

Strategic Framework

ANNUAL REPORT

Retreat 2023



Goal 1: Economic Opportunity for All

Explore Opportunities to Partner with Central Carolina Community College and Lee County schools, including public and private, to improve workforce opportunities

Improve Public Transportation and Mobility Options

Develop Target Industries to Provide Diverse Workforce Opportunities

EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- ◆ City staff participated in mock interviews with students at Lee County and Southern Lee high schools.
- ◆ Human Resources shared job openings that require a high school diploma or Associate's Degree with local high schools, the CCCC Career Center, Job Corps Scholars Program, and the YouthBuild Program.

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

- ◆ Installed 2 EV fast-charging stations in the City's Humber Street parking lot through the Duke Energy Park and Plug Program.
- ◆ Sanford was included in a \$10.4m Rural Surface Transportation Grant awarded to NCDOT for on-demand microtransit services.
- ◆ Sanford was included in NCDOT's transit-oriented development planning initiative for the potential S-Line Commuter Rail.

- ◆ NCDOT was granted \$3.4m from the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program for hub mobility planning connected to the S-Line.

DIVERSE WORKFORCE

- ◆ The Sanford Area Growth Alliance (SAGA) targets key industry with the goal of providing diverse employment opportunities, such as:
 - Service Offsite Solutions - low barriers to entry and opportunities to develop construction skills
 - Pfizer purchased Abzena's Sanford facility - double the average local wage
 - Bharat Forge Aluminum USA submitted preliminary plans for a second facility - highly transferable skills in advanced manufacturing
- ◆ SAGA is completing a Market Study and Opportunity Analysis to aid its recruitment and attraction strategy.

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Goal 2: Preserving & Creating Affordable Housing

Support Housing Initiatives in East Sanford

Increase Access to Affordable Housing

Improve the Condition and Number of Affordable Housing Properties

Develop and Improve Programs to Address Homelessness

EAST SANFORD

- ◆ City staff are working with a developer on a unified vision for First Street. The process is in the early phases.
- ◆ The City secured grant funding and completed area feasibility and area flood studies as well as the RFQ process for the Sanford Agricultural Marketplace. Council committed funds made available through ARPA to complete the funding for the project.
- ◆ The City received a \$1.1m NC Emergency Management grant to fund Little Buffalo Creek relocation design and to install drainage under Weatherspoon Street.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- ◆ Staff is finalizing the adoption of Phase 1 of the updated Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).
- ◆ Phase 1 of the updated UDO includes Accessory Dwelling Units, which typically rent at a lower rate. The update will also focus on new rules that support affordable housing development.
- ◆ Sanford City Council committed to three years of funding for Brick Capital CDC's for homebuyer education program.

CONDITION OF PROPERTIES

- ◆ The City completed safety enhancements, infrastructure repairs, HVAC replacement, and unit renovations at the Wilrik Hotel Apartments.
- ◆ The City and County allocated funds made available through ARPA for an urgent repair type program.
- ◆ The City was awarded NCHFA funds for urgent repair and single-family repair programs.
- ◆ The City partnered with Brick Capital CDC (BCCDC) for the Jackson Heights project and with BCCDC and the County for the Washington Ave project, both of which received CBDG funds. These projects will increase affording housing units and allow for future affordable housing development.

HOMELESSNESS

- ◆ The City and the Sanford Housing Authority completed the renovation of Linden Avenue.
- ◆ The City and County allocated funds made available through ARPA to fund program services at Outreach Mission, Inc.
- ◆ S3 Housing Connect supported homelessness initiatives. The City renewed its contract with Partners for Impact for project management.

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Goal 3: Vibrant Downtown

Develop and Implement
Strategies to Link Sanford
and Jonesboro

Improve Mobility

Recruit and Retain
Downtown Businesses

Continue to invest in
public infrastructure

IMPROVE MOBILITY

- ◆ The Triangle J Council of Governments was awarded a Safe Streets and Roads for All grant to develop a Comprehensive Safety Action Plan for Lee County to reduce crashes and their severity. This plan will include networks linking downtown Sanford and Jonesboro, such as Horner Blvd.

RECRUIT AND RETAIN DOWNTOWN BUSINESSES

- ◆ The Sanford Area Growth Alliance (SAGA) has studied the feasibility of marketing Downtown Sanford as a workplace hub for tech jobs.
- ◆ SAGA and the City of Sanford remain committed to the Real Investment in Sanford Entrepreneurs (RISE) program to provide entrepreneurial opportunities while marketing downtown real estate.

- ◆ The Public Art Program has placed murals on several downtown businesses, bringing positive attention to the area and helping to establish it as a tourism destination.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

- ◆ The City secured funding for the Sanford Depot renovation project from the State Capital and Infrastructure Fund, City funds made available through ARPA, and donations. An architect has been selected for the project.
- ◆ Sanford City Council committed City funds made available through ARPA for a study to develop a Small Area Plan for downtown Sanford that will focus on the area's residential and retail needs and options for parking and other improvements.

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Goal 4: Planning and Infrastructure for Growth

Leverage Sanford's Water and Sewer Assets

Improve Streetscape

Develop and Maintain Plans

Add Amenities to Meet the Needs of Residents

Leverage Highway Corridors

- ◆ The design of Fire Station #5 was completed. The City has advertised the project for bid.

WATER AND SEWER ASSETS

- ◆ The City is leveraging its utility assets by partnering with surrounding communities for the provision of utility services.
 - The City partnered with Pittsboro, Holly Springs, and Fuquay-Varina to expand Sanford's Water Filtration Facility to prepare for the region's imminent growth.
 - The City is exploring merging with Pittsboro for the provision of water and wastewater services to the town.
 - With the assistance of State funding, the City is providing utility services to VinFast.

DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN PLANS

- ◆ The Sanford Area Growth Alliance commissioned a market study and

analysis to guide and help recalibrate the local economic development recruiting strategy.

- ◆ City staff is in the final stage of Phase 1 of the updated Unified Development Ordinance to guide development of both residential and commercial properties.
- ◆ The parks department contracted with McAdams for a comprehensive Parks Master Plan.

AMENITIES

- ◆ The City secured State funds for a stage and sound system at Kiwanis Family Park.

HIGHWAY CORRIDORS

- ◆ The City directed Duke Energy to complete a photometric study of lighting along Horner Blvd and Hawkins Ave.

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Goal 5: Engagement

Support Programs that Help Grow Future Community Leaders

Develop Improved Information Dissemination Strategies

Strengthen Local and Regional Partnerships

Develop Diverse Community Building Programs

Engage the Various Cultures in Sanford

COMMUNITY LEADERS

- ◆ The City held Sanford 101 to educate residents about municipal governance.
- ◆ The Sanford Area Growth Alliance held its Leadership Sanford program with ongoing support from small and large businesses and local government.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

- ◆ The City added a Project Management Portal to share information about current projects. The portal can be auto-translated into Spanish.
- ◆ Public Information created a Resident's Guide to Municipal Services and a City Government Guide to help residents understand municipal operations.
- ◆ The City website and mobile app were redesigned to meet current best practices.
- ◆ The City upgraded its website to enable chapter marking for meeting videos.
- ◆ The Parks Department installed a weather station at Kiwanis Family Park that can provide live updates and announce delays during splash pad season.
- ◆ The Fire and Police departments joined social media. The Parks Department, Public

Information, and Appearance Commission maintained their social media presences.

PARTNERSHIPS

- ◆ Public Information worked with staff in Pittsboro and Siler City to help them introduce programs similar to Sanford 101.
- ◆ The parks department partnered with Lee County Parks & Recreation for several community events.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

- ◆ The City updated many policies and procedures in response to the Equity Task Force's work, such as removing some barriers to employment, increasing tuition reimbursement, increasing the minimum wage to \$15/hour, and promoting leadership and interview training for employees.

DIVERSE CULTURE

- ◆ The City partnered with El Refugio to increase Latinx participation in Downtown StreetFest & Fireworks.
- ◆ Public Information participated in speech presentations for ESL students at Lee County and Southern Lee high schools.