BEREA BEYOND

CITY OF BEREA 2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

LAND USE //TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY // COMMUNITY FACILITIES & PUBLIC SERVICES //

HOUSING //ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY //ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT //

COMMUNITY WELL-BEING & CIVIC LIFE //HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES //TOWN–GOWN PARTNERSHIP



LAND USE

GOAL 1 // Promote balanced, sustainable development that supports Berea's small-town character and future growth.

1. **Direct new development to areas with existing infrastructure** to prevent sprawl and protect farmland and natural areas.
2. **Support mixed-use infill and redevelopment near downtown, Chestnut Street, and along key corridors** such as Richmond Road (US25-), Walnut Meadow Road near I75- Exit 76, Boone Street, Old Town and the US21-/Prospect Street corridor.
3. **Encourage compact neighborhood patterns** with connected streets and accessible green spaces that are appropriately sized and feasible to maintain over the long term.
4. **Align land use** with infrastructure capacity and fiscal responsibility.
5. **Promote transitions** between residential, commercial, and industrial uses to avoid conflicts.
6. **Apply a '-15minute neighborhood' approach** to foster walkable, self-sufficient communities.
7. **Preserve Berea's small-town identity through thoughtful design standards and gateway enhancement**s, especially at major entry points such as the northern gateway (Richmond Road/ US25-) and southern gateway (Old US- 25/ Short Line Pike).

GOAL 2 // Strengthen the character of neighborhoods and key corridors through planning and design.

1. **Refine zoning categories** in different areas of the city to better reflect existing development patterns, building scale, and context.
2. **Develop overlay districts and design guidelines** for Downtown Berea, Chestnut Street, Boone Street, Richmond Road (US25-), and primary gateways including Glades Road and the US21- corridor.
3. **Encourage reuse of historic buildings and underutilized commercial spaces.**
4. **Create buffers or transitions between residential and industrial areas.**
5. **Pilot a small-scale form-based code overlay** in College Square, Chestnut Street, or Old Town areas to support walkable infill, small business reuse, and neighborhood-oriented redevelopment.

GOAL 3 // Provide land for a full range of community needs, from housing and jobs to parks and services.

1. **Expand areas designated for neighborhood-scale businesses and mixed-use development.**
2. **Identify suitable locations for housing, health services, childcare, and local retail**, prioritizing infill along corridors such as US21-/Prospect Street, Richmond Road, and near established neighborhoods like Ellipse Street and North Broadway.
3. Improve zoning processes to support flexible land uses while maintaining clear review procedures and opportunities for public input.
4. **Protect scenic and natural areas** through voluntary conservation tools and guidelines.



TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

GOAL 1 // Create a connected transportation system that serves all residents safely and efficiently.

1. **Expand sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian links** near schools, parks, and community hubs.
2. **Expand a connected network** of shared-use paths, bicycle facilities, and pedestrian connections, including protected lanes and bike parking.
3. **Improve lighting and visibility at intersections** to increase safety.
4. **Apply 'Safe Routes for All' practices** to enhance walking and biking citywide.
5. **Incorporate traffic-calming and complete street design principles** in future roadwork.
6. **Strengthen coordination with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC)** to align local priorities with state roadway planning and project implementation.



GOAL 2 // Strengthen mobility options and connectivity within Berea and to regional destinations.

1. **Explore a local shuttle, microtransit, or on-demand mobility projects** linking Berea College, Old Town, and other key destinations.
2. **Coordinate with regional partners to improve transit service and scheduling.**
3. **Promote carpooling and volunteer driver programs** for residents without personal vehicles.
4. **Develop neighborhood mobility hubs** with bike storage, EV charging, and trip information.
5. **Explore potential park-and-ride locations** to support weekday commuting and regional travel.

GOAL 3 // Modernize transportation infrastructure for long-term sustainability and safety.

1. **Prioritize transportation upgrades along Berea's primary gateways** (US25-, US21-, and Walnut Meadow Road) to improve traffic flow, aesthetics, and safety while reinforcing Berea's unique character and appearance.
2. **Plan for electric vehicle charging and fleet transition.**
3. Pursue a complete streets framework for new and upgraded road projects, where appropriate.
4. **Maintain and upgrade existing roads and bridges** through asset management.
5. **Seek state and federal grants** for safety and transportation innovation.





COMMUNITY FACILITIES & PUBLIC SERVICES

GOAL 1 // Provide high-quality, accessible facilities that meet community needs.

1. **Explore opportunities for a new recreation center** with youth, family, and senior programming.
2. **Expand library services and technology access** across the community.
3. **Locate public facilities where they are reachable by walking, biking, or transit**.
4. **Assess facility conditions and prioritize updates for accessibility and safety.**
5. **Design civic buildings to be welcoming** and functional for all residents.
6. **Co-locate community amenities** such as recreation, health, education, and workforce services within shared facilities to maximize public benefit.
7. **Incorporate flexible design in public buildings that allows spaces to adapt** for community meetings, pop-up services, and emergency shelter use.
8. **Evaluate options for creating a network of neighborhood-scaled facilities** (e.g., satellite libraries, pocket parks, or community rooms) to improve access across Berea.
9. **Use public art, landscaping, and wayfinding to connect civic buildings and create a recognizable "Civic Core"** linking downtown, Berea College, and nearby neighborhoods.

GOAL 2 // Coordinate investment in utilities and public services to support growth and resilience.

1. **Align infrastructure upgrades with growth and redevelopment priorities.**
2. **Expand broadband and digital access** throughout Berea.
3. **Plan for backup power**, water, and emergency response systems so essential services can continue during outages or emergencies.
4. **Improve coordination for emergency response** and disaster preparedness.
5. **Develop a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)** that prioritizes multi-benefit projects that improve infrastructure, safety, and public space simultaneously.
6. **Designate key civic buildings as "resiliency hubs"** equipped with backup power, communications, and cooling/warming stations for use during emergencies.
7. **Encourage green infrastructure and energyefficient upgrades** in all public facilities to reduce long-term maintenance costs.
8. **Coordinate infrastructure extensions along US-21, Richmond Road, and Berea Bypass** to support planned mixed-use and housing growth while protecting natural resources.

GOAL 3 // Strengthen civic spaces as gathering places for community life.

1. **Design public spaces for markets, cultural events, and performances.**
2. **Develop an online map of public facilities and parks.**
3. Identify opportunities to create a central gathering space that could support community events and civic life.
4. Promote joint use of school and college facilities for community programming.
5. Enhance existing parks and open spaces with amenities such as shade, seating, restrooms, and lighting to support everyday use and community gatherings.
6. Activate underused public spaces—such as parking lots or vacant parcels—through temporary events, art installations, or pop-up markets.
7. Encourage partnerships with local artists, Berea College, and civic groups to animate public spaces with performances, murals, and seasonal programming.
8. **Explore the reuse of the Old Town/Artisan Village area for** civic, cultural, or creative spaces that help connect nearby community destinations and key corridors.



HOUSING

GOAL 1 // Expand and maintain housing affordability while preserving Berea's character.

1. **Consider establishing a Community Land Trust** to manage long-term affordable housing.
2. **Evaluate incentive options for new developments that include affordable units.**
3. **Clarify regulations for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and small home**s to support thoughtful, small-scale housing options.
4. **Encourage smaller-scale housing options**, such as clustered homes and shared-housing, that fit within existing residential areas.
5. **Reduce regulatory barriers** like excessive parking or lot-size minimums.
6. **Explore opportunities to provide repair grants and loans** that support homeowners in maintaining older housing.
7. **Create a housing dashboard** to monitor affordability and availability.
8. **Encourage infill and redevelopment of underused residential parcels** for affordable and workforce housing.
9. **Explore density bonuses or other incentives** for projects that include senior, workforce, or first-time homebuyer housing.
10. **Partner with local employers and Berea College** to pilot shared-equity or rent-to-own programs that help moderate-income residents build long-term stability.
11. **Establish a "Preservation First" strategy** to retain existing affordable units through rehabilitation, code compliance assistance, and property maintenance support.

GOAL 3 // Provide a range of housing types for residents at all stages of life.

1. **Allow missing-middle housing near transit, schools, and employment centers.**
2. **Promote adaptable housing designs that serve residents of all abilities.**
3. **Encourage reuse of vacant buildings** for housing and mixed uses.
4. **Support live-work housing options** for artists and entrepreneurs.
5. **Collaborate with Berea College** on student and workforce housing solutions.
6. **Encourage development of senior-friendly** housing near services, health facilities, and transit stops.
7. **Promote multi-generational housing models** such as duplexes or accessory units that allow families to live together affordably.
8. **Establish design guidance for small-scale infill housing** that fits Berea's neighborhood character while expanding affordability.
9. **Support pilot housing projects that demonstrate innovative building type**s (e.g., modular, adaptive reuse, or community land trust homes) as examples for future development.

GOAL 3 // Partner with public and private sectors to expand affordable and attainable housing.

1. **Identify city-owned parcels suitable for affordable or mixed-income housing.**
2. **Pursue public funding and tax credit programs** for new housing development.
3. **Explore the feasibility of a local Housing Trust Fund** developed in collaboration with employers and lenders.
4. **Integrate anti-displacement strategies** into neighborhood revitalization efforts.
5. **Work with nonprofit and regional partners to develop a long-term Housing Action Plan** outlining goals, funding tools, and measurable targets.
6. **Coordinate with developers to include a range of housing types and price points** within large projects to promote economic diversity.
7. **Encourage public-private partnerships to create mixed-income neighborhoods** that blend housing, small business, and green space.
8. **Advocate for sta e level housing legislation or funding stream** that support affordable housing models.



ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

GOAL 1 // Protect Berea's natural resources and prepare for environmental challenges.

1. **Expand tree canopy coverage and replace aging street trees** within City-managed rights-of-way and public spaces, while coordinating with Berea College and other partners on broader canopy goals.
2. **Preserve stream corridors and steep slopes to prevent flooding and erosion.**
3. **Encourage stormwater management** through rain gardens and permeable surfaces.
4. **Support energy efficiency in homes and City facilities, and provide education** on existing solar programs and consumer protections related to residential renewable energy.
5. **Develop a Climate Resilience Strategy** identifying vulnerable areas, key infrastructure, and short-term mitigation priorities.
6. **Create a citywide Green Infrastructure Plan that integrates stormwater, landscaping, and trail system**s to reduce runoff and heat islands.
7. **Encourage sustainable construction and lowimpact site design** through voluntary design standards and incentives.
8. **Promote local food production and urban agriculture** through community gardens, school partnerships, and use of vacant lots.
9. **Coordinate with Berea College and local nonprofits** on tree-planting, composting, and waste-reduction initiatives.

GOAL 2 // Connect residents with nature through parks and green infrastructure.

1. **Expand greenway and trail systems connecting neighborhoods to parks and downtown.**
2. **Enhance access to outdoor recreatio**n for residents of all ages.
3. **Partner with local schools and Berea College on environmental education programs.**
4. **Prioritize park access for neighborhoods where connectivity is limited.**

1. **Expand multi-use trail connections** along Brushy Fork, Silver Creek, and between parks, schools, and civic centers.
2. **Incorporate nature play, community gardens, and educational signage** in new and existing parks.
3. **Establish a Berea Green Network linking parks, college open spaces, and conservation lands** through signage and branding.





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 1 // Support a strong local economy through small business and entrepreneurship.

1. **Provide resources and shared spaces for small business startups.**
2. **Encourage coffee shops, local markets, and neighborhood retail nodes.**
3. **Promote community events and festivals** that boost local commerce.
4. **Establish a Makers and Arts District** to strengthen Berea's creative identity.
5. **Promote adaptive reuse of underused commercial and industrial buildings** for maker spaces, co-working, and live-work studios.
6. **Develop a "Shop Berea First" campaign** to strengthen local purchasing and retain spending in the community.
7. **Explore opportunities, including partnerships, to support small businesses** through microgrants or façade improvement incentives in target reinvestment areas.
8. **Collaborate with Berea College and the Tourism Commission to expand cultural tourism** focused on arts, heritage, and outdoor recreation.
9. **Support skilled trades and innovative businesses** through workforce partnerships, flexible spaces, and targeted business support.



GOAL 2 // Prepare Berea's workforce for emerging opportunities.

1. **Collaborate with the Ignite Academy, Berea College, and regional partners on job training programs.**
2. **Provide career pathways** for youth and returning workers.
3. **Support broadband expansion and technology access** to enable remote work, learning, and innovation across Berea.
4. **Prioritize local hiring and contracting** for city-led projects.
5. **Partner with employers, the Kentucky Innovation Network, and local schools to promote skilled trades, green jobs** (such as clean energy, energy efficiency, EV infrastructure, and sustainable construction), and emerging technology fields including software, data, and applied AI.
6. **Establish an Entrepreneurship Resource Center or online portal** for business support, permitting, and mentorship.







COMMUNITY WELL-BEING & CIVIC LIFE

GOAL 1 // Build community pride and civic participation.

1. **Encourage neighborhood associations and volunteer projects.**
2. **Host community events** that connect residents across age and background.
3. **Develop a local leadership program** to prepare residents for civic involvement.
4. **Support annual community cleanups, tree plantings, and beautification projects** as visible expressions of local pride.
5. **Promote neighborhood-level planning and improvement grants** that empower residents to identify and implement small projects.
6. **Establish an annual "Berea Week"** or similar event celebrating local culture, students, and civic accomplishments.

GOAL 2 // Improve access to everyday needs and services.

1. **Support access to health care, childcare, and grocery options within the city.**
2. **Encourage development of walkable services** in all neighborhoods.
3. **Provide ways for residents to contribute ideas** and feedback on local initiatives.
4. **Strengthen partnerships with local nonprofits, healthcare providers, and schools** to expand access to mental health, nutrition, and afterschool programs.
5. **Explore neighborhood service hubs** that combine childcare, senior support, and health services in shared facilities.
6. **Enhance online and in-person tools for civic feedback**, allowing residents to map concerns, track projects, and suggest local improvements.



HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

GOAL 1 // Preserve and promote Berea's historic and cultural identity.

1. **Maintain an updated inventory** of historic properties and landmarks.
2. **Encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures** for new uses.
3. **Highlight Berea's heritage** through public art, signage, and storytelling.
4. **Support cultural festivals and performances** that celebrate Berea's traditions.
5. **Coordinate preservation efforts** with Berea College and local organizations.
6. **Develop a Historic Preservation Plan** identifying priority buildings, design guidelines, and financial tools for restoration.
7. **Create a walking and biking Heritage Trail** linking Berea College, Chestnut Street, and Old Town/Artisan Village's history.
8. **Provide incentives for façade restoration and adaptive reuse** in historic districts and corridors.
9. **Continue to collaborate with the Berea Arts Council and Tourism Commission** to market Berea



TOWN-GOWN PARTNERSHIP

GOAL 1 // Strengthen collaboration between Berea College and the City.

1. **Create a standing Town–Gown Committee** to guide coordination and communication.
2. **Establish a shared planning framework** for campus-edge development.
3. **Develop joint land-use studies for the campus edge and the city** to balance institutional and community needs.
4. **Collaborate on major capital projects and grant opportunities.**
5. **Publish an annual Town–Gown report** highlighting joint initiatives.

GOAL 2 //Align investments to benefit both the College and the community.

1. **Pursue joint-use facilities** for recreation, learning, and innovation.
2. **Support shared infrastructure improvements** that serve both entities.
3. **Collaborate on programs linking education, research, and local business.**
4. **Partner on innovation hubs, workforce housing, and maker initiatives** that connect students with local employers.



GOAL 3 // Strengthen positive relationships between students and residents.

1. **Establish a liaison office for student–community relations.**
2. **Encourage student involvement** in volunteer and cultural programs.
3. **Create a shared calendar of events and service opportunities** to better integrate students into civic life.
4. **Support mentorship and internship programs** linking Berea College students with city departments, local schools, and nonprofits.