Bessemer City
STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2027 Strategic Plan

Adopted on June 8, 2026

Vision

Bessemer City strives to be a unique and welcoming community that connects people to economic opportunities and a higher quality of life.

Mission

Bessemer City provides high quality public services in a responsible manner that creates success.

Values

- **Accountability**
- **Ethics**
- **Respect**
- **Commitment/Dependability**
- **Open-Mindedness**
- **Honesty**

Goal 1: Promote a desirable place to live and work that provides a healthy quality of life.

Strategies

1.1 Continuously update and review City code.

Tactics

- Continue review of the Land Development Code and Code of Ordinances.
- Prepare a prioritized list of code amendments for Council consideration.
- Improve code enforcement communication and citizen education.

1.2 Improve and promote walkability, sidewalk connectivity, and safe movement throughout the City.

Tactics

- Develop a sidewalk and walkability priority list.
- Coordinate with NCDOT on road and sidewalk funding opportunities.
- Incorporate walkability review into the future street, development, and infrastructure projects.

1.3 Advance arts, cultural, and community heritage initiatives through planning, partnerships, and outside resources.

Tactics

- Identify cultural arts partners, including faith-based, nonprofit, school, downtown, and community organizations.
- Evaluate feasibility of a VA monument or similar heritage project.
- Maintain a public art, cultural, and heritage project opportunity list.

Goal 2: Ensure a safe and secure community for residents and visitors.

Strategies

2.1 Advance implementation of identified public safety facility, staffing, and operational needs.

Tactics

- Continue planning for a new public safety building.
- Develop a phased implementation plan for public safety facility needs.
- Review Police and Fire staffing needs and identify phased options for additional personnel.
- Track public safety service indicators.

2.2 Develop and maintain funding strategies for public safety capital, staffing, and operational needs not covered by grants or other outside resources.

Tactics

- Continue identifying grants, appropriations, partnerships, debt options, donations, and other resources.
- Incorporate public safety staffing and facility needs into annual budget and capital planning when applicable.

Goal 3: Invest in high quality infrastructure to support a thriving and diverse economy.

Strategies

3.1 Develop and implement a long-range plan for capital improvements (CIP), utility maintenance, streets, sidewalks, and utility infrastructure improvements.

Tactics

- Update capital improvement priorities.
- Prioritize existing infrastructure before major new infrastructure expansions unless required for safety, compliance, or strategic economic development.
- Use enterprise fund studies, rate studies, engineering reports, and project updates to guide utility capital planning.
- Develop a grant and funding calendar for infrastructure projects.

3.2 Clarify, streamline, and improve development ordinances to support quality growth and responsible development.

Tactics

- Create a running list of ordinance sections needing review, clarification, removal, replacement, or amendment.
- Review the Land Development Code for consistency with growth plans, infrastructure capacity, housing needs, and Council policy direction.
- Use feedback from staff, developers, property owners, advisory boards, and Council to identify recurring ordinance issues.
- Start the process of building on the Comprehensive Plan.

3.3 Align building, infrastructure, and service improvements with growth plans.

Tactics

- Continue coordination with NCDOT, Gaston County, schools, utilities, and regional partners.
- Explore opportunities to attract or improve access to high-speed internet.
- Evaluate service capacity impacts during major development, annexation, utility extension, or infrastructure requests.
- Review major capital projects for alignment with adopted plans, service capacity, financial sustainability, and long-term maintenance obligations.

Goal 4: Provide opportunities for citizen engagement and promote volunteerism.

Strategies

4.1 Educate appointed and advisory boards to carry out City goals.

Tactics

- Develop an annual advisory board orientation.
- Create a board recruitment plan.
- Provide advisory boards with a simplified strategic plan summary.

4.2 Create programs and resources that better advise the community.

Tactics

- Pilot informal discussion meetings, coffee-style conversations, or topic-based public meetings.
- Use City facilities for public information meetings on major topics.
- Pursue pilot program and annual Citizens Academy program.
- Continue developing citizen education resources.

4.3 Implement and maintain a communication and engagement plan that supports Council priorities, public understanding, and community trust.

Tactics

- Coordinate social media, website, message boards, text alerts, and other channels.
- Advertise advisory board opportunities, public meetings, volunteer opportunities, and major project updates more consistently.
- Develop simple public-facing strategic plan progress updates.

Goal 5: Foster organizational sustainability that embraces innovation and creativity.

Strategies

5.1 Ensure the City continues to attract and retain high-quality professionals.

Tactics

- Implement the pay and classification plan in a financially responsible manner.
- Review salary competitiveness as part of the annual budget process.
- Evaluate employee benefit options.
- Develop a compensation and benefits communication piece for employees.

5.2 Continue staff engagement programs and offer more professional development opportunities and training incentives.

Tactics

- Continue staff engagement efforts.
- Establish a recurring employee highlight program.
- Identify department-level professional development needs.
- Explore low-cost or no-cost training partnerships.

5.3 Continue identifying ways to increase service delivery effectiveness.

Tactics

- Develop a process for departments to identify service delivery challenges and workflow improvements.
- Provide periodic Council educational briefings on major City processes.
- Identify technology, software, policy, or procedural changes that could improve efficiency.
- Use strategic plan progress reporting to highlight successes and barriers.