

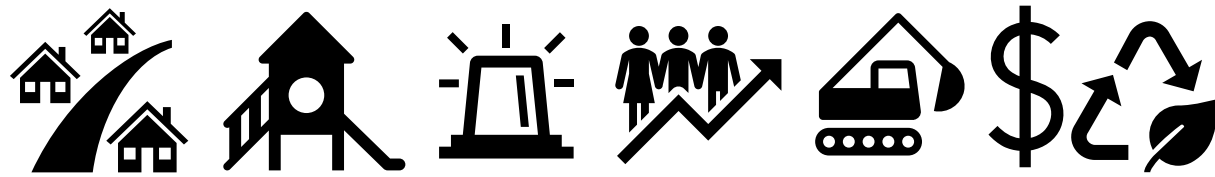


# Moving Forward

Draft Strategic Plan  
Presentation

September, 2023

# Strategic Planning



A strategic plan is used to define a vision for the future, set priorities for funding and resources to reach that vision, and give direction to ensure employees and other stakeholders are moving forward. Together.

A document such as this sets the direction while allowing for and demanding that it be reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure that the ideas and goals are still aligned with the needs of the community.

**If everyone is moving  
forward together, then  
success takes care of itself.**

**– Henry Ford**



Munhall has a rich history from the Negro Leagues to the Steel Mills to the Carnegie Library of Homestead. Our history dates back to the 1700's even though Munhall was not incorporated until 1901.



Over the last 122 years the Borough has seen tremendous change, moving from a steel mill town to a part of a shopping and entertainment destination. Through the years Munhall has maintained its small neighborhood feel and is a residential community at heart.



Munhall is a Borough of just under 10,776 residents as of the 2020 Census. We are approximately 2.3 sq. miles in size. The area known as “Lower” Munhall was initially built up as housing for the steel industry. Statistically, 34% of the homes in Munhall were built before 1940 and much of the infrastructure is aging. While aging infrastructure and a shrinking population base has caused financial challenges, Munhall is committed to being a strong community and to providing a well rounded set of services to its residents.

Services include:

- Full time Police force with 22 sworn officers
- Fire Protection from 4 active Volunteer Fire Departments
- EMS/Ambulance services from Munhall Area Pre Hospital Services
- Road maintenance through the Department of Public Works
- Refuse Collection
- Parks and recreational facilities
- Storm Water Management
- Sanitary Sewer Management through the MSSMA
- Administrative Services including: Building & Code Enforcement, Fiscal Management, and Administrative Leadership

### **Decision Making and Values**

The Borough of Munhall is working to continually evaluate the needs of its residents. The process involves utilizing the data that is available, the potential impact, the regulatory requirements, and resident feedback. Conflicts in these areas are unavoidable, and at times tradeoffs need to happen. The goal of using the factors listed below is to mitigate any negative impacts that may occur through the process.


**Economic Factors** include the fiscal health of the community and creating an innovative and entrepreneurial atmosphere where businesses that align with community values thrive, thereby fostering a true sense of place.

**Environmental Factors** include water, land and air stewardship, such as watershed and water policies, seeking to reduce our air emissions and carbon footprint through energy policies, greening the built environment, and waste reduction programs.

**Social Factors** include a high quality, safe community with equal access to services; strong, connected neighborhoods; and high-quality amenities including cultural, recreational, and open space options.

**Factors common to all areas** include building strong partnerships and commitment to a high quality of life and place. The Borough seeks to embrace a wide variety of partnerships (e.g., other government agencies, non-profits, educational institutions and private entities). Strong and effective partnerships are important in achieving our strategic objectives.

The following pages are divided into 7 different **Strategic Outcome Areas**. Next to each area are **Potential Outcome Measures**, or way(s) to measure the impact of various initiatives or changes. The final column are possible **Objectives** or ways to accomplish the larger goal in the **Strategic Outcome Area**.



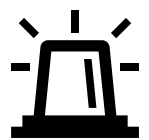
Strategic Outcome Area	Potential Outcome Measures	Objectives
<div data-bbox="290 526 537 602" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 10px;">Strategic Area</div>  <p><b>Community &amp; Neighborhood Livability</b></p> <p>Highlight and amplify the uniqueness &amp; positive qualities of each neighborhood</p> <div data-bbox="198 1128 561 1205" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin-top: 10px;">Larger Goal to Accomplish</div>	<div data-bbox="771 501 1228 607" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 10px;">How can We measure effectiveness?</div> <p>1. Voluntary Code Compliance</p>	<div data-bbox="1658 518 2335 628" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin-bottom: 10px;">What are some of the ways we can accomplish the Goal?</div> <p>1.1 Signage for each neighborhood            1.2 Creation of neighborhood preservation groups            1.3 Foster positive neighbor relationships            1.4 Address parking concerns            1.5 Re-institute rental license to track rental, residents, and landlords            1.6 Preserve and Enhance Munhall’s sense of “Place”            1.7 Partner with community groups- leverage grass roots initiatives</p>

After the charts you will find further definitions of the **Objectives** and ways in which they may be implemented.



**Strategic  
Planning  
2024-2027**



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Strategic Outcome Area	Potential Outcome Measures	Objectives	
 <p><b>Community &amp; Neighborhood Livability</b></p> <p>Highlight and amplify the uniqueness &amp; positive qualities of each neighborhood</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Voluntary Code Compliance</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Signage for each neighborhood</li> <li>1.2 Creation of neighborhood preservation groups</li> <li>1.3 Foster positive neighbor relationships</li> <li>1.4 Address parking concerns</li> <li>1.5 Re-institute rental license to track rental, residents, and landlords</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.6 Preserve and Enhance Munhall’s sense of “Place”</li> <li>1.7 Partner with community groups- leverage grass roots initiatives</li> </ol>
 <p><b>Parks, Culture &amp; Recreation</b></p> <p>Create a place where residents can be active and feel welcomed</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Total usage of facilities</li> <li>2. Response time to maintenance requests</li> <li>3. Adequate funding to support ongoing events</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Maintain upgrades to parks</li> <li>2.2 Reinstitute Parks &amp; Recreation Board</li> <li>2.3 Partner with local youth sports to co-promote events</li> <li>2.4 Research funding of West Field or donation to SVSD</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.5 Develop long term recreation plan</li> <li>2.6 Leverage GAP trail and benefits</li> <li>2.7 Municipal wide plan for public art</li> <li>2.8 Develop public private partnerships to support ongoing park/rec/cultural development</li> </ol>
 <p><b>Public Safety</b></p> <p>Provide top quality public safety through professional police and highly qualified volunteer firefighters</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of crimes committed</li> <li>2. Suspects apprehended</li> <li>3. Use of overtime for coverage</li> <li>4. Community Engagement (measurement TBD)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Updated &amp; integrated surveillance system</li> <li>3.2 Determine correct size &amp; deployment of police department</li> <li>3.3 Continued training and education of officers</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.4 Review equipping of the fire stations to assure appropriate and equitable distribution of funds</li> </ol>



**Strategic  
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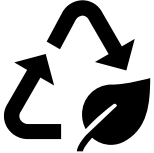
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Strategic Outcome Area	Outcomes	Objectives	
 <p><b>Government Administration</b></p> <p>Deliver an efficient, effective, transparent, and collaborative municipal government</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budgetary accuracy</li> <li>WC/injury claims</li> <li>Insurance claims data</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide cost-effective services to residents</li> <li>Improve organizational leadership &amp; development</li> <li>Align planning and funding requests with priorities</li> <li>Promote a values driven culture that reinforces ethical behavior</li> <li>Find areas to partner with the other Steel Valley Communities</li> <li>Increased use of data to drive decision making</li> <li>Inventory assets, recommendations for disposal or alternate use</li> <li>Strengthen public engagement and relationship with residents</li> <li>Improve productivity/efficiency of work and workflows</li> <li>Provide transparent, predictable, and efficient processes for citizens and businesses interacting with the Borough</li> </ol>	
 <p><b>Public Works &amp; Infrastructure</b></p> <p>Provide core public works and sanitation services to the residents in an efficient and cost effective manner.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response time to work orders</li> <li>Cost to Borough and residents for storm sewer O&amp;M</li> <li>Miles of roadway paved</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate cost/benefit of storm sewer system</li> <li>Utilize data to determine costs and opportunities</li> <li>Utilize workflow to optimize deployment</li> <li>Centralize all functions @ 1 Raymond Bodnar Way</li> <li>Reduce waste of consumables</li> <li>Maintain Borough owned bridges</li> </ol>	



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Strategic Outcome Area	Outcomes	Objectives	
 <p><b>Economic Health</b></p> <p>Promote a healthy, sustainable economy and tax base.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of vacant commercial buildings</li> <li>2. Number vacant homes</li> <li>3. Average sale price of structures</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.1 Align parties involved in economic development at the County, local, and private levels</li> <li>6.2 Improve policies and ordinances to allow for increased business development</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.3 Regular economic development meetings between municipal staff and development organizations</li> </ol>
 <p><b>Sustainability</b></p> <p>Work to provide service in a way that is cost effective and intentionally environmentally conscious in order to reduce negative environmental impacts.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cost of utilities</li> <li>2. Petroleum (gas) consumption by Borough vehicles</li> <li>3. Number of flooding events</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7.1 Actively engage in planned shift to renewable energy</li> <li>7.2 Improve riparian buffers along streams</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7.3 Improve policies to mitigate stormwater runoff in basin areas</li> <li>7.4 Reduce use of salt &amp; associated runoff</li> </ol>



## DEFINITIONS

### Community & Neighborhood Livability

**1.1 Signage for each neighborhood.** Munhall residents clearly identify with the neighborhood or “plan” that they live in, taking pride in where they live. Each area should have a more formal designation via signage of some type to capitalize on the sense of place. This includes signs at the entrances to the Borough and other wayfinding signs.

**1.2 Creation of neighborhood preservation groups.** In conjunction with the recognition of neighborhoods, individual neighborhoods or smaller areas could benefit from organizing under Munhall CARES or another umbrella to work towards increasing local engagement such as clean up days, adoption of parks/parklets, other beautification work.

**1.3 Foster positive neighbor relationships.** The Borough administration and elected officials can meet with neighborhoods to promote cooperative work (1.2) and to hear concerns.

**1.4 Address parking concerns.** The Borough should work with residents and designers to seek out ways to maximize parking across the Borough where there are limits due to narrow roads or other obstructions.

**1.5 Rental Licensing.** Council should support the re-institution of the rental registry program. There is a fee to landlords, but the benefits to the Borough are:

- a) Ability to track all rental properties vs. owner occupied (code enforcement)
- b) List of all residents in Borough vs. only property owners (safety)
- c) Data of rentals vs. owners and ability to map for analysis (planning/development)

**1.6 Preserve Munhall's sense of place.** Find ways to highlight Munhall as a positive place to live by highlighting industrial history and other relevant events such as West Field and the graves of Negro League players. Military history?

**1.7 Partner with grass roots organizations.** In addition to 1.1 and 1.2, continue to build partnerships with groups such as Munhall CARES, develop and integrate residents onto boards and committees when appropriate.

## **Parks, Culture & Recreation**

**2.1 Maintain upgrades to parks.** Munhall should plan for park maintenance and upgrades as a part of the annual budgeting and capital improvement planning. Munhall should have at least one staff member trained as a playground inspector (initial cost 3 days + \$720) for 3 years.

**2.2 Parks & Recreation Board.** Munhall should reinstitute the Parks & Rec Board (Ord 1572, 2016) to increase community involvement in the Borough and help organizations understand the costs and considerations necessary to operate the parks, playgrounds, and other activities. The Borough would benefit from outside ideas for programming for individuals of all ages.

**2.3 Partner with local youth sports to co-promote events.** The Borough/Parks & Rec Board could develop stronger relationships with the teams that play/use Munhall as their home field. This helps tie community and place together.

**2.4 Research funding for West Field.** West Field is 8+ years old and will soon require significant maintenance, including replacing netting and the field surface that have not been budgeted for. Costs for the field include maintenance upkeep of 2 sets of bathrooms, 2 locker rooms and a bathroom for umpires, 2 ball fields, bases, a “portable” mound, fence upkeep and more. The hard costs for utilities alone run \$18,000-\$20,000. Maintenance is \$7,500 and overtime for locking/unlocking is \$3,000. The cost to replace the entire field will run approximately \$600,000 for the new turf. That does not include labor to remove the old and install the new. Due to the 50-year allowances given to SVSD, if sustainable funding is not achievable the Borough should consider donating it to the school district to own/operate.

**2.5 Develop a long-term recreation Plan.** See 2.2, for the Parks & Recreation board. The Borough, as with all infrastructure, should have a guiding plan for future upgrades and uses to public spaces.

**2.6 Leverage GAP trail.** The Pump House and the GAP trail are volunteer run assets that Munhall can likely do more to support and use the trail to promote Munhall as a healthy and active place to live (i.e. proximity to the GAP trail).

**2.7 Municipal wide plan to public art.** Munhall can develop a zoning overlay to encourage the sense of “place” by encouraging public art. This could be statues or other sculptures but can also include items such as wall murals and smaller artwork on planters, trash cans or electric panels to show Munhall’s pride.

**2.8 Develop public-private partnerships.** The Borough should develop long-term partnerships with other entities such as AC Baseball, the various universities, etc. for West Field for sponsorships. Clear delineation of responsibilities is needed for Woodhill and Trautman ballfields.

## **Public Safety**

**3.1 Surveillance System.** The Police Department should be encouraged to develop an integrated camera/surveillance system that is scalable to meet current and future needs throughout the municipality.

**3.2 Correct size and deployment of the Police Department.** Munhall currently has one of the largest ratios of sworn officers to the number of residents at just over 2 per 1,000 residents. According to 2018 statistics, PA municipalities across the state average 2.3 officers per 1000 residents. That includes Philadelphia (4/1000) and Pittsburgh (3.1/1000).

**3.3 Continued training and education of officers.** The Borough and Police Department should (continue to) make training and skill building a cornerstone of our officers.

**3.4 Review equipping of the fire stations to assure appropriate and equitable distribution of funds.** Continue to work closely with the Public Safety Committee and the Bureau of Fire Chief to ensure that all stations operating under the Borough are safe and properly equipped.

## Government Administration

- 4.1 Provide cost-effective services.** As stewards of the tax dollars of our residents, the Borough needs to regularly review its practices and contracts to ensure that it is receiving the best value for the residents.
- 4.2 Improve organizational leadership & development.** The Borough does not currently have formal or informal plans for continuity of services, growth of skills, or succession planning. The Manager should work with the personnel committee to draft expectations for management and leadership staff.
- 4.3 Align planning and funding requests with priorities.** The Borough is in need of both a strategic plan to focus on describing the priorities of Council and on a capital improvement plan to fund said priorities.
- 4.4 Promote a values driven culture that reinforces ethical behavior.** Munhall, and most municipalities, has a reputation for favoritism and nepotism, whether earned or not. The Borough should publicly adopt strict ethical language regarding behavior. Actions need to follow from the elected officials to the leadership and the staff in order for an effort like this to be effective.
- 4.5 Find areas to partner with the other Steel Valley Communities.** Combined, Homestead, West Homestead and Munhall encompass 4 square miles and a combined population of 15,000 residents. There are significant savings and efficiencies that can be gained by looking at the larger budgets and needs of a “combined” area. Partnerships, contracts, and shared services are all examples of this. These could be services (police, fire, DPW), contracts for goods and services through a larger bid/contract than could be achieved alone, or intergovernmental contracting to reduce overhead.
- 4.6 Increased use of data to drive decision making.** Soon the Borough will have or have the capacity to analyze new data regarding the conditions of our roads and storm sewers. We now have data on when and where our employees drive and how they respond to calls for service (DPW and code enforcement). The Borough needs to leverage this data to make decisions about staffing and services in order to achieve the efficiency needed to stop expenses from ballooning over time, requiring larger tax increases.
- 4.7 Inventory assets, recommendations for disposal or alternate use.** The Borough has numerous assets from equipment and vehicles to buildings and land. The Borough should engage in an in-depth study of its assets to determine which are necessary, useful life – if there is one, and what is not needed. If an asset is not needed, is there another use for it in the Borough or should it be sold to remove a liability (insurance, maintenance, etc.) and receive potential income. For real property, a map with the location and a description of each location should be developed.
- 4.8 Strengthen public engagement and relationships with residents.** Munhall has many residents who would like to become involved in the upkeep and improvement of their neighborhoods and the borough as a whole. Through engagement efforts such as open houses, information sessions, and communications (i.e. newsletters).
- 4.9 Improve productivity/efficiency of workflows.** The Borough does have well-established processes and procedures for the way it conducts business. This can lead to inefficiency and frustration by both staff and those doing business with the Borough.
- 4.10 Provide transparent, predictable, and efficient processes for citizens and businesses interacting with the Borough.** See 4.9 – individuals coming to the Borough for business or assistance should be able to have their questions answered and services provided in a clear and consistent manner. An employee should not have to say “I don’t know” without assistance or further direction to the individual.

## **Public Works & Infrastructure**

- 5.1 Evaluate costs/benefit of the storm sewer system.** Storm sewers are a necessity and a pure cost to the Borough. Costs include repairs, permitting, and cleaning requirements. There are legal questions about a municipality's ability to charge a stormwater impact fee, requiring the use of general operating funds to keep the system going.
- 5.2 Utilize data to determine costs and opportunities.** As with 4.6 and 4.9 on the prior page, data should provide the information needed to determine priorities and areas for improvement.
- 5.3 Utilize workflow to optimize deployment.** Data and workflow analysis should be used to assist in planning and scheduling the duties for a day/week, etc. We should not rely on spur of the moment planning for duty assignments.
- 5.4 Centralize all functions at 1 Raymond Bodnar Way.** Public Works currently stores equipment at their main location behind West Field. Because of seasonal equipment needs, they also utilize the 2412 Charles St. and the sallyport at 1900 West St. As a part of capital planning, the Borough should investigate building an additional metal structure to house the equipment that is currently at alternate locations.
- 5.5 Reduce waste of consumables.** Munhall is known for its great roads in the winter. This is due to the excessive use of salt on the roads. The excess salt has an obvious financial impact. There are secondary costs to excessive salt as well: faster deterioration of the road surface; rusting of vehicles and equipment; and additional chemicals in the storm sewer and rivers (potential MS4 violation).

## **Economic Health**

- 6.1 Align parties involved in economic development at the County, local and private levels.** The Borough should become a more involved partner in the redevelopment of both public and private land through the various tools available. This may include advertising tax delinquent properties, encouraging sheriff sales, connecting with investors and developers as interested parties to offset the costs of a tax sale, working with the RAAC and with the other connecting communities when appropriate.
- 6.2 Improve policies and ordinances to allow for increased business development.** The Planning Commission should be involved in actively reviewing ordinances that affect land use and business development. The Zoning Ordinance should receive special scrutiny to ensure it is meeting and not impeding the goals of the Borough.
- 6.3 Regular economic development meetings between municipal staff and development organizations.** The Borough would benefit from having professional staff interacting with development agencies and organizations on a regular basis through membership & attendance at meetings.

## **Sustainability**

- 7.1 Actively engage in planned shift to renewable energy.** Solar, wind and other renewable energy is continuing to make progress. Some municipalities such as Forest Hills are creating enough solar energy to make a small profit while reducing the use of fossil fuels. The Borough should investigate and look for potential opportunities while grant funds are still available to offset installation costs.
- 7.2 Improve riparian buffers.** Riparian buffers act to intercept sediment, nutrients, pesticides, and other materials in surface runoff and reduce nutrients and other pollutants in shallow subsurface water flow. The areas along Ravine St. are in need of restoration.
- 7.3 Improve policies to mitigate stormwater runoff in basin areas.** The areas of the Borough around Troutman field, Shady Ave, Ravine St., and a few others would benefit from a study to reduce the amount of stormwater that flows down into these valley areas and cause erosion, flooding, and other damage to properties.
- 7.4 Reduce use of road salt & associated runoff.** See 5.5. Reducing the excessive use of salt will decrease the pollution entering the rivers/streams.

## **Recommendations & Next Steps**

1. Public Feedback sessions.
2. Review and make modifications based on public comment.
3. Formally adopt strategic plan with the intent of implementation in the 2024 budget (if not sooner).