

**COUNCIL FOR THE VILLAGE OF YELLOW SPRINGS  
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING: WORK SESSION  
AGENDA**

**Council Chambers 5pm.**

**Tuesday, February 17, 2026**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**ROLL CALL**

**WORK SESSION**

1. Village Values (DeVore Leonard: 10 min.)
2. Village Goals: Giardullo will facilitate. If needed, this work will be continued into Old Business at the Regular Meeting. (Giardullo: 45 min.)
  - Process Memo (Giardullo)
  - 2026 Council Goals Working List for Discussion

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Village of Yellow Springs is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities. Any person requiring a disability accommodation should contact the Village, Clerk of Council's Office at 767-9126 or via e-mail at [clerk@yso.com](mailto:clerk@yso.com) for more information.

**VILLAGE OF YELLOW SPRINGS, OHIO  
RESOLUTION 2026-08  
ADOPTING VILLAGE OF YELLOW SPRINGS ANNUAL GOALS FOR 2026-2027**

**Whereas**, Village Council adopts goals to guide decision making and resource allocation for the Village, and

**Whereas**, Village Council has publicly collaborated as to the aspirations, needs and vision for the community, and

**Whereas**, Village Council has and will continue to seek input from Village staff and the community in goal setting for 2026-27,

**NOW, THEREFORE, COUNCIL FOR THE VILLAGE OF YELLOW SPRINGS, OHIO  
HEREBY RESOLVES THAT:**

**Section 1.** Council has affirmed the following values as the basis for their 2026 Goals:

Value 1: Deepen decision-making processes with ~~active~~ citizen participation and effective representative governance.

Value 2: Be a model employer actively working to ~~attract and retain a diverse workforce and provide excellent achieve diversity in hiring and employee retention and a provider of services services~~ within a responsible and sustainable fiscal framework.

Value 3: Create a welcoming community of opportunity for all persons regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, economic status, mental/physical ability or religious affiliation.

Value 4: Pursue a strong economy that provides diverse employment, creates a stable tax base and supports the values of the community, particularly affordability.

Value 5: Seek, in all decisions and actions, to reduce the community's carbon footprint, encourage sound ecological practices and provide careful, creative and cooperative stewardship of land resources.

Value 6: Intentionally promote anti-racism, inclusion, equity and accessibility through ~~Villageall~~ policies, procedures and processes.

**Section 2.** The 2026 Village Goals as detailed in the attached Exhibit A are hereby approved.

Kevin Stokes, Council President

Passed:

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Judy Kintner, Clerk of Council

ROLL CALL

Kevin Stokes Y

Brian Housh Absent

Gavin DeVore Leonard Y

Ex. A Res. 2026-085-26

Carmen Brown\_Y\_\_\_\_\_ Trish Gustafson\_Y\_\_\_\_\_

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## 2025 YELLOW SPRINGS VILLAGE GOALS

### Community Engagement & Communications

- Continue improved community communications re: Village activities, elevating website enhancements.

### Financial Sustainability & Fiscal Responsibility

- Upgrade/make changes to VIP so that custom reports are fluid and easily available; conduct annual training with vendor.  
Continue efforts to secure additional grant funding for infrastructure, housing, and public safety projects.
- Explore options for cost-sharing agreements and partnerships to reduce financial burdens.
- Conduct periodic internal financial audits to ensure fiscal responsibility and efficiency.
- 

### Municipal Infrastructure & Utility Development

- Create plan to resolve status and future of existing municipal broadband utility.
- Develop long-term funding plan to continue focus on improvements in utility infrastructure.
- Update the Village's Capital Improvement Plan to align with identified infrastructure needs and project priorities.
- Review the Village's sidewalk policy to ensure it remains practical and effective.
- Support the update of the Active Transportation plan to improve safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility in the Village.

### Economic Development

- Collaborate with YSDC and other partners to execute actions highlighting that YS is open for business.
- Strengthen partnerships with local businesses and organizations to promote sustainable economic growth and address any business concerns that are in Village staff purview.
- Clarify role and responsibilities of YSDC vis a vis Village economic development, including expectations for intergovernmental communication (amongst taxing entities) for the purpose of long-term planning.

### Housing Development

- Determine and implement a housing strategy that encourages and sponsors the development of affordable housing in the Village – based on a Council/staff agreed upon definition of affordable housing – through incentives and policies.
- Establish clear policies and incentives for developers that align with Village values (refer to existing state law). Broaden decision-making by seeking external expertise and input on affordable housing options, consulting with professionals and experts outside the village to ensure a well-rounded and informed approach to policy and strategy development.
- Continue strategic zoning improvements to support diverse housing options.
- Advance the LIHTC project by securing funding, obtaining necessary approvals, and implementing the development plan, contingent on grant award.

### Leadership & Professional Development

- Develop and run a thoughtful strategic planning process and complete a Council and staff supported plan (timeline and process agreed upon in 2025).
- Complete a comprehensive wage study for all Village positions using appropriate comparables; use this information to prepare pay ranges for each position.
- Create a clear process for Council-managed staff evaluation and contracts/pay, including check-ins during the year/between evaluations (including Solicitor).
- Achieve clarity regarding Village staff salaries and benefits that impact Council-managed decisions (payrates, longevity, contracts, etc.).  
Expand networking/relationship building, growing regional leadership role and opportunities.
-

**Village Goals – Second Progress Report 2025**

This is the second update on progress since the Village Council adopted its goals. The table below provides an overview of staff progress on those goals. For each goal, you'll find the goal area, the specific goal, and a summary of actions taken so far. This report is designed to keep both Council members and the public informed about ongoing implementation efforts and significant milestones. Updates will be shared quarterly.

GOAL AREA	VILLAGE GOAL	ACTIONS TAKEN / PROGRESS
<b>Community Engagement &amp; Communications</b>	Continue improved community communications re: Village activities, elevating website enhancements.	We've strengthened community communications with the YSConnect app, YSPD Facebook page, new digital message boards and banner poles, and are finalizing the new website with a targeted launch in Spring 2026.
<b>Financial Sustainability &amp; Fiscal Responsibility</b>	Upgrade/make changes to VIP so that custom reports are fluid and easily available; conduct annual training with vendor.	In progress.
	Continue efforts to secure additional grant funding for infrastructure, housing, and public safety projects.	We are actively pursuing grants for infrastructure, housing, and public safety projects, including a promising OPWC application, upcoming SRTS and Active Transportation Plan submissions, and a \$13,100 trishaw grant awarded from the Dayton Foundation.
	Explore options for cost-sharing agreements and partnerships to reduce financial burdens.	Ongoing.

GOAL AREA	VILLAGE GOAL	ACTIONS TAKEN / PROGRESS
<b>Financial Sustainability &amp; Fiscal Responsibility (Continued)</b>	Conduct periodic internal financial audits to ensure fiscal responsibility and efficiency.	Ongoing.
<b>Municipal Infrastructure &amp; Utility Development</b>	Create plan to resolve status and future of existing municipal broadband utility.	We are advancing plans for the municipal broadband utility, with Altafiber targeting Spring 2026 for work and staff coordinating with MVECA to explore broadband options.
	Develop long-term funding plan to continue focus on improvements in utility infrastructure.	We are reviewing building, permit, zoning, and tap fees to develop a long-term funding plan for utility infrastructure improvements.
	Update the Village's Capital Improvement Plan to align with identified infrastructure needs and project priorities.	We've updated the Village's Capital Improvement Plan to a three-year horizon to better align projects with identified infrastructure needs and priorities.
	Review the Village's sidewalk policy to ensure it remains practical and effective.	Sidewalk policy review planned for Council consideration in 2026.
	Support the update of the Active Transportation plan to improve safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility in the Village.	Staff are seeking grant funding to update the Active Transportation Plan.

## MANAGER'S DESK

GOAL AREA	VILLAGE GOAL	ACTIONS TAKEN / PROGRESS
<b>Economic Development</b>	Collaborate with YSDC and other partners to execute actions highlighting that YS is open for business.	With a new YSDC executive director in place, staff are providing support as YSDC takes the lead on initiatives.
	Strengthen partnerships with local businesses and organizations to promote sustainable economic growth and address any business concerns that are in Village staff purview.	Ongoing.
	Clarify role and responsibilities of YSDC vis a vis Village economic development, including expectations for inter-governmental communication (amongst taxing entities) for the purpose of long-term planning.	Ongoing.

## MANAGER'S DESK

GOAL AREA	VILLAGE GOAL	ACTIONS TAKEN / PROGRESS
<b>Housing Development</b>	Determine and implement a housing strategy that encourages and sponsors the development of affordable housing in the Village – based on a Council/staff agreed upon definition of affordable housing – through incentives and policies.	Ongoing.
	Establish clear policies and incentives for developers that align with Village values (refer to existing state law).	CRA district approved by Council. Annexation for Springs Meadows 3 & 4 is finalized, with project work expected to begin in 2026 pending necessary approvals.
	Broaden decision-making by seeking external expertise and input on affordable housing options, consulting with professionals and experts outside the village to ensure a well-rounded and informed approach to policy and strategy development.	In progress; research underway.
	Continue strategic zoning improvements to support diverse housing options.	Ongoing; to be coordinated with the strategic plan.
	Advance the LIHTC project by securing funding, obtaining necessary approvals, and implementing the development plan, contingent on grant award.	The LIHTC project did not receive state credit; this goal is now concluded.

GOAL AREA	VILLAGE GOAL	ACTIONS TAKEN / PROGRESS
<b>Leadership &amp; Professional Development</b>	Develop and run a thoughtful strategic planning process and complete a Council and staff supported plan (timeline and process agreed upon in 2025).	Strategic planning conversations will begin in 2026 with the new Council.
	Complete a comprehensive wage study for all Village positions using appropriate comparables; use this information to prepare pay ranges for each position.	We will seek quotes for a comprehensive wage study in 2026.
	Create a clear process for Council-managed staff evaluation and contracts/pay, including check-ins during the year/between evaluations (including Solicitor).	Ongoing.
	Achieve clarity regarding Village staff salaries and benefits that impact Council-managed decisions (payrates, longevity, contracts, etc.).	Updates to the Personnel Policy Manual, clarifying staff salaries and benefits, will be presented to Council in 2026.
	Expand networking/relationship building, growing regional leadership role and opportunities.	Village Manager Burns launched a 'New Managers Group' with ongoing membership and regular meetings, continues active participation in DAMA and GDMMA, and has reestablished Greene County Managers luncheons while attending quarterly Greene County economic development meetings.

To: Village Council, staff, and interested community members  
From: Gavin DeVore Leonard  
Date: 2/6/26  
Re: 2026 Village Goals

For our goal setting discussions this year, as I sat down to work on sending my suggestions, I realized that there were many other considerations that came to mind. Looking over last year's Goals with fresh eyes was a reminder of how far we have come, and how far we have to go. This memo is meant to share more context of how I am thinking about the exercise of Goal setting. I think we have a great opportunity to improve Goal setting now and going forward, which could significantly increase clarity and alignment. I have some suggestions below that we don't need to discuss or figure out at the next meeting, but I'm not sure when to bring them up so I'll do it here. I'm actually really excited about us leveling up on how we prioritize and work together!

### **Context on Goal Setting**

The core of Village operations is service provision. Residents are counting on us for utilities, public safety, and much more. The large majority of our income and expenses are dedicated to providing the services that residents expect and deserve. Almost all of our staff are focused completely on providing these services.

At Council, in constant consultation with staff and through creating space for ongoing public input, we ultimately have to decide what the quality and quantity of our service provision should be. This requires thinking about what our community values, and therefore what policies we should pursue and what budget allocations we should prioritize. We have to find the line between what is a need and what is a want. Assuming we can afford all of our needs, with mindfulness about both the short and long term impact, we have to prioritize our wants. Residents are counting on us to keep affordability and cost of living at the top of mind, and to use resources wisely. If Council's wants don't effectively mirror those of the strong majority of residents, we risk losing trust (and the ability to pass levies, which are a reflection of that trust).

We are not making Goals in a vacuum, and too often it has felt like that. Time and money are real constraints. Council members may have more time or appetite to take on more projects, but we have to respect the capacity of our staff, as well as our ability to gather input from community members. We need to have reasonable expectations of what staff can do above and beyond what we've agreed are needs, and we have to give clarity on what the scope of those needs is (i.e. we all want paved streets, but how often do they need to be re-paved). Volunteers and partner stakeholders may be able to expand our capacity, but we have to be careful because sometimes more stakeholders and partnerships can mean more work, not less.

Lastly, I think we can get clearer about what we want to accomplish with each Goal at the very beginning, so there's less room for misunderstanding.

With this in mind, here are related recommendations:

*Recommendation: Add something to the Goals document that summarizes the core reality that the vast majority of our resources have always and will always go toward service provision.* That is our top Goal. In the process of service provision, there are many everyday or ongoing expectations. From my perspective, only if there is a notable shift in expectations around service provision would that become a Goal (if there is a major new initiative or redefinition of what the quality or quantity of a service will entail). In all of the goal sessions I've been part of over the past few years, this tension comes up. In the past few years, the "Village Goals" vs. "Council Goals" discussion was rooted in this underlying tension. When service provision does not show up on our Goals doc it feels like the biggest thing that most of our staff engage with is not seen and valued, I think that should change.

*Recommendation: Include "How We Work" Goals (I don't care what they are called).* These would be different from specific projects or issues we are trying to accomplish or address. For example, I think we are working to align staff capacity and Goals. Goals should be things we want to look back on at the end of the year (or two years) and ask ourselves if we are making progress.

*Recommendation: Add something to the Goals document that simply defines what "Village Goals" are.* I think they are: Priorities for Village operations and resources in the year ahead. If we are aiming for 2-year Goals, we should say that too. If there's something else anyone is expecting, let's name that now, and get clarity for ourselves and for the next Council on what we were trying to accomplish with this process.

*Recommendation: Add outcome/s to each Goal.* I believe that we should try to more clearly articulate what the outcome of each Goal is, so there is less room for misalignment. To that end, I've listed outcomes with the Goals I am suggesting below, as well as possible steps as part of the Goal to increase clarity of what work toward the Goal might entail and in order to get the ball rolling toward implementation.

For me, these recommendations feel like the bare minimum to have an effective goal setting process. I'll say more below on some of the followup work that's needed too.

All of these recommendations could be integrated into the Goals process fairly easily right now if there is straightforward agreement, or we could consider these ideas in the future. I don't think any of them should hold us up if they add complexity or difficulty for anyone.

## **Vision**

Another big part of the context within which we have a conversation about Goals is our vision (or lack thereof), particularly to the extent that it is discussed and agreed upon. I look forward to

the day when we have a codified strategic plan, an agreed upon document that spells out what we're aiming for. Until then, our Values are arguably the best guide and our Goals should dictate where we prioritize time and money. I think we all have some kind of an idea of the community we want to live in that guides which things we suggest we do or spend money on, and I hope a strategic plan will make this vision clear to everyone. Here is my stab at the vision I have for the community, which I hope is widely shared and I would be interested to hear any feedback on.

Yellow Springs is a community working to live by its widely shared social justice values. We imagine a place where prosperity is shared and we care about our neighbors, and where the vision of fairness and opportunity guides all of the decisions that we make.

We envision a community where we have resilient and high-quality services, while working to maintain affordability so that it is not only the rich who can benefit from such great services. Where we have a lot of peace and quiet and access to the natural world's beauty, while creating space for enough development to maintain a vibrant place to live with enjoyable and useful amenities for people of all incomes. Where we have many places to connect with our neighbors who live in the Village and who have deep roots here, while we also share our place with visitors and newcomers who want to experience some of this vision themselves, even if they don't or can't live here. Where those visitors contribute to our community, just as residents do, helping to make it better than how they found it and making it possible to maintain a vibrant downtown even with so few residents. Where we work hard to move past tolerance — which was enough to sustain and grow diversity when hate and segregation were legislated — toward inclusivity, where there is celebration of diversity and the investment and support to prove it. Where we are conscious and proactive working toward addressing power and privilege dynamics wherever they may impact our ability to build a diverse, inclusive community. Where we appreciate the eclectic, but realize that sometimes things will look the same, especially because sometimes economy of scale makes this possible. Where we let people decide how they present themselves and take care of their property, but that we need to hold each other — and especially owners of a lot property — accountable to some standards so our place maintains its charm and is safe and can stand the test of time. Where our place is so clearly vibrant artistically and intellectually and where people are active and engaged in our community and editing and improving this vision. Where we work to keep our carbon footprint small by sharing and following best practices for environmental stewardship. Where we appreciate local business and unique things and love to get to know the people who create what we need and want to enjoy life, and where we recognize the labor that goes in to making local commerce a key component of our small town. Where the people who live here and want to be involved in the community after work can afford to live here, because it is our vibrant downtown that is the engine of our community connectedness. We want to balance all of these things while also maintaining a balanced and sustainable budget. We know it will be hard, and we'll likely never reach the ultimate communitarian and cooperative utopian vision upon which our town was founded, but we want to try.

It's hard to write up our vision! I am sure I missed things! I'd love to hear others' thoughts! This is very much a first draft, and the process of prioritizing scares me, but I think it's necessary so we can figure out what we do with our limited resources.

Speaking of resources, one resource that's relevant to visioning, but also goal setting and values and strategic planning and more, is the [City of Oberlin's Social Equity Plan](#) (and several related documents). I have only recently become aware of it but I think it is really inspiring! I haven't read it fully, but on first glance it appears that they have been grappling with many of the same things that we are. Check it out, I think you'll find it interesting too.

## **Looking Back**

Now, since we need to set some priorities for this coming year, I'll first reflect on what is leftover from our Goal process in 2025. I think we should continue the following Goals from 2025 as priorities in 2026 (they are rephrased to what makes more sense to me). As I noted above, I tried to put an Outcome with each Goal so that we have something to measure or check on, as well as noting some Possible Steps for each, in hopes that the Goal might have even more clarity. I am thinking about these as part of 2 year goals, so if we decide to project for only a year, I would probably cut back. These are not prioritized in order of importance:

- Update website.
  - Outcome - a significantly improved source for Village information
  - Possible Steps - gather input prior to final completion
- Achieve clarity regarding Village staff salaries and benefits that impact Council-managed decisions.
  - Outcomes - 1) confirm use of VIP and clarify any other systems use toward automation and compliance, 2) legislate VLSA and overtime practices, and 3) pass updated Personnel and Policy Manual (PPM)
  - Possible Steps - work with Shared Resource Center to adopt best practices, etc.
- Clarify role and responsibilities of Village on economic development, vis a vis YSDC and any other partners or stakeholders.
  - Outcomes - 1) discuss and then document our role, 2) communicate that role to relevant stakeholders, and 3) align our related staffing and budget allocations
  - Possible Steps - set up a work session on the topic, gather input from other stakeholders, etc.
- Determine and implement a housing strategy.
  - Outcome - document purpose/scope, outcomes, and process for housing and development-related work
  - Possible Steps - housing work session, etc.
- Review CRA and TIF policies and consider legislation if needed.
  - Outcome - update CRA and TIF policies
  - Possible Steps - economic development tools work session, etc.
- Complete a strategic planning process.

- Outcomes - complete plan based on agreed upon timeline
- Possible Steps - identify contractor/s who will support us, set up working group/s, etc.

If a Goal from last year is not listed above it is because it seems to me that it was accomplished, is not a priority, is duplicative, or is covered as part of the everyday or ongoing expectations of Village staff and/or Council members.

## 2026 Goals

In addition to the Goals that carry over, I would like to prioritize (these are my “new Goals” to add to the conversation for 2026 Goals):

- Something about our primary goal being service provision (see above).
- Deepen our shared understanding of the budget and clearly identify what is considered a need.
  - Outcome - 1) increased communication throughout the year so that everyone involved in the decision making process is in a better position to prioritize and choose our wants during budgeting, 2) better understanding of choices and dynamics in the short and long term (3 year forecasts, long term budget cash expectations, etc.)
  - Possible Steps - regular Finance Committee report outs, gathering guidance/input from full Council along the way

As I mentioned above, I would like us to consider “How We Work” goals, as I think how we do things is a key component of what we do. To that end, here are my suggestions:

### How We Work Goals

- Reduce workload of Village Manager (and by extension other staff) by better aligning capacity and goals.
  - Outcome - self-reported work-life balance has improved.
- Improve say to do ratio by better aligning capacity and goals.
  - Outcome - increase percentage of completed goals compared to 2025
- Avoid significant misalignment on major projects.
  - See if we can make it a year without clearly clunky projects with broad disagreement, where a lack of clarity of purpose or process is a significant problem. We may choose to do hard things where not everyone agrees, but hopefully we can do it thoughtfully and with clarity.

### Strategy Screens

As we create our Goals, and certainly after we’re done, we should ask ourselves: do these Goals, taken together, move us in the direction we want to go as a community? In the future, our strategic plan can articulate the longer term arc we want to bend. In the meantime, it’s

incumbent upon all of us to make sure we at least don't go in the wrong direction unwittingly. I intend to review our Goals considering the following strategy screens (lightly edited from my 01/02/26 memo):

1. Will the Goal increase housing affordability?

I hope we'll pay particular attention to ensuring that retail, hospitality, and service sector workers — the people at the core of making our vibrant downtown a hub for community life — have affordable places to live so we can improve the ratio of people who work in town being able to live in town. Housing is not the only element of affordability for a place, but because it is the largest expense for almost everyone, it is an important metric.

2. Will the Goal increase racial diversity?

While racial diversity is one of many ways we may measure how healthy our community is, when considering both the inclusivity of our community and the interrelated socio-economic realities of spreading wealth and opportunity, I believe this is an important metric for our village's health.

3. Will the Goal lower our media age?

Our median age is now 53.9 years old (based on census data — check out the [Census Reporter site](#) for a great, easy to read, summary of our current census information). For context, the city of Dayton's is 33.6. Based on a number of factors (chiefly housing affordability), it's likely unreasonable to expect we'll have a population nearly as young as Dayton. But, without conscious decision making, our community will continue to become inaccessible for too many. This is a great place for people to age (and we can and should make it even better!), but it would be great to find a better balance.

Taken together, these screens encourage us to share prosperity and spread opportunity rather than continue or exacerbate stratification. Maybe there is a better source, but the [McKee Association's Cost-of-Living Report from 2022](#) has a lot of great information, including clear charts that show how racial diversity has consistently gone down and median age has consistently gone up in Yellow Springs over the last several decades (and how those are the opposite of the trends across the state).

At our retreat and in other conversations I've heard discussions about how Goals will impact our 1) community connection (deepening relationships and creating a rich cultural and intellectual life for villagers), 2) accessibility, 3) economic development and/or entrepreneurship climate, and 4) civic engagement (ensuring strong civic participation and effective process for decision making). I'll look forward to how others look at our Goals, taken together, and whether they ensure the Village is moving us in the direction we want to go as a village.

## Followup

I would like to see workplans developed after our Goals are set. At a minimum, a workplan could consist of:

- 1) A person who is bottom lining that work (they may not be doing all of it, but they are the one responsible for its completion)
- 2) A timeline for completion, including any key steps along the way, to ensure we are aligned in the level of urgency and/or importance for each project, while also cognizant of capacity

If, upon putting together these details, there are clear capacity gaps or needs identified in order to hit a Goal, that should be communicated. Currently our Goals are effectively equal in value, but we'll be choosing the level of importance based on timeline for completion (and then any budget allocation). It seems highly likely that this will need to be shared and discussed at an upcoming meeting and/or we'll need to empower 1-2 Council members to work with staff on these plans and followup.

Then, on a quarterly basis, I hope we'll put dedicated time on the agenda for Goal progress check-ins. These followup steps are typical in high performing organizations so there's clarity and accountability, where everyone is aware of the progress of work.

### **Conclusion**

As I said at the outset, I am legitimately excited about leveling up our work in the Village. If we get serious about having concrete Goals and working toward them, I think the clarity will go an awfully long way toward eliminating much of the confusion and frustration that sometimes seem to plague us. I feel a sense of urgency because there are significant long term trends that I'm not sure anyone in the community is happy about that we are trying to change. We'll be pushing back on literally decades of inertia. But it feels so worth it to try, and that means taking this seriously enough to plan our work and work our plan. I look forward to our work together!

Hi Elyse and Judy,

Here are my goals, but if there's a place to share with the team these comments I think it is pretty needed to explain how I got to these, as they move out of the current format.

Process: I did a line by line of the 2025 goals, with comments and questions (available if of interest), and then added in red my additions that I felt like were missing. To me this version felt quite long and full of items, making it overwhelming and not particularly realistic to accomplish. Then I compiled the following list that is still perhaps (likely?) too much in content. I am a huge proponent of making a list of goals that are actually feasible for 2026. Clearly, this is simplified significantly and would require sub-goals but I think there is value in identifying the goal, and then ensuring that the sub-goals all feed back into that primary goal.

This format could allow better alignment with actions items or workplans. I believe some of the previous goals from 2025 made it difficult for this because it was overly vague or broad, or in the other direction extremely specific (like an action item). I've heard staff ask for more direction, and I think reformatting goals is an opportunity to help do that. It also helps keep Council focused on the goals at hand and the shared collaborative work between staff/Council to reach them.

## **2026 YELLOW SPRINGS VILLAGE GOALS**

1. COMMUNICATIONS: Identify and maintain a communications plan for increased and improved communication with the village at large via multiple avenues.
2. FINANCE: Identify and implement cost cutting strategies while tracking progress on a return to a balanced budget by 2028.
3. INFRASTRUCTURE: Maintain high quality infrastructure and utilities while identifying methods for reducing costs or addressing increases in costs.
4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Collaborate with YSDC vis a vis Village economic development.
5. HOUSING: Determine and implement a two-year housing strategy that encourages and sponsors the development and maintenance of affordable and low income housing in the Village.
6. STRATEGY: Develop and run a thoughtful two-year strategic planning process for 2026-2027.
7. STAFF: Clarify Village staff salaries and benefits, especially those that impact Council-managed decisions, and related staff evaluation systems.

Examples of sub-goals:

1. COMMUNICATIONS: Identify and maintain a communications plan for increased and improved communication with the village at large via multiple avenues.
  - a. Development of communications plan capturing all the current avenues of communication (website, app, social media, newsletter, etc.).
  - b. Identify new communication avenues of interest to the Village

- c. Launch website
  - d. Maintain all other forms of communications as identified in Comms Plan
- 2. **FINANCE**: Identify and implement cost cutting strategies while tracking progress on a return to a balanced budget by 2028.
  - a. Explore options for cost-sharing agreements and partnerships to reduce financial burdens.
  - b. Conduct periodic internal financial audits to ensure fiscal responsibility and efficiency.
  - c. Develop long-term funding plan to continue focus on improvements in utility infrastructure.
- 3. **INFRASTRUCTURE**: Maintain high quality infrastructure and utilities to the Village of Yellow Springs while identifying methods for reducing costs or addressing increases in costs for residents.
  - a. Update the Village's Capital Improvement Plan to align with identified infrastructure needs and project priorities.
- 4. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**: Collaborate with YSDC vis a vis Village economic development.
  - a. Clarify role and responsibilities of YSDC vis a vis Village economic development, including expectations for intergovernmental communication (amongst taxing entities) for the purpose of long-term planning.
- 5. **HOUSING**: Determine and implement a two-year housing strategy that encourages and sponsors the development and maintenance of affordable housing in the Village.
  - a. Determine and initiate the best format for addressing housing concerns (i.e. committee/commission, housing retreats, town halls, etc.)
  - b. Determine priorities for above mentioned body for 2026. Ideas include:
    - i. Creating a renter registry.
    - ii. Establish clear policies and incentives for developers that align with Village values (refer to existing state law).
    - iii. Broaden decision-making by seeking external expertise and input on affordable housing options, consulting with professionals and experts outside the village to ensure a well-rounded and informed approach to policy and strategy development.
    - iv. Continue strategic zoning improvements to support diverse housing options.
- 6. **STRATEGY**: Develop and run a thoughtful two-year strategic planning process for 2026-2027.
- 7. **STAFF**: Achieve clarity regarding Village staff salaries and benefits that impact Council-managed decisions and related staff evaluation systems.
  - a. Finalize the Handbook.
  - b. Upgrade/make changes to VIP so that custom reports are fluid and easily available; conduct annual training with vendor.

## 2025 YELLOW SPRINGS VILLAGE GOALS

### Community Engagement & Communications

- Continue improved community communications re: Village activities, elevating website enhancements.

**Commented [1]:** What are we improving on, as in, what are the current communication strategies? What are the goals, besides launching the new website? I would love to spend more time to understand comprehensively what comms are now and what staff/Ben want to see into the future.

### Financial Sustainability & Fiscal Responsibility

- Upgrade/make changes to VIP so that custom reports are fluid and easily available; conduct annual training with vendor. ~~Continue efforts to secure additional grant funding for infrastructure, housing, and public safety projects.~~
- ~~Explore options for cost-sharing agreements and partnerships to reduce financial burdens.~~
- ~~Conduct periodic internal financial audits to ensure fiscal responsibility and efficiency.~~
- ~~Identify and implement cost cutting strategies while tracking progress on a return to a balanced budget by 2028.~~

**Commented [2]:** This is incredibly vague and broad. Should not be here IMO.

**Commented [3]:** For me this feels like an approach staff already takes with any large cost item - during the tour I feel like we got many examples of how this way of thinking is integrated into how staff works. Curious if this is about a specific field or topic?

**Commented [4]:** I thought this was already happening or perhaps this goal was met in 2025?

**Commented [5]:** This may not be the wording but this does seem like a if not THE clear financial sustainability goal of 2026.

**Commented [6]:** My understanding from the last council meeting that talked about this in 2025 was that it was not possible/likely. But I see the quarterly review looks optimistic.

**Commented [7]:** Could be under financial sustainability as well

**Commented [8]:** Accomplished in quarterly review

**Commented [9]:** My basic understanding is that this would be hugely controversial and divisive in town, so if it is a goal we need to be prepared for how much time and energy it will take.

### Municipal Infrastructure & Utility Development

- ~~Create plan to resolve status and future of existing municipal broadband utility.~~
- ~~Develop long-term funding plan to continue focus on improvements in utility infrastructure.~~
- ~~Update the Village's Capital Improvement Plan to align with identified infrastructure needs and project priorities.~~
- ~~Review the Village's sidewalk policy to ensure it remains practical and effective.~~
- ~~Support the update of the Active Transportation plan to improve safe, equitable, and sustainable mobility in the Village.~~

**Commented [10]:** I don't know practically what this means. What is a strengthened partnership with a business?

### Economic Development

- Collaborate with YSDC and other partners to execute actions highlighting that YS is open for business.
- ~~Strengthen partnerships with local businesses and organizations to promote sustainable economic growth and address any business concerns that are in Village staff purview.~~
- Clarify role and responsibilities of YSDC vis a vis Village economic development, including expectations for intergovernmental communication (amongst taxing entities) for the purpose of long-term planning.

**Commented [11]:** Absolutely

### Housing Development

- Determine and implement a housing strategy that encourages and sponsors the development of affordable housing in the Village – based on a Council/staff agreed upon definition of affordable housing – through incentives and policies.
- Establish clear policies and incentives for developers that align with Village values (refer to existing state law).

- Broaden decision-making by seeking external expertise and input on affordable housing options, consulting with professionals and experts outside the village to ensure a well-rounded and informed approach to policy and strategy development.
- Continue strategic zoning improvements to support diverse housing options.
- ~~Advance the LIHTC project by securing funding, obtaining necessary approvals, and implementing the development plan, contingent on grant award.~~

#### Leadership & Professional Development

- ~~Develop and run a thoughtful two year (2026-2027) strategic planning process and complete a Council and staff supported plan (timeline and process agreed upon in 2025).~~
- ~~Complete a comprehensive wage study for all Village positions using appropriate comparables; use this information to prepare pay ranges for each position.~~
- ~~Create a clear process for Council-managed staff evaluation and contracts/pay, including check-ins during the year/between evaluations (including Solicitor).~~
- Achieve clarity regarding Village staff salaries and benefits that impact Council-managed decisions (payrates, longevity, contracts, etc.) ~~and related evaluation systems.~~
- ~~Expand networking/relationship building, growing regional leadership role and opportunities.~~

**Commented [12]:** I recall someone saying a two year plan would be beneficial.

**Commented [13]:** Seems like an action item to achieving the goal of clarity on Village staff salaries, etc.

Judy,

These are the goals I outlined (for myself) in December. This list is intended to guide where I plan to concentrate my efforts and to align, where appropriate, with ongoing Village work. I am aware this is not a list of five straight-forward goals, however I can't see myself wanting to exclude any of these topics from the conversations around goals (and sub-goals) that we will be having during the work session.

## Housing

Establish a Tenants Rights Committee/Commission

Establish a Housing Commission

## Public Safety / Active Transportation

Address bicycle safety education gaps and related initiatives

## Infrastructure

Revisit existing parking plans

## Parks

Assess and address maintenance and improvement needs of existing public spaces

## Financial Stewardship

Identify, recognize, and eliminate wasteful spending

## Community Engagement

Hold town halls to allow residents to address Council and staff, either on demand or periodically

Host on-site events at Village facilities to support education and outreach related to Village services

I am sure some of these overlap with similar goals from my fellow council members, so I look forward to us working collaboratively with Johnnie and Elyse during the work session, to explore and narrow down our energy and focus as a group.

Thanks,  
Stephanie

## **Village of Yellow Springs – Goals - Senay**

These goals are intended to provide strategic direction and shared clarity for Council, staff, and the community as we move forward together. They are not meant to overshadow or compete with the essential day-to-day work that keeps our Village running & remains our highest priority.

### **1. Local Economy & Downtown Vitality**

- Coordinate with YSDC, YSCF, Chamber, SBDC and regional partners to develop technical assistance pathways for entrepreneurs including financing navigation, permitting education, and leasing readiness support.
- Explore pilot initiatives (pop-ups, markets, or cohort programs) that provide pathways to permanent local business presence.
- Evaluate zoning, permitting, and temporary use policies affecting pop-ups, markets, and micro-enterprises and recommend adjustments to reduce administrative friction.

### **2. Housing & Affordability**

- Assess Glass Farm development (affordable) including infrastructure capacity, financing scenarios, zoning compatibility, and phased development options.
- Formally evaluate and, *if feasible*, establish a Housing Commission with defined scope, reporting cadence, and policy advisory responsibilities.
- Identify cost-of-living pressure points (utilities, property tax impacts, service costs) and evaluate mitigation strategies consistent with fiscal sustainability. (Affordable Living)
- Develop an operational definition of “affordable housing” tied to Area Median Income (AMI), local wage data, and Village cost-of-living metrics to guide zoning, incentives, and development negotiations. (*This might be included in the Bowen Study*)

### **3. Organizational Alignment & Community Engagement**

- Improve communication clarity between Council, staff, and residents through predictable updates, engagement opportunities, and transparent decision framing.
- Improve Council & staff coordination by clarifying project prioritization processes and communication expectations.
- Support professional development and organizational capacity that helps staff balance essential services with strategic initiatives.

**Goals submitted by Carmen Brown**

- Increase the number of both for rent and for purchase housing stock by using ZERH standards and conservation development practices drawing on expertise at the local state and federal level- RFQ by end of year 2026.
- Work with EC to enhance the appearance of local parks and public spaces by engaging community youth groups, colleges, and master gardeners' programs.
- Continue work with YSDC to attract businesses to the Village.