

# Assessment

## Community Needs

Strategic Plan Committee members distributed a community wide survey and joined County Commissioners to gather community input through nine public forums, sixteen stakeholders meetings. They asked for perceptions about the current state of the county and how to improve the quality of life.

## Summary of Public and Focus Group Input

### Strengths Identified / What We Do Well

System of higher education  
Emergency services  
Healthcare systems  
Parks and recreation  
Natural resources  
Size of cities  
County social services  
Infrastructure, roads, etc.

Those surveyed said that Guilford County is a good or excellent:

Place to live (83%)  
Place to raise children (74%)  
Place to work (73%)

### Threats Identified / Areas that Need Improvement

Uncontrolled growth in rural areas, adversely impacting the natural resources and character  
Uncontrolled economic growth overtaxing the infrastructure (roads, emergency services, etc.)  
Failure to manage the county's tax base, tax rates and finances efficiently as we grow  
Not addressing crime in our schools (drugs, violence, etc.)  
Perception of being very or somewhat unsafe:  
From property crimes (44%)  
In public parks after dark (57%)  
In downtown areas after dark (40%)

### Other Frequent Concerns

Uncontrolled Growth in Rural Areas  
Environment  
Public Schools Quality and Safety

### Weaknesses Identified / Areas that Need Improvement

Lack of...Coordination between government entities  
Regionalism among counties/communities/governments  
Cohesiveness among county commissioners  
Uncontrolled growth and its impact on the environment  
Public transportation access  
Access to public libraries  
Investment in secondary educational school system  
Emphasis on crime prevention/education/resolving jail overcrowding

### Moderate or Major Problems

Crime (81%)  
Drugs (85%)  
Taxes (64%)  
Homelessness (64%)  
Unsupervised Youth (60%)  
Access to Public Transit (50%)  
Slow income growth (76%)  
Limited job growth (73%)

### Opportunities Identified / Partnerships

Better land use (government owned and blighted structures) for economic or community use  
Preservation of land to protect historic sites  
Use of incentives to promote higher paying jobs  
Government and citizen collaboration in solving community issues