
TOWN OF RUTHERFORDTON

2023
ACTION
PLAN

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A MINTED ORIGINAL

Established 1787

The Town Council of the Town of Rutherfordton pledges to create an environment in which the Town will flourish around the concept of its mission statement and core values. The Town Council acknowledges its role in Vision and Action Planning for the future of the Town and pledges that this document will be a living, changing, and evolving document to help guide the Town's path to the future.

Mayor

Jimmy Dancy

Councilmembers

Henry Giles

Stan Clements

Dr. Doug Sheets

Doris Crute

Town Manager

Doug Barrick

Draft Presented to Council

Wednesday, February 1st

Approved

TBD

Executive Summary

In December of 2022, the Town polled the Community to gather opinions from citizens about the direction of the community over the next 12–24 months. Simultaneously, Town Department Leaders submitted input on internal goals. In January of 2023, the Town of Rutherfordton Town Council met to review this data and to formulate a set of goals to guide the Town towards the future. The Town Council evaluated past major accomplishments, issues, organizational effectiveness, priorities, and opportunities for success as we strive for the future. These items, along with community feedback and input from the Town operational departments, were then used to set specific action points, goals, and programs to guide the Town over the next several years. The specific responses of each category discussed are included in this Action Plan.

This Plan will be used to establish the Town’s priorities as it undertakes new ideas or amends existing programs. It is a proactive statement of where the Town wants to be in the future. The Action Plan identifies key initiatives with corresponding goals to direct the Town’s actions to help achieve its overarching mission while remaining in line with its values. The Town Council has committed to a bi-annual review of this plan to measure progress and to update the plan to best suit the ever-evolving needs of the community.

2021 Action Plan

Goals Summary

The 2021 Action Plan defined five key initiatives including Accessible and Responsive Government; Balanced Economic Development; Community Gathering, Beautification, and Inclusion; and Infrastructure, Facilities, and Operations.

Evaluation

By keeping the 2021 Action Plan at the forefront of planning, the Town succeeded in nearly every goal in the 2021 Action Plan. The Town obtained goals in housing initiatives, community gathering and events, community outreach efforts, and more. Please review the 2022 Year in Review to learn more about the specific achievements.



2021 ACTION PLAN

Town of Rutherfordton

Accessible & Responsive Government



The Gold Standard

- Increase access to online meetings, Virtual Town Hall
- Be intentional with outreach, keep citizens informed other than social media
- Create community bulletin board & digital signage

Balanced Economic Development



Diverse Businesses Growth & Support

- Promote access to quality internet
- Encourage infill development of quality housing
- Establish Revolving Loan Fund
- Create new business resources & support

Community Gathering, Inclusion, & Beautification



Healthy community & relationships

- Develop community gathering spaces in new locations & promote them in existing places
- Engage the entire community
- Beautification within the town, interactive murals
- Establish PARC’s Department

Facilities, Operations, & Infrastructure



Continually & Proactively Maintain Assets

- Acquire land for Fire Station #2
- Continual focus on preventative maintenance on roads & sidewalks
- Upgrade equipment & increase safety in parks
- Capital improvement in Town departments & provide education opportunities for Staff


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Our "Why"

At the beginning of this process, we asked our Councilmembers and Staff to explain their "why;" Why do they dedicate time to the Town of Rutherfordton, why is the Action Plan important, and why are they motivated in serving this community. Their responses are summarized:

We are commitment to community. We strive to foster community involvement and ensure that there is continual improvement in the community to make Rutherfordton a better place to live, work, and play. This starts with a desire to not accept the status quo and to ensure that we are collectively striving for a higher quality of life through proactive planning. We aim to provide the best resources for our entire community and create a sense of place that shows care. We will work together to ensure this plan provides a strategic outlook aimed at actionable goals for the entire community to work together for a greater tomorrow.

Action Plan Outline

The Action Plan identifies and defines key initiatives and includes corresponding goals and sub goals to direct future actions by the Town to achieve the vision of the plan and the overarching Town mission and values. The plan is broken down into four key areas:

- Best in Governance
- Balanced Economic Development
- Community Building
- Neighborhood Stabilization & Housing

Each of these key areas includes goals to help give shape to each topic. The goals are the specific desires of the Town Council over the next several years and are seen as comprehensive and provide substance to each key area of the plan.



Mission Statement

"We are a Safe, Caring, Beautiful & Vibrant Town. Businesses Thrive & Involved Citizens Take Pride in our Community."

Best in Governance

This key area describes the Town’s desire to retain quality staff to ensure our community services reflect our Gold Standard, and continue to place the values and desires of our community at the forefront of our operations.

Staffing

- Diversify our staff to reflect our community
- Provide excellent benefits and incentives to increase staff retention

Robust Planning

- Ensure our vision and core values are being reflected in our services
- Continue to write grants to decrease burden on tax payers and keep projects moving forward
- Maintain open lines of communication with our Residents

Facilities

- Implement the plan to renovate the current Town Hall/Police Station for an expanded and modern police station
- Ensure quality facilities and that facilities reflect the needs of the community

Balanced Economic Development

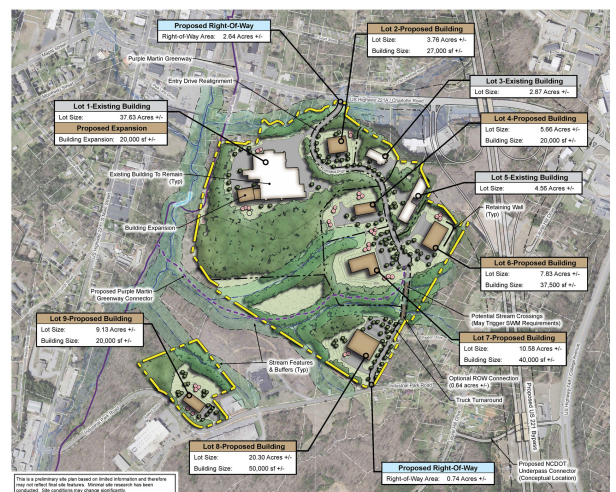
This goal area seeks to build a community approach to economic development across multiple sectors with a focus on small businesses, business diversification, and traditional job creation to foster the long term viability of both job creation and retention in our community. Fostering existing businesses and using our partnerships to provide quality housing and great jobs to truly impact our community for the long term while preserving the sense of place that makes us strong.

Business Development & Redevelopment

- Continue to focus on infrastructure development to help put Rutherfordton "on the map" for business destinations
- Business Park development
- Redevelopment of current assets for new uses
- Recruit additional grocery store
- Advocate for future I-74 Interstate designation and strategic US-221 corridor

Business Resources & Support

- Establish a Social District in downtown core
- Recruit Entertainment Businesses
- Create Business Welcome Guides



Community Building

Quality of life can be found in the connections made around public spaces and building an environment of inclusion that seeks to connect more residents. This goal seeks intentional ways to foster places that build relationships, establish community trust, and preservation of the rich heritage of our gold standard community. All while creating a vibrant place that people are attracted to as we reach the entire town through programs, preservation, and partnerships.

Community Gathering Spaces

- Build a new Town Hall building that features flexible Community Gathering Spaces
- Find ways to deploy EV Charging Stations
- Develop the "Whole" Concept Downtown
- Leverage historical assets like the Bechtler House
- Use of Town Buildings & Parks for Teen and Adult programming
- Community-Based Festivals & Events, like FAB, Hilltop Fall Festival, and Party in the Park

Equity & Inclusion

- Continue outreach efforts with digital signage
- Increase community health partnerships and resources
- Bolster internet access
- Increase community presence

Beautification of the Community

- Prioritize arts and murals
- Paint new Interactive Murals within our Town

Recreation

- Begin improvements at Norris Recreation Complex
- Add Parking at Marshall Park
- Improve assets at Crestview Park
- Complete 2nd St Park improvements
- Expand PMG
- Construct a memorial Picnic Shelter at Kiwanis Park



Neighborhood Stabilization & Housing

This goal prioritizes the continual and proactive actions that reverse the overall decline of neighborhood character, welcomes future community growth and expansion, and ensures that investments improve the quality of life and working conditions of the community.

Urban Redevelopment Area

- Facilitate Home Repair Program
- Land Bank properties for future planning and development
- Infill Development to provide housing options for the community
- Infrastructure development on public streets

Abandoned Properties

- Code Enforcement to abate public nuisances and other safety concerns
- Decrease neighborhood blight by clearing dilapidated structures

Leverage Partnerships

- Partner with other organizations to carry out housing goals
- Advocate and assist in housing of all types as outlined in 2022 Housing Needs Assessment



Implementation

Plan implementation will be dependent both on the Town Staff and the Town Council to take action on the recommendations contained in this report. Staff has the responsibility to take on these goals as a part of the operations of the Town and the Town Council must reinforce the desire and need for these actions to occur.

The Staff and Town Council must also be willing to update and review progress on these action points throughout the year along with a holistic annual review prior to the beginning of the budgeting process to ensure alignment of priorities and funding.



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