

What is in this report and why

The N.C. Progress Board. The Progress Board was created by the General Assembly in 1995, upon the recommendation of the Commission for a Competitive North Carolina. Our mission is to help the state's leaders and citizens pause, reflect, take stock and keep score, based upon a long-term view of what the state is to become, together with what it needs. That means setting milestones, checking progress, reporting data, recommending course corrections, and considering and reporting imaginative solutions to jumpstart change.

The Progress Board is chaired by the Governor. It is made up of 23 members appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, President Pro Tem of the Senate, and the Board itself to represent a cross-section of the state. Initially housed in the Department of Administration, the Board now is attached administratively to the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina system.

Organizing NC 20/20 findings and conclusions. To make sense of the huge volume of data that defines us and our state, we had to impose a structure that would suggest a manageable set of visions, goals and measures for North Carolina in the year 2020. We imposed some tough limits on the numbers of goals and measures. For each imperative (i.e., issue area), we have only four or five goals, and about as many measures. (We found we could only work with so many "puzzle pieces/building blocks" at once!) Still, you may see others that just cannot be left out. Tell us about your ideas; this business of setting strategic goals is for all North Carolinians.

Setting Goals, Monitoring Progress. If we are to create a "futures" map for the state, the first step is to set out vision statements with strategic goals, identify targets and measures, and monitor the state's progress toward achieving them. You will be seeing these terms repeatedly in the pages that follow, so let us define them up front.

- **Vision:** a special, unusual foresight that represents our highest and best expectations for one of the eight issue areas, at a future time (the year 2020).

Example: All families and children are healthy and live in safe and vibrant communities.

- **Goal:** a "word picture" of where we want to be, and the conditions or standards that have to be in place, i.e., sketching out what we mean by making our economy, our communities and our people and their lives "better."

Example: North Carolinians will have adequate and affordable housing options.

- **Measure:** a quantitative indicator of progress toward the target.

Example: Percentage of households paying more than 30% of their income for housing.

- **Target:** a measurable milestone of where the state must be along the timeline toward 2020 to achieve the goal

Example: The proportion of North Carolina renters paying 30% of their income or more in rent will decline to 25%. The proportion of homeowners with housing expenses exceeding 30% of income will decline to 13%.

Reporting to North Carolinians. A key role of the Board is to report the results of its research and analysis in ways that are useful to North Carolinians and North Carolina institutions. Our first report, issued in 1997, covered four of the eight imperatives defined by the Competitiveness Commission: A Prosperous Economy, Quality Education for All, Sustainable Environment and Healthy Children and Families. With this 2001 report, we are updating the first four areas and fleshing out the rest: Safe and Vibrant Communities, A High Performance Workforce, 21st Century Infrastructure and Accountable Government/Active Citizenship.

The report you are holding in your hands is a summary of our work over the last year. Reading the narrative in this report, we hope you will reflect on the imperatives, the visions, goals, etc., of each week and form your own opinion, then chart your own direction for helping us meet our targets.

What is in this report? This report contains all the vision statements, goals, and measures for the eight imperatives, and summaries of our findings about where we are today. The complete report narrative is available on our website, www.thepressboard.org. We encourage you to bookmark the site for future reference. The text is searchable and there is an index.

The citizen's role. North Carolina needs everyone to push around these ideas and findings like puzzle pieces; like building blocks. We think the chances are very good that new ways to look at old problems will come from people like you.

We talked with several hundred North Carolinians in interviews, listening sessions and other public meetings to get their sense of where North Carolina is, and where we should be headed. Now it's your turn.

Ask yourself these questions: Have we spelled out the right vision? Do the goals, measures, and targets make sense? Is this where I *really* want North Carolina to be in the year 2020?

Providing Policy Education. We are undertaking a wide range of activities to reach out to the state's constituents, including elected officials, public executives, non-profit organizations, business leaders, community leaders, the media and general public.

With this report completed, we intend to go on a "listening tour" of North Carolina to get folks' opinions about its contents. We intend to conduct some opinion surveys, hold some focus group meetings, and consistent with our statutory provisions, we intend to work on some policy analyses and recommendations and conduct educational programs for public officials. In particular, we hope to engage the non-profit community of North Carolina in learning more about what we've found, and solicit their interest.

Our goal is to become one of the "go-to" organizations for information on North Carolina - especially about the future of North Carolina.

All of our lives we've heard the saying 'hindsight is 20/20'. It's time to make *foresight 20/20!*