

GSO2040 Implementation Review – February 2024

GSO2040 was adopted by City Council on June 16, 2020, and went into effect that September. Since that time, a lot has happened! This annual report is an overview of implementation highlights and land use changes since that time. It gauges how the programs and projects from a variety of City departments are moving us toward our goals, and how the new plan has impacted the way our community is growing.

The year 2025 will mark five years since plan adoption, time to check on progress toward our Vision and Big Ideas and to see what trends City departments and community partners see for the future.

Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Awards | 1 |
| Implementation Highlights | 2 |
| Area Plans | 6 |
| Land Use Trends..... | 8 |



Awards

Since adoption, *GSO2040* has won two prestigious awards. This should be a source of pride for the entire community, as it reflects the level of public interest in the future of Greensboro, our residents’ ambitions for the city, and the emphasis on equity and sustainability that runs throughout the plan.

In 2021, the North Carolina chapter of the American Planning Association awarded the Plan the Marvin Collins Award for a Comprehensive Plan. The Awards Committee noted the very collaborative approach of the process and stated that the plan is “Clear, forward looking, well-written, (with) good use of graphics” and that “the comp plan is well done, but the presentation of the comp plan and its public accessibility are excellent.”



In the fall of 2022, the City received 2022 Daniel Burnham Award for a Comprehensive Plan from the American Planning Association in recognition of its focused, multi-year community engagement lead by Greensboro’s Planning Department. *GSO2040* was also recognized as the innovative leader in comprehensive plans and as a national example of how planning and planners work to make our communities better, stronger, and more resilient.

“*GSO2040* is a modern plan, beautifully displayed online with a logical structure, well-considered strategies, and compelling presentation that reflects the voices, needs, and desires of the Greensboro community,” says Ben Hitchings, APA Board of Directors member and vice-chair of this year’s awards jury.

Implementation Highlights

Since the adoption of **GSO2040**, the City has published [quarterly newsletters](#) that highlight projects and programs that move us towards the Six Big Ideas. These highlights have come from many different City departments. In addition to City projects featured in the newsletters, there are many efforts made by residents, businesses, and civic institutions.

Highlights from the quarterly newsletters are not the only ways the City is working to bring the comprehensive plan to life. The plan is not a to-do list. Instead it establishes goals for us to move toward, adapting to different circumstances and using new ideas. These newsletters highlight some of the ways, big and small, that this is happening. The following are a few key implementation steps that have been taken to date for each of the Six Big Ideas.



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.

Bike Lanes

The City has increased the number of bike lanes since **GSO2040** was adopted, and we have piloted programs for installing bike lanes. The City



BIKE MONTH CELEBRATIONS OCCUR IN MAY

has a [dashboard](#) available that shows the various bike facilities in Greensboro, which includes separate bike lanes, sharrows and edgelines, and greenways. Overall, we have 117 miles of bike facilities in the city. That includes separate bike lanes on Elm Street, Horse Pen Creek Road, Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, and East Florida Street, as well as other locations.

GoBORO Transit plan

The City started a major overhaul of its transit system with the launch of [GoBORO](#), an update to our long range transit plan. This plan is in development and more public activities will be scheduled in spring 2024. The plan balances two concepts: a “ridership concept” that focuses on more frequent transit service in areas that have high ridership and a “coverage concept” that seeks to provide service to as many people in Greensboro as possible.



Filling in Our Framework is about land use and development; how the pattern 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.

Missing Middle Housing

[Missing Middle Housing](#) includes a wide range of housing between detached, single family homes and apartment complexes. More common in older parts of towns, they are an excellent way to increase housing options and enrich neighborhoods. The City worked with Opticos Design [to identify ways to increase the supply](#) of Missing Middle Housing. Our next steps will be to work with the community to make the adjustments in our Land Development Ordinance.

Orchard Street Pop-Up Neighborhood Traffic Program

The City has begun to fund neighborhood-level changes to increase traffic safety. In this particular pilot program, the City worked with the neighborhood to create temporary traffic calming measures. Based on the trial, permanent changes were installed on the street.



ORCHARD STREET SAFETY POP UP



Prioritizing 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, ensuring 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.

Office of Sustainability and Resilience

In 2023, the City established the [Office of Sustainability and Resilience](#) led by Chief Sustainability Officer Shree Dorestant. The office’s four focus areas are Energy Management, Environmental Compliance, Sustainability Planning, and Education and Outreach. The team will help bring plans such as the adopted Strategic Energy Plan to fruition.

GSO4Ward

In 2021, Greensboro joined the Government Alliance on Race and Equity. Under this umbrella, the City formed the [GSO4Ward](#) team that has taken on a wide variety of diversity, equity, and inclusion programs. This team, along with the City’s Office of Equity and Inclusion, developed Cultural Competency 101 training for all City employees.



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

10-year Housing Plan

The City adopted [Housing GSO](#), a 10-year housing plan, in 2020. This plan is not just about providing housing, but also strengthening neighborhoods, particularly those that have suffered from disinvestment. By partnering with residents and identifying areas in need of reinvestment, the unique identities of these locations can be strengthened to add to diversity across the city.

Arts Residency Program

Launched in 2021, the [Neighborhood Arts Residency Program](#) works with artists and neighborhoods to create art and beautify spaces that reflect neighborhood priorities. The program has focused on five communities identified as reinvestment areas in the Housing GSO plan: Dudley Heights, Glenwood, Kings Forest, Mill District, and Random Woods. Projects have included murals, paintings on bus shelters and basketball courts, paint in the park events, and decorating sidewalks and crosswalks.



KINGS FOREST MURAL



Building Community Connections describes our quality of life, culture, arts, and places that make Greensboro unique and memorable, which bind us together as a community. This Big Idea includes strategies to improve livability, strengthen neighborhoods, increase our public safety, expand housing affordability, and build Greensboro’s identity as a University City.

Battleground Parks District

On June 17, the Parks and Recreation Department celebrated the grand opening of Phase 1 of the [Battleground Parks District](#) (BPD). The BPD is a uniquely Greensboro area that includes historic sites, competitive sports facilities, parks, and the Greensboro Science Center. Future phases will improve connections to each site through the district. The area will draw people with a wide variety of interests due to its mix of active and passive recreation opportunities.

National Register Nomination in East Greensboro

Greensboro is working to bring more equity and diversity to preservation, and has been at work to nominate three neighborhoods in east Greensboro to the National Register of Historic Places: Benbow Road, Clinton Hills, and Benbow Park. This area, collectively termed the Benbow Park Historic District, will be Greensboro’s first historically African-American neighborhood nominated as a National Register District.

Please look at this [story-map](#) that shows how these neighborhoods, modern architecture, and the Civil Rights Movement came together in Greensboro.



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.

Major new investments

Greensboro had a variety of economic development projects announced since **GSO2040** was adopted. The two largest are the results of careful planning and work. One is the Toyota battery plant at the Greensboro-Randolph Megasite. This project will bring nearly 6,000 jobs to the area and represents an investment of more than \$13 billion. The plant is expected to be operational in 2025.

[Boom Supersonic](#) is another project ready to take off. Boom has inked a deal to build a LEED-certified manufacturing facility at Piedmont Triad

International Airport. The project will create more than 1,750 jobs by 2030, and will bring an investment of more than \$500 million.

In addition to its economic impact, Boom Supersonic is redefining commercial air travel by bringing sustainable, supersonic flight to the skies. Boom's historic commercial airliner, "Overture," is designed and committed to industry-leading *standards* of speed, safety, and sustainability. Overture will be net-zero carbon, capable of flying on 100 percent sustainable aviation fuels at twice the speed of today's fastest passenger jets.

Guilford Works updates

Economic development has continued to focus on job training and outreach. Greensboro's Office of Workforce Development, aka [Guilford Works](#), has been busy connecting employers with talented career seekers through a variety of events and initiatives designed to broaden our ability to connect with the community. This includes virtual career fairs and hiring events, a Mobile Career Center to improve access to services, renovating the NCWorks Career Center, and continuing to update its Apprenticeship Program.



BOOM SUPERSONIC COMES TO GSO



GUILFORD WORKS MOBILE UNIT

Area Plans

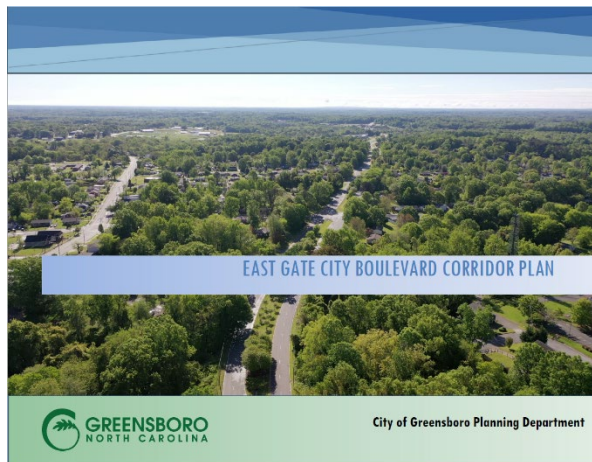
One of the primary focuses of **GSO2040** implementation was the creation of specific area plans that include more detailed recommendations on particular neighborhoods, activity centers, and corridors. The comprehensive plan covers Greensboro as a whole. These smaller area plans will help bring **GSO2040** to life by recognizing the special, unique attributes of neighborhoods, corridors, and other subareas.

The recommendations of the two plans below, and other upcoming planning efforts, are objective statements that fit under the Big Ideas, Goals, and Strategies of **GSO2040**. This framework will provide consistency between future plans, while still having enough flexibility to include all necessary recommendations in future plans. Here are a few significant ways that the City's work is implementing **GSO2040**.

East Gate City Boulevard

A team of City departments recommended the [East Gate City Boulevard](#) corridor as the first specific area plan after extensive analysis. The plan, adopted by City Council in August 2023, covers East Gate City Boulevard and adjacent neighborhoods from Eugene Street to the I-40 interchange, 3.4 miles to the east. The planning process was a collaborative effort between the City's Planning, Housing and Neighborhood Development, Parks and Recreation, Libraries, and Transportation departments. This collaboration represents a proactive approach to ensure cohesive and positive growth along the East Gate City Boulevard corridor.

The plan was initiated to coordinate new growth and investment along East Gate City



Boulevard, so both reinforce each other and benefit local neighborhoods. The road is a significant entrance into Greensboro for many reasons:

- The upcoming and significant public investment in the Windsor Chavis Nocho Community Complex (WCNCC) project
- Being a major thoroughfare for east Greensboro
- Previous investments in Barber Park, Gateway Gardens, Gateway Research Park, Downtown Greenway, and the Union Square Campus
- As a key entry corridor to get in and out of the city and downtown
- In conjunction with West Gate City Boulevard, it's a connection to many of Greensboro's major institutions.

Participation in the planning process was strong, and included stakeholder interviews, online surveys, discussions with area neighborhoods, interdepartmental coordination meetings, and four separate open house opportunities with associated follow-up surveys. The three open houses took place in December 2021, May 2022, and two separate opportunities in September 2022. In total, the open houses had approximately 200 attendees with more than 600 individual touchpoints of input (defined as total instances of engagement).

The corridor itself is predominantly residential with two prominent activity centers on either end of the corridor boundary, and a third emerging in the middle (WCNCC). These activity centers are home to a number of key institutional uses, such as Union Square Campus, Gateway Research Park, and Hayes-Taylor YMCA, Gateway Gardens, and Barber Park complex.

Having this corridor plan in place will guide future conversations about how residents get around, what new land uses they are comfortable with being introduced, and how to keep community dialogue healthy and consistent. Objectives in the plan cover the following topics:

- Encouraging non-residential uses to suitable locations within the established **GSO2040** activity centers.
- Increasing the access to non-automobile transportation options and enhancing physical connection within our neighborhoods.

- Establishing consistent community dialogue among the various neighborhoods, institutions, and the City.
- Working with residents to maintain strong, quality housing, and to create a consistent housing frontage along East Gate City Boulevard.
- Creating a unified identity to be celebrated and promoted that highlights the history of the area.

Fleming Road

Greensboro City Council directed City staff to study the [Fleming Road corridor](#) in early 2022. Concerns were the growth seen in northwest Greensboro near the airport and along New Garden Road in particular could change Fleming Road in a piecemeal fashion without an adopted plan in place.

The Fleming Road Study Area consists of the areas surrounding the Fleming Road corridor from Ballinger Road on the south, to an area north of I-840, along Lewiston Road. The City initiated this planning process in collaboration with residents, property owners, and other stakeholders to take a proactive look at the needs, concerns, and opportunities in the area, before potential market pressures or unanticipated development presents itself. This planning process launched in spring 2022 and engaged community members through nearly 800 touchpoints to understand their priorities for the future.



The objectives of the plan focus on issues related to:

- Maintaining the quiet, safe, and predominantly low-density residential character of the area
- Improving traffic law compliance and safety for all road users
- Protecting the natural environment including trees, streams and watersheds, and wildlife and their habitats
- Improving the quantity and quality of recreational facilities and green spaces
- Promoting the use of high-quality design, materials, and landscaping in conjunction with future development activity in the area.

Upcoming Plans

Greensboro has several other planning processes in various stages of development.

US 421 Study

A land use study of the US 421 corridor south of the City to the spring of 2024. The City started this study to better understand how City resources can best be used to support the economic impact expected from this investment and the other types of development that it may attract. The study

- evaluates the capacity of existing infrastructure,
- assesses upgrades needed to serve anticipated development,
- identifies potential industrial sites along the corridor, and
- offers policies and strategies for promoting quality growth.

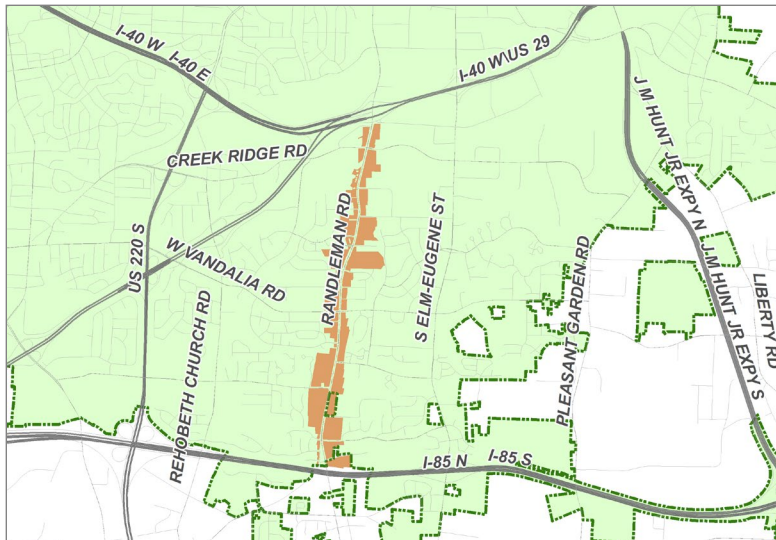
South Greensboro

The South Greensboro plan will cover an area that is approximately eight square miles in size, bounded by I-40 on the North, I-85 on the south, US 220 on the west, and US 421 on the east. This is a dynamic part of Greensboro that has seen most recent investment go to the southern periphery of the area. There are a wide range of land uses in the area, and a complex set of issues to plan for. The recent news of investment by Toyota to the south of Greensboro adds additional urgency to this process, but also

increases the opportunity for placemaking, improving the area's economy, and strengthening area neighborhoods.

Randleman Road

The City adopted phase 1 of the Randleman Road Corridor Plan in May 2016. That plan covered a section of Randleman Road from where it starts south to I-40. Phase 2 will pick up at I-40 to the southern City limits. The plan will focus on the road and adjacent properties. An existing conditions report has been put together to start this process. The City will host the first public meetings in the spring of 2024. More information can be found at www.greensboro-nc.gov/randlemanroad.



Land Use Trends

This report highlights changes to the zoning map from October of 2020, when **GSO2040** was put into practice, through December 2023.

General Observations

The following are very broad statements about the rezoning cases during this period. These do not reflect individual cases, but an overall summary.

- There was a high volume of zoning cases throughout the period that were not affected by the COVID pandemic.
- Logistics continues to grow as a part of our economy. Large warehousing projects on our periphery, as well as smaller infill projects, were occurring prior to the investment announcements by Boom Supersonic and Toyota's battery plan.
- Large rezonings have been on the periphery involving large pieces of property, and there has been significant reuse of property in Greensboro as well.
- Generally, rezoning activity has been spread across the city.
- **GSO2040** has been well integrated into the process. The language is accessible and the plan has been quoted by applicants, decision makers, and neighborhoods. The conversations about zoning decisions have focused more about how a project will fit into the setting, rather than focusing on different levels of residential density.

Summary of all Zoning Map Amendments

The following table summarizes all the zoning map amendments from October 2020, when **GSO2040** was put into practice, to the end of 2023. They are organized by broad land use category, with the number of amendments for each, specific zoning districts, and acreages, including average and median size.

| Zoning Category | Occurrences | Zoning District | Occurrences | Acreage | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|---------|---------|--------|
| | | | | Total | Average | Median |
| Agricultural | 1 | Agriculture | 1 | 19.3 | | |
| Business Park | 2 | Business Park | 2 | 23.8 | 11.9 | |
| Office | 15 | Office | 15 | 38.1 | 2.5 | 1.6 |
| Central Business | 1 | Central Business | 2 | 4.0 | | |
| Commercial | 46 | Commercial-Low | 7 | 9.3 | 1.3 | 1.5 |
| | | Commercial-Medium | 36 | 384.0 | 10.7 | 1.7 |
| | | Commercial-Neighborhood | 3 | 0.7 | 0.2 | |
| Light Industrial | 37 | Light Industrial | 37 | 1387.6 | 37.5 | 11.6 |
| Light Industrial Mixed | 2 | Light Industrial Mixed | 1 | 17.5 | 8.8 | |
| Heavy Industrial | 10 | Heavy Industrial | 10 | 146.3 | 14.6 | 9.2 |
| Single-family Residential | 44 | Residential Single-family 3 | 25 | 76.0 | 3.0 | 0.9 |
| | | Residential Single-family 5 | 10 | 198.0 | 19.8 | 1.6 |
| | | Residential Single-family 7 | 9 | 95.3 | 10.6 | 9.0 |
| Multi-family Residential | 73 | Residential Multi-family 5 | 9 | 210.0 | 23.3 | 5.8 |
| | | Residential Multi-family 8 | 14 | 142.4 | 10.2 | 6.0 |
| | | Residential Multi-family 12 | 17 | 153.0 | 9.0 | 4.8 |
| | | Residential Multi-family 18 | 23 | 323.2 | 14.1 | 9.2 |
| | | Residential Multi-family 26 | 10 | 76.9 | 7.7 | 4.5 |
| Parkland and Natural Resource Area | 2 | Parkland and Natural Resource Areas | 2 | 9.3 | 4.7 | |
| Planned Unit Development | 26 | Planned Unit Development | 25 | 1094.7 | 43.8 | 15.5 |
| Public and Institutional | 4 | Public and Institutional | 5 | 85.9 | 17.2 | 23.1 |
| University Mixed Use | 1 | University Mixed Use | 1 | 12.5 | | |
| Neighborhood Support | 1 | Neighborhood Support | 1 | 0.4 | | |

Map of all Zoning Map Amendments by Category

The following map depicts all the zoning map amendments from October 2020, when **GSO2040** was put into practice, to the end of 2023. They are organized by broad land use category.

