

Town of Zebulon
Vision 2030 Strategic Plan
2018 - 2030



Report prepared by



Strategic Plan At-A-Glance

Vision

Zebulon is a vibrant, growing community that maintains its small-town charm and heritage.

Mission

Zebulon is committed to enhancing the quality of life of our residents by delivering excellent, friendly services and fostering collaboration within our community.

Focus Areas and Goals

The Strategic Plan contains three focus areas, with priority goals within each area.

Vibrant Downtown	Small Town Life	Growing Smart
<p><i>We will have a clean, attractive, and historic downtown with a variety of special events, entertainment, shops, restaurants, businesses and housing to serve as the heart of Zebulon, providing a gathering place for the community and a destination for visitors.</i></p>	<p><i>We will preserve and enhance our small-town feel by developing more activities and locations to gather with family and neighbors, making Zebulon a safe, connected, family friendly and walkable town.</i></p>	<p><i>Our community is growing and we will plan for the growth with appropriate staffing and service levels to address land use and traffic concerns; promote economic development and preserve the affordability of our community</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revitalize downtown Zebulon• Develop events, entertainment, and cultural attractions to draw people downtown	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote more community events and festivals.• Enhance and create more community gathering places.• Increase the connectedness and walkability in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan for appropriate land use to meet transportation and housing needs• Pursue economic development opportunities with our community partners• Maintain appropriate staffing to support expected service levels for the growing community

Core Values

These values guide the how the Town of Zebulon will effectively serve the community.

- Honesty/Integrity
- Family
- Respect
- Dependability
- Teamwork

Town of Zebulon Strategic Plan

VISION, MISSION, FOCUS AREAS, GOALS AND VALUES

Zebulon Board members developed a vision and a mission statement to accompany the values developed by town employees. The vision statement articulates a long-term view of the ideal future for Zebulon. The mission statement describes why Zebulon exists and what it will do to help achieve its vision. The vision and mission statements will guide the work of Zebulon, ensuring that all activities it undertakes will help achieve the vision. The vision and mission are then rounded out with Zebulon’s core values, which represent the beliefs that are shared among the stakeholders of the organization and in turn drive the organization’s culture and priorities by providing a framework in which decisions are made.



Vision

Zebulon is a vibrant, growing community that maintains its small-town charm and heritage.

Mission

Zebulon is committed to enhancing the quality of life of our residents by delivering excellent, friendly services and fostering collaboration within our community.

Focus Areas and Goals

The strategic plan has identified three focus areas. The following table describes each focus area and the goals within each focus area. Appendix 1 includes sample tactics that can be pursued to achieve the goals.

Focus Area	Goals
<p>Vibrant Downtown</p> <p><i>We will work to have a clean, attractive, and historic downtown with a variety of special events, entertainment, shops, restaurants, businesses and housing to serve as the heart of Zebulon, providing a gathering place for the community and a destination for visitors. This supports our vision of a vibrant, small-town that preserves our heritage.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalize the downtown area of Zebulon • Develop events, entertainment, and cultural attractions to draw people downtown
<p>Small Town Life</p> <p><i>We will preserve and enhance our small-town feel by developing more activities and locations to gather with family and neighbors, making Zebulon a safe, connected, family friendly and walkable town. This supports our vision of maintaining our small-town heritage and charm while we grow.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote more community events and festivals. • Enhance and create more community gathering places. • Increase the connectedness and walkability in the community
<p>Growing Smart</p> <p><i>Our community is growing and we will plan for the growth with appropriate staffing and service levels to address land use and traffic concerns; promote economic development and preserve the affordability of our community. This supports our vision of a vibrant small town that is growing.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for appropriate land use to meet transportation and housing needs • Pursue economic development opportunities with our community partners • Maintain appropriate staffing to support expected service levels for the growing community

Core Values

These values guide the how the Town of Zebulon will effectively serve the community.

Honesty/Integrity

What it means to us ...

1. We're honest with each other, and ourselves, and we recognize we're only as good as our word.
2. We're open with each other about our goals and our intentions, and we do what we say we will do when we make a promise to one another.
3. We'll account for our actions, we'll hold others accountable for their actions, and do the right thing when no one is looking.

Family

What it means to us ...

1. We will depend upon each other.
2. We will support our families at home, work and in the community.
3. We will keep our work life balanced in time and identity.

Respect

What it means to us ...

1. We will listen to another's ideas and consider standing in their shoes.
2. We will give respect first in order to gain respect.
3. We will treat ourselves with respect.
4. We will appreciate each other.

Dependability

What it means to us ...

1. We will show up on time, and we won't abuse time, because our co-workers and our community are depending upon us.
2. We will take pride in knowing others can depend upon us.
3. We won't be prideful in asking for help and depending upon others.

Teamwork

What it means to us ...

1. We know our role is to achieve the group's goal.
2. We will work with people different than us.
3. We recognize we're part of something bigger than ourselves.



Creating the Strategic Plan

The Town of Zebulon Board and staff jointly developed the strategic plan during 2017-18. The plan was developed in phases.

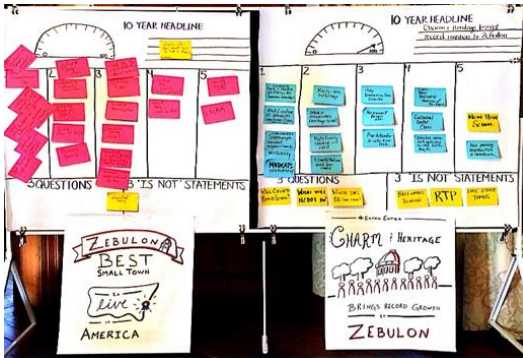
Phase 1: Employee and Citizen Input

The first phase of developing this strategic plan consisted of soliciting input from citizens and employees. During late 2017 and early 2018, Zebulon conducted a citizen survey and focus groups with employees and residents. These efforts were used to help identify common themes from Zebulon citizens, employees, and other stakeholders. Highlighted findings from employee and stakeholder input sessions are summarized here.

	Zebulon Today	Ideal Zebulon
<i>Citizen Focus Group</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly people, Small & caring community • Active civic groups, churches • Proximity to the big city with affordable housing • Downtown needs improvement • Would like to see more economic development • Infrastructure, particularly roads need attention • Concerned with quality of the schools • Not enough cultural events/activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repurpose and renovate old • Provide amenities for all ages • Grow with a purpose - plan for traffic, create a truck bypass. • Encourage a vibrant downtown • Maintain its small-town feel. • Provide big city perks locally - near the bypass
<i>Citizen Survey</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-town feel, with friendly people • Family lives in the area. • Not satisfied with downtown • Not enough things to do - restaurants, shopping, activities • Traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalized downtown • Better and more varied restaurants and grocery options • Better shopping • More community events/activities • Keeps small-town feel • Traffic problems fixed
<i>Employee Focus Group</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town of friendly people • A bit outdated • Not a lot of things to do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer more things to do • Improve infrastructure • Strong communications • Robust professional development opportunities • Staff to meet growth • Improve town website and online services, but maintain personal touch

Phase 2: Plan Development and Strategic Planning Retreat

In February 2018 the Town of Zebulon held its annual Board retreat. The Board reviewed the staff and citizen input and began charting a course for the future. The major sessions held during the retreat are outlined below.



Visioning Exercise

Board members and Zebulon staff were asked to describe Zebulon ten years from now. They were also asked to identify actions that would happen over the next five years to move toward their vision of the future of Zebulon.

Vision, Mission, and Values

The group spent a short period of time reviewing various examples of Vision and Mission statements from entities across the state. The group identified key concepts they would like to be included in Vision and Mission statements for Zebulon.

The staff shared values that were developed with the input of employees prior to the retreat. More than sixty town employees participated in Value Workshops to develop core values for the Town of Zebulon. Participants identified the values that would serve to guide their work. These values will be incorporated into budget documents and performance evaluations, and most importantly, used as the basis of how we work with each other to be an effective team. The five core values are listed below, along with descriptions detailing how the values are used in practice.



Developing Goals and Actions

At the retreat, staff and Board members identified goals and tactical actions within each goal. Board members then used dots to vote for what their top actions items are to help the staff prioritize what the top priorities are.

Phase 3: Writing the Strategic Plan

The Town of Zebulon staff, along with Fountainworks, led the process to finalize the development of the strategic plan. The information developed from the citizen survey, citizen and employee focus groups, and Zebulon Board Retreat shaped the core of the strategic plan. The original drafts of the vision and goals statements, as well as the performance measures developed at the retreat, have since been revised and updated, and can be seen in the previous and following sections of this document. The goals, strategic issues and performance measures developed at the retreat were revised and categorized and can be seen in their finalized form.

Phase 4: Implementation

The Town of Zebulon staff have the overall responsibility of ensuring the strategic plan is implemented. The town's annual budget and capital improvement plan will be prepared to support implementation of tactical action steps within each of the focus areas of the strategic plan. The staff will provide regular updates to the Board on the status of implementation of the strategic issues during Board meetings. As the implementation of the plan matures, key performance measures will be developed to monitor the success of the plan.

Appendix 1

Sample Tactical Actions for Each Focus Area

During the February 2018 Board Retreat, the Board of Commissioners brainstormed the types of tactical actions they would like to see pursued to help achieve Zebulon's mission. As a number of factors -- ranging from funding and staff time to available land or commitment from other community partners -- will impact the timing of the implementation of these tactics, they are shared here as sample actions to consider.

Vibrant Downtown

Sample Tactical Actions
<p>Revitalize the downtown area of Zebulon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create Building Loan and Incentives program for building interiors• Increase funding for downtown incentives (facades)• Explore Main Street program• Utilize existing authority for multi-use buildings downtown, (live/work; higher density; infill)• Investigate new parking opportunities in downtown• Develop and adopt appearance standards for downtown• Organize best practice field visits to other communities with revitalized downtowns <p>Develop events, entertainment, and cultural attractions to draw people downtown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a downtown arts program to promote art and performances downtown (with the ultimate goal of creating a downtown music and cultural arts center)• Develop more downtown events (e.g. 4th of July, car shows, street fair market)• Explore downtown uses and incentives to encourage more gathering places- breweries, restaurants, cafes

Small Town Life

Sample Tactical Actions
<p>Promote more community events and festivals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leverage relationship with Mudcats to start holding community events, ultimately using Five County Stadium year round• Establish a Zebulon Heritage Festival <p>Enhance and create more community gathering places.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborate with Wake County Schools (with the goal of locating a high school, middle school, and additional elementary school in Zebulon)• Improve Little River Park• Establish a permanent farmers market <p>Increase the connectedness and walkability in the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase town's walkability• Connect neighborhoods with sidewalks and greenways• Implementing sidewalk construction

Growing Smart

Sample Tactical Actions

Plan for appropriate land use to meet transportation and housing needs

- Update transportation plan
- Explore how to build more multi-family housing options
- Ensure land use plan addresses affordable housing
- Adopt unified development ordinance
- Utilize downtown overlay
- Open a new gateway to the North at Highway 96- bypass
- Understand all America City Criteria/state program

Pursue economic development opportunities with our community partners

- Increase Town and Chamber Joint Forces for Economic Development; Hire economic development director
- Identify certified sites for economic development projects
- Coordinate marketing effort
- Identify hospital sites

Maintain adequate staffing to support expected service levels for the growing community

- Hire development engineer staff to address new development
- Hire additional staff to meet increased population needs