



Winston-Salem

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2025

CITY OF
WINSTON-SALEM





City of Winston-Salem Mayor and City Council

Term: 2020 – 2024



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Vision, Mission, and Values

OUR VISION

The City's vision is to be a municipal government deserving of public confidence that provides excellent and innovative services, and is an active and cooperative partner in creating a vital community.

OUR MISSION

The City of Winston-Salem provides quality, affordable services that ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of citizens, while collaborating throughout the community to ensure its economic, social, and environmental vitality.

OUR VALUES

The City has set forward eight core values that are the underpinning of an organization committed to providing high-quality services in a culture of customer service excellence:



Openness



Integrity



Equity



Accountability



Teamwork



Respect For All
Citizens



Fiscal
Soundness



Continuous
Learning and
Improvement

A large mural of a bulldog is painted on the side of a water tower. The bulldog is depicted in a stylized, blocky manner with brown, tan, and black patches. It is surrounded by colorful confetti in shades of red, blue, yellow, and green. The background of the mural shows a landscape with green hills and a blue sky. The water tower is set against a clear blue sky. The foreground is a grassy field.

Strategic Planning Process

Community Input, Council Workshop, and Plan Development

At the beginning of each new four-year election term, the City of Winston-Salem's elected body establishes a strategic plan, which provides guidance to ensure staff work programming is aligned with City Council objectives and priorities.

To begin the 2022-2025 process, the City conducted a request for proposal to contract with a consulting firm to facilitate the process. The Novak Consulting Group: A Part of Raftelis, was selected in late 2020. The process began with The Novak Consulting Group leading four focus groups and a public input session prior to the Mayor and City Council's two-session workshop. The four focus groups included community individuals and leaders categorized into sessions designated as local small businesses and economy, local non-profits, neighborhood leaders and residents, and other large employer institutions such as higher education and major hospitals. The public input session allowed the opportunity for anyone in the community to speak. The Novak Consulting Group also held one-on-one meetings with each elected official.

The Mayor and City Council engaged in a two-day workshop in late March 2021 to create a strategic framework to help guide the City's actions and priorities over the next four years. At this workshop, the Mayor and City Council discussed and processed the impact of the pandemic over the past year, evaluated resident survey data from January 2021, reviewed the information from the public engagement sessions, and assessed the results and progress from the previous strategic plan. The elected body affirmed the six strategic focus areas identified during previous strategic planning processes. The Mayor and City Council were each asked to share their top three priorities for the new term and the group ranked those priorities by vote. From the workshop, the priorities were organized into three tiers based on rankings provided by the Mayor and City Council. The City's management team then created individual action items to help accomplish each of the priorities.

Document Format

The following pages include strategies and actions identified by the Mayor and City Council. The priorities for this document are grouped into three tiers. Each priority in each tier is labeled by a strategic focus area and includes actions items. The strategic focus areas remained the same as previous strategic plans and include Economic Vitality and Diversity, Safe and Secure Community, Livable Neighborhoods, Healthy Environment, Quality Transportation, and Service Excellence. The term "priorities" used in this document means high-level strategic areas or initiatives identified and ranked by the Mayor and City Council. A table displaying each priority and the focus area is included based on the priority tier.

Within each priority tier section of this document is the alignment of priorities and action items. Action items are individual tasks that the City will accomplish.

Strategic Focus Areas

The Mayor and City Council have identified six areas to help guide the work of City government:



Economic Vitality and Diversity:

Economic vitality and diversity requires a healthy local economy that serves all segments of the population and provides the monetary resources necessary to support the community. This includes sustaining a tax base sufficient to fund community services, providing members of the community with sufficient wages, and providing capital for community development.



Safe and Secure Community:

Public safety is the foundation upon which any successful city is built. Absent this, it is difficult to attract businesses, residents, or visitors, which in turn create the economic vitality that sustains our community.





Livable Neighborhoods:

Livable neighborhoods are the basic building blocks for our City's quality of life. They create an environment where people feel welcome, want to spend time, and want to interact. Livable neighborhoods provide access to adequate transportation, shopping and recreation options, encourage residents to maintain their homes, and celebrate our values, history, and culture. Livable Neighborhoods also includes facilities and activities that foster good physical health.



Healthy Environment:

A healthy environment ensures the places we live, work, and play are safe and conducive to overall good health. It includes such traditional measures as air and water quality, waste reduction and disposal, and policies that sustain our environment.



Quality Transportation:

Transportation systems influence virtually every aspect of community life. They are the means for moving people, goods, and services throughout the community, and they play a significant role in shaping patterns of growth, facilitating economic prosperity, and influencing the character and livability of our city and its neighborhoods.



Service Excellence:

Excellent citizen service is the cornerstone of responsive government, without which it is impossible to fulfill our vision statement for city government. Service excellence is based on the City's 4 Keys to Service Excellence. But it also includes ensuring that City employees have the knowledge and tools necessary to provide excellent customer service, as well as ensuring sound management of City resources.





Mayor & City Council Priorities

A Tiered Approach to Action and Investment

The Mayor and City Council participated in several engaging discussions about the current and future states of the city as it relates to City services, the local economy, changing demographics, and long-term community needs.

During their two-day workshop, the Mayor and City Council identified 16 priorities to help guide innovation and action for the next four years. The priorities were ranked at their workshop and our represented in tiers based on those rankings.



Strategic Priorities by Focus and Tier

To provide further context to the priorities and these discussions, the chart below illustrates the breakdown of strategies within each focus area by priority tier within the 2022-2025 strategic plan. As shown below, all priorities in the first two tiers are related to the focus areas of Economic Vitality and Diversity and Livable Neighborhoods.

This is intentional by the City Council, and reflects the importance they place on strengthening the local economy, partnering to address poverty and economic mobility issues, and designing strategies to strengthen the character, physical condition, and connectedness of neighborhoods and communities.



PRIORITIES & ACTION ITEMS

TIER 1



Economic Vitality and Diversity

Priority 1: Focus on job creation and workforce development including small businesses and invigorating the local travel and tourism industry

Priority 2: Collaborate with education and non-profit partners to provide funding for and implement Pre-K programming

Priority 4: Provide adequate funding strategies for economic development sites/ infrastructure and create policies that incentivize business recruitment



Livable Neighborhoods

Priority 3: Develop long-term, sustainable funding mechanisms for affordable housing projects and programs

Priority 1

Focus on job creation and workforce development including small businesses and invigorating the local travel and tourism industry

1.1: Identify community-wide short and long-term workforce development needs through a collaborative engagement process including the Piedmont Triad Regional Council, Forsyth Tech, Greater Winston-Salem, Inc., the Winston-Salem Black Chamber of Commerce, and other community partners.

1.2: Create two new City programs as apprenticeship or job training programs specific to city recruitment needs.

1.3: Review economic development and training opportunities to assist small businesses with job creation.

1.4: Perform a travel and tourism needs assessment and identify strategies for priority needs.

1.5: Recommend programs, consistent with American Rescue Plan Act eligibility, for job training to accelerate re-hiring and provide opportunities for the underemployed.

1.6: Reduce transportation barriers for job training by partnering to create a fare free program.

1.7: Collaborate with Forsyth County, the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System, and Piedmont Triad Regional Council (PTRC) for “academies in schools” pathways program.

Priority 2

Collaborate with education and non-profit partners to provide funding for and implement Pre-K programming

2.1: Work with community partners and the Forsyth County Early Childhood Education Task force to identify geographic areas in greatest need for pre-K learning opportunities and support efforts for pre-K expansion programs.

2.2: Propose capital funding mechanism for pre-K needs by evaluating local funds and American Rescue Plan Act eligibility.

2.3: Propose uses of already budgeted funds to assist in pre-K program development.

Priority 3

Develop long-term, sustainable funding mechanisms for affordable housing projects and programs

3.1: Review and amend City policies regarding affordable and workforce housing to reflect consistent definitions and the City's approach to providing assistance for development and redevelopment.

3.2: Provide a report to City Council on eligibility of American Rescue Plan Act for affordable housing, workforce housing, and permanent supportive housing needs.

3.3: Present to City Council an action item creating a land bank for affordable housing.

3.4: Present to City Council a review of other peer jurisdictions' affordable housing land trusts with funding alternatives.

3.5: Issue RFP(s) to construct at least 800 housing units.

3.6: Review and provide recommendations on aligning economic development and housing policies to stimulate affordable housing production.

3.7: Produce a public marketing and communications effort designed to engage the public about housing needs.

Priority 4

Provide adequate funding strategies for economic development sites/infrastructure and create policies that incentivize business recruitment

4.1: Institute economic development policy changes that further incentivize business recruitment and job creation.

4.2: Create an ongoing funding mechanism for economic development sites, infrastructure, and small business development.

4.3: Engage Greater Winston-Salem, Inc. and other community and regional stakeholders regarding highest priority needs for job creation.

4.4: Review eligibility and provide a report on funding economic development projects with American Rescue Plan Act.

MEASURING PERFORMANCE



Unemployment rate



City funding and private leverage ratios



Travel and tourism attendance metrics



Number of children served by pre-k programs



Test score increases related to pre-k development



Affordable housing units developed and redeveloped



Housing assistance program values



Increase in tax base and jobs from economic development

PRIORITIES & ACTION ITEMS

TIER 2



Economic Vitality and Diversity

Priority 5: Implement programs designed to reduce poverty and eliminate barriers to economic mobility

Priority 6: Working with community partners, design reopening plans to mitigate the economic impacts of COVID-19 and market the city's travel and tourism industry

Priority 8: Increase funding to support the local arts economy and initiatives for public arts



Livable Neighborhoods

Priority 7: Design strategies to maximize neighborhood engagement and connect residents to each other and the City

Priority 5

Implement programs designed to reduce poverty and eliminate barriers to economic mobility

5.1: Design and fund programs with community partners to use American Rescue Plan Act funding to address health disparities, build stronger neighborhoods, address educational disparities, and promote health childhood outcomes.

5.2: Ensure a commitment to equity in funding with all uses of American Rescue Plan Act funding. Create an equity evaluation process for all new City programs that includes a review of intended beneficiaries, potential externalities, and analysis of barriers to inclusion.

5.3: Review findings and recommendations from the Partnership for Prosperity's issue forums and action plan to determine appropriate items for City policy review.

5.4: Review communities with zero fare transit systems and provide a fiscal impact analysis to City Council.

5.5: Conduct a feasibility analysis of a transformational facility to provide vocational career training; health, wellness, housing, and other wrap around services; and opportunities for economic development and empowerment.

5.6: Develop an internal staff team tasked with researching and evaluating innovative practices in other jurisdictions related to economic mobility and eliminating barriers to employment opportunities.

Priority 6

Working with community partners, design reopening plans to mitigate the economic impacts of COVID-19 and market the city's travel, tourism, and hospitality industry

6.1: Review opportunities and provide financial support to affected industries using the American Rescue Plan Act and other federally available funding sources.

6.2: Work with Visit Winston-Salem and other community partners to market travel and tourism related events. Review a set-aside funding mechanism to partner with organizations in promoting and hosting events in the city.

6.3: Ensure City workforce is prepared for and provides a consistent level of customer support by reviewing continuity or operations plan and work-from-home policies and practices.

6.4: Review opportunities to use American Rescue Plan Act funding for revenue recovery for public assembly facilities, off-street parking, and occupancy tax funded programs.

6.5: Provide a report of strategies used by other jurisdictions to support COVID-affected industries and encourage use of travel, tourism, and hospitality services.

Priority 7

Design strategies to maximize neighborhood engagement and connect residents to each other and the City

7.1: Design long-term, relationship-focused neighborhood engagement strategies to maximize information flow and encourage public discourse about relevant topics.

7.2: Use resident survey response data to pilot new marketing strategies and evaluate outreach methods for potential upscaling.

7.3: Review options for social media analytics and engagement platforms to expand reach and input/feedback opportunities.

7.4: Analyze City Link call data for specific service requests types in similar geographies to target communications and outreach around those topics.

7.5: Work with community partners to create series of issue-oriented community focus groups to stimulate conversations surrounding community needs and create networks for information sharing.

Priority 8

Increase funding to support the local arts economy and initiatives for public arts

8.1: Increase financial contributions to public art funding through a "Percent for Art" capital project set-aside policy.

8.2: Work with arts agencies and the County to create an easily navigable online repository of local public art installations and exhibits.

8.3: Create a map designating priority sites for future City and County funded public art displays that aligns with the Arts Master Plan facility and location designations.

8.4: Recommend City development ordinances and incentive policies that require public art installations for projects exceeding certain thresholds.

8.5: Increase contributions to the arts economy by 25% or more through the annual budget process.

MEASURING PERFORMANCE



Number of persons trained/
training hours
provided for job
placement



Poverty rate



Total financial
household
assistance
provided



Community
survey data on
neighborhood
perception



Increase in public
art installations
and those in
historically
marginalized
communities



Public pandemic
recovery
assistance

PRIORITIES & ACTION ITEMS

TIER 3



Economic Vitality and Diversity

Priority 9: Engage in fundraising efforts with community partners to provide additional capacity to meet community needs

Priority 12: Work with appropriate stakeholders to review and address child care needs



Healthy Environment

Priority 10: Support the green economy by making investments in sustainable environmental programs and projects



Service Excellence

Priority 11: Address the digital divide by increasing access to technology infrastructure, equipment, and education

Priority 9

Engage in fundraising efforts with community partners to provide additional capacity to meet community needs

9.1: Identify specific community organizations aligned with City Council priorities and provide assistance with capital campaigns.

9.2: Review American Rescue Plan Act funding eligibility for providing assistance to non-profit organizations who support healthy outcomes and community initiatives in Qualified Census tracts.

9.3: Increase engagement with non-profit organizations to provide a platform to review and address emerging community needs.

9.4: Review options to transition part of the annual community agencies funding process into capital and start-up funding

Priority 10

Support the green economy by making investments in sustainable environmental programs and projects

10.1: Set a goal to have 100% of the City's leased pool fleet vehicles as alternative fuel vehicles by 2025.

10.2: Locate, design, and install City-owned solar photovoltaic cell projects by 2024 at City facilities using the FY 2022 appropriations.

10.3: Provide curbside residential recycling alternatives analysis that maintains or increases current diversion rates.

10.4: Create a sustainability equipment and infrastructure revolving fund supported by energy reduction and offset costs.

10.5: Recommend green business incentive programs, including EV charging stations, to support environmental design initiatives.

10.6: Pass a resolution creating a responsible sourcing practices policy for construction contracts.

10.7: Provide a comparison report of North Carolina peer cities that includes a matrix of major sustainability policy initiatives.

Priority 11

Address the digital divide by increasing access to technology infrastructure, equipment, and education

11.1: Work with Forsyth County Digital Equity Commission (FCDEC) oversight and implementation subcommittees to develop highest need areas within the City for high-speed broadband internet infrastructure.

11.2: Review state law authority and create a strategy for partnering to support an “internet for all” campaign within the city. Identify funding for phased approach to providing for infrastructure needs.

11.3: Review the eligibility of American Rescue Plan Act funds for broadband infrastructure, equipment and peripherals, and digital literacy training programs listed in recommendations from the Forsyth County Digital Equity Commission (FCDEC).

11.4: Provide financial assistance to the Forsyth County Digital Equity Commission (FCDEC) Planning Committee in developing a community assets survey to review currently available resources for advocacy, education, and financial support.

Priority 12

Work with appropriate stakeholders to review and address child care needs

12.1: In addition to pre-K initiatives for the year immediately preceding kindergarten, engage in community stakeholder meetings regarding childcare needs and barriers to access.

12.2: Provide a report on innovative practices and actions taken by other municipalities to increase access to quality childcare programs.

12.3: Review feasibility and fiscal impact of expanded childcare programs for school-aged children at City recreation centers.

MEASURING PERFORMANCE



Total assistance provided to non-profit entities



Reduction in City carbon footprint



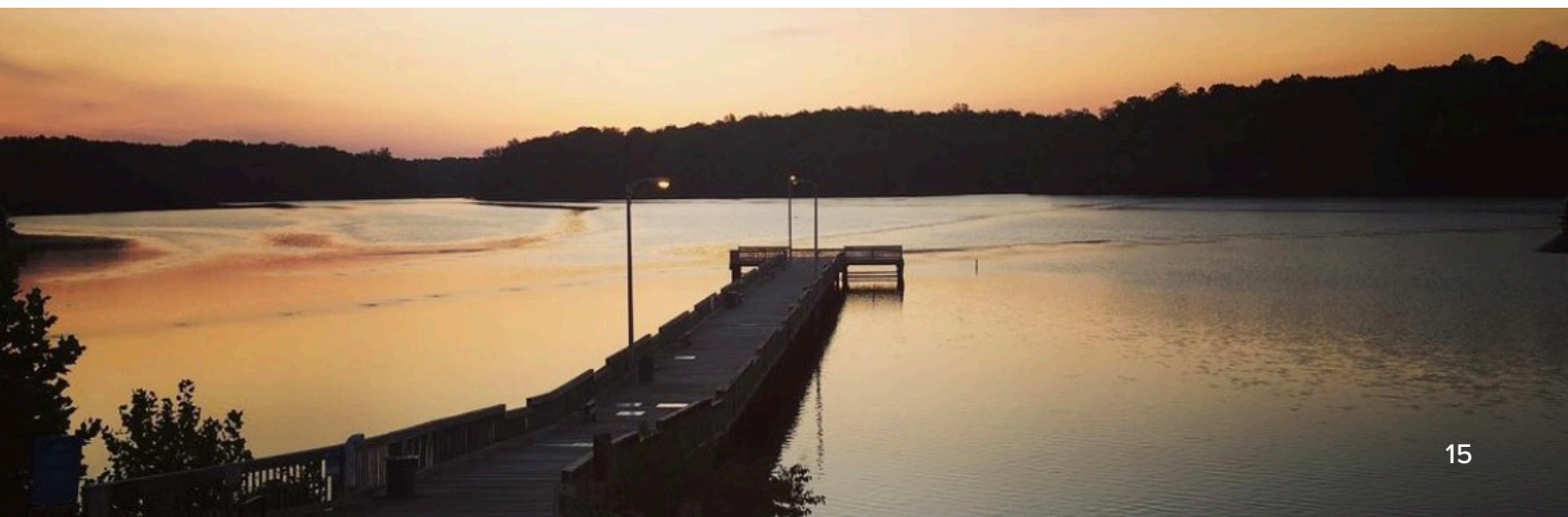
Return on investment for sustainability-related projects



Percentage of population with access to broadband and technology equipment/training



Increased access to childcare programming



PRIORITIES & ACTION ITEMS

TIER 3



Safe and Secure Community

Priority 16: Implement 21st century law enforcement reforms and best practices to prevent crime and increase the feeling of overall safety in the community



Livable Neighborhoods

Priority 13: Improve the physical landscape of the community through investments aesthetics programs and infrastructure maintenance



Quality Transportation

Priority 14: Invest in transportation infrastructure related to streets and rail systems



Service Excellence

Priority 15: Implement organizational plan to review processes for efficiency and eliminate redundancy in public and private programs

Priority 13

Improve the physical landscape of the community through investments aesthetics programs and infrastructure maintenance

13.1: Implement a program to reduce the instances of solid waste violations and hold property owners accountable for maintenance and sanitation standards.

13.2: Fund the highest priority recreation maintenance and facility renewal needs to revitalize aging facilities.

13.3: Increase program funding and outcomes related to private commercial and residential facility improvements including minimum housing needs and exterior façade improvements.

13.4: Identify areas for targeted investments and create action plans to increase neighborhood appeal and satisfaction with character and condition of individual neighborhoods.

Priority 14

Invest in transportation infrastructure related to streets and rail systems

14.1: Review and implement funding strategy to increase City's average streets pavement condition rating by 10% overall.

14.2: Review and allocate funds for necessary bridge replacements and annual capital repair needs, including a multi-year plan for bridge infrastructure upkeep.

14.3: Create sidewalk condition inventory to prioritize sidewalk maintenance needs throughout the City.

14.4: Review additional motor vehicle privilege tax authority for capital maintenance needs.

14.5: Provide a report to City Council on the future of light and commuter rail options in Winston-Salem and connectivity opportunities to other parts of the State.

14.6: Review Federal funding opportunities for multi-modal transportation and secure funding for rail planning.

Priority 15

Implement organizational plan to review processes for efficiency and eliminate redundancy in public and private programs

15.1: Report to City Council on the unimplemented recommendations from the two most recent citizens' efficiency review committees.

15.2: Conduct a citizen-led efficiency review charged with reviewing program efficiency, program effectiveness, and organizational structure.

15.3: Review duplication of services provided by City-funded non-profit agencies.

15.4: Replace obsolete performance management systems to allow for more timely management, reporting, and internal/external dashboard capabilities.

15.5: Present a plan to include additional recourses for auditing and process review/improvement functions.

Priority 16

Implement 21st century law enforcement reforms and best practices to prevent crime and increase the feeling of overall safety in the community

16.1: Implement pilot programs for a co-responder model for mental and behavioral health calls for service and report on program evaluation.

16.2: Implement changes to CAD and dispatch protocols to better recognize calls for service that might not require a law enforcement response.

16.3: Create interactive crime trend data dashboards for external publishing.

16.4: Review and recommend pilot programs and partnerships related to incarceration diversion.

16.5: Implement changes to Police training and operations programs based on a review of best practices.

16.6: Attain a 100% training level for sworn law enforcement in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT).

16.7: Complete the real time crime center infrastructure, equipment, and software upgrades and provide a report to City Council on operational effectiveness.



MEASURING PERFORMANCE



Investments in surface and multi-modal transportation infrastructure



Reduction in LEO interactions where LEO presence is not needed



Financial savings from elimination of duplication in services



Capital asset condition ratio



American Rescue Plan Act

A Framework for Recovery and Transformational Change

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) enacted by Congress on March 11, 2021 provides a once in a generation opportunity to begin to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and partner to create transformational change in communities and neighborhoods hit hardest by the pandemic. The negative economic impacts of the pandemic affected lower-income communities disproportionately and further exacerbated underlying social and economic issues.

The Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CLFRF) provided \$51.7 million dollars directly to the City of Winston-Salem to address issues related to pandemic recovery including designing COVID mitigation strategies, addressing the negative economic effects of the pandemic, providing opportunities to sustain public sector services, and making investments in certain infrastructure categories (i.e., water, sewer, stormwater, and broadband).

The City has committed to spending its share of the CLFRF funding within the basic framework that includes:

-  Providing economic relief and recovery for small businesses and those hardest hit by the pandemic
-  Creating transformation change by partnering to address underlying social and economic issues
-  Reducing the digital divide and partnering to create access to technology equipment and training
-  Providing for affordable housing development throughout the community



In doing so, the City has established guiding principles that include commitments to process transparency, fiscal soundness, community equity considerations, and providing for both restorative and transformation change opportunities.

The Mayor and City Council will provide for programs over the course of many years to strengthen the local economy and create lasting change for those in greatest need of assistance. Staff is committed to open processes to ensure the entire community is aware of opportunities and progress.

Other Federal Legislation

In addition to ARPA, Congress has also passed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), which is designed to provide assistance in replacing aging infrastructure and designing and building a sustainable future for all communities. The City will seek to benefit from both formulaic and competitive grant processes that will allow for the replacement of current, major infrastructure deficiencies (e.g., roads, bridges) and the development of infrastructure and sectors to support decades of growth in our community. As other opportunities become available that align to City identified strategic priorities, City staff will seek out funding sources to advance identified needs and produce outcomes to move the needle in areas of greatest importance as identified by the Mayor and City Council.

The City intends to seek out and use these opportunities, to the extent possible, to fund strategic priorities associated with recovering from the pandemic, rebuilding local infrastructure, and helping to build sustainable, thriving neighborhoods and communities.

