



A Vision Plan
by
The Citizens of Cabarrus County

October 2001

Overview and Invitation

Three hundred years ago, the first European who traveled across North Carolina to survey the broad lands at the foot of her mountains, wrote of the beauty of the rolling lands between the Yadkin and Catawba Rivers. A part of what he called a “delicious country” was to become modern Cabarrus County. Men and women were drawn to this special place by the promise of the land, by its distance from the wars and famine of Europe, by the opportunity to rear their children in their own faith. As soon as they built their first rough homes and put crops in the fields, they built churches and schools. They were fiercely independent people, they were artisans and craftsmen, skilled workers in wood and metal and cloth. They loved the land, and reared large families to hold it.

Although we still honor the legacy of those patriots and pioneers, they would not recognize modern Cabarrus. During the last decades of the twentieth century, the textile mills which provided jobs for many of her citizens were joined by an ultra-modern tobacco processing plant, world-famous motorsports racing facilities, manufacturing plants for great international businesses, a coffee processing plant, a modern hospital, an excellent school system. In addition to the highways which provide easy access to our markets, we are served by a modern regional airport. Motorsports racing events bring tens of thousands to the County. Growth is not painless, however. With growth has come strain on school facilities, the need to finance additional infrastructure, tensions between landowners, developers, and those who fear the loss of open spaces and changes in the rural character of the land.

The Envision Cabarrus project is an effort sponsored by a partnership of our local governments and our Regional Chamber of Commerce to develop a vision for the County we want to have in twenty years – the legacy we would leave for the next generation. We want to make it possible for our young people to remain in our community by increasing the number of good jobs available for them after they have completed their educations. We want to improve health care, educational opportunities and job opportunities for all our citizens. Hundreds of your fellow citizens have worked to commit their vision to writing. We do not seek to predict the future, but to shape and guide it, directed and informed by the core values we have held dear for two generations. Those values include faith in God, pride of workmanship, a love of country and family, a confidence that together we can face an uncertain future without fear.

There could be no better time to dream dreams and see visions than in these troubled times, when those who reject the rule of law threaten our way of life and our children’s future. For by adopting the strategies set out herein and by striving to reach the goals the Vision Task Force has crafted, we declare our confidence in the future of this great Republic. We invite you to join with us. After all, dreams have a way of coming true in this “delicious country” between the rivers.

1 October 2001



Clarence Horton, PLANNING CHAIR

INTRODUCTION

Our community is at an exciting – but challenging – stage in its history. For the first time, our local governments have joined together in a partnership to plan for our next twenty years of vibrant growth. Cabarrus County, the Cities of Concord and Kannapolis, the Towns of Harrisburg and Mt. Pleasant, and the Cabarrus Regional Chamber of Commerce are founding partners in the effort to “Envision Cabarrus.” “Envision Cabarrus” is a county-wide *Vision-driven* Strategic Planning process, which will produce a common Vision and direction for Cabarrus County for the short-term, mid-term (5 years), and long-term (20 years).

The planning effort comes at a time when Cabarrus and her surrounding counties have experienced unprecedented growth. In light of the County’s location, access to major highways, trained work force, and quality of life, that growth seems likely to continue for many years. Per capita income has not kept pace with the growth, however. While per capita income in neighboring Mecklenburg County has far exceeded the national average, growth in per capita income has been relatively flat in Cabarrus County for the period from 1995 through 1999 and remains slightly below the national average. Although new industries have been attracted to the area, the loss of textile jobs is a reality which must be faced.

Many dedicated individuals and organizations have developed strategies and are implementing plans to improve various aspects of the quality of life in our County, but there has been no overall strategic plan for our future. Through a “strategic thinking” process, Envision Cabarrus gives the Cabarrus County community an opportunity to develop a Vision, Strategies and Action Steps in six foundation areas that support a county-wide strategic plan: quality of life, education, infrastructure, government, economic development, and private sector leadership. During the planning phase of the process, community core values which guide and inform our decision-making were identified as were ten priority issues facing the County in the near future. A Vision Statement was developed for each of the six foundations as well as suggested strategies for achieving those Visions. Key Benchmarks were developed so that our progress in reaching our goals can be measured annually and any necessary corrections made. The crucial second phase of the process will be the implementation of the strategic plan which we have developed in the first phase.

Phase One: Developing our Vision

In February 2001, Henry Luke of Jacksonville, Florida, an experienced facilitator, was hired to manage the process. A 33-member Steering Committee was selected to guide the actions of the Vision Task Force, the group of citizens who make up the heart of the effort. Hundreds of citizens volunteered to take part in the planning effort, and more than 300 were selected to serve on the Vision Task Force. In April 2001, Mr. Luke interviewed nearly 100 county residents to obtain their thoughts on the challenges and opportunities facing the area. Nearly 300 citizens attended a Stakeholders’ Summit on May 19, 2001 and identified the priority issues facing the County. Finally, the members of the Vision Task Force attended four meetings at which the Community Core Values, Key Benchmarks, Vision Statements, and Strategies were developed. A Vision Statement was developed for each of the

six foundations and Key Benchmarks were developed to use in measuring our progress towards our overall vision for our County. Participants suggested Strategies for implementing the 6 Visions.

A preliminary draft of a Vision Document was prepared in July 2001 and widely circulated throughout the Cabarrus community. Some 33 members of the Vision Task Force then made presentations of the draft document to 2200 persons at meetings of community agencies and organizations, including local governing boards. On 6 September 2001, a Town Hall meeting was held at Jay M. Robinson High School to allow an additional opportunity for citizen comments. After considering and weighing all comments and suggestions received during the presentations and at the Town Hall Meeting, an editing committee studied the draft document in detail and reported its recommendations for amendments and additions to the Steering Committee. This final draft resulted from two additional meetings of the Steering Committee.

Phase Two: Carrying Out Our Vision

Now begins the hard work of implementing our vision. The Steering Committee asks that you and your organization endorse this Vision Document and become Vision Partners. Partners who endorse the Vision will be asked to identify those Strategies they can incorporate and effectively implement either within their normal mission, purpose and scope of operations, or in strategic alliances with other organizations. Each Vision Partner, or strategic alliance of Vision Partners, will establish benchmarks by which they can measure their progress, and will develop Action Steps for the specific strategies they adopt. Although implementation of all the strategies set out in this document cannot begin immediately, they will be phased in over the next five to ten years. In order to ensure that we are moving steadily towards our goals, the Key Benchmarks and Strategy Benchmarks will be reviewed annually.

After you have read this document, we hope you will accept the invitation on the last page and become a Vision Partner. A training session will be held later this year to assist you in adopting strategies, forming partnerships with other organizations, and adopting standards by which you can measure your progress. Join with us! Our children and their generations will benefit from your vision and commitment.

THE ENVISION CABARRUS STEERING COMMITTEE

ENVISION CABARRUS

OUR VISION

By 2020, Cabarrus County will:

- be a community of life-long learners with the *educational* resources to encourage all citizens to reach their potential.
- have a highly diversified and expanding *economy* that maximizes the *quality of life* of its residents.
- be a diverse *community* with accessible and adequate resources to meet the spiritual, physical, cultural, and health needs of all its citizens.
- have the *infrastructure* required to maximize the quality of life and economic opportunities of its citizens.
- have *governments* that encourage the participation of all citizens and are effective, efficient, accountable, and accessible.
- have *private sector leadership* that ensures an interdependent process of growth which results in the betterment of all our citizens and organizations.

OUR CORE VALUES

Core values are character traits that guide our daily decision making. The Vision Task Force identified these Cabarrus County Core Values to serve as guideposts as we pursue our *interdependent* Visions and Strategies.

Faith in God	Responsibility	Appreciation of Diversity
Integrity	Accountability	Stewardship
Family Values	Excellence	Ethics

OUR PRIORITY ISSUES

The participants in the Stakeholders Summit on May 10, 2001 selected their Top Ten Priority issues to be addressed in the Vision Process.

Priority Issues

1. Education
2. Economic Development
3. Transportation
4. Quality of Life
5. Growth Management
6. Infrastructure
7. Water and Sewer
8. Environmental
9. Park/Recreation/Green Space
10. Human Relations

Foundations Addressed In

- Education
Economic Development
Infrastructure
Quality of Life
Infrastructure
Infrastructure
Infrastructure
Infrastructure
Quality of Life
Quality of Life

The facilitator used this list during the Vision facilitation process during June. These issues are addressed throughout the Vision and Strategies for the six *interdependent* foundations required to provide a comprehensive Strategic Plan for Cabarrus County.

Foundations: Visions & Strategies

The Building Blocks That Support Our Vision

I.

Education Foundation

II.

Economic Development Foundation

III.

Quality of Life Foundation

IV.

Infrastructure Foundation

V.

Government Foundation

VI.

Private Sector Leadership Foundation

I. EDUCATION

VISION

Cabarrus County will be a community of lifelong learners with the educational resources to encourage all citizens to reach their potential.

Strategies

A. K-12

1. **Expect³ all students with varying skill levels, different learning styles, and special needs to graduate from high school prepared either to go to work, attend a community/technical college or attend a college, university or professional school. Monitor each student's grade level progress and implement remediation programs to ensure that each student progresses at maximum potential. This remediation program will reduce the achievement gap between racial and economic groups.**
2. **Develop a new technical high school and increase opportunities and awareness for effective technical training, including internships and co-op programs.**
3. **Increase teacher pay to allow recruiting and keeping our best teachers while requiring accountability for results.**
4. **Expect parents to encourage and mentor their children. When a young person does not receive this support, a mentor will be provided by community organizations including churches, businesses, civic clubs, neighborhood organizations, students mentoring students, retiree organizations and social service organizations. The end result will be a high school graduate prepared to be an effective citizen.**
5. **Create and maintain a fair discipline program that provides a safe environment conducive to learning for all students that will be implemented by the teachers and school site administrators, with strong support from administrators, school board, parents, the business community, governments, and not-for-profit organizations.**
6. **Implement a proactive school construction and maintenance program, concurrent with projected growth of population. Maximize the learning environment for all students at the least cost while recognizing the benefits of small schools and small class size.**
7. Establish priorities between:
 - three "R's": reading, writing, and math
 - three "E's": ethics, economics, and English
 - arts
 - athletics
 - practical application of life skills
 - community involvement by students
 - foreign language
8. Create community schools where students attend a school within a short distance of their neighborhood.

³ The highest priority strategies within each foundation are indicated by bold type..

9. Integrate our community core values, as identified in this document, into our character education programs.
10. Develop a sense of community within each individual school.
11. Create and maintain partnerships between K-12, all local higher education institutions, technical and vocational school and business.
12. Strive to integrate adult and student immigrants into the Cabarrus community beginning with learning basic English Communication.
13. Encourage employers to provide time for employees to be involved in their children's education.
14. Provide opportunities for employers and administrators/teachers to develop a better understanding of each other's jobs.
15. Provide specialized services for special needs students.
16. Ensure that an atmosphere of mutual respect exists between individuals within the total school community.
17. Ensure safe and effective transportation for all students.

B. Skills Training and Life-long Learning

1. **Provide skills training for:**
 - **the existing workforce that enables continuous increases in productivity and opportunity for advancement**
 - **life-long learning opportunities that enable all citizens to make life-long contributions to their community**
 - **manufacturing certifications**
 - **requirements for competitiveness in recruiting high paying jobs in a global market place**
 - **developing transferable skills for displaced workers**

C. Higher Education

1. **Expect higher education institutions to provide the required education and training needs of Cabarrus County citizens and employers. This will include the technology and on-line education required to meet Cabarrus County's job growth Key Benchmark.**

D. Birth to Pre-K

1. Expect children to enter kindergarten ready to learn.

E. General

1. Develop alternative funding sources to ensure world-class school systems in the Cabarrus community.
1. Create a continuous public relations campaign that communicates the ongoing operation of all schools, colleges, and universities.
3. Maintain a world-class library system for use by all students and citizens.

II. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Vision

Cabarrus County will have a highly diversified and expanding economy that maximizes the quality of life of its residents.

Strategies

1. Create a proactive Economic Development Marketing Program that focuses on high paying jobs with the following components:
 - Ensure that Cabarrus develops an independent economic base that is complementary with the Charlotte community, instead of growing as a bedroom community of Charlotte
 - Establish Internal Marketing Program with:
 - Retention⁴ and expansion of existing businesses
 - Communicating to area stakeholders the successes of the overall economic development program to build support
 - Advocating community development; i.e., providing the infrastructure and services that improve the business climate and quality of life of the community
 - Strengthen Private Sector Involvement in Economic Development.
 - Expand External Marketing Program with a regional, national, and international component that results in high paying job relocation.
 - Focus on targeted industries: information technology manufacturing, information technology service and wholesale trade, finance, insurance, back office operations, motor sports and medical.
 - Competitive incentives program for new high paying jobs provided for companies with a proven record of community service and meeting of environmental standards.
 - Recruit young people who have received training and college degrees back to Cabarrus to fill the community's new higher paying jobs.
 - Work in partnership with city, county, state and federal governments to create a customer-friendly community.
 - Prepare statement of impact on infrastructure for any new jobs created.
2. Develop a community-wide comprehensive land use and infrastructure plan that ensures infrastructure is available to support growth and improve our quality of life while respecting our private property rights.
3. Increase the skills with our higher education institutions and productivity of our existing workforce through enhanced relationships and programs. Prepare the emerging workforce through a new Technology High School and increased opportunities for effective technical career training. The education and training programs will be coordinated by a business advisory group to ensure the right skills are available for high paying jobs.
4. Recognize that small businesses are the cornerstone of a vibrant economy, encourage the growth and nurturing of existing small businesses and creation of new small businesses that will bring income into the community.
5. Encourage development of office and R&D space and speculative industrial space. Ensure that competitive high-speed broad band communications capacity is available to new and existing facilities.

⁴ The four ways to create new jobs are underlined...retention, expansion, relocation and creation.

6. Increase the productivity each year of the workers holding 70,000+ jobs in Cabarrus County so that earnings per job can increase. Productivity may be increased by training, capital investment, improved management techniques, etc.
7. Use appropriate financial packages including economic development bonds to assist with financing.
8. Involve churches and the faith community in creating a community with a healthy lifestyle that supports the medical community.
9. Enhance the Tourism and Visitor industry.

III. QUALITY OF LIFE

VISION

Cabarrus County will be a diverse community with accessible and adequate resources to meet the spiritual, physical, cultural, and health needs of all its citizens.

Strategies

A. Public Safety

1. **Maintain a safe community for all citizens that is free of crime.**
2. Strive to eliminate domestic violence and drug abuse.
3. Provide a comprehensive plan to ensure the safety of all citizens, governments, and schools from all high-risk threats (natural or manmade).
4. Implement a comprehensive plan including training and compensation for fire safety and emergency services.
5. Provide information about available legal services.
6. Improve prison inmates' chances for successful rehabilitation by providing education and training for inmates.
7. Implement community-based and problem-oriented policing.
8. Implement proactive animal control education and enforcement to promote safety, health and quality of life.

B. Family & Youth & Senior Citizens

1. **Create a community wide master plan that locates community centers within each neighborhood in existing facilities such as schools, churches, and other facilities. Implement the master plan to insure that the recreation, social, and cultural needs as well as social services of our community are met in a center close to where each citizen lives. Include sidewalks and bikeways that connect the neighborhoods and create walkable neighborhoods.**
2. Involve faith-based institutions in Envision Cabarrus.
3. Provide accessible and affordable childcare that helps prepare the child to be successful in school.

C. Health

1. **Provide quality, affordable, and multicultural physical, mental and emotional health services for all citizens that include education, prevention, and treatment.**
2. Expect each individual to be responsible for the personal decisions that impact their wellness and health. Reducing the ever increasing health care costs will require decisions about nutrition, exercise, drug use, alcohol, and proper use of medical services such as free health clinics and emergency rooms and insurance.
3. Ensure adequate availability of skilled employees for health care providers.

D. Recreation, Arts & Culture

1. **Implement a community wide parks and recreation master plan that encourages the construction of active facilities that serve the hosting of regional state and national tournaments. Provide the leadership for our region to become the amateur sports center of the east coast.**
2. Implement an Arts Community Master Plan.
3. Develop a performing arts center.

E. Human Relations & Sense of Community

1. **Respect and value all people.**
2. Develop events and festivals to create a sense of community.
3. Develop and Implement a continuous public relations campaign that communicates the Cabarrus sense of community. Use state-of-the-art communication channels.
4. Encourage young people to join civic clubs and organizations.
5. Involve Latinos and other immigrants in daily activities of the community.

F. Social Services

1. Deliver social services through our community centers throughout the community.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE

VISION

Cabarrus County will have the infrastructure required to maximize the quality of life and economic opportunities of its citizens.

Strategies

A. Transportation, Water, Sewer and Other Utilities

1. **Create and implement a county-wide comprehensive plan that creates a long-term sustainable water supply and adequate water and sewer facilities through regional cooperation of all local units of government to meet the growth anticipated by the Benchmarks.**
2. **Ensure that bus transportation, light rail, and commuter rail are implemented in Cabarrus and the region in order to meet air quality standards and enhance transportation efficiency. Partner with the University area to expedite rail implementation. These elements should be integrated with I-85 widening and other road construction so that transportation infrastructure is concurrent with growth.**
3. Maintain competitive high-speed broad band communication capacity.
4. Ensure the continuous reliability, availability and competitiveness of electric supply.

B. Growth Management

1. **Create and implement a county-wide comprehensive land use and infrastructure plan to meet the**

growth anticipated by the Benchmarks.

- **Interdependent elements to be included in this land use and infrastructure plan are housing, commercial, retail, industrial, agriculture, education, public safety, transportation (road, mass transit, rail, air, and other methods such as bikeways and sidewalks and walking trails that encourage “walkable” communities), recreation & parks, open space, government facilities, water, sewer, solid waste, storm drainage, electricity, communications, environmental, historical preservation.**
- **The service quality and reserve capacity desired by the citizens of Cabarrus County will be determined for each element of the land use and infrastructure plan.**
- **The element plans will include acceptable levels of service that must be met within a project service area in order for a building permit to be issued for that project service area.**
- **A process will be provided that allows a developer to enhance the level of service for a non-conforming infrastructure element.**
- **A capital improvement plan will be adopted that ensures the most efficient phasing of development and open space.**

2. **Develop and expand the options available to finance infrastructure. Ensure that the Cabarrus community receives its fair share of state and federal infrastructure funds.**
3. **Encourage the development of a foundation or trust to preserve open space.**

C. Environment

1. **Ensure that the air and water quality regulations are met on a continuous basis to protect our citizens’ health and so that federal financing sources for infrastructure funding is not lost.**

2. **Encourage county-wide recycling, water conservation including highly treated wastewater used for irrigation or other non-potable uses.**
 3. **Encourage the maintenance of clean roads through education and enforcement.**
- D. Regional**
1. **Create regional dialogue between all sectors to reach consensus on providing regional infrastructure.**
- E. Housing**
1. Encourage home ownership through the development of affordable housing programs.
 2. Encourage preservation and restoration of historic houses.

V. GOVERNMENT

<p>VISION</p> <p>Cabarrus County will have effective, efficient, accountable, and accessible governments that encourage the participation of all citizens.</p>

Strategies

1. **Encourage all levels of government in Cabarrus to endorse the Vision Plan and provide the leadership and resources to implement the Strategies, Visions, and Key Benchmarks and use the Core Values in guiding decision-making.**
2. **Encourage the election of innovative, diligent, intelligent public officials who will serve with honesty and integrity. Encourage our best citizens to run for office. Encourage salaries for public offices commensurate with the job requirements.**
3. **At all levels maintain effective, efficient, accountable, and accessible government that serves with integrity, fairness and compassion.**
4. **Use the latest communication technology to develop citizen participation in government.**
5. **Encourage all citizens to be informed and to vote in every election.**
6. **Develop a regulatory environment that nurtures the growth of existing business and encourages the start up and growth of new businesses.**
7. **Maintain government that is receptive and adaptable to the fast-paced changing global environment. Implement e-government that increases connectivity, sharing of data between all organizations and provides the most efficient services.**
8. Maintain a continuous communication program so that every citizen and organization understands the government services available.
9. Expect that all government officials and employees will be considerate, courteous, ready to listen and customer friendly to its citizens, businesses and organizations.
10. Consolidate government services within government organizations where efficient and effective.
11. Ensure that Cabarrus governments receive their fair share of all types of Federal and State Government funding consistent with the Vision Plan.
12. Ensure that real estate taxes are equitable and fair for farmers and the elderly that are on fixed incomes.

VI. PRIVATE SECTOR LEADERSHIP

VISION

Cabarrus County will have private sector leadership that ensures an interdependent process of growth that results in the betterment of all our citizens and organizations.

Strategies

1. **Encourage all private sector (for-profit and not-for-profit) organizations to endorse the Vision Plan and commit to provide the leadership and resources to help implement its Strategies, Visions, and Key Benchmarks while using Core Values as guides in decision making.**
2. **Encourage our leaders to take their turn in providing government leadership by accepting board appointments and running for elective office. Appreciate and support these leaders during their terms in office as they inevitably experience the conflicts and challenges of making difficult decisions in the best interest of the community at large.**
3. **Develop trust between governments, for-profit organizations, and not-for-profit organizations that results in increased collaboration.**
4. **Encourage all business and government leadership to creatively support and actively plan initiatives with faith-based and other not-for-profit, organizations that will build the good of the community.**
5. **Expand leadership development programs for all ages. Involve alumni of these programs in community leadership roles.**
6. Develop a network of investors who will be active in start-up investments for entrepreneurs and provide investment in projects beneficial to the community.
7. Expand the public-private partnership that involves local government and the Chamber of Commerce to implement and communicate the Vision Plan.
8. Encourage service clubs to develop communications with young people that will result in their increased involvement and membership.
9. Increase collaboration of business and faith-based institutions in youth initiatives.
10. Encourage faith-based institutions to actively participate in the implementation of the Vision Plan.
11. Involve neighborhood associations in the Vision Plan implementation.
12. Organize a systematic approach to make application for program funding from federal and state governments, foundations and corporations.
13. Communicate implementation of the Vision Plan activities throughout the community.
14. Immediately encourage the early involvement of newcomers in community affairs.

KEY BENCHMARKS

The Key Benchmarks will be used to measure the progress of the Vision Plan each year. Achieving each Key Benchmark will require our working together in an unprecedented way on the strategies in the six *interdependent* Foundations: Education, Economic Development, Quality of Life, Infrastructure, Government and Private Sector Leadership. Envision Cabarrus identifies the future desired by Cabarrus County residents. There will also be approximately 30 Strategy Benchmarks developed by Vision Partners that will be measured on an annual basis. The Benchmarks will tell us each year a) when we are successful and can celebrate; or b) when we fall short of the Benchmarks and the Vision Partners need to “review, revise and refocus” their Action Steps to accomplish the strategies.

1. Education

K-12

- The grade 9-12 Graduation rate will increase each year.
- The quality of high school graduates will increase each year as measured by the following:
 - a. First year success rate of graduates that go to college.
 - b. Employer satisfaction after one year for graduates going immediately into work place.
 - c. Earnings per job of students who immediately enter the work force as measured by starting salary and after one year of work.

Skills Training and Life-long Learning

Each year current employees will receive the training required to increase productivity enough to meet the Job Growth Key Benchmark.

The Envision Cabarrus Education Foundation Team and Benchmark Team will develop the annual measurements to be used for the three Education Key Benchmarks.

2. **Quality of Life¹** - the annual measurement of the Strategy Benchmarks in the Quality of Life Foundation will, as a group, comprise the Quality of Life Key Benchmark.
3. **Infrastructure** - the annual measurement for this Key Benchmark will be the reserve capacity to meet the requirements of each infrastructure element for anticipated annual growth. In order to determine the reserve capacity, the service quality desired by the citizens of Cabarrus County will be determined for each element of the infrastructure plan. Interdependent elements to be included in this plan are housing, commercial, retail, industrial, agriculture, education, public safety, transportation (road, mass transit, rail, air, and other methods such as bikeways), recreation & parks, open space, government facilities, water, sewer, solid waste, storm drainage, electricity, communications, historical, environmental, preservation.

¹ . The terms Education, Quality of Life, and Infrastructure have dual uses in Envision Cabarrus as Key Benchmarks and as three of the six *interdependent* Foundation.

4. Job Growth - To ensure our young people can stay in Cabarrus if they choose, there will be:

- net new job growth of 4.5% per year
- increases in average earning by 1% above the US average
- decrease the % of individuals in poverty to below 50% of the North Carolina poverty rate
- increase the per capita income so that as a % of the US per capita income, the gap will decrease between Cabarrus and Mecklenburg Counties

The result will be:

- reductions in the gap with Mecklenburg County
- increases in the numbers of our citizens living & working here
- measurable decreases in net imported earnings as a % of total earnings each year until below 15%

History:

- *Net new job growth was at a rate of 4.5% per year from 1991 to 1999.*
- *Average earnings per job increased 0.5% above the United States average from 1969 to 1999. However, from 1996 to 1999 average earnings per job increased at a rate of 1% below the United States average.*
- *Cabarrus per capita income by residents as a % of the United States per capita income increased an average of 0.7% per year from 1969 to 1999. However, 1995-1999 has seen almost no increase. The gap with Mecklenburg County increased from 18.4% in 1983 to 32.4% in 1999 or 0.9% per year.*
- *Net Imported Earnings as a % of Total Earnings from work by residents:*

Year	Cabarrus	Iredell	Gwinnett, GA
1970	(2)%	5%	56%
1980	13%	18%	50%
1990	22%	12%	31%
1999	23%	10%	16%

- *In 1997, Cabarrus' percent of individuals in poverty was 8% and North Carolina's was 12.6%.*

5. Spiritual and Character Growth - Spiritual and character growth will be measured each year by a statistically significant survey. After the second year survey, an annual increment of expected change will be developed by the Benchmark Team and approved by the Steering Committee.

VISION GLOSSARY:

Terms used in the Vision Process

Action Steps	What the Vision Partner is going to do; a series of projects or events developed to meet a specific annual Strategy.
Benchmark Team	A team responsible for assisting, and negotiating with, Strategic Alliances of Vision Partners in developing Strategy Benchmarks for the Key Strategies and updating the Key and Strategy Benchmarks annually.
Collaborative Implementation	The process of making the Vision a reality through the collaboration and action of Vision Partners.
Core Values	Character traits that guide daily decision-making.
Focus Groups	Ten groups of about 10 persons who helped acquaint the facilitator with the current and historical situation in the community.
Foundation Team	Each Foundation has a team that is responsible for helping develop Strategic Alliances and recruiting new Vision Partners as needed for implementation.
Foundations	Interdependent areas that will provide a comprehensive Vision for the community: Education, Economic Development, Quality of Life, Infrastructure, Government, and Private Sector Leadership.
Founding Vision Partners	The local governments and the Regional Chamber of Commerce, who originated and financed the Visioning Process.
Internal Strategy Benchmark	Where more than one Vision Partner is working on a strategy, each Vision Partner should develop an Internal Strategy Benchmark to provide a) a basis for developing its own Action Steps and b) to measure its progress. Each of the Vision Partners may have different Internal Strategy Benchmarks because each is working on different aspects of implementing the strategy. If each Vision Partner meets its Internal Strategy Benchmark, the overall Strategy Benchmark should be met.
Key Benchmarks	Five annual measurements of the community's progress towards achieving its Vision, requiring positive results from the <i>interdependent</i> Foundations and providing accountability for the process.
Key Strategies	The most important strategies in advancing the Key Benchmarks. Twelve will be selected initially for development of Strategic Alliances. When Alliances have been established for the first 12 strategies, others will be added until about 30 Alliances are operating.
Key Strategy Adoption	A process to select the sequence of Strategies to be implemented by Strategic Alliances that the Key Benchmarks are met.
Stakeholders Summit	A public meeting at which the attendees helped develop the top ten issues that should be considered during the Vision Process. Approximately 10 individuals present were elected to serve on the Vision Task Force.
Steering Committee	A diverse and representative 33-member team of community members appointed to lead and provide final policy direction for the Vision Process during the planning and implementation phases.
Strategic Alliance	A group of Vision Partners who work together to implement a specific Strategy. The Vision Partners in the Alliance will elect a chair to be responsible for providing leadership. There will be Alliance Benchmarks and Action Steps for the Strategic Alliance. The Vision Partners will assume responsibility for the Action Steps that fall within their own scope of operations and develop an Internal Strategy Benchmark and their own Action Steps for implementation. The key is to work collaboratively, but with a minimum of meetings and bureaucracy.
Strategy	A verbal picture of the future in a specific part of a particular Foundation. Twenty to thirty Strategies in each Foundation will provide a more detailed definition of each Foundation Vision. There are five priority Strategies for each Foundation. Each Strategy begins with words like "create, maintain, develop, increase...". An example of a Strategy is "Increase the graduation rate." The annual numeric amount of increase is the Strategy Benchmark that will be set by Vision Partners during Collaborative Implementation.

Strategy Adoption	A Vision Partner adopts a Strategy by developing Action Steps for its implementation, and Strategy Benchmarks for accountability.
Strategy Benchmark	Annual measurement of the progress of a specific strategy that provides accountability for the process on an annual basis for 3 to 10 years. Example: Increase the graduation rate 2% per year for 10 years. The Strategy Benchmark should be developed before the Action Steps.
Town Hall Meeting	An annual meeting to review the benchmarks and progress on strategies. The Vision Partners and public are invited.
Vision	A Vision defines what the community wants to be in the future in each Foundation area. There is a Vision for each Foundation area. Each Vision begins with "We will be..." or "We will have...". The six <i>interdependent</i> Foundation Visions together represent the community's Vision for the future.
Vision Document	The Vision document includes an Introduction which describes the visioning planning and implementation processes, contains a statement of our Vision, Core Values and Priority Issues. The document also includes Key Benchmarks for annually measuring our progress towards our Vision, a Vision statement for each Foundation, together with more than 87 strategies for achieving our Vision, including 30 priority strategies. The Vision document is not a prediction of the future, but is the community envisioning the future that the people want to create.
Vision Partner	Any organization, business, civic group, government entity, church, and so on, that has volunteered to collaborate with other community members to make the Vision and Strategic Plan reality. Vision Partners are the organizations that are responsible for making individual strategies a reality. A Vision Partner endorses the Vision Process even though it may not agree with every single Core Value, Key Benchmark, Vision or Strategy in the Vision Document.
Vision Task Force	A diverse group of 323 people responsible for developing the draft Vision document and making presentations on the draft document to community organizations.

TERMINOLOGY SUMMARY FOR VISION-DRIVEN STRATEGIC PLANNING

Long-term

20 years

- Core Values
- Key Benchmarks
- Visions for each of the *interdependent* foundations for a comprehensive Strategic Plan

+ Economic Development	+ Quality of Life
+ Education	+ Infrastructure
+ Government	+ Private Sector Leadership

Mid-term

5 to 10 years

- Strategies for each of the six foundations
- Priority Strategies

Short-term

1 to 5 years

- Developed by Alliances and Vision Partners for individual strategies:
- Strategy Benchmarks
- Action Steps

VISION TASK FORCE

Planning Chair: Clarence Horton

Aiken, Paul
Allman, Joyce
Alston, Betty
Amendum, Jim
Anderson, Richard
Anthony, Donald
Anthony, Jacqueline
Atkins, Tony
Austin, Ralph
Bankhead, Tim
Barger, Nancy
Barnhill, Lois
Barrier, III, George
Barrier, Lamar
Barringer, Scott
Batts, Hilda
Beatty, Joyce
Behm, Emily
Benson, Eileen
Bentley, Diana
Blackwelder, James
Blankenship, Dennis
Blevins, Eric
Bobbitt, Terri
Book, Larry
Book, Randy
Boucher, Sandra Lou
Boyd, Ellen
Boyd, Eric
Boyd, Steven
Brennan, Mandy
Brown, Alfred
Brown, Bachman
Brown, Linda
Brown, Mike
Brown, Paul
Brown, Shirley
Buchanan, Doris
Buckwell, Chip
Burris, Doris
Burris, Jason
Burton, Steve
Byerly, Jo Anne
Byrd, Mike
Byrd, Phil
Calloway, Jesse
Carruth, Bob
Carty, Michael

Cauthen, Randy
Chaney, Terri
Clark, Terri
Clifton, Jr., Frank
Cline, Donna
Cohen, David
Coleman, Jo Lynn
Cone, Gary
Cook, Grady
Cowherd, Phil
Crabill, Casey
Crabill, Jean
Crabtree, Will
Davis, Sam
Dayvault, Tom
Deal, Gayle
Dennis, Kym
Dewar, Susan
DiFoggio, Nick
Diss, Beth
Douglas-Jackson, Wanda
Dover, Audy
Dover, Elizabeth Anne
Downey, Marshall
Drye, Vera
Dunlow, Eddie
Edwards, Randy
Eggleston, Brandon
Epler, Jim
Ewing, Maurice
Faggart, Billy
Farina, Sam
Farrow, Andy
Fennel, Arne L.
Ferguson, Angela
Ferguson, Susan
Fertenbaugh, Cindy
Fisher, Randy
Flowe, Richard
Floyd, Cathy
Foley, Tim
Fowler, Mark
Fowler, Newton
Freeman, Robert
Friday, Miriam
Gaskin, Deond
Geathers, Ken
Gary, Maureen
Georgiou, Nick

Gerbino, Alfred
Gibbs, Harvey
Goedeke, Doris
Goff, Gina
Goodnight, Steve
Gordon, Mary
Graham, Angela
Greene, Jim
Greene, Laura
Haas, Roger
Hagler, Tim
Hales, David
Haley, Todd
Halloway, Terry
Hammett, Becky
Hammett Sr., John
Harris, Sr., Thomas
Harris, Tish
Harrison, David
Harrison, Grant
Harward, Floyce
Haviland, James
Hayes, Robin
Henderson, Dan
Henderson, Nichole
Henry, II, Hector H.
Herrington, Tom
Hester, Jackie
Hiatt, Brian
Hill, Ed
Hill, Carl
Hinnant, Elizabeth
Hinsdale, Larry
Hodges, Sonya
Holland, Frances Black
Honeycutt, Diane
Horton, Clarence
Horton, John
Hudson, Richard
Hunn, Mike
Inscore, Debra
James, Windy
Jay, Patricia
Jay, Sin
Jermyn, Bill
Johnson, Anise
Johnson, Charles
Johnson, Robert
Jolley, Bill

Jones, Branson
Jones, Philip
Jones, Terry
Juba, Joni
Julian, Glenn
Kraft, Janet
Kennedy, John
Kiker, Tony
Kimbrough, Lawrence
Kiser, Derelle
Klinglesmith, Cathy L.
Kluttz, Arthur
Krimminger, Gerald
Lane, Marion Charles
Lawless, Greg
Legg, Mike
Lesewy, Carol
Liles, George W.
Linker, Chris
Little, Steve
Lord, Vivian
Love, Glen
Lovin, Carol
Lovin, Kristen
MacDonald, Delaine
Mack, Louise
MacRae, Bill
Mahle, Amy
Marrow, Adrienne
Martin, Mark
McAllister, Teresa
McEachen, Harold
McGee, Martin
Meacham, Phillip
Melton, Bob
Melton, Wilmer
Mickens, Sr., Elvin
Miles, Robert
Misenheimer, Robert
Misenheimer, Sam
Monastra, Joe
Morris, Steve
Morrison, Fred
Moss, Ray
Mullin, David
Murdock, John
Nantz, Mark
Naylor, David

Oakley, Allen
Oates, Elizabeth
O'Brian, Kevin
O'Brian, Sean
Olson, Jr., Col. Russell V
Ours, Butch
Padgett, Scott
Palmer, Ira Lee
Patterson, Phillip
Perez, Frances
Phillips, John B.
Phillips, David
Phillips, Edwin
Phillips, Larry
Philpot, Billy
Pickard, Vicky
Plemmons, Mark
Polk, Iris M.
Ashley, Jeanne Porter
Porter, Tom
Potts, Richard
Potts, Sammie W.
Prentice, Sandi
Prescott, Bob
Pressley-Barrier, Jill
Privette, Annette
Privette, Coy
Proctor, David L.
Propst, Kelly
Quickel, Mike
Rader, Patti

Ramseur, James
Remkus, Mike
Rhodes, Tracy
Rieder, Morgan
Riley, Brad
Rimer, Pamela
Ritchie, Aaron
Ritchie, Jane
Ritchie, Patti
Robertson, Mike
Rounds, Leigh
Ruff, Lori B.
Ritchie, Ray
Ruth, Gary
Sands, Susan
Sasser, James
Sayewich, Edie
Scardina, Trisha
Schmidt, Richard
Schmitt, Thomas
Scott, Allen
Scott, Kay
Sharer, John
Sharpe, Marci
Shaver, John
Shelton Nichols, Jan
Shepperson, LaFonde
Shive, Gary
Sifford, Kelly
Simmons, Bill
Simmons, Jr., Andy

Simmons, Melissa
Small, Allen
Smith, George
Smith, Ron
Smith, Sr., Philip
Smith, Steve
Smith, Theresa
Snodderly, Blenda
Soloman, Jamara
Sossoman, Dianne
Spencer, Honnie
Stafford, Doug
Steele-Robinson, Alice
Steinbacher, Steve
Stout, Gwen
Stowers, Steve
Suggs, Richard
Sutton, Steve
Sutton, Virginia
Talley, Phoebe
Taylor, Jenna Sue
Treanor, Anne
Trexler, Jeanette
Trexler, Wayne
Troutman, Raiford
Tucker, Carolyn
Turner, Angie
Turner, Joe
Tuttle, John
Tyson, Edward B.
Valentine, Jason

Vaneekhoven, Roxann
VanGorden, Bob
Wade, Greg
Waldroup, Henry
Wall, Randy
Walton, Steve
Waters, Kathy
Weant, Katie
Weant, Vickie
Whiteside, Norman
Whitley, Mark
Wilhelm, Vicki
Williams, Bill
Williams, Charlie
Williams, James
Williams, Margaret
Williams, Martie
Williams, Wayne
Williamson, Jerry
Wilson, Cathy
Winkler, Harold
Wise, Chris
Woods, Pat
Woodward, Jennifer
Yelton, Ken
Yoos, David
Young, Bob
Young, Jeff
Yarborough, Susan

Editing Committee

Cobb, Karen
Farina, Sam

Harris, Tish
Harrison, David

***Envision Cabarrus Steering Committee members are shown in bold type**

Vision Facilitation by Henry Luke – Jacksonville, Florida
Process Management by Cabarrus Regional Chamber of Commerce
Envision Cabarrus Executive Director– Len Cone



INVITATION TO BECOME A VISION PARTNER

What is a VISION PARTNER?

Any organization, business, civic group, government entity, church, etc. that has volunteered to collaborate with other community members to make the Vision and Strategic Plan reality.

Vision Partners are the organizations that are responsible for making individual strategies Reality. A Vision Partner endorses the Vision Process even though it may not agree with every Single Core Value, Key Benchmark, Vision or Strategy.

What are the Vision Partners' responsibilities?

- Adopt Strategies that it wants to support through implementation
- Form Strategic Alliances where appropriate
- Create Strategy Benchmarks
- Develop Action Steps to accomplish the Strategy with realistic deadlines
- Provide resources to implement Action Steps
- Generate progress reports
- Include affiliation with ENVISION CABARRUS in printed and advertising material and create links to the Vision 2020 web-site (www.envisioncabarrus.org)
- Review, revise and refocus Action Steps when progress reports are negative

(Foundation Teams and a Benchmark Team will be available to assist you in these steps.)

Yes, please include us as an ENVISION CABARRUS Vision Partner!

Organization/ Business/Agency/ Club/ Church:

Representative: _____

Address: _____

_____ Zip code: _____

Telephone: Day _____ Evening _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

(A list of Vision Partners will be included in all ENVISION CABARRUS materials and on our web-site.)

2391 Dale Earnhardt Boulevard • Kannapolis, NC 28083
(704) 782-4000 • FAX (704) 782-4050