

CITY OF
LIBERTY

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2022 Strategic Plan



MAIN STREET, LIBERTY, S.C.

Adopted May 9, 2022

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Letter from the Mayor



Dear Liberty Community,

It is my pleasure to present the 2022 City of Liberty Strategic Plan. Our new plan is the culmination of input from our citizens, local businesses, and stakeholders. It is city-wide, issues-driven, and the first of its kind in our city’s history.

The process involves the foundation of several areas:

Focus Area 1:
Resilient and Proactive Infrastructure

Focus Area 2:
Economic Development

Focus Area 3:
Dynamic Community

Focus Area 4:
Efficient and Effective Government

The plan articulates the City’s strong commitment to provide our citizens and businesses with the tools and services to develop our community each year.

I am confident that this inaugural strategic plan will support Liberty’s budget each year. It is a living document that can be amended annually to reflect the contemporary needs of the municipality with an emphasis on accountability, partnership, innovation, and efficiency.

I would like to thank the citizens and council who gave their time to this process. These are exciting times for Liberty! I look forward to using our strategic plan as a guide to achieve our vision of a vibrant and thriving place to live, work, and play, while maintaining our small-town charm, and safe, family-friendly community.

For the love of Liberty,

Erica Romo Woods
Mayor of Liberty

Community-Based Plan

The purpose of strategic planning is to build a consensus around a singular vision for future development of a community or organization. For a local government, like Liberty, the process is developed to achieve an effective and efficient administration and delivery of municipal services to fulfill the shared vision. A successful strategic planning process involves the input of multiple internal and external stakeholders to survey improvement opportunities in all areas a municipality has responsibility. Most importantly, a municipal strategic plan assists a community in defining who they are, who they serve, what services they provide, and how to best provide those services.

In 2020, the City of Liberty developed the 'Liberty Master Plan'. This plan used citizen input to give the City and general roadmap for where the city may consider focusing future efforts. The city began developing a community-based plan through community meetings, discussions with department heads and elected officials, and a SWOT analysis. While an abundance of ideas, concerns, and goals were obtained, several major areas emerged. These included:

- Infrastructure/Facilities
- Review/Protect Historic Properties
- Arts/Recreation
- Walkways/Pathways
- Downtown/Economic Development
- Events/Tourism

Once the themes became apparent, the next step in the planning process was to develop several broad categories targeted at achieving the strategies. Four focus areas emerged, including Resilient Infrastructure, Economic Development, Dynamic Community, and Efficient and Effective Government. City Council met in 2021 to review and selected the final strategies and timeframes. There are three timeframes including short-term (12-18 months), mid-term (18 months – 3 years), and long-term (3 -5 years).

The City of Liberty is committed to implementing the strategic plan and incorporating community input in shaping future plans. The city believes using partnerships and collaborations is paramount to achieve future success in this endeavor. With this in mind, the 2022 Strategic plan is a 'living document' that must be updated and modified regularly to address changing circumstances, budget limitations, and shifting community priorities. The mayor and council are committed to annually reviewing the strategic plan and making changes to reflect the shared vision of the community.



A photograph of a historic stone mill house with a steep, snow-covered roof and a tall chimney. The house is surrounded by snow-covered bushes and trees in a winter setting. The image has a blue tint.

Community Vision

The City of Liberty is a historic mill town with friendly residents, prolific opportunities, and an innovative and diverse economy.

Focus Areas

The City of Liberty is focused on building and maintaining Resilient Infrastructure, promoting growth and prosperity through Economic Development, and ensuring a diverse Dynamic Community, all using Efficient and Effective Government.



Resilient Infrastructure

The City of Liberty is committed to providing a top-quality water and sewer system to the citizens, businesses, and visitors to Liberty. This includes ensuring access to safe drinking water at affordable rates and incorporating business-type activities to make strategic growth-focused investments.

Goals	Strategies	Time-Frame
Enhance Trust and Reliability	Deploy advanced meter reading technology through City-wide implementation of a wireless meter reading system.	Short-Term
	Provide tools for customers to better understand utility usage.	Short-Term
	Develop programs to assist low to moderate income households with utility bills and infrastructure improvements.	Mid-Term
Maintain and Repair Aging Infrastructure	Utilize state & federal grant funding to improve water & sewer infrastructure.	Short-Term
	Develop a long-term utility replacement program.	Long-Term
	Conduct a study regarding underground power for Historic Business District.	Mid-Term
	Conduct a wastewater inflow & infiltration study.	Long-Term
	Ensure an adequate & reliable network of fire hydrants.	Mid-Term
	Research competitive water & sewer rates by tracking regional water rates and making necessary rate adjustments to ensure the sustainability of business-type activities.	Short-Term
Build and Save for the Future	Create & maintain a dedicated reserve fund.	Short-Term
	Study current & future capacity rates.	Mid-Term
	Initiate key investments and the expansion of water & sewer services into new areas, including the bypasses and major future growth corridors.	Mid-Term



Economic Development

The City is committed to provide opportunities for local business development and retention of employment opportunities and prosperity, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all citizens. With this, the City finds it essential to ensure a fair, equitable, and diverse economy that capitalizes on the historic downtown, tourism, and local ‘shops’.

Goals	Strategies	Time-Frame
Revitalize Historic Downtown	Expand the Façade Improvement Grant to include full preservation of historic properties.	Short-Term
	Redevelop the Façade Improvement grant to include tracts of downtown buildings.	Short-Term
	Implement wayfinding strategy for Historic Downtown	Short-Term
	Develop a plan to increase public parking access.	Mid-Term
	Develop Streetscaping design to include monument welcome sign and rebuilt ‘train station’-style building to be used as economic development office/welcome center.	Long-Term
	Evaluate participation in the Main Street South Carolina program	Short-Term
	Support businesses through regular engagement and communication.	Short-Term
	Complete redevelopment of football stadium with the removal of visitor seating, the installation of restrooms, and performance stage, etc.	Mid-Term

Goals	Strategies	Time-Frame
Boost Commercial and Industrial Growth	Develop & implement a retail strategy to attract and retain retail and service-oriented businesses.	Short-Term
	Evaluate and update economic development incentives to encourage growth toward perimeter properties, including gateway corridors.	Mid-Term
	Enhance partnerships with economic development and small business partners to support entrepreneurs and local businesses.	Short-Term
Promote Local and Regional Tourism	Develop & implement a marketing strategy to encourage local & regional tourism.	Short-Term
	Specially design tourism spaces utilizing the Historic Downtown.	Mid-Term
	Enhance and market sports and recreation facilities to advance regional sports tourism	Mid-Term
	Cultivate cultural tourism by focusing on local arts opportunities and development.	Mid-Term
	Develop & Implement a comprehensive civic and wayfinding signage program.	Short-Term





Dynamic Community

The City of Liberty is committed to building and maintaining a Dynamic Community that is inclusive, attractive, is family-oriented, and strives for a high quality of life for all residents.

Goals	Strategies	Time-Frame
Cultivate Community Development and Engagement	Develop a strategy and implementation of a City Municipal Complex.	Mid-Term
	Develop a strategy for the redevelopment of the Rosewood Center.	Short-Term
	Ensure controlled, planned growth through the use of innovated land-use practices.	Mid-Term
	Support local & regional partners to encourage community development.	Short-Term
	Enhance & expand opportunities for community engagement.	Mid-Term
	Actively promote volunteerism and community engagement.	Short-Term
Enhance Transportation	Work with local & regional partners to investigate potential public transportation opportunities.	Mid-Term
	Work with local & regional partners to address traffic & road maintenance issues.	Short-Term

Goals	Strategies	Time-Frame
Expand Recreation and Health Opportunities	Implement an annual sidewalk repair maintenance program to increase walkability of the community.	Short-Term
	Conduct a Bicycle and pedestrian study	Mid-Term
	Conduct a Master parks Study to implement community-recommended improvements to recreational parks & facilities.	Short-Term
	Evaluate the need for additional public facilities, including a community pool and/or splash park.	Mid-Term
	Expand recreational program offerings to include non-sport activities, STEAM opportunities, and cultural activities.	Mid-Term
	Utilize regional partnerships to develop a regional trail plan potentially connecting Liberty to bordering municipalities.	Mid-Term
	Make strategic investments in recreational facilities & parks.	Mid-Term
	Evaluated the long-term need for leased recreation facilities.	Mid-Term
	Promote active lifestyles through year-round recreational programs for youths & adults.	Short-Term
	Recruit local & regional healthcare partners to open additional healthcare service distribution points.	Mid-Term
	Promote public welfare by increasing access to quality healthcare services.	Mid-Term





Efficient and Effective Government

It is imperative that the City of Liberty’s Efficient and Effective Government deliver community-focused services and building trust and transparency between City government and residents.

Goals	Strategies	Time-Frame
Enhance Service Delivery	Regularly review City Ordinances and make necessary updates to ensure compliance with state & federal codes.	Mid-Term
	Evaluate the need for additional code enforcement strategies, including the adoption of property maintenance requirements.	Short-Term
	Review and implement strategies to ensure compliance with building and zoning regulations.	Short-Term
	Examine the need for additional regulation related to property maintenance and appearance.	Short-Term
	Renew commitment to community policing strategies in order to maintain good community relations throughout the City.	Short-Term





Goals	Strategies	Time-Frame
Ensure Fiscally Responsible and Sustainable City Finances	Research and implement policies to maintain the long-term financial stability of the City.	Short-Term
	Evaluate potential impact fee for growth and new developments.	Short-Term
	Segment funds to ensure separation between government activities and business-like activities.	Mid-Term
	Update the Capital Improvements Plan program.	Short-Term
	Develop and implement a Facility Maintenance Plan to improve and extend the service life of existing buildings.	Mid-Term
	Research possibilities of using 'green', sustainable strategies for future government facilities.	Mid-Term
	Renew and update procurement policies to streamline purchasing; eliminate waste; implement financial controls; and ensure consistency with local, state, and federal procurement standards	Short-Term
Enhance Staffing Recruitment and Retention	Develop and implement a recruitment and retention strategy that focuses on hard-to-fill positions, increasing diversity, and succession planning.	Short-Term
	Develop and conduct an annual evaluation process.	Mid-Term
	Offer competitive compensation and benefits to attract and retain top talent.	Short-Term
	Ensure adequate staffing levels across the organization, focusing on career and talent specialization.	Mid-Term

Goals	Strategies	Time-Frame
Encourage Training and Professional Development	Provide training and professional development opportunities throughout the organization by utilizing LocalGovU and other resources.	Short-Term
	Develop and implement individual training plans for all staff, including the potential use of cross training.	Mid-Term
	Ensure City Council is a high functioning board by utilizing local, regional, and national training opportunities for continued professional development	Short-Term



Special Thanks

Mayor and Council

Erica Romo Woods, Mayor
Daniel Graybeal, Mayor Pro-Tem
Archie Newberry
Peggy Edwards
John Hayes
Robbie Shoenleben
Rhonda Whitaker

City Staff

Michael Calvert, City Administrator
Mandy Hess, Finance Director
Adam Gilstrap, Police Chief
Austin Lynch, Parks & Recreation Director
Tim Moore, Public Works Director
Chris Yardley, IT Manager
Gloria Turner, Utilities Coordinator
& all city employees





"Over the last several months, the City of Liberty has worked to develop a process to plan for our future as a community. With the assistance of citizens, businesses, and guests, a comprehensive plan has come to fruition that looks forward in developing our city growth, while working to upgrade aging infrastructure. The Strategic Plan collectively seeks to bring the city and its government together to create the type of city we are proud to call home."

Michael Calvert, City Administrator



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