

TOWN OF FAIRVIEW
Town Plan 2040 Comprehensive Land Use and
Master Plan



June 2026

Adopted:

Recommended by Fairview Planning Board:

(This space left blank intentionally)

***Town of Fairview Town Plan 2040
Comprehensive Land Use and Master Plan***

TOWN OF FAIRVIEW

7516 Concord Highway
Monroe, North Carolina

Adopted by the Town Council:

Town Council

Gary Wilfong, Mayor;
John Biggers, Mayor Pro-Tem;
Patricia Kindley;
David Link;
Kerry Price.



Planning Board

Doug Buchanan, Chairman;
Chrisie Black, Vice Chairman;
Bill Thomas;
Josh Presley;
Mike Medlin;
Fred Rogers;
Sharon Clontz;
Rodney Stephens (Alternate);
Alex Karakosta (Alternate).

Administration Department

Ed Humphries, Land Use
Administrator/Deputy Clerk;
Teresa Gregorius, Town Clerk;
, Town Attorney;
Darrell Baucom, Finance Director.

Planning Team - NFOCUS

Michael D. Harvey, AICP, CFM, CZO, Senior Planner, Lead Author;
Tom Weitnauer, AICP, Town Planner, Coauthor;
F. Richard "Rick" Flowe, AICP, Principal Planner, Coauthor;
Kevin Kormanek, Researcher.

(This space left blank intentionally)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	WHY PLAN OUR TOWN?	9
1.1	About Town Planning	9
1.2	Official State Policy	9
1.3	Statutory Reference	10
2.	ABOUT FAIRVIEW	11
2.1	Town of Fairview Background	11
2.1.1	<i>Location</i>	11
2.1.2	<i>History</i>	12
3.	COMMUNITY PROFILE	13
3.1	Population	14
3.1.1	<i>Population Growth and Projections</i>	15
3.1.2	<i>Population Projections</i>	16
3.1.4	<i>Diversity</i>	17
3.2	Housing and Families	18
3.2.1	<i>Housing Characteristics</i>	18
3.2.2	<i>Housing Inventory Characteristics</i>	19
3.2.3	<i>Occupied Housing Characteristics</i>	19
3.2.4	<i>Financial Characteristics and Housing costs</i>	19
3.2.5	<i>Housing Stock</i>	20
3.2.6	<i>Housing Types</i>	21
3.3	Economy.....	22
3.3.1	<i>Household Income</i>	22
3.3.2	<i>Median Household Income</i>	22
3.3.3	<i>Poverty Rates</i>	23
3.4	Education	23
3.4.1	<i>Educational Attainment</i>	23
3.4.2	<i>Public Schools</i>	24
3.4.3	<i>Colleges and Universities</i>	25
3.5	Workforce.....	25
3.5.1	<i>Employment</i>	25
3.5.2	<i>Commuting Patterns</i>	26
3.5.3	<i>Unemployment</i>	27
3.6	<i>Future Trends Projection - How does Fairview prepare?</i>	27
4.	NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES	31
4.1	Natural Resources	31

4.1.1	<i>Water Resources</i>	31
4.1.2	<i>Land Resources and Geography</i>	34
4.1.2.1	<i>Transportation Facilities</i>	35
4.1.2.2	<i>Growth</i>	36
5	VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY	37
5.1	<i>Community Participation – What does our community want?</i>	37
5.1.1	<i>Stakeholder Interviews – How these were performed and why so extensive!</i>	37
5.1.2	<i>Summary Results of Interviews, Survey, & Public Input Session – What our community said!</i>	38
5.1.3	<i>Community Input</i>	46
5.1.4	<i>Social Media Platform</i>	46
5.2	<i>Goals-Objectives-Strategies</i>	46
5.2.1	<i>Goal 1: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE!</i>	46
5.2.2	<i>Goal 2: STAY FAMILY ORIENTED!</i>	50
5.2.3	<i>Goal 3: RETAIN OUR CHARACTER!</i>	50
5.2.4	<i>Goal 4: ATTRACT BUSINESS AND IMPROVE DOWNTOWN!</i>	52
5.2.5	<i>Goal 5: PROVIDE FOR MORE NATURAL AREAS AND ATTRACT MORE THINGS TO DO!</i>	55
5.2.6	<i>Goal 6: COME TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY!</i>	56
5.2.7	<i>Goal 7: KEEP CRIME LOW!</i>	57
5.2.8	<i>Goal 8: CLEAN UP OUR TOWN!</i>	57
5.2.9	<i>Goal 9: ADDRESS BUSINESSES PERMITTED!</i>	57
6	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	59
6.1	<i>Why Focus on Economic Development</i>	59
6.1.1	<i>Property Tax Strategy and Other Taxes Collected</i>	59
6.1.2	<i>Jobs and Economic Base</i>	60
6.2	<i>Current Economic Profile - Conventional Sectors</i>	60
6.2.1	<i>Production, Transportation, and Material Moving</i>	60
6.2.2	<i>Educational Services, Health Care, Social Assistance and Manufacturing</i>	61
6.3	<i>Importance of the Infrastructure Networks</i>	61
6.4	<i>Existing Business Retention and Expansion</i>	62
6.5	<i>Tourism, Travel and Hospitality</i>	62
6.5.1	<i>Heritage Tourism</i>	62
6.5.2	<i>Recreation and Parks</i>	62
6.6	<i>Manufacturing</i>	63
6.6.1	<i>Economic Transformation</i>	63

6.7	Economic Development Opportunities	64
6.7.1	<i>Innovation Districts</i>	64
6.7.2	<i>Home-based Businesses</i>	65
6.7.3	<i>Small Business Incubator</i>	65
6.7.4	<i>Collaboration and Regional Partners</i>	65
6.8	Economic Development ACTION ITEMS!	65
6.8.1	<i>Immediate Action Items</i>	65
6.8.2	<i>Programmable Action items</i>	66
6.8.3	<i>Opportunity Based Action items</i>	66
7.	INFRASTRUCTURE	67
7.1	Water and Sewer Utility Systems	67
7.2	Transportation Network.....	67
7.2.1	<i>Roads and Highways</i>	68
7.2.2	<i>Aviation</i>	68
7.2.3	<i>Bicycle and Pedestrian</i>	68
7.2.4	<i>Transit Service</i>	69
7.2.5		
8.	PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT	71
8.1	Analysis of Existing Land Use and Development Patterns – <i>Where to Begin!</i>	71
8.2	The Plan - <i>What do we want our community to be? How do we get there?</i>	71
8.2.1	<i>Housing Growth</i>	71
8.2.2	<i>Commercial/non-residential Growth</i>	71
8.3	Existing Land Use Issues – <i>Recognizing the Problems of our Past</i>	72
8.4	Future Land Use – <i>Where We’re Going Next!</i>	73
8.4.1	<i>Refresh Fairview by Developing Underutilized Areas “Close-in” First</i>	73
8.4.2	<i>Future Growth beyond the Town Limits</i>	77
8.5	Re-thinking Fairview’s Zoning - <i>A Common Sense Approach!</i>	77
8.5.1	<i>Planning, Zoning and Development – The Town ‘Plans and Specs’</i>	77
8.5.2	<i>Development Agreements</i>	79
8.5.3	<i>Ordinance Administration</i>	80
8.5.4	<i>Introduction of the Future Land Use Map</i>	81
9.1	Summary	89
9.2	Actions to Implement Town Plan 2040	93

(This space left blank intentionally)

1. WHY PLAN OUR TOWN?

The purpose of the **Town of Fairview Town Plan 2040 - Comprehensive Land Use and Master Plan** ("Town Plan") is to provide information and perspective used to pinpoint and prioritize actions to support a resilient, self-sustaining community. The Town Plan must encourage economic opportunities, while at the same time maintaining the character and resources essential to Fairview in a vibrant, growing urban region. An up-to-date plan balancing the changing trends, environmental conditions, and the Town's vision is essential to the success of Fairview and its inhabitants. Information contained in the Town Plan should serve as the basis for both investment and future development decisions.

The Town Plan has been designed for regular use by citizens, businesses, investors, leadership, and agencies in making decisions affecting the future of Fairview. This Town Plan is vital to making informed decisions that will account for current conditions while maintaining perspective about the future when doing so. A Town Plan is the foundation of almost all capital improvement and growth decisions.

Adoption of Town Plan 2040 is not the end; it is a consensus on where to begin!

1.1 About Town Planning

Long-term planning for the future of a community is vitally important. One tool to guide the future of a community is the planning process and adoption of a comprehensive land use plan. Part of a comprehensive land use plan is designed to provide an overview of a community's existing conditions and physical development. The main function of the plan is to serve as a guide to a community's future development policy. The goals of a comprehensive land use plan are:

- involve the community in developing a long-term vision,
- address what should be maintained or changed in the future to achieve that vision,
- identify future land uses in an overall community-wide context,
- identify and prioritize needed future infrastructure improvement aimed at supporting the vision, and
- provide implementation guidance as to the private and public investment strategies to realize the vision.

Part of the on-going planning process is monitoring the plan's progress as a fluid document.

[§N.C.G.S. 160D-501](#) does not set a specific time frame for updating the comprehensive plan, but it does call for plans to be "*reasonably maintained.*" As recommended by the UNC School of Government, "*factors determining reasonableness would include rate of growth and change as well as physical, economic, and social conditions so professional practice calls for comprehensive plans to be updated every 5-10 years. If the community has experienced rapid change, then an update every five years may be more defensible.*"

Planning is an ongoing process!

1.2 Official State Policy

The State of North Carolina requires local governments in NC General Statute [160D](#) to adopt a plan to be eligible for certain funding, powers and authority by July 1, 2022. The plan is to be used as an assurance to the public that local decisions are made with a perspective on the future implications of pending decisions, and to affirm that public accountability and fiscal responsibility are considered as part of the decision-making process.

Decisions made about public spending and growth can often appear centered around individuals involved and how they may benefit. When governing board decisions adhere to an adopted plan, those individual interests are balanced with others affected by the outcome of decisions, which include citizens, property owners, and businesses.

1.3 Statutory Reference

Town of Fairview Town Plan 2040 - Comprehensive Land Use and Master Plan shall serve as the adopted plan pursuant to [§N.C.G.S. 160D](#) in the planning and regulation of development.

(This space left blank intentionally)

2. ABOUT FAIRVIEW

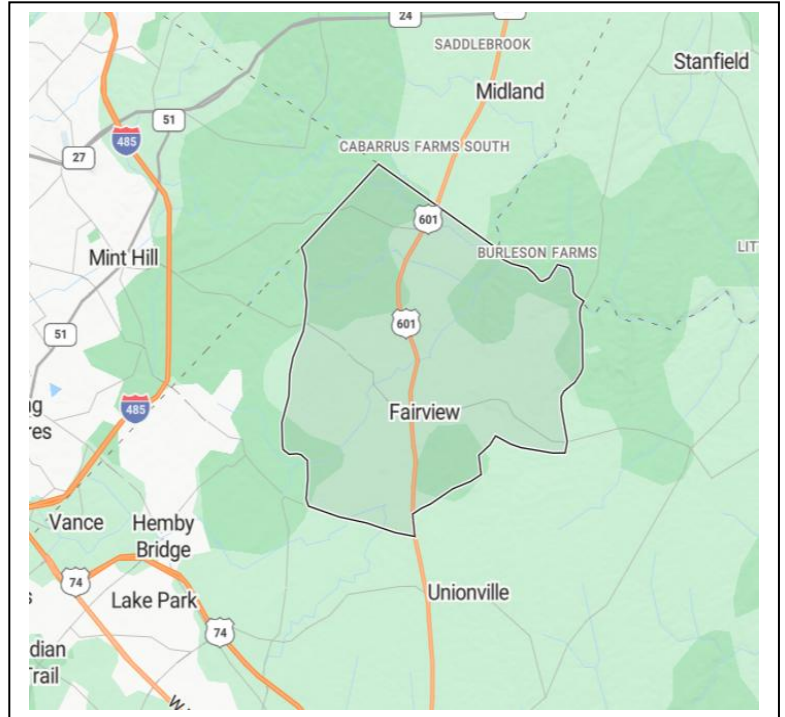
2.1 Town of Fairview Background

2.1.1 Location

The Town of Fairview, North Carolina is located within Union County, north of the Town of Unionville and east of the Town(s) of Mint Hill (Mechlenburg Conty) and Hemby Bridge. The county seat is the City of Monroe North Carolina, which is approximately 12 miles south of the Town along US Highway 601.

The Town's corporate limits encompass approximately 30.32 square miles of land.

Fairview is in the foothills of the Uwharrie Mountains. Tyler Knob is the highest point of the community at 849 feet at its peak, sitting on the Fairview-Unionville town line. The Rocky River runs through Fairview along the higher foothills of the Uwharrie Mountains.



Hospitals in proximity to the Town include:

- Atrium Health Union (Monroe NC): approximately 12 miles south;
- Atrium Health Union – West (near Matthews NC off Highway 74): approximately 12 miles west;
- Atrium Health – Anson: approximately 32 miles east;
- Atrium Health University City (Charlotte NC): approximately 26 miles northwest.
- UNC Hospital – Chapel Hill, NC: approximately 120 miles north.

Union County is included within the Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia NC/SC Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) which the U.S. Census Bureau estimated had a population of 2,754,842 in 2020.

2.1.2 History

According to several accounts, and per local historian Patrica Helms Kindley, the town got its name from Louretta Vanda Helms Price, who declared the area around the intersection US Highway 601 and NC Highway 218 to provide a “fair view”, hence the name Fairview.



Incorporated in 2002, settlement in the area now known as Fairview can be traced back as far as the late 1700's as an agrarian community with several local schools, notably:

- Brief: located on 601 north near the Cabarrus county line;
- Belmont: situated close to the banks of Crooked Creek just about one half mile south of the 218/601 intersection;
- Spruce Pine: located on Brief Road, 3 miles east of US Highway 601;
- Jerome: off Hwy 218 and about one mile south on Crowell Dairy Road.

The four schools came together in 1935 to become Fairview School.

The early local economy was dominated by agricultural land uses, with cotton, corn and wheat serving as the primary cash crops. Numerous cattle, hog, poultry, and dairy farms also flourished in the area. As the popularity of cotton farming began to wane, soybean production came into prominence along with milo, barley, oats and grape vineyards.

According to local historian Patrica Helms Kindley, an area in the southwest quadrant near Crooked Creek of Fairview served as a Native American encampment site now commonly referred to as “Red Field”.

3. COMMUNITY PROFILE

The development of a Town Plan first requires that identification and analysis of certain key growth factors be performed. The intent of the analysis is to ensure that policies contained in the Town Plan address current problems, trends, and issues facing the community, including the immediate area. The key growth factors included for analysis are discussed in several subject areas within the Town Plan. Collectively, these key growth factors summarize past and present conditions, while providing the essential yardsticks for estimating future conditions.

The U.S. Census Bureau prepares a detailed statistical portrait for local governments, counties and states of their respective social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics through the 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) products. The ACS 5-year estimates are constructed as period estimates and reflect the average characteristics over the five-year period. In general, unless a user knows how the estimate for each characteristic is trending over time, it is not accurate to consider the 5-year estimate as an estimate at any given point within the 5-year period. However, under certain conditions, the ACS estimates can serve as a proxy.

Figures from the U.S. Census Bureau 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, released on December 12, 2024, were used in the Community Profile for the Town of Fairview, as detailed in this section. Rather than refer to the 5-year period (2019-2023) throughout the narrative in this section, the last year of 2023, may be used for brevity in some locations, but the full five-year period will be noted as the source for tables and charts.

In their methodology of defining what is a current residence in the American Community Survey, the U.S. Census Bureau considers everyone who is currently living or staying at an address for more than two months is considered a current resident of that address. This means that their expected length of stay is more than two months, not that they have been staying in the housing unit for more than two months at the time when the survey is conducted. Persons away from their residence for two months or less, whether in the United States or overseas, on a vacation or on a business trip, are considered to still be a resident at the address, and the unit is classified as occupied and eligible for inclusion in the survey. Persons away from their residence for more than two months are considered not to be a resident. For the ACS, if no one is determined to be a current resident in the sampled housing unit, it is classified as vacant.

Data contained with this element is derived from two (2) sources:

1. The 2020 Decennial Census; and
2. The 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates.

It is important to understand the differences between these two data sources:

- Decennial Census data represents a 'physical count' of all residents occurring every ten years;
- American Community Survey (ACS) produces population, demographic and housing unit estimates based on data samples (i.e. does not represent a physical county of all residents). Data is collected on either a monthly or annual (i.e. yearly) basis.

Due to the COVID pandemic, the US Census Bureau experienced challenges in securing full participation in the Decennial Census. There are noticeable discrepancies in some data sets, most notably population, from Census and ACS data. In completing this Document, the best available data was utilized. In those cases where a disparity exists, steps have been taken to try and document those differences and provide an explanation.

3.1 Population

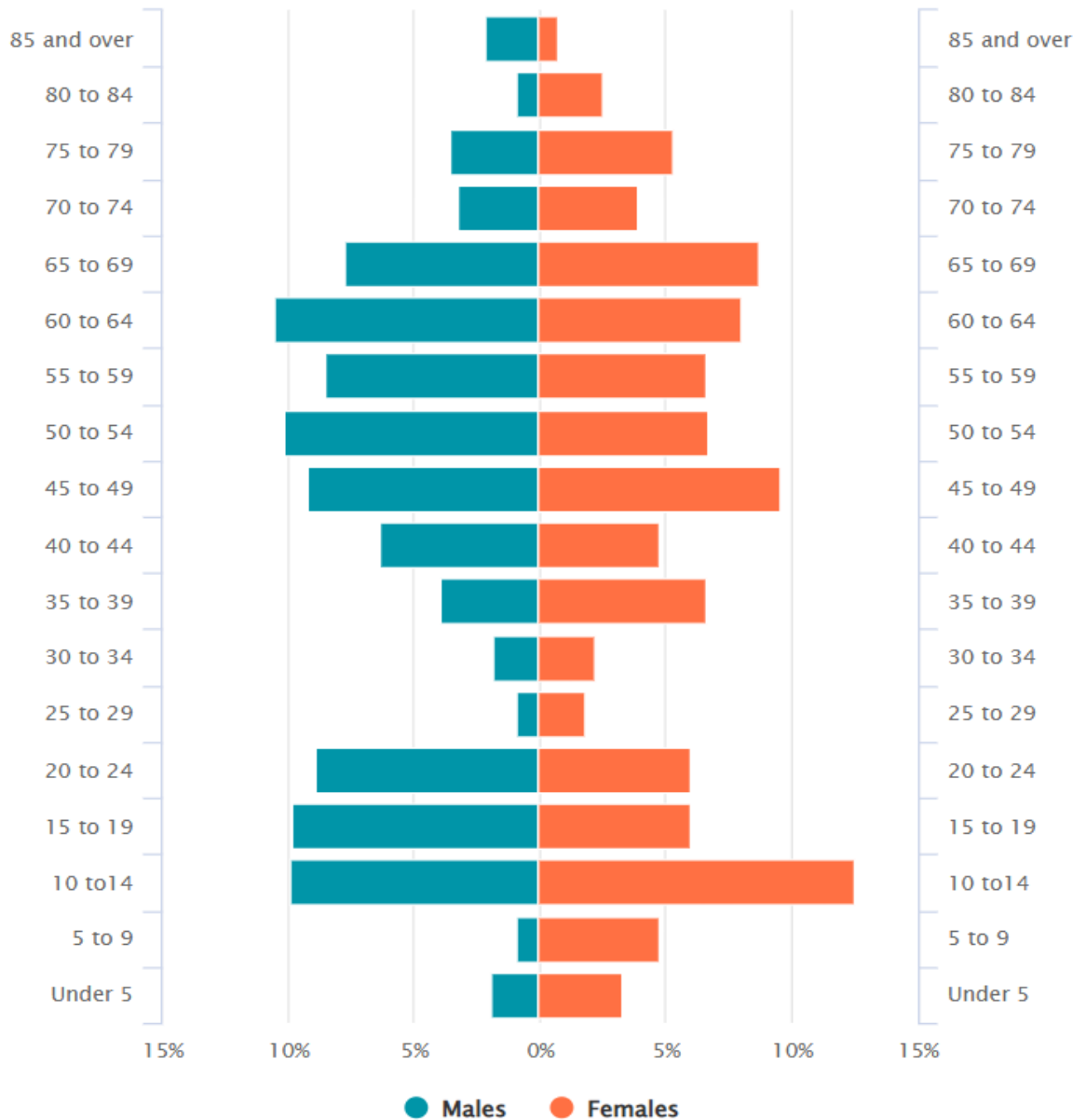
3.1.1 Population:

The U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census reported the Town of Fairview 's total population in 2020 was 3,463 persons. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ACS), Fairview 's residents were 48.5% female and 51.5% male. The median age was 39.37 years. It should be noted that the median age of residents in North Carolina is 39.4 per the 2020 Decennial Census.

An estimated 22.6% of the population was under 18 years, 23.6% were 18 to 44 years, 35% was 45 to 64 years, and 18.8% was 65 years and older.

Figure 3.1.1 (A): Population by Age and Sex for Fairview in 2019-2023

(This space left blank intentionally)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-2023

For people reporting one race alone:

- 98.1% were White;
- 0.6% were Black or African American;
- 0.3% were American Indian and Alaska Native; and
- 0.4 % were Asian;

No respondents identified as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.

Approximately 0.3% of the Town’s population identified as ‘some other race’. An estimated 0.3% of the population identified as two or more races. An estimated 2.8% of the people in Town identified as being Hispanic with an estimated 96.2% of respondents identifying as White non-Hispanic. People of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated there were 1,451 total households in the Town of Fairview for 2019 with an average household size of 2.6 people. Households include related family members, non-related individuals and people living alone. The number of households excludes group quarters.

3.1.2 Population Growth and Projections:

Population Growth

As reported by the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of the Town of Fairview has continued to increase over the last four decades as illustrated in the following table and figure.

Table 3.1.2.(A): Town of Fairview Decennial Population Estimates and Growth Rates

Year	Town of Fairview Population	Between Years	Percentage Increase/Decrease
1990	1,830		
2000	2,495	1990-2000	36.3%
2010	3,324	2000-2010	33.2%
2020	3,463	2010-2020	2.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau’s 1990-2020 Decennial Census

The following table illustrates the percentage of the Town’s population to the total population of Union County throughout the past 30 years. The Town’s population as a percentage of the County’s overall population for the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census has remained stable at approximately 2%.

Table 3.1.2.(B): Town of Fairview to Guilford County Population Comparison

Year	Fairview	Union County	Fairview’s Population to Union County’s Population
1990	1,830	84,211	.022%
2000	2,495	123,677	.022%
2010	3,324	201,292	0.016%
2020	3,463	238,267	0.014%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau’s 2000-2020 Decennial Census

The population estimates for each year between 2000 to 2020 are estimated annually by the U.S. Census Bureau. As illustrated in Table 3.1.2 (A) the

population has increased in the last two (2) decades. The period between 2010-2020, however, saw a sharp drop in the percentage of population increase from the 2000-2010 time period, decreasing by approximately 30%. As noted in Table 3.1.2 (B), Fairview’s population ranges consistently from approximately 1.5 to 2% of Union County’s total population.

3.1.3 Population Projections

The North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) State Demographer publishes population projections annually for each county using complex methodology tailored to each county’s birth, death, and migration rates.

The Town’s population has remained approximately 0.02% of Guilford County’s total population for the past two decades. To project the Town’s population in 2030 and 2040, the 0.02% was applied to the State Demographer’s County population projections of Union County for years 2030 (projection of 269,242) and 2040 (projection of 304,242).

Using this methodology, the anticipated population projection for the Town in year 2030 is 3,533 and in year 2040 is 3,604 persons. The North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) State Demographer publishes population projections annually for each county using complex methodology tailored to each county’s birth, death, and migration rates.

Table 3.1.3.(A): Town of Fairview Population – Estimates and Projections

Year	Population Estimates and Projections
1990	1,830
2000	2,495
2010	3,324
2020	3,463
2030	3,533
2040	3,604

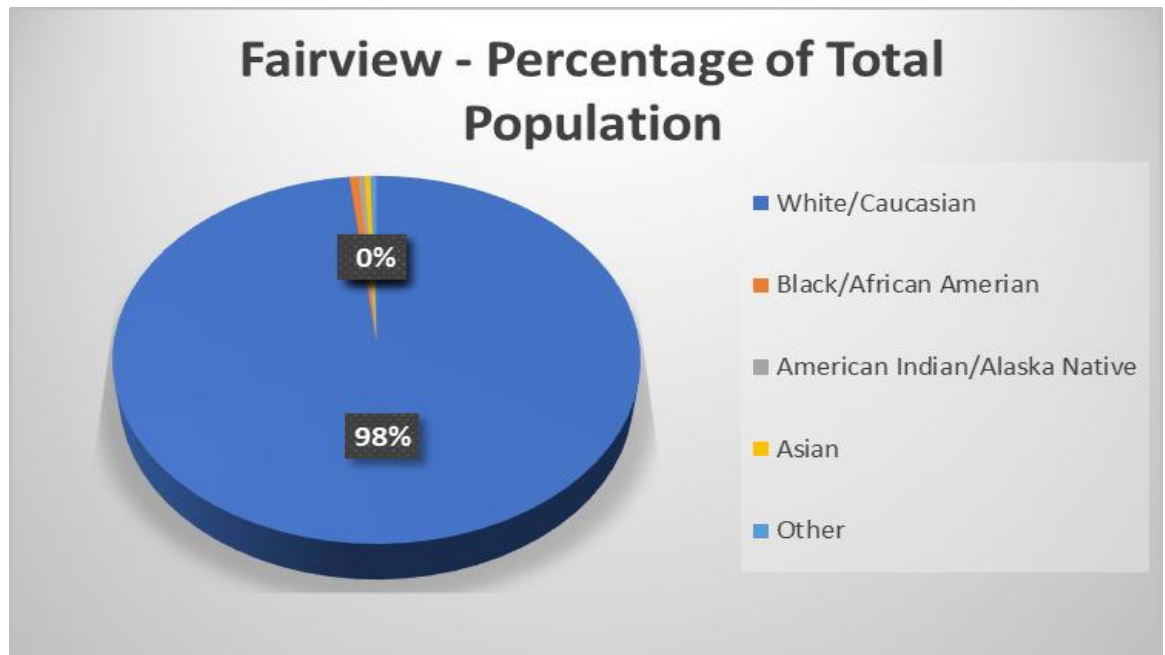
Sources: 1990 through 2020 Estimates: US Census Bureau’s Decennial Census 2030 & 2040 Projections: Average population percentage of Fairview to Union County’s population (0.02%) using US Census data combined with the NC OSBM population projection.

3.1.4 Diversity

As previously indicated herein, within Fairview for people reporting one race alone:

- 98.1% were White;
- 0.6% were Black or African American;
- 0.3% were American Indian and Alaska Native; and
- 0.4 % were Asian.

No respondents identified as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.



3.2 Households and Families:

3.2.1 Occupied Housing Characteristics

In 2020-2023 there were 1,451 households in the Town with an average household size was 2.60 people.

Married-couple households made up 61% of the total households while cohabiting couple households made up 1.2%. Female householder families with no spouse or partner present and own children under 18 years were 1.2% of all households, while 4.1% of households were male householder families with no spouse or partner present and own children under 18 years.

Of people living alone, 16.0% were male householders, and 10.5% were female householders, for a total of 26.5% of all households. 29.1% of all households have one or more people under the age of 18 while 33.6% of all households have one or more people 65 years and over.

(This space left blank intentionally)

Table 3.2.1.(A): Homeownership Rate – Population Breakdown:

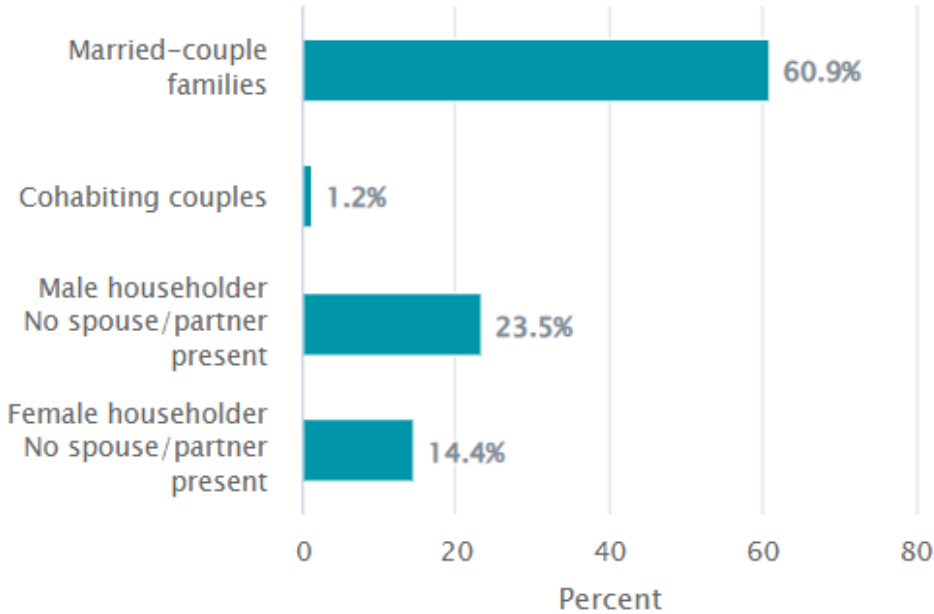


Table 3.2.1.(B): Homeownership Rates - Comparison

Jurisdiction	% of Owner Occupied Units	% of Renter Occupied Units
Town of Fairview	97.4%	2.6%
Union County	83%	17%
State of North Carolina	66.2%	33.8%

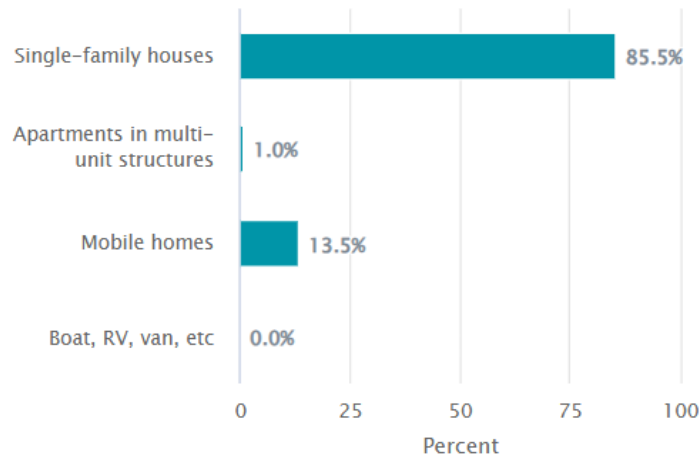
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey

3.2.2 Housing Inventory Characteristics

In 2019-2023, Fairview had a total of 1,451 housing units. Of these housing units:

- 85.5% were single-family houses either not attached to any other structure or attached to one or more structures (commonly referred to as "townhouses" or "row houses");
- 1.0% were located in multi-unit structures, or those buildings that contained two or more apartments.
- 13.5% were mobile homes, while any remaining housing units were classified as "other," which included boats, recreational vehicles, vans, etc.

Figure 3.2.2 (A): Types of Housing Units in Fairview in 2019-2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-2023

3.2.3 Occupied Housing Characteristics:

Between 2019-2023, Fairview had 1,246 housing occupied housing units while the remaining units were vacant. Of the housing units occupied, the percentage of these houses occupied by owners (also known as the homeownership rate) was 91.2% while renters occupied 8.8%. The average household size of owner-occupied houses was 2.57 and in renter-occupied houses it was 2.74.

For comparison, the percentage of home ownership in North Carolina for the same period was estimated by the Census Bureau at 66.8%.

9.5% of householders of these occupied houses had moved into their house since 2017, while 23.6% moved into their house in 1989 or earlier. Households without a vehicle available for personal use comprised 1.0% and another 38.7% had three or more vehicles available for use.

3.2.4 Financial Characteristics and Housing Costs

In 2019-2023, the median property value for owner-occupied houses was \$382,300.

Of the owner-occupied households, 71.3% had a mortgage while 28.7% owned their houses "free and clear," (i.e., without a mortgage or loan on the house). The median monthly housing costs for owners with a mortgage was \$1,674 and for owners without a mortgage it was \$496.

For renter-occupied houses, the median gross rent was \$1,141. Gross rent includes the monthly contract rent and any monthly payments made for electricity, gas, water and sewer, and any other fuels to heat the house.

Households that pay thirty percent or more of their income on housing costs are

considered cost burdened. Cost-burdened households in Fairview accounted for 30.4% of owners with a mortgage, 3.2% of owners without a mortgage, and 33.2% of renters.

3.2.5 Housing Stock

In 2019, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated 213 (17.1%) occupied residential structures have been built since 2000. These figures do not account for houses built since 2020.

Table 3.2.2: Town of Fairview Occupied Housing Units by Age in 2019

Year Built	Number Structures	Percent Structures
Built 2020 or later	0	0%
Built 2010 to 2019	99	7.9%
Built 2000 to 2009	114	9.1%
Built 1990 to 1999	348	28%
Built 1980 to 1989	244	19.6%
Built 1970 to 1979	201	16.1%
Built 1960 to 1969	105	8.4%
Built 1950 to 1959	60	4.8%
Built 1940 to 1949	51	4.1%
Built 1939 or earlier	24	2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-2023

The median number of rooms in all housing units was 6.6 rooms, and of these housing units 86.4% had three or more bedrooms.

3.2.6 Housing Types

As of 2023, the US Census Bureau reported the following breakdown of housing types within the Town:

- 85.5% were single-family houses either not attached to any other structure or attached to one or more structures (commonly referred to as "townhouses" or "row houses");
- 1.0% were located in multi-unit structures, or those buildings that contained two or more apartments.
- 13.5% were mobile homes, while any remaining housing units were classified as "other," which included boats, recreational vehicles, vans, etc.

Table 3.2.6 (A): Town of Fairview Housing Types

Housing Types	%
Single Family (Site Built)	85.5%
Mobile Homes	13.5%
Multi-family	1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2015-2019 American Community Survey

3.3 Economy

3.3.3 Household Income

Household income calculations consist of the income of all individuals aged 16 years and older in the household. Median household income for the Town was noted in the 2019-2023 American Community Survey as \$98,808. For comparison, the median household income for North Carolina was identified as \$73,958.

When analyzing the distribution of household income in the Town of Fairview, most households fall into the over \$200,000 income range (20%), followed by the \$50,000 to \$74,999 (16.1%) and \$100,000 - \$149,999 (15.3%) range. Refer to Table 3.3.1 (A) below.

Table 3.3.1 (A): Town of Fairview Household Income by Range

Income Range	% of Total Population
Less than \$10,000	0.7%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	0.0%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	0.6%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	9.1%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	12.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	16.1%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	12.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	15.3%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	12.9%
\$200,000 or more	20.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

3.3.4 Median Household Income

Median income is defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as the amount obtained by dividing the total income of a particular statistical universe by the number of units in that universe. The median income is the amount that divides the income distribution into two equal groups, half having income above that amount, and

half having income below that amount. Mean income is the amount obtained by dividing the total aggregate income of a group by the number of units in that group. The mean or average income is higher than median income.

The median household income in the Town of Fairview was \$98,808 per year. The Town of Fairview’s median household income is below that of the State of North Carolina and Union County as illustrated in Table 3.3.4 (A) below.

Table 3.3.4 (A): Median Income Comparison

Jurisdiction	Median Household Income
Town of Fairview	\$98,808
Union County	\$95,623
State of North Carolina	\$73,958

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

3.3.5 Poverty Rates

The U.S. Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If the total income for a family, or unrelated individual, falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then the family (and every individual in it) or unrelated individual is considered in poverty. Since poverty is determined by the circumstances of individual families (e.g., family size, income thresholds and income), there is no single poverty rate for an entire jurisdiction or geographic area.

As Table 3.3.5 (A) illustrates, the percentage of people in poverty, as well as the percentage of children in poverty, in the Town of Fairview is significantly lower than for Union County and for the State of North Carolina. The US Census Bureau reported a 0% estimate for children under 18 years old in poverty in Fairview and less than 3% for all people.

Table 3.3.3: Poverty Level Comparison

Jurisdiction	% of People in Poverty	% of Children (under 18 years Old) in Poverty
Town of Fairview	1.8%	2.3%
Union County	7.68%	11.1%
State of North Carolina	12.5%	21.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

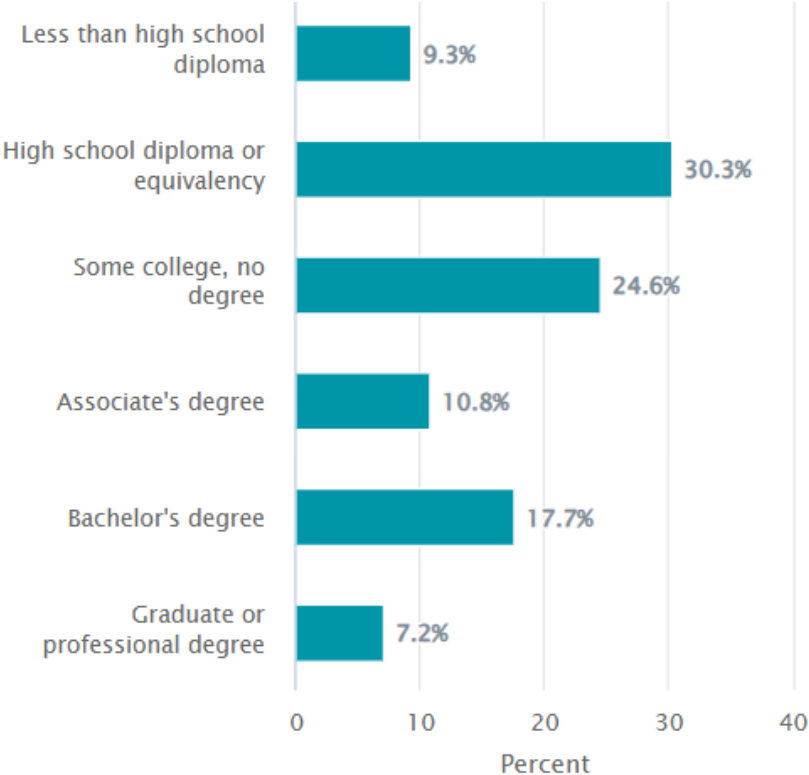
3.4 Education

3.4.1 Educational Attainment

90.6% of people 25 years and over had at least graduated from high school and 24.8% had a bachelor's degree or higher. An estimated 9.3% did not complete high school. The total school enrollment was 1,077 residents. Nursery school

enrollment was 51 students with kindergarten through 12th grade enrollment at 697. College or graduate school enrollment was 329 residents.

Figure 3.4.1 (A): Educational Attainment of People in Fairview in 2019-2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-2023

(This space left blank intentionally)

Table 3.4.1 (B): Educational Attainment Comparison for Population Aged 25 and Over

Educational Attainment	Town of Fairview	Union County	State of North Carolina
Less than high school diploma	0%	9.88%	12.2%
High school diploma or equivalency	31.1%	23.18%	25.7%
Some college, no degree	14.7%	23.4%	21.2%
Associate's degree	17.6%	10.5%	9.7%
Bachelor's degree	25.5%	17.4%	20.0%
Graduate or professional degree	6%	7.5%	11.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey

3.4.2 Public Schools

The Union County School System serves residents of Fairview. The system is composed of approximately 59 public schools serving approximately 46,000 students. Union County is the sixth-largest school system in North Carolina. Per the Union County School System website, there are also 14 private schools within the county providing educational services to residents.

Union County operates a single school within the Town’s jurisdiction off the Concord Highway, specifically the Fairview Elementary School:



Source: Union County GIS Map data

3.4.3 Colleges and Universities

Fairview is conveniently located in proximity to the following college and universities.

College / University	Distance From Fairview (in miles)
American International University - Global	9.3
Macedonia Baptist College	10.9
Wingate University	19
UNC – Charlotte	21
Central Piedmont Community College	21.5
Stanley Community College	26.4
South Piedmont Community College	27.6
Rowan Cabarrus Technical College	49
High Point University	78.8
Wake Forest University	82.9
UNC – Greensboro	91.5

3.5 Workforce

3.5.1 Employment

In Fairview, 54.4% of the population 16 and over were employed while 40.9% of the population were not currently in the labor force. An estimated 73.0% of the people employed were private wage and salary workers; 16.0% were federal, state, or local government workers; and 10.9% were self-employed in their own (not incorporated) business.

Table 3.5.1.(A): Occupations for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and over in Fairview in 2019-2023

Class of worker	Number	Percent
Private wage and salary workers	1,195	73.0
Federal, state, or local government workers	262	16.0
Self-employed workers in own not incorporated business	179	10.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-2023

Table 3.5.1.B: Occupations for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and over in Fairview in 2019-2023

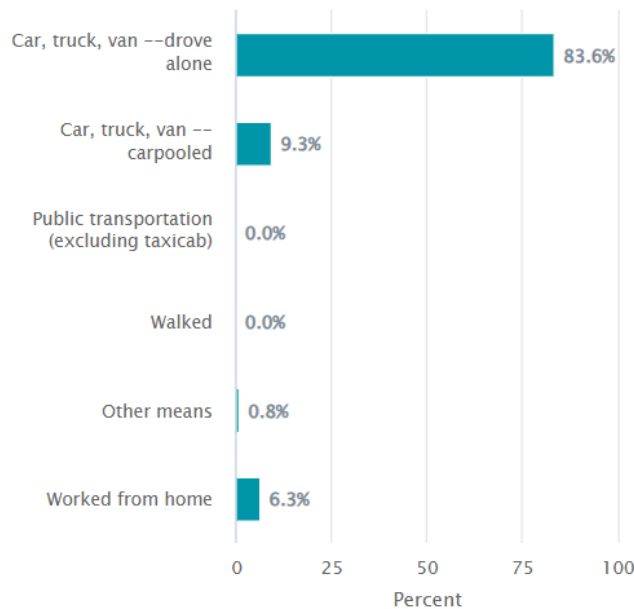
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	Number	Percent
Management, business, sciences, and arts occupations	614	37.5
Service occupations	205	12.5
Sales and office occupations	365	22.3
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	243	14.9
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	209	12.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-2023

3.5.2 Commuting to Work

An estimated 83.6% of workers drove to work alone in 2019-2023, with 9.3% of workers choosing to carpool. Among those who commuted to work, it took them on average 26.1 minutes to get to work from home.

Table 3.5.2 (A): Percent of Workers 16 and over Commuting by Mode in Fairview in 2019-2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019-2023

3.5.3 Unemployment

Labor statistics specifically for Fairview are not available through the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

3.6 Future Trends Projection - *How does Fairview prepare?*

Recognizing trends and how market dynamics can and do change will enable Fairview to position itself as a welcoming community for multiple generations looking at buying or renting a home, starting or growing a business, and finding Fairview a good place to visit. This approach to planning reinforces the community's desire to create a place where younger people will desire to locate, while aging community members will choose to remain. A vibrant and sustainable community is one where both the new and existing home markets are attractive to future generations and allow for aging members of the community to remain in the community by offering a variety of housing products near jobs, services and events.

According to contemporary real estate experts, the "50+" real estate market is changing. In these next few years, Generation X (those born between the years 1964 and 1977) will be joining the Boomers (born between 1946 and 1963) and Matures (between 1927 and 1945), making serving the age 50+ market both a challenging puzzle as well as an opportunity for both communities and the real estate industry itself.

A recent insightful online posting on RISmedia.com (a real estate trade site) states: "For the **Mature** buyers, those born between the years 1927 and 1945, the decision to move can be an emotional and complicated process. The sense of obligation to the family home may be a burden and a comfort at the same time." The posting goes on to state: "**Baby Boomers** are savvy home buyers. They approach the transaction with high expectations and confidence. They consider the home a reflection of their lifestyle, so image and status are important. Whether they are downsizing, upsizing, or purchasing a second home, vacation home, or investment property, they know what they want and how to tell you about it." And finally, the post states: "Newbies to the 50+ group, **Generation X** stands out because of their strong need for independence and practical yet cautious approach. They take on the responsibility of gathering information and rely strongly on facts and documentation. They ask a lot of questions and don't want to get burned. They expect their home to complement their lifestyle and not the other way around."

Preparations to embrace current and projected trends are a partnership of land development and real estate industries with local government leadership. New housing construction should address gaps in the market product offering; therefore, land development specifications appearing in the Town's ordinances must be adequate to accommodate these trends. Replacing the town's antiquated zoning ordinance, adding specifications for land development which creates new streets and supporting infrastructure, and maintaining quality control over the implementation of these standards must be prioritized to protect property rights of all parties while creating common-sense opportunities that don't setup for failures in the future.

As with the housing markets, ever changing trends in consumption, product development, technology and generational shifts in personal choices/values must be

considered when making decisions about commercial and other non-residential growth. This approach to planning reinforces the community's desire to create a place where younger people will desire to locate, while aging members will choose to remain. A community, where traditional values accompany craftsmanship must embrace the presence of technology in everyday life, commerce, and business. Innovation is an ever-increasing component of the economy at all levels; therefore, it must be considered in the formation of growth policy serving these innovators if we are to adapt and survive global influence on everyday life. *(Also see Sections 6 and 8 of this document).*

(This space left blank intentionally)

4 NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

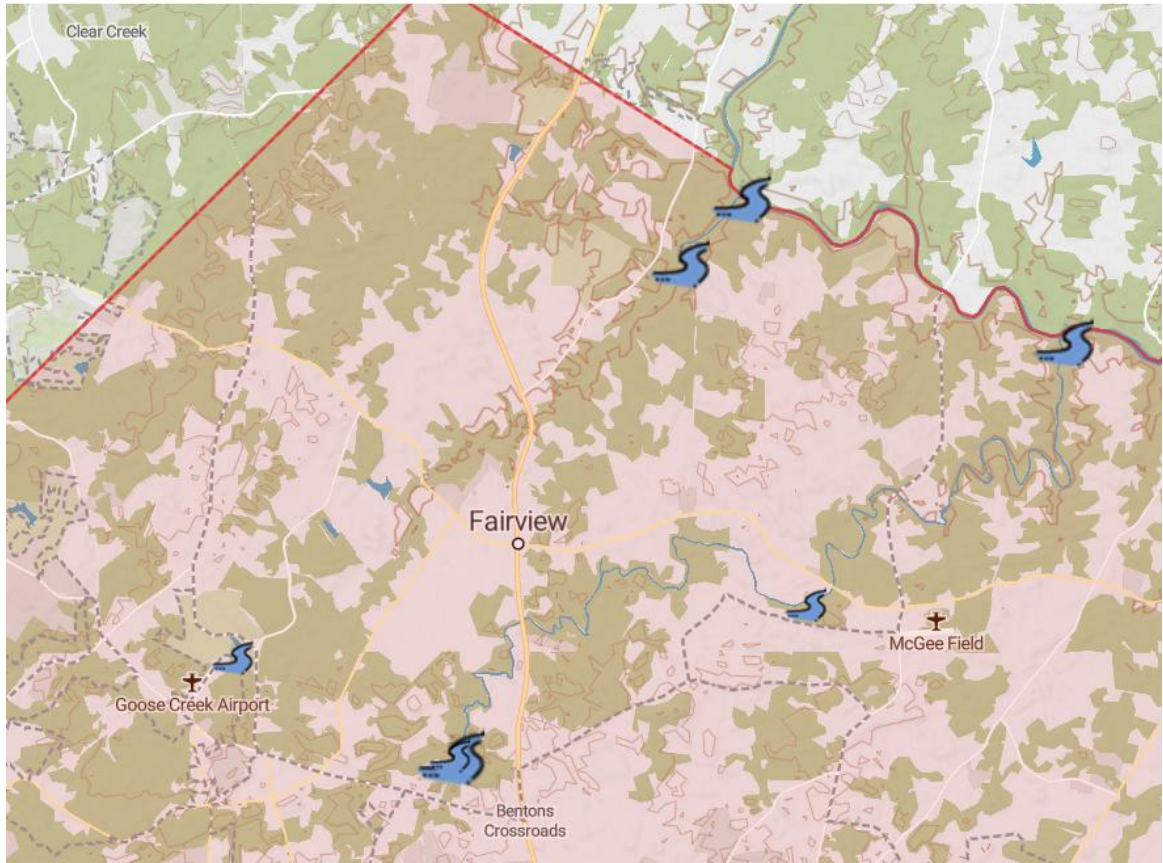
4.4 Natural Resources

4.4.1 Water Resources

Water resources provide both recreational and life sustaining resources for the Town of and the region. The Town of Fairview is within the Yadkin Pee-Dee River Basin and bordered by the following water bodies:

Stream Name:	State Description	State Classification
North Fork Crooked Creek	From source to Rocky River	C
Paddle Branch (west of Town near the Goose Creek Airport)	From source to Goose Creek	C
Grassy Branch (eastern portion of town, near the McGee field airstrip)	From source to Crooked Creek	C
Duck Creek (northern portion of the town)	From source to Goose Creek	C
Goose Creek	From source to Rocky River	C
Rocky River	From source to Pee Dee River	C

See map below for more detail on water feature location(s):



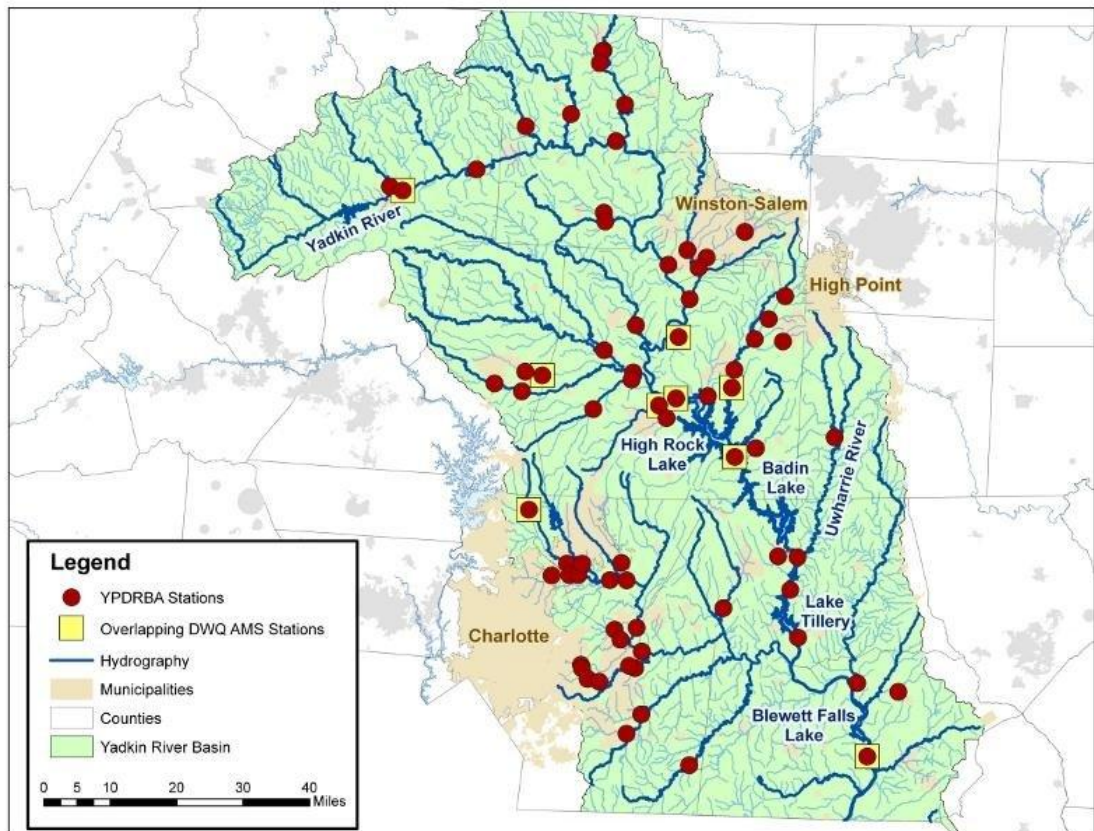
Source: NC State Department of Environmental Quality

There are several unnamed ponds within the community that are not classified by the State. As detailed herein, identified waterways are predominately classified by the State of North Carolina Division of Water Resources (DWR) as Class C water features, defined as follows:

Waters protected for uses such as secondary recreation, fishing, wildlife, fish consumption, aquatic life including propagation, survival and maintenance of biological integrity, and agriculture. Secondary recreation includes wading, boating, and other uses involving human body contact with water where such activities take place in an infrequent, unorganized, or incidental manner.

Yadkin Pee-Dee River Basin:

The Town, and all of Union County, are located within the Yadkin Pee-Dee River Basin (hereafter ‘the Basin’).



The Basin, covering around 7,221 square miles, is the second largest in the State of North Carolina. Its headwaters rise near Blowing Rock, North Carolina, and the basin drains to the Atlantic Ocean in Winyah Bay, east of Georgetown, South Carolina. The majority of the basin is within the Piedmont geographical area of the United States, and South Carolina, and parts of the Appalachian Mountains.

The basin covers an area approximately 433 miles long and includes 5,862 miles of streams and rivers, 22,988 acres of lakes. The basin is home to 93 separate municipalities, in 21 counties with an estimated population of 1,463,535 (2000 U.S. Census).

Five (5) major lakes existing within the basin, including:

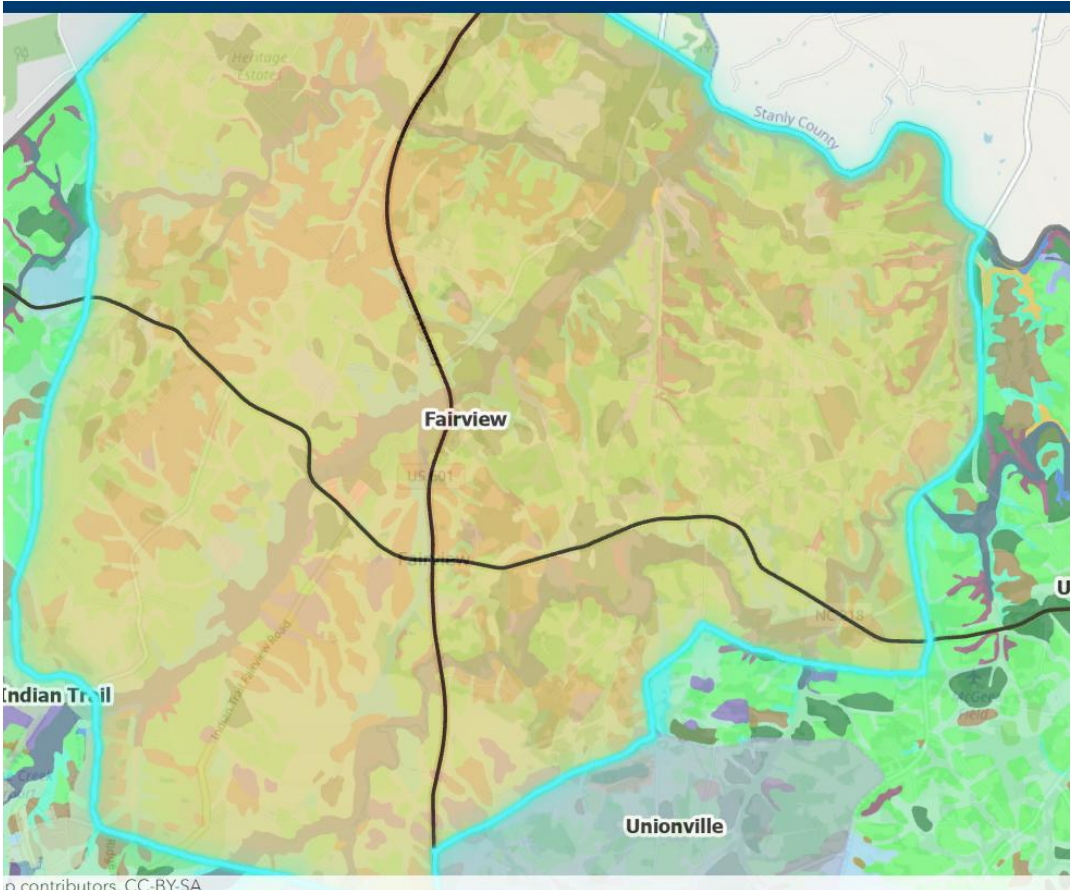
- W. Kerr Scott Reservoir;
- High Rock Lake;
- Tuckertown Reservoir;
- Badin Lake; and
- Falls reservoir.

WATERSHED REGULATIONS: The Town is not located within a State defined watershed area.

4.4.2 Land Resources and Geography

Much of the Town has a gentle rolling topography, characterized by its location in the foothills of the Uwharrie Mountains with gently rolling terrain that transitions between the coastal plain and higher Appalachian elevations.

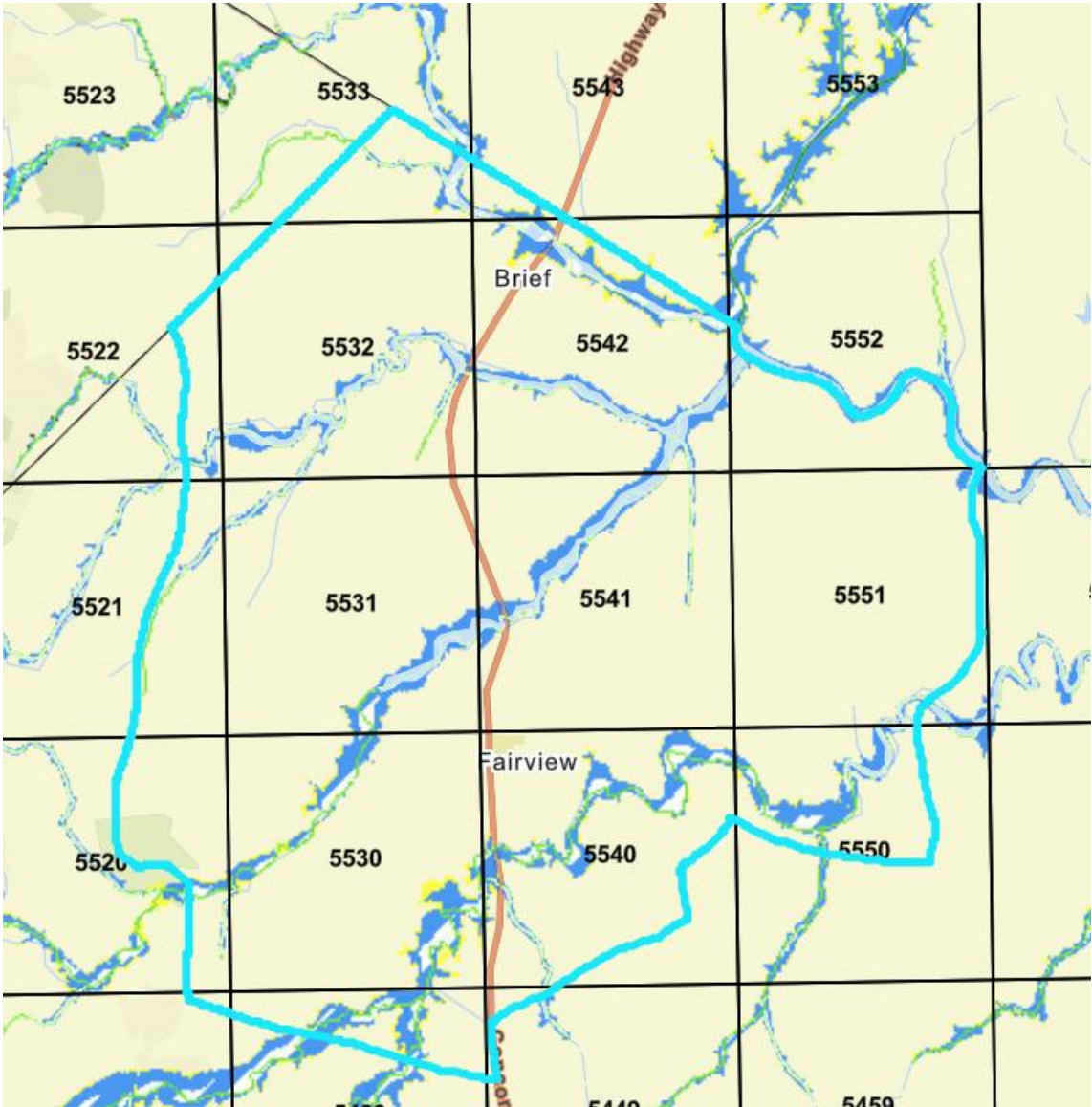
Soils:



According to the Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service dataset published in 1996, and the Union County GIS map data, the predominant soils in the Fairview area consist of the following:

PENDING

There are areas of the Town encumbered by floodplain/Special Flood Hazard Area as defined by FEMA. Development within these areas is regulated by the Town's flood damage prevention ordinance:



Source: NC FRIS database.

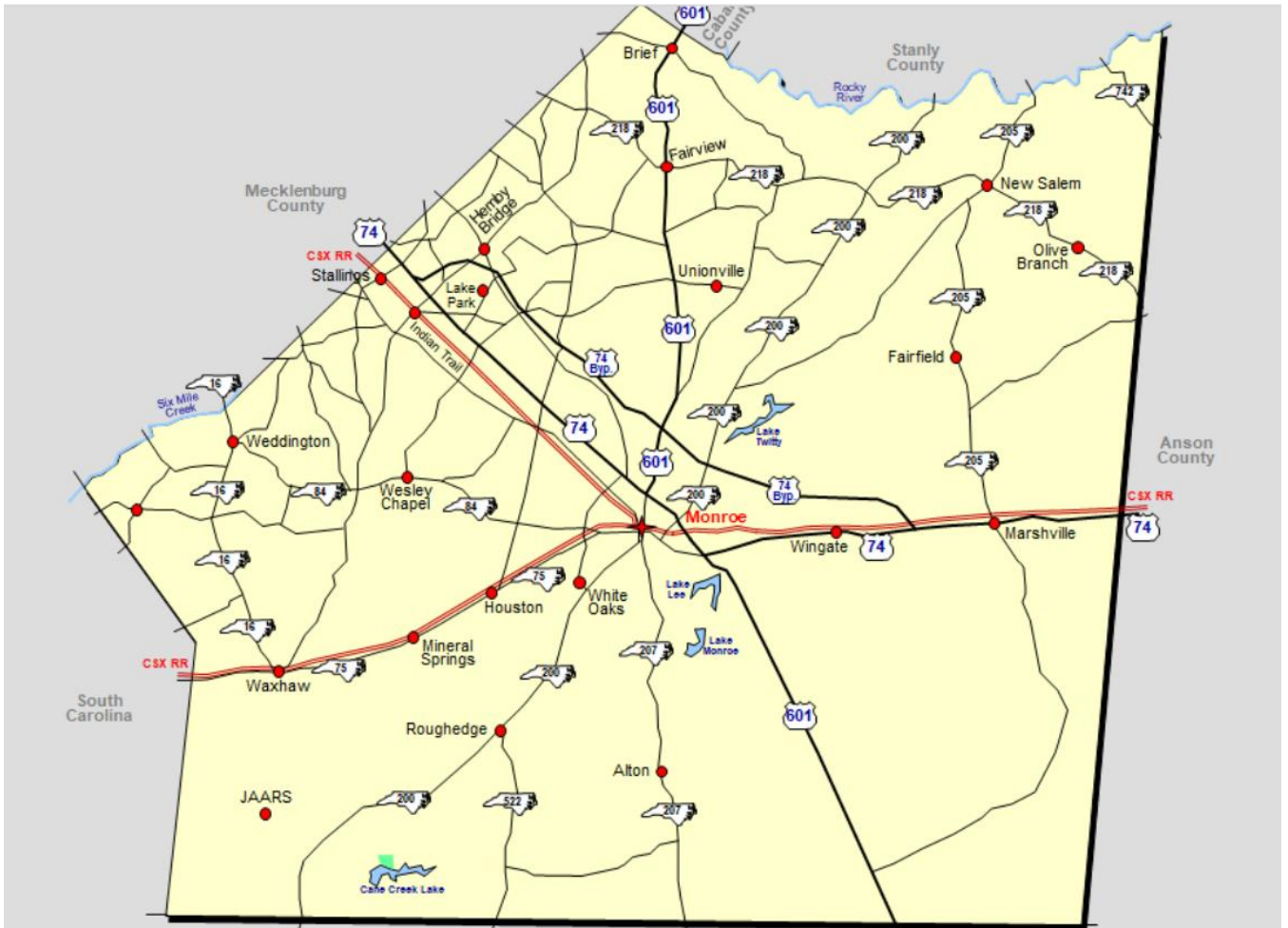
Soils in these special flood hazard areas are characterized as poorly draining and are not suitable to support various forms of development activity (i.e. residential or non-residential).

4.4.2.1 Transportation Facilities

Union County has an extensive road system including:

- 3 US Highways (US 74, US 74 Bypass (toll road), US 601)
- 9 NC State Highways (NC 16, 75, 84, 200, 205, 207, 218, 522, and 742)

The majority of roadways serving the Town are a mixture of state and federally maintained roadways. NC State Highway 218 and US Highway 601 bisect the Town, with Highway 601 being the main north/south connector.



Source: [Website Featuring Map Data for North and South Carolina Counties.](#)

Transportation matters for the region are managed through the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization and the Rocky River Rural Planning Organization, who are responsible for collaborating with residents and local, state, and federal agencies to coordinate transportation planning and project development within the region.

4.4.2.2 Growth

As previously indicated, Union County is in the Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The region's population has increased in recent decades and is projected to continue within the next 20 to 30 years.

5 VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY

Determining what is important to a community is critical. The voice of Fairview was sought by two techniques described below. This information, when summarized and ranked in order of popularity, provides the “value statements” about Fairview. These statements provide the foundation for the preparation of goals and objectives. From these goals and objectives, the team crafted draft strategies refined for Fairview’s needs by its elected leadership.

5.1 Community Participation – *What does our community want?*

Community participation for the initial planning process in the Winter of 2025 was a blend of two different, but integral, approaches for comprehensive outreach. First, the planning team performed a series of stakeholder interviews to gain an in-depth understanding of ‘likes’, ‘dislikes’, ‘wishes’, and ‘fears’ in the community, as well as identify top priorities for the Town’s progression toward the future. Secondly, an online survey was also available which was advertised through the Town’s website and Facebook account over three months in the fall of 2025.

The following sections highlight the process, results and opportunities for action.

5.1.1 Stakeholder Interviews – *How these were performed and why so extensive!*

Business stakeholder interviews are a great addition to any community engagement process because they give detailed insight into the opinions and perspectives of many members of a community. What makes this process unique for Fairview is that, due to the size of Fairview, almost every business was interviewed as part of this process. A random sample of business owners would have been too small to gain valuable information; so, each member of the business community could be reached was interviewed, on a one-to-one basis, to fully flush out the main content to be highlighted in Fairview’s plan for the future.

This outreach process spread goodwill throughout the Fairview community early in the process enabling word-of-mouth advertising for this initiative and better community participation to support the Town Plan. These interviews focused on the community and did not obtain proprietary information about the businesses.

While attempts to reach all businesses were made, there are likely several home-based or e-commerce businesses that were not identifiable. Most of the interviews were conducted within the places of business. During the endeavor, the interviewers gained a more comprehensive understanding of people’s attitudes, as well as, the physical characteristics and local context of the community layout, conditions of infrastructure, and numerous other valuable insights of Fairview.

5.1.2 Summary Results of Interviews, Survey, & Public Input Session – *What our community said!*

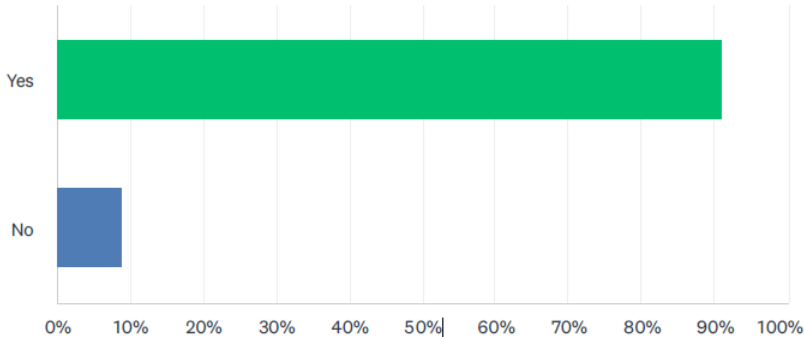
The interview responses were categorized and grouped separately for each of the six questions asked:

1. Do you reside within the Town of Fairview?
2. What do you like about Fairview (present)?
3. What do you dislike about Fairview (present)?
4. What wishes do you have for Fairview (future)?
5. What fears do you have for Fairview (future)?
6. What should be the #1 priority for Fairview moving forward?

The responses were then cataloged for ranking purposes enabling the results to be summarized graphically. The following pages illustrate the responses in order of their respective frequency rankings.

Q1 Do you reside within the Town of Fairview?

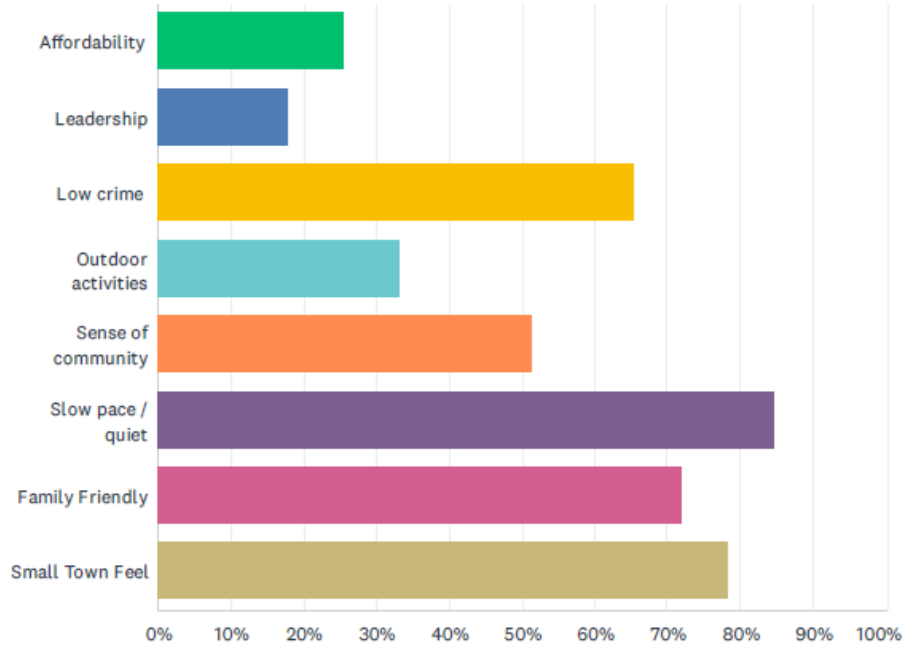
Answered: 78 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	91.03%	71
No	8.97%	7
TOTAL		78

Q2 ABOUT THE PRESENT, WHERE WE ARE TODAY What do you LIKE about Fairview? ... what do you like about your community?

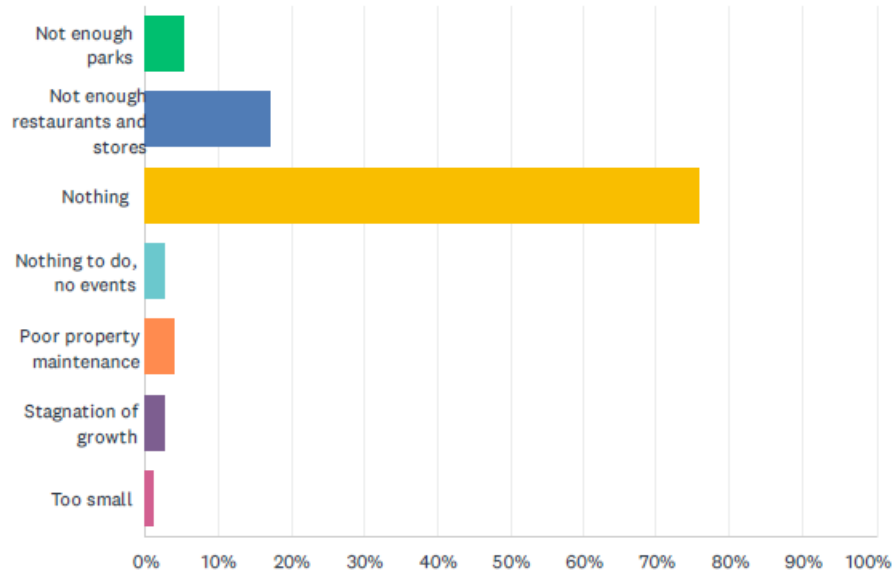
Answered: 78 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Affordability	25.64%	20
Leadership	17.95%	14
Low crime	65.38%	51
Outdoor activities	33.33%	26
Sense of community	51.28%	40
Slow pace / quiet	84.62%	66
Family Friendly	71.79%	56
Small Town Feel	78.21%	61
Total Respondents: 78		

Q3 ABOUT THE PRESENT, WHERE WE ARE TODAY What do you DISLIKE about Fairview? ... what do you dislike about your community?

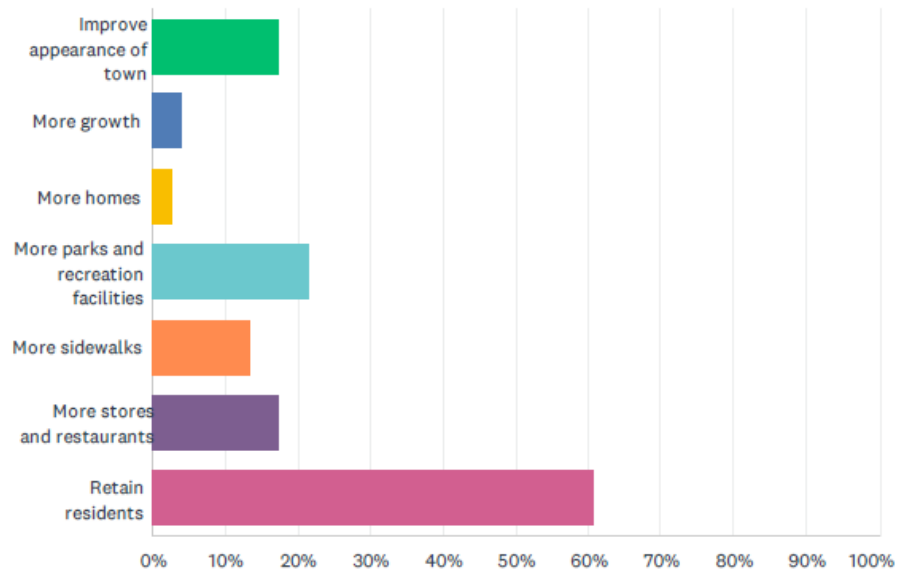
Answered: 75 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not enough parks	5.33%	4
Not enough restaurants and stores	17.33%	13
Nothing	76.00%	57
Nothing to do, no events	2.67%	2
Poor property maintenance	4.00%	3
Stagnation of growth	2.67%	2
Too small	1.33%	1
Total Respondents: 75		

Q4 ABOUT THE FUTURE, WHERE WE WILL BE IN THE FUTURE What do you WISH for Fairview? ... what do you WISH for your community's future?

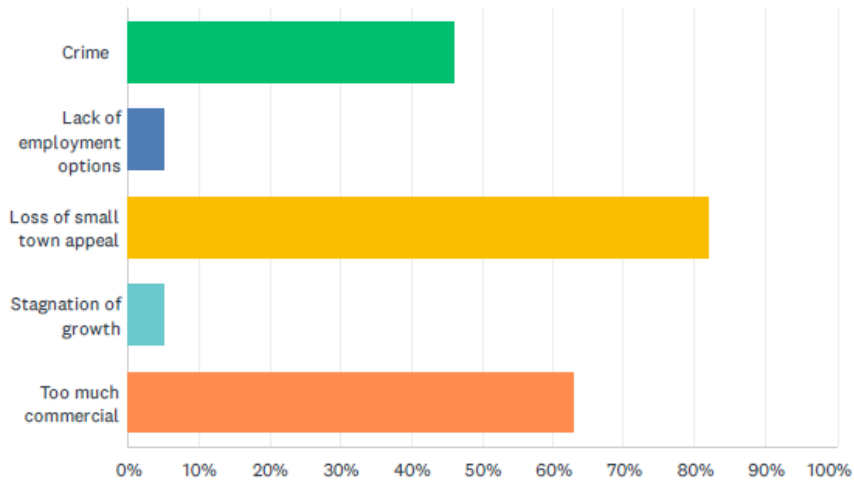
Answered: 74 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Improve appearance of town	17.57% 13
More growth	4.05% 3
More homes	2.70% 2
More parks and recreation facilities	21.62% 16
More sidewalks	13.51% 10
More stores and restaurants	17.57% 13
Retain residents	60.81% 45
Total Respondents: 74	

Q5 ABOUT THE FUTURE, WHERE WE WILL BE IN THE FUTURE What do you FEAR for Fairview? ... what do you FEAR for your community's future?

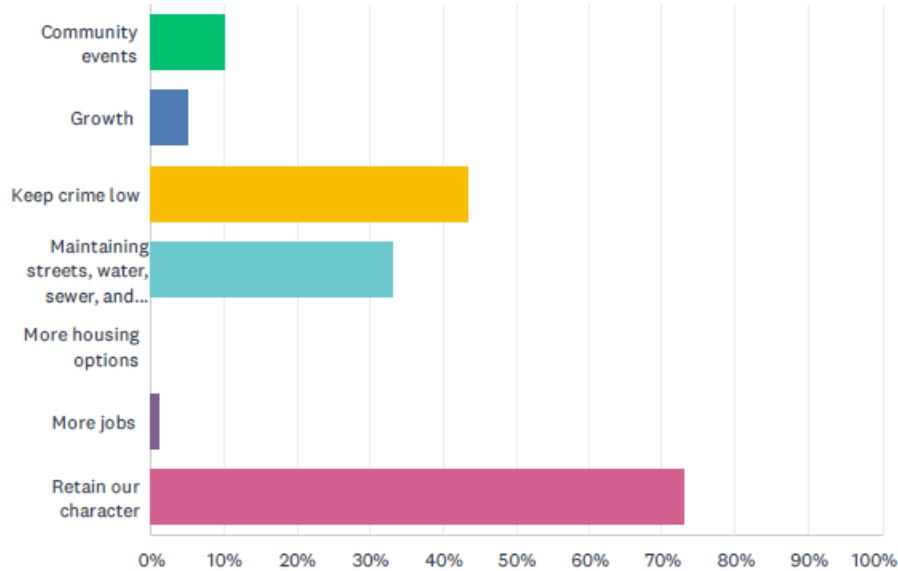
Answered: 78 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	COUNT
Crime	46.15%	36
Lack of employment options	5.13%	4
Loss of small town appeal	82.05%	64
Stagnation of growth	5.13%	4
Too much commercial	62.82%	49
Total Respondents: 78		

Q6 ACROSS THE BOARD What should be the #1 PRIORITY for Fairview moving forward? ... what is your Priority One?

Answered: 78 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Community events	10.26% 8
Growth	5.13% 4
Keep crime low	43.59% 34
Maintaining streets, water, sewer, and roads	33.33% 26
More housing options	0.00% 0
More jobs	1.28% 1
Retain our character	73.08% 57
Total Respondents: 78	

The following summarizes the main points made by local residents with the completion of this survey:

The rankings indicate ***'Retail Our Character'*** (73%) as the 1st priority moving forward, by a wide margin, for survey respondents when asked to identify what is the number 1 priority for the Town. Priorities were emphasized by related responses to another survey question as listed below:

- Related response to this question, *'What wishes do you have for Fairview?'*, respondents indicated: *'Retail Residences'* (60%), *'More Parks and Recreation Facilities'* (21.6%) and *'More Stred and Restaurants'* (17.5%).

NOTE: A main fear/area of concern identified by survey responses (question 5) was too much commercial development (62%) and Loss of small-town appeal (82%) impacting Fairview.

For the 2nd priority, 43% of respondents specifically identified *'Keep Crime Low'* as their next goal. This priority was emphasized by the related responses to other survey questions as detailed below:

- Related response to the question, *'What do you like about Fairview?'*, respondents indicated: *'Small Town Feel'* (78%), *'Slow Pace/Quiet'* (84%), *'Affordability'* (25%), and a *'Sense of Community'* (51%).
- A related response to the question, *'What do you dislike about Fairview?'*, was: *'Not Enough Restaurants and Stores'* (17%) and the desire for more parks (5%)
- **Approximately 76% of respondents indicated there was *'Nothing'* they disliked about the Town.**
- Related responses to the question, *'What wishes do you have for Fairview?'*, resulted in *'Retain Residents'* (60%). Only 4% of respondents wanted more growth within the Town.

For the 3rd priority, 33% of respondents identified *'Maintaining Streets, Water, Sewer, and Roads'* as the third most important priority. This priority was emphasized by the related responses to survey questions as detailed below:

- Related response to the question, *'What do you like about Fairview?'*, respondents indicated: *'Slow Pace/Quiet'* (84%), and *'Low Crime Rate'* (65%).
- Related responses given to the question, *'What fears do you have for Fairview?'*, were *'Loss of Small-Town Appeal'* (82%) and *'Too Much Commercial'* (62%) .

The 4th priority, 5% of survey respondents indicated ***'Community Events'*** and ***'Growth'***, which was emphasized by the related responses to survey questions as detailed below:

- A related response to the question, *'What do you like about Fairview?'*, respondents indicated: *'Outdoor Activities'* (33%).
- Related responses to the question, *'What do you dislike about Fairview?'*, was: *'Nothing to Do, No Events'* (2%) and *'Not Enough Parks'* (5%).

NOTE: AS a reminder for question 3 (What do you Dislike) 76% of respondents indicated there was nothing they did not like about the Town.

- A related response to the question, *'What wishes do you have for Fairview?'*, was: *'More Parks and Recreation Facilities'* (21%).

The last ranked priorities included: ***'Growth'*** (5%), ***'More Jobs'*** (1.2%) and ***'More Housing'*** (0%), which was emphasized by the related responses to other survey questions as detailed below:

- Regarding **‘Growth’**, related responses to the question, *‘What do you dislike about Fairview?’*, was: *‘Not Enough Restaurants or Stores’* (17%), and *‘Stagnation of Growth’* (2.6%). Related responses given to the question, *‘What fears do you have for Fairview?’*, were, *‘Too Much Commercial’* (62%), and *‘Stagnation of Growth’* (5%).

Final Priorities. After combining tied answers with their related answers and taking the concerns that had broader impacts not necessarily directly related to the Town’s planning efforts, community concerns fall into the following final priorities.

The Town Plan 2040 responds to each of these priorities in section 5.2.

- ***‘Maintain and Enhance Local Infrastructure (i.e. streets, water, sewer, sidewalks, and roads)’;***
- ***‘Stay Family-Oriented’;***
- ***‘Retain Our Character’;***
- ***‘Attract Business and Improve Downtown Fairview’;***
- ***‘Provide More Natural Areas, Parks, and Landscapes and Attract More Things to Do’;***
- ***‘Come Together as a Community’;***
- ***‘Keep Crime Low’;***
- ***‘Clean Up Our Town’;*** and
- ***‘Address Businesses Permitted’***

(This space left blank intentionally)

5.1.3 Community Input

The Town of Fairview advertised the online survey on the Town's website homepage and Facebook account.

5.1.3.1 Strategy: Develop a Consolidated Social Media Platform

Below are near-term action steps the Town of Fairview can take to expand its social media platform and widen its digital footprint.

1. **Continue to update and expand social media.** The Town can continue to use its official website to work closely with all Town departments to provide current information to the public. Following are the most immediate priority tasks recommended for the Town's social media.
 - a. **Continue to maintain Town website.** The Town recently launched a new attractive website which should be frequently updated and expanded to increase use and convenience.
 - b. **Add links and open new social media applications as soon as possible.** On the Town's website homepage, links should be added to its Facebook account. The Town should consider using Instagram. Even if posts are infrequent in the beginning, opening accounts now would ensure that the Town can claim the appropriate and authorized 'handles' (e.g., @townofFairviewnc, etc.) and create topical and relevant hashtags (e.g. #visitFairviewnc, etc.)

5.2 Goals-Objectives-Strategies

The objectives and strategies appearing under each goal appear in priority rankings based upon the number of public comments. These may be pursued as deemed appropriate by the Town, its citizens, and businesses.

5.2.1 Goal 1: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE!

WATER:

5.2.1.1 Objective 1: Continue to participate in a county-wide and/or regional planning efforts for possible extension of existing utility lines or the development of a regional water system.

GUIDING PRINCIPAL/POLICY:

- The Town of Fairview **will not** assume financial responsibility for the development of independent water treatment facilities or distribution systems due to the prohibitive costs. Development of such systems shall be a collaborative effort with local communities, Union County and surrounding regional partners;
- Town residents are expected to rely on private/individual water systems (wells) permitted through the Union County Health Department;
- Creation of a centralized water system **will not** result in an increase in

allowable residential density within the Town as a matter of right.

Strategy 1: Continue discussions with local municipal and County partners on the development of a new water allocation agreement to meet anticipated water needs for Fairview.

Strategy 2: Amend local ordinances to include the water utility providers as a review partner in all subdivision and non-residential site plan review projects to ensure utility opportunities/constraints are properly identified and addressed during the plan review process.

Strategy 3: Working with the internal and external partners, develop a long-range water service plan for the community including a schedule for regular servicing of lines (i.e. cleaning, flushing, etc.), installation and upgrading of utility lines, provision of water for fire suppression services (i.e. installation of fire hydrants), and addressing of water quality issues. This service plan will also identify how participating governments can coordinate local educational efforts for members of the community.

NOTE: This is a long-term planning goal with no formal timeline for implementation/completion.

SEWER:

5.2.1.2 Objective 2: Address the Town's long-term sewer needs.

GUIDING PRINCIPAL/POLICY:

- The Town of Fairview **will not** assume financial responsibility for the development of independent wastewater treatment facilities or distribution systems due to the prohibitive costs. Development of such systems shall be a collaborative effort with local communities, Union County and surrounding regional partners;
- Town residents are expected to rely on private/individual wastewater treatment systems (septic) permitted through the Union County Health Department;
- Creation of a centralized wastewater treatment system **will not** result in an increase in allowable residential density within the Town as a matter of right.
 - Higher density development, relying on public wastewater systems, shall only be located in areas of the Town identified as 'urban' on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM).

Strategy 1: Continue discussions with local municipal and County partners on the development of a new wastewater allocation agreement to meet anticipated wastewater treatment needs for Fairview.

Strategy 2: Amend local ordinances to include the wastewater utility providers as a review partner in all subdivision and non-residential site plan review projects to ensure utility opportunities/constraints are properly

identified and addressed during the plan review process.

Strategy 3: *Working with the internal and external partners, develop a long-range wastewater service plan for the community including a schedule for regular servicing of lines, adoption of fee schedule, installation and upgrading of utility lines, and addressing of water quality issues. This service plan will also identify how participating governments can coordinate local educational efforts for members of the community.*

NOTE: This is a long-term planning goal with no formal timeline for implementation/completion.

ROADWAYS:

5.2.1.3 **Objective 3: Address the Town's long-term road maintenance needs.**

GUIDING PRINCIPAL/POLICY:

- It is not the intent of the Town of Fairview to assume responsibility for the maintenance of local roadways with the creation of a Public Works or Maintenance Department. All roadways shall either be privately (i.e., neighborhood) or publicly (NC Department of Transportation) maintained;
- Review of any Town managed maintenance program shall be for budget identification/research purposes only during this Plan's time horizon and shall be completed with the cooperation of the NC Department of Transportation.

Strategy 1: *The Town shall continue to coordinate with NC Department of Transportation on the identification and ranking of local public roads for maintenance.*

STORMWATER:

5.2.1.4 **Objective 4: Continue to require local developers to develop, implement, and maintain stormwater infrastructure systems in accordance with State law.**

Strategy 1: *Amend the Town Zoning Ordinance to ensure appropriate references for development projects to comply with State stormwater standards.*

SIDEWALKS AND BICYCLE LANES:

5.2.1.5 **Objective 5: Encourage the development of sidewalk/greenway and bicycle lanes within development projects.**

GUIDING PRINCIPAL/POLICY:

- The Town of Fairview **will not** assume financial responsibility for the development or maintenance of sidewalks or bicycle lanes unless they

are part of a Town park project;

- The Town shall work to prepare a master sidewalk, greenway, and bicycle lane plan identifying locations for said infrastructure as part of the development review process. These systems shall be installed/maintained by local developers as part of the residential/non-residential development review process;
- The Town shall continue to coordinate with local municipal and County partners on the development of these systems;
- The Town shall continue to encourage existing sidewalks, greenways, and bike lanes developed as part of local projects to offer connection to publicly development recreational amenities (i.e., town parks).

Strategy 1: Revise the Zoning Ordinance to encourage and promote the installation of crosswalks at key intersections to facilitate safe pedestrian access to key areas within the community.

Strategy 2: Ensure connectivity to parks and natural areas.

Strategy 3: Ensure access is ADA compatible for universal access.

Strategy 4 Require developers to construct sidewalks and/or bicycle lane in new neighborhoods and commercial developments. Amend Town's Zoning Ordinance to require installation of sidewalks and/or bicycle lanes as part of residential and non-residential developments.

5.2.2 Goal 2: STAY FAMILY ORIENTED!

5.2.2.1 Objective 1: Identify which barriers currently exist in Fairview that inhibit it from being a more family friendly community.

Strategy 1: Identify whether the following barriers exist in the Town that inadvertently inhibit it from being family-oriented including, but not limited to:

- Lack of affordable housing;
- Exclusionary and single-use zoning;
- Insensitive urban design;
- Lack of services;
- Lack of quality education;
- Lack of recreational amenities; and
- Crime.

5.2.2.2 Objective 2: Continue to support housing at affordable prices.

Strategy 1: Continue to offer practices within the Town's ability to foster development of housing at affordable prices.

5.2.2.3 Objective 3: Ensure the zoning map and the Zoning Ordinance advance interests of families in the approval process of siting child-care facilities.

Strategy 1: Review the zoning map to ascertain if zoning districts where child-care facilities are allowed are convenient to neighborhoods and employers.

Strategy 2: Ensure the Zoning Ordinance's approval process for child-care facilities balances convenience to families while ensuring compatibility to surrounding land uses.

5.2.2.4 Objective 4: Safe Neighborhoods.

Strategy 1: Identify and continue practices that consistently achieve low crime rates throughout Fairview neighborhoods.

5.2.3 Goal 3: RETAIN OUR CHARACTER!

5.2.3.1 Objective 1: Ensure development within the Town is consistent with the policies, goals, and objectives of the Plan.

GUIDING PRINCIPAL/POLICY:

- Development shall be consistent with the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and various land use categories goals/objectives adopted as part of this document.

- Existing rural development intensities shall be preserved at a minimum limit of 1 dwelling unit per acre of property or lower. In certain circumstances, the Town shall promote a lower density level in rural designated areas of the community (i.e., 1 unit for every 2.5 or 5 acres) to preserve existing natural resources as depicted on the FLUM.

5.2.3.2 Objective 2: Ensure proposed residential and non-residential development activities are similar in scope and intensity to surrounding land uses, are not out of character for the area in which they are located and are designed to strengthen the Town's identity.

5.2.3.3 Objective 3: Encourage development at appropriate densities in areas where existing services/infrastructure (i.e. water, sewer, road, stormwater, etc.) are already provided and are viable to support the project.

GUIDING PRINCIPAL/POLICY:

- Fairview's growth will be directed, through application of the future land use map and zoning map, to areas where utilities and services are already provided OR anticipated to be provided.
- It is not the intention of the Town to allow suburban or urban intensive growth community wide. Most residential development within the Town shall adhere to established rural densities.

5.2.3.4 Objective 4: Apply standards of the Zoning Ordinance to assure quality growth.

Assess whether to Zoning Ordinance addresses the community's priorities to manage growth to assure safety and quality.

5.2.3.5 Objective 5: Complete additional Small Area Plans or Master Plans of those focus areas denoted on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM).

Areas identified as 'future growth areas' on the FLUM will need additional study/analysis, including the proposed new downtown corridor.

5.2.4 Goal 4: ATTRACT BUSINESS AND IMPROVE DOWNTOWN!

5.2.4.1 Objective 1: Finalize boundaries of the identified main street district.

Strategy 1: *Encourage private investment within Fairview by updating development ordinances to encourage desired development and establish quality standards and specifications to protect the environmentally sensitive and historically relevant assets of the Town.*

Strategy 2: *Complete an Assessment of Required Review Procedures. Existing development review procedures, standards and specifications shall be evaluated and updated in an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to ensure compliance with the adopted Plan to maximize development of a new downtown core.*

5.2.4.2 Objective 2: Support existing businesses and encourage additional businesses outside the downtown area that complement and not compete with downtown.

Strategy 1: *Complete a comprehensive study on the redevelopment of the newly defined Main Street land use category into a new downtown center.*

Strategy 2: *Complete a comprehensive study on a new downtown district consistent with the adopted 2040 Town Plan. This study will assist the Town in creation of a new Main Street (MS) downtown district (See Objective 3 for more detail).*

Strategy 3: *Ensure Town standards and specifications encourage growth and expansion of businesses. The Town should consider writing and adopting Zoning Ordinance Amendments to identify different commercial zoning districts with varying permitted uses and development standards.*

5.2.4.3 Objective 3: Preserve the small-town appeal of the newly defined downtown district while encouraging compatible business growth through development of revised development standards and specifications.

Strategy 1: *Create a Main Street District (MS) through zoning standards and specifications designed to allow existing business to grow and encourage compatible new development. As indicated on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), an area deserving additional study is the corridor along US Highway 601 near the existing Town Hall allowing for the creation of a true downtown development district. Careful consideration will go into the preparation of design standards and specifications that reinforce the small town feel through*

an understanding of architectural and urban design principles that direct the placement and massing of structures.

Attention will be also given to what may be considered the public realm, typically composed of streets, sidewalks, and civic spaces, to help guide the Town's decision-making of details when investing in light posts, outside furniture, landscaping and sidewalk surfaces.

Strategy 2: *Give attention during preparation of the new Main Street District (MS) to address development standards of adjacent properties and streets. As the new Main Street increases in development interest and popularity as a destination for commerce, entertainment and civic events, it is important to allow adjacent areas to have the option to transition to new uses that may offer supportive roles through the service sector, such as professional offices, while remaining compatible to adjacent residential uses. This transition also helps add to the number of employees and the private-sector clients who may become frequent patrons of restaurants and businesses along Main Street. Dismissive planning of support areas to Main Streets inadvertently restricts the primary destination streets from maximizing their potential in retaining the community-cherished small-town feel.*

Existing land use regulations can be modified to provide flexibility allowing access for parking, deliveries and other utilitarian functions at mid-blocks serving the needs of the proposed new downtown general use zoning district.

Strategy 3: *Incorporate a sense of small-town ambiance in public infrastructure. Details within the public realm of a town can be as important as the privately-owned buildings themselves for maintaining a tangible small-town look. When the Town of Fairview is tasked with selecting sidewalks, outside furniture, utility posts and even landscaping, the Town should have a pre-selected palette of elements from which to order that are in harmony with the small-town ambiance.*

Strategy 4: *Give attention during preparation of the Zoning Ordinance standards applicable to downtown to address adjacent properties and streets. It is important to allow adjacent areas to have the option to transition to new uses that may offer supportive roles through the service sector, such as professional offices, while remaining compatible to adjacent single-family uses. This transition also helps add to the number of employees and the private-sector clients who may become frequent patrons of restaurants and businesses along Main Street. Dismissive planning of support areas to Main Streets inadvertently restricts the primary destination streets from maximizing their potential in retaining the community-cherished small-town feel. The Zoning Ordinance can provide flexibility to allow access for parking, deliveries and other utilitarian functions at mid-blocks.*

5.2.4.4 **Objective 4: Have a good plan and ordinances so projects achieve the mission of the plan.**

Strategy 1: Adopt Town Plan 2040 to establish Fairview as a successful community and a partner in the future growth and re-development of the

area. Establishing a clear vision and the action steps to achieve the goals established by the Town is the first task toward a bright future.

Strategy 2: Prepare and adopt amendments to the Zoning Ordinance establishing standards and specifications for new development and re-development consistent with Town Plan 2040. *Relevant modern development standards will establish Fairview as a leader in central North Carolina in proactively seeking to refresh itself into a 21st century community (See 8.5).*

5.2.4.5 Objective 5: Adopt standards and specifications and take actions that attract new businesses within downtown with higher development and code enforcement standards to assure quality development.

Strategy 1: *Ensure the Zoning Ordinance encourages investment in downtown Fairview. The Ordinance should integrate architectural design standards and enhanced enforcement requirements.*

Strategy 2: *Improve way-finding throughout the Town to enhance the visitor experience. Local directional signage will help guide the visitor to the concentration of shopping, services, accommodations, and food/beverage businesses in Fairview. The Town should consider incorporating the newly designed branding into way-finding signs.*

5.2.4.6 Objective 6: Foster growth in local-craft businesses.

Strategy 1: Adopt Zoning Ordinance amendments with standards and specifications that respond to challenges associated with expanding and attracting local-craft businesses in downtown Fairview. *Restaurants, artisan specialty shops, and entrepreneurs producing products high in craftsmanship within proximity to each other will generate interest and establish Fairview as a destination.*

Ensure the Ordinance acknowledges the fiscal challenges a start-up business would have if required to develop property under the same conventional standards and specifications as a national retailer regarding minimum lot area, building setbacks, minimum parking and other site development standards.

Adopt standards and specifications that allow conversions of existing structures into new uses, encourage shared parking, and provide flexibility in building setbacks to respond to unique lot dimensions.

Adopt administrative review procedures sensitive to challenges faced by local craft businesses to improve their successful start-up in Fairview.

5.2.4.7 Objective 7: Identify shared parking opportunities for downtown businesses.

Strategy 1: *Future amendments to the Zoning Ordinance should be prepared that encourage shared parking in downtown Fairview for businesses that have different hours of parking demands. The land area and cost to develop parking is a large cost of land development that could be reduced*

if shared parking is allowed. The Ordinance should allow rear alleys downtown that provide standards that allow businesses to provide rear parking as well as allowing shared parking with other businesses of complementary hours will be recommended.

5.2.5 Goal 5: PROVIDE FOR MORE NATURAL AREAS AND ATTRACT MORE THINGS TO DO!

5.2.5.1 Objective 1: Develop a master park and recreation plan for the Town of Fairview.

Strategy 1: *Explore available sites for future Town parks or expansion of existing park facilities.*

Strategy 2: *Explore development of community wide greenway/natural trail system to ensure pedestrian access throughout the Town.*

5.2.5.2 Objective 2: Explore existing town-owned property and property the Town could acquire or lease for community events.

Strategy 1: *Explore existing town-owned properties the Town could repurpose or new property the town could acquire to construct public plazas for community events. Through the development process, new park plazas and amenities could be coordinated for operation by the Town and/or community partners. Utilizing new property tax revenues can partially fund civic spaces and a community event planning position as development occurs.*

5.2.5.3 Objective 3: Program the installation of cohesive place-making elements throughout civic spaces to help achieve synergy among existing and future businesses.

5.2.5.4 Objective 4: Amend the Zoning Ordinance to require new residential developments to develop neighborhood parks/recreational areas as part of the development process.

Strategy 1: *Encourage development of neighborhood parks for use by residents.*

Strategy 2: *Encourage and promote linking these recreation areas through natural trails/greenway systems.*

5.2.6 Goal 6: COME TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY!

5.2.6.1 Objective 1: Encourage community events co-hosted by Fairview businesses and the Town.

Strategy 1: Provide businesses with periodic Town support staff and resources to attract residents and visitors to Fairview for events (i.e., parades, Veterans Day ceremonies, holiday events, and concerts) to increase pride in the community and raise exposure to local businesses.

5.2.6.2 Objective 2: Plan for the development of outdoor civic event spaces.

Strategy 1: Explore properties the Town could lease for the construction of public plazas for community events.

5.2.6.3 Objective 3: Identify opportunities to add parks as the number of neighborhoods grow.

Strategy 1: Explore properties the Town could acquire to construct public parks.

Strategy 2: Identify opportunities for new development to provide parks in their plans.

5.2.6.4 Objective 4: Pedestrian Pathways.

Strategy 1: Require developers construct sidewalks in new neighborhoods and commercial developments.

Strategy 2: Prepare, fund, and implement a sidewalk master plan so the town may start budgeting toward building a sidewalk system connecting existing and future neighborhoods to schools and town amenities.

5.2.7 Goal 7: KEEP CRIME LOW!

5.2.8 Goal 8: CLEAN UP OUR TOWN!

5.2.8.1 Objective 1: Continue to Enforce and strengthen property maintenance standards.

Strategy 1: Enforce Existing Garbage-Related Ordinances. Enforce existing standards regarding dumpster maintenance, homeowner trash receptacles, and private garbage hauling.

Strategy 2: Strengthen Property Maintenance Standards. Adopt and enforce stronger property maintenance standards in future amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

5.2.8.2 Objective 2: Assign staff member(s) to monitor and coordinate roadside litter pickup efforts among participating civic and community organizations.

Strategy 1: Coordinate litter pickup locations and efforts within the Town of Fairview between Town staff, Union County, NCDOT, and volunteer civic and community organizations.

Strategy 2: The Town of Fairview should explore the creation of an “Adopt-A-Street” volunteer program within the town limits to tangibly demonstrate civic pride, contribute to a cleaner environment, help retain and attract economic development, and serve as a reminder to the public not to litter the roadways.

Strategy 3: The Town of Fairview will promote NCDOT’s existing “Adopt-A-Highway” volunteer program to attract participation within the town limits.

5.2.9 Goal 9: ADDRESS BUSINESSES PERMITTED!

5.2.9.1 Objective 1: Ensure the types of businesses permitted and their respective development standards starting at key locations (i.e., at Town’s major entrances, along major roadways, and at Fairview’s main intersections): improves visitors’ first impressions; strengthens the Town’s identity as having a modern and healthy economy; and attracts customers from within and outside of Fairview.

Strategy 1: The existing zoning map and the existing Zoning Ordinance should be evaluated, and where necessary amended, to ensure Town staff, property owners, interested developers, the Planning Board, and the Town Council have a clear path forward in investment and rezoning decisions

consistent with the Future Land Use Map and this and other related goals, objectives and strategies.

Strategy 2: As a complement to Strategy 1, ensure the types of businesses that are NOT permitted at key locations (i.e., at Town's major entrances, along major roadways, and at Fairview's main intersections), yet are valued as convenient and necessary to sustain our local economy, have options to locate at strategically planned locations to ensure their ability to locate, relocate, potentially expand, and thrive among compatible land uses.

(This space left blank intentionally)

6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As previously indicated within this document, the Town is located within the Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), an area whose population has increased in recent decades and is projected to continue within the next 20 to 30 years.

Although the Town was not formally incorporated until 2002, the area known as Fairview was initially established in in the late 1700's/early 1800's as a hub for agriculture and supporting commercial development. Since that time, the development of the town has inextricably been linked to the local agriculture community.

6.1 Why Focus on Economic Development

Economic development is critical to a community for two reasons: 1) to provide an employment and income base for the community; and 2) to enable a community's leadership to maintain the lowest reasonable rates for taxpayers.

Effective economic development starts with the latter. Prudent management procedures for the efficient and effective operations of both utility enterprises and tax revenue systems will ensure that all money due to both the Town and the County is collected.

6.1.1 Property Tax Strategy and Other Taxes Collected

The maintenance of low property (ad valorem) tax rates always begins with the prudent and effective management of reporting and collecting the other revenue sources towns receive to reduce reliance on property taxes. Emphasis on effective data reporting enables the retrieval of several types of taxes already paid by our citizens and businesses every day that can easily be overlooked in the absence of effective reporting practices.

The Utility Franchise Tax is a tax on utility billings collected by electric, gas, telecommunications and cable television companies that is distributed back to the Town by the respective utility. If the utility companies do not have current information reflecting the Town's boundaries, then inaccurate reporting to the State by the utility company results in reduced distributions to the Town by the State.

State sales tax distributions to the Town are controlled by the County. The sales taxes collected and redistributed within a county may return to the Town by either population or property valuation-based formulas - determined in North Carolina by the local County Commissioners. This system is a counter-productive system in that counties often compete with towns for growth so they may keep a larger share of sales tax distributions to be shared locally. The only effective role a town may have in successfully growing its recovery of the sales tax collected by local businesses is through the careful management of the utility enterprises. Provision of stormwater, potable water, and sanitary sewer has a profound effect on the location of businesses; and towns that manage their systems with an emphasis on return on investment can improve their share of local sales tax recovered by supporting growth within the boundaries of the town.

Property taxes are the major source of local discretionary funding for routine services such as recreation, sanitation, public safety and administration.

Maximizing the recovery of the taxes already collected by the state can reduce the level of taxation required of property owners.

6.1.2 Jobs and Economic Base

The economic base of a community is the collective group of business activities that bring money into the Town by providing a product or service. As detailed in Section 3.5.1 of this Document, the category of “*Management, Business, Sciences, and Arts*” occupations has been the top sector in recent years bringing money into Fairview, followed by “*Sales and Office*” occupations.

The non-basic sectors including commercial development (driven by residential development) are typically that part of the local economy providing services and products sought by the basic sector workers and others, such as the dry cleaners, pharmacy, grocery store and repair service businesses. When “travel and tourism” is part of the economic base, many businesses serve both purposes; restaurants are a good example because they serve both local and non-local customers routinely. “Hotels and other hospitality” businesses can serve both the tourism and corporate sector of our future economic base.

The economic base establishes a true purpose for the community. The jobs created by the basic sector businesses are the obvious direct benefit of the economic base. Jobs are critical because much of the impact of the economic base depends on how well money is distributed throughout the community, and jobs are the primary method of distribution. Automation often tends to allow economic activity to skim over the surface of a community and not have as deep an impact. One way to maximize a positive economic impact of the local economic base sector business community is to establish local relationships with companies and enterprises to provide as much local support and local resources as possible to increase distributions of wealth locally.

Increases in the value of local properties by infill development and redevelopment of under-utilized areas help lower property taxes for all taxpayers, further improving the local return on the investments made in existing infrastructure (see Section 6.1.2 of this document).

6.2 Current Economic Profile - Conventional Sectors

6.2.1 Production, Transportation, and Material Moving

As detailed herein, the largest number of the Town’s citizens in the workforce are employed in the “*Management, Business, Sciences, and Arts*” occupations, making up 37.5% of the workforce. The category with the most local employment is “*Sales and Office*” occupations, making up 22.3% of the workforce followed by *Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations* (14.9%). (See Table 3.5.1 in Section 3 of this Document)

These occupation groups are all commercial in nature and show that the commercial sector is not only the key to Fairview’s success, but these sectors will flourish when given the proper business climate and innovative options to attract attention. The updating of local zoning standards and specifications, as discussed in Section 8, will improve the business community’s options for innovative development.

A healthy commercial services sector is critical to support strong industry; therefore, practical standards and specifications such as zoning rules and non-residential property maintenance codes must be administered to support the sector.

Standards and specifications must be updated to protect property rights while preserving natural resources and establishing reasonable standards for enhancing the appearance of all new development and redevelopment.

Equally important to updating the Fairview development ordinances is professional administration to ensure equal and fair treatment to all Fairview's businesses and citizens. Proper implementation will enhance these industries and occupations, allowing them to become more prosperous.

6.2.2 Educational Services, Health Care, Social Assistance and Manufacturing

Educational services, health care, social assistance and manufacturing have been important to Fairview's historic growth. These businesses represent a vital sector in Fairview's area economy, providing jobs for many residents. *(See Table 3.5.1 in section 3 of this document for data within the corporate limits)*

6.3 Importance of the Infrastructure Networks

Infrastructure, including water, sewer, electricity, natural gas, telecommunications, high-speed internet, roads, railroads, and airports make up the core infrastructure for a community. These networks often seem unrelated; however, lack of coordination between these unique systems can result in poor decisions regarding land use development.

Municipal utilities such as water, stormwater, sewer, streets, sidewalks and greenways generally represent most hard structure utilities. These utilities generally are based upon the network of streets and roads.

Non-municipal services such as electric, telecommunications, natural gas and broadband fiber generally utilize flexible conduits for their conveyances. These service providers are typically located within or adjacent to public street and road right-of-way and therefore utilize much of the same network for distribution.

Coordination among these various service providers, as well as other governmental counterparts such as the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Union County and other providers, is also vital to efficient operations of Fairview's utilities and public works functions. Conducting periodic meetings to review planned improvements and proposed developments by private development interests can often improve the level of service to all of Fairview's businesses and citizens by identifying opportunities for cost savings through coordination. Inclusion of representatives of these various agencies on a local technical review committee coordinated by the Town's professional planning department will reduce costs to Fairview rate and taxpayers.

Examples of cooperative initiatives may include provision of services for manufacturing facilities, where dual feed electrical supply, water, sewer, and a host of other functions can be coordinated ahead of time to ensure appropriate capacity is provided and corridor limitations are foreseen. Projects to consider should be evaluated based on merit to the

Town's utility rate and taxpayers.

6.4 Existing Business Retention and Expansion

Diverse businesses including resilient job creators, specialty markets, professional services, health professionals, and food and beverage establishments supplemented by small industry, craftsmanship, and artistic endeavors (both for-profit and non-profit) will be required if Fairview is to refresh its local purpose in the region.

Without this emphasis, the Town risks becoming commercially stagnant.

For existing business to remain healthy and expand, it is vital that careful land use planning and the Town's Zoning Ordinance has standards and specifications that allow expansion while consciously assessing compatibility between land uses and when incompatibility exists or may exist with expansion, that business have attractive options of where they may locate within the Town of Fairview.

6.5 Tourism, Travel and Hospitality

Projects that enhance the tourism experience in Fairview should be considered and programmed into capital budgets over time to stimulate a continuation of new investment (both public and private) for the ever-changing tourism based industry.

6.5.1 Heritage Tourism

Heritage Tourism is defined by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as "traveling to experience the places, artifacts and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes cultural, historic, and natural resources." It is one of the fastest growing segments of the tourism and hospitality industry overall, and a major focus of the [State of North Carolina's tourism promotion](#) efforts.

Opportunities for the growth of Heritage Tourism include businesses that provide support services for artists and craftspeople. Such businesses include tool and musical instrument repair, wholesale, retail, and distribution of specialty materials used in the creative arts (weaving, basket-making, blacksmithing, pottery, woodworking, etc.), and services provided to residents and tourists such as demonstrations, guided tours, private lessons, and programming for public institutions and private and non-profit entities.

6.5.2 Recreation and Parks

As previously detailed herein, the Town has regional park facilities supporting residents and visitors. The Town benefits from several regional parks and historic sites throughout the region and should find additional opportunities to expand park development as a means of attracting potential economic development activities.

6.6 Manufacturing

Leadership boards of local government, both municipal and county, traditionally feel an obligation to emphasize traditional manufacturing; however, traditional manufacturing may only be a small part of the future economy of Fairview and most other small towns.

Traditional manufacturing blends traditional manufacturing with forward thinking values of naturally sourced and locally produced materials to produce tangible goods for a value-added industry.

While these traditional opportunities do exist, Fairview must recognize there are also pitfalls to placing all hope on 'traditional industry' – a sector that may inevitably employ humans to manage facilities that are designed for a specific level and duration of productivity. The reality is that smaller facilities are often the disposable ones. Larger facilities require a larger investment and typically are considered long-term commitments.

Technological innovation and globalism are fueling transformational change in both our cultural and business environments as discussed below.

6.6.1 Economic Transformation

An increasingly mobile workforce is utilizing digital, web-based technology – the ubiquitous 'mobile app' – that enables a business owner or employee to work from anywhere.

The COVID-19 global pandemic that emerged in late 2019 and continues to persevere through mid-2022 led to many employees to remain home, at least temporarily, to help reduce the spread of the virus. Employees who were fortunate enough to remain employed while working from home replaced face-to-face meetings with computer-based meeting platforms, such as Zoom.

As mentioned in an article entitled, "[What is the Future of Cities](#)," appearing in NPR's Planet Money on May 19, 2020, author Greg Rosalsky reported how some major companies signaled that remote work from home is here to stay. The article quotes Harvard University professor Ed Glaeser, whom Rosalsky calls the leading scholar of urban economics, as saying that, at least in the short run, how large dense cities, having large employment centers, may suffer in the foreseeable future, while companies open small offices in more affordable lower-density midsized cities where employees may work remotely, once the pandemic is over.

Many jobs are no longer tied to a specific location. Anyone with a Smartphone and an idea can become an entrepreneur. As stated above, technological innovation and globalism are fueling transformational change in the cultural and business environment.

Opportunities for Fairview in this new economic realm are directly related to the 'quality of place' issues that are explored throughout this Plan, while recognizing tourism, crafts, and other natural resource-based sectors. When employers, innovators and entrepreneurs can choose to live and work anywhere, it is quality of place – in addition to the basics of infrastructure and support services – that is

often the deciding factor.

Fairview has the attributes to successfully compete in this age of global commerce. The Town can glean from other proven economic development strategies and build its foundation by retaining young talent and attracting innovators from the greater region and around the country.

6.6.1.1 APP Based Economy

The ‘app-based’ economy isn’t just creating a new digital platform for freelance work. It is spawning a host of new economic activity. For example, more than a million ‘makers’ sell jewelry, clothing, craft supplies and tools, and all manner of home goods and accessories through the online marketplace.

6.6.1.2 GIG Economy

The GIG economy is part of a shifting cultural and business environment fueled by technological innovation and globalism. An increasingly mobile workforce is utilizing digital, web-based technology that enables employees to work from anywhere, so that jobs are no longer tied to a specific location. Companies such as Uber, Lyft, and AirBnB are examples of this emergent realm.

The workforce of this new ‘gig’ economy largely consists of freelance ‘independent contractors’ who can select among temporary jobs, referred to as ‘[gigs](#)’ (hence the term), and short-term projects from anywhere in the world. Likewise, employers can select the best individuals for specific projects from a ‘global’ labor pool and are no longer confined to any given area.

Opportunities for Fairview in the GIG Economy are directly related to the speed and quality of digital connectivity and the ‘quality of place’ issues that are explored throughout this Plan.

6.7 Economic Development Opportunities

Several opportunities exist for Fairview to re-establish a strong economic base. The following topics focus on first steps for advancing in the ‘21st Century’.

6.7.1 Innovation Districts

Innovation Districts are an outgrowth of the culture and technology driving today’s economic transformation. Instead of focusing economic development efforts on isolated campuses or business parks, Innovation Districts focus on clustering start-ups and incubators in compact, amenity-rich areas (i.e., walkable downtowns, mixed use districts, etc.) where a mix of entrepreneurs work in collaborative spaces and share knowledge and resources (a staple of the ‘Shared Economy’).

Existing incentive programs would be paired with a partnership of ‘innovation cultivators’ – the companies, organizations, and other groups that support the growth of individuals, firms, and their ideas. They include incubators, small business and technology development centers, community colleges, local high schools, job training firms and others advancing specific skill sets for the innovation-driven economy. The initial focus should be a future downtown ‘cluster’ of businesses utilizing available properties, beginning with development of a single ‘innovation space’, or business incubator.

6.7.2 Home-based Businesses

Technological innovations make it imperative to re-examine and update zoning provisions that limit or prohibit work at home. The Town should analyze the content and impact of existing standards and specifications with an attitude toward implementation and enforcement that encourages entrepreneurship, creativity, and individual expression while protecting neighborhood residential character.

6.7.3 Small Business Incubator

The Town should explore the necessary public-private partnerships and funding sources to plan and develop business incubators in available manufacturing space. The incubator's mission would be to recruit, develop, and stimulate entrepreneurial talent in the region in order to foster economic growth, strengthen and diversify the local economy, and create new jobs. For example, a partnership-funded non-profit organization would lease (or own) a building that provides support services such as high-speed broadband internet, utilities, reception, and security, along with amenities like audio-visual equipment, conference rooms, and distance-learning capability. A collaborative effort with the community college could offer support systems such as business plan and marketing strategy development, technical assistance, funding proposal preparation, and more.

6.7.4 Collaboration and Regional Partners

Economic development has been a major element of regional initiatives in recent years. All contain a host of economic development strategies to achieve the goals of job creation, talent retention, and entrepreneurship. The Town should take a leadership role in implementing those strategies that will help the community benefit from its world-class natural and cultural resources by tapping the technological potential of the 21st century economy, opening Fairview and the region to the global marketplace.

6.8 Economic Development *ACTION ITEMS!*

The economic development opportunities Fairview enjoys clearly fit into three categories. These are described as "Immediate", "Programmable" and "Opportunity".

6.8.1 Immediate Action Items:

The following immediate action items should be prioritized to accomplish in earnest. These items are intended to begin producing immediate results and improve the personality of Fairview as a community addressing its goals.

6.8.1.1 Eliminate obstacles to the goals set by the Town in this plan.

Clearly identify opportunities and obstacles within local zoning policies to encourage business attraction, retention and expansion. Ensure walkable options for visitors requiring flexible alternatives. Establish clear signage standards to alleviate clutter and establish fairness among businesses. Establish opportunistic standards for business types in manufacturing, commercial service, and home-based business sectors to stimulate opportunity while establishing specifications for development to protect these investments, neighborhoods and the environment as mutual benefactors. Standards and specifications must be evaluated to support additional action items below.

6.8.1.2 Promote Fairview as a “base camp” for travelers.

Promotion of Fairview as a host community and base camp for individuals and groups seeking access to a variety of food/beverage choices will clearly set Fairview apart from other communities catering to these visitors.

6.8.1.3 Promote Fairview as a location for modern manufacturing mated with a rural adventure lifestyle.

Promote Fairview as a community for entrepreneurs of forward-thinking business enterprises seeking both a rural community and adventure (active outdoors) lifestyle setting near urban amenities.

6.8.2 Programmable Action items:

The following programmable action items should be assigned to specific teams or departments to develop the ways and means to accomplish the tasks.

6.8.2.1 Install local way-finding signage.

Local directional signage will help guide the visitor to the concentration of automotive services, motorcycle services, accommodations, and food/beverage businesses in Fairview.

6.8.2.2 Establish partnerships.

Resources for collaboration and support of economic development initiatives are not always consolidated into one neat package. The resources in North Carolina flow into communities and regions through multiple agencies. Organizing strategic interagency partnerships and participating in effective ways often becomes cumbersome; therefore, identifying the best partnerships and managing effective relationships among those partnerships should be a defined responsibility of either the Town Manager or Town Planning Administrator.

The Town should explore the necessary public-private partnerships and funding sources to plan and develop business incubators and available manufacturing space.

6.8.3 Opportunity Based Action items:

The following opportunity-based action items will require continuous planning and forethought to recognize opportunities to act.

6.8.3.1 Support growth and expansion of eco-tourism businesses.

Support for growth and expansion of both existing and new businesses serving the motoring tourist with overnight and seasonal housing accommodations, RV camping (not as a permanent residence), base camp facilities, extended vehicle parking, outfitters, outpatient medical services, automotive services/repairs, and food/beverage services located within proximity to one another.

6.8.3.2 Establish criteria for financial participation in opportunities to expand the job and property tax base through strategic expansion of infrastructure.

Establish clear criteria for expansion of infrastructure (broadband, stormwater, potable water and sewer systems) based upon measurable benefits and a “return on investment” business model. Criteria should also include contingency factors for public health and welfare needs when potable water and sanitary sewer needs are critical.

7. INFRASTRUCTURE

7.1 Water and Sewer Utility Systems

As previously indicated herein, the Town of Fairview is solely reliant on individual/private utility systems (well and septic systems) to manage utility needs. Study efforts are on-going to focus on regional solution to public utility provision, which the Town will continue to participate in.

General Action Item: The Town will continue to participate in study efforts to identify regional utility infrastructure options but will not move forward with individual efforts due to budget and permitting constraints. The Town will continue, for the foreseeable future, to rely on private utility infrastructure (well and septic) to address utility needs.

7.2 Transportation Network

Recognizing trends and how peoples' preferences can and do change over time will enable Fairview to position itself as a welcoming community for multiple generations into the future. This approach to planning reinforces the community's desire to create a place where younger people will desire to locate and remain, while aging members will choose to age in place. This can be achieved by creating and sustaining a transportation system that is successful in meeting both the existing and anticipated needs of a diverse community that multiple generations will find attractive by including transportation options and choices that are safe, attractive and convenient.

One of the most common components of the transportation network and most visible characteristics of a neighborhood is the *street*, often taken for granted even though it can change everything about a neighborhood. The street strongly influences how people behave in their community. The following questions are presented to stimulate thoughts about neighborhood streets as an example of how important this simple concept is.

- Does the street have room to pass another car?
- Does the street have room for a visitor or emergency vehicle to park in front of a home or business?
- Does the street feature ditches or curbing for drainage?
- Does the street include sidewalks along its route?

The answers to these questions clearly define the character of the neighborhood, *for example*: neighborhood streets lined with ditches for storm-water conveyance will cause people to walk in the street just to visit a neighbor, or they may even give cause for residents to choose to drive a block away to visit that neighbor.

By contrast, neighborhood streets containing curbing with sidewalks set back from the curb encourage people to spend time outside to walk or play together. Streets designed properly provide a place to learn to skate or ride a bike. The street with sidewalks becomes the neighborhood's central gathering place, where multiple generations of citizens associate in many ways. The properly designed street will change the characteristics of human behavior and contribute to improved and healthy lifestyles. How many times have you heard concerns about kids not getting enough exercise? Well, maybe our streets have not helped much with that problem. We can do better. We can

improve the quality of neighborhoods in many ways.

Beyond the neighborhood street is a network of collector streets, often called arterials. These collector streets or arterials connect the neighborhood streets to the thoroughfares and highways that bring us all together. Streets also provide our principal connections to other modes such as airports and railroads. The following information about our transportation network and the actions we can take locally to improve how this network serves Fairview's citizens and businesses will provide the foundation for many decisions facing the Town.

7.2.1.1 Road and Highway Specific Action Steps

Areas of Town have been identified and designated on the Future Land Use Map for Commercial land uses as these areas should be encouraged to be redeveloped or enhanced as vacant or underperforming properties are replaced. (See sections 8.4.1 and Figure 8.4.1 of this document.) A few of these areas should receive more in-depth analysis of the roads and highways that serve them to identify necessary design and engineering improvements.

The intersection of US Highway 601 and NC Highway 218 should be studied for possible enhancement and redevelopment including pedestrian modes of transportation access (i.e. sidewalks and bicycles). Attention will need to be given to the location of driveway entrances to move them as far from the intersection as possible since this area may begin to experience traffic congestion if additional redevelopment activity occurs in the downtown area. This may even include installation of a full traffic signal at the existing intersection.

This intersection should also be studied with the goal of seeking funds to improve safety by installing high visibility and/or contrasting pedestrian crossings.

The Town should continue to foster reinvestment and infill development in the downtown area through roadway and sidewalk improvements.

7.2.2 Aviation

The closest airports to the Town are:

- Concord-Padget Regional Airport – 33 miles;
- Stanley County Airport – 47 miles;
- Charlotte-Douglass International Airport – 46 miles.

7.2.2.1 Aviation Specific Action Steps

The Town of Fairview will continue to cooperate with the local and regional partners for non-residentially zoned sites supporting development activities looking for proximity to local airport facilities.

7.2.3 Bicycle and Pedestrian

7.2.3.1 Bicycle Facilities

The Town of Fairview currently does not include designated bicycle facilities nor bike lanes within the Town limits.

7.2.3.2 Pedestrian Facilities

Currently, there are very few sidewalks within the corporate limits. As such, intersections throughout the Town limits, including downtown, do not include marked crosswalks or pedestrian cross signals. The Town's development standards do not require installation of sidewalks in residential subdivisions.

7.2.3.3 Bicycle and Pedestrian Specific Action Steps

Within the Zoning Ordinance, the Town should establish specifications for adequate street construction by developers for both bicycle and pedestrian safety.

7.2.4 Transit Service

7.2.4.1 Transit Service Action Steps

7.2.4.2 ¹

¹ NFOCUS looking for feedback.

(This space left blank intentionally)

8. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

8.1 Analysis of Existing Land Use and Development Patterns – *Where to Begin!*

Fairview is not unlike many other small towns in the Carolinas in that it experienced much of its transformation during the later half of the 20th Century when the industrial expansion led to better paying jobs and when increased automobile ownership enhanced individual mobility, while the inter-city and intra-city highway network was greatly expanded. The dramatic impact of this combination on American cities and towns was not foreseen and the problems associated with rapidly changing communities that followed led to long periods of decline in their once-vibrant core downtown areas.

Most existing land uses are comprised of single-family residences. Along US Highway 601 and NC Highway 281 there are pockets of non-residential developments providing local job opportunities.

What is known currently as the ‘future Main Street’ area, as depicted on the current Future Land Use Map, is an untapped resource. While dominated by residential dwelling units, the area includes several undeveloped parcels that could support non-residential development and help to create a community core area.

8.2 The Plan - *What do we want our community to be? How do we get there?*

8.2.1 Housing Growth

Recognizing trends and how market dynamics can and do change will enable Fairview to position itself as a welcoming community for multiple generations looking at buying or renting a home. This approach to planning reinforces the community’s desire to create a place where younger people will desire to locate, while aging members will choose to remain. A community where both the new and existing home markets are attractive to future generations and allow for aging members of the community to remain in the community by offering a variety of housing products.

According to contemporary real estate experts, the “50+” real estate market is changing. In the next few years, Generation X will be joining the Boomers and Matures; serving the 50+ market will become a challenging puzzle for both communities and the real estate industry.

8.2.2 Commercial/non-residential Growth

As with the housing markets, ever changing trends in consumption, product development, technology and generational shifts in personal choices/values must be considered when making decisions about commercial and other non-residential growth. This approach to planning reinforces the community’s desire to create a place where younger people will desire to locate, while aging members will choose to remain. A community, where traditional values accompany craftsmanship must embrace the presence of technology in everyday life, commerce, and business.

To grow commercial and non-residential offerings a community must create opportunities for success. The first step is to promote interest in both residents

and visitors alike. By increasing the presence of people in commercial setting, the critical mass necessary for businesses to sustain themselves will ensure vibrancy as the tourism visitors flow into and through the community. To accomplish this, the local zoning ordinance in existence at the time of this plan adoption must be repealed and replaced with development standards and specifications to promote refreshing internal growth.

8.3 Existing Land Use Issues – *Recognizing the Problems of our Past.*

A plan, any plan, is only as good as the community's commitment to implement.

While implementation strategies vary widely depending on the specific goals and objectives, many strategies will often include some form of incentive, motivation, criteria, or specifications for new growth, development and construction.

Throughout various sections of this document there are descriptions of incentives and motivations offering opportunities for success; however, a plan can fail when the criteria and specifications are inconsistent with the plan. The following subsections describe the challenges Fairview faces with policies in effect at the time of adoption of this plan.

The discussion continues in sections 8.4 and 8.5 of this document with insight into recommended new approaches to refreshing Fairview's economy and stimulating investment in the community's future. These recommended policy changes are designed to achieve the goals, objectives, and successes noted and illustrated in this plan.

As a prelude to the discussion, Jonathan Coppage, a visiting senior fellow at the 'R Street Institute' researching urbanism and civil society posted an article challenging leadership to re-think how we administer and regulate development. The following excerpts are from his article posted by the American Planning Association October 20, 2016.

“Establishing by-right development and streamlining local permitting processes will allow developers to respond nimbly to market demands and will relieve the “guilty until proven innocent” status of new building development, which depresses construction starts across the country by [delaying and inhibiting](#) housing projects. What’s more, adopting leaner codes would remove obstacles to the countless smaller developers and would-be builders who want to invest in strengthening their local communities, but currently can’t afford to navigate the vast regulatory burdens and uncertain futures awaiting anyone who tries to build in America today. Trulia economist Ralph McLaughlin found that these regulatory delays may have an even bigger impact on housing production than zoning restrictions.”

“Main Street-style development — the “storefront on the first floor, apartments rented out above” style that forms the core of any older town’s historic center — is a residential building form that uses first-floor commercial space to serve community members and enliven a neighborhood. This low-rise density helps prop up the balance sheets of towns responsible for running utilities all the way out to suburban developments, as former city planner and engineer Charles Marohn [has repeatedly demonstrated](#). It also keeps a constant set of the “eyes on the street” that Jane Jacobs identified as necessary for safe streets; renters keep an ear out for burglars after business hours and shopkeepers keep the

same at bay during the day. It is, in other words, the core of any successful town-building.”

8.4 Future Land Use – *Where We’re Going Next!*

The exciting aspects of this plan are not captured by the issues we’ve faced or the problems we believe we have, but the opportunities we have before us. The opportunities to build upon our previous successes are the greatest asset the businesses and citizens of Fairview possess. This plan recognizes those attributes, identifies the community stakeholders’ goals, and crafts a vision of our future. Along with the actions we must undertake to achieve the goals stated in this document, this plan provides the foundation for systematic decision-making by businesses, citizens, prospective investors in our community, and leadership at various levels.

Simply stated, the key to our success is to increase the population of the community by reasonable numbers to increase the economic activity to a level that will support the services we desire. The three groups to focus our energy on are as follows:

- Retain our young adults by creating the hometown they dream about.
- Attract newcomers by offering the dynamic small-town feel they seek.
- Encourage opportunities for our citizens to age-in-place through local options for senior living.

Creating an attractive atmosphere in Fairview will contribute toward our efforts to attract young adults to return, to come home when they seek that long-term location to settle into. These same investments will attract the newcomers seeking a special small-town atmosphere with lifestyle opportunities they find attractive. When a community feels good about itself it shows and that will become its greatest attribute in attracting visitors who just want to be a part of it all. That’s what successful towns do, they become special by taking deliberate steps toward that goal and they reap the rewards when they do it well.

The following “steps” provide guidance for implementing the recommendations of this plan. While they are not rigid in their order, their importance is unwavering to the future success of Fairview in the 21st century.

8.4.1 Refresh Fairview by Developing Underutilized Areas “Close-in” First

Focusing attention on strategic locations to reignite interest to enhance existing commercial development can boost investment by re-thinking development in the corridors.

For example:

- Encouraging the redevelopment of the area of the Town, identified as the new downtown main street core area allowing for commercial development (i.e., retail, professional office, craft businesses, etc.) to create a new ‘commercial center’ for the Town.
- Identification of existing, underutilized, commercial areas along US Highway 601 and NC Highway 218 creating ‘commercial parks’ to allow for continued, logical, development of non-residential development to address local job needs.

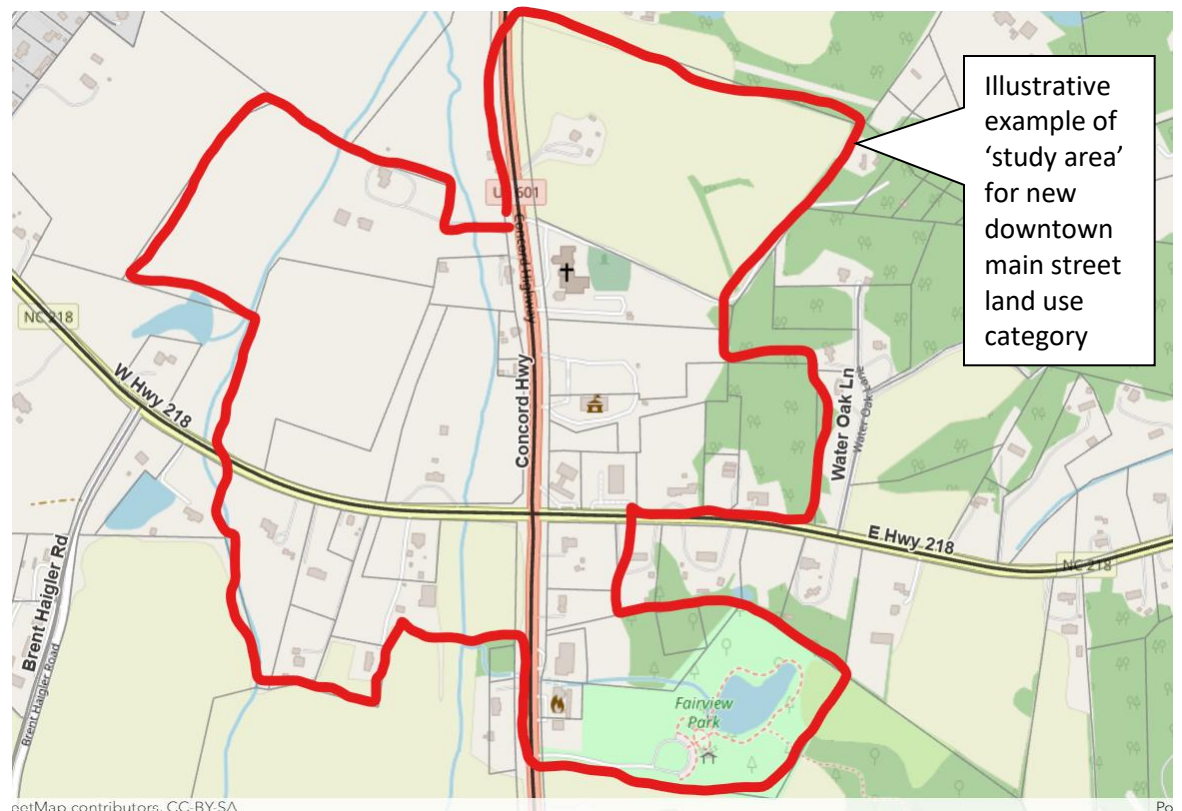
- Continued promotion of the agri-tourism economy taking advantage of the historic farm economy prevalent in the region.

Incentives to refresh and redevelop strategic sites in existing underutilized locations where existing infrastructure and location dynamics combine to support successful new investments will reinforce property values within these strategically important locations.

The **Future Land Use Map** appearing in figure 8.4.1 depicts a pattern of development to accommodate a combination of residential, non-residential and mixed-use growth and redevelopment. The map serves as the overall plan to guide decisions about future infrastructure investments and other public services for Fairview’s future growth.

Zoning changes are required by North Carolina statute to be made based upon both reasonableness and consistency with this plan.

Re-defined downtown core: As previously indicated herein, one of the recommendations of this Plan is the development of a ‘downtown main street’ core the intersection of US Highway 601 and NC Highway 281 near the existing town hall. It is also envisioned, the expanded/reimagined downtown core would connect to the existing Fairview Park to take advantage of existing recreational infrastructure.



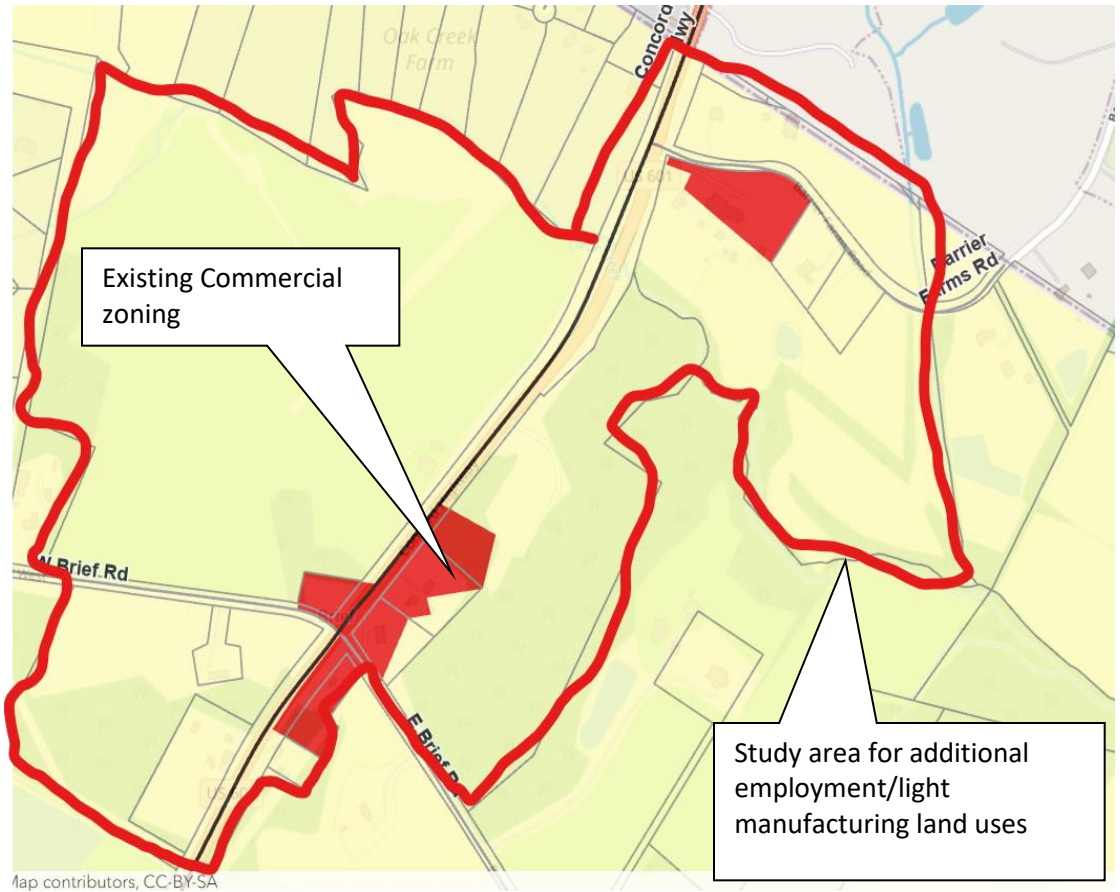
Source: Aerial photo from Union County GIS.

A community's downtown area has an important and unique role in economic and social development. Downtowns create a critical mass of activities where commercial, cultural, and civic activities are concentrated. This concentration facilitates business, learning, and cultural exchange.

Fairview has several components of what is classically defined as a downtown area but currently lacks the necessary land use regulation(s) and vision to bring to fruition.

Highway Corridors: The Town has designated several parcels along the US Highway 601 and NC Highway 218 corridors as viable for redevelopment into Commercial/Mixed Use land uses on the proposed new FLUM. The Town envisions phasing out several existing residential land uses within the corridor in support of additional non-residential development. The Town, however, will not pre-zone these properties allowing for non-residential development thereby making existing residential land uses nonconforming. New property owners will be expected to petition the Town to rezone parcel to an appropriate non-residential general use zoning designation to allow for future development.





8.4.2 Future Growth beyond the Town Limits

The outward expansion and growth of Fairview must be guided by a combination of this plan and the information gathered when examining specific development plans and proposals for the future.

When considering growth and development proposals outside Fairview's municipal limits, priority must first be given to the existing businesses and citizens and property taxpayers. The following questions should be made a part of the formal consideration of request for annexation and extension of services, whether publicly or privately funded:

- Will the project contribute to the overall wellbeing of Fairview's business and citizen well-being?
- Will the project contribute to the reduction of cost overall for services to current rate payers on the system?
- Will the project avoid the obligation of debt by the rate payer or taxpayer generated revenues in order to serve the project?

When these questions are answered by a resounding “yes”, the project is likely worthy of further consideration; however, if not, the project should be avoided.

8.5 Re-thinking Fairview's Zoning - A Common Sense Approach!

8.5.1 Planning, Zoning and Development – The Town 'Plans and Specs'

The traditional approach to land development ordinances in North Carolina was to adopt several different ordinances with individual topics based on the enabling legislation of the State.

However, today provisions have been made to combine these varied ordinances into a single or unified development ordinance or UDO as they are commonly known. The UDO approach brings everything into one, albeit lengthy, ordinance with the benefits of consolidation eliminating the confusion over administration and procedure for the business or citizen undertaking a project.

No longer would the applicant need to research separate ordinances to compile the criteria and specifications for their project. The exceptions to this consolidation or unification remain the building code governing structural, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical standards plus certain state and federal mandates governing the environment.

Within future amendments to the Town's Zoning Ordinance, the Town should accomplish two primary objectives: to modernize the Town's criteria and specifications to meet current statutory requirements, and to make certain the criteria and specifications are designed to help Fairview thrive once again.

This approach emphasizes the adopted plan and then seeks to achieve the goals of the plan. Tying the Town Plan to the Zoning Ordinance not only achieves statutory compliance but transforms the role of zoning from regulatory in nature into more of a set of criteria and specifications.

This *'plans and specs'* approach to town building improves the relationship of the Town with its businesses and citizens by establishing objectives, then administering the Zoning Ordinance to simply achieve those objectives. By using common sense policies to encourage re-use and reinvestment in Fairview, the Town can reduce tax and utility rates as the plan is implemented. This approach benefits all Fairview's businesses and citizens.

An article published in The Raleigh News & Observer, by community columnist Eric Johnson, entitled "[North Carolina's Rural Areas Need Investments that will Draw Young People.](#)" March 3, 2020, summarized the findings of a recent study conducted by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Mr. Johnson works for the UNC College Board and the College of Arts and Sciences. UNC-Chapel Hill hosted a panel of scholars and pundits to determine how college students are selected and what they choose to do with their lives. The panelists' concern is that young people go off to four years of college and emerge with no sense of obligation to their home communities. Graduates collect their diplomas and move to big cities. The article notes that a student stood up at the end of the event and asked, "I'm from a small town, why should I move back?" The article's author addressed that question by stating, "...the kind of things that draw graduates back home are the kind of things that benefit everyone: a strong sense of local identity, an openness to new ideas and new people, infrastructure that encourages connection rather than isolation."

According to the article, at the same event, Zach Mannheimer of Alchemy Community Transformations gave a fascinating talk about rethinking economic incentives. He said, "North Carolina should stop trying to recruit companies and industries and instead focus on investments that recruit *people*." "What's unique about your community?" he asked. "What can your community do to incentivize more people to come here?" The article recapped the response to that question with, "That usually means public spaces downtown, art and cultural projects that puts a singular stamp on the community, and the patience to nurture small businesses instead of pining for a big corporate savior." The article ended with, "Not everyone in North Carolina is going to live in Raleigh or Charlotte, no matter how hard we try to cram them all in. If the State is going to keep growing like ragweed, we need vibrant small towns and welcoming rural places."

The trends discussed in the report point to a need for communities to be very deliberate in how they establish development related standards and specifications, including how they implement such non-conventional approaches to stimulating investment in the community.

As described in herein, today's businesses seek "hot spots" for business location. This clustering of complementary businesses (i.e. shopping, dining, etc.) draws potential customers to locations where their interests or needs can be met. Location economists call this agglomeration. The benefit of agglomeration to the customer is both improved choices and typically better pricing of goods and services.

The best remedy for Fairview's existing underutilized commercial areas is to encourage re-use and re-development through new zoning criteria and specifications. This approach can work well provided there is a commitment to areas where the investment in infrastructure has already been made. Once the

Town has reinvigorated these areas, then growth beyond the current Town Limits should be studied to determine benefits for the Town's businesses and citizens.

Policies that promote the success of neighborhoods, businesses and civic uses alike are far more desirable to all persons involved; promote a more viable future of the community; and preserve the investments made by property owners in the community. This approach respects property rights in balance: the rights of one property owner, the rights of the adjacent or nearby property owner(s), and the interests town-wide linked to a vibrant community.

Black's Law Dictionary defines 'property rights' as ***"The rights given to the person or persons who have a right to own the property through purchase or bequest. These are basic rights in any society though absolute right for a property is rare in any society."*** Law Dictionary: [What is PROPERTY RIGHTS? Definition of PROPERTY RIGHTS \(Black's Law Dictionary\)](#)

In North Carolina, and in most states, municipalities are created for the provision of services to the benefit of its businesses, citizens and property owners. The decision to reside in proximity with others and to share in the provision of beneficial services provided by an organized local government defines the purpose of municipalities: 'to facilitate mutual benefits to those choosing to reside within a municipality'.

Therefore, municipalities inherently seek to balance property rights for the mutual benefit of those affected by the actions of the individual. This compromise on the absoluteness of property rights is therefore an understanding that rules may be enacted for the benefit of the greater community. Simply stated, when adjacent property owners must lose something of value to them for another property owner to gain, then an action or decision by that individual must not be particularly beneficial to the community. These assumptions of mutual benefit, the foundation of a municipality or community, are the basis for the establishment of rules governing development and the up keep of properties within a municipality.

The challenge becomes how well a community balances those rules with the protections of individual property rights, rather than to unreasonably suppress them.

A balanced and fair approach to the establishment of rules, standards and specifications must be the norm, not the exception. Focusing on the goals of the community rather than restricting a community out of fear or unwarranted bias must become the established culture and philosophy when making policy. The replacement of the current ordinances governing land development with professionally administered innovative policies instill trust and support for the municipality while creating greater opportunity.

8.5.2 Development Agreements

Accommodating current and projected trends requires a partnership of land development and real estate industries with local government leadership. Shifts in social values, particularly among different age groups, indicate a strong propensity to consume goods and services in vastly different ways than prior years. To meet the expectations of what consumers' desire, land development

will need to change the way it has been functioning since the 1970's. No longer do people rely solely upon the personal automobile for their daily needs. Today, generations young and old are finding new means of sharing within their daily lives as described herein. Therefore, local governments must find new ways to manage growth that is inclusive of a diverse and expectant population, development agreements are a new tool for local governments that many find effective in accomplishing new concepts.

Development agreements are a relatively new addition to the local government toolbox that has been recently modified to improve the way development specifications are established for a property. Having been authorized by the North Carolina legislature over a decade ago for the purpose of addressing larger phased developments and the need to hold entitlement to land development approvals for extended periods of time, the development agreement has opened a new avenue to creative design and town building. Section 19 of Session Law 2015-246 amended the statutes to remove the minimum size and maximum term of agreements. The changes effectively opened the window of opportunity just in time to create enormous flexibility in how new land development projects could be structured.

Today, development agreements offer a developer, landowner and the Town the ability to structure common sense approaches to projects that protect property rights and enable effective approvals and administration of projects when all sides agree. Ideally, the development agreement will not be used unwisely by local governments but will be utilized to offer higher degrees of trust. Trust, in the form of stability, eliminates concern that changes in elected local leadership will impact how a project progresses from start to finish.

The development agreement cannot substitute standards and specifications for development but can offer two substantial benefits: it can establish opportunities for participation by the local government and it can freeze zoning standards in place for the life of the agreement.

8.5.3 Ordinance Administration

The Town's Zoning Ordinance must be administered by experienced professionals to ensure protection of the rights of businesses and citizens. Such fair and unbiased administration must be proactive and seek to help these businesses and citizens achieve the successes they may seek that are consistent with both the adopted Town Plan and the Ordinance.

Proactive administration includes:

- Assisting businesses and citizens inquiring about their proposal and how their ideas fit into the comprehensive plan.
- Ensuring all inquiries enjoy all the privileges of the Zoning Ordinance.
- Providing accurate and prompt information to enable the business or citizen to rely on the information in making very important decisions.
- Identifying invalid permits and determining how to administer.
- Identifying non-conforming uses (showing on map), sending letters to describe how property rights will be preserved and limits on changes to the non-conforming use.
- Meeting with Union County Inspections Department to establish protocol for future projects.
- Preparing a guide on the “Table of Permitted Uses” to describe 1) why so extensive, 2) why include unwanted uses, and 3) how to use.
- Providing customer service functions to include Town of Fairview’s Planning Administrator administering final Certificate of Occupancy (CO) following all inspections by appropriate Town staff and County Inspections.

8.5.4 Introduction of the Future Land Use Map

The **Future Land Use Map** appearing in figure 8.6.1 depicts a pattern of development to accommodate a combination of residential, non-residential and mixed-use growth and redevelopment.

The map serves as the plan to guide decisions about future infrastructure investments and other public services for Fairview’s future growth. FLUM implementation is accomplished primarily through the application of zoning, although a variety of land use ordinances are available for various aspects of implementation. A key feature of land use planning in Fairview is the requirement for consistency between the FLUM and the application of zoning.

The FLUM defines the location of coordinated and appropriate land use classes and is designed to accommodate a particular combination of land uses that would achieve a desired pattern of development. It serves as the primary tool for staff, the Planning Board, and elected officials during review of re-zonings to ascertain the appropriateness of a development proposal and provides the development community with clear guidance to the locations where development activity may and may not be appropriate.

The **Future Land Use Map**, appearing in Figure 1, depicts a pattern of development to accommodate a combination of residential, non-residential and mixed-use growth and redevelopment.

Zoning changes are required by North Carolina statute to be made based upon both reasonableness and consistency with this plan.

There are eight basic land use categories meeting the specific development needs of Fairview:

1. **Rural:** Land in rural areas of the community appropriate for low intensity/low density residential development that is not dependent on urban services (i.e. water/sewer). The category further identifies lands used for agricultural production, agriculturally based businesses and related activities needing protection from high intensity development activity. As indicated, development activity is typically low intensity in nature to encourage preservation of agricultural lands, environmentally sensitive areas, and open space while discouraging large lot residential subdivision type developments.

NOTE: The Majority of the community falls into the Rural land use category where density is anticipated to be, at a minimum, of 1 dwelling unit per acre of property or lower. In certain areas, the Town would recommend density limits ranging from 1 unit for every 2.5 or 5 acres to ensure protection of identified environmentally sensitive areas (i.e., streams, water bodies, special flood hazard areas, wetlands, etc.).

It is the intent of the Town of Fairview, with the adoption of this plan, to preserve Rural designated areas at low intensity development levels to protect and promote the preservation of the existing 'rural' aesthetic.

2. **Transitional Neighborhood:** Land use category typically located in and around downtown providing for completion of residential neighborhoods surrounding downtown. Land located in this category is anticipated for development at urban densities and/or intensities.

The intent of the category is to recognize the need for in-fill development and the gradual transformation of existing development to high quality mixed density residential development supporting the central core of Fairview.

Higher density residential development allows a greater number of households to walk or bike, thus supporting businesses while reducing the parking demand and providing environmental and health benefits. A range of housing types (i.e. duplex, multi-family, etc.) is encouraged. Streets within the Transitional Neighborhood land use category shall be interconnected and shall typically include sidewalks and bicycle lanes providing connections to adjacent commercial and civic land uses as well as other mixed-use districts. Typically, pedestrian access shall extend into surrounding Neighborhood land use categories to help foster connectivity where appropriate. A range of housing types is encouraged. Criteria for the mix of building types establishes compatibility.

3. **Mixed Use:** The 'Mixed Use' land use category is established to provide opportunities for both compatible and sustainable re-development of both residential and non-residential land uses where underutilized commercial properties already exist as well as infill sites where site specific land planning of new development creates opportunities for businesses and various

housing designs sharing community amenities and enhancements. Land located in this category is anticipated for development at urban densities and/or intensities where urban services (i.e. water/sewer) are available. Permitted non-residential land uses are designed to augment residential land uses, not detract from them.

NOTE: Only those areas where public utilities (i.e., water and sewer) can be developed at higher intensities where density would exceed 1 dwelling unit per acre. The Town shall not allow for a rezoning to a higher density without the presence of public utilities.

As with the Transitional Neighborhood land use category, a range of housing types (i.e. duplex, multi-family, etc.) could be encouraged.

Streets shall be interconnected and shall typically include sidewalks and bicycle lanes providing connections to adjacent commercial and civic land uses as well as other mixed-use and transitional neighborhood districts.

4. **Commercial:** Providing opportunities for compatible, resilient, and sustainable non-residential development with a specific focus on retail and other similar commercial land uses. The category is typically located along major road intersections, or near major transportation routes, where urban services (i.e. water/sewer) are available.
5. **Town Center:** The Town Center land use category provides for development, revitalization, reuse, and infill development of the Fairview's downtown area. A broad array of non-residential and residential land uses is typically permitted enabling the needs of residents and visitors to be met. Land located in this category is anticipated for development at urban densities and/or intensities.

Desired development pattern(s) associated with this category seeks to integrate shops, restaurants, services, workplaces, civic, educational, and higher density housing in a compact, pedestrian-oriented environment. The Town Center land use category is intended serve as defining the 'hub' of surrounding neighborhoods and of the broader community. The existing Town Center Future Land Use area is also shown on Figure 8.4.2, Growth Opportunities Map as Catalyst Area #1. This area should receive additional studies in the future.

6. **Employment/Manufacturing:** Land in areas specifically targeted for economic development activity consisting of employment centers, industrial/manufacturing land uses, distribution centers, office, service/retail uses, and flex space (typically one-story buildings designed, constructed, and marketed as suitable for use as offices but able to accommodate other uses such as a warehouse, showroom, manufacturing assembly, or similar operations). Such areas are located adjacent to interstate/major highways where urban services (i.e. water/sewer) are available. Typically, this land use category is reserved for uses requiring very large buildings and/or large parking and loading facilities for support. Small-scale manufacturing and storage that is compatible with less intensive land uses are typically located

within the Commercial or Mixed-Use land use categories.

(This space left blank intentionally)

Figure 8.6.1 Future Land Use Map (pending)

Figure 8.6.2 Growth Opportunities Map

9. BLUEPRINT FOR FAIRVIEW - SUMMARY AND PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 Summary

The responsibility of implementing this plan lies with the Town of Fairview's Town Council. Through its leadership, this plan will serve as the blueprint for refreshing revitalizing growth. The core area of Fairview will be strengthened, opportunity for economic success will be established, and the foundation for decision making will be provided.

The tasks associated with implementation will require a steady long-term focus on achieving goals. To identify and prioritize the many tasks associated with implementation of this plan, the following table illustrates which steps to take when, and who should be responsible. These tasks are accompanied by a range of costs for overall budgeting. Seeking partnerships to share in the risk and the reward of joint ventures will improve the success and reduce the cost to the businesses and citizens of Fairview.

9.2 Actions to Implement Town Plan 2040

The information appearing in the Action Items Table 9.2 ***Blueprint for Fairview: Actions to Implement Town Plan 2040*** provides a quick reference guide format for the ultimate prioritization of the actions and recommendations of this plan.

