



# City of Bowling Green

Public Works Department

**Strategic Plan 2025-2030**



December 2024



To: Jeff Meisel, City Manager  
From: Andy Souza, Public Works Director  
Subject: 2025-2030 Strategic Plan  
Date: 4 December 2024

Bowling Green is the fastest growing city in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. It is developing at a speed requiring both present and future planning considerations. As such, we have prepared this strategic plan to help inform the latter. The scope of this plan is 5-years, but more importantly, it has helped cage our focus and open our thought processes to address change both now and in the future. Deliberately developed and with an eye toward being Community Led, Service Driven and Powered by Growth, we present this plan to you. As an American Public Works Association accredited agency we present this plan to the citizens of Bowling Green and will make it available on our website.

The 2025-2030 Strategic Plan is anchored on *three pillars- Preparing for Tomorrow, Executing Today and Caring for the Caretakers*. Each of these focus areas has been further refined and linked to specific goals and objectives. Those objectives will inform our budget submissions, monthly Project Meetings and be topics of discussion at our staff meetings.

Finally, our Strategic Plan is a living document. It will be modified and adjusted as needed to address changes, fiscal constraints and feedback from our citizens. At a minimum, the plan will be reviewed annually.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Souza".

Andy Souza  
Public Works Director

Matt Powell  
Environmental Manager

Melissa Cansler, P.E.  
City Engineer

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Facilities Manager

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Ryan Johnson  
Operations Manager

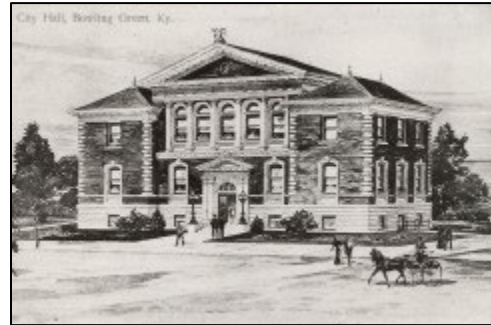
Denise Gilland  
Fleet Manager

[www.bgky.org/publicworks](http://www.bgky.org/publicworks)  
Bowling Green, KY



### ***History and Organizational Profile***

Bowling Green, the “Park City” of Kentucky, was established in 1798, and is the third largest city in the Commonwealth with a metropolitan statistical area population of over 183,992. The City limits occupy a land area of over **42.6 square miles**, has a current census population estimate of 74,926 and serves as the retail, educational, medical, commercial, and social hub for South-Central Kentucky and Northern Tennessee. The labor market for the area encompassing a radius of one hundred (100) miles from the city includes approximately 750,000 employable workers 18 years and older.



***Figure 1-Photo Care of: Kentucky Library and Museum, Western Kentucky University***

Bowling Green is home to several significant companies including the General Motors Corvette Assembly Plant, Fruit of the Loom (Union Underwear), Henkel Corporation, Holley Performance Products, and Bowling Green Metalforming. The State’s third largest public university, Western Kentucky University (WKU), is also situated in Bowling Green and offers approximately 16,750 students a wide range of academic programs, numerous extra-curricular clubs and societies, and the ability to cheer on the University’s athletic teams dubbed the “Hilltoppers.” WKU is one of only 25 “Safe Communities” in the US as accredited by the National Safety Council and is only the fourth academic institution worldwide to receive this designation.

Bowling Green is an active, friendly community which celebrates its low cost of living, quality school systems and local places to eat, shop and play. Bowling Green is the third-largest city in Kentucky and recently noted an 18.3% growth rate over the last 10 years. Additionally, the city ranks 11% below the national average when it comes to the average cost of living.

Bowling Green is home to more than 800 acres of land which includes playgrounds, dog parks, disc golf, golf courses and more. The sports and arts districts in Bowling Green are also vibrant and growing all the time.



***Figure 2-Bowling Green is located in Warren County. There are 120 counties in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.***

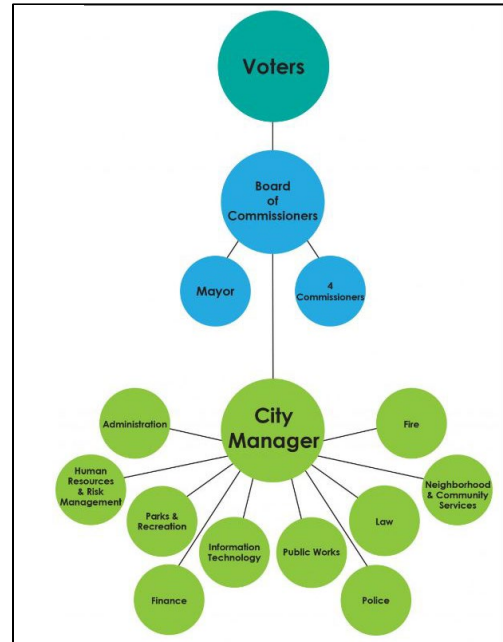
## City Government

Bowling Green is a City Manager form of government as constituted under Kentucky Revised Statute 83A.150. All of the power of the executive and legislative branch are vested in the Board of Commissioners (all judicial functions are under the jurisdiction of state government). The Board of Commissioners (Board) appoints a City Manager as the chief administrative officer, whose responsibility is to carry out the decisions of the Board and manage the day-to-day operations of the City.

The **Commissioners** serve **two year terms** while the **Mayor** serves a **four year term**. The Mayor has the statutory responsibility to preside at Board meetings, recommend appointments to designated boards, and is the signatory of authorized documents on behalf of the City. On 5 November 2024 the incumbent mayor and all 4 Board of Commissioners were re-elected.

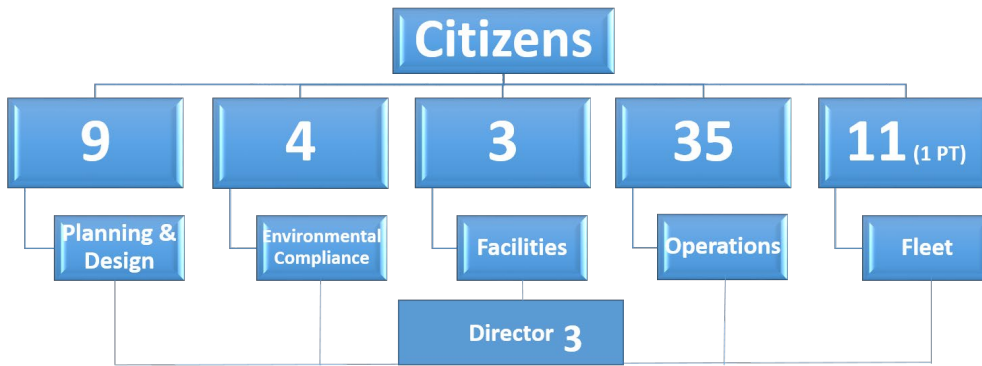
The City provides a full range of municipal services, including police and fire protection, permitting and inspection services, construction and maintenance of

streets and other infrastructure, recreational activities and cultural events, and general administrative services. The City employs approximately 560 full-time and up to 312 part-time employees. Bowling Green has been nationally recognized on many occasions and frequently receives accolades as one of the nation's top areas for economic development, livability, event hosting, and as a destination city. In 2023, the City was recognized by Site Selection magazine as the top performing metro area among the "2023 Top Metro for Areas with Populations Under 200,000," marking the 11th consecutive year the City has received the designation and been ranked as one of the top six. Bowling Green was also featured by Southern Living magazine's as one of "The South's Best Cities on the Rise 2022" and included in National Geographic's "World's Best Cities" and "Top 10 Best All-American Cities" lists. Sportsevents.com named Bowling Green a "Destination to Watch" and the City received a Reader's Choice Award for professionalism and quality of service in event hosting.



## Department Overview

The City of Bowling Green Public Works Department is composed of **65 full time equivalent (FTE)** positions and **2 part-time** positions. The department also utilizes interns to assist in both the Environmental Compliance Division and the Fleet Division.



*Figure 3-The Department is structured into five divisions with the citizens of Bowling Green being the focal point for all efforts.*

**Financial Profile**

The Public Works Department is included in multiple categories of the annual budget. A snapshot of the **FY25** Budget is listed below:

General Fund	Special Revenue	Capital Project	Enterprise	Internal Services
Public Works	Landfill Closure	Equipment Replacement	Convention Center	Fleet Management
		Sidewalk Improvement		Facilities Maintenance
		Greenway Development		
		Future Road Projects		
		Stormwater Improvements		
		Smallhouse Road Construction		
		Bluegrass Farms Blvd Extension		
		Municipal Facilities		
<b>\$8,206,609</b>	<b>\$3,413,525</b>	<b>\$5,231,500</b>	<b>\$510,525</b>	<b>\$5,788,975</b>

**Total**

**\$23,151,134**



<b>42¢</b> Public Safety	<b>17¢</b> Public Works	<b>16¢</b> Parks & Rec	<b>13¢</b> General Gov	<b>7¢</b> NCS
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## Strategic Plan Overview

*“If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there.”—Lewis Carroll*

Our Strategic Plan is a roadmap, incorporating both short and long range planning documents, to address the department’s efforts to anticipate and address the future needs of the City of Bowling Green. The city’s growth necessitates continuous planning and review across the department to ensure the needs of our citizens are addressed.

The plan began with a strategic offsite on 15 October 2024 at the Aviation Heritage Park. All Division Managers, the Director, Executive Assistant and Office Associate were in attendance. In order to prepare for the meeting, each member was asked to accomplish 3-hours of preparatory work. This effort included reading the City’s **Board of Commissioners 2022-2032 Strategic Plan**, Dr. Spencer Johnson’s **Who Moved My Cheese** and sections of John Kotter’s book **XLR8**.

The team was also asked to individually review all plans, guidance and documents related to their respective divisions in order to inform group discussions. Some of the relevant source planning documents are listed below, along with relevant pillars, goals and projects.

## Source Documents



Pillar I. Efficient Governance	Goal 1. Improve Mobility	Goal 3. Deliver Economic Opportunities and Enhance Quality of Life	Project-Intersection Improvements
Pillar III. Greenway Development	Goal 2. Provide access and options	Goal 4. Optimize Performance through People and Innovation	Project-Traffic Signal Improvements
Pillar VI. City Workforce Development	Goal 3. Provide Connectivity within and between modes		Project-Pavement Markers and Striping
Pillar VIII. Strong Neighborhoods	Goal 8. Support health and wellness		Project-Pavement Resurfacing

## Strategic Plan Methodology

The director identified three core pillars for the department’s Strategic Plan in order to focus the initial meeting and to establish areas for linkages with associated efforts, milestones and timelines for completion. The three pillars are **Preparing for Tomorrow**, **Executing Today** and **Caring for the Caretakers**.

Discussions during the planning offsite and follow-up meetings helped determine specific goals for each of the three pillars and associated timelines for completion. Goals were linked to the first letter of each pillar for ease of tracking and association. For example, the first tracked goal related to the **Preparing for Tomorrow** pillar is tracked as P1 with subsequent goals following in sequential order. Each of the three pillars was refined and broken into specific goals with annotated milestones and timelines for completion. These goals are then briefed monthly during the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday staff meeting of each month. During those meetings, updates and direction are provided.

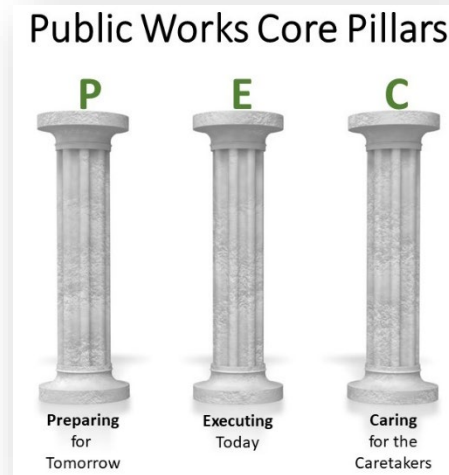
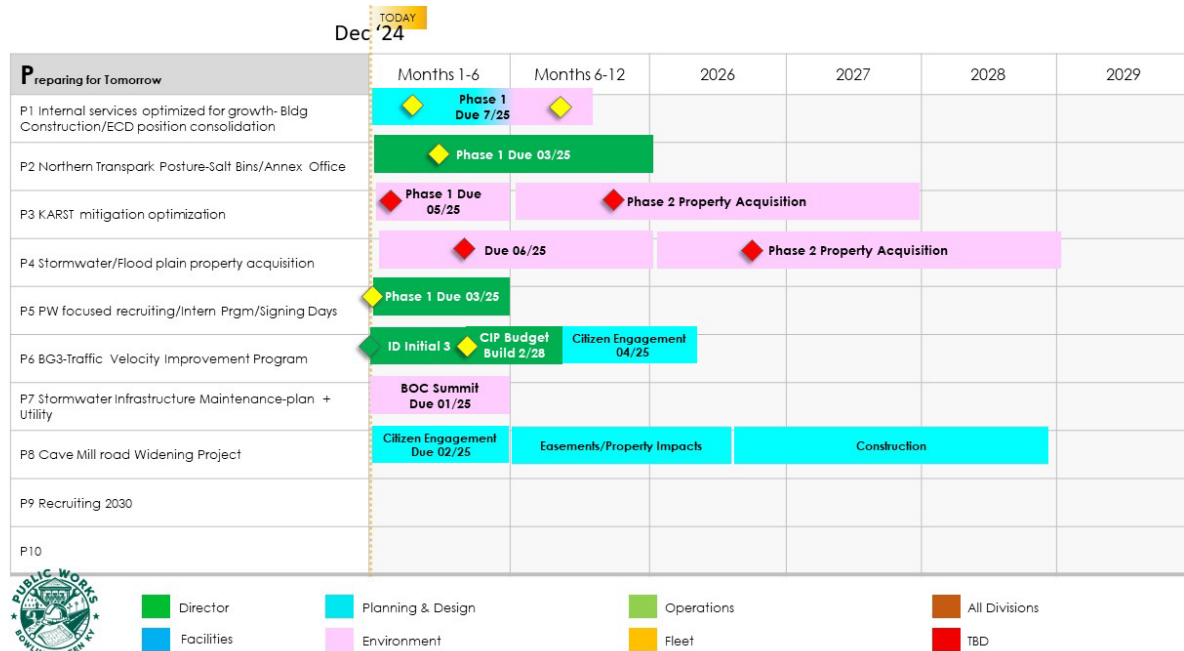


Figure 4-Public Works Core Pillars



Public Works Strategic Plan-2025-2030

Figure 5-Example of the Core Pillars and associated goals and timelines for completion on a Gantt Chart.

### ***Pillar Analysis and Tracking***

The team identified the following Goals for the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. They are classified according to pillar and assigned a numerical value for tracking. Items requiring less than 2-years to complete are annotated in **blue**.

#### **Preparing for Tomorrow**

- P1 **Internal services optimized for growth- building Construction & ECD positions consolidated**
- P2 Northern Transpark- Salt Bins/Annex Office
- P3 KARST Mitigation Optimization
- P4 Stormwater/Flood Plain Property Acquisition
- P5 **Public Works focused recruiting/Internship Programs and Scholarships**
- P6 "BG-3" Traffic Velocity Improvement Program
- P7 Stormwater Infrastructure Maintenance Plan & Utility
- P8 Cave Mill Road Widening Project
- P9 Street Overlay and Preservation

#### **Executing Today**

- E1 Citizen Engagement Program**
- E2 Citizen Information Hub**
- E3 Consolidated Inspection Process with NCS**
- E4 Face-to-Name Chart for Public Works**
- E5 Stormwater Mitigation Today
- E6 Street Overlay
- E7 Sidewalk Reconstruction Program
- E8 Sidewalk Improvement Program

#### **Caring for the Caretakers**

- C1 IT Refresh for Usability**
- C2 Optimize Office Associate I position for Admin**
- C3 Work with HR to develop a career advisor program**
- C4 Pay/Certification Way Ahead
- C5 City Employee Appreciation Events



## Final Thoughts

The department's **2025-2030 Strategic Plan** is meant to be a planning tool and aid. It is not a solution to all problems and is only as valuable as the work put into maintaining it. Its value resides in enabling the cognitive processes for thinking strategically. It is a living plan and serves as a guide. It is short deliberately and designed to be concise. During the plans development the **following topics** were also discussed and will be used as talking points in subsequent strategic planning efforts, meetings and to remind us all what we discussed. Finally, the director also asked for and received a "speed bump" list of topics/personnel slowing progressing and requiring director-level engagement to ignite action.



### Strategic Planning Discussion Items Department-wide Topics

#### Consolidation

- ❖ Public Works Campus (1 location vs 3)

#### Recruiting

- ❖ Hiring vs time
- ❖ Retention efforts
- ❖ Scholarships and Internships

#### 10-year personnel requirements

- ❖ Growth metrics related to personnel  
(Example: Cumulative miles of subdivision acceptance, # of signs, CDR support)
- ❖ CIPs impacting personnel  
(Example: Cave Mill Road widening- biggest city effort in 20 years/\$30M project)



### Strategic Planning Discussion Items Cross Divisional Topics

#### Efficiencies

- ❖ Construction Coordinator roles
  - Planning & Design Division
  - Environmental Compliance Division
  - Facilities Division

#### Checklists and Zone assignments

- ❖ Development & use of standardized checklists (if different from county, why?)
- ❖ 10 work zones across the city
  - Ops teams assigned to zones, cross linked with Admin building roles



### Strategic Planning Discussion Items Stop doing & Add list



- ❖ Wash Bay @ Fleet (do vouchers instead)
- ❖ Surplus @ Fleet
- ❖ Fire Storage
- ❖ Grant Projects (reduce)
- ❖ Repeated Traffic Complaints (Q&A)
- ❖ Injection Wells



- ❖ Fleet body shop
- ❖ Police upfitting
- ❖ Comfuel
- ❖ Free Space to think/Plan
- ❖ PW Planner position
- ❖ Facilities Coordinator
- ❖ Citizen complaint center
- ❖ Combine ECD with Ops
- ❖ Add mechanic @ Ops



### Strategic Planning Discussion Items Budget Items

- ❖ Consolidated campus
- ❖ Enterprise Fleet Management contract
- ❖ Roof needs for Ops and Fleet
- ❖ HVAC @ Fleet
- ❖ Fleet tow motor
- ❖ IT refresh
- ❖ Traffic control remote monitoring
- ❖ Procure land for floodplains
- ❖ Track drill
- ❖ Stormwater utility
- ❖ Small bucket truck
- ❖ Lowboy trailer

