



Buncombe County Government

Avril M. Pinder, CPA, ICMA-CM
County Manager

Dear Rachael Nygaard,

Buncombe County is in the midst of a strategic planning process, and we need your help. **We are holding a series of public engagement sessions, and we would like participation from members of Early Childhood Education and Development Committee.** The schedule is listed on page 2.

Please share this letter with your membership, and strongly encourage people to participate. In particular, the expertise of your members might be particularly helpful during the sessions on Educated and capable community.

Why a Strategic Plan

Buncombe County Commissioners are leading us in preparing a new strategic plan that will set the direction of our organization for 2020-2025. This five-year strategic plan will define priorities, guide County operations, and drive future policy and budget decisions. It will draw a vision for our community's future and establish a course of action for moving forward.

Our Planning Process

Beginning in July, the Board of Commissioners and County leaders began our work in workshops facilitated by Rebecca Ryan who has 20 years of industry experience and specializes in helping organizations plan for the future. Her approach included working with Commissioners to identify emerging trends that will impact our residents over the next 10-20 years (e.g., growth outpacing infrastructure, changing demographics). In September, the teams reviewed the results of the July session and moved forward by establishing focus areas, foundations and draft goals.

The Plan

Our strategic plan will be built around four areas of focus, each of which will later include goals, objectives, tactics and measures.

- **Environmental stewardship:** High quality air, water, farmland and renewable energy for future generations
- **Educated and capable community:** A community where all people thrive and demonstrate resilience throughout their lives
- **Vibrant economy:** A robust and sustainable regional economy that builds on our homegrown talent and provides economic mobility for residents
- **Resident well-being:** Our residents are safe, healthy and engaged in their community



Additionally, the plan identifies foundational components that are necessary for County operations.

- **Infrastructure:** Best-in-class performance to support the strategic focus areas through information technology, facilities, risk management, evaluation and administration
- **Resources:** The funding, talent, and partnerships that enable high quality delivery of services

Public Engagement

Public input is critical to creating a plan that reflects our community, and we invite you to join us. We will hold a series of conversations with the public to gather input about the best ways we can move into action. These sessions will be structured around the four focus areas of the plan and include representatives from the County's more than 35 boards and commissions. We will review strategic goals and discuss what success can look like and how we can get there.

Date	Time	Focus Area
Saturday, Oct 19	9:00 am – 11:00 am	Environmental stewardship
Tuesday, Oct 22	2:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Educated and capable community
Wednesday, Oct 23	5:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Vibrant economy
Thursday, Oct 24	5:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Resident well-being
Friday, Oct 25	8:00 am – 10:00 am	Environmental stewardship
Saturday, Oct 26	9:00 am – 11:00 am	Educated and capable community
Tuesday, Oct 29	9:00 am – 11:00 am	Resident well-being
Friday, Nov 1	9:00 am – 11:00 am	Vibrant economy

All sessions will be held at 200 College Street, Ground Floor Conference Room. These sessions are open to the public, and all are welcome. Please contact Angelyn.Johnson@BuncombeCounty.org to RSVP.

Next Steps

Through the end of 2019, Commissioners will continue to work with staff to further define the strategic plan. This process will include the public engagement sessions as well as work by County departments. We anticipate that Buncombe County's Five-Year Strategic Plan will be adopted at a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners in January 2020. The plan will take effect July 1, 2020.

It is my hope that the end result will be an ambitious plan that meets the dynamic needs of our community and that all members of the public can see themselves in. This is our community, and I look forward to working with all of you as we align with Board's strategy and commit ourselves to improving the quality of life in Buncombe County.

Sincerely,



Avril Pinder
County Manager