

Managing Growth and Development

Goal: *Manage growth and development to reduce sprawl, create a more compact and balanced urban development pattern and preserve open space and rural character.*

The predominant pattern of development in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County over the last fifty years has been suburban sprawl – auto-dependent, single use, discontinuous new development at the urban fringe. As a small urban county with an increasingly limited supply of raw land for development, we will not be able to sustain this sprawl development pattern indefinitely. And we may not be able to afford to support the infrastructure it requires. We must find a new development model, one that will allow us to grow smarter and maintain our economic vitality and quality of life for the next generation and beyond.

We can grow smarter by creating more compact and efficient development patterns that accommodate growth, maintain environmental quality

and enhance economic competitiveness. Using this approach means utilizing land at the suburban fringe more efficiently and at density levels that will not promote further sprawl. We can grow while protecting our environment by directing where this growth occurs and developing design modifications that minimize new development's impact on our sensitive areas and valuable open spaces.

We can have smart growth if we make more efficient use of land that has already been developed, encouraging reuse and infill and capitalizing on other development opportunities. Older urban and suburban neighborhoods should be reinforced as good places to live and do business. We need to develop policies and incentives to attract housing and businesses to these older areas. We need to revitalize and concentrate development in our downtowns and existing commercial areas, maximizing the density in these areas rather than promoting growth out at the suburban fringe.

