

“For the Times” UMass Boston Ten-Year Strategic Plan

Introduction

This section will be converted from bullet points to narrative in the final version

- This strategic plan, “For the Times,” is designed to establish the vision and priorities for the University of Massachusetts Boston (UMass Boston) for the next ten years.
- This plan is the culmination of a year of planning by our campus that has included the participation of more than 200 stakeholders on a set of strategic planning committees as well as engagement and input from countless others.
- The plan lays out 5 emergent strategic priorities and 5 strategic commitments for the next 10 years.
- The plan renews our commitment to our legacy of excellence, curiosity, and creativity.
- It also renews our commitment to being a leading public research university. At this moment of serious global crises, we need research filled with curiosity and creativity. We need more research, better research, relevant research, as well as translational vehicles to apply that research, to solve the crises that exist in our world.
- The plan further renews our commitment to having a teaching soul and to the belief that education is an indispensable tool for a more democratic, inclusive, sustainable, and just world.
- The plan also affirms our commitment to becoming a leading anti-racist and health promoting university.
- Importantly, it recommits UMass Boston to bringing people and ideas together to elevate Boston – through scholarship and engagement that informs public policy and shapes strong resilient communities.
- Finally, it affirms our belief that UMass Boston is more important now than ever – that we are a university **of and for the times**.
- This is an exciting time for UMB and we look forward to moving towards execution of this ambitious and important strategic plan.

Mission and Vision

Mission Statement:

As Boston’s only public research university, we pursue locally rooted, globally engaged research, teaching, learning, and service. We are an academic community committed to equity, environmental sustainability, social and racial justice, innovation, and excellence. Our rich and expansive scholarly and creative contributions aim to advance knowledge in partnership with the communities we serve,

especially those historically marginalized. We aspire to become an antiracist institution that honors and uplifts the cultural wealth and well-being of our communities in order to create and sustain a thriving and just campus culture and world.

Vision Statement:

As a public research university with a teaching soul, we aspire to become an antiracist and health-promoting institution where:

- Diversity, equity, and inclusion are core values that drive institutional practices.
- Wellness and an ethic of care are embedded within the policies, practices, and infrastructure of our campus culture.
- We invest in high-quality learning and research environments to support the development and success of students of plural identities and from diverse socio-economic, racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds.
- We honor our tradition of teaching and our history of public service as we become an increasingly sophisticated research university committed to expanding, creating, and disseminating knowledge.
- Our decision making across campus is transparent and inclusive to ensure that governance is shared among all community members.
- Environmental and racial justice align with sustainable economic and planning decisions with local and global effects.
- High impact research and scholarly activities contribute to the creation of new knowledge and relevant applications of that knowledge.
- Community-engaged scholarship, service, and reciprocity drive university practices that promote the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the communities we serve.

We commit to supporting each other and ourselves in a transformative campus-wide process to uphold this vision in all decision making related to research, scholarship, pedagogical innovations, resource allocation, hiring and promotion, and the development of policies and practices.

Cross-cutting Strategic Commitments

The “For the Times” strategic plan for 2022-2032 lays out five cross cutting strategic commitments as well as five strategic priorities. These Commitments and Priorities will provide the framework to structure and guide our work as we move to implementation.

Cross Cutting Strategic Commitments	Strategic Priorities
1. Anti-Racist and Health Promoting	1. Holistic Student Success
2. Community-University Engaged	2. High Impact Research and Scholarship
3. Continuously Improving	3. Enrichment of Our Human Core

4. Responsible, Sustainable, and Responsive	4. Expansive Enrollment, Programs, and Partnerships
5. Mission Driven	5. Reimagining Campus Space and Location

Commitment 1: Anti-Racist and Health Promoting

At UMass Boston, an overarching commitment to dismantling structural and systemic racism serves as a foundation from which the university operates. This perspective shapes how we envision and teach courses, how we engage in research and knowledge generation, and how we provide services to students, and how we operate the university each day. As a federally designated Minority-Serving Institution that is recognized as an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) and is an emerging Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), centering the students who are educated at UMass Boston is the engine that drives our work. We see anti-racism and health promotion as a commitment that happens in tandem with this work, intentional and embedded, explicit in expression in some places, such as the wide variety of courses and research that embrace this perspective formally, and implicit in enactment in others, such as deliberate and supportive research opportunities for students, the advancement of transdisciplinary scholarship, and the integration of community-university partnerships in the fabric of the university.

Securing individual and collective health are essential for individuals and communities to reach their full potential. Yet that potential has historically been profoundly compromised by the long-standing public health crisis of intersecting and distinct manifestations of racism, which has taken many forms, including anti-Blackness, forced diasporic movements, and discrimination against people of color. The declaration by many communities of institutionalized racism as a public health crisis recognizes that its trauma takes a toll on an individual's and a community's physical and mental well-being, which is directly linked to overall health. Health, therefore, must be viewed as a public good and holistically, reflecting physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely as the absence of disease or infirmity. Consequently, health promotion can no longer be the sole responsibility of the health sector. Rather it involves all sectors of society to take an explicit stance in favor of health, anti-racism, equity, social justice, and economic and ecological sustainability for all.

Because institutions of higher learning play a crucial role in all aspects of the development of public goods, as Boston's only public research university, we have a responsibility to generate, share, and implement knowledge and research findings that enhance the equitable health and wellness of students and society at multiple levels, both locally and globally. Therefore, we believe that health promoting and anti-racism is an integrative theme that can connect our strategic priorities and help our community fulfill its mission and realize its vision. Such a belief understands that we must embed health and wellness into all aspects of our campus culture, from everyday operations to our academic standards and measurements of success and promotion to accountability processes for campus interactions and outcomes. It reflects a desire to create and nurture a campus culture whose commitment to compassion, well-being, equity, restorative justice, and non-Eurocentric multicultural academic norms will improve both the overall health as well as the academic and scholarly rigor of our campus. An aspiration to be health-promoting and anti-racist, believes in an expansive and holistic view of that sees historical structures of oppression and domination, institutional racism and historical inequities, as urgent and dire problems for the health and wellbeing of all of our faculty, staff, and students, for our society, and for our earth as well. We

intend to collaborate with community partners to promote positive experiences and outcomes on campus through concerted culturally responsive policies, supports including educational, financial, and cultural resources, health equity, anti-racist training, and community well-being so that our campus can become a stronger partner for broader community health and development.

We believe that in doing so UMass Boston will become a leading example of a public research university serving its students, its community, its city, its nation, and its world for these times.

Commitment 2: Community-University Engaged

Community-university engagement is the reciprocal partnership between colleges/universities and the public and private sectors of the local and greater community to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; enhance curriculum, teaching, and learning; prepare educated, engaged citizens; strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; address critical societal issues; and contribute to the public good. The purpose of community-university engagement is to serve a public purpose that addresses issues of public concern. At UMass Boston, we believe in the importance of community-university engagement and make a renewed commitment to reciprocal engagement with our immediate community on Columbia Point, with surrounding communities in Boston and the region, and with communities around the globe.

Commitment 3: Continuously Improving

We are an inquiry-driven, learning community dedicated to individual and collective development. We are driven to continuously learn, grow, develop and improve. We believe in the power of evidence – quantitative and qualitative – to help us identify where we stand and to uncover opportunities for improvement. This evidence is used with the aim of informing and improving overall students' experiences, and in the spirit of transparency and accountability. In every way, we constantly push ourselves to greater levels of values-based performance, productivity, and impact; in service of our own development as individuals and in service of our great university and its vital mission. We demonstrate effectiveness by promoting a culture that values a holistic approach to, and continuous improvement in, student experiences, student outcomes, scholarly rigor and impact, and authentic community engagement.

Commitment 4: Responsible, Sustainable and Responsive

We will promote resource generation, utilization, and allocation systems and processes that enable effective, efficient and transparent use of resources. We must and will strengthen the university's overall financial position, propelling us to achieve a positive operating margin. To do this, we will refine, coordinate and strengthen our financial framework to manage all of our resources effectively and to develop new revenue streams to support our basic structures and mission-driven university ambitions. We do so recognizing that investment comes in many forms and that while new monies are one form, we can also invest through reallocation of existing dollars, reimagining of the ways in which we work, greater reliance on renewable resources, through prioritization and sequencing of priorities over time, and increasingly improve multi-year planning. We will streamline our processes, reduce or eliminate redundancies, find efficiencies, and improve the quality of services throughout campus. Key activities include sustainable utilization of all types of resources (human, natural, material and financial), the

adoption of a new hybrid activities-based budgeting model, leveraging partnerships with others, smarter use of material and technological resources, and a commitment to increased sustainable natural resources.

Commitment 5: Mission Driven

We joined UMass Boston because we are mission driven, and each day as we study, or research, or work on the campus we are driven by the mission to advance our values-driven work and serve our community. We do not believe that an organization's mission and vision are statements that you write and then post on the website. Rather, the mission and vision are bold statements that drive all decisions and establish direction for the organization. Deep and frequent engagement with our mission keeps us on track, it gives us focus and commitment, and it re-ignites our fire to make positive change for the campus, for the city, and for the world.

Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority 1: Holistic Student Success

UMass Boston will adopt a holistic framework for undergraduate and graduate student success and take steps to bring together stakeholders and align resources to support key focus areas. UMass Boston is committed to building diverse pathways to and through our institution and beyond, supported by holistic advising and support services and enhanced career success and alumni engagement. We are committed to valuing the cultural wealth of our students, cultivating a deeper sense of belonging in our learning environments, and advancing equitable student outcomes. In support of student success, UMass Boston will demonstrate its educational effectiveness by promoting assessment that values a holistic approach to, and continuous improvement in, student experiences and student outcomes.

Goal #1: Ensure Equitable Academic Outcomes

- Enhance academic support services to be more coordinated, proactive, and integrated
- Ensure equitable access to and engagement in culturally relevant, high impact learning environments, including learning communities, research activities, experiential and work-based learning, placed based and community engaged learning, and ethnic studies
- Work collaboratively across academic departments and student success work areas to identify gatekeeper courses that hinder student progression and develop and implement pedagogies and practices to support successful course completion
- Use qualitative and quantitative data to inform student success initiatives, and increase access to and use of data, including through the development of dashboards and through reconvening of the Academic Assessment Council
- Build structures for faculty and staff communities of practice and other professional development to strengthen learner-centered pedagogies and practices

Goal #2: Ensure Career Success and Alumni Engagement

- Expand student access to experiential learning that supports career development and success, including: internships, apprenticeships, research opportunities, mentoring and work-based curricula
- Embed (and expand existing) career success learning outcomes across the curriculum to engage students 'early and often' in career development learning activities.
- Develop structures that enable deep, reciprocal partnerships with local employers and community-based organizations which expand career opportunities for students
- Build systems, structures and capacity to equitably support students and alumni in career success
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Goal #3: Emphasize the importance of community cultural wealth and deepen sense of belonging

- Expand existing and develop new culturally sustaining pedagogies, practices, and programs
- Increase opportunities for community-engaged and place-based teaching, learning, and service
- Deepen commitment to being a 24/7 campus that fosters a sense of belonging, including through intentional efforts in athletics, recreation, health services, student involvement, OSLCE, U-ACCESS, student multicultural affairs, residence life, commuter student services, and many other university functions

Goal #4: Provide holistic advising and support services to our students

- Develop more holistic, integrated, and ongoing advising and student support services
- Build capacity and staffing stability in professional academic advising, career services, and mental health counseling
- Expand existing and develop additional models for culturally responsive and effective advising and academic support services
- Develop and expand supports that promote student mental, physical, and emotional health
- Increase FAFSA completion and further enhance financial planning assistance to students

Goal #5: Provide supportive pathways to and through UMass Boston

- Identify, honor, and support multiple and diverse and defined student pathways through the university
- Implement programs and support structures that focus on retention of out-of-state and international students
- Deepen partnerships and enhance articulation agreements with community colleges and Boston Public Schools, and build systems and services that support successful student transitions across public institutions
- Expand participation in programs that deepen student engagement, particularly in the first year on campus
- Identify, and then fix, policies and practices that create obstacles for students or compel students to transfer, drop out, or stop out
- Increase sense of community for graduate students with regular social, scholarly, and teaching forums that bring them together

Strategic Priority 2: High Impact Research and Scholarship

It is more important now than ever that public research institutions commit to creative, relevant interdisciplinary, and transformative research that will help solve the vexing problems facing our society. UMass Boston will enhance the research enterprise and our impact on the world by strengthening research capacity and establishing Grand Scholarly Challenges (GSCs), which are problems or opportunities of great magnitude and importance that, if addressed, will positively impact individuals, families, communities, and society. UMass Boston's GSCs focus on areas where UMass Boston is a leader among peer institutions and advances ambitious, practical solutions that impart real impact. The GSCs reflect values, ideals, theories, and substantive commitments that highlight UMass Boston's research and scholarly strengths. The proposed GSCs are *specific* and circumscribed in addressing focal problems and are *broad* in calling for transdisciplinary collaboration to achieve solutions.

Goal #1: Establish and Advance Four Grand Scholarly Challenges

- Climate Equity and Urban Coastal Areas
- Health Equity: Cells to Societies
- Education for the Future
- Advancing a Just Society – Local and Global Dimensions

Goal #2: Accelerate innovation and transdisciplinary scholarship

- Take steps to support and enable transdisciplinary research
- Evolve infrastructure to support innovation
- Expand opportunities to acknowledge and value community-engaged scholarship
- Embrace partnerships that enhance enterprise in the GSCs
- Build a culture of mentorship and sponsorship across boundaries

Goal #3: Increase national and international prominence of campus research and scholarship

- Better position our eminent and emerging scholars for national and international recognition
- Harness the transformative undergraduate and graduate student engagement in research
- Foster integration of the community engaged mission of UMB with external disciplinary and community expectations

Goal #4: Enhance supports for research

- Continue enhancing the capacity of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
- Improve the capacity of core research facilities to better support research and partnerships

Goal #5: Conduct research that enhances knowledge, action, and impact that supports anti-racism and health promotion at UMass Boston and beyond

- Build capacity to ensure that all researchers on campus have ongoing training in justice, equity, inclusion and diversity best practices for engaging with collaborators, students, and staff in all research activities in order to promote the diversification of all disciplines
- Increase recognition of and support for community engaged scholarship that promotes anti-racism and health promotion

Strategic Priority 3: Enriching Our Human Core

UMass Boston is committed to continuous improvement in all aspects of our work, with particular emphasis on support and development for the success of faculty and staff. To support our faculty and staff, we will renew our commitments to continuous professional development, mentorship, growth opportunities, quality of work life, training, and effective and productive processes that generate results. For all faculty and staff, we will emphasize health, wellbeing, justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Goal #1: Consistently engage with the mission and vision to deepen our commitment to UMass Boston

- Intentionally highlight, discuss, and engage with the mission during our day-to-day work with our students, teams, colleagues, and community partners
- Feature the mission and vision in recruitment, orientation, and onboarding of new students and employees
- Continue working to implement and further align the University's values statement with the recommended mission and vision statements.
- Emphasize anti-racist and health promoting values in campus policies, processes, and practices

Goal #2: Enhance physical spaces to better support teaching, learning, research and community engagement, as well as to promote health and wellness (see Strategic Priority #5)

Goal #3: Strengthen faculty and staff support and development programs

- Increase awareness of, and access to, existing resources for faculty and staff support and development
- Develop practices to address gaps in faculty and staff support and development for groups at different stages of their career and diverse constituencies (for example, needs of faculty and staff of color, women staff and faculty, international faculty, and graduate student instructors)
- Enhance connections and collaborations through Centers and Institutes, Office of Community Partnerships, and other groups/resources on campus

Goal #4: Deepen faculty and staff diversity to enrich our community and unlock greater organizational performance

- Provide increased opportunities for professional development in restorative justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Enhance community building activities and support systems for newly hired as well as current faculty and staff
- Promote hiring practices that support diversity, including diverse pools, anti-bias training, and collaborative hiring practices

Goal #5: Invest in employee morale, training, and wellbeing improvement

- Infuse diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in all service delivery practices
- Improve programs that emphasize employee recognition, promote professional growth, support effective and responsive service delivery, and/or support employee well-being
- Enhance outreach efforts to address faculty and staff concerns about physical health, mental health, and well-being

Goal #6: Improve service delivery capabilities and responsiveness

- Implement service management principles, practices, and technologies
- Catalog institutional services, analyze service delivery practices and eliminate duplication
- Implement technology to support service delivery (e.g. assessment, self-service, collaboration)
- Streamline and modernize complex business processes and standardize service delivery practice
- Explore opportunities to collaborate with other organizations to increase service delivery capabilities in a more cost-effective manner

Strategic Priority 4: Expansive Enrollment, Programs, and Partnerships

We will align resources to support people, processes, and technology that help all members of the UMass Boston community thrive in sustainable ways. We will align growth generating activities (enrollment, program development, sponsored research, philanthropic activity) with our other strategic priorities in order to more effectively deliver our unique and critical mission. These activities include enhanced enrollment management strategies, stronger research support and activity, improved service delivery, and academic program development that aligns with career opportunities for students.

Goal #1: Enhance and grow academic programs that are responsive to community and workforce needs

- Evaluate existing programs and new program proposals using a set of standard criteria in order to identify emerging areas for enhancement and growth while assessing how best to re-allocate resources as needed to support strategic growth

- Strategically invest in the type of program offerings that students, employers and communities value and are seeking, including programs that are flexible in time, pace and modality

Goal #2: Develop specific recruitment and retention strategies for sub-groups of potential students, including transfer, out-of-state, and international students

- Incorporate Inclusive Excellence principles into recruitment and retention strategies to enhance equitable opportunities
- Enhance transfer pathways and articulation agreements
- As described under “Holistic Student Success,” invest more time and energy into aligning academic and financial assistance to support student retention and progression
- Specifically consider and focus upon the unique services and supports that transfer students need in order to succeed at UMass Boston
- Design specific strategies for recruiting – and then welcoming - out of state and international students to our campus

Goal #3: Increase focus on recruitment and retention of graduate students

- Enhance the capacity of graduate admissions team
- Leverage new CRM system and other technologies to expedite application processing and strengthen communication internally and with students
- Build professional development activities and community enhancing experiences for graduate student retention.

Goal #4: Expand educational pathways for non-degree and non-credit students

- Create a dedicated and accountable team focused on non-degree and non-credit students
- Provide incentives, and remove obstacles, for the recruitment and registration of non-degree and non-credit students

Strategic Priority 5: Reimagining Campus Space and Location

UMass Boston has tremendous locational endowment, being situated in the heart of world-class Boston and sitting upon Boston harbor. UMass Boston exists of and for the city, of and for the times. The completion of the new campus quadrangle project strengthens the foundation of our campus, and our new master campus plan will help us harness our location and facilities in the pursuit of our mission and strategic plan. Our commitment to authentic community engagement extends our campus as we engage in reciprocal partnerships that expand the reach of our campus to enhance community, workforce, and economic development in diverse and equitable ways.

Goal #1: Complete or continue ongoing major campus projects

Goal #2: Complete development of an updated Campus Master Plan, aligning the work to this strategic plan

- Enhance physical spaces to better support teaching, learning, research, and community engagement
- Identify major capital project priorities and sequencing for the next 10 years

Goal #3: Engage in reciprocal community relationships to strengthen and benefit from new and existing community assets

- Contribute to the development of Dorchester Bay City, developing stakeholder partnerships that create further benefit for the community and for UMass Boston students and faculty
- Deepen reciprocal partnerships with employers and community partners that increase experiential learning and research opportunities for students
- Deepen partnerships with the greater-Boston community including through increased access to the UMass Boston campus

		Strategic Commitments				
		1. Anti-racist and Health Promoting	2. Community-University Engaged	3. Evidence-based Continuous Improvement	4. Responsible, Sustainable, and Responsive	5. Mission-driven
S t r a t e g i c P r i o r i t i e	1. Holistic Student Success	<p>Equitable Academic Outcomes</p> <p>Cultural Wealth & Sense of Belonging</p> <p>Holistic support services</p>	<p>Pathways to and through UMass Boston</p> <p>Career Success, Alumni Engagement, Employer Partnership</p>	<p>Create and utilize formative and summative indicators of success</p> <p>Continuous improvement in student experiences and student outcomes.</p> <p>Evidence will be used with the aim of informing and improving overall students' experiences</p>	<p>Targeted investment and efficient resource allocation can unlock new resources (retention)</p>	<p>Educational goals and success are consistent with the university's mission</p>
	2. High Impact Scholarship	<p>Grand Scholarly Challenges emphasize equity and justice</p>	<p>Grand Scholarly Challenges address focal problems that impact individuals, families, and communities</p> <p>Community engaged research is valued and recognized</p>	<p>Research productivity expands</p> <p>Increased external investment and partnerships</p> <p>Disciplinary-spanning scholarship increases</p>	<p>Targeted investment and efficient resource allocation can unlock new resources (grants)</p>	<p>Grand Scholarly Challenges are chosen specifically to advance the mission</p> <p>Pursuit of GSC's deepens researcher connections to the mission</p>
	3. Enriching Our Human Core	<p>Diversify faculty and staff</p> <p>Enhance mental health support</p>	<p>Providing reciprocal learning opportunities that span internal and external boundaries</p>	<p>Improve employee morale, training, and wellbeing</p> <p>Effective and responsive service delivery is rooted in</p>	<p>Improve service capacity</p> <p>Streamline/modernize complex businesses processes and standardize</p>	<p>Encourage campus stakeholders to engage frequently with the mission and vision</p>

S				continuous improvement	service delivery Improve service responsiveness by implementing service management principles, practices, and technologies	
	4. Expansive Enrollment, Programs, and Partnerships	Diversify pathways into and through UMass Boston to meet overdue growing diversify workforce and community leadership	Expand workforce development initiatives	Demonstrate expanded enrollment, academic programs, and partnerships	Expand enrollment in existing programs and strategically grow new programs Targeted investment and efficient resource allocation can unlock new resources (new students) Invest in high demand academic programs Align financial support for specific types of students	Diversity, equity, and inclusion are core values that drive opportunities for expanded enrollment, programs, and partnerships
	5. Reimagining Campus Space and Location	Physical space improvements cultivate wellness/health	Community-university partnership at Dorchester Bay City Community-university partnerships enhanced by use of UMB campus		Successful ethical collaboration at Dorchester Bay City generate significant opportunities for students and faculty	Campus Master Plan will prioritize space use for mission-aligned activities

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			Students and faculty learn and research in the city			
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Implementation, Assessment and Sequenced Timelines

This section will be converted from bullet points to narrative in the final version

- *Planning for, monitoring, and ensuring effective implementation is absolutely critical.*
- *One critical aspect of implementation planning will be to embed specific measurable goals throughout the plan*
- *We embedded within the strategic planning committees many of the team members who will be responsible for the implementation of the plan. This was done with an eye towards developing realistic and implementation plans!*
- *We do not intend to form a broad set of implementation committees. Rather, these strategic priorities and cross cutting themes will be embedded into existing governance, management and implementation structures.*
- *We do intend to embed frequent progress monitoring into the implementation of the plan. Meeting agendas will be driven by the plan. Dashboards will be developed to measure and monitor progress.*
- *We do not intend to tackle everything in this plan at the same time. There is too much in the plan, and we are too resourced-challenged as a university, to realistically think we could take on everything. We must remember that this is a 10 year plan. We must intentionally prioritize and sequence key initiatives in order to enable our implementation success.*

FY22 Strategic Planning Process

This section will be converted from bullet points to narrative in the final version

- *Strategic planning process launched in September 2021*
- *Solicited nominations for committees*
- *Formed a series of strategic planning committees with ~240 members representing the campus*
 - *Mission and Vision Committee*
 - *Student Success Committee*
 - *Academic Programs Committee*
 - *Educational Effectiveness Committee*
 - *Faculty Support & Development Committee*
 - *Research & Grand Scholarly Challenges Committee*
 - *Strategic Enrollment Committee*
 - *Campus Life Committee*
 - *Services & Responsiveness Committee*
 - *Community Engagement Committee*
 - *Campus Master Plan Working Group*

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- o In addition, the process sought to closely coordinate with the work of two important strategic initiative workgroups: the Restorative Justice Commission and the Activities-Based Budgeting Steering Committee*
- *Each committee pursued a similar set of activities*
 - o Data collection*
 - o SWOT analysis*
 - o Investigating best practices*
 - o Gathering feedback from the community*
 - o Drafting recommendations*
- *Recommendations were integrated into a draft document in spring of 2022*