

# ***TOWN OF SELMA***



## ***STRATEGIC PLANNING DOCUMENT***

***MAY 13, 2008***

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>Project Overview</b> ..... <b>Tab 1</b> Who, When, How Vision Statement Strategic Plan: Introduction
<b>Chapter 2</b>	<b>What Makes Selma Special: Strengths and Opportunities ...</b> <b>Tab 2</b> Proud History Location Friendly and Caring Community Entertainment and Recreation Economy and Commerce
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>Challenges for the Future: Weaknesses and Threats</b> ..... <b>Tab 3</b> Reputation Appearance Community Spirit/Pride Communication with Town Leaders Downtown Retail Diversity Lack of Local Job Opportunities Housing Grow Tax Base Crime No Plans to Guide and Manage Future Growth Growth in Surrounding Towns Will Provide More Attractive Enticements to Families and Businesses
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives and Recommended Actions</b> ..... <b>Tab 4</b> Create a Town Appearance that Appeals to Current and Potential Citizens, Businesses and Tourists Ensure a Healthy Quality of Life that Equals or Exceeds Surrounding Communities Establish and Maintain a Vibrant Business Community Develop Selma as A Destination Restore and Maintain a High Level of Community Pride and Spirit
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>Next Steps: How Do We Proceed?</b> ..... <b>Tab 5</b> Recommended Approach For Using Strategic Plan Desired Committee Structure to Implement Plan General Committee Policies Ongoing Maintenance of Strategic Plan
	<b>Appendix</b> ..... <b>Tab 6</b> I. List of Contributors II. Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats Lists III. Demographic Data IV. List of Strategic Planning Committee Members

# CHAPTER ONE

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

### Who, When, How

On September 21, 2006, Mayor Charles Hester convened a group of individuals to begin discussing the creation of a Strategic Planning Committee for the Town of Selma. Over the next eight months, this group met twice to discuss the role of the committee, refine the membership and set meeting dates.

At the meeting held May 10, 2007, committee members voted the following delegates to leadership positions:

- CHERYL OLIVER, Chairperson
- PAT WEAVER, Vice-Chairperson

Committee members also unanimously approved the following Strategic Planning Committee Mission Statement:

***The Strategic Planning Committee, in partnership with the Town of Selma, will project residential, business, leisure, and infrastructure potential for the planning jurisdiction of Selma.***

To create a Town of Selma Strategic Plan, the committee agreed to follow a standard strategic planning methodology that consisted of:

- Creating a Vision Statement
- Identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
- Creating Strategic Goals and Objectives
- Recommending Actions that will facilitate achievement of Goals and Objectives

### Vision Statement

Our vision statement succinctly states what we want the Town of Selma to be in the future. Leadership and direction must be provided by elected officials, business owners and citizens, and all should drive towards this vision. All decisions made regarding the Town of Selma should be made with this vision in mind. Decisions such as the creation or revision of town ordinances, policies, zoning, short term and long term planning, committees, event planning, etc., should bring the town closer to this vision.

After careful consideration, the Strategic Planning Committee decided to adopt the following words, already voiced by some in our community, as the Vision Statement for the Town of Selma:

***SELMA: A destination of choice for those who appreciate a great place to live, work, and play.***

### **Strategic Plan: Introduction**

Chapter Two, “What Makes Selma Special,” and Chapter Three, “Challenges for the Future” provide an executive overview of the results of what the Committee determined were the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing Selma.

Chapter Four, “Strategic Objectives and Recommended Actions” provides recommendations for emphasizing Selma’s strengths and opportunities and addressing the problems and threats.

Chapter Five is one of the most important chapters because it provides the “Next Steps” for implementing the Recommended Actions. The success of this plan will be measured in large part by how quickly, accurately, and enthusiastically it is implemented.

# CHAPTER TWO

## **WHAT MAKES SELMA SPECIAL: STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

### **Proud History**

Selma actually developed as a child of the Reconstruction Era. Shortly after the Civil War, Colonel John W. Sharp, a confederate veteran, was able to get the East-West North Carolina Railroad to relocate the Mitchener Station to a fifty-acre site he had recently purchased to start a town. The site was surveyed and platted, and the first lots were sold on May 1, 1867. Colonel Sharp named the town after his home town of Selma, Alabama.

The first school was started in 1869 and the first church in 1872. Selma, North Carolina, received its charter from the North Carolina General Assembly on February 11, 1873. The corporate limit was set at one-half mile using the Mitchener Building as the geographical center.

Doctor Lunsford Richardson moved to Selma in 1880 and soon invented a salve which he named Vicks VapoRub after his brother-in-law Doctor Joshua Vick. Another railroad running north and south, Atlantic Coastline Railroad, was built in 1886. The first newspaper, *The Selma News*, was published in 1887. Selma grew quickly with these two railroads and by 1899 the population was over 1,000.

Many factories built in the early twentieth century influenced life in the area to change from rural to urban. Large houses were built in this era. A new railroad station was built at the crossroads and was named Union Station. Manually-operated kerosene lamps lighted the streets. In 1941 the Aero Corporation opened a flight school to train World War II soldiers to fly and later the airfield was ranked with Raleigh and Rocky Mount airports.

After the war Selma grew to a population of 2,634 by 1950. At this time the railroads had completed their transition from steam engines to diesels. The first oil/gasoline tanks in our terminal were built in the 1960s. The new Sylvania plant helped the Selma population to become second in Johnston County with 3,197 citizens.

Major retailers were attracted by growth. Our local downtown businesses found it hard to compete. The town launched a program to revitalize the downtown area and it is now a prime destination for antique enthusiasts. The Rudy Theater now houses "The American Music Jubilee," which is

commensurate to entertainment in Branson, Missouri. The Selma Ice House has recently opened with a comfortable atmosphere and good quality entertainment, "Country Tonight Music Show."

### **Location**

Location! Location! Location! One of Selma's greatest strategic strengths is its location. Major highways (I-95, Hwy. 70, Hwy. 301) and railroad (Amtrak, Norfolk/Southern, and CSX) intersections are within the town limits. This makes Selma quite appealing to residents, businesses and tourists.

The major highways allow residents to easily commute to surrounding areas for business or pleasure. Commuter rails could facilitate travel for these commuters as well as for visitors who desire to visit Selma. With commuter rails, special entertainment and shopping trip packages could be offered as well as additional excursions similar to the very popular Santa Express which is run annually in December.

Selma is also in close proximity to nationally recognized and local healthcare facilities such as Johnston Memorial Hospital (soon to be named Johnston Medical Center) in Smithfield, Wilson Memorial Hospital in Wilson, Wake and Rex Hospitals in Raleigh, and Duke Hospital in Durham.

Additionally, Selma's location provides easy access to educational institutions such as Johnston Community College in Smithfield, Barton College in Wilson, and NC State University in Raleigh.

Located midway between New York and Florida, Selma is positioned as a logical place for I-95 travelers to take a break. The Johnston County Tourism Authority and Smithfield-Selma Chamber of Commerce are currently helping to market Selma to these tourists. This marketing effort should continue. In order to entice an ever-growing number of tourists to stay and shop in Selma, the town should seek to provide more destination-type offerings, such as higher quality hotels, a Vick's Museum, and a large "All Things North Carolina" Center. This Center would market NC Products and Services, artisan creations, sports teams, educational institutions, etc. Its purpose would be commercial as well as educational. The inclusion of a convention center would provide a wonderful setting for businesses and civic organizations to host conferences or to hold special events.

### **Friendly and Caring Community**

Selma's rich history has forged a strong community. Families have chosen to live here generation after generation. The ability to know most of the other citizens in the town, and be known by them, has fostered a friendly and caring community. Evidence of this can be seen in organizations such as our

churches, Boys & Girls Club, Senior Citizen's Center, volunteer Emergency Medical Services Squad, and volunteer Fire Fighters.

Feedback obtained from Visitor Surveys reveals that visitors are impressed by our friendliness and "the feel of the town." They consider the small town atmosphere attractive and encourage us not to lose it.

As Selma grows, it is critical that this sense of community be nurtured. This can be done in a variety of ways, including but not limited to, hosting more events for locals such as Kid's Day, having more events which display local talent, reinvigorating the Community Watch Program, and implementing regularly scheduled gatherings where citizens and town leaders can informally discuss their ideas about how to improve Selma.

### **Entertainment and Recreation**

Selma is fortunate to have nationally recognized talent showcased at The American Music Jubilee at The Rudy Theatre and The Ice House. These buildings, which are in close proximity to one another, could serve as the hub of a Selma Entertainment District. They could also become multi-use locations for Film Festivals, local talent contests, etc.

The nearby Gazebo area behind the Town Hall could be developed as a Town Common area that could, among other things, provide a location where local talent could perform. In addition to providing more entertainment options, this would have the added benefit of increasing visits to the downtown area.

Pedestrian-friendly walkways should link these locations to mark Selma's Entertainment District. To keep local citizens and tourists aware of upcoming entertainment and events, a highly visible digital sign should be installed.

Selma's Parks and Recreation Department does an excellent job of organizing and managing events like Railroad Days and Christmas Parades. In addition, this department hosts numerous sporting events for youth that include teams from Johnston County and surrounding counties. Feedback from participants and spectators of these events has been very positive. They praise both the site and the expertise with which the events are managed. We should continue to support these activities and continually seek to add new events.

### **Economy and Commerce**

As mentioned in the Proud History Section of this chapter, antique-themed businesses draw many antique enthusiasts to Selma. This theme provides a sense of unity to the downtown area and helps promote Selma as a destination.

Other businesses in the downtown area and surrounding areas range in size from large businesses, such as Sysco, to small independently managed ones. All are important contributors to Selma's economy and need to be included in overall town planning.

A directory of Selma businesses should be created. This would support better communication between town leaders and business as well as communication between the businesses themselves. It would also be a valuable tool in assessing what new businesses should be pursued.

Selma currently has a balanced budget. Town leaders have an obligation to keep it that way. In addition, as the town leaders create the 2008-09 Budget, they need to be certain that all of the material weaknesses or significant deficiencies cited in the 9/18/07 Town of Selma Financial Audit Report for the year ending 6/30/07 are addressed.

Selma has been very successful in obtaining grants to improve the town's appearance and infrastructure. Additional grants, such as Weed 'N Seed, should be identified and pursued.

To motivate more I-95 travelers to spend time in Selma, "Stop and Shop" package deals should be created that promote local shops, services, hotels, entertainment, and dining. According to the Johnston County Visitors Bureau's 2006-07 Annual Report, nine million I-95 travelers visited the nearby Outlet Mall during that period. Selma has a great opportunity to guide these visitors into our local businesses.

All of the strengths noted in this chapter and more are already ours! We can't however take them for granted. We must be diligent in maintaining them and in developing new strengths and opportunities upon which future generations can build.

# CHAPTER THREE

## **CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE: WEAKNESSES AND THREATS**

### **Reputation**

Statistically, the Town of Selma is comparable to other towns in the area. However, there is a perception of the town that is less than favorable within the county and area as a whole. Like many towns in this area there are issues with drug and alcohol abuse which lead to crime of various types.

The Police Department in Selma is vigilant in their efforts to combat crime. Chief Bowen has been proactive in his leadership of the department. They have used a number of tools to be proactive in fighting crime in Selma. A number of “hot spots” have been identified. An increased presence by officers in these areas in the past has been very productive and several arrests have been made. This tactic and any others that show success should be used on an ongoing basis. Crime is still a concern with many Selma residents and all resources available to the police department should be used.

Time and time again the committee has heard that the high rental housing percentage within Selma has led to less pride in home ownership and more of a transient population. Chief Bowen has met with landlords to open up lines of communication. In these meetings they have tried to educate landlords on the advantages of improving their property’s appearance as well as screening potential tenants. Although this tactic has merit, it should be noted that many of the property owners do not participate. There are still many substandard properties. There are still a number of areas with crime and drug problems. At the very least the property owners should take some responsibility for their properties. To be critical of all landlords would be irresponsible. Many landlords in town manage their properties in a way that should be commended. The problem arises mainly due to absentee landlords, who have very little control on how their properties are managed.

Although there are many real problems that contribute to a negative perception of the town, many communities in our area have the same problems. Our local and regional media are very quick to cover the negative news. The Town of Selma participates in marketing to attract visitors and tourism to the area. There is a noticeable disconnect locally when it comes to seeing Selma as a destination. In communication with downtown merchants it has been determined that Selma is visited by travelers off the interstate as well as others that drive in from one or two hours away. The missing demographic is local

area residents. The primary reason for this is reputation. A vision of Selma should include a number of local advocates that would include local politicians, realtors, business people, etc.

There are many positive things going on in Selma. A number of community events are held each year. The Town of Selma has a strong Parks & Recreation Department. Selma is home to the only Boys and Girls Club in Johnston County. There are strong churches that add much to the community. There should be an ongoing effort to identify positive news in the Selma area and capitalize on this with the various media. The Smithfield-Selma Chamber of Commerce has recently contracted with an advertising agency to do just that. The Town Council should appoint a liaison to feed positive news to the Chamber and take advantage of this effort.

### **Appearance**

A recurring topic in this committee has been the subject of appearance of the Town of Selma. All things considered, uptown Selma is a very attractive and vital area. It has a quiet charm with the antique shops, Rudy Theater, and other businesses.

The principle drawback and problem areas are the entrances to town along North and South Pollock St. These are primary entrances but appearance is also an issue along secondary entrances such as East and West Anderson Streets, River Road, Highway 96, Lizzie Street, and West Noble Street. The entrances into town from I-95 are also less than attractive. Every effort should be made to find ways to make all the entrances into town attractive to residents and visitors alike. The old adage is certainly true that first appearances are very important.

The reality is that town government cannot control private property, or 100%, the appearance of this property. However, it should be a focus that minimum standards are observed as well as codes and ordinances. It would be the recommendation of this committee that a code enforcement officer be employed.

There are also softer ways to improve the appearance of these primary and secondary entrances to town. It has been suggested that a Community Appearance Commission be implemented. This committee would be charged with the task of finding opportunities to improve areas of town. Landscaping could be improved along highway and town street rights-of-way. Attractive "Welcome to Selma" signage can be developed and implemented to better define the town.

## **Community Spirit/Pride**

It has been noted that there is very little community pride in the overall population. Selma has some concerned citizens who participate in a number of ways. The committee has, however, identified an area of concern, which is the lack of participation of the citizens of Selma. Much of the problem is driven by other weaknesses and threats outlined in this chapter and the resulting lack of pride in the town. Selma has a number of advantages that other towns do not have. Capitalizing on these strengths has never been more important than now.

The Town of Selma is fortunate to have a number of festivals and events scheduled each year. The town, as well as the organizations that sponsor these events, should take a hard look at the success of each event. Each event should be analyzed to determine if it is successful in drawing into town both local citizens and visitors. Each event should be financially independent and at least break even. If the event is poorly planned and executed it only adds to the poor perception of the town.

Although a number of events are planned each year, support for other events that will draw people into town should be considered. An event that has been very popular in other towns is a monthly "singing on the green." One evening a month local music talent could be showcased in an outdoor atmosphere free to the public. Selma has a significant advantage in having both The American Music Jubilee as well as The Selma Ice House. By forming a partnership between the two venues and the town this monthly music showcase should be very successful.

Community pride starts with town officials. The Town Councilmembers and management of the town should be asking themselves, have I shopped in every business downtown? If there is a special event such as birthdays, weddings, graduations, etc. do I buy the gifts in Selma?" If the answer is no, then why not?

More people need to be involved in the events that Selma has every year. Not only should the Town Council be involved in the coordination and planning but they should encourage other citizens to participate. It is a great opportunity for the town council and other town officials to be seen and interact with citizens of the town.

## **Communication with Town Leaders**

For citizens to have a sense of pride in their community they need to feel they play an important part in the process of local government. Town leaders should take a hard look at the makeup of the town's boards, commissions and committees to determine if they are structured in the best way possible. They

should also make sure the board members understand and fulfill the duties with which they are charged. The various boards, commissions and committees should be strengthened with concerned citizens that are determined to make positive improvements. There are a number of board members that are on more than one board. Some members chair more than one board. Although we do not think nor are we suggesting that there are members on these boards who have less than honorable motives, there may be a perception from citizens that there are ulterior motives. It is also imperative that the boards and commissions have more diversity and representation of all the citizens of Selma. There should be an effort to recruit for these boards to balance the representation.

Outside of the normal town meeting the town leaders should look for other ways to bring citizens into the process. It would be our recommendation that a quarterly forum be held. If well publicized and properly attended this forum would open up dialogue and fresh ideas to address some of the issues facing the town. These forums would also give the citizens of the town a venue to express any concerns they may have.

The leadership of the Town of Selma should always make decisions based on the best interest of ALL citizens of the town. All too often decisions have been made based on who the request comes from, not what the request is. This has certainly been the case in years past.

### **Downtown Retail Diversity**

Currently the town of Selma has a unique downtown area. Comprised of many antique shops, the Town of Selma has positioned itself as a destination. The April/May 2008 Triangle East magazine noted that Selma offers “over 100,000 square feet of treasures.” Having a close proximity to Interstate 95 brings visitors from all over the eastern seaboard. The uptown area also enjoys the distinction of having two musical entertainment venues in the Rudy Theater and the Selma Ice House. Selma is indeed fortunate in having a vibrant downtown area although there are weaknesses.

In discussions with the shop owners downtown there seems to be a lack of local shoppers who come uptown. There are many reasons for this, several of which have been outlined in other sections of this chapter. One item that everyone can agree on is a wider selection of dining would have a great benefit uptown.

### **Lack of Local Job Opportunities**

Although Selma enjoys some localized job opportunities there is a need for more and higher paying employment. Selma has a distinct advantage that is unique to other towns in the area. This advantage is its location on a major

east-west and north-south highway intersection. The opening of Highway 70 Bypass will only add to the importance of this transportation corridor. Selma is also located on railway lines that have east/west and north/south intersections. This transportation advantage is unique. The obvious choice for potential recruitment of industry is with any business that relies on transportation and distribution of product across the eastern seaboard.

The town should have a very strong partnership with the Johnston County Economic Development Office. Available industrial properties, both existing buildings and building sites should be promoted through their office and web site. A proactive approach by town leaders is needed to keep Selma out front when businesses are looking at locating to this area.

### **Housing**

There have been many discussions around the quality and quantity of housing in Selma. There are two distinct problems with overall housing opportunities in Selma. The first is the lack of new subdivision and “roof top” growth within the city limits and ETJ. The second is the existing issue of the high percentage of rental homes.

With regard to future residential development the time is here to have plans for what type of growth is in the best interest of the town. The Planning and Zoning Board should lead this effort. If not already in effect, there should be updated ordinances that outline planning and design standards. These ordinances should be adhered to and exceptions should be rare. A strong partnership between area developers, land owners, and the town should be developed in order to have planned growth without negative impact on transportation, schools, infrastructure, etc.

The separate issue to consider is the high percentage of rental homes versus home owners. Based on the most current data 54% of homes in Selma are rental homes. Many of these rental homes are owned by absentee landlords that are either unaware or unconcerned about the condition of their properties. Although a home renter is not necessarily a negative, many of these homes are small and in disrepair. This keeps the rents low. Many times, this will perpetuate a transient population with less stability.

The town is headed in the right direction by utilizing the process of condemning properties that do not meet minimum housing standards as defined by current ordinances. This should continue to improve the appearance and safety of the town. A continued effort by the town to combat crime and enforce housing codes should help in this endeavor.

There are other items that could help to change the high percentage of rental homes. One would be to offer seminars through Johnston Community College

on home ownership and personal finance. This could possibly help some people purchase a home. Organization and support of a local Habitat for Humanity would be another way to improve housing options in Selma.

The Town of Selma has a high number of government supported housing units. There is a perception of crime issues around these developments. The Selma Housing Authority has the direct responsibility to make sure that these units provide a safe environment for the residents, as well as neighbors. If not already in place extensive screening of potential tenants should be a priority. The police department should work in partnership with The Selma Housing Authority to make these units safe. Ultimately, the Selma Housing Authority has the responsibility for the safety of these residents.

### **Grow Tax Base**

Selma must grow the tax base to remain financially sound. Opportunities to bring in business, industries, and retail should be explored. A partnership with the county Economic Development group is a must. The town should look for ways to work with land owners through Johnston County economic development to bring land owners, developers and potential buyers to the table. The challenge is the partnership with land owners and their participation or willingness to meet in the middle on reasonable prices for land. There have been too many lost opportunities in the county over simple greed.

To improve the tax base personal residential developments should also be encouraged. Bringing in residential developers that wish to build higher end neighborhoods of the type and price that will strengthen the tax base has been difficult due to the overall appearance and reputation that Selma currently has. Without positive change of these weaknesses and threats there will be no change in upper end housing.

### **Crime**

Unfortunately, drug abuse is a plague on almost all small towns. The continued support of the police department is vital. There are a wide variety of programs that help with this issue. One source that Selma is fortunate to have is the Day By Day Treatment Center. This is one of the few drug and alcohol treatment centers in Johnston County and could be an important partner with this issue.

In addition to crime directly related to drug abuse, Selma has problems with crime in many other ways. Recent crime statistics show that criminal activity such as vandalism and larceny are up. For example, according to the April 2008 Selma Police Incident Report, Year-To-Date comparisons with 2007 show that vandalism incidents have increased from 64 to 102 and assaults have increased from 38 to 60. Much of this is attributed to the current drug problem. It should also be noted that gang activity is on the rise. We all see more gang

graffiti in the area. Increased patrols in problem areas are a must. There should be a known police presence in the areas with the greatest crime. Every avenue should be explored to find ways to reduce crime in the Selma jurisdiction. This should include reinvigorating Community Watch Programs where they exist and organizing them where they do not.

### **No Plans to Guide and Manage Future Growth**

It is imperative that the leaders of The Town of Selma have a strategic plan for what the town should be. A tool is needed to guide and plan for future development. This plan should include residential, business and industrial. It needs to give a view of what Selma could look like five, ten, and twenty years in the future. It should incorporate streetscape views including current buildings as well as future development. It is recommended that a paid consultant with the experience in providing this type of plan be contracted to develop a plan tailored to the needs of the town.

### **Growth in Surrounding Towns Will Provide More Attractive Enticements to Families and Businesses**

There has been a dramatic increase in growth in the northern part of the county. This area of the county has enjoyed this increased growth due to their proximity to Raleigh. With the Highway 70 West Bypass in Clayton, Selma is now much closer to Raleigh. The leadership of Selma should look for opportunities to have planned and managed growth.

Unfortunately there is a shortage of residential growth in the Selma area. The reality is that developers are reluctant to invest in the area with the current perception and appearance of the town. Until some of these issues are addressed, Selma will continue to face challenges in regard to growth opportunities. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, a proactive approach to planning and zoning, as well as recruitment of business and development partners, is essential for the positive growth that can be in Selma's future.



<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>VISION TAG</b> Live, Work, Play, Destination	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b>
		<p>Maintain updated Land Use Plan &amp; design documents that will be used to guide development of the town in a manner that is visually appealing, allows efficient extension of town infrastructure (utilities, roads, etc.) and logically aligns residential, business, entertainment, and recreational areas</p> <p>Continue to pursue grants that can be used to improve Selma's appearance</p>	<p>Update existing Land Use Plan which was published in 1971</p> <p>Update existing Design Document and have it formally approved by the Town Council</p> <p>New development should reinforce "A Charming Place to Be" slogan and maintain the neighborhood character of Selma</p> <p>Drawings that illustrate the desired architectural theme for Downtown Selma should be created for use by town planners and developers</p> <p>Pursue hiring of a town planner in 2009-2010 budget year</p> <p>Investigate Weed 'N Seed Program - <i>need to apply in May 2008 for 2009 dollars</i></p>

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>VISION TAG</b> Live, Work, Play, Destination	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b>
<p><b>ENSURE A HEALTHY QUALITY OF LIFE THAT EQUALS OR EXCEEDS SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES</b></p>	<p><b>L,W,P,D</b></p>	<p>Consistent monitoring of air, water, noise, rail and vehicle traffic</p>	<p>Town leaders and planning board should not approve future development that would negatively impact our environment</p> <p>Continue to publish the annual Town of Selma Water Quality Report</p> <p>Create and publish an annual report that trends rail traffic and provides a summary of its impact on the town</p> <p>Continue to provide input to appropriate NC Department of Transportation plans to ensure that Selma's needs are included in short- and long-term planning. This input should cite the need for commuter rails that would facilitate business &amp; leisure travel for Selma citizens &amp; those who desire to visit Selma. Stay closely connected to the Special Transit Advisory Commission.</p>

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>VISION TAG</b> Live, Work, Play, Destination	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b>
<b>ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN A VIBRANT BUSINESS COMMUNITY</b>	<b>L,W,D</b>	Proactively seek to increase customer base of town's businesses	<p>Continue our strong relationship with the Johnston County Bureau of Tourism to attract tourists</p> <p>Create a directory of Selma businesses</p> <p>Financially support marketing efforts that encourage area citizens to support Selma's businesses (Note: This local marketing is not addressed by the Johnston County Bureau of Tourism.)</p> <p>Increase retail diversity in downtown area</p> <p>Create a list of desired businesses to enable proactive marketing efforts to get those businesses</p> <p>Increase number of events in downtown Selma, i.e., street fairs, etc.</p> <p>Identify ways for our businesses to develop closer ties with local citizens</p> <p>Create placemats with map of town that highlights business and services. Distribute placemats to local area restaurants.</p> <p>Add directional signs to downtown area at Exit 97/Jr's area.</p>

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>VISION TAG</b> Live, Work, Play, Destination	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b>
		Foster sense of community among business owners	<p>Organize meetings of business owners where they can learn from each other</p> <p>Conduct informal semi-annual or quarterly meetings between town leaders and business owners to discuss direction of town and needs of businesses</p> <p>Sponsor management &amp; marketing workshops that focus on best practices for small business owners</p> <p>Ask Johnston Community College Marketing/Graphic Arts students to help local businesses create pamphlets, logos, banners, etc.</p> <p>Create a Downtown Selma Alliance (See <a href="http://www.godowntownraleigh.com">www.godowntownraleigh.com</a>)</p> <p>Design “Shop Selma” shopping bags for Selma area businesses. Provide box of 100 bags to merchants. Additional amounts could be purchased by merchants.</p>

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>VISION TAG</b> Live, Work, Play, Destination	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b>
<b>DEVELOP SELMA AS A DESTINATION</b>	<b>L,W,P,D</b>		<p>Create and distribute “Stop &amp; Shop Selma” package deals that encourage visits to Selma’s businesses, entertainment offerings and recreational events</p> <p>Develop additional attractions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vick’s Museum</li> <li>- Railroad Museum</li> <li>- Center that markets NC products, arts and crafts, and highlights NC artisans</li> </ul> <p>Create events that maximize presence of historic properties, i.e., Historic Architecture Walks, etc.</p> <p>Expand current entertainment options, i.e., increase variety of shows at The Rudy and the Selma Ice House, have outdoor movies in the summer, conduct special Friday night events, bring noted guest lecturers to area, etc.</p> <p>Partner with railroad companies to develop shopping tours and other special excursions similar to the December Santa Express - <i>consider Antique Excursion Hunt</i></p>

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>VISION TAG</b> Live, Work, Play, Destination	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b>
			Install digital sign in downtown area to advertise upcoming events and entertainment

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>VISION TAG</b> Live, Work, Play, Destination	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b>
<p><b>RESTORE AND MAINTAIN A HIGH LEVEL OF COMMUNITY PRIDE AND SPIRIT</b></p>	<p><b>L,W,P,D</b></p>	<p>Give citizens a sense of belonging</p>	<p>Increase involvement of citizens &amp; merchants in decision-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct informal quarterly or semi-annual meetings to share thoughts about what the town is doing right and what we can do better</li> <li>- Direct suggestions to appropriate committees or organizations</li> </ul> <p>Encourage churches to work together &amp; sponsor fun &amp; uplifting community gatherings</p> <p>Reassess the town's committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Do we have the right committees?</li> <li>- Is there an active membership?</li> <li>- Is the purpose clear &amp; distinct from other committees? <i>(Ask committees to provide Town Manager with job descriptions for committee members.)</i></li> </ul> <p>Advertise committee openings in local newspaper and on town website <i>(already town policy; just needs enforcement)</i></p>

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	VISION TAG Live, Work, Play, Destination	SUCCESS CRITERIA	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS
		Create a sense of community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure communication link between committees and Town Council - <i>Example: Planning Board should detail in writing why decision was made to approve or reject rezoning request. If they choose to provide an exception to an existing ordinance, that ordinance should be cited and the rationale explained.</i></li> <li>- Ensure ongoing communication link between committees</li> </ul> <p>Create &amp; distribute packages to welcome new citizens to Selma (<i>use this as an opportunity to market businesses</i>)</p> <p>Publicly celebrate successes of town, citizens &amp; merchants</p> <p>Have Mayor give “State of the Town” address annually</p> <p>Sponsor cross-generational events such as talent shows, athletic events, church choir sings, yard sales, spelling bees, Singing on the Green, etc.</p>

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>VISION TAG</b> Live, Work, Play, Destination	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b>
			<p>Combine individual church food banks into a Community Food Bank. This would bring volunteers from multiple churches together</p> <p>Should also seek to develop ties between Senior Center and Boys &amp; Girls Club, etc.</p> <p>Sponsor more downtown events, such as Railroad Days, that bring people together on a monthly basis – these can include events such a church cook-offs, choir sings, 4th of July watermelon-spitting contest, etc.</p> <p>Pursue other events that would help Selma gain national &amp; state recognition, i.e., invite Antiques Roadshow TV program to Selma, invite independent appraisers to special events, advertise on PBS, etc.</p> <p>Increase use of town website to deliver information to and receive input from citizens, i.e., polls on current issues (see <i>Town of Smithfield website</i>)</p>

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>VISION TAG</b> Live, Work, Play, Destination	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b>
		Promote Arts & Cultural Activities	<p>Use Reverse 911 to better communicate with citizens on critical information, i.e., road closings, tornado warnings, etc.</p> <p>Create parks within easy access of all citizens to encourage community play, individual fitness and neighborhood get-togethers</p> <p>Form a task force comprised of parents, students, police, and community leaders to address ways to help parents who are struggling with their children</p> <p>Have local restaurants conduct cooking classes for youth &amp; adults</p> <p>Show outdoor movies during the summer</p> <p>Use local entertainment establishments to highlight guest artists &amp; lecturers</p> <p>Pursue creation of Selma Little Theater</p> <p>Sponsor high quality Arts &amp; Crafts shows</p>

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>VISION TAG</b> Live, Work, Play, Destination	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b>
		Invest in our young people to build the next generation of Selma citizens	<p>Continue to support our Boys &amp; Girls Club</p> <p>Organize an annual Kid's Day with fun events in downtown Selma</p> <p>Provide group transportation for youth to surrounding area events, cultural activities, college tours, etc.</p> <p>Involve young people in town government</p> <p>Regularly host charity events via which youth can support good causes. This will build their self-esteem</p> <p>Showcase youth artwork in business windows</p> <p>Provide transportation to school Parent-Teacher meetings, sporting events, etc. for parents who do not have a vehicle</p> <p>Start a Youth Club such as "Selma Stars" that lets young people know that Selma cares about them &amp; provides them with opportunities to make a positive difference in Selma on an ongoing basis</p> <p>Encourage individuals, businesses, and civic</p>



		<p>Foster sense of trust between Police &amp; Community</p>	<p>holidays, teacher workdays, etc.</p> <p>Research need for a second fire station</p> <p>Immediately remove graffiti</p> <p>Provide Spanish Language Training for at least one police officer</p> <p>Continue programs such as the Citizens Police Academy</p> <p>Sponsor Police Appreciation Week. Have local churches honor officers, etc.</p> <p>Police officers must consistently display an "I'm here to protect &amp; serve Selma" attitude</p> <p>Have police assist citizens in etching an identifiable number onto high value items such as computers, etc.</p>
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<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>VISION TAG</b> Live, Work, Play, Destination	<b>SUCCESS CRITERIA</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED ACTIONS</b>
		Be known as a town with zero tolerance for drugs	<p>Selma Police Department should continue to be vigilant in arresting drug offenders</p> <p>Increase police presence around town</p> <p>Continue to identify &amp; heavily patrol crime “hot spots”</p> <p>Increase lighting in Downtown Selma</p> <p>Ensure alleys are not cluttered &amp; are well-lit</p> <p>Place “No Loitering” signs around downtown area &amp; enforce them</p> <p>Reinvigorate &amp; expand Selma’s Community Watch Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide a map that outlines Community Watch areas</li> <li>- Identify leaders of those areas</li> <li>- Provide guidance regarding purpose of this program</li> </ul>

# CHAPTER FIVE

## **NEXT STEPS: HOW DO WE PROCEED?**

The Strategic Planning Committee unanimously supports the recommendations in the preceding chapter. Implementation of these recommendations should begin during May 2008. A delay in implementation will only serve to allow the weaknesses and threats to reach a more critical level. The time to act is *now*.

### **Recommended Approach for Using Strategic Plan**

With the approval of the Selma Town Council, a copy of this document should be given to the leaders of all Town Committees. Recommended Actions should be assigned by the Town Manager to the appropriate Town Committees. It is important that the Recommended Actions be perceived as the minimum actions that should be taken to meet the Objectives. Recommendations included in this plan serve as examples to clarify the strategic intent. The Town of Selma Committees should actively identify and implement additional actions.

In an effort to communicate the Strategic Plan to a widespread audience and to encourage citizens to become actively involved in executing the plan, highlights of key components of this plan will, in multiple installments, appear in The Selma News. The Strategic Plan will also be accessible via [www.selma-nc.com](http://www.selma-nc.com).

### **Desired Committee Structure to Implement Plan**

- Historic Properties Commission (Business and Residential)
- Community Appearance Commission (Town Ordinance 2.4.4.)
- Downtown Area Revitalization (D.A.R.E.)
- Zoning/Planning/Ordinance Committee
- Marketing Committee (Led by Donna Bailey-Taylor. Focuses on Marketing to Tourists.)
- Citizen's Advisory Board
- Events and Recreational Activities Committee
- Library Board

### **General Committee Policies**

Committee members should reside in Selma or Extraterritorial Jurisdiction.

Citizens desiring to join a committee must complete an Application Form and be approved by Committee Members and Town Council.

Meeting minutes must be available, via the Town of Selma website, within two weeks after each meeting.

Committees should submit monthly reports to the Town Council that provide updates on current and projected activities.

Committees should submit at least three articles to The Selma News each calendar year to ensure that the community is aware of the committee and the role it plays.

Members should be replaced if they miss more than 25% of meetings in a calendar year.

### **Ongoing Maintenance of Strategic Plan**

The Strategic Planning Committee has created and documented the Objectives, Strategies and Action Plans that are deemed viable as of May 13, 2008. It is the intent of the Committee to review and, when necessary, update the plan semi-annually.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, additional strategic planning expertise is required in order to accurately update our Land Use Plan and to create a visionary architectural design for the town. This will help us answer strategic questions such as:

- What is the optimum population density for Selma?
- What should the downtown area look like in 2020? In 10, 20 or 30 years?
- What businesses should we proactively seek to locate in Selma?

This Committee recommends that dollars for obtaining the necessary consulting expertise be allocated in the 2008-2009 Town of Selma Budget.

# APPENDIX

## I. **List of Contributors**

Donna Bailey-Taylor, Johnston County Chamber of Commerce

Charles Bowen, Selma Chief of Police

Stan Farmer, Former Selma Town Manager

Charles Hester, Selma Mayor

Ray Jaklitsch, Selma Historical Homeowners Association Leader

Len Joyner

Ida Mitchell

Jennifer Moore, Selma Middle School Principal

Lewis Mullen, Photographer

Bob Price, Town of Selma Building Inspector

Katey Rowley, Selma Middle School Information Liaison

Smithfield-Selma Senior High School Honors Debate Class

Roy and Becky Swartz, General Contractors

Rev. Bobby Watson

## **II. Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats Analysis**

### ***TOWN OF SELMA STRENGTHS***

- (1) Location
- (2) Rail transportation
- (3) Antiques businesses that provide unifying theme for downtown area
- (4) Other local businesses owned by longtime Selma residents
- (5) Churches
- (6) Proximity to healthcare services
- (7) Entertainment offerings
- (8) Proximity to major I-95 outlet mall
- (9) Established town events
- (10) Ability to obtain grants for improvements
- (11) Balanced budget
- (12) Town signage
- (13) Police, fire and emergency medical services
- (14) Boys & Girls Club
- (15) Senior Citizens Center
- (16) Historical properties
- (17) Johnston County growth
- (18) Johnston County Area Transit System (JCATS)
- (19) Educational Institutions

## **TOWN OF SELMA OPPORTUNITIES**

- (1) Increase use of JCATS/rail transportation
- (2) Create Selma “Stop and Shop” packages
- (3) Give citizens a sense of belonging
  - (a) Increased communications between Town officials and employees, citizens, and merchants
  - (b) Cross-generational events
  - (c) Involve citizens/merchants in decision-making
  - (d) Kid’s Day
  - (e) Publicly celebrate successes of town, citizens, and merchants
  - (f) New citizens packages/information
- (4) Increase communication via Town website (*reference Town of Smithfield website*)
- (5) Increase interaction between town committees/boards
- (6) Partner with railroads to develop shopping trips and tours, other special excursions similar to Santa Express

## **TOWN OF SELMA WEAKNESSES**

- (1) Town reputation
- (2) Appearance of primary and secondary entrances to town
- (3) Weak/inconsistent enforcement of town ordinances
- (4) Low level of community spirit and pride
- (5) Ineffective communication between town leaders and citizens
- (6) Lack of retail diversity in downtown area
- (7) Lack of local job opportunities
- (8) Lack of new subdivision growth within city limits and ETJ
- (9) High percentage of rental homes and absentee landlords
- (10) No strong tax base
- (11) Crime: Drug abuse, vandalism and larcenies
- (12) Lack of up-to-date Master Land Use Plan

### ***TOWN OF SELMA THREATS***

- (1) If town's reputation and citizen pride do not improve, no citizens or businesses will want to move to Selma. Existing businesses may exit.
- (2) Growth in surrounding towns will provide more attractive enticements to families and businesses. This will negatively impact the stability and quality of our citizenry and businesses.
- (3) Drug haven
- (4) Citizens disillusioned with town government

### III. Demographic Data

The Strategic Planning Committee reviewed a wide variety of demographic information related to Selma, surrounding towns and comparable towns throughout North Carolina. The Committee decided to use the data from Sperling's Best Places because of the recency and variety of data it provided. Data related to Selma is included in this section for your quick reference. Demographic data for other towns is accessible via <http://www.bestplaces.net>.

The last page details Sperling's data sources.

**IV. List of Strategic Planning Committee Members**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone No.</b>
Joe Carter	7016 Kristi Drive, Garner, NC 27529	553-2955
Frank Cross	500 Adams Street, Raleigh, NC 27605	832-1600
Brian Hatcher	114 N. Raiford Street, Selma, NC 27576	965-8141
Cheryl Oliver, Chair	102 S. Massey Street, Selma, NC	965-2297
Vicki Richardson	1776 Little Divine Road, Selma, NC	965-8011
Roger Root	400 Poole Drive, Selma, NC	965-3901
Bennie Sanders	506 W. Anderson Street, Selma, NC	965-3871
Pat Weaver	110 W. Anderson Street, Selma	202-4900