report requested \$65,000 to conduct a full audit without any confidence that there would be a positive return on investment.
- Sponsor *food truck rallies*. The ability to provide for and encourage food trucks as part of the North Mears Promenade project was removed following strong opposition from the public and some members of the city council. Management, marketing, and utilities of two events per year would be a rough estimated cost of \$5,000.
- Build a *disc golf course at Funnell Field*. The minimum recommended acreage for a beginner 18-hole course is half an acre per hole. There is 7.5 acres of undeveloped area not used for soccer practices or overflow parking. Equipment for a disc golf course would cost \$24,000. Installation would be \$2,000 with annual maintenance of less than \$500.
- Build a *dog park at Funnell Field*. While only needing one acre, designers recommend two fenced areas – one for small dogs and a second for large dogs. Fencing, seating, waste stations, and a drinking fountain are estimated at \$54,000. It would cost \$9,000 per year to maintain.
- Replace the City's *GIS software*. Staff is of the opinion that the current system is more than adequate. Catalog prices average \$17,000 with another \$600 per year for maintenance and upgrades.
- Install a second *adult bench swing* at Goodrich Park. Purchase price of \$3,000, installation cost of \$650.
- *Advertise the marina* in the Great Loop Cruisers Association. \$100 per year for membership, plus advertising costs. Past advertising and boat show attendance has not resulted in increased sales. This Association is a very niche market and would not likely be beneficial to the marina and it's very limited financial resources.
- Replace the *Norman Park stairs*. Estimated cost of \$50,000.
- Implement a conditional *closure of North Mears* between Bells and Fetch to expand public seating and gathering . This would allow for a test run on the positives and negatives without a permanent closure. Signage and pedestrian safe barricades, such as large cement planters, would cost an estimated \$28,000.
- Maintain pedestrian *crosswalk painting*. Annual cost is \$3,000.
- Develop a *picnic table replacement* schedule. DPW has an inventory and maintains them until their useful life has exceeded repair costs, then they are replaced.

- Build a *tricycle park at Slocum Park*. The tennis court is no longer usable and beyond repair. A new hard surface area would have to be installed along with painting estimated at \$27,000.
- Build a public *restroom on White Lake Pathway* near the library to alleviate issues with pathway users going to the bathroom behind the library shed. The bathroom would cost \$125,000 with annual maintenance and utility costs of \$8,000.
- Coordinate the replacement of the **White River Bridge** with MDOT and the City of Montague. MDOT has been allocated \$400,000 to conduct preliminary engineering. There is no estimated cost or schedule.