

## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION and OVERVIEW**

Gibsonville, North Carolina is a community of over 6,410, which has seen an overall pattern of slow, but continual growth over the last century. As a result of this slow growth, the qualities that made Gibsonville special for older generations are still found within the community. The last fifty years has seen the continued development of subdivisions within the town limits and the downtown is still a focal point for the community. New commercial development has primarily occurred in Burlington, Gibsonville's larger neighbor to the east. The lack of strips malls within the community has been a saving grace for the town center.

However, in recent years an increase in population and continuing development has put strains on the community. Gibsonville is at a crossroads; strategically located between Greensboro and Burlington, the Town will continue to see development occur but likely at a price. The small town atmosphere that all residents and visitors enjoy has started to erode. The growth that is occurring does not meet the demands of the community and many feel that the Town is without a plan to guide growth into the next millennium. This Plan, a collaborative effort between elected officials, town staff, and concerned citizens, is an attempt to balance the prospect of new growth with the desire to maintain the characteristics that make Gibsonville such a unique place.

### **1.1 PURPOSE**

This document is a twenty-year land development plan for the Town of Gibsonville. The plan addresses various elements of growth ranging from community appearance to economic development. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Build community consensus on future development patterns.
- Create a Land Development Plan to guide future development decisions.
- Develop goals and policies for major types of development

### **1.2 LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

A committee was assembled in 1998 to start working on a plan for Gibsonville's future. In 2000, an offshoot of this committee was formally established as the Land Development Plan Steering Committee, comprised of seven (7) citizens with varying backgrounds. The Steering Committee was the voice of the citizens of Gibsonville and helped guide the planners from the NC Division of Community Assistance and the Town of Gibsonville in creating a plan that would best serve the Town. In addition, public meetings allowed the community to provide input into the plan throughout the planning process.

A new committee was established in 2011 to oversee the update of the plan. The Land Development Plan Update Committee is composed of five (5) members of the Planning Board. The Town Manager, Town Planner, and a planner from the NC Division of Community Assistance provided support and guidance in the updating process.

### **1.3 MISSION STATEMENT**

*“To create a plan that improves our quality of life, while managing the future growth of our community.”*

### **1.4 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Public participation in the planning process was of crucial importance. The Steering Committee that helped guide the development of the plan was the first step in making sure that the public had input in the plan. The members of the Steering Committee met monthly for over a year. During these meetings they discussed the existing conditions within Gibsonville, determined key issues facing the Town, and analyzed population, economic, and social data. The final plan resulting from these meetings represents the views of the people of the community.

At the beginning of the planning process, the Steering Committee decided to hold a Town Meeting to see if they were on the same track as the community, in regards to ideas and concerns. This meeting was held on September 28, 2000 and allowed the citizens of Gibsonville a chance to offer input in the planning process. Over 40 citizens attended the meeting which was held at the Gibsonville Elementary School. The results of the Town Meeting reinforced and honed the issues, ideas, and concerns already expressed by the Steering Committee. In a couple of instances the Town Meeting highlighted additional issues that were not discussed by the Steering Committee.

In January 2000, the Steering Committee began to draft land use goals and strategies and discuss future land use patterns. Throughout the winter and early spring the Steering Committee was busy making final recommendations on the plan. Following completion of the plan and prior to adoption, the Steering Committee held a public forum to discuss the plan with the Board of Alderman, Planning Board members, and citizens. This public forum took place in August 2001. The goal of the meeting was to allow the public to provide final input into the plan before it went before the Planning Board and Board of Alderman for adoption. In addition, copies of the completed plan were made available at the Gibsonville Public Library and Town Hall for all those who could not attend the meeting.

The Town’s Planning Board updated the Census demographic information and revised the development goals and strategies in the intervening years. In 2011, the Land Development Plan Update Committee formally began a process to update the plan.

### **1.5 GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE**

The scope of the plan encompasses the Town of Gibsonville’s planning jurisdiction and future growth areas, which include the land found within the Town limits and extra-territorial jurisdiction.

## **1.6 ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN**

The plan is organized into seven sections; Introduction and Overview, Issues and Vision Statement, Background Information, Comparison of Development Patterns, Goals to Guide us into the Future, Future Land Use Map, and Implementation and Review. All of these sections build on one another to incorporate the two main components of the plan: facts and values.

Facts are the reality of what has occurred and what is occurring in Gibsonville. For example, facts include information on population, economy, water service, transportation, zoning, and a multitude of other information. All these facts provided the Steering Committee with a firm foundation of where Gibsonville has come from and where it is headed. Most of the facts can be found in Section III, Background Information, of the plan.

The values of the community are not as concrete as facts. Values include how people feel about certain places, what is important to them, and what needs to change. Values are subjective and each person brings forward different values to the planning process. The plan incorporates the values that have gained a consensus within the community, such as maintaining Gibsonville's small town character, improving the downtown, and improving the community's appearance.

The first four sections of the plan are primarily concerned with establishing the facts and values. Section five takes the facts and values and blends them together into a realistic plan that represents the community's needs and desires.

## **1.7 HOW TO USE THE PLAN**

The plan is designed as a growth management guide for the community. Elected officials, appointed board members, Town staff, developers, and citizens should view the plan as a tool that can be used for making development decisions. The plan has three major components that will guide growth. These components are titled: Comparison of Development Patterns, Goals to Guide us into the Future, and Future Land Use Map. These components work together to evaluate proposed developments and also provide developers with information on what the Town wants, in terms of growth.

The Development Patterns that were identified in the plan look at overall development practices. At this level developments are evaluated on a very large scale to see if they contain the characteristics that the Town desires in future developments. Development proposals are evaluated by the amount of open space they include, connection of transportation network, and mix of uses. The Goals to Guide us into the Future set a general context for how development should minimize impact the environment, how services should be delivered, and what types of development patterns should occur. The goals should be used as a second element in evaluating a development proposal.

The Future Land Use Map shows where specific types of development should occur and gives a general description of each development type. When evaluating the proposal it is important to check the location, type of development, and general appearance of the development against the Future Land Use Map.

Section 7, Implementation and Review, found on pages 38-43, offer a detailed account of how the Land Development Plan should be used. This section includes a list of actions that can be taken right away to aid in the implementation of the Plan. In addition, this section includes an implementation matrix, identifying potential partners and funding sources that can be utilized to put many of these action plans into place.

## **SECTION 2: ISSUES AND VISION STATEMENT**

### **2.1 KEY ISSUES**

Growth has been identified as a key issue facing the Town of Gibsonville. During meetings with the Steering Committee as well as at the Town Meeting most people agreed that growth is an important issue. In particular four questions concerning growth have been raised.

- What kind of Growth does Gibsonville want?
- How much Growth does Gibsonville want?
- Where should Growth be located?
- What should the Growth look like?

The answers to these questions vary depending upon which part of the Town you are dealing with. One answer is clear though: the people of Gibsonville know growth is coming and they want to make sure it fits in with existing development in the Town.

The importance of the Town Center is a second issue that is of crucial importance to the citizens of Gibsonville. The Steering Committee and the citizens that attended the Town Meeting stressed the importance of the historic downtown. Maintaining the Town Center as the focus of commercial, governmental, and community activities must be accomplished in order to preserve a large part of what makes Gibsonville so special.

### **2.2 EXISTING AND EMERGING CONDITIONS**

First, the Town of Gibsonville continues to receive a constant flow of growth predominately in the form of new subdivisions. These new subdivisions can be primarily found within the Town limits. The one downside to this growth in housing is the decaying of other older housing stock throughout the Town.

Secondly, the growth that Gibsonville is receiving is turning Gibsonville into a bedroom community. The development of new subdivisions has resulted in more people calling Gibsonville home, while working in another town. More people are commuting further away to both the Greensboro/High Point/Winston-Salem area and the Triangle region, while enjoying the lower cost of living found in Gibsonville and the small town atmosphere. Gibsonville residents enjoy a lower cost of living because land is less expensive, taxes are lower than in the larger metropolitan areas to the east and west, and public services are provided more efficiently.

The lack of new commercial establishments within Gibsonville is another emerging condition. As new commercial developments spring up in the surrounding cities, more of Gibsonville's residents are traveling outside the town limits to make purchases. Without a critical mass of commercial establishments, the Town Center will decline.

Finally, Gibsonville's reliance on Burlington for water and the treatment of wastewater has affected the community's attitude about growth. Having a reliable and ample source of water and a way to treat wastewater is a crucial piece of the economic development puzzle. Gibsonville must make every effort to secure those two things in order to continue to grow and provide quality services to its citizens.

### **2.3 VISION STATEMENT**

In the year 2020, the Town of Gibsonville will continue to enjoy the small town atmosphere that makes it so appealing to its residents. The Town Center will have seen a renaissance and will once again become the center for community activities. Capitalizing on its strategic location, Gibsonville will have attracted many new businesses that enjoy easy access to both the Triad and Triangle regions.

The Town's commitment to quality growth has assisted in the development of a livable community. Gibsonville has many neighborhoods that are linked to other parts of the Town by roads as well as bike trails and sidewalks. The sprawling development patterns of the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century have been incorporated into a more compact development pattern, incorporating many of the features found around the historic core of Gibsonville including narrower streets, sidewalks, corner stores, and smaller lots. These things aid in enhancing Gibsonville's small town atmosphere. Residents of Gibsonville enjoy greater access to public open space, a less cluttered and more attractive landscape, less dependence on the automobile, and a more pedestrian friendly environment.

Gibsonville also has continued to provide quality services to its residents by planning for the future provision of water, sewer, parks and roads, to be delivered at a reasonable cost. Developers have also been able to plan and provide better quality development since the Land Development Plan highlights the location of new development, type of development that is desired, as well as suggestions on the appearance of new development.

## **SECTION 3: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **3.1 HISTORY**

Gibsonville became known as the Town of Gibsonville on February 18, 1871 when it was chartered by the North Carolina General Assembly. It is not known who requested incorporation, but the name Gibsonville had already been applied to the community since the first Post Office bore that name. Just why the founding fathers laid off the boundaries of the Town as they did, to include land in both Guilford and Alamance Counties, is unknown. It is doubtful that they realized the many complex problems which the Town would face because of this division.

The Town of Gibsonville, when first incorporated, constituted an area of one square mile, with the exception of the properties of two men. It is understood that these men did not desire their lands to be located within the corporate limits. The center of the Town was the railroad depot. The area that became the Town of Gibsonville contained fields for agricultural production as well as some gold mining. Numerous gold mine shafts were dug 50 and 60 feet deep, although today most are filled. One of these mines was located on the west side of Springwood Road, south of the Gibsonville Cemetery (Gibsonville – Land Development Plan, 1977).

One of the first commercial buildings in Gibsonville was operated by Captain Billy Gilmer; it was in the present day location of the Gibsonville Drug Store and carried a line of general merchandise, hardware, and groceries. The building was a wooden structure and was operated prior to the Civil War. One of the earliest public meeting places in town was the town well. The well was located alongside Piedmont Street, between the drug store and the depot. It was a windlass and bucket type and provided businesses and travelers with a spot in which they could refresh themselves. There is no record when the well was dug or when it was finally abandoned (Wyrick, 1971).

As the years passed, Gibsonville grew due to the railroad and the mills that located within the Town. This economic growth was accompanied by growth in population. In 1880, Gibsonville had a population of 111 people, but by 1950 the population had reached 1,866. The 2000 US Census listed Gibsonville's current population at 4,372; by 2010, that figure was up to 6,410 people.

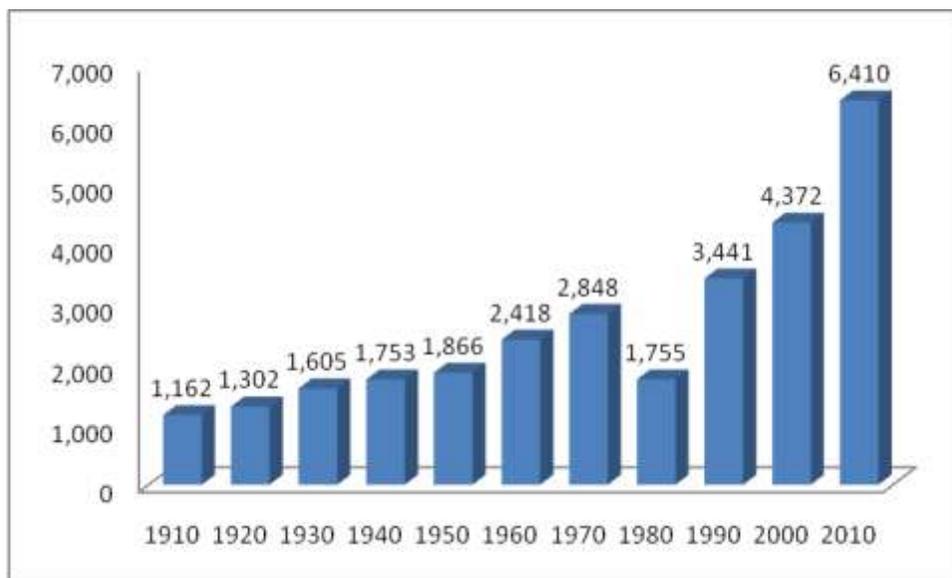
### **3.2 POPULATION, HOUSING, AND ECONOMY**

A detailed analysis of Gibsonville's population, housing, and economy was performed for the creation of the Land Development Plan and revised with recent United States Census information during the 2011 update. The entire analysis, *Town of Gibsonville – Community Profile*, can be found in the Gibsonville Planning Department. The following statistical tables were taken from that document.

### 3.2.1 POPULATION

Between 1910 and 1970 Gibsonville had a very steady population increase. However, between 1970 and 1980 Gibsonville lost approximately 1,000 people due to major job losses in the manufacturing sector. Since this dramatic decrease in population, Gibsonville has rebounded and gained over 4,000 residents. Gibsonville has been fortunate to experience an overall increase in population throughout its history.

#### A HISTORICAL LOOK AT GIBSONVILLE'S POPULATION 1910-2010



Source: US Census Bureau

It is difficult to project the population of any municipality due to the unpredictability of potential annexations. In Gibsonville's case the equation is further diluted by being split between two counties. Below is a chart showing the population projections for Gibsonville and Alamance County. These numbers reflect the State of North Carolina's estimates for Alamance County and rough estimation of Gibsonville's potential population growth.

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS GIBSONVILLE & ALAMANCE COUNTY

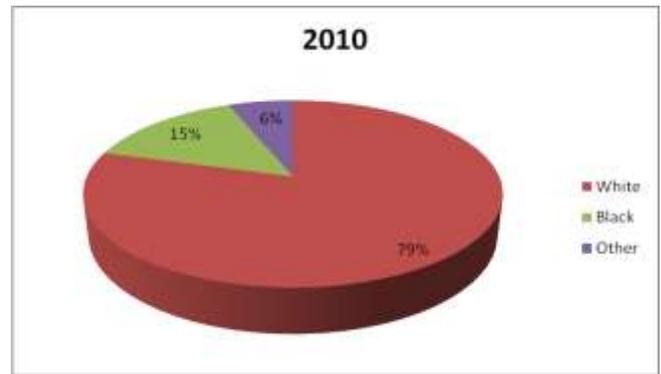
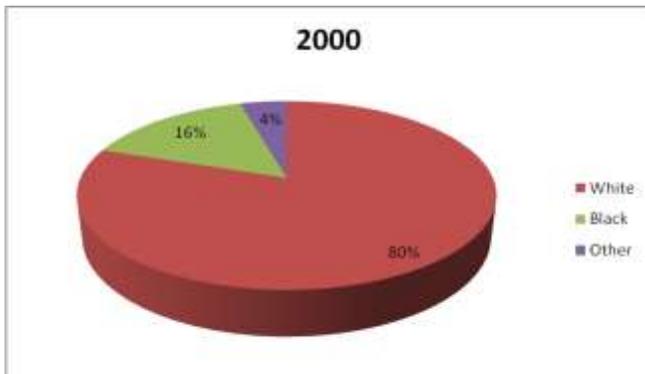
	<u>Gibsonville<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Gibsonville<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>Alamance County</u>
1950	1,866		71,220
1960	2,418		85,674
1970	2,848		96,362
1980	1,755		99,319
1990	3,441		108,213
2000	4,372		130,800
2010	6,410		151,131
2015	6,568	6,732	156,400
2020	6,772	6,982	161,234
2025	6,975	7,184	166,070
2030	7,178	7,386	170,904

Source: US Census Bureau, NC Office of State Planning

<sup>1</sup>Based on proportion of Alamance County, <sup>2</sup>Based on Gibsonville's Yearly Growth Rate since 2010.

Gibsonville's population is predominantly white. The Town's minority population accounted for roughly 20% of the total population in 2000 and 2010. While the majority of the Town's minority population is African American, the percentage of other races has raised slightly between decades.

### TOWN OF GIBSONVILLE - RACE



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census

The following chart highlights the growth in population over the last decade, according to age group. There were population gains in each of the age groups. Gibsonville's age segment that gained the most population between 2000 and 2010 was the 45-54 age group. The second highest population increase was seen in the age segment 60-64, followed closely by the 55-59 age range.

## AGE RANGES OF GIBSONVILLE'S POPULATION

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>Change</b>
0 - 4	309	419	<b>110</b>
5 - 9	350	442	<b>92</b>
10 - 14	374	459	<b>85</b>
15 - 19	275	446	<b>171</b>
20 - 24	253	312	<b>59</b>
25 - 34	587	784	<b>197</b>
35 - 44	797	1006	<b>209</b>
45 - 54	622	947	<b>325</b>
55 - 59	208	433	<b>225</b>
60 - 64	163	425	<b>262</b>
65 - 74	248	448	<b>200</b>
75 - 84	143	218	<b>75</b>
85+	43	71	<b>28</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4372</b>	<b>6410</b>	<b>2038</b>

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census*

In the following three sections the Town of Gibsonville is compared with the City of King (located in Stokes County) and the Town of Mocksville (Davie County). The purpose of this comparison is to provide a little insight into how Gibsonville relates to similarly sized towns in the Triad.

### 3.2.2 HOUSING

The City of King has the highest occupancy rate with 96.6% of all housing being occupied. Gibsonville had 93% of all housing occupied and an average of 2.56 people per household. Mocksville has the least number of people per household with 2.33.

## OCCUPANCY RATES (Households)

	<b>Houses</b>	<b>Occupied</b>	<b>% Occupied</b>	<b>Persons per Household</b>
<b>Gibsonville</b>	<b>2798</b>	<b>2584</b>	<b>92.4%</b>	<b>2.47</b>
King	3073	2856	92.9%	2.34
Mocksville	2218	1976	89.1%	2.48
NC	4,327,528	3,745,155	86.5%	2.48

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census*

Mocksville has the lowest home ownership rate with only 62.2% of people owning their own home. The lowest median value for homes was found in Gibsonville. King had the highest percent of homeownership and the highest median value for homes found within the town.

## HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES & HOUSING VALUES

	<b>% of Owner Occupied Units</b>	<b>Median Value</b>
<b>Gibsonville</b>	<b>76.5%</b>	<b>\$164,300</b>
King	71.4%	\$141,700
Mocksville	66.3%	\$132,000
NC	66.7%	\$149,100

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census*

When compared with the two other municipalities Gibsonville has the lowest percentage of Mobile Home/Other structures. Almost 20% of all Gibsonville's structures are Multi-Family, this is comparable to the State average and Mocksville's. Overall, King has the largest percent of Single Family homes and the least amount of Multi-Family housing.

## UNITS IN STRUCTURE

	<b>Single Family</b>	<b>Multi-Family</b>	<b>Mobile Home/Other</b>
<b>Gibsonville</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
King	79.2%	14.8%	6.2%
Mocksville	74.9%	23.5%	1.5%
NC	68.7%	16.9%	14.3%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census*

### 3.2.3 ECONOMY

Median Family Income and Per Capita Income are both lower in Gibsonville than the other two comparison jurisdictions, as well as the State as a whole. King has the highest Household, Family, and Per Capita income, the median Household income is \$43,611.

## INCOME

	<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>Median Family Income</b>	<b>Per Capita Income</b>
<b>Gibsonville</b>	<b>\$51,818</b>	<b>\$70,375</b>	<b>\$24,672</b>
King	\$54,429	\$64,506	\$24,285
Mocksville	\$47,644	\$52,717	\$21,667
NC	\$45,570	\$56,153	\$24,745

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census*

The poverty rate for all people in Gibsonville is well below the state average. In Gibsonville the highest poverty rates are seen among the elderly. Mocksville has the highest percentage of children in poverty with over 21%. The City of King has the lowest poverty rates for All Persons and children, while Mocksville has the lowest poverty rate for persons over the age of 65.

## POVERTY

	<b>All Persons</b>	<b>Children (0-17)</b>	<b>Elderly (65+)</b>
<b>Gibsonville</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>
King	5.4%	1.6%	13.0%
Mocksville	15.2%	32.4%	8.0%
NC	15.5%	21.6%	10.7%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census*

38% of Gibsonville’s residents are employed in the manufacturing industry. The second largest employment sector is retail trade (14.1%) followed by the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate industry (9.3%).

## GIBSONVILLE’S EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

<b>Industry</b>	<b># of Employee’s</b>	<b>% of Total Employed</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining	33	1.1%
Construction	235	8.1%
Manufacturing	417	14.4%
Wholesale Trade	30	1.0%
Retail Trade	272	9.4%
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	108	3.7%
Information	91	3.1%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Rental and Leasing	159	5.5%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services	194	6.7%
Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance	781	27.0%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services	239	8.3%
Other Services	141	4.9%
Public Administration	189	6.5%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census*

### 3.2.4 EDUCATION

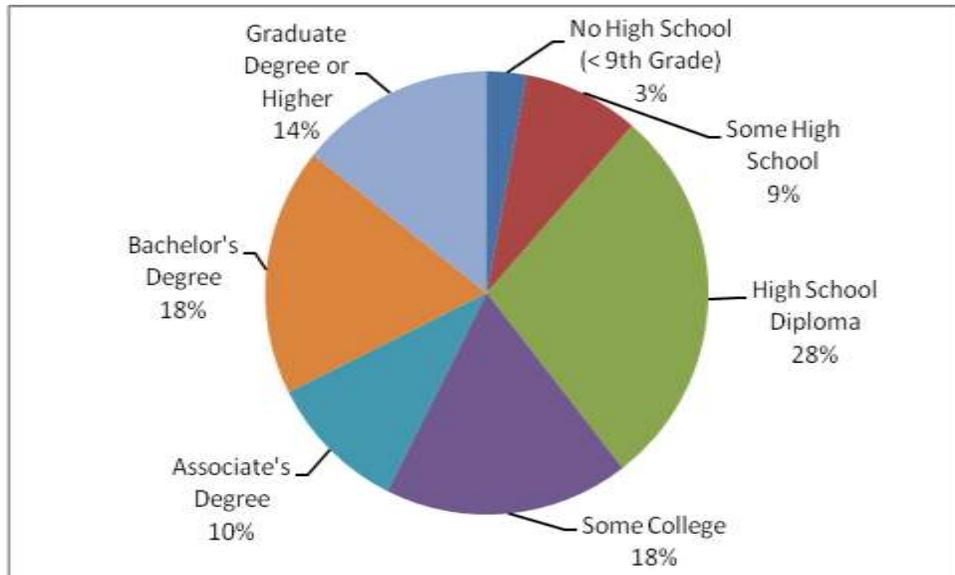
Gibsonville has the lowest percentage of residents without a High School Diploma and the highest percentage of residents with a Bachelor Degree or greater.

#### **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (Persons 25 and older in Gibsonville & Comparison Areas)**

	<b>% without High School Diploma</b>	<b>% with a 4 year degree or more</b>
<b>Gibsonville</b>	<b>11.4%</b>	<b>32.4%</b>
King	14.0%	18.5%
Mocksville	20.0%	23.1%
NC	16.4%	26.1%

*Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census*

#### **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT TOWN OF GIBSONVILLE**



*Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census*

### 3.3 DEVELOPMENT FACTORS

#### 3.3.1 PSYCHOLOGY

The Town of Gibsonville is located on the county line that divides Guilford County and Alamance County. It is bounded by the City of Burlington on the southeast, the Town of Elon on the east, and the Town of Whitsett on the southwest. Gibsonville has a total land area of 2.96 square miles within the Town limits. Gibsonville is the 138<sup>th</sup> largest municipality in reference to land area within the State of North Carolina.

### 3.3.2 HYRDOLOGY

Gibsonville lies within the Cape Fear River Basin, which is the largest river basin in North Carolina. The basin begins in the north central piedmont region of North Carolina and drains southeast to the coast. The entire basin covers 9,324 square miles of land and contains 6,204 miles of streams, the largest number for any basin in the State.

The Town of Gibsonville is located in the north central piedmont region of the State. The Back Creek and Travis Creek tributaries run through the Town and provide areas to run gravity feed sewer lines.

#### 3.3.2.1 Watersheds

The Water Supply Watershed Protection program enables local governments to collectively plan for the protection of their drinking water. Watersheds do not conform to governmental jurisdictional boundaries; rather they are defined by topography. In some situations the boundaries of a watershed and governmental unit may be mutual. The North Carolina Division of Water Quality emphasizes the need for comprehensive water quality planning in order to protect all water resources within the State.

Gibsonville does have two properties in its jurisdiction that fall under the State's Water Supply Watersheds (Class I-V) Protection. The Town realizes the importance in protecting water resources found within the community because the rivers and streams in Gibsonville flow from and to other communities.

#### 3.3.2.2 Flood Prone Areas

The Town participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and enforces a flood prevention ordinance within the Town limits and extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The NFIP, last updated in 2008, is a valuable tool to be used by planners and developers to promote sound development practices within vulnerable areas. The NFIP identifies areas that are subject to 10, 50, 100, and 500-year flood events. A flood event refers to the probability that a flood will occur in any 10, 50, 100, or 500-year period. Each of these events has a 10, 2, 1, and .02 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded during any year respectively. The likelihood of a 10-year flood event occurring in every year is 10%. The figures do not mean that every 10 years a flood of that magnitude will occur; the actual probability is much higher.

Development encroachment on floodplains reduces the flood-carrying capacity, increases the flood heights and velocities, and increases flood hazards in areas beyond the development itself. One aspect of floodplain management involves balancing the economic gain from floodplain development against the resulting increase in flood hazard. For purposes of the NFIP, a floodway is used as a tool to assist local communities in this aspect of floodplain management. Under this concept, the area of the 100-year floodplain is divided into a *floodway* and a *floodway fringe*. The floodway is the channel of a stream plus any adjacent floodplain that must be kept free of encroachment so that the 100-year flood can be carried without substantial increase in

flood heights. Minimum federal standards limit such increases to 1 foot, provided hazardous velocities are not produced. The area between the floodway and the 100-year floodplain boundaries is called the floodway fringe. The floodway fringe encompasses the portion of the floodplain that could be completely obstructed without increasing the water-surface elevation of the 100 year flood more than 1 foot at any point. More attention must be given to the relationship between development activities near or in the floodway/ floodway fringe and land use activities both up and down stream to ensure compliance with the newly adopted state Jordan Lake Rules.

### **3.4 EXISTING LAND USE**

Gibsonville has a wide variety of land uses found within the planning jurisdiction. The urban center contains a multitude of commercial, governmental, and industrial land uses. In addition, the more rural extra-territorial planning jurisdiction (ETJ) has large residential tracts and agricultural uses.

For the purposes of this Plan, the Planning Staff and Steering Committee utilized the existing zoning map and some windshield surveys to determine the location and variety of land uses within Gibsonville's planning jurisdiction.

### **3.5 HISTORICAL and CULTURAL RESOURCES**

#### **3.5.1 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

The historic properties located within Gibsonville reflect the character and heritage of the people that have lived in the area. Currently, Gibsonville does have an individual property listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Francis Marion Smith House was officially listed on the NRHP on July 12, 1984. In addition to this listing, Gibsonville also has one other structure that has been identified by the State of North Carolina as being eligible for nomination to the NRHP. Gibsonville's downtown has been identified and has been placed on the State of North Carolina's study list of potential sites that could be placed onto the NRHP.

The National Historic Preservation Act created the National Register in 1966. The act recognizes and protects properties of historic and cultural significance that warrant consideration in federal undertakings such as highway construction and urban renewal projects. In addition, the act also provides incentives for local and private preservation initiatives. Listing on the National Register is primarily an honor that shows a structure or structures have been researched and evaluated according to established procedures and determined to be worthy of preservation for its historical value. Being listed on the National Register does not carry with it any restrictions unless the owner wishes to apply for federal benefits such as a grant or tax credit. Income-producing historic properties are eligible to receive a 20% state tax credit and a 20% federal investment tax credit for the cost of a certified rehabilitation project. Non-income-producing historic properties are eligible for a 30% state tax credit.

Both Alamance and Guilford County have completed and published architectural surveys. These publications will offer additional information regarding historic properties and structures within the community. Alamance County's publication is titled Alamance County Architectural Heritage and Guilford County's publication is titled Architectural Resources: An Inventory of Historic Architecture.

### **3.6 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

#### **3.6.1 WATER**

The Town of Gibsonville receives water from multiple sources. The portion of the Town that lies in Alamance County receives a majority of its water from the City of Burlington and in particular Lake Macintosh. The Guilford County portion of the Town also receives water from Burlington. Finally, Gibsonville has two Town wells located on Tenth Street and Homestead Avenue that supply water in case of emergency.

Water allowances for each water source include: 2.5 million gallons per day (gpd) from Burlington, and a maximum of 12 hour run time on the two wells. The two wells are drawn from first to supply water to the Town and then Burlington's water supply is used. The actually amount drawn from the wells and purchased each day is 80,000 from the wells, and 500,000 from the City of Burlington.

Gibsonville also has two water towers on Tenth Street and Joyner Street that provide additional water storage capacity of 75,000 and 125,000 gallons respectively. Finally, there is a ground reservoir of 154,000 gallons.

#### **3.6.2 SEWER**

The Town of Gibsonville does not treat any of its wastewater. Two pump stations are responsible for pumping Gibsonville's wastewater to the City of Burlington for treatment. The North side pump station has a capacity of 800,000 gpd and a daily allowance of 750,000 gpd through a contract with Burlington. Currently, Gibsonville sends approximately 154,000 gpd to Burlington's East Burlington Wastewater Treatment Plant. The South side pump station has a capacity of 1.2 million gpd and a daily allowance of 800,000 gpd through a contract with Burlington. Currently, Gibsonville sends 310,000 gpd to South Burlington Waste Treatment Plant.

#### **3.6.3 SCHOOLS**

Gibsonville is part of both the Alamance-Burlington School System (which has a current enrollment of 22,763) and the Guilford County School System (which has a current enrollment of 72,196). The Alamance-Burlington School System has a total of 36 school buildings throughout the County, while the Guilford County School System features 122 buildings.

Gibsonville has three public schools located within the planning area: Gibsonville Elementary, Eastern Guilford Middle School, and Eastern Guilford High School. All three schools are part of the Guilford County School System. However, a number of Gibsonville’s students attend school in Alamance County.

### 3.6.4 TRANSPORTATION

The Town of Gibsonville is part of the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The Burlington-Graham Urban Area Transportation Plan 1999-2025 should be consulted for further information on particular transportation planning efforts.

#### 3.6.4.1 Highway

The Town of Gibsonville maintains more than 29.6 miles of roads according to the 2011 Powell Bill. Interstate 40 & 85 run east/west along the southernmost point of Gibsonville’s Town limits which provides convenient access to the Triad and Triangle. In addition, US Highway 70, NC State Highway 61 and NC State Highway 100 all run through the Town. Gibsonville is fortunate to have an excellent road system in place that provides access to the surrounding metropolitan areas.

The Town of Gibsonville belongs to the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Long-range transportation planning projects listed for Gibsonville on both the NCDOT Transportation Improvement Plan and the Burlington-Graham MPO Thoroughfare Plan include the NC Highway 61 Gibsonville bypass and the Cook Road extension. Local needs projects identified by the Town include several sidewalk projects, along Westbrook Avenue/Alamance Street, Steele Street, Springwood Avenue, and Whitsett Street.

#### 3.6.4.2 Air

Gibsonville is fortunate to be located between two international airports and is in close proximity to Burlington Alamance Regional Airport. These factors help make Gibsonville more marketable for business and industry. The table below lists surrounding airports and their characteristics.

### **Air Transportation**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Number Runways</b>	<b>Runway Length (feet)</b>	<b>Type of Ownership</b>	<b>Type of Users</b>
<b>Smith Reynolds</b>	Forsyth	2	3,938 6,654	Public	Public
<b>Greensboro PTI</b>	Guilford	2	10,000 6,380	Public	Public
<b>Raleigh Durham International</b>	Wake	3	10,000 7,000 3,550	Public	Public

<b>Burlington Alamance Regional Airport</b>	Alamance	1	5,000	Public	Public
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### 3.6.4.3 Rail and Other

Gibsonville has both passenger and freight service running through the Town. Passenger service is available through Amtrak at the new Burlington station. The high-speed rail corridor, from Raleigh to Charlotte within the State and between Washington, D.C. and Atlanta on a larger regional scale, pass through Gibsonville. Due to the presence of the high-speed rail corridor, future road improvements or construction must be in the form of overpasses as opposed to at-grade crossings.

### 3.6.5 FIRE PROTECTION

The Town of Gibsonville Fire Department serves Gibsonville. The department is a combination unit that is made up of 6 full-time firefighters and 23 local volunteers. The department has a rating of ISO Class 5. The department is equipped with 3 fire engines that can carry from 750 gallons to 1,000 gallons. The average response time for the department is 2 minutes.

### 3.6.6 ELECTRICITY/TELEPHONE/NATURAL GAS

Duke Power provides electricity in the Town of Gibsonville. Century Link provides the Town with its telephone service. Piedmont Natural Gas Company provides natural gas.

### 3.6.7 SOLID WASTE

The Town of Gibsonville Sanitation Department collects solid waste. The Town also participates in a recycling program. Waste Industries currently has the contract on providing recycling services to all of Gibsonville's residents.

## 3.7 CURRENT DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

The Town of Gibsonville has two major ordinances that regulate development of land: the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations.

### 3.7.1 ZONING ORDINANCE

From the attention given the subject by legal writers and in court decisions, it is clear that confusion exists as to the distinction between "planning" and "zoning." In reality, zoning is one of many legal and administrative devices by which plans may be implemented. Most of the confusion has arisen out of the fact that many jurisdictions have adopted zoning ordinances before embarking on full-scale planning.

Zoning is essentially a means of Ensuring that the land uses of a community are properly situated in relation to one another, providing adequate space for each type of development. It allows the control of development density in each area so that property

can be adequately serviced by such governmental facilities as the street, school, fire, police, recreation, and utility systems. This directs new growth into appropriate areas and protects existing property by requiring that development afford adequate light, air and privacy for persons living and working within the community.

Zoning is probably the single most commonly used legal device available for implementing the land-use plan of a community. Zoning may be defined as the division of a county (or other governmental unit) into districts, and the regulation within those districts of:

1. The height and bulk of buildings and other structures;
2. The area of a lot which may be occupied and the size of required open spaces;
3. The density of population;
4. The use of buildings and land for trade, industry, residence or other purposes.

Of major importance for the individual citizen is the part zoning plays in stabilizing and preserving property values. It affects the taxation of property as an element of value to be considered in assessment. Ordinarily, zoning is only indirectly concerned with achieving aesthetic ends, although there has been an increasing tendency to include provisions within zoning ordinances, which are most solidly based on "general welfare" concepts.

Zoning has nothing to do with the materials and manner of construction of a building; these are covered by the building code. Also, the zoning ordinance may not be properly used to set minimum costs of permitted structures, and it commonly does not control their appearance. These matters are ordinarily controlled by private restrictive covenants contained in the deeds to property. There are, however, some examples, particularly in relation to historic buildings and areas, where zoning has been and is being used effectively. There appears to be a trend toward a greater acceptance of aesthetic control as a proper function of the zoning ordinance.

The zoning ordinance does not regulate the design of streets, the installation of utilities, the reservation or dedication of parks, street rights-of-way, and school sites, and related matters. An official map preserving the beds of proposed streets against encroachment can be useful for protecting right of way. The zoning ordinance should, however, be carefully coordinated with these and other control devices. It is becoming more common for the provisions of many of these separate ordinances to be combined into a single comprehensive ordinance, usually called a land development control ordinance.

Gibsonville established zoning in 1977. Over the years, the zoning ordinance has changed to incorporate newer principles of land use regulations.

If a property is zoned properly for its intended use, then the needed permits can simply be obtained through application and the payment of any required fees. If a rezoning is required, the approval of the Board of Alderman must be obtained. This process can take

anywhere from a few weeks to a few months, depending on the magnitude, complexity and any controversy generated by the proposal.

The Town of Gibsonville is divided into the following zoning districts:

AG	Agriculture	GOH	General Office Heavy
RS-40	Single-Family Residential	NB	Neighborhood Business
RS-30	Single-Family Residential	LB	Limited Business
RS-20	Single-Family Residential	GB	General Business
RS-15	Single-Family Residential	HB	Heavy Business
RS-12	Single-Family Residential	CB	Central Business
RS-9	Single-Family Residential	SC	Shopping Center
R-MF	Residential Multi-Family	CP	Corporate Park
RM-8	Residential Multi-Family	PI	Public and Institutional
RM-5	Residential Multi-Family	LI	Light Industrial
LO	Limited Office	HI	Heavy Industrial
GOM	General Office Medium		
PUD	Planned Unit Development		

Most of the historic part of the Town is zoned RS-15 and RS-12, while the surrounding rural landscape of the ETJ is AG. It is important to note that a request to change the zoning ordinance, whether by application for a general district or a special district, is a request to change the basic plan for the area where the property is located. For example, if someone applies to change the zoning from residential to commercial to allow a used car lot, regardless of the special conditions on the site, the basic issue is still whether a business should be located on that property and does it meet the general purposes of the ordinance. Such decisions or changes to the plan may not individually have a large impact, but taken collectively may indicate the need to revise or modify the plan to meet continuing demands for growth and development.

### 3.7.2 SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

Subdivision regulations are locally adopted laws governing the process of converting raw land into building sites. They normally accomplish this through plat (map) approval procedures, under which a developer is not permitted to make improvements or to divide and sell his land until the governing body or planning board has approved a plat of the proposed design of his subdivision. The approval or disapproval of the local government is based upon compliance or noncompliance of the proposal with development standards set forth in the subdivision regulations. In the event that the developer attempts to record an unapproved plat with the local registry of deeds or to sell lots by reference to such a plat, he may be subject to various civil and criminal penalties.

Subdivision regulations may serve a wide range of purposes. To the health officer, for example, they are a means of insuring that a new residential development has a safe water supply and sewage disposal system and that they are properly drained. To the tax official they are a step toward securing adequate records of land titles. To the school or parks

official they are a way to preserve or secure the school sites and recreation areas needed to serve the people coming into the neighborhood. To the lot purchaser they are an assurance that he will receive a buildable, properly oriented, well-drained lot, provided with adequate facilities to meet his day-to-day needs, in a subdivision whose value will hold up over the years.

Subdivision regulations enable the Town to coordinate the otherwise unrelated plans of a great many individual developers, and in the process to assure that provision is made for such major elements of the land development plan as rights-of-way for major thoroughfares, parks, school sites, major water lines and sewer outfalls, and so forth. They also enable the Town to control the internal design of each new subdivision so that its pattern of streets, lots and other facilities will be safe, pleasant, and economical to maintain.

From the standpoint of the local governing board, subdivision regulations may be thought of as having two major objectives. First, these officials are interested in the design aspects of new subdivisions, as are the other officials mentioned. But secondly, they are also interested in allocating the costs of certain improvements most equitably between the residents of the immediate area and the taxpayers of the Town as a whole. When subdivision regulations require a developer to dedicate land to the public or to install utilities or to build streets, they represent a judgment that the particular improvements involved are (1) necessary in a contemporary environment and (2) predominantly of special benefit to the people who will buy lots from him (presumably at a price sufficient to cover the cost of these improvements) rather than of general benefit to the taxpayers of the Town as a whole.

## **SECTION 4: COMPARISON OF DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS**

The Gibsonville Land Development Plan provides a new vision for the development of the Town and surrounding area. The vision includes several new types of development patterns. This section provides a general explanation of the differences between the current approach and the desired development type.

### **4.1 STRIP DEVELOPMENT vs. COMMERCIAL CENTERS**

*Strip Development:* Currently most commercial development has occurred in linear strips along major thoroughfares. The characteristics of strip development include:

- Automobile oriented
- Large parking lots
- Large front yard setbacks
- Single use (i.e. only commercial)
- Numerous curb cuts
- No interconnectivity between uses
- Poor design characteristics

*Commercial Center:* The Commercial Center is based on applying the attributes of a traditional downtown to a new site that is smaller in scale. The characteristics of a Commercial Center include:

- Pedestrian and automobile friendly
- Few curb cuts or limited access
- Buildings built to a pedestrian scale
- Building closer to the road
- Interconnectivity between uses and shared parking
- Mixed use (i.e. commercial, office, multi-family residential)
- High quality design characteristics

The Gibsonville Land Development Plan incorporates the principles of Commercial Centers as a viable alternative to the current Strip Development.

### **4.2 UNCONNECTED ROADS vs. ROAD NETWORK**

*Unconnected Roads:* The current proliferation of cul-de-sac subdivisions has resulted in a transportation network that limits the number of ways through town. In addition to the residential subdivision, commercial development has also been guilty of providing no connectivity between uses. The characteristics of Unconnected Roads include:

- Lower capacity
- Fewer route choices
- Longer driving distances
- Less efficient
- Single mode of transportation

*Road Network:* A transportation system based on a Road Network will help aid in the traffic congestion found on some of Gibsonville’s major thoroughfares. Increasing the number of choices will help to disperse traffic throughout the Town. The utilization of a Road Network will result in:

- More capacity
- More route choices
- More access
- Shorter distances
- Supports all modes of transportation

The Gibsonville Land Development Plan supports the use of Road Networks within new residential and commercial areas to provide Gibsonville with more transportation options throughout the Town. The Road Network model can be incorporated into new subdivisions, new commercial centers, and even office parks.

### **4.3 SEPARATION OF USES vs. MIXED USE**

*Separation of Uses:* The standard zoning ordinance has created a situation in which all uses must be segregated from one another. This has resulted in the destruction of lively neighborhoods that included a neighborhood store as well as the removal of residences from the Central Business District in many communities. While some uses need to be separated from one another, many others would work well together if designed properly. For example, the construction of three story multi-family apartment buildings in the middle of a single-family residential district would not work. However, a multi-family townhouse development that is designed to complement the surrounding neighborhood, could fit. Separation of Uses has resulted in the creation of “pods” of development and all traffic must get onto the main road to go anywhere.

*Mixed Use:* The concept of Mixed Use development goes back to the time before zoning when many uses were found in a neighborhood. The historic part of Gibsonville has many examples of commercial, multi-family, and single-family uses together within the same development. By encouraging a mix of uses you can decrease traffic, allow people opportunities to walk to work or the store, and promote commercial development that has a built-in residential market built. The Central Business District is an excellent example of mixed-use development that combines offices, retail establishments, and residences to serve multiple needs.

The Gibsonville Land Development Plan encourages mixed-use development, especially within and around the Town Center.

### **4.4 CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT vs. OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT**

*Conventional Development:* Conventional Development maximizes the number of lots or retail space that can be created out of any piece of land. This method of development pays little attention to environmental factors, neighborhood design, or open space. The

goal of the development is to place as many houses or businesses on the site as allowed under the current zoning ordinance. As a result, land that should be preserved due to environmental conditions or topography is subsequently developed. In addition, this type of development places a greater burden upon the Town because it does not provide any recreational space for the residents and results in overcrowding at parks and other recreational facilities due to the increased number of residents in the area.

*Open Space Development:* An Open Space Development provides a designated area as open space within the development. This land is permanently protected from development and can be used by the neighborhood as a recreational amenity. The developer that chooses to develop in this manner can still build the same number of units, but on smaller lots with less infrastructure needs as a result of clustering the development. By encouraging Open Space Development, the Town can increase the recreational opportunities for its residents, decrease the amount of infrastructure that needs to be maintained, and increase the attractiveness of the overall community.

The Gibsonville Land Development Plan supports the concept of open space development in order to maintain Gibsonville's small town atmosphere and protect surrounding rural areas.

## SECTION 5: GOALS TO GUIDE US INTO THE FUTURE

A series of topically based goals were created to highlight the major consensus points that were reached during the initial planning process in 2001. These goals were refined during the update process in 2011; several categories were combined and reorganized into seven (7) areas of focus: water and sewer, economic development, transportation, residential development, commercial and industrial development, parks and recreation, and natural resources and open space. Goals for each area were revised to reflect current conditions and priorities, with objectives and specific strategies added to provide some clarity for implementation purposes. The appropriate goals should be used to critique development proposals.

### 5.1 WATER AND SEWER

**Goal:** Ensure the future availability of water and sewer to serve the needs of the existing community as well as future developments.

**Objective 5.1A:** Promote the continued cooperation between Gibsonville and the surrounding municipalities in offering water and sewer services at reasonable cost.

**Strategy 5.1A-1:** Maintain service agreement with the City of Burlington for the purchase of water and treatment of wastewater. Review service agreement every five years and open communication with the City of Burlington to ensure the future water needs of the Town are met.

**Strategy 5.1A-2:** Continue efforts with neighboring municipalities to implement the Jordan Lake Rules at minimal cost.

**Strategy 5.1A-3:** Study opportunities to create a regional water and sewer authority with neighboring municipalities and identify additional potential future water supply sources.

**Objective 5.1B:** Ensure that water and sewer services are provided in a cost efficient and sustainable manner.

**Strategy 5.1B-1:** Pursue the development of a feasibility and cost/benefit study on a water and sewer system provided fully by the Town.

**Strategy 5.1B-2:** Maintain existing groundwater wells as a supplemental water supply source.

**Strategy 5.1B-3:** Review and revise, as necessary, the Town's Capital Improvement Program on a yearly basis to direct capital resources to priority areas.

**Strategy 5.1B-4:** Develop a Water and Wastewater Master Plan to plan for future service extensions and facility upgrades.

**Objective 5.1C:** Promote economic development through strategic water and sewer extensions.

**Strategy 5.1C-1:** Encourage the extension of water and sewer into areas identified for future development on the Future Land Use Map.

**Strategy 5.1C-2:** Review and revise, as necessary, the Town's Water and Sewer Extension Policy.

**Objective 5.1D:** Ensure that water and sewer infrastructure is maintained and upgraded, as necessary.

**Strategy 5.1D-1:** Establish an inventory, with defined criteria, of aging and substandard water and sewer lines identified through system failures and inspections.

## **5.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Goal:** Provide a healthy environment for a diverse mix of industry, business uses, and other employers that builds upon the area's economy and strengthens the community.

**Objective 5.2A:** Develop, reuse, and revitalize unused or underutilized structures and properties.

**Strategy 5.2A-1:** Develop and maintain a database of available buildings, storefronts and vacant land appropriate for commercial and/or industrial use. Provide this list to the local real estate industry and work with realtors to market these sites.

**Strategy 5.2A-2:** Encourage new industry and business to locate in areas already served by adequate infrastructure.

**Objective 5.2B:** Work with the Alamance County Chamber of Commerce and Guilford County Chamber of Commerce to market Gibsonville to potential industries/employers.

**Strategy 5.2B-1:** Identify appropriate sites for new commercial and industrial development and locate on a map for distribution to prospective developers.

- Strategy 5.2B-2:** Develop and distribute promotional materials to attract new business and industry to Gibsonville.
- Objective 5.2C:** Work collaboratively with the Alamance County Tourism Development Authority and the Guilford County Tourism Development Authority to promote the potential for tourism in the area.
- Strategy 5.2C-1:** Continue to encourage the growth of the tourism industry through active partnerships with local organizations that support tourism efforts.
- Strategy 5.2C-2:** Identify regional tourism assets and encourage development that supports a tourism-based economy, such as artisan shops and Bed and Breakfast establishments.
- Objective 5.2D:** Encourage small business entrepreneurship and local business development in Gibsonville.
- Strategy 5.2D-1:** Conduct a study on potential incentives to attract and maintain local businesses.
- Strategy 5.2D-2:** Conduct a downtown market analysis to identify potential new markets.
- Strategy 5.2D-3:** Support the creation of a local business support program, in conjunction with the local Merchants Association, to ensure the longevity of local small businesses.

### **5.3 TRANSPORTATION**

**Goal:** Ensure a safe transportation system that maximizes the capacity of existing roadways to serve the needs of vehicular traffic as well as the needs of alternative modes of travel such as bicycle and pedestrian oriented travel.

**Objective 5.3A:** Encourage pedestrian trails and sidewalks to link commercial, residential, and recreational centers of the Town and provide transportation alternatives.

**Strategy 5.3A-1:** Pursue the development of a Pedestrian Plan with the NC Department of Transportation to identify pedestrian needs within the Town.

**Strategy 5.3A-2:** Review and revise, as necessary, the Town's development regulations to require pedestrian walkway and sidewalk improvements.

- Strategy 5.3A-3:** Require alternative transportation modes (sidewalks, greenways, bike paths) to be included in all new developments.
- Objective 5.3B:** Explore regional transportation options that will link Gibsonville to neighboring municipalities and commercial centers.
- Strategy 5.3B-1:** Work with the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART), Alamance County Transportation Authority (ACTA), and Elon University (Bio-Bus) to provide public transportation for Gibsonville residents.
- Strategy 5.3B-2:** Explore the development of a public transportation feasibility study with local colleges and universities that would examine commuter patterns and demand.
- Objective 5.3C:** Implement improvements related to traffic flow in and out of commercial areas to promote safety and reduce traffic congestion.
- Strategy 5.3C-1:** Study the use of traffic calming measures in the downtown district to alleviate congestion concerns.
- Strategy 5.3C-2:** Develop a traffic flow study to determine areas of traffic congestion and identify applicable traffic calming measures.
- Strategy 5.3C-3:** Review local ordinance requirements for vehicular access to commercial areas and revise as necessary to allow for interconnectivity and common access points.
- Strategy 5.3C-4:** Examine traffic patterns and parking issues in the downtown area as part of the Downtown Study and Master Plan.
- Objective 5.3D:** Maximize the functionality of the Town’s existing road system.
- Strategy 5.3D-1:** Attend and participate in Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) meetings to ensure the transportation needs and concerns of Gibsonville residents are being addressed.
- Strategy 5.3D-2:** Identify priority areas for roadway improvements and develop a schedule for implementation.

## **5.4 RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Goal:** Preserve, enhance, and create satisfying living environments that create and maintain strong neighborhoods.

**Objective 5.4A:** Encourage the continued viability of single-family homes as a major housing source, while allowing alternative forms of housing such as multi-family and retirement communities, where appropriate.

**Strategy 5.4A-1:** Review Town ordinances related to residential development and revise as necessary to allow flexibility for senior housing developments.

**Strategy 5.4A-2:** Encourage the development of higher density and multi-family residential uses in the downtown district and other designated activity areas.

**Strategy 5.4A-3:** Explore amending the zoning and subdivision ordinances to allow and encourage a mix of housing types and compatible uses.

**Strategy 5.4A-4:** Promote and encourage the use of green energy sources in new construction.

**Objective 5.4B:** Protect the integrity of existing neighborhoods.

**Strategy 5.4B-1:** Protect the character of existing residential neighborhoods through the review and revision of Zoning Ordinance standards.

**Strategy 5.4B-2:** Prohibit the encroachment of incompatible non-residential uses in established neighborhoods.

**Strategy 5.4B-3:** Review and revise landscape buffer requirements to ensure adjacent residential properties are effectively screened from incompatible land uses.

**Strategy 5.4B-4:** Explore options and strategies available to encourage the redevelopment and maintenance of properties located in the Town's established neighborhoods including support of a more aggressive minimum housing and code enforcement program.

**Strategy 5.4B-5:** Encourage neighborhood involvement in the enforcement of community appearance standards.

**Strategy 5.4B-6:** Support the work of the Friends of the Rose Garden Club in promoting community appearance through landscaping design and maintenance.

**Strategy 5.4B-7:** Encourage the development of neighborhoods that minimize traffic congestion and promote walkability, retain open spaces, and contribute to the small town character of Gibsonville.

*Strategy 5.4B-8:* Encourage new residential development that complements the architectural designs of established neighborhoods.

## **5.5 COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Goal:** Provide a healthy environment for a diverse mix of commercial and industrial development and other employment sectors that build upon the area's economy and strengthens the community.

**Objective 5.5A:** Establish Gibsonville's downtown area as a mixed-use center of commerce and activity.

*Strategy 5.5A-1:* Develop a Master Plan for Downtown Gibsonville studying parking issues, potential business investment, and traffic patterns.

*Strategy 5.5A-2:* Explore grant opportunities, such as a façade grant program, to assist downtown business owners in restoring and renovating their buildings to provide an attractive and inviting environment for consumers.

**Objective 5.5B:** Encourage commercial and industrial development that utilizes effective landscaping and buffering to aid in improving the overall aesthetics of the community.

*Strategy 5.5B-1:* Review and revise development and signage standards in the Zoning Ordinance to ensure attractive commercial developments that reflect Gibsonville's small town character.

*Strategy 5.5B-2:* Review landscaping, access, and overall design provisions in development ordinances and revise as needed to ensure commercial development is attractive and presents a high quality image to visitors and residents alike.

*Strategy 5.5B-3:* Review and revise zoning and subdivision ordinance requirements on screening and buffering of property to better protect property values from incompatible land uses.

**Objective 5.5C:** Encourage variety in the Town's mixture of commercial, industrial, and institutional development.

*Strategy 5.5C-1:* Identify businesses of primary need and promote Gibsonville as a desirable location to potential service providers.

*Strategy 5.5C-2:* Increase the overall retail diversity throughout the Town.

**Objective 5.5D:** Encourage commercial and industrial development to locate in designated areas.

**Strategy 5.5D-1:** Encourage well planned commercial development within designated village centers and other appropriate areas.

**Strategy 5.5D-2:** Encourage light industrial uses that does not interfere with the residential, commercial, cultural, or leisure development of the community.

**Strategy 5.5D-3:** Encourage mixed-used development combining compatible uses in the downtown district.

**Strategy 5.5D-4:** Encourage the use of office and institutional developments as a transitional land use between activities of higher and lower intensity.

**Strategy 5.5D-5:** Prohibit the encroachment of commercial and industrial development into established or planned residential areas.

## **5.6 PARKS AND RECREATION**

**Goal:** Promote and enhance Gibsonville’s parks, recreational facilities, and cultural assets.

**Objective 5.6A:** Provide carefully planned recreational developments for the equitable distribution of recreational opportunities.

**Strategy 5.6A-1:** Explore opportunities to expand the Town’s recreational facilities (gymnasium, swimming pool, etc.).

**Strategy 5.6A-2:** Direct new recreational resources to areas of the Town in most need.

**Strategy 5.6A-3:** Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to plan for new facilities and scheduled improvements to existing facilities.

**Strategy 5.6A-4:** Support the efforts of Guilford County in maintaining and improving Southwest Park and Northeast Park.

**Objective 5.6B:** Promote an active community through abundant walking and biking opportunities.

**Strategy 5.6B-1:** Conduct a study on the development of a greenway system that would link the Town’s recreational facilities, retail establishments, and neighborhoods.

**Strategy 5.6B-2:** Identify primary roads used by bicyclists and determine need for amenities.

**Objective 5.6C:** Promote preservation efforts of properties of historical or cultural significance.

**Strategy 5.6C-1:** Work with the Gibsonville Museum and Historic Society to develop an inventory of the Town’s historic and cultural facilities.

**Strategy 5.6C-2:** Support efforts that restore, revitalize, or reuse cultural and historic structures, buildings, monuments, and neighborhoods.

## **5.7 NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE**

**Goal:** Preserve and promote the Town’s natural resources, landscapes, and agricultural areas.

**Objective 5.7A:** Promote the protection of sensitive natural resources including wetlands, waterways, slopes, and floodplains.

**Strategy 5.7A-1:** Ensure the enforcement of riparian buffer requirements in the Town’s Riparian Buffer ordinance.

**Strategy 5.7A-2:** Carefully control land development activities within the 100-year floodplain, along streams, in wetland areas, and in areas with steep slope by limiting new development to low intensity uses such as agriculture, recreational areas, and hiking/biking trails.

**Strategy 5.7A-3:** Provide educational materials on the importance and value of stream buffers to those property owners and developers with streams on their property.

**Objective 5.7B:** Encourage the preservation and restoration of creeks, streams, and other drainage features that aid in the control of stormwater runoff.

**Strategy 5.7B-1:** Implement recommendations of Town-wide drainage study by installing stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) in areas of high concern.

**Strategy 5.7B-2:** Pursue the development of a Stormwater Master Plan to identify necessary improvements and potential funding sources.

- Objective 5.7C:** Conserve important agricultural and rural landscapes within Gibsonville’s planning jurisdiction.
- Strategy 5.7C-1:** Work with the Alamance County and Guilford County Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) programs to ensure agricultural land is preserved.
- Strategy 5.7C-2:** Continue to support the Town’s Farmer’s Market to provide an outlet for local farmers and demonstrate a financial return on agricultural lands.
- Strategy 5.7C-3:** Explore programs that will encourage the preservation of open space in agricultural areas.
- Strategy 5.7C-4:** Discourage high-density development in the agricultural/rural areas of the planning jurisdiction.
- Objective 5.7D:** Promote the preservation of open space and woodlands.
- Strategy 5.7D-1:** Evaluate how Town ordinances can most effectively promote the provisions of open space.
- Strategy 5.7D-2:** Study the use of density bonuses in new developments to encourage the preservation of open space.
- Strategy 5.7D-3:** Study means of preserving trees in new developments.

## **SECTION 6: FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

A future land use map was developed for the Town during the initial planning process and revised during the 2011 update. At this time, 12 land use categories were combined into eight (8) simplified categories (Town Center, Neighborhood Center, General Commercial, Regional Industrial/Employment Center, Neighborhood Residential, Suburban Residential, Rural Residential, and Park/Open Space). The future land use map highlights where specific land use types should be encouraged; it is a guide that provides approximate locations for future development, however, it does not take the place of an official zoning map.

The following conditions were taken into account when devising the content of the map: existing land use, existing zoning, water and sewer infrastructure, access to thoroughfares, topography, hydrology, slopes, and other physical development limitations. These considerations provide useful insight into the land use patterns, availability of services, planned road improvements, and potential development sites in each planning area.

### **1. Town Center**

The historic center of the Town, the Town Center incorporates a traditional mix of commercial, office, institutional, residential (including multi-family), and open space uses. The pedestrian scaled development and use of complementary buildings creates a unique atmosphere that separates the Town Center from other districts. The Town Center services the entire community and should be seen as the center of civic life. Design characteristics for future development should focus on the traditional, pedestrian oriented downtowns of the early 1900's. Some specific attributes to be considered are sidewalks, street trees, storefronts, and complementary building styles.

Gibsonville's Town Center is built around Main Street, which comprises the Central Business District of the Town. Many of the Town's historic buildings are situated in this area; in addition to the historic commercial buildings along Main Street, the district is surrounded by historic mill houses. Main Street also features the Town Greens, which serves as a center of community life. Three (3) major thoroughfares come through the Town Center: NC Highway 100, NC Highway 61, and Springwood Avenue.

As additional attention has been paid to the Town Center, in order to restore the district to prominence, specific development goals have been devised.

- Encourage infill development within the Town Center, as well as redevelopment efforts of deteriorating structures.
- Continue to encourage the redevelopment efforts underway within the Town Center.
- Promote the Town Center as the commercial and governmental center of Gibsonville.

- Encourage tourism within the Town Center through promotional campaigns that highlight the downtown area.
- Initiate a corridor improvement program for the Town Center and Main Street that will place utilities underground, improve pedestrian crossings, and develop streetscapes.
- Create more neighborhood pocket parks within the area on vacant and underdeveloped lots.
- Continue to promote a mix of uses and pedestrian scaled developments within the Town Center.
- Develop a historic district and/or Main Street program as a resource to preserve and promote the historic downtown area.
- Explore the creation of a façade grant program for downtown properties.
- Improve pedestrian opportunities in the Town Center through the repair and construction of sidewalks and greenways connecting neighborhoods, parks, schools, shopping, and employment locations.

## **2. Neighborhood Center**

Neighborhood Centers act as the public/commercial focal point within one or more neighborhoods that provides a mix of commercial, office, institutional, and residential uses at the neighborhood scale. The development should be designed to complement the surrounding neighborhood, while offering a corner store for the residents. Neighborhood Centers should be primarily located at the intersection of major roads, but should encompass just one quadrant of the intersection. The goal of the Neighborhood Center is to offer local residents an opportunity to shop for everyday items close to home. The development should be designed to include one and two story structures that are close to the street and built at the pedestrian scale. Automobile and pedestrian connections should be provided to surrounding developments.

Two neighborhood center sites were identified during the initial land use planning process but due to changing conditions over time, both of these original locations were deleted and two new sites chosen.

## **3. General Commercial**

General Commercial developments place an emphasis on the automobile and are usually characterized by numerous curb cuts, a linear pattern of development, and large amounts of parking in front of the structures. General Commercial development is usually located along major roads that coincide with areas of existing strip development. The goal of the General Commercial district should be to minimize the number of curb cuts, move parking to the rear or sides of structures, and try to encourage more interconnectivity between uses. In addition, efforts should be made to reduce this type of development due to the concerns expressed by citizens during the public forums.

#### **4. Regional Industrial/Employment Center**

Regional Industrial/Employment Centers are areas designed for office parks, research campuses, and some limited light industry. These centers service business and corporations that wish to be located within close proximity to thoroughfares while still maintaining a campus like atmosphere. The development usually includes amenities for workers including trails, picnic areas and open space. A special emphasis should be placed on landscaping, parking placement, and building design to incorporate the natural features into each site design. These centers will serve as a major employment source in the future.

#### **5. Neighborhood Residential**

Neighborhood Residential signifies the residential areas of the Town that are the most dense and closest in proximity to commercial areas and major thoroughfares. An example of a Neighborhood Residential district can be found surrounding the Town Center. The district is characterized by its variety of residential types including single-family homes and town houses. The district includes small neighborhood or “pocket” parks that service the needs of local residents. Design of these developments should emphasize smaller lots, building placement close to the street, interconnectivity between neighborhoods, sidewalks, and street trees. The goal of this district is to create a sense of place and a pedestrian friendly atmosphere at a higher density.

#### **6. Suburban Residential**

The Suburban Residential district provides for the development of conventional subdivisions at medium to low densities. These areas are usually located outside the commercial areas of the Town and are serviced by water and sewer. Future developments should look to provide sidewalks and connectivity between adjacent properties. In addition, the preservation of open space along undevelopable land should be encouraged. This has been the predominant development type over the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **7. Rural Residential**

Rural Residential districts are designed for residential purposes that preserve the existing rural character, while offering larger lots. These districts are usually located on the outskirts of the urban area and are not serviced by water and sewer. The Rural Residential district is developed at a low to medium density. Design of the development should seek to maximize the preservation of the rural character and preserve open space.

#### **8. Park/Open Space**

Park/Open Space areas are designated for recreational activities, either passive or active. Parks should be located in close proximity to residential areas. Smaller parks may be part of a development while larger town-wide parks should be strategically placed to serve the entire community. The design of parks should include multiple access points and transportation options.

## **SECTION 7: IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

### **7.1 HOW TO USE THE LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

#### ***7.1.1 Future Land Use Map***

The Future Land Use Map should be used as the first step in evaluating development proposals. The Future Land Use Map and the supporting information in Section 6 outline appropriate locations, types, and patterns of land development. When reviewing a proposed development, the developer, staff, citizens, Planning Board, and Town Board of Commissioners should determine first if that type of development is desired in the proposed location.

#### ***7.1.2 Goals to Guide us into the Future***

The goals and objectives outlined in the section 5 of the plan should be used as a second check in evaluation of how well proposed developments are supported by the Gibsonville Land Development Plan. These goals and objectives represent principles that affect all development within the Town. If a proposed development does not appear to be supported by these goals and objectives, it should be returned to the developer for revisions. A useful means of organizing and communicating this information is through the drafting of a recommendation memorandum by either Town staff or the Planning Board. The recommendation memorandum will include a short analysis of how the proposed development will meet or not meet the Land Development Plan policy directives as well as the Future Land Use Map.

#### ***7.1.3 Comparison of Development Patterns***

The Comparison of Development Patterns section of the plan (section 4) offers a general overview of the type of development the Town of Gibsonville would like to encourage. Four main attributes of development are highlighted and a general explanation is given of what Gibsonville would like to encourage, as well as discourage. This section of the plan should be used as the first cut for reviewing development proposals.

#### ***7.1.4 Uses of the Land Development Plan***

The Land Development Plan will serve slightly different purposes for each user. As it is a critical tool for Town Staff, the Town Planning Board, and the Town Board of Aldermen, it would be prudent to hold a workshop upon adoption of the Plan to illustrate how the Plan can be helpful in the decision making process on such things as new developments, rezonings, and special use permits.

*As Used by the Developer:* The developer can utilize the Land Development Plan to see if their development proposal meets the intent of the plan. Beginning with the Comparison of Development Patterns and continuing through to the Future Land Use Map, a developer can get a good idea about how the proposed project will be received. Before consulting the Future Land Use Map the developer should make sure that the

overall plan for the proposed development meets the goals, objectives, and strategies established in the plan.

*As Used by Town Staff:* The Town’s staff reviews zoning petitions, recommends that the petition be approved or denied, and prepares a written zoning report for the Planning Board. In making their decision and writing the report, the staff reviews relevant planning documents, including the Land Development Plan. Using the adopted policies in the plan will facilitate staff review of the rezoning request. The staff will be able to point out those policies that support the rezoning and those that are in conflict with the rezoning, thereby shaping the overall staff recommendation.

*As Used by the Town Planning Board:* Prior to the regular meeting, each Planning Board member can make his or her own determination as to the consistency of the proposed rezoning with the Town’s adopted growth strategies and future development policies. As always, the Planning Board should take into account the recommendations of the Plan, but may choose to give different weight to different policies.

*As Used by the Town Board of Aldermen:* In its legislative authority to rezone property, the Town Board of Aldermen has the final word as to whether the rezoning request is consistent with the various plans that affect the property in question. As customary, the Board of Aldermen should take into account and weigh the interpretation of policy as employed by the property owner, the Planning Board, Town staff, and the general public. Over time, a track record of policy interpretation forms a consistent foundation for decision-making.

*As Used by the General Public:* Residents of the Town of Gibsonville can and should reference specific policy statements when speaking in favor of or in opposition to a rezoning request.

## **7.2 IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS**

The Gibsonville Land Development Plan represents a vision for the future of the Town and provides goals and objectives that should be considered in daily decision-making. Successful implementation of the Plan will be the result of actions taken by elected and appointed officials, Town staff, public sector agencies, and private citizens and organizations.

These actions can be divided into three distinct categories:

- Town regulations (policies, ordinances, etc.)
- Planning initiatives (master planning, etc.)
- Economic development measures
- Continuous planning actions by the Town Board of Aldermen, Planning Board, and other appointed committees

### **7.2.1 Town Regulations**

In order to achieve Gibsonville's vision for the future, the Town must ensure that regulations permit the type and style of development proposed in the Land Development Plan. Following adoption of the Plan, any Town ordinances and policies that affect future development will need to be reviewed and revised to reflect the values contained within the Plan. New policies will also need to be drafted.

*Zoning ordinance:* A comprehensive review of Gibsonville's zoning ordinance will be necessary to identify discrepancies between current requirements and the Land Development Plan's vision. As a result of this review, several revisions will likely need to be incorporated, including changes in zoning district classifications and allowed uses, changes and additions to design standards, and changes in zoning district density allowances. All of these revisions should support the values contained within the Land Development Plan and work towards the land use patterns illustrated in the Future Land Use Map. These tasks should be performed by the Town Planning Board. Specific topics of review, based on the strategies devised in the Plan, include the requirement of pedestrian amenities in both residential and commercial development, stricter architectural design standards, allowances for higher-density residential and mixed-use development in identified areas, stronger landscaping and buffering requirements, and the inclusion of incentive measures, such as cluster development and density bonuses, for the preservation of open space and agricultural lands.

*Subdivision ordinance:* In conjunction with the review of the zoning ordinance, the subdivision ordinance must also be evaluated to ensure that the requirements contained therein support both the statements contained within the Land Development Plan and any revisions made to the zoning ordinance. This review should also be lead by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

*Water and Sewer Extension Policy:* The Town's Water and Sewer Extension Policy can be an invaluable tool in directing development to desired areas, located on the Future Land Use Map. The availability of water and sewer infrastructure has a substantial impact on development occurring in an area. The Town should review and revise this policy on a yearly basis, using the Future Land Use Map as a guideline.

### **7.2.2 Planning Initiatives**

While the Land Development Plan serves as a guidance document for reaching the desired future vision for the Town, additional planning initiatives will also be needed. These initiatives will address specific topics of interest and produce a master plan for the Town to utilize in further implementation of the Land Development Plan.

*Water and Wastewater Master Plan:* A Water and Wastewater Master Plan is typically used to plan for future utility line extensions and facility upgrades. It should be tied to the Town's Capital Improvement Program Plan and budget. Additional components can include an inventory of aging and substandard utility lines and a replacement schedule for

their repair or replacement. As the Town is exploring alternatives for water supply and wastewater treatment, the Master Plan can also incorporate feasibility and cost/benefit studies of pursuing different service providers or developing a Town sourced system.

*Pedestrian Plan:* The Town can apply for grant funding from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to develop a comprehensive, town-wide pedestrian plan. This plan will help the Town determine how to provide interconnectivity and linkages between different development types. NCDOT also provides grant funding for the development of comprehensive bicycle plans to study means of incorporating travel by bicycle into the transportation network. However, towns can only apply for one these grant initiatives at a time.

*Comprehensive Transportation Plan:* The Town can also undertake a Comprehensive Transportation Plan, in conjunction with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the local metropolitan planning organization (MPO). These plans examine necessary roadway improvements, public transportation routes, and bicycle and pedestrian amenities. These plans are helpful in identifying roadway capacity deficiencies and safety hazards, as well as determining the need for public transportation and pedestrian options. The Town may also choose to develop detailed studies of any of these topics, such as Commuter Study, Traffic Flow Study, and/or Public Transportation Demand Study, to enable additional analysis on the needs of the community.

*Downtown Development Master Plan:* A Downtown Development Master Plan concentrates on the downtown district and looks at several development factors, including traffic flow and congestion, parking needs, housing options, business investment, and tourism potential. These plans often involve streetscape improvement and building renovation components.

*Parks and Recreation Master Plan:* A Parks and Recreation Master plan would allow the Town to plan for future recreational needs through the addition of new facilities and upgrades and improvements to existing facilities. In addition to parks and recreational facilities, this plan could also include a study on the creation of a town-wide greenway system and a connecting system of trails to accommodate both pedestrian and bicycle travel. The plan could also address the utilization of the Town's open space areas with a variety of passive recreational uses.

*Stormwater Master Plan:* A Stormwater Master Plan identifies areas of concern for flooding and ponding and prescribes a number of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to alleviate issues. This plan can build upon the results of the town-wide drainage study through the identification of sites for implementation of BMPs (rain gardens, wet retention ponds, bio-retention areas, and pervious pavement).

### ***7.2.3 Economic Development Measures***

Economic development goals in Gibsonville are focused on the revitalization of the historic downtown district into a thriving center of commerce and community life.

Entrepreneurship and local small business development are encouraged. As the primary concern is the abundance of vacant buildings in the downtown area, immediate actions should be focused on coordinating marketing efforts with local realtors and pursuing funding sources for building renovations that will make the space more attractive to buyers and tenants. Attention should also be paid to means of supporting small businesses to ensure that they remain viable and profitable.

#### ***7.2.4 Continuous Planning Actions***

Regular use of the Land Development Plan is not limited to decision making on development requests; there are a variety of planning actions that will support the continued use of the plan. These actions include collaboration with other municipalities and organizations, scheduled review and revision of essential governmental plans and policies, and maintenance of existing resources.

*Collaboration and Partnerships:* The Plan has identified a number of essential partners for the Town to collaborate with, including neighboring municipalities and counties, Chambers of Commerce in Guilford and Alamance counties, Voluntary Agricultural District programs in both counties, regional transportation providers (PART, ACTA), Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the local realty industry, and community groups. The Land Development Plan Implementation Matrix, included in this section of the plan, identifies additional potential partners and possible sources of funding.

*Plan and Policy Review Process:* The Town has a number of plans and policies that should be reviewed and revised, as necessary, on a regular basis. One of the most critical of these is the Capital Improvement Program, which plans for future infrastructure needs. The CIP plan and corresponding budget should be thoroughly reviewed at least every six to twelve months to reflect shifting priorities and ensure any emergency repairs can be funded. Any master plans suggested within this document should also be reviewed on an annual basis to determine if the goals and objectives contained therein are still in line with the Town's vision of its future and to assess progress made. Other important tasks include the representation of Gibsonville at coalition meetings, including the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the coalition of governments lobbying for changes to the State's Jordan Lake Rules. A representative should be appointed to each board or committee and attend meetings regularly to ensure that the Town is involved in the process.

*Resource Maintenance:* The Town's existing resources should be maintained to ensure future longevity. Town resources include water supply sources, utility infrastructure, roadways, parks and community facilities, historic properties, and open space and agricultural areas. While the Town purchases water and wastewater treatment services from the City of Burlington, that service agreement must be maintained to ensure that essential needs of the citizens of Gibsonville are met. The Town should also maintain the groundwater wells in their jurisdiction to provide an emergency source of water, if needed. Similarly, water and wastewater lines operated by the Town must be maintained

on a daily basis. Roadway repairs and improvements and maintenance of community facilities also require daily oversight. While the maintenance of historic properties and agricultural land falls outside of the jurisdiction of local government and onto individual landowners, these are important resources. The Town can support the preservation efforts being undertaken by numerous community and governmental groups.

**See Appendix 1: Implementation Matrix**

### **7.3 REVISIONS & MONITORING**

As the Land Development Plan is used and new development occurs in Gibsonville, it will be necessary to make revisions to the plan in order to keep it updated. A major development, new road, or water and sewer extension can drastically change an area. The Town of Gibsonville Planning Board should review the plan during the second quarter of each year and adopt any changes with the new fiscal year. Public input should be gained at a public hearing of the Planning Board and Board of Alderman. During this review, the Town should also assess the progress of implementation to ensure that the recommendations contained within the Plan are put into action.

The Land Development Plan will only be a document worth using if it is kept up to date and used daily by the staff and monthly by the Board of Aldermen and Planning Board.

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