



CARBONDALE VISION 2025

BY 2025, CARBONDALE WILL BE RECOGNIZED AS A GROWING, DISTINCTIVE, INNOVATIVE, UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY WITH A VIBRANT CITY CENTER AND ATTRACTIVE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS; PROVIDING HIGH-QUALITY SERVICES, FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY, AND OPEN, TRANSPARENT GOVERNMENT FOR ITS RESIDENTS; AND AS A REGIONAL CENTER THAT WELCOMES VISITORS FOR THE ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, HEALTHCARE, EMPLOYMENT, RETAIL, AND EDUCATION.

COUNCIL GOALS AND ACTION PLANS

FY2020 THROUGH FY2025

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

Strategic Initiatives:

- Explore a merger with the Carbondale Park District
- Conduct more year-round, community-oriented programs for youth
- Conduct a citizens survey
- Publicize the positive aspects of Carbondale, being proactive, using social media, and embracing the diverse nature of the community
- Study existing housing profiles to address areas of concern and identify incentives for increasing homeownership
- Improve the aesthetics of the welcoming corridors into Carbondale
- Conduct more community-wide events
- Make broadband accessible and affordable for low-income residents
- Explore opportunities to partner on events and programs with BGCSI and other youth-oriented agencies
- Pursue job training programs with public schools and Labor
- Partner with Paul Simon Public Policy Institute to administer a citizens survey
- Market the City through multiple media channels and regionally
- Implement a residential TIF to help redevelop homes and restore neighborhoods
- Complete design and installation of entry signs at all main corridors to the city
- Pursue the design and installation of a permanent concert venue
- Continue planting trees along major corridors and other high visibility areas
- Work with ISP's to deploy fiber throughout residential areas

Action Plans:

- Work with Park District genuinely explore the pros/cons of merging operations

Goal #2: Encourage progressive economic development, tourism, arts, and entertainment

Strategic Initiatives:

- Provide increased City funding for economic development
- Build on the Carbondale retail sector, understanding that there are changes in the retail marketplace
- Partner with regional economic development groups
- Encourage entrepreneurship and small business development in the city
- Analyze and expand where needed, TIF districts in areas needing redevelopment
- Partner with SIU to utilize facilities for entertainment/arts events
- Examine the use of funding provided by the City for Tourism

Action Plans:

- Add additional ED staff and resources through the budget process
- Develop an arts and entertainment district downtown
- Continue building regional coalitions to improve workforce and attract employers
- Complete study to examine feasibility of a co-working space
- Complete an economic development strategic plan
- Explore funding opportunities and partnerships to establish a microloan program for business startups

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

Strategic Initiatives:

- Plan for 2020 Census outcomes
- Maintain a reserve fund for emergencies
- Consider the need for strategic annexation
- Create a policy to promote public participation
- 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
- Instill a culture of ownership in the City budget

Action Items:

- Utilize the complete count committee to increase participation in the 2020 Census
- Use every possible budget savings to build reserve funds
- Enact a public comment ordinance
- Continue to publicize see/click/fix
- Continue to strategically contact non-residents to consider annexation
- Encourage broader employee participation in the budget process

Goal #4: Provide high-quality City infrastructure

Strategic Initiatives:

- Prioritize CIP projects including input from Staff and the City Council
- Consider the need for a stormwater utility fee
- Ensure water/sewer rates are sufficient to fund maintenance upgrades and improvements
- Implement a street improvement plan
- Keep technology current
- Develop a comprehensive definition of a Community Investment Program and rubric for assessing priority investments

Action Items:

- Organize a CIP committee to review and prioritize projects
- Analyze service fees annually to ensure sustainability of enterprise funds
- Utilize pavement condition study to develop street improvement plan
- Expand the use of technology to increase efficiencies

Goal #5: Build on, expand, and develop new relationships with SIU and other regional entities

Strategic Initiatives:

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

Action Items:

- Work with SIU to further leverage and market Carbondale's proximity to the Shawnee National Forest
- Continue to lead the development of regional coalitions to improve economic development
- Work with SIH to help coordinate future expansion plans
- Partner with Tourism and SIU to continue offering events that appeal to SIU students
- Remained focused on enhancing curb appeal, including the areas adjacent to SIU campus

Goal #6: Use the downtown master plan as a guide to revitalize the City Center

Strategic Initiatives:

- Pursue funding for the multimodal transportation project
- Develop a master parking plan
- Promote public art/green wall downtown
- Address issues of downtown vacancies and “high rent”
- Use the master plan as a guide
- Publicize and encourage owners to improve downtown properties using existing incentives

Action Items:

- Find a way to secure funding for a regional multimodal center
- Work with Carbondale Main Street to develop programs to encourage new retail activity (i.e. pop-up stores) to better utilize vacant spaces
- Develop program to encourage public art installations
- Identify the best long-term parking solution
- Develop new incentives to encourage property owners to renovate buildings

Goal #7: Beautify streetscapes and enhance residential development/rehabilitation

Strategic Initiatives:

- Explore development of a Community Housing Trust
- Address the need to convert rental houses into owner-occupied housing
- Provide adequate sidewalks and bicycle lanes
- Create an incentive program for new residential development for single families and seniors

Action Items:

- Implement a residential TIF to help renovate blighted homes and to encourage homeownership
- Continue to provide housing programs to enhance curb appeal and convert rental properties to owner-occupied
- Proceed with additional streetscape phases downtown to include E. Main and E. Walnut corridor
- Continue providing welcome packets to new homeowners
- Request maintenance permits from IDOT to add trees and landscaping in high visibility right-of-way areas
- Continue to evaluate the need for street lighting, in particular in high-traffic areas or areas prone to crime
- Expand bike lanes whenever possible
- Add and improve sidewalks throughout the City to improve accessibility