

# CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE North Carolina

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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Plan Assessment Recommendations

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# POLICY THEMES & RECOMMENDATIONS

This report presents consolidated policy themes and recommendations for future planning efforts based on an inventory and assessment of the City of Fayetteville's existing plans.

Each of 13 relevant plans was reviewed to identify its purpose, components, and major themes and goals. After summarizing the plans, all of the implementation strategies from each plan were compiled into a spreadsheet in order to catalogue, categorize and analyze them. Strategies were then sorted by category to identify any contradictions or redundancies. Recommendations of how the plans can operate more cohesively are presented in this summary report. See the full report for more details.

## POLICY THEMES

Strategies from each plan were categorized and identified as either policies or more specific action-oriented recommendations. Policy strategies were analyzed for consistent and recurring themes. This exercise consolidated the 837 strategies from 13 plans to 80 policy themes identified within 10 strategy categories. The themes can inform future planning and implementation efforts, providing a gauge by which to measure policy decisions. These policies can also be used to craft goals and implementation strategies for a Comprehensive Plan for the City, if so desired.



## CHARACTER

1. Encourage adaptive reuse of large buildings.
2. Improve landscaping and streetscaping through retrofitting and redevelopment.
3. Utilize greenways, open space, and parks to help improve the appearance and property values of targeted areas.
4. Improve the appearance of the City's gateways with signage, landscaping, tree preservation, public art, buried utility lines, lighting, prohibition of noxious or visually unappealing uses, and development standards.
5. Engage in proactive code enforcement and mitigate blighting effects in fragile or sensitive neighborhoods.
6. Establish strong building design and sign standards to encourage high quality, attractive development, and redevelopment.
7. Preserve and protect historic and natural resources.
8. Protect the rural character of areas outside of the Municipal Services Area.
9. Incentive both residential and non-residential redevelopment, quality enhancement, and aesthetic improvements.
10. Create a community brand to visually incorporate throughout the City.



## LAND USE

1. Focus growth and higher-intensity uses within the established Municipal Service Area, and protect agricultural lands and rural areas from the effects of sprawl.
2. Accommodate a variety of quality housing types for different incomes and stages of life, concentrating higher-density residential development near adequate infrastructure, transportation, and services.
3. Stabilize and enhance the housing stock within fragile or sensitive neighborhoods through new development, redevelopment, and unit rehabilitation.
4. Ensure that higher intensity development occurs where the utilities and road infrastructure can accommodate such uses, and focus such development at designated nodes to avoid strip commercial development along thoroughfare corridors.
5. Encourage compatible mixed-use development while discouraging incompatible uses from locating adjacent to established residential areas and promoting transitional zoning and buffering.
6. Engage in small area and neighborhood planning to maintain and enhance the unique identities of different areas of the City while integrating those areas into the overall urban fabric.
7. Encourage and incentivize the adaptive reuse of large vacant buildings.
8. Avoid or heavily mitigate development within environmentally sensitive areas and allow for the clustering of housing to protect such areas.
9. Utilize the Land Use Map for land use and zoning decisions.
10. Locate industrial development away from residential and environmentally-sensitive areas and in close proximity to transportation facilities and adequate infrastructure.
11. Be mindful of nearby military facilities and operations when making land use and development decisions.

## LAND STEWARDSHIP

1. Protect and enhance the City's and County's natural resources.
2. Protect and enhance the urban tree canopy.
3. Establish a contaminated site clean-up program, and monitor contaminated sites.
4. Protect water quality through impervious surface reduction, stormwater mitigation, and innovative filtration technologies.
5. Attract “clean” industries.
6. Avoid or heavily mitigate development within environmentally sensitive areas.



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

1. Diversify and strengthen the economic base with tourism, “clean” high-tech industries, small businesses, educational institutions, cultural amenities, and spaces for office and retail uses.
2. Provide nearby employment opportunities for fragile or sensitive neighborhoods.
3. Incentivize economic development, redevelopment, and industry that will provide jobs.
4. Set aside land specifically for industrial development.
5. Provide quality public schools, and work with employers and local educational institutions to provide training and workforce development opportunities.
6. View the City's character, appearance, natural resources, historic resources, cultural resources, and overall experience as economic development tools.
7. Promote a variety of attractive and quality housing options to attract both employers and employees to the City.
8. Incentivize the redevelopment of unused or underutilized sites throughout the City.
9. Balance robust economic development with aesthetic, environmental, transportation, and safety standards.



## DOWNTOWN

1. Encourage a mixture of compatible uses that establish Downtown as the center of gathering, culture, and entertainment.
2. Improve the appearance and experience of Downtown with sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, lighting, street furniture, and signage.
3. Improve the appearance of the gateway corridors that lead to Downtown with streetscape improvements and development standards.
4. Support preservation, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse to maintain the architectural and historic fabric of Downtown.
5. Strengthen and promote growth within adjacent neighborhoods and Fayetteville State University to increase the population and activity to support the long-term viability of Downtown.
6. Implement strategic catalyst projects to support Downtown's character and economic development.
7. Connect parks and public spaces within the Downtown to parks elsewhere in the City with greenway corridors.
8. Balance the pedestrian, vehicular, and public transit experiences within the Downtown.



## INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Focus growth in areas where adequate utility infrastructure is present, rather than extending infrastructure.
2. Be mindful of adequate public facilities in planning for growth and evaluating proposed development. This includes utilities, schools, transportation facilities, emergency services, parks, and other services.
3. Work collaboratively with Cumberland County and its other communities to identify and implement the most cost-effective methods of water and sewer service provision.
4. Develop policies to work with developers to connect to nearby utilities and upgrade utility infrastructure capacity in identified future growth areas.
5. Manage stormwater regionally within drainage basins rather than on a site-by-site basis.
6. Utilize and frequently update the Capital Improvements Plan to appropriately fund future infrastructure expenses.
7. Provide infrastructure incentives as an economic development tool.
8. Make infrastructure improvements in fragile or sensitive neighborhoods as a catalyst for development and redevelopment.
9. Develop infrastructure standards for new development based on location.



## TRANSPORTATION

1. Promote a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation network.
2. Complete the Cape Fear River and All-American Trails and enhance them with pedestrian and bicycle connections from surrounding areas.
3. Connect the City's transportation system to the regional and state-wide transportation systems.
4. Support transit effectiveness by focusing higher-intensity development around transit corridors and stops.
5. Promote access management and site interconnectivity along thoroughfares to improve traffic flow, safety, and corridor aesthetics.
6. Promote pedestrian and bicycle access in the vicinity of schools and adjacent neighborhoods.
7. Provide adequate transportation infrastructure in areas identified for growth and higher-intensity development.
8. Provide adequate lighting along thoroughfare corridors.
9. Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between fragile or sensitive neighborhoods and nearby shopping, employment, and community facilities.



## **PARKS & RECREATION**

1. Embrace parks and recreation facilities as a vital quality-of-life factor that also influences economic development.
2. Plan for and implement a network of parks, open spaces, and greenways to connect residential areas with schools, parks, service areas, downtowns, cultural resources, and other areas of interest.
3. Promote and facilitate neighborhood parks and open spaces.
4. Co-locate parks and recreational amenities with educational and other public facilities.
5. Provide parks and recreational facilities with both indoor and outdoor offerings that accommodate different age and ability groups.
6. Work collaboratively with Cumberland County to engage in parks planning and implementation.



## SERVICES

1. Provide easily-accessed information about City services and tips for their efficient and effective use.
2. Expand senior citizen services and amenities.
3. Maintain and enhance the protection of public health and safety by engaging with citizens as well as monitoring and improving emergency response times.
4. Work collaboratively with Cumberland County to identify opportunities for service consolidation.
5. Provide enhanced police patrols and engagement, community clean-up events, and home ownership incentives or assistance within fragile or sensitive neighborhoods.



## ENGAGEMENT

1. Work with the residents of fragile or sensitive neighborhoods to engage in community clean-up and beautification efforts as well as crime reduction techniques.
2. Work with faith-based and other non-profit agencies to provide services and resources to those in need and bridge economic gaps.
3. Provide easily-accessed information about local government and community services through all media outlets including television, radio, news media, the City's website, and social media outlets.
4. Encourage diverse citizen representation to serve on the City's advisory boards or within other community groups.
5. Work collaboratively with Cumberland County, surrounding communities, and military installations on matters of mutual interest such as land use and stewardship, services, and economic development.
6. Incentivize positive social programs that encourage economic stability, property maintenance, crime prevention, education, health and safety.
7. Promote citizen participation in the planning and development process and related activities.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Following review of the 837 strategies from 13 plans, determining categories, and analyzing the plans for consistency, there are five recommendations that can be addressed or started immediately by the City of Fayetteville. The five recommendations detailed below highlight what Development Services staff can do to foster more cohesiveness between the existing plans to create a unified vision for Fayetteville. On the following pages, a description for each recommendation along with responsible parties and suggested timelines for completion.

### 1 EVALUATE IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

### 2 UPDATE LAND USE MAP

### 3 COMPLETE A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### 4 ESTABLISH A QUALITY OF LIFE INDEX

### 5 CREATE AN ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

## 1 EVALUATE IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

### Purpose

The plans reviewed for this assessment span over four decades. This extended length of time indicates that strategies may have already been completed, may still be outstanding, or may no longer be relevant. Knowing each strategy's implementation status would assist the City in the establishment of priorities for the next 10-20 years. This evaluation will also help the City of Fayetteville plan for capital improvements.

### Tasks

Using the inventory spreadsheet, the Development Services Department should work with other departments to ascertain the status for the action-oriented strategies. Each strategy should be identified as complete, partially complete, in process, no action taken, or no longer relevant. Special attention should be given to those strategies with "Development Ordinance" or "Zoning Map" as the mechanism for implementation. The City's development ordinance and zoning map should be reviewed to see if these strategies have been included.

### Timeframe

2-3 months

## 2 UPDATE LAND USE MAP

### Purpose

Of the 13 plans reviewed, some plans were general in geographic extent, focusing on Cumberland County as a whole, while other plans were neighborhood or corridor specific. The majority of these plans contained future land use recommendations. An comparative analysis of land use maps would facilitate the creation of a new cohesive and consistent land use map for the City to use in making land use and zoning decisions going forward.

### Tasks

The Development Services Department should oversee the review of the land use maps contained in each plan with the aid of the City's GIS mapping system and Cumberland County parcel data in conjunction with the existing Cumberland County 2010 Land Use Map to highlight areas of conflict or transitional areas within the City. This task will help determine where land uses have trended in a different direction than originally envisioned. The City may also opt to utilize the services of a planning consultant to facilitate the process.

The City of Fayetteville should also break out its municipal influence area (MIA) from Cumberland County's Land Use Map, while still being mindful of the County's long-term land use goals. Fayetteville would also benefit from identifying character areas throughout the City and acceptable land uses and building patterns within those areas. This broader approach to land use could provide greater flexibility for acceptable uses dependent upon the character and infrastructure available in different areas.

It is recommended that the updated future land use map become part of a larger Comprehensive Plan for the City. However, the creation and adoption of a future land use map, along with the policy themes identified in this section, could potentially comprise an abbreviated, interim City of Fayetteville Land Use Plan, that could eventually be incorporated as a component of a Comprehensive Plan at a later date.

### Timeframe

4-6 months (update every 5 years)

## 3 COMPLETE A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### Purpose

A new Comprehensive Plan for the City would be the most effective method to compile existing conditions, establish long-term goals, and update strategies in a cohesive manner. As employee attrition occurs, the experiential knowledge of past planning efforts also departs, leaving new staff to review all of the existing plans for guidance on next steps and priorities. Having an updated Comprehensive Plan will contribute to greater consistency and efficiency. A Comprehensive Plan also provides contextual and consistent goals and strategies for the entire City in one document, rather than the approximately 40 documents that exist now.

### Tasks

The completion of a Comprehensive Plan can be coordinated by the Development Services Department with collaboration from a steering committee comprised of City staff, elected officials, and/or community leaders. The City may also opt to utilize the services of a planning consultant to facilitate the process.

Updated city-wide demographic, housing, and economic data should be produced as part of the

background information. Maps should depict all existing environmental factors, land use, development patterns, infrastructure, parks, and public facilities. The process should also incorporate a public input phase utilizing a survey and community meetings to gauge if sentiments documented in previous efforts remain relevant.

The Comprehensive Plan should include all components that affect the long-term growth and development of the City, following the policy theme categories identified in previous plans. These components may include character, land use and growth management, land stewardship, economic development, infrastructure, transportation, services, parks & recreation, and community engagement. The plan may also have specific focus areas, such as downtown, major corridors, or neighborhoods. The document should also contain an implementation framework to consult during capital improvements planning and annual budget planning.

### Timeframe

12-18 months (update every 5-10 years)

## **4** ESTABLISH A QUALITY OF LIFE INDEX

### **Purpose**

Many of the recommendations in 13 plans included in this assessment discussed fragile or sensitive neighborhoods, community capital, and bolstering economic development. Since these plans span four decades, baseline information has most likely changed. To allow for further analysis of neighborhood conditions and a way to measure change over time, it is recommended that a Quality of Life Index be created for Fayetteville.

### **Tasks**

The City can use any geographic divisions it chooses, such as census tracts, quadrants, sectors, or even neighborhoods to assess the quality of life. Within these areas, information can be gathered on income, crime, code violations, number of businesses and houses, vacancies, environmental criteria, infrastructure condition, and other quality of life factors. This allows Fayetteville to determine their own criteria, based on goals and important factors to the City's growth. Once determined, baseline information can be gathered and grouped by geographic division. This provides measurable outcomes and can highlight areas that need prioritized and targeted attention.

The index should be created and maintained by the Economic and Community Development Department with a committee comprised of representatives from pertinent City departments, members of the Redevelopment Commission, and other community advocates. Each department would be responsible for updating its applicable data. For instance, the Public Works department can determine and update information about infrastructure.

### **Timeframe**

1 year (update every 2-5 years)

## 5 CREATE AN ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

### Purpose

The majority of the plans reviewed highlight the need for social programs and education for residents within specific neighborhoods. In order to provide information about available resources, to help with collecting further qualitative neighborhood information, and to involve citizens in planning and implementation efforts city-wide, an engagement strategy for the City should be created.

### Tasks

The clearinghouse of resident resources that already exists through the Economic & Community Development Department can be expanded and updated regularly to ensure applicability. The engagement strategy could also include regularly scheduled community meetings, lunch-and-learn sessions, webinars, social media, printed materials, or other similar outreach method(s) that address multiple themes or one theme at a time.

The engagement strategy can be implemented by a public information officer or communications specialist or a designated staff member within the Economic &

Community Development Department. Another option is to assign sectors or neighborhoods of the City to different staff members within the Economic and Community Development Department. Targeted outreach can start within the first year, with city-wide updates occurring on a regular basis. This is a long-term, evolving strategy that will need regular organization and input updates as issues arise.

### Timeframe

4-6 months (annual updates)

