

**CITY OF HAMPTON, IOWA
MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL GOAL SETTING REPORT
2026-2027**

Mayor:
Steve Birdsall

City Council
Kristin Roode
Barry Lamos
Bill Holmstrom
Jerre Grefe
Jeanne Fay
Jim Davies

City Manager/City Clerk:
Ron Dunt

Public Works Director:
Doug Tarr

Police Chief:
Mark Morrison

Facilitated by:
Patrick Callahan
Callahan Municipal Consultants, LLC
March 19, 2026

City of Hampton, Iowa

Mayor & City Council Goal Setting Session

2026-2027

Introduction

The City of Hampton requested assistance from Patrick Callahan in December 2025 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 March 19, 2026. The City's elected officials and department heads were asked to do the following:

1. Identify the major accomplishments of the City in 2024 and 2025, as listed by the Mayor, Council Members, and the City Department Heads. **(Exhibit A)**
2. Review the list of most important issues, concerns and trends facing the City in 2026, as listed by the Mayor and Council Members and by the City Department Heads. **(Exhibit B)**
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. **(Exhibit E)**
8. Identify ongoing commitments and priorities. **(Exhibit F)**.

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 ONGOING PROJECTS

After reviewing the list of proposed programs, policies and capital projects the Mayor and City Council Members concluded that the City was already committed to the completion of the numerous programs, policies, initiatives and capital projects. These ongoing commitments and priorities are listed as Exhibit F. 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 ongoing projects.

INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS – 2026-2027

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

1. Initiate a master plan for updating parks, recreation areas, and equipment, improve recreational facilities: soccer, baseball, and pickleball.
2. Adopt a vacant building ordinance.
3. Continuation of nuisance abatement, Image of Pride, and community clean-up program with Chamber. Consider a community clean-up/fix-up program providing grants, loans, and volunteer assistance to help homeowners rehabilitate their properties, remove hazards, and enhance neighborhoods.
4. Work with the county on a potential recycling program – year-round appliance drop off, add bins, and structures at new composts site.

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 – 2026-2027

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

1. Possible body worn cameras in future.
2. Improve downtown parking with additional parking lots and or imaginative reconstruction of street paths.

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**.

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 2026 & 2027 for the quarterly updates are: June 25, September 24, December 10, and March 25.

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 2032, which may result in some additional modifications.

It is recommended that the City continue to update the capital improvements plan so as 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. A handout on the preparation 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 Hampton 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 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 Hampton.
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 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 meeting with the School Board and the Hampton 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 residents could read this report.

FINAL COMMENTS

It was a pleasure to assist the City of Hampton 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 Mayor, the City Council Members, and City Management Team for the great cooperation and timely responses during this process.

Patrick Callahan
Callahan Municipal Consultants, LLC

March 23, 2026

EXHIBIT A
CITY OF HAMPTON, IOWA
GOAL SETTING SESSION 2026-27

Major Accomplishments

Infrastructure Improvements

1. Upgrade to the water plant to enhance the backwash process and provide a more efficient system for back washing the system. (\$2.3M)
2. Water main improvements
3. Continued HMA milling and overlay of city streets - along with curb and gutter replacement, where necessary.
4. Concrete patching on 4th Ave NW.
5. Bridge/Culvert replacement on 6th St NW.
6. Annual street improvement program
7. Water main projects on 12th Avenue
8. Sidewalk project along Highway 65

Equipment & Building Improvements

9. Tractor/backhoe replacement for Street Department
10. Street sweeper purchase
11. Purchased a new firetruck - it was paid off early.
12. Purchased two new police vehicles.
13. Changing location and upgrading the compost and brush site.
14. Remodeling city council chambers with meetings on YouTube.
15. Support of Hampton Public Library and the landscaping project.
16. Establishing new landfill property.

17. Continue to upgrade equipment with grant funding.

18. Airport runway & taxiway rehabilitation.

Parks & Recreation Improvements

19. Creating a new location and constructing a skateboard park.

20. Continuing beautification of parks and area's with planting new trees and the elimination of dead ash trees.

21. Remodeling disk golf at East Park from 9 to 18 holes.

22. Bandshell tuck pointing project.

23. Bike Lane expansion.

24. Pool painting project.

Public Safety Projects

25. Held two Police Citizens Academies.

26. Hired and retained good police officers and staff.

27. Held National Night Out – continues to grow.

28. Police Department reviewed and updated all policies.

29. Reduced drug houses and squatting.

30. Built and maintained collaborative work environment – City, Public Works, Community Resources, Franklin General, Schools, Sheriff's Office, DHS, etc.

31. Renovation of Police Department through grant funding.

32. Police Department solved many major cases quickly and effectively.

33. Eradicated majority of the "backpack mafia."

Administrative Projects and City Code Enhancements

- 34. Urban Chicken Ordinance.
- 35. Contracting services - For example: Manager and Pralle Enterprises at the airport and Ion Environmental Solution at the wastewater treatment plant.
- 36. Hampton Tree Board/Tree City USA.
- 37. City website updated!
- 38. Noise ordinance.
- 39. Mapping project.
- 40. Excellent information communication efforts – text and email alerts and media presence with newspaper and radio.
- 41. Employee wage adjustments.
- 42. IT service contract.
- 43. Success with accomplishing the 2022 goals and priorities.

Financial Success and Stability

- 44. Remaining financially stable.
- 45. Budgeting for street rehab projects each year.
- 46. Staying financially stable through the efforts of the City Manager.
- 47. Increased interest income due to City Manager pursuing other banking bids.
- 48. Replaced many Public Works positions after the retirements. New staff members are great!
- 49. Reduced the property tax levy.
- 50. Ability to fund capital projects and equipment without a lot of new debt.

Community Betterment Projects

- 51. Beginning the restoration/structural refurbishing of the Rick's Pharmacy building downtown.
- 52. Progress on the acquisition and demolition of blighted properties.
- 52. Coordination of City Wide Clean up with the Chamber.
- 54. Image of Pride and Nuisance Property efforts.
- 55. Partnering with Chamber as a Main Street community.
- 56. Ash tree removal in city right-of-way and cemetery.
- 57. Purchasing and installing new downtown Christmas lighting.
- 58. Assisting FC Development in attracting new businesses and NIACC Career Center.
- 59. Reduced homelessness to almost nothing.
- 60. Entrance sign lighting project.
- 61. Centro Inc. expansion.
- 62. Sukup expansion.
- 63. Buersh Building systems expansion.
- 64. Funeral home construction and mausoleum relocation planning.

Exhibit B
Hampton, Iowa
Goal Setting Session 2026-27

Issues, Concerns, and Opportunities

Infrastructure Issues and Concerns

1. Zero parks/playgrounds and safe spaces for kids on the south side of town.
2. Continued progress on street rehabilitation program with a plan toward scheduled maintenance.
3. Airport fuel tank project.
4. Outdoor recreation enhancements – relocation of the tennis/pickleball courts, soccer fields expansion, immediate need and long-term plans, and keep the baseball diamonds up for the baseball program.
5. Need more time for compost site to be opened.
6. Armory Lane opportunity.
7. Fluoride in the water.
8. Aging equipment which results in higher maintenance costs.

Public Safety Issues

9. Police resources are being tied up doing nuisance abatement.
10. Current parks are overpopulated with trees being planted.
11. Recognizing the need for due process.
12. Closing cemetery access at dusk to reduce vandalism.
13. Concern regarding time spent on small nuisance issues by Police Department and Public Works Director – Create a police reserve to deal with smaller issues.
14. Security at City Council meetings.

15. Licensing dogs does not impact whether they will bite.

Personnel Issues

16. Attracting and retaining qualified employees with competitive wages and benefits.

17. Recruiting and retaining qualified police officers.

18. Concern with following social media influence instead of staff input.

19. Create an incentive program to recognize contributions of current city employees, help in retention of current city employees, and help with attracting new employees to these positions as they become open.

20. Have photos of city employees in council chambers with stars for each year of service.

21. Lack of qualified job applicants for both part time and full time positions.

22. Inexperienced staff have learning curves, which requires patience.

23. Elected officials' negative attitudes toward city staff during public meetings.

Financial Concerns and Issues

24. State Legislature's objective is to reduce property taxes, but the City still needs money to operate.

25. Budget impact of reduced state revenues and keeping up with inflation.

26. Negotiate with local gas stations, where all city vehicle gas purchases will be purchased from the successful vendor who provides the greatest incentive discounts for city's business.

27. Establish Water Bill Payments electronically – pay an estimated (static payment), for 11 months, then one catch up payment or refund on the 12th month, with a 2% discount for using this system to customer.

28. Insurance premium cost increases.

29. Need to continue county sharing endeavors.

Housing Needs

- 30. Support apartment dwellings in downtown buildings.
- 31. New housing concerns – filling vacant lots that have demolished or burnt blighted properties.
- 32. Lack of private property accountability.
- 33. Need for more affordable housing.
- 34. Aging population and few affordable senior housing options.
- 35. Getting landlords to complete rental inspection process.

Community Betterment Concerns

- 36. Attracting young families to Hampton.
- 37. Attracting businesses to Hampton – industry and retail.
- 38. Continued progress on blight properties.
- 39. Stabilize Rick's Pharmacy ASAP and put it up for sale or rent.
- 40. Aging population and replacement of retiring community leaders and business owners.
- 41. Needed support for the maintenance and improvements to our downtown district buildings – many are 100+ years.
- 42. Parking in the downtown district.
- 43. Blending of Hispanic/Latino and Anglo communities - cultures promoting diversity.
- 44. Too many cars sitting around not driven with no licenses.
- 45. Fewer people shop local, which hurts businesses.
- 46. Immigration reform.
- 47. Fewer people locating in Hampton, especially teachers and professional people.

48. Mental health crisis.

49. Social media negativity and misinformation.

50. "Brick and Mortar" food businesses with food trucks should not be required to pay a fee.

51. Need for more job opportunities in the community.

EXHIBIT C – Rankings
HAMPTON, IOWA
GOAL SETTING SESSION – 2026-27

Significant Initiatives, Programs & Policies

Policy, Programs, & Initiatives	Council Rankings
1. Initiate a master plan for updating parks, recreation areas, and equipment, improve recreational facilities: soccer, baseball, and pickleball.	6
2. Adopt a vacant building ordinance	6
3. Continuation of nuisance abatement, image of Pride, and community clean-up program with Chamber. Consider a community clean-up/fix-up program providing grants, loans, and volunteer assistance to help homeowners rehabilitate their properties, remove hazards, and enhance neighborhoods.	5
4. Work with the county on a potential recycling program – year-round appliance drop off, add bins, and structure at new compost site.	4
5. Installation of parks on the south side of town.	3
6. Study feasibility of increasing hours at the compost site and a recycling option.	3
7. Create a storm water utility.	3
8. Policy to include limitation of repercussion for refund in the case of clerical or computer error in collection of fees or payments to citizens.	3
9. Provide sufficient housing and community infrastructure. Consider a little housing/tiny home development providing affordable, sustainable, and communal living options.	3
10. Sidewalk and bike route programs as structured initiatives aimed at developing infrastructure, policies, and educational campaigns to make walking and cycling safer, more convenient, and more accessible.	2
11. Initiate and implement a leaf pick up program.	2
12. Storm sewer televising initiative.	2
13. Decision on what to do about leaves and burn ban.	2
14. Continue the rehab of the pharmacy building to a point featuring a flexible design for a sale allowing move-in-ready access with minimal customization.	2
15. Downtown snow removal improvement plan.	1

16. Study the pros and cons of eliminating fluoride in drinking water.	1
17. Provide open house opportunity (tour) to view city facilities – Water Plant, Wastewater Plant.	1
18. Reduce posted speed limit along Highways 65 & 3 to conform with the recommended Dept. of Transportation guidelines to improve crossing safety.	1
19. Review city water and sewer rates.	1
20. Update the Public Works employees to a merit-based wage structure.	1
21. Development of a city slogan or focus on which to build future plans for marketing and business development (perhaps via a community contest?)	1
22. New city ordinance - no building to be constructed that is taller than the courthouse. Provide greater opportunity to utilize water tower structure for electronic wave capture needs.	1
23. City takes responsibility for the repair and replacement of sidewalks.	0
24. Search for a way for the police & fire departments to store access codes offered by residents to permit access to homes for wellness checks without doors having to be broken down.	0
25. Stop licensing dogs – waste of staff time and it does nothing to prevent dog attacks.	0
26. Stricter vicious animal ordinance,	0
27. Increased oversight of Tree Board planting plans – plans need approval prior to planting, not after completion.	0
28. Mobile app for residents to submit ideas (suggestion box) and report nuisances.	0
29. Check into grant opportunities for city improvements.	0
30. Update utility of accounting software.	0
31. Stop talking about chickens and dogs – Chickens and all other livestock don't belong in town and dogs that are licensed still bite.	0
32. Update employee job descriptions.	0
33. Promotion of volunteerism and charitable giving.	0

Exhibit D - Rankings
Hampton, Iowa
Goal Setting Session 2026-27

Capital Projects & Equipment Purchases

Capital Project & Equipment Purchase	Council Ranking
1. Possible body worn cameras in future.	5
2. Improve downtown parking with additional parking lots and or imaginative reconstruction of street paths.	4
3. Update Tasers.	3
4. Storm drainage improvements and storm sewer television initiative.	3
5. Black dirt storage hoop building.	3
6. Industrial Park expansion planning with FEDA funding.	3
7. Pickleball/Tennis court partnership	3
8. Update rifles.	2
9. Purchase a leaf vacuum for the Street Department.	2
10. Public Works Vehicles – Pickups, Dump trucks & Heavy Equipment.	2
11. Improve and establish controllable cross walk signs at corner of Federal Street and Highway 3 to improve pedestrian safety crossing. Also improve visibility of crosswalks along Highway 65 at trail crossings by providing lighted crossing warning signs.	2
12. Recreation Complex – Soccer, baseball/softball, & football.	2
13. Housing project/program.	2
14. Redesign and replace gateway signage at the four entrances to city.	2
15. Batwing mower.	1
16. Sidewalk/bike route initiative.	1
17. Soccer field upgrades at East Park.	1
18. Repairs at baseball diamond.	1
19. Cemetery entrance road replacement.	1

20. Creek bank stabilization projects.	1
21. Facilitate the building or renovation of a structure to provide for a community storm shelter.	1
22. Improve the outdoor severe weather siren system so it is designed to be heard indoors.	1
23. Work toward budgeting for and purchasing a larger and new or good used street sweeper.	0
24. Downtown alley paving projects.	0
25. Cold storage building for equipment.	0
26. Updating softball field – city league softball.	0
27. Progress Park parking lot overlay project.	0

Exhibit E
Hampton, Iowa
Goal Setting 2026-27

Teamwork Suggestions and Observations

Mayor & Council Members Comments and Observations

1. Goal setting will help especially the newer members.
2. Not monopolizing time during meetings.
3. Be civil always – do no attack each other in or out of the meetings – act like a team.
4. Do our homework in advance and avoid “aha!” or “gotcha” moments for other council members, the mayor or city staff.
5. Speak up at City Council meetings.
6. Talk to your fellow Councilors - We are a team, not individuals.
7. Stay in our own lanes as the governing body for the City of Hampton and steer clear of the daily duties of the staff.
8. Establish a city council mentor program for new members designed to ease the transition into municipal office by pairing a newly elected official with an experienced peer. This program would focus on providing guidance on city government operations, policymaking, and navigating the complexities of public office.
9. Appreciate the ability to attend the League of Cities Annual Conference – which all our Councilors and Key Employees could/would attend.
10. Appreciate the Management Teams’ open-door policy, but it can be intimidating.
11. Keep communication respectful – continue to do this.
12. Work together on the priorities for the city.
13. Continue to make sure council has the information ahead of time.
14. At each council meeting have a different council member who will lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Management Team Comments and Observations

15. Work together toward goals, not pushing through individual wants.
16. Listen to the staff and trust the staff - utilize their knowledge and years of experience.
17. Do not micromanage the city staff.
18. Emphasize the importance of due process.
19. Make decisions for the benefit of the community as a whole and not the "squeaky wheel."
20. Take personal feelings out of professional decisions.
21. Foster realistic expectations.
22. Address questions/concerns with city staff prior to open meetings.
23. Trust the process and city staff – results take time and often there is already work being done behind the scenes.
24. Have an open mind and listen to other council members.
25. Address personal issues or concerns with each other outside of open meetings.
26. Remain positive and respectful - Communicate effectively.
27. Utilize common sense and supporting data for decision making.
28. Don't assume that you have all the information without doing your diligence.
29. Ask questions - bring solutions with the problems.
30. Know the funding sources of city services and projects.
31. Council and staff to remain mindful of roles and maintain them.

32. Derogatory comments about city employees at meetings can create a hostile work environment, erode staff morale, and possibly expose the city to lawsuits.
33. Evaluate how social media use is perceived by the public, other elected officials, and city staff.
34. Elected officials should refer citizen complaints to the appropriate city staff.
35. Allow the city management team to do their job and report back to the city manager and city council.

EXHIBIT F
HAMPTON, IOWA
GOAL SETTING SESSION 2026-27

Ongoing Commitments – “List of Givens”

Policies, Programs & Initiatives and Capital Projects

1. Continue National Night Out program
2. Continue with Community based partnerships with Police Citizens Academy or similar programs.
3. Continue to integrate technology into policing.
4. Continue to enhance and offer police officer training.
5. Maintain updating policies.
6. Continue to build strong working relationships with the Law Enforcement Partners.
7. Continue to update vehicles and equipment on a schedule or as needed.
8. Continue city wide cleanup event.
9. Continue to work with Public Works staff to obtain the necessary certifications (water, wastewater, etc.) so to utilize our employees in several duties.
10. Continue street rehabilitation program.
11. Police equipment on a schedule – Computers, cameras, software.
12. Complete the work on Rick’s Pharmacy building.
13. Continue budgeting for an purchasing police vehicles so to keep the fleet up to date.
14. Continue the effort to collect information and to implement the plan to sell used city vehicles and city equipment that is no longer needed.