



## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Fellow Board of Commissioners

FROM: Commissioner Kay Cashion

DATE: November 15, 2012

SUBJECT: 2012 Citizens Academy SWOT Analysis

---

The 2012 Citizens Academy participants committed their time and efforts during the past 10-weeks, most came to class after working full-time jobs. The participants spent time learning more about County Government and all the services Guilford County provide; they also worked on budgeting exercises and strategic planning (which included completing a SWOT Analysis and ranking the County's current strategic priorities).

To that end, the following are the major Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats the Citizens Academy participants identified; additional detail can be found on the attached documents.

### **Strengths**

Airport and interstate system-Transportation  
NC

Hub for multiple institutions for higher  
learning-Rich in High Learning(i.e. Colleges)  
Higher Education facilities in place( UNCG,  
A&T, HPU) and a world class Technical  
College-GTCC

Guilford County continues to provide quality  
service to citizens despite budget cuts; hiring  
freezes and staff turnover. Effective and  
efficient service delivery.

### **Opportunities**

Room to attract business with lower taxes

Improve secondary education

### **Weaknesses**

Debt

Potential for significant turnover in leadership  
positions

High tax rate that detracts from businesses  
locating to Guilford County.

### **Threats**

Current economic conditions and affect on  
citizens

Aging population, those over 65 are projected  
to increase by 50% in the next 15 years

Thank you again for your support of this endeavor. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

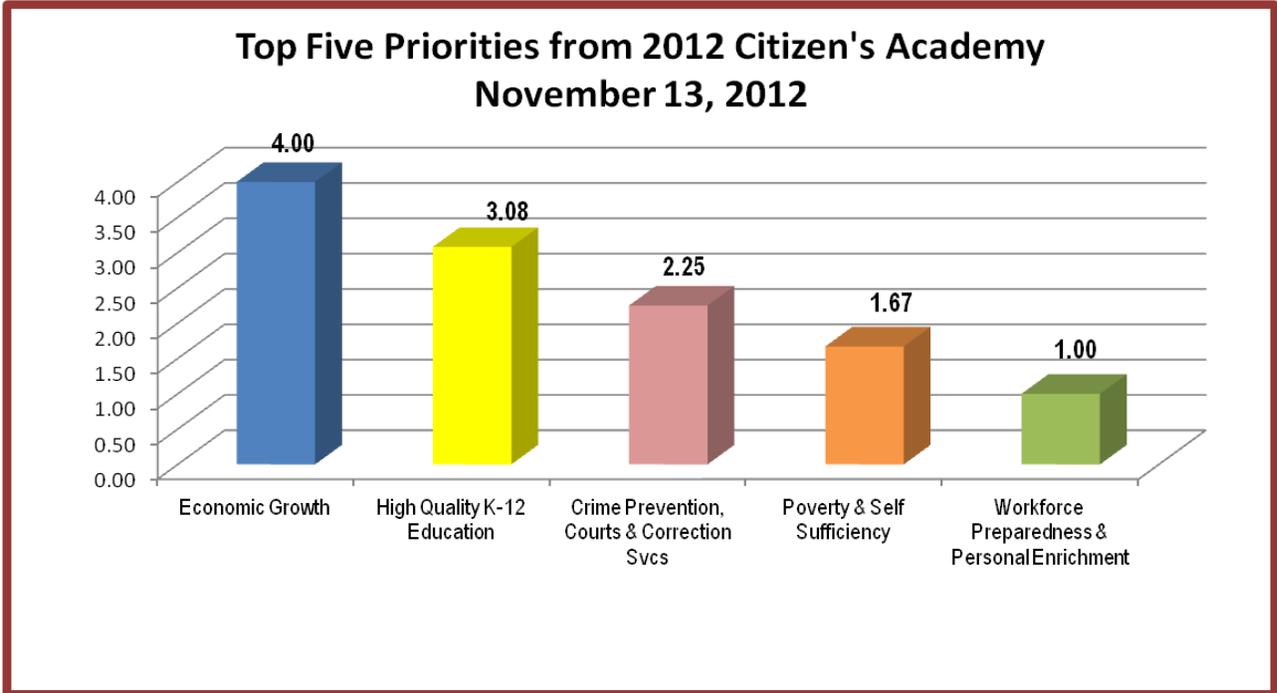
Attachments

**STRATEGIC PLANNING SWOT  
ANALYSIS  
SMART GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

**S**pecific  
**M**easurable  
**A**chievable  
**R**esults-Oriented  
**T**ime Oriented

Completed by: 2012 Citizens Academy Participants

<b>Top Five Priorities</b>		
<b>Commissioners' January 2012 Ranking</b>	<b>May 2011 Public Survey</b>	<b>Last Years' Academy Participants</b>
Economic Growth	High Quality K-12 Education	Economic Growth
High Quality K-12 Education	Poverty & Self-Sufficiency	Poverty & Self-Sufficiency
Prevention/Emergency Response	Economic Growth	High Quality K-12 Education
Crime Prevention, Courts & Correction Services	Crime Prevention, Courts, Correction Services	Crime Prevention, Courts, Correction Services
School Readiness & Youth Development	School Readiness & Youth Development	Prevention/Emergency Response



## 2012 Citizens' Academy Participants SWOT Analysis

### Strengths

1. Major Airport and interstate system-Transportation Hub to NC.
2. Hub for multiple institutions for higher learning-Rich in High Learning (i.e. Colleges) Higher Education facilities in place (UNCG, A&T, HPU) and a world class Technical College-GTCC.
3. Guilford County continues to provide quality service to citizens despite budget cuts; hiring freezes and staff turnover. Effective and efficient service delivery.

### Associated SMART Goals:

1. Attract at least 5 Fortune 500 companies of diverse industries to establish significant operations in Guilford County by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 by promoting our airport and interstate transportation systems.
2. By working with our local colleges and universities, identify, develop and implement state of the art, cutting edge job training curriculum(s) that will be used to support local, national and international businesses by 2014.

### Associated SMART Objectives:

1. By 4-1-13, form an Economic Development team that consists of leaders from the transportation industries, institutions of higher learning, local government(s), and leaders of key local business.  
  
By 7-1-13, empower the team to both develop strategies and benchmark goals that will be used to determine progress towards meeting the above two SMART goals.
2. By 7-1-13, develop a survey that can be used periodically both internally by the Economic Development team and externally by key stakeholders to ensure that progress is being made towards achieving the established SMART goals.
3. Interview BB&T and other firms that expanded in Guilford County without incentives. Incorporate into above evaluation.

## 2012 Citizens' Academy Participants SWOT Analysis

### **Weaknesses**

1. Debt
2. Potential for significant turnover in leadership positions due to fact many managers are eligible for retirement-Shrinking Pool. County will lose a lot of high level managerial employees in the next 5-10 yrs.
3. High tax rate that detracts from businesses locating to Guilford County.

### **Associated SMART Goals:**

1. Develop a long term capital budget that ensures an appropriate level of debt is used to finance growth/replace obsolete equipment/facilities by 7-1-13.
2. Develop succession plans for all departments facing the turnover of leadership by 7-1-14.
3. Identify whether or not the current or and increased tax rate would be a deterrent to business investment in Guilford County by 7-1-13.
4. Recalculate School population Projections after Charter School Increase. Cancel Bonds for schools not needed 1/1/13.

### **Associated SMART Objectives:**

1. Form a team of both current and if possible retired department heads as well as enlist local colleges to explore alternative funding methodologies/sharing of local/regional services to reduce the need for borrowing to support the long term capital investment plan for Guilford County by 1-1-13.
2. By 4-1-13, HR needs to identify those department heads who plan to retire over the next 5 years.

By 7-1-13, HR, (with the assistance of the current department heads) needs to conduct strengths/needs assessment of internal staff to determine which staff has the capability of filling those positions.

By 10-1-13, HR needs to identify where external candidates would be needed as well as ensure that each internal staff identified has a personal development plan in place to help build the skills needed to fill vacancies created by retirement.

3. By 7-1-13, with the help of local colleges and universities, survey business leaders who have established businesses in Guilford County, business leaders who are considering relocating a business to Guilford County, business leaders who relocated a business out of Guilford County and those that considered relocating to Guilford County but chose to go elsewhere regarding the current tax rate.

## 2012 Citizens' Academy Participants SWOT Analysis

### **Opportunities**

1. Room to attract business with lower taxes
2. Improve secondary education

### **Associated SMART Goals:**

1. Reduce property taxes by 1-2% over 5 years, encourage business development and growth within Guilford County.
2. Reduce the number of remedial credits by 5-10% which is required of Guilford County School graduates upon enrollment into GTCC.

### **Associated SMART Objectives:**

1. By 7-1-13, with the help of local colleges and universities, survey business leaders who have:
  - Established businesses in Guilford County,
  - Considered relocating a business to Guilford County,
  - Relocated a business out of Guilford County,
  - Considered relocating to Guilford County, but chose to go elsewhere regarding the current tax rate

By 10-1-13 include multiple "what if" analysis of what happens to county revenue over the next 5 years if tax rates are reduced.

2. By 4-1-13, determine what impact reducing the number of remedial credits would have on enrollment and revenue generated by GTCC as well as the impact on the quality of courses being offered.

By 6-1-13, make recommendations as to whether this should be done based upon above findings.

## 2012 Citizens' Academy Participants SWOT Analysis

### THREATS

1. Current economic conditions and cost/concessions needed at times to attract outside investments.  
Rising economic development in surrounding counties which leads Guilford County citizens opting to work or relocate to other counties such as Forsyth, Wake and Mecklenburg.
2. Aging population, those over 65 are projected to increase by 50% in the next 15 years.

### Associated SMART Goals:

1. Create an Executive Level NGO-Economic Advisory Authority to reduce intra-county competition for business development and position Guilford County to compete against other regions for economic development.
2. Create a Senior Citizen Job bank.

### Associated SMART Objectives:

1. (Same as SMART Goal for strengths) By 4-1-13, form an Economic Development team that consists of leaders from the transportation industries, institutions of higher learning, local government(s), and leaders of key local business.  
  
By 7-1-13, empower the team to both develop strategies and benchmark goals that will be used to determine progress towards meeting the above two SMART goals.
2. By 4-1-13, enlist help from local colleges and Universities to see if this has been done elsewhere in the US and how successful it has been.  
  
By 7-1-13, develop strategy on how to enlist the senior citizens from the community to sign-up for this effort.
3. Stop the competition that is occurring between cities within the county.
  - Allow cities and counties to be united and work for a common good.
  - Devise methods to better achieve an understanding of the returns on the incentives given, a \$ for \$ understanding.
4. Make use of the experience of the vast number of retired executives that live in Guilford County.
  - Achieve more citizen involvement
  - Encourage citizens to help each other