

**ALAMANCE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS STRATEGIC VISIONING RETREAT -
SUMMARY**

Thursday, September 10, 2015

FROM MEETING NOTES PREPARED BY FACILITATOR LYDIAN ALTMAN

Retreat Objectives:

- To recognize our successes over the last few years.
- To assess the implications of upcoming changes in our community.
- To establish preliminary vision for the community.
- To determine expectations for a strategic planning process.

What's happened in the last year or so of which you are most proud?	
# mentions	comment
4	Interlocal communication and understanding of others' perspectives; strong cooperation amongst all community stakeholders
2	Our employees are stellar
2	Economic growth, current and upcoming [generating 1,160 new jobs!]
	Embracing the good things about economic development without losing rural feel and character
	We are a progressive, planful county that's on the move towards world class status
	People <u>want</u> to move here
	Uniting to improve educational system here
	This organizations' commitment to technology and openness about how we do our work (transparency)
	Willing to develop clarity and focus about our work, especially by undertaking a strategic plan
	Recycling processing facility has been a big success for residents; high utilization

[Facilitator's note: You could consider this 'Most Proud' list your organization's strategic advantages, those assets that you have to build on to leverage even greater successes.]

Anticipated Changes - summary

Continuous/Short-term/Medium-term/Long-term

Short-term (next 18 months)	Medium-term (18-36 months)	Long-term (3-5 years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging Facilities • Unexpected demographic shifts • Increased capital need for schools • Concentrated pockets of • Availability of housing options • Road infrastructure • Balancing Needs with Revenue Constraints • Retirements within the organization • Rapid changes in technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure Planning • Demographic shifts (browning and graying of America) • Shifts in service expectations • Stresses of land use • Large scale technology changes (functions, amount and type of data) • Need more revenues, resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional employers in the county • More residents , more services, changing expectations • NC Commerce park • Loss of Agricultural Land and Farmers • Utilities, Infrastructure
<p>Continuous (ongoing)</p>		
<p>Uncertainty of legislative actions and impact on our revenues – sales tax redistributions, Medicaid policy decisions</p> <p>Eroding local control over authority and revenue generating ability (by state legislature)</p> <p>Local election in 2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • board member & leadership changes • impact on organizational structure? Local policies? Resource allocations? Working relationships? <p>Federal rules on water quality – Alamance County has lots of bodies of water that could be affected</p> <p>State help on conservation easements – will this be available?</p>		

Identified Values:

- Mix of urban and rural areas
- Open, collaborative community
- Relaxed, friendly, caring way of life
- Innovative organization (Family Justice Center; electronic 50B)
- Workforce committed to positive public outcomes
- Focus on the greater good
- Teamwork

Vision:

- Prosperous, Vitality. New development probably centered in cities
- Strong community reinvestment
- More in-county job options
- Diversity of Businesses and employers (as a result of proactive recruitment)
- Business-friendly county (incentives, fast-tracked, open, balanced, realistic)
- Good growth (planned, anticipated, orderly, knowledge-based)
- Increased services

Population

- More educated
- More diverse
- Harmonious: respectful of differences, greater understanding of cultures

County Staff

- Enjoyable, desirable work environment
- Buy-in of employees to the strategic plan
- Turnover rates dependent on pay and benefits
- Efficient, effective and innovative
- Engaged, happy
- Collaborative relationship with municipalities on utilities

Actions, Decisions, Practices (that enable Vision)

- Planning & Visioning
- Educate folks about the work of county government, "Why It Matters"
- Invest in education
- Encourage urban renewal in Burlington. Adopt strategies to make that happen

- Cohesiveness and communication between management, employees and other governments (including schools) to be responsive to the community through strategic planning (long-term, unselfish thinking and actions)

Government's Role (in achieving that vision)

- To lead the movement forward
- Set goals and vision (for staff to implement)
- Develop policies, ordinances, and framework to support vision
- Represent public views
- Collaborate with regional partners; promote cohesiveness with all
- Be positive, complete, and transparent with communications
- Allocate/raise revenues to resource the plan
- Seek guidance of experts, when needed
- Set an example for diversity through hiring choices

How should the county proceed with strategic planning?

- **Inventory existing plans**
 - What does the county have in place that could be useful and relevant to help guide this work?
 - What have others done? Has input been gathered that could be used to supplement or supplant county's engagement efforts? Are there parts of others' plans where the county can/should fit?

- **Scope: Who should be involved in developing county plan, and in what ways?**
 - Stakeholders: community at large, chamber (representative of business community), nonprofits, municipalities, maybe major employers
 - How involved will they be? (see Level of Involvement)
 - Test/consult
 - Set boundaries for how it might be used
 - Engagement purposes:
 - Educate, inform
 - Exchange of views
 - Staff capacity and expectations (undetermined)

- **Completion: When would you like the plan to be completed?**
 - Process to design, engage, and develop could take about one year

- **Outcomes: What do you expect as outcomes from your strategic planning process?**
 - Vision, attainable goals
 - The become front and center and guide our actions and agendas
 - Operating and capital budgeting decisions by Board and preparation by departments
 - Help funded agencies fit with county's goals
 - Review progress periodically (annually or every 6 months?)