CHAPTER 1
Legacy Vision and Goals
Chapter 1. Legacy Vision and Goals

The 2001 Legacy Plan process began with the development of a vision for Winston-Salem and Forsyth County’s future. The box below gives a summary of Our Vision, while the following text details Our Vision and stated goals in the 2001 Legacy Plan as well as the accomplishments made in reaching Our Vision over the past ten years.

Summary: Our Vision

- A more compact, balanced development pattern
- A more balanced, sustainable transportation system
- Regional cooperation in planning and development
- A vital and diverse economy
- Concern for the environment balanced with economic development
- A regional system of parks, natural areas and open space connected by a network of trails
- Winston-Salem’s downtown and small town downtowns are the focal points of our communities
- Livable neighborhoods
- A community with special character and identity
- A high quality of life
- Active citizenship

Growth Management Plan

Our Vision

Growing smarter will require that we better manage our future growth and development. Legacy envisions a different future in which more compact patterns of development replace sprawl. Here is what the 2001 Legacy Plan envisions for our future land use patterns. Although the Legacy Vision set the year 2015 as a target date, most, if not all, of these statements are still very relevant in 2012 as we look further into the future.

In the year 2015 we envision that . . .

- Effective management of growth and development has curtailed suburban sprawl and fostered quality growth.
- Choices of housing densities and style, reduced automobile dependence, pedestrian-oriented character, convenient neighborhood shopping, schools, parks, and other services exist in the community.
- Our community has compact urban activity centers and corridors with mixed retail, office, light industrial, and higher-density residential development.
- A vital Downtown with diverse uses and activities serves as the physical and spiritual center of our community. Downtown has grown upward reducing the need for suburban greenfield development.
- The creative use of abandoned buildings and vacant land in older residential, commercial, and industrial areas has resulted in the transformation of these areas into attractive urban environments.
- Transportation, water, sewer, and other services have been provided in a cost-effective and coordinated way.
- A compact pattern of development has resulted in increased use of public transportation and reduced traffic congestion and air pollution.

- The character of our small towns has been preserved.
- We have retained farmland and open space in our rural areas.
- A high level of coordination exists among the various agencies that manage development in the county.
- Our community strikes a sustainable balance between meeting the needs of current residents while preserving future resources.

Overall Goal for Growth Management

Manage growth and development to reduce sprawl, create a more compact and balanced urban development pattern and preserve open space and rural character.

Other Goals for Growth Management

Goal 1. Higher development densities and mixed-use development within the Municipal Services Area.

Goal 2. Increase infill development within the Municipal Services Area.

Goal 3. A more balanced pattern of growth and development in Forsyth County.

Goal 4. Reserve land in Future Growth Area for long-range urban development.

Goal 5. Preservation of farmland, open space and rural character within the Rural Area.

Goal 6. Adoption and implementation of the Growth Management Plan by all local governments as part of Legacy.
Growth Management Accomplishments

- Pedestrian Business and Mixe-Use Zoning District Ordinance revisions
- Planned Residential Development ordinance revision
- Voluntary Agricultural District
- Agricultural Tourism Program
- Area plans
- Downtown Strategic Plan
- Parking reductions
- Setback reductions
- Residential Infill Ordinance
- Commercial Infill Ordinance
- Neighborhood revitalization projects
- Reuse of underutilized and older buildings
- Completion of comprehensive plans for Clemmons, Kernersville, and Lewisville

Transportation Alternatives

Our Vision
The Legacy Focus Groups have envisioned in their report, Forsyth County Tomorrow, a much more balanced and sustainable transportation system in our future. Transit-oriented land use policies have made transit, walking, and bicycling competitive with the automobile and given people a choice of how they get around our community.

In the year 2015 we envision that . . .
- Our land use policies support public transit, walking and bicycling. Compact development patterns at activity centers and along transit corridors have made transit economically self-sustaining. In our neighborhoods, pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented developments with a mixture of uses have lessened the need to drive.
- The availability of convenient and affordable transit, including buses, vanpools and rail, provides alternatives to the automobile for travel and reduces congestion on our highways.
- An intercity rail system connects major destinations in the Triad, reducing traffic congestion at peak commuting times.
- Incentive programs to reduce single-occupant vehicle commuting and to promote transit, vanpooling, carpooling, and staggered work hours are strongly supported by local businesses and governments.
- Advances in technology have reduced traffic, cut costs, and improved air quality. Telecommuting, the use of alternative fuels and a greater number of fuel-efficient vehicles have reduced air pollution to acceptable levels.

Goal 7. A balanced and sustainable transportation system linking highways, transit, greenways, bikeways, and sidewalks into a seamless transportation network that provides choices for people’s travel needs.

Transportation Alternatives Accomplishments

- Greenway Plan and Greenway Plan Update
- Pedestrian Plan
- Bicycle Plan
- Kernersville Pedestrian and Bike Plan
- Clemmons Village Transportation Plan
- Rural Hall Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Plan
- Central City Streetcar Study
- Collaboration with PART on regional rail/bus system
- Comprehensive Transportation Plan
- 2030 and 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan
- New street standards and sidewalk requirements
- Reduced fare passes for WSTA and flexible work schedules offered by City government
- PART system expansion
Regional Planning and Development

Our Vision
Forsyth County recognizes that it stands to benefit from increased regional cooperation in planning and development. The Legacy Focus Groups have envisioned a future in which we are active participants in regional initiatives aimed at fostering appropriate growth and development in the Triad Region.

In the year 2015 we envision that...
• There is a collaborative spirit and ongoing dialogue between the various communities in the region.
• Approved annexation agreements between communities are fostering orderly growth and development and minimizing land use and jurisdictional conflicts.
• An efficient regional transportation system that reduces traffic congestion and improves air quality in the region.
• Major new industries provide high-paying job opportunities in the region.
• Regional parks, greenways, and other recreational opportunities foster regional identity and improve the quality of life for residents of the region.

Goal 8. Effective collaboration among communities of the Piedmont Triad Region in managing regional growth and development to ensure a high quality of life for the region’s residents.

Economic Vitality

Our Vision
Forsyth County has a vital and diverse economy built on clean, high-paying companies, world-class educational institutions and high-tech medical facilities. The community is a source of pride for its citizens and is envied by its competitors. Governing bodies, business leaders, citizens and special interest groups all recognize the critical relationships between quality of life and economic strength and work together to promote progressive, balanced, and competitive programs for economic development.

In the year 2015 we envision that...
• Corporations and small businesses thrive because of our well-trained and highly-skilled workforce.
• We have a strong and diverse business community that includes banking, high-tech medical research facilities, film and visual communications industries, and entrepreneurial niche companies.
• New technologies complement a highly-skilled workforce to support world-class manufacturing facilities.
• Site location policies emphasize office and industrial sites in Downtown Winston-Salem and at existing and planned suburban activity centers.

Regional Planning and Development Accomplishments

• Heart of the Triad study
• Consulting other communities on zoning proposals near their boundaries
• Collaboration with small towns on area plans, greenways, and other projects
• Regional Transit Development Plan
• The Piedmont Triad Sustainable Communities grant and the Aerotropolis Initiative

Goal 9. Attract environmentally-sensitive new businesses and expand existing large and small businesses to provide a broad range of employment opportunities and a high quality of life for people living and working in Forsyth County.
Environmental Quality
Our Vision
The Legacy Focus Groups have envisioned a future in which concern for the environment is balanced with economic development to produce quality growth.

In the year 2015 we envision that . . .
• We have clean, high-quality water to meet our domestic, economic, and recreational needs.
• Our clean air is a major asset for our community.
• Significant natural areas have been identified and protected.
• Our developments are designed and built in an environmentally-sensitive manner.
• Resources are used efficiently and reuse and recycling conserve landfill space and natural resources.
• Citizens have a greater understanding of and sensitivity to the community’s air, water, and land resources.
• State and local governments are partners in promoting environmental quality.
• Environmental regulations are cost-effective and based on sound scientific principles.
• There is balance between economic growth and the preservation of our environmental assets.

Goal 10. The preservation and enhancement of our environmental resources resulting in a high quality of life for Forsyth County residents.

Environmental Quality Accomplishments

• Phase II Stormwater Ordinance
• Revised floodplain regulations and stream buffer requirements
• Revised Winston-Salem Tree Planting and Preservation Ordinance
• Clemmons tree ordinance and Lewisville draft
• Reduced off-street parking requirements
• Preserving trees and open space through special use rezonings
• Enforcement of State watershed requirements
• The Triad Early Action Air Quality Compact

Economic Vitality Accomplishments

• Establishment and use of the Millennium Fund by the Winston-Salem Alliance
• Development of the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter
• Collaboration with medical institutions
• Setting aside future industrial areas through the area plan process
• Listing of Winston-Salem as one the nation’s most “wired” cities
• Caterpillar and Dell recruitment and facility development; Dell replaced by Herbalife
• Fed Ex Ground facility in Kernersville
• Industrial Sites Study
• Designation of Winston-Salem as one of America’s Most Livable Communities
• Growth of BB&T, Wachovia/Wells Fargo, and other financial institutions
In the year 2015 we envision that...

- We enjoy a vast regional system of community parks, significant natural areas and preserved open space all connected by a green network of trails and streams.
- Our well-maintained park system provides opportunities for fun and relaxation for all at locations minutes from every resident’s home.
- Countywide greenways are used for outdoor recreation and walking or cycling to parks, schools, work, and shopping.
- Our protected public open spaces are extensive and provide a break from development.
- Local governments in Forsyth County have come together with private providers to efficiently meet the diverse recreation needs of residents.

Goal 11. Forsyth County residents enjoy an extensive system of parks and preserved natural areas connected by a network of open spaces and greenways.

Open Space, Parks, and Greenways Accomplishments
- City-County Parks and Open Space Plan
- Greenway Plan and Greenway Plan Update
- New greenway construction
- Improvements to City and County parks
- Preserving open space through special use rezonings
- Protection of open and forested lands surrounding Bethania
- Bethania Black Walnut Bottom Loop Trail

City and Town Centers

Our Vision
The Future of DOWNTOWNS Focus Group concentrated their efforts on Downtown Winston-Salem, believing that our community’s fortunes are very closely tied to the success of this city center. Without a vital and growing city center, Forsyth County could not hope to be a player on the regional and national scene. Town centers in Forsyth County’s small towns are also important to the community’s pride and vitality, and recommendations are made to preserve and enhance them. Kernersville has made substantial improvements to their downtown to address these issues. Some newer communities like Lewisville are working to prevent their downtowns from becoming automobile-dominated commercial strips by planning for compact pedestrian-oriented town centers.

In the year 2015 we envision that...
- Downtown Winston-Salem is a dominant focus of economic and social life in our community, a center of civic, entertainment, and cultural activities and a strong symbol of community pride and identity.
- New and restored buildings with a walkable scale, improved streets, sidewalks, signage, lighting, and additional green spaces have made Downtown an exciting place for visitors and residents alike.
- The growth in tourism and convention activity, creation of special entertainment districts, exhibits, concerts, ethnic festivals, and outdoor cafes bring people Downtown and add vitality to Downtown’s streets, day and night.
- A large increase in the number of people living and working in and near Downtown has increased Downtown’s vitality.
Public tax money and private financial incentives combined with public/private partnerships and the marketing of Downtown’s assets to customers, potential investors, new businesses, local citizens and visitors has made Downtown a competitive investment location for development or relocation.

The smaller towns in Forsyth County have developed village scale town centers with small town atmosphere to serve people from surrounding residential and rural areas.

**Goal 12.** A vibrant city center that is the focus of the economic and social life of our community, a center of civic, entertainment, and cultural activities and a symbol of community identity.

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**City and Town Center Accomplishments**

- The *Downtown Plan* and revisions
- Collaboration with the Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership
- Construction of BB&T Ballpark
- Fourth Street streetscape project
- Strollway extension
- Construction of Southeast Gateway development started
- Winston Overlay District
- The addition of residential units in Downtown Winston-Salem
- Construction of One West Fourth Street and reuse of the Winston Tower
- Establishment of restaurants and entertainment establishments Downtown
- Plans for the expansion of the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter
- Research Parkway construction underway
- Kernersville Downtown Overlay District
- Lewisville streetscape improvements, Shallowford Square and Town Hall
- *Clemmons Village Point Small Area Plan*
- Rural Hall Downtown preservation and rehabilitation efforts
- Tobaccoville Village Hall and Village Park

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**Building Better Neighborhoods**

**Our Vision**

The *Legacy* Focus Groups have envisioned more livable neighborhoods in our urban areas, suburbs, and small towns. New neighborhoods and revitalized older neighborhoods contain a diversity of housing types and people, and better access to neighborhood shopping and services, recreational facilities, and educational opportunities. A united effort to address social issues, such as crime, quality of education, and homelessness, has helped to strengthen the relationship between our neighborhoods. With careful planning, appropriate design standards, and citizen empowerment, neighborhoods have become the building blocks of our community.

**In the year 2015 we envision that . . .**

- New neighborhoods incorporate community-oriented features, such as front porches, sidewalks, street trees, pocket parks, trails, community focal points, and nearby services. All residents enjoy walking to nearby shopping and services, schools, churches, and public open spaces.
- Various housing types that are suitable for different income levels, family sizes, and tastes have been developed, reducing segregated housing patterns and enhancing interaction.
- Public housing reform and increased home ownership has brought neighborhood pride to all areas of our county. Many residential opportunities are provided for people who choose to live Downtown or in the historic neighborhoods surrounding the central city.
- In our self-sufficient neighborhoods, we can travel by bicycle, on foot, or take the bus for daily needs.

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**CHAPTER 1 - LEGACY VISION AND GOALS**
Neighborhood Accomplishments

- Area plan recommendations
- Revised street standards and sidewalk requirements
- Old Cherry neighborhood revitalization
- National Register Districts approved in numerous neighborhoods
- Revitalizing Urban Commercial Areas Program (RUCA)
- Reorganization of police patrol districts
- Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District
- Commercial and residential infill ordinances
- Adoption of MLK Overlay District standards
- Weed and Seed Program
- Active community development corporations
- Establishment of community assistance liaisons by City of Winston-Salem
- HOPE VI revitalizations in Kimberly Park and Happy Hill
- Operation Impact
- Redevelopment of Kensington Village (formerly Goler Apartments)
- Central Kernersville Study and North Main Street Area Plan, Phase I
- Tobaccoville Village Guidelines

- Sidewalks and greenways connect neighborhoods to nearby parks, shopping, schools, and other neighborhoods. Neighborhood streets have been designed to slow down traffic, making neighborhoods safer for children and adults.
- Reliance on incentive-based policies encourage developers and businesses to work with neighborhoods to create consensus on new development proposals.

Goal 13. New and revitalized neighborhoods that offer a variety of quality housing types, convenience to services and shopping, and foster a strong sense of community.

Community Character
Our Vision
The Legacy Focus Groups envisioned a future where we have built upon our rich Moravian heritage to create a community with a special character and identity.

In the year 2015 we envision that . . .
- Historic preservation and reuse of buildings are a priority.
- Attractive community gateways and boulevards convey our sense of pride and caring to visitors.
- Coordinated directions to attractions, services, and events are provided by colorful banners and other attractive signage.
- Each neighborhood has its own special character.
- Major businesses show their civic pride through tastefully designed buildings and signage and distinctive landscaping.

Goal 14. A distinctive image that makes the communities within Forsyth County unique and special places.
Goal 15. To provide for the identification, protection and promotion of historic resources as an integral component of quality growth in Forsyth County.
This chapter discusses quality of life issues and makes specific land use and physical design recommendations to improve the quality of life in Forsyth County. Aspects of these issues that are specifically program oriented, such as school curricula, are not included in the action agenda items of this chapter.

**In the year 2015 we envision that...**
- Our strong sense of community enables diverse people to work together to solve community problems.
- People of different incomes, races, and ethnic groups live, work, worship and have fun together.
- We have factored safety into the design of new and existing developments.
- Our educational system is outstanding and our neighborhood schools are a primary focus of community life.
- We have high-quality and well-designed medical facilities at convenient locations throughout our county.
- Our community is a friendly and accessible place for senior citizens, disabled people, and lower-income residents.

**Goal 16.** People of different races, ages, abilities and incomes work together to overcome community problems, provide accessible resources to residents, and attain a high quality of life in Forsyth County.
In the year 2015 we envision that...

- We value involving, informing, and empowering the people of Forsyth County to enable them to participate in a meaningful way in the decisions that affect the quality of their lives.
- Citizens work closely with elected officials to reach shared community goals and to promote regulations that work for citizens.
- A broad base of citizens regularly participate in community affairs.
- There is higher voter registration and a strong turnout of an informed electorate.
- The Neighborhood Services Program, designed to assist in neighborhood improvement, is a communication resource for citizens and government.
- The Council of Neighborhoods, a volunteer organization of neighborhood association representatives, coordinates neighborhood participation in community affairs.

Goal 17. Active and involved citizens and a responsive environment for citizen participation that promotes involvement in community affairs and contributes to the quality of life in our community.

Active Citizenship Accomplishments

- Provided additional public notification for rezoning – letters, signs, and website
- Provided more opportunities for public comment on rezonings and text amendments
- City- and countywide system of area plans with active citizen participation
- Active Neighborhood Alliance and Neighbors for Better Neighborhoods
- Bilingual Hispanic outreach specialist in the City of Winston-Salem Human Relations Department
- Establishment of community assistance liaison positions
- Enhanced government web sites, use of Facebook and Twitter
- City initiatives in transparency, such as Talk of the Town meetings