



Kentucky
League
of Cities

CITY OF SOUTHGATE

2026-2030-2035
VISION PLAN

Prepared by the Kentucky League of Cities
Community and Economic Development Team

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Introduction

City of Southgate City Council

- Jim Hamberg, Mayor
- Jackson Curry, Councilmember
- Elizabeth Hartman, Councilmember
- Paul Melville, Councilmember
- Mark Messmer, Councilmember
- Aileen Okura, Councilmember
- Tom Whitehead, Councilmember



Executive Summary

As a KLC member, the City of Southgate engaged with the Kentucky League of Cities' Community and Economic Development team with the intention of creating a new visionary workplan for the city. Coming from previous efforts for envisioning how Southgate can continue to move forward from 2026, this plan utilizes city and community input to build a vision for where the

city is today and where it could be around 2035. KLC staff conducted meetings and interviews with the Mayor and Council, numerous community business stakeholders, city department heads, contractors, and key individuals within the city who could help to shape Southgate's future and implement the strategies and visions found within this plan.

Purpose of the Work Plan

The Mayor and City Council of Southgate desire to create a work plan with goals and priorities that will move the city forward with the vision of the next 10 years in mind. The Southgate Strategic Vision Plan encompasses a multi-pronged approach to address the needs of the city's

residents and businesses, elevate the assets of the city, and leverage the amenities of the surrounding communities. The city will continually evaluate its progress and modify the priorities, as needed, to accomplish its goals.

Strengths of Southgate

- Safe, rated as one of the safest cities in the state, and especially in northern Kentucky, in 2026(according to SafeWise)
- Fiscally smart
- New development opportunities
- Good community atmosphere
- Engaged and strong, hard-working city leadership
- Regional collaborations, such as Campbell County Planning and Zoning, the Northern Kentucky Area Development District, the Campbell County Fiscal Court, Municipal Government League of Northern Kentucky, KLC, Southbank Partners, TANK, OKI, and others



The Values of Southgate

- Strong leadership
- Sense of community
- Amenities such as the community center, parks, playgrounds, ball fields, walking trails, fishing lake, and picnic shelter
- Forward-thinking leadership
- Dedication of remembering the city's past
- Community events
- History and traditions



The Realities of Southgate

- Landlocked – difficulty in expanding new business and residential developments
- Street and road maintenance is an ongoing cost
- Lack of pedestrian infrastructure/connectivity, especially on Blossom Lane, U.S. 27, and Mook Road
- Limited retail or commercial space
- Budget constraints – revenue generation is difficult without new development
- Maturing city staff
- Infrastructure and developments along U.S. 27 need upgrades and/or more future planning including agencies such as OKI
- Alignment of zoning updates are needed to address future growth
- City facilities need upgrading or consider new buildings in the future



Empower

- City leadership needs to remain focused on forward thinking and finding pragmatic solutions to Southgate's challenges.
- Developing a broader marketing strategy for Southgate can promote opportunities for business, residential development, city events and engagement, and attracting visitors.
- Exploring the potential creation of a business council could more closely align the city's goals with business needs and vice versa.
- Memorial Pointe and Sunrock developments represent great opportunities for the city to expand, but Southgate must be prepared to handle this new growth.
- Working closely with city department heads to address needs for new personnel and retaining facilities can better serve Southgate and its projected growth.

3,747

Southgate's population has been growing slightly for more than two decades. The median age of 36.9 years means many are in their prime working years.

\$54,421

Southgate's median household income is derived from the high percentage of workers in office fields such as management (15.6%), administrative support (13.5%), and sales (8.2%).

Source: 2024 U.S. Census Bureau Projection (Most recent ACS data available as of March 2026)

Southgate Focus Areas

1. Residential and Business Development

2. City Governance and Facilities

3. Quality of Life

4. Transportation

5. Regional Collaboration



Residential and Business Development

Two construction projects are occurring at the same time. Ongoing projects at Memorial Pointe and Sunrock bring multiple opportunities for new residents and residential development while continuous work along U.S. 27 would help foster new business development.

City Governance and Facilities

Some city facilities should be updated to accommodate for projected growth. Updating or renovating existing structures and replacing or renovating those facilities or constructing new facilities should be considered alongside the need for succession planning in the affected departments.

Quality of Life

Southgate residents enjoy multiple recreation areas in the city but would like connectors to these

areas with improved pedestrian infrastructure and more marketing around the various community events available to them.

Transportation

Expanding and maintaining transportation options are primary focuses of the city. Streets and roads require constant and consistent attention. Public transportation and alternative transportation options are needed. An ongoing funding plan to address these areas is critical.

Regional Collaboration

Northern Kentucky is a unique and diverse region of the commonwealth, dotted with relatively small cities, urban development, and rural character. Southgate's vision plan envisions collaborating with its neighbors to leverage regional assets that elevate the city's unique character and leverage the many community assets available in the surrounding region.

Southgate Focus Areas

1. Residential and Business Development

Residential and business development are crucial for the economic vitality of a city. Southgate is constrained by its lack of available new land. The city should focus on infill development and a realignment and possible expansion of its current commercial assets, collaborating with its regional partners to achieve this goal.

Residential and Business Development

1. Continuously update the business inventory. Are there any business locations that can be converted to expand the business community? Categorize and determine the business mix. Partner with regional agencies to determine if the business mix leverages the potential market.
2. Communication – Business owners indicated that they feel left out of the
- loop with what's going on within the city. Implement a consistent communications strategy that regularly includes roundtable discussions, onsite visits with business owners, opportunities for businesses, the city, and the residents to interact, and include business owners in community activities. Collaborate to create events that recognize and involve the business community. Continue the formation of the Southgate Business Association.
3. Completion of Memorial Pointe and Sunrock residential developments – New development will begin to generate additional tax revenue for the city and attract new residents.
4. Southgate should continue its involvement with development and planning for



MEMORIAL POINT

Southgate,
Campbell County,
Kentucky

CONCEPT & STAGE ONE PLANS

Plan Overview



Southgate Focus Areas

1. Residential and Business Development



condos/apartments and single-family homes at Sunrock and assisted living and hearing-impaired units at Memorial Pointe.

- a. Explore opportunities for improved land usage that may allow for further developments in the future, including medium-density, middle-income housing.
5. Be proactive with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) and the Campbell County Planning and Zoning Commission to guide growth and developments on U.S. 27.
 - a. Seek to promote frontage along the
6. Ensure future roadway plans and infrastructure developments are transparent and benefit the city's needs.
 - a. New businesses and residential developments will rely on these changes to affect their ability to live and work in Southgate.
- b. Maintain focus on attracting business entities that attract visitors to Southgate and provide options for residents, e.g., local retail and restaurants with unique attractions.

Southgate Focus Areas

1. Residential and Business Development

7. Explore the possibility of a new position in the city for a business/community administrator.
8. Consider reimagining Electric Avenue for future business development and a gathering space for entertainment. Consider continuing the sidewalk on the east side of Electric Avenue near Ridgeway to Electric Avenue from the current curb into the street and down Bluegrass Avenue to U.S. 27.
9. Create planning around parcels of land that are available to develop such as the western end of Blossom Lane.
10. Attract a distillery/brewery, new restaurant(s), and other businesses to the city.
11. Continue to develop and fill in potential mixed-use developments within Southgate, encouraging local entrepreneurs.

Reimagine Electric Avenue 2030

Option A: Food and Music Nights in the Park



Southgate Focus Areas

1. Residential and Business Development

Reimagine Electric Avenue 2030

Option B: Transform the appearance of Electric Avenue



Southgate Focus Areas

1. Residential and Business Development

Reimagine Electric Avenue for Future Business Development 2035

Option C: Consider redevelopment and revitalization of Electric Avenue



Southgate Focus Areas

2. City Governance and Facilities

The city should consider evaluating and prioritizing the expansion and replacement of basic infrastructure including city buildings. In addition, the city should evaluate the current status and location of city facilities and plan for growth and needs for the future.

City Governance and Facilities

- Expand new development to reduce the overall tax burden on the residents and existing businesses.
- Continue regular repaving of streets as funds become available.
- Focus on debt reduction.
- As funding or finances permit, continue to explore the feasibility of switching the location of the police department and city offices or constructing a new facility to house both to improve efficiency.
- Improve communication outreach from the city to the residents and business owners through the city's website, social media, and the Southgate Police app through the use of a QR code.
- Continue to expand the Park and Tree Board.
- Continue to plan for the Optimist Park development. Seek sponsorships for signage as needed.
- Explore grants and other private funding for economic development studies and projects.
- Work with a developer to purchase the the facility located at East Walnut and Electric Avenue.
- Develop connectors with new developments at Sunrock and Memorial Pointe.
- Add backup generators to key city government buildings, including city hall, the police evidence room, the police department, and the community center/shelter.
- Continue to diversify revenue streams.
- Continue to bring city buildings into ADA compliance.
- Continue commercial development of Sunrock and commercial property on U.S. 27 from Bluegrass Avenue to Willow. Expand from Memorial Pointe to Blossom Lane on U.S. 27 for commercial consideration.
- Hire an additional full-time public works employee, currently in the 2026-2027 budget.
- Consider hiring a city administrator in the next budget year.



Southgate Focus Areas

3. Quality of Life

Southgate increased its investment in improving the city's quality of life. A city's quality of life isn't just a feel-good metric — it's the backbone of its long-term success. When residents have access to safe neighborhoods, reliable infrastructure, green spaces, cultural amenities, and economic opportunity, the entire community becomes more resilient and attractive. High quality of life draws talent, encourages investment, strengthens social cohesion, and creates a sense of pride that fuels civic engagement. In many ways, it's the clearest reflection of how well a city cares for the people who call it home. This is reflected by its walking paths, walkability, especially in the inner-city for exercise, and recreation on the community center grounds.

Quality of Life (not in any particular order)

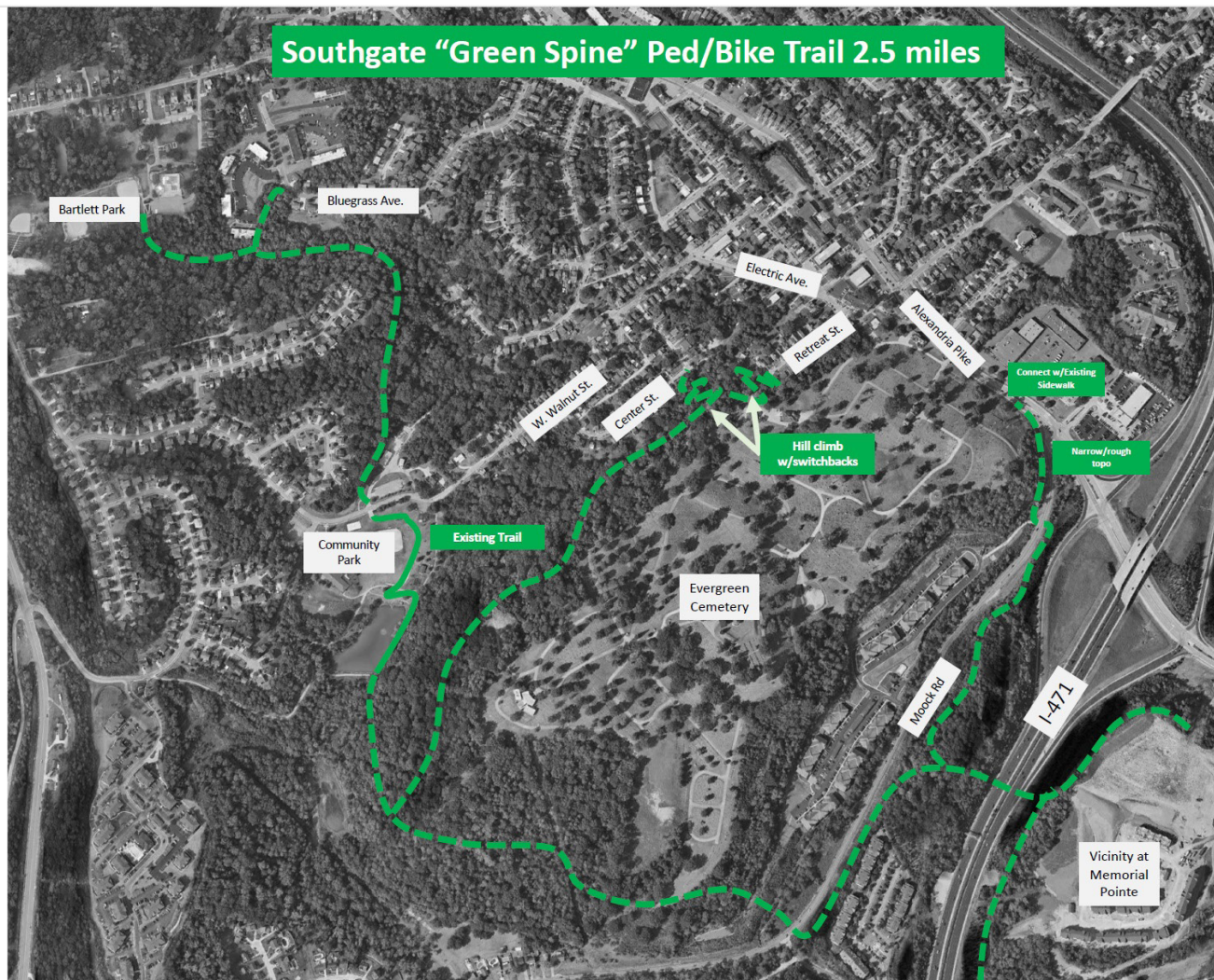
- Reconsider creating a senior citizens group. Activities may include organizing and planning community events, bingo, and decorating for holidays.
- Mentor the next generation of future community leaders.
- Create additional community events for the city that brings everyone together at the community center.
- Consider adding new exercise stations within the community center grounds.
- Begin developing connectors with new sidewalks connecting developments at Memorial Pointe to Blossom Lane through use of new pedestrian trail systems as shown in the diagram. A connector between Sunrock and Memorial Pointe may take many years.
 - Begin conversations and planning with the KYTC, Campbell County, and surrounding cities to ensure these trails are feasible.
- Re-evaluate the sidewalk assessments throughout the city and begin work to remediate any damages/incomplete pathways.
 - Consider opportunities for improved walkability in and around Southgate for residents and visitors.
- Encourage walking along the trails for exercise.
- Complete development of Southgate "Green Spine" to connect all parts of the city and provide ample walkability for quality of life.
- Create greenspace within a renewed downtown core in Southgate which can be used for community gatherings at the soon-to-be-new Optimist Club Park. Create walking tours, explaining historical areas within the city and Evergreen cemetery.
- Consider an additional option for residents alongside the city park and community center, such as the placement of a permanent basketball court.
- Evaluate and expand recreational opportunities and programs offered at the city park with changing needs and interests of residents.
- Continue upkeep on the trail as grants or funds permit.



Southgate Focus Areas

3. Quality of Life

Green Spine Project and Implementation Steps 2030



Southgate Focus Areas

4. Transportation

Good transportation keeps a community moving, connecting people to work, school, and everything that makes daily life easier. Having options like buses, bikes, walking paths, and rideshares helps cut traffic, supports the environment, and makes it easier for everyone to get around. When a city offers different ways to travel, it becomes more flexible, accessible, and enjoyable for the people who live there.

Transportation

1. Evaluate a possible road reconfiguration along U.S. 27 by KYTC.
 - a. Work with Campbell County Planning and Zoning, Newport, Southbank Partners, and KYTC in this effort.
 - b. Ongoing discussions with Newport, Southbank Partners, and KYTC.
2. Consider possible repaving as funds permit.
3. TANK (Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky) shelter(s) on U.S. 27 northbound at Mook Road, realign U.S. 27 southbound shelter at 525 Alexandria Pike.
4. Expand sidewalk connectivity throughout the city. Work with Campbell County for Blossom Lane, KYTC for Mook Road and U.S. 27.
5. Continue to develop trail connectors throughout the city.



Southgate Focus Areas

5. Regional Collaboration

Regional collaboration helps the city address shared challenges — like transportation, housing, and economic growth — more effectively than working alone. By coordinating with neighboring communities, the city can align infrastructure, pool resources, and attract broader investment and reinvestment. This approach reduces duplication, improves efficiency, and strengthens the city's position within the region.

Regional Collaboration

1. Collaborate with the City of Ft. Thomas and the KYTC to implement a road reconfiguration along U.S. 27.
2. Continue in conjunction with the Northern Kentucky Water District to replace water infrastructure and SD1 to replace storm water infrastructure.
3. Work with the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments and Southbank Partners to secure potential SNK/TA grant opportunities for road paving, pedestrian paths, and transit improvements.
4. Coordinate with the Campbell County Planning Commission to ensure that appropriate zoning regulations align with the city's future planning goals.
5. Discuss potential TANK bus routes between Southgate, Bellevue/Dayton, Fort Thomas, and Wilder.
6. Explore opportunities to create interlocal agreements with the neighboring cities that could lead to greater efficiencies in delivering essential services to both cities.
7. Communicate and collaborate with other cities in northern Kentucky to promote regional events, create economic development opportunities, and address housing issues.
8. Collaborate with Bike-Walk Kentucky and Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati Trails to develop trail connectivity from Southgate to other surrounding cities.
9. Create regional events that serve as touchpoints from Southgate to adjacent cities.



Conclusion

Southgate's future is bright because it is rooted in a clear vision and a practical path forward. This vision plan recognizes that lasting success depends on balancing growth with stewardship, innovation with tradition, and local priorities with regional opportunities. By focusing on residential and business development, city governance and facilities, quality of life, transportation, and regional collaboration, Southgate is positioning itself to remain a desirable and safe place to live, work, invest, and raise a family.

The strategies outlined in this plan are interconnected. Thoughtful residential and commercial growth will strengthen the tax base and support quality services. Effective leadership and modern facilities will ensure the city remains responsive, efficient, and prepared for future needs. Investments in parks, public spaces, community amenities, and neighborhood vitality will enhance quality of life for residents of all ages. Improvements to transportation will increase connectivity, safety, and accessibility, while collaborating with stronger partners, neighboring

communities, and regional organizations will allow Southgate to leverage resources, address shared challenges, and pursue opportunities that extend beyond city boundaries.

Achieving these goals will require ongoing commitment, collaboration, and adaptability through planning. While challenges and changing conditions are inevitable, Southgate has the advantage of a strong community identity, engaged residents, and dedicated leadership. By working together and maintaining a focus on these visionary priorities, the city can build on its strengths and make steady progress toward a more prosperous, connected, and vibrant future.

This vision plan is more than a roadmap — it is a commitment to purposeful action. With continued collaboration, thoughtful implementation, and leadership Southgate can confidently move forward, preserving the qualities that make it unique while embracing opportunities that will benefit current residents and future generations alike.





CITY OF SOUTHGATE
2026-2030-2035 VISION PLAN

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