



CITY OF YUMA
STRATEGIC PLAN
2025-2030



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MAYOR AND COUNCIL



Mayor
Douglas J. Nicholls



Deputy Mayor
Carol Smith



Councilmember
Mark Martinez



Councilmember
Leslie McClendon



Councilmember
Arturo Morales



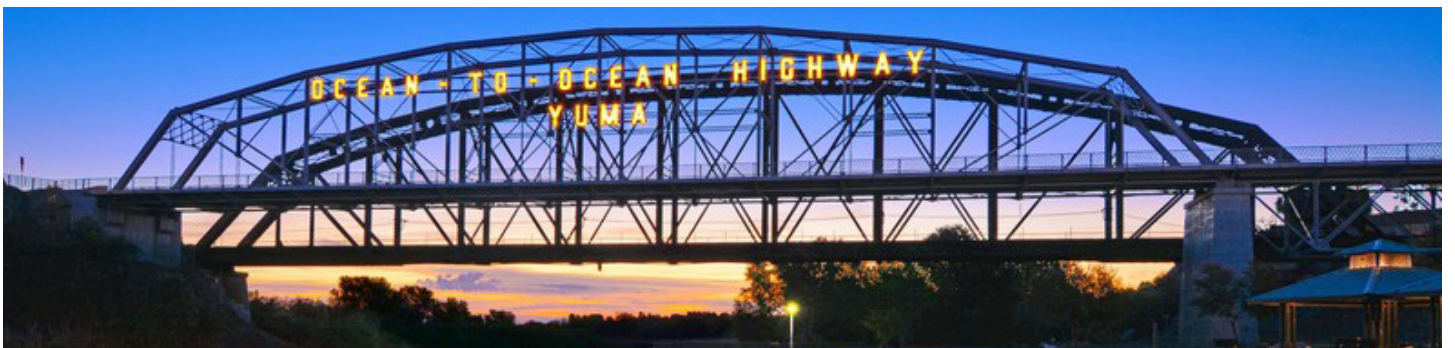
Councilmember
Chris Morris



Councilmember
Karen Watts

VISION

Yuma is a thriving, safe and prosperous community with opportunities powered by innovation, partnerships, collaboration and robust education – a welcoming and unique place that all generations are proud to share.



SHAPING YUMA'S FUTURE: VISION AND STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Since 2020, the Yuma City Council has held an Annual Council Retreat to develop, review, and update the City's Strategic Plan. These sessions give the Council time to step away from daily business, focus on long-term priorities, and ensure the City's vision and strategic outcomes remain relevant to community needs and aspirations.

In March 2025, the Council reaffirmed its commitment to the existing Vision Statement and the five (5) strategic outcomes that guide Yuma's future. Councilmembers reviewed the definitions for each outcome, reached consensus on an updated definition for Safe & Prosperous, considered progress on current initiatives, and identified new priorities to better align with the strategic outcomes.

This plan reflects the priorities, updated language, and initiatives that emerged from those conversations.



STRATEGIC OUTCOMES



SAFE & PROSPEROUS

Yuma is a safe and prosperous city that supports thriving businesses, access to education, and multi-generational opportunities, with the safety of the community as its cornerstone.



ACTIVE & APPEALING

Yuma plans and leverages its natural resources, public spaces and cultural amenities to support an active and appealing community.



CONNECTED & ENGAGED

Yuma is connected and engaged through cutting-edge technology, active communication, forward-looking partnerships, and ongoing public involvement.



UNIQUE & CREATIVE

Yuma is a unique and creative community, built on our shared history, sense of place, and civic pride.



RESPECTED & RESPONSIBLE

Yuma is a trusted steward of City resources; relied upon to provide regional leadership, premier services, and facilities.

KEEPING THE PLAN CURRENT

The Strategic Plan is reviewed and updated annually at the City Council retreat, with regular status updates and ongoing community input through public meetings, open houses, surveys, and online platforms.



SAFE & PROSPEROUS

Yuma is a safe and prosperous city that supports thriving businesses, access to education, and multi-generational opportunities, with the safety of the community as its cornerstone.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Prioritize and identify funding for elements of the ADA Transition Plan
- Continue to enhance state and county relationships for emergency management preparations and response.
- Enhance collaboration between City and County development departments
- Focus on acquiring land for innovation district and industrial development
- Implement an Intelligent Transportation System
- Develop a plan for and support Downtown and Innovation District development

EXISTING/ONGOING INITIATIVES

- Desert Dunes Expansion
- Update zoning regulations
- Update utility codes
- Pursue widening of US 95 to YPG
- Develop and implement a city-specific economic development strategy which includes Foreign Trade Zone and Yuma-focused opportunities.
- Continually identify and address staffing and operational needs for public safety
- Seek voter approval for base adjustment to annual expenditure limitation in General Election of 2026
- Install directional signage on 4th Avenue connecting to Downtown
- Update regulations and processes to increase housing opportunities for all





ACTIVE & APPEALING

Yuma plans and leverages its natural resources, public spaces and cultural amenities to support an active and appealing community.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Identify and determine priority funding for elements of the Parks Master Plan
- Identify and promote opportunities for sports and adventure tourism.
- Increase Downtown use and visibility



EXISTING/ONGOING INITIATIVES

- Build East Mesa Park facility
- Care for existing infrastructure – improve road conditions, park revitalization program
- Beautify the community’s overall curb appeal – landscape right-of-ways
- Develop a partnership for trail connections – establish a trail/ bike path connection (irrigation districts) establish equitable maintenance partnerships BOR/ADOT/schools



CONNECTED & ENGAGED

Yuma is connected and engaged through cutting-edge technology, active communication, forward-looking partnerships, and ongoing public involvement.



NEW INITIATIVES

- Establish a youth government program

EXISTING/ONGOING INITIATIVES

- Establish private-public partnership for Hotel del Sol
- Joint K-20 education opportunities – Elevate Southwest
- Establish Innovation Hub



UNIQUE & CREATIVE

Yuma is a unique and creative community, built on our shared history, sense of place, and civic pride.

NEW INITIATIVES

- Develop and make accessible documentation/history of City of Yuma
- Develop a plan for City's celebration of America's 250th



EXISTING/ONGOING INITIATIVES

- Develop Innovation District



RESPECTED & RESPONSIBLE

Yuma is a trusted steward of City resources; relied upon to provide regional leadership, premier services, and facilities.



EXISTING/ONGOING INITIATIVES

- Prioritize public-private partnerships
- Keep taxes low and relevant to residents' desire for services
- Actively support the protection of the region's Colorado River Water Rights
- Expansion of Public Safety Training Facility
- Advocate for local control by proposing our own bills – be proactive, not reactive

COMPLETED PRIORITY INITIATIVES

SAFE & PROSPEROUS

- Focus on acquiring land for innovation district and industrial development. City purchased about 14 acres of land from Union Pacific Railroad to be used for future redevelopment as part of the Yuma Downtown Innovation District. (2025)
- Update regulations and processes to increase housing opportunities for all (2025)
- Update Zoning regulations (2024 & 2025)
- Update City's Investment Policy (2024)
- Update the General Plan (2022)
- Community Development Code Update of the 2018 Plumbing, Fuel, Gas, Mechanical and the 2020 National Electric Code (2022)

ACTIVE & APPEALING

- Care for existing infrastructure – improve road conditions, park revitalization program. To date nine playgrounds have been replaced, two restroom buildings and one ramada have been updated, and two new ramadas were installed. (2025)
- Integrated Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plan update (2025)
- Revitalize Kennedy Skate Park (2025)
- Complete Parks, Arts, Recreation and Trails Master Plan (2024)

CONNECTED & ENGAGED

- Research and develop AI uses and City applications. AI Policy developed and approved with CoPilot being installed across the City organization with integrations with current software offering being turned on. (2025/Ongoing)
- Hold joint City/County meeting (2025)
- Transition to Invoice Cloud (2021)

UNIQUE & CREATIVE

- Use drone technology to enhance City operations. Drone Policy developed and adopted, and online mapping program established (2025)
- Create partnership with Yuma County Historical Society to sustain Molina Block and Sanguinetti House Museum. Entered into a lease and operating agreement with Yuma County Historical Society. (2025)
- Update contractor self-inspection program for lath, drywall, and roof nailing (2024)
- Deploy intranet to improve internal communications (2021)

RESPECTED & RESPONSIBLE

- Increased Public Service Announcements (PSAs) for recruitment and retention (Ongoing)
- Provide competitive benefit and compensation plans to be an employer of choice (Ongoing)
- Advocate for local control (Ongoing)
- Update the General Plan and identify where development will occur (2022)
- Issue a bond to address PSRPS shortfall. City refinanced its Public Safety Personnel Retirement System debt saving over \$72.7 million. (2021)

BACKGROUND

PURPOSE OF A CITY'S STRATEGIC PLAN

A city's strategic plan is more than a document—it is a shared roadmap for the community's future. It defines a clear vision, sets long-term priorities, and establishes measurable goals to guide decision-making. By identifying strategic outcomes and priority initiatives, the plan helps ensure that resources are used effectively, opportunities are pursued intentionally, and challenges are addressed proactively.

For the City of Yuma, the Strategic Plan serves several key purposes:

- **Provides direction** for policy decisions, capital investments, and program development.
- **Aligns efforts** of the City Council, staff, and community partners toward common goals.
- **Promotes accountability** by setting priorities that can be measured and reported on over time.
- **Strengthens resilience** by anticipating future needs and positioning the City to respond effectively to change.
- **Engages the community** by connecting residents to the City's vision and demonstrating progress toward shared outcomes.

When used consistently, the Strategic Plan becomes a living framework—helping the City adapt to changing circumstances while staying focused on the long-term vision for Yuma's future.

PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL RETREAT

Since 2020, the Yuma City Council has met annually for a Council Retreat to develop, review, and update the City's Strategic Plan. The retreat fosters collaboration between Council and staff, strengthens the ability to work together effectively, and creates space for candid, forward-looking conversations.

It is a dedicated time to review progress on strategic initiatives, identify emerging opportunities and challenges, and confirm the shared direction for the City—ensuring resources are aligned with what will have the greatest impact on Yuma's future.

and initiatives discussed during the small group discussions. From there, Council participated in a ranking exercise (“dot voting exercise”) and based on interest (number of dots received) the initiatives were categorized as top priority, high priority, or other priority.

Based on this exercise, the Council identified several new initiatives to support each strategic outcome. The updated language and new initiatives have been incorporated into this document.



A LIVING PLAN: HISTORY AND EVOLUTION

In 2020, the City Council recognized the need for an updated and actively managed Strategic Plan. At the time, the City's most recent strategic management document dated back to 2002. To launch this effort, the Council held a Vision and Goal Setting Retreat in October 2020. With the support of an outside facilitator, the Council and members of the Executive Leadership Team created a plan that reflected Yuma's unique history and its desired future.

The planning process was shaped by extensive community input. In the weeks leading up to the retreat, the City hosted a listening tour—Your Insights, Yuma's Future—with public sessions across the community, along with an online survey. Residents and business owners shared their perspectives on Yuma's strengths, challenges, and priorities for the future. This feedback was provided to the Council during the retreat and played a key role in shaping the plan.

At the conclusion of the 2020 retreat, the Council adopted a Vision Statement, five strategic outcomes, and a set of priority initiatives for each outcome. The Strategic Plan was formally adopted on December 16, 2020.

Since then, the City Council has met annually to review and update the plan—ensuring it remains a living document that reflects progress, responds to emerging challenges, and stays aligned with the community's evolving needs.

HOW THE 2025 RETREAT SHAPED THE PLAN

On March 24 and 25, 2025, the City Council held its Annual Council Retreat to review the Strategic Plan and engage in strategic conversations about Yuma's future. Councilmembers reaffirmed the current Vision Statement and five (5) strategic outcomes, discussed updated definitions, and reached consensus on a revised definition for Safe & Prosperous.

Over the two days, the Council reviewed progress on existing initiatives, identified new priorities, and discussed funding considerations. Strategic topics included water resources, economic development, infrastructure, parks and recreation, and public safety. The retreat concluded with agreement on which initiatives should be incorporated into the Strategic Plan for alignment with the strategic outcomes.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The City of Yuma engages with residents through both formal and informal channels to gather input and share information. Formal opportunities include public meetings, open houses, surveys, and other structured outreach efforts. Information is also shared through news releases, television, the City's website, and other online platforms. Informally, Councilmembers and staff connect with residents at community events and in everyday conversations.

These ongoing interactions help ensure the Strategic Plan reflects the community's priorities and remains responsive to Yuma's changing needs.



LOOKING AHEAD

The Strategic Plan is a living guide for the City of Yuma's work and decision-making. As we move forward, the City Council and staff will continue to use this plan to set priorities, align resources, and track progress toward our shared vision. The status of initiatives will be reviewed and updated each year, and new opportunities and challenges will be considered as they arise.

Ongoing community input—through public meetings, outreach events, online engagement, and everyday conversations—will remain central to this process, ensuring the Strategic Plan stays focused, responsive, and reflective of what matters most to our community.



STRATEGIC PLAN TIMELINE

2020

Initial Vision & Goal Setting Retreat; Strategic Plan developed and adopted.

2021

Annual retreat; updated plan adopted, Vision Statement amended, new initiatives added, and status of initiatives updated.

2022

Plan updated to reflect status of initiatives; no new initiatives added.

2023

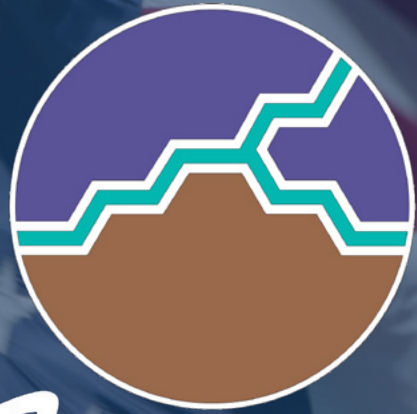
Annual retreat; mid-year update with no changes to the plan; status of initiatives updated.

2024

Annual retreat; refined definitions for three strategic outcomes, identified new initiatives, and updated status of initiatives.

2025

Annual retreat; updated Safe & Prosperous definition, identified new initiatives, and updated status of initiatives.



CITY OF
Yuma