STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY REPORT

VILLAGE OF
PEOTONE

October 12, 2026

Dear Mayor Vieaux and Administrator Palmer,

I am pleased to present the Village of Peotone's 2026-2029 Strategic Plan and Summary Report. This plan reflects the Village's commitment to thoughtful growth, fiscal responsibility, high-quality municipal services, and preservation of the small-town character that makes Peotone "feel like home."

The strategic planning process brought together input from residents, business owners, students, taxing body representatives, elected officials, and Village staff through community engagement, focus groups, environmental scan research, and facilitated planning sessions. Together, these efforts produced a clear set of priorities for the next four years: Enhanced Communication, Proactive Development, and Quality of Life.

The resulting plan provides a practical framework for decision-making, resource alignment, and measurable progress. It recognizes both Peotone's strengths, including its strong sense of community, strategic location, and fiscally responsible leadership, and the important work ahead related to growth, infrastructure, facilities, communication, and long-term service capacity.

It has been an honor to support the Village of Peotone in this important effort. I extend my sincere appreciation to the Mayor, Village Board, Village staff, and community stakeholders who contributed their time, candor, and commitment to shaping this plan.

Yours truly,

Cory Poris Plasch

President/CEO

CP2 Consulting

Contents

Submission Letter 01

Executive Summary 03

Vision, Mission, and Values 04

The Strategic Planning Process 05

Assessing the Current Environment 06

Stakeholder Engagement 07

Environmental Scan 08

External Stakeholder (Community) Survey Results 10

Focus Group Results 12

Understanding the Environment 13

SWOT Analysis 14

Targets by Strategic Goal 15

Strategic Plan Implementation 18

Strategic Plan Participants 19

Executive Summary

Beginning in January 2026, the Village of Peotone undertook a strategic planning process to establish priorities for 2026-2029. The effort was designed to help the Village evaluate its current environment, listen to community and stakeholder perspectives, clarify its long-term direction, and set measurable goals to guide decision-making over the next four years.

The planning process included an environmental scan, a community survey, six focus groups, and facilitated sessions with Village leadership and staff. This input shaped updated Vision, Mission, and Values statements and resulted in three strategic goals for the Village: **Enhanced Communication, Proactive Development, and Quality of Life**. Each goal includes an associated outcome, key outcome indicator, and performance target to support measurable progress.

Community input confirmed deep pride in Peotone's small-town character, safety, relationships, and family-oriented quality of life. At the same time, residents, business owners, students, elected officials, and staff identified important challenges, including communication, infrastructure and Village facilities, commercial development, housing options, staff capacity, and the need for clearer long-term direction.

The 2026-2029 Strategic Plan serves as a practical roadmap for aligning Village resources, Board priorities, staff initiatives, and community expectations. It emphasizes proactive planning, responsible development, transparent communication, and continued investment in the services, infrastructure, and public spaces that support Peotone's quality of life. As implementation moves forward, Village staff will develop initiatives and project plans tied to each goal and report regularly on progress toward the plan's performance targets.

Ultimately, this plan reflects Peotone's desire to grow with purpose while protecting the character, fiscal discipline, and community spirit that residents value most.

Vision, Mission, Values

Vision

Safe. Clean. Thriving. Peotone is a community that grows with purpose, protects its small-town character, and manages every public dollar with honesty and care.

Mission

We provide high-quality, fiscally responsible services and guide growth with purpose, building a community that feels like home.

Values

Excellence
Holding ourselves to the highest standard in every interaction, program, and project.

Accountability
Governing openly, serving with purpose, and standing behind the results.

Service
Answering the call of our community, safely and swiftly, every time.

Integrity
Doing what's right, and honoring each person with the respect they deserve.

Collaboration
A friendly, fun culture - working together, inside our organization and with our community.

The Strategic Planning Process

The Strategic Planning Process seeks to answer five questions:

1. Where are we right now? (Plan Development)
2. Where do we want to be? (Plan Development)
3. How do we get there from here? (Plan Implementation)
4. How will we know when we get there? (Plan Implementation)
5. Are there changes in the future external environment that we need to consider?

DEVELOPMENT

Where are we now?

Scan the Environment

Conduct Internal and External Analysis (SWOT)

Develop a Strategic Profile

Identify Strategic Challenges

Where are we going?

Define Our Mission

Articulate Core Values

Set a Vision

Identify Key Intended Outcomes

IMPLEMENTATION

How will we get there?

Develop Initiatives

Define Performance Measures

Set Targets and Thresholds

Spread Throughout Organization

How will we know?

Create Detailed Action Plans

Establish Accountability: Who, What, When

Identify Success Indicators

Assessing the Current Environment

The Strategic Planning Process began with a meeting with the consultant and Village staff. The meeting included a review of strategic planning principles, a discussion of the organizational value proposition and the status of the vision and mission statements. The session concluded with a timeline for the planning process and a process for conducting stakeholder outreach.

Stakeholder Engagement

To answer the question "Where are we now?", the Strategic Planning Process began with gaining an understanding of the operating environment. This is the first activity in developing a Strategic Plan as internal and external forces, dynamics, and constraints must be considered to arrive at the most effective strategy.

Assessing the environment included:

- A Community Survey
- Focus Groups

As environmental factors change over time, they need to be evaluated and incorporated into the strategic thinking and planning process using current data. As a result, the focus groups were limited in scope and consisted of residents, business owners, taxing body representatives, Village employees, and high school students. Each focus group discussed what participants saw as strengths of Peotone along with opportunities for change.

The results of these efforts were presented to the Village Board at the first Strategic Planning Session on May 18, 2026. They are summarized below.

Environmental Scan

The Village of Peotone is a small, strategically located community in eastern Will County, about 40 miles south of Chicago and near major transportation corridors including Interstate 57 and Illinois Route 50. With approximately 4,400 residents, Peotone balances its strong small-town identity with opportunities for measured residential, commercial, and highway-oriented economic growth. The Village's financial and operational approach emphasizes fiscal discipline, infrastructure stewardship, and sustainable service delivery, supported by a conservative FY2026 budget and a mix of intergovernmental and locally generated revenues. As Peotone plans for the future, continued regional partnerships, strategic infrastructure investment, and thoughtful development will be central to strengthening municipal services, supporting responsible economic opportunity, and preserving the community character that residents value.

Statistics to Consider

- **Median age**: The Village's median age is **39.3 years**, suggesting a relatively stable, middle-aged population.
- **Age distribution**: Approximately **26% of residents are under 18, 59% are ages 18-64**, and **15% are age 65 or older**.
- **Median household income**: Peotone's median household income is approximately **$84,375**, slightly above the Illinois average.
- **Poverty rate**: The share of residents living below the poverty line is reported at approximately **3.9%**, indicating relatively stable household economic conditions.
- **Unemployment and job growth**: The scan reports unemployment at roughly **7.5%**, with employment growth of approximately **7.8% from 2022 to 2023**.
- **Median property value**: The median property value is approximately **$387,085**, reflecting steady value growth while remaining comparatively affordable within the greater Chicago region.
- **Transportation access**: Peotone is positioned near **Interstate 57** and **Illinois Route 50**, supporting commuter access, local business activity, and future commercial growth opportunities.
- **FY2026 total budget**: The Village's FY2026 adopted budget totals approximately **$6.275 million across all funds**.
- **General Fund expenditures**: FY2026 General Fund expenditures are budgeted at approximately **$4.356 million**, supporting core services such as police, public works, administration, and community development.

Environmental Scan (cont.)

Statistics to Consider

- **Intergovernmental revenue dependence**: Intergovernmental revenues are projected at approximately **$2.37 million**, representing **more than 50% of General Fund revenues**, which makes state-shared revenue an important fiscal factor.
- **Local tax revenue**: Locally generated taxes are projected to account for roughly **25% of total General Fund revenues**, showing the importance of commercial growth and local tax base expansion.
- **Capital investment**: The FY2026 capital program includes approximately **$1.097 million** in infrastructure improvements, including **$880,000 for Conrad Street storm sewer improvements, $167,400 for Crawford Street resurfacing, and $50,000 for sidewalk improvements**.
- **Lean staffing model**: Peotone authorizes **22 full-time and 7 part-time employees** in FY2026, up from 20 full-time employees, reflecting a small municipal workforce that must balance service delivery with limited staffing capacity.

External Stakeholder (Community) Survey Results

An External Stakeholder (Community) Survey was conducted February 11 through March 12, 2026. External stakeholders are individuals or groups who are outside the organization but are affected by the actions of the organization and the quality of life in the community. These include, but are not limited to, businesses, neighborhoods, residents of all ages, historically excluded populations, special interest groups, educational facilities including K-12 schools and higher education, and other taxing jurisdictions.

Key Takeaways

- The survey had 337 responses, with 89% indicating they are a resident of Peotone, 45% identifying as a homeowner in Peotone, 7% owning property other than their home in Peotone, and 8% identifying as a business owner in Peotone.
- 40% of respondents have lived in Peotone for 21 or more years, and 21% for 0-5 years.
- When asked what they liked best about living in Peotone, the top four answers were a peaceful community (68%), location (37%), affordability (32%), and grew up or have family here (28%).
- Respondents indicated that the four most important areas for quality of life in Peotone are public safety (97%), affordability/cost of living (92%), neighborhood appearance (91%), and housing (87%).
- More than 70% of respondents said that they were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the following services/features in Peotone: quality of life (85%), police (79%), neighborhood appearance (73%), and fire and emergency medical response (71%).
- When asked the most important things for a strong and healthy community, the top three responses were a sense of safety and security (63%), high-quality schools (59%), and new business development (39%).
- The following were deemed "essential" to the future of Peotone: a safe community (89%), a good place to raise a family (79%), affordable Village services (74%), and high-quality schools (73%).

External Stakeholder (Community) Survey Results (cont.)

Key Takeaways

- At least 70% of respondents strongly or somewhat agreed with the following statements:
  - The Village should invest in projects and programs that enhance the quality of life for all community members. (84%)
  - A high-quality school system is an important factor in the success of the community. (81%)
  - Providing a safe and healthy environment is the highest priority of the Village's government. (79%)
  - The Village is a good place to live for those of all ages. (76%)
  - The Village should invest in creating jobs and growing local businesses. (74%)
- When asked about the creation of new revenue sources to pay for critical infrastructure, the percentage of respondents who strongly or somewhat agreed with the following statements was:
  - The Village should focus primarily on small local business recruitment. (70%)
  - The Village should focus on bringing in commercial developments that will bring in large amounts of property tax dollars. (59%)
  - The Village should focus on bringing in more residential developments that would support new business growth. (58%)
  - The Village should expand the current Village boundaries to bring in existing farmland into the Village. (47%)
  - The Village should focus on bringing in more strip malls and retail developments. (38%)

Focus Group Results

The Village of Peotone conducted six community focus groups on April 15 and April 16, 2026, as part of its strategic planning process. Input was gathered from a broad cross-section of residents, business owners, taxing body representatives, Village employees, and high school students. Each group was asked a common set of questions exploring what participants value most about Peotone, the challenges the community faces, desired changes, satisfaction with Village services, and priorities for the future.

A focus group is a small-group discussion, guided by a trained facilitator, used to gather in-depth information about a community's thoughts and opinions about a designated topic. The interaction enables participants to ask questions of each other, as well as to re-evaluate and reconsider their own understandings of their specific experiences. The facilitator's role is to gather information in an impartial and confidential manner, manage the pace of the discussion, and ensure that everyone has a chance to participate. The process included a set of questions and follow-up discussion within the small group.

Seven major themes emerged:

- Strong pride in Peotone's small-town character and sense of community, raised in all six groups;
- Differing views about growth, including both concern about change and recognition that some growth is needed, raised in all six groups;
- A desire for clearer long-term direction and more consistent follow-through, raised in five groups;
- Concern about the pressure placed on homeowners by a limited commercial and industrial tax base, raised in all six groups;
- Interest in more amenities, recreation, and gathering places for youth and families, raised in all six groups;
- Concerns about roads, sidewalks, public facilities, and the appearance of key corridors, raised in five groups; and
- A desire for stronger communication and coordination among local governmental bodies, raised in five groups.

The six focus groups produced a consistent picture of a community with strong pride in its small-town character and a clear awareness of the challenges ahead. All described Peotone as a place with strong relationships, a sense of safety, and a community identity worth preserving. At the same time, participants across the groups recognized that preserving Peotone's strengths will require intentional action. Overall, the focus group process suggests that Peotone does not need to choose between protecting its identity and planning for change.

Understanding the Environment

An integral part of the Strategic Planning Process is a SWOT Analysis, which stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. It provides a situational overview of the environment in which strategic planning takes place and allows a systematic examination of factors impacting the community. **Strengths and Weaknesses** examine the internal operating environment, while **Opportunities and Threats** evaluate the external operating environment.

To provide ample opportunity for reflection, a SWOT survey was distributed to the Board Members and staff prior to the Strategic Planning session. During the Strategic Planning Retreat, the SWOT data was reviewed to determine key themes and strategic issues.

SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

- Safe, great Police Department
- Experienced, dedicated, professional Village staff
- Strong financial position, fiscally responsible leadership
- Family-oriented, small-town community pride
- Strategic location / I-57 Highway
- Cooperation among departments and elected officials
- Responsive, accessible, resident-focused local government
- Opportunities for residential and business growth
- Strong police-community relationships
- Employees accomplish a great deal with limited resources
- Undeveloped land available for future growth
- Successful business base/ auto dealerships

WEAKNESSES

- Staff / Operations - not enough staff, operational costs
- Schools and Parks - loss of families, few amenities
- Facilities - aging infrastructure, condition of facilities
- Planning - long-term planning, not sure what community wants
- Growth - lack of businesses, expand commercial and retail, limited housing

OPPORTUNITIES

- Economic growth – location, securing development
- Residential growth and responsible residential development
- Attracting and increasing commercial and industrial development
- Location related to I-57 and Rt. 50, highway access and lots of available land for growth
- Marketing of low taxes to spur growth
- Blank slate to create a vision for the future

THREATS

- Municipal boundaries
- Lack of economic development
- Competition from neighboring communities for residential and businesses
- Difficulty attracting and retaining businesses
- Lack of housing options
- Support for local businesses
- Slowing residential growth
- Limited commercial development
- Rising infrastructure costs

The Strengths and Opportunities groups combined to discuss how internal strengths coupled with external opportunities could be enablers of success.

The Weaknesses and Threats groups combined to discuss how internal weaknesses coupled with external threats could be challenges to success.

Then, the groups combined, and all participants reviewed the key themes. A list of strategic issues was identified, including growth, communication, housing and future market planning, industrial, commercial/retail, support for economic development/ businesses in town, intergovernmental collaboration, staff capacity (present and future), future Village facilities, stormwater management, leveraging grants, and creative revenue generation.

Finally, the most important organizational priorities were finalized, taking into account information gathered throughout the process, including the Environmental Scan.

Through this analysis, **three Strategic Goals were identified: Enhanced Communication, Proactive Development, and Quality of Life.**

Participants were then divided into cross-functional groups. They determined desired Outcomes (what success looks like), Key Outcome Indicators (how to measure progress towards success), and Performance Targets (a measurable goal achieved by a defined date) for each Strategic Goal.

Targets by Strategic Goal

STRATEGIC GOAL Enhanced Communication			
OUTCOME	KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR	TARGET	INITIATIVE
Improved communication	• # of newsletters • # of email recipients	• Village newsletter every two weeks • Increase email recipients to approximately 800 by 03/2028	• Newsletter content calendar • Email engagement strategy
Telling the Peotone story	• # of materials distributed	• ≥4 materials distributed annually starting 03/2027	• Village content / communications strategy
Transparent government	• # of times strategic plan reported	• Strategic plan reporting 2x annually	• Strategic plan implementation

Targets by Strategic Goal (cont.)

STRATEGIC GOAL
Proactive Development

OUTCOME	KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR	TARGET	INITIATIVE
Housing for multiple stages of life	• # of single-family permits • # of multi-family permits	• 80 single-family permits approved by 12/2030 • 40 multi-family permits approved by 12/2030	• Housing plan
Clear path for growth	• Comp Plan project milestones	• Comp Plan updated by mid-2028	• Comp Plan RFP • Comp Plan funding initiative
Clear vision for housing in Peotone	• Marketing project milestones	• Introductory marketing materials available by 03/2027	• Housing marketing materials
Future of Village Hall and Police Department clear	• Assessment project milestones	• Future location determined by 12/2027	• Site location assessment

Targets by Strategic Goal (cont.)

STRATEGIC GOAL Quality of Life			
OUTCOME	KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR	TARGET	INITIATIVE
Revitalized Downtown	• # of grants awarded • $ allocated annually to downtown revitalization	• ≥3 façade grants awarded annually • Allocate funding annually to support downtown revitalization projects	• Grant façade strategy • Grant façade marketing materials
Increased intergovernmental collaboration	• # of meetings	• ≥4 meetings with other taxing bodies annually	• Intergovernmental collaboration strategy
Grants utilized effectively	• # of grants	• ≥12 grants applied for annually	• Develop grant matrix
Improved streets	• $ invested annually in road improvements • # of miles of road • # of square feet of sidewalk improved annually	• Invest a minimum of $400,000 annually in road improvements • Improve ___ square feet of sidewalks annually • Improve ___# of miles of road by ___(date)	• Develop sidewalk improvement criteria • Priority list of sidewalk and road improvements

Strategic Plan Implementation

Implementation is the final step in the Strategic Planning Process and consists of staff developing Initiatives to support the Strategic Goals determined during the Strategic Planning Process. The following Initiatives will be reported on regularly, showing the measurable progress the Village of Peotone is making towards their Strategic Goals and associated Performance Targets.

Enhanced Communication

- Newsletter content calendar
- Email engagement strategy
- Village content / communications strategy
- Strategic plan implementation

Proactive Development

- Housing plan
- Comp Plan RFP
- Comp Plan funding initiative
- Housing marketing materials
- Site location assessment

Quality of Life

- Grant façade strategy
- Grant façade marketing materials
- Intergovernmental collaboration strategy
- Develop grant matrix
- Develop sidewalk improvement criteria
- Priority list of sidewalk and road improvements

Strategic Plan Participants

The strategic plan was developed with the hard work and dedication of many individuals. The Peotone Board and Staff led the way, taking time out of their schedules to commit to long-term thinking. They defined a direction and a set of outcomes that are important to the community stakeholders with whom they partner and serve.

Board of Trustees

Mayor Chris Vieaux

Trustee Pat Bowden
Trustee Jackie Richards
Trustee Julie Sluis
Trustee Gary Hudson
Trustee Todd Sandberg
Trustee Nick Strba

Village Staff

Village Administrator, Nick Palmer
Chief of Police, David DeMik
Village Clerk, Stacey Hartwell
Public Works Manager, Bob Hennke

Consultant

Cory Poris Plasch, President, CP2 Consulting

CP2 CONSULTING