

Executive Summary

Chapter I: Introduction

A comprehensive plan is a statement of long-range policies made by the governing body of a community concerning its future physical development. The Williamston 2009-2010 Comprehensive Plan Update (comprehensive plan update or plan update) provides a basis for the preparation or update of more detailed functional plans to serve as a general guide in day-to-day decisions. Williamston is also benefiting from its participation in Audubon International's Sustainable Communities Program. In 2009, the Town Board, through the Planning Board, initiated the process to update the Town's comprehensive plan.

English adventurers explored the banks of the Roanoke River where Williamston now stands as early as 1587. It is believed that settlers were in the Williamston area by 1700; however, documentation appears to be unavailable. In 1779, the General Assembly authorized the establishment of a town on the land of Thomas Hunter. In 1922, the Roanoke River was bridged at Williamston and with it came the greatest boon to the welfare of Williamston to date.

Williamston is located in Martin County about 90 miles east of Raleigh; approximately 90 miles inland from the North Carolina Outer Banks and the Atlantic Ocean; and, is about 80 miles southwest of Norfolk, Virginia. Williamston is bordered to the north and west by the Roanoke River.

Williamston is governed by a five member Board of Commissioners (Town Board) and a Mayor. Williamston's authority to adopt and implement a comprehensive plan is drawn from its state authorized general police power per North Carolina General Statute §160A-174.

The comprehensive plan update is based upon the target date of 2030. The plan update has a detailed table of contents and eleven (11) chapters which provide background information, examine existing land use patterns, project future land use patterns, list the Town's goals and implementation strategies, and include a detailed action plan for nineteen (19) issue areas to implement the plan update.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE VISION STATEMENT

The Town of Williamston seeks to maintain its small town character, charm, and natural beauty, revitalize its downtown, encourage and utilize sustainable development concepts, and protect natural environmental systems by:

- working to make itself a clean, safe, drug-free, and aesthetically pleasing community;
- providing core services in an efficient manner;
- supporting and encouraging sustainable residential and commercial development initiatives and planning;
- embracing smart growth principles and promoting smart growth practices, concentrating commercial and industrial development in appropriate areas where adequate infrastructure exist to support such development;
- balancing residential and commercial land uses;
- maintaining and improving its infrastructure;
- seeking assistance to improve neighborhoods;
- protecting and preserving the natural environment and surface and ground waters;
- assessing options to provide additional areas where growth can occur;
- keeping citizens informed; and,
- seeking intergovernmental cooperation to improve Williamston, Martin County, and the region.

Chapter II: Population

The total population in Williamston in 2000 was 5,911 people. Census 2010 reports the Town's population has decreased to 5,511 people. An annexation in 2010-2011 brought the population up to about 5,520 people. The median age of residents was 41.9 years in 2010. The 2010 population was comprised of 2,337 males and 3,174 females. The 2010 population consisted of 3,441 black or African American people and 1,907 white people. These two groups accounted for 97% of the Town's population. In 2010, 1,756 people were enrolled in schools. Of this total, 453 were enrolled in college or graduate school. In 2010, 1,199 people (aged 25 years and over) were high school graduates or higher. In 2010, 800 people (aged 25 years and over) held an associate's degree or higher. Census 2010 reported there were 4,194 people 15 years old or older in Williamston. Of this total, 1,774 people were married. There were another 232 people listed as married, but separated.

There were 2,172 total households in Williamston in 2010. Of the total, 1,403 were family households and 769 were non-family households. Of the non-family households, 730 were situations wherein the householder lived alone. The average household size was 2.38 people, while the average family size was 3.03 people. There were 694 households with individuals under 18 years old and 706 households with individuals 65 years and over.

Williamston's population should increase to 6,000 people during the planning period.

Chapter III: Housing

The total housing units recorded for Williamston in 2010 was 2,587 units.

Approximately 25% of the land in Williamston is utilized for residential purposes or platted for future residential development. Single-family residences continue to be the dominant housing type in North Carolina and in Williamston. Single units (detached) accounted for 1,891 of the Town's total units in 2010. There are a number of multifamily developments in Williamston. Census 2010 reported that 528 people lived in structures with two (2) or more units in the structure. Proportion-wise, the quality of the housing stock is improving. Of the 2,587 housing units included in Census 2010 data, 878 units have been added since 1970. None of the Town's 2,172 occupied housing units in 2010 lacked complete plumbing facilities and none lacked complete kitchen facilities. Most occupied housing units rely on electricity for house heating fuel (climate control). In 2010, 63 occupied units did not choose to have telephone service and 455 did not have a vehicle available.

Housing related programs include the Employee Homeownership Program (EHP) and the Residential Development Incentive (RDI) Program.

Chapter IV: Economy

In 2010, the potential labor force in Williamston, made up of people 16 years old and older, totaled 4,182 people. Of this total, 1,901 people were in the labor force. Of the 1,901 people in the labor force, 1,664 people were employed and 228 people were unemployed. Nearly 82% of Williamston's workers drove (car, truck, or van) alone to work; over 11% carpooled; and, 6.8 walked to work. Of the 1,664 workers, 1,174 were private wage and salary workers, while 375 were government workers and 103 were reported as self-employed.

Within five miles, there are about 11,000 people. Within fifteen miles of Williamston, there are about 35,000 people, while there are about 235,000 people within thirty miles of Town.

Census 2010 reported the per capita income was \$14,119; the median household income was \$25,884; and, the median family income was \$40,833. The average weekly wage for workers in the area (Town and Martin County) was \$557 in the fourth quarter of 2007. The average weekly wage for the State for the same reporting period was \$718. An estimated 350 families and an estimated 1,712 people live below the poverty level.

Commercial and service type development is located downtown, in areas adjacent to downtown, and along U.S. Highway 17, E. Main Street, W. Boulevard Street, E. Boulevard Street and Washington Street. Also, there are retail establishments and personal services type establishments located throughout the Town. There is some light manufacturing activity at various locations in Town. Williamston is home to the Northeast Technology and Business Center (NETBC). The Roberson Business Park off contains approximately 80 acres divided into 14 lots. Since 1945, the Williamston Commercial Historic District has maintained its position as the Town's primary concentration of commercial, professional, and governmental activities. Williamston Downtown, Inc. (WDD), a North Carolina chartered non-profit corporation established for the purpose of revitalizing the Williamston central business district.

Business development and improvement programs include: Facade Improvement Grant Program; Economic Development Incentive Program; and State (Article 3J) Tax Credits.

The Senator Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center has established Williamston as a destination for those attending a variety of events. There are a number of tourist destinations and attractions in and around Williamston.

Chapter V: Community Facilities and Services

The Martin County Arts Council, Martin Community Players Associations, and Roanoke Arts and Craft Guild offer opportunities to view and/or participate in artistic pursuits. Williamston has three (3) landmark properties listed in the National Historic Register, two (2) historic districts, and approximately 31 contributing historic structures in the Williamston Commercial Historic District.

Williamston is served by two local newspapers and a number of radio and television stations. Suddenlink Communications provides cable television service. In-structure telephone service is provided by CenturyLink. A number of firms in the area provide cellular telephone service, internet service, and/or satellite television service. Western Union provides telegraph service. Williamston is serviced by Dominion North Carolina Power.

Fire protection in the Williamston Fire District is provided through the Williamston Fire/Rescue/EMS Department. Law enforcement and public safety are provided by the Williamston Police Department.

Martin General Hospital and the Martin County Health Center serve the general health needs of residents. The Martin County Senior Center and the Martin County Department of Aging serve senior citizens and a number of firms and agencies offer in-home health care.

The Martin Memorial Library and the Martin Community College Library serve Williamston.

Some areas in Town are served by Piedmont Natural Gas and several companies distribute propane gas locally.

Williamston maintains and manages a variety of Town-owned recreational facilities.

Students in Williamston are served by five Martin County schools including Riverside High School, which is located in the Town's ETJ. There are three (3) private schools near Williamston. Martin Community College (MCC) is a public comprehensive community college serving Town residents. Area students can pursue undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral studies at East Carolina University in Greenville.

Household garbage pickup in Williamston is contracted through Martin County with Waste Industries, Inc. Williamston participates in a regional sanitary landfill in Bertie County. Recycling is offered through a contract with Martin County. Williamston contracts with a private hauler for commercial waste pick-up.

The Public Works Department maintains Town-owned buildings and grounds and is also responsible for the Town cemetery and garage.

There are nearly 60 churches and religious institutions in and around Williamston, with most denominations represented. A variety of civic organizations and clubs meet in and around Williamston. There are garden and book clubs in the area as well

Chapter VI: Transportation System

Three Federal (U.S.) highways serve Williamston: U.S. Highway 64, U.S. Highway 17, and U.S. Highway 13. NC Highways 125, 903, 171, and 11 also serve Williamston and Martin County. There are two bridges in Williamston, one over the Roanoke River along U.S. Highway 17/13 and one along Main Street at the Seaboard Coast Line railroad overpass.

Williamston is responsible for maintaining about 44 miles of streets and roads utilizing State financial aid and Town resources. Each year, State Street-aid (Powell Bill) allocations are made to incorporated municipalities that establish their eligibility and qualify.

State-local transportation system planning efforts are the Comprehensive Transportation Plans (CTP) and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The current State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) includes four (4) local projects.

The Town's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) 2011-2015 includes programming for street repair projects, three (3) equipment related projects, and three (3) drainage system improvements projects related to Skewarkee Drainage Watershed Improvements.

In 2003, Williamston completed the Skewarkee Trail and continued to plan for bicycle, pedestrian, and multi-use facilities. In 2002, the Town secured funding NCDOT's Enhancement Funding program to construct River Landing.

The Martin County Airport offers a 5,000 foot paved runway and is open year-round, 24 hours per day. Residents also use the Pitt-Greenville Airport.

Bus transportation and parcel service is offered by Trailways Bus Line. Martin County Transit (MCT) offers limited transportation services to residents.

Seaboard Coast Line Railroad, an operating unit of CSX Transportation, operates trains along a line that bisects Martin County, servicing Williamston.

Local, regional, and national motor transport companies serve Williamston.

Chapter VII: Water and Sewer Systems

Williamston owns and operates its own public water supply system consisting of six (6) water supply wells, over fifty (50) miles of water distribution mains ranging in size from two (2) inches to twelve (12) inches, and five (5) elevated storage tanks with a total capacity of 1.475 million gallons. Williamston's system is identified by the State as PWSID: 04-59-010. The oldest portion of the water system is over forty-five years old. Williamston provides water (and sewer) service to some areas outside its corporate limits. The Town obtains its water from wells in the Black Creek aquifer, located within the Central Coastal Plains Capacity Use Area. A 25% withdrawal reduction was implemented in 2008 with successive 25% reductions scheduled for 2013 and 2018. The Town has a contract to buy withdrawal credits from Robersonville and be able to continue to withdraw as it does now. Williamston has spent minimal amounts for water credits and has been able to reduce usage.

The Town is working with the Martin County Regional Water and Sewer Authority (MCRWASA) to develop additional water sources. Both the Town and the Authority are actively seeking State and Federal funding assistance. MCRWASA proposes to withdraw water directly from the Roanoke River. A new water treatment plant and facilities will be required as the new source is accessed. The Town's water system needs to be upgraded to accommodate anticipated growth and the purchase of water from MCRWASA. Upgrades will require line installation and improvements to allow for water transmission from the authority's system to the Town's.

Williamston operates a sewer system consisting of a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and sanitary sewer collection/interceptor system consisting of: about forty-five (45) miles of 8-inch to 24-inch gravity mains at depths ranging from 4 feet to 18 feet deep; approximately 1.4 miles of 4-inch and 6-inch force mains; eight (8) pumping stations; and, associated service laterals. The WWTP serving the Town is located on the Roanoke River east of the Town limits. A small amount of the sewage treated at the facility is from out-of-town customers. With improvements made over the years, the facility has operated more efficiently, normally meeting all effluent limitations on a consistent basis. Additional required sewer upgrades were completed in early 2010. The sewer system has nearly 2,400 sewer connections. Operating under State permit number NC0020044, the Town's permitted capacity is 2.0 MGD. The system's design capacity is 2.0 MGD, while its average annual daily discharge is about 1.4 MGD. The receiving stream is the Roanoke River. Currently, the system serves a population of about 8,000 people.

The Town faces two significant challenges with respect to its sewer system. First, the Town must begin to correct infiltration/inflow problems. Second, Town leaders must fashion a program to pay for and provide sewer service to areas being annexed or proposed for annexation.

Chapter VIII: Natural Features

Williamston has an average yearly temperature of 61°F. Precipitation averages 50 inches annually. No air quality problems have been cited by State or Federal agencies. The relative humidity averages about 72%. There are five federally protected/listed vertebrates and one invertebrate in Martin County (and potentially in Williamston).

The soil associations found within Williamston and its ETJ include a variety of soil types. There are thirty-four (34) different soils in Williamston and its ETJ.

Elevations in Williamston range from approximately 10 feet above mean sea level near water courses to as high as 80 feet above mean sea level at different points. Williamston is underlain by clay, silt, sand, and limestone beds which were deposited on crystalline basement rocks.

Parts of Martin County are favorably situated for groundwater supplies but the chemical quality of the groundwater is not uniform. Martin County has abundant surface water. The area is drained by the Roanoke and Tar-Pamlico Rivers and their many tributaries.

Chapter IX: Existing Land Use and Development

General development patterns have not changed significantly within Williamston proper in the past 15 to 20 years. Beginning in 2010, the Town annexed two hundred and sixty-five (265) acres encompassing the Roanoke Country Club and surrounding (primarily) residential development, as well as a residential area at the end of Cedar Lane. The Cedar Lane area annexation has been finalized. The effective date for the annexed areas encompassing the Roanoke Country Club has not been determined.

Including the aforementioned annexations, the Town consists of 2,830 acres, divided into about 3,000 parcels. Some 1,918 acres (68%) of the Town's area have been developed, while about 912 acres (32%) of the Town's area are not developed. Existing land use categories are: Residential (24%); Multi-family Residential (4%); Commercial (16%); Manufacturing (7%); Public and semi-public/Government/Religious/Office and Institutional (8%); Recreation (9%); and, Vacant/Open Space/Rights of Way and Easements (32%). The ETJ encompasses about seventeen (17) square miles. The Town enforces its zoning ordinance in the ETJ. Martin County does not have a zoning ordinance. The area necessary to accommodate anticipated growth will come from existing platted lots, supplemented by the acquisition of additional developed land area through annexation.

Chapter X: Future Land Use and Development

The projected future land use plan delineates the areas in and around Williamston best suited for residential, business, industrial, and public/open space/institutional land uses. The projected future land use plan is used in conjunction with the Town's goals and implementation strategies to express the Town's vision for its future. Future land use categories are:

- R4-Residential encompasses an estimated 114 acres (0.8%).
- R4-MHO-Residential with Mobile Home Overlay encompasses an estimated 20 acres (0.1%).
- R8-Residential encompasses an estimated 774 acres (5.38%).
- R8-MHO-Residential with Mobile Home Overlay encompasses an estimated 66 acres (0.5%).
- R10-Residential encompasses an estimated 309 acres (2.1%).
- R15-Residential encompasses an estimated 2,363 acres (16.2%).
- R15-AO-Residential with Agriculture Overlay encompasses an estimated 2,431 acres (16.6%).
- R20-Residential encompasses an estimated 469 acres (3.2%).
- R20-AO-Residential with Agriculture Overlay encompasses an estimated 4,349 acres (29.8%).
- CD-Downtown Commercial encompasses an estimated 56 acres (0.4%).
- CBD-Central Business encompasses an estimated 45 acres (0.3%).
- CH-Highway Commercial encompasses an estimated 1,313 acres (9.0%).
- CH-MU-Highway Commercial-Mixed Use encompasses an estimated 32 acres (0.2%).
- CN-Neighborhood Commercial encompasses an estimated 9 acres (0.1%).
- O&I-Office & Institutional encompasses an estimated 572 acres (3.9%).
- M1-Restricted Manufacturing encompasses an estimated 233 acres (1.6%).
- M2-Mixed Manufacturing encompasses an estimated 583 acres (4.0%).
- SHO-Special Highway Overlay (SHO) encompasses an estimated 697 acres (4.7%).
- Conditional Use (CUD) encompasses an estimated 1 acre (less than 0.001%).
- Tourism Related Economic Development (TRE) encompasses an estimated 164 acres (1.1%).

Chapter XI: Goals and Implementation Strategies

Local governments have only the legal authority granted to them by the State to enact a development management program. This is known as the “Dillon Rule.” Williamston has an extensive development management program and continually assesses its options with respect to additional tools.

Goals and implementation strategies have been developed for nineteen the (19) issue areas. Issue specific action items follow. Action items taken or adapted from the Town’s work with Audubon International’s Sustainable Communities Program appear in **green** type.

1. Residential Development (RD) Action Items:

- Continue the Employee Homeownership Program (EHP) to encourage employees to invest in the community while helping reduce the number of vacant housing units in the Town.
- Continue the Residential Development Incentive (RDI) Program to encourage private investment to improve the Town’s housing stock.
- Continue to enforce the zoning ordinance, as amended.
- Study amendments to the zoning ordinance with respect to lots widths and setback requirements and the allowance of administrative review options.
- Seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for projects as necessary.
- Study ordinance amendments to require property owners to improve and maintain the general appearance of residential properties and require maintenance of residential (and commercial) properties that are owned or controlled by absentee owners.

2. Commercial Development (CD) Action Items:

- Continue to enforce the zoning ordinance, as amended.
- Develop commercial building and development design guidelines and standards.
- Continue the building facade improvement grant program to encourage private investment to improve commercial buildings.
- Study amendments to the zoning ordinance with the goal of promoting economic development.
- Continue forums involving Martin County and Williamston political leadership to discuss economic development issues.
- Continue developing a commercial strategic economic development plan.
- Identify additional methods for financing development such as grants and capital reserves.
- Continue to develop a local farmer’s market.
- Develop a farmland preservation program.
- Formally request NC State University to conduct an economic study of the Roanoke River’s tourism generating potential.
- Continue to develop the boardwalk along the Roanoke River near Moratoc Park.
- Seek funding to add additional camping platforms along the Roanoke River.
- Provide incentives for new businesses locating downtown.
- Utilize, as necessary, the information resources available through the partnership between Audubon International and the American Ecotourism Alliance.
- Inform, as necessary, State senators and representatives concerning the financial needs of the Senator Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center.

3. Industrial Development (ID) Action Items:

- Continue to enforce the zoning ordinance.
- Continue to work with the Northeast Partnership and State Department of Commerce to attract industrial development to the area.

- Participate in regional economic planning activities to attract industrial development of the area.
- Expand membership in the Committee of 100 and Committee of 1,000.
- Continue to offer, in partnership with the Economic Development Corporation, economic incentives for new businesses.

4. Arts, Culture, Historic/Heritage Preservation (AC) Action Items:

- Study regulations to require that redevelopment efforts be consistent with the historic preservation policies contained in this comprehensive plan.
- Develop and adopt a historic district zoning overlay.
- Seek funding sources for historic preservation projects.
- Develop a Historic Preservation Commission.
- Write articles about, and conduct tours of, historic sites
- Continue to seek funding for a permanent multi-use facility for the Martin County Arts Council.

5. Downtown Revitalization, Enhancement, and Marketing (DR) Action Items:

- Study revisions to current incentives relative to development and redevelopment of downtown and consider adoption of new incentives as a part of the study effort.
- Seek grant funding for projects as necessary.
- Study historic overlay zoning district regulations and/or development design guidelines applying to core downtown areas to enhance interest in private investment and redevelopment in some unused or under used downtown properties and, as guidelines are discussed and developed, encourage all parties interested in developing or redeveloping downtown, to recognize and contribute to the downtown's appeal.
- Study revisions to current incentive programs relative to development or redevelopment downtown, and adopt, as necessary and practicable, new incentives as a part of the study effort.

6. Transportation System (TS) Action Items:

- Complete the (on-going) development of a comprehensive pedestrian plan to include elements to provide new sidewalks, connections between existing sidewalks, and general improvements to existing sidewalks at various places in Town and seek grant funding to complete the plan's recommendations.
- Seek assistance from the North Carolina Department of Transportation to update the Williamston Thoroughfare Plan.
- Seek grant monies and technical assistance from the North Carolina Department of Transportation for road improvements, industrial access projects, downtown enhancement, bicycle and pedestrian corridors, and implementation of the projects recommended in the Williamston Thoroughfare Plan.
- Develop and implement guidelines to encourage improvements to the quality and appearance of local taxi services.
- Develop a street improvement master plan
- Seek technical and financial assistance to make Williamston a pedestrian friendly community.
- Develop a curb and gutter plan that is consistent with Sustainable Community initiatives.
- Subsidize the cost of discounts for monthly/yearly passes on the public transportation system.
- Work with the appropriate agencies to monitor the use of public transportation and to determine if additional public transportation routes are needed to service under-served areas of the community.
- Develop incentives such as preferred parking spaces at various locations to promote car pooling and arriving in hybrid or alternative fuel vehicles.

- Use grant funds (if available) to incorporate permeable pavement when resurfacing Town parking lots.
- Improve safe and accessible routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

7. Parks and Recreation and Public Open Spaces (PR) Action Items:

- Complete River Landing Phase II.
- Purchase and install exercise equipment, playground equipment, and site amenities for parks and recreation facilities as necessary.
- Complete building construction projects and building and facility upgrades as necessary.
- Purchase maintenance vehicles and equipment as necessary.
- Prepare a green trails plan.
- Seek State and Federal grants to provide recreational facilities to Williamston residents.
- Complete the (on-going) update of the parks and recreational facilities master plan.
- Incorporate “green” principles (which include water and energy conservation, minimization of noise and light pollution, protection of wildlife habitat and wetlands protection, and the use of bio-retention areas to filter run off-water) into the design, construction, and maintenance of any new recreational facilities that may be developed during the planning period.
- Create an ecological demonstration site and develop a nature trail at the new recreational facility.
- Recycle at the new recreational facility.
- Develop a program to inform the public of the environmental principles incorporated into recreation programs and facilities.
- Install signage explaining the purpose of bio-retention areas and promoting “green” principles at parks and recreation sites and facilities.
- Enroll all parks and recreation facilities in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program and work to have each facility earn certification.
- Include a theme of ecological responsiveness in recreation department promotional materials and activities.
- Map existing trail system, including the Rail Trail and any designated bike lanes.
- Institute a recruitment program to disadvantage facilities.
- Develop a program to inform the public of the health benefits of a healthy lifestyle and expand programs to include natural activities.

8. Natural Features and Environmental Protection (NF) Action Items:

- Study amendments to the zoning ordinance with respect to erosion and sedimentation control.
- Develop a public education program about the Town’s sustainability practices utilizing the Town’s website and by contributing quarterly articles for local newspapers.
- Install signage promoting environmental awareness along the Rail Trail, at public parks, and at municipal buildings and facilities.
- Develop a recognition program for local people and organizations practicing good environmental stewardship.
- Meet with the Board of Martin County Public Schools to encourage an environmental component in the curriculum and to encourage environmental projects in school buildings and on school grounds to be documented and possibly recognized through the Audubon Partners for the Environment program.
- Conduct workshops for developers, contractors, real estate professionals, and other stakeholders to disseminate information concerning environmental issues such as storm water management and “green” building practices.
- Develop and coordinate a regular speaker series for the public concerning environmental and sustainability issues.

- Collaborate as necessary, with environmental organizations to achieve regional conservation objectives.
- Commission a study to identify drainage and storm water problems in Williamston.
- Require permeable pavement, when possible, for all new construction.
- Remove pavement, when possible, as Town projects are undertaken.
- Use bio-retention ponds and other natural features to control and filter storm water runoff and resulting pollution for Town projects.
- Adopt a code prohibiting up-lighting on new development and specifying appropriate factors for new lighting.
- Offer incentives to retrofit existing structures with properly oriented lighting fixtures.
- Conduct periodic surveys of residents concerning environmental concerns.
- Monitor and publicize the results of efforts to mitigate pollution.
- Map Federally listed contaminated sites using the EPA's "Enviromapper" program to compare the areas found with population concentrations.
- Study the use of wind and solar sources to power Town buildings and facilities.

9. Water and Sewer Systems (WS) Action Items:

- Purchase radio read equipment.
- Purchase maintenance vehicles and equipment as necessary.
- Complete water supply and water system improvement projects and water transmission main projects as identified.
- Complete water system fire flow improvements as identified.
- Update record water and sewer mapping.
- Complete Roberson Estates street and utility improvements.
- Complete infiltration/inflow rehabilitation projects as necessary.
- Develop and update as necessary electronic mapping of the Town's water and sewer systems.
- Develop and submit annual updates of the Williamston Local Water Supply Plan (LWSP) to the North Carolina Division of Water Resources.
- Develop a water and sewer master plan.
- Implement applicable recommendations in the water supply study commissioned by the Martin County Regional Water and Sewer Authority by the Wooten Company and others to identify alternative water source solutions.
- Expand the Town's water conserving low-flow faucet retrofit incentive program.
- Install low-flow faucets in Town-owned buildings.
- Install half-flush toilets and waterless urinals in Town-owned buildings.
- Develop and disseminate to the public information on water supply/system planning and water conservation techniques.

10. Community Facilities and Services (CF) Action Items:

- Complete building construction projects and building and facility upgrades as necessary.
- Purchase maintenance vehicles and equipment as necessary.
- Complete Skewarkee drainage watershed improvements as necessary.
- Seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for projects as necessary.
- Update the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan developed with Martin, Washington, and Tyrrell counties as necessary.
- Update user fee information relating to fee-for-service rescue operations and study and implement as appropriate fee for service plans to pay for emergency medical services.
- Consider developing and adopting a formal fire apparatus replacement policy.
- Commission a space needs study concerning the Williamston Fire and Rescue Department's current and future requirements.

- Reprioritize neighborhoods for active Community Policing.
- Install street lights as necessary in areas which have been annexed.
- Utilize and update and improve the Town's website and use newsletters to disseminate information to residents and visitors concerning Town services, schedules, and related issues and encourage the continuity of website content (as well as printed information that may be disseminated) between Williamston, Martin County, and agencies or organizations serving the area or disseminating information about the area.
- Meet with Employment Security Commission staff and education providers as necessary concerning workforce needs.
- Host an annual symposium for students and parents about local job opportunities.
- Lobby the appropriate agency(s) to conduct a study of Williamston residents' access to healthcare and identify barriers and existing problems.
- Build or buy an aquatic pool for senior exercise activities.
- Lobby the appropriate agency(s) to study major health issues in the community to identify major concerns that should be addressed.
- Develop and disseminate to the public information regarding waste reduction techniques.
- Hire a full time crime prevention officer.
- Study average response times for fire, EMS, and law enforcement and implement recommendations for improvement as applicable.
- Establish and support crime prevention strategies such as Neighborhood Watch, anti-gang task forces, and "Broken Window" policies as applicable.
- Conduct annual training on the Town's Disaster Plan.

11. Extraterritorial (Planning) Jurisdiction (EJ) Action Items:

- Continue to enforce the zoning ordinance, as amended in the extraterritorial (planning) jurisdiction area.
- Consider annexation(s) of area(s) in the extraterritorial (planning) jurisdiction to increase the Town's population; to serve areas in need of utilities and services as appropriate; to provide additional land area to accommodate projected population growth; and, to provide additional land area to accommodate economic growth.
- Extend the Town's extraterritorial (planning) jurisdiction (ETJ) to include a two (2) mile area limit on the north side of Town to concur with the construction of the Highway 125 Bypass.

12. Intergovernmental Relations and Regionalism (IR) Action Items:

- Develop strategies to promote inter-agency and inter-governmental cooperation to improve interaction and communication between, but not limited to, the Williamston Town Board, Williamston Planning Board, the Martin County Board Commissioners, the Martin County School Board with respect to public facilities and services.
- Conduct regular meetings involving the boards of commissioners and key staff members of Williamston and Martin County to promote cooperation.
- Meet with the Martin County Board of Commissioners semi-annually for a non-agenda dinner meeting.

13. Citizen Participation (CP) Action Items:

- Establish standard procedures by which the Town citizens or groups can meet with government officials and resolve differences of opinions.
- Continue to plan and conduct Town Day for the public.
- Develop and promote opportunities for volunteerism such as trash clean-up days, community flower planting days, mentoring, tutoring, or food kitchen/homeless shelters.
- Sponsor a leadership school for high school students.

- Develop a program to celebrate community achievement and values.

14. Housing (HO) Action Items:

- Seek grant funding for projects as necessary.
- Develop a series of housing strategies aimed at providing options for middle-to-low income families regarding housing.
- Provide a home ownership course.
- Study, and implement as practicable, rent to own programs.
- Continue the (housing) down payment assistance program to encourage and foster home ownership.
- Study, and implement as practicable, methods to assist first time home buyers in their efforts to obtain low interest loans.
- Update the housing study using CENSUS 2010 information and make comparisons with CENSUS 2000 figures to measure successes.
- Create public-private partnerships to foster home ownership.
- Seek local, State, and Federal money to assist first time homebuyers.
- Develop programs to educate the public about housing assistance programs.
- Create programs to encourage home ownership.
- Develop standards for new multi-family developments to ensure that such developments are in harmony with existing, surrounding development.

15. Community Appearance (CA) Action Items:

- Seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for projects as necessary.
- Continue using a mission oriented appearance commission with the Zoning Administrator as facilitator.

16. Growth Management, Smart Growth, and Sustainable Development (GM) Action Items:

- Upgrade geographic information system hardware and software.
- Seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for projects as necessary.
- Study amendments to the zoning ordinance with respect to lot widths and setback requirements, erosion and sedimentation control, and the allowance of administrative review options.
- Establish level of service standards and criteria for infrastructure systems.
- Develop location, density, and intensity criteria for new and existing development and redevelopment, including public facilities and infrastructure, so that they can better avoid or withstand natural hazards.
- Develop and implement a compatibility review checklist to use in determining if a development or project is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
- Develop and implement zoning regulations to allow for and regulate artisan and craftsman activities in areas appropriate for such uses.
- Extend the Town's extraterritorial (planning) jurisdiction (ETJ) limits on the north and northwest sides of Town as the NC Highway 125 Bypass project is completed.
- Work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NC Forest Service to identify and target priority conservation areas for permanent protection utilizing techniques such as direct acquisition, conservation easements, and transfer of development rights.
- Publish articles in newspapers with local circulation on caring for environmentally sensitive areas.
- Develop and disseminate information to the public as to the effect of continuous inundation of the Roanoke River wetlands.

- Study, and adopt as necessary, revisions to the Williamston Town Code to make it consistent with smart growth principles.
- Submit the Town comprehensive plan update for approval by Audubon International and earn the Audubon Planning Award (signifying completion of Stage II of the Audubon Sustainable Communities Program).
- Enforce, and amend as necessary, land use ordinances to steer development and land uses in such a way as to protect priority conservation areas and to foster compact residential development focused around the downtown and transportation nodes.

17. Redevelopment (RE) Action Items:

- Study amendments to the zoning ordinance to address redevelopment issues such as protecting the character and appearance of areas where redevelopment is proposed, promoting sustainability, protecting the natural environment, and eliminating non-conformities where practicable.
- Seek Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for projects as necessary.

18. Population Growth (PG) Action Items:

- Work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop a population recruitment program and to incorporate recruitment strategies into economic development promotional efforts.
- Work with appropriate agencies to expand services and opportunities to attract young married couples with children to the Town.

19. Town Management and Administration (TM) Action Items:

- Prepare pay plan classifications and updated job descriptions plan.
- Complete building and facility upgrades as necessary
- Update, as necessary, the capital improvements plan (CIP).
- Adopt a vehicle replacement policy.
- Develop a personnel contingency plan.
- Conduct an annual retreat to review and update long-range plans and discuss existing and emerging trends and issues.
- Develop a long-range plan for the cemetery relative to usage, benefits, and perpetual care.
- Conduct an annual review of the Town's accomplishments, document the implementation of objectives, strategies, policies, and practices, and measure sustainability indicators, comparing them to established targets and timelines.
- Publicize the environmental practices implemented by the Town, documenting the Town's "green" projects.
- Provide training regarding sustainability to Town employees in their respective areas of service.
- Pursue private and public funding to expand the delivery of services.
- Regularly review and evaluate the implementations of long range plans and communicate the progress made to the community.

Workshops and Meetings and Sources Consulted are listed at the end of the comprehensive plan update.