

Goal Setting Update-First Quarter 2026 (Updates are in Red)

Goal 1 - Increase housing by improving the viability of projects (including small-scale) via revised ordinances and codes and financial incentives; and help residents stay in their homes.

Objectives

- Encourage housing developments of other types of housing to include single-family
 - Make big impacts with a lot of little deals
 - “Push what we have” – get permitted projects completed
- Align ordinances and codes with our housing goals
 - Modernize city codes
 - Consider recommended land use ordinance changes to increase housing
 - Pass the shelter ordinance-**Second Read by Council on April 16th**
 - Focus on encouraging infill development
 - Explore “pre-approved” housing plans
- Help people stay in their homes
 - Provide educational resources for people who are challenged
 - Keep taxes down
- Financial incentives
 - **Housing Opportunity Program (HOP) Ordinance Development Grant:** Secured a **\$15,000** Municipal Ordinance Development Grant from the Maine Office of Community Affairs to support legal review, planning consultant services, and staff time to update land use ordinances for compliance with **LD 1829, LD 997, and LD 427** (performance period through **7/31/2027**; substantial completion targeted for **fall 2026**).
 - **Downtown Omnibus TIF — Amendment 8 (AMD-8):** completed and had approved Amendment 8 to (1) accommodate the Miller Water Street TIF at 211 Water Street and (2) extend the Downtown Omnibus TIF term by four years to 2033.
 - **Riverlands Affordable Housing TIF:** Advanced the **Riverlands Affordable Housing TIF** and Development Program through the City’s local review process and prepared the item for City Council consideration/public hearing.
 - **CDBG Housing Assistance application support (Glenridge Supportive Apartments):** Supported the City’s role as municipal applicant for the 2026 CDBG Housing Assistance grant, including required Council materials, coordination with the project sponsor on application documentation, and advancing the full application following the State’s invitation to proceed.
- Utilities sewer/water expansion
 - Offer Tax Increment Financing to offset costs
 - Collaborate with utility districts and Board of Trade-**On going discussions with the utility district regarding delegated authority and with Board of Trade on Homelessness.**
 - Continue to explore creative financing

Goal 2- Increase and broaden the tax base by becoming more attractive for developers and entrepreneurs, advancing specific projects, and attracting and retaining small businesses, all in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Objectives

- Explore new specific opportunities with promising impact
 - Explore impact fees for new tax-exempt properties
 - Consider additional education to nonprofits about this
 - Continue and explore new options for events – to make Augusta a destination-**We have added the Travis Mills 5-K to our summer list of events.**
- Support businesses development and retention throughout the City
 - **Venture Forward Augusta (Roux Institute):** Advanced the City’s participation in the **Venture Forward** small-business growth program, including Council authorization for the Master Collaboration Agreement and implementation planning for a cohort-based program serving local businesses.
 - Participated in the MaineBiz “Five on the Future” Forum (01/14/26).
 - Attended the 2026 Kenney Awards (01/23/26).
 - Participated in Municipal Day at Northeastern University’s Roux Institute (02/05/26).
 - Represented the City at MEREDA Forecast 2026 (02/26/26).
 - Attended the Kennebec Chamber of Commerce March Women’s Luncheon featuring Katie Shorey (Live+Work Maine) (03/11/26).
 - Participated in a CEDS meeting hosted by Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG) (03/12/26).
 - Participated in the EDCM Forum & Networking Event with Commissioner Mike Duguay (03/19/26).
 - Great Wall Restaurant: Worked with the owners to identify relocation options within Augusta following displacement from the Anthony Avenue site, with coordinated input from Code Enforcement and the Augusta Police Department on site availability, suitability and traffic flow considerations.
- Focus on high-stakes projects, including but not limited to:
 - Support the Western Avenue partnership – PPI-The PPI study hosted the first public meeting at Farrington School to review existing conditions along the Western Avenue area, and citywide for the Active Transportation Plan. The well-attended group and survey feedback helped identify problem areas, desired destinations, and gaps in our transportation system. Next steps include additional outreach efforts, such as community bike rides, one-on-one interviews, additional survey outreach, and pop-ups at existing community events. An on-demand video of the first public meeting will be available soon. Careful coordination with the City’s comprehensive plan and other planning documents is ongoing.
 - Renew discussions with the owners of the AIM parcel
 - Continue progress on Capital Heights-**Weekly contact with the developer.**
 - Explore targeted development opportunities for the North End of Water Street
 - Continue to implement Civic Center Facilities Master Plan
 - Completion of the road at North Station-**Funding in the 2027 CIP.**

Goal 3- Maintain and improve our organizational excellence, civic engagement, and professionalism aligned with City policies and plans.

Objectives

- Good communication with the citizens
 - Continue our public relations efforts-the rebranding committee has begun to the second phase of vendor selection, working toward a unified municipal brand that will enhance clarity, trust, and transparency. In addition, the City is in the process of transitioning to a new website vendor to improve accessibility for all users and provide a more user-friendly, mobile-responsive experience.
- Committees are high-functioning, well-populated, and well-staffed
 - Review and align our boards and committees
- Continue to maintain strong relations with the State, including legislative relations (such as an annual gathering)
- Maintain good communications and collaboration with the schools – city staff as well as the Mayor sit on the School Building Committee as representative from the city to move the replacement of Hussey School forward. To date, the committee has worked with the school and the consultant on an expansion and renovation of the Farrington School as the Hussey replacement.
- Review the Comprehensive Plan to
 - Align land use planning initiatives – preparing land use ordinance amendments to better address homeless shelters and the housing crisis via amendments required by new state laws. Recommending the first full re-write of the Land Use Ordinance in 36 years via a CIP item to hire a consultant. The goal would be to fully align the code with the Comprehensive Plan and substantially simplify the code, enabling easier understanding by residents and developers.
 - Insure alignment with other community initiatives with the plan
 - How the plan could be used to support grant seeking – the Plan is being used to support NBRC grants, DOT grants, as well as other grants as they come available. Many state grants provide bonus scoring points for a consistent comprehensive plan.

Goal 4 - Improve mobility and access by developing dependable, affordable transportation that supports economic development and quality of life.

Objectives

- Support development of the Active Transportation Plan
 - Pedestrian visibility and safety – sidewalks, lighting, crosswalks-Downtown Pedestrian Safety improvement project has been awarded.
 - ⇨ **EV charging upgrades (grant-funded):** Replaced/improved EV charging units at **City Center** and the **Dickman Street Parking Garage** and added new units at the **Kennebec River Rail Trail** public parking lot. Consider a Public Transportation Plan
- Support and improve single-ride for-fee opportunities, such as
 - Review and revise our regulatory requirements for taxis-Completed by Council in March of 2026

- Provide education at our website and other places about transportation options such as ride-sharing options
- Continuing work with KVCAP for 2-3 routes and on-demand service. KVCAP feels they should be able to give an update to council in May with hopes of providing services in mid-summer if approved by council.
- Held a productive meeting with Greenlight Rides for a “hybrid” model that council requested we explore that would include 1 bus route and a ride share option. We should be ready to bring this to council towards the end of April or mid-May.

Goal 5 - Improve quality of life by enhancing community spaces, community activities, and maintaining public order.

Objectives

- Consider establishing staff positions to improve quality of life, such as
 - a position to coordinate homeless services
 - deputy fire chief
 - another community response specialist
 - and others.
- Improve safety and response to crime by
 - Develop recommendations to revise the Homeless Protocol law-**Mayor and Council Sponsored the Loitering Ordinance revision for the April 16th business meeting.**
 - Consider neighborhood-level initiatives
- Unify and promote park amenities according to plans
- Support cultural anchors such as the Colonial Theater and First Amendment Museum
- Educate the public about the safety of our public spaces and encourage activities.
 - **As a result of members of the unhoused community reluctant to accept police involvement, we’d like to identify other options designated as the unhoused back-up plan during inclement weather, the police lobby was not received well by those in need and many continued to suffer outside. (Goal #5)**
 - **Downtown Patrols will return with the added foot traffic and warmer weather. (Goal #5)**
 - **Staff continue to work with Parks to address violations, camping, litter and abandoned vehicles. (Goal #5)**
 - **Educate our staff and the community on the laws related to the various e-bikes and fuel-operated scooters and cycles. We will begin a new effort to address the various safety violations occurring daily. (Goal #5)**

Goal 6 - Protect public assets and reduce long-term costs through strategic infrastructure investment and maintenance.

Objectives

- **This year’s Paving Maintenance Program will focus on preventive treatment of seven rural roads. Addressing these roads now is intended to prevent significantly higher capital construction costs in the future.**
- **For comparison, last season, thirty-six neighborhood streets, approximately seven miles of roadway, were paved throughout the city. This season’s program targets seven streets**

totaling approximately nine miles of roadway, reflecting a strategic shift toward longer rural segments requiring preservation work. A bid for Ward Road was currently advertised for full reclamation. The other streets are on a separate paving bid currently underway.

- Staff completed and submitted (1) a \$3,000,000 Congressional Direct Funding (T-HUD) request to Senators Collins and King for Augusta Civic Center repairs and improvements; (2) an EPA Brownfields Community-Wide Assessment application requesting \$500,000; and (3) an NBRC Catalyst grant application requesting \$80,000 (with a \$20,000 City match; \$100,000 total project).
- Civic Center completed projects this year including roof replacements for the Auditorium and L sections, with the M roof currently underway. Additional completed improvements include repairs to the north and south staircases, repaving of walkways, loading dock repairs, front entrance concrete slab repairs, and restoration of lawn areas impacted by construction work. Major equipment replacements have included the hot water heater, refrigerator condenser, and boilers.
- Civic Center Interior upgrades have also been completed, including painting of both ballrooms, multiple breakout rooms, and hallways. In addition, we have invested in new auditorium chairs and chair racks, as well as a new dance floor system, which will eliminate the need to utilize the basketball court for non-sporting functions.
- Multiple projects at the Civic Center are currently in progress through the RFP process. This includes fire door replacements (RFP closed and pending award), restroom exhaust fan upgrades, and North Wing entrance repairs. We are also working with Headlight AV to develop an RFP for a new auditorium sound system. In parallel, we are proceeding with smaller AV equipment purchases under the bond to strengthen overall inventory without requiring a formal RFP. Additionally, we are researching a new carpeting system for the basketball court, with an RFP to follow.
- The city put out an RFP for PW Architectural and Engineering services to plan the future of the PW facility, ensuring that that department can effectively and efficiently serve the residents and businesses of the city for the next 50-75 years.