

# VISION 2027: TOWN & COUNTRY

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Official Seal of the Town of Knightdale (as seen at right) embodies a train, cotton, a tobacco leaf, and a pine tree. These symbols of Knightdale's historic beginnings and economic origins say much about her citizens' desire for Knightdale's future. Early citizens knew that the keys to a vital community rested on the new town's ability to embrace new technology and infrastructure and capitalize on its native and developed resources.

The physical, built form of a town reflects the decision making processes employed by local leaders, and the decision making processes are guided by the community's vision or lack of vision. Most towns hope that development is accompanied by economic vitality and community enhancements, but those enhancements may end up compromising a community's aspirations for a prosperous future without a clearly stated and defended vision. Without such a vision, the community is left to the dictates of others unfamiliar with the community.

Knightdale has been and continues to be in an enviable position that few communities share, and the question becomes not "will" Knightdale grow, but "how"? The Town of Knightdale is confident that it will grow because of the following reasons:

- Proximity to Downtown Raleigh, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina State University and Wake Tech Community College;
- Ease of access via the US Highway 64/264 and Interstate 540 freeways;
- Potential to utilize the existing rail corridor for enhanced freight and/or passenger service;
- Availability of large parcels of undeveloped land adjacent to transportation corridors;
- Availability of ample public utility capacity; and
- A rapid residential growth rate (Knightdale's resident population grew an astounding 216% between 1990 and 2000, one of the fastest rates in the state; followed by an estimated 98% between 2000 and 2010.)



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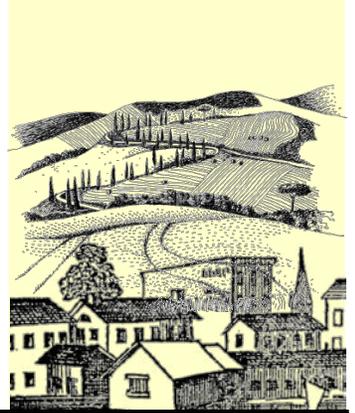
## **II. OVERALL GOALS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Keeping the preceding reasons for growth in mind, the Comprehensive Plan of the Town of Knightdale provides a functional framework to guide the development and implementation of a community vision that promotes the following specific goals:

1. To maintain a respect for the existing relationship between rural and urban Knightdale; the old English concept of town building based upon “town and country” is the foundation of this Plan; and
2. To provide equal opportunity to all Knightdale citizens, including equal access to facilities and opportunities of the Town and region; and
3. To provide safe, dynamic and sustainable neighborhoods, which offer employment opportunities, high quality education, adequate and affordable shelter, health care, and recreational amenities; and
4. To provide a vibrant and varied local economy, which will attract and support a wide diversity of business opportunities and community services; and
5. To provide balance and responsible urban design, planning and development, and protection of the Town’s historical, cultural and natural resources; and
6. To provide an open, accessible, responsive and fiscally responsible government whose structure creates the functional framework to meet the goals of the Plan.

The goals as outlined are the result of several years of learning, listening and communicating with citizens, town officials, the development community and planning consultants. Both of Knightdale’s Comprehensive Plan Update committees and the Town’s Planning Staff agree that Knightdale can afford to imagine a proactive future, guided by the expressed desires of her citizens because the Town possesses a unique, and enviable, geographic position within a nationally-recognized economic center, and because of improving accessibility and regional growth.

While demonstrating a desire for growth and development, the Town should seek to minimize the negative impacts of said growth and always employ the expectation that new development will contribute positively to the overall health and function of the Town. In the final analysis, the Comprehensive Plan Update Committees hope that the decisions made by the Town in the coming years will contribute to the building of a legacy that benefits future generations.



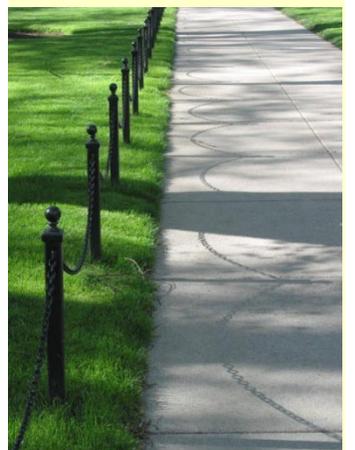
### III. 2027 VISION PROCESS

Realizing the overall vision for Knightdale requires clear, attainable objectives that address the preceding goals. Tasks for achieving these objectives are then provided to guide the Town's planning and implementation strategies. The objectives and tasks throughout the document are formed by local desires, current conditions, future trends and opportunities; they are items by which the Town can measure its progress in fulfilling the vision for Knightdale's future.

In crafting a vision for Knightdale, public participation played a key role in understanding what the public envisioned for the future of the Town. Feedback in the form of phone calls and email, discussion at meetings and written comments from a visual preference survey, resulted in several common themes. The following statements summarize the most common concerns and issues as stated by citizens at the June 2002 Landowners Workshop (**See Figure 2.1 for the detailed comments from the June 12, 2002 Public Planning Workshop**):

- Preserve some of the rural character...farms and natural areas.
- Retain the small-town atmosphere.
- Expand economic opportunities, broaden our local economy.
- Expand housing choices.
- Improve transportation choices. Make it easier to walk, get to Raleigh.
- Preserve and enhance our unique character.
- Preserve our history.
- Continue to make Knightdale more attractive.
- Knightdale has so much potential it does not have to settle for less.

Creating the vision of what Knightdale can be in 2027 meant finding the consensus between what the public said and what the staff, committee and consultants learned about the Town's resources, constraints and future trends. A number of questions were posed throughout the visioning process by CPUC1 and included the following:



*Any town that doesn't have sidewalks doesn't love its children. - Margaret Mead*

*A street is a spatial entity  
and not the residue  
between buildings. -  
Anonymous*

**Q: *What planning precedents from other towns should be followed?***

A: The project team studied Raleigh's Cameron Park neighborhood; the Towns of Cornelius, Davidson and Huntersville, NC, and English town building concepts as citizens expressed a strong desire to maintain a small town atmosphere and preserve rural areas.

**Q: *What lessons may be learned from these?***

A: After studying a number of development scenarios from existing towns, it was noted that transportation corridors determine where and how development occurs, that existing infrastructure can be maximized, and that the Town can require a high standard of development.

**Q: *Is the Town able to imitate successes from these places?***

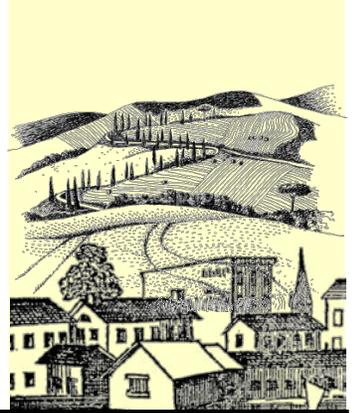
A: The project team understands that many "new places" have components which may be duplicated from "old places". Regional examples of these "old places" include Charleston, South Carolina and Savannah, Georgia. These towns have become major tourist attractions in large part because of their historical patterns of development. The question is, does Knightdale want to become "Everywhere, USA" or does Knightdale want to have a unique small town character which is memorable to its citizens and visitors?

**Q: *What tools does the Town need to meet its goals and objectives?***

A: Having strong leadership is one of the most important tools since the Town's leaders make important decisions about land use and town creation. Having a clear vision is also an important tool. The vision outlined in this Plan is the result of active public participation which dictates how the Town will grow through 2027. Sound planning principles are critical and are reflected in a well written zoning and subdivision ordinance. Finally, appropriately crafted policies on issues, such as annexation and extension of water and sewer services, will help the Town successfully implement its growth priorities.



*The public squares of old Savannah, Georgia contribute to the local character and tourism.*



**Q: What kind of future can the Town achieve?**

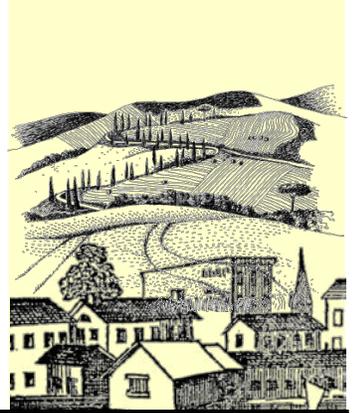
A: It is not unrealistic to imagine that Knightdale can be a regional leader in town building and grow in a quality fashion. As noted previously, growth pressures are ever increasing but, with the right tools in place, Knightdale may have a prosperous future.

The people's vision for Knightdale in 2027 is summarized by the phrase "Town and Country", and the details of this vision are found throughout this document, from the Design District Master Plan to the Small Area Plans. CPUC2 acknowledged and affirmed the existing vision as they set out to refine the plan details in 2009. By continuing to keep this vision at the forefront of its mind, the Town may better create a community of which future generations will be appreciative.

**FIGURE 2.1**

<b>What elements would make Knightdale a distinct and memorable town?</b>		
Group 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Small town atmosphere"</li> <li>• "Country life with city perks"</li> <li>• "Safety"</li> <li>• "Distinctive / upscale shopping (quaint downtown)"</li> </ul>	Group 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Small town atmosphere"</li> <li>• "Different street standards – small scale"</li> <li>• "No more cul-de-sac(s)"</li> </ul>	Group 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "A strong comprehensive plan implemented (sic) by zoning, ordinances, etc. – community vision"</li> <li>• "Uniform design standards"</li> <li>• "Differentiate ourselves from our surrounding communities – East Raleigh, etc."</li> </ul>
<b>Land Use and Growth</b>		
Group 1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do comprehensive plan if someone can randomly change it – need to change zoning to implement the Comp. Plan."</li> </ul>	Group 2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Create a plan to put high density where we want it"</li> <li>• "New zoning districts"</li> <li>• "Neighborhood streets"</li> <li>• "No landfill"</li> <li>• "Place a section away from (existing) residential for high density &amp; commercial"</li> </ul>	Group 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Need future land use map"</li> <li>• "Implement new zoning and ordinances to encourage growth in accordance with the new plan"</li> </ul>

<b>Historic Preservation</b>		
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Revitalize downtown – commuter rail”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Protect our downtown</li> <li>• “Protect existing quality of life”</li> <li>• “More open space”</li> <li>• “Connectivity”</li> <li>• “Link from past to future of Knightdale”</li> <li>• “Diversity”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Old downtown, plantations”</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation</b>		
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Link North Knightdale with South K-Dale (sic)”</li> <li>• “Rail”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Zone existing s/d (sic) property to protect from haphazard dev.”</li> <li>• “Roads (sic) of development to connect back from edges of highways”</li> <li>• “Expand our roads and ease congestion”</li> <li>• “Train stop in K’dale properly zoned”</li> <li>• “Plan corridor along rail system”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Develop regional political strength to influence transportation issues on a regional basis”</li> <li>• “As a municipality become local road builders. (Bonds paid for by impact fees)”</li> </ul>
<b>Bypass 64</b>		
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Speed up link/connection from 540 to 64 bypass”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Need to take control of interchanges in our ETJ and expand ETJ. Run water sewer.”</li> </ul>	-
<b>Business 64</b>		
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Less stoplights”</li> <li>• “Synchronized lights”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Prevent Bus. 64 from looking like hwy 70 in Clayton or Capital Blvd”</li> <li>• “Buffers and streetscapes”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “How do we retain existing large businesses? How do we promote quality long-term businesses? We need to be user friendly”</li> </ul>



<b>Smithfield Road</b>		
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Pedestrian friendly aesthetically pleasing (landscaping)”</li> <li>• “Streetscaping – old fashioned lights. Meandering/winding, walkways, benches”</li> <li>• “Greenway connectivity”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Important future connector from 64 bypass to Knightdale need to look at future land use on this corridor – future 4 lane with median”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Park and ride for train to RTP and downtown”</li> </ul>
<b>Open Space, Parks and Recreation</b>		
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Usable open space – a variety not specific to team sports”</li> <li>• Connectivity localize parks – amphitheater – pool”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “More green space in each new s/d”</li> <li>• Greenway system to connect K’dale”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Preserve what little older growth that we have”</li> <li>• “Force developers to do lower impact development”</li> <li>• “Require natural areas”</li> <li>• “Need tax base growth for Parks and Recreation”</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>		
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Better quality”</li> <li>• “Larger lots”</li> <li>• “Higher density”</li> <li>• “More varieties of builders”</li> <li>• “No more cookie-cutter garage doors on the street”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Don’t want to see manufactured housing as infill in existing s/d”</li> <li>• “Larger homes”</li> <li>• “A place for all homes”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “More upscale single-family homes”</li> <li>• “Balance with commercial, industrial”</li> </ul>
<b>Retail</b>		
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “More upscale / distinctive shops”</li> <li>• “Revitalize downtown buildings for shops, restaurants, cafes, etc.”</li> <li>• “More variety”</li> <li>• “Less fast food, car wash, Quick Lubes”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Keep in noads (sic) from the edges of main highways”</li> <li>• “New ways to encourage employment based growth”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “More mixed-use – community integrated small store shopping”</li> </ul>

Catalyst Projects		
<p>Group 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Industrial park”</li> <li>• “Wake Tech (Community College) extensions”</li> <li>• “Medical center”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Good planning”</li> <li>• “Medicine”</li> <li>• “Have a large corporation / industry come to K'dale area like Bayer plant, Glaxo...”</li> <li>• “Hi-light / promote amphitheater at Park”</li> <li>• “Encourage the arts – music, drama, dance”</li> </ul>	<p>Group 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Important to attract now before large land tracts are gone. Incentives? Promotion? Chamber?”</li> </ul>

#### IV. TOWN COUNCIL VISION STATEMENT

In 2007, the Town Council set out on its own visioning process for the Town and established the following:

**Vision:** *Promoting wellness through healthy and active neighborhoods and businesses*

**Mission:** *Serve citizens of Knightdale by providing leadership to promote quality living, balanced growth, and economic opportunity*

**Focus Areas:** *Safe; Transparent; Active; Green; Engaged (STAGE)*

CPUC2 considered the original vision of “Town and Country” as well as the Council’s vision as embodied by STAGE throughout the course of its update work. The result is a renewed focus on engaging the community in building an active, safe and self-sufficient town while employing an open and transparent regulatory process that encourages green development practices in order to preserve the town’s rural and historic heritage.



2007 – Knightdale Town Council Members: (L-R) James Roberson, Tim Poirier, Russell Killen (Mayor), Terrence Gleason, Jeff Eddins & Mike Chalk (Mayor Pro Tem).