

A photograph of a blue kayak floating on a calm lake at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, with the sun low on the horizon. The water reflects the colors of the sky. In the background, there are dark silhouettes of trees and land. The kayak is in the foreground, slightly to the right, and its reflection is visible in the water.

One Gaston 2040 Winter Update 2024

ONE GASTON 2040: A PLACE WHERE **EVERYONE** THRIVES



Dear One Gaston 2040 Supporter,

We are excited to share a few updates on One Gaston 2040! The five focus area teams are hard at work planning the future of Gaston County. They are making progress addressing food insecurity, transportation, county pride, and more!

We are also very excited to announce Gaston Together is officially the lead organization for One Gaston 2040. This is an honor for Gaston Together and also a benefit to you. Because Gaston Together is a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit, donations to One Gaston 2040 are now tax deductible! Donations you send to Gaston Together, and designate for One Gaston 2040, can be deducted from your taxes*.

We are pursuing multiple funding opportunities and are working hard to continue to move One Gaston 2040 forward. In the spirit of continued progress, we have revamped the One Gaston 2040 website. The new website launched in November and is a partner site to the Gaston Community Explorer Data Hub.

We appreciate your continued support and look forward to giving you more updates in the future. We could not make Gaston County "a place where everyone thrives" without you!

Sincerely,

Gaston Together

Gaston Together



GASTONTOGETHER.ORG

Gaston Together is the lead organization for One Gaston 2040. We work in partnership with the Gaston County government on One Gaston 2040 to fulfil the county vision.

Gaston Together a 501 (c)(3) not for profit organization, has not provided any goods or services, in whole or in part, to you in consideration for this contribution. EIN#56-2048064

*Subject to IRS regulations

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU QUICKFACTS ABOUT GASTON COUNTY, NC

QuickFacts provides statistics for all states, counties, and for cities and towns with a population of 5,000 or more.

237,242

July 1, 2023 Total
Population Estimates

103,212

2023 Total Housing Units

\$62,628

2022 Median Household
Income

640.7

2020 Population per
Square Mile

4,580

2022 Total Employer
Establishments

26.5

2022 Mean Travel to
Work in Minutes

GASTON COMMUNITY EXPLORER

The Gaston Community Explorer is a Community Data Portal. Visit the Gaston Community Explorer to find data on Gaston County. Explore different jurisdictions, categories, and mapping tools to find data on Gaston County.

GASTON COMMUNITY EXPLORER DATA CATEGORIES



Population



Housing



Economy



Health



Transportation



Education



Environment



Social Equity



Public Safety



Elections



Parks & Recreation



Tourism Development

ONE GASTON 2040 FOCUS AREAS

ONE GASTON CARES

We are healthy in mind, body and spirit, and our communities work together for quality of life for all.

OBJECTIVES

- Collaborate and build coalitions
- Welcome and value diversity
- Promote health and wellness in mind, body and spirit

ONE GASTON CONNECTS

We have convenient access to the internet, and the ability to get around by walking, biking, driving, and using public transit.

OBJECTIVES

- Improve mobility, connectivity, and accessibility
- Enable broadband internet access

ONE GASTON WORKS

We have great job and career opportunities, and we are prepared and equipped to succeed.

OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen childcare and early childhood education
- Ready students for college and careers
- Strengthen targeted economic development

ONE GASTON GROWS

We achieve quality growth and economic success by using our land and resources wisely.

OBJECTIVES

- Maximize housing options
- Provide adequate infrastructure
- Retain character and natural amenities

ONE GASTON SHINES

We will have a sense of pride about all Gaston County has to offer.

OBJECTIVES

- Generate pride and positive perceptions
- Leverage arts and culture

ONE GASTON CARES

The Cares team is working to address food insecurity and access in the County. We developed a Charitable Food Collaborative where various groups meet to discuss community needs and ways to work together. In the spirit of collaboration, we are facilitating the recreation of a Food Policy Council for Gaston County.

Looking towards the future, the Cares team is starting work on programs for 2025. We are planning an educational summit for the Charitable Food Collaborative and starting work on the 2025 community health assessment. Members of the team will guide the work on creating the assessment and will participate in focus groups to aid in its creation.

FAMILY HIKE CROWDERS MOUNTAIN STATE PARK VIA GOGASTON.ORG

ONE GASTON CONNECTS



PHOTO BY DIGIDREAMGRAFIX FROM GETTY IMAGES

The Connects team has been working to understand opportunities that can advance our work addressing community transportation and technology needs. We have focused on concerns around disruption and disaster, key cross-jurisdictional projects, and digital divides and needs.

We have identified multiple areas that are opportunities for addressing these needs in the County: downtowns, housing, trails, broadband, and mobility options (incl. Micro Transit).

More specifically, we are looking at:

- A Comprehensive Transportation Plan;
- Regional Transportation Demand Management
 - Micro Transit
- Coordination with the “Grows” Focus Area
 - Local Carolina Thread Trail Initiatives
- Downtowns, Housing, Trails, Broadband, Mobility Options (incl. Micro Transit)
- Mobility and Broadband initiatives with 2025 actions upcoming
 - Augment County resiliency through transportation & technology

ONE GASTON **WORKS**

The Works team is focusing on creating an economic development plan. They are utilizing information from other communities to aid in the plan's development. Specifically, they are looking at Lynchburg, Virginia's economic development plan, as an example.

The team is also meeting with organizations throughout the County to establish relationships and identify common goals, including Gaston College, Belmont Abbey College, Goodwill, and Gaston County Schools. Finally, the team is working to incorporate the arts into the economic development plan.

HONEY HUNTERS GAME IN GASTONIA VIA GOGASTON.ORG



ONE GASTON GROWS



The Gaston Grows team is working toward sustainable growth and enhanced quality of life in Gaston County by focusing on three key objectives:

- **Maximizing Housing Options:** Expanding access to affordable, workforce, and specialized housing types, such as senior and disability-friendly options, to address the county's evolving housing needs.
- **Providing Adequate Infrastructure:** Enhancing infrastructure with projects like improved roadways, expanded transit options, and inter-municipal connectivity for water and sewer services to support growing communities.
- **Retaining Character and Natural Amenities:** Preserving the unique charm of local downtowns, protecting natural resources, and improving recreational spaces, including parks and trail systems, to balance growth with the area's natural beauty and heritage.

Here are some recent examples of how we're advancing our goals across housing, infrastructure, and community character:

- The Grows and Connects teams held a joint meeting in Ranlo to discuss key focus areas and explore potential synergies between transportation, infrastructure, and development goals.
- The Grows team is actively involved in multiple community initiatives that align with our goals, including:
- Representation on the City of Gastonia Comprehensive Plan, contributing insights to guide the city's growth.
- Leadership roles in downtown business organizations across multiple municipalities, helping to enhance local economic vitality while preserving character.
- Organizing Belmont's roads bond campaign, which aimed to improve connectivity and infrastructure across the area.
- Serving on the City of Gastonia's Affordable Housing Committee to support strategies for expanding housing options for residents across various income levels.

These initiatives illustrate our commitment to advancing One Gaston 2040's vision through collaboration and strategic action across the county.

ONE GASTON **SHINES**

The Shines team is working to promote Gaston County. They created the social media hashtag #gastonshines to encourage conversations and engagement with the County. They are also working on creating One Gaston 2040 merchandise to help spread the word about the vision. We are excited about One Gaston 2040 stickers, pens, mugs, and maybe more! Finally, 2025 will be the inaugural year of One Gaston 2040 week- a week dedicated to celebrating the vision and sharing information throughout the County.

DALLAS LINEBERGER FARM FALL PUMPKINS VIA GOGASTON.ORG



ONE GASTON 2040: A PLACE WHERE **EVERYONE** THRIVES

STAY CONNECTED!

CHECK US OUT ONLINE!

ONE GASTON 2040

onegaston2040.com

GASTON COMMUNITY EXPLORER

<https://one-gaston-2040-data-hub-gcnc-tax-admin.hub.arcgis.com/>



ONE GASTON 2040
STRATEGIC PLANNING GUIDE



GASTON COMMUNITY
EXPLORER

GASTON TOGETHER

gastontgether.org

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GASTON TOGETHER

PHOTO BY RYAN ON UNSPLASH.COM

