



City of  
**Waukesha**  
STRATEGIC PLAN • 2024-2029



# FROM THE MAYOR

On behalf of our elected officials and City staff, I want to thank you for your contributions to the City of Waukesha. As we strive to be a place of choice for people, businesses, and community, it is crucial to have a compass to guide the organization. My last 10 years as Mayor have shown me the importance of the city-wide Strategic Plan: to lead the City in decision making and actions. It is the Strategic Plan that provides a comprehensive framework to focus the work and priorities of the City staff and Common Council toward accomplishing specific goals for the next five years.

The Plan contains our Mission Statement, which describes our purpose and reason for existing. Our Vision Statement defines our desired future and provides direction for where we want to go as a community. Our Core Values state how the organization and City staff will conduct its business, make decisions, and deliver programs and services to the community. Strategic Priorities and the supporting Objectives and Performance Measures define the specific factors the City staff will focus on.

I believe the Strategic Plan will lead us into a bright and wonderful future for ours and future generations. I am especially grateful to our elected officials and the many community members who actively participated in this important and significant process.

*Thank you for making Waukesha  
a desired place to be.*

Thank you,

Mayor Reilly





# FROM THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR



Thank you, City of Waukesha community, for participating and being a part of the Strategic Plan for the City's future. The Strategic Plan has been adopted by the Common Council and will serve to guide the work of the City for the next five years. This plan reflects the hard work of your elected Councilors, residents, businesses, advisory boards and committees, a broad array of community groups, department heads, and employees.

In this document you will find our City's Mission, Vision, Core Values, Strategic Priorities, and Goals. There are specific steps, the actions that must be taken if we are to arrive at the desired destination. It is important to view this document as a road map. Our continued success will depend on following the direction and objectives provided to make our Vision for Waukesha a reality.

Thanks to all of you for your many meaningful contributions to this Strategic Plan.

*We look forward to implementing the Strategic Plan in collaboration with all of our internal and external partners.*

Anthony Brown





## *Our Government*

The city of Waukesha operates under a mayor-council form of government.

At the helm is the mayor, who serves as the chief executive officer, and a City administrator who oversees day-to-day operations. Supporting the mayor are the Common Council members, who are elected representatives from various districts within the city. The Common Council plays a crucial role in legislative decision-making, including passing ordinances, approving budgets, and setting policies. Collaboration between the elected officials and administrative staff helps ensure efficient governance and responsiveness to the needs of Waukesha residents.

Regular meetings of the Common Council are held in the City Hall Council Chambers on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month.

[www.waukesha-wi.gov/CityCouncil](http://www.waukesha-wi.gov/CityCouncil)



## Mission Statement



*(Where we're headed)*

We are dedicated to fostering a high quality of life in Waukesha through efficient, effective, and engaging government.

## Vision Statement



*(Our shared idea of the future)*

Waukesha is an accessible, vibrant, and desirable community where diversity is celebrated, and sustainably sound and innovative practices are prioritized.

## Core Values



*(Expectations for City decision making and service delivery)*

### Be of Service

To each other by enhancing, innovating, and providing high levels of customer service to the community.

### Be Open

By connecting, listening, responding, and engaging.

### Be Accepting

By supporting change, showing consideration, and being inclusive.

### Be Responsible

By forward-thinking, owning the work, and showing accountability and integrity.

### Above All

Be focused on ensuring the community is safe and secure.





## ***Our Goal** (Where we're headed)*

*We will manage resources in ways that focus on fiscal stability, resilience against economic challenges, and balanced approaches to funding the needs of the community.*

## ***Objectives/Performance Measures***

*(What we'll focus on to get there | How we'll know we're successful)*

### **OBJECTIVE 1**

Develop a five-year financial plan that forecasts budget balancing challenges, opportunities for efficiencies, and capital investment needs.

#### Performance Measure

1. Number of balanced years in annual updated General Fund five-year projection

### **OBJECTIVE 2**

Review and update (if necessary) all financial policies and management tools to include organizational and departmental strategies that are modern and based on best practices.

#### Performance Measures

1. All financial City policies will be updated by December 2026.
  - Progress of updating existing policies and/or drafting additional policies will occur in each year leading up to December 31, 2026
2. Number of financial policies reviewed, updated and/or created in the year.
3. Number of interim financial reports produced each year.
4. Maintain a bond rating of Aa2 and strive to increase to a bond rating of Aa1 by April 2029.



## OBJECTIVE 3

Review existing debt obligations and potential new debt for capital investments so that the City's principal balance decreases annually.

### Performance Measures

1. Decrease levy-supported General Obligation (GO) debt balance.
2. Develop a 10-year asset inventory for fleet, facilities, and equipment by December 2025.
3. Annually update asset inventory for fleet, facilities, and equipment.

## OBJECTIVE 4

Review all current revenue sources and identify possible new non-levy revenues to pursue.

### Performance Measures

1. Annually review property tax-based support for all departmental operations that have revenue-generating activities.
2. Develop a citywide sponsorship/partnership fundraising approach that is coordinated across all departments.
3. Increase parking revenue by 15% by instituting surface lot automated pay structure by December 2029.
4. Increase Drop-Off Center revenue by 15% to get closer to budget neutral by December 2029.
5. Increase City garage revenue by 15% by providing additional inter-governmental services by December 2029.
6. Annually review, and increase, if reasonable, the cost recovery for City services that have revenue-generating activities.

## OBJECTIVE 5

Review all current expenditures and cost savings opportunities.

### Performance Measures

1. Decrease operational costs at the Clean Water Plant by \$100,000 by December 2029.
2. Reduce credit card processing fees by consolidation of services used by multiple departments by December 2029.
3. Complete Department based service inventories and ranking of tasks by priority by December 2025





## *Our Goal (Where we're headed)*

*We will encourage an organizational culture that embraces diversity, learning, and innovation in service delivery.*

## *Objectives/Performance Measures*

*(What we'll focus on to get there | How we'll know we're successful)*

### OBJECTIVE 1

1. Conduct an organizational assessment and create a long-term staffing plan that meets and maintains City obligations and commitments.

#### Performance Measures

1. Develop departmental training plans as part of the annual budget process.
2. Establish cross-training opportunities across departments and implement a plan by December 2026.
3. Develop an Employee Engagement Survey Plan by December 2025 and conduct an annual survey to measure engagement.
4. Create succession plans within all departments by December 2025.
5. Update Departmental Strategic Plans (every five to eight years).
6. Develop a Comprehensive Master Plan for the Cemetery Department by December 2026.

### OBJECTIVE 2

Leverage technology solutions to enhance efficiencies in service delivery to streamline processes, reduce costs, and improve the quality of services.

#### Performance Measures

1. Develop processes to reduce time from application to time of hire by December 2025.
2. Complete software, subscription, and hardware inventory organization-wide by December 2024.
3. Eliminate redundant, underused software by March 2025.
4. Identify a system to conduct customer feedback surveys by December 2025.
5. Implement new permit software to increase the number of city services available online by December 2027.



## OBJECTIVE 3

Recognize, encourage, and reward creative thinking, innovation, experimentation, and calculated risk-taking through enhanced employee recognition programs.

### Performance Measure

1. Create enhanced employee recognition programs by December 2025.

## OBJECTIVE 4

Provide resources to develop an employee recruitment and retention program that includes training and professional development activities.

### Performance Measures

1. Hold full City Leadership Program classes (at least 12 participants) every year.
2. Offer at least six programs for the Leadership Alumni Group every year to have an engaged and informed workforce and continue to nurture leadership skills.
3. Offer one Tony Time training topic every month.
4. Track number of applicants received via job fairs/table events.
5. Develop an internship program with schools by December 2025.
6. Develop a mentorship program for new hires with initial emphasis on high-turnover departments by December 2026.
7. Create a safety committee to track improvements in employee safety by March 2025.
8. Serve the community through volunteering efforts within the City two to three times a year.
9. Establish clear onboarding procedures for all new employees and in each department by June 2025.





## *Our Goal (Where we're headed)*

*Stimulate economic and community vibrancy  
where all can live, gather, work, and recreate.*

## **Objectives/Performance Measures**

*(What we'll focus on to get there | How we'll know we're successful)*

### **OBJECTIVE 1**

1. Focus capital investments on new and existing mobility and accessibility infrastructure, neighborhood cohesiveness, culture and recreational spaces, and transportation improvements.

#### Performance Measures

1. Positive change in Livability Score the American Association of Retired Person (AARP) and satisfaction focused on community accessibility initiatives (baseline: 59, increase 2 – 3 points in five years).
2. Implement the Freidman Alley Placemaking Plan by December 2028.
3. Track the number and types of community plans developed/updated.

### **OBJECTIVE 2**

Update Standard Development guidelines on a biannual basis and require new development to adhere and build to the standards.

#### Performance Measure

1. Increase the number of workforce style housing units year over year.

### **OBJECTIVE 3**

Update all zoning codes to promote the construction of additional housing and make it easier to redevelop parcels in the City.

#### Performance Measure

1. Update zoning code by the end of December 2025.

1. "The AARP Livability Index is created from more than 50 unique sources of data across the seven livability categories. Using these metrics and policies, the AARP Livability Index scores communities by looking at how livable each neighborhood is within the community."



## OBJECTIVE 4

Implement items approved in the 2023 – 2027 Waukesha Area Transit Development Plan.

## OBJECTIVE 5

Implement improvements from the adopted 2023 Sidewalk Plan to increase pedestrian safety and mobility by increasing sidewalk connectivity.

### Performance Measures

1. Complete all areas identified as high priority in the Sidewalk Plan.
2. Update the Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan by December 2028.

## OBJECTIVE 6

Update the Park and Recreation System Master Plan (Park and Open Space Plan) that focuses on maintaining and improving existing park and open space. Require projects to adhere to plan priorities.

### Performance Measure

1. Number and type of park and/or bicycle and pedestrian-focused improvements completed.

## OBJECTIVE 7

Review City facilities for meeting Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines and create a comprehensive plan to update facilities not meeting the mandated requirements.

### Performance Measure

1. Track the number of ADA improvements made annually (once the City identifies the list of improvements needed that will establish the annual goal).

## OBJECTIVE 8

Partner with and create a Business Recruitment Plan (including a list of financial incentives that are available for desired development projects) to attract and support new businesses in the downtown Business District.

### Performance Measure

1. Create the Business Recruitment Plan by December 2026

## OBJECTIVE 9

Collaborate with other governmental entities to review underutilized parcels in the City owned by other governmental entities to develop a plan to repurpose said parcels.

### Performance Measure

1. Develop a plan by December 2025





## *Our Goal (Where we're headed)*

*Promote open communication and active participation, information-sharing, and a sense of belonging within our community.*

## **Objectives/Performance Measures**

*(What we'll focus on to get there | How we'll know we're successful)*

### **OBJECTIVE 1**

1. Inform the community about City accomplishments, roles and responsibilities, and progress toward strategic initiatives through all City communication channels.

#### Performance Measures

1. Increase the use of WisVote for creating registrations and absentee requests or obtaining poll/ballot information by 20% by calendar year end through additional public outreach areas.
2. Annually review and update the Resident Guide.
3. Increase Department of Public Works (DPW) events/public outreach for the personal care product and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) responsibilities.
4. Increase engagement on social media year over year.
5. Review options to provide paperless City communications to identify whether waste and expense can be reduced by December 2025.

### **OBJECTIVE 2**

Develop multilingual communication methods to enhance the community experience for all residents.

#### Performance Measures

1. Create a plan for communicating with multilingual audiences by December 2025.
2. Maintain ADA, Section 508, and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG AA) compliance on all digital items related to the public (website, social media, kiosks, message boards, etc.) to ensure consistent and equal experiences for as many residents as possible by conducting a yearly compliance audit.



## OBJECTIVE 3

Implement a periodic community survey program that serves as a tool to update and enhance communication and services to a diverse community.

### Performance Measure

1. Conduct biannual community survey.

## OBJECTIVE 4

Encourage and provide opportunities for partnerships between social, civic, church, and community support organizations.

### Performance Measures

1. Increase the number of volunteers (hours) annually.
2. Unify volunteer efforts across all departments and programs to increase engagement and opportunities for the community.

## OBJECTIVE 5

Provide a variety of engagement opportunities for residents to seek information about the community.

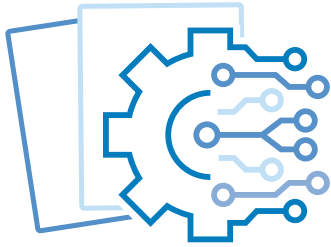
### Performance Measures

1. Fill classes (at least 20 participants) in the Local Government Academy annually.
2. Increase the number of community events (table/booth) where a City representative/information is present.
3. Develop a community-focused survey to target Community Safety topics by December 2025.
4. Increase outreach to the community and the number of Community Safety programming year over year.
5. Increase the rating of “residents’ connection and engagement with their community” as asked on the National Community Survey (increase from 58% by December 2029).
6. Investigate options for a centralized Citywide citizen request portal and app by December 2025.
7. Identify systems for targeted communications to residents (so the City can communicate directly with businesses, neighborhoods, dog owners, etc.).





# HOW DID WE BUILD THIS PLAN?



Documents + data sources  
reviewed and used for  
environmental scan **24**



Online interactions  
with Social Pinpoint  
**1,100**



Survey responses **90**



Ideas Wall  
comments  
**132**



People interviewed **56**



Community forums **3**

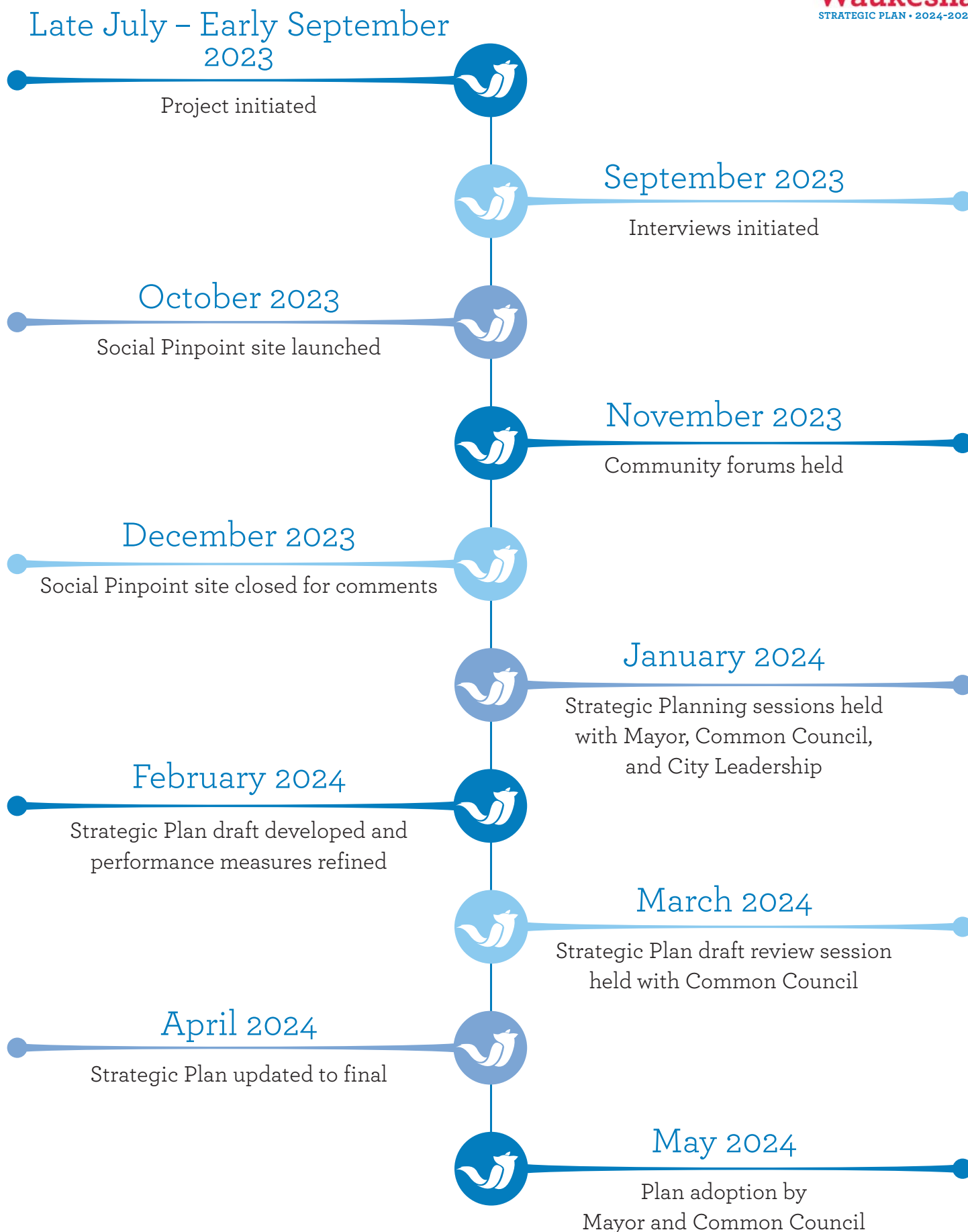


Council workshops  
and presentations **3**



City Leadership meeting **1**

# HOW DID WE BUILD THIS PLAN?





## *Putting the Plan into Action*

Now that the plan has been adopted, the focus shifts towards implementation and execution. This involves breaking down the plan into actionable steps, assigning responsibilities, and establishing timelines. Regular monitoring and evaluation are essential to help ensure alignment with organizational goals and adaptability to changing circumstances. Additionally, communication plays a crucial role in keeping stakeholders informed and engaged throughout the implementation process. We hope you stay involved as we work through accomplishing our vision.

## *Keeping Track of Progress*

### **How are we doing? We'll let you know.**

The City will monitor progress toward our Strategic Plan goals and objectives, as well as report on the performance measures. Tracking keeps us transparent and holds us accountable.

The City will provide the community with an annual report and year-end Common Council presentation. Community members can expect to understand what the City is working on and the benefits that will result for residents, businesses, and the community overall.

### **Monthly**

City staff will meet and discuss progress on strategic plan goals and objectives.

### **Quarterly**

City leadership will provide the City administrator with updates on progress toward each strategic priority and goal.

### **Twice A Year**

The City administrator will provide the Common Council with an update on progress toward each strategic priority and goal, including successes and challenges.

### **Annually**

The City administrator will provide a year-end report detailing progress on each strategic goal and objective. The report will be presented to the Common Council and posted on the City's website, [www.waukesha-wi.gov/strategicplan](http://www.waukesha-wi.gov/strategicplan), for community access.





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