



CARBONDALE VISION 2025

BY 2025, CARBONDALE WILL BE RECOGNIZED AS A GROWING, WELCOMING, DIVERSE, INCLUSIVE, DISTINCTIVE, AND INNOVATIVE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY WITH A VIBRANT CITY CENTER AND ATTRACTIVE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS. THE CITY WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY SERVICES, DEMONSTRATE FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY, AND SERVE AS AN OPEN, TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT FOR ITS RESIDENTS; AND AS A REGIONAL CENTER FOR ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, HEALTHCARE, EMPLOYMENT, RETAIL, AND EDUCATION.

COUNCIL GOALS AND ACTION PLANS FY2022 THROUGH FY2025

Goal #1: Provide a high quality-of-life and foster a sense of community for all residents

Strategic Initiatives:

- Complete the merger of operations with the Carbondale Park District and continue to educate the community on the benefits of a City parks department
- Make broadband accessible and affordable for all residents
- Study existing housing profiles to address areas of concern and identify incentives for increasing homeownership
- Continue to improve parks and recreation for those parks that are the City's responsibility
- Conduct more year-round, community-oriented programs for youth
- Publicize the positive aspects of Carbondale, being proactive, using social media, and embracing the diverse nature of the community
- Improve the aesthetics of the welcoming corridors into Carbondale
- Conduct a citizens survey

Action Items:

- Establish Founders Park as part of the City Parks Department
- Create a subsidy for internet modem, installation costs, and fees to make broadband more affordable and accessible to residents
- Explore possibility of creating a citizens committee to evaluate merger with the Park District
- Continue and expand City-run housing programs

- Continue supporting youth programs like the Boys and Girls Club and help restart operations at the Eurma C. Hayes Center
- Establish social media content team to promote all city departments and services adequately
- Partner with civic organizations to improve aesthetics of welcoming corridors
- Revisit City code on signage to improve opportunities for downtown art
- Complete and institute wayfinding system
- Work with ISPs to deploy fiber throughout residential neighborhoods, while using available grant funding to lower the cost of installation to homes.
- Review programs that offer low cost computers and investigate technology skills training programs
- Identify an affordable solution to administer a community survey

Goal #2: Establish programs, processes, and networks to address diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice

Strategic Initiatives:

- Explore possibilities for revising responsibilities for the Human Relations Commission or another entity to address citizen complaints
- Develop processes to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and equitably
- Create a Diversity Action Plan for City operations
- Identify ordinances that contribute to exclusionary zoning

Action Items:

- Create a Police Review Board to review citizen complaints and advise city on potential policy changes
- Identify and address systemic racism in institutions within Carbondale
- Publicize the purpose of the Human Relations Commission
- Identify areas of unequal opportunity and access in Carbondale and begin creating a plan to improve resources for all
- Create a staff report identifying codes and regulations that hinder opportunities for minority entrepreneurs
- Establish a minority business council
- Develop business training seminars tailored to the minority community to assist with startups
- Require planning staff and Planning Commissioners to attend trainings and compile research on current zoning philosophies, such as Form-Based Code and Unified Development Zones, as they work on the update of the Comprehensive Plan
- Explore opportunities to address poverty and food insecurity in the community

Goal #3: Demonstrate fiscal responsibility and transparency while providing high-quality City services

Strategic Initiatives:

- Develop a strategy to address possible census-related contingencies, such as home rule, loss of revenue, etc.
- Instill a culture of ownership in the City budget
- Continue to promote public participation in the City policy making and budgeting process
- Continue customer service focus on a “warm transfer” of customers and follow up to see if problems are resolved
- Publicize the see/click/fix system

Action Items:

- Help publicize the benefits of Home Rule and how the potential loss of home rule will affect the city
- Implement a new digital phone system
- Provide ongoing customer service training for city employees
- Continue to build reserve funds
- Consider the need for strategic annexation
- Work to improve the City’s bond rating

Goal #4: Encourage progressive economic development, tourism, arts, and entertainment

Strategic Initiatives:

- Increase City funding for economic development
- Encourage entrepreneurship and small business development in the City
- Partner with SIU and non-SIU vendors to utilize facilities for entertainment/arts events
- Analyze and expand where needed TIF districts in areas needing redevelopment
- Partner with regional economic development groups.
- Build on the Carbondale retail sector, understanding that there are changes in the retail marketplace
- Review possible ordinances that are barriers to business start-ups
- Establish a co-working space for Carbondale businesses

Action Items:

- Working with the Chamber of Commerce, the Small Business Development Center and similar groups, devise a strategy to encourage entrepreneurship, focusing on SIU students, women and minority populations, and existing businesses
- Work with Carbondale Tourism on their outdoor recreation opportunities promotion. Encourage groups such as Friends of the Shawnee, Green Earth, River to River Society, Illinois Climbers Assoc., Touch of Nature, etc. to share Carbondale Tourism office resources and/or storefront.
- Promote entrepreneurialism as a tool to increase competition for existing industries, which will improve services.

- Relax permitting on food trucks and other independent businesses. Relax site standards such as minimum parking requirement, loading reqs, floor-area ratio, sign reg's, etc. This would require significant text amendments to the code.
- Leverage all available funding sources to develop a permanent live entertainment venue downtown.
- Work with SI Now, Greater Egypt Regional Planning Commission and other regional focused groups to devise a business attraction strategy that leverage Carbondale's strengths
- Develop plans to advance an industrial park in Jackson County
- Use technology and advanced data collection methods to design a strategy to grow existing retailers and attract new ones
- Work closely with the Planning Department and the business community to pinpoint obstacles to business growth, and devise strategies to implement targeted revision of existing City Code
- Visit successful coworking spaces in the Midwest to learn best practices

Goal #5: Provide high-quality City infrastructure

Strategic Initiatives:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure water/sewer rates are sufficient to fund maintenance, upgrades, and improvements • Keep technology current • Develop a program to beautify streetscapes in areas such as landscaping, ditches, lighting, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance transportation access and infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians • Consider the need for a stormwater utility fee • Explore restoration of brick streets • Address the need to enclose open ditches • Consider burying existing utility line |
|--|---|

Action Items:

- Incorporate bike paths and lanes into regular street maintenance
- Train staff on the City's complete streets policy
- Develop plan to begin transitioning City fleet vehicles to electric
- Put wayfinding and bike wayfinding plans in CIP
- Commission local artist to paint bike tunnel under Hwy 13.
- Address climate change in infrastructure design to improve community resiliency
- Replace existing video and audio equipment in Council chambers for improved quality when live streaming meetings and other events

Goal #6: Enhance residential development/rehabilitation

Strategic Initiatives:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the need to convert rental housing into owner-occupied housing. • Explore development of a Community Housing Trust. • Provide adequate sidewalks and bicycle lanes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with community partners to encourage home ownership. • Establish "traditional" Carbondale overlay districts. • Consider the need for an adaptive reuse ordinance. |
|---|--|

Action Items:

- Complete the expansion of TIF #2 into residential neighborhoods
- Leverage TIF and other funds in the newly expanded TIF boundaries to purchase rental properties
- Use available funding to develop a resident attraction initiative and other incentives to spur new home ownership
- Apply a focus on walkability and cycling to all infrastructure design, adhering to our complete streets policy
- Establish a community housing trust and redevelopment agency to facilitate homeownership and to address affordable housing issues

Goal #7: Build on, expand, and develop new relationships with SIU and other regional entities

Strategic Initiatives:

- Market both SIU and the City together
- Encourage economic development that supports retention of graduating students in the community, e.g., makers' space, innovation labs
- Improve and expand communication between SIU/SIH/City services and functions
- Coordinate City/SIU/regional planning
- Look for ways to have “fun” things for students
- Create seamless aesthetics between SIU campus and the City

Action Items:

- Sponsor live entertainment downtown
- Offer space downtown, in City Hall, the old train depot, etc. to SIU departments to display projects.
- Continue to work with SIU, SIH on new wayfinding infrastructure.
- Survey SIU students, SIH employees, to learn what they'd want to see in Carbondale that would encourage them to stay here.
- Participate in the SI Now initiative as well as other regional partnerships

Goal #8: Use the downtown master plan as a guide to revitalize the City Center

Strategic Initiatives:

- Review the need for changes in the downtown master plan.
- Construct a permanent entertainment venue on Washington/Walnut.
- Publicize and encourage owners to improve downtown properties using existing incentives.
- Address issues of downtown vacancies and “high rent”.
- Promote public art/green wall downtown.
- Define the “downtown” for planning purposes.

Action Items:

- Find a way to incentivize property owners to be more competitive with lease rates and to sell property
- Integrate public art throughout downtown
- Promote the entertainment district and develop programming to encourage visitors
- Establish walking/biking loop routes through downtown.
- Incorporate and encourage public input into redesigning the Town Square area
- Collaborate with SIU and Carbondale Community Arts to develop murals, sculptures and other forms of art downtown