Brunswick Vision

Our County • Our Vision • Our Future

Strategic Vision for Brunswick County

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BRUNSWICK, Duchy of. Quarterly: 1 or, seme of hearts gules, a lion rampant azure (Luneberg), 2 gules, two lions passant guardant in pale or (Brunswick), 3 azure, a lion rampant argent, crowned gules (Everstein), 4 gules, a lion rampant or within a bordure compony argent and azure (Homburg), 5 or, a lion rampant gules, crowned azure, 6 gules, three bars and in chief a lion passant or, 7 per fess in chief or, two bears' paws sable (Hoya), in base per fesse in chief barry of four gules and argent (New Bruchhausen), the base gyronny of eight argent and azure (Old Bruchhausen), 8 azure, an eagle displayed argent; armed gules, (Diepholz), 9 barry of four argent and gules, a pale counter-changed (Hohnstein), 10 argent, a stag's attire gules (Reinstein), 11 argent, a stag trippant sable (Klestenberg), 12 argent, a stag's attire sable (Blankenburg). Supporters — Two savages, each supporting a club and wreathed about the head and middle with leaves. Motto — "Nec aspera terrent."

Brunswick Crest

Former County Seal

Current County Seal
Adopted Dec. 15, 1975

Brunswick Vision

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Message from the Chairman

When I was first elected to the Board of Commissioners, I received a copy of "Brunswick Tomorrow," among numerous other documents and information about the County. Completed in 2004, the plan offers a detailed glimpse of Brunswick County at that time, along with where residents wanted to see their County in the future and how they wanted it to get there.

"Brunswick Tomorrow" was the result of a tremendous amount of hard work by a number of individuals, and it served Brunswick County well for many years. But since its completion, Brunswick County has experienced rapid growth, undergone tremendous demographic changes, and experienced dramatic economic shifts. Brunswick County was not immune to the economic recession, and its economy, though growing stronger, looks different than it did in 2004. At the same time, our county has been among the fastest growing in the state and in the nation for several years in a row, and the percentage of residents who are 65 years old or older continues to grow. In 2010, 21.4% of our population was 65 or older, and by 2015 that figure had grown to 28% (statewide, those numbers were 12.9% and 15.1%, respectively).

As we undertook the process to develop a new long-term strategic vision guide, we wanted to mirror many of the steps taken in forming "Brunswick Tomorrow." As Denny Jordan, Chair of "Brunswick Tomorrow," wrote then, "This is your plan! Its heart and soul comes from the comments and the feedback that we received." We held meetings to gather public input in areas across Brunswick County, and met with a number of groups with specific economic interests. We also opened a survey to gather public input, which was made available online (including at facilities with public computer and internet access), as well as in paper format.

In reviewing the feedback from the survey as well as the meetings, certain themes started to stand out. Many of our citizens of all ages moved here recently, in many cases in the last five or ten years. Some moved here from other states, and some from other areas of North Carolina, including neighboring counties. Over and over, citizens mentioned coming to Brunswick County for its quality of life, its unique character, and its natural resources, including beaches, waterways, and rivers. They mentioned coming to Brunswick County because it was <u>not</u> like neighboring counties and large towns, and wanting to see it maintain its unique atmosphere. Maintaining that, while at the same time preparing for growth and ensuring adequate infrastructure for the rapidly growing population, was another common theme.

After the public input was compiled, we assembled four citizen action teams to help develop mission statements and goals, with ideas for how to apply the public feedback we had received.

Each team developed a report, which was reviewed by the steering committee and ultimately incorporated into this final document.

The document is called Brunswick Vision because that's what it is – your vision, for your county.

Frank Williams
Chairman, Brunswick County Board of Commissioners
Co-Chair, Brunswick Vision Steering Committee

Brunswick Vision

Our County ● Our Vision ● Our Future

Introduction

Brunswick County launched a strategic visioning process in September 2015. The county's previous strategic vision document, *Brunswick Tomorrow*, was completed in 2004, and Brunswick County has undergone tremendous changes in the 13 years since its adoption.

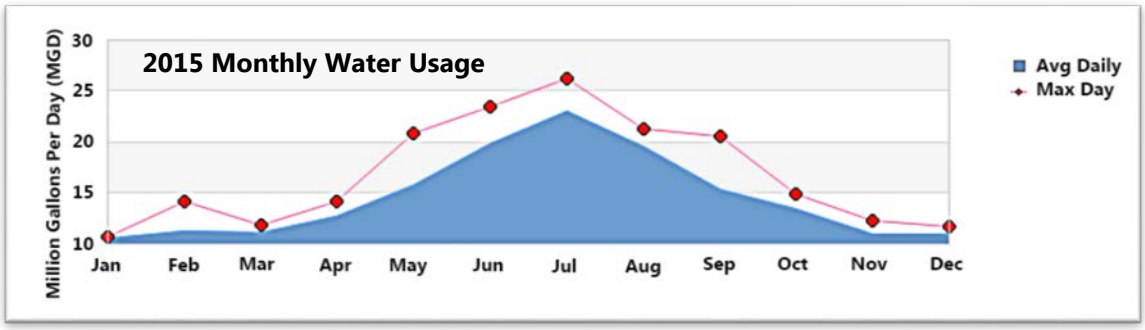
Brunswick Vision is intended to articulate a long-term vision and establish strategic goals to ensure that Brunswick County continues to be a great place to live, work, start or run a business, retire or spend a vacation.

Background[1]

Brunswick County has seen steady and fast-paced growth since the beginning of the 21st century, with much of that growth coming from new residents moving into the County.[2] The County's population in 2000 was 73,692; as of July of 2015, that number had grown to 122,765.

In recent years, Brunswick County has consistently ranked among the 50 fastest-growing counties in the nation, and among the top 10 fastest-growing counties in the state – many years coming in as the fastest-growing in North Carolina.

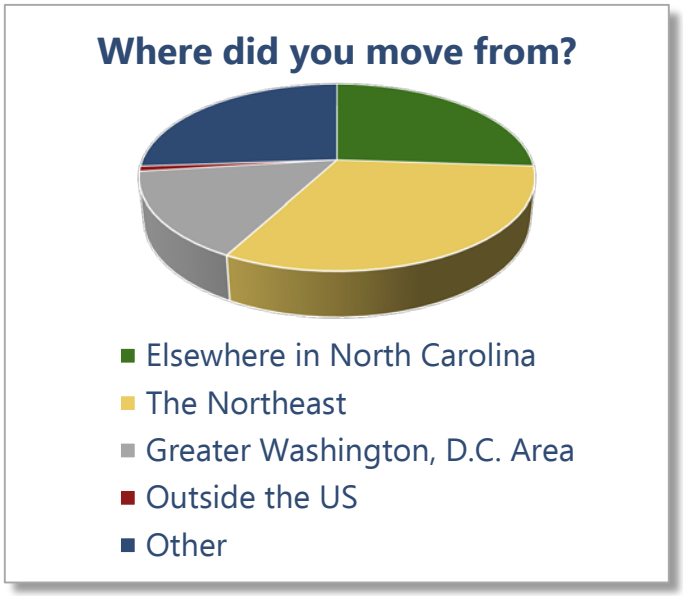
And as a coastal county, Brunswick County must not only plan for the rapid growth in permanent population that is expected to continue, but as a vacation destination, must plan for the increase in population that occurs every summer. Infrastructure must be built to meet the needs not just of permanent, year-round residents, but of peak populations during the busiest of summer months. At its peak, this seasonal population is estimated to be 2.6 times the county's year-round population.[3] Public Utilities must meet an average daily use of 10.56 million gallons per day in January and an average daily use of 23 million gallons per day in July, to meet the needs both of additional visitors and of additional irrigation use.[4] All areas of infrastructure, including transportation, parks and recreation, schools, and cultural arts programs, must similarly plan to meet the needs of the rapidly growing population as well as the seasonal increases.



[1] All statistics and demographics from U.S. Census Bureau unless otherwise noted.
[2] Source: Responses to Citizen Feedback (Citizen Survey and Public Meetings), Appendix A
[3] Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce: www.nccommerce.com
[4] Source for usage numbers and chart: Brunswick County 2015 Local Water Supply Plan, as filed with the NC Division of Water Resources: http://www.ncwater.org/Water_Supply_Planning/Local_Water_Supply_Plan/report.php?pwsid=04-10-045&year=2015

This steady growth brings with it both challenges and opportunities. Much of the population growth has been among residents 65 years and older; in 2010, these residents made up 21.4 percent of the population, and just five years later, 28 percent of the population was 65 or older. As the number of residents 65 and older continues to increase, so will demand for healthcare and other services commonly used by seniors.

Additionally, much of the growth has come from residents moving to Brunswick County from other areas, many times outside of North Carolina. Of citizen input survey respondents, 28.82% had lived in Brunswick County for less than five years, and more than 50% had lived in Brunswick County for less than ten years. Of those who moved to Brunswick County, 19.5% of survey respondents reported moving from elsewhere in North Carolina, while 23.8% reported moving from the Northeast states of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania. The greater Washington, D.C. was also highly represented, with 11.4% of respondents reporting moving from Virginia, Maryland or D.C., with many specific referencing D.C. or a nearby municipality (such as Annapolis). In many cases, these recently-relocated residents have different needs and expectations than those who have not recently relocated, regardless of age.



The strategic visioning process was undertaken not just as a means to update *Brunswick Tomorrow*, but as a way to gather and incorporate resident input, as county leaders plan to meet the challenges and opportunities that come with rapid growth.

Process

Steering Committee and Planning

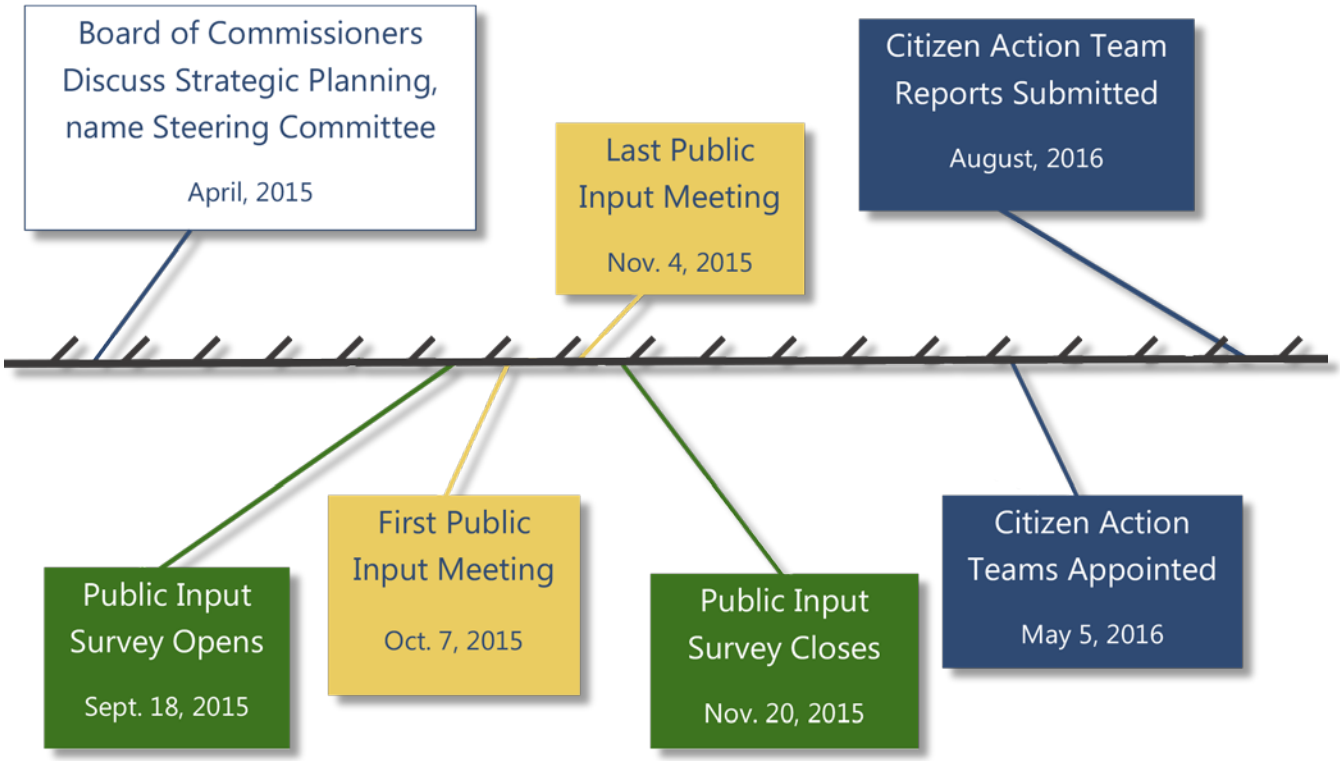
During budget workshops in the spring of 2015, the Board of Commissioners discussed implementing a strategic visioning process. It was decided that the process would be led by the Commissioners, with assistance from county staff. A strategic vision steering committee was appointed, with Commissioners Frank Williams and Randy Thompson serving as Committee Co-Chairs. Additional committee members included the County Manager and Deputy Manager, Planning Director, Cooperative Extension Director, and Public Information Officer. The committee began planning ways to gather public input, and a facilitator was hired to help facilitate public meetings.

Public Input: Meetings and Survey

Ten public input meetings were planned, two in each county district, to provide residents a chance to voice thoughts and opinions about long-term planning in Brunswick County. However, due to unexpected inclement weather, one meeting was cancelled and another rescheduled; ultimately, the meetings were held between Oct. 7 and Nov. 4, 2015. These meetings were open to any residents in the county, and turnout at the public input sessions was varied, ranging from approximately 10 to approximately 50 residents.[5]

Additional meetings were held with the members of the Brunswick County Economic Development Advisory Commission, the Brunswick County Small Business Advisory Commission, Brunswick County Farm Bureau, and Brunswick Catch.

During the same time frame, a survey was conducted to gather additional public input. The survey was available online from Sept. 18 until Nov. 20, 2015, during which time 3,823 people submitted survey responses. Staff at county library branches and senior centers were familiar with the survey, and signs were placed near public computers in those locations to help those without a home computer or internet access take the survey. Additionally, paper surveys were made available and distributed to numerous groups; 148 people completed paper surveys.[6]



[5] See Appendix C for feedback from the Public Input Sessions.
[6] See Appendix B for the results of the Citizen Survey.

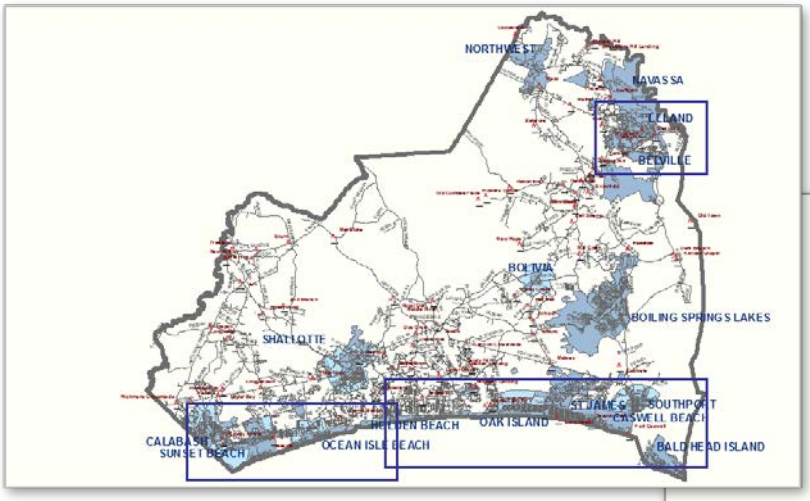
Citizen Action Teams

On May 2, 2016, four citizen action teams were appointed, each focusing on a different area or set of issues. The teams included Health and Safety, Education and Workforce Development, Economic Development/Quality of Life/Environment/Planning, and Public Information/Citizen Engagement/Communication/Volunteerism. Over the course of several months and numerous meetings, each action team formulated mission and vision statements and potential goals specific to that area, for consideration by the Board of Commissioners. In August, each action team presented a final report with recommendations to the steering committee.

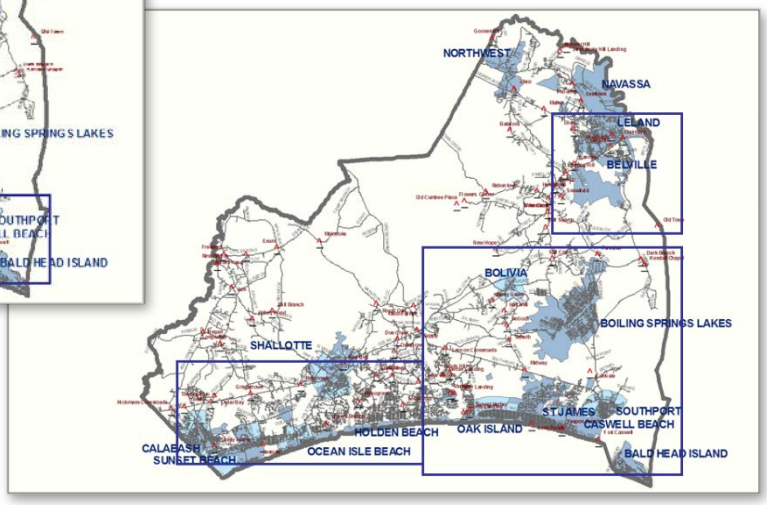
Final Document and Implementation

The final document, prepared by the steering committee, was the result of the compiled input from the public meetings, the survey results, and the citizen action team reports. Many of the recommendations from the citizen action teams are incorporated into the final vision, though some were of a more immediate and tactical nature, and were forwarded to county staff and agencies for consideration. The vision presents priorities and goals, as expressed by the county's residents, for consideration as the county moves forward.

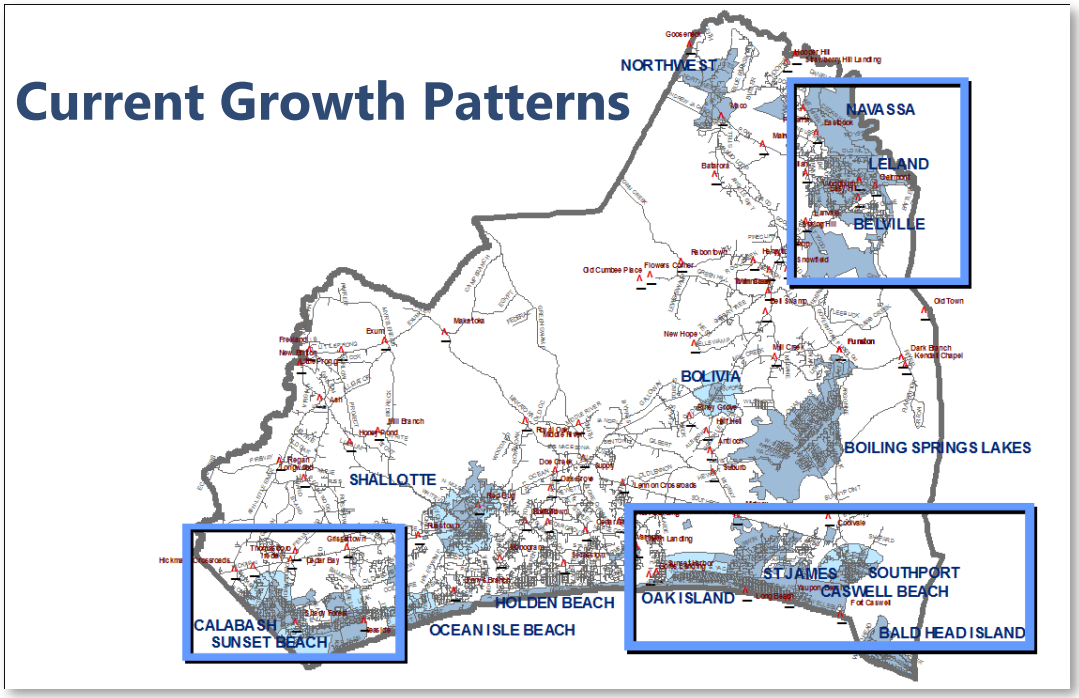
Major Trends and Indicators



Growth Patterns Prior to 2004



Growth Patterns 2004-2008



Demographics[7]

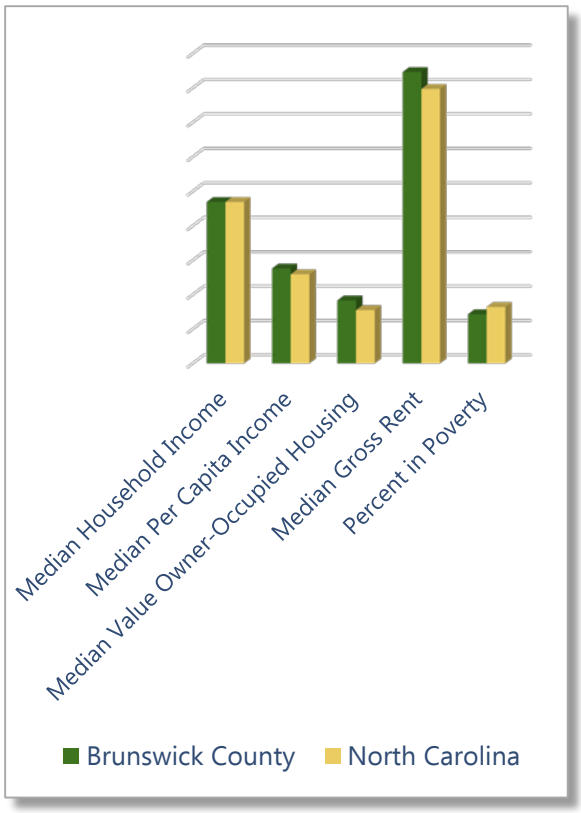
Population, July 2015 (Estimate)	122,765
Population, April 2010 (Census)	107,431
Percent Population Change, 2010-2015	14.3%
Percent Population Change in North Carolina, 2010-2015	5.3%
Persons under 18 years, July 2015	16.7%
Persons under 18 years in North Carolina, July 2015	22.8%
Persons 65 years and over, July 2015	28%
Persons 65 years and over in North Carolina, July 2015	15.1%

Workforce & Education

Labor Force, July 2016	52,782
Unemployed, July 2016	2,943
Unemployment Rate, July 2016	5.6
Unemployment Rate, July 2015	7.2
Unemployment Rate in North Carolina, July 2016	5.0
Unemployment Rate in North Carolina, July 2015	6.3
High School Graduate or Higher (25 Years+), 2011-2015	86.6%
High School Graduate or Higher (25 Years+) in NC, 2011-2015	85.8%
Brunswick County Schools Graduation Rate, 2016[8]	82.8%
Statewide Graduation Rate, 2016[8]	85.9%
Average SAT Score (2400 Scale), 2015	1440
Average SAT Score (2400 Scale) in NC, 2015	1478
Bachelor's Degree or Higher (25 Years+), 2011-2015	26.1%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher (25 Years+) in NC,2011-2015	28.4%

Income, Housing & Poverty

Median Household Income, 2011-2015	$46,859
Per Capita Income, 2011-2015	$27,586
Median Household Income in North Carolina, 2011-2015	$46,868
Per Capita Income in North Carolina, 2011-2015	$25,920



[7] All demographic and statistical information is from the US Census Bureau, unless otherwise marked.
[8] Source: NC Department of Public Instruction's North Carolina School Report Cards

Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units, 2011-2015[9]	$182,500
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units in NC, 2011-2015[9]	$154,900
Median Gross Rent, 2011-2015	$846
Median Gross Rent in North Carolina, 2011-2015	$797
Percent in Poverty	14.3%
Percent in Poverty in North Carolina	16.4%

Taxes, Sales & Services

Property Taxes per $100 of Valuation	$0.485
Total Retail Sales, 2012 (1,000)	$1,125,773
Total Retail Sales Per Capita, 2012	$10,029
Total Accommodation and Food Service Sales, 2012 (1,000)	$180,820
Total Healthcare and Social Assistance Receipts/Revenue, 2012 (1,000)	$326,561

Health

With a Disability, Under Age 65 Years, 2011-2015	12.3%
With a Disability, Under Age 65 Years in North Carolina, 2011-2015	9.6%
Persons Without Health Insurance, Under Age 65 Years	17.4%
Persons Without Health Insurance, Under Age 65 Years in North Carolina	13.1%
Number Physicians, 2013[10]	117
Physicians per 10,000 Population, 2013[8]	10.1
RNs per 10,000 Population, 2013[8]	47.5
Dentists per 10,000 Population, 2013[8]	3.4

[9] Note: Refers only to owner-occupied housing units (does not include vacation rentals)
[10] Source: Access NC Economic Data and Site Information/NC Department of Commerce: http://accessnc.commerce.state.nc.us/EDIS/demographics.html.

Employment & Wages by Industry[11]

	Brunswick County (2015)		North Carolina (2014Q2)	
	Annual Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Employment	Average Weekly Wage
Total All Industries	29.894	$706	4,072,412	$818
Total Government	4,998	$787	693,159	$824
Total Private Industry	24,896	$690	3,379,253	$817
Agriculture Forestry Fishing & Hunting	0	-	29,429	$580
Mining	0	-	2,829	$956
Utilities	1,365	$2,103	14,828	$1,551
Construction	1,829	$780	178,683	$848
Manufacturing	1,260	$936	446,681	$1,017
Wholesale Trade	544	$896	176,498	$1,223
Retail Trade	4,866	$453	475,911	$498
Transportation and Warehousing	567	$897	131,564	$872
Information	369	$872	73,073	$1,283
Finance and Insurance	497	$1,047	152,746	$1,381
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	901	$619	52,662	$781
Professional and Technical Services	14	$1,609	208,951	$1,328
Mgt of Companies, Enterprises	0	-	80,264	$1,578
Administrative and Waste Services	1,401	$550	285,387	$605
Educational Services	307	$591	381,537	$771
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,665	$753	578,846	$840
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	1,432	$379	66,266	$541
Accommodation and Food Services	4,145	$299	389,440	$297
Other Services Ex. Public Admin	629	$599	103,588	$574
Public Administration	2,188	$818	239,651	$834
Unclassified	0	-	0	-

[11] Source: NC Economic Data and Site Information/NC Department of Commerce: http://accessnc.commerce.state.nc.us/EDIS/demographics.html

Executive Summary

Between 2000 and 2016, Brunswick County has undergone unprecedented growth and change.[12] The county's overall population has grown at one of the fastest rates in the country, growth which is expected to continue: projections show Brunswick County's population surpassing 170,000 people by 2030[13]. With much of that growth due to residents relocating to Brunswick County from other counties and states, the county's overall demographics have shifted as well – another trend which is expected to continue. At the same time, the economy – both nationally and locally – went through first a recession, and then a period of recovery, leaving its own impact on the changing face of Brunswick County. Brunswick Vision represents the combined involvement of residents and elected officials in examining these changes and planning together to ensure that growth is met while Brunswick County retains its unique character.

The process began in the spring of 2015, with discussions by the Board of Commissioners about taking a renewed look at strategic planning for the county. Over the next two years, a steering committee was formed, public input was gathered through a series of meetings and surveys, and citizen action teams were appointed to help compile and formulate goals and recommendations.

At a series of nine public input meetings, residents were asked about their county, including what they would like to see moving forward, issues they believed would need to be addressed, and what they would like to see preserved. Similar questions were asked in online and paper surveys, including questions about what attracted residents to Brunswick County, about the county's greatest assets, and about the county's greatest challenges.

After reviewing the public input, the citizen action teams began assessing the information and formulating goals and strategies. Prepared in final reviews, each addressing a different area or set of issues, this information was reviewed by the steering committee and incorporated into a final document.

While full information is contained in the report, following are the key values and priority areas identified by these groups.

[12] All demographics and statistics from U.S. Census Bureau unless otherwise noted.
[13] Source: N.C. Office of Budget and Management County Population Projections

Vision for Brunswick County

Brunswick County is:

- **Visually attractive:** pleasing to the eye
- **Relaxed and friendly:** laid-back pace of life
- **Safe:** safe streets, neighborhoods and schools
- **Convenient:** sufficient transportation networks and easily accessible shopping opportunities; easy access to needed services
- **Balanced:** growing base of retail and restaurant shopping opportunities and employment centers, but not overly commercialized on the beaches and in rural residential areas
- **Affordable:** low tax rates, low cost of doing business
- **Prosperous:** strong, balanced economy that is not overly reliant on seasonal, tourism-based factors and which provides stable, private-sector jobs year-round and offers a welcoming business climate
- **Clean:** clean, safe environment; clean roadways
- **Prepared:** well-educated students who are ready for college or the workforce upon graduation from high school
- **Healthy:** easy access to healthcare facilities; clean, safe drinking water and wastewater treatment.

Vision for Brunswick County Government

To provide essential services to support the development of a sustainable and prosperous community with limited bureaucratic intrusion.

Mission Statement for Brunswick County Government

The government of Brunswick County, North Carolina exists to promote and sustain a superior quality of life. In partnership with our communities, we pledge to deliver cost effective services in a personal, responsive, respectful and innovative manner, to our residents and visitors alike.

Core Values

- Accountability
- Customer Service / Trust
- Dignity / Respect
- Diversity
- Environment
- Integrity is Paramount
- Professionalism
- Safety
- Stewardship of Public Resources
- Teamwork

Strategic Priority Areas

- **Economic Development:** Grow and maintain a prosperous economy which offers diverse, stable, year-round private sector jobs.
- **Education & Workforce Development:** Ensure that Brunswick County's youth have the opportunity to receive a world-class, well-rounded education which prepares them for college or the workforce; ensure that our workforce has access to the skills and education needed to perform in the workplace of tomorrow.
- **Public Safety:** Ensure that Brunswick County's communities and neighborhoods are safe and that our county is adequately prepared for potential emergencies.
- **Public Health:** Ensure that Brunswick County residents have access to quality healthcare services; encourage and promote healthy living in Brunswick County; protect public health.
- **Quality of Life:** Maintain our quality of life and character as we grow; preserve and protect the environment and aesthetic appearance of our county.
- **Infrastructure:** Develop and maintain the infrastructure needed to meet current and future demand.
- **Public Information & Citizen Engagement:** Ensure that citizens have ample opportunities to learn about and engage with county government and contribute their time and energy to our community.

Goals & Strategies

Economic Development

With Brunswick County's population expected to continue its rapid growth, simultaneous economic growth – both in jobs for residents and in options for shopping and dining – was a common theme among citizen feedback.

Mission Statement: Grow and maintain a prosperous economy which offers diverse, stable, year-round private sector jobs.

Goal: Improve Brunswick County's economy and job base by recruiting major employers and by promoting expansion of existing industries and businesses.

Strategies:

- Develop a strategic economic development and marketing plan
- Develop and communicate a strong, clear brand for Brunswick County
- Strengthen marketing of Brunswick County's unique assets including premiere industrial sites, an excellent transportation network with rail access, port proximity and available utilities infrastructure and a results-oriented collaborative team
- Continue emphasis on recruitment of both large and smaller/mid-sized industries
- Continue the county's expansion of water and sewer infrastructure and growing customer base
- Establish and maintain relationships with site consultants

- Maintain relationships and partnerships with the community college as well as local, regional and state economic development leaders, supporting collaboration and educational opportunities that ensure a prepared workforce
- Strengthen and maintain the available inventory of industrial and commercial sites in Brunswick County
- Support the chambers of commerce in their recruitment and retention of businesses
- Maintain resources for the Tourism Development Authority to attract visitors to the county

Quality of Life

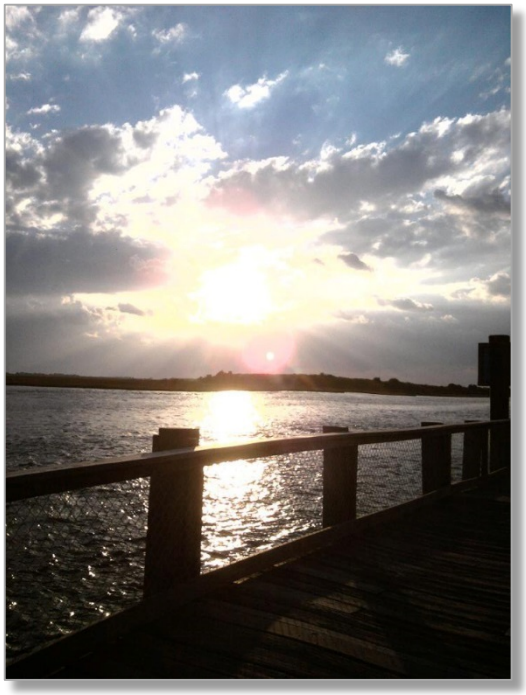
Growth was a common theme among citizen feedback, including in some instances the desire for more growth. But mentioned just as often, if not more frequently, was the desire for balanced growth and the preservation of Brunswick County's waterways, environmental resources and unique character.

Mission Statement: Maintain our quality of life and character as we grow; preserve and protect our environment and the aesthetic appearance of our county.

Goal: Maintain a common-sense, customer service-oriented culture and regulatory climate which protects our environment, communities and aesthetic appeal without placing unnecessary or unreasonable regulatory burdens on businesses and individuals.

Strategies:

- Ensure information is clearly articulated, available in multiple formats and media and that customer assistance is proactive and available
- Ensure consistency in application of ordinances and regulations
- Maintain a Unified Development Ordinance that is clear, concise and revised as needed
- Provide staff with the training and resources necessary for exceptional customer service
- Engage stakeholders in decision-making regarding ordinances and economic development and encourage county-wide regulatory consistency when appropriate
- Encourage open communication with businesses regarding the regulatory climate and customer service



Goal: Protect and maintain the quality of our shoreline and our waterways in such a way that we can ensure that they continue to be vibrant economic, cultural, environmental and aesthetic assets

Strategies:

- Develop and maintain strong working relationships with non-profit, public, and business and industry groups and entities that have clear interests in the preservation of these assets
- Collaborate with our municipalities on projects that restore or protect the quality of our waterways and shoreline
- Support and collaborate with the Brunswick Shoreline Protection group, NC BIWA, and all levels of government to develop consistent fiscal resources to maintain these assets
- Coordinate public education efforts about the strategic importance of our shorelines and waterways to the health and well-being of our residents and to the economic well-being of our county

Infrastructure & Community Facilities

Mission Statement: Develop and maintain the infrastructure needed to meet current and future demand.

Goal: Encourage the continuation of the sense of place that is Brunswick County with a small-town charm and coastal ambiance as the county continues to grow; maintain and enhance the visual appearance of the county, while respecting and protecting private property rights.

Strategies:

- Support Brunswick Transit System's plans to expand their services in a self-sustaining manner
- Advocate for the N.C. Department of Transportation to provide resources to keep major thoroughfares clean and well-maintained
- Maintain comprehensive and accessible information of county and municipal cultural and recreational resources, including beaches, parks, boat ramps, walking trails, arts centers, and similar resources that are located within Brunswick County

- Continue to support the North Carolina Coastal Land Trust and Nature Conservancy land acquisition efforts to acquire areas of environmental sensitivity and importance
- Continue the balanced approach to growth as outlined in the County's Unified Development Ordinance, which promotes quality development through use of exceptional design, best management practices and sustainability
- Support lifelong learning and cultural opportunities at Brunswick Community College
- Promote awareness of educational opportunities offered by NC Cooperative Extension
- Continue the county's expansion of water and sewer infrastructure and growing customer base
- Strengthen and maintain relationships and communication with private utility providers
- Support efforts to develop and expand affordable and workforce housing, and continue to address the needs of those displaced from housing

Education and Workforce Development

Brunswick County Schools currently operates 19 public schools serving 12,500 students. Additionally, several private and charter schools serve county students, and Brunswick Community College offers a variety of professional and technical programs as well as continuing education programs.

Mission Statement: Ensure that Brunswick County's youth have the opportunity to receive a world-class, well-rounded education which prepares them for post-secondary education and employment in the workforce.

Goal: Ensure that educational institutions collaborate, engage the business community, align career pathway education with workforce needs, foster effective professional development for instructors, and provide routine counseling for all students preparing for university admissions, community college enrollment, military service, or entrance into the workforce.

Strategies:

- Ensure that Brunswick County Schools and Brunswick Community College have the needed resources to support high-quality educational programs that prepare students to enter the workforce or matriculate to higher education
- Strengthen collaboration and communication among key stakeholders (Brunswick County government, Brunswick County Schools, Brunswick Community College, NC Works Career Center, Cape Fear Workforce Board, Brunswick County employers) on workforce development issues
- Engage business and industry leaders in communication and collaboration to ensure that educational programs are aligned with economic growth

Public Safety

Brunswick County residents are served by 22 fire departments, including municipal departments and volunteer departments; by 8 county EMS substations and six municipal or volunteer rescue squads; by 11 police departments and one public safety agency as well as the county sheriff's office; and by County Emergency Management planners and leaders, as well as their counterparts in municipalities, the Duke Energy nuclear plant, and the Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point.

Mission Statement: Ensure that Brunswick County's communities and neighborhoods are safe and that our county is adequately prepared for potential emergencies.

Goal: Provide the citizens of Brunswick County with quality, cost-effective and efficient regional fire and rescue protection and emergency medical services that meet national standards.

Strategies:

- Select a team of relevant stakeholders to review and monitor the 2017 countywide fire study and evaluate and prioritize the study recommendations, providing public information and providing opportunity for public feedback throughout the review process
- Develop an action plan to implement recommendations
- Continue the process of studying relevant fire and public safety issues and formulating recommendations as situations and needs change
- Continue to enhance cooperation and coordination among and between the county, municipal and volunteer units

Public Health

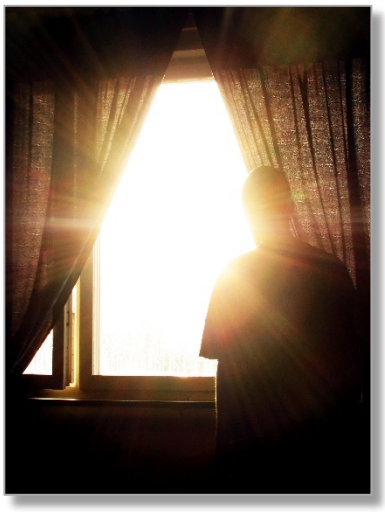
Brunswick County has two hospitals, Dosher Memorial Hospital and Novant Health Brunswick Medical Center, as well as numerous nursing and assisted living homes, physicians' offices, specialists, dentist's offices and other healthcare providers. An Outreach VA clinic in Supply offers medical care for Veterans. Trillium Health Resources manages mental health, substance use and intellectual/developmental disability services for people who receive Medicaid, are uninsured or cannot afford services, and in 2016, the ECU School of Dental Medicine opened a Community Service Learning Center in Bolivia. Several non-profit organizations offer lower-cost medical care to uninsured or underinsured residents, and other organizations participate in lower-cost events at times throughout the year. Additionally, some residents travel to adjacent New Hanover County or Horry County for medical services or procedures.

Mission Statement: Ensure that Brunswick County residents have access to quality healthcare services; encourage and promote healthy living in Brunswick County to protect public health.

Goal: Ensure that residents suffering from mental illness, drug abuse, and addiction have access to needed treatment.

Strategies:

- Work with state and private mental health partners to provide access to out-patient mental health and substance abuse treatment services at the Brunswick County Government Center including:
    - Mental health outpatient services (including counseling and issuing prescriptions) for referrals from Brunswick County Drug Court and Brunswick County Detention Center
    - Psychiatric services, both on-site and via telehealth
    - Comprehensive clinical assessments for foster children needing therapeutic services
    - Therapy services for custodial children with substance abuse problems
    - Assessments for parents of children taken into custodial care
    - Access to mental health services on weekends and after-hours
    - A "warm hand-off" to mental health providers upon detention center release
    - Harm reduction strategies



- Provide for the coordination of services for underinsured and uninsured citizens to ensure access to care
- Establish partnerships with local mental health care providers to ensure accessible long- and short-term inpatient substance abuse treatment facilities and increase the amount of intensive outpatient aftercare services that are accessible to county residents
- Develop a plan to improve access to comprehensive behavioral health/substance abuse services within Brunswick County

- Collaborate with the local hospital systems regarding their plans for behavioral health access in Brunswick County
- Research prescription medication assistance programs for uninsured and underinsured citizens

- Provide a central location for citizens to become aware of resources and opportunities for Health Services in Brunswick County

Goal: Ensure that Brunswick County residents have access to needed healthcare services.

Strategies:

- Provide accessible, low-cost primary healthcare services for children within Brunswick County Health Services
- Support local non-profit organizations in their efforts to provide accessible, low-cost healthcare services for adults
- Develop a "no wrong door" policy for providing services and/or "warm hand-off" referrals to partner organizations
- Research and develop a comprehensive plan to support new services for senior citizens, such as adult daycare services
- Support local efforts to meet the medical needs of residents and provide critical care services that are traditionally provided outside of Brunswick County
- Provide a central location for citizens to become aware of resources and opportunities for Health Services in Brunswick County
- Monitor changes to laws regulating healthcare and health insurance, and develop appropriate responses and public information strategies

Public Information & Citizen Engagement

Mission Statement: Ensure that citizens have ample opportunities to learn about and engage with county government and contribute their time and energy to our community.

Goal: Provide information to the public in a user-friendly and engaging manner to ensure that individuals seeking information from Brunswick County government can easily find the information they need.

Strategies:

- Provide a mobile, responsive website and other social media venues that are attractive, interactive and that optimize the user experience
- Utilize social, electronic, and print media to distribute information to the public
- Conduct public events and public appearances to inform and engage the public
- Provide multiple means to receive public feedback for continual improvement of county services
- Enhance and maintain relationships with print and electronic media outlets
- Identify key people and organizations that can assist with grassroots communication and outreach efforts
- Strengthen coordinated communication between Brunswick County Government, Brunswick County Schools, Brunswick Community College, judicial officials, and the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office

Goal: Encourage and promote volunteerism and civic engagement in Brunswick County

Strategies:

- Establish, maintain, and promote ways to support non-profit agencies and members of the public who wish to volunteer, and otherwise support the missions of the agencies
- Recognize Brunswick County volunteers who go above and beyond the call of duty or who win major volunteer awards, such as the Governor's Volunteer Service Award

Summary of Research Results

Overview of Citizen Feedback

Process & Response

- Brunswick County conducted both quantitative research (citizen survey) and qualitative research (public meetings) to obtain feedback from residents, business owners and other key stakeholders.
- A total of 3,971 respondents completed part or all of the survey; respondents were spread throughout the county; retirees and citizens with a higher level of education were heavily represented. Quantitative research used measurable data to formulate facts and uncover patterns and trends in research.
- Brunswick County held nine public meetings for the general public throughout the county, and held input sessions at meetings of Brunswick County Economic Development Advisory Commission, Brunswick County Small Business Advisory Commission, Brunswick County Farm Bureau and Brunswick Catch. These meetings were part of the qualitative research, used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations.

Vision for Brunswick County

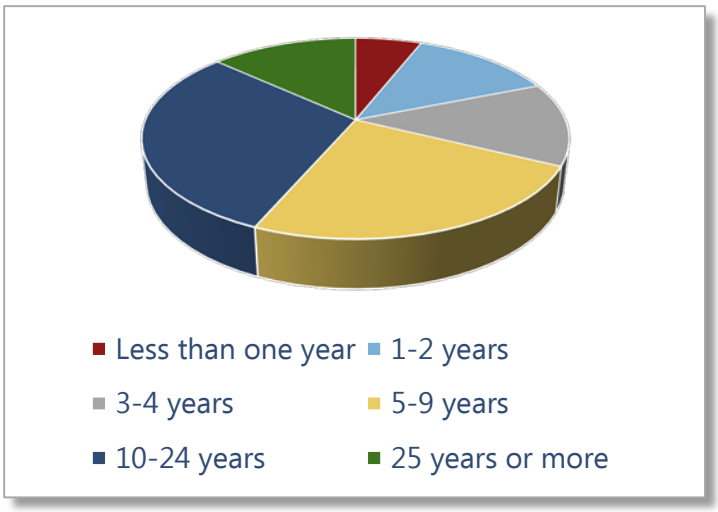
Respondents envision the Brunswick County of tomorrow as:

- **Visually attractive:** pleasing to the eye
- **Relaxed and friendly:** laid-back pace of life
- **Safe:** safe streets, neighborhoods and schools
- **Convenient:** sufficient transportation networks and easily accessible shopping opportunities; easy access to needed services
- **Balanced:** growing base of retail and restaurant shopping opportunities and employment centers, but not overly commercialized on the beaches and in rural residential areas
- **Affordable:** low tax rates, low cost of doing business
- **Prosperous:** strong, balanced economy that is not overly reliant on seasonal, tourism-based factors and which provides stable, private-sector jobs year-round
- **Clean:** clean, safe environment; clean roadways
- **Prepared:** well-educated students who are ready for college or the workforce upon graduation from high school
- **Healthy:** easy access to healthcare facilities; clean, safe drinking water and wastewater treatment

Citizen Survey Results

Who Responded?

Length of time in Brunswick County: Raw Data



- Less than a year: 5.33%
- 1-2 years: 11.54%
- 3-4 years: 11.95%
- 5-9 years: 21.61%
- 10-24 years: 27.02%
- 25 years or more: 11.82%
- Work in Brunswick County, but don't live here: 1.67%
- Own a business or have business interests in Brunswick County, but don't live here: 0.33%
- Own property in Brunswick County, but don't live here: 7.84%
- Vacation in Brunswick County, but don't live here: 0.89%

Length of time in Brunswick County: Observations

- 50.43% of respondents have lived in Brunswick County less than ten years
- 77.45% of respondents have lived in Brunswick County less than 25 years
- 10.73% of respondents do not live in Brunswick County, but work here, have business interests here, own property here or vacation here

Geography

- Ash: 0.83%
- Bald Head Island: 0.85%
- Belville: 1.49%
- Boiling Spring Lakes: 2.35%
- Bolivia: 3.71%
- Calabash: 2.72%
- Carolina Shores: 2.43%
- Caswell Beach: 1.41%
- Cedar Grove: 0.08%
- Holden Beach: 4.56%
- Leland: 21.25%
- Longwood: 0.48%
- Maco: 0.35%
- Navassa: 0.19%
- Northwest: 0.29%
- Oak Island: 9.87%
- Ocean Isle Beach: 6.56%
- Sandy Creek: 0.11%
- Southport: 8.59%
- Shallotte: 3.95%
- St. James: 15.15%
- Hwy 211 Corridor: 0.67%
- Sunset Beach: 4.67%
- Sunset Harbor: 0.53%
- Supply: 3.92%
- Town Creek: 0.53%

- Varnamtown: 0.24%
- Waccamaw: 0.00%
- Winnabow: 2.24%

Responses were spread geographically throughout the county, with just over 26% in northern Brunswick County, just over 26% in southwestern Brunswick County (including Shallotte and Holden Beach), and just under 40% in the Southport-Oak Island-Bald Head Island-St. James area.

Just over one quarter (28%) of respondents indicated they live in beach communities, while 43% indicated they live in suburban communities on the edges of the county close to Wilmington or Myrtle Beach.

Children in Secondary Education -- respondents who have children enrolled in or participating in:

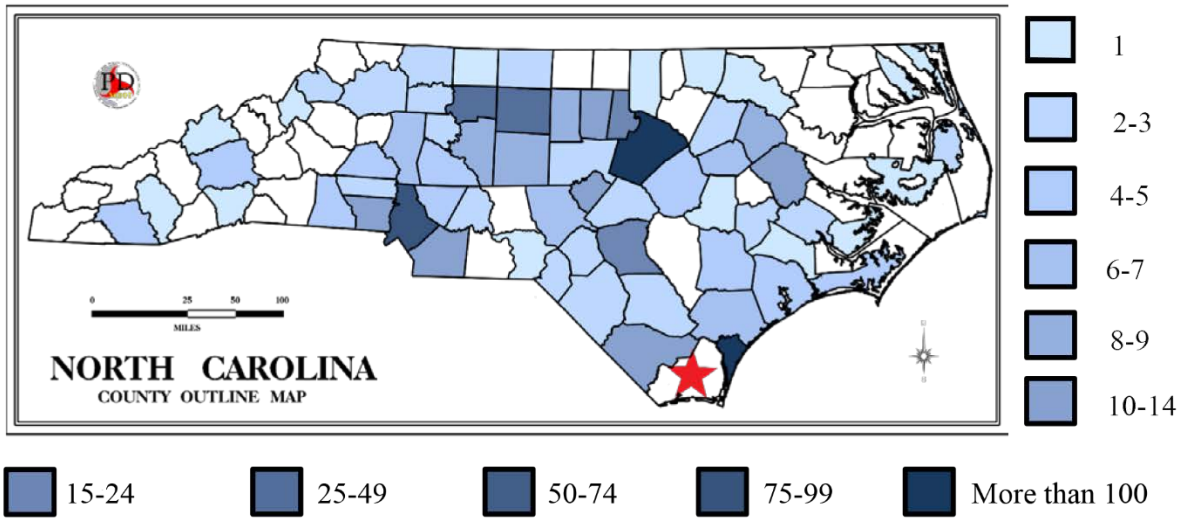
- Brunswick County Public Schools: 55.40%
- Public charter school in Brunswick County: 6.36%
- Private school in Brunswick County: 5.45%
- Home schooling: 4.54%
- Private school in another county: 3.63%
- Public charter school in another county: 2.32%

Children in Higher Education -- respondents who have children enrolled in or participating in:

- Four-year college elsewhere: 19.17%
- Brunswick Community College: 13.52%
- UNC-Wilmington: 8.98%
- Community or two-year college in another county/area: 7.06%

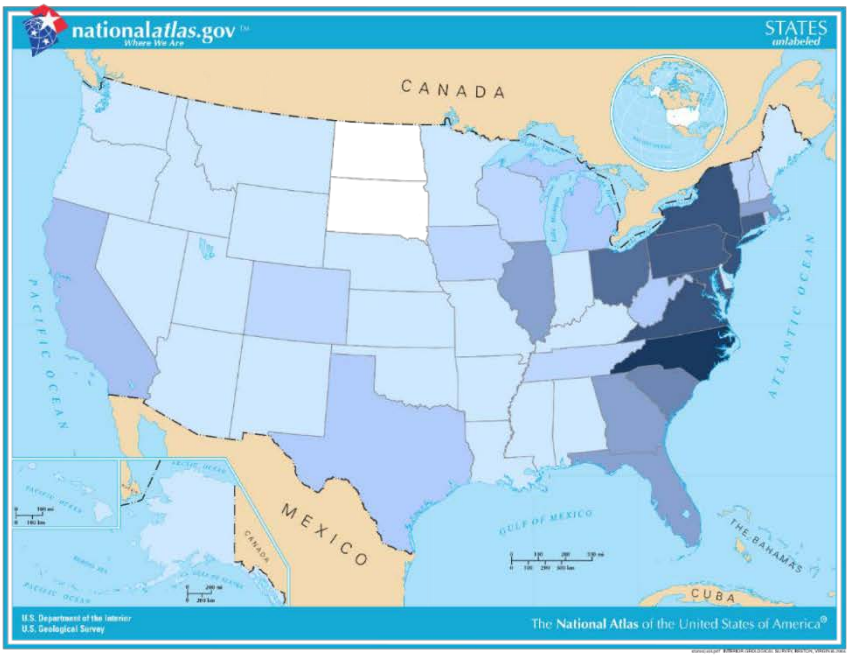
From where did we move?

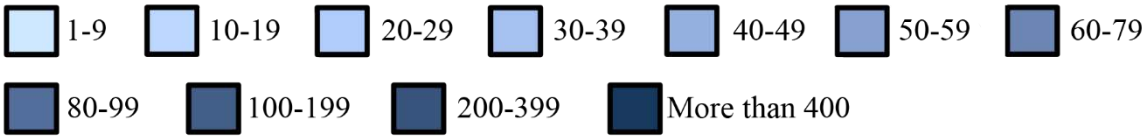
The majority of respondents (776) indicated they moved from elsewhere in North Carolina, with the majority of those indicating they moved from nearby or metropolitan areas, including New Hanover County (174), Wake County (109), and Mecklenburg County (95).



Outside of North Carolina, the remaining respondents reported moving from 49 states or US territories, and 11 countries. Of these, the biggest concentration of residents came from the Northeast, including New York state (349), New Jersey (286), Pennsylvania (180) and Connecticut (132).

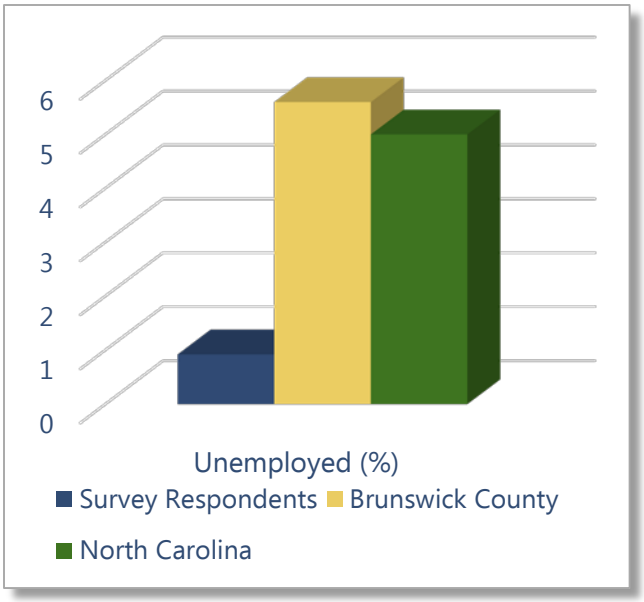
Another area which a large number of respondents referenced was the greater Washington, DC area, including Virginia (265), Maryland (154) and D.C. itself (33). Many of these respondents mentioned towns and cities near D.C. (such as Annapolis) or referred to their town as a suburb of D.C.





Employment Situation: When asked about their employment status, respondents answered as follows:[14]

- Retired: 48.17%
- Employed full time, happy with their situation: 24.45%
- Employed full time, looking for other opportunities: 7.07%
- Employed part time, happy with their situation: 5.19%
- Self-employed / business owner, full-time: 4.68%
- Self-employed, part-time: 3.71%
- Homemaker: 2.54%
- Employed part-time, looking for full-time work: 1.19%
- Disabled: 1.19%
- Unemployed: 0.92%
- Students: 0.89%



Types of Businesses Owned or Worked in: When asked what type of business or organization they work in or own if self-employed, respondents answered as follows:

- Education: 25.22%
- Professional Services (attorney, accountant, consultant, etc.): 11.77%
- Healthcare: 10.41%
- Government: 8.62%
- Real estate: 6.34%
- Technology: 4.93%
- Retail: 4.01%
- Service / Hospitality / Foodservice: 3.8%
- Construction: 3.25%
- Manufacturing: 2.49%
- Utility: 2.17%
- Transportation / Warehousing / Logistics: 1.57%
- Arts & Entertainment: 1.14%
- Agriculture: 1.03%
- Wholesale trade: 0.92%
- Science: 0.7%
- Commercial fishing / seafood: 0.16%
- Other: 11.44%

Employment and Type of Business Observations

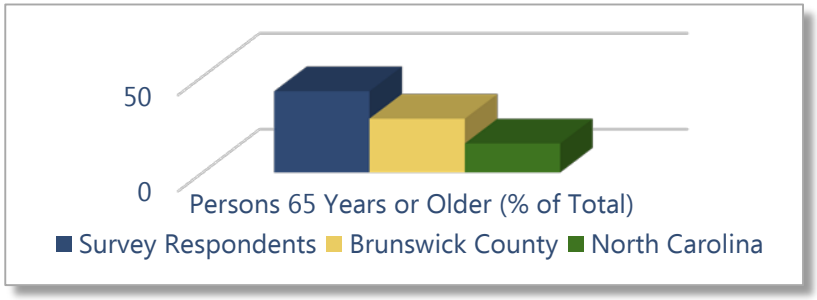
- A high percentage of respondents are employed by educational institutions (the questions did not distinguish between secondary and higher education).

[14] All comparative county, state and national demographics and statistics from U.S. Census Bureau unless otherwise noted.

- A low percentage of respondents are engaged in blue-collar professions.

Age of Respondents: Raw Data

- 19 or under: 0.41%
- 20-24: 0.66%
- 25-34: 5.89%
- 35-49: 14.74%
- 50-64: 36%
- 65 or over: 42.30%

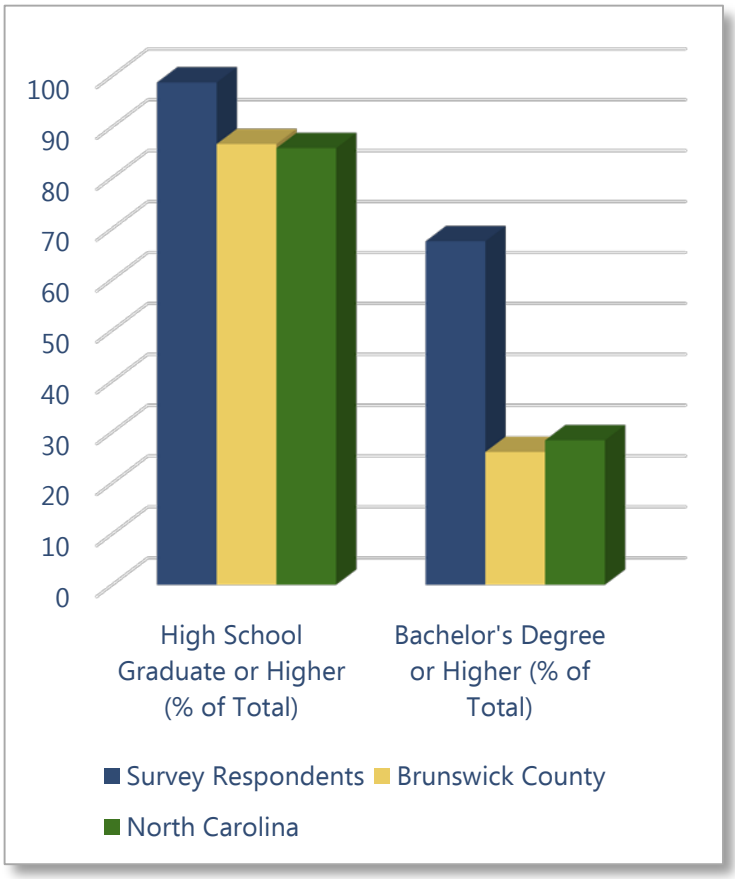


Age of Respondents: Observations

The percentage of survey respondents who indicated that they are 65 or older (42.3%) is significantly higher than the percentage of Brunswick County residents in that age range (28% according to the U.S. Census Bureau), which in turn is higher than the 14.5% national average.

Respondents' Education Levels: Raw Data

- Some high school: 0.61%
- GED: 0.69%
- High School: 4.86%
- Some college: 17.34%
- Associates degree: 9.63%
- Bachelor's degree: 35.91%
- Master's degree: 26.8%
- Doctorate: 4.79%



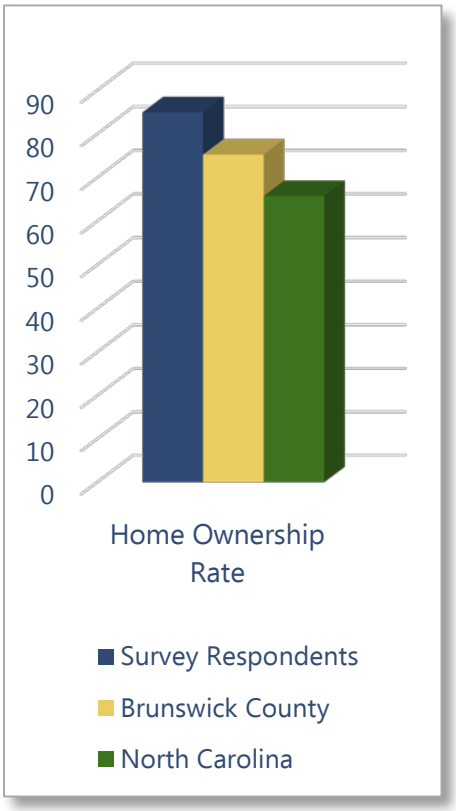
Respondents' Education Levels: Observations

Survey respondents have a higher education level than Brunswick County residents as a whole. Just over a fourth (25.4%) of Brunswick County residents have a bachelor's degree or higher. By comparison, 35.91% of survey respondents report at least a bachelor's degree, and the number who indicated they have a master's degree (26.8%) exceeds the percentage of Brunswick County residents who have a bachelor's degree.

Housing Situation: When asked about their current housing situation, respondents answered as follows:

- Own home with mortgage: 55.11%

- Own home without mortgage: 29.87%
- Don't live in Brunswick County but own a vacation home: 5.83%



- Rent home: 4.61%
- Rent apartment: 1.53%

Don't live in Brunswick County but work here: 0.74%

- Don't live in Brunswick County but vacation here: 0.66%
- Other: 1.65%

Conclusions / Observations: A total of 84.98% of respondents indicated they own their homes.

Household Income Level: When asked about their household income level, respondents answered as follows:

- $14,999 or less: 1.93%
- $15,000 to $24,999: 3.72%
- $25,000 to $34,999: 5.19%
- $35,000 to $49,999: 11.38%
- $50,000 to $74,999: 21.45%
- $75,000 to $99,999: 20.94%
- $100,000 to $149,999: $20.29%
- $150,000-$199,999: 7.83%
- $250,000 or more: 7.26%

By comparison, Brunswick County's median household income as of 2014 is estimated at $46,955 according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

Service in the Armed Forces: Approximately 20% of respondents (804 out of 3,971) indicated they had served in America's Armed Forces:

- Army: 45.65% (367)
- Air Force: 21.52% (173)
- Navy: 18.66% (150)
- Marines: 8.83% (71)
- Coast Guard: 3.98% (32)
- N.C. National Guard: 3.98% (32).

How did we respond?

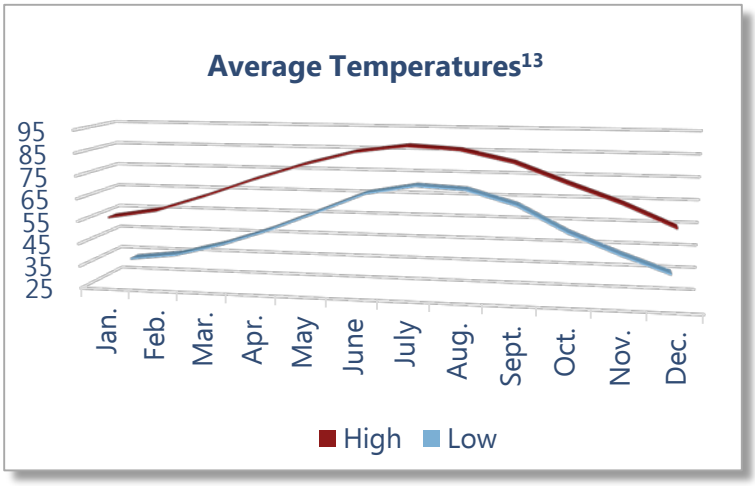
View of the Economy

	Positive	Negative	Neutral / Don't Know
National Economy	28.03%	47.17%	24.8%
Brunswick County Economy	29.13%	28.38%	42.28%

Shopping Habits: Where do you primarily shop for clothing and other non-food items?

- Wilmington / New Hanover County: 50.14%
- Myrtle Beach / Horry County: 19.2%
- Brunswick County: 17.35%
- Online: 8.87%
- Columbus County: 0.26%
- Other: 4.19%

What Attracted You Here?



- Beaches / waterways / river
- Climate / weather (multiple references to a lack of snow); "no blizzards"[15]
- Lifestyle / quality of life
  - Slower pace
  - Small-town feel
  - Family-oriented
  - Not too commercialized / "non-commercial feel" (multiple references to beaches without high-rises)
  - Golf and other recreational opportunities
  - Nice neighborhoods (specific communities mentioned by name); appealing appearance of neighborhoods
  - Friendly people / community / neighborhoods
  - Parks & other amenities
  - Great place to retire
  - "Simplicity" of life
  - Peaceful; "unhurried" atmosphere
  - Small-town life with access to larger towns
- Location: proximity to Wilmington and Myrtle Beach, but without the bigger-city hassles of living there; several mentions of entertainment opportunities in ILM and MB, plus references to UNCW; numerous mentions of relatively short drive to Charleston, Raleigh, Charlotte and the Triad
- Lower cost of living / lower taxes (specifically mentioned numerous times)
- Move closer to family; move somewhere their children / grandchildren would vacation
- "Divine intervention"
- Relatively less congestion / traffic
- Some people specifically referenced places from which they moved
- "It's a long story, but Brunswick County has been my destiny."

[15] Source (Chart Data): National Weather Service

- Vacationed here before moving here

What are Brunswick County's greatest assets?

- Beaches / waterways / scenery / natural beauty
- Parks / open areas
- Schools / Brunswick Community College / Charter Day School
- Quiet, laid-back atmosphere; small-town feel
- Recreation / activities / golf / fishing
- People (both newcomers and natives); citizens engaged in the community
- Cost of living / low property taxes
- Available land
- Potential to shape future around a vision
- Public Safety
- "Location Diversity" of county (combination of beaches, towns, farmland, etc.)
- Attractions: Southport waterfront, Brunswick Riverwalk, Brunswick Town, Bald Head Island, Ingram Planetarium, etc.
- Local businesses vs. chains
- History

Observations:

- In many cases, people identify more with their community or subdivision (e.g., Brunswick Forest) than their town
- Citizens do NOT want Brunswick County to be like Myrtle Beach or Wilmington. Citizens do not want high-rises on beaches, or for beaches to be overly commercialized.

Opportunities

- Grow with vision
- Agri-business/agri-tourism

What are the greatest challenges facing Brunswick County?

Most Frequent Replies

- Quality jobs
- Schools / education (technical school)
- Road / transportation infrastructure (also mentioned: public transportation, bike/pedestrian)
- Growth: Retaining our character / charm / natural beauty as we grow (don't become MB); protecting the environment as we grow; that we will grow and become just like everywhere else

Other Replies

- Diversifying economy beyond tourism
- Workforce. "Inability to find enough good employees to increase my business."
- Lack of retail shopping, restaurants. "More retail without over-commercialization"
- Access to healthcare

- ** Access to resources in the central part of the county (not close to ILM or MB)
- Housing
- Protecting our shoreline
- Infrastructure (water, sewer)
- Access to needed services (internet, natural gas, Fire, EMS)
- Aging population (resources, transportation, access to h/c); "although so many people retire here, this really is not a place that is conducive to aging in place"
- Attracting / retaining younger residents
- Crime (drugs)
- Economic disparity / poverty; lack of resources for / attention to the less fortunate
- Cost of homeowners insurance / wind & hail
- Maintaining appearance of roadsides on major highways (e.g., causeway)
- Maintaining proper balance between needed zoning/stormwater ordinances and ensuring that we are a business-friendly county
- Activities (younger generation, retirees)

Observations & Other Comments

- As is the case with any large survey, citizens provided varying and often conflicting feedback. For example, some respondents want more shopping and commercialization, while others want less. Some want more industrial growth, while others want to keep industry out.
- One respondent said, "Change is good, but staying true to what and who built Brunswick County is important."
- Some respondents pointed out that today's new homes & buildings will age simultaneously in 20-30 years.

View of County Government Priorities

Program/ Service	Rank: Extremely Important	Rank: Total Important	Extremely Important	Important	Total Important	Neutral	Not important	Extremely Unimportant	Total Unimportant
Emergency Medical Services	1	1	71.26%	25.66%	***96.92%***	2.52%	0.38%	0.18%	***0.56%***
Water & sewer	2	2	61.12%	32.18%	***93.30%***	5.62%	0.64%	0.43%	***1.07%***
Public Schools	3	8	60.52%	23.49%	***84.01%***	11.26%	3.50%	1.23%	***4.73%***
Sheriff's Office	4	4	56.85%	34.13%	***90.98%***	7.44%	1.04%	0.53%	***1.57%***
Disaster Preparedness	5	3	56.60%	35.67%	***92.27%***	6.65%	0.76%	0.31%	***1.07%***
Health Services	6	6	50.73%	34.93%	***85.66%***	11.81%	1.97%	0.56%	***2.53%***
Curbside trash pickup	7	5	49.57%	40.11%	***89.68%***	6.60%	2.73%	0.99%	***3.72%***
Mosquito control	8	7	43.53%	41.30%	***84.83%***	12.43%	2.15%	0.59%	***2.74%***

Curbside recycling	9	10	41.02%	37.13%	***78.15%***	14.76%	5.32%	1.77%	***7.09%***
Parks & recreation	10	9	36.62%	45.59%	***82.21%***	15.12%	2.15%	0.51%	***2.66%***
Veteran Services	11	13	35.78%	38.28%	***74.06%***	20.36%	4.22%	1.36%	***5.58%***
Public libraries	12	11	33.32%	41.73%	***75.05%***	20.14%	4.14%	0.66%	***4.80%***
Brunswick Community College	13	12	32.69%	41.71%	***74.40%***	17.72%	6.68%	1.20%	***7.88%***
Senior centers	14	14	30.96%	42.23%	***73.19%***	21.74%	4.10%	0.97%	***5.07%***
Social Services	15	15	29.21%	40.70%	***69.91%***	23.79%	4.60%	1.70%	***6.30%***
Cooperative Extension	16	16	14.12%	38.74%	***52.86%***	39.08%	6.38%	1.69%	***8.07%***

Experience with County Government

Respondents were provided with a list of county departments and county-funded services and were asked to identify those they had used or interacted with in the past year. Among respondents, the most used county-provided or county-funded services are:

- Library system: 39.89%
- Parks & recreation: 36.51%
- Tax office: 35.07%
- Public utilities: 30.16% (it is worth noting that some who checked this box may have been referring to a municipal or sanitary district utilities office)
- Board of Elections: 28.51%
- Solid wastes & Recycling: 26.9%
- Emergency Services: 20.01%.

Respondents were asked to rate the level of responsiveness and customer service they experienced while dealing with county government. They responded:

- Excellent: 22.98%
- Good: 44.62%
- Fair: 12.14%
- Poor: 3.21%
- Terrible: 1.47%
- N/A: 15.57%

Priority Issues

Issue	Extremely	Somewhat	Total Important	Neutral	Not Very	Not at All	Total Unimportant
More retail shopping	37.70%	40.03%	77.73%	12.53%	6.91%	2.84%	9.75%
Keeping tax rate low	64.34%	26.27%	90.61%	6.73%	2.08%	0.58%	2.66%
Preserving agricultural & rural heritage	36.05%	38.38%	74.43%	18.95%	5.49%	1.13%	6.62%
Access to professional services	27.12%	46.33%	73.45%	20.88%	4.64%	1.03%	5.67%
Maintaining shoreline	75.34%	18.10%	93.44%	4.92%	1.15%	0.48%	1.63%
More restaurants	30.52%	40.36%	70.88%	20.45%	6.29%	2.36%	8.65%
Recruiting industry	40.05%	34.86%	74.91%	17.60%	4.55%	2.95%	7.50%
Protecting waterways	74.39%	21.47%	95.86%	3.42%	0.61%	0.10%	0.71%
Opptys for civic/volunteer involvement	18.84%	47.64%	66.48%	28.39%	3.95%	1.19%	5.14%
Increased access to affordable housing	17.29%	31.04%	48.33%	35.47%	11.09%	5.11%	16.20%
Access to medical care	59.53%	31.26%	90.79%	7.97%	0.87%	0.38%	1.25%
New schools	25.66%	31.69%	57.35%	32.61%	5.90%	4.14%	10.04%

Rank

Issue	#1	#2	#3	Rank #1	Rank Top 2	Rank Top 3	Rank - Extremely Important	Rank - Total Important	Forced Rank
More retail shopping	268	275	273	6	5	5	6	5	5
Keeping tax rate low	1089	491	357	1	1	1	3	4	1
Preserving agricultural & rural heritage	80	181	270	8	8	8	7	7	7
Access to professional services	19	63	125	12	11	11	9	8	10
Maintaining shoreline	565	597	497	2	2	2	1	2	2
More restaurants	53	168	234	10	9	9	8	9	8
Recruiting industry	228	270	285	7	7	6	5	6	6
Protecting waterways	311	545	531	5	4	3	2	1	3
Opptys for civic/volunteer involvement	20	56	90	11	12	12	11	10	12
Increased access to affordable housing	70	131	144	9	10	10	12	12	11
Access to medical care	481	421	431	3	3	4	4	3	4

New schools	328	194	187	4	6	7	10	11	9

Other Issues Shared:

- Lack of coordination / consistency between counties, municipalities, esp. in terms of zoning laws

Other Feedback

- "People move to a specific area for the daily things: schools, stores, safe area. The tourism aspect is important, but if you want new families to move here, they need more than the basics."
- Better communication with the public
- "It's not 'broke,' so avoid trying to fix it."
- Attract RTP employees who are able to work remotely
- Numerous comments about the need for more bike paths
- More cooperation / consolidation / communication between governmental entities to avoid duplication of services
- Public information: educate public on role of counties, what we do, who to contact
- Play to our strengths
- More frequent mowing of ditches, cleaning of roadways
- Allow / encourage roadside vegetable stands
- Beaches draw more than just tourists
- Attract future nursing / retirement facilities (higher-end)
- "The county is becoming a string of unrelated self-contained housing communities. The challenge is to find ways to foster connections among them and the 'native' county residents and institutions."
- Business leaders want amenities and a qualified workforce
- Make it easier to find your way around county government complex
- Don't make strategic plan a "wish list"
- Plan for fact that aging residents may not be able to drive in years to come

Feedback from Public Meetings

Introduction

Whereas the citizen survey was designed to provide measurable, quantitative feedback, the public input meetings were essentially focus groups and were intended to provide qualitative feedback. As such, one of the key purposes of the public input meetings was to discern the underlying motive or reason behind items that were suggested.

The following trends and patterns and key topics emerged from citizen feedback (not all of these items fall under county jurisdiction):

Plan for Future Growth: Maintaining Quality of Life

- Water / Sewer infrastructure
- Roads / transportation network (particularly major routes in and out of Wilmington & South Carolina)
- Anticipate needs of an aging population (healthcare, retirement facilities, senior housing, transportation)
- Balance citizens' desire for more shopping and retail with desire to not become too commercialized (desire to not become overly commercialized was strong in beach communities)
- Don't lose our character / charm / quality of life as we grow

Environment / Land Use

- Preserve and protect the aesthetic appearance of our county ("Don't become Myrtle Beach")
- Clean up / landscape major thoroughfares
- Maintain and protect our beaches and waterways
- Ensure that our stormwater regulations are sufficient to protect the environment and neighboring property owners
- Balance these against the need to protect private property rights and ensure that our regulatory climate is conducive to recruiting and growing businesses
- See what can be done to clean up the Lockwood Folly and Shallotte Rivers

Economic Development

- Recruit stable, private-sector jobs that will attract younger workers and enable Brunswick County's young people to return home after college
- Diversify our economy beyond tourism, construction and service jobs
- Leverage our agricultural heritage; encourage agri-tourism, promote/encourage agri-business
- Promote / encourage aquaculture
- Encourage entrepreneurship, development of home-grown businesses
- Emphasize workforce development

- Support existing businesses
- Recruit businesses that will offer jobs suitable for our workforce
- Recruit businesses that will provide services, shopping opportunities for our increasingly affluent, senior-heavy population
- Encourage people to patronize local businesses
- Comprehensive list of "things to see and do" in Brunswick County (parks, trails, fishing, etc.)
- Strategic, focused plan to promote Brunswick County to key audiences (tourists, job creators, business owners, executives)

Education

- Strengthen our public school system
- Encourage talented retirees to engage with / mentor students
- Encourage vocational / technical education (make it a priority, not an add-on)
- Upgrade / modernize county libraries
- Encourage opportunities to get youth together doing positive things (vs. sitting idle and getting into trouble)
- Promote opportunities available at BCC

Public Safety

- Ensure that law enforcement agencies have resources they need
- Emphasis on fighting heroin epidemic
- Emphasis on preventing gangs from gaining a foothold
- Suggestion from a police chief: implement a "scared straight" program in Brunswick County
- Educate citizens on traffic issues involving farm equipment (importance of respecting farm equipment on rural roads)

Health & Human Services

- Raise awareness of the pockets of poverty that exist in Brunswick County
- Inspire HOPE among those who feel trapped in a cycle of poverty
- Raise awareness of opportunities for the less fortunate (both within government and without)
- Treatment options for those suffering from addiction
- Coordinate efforts among volunteer organizations
- Encourage affordable housing options (think "starter homes")
- Anticipate needs of seniors who will age in place
- Research ways to de-centralize services and make them more accessible in far reaches of county
- More pro-active outreach to veterans
- Seek to recruit trauma center to Brunswick County

General Government

- Maintain our low property tax rate
- More pro-active public communication and engagement

- Continually seek to strengthen partnerships with other agencies to improve cooperation, reduce redundancy

Emergency Management

- More effective, streamlined systems for communicating emergency information to the public

Community

- Leverage / take advantage of huge pool of volunteer / retiree talent ("skill bank" – inventory available volunteer talent, match to community need)
- Connect volunteers with needs

Citizen Action Teams

Health & Safety

Chair: John Grimes, Chief, Leland Volunteer Fire/Rescue Department
Brunswick County Sheriff's Office designee
Copelen Taylor, Chief of Police, City of Northwest
Rodney Gause, Chief of Police, Town of Shallotte
David Robinson, Chief, Coastline Volunteer Rescue Squad
Charles Drew, Chief, Southport Fire Department
Keith DeVincentis, Retired FBI Agent
Kathy Lawler, Health & Human Services Advisory Board
Chris Thomas, Assistant District Attorney
N.C. Highway Patrol designee
Judge Jason Disbrow
Garth Walters
John Lewis
Michelle Caulk, Clerk of Court's Office
Brian Watts, Brunswick County Emergency Services
Todd Coring, 911 Center
Cris Harrelson, Health Department
Cathy Lytch, DSS
Dosher designee
Novant designee

Education & Workforce Development

Chair: Greg Bland, Dean of Continuing Education & Workforce Development, BCC
Gordon Corlew, CEO, Lee Linear
Russell Green, VP, Human Resources, ATMC
Jonathan Hicks, Manager of Training Programs, Duke Energy
Michael Norton
Bobby Davis, Vice President, Technical Services, BEMC
James Knox
Suzanne West
Ed Lemon
Allen Williams
Brunswick County Schools designee

Economic Development / Quality of Life / Environment / Planning

Chair: Mark Blevins
Susan Cruse, Chair, Small Business Advisory Commission
Bill Bittenbender, ABCPOA
Jerry Helms, Economic Development Advisory Commission
Howie Franklin, Cape Fear Regional Jetport
Resea Willis, Brunswick Housing Opportunities
Rich Leary
Joy Easley, Planning Board
Chip Carroll
Milton Coleman
Carol Dunham
Ron Medlin, Vice Chair, Small Business Advisory Commission
Clif Cheek
Allen Bryant, Economic Development Advisory Commission
Carrie Moffett
David Hewett, Town Manager, Town of Holden Beach
Chris McCall, Village Manager, Bald Head Island
Clint Berry
Tom Woods

Public Information / Citizen Engagement / Communication / Volunteerism

Chair: Helen Pannullo
Jayne Mathews
Fred Stephens
Tommy Wallace
Cynthia Tart
David W. Sink, Jr.
Lewis Dozier
Peggy McDonald
Jay & Diane Merritt
Forrest King
Michael Callahan
Jessica Swencki, PIO, Brunswick County Schools
London Schmidt, PIO, Brunswick Community College
Emily Flax, PIO, Brunswick County Sheriff's Office
Amanda Hutcheson, PIO, Brunswick County Government
Scott Garner, Brunswick County Emergency Services