

Town of Tarboro

North Carolina



Economic Development Strategic Five-Year Plan 2019 - 2023



For the Town of Tarboro by the
North Carolina Department of Commerce
Rural Economic Division
NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center

Adopted May 13, 2019

Acknowledgements



MS&RPC Staff would like to thank and recognize all who contributed their efforts to development of the Plan including: Steering Committee, citizens, business people, Planning Board members, Board of Commissioners, and Town staff.

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Section 1. Strategic Plan Overview

This Economic Development Strategic Plan will help give the Tarboro Town Council and responsible parties guidance for economic development improvement decisions, and for the community to take part in the implementation. The focus of the Plan is to act as a guide to help direct improvements for Tarboro. The plan will help promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses, and recruitment of new businesses.

Elected officials, Planning Board and Town staff as well as citizens, business persons, and civic volunteers will all play a key role in carrying out the goals, and actions outlined in this Plan.

Implementing the Plan actions will help improve Tarboro's long term economic development.

This Five-Year Plan identifies issues and impacts, and addresses Tarboro's economic development with the following:

Tarboro - Economic Development Strategic Five-Year Plan - Information

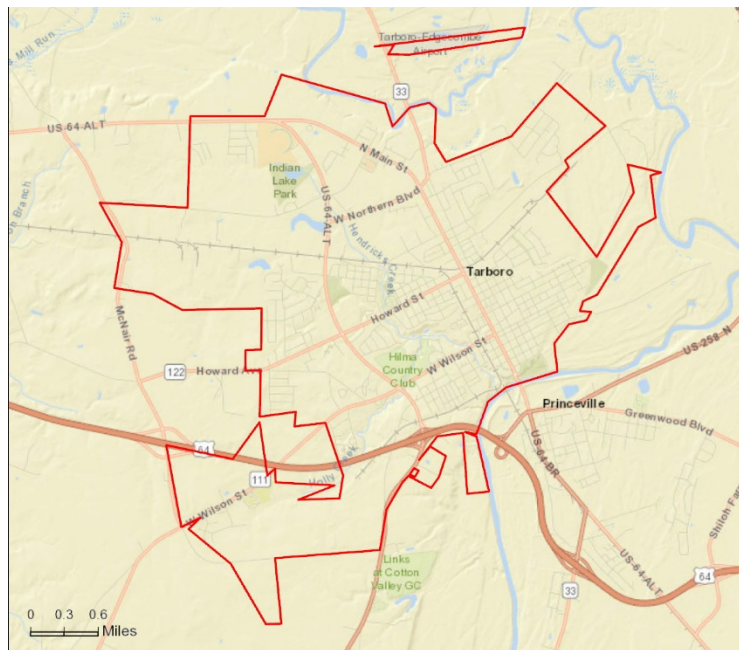
- Section 1 – Strategic Plan Overview
- Section 2 - Vision
- Section 3 - Town Development Overview
- Section 4 - Current Economic Situation
- Section 5 - Assessment
- Section 6 - Strategy implementation, monitoring, evaluation



In the summer of 2018 the North Carolina, Department of Commerce, Rural Economic Development Division - NC Main Street and Rural Planning Center was invited to assist the Town of Tarboro in developing an Economic Development Strategic Five-Year Plan. The Town organized the Tarboro Economic Development Plan Steering Committee, comprised of engaged citizens and business persons, to oversee the development of this Plan.

Comments and input were recorded from the Steering Committee throughout the process. The public responded to an economic development survey and additional public input was sought through an economic positioning/vision process that included discussion about the Town and downtown strengths,

weaknesses, opportunities, and outside threats (forces outside beyond Town control). From this process, the goals, objectives, and strategy actions were developed for the Plan.



Tarboro Town Limits

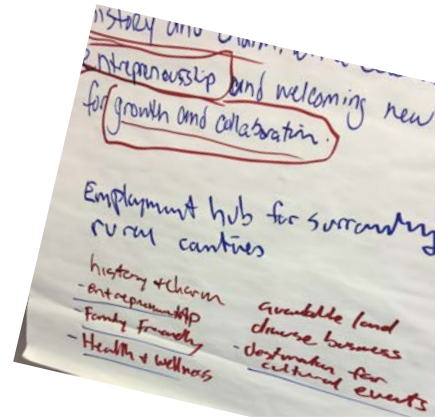


Downtown Tarboro

Section 2 – Economic Positioning /Vision

Visioning is the process of developing consensus about what future the community wants, and then deciding what is necessary to achieve it.

A community economic positioning/vision statement is one of the elements needed to form a forward-looking strategic framework that provides local government boards/commissions the long-term and comprehensive perspective necessary to make disciplined, tactical, incremental decisions on community issues as they arise.



The Tarboro Economic Development Strategic Plan Steering Committee spent an afternoon developing several different drafts of an economic positioning/vision statement for Tarboro. Another afternoon was spent wordsmithing numerous versions that distilled into the recommended economic positioning/vision statement for Tarboro:

Succeeding since 1760, Tarboro is a dynamic, opportunity-driven small town, leading the region in business and livability.

STRATEGY: HISTORY & CULTURE (*Succeeding since 1760*)

Goal 1: Reimagine uses and access to Tarboro's history and assets to make it relevant and marketable to current and future generations.

STRATEGY: LEADING REGION IN LIVABILITY

Goal 2: Emphasis on town-wide appearance, recreation, entertainment, events and activities, and natural resources to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.

STRATEGY: LEADING REGION IN BUSINESS

Goal 3: Grow the local economy in Tarboro

Goal 4: Encourage growth through residential development

STRATEGY: HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Goal 5: Develop and implement *healthy community* plans to facilitate healthy lifestyles for all residents.

Section 3. Town Development Overview

Tarboro is a municipality and county seat located in Edgecombe County, North Carolina. The town is situated near the western edge of North Carolina's coastal plain. Nearby towns are Princeville and Rocky Mount. Tarboro is connected by US highways 64, 64A, 258 and NC highways 111 and 122. The north-south Interstate 95 is approximately 20 miles west of town. Tarboro has proximity to major airports, railways and deep-water ports.



Highway marker commemorating Tarboro's Historic Town Common

Created in 1760, Tarboro is the ninth-oldest incorporated town in North Carolina. Tarboro officially was designated as the county seat of Edgecombe in 1764. Situated on the Tar River at the fall line in the Piedmont, the town served the area as an important colonial river port. It was a thriving trade center until the Civil War. A description of the Town, laid out in a traditional grid pattern of lots and streets, was published in "Edgecombe County: Twelve North Carolina Counties in 1810–11," by Dr Jeremiah Battle: *"There are about fifty private houses in it; and generally, from fifteen to twenty stores, a church, a jail, two warehouses, and a large Court House, which in the year 1785 was used for the sitting of the State Legislature. **This place affords good encouragement to all industrious persons, particularly merchants of almost every description.**" (emphasis added).*

At the center of the town's 45-block National Register Historic District, the 15-acre Town Common is the second oldest legislated town common in the United States and the *only remaining original common on the east coast*, outside of Boston. This historic public park, famous for its tall oaks, tree canopy, and war memorials has stood the test of time.

Downtown Tarboro nestled between the Historic District, the beautiful 15-acre Town Common, and the banks of the Tar River, is the home of many businesses and residents. Beautiful and walkable streetscapes highlight the character of a mix of specialty & service shops offering locally made, goods, art, and unique finds. The local brewery, coffee house, bakery, and restaurants offer inviting spaces, a taste of Tarboro, and a friendly atmosphere where warm welcomes and connections are made. Throughout the year, residents enjoy cultural festivals that highlight live music, dancing, food, and the chance to connect to meet old and new friends on Courthouse Square, the Town Common, and the banks of the Tar River at Riverfront Park.

Continue your stroll through the 45-block Historic District, home to many colonial, antebellum, and Victorian homes dressed in elegant columns, ornate gingerbread, stately porticos, soaring chimneys, bay

windows, and porches of every size or enjoy viewing nature along the banks of the Tar River at River Front Park. While Downtown Tarboro is a perfect daytime destination, you may find that Tarboro is a place where you just might decide to stay a while.

Tarboro's labor force is prepared through strong secondary schools, a business-focused community college and area universities and colleges. Tarboro is served by Edgecombe County Public School System, as well as several private and parochial schools in the area. Tarboro is also home to Edgecombe County's first K-12 NC public charter school. North East Carolina Prep School has a current enrollment of over 950 students¹ with projections for continued growth. Edgecombe Community College's main campus is in Tarboro with a satellite campus on the Edgecombe County side of Rocky Mount. Located about 25 miles from Tarboro is East Carolina University, the state's 3rd largest and fastest growing university in Greenville; NC Wesleyan College in Rocky Mount and Barton College in Wilson. NC State University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC Central University, Meredith College, William Peace University and others are all located just over an hour's drive from Tarboro.

Tarboro and Edgecombe County offer major arts and cultural attractions, outdoor activities and special events. Tarboro has one of North Carolina's largest and most diverse historic districts with the Tarboro Historic District National Recreation Trail, designated by the U.S. Department of the interior, providing a two-mile leisurely stroll through this beautiful area. Examples of historic sites here are the Pender Museum, Town Common, Cotton Press, Calvary Church and churchyard and N.C. Main Street Program improvements in historic downtown. The Edgecombe County Cultural Arts Council operates the art and history museum and provides workshops, classes, lecture's and exhibits about eight art shows annually in the Pittman Gallery along with other special events. The County Veterans Military Museum, located downtown, has historic appeal.²

Tarboro has an abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities which include the Tar River, Riverfront Park with a boat ramp and paddle trail. Additionally, Indian Lakes Sports Complex and other parks feature tournament-quality softball/baseball facilities, an amphitheater, an active recreation center, tennis courts and more. Hunting and fishing opportunities are also readily available.

One of the most significant assets of Tarboro is public and private cooperation. Businesses are complimentary of Town staff, utility services and Town leaders. The private sector is actively engaged in community development. Both public and private leadership understand the need for growth and realize the need to capitalize on economic development assets.³ An example is the Town's participation in the Carolina's Gateway Partnership.

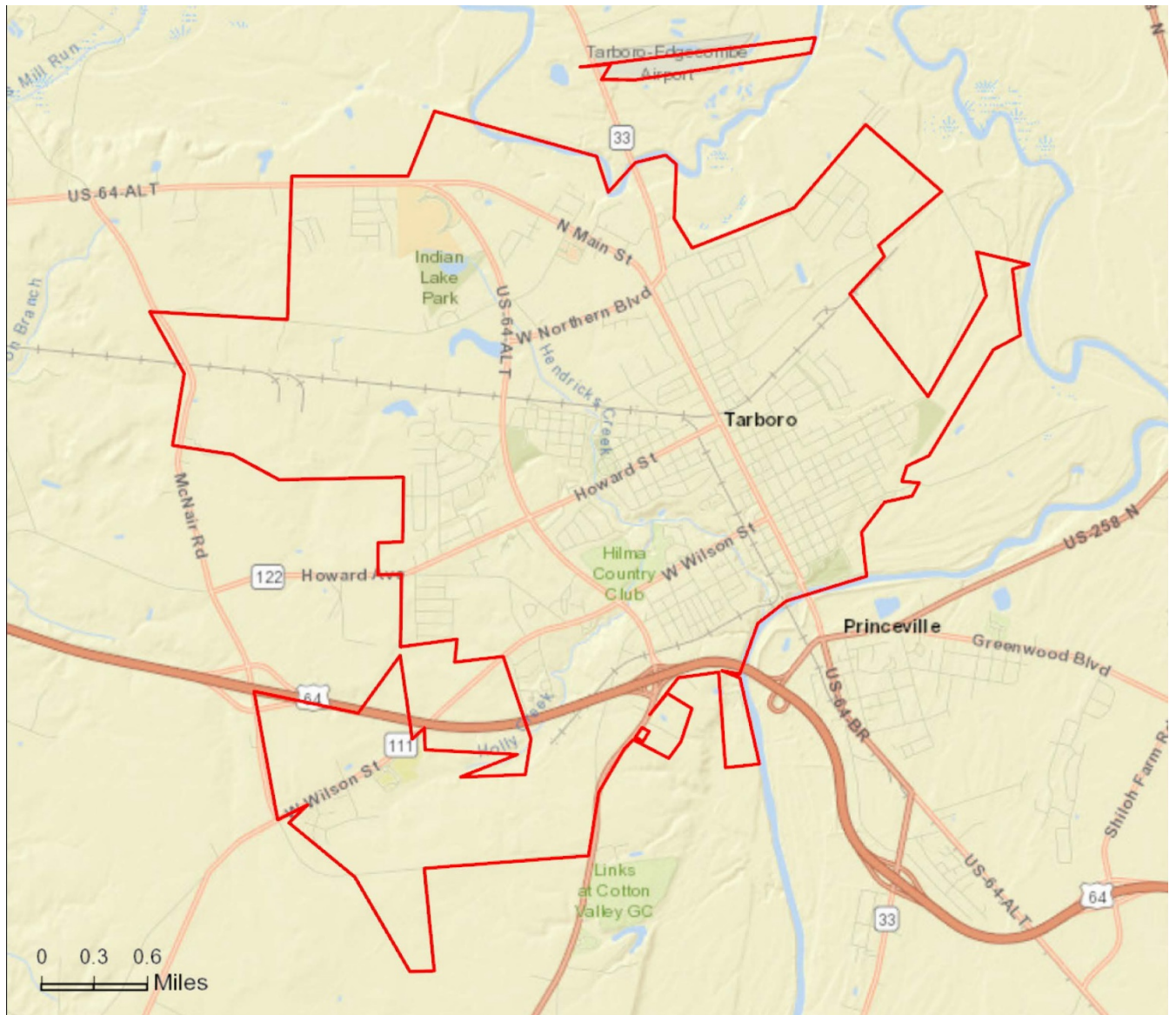
On the following pages, Map 3-1 shows the Boundaries of the Town and Map 3-2 shows the Downtown District Boundaries.

¹ William Etheridge, Executive Director, North East Carolina Preparatory School – FY18-19 School year.

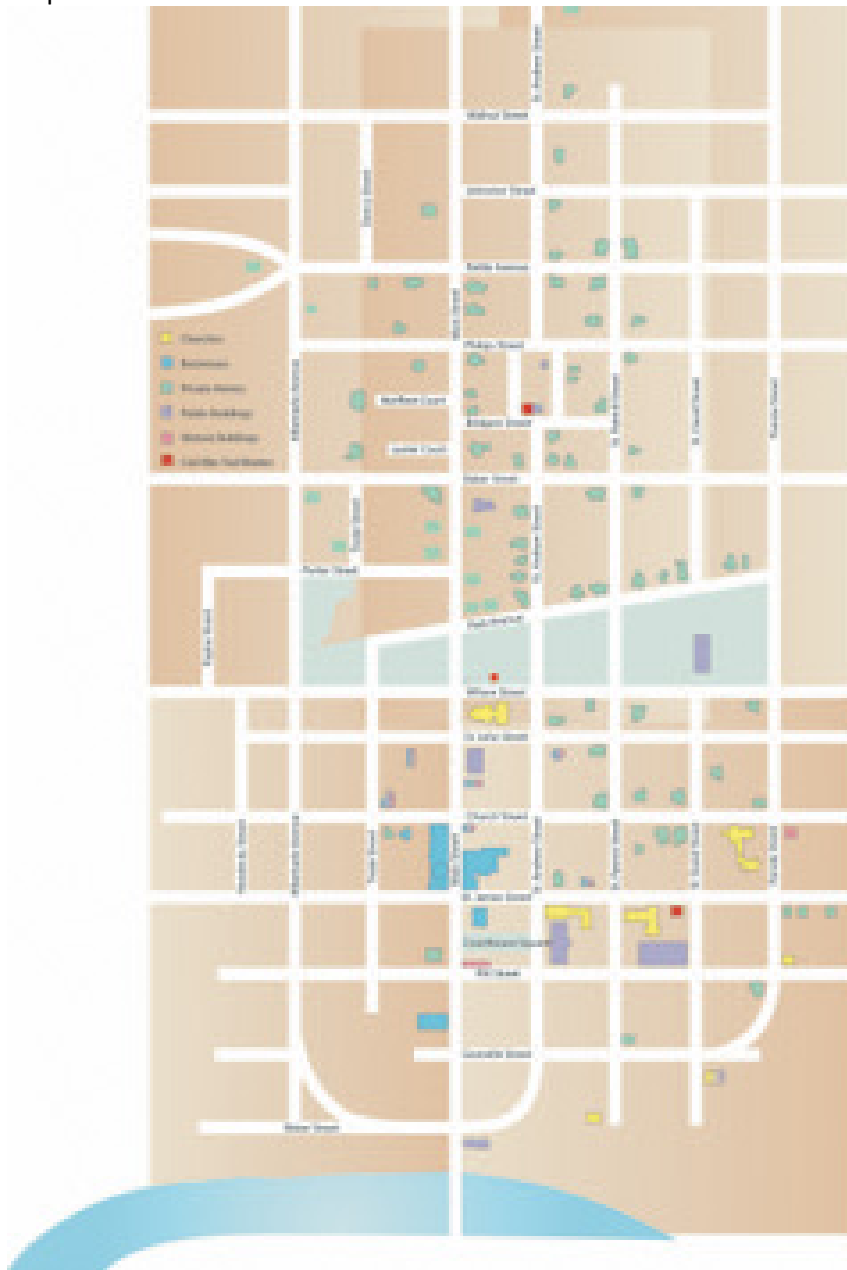
² Introduction to Tarboro, Town of Tarboro Strategic Economic Development Plan, 2005, Sanford Holshouser Business Development Group LLC

³ Introduction to Tarboro, Town of Tarboro Strategic Economic Development Plan, 2005, Sanford Holshouser Business Development Group LLC

Map 3-1 *Tarboro Town Boundaries*



Map 3-2 Downtown Tarboro Boundaries



Section 4. Current Economic Situation

This section of the Strategic Plan contains demographics, traffic counts, job and employment type, and a retail service economic assessment for the Town of Tarboro.

Population

The Town of Tarboro population has increased by about 3% from 1990 to 2010, which was the last US Census.

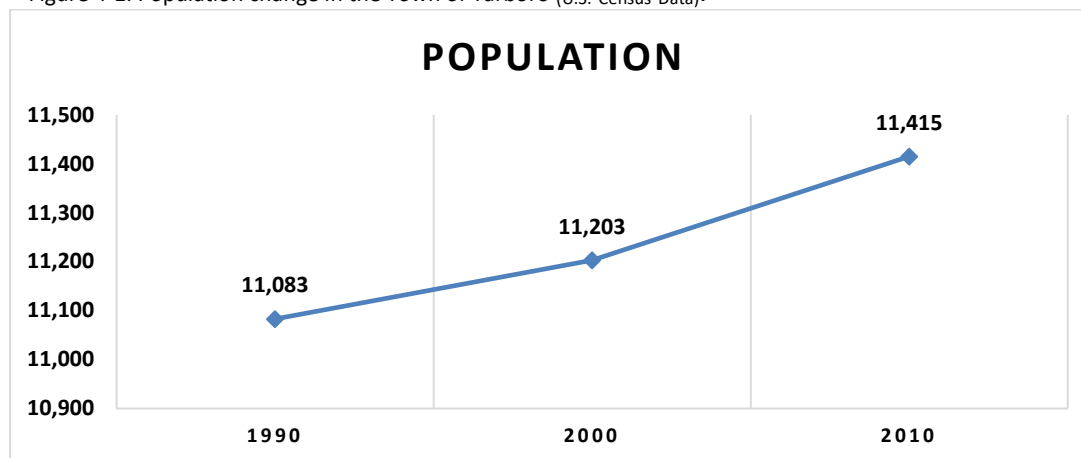
Table 4-1. Tarboro population changes.

Year	1990	2000	2010
Population	11,083	11,203	11,415

Source: U.S. Census Data

During the 20-year period from 1990-2010 Tarboro gained approximately 330 residents or .3% of Town population (*Figure 4-1*). During the same period, Edgecombe County's population remained flat, with no statistical difference. (*Table 4-2*).

Figure 4-1. Population change in the Town of Tarboro (U.S. Census Data).



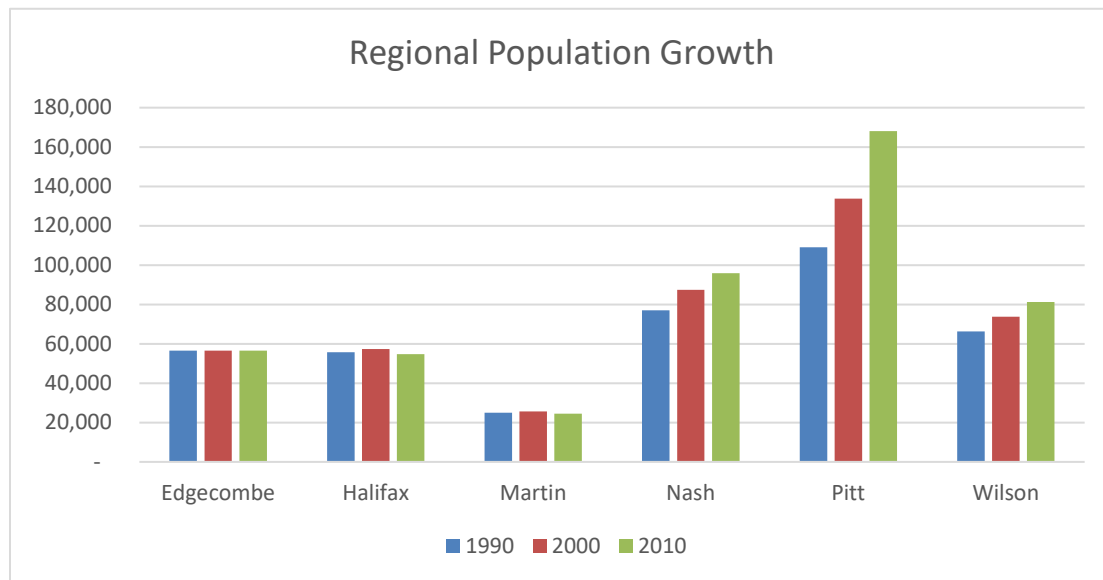
The population growth data from 1990 to 2010 in the regional six-county area that adjoins Edgecombe (*Table 4-2*, and *Figure 4-2*) shows Edgecombe remaining statistically flat; decline in Martin (-2%), and Halifax (-2%). However, there was significant growth in Nash (24%), Pitt (54%) and Wilson (23%) counties, during that 20-year time span.

Table 4-2. Regional population growth of Edgecombe County and neighboring counties.

Year	Edgecombe	Halifax	Martin	Nash	Pitt	Wilson
1990	56,608	55,671	25,049	77,060	109,054	66,238
2000	56,606	57,370	25,593	87,420	133,798	73,814
2010	56,552	54,691	24,505	95,840	168,148	81,234

Source: US Census

Figure 4-2. Population growth in Edgecombe and surrounding counties.



Racial Composition

Table 4-3 shows the racial composition in Tarboro. Approximately 48% of the Town is black, 46% white and 6% Hispanic. The remainder of the population is comprised of American Indian, Asian, Pacific Islander and others.

Table 4-3. Racial Composition - Town of Tarboro 2018.

Race	White	Black	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Some Other Race*	2 or more races (mix)	Hispanic
Percent of Population	45.9%	47.9%	0.3%	0.5%	0.1%	1.2%	6.4%	6.4%

Source: U.S. Census Data – ESRI *Previously known as “Other” an uncategorical statistic

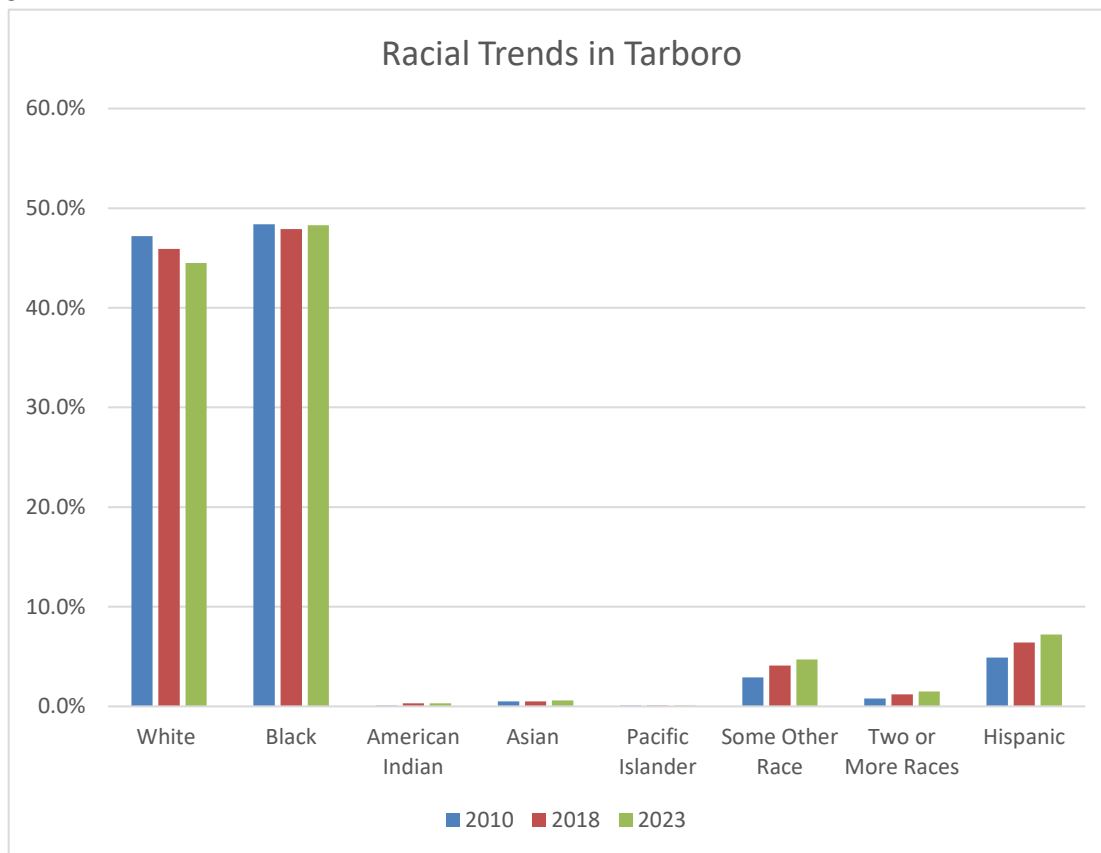
Racial Trends

Table 4-4 and Figure 4-3 shows how Tarboro’s racial populations are trending since 2010. The black population has remained relatively stable since 2010 with a 0.5% dip but a 0.4% projected increase by 2023. The white population has declined slightly by 1.3% with an additional projected decline of 1.4% by 2023. The Hispanic population is trending higher by 1.5% since 2010 and a projected increase of 0.8% by 2023. Those populations who identify as American Indian, Asian and Pacific Islander are each under 1% with small growth expectations. Those who identify as *Some Other Race* and *Two or More Races* show projected population increases of 1.8% and 0.7% respectively.

Table 4-4. Racial Trends Town of Tarboro

YEAR	2010	2018	2023	YEAR	2010	2018	2023
White	47.2%	45.9%	44.5%	Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Black	48.4%	47.9%	48.3%	Some Other Race	2.9%	4.1%	4.7%
American Indian	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%	Two or More Races	0.8%	1.2%	1.5%
Asian	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%	Hispanic	4.9%	6.4%	7.2%

Figure 4-3. Racial Trends Town of Tarboro



Age

The median age data in Table 4-5 shows that Tarboro's population has become slightly older, as the median age increased 4.2 years from 2000 to 2017. This is on par with Edgecombe County which aged 4.1 years over the same time frame but has been consistently about 3 years older than the County's median age. Tarboro likely skews a bit higher than the county because of the retirement communities and other urban costs within Town limits.

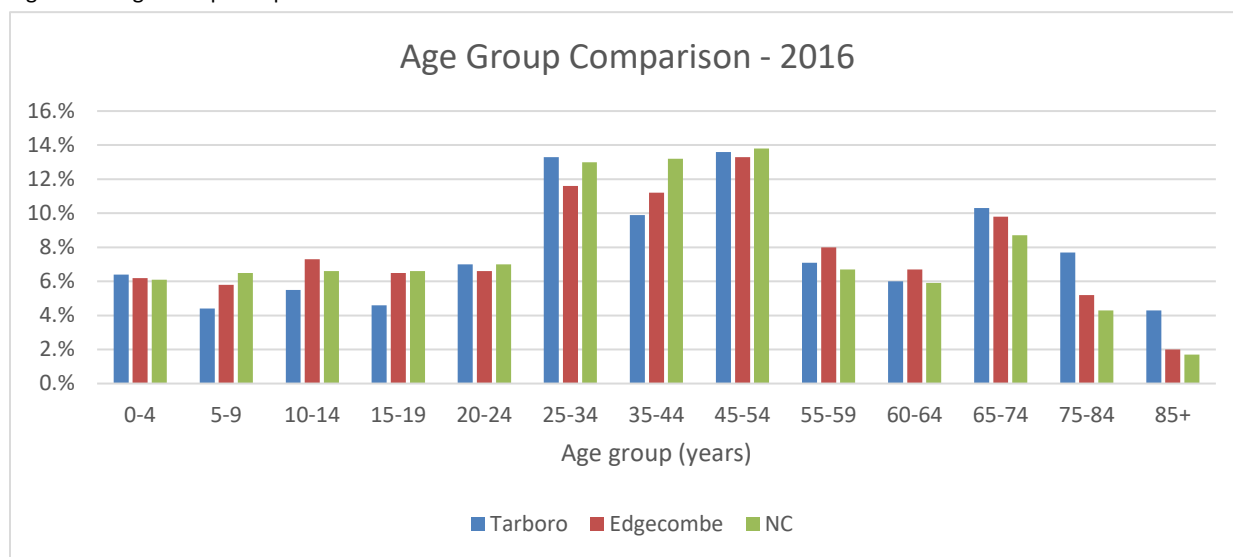
Table 4-5. Median Age Trend - Town of Tarboro

Age/Year	2000	2010	2016	Change in Age (2000-2016)
Tarboro	39.4	42.3	43.6	+4.2 years
Edgecombe County	36.2	39.6	40.3	+4.1 years
North Carolina	35.3	37.4	38.3	+3.0 years

Source: U.S. Census Data – American Community Survey

An age group comparison is shown in Figure 4-4 for Tarboro, Edgecombe County, and the State of North Carolina. Generally, compared to Edgecombe County and statewide, Tarboro has lower percentages of younger people, 5-19 years old, 35-44 years old and 55-64 years old. Higher percentages are with people 0-4 years old; 20-34 years old, 45-54 years old. The town has more older persons above 65 and older compared to the County and State.

Figure 4-4. Age Group Comparison



Source: U.S. Census Data – American Community Survey

Poverty

The amount of poverty in total population in Tarboro is lower (by 9.7%) compared to Edgecombe County and little lower than the state. Tarboro was lower than the state in all age groups except 18-64 age group (0.7% higher). Under 18 years old the poverty rate in Tarboro was 23% versus 41% for the County; 18 to 64 years old the in-town poverty rate was 17% versus 23% for the county. And for 65 and older Tarboro's poverty rate was 9% versus 16% for the Edgecombe County. (Table 4-6).

Table 4-6. Persons Below Poverty (Percentage of Population) Tarboro, Edgecombe County and NC– 2016.

	Total Population	Under 18 years	18-64 years	65 years and older
Tarboro	16.3%	22.8%	16.6%	8.8%
Edgecombe County	25.7%	40.6%	22.7%	15.6%
North Carolina	16.8%	23.9%	15.9%	9.7%

Source: U.S. Census Data – American Community Survey (2016) - Poverty Guidelines for 2016 are based on persons in family/household: One-\$12,071; Two-\$15,379; Three-\$18,850; Four-\$24,230;

Households

In 2000 Tarboro had 4,369 households, and by 2010 had increased to 4,565 households, with an increase of 196 in that 10-year span between census years.

Table 4-7. Households in Tarboro.

Year	2000	2010
Households	4,369	4,565

Source: U.S. Census Data-ESRI

Occupancy-Vacancy Comparison

Tarboro's housing occupancy rate was nearly 5% higher and the vacancy rate nearly 5% lower than Edgecombe County and statewide which were nearly equal with each other.

Table 4-11. Housing occupancy and vacancy comparison – 2016.

	Occupancy	Vacancy
Town of Tarboro	90.1%	9.9%
Edgecombe County	85.5%	14.5%
North Carolina	85.7%	14.3%

Source: U.S. Census Data 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing – Median Value

The median value of housing Tarboro in 2016 was \$98,400, which was higher than Edgecombe County, Halifax, and Martin counties. The remaining border counties (Table 4-12) of Nash, Pitt and Wilson counties had a higher median value of housing.

Table 4-12. Comparison of median value of owner-occupied housing units – 2016.

County	Edgecombe	Halifax	Martin	Nash	Pitt	Wilson
Median house value	\$82,200	\$87,700	\$84,000	\$120,500	\$135,000	\$117,100

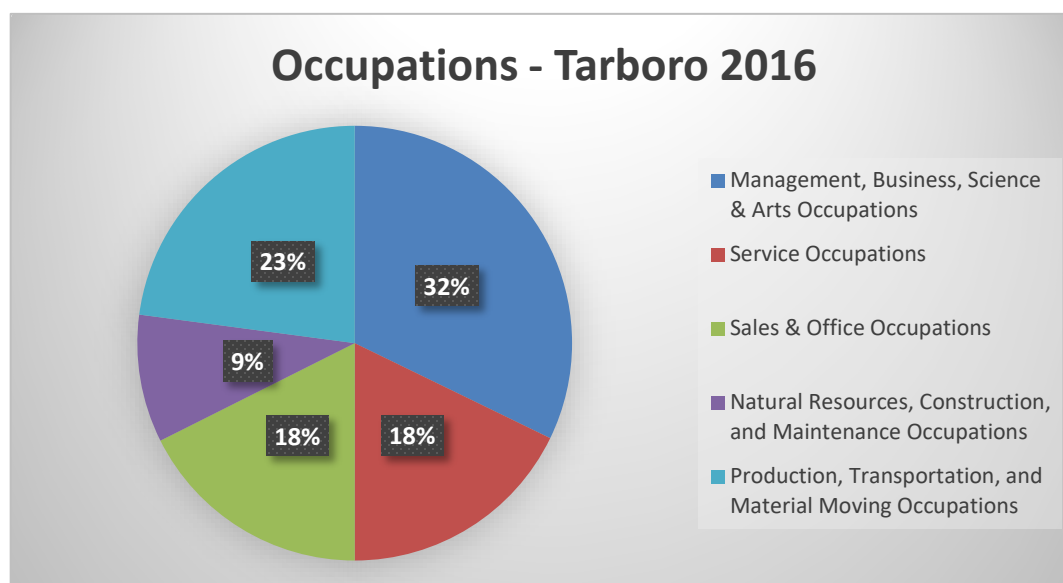
Source: U.S. Census Data 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Working Occupation

Worker occupation in Tarboro is shown in the following pie-chart (Figure 4-6).

Management, Business, Science and Arts account for 32% of worker occupations, *Production, Transportation, and Material Moving* at 23%. *Service* 18%, *Sales and Office* 18%, and *Natural Resources, Construction and Maintenance* 9%.

Figure 4-6. Worker occupation in Tarboro – 2016.



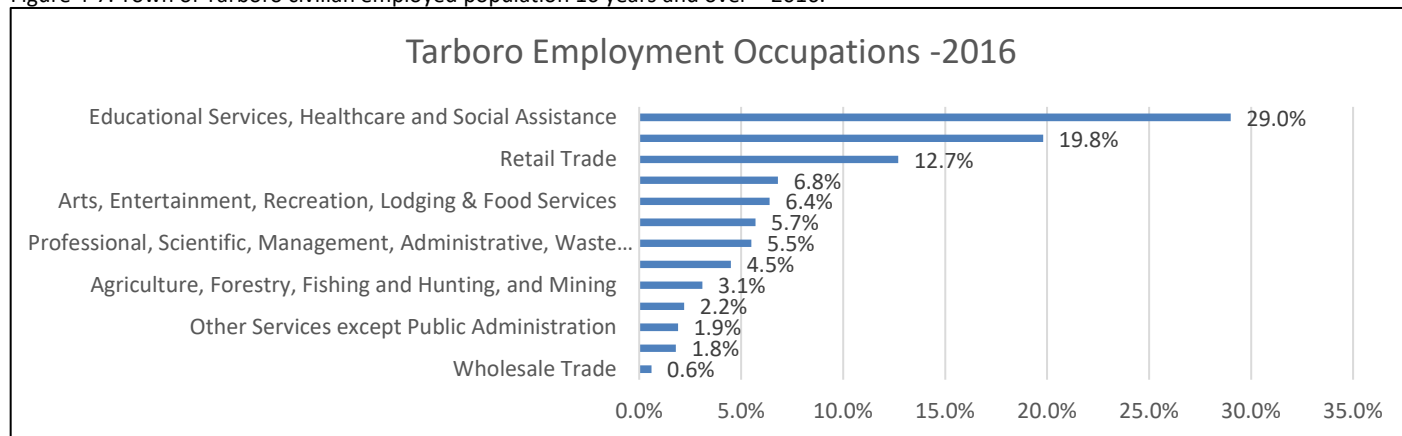
Source: U.S. Census Data – American Community Survey

The following Figure 4-7 shows categories of Tarboro civilian employed population 16 years and over for 2016.

The **top three fields of employment in Tarboro** are:

1. Educational services, health care, social assistance
2. Retail Trade
3. Arts, entertainment, recreation, lodging & food services

Figure 4-7. Town of Tarboro civilian employed population 16 years and over – 2016.



Source: U.S. Census Data – American Fact Finder.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate for Edgecombe County was 5.9% in December 2018 (Table 4-13), which was the highest of all the bordering counties. Pitt had the lowest at 4.0%, followed by Martin and Nash respectively. All counties were higher than the statewide rate of 3.9%.

Table 4-13. Unemployment rates – December 2018.

Counties	Edgecombe	Halifax	Martin	Nash	Pitt	Wilson	NC
Unemployment rate	6.8%	5.6%	4.9	4.6%	4.0%	5.4%	3.9%

Source: N.C. Department of Commerce - Labor & Economic Analysis Division

Income

Tarboro has a higher per capita income and household mean income (average) compared to Edgecombe County, but about 7.5% lower than statewide (Table 4-14)

Table 4-14. Per capita and mean household income – 2016.

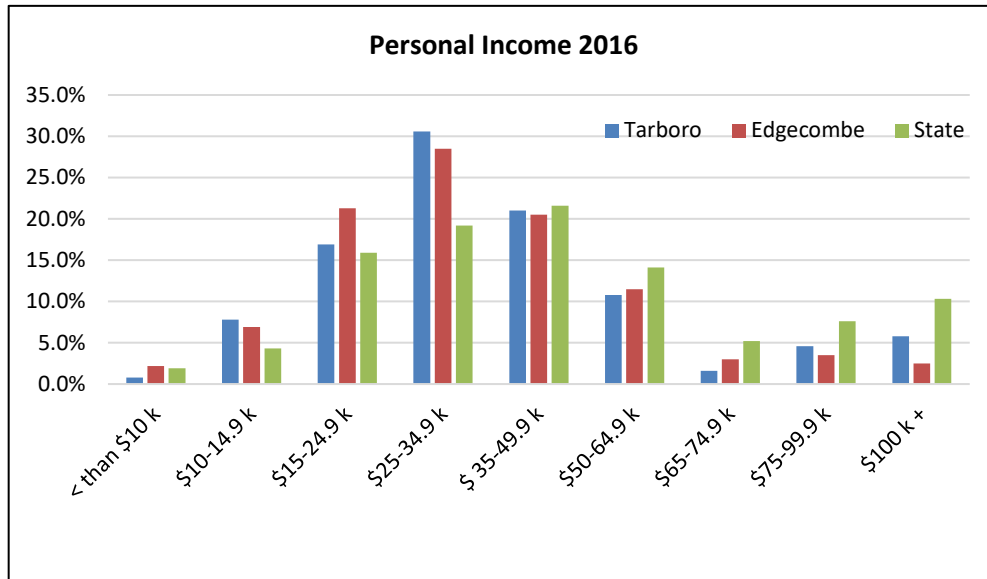
Type	Tarboro	Edgecombe	North Carolina
Per Capita Income	\$21,315	\$18,009	\$26,779
Household Mean Income*	\$50,128	\$45,037	\$67,367

Source: U.S. Census, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Mean income (average) is the amount obtained by dividing the total aggregate income of a group by the number of units in that group. The means and medians for households and families are based on all households and families. Means and medians for people are based on people 15 years old and over with income. — US Census Bureau, Frequently Asked Question, published by First Gov.

Personal income and household income distribution 2016 for Tarboro, Sampson County, and the State is shown in Figures 4-8 and 4.9. For personal income (Figure 4-8) Tarboro has a lower percentage of persons with income from less than \$10K income bracket compared to the State and Edgecombe County as well as in the \$15-25k and \$50-75k brackets. Tarboro is on par with the County and State in the \$35-50k bracket and higher than Edgecombe, but lower than the state in \$75K to 100K+ brackets.

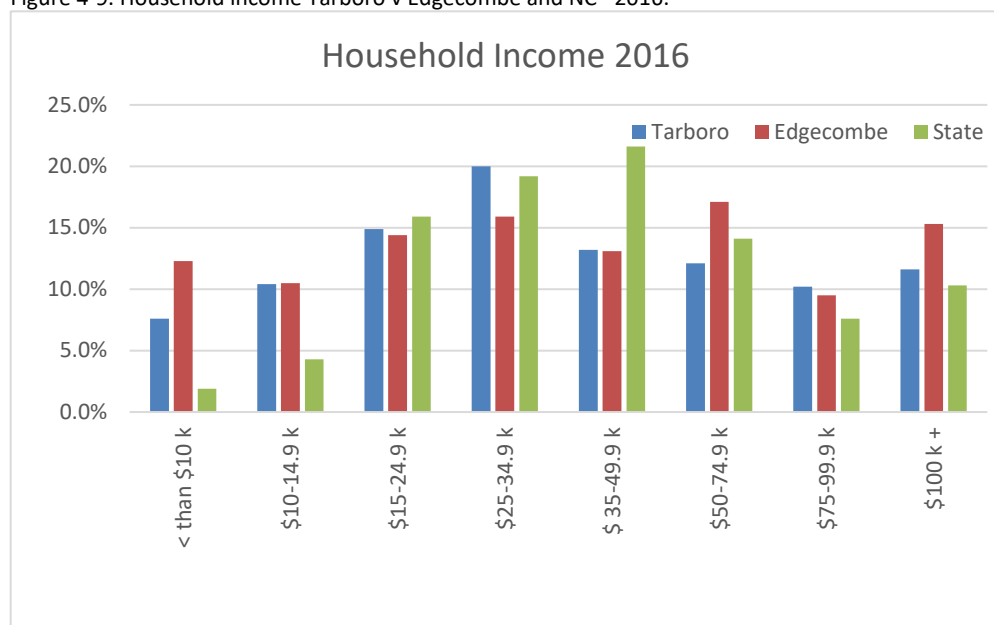
Figure 4-8. Personal income Tarboro v Edgecombe and NC– 2016.



Source: U.S. Census Data

As shown in Figure 4-9, Tarboro has an equal or higher percentage of households with incomes \$10k to 50k compared to Edgecombe County. Tarboro has a higher percentage of households than the County with incomes in the \$75k to 100K+ bracket.

Figure 4-9. Household income Tarboro v Edgecombe and NC– 2016.



Source: U.S. Census Data

Traffic Counts

Traffic counts (Figure 4-10) from the 2nd quarter of 2018 (April-June) show that approximately 17,000 - 18,000 vehicles travel US 64 each day. Along the major thoroughfares in Town, US 64 BR, US 64 Alt are in the approximate range of up to 6,000 to 15,000 vehicle trips per day.

Figure 4-10. Traffic count map of Tarboro



Source: Kalibrate Technologies Q-2 2018.

Jobs – Inflow and Outflow

The following Figure 4-9 map shows a **2015** jobs analysis with inflow and outflow where: 6,060 people (80.7%) are employed in Tarboro but live outside of Town; 2,907 people (66.7%) live in Tarboro but are employed outside of Town; and 1,450 people (33.3%) are employed and live in Tarboro.

Figure 4-10. Jobs inflow and outflow analysis of Tarboro – 2015.

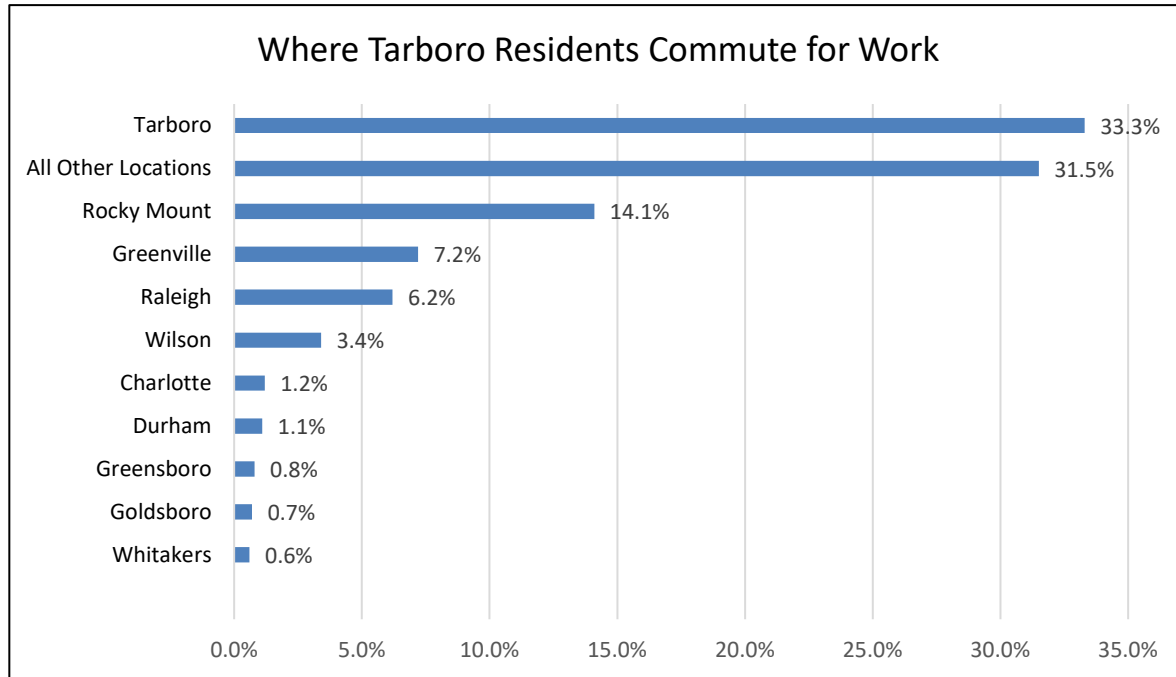


Source: US Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2015)

Commuters

Approximately 67% of Tarboro's working population commutes to someplace outside of town to go to work for their primary employment. Figure 4-11 shows those location with the percentage of working population.

Figure 4-11. Where Tarboro Residents commute for Work



(Source: US Census – On The Map)

Largest Town Employers

The following Tables (4-15 and 4-16) show the largest employers by number of employees and annual dollar sales. The top employer is Vidant Edgecombe Hospital.

Table 4-15. Largest Employers in Tarboro by Number of Employees.

Company Name	Business Description	Employee
Edgecombe County Schools	Education	1,100
QVC Inc.*	Distribution	1,100
Tyson Foods	Food Processing Bakery Products	950
Edgecombe County	Local Government	650
Air System Components	Industrial Venting Equipment Mfg.	500
Vidant Health Care	Health Care Services	470
Keihin Carolina System Technology Inc.	Electronic Systems for Auto Industry	450
LS Cable & System	Communications wire/cable	260
Town of Tarboro	Local Government	170
Greenleaf Nursery*	Wholesale Shrubbery & Plants	160
Mayo Knitting Mill Inc	Hosiery	130

Source: Carolinas Gateway Partnership June 21, 2018 *Located in Edgecombe County

Retail Leakage/Surplus Analysis

The retail leakage and surplus analysis (or Gap Analysis) examines the quantitative aspects of Tarboro's retail opportunities and a guide to understanding retail opportunities. This is a first step in understanding market potential within the Town's Primary Trade Area, which is a 5-mile radius from the center of Tarboro.

When consumers spend dollars outside the Primary Trade Area, this is known as "Retail Leakage" referred to as Leakage throughout the report. **Retail Leakage** indicates an **unmet demand in the trade area**. This suggests the possibility the community can support additional retail for that business type. Residents, within the primary trade area, are purchasing products outside of the trade area indicating an opportunity to capture these dollars somewhere in Tarboro. (Leakage is shown as a **positive value in green** when reviewing the actual ESRI data*.)

Retail Surplus means the community's primary trade area is **capturing the local market plus attracting non-local shoppers**. Surplus doesn't necessarily imply that the community can't support additional businesses, but rather the community has possibly developed strong clusters of retail including eating and drinking establishments that have broad geographical appeal. (Surplus is shown as a **negative value in red** when reviewing the ESRI data*.)

Before drawing conclusions about potential business expansion or recruitment opportunities, qualitative considerations, using additional sources should be more closely studied. This could be additional information from ESRI data* or sources the county or regional economic development office may have. This report is based on the data collected and could serve as a starting point for a business recruitment effort.

Table 4-16 shows the total Industry summaries for the Primary Trade Area of five miles from the Town's center. The last column shows the number of businesses within PTA. For example, within the five-mile radius there are a total of 142 retail trade, food and drink businesses 102 are retail only, 40 are food and drink.

Table 4-16. Retail Industry Summary

Retail Profile Tarboro NC (5-Mile Radius)	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/ Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade / Food & Drink	\$ 165,616,362	\$ 232,805,448	(\$67,189,086)	(16.9)	142
Total Retail Trade	\$ 150,808,149	\$ 213,397,949	(\$62,589,800)	(17.2)	102
Total Food & Drink	\$ 14,808,212	\$ 19,407,499	(\$4,599,287)	(13.4)	40

The *Retail Gap* represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. The *Leakage/Surplus Factor* presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (*total leakage*) to -100 (*total surplus*). A positive value represents "leakage" of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area.

Retail Leakage

The table below (Table 4-17) shows retail sales leakage from within the 5-mile Primary Trade Area in Tarboro in 2017. The bar-graph shows retail leakage where customers shop outside the trade area. There is a total leakage in retail trade and food & drink sales of approximately \$67 million.

Table 4-17 also demonstrates Retail Potential. While there may be overall retail surplus in the Primary Trade Area,

(see Table 4-18) there is also leakage in specific retail categories. Table 4-17 takes the leakage information for each of the retail categories including food and drink that are “leaking” and estimates a business capturing 10% of that leakage. The estimated capture rate of 10% is intended as a starting point. Retailers or potential retailers could / should aim higher. Using an average of \$300 per square foot in annual retail sales gives us the number of square feet needed to support that business. The annual *Sales Per Square Foot* of \$300 is an average of what recent surveys from comparable studies have shown businesses are earning.

As an example, the Town “leaks” approximately \$3.2M in “Clothing Stores” and might support an additional 10-11,000 square feet of retail space. “Home Furnishings” leaks approximately \$1.7 million and could utilize an additional 5,000 square feet of space. These amounts may or may not be enough to entice new business start-ups but may encourage expansions of existing businesses or some niche or boutique business opportunities.

Table 4-17. Town of Tarboro Retail Leakage and Retail Potential.

NAICS Code	Retail Leakage (5-Mile Primary Trade Area)	Retail Gap (Leakage)	Est. Capture 10%	Sales per S/F	Leakage Factor	S/F Needed	Number of Businesses
7223	Special Food Services	\$69,357	\$6,936	\$300	34.4	231	1
4542	Vending Machine Operators	\$141,679	\$14,168	\$300	100.0	472	0
4512	Book, Periodical, and Music Stores	\$354,604	\$35,460	\$300	46.0	1,182	1
4483	Jewelry Luggage and Leather Goods Stores	\$522,039	\$52,204	\$300	30.6	1,740	2
443	Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$529,319	\$52,932	\$300	6.8	1,764	3
4543	Direct Selling Establishments	\$695,136	\$69,514	\$300	100.0	2,317	0
4442	Lawn & Garden Equipment & Supplies Stores	\$707,474	\$70,747	\$300	100.0	2,358	0
7224	Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages)	\$738,034	\$73,803	\$300	64.7	2,460	1
4532	Office Supplies, Stationary, and Gift Stores	\$1,105,551	\$110,555	\$300	74.7	3,685	1
4412	Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	\$1,465,200	\$146,520	\$300	36.6	4,884	1
4422	Home Furnishing Stores	\$1,737,947	\$173,795	\$300	71.0	5,793	1
4541	Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	\$1,772,325	\$177,233	\$300	100.0	5,908	0
4511	Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores	\$2,211,047	\$221,105	\$300	53.2	7,370	2
4529	Other General Merchandise Stores	\$2,356,846	\$235,685	\$300	20.3	7,856	7
4481	Clothing Stores	\$3,241,865	\$324,187	\$300	60.5	10,806	4
4539	Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$4,306,903	\$430,690	\$300	83.7	14,356	2

(Source: AccessNC - ESRI Retail Marketplace Profile – 2018).

As noted earlier, Retail Surplus means the community's primary trade area is capturing the local market plus attracting non-local shoppers. Surplus doesn't necessarily imply that the community can't support additional businesses, but rather the community has possibly developed strong clusters of retail including eating and drinking establishments that have broad geographical appeal. Table 4-18 shows those retail types that are attracting consumers within the primary trade area.

Table 4-18. Town of Tarboro Retail Surplus.

NAICS Code	Retail Surplus Tarboro (5-Mile Primary Trade Area)	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
4521	Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	\$17,120,193	\$38,559,008	(\$21,438,815)	(38.5)	3
447,4471	Gasoline Stations	\$16,856,816	\$31,749,308	(\$14,892,492)	(30.6)	10
446,4461	Health & Personal Care Stores	\$9,848,364	\$19,526,577	(\$9,678,213)	(32.9)	6
4453	Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	\$821,628	\$8,468,262	(\$7,646,634)	(82.3)	3
4441	Building Materials & Supplies Dealers	\$10,150,405	\$17,256,234	(\$7,105,829)	(25.9)	8
7225	Restaurants/Other Eating Places	\$13,732,918	\$19,139,596	(\$5,406,678)	(16.4)	38
4411	Automobile Dealers	\$27,768,558	\$32,777,271	(\$5,008,713)	(8.3)	9
4421	Furniture Stores	\$3,281,037	\$7,701,838	(\$4,420,801)	(40.3)	6
4413	Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	\$3,179,802	\$5,776,980	(\$2,597,178)	(29.0)	6
4452	Specialty Food Stores	\$951,081	\$2,014,074	(\$1,062,993)	(35.8)	7
4533	Used Merchandise Stores	\$687,664	\$962,468	(\$274,804)	(16.7)	3
4482	Shoe Stores	\$1,050,661	\$1,281,935	(\$231,274)	(9.9)	2
4531	Florists	\$205,274	\$348,176	(\$142,902)	(25.8)	3

***Sources for information:** ESRI On-Line Reports for Business, Demographics, <http://www.esri.com/>.

Disclaimer: This report was prepared by the NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center. Information contained in the report is primarily from ESRI On-Line Business Analysis and checked against sources above. Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained within is accurate, however, no warranty is made about the accuracy of this report by the NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center or its sources.

Section 5. Assessment

The Tarboro Economic Development Strategic Plan Assessment information was gathered with the following:

Assets and Economic Drivers

The following Assets & Economic Drivers information was collected from the *Tarboro Economic Development Strategic Plan Steering Committee* at the July 25, 2018 meeting.

Economic Assets	Cultural Assets	Natural/Recreational
Access to Rail	Blount Bridge	Albemarle Trail
Ace Hardware	Blount Bridges House	Available Land
Agriculture	Calvary Church Arboretum	Golf Course
Business Friendly	Community Choirs	Indian Lake Sports Complex
Carolina Connector	Courthouse Square	Tar River
CSX	Drug store bldg (former) @ Walnut & Main	
Doug Henry Ford	Edgecombe Community College Performance Series	
Downtown Retail	Historic District	
Fish Monger	Historic Preservation Curriculum at ECC	
IGA Building (grocery)	Keihin Auditorium & Atrium	
Keihin Carolina Systems Technology (KCST)	Municipal Milk Plant	
Multi-specialty Clinic	NC Symphony	
National Register Historic District / Local Historic Commission	New Year Event	
NC Main Street Program	Special Events	
On the Square	Summer Music	
Park Hill Cinema	Tar River Players	
Quigless Clinic	Tarboro High Football	
Riverside Plaza	Town Common	
Sara Lee	Veteran's Museum	
Size		
Tarboro Brewing Company		
Tarboro Industrial Park		
Vidant-Edgecombe Hospital		
Walmart		

Assets and Economic Drivers *(continued)*

Institutional	Community	Governmental Assets
County of Edgecombe	Fountain of Albemarle Retirement Village & Senior Living	Carolinas Gateway Partnership
Early College	Monika Fleming	Courthouse
Edgecombe Community College	Non-profits	Genealogy
Edgecombe County Public Schools	Todd Gurley (professional athlete)	Historical Municipal Ball Park
Historic Churches/Churches	Vidant-Edgecombe Hospital	Human Services
NECP Charter School		Low Crime Rate (Great PD)
Town of Tarboro		Public Library

SWOT Analysis

These are the results to determine Tarboro's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats from an exercise given to two separate groups: Tarboro Economic Development Strategic Plan Steering Committee and the Tarboro Development Corporation.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Access to Downtown housing	Access to river
Albemarle nursing home/assisted living	Cultural shift
Business serve diverse clientele	Desolate on the weekends
Businesses with tenure	Dining options not great hours/variety
Community pride	DT marketing
County seat	Empty, abandoned spaces
Courthouse square	Farmers market not permanent
Diversity of industry	Flood damaged properties
Farmers market	Inconsistent business hours
Financial strength	Keeping momentum for change
Gas station	No grocery store
Geographically condensed	No indoor event space
Government access	No local newspaper
Government engagement	No overnight accommodations
Government stability	No private schools in town
Green Space	No public transportation
History	Old story versus new story of Tarboro
Land values	One-way streets
Mixed use	Parking/signage for parking
Occupancy	Perception of being stuck in the past
People talk about safe community	Retail leakage
Proximity/Location	School scores
River/commons	Size of town
Safe	Under-utilized river front
Size	

Strengths <i>(continued)</i>	Weaknesses <i>(continued)</i>
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Tarboro football
Teach for America
Traffic
Walkable
Tarboro Development Corporation (TDC)

Opportunities	Threats
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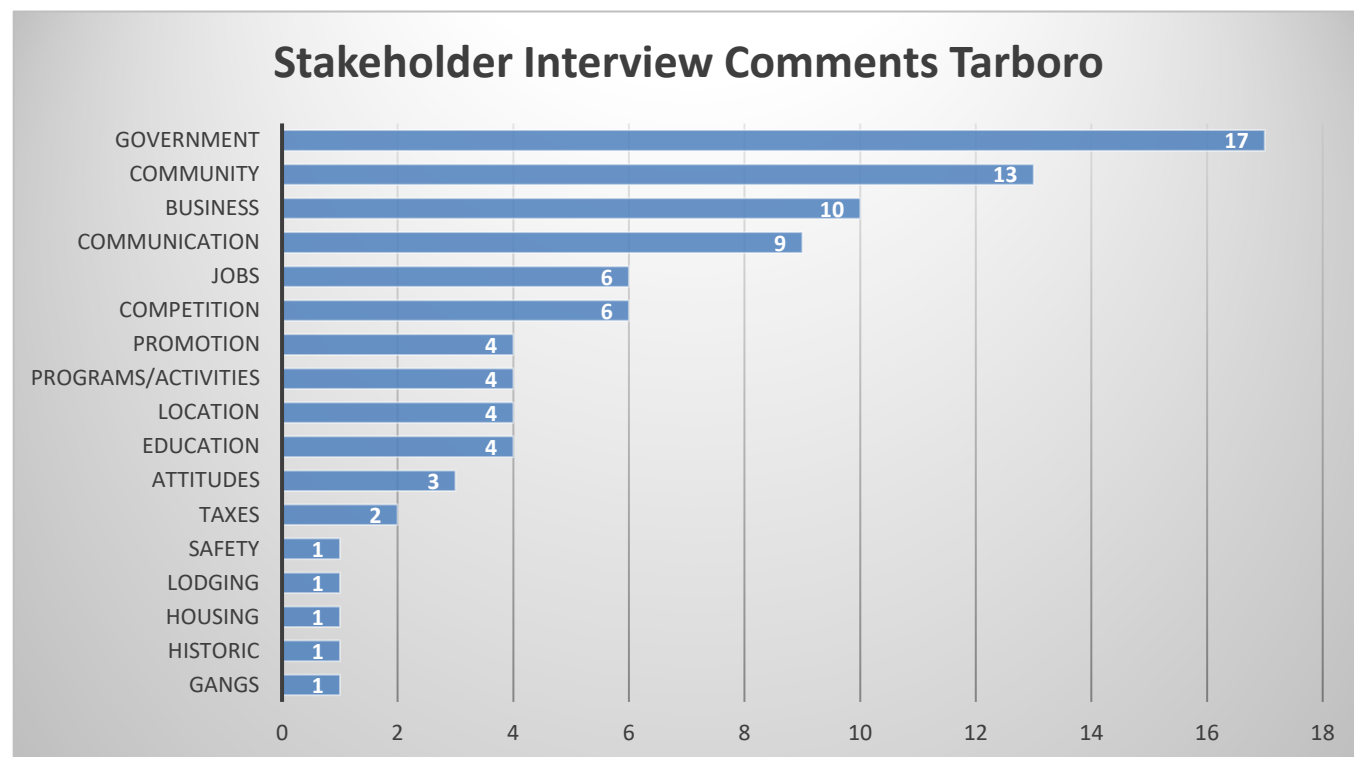
Abandoned, vacant properties	Aging infrastructure
Boutique hotel/event space	Brain-drain - college-bound young people don't return
Coffee, brew, food	Broadband - internet speeds
Creating positive image of small town living	Cost of building re-habilitations
Expand what Town is known for (i.e. "On the Square" restaurant)	Economic threat due to market perception
Greater marketing overall (share great stories)	Flooding
Improve employment of local residents	Lack of newspaper
Kingsboro development (housing/support businesses, etc.)	Larger nearby towns have bigger pool of corporate resources & relationships
List available properties on Town website	Location
Location	Old style thinking
Mixed use	Online shopping/selling in town (some do/don't)
More County/Town collaboration	Tarboro 27886 (opinion web space)
Perception that nothing's new	
Public parking signs	
Town billboards	

Economic Drivers

Agriculture	Manufacturing & Industry
Available land	People/family
Carolina Intermodal Connector (CSX)	Proximity to Kingsboro Mega Site
County of Edgecombe	QVC
County Seat	Returning native residents
Edgecombe Community College	Sara Lee
Housing growth - need additional, affordable units	Sports complex
Johnston Controls	St. Anne's Chapel
Kanban	Tarboro Industrial Center
Keihin Carolina Systems Technology (KCST)	Tourism
L.S. Cable/Madam Moorecraft	Town of Tarboro
Location/proximity to I-95 and US 64	Vidant-Edgecombe Hospital
Madem-Moorecraft Reels USA	Vidant Multi-Specialist Clinic

Stakeholder Interview Responses

A variety of stakeholders from Tarboro provided their candid responses to a series of questions. The responses/comments below were sorted by broad topic without differentiating between positive or constructive (negative) comments. *The question sheet can be found in Appendix Section 5-A.*



Stakeholder Interview Responses Tarboro EDSP		
Combined Comments	Category	Question
Tarboro's people! On the opposite side are the ones who resist change and are content with Tarboro being stuck right where it is.	Attitudes	2-Challenges
The old ways of thinking have been and continues to be a hindrance. Some long town residents do not want change and do not appreciate that "diversity" is a way to strengthen the community for the better.	Attitudes	2-Challenges
Willingness to invite and work with new businesses here, low housing price (able to buy your first home at a reasonable price).	Attitudes	3-Opportunities
Lack of variety of restaurants	Business	2-Challenges
New Businesses and different restaurants other than fast food.	Business	2-Challenges
Larger retail stores	Business	3-Opportunities
Agriculture growth	Business	3-Opportunities
Arts	Business	3-Opportunities

Being able to bring in outside businesses to promote growth within the city would be ideal.	Business	3- Opportunities
We need to attract different types of businesses (i.e. well- known sit-down restaurants such as Red Lobster) that can create more revenue that the surrounding municipalities will want to come to Tarboro to support.	Business	3- Opportunities
Further develop downtown and the downtown program	Business - Downtown	3- Opportunities
Downtown	Business- Downtown	2-Challenges
Improve shopping in downtown and other parts of town	Business- Downtown	5-Quality of Life
Communication and community involvement	Communication	1-Strengths
For all of the above-mentioned programs and events that the Town has to offer, being able to get that information out to everyone seems to be something that needs to be worked on the most. Overall, the community is also low income which presents a major hurdle as well.	Communication	2-Challenges
Opportunities for the town should include residents being more inclusive and tolerant of what is different.	Communication	3- Opportunities
The first step would be working on how to make sure the public is aware of what all is offered through town events and programs offered at the community centers and senior center. Listening to the community to see what they would like offered as well, adapt to the changes as they come along.	Communication	6- Improvements 5 Yrs
Continue to work with the residents and get their input from all parts of the town of Tarboro on what their priorities/needs are for themselves and their families.	Communication	6- Improvements 5 Yrs
Reach out to all residents to make sure they are being represented before major decisions are made by the Town Council.	Communication	6- Improvements 5 yrs
Inclusion in racial and economic equity in employment and housing is extremely important to make sure the town continues to grow and move forward.	Communication	6- Improvements 5 Yrs
Include citizen input in decision-making	Communication	7-Other Comments
I never see my town-council member – doesn't feel like (he/she) is approachable	Communication	7-Other Comments
Small town, hometown lifestyle	Community	1-Strengths
Quality of family life	Community	1-Strengths
Kids went to college here, returned and raised their kids here	Community	1-Strengths
Several generations	Community	1-Strengths
Strong community base, strong religion, being right off a major highway.	Community	1-Strengths
Tarboro's people! There are many in these towns that have a passion for growing Tarboro and work hard to go so.	Community	1-Strengths
Small community, close knit	Community	1-Strengths
I chose to work here and chose to live in Tarboro and raised two children	Community	1-Strengths
Although it's a town, it's a community	Community	1-Strengths

The people of Tarboro are very “friendly” and “welcoming”. Through several major disaster’s, they have shown “resiliency” and a willingness to keep moving forward.	Community	1-Strengths
Tarboro has a “hometown” feel without being “too country” or out of touch with what’s happening overall in the state and country.	Community	1-Strengths
We need to continue to support our local football teams (Tarboro High Vikings) so that when any of them become successful (i.e. Todd Gurley, Kelvin Bryant) we can market their hometown and inspire others to continue to give back as they make it big!	Community	3- Opportunities
Focusing on improving the quality of life for all the people who reside here.	Community	5-Quality of Life
Other towns	Competition	4-Threats
New industry because of the attraction of the larger cities nearby	Competition	4-Threats
Larger towns that can offer more than what Tarboro has to offer, i.e. Rocky Mount & Wilson. Rocky Mount also just opened a new state of the art event center as well.	Competition	4-Threats
Greenville and Rocky Mount are growing and attracting business from Tarboro.	Competition	4-Threats
Greenville, Rocky Mount, Raleigh, & other large towns that have the size to potentially draw in large industry away from Tarboro.	Competition	4-Threats
Who purchases properties and what they build, electrical rates, school performance, county tax rate.	Competition	4-Threats
School system could use some improvement	Education	5-Quality of Life
Schools not what they used to be	Education	5-Quality of Life
School Performance, lower county taxes, clothing store(s).	Education	5-Quality of Life
Hiring educators in the schools/community college who want to be here to improve our educational system for our students.	Education	5-Quality of Life
The unfortunate problem of gangs from other areas that can “infect” a town and cause so many unnecessary problems.	Gangs	4-Threats
Appears that Town Council is not always on the same page with each other. They may be their own worst enemies – getting too deep in the woods	Government	2-Challenges
It's off to a good start.	Government	6- Improvements 5 Yrs
Tina (Parker) has great ideas and can get things done	Government	6- Improvements 5 Yrs
Having the right people on the payroll - takes new and young people to keep things fresh	Government	6- Improvements 5 Yrs
Increase funding to effective programs and trim funding from those that are not effective.	Government	6- Improvements 5 Yrs
Balance services with amount of staff to accommodate without overworking/stressing	Government	6- Improvements 5 Yrs

Funding not always available	Government	2-Challenges
Focusing on “what we can” be is a wonderful way to encourage others to participate in making Tarboro an even more special place to be.	Government	7-Other Comments
No matter how uncomfortable it may be to some, the town has to make efforts to eliminate barriers that keep the entire Town of Tarboro from being prosperous and growing at a rate that benefits everyone. Learning to accept that there will always be some differences. Overall, we should want all of the people who live here to feel like they are a part of a “growing” and “sustainable area” that can be a wonderful place to raise a family and live.	Government- Barriers	7-Other Comments
Local government works well with County	Government- Cooperation	1-Strengths
Work with county, work with state and local leaders to find solutions for challenges.	Government- Cooperation	6- Improvements 5 Yrs
With the Town of Tarboro being the capital of Edgecombe County, working hand in hand with the county to strategize and develop plans to benefit and improve SAFE affordable housing and jobs in the town and county. When you are both fighting for the same resources someone comes up short.	Government- Cooperation	7-Other Comments
Seems downtown is kept cleaner than other parts of town – debris pickup, etc.	Government- Downtown	6- Improvements 5 Yrs
Sidewalks are unsafe and in need of repair – difficult to walk	Government- Infrastructure	6- Improvements 5 Yrs
Keep a diverse and fair work opportunities for anyone who wants to work for the town.	Government-Jobs	6- Improvements 5 Yrs
If we need to hire someone to recruit (business/industry) that would be great	Government-Jobs	7-Other Comments
Promoting business growth would be a huge step for the Town of Tarboro. Being able to bring in people from the outside would be the best way to stimulate growth for the town, remaining stagnant and only relying from what’s within will only lead the town on the same path as it is.	Government-Jobs	7-Other Comments
History	Historic	3- Opportunities
With the recent major floods in Edgecombe County, there has been an influx of people from other areas moving to Tarboro. With new people, the history and the traditions are not as important and therefore leaves a lack of pride in what Tarboro has to offer.	Historic	4-Threats
More affordable housing is a definite need.	Housing	5-Quality of Life
Lack of economic opportunity has been a major challenge since losing a lot of manufacturing jobs in the last 20 years. Hopefully, that is changing with the new tire company, CSX and Corning that are coming to Edgecombe County.	Jobs	2-Challenges
As mentioned earlier, bringing in new businesses would go a long way to promote a change within the town.	Jobs	5-Quality of Life
Better paying jobs to come to the Tarboro area, more community education, indirectly tax breaks from the county.	Jobs	5-Quality of Life

Increase industry to increase employment and decrease poverty. Our town is ridden with poverty	Jobs	5-Quality of Life
The opportunity for sustainable, lucrative jobs/employment for the residents who live here and plan to stay and raise families.	Jobs	5-Quality of Life
Good start with the Tire Factory and CSX hub	Jobs	7-Other Comments
Central hub of Wilson, Greenville, and Rocky Mount	Location	1-Strengths
Tarboro is centrally located in close proximity to cities such as Raleigh and Greenville	Location	1-Strengths
Tarboro could potentially become an industrial center that it was in the 90's. Our proximity to major highways is a huge asset in this venture.	Location	3-Opportunities
Proximity of Raleigh and Greenville - If people work in Tarboro, they seem to want to live in those towns because of what they offer and relatively closeness	Location	4-Threats
We also need another hotel and possibly one or two bed and breakfast establishments to be able to accommodate visitors and tourists who like the small town feel but has outstanding amenities to enjoy.	Lodging	5-Quality of Life
For a town the size of Tarboro, it does have a lot of community events. The community centers and senior center also make available a multitude of programs for the public to be active in.	Programs/Activities	1-Strengths
Lot's to do with kids and seniors	Programs/Activities	1-Strengths
Good recreation department	Programs/Activities	1-Strengths
Not as much stuff to do	Programs/Activities	2-Challenges
Town should get in on the ground floor of new companies and employees coming in. Promote living in Tarboro to those folks	Promotion	3-Opportunities
Promote safety and recreation	Promotion	3-Opportunities
Promote Tarboro as good place to live	Promotion	3-Opportunities
The right marketing can really help to encourage more support for seeing what Tarboro has to offer and the types of people who have come from here.	Promotion	3-Opportunities
Feel safe walking at night	Safety	1-Strengths
Poor economics, lack of good education, lack of jobs, one of the highest county taxes in the state.	Taxes	2-Challenges
Look at ways to lower taxes – very high	Taxes	5-Quality of Life
Just continue the path the town is going. Slowly keep making changes to improve the town as a whole.		6-Improvements 5 Yrs

Results of Economic Development Strategic Plan Survey

175 Tarboro residents, property and business owners participated in a public survey that was posted online between October 4, 2018 and December 18, 2018. Paper copies were available at various locations around the Town of Tarboro during that same period.

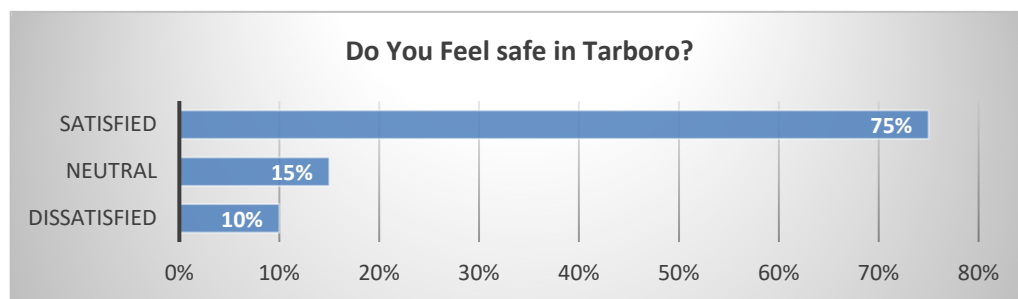
Demographics (Who Took the Survey)

64% of the respondents were Tarboro homeowners and 14% were renters in Town. 50% were frequent shoppers in Tarboro. 38% work in Town, 8% were commercial business owners and 4% were commercial tenants. 4% were college students and 2% high school students.

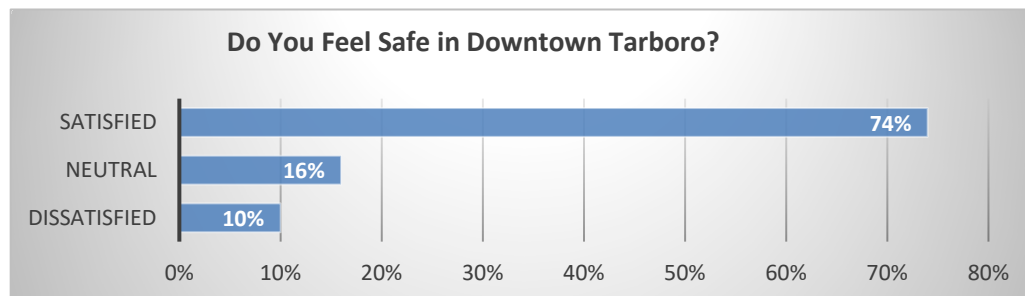
55% were female and 45% were male. The largest percentage of the respondents were 45-64 years old (38%); 35-44 years old (25%); 25-34 years old (15%); 65-74 years old (14%); 18-24 years old (7%) and 2% were 75 years and older.

Safety

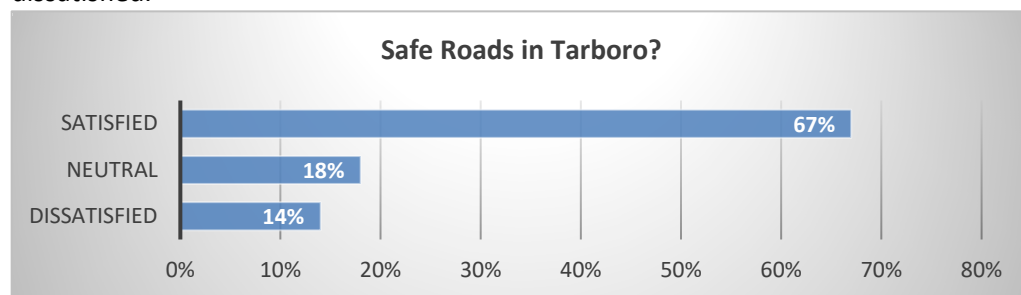
Tarboro provides a sense of safety as a community with 75% of the respondents saying they feel safe in Town. 15% had no opinion. 10% had no opinion.



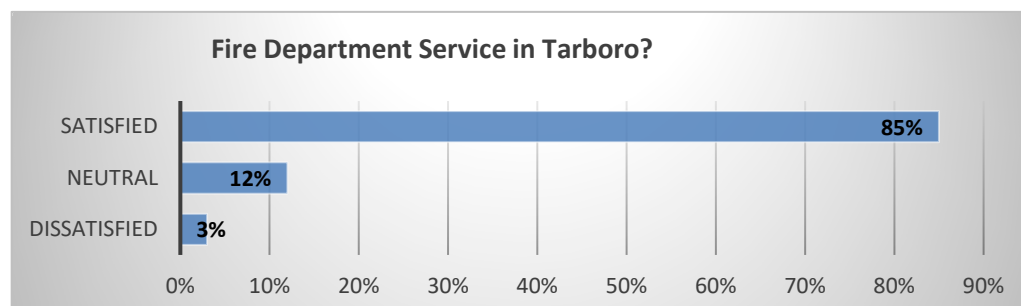
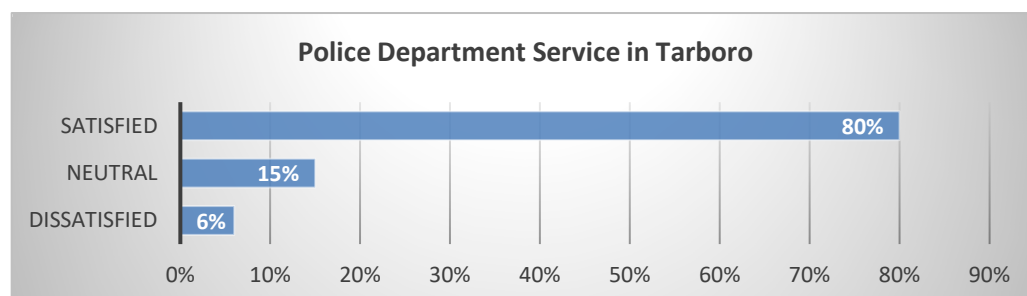
74% said they feel safe in Downtown, 16% had no opinion



67% were satisfied to very satisfied with road safety in Town while 18% had no opinion and 14% were dissatisfied.

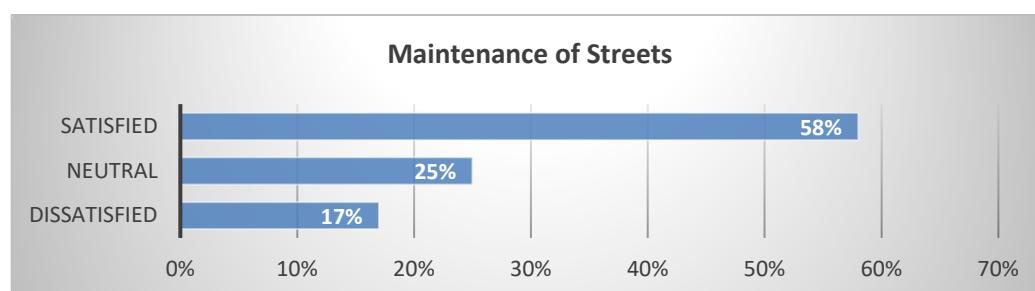


Tarboro respondents were satisfied to very satisfied with the Police (80%) and Fire (85%) Departments.

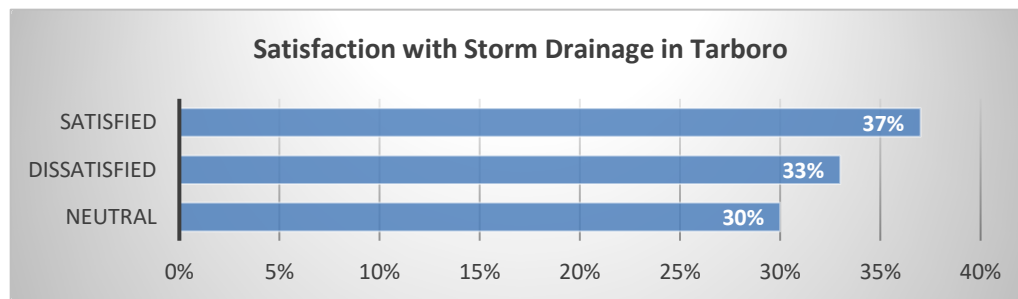


Services

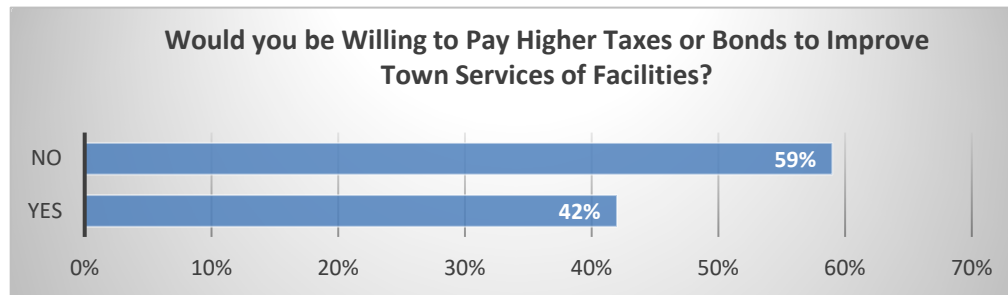
58% of the respondents indicated they were mostly satisfied with street maintenance while 17% were dissatisfied and 25% had no opinion.



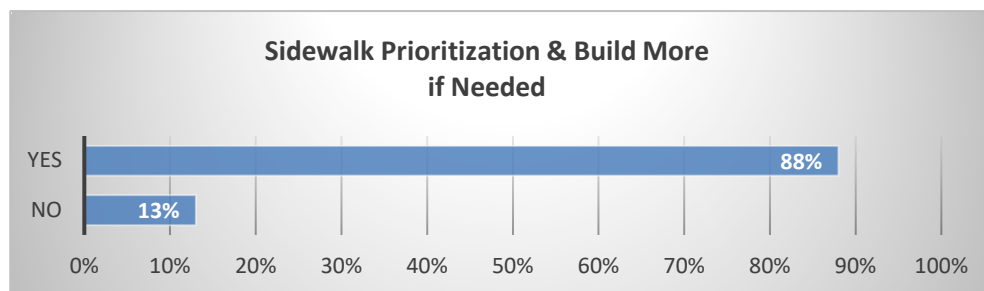
There were a few more respondents satisfied (37%) with the Storm drainage than dissatisfied (33%) and nearly the same number with no opinion (30%). 54% of the respondents were satisfied with the Town's sewer service than dissatisfied (14%) and 32% had no opinion.



Most of the respondents indicated they would be opposed (59%) to pay higher taxes or bonds to improve Town services or facilities. 42% indicated support.



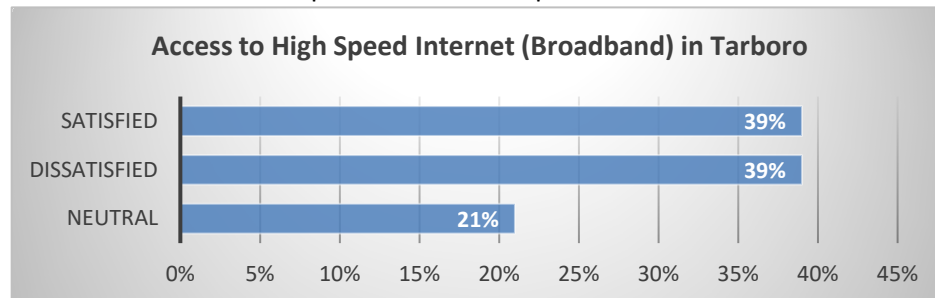
When asked if they were in *Favor of the Town prioritizing existing & building additional sidewalks?* 88% of the respondents said yes.



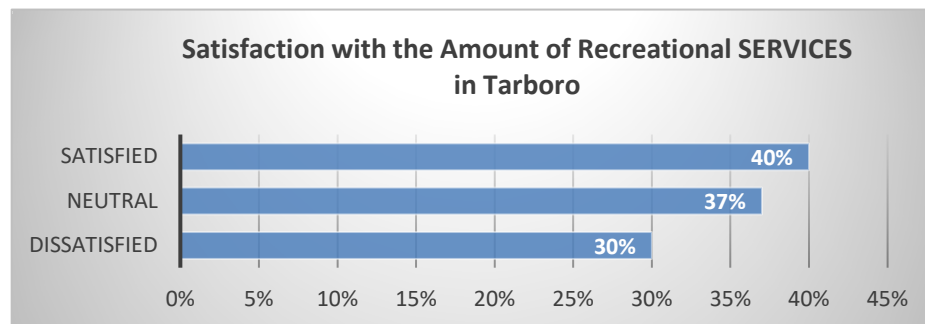
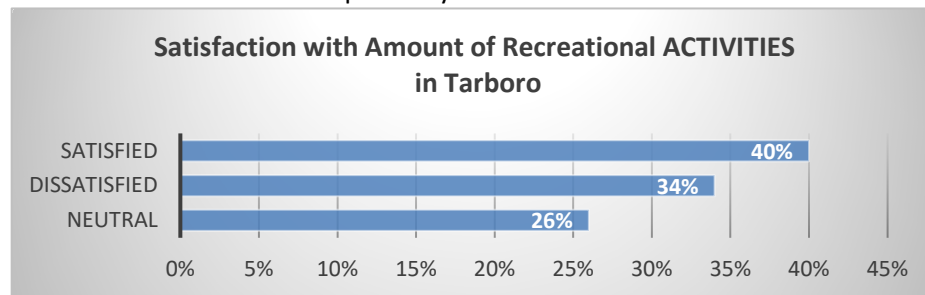
Amenities

There were 5 questions about the amenities within the Town of Tarboro related to Broadband, Recreation, Health Care and Walkability.

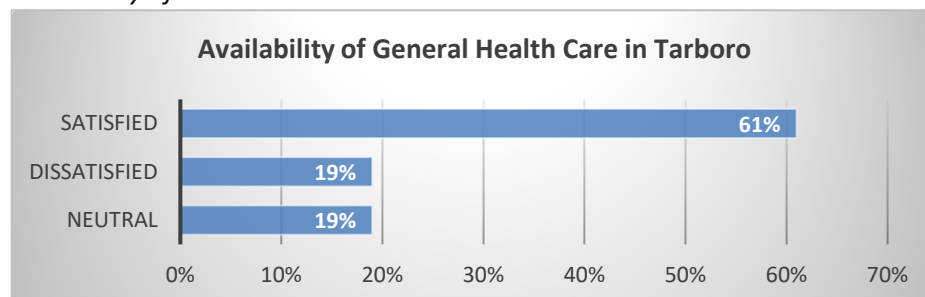
Access to High Speed Internet (Broadband) was the only one that split between satisfied and dissatisfied at 39% each. 21% of the respondents had no opinion.



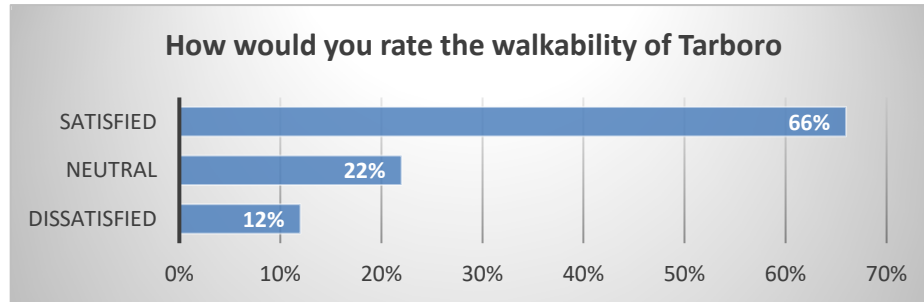
Recreational Activities and Services showed a little more satisfaction at 40% for both than dissatisfied, which was 34% and 37% respectively.



Availability of General Health Care ranked at 61%.

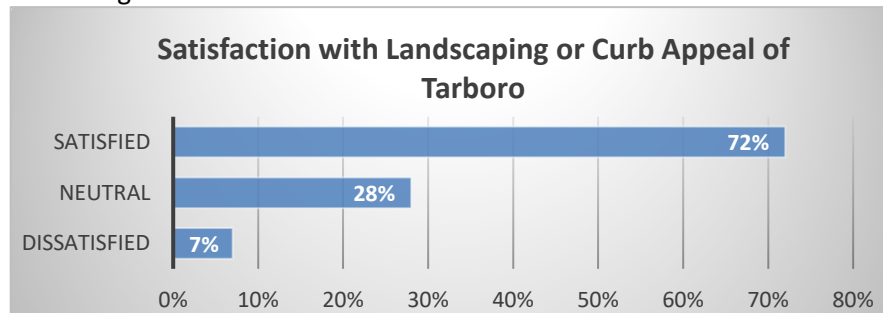


Walkability of Tarboro ranked well at 66% for walkability.

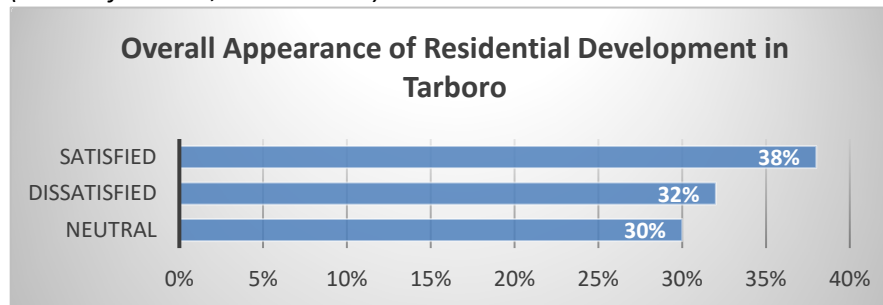


Appearance

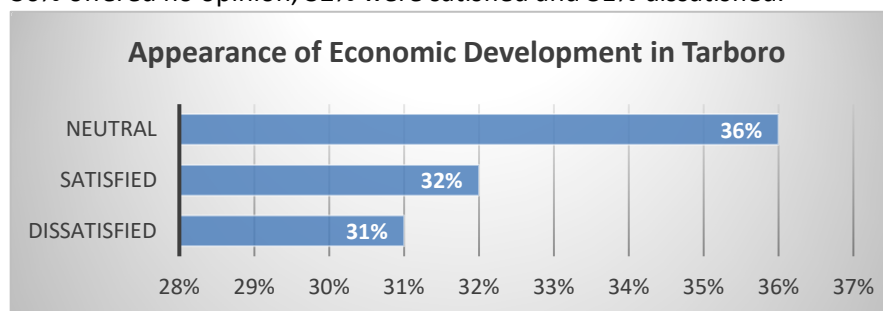
Satisfaction with *Landscaping and Curb Appeal* was viewed favorably by 72% of the respondents with 28% remaining neutral.



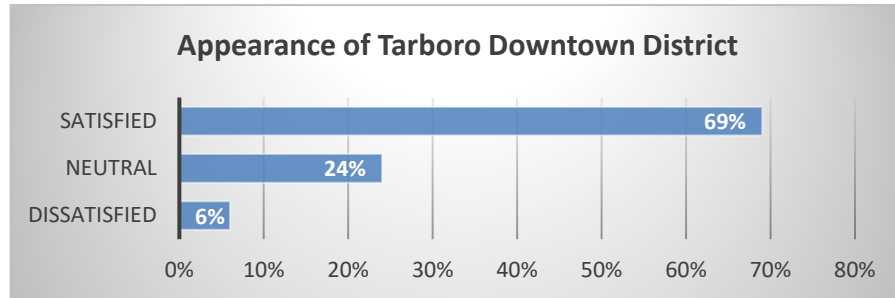
The *Overall Appearance of Residential Development* was viewed less favorably with 38% satisfied, (Dissatisfied 32%, Neutral 30%).



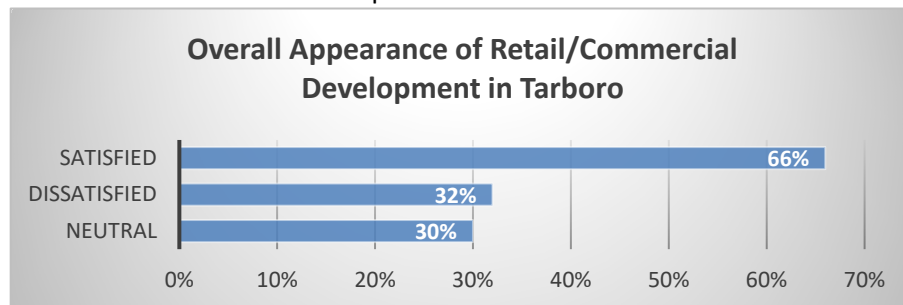
The *Appearance of Economic Development* nearly mirrors that of “Residential Development” however, 36% offered no opinion, 32% were satisfied and 31% dissatisfied.



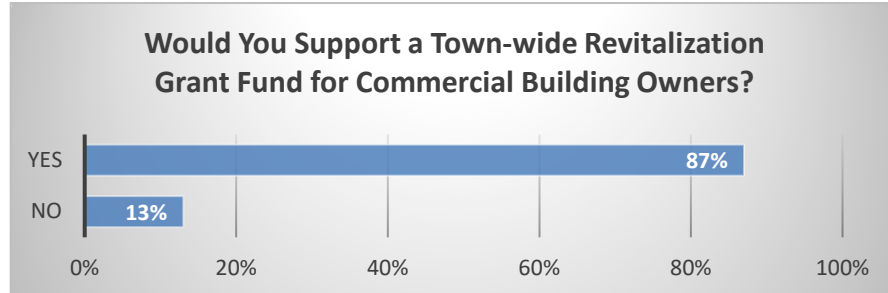
The *Appearance of the Downtown District* was positive (69%) with 6% dissatisfied.



The *Overall Appearance of Retail/Commercial Development* was favorable with 66% satisfied, 32% dissatisfied and 30% with no opinion.

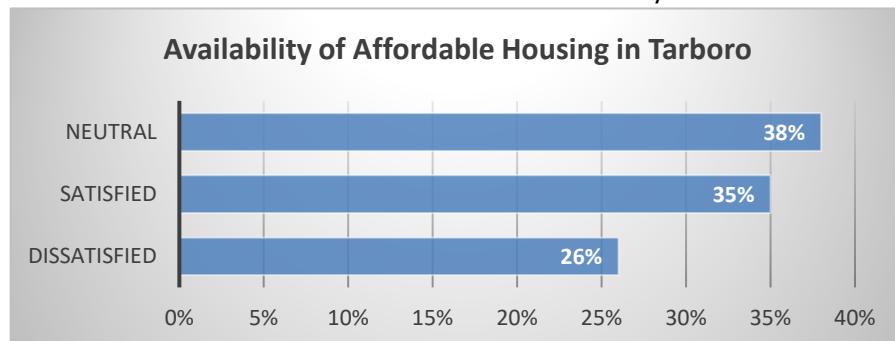


87% said they would be supportive of a *Town-wide Revitalization Grant Fund for Commercial Building Owners*.



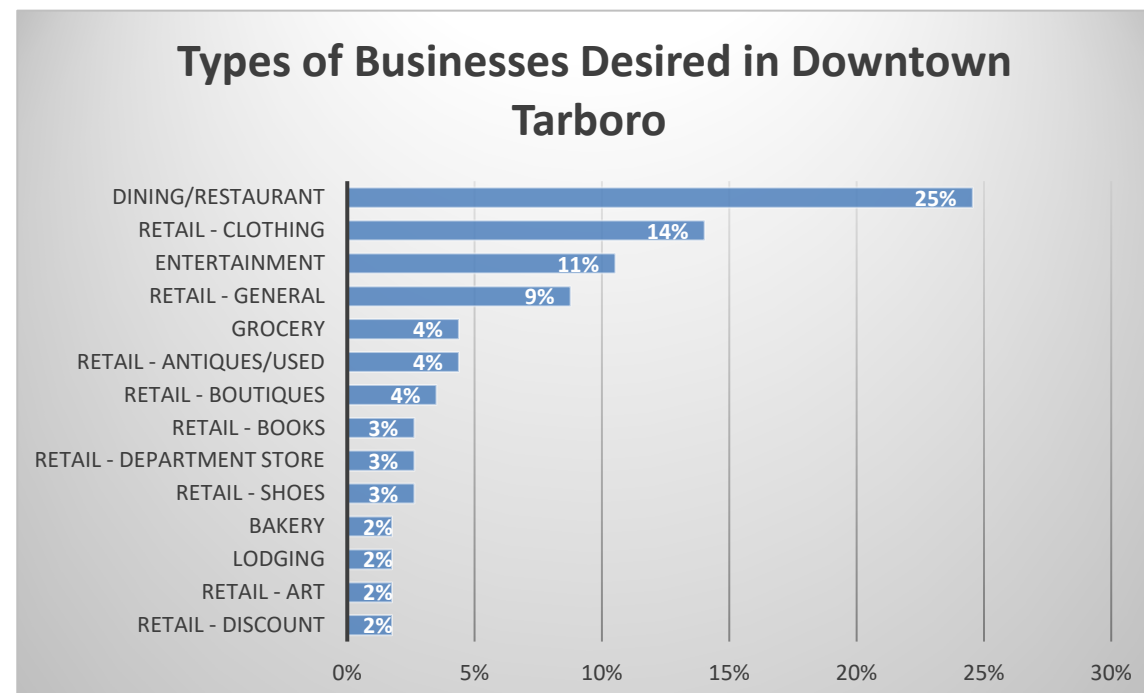
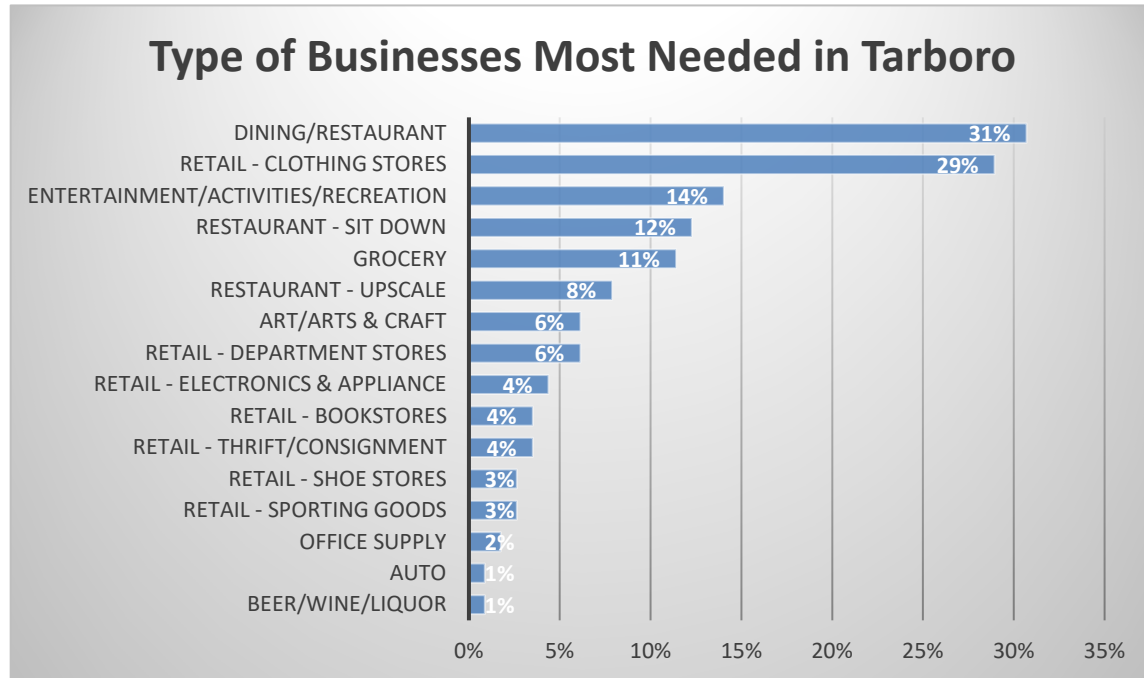
Availability of Affordable Housing

Interestingly, 38% of the respondents did not have an opinion on this question. Just 35% indicated they were satisfied and 26% dissatisfied with the availability of affordable housing.



Business

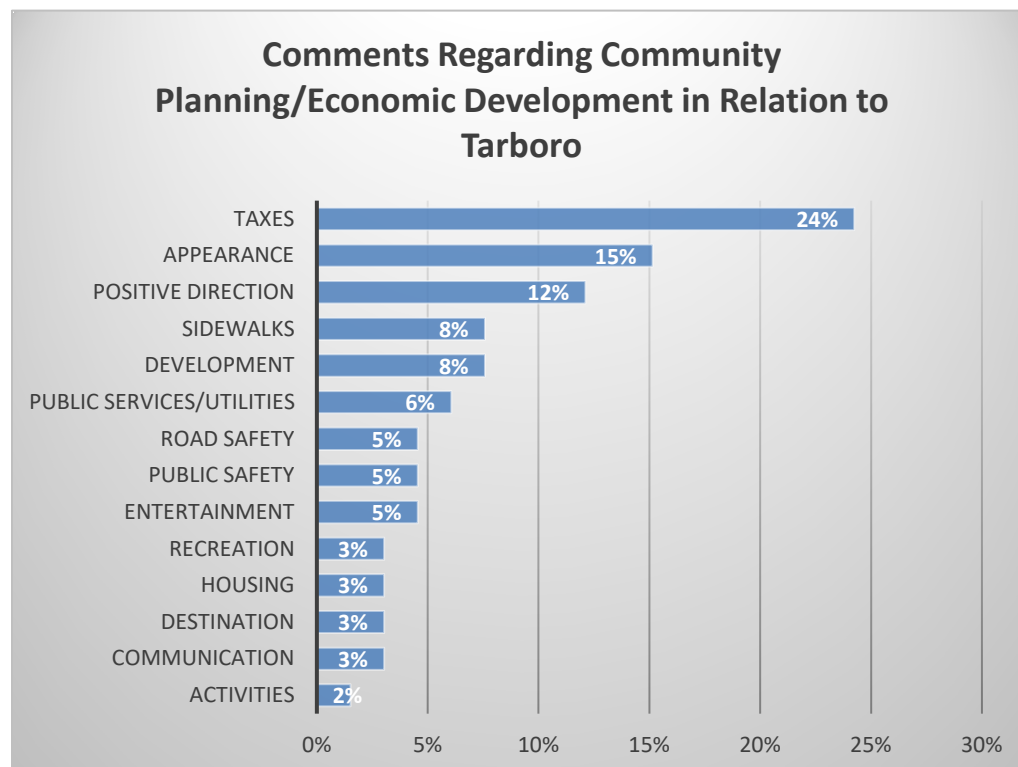
Respondents were asked to indicate up to three types of businesses they would like to see in Tarboro proper and in Downtown. Restaurants, clothing stores and entertainment activities claimed the top 3 desires in both. Retail is shown by type in both charts.



Public Comments Regarding Community Planning/Economic Development in Tarboro

One of the last questions asked in the survey offered the opportunity to respondents to make a comment or two about community planning and economic development in Tarboro that the survey may or may not have addressed. 66 respondents made comments, all of which follow. We sorted the comments by broad topic without differentiating between positive or constructive (negative) comments.

It is interesting to note that Taxes were the most commented upon, followed by Appearance and comments that were indicative of the direction the Town is headed.



Section 6. Strategy Implementation (*Action Plan*)

High performing organizations are those that learn to anticipate and adapt to change by creating value for those served, and motivation and meaning for those who serve them. The best tool for accomplishing these objectives is strategic planning.

In December 2017, the Town of Tarboro adopted a resolution requesting assistance from the North Carolina Main Street and Rural Planning Center to help develop and prepare an economic development strategic plan for the Town. A strategic planning steering committee, comprised of County and City officials and staff, prominent industrial and local business owners, and the Chamber of Commerce, was formed to develop the plan. The committee met over the summer and fall of 2018, and into the winter of 2019, and discussed issues facing the Town of Tarboro. In addition, the community provided significant input through stakeholder interviews and citizen surveys to gauge public opinion on economic and community development priorities. The committee articulated an economic positioning statement/vision for the future of Tarboro and this statement was used as a focal point for the development of the goals, objectives, and actions that surfaced throughout the process:

Succeeding since 1760, Tarboro is a dynamic, opportunity-driven small town, leading the region in business and livability.

The plan focused on three main areas of concentration: History and Culture, Leading the Region in Livability, Leading the Region in Business, and Healthy Community. The steering committee identified major issues, and the strategies, and actions were developed to implement the plan's vision over the next five years. This document is the culmination of their efforts.

If the wishes of the Town are to have meaning, they must be accompanied by deliberate planning efforts that move the organization and the community toward its desired future. This requires clearly defined goals, proactive and measurable objectives, direct action, committed leadership, and effective management. Above all, it requires managing the forces of change. Those forces include community demographics, State and Federal mandates, fiscal constraints, economic conditions, emerging technologies, and many other influences on service delivery efforts.

The Action Plan is composed of the following elements: *Goals, Objectives, Actions*. The time horizon of the plan is 5-10 years. The *goals, objectives, actions* (and *tasks*) refer to the following definitions:

- **GOALS:** are general guidelines that explain what you want to achieve—they are usually long-term and represent broad visions for the future
- **OBJECTIVES:** defines strategies or implementation steps to attain identified goals. Objectives are specific and measurable and may have a completion date
- **ACTIONS:** a series of steps a community takes to implement a specific objective or strategy.
- **TASKS:** list of steps to achieve an action, usually achievable in a one-year time frame. (*Note: the plan does not show specific tasks as these will need to be developed by the individuals and/or team implementing the specific actions*)

Monitoring and Evaluation

Constant evaluation of the goals, objectives and action steps in this plan, via regular review sessions with Town leadership and other community representatives, is critical to ensuring it remains a viable, living document. The Town will continually monitor progress on its success at managing projects, meeting deadlines, communicating internally and to multiple external audiences, and utilizing the resources available.

The *Tarboro Strategic Economic Development Plan 2019-2023* is a living document used to prioritize the needs of the community and outline Town objectives. The value of the plan lies with the ability of the Town to set realistic goals — and implement innovative strategies — against which progress can be measured. It also allows the community to gauge the ongoing economic development efforts of its local government.

Implementation, evaluation, and modification will be continuous for the plan and the Town of Tarboro to remain relevant, responsive, and proactive. This strategic effort will provide greater accountability and represents an organization-wide approach to the preservation and enhancement of the quality of life this very special community enjoys.

The most successful strategic planning efforts approach implementation from a network-based model, versus a more traditional hierarchical model (top-down approach). The Town should consider appointing an Implementation Team (or Taskforce) to oversee the Town's efforts and to reach out to partners. By working with economic partners such as NC Department of Commerce, Carolinas Gateway Partnership, and the Chamber of Commerce, Tarboro's economic development strategy can leverage resources and capacity. NC Department of Commerce has yearly Actions & Tasks templates to assist the Town in measuring progress, and the Town should reach out to NC Commerce once a year to help evaluate success, report progress and update the action plan as goals are realized.

The Economic Development Steering Committee should revisit the plan twice yearly (at budget time, and in November) to mark progress and amend the plan as necessary. The Plan should be comprehensively revised at the end of five years.

Tarboro Strategic Economic Development Implementation Plan 2019-2023

Economic Positioning/Vision: *Succeeding since 1760, Tarboro is a dynamic, opportunity-driven small town, leading the region in business and livability.*

HISTORY AND CULTURE	LEADING REGION IN LIVABILITY	LEADING REGION IN BUSINESS	HEALTHY COMMUNITY
Although Tarboro's history remains unchanged, methods of presenting and sharing Tarboro's 18 th and 19 th century history should be reimagined to make it relevant and marketable to 21 st century generations.	"Livability" is defined as the qualities of a place (<i>city, town, suburb, neighborhood</i>) that contribute to the quality of life experienced by residents and others.	Communities leading in business development focus on making themselves more attractive to the business market.	The health of a community—its people and places—is among the most important factors to address when planning for the future. <i>Healthier communities</i> help to cultivate a healthy, more productive workforce fueling future economic growth. <i>Healthier communities</i> attract more talented employees and a healthier customer base, which can strengthen their economies.
GOAL 1: Reimagine uses and access to Tarboro's history and assets to make it relevant and marketable to current and future generations.	GOAL 2: Emphasis on town-wide appearance, recreation, entertainment, events and activities, and natural resources to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.	GOAL 3: Grow the local economy in Tarboro GOAL 4: Encourage growth through residential development	GOAL 5: Develop and implement <i>healthy community</i> plans¹ to facilitate healthy lifestyles for all residents.
<p>Objective 1.1: Increase number of visitors to historic district / attractions / activities by 10%</p> <p>Action: Develop/enhance a Tarboro Heritage Tourism Program, possibly as an umbrella of the Chamber of Commerce/ Tourism Development Authority, to manage marketing, event/activity scheduling and visitor statistics.</p> <p>Objective 1.2: Centralize the reimagination, branding and marketing of Tarboro's historic assets</p>	<p>Objective 2.1: Make Tarboro more walkable and connectable by adding 25% more sidewalks</p> <p>Action: Extend sidewalk and crosswalk system as per 2017 Tarboro Pedestrian Plan</p> <p>Objective 2.2: Increase locations and number of events/social activities that include all populations by 15%</p> <p>Action: Determine event/activity gaps throughout Town</p> <p>Tasks: Inventory all events/activities by date, type, organization and location</p>	<p>Objective 3.1: Increase Retail and Dining options town-wide by 5%</p> <p>Action: Develop business recruitment plan for restaurants and retail stores utilizing this plan to target specific business types.</p> <p>Action: Continue to attend International Council of Shopping Centers in Charlotte each year.</p> <p>Objective 3.2: Support implementation of Downtown Tarboro's 2019-2023 Work Plan goals and objectives</p>	<p>Objective 5.1: Increase opportunities for physical activity</p> <p>Action: Promote walking and biking</p> <p>Action: Review existing policies to improve the built environment to enhance access to and availability of physical activity opportunities.</p> <p>Objective 5.2: Improve access to healthy foods</p> <p>Action: Identify and remove zoning and other policy barriers to urban food production</p>

¹ Guidebook on Local Planning for Healthy Communities, NC Department of Commerce, by Jerry Weitz, East Carolina University, September 2013

<p>Action: Create a structured entity, utilizing existing and new volunteers, to develop a plan to reimagine the branding, formatting and story-telling (presentation) of all Tarboro's historic information, documents and public and private historic assets.</p> <p>Tasks: Develop brief operating guidelines, purpose statement and deadlines for approval, funding and implementation.</p>	<p>Action: Recruit civic and non-profit organizations to create relevant events to fill gaps</p> <p>Objective 2.3: Improve outdoor and indoor recreation opportunities in Tarboro</p> <p>Action: Implement per 2019 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan</p> <p>Action: Improve and increase marketing of all recreation areas.</p>	<p>Objective 3.3: Continue to work with and improve relationship with Carolina Gateway Partnership (see Appendix 6-A)</p> <p>Objective 3.4: Continue and improve Existing Business & Industry Program (See Appendix 6-B)</p> <p>Objective 3.5: Prepare and market client-ready industrial sites (See Appendix 6-C)</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Objective 4.1: Increase number of housing units by 10%</p> <p>Action: Focus on diversity of residential housing options</p> <p>Tasks: Identify areas for targeted residential development or redevelopment</p> <p>Tasks: Seek assistance from <i>Upper Coastal Plain Council of Governments</i> and <i>Carolinas Gateway Partnership</i> to develop marketing materials to recruit housing developers / builders.</p>	<p>Action: Encourage neighborhood markets and convenience stores to carry healthy food such as fresh fruit and vegetables</p> <p>Action: Allow cultivation and sowing of herbs, vegetables, or similar crops in residential areas, as an accessory use</p> <p>Action: Allow community gardens as a permitted use in all zoning districts</p> <p>Action: Encourage the provision of resources to help get community gardens started in low-income areas</p> <p>Action: Support local marketing campaigns to promote local food production</p> <p>Objective 5.3: Engage and build neighborhood relationships between residents, stakeholders and providers</p> <p>Action: Include and encourage residents and stakeholders to participate in decision making and implementation</p> <p>Action: Partner with Vidant, Edgecombe County and other health organizations for health education opportunities</p>
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APPENDIX

Stakeholder Interview Questions
Tarboro, NC
November 2018

Name: _____

Address: _____ Town _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Interest/Title: _____

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1. What are Tarboro's strengths?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What are Tarboro's weaknesses/challenges?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What are the opportunities for the Town?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What are the threats, from outside of the Town with little to no control of, by the Town?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What changes do you think could improve the quality of life in Tarboro in the next 5 years?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. What could the Town do to improve its programs and services over the next 5 years?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. The Town is undergoing an economic development strategic planning process. Do you have any other comments or suggestions that will help the Town in its economic development and planning efforts?

## **Appendix – Section 6-A**

### **Objective 3.3**

#### ***Continue to Maintain & Improve Carolina Gateway Partnership Relationship***

The Carolinas Gateway Partnership (CGP) serves as the primary economic development organization for Edgecombe County, Nash County, Tarboro and several municipalities within these two counties. This regional Economic Development organization has done well for the counties and the town and cooperation between the CGP and each of the member county municipalities is extremely important to economic development success.

The roles of Carolina Gateway Partnership and Tarboro are different but complementary, requiring cooperation and seamless coordination. The following objectives are generally accepted professional principles that help define the economic development roles of the Carolinas Gateway Partnership and the municipalities, including Tarboro:

- 1) A new or expanded industry in Edgecombe County benefits all citizens of the County, whether they live in a municipality not selected for the facility or in another area of the County.
- 2) A company looking at Edgecombe County to locate a facility should be shown the best sites available that the requirements of the company regardless of where it is in the County. If Tarboro's industrial product development efforts of sites and buildings are successful, then their chances of earning industrial client locations will be greatly enhanced.
- 3) The Carolinas Gateway Partnership is the proper client-handling agency for the entire county and should be the County's first point of contact for site-search consultants, developers and the Economic Development Partnership of NC / NC Department of Commerce.
- 4) The CGP is trusted, to present facts to a developer regarding product in any one or more of Edgecombe County's municipalities, or about a site not within municipal boundaries, depending on the needs of the client company and the availability of services. The CGP would be unprofessional if it allowed individual municipalities to dominate CGP-client relationships with demands that all county clients should be shown a municipality's product in all cases.
- 5) For prospects discovered directly by the Town, the CGP should be called in to assist and the CGP should respect the municipality's exclusive relationship with the prospect until it becomes apparent that the prospect will decline all local proposals. At that point, the Town should ask the CGP to attempt to salvage the prospect for another location in the County.
- 6) Within the bounds of confidentiality for a project, the CGP should be willing to tell the municipality why it was not on the visit list for a client or, if the municipality was visited, why it was not selected for the project, and how the Town could improve its chances of being selected for a similar project in the future.
- 7) The primary responsibility of Tarboro must be to hone to maximum sharpness its own selling points such as product (sites, buildings and infrastructure), its workforce, and its quality of life features (local services, schools, downtown, appearance, etc.).

8) The CGP should continue to work with and advise the municipalities regarding development of water, wastewater, natural gas, and telecommunications (broadband) and other infrastructure and product required by companies.

9) Within the context of the statements above, the Town should continue reviewing their policies on annexation that permit the municipality to grow its industrial base.

10) It is essential that the CGP intensify their efforts and serve as catalysts to find additional resources and methods of assisting the marketing efforts of Tarboro. Marketing for economic development is an inexact science but with a combination of additional public/private funding and using innovative marketing methods that have been reasonably successful in similar non-metropolitan areas, additional business client activity should occur.



## Appendix Section 6-B

### Objective 3.4.

#### **Existing Business and Industry (*Retention & Expansion*)**

While preparing for new companies that locate in Tarboro, the Town's primary emphasis should be on the companies that already make up the industrial base. Continue and expand, where feasible, the Town's *Existing Business & Industry Program*.

In economic development, as in any sales-related field, existing businesses are the least expensive customers to keep. This program should continue to be coordinated by the Carolinas Gateway Partnership (CGP), with involvement by Edgecombe Community College and the Economic Development Partnership of NC and any regional NC Department of Commerce programs. This type of program, if supported by the Town, carefully implemented and enthusiastically facilitated by dedicated staff, will create and/or retain more jobs for Tarboro than any other economic development program the Town could undertake. Here are some services/objectives recommended that CGP and/or Town provide to local companies:

- Show appreciation for the companies and their employees
- Provide problem-solving related to infrastructure, workforce, government services and related issues.
- Advise the companies of beneficial programs and services such as financing, technical assistance, grants, training and international trade.
- Assist with expansion plans including site selection, financing, infrastructure support, worker training and incentives.
- Conduct research assistance on demographics, wage information, cost of living statistics, etc. and sharing information with local companies.
- Keep communications open between Town leadership and the companies, especially Town decisions affecting the companies and, conversely, early warning from the companies concerning layoffs or closing.

## Appendix Section 6-C

### Objective 3.5

#### ***Prepare Client-Ready Sites (Business Park + Sites + Buildings = Product)***

The Tarboro Commerce Center is made up of approximately 185 acres of prime property situated on an interstate quality highway. Approximately 95 acres are presently available. The site is owned by the Town of Tarboro and has all the necessary utilities and is zoned industrial. The property is state certified and suitable for subdividing into smaller tracts.

The Edgecombe Community College Tarboro campus is located adjacent to the park. The Town should identify, list and market all available and future sites for industrial development.

- **Inventory All Available Properties for Potential Industrial Development**  
Action: Include levels of readiness, utilities, grading, clearing, quality of building(s), etc.
- **Enter into Marketing Agreements with Owners of Privately-held Properties**  
Action: Agreements should allow Town and Carolinas Gateway Partnership to market and negotiate prices.  
Action: List properties on websites of Town and CGP
- **Provide Public Improvements to Eligible Private Properties**  
Action: Identify criteria for eligible private properties/sites
- **Encourage State-Certification of Privately-Owned Industrially-Zoned Properties**