

City of Lawrence

**Strategic Plan Development
Consultant Services**

September 28, 2016





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Diane Stoddard
Assistant City Manager
City of Lawrence
6 E. 6th Street
Lawrence, KS 66044

Dear Ms. Stoddard:

The mission of The Novak Consulting Group is to strengthen organizations, for those they serve and those who work in them. We are dedicated to providing management consulting services to local governments and nonprofit organizations across the country. The firm was originally established as Public Management Partners in 2001, a firm specializing in local government consulting in the Midwest. Since then, we have been providing our clients with the very best thinking and execution in organizational design, development, and improvement.

We are pleased to submit this proposal to the City of Lawrence for Strategic Plan Development Consultant Services. This proposal is based on our understanding of the needs for this engagement as outlined in the City's Request for Qualifications, as well as our experience facilitating strategic planning processes for local governments across the country.

We have had significant success working with community members, elected officials, department leadership teams, and staff to identify priorities for a community and achieve consensus. We are also skilled in developing effective implementation models that ensure the goals developed for the strategic plan are measurable and actually achieved. We are confident our approach will provide the City with the direction it seeks for the community and the organization.

We look forward to the opportunity to serve Lawrence. Please contact me at (513) 309-0444 or jnovak@thenovakconsultinggroup.com should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Julia D. Novak
President

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About The Novak Consulting Group

For nearly a decade, a highly respected management consulting firm named Public Management Partners helped a variety of organizations function more effectively. Through the years, the firm's founding partners built a sizeable client base of predominantly local governments and nonprofit organizations in the Midwest. Projects ranged from those as small as conducting community workshops to those as sweeping as analyzing the operational efficiency of entire departments within a municipality.

In 2009, Julia D. Novak acquired Public Management Partners and founded The Novak Consulting Group, staffed by consultants with decades of collective experience. With The Novak Consulting Group, Julia built upon Public Management Partners' reputation for innovation and results while expanding the company's services nationwide. Her company meets a wider range of needs, consulting with governments in the areas of public works, public safety, human resources, finance, planning, IT, and more. We provide our clients with the very best thinking and execution in organizational design, development, and improvement. Our services include:

- Strategic Planning
- Organizational Assessment and Optimization
- Executive Search

The Novak Consulting Group provides unparalleled service to our clients. Leaders in local governments and nonprofit communities have come to rely on The Novak Consulting Group for high caliber advice with the personal attention you expect.

- **Niche expertise.** Our expertise lies in strengthening two kinds of organizations: local governments and nonprofits. We're consulting specialists rather than generalists, focusing our strengths to do a highly effective job for a very specific group of clients.
- **Flexibility to serve you better.** We employ a small core staff of senior-level consultants, and draw from our pool of subject matter experts when their expertise can help us serve you better. The result? A highly nimble, more efficient approach to giving you the services you need, when you need them.
- **Decades of collective experience.** Our associates and subject matter experts have decades of experience in strengthening local municipalities and nonprofit organizations. They've served in a wide range of positions, from city manager to public works director to director of management information systems.
- **Personal service from senior-level consultants.** You appreciate it when deadlines are met, phone calls are returned, and your challenges are given in-depth, out-of-the-box thinking. While a large firm may assign your business to junior-level people, we're small enough to offer very personal service from senior-level consultants.

The Novak Consulting Group is a women-owned firm led by President Julia Novak, headquartered in Cincinnati, Ohio. The firm is staffed with local government professionals, including 8 full-time associates, 5 subject matter specialists, and an office manager.

Strategic Planning Approach and Work Plan

The Novak Consulting Group is interested, capable, and excited to help the City of Lawrence develop a strategic plan for the community. We have provided a general scope of work that will result in a valuable tool that will serve as a guide for the future and assist in the realization of a shared vision. We understand that the specific work plan will be developed in close consultation with the City.

Regardless of the detailed tasks, effective and efficient project management will be critical for ensuring successful completion of this engagement. Therefore, our approach is to work collaboratively with the City to ensure all expectations are articulated from the start. We remain in close contact with our clients throughout all phases of each engagement to ensure these expectations are met. This also allows us to quickly address any contingencies that may arise. Our past experience with similar work enables The Novak Consulting Group to hit the ground running.

Additionally, we understand the unique roles of each stakeholder. Each participant in this process comes to this engagement with a different perspective and, perhaps, conflicting priorities. Each of these viewpoints is important and valuable. It is our responsibility to work in partnership with the City to synthesize this information and facilitate a process that:

- Honors and respects the diversity of opinions of participants;
- Promotes group communication and collaboration through inclusivity and community building; and
- Provides useful information and direction for decision making and priority setting.

At its best, strategic planning engages individuals and strengthens a sense of community that undergirds strong civic engagement. Tapping individuals who are content, and even perhaps apathetic, creates new leaders for the future and energizes people in a positive way towards their local government. At The Novak Consulting Group, we believe that communities function best when there is engagement during *good* times, not just when people oppose something. By creating constructive dialogue, the community is much more likely to react productively and civilly when something occurs that might otherwise bring out nonproductive forms of engagement.

A visioning or strategic planning process involves articulating a clear vision and mission for the community, preparing an environmental scan that identifies the factors affecting the community, establishing goals, identifying priority strategies, and creating implementation plans that become the focus of activity and engagement long after the process itself has finished. The process of developing a strategic plan explores three specific questions:

- What do we know to be true? – Where are we today?
- What do we hope will be true in the future? – Where do we want to go?
- What must go well in order to make it so? – How do we get there?

In this way, a strategic plan is a road map to move a community towards its intended vision.

The following outlines our general approach to answering the three key questions in the development of a strategic plan.

Begin Engagement

A successful strategic planning process will benefit from a collaborative relationship between the consulting team and the City from the very beginning of the process. This task is intended to begin building that relationship.

At the start of this engagement, we will request and review all background information, including any previous vision or mission statements, results of other planning processes, and other relevant data. Next, The Novak Consulting Group will meet with the City's project team to gain a clear picture of what the City hopes to accomplish from the strategic planning process. We want to ensure that we have a shared understanding for how to develop the plan. We will review the project plan and finalize the schedule.

We will meet with the Mayor and each member of the City Commission to hear their perspective about this process and to develop an understanding of the context for the strategic plan. Additionally, we will also conduct a meeting with the City's management team to review the project and begin engaging the City's leaders in the process.

Prepare Environmental Scan

In order to answer the first question (Where are we today?), an environmental scan must be completed. The Novak Consulting Group will work collaboratively with the City to develop this scan which will provide helpful background information about the current state of the City and potential future impacts.

To prepare the scan, The Novak Consulting Group will gather existing data about the community such as financial trends, demographic data, statistics about housing, manufacturing, business, and jobs, and other relevant information. The information will be incorporated into the environmental scan.

To further inform the scan, The Novak Consulting Group will conduct a session with the City's management team to identify the City's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges (SWOC). If desired, feedback from the community on the City's SWOCs can also be solicited through use of focus group sessions, community meetings or a community survey. All information developed will be compiled into the environmental scan which will be reviewed by the City.

Facilitate Strategic Planning Retreat

Next, The Novak Consulting Group will facilitate a retreat with members of the City Commission and key staff to develop the strategic plan framework. During the session, the results of the environmental scan will be presented, and the participants will answer the second question (Where do we want to go?) and articulate a desired future (vision) for Lawrence. The group will also spend time developing key focus areas – those things that must go well in the community in order for the vision to be realized. As a group, participants will also spend time articulating key priority initiatives for each key focus area.

Following the retreat, a written summary of the event will be prepared for the City.

Solicit Community Feedback on Strategic Plan Framework

A strategic plan is best when touched by as many key stakeholders as possible. Therefore, The Novak Consulting Group will work with the City to identify those individuals and groups from whom the City wants feedback. A series of community meetings or even a community survey would be conducted to gather input on the strategic planning framework.

Our trained facilitators use a variety of techniques to actively engage participants in the input process. We thoroughly prepare for each session and develop an agenda for the group. However, each session is slightly different, based on the participants. Our facilitators know how to “read the group” and determine the best techniques to use to solicit feedback from participants with different styles: some participants will readily voice their ideas, while others may need prompting or perhaps a written exercise to engage. Regardless of the methods, our goal in any facilitated session is create an environment that allows participants to feel comfortable sharing their honest feedback. For this process, we often use the World Café format to actively engage participants and encourage community building.

Additionally, the City may wish to consider the services of a graphic facilitator for the community meetings. A visual co-creator provides an opportunity for participants to see their ideas visually represented within the context of the strategic plan for the community.

This is also an ideal time to further engage the City organization in this process. Their feedback on the strategic plan framework is important, and they can play a key role in articulating organizational values that are important to live out the vision and key focus areas articulated in the plan. Their feedback can be solicited through an online survey and/or a series of employee focus group sessions.

Assist with Implementation

Achievement of the vision, key focus areas, and initiatives will rest on successful implementation. Therefore, The Novak Consulting Group will work with the City staff to develop implementation action plans for each initiative in the strategic plan. These action plans can include key performance measures for use by the organization as well as the Commission and community to ensure progress toward achieving the strategic plan's vision.

Prepare Final Deliverables

At the conclusion of the above activities, The Novak Consulting Group will prepare a comprehensive deliverable that includes the results of the process. We will also assist with the development of strategy maps for priority based budgeting. We will review the draft deliverables with the City and make any necessary changes or modifications prior to finalization.

We will also work with the City to develop strategies for continual engagement of the community as the strategic plan is implemented, and provide deliverables for public presentation.

The scope of work for a strategic planning process as detailed in this proposal generally requires 12 – 16 weeks to complete. The final schedule will be developed in consultation with the City once the detailed scope of work is determined; however, The Novak Consulting Group does not anticipate any concerns with completing the process within the timeframe outlined by the City.

Project Team

Our project team is made up of senior level consultants with direct local government experience. What sets our project team apart is our ability to explore and relate to local community values while at the same time investigating realistic approaches for cost-effective and long-term strategic solutions.

President Julia Novak – Julia will serve as engagement director and lead facilitator. She will be the City's primary contact throughout this engagement. Julia has worked in and around local governments for over twenty-five years – 16 years in direct service to local governments and 13 years as a full-time consultant. She founded The Novak Consulting Group in 2009. As a professional consultant she has led engagements in communities of all sizes covering the full spectrum of local government services. She has facilitated more than 100 retreats and strategic planning sessions with elected officials and is an established thought leader in the area of governance and management. During her local government career, she worked in Fort Collins, Colorado; Lexington, Massachusetts; Rockville, Maryland; and was city manager of Rye, New York. Julia earned a bachelor's degree in government and politics from George Mason University and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas. Julia was in the first class of individuals certified by ICMA as Credentialed Local Government Managers and maintains that designation.

Organizational Assessment Practice Leader Michelle Ferguson – Michelle has over 20 years of local government management experience, both as a consultant and in direct service to some of the leading local governments in the country. As a consultant, Michelle has completed detailed organizational reviews of entire jurisdictions and recommended improvements to structure, staffing, and processes within departments across the country. She has provided customized training in the development and use of performance measures to assist numerous organizations continuously improve service delivery. Additionally, Michelle is also a skilled facilitator, able to bring diverse groups of people together to articulate shared visions and priorities. She has lead strategic planning engagements at the community, organizational, and department levels, and she has facilitated numerous staff and governing body retreats.

Analyst Haley Kadish – Haley has six years of government and consulting experience that inform her work as an analyst. She provides our project teams with a variety of staffing and operations analyses, researches best practices, and develops performance measures at the department, organizational, and community level. Prior to joining The Novak Consulting Group, Haley served as an ICMA Local Government Management Fellow in Catawba County, North Carolina where she improved the talent recruitment and selection process, developed departmental performance measures, assisted in the development and implementation of a community food sustainability plan, and improved operations by researching and analyzing options for special projects throughout the county.

Analyst Josh Rauch – Josh has seven years of consulting and government experience involving a wide variety of organizational and operational analysis. Prior to joining the Novak Consulting Group in December 2014, he served as deputy economic development administrator for the City of Springfield, Ohio. In addition to his background in economic development, Josh has significant experience in community engagement efforts and property maintenance code enforcement.

Our project team members are employees of The Novak Consulting Group. No sub-consultants will be used to complete the scope of work outlined in this proposal. Complete resumes for each of our project team members are included.

Julia D. Novak, President

Julia established The Novak Consulting Group in September 2009 when she acquired Public Management Partners. From 2003 to 2009, she served as a vice president for a local government consulting firm. Julia has over 25 years of experience working with and for local governments. She is a consultant, trainer, and facilitator who worked with numerous organizations and community groups. During her local government career, she worked in Fort Collins, Colorado; Lexington, Massachusetts; Rockville, Maryland; and was city manager of Rye, New York.

Julia has extensive experience as a facilitator and trainer. She has worked with both elected and appointed officials across the country to conduct goal setting, develop strategic plans, and prioritize service delivery. She has conducted training for elected officials as an individual trainer and through the National League of Cities and a consortium of cities in California. Topics included leadership style and evaluating appointed officials.

Julia has also established herself as a thought leader in the area of governance and administration. In April 2002, Julia was one of 20 practitioners who participated in the ICMA-sponsored symposium on the future of local government administration.

Her response to Dr. James Svara's paper, "City Council, Roles, Performance, and the Form of Government," is included in the ICMA-published book, "The Future of Local Government Administration." Public Management Magazine has published multiple articles which she authored and co-authored, including "Preparing Councils for Their Work," co-authored with Dr. John Nalbandian; "Permission to Manage" which discusses the importance of using data to manage local governments; "Dreams That Make a Difference" on the value of community based strategic planning; "Civility" and most recently "Using Data in Police Management." In 2010, Julia served as a trainer for a USAID Initiative in Baghdad, Iraq to develop the capacity of local advisors and councils in Iraq to engage in strategic planning, project management, policy analysis, and policy advocacy.

In 2000, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) awarded Julia its Assistant's Excellence in Leadership Award for her work in building community and increasing organizational capacity as deputy city manager of Rockville, Maryland.

Julia has been a speaker at national conferences for the ICMA, National League of Cities, and American Society of Public Administrators. She has been a featured speaker/trainer for many state associations, including Ohio, Vermont, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, the Metropolitan (D.C.) Association of Local Government Administrators and the Illinois Assistant Municipal Managers Association.

Julia earned a bachelor's degree in government and politics from George Mason University and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas. Julia was in the first class of individuals certified by ICMA as Credentialed Local Government Managers, and maintains that designation. Julia is a Master Facilitator of the popular Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator, and is certified to administer several other Level B psychological assessments, Apter Motivational Styles Profile, and the Strength Deployment Inventory. She also is trained in popular level-A assessments, including the Thomas-Killman Conflict Modes Inventory and the Human Element-B.

Education

*Master of Public Administration,
University of Kansas*

*Bachelor of Arts, George Mason
University*

Professional Certifications

*Certified Professional Manager,
International City/County
Management Association*

*Master Facilitator, The Myers-
Briggs Personality Type Indicator*

Industry Tenure

29 years

Consulting, 13 years

Local Government, 16 years

Michelle L. Ferguson, Organizational Assessment Practice Leader

Michelle has over 20 years of management experience in local government, and she currently serves as the organizational assessment practice leader for The Novak Consulting Group, having been with the firm since its inception.

Michelle began her consulting career in 2005 following 10 years of direct experience in local government management, which included serving as assistant county manager in Arlington County, Virginia.

Michelle excels at helping local governments continuously improve their organizations and enhance service to the public. She is skilled in project management, process improvement strategies, performance measurement, consent building, and public process design.

As organizational assessment practice leader, Michelle has completed detailed organizational reviews of entire jurisdictions and recommended improvements to structure, staffing, and processes within departments across the country. Specific department reviews have included development review, parks and recreation, public works, human services, human resources, capital budgeting, and collections. Additionally, she has provided customized training in the development and use of performance measures to assist numerous organizations continuously improve service delivery.

Michelle is also a skilled facilitator, able to bring diverse groups of people together to articulate shared visions and priorities. She has lead strategic planning engagements at the community, organizational, and department levels, and she has facilitated numerous staff and governing body retreats.

During her tenure with Arlington County, Michelle oversaw the daily management and implementation of the County's capital program. She also led the organization-wide performance measurement initiative establishing their Balanced Scorecard. Prior to Arlington County, Michelle served as assistant city manager in Overland Park, Kansas.

Michelle earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Loyola University-Chicago and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas. She is a member of the International City/County Management Association. She also served as the president of the Metropolitan Association of Local Government Assistants in Washington, D.C and has presented at state and national conferences on topics such as strategic planning, effective governing bodies, and council-staff relations.

Education

*Master of Public
Administration, University of
Kansas*

*Bachelor of Arts, Loyola
University - Chicago*

Industry Tenure

20 years

Consulting, 11 years

Local Government, 10 years

Haley Kadish, Analyst

Haley has six years of government and consulting experience that inform her work as an analyst. She provides our project teams with a variety of staffing and operations analyses, including workload and scheduling evaluations as well as staffing assessments. She also researches best practices and develops performance measures at the department, organizational, and community level.

Prior to joining The Novak Consulting Group, Haley served as an ICMA Local Government Management Fellow in Catawba County, North Carolina. As a Fellow, she improved the talent recruitment and selection process and developed departmental performance measures. She also assisted in the development and implementation of a community food sustainability plan and improved operations by researching and analyzing options for special projects throughout the County.

Haley started her career in the private sector as a virtual solutions subject matter expert for Procter & Gamble. During her tenure, she led a global team and launched and managed virtual consumer research services in multiple product categories.

While in graduate school at The Ohio State University, Haley served the Franklin County, Ohio Child Support Enforcement Agency as a program analysis intern. She also served as a public affairs intern for the U.S. State Department in Zambia.

Haley earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from University of Texas at Austin and a master's degree in public administration from Ohio State University. She is a member of the International City/County Management Association. Haley is an accomplished artist whose analytic and technical skills are complemented by her design skills.

Education

*Master of Public
Administration, Ohio State
University*

*Bachelor of Art, University of
Texas, Austin*

Industry Tenure

Consulting, 3 years

Local Government, 3 years

Joshua Rauch, Analyst

Josh has experience in several local government settings, most recently with the Economic Development Division of the City of Springfield, Ohio. While there, he assisted with business retention and expansion activities, provided staff support for tax incentive negotiations and reporting, and helped develop the City's marketing strategy.

Josh began his career as an undergraduate intern with the City of Dayton, Ohio. He organized community engagement events for young adults working in Dayton over the summer months. He built on this experience during graduate school when he began working for the City of Mission, Kansas. There he helped coordinate a variety of community events, including public budget hearings, community input sessions, and a successful attempt to set the Guinness World Record for the Largest Painting Made with Footprints. He also managed the City's property maintenance code enforcement program and neighborhood assistance programs.

Education

*Master of Public
Administration, University
of Kansas*

*Bachelor of Arts, Political
Science, University of
Dayton*

Industry Tenure

Consulting, 1 year

Local Government, 6 years

Aside from community engagement activities, Josh has helped formulate, implement, and administer new policies and programs related to transportation funding, social media engagement, code enforcement and neighborhood assistance, information technology, sustainability planning, and performance measurement.

As a consultant, Josh has provided analytical support for organizational and operational reviews involving a wide array of functions, including fire staffing, human resources, economic development, public works, information technology, and administration.

Josh earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Dayton and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas. He is a member of the International City/County Management Association.

Similar Projects and References

The Novak Consulting Group has extensive experience with strategic planning throughout the country. We encourage you to contact these or any of our current or previous clients. The following projects were led by Julia Novak.

Sierra Vista, Arizona engaged The Novak Consulting Group to facilitate a strategic planning workshop with the governing body and senior staff to lay out a two-year work plan of high priority policy initiatives. Work included individual interviews with the Council, a work shop with senior staff, and a two-day joint strategic planning workshop.

Mary Jacobs, Assistant City Manager
(520) 439-2147 Mary.Jacobs@SierraVistaAZ.gov

Windsor, Colorado engaged The Novak Consulting Group to facilitate a strategic planning process that involved the Town Board, department directors, and approximately 80 interested residents who contributed to a new Vision and four performance commitments. The Town identified short and long term initiatives designed to move the Town towards its vision of being the hub of Northern Colorado.

Kelly Arnold, Town Manager
(970) 674-2400 karnold@windsorgov.com

Westminster, Colorado initially engaged The Novak Consulting Group to conduct a strategic planning retreat with the City Council. Subsequently, Julia worked with the management team to develop implementation plans for the Council's key focus areas. Repeat engagements with the Council and with staff were recently conducted as an update to the previous year's process.

Barbara Opie, Assistant City Manager
(303) 658-2009 BOpie@CityofWestminster.us

Midland, Michigan engaged The Novak Consulting Group to conduct a community-based strategic planning process. The engagement involved use of a Search Conference, which included involvement of over 100 community members who gathered to articulate the vision and key performance areas for the community, along with critical initiatives and action plans.

Bridgette Gransden, County Administrator
(989) 832-6797 BGransden@co.midland.mi.us

Clayton, Missouri has engaged The Novak Consulting Group annually since 2011 to facilitate retreats with both the governing body (Mayor and Board of Aldermen) and department heads. The retreats improved working relationships, established priorities, and articulated and clarified expectations. Additionally, The Novak Consulting Group assisted the City with a community-wide strategic planning process called "C – The Future." This process included approximately 60 stakeholders who participated in articulating the future vision and determining action steps to achieve the vision. The environmental scan was informed from focus groups, community surveys, and individual interviews with local leaders. Others were able to participate using MindMixer technologies on a site that became known as "Clayton Connects."

Craig Owens, City Manager
(314) 727-0671 cowens@ci.clayton.mo.us

Lancaster, Texas first engaged The Novak Consulting Group in 2010, and we facilitated annual retreats in 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 with their governing body and department heads, in order to develop their strategic plan. This process included visioning, goal setting, and articulating key priorities that would shape the direction of the City over the next five years.

Opal Mauldin-Robertson, City Manager
(214) 500-1383 ORobertson@lancaster-tx.com

Manhattan Beach, California engaged The Novak Consulting Group to facilitate a strategic planning process with the City Council and the City's management team. A vision, key focus areas, and priorities were collaboratively developed to ensure alignment among the Council and staff.

Nadine Nader, Assistant City Manager/Chief Operating Officer
(310) 802-5053 nnader@citymb.info

Fort Collins, Colorado has engaged The Novak Consulting Group multiple times since 2010. Work with the City has included goal setting/strategic planning with the governing body, retreats with the leadership team, a structural review of the budget and finance functions, and an organizational analysis designed to enhance service delivery for the customers of Transportation, Community Planning, and Environmental and Utility Services.

Darin Atteberry, City Manager
(970) 221-6505 datteberry@fcgov.com

Range of Costs

The total cost to complete a strategic planning process can range from \$22,500 to \$47,500, including all professional fees and expenses for The Novak Consulting Group.

The primary drivers of the cost include the following:

- Development of the environmental scan
- Level of engagement with community
- Level of engagement with City employees