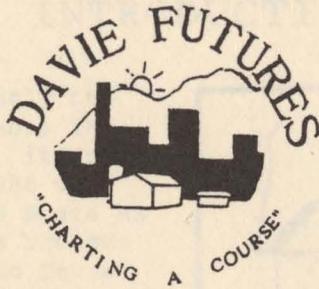


CHARTING A COURSE



DAVIE FUTURES

A Strategic Plan for Davie County



January 1, 1989

Dear Citizens of Davie County,

In March, 1987, a group that eventually would grow to more than 50 citizens representing a cross-section of Davie County's people and communities joined together to examine the future of Davie County. Our goal has been to study various problems and issues facing our County and to prepare a plan which will help Davie County to meet the many challenges of the 21st Century. The results of this project, known as *Davie Futures*, are presented in this report.

Truly, the *Davie Futures* project is a product of both the citizens and elected officials of Davie County. The Davie County Board of Commissioners along with the governing boards of Mocksville and Cooleemee planted the seeds for the project, but instructed the *Davie Futures* group to operate independently in order to develop some creative and practical approaches to the future. Our intent was not to address all of the problems and issues facing Davie County, but to focus instead on a handful of critical topics which will most likely improve the County's future.

Four major issues were selected: 1) Economic Development, 2) Education, 3) Infrastructure, and 4) Quality of Life. In March, 1988, one year from the date our project began, the Steering Committee and four task forces involved in *Davie Futures* produced a list of 55 recommendations which are included in this report. Although some of these recommendations can and should be carried out by our local governments, most of them will depend on volunteer efforts if they are to achieve success. We hope that you will join with us to assure this success.

On behalf of the *Davie Futures* project and the many volunteers listed on page 14 of this report who served so energetically on the Steering Committee and four task forces, along with others who encouraged us and provided information and advice, I hope that you enjoy reading this report and will feel free to call on me if you have any questions or comments. We want this report to reflect your hopes and concerns for Davie County, and welcome your suggestions for making it better.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support. It has been an honor to serve the good people of Davie County.

Sincerely,

E.C. Tatum, Jr.
Chairman, *Davie Futures*

INTRODUCTION

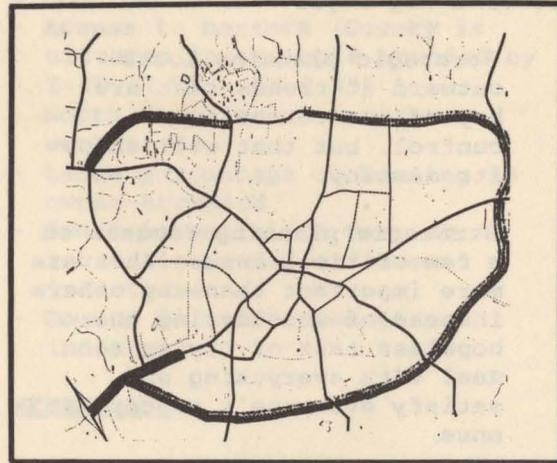
Davie County is currently the sixth fastest growing county in North Carolina. In fact, its rate of growth from 1980 to 1986 was nearly double that of the State as a whole. This growth has brought a new era of prosperity to Davie County, but it also presents many challenges. For example, will the County's traditional lifestyle and high quality of life be threatened by new development? Can the County provide the services and facilities necessary to accommodate new growth? Will Davie County's schools be prepared to meet the demands placed on them? What types of businesses and industries do the people of the County want and need?

These are some of the many questions that prompted a group of more than 50 citizens of Davie County to initiate a project in 1987 known as *Davie Futures*. The aim of *Davie Futures* was not to produce a lengthy plan which attempted to deal with all of the issues facing the County as it moves into the 21st century, but to focus instead on a few broad issues of critical importance. During a series of meetings and discussions held in March, 1987, four major issues emerged:

- 1) Economic Development,
- 2) Education, 3) Infrastructure,
- and 4) Quality of Life.

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For each of these four issues, a task force composed of Davie County citizens set out to study each issue in depth, to examine the County's strengths and weaknesses, and to prepare a list of goals and recommendations (or "strategies") for submission to the *Davie Futures* Steering Committee, a group of 16 citizens formed for the purpose of guiding the planning process. The task forces worked energetically during the last half of 1987, and several of these groups produced detailed reports listing recommendations for improving Davie County. In March, 1988, the Steering Committee reviewed the work of the task forces, and with only minor modifications, approved the 55 strategies submitted by the task forces. These strategies are presented in this report for the consideration of the people of Davie County.

The *Davie Futures* project is a good example of *strategic planning*. In fact, Davie is one of the first counties in North Carolina to successfully complete a strategic plan, and the *Futures* project has attracted positive attention from cities and counties from throughout North Carolina. Strategic planning is different

from traditional planning in several key ways:

- Strategic planning looks outward at trends that are beyond the community's control, but that will shape its destiny
- Strategic planning focuses on a few critical issues that are more important than any others instead of shouldering the hopeless task of trying to deal with everything and satisfy everyone's concern at once
- Strategic planning is realistic about what resources are available to achieve goals and who controls them
- Strategic planning is action-oriented and produces a set of actual steps that can be taken to achieve these goals
- Strategic planning does not rely exclusively on government for implementation, instead, it draws on the efforts of citizens, civic groups, businesses, industries, etc.

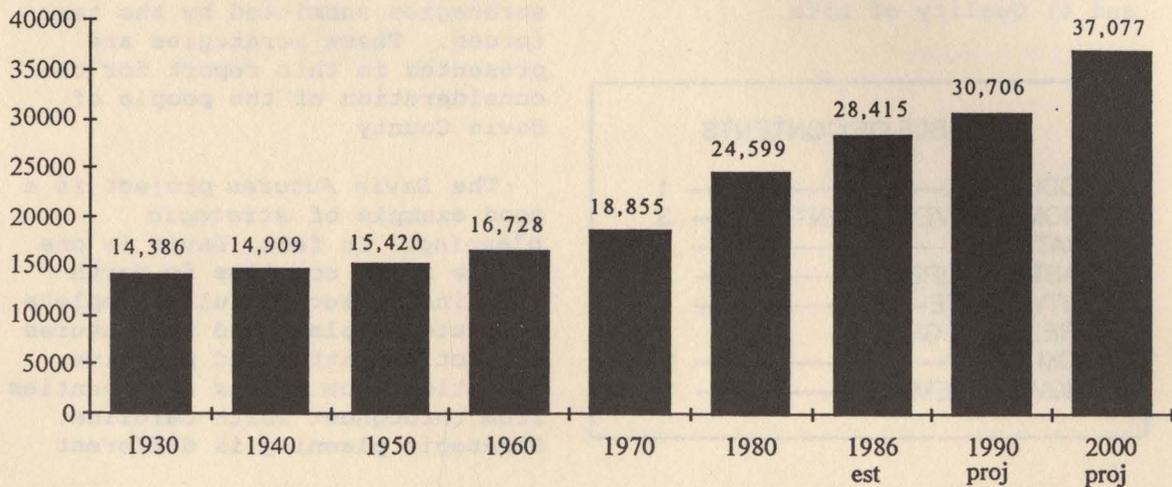
It is in the spirit of strategic planning that this report is presented to you, the citizens of Davie County. The theme of Futures has been to "chart a course" for the County for the year 2000 and beyond. But, to undertake this journey successfully, the people of Davie County must become involved. We hope that you will study the recommendations in this report and, if possible, participate in the implementation of the plan.

The world around us will change...this is certain. Will Davie County be prepared to respond to this change? Will it be willing to tackle the difficult issues and make the difficult decisions that will be necessary to secure the prosperity and quality of life for the next generation that we now enjoy? The answer is a resounding yes! The people of Davie County welcome the challenges of the future and are prepared to meet them head-on!

Please join with us in keeping the spirit of *Davie Futures* alive!

Thank you!

Population of Davie County: 1930 to 2000

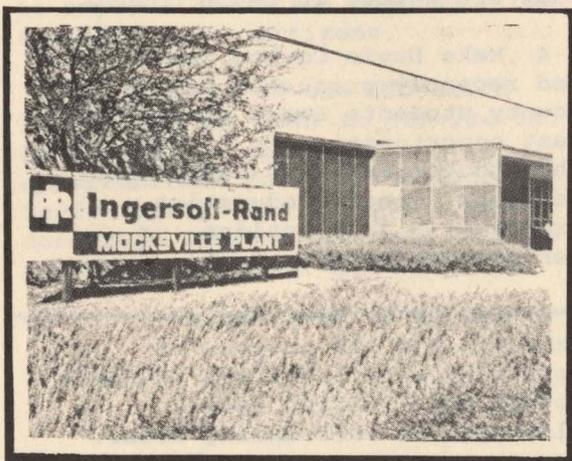


SOURCE: US Bureau of the Census and the NC Office of Budget and Management

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Davie County is fortunate to have avoided the economic misfortunes that have plagued many of the rural areas of our nation during the past decade. Instead of economic stagnation, Davie County is riding a wave of economic prosperity that has witnessed the expansion of industry, business, and residences. Overall, the County's economy is strong and all indications are that a bright future lies ahead for the people of Davie County.

The mission of the Economic Development Task Force has been to *create an environment that fosters quality economic growth and employment opportunities for the citizens of Davie County, with an emphasis on self-sufficiency.*



The Task Force identified the major strengths and weaknesses affecting Davie County's economic development as follows:

STRENGTHS

- Rural setting
- Close to urban areas
- Strong industries
- Plentiful water supply (Yadkin and South Yadkin Rivers)
- Availability of industrial sites

- Countywide zoning
- Access to markets (County is situated in triangle bounded by I-40, I-77, and I-85)
- North Carolina is a right-to-work state
- Large percentage of housing is owner-occupied
- Great potential in tourism, recreation, and retirement industries
- County is attractive to new industry

WEAKNESSES

- Sewer capability
- No single community college committed to Davie County
- No efficient north-south highway interconnection
- Difficult to retain high school graduates in the County
- Lack of sufficient rental housing for future growth
- Utilities, specifically electric power and telephone services
- Large number of residents commute outside of the County for employment

The Steering Committee endorsed the following economic development goals and strategies:

GOAL #1:

Recruit and expand industries that are environmentally sound, recession proof, and pay a higher wage.

STRATEGIES:

1-1 Expand US 64 to make it an effective bypass between Interstates 40 and 85, and relieve the strain on pedestrian traffic in Mocksville and Davie County.

1-2 Actively promote intergovernmental cooperation among the Towns of Cooleemee and Mocksville, Davie County, and the State and Federal governments.

1-3 Increase efforts to attract and promote the tourism, recreation, retirement, and second home industries in Davie County.

1-4 Coordinate County growth plans with the upgrading of telephone and power services.

1-5 Promote the development of housing facilities for all income levels in order to retain young people, expand the retirement housing market, and attract qualified individuals for industry. Examples include condominiums, aesthetically-pleasing mobile home parks, mid-to-high level apartment units, and upper-level single family residences.

GOAL #2:

Increase the availability of reasonably-priced industrial sites.

STRATEGIES:

2-1 Initiate discussions among Town of Mocksville, Town of Cooleemee, Davie County, and Chamber of Commerce officials concerning public development of an industrial park.

2-2 Form a standing industrial site committee with a membership consisting of public officials, developers, and landowners.

2-3 Expand areas available for industrial and commercial development through mechanisms such as zoning amendments and extension of public utilities.

2-4 Develop industrial parks in areas that would not infringe upon planned residential or agricultural areas, and provide needed services such as public water and sewer to these parks.

GOAL #3:

Formulate an overall economic development strategy.

STRATEGIES:

3-1 Recruit industries that have proven to be environmentally safe, and that require skilled employees which, in turn, would raise the average salary and provide more jobs for Davie's high school graduates who now must seek employment outside of the County.

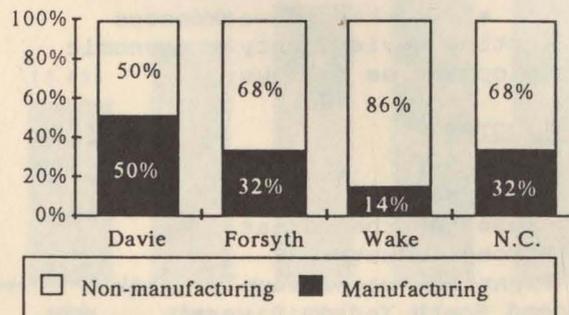
3-2 Work through the Davie County Planning Board to formulate a comprehensive thoroughfare plan, which would alleviate future traffic congestion and allow clear access to industrial parks.

3-3 Recruit commercial and professional services that will provide the goods and services that are needed in Davie County.

3-4 Make Davie County residents and recently-graduated Davie County students aware of employment opportunities in the County through "career day" recruitment seminars, special education programs, a jobs hotline, or central job opening text.

3-5 Launch a "Shop Davie" campaign for the purpose of retaining retail dollars in Davie County and limiting retail "leakage" to surrounding areas.

Employment Mix: 1984

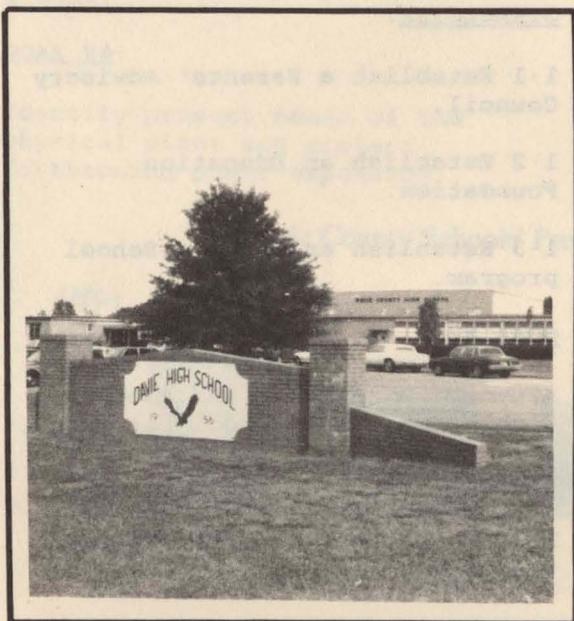


SOURCE: NC Employment Security Commission

EDUCATION

The consensus of the Education Task force was that, overall, Davie County's public school system is well-operated and delivers quality services to the citizens of Davie county. Based on an informal survey conducted in 1987, citizens voiced strong support for Davie's public schools. The confidence of the public is reinforced by the fact that the County's eighth-graders recently placed fifth out of 140 public school systems in North Carolina on the California Achievement Tests and that Davie's students consistently score above the state average on the North Carolina Competency Tests. Nevertheless, the County is not content to rest upon its laurels, but is constantly seeking ways to make its schools even better and to improve education opportunities for all of its citizens.

The mission of the Education Task Force has been *to provide the best possible education opportunities for the citizens of Davie County, and to enable and encourage Davie's citizens to take advantage of these opportunities.*



The Task Force identified the major strengths and weaknesses related to education in Davie County as follows:

STRENGTHS

- Davie County has an excellent tax base and a high ability to fund its public schools
- The overall quality of the Davie County Schools is perceived positively by the residents of Davie and surrounding counties
- Access to teacher education programs at many nearby colleges and universities, as well as the County's geographic setting, enhance Davie's ability to recruit excellent teachers and provide continuing education opportunities for current teachers
- The County's teachers are well-qualified
- Positive teaching and learning environment; relative lack of racial unrest in public schools; no major drug abuse problems
- Strong public support (non-financial) of schools; strong base of parent support is evident in numerous booster and volunteer organizations
- Schools are stable, as evidenced by low turnover rate among teachers
- Good physical facilities
- Minimum school bureaucracy places parents, teachers, and students in close touch with decision-makers
- All of the Davie County schools are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the State of North Carolina
- The Davie County School system conducts effective public relations programs through its Community Schools program and related channels of communication
- Absence of involuntary school busing

- Although Davie's overall population is growing rapidly, school enrollment is stable to slightly declining. This trend presents an opportunity to focus attention on the quality rather than quantity of its programs.

WEAKNESSES

- According to a recent statewide study, Davie County ranks very low in its local effort to fund its public schools
- There is no established mechanism for soliciting private support for public education, such as an Education Foundation
- The percentage of Davie's residents who have graduated from high school or who have attended college is relatively low
- Davie County does not have a local community college (although it maintains close relationships with institutions in surrounding counties, notably Davidson Community College)
- Davie's dropout rate, although not excessively high relative to state and national figures, is too high for local acceptance
- Teachers have too little time available to actually teach
- Lack of teacher assistants in some grades hampers effectiveness of teachers
- Lack of teacher pay supplement has the potential to create morale problems among teachers as well as to influence well-qualified teachers to seek employment in neighboring systems that offer supplements
- Lack of organized citizen support to advocate the needs of public schools
- Lack of alternative school (e.g. for pregnant teenagers, discipline problems, potential dropouts)
- Combination classes in certain grades in elementary schools
- Relatively low proportion of population enrolled in college
- Some schools in Davie County are stigmatized by negative

reputations, although there is little objective data to support significant differences among schools

- Lack of some programs needed to implement the State's Basic Education Program (e.g. cultural arts, foreign languages)



The Steering Committee endorsed the following education goals and strategies:

GOAL #1:

Seek greater funding for identified needs through community cooperation and support.

STRATEGIES:

1-1 Establish a Parents' Advisory Council.

1-2 Establish an Education Foundation.

1-3 Establish an Adopt-a-School program.

GOAL #2:

Attract, encourage, and keep highly-qualified school personnel.

STRATEGIES:

2-1 Make better use of student teachers.

2-2 Release teachers from non-instructional duties.

2-3 Establish high standards for the recruitment and retention of well-qualified teachers.

2-4 Seek greater funding for the expressed purpose of teacher supplements.

GOAL #3:

Strengthen existing programs where needed and expand the curriculum to better meet the educational needs and interests of the community.

STRATEGIES:

3-1 Expand educational opportunities in the cultural arts.

3-2 Improve the continuum of the education curriculum from the middle grade level to the secondary grade level.

3-3 Expand the academically gifted program to include grades K-3 and 7-12.

3-4 Begin a formal drop-out prevention program in elementary grades.

GOAL #4:

Identify present needs of the physical plant and project forthcoming plant expansion.

STRATEGIES:

4-1 Meet new facility construction needs at Shady Grove, North Davie, Pinebrook, and Mocksville Middle Schools.

4-2 Meet facility renovation and construction needs at Mocksville Middle School and Cooleemee School.

4-3 Install complete air conditioning facilities in Davie High School.

4-4 Discuss and continue study of the need for and problems associated with a new high school in eastern Davie County.

GOAL #5:

Increase parental and community awareness of and involvement in the education process, and enhance the image of the school system through public relations.

STRATEGIES:

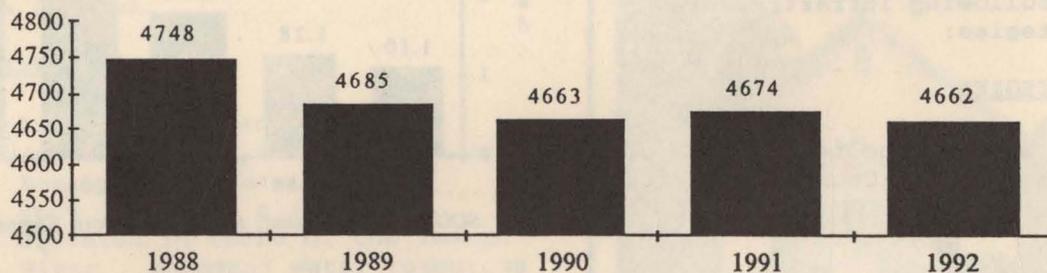
5-1 Expand parent volunteer programs.

5-2 Encourage community college expansion.

5-3 Establish mentor programs for Grades 7-12.

5-4 Improve educational consciousness for parents.

Davie County Schools' Projected Enrollment: 1988 - 1992



SOURCE: N.C. Board of Education

INFRASTRUCTURE

The term "infrastructure" includes a broad range of community services and facilities that are necessary to support the activities and development of a community. Examples include water and sewer lines, fire stations, parks, hospitals, roads and streets, schools, libraries, and many others. Several of these services and facilities (such as schools) are covered elsewhere in this report as part of a specific topic.

As a general rule, Davie County is in an enviable position with regard to its infrastructure. For example, the County maintains direct access to two abundant sources of water, the Yadkin and South Yadkin Rivers. A large portion of the County is served by a public water system operated by the County government, and a limited area of the County is also served by public sewer. Also, in a recent study, Davie County ranked #1 out of 100 North Carolina counties in terms of the number of major highway miles per square mile. In addition, a strong network of volunteer fire departments serves the County.

The mission of the Infrastructure Task Force has been to provide the community services and facilities, especially the public infrastructure, necessary to serve the growing needs of Davie County and its people.

The Steering Committee endorsed the following infrastructure strategies:

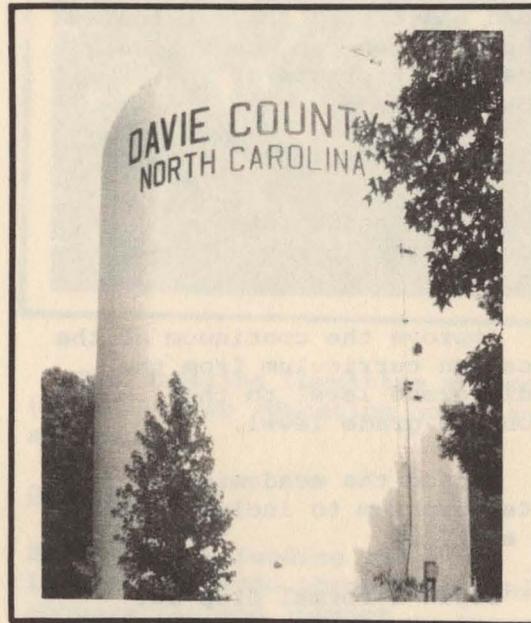
STRATEGIES:

1-1 Examine the feasibility of forming a City-County Utilities Commission.

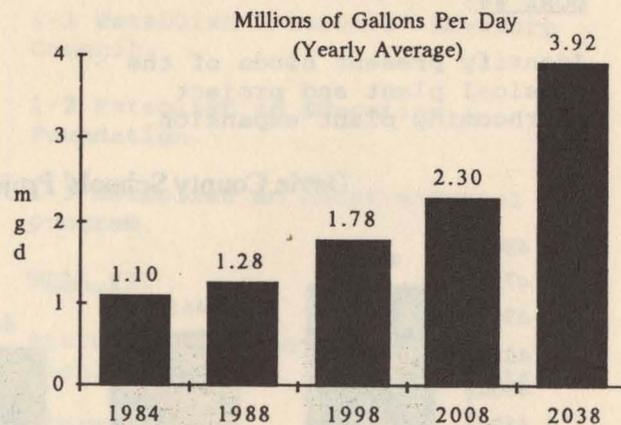
1-2 Encourage the formation of sanitary districts in feasible areas.

1-3 Monitor the operation and maintenance of private waste treatment plants.

1-4 Begin a comprehensive road-naming effort accompanied by the placement of road signs.



Davie County Water System Consumption



SOURCE: Finkbeiner, Pettis, and Strout Engineers, 1986.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Davie County's excellent quality of life is perhaps its major asset. The area is viewed by its residents and visitors as an excellent place to live and work. But, as the County's population and economy continue to expand, the challenge of protecting the environment that helps to make Davie desirable will intensify. What can be done to save small family farms? Will traffic congestion increase? How can the values that bind people together in a spirit of harmony be preserved?

It is difficult to measure the quality of life, yet people know instinctively when it is being lost. The protection of those community assets that Davie County holds dear, such as a clean environment, good neighbors, and a low crime rate can be achieved if the people of the County do not take them for granted. But, action will be required to secure a high quality of life for the future. Davie County must invest now in order to reap rewards later.

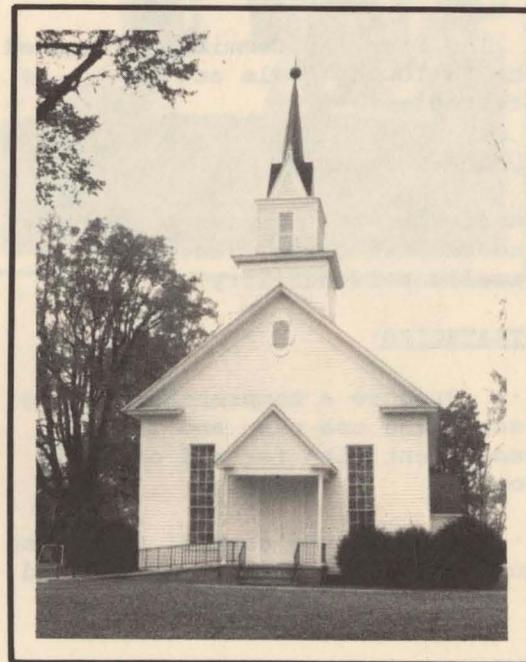
The mission of the Quality of Life Task Force has been to *identify, protect, promote, improve, expand, and add to those aspects of life which make Davie County a unique and desirable community.*

The Task Force identified the key strengths and weaknesses related to Davie's quality of life as follows:

STRENGTHS

- Advantageous geographic setting...near metropolitan area but has rural atmosphere
- Very desirable climate
- Situated in forks of the Yadkin River...abundant water resources
- Clean environment

- Low crime rate
- Landscape is uncluttered at present by visual obstacles such as billboards and open dumps
- Town of Mocksville and Davie County operate under the council-manager form of government
- Desirable residential environment; predominantly low-density single-family; virtually no blighted areas
- Spirit of citizen participation and involvement in community affairs
- Wealth of local talent (both "long-termers" and "newcomers" to Davie County) available for leadership and problem-solving if properly identified and trained
- Potential for development of tourism industry; Boone Family heritage and Bermuda Run are major tourism assets
- Picturesque landscape marked by well-managed farmland, open spaces, and water resources
- Land use regulations (zoning and subdivision ordinances) are modern, up-to-date, and well-enforced
- Low tax rate
- Positive race relations



WEAKNESSES

- Urban growth is spilling over into Davie from adjacent metropolitan areas
- Many soils in the area are not suitable for septic systems
- A large portion of Davie's property tax base consists of manufacturers' inventories, which will become tax-exempt in 1988. Replacement revenues will be frozen at 1987 levels.
- The Davie County Hospital is experiencing problems related to fiscal condition and personnel turnover
- Threat of low-level radioactive/hazardous/nuclear waste facility
- Lack of minority representation on local boards and commissions
- Increased availability of alcoholic beverages in County
- Small family farms are under increasing pressure to survive
- The County lacks an up-to-date land use plan and growth management philosophy, and has no full-time staff devoted to long-range planning
- There is no museum for preservation and exhibition of Davie County's history
- Lack of quality, affordable rental housing
- Cultural organizations suffer from lack of funding

The Steering Committee endorsed the following goals and strategies:

GOAL #1:

Manage growth in order to protect and enhance Davie County's excellent liveability.

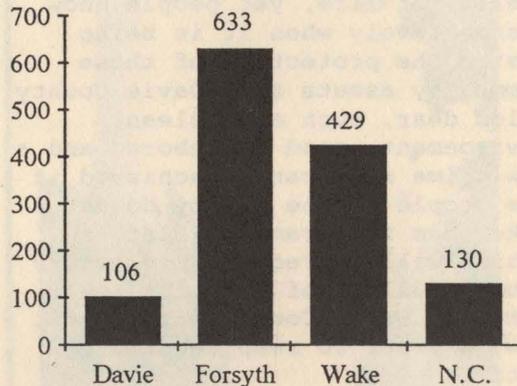
STRATEGIES:

- 1-1 Prepare a comprehensive long range land use plan and growth management plan for all of Davie County.
- 1-2 Finance the cost of preparing and implementing the land use and

growth management plans by one or more of the following: enacting a land transfer tax, obtaining grants, or increasing fees on development.

- 1-3 Establish a target date of July 1, 1989 to complete the County's land use and growth management plans. Move immediately to revise the County's existing zoning ordinance (and related development regulations) to require a site plan approval process for large developments.

Population Per Square Mile 1986



SOURCE: US Bureau of the Census and the NC Office of Budget and Management.

GOAL #2:

Preserve Davie County's wholesome rural character.

STRATEGIES:

- 2:1 Encourage the Chamber of Commerce and civic and governmental organizations to focus attention and energy on strengthening the County's agricultural economic base.
- 2-2 Request the Davie County Agricultural Extension Agent to draft a proposal for establishing voluntary agricultural district

agreements and promote such agreements throughout the County.

2-3 Establish a citizen study commission to recommend steps that could be taken to develop exemplary citizenship among Davie residents by strengthening current and proposed "character-building" institutions such as a local YMCA.

GOAL #3:

Encourage community fiscal responsibility and good government

STRATEGIES:

3-1 Continue support of Commission-Manager form of local government...it is working well.

3-2 Continue periodic County Commission/community meetings and make greater utilization of citizen study groups for evaluation of community needs. Distribute printed reports explaining major proposals and periodic reports on accomplishments. Staff the managers' offices of Davie County and Mocksville each with an administrative assistant to facilitate the foregoing suggestions and to enable the managers to devote more time to citizen relations.

3-3 Maintain high standards of fiscal prudence and a strong work ethic among Davie County's citizens and their local governments while supporting schools and emergency services at top quality levels.

3-4 Develop a pool of community leadership talent by initiating a "Leadership Davie" program.

GOAL #4:

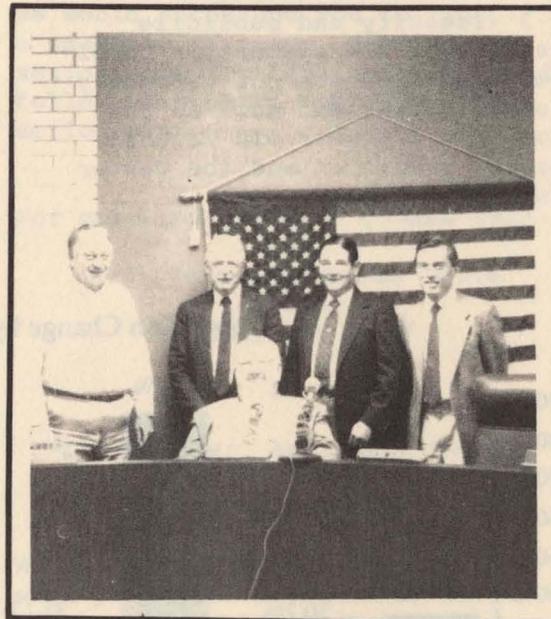
Support environmental protection and beautification.

STRATEGIES:

4-1 Establish a citizens' advisory environmental impact study commission to provide "front-line" vigilant scrutiny of threats to the environment from: waste disposal of all types, major construction projects, and overuse of land, water, and air capacity.

4-2 Launch a countywide beautification program which would direct its efforts toward:

- a horticultural planting program to beautify entrances and other key public places in the County
- a study of existing Federal, State, and local billboard control laws to determine if they adequately protect Davie County's aesthetic and natural resources
- an ongoing clean-up, anti-litter, and Keep Davie County Green campaign.



GOAL #5:

Enrich Davie County's cultural, historical, and recreational resources.

STRATEGIES:

5-1 Establish a Davie County tax exempt "501(c)(3)" Community Foundation to accept gifts, grants, and endowments and enlarge private financial support for the benefit of the County's cultural, historical, and recreational resources.

5-2 Request the Mocksville-Davie Chamber of Commerce to make a study of ways to maximize "tourist dollars" by capitalizing on the County's cultural, historical, and recreational resources, including the potential for a Daniel Boone Historic Museum.

5-3 Identify and publicize aspects of Davie County's local culture which are not currently fully recognized, such as the County's 125 year old Masonic picnic tradition and the Center Fair.

5-4 Commission a study to determine the feasibility of expansion of the County's library facilities.

GOAL #6:

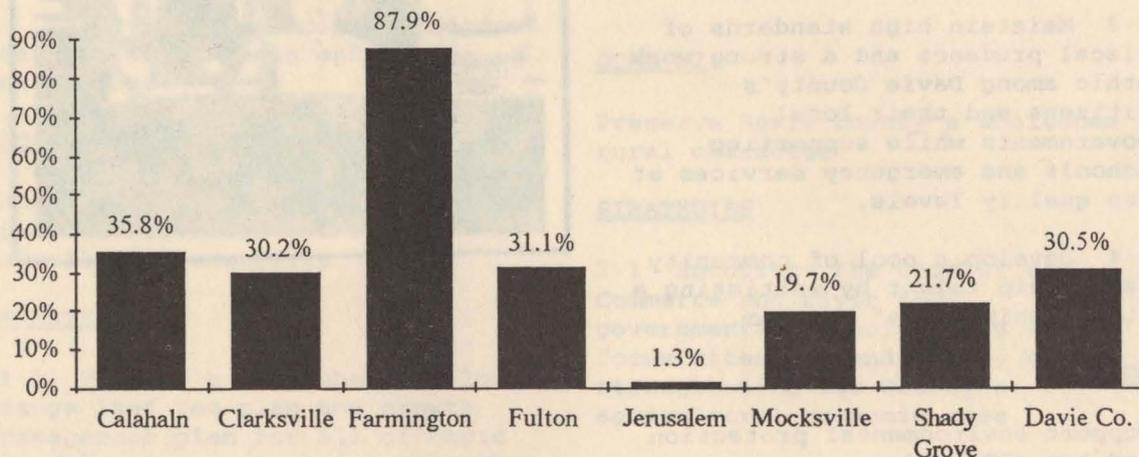
Strengthen human services and good human relations.

STRATEGIES:

6-1 Encourage the Davie County Hospital to become more entrepreneurial in broadening its services and income in order to better cope with the competition and resultant financial strain faced by the Hospital.

6-2 When a future vacancy occurs in the County's or Towns' governing boards, or County Board of Education, consideration should be given to filling the unexpired term by appointing a minority representative as a means of strengthening Davie County's good human relations and encouraging greater minority participation in local government.

Population Change by Township: 1970 to 1980



SOURCE: US Bureau of the Census.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The *Davie Futures* strategic plan has identified numerous recommendations, or strategies, aimed toward improving Davie County and the lives of its citizens. But, a plan is worthless if it is allowed to sit on a shelf and gather dust. A plan must be followed by action if it is to fulfill the hopes and dreams of the community.

Each of the 55 strategies put forward in this report will require follow-up by the citizens of Davie County. It is a mark of the early success of this plan that several of the strategies have already been implemented. But, much work remains to be done.

The next stage of the planning process will involve translating each of the strategies into a plan of action. A strategy shows how a goal will be achieved but not exactly how. Once the strategies have been developed, an action plan should be devised for each one. At a minimum, these action plans should specify what things will have to be done; who will be responsible for doing them; by when they have to be done; how much they will cost; and where the funds will come from. Without these details, it is too easy to let things slide in the crush of daily business. It is hard to imagine only one institution or organization being able to develop and implement a strategic plan by itself. Therefore, many government agencies, non-profit, and private sector firms are usually involved. Consequently, there is usually no established

means of routine assignment, monitoring, and supervision of tasks. This makes it even more important than usual for responsibilities and tasks to be made clear at the outset and to be communicated to everyone in the process.

The action plan can be very simple or very sophisticated. The essential feature of the action plan is that everyone knows that it has to be done, when it has to be done, and that it will not be held up for lack of resources.

Please help us to make the *Davie Futures* project a success by volunteering your time and energy, or that of your church, school, employer, civic organization, etc. to make *Davie Futures* a reality. We would encourage you to "adopt" a specific strategy, develop an action plan for that strategy, and follow through to implement the action plan.

For more information, please call:

•E.C. Tatum, Chairman *Davie Futures*
@ (704) 284-2334

or

•Craig Greer, Assistant County Manager
@ (704) 634-5513

We will look forward to working with you, the citizens of Davie County, to achieve a bright and prosperous future for Davie County! Thank you!

*Many thanks to Kurt Jenne, author of "Strategic Planning: Taking Charge of the Future," Popular Government, Spring 1986, for providing information used in this report.

DAVIE FUTURES PROJECT MEMBERSHIP

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JANUARY, 1989