

Community Appearance Commission
Forward 2045 Input
January 25, 2023

Strengths and Opportunities: What are the “positives” in the community that we should be leveraging and building on into the future?

- Diversity of people
- Rich history – should be built on for tourism
- Smith Reynolds Airport
- Cost of living
- Accessibility to mountains and beaches – location
- Can get around town easily – make sure this remains
- The overall turn-a-round the City has made, reinvented itself
- Adaptive reuse of historic buildings
- Arts and innovation
- Existing housing stock available for rehab
 - Need to encourage rehab/renovation over demolition and building new
 - Opportunity to provide education on techniques/skills for rehabbing a home (Decatur, GA example)
- Green spaces and connectivity between them
- Greenways
- Biking community
 - Younger generation is moving away from owning a car and moving toward walking and biking to destinations
- Health care system/hospital – Level 1 Trauma Center
- Good schools
- Connectivity between different parts of town
- Vacant office space since COVID
 - Opportunity for reuse of space for residential or other uses
 - Both high-rise Downtown buildings and low-rise suburban buildings
- Very “tangible” for outsiders just moving here – appealing
- Sense of community
- Has everything a major city has but is still accessible

Weaknesses and Threats: What are the “negatives” in the community that we should be addressing into the future?

- Still feels like two cities (east vs. west) especially in relations to appearance of areas
 - Potential to spend additional resources to improve these areas to the same level of western areas of Winston-Salem
- Continued deterioration of properties on the East side – 3rd, 4th, and 5th Streets specifically
- How we address low-income housing – dispersed across community or centralizes in one area

- Overall loss of community
- Traffic issues with through traffic on neighborhood streets/traffic calming
 - Trucks using neighborhood roads
- Trash/leaf/bulky item pickup
 - Maybe offer bulky item pickup more than once a year to stop people from leaving items on curb throughout the year or illegal dumping of items
- Showcasing other areas besides Downtown
 - When coming off US 52 at Martin Luther King Blvd, all directional signage points to the west for Downtown. No signage points to the east.
- Homeless population
- Railroad right-of-way conditions and reuse
- Increase crime/gang activity especially Hispanic gang activity

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County will be a _____ (adjective) community by 2040 with:
 (list of defining characteristics)

- Inclusive
- Diverse
- Affordable
- Livable with services that meet the needs of the populations especially an aging or disabled population

Strengths and Opportunities

- Like that we are not Atlanta, Raleigh, or Charlotte – makes it easy to get around
- Enjoy the “life” coming back to Downtown Winston-Salem
- Like that Downtown is walkable with 2-way streets and would like it to see the walkability improved (without pedestrian malls or closure of streets)
- Like that there are varieties of economic opportunities in terms of scale – the County can support large industry as well as smaller “niche” businesses, start-ups, or entrepreneurs
 - Area is accessible for economic development
- Like that there are organizations such as Triad Cultural Arts
- The diverse and unified community in Winston-Salem
- Public Art
 - Have more opportunities for artists of color
- Ability for residents to get involved in community

Weaknesses and Threats

- City government
 - Need more of a will to invest in African American community and projects
 - Ward system – everyone is in a “silo” and only focused on their individual ward rather than the city at large
- Competition for resources and the tension that it brings to competing priorities
 - City/Urban vs County/Rural
- Lack of vision on public transportation – need to be more creative
- Wake Forest University and University of North Carolina School of the Arts becoming their own entity and taking over the identity of the community
 - Loss of neighborhood identity
- What becomes of our economic engine now that banking has left?
 - Will it only be the hospitals or employers without headquarters in the City or County?
- How will the beltway impact development in those areas?
 - Potential for sprawl
- Car-centric City
- Loss of culture and history of older neighborhoods due to new development and infrastructure
 - Patterson Avenue as example

College Advisory Board
Forward 2045 Input
February 22, 2023

Q1: What are you looking for when thinking about where to start your career?

- Places for young adults
 - Places that cater to a younger audience
 - Activities based – pottery, etc.
- Easier access to get to amenities and downtown
 - Easier access to parking
- Diverse public transportation
 - WIFI – Europe example
 - Missing that here
 - Getting into town from bedroom communities
- Safe bike paths
 - People not accustomed to seeing bike paths – education piece is needed

Q2: What are the “positives” in the community that we should be leveraging and building on into the future?

- Live music events
 - Closing streets and communities coming together
- Diversity – cultural element
 - Can't get that from suburbia
 - More events, festivals, celebrations
 - Diversity hub

Q3: What are the “negatives” in the community that we should be addressing into the future?

- Not utilizing what we have in terms of colleges and universities
 - Not enough events or activities that cater to youth or college student
 - Get them out into the communities
- Observation: Winston-Salem is not Charlotte or Raleigh
 - It is smaller but can build itself as an option
 - Market and educate about community – be more intentional with branding
- Air travel – Charlotte and Raleigh offer more travel destination options

Historic Resources Commission – Education Committee
Forward 2045 Input
February 27, 2023

Q1: What are the “positives” in the community that we should be leveraging and building on into the future?

- Public art – keep going
- Public parks and access – Bailey Park
 - Being alive in Downtown and Innovation Quarter
 - Attracts more people to area
 - Need more into the country – not just in the Downtown
- Balance of art, history, new development, redevelopment/adaptive reuse
 - Cool mix – nice to keep
- Biking infrastructure has gotten better – need more
- Question posed – Why do you live where you live?
 - Rural Hall – small quiet, have space but still close to Winston-Salem and Downtown also Pilot Mountain
 - Kernersville – same as Rural Hall, access – live in the woods but still have proximity, good mix of both

Q2: What are the “negatives” in the community that we should be addressing into the future?

- Difficult to get Downtown – parking
 - A hop on/hop off trolley would be good idea – Asheville example
 - Lack of knowledge of what is going on in Downtown/Winston-Salem for people from county
- Parking Downtown
 - Cost/having to pay
 - Dislike of parking decks
- Traffic/Transportation access – especially to Downtown
- People don't feel 100% safe walking or biking
- Homeless population

Youth Advisory Council
Forward 2045 Input
February 28, 2023

Q1: What community amenities and location characteristics are important to you? Describe your ideal community?

- Diverse
- Equal Opportunity
- Environmentally sustainable
 - Considering effects on future generations
- Sees its population – recognizes its problems

Q2: What are the “positives” in the community that we should be leveraging and building on into the future?

- Trees/Vegetation/Beautification effort
 - Be greener
- Public art – need more

Q3: What are the “negatives” in the community that we should be addressing into the future?

- Amenities for homeless population
- Gentrification – don’t destroy history especially on eastside of Winston-Salem
 - Keep history
- More recreation and parks

Public Art Commission
Forward 2045 Input
March 7, 2023

- Safety in all communities is important.
- City should be clean, not run down.
- More inclusive.
- Want people to be proud of their community.
- Need better access to food and healthcare.
- More diverse activities for a wider range of people downtown.
- Need a comprehensive social services network.
- Show people opportunities.
- More walkable and bikeable.
- Need better public transit.
- Improve our community's social/economic mobility.
- Fix barrier of US 52.
- Be smart about gentrification so people aren't priced out of the city.
- Infrastructure should be available to all.
- Support organizations that build social capital/create connections between neighbors. Help seniors build community.
- More transparency between the community and its government.
- Need creative ways to help homeless people – get people out of the elements, keep them safe.
- Make intentional investments in communities that were redlined/disinvested in. Greenlining?
- Systemic antiracism/justice/healing/wellness systems.
- Help children, elderly, and immigrants transition into community.
- Affordability of the city has decreased.
- Convert vacant lots into community gardens to help the hungry.
- Tax property owners higher for vacant buildings.
- Create more ongoing support for small businesses after the creation stage.

Recreation and Parks Commission
Forward 2045 Input
March 7, 2023

General Comments:

- Move toward electric cars with hook ups/charging stations
- Solar panels on City buildings
- Need better public transportation system
- More bike and scooter lanes
- More sidewalks and better connectivity
- Reduce/eliminate food deserts

Winston-Salem Bicycle/Pedestrian/Active Mobility Advisory Commission
Forward 2045 Input
March 8, 2023

Question 1: What community amenities and characteristics are important to you? Describe your ideal community?

- Connected sidewalks
- Bike lanes
- Ability to not need a car for all trips
- Strong local business economy
- Feeling safe wherever I visit
- Green spaces and trees
- The ability to walk to playgrounds and community gathering spaces
- A “15-minute City”
- Park and Open space

Questions 2: What are the “positives” in our community that we should be leveraging and building on into the future? What do you like about our community?

- That we are recapturing the essence of Downtown
- Bringing and supporting more locally owned businesses and start-ups
- Progress made on bike lanes
- Good greenways
- A lot of parks which is nice, and they are fairly accessible
- Like that we are creating neighborhoods
- Enjoy the connection to history
- Beautiful city that is welcoming
- Innovation Quarter – growth is a real opportunity if it spreads and could be an economic opportunity into East Winston
 - Still lots of space to be filled
 - Opportunity for mixed-use development
 - Like what is has become so far but can be an even greater economic engine for Downtown and East Winston with potential to expand north
- Artwork Downtown and throughout the City of Winston Salem
- Creative Corridors with the arches on the bridges – Just lovely
- Partnerships with organizations/agencies such as Wake Forest University for community improvements
 - Reynolda Village and crosswalks as an example
- Becoming a more pedestrian-friendly community with new crosswalks – need more
- Like improvements at Salem Lake – making outdoor spaces more inviting

Question 3: What are the “negatives” in our community that we should be addressing into the future? What is our community missing?

- Homelessness issue – people living under bridges
 - Mental health issue
 - Threatens use and enjoyment of public spaces
- Tired parks and greenways – maintenance across City of Winston Salem
 - If people come and see issues, it can leave a bad impression
 - Potholes and creek beds deteriorating
- Litter has increased over the past couple years
- Claim we are a Complete Street City but not truly – need ordinance
- Need permanent skateboard park that is concrete
- Increased connectivity
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Infrastructure is actually where people are and where they are going
 - Especially for people who are fully reliant on such infrastructure
- Gun Violence
 - Finding ways to connect neighbors and neighborhoods to empower communities
 - Not just relying on police
- Need to look at necessities - can people eat, have a place to sleep, etc.

Microsoft Teams Chat Comments (virtual meeting)

- I understand that many communities are interested in '15-minute cities'
- I like seeing more mixed-use, high-density development with retail/business on lower levels and residential above.
- I love the skyline and lights at night - we have an absolutely gorgeous cityscape from both 52 and 421/Salem Parkway
- Capitalizing on arts and innovation
- As an outsider, I really enjoy the time I spent in downtown, as well as in Salem. I had the good fortune to bike with Matthew and Hunter to get an idea of how wonderful the city is in those areas. I also attended the state American Planning Association NC chapter conference and enjoyed walking around downtown/felt safe
- I like that there are opportunities and events to experience different parts of the city: movies at bailey park, book reading along the path at miller park, events at Bethabara, Reynolda , etc.
- From a tourism perspective, we are perfectly situated for outdoor enthusiasts of all types... within an hour you can hike, bike, paddle, fish, walk... you can do history, wine, art... an endless number of activities for all ages!
- I think opportunities are a Complete Streets ordinance and adopting a Vision Zero ordinance for safety as well. I do not know if the city and/or the MPO have these plans or ordinances adopted. I encourage these for all my cities and MPOs
- agreed, need to balance building new with maintaining what we already have. And leverage community groups to help do that work (ie. FORBA can do trail maintenance, neighborhoods can do landscaping, gardening, litter pick up, etc)
- Sidewalk gaps, or sidewalks that are not logical... where people "naturally" walk...

- Unsafe crosswalks
- Lack of maintenance of greenways/walkways
- Uncovered bus stops -
- I think better promoting the events and creating more events targeted at the younger working folks. I managed a lot of out of just out of school folks in my previous job and they would always want to move to a city like Charlotte because they felt that there was nothing to do for them in Winston. Creating some more opportunities for them seems like a good opportunity to keep them in the city.

Keep Winston-Salem Beautiful
Forward 2045 Input
June 9, 2023

General Comments

- Innovation is good but is there oversight over initiatives/programs/projects to ensure they are meeting needs of residents
- We need to accommodate everyone, make sure taxpayers are happy, that programs/projects are sustainable and promote sustainability, and avoid displacement

Characteristics of Ideal Community

- Walkability
- Green space and trees
- More family entertainment options
- Less crime
- Affordable housing
- Less homelessness
- Better handling of increase in traffic and need for driving – too much reckless driving
- Less litter (in specific places)
- Creation of department that handles who is coming to the community
- Encouragement for more younger workers to come back to work force
- Attract more Fortune 500 businesses that could be an economic boost for rural areas

Strengths and Opportunities

- Arts
- Improvement in eating establishments – build on that for more diverse options
- Parks
- Tree City USA designation
- Recreation Centers and the activities at the centers
- Accessibility to grocery stores for most of the area – opportunity for improvement in food deserts
- Intersection between technology and social issues/connections – AI could present an opportunity
 - Robotics technology and what it could bring
 - Self-driving vehicles

Weaknesses and Threats

- Internet/electric use and availability
- Lack of walkability
- Lack of pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure
- Valet in public parking spaces Downtown

Urban Food Policy Council
Forward 2045 Input
July 13, 2023

- Social services as a community are at an inflection point.
- Covid showed how fragile our systems were, traditional food systems and farm to table.
- Need access for elderly for food and health
- Need to consider at risk populations writ large
- Consider healthy living, livability, access to health systems
- Look at social support infrastructure
- How to weave vacant city spaces into growing/garden opportunities. How to organize those spaces, maximize them for shared use.
- Using libraries and rec centers for food literacy programs
- Maximize what we already have
- We need a rapid hunger response system
- Access to food as a basic human right
- Tie food access into everything – housing, growth – everything should have a food lens
- Make policies friendlier to our community – community-built economic development
- Utilized parks and greenways as a way to access food
- Make local mean local [not regional] – hyperlocal
- How to combat legal barriers to food access
- Upgrading local community economic development assistance to show community support for better health and food outcomes.
- More Farmers Markets to help fill the local healthy food gap.
- **Develop and support a local food economy**
- Develop value-added processing for food – cold storage, shared kitchens
- Regional coordination of food systems
- Remove barriers to food/agriculture access
- Build greater food literacy
- Get local food into schools

Winston-Salem Transit Authority
Forward 2045 Input
July 27, 2023

- Infrastructure improvements
- More sidewalk accessibility everywhere
- Accessibility at City and County facilities, including parks and recreation centers, especially bathrooms
- More accessible housing for an aging population
- Affordable housing near city center
- Develop the City of Arts and Innovation
- Homeless population → housing should be top priority
- Continue to invest in transit
 - Make transit viable for more people
- Affordable housing – financing a hurdle for many
- More walkable communities → connect to bus stops
 - Make streets more transit friendly
- More funding for transit
 - Extend buses farther out into suburban neighborhoods
 - Modernize technology for transit
 - Make route improvements, more efficient
 - Higher frequency transit