

Kickoff Meeting Summary

April 29, 2026

The *Envision Elon* Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee held its kickoff meeting on April 29, 2026 in the Town Council Chambers. The meeting lasted 1.5 hours with a presentation, Smartphone polling activities, and open discussion.

A. Introduction

The Steering Committee and project team introduced themselves. Nate Baker from LOI delivered a PowerPoint presentation introducing the project, background on comprehensive plans, the project timeline, stakeholder groups interviewed, and initial questions to explore for the comprehensive plan project.

B. Smartphone Polling

The LOI team asked Steering Commission members to use their Smartphones for an online polling exercise. Two questions were asked of commissioners and word clouds were created in real time. The following two questions were asked:

1. Type all the words you think best describe Elon today
2. Type all the words you hope to describe Elon in the future

C. Discussion

The LOI team spent the bulk of the meeting on open discussion, with an LOI team member taking notes on a large sticky pad as Steering Committee members discussed three different questions:

1. When the plan process is over and the document is adopted, how should we measure success?
2. What are critical groups to engage in this process?
3. What are the biggest challenges and opportunities in Elon over the next 5, 10, 20 years?

D. Next Steps

A final PowerPoint slide was delivered to the Steering Committee providing next steps in the project, including the first round of communitywide engagement taking place in late summer.

E. Appendix

1. PowerPoint Presentation
2. Mentimeter Results
3. Steering Commission Discussion Notes



Elon, NC Comprehensive Plan – Steering Committee Meeting #1

Elon, NC
April 2026

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Background
3. Approach
4. Discussion
5. Next Steps



The Consultant team



*Project Management, Public Engagement,
Land Use and Zoning, Growth Management,
Transportation, Infrastructure*



Meet the Team!



Nate Baker,
AICP, CNU-A

Project Manager



Santiago Vallejo-
Gutierrez

Project Planner



Fred Lopez,
FAICP

Principal-in-Charge



Marty Boyd

Senior Project Advisor



Sam Schulte

Senior Planner

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A community-driven process and document

- 1. Where are we now?** Analysis of trends & conditions
- 2. Where are we going?** Community vision and goals
- 3. How do we get there?** Policies and implementation actions



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

The highest-level expression of a community's future

1. **Blueprint** for the community's future
2. **Compass** that guides decision-making
3. **Playbook** for capital investments
4. **Messaging tool** articulating the community's vision

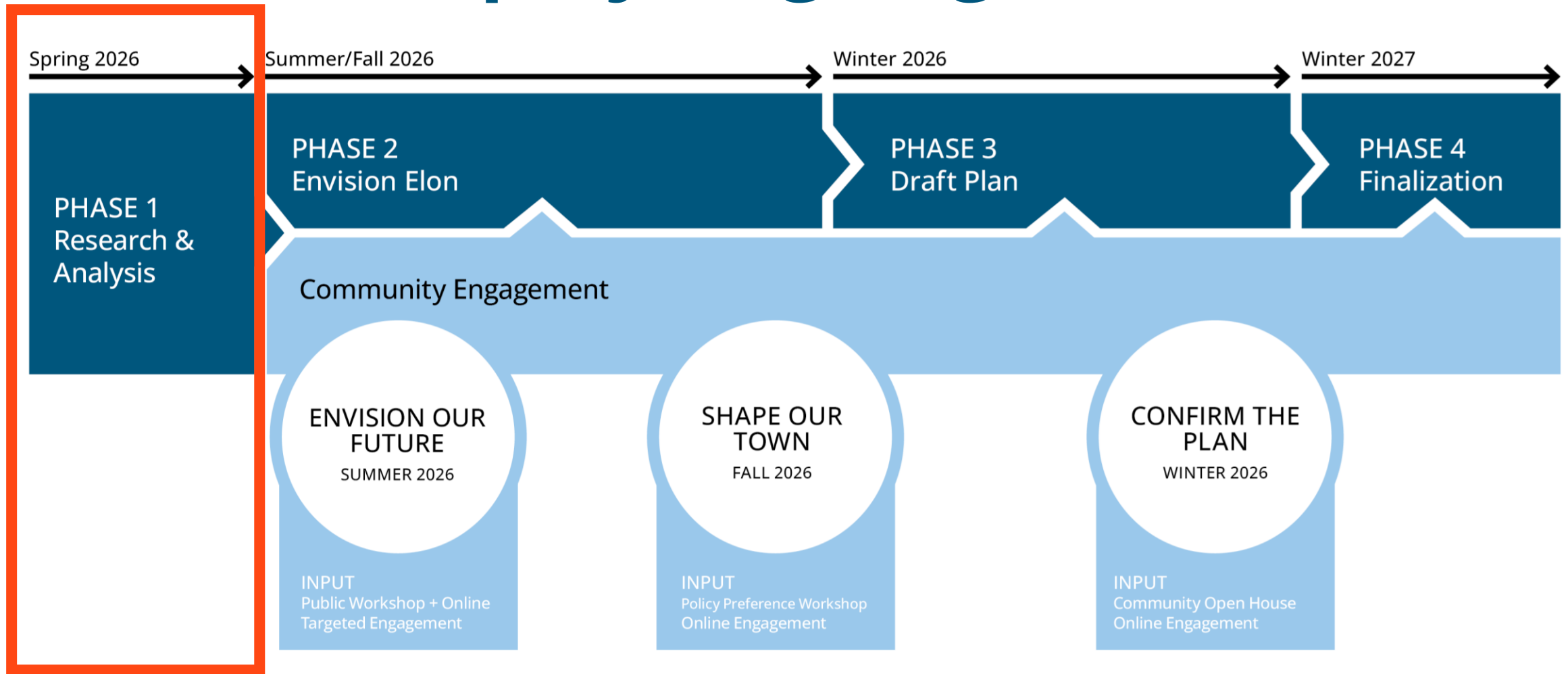
What topics does the plan cover?



Why is the town doing this?

- 1. Revisit the current Comprehensive Plan**
- 2. Engage in genuine communitywide dialogue about the town's future**
- 3. Develop strategies to protect what people love and explore new opportunities**
- 4. Provide development guidance following adoption of the new code**

How is the project going to work?



WE ARE HERE

Groups We're Interviewing Now

1. School System/Education
2. Developers/Real Estate
3. Business Stakeholders
4. Town Staff
5. Town Council
6. Sustainability Committee
7. Transportation
8. Community Organizations
9. Community Leaders
10. Ballpark Community
11. Parks & Rec / Cyclist Community

Roles and Responsibilities

Public

Input and feedback

Planning Board

Process guidance + local experience

Stakeholders

Targeted input

Steering Committee

Input and feedback

Elected officials

Participate, champion, adopt, implement

Town staff

Coordination

Consultant team

Process leadership, expertise

Initial Questions to Explore



The town is growing and changing. How can Elon shape its growth to protect, enhance, and replicate the things it cherishes, while taking advantage of new opportunities?



The town is a great place to live. What does Elon need to improve on quality-of-life factors (housing, economic development, tax base, good schools, low crime)?



Elon is home to diverse age groups. What services should the town plan for? Parks & rec, schools, childcare, age-in-place options, emergency services, entertainment

Discussion Questions

- 1. When the plan process over and the document is adopted, how should we measure success?**
- 2. What are critical groups to engage in this process?**
- 3. What are the biggest challenges and opportunities in Elon over the next 5, 10, 20 years?**

The Planning Continuum



Next Steps

1. Finalize the Project Management Plan
2. Finalize the Project Brand
3. Analyze Key Planning Trends and Influences
4. Prepare First Round of Public Engagement: *Envision Our Future*
 - In-Person Community Workshop For Our Future – Late Summer 2026
 - Conduct online engagement component
5. Use Community Input to Draft Vision and Goals
6. Conduct Second Round of Public Engagement

Type all the words you think best describe Elon today



Type all the words you hope to describe Elon in the future



challenges and opportunities

- where will growth go? How will it be sustained?
- Elementary school close to maxed out how can new families be supported
- housing options
 - public
- greenspace
- infrastructure to sustain growth
- emergency services
- growth should not come at the expense of level of service
- lower enrollment uncertainty
- tax base missing
- smart growth
 - retail, commercial, industrial
- want to attract more job centers
- how to get entrepreneurs to invest in Elon?
- strong diverse economy
 - how to get local economic growth
- fill in gaps in downtown district
- strength of small town feel while still being a college town

Critical Groups and outreach strategy

- Twin Lakes community through life enrichment coordinator
- University through community affairs
- local HOAs
- local turnout is usually low messaging is good engagement still low
- FB, Instagram
- create community ambassador option
- inform people of the importance of feedback
- pop up events, farmers market, movie nights
- meeting in a box kits
- prefer shorter surveys
- people most affected may not be able to participate through in-person events
- 100 people showing up would be a success
- family friendly childrens station sidewalk chalk activity
- make meetings more fluid
- option for smaller group engagement
- PTA group
- water bill mailers
- Elon faculty and staff

Measuring Success

- large number of regular folks participating that don't usually participate
- make plan exist beyond a piece of paper
- use momentum to implement plan
- clear and readable by regular people
- accessible and actionable
- prefer less technical language or summary option
- MAPS
 - online + interactive maps
 - win an award for it
 - easy to interpret
 - public buy in
 - realistic
 - funding strategies
 - proactive instead of reactive
 - avoid making mistakes from past plans
- PTA groups
- water bill matters
- Elon faculty and staff