



City of Sanford 2025-2026 Strategic Framework

May 2025



Purpose:

The City of Sanford's Strategic Framework serves as a guiding tool that reflects Sanford City Council's vision and priorities for the city. The tool provides direction for decision making that is supported by key goals and focus areas based on the needs and aspirations of our community.

City officials and staff use the Strategic Framework to ensure that daily operations, long-term planning, and resource allocation are aligned with the City's mission and values. Whether developing a new program, considering a budget proposal, or responding to community feedback, this framework provides a shared foundation for consistent and effective governance.

By using the Strategic Framework, we aim to deliver high-quality services, promote transparency, and build a stronger, more resilient Sanford for everyone.

Goals:



Economic Prosperity for All



Preserve & Create Affordable Housing



**Vibrant Downtown Sanford &
Historic Jonesboro**



Planning & Infrastructure for Managed Growth



Community Building

City of Sanford

www.sanfordnc.net

The development of this framework was facilitated by Central Pines Regional Council.



Goal 1: Economic Prosperity for All

OBJECTIVES & INITIATIVES

Explore Opportunities to Partner with Central Carolina Community College and Schools in Lee County, Including Public and Private, to Improve Workforce Opportunities.

- Encourage stakeholders to explore workforce and vocational opportunities, e.g., the E. Eugene Moore Manufacturing and Biotech Solutions Center.
- Participate in job fairs, explore internship opportunities, and consider other activities to encourage public service and possible employment with the City of Sanford.
- Continue the City of Sanford’s recruitment efforts through colleges and universities, including Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

Improve Public Transportation and Mobility Options.

- Create a microtransit pilot program utilizing the funding received through the Rural Surface Transportation Grant.
- Work with our local partners (SAGA, Visit Sanford, and DSI) to explore ways to attract private rideshare companies to complement the microtransit program.
- Continue partnership with NCDOT to explore mobility hub — rail/multi-modal station — along S-Line Corridor.
- Continue to partner with NCDOT on mobility improvements throughout the city.

Develop Target Industries to Provide Diverse Workforce Opportunities.

- Tailor recruiting efforts to companies that provide diverse job opportunities.
- Continue supporting SAGA’s strategy to position Sanford as a regional hub for the life sciences industry.



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Goal 2:

Preserve & Create Affordable Housing

OBJECTIVES & INITIATIVES

Support Housing Initiatives.

- With relevant stakeholders, develop a comprehensive look at development.
- Explore best practices that are within the City's purview and develop strategies for impactful options, including those prior to the construction phase.
- Work with Sanford Affordable Housing Development Corporation to explore opportunities for the nonprofit to work toward the City's goals.

Increase Access to Affordable Housing.

- Establish criteria to identify areas of opportunity.
- Explore changes to land-use policies to increase affordable and workforce housing opportunities (e.g., UDO and tiny houses).
- Continue support of homebuyer education and housing counseling.
- Identify and develop strategies to maintain existing affordable housing amid market changes.

Improve the Condition and Number of Affordable Housing Properties.

- Continue to fund urgent repair and single-family rehab programs.
- Continue partnerships with nonprofits and redevelopers.

Develop and Improve Programs to Address Homelessness.

- Continue to support S3 Sustainable Housing Alliance.
- Encourage collaboration among agencies that provide homeless services.



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Goal 3:



Vibrant Downtown Sanford & Historic Jonesboro

Develop and Implement Strategies to Link Sanford and Jonesboro.

- Explore the feasibility of extending or establishing a district in Historic Jonesboro.
- Develop strategies to jointly market Downtown Sanford and Historic Jonesboro.
- Study mobility improvements between Downtown Sanford and Historic Jonesboro - walkability, public transit, corridor improvements (landscaping, streetscapes, and lighting).
- Explore opportunities for additional events, public art, and activities in Historic Jonesboro.

Improve Mobility.

- Continue to improve walkability/bike-ability through partnerships with NCDOT and improvements to development codes.
- Continue to work with NCDOT to address concerns about Horner Boulevard and Main Street safety.

Recruit and Retain Downtown Businesses.

- Encourage use of vacant buildings for business in Downtown Sanford and Historic Jonesboro.
- Identify and take advantage of public/private opportunities in Downtown Sanford.
- Continue to support the RISE Program and examine changing program needs.
- Direct SAGA and DSI to investigate the viability of a downtown incubator.
- Ask DSI to continue participation in the NC Main Street Program.

Continue to Invest in Downtown Public Infrastructure.

- Continue work to complete the Pilgrim's Sanford Agriculture Marketplace, renovate the Depot building, and explore the possibility of creating a mobility hub.
- Invest in the First Street Initiative through improved public space and creation of a destination location at Sanford Central Green.
- Adopt and begin implementing the Downtown Small Area Plan.
- Incorporate the Parks Master Plan in areas that would further enhance a vibrant downtown.
- Develop a plan for expanding streetscape, parking options, and other infrastructure improvements to include creating an urban side-path/greenway to connect the greenway to Downtown Sanford.

OBJECTIVES & INITIATIVES



Goal 4:

Planning & Infrastructure for Managed Growth

OBJECTIVES & INITIATIVES

Maximize the Benefits of the Utility System.

- Invest in the distribution and collection system.
- Develop and implement long-range plans to allow for strategic infrastructure investments.
- Capitalize on local and regional opportunities.
- Seek appraisal of current assets.

Develop and Maintain Plans.

- Enhance long-range growth planning.
- Continue discussions on urban growth boundaries.
- Continue to update the UDO with Phase II-Multi-Family and Phase III-Commercial and other land use ordinances.
- Regularly review documents.
- Explore stormwater funding mechanisms.
- Implement the Parks Master Plan.
- Work with Lee County to update the Land Use Plan.
- Develop a decision-making matrix to utilize when making strategic growth decisions.

Invest in Public Safety.

- Continue to evaluate the needs for future fire stations to meet the City's growth projections.
- Pursue fire department accreditation.
- Explore police department infrastructure across the city.
- Maintain facilities.

Leverage Highway Corridors.

- Enhance street lighting along corridors.
- Create and enhance corridor standards.
- Increase staff capacity to enforce existing corridor standards.
- Continue to partner with NCDOT on transportation planning initiatives.

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Goal 5: Community Building

Support Programs that Help Grow Future Community Leaders.

- Continue Sanford 101 Program.
- Participate in SAGA's Leadership Sanford, the RISE program, and youth leadership opportunities.

Develop Improved Information Dissemination Strategies.

- Strengthen core identity to welcome new residents and build a stronger connection with them; investigate options to distribute information and maintain information to remain current.
- Enhance and market existing tools such as subscribed alert system, website, the Projects Hub, and City social media accounts.
- Increase storytelling presence as we grow, and increase outreach messaging.
- Publish and regularly update the Resident's Guide to Municipal Services.
- Ensure all City information is bilingual.

Strengthen Local and Regional Partnerships.

- Continue engagement with Broadway and Lee County.
- Look for ways to collaborate and partner outside of Lee County.
- Explore other opportunities and cross-share information among regional partners, including Central Pines Regional Council, N.C. League of Municipalities, and National League of Cities.

Develop Diverse Community Building Programs.

- Explore opportunities to advance equity.
- Explore how parks can continue to bring the community together.
- Explore opportunities through citywide events.
- Through leadership programs and community organizations, recruit individuals who reflect the full diversity of the community. Leverage past participants' organizations and relationships to continually widen and deepen the pool of informed and inspired current and future community leaders.
- Support programs that build community and public safety trust and relationships, like National Night Out, and explore neighborhood engagement opportunities.
- Continue to support a diverse public arts program.

Engage the Various Cultures in Sanford.

- Continue to explore opportunities.
- Consider other Sister City opportunities.