



# TOWN OF HERTFORD COUNCIL RETREAT

March 2 -3, 2024



# STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2023 - 2024



## **Mission**

*Grow Hertford into a first-class community to live, work, play, and visit through increased economic opportunity for residents and businesses, improved housing, and more accessible youth programs, while maintaining an affordable cost of living.*

# Values

- We are one community of many voices, all with the same right to be heard and respected
- We are one community of many needs, all of which must be met for our **shared success**
- We must provide residents with **opportunities** to escape the cycle of poverty
- We must invest in and protect our youth to guarantee the future of our Town
- We must ensure every dollar we spend is put toward the item of **greatest positive impact**
- We must regain the **public trust** by speaking truth, being transparent, and listening always.



## STRATEGIC GOALS

- 1. An attractive historic waterfront community for tourist and citizens**  
*Preserve our historic housing stock and commercial spaces, improve, and maintain existing public spaces and provide a new community gathering space to attract tourism and citizens to our downtown.*



## STRATEGIC GOALS

2. A finance plan to identify funding for current projects and guide Town finances into the future.  
*Identify grant opportunities, create financial policies, identify current assets, prepare, and follow rate studies, refinance debt, and explore partners to create a financial plan to fund community improvements and establish a culture of growing within means.*

## STRATEGIC GOALS

- 3. Best practice administration operations**  
*Utilize technology, personnel evaluation system, and merit pay to enable staff to excel and improve operating efficiencies.*



## STRATEGIC GOALS

### **4. A well-maintained Infrastructure and best practice utility operations**

*Provide quality utilities and utility services in an efficient manner.*

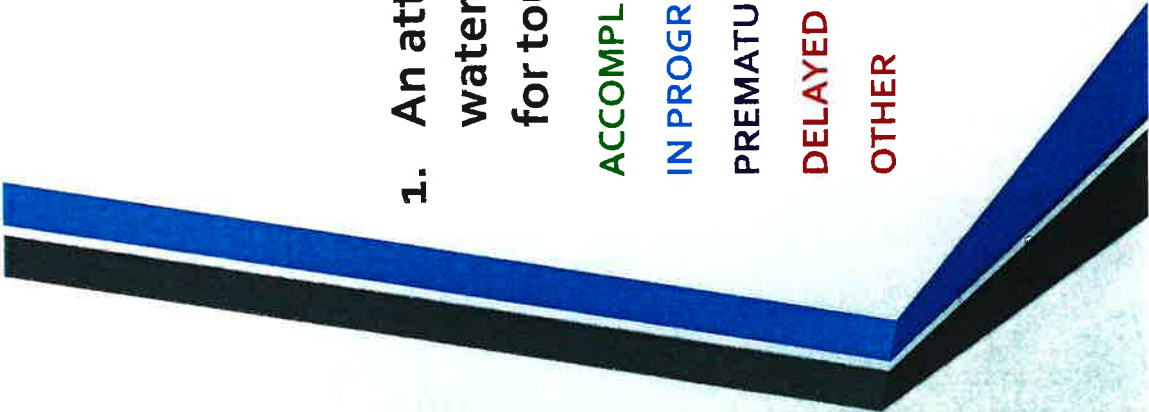
*Establish a level of service to be achieved through staffing, a Capital Improvement Plan for infrastructure repair, and use of technology.*

## STRATEGIC GOALS

### 5. A well-informed citizenry and visitors

*Improve communications to guide visitors and keep citizens informed.*





1. An attractive historic waterfront community for tourist and citizens

ACCOMPLISHED  
IN PROGRESS  
PREMATURE  
DELAYED  
OTHER

**a. Objective: Repair and improve street surfaces in the river front and downtown (following underground and infrastructure repairs)**

• *Strategies:*

1. *Conduct a pavement condition study to prioritize repairs and quantify the costs*
2. *Develop an annual or bi-annual budget repair and resurfacing program*
3. *Prepare a Request for Proposal to bid the project*
4. *Select a vendor/award contract*

1. An attractive historic waterfront community for tourist and citizens

ACCOMPLISHED

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b. Objective: Repair, improve, and install sidewalks in the river front and downtown (following underground and infrastructure repairs)

- Strategies:

1. Select a firm to design, bid, and manage the project
2. Select a vendor/award contract
3. Close out grant



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**c. Objective: Create a community gathering space**

• Strategies:

1. **Identify a well located property**
2. **Develop a plan for the space**
3. **Identify funding to develop the plan**
4. **Bid the construction of the plan**
5. **Select a vendor/award contract**

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d. Objective: Improve housing stock and appearance of town

• Strategies:

1. Secure Code Enforcement services through hiring staff (planner/code enforcement), sharing with another community or contracting
2. Budget to enforce codes and carry out clean up as needed
3. Enforce nuisance and junk car ordinances
4. Enforce minimum housing standards
5. Place liens on property for town expenses due to non-compliance
6. Coordinate with county on foreclosures to collect or secure the ownership of the property
7. Determine options for housing displaced tenants
8. Determine goals for housing improvement (meet minimum standards, for sale, outside appearance only, etc.)
9. Develop criteria to use code enforcement fee debt forgiveness to incent housing improvements and guarantees to meet goals
10. Amend code enforcement fee debt forgiveness policy to match new goals



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**e. Objective Develop plan for utilization of foreclosed properties**

• Strategies:

1. **Identify properties most likely to be foreclosed and become town property**
2. **Decide best use of individual and combined properties**
3. **Develop plan (single family, duplex, condos) for each property to achieve town goals**
4. **Identify and partner as needed with developers or builders to buy improve and sell properties**

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**f. Prevent further deterioration of and improve commercial buildings**

• **Strategies:**

- 1. Investigate a Demolition by Neglect (DBN) ordinance**
- 2. Seek County building and standards help enforcing the DBN ordinance or minimum standards**
- 3. Budget funds to enforce the ordinance (town make repairs)**
- 4. Adopt and enforce the ordinance or minimum standards**
- 5. Consider using tax back grants like those used for industry to incent improvements**
- 6. Façade grants are an option if money is available**



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q. Develop amenities for citizens and tourists in the Downtown and River Front

• Strategies:

1. **Identify locations for electric car charging stations**
2. **Secure funding for electric car charging stations**
3. **Review and amend zoning ordinances as needed to allow murals**
4. **Create guidelines for murals (content, area where they are allowed, approval process, artist selection process, etc.)**
5. **Identify and secure rights for murals**
6. **Select artists**
7. **Paint murals**
8. **Work with new cable provider to provide free Wi-Fi downtown**
9. **Secure/manage parking using leases and purchase to avoid inefficient use by owners/others**
10. **Provide public restrooms downtown**

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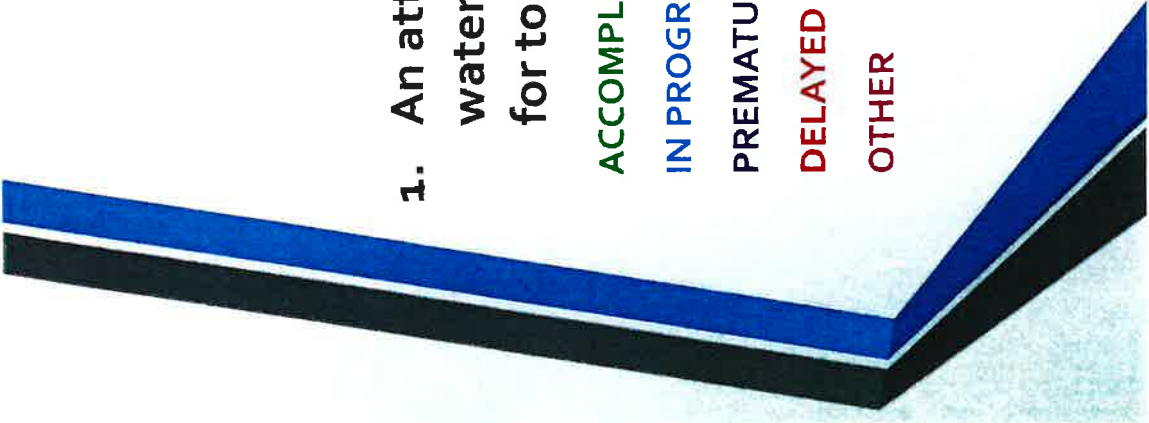
DELAYED

OTHER

h. Objective: Secure and improve vehicle and pedestrian access through Barrow Alley

• Strategies:

1. **Secure right of way as needed**
2. **Engineer and install utilities necessary for future growth. Create an alley improvement plan to allow paving for cars and safe pedestrian access to the Church parking lot**
3. **Identify funding for improvements**
4. **Seek bids for the improvements**
5. **Select a vendor/award contract**



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**i. Objective: Continue to Implement the Community and Waterfront Plan**

- Strategies:
  - 1. Design extension of retaining wall and boardwalk**
  - 2. Identify funding**
  - 3. Bid project**

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## j. Objective: Continue Harbor Town Project

- Strategies: See Harbor Town Project Plan for action steps

1. Accommodate fast ferries at town dock
2. Accommodate dinner boat
3. Temporarily utilize a barge at the town dock
4. Use the S-Bridge once it is in place



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## k. Objective: Bury overhead wires to improve appearance

- 
- Strategies:
  1. *Develop a co-bury agreement with new cable provider*
  2. *Develop a plan/policy to install conduit everywhere we dig for water/sewer and stormwater pipes*

## L. Objective: Recruit a hotel to the Waterfront

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### • Strategies:

1. *Identify suitable sites and discuss with owners*
2. *Identify hotel developers in the region and meet with them*



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2. A finance plan to identify funding for current projects & guide town finances into the future.

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## a. Objective: Refinance Debt

- Strategies:

1. **Identify and select firms that work with local government on refinancing and financial plans**
2. **Select and contract with a firm**
3. **Review financing proposal and take action**



2. A finance plan to identify funding for current projects & guide town finances into the future.

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**b. Objective: Create a system to secure and manage grants**

• **Strategies:**

- 1. Hold a funding summit**
- 2. Utilize Albemarle Commission grant services**
- 3. Contact NCLM about services to manage ARP funds**
- 4. Utilize CERRI services**
- 5. Identify grant services through engineering services assisting with utility infrastructure**
- 6. Develop and use a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to better inform the financial plan**
- 7. The grant process will be ongoing as projects are identified and planned**

**C. Objective: Effectively utilize existing resources**

**Strategies:**

- 1. Inventory all town owned property**
- 2. Identify properties that are and will be need for town operations**
- 3. Establish a value for the properties considered to be excess**
- 4. Establish a plan (in-house or broker) to market/sell the properties**
- 5. Consult the Development Finance Initiative at the UNC School of Government concerning selling or developing the large parcel owned by the town on the water**
- 6. Send DFI existing demographic, market, and other studies from their scope of work. Use DFI to study possibility of location new school and housing on town property**
- 7. Bring amended DFI proposal to council for action**

**2. A finance plan to identify funding for current projects & guide town finances into the future.**

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**d. Objective: Develop Financial Plan**

*Strategies:*

- 1. Utilize a finance firm to develop a financial plan incorporating potential grant funding, financing and selling assets***
- 2. Complete Utility rate study and incorporate into financial plan***
- 3. Complete water and sewer assessments and incorporate project needs into plan***

2. A finance plan to identify funding for current projects & guide town finances into the future.

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**e. Objective: Establish a culture of having and following best financial practices**

• Strategies:

**1. Review and update or create policies and procedures to guide debt limits, fund balances, utility rates and purchasing**



## STRATEGIC GOALS

- 3. Best practice administration operations**  
*Utilize technology, personnel evaluation system, and merit pay to enable staff to excel and improve operating efficiencies.*

**a. Objective: Utilize smart meters in utility systems**

• Strategies:

- 1. Continue to implement the plan to install and utilize electric smart meters for the electric system**
- 2. Identify smart water meter providers**
- 3. Identify radio read user towns and verify their satisfaction**
- 4. Interview providers to determine the system that best fits current billing software or reading needs**
- 5. Secure a bid(s) for the system**
- 6. Identify funding for purchase and installation**
- 7. Award contract**
- 8. Notify/inform citizens of impact and possibilities**

**3. Best practice administration operations**

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3. Best practice administration operations

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b. Objective: Using GIS to create a better system for cemetery recordkeeping

• Strategies:

**1. Continue conversion from paper maps to GIS**

**C. Objective: Develop program to evaluate staff performance, identify individual goals to achieve and training needs for growth, and recognize strong staff performance.**

• Strategies:

- 1. Review MAPS pay plan to get employees up to market**
- 2. Create a simple performance evaluation process that identifies what the employee has done well (previous year goals), could improve on, needs from their supervisor and expects to achieve over the next year**
- 3. Conduct evaluation no less than annually but visit goal progress frequently. Annual evaluations can be on employee anniversary date, before new calendar or fiscal year, or using some other timing**
- 4. Budget for a merit increase pool of funds in the budget**
- 5. Utilize the evaluation system to award merit increases and improve or remove employees**

**3. Best practice  
administration operations**

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3. Best practice  
administration operations

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## d. Objective: Submit audit on time

- **Strategies:**

- 1.** *As records can be closed out (payroll, accounts payable, etc), prepare them for the auditor as soon as possible.*  
*Seek temporary assistance if needed*
- 2.** *Schedule the auditor visit for a time when you anticipate records will be complete (adjust visit as needed)*
- 3.** *Document schedules and dates to show LGC if -the delay is due to the auditor*
- 4.** *Press auditor to complete audit and meet LGC deadline*



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