

**Town of Garner  
Council Retreat Minutes  
February 8-9, 2017**

Facilitator: Crystal Morphis, Creative Economic Development Consulting, LLC

Present: Mayor Ronnie Williams, Mayor Pro Tem Kathy Behringer, Council Member Jackie Johns, Council Member Buck Kennedy, Council Member Ken Marshburn, Council Member Gra Singleton

Staff Present: Rodney Dickerson-Town Manager, John Hodges-Asst. Town Manager-Development Services, Matt Roylance-Asst. Town Manager-Operations, William E. Anderson-Town Attorney, David Bamford-Senior Planner, Tony Beasley-Inspections Director, Sam Bridges-Town Lobbyist, Tony Chalk-Town Engineer, Michael Gammon-Budget & Special Projects Manager, Mari Howe-Downtown Development Manager, Forrest Jones-Public Works Director, Rick Mercier-Communications Manager, Matthew Poole-Fire Chief, BD Sechler-Human Resources Director, Joseph Stallings-Economic Development Director, Pam Wortham-Finance Director, Brandon Zuidema-Police Chief, Elmo Vance-GEDC, Rebecca Schlichter-Deputy Town Clerk, Stella Gibson-Town Clerk.

**Day 1 - February 8, 2017**

Mayor Pro Tem Behringer called the Retreat to order and Mr. Dickerson provided opening remarks.

Mr. Hodges stated updates to the Strategic Plan Accomplishments will be provided on a quarterly basis moving forward and provided the following highlights:

- Increased Fire Department staff
- Use of social media, video, print, other tools to reach 140,000 people monthly
- Public Facilities Repair and Maintenance process (similar to VERT)
- Engaging a firm to analyze storm water infrastructure for future maintenance issues
- Updates to the CIP plan and process, possibly using it more as a long-term planning tool; include a scoring process for adding things in the future
- Looking at funding for future needs from our various partners – ex. CAMPO (as an example, CAMPO is looking at funding a sidewalk project to connect Stowe Place to Blanton Dr. on a 80/20 match)
- Also looking to tie our projects to potential funding sources for future projects
- Working with GRA and the Chamber of Commerce to tie their funding requests to our strategic plan
- Worked with GVFR on staffing issues which had a positive impact in terms of new ISO rating
- Collaboration with City of Raleigh Utilities for maximum partner benefit / long-range planning
- Doing a thorough review of fee schedule to come to market in some areas, better provide services to citizens/businesses
- Reduced highway beautification costs on Highway 70 by 50% through contract re-negotiation
- Use of career ladder program in appropriate departments for recruitment and retention
- Police Department implementation of Internal Leadership Academy
- Roll out of new Town website and a new Downtown Garner website

- First phase of Development Services software project completed using an internally developed program; using tablets in the field with remote printing for immediate response
- PAFR completed and distributed
- Departments working with Town's strategic plan to direct/guide work and budget efforts
- Wake County Commissioners approved expansion of the Town's ETJ
- Communications staff developed a video for the Garner Forward initiative; video won a statewide award and helped with getting more online survey participants
- Working with DOT on issues including Highway 50 bridge project and other issues around Town
- GRA had 35 citizens participate in a planning session for Downtown Garner
- GRA assisted three business owners in purchasing/renovating properties in the downtown area
- Produced videos about downtown businesses and economic development sites
- Police Department was selected to work with Duke University on a project to increase community engagement
- The Inspections Department added additional staff to expedite processes
- A Garner 101 daytime class was added to allow another segment of the community to participate
- Downtown Garner has 145,000 followers through social media
- 55% increase in website use/viewing since the re-launch
- Police Department conducting outreach to underserved populations
- Downtown Garner launch of "pop-up market" events and movie nights
- Increased programming for seniors – more than 100 monthly programs; 3,000 meals served daily through Meals on Wheels
- Collaborated with New Rand Road and Rebuilding Together of the Triangle
- Preparing to begin work on updating the Parks & Rec Master Plan – to follow the Garner Forward initiative

## **2017 Financial Outlook**

Presenter: Michael Gammon, Budget & Special Projects Manager

Mr. Gammon provided the following updates:

## **2016 Economic Performance**

### Unemployment Rate

- US: 4.7% (4.9% to start 2016; 10% Recession High)
- NC: 5.0% (5.6% to start 2016; 11.3% Recession High)
- Wake County: 4.0% (4.6% to start 2016; 8.4% Recession High)
- Garner: 3.9% (4.2% to start 2016; 8.7% Recession High)

### Labor Force

- US: 1.27 million workers added since December 2015 (.81%)
- NC: 82,941 workers added since December 2015 (2.5%)
- Wake County: 17,219 workers added since December 2015 (3.2%)
- Garner: 550 workers added since December 2015 (3.5%)

### Nationwide Construction Spending (Jan 2017)

- Total 2016 spending increased by \$46.6 billion (4.1%) over 2015
- Residential: 2016 spending increased by \$13.5 billion (3%)
- Non-Residential: 2016 spending increased \$39.2 billion (4.6%)

- Public Sector: 2016 spending increased \$7.5 billion (2.6%)

**Garner Building Activity**

- Total permits decreased by 218 permits (-16.1%)
- Main contributing factor was the drop off in mechanical permits (Deer Harbor Apartments); several categories have increased
- Total construction value added increase \$9.1 million (14.3%)

**Nationwide Home Sales**

- New home sales increased 12.7%; Existing home sales increased 15.4%
- Median price of new homes increased 5.7%; Median price of existing home sales increased 6.8%
- Wake County Home Sales
  - 21,383 homes sold (14.5% increase from 2015)
  - Average price of \$296,134 (4.6% increase from 2015)
- Garner Home Sales
  - 448 homes sold (4.2% increase from 2015)
  - Average price of \$201,595 (2.9% increase from 2015)

**General NC Economic Outlook**

Dr. Michael Walden, NCSU

- National Economic Growth Rate will accelerate in 2017 from Federal Economic Stimulus and/or Reduced Tax Rates
- Both the Inflation Rates and Interest Rates will be higher in 2017
- North Carolina’s Aggregate Economic Measures will also trend higher in 2017, with 100,000 new payroll jobs added
- North Carolina’s Aggregate Growth will exceed the National Aggregate Growth in 2017
- Expect to see Unemployment Rates of under 4% in Raleigh, Durham, and Asheville; However, rates will still be above 5% in Goldsboro, Fayetteville, and Rocky Mount
- Fastest Job Growth still expected to continue in the more urbanized areas of the state.
- North Carolina could benefit from new Presidential Administration’s policies on Military and Energy

**Assessed Property Values**

	FY 16-17 Budget	FY 16-17 Projected	FY 17-18 Projected
Real Property	\$2,730,000,000	\$2,732,009,205	\$2,777,000,000
Personal	\$180,000,000	\$179,065,109	\$179,000,000
Public Service	\$114,000,000	\$118,064,138	\$118,100,000
Vehicles	\$246,375,000	\$257,049,360	\$265,049,360
Est. Appeal Loss	-\$20,000,000	-\$18,403,756	-\$6,572,770
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,250,375,000</b>	<b>\$3,267,784,056</b>	<b>\$3,332,576,590</b>

- The difference between FY 16-17 budget and final FY 16-17 projected valuation is an increase of .54% (equivalent to \$91,137)
- The difference between the FY 16-17 budget and next fiscal years projected FY 17-18 valuation is an increase of 2.53% (equivalent to \$430,326)
- One penny on the tax rate in FY 2017-18 is currently expected to generate \$333,258

**Development Related Fees**

#### Water/Sewer Capacity & Acreage Fees

- Currently (through end of January), -81.01% lower than where the Town was YTD the previous year.
- When controlling for the Deer Harbor Apartments (Greenfield) project, the Town is 4.2% higher than where it was YTD the previous year.

#### Building Permit Fees

- Currently (through end of January), -22.79% lower than where the Town was YTD the previous year.
- When controlling for the Deer Harbor Apartments project, the Town is 13.2% higher than where it was YTD the previous year.
- Future McCullers Walk Phase I revenues are not built into this projection.

#### Other Taxes and Fees

##### Sales Tax – July 2016 through October 2016

- Fiscal Year to Date is 7.57% higher than the previous fiscal year.
- Last 12 Months of Collections are 8.07% higher than the previous 12 month period.
- FY 2015-16 performance over the final four months is affecting the FY 2016-17 sales tax projections. Also, each year's projections are heavily dependent on performance during November & December (which we have not received yet).
- Receive estimates of growth from NCLM, General Assembly's Fiscal Research Division in late March.

##### Motor Vehicle License Fees

- Wake County projects the Town's revenue from this source to finish \$5,388 (1.5%) higher than the previous year.
- Advised of a possible drop in this revenue last budget cycle, but Garner registrations have increased.

#### Intergovernmental Revenues

##### Unrestricted

- Beer & Wine Tax should be similar to prior years
- Utility Franchise Fees should be similar to prior years. Current year collections are very early in the distribution cycle, right now they are projected to be under budget for FY 2016-17, but that is based off of one of four distributions received.
- Video Programming fees will continue to dwindle as customers "cut the cord". Expected to finish slightly better than budget.

##### Restricted

- Build America Bond Reimbursement goes down as debt decreases
- PEG Channel Allocation should be similar
- Powell Bill collections will exceed budget
- GHSP DWI Officer grant and SRO reimbursement from school system

#### Sales & Service Fees/Investments

##### Recreation Fees And Facility Rentals

- Revenues from recreation fees and facility rentals have had a strong increase over the previous year. Expected to finish strong for the remainder of the year.
- Reversed a multi-year trend of declining revenues from these sources.
- Traditionally, recreation and facility rental revenues are strongest during the Spring and Summer months. Some of the strongest revenue growth could be ahead of us.

## Early (very early) Revenue Picture

	FY 15-16 Actual	FY 16-17 Budget	FY 17-17 Estimated	FY 17-18 Projected
Property Tax	\$16,724,254	\$17,231,362	\$17,183,224	\$17,465,196
Permits & Fees	\$3,338,914	\$1,994,760	\$1,770,128	\$1,823,232
Other Taxes	\$5,853,116	\$5,880,800	\$6,423,106	\$6,615,799
Intergovernmental	\$3,138,182	\$3,343,598	\$3,194,188	\$3,238,907
Service Fees	\$474,952	\$448,417	\$512,289	\$532,781
Investments	\$78,955	\$100,000	100,000	100,000
Totals	\$29,608,373	\$28,998,937	\$29,182,935	\$29,775,915

## Garner Forward Briefing

Presenter: Scott Lane, Stantec Consulting Services

Mr. Lane provided an update of the Garner Forward Comprehensive Growth and Transportation plan since the project started last year along with the next and upcoming tasks.

- What does the “Big Picture – National and Garner Trends” mean for Garner”
- National context of growth – national growth historically came from 35-64 year old range; now we are seeing much more growth from Baby Boomers – now the 65 and older growth
- “Density builds Main Streets” slide
- Home ownership is down significantly from 2006 – down especially among 20-39 year olds; the younger you get, the less home ownership
- In RTP – significant interest in making trade-offs for walkability, park proximity & access, and nicer finishes (but less size); there is a priority on creating locations with “value”
  - Example shown from Pendleton Tract in Clemson, SC
- Traditional / Historical growth model – focused on suburban; now a new growth model favoring walkable urban areas.
- Major generational shifts in residential market trends
  - Boomers are aging out of conventional single-family; want lower maintenance
- Garner has 23% under 34; 25% age 55+ (highest pct in Wake County)
- Garner has 34% with bachelors or higher (lowest in Wake County) – ½ of Apex or Cary
- Garner has 34% families with children – among lowest in Wake County
- Garner has only 12% of homes valued at \$300K; very low in Wake County (50% in Cary, 37% in Apex)
- Residential trends in tenure by income 2010 vs 2015 – Garner shows higher home ownership increase vs Wake County overall in lower household income; all told 47% of homes in Wake County are owner-occupied while 30% of homes in Garner are owner-occupied
- What would increase interest in living in RTP?
  - Less need to drive
  - Variety of retail and dining
- Amenity issues in RTP:
  - Single family home on an average or large size lot still very attractive
  - Other amenities gaining interest – patio homes, smaller lot, individual garage, etc.
- New homes sale by prices
  - We are behind Wake Co for Townhome sales

- We are ahead of Wake Co for single family home sales
- Seeing more people interested in living / working without a vehicle (car ownership decreased from 73% in 2007 to 66% in 2011)
- Boomers now transitioning to empty nesters wanting lower maintenance, rentals, patio homes / townhomes, some interest in age-restricted neighborhoods (some interests similar to millennials – ex smaller homes)
- Ken – why compare us to Wake Co as opposed to other municipalities? Scott – somewhat due to ease of data use; other data is available
- Residential market trends for rental multi-family – “Active Adult” communities or “OPAL” – Older Person Active Lifestyle; seeing increased desire among several groups
- Summary for Residential Market:
  - Garner has performed relatively well
  - Demographics are more moderate in Garner than those of other towns (tempers home prices)
  - Large boomer population will need housing choices in the coming decade
  - Market increasingly wants mixed-use, walkable environment

#### Office Market Trends

- Recovering nationally; seeing growth in urban cores in most markets
- Old model – office goes where boss wants to live; new model – officer goes where employees want
- Need for creative office spaces – open work space
- Co-working opportunities increasing
- Millennials want more public transportation / less roads and highways; want to have communities where you don’t have to drive to work or to shop; interest in mixed neighborhoods
- Market Capture – Wake has recovered from the recession
- Garner office opportunities – we lack the mixed use and walkability components right now
- Retail is shifting significantly – Internet sales now at 8% of all retail sales; growing much faster than traditional retail
- People want “experiential shopping” – mixed use, street retail, urban markets
- Vacancy rates in Garner are relatively low
- Garner has opportunities for more street-oriented/Main Street retail and more neighborhood retail (including grocery as anchor)

#### Industrial Market Trends

- National Context – toward “last-mile” and “fulfillment” centers (how does the product get actually delivered – smaller distribution points closer to your home for final delivery rather than just coming from a large regional center in another place or state)
- Opportunities exist for new opportunities based on recent trends
- Buck – please explain “last-mile” and “fulfillment”
- Garner performing relatively well in the market

#### Future trends:

- Office (traditional) – down
- Mixed Use – up
- Retail – changing
- Need to balance multi-family market demand with what Garner wants to see (i.e. many folks don’t want more apartments in Garner but the market shows the need)

Five topics/focus areas to consider; these will be the basis of the context for recommendations going forward.

1) Housing

- Attract young and old
- Use design and location to create good multi-family places
- Refocus on our centers – including Downtown and North Garner
- Anticipate a re-development surge

2) Transportation

- Use the full range of congestion management techniques
- Identify “bang-for-buck” projects and funding
- Increase the role of transit
- Prioritize and defend connectivity
- Manage I-540 as an asset
- Create great streets (start with one)
- Celebrate entry points (gateways)

3) Character

- Balance costs with revenues
- Influence design to keep within our character and improve value
- Create a healthy brand
- Partner with civic and other organizations – public and private
- Recommendations need to address schools and performance

4) Parks, Greenways, and Open Space

- Identify and invest in outdoor space
- Keep adding indoor recreational space
- Connect us internally with open space
- Connect us with regional trail network
- Explore public and private partnerships, including neighboring Towns

5) Commercial Lands

- Attract unique commercial establishments
- Align development code with our desired ends
- Support anticipated increase in office needs
- Take advantage of work-in-place trends
- Understand utility demands associated with development

Mr. Lane stated the most supported response in surveys was “Ensuring that the Town develops in a way that is cost-effective and reduces our exposure to tax increases to support expanded infrastructure.”

“Visualizing the Recommendations” – four sample sites

1) Garner Station

Longer-term proposition considering redevelopment spurred in part by future Wake County Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) promulgated by the Wake County Transit Strategies Plan (buses running in their own right-of-way for expedited travel). Encourages redevelopment focused around the bus right-of-

way and to blend with the Raleigh plans for the Saunders St. corridor. This anticipates a mix of foot and vehicular traffic. Council Member Kennedy expressed the need to determine what Council's role was in facilitating this going forward as there is a lot of need for redevelopment in this area. Council Member Singleton expressed the need to keep in mind parking decks may be needed to go along with this plan and the use of public transportation and those are expensive.

- 2) Northeast Gateway – north of ConAgra Site on Jones Sausage Road at I40  
This could be a very mixed use location for industrial and manufacturing. Not all “dirty industry”; combination of office, distribution, manufacturing, etc.  
Council Member Kennedy asked who owned the property on the northwest corner of I40 and Jones Sausage Road and Mr. Stallings responded the Town owns 15 acres and there is a family that owns about 65 acres between Hunters Mark and I40. An issue to consider will be access and water/sewer.
- 3) Auburn-Knightdale Village  
This is the area on Auburn-Knightdale Road between US70 and Garner Road. Not a preferred site, but could be related to passenger rail if that becomes a reality. Like this site as a location for folks coming east from Johnston County; dislike this site because of some existing home sites to the west and how it all blends together. To some extent it extends out to the new construction coming on Ackerman Road north of Garner Road.
- 4) Fifth Avenue  
Building on the energy of the new Police Department and Town Hall and the revitalized Library; this adds to some existing and relatively new work in the area. This plays to “experiential retail” that could be in the area.

These are not “prescriptive visions”, just “what could be” suggestions.

Council Member Kennedy asked how the Town could influence this process/make these happen and Mr. Lane responded that is the next phase of this process. We want to prioritize/narrow down options to create a realistic, visionary work plan that can actually be accomplished. May not want to wait for another 10 years to update the plan again. Need to make sure UDO and other plans / ordinances are current and not prohibitive to development.

Council Member Marshburn asked if Auburn Station was the most challenging and Mr. Lane responded that it was based on the odd shape and surrounding area.

Mr. Lane asked Council if they agreed with the proposed plans overall approach and direction? Council consensus was yes, they agreed with the approach. Mr. Lane asked Council if they agreed with the five major topics and Council consensus was yes, they agreed with the topics. Mr. Lane then asked Council if they agreed with these possibilities were realistic. Mayor Pro Tem Behringer, Council Members Marshburn, Johns, and Kennedy voted the possibilities were realistic. Mayor Williams and Council Member Singleton voted the possibilities were not realistic.

### **City of Raleigh Utilities**

Presenter: Robert Massengill, Public Utilities Director

Mr. Massengill provided the following updates:



### Rate Increases

Rate increases are being driven by the cost of replacing aging infrastructure, particularly due to a lack of improvements in the past. The City of Raleigh is trying to “catch-up” on replacing old pipes; some pipes from the 1880’s are still in service. Pipes installed in the 1950’s and 1960’s were constructed of asbestos and although it is safe to use, they do not hold-up as well as ductile iron and other types of pipe today. Improvements are going where the need is the greatest. Many in the Garner area are due for replacement. These replacements will drive rates for some time. Pipe replacement is being paid for with cash (\$50-\$60M year). Currently there is \$7 - 9B worth of pipe in the ground. When replacing the water lines, the City of Raleigh will also determine if the sewer lines need to be replaced and if needed, replace both lines at the same time.

### Bill Assistance Program

The City of Raleigh established a program which provides \$240 annually for those who qualify for bill assistance. The Town of Garner is the only municipality to partner with the City on the Bill Assistance Program and contributed \$14,000 to assist customers in Garner (funds can’t be shared between municipalities). The program was implemented in January 2017 and in the first two weeks, helped 80 customers. By the first week in February, 120 customers were helped.

### Next Water Supply

The City of Raleigh is asking Council for support on the “next water supply” project; looking ahead 15-20 years. The City thought it would be Little River; however, a number of groups have given push back regarding endangered species and wetland protection. An alternatives analysis determined twenty alternatives. The most practical, inexpensive approach is to re-allocate a portion of the water quality storage in Falls Lake to the water supply storage. The City of Raleigh needs the Town’s support with a letter of support for getting approval for this change.

### **Economic Development Program Update**

Presenter: Joseph Stallings, Economic Development Director

Mr. Stallings provided the following updates:

#### 2016

- June - BREXIT
- November — Federal elections
- Stock Market reaches all time high
- December — Fed raises interest rates 25bps

#### What to Watch in 2017

- BREXIT
- Oil prices
- Refugee issues and global instability
- Strengthening dollar impact on trade
- Trump Presidency
- More Fed rate hikes (3 hikes planned)
- Decreasing unemployment rates

HB2 repeal?

Business Attraction

- The Economic Development Department submitted proposals for attraction projects that could bring over \$564M in potential investment and 2,784 potential jobs to Garner.
- Twenty-Four Requests for Information (RFI) from potential clients between July and December 2016.
- Nearly three-quarters of RFIs received between July 1 and December 31, 2016 were seeking existing space.
- Development-ready sites put Garner in the running for significant commercial/industrial investment.

#### Late 2016 Openings and Announcements

- Strategic Behavioral Health completed \$2.2M expansion in December.
- Improved Nature's manufacturing facility is currently under renovation.
- Bella Rose Nursing Home is making progress on their expansion; expected to be up and running in 2017.
- STOCK America expected to begin operations at their new corporate headquarters in Greenfield North Park in the first quarter of 2017.
- Poole's Plumbing opened their corporate headquarters in Garner.
- Two new 10,000 square foot office buildings will be breaking ground on Timber Drive.

In the past 6 months, several projects made substantial growth in Garner:

- Gabe's and Brice's Brewing opened their doors.
- Chipotle and Famous Toastery coming to White Oak.
- New retail space under construction at Highway 70 and Timber Drive.

Like the Triangle, Garner is seeing vacancy rates decline and lease rates rise in the industrial and commercial sectors.

#### Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)

- The Economic Development Department kicked off the second year of its Business Retention & Expansion program to visit 30+ businesses in partnership with the chamber, utility representatives, and business service providers.
- Fifteen established Garner companies were surveyed in the first half of FY 16-17. Of those surveyed, 66% say their historical employment trend is increasing and 33% said it was staying the same.
- BRE visits highlighted the potential economic impact of established businesses with strong ties to Garner. Forty percent of businesses surveyed have plans for local expansion in the next 12-18 months which equals \$21M in estimated new investment of IT improvements, facility expansions, and/or equipment upgrades. This will also generate 68 new jobs to support these growing companies.
- BRE clients consistently ranked location as the #1 advantage of doing business in Garner and Wake County

Despite positive trends in sales and employment growth, BRE clients still face obstacles in the business community.

- Workforce development is a key issue as 13% said they have problems retaining employees, 33% said they have problems recruiting employees, and 87% said they have a formal workforce training program.
- The top 3 challenges according to BRE clients is economy, workforce and education and working capital.

- For the first time, the Garner Economic Development Department will be working with the Trojan Business Alliance to facilitate a career fair at the local high school. This event will help those students who are not college or military bound connect with local employers who currently have open entry level positions available for exiting high school seniors. This event is scheduled to take place in the second quarter of 2017.

#### Garner Technology Center

- The Economic Development Department submitted the Garner Technology Center Site for 25 attraction projects and conducted 13 site visits over the last two years as part of its marketing efforts.
- 97 Requests for Information from potential clients between January 2015 and December 2016.

#### Facility and Site Needs

- In 2016, 52 site selection projects came to Garner looking for up to 4.5M square feet and 1,040 acres; representing an estimated total of \$2.26B in investment and up to 6,888 new jobs.
- Companies may indicate multiple site term preferences, with leasing of existing facilities and land purchase being considered most often as space acquisition options.
- Projects in 2016 confirmed the great demand for buildings with a minimum 20'-24' of ceiling clearance. Several industries required a minimum 24' but would prefer to have up to 40' minimum clearance.

#### Downtown Development

- The Garner Revitalization Association (GRA) brought over 4,500 people to downtown Garner in late 2016 with the creation of new events and engaged 35 community members during a vision session at GRA's Annual Retreat.
- Two new event series were added to the schedule (Pop-Up Market, Outdoor Movies, Food Truck Rodeo) to create new opportunities for eating, shopping, and playing in downtown.
- In October 2016, GRA launched the newly revamped Downtown Garner website, with great new features including a flexible Wordpress platform, a mobile-responsive design, and an updated look for downtown Garner.

### **Economic Development Strategy**

Presenter: Crystal Morphis

Council was asked to give general direction to staff on overall categories and topics for staff to use to develop a work plan for this year – different from a long-term economic development strategy (that also needs to be developed as part of the strategic plan).

#### Marketing / Recruitment

Ms. Morphis stated the goal is tell your story so often that others will begin to tell it for you. If you don't tell your own story, someone will tell it for you (and you may not agree/like it).

#### Product Development

- At this time, the Town does not have a good inventory of buildings and may be missing a large percentage of those looking to move to a new community. Garner is also missing an inventory of

large shovel-ready sites beyond the ConAgra site. Not a lot has changed in last five years in that regard.

- HQ Raleigh is an example of a co-working space which is not just used by young people. By 2025, 40% to 60% of the workforce will be “free-lancers” – including young and old.
- The Town may want to identify top development sites, their status, the cost of development – Wake County has a site assessment program.
- May want to consider funding mechanisms for site development, for example: Orange County passed a ¼ cent sales tax for economic development. Majority goes to pay debt service on development costs / investment.

#### Retail Development

- Wages are a consideration with retail development in many cases – we may need to encourage mixed use to complement retail to ensure opportunities for wages above retail.
- Currently the Town has an incentive for mixed use of \$50M or more; one thing we did well was North South Station with Gabe’s and site development / preparation. Keeping an open mind to filling second generation retail is important.
- Wake County has converted shopping centers and movie theaters into schools.
- Economic Development is focused on identifying space rather than seeking tenants; property owners have realtors doing that. The Town needs to focus on policy development and need to be careful how we use our limited resources.

#### Small Business and Entrepreneurship

- Communities take a variety of approaches to encourage small businesses and entrepreneurship. Some offer financial support or incentive; others do a small business liaison approach.
- Communication and education is important for small business owners/investors.
- May want to consider a Technical Review Committee approach.

#### Residential Development

- The role of Economic Development in this area is to not to consider residential development as a core function. Assistance may be provided to developers, but the department will not actively look to involve itself.

#### Organizational Development

- May want to consider a review of resources available versus the program of work expected.
- An Economic Development Plan would help with planning and include things such as branding and other programs.

#### Other topics / discussion related to Economic Development?

- Council Member Singleton stated the Town discussed the spec building issue 20 years ago.
- Council Member Kennedy stated there are a lot of positive things going on in Garner and maybe we should just be who we are – be Garner.

#### **ConAgra Redevelopment Goals**

Presenter: Crystal Morphis

Council Member Marshburn stated he and Elmo Vance were representing GEDC on this topic.

Ms. Morphis stated it was important to re-evaluate this site because the Town does not have an abundance of shovel-ready sites in its inventory. One approach may be a phased implementation program. One strategy would be to put out an RFI for a private developer to help sell the site. They will sell it, but not necessarily to a developer you want. Another change in strategy would be to focus on three sites or to build a spec building. Some infrastructure development could also be considered.

Council Member Marshburn read the following statement – “In summary, Garner has expectations that this site will transform the local economy. Such a transformation is possible if the Town is patient and meets the expectations set out in the plan.”

Council consensus identified the number 1 priority for the site was tax base. Council Member Marshburn stated other elements are important as well. The level of wages is important as is the type of business that comes there. Council agreed that number of jobs and wages could be considered on a sliding scale if one of the main goals is greatly exceeded.

Ms. Morphis added a private developer could propose a project if the Town would do certain things to make the development easier. In some cases, a municipality might agree to carry the interest until the development sells (as an example). However, the developer’s goal is to sell, so the Town may need to have a good development agreement to control specific areas of importance.

Mr. Stallings stated some issues to consider if the site were broken up would be the sewer to the lower site (\$300K) and a possible road cut. The importance of the sewer extension is based on someone wanting the lower site. This expansion also opens up the property on the other side of Jones Sausage Road to have sewer available. Another issue to consider is bringing development and employees to Jones Sausage Road which will require significant road improvements.

Ms. Morphis stated a summary and proposed action steps will be provided after the Retreat.

Ms. Morphis added another item to consider is whether the leadership represents the constituency and the need to consider a commitment to actively recruit the next generation of leaders.

Day 2 – February 9, 2017

### **CAMPO Southeast Area Study Briefing**

Presenter: Alex Ricard and Paul Black

#### MPO Core Functions:

- Establish a fair and impartial setting (No one agency or locality can make decisions)
- Evaluate transportation alternatives
- Maintain a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
  - Must cover 20+ years (usually 25-30 years) – updated every 4 years
  - MTP costs and revenues must balance (fiscally constrained)
  - Currently working on 2045 MTP – to be adopted summer/fall 2017
- Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
  - STIP – Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

- TIP is 5-10 year program
- Involve the public – residents and key affected sub-groups
- CTP – Comprehensive Transportation Plan – goes out 40+ years (the vision)

CAMPO includes portions of Harnett, Johnston, Granville, Franklin Counties along with Wake County; this is re-evaluated with the 10 year census. Towns can also request membership in the MPO.

CAMPO is “one member – one vote” unless a member calls for a weighted vote; in that case, it becomes a weighted vote based on population. For CAMPO, two of the “big three” (Wake Co, Raleigh, Cary) have to agree to have it pass. Weighted voting has never been used in CAMPO’s history.

#### MTP

- Current plan is the 2040 plan
- Hot Spots (included in annual call for projects) – small feasibility studies without a clear recommendation
- Corridor Plans – similar to hot spots but over a longer distance
- Small Area Plans – ex. include the Southwest Area Study, Northeast Area Study, Southeast Area Study (needed because these smaller issues can’t get addressed in the bigger CAMPO discussions) – these are essentially “mini-MTPs”

#### Hot Spots in Garner

- Swift Creek Area Network Study (2012)
  - Gorman St extension analysis
- NC 540 Grade Separation and Interchange Assessment (2013)
- US 401 Intersection Analysis (2013) – Ten Ten Road, Hilltop Needmore Road

#### Current TIP Projects in Garner Area (dates are start date)

- NC 540 from 401 to 40 – in the 2020 plan (to be open no later than 2025)
  - The final leg from 40 to 64 is delayed subject to a “corridor cap” that limits funding spent in a given area in a certain timeframe (currently in 2027)
- US 401 widening from Ten-Ten to 540 – in the 2019 plan
- I40 widening from 440 to 42 (2019 – but could be delayed) – this includes the 40/42 intersection
- I40 widening from 440/1 to Lake Wheeler – 2020 / 2022
- US 70 Business / Timber Dr interchange – 2020 (right-of-way) / 2022 (construction begins) – design has not begun yet, but likely 70 going over Timber with no stop light
- US 401 4-lane Superstreet from Legend to Purser - 2020

Chief Zuidema asked about pedestrian safety to cross 401 between Mechanical/Purser and the response was that there is the possibility to do more “emergency” funding for this type of issue.

#### Strategic Prioritization Process

- Strategic Transportation Investments (STI)
- 3 funding pots (total of \$15B for FY 2016-2025)
  - Statewide mobility – mostly statewide/interstates (this includes the “corridor cap” – 40% of funds (currently \$6B)
  - Regional impact – funding based on population in the region; funds those projects not selected in statewide mobility. 30% of funds (\$4.5B)

- Division needs – local needs/projects not selected in regional impact. 30% of funds (\$4.5B)
- At regional level it depends on who/what you are competing against. Ex. Hwy. 42 in Johnston County scores high as it competes with areas to east where Hwy. 42 in Wake scores low as it competes with different projects (including 50 and 401)
- At division level – look at secondary roads like Timber Drive, Old Stage, etc. Funding is not based on population – all divisions get the same amount. Right now have \$113M to fund 10 years of programs – very insufficient for the needs, say nothing of the wants.

Maximizing Funding Potential – some projects score so well that CAMPO does not need to “add” any points to get them funded. Also have some projects that score so low they will not get funded regardless of what NCDOT or CAMPO does to try to have it score higher.

- Can “add points” to certain projects – the goal is get the project over the funding line by adding points. CAMPO has only a limited number of points to use.
- Look for projects that can be pushed over the funding line (the red line) to get them funded

STI – Region C (Garner) – we have 2,500 Regional Impact Points

- Have identified 22 potential projects that will be competitive (out of 88 CAMPO supported projects)
- There is a request for \$12.3B in projects; have \$678M to spend

STI – Division 5 (Garner) – similar concerns with far more projects than funding

CAMPO – Locally Administered Projects Program (LAPP)

Separate pot of funds from the SPOT program – between \$20M and \$25M; These funds are controlled by CAMPO board.

LAPP is an annual competitive process with submitted and scored projects that ensures the funds are spent.

LAPP committee – sub-committee of TCC (Technical Coordinating Committee)

- Separate impartial selection committee
- TCC evaluates program changes
- Executive Board approves program changes and funding

LAPP money is split up annually for “targeted investment”

- Currently 65% for roadway (\$15M), 20% for bike (\$4.6M) / pedestrian, 15% for transit
- Can be modified during the year

FY18 LAPP Funding – includes our sidewalk project at Lake Benson

- CAMPO members can submit a limited number of projects – limits vary by size of jurisdiction (ex. Garner can submit 3 per year; Raleigh can submit 5 per year)
- Roadway funding more likely to be spent on construction vs right-of-way
- LAPP funding should not be looked at as the sole source for funding a project; money has to be paid back if the project is not completed in a certain period of time. You should be committed to doing the project on your own and use the LAPP money as “bonus” money

- LAPP has a pre-set calendar / schedule each year. Each project only needs to be submitted one time regardless of the different potential funding sources from CAMPO. CAMPO will determine where to consider the project based on a single score.
  - Sept – submittal deadline
  - Oct – call for projects closes
  - Nov/Dec – project scoring
  - Jan – recommendations to CAMPO executive board

The study area is southeast area of Wake, western portion of Johnston.

This is part of the MTP process; moving toward the recommendation phase of this study.

CAMPO uses two models – land use and transportation; they impact each other through planning. CAMPO looks at land use and works to predict the transportation impact; also offer suggestions on changing land use to improve transportation. Look at current plans, dispersed plans, compact plans as to how transportation evolves through testing all three models/scenarios.

CAMPO is suggesting a change in land use toward a more compact approach in Garner, particularly around the White Oak area to avoid transportation issues/concerns.

Another example is in Archers Lodge – suggesting the way development occurs to minimize traffic impacts and concerns.

Garner Hot Spots – looking at Jones Sausage railroad interchange as well as Timber Drive.

- Recommending straightening out Jones Sausage down to 70 (at Morris Dr) and then on to Timber Dr. East; this would close the old Jones Sausage Road between the tracks and EGMMS
- Looking at extending Timber Drive East (staying south of 40) to ultimately connect back around to White Oak east of Ackerman / Hebron Church. This also includes improvements at White Oak / Ackerman / Hebron Church
- There is a recommendation for a new I40 interchange at White Oak Road – not yet funded

Transit / Transportation connection – if certain types of transit are desired, you must have a certain level of density. The density matrix is based on jobs per acre and residents per acre. If Garner wants this type of transit service, there should be a focus on increasing density in specific areas.

Mr. Rutkowski stated there was a need for guidance from our communities as to how to allocate “new” money (\$180M) coming from tolling of 540.

### **Garner Forward – Transportation Plan Preliminary Recommendations**

Presenter: Mike Rutkowski, Stantec

Mike Rutkowski stated the mission of this was to validate the “old” plan (2010) and to look at other options beyond just widening roads.

What did we hear?

- Got 1,100 completed surveys



- Did meetings

What are our guiding principles?

What are the recommendations for a multi-modal approach?

Number one issue heard back in terms of shortcomings – traffic & road capacity; third highest ranked issue was lack of pedestrian facilities.

We heard some concern with going east-west (connectivity) for vehicles and bike/pedestrian.

89% of respondents said we need to protect pedestrians from vehicles on streets; 60% agreed strongly that congestion is our top issue.

What we heard:

- Multi-modal connection within Garner to collector streets
- Focus on mobility corridors and smaller projects – spot safety
- Complete streets – close the gaps and prioritize bike/pedestrian/transit projects
- Create one great success story (pilot project)
- I-540 mainline, integrate connectivity and growth at nodes
- Bond referendum or tax

Guiding principles from what we heard:

- Use the full range of congestion management techniques available to us
- Connect us with regional trail network
- Increase the role of transit, but use technology to the fullest extent
- Prioritize and defend connectivity
- Manage I-540 as an asset; control land use in the area
- Create great streets – but start with one; we need a great example
- Celebrate entry points (gateways)

Multi-modal issues:

- Need pedestrian and greenway facilities – but not as many as suggested in the existing plan (far too many recommended)
- Want to take advantage of existing greenway facilities, connect to downtown, take advantage of Swift Creek connectivity
- Transit recommendations along 401 and 70 corridors – including park & ride and station stops and a small circulator inside Garner (moved off of Timber Drive to better access those likely to use it)
- Roadway and intersection improvements – simplified from old plan; includes a lot of “clean up” of issues (ex. no longer have five lanes on Timber Dr. with turn lane) – can be done without right-of-way purchase in many cases.
- Connectivity issues – ex. Jones Sausage extension, connecting Old Stage to 401, etc.; includes a “laneage map” – where to make improvements (ex. 10-10 Road widened and a median installed)
- Did ten different “corridor profiles” – ex. Vandora Springs Road – shows accidents, road features, speed limit, number of vehicles per day, etc. – use to make decisions and prioritize road improvements
- Pilot project recommendation – Aversboro Road (north of Timber to 70) – concept looks at Aversboro – Timber to Lakeside. Widening roadway would cost \$7-8M because of moving curb and

gutter and right-of-way costs. Recommendation is to re-purpose it to one lane in each direction with bike lanes and pockets of median – volume does not necessitate four lanes.

- Council Member Singleton stated citizens would not want us to spend money to remove pavement but improving a small section along 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue near Town Hall might work.
- Aversboro doesn't have to be the example, but you need to have a road that provides services to everyone. Look at Charlotte and Atlanta – they are building / changing to meet the needs / wants of their citizens. Getting good reinvestment of private dollars based on public dollars spent. People want better choices – want to feel safe, better options for transit. We need to change our ways – think differently. If not Aversboro, think about a “signature” road.
- Council Member Singleton stated Timber is the signature road – I agree with this approach there and cleaning it up.
- Building a multi-use path on the west side of Timber Dr. would be a good investment.
- Aversboro would be a good example because it is not expensive and would be well received.

Next steps:

- Putting together a separate document for the Comp Plan

Mr. Triezenberg stated the Town will be receiving a land use plan/model from Stantec which will go into CAMPO's model and continue to get recommendations on the transportation side based on our intended land use. Where there are any major changes, Stantec will go back and adjust any transportation recommendations if/when land use changes. The Town needs to work within CAMPO guidelines to maximize funding potential. NCDOT is also pushing Hot Spots, so this will help with funding at the Division level.

### **Street and Sidewalk Project Prioritization**

Presenter: John Hodges, Assistant Town Manager-Development Services

Mr. Hodges stated leaving the funds that were set aside for Highway 70 widening and landscaping/lighting; which is supported by CAMPO and NCDOT. Also, New Rand Road improvements will help with some Highway 70 issues. If the Town does not move forward with the Highway 70 improvements, there is a balance of \$4.1M. Council Member Singleton expressed the need to keep the street light and landscaping money from Highway 70; these are feature streets and need to be addressed (\$900K).

Council consensus to take \$3M away from widening Hwy. 70 and consider it for other projects. The next logical step is to bring back the two projects from CAMPO with additional detail and discuss in a work session as to what, if anything, we want to do with either of those. If there are other projects after that, we could consider other existing projects, including those that may come from the Transportation Plan update.

### **Wake County Commissioner John Burns**

Commissioner Burns distributed the County's 2007 Legislative Agenda and the Goals for the year.

Commissioner Burns stated there were two new Commission members this year. Wake County is working closely with WCPSS on budgeting. Commissioner Burns also stated schools were a concern for

Garner, and they are committed to a seven-year funding plan for WCPSS CIP to help municipalities better understand the process and make it more predictable. Any changes should come at the end of the seven-year plan rather than in the middle of the plan. Wake County can now only do construction bonds largely on even-numbered years to fund CIP for WCPSS.

Legislative update shows Wake Co interests, including issues relevant to Garner.

- Wake Co is seeing a growth rate of 63 new people each day.
- Growth is driving most all concerns in Wake Co.
- Very concerned with behavioral health concerns – need additional funding. The closure of Dorothea Dix is an ongoing concern. Wake Med and the jail are now getting overwhelmed; this has caused some diversion from Wake Med emergency rooms due to a lack of beds.
- Thanked Garner for supporting the transit referendum. Commissioners will be in DC this month to encourage federal funding of the plan. The plan can be funded with just the sales tax increase, but federal funds are needed to fully implement the plan.

The County's focus is on continuing to work toward stated goals and to do things that are bought in throughout the county. We want all of our projects to work similar to the Transportation Plan process and need feedback on their work.

Garner is particularly important to the County as growth is coming more toward Garner (shifting from the southwest) and they want to help Garner prepare for that growth; making sure changes outside of Garner's ETJ don't negatively influence Garner plans and goals.

Commissioner Burns reported the County is funding the Garner Magnet High School replacement.

Council Member Marshburn expressed thanks to the County for supporting Garner's ETJ expansion request. Council Member Marshburn added the Town is anxious to get investment in the Technology Site and want to make sure that the Commissioners can help support us in this regard. Commissioner Burns responded that the County had heard from two potential tenants and their Economic Development Director was also anxious to fill this site. The County takes a location neutral approach to development in Wake County. Their incentives are about projects performing before incentives are paid out. The County looks at areas of economic disadvantage and target companies for those when possible; this would be the only exception to their location-neutral approach.

Commissioner Burns added the County has matching funds approved for Garner's most recent Greenway project. They will be voting to approve the 2017 County Greenway Plan at their next meeting. The first goal is to fill any existing gaps; the second goal is to connect all the lakes and parks in the county; and the third goal is to connect us regionally. The County looks at greenways as an additional transportation system and environmental protection. Garner has a number of projects on the priority list.

### **Review Strategic Initiatives**

Presenter: Crystal Morphis, Facilitator

Ms. Morphis reviewed each of the Strategic Initiatives and asked Council if there were any concerns.

### Fiscal Responsibility

Kennedy

- Objective 4, Initiative- need to determine how to use the dollars and for what.

### Efficient and Timely Service Delivery

Kennedy

- Objective 1 - a consensus on who are the regional and community partners; includes the Wake County Commissioners, Wake County Public School System Board, City of Raleigh, DOT, CAMPO, Triangle J.

Marsburn

- Objective 1, Initiative 3 - great progress has been made with GVFR and other service partners.
- Objective 2, Initiative 1 - confirming staff was satisfied that cost recovery was on track. Mr. Dickerson stated the fee structure was being evaluated and will be presented at a future work session.

Kennedy

- Objective 4 – the Town has a changing group of customers and we need to make sure we comprehend what customers expect/demand.

### Orderly Growth

Kennedy

- Objective 1 – do we have a plan to influence/incentivize growth? Mr. Stalling stated this should be accomplished by Objective 3 when the Economic Development Plan is revised.

Behringer

- Objective 1, Initiative 2 – asked about land development in North Garner; however there are no water/sewer services in the area. The Town does not have infrastructure everywhere it is needed. Mr. Stallings stated he could provide a list of potential economic development sites that will need infrastructure investment.

Council Member Singleton stated the Town should look at public wi-fi in the parks and other Town facilities/properties. Ms. Morphis stated it was not an advantage to have wi-fi service because so many places do, however it's more of a disadvantage if you don't.

### Quality of Life

Marshburn

- Objective 3, Initiative 4 – GPAC expansion asked how the Town compares to other similar facilities; what is a reasonable expectation for activity? Mr. Dickerson responded the Town's revenue is increasing; the challenge is that GPAC is big enough for some events, but not big enough for others. We also face challenges in setting ticket prices vs attendance.

Kennedy

- Objective 1 – Need to review the Town's ordinances/regulations relating to "organized junk", etc. to improve the general appearance in Town.

Behringer

- Objective 4 – The Town does a good job with this; however, there is interest in more of an arts emphasis in the downtown area.

Johns

Objective 3, Initiative 2 – Felt there was always room for improvement in providing services for aging population.

### **Thoughts to Carry Forward**

Kennedy – Stated he felt this discussion elevated the Town’s “end game” moving forward.

Marshburn – Stated this was a good reminder of our need to maintain contact with our partners such as the Wake Co Commissioners. This is worthy of a concerted effort to cultivate relationships.

Behringer – Stated we need to make sure we have different generations on our various committees. We need to be purposeful about engaging all different groups in our community. We need to develop our future leaders with interest in what we are doing so they can carry it on. “They are tomorrow.” We have talked about succession planning, but have never had a plan to do it.

### **To Do List**

- Look at Garner through the social media lens to better understand how the Town is viewed by others.
- Doing an awareness campaign – branding for the Town/community.
- Review water/sewer policy changes – it was mentioned that we need to review how the last year of change has been.
- Possible need to discuss how the Town structures current staff and/or adding new staff as a result of work from CAMPO.
- Legislative agenda of CAMPO, Wake County, and Garner should be aligned for greater effectiveness.

### **Staff Comments**

Matthew Poole - a lot of conversations were based on Baby Boomers and Millennials, but I don’t fit either category. There is a lot of “me” in Garner – we discussed figuring out who we are. My emphasis is don’t overlook all aspects of the population – don’t forget Gen X.

Tony Beasley – couple of overall perspectives. We need to look at continued proactive enforcement for code enforcement; we think we understand your expectations for this, but want to make sure Council understands the more proactive we are, the more resources we need. As an example, we are taking on new ETJ on March 17 and we are evaluating those impacts now. We need to make sure we can provide the services you want us to provide.

Mari Howe – I ask for open-mindedness as we bring new ideas and tools to the table – ex. TIF – particularly for Downtown. We need some additional tools to be able to grow; need to look at co-working facilities.

Stallings - thank you Council and GEDC – great joint session and appreciate the opportunity to talk and get feedback. Goal is to be better each year than the previous year and will continue to work on that. It's going to change the way we look and who we are.

Forrest Jones – thank you for the time for this dialogue and feedback.

Brandon Zuidema – keep in mind that we are now coming into growth for the first time in my seven years. Need to consider if we want to maintain services and add resources or cut back in some area.

Rick Mercier – we need to continue to get more/good information and feedback for enhancing our engagement with the community. We need to talk more about who we are and who we want to be – will need to address branding.

Michael Gammon – we have looked at a lot of different priorities; ex. CAMPO chart of showing the needs vs. the resources. We need to focus on a true CIP process that looks at needed expenses and revenues and the timeframes we want to have things happen in. We have a lot of bond expenditures to continue / complete. It all fits together with the bigger CIP process – using VERT and the facilities process to address growth pressures while still maintaining what we already have.

Pam Wortham – we have had so many ideas the last two days; we have needs and capacity/resources to allow us to pursue opportunities. Encourage you to continue to look at where do we want to go as a community – we can still be even better than we are. Who do we want to attract? Think about what we strategically want Garner to look like.

Jeff Triezenberg – thank you for your involvement in this process. We will have more than just a planning tool – it should influence all aspects/departments of the Town. I was encouraged that this was educational and helpful. Next few months are critical in terms of the new Comp Plan – will be a lot of attention to detail in that process.

BD Sechler – challenges of staff retention and recruitment are significant; need to be done to allow the Town to continue to move forward. Appreciate the Council support – going back to health care last year. From a labor standpoint, we do well in reviewing salary to assist with recruitment and retention. We are not seeing a large turnover (voluntary) in general and that is a credit to the ongoing work we do. Look forward to finding creative ways to maintain a good culture.

Matt Roylance – I've been very impressed; glad to have this serve as a good overview for me.

John Hodges – thank you to Council for willingness to have staff bring a variety of topics to them, to include focusing on longer-range initiatives. It is paying off in terms of what we are doing and will do going forward. Thank you to staff for this meeting and for the prep work.

Rodney Dickerson – we have a lot of talent and knowledge – sometimes my job is to step back and let staff do their work as they know it best. We appreciate you (Council) allowing us to use our talents to improve Garner. We all want Garner to be the best it can be.

## **Next Steps from the Retreat**

Mr. Dickerson reported the staff retreat will occur in March where tasks will be added and some of this discussion will become a part of the budget process. We will be following up with Council over the next six months. We also have some long-range issues. We also want to discuss the possibility of the Council retreat in the fall prior to starting the budget process rather than in February. We will need Council feedback on that. Council consensus this may occur the first week of December.

## **Final Comments**

Marshburn - people describe bureaucracies different ways; I look at it as a positive means of governing. My point is we have good continuity in this Town to where we have not had any impact in service as changes have occurred with staff and others. We as elected officials aren't doing the day-to-day work and appreciate the work of our staff. It is a testament to staff how they weather through changes.

Johns - appreciate what the staff does and what they do. Talked to a woman recently who was very happy in how she was treated at Town Hall. I've had people asking about what we will do with Con-Agra. We see that most people leaving Garner are retiring. We have development coming with 540 and the Recreation Center. Keep on doing a good job for us.

Singleton - when I first ran in 1993, Garner did not have a good reputation; we had contentious meetings and issues with water rates and other things. We talk about who we are now; we were not making good plans and decisions. We started doing better over time and we have come a long way. We have good staff who works hard; we work well with partners in the area. We have room for improvement, but have come a long way in twenty years. Our retreats have also come a long way. We may never know who we are, but we continue to progress and grow.

Behringer - I joined local government in 1989 in Raleigh after Walnut Creek Amphitheater was built next to my house. I was shocked how the community was not involved and how that process worked. In Garner, I joined a community watch group and it grew from there. I appreciate how we treat people in Garner and how we try to find solutions. I appreciate our staff and our small-town atmosphere. Thank you for the collective effort.

Kennedy - in terms of growth versus other areas, we are growing at a reasonable rate. My first planning retreat (2004) we asked ourselves about the #1 concern and I offered the idea of improving our image – it came in last in a vote. We've made progress since then. The outcomes we are seeing result from the good preparation done in advance; this is the furthest in advance we have ever had information and it was solid and let us prepare and raise questions. It is fulfilling to know we do things in a purposeful and efficient manner. I sleep well and have a good feeling knowing we are making good decisions and doing good work. Thank you for helping me consider this a successful planning retreat – this is the highlight of my year.

## **Council feedback on Retreat Structure:**

Kennedy - topics were narrowly aligned and related and it was appropriate.

Behringer – would like to get the supplemental materials sooner.

Marshburn - we are accustomed to this format and external folks coming in. I thought it was appropriate and we kept moving.

**Adjournment:** 3:04 p.m.