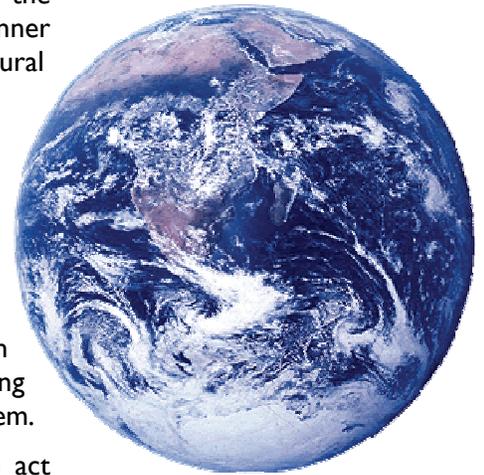# 9 — Sustainability

The concept of "sustainability" involves the ability of a community and society to meet the needs of the present population while ensuring that future generations have the same or better opportunities. There are increasing concerns that as a culture we are using resources at a faster rate than we are replenishing them and are creating communities that are not sustainable in the long run. The Village of Clemmons seeks to move into its future in a manner that conserves natural resources and minimizes degradation of the natural environment.

One of the challenges in addressing sustainability in a community comprehensive plan is that many of the issues are global in nature – air quality, biodiversity, ozone depletion and climate change, food production, and others – and it is often difficult to identify how local planning policies can address these issues. Large and small communities all across the nation are finding effective ways to do this. According to the U.S. Conference of Mayors, 1,016 municipalities across the nation and 41 in North Carolina have adopted sustainability programs and policies, including Clemmons' neighbors: Bethania, Pilot Mountain, Lewisville, and Winston-Salem.

Like its neighbors, the Village of Clemmons believes it is important to act responsibly and do its part to address these issues. The Village desires to work to determine how best to "think globally and act locally," while also recognizing that these efforts must be balanced with other local demands on government time and resources.

Clemmons has committed to "think globally and act locally" through many new policy initiatives identified in this plan to create a more sustainable Clemmons for future generations.

SUSTAINABILITY IN CLEMMONS

Clemmons has begun to embrace many sustainable growth themes without using that terminology. For example, the ending of urban sprawl through managed growth is a fundamental principle of sustainability, as is the encouragement of pedestrian facilities and mass transit as alternatives to the automobile. In today's world, the concept of a sustainable community has evolved, but this comprehensive plan recognizes the importance of the Village doing its part to contribute to a larger sense of sustainable culture.

For the purposes of this plan, the following themes are embraced as desired sustainable growth policies for the future. Many of these are addressed in the appropriate places in previous individual chapters. The purpose of this chapter is, in part, to recognize sustainability as an overall theme and to create a framework for thinking about the idea, and planning for it as a community. It is intended to provide a summary of the issues in order to integrate them under the sustainability umbrella and guide implementation of future initiatives.

SUSTAINABILITY POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

Village as Sustainability Leader in Community

The Clemmons community promotes the development of a formal sustainability policy for the Village. Adopting formal policies and resolutions in support of sustainability measures sends a signal to the community and the larger region that Clemmons is becoming a leader in sustainable planning in Triad. Possible sources for developing a formal sustainability policy include:

- Consideration of the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and adopting this as a formal Village resolution[6]
- Consideration of membership with the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives' (ICLEI) Local Governments for Sustainability[7]

Objective #109: Develop Formal Sustainability Policy
Using the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and the ICLEI local government toolbox as a guide, develop a formal sustainability policy for Clemmons.

Promoting Mobility and Access for Pedestrians and Bicyclists

The support, design, and development of pedestrian facilities promotes sustainability on several levels. First, it promotes a healthier community by encouraging walking as a form of exercise. Second, it promotes more personal interaction which can reinforce a stronger sense of community. Finally, it can provide opportunities for movements that can avoid automotive uses, saving fuel and avoiding additional air pollution. Example policies include:

- Development of a multi-modal transportation system as set out by the Village Transportation Plan recommendations
- Development of a trail and greenway system that links neighborhoods to local and regional parks and destinations
- Requirement of pedestrian and bicycle amenities and facilities in all new developments and redevelopments
- Focused development in activity centers distributed through the community to promote pedestrian and bicycle access from neighboring areas
- Development of a bicycle system that accommodates all levels of riders

Objective #110: Implement the Village Transportation Plan
Implement the action strategies of the Village Transportation Plan to create a more sustainable transportation system for Clemmons.

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[6] For more information on the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, refer to http://www.usmayors.org/climateprotection/revised/

[7] For more information on the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), refer to http://www.iclei.org/

CLEMMONS COMMUNITY COMPASS
9 – SUSTAINABILITY

Encouraging Green Building Techniques

The technology for the design of environmentally-friendly buildings has continued to improve, making it more feasible and affordable to design "green" buildings. The Village will work to identify feasible practices to promote the use of environmentally sensitive guidelines, such as those published by the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) rating system. The Village will also explore opportunities to use these building techniques in future municipal developments, such as the Village Center. Policy initiatives include:

- Promoting green building design in commercial and residential developments through new development incentives
- Using green development techniques when developing new municipal facilities

Objective #111: Sustainable Development Point System
Amend the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to include a sustainable development point system that encourages use of green building techniques in public and private developments. (See also objectives #80 and #113.)

Conserving Energy and Saving Money

Energy conservation is another fundamental tenet of sustainability, and is interrelated to many of the other issues discussed here. For example, a more walkable community that reduces automobile traffic can save on fuel, and "green" buildings can save on heating and air conditioning. The Village will continue to explore means of saving energy, particularly involving municipal government operations.

- Reduction in automobile use through development of multi-modal transportation system resulting in a decrease in non-renewable fuel use
- Promoting energy efficient houses and private commercial developments
- Consideration to develop an energy audit program for the Village

Objective #112: Undertake an Energy Audit for the Village
Explore the possibilities for undertaking an energy audit for the Village to identify ways to save energy and reduce utility and fuel costs. Identify potential funding sources for an energy audit.

Reducing Waste and Promoting Recycling

Recycling involves the reprocessing of materials into new products, and is a fundamental practice that promotes sustainability. Another component of recycling is encouraging the use of products made from recycled materials. The Village will continue to promote recycling and will work to explore new and better opportunities to spread the practice. Example policy action areas can include:

- Expanding residential weekly recycling services to include cardboard pickup

- Providing interior recycling bins at all municipal facilities that are available and easily accessible to visitors as well as employees
- Providing incentives to developers that use recycled or reused materials in new construction and redevelopment projects
- Providing incentives to developers that implement construction site waste management programs

Objective #113: Increase Recycling and Reduce Waste Production

Explore new ways to reduce waste production and increase recycling in Clemmons. Ideas include providing recycling bins and trash cans at strategic public locations, educating residents about the benefits of waste reduction and recycling, and providing incentives to developers that reduce waste production and increase recycling on construction sites.

Protecting Natural Resources

The protection of the natural environment is both a long-standing policy priority for the Village as well as a fundamental principle of sustainability. This is an example of where current Village policy aligns very well with the sustainable growth theme. Policies include:

- Focused development that protects rural areas, environmentally sensitive lands, efficiently uses infrastructure, and clusters development in a more compact form. This includes interjurisdictional efforts to ensure this compact form is reaffirmed with other regional plans
- Maintaining the viability of older, existing neighborhoods to reduce demand for new housing and expanded development
- Initiation of a tree canopy study to identify ways to maintain trees in the Village
- Establishment of new community gardens
- Reduction in water and wastewater use in new developments

Objective #114: Encourage the Expanded Protection of Natural Resources

Include provisions for further protection of natural resources through a new sustainable development points system (see also objective #111). This could include points for cluster developments, protection of existing tree canopy beyond the current requirements, reduction in impervious surfaces, establishing community gardens, and reducing water and wastewater use.

Objective #115: Develop a Tree Protection Ordinance

The Tree Committee shall continue its work to develop a Village-specific Tree Protection Ordinance. The ordinance should work to conserve existing tree canopy in Clemmons and identify requirements for replanting on sites where tree removal is necessary to develop.