



City of Portsmouth

2026-2027 City Council Goal Categories, Summaries, and Strategic Objectives

The City Council established six broad goal categories and associated strategic objectives during their retreat on January 10, 2026.

Goal Category #1: Housing

Goal Summary: Increase the supply, decrease the cost, simplify the process, and expand below-market housing options.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Create a Homeowners Bill of Rights by the City Council, Planning Board, and City Staff by the end of 2027.
2. Rewrite the zoning ordinance by the City Council, Planning Board, and City Staff by the end of 2027.
3. Create a Housing Action Plan that includes a review of any plans existing from the former Housing Navigator by the end of July 2026.
4. Implement the Housing Action Plan by all stakeholders by the end of 2027.

Goal Category #2: Parking and Transportation

Goal Summary: Make Portsmouth a multi-modal transportation City leveraging both private & public participation and resources.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Determine feasibility of a shuttle loop, identify parties for a public/private partnership for developing funding sources by a Task Force, consultants, and City Staff by the end of October 2026.
2. Identify viable location for adding parking for all modes of transportation by consultant and City Staff by the end of October 2026.

Goal Category #3: Governance for the Governed

Goal Summary: Improve services to residents while protecting the tax base. Remove barriers to entry to boost services that are needed. Challenge State and legal barriers that hinder services.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Rewrite the Zoning Ordinance to find creative tax solutions that incentivize needed sectors (e.g., payment in lieu) to be completed by the Legal Department.
2. Assist needed service sectors with upfront development costs such as design, planning, and permitting.
3. Improve City services without increasing staff by unburdening staff from minutiae generated by red tape to be completed by the City IT Department and staff.
4. Find partners outside the community to help reduce costs to the City and desired service sectors.
5. Establish a Task Force to identify childcare deserts while leveraging the housing model to incentivize growth.

Goal Category #4: Arts, Culture, and Enrichment of Residential Life

Goal Summary: Support, enhance, and promote current programming that supports resident year-round life & community.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Combine the various newsletters and increase search engine optimization to build citizen awareness by coordinating the various newsletter developers in each department by the Communications Team by the end of March 2026.
2. Create and utilize existing resources for community awareness and activity by the Economic Development Director by the end of 2026.
3. Complete the Artspace study with recommendations by the Contractor, City Manager's office, and Art Council by the end of 2026.
4. Implement the Resident Access Parking Program Pilot to increase parking availability to residents.

Goal Category #5: Reduce School Food Poverty

Goal Summary: To make sure no child goes without food due to cost.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Build a taskforce to discuss the policy objective by the City Council and School Board by the end of March 2026.
2. Explore community partnerships to support school food programs, including Gather, the Community Fridge, and the Middle Street Baptist Church by the City Council, the School Board, and the Welfare Director by the end of June 2026.
3. Determine feasibility of and plan for City funding of a free breakfast and lunch program by the City Council, School Board, and Finance Department by the end of June 2026.
4. Identify grant funding opportunities to support free breakfast and lunch programs in schools by City Staff by the end of 2026.

Goal Category #6: Preserving Sense of Place

Goal Summary:

Protect and enhance Portsmouth's character by nurturing a healthy community, preserving natural and built environments, promoting resiliency, and expanding solar energy use.

Strategic Objectives:

1. Showcase kids' art in public spaces.
2. Revitalize Adopt-a-Spot.
3. Prioritize and implement the Climate Action Plan (CAP) by the City Council, City Staff, and citizens by 2040.
4. Highlight resiliency and activation of waterfront climate and character by 2027.
5. Activate green space preservation to equate to a love that creates generations of stewards by 2027.
6. Remove impediments for small scale residential solar by the Planning and Sustainability and Inspection Departments by the end of 2026.
7. Adopt solar array ordinance changes by the City Council as reviewed by the Planning and Sustainability Department by the end of June 2026.
8. Build a solar farm (Jones Avenue) by the City Department of Public Works, Portsmouth Energy Advisory Committee, Sustainability Committee by 2027.