

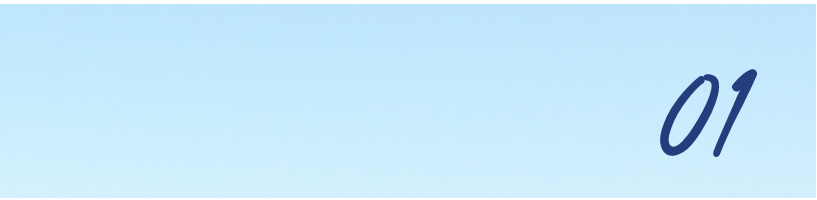


City of Evansville

Strategic Plan

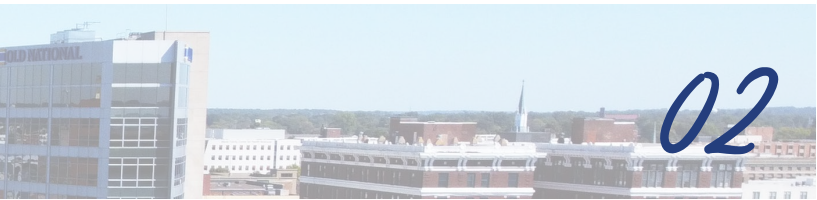


Building the Future of Evansville City Government



**LETTER FROM
THE MAYOR**

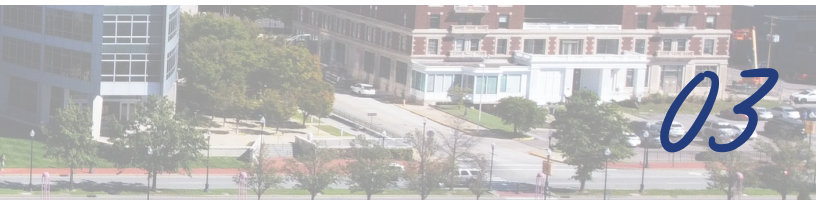
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WHO WE ARE

Mission
Vision
Values

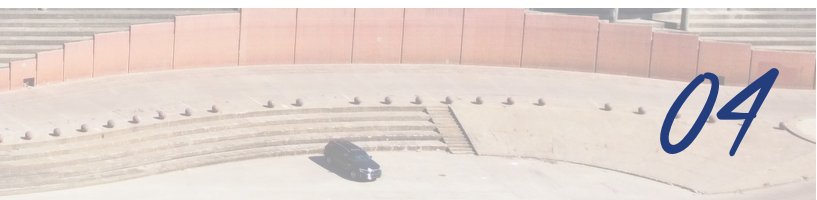
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WHAT WE LEARNED

Our Process

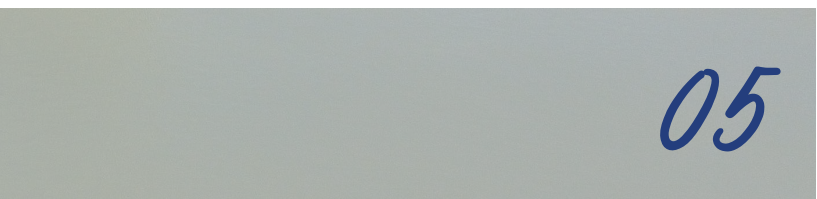
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HEADING**

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01

A letter from the Mayor

Forward together.

Dear Evansville Residents,

It is my distinct pleasure to present the City of Evansville’s **Strategic Plan**, a guiding framework for how we will continue to serve and support our community in the years ahead.

Over the past several months, the City of Evansville, in partnership with Crowe LLP, has undertaken a comprehensive process to evaluate how our government can best serve you—our residents, businesses, visitors and community organizations. Through this effort, we engaged city employees, conducted workshops with department heads, and, most importantly, listened to you. Nearly 800 residents, business owners, and visitors participated in our community survey, providing invaluable input on how we can improve city services.

This strategic plan is the culmination of that collaborative effort. It serves as both a roadmap and a management tool, helping to align our leaders, resources, and operations with our shared mission and vision. At its core, the plan emphasizes efficient government operations, the strengthening of public services, and the commitment to making those services more accessible and responsive to all residents.

Your feedback was central to shaping this plan, and it reflects the priorities and values that matter most to our community. With this document as our guide, we will allocate resources, establish programs, and undertake projects with transparency and accountability, ensuring that our actions remain aligned with the needs and aspirations of our city.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the strategic planning process. Your engagement and ideas are what make this plan possible. I am excited to put it into action as we continue moving Evansville forward, together.

Sincerely,

Mayor Stephanie Terry



02

Who We Are



Who We Are

Mission & Vision

The City of Evansville's mission and vision serve as the foundation for this Strategic Plan. Together, these commitments outline our core purpose and reflect the aspirational future vision for our community.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to serve the people of Evansville. We provide essential services that keep our community safe, healthy, and vibrant.



Vision Statement

Our City will be a vibrant, inclusive community where safety, opportunity, and connection empower all to thrive.

Who We Are

Organizational Values

The City of Evansville is united by shared values that shape our personal conduct, elevate the quality of our interactions and services, and set the high standards we strive to meet. These organizational values guide our actions and drive our strategic choices.



Trust

We nurture positive relationships at City Hall and with the public through transparency and honesty. We seek to build trust with one another and are held accountable by our community.



Respect

We uphold the dignity of all individuals and ensure an environment of inclusivity for everyone. We respect ourselves and each other.



Innovation

We pursue new ideas and innovative solutions to enhance the services we provide. We don't accept doing things the way they've always been done.



Teamwork

We are united in our goal to collaboratively advance the priorities of Evansville. We seek out ways to help each other as part of our commitment to serving our community.



Quality

We provide residents and visitors with unparalleled service quality. We ensure that the needs and aspirations of our constituents are met with commitment and excellence.

03

What We Learned

What We Learned

Our Process

The City pursued a series of planning and engagement activities in summer 2024 to develop this Strategic Plan. This included focus group sessions with City leaders and staff, a staff survey, an off-site leadership retreat hosted by the Mayor's Office and facilitated by our partners at Crowe LLP, and a community survey that helped identify focus areas and goals for this Strategic Plan. In addition, Crowe also developed an organizational assessment report which provided the Mayor's Office with a series of recommendations related to overall government operations.

We reflected on and identified themes, challenges, and opportunities from across these events, seeking to first understand perspectives of our City staff and community, and then hone our strategic priorities based on these inputs.

Please read the following pages for additional information about this process and the various activities that informed development of this Strategic Plan.

Staff Survey

The City administered a staff survey to gather additional feedback related to perceived strengths and challenges of City department operations. Staff were asked to evaluate their respective department's processes and policies, accessibility to adequate technology, top priorities, and existing support systems. The survey also included free response opportunities where respondents could share any other feedback related to this effort. Insights from the survey were used to gather internal strategic goals.

Focus Group Sessions

In July 2024, the project team held focus group sessions with City leaders to better understand perceived strengths and challenges related to City departments' operations and ability to provide services to the community. Department leadership shared ideas, department-level Strategic Plans, and other goals and ideas for this Strategic Plan.

What We Learned

Our Process

Strategy Lab with City Leadership

In August 2024, Mayor Terry, the Mayor's Office, and City Department leaders engaged in a one-day strategic planning retreat known as the Strategy Lab facilitated by Crowe LLP. The purpose of the Strategy Lab was to brainstorm together and develop the foundation for the City's vision statement, mission statement, organizational values, and identify goals and specific projects to help drive the direction of this Strategic Plan.



What We Learned

Our Process

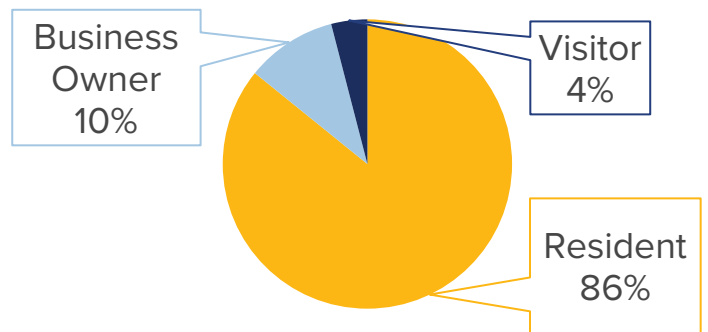
Community Survey

As part of the strategic planning process, the City also administered a **Community Survey** to collect feedback from constituents to inform the direction of the City’s Strategic Plan.

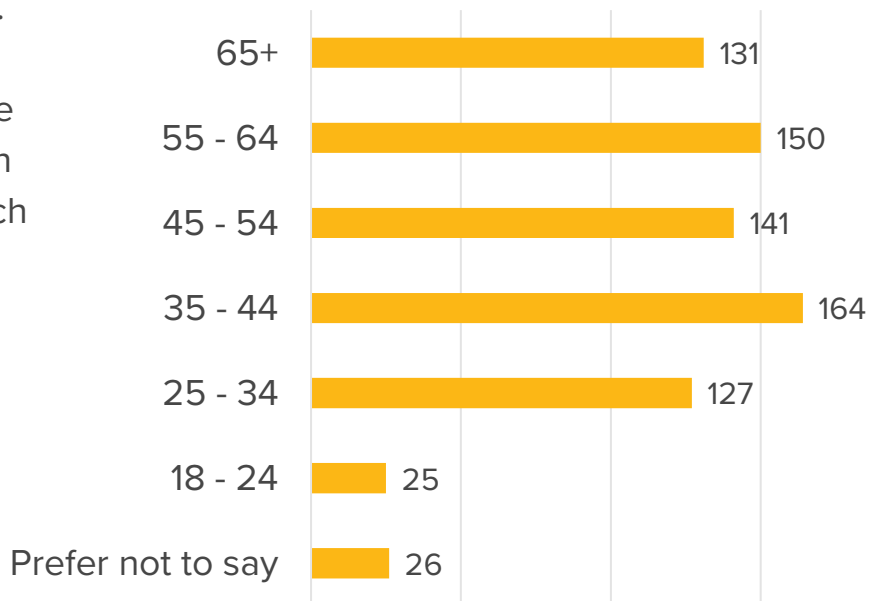
Respondents were asked to provide feedback on proposed Focus Areas for City government, quality of life topics, preferred ways of engaging with the City.

In total, **770 individuals** responded to the Community Survey. Please see graphs on the right and on the following pages which highlight select demographic information of respondents. This input was used to understand community priorities and ultimately shape the direction of the Strategic Plan.

What best describes your relationship to Evansville?



What is your age range?



770 Individuals responded to the Survey.

84 Business owners responded to the Survey.

708 Residents responded to the Survey.

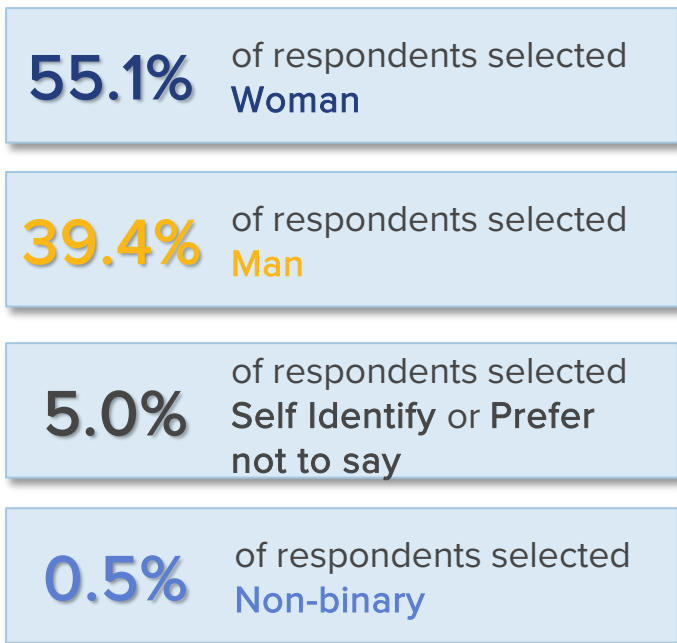
518 Respondents have lived in Evansville for more than 20 years.

What We Learned

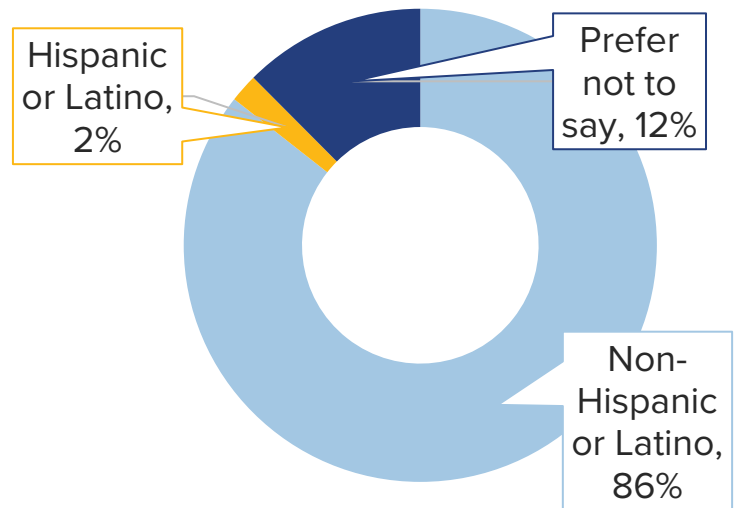
Our Process

Community Survey (continued)

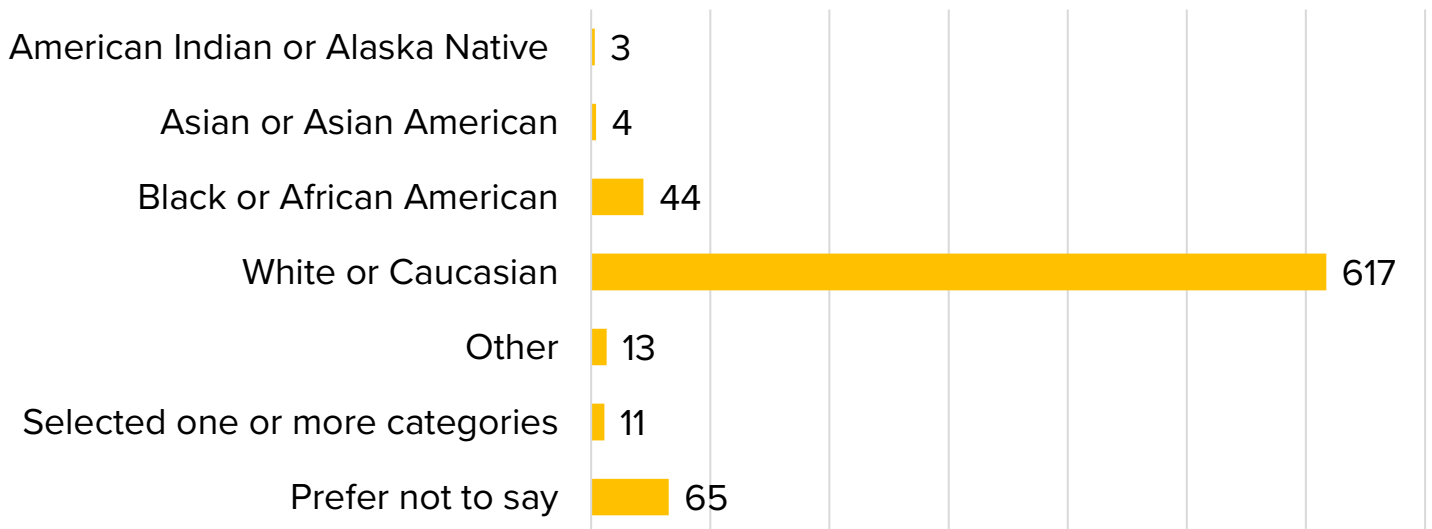
What is your gender?



What is your ethnicity?



What is your race?



What We Learned

Our Process

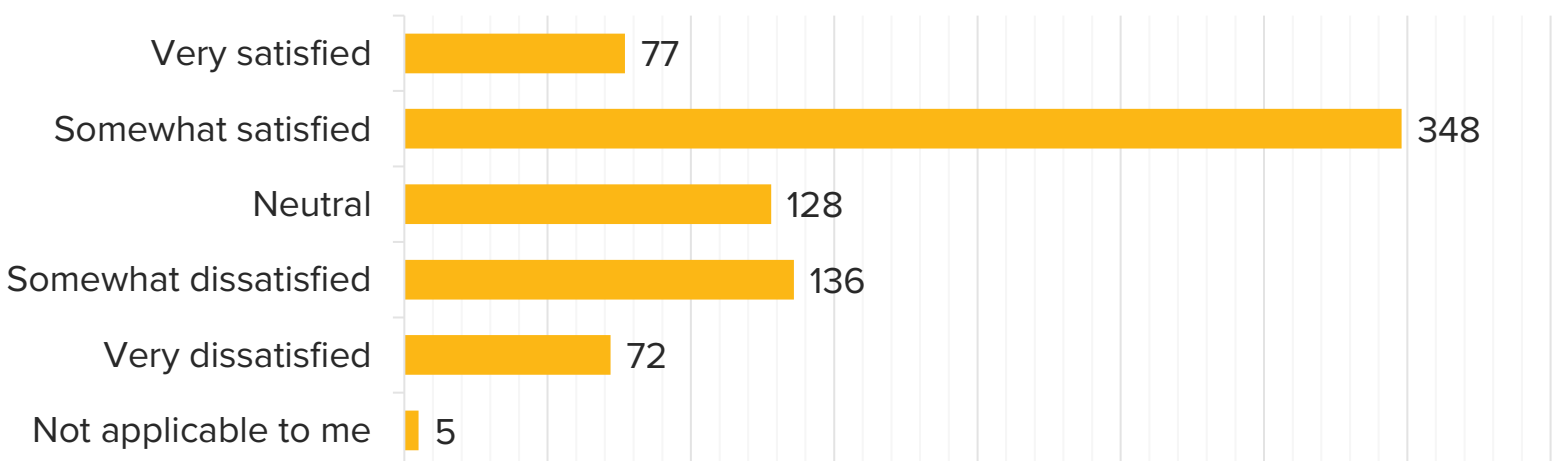
Key Takeaways

Several key themes emerged from staff and community input. Survey input from community members pointed to the importance of investment in roads and infrastructure, public safety, public parks and other public spaces, and other strategic investments in neighborhood revitalization. City staff used this feedback to discuss ways City operations can continue to align with and better advance the public’s priorities in these areas.

City staff input echoed many of these similar themes while also pointing to operational strengths and areas for improvement at City Hall. Staff highlighted many positives aspects of City government, including commitment to quality service provision, the internal commitment to teamwork and collaboration, and the desire to incorporate even more cross-department collaboration across City services when applicable. Staff also pointed to challenges with recruitment and staffing capacity, and the desire to modernize certain technologies and processes.

These themes and others became foundational elements of this Strategic Plan.

How satisfied are you with your overall quality of life in Evansville?*



*Question included in 2024 Community Survey

04

Where We're Heading



Where We're Heading

Focus Areas

This Strategic Plan is our guiding framework for the City of Evansville, serving as a management tool to help the City align resources and operations in support of our mission and vision.

This Plan is organized in the following four high-level Focus Areas. Please read the following pages to learn more about each of the following Focus Areas and associated City goals.

01 Advance Organizational Excellence and Innovation

This focus area reflects our commitment to creating a City Hall where new ideas, efficiency and quality service provision are at the core of everything we do. As a City organization, we won't rely on doing things the way they have always been done.

02 Modernize City Technologies

This focus area reflects our commitment to investment in our technology systems that support so much of what we do at City Hall. Modern systems and processes are essential to a high-functioning City government, and support our goal to provide the quality, timely, and efficient services that City residents deserve.

03 Create Opportunities to Connect

This focus area reflects our commitment to building strong relationships, both inside of City Hall and with our community. We seek to expand opportunities to engage with residents in ways that are meaningful and innovative.

04 Prioritize People and Places

This focus area reflects commitments toward making Evansville a place we are proud to call home. We understand that our community cares deeply about investment in neighborhood revitalization, public parks and public spaces, and other efforts to make our home a vibrant community.

Where We're Heading

01 Advance Organizational Excellence and Innovation

We are committed to creating a City Hall where new ideas, efficiency and quality service provision are at the core of everything we do. As a City organization, we won't rely on doing things the way they have always been done. Please read the following pages for an overview of the City's goals within this Focus Area.

Goal #1: Modernize the City Organizational Structure and Processes

City government is tasked with providing many types of public services – this can result in a complex organizational structure and processes that can be difficult to navigate. To modernize our approach, the City is taking steps to review our overall organizational chart and update both structure and naming convention of some functions when appropriate. For example, the City is considering options to remodel the structure of the Transportation and Services department to create more clarity around roles and responsibilities. We are also exploring options to add additional employees to the Computer Services Department to keep up with demand.

Our goal with these efforts is to identify and solve operational gaps while also streamlining the way we deliver services, benefiting citizens and making it easier to do business with the City. We are also exploring options to simplify bidding processes, implementing a new electronic accounts payables processing and payment system, and taking steps to expand opportunities and increase utilization of minority and women businesses working with the City.

What This Means For You:

A modern City structure can make it easier to understand “who does what” in your City government and improve the way we deliver services to you. Streamlining our processes will expand access and opportunities for new ideas and increased competition in the community – benefiting taxpayers.

Where We're Heading | Advance Organizational Excellence and Innovation

Goal #2: Update Outdated City Policies, Procedures, & Regulations

It is crucial that internal policies and procedures, alongside City regulations reflect the present needs of City government and our community. As part of this strategic planning process, we have already begun efforts to update Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across the City. We will also review City policies and regulations in other areas, like Purchasing, Zoning, and others, to identify bottlenecks or barriers to providing efficient service. This will require collaboration across government and other partners and is an important step for making your government work best for residents.

What This Means For You:
Implementing changes helps our City work more efficiently and effectively – demonstrating our commitment to getting things done!



Where We're Heading | Advance Organizational Excellence and Innovation

Goal #3: Implement the City's Strategic Plan

This strategic planning effort was the first of its kind in many years for our City, and the result – this Strategic Plan – will serve as a guide and internal management tool for the City government. However, we know work remains to transform the priorities outlined on these pages into the specific projects and initiatives that will positively impact our community. The City is taking a series of steps to implement this Strategic Plan, including continuing efforts to identify and prioritize projects, develop timelines, and establish what success looks like. Please see the **Our Next Steps** section of this document to learn more about how the City intends to put this Strategic Plan into action.

What This Means For You:
This Strategic Plan won't just "sit on a shelf" – we're taking the next steps to transform our goals and your priorities into actions.



Where We're Heading

02 Modernize City Technologies

Modern technology systems and processes are essential to a high-functioning City government, and support our goal to provide the quality, timely, and efficient services that City residents deserve.

Goal #1: Address Core Technology Needs

Upgraded and integrated technology is crucial for the efficient operation of government services and public safety. Today, we know this is an area for improvement and investment at the City.

To address, we will proactively take steps to analyze department-specific technology needs and explore ways to better integrate technology at City Hall. We are also focused on planning for upgrades to critical public safety technologies, including an updated computer aided dispatch (CAD) system, upgrading Emergency Operations Center technology, and improving emergency response capabilities. These plans will advance safety measures in our community.

In addition, we recognize that our City must continue efforts to protect the security and integrity of our data. City government has participated in several cyber security assessments over the last few years and assessors have commended our preparedness. We will build on this success and plan to take additional steps to further upgrade our cybersecurity protections.

Overall, the City strives to have modern, updated technology and will continue to identify additional areas for improvement.

What This Means For You:

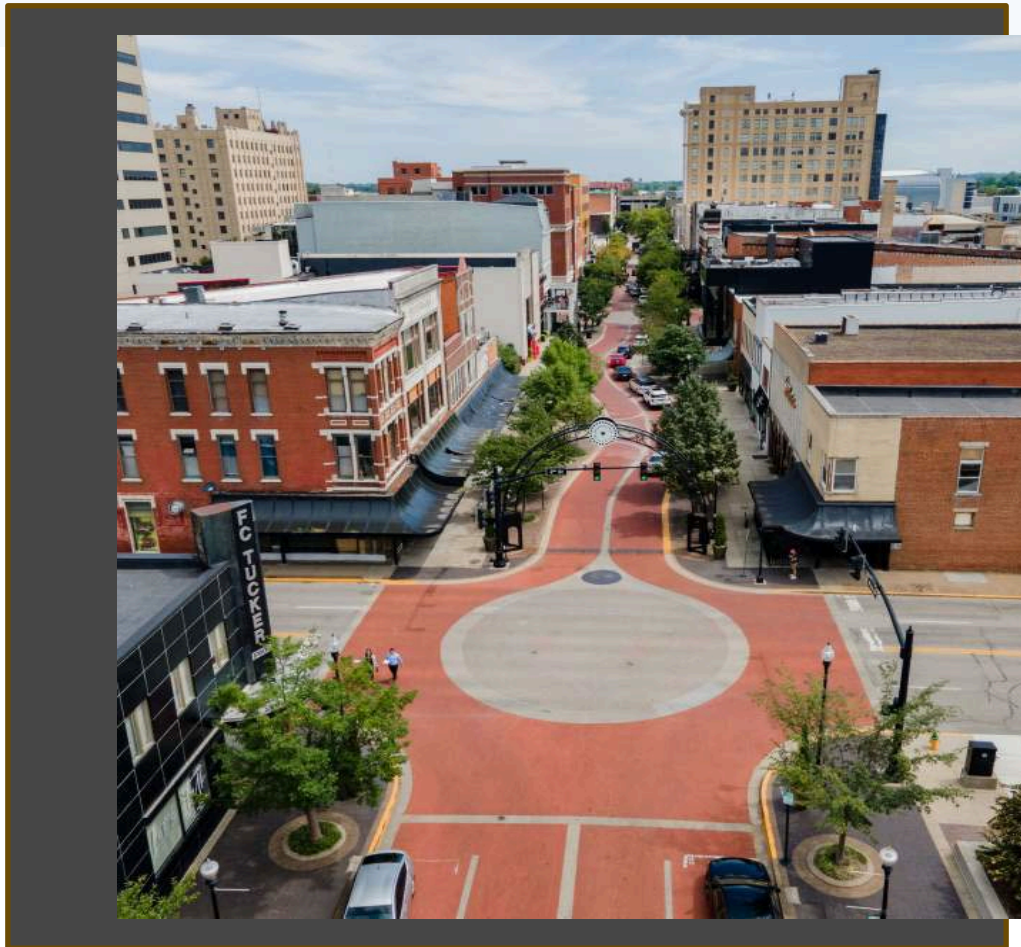
Better technology at City Hall will improve the quality of and timeliness of services to our community.

Where We're Heading | Modernize City Technologies

Goal #2: Improve Public Transportation Experience

Community input pointed to the desire for more investment in quality public transportation. The City is taking steps to improve transportation technology and overall rider experience by implementing digital ticketing for passengers on the Metropolitan Evansville Transit System (METS), releasing a new bus tracking app and dispatching system with automatic passenger counts, and adding new METS buses to the schedule and rotation.

What This Means For You:
Improved accessibility and enhanced experience when using City public transportation.



Where We're Heading

03 Create Opportunities to Connect

Building strong relationships, both inside of City Hall and with our community, is one of our most important priorities. To do this, we seek to expand opportunities to connect with your City government and affirm our commitment to transparent and timely communication with residents.

Goal #1: Promote Transparent Government

You deserve a government that communicates transparently with constituents and provides information in an easy to understand and accessible way. We are taking steps to publish more City data externally on the City website and through other means. We plan to continue efforts like the Traveling City Hall series which gives residents more ways to interact with your City government. We have plans to begin an internal Virtual City Hall series, which will make it easier for City staff to connect with the Mayor's Office.

What This Means For You:
Increased access to information that helps you understand City government activities and performance.

Goal #2: Support Internal Collaboration Efforts

One of the great strengths of the City workforce is our commitment to working together, but we know there are ways we can do more. The City is exploring multiple solutions to make it easier to share information between departments, like establishing Department Collaboration Labs where leaders can connect with one another and creating an online project management tool to support cross-department visibility into ongoing projects.

What This Means For You:
Working together results in better, more efficient service for you.

Where We're Heading | Create Opportunities to Connect

Goal #3: Strengthen City Communication Channels

Residents deserve clear communication from your City government. We are taking steps to improve and modernize the ways in which you can receive information about City government, including expanding our social media presence, distributing a new Community Newsletter, re-designing the City Website, and reorganizing the City Website's Document Center. The City is building an internal facing Communication Plan, as well as creating City brand consistency for all platforms.

What This Means For You:
Easier access to information about your City government and more ways to get involved.



Where We're Heading

04 Prioritize People and Places

The People and Places of Evansville are what make us unique and are the foundation of our community – it's what makes Evansville home. As part of this Strategic Plan for City government, we recognize that new support for the "People and Places" that make up your local government – Evansville's public servants and government facilities – are also critical investments for our future.

Goal #1: Recruit and Retain a Skilled City Workforce

A qualified workforce is essential for the success of any City government. Through our strategic planning process, City leaders shared current capacity challenges that are important to remedy. To address this, the City is taking steps to examine staffing needs, expand recruitment channels, and fill vacancies. We will continue to seek ways to ensure we are appropriately rewarding those who provide the essential services our City requires.

What This Means For You:

Residents deserve to have a qualified and fully staffed City workforce – we are taking steps to meet that expectation.

In short, our public servants are the City's most importance resource. We're taking steps to further support our invaluable workforce who provide services to you.



Where We're Heading | Prioritize People and Places

Goal #2: Create Opportunities to Further Skills, Knowledge, and Training

Across all areas of our City government, we heard from employees who have interest in furthering their knowledge and skillsets. Employees outlined a series of training needs and goals, including additional support and training for City technology systems, or other areas of professional development specific to their role. We are exploring ways to further invest in training opportunities for our public servants, both to support their own career and skill development and to improve the quality and scope of services we provide to you.

What This Means For You:

Qualified staff with the skills to do the job are who you want working in City government .

Goal #3: Improve Facilities and Workspaces

A modern City government should include public buildings and City workspaces that are safe, upgraded, and equipped to support the critical work happening for our communities. The City is taking multiple actions in this area, including planning for site improvements, equipment replacements and updates, and other building maintenance across City government. Improvements will impact multiple departments, including but not limited to Police, Fire, Street Maintenance, Mesker Park Zoo and Botanical Garden, Metropolitan Evansville Transit System (METS), and others.

What This Means For You:

Upgraded public facilities are essential component of a healthy, strong, and vibrant downtown. City facilities are for you, too.

Where We're Heading | Prioritize People and Places

Goal #4: Improve Quality of Parks & Public Green Spaces

Today, our Parks and Recreation Department maintains 46 parks and 22 special use facilities, spanning over 1600 acres of our community. Our parks are an important part of what make Evansville a place we love to call home, and community input was loud and clear that investment in our parks system should be a priority for this City government.

What This Means For You:

Residents can expect improvements and expansions to our public parks, with the goal of creating accessible green spaces for everyone.

We are taking steps to increase safety, improve accessibility, and focus on connectivity and overall quality of our park spaces, including investments in additional parks equipment and lighting. The Parks Department also has published their Five-Year Plan which details other goals and planned improvements to our parks system. Read the Five-Year Plan [here](#).



Where We're Heading | Prioritize People and Places

Goal #5: Improve City Roads, Sidewalks, and Other Infrastructure

Public input from our Community Survey pointed to the need for additional investment and improvements to our roads, sidewalks, and our overall City infrastructure. This is a primary concern in our community. We're seeking to build on recently made progress in this area and will continue to focus on improving roads and infrastructure through regular maintenance and enhancing pedestrian accessibility and safety. We're also looking at ways to streamline or improve communication between the multiple City government departments to work together to improve our City infrastructure.

Goal #6: Revitalize Our Neighborhoods

Investment in neighborhood revitalization is part of our commitment to prioritizing the people and places of Evansville. We know that beautiful and safe neighborhoods are a critical component for any thriving community. As such, we will further efforts to address blighted areas of our City and other projects which improve residents' overall quality of life, like cleaning up neighborhood parks and ensuring accessible and safe sidewalks. The City will expand efforts like the Block-by-Block Initiative which hosts neighborhood clean up efforts. We continue to seek ways to best support those who need it most. One example is the City plans to assess and develop a consolidated plan that addresses housing discrimination and affordable housing.

What This Means For You:

Improvements to roads, sidewalks, and other infrastructure enhances are critical for our City's future and enhance resident quality of life.

What This Means For You:

Residents deserve to live in safe and beautiful neighborhoods where all feel welcome.

Where We're Heading | Prioritize People and Places

Goal #7: Further Sustainability Efforts

A sustainable community is important to our citizens and to the future of Evansville. As part of this commitment, we are working to identify climate hazards, risk, and impacts to our community. We plan to publish a 2025 Evansville Climate Action Plan and launch an online climate action dashboard where residents can track our progress. These efforts will chart a path to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and improve our resiliency to climate impacts. Across City Hall, many departments have launched other sustainability initiatives to further support the City's commitment in this area.

To further transparency and sustainability efforts, City Hall is also developing a roadmap to reduce our municipal energy use – with the goal of reducing the City's overall energy costs.

What This Means For You:

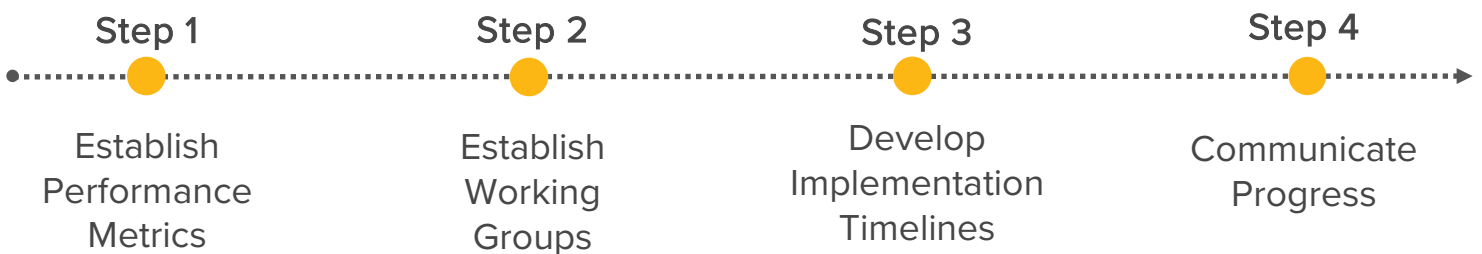
A focus on sustainability raises the quality of life of people that live, work, and visit Evansville.



Where We're Heading

Our Next Steps

The City is taking a series of next steps to turn this plan into actions. Please read below to learn more about our plans to implement this Strategic Plan and keep you updated on our progress.



Step 1: Establish Performance Metrics

The City will outline specific projects for each Focus Area and establish quantifiable performance metrics and indicators to understand our progress and determine success.

Step 2: Establish Working Groups

The City will establish working groups with leaders for each Focus Area. These groups will drive initiatives forward and report back on progress.

Step 3: Develop Implementation Timelines

The City will create an implementation timelines with key milestones and deadlines for strategic initiatives for each goal and Focus Area.

Step 4: Communicate Progress

The City will provide an **Annual Strategic Plan Update** to the community highlighting achievements, ongoing efforts, and next steps for the Strategic Plan.

05

Acknowledgements



Acknowledgements

Thank You

We express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to community members and City staff whose contributions shaped this Strategic Plan.

Mayor's Office

Mayor Stephanie Terry
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Crowe LLP



City of Evansville

Strategic Plan



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