GSO 2040

City of Greensboro
GSO2040 Comprehensive Plan

AMENDING CHAPTER 30
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE GREENSBORO CODE OF ORDINANCES WITH
RESPECT TO ZONING, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SECTION 30-1-10

WHEREAS, the City Council directed City Staff to update the existing comprehensive plan, Connections 2025, with a new comprehensive plan;

WHEREAS, Session Law 2019-111 which establishes the new Chapter 160D of the North Carolina General Statutes will require that municipalities that adopt and apply zoning regulations also adopt and reasonably maintain a comprehensive plan;

WHEREAS, City staff undertook significant research and public input to create *GSO2040* as the intended comprehensive plan for the City of Greensboro, in a process which featured over 160 opportunities to get public input and gathered over 6,500 comments;

WHEREAS, an Advisory Committee composed of representatives from each of Greensboro's Boards and Commissions, and chaired by Council Member Justin Outling was established to provide feedback on Plan contents and advise and assist with public outreach;

WHEREAS, on May 20, 2020 the Planning Board held a public hearing and voted unanimously in support of adoption of the Plan;

WHEREAS, due to the time it will take to adopt ordinance, policy and practice changes necessary to implement the *GSO2040* Plan, the Planning Department recommends that the effective date of the plan be delayed and that rezoning and original zoning applications for consideration by the Zoning Commission or City Council are not subject to the provisions of Section 30-4-3, Comprehensive Plan Amendments, of the Land Development Ordinance effective immediately; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, that Chapter 30 of the City Code of the City of Greensboro is amended as follows:

Section 1.   The Plan developed and presented to City Council at its June 16, 2020, Council meeting and known as *GSO2040* is hereby adopted and incorporated by reference into the City Code as written and amended in accordance with the instruction of City Council as set forth at that meeting.

Section 2.   All ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are repealed to the extent of such conflict.

Section 3.   This ordinance shall become effective on September 1, 2020.

Section 4.   Effective upon adoption, rezoning and original zoning applications for consideration by the Zoning Commission or City Council are not subject to the provisions of Section 30-4-3, Comprehensive Plan Amendments, of the Land

Development Ordinance, and any original zoning or zoning amendments shall be reviewed for consistency with the proposed *GSO2040* Plan such that the City remains compliant with North Carolina General Statutes Section 160A-383.

THE FOREGOING ORDINANCE WAS ADOPTED
BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
GREENSBORO ON THE 16TH DAY
OF JUNE, 2020 AND WILL BECOME
EFFECTIVE UPON ADOPTION.

APPROVED AS TO FORM

ANGELA R. LORD
CITY CLERK

CITY ATTORNEY

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NC-APA
Award Winner

2021 Marvin Collins
Outstanding Planning Award

Award Category
Comprehensive Plan | Large Community

This certificate is awarded to
City of Greensboro, Planning Department

In recognition of
GSO2040

Given this 6st day of October, 2021

Johanna Cockburn, Chapter President

Bynum Walter, Awards Committee Co-Chair   Elizabeth Jernigan, Awards Committee Co-Chair

American Planning Association
North Carolina Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

**Nancy Vaughan
Mayor**

In 2018, when we started the process of planning for what Greensboro would be in the year 2040, we were excited about the myriad of possibilities that we could identify, build and enhance to make our city even better. We wanted to gather ideas from our residents and shape them into a united vision to guide us over the next twenty years. I'm happy to report we did just that--Through 160 public events, focus groups, and surveys we cultivated over 6000 responses from all neighborhoods, ages, and races. Those thoughtful contributions created a foundation of values and big ideas that were used to sculpt our comprehensive plan, *GSO2040*.

After collecting the input, it was clear there was a bold vision for Greensboro---**to be the Best Mid-Size City in America.** This means a city that is greener, more equitable and inclusive, and continues to make history. We are united in wanting to make Greensboro a City of Inspiration. A city that inspires us each and every day and serves as inspiration to other cities around the globe.

Once we had captured this lofty vision, we got to work on the structure to make it happen. As the plan came together it was top of mind to create a framework that was malleable. Our plan needed to provide guidance to help us reach our goals, but enough flexibility to shift as the world surges forward with new technologies, trends, and desires. With elasticity in mind, the vision was distilled into big ideas, goals and strategies. These would be the tools to guide the implementation to reach our vision.

Now, as we present the plan to community, the world has changed. We are in the midst of a pandemic that has each of us reflecting on our world, our city, and our home. We are craving connectivity with people, technology, and our city in new ways, now more than ever. Residents are relishing our green spaces, supporting our local businesses and walking and biking more. Individuals are realizing new needs and new inequities that need to be addressed in our community. We are all wondering what the world will look like going forward—Will we go to an office? Where will we gather? What will jobs look like? How do we make sure everyone has opportunity to thrive?

We don't know everything our future holds, but this isn't the first challenge Greensboro has faced and it certainly won't be the last. **GSO**2040 provides a flexible framework we can use to adapt to challenges, obstacles, and growth along the way. Crafted as a general guidebook, the plan reinforces those values we hold dear such as our greenspaces and community connections, identifies areas we need to address such as sustainability, equity, housing and technology connectivity, and presents strategies to ensure we are economically competitive.

As Mayor of Greensboro, I am excited for the possibilities of our City's future, and even more thrilled about this roadmap to get there. I encourage each of you to dive into this plan and join us as we make Greensboro North Carolina the BEST Midsize in America and a true City of Inspiration!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**Sue Schwartz, FAICP
Planning Director**

> ## "Nothing is constant but change."

So what does a Greek philosopher from 500 BC have in common with a pop icon from the 1980's? Their quotes sum up how we feel about change in our community. Since the fall of 2017, we have been taking our friend Ferris' advice, we have been looking around our city together to remind ourselves just what makes Greensboro remarkable. The adversities we have overcome, the progress we have made, and the indelible marks we have made on our nation's history.

We also took the time to see how we have changed, and how the world is changing around us. Knowing that change is constant, a city's comprehensive plan is a guide for the community on how, where, and what kind of change will make Greensboro even better for future generations. One of our biggest takeaways is not only that the rate of change around us is faster than ever before, but that we are also living in an era of "disruptors": changes that are so dramatic, that they alter the trajectory of growth. Examples? Autonomous vehicles, 5G networks, on-line shopping, to name a few.

So what are the changes that Greensboro as a city must prepare for?

- **More choices for where and how we live.** Approximately 67% of us live in one- and two-person households. A majority of us desire more walkable places to live that provide better access to services, recreation, and our work.

- **More choices for how we get from place to place**. In addition to walking more, new technology is changing how we think about getting from place to place, from autonomous vehicles to the popularity of micromobility options, like scooters and bike share services. This calls for a close look at the distances and quality of connections between where people live, work, and shop.

- **How we earn a living and how we shop are changing.** This means our local economy is evolving, too. Historically, Greensboro has always made things: primarily furniture, textiles, and tobacco products. Now that spirit is broader and encompasses a range of activities from the largest maker space in the southeast (with demand for more), to making small jets. The growth of online shopping exploded in the last year, and its growth is expected to accelerate, continuing to change the businesses that make up a large part of our City.

> ## "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."

How are we responding to these and other changes? Our plan is framed by Six Big Ideas:

- **Filling in Our Framework**
- **Creating Great Places**
- **Becoming Car Optional**
- **Prioritizing Sustainability**
- **Building Community Connections**
- **Growing Economic Competitiveness**

Each has goals and strategies to guide Greensboro towards bringing those Six Big Ideas to life. The ideas are big, but taking intentional steps that might seem small or unrelated will add up to a better future for us all.

The most important thing to know? This is **GREENSBORO's Plan**! Since the fall of 2017, staff has actively sought input on more than 150 occasions, ranging from traditional community workshops, to pop-ups at public events and local retailers, to presentations at civic clubs or neighborhood associations, and at focus groups with the development community and environmental interests, among others. These discussions were a rich resource of ideas and concerns, as well as reminders of what makes us uniquely Greensboro. Throughout this document we have highlighted quotes from these conversations to remind us where these ideas are from.

The second most important thing to know is that the conversations are far from over! Throughout this process it became clear that Greensboro needs more area plans for development guidance, in areas that are dealing with growth pressures, in areas to leverage economic development investments, and in areas in need of reinvestment. These plans are most effective when all stakeholders are fully involved in their development and implementation.

The *PLAN***IT** GSO process has been a wonderful adventure. Learning more about our community, our people and dreaming about what is possible for our future. A future the people of Greensboro are committed to. As we transition from our planning process, *PLAN***IT** GSO, to our comprehensive plan, **GSO**2040, we move forward with the community's hopes and dreams and Greensboro's determination to make it happen.

GSO2040
PLAN COMPONENTS

GSO2040 expresses the community's vision for what it wants to be in 2040 and creates a broad framework of policies for achieving that vision. These policies are based on extensive public input and conversation, a review of data about the current state of the city, alignment of existing plans from City departments, collaboration with community partners, and a review of current trends affecting cities across the country. The Plan uses several key pieces to describe our current values, the vision of what we want to achieve, and the goals and strategies we will use to get there.

COMMUNITY VALUES

▼

VISION

| THE BEST MID-SIZE CITY IN AMERICA. | THE GREENEST CITY IN THE SOUTHEAST. | EQUITABLE, DIVERSE, AND INCLUSIVE. | WE MAKE HISTORY. | A CITY OF INSPIRATION. |

▼

BIG IDEAS

| FILLING IN OUR FRAMEWORK | CREATING GREAT PLACES | BECOMING CAR-OPTIONAL | PRIORITIZING SUSTAINABILITY | BUILDING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS | GROWING ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS |

GOALS → **STRATEGIES** → **IMPLEMENTATION**
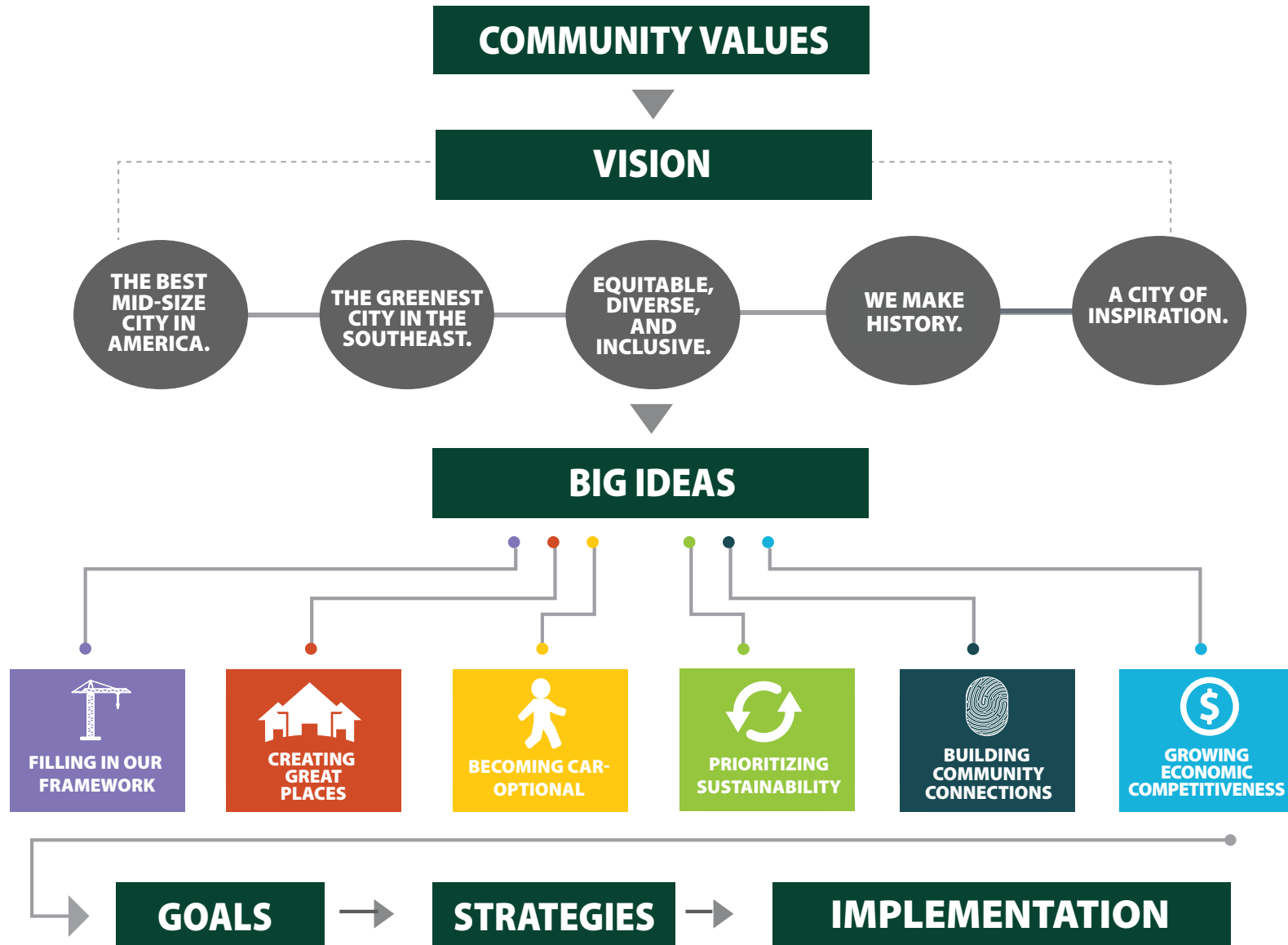
PART 1
BUILDING THE VISION

WHAT IS *GSO2040*?

The greatest, most memorable cities don't just happen. There is a roadmap that has guided them to become places of lasting value and opportunity for all residents, and destinations visitors desire to return to. That roadmap is a guide to a shared vision for the future and is called the comprehensive plan; *GSO2040* is the City of Greensboro's adopted Comprehensive Plan. The Plan provides a common touch point to align projects, programs, and policies with the community's vision for the future. The updated plan will help residents, employers, and community institutions understand how they each play a role in Greensboro's roadmap for success.

GUIDING THE CITY'S FUTURE

The Comprehensive Plan conveys where and how Greensboro can best progress: what places need thoughtful reinvestment, what places can best support growth, and what types of development we want throughout city. The Plan builds on the city's history and strengths, and respects who and what make Greensboro a great city, and is organized around the community's shared values, principles, and priorities.

The plan coordinates land use, transportation, economic development, and capital improvement plans, as well as small area, redevelopment, and neighborhood plans. The Plan maps a path from the present to the future as a guide to the decisions about growth and change and all the individual elements of community that combine to comprise a livable, sustainable, and resilient City of Greensboro.

> **"A vision and commitment to think outside the box and inspire citizens and visitors with truly innovative methods of growth and change."**
>
> *Survey Response, 2018*

MANAGING CHANGE

A comprehensive plan gives voice to a community's aspirations for the future. It provides a clear, concise vision, and goals that are memorable, easy to understand, and that reflect a broad base of community input. Cities cannot predict all the challenges they will face in the next 20 years, but tying policies and programs to long-term goals the community identifies as priorities allows a city to make the necessary changes to stay on track and achieve a shared vision.

GSO2040 PROVIDES THE CITY OF GREENSBORO WITH:

- A clear, concise vision that is memorable, easy to understand, and reflects everyone's input.

- A cohesive set of policies organized around our shared values that promote broad community ownership.

- A land use guide based on desired development patterns, which coordinates with transportation and economic development policies and features strategies to successfully manage change.

- Measures of success related to the vision and shared values identified through the planning process, with checkpoints to ensure that course corrections and needed updates are identified and addressed in a timely manner.

- An implementation guide that identifies action steps and methods for achieving Greensboro's vision.

USER'S GUIDE

*GSO*2040 is a policy document used by city leaders and staff, developers, business owners, and residents to inform and guide land use and policy decisions.

As Used by City Staff

The Plan references and builds on the existing plans of City departments and community partners. City staff will consult it when reviewing changes to development ordinances, rezoning requests, and making recommendations for facilities, services, and capital improvements. Department heads will use the Plan to inform the preparation of work plans, budgets, and capital improvement programs.

As Used by the General Public

Residents will be able to refer to the Vision Statement, Goals, Strategies, and illustrative maps for assessing the potential for growth in individual neighborhoods and when addressing a particular proposal or other matter before the City Council or appointed boards or commissions. As common point of reference, the Plan will foster better discussion of the positive aspects of growth and development as well as concerns about changes to Greensboro

As Used by Appointed Boards and Committees

Members of appointed boards and committees will be able to use the Plan to carry out their work and mission. Some boards, such as the Zoning Commission and Planning Board, will more regularly consult the Plan for guidance in decision-making.

As Used by City Council

City Council will use the Plan as a guide when making decisions so that the long-term vision for the city is a consistent point of reference.

As Used by Other Agencies and Partners

A wide variety of Greensboro's partners, including non-profits, businesses, the education community, and nearby county and municipal governments, can use the Plan to identify and implement mutually supportive goals.

As Used by Development Interests

Developers, property owners, builders, and others involved in constructing our city will be able to consult the Plan to develop projects and site plans that consider the larger context, rather than focusing solely on individual sites. The Plan will create a starting point for conversation about important issues and questions that will be considered when making decisions about land use changes.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

RESEARCH AND BACKGROUND

Three essential resources were created as part of the background work of creating this plan. The documents can be viewed in their entirety on the City of Greensboro *GSO*2040 Comprehensive Plan web page.

- A **Data Book**, which compiles and summarizes important long-term data about Greensboro and how we compare to other cities.

- A **Conditions and Trends Report**, which summarizes data trends in Greensboro and reviews ten major trends affecting cities across the country that are likely to impact Greensboro. These include topics such as technology, transportation, climate change, equity, and housing.

- A **Community Preference Survey** conducted by the National Association of Realtors (NAR) in conjunction with the Greensboro Regional Realtors Association. The NAR performs this survey every two years for the top 50 metropolitan areas across the country; this is the first stand-alone survey done.

Through the development of these documents, many key findings and topics were identified. These key findings highlight some of the major changes that occurred since the previous comprehensive plan and include some of the challenges and opportunities that Greensboro faces.
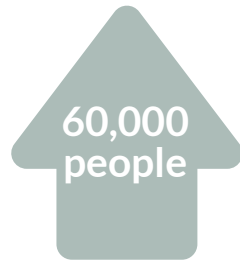
Greensboro is growing.

Greensboro is projected to grow by 60,000 people over the next 20 years. The percentage of growth since 2000 is higher than national and state rates, but not as high as other large North Carolina cities.

60,000 people

Our population is aging.

The share of Greensboro's population that is older is increasing and the share that is younger is decreasing. The increase in the older population offers opportunities to create a more walkable, transit-friendly community so that residents can age-in-place while also having an increasing impact on demand for access to health services and appropriate housing. The loss of younger generations, including millennials, is troubling as it may create a vacuum in the employment pool and diminish the overall vitality of the community.

Year	Under 20	20 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 85+
2000	26.4%	41.5%	20.2%	11.9%
2018	25.8%	36.1%	24.2%	13.9%

■ Under 20 ■ 20 to 44 ■ 45 to 64 ■ 65 to 85+

-400 acres of Heavy Industrial land
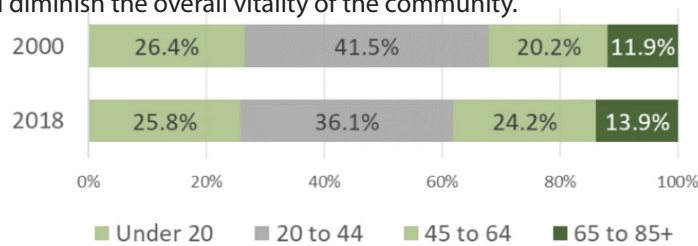
Industrial land is important.

Future job growth may be hurt if there is a continued loss of land available for manufacturing, distribution, and other industrial uses. The largest decrease in land use since the last Comprehensive Plan has been heavy industrial with the loss of over 400 acres.

We want different things.

People's needs and preferences are changing.

- The size of households is shrinking. Sixty-seven percent of Greensboro households are now one- or two-person.
- We want more ways to get around instead of being completely dependent on cars.
- There is a strong preference for mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods. We buy more things online, changing the need for bricks and mortar retail space.
- We want to hang out and shop in interesting places that provide new experiences.
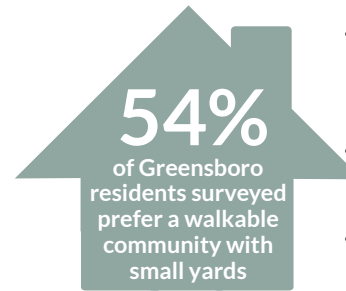
We have housing challenges.

- Housing affordability: there are not enough options for people at different income levels from the very poor, to middle income families, to new-to-the-work-force singles.
- Location: many available, affordable housing options are in places that make travel for jobs and services an additional cost burden.
- Quality: instances of inadequate upkeep and vacancies can have a large impact on overall neighborhood quality.

54%
of Greensboro residents surveyed prefer a walkable community with small yards

CHANGE IN EMPLOYMENT
From 2000 to 2018

Manufacturing jobs decreased **-11%**

while Service jobs increased **+30%**

with the largest gain in the Educational & Health Services sector **+ 13,344 jobs**
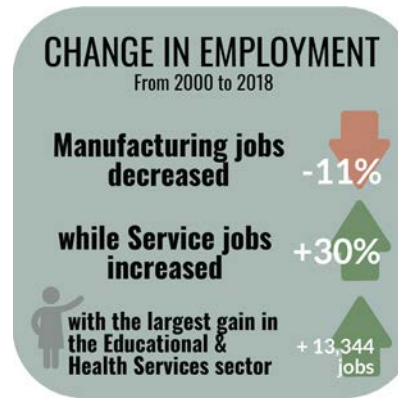
Our economy is in transition.

There are fewer manufacturing jobs and more service jobs, which are generally lower paying. Median earnings have increased, but not as much as the state, nation, or other North Carolina cities.

52,172
number of people living below poverty level in 2018 versus 26,107 in 2000

Many people live in poverty.

Over 26,000 more Greensboro residents were living below the poverty line in 2018 than in 2000. Differences in wealth, income, and unemployment vary strongly between census tracts across the city and also vary greatly across races and ethnicities.

The world is changing fast.

Changes in technology, the climate, and the economy are happening more rapidly than at any time in history. Developments in technology, the retail market, transportation, and other areas create exciting opportunities that are difficult to predict. Adaptability, resiliency, and nimbleness are critical for Greensboro to succeed in the future.

COMMUNITY PREFERENCES SURVEY RESULTS

In November 2017, the National Association of Realtors conducted a statistically valid survey asking Greensboro residents about available transportation and housing options and what their priorities would be for selecting a new place to live. This Greensboro-specific version of the Community Preference Survey conducted every two years in the country's 50 largest metropolitan areas was the first conducted solely in a local market. The survey was conducted at the request of and in coordination with our local Greensboro Regional Realtors Association.

Survey questions covered commuting distances, transportation options, and preferences in house size, yard size, and between detached and attached houses. The full survey can be found at Community Preference Survey. A summary of the results includes the following:

High Level of Satisfaction

Nine out of ten residents are either "very" or "somewhat" satisfied with their quality of life, with nearly half saying they are "very" satisfied. This is a higher number than reported for the top 50 metropolitan areas surveyed every two years.

Top Priorities

Maintaining and repairing roads and highways is by far the top priority both for Greensboro residents and nationally. Greensboro residents rated the following items as higher priorities than the national survey:

- building more sidewalks (59% high priority);
- expanding public transportation; and
- providing more transportation alternatives.

The latter two priorities, as well as building more roads to alleviate traffic congestion, are especially preferred among non-white Greensboro residents.

Transportation

About half of the respondents currently travel for work or school, and 93% of them do so in a private vehicle.

Walkable Neighborhoods

The more walkable people reported their neighborhood to be, the more satisfied they are with their quality of life. Two-thirds said that having sidewalks and destinations to walk to was "very important" in deciding where to live. The preference for walkability was stronger for younger adults, particularly millennials.

Short Commutes

In addition to walkable neighborhoods, over half the responses indicated that having a short commute and being close to a highway were important in deciding where to live.

Neighborhood Choice

Overall, 54% of residents stated a preference for living in walkable communities in homes with smaller yards, and 41% stated a preference for a suburban community and larger yards. However, preferences differ between generations, and for households with and without children.

- A majority of older Greensboro residents (Gen Xers and Baby Boomers) are more likely to prefer living in a home in a walkable with a smaller yard as opposed to a home with a larger yard that requires driving for all trips, while Millennials are evenly split in their preference.

- Preferences switch when the choices of a walkable community include living in an apartment or townhome versus a detached house. Millennials are more likely to prefer the short commute and a walkable community and if the choice includes living in an apartment or townhome, while the older generations prefer the detached, single-family house with a larger yard even with a longer commute.

- Those with children living at home prefer living in a detached home with a large yard even with more driving and longer commute. However, those families are split in their choice if the smaller yard and the walkable community is not tied to living in an attached home. In both cases, women prefer walkable communities, even if it means a smaller yard or attached home, while men are split. When all differences are taken into account, 33% of respondents prefer to live in walkable communities with short commutes, no matter the tradeoffs in yard size and housing type, and 25% prefer homes with bigger yards even when it means more driving.
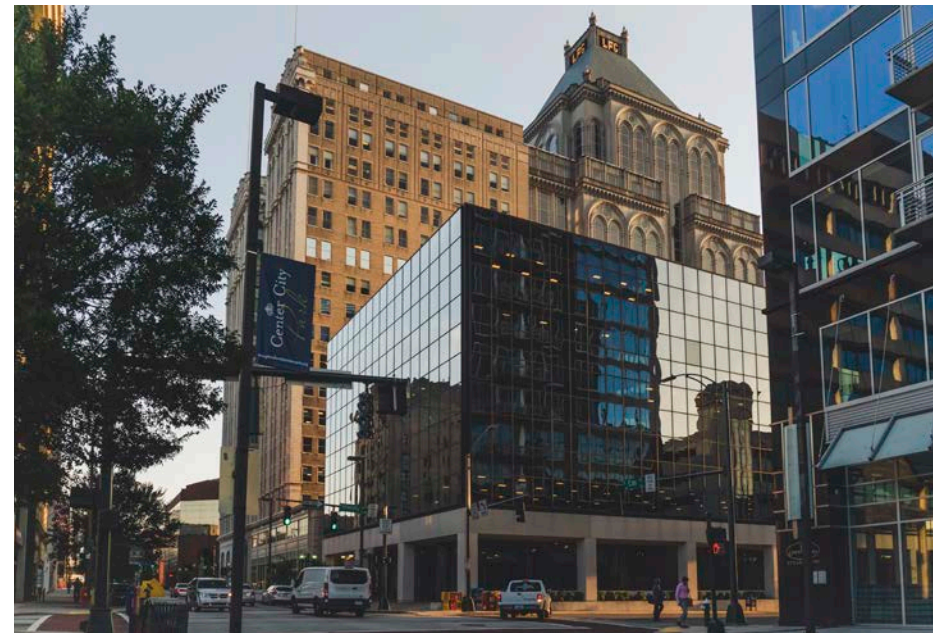
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The planning process for **GSO**2040 was called *PLAN***IT** GSO and started with public engagement. All of these were opportunities to get input, raise awareness, and get residents signed up for project updates. Public engagement began in 2017 with small pop-up events in the spring and built to bigger events in the fall and winter including a presence at the National Folk Festival. Throughout the process, engagement was focused on several areas: traditional public meetings; pop-ups to interact with people gathered at existing events; a strong online presence; presentations to organizations like civic groups and neighborhoods; and a speaker series.

- **Community Wide Public Meetings**

  The first city-wide community open house was the project kick-off meeting and celebration held in October of 2018 downtown at Center City Park. Following this, a series of six community meetings was held at City Recreation Centers across the city. In March 2019 an all-day event, the *PLAN***IT** **GSO**2040 Fair, was held at the Central Library. All these events were heavily publicized on a variety of platforms from word-of-mouth to social media.

  All the events included specific activities to get input, but also to accomodate participants who could only arrive at the meeting as their schedules allowed. In addition to gathering public comments and feedback on Plan elements as they were being created, a major emphasis at all of these meetings was to create an environment where attendees could talk to each other about issues of concern.

- **Pop-Up Meetings**

  Making it easy for participants to engage in the process was a key component. To engage more people in conversations, the City held pop-up meetings at existing events where people were already gathered, which created opportunities to gather input from all across the City.

  Staff set up booths at events ranging from the National Folk Festival, farmers markets, the Juneteenth Celebration, flea markets, road races, and holiday parades to name a few. Staff would "pop up" in small venues as well like coffee shops and outdoor events. City libraries also hosted stand-alone survey stations where comments could be left.

Pop-up event at Run for the Greenway

World Café Meeting at Glenwood Recreation Center

- **Online**

  Staff regularly published online surveys that supplemented and ran parallel to other public engagement. Facebook, Twitter, and NextDoor were used to publicize events, raise awareness about trends and planning concepts, and hold conversations. Online contests were a fun way to get input, for example, "To GSO with Love," held in the weeks prior to Valentine's day in 2018.

- **Other**

  Presentations to groups and organizations accounted for a large number of public outreach activities. Staff made dozens of presentations to neighborhood and civic organizations, and made sure to offer this opportunity to organizations across the city. Staff also worked closely with internal City departments and boards and commissions to educate and obtain their insight on comprehensive plan initiatives. The Speaker Series brought nationally recognized experts to Greensboro to speak on specific aspects that the comprehensive plan addresses. More information on the Speakers Series is available on page 14.

World Café Meeting at Smith Senior Recreation Center

PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

From the many conversations and survey responses gathered from public input, a few key themes emerged.

- **A Sense of Community**
- **The Value of Outdoor Amenities**
- **Concern About Growing**
- **Keeping the Green in Greensboro**
- **Addressing Housing Concerns**
- **More Transportation Options**

A Sense of Community

Residents from across the city stated that one of the best things about Greensboro is its people and its sense of community. We heard that Greensboro was a more open and engaging community than most other places they had visited or lived.

> **"Greensboro is the perfect place to raise a family. It is big enough to attract lots of performance, arts and culture but small enough to have a strong sense of community and convenience. "**
>
> *Scuppernong Books Pop-Up, 2017*

The Value of Outdoor Amenities

Residents commented positively that our trails, greenspaces, and numerous parks help attract visitors and retain residents, while creating a sense of place and vibrancy throughout the City. They also emphasized the need to preserve greenspace as the City grows.

> **"I love the huge number of well maintained parks and trails we have. Never seen anything else like it! The parks and rec system, hybrid city buses and it's dedication to being beautiful. There's no place like home."**
>
> *Love Letter Event Response, 2018*

Concern about Growing

Residents see the positive aspects of growth, but have concerns about how it will occur. There is support for business growth and growth downtown, but anxiety about the location and type of growth that may occur in and around existing neighborhoods and greenspaces.

> **"Not all new development is respecting the land. Developers have a responsibility to restore trees and landscaping and to seriously consider traffic coming out of their developments."**
>
> *Online Survey Response, 2019*

Keeping the Green in Greensboro

Being a "green" community is important to people across Greensboro. They want to plant trees and preserve greenspace, but also want more sustainable development patterns, more use of renewable energy, greater transportation options, and the recruitment of innovative "green" businesses.

> **"Not only greenspaces but being a truly green city with energy, recycling, use of alternative fuels and resources."**
>
> *Griffin Recreation Center, 2017*

Addressing Housing Concerns

Residents expressed concern about housing affordability and maintenance. Specific suggestions ranged from increasing the availability of supportive services to fostering public-private partnerships that lower rental costs and bolster economic development opportunities. They also spoke about the impact that poorly maintained housing has on health and overall neighborhood quality.

> **"There needs to be a variety of affordable and livable homes.**
>
> *Online Survey Response, 2019*

Pop-up event at Greensboro Folk Festival 2017

More Transportation Options

Many residents expressed interest in having more ways to get around the city. They suggested adding sidewalks, greenways, trails, and upfitting neighborhood streets to allow more places to walk and cycle for transportation and for exercise. A desire for more comfortable public transit with shorter and more consistent wait times was also expressed.

> "While walkability and bikeability is improving, public transportation needs improvement and ways to attract new riders without negatively affecting current users."
>
> *UNCG Geography Club, 2017*

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Representatives from 20 of the City's established boards and commissions came together to form an Advisory Committee in the summer of 2018. This Committee played a vital role in the plan development process as a sounding board and by providing feedback, as well as assisting with the public engagement process. Committee members not only advised staff on strategies for outreach, but also were actively engaged as facilitators and participants at meetings and events.

Advisory Committee members brought tremendous experience and a broad range of opinions to the table. Many had served on multiple boards and commissions, and their understanding of City operations, how City policies are used on a daily basis, and the relationships between the City and other community groups was invaluable. Advisory Committee members and the boards and commissions they represent can be found in the Acknowledgements on page 2.

Councilman and Advisory Committee Chair Justin Outling

David Parrish, City Manager speaking to attendees at the Lewis Recreation Center

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Commitee Meeting

PLANIT GSO Public Engagement Process

As part of our public input process titled *Plan*IT GSO, staff conducted several phases of public outreach in three forms: Public Meetings, Pop-up Meetings, and Online Surveys.

The Planning Department began gathering input in the fall of 2017 at the annual North Carolina Folk Festival. Three basic questions were asked, and the following topics were mentioned the most:

What makes Greensboro special?
- People
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Greenery

What needs to change to make Greensboro better?
- Improved transportation, transit and pedestrian opportunities
- Continued improvement of the Downtown
- More vibrant places

In 20 years, I'd like to Greensboro to be known for...
- Its rich arts and culture community
- Its people and the sense of community
- Its diversity

160 engagement events were held over two years

6,000+ people were reached to share ideas and help shape GSO 2040

1

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Typical public meetings and focus group meetings scheduled, organized and led by Planning Department

2

POP-UP MEETINGS

Existing events organized by others (festivals, meetings of civic groups or neighborhood associations, places where people gather)

3

ONLINE SURVEYS + SOCIAL MEDIA

Surveys online mirrored questions asked at other events, and social media was used to advertise events, surveys, and information

2017   **2018**   **2019**

APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT

SPEAKER SERIES

The *PLANIT* GSO Speaker Series brought nationally known experts in community design and development to Greensboro to highlight the latest trends taking place in U.S. cities.

Please visit **greensboro-nc.gov/planitgso** to access recorded videos of most of the presentations referenced below.

2017

Dan Parolek
October 19, 2017

"Missing Middle: Responding to the Demand for Walkable Urban Living"

Geoff Anderson
November 28, 2017

"Growing an Amazing City: Greensboro"

2018

Kol Peterson
March 13, 2018

"Accessory Dwelling Units: A New/Old Idea that is Reshaping Cities"

Parris Glendening
March 27, 2018
"Investments in Smart Planning: How Housing Builds our Economy"

Chris Leinberger
April 11 & 12, 2018
"Placemaking and Management: Addressing Market Demand for Walkable Urbanism in the Knowledge Economy"

Majora Carter
November 5, 2018
"Community as Corporation: How Taent-retention Strategies in Low Status Communities can Drive Prosperity from Within"

2019

Caroline Dwyer
March 6, 2019

"Planning for a Healthy Community- Past, Present, and Future"

Kristen Jeffers
April 18, 2019

"An American Expat on the Future of her Hometown"

Bruce Katz
September 24 & 25, 2019

"New Localism: Building on our Strengths"

Henry Cisneros
October 29 & 30, 2019

"The Equitable City: Property, Opportunity, Leadership"

CHAPTER 2: HISTORY OF GREENSBORO
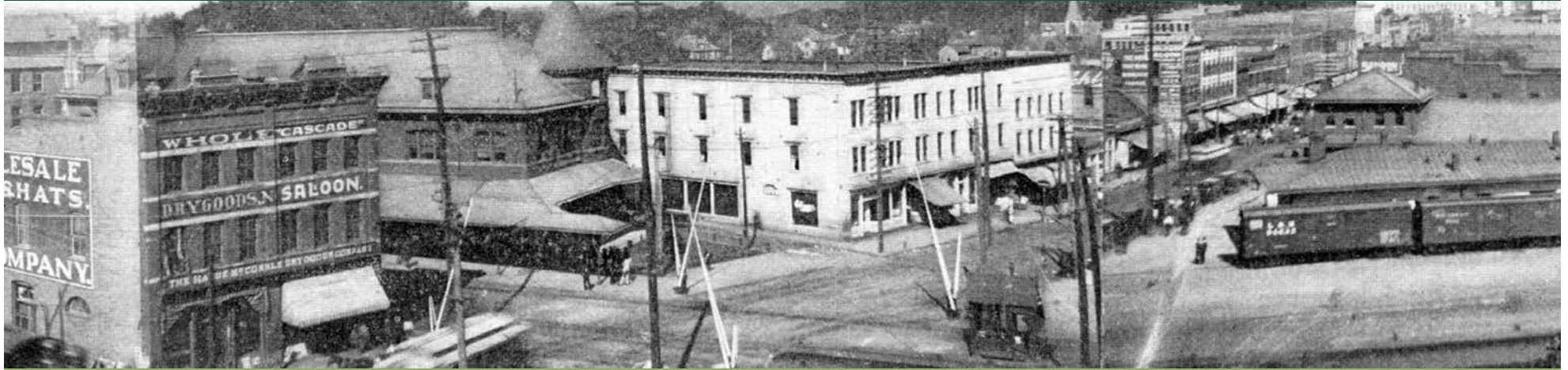
Located in Guilford County in the heart of the central Piedmont region of North Carolina, Greensboro is approximately halfway between Washington DC and Atlanta, and midway between Charlotte and Raleigh. Greensboro is a forward looking city with a deep respect for the past. Connections to the past are evident throughout the city.

A review of Greensboro's history is vital to understanding the Greensboro of today, and for guiding our future growth and development. The area saw historically significant events before the town was incorporated and has been home to distinct communities that have come together over time as a single community.

Greensboro's reputation as a community where social justice and equity are strong values has deep roots. Quakers were early leaders in the abolition movement and helped fugitive slaves escape along the Underground Railroad segment that traversed the woods around the New Garden Boarding School. During the Civil War, New Garden Quakers were persecuted for their refusal to serve in the Confederate army, and Quaker men hid in the woods to avoid conscription.

Local college and high school students led Sit-Ins at the Woolworth's lunch counter in 1960, which sparked non-violent protests against racial segregation across the South. The Quaker community aided conscientious objectors during the Vietnam War, and Greensboro has had one of the country's largest refugee resettlement programs. Acknowledging and celebrating our history is an important element of how Greensboro defines itself.

Early History

Greensboro is named after General Nathanael Greene, who was instrumental in turning the tide of the Revolutionary War at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse in 1781. Today Guilford Courthouse National Military Park is a National Historic Landmark and a green oasis in a rapidly developing part of the city.

Guilford County was settled in the mid-1700s by English, German, and Scotch-Irish immigrants. Quakers from Pennsylvania and New England brought with them deeply held convictions about the injustice of slavery and the rationality of human rights, and their influence is still felt today.

Unlike many cities in the south and the east, "Greensborough" did not begin as a settlement on a river or at a colonial crossroads. In 1808, a political decision to move government offices to the geographic center of the county for the convenience of all citizens started this small town on the path to becoming the city it is today. This spirit of cooperation is still a defining quality of Greensboro.

Even though it lacked the natural advantage of a river, Greensboro became a hub for transportation and commerce, due in large measure to the efforts of local businessman and state governor John Motley Morehead. Morehead raised money for a railroad that would move people and goods across the state from Morehead City to Charlotte. Construction began in Greensboro in 1851, and soon 60 trains were arriving and departing daily on tracks running in seven directions.

Hotels and restaurants sprang up near the depot to serve passengers making connections to destinations all over the eastern seaboard, and the term "Gate City" was coined. Sawmills, foundries, and furniture factories were just some of the industries that opened along the railroad tracks as Greensboro's economy began to flourish. Today Greensboro is still known as the Gate City and is a logistics hub with a transportation network that rivals many larger cities.

Greensboro was a small town for most of the nineteenth century, but with the rise of textile manufacturing near the end of the century, the population began to grow dramatically. By 1920 Greensboro was a city of nearly 20,000 and the third largest in the state, surpassing older cities such as Wilmington and Salisbury.

Economic Growth

Almost from the beginning, Greensboro's economy was tied to cotton. The first steam powered cotton mill in North Carolina opened in Greensboro in 1834.

In 1893, attracted to Greensboro by its advantageous rail service and low-cost labor, the Cone brothers moved their Cone Export and Commission Company from New York. In 1895, they opened Proximity Mill, named for its proximity to the cotton fields. Revolution Mill opened in 1899 and became the world's largest flannel producer. White Oak, built between 1902 and 1905, was the largest cotton mill in the south and produced more denim than any other mill in the world. In the northeast part of the city, the Cones built hundreds of homes for their workers in villages surrounding their mills.

By 1940, Greensboro was home to some of the world's leading textile manufacturers including Cone Mills, Burlington Mills, Blue Bell, and Mock Judson Voehringer, and the city's population had grown to 60,000. One of the city's largest hotels was named "King Cotton" and the Latham Park neighborhood was named for a prominent cotton broker.

Tobacco also played a major role in the City's economy. At one time there were 14 cigar makers, and it was second only to Tampa in cigar production. By the late 1900s, Greensboro was a major marketplace for tobacco grown throughout the region. The Lorillard Tobacco Company built a massive cigarette plant east of downtown and was the country's oldest continuously operating tobacco company until it was purchased by ITG Brands in 2014. Textiles and tobacco provided jobs for thousands of Greensboro residents for most of the twentieth century. The steep decline of textile manufacturing, and to a lesser extent tobacco, during the last decades of the century disrupted and changed the local economy.

Greensboro became a major insurance and banking center in the first decades of the twentieth century. Home to Jefferson Standard (now Lincoln Financial) and other large life insurance companies, Greensboro was once known as "the Hartford of South." When it was constructed in 1929, the Jefferson Standard Building, at the corner of Market and Elm Streets was one of the tallest and most architecturally distinctive skyscrapers in the South. The building has been carefully restored and remains a centerpiece of the City's unique identity. Security National Bank in Greensboro merged with American Commercial Bank to form North Carolina National Bank which, through subsequent mergers and acquisitions, is now Bank of America.

Twentieth Century Growth
Spurred by the development of streets, trolleys, and electric streetcars, Greensboro grew outward from the central business district. In 1923, Greensboro's municipal limits were extended for the third time, and the land area had grown to 18 square miles.

In 1928, the Tri-City Airport opened in the Friendship community west of Greensboro at the Lindley Field, which was once part of the Lindley Nurseries. Today, with new runways, a network of highways, and a shipping hub in place, Piedmont Triad International Airport is one of the most important economic engines of the region.

Greensboro was selected as the site of a huge training camp and departure point during World War II because of its excellent transportation network. The largest military base in any American city, Overseas Replacement Depot (ORD), operated from 1943 through 1946. After the war many of the barracks and supply quarters were converted to industrial uses and warehouses. Today the area along East Bessemer Avenue is still referred to as "ORD."

Soon after World War II ended, Greensboro began to see suburban expansion as the automobile opened up the surrounding countryside to residential development. Greensboro's central business district suffered in competition with shopping centers and malls during the 1960s and 1970s, and by 1980, vacant storefronts outnumbered active businesses. But like many American cities, a downtown revival has been taking place and has accelerated in the last decade.

North Carolina's first and largest Urban Renewal project was in Greensboro. Warnersville, established shortly after the Civil War as a planned African American community, was declared blighted in the late 1950s and slated for redevelopment. Once a vibrant neighborhood with homes, churches, and businesses, it was totally cleared and rebuilt with suburban-style houses and apartments, forever altering the character of the neighborhood. African American-owned businesses were removed, and a major thoroughfare was built through the heart of the neighborhood.

Greensboro is located at the top of the Cape Fear River Watershed, and its water supply is dependent on rain water captured in reservoirs. From 1998 through 2002, the City suffered historic drought conditions that caused economic and personal hardship for many of its residents. Randleman Lake came online in 2010, guaranteeing the City's water supply for the next 50 years.

Arts and Culture
Greensboro has long been known for its arts. William Sydney Porter, better known as short story writer O. Henry, was born in Greensboro in 1862. In the 1870s and 80s, Albion Tourgée was a prolific and popular novelist, who, some scholars have argued, was one of the most important American writers of his day. His book "A Fool's Errand" was based in part on his experiences living in Greensboro after the Civil War. During the 1950s and 1960s Woman's College, now the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, was a haven for some of America's finest poets and novelists, and visiting writers included Robert Frost, Flannery O'Connor, Robert Penn Warren, and Eudora Welty.

The Magnolia House Motel, now restored and on the National Register of Historic Places, accommodated traveling African-Americans during the era of segregation. The Motel was included in the "Green Book" that listed safe businesses for traveling African-Americans. Many accomplished musicians, artists, and athletes stayed there, as did the families of students attending Bennett College.

Greensboro has a long history as a seat of higher education. New Garden Boarding School, now Guilford College, was chartered by the Quaker Society of Friends in 1834 and was the first coeducational institution in the South and third in the United States. In 1838, Greensboro College became the first chartered college for women in North Carolina. Bennett College was founded in 1873 as a school for freedmen and is one of only two historically black colleges for women in the nation. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro was started in 1891 as the State Normal and Industrial College and is still remembered fondly as "WC" for Woman's College of the University of North Carolina. North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, now the largest historically black college or university (HBCU) in the nation, was established in 1891 as the Agricultural and Mechanical College for the Colored Race and was the first land grant college for people of color in North Carolina. Guilford Technical Community College opened in 1958 on the site of the Guilford County Tuberculosis Sanatorium and is the third largest in the North Carolina Community College System. Total enrollment for the city's colleges and universities is estimated at over 60,000.

COMPONENTS OF THE PLAN

*GSO*2040 expresses the community's vision for what it wants to be in 2040 and creates a broad framework of policies for achieving that vision. These policies are based on extensive public input and conversation, a review of data about the current state of the City, alignment of existing plans from City departments, collaboration with community partners, and a review of current trends affecting cities across the country. The Plan uses several key pieces to describe our current values, the vision of what we want to achieve, and the goals and strategies we will use to get there.

Our Plan includes the following components:

Values	Our Values are the aspirations that are most important to the community today and were produced by thoroughly analyzing public input and priorities.
Vision Statement	Our Vision creates a picture of what we want to be true of our community in 20 years based on input from the public and from the City's leadership.
The Six Big Ideas	Our Six Big Ideas are the heart of the Plan. Extracted from our Vision, our Six Big Ideas incorporate our shared values and define the goals and strategies that make up the policies that will move us towards realization of our Vision.
Anticipated Land-Use Maps	Our Future Land-Use Maps, based on the policies in the Plan, are used to guide future land-use decisions for rezoning, annexation, and capital investment.
Implementation	Our implementation strategy includes annual updates and work plans that focus on high-priority components of the Plan.

OUR COMMUNITY VALUES

From extensive public input and the visions and goals of existing City plans, staff and the Advisory Committee shaped and refined the following values that represent what our community holds to be important.

It is important to our community that:

We are a vibrant, welcoming, and connected city.

We celebrate our heritage, our cultures, and each other.

We take pride in our neighborhoods, our businesses, and our shared spaces.

We shape our future and are stewards of our environment.

We all benefit from our prosperous economy.

Councilwoman Hightower speaking to meeting atendees at the Glenwood Recreation Center

PLAN**IT** *GSO2040* Fair

OUR VISION

Our Vision expresses what we as a community aspire to be and provides a common touchpoint for making decisions and a consistent point of reference to manage changes in conditions in the future.

In 2040, we want to be able to say:

Greensboro is the best mid-size city in America.

Greensboro is an ambitious city that achieves and is known for great things. Our community is livable and active: friendly, warm, and welcoming, with all the amenities of a larger city.

Greensboro is the greenest city in the Southeast.

Greensboro is green in all ways: we have a resilient tree canopy, a vibrant park system, and we take care of our environment.

Greensboro is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusivity.

Greensboro is diverse. We commit not just to diversity, but also to inclusion and equitable participation and opportunity for those who live, work, or go to school in Greensboro.

We make history.

Greensboro honors and builds on its history and continues to make history as a forward-thinking city.

Greensboro is a city of inspiration and creativity where people and businesses thrive.

The culture of Greensboro includes arts, education, and a history of entrepreneurship.

PART 2
THE SIX
BIG IDEAS

WHAT ARE THE 6 BIG IDEAS?

Our Six Big Ideas are the framework for the *GSO2040* Comprehensive Plan. Each includes community-driven goals and strategies that together make up the policies Greensboro will use as it moves forward. These Six Big Ideas encompass various topics such as land use, housing, transportation, and the environment, and bring the components of the Plan together to facilitate coordinated action across City departments and the community as a whole. This framework structures how the City and its partners address issues and accomplish goals over the next 20 years and makes the Plan comprehensive in scope and approach.

Filling in Our Framework describes our land use and development: how the patterns of buildings, roads, and other manmade parts of the city can create a more vibrant and livable Greensboro. This Big Idea focuses on how we arrange our land uses for where we live, work, attend school, shop, and enjoy our free time.

Creating Great Places describes the creation of interesting, attractive places and vibrant public spaces in neighborhoods across Greensboro, in downtown, and with our historic resources.

Becoming Car Optional describes our aim to expand quality transportation options beyond cars and maintain an efficient transportation system that allows people and goods to travel throughout Greensboro. This Big Idea focuses on lessening our dependence on cars and reducing the pressure to have multiple cars per household.

Prioritizing Sustainability describes our leadership role in environmental stewardship, social equity, and a resilient economy. This Big Idea focuses on protecting our natural resources, ensuring that residents live in a healthy environment with equitable access to public services and a voice in governance, while also making Greensboro's economy resilient to changes at the regional, national, and global scale.

Building Community Connections describes our quality of life, the culture, arts, and places that make Greensboro unique and memorable, and the ties that bind us together as a community. This Big Idea includes strategies to improve livability, strengthen neighborhoods, increases our public safety, expand housing affordability, and build Greensboro's identity as a University City.
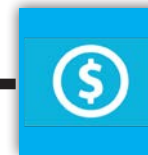
Growing Economic Competitiveness describes building a prosperous, resilient economy that creates equitable opportunities to succeed. This Big Idea includes strategies designed to strengthen our economy through job creation and attraction, diversification of our local economy, and building a steady and growing tax base.

Filling in Our Framework is about land use and development: the pattern of buildings, roads, and other manmade parts of a city. It includes both what buildings are used for, from residences to businesses to large institutions such as hospital and college campuses, as well as how buildings are placed in relationship to each other and to the street. It addresses Greensboro's land use and development patterns with the intention to create mixed-use activity centers and build on and strengthen our existing mixed-use neighborhoods.

Why Fill In Our Framework?

To create the type of Greensboro envisioned in this plan, and to accommodate the future growth of the city, we will need to create opportunities for a wider variety of neighborhoods, in particular more mixed-use areas and areas with greater density. If done in accordance with the plan's policies this will result in a healthier, more prosperous, and more interesting Greensboro. All cities and neighborhoods change over time, and healthy cities evolve and grow with development that adds value and benefits to its surroundings. Some areas need reinvestment more than others, and some are better able to incorporate new growth, and planning for change takes this into consideration.

Infill is development of vacant, abandoned, passed-over, or underutilized land that occurs where a city has infrastructure such as roads, water, and sewer in place. Each site's context and unique circumstances will suggest a different suitable approach within a broad set of parameters, as described in the Plan's Anticipated Growth Maps. When done well, infill development reflects the character of the surrounding area and enhances nearby properties.

Greensboro's previous comprehensive plan, *Connections 2025*, had goals stressing infill, but programs have been difficult to design and implement. Infill goals and strategies help to create distinctive, walkable, mixed-use areas that can support a more robust transit network.

Creating well-defined opportunities for infill will help preserve and improve the quality of adjacent neighborhoods and greenspace and relieve pressure to develop at the edges of the city, which is significantly more expensive for the City over the long run.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ADDRESSED

The goals and strategies in the Filling in our Framework Big Idea address the following issues discussed in public meetings or observed when collecting data about the City. More details are available in the Data Book, the Conditions and Trends Report, and in the public comment summary.

Preservation of Greenspace and Neighborhood Quality

Greensboro has an abundance of stable neighborhoods and greenspaces, including public parks. Population forecasts show Greensboro growing by more than 60,000 people over the next 20 years. This growth rate is higher than state or national averages, but not as high as other major cities in the state. People are aware of the need to grow and change, but concerned about the impacts of growth on both existing neighborhoods and greenspaces.

Housing and Neighborhood Options

National housing preference surveys and demographic trends point to a 20% to 35% gap between supply and demand for housing in walkable urban places during the next decade. Research by the National Association of Realtors and others indicates that baby boomers and millennials have very similar preferences regarding housing options and residential environments. Both groups strongly favor:

- Shorter commutes;
- Walkable urban neighborhoods over auto-oriented suburbs;
- Small or no yard to maintain;
- Rental over ownership;
- Living in proximity to shops and services;
- Living among people with a mix of incomes;
- Living in areas with a mix of residential options; and
- Access to quality mass transit.

In addition, research shows that the size and variety of housing types in the U.S. is not well-aligned with current or anticipated levels of demand. Currently 67% of occupied housing units in Greensboro consists of one- or two-person households. By 2025, 25% or fewer households in the U.S. will include children.

The term "Missing Middle Housing" refers to dwelling types that span the middle ground between detached single-family homes and mid-rise apartments buildings. Examples include duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes; courtyard apartments; bungalow courts; townhouses; multiplexes; live-work units; and accessory units, sometimes referred to as "granny flats." Zoning codes in many cities, including Greensboro, and the financing restrictions of many lending institutions have led to limited construction of these traditional housing types over the past 75 years. Missing Middle Housing can effectively supply dwelling units at a greater density that appeal both to affluent buyers, young professionals, and meet the needs of low-income households with fewer options.

A Need for Distinctive Places

Greensboro is losing millennials and the generations that follow as a percentage of our overall population. One factor, frequently referred to as Placemaking, which makes a community desirable to everyone, is having public spaces that are inviting, social, and aesthetically appealing, to younger people in particular. Though specifically discussed in the Big Idea "Creating Great Places," creating a stronger network of walkable, mixed-use centers will form a platform for Placemaking.

Efficiency and Land Use

The overall density of Greensboro, as measured by the number of people per square mile, is less than most of the other major cities in the state. Though our density increased from 2000 to 2016, it was at a rate lower than any other city in North Carolina besides Fayetteville, which actually lost density during that period. As noted in our Data Book, most of Greensboro's growth during that time came from annexations, not from increasing the population within the existing City limits.

Lower density affects city finances in two ways. On the expense side, public services are delivered across the entire expanse of a city, and costs generally increase as a city grows. Expenses include the installation and maintenance of streets, water and sewer pipes, and other utility infrastructure and the delivery of public safety, solid waste collection, and other services. On the income side, denser, walkable, mixed-use areas generally have higher tax values per acre than other types of development. Not having enough density can make it difficult for a city to meet its long term fiscal needs.

In addition, infill makes use of investments that the City has already made in streets and other infrastructure, and leverages investments made in existing neighborhoods. Infill makes more efficient use of these existing assets, brings vitality into existing city neighborhoods, and puts higher-value property onto the tax rolls.

Creating More Transportation Options

Transportation and land use are connected; planning and constructing streets in coordination with the development pattern of adjacent land uses creates more efficient streets, as well as safer neighborhoods and shopping areas. Having transportation options in addition to private vehicles is important to a wide range of people in Greensboro.

Transportation options can include walking, public transit, cycling, and micromobility, the growing trend towards the use of electric scooters, electric skateboards, shared bicycles, and electric pedal-assisted bicycles. Interest in these options is frequently mentioned in public input as is preference for shorter commutes and walkable neighborhoods, even when the trade-offs are smaller houses and yards. Residents in more walkable neighborhoods reported greater satisfaction with their quality of life in the survey of Greensboro by the National Association of Realtors.

Participant providing input at community meeting located at the Smith Senior Recreation Center

OUR GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR FILLING IN OUR FRAMEWORK

Goals and strategies for filling in the framework of Greensboro's built environment focus on appropriate infill opportunities, maintenance of a vital downtown, and preservation of the character of the buildings and neighborhoods that make up the history of the city.

> " **[The] built environment pays respect to natural environment, living and building with it rather than destroying and building on top of it.** "
>
> *Online Survey Response, 2019*

Goal - A

Greensboro is recognized and admired for its attractive, walkable, and compact mixed-use activity centers where people live, work, and enjoy life.

Strategy 1: Encourage higher density, mixed-use, walkable infill development throughout the City of Greensboro. Successful mixed-use infill development requires different tools and approaches depending on its size and context.

In historically underserved areas of east Greensboro, create an infill program that supports and incentivizes walkable, mixed-use developments which coordinate with housing programs and high-frequency transit service.

Focus areas include: walkable, neighborhood-scale commercial development that serves surrounding residential areas, done in an incremental manner as new development occurs that builds on the existing character of the area; commercial corridors in coordination with increased, higher-frequency transit service; large, underutilized or vacant sites in commercial or light industrial areas; and along the boundaries of college campuses and other large, institutional uses.

Strategy 2: Ensure that mixed-use projects both strengthen and add value to the community. Architecture and urban design should be of high quality and should complement existing development. Projects should be coordinated with transit services and offer multiple mobility options. Additionally, new services and housing should augment, not displace, existing neighborhood-scale commercial development.

Strategy 3: Identify areas for walkable, mixed-use activity centers for future study and land-use planning.

Goal - B

Greensboro attracts world-class development to transform underutilized sites and buildings into valued assets that complement their surroundings.

Strategy 1: Maintain an inventory of key underutilized sites and structures and market them as opportunities to private industry and developers. Focus strategic public investment in adjacent community services, facilities, and infrastructure to attract maximum private investment. Reinforce economic development initiatives by coordinating them with federal and state funding directed to the revitalization of existing neighborhoods.

Strategy 2: Establish infill development guidelines that ensure revitalized sites will be of high quality and will complement existing neighborhood character. Collaborate with developers, the business community, and residents to develop guidelines pertinent to better understand barriers to development, what investments help encourage additional development, and the elements of new developments that add value for surrounding neighborhoods.

Goal - C

People choose to live in Greensboro because every neighborhood is safe and has convenient access to first-rate schools, services, shopping, parks, and community facilities.

Strategy 1: Employ a problem-prevention model to identify causes and solutions to neighborhood problems. Foster a formal process for collaboration and partnership between residents, City departments, and community agencies to work together as part of the problem-prevention model and implementation.

Strategy 2: Invest in building and maintaining quality, accessible public recreation centers, libraries, neighborhood park facilities, and other services to sustain livable neighborhoods. Build on partnerships between the City, residents, and Guilford County Schools to ensure our public schools are able to provide the highest level of educational excellence.

Creating Great Places covers our need to create interesting places and public spaces in neighborhoods across Greensboro, in downtown, and with our historic resources. This Big Idea includes strategies that improve livability, strengthen neighborhoods, and increase our public safety, access to affordable housing, and public amenities.

Why Create Great Places?

Greensboro understands the value of having healthy neighborhoods and housing and is committed to enhancing the quality of life for all its residents. Ensuring the stability and livability of neighborhoods and housing in all areas of the City remain a key factor in Greensboro's future success.

Greensboro is also recognizing the importance of Placemaking, an approach to creating vibrant communities with lasting appeal and value. People are drawn to places that offer a range of features and qualities, a wide variety of structured and spontaneous activities, and most importantly, the presence of other people. The Project for Public Spaces (PPS) provides an extensive array of research and reference guides for advancing the Placemaking movement. According to PPS, the key attributes of great places are simple and intuitive:

- They are accessible and well connected to other important places in the area;
- They are comfortable and project a good image;
- They attract people to participate in activities there; and
- They are social environments in which people want to gather and visit again and again.

Greensboro's architectural heritage has a significant impact on both the city's economy and its quality of life. Well-preserved historic buildings and neighborhoods play a role in attracting new businesses and industries. Residents point with pride to restored homes in Fisher Park as well as to vintage storefronts on South Elm Street that now house restaurants, shops, bars, and small businesses, and to Guilford Battleground National Military Park and Governor Morehead's Blandwood Mansion.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ADDRESSED

The goals and strategies in the Creating Great Places Big Idea address issues discussed in public meetings or observed when collecting data about the city. More details are available in the Data Book, the Conditions and Trends Report, and in the public comment summary.

Creating a Variety of Neighborhoods

Placemaking efforts are being carried out by local governments, private businesses, non-profits, citizen-activists, or by partnerships among two or more of these groups. Greensboro is turning its attention to the principles of Placemaking as part of its community and economic development strategy.

Placemaking, especially within the downtown area, but also in neighborhood-oriented centers, can have a transformational effect on growth and development in Greensboro over the planning horizon. It is especially valuable as a tool for improving quality of life in or near newer suburban areas that developed without the benefits of a mix of uses. Considering the growing demand for the type of community atmosphere that Placemaking can create, Greensboro stands to gain much by increasing its efforts on this front, and risks at least as much by failing to improve the quality of places it offers to its residents and visitors.

Retaining Residents

Greensboro is losing younger residents as a percentage of our overall population. A job market that offers options and opportunity is important for attracting and retaining a young workforce, but many millennials look for stimulating places to live and express a desire to live in interesting, unique neighborhoods. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan, *Plan2Play*, includes recommendations for creating "Community Hearts," which are identifiable community gathering spaces with inclusive and contemporary programming, as well as unique neighborhood parks. The *Cultural Arts Master Plan* emphasizes the role public art plays in creating an attractive community with a high quality of life.

Quality of life considerations are important to older generations as well. Greensboro has activities for older residents, particularly cultural amenities, including those offered by its colleges and universities and its recreational facilities.

Renting and Homeownership

Increasingly people are choosing to rent rather than own a home. Cities need a housing inventory that accommodates a range of housing preferences and a balance of rental and owner-occupied properties to stabilize neighborhoods and grow intergenerational wealth.

Housing Affordability

Neighborhoods and housing were central topics throughout the public engagement process. Greensboro residents desire more housing options in and near the downtown area and across all areas of the city. A healthy city needs options for safe, affordable housing, consistent code enforcement for properties in disrepair, and convenient access to goods, services, and amenities. Many areas that have suffered disinvestment are located near downtown, but have the underlying building form to be highly marketable, despite the current lack of investment. Adding new, compatible housing in these locations may help overcome developer reluctance to build by increasing property values and market interest.

Participant providing input at community meeting located at the Smith Senior Recreation Center

OUR GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR INTERESTING NEIGHBORHOODS AND PLACES TO LIVE

Housing variety and affordability, access to great schools, and amenities make a difference in the vibrancy and uniqueness of neighborhoods. Community engagement, governance, and leadership play a fundamental role in ensuring neighborhoods have a voice. Local governments must provide public services, amenities, and recreation equitably to all neighborhoods and work with non-profit organizations and agencies to ensure the well-being of its residents and the upkeep of its housing stock.

> "All things exciting, different, game-changing, out of the box, future focused and different from every other city."
>
> *Online Survey Response, 2019*

Goal - A

Greensboro's citywide network of unique neighborhoods offer residents of all walks of life a variety of quality housing choices.

Strategy 1: Protect and enhance the unique character of every neighborhood. Leverage planning and permitting tools to safeguard the environment and historic buildings and places from potential negative impacts of development, redevelopment, public projects, and commercial encroachment. Encourage Placemaking projects and improvements that reinforce the distinct character of each neighborhood. Strengthen the role of homeowner and neighborhood associations in recognizing, enhancing, and celebrating the unique neighborhood character.

Strategy 2: Meet housing needs and desires with a sufficient and diverse supply of housing products, prices, and locations. Find opportunities to add to the variety of housing types and price points that are close to downtown, employment centers, community services, and public transit. Use housing programs and small-area plans to create walkable infill and provide a range of housing options near transit hubs and other amenities and find opportunities to add public and private amenities in neighborhoods receiving support for housing. Increase options for residents to stay in the community as they age.

Strategy 3: Work towards providing housing for all residents of Greensboro. Ensure that supportive and transitional housing are included in the housing mix. Support and foster collaboration between agencies and non-profit organizations that aim to reduce and eliminate homelessness.

Goal - B

Greensboro's historic places are treasured, protected, and contribute to the city's unique identity.

Goal - C

Downtown is a dynamic center of economic and cultural activity for residents of Greensboro and an unforgettable destination for visitors.

Strategy 1: Continue to identify and promote the historic fabric of the city. Collaborate with museums, history experts, and community partners to create a strong heritage tourism program to promote area historic attractions. Cultivate local community support for historic preservation by organizing and supporting education, awareness, and celebration of Greensboro's role in history with events, displays, presentations, and other tools.

Strategy 2: Continue to protect the city's historic resources. Leverage existing policies and explore new tools to ensure that development and infrastructure improvements in new and historic residential areas near downtown complements the existing character of the area. Continue to develop tools that recognize the wide range of historic events that have occurred in Greensboro in addition to preserving its physical assets.

Strategy 1: Support continuing investment in Downtown. Consider the use of strategic plans for Downtown to identify priority development areas and coordinate improvements to streetscapes, road design, water capacity, and other public services that will encourage heightened private investment.

Strategy 2: Continue to focus on recruiting retail, restaurants, art and cultural venues, offices, and residences to Downtown. Foster entrepreneurship within the city by developing policies and programs that provide support for new local businesses to locate Downtown. Identify specific businesses, retailers, restaurants in surrounding communities that are desired for Downtown and develop relationships and incentives that will encourage them to relocate or expand to Greensboro.

Strategy 3: Attract residents and visitors Downtown with increased festivals, activities, and events related to the arts, music, theatre, and commerce in all seasons, on different days of the week, and a variety of times of day. Build on collaborations with community groups such as the Greensboro Area Convention and Visitors Bureau, foundations, the Chamber of Commerce, the arts and history community, young professionals, universities and colleges, to plan and execute current and new events and activities that highlight Downtown as the "heart" of the community.

BECOMING CAR OPTIONAL

Becoming Car Optional describes the aim to expand transportation options beyond cars and maintain an efficient transportation system that allows people and goods to travel throughout Greensboro. This Big Idea focuses on lessening our dependence on private automobiles and reducing the pressure to have multiple cars per household.

Why Become Car Optional?

Like most cites in the United States, the design of Greensboro's land uses and road network make walking, cycling, and other non-automotive means of transportation difficult, and many times unpleasant. We have become dependent on private automobiles for the vast majority of trips outside of our house, rather than viewing the automobile as one of multiple options.

Public demand for a variety of transportation options, for neighborhoods that provide sidewalks, and for amenities within walking and cycling distance has grown significantly. These trends are particularly strong among millennials. Greensboro is adding sidewalks and bike lanes and continuing to improve our transit system, but a holistic approach that includes land use and development practices will be more effective in meeting the public demand for transportation options that increase convenience and improve health.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ADDRESSED

The goals and strategies in the Becoming Car Optional Big Idea address issues discussed in public meetings or observed when collecting data about the city. More details are available in the Data Book, the Conditions and Trends Report, and in the public comment summary.

Affordability

Although real estate in Greensboro is considered relatively affordable to other major markets, the most affordable housing is generally in locations that have higher transportation costs because they are farther away from jobs and services. These added costs frequently offset savings in real estate, causing many families to be cost-burdened when housing and transportation costs are combined. Improving flexibility in the transportation network by increasing options such as transit and changing land use patterns to reduce the amount of distance from housing to jobs, services, and amenities are key to meeting needs for affordable housing for all residents of the city.

Street Design

Transportation design has substantially changed since the 2003 adoption of *Connections 2025*. Best practices such as Context Sensitive Design and Context Sensitive Solutions and policies for creating complete streets have shifted the focus of road design away from a singular emphasis on cars and drivers to consideration of pedestrians, cyclists, and nearby residents and businesses.

Cities across the country are thinking about how to deal with the rise of autonomous vehicles and what that means for their transportation systems. Use of autonomous vehicles in e-commerce and logistics is of particular importance to Greensboro, which is both a freight hub and a manufacturing/fabrication center.

Safety

Greensboro, like most cities, has historically designed and built streets primarily with the safety of motorists in mind, under the assumption that most users of the road will be motorists and that motorists will obey posted traffic signs. The safety of pedestrians is an often-stated concern in neighborhoods across Greensboro, particularly on interior streets, where reports of high speeds and unsafe driving are common.

Greenspace

The importance of keeping the green in Greensboro was highlighted in public comments throughout the process. Greensboro's linear parks, set around the small streams that form the headwaters of the Cape Fear River, are an important part of a growing and active transportation network that provides both passive and active recreation space as well as wildlife habitats.

Transit

Transit services provide a viable option to driving your own car, but, to be successful, require a higher level of development density than is typically found in Greensboro. By focusing on denser development, particularly residential development towards reinvestment opportunities on commercial corridors, we can offer a greater range of living options, reinvest in areas facing vacancies in the retail market, strengthen our tax base, and improve the overall health of our transit system.

The "last-mile" or "first- and last-mile" connection describes the beginning or end of an individual trip made primarily by public transportation. In many cases, people will walk to and from transit if it is close enough, although bikes, scooters, and ride-share options are becoming increasingly more feasible. Transit or mobility hubs facilitate a better transit network and create centers along our corridors that make it easier to travel the remaining distance to a final destination.
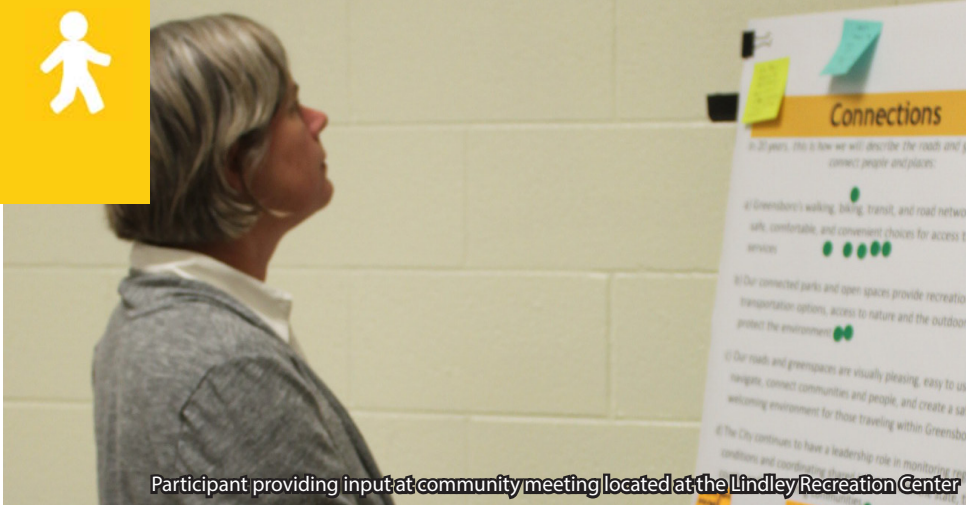
Participant providing input at community meeting located at the Lindley Recreation Center

OUR GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR A CAR OPTIONAL CITY

Public input gathered during the process has uncovered a greater demand for walkable, mixed-use areas than what is currently available on the market. This market trend presents an opportunity to strengthen neighborhoods, add to Greensboro's tax base, and create a more attractive and interesting city with lots amenities, but only if the new development is carefully blended into the existing development pattern.

> "People across the city should be able to access the assets of the city through multiple modes of transportation."
>
> *Advisory Committee Meeting, 2019*

Goal - A

Greensboro has unrivaled pedestrian, biking, transit, and road networks that provide safe, comfortable, and convenient transportation options.

Strategy 1: When designing and reconfiguring streets, continue to build on programs and policies that consider the existing and future land use of the surrounding area. A variety of road features such as street width, degree of straightness, cross walk design, and curb design at intersections are important in creating an environment that supports the intended intensity and scale of adjacent land uses.

Strategy 2: Encourage new development that is compatible with the intended use of the adjacent roadway, which could be supporting commercial activity, serving a primarily residential area, or carrying significant traffic volumes. Support denser development along commercial corridors to create a better environment for multiple transportation options such as walking and higher rates of public transit use. Create plans to connect adjacent, large commercial areas to each other with transportation improvements that allow comfortable and convenient use of various non-automotive travel modes.

Strategy 3: Multiple transportation options should be considered when designing streets. Choosing transportation other than a private car should be safe, convenient, and comfortable. If some streets are not able to safely handle multiple forms of transportation, routes should take advantage of quieter parallel streets. This includes supporting programs for Complete Streets and for traffic calming when appropriate and in coordination with assessments of adjacent land uses.
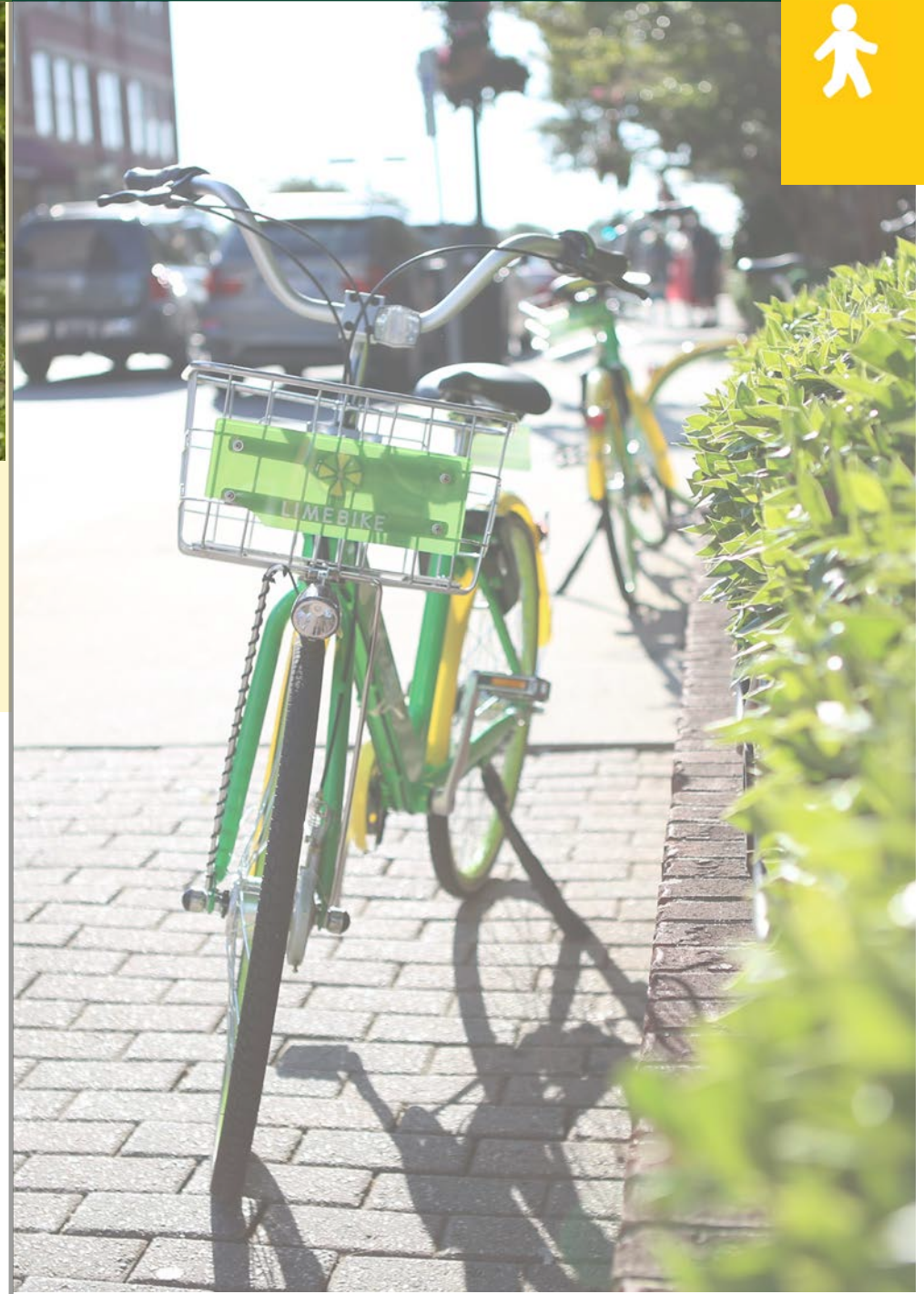
Goal - B

Everyone loves our interconnected greenspaces, which provide recreation and transportation opportunities, promote active living, and protect our natural environment.

Strategy 1: Expand the greenway network to connect all parts of the city as a key element of the transportation system. Develop a variety of parks and park programs to make vital and unique public places in neighborhoods that promote healthy living and social interaction.

Strategy 2: Continue to improve our parks and green corridors to offer refuge for urban wildlife, positively impact the environment, and provide educational opportunities for residents. Many of Greensboro's parks run along our extensive creek network and create rich habitats for a variety of wildlife, as well as opportunities for recreation, education, and to improve water and air quality. Rail corridors throughout Greensboro provide "highways" for wildlife to move across the city safely.

PRIORITIZING SUSTAINABILITY
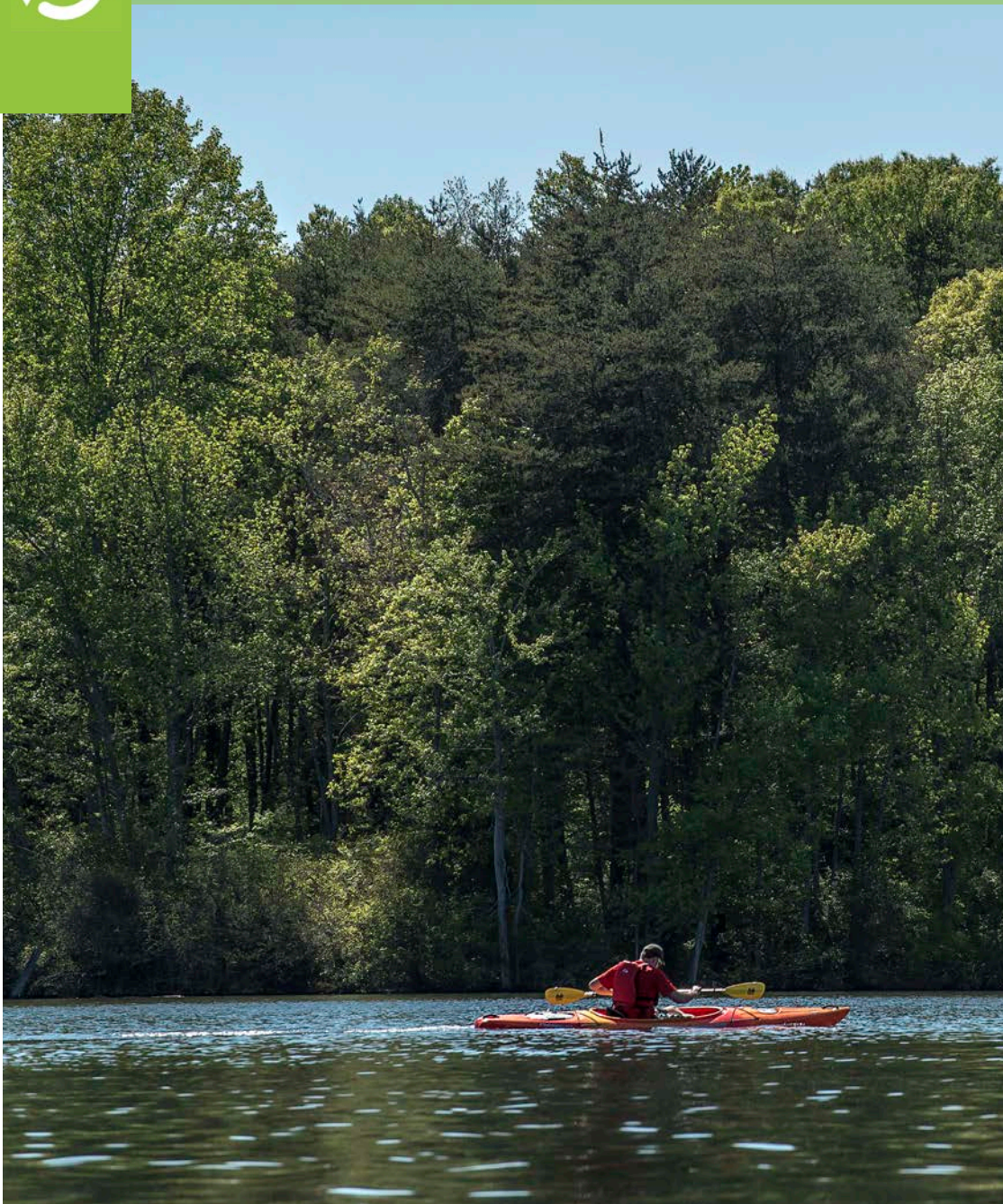
Sustainability describes Greensboro's role in environmental stewardship, building social equity, and creating a resilient economy. This Big Idea focuses on protecting our natural resources and ensuring that residents live in a healthy environment, have equitable access to public services, have a voice in governance, and that Greensboro's economy is resilient to changes at the regional, national, and global scale.

Why Prioritize Sustainability?

Sustainability is the process of continuous improvement towards environmental stewardship, social equity, and a resilient economy. It is a way of thinking and acting that considers the long-term, indirect, cumulative, and global effects of human activity on the Earth's natural systems, with the aim of repairing past damage and preventing future degradation. Promoting a sustainable community means following a path toward ensuring that all future generations benefit from the same, or better, quality of life than we do now.

During public engagement opportunities, a wide range of participants expressed strong interest in having the Plan include goals and strategies to address issues related to sustainability and resilience. This was consistent across multiple meetings in different parts of Greensboro. In a complex system such as a city, balancing these objectives is a continual, dynamic process that involves action, feedback, assessment, and further action. The goal is to build an enduring community that meets the needs of our residents now and into the future.

Greensboro's Vision predicts a future in which we are the greenest city in the Southeast, with a high level of equity, and a prosperous and resilient economy. The principles of sustainability featured prominently in the Plan's Vision and Values will serve as the City's guide for policymaking, growth, and change over the next 20 years and reflect the importance of sustainability expressed by participants in the planning process. Changes in technology, the climate, and the economy will continue at a rapid pace, and the ability of our community to adapt will be key to our ability to flourish.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ADDRESSED

The goals and strategies in the Prioritizing Sustainability Big Idea address issues and opportunities discussed in public meetings or observed when collecting data about the city. More details are available in the Data Book, the Conditions and Trends Report, and in the public comment summary.

Global Change

Among other effects of human-induced global change, Greensboro will experience less predictable rainfall patterns, with increased periods of drought and more intense storms. More frequent and more intense storms are likely to exceed the capacity of older portions of the storm sewer system, resulting in flooding in low-lying areas and along Greensboro's many small creeks. This increased uncertainty emphasizes the need for Greensboro to build greater resilience into its economy and infrastructure.

Social Equity

Disparity in employment, income, wealth, and other factors has been increasing throughout the U.S. and in Greensboro for several decades. These disparities are most visible in east Greensboro, but have significant negative effects on Greensboro's overall economy. Reversing these inequities presents a major opportunity for improving our economic strength, stability, and resilience. Ensuring that City services and facilities are provided as equitably as possible throughout Greensboro, both geographically and socio-economically, is important if we want to erase disparity gaps. Examples of these gaps may include employment, income, wealth, educational attainment, health, social capital, civic engagement, access to healthy food, access to safe and affordable housing, and access to transportation.

Regional Cooperation

The problems and opportunities that cities face often do not align with their boundaries. Solutions may be more attainable through cooperation and collaboration with adjacent city and county governments. Successful management of resources and systems and efficient provision of infrastructure and services often necessitate area-wide coordination, and regional partnerships or governments are a common means of comprehensively addressing issues that reach beyond the boundaries of a single city or county.

Community meeting hosted by the Community Sustainability Council and Planning staff

OUR GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Greensboro embraces a triple bottom line approach to sustainability that balances three interdependent attributes. Environmental stewardship ensures that the contributions of natural resources to human well-being are explicitly recognized and valued. Social equity incorporates fairness and justice in providing for the housing, services, health, safety, and the livelihood needs of all citizens and groups. Economic resilience is necessary to build a diverse, strong local economy that can withstand changes to the regional, national, and world economy.

> **"GSO designs for a sustainable future for all by nurturing one another, caring for our land and resources, and building a thriving economy."**
>
> *Online Survey Response, 2018*

Goal - A

Greensboro advances environmental stewardship, taking care of our natural resources and the natural systems that support all living things.

Strategy 1: Promote resilient, efficient, and environmentally beneficial patterns of land use. Utilize and modify rezoning, subdivisions, site plan, building permit, annexation, and related review and approval processes to achieve an appropriate jobs-housing-service balance. Additionally, apply these processes and others to ensure that all Greensboro residents are within walking distance to a park, green space, or natural feature.

Strategy 2: Take policy and program actions that advance sustainability. Such actions may include promoting green infrastructure to manage water quality, tree planting policies to reduce the urban heat island effect, development of programs to increase recycling and reduce solid waste production, and policies to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases. Stay up-to-date on emerging technologies and advancements in science that may contribute to increased sustainability.

Strategy 3: Develop a strong communication, education, and partnering plan designed to protect the environment. This plan could include public messaging, new incentives, and environmental education. Additionally, cultivate strong partnerships with local, regional, and state entities and organizations that work on environmental protection to help Greensboro adapt to the local effects of global climate change and address other environmental issues.

Strategy 4: Enhance proactive stormwater and flood hazard mitigation efforts to address impacts from more frequent high duration and high intensity storm events including measures to protect critical community assets, manage floodplains, reduce property loss, ensure business continuity, and improve public safety.

Goal - B

Greensboro embraces social equity, ensuring all residents benefit from fair and just treatment in the distribution of public services and have a voice in governance.

Strategy 1: Evaluate impacts to vulnerable populations and communities when reviewing existing and considering new public policies, projects, and services. Where past decisions have resulted in disparities in the distribution and quality of public services and facilities, be proactive in working to eliminate them to improve quality of life outcomes. As part of this strategy, maintain a vigilant focus on inter-generational equity, so that future generations are able to live as well as, or better than, current Greensboro residents.

Strategy 2: Work to ensure that all Greensboro residents have meaningful opportunities to participate in public decision-making processes. Promote capacity-building and leadership programs to equip residents to authentically engage in civic decisions. Additionally, collaborate with and help strengthen community organizations, such as neighborhood associations and civic organizations, to foster active participation in shaping Greensboro's future.

Strategy 3: Promote a just, ethical, and respectful community. Ensure the continued protection of human and civil rights and work to instill in individuals a sense of respect for the rights of others through civic actions, policies, programs, and dialogue.

Goal - C

Greensboro builds economic resilience, expanding the local economy's ability to withstand and adjust to disruptions and changes at the regional, national, and global scales.

Strategy 1: Consider the impact that growth and development patterns and infrastructure investments have on the City's fiscal health. Use the Growth Tier Map and policies to evaluate infrastructure investments when making capital investments and land use decisions. Furthermore, design resilient infrastructure systems able to withstand and quickly recover from natural disasters and other emergencies.

Strategy 2: Cultivate a diverse range of industry sectors and scales of operation in the local economy to help minimize the impacts of major fluctuations within any single sector. Create a local economy that is based on reuse, durability, and repair, to reduce the impacts of an economy centered on disposable goods. Encourage a robust level of local investment from public, non-profit, and private sources to support entrepreneurship, especially when it advances sustainability goals or strategies.

Strategy 3: Enhance economic resiliency through strong partnerships and a deep reserve of social capital. Continued and enhanced collaboration with adjacent city, county, and regional entities will allow for quicker, more comprehensive and more nimble responses to economic issues. In addition, nurture social capital to weave a community fabric of interdependence, collaboration, and caring that will enable residents to rely on one another in times of economic distress.

Building Community Connections describes our quality of life and the culture, arts, and places that make Greensboro unique and memorable and the that ties us together as a community. This Big Idea includes strategies that improve livability, strengthen neighborhoods, and increase public safety, access to affordable housing, and public amenities. It encompasses historic preservation, arts and culture, and education. The strategies in this section will establish Greensboro's identity by promoting the cultural and educational opportunities that make Greensboro a vibrant place.

Why Build Community Connections?

Greensboro's community defines our city. One of the most significant threads in public comments was that people liked the friendly, engaging, and open spirit of Greensboro, and are very satisfied with the quality of life found here. In particular, people said they appreciated the number of amenities Greensboro has for a city its size. Focusing on community and the "softer" assets of the city is a vital part of the future of Greensboro.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ADDRESSED

The goals and strategies in the Building Community Connections Big Idea address the following issues discussed in public meetings or observed when collecting data about the City. More details are available in the Data Book, the Conditions and Trends Report, and in the public comment summary.

Diversity of Population

Greensboro has a diverse population. Over the past decade, the city has evolved into a majority non-white city with the highest percentage of non-white population compared to other large cities in the state. Greensboro is a resettlement community; almost 34,000 residents of Greensboro were born outside of the U.S. City of Greensboro customer service provided assistance to non-English speakers more than 2000 times between July 2018 and June 2019, in languages such as Spanish, Swahili, Vietnamese, Arabic, Nepali, French, Mandarin, and Kinyarwanda.

Changing Age Demographics

The median age in Greensboro in 2018 was 34.3 years; this is younger than the median age for both North Carolina and the U.S., but is older than most of the other major cities in the state. Greensboro is home to several colleges and universities, which likely contributes to its lower median age. However, we are losing younger people as a share of our overall population; between 2000 and 2016, the group of age categories between 55 and 74 experienced the greatest increase and the group between 20 and 44 the greatest decrease. The loss of younger generations is troubling as it may lead to a vacuum in the employment pool and diminish the overall vitality of the community.

The number of older residents in Greensboro is increasing, due in part to the fact that many people stay in Greensboro as they age, and that North Carolina is a destination for retirees. This can have positive impacts on the area's economy and increase levels of civic engagement and volunteerism. It also presents a market for diversifying housing stock and making neighborhoods more walkable and transit-friendly to enable residents to age in their own community rather than move. Overall, the goals *GSO2040* align with those of the AARPs Domains of Livability and being an age-friendly community.

Embracing Our Universities

Greensboro is home to seven institutions of higher education with a combined student population of approximately 60,000. These institutions play a vital role in the civic, cultural, and economic life of Greensboro and leverage quality growth and investment on the edges of their campuses. Making students feel at home while they're away from home benefits the community as a whole, and positioning the schools as community assets is a vital step in embracing an identity as a University City.

Historical Significance

Greensboro encompasses an area that has seen historical events of monumental proportions over the years from a pivotal Revolutionary War battle in 1781 to a peaceful lunch counter protest in 1960 that sparked the sit-in movement across the south. New Garden Quakers were actively involved in the anti-slavery movement, and the first documented case of Underground Railroad activity was in 1819 when Vestal Coffin aided local slave John Dimrey. Through strategies aimed at increasing diversity, embracing others, and remembering our history, the city will continue to honor those who came before us.

Station at the 2040 *PLANIT* GSO Fair

OUR GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Our goals and strategies for building community connections focus on what makes us a unique community, be it our diversity, our history, the presence of higher education, or the events and festivals we hold.

> "I love this city because it's a melting pot of people of different backgrounds and cultures. The arts are rich with culture and diversity."
>
> *City Academy, 2017*

Goal - A

Greensboro is a thriving, dynamic, and livable city that people love to visit and call home.

Strategy 1: Develop a process to understand, measure, and build on the qualities of Greensboro that make it an excellent place to live. Identifying the key elements that we want to measure and improve will make quality of life issues more tangible, particularly for the elements that make Greensboro feel open, friendly, and welcoming.

Strategy 2: Actively celebrate the city's unique and positive attributes, like its strategic location in the state and region, and market Greensboro as a tourist destination. Identify the reasons why residents and visitors love our city and make those known. Additionally, identify Downtown as the key central area of Greensboro and highlight its importance to the city. The places that residents and visitors gather should leave a lasting impact.

Strategy 3: Comprehensively delineate and create land-use plans for the areas around significant gateways that define key entrances to the city, and continue to build a program that creates design elements that clearly indicate to visitors that they have arrived in Greensboro and that make a positive and memorable first impression.

Goal - B

Greensboro's cultural identity—our museums, libraries, arts communities, festivals, and events— is a source of pride and shared experience.

Goal - C

Greensboro treasures its history, honors its role in the civil rights movement, and celebrates its diversity through engagement and inclusion.

Strategy 1: Strengthen sustainable support for arts and culture that creates an environment for artists and cultural organizations to flourish, increases public participation, and builds Greensboro's ability to attract artists. Advance cultural parity and arts participation for all Greensboro residents by focusing on equitable access to programs and resources for success. Continue to promote Greensboro as a tourist destination for sports, arts, festivals, and events related to higher education.

Strategy 2: Locate public art strategically in neighborhoods throughout Greensboro to create unique and memorable public spaces. Distribute art installments and cultural activities across Greensboro to show the uniqueness of Greensboro's neighborhoods and create more reasons for people to visit different areas across the City. Foster relationships between artists and residents, making cultural activity a point of civic pride for all residents.

Strategy 1: Actively celebrate Greensboro's rich history. Market the fact that Greensboro is a place that "makes history" for tourism, economic development, and college recruiting. Continue to celebrate Greensboro's role in world-changing events like the Battle of Guilford Courthouse and the Greensboro Sit-ins.

Strategy 2: Embrace a broad definition of diversity, protect vulnerable populations, and continue our tradition of being a safe haven for refugees and immigrants. Celebrate the wide range of cultures present in Greensboro, provide opportunities for cross-cultural relationships, and continue to facilitate everyone's participation in city governance through groups like the International Advisory Committee (IAC).

Goal - D

Our colleges, universities, and Career and Technical Education facilities play a leading role in the cultural, social, and economic fabric of the community.

Goal - E

Everyone does their part to maintain stable, attractive, and healthy places to live and raise families.

Strategy 1: Build on existing partnerships between the City, neighborhoods, and colleges and universities, while creating opportunities for new partnerships, so higher education campuses play an increasingly stronger role in the cultural life of the larger community. Build on efforts that make neighborhoods around campuses strong and vibrant neighborhoods. Make institutional spaces and programs easily accessible to residents.

Strategy 2: Market Greensboro as a University City, rich with colleges and universities that provide cultural and educational opportunities. Highlight the institutions that have flourished since their inception and the leading programs that attract students from across the country and the world.

Strategy 1: Build upon successful community initiatives to improve housing conditions while encouraging community involvement and participation. Work to ensure the quality, quantity, and diversity of housing choices across and between neighborhoods.

Strategy 2: Build neighborhood association capacity to work collaboratively, assess conditions, and effect change. Strengthen neighborhood planning tools and coordinate City programs and funding initiatives to support public and private efforts to protect and improve all neighborhoods. Create and foster partnerships among and between neighborhoods to strengthen the social fabric of Greensboro.

Strategy 3: Improve the city's housing through effective use of code enforcement and the strategic leveraging of resources. Encourage local collaboration between nonprofit organizations and health providers that highlight the importance of housing conditions and their impacts on public health.

Growing Economic Competitiveness is about building a prosperous, resilient economy that creates equitable opportunities to succeed. This Big Idea includes strategies designed to strengthen our economy through job creation and attraction, diversification of our local economy, and by building a steady and growing tax base.

Why Compete Economically?

A robust economy is crucial to the future of any city or region, and coordinating economic development with Greensboro's physical growth and development is important to our success. A resilient, thriving, and equitable economy provides options for growth and development for individuals and for businesses. Provision of equitable opportunities requires efforts to improve education, job training, and transportation at all levels and ensuring all parts of the city have access to the goods and services they need to live their best life in Greensboro.

The policies in this section are more reliant on partnerships, both locally and regionally, than in other parts of this Plan because of the nature of economic development and of our size as a market. But the City provides the basic services that create quality of life that attracts businesses and employees, enables residents to shop and use products, and ensures that the framework provided by streets, buildings, and other services creates an environment where business can thrive.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES ADDRESSED

The goals and strategies in the Growing Economic Competitiveness Big Idea address issues discussed in public meetings or observed when collecting data about the city. More details are available in the Data Book, the Conditions and Trends Report, and in the public comment summary.

Reinventing Our Economic Base

Greensboro felt the effects of the last recession before other communities. Greensboro has a long history as a manufacturing and logistics hub, and like so many American cities, experienced a decline in manufacturing as companies either relocated or shut down in response to global economic forces. Since 2000, the share of manufacturing jobs as a percentage of total jobs decreased while the share of service jobs increased, and many high-paying "blue collar" jobs that required less formal education have been replaced with low-paying jobs in the service sector. More recently, this trend is beginning to reverse, and Greensboro has made strides in logistics, aerospace, and other areas of focus; planning will help continue this upward trend and produce a more resilient economy.

Equity and the Shrinking Middle Class

The number of Greensboro residents living below the poverty level increased by over 10%, from 2000 to 2018, over 26,000 people. Earnings did not keep pace with other cities in North Carolina and are well below Raleigh and Charlotte.
Many workers must commute to other cities for employment. Wealth, income, and unemployment vary dramatically from one census tract to another across the city.

Regionalism

Greensboro is in competition with larger economic markets, which means we must continue to build on partnerships currently in place, at scales ranging from inside the City, to across the county, to the multi-county region. This includes not just traditional economic development partners, but also the educational community, such as the Guilford County School system and local colleges and universities.

Technology

Technology is a driving force in economic development, and a broad-based approach to preparing for advances in technology is important. Upgrades to city infrastructure, access to technology for residents and neighborhoods, and partnerships to navigate changes, will ensure our success. Predicting the future of technological change is difficult; cities around the world are preparing their infrastructure for technologies and modes of transportation and communication yet to come.

Unpredictability

Much of the change and growth in our economy is driven by changes in the global economy and in technology. To be nimble enough to respond to change, the City and the region need to have a strong foundation in the basics such as education, job training, infrastructure, and partnerships.

Industrial Land

Economic development efforts frequently focus on locations that have characteristics favorable for use by industry, such as adjacency to highways and rail, large size, a lack of slopes and streams, and the absence of large residential areas or other incompatible land uses. These sites are in increasingly short supply in Guilford County, and land use decisions should carefully consider the impact on industrial land.

Some older industrial areas within the city limits of Greensboro, particularly in south and east Greensboro, are becoming obsolete and offer opportunities for reinvestment. In particular they can support smaller businesses that typically can coexist with other land uses. These areas can support a diversified and resilient economic base in areas of the city that need reinvestment.

Participant providing input at community meeting located at the Lewis Recreation Center

OUR GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

Ensure that the community is prepared to deal with both positive and negative changes in its economic health by initiating sustainable urban development and redevelopment strategies that foster green business growth, build reliance on local assets and build local capacity, and ensure that economic and technological progress does not negatively impact the environment.

> "[Greensboro] is a vital regional city that offers strong education, affordable housing, and a significant business community that invests in the city."
>
> *National Folk Festival, 2017*

Goal - A

Strategic public investment in historically underserved areas of Greensboro attracts private investment and sets the stage for revitalization without displacing existing residents.

Strategy 1: Work with City-funded economic development partners to address the needs of economically distressed areas. City funding of economic and community development is intended to improve conditions throughout the city, and can impact social inequity and economic disparity by focusing public investments and services in areas of greatest need. Without focused effort, these areas and residents are likely to continue to struggle economically.

Strategy 2: Support the addition of a variety of housing types and price points in coordination with investment in historically underserved areas. Providing additional housing options will increase the likelihood that residents are able to stay in the neighborhoods they love and will provide greater opportunities to attract new investment.

Strategy 3: Create land-use plans that involve neighborhood residents and other stakeholders and coordinate public and private investment, and use a variety of tools and funding sources to leverage incentives and finance transformative projects in areas of disinvestment. Market strategic sites and recruit retail uses that are economically sustainable, meet neighborhood objectives, and attract other investment. Commercial development that is sustainable and compatible with neighborhood objectives should be encouraged.

Goal - B

Increase and preserve the inventory of developable sites compatible with corporate and industrial uses.

Goal - C

Investment in cutting-edge communications technology enhances the quality of life for all residents and helps businesses thrive.

Strategy 1: Work with community partners to ensure that the appropriate sites on Greensboro's periphery are designated as Industrial on the Future Land Use map. Identify the most important assets for future development and make sure that the resources needed for that development are preserved. Development should focus on industrial uses first. Greensboro should undertake more detailed land-use studies of industrial areas to better understand how phasing can be achieved to preserve industrial land while providing space for support land uses.

Strategy 2: Ensure that the appropriate sites in the developed, central areas of Greensboro are designated as Industrial on the Future Land Use Map. These areas are suitable for or best suited to flexible, smaller scale light industrial development that can provide jobs closer to neighborhoods in need. Create plans that evaluate the relationship of industrial with supporting land uses to understand how these areas should evolve.

Strategy 1: Encourage fiber-ready infrastructure to reduce the need for costly future up-fits, increase property values, and promote economic growth. Build on local and regional partnerships to increase the capacity, adaptability, quality, and availability of the city's technology infrastructure. Access to technology is increasingly necessary for everyone, from big businesses to school-age children. Making sure that people have access to the necessary tools of advancing technology is essential to Greensboro's quality of life.

Strategy 2: Build data systems that foster informed public policy decisions and enhance the City's capacity for delivering services in an efficient and equitable manner. This includes both data gathering and analysis, as well as systems that use real-time data to make adjustments, for instance in light signalization and pedestrian crosswalks.

Goal - D

Education and workforce training opportunities empower residents to achieve financial security and career fulfillment and are matched to the needs of employers.

Strategy 1: Work with our community partners to provide quality learning from early childhood to higher education through local schools and businesses. Continue to work with local schools, businesses, and economic development entities to provide training for available and upcoming jobs that support entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Strategy 2: Work with our partners to provide accessible and affordable career and workforce education. Support and promote the alignment of workforce strategies as established by regional economic development groups, working with employers to understand specific needs, and providing specialized training for people to meet those needs.

Goal - E

Greensboro promotes homegrown businesses, supports entrepreneurship, cultivates industry leaders, and welcomes major corporations and institutions.

Strategy 1: Work cooperatively with local and regional economic development and entrepreneurial entities to leverage relationships and maximize impact with our collective resources. Foster a dynamic, diversified, and inclusive business climate that makes Greensboro the location of choice for private investment and corporations expanding their businesses. Position the City of Greensboro organization as a leader in diversity and inclusion. Enhance public transit connections to major employment areas, including those around Piedmont Triad International Airport, in order to provide transportation options for employees and broaden the applicant pool for employers. This could include smaller shuttles to specific sites, which may require partnerships with area businesses.

Strategy 2: Provide entrepreneurs at all stages of the business life cycle with connections to education, financing, and other resources and assets that support their growth. In particular, increase opportunities for Greensboro businesses, especially those owned by minorities and women, to participate in the local economy, and showcase the talents and products of homegrown companies in the global marketplace. Retain, recruit, and inspire innovative businesses and talented individuals with bold vision to expand interesting and creative opportunities for employment for all segments of the community.

Goal - F

Greensboro attracts and retains a diverse pool of talented individuals, especially young adults, who have a wide variety of skill sets.

Strategy 1: Market professional development opportunities to young professionals, skilled and unskilled tradespeople, artisans, and craftspeople. Support and foster relationships between our colleges, universities, and local employers that establish a direct pipeline connecting graduates to local jobs. Highlight opportunities that exist in Greensboro, whether they are for technical jobs in fields such as aviation or for creating career paths by developing their new businesses.

Strategy 2: Market our park system, strategic location, and other unique assets that make Greensboro attractive. Similar to how we market our city to tourists, make sure everyone knows what a great place Greensboro is to live and work. Give students an opportunity to see what Greensboro is like outside of their campus.

PART 3
MAPS & IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

Maps and graphics are an important component of any comprehensive plan. These maps are the manifestation of the values, vision, and policies of the plan, and place the plan's recommendations onto the geography of the city. The maps are advisory in nature and function as a guide to which policies to consider when making decisions about land uses. Although used most frequently in rezoning cases, they also inform other aspects of a city's desired growth pattern such as capital expenditures.

This chapter begins with maps that describe the current conditions of Greensboro:

- **Existing Built Form;**
- **Existing Centers and Corridors;**
- **Current Influences on Growth;**
- **Growth Tiers, in the area between the City limits and the Water/Sewer Service Boundary;**
- **Existing Neighborhood, Corridor, and Redevelopment Plans; and**
- **Economic Development Areas.**

These maps inform the creation of the future land use maps that illustrate the community's vision and the Plan's policies. The Anticipated Growth Map section of this chapter includes:

- A **Future Land Use Map (FLUM)**, which shows broad categories of land uses;
- A **Future Built Form Map (FBFM)**, which shows the context for development; and
- A description of how to use these maps to assess the consistency of a zoning requests with the policies in the **GSO**2040.

Plan implementation will involve direct City investment and action steps, but many of the changes will be driven by economic activity and reinvestment, some of which will require changes in zoning. The policies in the Plan will be used to consider land use changes that will incrementally move Greensboro towards the city described in the Plan's Vision and Values. The Plan's policies and the maps depicting Greensboro's future growth pattern are a key part of the decision-making process for zoning and development matters that come before the Zoning Commission and City Council. They also describe broader land use planning and policy objectives for Greensboro and set the context in which future development is considered. The Anticipated Growth Maps show what the Plan seeks to preserve and create regarding quality of life in our community.

Though the two Anticipated Growth Maps specifically reference the city's future development, all of the maps in this section should be viewed as a system, and not viewed on their own or without reference to the policies listed in this Plan.

Map workshop at the Advisory Committe meeting

Planning staff discussing maps for the comprehensive plan

What do the Anticipated Growth Maps **do**?

Provide a framework for discussing Plan policies + aspirations when making land use decisions. They are **not regulatory**.

→ Inform changes to the development ordinance

→ Inform the funding of large, capital projects

→ Frame the policy discussion in rezonings, but are **NOT** zoning maps

*GSO*2040 has 2 maps that work together:

{ **WHAT**
Future Land Use Types: WHAT land uses we want to see developed

+

HOW
Future Built Form: HOW the pieces fit together }

Often, rezoning requests accompany proposed land use changes. As part of the decision process, Zoning Commission or City Council will use the Anticipated Growth Maps as a guide to policies that assist in making a determination and statement that the request is either consistent or inconsistent with *GSO*2040 policies. If the request is inconsistent with the plan and the rezoning is approved, the maps are considered to be amended.

→ Review Questions **listed in the plan**

→ Review relevant policies **+ big ideas**

Map 1: Existing Built Form

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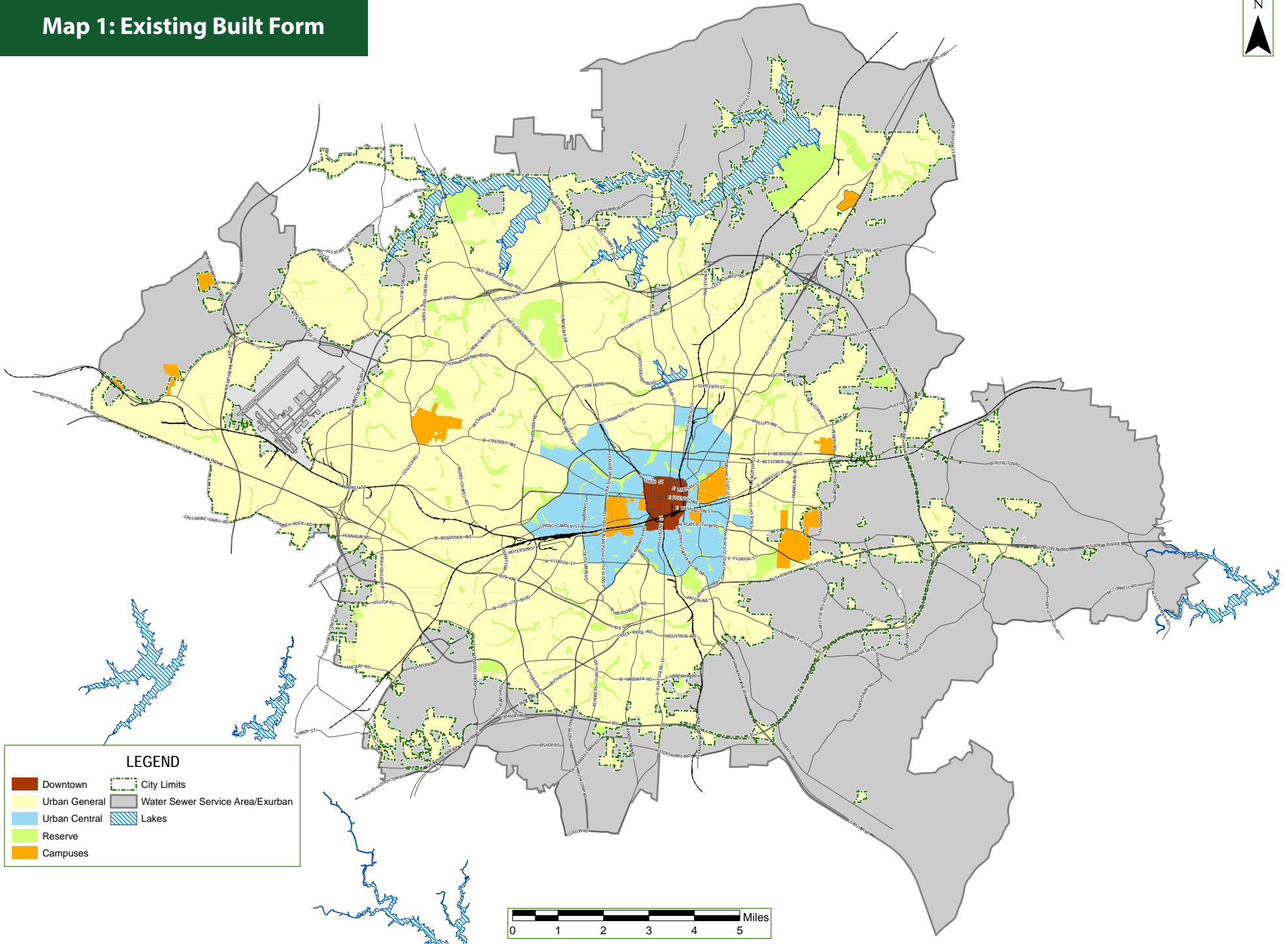
LEGEND

■ Downtown	(Downtown - dark red)	⌐ City Limits	
■ Urban General		▨ Water Sewer Service Area/Exurban	
■ Urban Central		▨ Lakes	
■ Reserve			
■ Campuses			

0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

Map 1: Existing Built Form

The Existing Built Form map broadly categorizes Greensboro into areas with distinctly different types of development. In Greensboro, as in most cities, development patterns vary based on proximity to the city center and the era in which development occurred.

Downtown

Downtown has the most urban character in Greensboro, with the highest residential densities, the most varied uses, and a building pattern that emphasizes access for pedestrians, cyclists, and the use of other transportation options. It is the center of the community and belongs to all of Greensboro, even though it has its own merchants' and residents' associations. Downtown is also referred to as the central business district, which refers to its primary zoning designation, although the Plan does not recommend all areas inside this boundary be rezoned to Central Business District unless a zoning application or small area plan makes the case that such a change is merited.

Urban Central

These are generally older areas of the city or newer areas developed in the style of traditional neighborhoods. These areas are characterized by:

- Short blocks and a grid-based street pattern;
- Fine-grained zoning designations with a wide variety of uses close to each other;
- A range of residential building types, from detached, single-family houses to mid-rise apartment buildings in close proximity to each other;
- Buildings on lots that are close to the width of a residential lot, rather than a uniform building along the entire blockface;
- Buildings close to each other and to the street; and
- Connected sidewalks that form a walkable network.

Urban General

The bulk of this area was built after World War II and has a development pattern based on:

- Street systems that feature cul-du-sacs and long, looping roads;
- Large lots and street setbacks;
- Fewer sidewalks and neighborhoods separated by high traffic streets; and
- Uses segregated on large parcels with generous buffers.

Campuses

Greensboro has five major higher education campuses, each with a distinct building style and with the potential to influence growth on its periphery. The regional Four Seasons Mall and Koury Convention Center and the Cone Health medical campus are also large-scale land uses with distinctly different character than their surroundings.

Reserves

These are parks, areas designated as open space and drainage ways, and areas near our watershed lakes. These areas are designated to remain as open, green space.

Water and Sewer Service Area (WSSA) and Exurban

This area is outside of Greensboro's incorporated city limits, but is where the city is able to extend water lines, sewer lines, and other services in cases of annexation. The cost of these extensions varies widely, so the WSSA is categorized into three tiers, as shown on the Growth Tiers Map on page 59. This area is less developed than in the Downtown, Urban, Suburban, and Campus areas, with many larger tracts used for agricultural and industrial uses.

Willow Oaks neighborhood is an example of a urban central neighborhood.
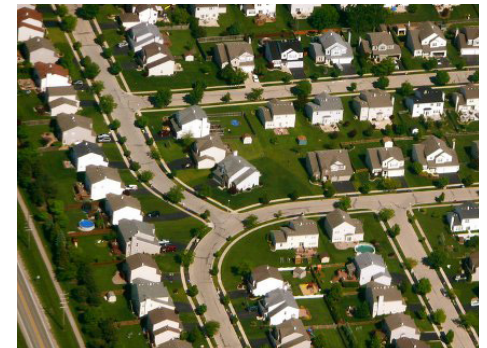
The image above illustrates a urban general neighborhood.

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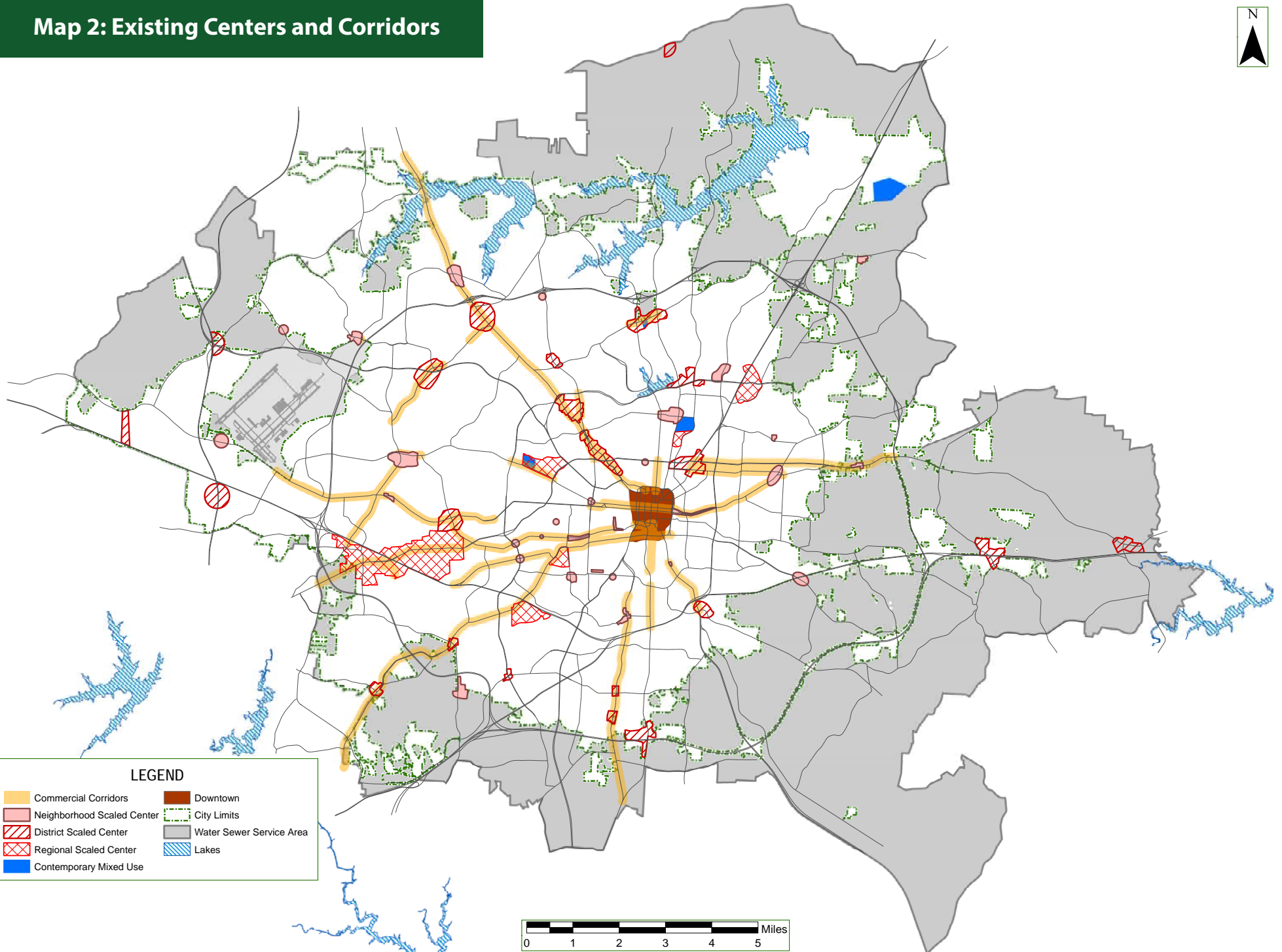
LEGEND

Commercial Corridors		Downtown	
Neighborhood Scaled Center		City Limits	
District Scaled Center		Water Sewer Service Area	
Regional Scaled Center		Lakes	
Contemporary Mixed Use			

Miles
0   1   2   3   4   5

The Existing Centers and Corridors map shows commercial corridors and centers of activity generally commercial in nature.

Commercial Corridors

Commercial corridors are roads that are lined with commercial development, as distinguished from roads that serve primarily to move cars from one point to another and that may have residential development adjacent to them. Most of the commercial development in Greensboro reflects this pattern and is spread along stretches of roadway rather than centered on a specific place or intersection.

Centers

The map shows several types of centers that are primarily commercial in nature and that reflect the design of the area in which they are built. In parts of the city developed before WWII, the Centers are often integrated into the surrounding area, are composed of individual buildings, and have good sidewalk connections to adjacent areas. Centers built in a more suburban style are generally larger, include parking as a major feature, and are separated and distinct from other adjacent uses.

- **Neighborhood Scale Centers:** Small areas that primarily serve and are similar in size and scale to adjacent neighborhoods.

- **District Scale Centers:** Tend to be larger than Neighborhood Scale, serve people from across the city, and buildings are generally larger than buildings in the surrounding area.

- **Regional Scale Centers:** Serve all of Greensboro and beyond and generate significant automobile traffic.

- **Contemporary Mixed Use Centers:** Developed as walkable areas that incorporate a variety of uses, often including residential, office, and commercial. They are generally large-scale, but self-contained and designed so as not to negatively impact adjacent communities.

Tate Street, located east of University of North Carolina at Greensboro, is an example of a neighborhood scale center

The Greensboro Coliseum Complex is an example of a regionally-scaled center

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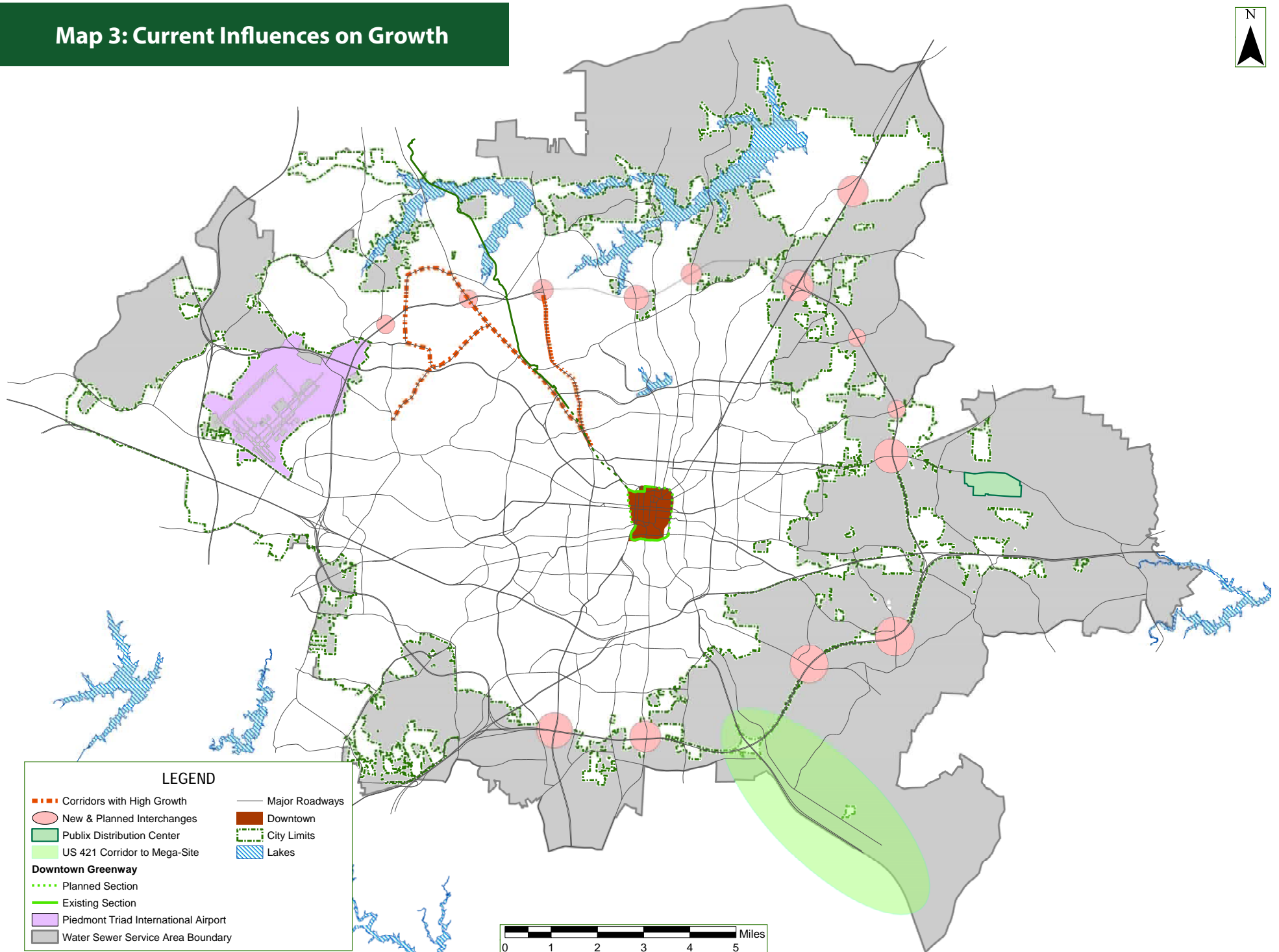
LEGEND

- ▪▪▪ Corridors with High Growth
- ⬤ New & Planned Interchanges
- ▭ Publix Distribution Center
- ▭ US 421 Corridor to Mega-Site

Downtown Greenway
- ▪▪▪▪ Planned Section
- ▬▬ Existing Section
- ▭ Piedmont Triad International Airport
- ▭ Water Sewer Service Area Boundary

- ▬ Major Roadways
- ▬ Downtown
- ▬▪▬ City Limits
- ▨ Lakes

Miles
0 1 2 3 4 5
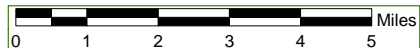
This map looks at the conditions and trends that are likely to cause changes to the pattern of land uses in Greensboro.

Corridors with High Growth

These corridors are attracting development, seeing increases in traffic volume, and have had a high number of rezoning cases along them. In some instances, the relatively high degree of change in land use along these corridors has been a cause of concern in adjacent neighborhoods. This growth trend is likely to continue in these locations.

Interchanges on the Urban Loop

Completion of Interstate 840, the Urban Loop, will alter and improve traffic flow in Greensboro. The construction of interchanges is likely to increase development pressure nearby.

Large Industrial Sites

Two specific sites are of sufficient size that their development will have a large impact on their surroundings and warrant additional land use planning in their vicinity. First, the **Publix Distribution Cente**r will open soon after this Plan is adopted as regional distribution center with multiple buildings totaling over one million square feet. The site will employ over 1,000 people and offer a wide range of jobs, and may attract other commercial and residential development. Second, the **Greensboro Randolph Megasite**, a 1,500-acre advanced manufacturing site, is a regional collaboration between government, business, and education in Randolph County. The presence of recently-installed water and sewer lines extending to the site, and the possibilities for residential and supporting land uses, may continue to drive new requests for development and access to City services along the US 421 corridor southwest of Greensboro. Any such requests must be evaluated based on the impact to the long-term fiscal health of the City and the ability to provide water and sewer in sufficient quantities to the industrial site.

Downtown Greenway

The Downtown Greenway is a four-mile walking, cycling, and recreation path around Downtown. Although still under construction, the Greenway is already creating gathering spaces with art installations and new businesses.

The Greenway is a critical piece to extending Downtown's vitality from Elm Street's north/south spine and to bringing increased attention to south and east Greensboro.

Piedmont Triad International Airport

The Piedmont Triad International Airport sees significant passenger and cargo traffic, and is a major driver of job growth. This is due both to industries directly related to aviation and those related to warehousing and logistics. These industries are supported by strong highway and rail connections and by being close to High Point and Winston-Salem. The area is beginning to see more residential development as well as supportive retail and services, which need to be balanced with employment opportunities.

Water and Sewer Service Area (WSSA)

This area is outside of Greensboro's incorporated city limits, but is where the City is able to extend water lines, sewer lines, and other services in cases of annexation. The cost of these extensions varies widely, so the area is categorized into three tiers, as shown on the Growth Tiers Map on page 59. This area is less developed than in the Downtown, Urban, Suburban, and Campus areas, with larger tracts available for agricultural and industrial uses.

Courtesy of Downtown Greenway

Map 4: Growth Tier Maps

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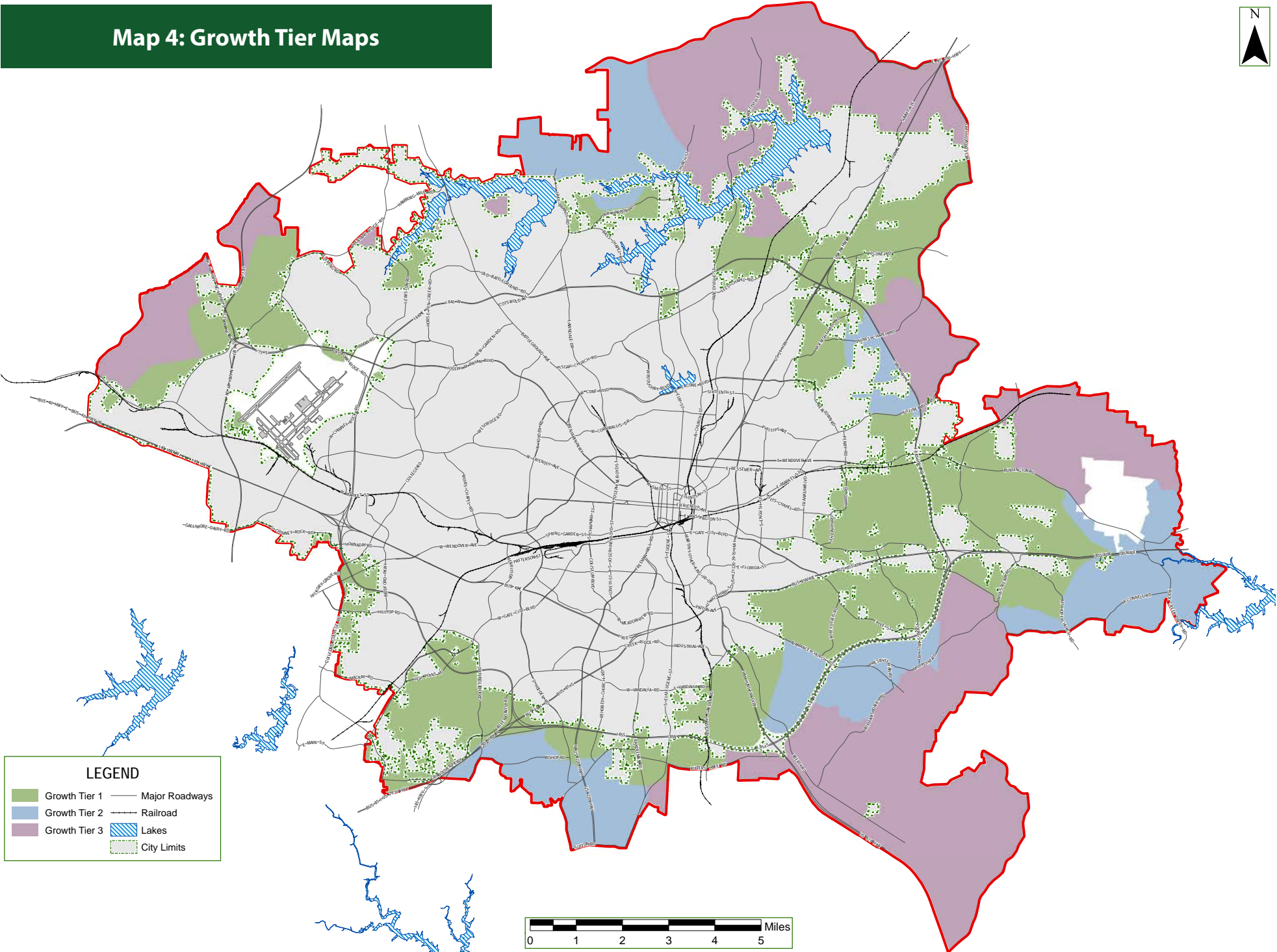
LEGEND

Growth Tier 1   Major Roadways
Growth Tier 2   Railroad
Growth Tier 3   Lakes
                  City Limits

0 1 2 3 4 5 Miles

The City is able to annex property outside of the current municipal limits under certain circumstances. This process is guided by the City of Greensboro's adopted policy for water and sanitary sewer service, "Outside the Corporate Limits," which became effective April 3, 2012 and was amended on May 20, 2014.

The Growth Tier Map shows areas outside Greensboro's city limits but inside the area in which the City can legally annex property and extend water and sewer services; this is called the Water Sewer Service Area (WSSA). Three tiers are delineated based on the cost to extend City services to the area, primarily water and sewer, solid waste collection, and Police and Fire protection, as well as long-term maintenance of City facilities. In Growth Tier 1, due to the nearby presence of existing City infrastructure, the City is able to extend services currently, if an annexation is requested; Tiers 2 and 3 will require significant City investment to serve.

Water and sanitary sewer service, as well as other City services from public safety to parks to library facilities, are necessary components of urban development. The City needs to be able to expand its tax base in order to meet the costs of providing and extending these services, but this process must take place in an intentional and methodical fashion to ensure efficient and effective delivery of City services. It is the City's policy to extend water and sewer services only to those areas that can be immediately annexed.
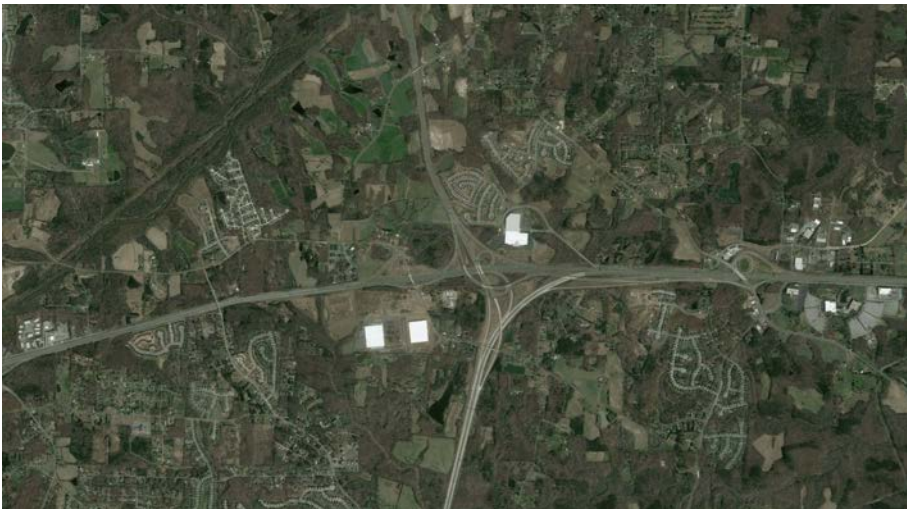
Annexation and Service Policy Overview

Property Located Inside Growth Tier 1
Growth Tier 1 of this Plan is the area where the City is currently able to provide all City services including water and sewer service based on the location of existing infrastructure such as roads, fire stations, and water and sewer pipes. Before connecting to water or sewer service, property located within Growth Tier 1 will be annexed into the City. All projects that connect to City water and sewer will be required to comply with the City's Comprehensive Plan and land development regulations.

Property Located Outside of Growth Tier 1
Water and/or sewer service may be allowed outside Growth Tier 1 provided property can be annexed immediately.

If property cannot be annexed immediately, water and/or sewer service can be allowed in Growth Tiers 2 and 3 under specific circumstances:

1. Economic development projects meeting criteria outlined in the WSSA policy.

2. Extensions determined by City Council to address significant public necessity.

3. Properties adjacent to existing water lines but not annexable that meet standards specified in the adopted WSSA policy.

N

New Garden
Road Corridor

Lawndale
Drive Corridor

Phillips-
Lombardy

Friendly
Avenue Area

Cedar Street /
Bellemeade

Dunleath

East Market
Street

Jonesboro /
Scott Park

Heath
Community

Western Area

College
Hill

East-
side
Park

Lindley Park

Central
Gateway
Corridor

South-
side

Gorrell
Street

South
Elm

Ole
Asheboro

Willow
Oaks

Central
Gateway
Corridor

Greater
Glenwood

Arlington
Park

Heritage
House

Randleman
Road Corridor
Phase I

LEGEND

- Active Redevelopment Areas
- Neighborhood & Corridor Plan Areas
- City Limits
- Water Sewer Service Area

Miles

0   1   2   3   4   5
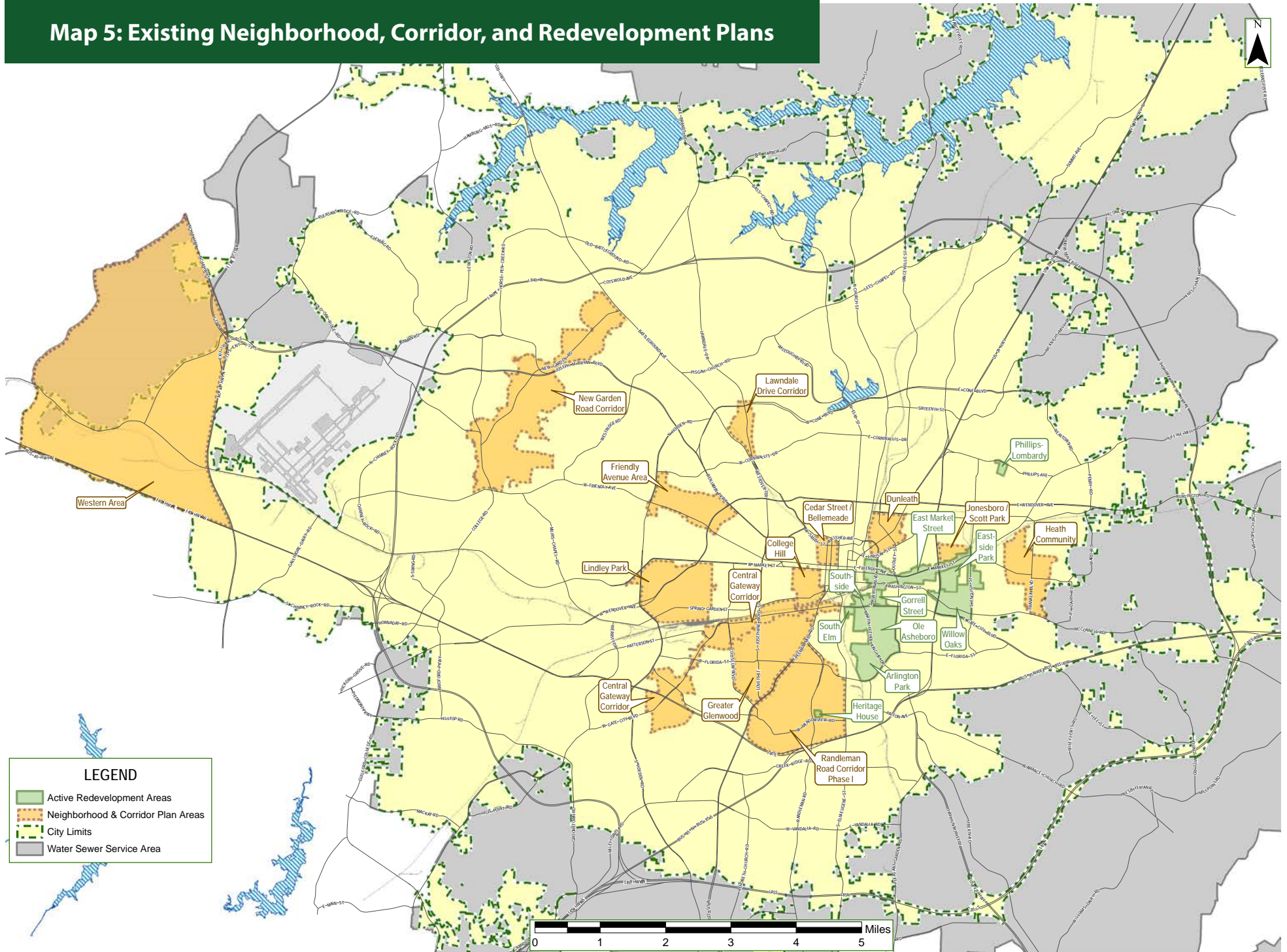
The City has a number of adopted small area, redevelopment, and corridor plans that have been developed through extensive research and input from residents and stakeholders. These plans contain significantly more detail than is included in a Comprehensive Plan.

Recommendations, including for land use, of the adopted plans shown on this map are incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan. An amendment to any one of these plans should be done through the specific plan amendment process found in each plan. Land use designations are based on the categories from *Connections 2025* or were developed in consultation with the neighborhood. The definitions for these uses are found in the individual plans.

Redevelopment Plans
Redevelopment Area designation must meet the requirements of North Carolina statutes, and allows the City to use federal funds more effectively. Greensboro has been using these tools for over 50 years. By targeting federal, state, and local resources in specific neighborhoods, the City has been able to address many issues of concern, from crime prevention and abandoned houses, to the development of parks and public facilities. Greensboro's Redevelopment activity is described in the plans below.

- Arlington Park Redevelopment Plan
- Eastside Park Redevelopment Plan
- East Market Street Redevelopment Plan
- Gorrell Street Redevelopment Plan
- Heritage House Redevelopment Plan
- Ole Asheboro Redevelopment Plan
- Phillips Lombardy Redevelopment Plan
- South Elm Street Redevelopment Plan
- Southside Area Development Plan
- Willow Oaks Redevelopment Plan
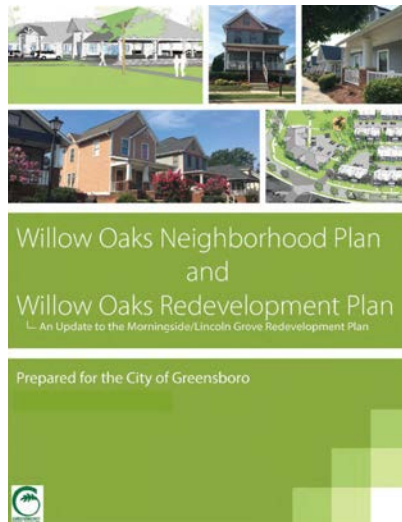
Willow Oaks Neighborhhood and Redevelopment Plan

Neighborhood and Corridor Plans
Neighborhood and corridor planning activities involve other City departments such as Police, Transportation, Field Operations, and Parks and Recreation in partnership with residents and neighborhood associations. These collaborations provide an opportunity for residents to manage and guide their community's future through the development of neighborhood and corridor plans. Area plans completed by the Planning Department include:

- Cedar Street/Bellemeade Area Plan
- Central Gateway Corridor Plan
- College Hill Neighborhood Plan
- Dunleath Neighborhood Plan
- Friendly Avenue Area Plan
- Greater Glenwood Neighborhood Plan
- Heath Community Strategic Plan
- High Point Road/West Lee Street (Gate City Blvd) Corridor Plan
- Jonesboro Scott Park Neighborhood Plan
- Lawndale Drive Corridor Plan
- Lindley Park Neighborhood Plan
- New Garden Road Strategic Plan
- Randleman Road Corridor Plan
- Western Area Plan

New Garden Road Strategic Plan

LEGEND

Reinvestment Areas and Corridors

City Limits

Impact Zones

Zone 1

Zone 2

Water Sewer Service Area

Miles

0   1   2   3   4   5

The Economic Development Policy map delineate areas where extra support is given too new and expanding businesses.

Reinvestment Areas and Corridors

These areas were identified in *Connections 2025* for public and private investment and are eligible for Urban Development Investment Guidelines that the City uses to promote infill and redevelopment to create more economically and socially vibrant communities.

- Reinvestment Areas include designated Redevelopment Areas and additional locations first identified in *Connections 2025*.

- Reinvestment Corridors include eight commercial corridors along major thoroughfares that need reinvestment to increase economic activity and strengthen adjacent neighborhoods.

Impact Zones

Impact Zones encourage growth on priority sites in specified areas to diversify the local economy, provide high wage employment opportunities, and support a sustainable, vibrant community. Each zone includes areas that would most benefit from investment and reinvestment. Current incentives for these areas include the "80 for 8" program that extends the life of economic incentives. Zone 1 offers an incentive of up to 80% of the increased ad valorem tax for up to eight years; Zone 2 offers an incentive of up to 80% of the increased ad valorem tax for up to six years.

West Gate City Boulevard, after streetscape improvements

ANTICIPATED GROWTH MAPS

The maps in this Plan illustrate how its policies can move Greensboro towards our Vision and Big Ideas. The maps are advisory and work as a system; they should be used as a guide to finding the most applicable Plan policies. The preceding maps showing existing conditions that are important to understanding the Anticipated Growth Maps, which directly guide land use decisions.

- The **Future Land Use Map** broadly describes land use and designates areas for airport, residential, commercial, industrial, mixed use, or reserve. Requests for changes to zoning must consider the full range of uses and activities permissible within those designations.

- The **Future Built Form Map** describes how development and land use fit together and designates areas as within an activity center, a place type, or a corridor.

The Anticipated Growth Maps illustrate where the City expects to see increases in activity levels and broadly describe the type of growth and development that is appropriate to an area. They are based on factors likely to influence future development, many of which are shown in the Existing Conditions Maps: the nature of existing development; the locations of future interchanges; areas where the city needs reinvestment; existing neighborhood, corridor, and redevelopment plans; existing areas of high growth; and existing City investments in water, sewer and other infrastructure.

It is within Activity Centers and along Urban Corridors that the Plan anticipates the most increases in walkable, mixed-use development. Some development in "Urban General" or in "Regional Activity Centers" may continue to be car-oriented, although overall the Plan seeks to increase the number of walkable, mixed-use areas.

In preparing the Future Land Use Map and the Future Built Form Map, the City considered the current land uses and conditions, physical and environmental features, the availability and capacities of infrastructure to support property uses, and the application of strategies identified in the Plan to implement the Six Big Ideas.
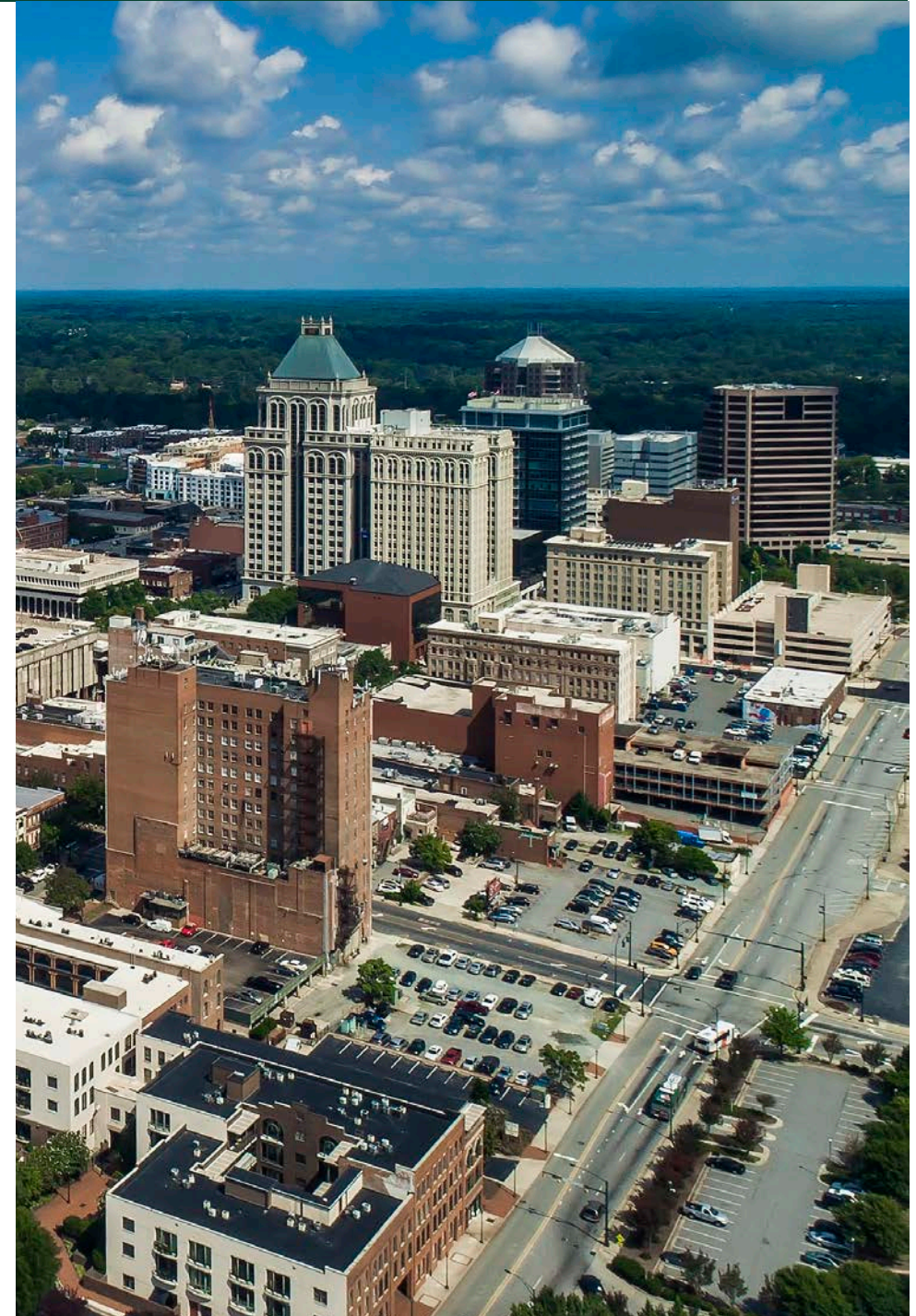
> "You need business growth to create a velocity of turnover, as businesses expand and move, to create opportunities for new growth and the types of development that we say we want to see. Greensboro needs to have a higher velocity."
>
> *Developer Session, January 2020*

How do the maps support the Six Big Ideas?

The Six Big Ideas work together to support each other, and the Anticipated Growth Maps support them in a variety of ways.

Filling in Our Framework: showing areas for reinvestment and context for focused infill development.

Creating Great Places: guiding development appropriate for different neighborhoods and identifying investment priorities, including Downtown.

Becoming Car Optional: specifying areas for infill development and putting uses closer together and focusing more frequent transit service in areas needing reinvestment.

Prioritizing Sustainability: taken together, the elements in the maps support environmental stewardship, economic resilience, and social equity.

Building Community Connections: making land use decisions appropriate for different neighborhoods will create better quality of life and diversify the housing stock; focusing on our downtown, major activity centers, and areas around our campuses emphasizes what makes our community unique.

Growing Economic Competitiveness: showing areas for reinvestment, job growth, and appropriate infill development, and creating a Greensboro that attracts a stronger work force.

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PIEDMONT TRIAD
INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT
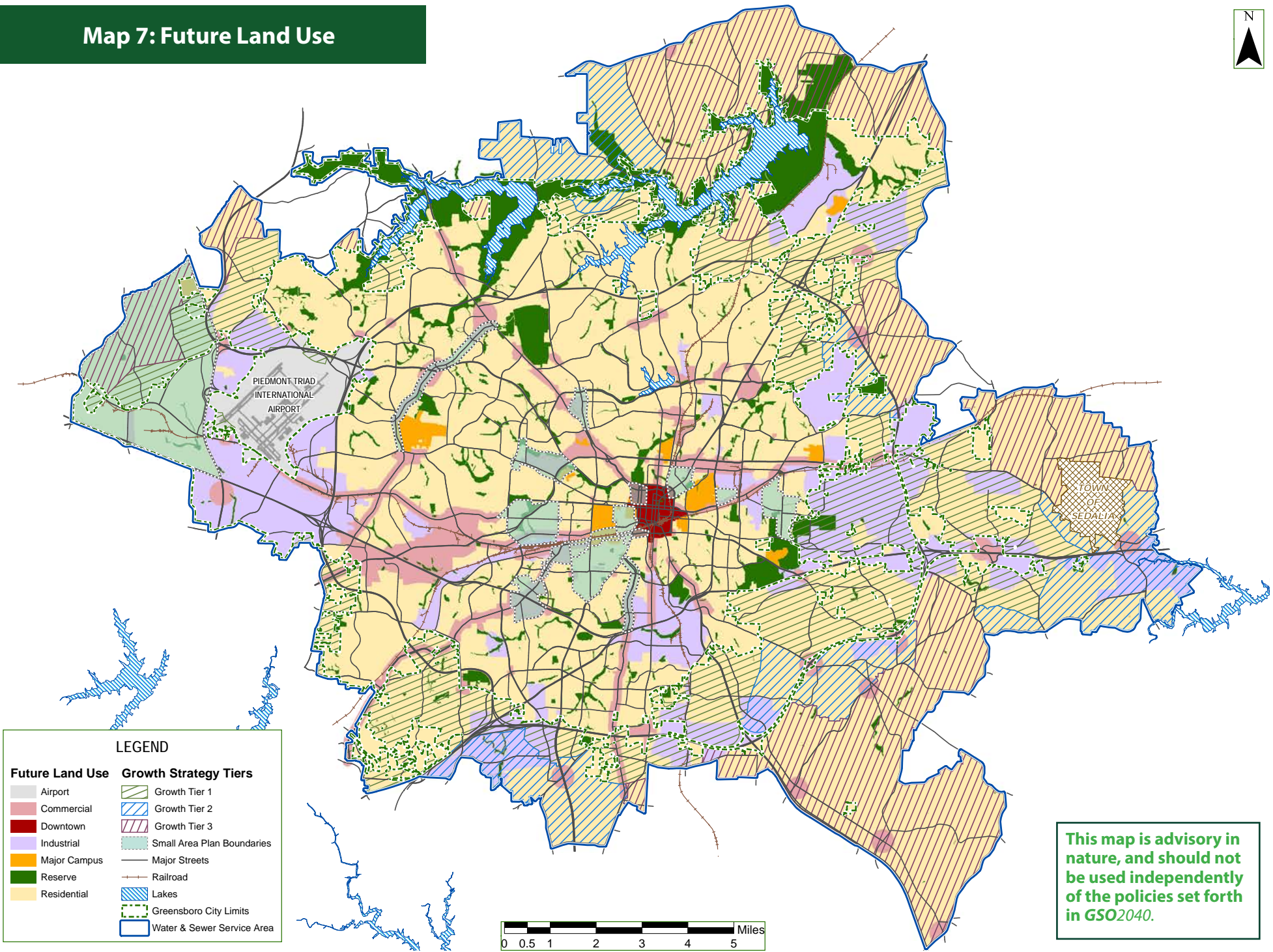
TOWN
OF
SEDALIA

LEGEND

Future Land Use	Growth Strategy Tiers
Airport	Growth Tier 1
Commercial	Growth Tier 2
Downtown	Growth Tier 3
Industrial	Small Area Plan Boundaries
Major Campus	Major Streets
Reserve	Railroad
Residential	Lakes
	Greensboro City Limits
	Water & Sewer Service Area

Miles
0 0.5 1   2   3   4   5

This map is advisory in nature, and should not be used independently of the policies set forth in *GSO*2040.

The Future Land Use Map breaks Greensboro into very broad areas based on the main character of land uses that we want to see in future. These are not intended to be exclusive; it is assumed that there are a variety of uses in each area, but the designation reflects the area's predominant character.

Residential includes both single-and multi-family residential. Other uses should generally be in the scale of a Neighborhood or a Community Center as described in the Future Built Form Map on page 69, in a form that is appropriate to the character of the area. Many residential areas include commercial corridors, and future development along these corridors should be oriented to the corridor to avoid negative impacts to adjacent residences.

Commercial includes retail sales, wholesale sales, personal service businesses, professional service businesses, restaurants, entertainment, hotels and hospitality, commercial assembly halls, and event spaces. These can be either linear commercial corridors or larger centers of commercial development or a combination of both. Some include residential uses as well, and represent an opportunity for denser development, particularly in conjunction with enhanced transit service and mobility hubs.
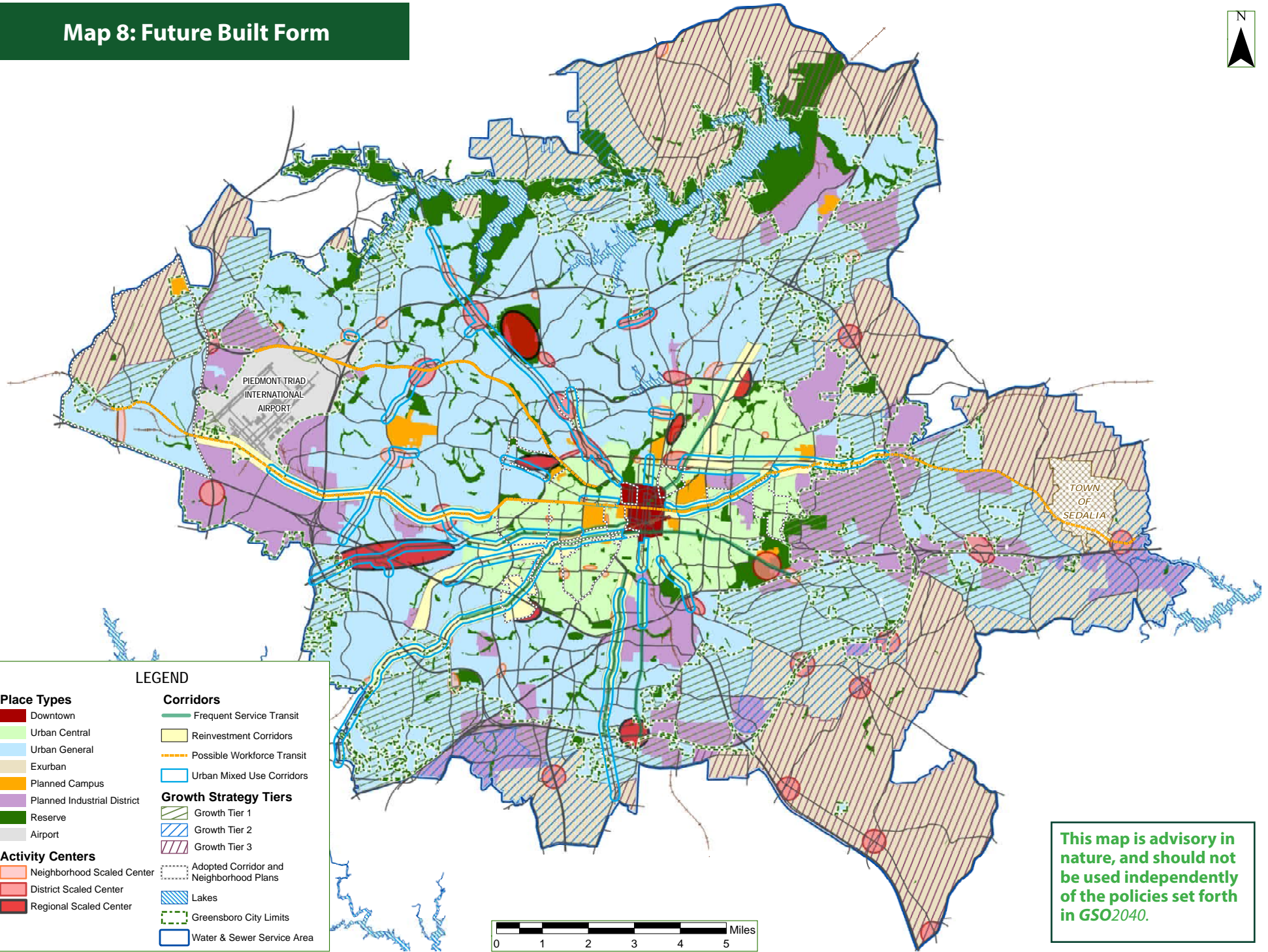
Municipal, Institutional, or Office Campus applies to university and college campuses, medical and health care campuses, office, business and research employment centers, elementary and secondary schools, and municipal facilities.

Industrial includes light and heavy manufacturing, assembly and fabrication, and warehousing, logistics and distribution centers. Greensboro has seen a loss of land suitable for and attractive to industrial development, and it is critical that these areas be protected for larger industrial development opportunities.

Airport applies only to property owned or operated by the Piedmont Triad International Airport Authority and includes aviation-related activities and on-site hotels.

Reserves are publicly accessible parks, publicly owned open spaces including woodlands, habitat reserves, lakes, wetlands, historic battlegrounds, public and non-commercial recreation facilities.

LEGEND

Place Types
- Downtown
- Urban Central
- Urban General
- Exurban
- Planned Campus
- Planned Industrial District
- Reserve
- Airport

Activity Centers
- Neighborhood Scaled Center
- District Scaled Center
- Regional Scaled Center

Corridors
- Frequent Service Transit
- Reinvestment Corridors
- Possible Workforce Transit
- Urban Mixed Use Corridors

Growth Strategy Tiers
- Growth Tier 1
- Growth Tier 2
- Growth Tier 3
- Adopted Corridor and Neighborhood Plans
- Lakes
- Greensboro City Limits
- Water & Sewer Service Area

PIEDMONT TRIAD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

TOWN OF SEDALIA

Miles
0   1   2   3   4   5

This map is advisory in nature, and should not be used independently of the policies set forth in *GSO*2040.

The Future Built Form Map illustrates how areas of the city are envisioned to develop in ways that can help create a more desirable and sustainable Greensboro. Areas were designated based on a variety of considerations including historic and current development conditions, the function of roadways that serve them, their overall location in the city, and other nearby land uses. In addition to the more universal development review considerations of the Future Land Use Map, the Future Built Form Map is used to identify specific evaluations for each district.

The Plan focuses most new growth into Activity Centers. Incremental growth is what will create the Greensboro that this Plan envisions. The Place Type designations help assure that this incremental growth fits in with and strengthens the existing context.

The **Downtown** place type is Greensboro's urban core, historically designed to be the center of town from which the growth and expansion of Greensboro radiates. The Urban Core remains the civic, cultural, and economic central place. Its diversity and vibrancy accommodates an array of building types, bulk, and mix of uses and intensities. It is large enough to encompass multiple sub-districts with individual character and activity centers, such as residential, commercial, transportation, entertainment, or government, while not being so large as to dilute its collective identity as a destination and the "face" of Greensboro.

The **Urban Central** place type has a base of mixed-use development and a more complete sidewalk network. New development will incrementally add to the existing mixed-use, walkable environment with a mix of housing types and small, neighborhood-serving and pedestrian-friendly commercial areas. This context was created as Greensboro grew outward in the mid and late 1800s. The pattern of development reflects the horse-drawn carriages, rectilinear grid of local streets with small lots, laid within a network of non-rectilinear roads and rail lines that connected us to other towns. Expansion of Greensboro in the early twentieth century was spurred by the extension of this street grid and the introduction of trolleys and electric streetcars.

The **Urban General** place type encompasses the largest area of physical development in Greensboro, which occurred post WWII and reflects the national trends in development patterns of that time. The growth of middle-income families, automobile ownership, single-family home ownership, and changes in retail patterns to shopping centers and malls has contributed to the characteristics of conventional neighborhoods. New growth in this area will be focused in Activity Centers; some of this growth will continue to be car-oriented, but there are opportunities for walkable, mixed-use development on larger sites by creating more access from surrounding neighborhoods and increasing development intensity along existing corridors, which will strengthen transit service and other transportation options.

PLACE TYPES

Much of Greensboro is composed of areas that have a consistency of character, identity, or purpose, and that are most often bounded by corridors, natural features, or parks, that create transition or separation from other neighborhoods that may not share the same characteristics. Place types can be predominantly residential, institutional, educational, industrial, or planned mixed-use.

These areas do not have to be uniform in land use or intensity to create and maintain a recognizable identity, but deviations from the basic pattern should not be abrupt or visually disruptive. Neighborhoods within them should have sufficiently identifiable character and edges so that it is obvious what is included within them.

Place Types with a mix of uses or densities have the greatest capacity to absorb development that is not disruptive of the existing pattern. This ability to absorb new development is also found along neighborhood edges separating one community from another, and seams, which are the lines along which two neighborhoods are related and joined together.

Downtown should reflect these characteristics:

1. Development is respectful and reflective of the history of Greensboro.
2. First floor business uses contribute to the vitality and diversity of the land-use mix.
3. Podiums of tall buildings incorporate design elements and features that reflect the human scale.
4. Buildings and building entrances are oriented to the sidewalk and street.
5. Building design is responsive to the human scale.
6. High-density housing in and near the central business district results in increased housing choice and supply.
7. Vibrant public spaces are fostered.
8. Increased and improved transit and mobility options within, to, and around downtown support commerce and increased density.

Urban Central should reflect these characteristics:

1. Development is consistent with adopted neighborhood plans and their design guidelines.
2. New development should be compatible with the existing development pattern, as described in the "Existing Built Form" section:

   • Short blocks and a grid-based street pattern;

   • Fine-grained zoning designations with a wide variety of uses are found closer to each other;

   • A range of residential building types, from detached, single-family houses, to Missing Middle Housing, to mid-rise multi-family in close proximity to each other; and high-rise multi-family in Activity Centers and along Mixed-Use Corridors;

   • Buildings on lots that are close to the width of a residential lot, rather than a uniform building along the entire block face;

   • Buildings close to each other and to the street; and

   • Connected sidewalks that form a walkable network.

3. There is benefit from and support from the viability of public open spaces, plazas, public art, and cultural resources.
4. Safety and crime prevention is integrated into building and site design by orienting windows and doorways to streets overlooking semi-public and shared spaces. Parking is oriented behind buildings, so buildings are built to the street with unobstructed windows for visual surveillance on the sidewalk and street.
5. Front doors and porches build community and neighborhood vitality and encourage neighbor interaction.
6. Exterior building materials are durable, sustainable, and contribute to the unique character of the surrounding buildings and existing neighborhood.
7. Equitable and ample access to walking, bicycling, transit and ride sharing is provided.

Urban General should reflect these characteristics:

1. Setbacks, building orientation, building materials, height, and scale of residential buildings are considered within the existing neighborhood context.
2. New housing helps increase the range of choice, supply, and adds additional appropriately-scaled density with: Missing Middle housing; mid-rise multi-family; and high-rise multi-family in Activity Centers and along Mixed-Use Corridors.
3. Transitions between neighborhoods and different land uses provide continuity in scale, density, intensity with adjacent uses.
4. Cut-through traffic is minimized.
5. New freestanding or expanded business areas are created within or adjoining an existing Activity Center or as part of creating a new Activity Center.
6. Exterior building materials are durable, sustainable, and contribute positively to the character of the public realm.
7. The size and impact of surface parking lots is minimized through landscaping, screening, narrow curb-cuts, and use of glare-free, no-spill lighting.
8. New sidewalks contribute to the completion of a sidewalk network.

Planned Campuses should reflect these characteristics:

1. Consistency with adopted Campus Plan.
2. They are proximate to an existing or planned transit route.
3. They present no detrimental impact on existing vehicular parking resources.
4. They provide direct accessibility to pedestrian and bicycle routes and facilities.
5. Where development is adjacent to residential uses, parks or other low intensity uses, the transition to adjacent property is provided through building massing, intensity of use, and hours of operation, with consideration to traffic, light, noise, and other potential impacts of the development.
6. The growth of large medical, educational, and cultural institutions should be generally accommodated within their existing or planned footprints and any campus expansion is sensitive to the preservation of housing stock and neighborhood vitality.

Planned Industrial Campuses should reflect these characteristics:

1. Employment or employment support uses only are permitted. Support could include retail, services, and housing but only if new uses do not undermine the potential for future job creation.

2. Employment areas are protected from erosion by non-employment uses so that their viability for industrial and other uses that create quality, living-wage jobs is not lessened. This could include guarding against loss of important road or rail access, having contiguous land broken up into smaller pieces, or introducing new housing or other uses that can later claim that the employment uses are not compatible.

3. They have a demonstrated tolerance for noise, trucking, and other off-site impacts.

4. They are sufficiently supported by roadways, rail lines, and other infrastructure.

5. Employment and employees are supported and connected through transit, bicycle and pedestrian access and connections, and the installation of high-quality infrastructure such as bus shelters, heating, lights, and data displays.

6. Adaptive reuse of older industrial and commercial property is encouraged.

7. Inactive uses, such as storage facilities, are screened by active uses along street frontages or located above or below street level.

ACTIVITY CENTERS

Ranging in size from a corner business at the intersection of two collector roads to regional shopping centers, activity centers attract people and are often the focus of community, civic, and social or commercial activity. Location, accessibility, size, and the extent and diversity of activities within an activity center influence the nature of economic development opportunities, potential impacts on nearby uses, and the way in which it is enjoyed by the community.

The size of the activity center correlates with the market area it serves. Commercial centers that serve as a convenience to a neighborhood have a much smaller footprint than activity centers that serve many neighborhoods, or that serve the city as a whole, as does a regional shopping center or sports facility. Regional scaled activity centers attract visitors from all of Greensboro and beyond. The core of downtown Greensboro stands alone as a unique and important activity center.

No matter their size, activity centers have a common structure. Development intensity and building bulk is most often highest near the heart of an activity center (often described as the 100% intersection) and transition to less intense forms as it moves towards surrounding neighborhoods. Gateways and landmarks help to define the entries to activity centers. Many activity centers arise organically from the interaction of people and activity at the crossroads of two or more corridors, and naturally have more than one point, direction, or mode of ingress/egress.

Neighborhood and District Scale Activity Centers should reflect these characteristics:

1. Development (site and buildings) is properly scaled to the needs of residents in the appropriate market area. The scale and types of activities accommodated match the service area. A District Scale Activity Center is physically larger, serves a wider market area, and has a greater breadth of businesses, services, and activities than a Neighborhood Activity Center, and draws vehicular traffic from a larger area, requiring more space for parking, loading, and greater spacing between vehicular access driveways.

2. Development adjacent to residential neighborhoods, parks, or other low intensity uses gives consideration to light, traffic, noise, and other potential impacts of the development.

3. Buildings and uses are easy to access on foot or by bike. These Centers include safe paths, bike racks, benches and other amenities for non-motorized travelers.

4. These Centers coordinate adjacent site designs and public improvements to provide comfortable sidewalk space for pedestrian movement, curb "bump-out" extensions, street trees/lighting/furniture, sidewalk cafés, and an active pedestrian-friendly environment.

Regional Scale Activity Centers, in addition to the characteristics referenced in Neighborhood and District Scale Activity Centers, should also reflect these characteristics:

1. Development is in close proximity and has a high degree of accessibility to High Frequency Transit Service.

2. Safe access by automobile to and from the site is essential, as are logical and clear driving paths within developments.

3. Cross access easements between commercial properties limit roadway congestion and contribute to walkable commercial environments.

4. Development is separated from residential neighborhoods and other low intensity uses.

5. Infrastructure capacity serves the highest densities and intensities of use.

6. Storm water management is integrated into site plans and landscape plans.

7. Adopted design standards and best design practices result in pedestrian-scaled building design that breaks up uninterrupted building walls and blank facades with the use of architecture, fenestration, building material changes, and greenwalls.

CORRIDORS

Corridors are the linear commercial and office developments typically along collector or arterial roadways. They include properties directly fronting on the road and may include properties having primary access to or in immediate proximity to the road. The character and function of the road and the uses within a corridor are highly correlated.

Defining characteristics of strong, attractive, and functional corridors include:

- Recognition of the relationship between road speed and development character: wider and faster roads reinforce the feasibility of auto-oriented development and decrease the likelihood of pedestrian friendly development. As road speed increases, accessibility often decreases, resulting in fewer supportable access points (per mile), larger lots, bigger buildings and the need for more on-site circulation.

- Development along smaller corridors is matched by smaller buildings and smaller or no setbacks to the right-of-way, offering greater engagement with pedestrian traffic.

- Depth, as measured from the roadway, correlates with the intensity and activity of land uses along the corridor, with greater depth provided where needed to accommodate larger structures, vehicular parking areas and circulation, and to transition to lesser intensity uses that abut the corridor.

- Consistent building setbacks emphasize the "enclosure" of the public realm created between face-to-face buildings across the public way.

- Shared access between uses minimizes the isolation of individual buildings and sites to accommodate both pedestrian and vehicular cross access and reduce the number of access points along the corridor.

- Building massing provides continuity and compatibility with adjacent and nearby buildings.

- Site landscaping contributes to the corridor character.

- Site lighting contributes to site safety and attractiveness without spilling onto adjacent property.

Urban (Mixed-Use) Corridors reflect these additional characteristics:

1. Consistency with adopted corridor plans.

2. Cross easements are provided for vehicular and pedestrian access.

3. They meet the existing need and convenience of the surrounding community.

4. Visual clutter and confusion caused by sign proliferation is minimized while maintaining safe and efficient wayfinding for both pedestrians and vehicles.

5. Landscaping, sidewalks, lighting, fencing, and building features are located so as to guide pedestrian movement on or through the site. On-site and on-building lighting at entrances and along walkways is maintained at safe lighting levels.

High Frequency Transit Service Corridors reflect these additional characteristics:

1. These corridors are suitable for lower required off-street parking requirements.

2. They accommodate higher development densities with convenient access to transit stops.

3. They are suitable for personal service business, day care, and family support services.

4. Employment generating and institutional uses are encouraged where well-served by public transportation.

Reinvestment Corridors reflect these additional characteristics:

1. Consistency with adopted corridor plans.

2. Uses that support or provide access to employment are prioritized.

3. Existing buildings are adapted for reuse.

4. Neighborhood support services are accommodated.

5. Specific deficiencies, such as lack of access to healthy food, health services, and social services are eliminated.

6. Barriers to reinvestment are reduced.

7. Displacement is avoided for creative and activity-producing uses such as artist studios, work/live spaces, and galleries.

Possible Workforce Transit Corridors enhance public transportation to major employment areas in order to provide transportation options for employees and broaden the application pool for employers.

HOW TO USE *GSO2040* ANTICIPATED GROWTH MAPS

When a proposed development is a permitted use in an existing zoning district, the development can proceed through administrative procedures such as site plan and building permit review. When a proposed development is not permitted with existing zoning, the property owner needs to seek an amendment to the zoning map in order to move forward with the development.

This Comprehensive Plan does not contradict or change the existing process for amending the zoning map. The questions and process outlined in the Plan provide a basis for determining whether the proposed change in the zoning designation of a property is consistent with the policies in this Plan. Determination of consistency with the Comprehensive Plan is a significant decision point in development review and regulation.

As part of the decision to amend the zoning map based on the requested change, after holding a public hearing, the Zoning Commission or City Council must approve a brief statement as to whether the proposed zoning designation is consistent or inconsistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan. This requirement may also be met by a clear indication in the minutes of the Zoning Commission or City Council that at the time of the action on the amendment, the board was aware of and considered relevant portions of the Comprehensive Plan. If the amendment is adopted and the action was deemed inconsistent with the adopted plan, the zoning amendment shall have the effect of also amending any future land use map in the approved plan and no additional request or application for a plan amendment shall be required.

The concepts set out in this section of the plan describe the points to consider, emphasize their importance, and note how this Comprehensive Plan can be a living part of all land use and development considerations by the City. All maps in the plan are advisory in nature. The following questions are not a score sheet, but rather a guide to the interrelated considerations that will need to be addressed by City staff, appointed officials, and City Council members in the review process. The question to be answered is whether or not the proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. If the determination is that it is consistent and should be considered, the various best practices described for developments consistent with the Plan are also relevant and should then be applied to the proposed development or rezoning.

TO DETERMINE IF A REZONING REQUEST IS CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A land use designation on the Future Land Use Map can be compatible with a range of zoning districts. It is likely, therefore, that many requests for specific zoning or conditional use permits will be deemed consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Future Built Form Map designates property as being within an activity center, a place type, or a corridor; the Future Land Use Map designates property for airport, residential, commercial, industrial, mixed use, or reserve. Requests for changes to zoning must consider the full range of uses and activities permissible within those designations.

In determining whether the proposed zoning is consistent with these designations, the Zoning Commission or City Council will use the following questions to frame the discussion. This is not a checklist, but a set of questions to guide the determination of consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. If the answers to these questions are generally in the positive, the rezoning request should be deemed consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

1. Is the proposed rezoning in an area with an adopted neighborhood, corridor, Redevelopment, or small area plan, and if so is it consistent with that plan?

2. Does the proposed rezoning support uses anticipated within the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map and Future Built Form Map designations?

3. Is the site for the proposed zoning district in an Activity Center or directly adjacent to an Activity Center?

4. Are the uses permitted within the proposed zoning district found elsewhere within the same Future Built Form (center, place type, or corridor), or can the same uses be found in an area with the same Future Built Form designation elsewhere in Greensboro?

5. Are the uses permitted within the proposed zoning district of a similar scale, intensity, or off-site impact as existing nearby uses?

6. If warranted due to differences in the zoning, use, or scale of adjacent properties, can the property proposed for rezoning accommodate a satisfactory transition to the existing scale and intensity of existing, adjacent uses?

7. Are the uses permitted within the proposed zoning district compatible with the scale and design of the adjacent road?

8. Would the proposed rezoning or land use change impact the existing adjacent land uses? Is the proposed zoning compatible with existing adjacent land uses? Would the proposed change make a use or building nonconforming or increase the degree of nonconformity?

9. Will the proposed zoning accommodate development that permits the extension of the existing and planned street and sidewalk system and the plan's priorities for interconnection of adjacent neighborhoods?

10. Does the proposed change in zoning support one of the Big Ideas such as Growing Economic Competitiveness, Filling in our Framework, or Creating Great Places, as discussed on page 75?

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS WHEN PROPOSED REZONINGS ARE INCONSISTENT WITH ANTICIPATED GROWTH MAPS

It is likely that some rezonings proposed to the City may deviate from the land use designation on the Anticipated Growth Maps. Such a difference does not mean that the proposal should be dismissed outright or is not otherwise consistent with the intent of this Plan. It does mean that a higher level of evaluation is required to determine appropriateness of the proposal.

If a rezoning request is not consistent with the adopted Anticipated Growth Maps, the evaluation must consider why there is an inconsistency and how the proposed change relates to the overall intent of the Plan. While there may be reasons over time that cause changes to the land use designations of a particular property, it is less likely that the overall intent expressed in the Vision, the Six Big Ideas, and the Goals of this Plan will change. Those elements make up the fundamental description of the desired future for Greensboro; even if a land use on a particular parcel is different than anticipated, development still should advance the overall intent of the Plan and the City's vision for the future.

Two areas to consider are the following:

1. Changes in Conditions

It may be that the Land Use or the Future Built Form designation on the plan is no longer the right one. The primary question to be answered is whether something has changed in the assumptions underlying the original land use designation. To determine that, the Zoning Commission or City Council should seek answers to these questions:

- Is there a new issue at hand that was not considered when the plan was adopted?

- Is new data available or has a plan or study been done that shows a different land use designation is more appropriate or logical?

- Was a mistake made in projections or forecasts that led to the land use designation?

- Is this a natural extension of one built form or one land use into an adjoining area as a result of growth, investment, increased market demand, or a change in product design?

2. Consistency with Big Ideas

The overall goals of this plan should still be supported by any given proposal. The Six Big Ideas of the plan are fundamental to achieving Greensboro's vision and are not likely to change based on new data, research, or technology. They present the logical basis against which to consider proposals that deviate from the Future Land Use Map or the Future Built Form Map. If the Zoning Commission or City Council finds that a proposal is in keeping with and supportive of the Goals and Strategies related to the Six Big Ideas of this plan, then this is evidence of consistency with the Plan.

The Six Big Ideas that convey the fundamental ideals of the community are described starting on page 22 and include:

1. **Filling in our Framework**
2. **Creating Great Places**
3. **Becoming Car Optional**
4. **Prioritizing Sustainability**
5. **Building Community Connections**
6. **Growing Economic Competitiveness**

A development or rezoning proposal should be evaluated in the context of the Six Big Ideas and their associated goals to determine consistency with the intent of this Plan. Review will require the depth of evaluation anticipated in the requirements of Chapter 160D of North Carolina Statutes for review of consistency with a comprehensive plan.

Overview

GSO2040 states the community's vision of what it wants Greensboro to be in 20 years, and includes broad goals and strategies that will guide the Community towards that vision. This implementation strategy provides the framework for more specific steps that will achieve the Plan's goals by stating important first steps and a process for regular updates and review. To best implement *GSO2040*, there must be a high level of commitment on the part of the City Council and City departments. Effective implementation can be thought of in two ways: ongoing activities and decisions that reflect plan policies; and direct action steps.

ONGOING IMPLEMENTATION

The steps below represent ongoing processes to implement the plan over the next 20 years.

Area Plans

Staff will establish a schedule for creating small area plans, neighborhood plans, and corridor plans to support plan implementation. Plans at this scale provide a finer grain of detail for specific geographies and facilitate specific activities such as economic development or streetscape projects, and provide more detail for land-use decisions.

Investment Decisions

GSO2040 will be a tool to align the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and other investments to ensure adequate financing for the plan's recommended activities, to provide support for investment in areas needing reinvestment, and to support distinctive mixed-use, walkable development.

Work Plan Alignment

GSO2040 was carefully aligned with existing City plans; updates to *GSO2040* and other City plans will be made in a similarly coordinated fashion to ensure that plans remain in alignment. Transportation plans, the HUD Consolidated Plan, and regional economic development plans are all examples of opportunities for continued collaboration.

Zoning Amendments

Each rezoning decision will be evaluated with the policies, maps, Vision and Big Ideas of *GSO2040*. This process will foster incremental change that moves Greensboro towards the Vision set forth in *GSO2040* such as increasing housing choices, creating great places and more mixed-use, walkable development, and supporting neighborhood health.

Development Ordinances

The City will evaluate the Land Development Ordinance and other development regulations and make the necessary updates and amendments to support the recommendations in *GSO2040* and ensure that our development standards continue to align and work towards a common purpose.

Continued Education and Promotion

Greensboro will take advantage of the momentum gained through the *PLAN*IT GSO planning process to continue the conversation about Greensboro's future. This will include updates on Plan implementation as well as continuing to provide information through publications such as the quarterly Growth and Development Trends report.

REVIEWING PROGRESS AND MONITORING CONDITIONS
Regular review and reporting on progress to the Planning Board and City Council will help keep implementation on schedule and ensure accountability.

Five Year Plan Updates
The City will create a Five-Year Plan to implement specific, priority action steps in the Plan. Updates to the Five-Year Plan will include: analysis of changes in land use, demographics, and economic data; a summary of Plan implementation; and public input.

Annual Reviews
Annual reviews will include updates on Plan implementation and a summary of land use trends for the year and will be provided to the Planning Board.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Thank you!

Plan Development and Photography Credits

Councilman Justin Outling

District 3
City Council

Committee Chair

A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE *GSO2040* ADVISORY COMMITTEE!

James Bennett
Board of Trustees of the Greensboro Public Library

Adam Carrol
Greensboro Transit Authority Board

Dawn Chaney
Community Partners Board

Bob Davis
Solid Waste Management Commission

Wayne Durham
Redevelopment Commission of Greensboro

Vicki Foust
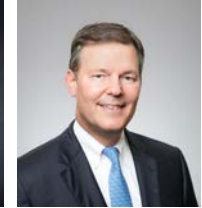Community Sustainability Council

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Moussa Issifou
Human Relations Commission

Michelle Lucas
Commission on the Status of Women

Suzanne S. Nazim
Minimum Housing Standards Commission

Saroj Patnaik
International Advisory Committee

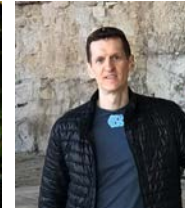**Kim Record**
Greensboro Sports Commission

Alex Rosser
Piedmont Triad Regional Airport Authority

Mac Sims
Tourism Development Authority

David Sevier
Criminal Justice Advisory Committee

Jeff Smith
Parks & Recreation Commission

David Wharton
Historic Preservation Commission