



# Strategic Plan

## An Introduction from the Mayor

Over the past several years, we've built real momentum. We've made record investments in our roads, parks, and water system. We've prioritized safety, doubled down on transparency, and worked every day to make city services more responsive, efficient, and equitable. And through it all, we've kept our sights set firmly on the future. Not just reacting to what's urgent, but preparing Toledo to grow and thrive for decades to come.

When I look back on my time as Mayor, I want to remember that all the work we did together helped neighbors feel connected, that city government showed up with purpose, and that pride in our hometown ran deeper than ever.

This plan is the foundation of a bigger promise: that Toledo will be a place where more people want to live, where longtime residents want to stay, and where future generations will be proud to call home.

**Let's get to work.**

Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz

# Mayor's Big Bold Goal: 300,000 Toledo Residents by 2045

Growth brings opportunity. It creates jobs, supports local businesses, strengthens neighborhoods, and gives us the resources to improve core services.

## Mayor's Big Initiatives

### Make the Riverfront a Gathering Place

We're reconnecting the city to the river that built it — transforming our waterfront into a destination for recreation, community, and celebration.

### Connect Downtown's Momentum to Neighborhoods

We're making sure every neighborhood shares in the energy and investment fueling Downtown's resurgence — starting with the corridors that connect us.

### Build Homes to Welcome Future Toledoans

We're expanding the kinds of homes people can find in Toledo — affordable, modern, and ready for families, workers, and future residents to make their own.

## All Hands on Deck

City government can do a lot. We can invest in roads and parks, cut red tape, plant trees, fund housing, and put more resources into public safety. We can set goals, track progress, and show up every day committed to making Toledo better. But we cannot do this alone — and we were never meant to.

The vision at the heart of this plan — **a Toledo that 300,000 people choose to call home** — that vision only becomes real if our community partners,

businesses, nonprofits, neighborhood associations, faith communities, and institutions decide to be part of building it.

## **Our Commitment to Residents**

### **We Put Safety First**

Safety is our most important responsibility — for our residents, our workforce, and our neighborhoods. Whether it's a fire response, a crosswalk design, or a job site, we protect people by planning carefully, acting quickly, and never cutting corners.

### **We Build Trust**

We show up, even when things get hard. We follow through on our promises, own our mistakes, and tell the truth. We believe that transparency builds trust, and trust builds a stronger city.

### **We Meet People Where They Are**

We design for real life. We listen before we act, and we adapt our systems to fit the people they serve, not the other way around. Every person is different, and everyone deserves to be treated with dignity, clarity, and care.

### **We Experiment Boldly**

We try new things. We improve what works and we learn from what doesn't. Innovation is how we build the Toledo of the future. That means creating space for risk, creativity, and challenging the status quo.

### **We Focus on the Future**

We don't settle for "the way it's always been." We're building for 2040 and beyond, with long-term goals, shared alignment, and the belief that Toledo's best years are still ahead. Every decision we make today is an investment in a stronger tomorrow.

# Build Safe, Vibrant, & Connected Neighborhoods

## Objective 1: Improve housing availability, choice, and quality.

**Proactively recruit and support new housing developers to work in Toledo by addressing financial, regulatory, and market barriers.**

Ongoing. More development means more homes for current and future residents. Working to address financing, zoning, and permitting barriers can help projects move faster and save money.

**Explore creating a city demolition fund for commercial and residential properties.**

2027. Demolition eliminates blight, improves neighborhood safety, and prepares sites for new development. Dedicated funding would help ensure the city is able to maintain these activities at the level needed to make an impact.

**Implement a comprehensive public education campaign on the importance of affordable housing to neighborhood vitality and economic growth.**

Ongoing. Public support is critical to the success of any effort to create and preserve affordable housing. This public education campaign will define what affordable housing is, what it isn't, and how its presence provides creates a net benefit for current and future residents of Toledo.

**Establish an Affordable Housing Trust fund capitalized by local resources.**

2027. A long-term, flexible funding source dedicated to supporting affordable housing development is a critical tool in helping to spur new development and preservation efforts in the city.

**Provide financial assistance to seniors and low-income homeowners in Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSAs) focused on housing preservation and code compliance.**

2026. Keeping people in their homes helps preserve existing housing and prevents neighborhood decline in addition to stabilizing families. Grants or low-cost financing is a cost-effective way to help residents fix roofs and address code violations.

**Launch an appraisal gap financing initiative in NRSAs to incentivize infill housing construction and rehabilitation.**

2026. An appraisal gap is a barrier to development where it costs more to construct or rehabilitate a home than what it will appraise for when completed. Financing the gap supports development in neighborhoods with lower property values.

**Launch approved infill housing construction templates.**

Ongoing. Infill housing construction templates are pre-approved or standardized design, architectural, and planning models used to streamline the development of new homes on small, vacant, or underutilized lots within existing, built-up neighborhoods. These templates are designed to speed up the permitting process, reduce development costs, and ensure new construction matches the character of established neighborhoods.

**Capitalize and launch NRSA Housing Predevelopment Support.**

2027. Predevelopment support provides early funding for planning, site prep, and design to help speed up construction in neighborhoods that need investment.

## **Shepherd legislation and implementation of the Multifamily Rental Licensing Program.**

**2026.** Licensing large rental properties helps ensure tenants have safe, well-maintained housing that meets safety and quality standards. Properties must undergo regular inspections to hold landlords accountable.

## **Objective 2: Reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries, and improve multimodal transportation access.**

### **Update the Complete Street Guide to allow for the creation of a network of safe, walkable, and bikeable routes.**

**2026.** Streets are for everyone: drivers, walkers, cyclists, wheelchair users, and transit riders. The Complete Street Guide ensures all users are considered in the design of future roadway improvements.

### **Use evidence-based design guidelines to prevent severe and fatal crashes.**

**Ongoing.** Proven safety features such as lighting, pedestrian crossings, and traffic-calming measures save lives and will be built into future roadway projects.

### **Update the Bike Plan to prioritize future improvements and activate existing assets.**

**2026.** The Bike Plan was last updated in 2015, and significant progress has been made on recommended routes and connections. Updating the plan will help to identify future priorities for expansion and improvements to existing facilities.

### **Build improvements at two High Injury Network segments and one High Injury Network intersection per year.**

**Ongoing.** Crashes aren't equally distributed across the city's road network. Focusing on the most dangerous roads and intersections first means saving the most lives.

### **Objective 3: Foster stronger city–resident connections through trust, collaboration, enhanced access to opportunities, and responsive city services.**

**Adopt a resident-centered code compliance approach that prioritizes outreach, support, and long-term neighborhood stabilization.**

**Ongoing.** Punitive enforcement can't fix code issues when residents don't have the resources. A proactive model that provides genuine support helps homes stay compliant and stabilizes neighborhoods.

**Establish a centralized Community Response team and protocol to help residents navigate complex health, housing, and safety challenges.**

**2027.** Navigating complex systems in times of trauma is difficult. A central team designed to walk residents through city services and community resources will make it easier on those who need it most.

**Develop a Youth, Family, and Workforce Success strategy to define the City's role in advancing education, employment, housing stability, health, and economic opportunity.**

**2028.** Supporting family stability and long-term economic mobility for the next generation is critical to the city's future. A citywide plan will help align existing efforts and connect people to education, jobs, housing, and health resources.

## **Reimagine mayor-appointed boards and commissions to improve outreach, transparency, and meaningful resident engagement.**

**2026.** Community voices are central to decision-making and long-term planning. By improving how boards and commissions are activated, we can improve transparency and bring more voices to the table.

## **Objective 4: Improve Toledo's urban forest.**

### **Embed tree planting and preservation into neighborhood revitalization initiatives.**

**Ongoing.** Partner with the Toledo Land Bank, Community Improvement Corporation, and Neighborhood, Housing & Demolition Programs to integrate tree planting into post-demolition lots, infill housing, and redevelopment projects. Each new housing or site reuse project will include at least one street or yard tree per parcel, enhancing shade, safety, and property value.

### **Establish a citywide tree inventory and urban forest management plan.**

**2026-2027.** Conduct a comprehensive street tree inventory and canopy analysis using GIS, LIDAR, and field verification. Develop a Citywide Urban Forest Management Plan that sets long-term goals for canopy growth, maintenance cycles, risk reduction, and additional funding strategies.

### **Protect existing canopy and integrate tree planning into infrastructure and capital projects.**

**2026.** Update city codes and standards to require tree protection during construction, including demolition projects, and to promote green infrastructure. Implement a tree removal permit process and require that trees removed for development be replaced.



## **Increase public awareness, education, and pride in Toledo's urban forest.**

**Ongoing.** Public support is critical to the success of any effort to improve Toledo's urban forest. This public education campaign will define the tree canopy as critical public infrastructure, highlight the numerous individual and community benefits of increased tree coverage, and encourage residents to play an active role in caring for the health of existing trees.

## **Pilot 'cooling corridors' in heat-vulnerable neighborhoods through targeted tree planting.**

**2027.** Target “heat island” areas along major pedestrian or transit routes and integrate shade trees with bus stops, bike paths, school routes, and walking routes to parks to reduce temperatures, improve air quality, and enhance walkability.

## **Launch an Urban Tree Stewardship and Maintenance Program.**

**2027.** Establish a proactive maintenance and young tree care program to ensure long-term survival and reduce mortality. Utilize volunteer teams and workforce trainees to perform post-planting check-ups, pruning visits, emergency care, maintenance advice, and watering support.

## **Objective 5: Improve the quality, accessibility, and connectivity of parks and community centers.**

### **Activate parks through programming, events, and partnerships focused on overall health and quality of life.**

**Ongoing.** Build out programming that increases overall usage, encourages community building, and supports health and well-being both physically and mentally.

### **Improve or replace park infrastructure to better meet community needs.**

**Ongoing.** Improvements to existing park infrastructure will include community input to ensure alignment with the neighborhood's needs and accessibility features that allow playgrounds, splash pads, and other amenities to be used by everyone.

### **Improve neighborhood connectivity by activating existing bike and pedestrian trails.**

**Ongoing.** Utilizing the bike plan and safe routes to school planning, prioritize new and improved connections between existing infrastructure, parks, and other neighborhood amenities to offer residents more ways to move around Toledo.

### **Find a long-term use and activation partner for the Zablocki Center.**

**2026.** Finalize the community engagement report and recommendations for a long-term activation partner, develop a transition plan, and complete building upgrades prior to reopening.

## **Objective 6: Strengthen the community safety ecosystem and reduce crime.**

### **Restructure the City's violence reduction initiatives to ensure long-term operational and financial sustainability, with a focus on evidence-based, capacity-building, and hospital-linked interventions.**

**2027.** Hospital-linked violence interventions have proven to be effective because they engage participants during a critical, receptive period immediately following a violent injury, providing bedside intervention and long-term support. Aligning city efforts with this model creates a more

effective, sustainable approach to reducing crime and supporting at-risk individuals.

### **Strengthen collaboration among all Northwest Ohio law enforcement agencies.**

**Ongoing.** Toledo Police will convene regular meetings with other law-enforcement agencies across the region. These relationships can support community safety by ensuring departments are working together on cases that may span multiple jurisdictions, reducing duplication of effort and producing better outcomes.

### **Complete a public safety assessment to align future investment.**

**2027.** A public safety assessment is designed to examine the current state of public safety and determine what is needed to improve outcomes. The assessment would provide a tool for aligning future investment in public safety where it will have the greatest impact.

### **Relaunch Peace in Motion and a summer safety strategy.**

**2026.** The summer season often brings an uptick in violence. The seasonal strategy is designed to promote community safety during the warmer months through programming, visible presence, and education.

# Promote Economic Growth & Inclusive Opportunity

## Objective 1: Strengthen Toledo's tax base, create quality jobs, and diversify the local economy.

### **Prepare strategic sites and buildings for redevelopment.**

2026. In partnership with the Toledo Community Improvement Corporation and Lucas County Land Bank, make it easier for new businesses and housing to locate in Toledo by getting key properties ready for investment. This includes cleaning up sites, completing early planning work, and partnering with local organizations to reduce risk and attract developers—leading to new jobs, housing, and tax revenue.

### **Explore the creation of a Growth Capital Fund designed to provide strategic investments to emerging companies with strong scaling potential.**

2027. Evaluate options to create a local investment fund that would focus on advancing innovation, supporting local entrepreneurship, attracting outside investment, and positioning Toledo as a competitive market for high-growth industries. that supports promising startups and growing companies. This would help Toledo-based businesses scale, attract outside investment, and build a stronger, more diverse economy.

### **Launch the Storefront Merchant Assistance Loan (SMAL) Program to support neighborhood business growth.**

2026. Support small businesses in opening or expanding storefronts in Toledo's neighborhoods by offering financial assistance for buildout,

equipment, and improvements—helping fill vacant spaces and create vibrant commercial corridors.

**Launch the Property Readiness Evaluation (PRE) Program to fund feasibility, market, and due diligence studies for redevelopment sites.**

2026. Provide funding to study and prepare sites for redevelopment before construction begins. By helping property owners understand what's possible on a site, this program reduces uncertainty and helps move more projects forward—bringing new investment and jobs to the community.

**Create a Business Resource Guide and online toolkit to simplify access to building codes, permits, and incentive programs.**

2027. Develop a simple, easy-to-use guide that helps business owners understand how to start, expand, or invest in Toledo. This tool will bring all permits, requirements, and available incentives into one place, saving time and helping businesses grow faster.

**Launch a data-driven marketing and branding strategy to position Toledo as a premier destination for investment.**

2027. Promote Toledo as a top place to invest, live, and do business by telling a clear, compelling story backed by data. This effort will highlight available sites, key industries, and success stories to attract developers, employers, and new residents.

**Partner with the Northwest Ohio Innovation Consortium to accelerate advancements in sustainable manufacturing.**

2026. Work with regional partners to support innovation and growth in advanced manufacturing and technology industries. This collaboration will help attract new companies, support existing businesses, and create high-quality jobs in emerging sectors.

## **Objective 2: Connect residents in targeted neighborhoods to good-paying jobs and career pathways.**

**Identify areas with high unemployment, identify existing employment barriers, and track workforce outcomes to guide future investment.**

2026. Ensure that job training programs are preparing residents for the types of jobs that are actually available in Toledo. This helps people gain the skills they need while helping employers find qualified workers.

**Align education, training, and credentialing programs with employer demand in high-unemployment areas.**

Ongoing. Provide additional resources, training, and funding to very small businesses — especially in underserved neighborhoods — helping entrepreneurs succeed and strengthening local economies.

**Explore community benefit agreements and incentive-based hiring commitments tied to City-supported projects in high-poverty neighborhoods.**

2027. Encourage developers receiving City support to commit to hiring local residents and investing in the surrounding community, ensuring that growth benefits Toledo residents directly.

**Continue pursuing Choice Neighborhoods designation for the Vistula neighborhood.**

Ongoing. Work to secure federal support to transform the Vistula neighborhood through housing improvements, community investment, and economic opportunity—creating a stronger, more connected neighborhood.

**Increase support for micro-enterprises and small businesses located in high-poverty neighborhoods.**

**Ongoing.** Provide additional resources, training, and funding to very small businesses—especially in underserved neighborhoods—helping entrepreneurs succeed and strengthening local economies.

## **Objective 3: Cultivate a thriving small business and startup ecosystem.**

**Expand outreach and programming for startups, early-stage, and small businesses.**

**2027.** Offer more workshops, mentorship, and support services to help new and growing businesses succeed, especially in Toledo's neighborhoods.

**Launch an annual Toledo Emerging Developer Conference to cultivate local and minority developers, builders, and investors.**

**2028.** Create an annual event to support and connect local, minority, and first-time developers with tools, training, and capital—helping build a stronger pipeline of local development talent.

**Develop an online Small Business Guide.**

**2027.** Create a step-by-step guide to help entrepreneurs start and grow a business in Toledo, making it easier to navigate requirements and access available support.

## **Objective 4: Make it easier to do business in Toledo.**

**Complete the comprehensive rewrite of the Toledo Planning and Zoning Code aligned with the Forward Toledo Plan.**

2028. Update Toledo's rules for development to make them clearer, more predictable, and aligned with the City's long-term vision—making it easier to invest and build in Toledo.

**Streamline permitting and development review through a comprehensive review of permit processes, inspection procedures, and fee structures.**

2027. Make it faster and easier to get approvals for building and business projects by improving processes, reducing delays, and clarifying requirements — helping projects move from idea to reality more quickly.

**Form an advisory committee of industry professionals to recommend ongoing regulatory improvements.**

2027. Bring together architects, developers, contractors, real-estate professionals, small business owners and community partners to regularly review City processes and recommend improvements—ensuring Toledo remains competitive and business-friendly.

**Create user-friendly guides and checklists for common permitting and occupancy submissions.**

2027. Develop simple checklists and guides so applicants know exactly what is required—reducing confusion, errors, and delays in the process.

**Train City staff to serve as business liaisons, guiding applicants from permit to occupancy.**

2027. Equip City staff to guide businesses through the development process from start to finish, providing a more supportive and customer-focused experience.

**Implement a Healthy Food Overlay to expand access to healthy food in food 'desert' areas.**



2027. Encourage grocery stores and fresh food options in areas that lack access by making it easier to develop these uses — improving health outcomes and quality of life.

## **Objective 5: Stimulate new housing, commercial, and industrial development in strategic areas.**

### **Create a Capital Improvement Program set-aside to support development-ready public infrastructure.**

2027. Dedicate funding for infrastructure improvements that directly support new development—helping projects move forward and attracting private investment.

### **Designate a list of priority corridors that connect Downtown to the neighborhoods.**

2026. Priority corridors are the key connectors between the places Toledoans live, work, and play. Designating these priority corridors allows us to prioritize future investment in alignment with our strategic priorities.

### **Develop a wholistic framework to prioritize infrastructure projects aligned with strategic priorities.**

2026. Create a clear plan to invest in roads, utilities, and public infrastructure where it will have the greatest impact — supporting development, job creation, and neighborhood growth.

### **Complete the RAISE Grant project in the Uptown, Junction, and Englewood neighborhoods.**

2030. Deliver major infrastructure improvements in key neighborhoods to improve safety, connectivity, and economic opportunity — making these areas more attractive for investment.

## **Complete construction of priority corridors, including Washington St. and Monroe St.**

2030. Build improvements to key streets to enhance safety, accessibility, and economic activity — supporting businesses and improving quality of life.

## **Complete design for priority corridors, including Huron/Madison, Front/Main, and N. Summit St.**

2028. Advance plans for key streets and corridors to prepare them for future improvements — laying the groundwork for safer, more vibrant, and economically active areas.

## **Complete vision for priority corridors, including Dorr, Cherry, and Woodville.**

2029. Develop long-term plans for important corridors to guide future investment and ensure coordinated, impactful improvements.

## **Integrate placemaking principles into all major public infrastructure projects.**

2026. Design public spaces and streets to be welcoming, attractive, and people-focused—creating places where residents and visitors want to spend time, supporting businesses and community pride.

## **Partner with TARTA to evaluate bus rapid transit on Monroe St.**

2026. Evaluate faster, more reliable transit options along key corridors to better connect residents to jobs, education, and services—supporting workforce access and economic growth.

## **Implement the downtown wayfinding strategy.**

2027. Install clear signage to help residents and visitors navigate downtown more easily, encouraging exploration, increasing foot traffic, and supporting local businesses.

# **Deliver Exceptional City Services & Modernize Infrastructure**

## **Objective 1: Prioritize and improve core city services.**

### **Audit and rationalize our city service catalog.**

2026. Review and complete a centralized list of services that the city provides to residents, businesses, and visitors.

### **Prioritize services for improvement based on internal, resident, and stakeholder feedback.**

2027. Following a rationalization of the city services catalog, services will be prioritized in order to guide future improvements and investment, aligning effort to the services that are most valuable to residents.

### **Implement a continuous improvement process for city services.**

2028. Following initial improvements to city service delivery, a continuous improvement cycle would build consistent resident feedback and performance data into a process that allows for ongoing evolution of city service delivery.

## **Objective 2: Improve city-owned infrastructure and facilities.**

## **Complete an assessment of city-owned facilities and develop a maintenance tracking system.**

**2026-2027.** Move to a more predictive maintenance approach for our city owned facilities, in order to reduce energy consumption, lower operational costs, and extend the useful life of our equipment.

## **Prioritize infrastructure investments that reduce the risk of catastrophic failures, high-impact service disruptions, and emergency repairs.**

**Ongoing.** Prioritizing building improvement investments prevents emergency repairs by shifting from a reactive "fix-it-when-it-breaks" mindset into a more proactive approach for maintenance. This strategic approach reduces safety risks, extends equipment life, and avoids high-cost, after-hours emergencies.

## **Implement a maintenance protocol for new infrastructure projects.**

**2026.** Create a proactive strategy during the design and construction phases of a project to focus on preventative care to maximize lifespan.

# **Objective 3: Reduce our environmental footprint.**

## **Reduce residential recycling contamination.**

**Ongoing.** Public support is critical to the success of any effort to reduce contamination. A public education campaign would work to improve awareness of and compliance with recycling regulations through cooperation. These efforts would be complimented by increased enforcement of repeat violations, including fines for ongoing contamination or removal of recycling totes from the most chronic offenders.

### **Implement a Renewable Natural Gas Project at the Hoffman Road Landfill.**

2026. A sustainable method of fuel is made by capturing methane from the waste decomposing at the landfill.

### **Incorporate green construction techniques at city-owned buildings.**

Ongoing. Green building is the practice of designing and constructing buildings to be environmentally responsible. Green buildings offer advantages including lower utility bills, reduced maintenance.

### **Pursue strategic electrification of recommended fleet vehicles and equipment.**

Ongoing. Electrifying vehicle fleet offers benefits including fuel savings, reduced maintenance, and reduction of fuel emissions.

### **Develop recycling programs at city-operated facilities.**

2026. Currently, the city doesn't collect recycling at city-operated facilities. We will determine how to best collect recyclables from city-operated facilities, transport to recycling center, and educate employees to increase participation.

### **Conserve water resources and adapt land management practices for sustainable water use.**

Ongoing. Sustainable water management ensures that communities have access to clean and sufficient water supplies, even as populations grow and climate change intensifies water-related challenges.

## **Objective 4: Prioritize proactive communication and enrich resident contact.**

## **Develop a communication and customer service training program for resident-facing employees.**

**2027.** Resident-facing employees from our construction crews to office staff are a direct line of communication between residents and the city. Establishing a standard level of service and training employees on customer service, conflict resolution, and communication skills will improve the experience residents have interacting with the city.

## **Enhance and expand city communication channels to provide more value to more residents.**

**Ongoing.** The ways residents and stakeholders prefer to receive information and updates from the city is always evolving. Analyzing utilization, impact, and cost of certain communication channels, as well as experimenting with new forms of communication, will be an ongoing effort to reach more people in more effective ways.

## **Refine service request workflows, prioritization, and escalation procedures to improve communication and resident satisfaction with outcomes.**

**Ongoing.** Communication is central to the experience residents have when requesting and receiving city services. Improving the process will enhance the value of each touch point, provide transparent communication about progress, and create smoother pathways to escalation when something unexpected inevitably occurs.

## **Implement a communication strategy for planned infrastructure improvement projects.**

**2026.** Infrastructure improvement projects tend to be disruptive to residents and businesses. An improved communication strategy will reduce surprises as construction begins, provide clear progress updates as construction continues, and reduce friction between residents and the city.

# Secure Toledo's Financial Future

## Objective 1: Build long-term financial resilience.

### **Improve our credit rating.**

**2029.** A higher credit rating signals to investors that the City is a low-risk borrower, which directly results in lower interest rates when issuing debt. This leads to long-term savings on borrowing costs, freeing up resources for additional infrastructure investments.

### **Adopt a general fund balance policy.**

**2026.** The general fund is the city's primary operating fund. A fund balance policy will outline expectations for balanced budgets, minimum fund balance levels, and expenditure controls to ensure that the City can maintain essential services during economic downturns.

### **Reduce the budget deficit.**

**Ongoing.** Focuses on aligning revenues with expenditures to eliminate structural imbalances through a combination of strategies including revenue enhancements and diversification, prioritizing expenditures and increasing operational efficiencies.

## Objective 2: Grow, diversify, and protect income streams.

**Conduct a revenue and fee optimization study to align fines and fees with the cost of service delivery.**

**2026.** Many city fines and fees have not kept pace with cost of service delivery. A study would help to identify where we currently fall short, measure how our fines and fees compare to other cities, and make recommendations for implementing updates.

**Inventory and evaluate potential new revenue sources, including admissions tax, neighborhood safety income tax, and others.**

**2026.** State policy changes have taken tens of millions of dollars from Toledo's local government funds, creating a budget deficit we can't cut our way out of. New revenue will need to be brought in to ensure service delivery can be appropriately maintained.

**Maximize federal and state grant dollars to reduce the burden on local revenue streams.**

**Ongoing.** Many grants allow for a portion of administrative fees to be reimbursed back to the city, allowing the city to recover some funding for time spent implementing grant funded projects.

**Develop coordinated public-private fundraising strategies for key capital projects.**

**2028.** Major capital projects are a great opportunity to recruit private donations, creating more funding for transformational projects.

**Reduce tax leakage by increasing compliance, improving collections, and strengthening enforcement.**

**Ongoing.** Focuses on ensuring that all taxes owed to the City are billed and collected in the most efficient manner. Underreported taxes represent lost revenue that could otherwise support essential City services.



## **Objective 3: Maximize impact and efficiency of existing resources.**

### **Develop a four-year spending plan that aligns the operating budget with the strategic plan.**

2026. As a follow-up to this plan, a spending plan will create a detailed plan for how projects are prioritized and implemented over the next four years.

### **Establish a holistic framework to align all infrastructure investments with the strategic plan.**

2026. Major infrastructure projects provide once-in-a-generation opportunities to reimagine the built environment. The investment of federal, state, and local dollars into these projects should be prioritized to align this strategic plan and stacked with other types of city and community investment to maximize impact. A holistic framework allows for the evaluation of potential infrastructure projects against all these goals and opportunities.

## **Objective 4: Control expenses and eliminate waste.**

### **Implement healthcare cost containment strategies.**

2026. Healthcare costs are one of the fastest growing components of the City's budget. Cost containment strategies may include plan design changes, prescription cost management and increased employee contributions while still focusing on providing quality coverage for employees.

### **Modernize citywide procurement practices.**

**2027.** Improve how the City purchases goods and services by adopting more efficient, transparent and data-driven processes in order to achieve better pricing and reduce inefficiencies. This may include implementing new procurement software systems.

### **Optimize the use of city-owned real estate.**

**2028.** City employees are currently distributed across many city-owned buildings. Optimizing the use of these buildings could allow for budget savings or create opportunities to sell assets.

### **Review and optimize vendor contracts.**

**Ongoing.** As vendor contracts come up for review, city staff will seek reductions in existing agreements and evaluate whether the vendor's services are still needed.

### **Review and optimize fleet utilization.**

**2027.** Review our current utilization of city-owned vehicles to identify opportunities for consolidation, sharing, or reduction where no longer needed.

### **Optimize city workforce through the use of external resources, attrition-based restructuring, and cost-sharing/service delivery agreements with partners.**

**2027.** Create a long-term plan to realign city workforce for maximum impact, utilizing external resources and cost-sharing agreements where appropriate, and transitioning existing jobs as current employees vacate them.

### **Launch an employee-driven expense reduction program.**

**2026.** The people closest to the work often have the best ideas for how to do it more efficiently. This program will reward employees who identify operational changes that save the city money.

## **Objective 5: Strengthen understanding of our budget, financial priorities, and long-term outlook across the organization and community.**

### **Integrate city budget education into community outreach efforts.**

**2027.** Helping the community better understand the city budget is a critical foundation for providing input on how to best prioritize city dollars. Outreach materials focused on how the city is funded, how the money is spent, and what value that brings to the city will be developed.

### **Publish a simplified 'Budget in Brief'.**

**2026.** Critical to understanding how the city's budget works is a document that can be easily digested. A budget in brief will be published annually alongside the full proposed budget to help strengthen community understanding of the city's financial position.

### **Enhance internal financial reporting and quarterly forecasting communication.**

**Ongoing.** Improving the city's internal reporting will help give leadership more information to guide budgetary decisions in between annual budget and reporting cycles.

### **Build sustained engagement with boards, commissions, advocates, and legislators on budget priorities and forecasts.**

**Ongoing.** Ongoing communication with our community partners about the city's budget position will help build collaboration where support is needed.

# Cultivate a Thriving Workforce

## **Objective 1: Attract a diverse, high-quality workforce that reflects the makeup of the community.**

**Develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy for all position types using a skills- and competency-based approach to hiring and evaluation.**

**2026.** We will update how we hire by focusing on the actual skills and abilities needed to do each job, rather than only degrees or past job titles. This opens the door to a wider range of qualified candidates, including people with non-traditional backgrounds, helping us build a workforce that better reflects our community. It helps attract diverse, talented individuals who can succeed in the role and serve residents effectively.

**Align Civil Service rules with best practices to improve time-to-hire, cost-per-hire, and other key recruitment performance indicators.**

**2026.** We will review and update hiring rules to make the process faster, more cost-effective, and easier to navigate. Long or complicated hiring processes can discourage strong candidates from applying or accepting jobs. A smoother hiring process helps us compete for top talent and bring in qualified candidates more efficiently.

**Reduce hiring timelines by evaluating potential barriers and inefficient processes.**

**Ongoing.** We will identify and remove delays or unnecessary steps in the hiring process. Top candidates often accept other job offers if the process

takes too long. Faster hiring helps us secure high-quality candidates before we lose them to other opportunities.

### **Modernize the job classification system to align with updated job descriptions.**

**Ongoing.** We will update job titles, descriptions, and requirements so they accurately reflect the work being done today. Outdated job descriptions can confuse applicants or fail to attract the right candidates. Clear and modern job information helps attract candidates with the right skills and expectations.

### **Explore potential hiring incentives to recruit former residents and recent graduates.**

**2027.** We will consider offering incentives, such as relocation assistance or student-focused opportunities, to attract people back to the community or encourage graduates to stay. Many talented individuals leave the area for opportunities elsewhere. These incentives help bring skilled individuals into the workforce while strengthening the local talent pool.

### **Build a sustainable talent pipeline through mentorships, internships, and fellowship programs.**

**2027.** We will create structured programs that give students and early-career professionals hands-on experience in public service. These programs help people learn about career opportunities and gain valuable skills. They create a steady flow of future employees who are prepared and interested in serving the community.

## **Objective 2: Develop and retain employees through a competitively based pay scale, training, and growth opportunities.**

**Establish an internal mentorship program to support knowledge transfer, professional growth, and cross-departmental collaboration.**

2026. We will pair experienced employees with newer staff to provide guidance, support, and knowledge sharing. Employees are more likely to succeed and stay when they feel supported. It helps employees grow professionally and strengthens retention.

**Implement an environmental health and safety risk management framework to align workforce development with safety and sustainability goals.**

2026. We will create a structured approach to identifying and reducing workplace safety risks. Safe workplaces protect employees and reduce injuries and disruptions. A safe and supportive environment improves employee satisfaction and long-term retention.

**Maximize federal and state grant dollars to reduce the burden on local revenue streams.**

Ongoing. Many grants allow for a portion of administrative fees to be reimbursed back to the city, allowing the city to recover some funding for time spent implementing grant funded projects.

**Administer a climate survey every three years, share results transparently, and communicate progress on actions taken in response to feedback.**

2026, 2029. We will regularly ask employees for feedback about their workplace experience and share the results openly. Understanding employee concerns helps leadership make meaningful improvements. Listening to employees helps us create a better workplace where people want to stay and grow.

## **Formalize and expand training for new executive-level managers and supervisors.**

2027. We will provide consistent training for leaders to strengthen management skills across departments. Strong leadership leads to better team performance and employee satisfaction. Well-trained leaders help employees succeed and grow within the organization.

## **Expand employee recognition programs.**

2027. We will create more ways to acknowledge and celebrate employee achievements and contributions. Recognition boosts morale and shows employees their work is valued. Employees who feel appreciated are more likely to stay and perform at a high level.

## **Strengthen onboarding and orientation across all departments to clarify expectations, reinforce culture, and connect employees to the purpose of public service.**

2026. We will improve how new employees are welcomed, trained, and introduced to their roles. A strong start helps employees feel confident and connected from day one. Better onboarding leads to higher retention and faster productivity.

## **Explore performance-based compensation and incentive structures for executive class.**

2027. We will consider pay structures that reward strong performance and results. Incentives can encourage accountability and high achievement. Competitive and performance-based pay helps attract and retain strong leaders.

## **Develop a succession planning framework for key positions.**

2027. We will identify and prepare employees to step into key roles as they become available. Unexpected vacancies can disrupt operations. Planning ahead ensures continuity and creates growth opportunities for employees.

### **Implement a learning management system.**

2027. We will introduce an online platform where employees can access training and track their development. Easy access to training helps employees build new skills at their own pace. Continuous learning supports career growth and long-term retention.

### **Implement an employee performance system to promote individual development and plan career growth.**

2027. We will create a clear process for setting goals, providing feedback, and tracking performance. Employees need clear expectations and regular feedback to succeed. It helps employees grow and advance in their careers.

## **Objective 3: Foster a connected, engaged, and high-performing organizational culture.**

### **Implement an internal communications strategy that prioritizes transparency, collaboration, and alignment.**

2026. We will improve how information is shared across the organization to keep employees informed and connected. Clear communication reduces confusion and builds trust. It helps create a more connected and engaged workforce.

### **Improve the efficacy and efficiency of internal service procedures.**

Ongoing. We will streamline internal processes to make it easier for departments to work together. Inefficient processes slow down work and



frustrate employees. More efficient systems support better performance and collaboration.

**Increase awareness of and compliance with internal service procedures.**

**Ongoing.** We will ensure employees understand and follow established processes and guidelines. Consistency helps avoid errors and improves service quality. It supports a more effective and accountable organization.

**Periodically review, update, and reinforce administrative policies.**

**Ongoing.** We will regularly review policies to ensure they are clear, current, and relevant. Outdated policies can create confusion or limit effectiveness. Clear policies support consistency, fairness, and strong performance.

**Conduct strategic planning workshops with supervisors and staff to ensure the strategic plan is translated into individual goals and performance objectives.**

**2026.** We will work with staff and supervisors to connect the organization's big-picture goals to everyday work. Employees perform better when they understand how their work contributes to larger goals. It builds alignment, engagement, and a shared sense of purpose.