Strategic Plan

TO: Mayor and Board of Commissioners

FROM: Maureen Keith, Communications Coordinator

DATE: June 23, 2022

Background/Issue

The Town began the process of creating a new strategic plan in the Spring of 2018. Below is a timeline of events that have occurred during this process:

April 2018: Community Meeting
Over 100 residents came together to share their desired future and unwanted future for Matthews. This served as the foundation for the Vision Statements

January 2019: Vision Statements Completed
Our Town, Our Vision: Twelve Vision Statements were approved by the Board and published. The Our Town, Our Vision document is attached to this memo for your reference.

July 2019: Strategic Planning Session I
Approximately 60 Town of Matthews staff members met to begin the process of turning the Vision Statements into a Strategic Plan. Every department was represented at this day-long planning session.

September 2019: Strategic Planning Session II
A smaller group of Town staff met to make sense of the output from the earlier meeting. Staff began developing strategic themes for each vision.

January 2020: Strategies Developed
Staff developed draft strategies, reviewed by each department.

February 2020: Board Review of Draft Strategies

April 2020: Strategies Finalized
*Project stalled due to the Covid-19 pandemic*

September 2021: Strategies revisited and reviewed by Department Heads

November 2021: Board received an update on the Strategic Plan
Staff transitioned the plan to a new, streamlined format.

January 2022: April 2022: Small Group Meetings
Staff met in small groups to finalize the objectives, initiatives and outcome measures for each vision.

June 27, 2022: Present the final draft document to the Board of Commissioners
Proposal/Solution

The final step in the process of preparing the strategic plan is Board review and approval.

Financial Impact

None.

Related Town Goal

Operational Performance: To plan, allocate resources, and operate all departments effectively and efficiently in order to meet the citizens’ needs for local government services.

Recommended Action

Approve the Town of Matthews 2023-2028 Strategic Plan as presented.
The Matthews Strategic Plan is principally guided by 12 Vision Statements. The Vision Statements were written based on the resident feedback received during the Our Town, Our Vision community meeting. The Board of Commissioners and Town staff then worked to develop the Strategic Plan. The Vision Statements serve as the Town’s key focus areas and have associated objectives, initiatives and performance measures to ensure transparency, accountability and focused work.
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VISION 1: WELL-PLANNED, MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM
A system of improved arterial roads help divert non-local, commuter traffic away from downtown Matthews. Street improvements accommodate cars, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit services. The Silver Line extension of the light rail line provides many benefits to the community and is a welcomed alternative for commuters.

VISION 2: VIBRANT, PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY DOWNTOWN
Downtown Matthews is a true destination in the region, with a reputation for a variety of dining, entertainment options, and thriving local businesses. Pedestrian-friendly streetscapes create a safe and inviting environment. New mixed-use development in the downtown support merchants and add vibrancy to the community.

VISION 3: WALKABLE AND BIKEABLE COMMUNITY
Matthews is a true walkable and bikeable community. There is improved connectivity between neighborhoods and developments with a well-integrated network of streets, sidewalks, bikeways, walking trails, and greenway trails. This continuous system provides a multitude of transportation choices for residents.

VISION 4: SMALL TOWN FEELING AND IDENTITY
Matthews has kept its small-town identity and welcoming charm. Attractive landscaping, understated signage, and wide, shaded sidewalks create an inviting community. Many parks and open spaces are accessible within walking and biking distance from most parts of town. Town residents put a high value on the town’s heritage and the preservation of historic buildings and landmarks throughout the community.

VISION 5: EXPANDED PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM
Matthews has steadily added to its parks and open spaces with an extensive system of greenway trails and multi-use paths connecting residents to schools, parks, and neighborhoods.

VISION 6: DESTINATION FOR ARTS AND CULTURE
Matthews is full of historic character, and an impressive offering of arts and entertainment options including festivals, art shows, concerts, and plays. It is this great variety of offerings that has given Matthews an outstanding reputation in the cultural and social landscape of the region.
VISION 7: QUALITY COMMUNITY-SERVING SCHOOLS
The Town of Matthews has worked cooperatively with various educational organizations to ensure that area schools remain community-oriented, appropriately funded and inclusive.

VISION 8: PROPERLY MANAGED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
The Town of Matthews offers a wide variety of housing types and values, with walkable, distinctive and attractive neighborhoods to help meet the housing needs of all residents. Town leaders have balanced the need for sustained economic development with concerns about over-development.

VISION 9: DIVERSE COMMUNITY
Matthews is a place where people of various racial, ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds are equally accepted. This diversity is reflected in membership in town boards and committees.

VISION 10: COMMUNITY DEDICATED TO PUBLIC SAFETY
Matthews is a community of neighbors, business owners, police officers, firefighters, and other public safety personnel committed to working together for a safe and secure town.

VISION 11: TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE AND ENGAGEMENT
The Town Board and various town committees have no shortage of interested, qualified people willing to serve. Town Commissioners operate in the spirit of transparency and routinely seek the views of their constituents on important decisions. The informed citizenry keeps up with timely and effective communication from the Town.

VISION 12: HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT
Matthews continues to lead the way in environmental best practices for the region. Tree preservation and a focus on native plant species throughout town have been beneficial to the environment in Matthews. Matthews’ walkable neighborhoods and an emphasis on connectivity have reduced dependency on cars.
VISON 1: WELL-PLANNED, MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

A system of improved arterial roads help divert non-local, commuter traffic away from downtown Matthews. Street improvements accommodate cars, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit services. The Silver Line extension of the light rail line provides many benefits to the community and is a welcomed alternative for commuters.

Objective 1: Improve the flow of traffic and divert commuter traffic around downtown Matthews.

- Initiative 1.1: Identify improvements to the flow of traffic throughout Matthews to decrease drive times and reduce congestion.
- Initiative 1.2: Advocate for road development opportunities that promote traffic diversion around the core of Matthews onto larger road networks like US-74 and I-485.
- Initiative 1.3: Ensure any new transportation improvements balance desire to move traffic with maintaining small town feel.
- Initiative 1.4: Identify possible technological advances that can assist in creating more reliable drive times (such as Bluetooth data to control traffic signals).

Objective 2: Continue to prioritize the importance of safe driving conditions.

- Initiative 2.1: Identify high crash zones and possible solutions to reduce crashes.
- Initiative 2.2: Assess areas of improvement for traffic signs, lighting, signals, pavement markings, and road conditions.
- Initiative 2.3: Promote driver safety education.
- Initiative 2.4: Explore implementation of Traffic Preemption Systems to help reduce emergency response times, promote safer vehicular movement when yielding to emergency vehicles, reduce intersection crashes, and improve overall traffic safety.
- Initiative 2.5: Study speed limits and identify opportunities to reduce speeding.

Measuring Progress:

- High crash zones and possible solutions to address them have been identified.
- Percent increase in the network of sidewalks, multi-use paths and greenways.
- Citizen survey responses show that residents feel safe when traveling in Matthews.
- Improvements to the flow of traffic have been identified.
Objective 3: Encourage multi-modal transportation.

- Initiative 3.1: Expand the network of sidewalks, multi-use paths, bicycle lanes, and greenways to allow for non-motorized transportation throughout the entire Town.
- Initiative 3.2: Assess safety and visibility of existing multi-modal system.
- Initiative 3.3: Identify potential road improvements to accommodate pedestrians, cars, bicycles.

Objective 4: Continue to advocate for Silver Line in Matthews.

- Initiative 4.1: Work closely with CATS on development of the Silver Line.
- Initiative 4.2: Plan for transit-oriented development around Silver Line.
- Initiative 4.3: Communicate with residents about the many benefits of bringing light rail to Matthews.

Objective 5: Develop and maintain a plan for future transportation needs.

- Initiative 5.1: Identify funding opportunities for transportation projects.
- Initiative 5.2: Educate public on the Matthews vision for transportation.
- Initiative 5.3: Keep abreast of emerging technology trends related to transportation and assess local applicability.
- Initiative 5.4: Advocate for the Matthews vision to NCDOT and other partnering agencies.
- Initiative 5.5: Consider business and economic development in transportation decisions.
- Initiative 5.6: Incorporate aesthetics in transportation planning.

Measuring Progress:

- Communication efforts on the benefits of light rail in Matthews are underway.
- Work with CATS on the development of the Silver Line continues.
- Implementation of Traffic Preemption Systems has been explored.
- Speed limits have been studied and opportunities to reduce speeding have been identified.
- Areas for improvement for traffic signs, etc. have been studied and identified.
Objective 1: Support and nurture a vibrant downtown Matthews.

- Initiative 1.1: Identify opportunities to support the business community.
- Initiative 1.2: Identify areas in downtown to be gathering places such as outdoor eating areas and pedestrian plazas.
- Initiative 1.3: Develop a plan to enhance beautification throughout downtown.

Objective 2: Improve the pedestrian experience for all ages and abilities throughout downtown.

- Initiative 2.1: Identify opportunities to implement portions of the Downtown Streetscape Plan.
- Initiative 2.2: Continue to address sidewalk gaps/sidewalk maintenance needs in downtown.
- Initiative 2.3: Identify opportunities for uniquely Matthews features and charming points of interest.
- Initiative 2.4: Identify opportunities to provide shaded, comfortable resting places.
- Initiative 2.5: Update downtown directory signs and consider adding other points of interest such as public art.
- Initiative 2.6: Explore pedestrian wayfinding signs (public parking, restrooms, other points of interest).
- Initiative 2.7: Determine the need and possible locations to install additional drinking fountains and water for pets.

Measuring Progress:

- Areas for potential gathering spaces have been identified. A plan to enhance beautification downtown has been developed.
- Number of parking spaces added in existing right of way and/or shared use.
- Percentage of Downtown Streetscape Plan that has been implemented.
- Number of sidewalk gaps/sidewalk maintenance projects that have been completed in downtown. Attendance at special events and activities.
- Parking counts show an increase in parking utilization.
Objective 3: Foster an environment that encourages downtown to be a destination.

- Initiative 3.1: Continue offering special events and activities that draw visitors to Matthews.
- Initiative 3.2: Develop marketing materials and/or a website to promote Matthews as a destination.
- Initiative 3.3: Periodically revisit downtown parking needs.
- Initiative 3.4: Build out extra parking spaces in existing right of way and pursue shared lease agreements.
- Initiative 3.5: Identify ways to attract a diverse mix of businesses and attractions including restaurants, shops, museums, gardens, fountains and other points of interest.

Objective 4: Encourage mixed use development in appropriate downtown areas.

- Initiative 4.1: Update Downtown Master Plan
- Initiative 4.2: Remove barriers to mixed use development.

Measuring Progress:

- Marketing materials promoting Matthews as a destination have been developed.
- Opportunities for uniquely Matthews features/points of interest have been identified and are developed/are being developed.
- Shaded, comfortable resting places in downtown have been identified.
- Downtown directly signs are updated.
VISION 3: WALKABLE AND BIKEABLE COMMUNITY

Matthews is a true walkable and bikeable community. There is improved connectivity between neighborhoods and developments with a well-integrated network of streets, sidewalks, bikeways, walking trails, and greenway trails. This continuous system provides a multitude of transportation choices for residents.

**Objective 1: Expand the network of sidewalks, multi-use paths and greenways to allow for non-motorized transportation throughout the entire Town.**

- Initiative 1.1: Improve connections between neighborhoods, communities, retail areas, employment centers, parks and greenways.
- Initiative 1.2: Ensure town zoning codes require a walkable and bikeable environment.
- Initiative 1.3: Encourage sidewalks and connectivity as part of conditional rezonings.
- Initiative 1.4: Develop a plan for maintenance of multi-modal system.

**Objective 2: Continue to improve the pedestrian experience for all ages and abilities.**

- Initiative 2.1: Assess safety and visibility of existing multi-modal system.
- Initiative 2.2: Continue to address sidewalk gaps.
- Initiative 2.3: Educate residents about bicyclist and pedestrian safety.

**Objective 3: Encourage transportation through non-motorized means.**

- Initiative 3.1: Use a variety of communication methods to make citizens aware of their options (interactive maps, etc.).
- Initiative 3.2: Educate community on benefits of an active lifestyle.

**Measuring Progress:**

- Percent increase in the network of sidewalks, multi-use paths and greenways.
- Number of conditional rezonings that include sidewalks and connectivity.
- A plan for multi-modal system maintenance has been developed.
- The safety and visibility of existing multi-modal system has been assessed.
- Number of sidewalk gaps addressed.
- Educational efforts for residents regarding bicyclist and pedestrian safety are underway.
- Interactive map of sidewalks, greenway connections, etc. is complete.
- Public education on the benefits of an active lifestyle.
VISION 4: SMALL TOWN FEELING AND IDENTITY

Matthews has kept its small-town identity and welcoming charm. Attractive landscaping, understated signage, and wide, shaded sidewalks create an inviting community. Many parks and open spaces are accessible within walking and biking distance from most parts of town. Town residents put a high value on the town’s heritage and the preservation of historic buildings and landmarks throughout the community.

 Objective 1: Preserve and promote the history and heritage of Matthews.

• Initiative 1.1: Encourage preservation of historic properties.
• Initiative 1.2: Educate residents about the history of Matthews.
• Initiative 1.3: Consider addition of historical markings/signage downtown.

 Objective 2: Continue the character/charm of Matthews through design and placemaking.

• Initiative 2.1: Identify opportunities for uniquely Matthews features (example: Love Matthews, Celebrating Matthews mural).
• Initiative 2.2: Identify opportunities for gathering spaces, parklets and plazas.
• Initiative 2.3: Increase trees along sidewalks and multi-use paths where possible.
• Initiative 2.4: Continue efforts to add public art.
• Initiative 2.5: Update Comprehensive Plan to reflect the Town’s desire to maintain a small-town feeling and identity.
• Initiative 2.6: Expand walkability in and out of the downtown area with additional greenways and multi-use paths.
• Initiative 2.7: Identify opportunities to establish walkable, charming nodes throughout Matthews.

 Measuring Progress:

- Percentage of downtown streetscape improvement plan implemented.
- Percentage of downtown mobility plan implemented.
- Event/programming attendance.
- Number of additions to public art collection.
Objective 3: Maintain the small town feeling in the downtown area.

- Initiative 3.1: Determine appropriate scale of future downtown development.
- Initiative 3.2: Implement Downtown Streetscape Improvements and Downtown Mobility Plan.
- Initiative 3.3: Explore addition of an Architectural Review Board.
- Initiative 3.4: Ensure new buildings complement existing structures and add to the downtown character/charm.

Objective 4: Incorporate Town branding to demonstrate Matthews is a welcoming community.

- Initiative 4.1: Complete gateway signs and reevaluate where additional signs may be needed (Example: Roundabout on Matthews – Mint Hill Road).
- Initiative 4.2: Identify opportunities for Town branding (Example: Flyovers at 74 widening project).
- Initiative 4.3: Continue Special Events and Programming offerings that bring the community together.

Objective 5: Continue to promote volunteerism both inside the organization and with local nonprofit organizations.

- Initiative 5.1: Consider organizing opportunities for employees to utilize the volunteer hours allotted in the Town’s personnel policy.
- Initiative 5.2: Continue organizing and promoting Community Cleanups
- Initiative 5.3: Promote number of hours employees volunteered annually.
- Initiative 5.4: Explore additional volunteer opportunities/special projects for community members looking to volunteer.

Measuring Progress:

- Additional parklets/gathering spaces/plazas.
- Number of volunteer hours for Town employees.
- Number of organized volunteer opportunities for employees.
- Gateway signage is complete.
VISION 5: EXPANDED PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Matthews has steadily added to its parks and open spaces with an extensive system of greenway trails and multi-use paths connecting residents to schools, parks, and neighborhoods.

Objective 1: Continue work on developing new park space and improving existing parks.

- Initiative 1.1: Identify opportunities and implement plans to create outdoor gathering spaces.
- Initiative 1.2: Consider potential options for preservation of natural space.
- Initiative 1.3: Regularly update and review the Park Maintenance Plan.
- Initiative 1.4: Work towards completion of the Park Master Plan, and set a timeline for review and reevaluation of the plan.
- Initiative 1.5: Identify and create a plan to address the needs of every park in Matthews, including addition of restrooms, playground equipment replacement, and other amenities.
- Initiative 1.6: Identify and create a plan to address gaps in accessibility and location of parks.
- Initiative 1.7: All playground equipment meets best practice standards according to the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).
- Initiative 1.8: Increase diversity of and access to park amenities to appeal to those of all ages and abilities.
- Initiative 1.9: Use the conditional zoning process to encourage open space/gathering areas within developments throughout the community.
- Initiative 1.10: Continue cooperation with Mecklenburg County to help fund projects.

Measuring Progress:

- Opportunities for outdoor gathering spaces have been identified and plans are being implemented.
- Options for preservation of natural space have been identified.
- Park Maintenance Plan is updated.
- Amount of work towards completion of the Park Master Plan.
- A timeline for review and reevaluation of the Park Master Plan has been created. The needs of every park in Matthews have been identified and a plan to address the needs is in place. Gaps in accessibility to parks have been identified and a plan is in place to address the gaps.
Objective 2: Expand and connect multi-use paths and greenways throughout all of Matthews and provide connectivity to parks and open spaces.

- Initiative 2.1: Conduct an analysis to identify gaps in access to parks, multi-use paths, and greenways.
- Initiative 2.2: Create a plan to determine (and increase) the percentage of households within a certain distance of a greenway, multi-use path or other walking trail.
- Initiative 2.3: Identify opportunities to expand greenways and multi-use paths.

Objective 3: Educate the Matthews community on park and trail offerings.

- Initiative 3.1: Continue event offerings such as Kid in Nature Day to highlight park amenities.
- Initiative 3.2: Create an interactive online map of all park and greenway, etc. offerings.
- Initiative 3.3: Increase social media activity highlighting park offerings and amenities.

Measuring Progress:

- Increase in park amenities that meet the needs of all residents and visitors to Matthews – all ages and abilities.
- Number of conditional rezonings that include open space/gathering space in the development.
- Amount of funds contributed by Mecklenburg County for park projects in Matthews.
- Gaps in access to parks, multi-use paths and greenways have been identified and a plan has been developed to address the gaps.
- Percent increase in number of greenways, multi-use paths, etc. in Matthews. Interactive online map is created.
- Increase in social media activity highlighting parks offerings and amenities.
VISION 6: DESTINATION FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

Matthews is full of historic character, and an impressive offering of arts and entertainment options including festivals, art shows, concerts, and plays. It is this great variety of offerings that has given Matthews an outstanding reputation in the cultural and social landscape of the region.

Objective 1: Offer a variety of arts and cultural experiences that appeal to everyone in Matthews.

- Initiative 1.1: Embrace new and innovative cultural offerings that establish Matthews as a cultural destination.
- Initiative 1.2: Work closely with the Cultural Diversity Committee to identify and close gaps in current offerings as well as opportunities for progress.
- Initiative 1.3: Identify and address any barriers to citizen participation in arts and culture offerings – including access and transportation barriers.
- Initiative 1.4: Continue focus on adding to the Town’s public art collection.

Objective 2: Coordinated promotion of arts, culture and other tourism related offerings.

- Initiative 2.1: Create and implement a communications plan to promote the cultural offerings in Matthews.
- Initiative 2.2: Identify pertinent organizations and pursue opportunities to build relationships and work together to promote the cultural offerings in Matthews

Measuring Progress:

- Increase in number of arts and cultural experiences.
- Barriers to resident and visitor participation have been identified and a plan has been developed to address them.
- The Park, Recreation and Cultural Resource Department continues regular discussion with CDC and attends CDC meetings.
- Progress of communication efforts and report on ways we are promoting events. New relationships have been established and opportunities pursued.
- Number of additions to the Town’s public art collection.
**Vision 7: Quality Community Serving Schools**

The Town of Matthews has worked cooperatively with various educational organizations to ensure that area schools remain community-oriented, appropriately funded and inclusive.

**Objective 1: Support cooperative partnership with CMS.**

- Initiative 1.1: Advocate for the most comprehensive school safety measures.
- Initiative 1.2: Explore opportunities to partner with schools in Matthews to promote a strong relationship with the community.

**Objective 2: Support cooperative partnerships with all other local schools.**

- Initiative 2.1: Explore opportunities to partner with schools in Matthews to promote a strong relationship with the community.

**Objective 3: Continue the efforts of the Matthews Committee on Education.**

**Measuring Progress:**

- CMS and the Matthews Board of Commissioners maintain a cooperative partnership and have regular communication. Partnerships with schools in Matthews have been strengthened.

- The Matthews Committee on Education remains active and assisting with the Town’s relationships with schools in Matthews.
VISION 8: PROPERLY MANAGED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The Town of Matthews offers a wide variety of housing types and values, with walkable, distinctive and attractive neighborhoods to help meet the housing needs of all residents. Town leaders have balanced the need for sustained economic development with concerns about over-development.

Objective 1: Ensure a variety of housing options (type, style, affordability) meet the needs of residents now and into the future.

• Initiative 1.1: Complete affordable housing needs assessment to determine the needs of the Town.
• Initiative 1.2: Update Housing Trends Report as necessary.
• Initiative 1.3: Identify and implement feasible recommendations from affordable housing needs assessment.
• Initiative 1.4: Complete an assessment of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to identify and remove barriers to ensuring housing options meet the needs of all residents.
• Initiative 1.5: Identify proper balance between home ownership and rental units.

Objective 2: Determine balance between sustained economic development versus concern of overdevelopment.

• Initiative 2.1: Identify ways to increase and improve community engagement regarding development and decisions made by the Board.
• Initiative 2.2: Consider environmental implications of potential development.
• Initiative 2.3: Continue conversations with elected officials to discuss planning decisions, long term effects and benefits to the community.
• Initiative 2.4: Update and maintain a Comprehensive Plan.
• Initiative 2.5: Continue to monitor economic trends to ensure the Town’s approach to economic development continues to meet our needs.

Measuring Progress:

- Affordable housing needs assessment is completed. Affordable housing needs assessment recommendations are analyzed and implemented where appropriate.
- Housing Trends Report is up-to-date.
- Assessment of UDO is complete.
- Proper balance between ownership and rental units has been studied.
- New ways to increase community engagement with the Board regarding development decisions has been implemented.
- Educational efforts regarding development, rezoning, etc. are underway.
Objective 3: Improve non-motorized connectivity between neighborhoods and/or commerce centers, recreational amenities, and public transportation.

- Initiative 3.1: Encourage transit-oriented development along the Silver Line light rail corridor.
- Initiative 3.2: Improve connections between neighborhoods, communities, retail areas, employment centers, parks and greenways.

Objective 4: Continually evaluate staffing needs to ensure staffing levels adequately meet organizational and community needs.

- Initiative 4.1: Consider conducting a workload analysis to gauge staffing levels.

Measuring Progress:

- A method to consider environmental implications of potential development has been implemented and is being utilized when appropriate.
- Comprehensive Plan is completed and updated as needed.
- Economic trends are being monitored regularly.
- Staffing levels are meeting the needs of the organization and the community.
- Percentage of the Town’s Greenway Master Plan (within the bike ped plan) completed.
- Percentage of the Development of Matthews Downtown Loop completed.
VISION 9: DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Matthews is a place where people of various racial, ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds are equally accepted. This diversity is reflected in membership in town boards and committees.

Objective 1: Demonstrate that Matthews is a welcoming and accepting community.

- Initiative 1.1: Pursue new opportunities for multi-cultural events and programs.
- Initiative 1.2: Ensure Town facilities, communications and meetings are ADA compliant.
- Initiative 1.3: Continue to strive for diversity on Town Advisory Boards/Committees.
- Initiative 1.4: Strive to hear balanced viewpoints and gain input from all sides on issues.
- Initiative 1.5: Welcoming and inclusive facilities including parks and playgrounds.
- Initiative 1.6: Translation services are available and utilized when necessary and pertinent communication efforts, job ads are being translated.
- Initiative 1.7: Consider implementation of incentives for employees who speak more than one language.
- Initiative 1.8: Work with Mecklenburg County on Age-Friendly Action Plan.
- Initiative 1.9: Continue focus on affordable housing.
- Initiative 1.10: Explore additional opportunities to provide scholarships for recreational camps, activities and classes.

Measuring Progress:

- Percentage of the Town’s ADA transition plan has been implemented.
- Town Advisory Boards/Committees have a diverse representation among applicants.
- Communication efforts in minority publications/outlets. Citizen survey results show Matthews is perceived as a welcoming community.
Objective 2: Attract and retain a diverse applicant pool for Town employment and promotional opportunities.

- Initiative 2.1: Develop and implement recruitment strategies to reach a diverse group of applicants.
- Initiative 2.2: Implement recommendations from DEI Strategic and Training Plans.
- Initiative 2.3: All hiring interview panels have diverse representation.

Objective 3: Build and maintain partnerships with organizations united in the goal of a welcoming, diverse community.

- Initiative 3.1: Continue the Town’s partnership with the Human Services Council.
- Initiative 3.2: Continue efforts of the Cultural Diversity Committee.
- Initiative 3.3: Identify relevant events/programs in which the Town can participate.

Measuring Progress:

- Attendance at and offerings of multi-cultural events have increased.
- Increase in diversity among applicant pool for Town employment.
- DEI Strategic and Training plans have been implemented.
- All hiring interview panels have diverse representation.

VISION 9: DIVERSE COMMUNITY
Matthews is a place where people of various racial, ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds are equally accepted. This diversity is reflected in membership in town boards and committees.
VISION 10: COMMUNITY DEDICATED TO PUBLIC SAFETY

Matthews is a community of neighbors, business owners, police officers, firefighters, and other public safety personnel committed to working together for a safe and secure town.

Objective 1: Meet the community’s desire for a high level of safety and security.

• Initiative 1.1: Continually evaluate appropriate staffing needs to maintain desired level of service.
• Initiative 1.2: Continue efforts to be an employer of choice to attract and retain a skilled workforce.
• Initiative 1.3: Remain responsive to citizen requests for traffic calming/speed limit enforcement.

Objective 2: Continue public safety outreach and engagement with the community.

• Initiative 2.1: Maximize community policing tactics including partnerships, public outreach, etc.
• Initiative 2.2: Maximize community risk reduction, education and outreach.
• Initiative 2.3: Continue public engagement and communication efforts.

Objective 3: Implement public safety best practices.

• Initiative 3.1: Continually evaluate funding needs to maintain desired level of service.
• Initiative 3.2: Maximize data driven policing and deployment tactics to keep crime rates as low as possible.
• Initiative 3.3: Implement programs and procedures that can help maintain a low Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating.
• Initiative 3.4: Continue use of CPTED principles (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design).
• Initiative 3.5: Town departments continue working together collaboratively.

Measuring Progress:

- Town is staffed appropriately and meeting the needs of the community.
- Employee retention measurements.
- Increase in public outreach and engagement.
- Maintain low ISO rating.
- Data driven policing and deployment tactics have helped keep crime rates as low as possible.
- Funding needs are evaluated and identified.
VISION 11: TRANSPARENT
GOVERNANCE & ENGAGEMENT

The Town Board and various town committees have no shortage of interested, qualified people willing to serve. Town Commissioners operate in the spirit of transparency and routinely seek the views of their constituents on important decisions. The informed citizenry keeps up with timely and effective communication from the Town.

Objective 1: Promote the ideals of openness and transparency by educating community members about Town government.

- Initiative 1.1: Utilize a combination of existing and emerging communication platforms to consistently inform and engage with the community - sharing resources, best practices, education, and safety tips.
- Initiative 1.2: Create an open government hub on the Town website making it easier for citizens to access documents and information.
- Initiative 1.3: All Town staff and Board members prioritize responsiveness and transparency.

Objective 2: Cultivate an informed and responsive culture for all levels of the organization.

- Initiative 2.1: All Town staff engage in best practices regarding responsiveness to the community and receive regular citizen service training.
- Initiative 2.2: Develop and implement onboarding programs for all appointed positions.
- Initiative 2.3: Communications, public speaking, and/or media training for all elected officials and key staff members.
- Initiative 2.4: Streamline application and appointment process for advisory boards and committees.

Objective 3: Encourage robust community engagement

- Initiative 3.1: Develop, implement and continually update new processes and opportunities for proactive engagement that reaches all sectors of the community, with particular attention on underrepresented groups.
- Initiative 3.2: Ensure Town representation at community events.
- Initiative 3.3: Identify new ways to engage with the community – by meeting residents where they are.
- Initiative 3.4: Create and keep updated a shared resource of community contacts for Town staff to utilize when communicating with neighborhoods.

Measuring Progress:

- Increase in number of social media followers, visitors to www.matthewsnc.gov, social media interaction, newsletter subscribers.
- Attendance at public meetings.
- Citizen survey responses.
- Number of applicants and percentage of vacancy rates for Town advisory boards and committees.
- Documented consistency with communications/media/public speaking training with planned/scheduled training. Citizen service training
- Establishing and maintaining strategic partnerships with community organizations and nonprofits that can assist in engagement efforts.
VISION 12: HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

Matthews continues to lead the way in environmental best practices for the region. Tree preservation and a focus on native plant species throughout town have been beneficial to the environment in Matthews. Matthews' walkable neighborhoods and an emphasis on connectivity have reduced dependency on cars.

Objective 1: Reduce the Town’s carbon footprint.

- Initiative 1.1: Identify ways to reduce dependency on cars.
- Initiative 1.2: Continue focus on connectivity and walkable neighborhoods.
- Initiative 1.3: Incorporate innovative environmental practices into development and maintenance of Town parks and facilities.
- Initiative 1.4: Consider converting Town vehicles and equipment to electric.
- Initiative 1.5: Consider a more formalized work from home policy for Town staff to reduce car trips.

Objective 2: Preserve and beautify the landscape in order to make Matthews a cleaner, greener, and more aesthetically pleasing community.

- Initiative 2.1: Continue to encourage use of native plants species throughout town.
- Initiative 2.2: Hold regular invasive plant removal events.
- Initiative 2.3: Evaluate current tree preservation efforts and requirements.
- Initiative 2.4: Promote tree planting programs to increase tree canopy.

Measuring Progress:

- Number of invasive plant removal events and amount of material removed.
- Established new environmental practices in maintenance of Town parks facilities.
- Increase in Town tree canopy. New partnerships established to promote a healthy, sustainable Matthews.
Objective 3: Lead the way in environmental best practices in the region.

- Initiative 3.1: Identify opportunities for the Board of Commissioners to implement new policies or programs that benefit the environment.
- Initiative 3.2: Determine locations for electric car charging stations.
- Initiative 3.3: Deter the addition of drive-thru service to decrease the number of idling cars.
- Initiative 3.4: Continue discussions with CATS about micro-transit service within Matthews.

Objective 4: Partner to provide educational opportunities that promote a healthy, sustainable Matthews.

- Initiative 4.1: Educate citizens about the use of e-scooters.
- Initiative 4.2: Identify opportunities to promote/educate citizens on the benefits of walking. (Example: A walking school bus promotion when the Sam Newell multi-use path is completed).

Measuring Progress:

- Increase in connections/multi-use paths/greenways in Matthews.
- Number of e-scooter trips.
- Decrease in vehicle miles saved through work from home, etc. policies.
- Increase in miles of sidewalk.