

Regional Planning and Development

Goal: *Effective collaboration among communities of the Piedmont Triad Region in managing regional growth and development to ensure a high quality of life for the region's residents.*

Forsyth County is part of the larger urbanizing Piedmont Triad Region. With an estimated 1997 population of over 1.4 million people, the twelve counties that make up this region are increasingly bound together by common economic, political and social ties.

The economic linkages in the Triad are indicated by the significant numbers of people commuting across county lines to their jobs every day. The 1990 census showed that 13,320 persons commute to work from Forsyth to Guilford County every day. They pass 5,407 persons commuting in the opposite direction from Guilford to Forsyth County.

Our increasing economic interdependence means that planning for transportation systems, provision of sewer and water, and open space needs to take place within a regional context. We have, therefore, envisioned a future in which we are active participants in regional initiatives aimed at fostering appropriate growth and development in the Triad Region.

Key Recommendations

Regional Identity

- Use education and the media to increase awareness of regional issues and build a strong regional identity.

Regional Transportation

- Support the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation in planning for and coordinating regional public transportation planning, including rail, in the Triad.

Development Patterns

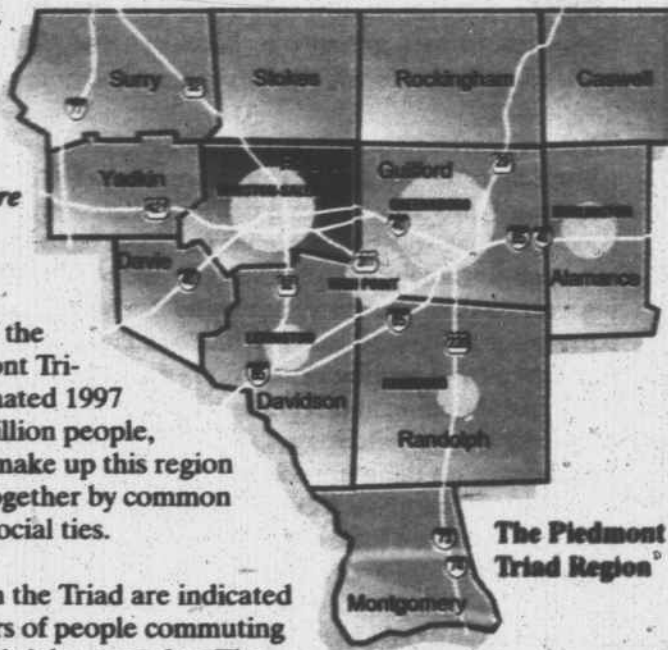
- Prepare and implement a regional plan which would identify preferred land use patterns along intercity transportation corridors.

Economic Development

- Increase the recognition of the region as a global business center by developing programs to promote the region nationally and internationally.

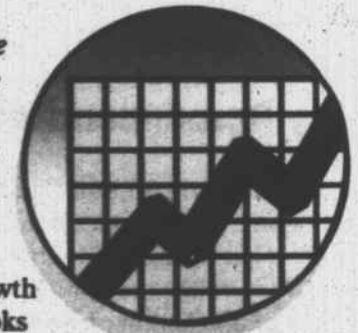
Open Space and Recreation

- Continue to fund development of the regional Triad Park and develop a regional greenway plan for trails linking the Triad Park with Winston-Salem, Kernersville, Greensboro and High Point.
- Work with the Piedmont Land Conservancy, whose mission is to preserve natural and scenic lands in the Piedmont, to protect areas of regional significance.



Economic Vitality

Goal: *Attract environmentally sensitive new businesses and expand existing large and small businesses to provide a broad range of employment opportunities and a high quality of life for people living and working in Forsyth County.*



The potential for continued economic growth in Winston-Salem and Forsyth County looks bright. Strategically, our community benefits from a central location within the burgeoning "Piedmont Crescent" of North Carolina. This mega-region of over 3.5 million people, includes not only the Piedmont Triad, but also the Charlotte and Triangle metropolitan areas. With a desirable climate and good transportation links both within and outside the region, the Piedmont Crescent appears destined for continued economic success. However positive the economic future may be for the region as a whole, Winston-Salem and Forsyth County must still compete to share in the region's economic strength. Just as businesses must compete with each other for market share, whole communities must now compete more aggressively with other communities for quality jobs and economic stability.

While good development sites with supporting infrastructure such as roads, water, and sewer are vital for economic growth, communities must also offer a quality living environment to remain competitive in today's business climate. Especially, in the context of a growing high tech and service economy, quality employers must offer their employees a desirable place to live and work, in addition to good salaries, if they are to attract and retain highly educated and skilled workers. To a large extent, excellent educational opportunities, safe and attractive neighborhoods, and clean natural environments have become part of the competitive formula for a community's economic success.

Key Recommendations

Sustainable Development

- Seek and use EPA grants to identify, cleanup and rejuvenate "brownfield" sites.
- Forge new public, private, and nonprofit alliances and develop local incentives to encourage business reinvestment in "brownfield" sites.
- Identify and create development-ready "greenfield" industrial sites.

Economic Diversification

- Promote public-private partnerships, including the selective use of local incentives which facilitate the growth of capital investment and high paying jobs.

Educated Work Force

- Promote community initiatives to improve the quality of primary and secondary schools in Forsyth County.
- Support Forsyth Technical Community College and other institutions of higher learning to meet the challenges of providing a well trained and highly educated work force.

