



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

RESPONSES TO SUBMITTED QUESTIONS

Project:	2025 Strategic Plan
RFP Open Date:	Tuesday, September 16, 2025
RFP Questions Due Date:	Friday, October 3, 2025
RFP Answers Posted Date:	Monday, October 6, 2025
RFP Close Date:	Friday, October 10, 2025
Contact Information:	Erin Shane, Executive Director Board of Supervisors Office eshane@johnsoncountyiowa.gov 319-356-6000
Project Description:	The Board of Supervisors has initiated a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to identify a qualified consultant to facilitate and create the county's next strategic plan.

1. What is your budget range for this strategic plan project?

In response to your question, our max budget is \$100,000 for this next strategic plan.

2. Engagement questions – grouped below:

- *Do you have a large-scale community visioning process (which would involve things like pop-ups to community events, presentations at community meetings, maybe work groups who would take on topical areas, etc.) OR should community input be gathered in something like a survey that would provide good data to decision makers but not be as visible to the community or involve them directly in developing recommendations?*
- *What is the minimum number of engagement meetings you would like during the partnership (per month/per quarter)?*
- *How does the County envision compensating or supporting community members who participate (stipends, childcare, translation, transportation, meals, etc.)?*
- *Are there established advisory groups, committees, or community leaders the consultant should prioritize for outreach?*
- *Does the County have a pre-compiled list or contact database of key community stakeholders that will be provided to the selected consultant, or will the consultant need to perform that inventory?*
- *Is the County open to including an online survey as part of the engagement approach?*
- *We see the County's interest in most of the stakeholder and community engagement happening in person, and we are also curious what portion of the plan development session with the Plan Committee the County envisions happening in-person?*
- *Does the County have expectations for a minimum number of Board strategic planning retreats (or full-day workshops) during the project? If so, how many sessions, approximate duration, preferred timeframes, and expected participants?*
- *Are you looking for anything different in the approach to this strategic plan (e.g. minority perspectives, public engagement, nonprofit and business sector involvement, etc.)?*

We do want meaningful input from stakeholders and discussed at length how much and with who we wanted to pursue. The committee felt that responding consultants are best positioned to define parameters for our engagement plan based on their past experience, size of our community, understanding of our organization, project objectives, and of course project budget. In the end, we did not want to get too specific but instead rely on the market to propose how we should engage stakeholders. We are open to all options.

3. Why hasn't the county adopted a new Strategic Plan since its expiration in 2022? Was the existing plan extended for a particular reason (i.e. COVID needs extended timeline, etc.).

Staff turnover and competing priorities for staff time are the main reasons we have not updated our strategic plan.

4. Translation questions – grouped below:

- *What translation expectations does Johnson County find as a need for the facilitation of the Strategic Plan, and/or for the presentation of the Plan itself?*
- *Does the County have in-house or community partner resources for translation services? We'd prefer to use County or local resources contracted separately if possible.*
- *How many languages would the County want to have materials translated to?*

As for translation expectations, they are not yet defined since the engagement plan is not yet determined. We do have staff that could potentially manage some of this need for live meetings, and the remainder would need to be determined as the scope of work is developed. I appreciate you asking about this service and suggest providing a line-item cost to provide services in alignment with what you think would work in our community.

5. What was the budget for the most recent strategic planning process?

The last strategic plan was conducted in house.

6. Are there particular themes or priorities from the 2020–2022 strategic plan that the Board would like to see carried forward, or conversely, areas the Board wishes to move away from?

The Committee wants to use the strategic planning process to drive themes / priorities for this next plan.

7. Are there specific policy areas or departmental priorities that the Board especially wants the strategic plan to address?

The Committee wants to use the strategic planning process to drive themes / priorities for this next plan.

8. How does the Board envision balancing internal (staff, departments) vs. external (residents, stakeholders) priorities in the plan?

The Committee wants to use the strategic planning process to reveal feedback and will determine the balance of internal/external priorities once the feedback and ideas are identified. The Committee feels the plan should be more focused on internal but like all communities, we want to remain flexible to feedback received and determine “the balance” at a later date.

9. Does the County have existing or preferred survey tools, facilitation formats, or accessibility vendors, or should the consultant propose and budget for these?

The consultant should propose and budget for these.

10. The RFP emphasizes robust engagement. Are there particular communities, neighborhoods, or demographic groups the County feels have been underrepresented in past planning efforts?

The Committee did not specifically discuss areas of underrepresentation in past planning efforts to inform this RFP process, but we appreciate this question and can certainly address this when we finalize engagement scope with the final candidate.

11. How does the County expect the consultant to engage with sovereign tribal nations or Native community members in Johnson County? Are there established protocols or relationships to honor?

The Committee did not specifically discuss engagement with sovereign tribal nations or Native community members in Johnson County to inform this RFP process, but we appreciate this question and can certainly address this when we finalize engagement scope with the final candidate.

12. Are there any restrictions or requirements related to working with out-of-state consultants (e.g., travel expectations, in-person vs. hybrid vs. virtual work)?

No restrictions or requirements related to working with out-of-state consultants.

13. Between consultant selection (November 2025) and project completion (June 2026), what milestones does the County consider most critical?

The Committee wants to use the strategic planning process to determine critical milestones for this next plan.

14. The RFP notes the plan should cover three to five years—are there any “non-negotiable” goals or outcomes that must be included in that timeframe?

There are no known “non-negotiable” goals or outcomes that must be included in this next plan.

15. Does the County already have a preferred performance measurement system, or should the consultant propose one from scratch?

The consultants should propose a preferred performance measurement system.

16. What is the County’s greatest hope for this strategic planning process, and what concerns or challenges are you most mindful of?

The Committee identified their goal for this next strategic plan in Section 6 - Project Objectives. The Committee did not specifically discuss challenges or concerns for this next plan.

17. The RFP indicates the final strategic plan should be a visually engaging plan. Do you have any examples of the level of graphic design, either based on your previous strategic plan or a similar plan that inspired this request?

We do not have examples for graphic design for this next plan.

18. Does the County have any specific meeting schedule over the course of the RFP that it prefers (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)

We do not have a pre-determined meeting schedule.

19. Timeline questions – grouped below:

- *When does the County prefer the project work to be completed no later than?*
- *Is the County open to the Implementation Framework development work (identifying specific action steps, timelines and strategies) happening after June 2026?*
- *Does the County have a targeted completion date for this project?*

The County prefers the project to be completed by June 2026. We are open to discussing and perhaps adjusting the overall timeline with the chosen consultant if the timeline is too aggressive for the final scope of work.

20. Does the County have a policy for working with small or MBE/WBE enterprises relevant to this RFP?

No policy for working with small or MBE/WBE enterprises relevant to this RFP.

21. Given the tight timeline between questions responses posting and the proposal due date, is the County open to extending the proposal submission date?

We will not extend the proposal's submission date.

22. Is the Board the final approver of the Strategic Plan? If so, can you describe the relationship you envision between the Board and the Strategic Plan Committee during the planning process?

Yes, the Board is the final approver of the Strategic Plan. The Committee itself has 2/5 of the Board of Supervisors on the team, and the Board Office Executive Director staffs both entities. The committee is expected to navigate most all details of the RFP selection process and project setup. If the committee has a stalemate or is unsure of what the Board may want, I will serve as the messenger to resolve. Finally, the Board created the Committee wanting their independent judgment on this process.

23. Can you describe the process you envision for aligning the plan with available resources and future budget planning?

The Board would have final responsibility for aligning the plan with available resources and future budget planning. The Committee will work with the consultant to create recommendations, subject to the Board's approval and potential adjustment.

24. Is the County open to the consultant adjusting the order of the Scope of Work items to seek feedback on the draft plan before developing the Implementation Framework?

The County will work with the chosen consultant to create a Scope of Work that makes sense for both parties.

25. Evaluation criteria – grouped below:

- *Is the evaluation criteria weighted or is there an order of priority?*
- *What is the weighting or relative importance of the RFP's evaluation criteria (e.g., Qualifications/Experience/References, Cost, Methodology, Engagement Approach, Compliance)? If numeric weights are used, could you please share the point distribution?*

The evaluation criteria are not weighted nor is there an order of priority.

26. Will the County identify a project management team (or individual) to serve as the main point of contact for the County?

The Board Office Executive Director will serve as the main point of contact for the consultant. The Committee will be closely involved defining the Scope of Work, priority decisions, and of course edits for the draft plan. The Board has final approval over the plan and will be consulted throughout the plan.

27. Will the County provide access to reports, studies, previous strategic plans, meeting minutes, workflows, process maps and schematics, and other documentation that outlines work done to date and future priorities?

The County can provide data and information related to the creation of the next strategic plan if the requested resource exists.

28. Will the County provide scheduling support for stakeholder and community sessions?

Once an engagement plan is confirmed and the need for assistance exists, the County may work with the chosen consultant to engage stakeholders and schedule community sessions.

29. Does the County have a preferred structure or template for the strategic plan based on previous versions?

There is no pre-determined structure or template for this next strategic plan.

30. How does the County currently track performance or progress on strategic goals and objectives?

Since the County does not have an active strategic plan, we are not tracking performance or progress on strategic goals and objectives.

31. Have County staff participated in strategic planning efforts before or have previous plans been developed by senior leadership only?

The Committee discussed this point while creating the RFP and confirmed past efforts were limited to senior leadership only.

32. Does the County anticipate any blackout dates (holidays, election periods, or budget cycles) that may impact the scheduling of workshops and meetings?

The County will work with the chosen consultant to maintain this project as a priority parallel to the County's regular organizational and governance needs.

33. Timeline: What is the preferred frequency of project updates to and status meetings with the County (e.g., monthly, biweekly, weekly)?

The County will work with the chosen consultant to create a project timeline and reporting expectations that make sense for both parties.

34. Tracking performance – grouped below:

- *What processes, if any, does the County currently have in place for tracking performance metrics? How is this information communicated to County stakeholders and/or the broader community?*
- *Did your last plan include a measurement component? If so, how is progress monitored and communicated within county government and more broadly?*

Since the County does not have an active strategic plan, we are not tracking performance or progress on the prior strategic goals and objectives.

35. Has the County conducted a citizen engagement or community satisfaction survey within the past two years? If so, can the County provide the survey and its results?

The County has not conducted a citizen engagement or community satisfaction survey within the past two years.

36. How does the County currently leverage community stakeholders and communication channels? Are there existing partnerships the consultant could leverage for community engagement efforts?

Once an engagement plan is confirmed and the need for assistance exists, the County may work with the chosen consultant to engage stakeholders.

37. Has the County conducted an employee engagement or satisfaction survey within the past two years? If so, can the County provide the survey and its results?

The County conducts The Well-Being Questionnaire (WellBQ), which is a bi-annual questionnaire hosted by wellness committee allowing direct insight from employees to voice their needs, preferences, and concerns. The County can provide data from 2023 to the chosen consultant, or by submitting a public records request from all other interested parties.

38. What internal communication efforts have been utilized to inform employees and other County stakeholders about the strategic planning process?

No internal communications have been issued for this strategic plan to date. We expect to regularly communicate within the organization once the final consultant is chosen.

39. In what ways is the County hoping to improve upon its last strategic planning effort?

Generally, the County is casting a wider engagement net as compared to the last few plans and wants to hear from all stakeholders to inform Johnson County operations and decision making for the next three to five years.

40. Regarding the County's 15-page limit, are the following items, included in that limit? Table of contents and Work samples, included as an appendix

Regarding the County's 15-page limit, a Table of Contents would be included while work samples should be placed in an appendix.

41. Will the County consider firms and key personnel based outside of Iowa, provided that in-person engagement and workshops are delivered as requested? If there are residency preferences or requirements (e.g., local participation, M/WBE/SBE), please specify.

Yes, the County will consider firms and key personnel based outside of Iowa, provided that in-person engagement and workshops are delivered as requested. There are no residency preferences or requirements for this RFP.

42. Are you open to working with a consultant located outside of the state?

Yes, the County will consider firms and key personnel based outside of Iowa, provided that in-person engagement and workshops are delivered as requested. There are no residency preferences or requirements for this RFP.

43. How would you summarize the County's ability to perform on its last strategic plan? What major accomplishments have been achieved? What were some of the biggest hurdles?

Feedback received for these questions include: COVID changed everything; we had most ideas fall heavily on just a few department heads; and the ideas were more specific rather than big picture.

44. Are there any preliminary areas of inquiry or issues you anticipate this strategic planning process should address?

There are no pre-determined areas of inquiry or issues to address for this next strategic plan.

45. Who are the primary decision-makers and influencers for this plan, and how would you like to see them stay involved and informed throughout the process?

The Board Office Executive Director will serve as the main point of contact for the consultant. The Committee will be closely involved defining the Scope of Work, priority decisions, and of course editing the draft plan. The Board has final approval over the plan and will be consulted throughout the plan.

46. How can you partner with the selected consultant to ensure that the voices represented in this plan are representative of the full county population?

The County will work with the chosen consultant to create an engagement plan that makes sense for both parties, ensuring a broad base of input.

47. How is this strategic plan tied to the Better Together 2030 plan? (<https://bt2030.org/about/>)

Johnson County is an active member of Better Together 2030 and fully supports the aims of that community plan. This next strategic plan is expected to guide Johnson County operations and decision making for the next three to five years.