

2027 South Bend Common Council Budget Priorities By District and City Wide

2027 Budget Priorities – Councilmember Canneth Lee District 1

CITY OF SOUTH BEND

FIRST DISTRICT

BUDGET PRIORITIES

Council President Canneth Lee

VISION

Investing in safe neighborhoods, strong infrastructure, quality housing, economic opportunity, and a high quality of life for First District residents.

BUDGET PRIORITY SUMMARY

#	Priority Area	Key Investments
I	Infrastructure	Street resurfacing, sidewalks, ADA improvements, lighting & drainage
II	Public Safety	Neighborhood policing, traffic calming, police/fire/emergency support
III	Housing & Revitalization	Affordable housing, homeowner repair assistance, vacant property enforcement
IV	Economic Development	Portage Elwood corridor, small business support, workforce development
V	Parks & Quality of Life	Park improvements, youth programming, neighborhood beautification
VI	Community Well-Being	Food security, mental health & senior services, community partnerships

JUN 22 2026

Bianca Tirado
City Clerk, South Bend, IN

VII Equity & Reparatory Justice

Reparatory Justice implementation, underserved neighborhoods, homeownership

I. INFRASTRUCTURE

- Street resurfacing and pothole repair throughout the First District
- Sidewalk, alley, and ADA accessibility improvements to support all residents
- Improved street lighting and stormwater drainage systems

II. PUBLIC SAFETY

- Increased neighborhood policing and sustained community engagement programs
- Traffic calming measures and pedestrian safety infrastructure improvements
- Continued funding and support for police, fire, and emergency response services

III. HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

- Preservation and development of affordable housing options
- Homeowner repair and rehabilitation assistance programs
- Stronger enforcement of ordinances governing vacant and problem properties

IV. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Targeted revitalization investment in the Portage Elwood corridor
- Support for small businesses and local entrepreneurs
- Workforce development initiatives and youth employment opportunities

V. PARKS & QUALITY OF LIFE

- Capital improvements to neighborhood parks and playground facilities
- Expanded youth programming and recreational opportunities
- Neighborhood beautification and community cleanup efforts

VI. COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

- Food security initiatives and access to nutrition resources
- Mental health services and programs supporting senior residents
- Strengthened partnerships with community organizations and nonprofits

VII. EQUITY & REPARATORY JUSTICE

- Dedicated funding for implementation of Reparatory Justice recommendations
- Strategic investments in historically underserved neighborhoods
- Expanded pathways to homeownership and economic growth for all residents

BUDGET GOAL

To ensure the First District remains a safe, vibrant, and thriving community through strategic investments that improve the lives of residents and strengthen neighborhoods.

2027 Budget Priorities – Councilmember Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers District 2

1. Safety cameras
2. Infrastructure – Falcon to Lombardy
3. Curb/sidewalk replacement
4. Lamppost/lighting
5. Affordable housing on vacant lots
6. EV committee involvement
7. Paint the viaduct at Walnut and Western
8. Food corridor Mayflower to Summit should be paved
9. More apartments are needed
10. What are the options for street/speedbumps (traffic calming)
11. Four-way stop sign on Sheridan and Linden (optional)
12. Painting fire hydrants
13. Signs for directions for various locations
14. “Welcome to South Bend” sign on viaduct
15. Home improvement grants
16. After school programs for children
17. Jobs, employment for seniors and youth

2027 Budget Priorities – Councilmember Sharon McBride District 3

1. Miami Street business development and streetscape, corridor facelift.
2. Michigan Street business development and streetscape, corridor facelift.
3. Increase curbs and sidewalk focusing on waiting lists and trip hazards.
4. Demo dilapidated houses in the district.
5. Mow vacant lots in the district.
6. Maintain and clear allies.
7. Ensure 1Roof provides programming as agreed for community. They state they do not have any funding for programming. Hold them accountable.
8. Continue with affordable housing infill.
9. Address potholes and lighting.
10. Continued support to bring HASB online and MWBE grant opportunities.
11. Do not cut the Council Budget.

My priority list from the past few years generally remains the same. Miami and Michigan Street facelifts are my top priorities. Also cleaning up Code violations such as abandoned vehicles, trash, alleys, sidewalk allocations and abandoned buildings and houses that are an eyesore.

2027 Budget Priorities – Council member Heidi Beidinger, 4th District

1. Safe and Healthy Housing and Lead Safe Homes
 - a. Expand code enforcement officers to clean up backlog
 - b. Revisit RSVP and Landlord Registry to ensure scope and compliance
 - c. Include environmental lead testing as part of code enforcement
 - d. Collect outstanding fines from landlo
2. Engage small business (<40,000 sq ft) developers and provide incentives
3. Develop a council communication plan to educate and increase awareness of council purpose, updates and accomplishments
4. First-time home buyer support program
5. Neighborhood Enhancements
 - a. Accelerate vacant property development and rehabilitation

b. Develop land bank

6. Environmental and Climate Change Resilience

a. Air quality monitoring

b. Expand tree canopy

c. Reduce unused parking lots; return to green space

2027 Budget Priorities – Councilmember Sherry Bolden-Simpson, District 5

1. My 2027 Budget Proposals

City Park in the 5th district – Negotiate with South Bend Community School Corporation to purchase land by Hamilton School on York Road. If The City of South Bend would pay for the demolition of Hamilton, SBCSC may offer a competitive sale price.

Support 5th district residents who have household incomes below 80% AMI with sidewalk/curb repair.

Support elderly residents in the 5th district who are on a fixed income with home repairs.

Commit extra funds to repair streets and curbs in Lafayette Falls. Large construction trucks are using the residential streets to reach the expansive development. A construction road has yet to be constructed. Meanwhile, the trucks are damaging the streets in the Lafayette Falls subdivision.

Require developers that request abatements to pay a fee that will build a home repair fund. Use that fund to offset the cost of general home repairs. Designate this fund to homes on Beck's Lake.

Continue upgrades to our sewer and water systems.

Commit funds to the cost of independent testing of soil and water in Beck's Lake.

Invest in clean energy such as solar energy.

Purchase 1000 water softeners for homes in areas where water is extremely hard.

2. While planning for the 2027 budget we should?

Seriously consider the recommendations in the Reparation Commission Report. Consider the needs of low-income households that are not in targeted areas of the city. Carefully consider the impact that budget cuts will have on vulnerable city residents. Equity – Address the needs of the most depressed areas of the city.

3. Our long-term budget planning should keep in mind the following.

The changing needs for housing and budget accordingly. History has shown that large low-income housing complexes do more harm to the community overall. The City should create mixed income housing throughout the city and phase out housing like Miami Hills and Beacon Heights.

Search for and consider new sources of revenue to reduce the costs of sidewalk, curb and street repair.

Continue building mixed income neighborhoods.

Remain mindful to encourage redevelopment in all areas of the City.

4. Additional comments on city spending/budgeting.

Commit extra funds to repair streets and curbs in Lafayette Falls. Large construction trucks are using the residential streets to reach the expansive development. A construction road has yet to be constructed. Meanwhile, the trucks are damaging the streets in the Lafayette Falls subdivision.

2027 Budget Priorities – Councilmember Sheila Niezgodski District 6

1. Continued investment for 3 years for the Community Center for Rum Village.
2. Investment plan for the Indiana corridor.
3. Investment plan for the vacant Kroger store on Western Avenue and for the library branch on Lombardy and Ford that will close when the new library branch opens on Sheridan.
4. Revisit plans to build a park along Western Avenue. The property North of Harrison School. This could be possible by exploring a collaborative agreement with the city and SBCSC. The park was in the original Western Avenue Main Streets plan.
5. Affordable infill housing on vacant lots in the 6th District to promote homeownership.
6. Repair/replacement of aging curbs and sidewalks.
7. A speed cushion is needed on Lombardy between Sample and Meadow Lane.
8. Continue to support La Casa De Amistad.
9. Address Gertrude Street crossing between Rum Village Park and the Mountain Bike

Trail. The current access to the trails is unsafe and has a blind spot due to the topography of the street and frequent speeders that disregard the posted speed limit. Identify steps to provide a safe crossing for bike trail users and for the entrance of the park.

10. A grocery store is needed in Rum Village which is considered a food desert.
11. Request for two shelters and two trash receptacles on Western Avenue, Route 10, at Grant Street and Pulaski Street. This could be a shared cost with the city and TRANSP.

While planning for the 2026 budget we should:

Evaluate programs that were funded by ARP dollars and measure the life expectancy for each program. While many of these programs provided a once in a lifetime opportunity for residents, evaluate which programs can be sustainable moving forward.

Continue investing in our neighborhoods, which is essential to having a vibrant city.

Our long-term budget planning should keep in mind the following:

Continue to monitor and pursue revenue sources to ensure the ability to deliver essential services to residents regardless of the state of the economy. Continue to keep a healthy reserve that can sustain the city if needed. Work towards a non-deficit budget.

Water and sewer mandates from the state and federal governments.

Continued focus on public safety.

Additional Comments on City Spending/Budgeting:

While difficult decisions will be made in regard to this year's budget and next year's budget, we must continue to focus on delivering vital services that residents expect.

2027 Budget Priorities - Councilwoman Karen White at Large

Opening Comments

As we begin the 2027 budget process, I would like to provide my overview of the financial landscape and the priorities that will guide our planning. The city continues to face a challenging fiscal environment, requiring disciplined decision-making and a clear focus on essential services. As the Mayor emphasized during the 2027 budget kickoff, salary increases for the upcoming year should be limited to **2 percent**, and all departments will be expected to identify **areas for potential reductions 5 percent** to ensure long-term sustainability.

In addition, the City (we) will enter contract negotiations with both the **Police** and **Firefighters** unions during this budget cycle. These discussions will have significant financial implications, and it is important that we approach them with a full understanding of our constraints and obligations.

Protecting essential services must remain our top priority. Council members should ensure that any required reductions do not undermine the core operations that residents rely on every day. At the same time, we must acknowledge that not all neighborhoods experience the same level of access or support. Several areas of our community continue to face higher needs and would benefit from targeted investments and direct services. As we shape the 2027 budget, our approach should balance fiscal responsibility with a commitment to equitable service delivery across the city.

Budget Priorities & Alignment Priorities

- What are the top three priorities driving this budget?
- How does this budget reflect our strategic goals for the next fiscal year?

Spending & Efficiency

- Which departments or programs saw the largest increases or cuts, in 2026?
- What new positions were added?

My budget priorities for 2027 are:

- WE must continue to support safe, clean, and thriving neighborhoods. Ensuring a strong quality of life for all residents requires sustained investment in basic infrastructure such as curbs, sidewalks, street maintenance, and the removal or rehabilitation of vacant homes.
- Housing stability remains a core priority, and we must continue to support programs that expand access to safe and affordable housing.
- The investment in our youth. The Youth Advisory Council—funded through the Common Council budget—plays a critical role in elevating youth voices and strengthening civic engagement. In addition, we must continue to create meaningful opportunities for young people, including job programs, internships, and pathways to career development. These investments not only support individual success but also contribute to long-term community stability and economic growth.
- Improving communication and community engagement is another key priority. Strengthening communication between departments, Council members, and residents will help ensure transparency, responsiveness, and trust.
- Encourage redevelopment of vacant commercial corridors.
- Strengthen workforce development and job-training partnerships.
- Public Safety remains a top priority for me.
- Improving communication and community engagement is another key priority. Strengthening communication between departments, Council members, and residents will help ensure transparency, responsiveness, and trust.

2027 Budget Priorities – Councilwoman Rachel Tomas Morgan at Large

I. 2027 Budget Priorities reflect ongoing commitments from previous budget priorities

Early Learning Support to Launch the “South Bend Strong Start Initiative”

- a. Support the outcomes of Ready To Grow and Early Learning Indiana’s (ELI) strategic planning process towards implementation of the “South Bend Strong Start Initiative” and its Strong Start Fund.
- b. Over time, the initiative is intended to help create a more stable, coordinated, and sustainable early learning ecosystem across South Bend and St. Joseph County. Success will include stronger provider stability, expanded access to high-quality early learning environments, reduced affordability barriers for working families, and increased employer participation in community-based early learning solutions.
- c. The initiative will focus on three integrated areas of implementation: 1) Family access & affordability; 2) Provider stabilization & quality advancement; and 3) Coordinated community investment & governance

Public Safety, Emergency Services, and Public Safety Technologies

- a. Ensure funding to maintain personnel and staffing needed in police, fire, and emergency services
- b. Ensure funding for desired staffing levels for Real Time Crime Center and investigative services
- c. Maximize public safety technologies and ensure funding for maintenance, needed upgrades, and potential new public safety technology tools
- d. Residents want continued traffic enforcement and want police to enforce speeding (or other) violations while driving

Follow through on Neighborhood Plans

- a. Advance and support action items of neighborhood plans passed in previous years by beginning with low-hanging fruit to show commitment and momentum
- b. Continue to incentivize adaptive reuse

- c. Continue to incentivize new construction on vacant lots in distressed neighborhoods and support mixed housing development types that reflect the value and benefits of diversity within neighborhoods

Downtown Plan Next Steps

- a. Support next steps and low-hanging fruit action items of our South Bend Downtown Plan 2045 to keep energy and momentum moving forward
- b. Collaborate with DTSB to support temporary & longer-term solutions to activate vacant buildings in the downtown corridor through art & lighting installations to promote safety and potential programs
- c. Continue ongoing conversations and planning with regard to Amtrak and the downtown train station proposal. Put long-term plans in place to ensure this potential for South Bend's future.

Strong City Services and Infrastructure

- a. Provide strong, traditional city services that impact our residents daily lives, health, safety, and mobility.
- b. Safe Streets, Speeding Controls, Crossings, Multi-modal Lanes, Curbs, and Sidewalks

Continue investment in repairing our failing streets, curbs, and sidewalks. Continued investment in multi-modal lanes, safety and speeding controls through re-design of streets, safe crossings, technology, police enforcement, and other safety and speed controls. Residents want even more police traffic enforcement.

- c. Water & Sewer Utility Infrastructure

Ensure we are setting aside funding and planning for continued upgrades. Evaluate and address lead piping and replacements where necessary.

Parks, Trails, Green Spaces, & Connectivity

- a. Ensure funding is available for what we have previously promised our residents with regards to parks, trails, green spaces, and connectivity. This includes ensuring that we have or will plan for the resources necessary for MLK Dream Center programming, Kennedy Park, other smaller park

improvements, potential green spaces identified in neighborhoods and downtown plans, and trails and walks that connect our communities.

Investing in our City Personnel and Development

- a. Work towards a tiered pay raise system that considers gaps between wages and inflation for lower-paid non-bargaining city positions
- b. Prioritize COLA increases to retain and attract talent in our City workforce, ensuring salaries are fair and competitive
- c. Continue to ensure health benefits are high quality and affordable, consider flexible and remote work policies where possible, and support remote and in-person continuing educational opportunities within Indiana or in the Midwest.

Planning & Investing in South Bend's Sustainability and Future Generations

- a. Climate Action Plan 2045 Next Steps

Determine what is feasible in this political and financial climate and plan for these investments. Support low-hanging fruit next steps.

- b. Tree Canopy

Growing and maintaining trees throughout the city is a low-cost, long-term investment in beautification and South Bend's climate action plan. Ensure funding is available to meet the needs of this program. Continue neighborhood and business outreach to expand utilization and scale. Prioritize areas for high-impact visibility – downtown, public spaces, pedestrian & vehicular corridors, as well as low tree canopy districts of the city. Commit to continuous improvement in our tree canopy program(s). Consider public-private cost-sharing partnership programs with businesses and homeowners for maintenance and removal.

II. While Planning for the 2027 Budget, we should:

Follow through on commitments and priorities we had set forth in these two terms and realize them.

Be strategic and judicious in implementing new initiatives in the near future as we plan for the overall reduction of revenue and look to expand other sources of revenue streams.

Continue to assess and reduce redundancies across city departments to increase cost savings. As we live into life in the new City Hall, we must commit to continuous improvement in these areas.

III. Our Long-term Budget Planning Should Keep in Mind the Following:

Investments in aging utilities infrastructure with basic city services and sustainability/climate resiliency for future generations of South Bend residents.

IV. Additional Comments on City Spending/Budgeting:

We must be open, prepared, and courageous to make some difficult budget decisions moving forward.

2027 Budget Priorities - Councilman Dr. Oliver Davis at Large

1. Funding for Chemical and Biological Testing

- Soil, groundwater, and air quality testing in residential areas.
- Lead and environmental hazard remediation in residential areas.
- Community health screenings and health impact studies.

2. Funding for Affordable Housing and Home Repair

- Establishment of the LaSalle Park Affordable Housing Fund with \$3 million from the Redevelopment Commission/TIF or General Reserves for seed funding to support the development of 5 new construction homes and 50 repaired, weatherized (energy efficiency), or rehabilitated homes in the neighborhood.
- Development of affordable housing.
- Home repair grants for existing residents.
- A commitment of \$1 million (out of the \$7 million, multi-year federal lead remediation grant) from the city's Lead Hazard Reduction Program.
- Financing to assist in building mixed income single family homes and duplexes in the LaSalle Park Neighborhood. \$5 million over a five-year period to build a total of 28 units. These single-family structures and duplexes will be built in the LaSalle Park Neighborhood.
- Include the financial recommendations in the Reparation Commission Report.

3. Increased Infrastructure and Neighborhood Improvements

- Street and sidewalk repairs (Illinois Street, for example)
- Alley improvements (behind LaSalle Park Homes, part of the complex on the corner of Linden and Falcon streets)
- Cleanup of vacant lots and neighborhood beautification. (The neighborhood association may apply for the Ignite Grant.)

4. More funding for Diversity Economic Development and Workforce Opportunities
 - Investment in Minority-owned contractors and businesses through a grant-making opportunity fund and affordable housing generation and home repair programs
5. More funding for Youth and Community Development
 - Youth employment and leadership programs.
 - After-school and educational opportunities.
 - Community-based violence prevention as have been implemented in Chicago, Illinois and Newark, New Jersey
6. FAR NORTHWESTNEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION Lathrop - Elwood Johnson - Bendix
 - Funding for Neighborhood Survey
 - Increased CDBG Funds - Housing Home Repair - Roof Top initiative
 - Increased Affordable housing on vacant lots
 - Continue Funding for Container Farm (In progress).
 - Request support from COSE Infrastructure
 - Funding for Main water line 1700 Block of Meade St.
 - Funding for Enforcement - Cameras at critical areas (drug houses, illegal dumping)
 - Funding for Youth Engagement
 - Funding for Fremont Park & LaSalle Landing
 - Funding Senior Programs
 - Funding for Community Garden
7. Funding for 5th District Area
 - Funding a City Park in the 5th district – Negotiate with South Bend Community School Corporation to purchase land by Hamilton School on York Road.
 - Supporting 5th district residents who have household incomes below 80% AMI with sidewalk and curb repair.
 - Purchasing 1000 water softeners for homes in areas where water is extremely hard to finance
 - Search for and consider new sources of revenue to reduce the costs of sidewalk, curb and street repair.
8. Funding for 6th District Area
 - Full funding for the multi-year plan for the Rum Village Master Plan via TIF funds, grants, and other opportunities.
 - Supporting 6th district residents who have household incomes below 80% AMI with sidewalk and curb repair.
 - Explore TIF Funding and other funding sources to help support the funding of a new grocery store to replace the Kroger's store
 - Assist TRANSPO in the funding of more Bus Shelters (warm shelters) through the 6th District
 - Search for and consider new sources of revenue to reduce the costs of sidewalk, curb and street repair in the 6th District

- Increase funding to Parks and other Community Investment to help with the cost of cutting vacant yards throughout the summer season