

# Supporting the Regional Vision

## Engaging Communities in Transit Development and Sustainability Planning



New Partners for Smart Growth – February 3, 2011

# Regional Transit Development Plan Stakeholder Involvement

- ▶ Activities to educate, inform, solicit input and build consensus with community stakeholders:
  - Partners team meetings
  - Stakeholder interviews
  - Project website
  - Social media
  - Online survey
  - Charrettes/  
Workshops



# Regional Transit Development Plan Stakeholder Interviews

- ▶ Over 100 interviews
- ▶ 50 Triad agencies/organizations
- ▶ Key issues:
  - Transit and transportation
  - Economic development
  - Social and public services
  - Community development
  - Land use
  - Environmental
  - Quality of life





# Regional Transit Development Plan

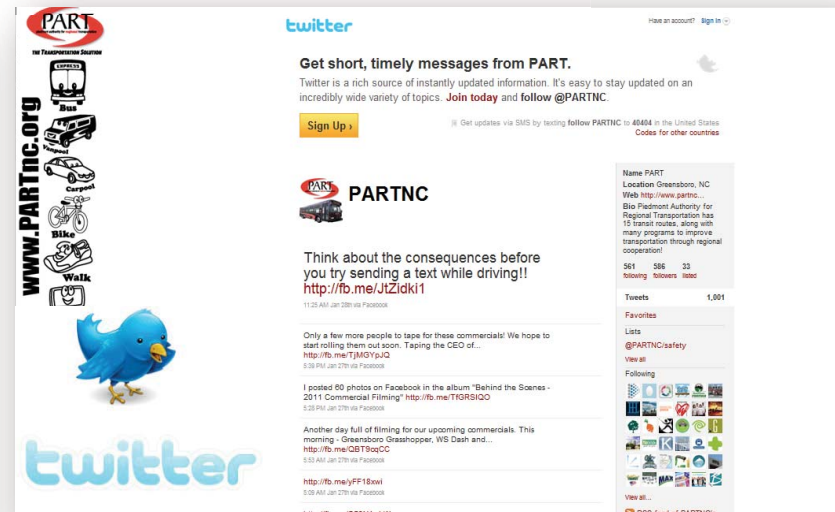
## Creating Awareness

- ▶ Project website
  - Survey
  - Materials
  - Announcements
  - Social media
- ▶ Project fact sheet
  - Inform/educate
  - Create awareness
  - Encourage participation



# Regional Transit Development Plan

## Social media – Planning in real-time



THE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTION

# Regional Transit Development Plan: Vision, values and transit: online survey

- ▶ Electronic survey for riders and non-riders
- ▶ Sent to listservs and contacts by email
- ▶ Announced at community events
- ▶ Linked to PART home page and project site



ACTA ACTS GTO HI TRIA PART RCATS TAMS WSTA YVEDI

## Regional Transit Development Plan

JOINING OUR FUTURE — THE TIME IS NOW

ALABAMA DADE DAVENPORT FORTY EIGHT HAWAII ILLINOIS INDIANA IOWA KANSAS KENTUCKY LOUISIANA MISSISSIPPI MISSOURI NEBRASKA NEVADA NEW JERSEY NEW YORK NORTH CAROLINA NORTH DAKOTA OHIO OKLAHOMA OREGON SOUTH CAROLINA SOUTH DAKOTA TEXAS VIRGINIA WISCONSIN WYOMING

### The Time is Now!

*Developing a regional transportation solution*

**What is the Regional Transit Development Plan (RTDP)?**  
A study to identify issues and opportunities related to existing and future transit services in the Piedmont Triad.

**How can I participate?**  
The Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART) is seeking your input to better understand the long-term vision for transit in the Piedmont Triad.

**Take the PART Survey!**  
Help shape the future of transit services in the Piedmont Triad.  
Visit [www.partnc.org/rtdp.html](http://www.partnc.org/rtdp.html) and take the online survey which will be available by April 14th.

**Visit [www.partnc.org/rtdp.html](http://www.partnc.org/rtdp.html)**

PART's mission is to enhance the quality of all forms of transportation for each of our citizens through efficient use and protection of our natural, economic and human resources.

PART's programs include the PART Express, transportation demand management, Triad Commute Challenge, Triad Air Awareness, regional transportation planning efforts and safety awareness. Learn more at [www.partnc.org](http://www.partnc.org).

**PART**  
Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation  
7800 Airport Center Drive, Suite 103  
Greensboro, NC 27409  
E-mail: [markk@partnc.org](mailto:markk@partnc.org)  
Direct: 336.235.4651

**RTDP Facts & Figures**

- ▶ The Piedmont Triad's population is expected to grow by 15 percent over the next 10 years reaching 1.8 million people by 2020. By 2030, it is expected to top 2 million.
- ▶ The purpose of the RTDP is to obtain feedback from the region's residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to identify ways to improve existing transit services and address the challenges of future growth and its impact on the transportation system. A balance between economic development and environmental stewardship is sought.
- ▶ The RTDP will examine the benefits that transit provides and identify how they meet current and future challenges faced by the region. These benefits include: supporting economic development, protecting the environment, helping establish the Piedmont Triad as a place of distinction, and providing mobility choices.
- ▶ The RTDP will include three related studies:
  1. a transit development plan;
  2. a strategic corridors plan; and
  3. a financial plan.All of these plans will serve as a blueprint for regional transportation efforts over the next 10 to 15 years.
- ▶ PART is coordinating with eight other transit systems and 10 counties to address growth and congestion in the Piedmont Triad region.
- ▶ The RTDP should be complete in summer 2010.

**Contact Information:**  
Mark E. Kirstner, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner  
Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation  
7800 Airport Center Drive, Suite 103  
Greensboro, NC 27409  
E-mail: [markk@partnc.org](mailto:markk@partnc.org)  
Direct: 336.235.4651

**PART**  
Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation

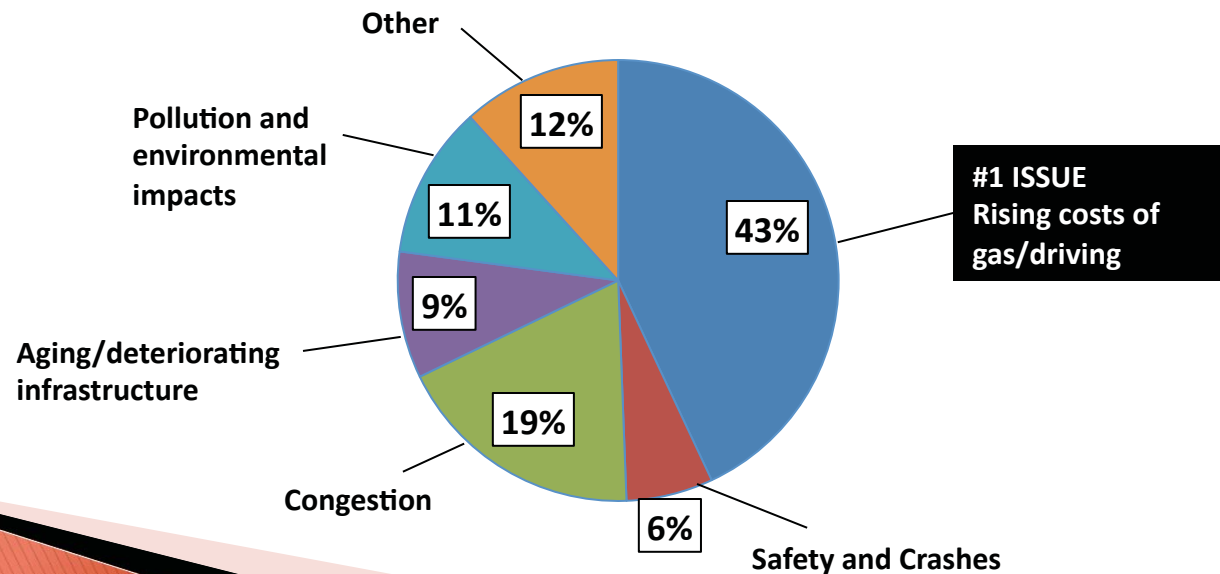
Visit us on the Web: [www.partnc.org/rtdp.html](http://www.partnc.org/rtdp.html)



# Regional Transit Development Plan online survey .....and the results are in

- ▶ 593 respondents
- ▶ 79.8% non-riders
- ▶ Strong market for potential transit users
- ▶ Majority of participants ages 35–64 – emphasis on commuting

Top Transportation Concerns



# Regional Transit Development Plan

## Other stakeholder outreach

- ▶ Partners team meetings
- ▶ Locals officials briefings
- ▶ PART board updates
- ▶ Stakeholder charrettes
- ▶ Public meetings
- ▶ Promotion at fairs, festivals and events





# Regional Transit Development Plan

## How community input shaped the plan

- ▶ Creates a “family” of routes
  - Addresses transit dependent and choice riders
  - Expands coverage area
  - Enhances connections among all routes



# Regional Transit Development Plan: How community input shaped the plan

- ▶ New capital facilities
  - Local stop improvements
  - More transit centers and park and ride lots
- ▶ New amenities
  - Sidewalks and bike paths
  - Shelters



# RTDP Lessons Learned

- ▶ Conduct early and continuous involvement
- ▶ Build on ongoing dialogue
- ▶ Utilize collaborative teams
- ▶ Use multi-faceted strategies and tools
- ▶ Go to where the people are
- ▶ Be accountable
- ▶ Tailor and adapt

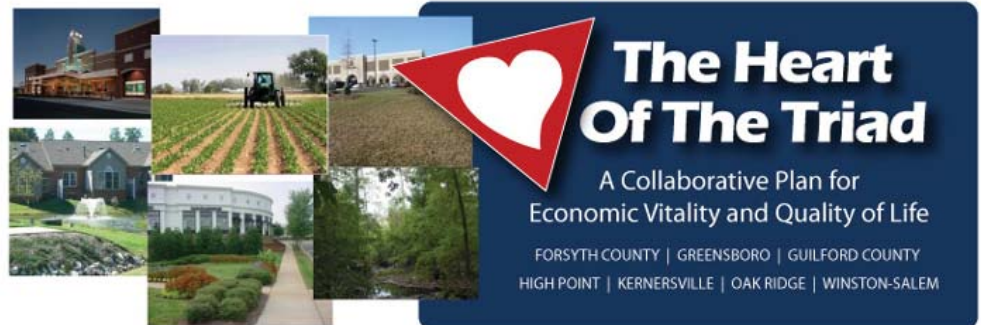




# The Heart of the Triad

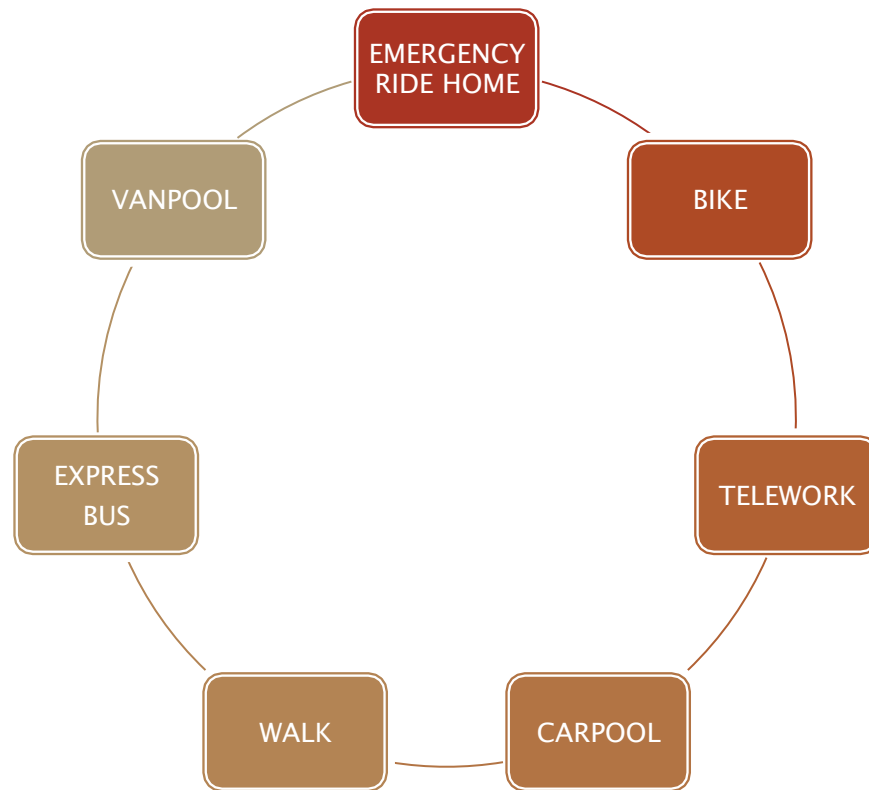
## Land use and transportation study

- ▶ Collaborative master plan
- ▶ 7,500-acre coverage area across two counties
- ▶ Plan adopted in June 2010
- ▶ Stakeholder engagement:
  - Strategic planning committee
  - Stakeholder advisory committee
  - Heart News newsletter
  - Website
  - Public meetings
  - Planning charrette



# Transportation Demand Management

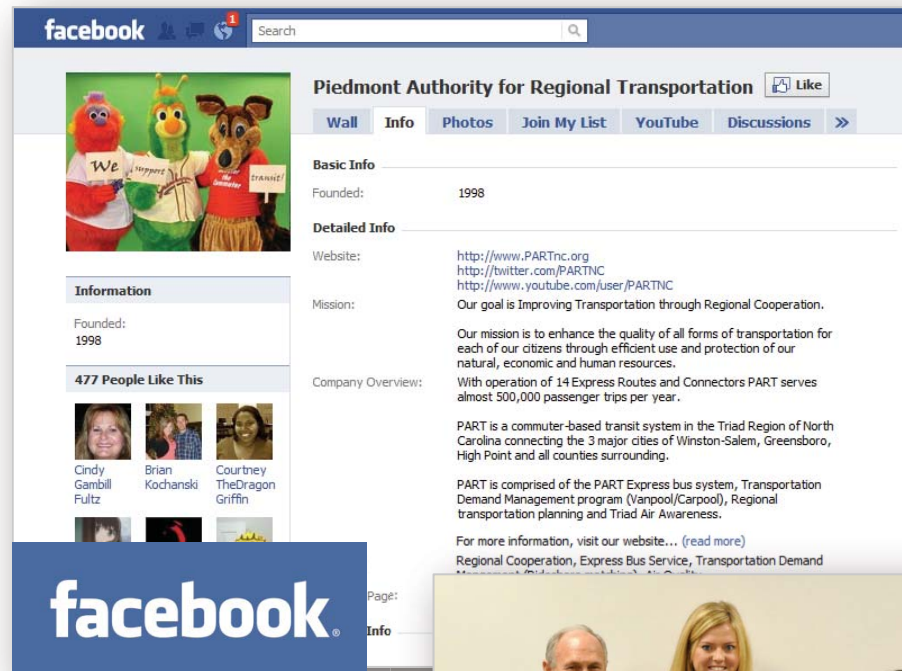
## A multi-prong outreach strategy



- ▶ Customer Satisfaction Survey
- ▶ Triad Commute Challenge
- ▶ Joint venture programs with major employers
- ▶ Share the Ride NC



# Strategies: Ongoing Use of Social Media Becoming “friends” with PART



## First Place

Social Networking:  
“PART Social Media,”  
Piedmont Authority  
for Regional Transit,  
Greensboro, NC  
(Grand Award)



Group 1: Public transportation  
systems with four million or fewer  
passenger trips annually





# Strategies for Effective Outreach

- ▶ Use stakeholder involvement plans
- ▶ Set evaluation measures
- ▶ Determine community context
- ▶ Use key leader/stakeholder group interviews
- ▶ Leverage web-based technologies
- ▶ Employ dynamic meeting approaches
- ▶ Target local and regional awareness
- ▶ Emphasize grassroots outreach
- ▶ Coordinate proactively with the media
- ▶ Commit to the process

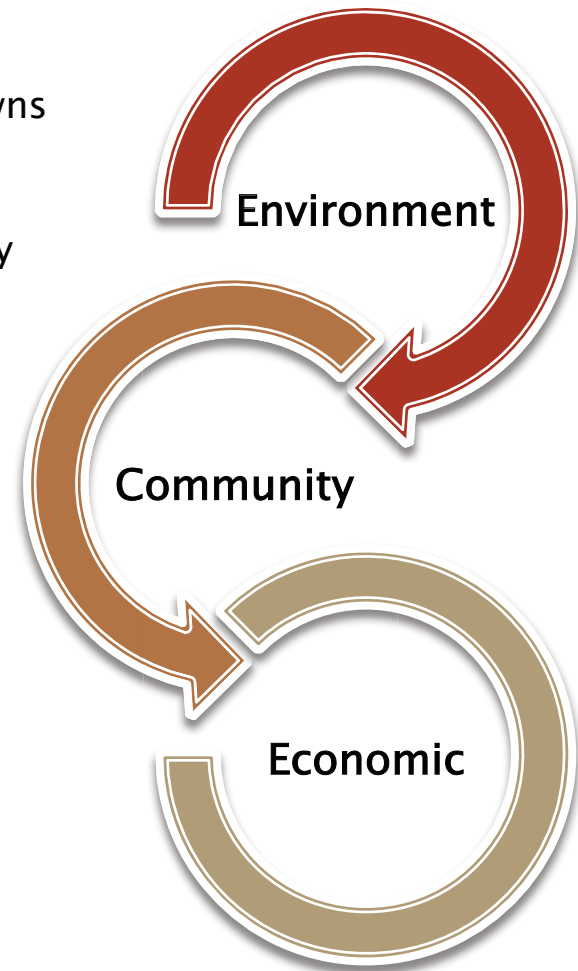
# Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Project

- ▶ US Dept of Housing and Urban Development grant awarded in October 2010
- ▶ Regional plan to build economic competitiveness
- ▶ Connect housing with good jobs, quality schools and transportation



# Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Project – TBL


- ▶ **Protect natural resources**
  - Provide green infrastructure that binds cities and towns
  - Improve air quality
  - Manage greenhouse gas emissions
  - Reduce energy consumption/foreign fuel dependency
- ▶ **Promote community goals**
  - Encourage compact and walkable communities
  - Provide access to affordable housing
  - Strengthen regional partnerships
  - Promote social equity
  - Meet the needs of anticipated demographic changes
- ▶ **Support economic development**
  - Expand employment opportunities
  - Attract employers to along transit lines and centers
  - Lower transportation costs





# Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Project

- ▶ Public engagement approach
  - Accessible
  - Open and transparent
  - Involvement of hard-to-reach populations
  - Place-based and citizen-based leadership



## Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Project

On October 14th the Piedmont Triad was awarded \$1.6 Million from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The funds will be used to create a regional plan intended to build economic competitiveness by connecting housing with good jobs, quality schools and transportation.

### Why the Piedmont Triad?

To distinguish the Piedmont Triad from other areas throughout the country the following issues related to Regional Sustainability were identified:

- ⑥ Job loss - Economic Hardship
- ⑥ Low residential densities, weak performing town centers and downtowns, disconnected street network - Severe sprawl and farmland loss
- ⑥ 4% of regions households spend 45% of income on housing and transportation - Affordability Gap
- ⑥ 30% of housing stock in rural counties consist of manufactured housing - Lack of housing choices for lower-income residents
- ⑥ 95% of region's trips were made by automobile - Addicted to automobiles
- ⑥ Sedentary auto-oriented lifestyle - Health Issues
- ⑥ Rapid demographic shift and increasing diversity - Mixed residential segregation
- ⑥ Abandoned manufacturing plants and site ready for redevelopment - Brownfields
- ⑥ Region's 20 institutions of higher education - Emerging opportunities

### Elements of Sustainability

Sustainability is the act of balancing the environment, community and economic needs of the built and natural environment for present and future generations.

#### Environment


- ⑥ Defining the limits of communities giving a true sense of urban and rural settings;
- ⑥ Taking advantage of abandoned mill sites and brownfields;
- ⑥ Providing the green infrastructure that binds cities and towns, offering natural resource functions such as aquifer recharge and flood protection;
- ⑥ Being a component of the local tourism and agricultural economy
- ⑥ Managing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing energy consumption.

#### Community

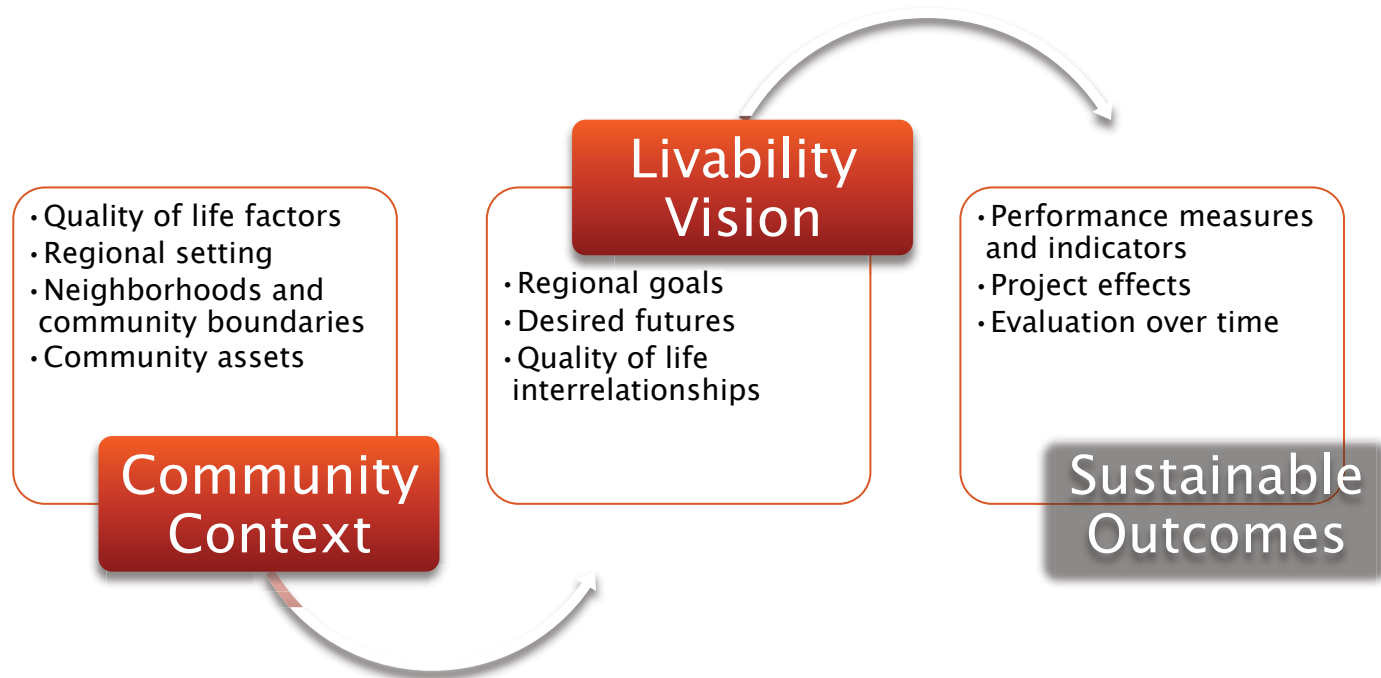
- ⑥ Promoting compact, walkable development featuring infill and community redevelopment to stress compact patterns and minimize pressure on loss of agricultural lands;
- ⑥ Fostering social equity in housing, employment and transportation choices;
- ⑥ Meeting the needs for anticipated demographic changes;
- ⑥ Supporting energy efficiency and lowering greenhouse gas emissions; and
- ⑥ Reducing the need for automobiles for short trips.

#### Economy

- ⑥ Expanding employment opportunities to meet 21st Century needs;
- ⑥ Lowering the cost of housing and transportation for low income residents by locating employment centers proximate to transit lines; and
- ⑥ Continuing to pursue economic development clusters that yield more jobs with higher wages



# Best Practices: A Framework for Community Sustainability and Quality of Life



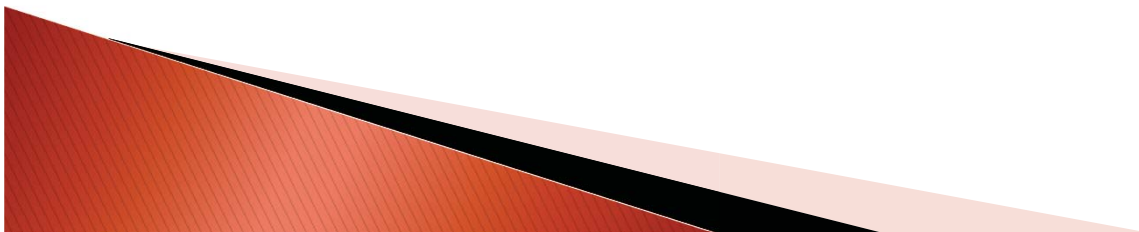
# Sustainable Communities: A Few Key Questions

- ▶ **Determining Context**
  - What are the relationships between the key community quality of life issues?
  - How do these elements relate to community vision and regional/plan goals?
  
- ▶ **Assessing Effects**
  - How are various quality of life elements affected?
  - What tools can be used to address qualitative considerations?
  - How do effects relate to each other and to overall community/regional vision?



# Sustainable Communities: A Few Key Questions

- ▶ Developing Indicators & Measures
  - What tells us we are moving towards our goals?
  - How do we measure that?
  
- ▶ Sustainable Solutions
  - Do solutions reflect the larger community vision/framework?
  - Do they support the goals over time?
  - When will we assess progress? update the plan?



# Contact Information

Ann Steedly, PE  
Chief Operations Officer  
Planning Communities, LLC  
[asteedly@planningcommunities.com](mailto:asteedly@planningcommunities.com)  
(919) 848-5959

