

Brunswick Tomorrow

Our County

Our Vision

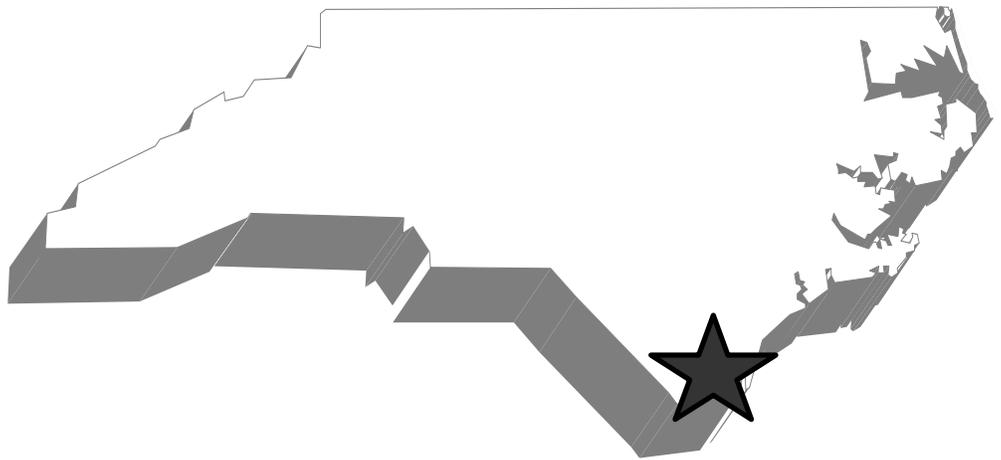
Our Decision

February 2004



North Carolina
Department of
Commerce
**Division of
Community
Assistance**

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**Brunswick County Planning and
Community Development**
P.O. Box 249
75 Courthouse Drive N.E., Bldg I
Bolivia NC 28422

J. Leslie Bell, AICP, HDFP
Director

Brunswick Tomorrow
Brunswick Tomorrow

Our County – Our Vision – Our Decision

Letter from the Chair:

Being a part of a process to develop a 20 year vision plan for Brunswick County, NC has been challenging and rewarding to say the least. After 12 months of planning, public forums, Action Team strategy sessions and a public comment period, we are proud to present your “bottoms up” future vision for Brunswick County.

Brunswick Tomorrow was formed to develop a vision for Brunswick County using comments and feedback from you - the residents of our County - and we never varied from our mission to be the people’s representative. “Our County – Our Vision – Our Decision” was the theme that guided the Brunswick Tomorrow Steering Committee, and in many ways it symbolized the feelings and emotions of the hundreds of individuals that participated in this process.

While formulating a process to develop a future vision, we found that the residents of Brunswick County have a lot of pride in the past, present and future for “Our County”. We also found that when given an opportunity to speak the residents of Brunswick County had many ideas and suggestions for “Our Vision”. In addition, a resounding message emerged for the leaders of Brunswick County in this process, and the message was that a future vision for Brunswick County should be “Our Decision”. This is your plan! It’s heart and soul comes from the comments and feedback that we received in the public forums that were held May through June 2003.

Equipped with comments from our 11 public forums, held throughout the County, our Steering Committee facilitator from the North Carolina Department of Commerce, organized your comments and feedback into the following eight (8) major strategic elements for our future vision:

- (1) Managed Growth / Planning
- (2) Communication / Relationships / Consensus Building
- (3) Economic Development and Job Growth
- (4) Infrastructure
- (5) Services
- (6) Environment Natural And Manmade
- (7) Education
- (8) Quality Of Life

As the Steering Committee reviewed your comments, we reached consensus that all eight major strategic elements are pivotal in creating a complete vision for the future of Brunswick County.

To move your vision forward, the Brunswick Tomorrow Steering Committee formed Action Teams that included two members of our Steering Committee, a facilitator from the NC Cooperative Extension Service, staff assistance from the Brunswick County Planning Department, Brunswick County department heads, municipal government representatives and citizen volunteers from across the County. Each Action Team was assigned two of the major strategic elements, and was asked to develop a mission statement to guide them in drafting goals and strategies for each of the eight major strategic elements. Goals and strategies are the “how to achieve” for the vision represented in each mission statement.

Holding true to our commitment to ensure that your vision for each major strategic element was accurately reflected, we placed our first draft in each of the four public libraries, in the Brunswick County Planning Department, on the Brunswick County web-site, notified all nineteen municipal governments in Brunswick County seeking their input, and we provided copies to County leadership for review and comment. Over the last two months, the Brunswick Tomorrow Steering Committee has reviewed comments and organized goals and strategies to complete your 20-year future vision.

Our task, to develop a future vision for the leadership in Brunswick County is complete. The next step, and perhaps the most difficult, will be to implement the strategies in our future vision. The responsibility to implement our vision rests squarely on the shoulders of all the leadership in Brunswick County both elected and appointed, and I will close with the following thought. Every decision you make and every action you take each and everyday is critical, because nothing has priority over our future!

Denny Jordan

Denny Jordan
Chair – Brunswick Tomorrow
Our County! - Our Vision! - Our Decision!

Our Future Starts Today!

Brunswick Tomorrow *Brunswick Tomorrow*

Our County – Our Vision – Our Decision

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Visioning for any community is the first and most vital step in seeking agreement about the desired outcome of any long range plan. By providing a forum where citizen's values and hopes for the future were articulated, the members of Brunswick Tomorrow are committed to charting a course for the future of Brunswick County that will not only preserve its character but allow its government to maximize future opportunities.

In January 2003 the Brunswick County Commissioners appointed 10 residents of the community who represent the County in varied interests, to serve as members of a "Visioning Key Stakeholders Group". The primary task of this diverse and representative group was to create a long term vision for Brunswick County and explore issues that would assist County and community leaders in meeting the needs of its citizens over the next two decades.

The initial meeting was conducted at Brunswick County Community College with Melba Laney from the State of North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Community Assistance facilitating the process. At this early stage the committee formally selected a name and slogan to identify the body as "Brunswick Tomorrow- Our County, Our Vision, Our Decision." It became known to the electorate as Brunswick Tomorrow.

A series of eleven community meetings were scheduled throughout the County to seek input from citizens, who would suggest how they envisioned the community in twenty years.

A response to the following was sought at each meeting:

- What do you want your County/community to look like in the future?
- What natural features need to be preserved or enhanced?
- What services should be provided to County/community members?
- What aspects of the County's heritage and tradition should be preserved for the future?

- What aspect of the County's economic base should be supported and strengthened?
- What aspects of living and working in the County should be protected?

Over 900 responses to various aspects of these questions were received from the community meetings and categorized for the committee by the facilitator. Additionally, seventy-eight individuals volunteered to serve on the four Action Teams addressing eight major strategic elements:

- Managed Growth/Planning and Communication/Relationships/ Consensus Building
- Economic Growth and Development/Education
- Infrastructure and Services
- Environment and Quality of Life

The Action Teams' assignments were to:

- Develop Vision Statements
- Develop Internal/External analysis
- Develop Goals and Strategies
- Make recommendations to the Steering Committee

This phase commenced in August and was completed in October of 2003. The findings and recommendations of the Action Teams were forwarded to the Brunswick Tomorrow Steering Committee for its review in November. The Brunswick Tomorrow Steering Committee began a series of daylong meetings to review the recommendations and prepare a final document. This executive summary presents the Vision Statements and Goals for the eight major strategic elements. Please refer to the complete document for the Vision Statements, Goals and Strategies.

MANAGED GROWTH/PLANNING and COMMUNICATION/RELATIONSHIPS/CONSENSUS BUILDING

Brunswick County ranks 7th in land area of the total counties in North Carolina and is made up of a collection of rural and coastal communities. Primary growth areas are concentrated around municipalities located south of the County's major roadway, US Hwy 17. The public forums held throughout the County identified the need for a clear managed growth plan. This concern was based on the need for infrastructure to support the County's rapid growth.

Managed Growth/ Planning Mission Statement: Set high standards for responsible, well managed growth and guide development patterns through comprehensive planning and community involvement.

Goals:

- Develop objectives that will guide and support responsible well managed growth.
- Develop alternative sources of revenue to help fund County services and expenditures so that growth will pay for itself.
- Develop a transportation system and manage future growth.

Communication/Relationships/Consensus Building Mission Statement: Develop a high degree of cooperation among County government and municipal governments and citizens.

Goals:

- Foster County and Municipal Governments that work together to meet mutual needs.
- Provide more information that is readily accessible about Brunswick County Services.
- Broaden opportunities for citizen participation.

EDUCATION and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In reviewing the Educational Component of this Action Team, the paramount goal was to provide better educational opportunities to the citizens and students of Brunswick County. The Economic Development component was to provide gainful employment opportunities for all citizens.

Education Mission Statement: Promote quality education and lifelong learning opportunities in Brunswick County.

Goals:

- Promote quality education and training.
- Provide life long learning programs and opportunities.

Economic Development Mission Statement: Identify goals and propose strategies for the development of new business and industry, agribusiness, seafood products, tourism, recreational and retirement areas in all parts of the County.

Goals:

- Develop a variety of economic and employment opportunities that provide meaningful and fruitful employment.
- Expand employment opportunities in all areas of the County.
- Educate and train the workforce to support diverse industries.

INFRASTRUCTURE and SERVICES

The primary focus of this Action Team was the delivery of water and then sewer to the entire County as soon as feasible, while protecting the environment and the quality of surface and ground water. Services addressed by the committee dealt with Countywide public transportation, mosquito control, fire and rescue and County clean up program.

Infrastructure Mission Statement: Provide an infrastructure system that meets our citizens' present and future needs, supports a vibrant economy, protects the environment and adds to the overall quality of life.

Goals:

- Supply County water to as many residents and businesses in Brunswick County as is economically and physically feasible.
- Provide continuous growth of the wastewater collection and treatment systems that enhances the health and welfare of citizens while protecting the quality of surface and ground water.
- Minimize flooding and resulting damage to life and property during normal and significant rainfall events in order to restore and preserve water quality so residents and visitors can enjoy water related activities.
- Ensure safe hurricane Evacuation routes.
- Provide a safe, coordinated system of bike and pedestrian paths and trails throughout the County.
- Construct a Multipurpose Complex for local, regional and state athletic events, trade shows and cultural/heritage exhibitions.

Services Mission Statement: Provide County wide services that enhance the health, safety and quality of life for Brunswick County citizens:

- Provide a comprehensive, multi-modal, cost effective public transportation system to meet the needs of Brunswick County citizens.
- Continue and expand the "Hickman" mosquito –control program in Brunswick County.
- Provide the citizens of Brunswick County with cost effective and task efficient regional Fire and Rescue protection and Emergency Management Services that meets national standards.
- Have a clean County that is aesthetically pleasing to citizens and visitors and fosters a healthy environment.

Fully aware of the cost of the issues involved, we urge the government leaders to establish a comprehensive long range plan, based on growth for water, sewer, and storm water management.

QUALITY OF LIFE and ENVIRONMENT

The focus for Quality of Life and Environment is to promote the well-being and enhancement of our citizens by providing opportunities and incentives which enable County residents to meet their basic needs for:

- Food
- Clean Water
- Affordable Housing
- Gainful Employment
- Education
- Health Care
- Fair Tax Base
- Life Enrichment Activities
- Ensure the Preservation of Historic and Cultural Sites
- Protect and Enhance Utilization of Natural Resources
- Ensure Public Access to the Beaches, Streams and Estuarine Waters of the County.

Quality of Life Mission Statement: Enable Brunswick County residents to meet their needs for food, clean water, clothing, housing, employment, healthcare and life enrichment activities.

Goals:

- Provide accessible and affordable resources and programs that focus on prevention of injury/illness, chronic disease management, and provide information links to other support services and groups.
- Provide accessible and affordable resources that focus on mental health care.
- Provide for the well being of our senior citizens by increasing their participation in current programs while developing adequate facilities and support for an independent life style.
- Encourage continued senior citizen involvement in the community providing them with opportunities to share their skills and work experience for community benefit.
- Recruit and train a corps of volunteers for youth services.
- Place emphasis on the need to work directly with under privileged youth.
- Ensure that all families and individuals have permanent, safe and adequate housing at an affordable cost.
- Offer alternative revenue sources “in lieu of” and not in “addition to” the North Carolina Property Tax.

Environment Mission Statement: Preserve and protect our natural and man-made environments for present and future generations.

Goals:

- Preserve and protect wetlands from development pressure.
- Protect the water quality of our streams and rivers.
- Maintain Brunswick County beaches as a valuable natural resource.
- Implement ongoing educational programs on the importance of conserving and protecting wetland areas.
- Increase the amount of usable open space in major subdivisions.
- Convene and steer a Brunswick County “Conservation Council”.
- Promote healthy forestation and maintain key wildlife areas.
- Promote the reuse of existing commercial and industrial sites that have been abandoned.
- Preserve historic sites, buildings, written records and oral history.
- Ensure the sustainability and viability of the farming and commercial fishing industry in the County.
- Ensure that the local community and government officials recognize the importance and value of maintaining traditional farming and commercial fishing.
- As Brunswick County continues to grow greater demands are made on its government to protect the environment, assist the elderly and the young, increase affordable housing provide greater healthcare services, increase open space, stabilize property taxes and guarantee healthy streams and rivers which represent a few desires of the people.

In summary, we have attempted to synthesize the thoughts, and comments of the people of Brunswick County. We have presented their concepts as succinctly as possible.

The major concern is that the people living to the north of U.S. Hwy. 17 have waited long enough for the County to provide them with water and sewer. This comment resonated throughout the public section of our task. We recommend that the commissioners give very serious thought to this. Perhaps, the Board may wish to look beyond the conventional methods of financing these projects to facilitate and alleviate this long standing issue. We look forward to implementation of the strategies to accomplish the stated goals and hope this plan will be used to guide the actions, priorities and programs of the County in the upcoming years.

Introduction and Background

Brunswick County (Brunswick) is a very desirable place to live and work. It is blessed with a warm climate, natural beauty and desirable location. Brunswick ranked fifth (73,143) out of North Carolina's one hundred counties in percentage population growth from 1990 to 2000 (+43.5%). Population growth for the County is expected to continue; the North Carolina State Data Center projects the 2020 population for Brunswick County at 112,992. With growth comes opportunities and challenges. The Brunswick County Commissioners realizing this initiated a Visioning Project in December 2002 to bring people together to develop a shared vision of what they want their County to be in the future.

A Steering Committee was appointed in January of 2003 to guide the process. The committee was composed of two representatives from each of the five commissioners' districts and County department representatives. The first

meeting of the Steering Committee was February 18, 2003 and marked the beginning of Phase 1 of a four phase process. The Brunswick County Planning Department was assigned the lead in the project and the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Community Assistance as facilitator. The Steering Committee decided early in the process to name the visioning effort "Brunswick Tomorrow – Our County, Our Vision, Our Decision". This phrase reflects the focus of the group; and what Brunswick County of the future should be with the realization that its destiny should belong to those who live here. Much effort has been placed on gathering public input from all sectors of the County through a strategic thinking process. The Visioning Report follows the process used to organize the effort, gather public input and select major strategic elements and how Action Teams developed goals and strategies to address these issues.

Four Phase Process

Phase 1

Phase 1 consists of a Steering Committee organization and environmental scan. A list of Steering Committee names can be found in Appendix A of this report. Basic data about the County and County department information was presented to the group. A chairperson and vice chairperson were selected. The group named itself "Brunswick Tomorrow – Our County, Our Vision, Our Decision". It was decided that a series of public meetings would be used to involve people in the visioning process. Eleven public meetings were scheduled throughout the County, two in each commissioners' district. An invitation to attend a public meeting was sent to all postal patrons in the County.

Announcements of the meetings were sent to newspapers, television stations, radio stations, community organizations, civic organizations, churches, governmental organizations and the municipalities in the County. The Planning Director also appeared on the morning show of a local television station to talk about the project and the public meetings.

Phase 2

Phase 2 included eleven public meetings asking the public to share their ideas and vision for the future of Brunswick County. Five meetings were held during daytime hours and six meetings were at night. Turnout at the public visioning sessions ranged from 11 to 51.

In addition to the public meetings, a table was set up at Brunswick Community College with Brunswick Tomorrow representatives to solicit responses to questions asked at the public meetings. The format for the visioning sessions provided information about the visioning project by the Brunswick Tomorrow Chairperson, a scan of the County by the Planning Director and a visioning exercise led by the facilitator composed of questions to the public to generate ideas about what they desire for the future of the County.

The comments from the public meetings were used to help focus on areas that were important to the public and were the basis for selection of major strategic elements. Eight major strategic elements were selected for further study by Action Teams. Four Action Teams were appointed by the Steering Committee; two major strategic elements were assigned to each Action Team. Two members of the Steering Committee served as co-chairs of each Action Team. Others serving on the Action Teams were citizens at the public meetings that expressed interest in serving on a team

and other individuals with knowledge and interest in the key issue.

Phase 3

Phase 3 called for the Action Teams to meet intensively during September, October and early November 2003 to study major strategic elements and develop goals and strategies to address them. Representatives from County departments participated on the Action Teams to provide information relative to the major strategic elements and answer questions. The goals and strategies developed by each Action Team were reported back to the Steering Committee who are responsible for the entire report. The Steering Committee reviewed all strategies and recommendations and went back into the community for comments before final preparation of the report for presentation to the County Commissioners.

Phase 4

The final phase of the process is implementation of the plan. The plan should be used to guide actions, programs and priorities of the County for the next 20 years.





Steering
Committee



Brunswick Tomorrow

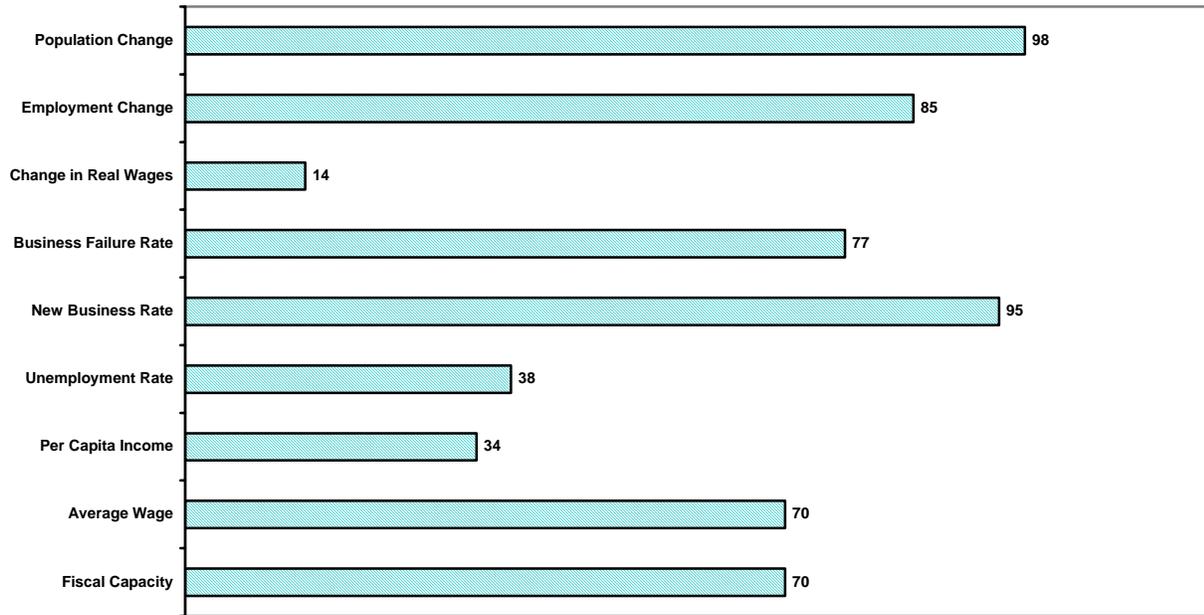
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Major Trends and Indicators



BRUNSWICK COUNTY TRENDS AND INDICATORS

County Score of Key Trend and Status Indicators



Compares performance among the 100 counties in North Carolina from 1 (lowest) to 100 (highest).

Demographics

Population, July 2002	79,054
Population, 2000 Census	73,143
Population, 1990 Census	50,985
Percent Population Change, 1990-2000	43.5
Percent Population Change, NC, 1990-2000	2.1

Workforce & Education

Employment, September 2003	35,227
Unemployed, September 2003	1,687
Percent unemployed, September 2003	4.6
Percent unemployed, 2002	6.8
Percent unemployed, NC, September 2003	6.4
Percent unemployed, NC, 2002	6.7
Percent high school graduates, 2000	78.3
Percent high school graduates, NC, 2000	78.1
Average SAT score, 2003	998
Average SAT score, NC, 2003	1,001
Percent bachelor's degree or higher, 2000	16.1
Percent bachelor's degree or higher, NC, 2000	22.5

Income, Housing & Poverty

Median household income, 2000	\$35,888
Per capita personal income, 1990	\$14,090
Per capita personal income, 2001	\$23,046
Per capita personal income, NC, 2001	\$27,308
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2000	\$95,078
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, NC, 2000	\$108,300
Percent in poverty, 2000	12.6
Percent in poverty, NC, 2000	12.3

Announced Jobs & Investments

Jobs announced, 2002	30
Jobs announced, Thru September 2003	**
Total investment announced, 2002	\$1,155,000
Total investment announced, Thru September 2003	**

Announced Closings & Layoffs

Number of affected establishments, 2002	1
Number of affected establishments, Thru September 2003	2
Job losses, 2002	14
Job losses, Thru September 2003	42

Taxes, Sales & Service

Property taxes/\$100 Value	\$0.520
Gross retail sales (Mil \$, May 03)	\$82.5
Gross retail sales (Mil \$, FY 01-02)	\$882.6
Number of physicians, 2002	75
Population/physician ratio, 2002	1,051
Population/RN ratio, 2002	192
Population/Dentist ratio, 2002	4,379

Employment and Wages by Sector – First Quarter 2003

	Brunswick			North Carolina		
	Avg. Employee	% Total	Avg. Wkly Wage	Avg. Employee	% Total	Avg. Wkly Wage
Total All Industries	21,393	100.0	\$624	3,681,184	100.0	\$651
Total Government	4,125	19.3	\$661	629,173	17.1	\$728
Total Private Industry	17,268	80.7	\$513	3,052,011	82.9	\$651
Agriculture Forestry Fishing & Hunting	133	0.6	\$428	26,184	0.7	\$461
Mining	**	**	**	3,934	0.1	\$891
Utilities	**	**	**	15,429	0.4	\$1,290
Construction	2,232	10.4	\$489	206,799	5.6	\$590
Manufacturing	1,412	6.6	\$603	619,952	16.81	\$765
Wholesale Trade	343	1.6	\$571	161,673	4.4	\$898
Retail Trade	3,153	14.7	\$340	428,342	11.6	\$413
Transportation & Warehousing	702	3.3	\$677	131,701	3.6	\$701
Information	279	1.3	\$783	77,433	2.1	\$975
Finance and Insurance	410	1.9	\$783	137,340	3.7	\$1,379
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	925	4.3	\$445	45,096	1.2	\$554
Professional & Technical Services	872	4.1	\$601	150,193	4.1	\$900
Management of Companies & Enterprises	22	0.1	\$507	61,306	1.7	\$1,526
Administrative & Waste Services	660	3.1	\$454	203,204	5.5	\$425
Educational Services	2,131	10.0	\$290	331,635	9.0	\$597
Health Care & Social Assistance	2,109	9.9	\$545	446,647	12.1	\$623
Accommodation & Food Services	1,952	9.1	\$184	277,579	7.5	\$227
Other Services Ex Public Administration	356	1.7	\$344	95,819	2.6	\$422
Public Administration	1,596	7.5	\$654	211,276	5.7	\$667
Unclassified	43	0.2	\$598	5,300	0.1	\$632

Note: All data are the latest available at the date the profile was prepared. Demographics data are from US Census. Workforce & Education data are from NC Employment Security Commission, US Census, & NC Department of Public Instruction respectively; County unemployment rates are seasonally unadjusted. Average wage data are from ESC's "Insured Employment & Wages in NC for Private Industry by Sector." Income, Housing & Poverty data are from US Bureau of Economic Analysis and the US Census, respectively. Jobs & Investments data are from NC Department of Commerce. Closings & Layoffs data are from the NCEC. Private Sector Employment data are from NCEC's "Insured Employment & Wages in NC for Industry by Sector series; ** indicates data not available or suppressed for confidentially reasons. Taxes, Sales & Services data are from the NC Department of Revenue & the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, respectively.

GOAL: Develop alternative sources of revenue to help fund County services and expenditures so that growth will pay for itself.

STRATEGIES:

- Establish a committee to study, evaluate and recommend how future growth can be financed that will be equitable for all County residents.
 - Land transfer tax
 - Impact fees for new development
 - Other
- Request increasing the Homestead Act deduction by the NC State Legislature from \$25,000.



MANAGED GROWTH/PLANNING

Brunswick County is ranked 7th in land area of the total 100 counties in North Carolina and is comprised of a collection of both rural and coastal communities with major activity centers located throughout its diverse 856 sq. miles. Primary growth areas are concentrated around major activity centers (municipalities) located south of the County's major thoroughfare—US Hwy 17—and in northern Brunswick County. Ranked 5th in population growth

rate of all 100 counties in North Carolina, Brunswick County's population is projected to grow 54 percent (112,886) by Year 2020. The public forums held throughout the County identified the need for a clear managed growth plan. This concern is based, in part, on the need for infrastructure to support the County's rapid growth.

MISSION STATEMENT: SET HIGH STANDARDS FOR RESPONSIBLE, WELL-MANAGED GROWTH AND GUIDE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT.

GOAL: Develop objectives that will guide and support responsible well-managed growth.

STRATEGIES

- Develop a Countywide Comprehensive Plan.
- Plan infrastructure to support desired type and location of growth.
- Enhance and develop new public accesses to waterway resources and implement the priority recommendations contained in the Brunswick County Shoreline Access Plan Update.
- Maximize local, state, and regional eco-tourism opportunities and preserve open space by updating and implementing a Brunswick County Greenways Network.
- Continue to support North Carolina Coastal Land Trust and Nature Conservancy land acquisition efforts to acquire areas of environmental importance.

GOAL: Develop alternative sources of revenue to help fund County services and expenditures so that growth will pay for itself.

STRATEGIES

- Establish a committee to study, evaluate and recommend how future growth can be financed that will be equitable for all County residents.
 - Land transfer tax
 - Impact fees for new development
 - Other
- Request increasing the Homestead Act deduction by the NC State Legislature from \$25,000.

GOAL: Develop a transportation system plan to manage future growth.

STRATEGIES:

- Establish aesthetic and architectural guidelines for future development, particularly along major transportation corridors and scenic highway corridors.
- Develop a County Transportation Improvement Plan (supplementary to NCDOT Transportation Improvement Plan) to identify transportation needs to meet future growth.
- Provide leadership to lobby NC DOT to incorporate and fund the County's local Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) through the Statewide NC DOT TIP.
- Design multi-tier development standards (overlay) for major transportation corridors and high-speed transportation routes.
 - US Highway 17
 - NC 211
 - Proposed I-74 Corridor
 - Proposed I-140 Bypass
 - Proposed 2nd Bridge to Oak Island
 - Proposed Southern Bridge (Cape Fear River)
- Develop architectural standards for off-premise outdoor advertising signs.
- Endorse and implement NC Department of Transportation US Hwy 17 Corridor Access Management Study.



COMMUNICATION/RELATIONSHIPS/CONSENSUS BUILDING

Brunswick County, with its 19 member municipalities, contains more incorporated areas than any of the 100 counties in the State of North Carolina. The County's 19 municipalities vary in population ranging from 151 to 7,033 with a total incorporated population of 33,402 and an unincorporated population of 45,652 (North Carolina State Demographics, 2003). Historically, most Towns are located along and/or south of US Hwy 17 – the County's major thoroughfare. Most of the County north of US Hwy 17 is predominantly rural with an agricultural economy.

As a result of the County's large land area and disparity in resources among its Towns, communication and mutually-beneficial working relationships have been challenging. Although several successful cooperative ventures between the Towns and the County have materialized, the public forums held throughout the County clearly identified more successful mutually-cooperative working relationships as a key factor in managing one of the fastest growth rates in the State. Access to information and designated information outlets also were identified as key areas of interest among the County's citizens.

MISSION STATEMENT: DEVELOP A HIGH DEGREE OF COOPERATION AMONG COUNTY GOVERNMENT, MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS AND CITIZENS.

GOAL: Foster County and Municipal Governments that work together to meet mutual needs.

STRATEGIES:

- Strengthen cooperation between Town and County elected officials.
 - Utilize workshops on general direction and specific topics for County and Municipal officials.
 - Create additional opportunities for elected officials to work together.
- Identify forums and other opportunities for County and Municipal Staff to work together to identify and resolve areas of mutual concerns.
- Research successful models of cooperative programs between County and Municipal governments.

GOAL: Provide more information that is readily accessible about Brunswick County Services.

STRATEGIES

- Establish a Community Relations Office with staff.
- Identify existing outlets, which are accessible to all citizens, to distribute information about County-wide services.
 - County Government
 - Municipal Governments
 - Non-Profit and Other Civic Organizations
- Create new outlets to distribute information on County-wide Services.
 - Information center at the County Government Complex
 - “How to/ Where to” guide for County residents
 - Create new outlets to distribute information on County-wide services.
 - Towns and County help each other in distribution of printed information and brochures
 - Create a ‘County Corner’ at public libraries where information is available to citizens.

GOAL: Broaden opportunities for Citizen Participation.

STRATEGIES

- Hold annual or semiannual Town Meetings to provide opportunities for citizens to voice their opinions and encourage their involvement.
- Meet with local and regional newspapers regarding the feasibility of linking the County’s website to Brunswick County news section on the newspapers’ websites.
- Develop a Brunswick County news section on the County’s web site.
- Televisе monthly Board of Commissioners’ and Town Council meetings as part of cable franchise agreement(s).



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Beginning in 2001, several major plants that called Brunswick County home closed their doors. Companies such as Caterpillar, Armada Corp., Cott Beverage, Technical Yarns, and Hydro-Chem no longer provided jobs to many of Brunswick County's citizens. A total of 525 manufacturing jobs were lost in Brunswick County in 2001. Since those job losses occurred in 2001, 600 new jobs have been created in Brunswick County. These jobs have come as the result of the recruitment of 25 small manufacturing facilities. Despite the change over in jobs, tourism is still the biggest moneymaker in Brunswick County. The beach community is thriving with beach tourism, shopping

expenditures, and retail trade growth. The housing industry continues to grow. Brunswick County continues to recruit the automotive, plastics, and marine trade industries. The Brunswick Tomorrow Economic Development Action Team was formed to help manage the growth in Brunswick County. Currently, 78% of the jobs in Brunswick County are service industry positions. Only 20% of the jobs in Brunswick County are manufacturing jobs and agriculture accounts for just 2% of the County's jobs. The Brunswick Tomorrow Economic Development Action Team was formed to identify strategies for attracting companies, primarily other than service-oriented industries, to locate in Brunswick County.

MISSION STATEMENT: IDENTIFY GOALS AND PROPOSE STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY, AGRIBUSINESS, SEAFOOD PRODUCTS, TOURISM, RECREATIONAL AND RETIREMENT AREAS IN ALL PARTS OF THE COUNTY.

GOAL: Develop a variety of economic and employment opportunities that provide meaningful and fruitful employment.

STRATEGIES:

- Promote ecotourism to enhance traditional tourism.
 - Develop brochures to publicize existing ecotourism/tourism attractions.
 - Publicize through multimedia to make ecotourism data available to the general public.
 - Form a relationship with local tourist development agencies to utilize their contacts and advertising media.
 - Identify and publicize ecotourism/agri-tourism attractions that could be successful in Brunswick County.
 - Work with NC Cooperative Extension to set up task force to train individuals in eco/agri-tourism.
- Promote new farm crops to develop alternate farming methods and make effective use of farmlands.
 - Encourage local restaurants to utilize local crops for their businesses.
 - Support a Farmers Market and Heritage Tourism.
 - Support NC Cooperative Extension's efforts in development and implementation of alternative crops.
- Initiate a County agricultural fair at Multipurpose Complex (complex a joint venture of Brunswick County and Brunswick Community College)
- Encourage the private sector to develop adventure sports.
 - Promote adventure sport competitions.
- Explore opportunities to make commercial fishing more profitable.

GOAL: Expand employment opportunities in all areas of the County.

STRATEGIES:

- Formulate and expand local incentives to attract industry.
 - Inventory unused business facilities.
 - Support County water and sewer systems and other infrastructure.
 - Support and enhance incubator program for startup businesses.
 - Identify and recruit industries that are compatible with and complement Brunswick County's geography, culture and climate.
 - Create awareness of incentives for the employment of the elderly.
- Encourage clean industry to locate in Brunswick County to promote a healthy environment.
 - Support businesses involved with computer software business, medical technology and telecommunications.
 - Promote awareness of service industry catering to tourists' opportunities.
- Establish a regional ecotourism board and link with Brunswick County resources to unify interests of different groups across the Cape Fear Region.
- Expand opportunities (both public and private) for employment and procurement by using local vendors.

GOAL: Educate and train workforce to support diverse industries.

STRATEGIES:

- Increase and enhance apprentice programs to improve the link between educational and vocational opportunities.
 - Cultivate relationships with NC Employment Security Commission, Brunswick Community College, and other institutions to underwrite job training programs
 - Seek industry/business support for apprenticeship programs.
 - Provide transportation for job training for those who need it.
 - Support existing apprenticeship and job sharing programs in Brunswick County Schools.
 - Develop work training programs to better train workforce.



EDUCATION

Brunswick County currently has several challenges facing its public education system. The County has one of the highest dropout rates among the 100 counties within the State of North Carolina. Also, there is a growing Hispanic population that requires the Board of Education and Brunswick Community College to provide resources to meet the needs of Hispanic students. The growth that is occurring in Brunswick County is also leaving many people without sufficient access to educational centers. Many of Brunswick County's residents are unable to afford transportation to and from educational centers such as Brunswick Community

College. To meet a growing list of educational challenges, Brunswick County has undertaken new endeavors in order to meet these challenges. The Brunswick County Board of Education is promoting 100% certified teachers in K-12 by the year 2005, and is proposing an initiative to move toward "Community Based Education." The Board of Education also is utilizing a 1999 \$83.5 million Local School Bond Fund intended to address the capital needs of Brunswick County's schools until 2008. The construction of the capital projects is scheduled to take place in three phases over a five-year period.

MISSION STATEMENT: PROMOTE QUALITY EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN BRUNSWICK COUNTY.

GOAL: Promote quality education and training.

STRATEGIES:

- Support Board of Education goal of 100% certified teachers in K-12 by 2005.
- Encourage school system to reduce dropout rate continually over 20 year period.
- Expand service and trade training opportunities in our high schools and at Brunswick Community College.
- Ensure state of the art technological skills training is available to K-12 students.
- Form partnership with Brunswick Community College and Economic Development Commission to ensure training for future employment needs.
- Determine the feasibility of a health occupation training program.

GOAL: Provide life long learning programs and opportunities.

STRATEGIES:

- Continue and expand lifelong learning and cultural programs and courses at Brunswick Community College.
- Promote awareness of educational opportunities available with NC Cooperative Extension.
- Support and expand cultural and performing arts events at the Odell Williamson Auditorium.
- Use existing facilities for lifelong learning opportunities.

**BRUNSWICK COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ODELL WILLIAMSON AUDITORIUM**

*Your Center For The Arts In
Southeastern North Carolina*



INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is defined as the basic installations and facilities on which the continuance and growth of a community depends. Infrastructure for this report includes water and sewer facilities, storm water management, roads and bike paths. As the County continues to grow and density increases, the need for infrastructure will increase to accommodate the growth and to protect the natural environment. The top priority of the Infrastructure and Services Action Team was the desire to have clean, potable water available to the greatest number of citizens of Brunswick County as is economically and physically feasible.

Brunswick County began a storm water management program in 2002 with the purpose “to meet the current and anticipated needs for storm water services and to protect public and private properties, rivers, estuaries, and other water bodies from unnecessary damage due to storm water releases and non-point source pollution.” Step One of the Storm Water Management Program applies the regulations to new construction and is currently enforced

The County began its water supply and distribution system in 1977 in the Southport area. It currently has two treatment plants, the Northwest Surface Water Treatment Plant and the NC Hwy 211 Groundwater Treatment Plant. The Northwest Plant’s water supply is the Cape Fear River purchased from the Lower Cape Fear Water and Sewer Authority. It has a treatment capacity of 24,000,000 gallons per day and on-site storage of 4,000,000 gallons. The NC Hwy 211 Plant’s water supply is from ground water. It has a treatment capacity of 6,000,000 gallons per day and on-site storage of 1,250,000 gallons. The distribution system has 2,962,000 linear feet (560 miles) of pipe.

The County’s Northeast Brunswick Regional Water Reclamation Facility currently serves three (3) wholesale customers (North Brunswick Sanitary District, Town of Navassa and Town of Leland) and approximately twenty-five (25) commercial and industrial customers. The County is currently permitting the West Brunswick Regional Water Reclamation Facility that will serve one (1) wholesale customer (Town of Holden Beach) along with the Town of St. James and Winding River Plantation. In the meantime, the County will continue to operate package treatment facilities at St. James, Winding River Plantation, Brunswick Community College and Brunswick County Government Complex, all of which will be decommissioned after the start up of the West Brunswick Regional Wastewater System.

A safe and efficient road system that provides easy access to all areas of the County and access to adjoining areas is important to the growth and quality of life for Brunswick County. The County is partnering with the state to improve existing and to expand regional roadways and bridges to serve the traveling public and County citizens and to provide effective evacuation routes in times of emergencies. The US 17 Corridor Study will look at “innovative alternatives to protect the integrity of the US 17 in Brunswick County and to maintain mobility along the corridor”.

MISSION STATEMENT: PROVIDE AN INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEM THAT MEETS OUR CITIZENS' PRESENT AND FUTURE NEEDS, SUPPORTS A VIBRANT ECONOMY, PROTECTS THE ENVIRONMENT AND ADDS TO THE OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE.

GOAL: Supply County water to as many residents and businesses in Brunswick County as is economically and physically feasible.

STRATEGIES:

- Seek regional cooperation and coordination to maximize service delivery while minimizing duplication of infrastructure and services.
 - Develop a County/Municipal Association to initiate discussion for cooperation and coordination between local governments for service delivery.
 - Establish a Countywide Public Utilities Board.
- Prepare a comprehensive, Countywide water supply and distribution plan and timeline for development that meets the anticipated growth for Brunswick County.
- Maintain major thrust toward a Countywide water system.
 - Monitor rates and update them as needed.
 - Charge capital recovery fees for new development.
- Vigorously pursue grants to expand the water system for small and traditional communities.
- Encourage Lower Cape Fear Water & Sewer Authority (LCFWSA) to implement state of the art vigorous control and monitoring for possible contamination of primary water source.
- Prepare back-up water source for emergency events.
- Develop policies, practices and procedures for water supply and distribution consistent with stated goals.
- Enhance County fire protection system as the water distribution system is expanded, (i.e., fire hydrants, elevated storage and other needs).

GOAL: Provide continuous growth of the wastewater collection and treatment systems that enhances the health and welfare of citizens while protecting the quality of surface and ground water.

STRATEGIES:

- Seek regional cooperation by all local governments to maximize service delivery while minimizing duplication of infrastructure and services.
 - Develop a mechanism, such as a County/Municipal Association, to study service delivery.
 - Establish a Countywide Public Utilities Board.
- Prepare a comprehensive, Countywide wastewater collection and treatment plan and timeline for development.
- Coordinate water and sewer grants for rural development opportunities
- Maintain major thrust toward a Countywide wastewater system.
 - Monitor rates and update them as needed.
 - Charge capital recovery fees for new development.
- Expand opportunities for use of reclaimed water.
- Pass an ordinance to prohibit disposal of septage and biosolids in Brunswick County that originated outside of Brunswick County.
- Implement a County permitting process for biosolids and septage land application sites.



GOAL: Minimize flooding and resulting damage to life and property during normal and significant rainfall events in order restore and preserve water quality so residents and visitors can enjoy water related activities.

STRATEGIES:

- Review and refine County's existing Storm Water Manual and Storm Water Ordinance.
- Develop a Storm Water Master Plan.
- Fully fund a Storm Water Management Program with impact and permitting fees to monitor and enforce the Storm Water Ordinance.
- Implement Step Two of the Storm Water Program – regulation of existing development
- Actively seek Countywide partnerships for storm water management.
 - Establish a Countywide Public Utilities Board.
- Keep streams and waterways clear of limbs and debris in addition to the effort already in effect with the mosquito control program.
- Educate the public about the need for storm water management.
- Require all stormwater management systems be designed and maintained to enhance mosquito control.

GOAL: Ensure safe Hurricane Evacuation Routes.

STRATEGIES:

- Identify and make improvements to roads that serve as Hurricane Evacuation Routes.
 - Perform routine bridge and culvert maintenance and raise bridges over streams that have documented flooding during significant rain events.
- Support the planning and implementation of regional roadways.
- Support the construction of a second Oak Island bridge, and new bridge for Sunset Beach and the Southern Bridge for the Cape Fear River.

GOAL: Provide a safe, coordinated system of bike and pedestrian paths and trails throughout the County.

STRATEGIES:

- Encourage appropriate thoroughfares (state maintained roads) to include bike lanes as they are designed and expanded.
- Coordinate efforts for construction of bike and pedestrian paths with the East Coast Greenway and County and municipal park systems.
- Amend Subdivision and Planned Unit Development Regulations to encourage connectivity of bike and pedestrian paths among developments.
- Include bike and pedestrian trails at all County parks.
- Secure access to and provide for bike and pedestrian trails along rivers and streams for sites denoted in the Brunswick County Shoreline Access Plan.

GOAL: Construct a Multipurpose Complex for local, regional and state athletic events, trade shows and cultural/heritage exhibitions.

STRATEGIES:

- Partner with educational, business and local governments to construct a centrally located Multipurpose Complex.
- Include space for a County fairground and other outdoor spectator events.

SERVICES

The services addressed in this Key Issue are Countywide public transportation, mosquito control, fire and rescue and the County clean-up program. The County has a public transportation system named Brunswick Transit System that has been open to the public since July 2003. Fees are based on service needed. Brunswick Human Service Agencies contract with the system to meet the daily transportation needs of their clients. Service is available to the general public. The system has a shuttle service available from the Leland area to Bolivia with a published schedule. Brunswick Transit System recently partnered with the Wilmington Transit System to link services between Brunswick and New Hanover Counties. This fixed-route service will give citizens scheduled transportation to the Wilmington urbanized area. The long term goal of Brunswick Transit System is to make transportation available to the general public throughout the County. The size and dispersed population necessitates service delivery in nontraditional ways. As the County grows and its population ages, the need for public transportation increases.

Brunswick County has an excellent mosquito control program that includes adulticiding, larvaciding, biological control and physical control. Adulticiding (spraying to kill adult mosquitoes) includes spraying chemicals throughout the entire County every two weeks or every four to five days during particular bad periods and aerial spraying in emergency situations only. Larvaciding treats breeding areas with chemicals to disrupt the life cycle so the mosquitoes don't mature to adults. This is accomplished through a non-toxic insect growth hormone in granular form, bricks

given to County residents upon request or aerial spraying of Eagle Island spoil islands. Biological control is by minnows placed in bodies of water to consume the mosquitoes. Physical control is by drainage ditches for areas of standing water. The mosquito control program also has a flock of twenty chickens used for year-round monitoring for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) and West Nile virus. The program must be maintained and expanded as needed to protect the public health and enable outdoor activities.

Fire and rescue service in Brunswick County is a joint effort between the County and twenty-two volunteer fire departments. The County is divided into fire insurance districts with fire fees based upon square footage of types of buildings. Fire fees provide for fire, medical first responder, and rescue. Brunswick County Emergency Medical Services Division provides paramedic ambulance service and volunteer rescue squads provide quick response, basic transport and special rescue in towns and the County. There are approximately fifty-five full time EMS personnel and four hundred volunteers; there are six hundred to one thousand volunteer firemen with forty percent of the departments having some paid staff. A Public Safety Study was recently completed by an outside consultant that looks in depth at current fire and rescue service in the County and makes recommendations for improvements. The Infrastructure and Service Action Team's strategy for the Fire and Rescue Key Issue is that the Public Safety Study be analyzed by a Review Team to determine what recommendations will work best for Brunswick County and develop an Action Plan for implementation.

The County Appearance and Code Enforcement Program is a joint operation of the Planning Department and Operation Services initiated in October 2002 to clear the County of junked cars and abandoned mobile homes and buildings. One thousand seven hundred requests have been made by property owners for voluntary clean up of their

property. Seventeen thousand man hours have been used to clean up four hundred sixty-six mobile homes, three hundred twenty buildings and four hundred seventy-eight cars and trucks. This program has been successful in removing many eyesores from the County while recycling much of the materials.

MISSION STATEMENT: TO PROVIDE COUNTYWIDE SERVICES THAT ENHANCE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR BRUNSWICK COUNTY CITIZENS.

GOAL: Provide a comprehensive, multi-modal, cost effective public transportation system to meet the needs of Brunswick County citizens.

STRATEGIES:

- Generate awareness of current capabilities of Brunswick Transit System.
 - Prepare a comprehensive public transportation plan.
- Develop a slogan and marketing plan for easier identification.
- Explore innovative means to increase funding available for the Brunswick Transit System.

GOAL: Continue and expand the “Hickman” mosquito control program in Brunswick County.

STRATEGIES:

- Identify and train qualified personnel to continue the “Hickman” mosquito control program.
- Begin an education program on individual mosquito control and protection.
 - Coordinate an educational program in the public school system with the current recycling program.
 - Initiate a public service program on mosquito personal protection and elimination of breeding places around the home.
- Maintain funding for mosquito control research and an appropriate capital reserve fund.
- Develop a regional comprehensive mosquito control program.
- Expand the County snagging and ditching program
- Develop standards for building/maintaining stormwater management systems that reduce mosquito habitats.

GOAL: Provide the citizens of Brunswick County with cost effective and task efficient regional Fire and Rescue protection and Emergency Medical Services that meets National Standards.

STRATEGIES:

- Appoint a Public Safety Study Review Team composed of local citizens and Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services personnel and volunteers to evaluate the recently completed Public Safety Study.
 - Determine what recommendations in the Public Safety Study will work best for Brunswick County.
 - Develop an Action Plan to implement recommendations of the Review Team
 - Keep the Brunswick County public informed of the activities and progress of the Review Team.
- Continue to foster cooperation and coordination between the County and volunteer units and volunteer units with each other.



GOAL Have a clean County that is aesthetically pleasing to citizens and visitors and fosters a healthy environment.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop a comprehensive, County-wide recycling program.
- Revise County's Code of Ordinances to transition the County's Clean-up Program from a free service to a fee based service.
- Include enforcement provisions in revised Code of Ordinances for the Clean-up Program and resources and personnel to carry it out.
- Investigate a best practice method for disposal of household medical waste.



QUALITY OF LIFE

Brunswick County experienced a 43% increase in population from 1990 through 2000; the current County census exceeds 73,000 residents. By the Year 2020, the projected population is expected to be about 112,000. If the current percent of residents over 65 remains the same (now at 16.9%), then almost 19,000 residents will be high-volume consumers of the health care system. Essentially, this will be a 53% increase in the over-65 population segment for the next 16 years. In anticipation of this long-term demand, Brunswick County is evaluating health care services for seniors, wellness programs, diabetic support, expanded VA medical facilities, and more medical services. Steps must be taken to assure the continued health and safety of County residents.

The phenomenal population growth in Brunswick County is greatly impacted by the in-migration of senior citizens who are attracted by a favorable climate, beaches, a relatively low-density environment, retirement-communities, etc. This greatly adds to the indigenous population of seniors living in the County. The NC Division of Aging currently estimates that people 60+ years of age number 19,200 or in excess of 25% of the population.

While most senior in-migrants arrive with modest or greater resources allowing an independent life-style, the aging process coupled with a disappearing financial security and a lack of extended family support reduces the abilities of many to maintain the quality independent life-style that they had planned. Similarly, the seniors who have resided all their lives in Brunswick County have the same financial struggle to remain in their own homes and be self-sufficient.

Program statistics from all services reveal a relatively low participation level of seniors who are by age or otherwise eligible for services. However, financial resources available are being utilized to their full potential.

A program or facility providing adult day care/respite for families who need such a service is not available.

Senior Center and Nutrition sites exist in Ash, Leland, Shallotte, Southport and Oak Island. Traditionally budgets have been utilized primarily for transportation, food and labor costs with little being expended on facilities development/upgrading or program equipment provision. As a consequence, facilities and equipment are now showing age and dilapidation that reduces attractiveness and limits capacity for outreach to the target population. Also, distance from the centers limits access to service.

Improvements in the quality of life for the residents of Brunswick County will require that all residents have 1) access to enough nourishing food, 2) decent housing in a healthy, safe environment, 3) opportunities for well-paying employment, 4) opportunities for education, 5) wellness education and incentives to develop a healthy lifestyle, and 6) opportunities for life enrichment in the form of entertainment, athletics, music, arts, crafts, and drama.

Long-term improvements need to be focused on the young residents to begin the cycle of continuous quality of life upgrade generation by generation.

Currently 14% of the County's population is living below poverty including 22.7% of the County's children. The number of persons below poverty for Brunswick County is already 2% higher than the state's average. As the County's population is expected to grow so are these numbers. The increase in monthly rental payments and the large amount of money needed to purchase a home conducive to their families needs is forcing families to live in substandard and unhealthy conditions. A study conducted by the Tri-County Homeless Interagency Council in Spring 2003 reports over 663 homeless individuals living in Brunswick County. These individuals and families are sleeping in cars, in the woods or doubled up with other families in units that are dangerously too small. The Department of Public Housing has a waiting list over 2 years long for assistance with rent, which alone displays the large number of those in need of assistance in obtaining affordable permanent housing. With the median value of homes in Brunswick County at \$127,400, the opportunity for a family making below \$10 an hour to own such home is impossible. Although the median County income is over \$30,000 a year, individuals who can afford to live in such up scale retirement communities drastically skew this number.

Brunswick County derives over 68% of its operating revenue from ad valorem or property taxes. Businesses, industry and property owners pay approximately \$65 million in taxes on property valued at over \$12.5 billion. The shift of the tax burden toward single family home owners has

increased over the past several years as more and more laws are passed that partially or totally exempt various types of property including business inventory, non profits, conservative easements and elderly exemptions for senior citizens.

As property values rise after each revaluation more burden is placed on some property owners, many of whom are least able to absorb the increase. These trends have raised debate regarding the whole property tax system including abolishing property taxes or capping property value at its sales price. More and more government officials prompted by angry taxpayers are seeing the need to look at alternative revenue sources. The objective here is to present alternative funding sources to replace some of the property tax revenue. These strategies should not be considered as additional funding sources, but alternative sources in addition to a reduced tax rate and ultimate tax burden.

A major focus of the 2004-2010 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) is the upgrading of the major highway infrastructure for the area. This focus is designed to promote access and flow of traffic to and from one of the state's primary sources of revenue - tourism and residential growth along the Brunswick County beaches. However, the current plan has a glaring weakness. Brunswick County is home to a nuclear power plant, a major Army ocean terminal for ammunition shipments and is prone to wildfires, hurricanes and floods, yet most evacuation routes out of the beach and surrounding communities along the coastal area are two lane roads.

MISSION STATEMENT: ENABLE BRUNSWICK COUNTY RESIDENTS TO MEET THEIR NEEDS FOR FOOD, CLEAN WATER, CLOTHING, HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, HEALTHCARE AND LIFE ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES.

HEALTH CARE

GOAL: Provide accessible and affordable resources and programs that focus on prevention of injury/illness, chronic disease management, and provide information links to other support services and groups.

STRATEGIES:

- Prevention/ Intervention:
 - Expand the Brunswick County web site with links to Federal, State, and local organizations that focus on wellness and/or provide healthcare resources.
 - Increase the use of Mobile Health Unit and inform public through the media of locations, times and routes.
 - Hold more public health fairs.
 - Support wellness initiatives via bike rallies, marathons, fishing tournaments, etc. that provide the County a link with regional and private resources.
 - Work with state and Federal legislators to obtain grant money for initiatives to reduce health care costs.
- Crisis Management: Individual & Area-wide
 - Create a 'super number' and web site that residents can access to aid in finding resources.
 - Work with local religious groups to provide emergency support systems for large scale or traumatic events.
 - Continue County-wide test drills of our emergency preparedness system.
- Chronic Disease Management (e.g., diabetes, cancer, pulmonary disease)
 - Create a task force of volunteers to help with specific suggestions and/or grant writing to fund a group that will network with Federal, State, local and private resources in this area.
 - Develop support for youth health programs.

GOAL: Provide accessible and affordable resources that focus on Mental Health Care.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop a comprehensive mental health services program.

SENIOR SERVICES

GOAL: Provide for the well being of our senior citizens by increasing their participation in current programs while developing adequate facilities and support for an independent life style.

STRATEGIES:

- Establish/expand and ensure full accreditation at nutrition sites and senior centers.
- Offer a wider variety of activities and programs at senior centers.
- Collaborate with other entities to provide a wider range of health and wellness programs.
- Develop a comprehensive information and referral program to support independent living.
- Develop a comprehensive fund raising plan to support senior centers and activities.
- Continue to support the efforts of Brunswick Transit System (BTS).

GOAL: Encourage continued senior citizen involvement in the community providing them with opportunities to share their skills and work-experience for community benefit.

STRATEGIES:

- Seek federal funding for a Retired Senior Volunteer program in Brunswick County.
- Develop a County-wide approach to the recruitment and deployment of Title V subsidized workers for community service.
- Advocate a greater utilization of senior citizen experience on area non profit boards, governmental advisory boards, etc.
- Work with the local chapters of AARP and others to involve seniors in community service.

YOUTH SERVICES

GOAL: Recruit and train a corps of volunteers for youth services.

STRATEGIES:

- Make the public aware of the challenges and opportunities of volunteering for youth services.
- Encourage industry participation in volunteer work.
- Partner with civic clubs, churches, 4-H, junior achievement and mentoring organizations for funds and services to support youth programs.
- Recruit more senior volunteers through Brunswick Senior Resources.

GOAL: Place emphasis on the need to work directly with under-privileged youth.

STRATEGIES:

- Establish a youth in need initiative.
- Achieve a higher level of parent or guardian involvement in the youth in need initiative.
- Encourage wellness education.
- Encourage our youth to stay in school.
- Follow Parks and Recreation Master Plan to construct a Multipurpose Complex that would include facilities for life enrichment activities: athletics, music, drama, arts, crafts, development of social skills and wholesome entertainment. Complex would be a joint venture for Brunswick County, Brunswick Community College and the public school system.
- Revisit the feasibility of a YMCA/YWCA presence in Brunswick County.
- Maintain and expand support for Brunswick County Park and Recreation facilities and programs.
- Better communicate the programs, athletics, classes, etc. available for the youth of the County.
- Eliminate transportation as a barrier for youth participation in activities.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

GOAL: Ensure that all families and individuals have permanent, safe and adequate housing at an affordable cost.

STRATEGIES:

- Create housing opportunities for the elderly, disabled and homeless.
- Provide low and medium-income families and individuals with affordable housing options.
- Support agencies, both private and public, to facilitate temporary and transitional housing for homeless individuals and families.
- Promote self-sufficiency of those utilizing affordable housing options through community supports and services.
 - Offer Credit Counseling and Home Ownership Counseling services through the Public Housing Agency.
 - Locate grant monies to assist low and medium-income families, including senior citizens.

FAIR TAX BASE

GOAL: Offer alternative revenue sources “in lieu of” and not “in addition to” the North Carolina property tax system.

STRATEGIES:

- Investigate the feasibility of a graduated scale real property transfer tax.
- Explore implementing impact fees at the time of application for building permit for the cost of providing the service that are in line with surrounding areas.
- Collect water and sewer capacity fees for proposed new developments.
- Collect County room tax.
- Insure that the “use value” program is provided to all eligible citizens and that it is allowed only to qualified parcels, both open and timber land.
- Allocate a percentage of new revenue sources to expand the water system into areas that currently do not meet the enterprise system model.
- Create an annual fee schedule for homeowners:
 - Primary residence \$0
 - Second home/non rental \$100
 - Rental/resort \$500

ENVIRONMENT – NATURAL & MANMADE

Brunswick County has many natural features that attract new visitors and residents alike. Just the 45 miles of beaches alone attracts thousands of tourists every year ranking Brunswick County as the 10th largest in North Carolina tourism (based on 2001 revenue). In addition to the coastal ecosystems, wetlands and forests serve as vital filters for water runoff, marine life nurseries, as well as aesthetically contribute to the community. The rivers, streams, Green Swamp and wildlife combine to make Brunswick County one of the most ecologically diverse and unique areas in North America, if not the world.

Citizens and visitors to Brunswick County know that the County is rich in water resources that benefit many different recreational uses. The ability of all citizens to have access to the Atlantic Ocean, Intracoastal Waterway, and estuarine streams and rivers is a vital part of the quality of life found in Brunswick County. During the 1998 CAMA Land Use process, providing adequate access was again identified as an important need for the citizens of this County.

Brunswick County has a rich history and man made environment. The land, originally inhabited by the Indians related to the Waccamaw and the Choctaw tribes, was discovered in 1524 by the Italian explorer Giovanni Verrazano on behalf of the king of France. Just two years later, a Spaniard – Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon – scouted a suitable colony site along the Rio Jordan – later known as the Cape Fear River. However, it wasn't until 1629 that King Charles I of England granted all of present-day North and South Carolina to proprietors – a land grant named Carolana or Latin for Charles – but the land grant expired in August 1662.

The earliest American colonial legal grant was to Landgrave Thomas Smith on May 8, 1713 with the conveyance of Smith Island (now Bald Head Island) and most of present-day Southport. In 1725, settlements began in earnest. Grants dated June 3, 1725 were received by Samuel Swann, Charles Harrison, Eleazar Allen, and Maurice Moore who transferred many acres to his brother, Roger Moore, an early rice plantation that is now Orton Plantation.

Brunswick Town – established 1745 – became a borough town in 1754 and the County seat when Brunswick County was established in 1764. Brunswick Town was named in honor for King George I, Duke of Brunswick and Lunenburg. In 1779, the County seat moved to the plantation of John Bell near Lockwood's Folly Bridge. In 1784, Walkersburg was established – named in honor of John Walker on whose land it was situated – and provisions were made to erect a courthouse and other public buildings there, which was located near Deep Water Point.

In 1808, the courthouse moved from Lockwood's Folly to Smithville until 1858. Smithville – established in 1792 in honor of Benjamin Smith, Governor of North Carolina from 1810-1811 and later renamed to Southport in 1887 – served as the County seat until 1977 when it was moved to Bolivia.

As Brunswick County continues to grow, greater pressure will be exerted on its natural resources and manmade environment. While there is overwhelming public support to contain development pressures on these fragile ecosystems, there must be coordinated policies to assure their preservation. The lifestyle, history and uniqueness of Brunswick County must be protected and available for future generations.

MISSION STATEMENT: PRESERVE AND PROTECT OUR NATURAL AND MAN-MADE ENVIRONMENTS FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

ENVIRONMENT

GOAL: Preserve and protect wetlands and swamps from development pressures.

STRATEGIES:

- Expand public awareness of the importance of wetlands and swamps.
 - Prepare newsletter for public distribution.
 - Use NCDENR to present program to schools and civic organizations.
 - Promote youth interest in environment and marine ecology with local activities (e.g., beach clean-ups, turtle watches, boat rides, etc.).
- Identify and map Federal 404 Jurisdictional Wetlands through the US Army Corps of Engineers.
- Prepare policy on wetland and swamp protection.
- Prepare quick facts for consumers and developers with list of action items that help protect these environments.
- Expand Brunswick County web site with links to local groups focusing on environmental issues.
- Create bike paths and/or horse trails adjacent to prime areas to foster greater awareness. Trails may go through sensitive areas if they are managed and impact is minimal.
- Host international meetings with environmental groups to better coordinate ecotourism and other conservation efforts.



GOAL: Protect the water quality of our streams and rivers.

STRATEGIES:

- Identify point and non-point pollution sources on rivers and streams.
 - Make recommendations to reduce and eliminate pollution sources.
 - Determine the feasibility implementing a sentinel device or tracking system that will trigger an alarm and subsequent investigation.
- Advise property owners on backyard conservation activities that protect streams and rivers.
- Expand the Brunswick County web site with links to local groups that focus on river water quality and marine ecology programs.
- Collaborate with universities to provide areas for sampling and access for water quality studies.

GOAL: Maintain Brunswick County beaches as a valuable natural resource.

STRATEGIES:

- Expand the Brunswick County web site with links to local groups that focus on beach quality and marine ecology programs.
- Establish a regional ecotourism board and link with Brunswick County resources to unify interests of different groups across the Cape Fear region.
- Continue volunteer efforts through the NC Cooperative Extension Services to plant beach grass after beach replenishment.
- Establish a contingency/emergency response for an oil spill or other beach-related catastrophe.
- Collaborate with universities to provide areas for sampling and access for water quality studies.

GOAL: Implement on-going education programs on the importance of conserving and protecting wetland areas.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop a “Nature’s Classroom Program” in our public school system for wetlands education.
- Coordinate the wetland education program with Brunswick Community College, UNCW and other universities.
- Develop a volunteer supported educational program as part of the NC Cooperative Extension Service to include; Agriculture, Aquaculture, Horticulture and Zoology.
- Create trails and access into natural areas and wetlands.
- Expand the program that cooperates with schools from the Mountains and Piedmont to plan for weekend “Eco-Camps” for students to visit Brunswick County.
- Work with the NC Cooperative Extension 4-H to create state-wide high school program for “Eco-Education Projects”.



GOAL: Increase the amount of useable open space in major subdivisions.

STRATEGIES:

- Examine open space alternatives and revise existing ordinance to provide for more useable open space.

GOAL: Convene and steer a Brunswick County “Conservation Council”.

STRATEGIES

- Designate a Brunswick County staff person to be responsible for assembling and organizing this group.
- Include representation of conservation groups, forest industry, farming/agriculture, environmental educators, land developers, real estate professionals, senior citizens, fishing/aquaculture, NC Wildlife Resources Commission/hunting groups, Brunswick County Planning and Parks & Recreation Departments on the Conservation Council.

GOAL: Promote healthy forestation and maintain key wildlife areas.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop a tree preservation ordinance.
- Increase buffer along areas of deforestation or clear cutting.
- Include vegetative medians as a best management plan as highways are expanded or improved when feasible.
- Educate public of the benefits of controlled burns on “Natural Areas” by certified professional foresters.

GOAL: Promote the re-use of existing commercial and industrial sites that have been abandoned.

STRATEGIES:

- Work with Economic Development to promote reuse of abandoned commercial and industrial sites.
- Explore funding opportunities for brownfield site cleanup and redevelopment.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

GOAL: Preserve historic sites, buildings, written records and oral history.

STRATEGIES

- Create a Brunswick County historical placard.
- Promote the maritime history with focus on local stories and films of elders.
- Create a 'County Corner' at public libraries where information is available to citizens.
- Incorporate the private sector in promoting the history of Brunswick County.



FARMING & FISHING

GOAL: Ensure the sustainability and viability of the present Farming and Commercial Fishing Industry in Brunswick County.

STRATEGIES:

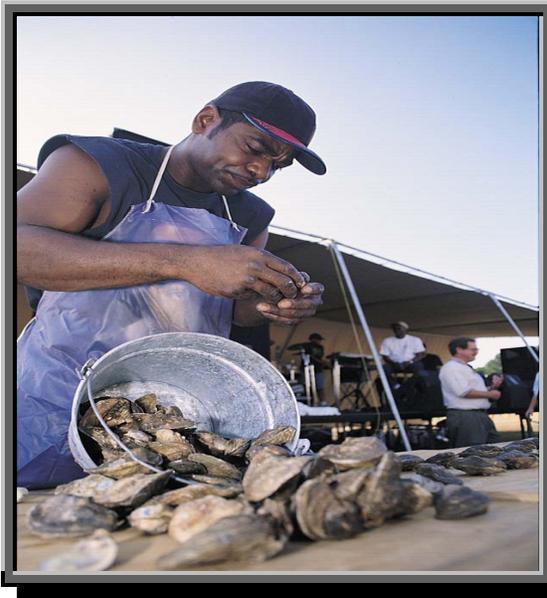
- Provide two educational opportunities annually for Farmers and Commercial Fishers about proposed law and policy additions or changes hosted by the NC Cooperative Extension Service and Division of Marine Fisheries.
- Strengthen the current relationships with other agencies and groups to ensure prime farmland stays in agricultural production.
- Encourage “fruit stands”: direct to market sales.
- Refine the definition of “bona fide” farm.
- Educate future generations on transferring assets with the assistance of Cooperative Extension Service and Division of Marine Fisheries.
- Assess real estate for property tax purposes that will reflect the value of farm land for its agriculture use.



GOAL: Ensure that the local community and government officials recognize the importance and value of maintaining traditional Farming and Commercial Fishing.

STRATEGIES:

- Invite citizens, political leaders, and mass media members to visit Farming and Commercial Fishing events and individuals farms.
- Seek grant funds to help “tell” the Farming and Commercial Fishing Industry story.
- Increase education on benefits of local, fresh vegetable markets.
- Encourage the County leaders to promote cooperation between the commercial and recreational fishing industries and resolution of economic and environmental issues between the two industries.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

BRUNSWICK TOMORROW STEERING MEMBERS

Denny Jordan, Chair, District 1
Michael Loyack, District 1
E.J. Grissett, District 2
Vance Hamilton, District 3
Rhonda Davis, Vice Chair, District 3
Purnell Swett, District 4
Whitney King, District 4
Bob Davis, District 5
Brenda Bozeman, District 5

APPENDIX B

ACTION TEAM MEMBERS

Action Team 1 Managed Growth/Planning & Communication/Relationships/Consensus Building

Co-Chairs: Purnell Swett
Vance Hamilton

Facilitator: Dr. Martha Warner, Director, Brunswick County Cooperative Extension

Staff: Leslie Bell – AICP, Director of Brunswick County Planning Department

Ravin Gore, Brunswick County Planning Department

Resource staff: Steve Stone, Assistant Brunswick County Manager

Members:

Jack Redmon

Jim Elswich

Ken Stuart

James Hardy

Clint Berry

Alan Fitzgibbon

Michael Norton

Mary Anne Concia

Pat Olsen

Larry Clemmons

John McHenry

Jeff Harvell

Shelly Leshner

Action Team 2 Economic Development & Education

Co-Chairs: Rhonda Davis, Brunswick County Board of Education
Whitney King

Facilitator: Al Hight, Brunswick County Cooperative Extension

Staff: Matt Stuart, Brunswick County Planning Department

Resource Staff: Steve Johnson, Director, Economic Development Commission

Members:

Pat Purvis Brown

Joseph Butler

Dr. Eddy Daniel

Dr. Katie McGee

Eli Smith

Karen Sphar

Robert Swanson

Jerry Thrift

Willie Richardson

Jim Roach

Ardith Shaw

Steve Skillman

Fernado Trulin

John Pop Wolfe

Percy Woodard

Mitzy York

Action Team 3 Infrastructure & Services

Co-Chairs: E.J. Grissett

Michael Loyack

Facilitator: Helen Bunch, Brunswick County Planning Department

Staff: Melba Laney, DCA

Resource Staff: Scott Garner

Lee Smith, Director, Public Utilities

Yvonne Hatcher

David Stanley

Brian Hollis

Tiffani Tabor

Iris McCombs, NCDOT

Randy Thompson, Director, Emergency Management

Jeff Phillips, Director, Engineering Services

Brian Watts

Stephanie Rumley

Kim Webb

Team Members:

David Bowman

Dennis Dupuis

Steve Edwards

Joseph A. Gore

John Quakenbush

David Durr

Sherman Davis

James Knox

Action Team 4 Quality of Life & Environment – Natural and Manmade

Co-Chairs: Brenda Bozeman

Bob Davis

Facilitator: David Nash, Brunswick County Cooperative Extension

Staff: Chris McCall, Brunswick County Planning Department

Resource Staff: Vonnie Fullwood, Director, Brunswick County Public Housing

Jim Russell, President/CEO Brunswick Senior Resources, Inc.

Boyd Williamson, Tax Administrator, Brunswick County Tax Department

Don Yousey, Director, Brunswick County Health Services

George Page, Director, Brunswick County Parks & Recreation

Team Members:

Pearly Vereen

Dan Bell

Karen Chevrotee

Murray Sherman

Jeff Harvell

June Plunkett

Gary Tagtmeyer

Tom Saullo

Susan Holland

Jewel Prendeville

Christy Haik

Bea Haik

Phillip Inman

Robert Zeid

Kathy Dasso

Mary Earp

Doug Holland

Lee Weddig

Brent Bishop

APPENDIX C

(Pocket with Program from Public Meetings)