

CIVIC ACTION PLAN 2.0

Serving as the implementation plan for
community engaged teaching and learning of
UNI's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan



University of Northern Iowa™
Community Engagement

Implementation Framework



This framework illustrates that community engaged teaching and learning will be embraced through a social justice lens, with a commitment to diversity, innovation, inclusion, equity and mutually beneficial relationships and partnerships. Programming such as days of service, service-learning, volunteerism, celebrations, scholarships & fellowships, and networking will be realized through our four goals: providing structure and support, enhancing community engaged learning opportunities, building and strengthening community relationships, and elevating the benefits of community engagement. All this in support of UNI's mission, "The University of Northern Iowa creates, empowers, and innovates to enrich Iowa and beyond".

The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) has previously declared a shared commitment to the public purpose of higher education and a promise to develop a [Campus Strategic Plan](#) and [Civic Action Plan](#). From this declaration, the 2017-2022 UNI Strategic Plan and Civic Action Plan were developed and implemented. Please read the [Impact Report](#) to learn about the effect of the programs and services implemented in the first Civic Action Plan.

In 2021, UNI began the process of continuing this commitment through the creation of a Civic Action Plan 2.0. This Civic Action Plan 2.0 was developed in conjunction with the university's 2023-2028 strategic plan. Similarly to the previous development of these plans, the efforts in developing the Civic Action Plan 2.0 and strategic plan complimented each other.

The development of UNI's Civic Action Plan 2.0 involved four phases:

Phase 1: Formed Civic Action Planning Committee (Fall 2021)

Phase 2: Developed a draft Civic Action Plan 2.0 (Spring 2022)

Phase 3: Solicited feedback on the Civic Action Plan 2.0 (Spring 2022)

Phase 4: Edited based on feedback & finalized CAP 2.0 (Summer 2022)

UNI's Civic Action Plan 2.0 serves as the implementation of community engagement in support of UNI's Strategic Plan and its community engagement focus embedded throughout the plan, specifically Goal #2 – Empower Communities to Shape Their Future.

The purpose of UNI's Civic Action Plan 2.0 is to provide students experiences that prepare them for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to deliberate, act, and lead in pursuit of the public good. Students may have the opportunity for community engagement experiences through general education, their majors, in student organizations and clubs and have access to individual volunteer and service experiences.

It is important to highlight the university strategic planning process and outline UNI's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan. Understanding the university's strategic plan provides a framework and context for the development and implementation of UNI's Civic Action Plan 2.0.

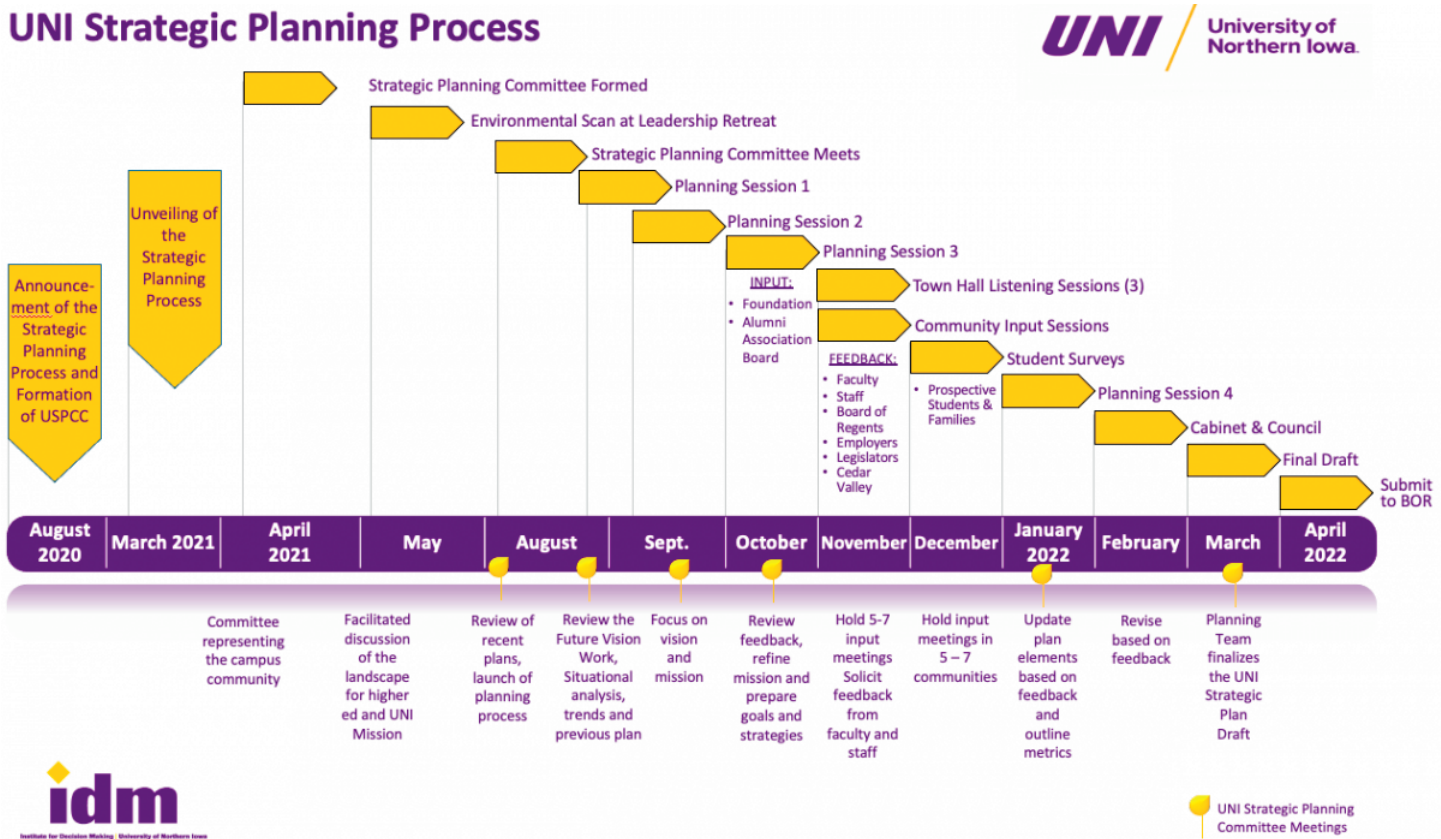
UNI Strategic Planning Process, Timeline, and Model

UNI's Future Vision outlines a long-term aspirational view of UNI and provides the framework for the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan.

The University of Northern Iowa, supported by the UNI Institute for Decision Making, facilitated a broadly inclusive strategic planning process that began in April of 2021. The process began with a leadership retreat that included students, faculty and staff participants who represented a broad cross-section of the campus community. Following the retreat, a 22-member Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was appointed with representatives from all areas of the campus and from the Cedar Valley community. During the Fall of 2021, the SPC participated in multiple interactive planning sessions to craft new plan elements, including the university's vision, mission, values, and strategic goals and initiatives.

The SPC facilitated a broadly inclusive public input process to develop the strategic plan. Public input sessions were conducted by SPC members in Waterloo, Cedar Falls, Cedar Rapids, Des Moines and Sioux City. Nearly 150 participants attended these input sessions. Participants included representatives from economic development organizations, nonprofit organizations, K-12 teachers and administrators, community leadership, alumni, elected local and state officials, members of the Board of Regents and Foundation Trustees. In addition, an online survey and other in-person sessions on campus gathered input from UNI students, parents and representatives from the broader community.

Public input was reviewed by the SPC to help revise the Strategic Plan components. A series of Town Hall feedback sessions were held on campus to obtain further responses and prepare a final draft for review by the Board of Regents. The final strategic plan was approved by the Board of Regents on June 20, 2022.



The 2023-2028 Strategic Plan incorporates high impact practices from existing university master planning documents and presents a set of overarching goals and underlying strategies that will guide the university's work for the next five years and work toward achieving the University's Future Vision for 2051.

This document will serve as UNI's implementation of Community Engagement in support of UNI's Strategic Plan and its community engagement focus embedded throughout the plan, specifically Goal #2 - Empower Communities to Shape Their Future.

Mission:

The University of Northern Iowa creates, empowers, and innovates to enrich Iowa and beyond.

Vision:

We serve the public good through equitable and inclusive excellence in teaching and learning, scholarship, and service.

UNI's Strategic Plan

Goal 1: Create Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive Opportunities.

Create an equitable and inclusive living, learning, and working environment for all.

Goal 2: Empower Communities to Shape Their Future

Empower and engage learners and communities to confront challenges and seize opportunities that advance the public good.

Goal 3: Innovate for Learner Success.

Enhance access and support services for all learners through innovative and relevant academic curriculum and out-of-class experiences.

Goal 4: Steward Resources Effectively.

Align and effectively utilize University resources to improve equitable access, affordability, and quality

UNI's Civic Action Plan

Implementation of Community Engagement in support of UNI's Strategic Plan

The University of Northern Iowa is a Carnegie Classified institution for Community Engagement. The UNI Civic Action Plan 2.0 (CAP 2.0) provides community engaged learning opportunities and programming for all students, faculty, and staff. Community relationships will be built and enhanced to empower communities to confront challenges and seize opportunities that advance the public good. The UNI Office of Community Engagement will work to elevate and communicate the benefits of community engagement work both across campus and to community partners. This plan offers connections for the community, the university, its faculty, staff, students, centers and institutes. The Civic Action Plan 2.0 serves as the implementation of community engagement in support of UNI's Strategic Plan and its community engagement focus embedded throughout the plan, specifically Goal #2 - Empower Communities to Shape Their Future.

Goal 1

Structure & Assessment

Provide structure, support, and assessment of community engagement.

Strategy 1

Create/provide a database/clearinghouse of information for UNI faculty, staff, students, and community partners about initiatives, projects, and partnerships between the university and various communities.

- **Tactic 1:** Provide information on current initiatives, projects, and partnerships that currently exist.
- **Tactic 2:** Provide information for how faculty, staff, students, and community partners can get involved in existing initiatives, projects, and partnerships.
- **Tactic 3:** Provide opportunities for how faculty, staff, students, and community partnerships can begin the co-creation of new initiatives, projects, and partnerships (relates Goal 2, Strategy 1).

Strategy 2

Facilitate knowledge of, and expand funding opportunities and financial support for community projects/initiatives.

- **Tactic 1:** Expand funding opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to develop mutually beneficial community initiatives, projects, and partnerships.
- **Tactic 2:** Educate and support faculty, staff, students, and community businesses/organizations on the importance of paid internships.

Strategy 3

Conduct assessment and evaluations of community engaged work.

- **Tactic 1:** Conduct an assessment of service-learning on student learning and development.
- **Tactic 2:** Conduct an evaluation of community impact from UNI community engaged initiatives, projects, and partnerships.
- **Tactic 3:** Enhance the ease and usefulness of the community engagement database and faculty/staff reporting systems.

Key Performance Indicators

- Increase the percentage of reported engagement by 5% from year to year through campus database and/or other reporting measures.
- Increase the number of service-learning designated courses approved by 100% (50 courses approved by 2028) assuring at least five courses in each college.
- Create curricular designations for courses that have engaged learning or high impact practices within the system to encourage enrollment growth in those courses.
- NASCE: Increase the percent of students who have indicated they have participated in service/community engaged courses at UNI from 27% to 35% by 2028.



Goal 2

Opportunity & Programming

Enhance community engaged learning opportunities and programming for all UNI students, faculty, and staff.

Strategy 1

Facilitate opportunities for uniting UNI students, faculty, and staff, with community partners to co-create new and/or continue initiatives, projects, and partnerships.

- **Tactic 1:** Host networking events that allow for effective, purposeful, and mutually beneficial initiatives, projects, and partnerships to form (focus - all).
- **Tactic 2:** Host service-learning institutes for individual faculty/instructors and theme-based/cohorts to develop mutually beneficial initiatives, projects, and partnerships (focus - faculty/instructors).
- **Tactic 3:** Facilitate co/extracurricular programming/credentials/certificates to develop mutually beneficial initiatives, projects, and partnerships (focus - students, staff/advisors).
- **Tactic 4:** Connect individuals to volunteer opportunities (VCCV) through office hours in the Maucker Union and Get Connected (focus - all).
- **Tactic 5:** Promote and facilitate the use of Panther FYI (Find Your Involvement) to connect students with engagement opportunities (focus - students).

Strategy 2

Support UNI centers/institutes in connecting community work/efforts to curricular and extra-curricular activities.

- **Tactic 1:** Partner with the Center for Teaching and Learning to support faculty, especially new faculty, in their community engaged teaching and learning.
- **Tactic 2:** Facilitate Service-Learning Institutes (SLIs) to support UNI centers/institutes to both enhance student learning and positively impact communities (relates to Goal 2, Strategy 1, Tactic 2).
- **Tactic 3:** Provide a front-door for the community to all the programs and services offered by UNI centers/institutes.

Key Performance Indicators

- Implement a Service-Learning Institute for 15 participants annually, with 95% reporting the SLI as being helpful in designing a service-learning project/course (both online & in person).
- Certify 35 students in earning their CNP annually (25 course route 15 UG, 10G; 10 Self guided).
- NASCE: Increase the percent of students who are asked by students, staff or faculty members to volunteer from 45% to 65% in 2028.
- Develop and launch a plan to institutionalize a collective, campus-wide community engagement project by 2028.



Goal 3

Empower Communities

Build and strengthen community relationships to empower communities to confront challenges and seize opportunities that advance the public good.

Strategy 1

Understand the capacity needs of community organizations/businesses to enhance community initiatives, projects, and partnerships to expand their capacity to advance the public good.

- **Tactic 1:** Conduct a capacity needs assessment of community organizations/businesses (identify the gaps in community organizations/business that limit the achievement of the mission/purpose).
- **Tactic 2:** Based on the results of the needs assessment, create opportunities/connections for UNI students, faculty, and staff to fill the gaps in capacity through service-learning, UNI centers/institutes, AmeriCorps, Interns, student organizations, volunteers, etc. (relates to Goal 2)
- **Tactic 3:** Provide sustainability between UNI and community partnerships through the database/clearing house of information (related to Goal 1, Strategy 1).

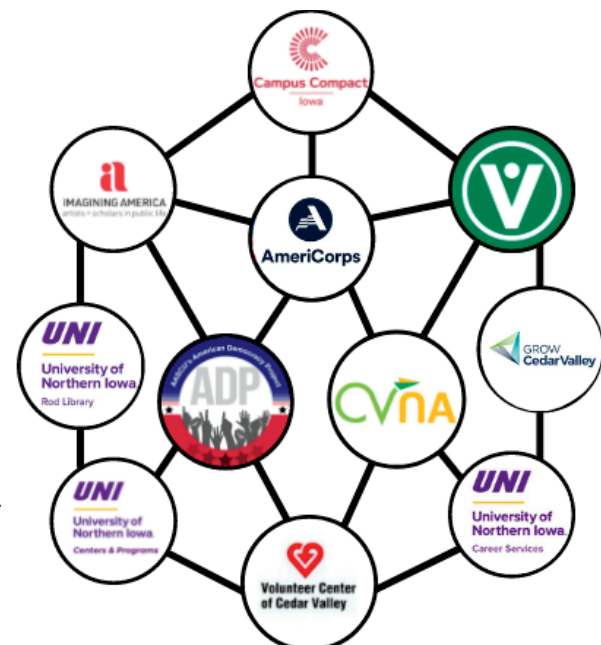
Key Performance Indicators

- Host Town Hall for Community Engagement annually with goal of 50 participants.
- Organize 20 networking Now sessions per year (on campus; 10 center/institutes/faculty; 10 advisors/advising groups.)
- NASCE: Increase percent of students who indicated Yes to completing community service at UNI from 56% to 70% by 2028.
- NASCE: Increase the percent of students who hear about community engagement opportunities from the Volunteer Center of Cedar Valley from 15% to 25% by 2028.

Strategy 2

Engage with networked organizations that enhance community engagement to build and enhance the partnerships possible between UNI faculty, staff, and students and the community.

- **Tactic 1:** Provide representation and leadership in/for networked organizations.
- **Tactic 2:** Build and enhance engagement opportunities and programming for students, faculty, staff, and community members through the networked organizations.
- **Tactic 3:** Focus on building and enhancing relationships and networks, with a focus in the Waterloo community.



Goal 4

Elevate & Communicate

Elevate and communicate the benefits of community engagement work both across campus and to community partners.

Strategy 1

Obtain Carnegie re-classification for community engagement.

- **Tactic 1:** Form a steering committee of leaders from key divisions and departments from across campus to lead the effort in applying for re-classification.
- **Tactic 2:** Host ongoing committee meetings to advance progress on the application.
- **Tactic 3:** Submit the application in April 2025.

Strategy 2

Launch the opportunity for students to Graduate with Distinction to recognize students that exemplify community engaged learning and its benefits.

- **Tactic 1:** Develop the requirements for earning “graduation with distinction” in community engaged learning.
- **Tactic 2:** Educate faculty, staff, and academic advisors so they can inform students on the benefits of community-engaged learning, especially service-learning courses.
- **Tactic 3:** Facilitate the process for students to apply for “graduation with distinction”.

Strategy 3

Promote stories highlighting the mutual benefits of partnerships between UNI and communities.

- **Tactic 1:** Launch the #UNIEngaged podcast and continue other information sharing such as newsletter, social media posts, and targeted emails.
- **Tactic 2:** Publish a new community engaged story monthly highlighting the benefits for students, faculty, staff and the community.
- **Tactic 3:** Create a faculty/staff Service-Learning Honor Roll to recognize those that have completed an SLI and are offering a service-learning course.

Key Performance Indicators

- Retain Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement status (application submitted by 2026).
- NSSE: Increase the percentage of students reporting that their institution contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in the area of informed and active citizens from 57.8% saying quite a bit or very much to 65% by 2028.
- NSSE: Increase the number of students who connect their learning to societal problems and issues often or very often from 56.6% to 65% by 2028.
- Launch podcast in Fall 2022, publish 8-10 podcast episodes annually featuring community engagement efforts at UNI.





Office of Community Engagement

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engagement.uni.edu



UNIEngagement