

# ***Kernersville 2020***

**Quadrennial Report  
2013**

## **Kernersville 2020 – Quadrennial Report (2012)**

“Kernersville 2020” was initiated by the Economic Development Advisory Council of the Kernersville Chamber of Commerce in 1996. The process was completed and initial goals were established in 1997. The initial Kernersville 2020 document identified twenty-seven (27) major issues and developed 104 strategies to address these issues. The plan was reviewed and updated in 1999, 2001, 2004 and 2008.

The development that we experienced between 2004 and 2008 was described in the 2008 update as perhaps “the most significant amount of development that has ever occurred in Kernersville in any four-year period of time in our history.” The 2008 update pared down to eighteen (18) the number of major issues to be addressed.

While the 2008 update acknowledged the beginning of a slight downward trend in the economy, no one could forecast the dramatic slowdown in the regional, state and national economies that we experienced between 2008 and 2012. While the 2004-2008 period has been characterized as probably the most significant growth period in our community’s history, the 2008-2012 period could very well be the worst four-year period on the national level in the past eighty (80) years. Kernersville, however, fared much better than most communities.

Although we witnessed the closing of the Dell facility, we were encouraged by the opening of the Caterpillar plant. Deere-Hitachi continued their expansion in Kernersville. FedEx Ground and Kernersville Medical Center opened their doors creating hundreds of new jobs for our area. These developments were tempered, however, by the slow down in the residential, commercial and office segments of the economy.

Many of the remaining issues identified by Kernersville 2020 will require significant public investment and we recognize the challenge this presents when faced with a stagnant economy, no real growth in the tax base and an increased cost of providing services. While there is still work to be done, significant progress has been in the following areas:

### **Triad Business Park (FedEx Ground) and Medical Business Park (Kernersville Medical Center):**

Both are established. Both will grow as the economy recovers. Both have some challenges related to road construction and stream crossings but the parks should become the catalysts for exponential economic growth in the area. Kernersville Medical Center has already announced plans for a medical office building and we are cautiously optimistic that the VA Clinic will conclude its due diligence and announce their decision to locate in Kernersville.

**Historic Downtown Kernersville and Tourism Efforts:** Korner’s Folly, Ciener Botanical Garden, Chamber of Commerce, KDPDC, Kernersville Historical Preservation Society, Community Appearance Commission, civic clubs and private individuals continue to do a good job in these areas. Two items mentioned in 2008 were for a Farmers Market downtown and a restaurant in The Factory. The Farmers Market opened in 2010 and a restaurant is scheduled to open in The Factory in the spring of 2012. Improvements to North Main Street will continue to pay dividends by attracting additional investments in the downtown area. We would like to see a similar focus on North Cherry Street as well as continued implementation of the recommendations of the Downtown Task Force.

**Recycling and Solid Waste Disposal:** Town of Kernersville continues to address these issues. We recognize that this is an ongoing effort and do not think that it is necessary to continue commenting in this report. Significant progress has been made since these issues were identified in the original Kernersville 2020 document.

As the primary focus of the 2012 update of Kernersville 2020, we would like to concentrate on two areas:

Public Facilities: Public Library, Civic Center, Parks and Recreation

Transportation Issues: Highways, Mass Transit, Sidewalks and Greenways

The primary remaining issues, most of which were identified when this process began fourteen years ago, involve significant public investments in infrastructure. In some cases, an investment by the Town can be leveraged to secure funds from other sources to accomplish these initiatives. In some cases, it might be necessary for the Town to consider a bond referendum to give the citizens of Kernersville an opportunity to express their opinion concerning the worthiness of these projects:

### **Public Facilities**

**Public Library** – Bond referendum was approved by the voters that allocated \$6,000,000 for a library in Kernersville. Our target date for opening the library in Kernersville should be no later than 2016. This will require convincing the Forsyth County Commissioners to move forward with this project.

**Civic Center** – The 2008 update suggested a multi-purpose facility be constructed by 2014. This is another project that might require a local bond referendum. This could possibly be a joint venture with the Little Theatre to provide a facility that could accommodate their needs but also include meeting space for large community events such as trade shows, dance recitals and banquets that would accommodate seating for five hundred (500) or more.

**Parks and Recreation** – Continued development of Beeson Park provides not only recreational opportunities for Kernersville residents but also serves an economic benefit to the Town by attracting large numbers for events such as cross-country meets, softball tournaments, soccer tournaments and lacrosse tournaments.

### **Transportation Issues**

**Highways** - The South Main Street commercial district, Kernersville Medical Center, FedEx Ground and, hopefully, the VA Clinic, will continue to accelerate the need for improvements to the highway system serving Kernersville. Interchanges on Business 40 at Macy Grove Road and Big Mill Farm Road along with an interchange on I-40 and Macy Grove Road – in conjunction with local improvements to Salisbury Street, Union Cross Road, Piney Grove Road, Smith Edwards Road, Whicker Road, Shields Road, Old Winston Road, South Main & Cherry intersection - are essential to relieving congestion and efficiently moving traffic in and around Kernersville.

**Mass Transit** – Maintain PART bus service to Kernersville and make sure Kernersville is included in future planning for other modes of mass transit for the Piedmont Triad.

**Sidewalks and Greenways** – The expansion of sidewalks and greenways throughout the community serve not only a transportation issue but also a health and quality of life issue for those who use these amenities for recreational opportunities. Access to an improved sidewalk system is also extremely important for citizens with disabilities.

**Summary:** All of the remaining issues in Kernersville 2020 are issues that will have to be addressed primarily by the public sector but present some opportunities for public-private partnerships. All will require a significant amount of funding. It will take leadership from our elected officials to prioritize these issues, identify funding sources, develop partnerships where appropriate and take the lead role to accomplish these goals.