

ACTION PLAN

Introduction

This Plan includes more than 200 policies for the City of Wilson to address. While each of these policies is important for achieving the vision of becoming “One Wilson Growing Together,” it is critical to set priorities among all the action strategies. These priorities will lay the groundwork for developing future annual work plans for the City and will help with organizing and prioritizing future implementation efforts.

Throughout the course of the planning process, community input focused on creating a more sustainable community that manages growth, reinvigorates the Center City and Downtown areas, and improves the education, job prospects, and well-being of citizens. Listed below are the major categories of implementation efforts that need attention in Wilson.

1. Managed Growth
2. Center City Initiatives
3. Neighborhood Planning
4. Economic Development Initiatives
5. Capital Improvements
6. Partnerships
7. Land Development Ordinance Updates
8. Sustainable Planning Actions

This chapter provides recommendations for the top priority implementation actions that the City should consider to implement this Plan. In addition, the last section of this chapter includes a matrix of secondary implementation action priorities. As priority actions are completed, implementation items from the secondary list can be moved to the priority listing. For all implementation actions, a timeline and responsible entity for initiating action is identified. To ensure implementation of the Plan, this information should be used to develop annual City work plans for departments.

Top Priority Implementation Actions

The following matrix illustrates the relationship between the top twelve priority implementation actions and the eight major implementation categories.

Table 8: Implementation Actions Matrix

	Priority #1: Work with County to establish Tiered Growth System	Priority #2: Amend City's Land Development Ordinances	Priority #3: Establish Neighborhood Planning Process	Priority #4: Support and Facilitate Center City Catalyst Projects such as The Villages of Center City	Priority #5: Establish a Vacant Properties Initiative	Priority #6: Redesign of and Streetscape Improvements to Highway 301	Priority #7 Implement Elements of Barton College's Master Plan under City Jurisdiction	Priority #8: Promote Green Workforce Initiatives with WCC & Help Implement Master Plan	Priority #9: Establish Sustainable Performance Standards and an Energy Conservation Strategy	Priority #10: Conduct a Feasibility Study for a Downtown Civic Center	Priority #11: Promote Revitalization of Downtown	Priority #12: Develop Formal Agreement with Wilson County Schools
Managed Growth	✓	✓		✓								✓
Center City Initiatives	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Neighborhoods		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
Economic Development				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Capital Improvements	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Partnerships	✓		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓
Ordinance Updates		✓		✓	✓				✓		✓	
Sustainable Planning	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	

Priority #1: Work with Wilson County to Establish a Tiered Growth System

Two of the goals of this Plan are to efficiently use existing public infrastructure and revitalize older areas of the community. Currently, new users of public infrastructure and new developments are charged the same development and infrastructure fees regardless of where they are located and how much it will actually cost to provide services to the locations. This fee approach can be more costly for the City as fees do not reflect costs; it may be a disincentive to develop in the Center City as costs are the same everywhere.

One tool that can be used to direct growth to targeted locations and away from another is to base public utility and development fees on whether or not a project is located in an area where public services are currently provided or are planned to be provided. This concept essentially links public fees to the public cost to provide the services (i.e., water, sewer, police and fire protection, etc.) for a specific location, helping to guide development to appropriate areas.

This is especially important given the findings of the 2005 Cost of Land Uses Fiscal Impact Analysis for Wilson. This report shows that several forms of development, including single-family residential valued less than \$250,000 and commercial retail shopping centers, result in a net deficit for the City. The cost to service these developments is not covered by the tax revenues generated by these developments. Providing services to these types of development located in areas where services are not yet provided can be costly to the City.

Examples of Tiered Growth Systems

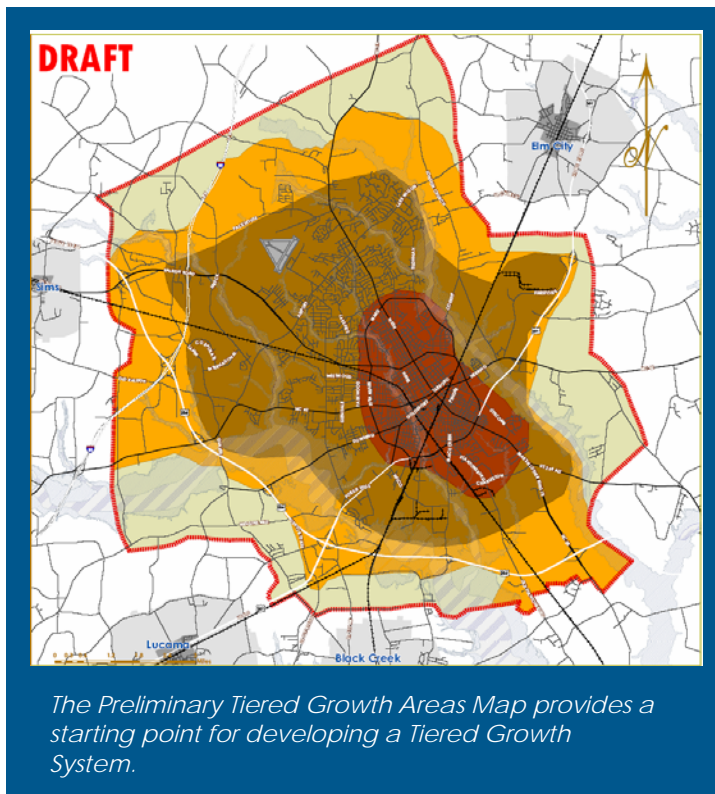
Communities across the country are evaluating and adopting new fee structure systems that base fees on the actual costs to serve new growth in specific areas. The reasoning is that -- the farther out the hookup or service from existing infrastructure, the more money would have to be spent on infrastructure to service the new development. The Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District has established a tiered fee system with separate fees for infill areas and new growth areas. Analysis showed that the cost to convey service to infill areas was only 15 percent of the cost for new growth areas as infrastructure was already in place in infill areas. Charlotte County, Florida, adopted a tiered fee system in 2009 to promote development within its urban services area (USA) and recoup the true cost to service areas outside of the USA. Albuquerque, New Mexico, has taken a "zone" approach that provides relief for fees in fully-served areas, and has separate fee amounts for second (partially-served) and third tier (not served) areas.

Developing a Tiered Growth System

Based on the preliminary analysis of service areas and the location of existing infrastructure, a draft Tiered Service Areas map is provided in the Plan. This map provides a conceptual starting point for discussing a policy to direct growth to certain areas based on the tiered fees concept. This map denotes four areas.

- ◆ The **Core Service Area** consists of land immediately surrounding and within the Ward Boulevard loop. It generally includes land that is currently serviced by public infrastructure. This area is likely less expensive to serve than other areas as infrastructure is already in place. Several redevelopment projects, including The Villages of Center City, are located in this area.

- ◆ The **Primary Service Area** encompasses areas that are either currently served by public infrastructure or where plans for service are in place, such as the sixth fire station. This area is likely less costly to serve than outer reaching areas, but is likely more costly to serve than the core service area.
- ◆ The **Secondary Service Area** encompasses areas that are within the primary growth area that do not currently have plans to be serviced but that will likely be provided public services in the next ten years. This area likely will be more costly to serve than the core and primary service areas, but less than the future service area.
- ◆ The **Future Service Area** incorporates the entirety of the secondary growth area. These areas are likely to be provided service within 20 years. Costs to provide service to this area will be significant as this area generally is not currently served by the City.



As stated previously, the Tiered Service Areas map is a starting point for defining a City fee structure intended to create incentives for development within the lower tier areas and disincentives for development in the higher tier areas. Fees that could be included within this system include water, sewer, building permit, and other development related fees.

The City should consider the trade-offs of applying this policy to all development. For example, residential and commercial developments located within an outer area could have significant impacts on the land use patterns and public service expenditures for the community. Employment development, such as a business park or industrial development, located in an outer area may provide enough community benefits to outweigh the costs to service outer reaching areas.

To establish a new tiered growth system, the City will need to work collaboratively with Wilson County to evaluate the costs to provide service to these four areas and refine the service area map and corresponding development fees accordingly.

Priority #1: Work with Wilson County to Establish a Tiered Growth System

Timeline: Initiate within one year of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: Planning and Development Service Department with cooperation from Fire/Rescue Services, Police, Public Services, and Wilson Energy

Priority #2: Amend Wilson's Land Development Ordinances

This Comprehensive Plan reflects the desired future land use and design goals for the City of Wilson: to create a more compact development form that reinforces redevelopment of the Center City area and encourages low-impact, green development throughout the community. One of the main land management tools for achieving these goals is the City's ordinance, particularly the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. Key amendments to be made to these ordinances include:

Future Land Use

- ◆ Using the Future Land Use Map as a guide, revise zoning district designations to encourage development within primary growth areas and encourage the conservation of secondary growth areas for future development beyond 2030.
- ◆ Using the Future Land Use map as a guide, update the City's Zoning Ordinance to allow for higher densities and mixed-use development in targeted areas and reduce land zoned for low-density, single use development.
- ◆ To encourage a more compact development form through mixed-use developments, streamline the development approval process and simplify zoning standards required for mixed-use development within the City's Zoning Ordinance.
- ◆ Low-impact design methods that minimize site disturbance and utilize green building technologies should be encouraged through the use of development incentives, such as fast-track permitting, reducing or waiving fees, reducing or waiving design requirements, or other incentives.
- ◆ Approval of Rezoning and Conditional Use Permit cases should include consideration of market conditions and how the project will affect the City's overall retail vacancy rate.

Redevelopment and Infill

- ◆ Provide flexibility to promote the reuse of older buildings in commercial corridors and neighborhood business areas, such as Five Points. Parking reductions should be permitted in order to allow infill development within parking areas.
- ◆ Provide for flexibility in achieving compatibility for setbacks, parking, height, lot coverage, and other development standards. Consider adopting context dependent standards for infill developments that set requirements based on adjacent land uses (e.g., height should be no more than 115 percent of any structure within 500 feet.)

- ◆ Develop design guidelines for infill / redevelopment, mixed-use, and multi-family developments.

Downtown

- ◆ Amend zoning regulations within Downtown to reflect the Future Land Use Map and appropriate uses as identified on the Future Land Use Map for Downtown. Examples include allowing Bed & Breakfasts, allowing as-of-right eating establishments, multi-family housing, and civic and fraternal organizations.
- ◆ Uses that should be prohibited within Downtown include auto sales and service, gas stations, car washing businesses, and other related uses.
- ◆ Evaluate the need to rezone industrial areas to promote redevelopment of these sites.
- ◆ Provide incentives for green development or redevelopment within Downtown.
- ◆ Amend zoning regulations to allow for development of live-work spaces and other Downtown housing opportunities.

Protection of Environmental Resources

- ◆ Adopt new development standards to provide more incentives for open space set-asides.
- ◆ Provide incentives to developments using green building techniques that reduce the development footprint on undeveloped lands and protect trees and natural areas during the construction process.
- ◆ Further restrict development in flood prone areas, specifically revising the 50 percent “no build” area standard. Consider development of a program to allow transfers of development density from these areas to areas that are appropriate for development.
- ◆ Amend the City’s tree protection ordinance to require enhanced tree protection and tree preservation during construction for all new developments. Explore requiring a tree permit for removal of trees on developed lots.
- ◆ Develop and adopt low-impact development incentives (i.e., stormwater management best practices) to encourage developers to use these techniques in new developments.

Transportation and Connectivity

- ◆ To ensure future land is available for development of the commuter rail corridor, amend the Zoning Ordinance to require right-of-way dedication or conveyance of land, as designated per the future Comprehensive Transportation Plan’s alignment for the rail corridor.
- ◆ Develop and implement access management standards for major and minor thoroughfares. Require internal circulation of commercial and employment centers and limit the number of street access points to maintain road capacity.

- ◆ Consider requiring residential subdivisions to meet connectivity index requirements.
- ◆ Require stacking of vehicles entering land uses located along major and minor thoroughfares to be addressed on site.
- ◆ Require land uses permitted along major and minor thoroughfares to provide accessibility and facilities for multiple modes of transportation.
- ◆ Transportation Impact Analyses should include all modes of transportation (i.e., vehicular, transit, bicycle, pedestrian).

Community Design

- ◆ Consider adopting new development standards to limit the conversion of single-family, owner-occupied homes in established neighborhoods to multi-family rental uses.
- ◆ Encourage a range of housing types within master planned developments. Amend zoning districts to allow for a range of housing types, as appropriate, to be developed on infill lots within established residential areas.
- ◆ Amend the City's development standards to require enhanced landscaping for all new developments, particularly along roadways to screen developments from the road.
- ◆ Amend development standards for new residential subdivisions to allow for developments that have similar standards as traditional neighborhoods found in Downtown (i.e., setbacks, lot size, sidewalks, street trees, street configurations, block size, etc.)
- ◆ Require street tree plantings on lot frontages in new residential subdivisions.
- ◆ Require the use of trees and landscaping within parking lots to define pedestrian walkways and provide natural drainage.
- ◆ Require appropriate siting of parking lots to reduce the amount of impervious surface visible from road corridors.
- ◆ Amend setbacks and dimensional standards in commercial corridors to create more opportunities for mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly commercial developments that efficiently use land along major road corridors.
- ◆ Assess the standards in the Highway Development District and determine if these standards are appropriate for gateway areas or if additional standards are needed to address landscaping, signage, and setbacks from the road.
- ◆ Adopt development standards to limit parking in front yard areas.



Priority #2: Amend Wilson’s Land Development Ordinances

Timeline: Initiate within one year of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: Planning and Development Service Department with TRC Departments

Priority #3: Establish a Neighborhood Planning and Implementation Process

An important strategy for obtaining Wilson’s vision is to pursue more detailed planning at the neighborhood level. While Wilson shares a community vision, individual neighborhoods have different needs based on existing conditions and neighborhood-specific issues and challenges.

Neighborhood planning presents an opportunity for citizens to shape the neighborhoods where they live, work, own property, or manage businesses. The neighborhood planning process in Wilson should address land use, zoning, public safety, infrastructure, transportation, schools, and urban design issues. The goal of neighborhood planning is for diverse interests to come together and develop a shared vision for their neighborhood. A neighborhood plan:

- ◆ Represents the views of all the stakeholders that make up a neighborhood
- ◆ Identifies neighborhood strengths and assets
- ◆ Identifies neighborhood needs and concerns
- ◆ Establishes goals for improving the neighborhood
- ◆ Recommends specific recommendations to reach those goals

Potential implementation strategies that could result from neighborhood planning initiatives include the development of new partnerships to leverage resources and improve neighborhood assets, targeted capital improvements such as sidewalks, street lighting, community facilities and parks, changes to zoning and development standards, and other efforts.

For neighborhood plans, all stakeholders should be invited to participate – business owners, residents, property owners, and various community organizations and educational institutions. A high priority for the City is improving the neighborhoods in the Center City, including those surrounding the Villages of Center City Hope VI revitalization project, Downtown, Barton College, public schools, and Wilson Community College. Working together with City planning staff, stakeholders should work to establish a clear vision and identify priority needs and actions to achieve the neighborhoods goals. Important intangible outcomes from the neighborhood planning process are stronger relationships between neighborhood stakeholders, improved neighborhood cohesion, better communication between neighbors, and the generation of a sense of common ground between diverse stakeholders.

Neighborhoods were engaged during the comprehensive planning process to develop a list of the top 10 characteristics of a great neighborhood and should be guiding principles for development of neighborhood plans. (See sidebar in Chapter 7 for top 10 list.)

Neighborhood Planning Examples

The City of Austin’s Neighborhood Planning process is a good example of a long-standing neighborhood planning process that has continually engaged communities in development of neighborhood scale plans. The City’s process connects with neighborhoods, provides education regarding land use, development, and capital improvement choices, and facilitates a consensus-based process for developing strategies for neighborhood improvement. These plans are developed through joint city-neighborhood collaboration and are formally adopted by the City Council. Any changes to the plan must be amended by City Council.

The City of Champaign, Illinois, has established a formal neighborhood planning approach called “Neighborhood Wellness” that identifies strategies for delivering neighborhood-based services throughout the City. The City was awarded a national planning award in 1992 for this program that assesses each neighborhoods level of “wellness” and develops goals and strategies to improve conditions. This planning is adopted as part of the comprehensive plan for the city. Updates to the plan involve five phases:

- ◆ Defining planning areas, including any new areas that have been annexed since the last version of the plan
- ◆ Collecting and analyzing data on social, economic, and physical conditions in planning areas
- ◆ Classifying four levels of wellness for each neighborhood: healthy, conservation, preservation, and restoration
- ◆ Ongoing public participation and community engagement

- ◆ Development of an action plan with goals, objectives, and strategies and an implementation schedule for plan programs

Baltimore’s Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative is a program focused on revitalizing the City’s older neighborhoods by reinvigorating stagnant real estate markets and building stronger connections among residents. This initiative uses tax credits, loan pools, neighborhood marketing, neighborhood events, code enforcement, and infrastructure improvements to improve participating neighborhoods. This initiative goes beyond traditional neighborhood planning to look at market approaches for improving neighborhoods.

Developing the Neighborhood Planning Process

Development of a formal neighborhood planning process to be led by the City will require some evaluation of staff capacity and resources. There are currently sixteen neighborhood associations formally recognized by the City of Wilson. It is unlikely that the City can undertake planning initiatives in all of these neighborhoods simultaneously, much less providing planning services to other areas that are not currently organized into neighborhood groups.

The City will need to accomplish the following to establish a formal process for developing neighborhood plans:

- ◆ Working with neighborhoods, develop a comprehensive map that identifies neighborhood boundaries for the entire City (A preliminary map is included in the Neighborhoods and Housing Chapter)
- ◆ Develop a formal process for initiating neighborhood planning, such as by neighborhood petition to the City Council
- ◆ Develop a set of criteria for determining priorities among neighborhoods requesting neighborhood planning services
- ◆ Develop a formal process for adopting and implementing neighborhood plans
- ◆ Recommended criteria for determining neighborhood priorities include the following:
 - ◆ Neighborhood is located within the Center City area
 - ◆ Neighborhood is represented by a formal neighborhood association
 - ◆ Neighborhood leadership can articulate the critical needs in the community and support identification of needs through a community petition
 - ◆ Neighborhood is located near a public or private school or college

Priority #3: Establish a Neighborhood Planning and Implementation Process

Timeline: Initiate within two years of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: Planning and Development Service Department

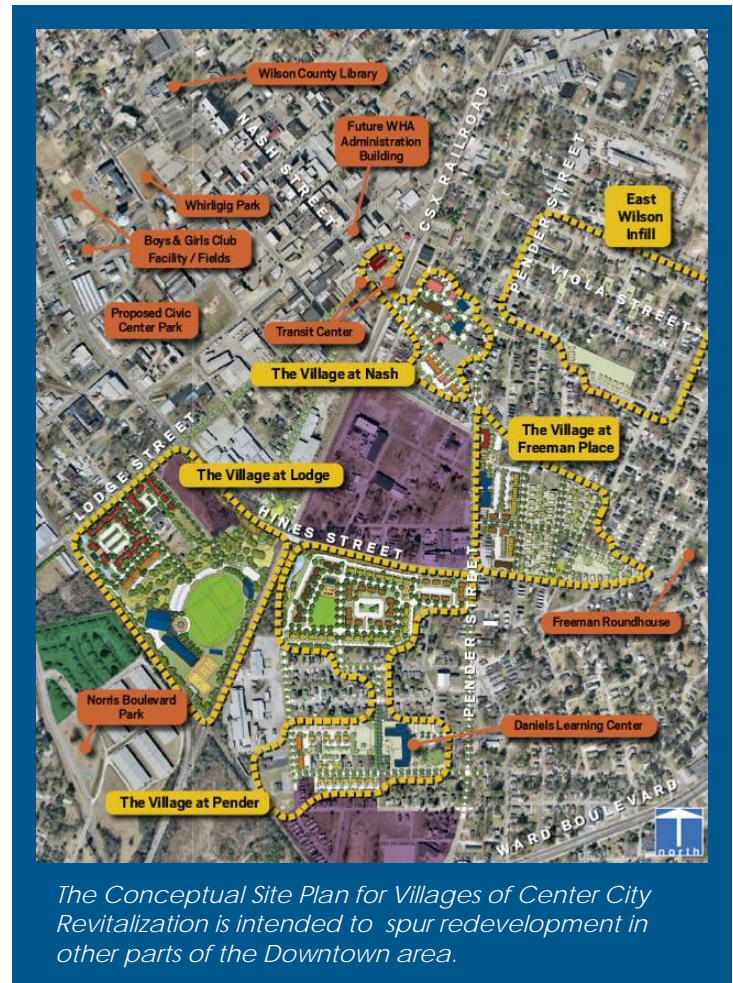
Priority #4: Support and Facilitate Center City Catalyst Projects such as the Villages of Center City

There is much evidence to show that communities with strong institutional partnerships focused on common goals can go far to achieve community visions. Revitalization of Wilson’s Center City has a higher probability for success if undertaken as an “all hands on deck” approach. The City can serve as a leader among partners involved in projects to improve the neighborhoods, commercial areas, institutional uses, streetscapes, schools, and overall quality of life in the Center City. These present opportunities for the City to encourage partners to raise the bar on development and take a more integrated and sustainable approach to develop greener communities that are energy efficient, limit land and resource disturbance through careful site design, and provide integration between neighborhoods and activity areas. The City can continue the momentum developed over the course of the Comprehensive Plan process by making it a priority to support and facilitate catalyst projects that focus local efforts and generate community interest, showing that plans can in fact become a reality.

Villages of Center City

Wilson is fortunate to have the timely opportunity to assist with the implementation of the Villages of Center City project. Led by the Wilson Housing Authority, this project is designed to redevelop and revitalize the Whitfield Homes public housing community located south of Hines between Lodge and Pender. This plan includes over 405 new mixed-income housing units ranging from walk-up apartments, to duplexes, to townhomes. Plans for the Villages at Pender and Lodge include new parks and playgrounds, open spaces, development of a new greenway near a restored creek, and community gardens.

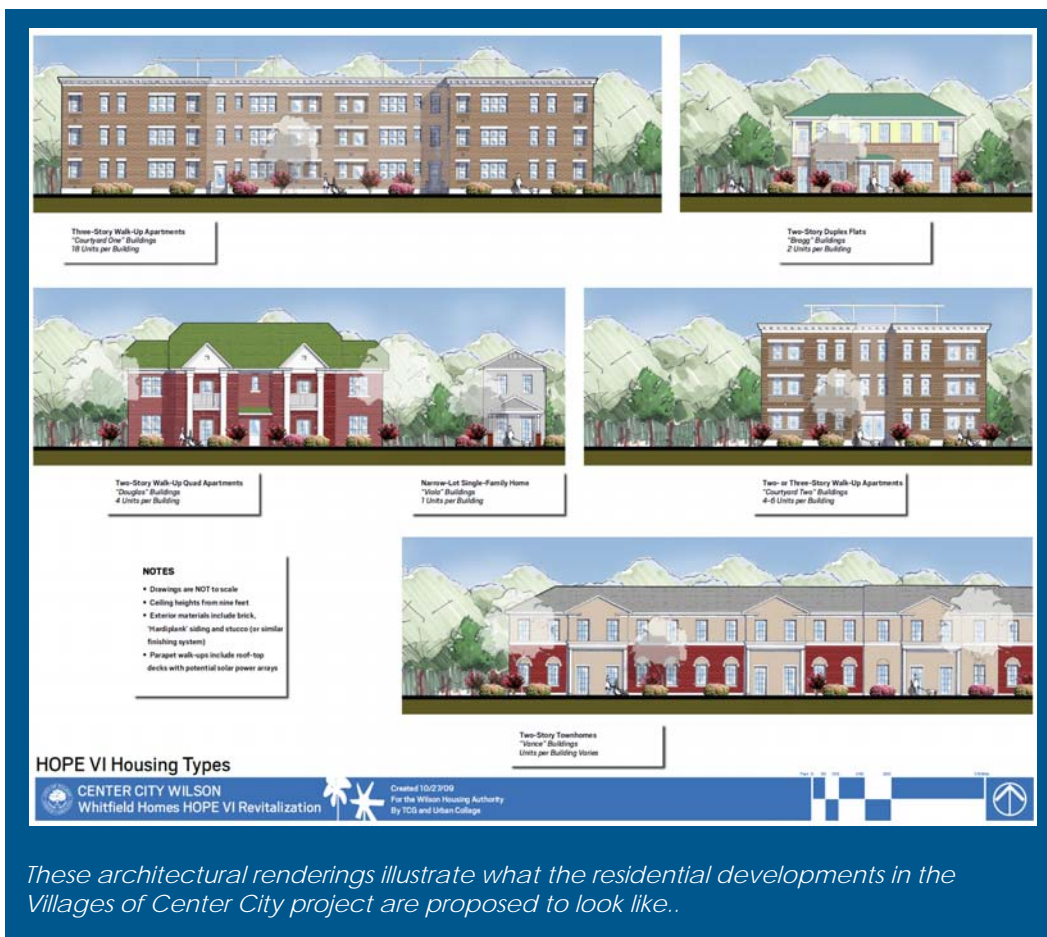
In addition, this project has identified other opportunities for redevelopment that build on the Comprehensive Plan’s goals to improve neighborhoods and create better connections between Downtown and adjacent neighborhoods located in the southeastern portions of the Center City. Other village opportunities include:



The Conceptual Site Plan for Villages of Center City Revitalization is intended to spur redevelopment in other parts of the Downtown area.

- ◆ **Village at Freeman Place.** The Villages Concept Plan builds on ongoing efforts to revitalize and redevelop the Freeman Place for first-time homebuyers. Located east of Pender and north of Hines, new development is proposed to provide additional single-family detached housing and higher-density housing opportunities as well as a new childcare facility.
- ◆ **Village at Nash.** Located north of Barnes and west of Pender, the Concept Plan for the Village at Nash includes new owner-occupied townhomes, senior housing as part of the St. Johns Renaissance proposed mixed-use project, and senior housing in the Cherry Hotel.
- ◆ Thirty-seven scattered **infill sites** have been optioned to the Wilson Housing Authority within one mile of Whitfield homes. These sites are opportunities for new housing development in established neighborhoods.

The City and its partners have invested \$14 million in anticipation of these revitalization efforts, focused on Freeman Place, code enforcement, and demolitions and repairs. This project will create a market synergy in this part of the City and will create new interest for redeveloping other strategic areas of the Center City, such as the Hi-Dollar Warehouse and other sections of the Downtown Tobacco Warehouse District. The graphic on the previous page illustrates the Villages of Center City conceptual site plan and its relationship to Downtown. The image below illustrates what some of the residential developments are proposed to look like.



To ensure the Village of Center City and other identified catalyst projects are given priority attention, the City should provide support by:

- ◆ Identifying implementation of catalyst projects as a high priority for the City
- ◆ Assisting in the sale and assembly of city-owned land for redevelopment as part of catalyst projects
- ◆ Developing short-term “stop-gap” Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance revisions to enable project entitlements under planned densities before the major Zoning/Subdivision Ordinance update is undertaken (Implementation Priority #2)
- ◆ Engaging in aggressive code enforcement in and around the Villages of Center City to target remaining blighted properties
- ◆ Establishing partnerships with the Wilson Housing Authority, Preservation Wilson, Wilson Community Improvement Association (CDC), neighborhood associations, and other organizations to create a strong community focus on catalyst projects, leverage resources, and make redevelopment plans a reality
- ◆ Establishing the next redevelopment area priorities that will build on the momentum and synergy of current catalysts projects, some utilizing local Brownfields sites. Potential priorities include the Narrow Way area and a Brownfields site bounded by the CSX rail line, Barnes, Pender, and Gay Streets. (See purple areas located on the Revitalization Conceptual Site Plan map on the previous page)
- ◆ Undertaking neighborhood planning initiatives in the Center City, targeting neighborhoods between Downtown and Highway 301 Corridor
- ◆ Transportation and other capital improvements, including: (1) improvements to Lodge and Pender Streets to serve as the main connectors from the Villages of Lodge and Pender to the core of Downtown and the transportation hub, (2) improving pedestrian accessibility of the Hines Street overpass, (3) expansion of Norris Park into floodplain areas located on adjacent project sites, and (4) necessary on-site infrastructure.

Priority #4: Support and Facilitate Center City Catalyst Projects

Timeline: Initiate within one year of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: Planning and Development Service Department, Community Development Department, Downtown Development Corporation, and Public Services Department

Priority #5: Establish a Vacant Properties Initiative

An informal survey in the summer of 2009 identified 260 vacant and boarded-up properties in the Center City area. Research around the nation has shown that vacant properties can impact the property values of neighboring lots and perceptions of safety. This is true in Wilson as many community members cite blighted, vacant properties as a key issue to be addressed in the future. Currently, the City has few tools to address these vacant and blighted properties. The City aims to establish a Vacant Properties Initiative that achieves the following goals:

- ◆ Vacant properties should be improved and protected as a priority, and demolition should be used only when other solutions have been exhausted
- ◆ The City should serve to facilitate private sector revitalization of vacant properties and should work with landowners and developers to identify ways that the City can encourage this action
- ◆ Revitalization of vacant properties should uphold the City's goal of achieving a more green development form – one that uses low-impact development techniques and green building design

Example Vacant Properties Initiatives

Communities around the nation are establishing programs to encourage reuse of these properties while simultaneously addressing the need for housing and commercial development. *Operation No Vacancy* is a new initiative in Hickory, North Carolina, that aims to attract reinvestment in distressed commercial and industrial corridors. The initiative began after staff conducted a comprehensive inventory of vacant buildings in the City. City staff has used this inventory to create a Commercial Revitalization Area, which contains the areas that have the highest concentration of vacant buildings and need for reinvestment. The newly created and City financed Vacant Building Revitalization grant offers 50 percent matching funding of up to \$25,000 to people who redevelop a vacant or under-utilized non-residential building in the targeted area. Brownfields sites can be given priority for the vacant building grants. Other economic development incentive programs include City financed community appearance and landscape incentive grant programs, and a commercial revitalization area tax incentive for projects that invest more than \$500,000. For residential buildings, the City offers first-time home buyer and home rehabilitation financial incentives through its CDBG funding.

The National Vacant Properties Campaign serves as a resource to communities looking to overcome the challenges of vacant properties. It provides a clearinghouse of information on vacant property initiatives undertaken across the nation, including new funding and regulatory tools that address prevention of abandonment, fostering rehabilitation of substandard housing and buildings, acquisition and management of tax-delinquent properties, and flexible zoning tools to promote reuse of buildings.

Developing a Vacant Properties Initiative

The City of Wilson should develop a vacant building initiative to increase private investment in vacant buildings in areas such as Five Points, the Old Wilson Mile, the Highway 301 Corridor, and in Downtown. The first step is to maintain an updated inventory of properties and lots in disrepair. Next, the City should identify those properties with historic values and those that have a greater impact on the community and set priorities to identify properties most in need of

addressing. Working with landowners and local partners, such as Preservation Wilson, the City should focus on historic structures and properties that are in disrepair before demolition is necessary. The City should set standards for maintaining vacant buildings, to discourage neglect and disrepair before it occurs. Finally, the City should work with landowners and local partners to identify methods that the City can use to facilitate revitalization of properties, such as waiving tax liens or other fees on vacant properties as a trade-off for rehabilitation work.



Priority #5: Develop a Vacant Properties Initiative

Timeline: Initiate within two years of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: Planning and Development Service Department and Community Development Department

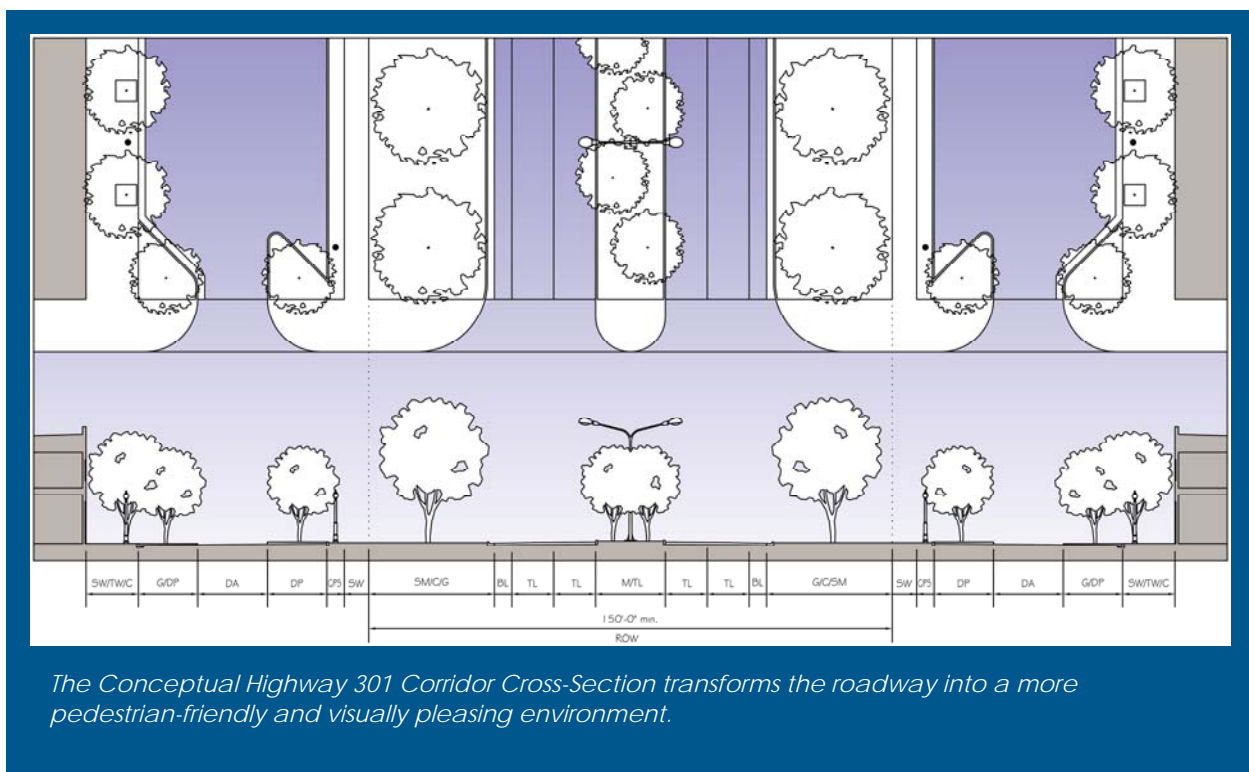
Priority #6: Redesign of Streetscape Improvements to Highway 301

The City’s overall goal for revitalizing aging commercial corridors, such as the City’s first priority -- Highway 301 -- is to enhance the quality of life in these areas. This includes transforming the form and function of the road corridor, providing more multi-modal transportation amenities (e.g., sidewalks, bike lanes, etc.), redevelopment of vacant lots, and enhancing the visual character along the roadway.

Highway 301 was once the main road for north-south interstate travel before the development of Interstate 95. Since that time, the role of the road has changed. Today it primarily serves regional and local travelers. Currently, the North Carolina Department of Transportation lists Highway 301 as an expressway within the North Carolina Intrastate System, an outdated classification that continues Highway 301 as a major regional road. The City has a different

vision for the road that would transform it from its prior regional expressway function to a tree-lined boulevard.

Through the Neighborhoods, Corridors, and Gateway Design Charrette held in April, 2009, the community developed a vision for the Highway 301 Corridor that transforms the roadway from its former use as a regional automobile-dominated roadway to a green corridor that is more pedestrian-friendly and visually pleasing (see the graphic below). The Comprehensive Transportation Plan that is being developed will focus on context sensitive improvements to this corridor that reflect this vision, including sidewalks, crosswalks, designated bike lanes, relocating utilities underground, planting of street trees, and landscaped medians.



As a first step to improving the Highway 301 Corridor, the City of Wilson should work with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, through a Transportation Improvement Program request or an enhancement project, to redesign the Highway 301 Corridor. Next, the City should work with the North Carolina Department of Transportation to initiate a streetscape improvement project to implement new road cross-sections for the Highway 301 Corridor.

Priority #6: Redesign of and Streetscape Improvements to Highway 301

Timeline: Initiate within two years of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: Planning and Development Service Department

Priority #7: Implement Elements of Barton College's Master Plan that Relate to the City's Area of Responsibility

Barton College is an important community asset in Wilson. Barton serves as an educational and cultural landmark in the community that draws students and visiting families from around the nation to Wilson each year. It generates sales tax revenues, provides important cultural events, and offers higher education opportunities within the community.

Barton recently undertook an update to its Master Plan. This update focused on ways to improve the visual character of the college campus, improve transportation and pedestrian access and circulation, provide expansion opportunities, and revitalize neighboring areas. The City has been involved in development of Barton's Master Plan and supports the initiatives it includes. Part of this initiative includes City-College partnerships to improve the areas surrounding Barton.

Implementation of the Barton Master Plan has important implications for the neighborhoods surrounding the College. Many of the implementation strategies outlined in the Master Plan will be catalysts for larger neighborhood revitalization efforts and will lead to tangible improvements to neighborhoods.

The City should take a proactive step and begin formal discussions with Barton College to identify priority partnership projects to improve this part of the community, including incorporating transportation improvements identified in Barton's Master Plan as part of the City's Comprehensive Transportation Plan, public investments in streetscape improvements, improving K-5 schools in areas surrounding Barton, and undertaking neighborhood planning in areas near the College. The City should work to convert Raleigh Road Parkway and Atlantic Christian College Drive to serve as two-way streets to improve traffic flow and accessibility to the College.

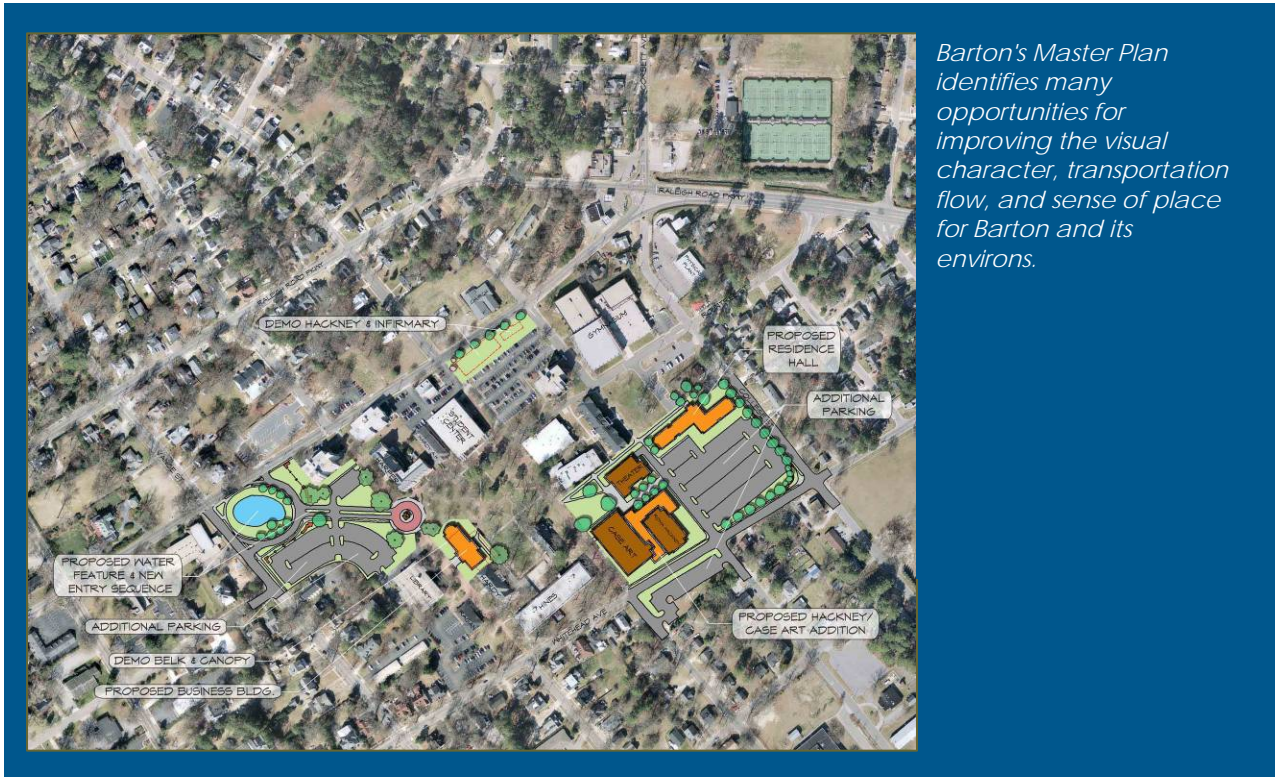


Before



After

Using ideas from the Barton College Master Plan, this photo rendering illustrates how the intersection at Corbett Avenue and Raleigh Road Parkway might look like if redesigned to function as a roundabout.



Barton's Master Plan identifies many opportunities for improving the visual character, transportation flow, and sense of place for Barton and its environs.

Priority #7: Implement Elements of Barton College's Master Plan that Relate to the City's Area of Responsibility

Timeline: Initiate within two years of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: Barton College and Planning and Development Service Department

Priority #8: Promote Green Workforce Development Initiatives and Work with Wilson Community College to Implement Elements of its Master Plan that Relate to the City's Areas of Responsibility

Seventy (70) percent of Wilson Community College's over 11,000 students are residents of the City of Wilson. The Community College has a highly significant societal and economic impact on the City. Wilson Community College (WCC) provides a growing number and variety of educational programs including dropout recovery, trade, technical, professional, and college transfer programs.

WCC serves as a training leader for our region in a variety of critical workforce sectors such as: Allied Health, Nursing, Health Care providers, Teachers, Fire, Police, and Emergency Medical Technicians. College programs draw thousands of students from around the State to Wilson each year. Further, the College is also a leader in the State with its innovative Introduction to Manufacturing Program and related business and industry training program from which over 1,900 students have graduated in the last three years. The College's focus on workforce development has been applied to its leadership in the areas of sustainable/green practices and education and has seen WCC become an acknowledged leader nationally in the development of sustainable practices, purchasing green products, facilities retrofit, and construction of a new certified LEED Gold green building (see rendering to the right). All of these capacities become the basis for teaching the 21st Century skills of the new green economy.



Rendering of Wilson Community College's LEED Designed Student Center.

The College has gone beyond being a green campus and now provides green workforce training programs for its students, including a program to train green building for residential contractors and a Green Advantage course that trains commercial contractors and subcontractors for this certification exam. Wilson should join WCC in promoting green workforce development initiatives in the City to capitalize on the leadership of the College and the need to train the City's workforce for employment in the new economy. This might include:

- ◆ Joint efforts to work with local green businesses to develop new training programs at WCC, such as a preservation training program to advance revitalization initiatives in the City
- ◆ Marketing the green businesses currently at work in Wilson
- ◆ Promoting green jobs and training programs at local public schools

Wilson Community College is an enthusiastic partner in the City's vision for community services and development. This includes the College's role as sustainability and green champion in partnership with the City and Wilson Housing Authority. These partnerships are creating opportunities for cooperative green retrofit plans for the revitalization of Downtown, the historical housing sector, and community housing throughout the city. A major initiative is underway with Wilson Housing Authority properties, as well as larger neighborhood revitalization efforts. WCC serves in an advisory and resource capacity as well as offering training in green restoration in support of Downtown development and restoration efforts.

In addition, the City should work with WCC to implement the elements of the College's 2008-2018 Facilities Master Plan that relate to the City's areas of responsibility. These might include developing a plan for expanding the campus across Herring Avenue, the possible use of Brownfields money (if available) for site redevelopment, and the revitalization of the Herring Avenue Corridor. Among the rapidly growing community colleges in the State, Wilson

Community College has reached a point where it is landlocked on 31 acres occupying outdated and inadequately maintained buildings and infrastructures. When the current College Plan is updated, the City should be involved in the planning process.

Priority #8: Promote Green Workforce Development Initiatives and Sustainable Practices, and Identify Other Priority Partnership Projects, Assist with the Implementation of the College’s Master Plan

Timeline: Initiate within two years of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: Wilson Community College, Wilson County, Planning and Development Service Department, Economic Development Council

Priority #9: Establish Sustainable Performance Standards and Develop an Energy Conservation Strategy

The City of Wilson has an opportunity to be a leader in the community in establishing sustainable development practices. Communities around the nation, including Washington D.C., Salt Lake City, Utah, Greensboro, North Carolina, and others are developing sustainability policies and programs that are focused on energy conservation that can result in a reduction in costs for both the public and private sector.

The City should develop a formal energy conservation strategy to initiate adjustments to City operations that will serve to promote energy efficient transportation and development patterns, material conservation (waste reduction and recycling), and energy efficiency and conservation strategies for buildings and facilities. Likewise, the City should develop incentive programs for private sector projects that incorporate energy efficient transportation and land use patterns and sustainable building designs and systems. Incentives could include procedural incentives, such as waiving fees for development applications, offering density and height bonuses, allowing shared parking agreements, allowing green roofs to qualify for open space credits, and expedited processing for infill and mixed-use projects.

Priority #9: Establish Sustainable Performance Standards and Develop an Energy Conservation Strategy

Timeline: Initiate within two years of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: City Administration with assistance from relevant City departments

Priority #10: Conduct a Feasibility Study for a Downtown Civic Center

Wilson is lacking a space to hold larger community events. Providing a multi-use space that could be used for concerts and other events to serve area residents is needed and could also help generate regional interest in Wilson and draw new visitors to the community.

The Civic Center idea is clearly one that will require a great deal of detailed study and feasibility analysis before it could be deemed viable. At the May 2009 Downtown Charrette, key preliminary issues for evaluating a new Civic Center were identified:

- ◆ The civic center’s size and specific uses must be determined (meeting space, trade shows, performances, etc.)
- ◆ The civic center should be located and designed for future expansion
- ◆ The most economically viable lodging near the center might be a 20-25 room “inn style” operation within a block of the civic center (not a national chain)
- ◆ Potential civic center models to study include those in the following communities:
 Sanford, North Carolina;
 Statesville, North Carolina;
 Mooresville, North Carolina (shown in the image below);
 Natchitoches, Louisiana;
 Natchez, Mississippi



Mooresville’s Citizen Center can serve as a model development for a civic center in Wilson.

A feasibility study should be undertaken to identify the need for a civic center in Downtown Wilson. The study should also investigate demand for specialty lodging, potentially located in an existing historic building, in close proximity to the civic center. The Mooresville, North Carolina, Charles Mack Citizens Center (shown at right) is a good example of a downtown civic center in a community that is similar to Wilson.

Priority #10: Conduct a Feasibility Study for a Downtown Civic Center

Timeline: Initiate within four years of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: Downtown Development Corporation and Wilson Visitors Bureau

Priority #11: Promote Revitalization of Downtown

Revitalization of Wilson's Downtown is a high priority for the City. Many of the implementation priorities included in this chapter address different aspects of Downtown revitalization:

- ◆ **Priority #2: Amend Wilson's Land Development Ordinances** – This implementation action identifies several City ordinance amendments to ensure appropriate zoning and land uses are established in Downtown.
- ◆ **Priority #3: Establish a Neighborhood Planning Process** – Developing neighborhood plans and implementation initiatives for areas adjacent to Downtown will have a strong impact on improving the character and quality of Downtown.
- ◆ **Priority #4: Support and Facilitate Center City Catalyst Projects Such as The Villages of Center City** – The City will focus resources on development of catalyst projects, many of which are proximate or adjacent to Downtown, providing additional housing opportunities and reshaping the community fabric in the Downtown area.
- ◆ **Priority #5: Establish a Vacant Properties Initiative** – A large proportion of vacant properties are located in Downtown Wilson. This implementation action will set priorities for structures in need of repair and reinvestment and establish policies for encouraging redevelopment of these properties.
- ◆ **Priority #7: Incorporate Barton College's Master Plan into the City's Plan** – Working with Barton College to establish a partnership for implementing the College's Master Plan will further revitalization efforts in Downtown through public investments in streetscape improvements, improving area schools, and undertaking neighborhood planning near the College.
- ◆ **Priority #9: Establish Sustainable Performance Standards and Develop and Energy Conservation Strategy** – Developing a formal energy conservation strategy to initiate adjustments to City operations will promote energy efficiency and material conservation. As many government operations are located in Downtown, these programs will set a precedent for Downtown development and operations that can be promoted to private sector developers.
- ◆ **Priority #10: Conduct a Feasibility Study for a Downtown Civic Center** – A larger City civic center in Wilson would provide new opportunities for events, conferences, and performances, and could bring prominence and greater visibility to Downtown Wilson throughout the region. Conducting a feasibility study for a new civic center is the first step in achieving this goal.

In addition to these priorities, Downtown Revitalization can be achieved through strategic economic development, design and development, and transportation strategies:

Economic Development Strategies

- ◆ **Maintain existing Downtown Redevelopment incentive programs**, such as the Rent Incentive Program, Owner-Occupied Building Grant, and Façade Matching Grant programs, to provide developers with redevelopment assistance.

- ◆ **Expand the mission of Wilson Downtown Properties, Incorporated**, to include property ownership and redevelopment to more fully engage in targeted redevelopment projects.
- ◆ **Assist in the formation of a Downtown Merchants Association** by providing City staff assistance and technical support.
- ◆ **Strengthen the linkages between Downtown and Barton College and Wilson Community College** to encourage students and teachers to visit Downtown. Possible initiatives include a historic walking trail or a rubber trolley to promote connectivity between these destinations.
- ◆ **Develop a Downtown Market** in a highly visible location, such as an existing parking lot, to provide opportunities for local artisans, vendors, shop owners, and other businesses to sell goods at a Downtown market space. Monthly or weekly markets could be scheduled along with other Downtown events to promote activity in Downtown. A location in the warehouse district is preferred, containing a shelter to accommodate trucks and vendors.
- ◆ **Expand the Municipal Services District (MSD)** to include areas that are commonly identified as part of Downtown, such as the Tobacco-Warehouse Historic District, to expand the jurisdiction of the Downtown Development Corporation to Downtown areas that are priorities for revitalization assistance.
- ◆ **“Repurpose” vacant store fronts** through partnerships with Downtown landowners of vacant buildings. They could serve as art exhibits, advertising space for community events or civic gatherings, or advertisement for other Downtown businesses.

Design and Development Strategies

- ◆ **Develop Downtown Design Guidelines** to assist landowners with redevelopment of historic and older properties. Guidelines should be used as an incentive in return for financial incentives to developers made by the Wilson Downtown Development Corporation.
- ◆ **Encourage use of the North Carolina Rehabilitation Code** for eligible Downtown redevelopment projects that can benefit from use of this Code over the standard building code. The City should identify a staff person in the Planning and Development Services Department to serve as an advocate for the Code, educating other City departments and Downtown landowners on the benefits of the Code.
- ◆ **Strategic infill opportunities on vacant parcels and surface parking lots** should be prioritized for future development, such as the Hi-Dollar warehouse and the 208 West Nash Street sites. New development guidelines for new construction should be used in order to mimic existing building designs. The City should consider offering low interest loans and/or existing incentives to support new construction on infill lots. The City could also master lease space to assist a developer seeking project financing.
- ◆ **Promote the use of green building techniques and energy conservation measures** in privately owned structures. Educate landowners that historic properties are the

“greenest” developments as they reuse existing infrastructure and building materials. Consider establishing a formal program to offer incentives for green developments in Downtown.

Transportation Strategies

All transportation strategies should be addressed in the City’s Comprehensive Transportation Plan that is being developed in partnership with the NC Department of Transportation.

- ◆ **One-way streets in Downtown Wilson should be converted to two-way** to improve access and visibility for retail, and reduce travel speed for office and residential uses. Tarboro and Pine streets are the most viable candidates. Establish plans for street conversion.
- ◆ **Develop a strategy for improving transit service** to Downtown.
- ◆ **Improve accessibility to Downtown for cyclists** by providing bike racks at key destinations and signage along bicycle routes.
- ◆ **Improve pedestrian accessibility in Downtown** by providing designated walkways from parking lots to street fronts, crosswalks at intersections, and street furniture, such as benches, trash and recycling receptacles, and other amenities.

Priority #11: Promote Revitalization of Downtown

Timeline: Initiate within two years of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: Downtown Development Corporation with assistance from Planning and Development Services Department

Priority #12: Develop a Formal Agreement with Wilson County Schools

Wilson’s public education system provides quality services, but it faces many challenges, including high school drop out rates and underperforming schools. Community demographics and the quality of life experienced in neighborhoods can play a role in educational attainment, supporting the notion that “it takes a village” to ensure the future of our youth. Quality of life issues, such as after school programs, recreational amenities, and the Safe Routes to School program can improve the educational experience for the City’s students. Partnerships with neighborhood organizations, community groups, and educational institutions are helping to improve educational attainment in Wilson. Improving the schools and the neighborhoods surrounding the schools are related goals, and will require joint efforts of the City, neighborhood stakeholders, and Wilson County Schools.

There is an opportunity to address other school-related issues through increased dialogue between the City and Wilson County Schools regarding the siting and design of new facilities. Schools can generate growth and therefore the locations of new schools should align with the City’s future land use plans. The City and Wilson Public Schools should also work together to identify strategies to fully utilize existing schools operating under capacity prior to development

of new schools. Facing tax revenue shortages, the City and Wilson County Schools could join forces through joint use agreements to stretch public dollars and provide jointly operated and maintained parks and recreation offerings to the City’s residents.

The City should initiate a process with Wilson County Schools to develop a formal agreement to share information, plan for the improvement of underperforming schools, jointly plan for new schools, and consider the joint-use of public school facilities, ball fields, and playgrounds.

Priority #12: Develop a Formal Agreement with Wilson County Public Schools

Timeline: Initiate within two years of Plan adoption

Responsible Entity: City Administration with assistance from Planning and Development Service Department

Secondary Priority Implementation Actions

Secondary priority implementation actions formulated from plan goals and policies are provided in the following matrix and organized by key implementation categories. To assist with the development of annual work plans for City departments, the matrix provides the entity responsible for the action and the timeline for initiating action.

- ◆ **Ongoing** actions should be commenced upon adoption of the plan and should continue for the life of the plan.
- ◆ **Short Term** actions should be initiated within three years of plan adoption.
- ◆ **Medium Term** actions should be initiated within five years of plan adoption.
- ◆ **Long Term** actions should be initiated within seven years of plan adoption.

Implementation Action	Timeline	Entity Responsible
Managed Growth		
1. Maintain an up-to-date geographic information system dataset of existing land uses and vacant structures in Wilson. Periodically compare this data to data on new development and redevelopment and identify trends in aging corridors requiring reinvestment focus.	Ongoing	Planning and Development Services and Information Technology Services

Implementation Action	Timeline	Entity Responsible
2. Ensure that City departments share information regarding proposed developments that will require expansion of public safety services. Assess the ability of proposed developments to meet Comprehensive Plan goals and policies and compare it against the Future Land Use Map. Ensure that existing facilities and service capacity can adequately serve new and existing demands for service. Mitigate any potential impacts that might decrease levels of service.	Ongoing	Fire/Rescue, Police, Public Services, Planning and Development Services
3. The City shall set a schedule for regular review of the primary growth areas to ensure that adequate land is available for forecasted development.	Short Term	Planning and Development Services
4. Monitor the balance of tax revenues and public infrastructure costs over time and compare with development approvals to identify trends. Seek strategies to maintain a fiscal balance.	Short Term	Planning and Development Services
5. In collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and Wilson County, adopt and implement a new Wilson Comprehensive Transportation Plan.	Short Term	Public Services and Planning and Development Services
6. Develop a fiscal model to analyze development proposals and any positive or negative impacts development has on municipal budgets.	Medium Term	Planning and Development Services and Finance
Center City Initiatives		
7. Develop and adopt a Commercial Maintenance Building Code and actively enforce it.	Short Term	Planning and Development Services and Downtown Development Corporation
8. As opportunities arise, replace holly trees with a more appropriate species in the Main Street District.	Ongoing	Parks and Recreation and Public Services

Implementation Action	Timeline	Entity Responsible
<p>9. Continuing the partnership with Preservation Wilson, the City should market the Hi-Dollar Warehouse for a mixture of civic and commercial uses. In order to encourage a successful development the following uses should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A government use, such as offices or meeting space, to accelerate loan approval and construction ◆ A Visitor’s Center ◆ A signature destination restaurant 	Ongoing	Downtown Development Corporation and Wilson Visitors Bureau
<p>10. Revitalization and rehabilitation of blighted and vacant properties is paramount. For those properties that can not be addressed by these means, the City should seek new funding sources to fully fund the City’s demolition program.</p>	Short Term	Planning and Development Services
<p>11. Provide incentives to developers with projects in the Highway 301 Corridor, such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Reduce City of Wilson utility connection fees for Highway 301 Corridor developments ◆ Offer an accelerated entitlement process ◆ Negotiate property tax credits for the incremental increase in value over a specific period 	Short Term	Planning and Development Services
<p>12. Consider development of a “One Wilson” Park at the location of Downtown Alive events.</p>	Medium Term	Downtown Development Corporation
<p>13. Extend sidewalk improvements from Nash Street to side streets within the Main Street District. Consider burying overhead lines in this area.</p>	Medium Term	Planning and Development Services and Public Services
<p>14. Explore corporate partnerships in return for discreet advertising signage in gateway areas and other gateway design features.</p>	Medium Term	Planning and Development Services
<p>15. Consider development of a land bank to acquire and redevelop vacant and abandoned properties with tax liens. Work with City leaders to encourage the State legislature to authorize the use of this tool.</p>	Medium Term	Planning and Development Services

Implementation Action	Timeline	Entity Responsible
16. Consider new funding mechanisms to promote redevelopment in the Center City: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Tax Increment Financing ◆ New Markets Tax Credits ◆ Grants or low-interest loans from non-profit community development foundations, such as the Golden Leaf and Z. Smith Reynolds foundations. ◆ A collaborative low-interest fund with area banks and financial institutions ◆ Section 108 Loans ◆ Economic Development Initiative (EDI) and Brownfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI) grants. ◆ Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Loans 	Medium Term	Economic Development Council and Downtown Development Corporation
17. Consider creating a revolving fund for real estate purchases and dispositions within the Highway 301 corridor.	Medium Term	City Administration
18. Develop design guidelines for redevelopment along the Highway 301 Corridor.	Medium Term	Planning and Development Services
19. Work with Wilson Community College to develop a plan for the Herring Road Avenue Corridor, including gateway treatments and reuse of vacant buildings.	Medium Term	Planning and Development Services
20. Develop a Heritage Tourism Plan for Wilson that markets Wilson as a unique, historic destination along I-95.	Long Term	Downtown Development Corporation, Visitors Bureau, and Preservation Wilson
Quality of Life		
21. Advertise community events in the Wilson Parks and Recreation newsletter.	Ongoing	Parks and Recreation and Public Affairs
22. Working with local partners, identify ways the City can assist in attracting and recruiting new cultural and entertainment establishments and activities to the City.	Short Term	Visitors Bureau

Implementation Action	Timeline	Entity Responsible
23. Working through the Citizens Academy, poll citizens on the best ways to provide information about public events and activities.	Short Term	Public Affairs
24. Publicize the City’s community calendar on the Wilson Times website.	Short Term	Public Affairs
25. Explore opportunities for developing a comprehensive, multilingual community calendar that includes civic, cultural, recreational, educational, and other events.	Short Term	Public Affairs
26. Continue to conduct the Citizens Academy and expand outreach to Spanish-speaking citizens.	Short Term	Human Relations
27. Organize cultural events that display the unique character of the City and its residents. Such events could include a public market, art show, and concert with local musicians.	Medium Term	Downtown Development Corporation and Visitors Bureau
Neighborhoods and Housing		
28. Consider establishment of a local “Weed and Seed” program.	Short Term	Police and Community Development
29. Examine appropriate incentives, shifting expenses from City initiated demolitions to assistance with rehabilitation when appropriate.	Short Term	Community Development and Planning and Development Services
30. Implement the Housing Improvement Action Strategy Plan for Wilson.	Medium Term	Community Development
Economic Development		
31. Work with local economic development partners, such as the Wilson Economic Development Council, Chamber of Commerce, Wilson Downtown Development Corporation, and Wilson Downtown Properties to identify future development opportunities and assist with development approvals by providing zoning and infrastructure to foster development of new employment centers, as guided by the Future Land Use map.	Ongoing	Planning and Development Services

Implementation Action	Timeline	Entity Responsible
32. Work with local partner organizations, such as the OIC, to identify ways that the City can assist with reaching the goal of enhancing job readiness of the local workforce.	Ongoing	City Administration
33. Work with local partner organizations to market Wilson as having the most advanced fiber-optic network in the State and one of the best in the nation.	Ongoing	Public Affairs
34. Seek funding assistance from the Federal EPA and other organizations to identify and assess Brownfields in Wilson and develop strategies for remediating and redeveloping these properties.	Ongoing	Planning and Development Services
35. Work with the Economic Development Council to develop a strategy for protecting industrial parks from encroachment by residential subdivisions. Locations proximate to residential areas are often not preferred by prospective businesses due to potential impacts from industries.	Short Term	Planning and Development Services
36. Update the EDC website to include information on available State and local resources available to small businesses, including funding, training, grants, and location assistance.	Short Term	Economic Development Council
37. In coordination with local economic development partners, identify barriers to local business development that the City can take action to amend.	Short Term	Planning and Development Services
38. Identify the appropriate agency/organization and position to coordinate the local small business development efforts occurring in Wilson.	Short Term	Economic Development Council & City Administration
39. Work with existing businesses in Wilson to develop business expansion strategies that capitalize on local technologies.	Short Term	Economic Development Council & Greenlight
40. Following development of Woodard Parkway, work with the Economic Development Council to identify long-term needs for a new industrial park. Determine potential sites appropriate for this type of development.	Medium Term	Planning and Development Services & Economic Development Council

Implementation Action	Timeline	Entity Responsible
41. Analyze development approvals, recruitment efforts, locations of newly established businesses and locations where businesses are not succeeding to identify trends. Trends that show that recruitment efforts are inconsistent with Downtown business development initiatives should be addressed.	Medium Term	Planning and Development Services, Downtown Development Corporation and Economic Development Council
42. Periodically develop a community leakage analysis to identify areas where a business recruitment initiative might be successful in attracting new business.	Medium Term	Economic Development Council
Parks and Recreation		
43. Encourage private development of youth recreational facilities, such as a skating rink.	Ongoing	Planning and Development Services and Parks and Recreation
44. Explore opportunities for the potential sale and/or reuse of small mini-parks that are not actively in use. Neighborhood community gardens or neighborhood owned open spaces or passive park areas are two options for reuse of these sites.	Ongoing	Planning and Development Services and Parks and Recreation
45. Amend zoning and subdivision ordinances to include provisions that encourage or require new residential developments to include open space, park areas, and greenways.	Short Term	Planning and Development Services and Parks and Recreation
46. Work with community neighborhood watch programs to develop strategies to ensure the safety and proper use of local parks.	Short Term	Parks and Recreation
47. Consider opportunities to partner with businesses to provide new recreational facilities and programs for area youth. The privately sponsored Boys and Girls Club in Manassas, Virginia, is an excellent example of this type of partnership.	Short Term	Parks and Recreation
48. Explore expansion of recreational programming for seniors.	Short Term	Parks and Recreation

Implementation Action	Timeline	Entity Responsible
<p>49. Targeted improvements to existing parks and recreational facilities and development of new facilities to be undertaken by the City include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Future construction or renovation of neighborhoods parks, such as Cavalier Terrace ◆ Development of a new recreation center and renovation of existing recreation centers ◆ Development of a new indoor pool at the Gillette complex ◆ Improvements to Wedgewood Golf Course ◆ Provide additional trails/multi-use paths, and other recreational facilities at Lake Wilson park ◆ Development of the greenways system as identified in the 2008 Bicycle Plan 	Medium Term	Parks and Recreation
50. Explore opportunities to provide a dog park within the Center City area.	Medium Term	Parks and Recreation
51. Working in collaboration with Wilson County, explore opportunities to provide a new community park.	Medium Term	Parks and Recreation
52. Working in collaboration with Wilson County, explore opportunities to improve Lake Wilson by providing trails, passive park areas, restroom facilities, and other amenities.	Medium Term	Parks and Recreation
53. Explore opportunities for partnering with Wilson Community College and Barton College to provide new recreational facilities and programs for City-wide use.	Medium Term	Parks and Recreation
54. Working with Wilson County Schools, explore opportunities for joint-use of parks and recreational facilities on school grounds for use by the general public during non-school hours.	Medium Term	Parks and Recreation
55. In the future, identify need for parks and reserve land in Wilson’s growth area for new facilities.	Long Term	Parks and Recreation
Capital Improvements and Infrastructure Planning		
56. Work with the North Carolina Department of Transportation on a partnership to utilize the City’s fiber optic network to coordinate intersection signal timing.	Short Term	Public Services

Implementation Action	Timeline	Entity Responsible
57. Identify solutions for the congested intersection at Raleigh Road Parkway and Forest Hills Road in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan.	Short Term	Public Services
58. As part of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan, identify one-way pairs in Wilson and set priorities for conversion/improvement of these pairs.	Short Term	Public Services
59. As part of the Wilson Comprehensive Transportation Planning process, work with Wilson Community College to identify needed multi-modal transportation enhancements to improve accessibility to Wilson Community College, including pedestrian and bicycle access and transit service.	Short Term	Public Services
60. Ensure that public right-of-way for roadways have adequate space for locating all underground public utilities.	Short Term	Public Services
61. Consider providing a dedicated, annual funding source to pay for public pedestrian and bicycle improvements. A potential source of income is an increase in the vehicle licensing fee for vehicle registrations.	Short Term	City Administration and Finance
62. Develop a formal funding plan for siting, design, construction, and maintenance of Fire Station #6.	Short Term	Fire/Rescue Services and Finance
63. To assist with employment access out of Wilson, study the viability of a van pool service to destinations in the Triangle and Greenville.	Short Term	Public Services and Planning and Development Services
64. Seek re-enlistment of the Wilson Industrial Air Center Airport in the National Plan for Integrated Airport Systems. This designation will make the airport eligible for federal funding to make improvements.	Short Term	Wilson Industrial Air Center Airport Authority
65. Develop a collector street alignment to protect major corridors, such as between Airport and Merck Roads. A model alignment to consider is Westwood Boulevard.	Medium Term	Public Services and Planning and Development Services

Implementation Action	Timeline	Entity Responsible
66. Using traffic studies and forecasts, examine the applicability of a super-street concept and other road designs to protect and enhance travel times and public safety on major thoroughfares, particularly for U.S. 264 (Raleigh Road Parkway.)	Medium Term	Planning and Development Services and Public Services
67. Assess the local transit system and its ability to provide adequate transportation service to citizens in need.	Medium Term	Wilson Transit System and Public Services
68. Expand the Wilson Industrial Air Center Airport’s runway from 4,500 feet to a minimum of 5,000 feet to accommodate larger aircraft.	Long Term	Wilson Industrial Air Center Airport Authority
Partnerships		
69. Work with Wilson Community College and Barton College to develop mentoring programs to assist students in underachieving public schools.	Short Term	Human Relations
70. Develop a program to donate used municipal computers and establish neighborhood resource computer labs for after school and workforce training programs. Work with Barton College and Wilson Community College to teach classes at these neighborhood centers.	Short Term	Human Relations and Planning Development Services
71. Work with Wilson County to develop a formal agreement for coordinating information on development proposals in areas of mutual interest. Consider agreements to amend County zoning in areas of mutual interest.	Short Term	City Administration and Planning and Development Services
72. Coordinate Parks and Recreational facility development and programming with the efforts of other religious and non-profit groups to provide after school programming that is accessible and affordable to all students in the City.	Short Term	Parks and Recreation
Sustainable Planning		
73. The City will review all procurement requests and whenever possible use locally-owned vendors.	Ongoing	Administration

Implementation Action	Timeline	Entity Responsible
74. Adopt measures to reduce water consumption in City-owned facilities, such as purchasing new bathroom facilities that do not use potable water or use less water than traditional facilities. Reduce the need to use potable water for landscape irrigation.	Short Term	Public Services
75. Develop incentives or bonuses within the City's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to encourage development of projects that meet energy conservation goals.	Short Term	Planning and Development Services
76. Consider expanding the municipal recycling program to include recycling receptacles in public spaces, such as Downtown.	Short Term	Public Services
77. Adopt measures to reduce solid waste and to encourage recycling in all City-owned and maintained properties.	Short Term	Public Services
78. Develop public outreach programs to educate the public about the benefits of energy conservation, including costs savings to the individual household, reducing the carbon footprint for the community, and promoting a more sustainable lifestyle.	Short Term	Public Affairs
79. Develop public outreach programs to educate the public about the need to reduce water demand and wastewater discharge to maintain a healthy water supply. Provide information about ways to reduce wastewater discharges, such as low-flow or no-flow toilets, efficient faucets, and graywater reuse.	Short Term	Public Affairs
80. Using a geographic information system, identify trees and tree groves in the City that are critical for maintaining a forested canopy and habitat areas. Provide further protection for these areas.	Medium Term	Planning and Development Services
81. Prepare a tree-planting and pruning manual for the City. The manual should include information on appropriate types of trees for specific conditions, pruning techniques, maintenance of trees, etc.	Medium Term	Parks and Recreation
82. Develop a long-term strategy for maintaining City-owned trees and landscaped areas.	Medium Term	Parks and Recreation

PLAN MONITORING AND UPDATING

Introduction

The Wilson 2030 Comprehensive Plan is a vision plan and a policy document that will guide future decision-making within the City. In order for the Plan to remain relevant and useful, it must be updated periodically to reflect the current trends, conditions, and needs of the community, and its progress should be monitored. This chapter addresses both plan updating and monitoring to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan has the ability to evolve and grow with the community over time.

Plan Updating

It is intended that an update of this Plan take place at least every five years unless otherwise directed by the City Council to occur sooner. In making a determination of when a Plan update should be initiated, a prime consideration is the magnitude of the changes that have occurred in the City since the Plan was last updated. For instance, unexpected changes in the economy, the environment, traffic congestion, projected growth, or other issues, may trigger a Plan update in less than five years.

When conducting a Plan update, Wilson will thoroughly re-evaluate the vision, goals, policies, and implementation actions of this Plan and change or remove those no longer relevant to the community. A Plan update will also include a thorough review of the validity and current quality of all information contained within the Plan and should include opportunities for involvement by the public, boards and commissions, elected and appointed officials, staff, and other affected interests.

Plan Monitoring

The City will monitor the implementation of the Plan over time to measure the progress in achieving goals, policies, and actions. This information will provide crucial feedback to the City's decision-makers regarding the approach to Plan implementation on an ongoing basis.

A formal process should be developed to institutionalize Plan monitoring. It is recommended that the Planning and Development Services Department, the department that supervised development of the Comprehensive Plan, prepare a comprehensive annual report to the City Manager and City Council on the status of Plan implementation. This will require staff to coordinate with other departments, agencies, and organizations to develop complete and accurate reporting on Plan implementation efforts.

In addition to Plan monitoring, the City will use the Comprehensive Plan during development of the City's annual budget and updates to the Capital Improvement Program to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Like Plan monitoring, the Planning and Development Services Department will take the lead on evaluating consistency among future City budgets, Capital Improvement Programs, and the Comprehensive Plan.