



ALAMANCE COUNTY

2020 LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN

ADOPTED NOVEMBER 18, 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the many contributors and Alamance County residents who gave their time and talents to make this Land Development Plan possible.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ALAMANCE COUNTY LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN	
INTRODUCTION	5
Purpose.....	5
Process.....	5
Organization	5
Study Area.....	6
Public Involvement	8
Existing Plans	12
EXISTING CONDITIONS	19
Overview	19
Today.....	19
Contents.....	19
History.....	20
Population	22
Demographics	22
Housing	24
Economy.....	25
Agricultural Resources.....	26
Parks and Natural Resources.....	28
Existing Land Use	30
Cost of Services.....	32
Land Supply	32
VISION	37
Refining a Vision for Alamance County.....	37
Purpose Statement.....	38
Goals	38
Introduction to Scenario Planning	40
Measure	40
Scenario Planning Results	41
RECOMMENDATIONS	43
Recommendations Overview.....	43
Future Land Use Map.....	44
Future Land Use Character Areas	46
Municipal Growth	46
Suburban Transition	46
Rural Residential	46
Agricultural	46
Open Space / Parks	47
Rural Center	47
Mill Village	47
Employment / Industry	47
Land Use and Agriculture.....	48
Economic Development.....	54
Parks, Conservation and the Environment. .	58
Infrastructure and Public Services	62
SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN	65
Overview	65
Small Area Plan Purpose.....	65
Goals and Objectives	65
Community Character	66
Snow Camp over the Years.....	68
Existing Land Use	70
Land Supply	71
Demographics	72
Housing	73
Economy.....	73
Recommendations	74
Potential Zoning Districts (in Snow Camp) .	75

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

Context

From the 2007 adoption of the original Land Development Plan (LDP) to the beginning of this update in 2019, Alamance County has experienced significant change. Since 2010, builders have added 7,771 new homes to the County’s housing stock. Employers added nearly 9,000 jobs during this period. Environmental concerns have accompanied new development pressures. Even during the preparation of this plan, the community experienced social change in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and civil unrest due to systemic inequities. Alamance County faces new issues and challenges each day. In times of rapid change, it is important to acknowledge the past and look to the future. This plan is a product of many community conversations, and it will help Alamance County address pressing issues and shape its future.

Planning in North Carolina

In the State of North Carolina, the Legislature enables both cities and counties to implement planning regulations. In 2019, the General Assembly passed SL2019-111 which modernized the statutes and organized them into a new chapter, G.S. § 160D. This text established a

new comprehensive plan requirement; all cities and counties exercising planning powers must have a comprehensive plan. In addition, the plan must be updated regularly. This document, the Alamance County Land Development Plan and Small Area Vision Plan, shall fulfill the comprehensive plan requirement.

Process

In the face of growth and new challenges, Alamance County took a bold step in its decision to update the 2007 County Land Development Plan. County leadership and staff saw an opportunity to create a plan with a vision and goals reflecting the broad and diverse community. The entire process lasted thirteen months from initiation to adoption.

Organization

The plan is organized into the following five sections:

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Existing Conditions
- ▶ Vision
- ▶ Recommendations
- ▶ Snow Camp Small Area Plan

The first four sections apply to the entire study area. The fifth, and final, section contains recommendations unique to the Snow Camp area in southwest Alamance.

Process and Schedule



Schedule



1. INTRODUCTION

Study Area

Alamance County is located in central North Carolina, approximately sixty miles from the state capital of Raleigh and 25 miles from the City of Greensboro. As shown on the Study Area Map (opposite), it is situated between Caswell County (north), Orange County (east), Chatham County (south), and Guilford County (west).

The County is divided by I-85/I-40 (Sam Hunt Freeway) and US Hwy 70. Most of the towns and cities are concentrated along these routes, leaving primarily rural areas to the north and south.

The County contains several cities and towns including Burlington, Alamance, Graham, Mebane, Green Level, Haw River, Swepsonville, Ossipee, and Elon. The cities' planning jurisdictions occasionally extend beyond their corporate limits into unincorporated areas

Distribution of Land
County Area - 434 mi²
Cities - 69 mi²
ETJ - 104 mi²

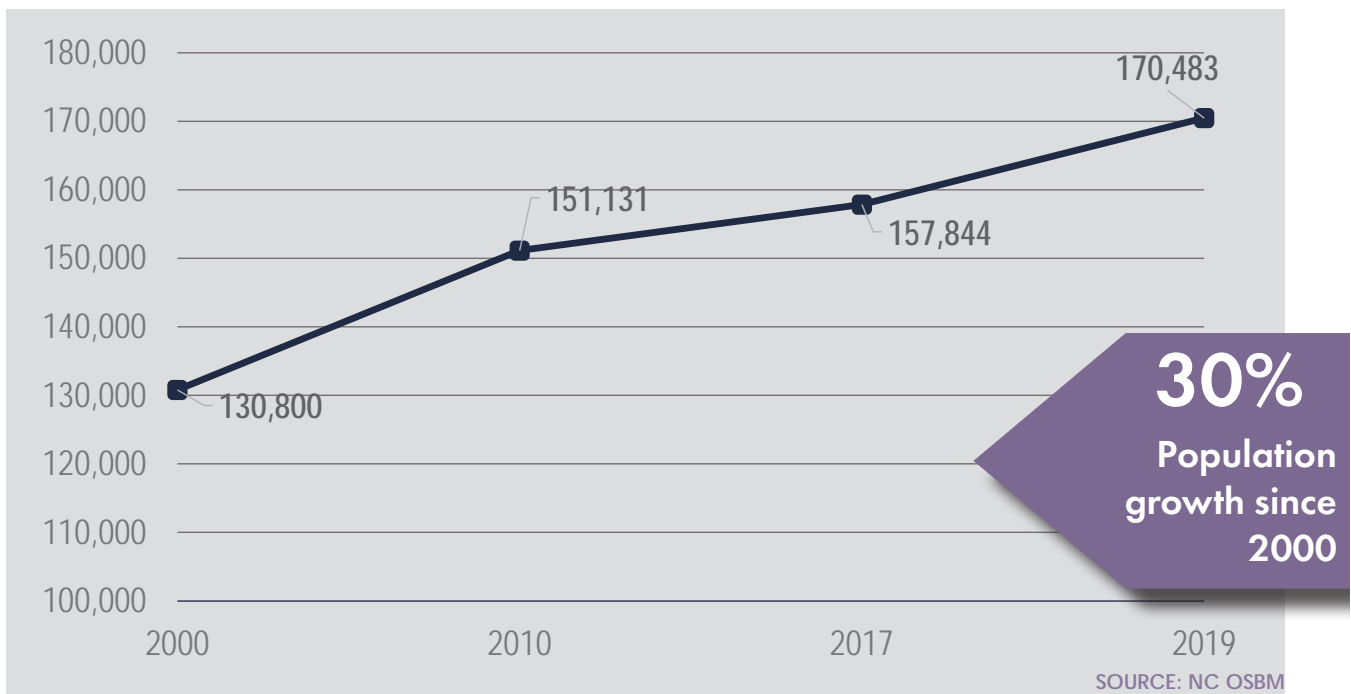
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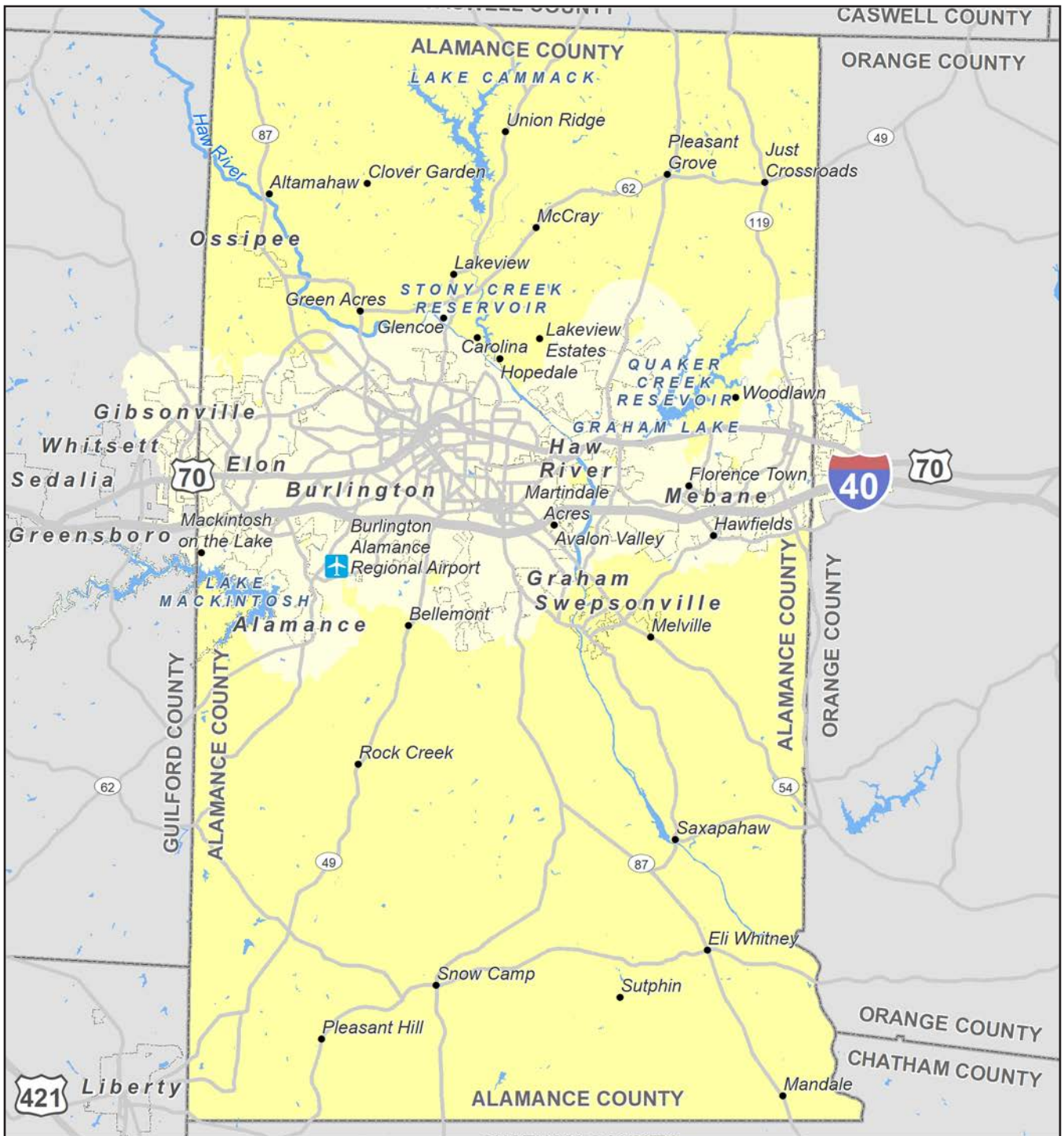
county jurisdiction

of Alamance County called extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJs).

This plan concentrates on the County's jurisdiction excluding the cities and ETJs. The study area is approximately 330 mi² with an estimated population of 49,000 (Source: Esri).

Total Population Growth





0 0.5 1 2 Miles
1 in = 4 miles

- Alamance County Study Area
- ETJ
- Municipal Limits

1. INTRODUCTION

Public Involvement

Overview

The engagement process includes residents from both the rural and the urban edges of the County's municipalities, business owners, staff, and County decision makers. The project team designed outreach activities to be transparent, accessible, and understanding of differing visions of the future. Review of relevant plans and studies, among them Vision Alamance 2018-2023: Alamance County Strategic Plan, provided insight into residents' values. Thoughtful engagement allowed diverse voices to be heard and give clear, not always unified, feedback for what should be included in the plan.

Data Driven Engagement

The project team used demographic data including population growth, age, and median income in conjunction with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) land use data to design the outreach. The data also informed the need to more effectively target audiences by geographically boosting Facebook posts or holding an event in a particular locale to ensure input received was balanced and representative. Data collection revealed necessary insights into issues, challenges, and changes throughout the County over the last thirteen years.

Demographic Highlights

- ▶ **30% population growth since 2000 with 30% in the unincorporated areas**
- ▶ **24% of housing built since 2000**
- ▶ **40% of land devoted to agriculture**
- ▶ **40% rural residential or vacant**
- ▶ **\$44, 281 median household income (similar to the 2007 LDP)**
- ▶ **56% work outside of the study area**
- ▶ **15.7% increase in renting**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Engagement Plan

The project team developed an engagement plan to establish target audiences, methods, and schedules for outreach. It is natural for public engagement plans to transition and evolve to meet community needs. March of 2020 brought a national pandemic and subsequently a statewide stay-at-home order. The ability to engage with the community in an interpersonal way face-to-face shifted. Virtual workshops and steering committee meetings replaced public workshops, open houses, and participation in festivals and events. The activities described below helped the project team maintain momentum and deliver the plan by the original planned date.

Stakeholder Interviews

On October 17th, 2019, the team held one-hour sessions with groups of stakeholders including residents, farmers, business owners, employers, County, and regional agency representatives, educators, staff, and county officials to identify the issues to be addressed in the plan. The project team presented the following common interview themes at the first steering committee meeting.

- ▶ Preservation of community character (rural, low density, etc.)
- ▶ Protection of farmland, tradition, and history
- ▶ Concern about heavy industrial development
- ▶ Business environment where industry can grow and provide better quality jobs
- ▶ Development pressure in southern portion of the County
- ▶ Recreation as an important asset

PUBLIC EVENTS

- 6 Steering Committee Meetings
- 10+ Stakeholder Groups
- 1 Alamance Community Summit
- 2 Virtual Workshops
- 2 Public Open Houses
Compliant with NC reopening guidelines



ALAMANCE COUNTY
LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Help shape the County's future land use, growth, economic development, transportation, agricultural preservation, recreation, and MORE!

- THIS MONTH**
Take the online survey at www.SurveyMonkey.com/r/AlamanceCoSurvey.
- TODAY**
Sign-up for email updates and learn more about the project at www.AlamanceCountyPlan.com.
- Follow Alamance County Planning at www.Facebook.com/ACPlanning/.
- COMING SOON**
Stay tuned for upcoming online and in-person public workshops!

The flyer features the Alamance County seal and a photograph of a group of people participating in a public workshop outdoors, gathered around a campfire.

A flyer encouraging resident involvement

1. INTRODUCTION

Steering Committee

The Alamance County Board of Commissioners appointed a thirteen-member steering committee of staff, community leaders, and residents representing schools, agricultural preservation, parks, land development, and more, to guide the project team throughout the yearlong process. The steering committee met six times, reviewing documents; encouraging participation from neighbors, colleagues, and friends; and providing direction and feedback.

Alamance Community Summit

Ted Abernathy of Economic Leadership presented and led a discussion for an invitation-only morning event at Impact Alamance in Burlington. Mac Williams from the Alamance Chamber also presented. Topics of the morning included growth and economic opportunities and challenges in the County. Questions and comments during the interactive portion ranged from:

- ▶ Overlooked value of agriculture
- ▶ Utility capacity for growth
- ▶ Keeping rural and natural areas nearby
- ▶ Balance housing types considering market, policy, financing
- ▶ Breaking point at which residential pays for itself
- ▶ Leveraging infrastructure in extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) extensions
- ▶ Better development standards
- ▶ Defined growth areas

These issues are further explored in the chapter on economic development and used to inform recommendations throughout the Land Development Plan.

Surveys

With the state stay-at-home order taking effect in mid-March, one week before scheduled in-person public workshops, surveys rose from a supplemental tool to a primary tool to reach out to the general public. The project team prepared notices for the virtual workshops, and distributed flyers encouraging people to take

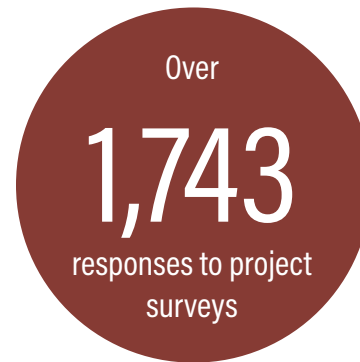


Ted Abernathy of Economic Leadership presenting at the Alamance Community Summit on January 23, 2020

the online surveys. Staff distributed information online via email, Nextdoor, and Facebook. In addition, paper copies were available at some Dollar General stores at rural crossroads.

The first survey was open during spring 2020 and asked respondents questions about their goals and vision for the County. Answer formats ranged from multiple choice, ranking, and open response. The second survey, available in early July, asked for respondents to state a preference for one of three land use scenarios.

During the survey window, the project team checked respondents' zip codes to ensure balanced geographic representation. This helped them consciously reach traditionally underrepresented groups.



The graphic below shares some of the key themes and comments generated by the survey.

What do you appreciate most about Alamance County?



Farmland/Rural Character
51%



Cost of Living
42%



Access to Parks, Trails,
Rivers, and Lakes
47%

What potential impacts of growth are you most concerned about?

Lack concerned Alamance County Cost many New development
 Poor growth many apartments increase Increased crime
 overcrowding county people Safety schools
 housing need built community way quality law enforcement
 Crime rural areas areas apartments built housing developments
 services

1. INTRODUCTION

Existing Plans

Alamance County Strategic Plan: Vision Alamance 2018-2023

The Alamance County Strategic Plan firmly establishes the County's mission, vision, and core values. It outlines five action pillars to guide the county's future growth and success.

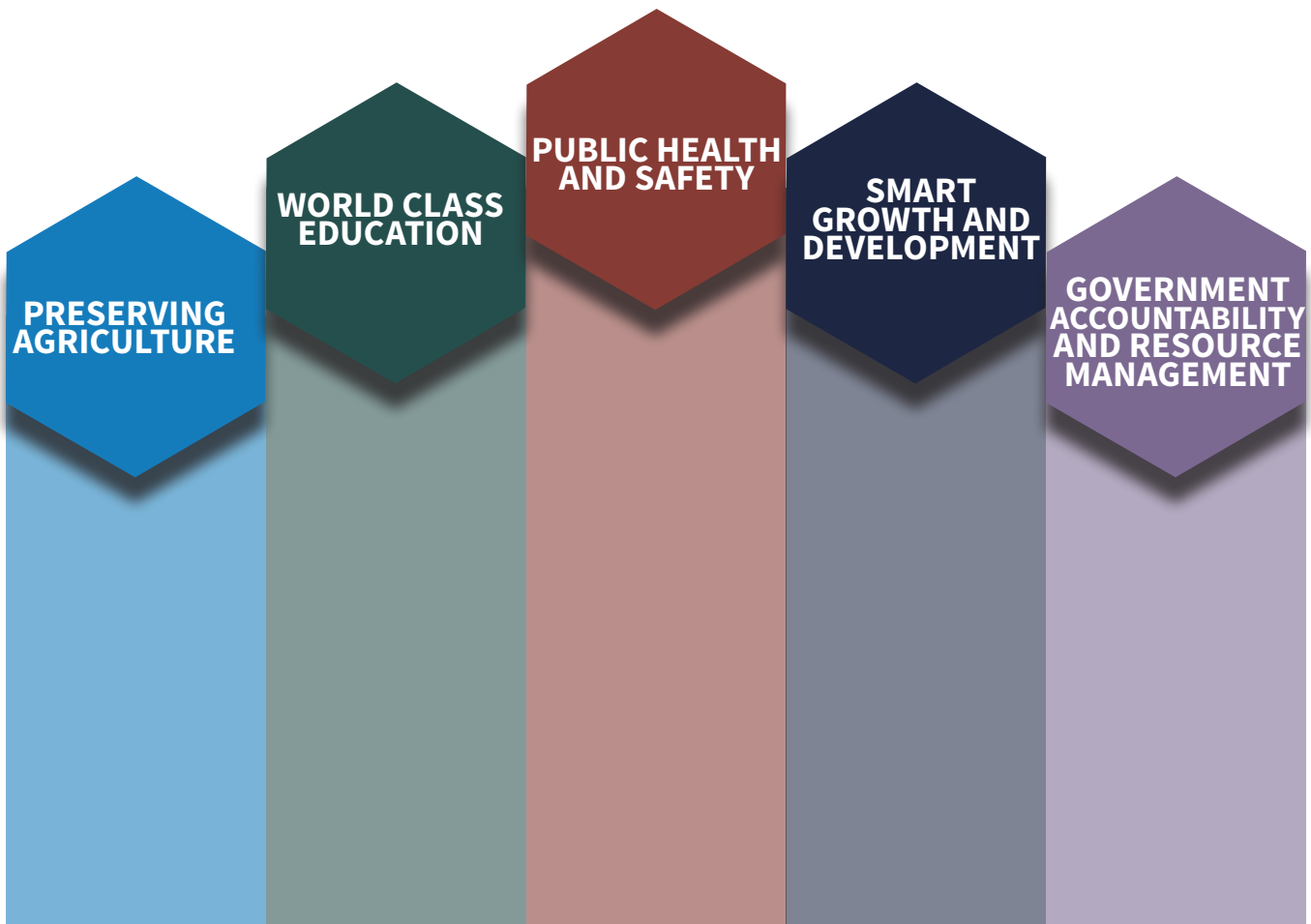
The Strategic Plan identifies the need to balance growth and preservation. The Land Development Plan directly addresses this priority. Throughout the planning process, the focus remained on authenticity.

The recommendations in this plan aim to further County's mission, vision, and goals in ways which maintain and enhance community character.

Alamance County Strategic Performance Management Mid-Year Report 2018

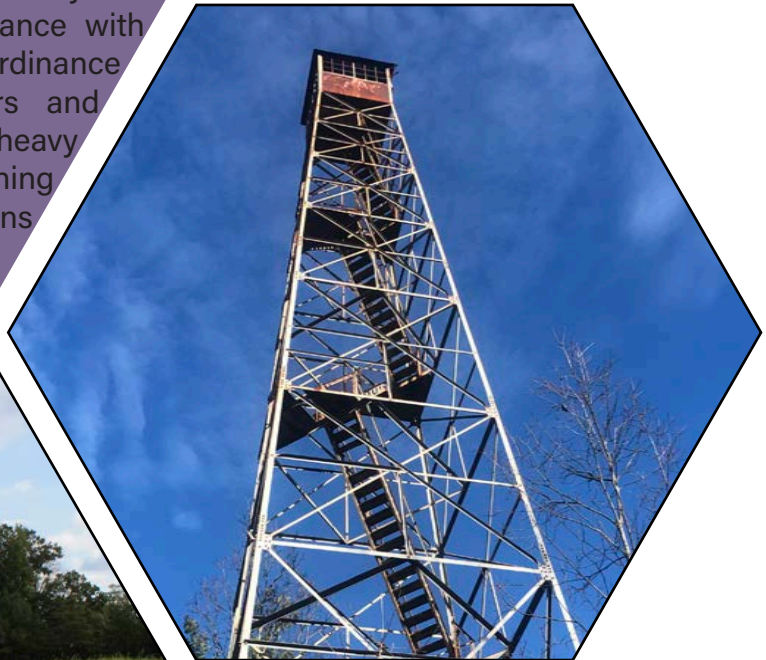
This document tracked the County's mid-year progress toward the goals of each Action Pillar. The measures focus on the amount of activity over time rather than performance standards.

Alamance County Strategic Plan Action Pillars



**Heavy Industrial
Development Ordinance 2019**

The Heavy Industrial Development Ordinance (HIDO) was adopted in 2011 to replace the 2006 Noxious or Unwanted Land Use Ordinance. The HIDO regulates industrial uses, balancing the County's needed industry and health, safety, and welfare. In accordance with the Land Development Plan, the Ordinance restricts location, lot size, buffers and screening, and other features of heavy industrial development. The Planning Department issues operations permits.



**Subdivision Ordinance
Amended 2016**

The Alamance County Subdivision Ordinance regulates the subdivision of land in Alamance County per G.S. § 160D. It applies to all divisions of land into two or more lots. These regulations control subdivision lot design; assure adequate circulation of vehicular traffic; provide means for rights-of-way, utility easements, and public facility site dedication or reservation; and assure the proper installation of streets and utilities. It was originally adopted in 1972 with its most recent amendment in 2016.

1. INTRODUCTION

Land Development Plan (LDP) 2007

The 2007 LDP included policies to shape land use decisions. Recommendations included provisions for various land uses, historic resources, community appearance, and environmental considerations.

The policies in the 2007 LDP were closely aligned with the County's values; however, in some instances, contemporary land use tools can achieve more effective results. This plan re-examines the overall goals of the community and incorporates useful solutions to improve upon past practices.

Recommendations included updating development regulations, in accordance with its policy guidelines. Some key themes and recommendations emerged and are shown below.

The 2007 LDP included a Growth Strategy Map that outlined future growth areas, rural areas and conservation areas. Elected officials reference this map during development decisions and ordinance updates. Considering the changes in the County since 2007, it was necessary and crucial to update this map.

Land Development Plan Recommendations

Economic Development

- ▶ Revitalization and reuse of existing structures and sites

Transportation

- ▶ Thoroughfare safety
- ▶ Street interconnectivity

Industrial Development

- ▶ Suitable locations
- ▶ Natural features to buffer heavy industrial sites
- ▶ Light industry in urbanized areas
- ▶ Access to thoroughfares

Commercial Development

- ▶ Lack of dimensional standards
- ▶ Office and Institutional Development
- ▶ Parking
- ▶ Building Placement
- ▶ Buffers

Residential Development

- ▶ Single-family homes
- ▶ Cluster developments and Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)
- ▶ Floodplain avoidance
- ▶ Transportation network
- ▶ Density incentives

Agricultural and Rural Preservation

- ▶ Low-density
- ▶ Conservation of productive lands

Historic and Cultural Preservation

- ▶ Site designation and registration
- ▶ Adaptive reuse
- ▶ Tourism opportunity
- ▶ Structure protection

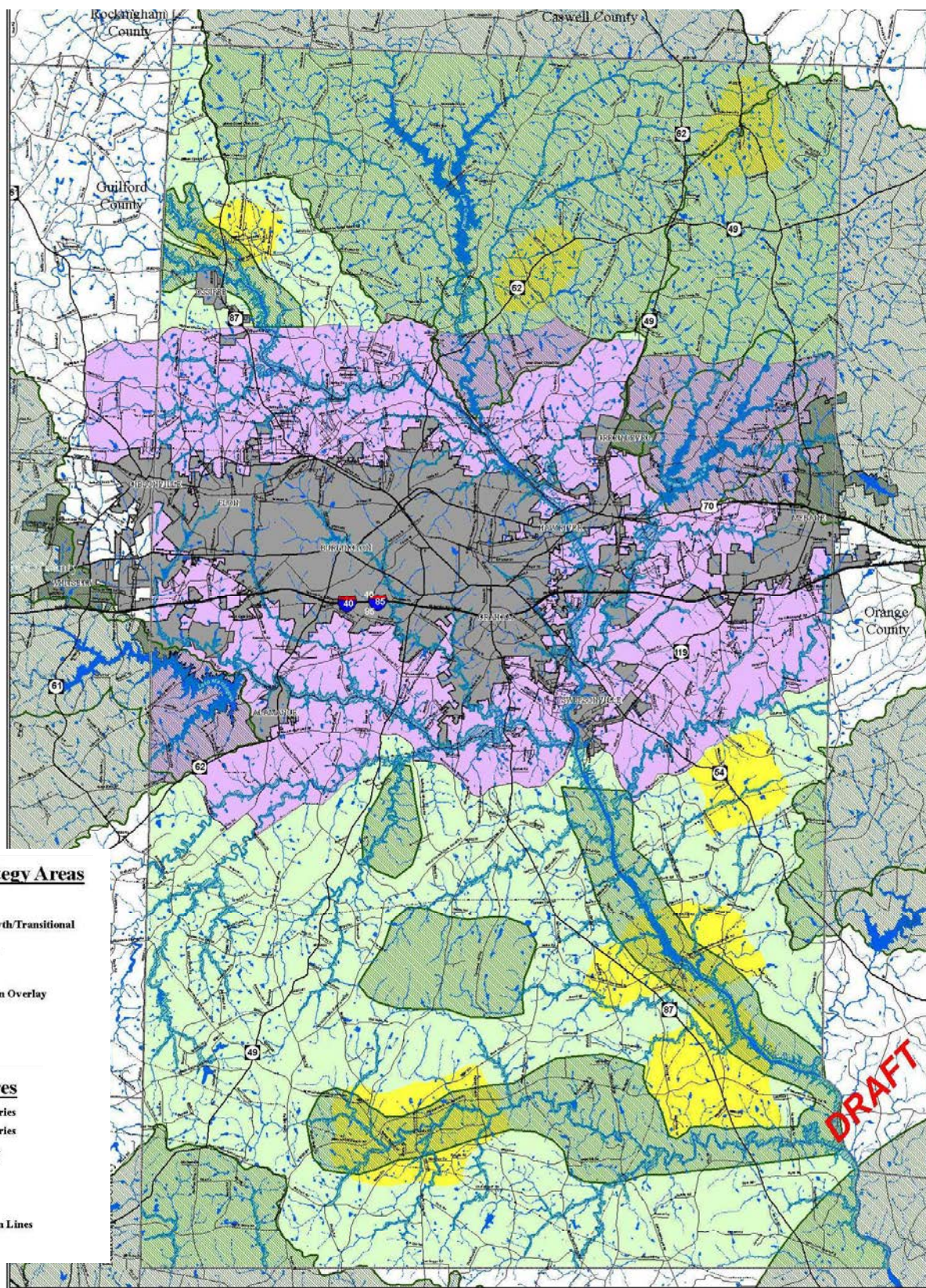
Community Appearance

- ▶ Community gateways
- ▶ Sign control
- ▶ Landscaping
- ▶ Infill development
- ▶ Street trees
- ▶ Natural feature preservation

Environmental Quality

- ▶ Floodplain avoidance
- ▶ High-density in water supply watershed avoidance
- ▶ Noise, odor, air, and water pollution mitigation
- ▶ Land conservation efforts

2007 LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN GROWTH STRATEGY



1. INTRODUCTION

Watershed Protection Ordinance Amended 2018

Adopted in 1987 and last amended in 2018, the Watershed Protection Ordinance protects County watershed areas. The Ordinance limits development in those areas to reduce pollution and cost of water treatment. Provisions include land use restrictions, density and built-upon limits, riparian buffer requirements, permit application procedures, and administrative mechanisms and apply to land designated as Public Water Supply Watershed by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality. The Alamance County Watershed Protection Map illustrates these areas which include the water supply lakes for Burlington, Graham, Mebane, and the Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA).

There are two watershed zones: the Watershed Critical Area (WCA) and Balance of Watershed (BOW). The WCA includes:

- ▶ Back Creek Watershed
- ▶ Stoney Creek Watershed
- ▶ Big Alamance Creek Watershed
- ▶ The BOW includes
- ▶ Back Creek Watershed
- ▶ Stoney Creek Watershed
- ▶ Cane Creek Watershed
- ▶ Rocky River Watershed
- ▶ Haw River Watershed
- ▶ Upper Haw River Watershed

Farmland Preservation Ordinance Amended 2009

This Ordinance encourages farmland preservation in rural parts of the County especially in existing agricultural areas. Participation is voluntary. Goals include:

- ▶ Farmland, forest, and horticultural land preservation
- ▶ Creation and preservation of open space
- ▶ Conservation of water resources and environmentally sensitive lands such as wetlands

- ▶ Development and growth management
- ▶ Economic development
- ▶ Quality of life enhancement

Farmland Protection Plan 2007

The purpose of the Farmland Protection Plan is twofold, to understand the foundations of the agricultural economy in Alamance County and to create a plan addressing future needs and growth. The plan recommends actions to promote and continue agricultural endeavors in the county. The priority recommendation in the plan was to “support farm friendly county-based land use policies and programs.” This LDP continues Alamance County’s efforts in refining strategies for preserving and enhancing agricultural lands.



A barn in Southwest Alamance County

Historic Properties Commission Ordinance Amended 2016

Alamance County adopted the Historic Properties Commission Ordinance in 2004 and amended the ordinance in 2016. The ordinance established the Alamance County Historic Properties Commission (HPC) to list and regulate historic resources within the unincorporated areas of the County and participating municipalities. The ordinance allows the HPC to manage property acquisition on behalf of Alamance County. The HPC has the power to prepare and recommend a historic preservation element for the County comprehensive plan and select municipal plans by request.

Historic preservation is critical as Alamance County grows and develops. Land use decisions have a direct impact on precious buildings and sites. This plan seeks to protect the rich past of the County by recommending supportive land use patterns.



The Garrett Family Home built circa 1835



The John Allen House built circa 1780

2



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Overview

Alamance County's convenient location in central North Carolina, between the mountains and the sea, and along US-70, I-40, and major east-west rail lines has helped it thrive over the years. It is characterized by a striking divide between its rural and more urban landscapes.

Today

In recent years, Alamance County has begun to feel development pressure in its unincorporated areas. This has threatened to shift the balance between the rural and urban lands and has inspired elected officials and citizens to think proactively about the future.

Contents

To address recent changes, the plan will first seek to provide an understanding of the current state of the County and emerging issues. This chapter establishes baseline measures for the remainder of the plan. It provides information on history, population, demographics, housing, economics, agriculture, and parks and recreation.

The statistics contained in this chapter come from a variety of sources. The project team collected federal, state, and local government data and information from local organizations. The team also generated primary data from citizen input and conducted analyses using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools.



Farmland in Alamance County



A single-family home in a subdivision in southern Alamance County

EXISTING CONDITIONS

HISTORY

The rich and compelling history of Alamance County begins with Native American Indian tribes, the Oenocks or the Eno, first inhabiting the land. Visiting European explorers documented the area as early as the 1670s, remarking on the availability of timber and fertile soils.

Agriculture became a fixture early in the Colonial Era when farming and organized trade grew to prominence. During this time, groups of Quakers settled into modern-day Snow Camp.

In the 1760s, tensions arose between the area colonists, and Royal Governor William Tryon. War with France had left Great Britain saddled with great debt. Increased taxes and local corruption caused clashes between groups of poor farmers and the authorities, and these skirmishes eventually culminated in the 1771 Battle of Alamance. Less than five years later, the same factors involved in this conflict would incite the American Revolution.

Alamance County was founded in 1849, after citizens of the western half of Orange County petitioned the State of North Carolina.

At that time, textiles, agriculture, and railroad transportation were integral to the economic fabric of the Southern States. These industries flourished in Alamance County but at a price. The majority of the farms in Alamance County operated using slave labor. In 1860, enslaved persons comprised approximately one-third of the County's population.

In 1861, the Battle of Fort Sumter would sweep the United States into an all-consuming civil war. The conflict divided the citizens of Alamance County between the Union and Confederacy. During the subsequent period of Reconstruction, the American South was left in a recession, and racial tensions remained.

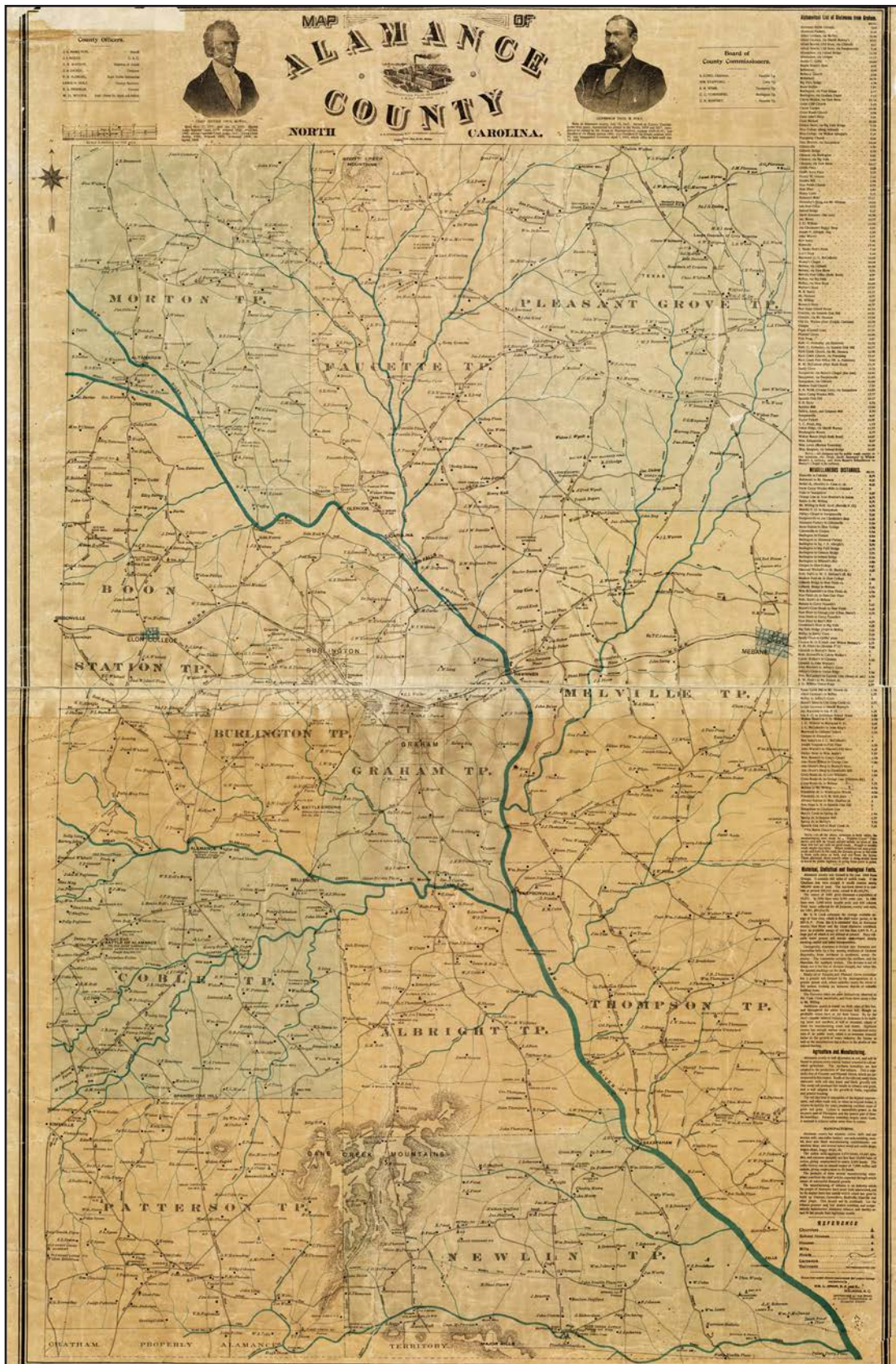
Meanwhile, technological advances enabled the textile mills to employ increasing numbers of people. Water from the Haw River and other major streams powered looms and machines. Mill villages housed hundreds of resident workers and their families. Farms also thrived during this time. This industrial period saw the County through to the twentieth century.

The onset of the Great Depression left many people struggling to overcome extreme hardships. Alamance County's mills and farms largely continued to operate. They continued to provide jobs, textiles, and food for the community.

During World War II and the Korean War, Alamance County's men and women served the cause, and some gave their lives. War efforts were also a community endeavor. Contributing supplies, donations, and labor helped residents unite around a common mission.

By the 1970s, the mills and farms that had sustained Alamance County through the years, began suffering major losses forcing them to close.

Today, the County is largely rural, but some mills are being renovated for a variety of uses. The towns have diversified their economic base, promoting new industries, and providing jobs for the County's able workforce. Alamance County's location along US 70 and I-40 and close proximity to the Triad and Triangle regions offer residents small-town, rural living with amenities a short drive away.



A map of Alamance County circa 1893

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Population

Overall Growth

In 2000, Alamance County's population totaled 130,800. By 2019, the population had increased by 30% to an approximate total of 170,000. This mirrors the growth throughout North Carolina.

The influx of new residents has created a need for additional housing supply. From 2000 to 2019, 18,000 new units were added to accommodate the market.

Geographic Distribution

During this period, almost 30% (10,700) of the total population growth occurred in unincorporated areas of the County. Of the 18,000 new housing units, 5,000 are located in unincorporated areas.

Growth rates have varied throughout the County. The Growth Rate Map (opposite) illustrates the areas with the most rapid growth by using a darker shade. These areas include the municipalities near I-40.

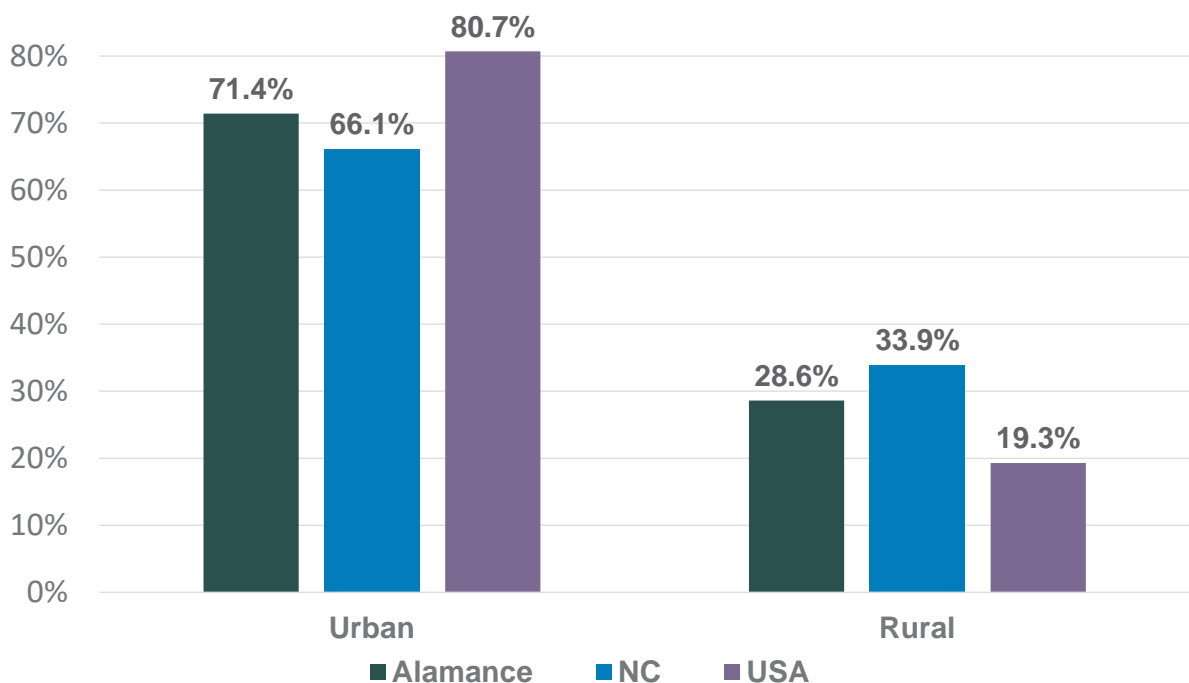
Unincorporated areas that experienced growth include the NC-49 corridor between Burlington and Liberty, north and south of Mebane, and the Swepsonville area.

Demographics

Minority Population

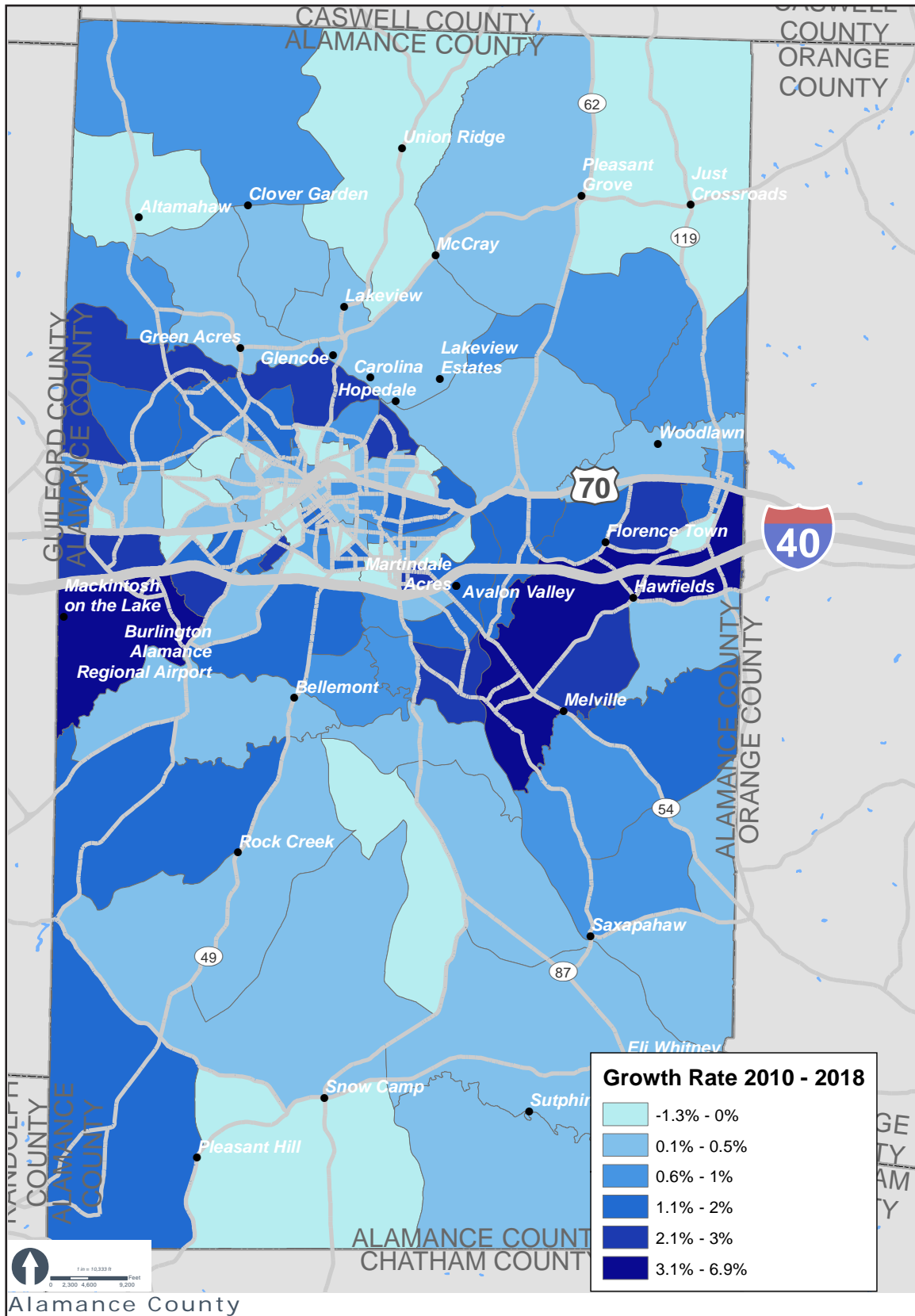
Alamance County has a diverse population, but minority populations are concentrated in the municipalities and in the northeast part of the County. This information was important for public engagement purposes. Ensuring that the voices of all Alamance County residents were heard was a top priority during the planning process.

Urban and Rural Population



Source: ESRI Business Analyst 2019, accessed November 2019

Growth Rate Map



EXISTING CONDITIONS

HOUSING

Housing in Alamance County is generally more affordable than in the rest of the state and is dominated by single family housing stock. There are 74,347 housing units in Alamance County, including the municipalities (Source: Esri). The County, including the municipalities, has seen a yearly 1.6% growth rate in its housing supply. Single family residential housing, which represents 68% of the housing stock, although

recent years have seen increased demand for multifamily housing in the I-40 corridor. Increased demand for housing is often met by building on former agricultural land, in the form of subdivisions. Currently, 8.2% of housing units are vacant (Source: 2017 Census Data).

From 2000 - 2017
Alamance County had a



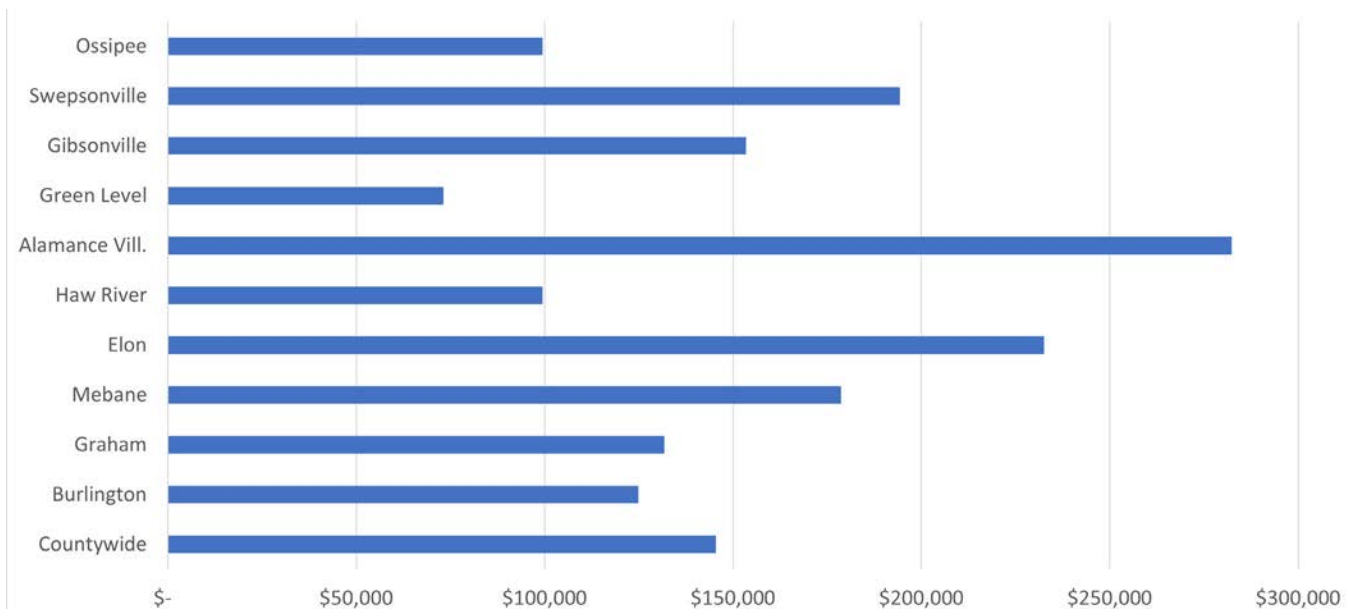
3 out of 10 new homes built
unincorporated areas of the
county

15.7%
increase in
renting
while...



...home
ownership
decreased
6.7%.

\$1,158
Average monthly rent



County median housing prices. Source: 2017 ACS

ECONOMY

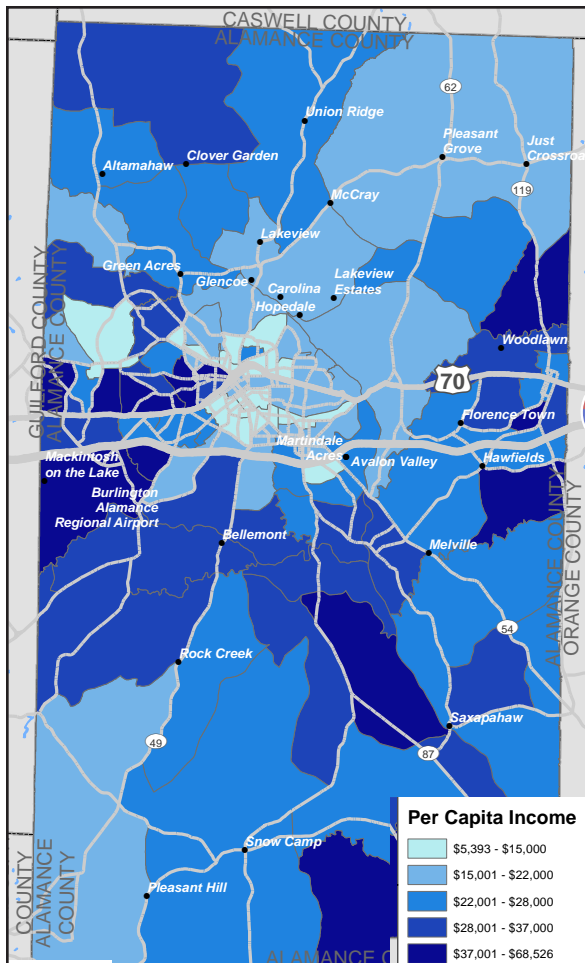
In general, Alamance County has a solid job base. Growth sectors include manufacturing, retail, healthcare, entertainment, accomodations and food service, construction, finance, insurance and real estate. Daytime population decreases due to out-commuting. Each day 56.1% of workers (71,091) leave the County for work.

The County does have lower average incomes than some surrounding areas. In 2017, Alamance County's median household income was \$44,281 which is less than the State average of \$50,320. The unemployment rate is 4.3%. This is more similar to the state unemployment rate.



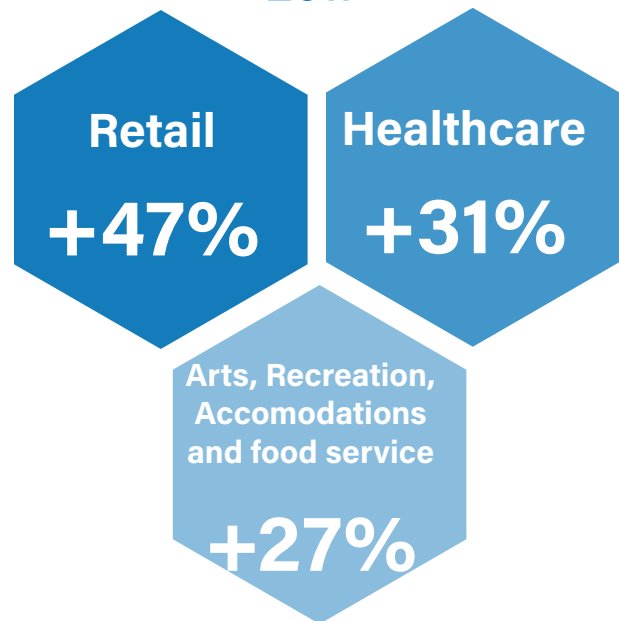
Honda Power Equipment Manufacturing, Inc. and Honda Aero, Inc. plants, respectively located in Burlington and Haw River, generate significant economic impacts throughout Alamance County.

Income Map



56% of residents work outside of Alamance County

Industries with the biggest employment growth 2010-2017



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Agricultural Resources

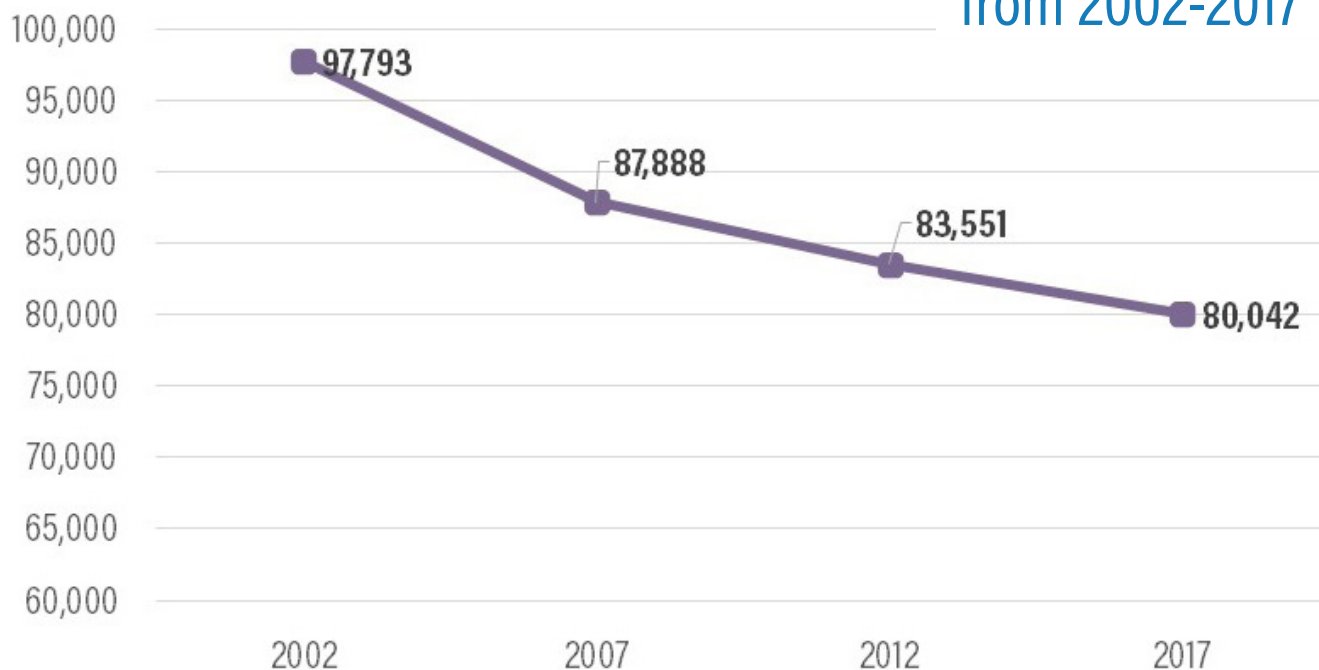
Agriculture is a vital economic and cultural resource for the County. According to the most recent Census of Agriculture (2017), there are 80,042 acres of farms in the County. This acreage represents 30% of the property in the County. Based on tax parcel records, farms and forestlands may comprise even more land area today than indicated in 2017. Market value of farm products totals \$41 million. The County has a Voluntary Agricultural District Program and an active Farmland Preservation Program.

Farmland and agriculture is important to the County as evidenced by programs, data, and community feedback. However, the County has seen the land in farms diminish in recent decades, with both number of farms and average farm size declining. The loss



A farm in southwest Alamance County of farmland is a product of an aging farmer population and growing development pressure on agricultural lands.

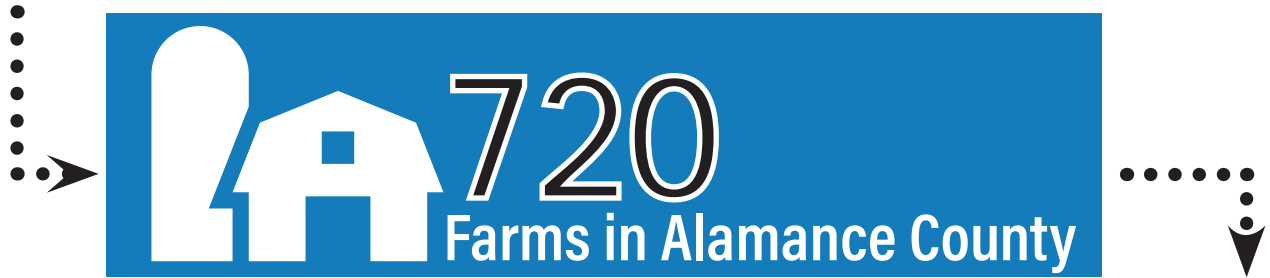
Acres in Farms



17,751 acres
of farmland lost
from 2002-2017

Source: 2017 Census of Agriculture

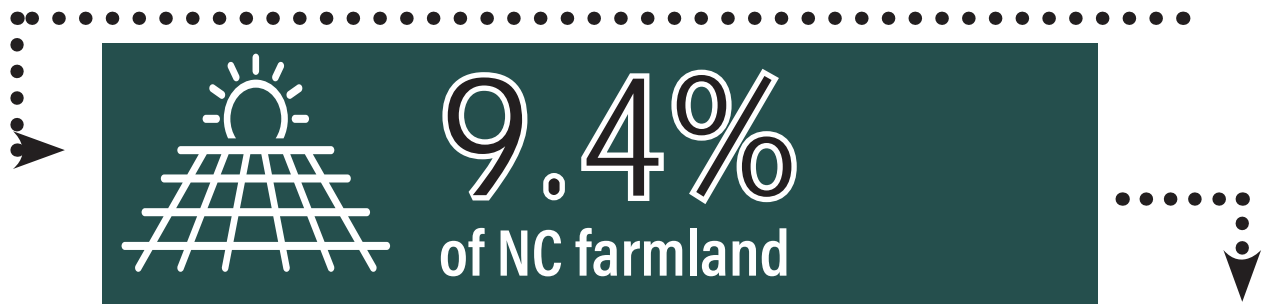
There are



covering



or



Where you will find



Source: 2017 Census of Agriculture

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Parks and Natural Resources

Alamance County is home to a rich collection of natural resources and a growing system of parks and trails that support healthy lifestyles and a high quality of life.

Alamance Parks has dedicated more than forty years to improving access to the outdoors through its parks programming. There are three major focus areas: the outdoors, community, and youth athletics. Alamance Parks currently maintains a number of parks and community centers throughout the County. In addition, the County maintains and is actively working to complete the Haw River Trail. There are twenty miles of trail currently along the Haw River with the longest segment being seven miles in length. The 35-mile Haw River Paddle Trail is complete and includes fourteen access points along the river. Ten of these are County-maintained, and four are maintained by municipalities.

Major natural resources include prime farmland, the Haw River and forests that protect water quality. In addition, there are thirteen designated Natural Heritage Natural Areas in the County. These are unique natural



ALAMANCE PARKS

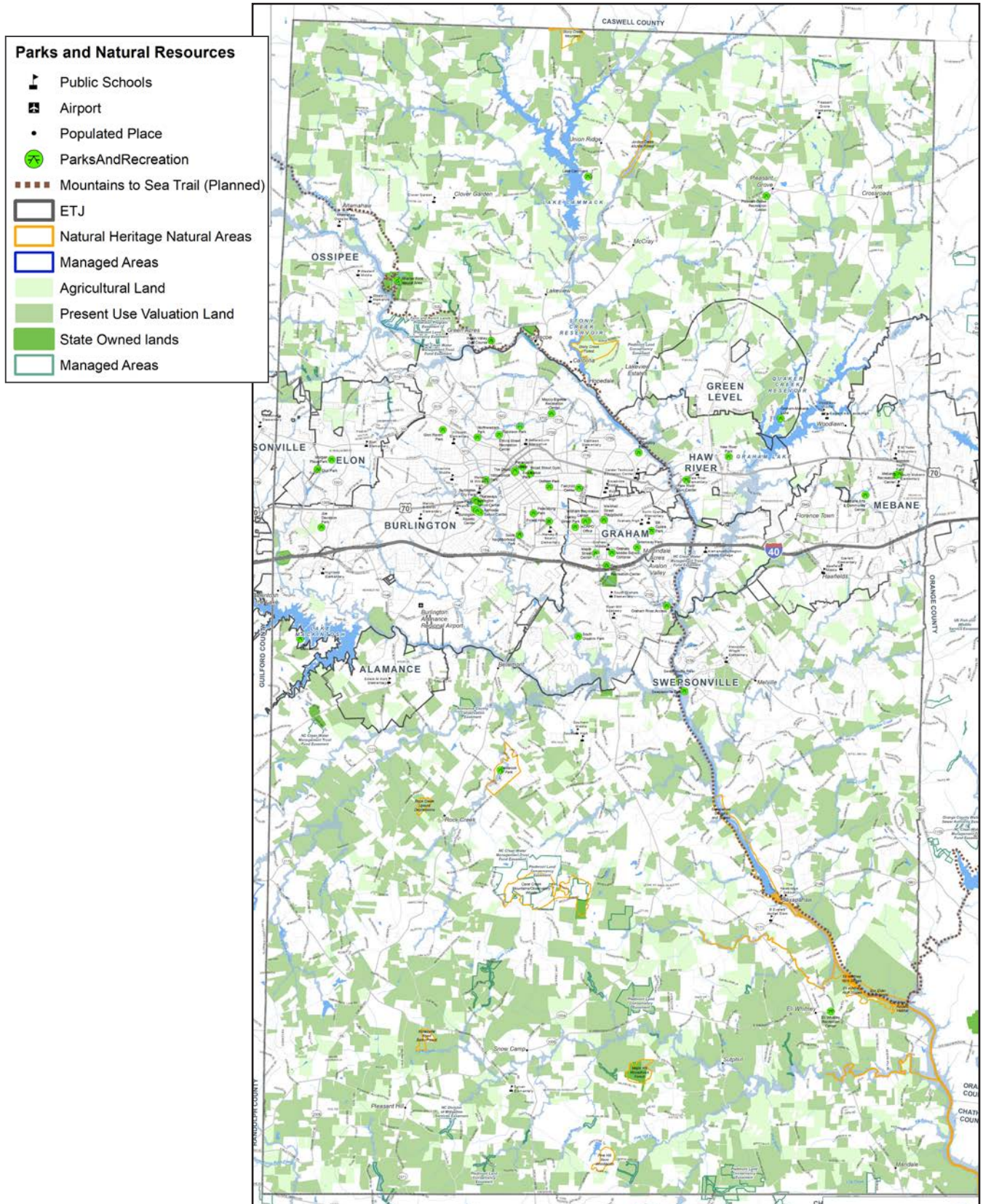
assets that harbor rare plants and animals. A very important natural area, the Cane Creek Mountains, was recently acquired and opened as a park.

PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

- Cedarrock Park
- Pleasant Grove Community Center and Park
- Eli Whitney Community Center
- Shallow Ford Natural Area
- Saxapahaw Island Park
- Great Bend Park
- Haw River Trail and Access Points
- Cane Creek Mountains Natural Area



Parks and Natural Resources



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing Land Use

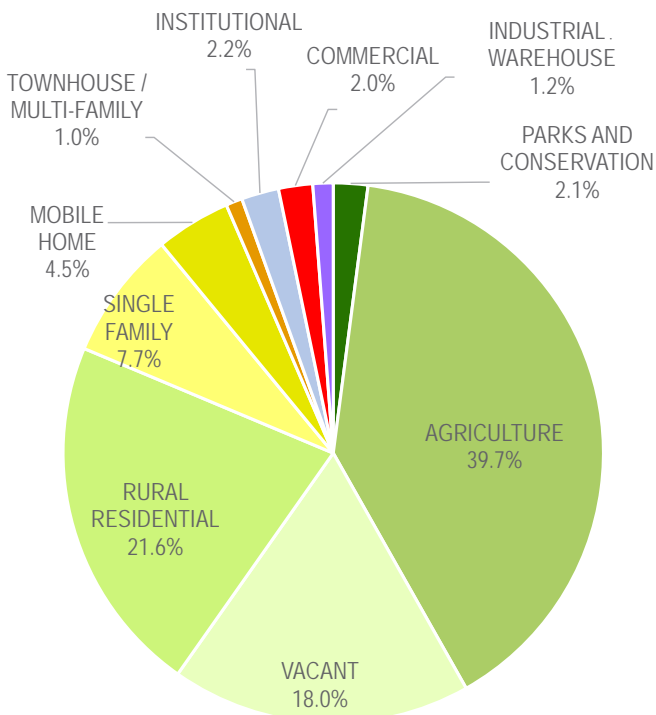
To gather a better understanding of the mixture of land uses found within the Study Area, a detailed analysis of existing land use was performed utilizing County tax parcel data. This data was then verified through a review of aeriels and a community tour, and then vetted by staff. Highlights of the existing land use trends are shown below.

EXISTING LAND USE HIGHLIGHTS

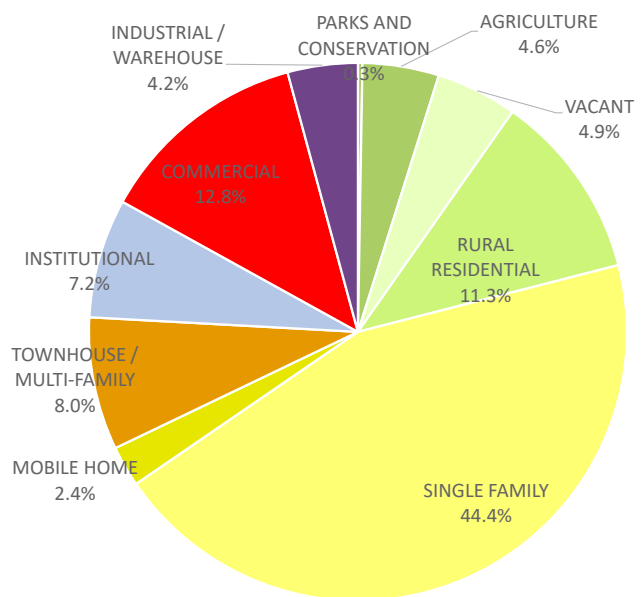
- ▶ 40% of land is devoted to agriculture.
- ▶ Tax base is dependent on single-family Residential (44%).
- ▶ Commercial and Industrial uses are concentrated in towns and make up only 3.2% of the land area in the County, but account for 17% of property values.
- ▶ Parks and conservation lands make up 2.1% of the land area (3,500 acres).

Agricultural uses are prevalent throughout the County representing between 30 and 40% of total land area (Sources: 2017 Census of Agriculture and Tax Parcel Records). Agricultural lands make up a higher percentage of land in some areas; 60% of the Snow Camp area is in some form of agriculture, including cropland, pasture, and timberlands.

More intense uses, including multi-family, commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses are concentrated in municipalities. For instance, 90% of all commercial properties are located in municipal extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJs).

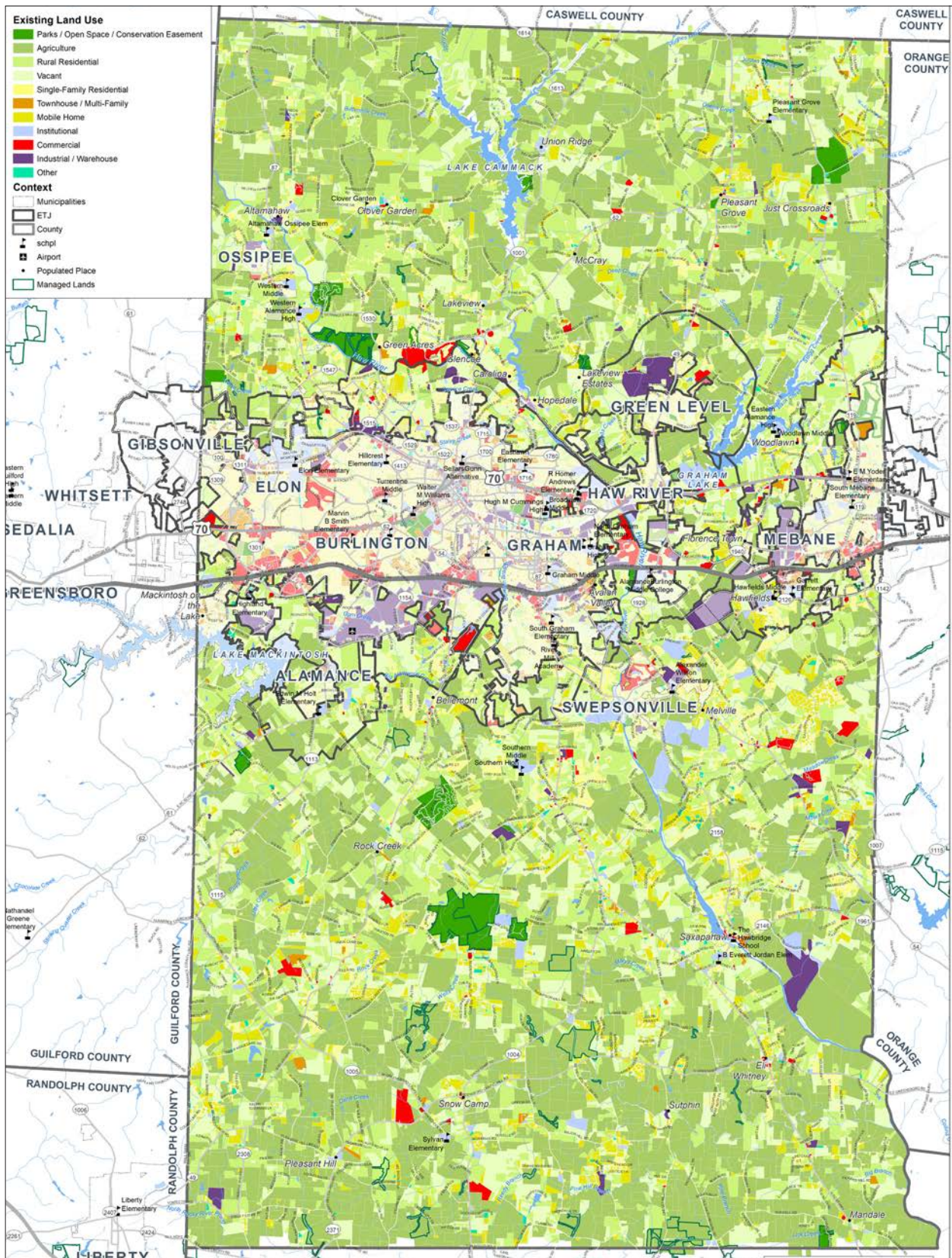


Existing Land Use Inventory



Tax Value by Land Use

Existing Land Use



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Land Supply

Cost of Services

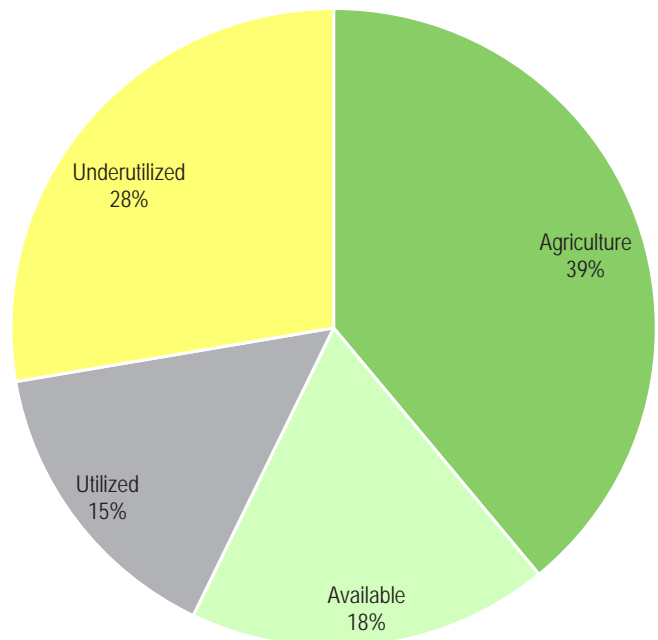
Land use decisions have financial impacts. Different types of land use cost the County and municipalities more in services including emergency response and schools. Tax revenues for some land uses exceed service expenditures and result in a net gain in revenue. Others do not pay for the services that they require. The revenue/expenditure ratio measures the amount of County revenue contributed by a given land use for each dollar in public services used by that land use. Figures greater than one indicate a land use that provides more tax revenue than it consumes in public services. As agricultural land is increasingly converted to residential in the County, it may cost more in public services than new tax revenue provides. Figures below are specific to Alamance County and are from a 2006 Cost of Services Study.

	Revenues/ Expenditures Ratio
Residential	0.68
Commercial	4.29
Agricultural	1.69

Cost of Services by Land Use

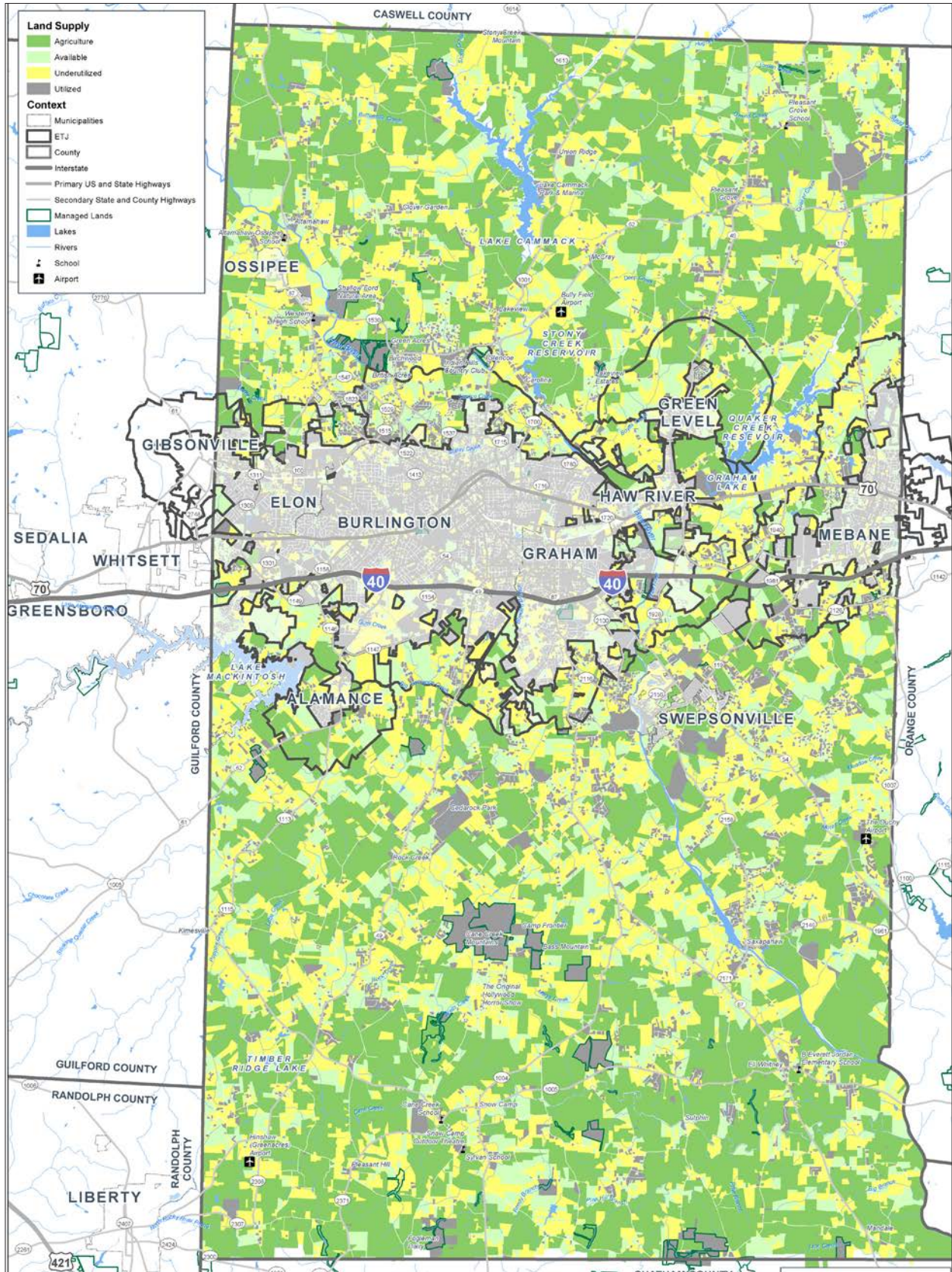
Analysis

To gather a better understanding of the capacity for development in the County and in the towns' planning jurisdictions, an analysis of available and underutilized land was completed. In the chart below and the map on the next page, land is divided into three categories: Available, Underutilized, Utilized and Agriculture. Available lands are those without agricultural operations or a significant structure. Underutilized lands are properties that could accommodate additional development (e.g., a parcel with a house on 20 acres). Utilized lands are those that are not likely to be redeveloped due to recent development or high value structures. Utilized lands also include parks and churches. Agricultural lands include those with farming operations that are participating in the Present Use Value Program. Of land within municipal planning areas, there are 14,000 acres of Available land 10,000 acres of Underutilized lands. This indicates that the majority of projected housing growth could occur within the towns.



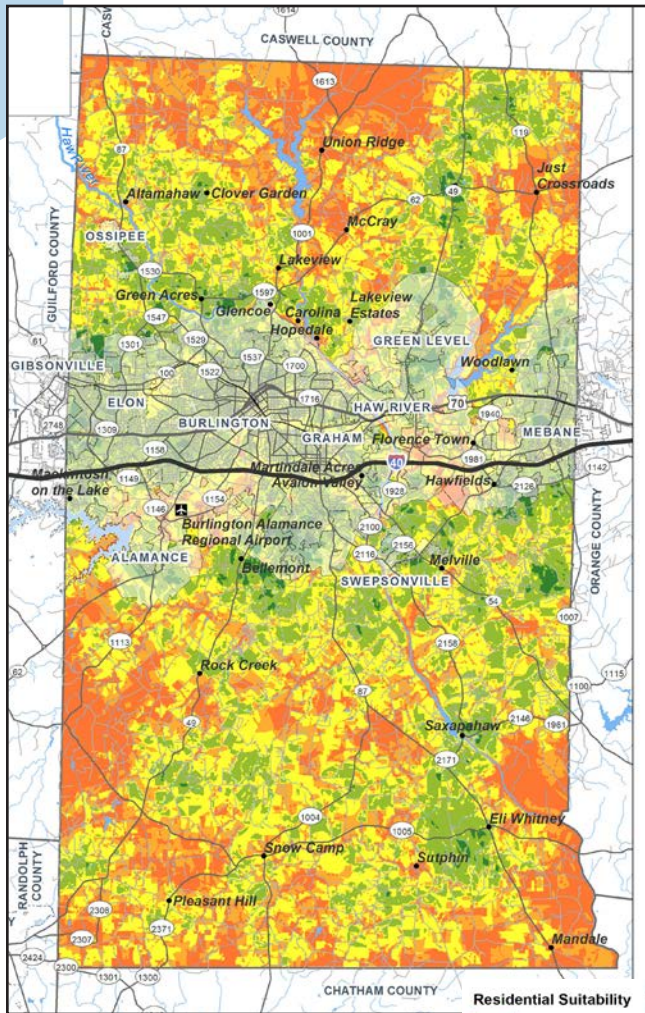
Percentage of Land Supply

Land Supply Map



EXISTING CONDITIONS

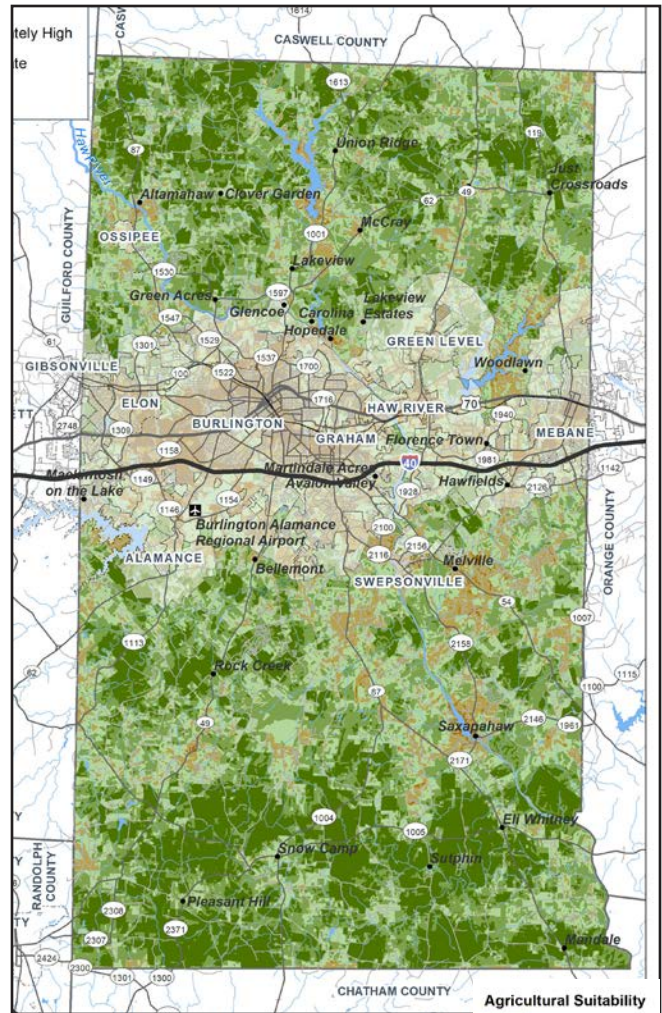
Land Suitability



Residential Suitability

Areas suitable for residential development were analyzed based on economic and environmental factors including: proximity to existing homes, proximity to commercial land uses and services, proximity to schools and parks, distance from industrial lands, proximity to major employers, environmental constraints, parcel size, soils, and recent development activity.

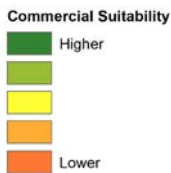
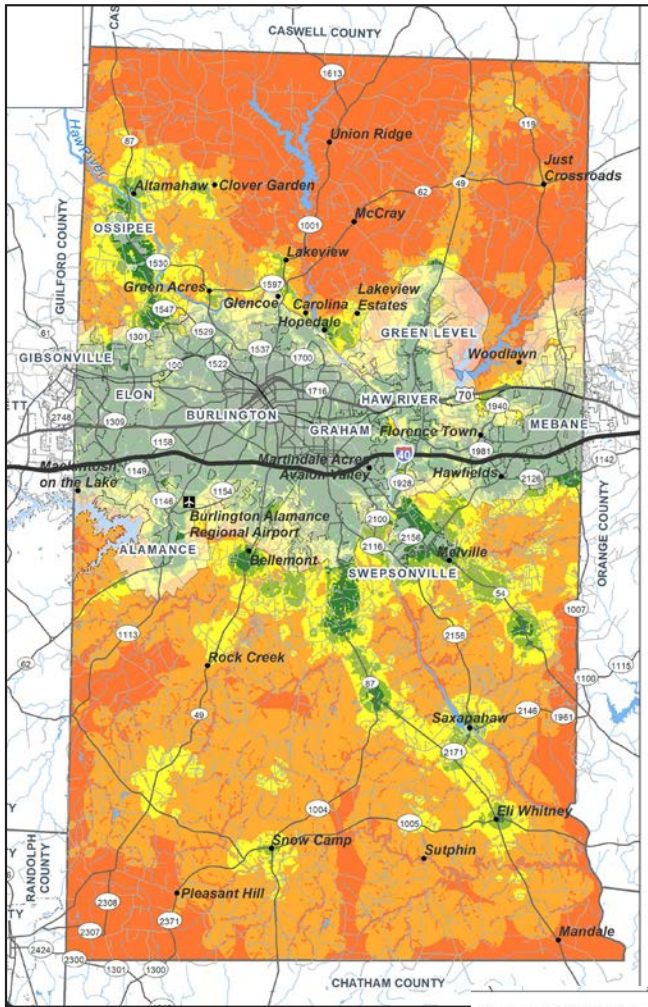
Areas with high residential suitability and high agricultural suitability are likely to see conflicts between those uses in the future. Areas with high conflict include east of Altamahaw, around Eli Whitney, and west of Snow Camp.



Agricultural Suitability

Areas suitable for agricultural operations were analyzed based on economic and environmental factors including: size of properties, prime farmland soils, concentration of operations, Present Use Value designation, proximity to conservation easements, and Voluntary Agricultural Districts.

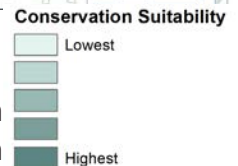
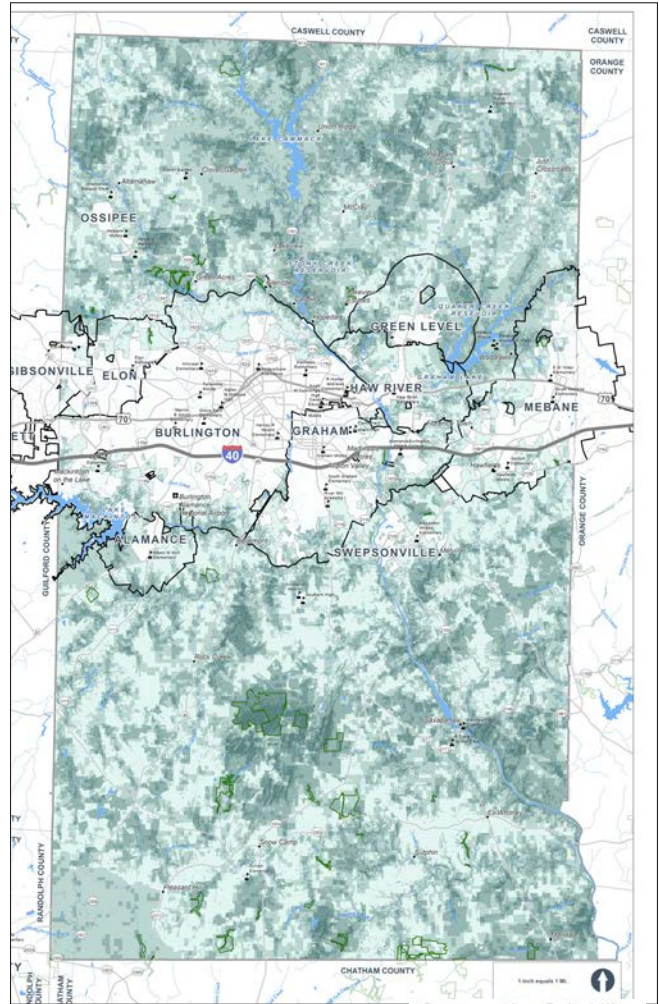
Northern and southern portions of the County have highest suitability for agriculture. Directing future residential growth away from these areas will be key to preserving agricultural uses in these areas, over the long-term.



Commercial Suitability

Areas suitable for commercial development were analyzed based on economic and environmental factors including: proximity to residential, proximity to commercial, high traffic roadways and intersections, and environmental constraints.

There is a high level of commercial suitability and development pressure along major corridors including the NC 87 corridor and NC 54. Without County policies to discourage strip commercial development, these type of land uses are likely to locate along these corridors.



Conservation Suitability

Areas that are high priorities for conservation were analyzed based on environmental factors including: proximity to streams, importance for water quality, steep slopes, habitat values, and other inputs. The Haw River is a drinking water source for 700,000 people. This map of potential conservation suitability factors integrates natural assets and the working priorities of the Jordan Lake One Water Initiative. Large areas of important conservation lands are located in the Cane Creek Mountains, east of Saxapahaw along the Orange County line and in forested areas in the northern parts of the County.

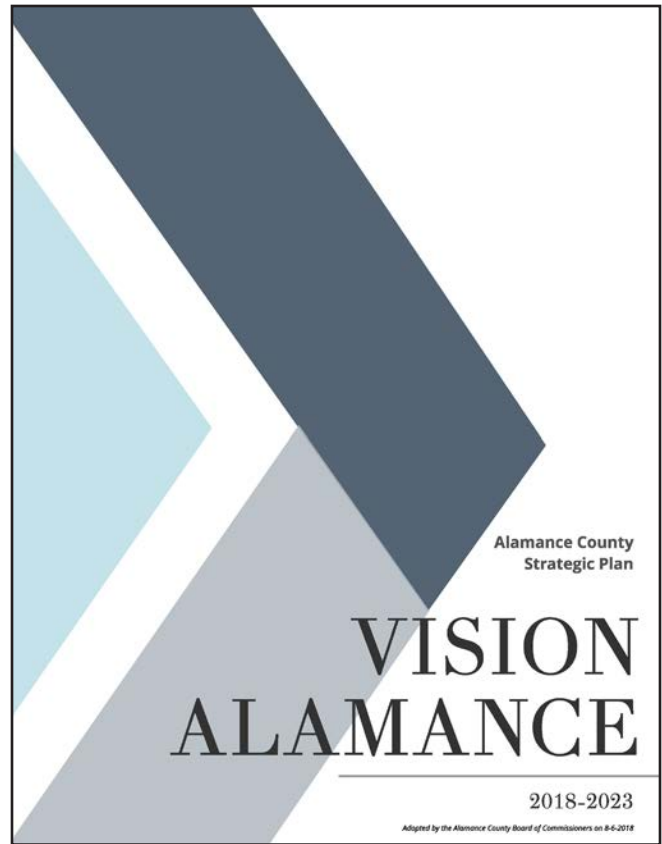
3



VISION

REFINING A VISION FOR ALAMANCE COUNTY

In 2018, the Alamance County Board of Commissioners developed a Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan outlined a vision for the County that includes a cohesive community with a thriving economy and balancing rural history with thoughtful growth and development. The Strategic Plan also defined priorities for the county including preserving agriculture, education, smart growth, and public services. This vision echoes the feedback we heard from the citizens during the development of this plan.



Vision Statement

Alamance County is a **cohesive community** with a **thriving economy** that balances respect for our **rural history** with **thoughtful growth** and development.

3. VISION

Purpose Statement

The Land Development Plan, the planning process, and public engagement seek to refine the vision for the County and clarify what thoughtful policies can lead to desirable land use decisions. More specifically the LDP outlines policies, strategy options, and tools that can help protect agriculture and rural character, support a diverse economy and reinforce the quality of life in the County.

Purpose Statement

Establish policies, strategy options, and tools to encourage thoughtful growth and development while protecting agricultural heritage and rural character, supporting a diverse economy and reinforcing the County as the preferred place to live, work and play.

Goals

Plan goals were developed based on survey results and stakeholder input. Goals can be divided into Land Use, Quality of Life, Public Services and Infrastructure, Economic Development, and Leadership. Recommendations in Chapter 4 are meant to support the goals. Annual reports to the Board of Commissioners should also provide updates based on progress made toward the goals.

Goals



LAND USE

- Protect Alamance County's farmland and rural character.
- Prioritize redevelopment, revitalization, and beautification.
- Establish development regulations that promote residential and commercial development reflective of the expectations of current and future residents.



QUALITY OF LIFE

- Increase access to open space, parks, trails, and natural features.
- Preserve historic and cultural resources including our historic mills, structures, the battlefield, art, festivals, and music.
- Preserve Alamance County's character and identity while leveraging assets to support economic resiliency.



PUBLIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- Limit infrastructure investments that increase conflicts between agriculture and development in rural areas.
- Preserve and improve access and mobility for County residents.
- Plan for and manage growth to ensure adequate transportation systems, public services, and facilities without burdening the County.
- Improve the quality and reputation of ABSS Schools to achieve parity with surrounding counties.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Partner with the Chamber and municipalities on economic development efforts.
- Invest in quality of life assets, amenities and broadband to attract businesses and talent.
- Support business retention and small business development.
- Enhance education and workforce development opportunities.



LEADERSHIP

- Equip leadership with expertise to innovate, implement, and integrate policies to move the County in the desired direction.
- Promote trust in operations and decision making by providing transparency and openness and addressing citizen concerns.
- Expand the diversity of public involvement, staff, and membership on boards and commissions.

3. VISION

Introduction to Scenario Planning

As part of the Alamance County Land Development Plan, three alternative land use scenarios were developed to frame potential policy changes. The Steering Committee and the public provided input to determine what components of these scenarios were preferred. They informed the policy recommendations in this plan. Information on the three scenarios is available in the Appendix.

- *Performance Measure Table Key**
- + No Change from Current Policies
 - ++ Improvement from Current Policies
 - +++ Significant Improvement

Draft Performance Measures Table*

Measure	BAU	MG	ARC
Amount of Residential	+++	++	+
Predominant Residential Type	Large scale conventional subdivisions in rural area.	Focused growth near activity areas. Lower density areas in rural areas away from towns.	Very large lots or farmhouse clusters (small, very low-density subdivisions) only.
Defined Edges	+	++	++
Agricultural Protection	+	++	+++
Environmental Protection	+	+++	++
Non-Residential	Mostly strip commercial along major roads	Commercial in Rural Centers and reservation of Employment Areas	Mix of uses in Mill Villages and some Employment Areas

BAU

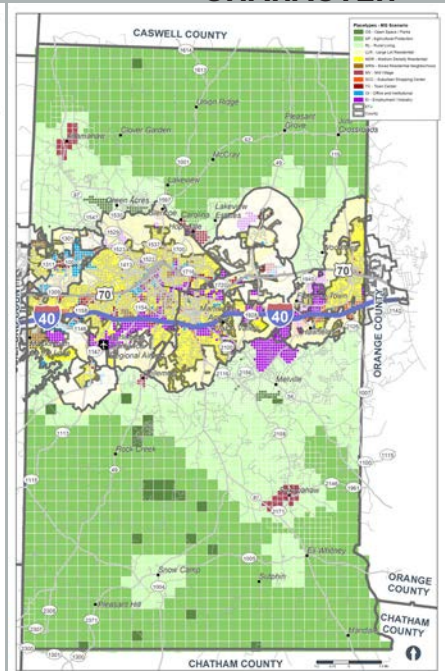
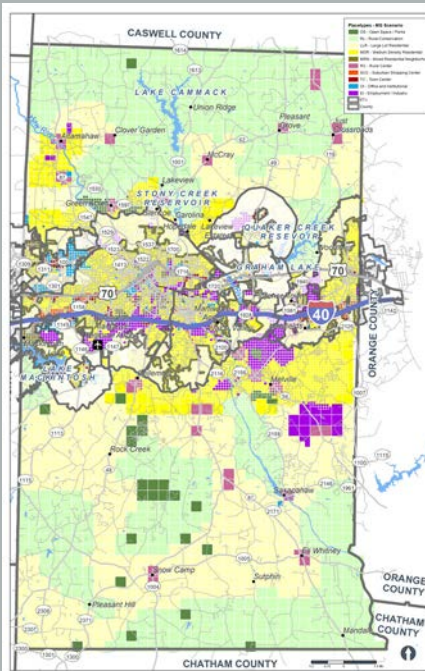
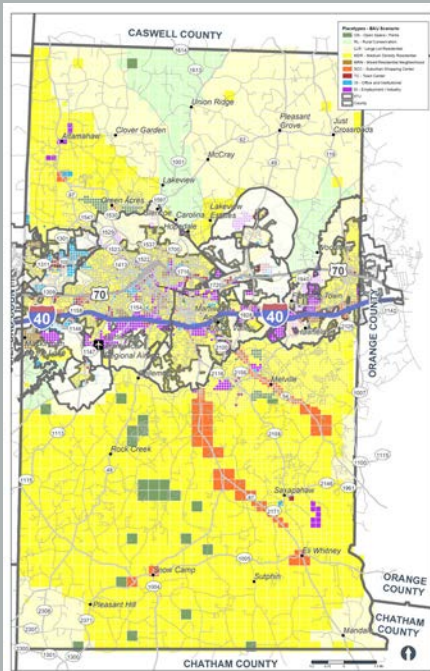
BUSINESS AS USUAL

MG

MANAGED GROWTH

ARC

AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL CHARACTER



The maps above show different colors for “placetypes” that could be encouraged through land use policies in the County. The placetypes and assumptions for the scenarios are described in subsequent pages.

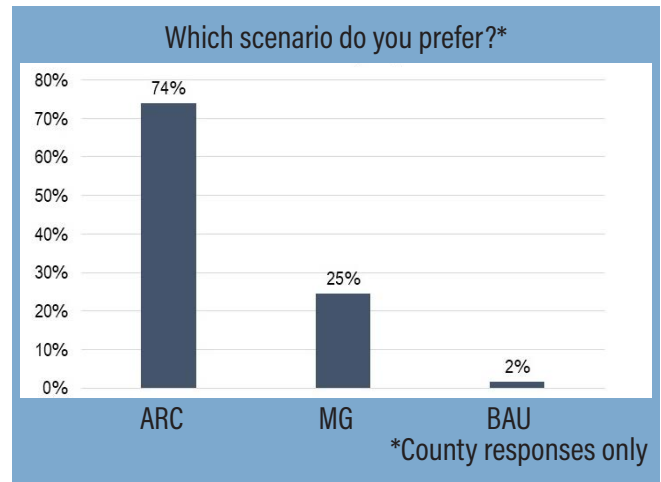
Scenario Planning Results

The majority of responses indicated support for the Agricultural and Rural Character Scenario (ARC). 74% of County respondents preferred the ARC Scenario. In the Southwest, the preference was even higher at 84%. This scenario showed a significant reduction in allowable residential intensity in Snow Camp and other rural parts of the County. Average densities of new development more closely match existing properties.

Outcomes for the scenario included:

- ▶ Residential density restrictions in the County jurisdiction would preserve the distinction between the urban and rural areas.
- ▶ Performance-based design criteria for residential and non-residential development would ensure compatibility of these uses with the rural character of the County.
- ▶ Mix of uses in Mill Villages (i.e. Saxapahaw)
- ▶ High-impact development would be restricted in Agricultural Protection Areas in the County.

There was also some support for the Managed Growth (MG) Scenario. As a result, the Future Land Use map was created based largely on the ARC scenario, but incorporated some ideas from the MG Scenario.



The rural roads of Alamance County are lined with farmland, forests and the occasional grazing livestock.

The ARC scenario

"Preserves the way of life that has treated us so well for so long."

"Keeps growth near existing businesses and transportation infrastructure."

"Limits urban sprawl."

4



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations Overview

The recommendations in this chapter elaborate on the goals in Chapter 3 and are organized by topic area. Recommendations are divided into the following sections:

- ▶ **Future Land Use Map and Character Areas**
- ▶ **Land Use**
- ▶ **Economic Development**
- ▶ **Parks, Conservation and the Environment**
- ▶ **Infrastructure and Public Services**

The Future Land Use Map and Character outlines the preferred development pattern in the County’s planning jurisdiction (outside of the defined municipal city limits and extra-territorial jurisdictions (ETJ)).

Topic area recommendations include policy statements and strategies.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Future Land Use Map

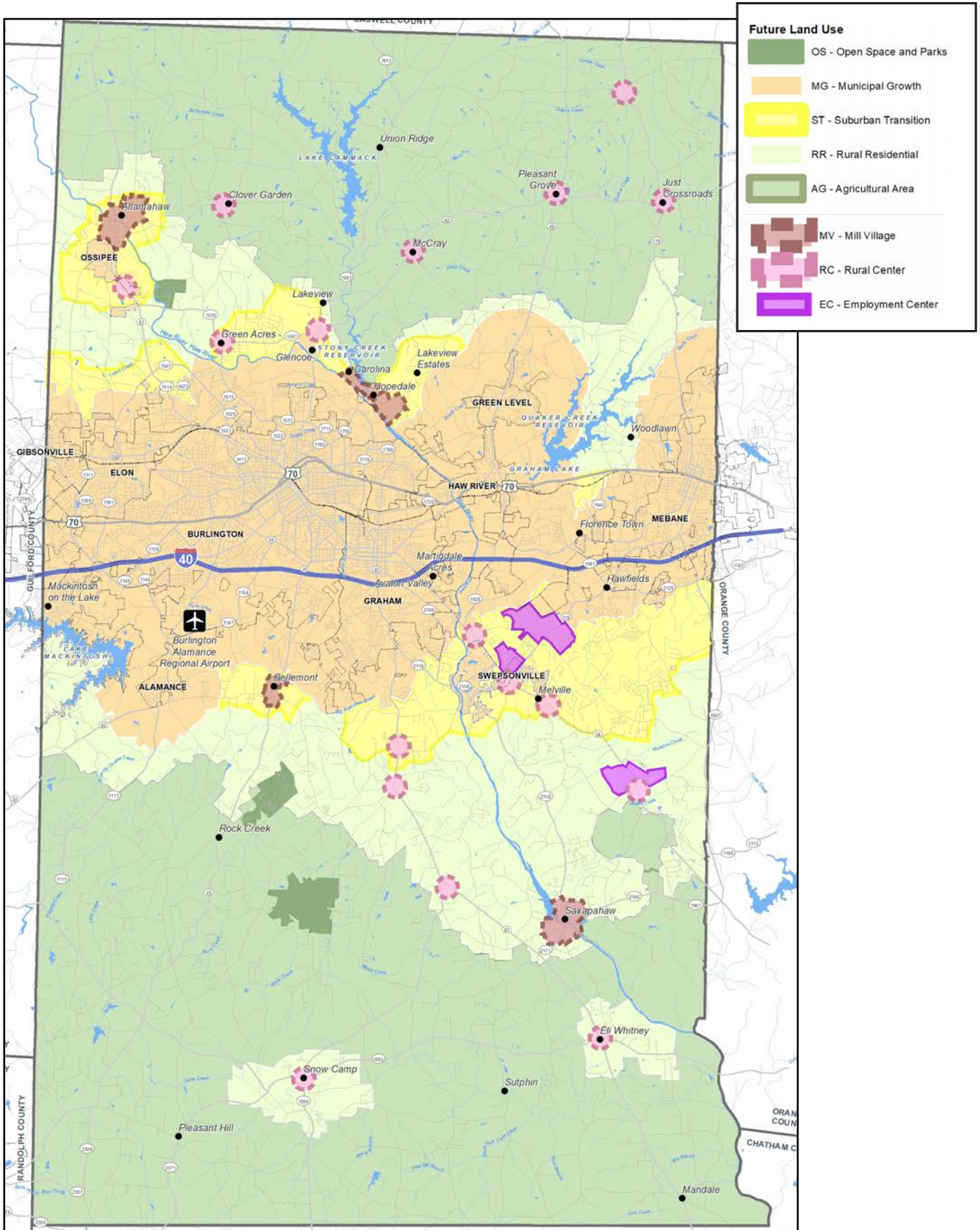
The Future Land Use Map shows the intended land use pattern in Alamance County. The map should guide growth and development as well as land use regulations in the County planning jurisdiction.

Color-coded land use categories are described on the following pages and represent character areas that have similar allowable uses, design characteristics, and density recommendations. Recommendations described later in the chapter elaborate on County actions and updates to land use regulations that will be necessary to implement the Future Land Use Map.

Areas of suburban residential growth are shown in yellow (Suburban Transition areas on the map on the opposite page). Mill Villages are depicted in red. They acknowledge the unique history of the County and should allow for a mix of residential types and land uses that reinforce the character of these historic areas. Rural Centers provide opportunities for commercial uses at key crossroads. It is anticipated that the majority of new industry will likely locate in municipalities; however, some key Employment Centers are shown on the Future Land Use Map. This helps accommodate growth in employment and industry at key sites in the county jurisdiction.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP HIGHLIGHTS

- Focused growth near municipalities
- Defined opportunities for commercial and employment land uses
- Protection of rural character in less developed areas
- Decrease development pressure in Agricultural Areas



4. RECOMMENDATIONS

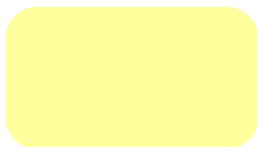
Future Land Use Character Areas

The Future Land Use Map provides a generalized guide for land use decisions in Alamance County. The character areas below describe intended land uses, density and design of new development in different parts of the County's planning jurisdiction. The descriptions are for the predominant uses expected to occur and may not capture all existing land uses.



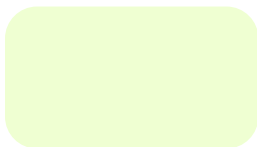
Municipal Growth

These areas are located within municipalities and the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of municipalities. Land use in these areas is governed by the adopted plans of each jurisdiction. It is anticipated that the majority of the higher-intensity land uses including much residential, commercial, and industrial development will be located in these areas.



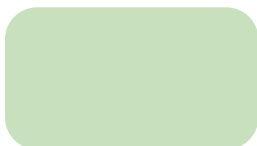
Suburban Transition

Development in this area provides a transition between more urban growth in the municipalities and more rural areas in the County's jurisdiction. These areas are appropriate for well-designed neighborhoods and potentially future annexations. Lot sizes in new development are typically between 0.5 acres and 1 acre. Gross density is largely dependent on soils and access to utilities and generally does not exceed 1 dwelling unit per acre. Homes should be clustered away from important natural features.



Rural Residential

Low density residential uses are integrated into the rural landscape which includes agricultural and forestry uses. These areas are appropriate for homes on larger lots and some small-scale subdivisions if designed as a rural cluster option. Gross density is typically less than 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres.



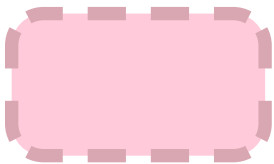
Agricultural

Prime agricultural lands are comprised mostly of working farms and timberlands. There is agriculture supporting commercial uses. Only very low-density, small-scale residential development is allowed. Density is typically less than 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres. A Rural Cluster Option that allows smaller lots with design criteria and limits on scale (e.g., 1 unit per 3 acres with 30% open space, max number of units of approximately twenty) could be permitted.



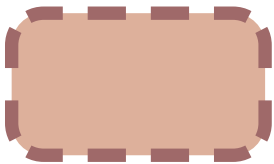
Open Space / Parks

This is land restricted from development including parks and conservation easements. Parks and additional open space are present and will occur in other areas and are not shown in order to simplify the map.



Rural Center

These areas are comprised of small-scale commercial, office, and flex uses and are typically located at historic crossroads communities where there is a history of commercial and/or civic uses. New development in these areas limited in scale should meet design criteria established in this Plan and relevant County ordinances.



Mill Village

These areas are historical mill villages that include old buildings and structures that are appropriate for a variety of uses. A mix of residential and non-residential uses is anticipated here. New development should mimic the scale and design of historic buildings.



Employment Centers

These areas contain employment-generating industrial uses such as warehouses, light manufacturing, and multi-tenant flex spaces and should be located in areas with highway access.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Land Use and Agriculture

Recommendations related to land use and agriculture are focused on priorities that were voiced by citizens during the plan development process. The recommendations focus on protecting farmland and rural character, discouraging heavy industry in certain areas and encouraging reuse, redevelopment and small-scale commercial development.

Policy LU-1 Encourage a development pattern that follows the Future Land Use Map

LU 1.1 Encourage the majority of residential growth to be located in Municipal Growth and Suburban Transition areas shown on the Future Land Use Map.

- Currently new residential developments in Alamance County must adhere to basic subdivision design standards. Additional land use regulations and/or changes to the approval process may be needed to encourage more growth to occur in Municipal Growth and Suburban Transition areas while discouraging growth in more rural and agricultural areas.

LU 1.2 Encourage commercial uses to be located in Municipal Growth areas, Employment Centers, Rural Centers and Mill Villages.

- Encourage larger scale commercial and office uses to be located in Municipal Growth areas and Employment Centers.
- Small to medium scale commercial development is appropriate for Rural Centers and Mill Villages.

LAND USE FRAMEWORK

- ▶ Protection of farmland and rural character
- ▶ Discourage mining or resource extraction in some areas
- ▶ Reuse and redevelopment of existing sites
- ▶ Encourage small-scale shops and businesses
- ▶ Encourage office, industrial, manufacturing or distribution uses in key locations

LU 1.3 Discourage more intense commercial uses in Rural Residential areas and Agricultural areas.

- Exceptions may be codified to allow for reuse of historically commercial sites, home occupations and agricultural markets and other agricultural uses exempt from regulation.

LU 1.4 Encourage industrial uses to be located in Municipal Growth areas and Employment Centers.

- Exceptions should include existing industrial uses and agricultural and timber-supporting uses.
- Other uses that have limited impact on transportation infrastructure and water usage such as solar farms should be allowed if they meet performance criteria and reduce impacts on existing properties (i.e., noise, light, visual impacts).

LU 1.5 Update land use regulations and approval processes to accomplish goals of the Land Development Plan.

- Updates to subdivision regulations and combining existing ordinances into a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is recommended.
- Consider modifying approval processes and establishing new land use regulations as needed.

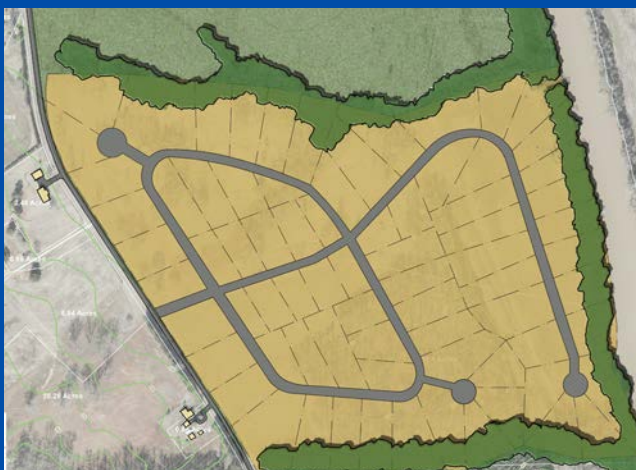
Policy LU-2 Improve subdivision design in transition areas

LU 2.1 Increase base lot size requirement and improving open space preservation in new development.

- Currently minimum lot sizes allowed in the county can be as small as 8,000 square feet with community/public water. On septic systems and wells, lot sizes are determined by soil analysis, the health department and/or location of development in watershed areas.
- Increasing the minimum lot size for new development and requiring open space

Subdivision Design

The Draft Land Development Plan recommends updating current regulations to improve the design and compatibility of new subdivisions in rural Alamance County.



Current subdivision regulations do not require open space and allow relatively small lot sizes. These types of developments could impact water quality, rural views and agriculture.



Improved subdivision regulations could require better connectivity, more open space (10-20%) and preservation of key natural features.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

can help preserve natural features and can make new subdivisions fit better in rural areas.

- *A minimum lot size requirement of 30,000 square feet would be more appropriate (a larger minimum is currently required for watershed areas).*
- Open spaces can reduce conflict with existing and future agricultural operations when placed in strategic locations.

LU 2.2 Consider a mechanism to incentivize higher quality development by allowing for smaller lots if higher standards are met.

- A sliding scale could allow smaller lots if higher standards are met
 - *Gross density of 1 dwelling unit per acre or 40,000 square foot lot minimum: basic road standard, 0% Open Space requirement, minimal frontage and side buffer*
 - *35,000 square foot lot minimum: improved road standard, 15% Open Space requirement, rural frontage treatment and side/rear buffers*
 - *30,000 square foot lot minimum: improved road standard, 25% Open Space requirement, frontage treatment, side/rear buffers, sidewalk on 1 side of road*

LU 2.3 Consider requirements for frontage buffers, tree saves or landscaping for major subdivisions.

- Consider requiring a rural scenic buffer in rural zoning district along major roadways.

LU 2.4 Evaluate and improve transportation standards for new subdivisions.

- Require two access points for new subdivisions greater than 30 units.
- Establish block length, stub street and/or interconnection standards.
- Consider requiring sidewalks or a multi-use path in major subdivisions with smaller lot sizes.

Policy LU-3 Reduce development pressure in rural and agricultural areas

LU 3.1 Allow only very low density development by increasing minimum lot size.

- Avg parcel size in Rural Residential and Agricultural Areas is much higher than currently allowed in county ordinances. Average parcel size is 5 acres in Rural Residential areas and 12 acres in Agricultural areas.



New land use regulations with incentives for “rural cluster subdivisions” could require lower density development that is more compatible with existing agricultural uses, while still allowing some new residential development.

LU 3.2 Provide a Rural Cluster Option that incentivizes small-scale residential developments that balances property options with protecting rural character and agriculture.

- See the Snow Camp Small Area Plan for an example of dimensional criteria for a Rural Cluster Option.

Policy LU-4 Protect and promote agriculture

LU 4.1 Discourage higher density, large-scale subdivisions in Rural Residential and Agricultural areas.

LU 4.2 Discourage extension of water and sewer service into prime agricultural areas.

LU 4.3 Reduce potential conflicts between new neighborhoods and agricultural operations through design requirements, including preservation of open space and vegetated buffers .

LU 4.4 Promote agriculture in the County.

- Celebrate farming through programming at County parks and events (i.e., farm tours)
- Educate the non-farm public on economic, environmental, and cultural benefits of Alamance County farms.
- Provide maps, GIS Data, and informational materials to elected officials, citizens,



The Cedarrock Historical Farm provides an example of life on a farm in North Carolina during the late 19th Century. Populated with farm animals, antique and replica farm equipment, and a farmhouse, the Historical Farm provides a fun, educational stop while visiting Cedarrock Park.

landowners, and realtors on agriculture areas, Voluntary Agricultural Districts (VAD), and farmland and forestry conservation incentive programs.

- Work with the Department of Agriculture and Cooperative Extension to promote land conservation, connect farms with land and encourage crop diversity.
- Continue and expand voluntary purchase of development rights program.

LU 4.5 Encourage agritourism operations.

- Encourage new agritourism uses to be located in Rural Residential and Agricultural Areas identified on the Future Land Use Map.
- *Note: Farming related activities are except from zoning regulation. See*

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

<https://canons.sog.unc.edu/what-does-the-farm-exemption-from-zoning-regulation-include/> for more information.

Policy LU-5 Reduce impacts of high impact development

LU 5.1 Restrict high impact development (i.e., large-scale commercial, heavy industry and mines) in agricultural areas.

- Creation of zoning or an overlay district could require a more extensive review and decision making process.

LU 5.2 Update the Heavy Industrial Development Ordinance to reduce impacts on existing residents and the environment.

- Updates could include modifications to minimum parcel sizes, landscaping and screening requirements and/or water quality protection measures.

Policy LU-6 Preserve the character and function of mill villages as community centers

LU 6.1 Encourage preservation of historic structures in mill villages.

- Allow for a mix of uses and housing types in mill villages, but require that scale and design of new development is compatible with existing structures.
- Develop customized land use recommendations and design guidelines for mill villages based on small area planning efforts that involve local citizens and land owners.

Policy LU-7 Manage growth along rural highways

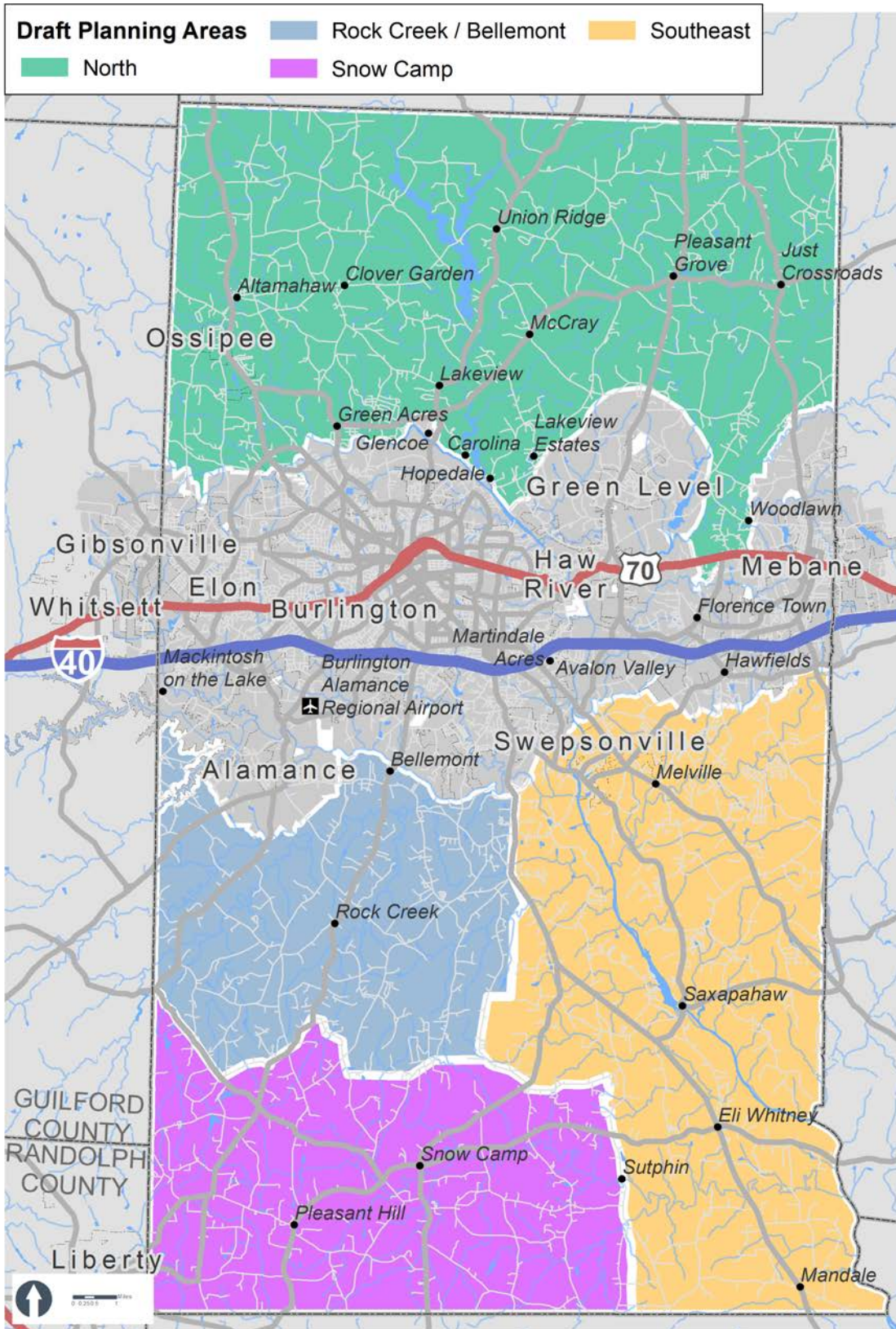
LU 7.1 Establish land use regulations that discourage strip commercial development along rural highways.

- Strip commercial development creates a sprawling, leapfrog pattern of development that is spread out at random intervals along a corridor, each with its own driveway, creating congestion and increasing accidents. Commercial strip development rarely achieves the density or critical mass necessary to build a recognizable place and results in degrading lease rates and low-quality buildings that rarely age well.
- Increasing access management requirements and design or locational criteria for new development are options that could help manage development along major corridors such as NC 54, NC 49 and NC 87.
- Many other options exist for addressing the location and design of development along these corridors and range from traditional zoning districts and standards or establishing an overlay district that applies only to a designated portion of a road corridor.

Policy LU-8 Create small area plans for portions of the county

- This plan included a study of and custom recommendations for the southwest area, including Snow Camp.
- Future studies of the Southeast, Rock Creek area and Northern Alamance County are recommended.

Small Area Plan Boundaries



4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Economic Development

Alamance County has had success in recruiting major employers and diversifying the job and industry base. Prior to the coronavirus unemployment in the county was at 3.4%, less than the North Carolina average. Recruitment of higher wage jobs is a priority, as wages and incomes track lower than many surrounding counties.

Policy ED-1 Community Partnerships

ED 1.1 Partner with the Alamance Chamber of Commerce and municipalities.

- Business retention, expansion and recruitment.
- Workforce development, education, and training.
- Small business development; tourism and recreation.
- Downtown revitalization
- Share information on development trends.
- Discuss potential ETJ expansion in regard to opportunities for increasing jobs and the non-residential tax base.

ED 1.2 Support Alamance Community College and K-12 schools.

- Support Support ACC's role as a leading trainer of career-ready individuals prepared to take advantage of opportunities in high-demand fields offered by Alamance County businesses.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUCCESSES

- Honda Power Equipment (here since 1984) announced a new \$46 million expansion.
- Lotus Bakeries started with a \$50 million investment and 60 jobs, and recently announced a \$17 million expansion.
- UPI Chem distribution center, \$17 million investment and 39 jobs
- Unemployment before the coronavirus was at 3.4%, lower than neighboring Guilford County and North Carolina overall.



Investing in early education and training can help Alamance County recruit new businesses and can contribute to the availability of an able workforce. In 2018 education bonds passed which resulted in a new high school in the southeastern part of the county and improvements to many schools. Currently Alamance County ranks 43rd in per-pupil funding, just below the state average. Source: 2017-18 School Year Data from the 2020 Local School Finance Study, Public School Forum of NC.

- Facilitate greater interaction between K-12 schools and the business community to raise awareness of career options in Alamance County and increase internships, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities for students.

Policy ED-2 Business Recruitment

ED 2.1 Focus on business recruitment.

- Continue business recruitment on core industries including manufacturing and distribution.
- Increase focus on business recruitment and expansion for higher-wage jobs in growing business sectors, such as professional, scientific, and technical services.
- The County has a strong employment base, but job gains in professional and technical services and financial sectors lag behind North Carolina as a whole.

Policy ED-3 Downtown Revitalization

ED 3.1 Support downtown revitalization by maintaining, locating, or expanding County functions and facilities within city limits.

- Locate future county services inside city limits where feasible to reinforce town centers and protect agriculture by limiting the extension of utilities into rural areas.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SITES

- 3 developed major business parks – Central Industrial Center (CCIC), North Carolina Industrial Center (NCIC), and NC Commerce Park (NCCP)
- 6 small developed business parks in Burlington – Anthony Rd. area
- 1 small developed business park in Graham – Riverbend
- 2 completed Duke Energy Site Readiness program sites
- Two areas of future employment identified on Draft Future Land Use Map
- Several additional stand-alone sites scattered around county



The downtown of Graham, Burlington, Mebane and other towns in Alamance County serve as retail and civic centers and also offer attractions and events that benefit the entire county.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy ED-4 Amenities

ED 4.1 Promote Alamance County's scenic natural areas and recreational assets.

- Parks and recreational assets (including Cedarock Park, Saxapahaw Island park, the Cane Creek Mountain Natural Area, and the Haw River Trail) are unique community assets.
- Promoting the county as part of North Carolina's 'Green Heart' in the middle of the Triad and Triangle regions can make the county a regional destination.
- Expanding and connecting these facilities can increase quality of life for residents as well as make the county attractive to businesses.

Policy ED-5 Agriculture

ED 5.1 Expand inter-county efforts to support agriculture.

- Regional efforts (such as the Piedmont Food Processing Center) are needed to support the local processing and sale of Alamance County farm products.



During stakeholder interviews for the Land Development Plan, economic development stakeholders noted that the Haw River, the Haw River Trail and other parks and natural areas are unique asset to the county and help define the “brand” for Alamance County by appealing to residents, employers and visitors interested in outdoor activities and active lifestyles.

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4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Parks, Conservation and the Environment

Alamance County is the 17th most populated county in North Carolina. Despite a growing population and economy much of the county remains quite rural. There are 80,042 acres of farmland (Source: 2017 Agricultural Census) and 147,000 acres of forest (Source: 2019 USDA Cropscape Data). There are also 13 designated Natural Heritage Natural Areas in the county. These areas of rare habitats and species represent unique natural communities that are of county and regional significance. The Alamance County Parks system includes a number of parks, community centers, natural areas and trails that provide active and passive recreation opportunities. Protecting agriculture, key natural and historical resources and maintaining and expanding the parks system will be important to enhancing the quality of life in Alamance County and maintaining economic competitiveness.

Policy PC-1 Promote and invest in parks and trails

- County parks, community centers, and trails are unique assets that improve quality of life for residents and help attract and retain businesses.

PC 1.1 Maintain and enhance existing parks and open space.

- Continue to maintain existing parks and implement recommendations from the 2017 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan.

PC 1.2 Coordinate with municipalities to address under-served areas.

Policy PC-2 Expand access to trails and the Haw River

PC 2.1 Continue working toward improving and extending the Haw River Land Trail.

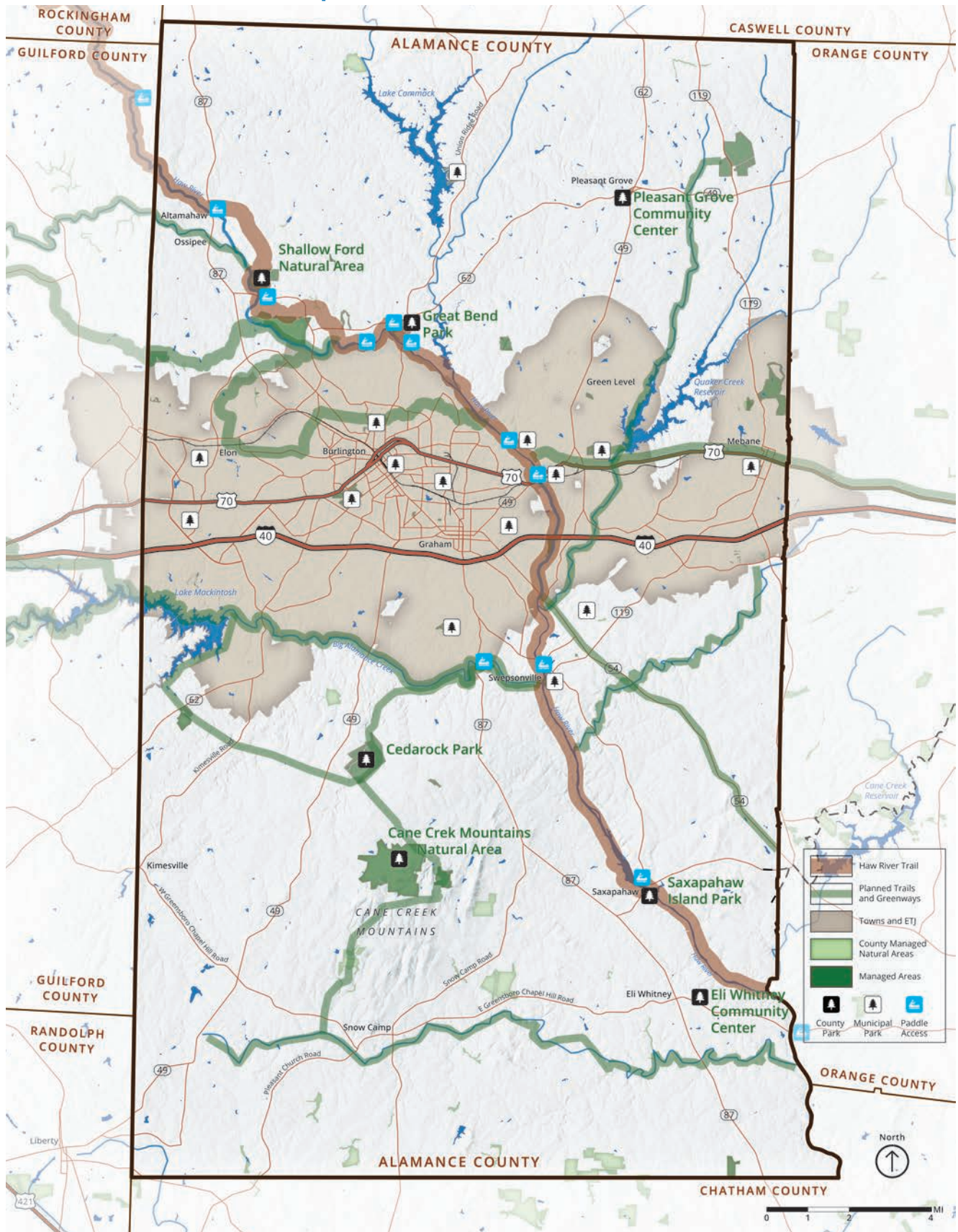
PC 2.2 Work with municipal and state partners to complete segments of the Mountain to Sea Trail through Alamance County.

PC 2.3 Continue working with the Haw River Trail Partnership to maintain and improve access to the Haw River.

PC 2.4 Study additional priority greenway and trail connections including:

- Big Alamance Creek Greenway: A greenway extending along Big Alamance Creek would connect to the Haw River Trail west of Swepsonville, extends westward and skirts the North side of Lake Mackintosh connecting with trails in Guilford County. This long-distance trail was envisioned in the Alamance County Greenway Plan.
- Burlington and Elon Greenways: A combination of trails and bikeways in these communities make up part of a northern connection across the county, eventually connecting to the Buffalo Creek Corridor in Guilford County. These facilities are important to making urban connections to regional systems and are referenced in local planning efforts.

Parks and Trails Map



4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Haw River Trail to Mebane: A future connection between the Haw River Trail and Mebane is important for making connections to developing trail systems in the east toward Orange County. This connection is also identified as part of the state's priority network for North Carolina in the Great Trails State Plan.
- Other trails noted in the 2017 Alamance County Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan, specifically Appendix D - Alamance County Trails Plan

Policy PC-3 Protect natural and cultural resources

PC 3.1 Encourage preservation and appropriate adaptive reuse of historical resources.

- The identification, restoration and active use of structures, buildings, monuments, and neighborhoods of historic or architectural significance is encouraged as a means of enhancing their economic and cultural value to the County. National registration and designation of local historic areas is encouraged, when appropriate.
- Below is a list of some of the key sites included on the National Register of Historic Places in Alamance County:
 - *Alamance Battleground State Historic Site (listed in 1970)*
 - *Bellefont Village Historic District (listed in 1987)*
 - *Glencoe Mill Village Historic District (listed in 1979)*

PC 3.2 Discourage the destruction of architectural, historic, and archaeological resources in the County.

PC 3.3 Discourage higher intensity development in the critical water supply watershed areas.

PC 3.4 Work with the North Carolina Wildlife Commission to update the Natural Heritage Inventory in the County.

- The existing inventory is from 2002 and needs to be updated due to changes in the landscape. For instance 3 of the 17 Natural Heritage Areas identified in 2002 have been destroyed or have been impacted to the point that they no longer meet the qualifications for this designation.

Policy PC-4 Encourage development design that preserves sensitive natural features of the site

PC 4.1 Increase requirements for open space in new residential development.

- Currently minimum stream buffers and regulated features (floodplains and wetlands) are protected. Requiring additional open space reservations can help preserve natural features and can make new subdivisions fit better in rural areas. If located in the right places open space can also reduce conflicts with existing or future agricultural operations.

- Require public access easements for planned trails and greenways along the Haw River and Big Alamance Creek.
- Open space in new subdivisions should be included in a separate parcel and deed restricted.

PC 4.2 Update regulations to prioritize open space protection along the Haw River and its tributaries.

- Existing riparian buffer requirements are 50ft in the Jordan Lake watershed.
- Prioritizing and/or incentivizing the protection of additional open space and/or larger vegetated buffers along perennial streams is recommended to maintain and improve water quality.

PC 4.3 Review and update land use regulations to reduce negative impacts of erosion and stormwater.

- Runoff from new development should be of a quality and quantity as near to natural, pre-development conditions as possible.

PC 4.4 Protect the floodplain.

- Discourage residential development in the 100 year floodplain
- Prohibit higher intensity development in the 100-year floodplain
- If development must occur, low intensity uses such as open space, recreation, and agricultural activities are preferred.

Policy PC-5 Support land conservation efforts within the County.

PC 5.1 Continue and expand the voluntary purchase of development rights program.

PC 5.2 Coordinate with the Jordan Lake One Water Initiative to conserve land important to water quality in the Haw River and Jordan Lake.

Policy PC-6 Promote cultural and recreational tourism in the County

PC 6.1 Coordinate with the Alamance County Visitors Bureau and municipalities to promote recreational tourism in the County.

PC 6.2 Improve facilities at Cane Creek Mountain Natural Area.

PC 6.3 Develop the tourism potential of the area's architectural and historic resources.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Infrastructure and Public Services

Water and sewer service is provided by municipal systems in Alamance County. Limiting the extension of these services into rural areas of the county can help protect agricultural operations. Maintaining mobility for Alamance County residents is a goal of this plan. Preserving capacity of major roadways and ensuring new development disperses traffic and makes incremental improvements to the transportation system are part of the recommendations in this section of the plan.

Policy INF-1 Discourage extension of water and sewer service into agricultural areas

INF 1.1 Discourage extension of water and sewer services to properties in the Rural Residential and Agricultural areas on the Future Land Use Map.

- Exceptions to this policy may include transmission of services between local governments, cooperative agreements on major economic development projects and extension of lines needed to improve pressure in growth areas, but which must run through more rural areas

Policy INF-2 Support broadband internet expansion in the county

INF 2.1 Study and support extension of broadband internet to underserved parts of the county.

Policy INF-3 Encourage annexation with the provision of municipal utilities in Municipal Growth and Suburban Transition areas identified on the Future Land Use Map.

- Provision of water and sewer service without annexation should generally be discouraged, especially for residential development due to the cost and expectation of public services in residential developments.

Policy INF-4 Coordinate with local governments to ensure adequate public services

INF 4.1 Coordinate to improve police and fire service in growth areas which include Municipal Growth and Suburban Transition areas, Rural Centers and Mill Villages.

INF 4.2 Ensure adequate public safety services in more rural areas.

Policy INF-5 Reduce transportation impacts of new residential development

INF 5.1 Update regulations to require new major subdivisions to make necessary transportation improvements that reduce the impacts to public roadways.

- Consider establishing or revising standards related to driveways and access roads, turn lanes, sidewalks and connectivity requirements
- See Land Use recommendations for more information.

Policy INF-6 Preserve mobility along major thoroughfares

INF 6.1 Improve access management along major thoroughfares.

- Review driveway spacing standards for new development and consider requiring larger spacing along major thoroughfares outside of Rural Centers.

INF 6.2 Prioritize modernization of roads and intersection improvements in the county.

INF 6.3 Study future collector street needs in areas of residential growth (i.e. Municipal Growth and Suburban Transition areas on the Future Land Use Map).

INF 6.4 Study hot spots for accidents and truck traffic in the county.

- Address truck traffic through Saxapahaw

Policy INF-7 Support regional transportation planning efforts

INF 7.1 Continue to support regional transportation planning efforts through the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMPO).

INF 7.2 Study future transit services within the county and between Alamance County and adjacent counties.

INF 7.3 Study future transportation improvements to east/west connections in conjunction with municipalities and the Burlington-Graham MPO.

5



SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN

Overview

Snow Camp is a unincorporated community in southwest Alamance County with a population of 6,274 depicted within the study area boundary identified in exhibit 6.01. Set amongst forested hills and an agrarian landscape, Snow Camp is situated 9.6 miles northeast of Liberty, 22.1 miles west of Chapel Hill, 17.1 miles south of Burlington, and 12.6 miles north of Siler City. Growth in the region and mining interests have threatened to change the character of portions of southern Alamance County, including the areas surrounding Snow Camp. As part of the Land Development Plan, a small area plan was created to focus on Snow Camp and the southwestern part of Alamance County.

Small Area Plan Purpose

The Snow Camp Small Area Plan includes an analysis of the study area, what makes it unique and a set of specific strategies put together with maps and supporting information that aim to preserve or improve the community. Through a collaborative process with staff, stakeholders and the general public, recommendations are made for various issues such as land use, development design, transportation, economic development, parks and open space, and natural resources.

Without being an incorporated town, there is little in the way of governing documents and policies to help manage the growth and change that Snow Camp is experiencing. The Snow Camp Small Area Plan looks to address many of those issues and present a set of policies and strategies that can guide efforts by Alamance County and other partners in the public, private and non-profit sectors.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN

- Identify what area makes up the community of Snow Camp
- Define the character of the community
- Establish a set of guidelines focused around manageable growth
- Promote the preservation and economic vitality of the community's businesses and natural resources
- Support the historical significance of the region
- Create recommendations for implementation strategies to guide Snow Camp's future

SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN

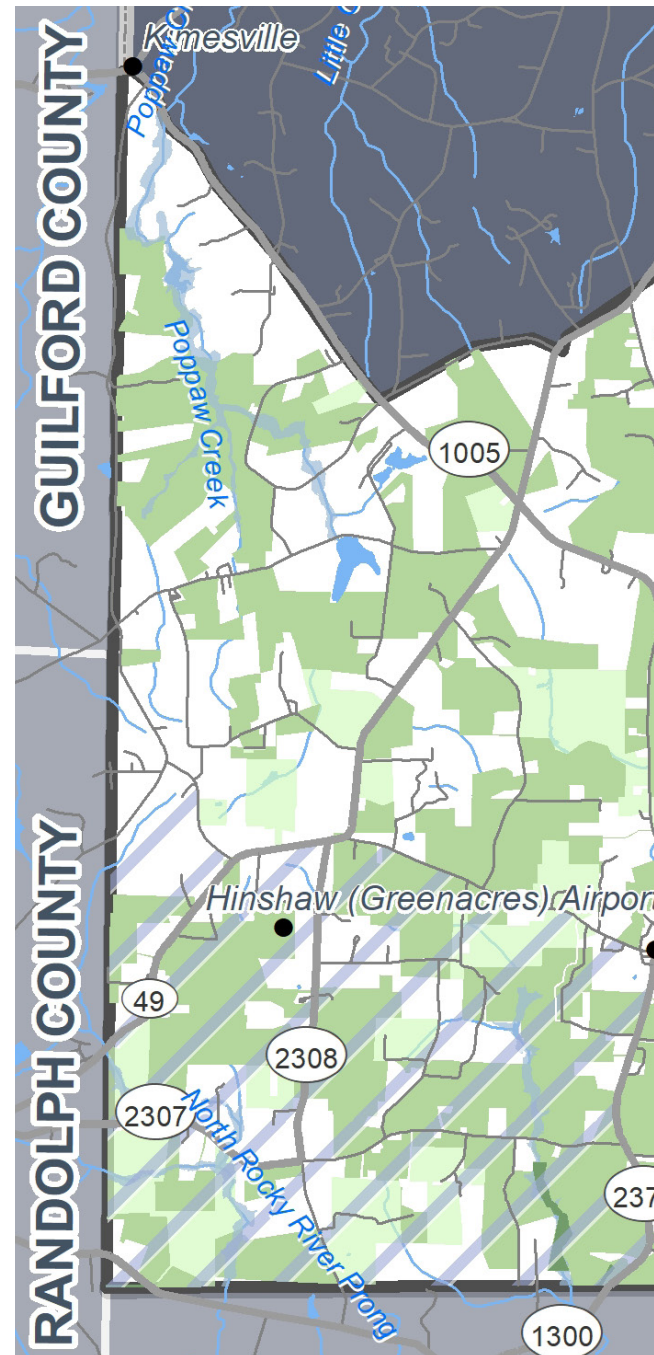
STUDY AREA

The population within the Snow Camp / Southwest Alamance County study area grew from 4,780 in 2000 to 6,274 in 2019. This growth and a recently proposed crushed stone quarry has caused the community and county to consider if additional policies are needed to safeguard community interests in Snow Camp in the future.

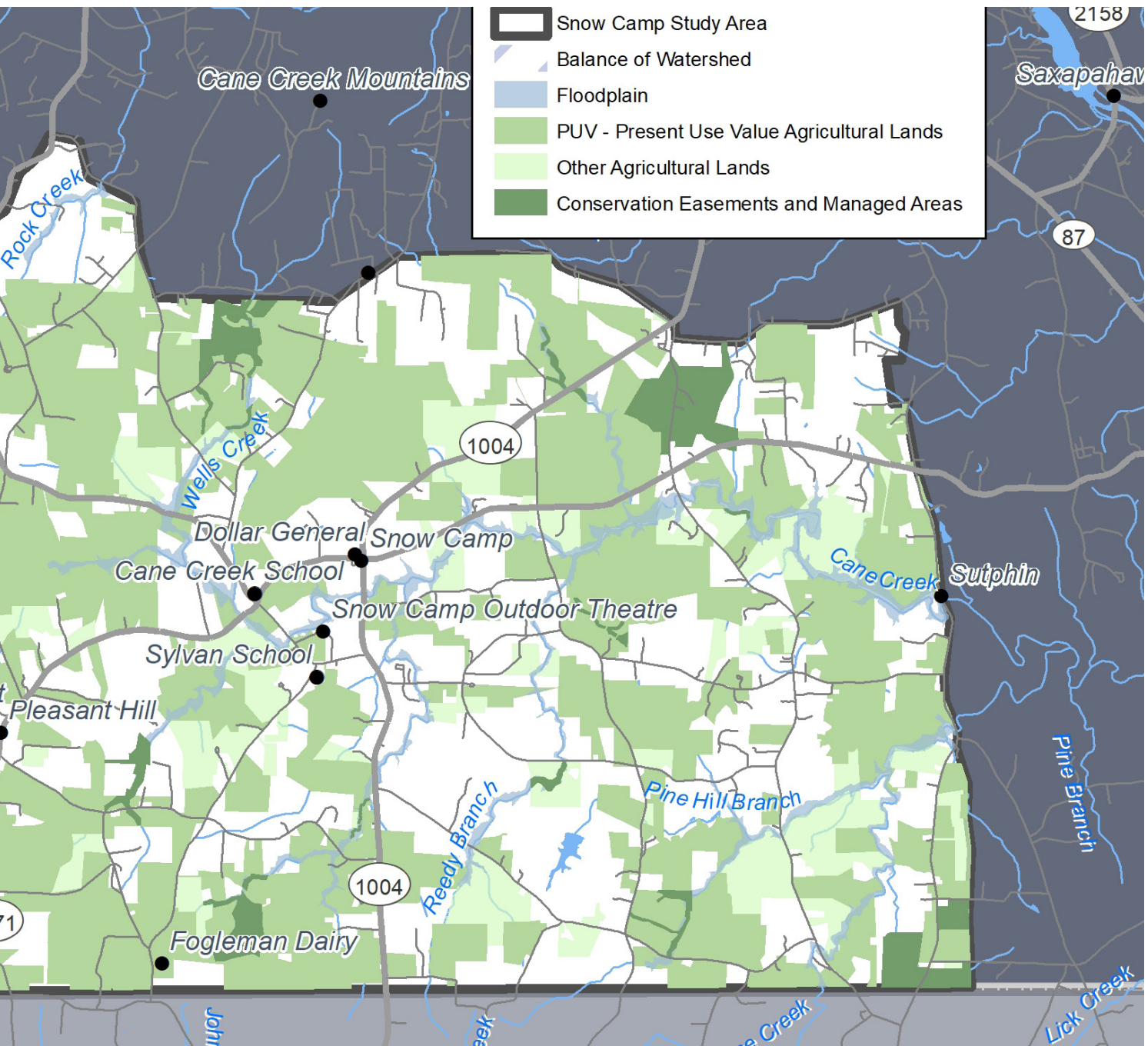
The character of Snow Camp has been created by a variety of landscapes and structures defined over time by settlement patterns. The landscape is dominated by farmland, rural homesteads, small-scale commercial and civic uses near key crossroads.

The Snow Camp study area boundary is 40,900 acres (64 square miles) and is comprised of 23,000 acres farmland (59% of total acreage). The majority of farmland is enrolled in the Present Use Value (PUV) Program, which provides a tax break for agricultural land by basing taxable value on present-use of the land instead of market value. A number of conservation easements exist in the study area. A large conserved property north of East Greensboro Chapel Hill Road is used as a Coast Guard training facility.

Major geographic features include Cane Creek which drains most of the study area. Major tributaries include Wells Creek, Reedy Branch, and Pine Hill Branch. The western part of the study area drains north to Big Alamance Creek via Pappaw Creek and south into Chatham County via North Rock Rocky River Prong.



Snow Camp Cotton Field



SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Snow Camp can be defined by its rural charm filled with large expanses of farmland and pasture on flatter land with better soils and stands of timber on steeper lands and along floodplains.

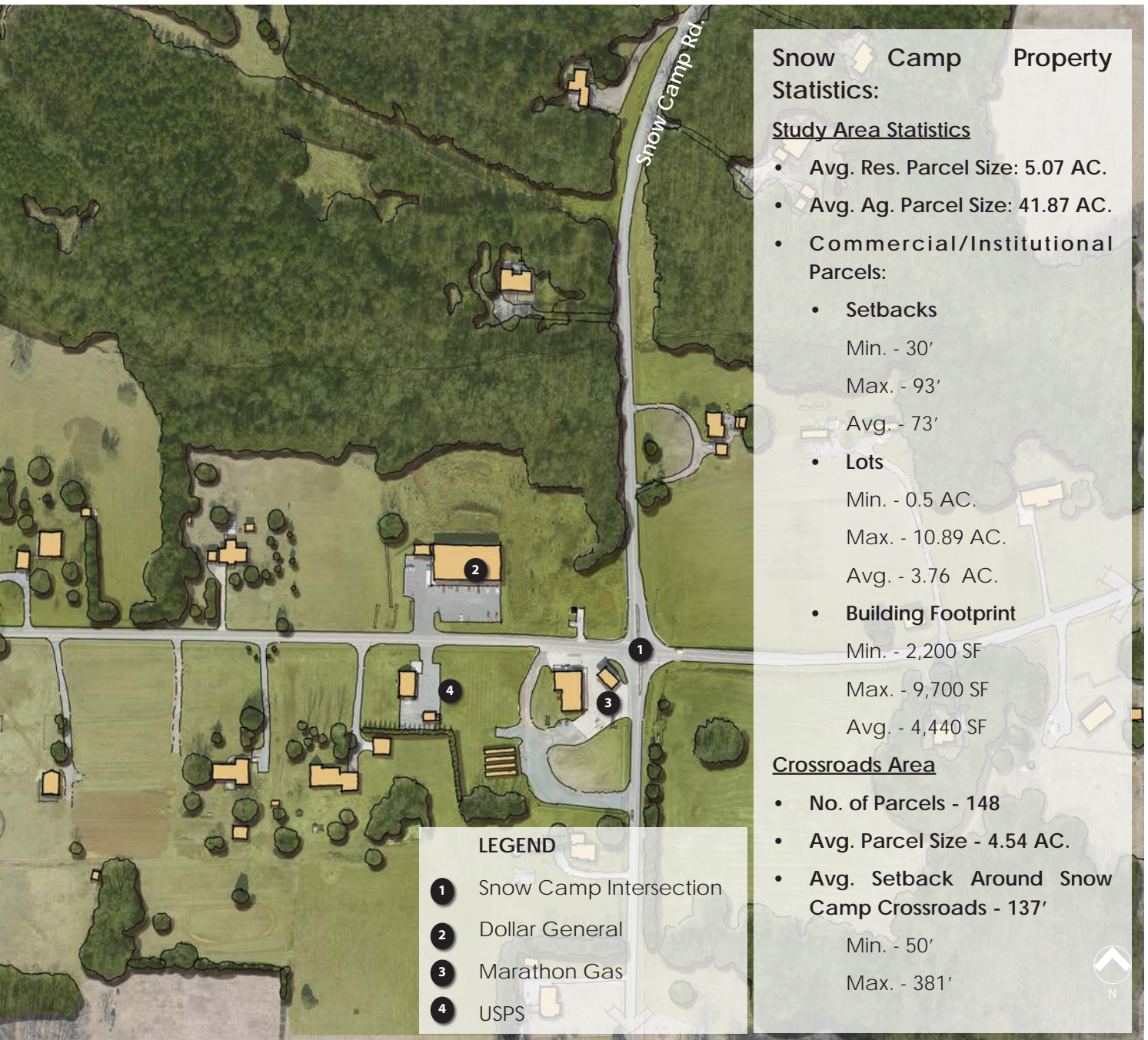
Three buildings make up Snow Camp's main intersection at the cross roads of East Greensboro Chapel Hill Road and Snow Camp Road. They include a gas station, post office and Dollar General. Other community buildings within a short drive of this intersection include the Snow Camp fire station, Yesterday's Grill, Snow Camp Outdoor Theater, Sylvan Elementary School and various churches in the vicinity.

Alamance County currently does not have zoning ordinance that defines allowable uses, density limits and design requirements. A number of other ordinances exist that specify basic standards for development, including a Subdivision Ordinance and a Heavy Industrial Development Ordinance, but generally these tools allow for development that does not fit the character of Snow Camp. Additional land use regulations and tools may be needed to help mitigate the unintended consequences of unwanted development.

As part of this plan the form of Snow Camp's built and natural environments and agricultural land use patterns were studied to understand the qualities that contribute to the character of the area. Statistics gathered are included on the following page. Key findings include:

- The average residential parcel size in the Snow Camp Study Area (southwest Alamance County) is around 5 acres
- Maximum building footprint is under 10,000 square feet
- Setbacks vary, but are typically quite large





5. SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN

Snow Camp over the Years

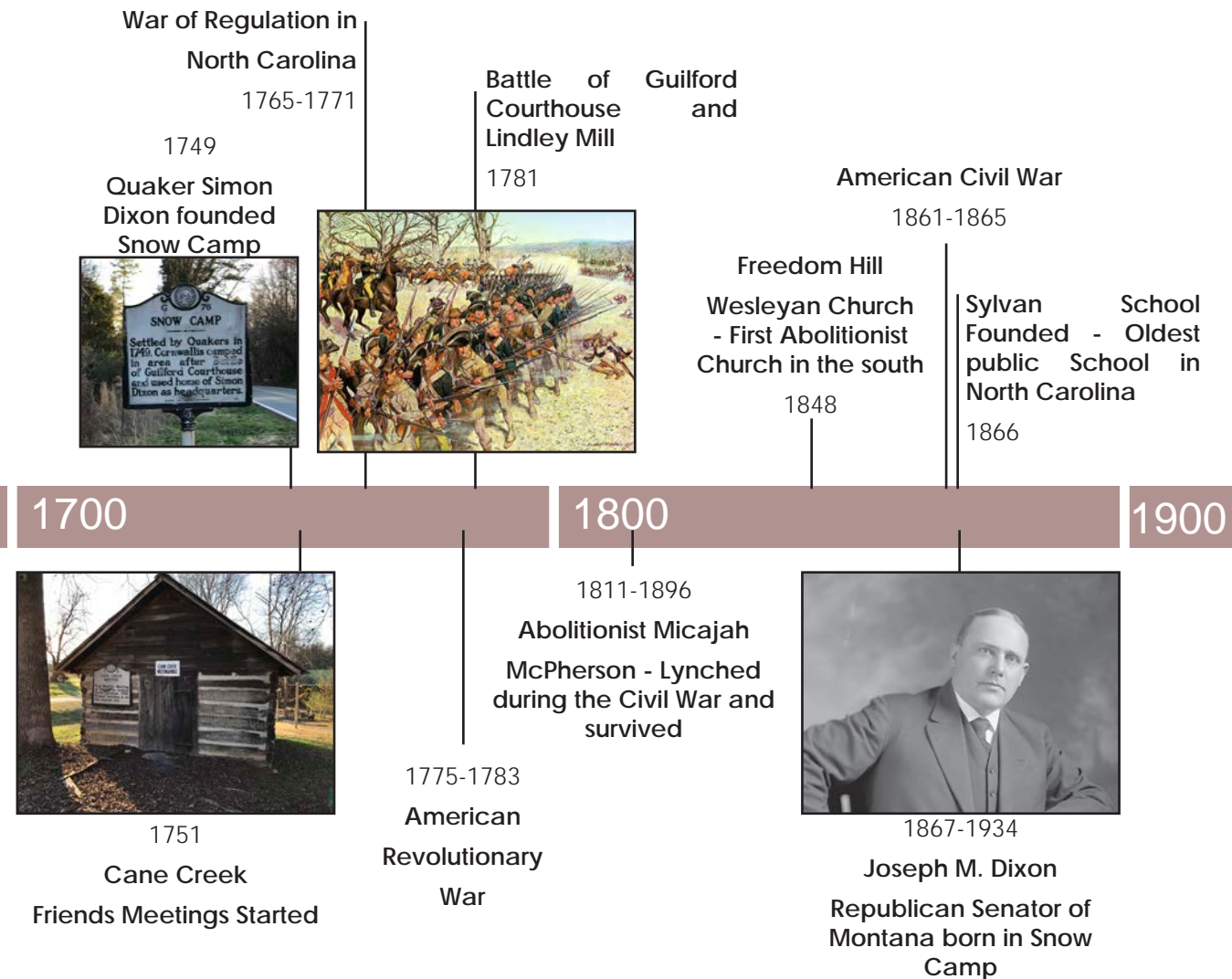
Snow Camp North Carolina has a long history tied to its surrounding landscape and central to skirmishes during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars.

The land in Snow Camp prior to settlement by Europeans was home to the Sissipihaw Indians who farmed, hunted and fished the rolling hills of the Piedmont.

When Europeans settled the area in the 1740's it was Simon Dixon, a quaker that left Pennsylvania as part of the southern migration that founded Snow Camp in 1749 on the banks of Cane Creek. After building a cabin and the

start of a mill, quakers continued to migrate south and established a community building mills and churches throughout the region.

Snow Camp became a centerpiece in the War of Regulation at the Battle of Alamance which has been said to have led to the American Revolution not long after. During the Revolutionary War, General Cornwallis took over the Dixon House where he rested before the battle of Guilford Courthouse (1781) which was a strategic victory for the Americans. Following the Battle of Guilford Courthouse months later, the battle of Lindley Mill took place on the banks of Cane Creek where patriot forces fought after loyalist militias had captured



Governor Burke. Both battles have been said by many historians to have been key to fueling the patriot movement leading to the eventual defeat of the British Army at Yorktown.

Nearly 100 years later, During the Civil War, Snow Camp housed many runaway slaves as part of the underground railroad.

Today, Snow Camp is home to many cultural resources including the Snow Camp Outdoor Theater and the Cane Creek Friends Meeting. The Outdoor Theater is currently closed but once hosted many historical shows on the original property of where Snow Camp was founded. The Cane Creek Friends Meeting House is considered the first established Quaker community in the Piedmont of North Carolina.

HISTORICAL MARKERS

- Historic Snow Camp and Outdoor Theater
- Spring Friends Meeting and Historical Marker
- Battle of Lindley’s Mill
- Cane Creek Meeting House
- Sylvan School
- Snow Camp and the American Revolution
- Freedom Hill Wesleyan Church

Snow Camp
Historical Society
1971-Present



1950

2000

TODAY



1978-Present

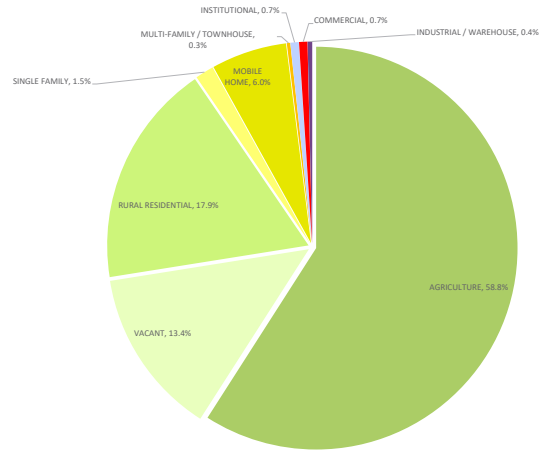
Lil John’s Mountain Music
Festival

5. SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN

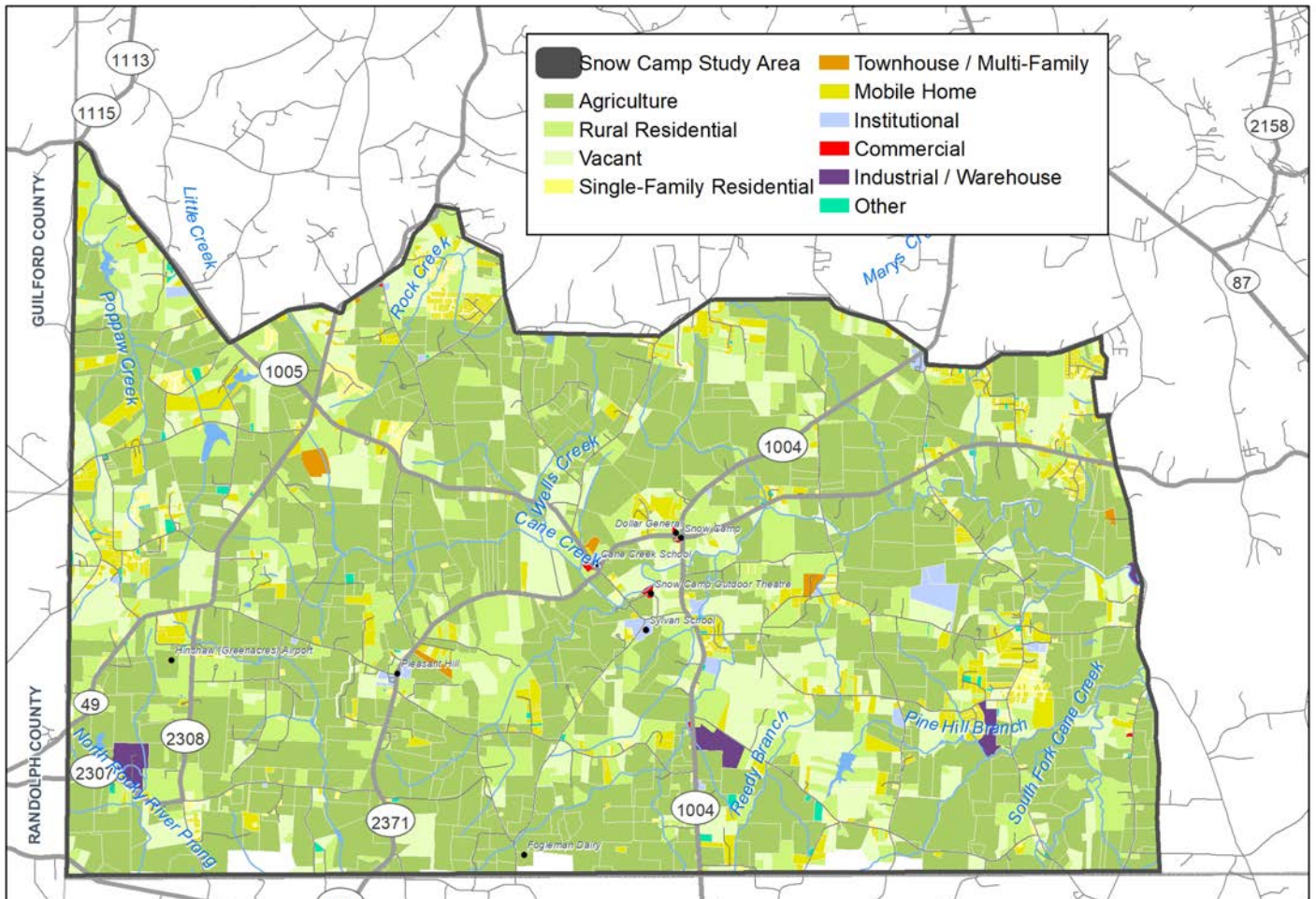
Existing Land Use

Agricultural lands, vacant lands and low density, rural residential uses make up the majority of land uses in the study area. Agriculture makes up 59% of the land area. There are 10,200 acres of residential properties (26% of total acreage), 5,300 acres of vacant land (13%) and 50 acres of existing institutional, commercial and industrial uses (4% of total acreage)*.

**Note: Industrial acreage does not include proposed quarry.*



Existing Land Use Chart



Existing Land Use Map

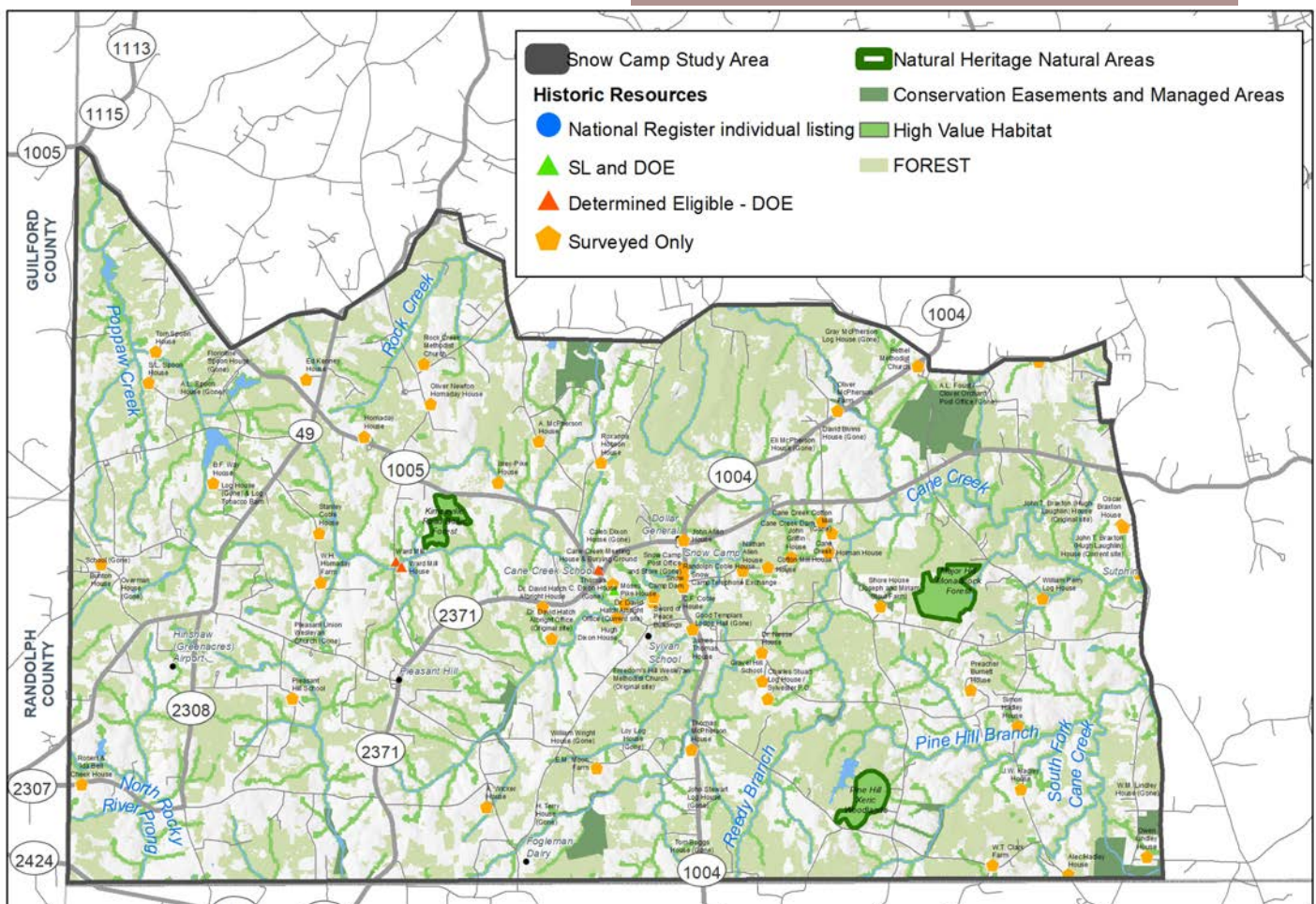
Natural and Historic Resources

There are three designated Natural Heritage Natural Areas in the study area. These sites represent the best examples of intact natural communities in the county and region. The areas provide habitat for rare species and can be impacted by residential or industrial development as well as timbering.

There are 59 historical structures and sites surveyed in the study area. The majority of these are clustered in the heart of Snow Camp. Notable sites and structures include the Cane Creek Meeting House and Burying Ground, the ruins of Dixon Mill, the Sword of Peace Buildings, and a fieldstone wall along Sylvan School Road that dates to 1800.

NATURAL AND HISTORICAL HERITAGE

- Natural Heritage Natural Areas
 - Kimesville Road Basic Forest
 - Major Hill Manadnock Forest
 - Pine Hill Xeric Woodlands
- Historical Resources
 - 59 total historical surveyed structures and sites

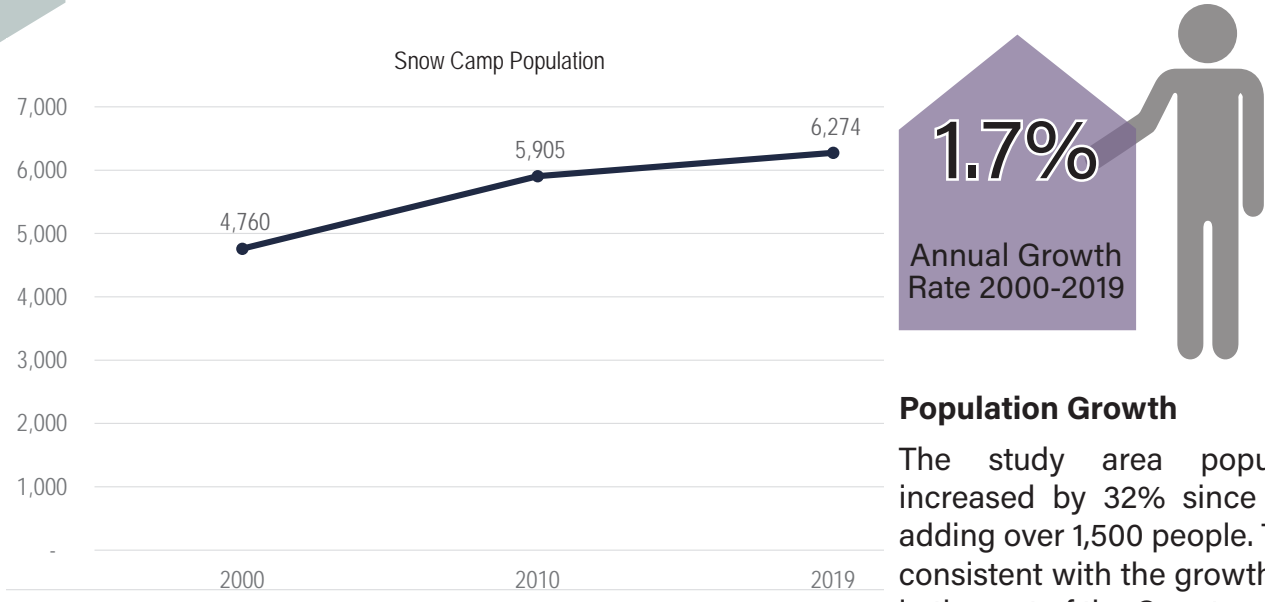


Natural and Historical Resources Map

5. SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN

Demographics

The following demographics analyses give insight into the unique make-up of the study area:



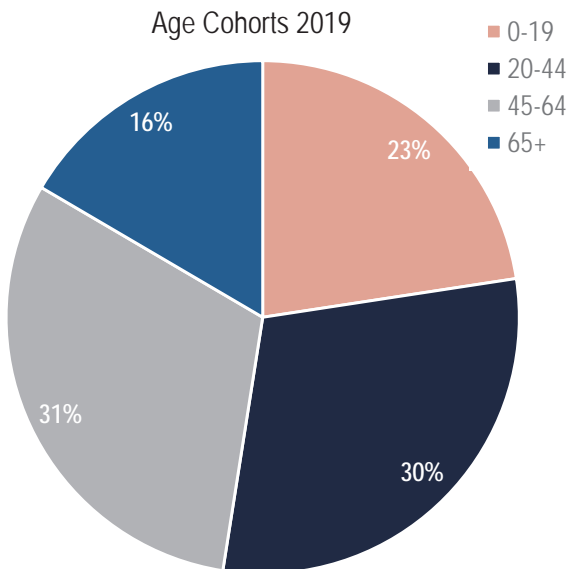
Source: ESRI

Population Growth

The study area population increased by 32% since 2000, adding over 1,500 people. This is consistent with the growth seen in the rest of the County.

Population Characteristics

The population of Snow Camp has an age distribution consistent with the rest of the county. Just over half the population (53%) is age 44 or under.

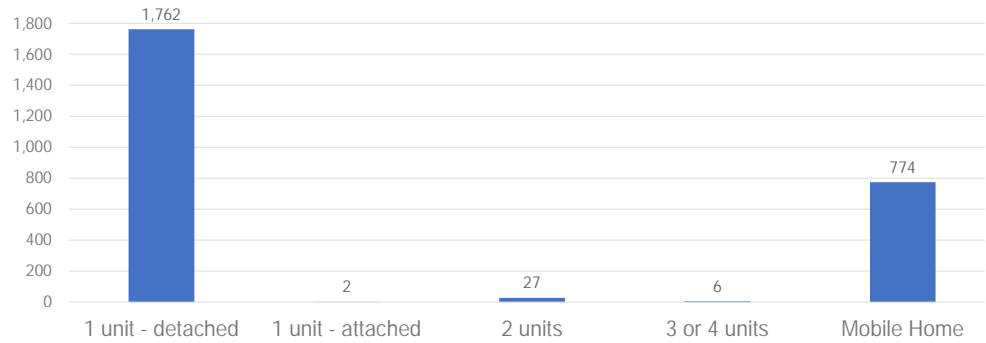


Source: ESRI

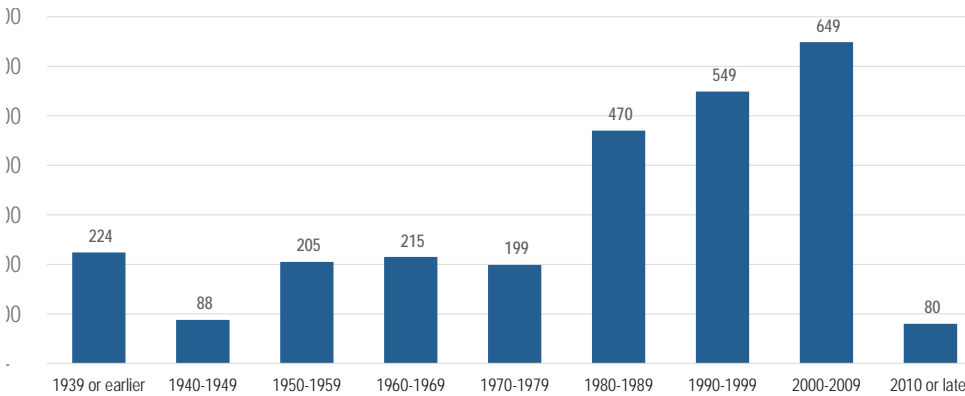
Housing

Housing Mix

Housing in the Snow Camp Area is dominated by single family detached homes and manufactured homes, which together account for 98.6% of homes in the study area. The other 1.4% are mostly 2 or 3 unit dwellings.



Source: ESRI: Housing Types



Source: ESRI

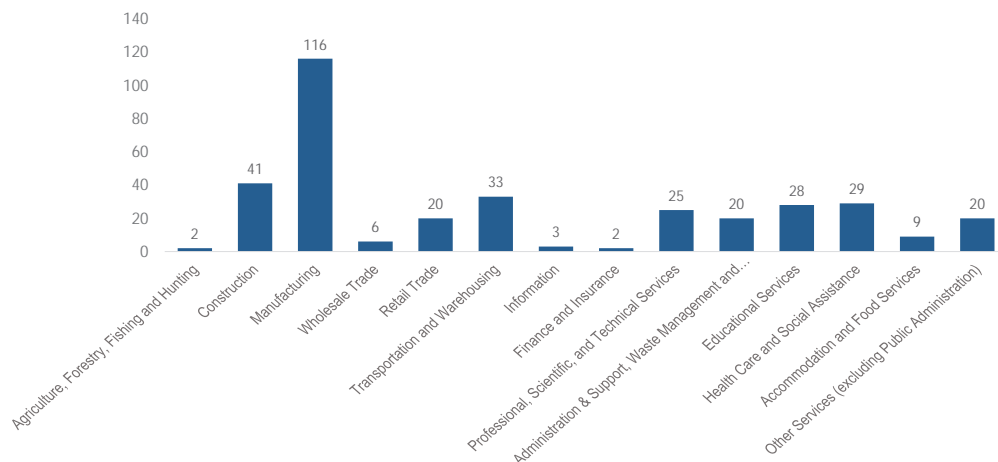
Housing

There are an estimated 2,612 housing units in the Snow Camp Study area. Between 2000 and 2019, housing units increased 34%, which is reflected in a very similar population growth. 47% of the housing stock was built after 1989, with every decade since the 1980s seeing more homes built than the last.

Economy

Employment Industries

In total there are 354 jobs located within the Snow Camp study area. The dominant industry represented in the study area is manufacturing, with 116 jobs, or 32% of the employment. Other prominent sectors include construction, transportation and warehousing, and healthcare.



Source: Census on the Map

5. SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN

Recommendations

Policy SC-1 Encourage a development pattern that is consistent with the Small Area Plan and Future Land Use Map.

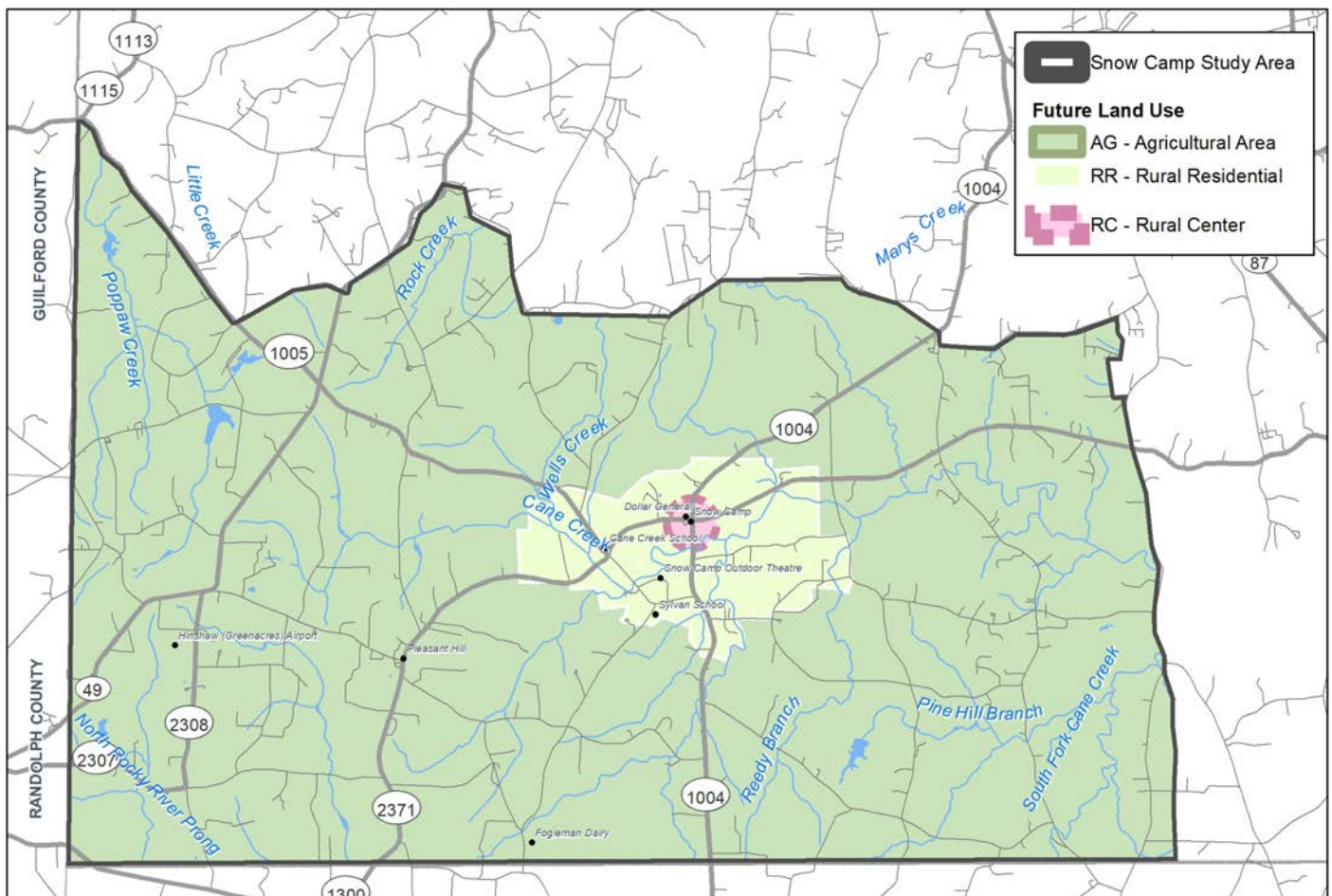
SC 1.1 Base land use policy and decisions on consistency with this plan and require development design to adhere to recommendations for the applicable future land use character areas.

SC 1.2 Allow only low density residential development in order to reduce conflicts with agriculture.

SC 1.3 Encourage small-scale commercial development in Rural Centers identified on the Future Land Use Map.

Policy SC-2 Preserve the natural and historical assets of Snow Camp.

SC 2.1 Encourage the preservation, rehabilitation and appropriate reuse of



Future Land Use Map

historic structures.

- Consider designation of additional Local Landmarks

SC 2.2 Encourage the preservation of scenic rural views, historical landscapes and key natural features.

- Consider designation of priorities for open space preservation in new developments.
- Survey respondents from the southwest preferred that priorities for open space preservation should include:
 - Farms and working agricultural lands
 - Streams and areas important for water quality
 - Mature forest and wildlife habitats

SC 2.3 Update the Subdivision Ordinance

- Increase minimum lot size requirements
- Implement open space requirements for major subdivisions
 - *Consider a sliding scale based on lot size or overall density of subdivision*

SC 2.4 Encourage voluntary land conservation in the Snow Camp Area

- Educate landowners about options and benefits of conservation easements
- Continue and expand the Purchase of Development Rights program
- Consider updates to the Purchase of Development Rights program to prioritize historical farm landscapes, water quality and/or wildlife habitats

Policy SC-3 Protect water quality in the Snow Camp area

SC 3.1 Work with the Jordan Lake One Watershed Initiative to protect lands in the Snow Camp area

SC 3.2 Study potential stream restoration along Cane Creek and its tributaries

SC 3.3 Update Heavy Industrial Development Ordinance to improve protections to water quality and ground water

SC 3.4 Consider updates to ordinances and approval processes to encourage only small-scale subdivisions that are designed to respect natural and historical features

- The majority of survey respondents (75%) in the southwest area preferred farmhouse cluster subdivisions. 79% of respondents did not support conventional subdivisions.

Policy SC-4 Restrict high impact land uses in the study area, especially in Agricultural Areas identified on the Future Land Use Map

SC 4.1 Consider requiring a more extensive review and decision making process for certain high impact uses including large-scale residential and commercial development, heavy industry and mines.

5. SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN

Policy SC-5 Consider implementing additional regulations to manage growth and high impact land uses.

SC 5.1 Consider some form of zoning in the Snow Camp Area or the County as a whole to preserve agriculture and rural character.

- Alamance County currently regulates land development through a series of ordinances. The Subdivision Ordinance regulates the splitting of tracts of land so that it can be sold, developed or used. The Heavy Industrial Development Ordinance and Automobile Graveyards Ordinance establish standards for certain types of development. A zoning ordinance would allow all the county to discourage high impact uses in rural and agricultural areas.
- Options for implementing zoning are described below:
 - Option A: Designate 4 zoning districts based on existing uses and character. These could correspond with the Future Land Use Map and character areas (Agriculture, Rural Residential, Rural Center). A fourth district for industrial uses such as solar farms could also be needed.
 - Option B: Implement zoning countywide. This would require 6-7 zoning districts due to additional land use types and character areas. This would be a larger effort than implementing zoning just for the southwest part of the county (Snow Camp).
 - Option C: Establish an overlay district for Agriculture areas in Snow Camp or county-wide. Discourage higher

density residential growth and heavy industry in these areas through dimensional standards or a special use permit requirement.

- In addition to these options a combination of Option A and Option C could be pursued that allows for zoning districts to be established and applied in the southwest and the implementation of an agricultural overlay or one or more zoning districts in other areas of the county.
- Potential zoning districts are described on the next page.

SC 5.2 Consider the combination of current ordinances into a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)

- Combining the current ordinances under a UDO would allow for a more user friendly document and potentially streamline administration of the current regulations, while creating a framework for implementing zoning in all or part of the county

SC 5.3 Consider reasonable exemptions when establishing zoning districts.

- *Note: Farming related activities are except from zoning regulation. See <https://canons.sog.unc.edu/what-does-the-farm-exemption-from-zoning-regulation-include/> for more information.*
- Consider other reasonable exemptions during the drafting of the zoning districts (i.e. agricultural supportive uses, communication/utilities, educational uses, governmental uses, public facilities, recreation)

Potential Zoning Districts (in Snow Camp)

AG - Agriculture

- Purpose: Protect concentrations of agricultural operations and prime farmland from impacts of dispersed residential development and heavy industrial uses.
- Dimensional Criteria:
 - *Gross density of less than 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres*
 - *Lot size minimum (3 acres / 130,680 square feet)*
- Rural Cluster Option:
 - *Up to 15 lots. Flexibility in lot size (dependent on soils) to allow for preservation of sensitive natural features. Minimum property size of 30 acres. Maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 3 acres*
 - *40% open space requirement with prioritization criteria*
- Non-farm Commercial Uses: Consider a performance-based approach to permitting currently unregulated non-farm commercial uses in rural areas that addresses parcel size, parking and landscaping to reduce conflicts due to light, noise, etc.

RR - Rural Residential

- Purpose: Reduce impacts on agricultural operations and existing property values. Encourage residential development more compatible with existing residential uses that average 5 acres per home.
- Dimensional Criteria:
 - *Gross density of less than 1 dwelling unit per 3 acres*
 - *Lot size minimum of 1.5-2 acres*
- Rural Cluster Option:
 - *Up to 15 lots. Flexibility in lot size (dependent on soils) to allow for preservation of sensitive natural features. Minimum property size of 30 acres. Maximum density of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres*
 - *30% open space requirement with prioritization criteria*

RC - Rural Center

- Purpose: Allow for small-scale commercial development at high traffic crossroads or key locations.
- Dimensional Criteria: Maximum building footprint in Rural Centers should be less than 10,000 square feet or required to meet additional standards. Minimum lot size, maximum impervious surface coverage and landscaping requirements should also be established.
- Parking and Access Requirements: Only one bay of parking between street and building, remainder of parking in the side or rear, with option to pull building closer to the road right-of-way if all parking is placed in the rear. Cross-access (easements and construction) to adjacent properties is required.

Other

- There may be a need to designate some industrial uses as non-conforming or create an industrial district with a special approval process.

5. SNOW CAMP SMALL AREA PLAN

Implementation Steps

Implementing zoning in the county is not an overnight process. A number of steps would have to be taken to modify administration and approval processes and develop and implement the zoning ordinance. Below is a list of steps needed:

- ▶ Conduct a work session with the County Commissioners and Planning Board on implementation of the plan. A major decision would be which option to pursue (see SC 5.1).
- ▶ Establish zoning districts with clearly defined purpose statements that outline the character and objective of each district.
- ▶ Establish district standards that accomplish the purpose of each zoning district, including but not limited to:
 - ▶ Use standards – which uses are allowed in which districts, and what procedures, applications, or design standards are necessary to establish and operate a use
 - ▶ Dimensional standards – min. lot width, min. lot size, max. density, driveway separation requirements, impervious surface restrictions, structure height limits, etc.
 - ▶ Character standards – landscaping requirements, open space requirements (if applicable), materials and design standards (for nonresidential and multi-family structures), pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks, bike lanes, parks, mailbox areas), etc.
- ▶ Administrative code changes: Establish regulatory authority and process (NCGS Chapter 160D) and duties of enforcement (boards, administration, application and review procedures, appeals, etc.)
- ▶ Establish standards for nonconformities
 - ▶ Define nonconformities.
 - ▶ Determine standards for bringing uses that are nonconforming into compliance – timeframes, restrictions on expansion/operations/etc., amortization timeframes (if desired)
- ▶ Conditional zoning standards
 - ▶ If used, need to establish standards.
- ▶ Map the zoning districts
 - ▶ Identify properties in GIS that fit within each zoning district. (3,400 parcels in the Southwest District)
 - ▶ Note: In some instances, properties may be split-zoned. This is often not viewed as a best practice, but it is appropriate when an existing, more intense use occupies only a small portion of a property, and the governing body does not wish to extent an entitlement for that more intense use to the entirety of the property. Split-zoning is common when establishing a zoning map from scratch. As properties subdivide, change use, and develop in the future, these properties will naturally trend toward a more uniform zoning for each property.
- ▶ Conduct public noticing required by the State and establish an effective date
- ▶ Some ordinances can and will remain separate from zoning, but also enforceable. These may include the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, Heavy Industrial Development Ordinance, Watershed Protection Ordinance, Fire Prevention, Wireless Communications Facilities, etc.

NEXT STEPS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

At each major step, the public must be involved so that they can provide input on and are aware of the proposed changes to land use regulations. Key opportunities for engagement include gathering feedback on zoning district standards and public comment and a public hearing on a draft ordinance.

