



PITTSBORO



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Special Thanks

Forest Hall at Chatham Mills

39 West



STEWART

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1

INTRODUCTION



The Town of Pittsboro's Land Use Plan identifies land use goals and provides recommendations for achieving that vision. It should help to guide land use policy, funding, resource decisions, and infrastructure investment for the Town, its staff, its elected and appointed leaders, and the public. This section provides background information about the Town of Pittsboro and general information about the importance of the Land Use Plan.

Project Schedule



INTRODUCTION

The historic Town of Pittsboro is the seat of Chatham County, North Carolina. It is located in the Piedmont region of central North Carolina, approximately thirty miles west of Raleigh, the state capital, and fifteen miles south of Chapel Hill. The Town itself has a total land area of 5.49 square miles, and the population was 4,537 based on the 2020 decennial Census. Pittsboro's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) includes rural areas and new development, including the master planned community of Chatham Park which will be annexed into the town limits as developed.

Brief History

The area that is now Pittsboro was originally home to the Sissipahaw and Haw Native American tribes. In the early 18th century, European settlers began to move into the area, and the Town of Pittsboro was founded in 1785.

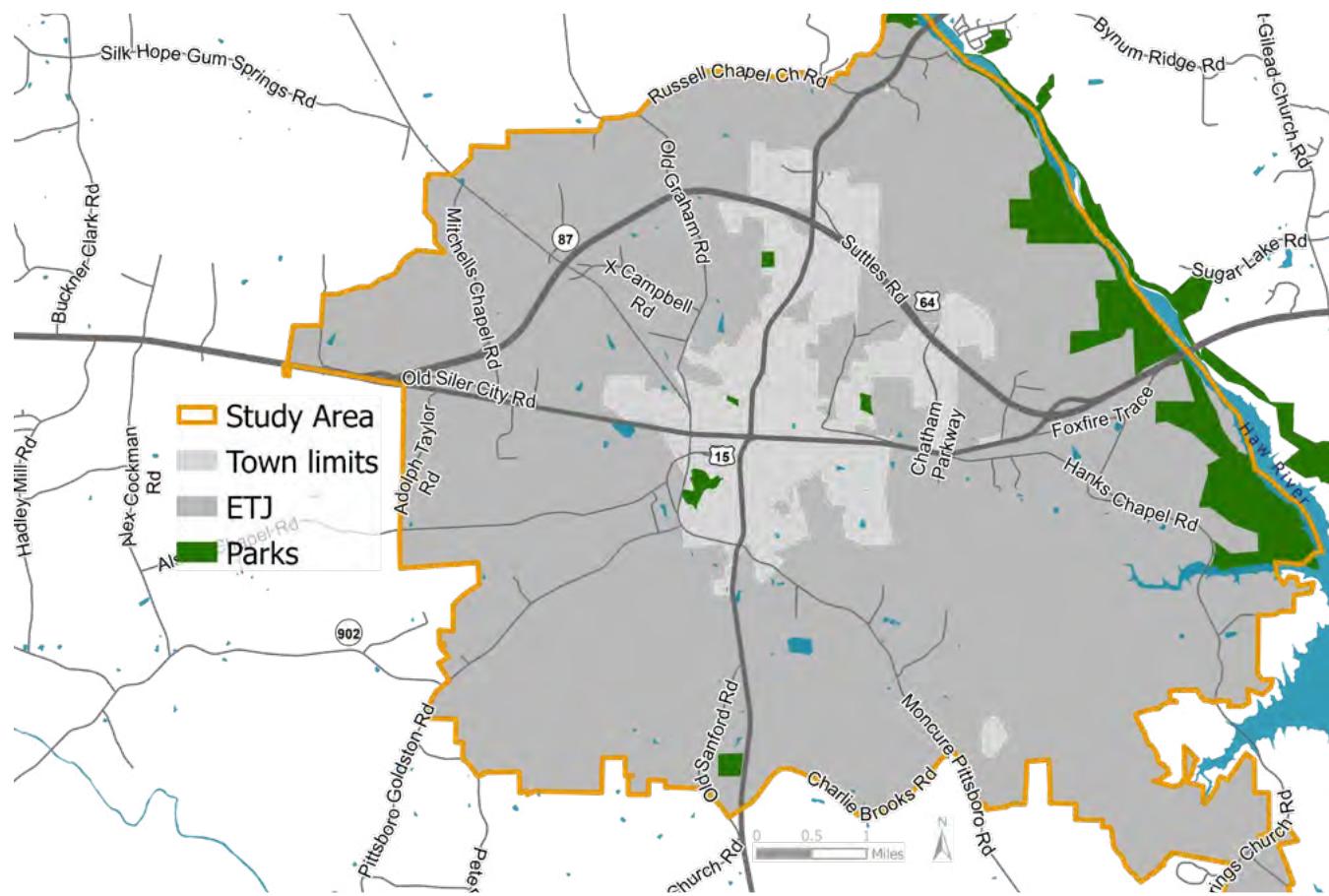
Map 1. Study Area Map

Pittsboro has a rich history of agriculture and industry. The town was an important center for the production of tobacco, cotton, and grain. In the 20th century, Pittsboro became known for its furniture and clothing manufacturing operations.

As the seat of Chatham County since the late 1700s, Pittsboro is a center for local government. The County's first courthouse was built in Pittsboro in 1778, and the current courthouse, built in 1881, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is prominently situated in the center of the town, surrounded by a number of local businesses and restaurants. Today, the town is characterized by a lively downtown area with multiple historic and newer residential neighborhoods.

Geography

The Town of Pittsboro sits at an elevation of 400 feet. Part of the Cape Fear River Basin, Pittsboro is drained by Roberson Creek, which passes through town on its



way to the Haw River on the eastern edge of the town's ETJ. The Haw is a major inflow tributary of Jordan Lake, a reservoir completed in 1974 and owned by the Army Corps of Engineers.

The land in and around Pittsboro is characterized by rolling hills with steeper slopes adjacent to waterways and drainages. Land not cleared for development or agriculture is naturally forested with species typical of the oak/hickory hardwood group and the loblolly/shortleaf pine softwood group.

Regional Context

Every community plays a regional role, and central North Carolina is especially dynamic. Evolving social and economic conditions in surrounding areas will continue to impact Pittsboro.

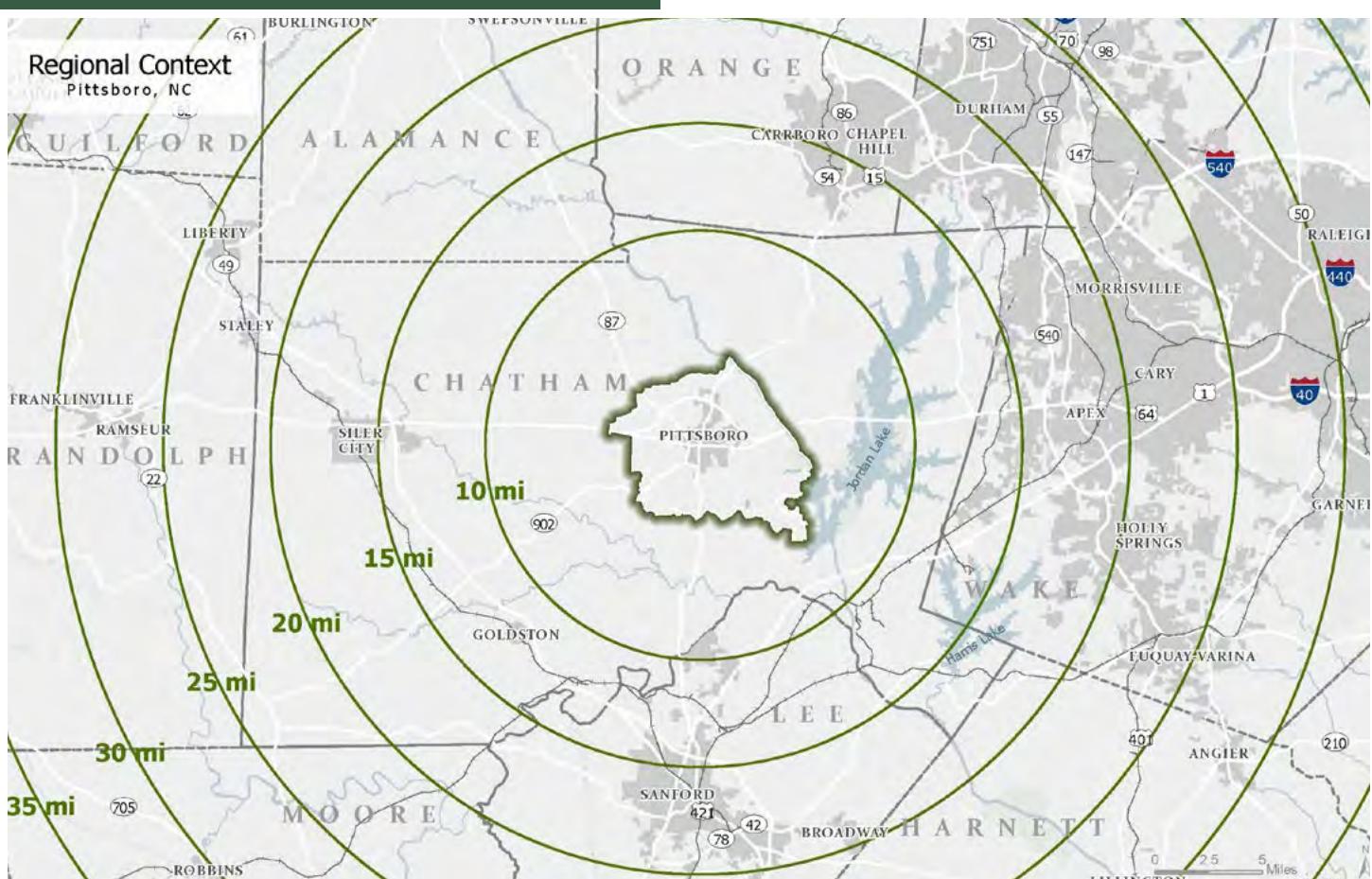
Research Triangle

North Carolina's Research Triangle, formed by the cities of Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill, is a major center for technology and scientific research. This concentration of resources has had a significant impact on the economic development of the region, attracting a large number of high-tech and biotech companies and helping to create a diverse and robust economy. Additionally, the presence of these research institutions and companies has also led to the growth of a highly educated and skilled workforce, further fueling economic development in the region.

Chatham County

Chatham County is one of North Carolina's fastest growing counties with a total population just over 76,000 in 2020. The largest town is Siler City, (pop. 7,702), but much of the growth is occurring in unincorporated areas.

Map 2. Regional Drive-time Map



INTRODUCTION

The County has several industrial mega-sites aimed at attracting major employers. In late 2022, the State of North Carolina announced the establishment of a new electric auto battery manufacturing facility at Triangle Innovation Point near Moncure, with an anticipated 7,500 new jobs created.

The County also provides many of the land-based resources that are available to Pittsboro residents. Natural resources, agricultural operations, and outdoor recreational facilities are distributed throughout the County. These elements are integral to life in the area, irrespective of government jurisdiction.

Chatham Park

Chatham Park is a planned development project in the Town of Pittsboro and its ETJ. The Board of Commissioners approved the Master Plan for the project in 2015 and development is underway. The Master Plan is approved for a maximum of 22,000 residential units and 22,000,000 square feet of non-residential development.

Why Plan?

The Land Use Plan is an opportunity for a community to assess its current condition, identify its goals for the future, and chart a path forward to achieve those goals. It is also a State-required document for enacting or enforcing zoning in North Carolina.

This plan replaces the Town of Pittsboro's 2012 Land Use Plan. The new Land Use Plan will serve as guidance for land use decisions in the Town and its extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

The Process

The ten-month planning process included community engagement paired with in-depth analysis of existing conditions in the Town. The project team, consisting of Town staff and a consulting team, conducted research, geospatial analysis, and reviewed existing planning documents. A Steering Committee provided guidance on overall project direction, while input from stakeholders, members of the public, Town staff, and elected and appointed boards helped to shape a set of goals for Pittsboro's future. The goals acted as a backdrop for developing recommendations, which were presented to the public and stakeholders for additional feedback. The adopted Land Use Plan is a culmination of all these activities.

What is a Land Use Plan?



A STATE REQUIREMENT

North Carolina's General Statutes require all municipalities to have a current future land use plan to guide their future development



A LONG-RANGE PLAN

Land use plans look 10-20 years in the future, and make projections based on past trends and data



DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

Land Use Plans set guidance for location and intensity of certain types of development, which guides decision making for City staff, Council, and boards.



POLICY, NOT REGULATION

The Land Use Plan is a policy document, meaning it influences decision making as opposed to dictating requirements. It is not a rezoning of the City.

Engagement

Community engagement was an important element of this plan. Outreach included stakeholder interviews, two public meetings, a bilingual survey, and conversations with many town leaders, residents, and business owners across the Town. Project announcements were made to the public using traditional and social media as well as flyers distributed around town. A summary of public engagement is available in Chapter 2.

How to Use This Plan

The Town of Pittsboro's Land Use Plan will serve as a strategic guide for land use decisions for the Town and its ETJ. The Future Land Use Map and accompanying character area descriptions should be referenced by decision-makers, including Town staff, Planning Board, and the Board of Commissioners, in rezoning cases and development proposals. The complete set of recommendations should be used by Town leadership and staff to craft a strategic work plan.

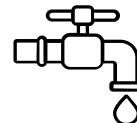
The Land Use Plan should also serve as guidance for investors, developers, and the general public when making land acquisition and development decisions. Although the Plan is only a guide, it should lower the risk of unexpected land use changes in the Town's jurisdiction.

Plan Organization

- ◆ Chapter 1 – An introduction to the process and an overview of the plan document.
- ◆ Chapter 2 – An explanation into how this Plan was developed. It details key inputs used during the planning process, including:
 - » An assessment of previous plans;
 - » Key demographic findings;
 - » A summary of input received, and;
 - » The goals that have shaped the recommendations.
- ◆ Chapter 3 – The four plan elements, highlights from their respective analysis, and recommendations. The elements are:
 - » Land Use and Housing,
 - » Infrastructure,
 - » Downtown, and
 - » Natural Resources & Conservation.



LAND USE AND HOUSING



INFRASTRUCTURE



DOWNTOWN



NATURAL RESOURCES & CONSERVATION

Plan Updates

The Land Use Plan should be updated every five-to-seven years to remain relevant. In particular, the Future Land Use Map may need to reflect changes in infrastructure, rezonings, and direction from Town leadership.

Best practices in urban planning are always evolving and recommendations are interrelated. As the Town changes over time, design, development, operations, and maintenance are all critical elements to preserving the integrity of the built and natural environment. Current best practices are an important part of this Plan, but strategies should continually be reexamined and updated to maintain relevance over time.



2

PLAN DEVELOPMENT



The process of developing a land use plan involves several elements of data-driven analysis and community engagement. This section provides some of the highlights from the plan development process, from the early activity of assessing existing plans to creating a set of goals to help steer plan recommendations.

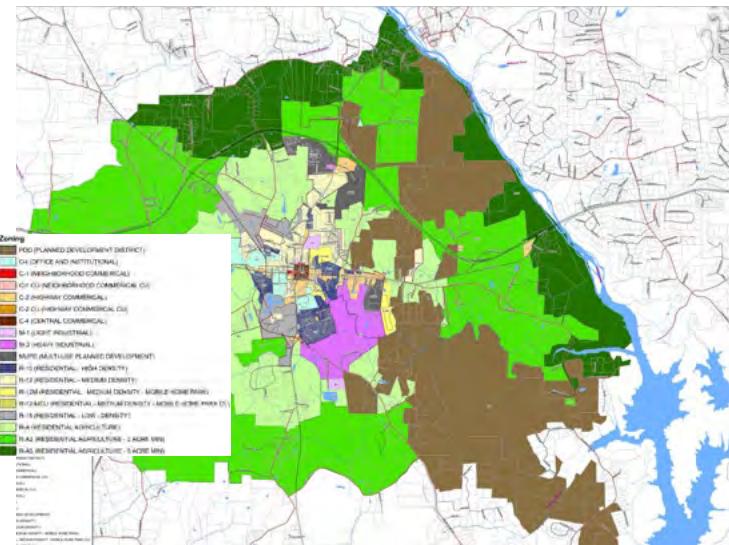
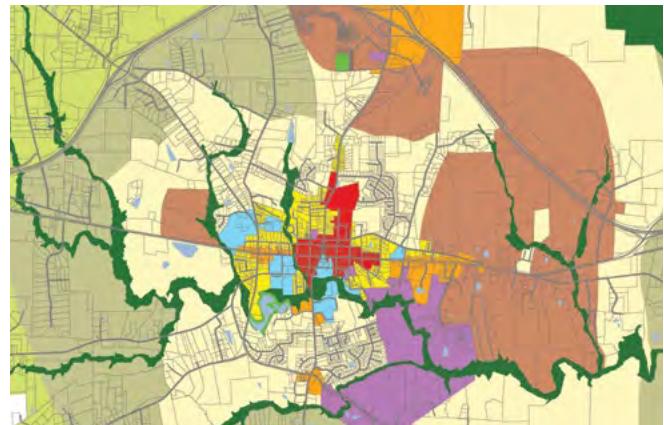
PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Plan Assessment

Conducted early in the land use planning process, a plan assessment helps to identify plans and studies that are currently being used by the Town. Those summarized below contributed to this plan and will continue to influence Town planning decisions in the future.

Land Use Plan (2012)

The vision for the 2012 Land Use Plan is a town with a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses. Adaptive reuse and protection of sensitive natural areas are also important focus areas. The Plan has fourteen different goals that guide the recommendations. The Plan acknowledges a limited amount of residential growth, but it does not account for the growth currently planned in Chatham Park and other large residential projects. The Plan carefully explains the relationship between land use planning and other factors such as transportation and environmental conservation. The 2012 Future Land Use Map is shown to the right.



Unified Development Ordinance

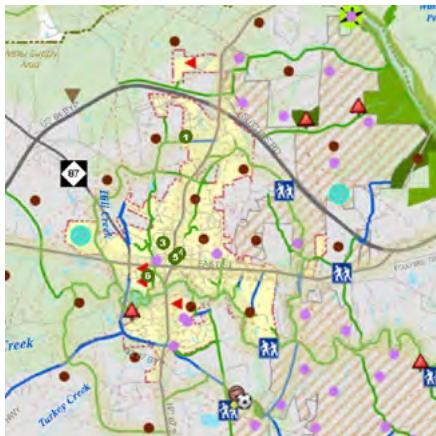
Pittsboro's current zoning map conveys many of the concepts set forth in the 2012 Future Land Use Map, with some alterations to accommodate Chatham Park. The "green ring" around the edges of the planning jurisdiction can be seen on the zoning map, with R-A2 (Residential, 2 acres) or R-A5 (Residential, 5 acres) around the western half of the edges. The entirety of Chatham Park is designated as a Planned Development. The industrial area southeast of downtown is reflected in the current zoning map.

Closer to the center of Town, the absence of smaller residential lots is apparent. Though zoning regulations do permit a 5,000 square foot lot in the R5 district,

this zoning district is not currently used. Most in-town residential parcels are zoned R-10 and R-12 (minimum 10,000 and 12,000 square foot lots, respectively) equating to a density of approximately 4 units per acre.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2020)

In 2020, Pittsboro developed a plan with detailed recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian policies, programs, and infrastructure. The plan built upon the 2009 Pittsboro Pedestrian Plan, the Chatham County Bicycle Plan (2011) and the One Pittsboro Parks and Recreation System Master Plan (2019). The plan had three key regulatory recommendations: 1) update development regulation and engineering standards, 2) implement and enforce connectivity requirements, and 3) develop a policy to require the Town, NCDOT, and regional partners to review the recommendations in the 2020 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan when developing projects.

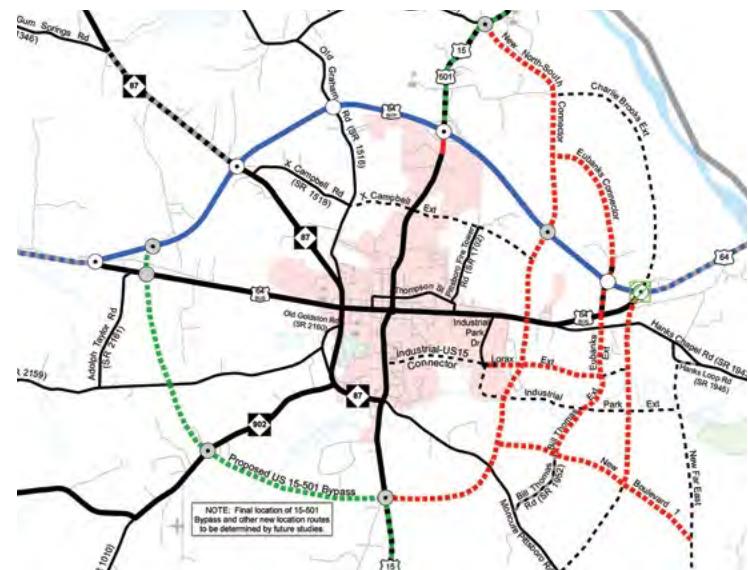


Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2019)

According to the parks and recreation needs assessment, residents' top priority was "improved bicycle/pedestrian/wildlife connectivity including greenways, trails, and bikeways." The Vision map proposes parks of different scales, including neighborhood parks, community parks, and regional parks. It identifies new locations for Haw River access, a potential sports complex, and recreation centers with pools. It also proposes a network of greenway and on-street transportation infrastructure that connect to key locations in town. The plan recommends acquiring sites for local parks within the Town's corporate limits that are at least five acres in size, to provide ten-minute access for all residents.

Town of Pittsboro Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2011)

The Town of Pittsboro created its own CTP in 2011, which was later amended in 2015. Recommendations in this plan were pushed forward with the release of the 2020-2029 STIP. In addition to improvements to existing roadways, the Pittsboro CTP recommended a new north-south connector from US 15-501 at Russell Chapel Church Road connecting to a proposed US 15-501 Bypass south of Town where US 15-501/ NC 87 S is Sanford Road. Additionally, a number of new proposed roads are shown to the east of Town between municipal limits and the Haw River, where expected residential growth is planned.



Other Reviewed Plans

Additional plans and documents reviewed for the purposes of the Land Use Plan include:

Pittsboro Downtown Vision Plan (2014)

Chatham Park Master Plan

Chatham Park North Village Small Area Plan

Chatham Transit Network Community Connectivity Plan (2019)

Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) (2022)

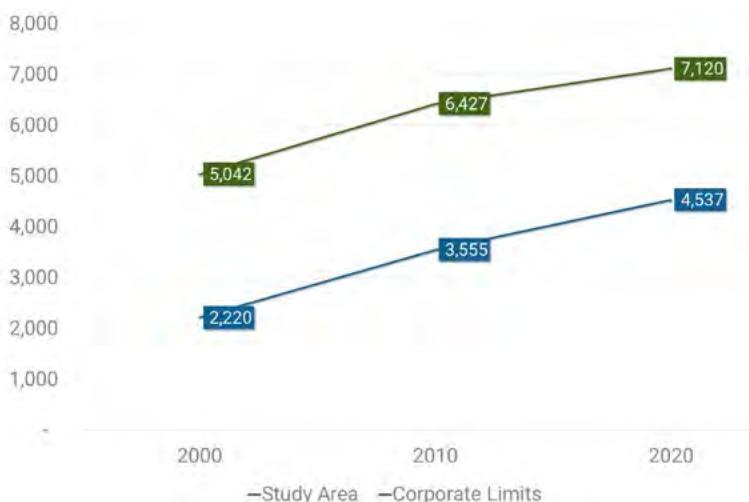
PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Demographics

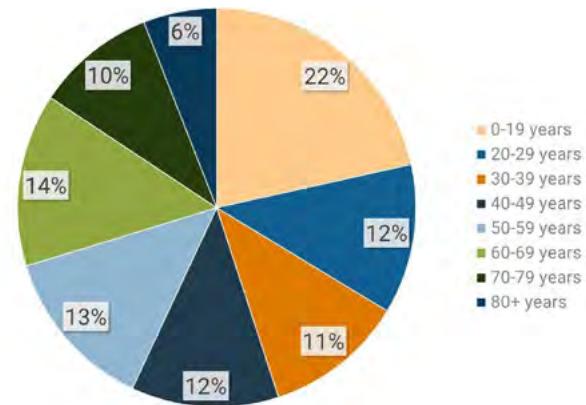
The Town of Pittsboro has experienced significant growth from 2000 to 2020. Population in the study area has increased by 2,078 or 41%. The study area's annual growth rate is 1.7%. The community is majority White at 68% (not taking into account Hispanic population). The median age has increased from 39.8 to 41.6 since 2010.



POPULATION GROWTH



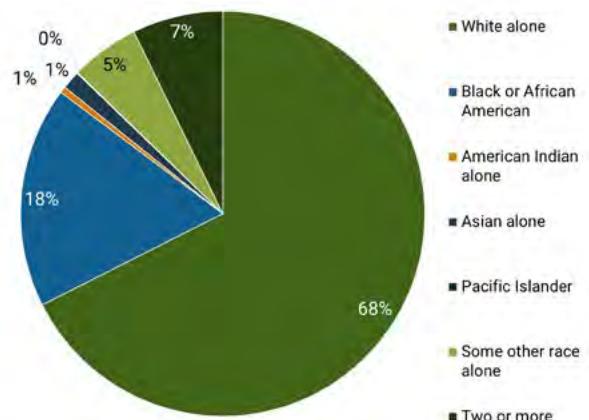
AGE COHORTS



Population Projection: Study Area

It is a challenge to project Pittsboro's future population growth, as most conventional projection methods are based on historic trends. Pittsboro, however, is on the cusp of major growth spurt. Currently approved residential building projects alone are enough to assume a sustained high rate of growth in the next few decades. For comparison, the population of Huntersville, NC grew from 3,000 to 61,000 between 1990 and 2020. Assuming infrastructure keeps up and the economy continues to support new investment in the region, Pittsboro will likely follow a similar pattern. With such dramatic growth, however, considerable uncertainty accompanies the following projections.

RACIAL MAKEUP



POPULATION PROJECTIONS

2020 (Decennial Census)

7,120

2030 Estimate

18,412

2040 Estimate

29,704

2050 Estimate

40,996

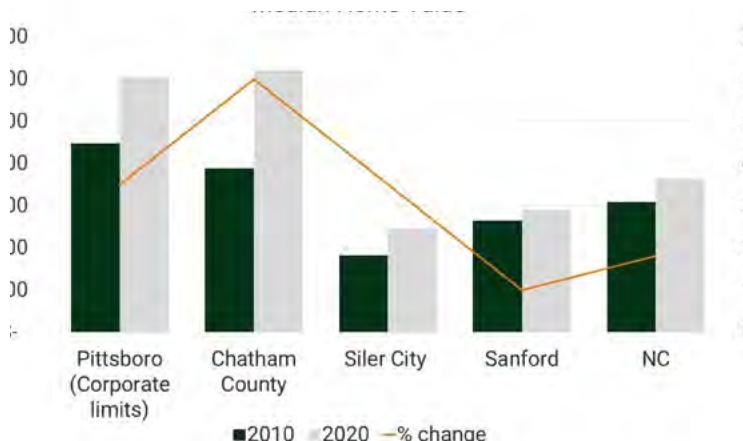
Population projections based on a continuation of approved development trends and predicted build out of Chatham Park (500 homes/year).

Housing

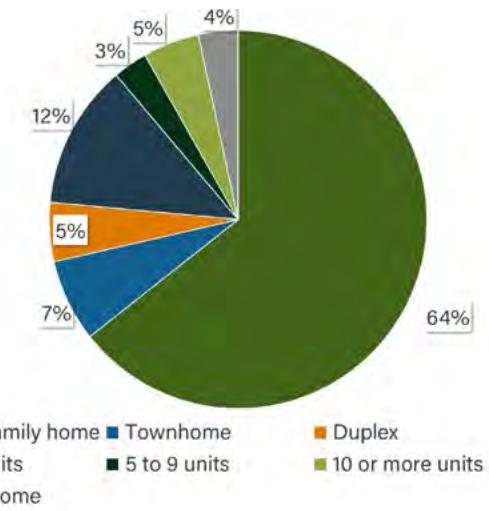
The majority of the homes in Pittsboro are single-family, owner-occupied detached houses. The median home value is \$302,100 and has increased by 35 percent since 2010. Over one-third of the housing stock was constructed between 2000 to 2009.



MEDIAN HOME VALUE



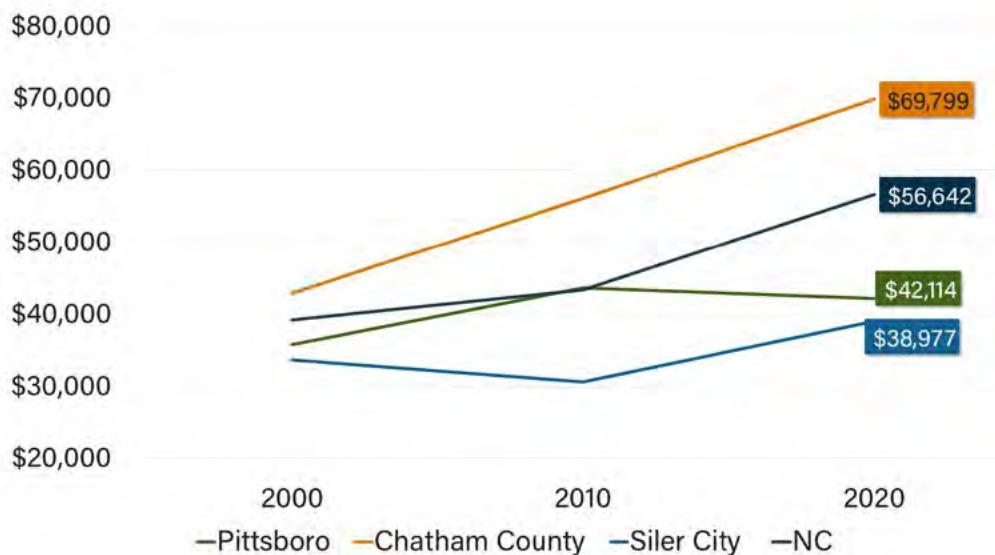
HOUSING UNIT TYPE



Income

The Median Household income is \$42,114 for the town limits. This is \$14,528 less than North Carolina's median household income. An aging population could be contributing to income trends in Pittsboro.

MEDIAN INCOME



PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Engagement Summary

The Land Use Plan Update was developed through a process of community input sessions and collaboration with a project team, which included Town staff and the project steering committee. Community members had an active hand in shaping the Plan's direction and priorities through stakeholder interviews, project surveys, and a public meeting, and were encouraged at every stage to reach out to Town Staff to provide input on the plan. During the course of the planning process there were:

- ◆ Five (5) Steering Committee Meetings
- ◆ Five (5) Stakeholder Interviews
- ◆ One 20 Question Survey
- ◆ 573 Survey Responses
- ◆ Two (2) Public Meetings



Steering Committee

Planning staff pulled together a project steering committee comprised of residents, business owners, industry leaders, developers, and elected officials. The Steering Committee met 5 times throughout the project to provide their valuable perspective on the strengths and needs of the community and steered the direction and content of the plan.



Stakeholder Interviews

Virtual stakeholder meetings were held on October 4th and 5th, 2022. Each of the five meetings were structured by inviting participants from different public and private sectors sorted into different topics. These groups were: 1) Developers, Builders, Architects, Engineers, Surveyors, Realtors, Large Landowners; 2) Downtown Stakeholders; 3) Regional government, transportation, public works, utilities, etc.; 4) County, Schools, Parks; and 5) Neighborhoods, Environmental, Cultural. The conversations were free flowing; the project team began each hour-long meeting with a few general questions to start with and let the discussions form from there. The meetings provided valuable insight into the unique challenges and opportunities facing the community.

GROUPS AND NUMBER OF ATTENDEES

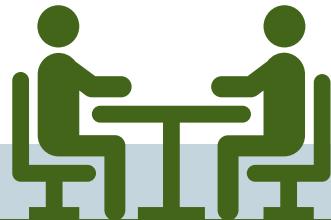
Developers, Builders, Engineers, Landholders (7)

Downtown Interests (3)

Regional, Transportation, Public Works/Utilities (5)

County, Schools, Parks (11)

Neighborhoods, Environmental (3)



KEY THEMES FROM STAKEHOLDERS

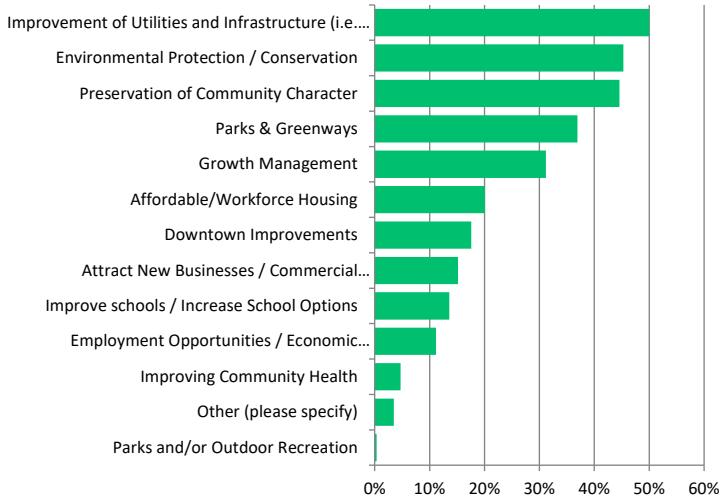
- ◆ Sewer capacity / water quality concerns
- ◆ Balance
 - » Density vs. open space
 - » Regulations vs. property rights/innovation
- ◆ Role of master planning
 - » Opportunities and concerns related to Chatham Park
 - » How can/should policies shape future growth?
- ◆ New jobs coming
 - » Need for schools / housing
 - » County vs. municipalities
 - » Transportation demand
- ◆ Downtown
 - » Infill: What do we want and where? Need housing.
 - » Concern over extent of commercial in residential neighborhoods
 - » Wayfinding/signage
 - » Parking
 - » Recruiting new uses; encouraging the right kinds of uses
- ◆ County offices moving (7-10 years?)
 - » Issue / opportunity
- ◆ Pedestrian mobility and safety
 - » Downtown
 - » Safe routes to school
 - » East St. Corridor
- ◆ Conservation and recreation
 - » Recreation/tourism opportunities
 - » Lower Haw River Natural Area
 - » Haw River Trail study – connection to Alamance County
 - » Protection of natural resource areas and habitat corridors
 - » Stormwater/increasing flooding concerns

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Community Survey

A 20-question online survey was developed to guide the plan and define priorities. The survey was active during the fall of 2022. Respondents were asked a series of demographic questions to determine their relationship to Pittsboro and determine if the survey reached a representative portion of the community based on current Census data. Respondents were then asked to provide input on community priorities and challenges both generally and in relation to transportation, open space, business and development. Some questions were multiple choice, while others offered the opportunity for open-ended comment. The survey was promoted through the Town and project website, as well as newsletters, flyers and social media posts. Over 570 people responded to the survey. This response shows the interest that people have in the future Pittsboro.

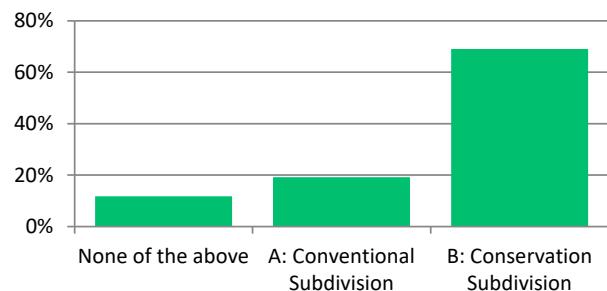
What are your top three priorities for the future of Pittsboro?
(Choose up to three or at least one)



What type of residential development do you think Pittsboro needs? (rank your top three priorities, 1 being highest priority)



Which type of subdivision style do you prefer?



Public Meeting

The two community workshops held on November 15th allowed attendees to engage in the planning process via informational materials, feedback activities, and small group discussions. There were several feedback activities: a Development Preferences dot exercise, a Draft Goals comment board, a Draft Future Land Use map of the Town of Pittsboro, a Draft Future Land Use map of Downtown Pittsboro, and a large format input mapping exercise of Pittsboro. The activities encouraged participants to indicate their thoughts and reactions to the Draft Goals and FLUM. The meeting also included comment cards that asked for public comment on four different topic areas as related to the Town of Pittsboro.

Key Themes from Map Comments

- ◆ Balance growth (tax base and geographically)
- ◆ Identify brownfields, reuse of sites downtown
- ◆ Pedestrian Improvement Priorities
 - » W. Salisbury St – Needs to be safe for pedestrians
 - » Wider sidewalks downtown
- ◆ Trail connections
 - » Downtown to Haw River
 - » Trail south to Rock Ridge park, then to Deep River
- ◆ Downtown
 - » Key intersections
 - » Additional signage needed
 - » Public bathrooms or better signage to courthouse bathrooms

Participants said the following were the top three wants for a new neighborhood in Pittsboro:

①



Access to walking trails, greenways, parks, greenspace

②



Sidewalks and crosswalks

③



Including a mix of unit types for households of different ages and backgrounds



PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Plan Goals

The Plan Goals were developed to guide future actions of the Town of Pittsboro. Representing more than just discrete targets for planning, land use, and policy decisions, these six goals rose from public, committee, and stakeholder input. Together, with champions from the public and private sectors, will help achieve the shared vision for the future of Pittsboro.



Grow strategically by investing in infrastructure, facilities, and programs that improve the quality of life for all residents.

1



Collaborate with public and private partners, state and regional agencies, and neighboring jurisdictions to address cross-boundary opportunities and constraints.

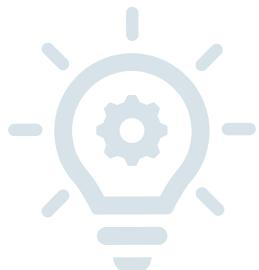
2



Support a **vibrant, energetic downtown** with housing, entertainment, employment opportunities, and gathering spaces.

3





Create **opportunities to innovate** by supporting creative placemaking, entrepreneurship, and the arts.

4



Balance the **preservation of existing neighborhoods** with the need to increase and **diversify housing opportunities**.

5



Protect natural resources with best practices in land use planning, green infrastructure, low-impact development, and conservation development design.

6



3 PLAN ELEMENTS



Guided by an established set of goals presented in the previous section, the Plan Elements are organized under four topic areas. These topics include land use & housing, infrastructure, downtown and natural resources & conservation.

Each plan element includes highlights from analysis and trends related to the topic area and policy recommendations that should be utilized to guide work plans, land use decisions, and infrastructure and services in the coming years.

**LAND USE &
HOUSING**

INFRASTRUCTURE

DOWNTOWN

**NATURAL
RESOURCES &
CONSERVATION**

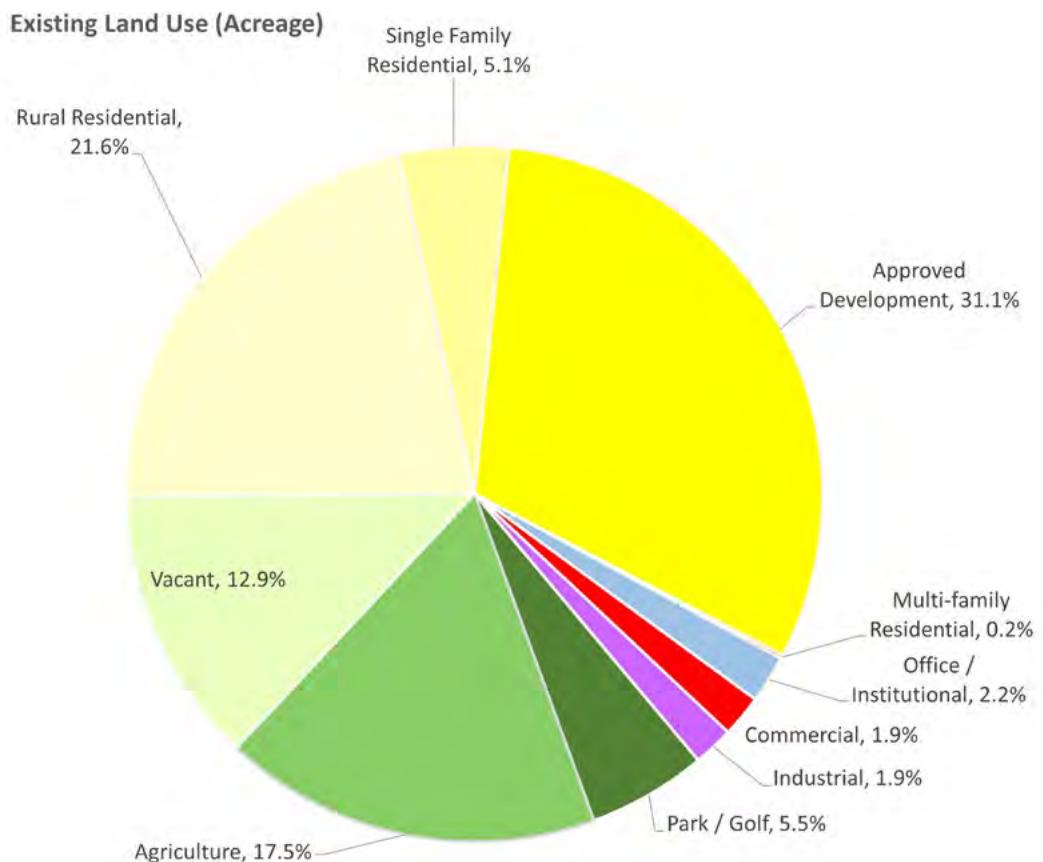
Land Use Trends

The Town of Pittsboro has undergone significant changes during the last two decades. The population within the town limits has doubled and the town has expanded beyond the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. New development has occurred along US 15-501 and near the US 64 Bypass. The first phases of Chatham Park, a 7,100-acre planned community, are complete and more are under construction. Recent announcements of new employers locating in Chatham County, at the Moncure Megasite and the CAM site in Siler City, present both a challenge and an opportunity for the Town.

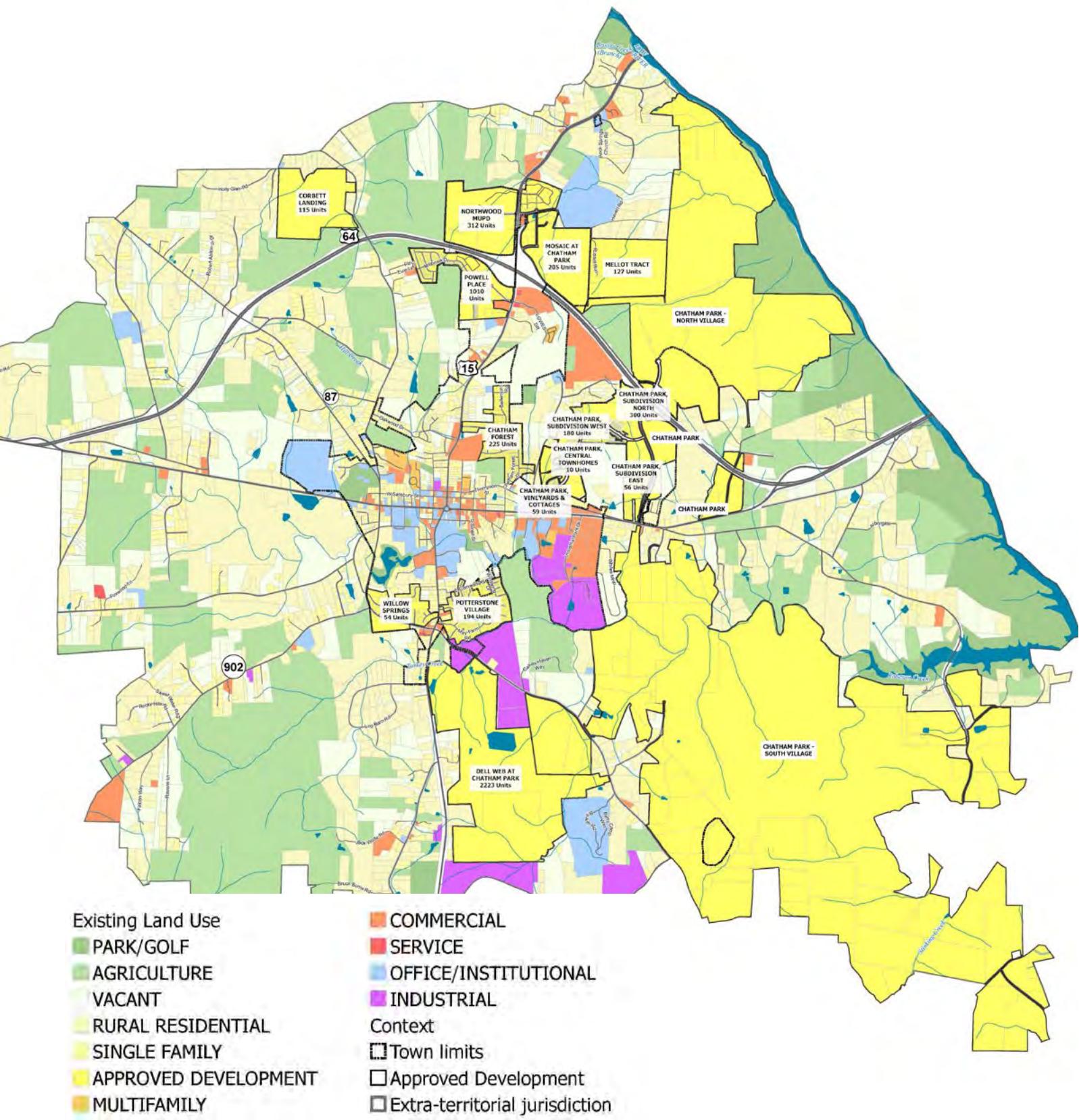
Key Land Use Statistics:

- Agricultural lands make up 17.5% of the land area.
- Single Family and Rural Residential land uses make up 27% of the land area.
- Approved developments cover 31% of the land area.
- Multi-family Residential makes up less than 1% of existing land uses.
- Non-residential uses including commercial, office and industrial lands make up 6% of the land area or 1,700 acres.

Existing Land Use Chart



Map 3. Existing Land Use Map



Land Use Suitability

Land use suitability analysis is a process determining the best or most likely areas for certain types of land uses (e.g., residential, commercial, industrial, conservation) and their level of suitability. It is done using GIS software and includes a variety of economic and environmental inputs. Based on the inputs, areas within the study area are determined to be more or less supportive of the use in question.

Inputs are chosen based upon the type of suitability analysis. For example, a residential suitability analysis will have lower values for areas closer to industrial uses, because it is undesirable for homes to be built near existing major industry. Higher values would be assigned to land near schools, parks and existing utilities, because these are more desirable areas for building homes. The inputs are calculated and the results produce a map showing where development is more suitable and areas where certain uses are less suitable.

Additional Maps:

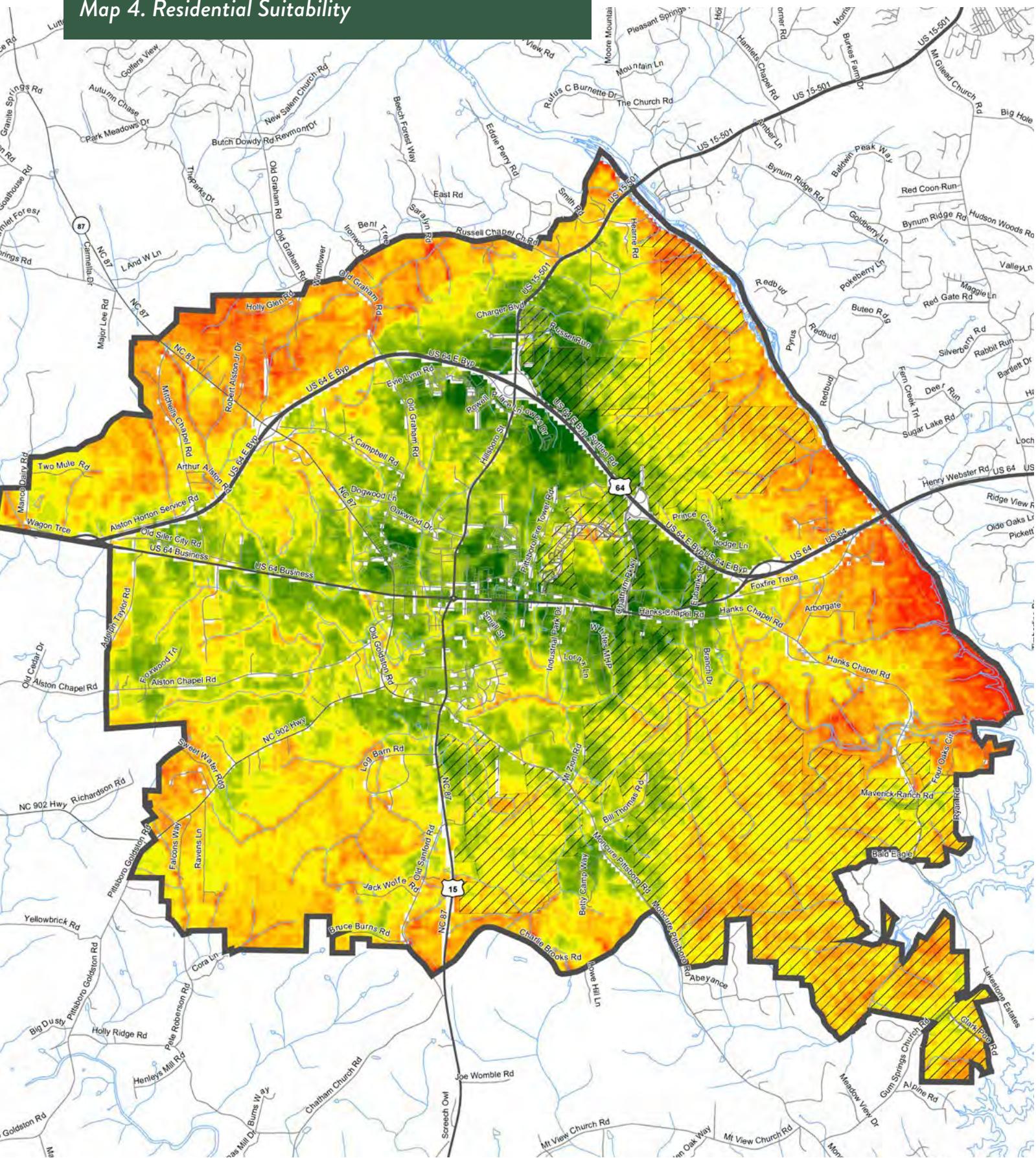
Principle inputs used during the creation of the future land use map include the residential suitability map (pictured to the right), commercial suitability map, and maps of key environmental assets. These additional maps are included in the Appendix.



Residential Suitability Inputs

- Near concentrations of existing streets.
- Located proximal to approved residential development.
- Near existing commercial and service centers.
- Near schools and parks.
- Not adjacent to industrial areas.
- Not environmentally constrained.

Map 4. Residential Suitability



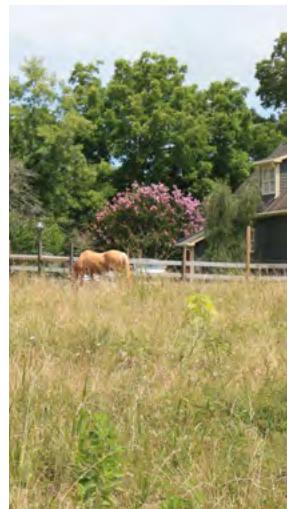
Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map and associated character areas represent a development pattern that is desired over the next 5-10 years. They are meant to guide land use decisions and development design in the Town of Pittsboro municipal limits and in the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ). An update of the Future Land Use Map or portions of the map is recommended periodically as infrastructure capacity changes.

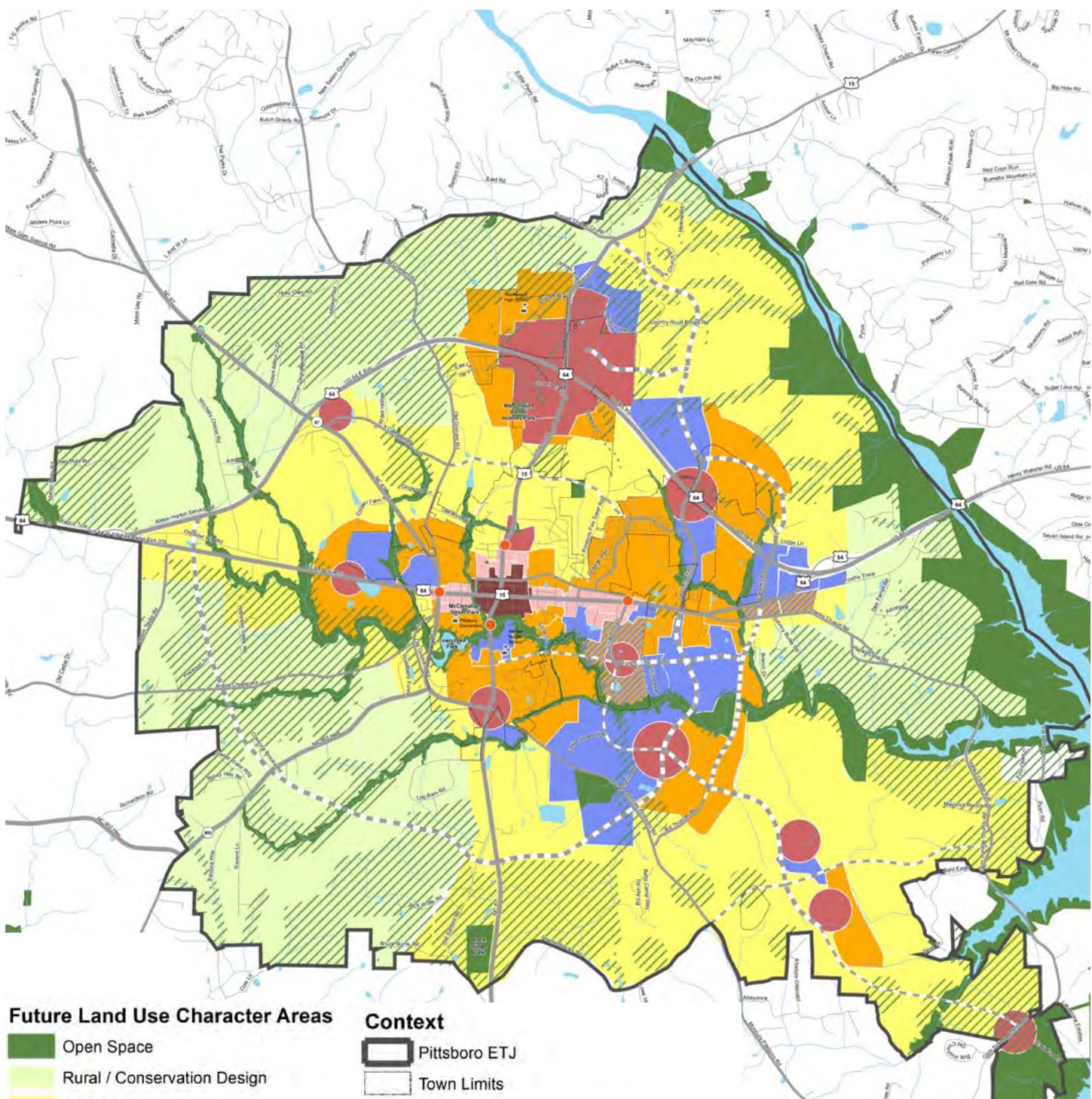
The Future Land Use Map on the following page includes eight character areas. These areas are described on pages 26 and 27 and represent areas that share similar uses, intensity and other design characteristics. This map is meant to be less prescriptive than zoning, as each character area could include a number of different zoning districts.

Highlights from the Future Land Use Map include:

- ▶ A defined Town Center and Downtown Support area that includes a variety of uses and walkable streets.
- ▶ Designated Mixed-Use Activity Centers that serve as focused centers of growth.
- ▶ Employment Mixed Use areas that can add to the Town's industry and tax base.
- ▶ Traditional Neighborhood / Infill areas that can accommodate a variety of new residential types.
- ▶ Residential areas that can be served with planned or limited extensions to the water and sewer system.
- ▶ Rural / Conservation Design areas where new development should be balanced with preservation of natural resources.



Map 5. Future Land Use Map



Future Land Use Character Areas

- Open Space
- Rural / Conservation Design
- Residential
- Traditional Neighborhood / Infill
- Employment / TND
- Mixed-Use Activity Center
- Downtown Support
- Town Center
- Employment Mixed Use

Context

- Pittsboro ETJ
- Town Limits
- Schools
- Natural Resource Conservation Target Area
- Gateways
- Minor Thoroughfare
- Major Thoroughfare

Character Areas

The following draft Future Land Use Character Areas describe the types of development that should be encouraged in different areas of Pittsboro. Each category indicates the predominant land uses allowed as well as relative intensity and shared design features that should be included in new development.

Note: Land Use, existing or future, is a description of how land is or should be utilized or developed, but it does not impact how any one property is zoned nor does it impact the current structure. It is a policy recommendation, not a regulatory change, although the land use recommendations in this plan should influence the design of future development and may be better implemented with changes to the town's zoning.

Town Center

The Town Center is the core area of Downtown Pittsboro. This is the traditional central business district and a few, key adjacent blocks. It serves as a focal point and central gathering place for the town. Development is characterized by a blending of preserved older structures and adaptive reuse of existing buildings, integrated with context-sensitive new construction. This character area supports a mix of uses, primarily commercial retail and services, office, civic, and some residential. Mixed-use buildings, typically ground floor commercial with upper floor office or residential, are common in the core of the Town Center. Minimal setbacks and active commercial frontages are encouraged, especially along Hillsboro Street and US 64 Business. This is envisioned as a walkable area where safe and comfortable pedestrian movement is a priority. Wide sidewalks, safe crossings and traffic calming mechanisms are employed to accommodate pedestrians and slow vehicles. On-street parking and off-street parking in small, shared surface lots behind buildings accommodate visitors arriving by vehicle. Civic/green space occurs as small formal greens, plazas, courtyards, streets and alleyways enhanced as linear public spaces, enhanced grounds surrounding civic buildings, and outdoor dining spaces.



Downtown Support

The Downtown Support area provides for housing options and nonresidential uses located near the Town Center. It functions as a transition into other lower intensity character areas. The experience of the downtown begins at the four minor gateways, which are identified on the map. Transitions into downtown are signified by creek crossings, road narrowing, and/or a change in uses particularly at key intersections. The function and appearance of properties with frontage on the major corridors contribute to that experience. The Downtown Support category is designed to allow a variety of medium to higher-density housing types in tandem with retail, commercial, lodging and office uses that support and foster growth of the Town Center. Higher density development should



be directed near the Town Center and major corridors. Though the scale of buildings and uses within them may vary, consistent site development details and streetscape elements should tie the place together including an extension of the downtown street grid and pedestrian facilities along the streets. Rear parking lots are encouraged where side road connections on parallel streets are possible, however, front parking is still possible if access management between businesses and the main corridor is a challenge.

Traditional Neighborhood / Infill

The Traditional Neighborhood/Infill area is comprised of primarily single-family residential uses with house-scale multifamily and townhomes permitted. Higher density uses, such as apartments and condos may be appropriate if located near commercial/services areas with good access to collector streets and pedestrian facilities. The Traditional Neighborhood/Infill category is designed to retain the scale and character of established neighborhoods while allowing flexibility of housing types and infill development. Small-scale office and commercial uses may be appropriate in some areas. The streets are connected on a loose grid network and have pedestrian facilities along collector streets. Traditional Neighborhood districts are found adjacent to Downtown and in proximity to new planned Mixed Use Activity Centers.



Mixed Use Activity Center

Mixed Use Activity Centers provide a setting for services and activities that are supportive of surrounding residential neighborhoods. These areas are usually located adjacent to major thoroughfares and at major intersections. Development should have a defined center around a community anchor, such as a school, park, library, or a commercial district or retail shopping center. Uses include commercial and opportunities for office, civic, and institutional uses. Multi-family housing opportunities may be integrated as part of a mix of uses. Apartments and townhouses should be located in close proximity to shopping and services. All portions of the development should be accessible by both a convenient road network and a system of sidewalks or greenways. Public parks or plazas should function as community gathering space.



The size of the activity centers shown on the Future Land Use map correspond to an approximation of the scale and footprint of non-residential and higher density residential uses in that center. Smaller circles represent neighborhood centers that should have a relatively small footprint of non-residential uses (typically less than 70,000 square foot). These also include specialty centers such as Chatham Mills and The Plant. Medium circles represent community centers that serve a larger area and typically have less than 200,000 square feet of non-residential uses. The largest activity centers, including the area near US 64 and US 15-501 and those along Chatham Parkway, are meant to represent regional centers and will likely have the largest footprint of non-residential uses.

Employment Mixed Use

Employment Mixed Use areas designated on the Future Land Use Map as locations for primary employment and economic development opportunities. Employment Mixed Use areas are located along major transportation corridors and have adequate levels of infrastructure and parcels large enough to accommodate future employment growth. These are a mix of non-residential uses, which may include but are not limited to various types of commercial, office, or industrial uses. Industrial and office uses may include any combination of warehouse, office, research and development, tech-flex, hospital or medical office, renewable energy, recycling, fabrication, assembly, or technology. A limited amount of commercial uses would also be appropriate (e.g., restaurants, services, and convenience retailers to serve employees). However, these uses should be situated only where not in conflict with existing employment land uses and should not be built in such a way as to jeopardize the use of those lands most suitable for office or industrial development.



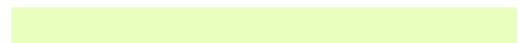
Residential

Residential areas in and around the Town of Pittsboro include the newer subdivisions, older neighborhoods built outside of the town proper, and areas where sewer service is expected to expand to reach future and planned developments. These are predominantly suburban areas with lower density than in the Traditional Neighborhood areas. Smaller lots in combination with townhomes and small-scale apartments can be used in combination with larger lot single-family homes or larger conservation areas in the same development. These typically are supported by public utilities. Some small-scale commercial uses may be appropriate if part of a planned development.



Rural & Conservation Design

The Rural and Conservation Design designation is predominately low-density residential and large tracts of open space and/or agricultural land. The rural character of these areas can be retained by encouraging either low-intensity uses or context-sensitive rural design for new master-planned communities. These areas are primarily located outside of existing sewer service areas and may have to rely on septic systems or private sewer systems for wastewater treatment in the near-term. These areas have a limited road network, with some areas within the water supply watershed. Large lots or lower overall density is required if new development is not connected to sewer. Conservation design subdivisions are especially encouraged if sewer is available. These subdivisions that have relatively low overall density (gross density) but the size of the



individual lots and development footprint is condensed in order to retain more open space and protect key natural features. Some smaller-scale commercial uses may be appropriate if part of a planned development designed in a way that fits the character of the surrounding area.

Parks and Open Space

The Parks and Open Space designation applies to parks, public recreational areas, conservation areas and floodplains. Access may be restricted due to sensitive resources. Uses include active and passive recreation (including trails and greenways), wildlife management, environmental restoration / mitigation / preservation, and educational uses. Structures that support or are associated with the intended uses shall be permitted. The primary use of land shown under this designation should be open space, conservation, or recreation.



Natural Resource Conservation Target Area

These areas represent high value natural resource areas that are key to providing clean water and preserving intact native habitats within the Pittsboro ETJ. Within these areas new developments should employ conservation design techniques that cluster development away from key natural resources and preserve important features, such as riparian areas, stands of mature forest, wetlands, floodplains and adjacent forested areas. In addition, as detailed in the Natural Resources and Conservation Element, new developments should be required or incentivized to preserve at least 50% of the priority natural assets located within the overlay.



Overview

The Town of Pittsboro has grown significantly over the past 20 years. Major developments, such as Chatham Park, and new employers locating to Chatham County will continue to fuel demand for housing in the area. There is an opportunity to strategically accommodate growth in the Town where new residents will have access to services, local businesses and can more economically be served with public infrastructure. The Town has a role to play in accommodating growth and curtailing historical trends of growth occurring in the rural areas of Chatham County which will have the benefit of reducing impacts on natural resources.

Overall goals for land use and housing include strategic growth and investment downtown and near walkable centers, diversifying housing opportunities and protecting natural resources. Challenges include infrastructure availability, especially limited sewer treatment capacity in the near-term.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY GOALS

Primary Goals

- Grow strategically by investing in infrastructure, facilities, and programs that improve the quality of life for all residents.
- Balance the preservation of existing neighborhoods with the need to increase and diversify housing opportunities.

Secondary Goals

- Support a vibrant, energetic downtown with housing, entertainment, employment opportunities, gathering spaces and investments in infrastructure
- Protect natural resources with best practices in land use planning, green infrastructure, low-impact development, and conservation development design.

Recommendations

LUH 1: Utilize the Land Use Plan in everyday decision making and evaluate and update town policies and ordinances to assist in the implementation of the Land Use Plan.

LUH 1.1: Utilize the Land Use Plan as a key resource in development review, infrastructure planning, and coordination with outside service providers.

- Evaluate rezoning requests and development design based on the Future Land Use Map and character areas.

LUH 1.2: Consider amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to support the implementation of the Land Use Plan.

LUH 1.3: Update the Land Use Plan regularly based on infrastructure availability and capacity.

- Consider expanding the Land Use Plan into a Comprehensive Plan that integrates additional elements, including parks, transportation and economic development.

LUH 2: Focus growth near infrastructure and walkable commercial and service centers and away from sensitive natural resources.

LUH 2.1: Encourage growth near existing infrastructure and in a way that facilitates the creation of walkable commercial and service centers.

- Identify and remove barriers to infill and redevelopment in the Town Center and in the Downtown Support areas identified on the Future Land Use Map. See *Downtown recommendations* for more specifics.

LUH 2.2: Support development proposals that reinforce or create walkable commercial and service based activity centers.

- ▶ Support rezonings to mixed-use zoning districts in areas shown as Town Center, Downtown Support and Mixed-Use Activity Center on the Future Land Use Map. Associated zoning districts include:
 - ◆ Neighborhood Mixed-Use Center District (NMUC)
 - ◆ Community Mixed-Use Center District (CMUC)
 - ◆ Central Commercial District (C-4)

LUH 2.3: Encourage conservation subdivisions in areas with sensitive natural resources, particularly in areas shown as Residential and Rural / Conservation Design on the Future Land Use Map.

- ▶ Evaluate and clarify permitted uses, density and approval process in Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) for conservation subdivisions.

- ▶ Evaluate existing and additional incentives for conservation subdivisions including flexibility in lot size and allowable housing types. See Natural Resources and Conservation element for more details.

LUH 3: Increase walkability in Downtown Pittsboro and in key areas by addressing the 3 “Ds”(density, diversity, design).

— Density —

LUH 3.1: Evaluate residential districts and approval processes to allow for more inclusive housing near downtown and as part of planned developments within walking and biking distance to planned mixed-use centers.

- ▶ Utilize conditional zoning process to encourage innovative approach to development where current R-5, R-10, and R-12 zoning districts overlap with Traditional Neighborhood / Infill areas.

WALKABILITY - THE "3Ds"

The principal of walkability and its relationship to the ‘3 Ds’ – density, diversity, and design – is based on the idea that the character of the built environment encourages walking. Studies have shown that by increasing density, diversity of uses and improving design of the built environment higher rates of walking occur. Density, or development that is physically compact, and has smaller lot sizes, lot widths, and/or setbacks is more conducive to walk trips. Increased building heights can also contribute to higher densities. Other ways to increase density include reducing parking requirements. Diversity refers to integrating a mix of uses and housing types in new development. More diverse land uses, such as combining residential and commercial uses can increase the propensity for pedestrian travel. Finally, by designing the built environment at the “pedestrian scale”, with safe, comfortable paths for walking and elements with visual interest such as attractive landscaping and active, transparent storefronts all contribute to a positive pedestrian experience.



- ▶ Encourage rezonings to the R-5 zoning district in areas on the Future Land Use Map shown as Downtown Support, Mixed-Use Activity Center and Traditional Neighborhood / Infill.
- ▶ Evaluate existing lower-density zoning districts — particularly those closer to the center of town, such as R-10 and R-12 — and consider revisions to allow for slightly higher densities and/or a greater diversity of housing (e.g. duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes and/or townhomes or small-scale apartments).

— Diversity of Land Uses —

LUH 3.2: Allow for extension of the downtown via rezonings to the C-4 District in areas shown as Town Center on the Future Land Use Map.

LUH 3.3: Identify and remove regulatory barriers to mixed-use development.

LUH 3.4: Evaluate allowing small-scale, neighborhood commercial uses, in more zoning districts.

LUH 3.5: Consider updates to UDO including right-sizing parking requirements.

- ◆ Consider reduced requirements for certain uses based on parking trends and available on-street or shared parking.

— Design —

LUH 3.6: Coordinate with engineering, police and the fire department to address areas with pedestrian safety concerns.

LUH 3.7: Evaluate development standards and determine potential changes to increase pedestrian safety and comfort in new development.

- ▶ Specific design standards that can impact pedestrian safety and comfort include setbacks (maximum setbacks preferred in downtown areas), curb radii, sidewalk and street tree requirements, connectivity standards, lot width or alley access requirements, building height, architectural requirements, and parking lot design and location requirements.



Example of an attached single-family residence, or town-home, located on Thompson Street just east of downtown.

LUH 4: Address lack of available housing by accommodating a mix of housing types in well-designed neighborhoods.

LUH 4.1: Continue to provide development incentives for affordable and workforce housing.

- ▶ Current development incentives provide density bonuses, expedited review, application and fee rebates, changes to dimensional standards and other benefits to new developments.

LUH 4.2: Collaborate with the development community to market and refine available incentives with the goal of increasing housing variety in key areas.

LUH 4.3: Encourage mix of housing types in new developments.

- ▶ Encourage a mix of housing types and price points through the conditional zoning district process.
- ▶ Consider requiring at least two lot sizes in new residential subdivisions over a certain size and/or in certain districts.
- ▶ Allow for attached housing types as part of a conservation subdivision design.

LUH 4.4: Remove barriers to attached and “missing middle” housing types in key areas.

— Town Center / Downtown Support —

- ▶ Encourage / require multiple stories within the Town Center and Downtown Support area.
- ▶ Encourage second floor residential in existing underutilized buildings and in new development in the Town Center and Downtown Support area.
- ▶ Encourage rezonings for multi-family housing in the Town Center and Downtown Support areas.
 - ◆ *Townhomes and apartments may be appropriate in these areas. Rezonings to the MF Residential zoning district should be considered.*



Example of a cottage home on a small lot that fronts a common green in Chatham Park. The front setback is consistent with the traditional neighborhood style.

— Mixed Use Nodes —

- ▶ Encourage new development that integrates medium to high density housing with commercial uses in and near Mixed-Use Activity Centers on the Future Land Use Map.

— Traditional Neighborhood / Infill Area —

- ▶ Address barriers to attached housing and other innovative housing typologies (e.g. pocket neighborhoods).
 - ◆ *Barriers to attached products include a low max density in the R-10 district.*
 - ◆ *Evaluate Pocket Neighborhood standards and consider adjustments to dimensional standards based on test fitting one or more potential candidate sites.*

LUH 5: Preserve the character of existing neighborhoods through encouraging context-sensitive design.

LUH 5.1: Consider code updates related to the scale/form of new development and the use of buffers and transitions between conflicting uses.

LUH 5.2: Encourage a development pattern that transitions in density and scale away from activity centers.

- ▶ New development should use transitions such as reduced density, step-backs (height reductions), housing type transitions and vegetative buffers to transition from higher intensity areas to lower density single family areas.
 - ◆ *Consider neighborhood designs where commercial and residential uses are at the core of the development, with lot sizes increasing toward the periphery.*
 - ◆ *Transitions between residential and commercial uses should focus on visual and noise buffering while maintaining connectivity.*

LUH 6: Support existing businesses and encourage a balanced tax base.

LUH 6.1: Limit impacts to existing industrial and business uses from new residential development.

- ▶ New residential should be sited and designed in a way that limits impacts to existing non-residential uses.
- ▶ Support rezonings to commercial and industrial districts within the Employment Mixed Use area, adjacent to compatible uses and/or in areas with historic industrial uses.

Background & Analysis

Transportation Network

Roadways

The Town of Pittsboro is centered around the intersection of US 64 Business and US 15-501. Both of these highways are owned and maintained by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). Traffic volumes are highest (between 14,000 and 15,000 cars a day) on the freeway section of US 64 Bypass near the intersection of US 15-501 and in the eastern part of Town near the intersection of US 64 Business East. NC 87 provides a primary route from the south and routes traffic southwest of downtown and to the northwest. The Town of Pittsboro maintains a number of local streets that intersect and parallel primary state roadways, including many streets downtown. Map 6 displays the road ownership of the streets in Pittsboro.

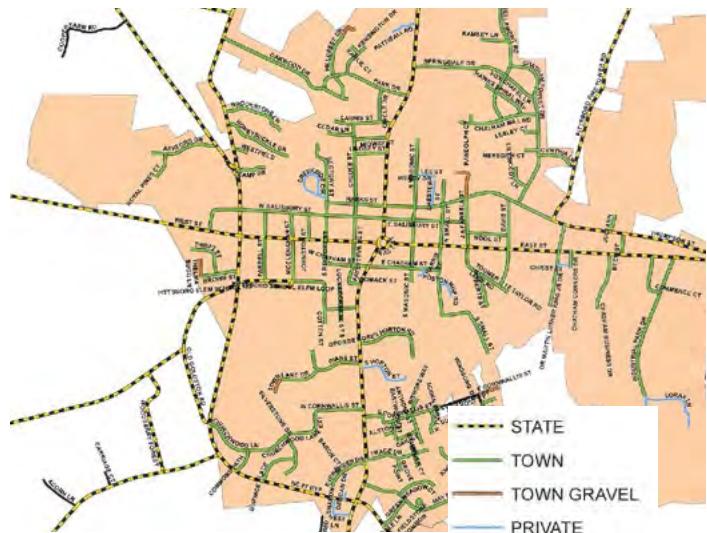
The Pittsboro Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) was adopted in 2011. Since this time planned roadway alignments related to Chatham Park have changed. Map 8 reflects current roadway plans. It is anticipated that a joint effort between Chatham County, Town of Pittsboro and NCDOT will begin soon to update the Town and County's CTP.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The recently completed Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2020) details the need for key sidewalk and greenway connections. Key planned projects include extension of the Robeson Creek Greenway, accessing the Haw River Trail, and connecting downtown to Chatham Park.

The need for improvements to pedestrian facilities is documented in the Pittsboro Downtown Vision Plan. Narrow sidewalks, gaps in connectivity, lack of crosswalks and the need for ADA Accessibility improvements are some of the pedestrian issues downtown. An ADA Transition Plan for the Town of Pittsboro could be needed.

Map 6. Road Ownership Map



The map above shows state maintained roads in dashed yellow/black lines. Town maintained roads are shown in green and brown.

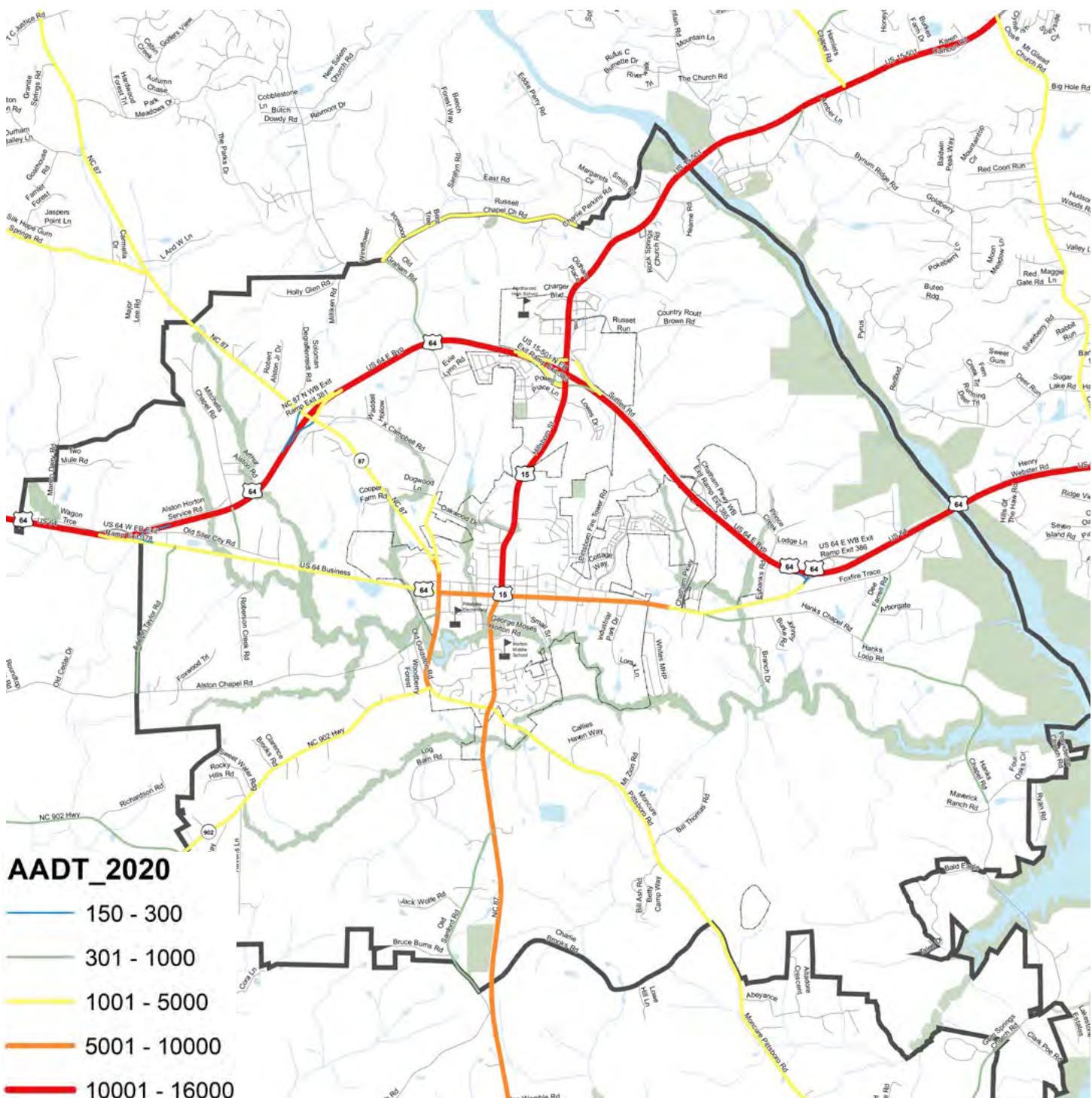
Water and Sewer System

Water

The Town's primary water source is the Haw River. As of 2020, average daily withdrawal was 700,000 gallons per day and maximum withdrawal was 1.2 million gallons per day (MGD). The capacity of the Town's water treatment plant is 2 MGD. Recently the Town invested in a granular activated carbon filter system (GAC filter) to remove PFAS chemicals that are present in the Haw River watershed due to discharges upstream. The Town of Pittsboro also has a future stake in water supply allocations from Jordan Lake.

Sewer

The Town's current wastewater treatment plant has very little remaining capacity. A potential merger with Sanford utilities is underway, along with a 14-mile pressurized sewer main that will transport wastewater from Pittsboro to Sanford. More study is needed to determine future sewer capacity needs and short-term and long-term solutions.

Map 7. Average Daily Traffic Map


AADT_2020

- 150 - 300
- 301 - 1000
- 1001 - 5000
- 5001 - 10000
- 10001 - 16000

Context

- Pittsboro ETJ
- Town Limits
- Schools

Overview

Services and infrastructure provided by the Town of Pittsboro and its partners will need to be expanded to meet the increasing demands due to new residents and businesses. Coordination with local and regional partners will be essential to addressing long-term needs.

Recommendations

INF 1: Coordinate with regional partners and pursue grants and funding to acquire additional sewer capacity for new businesses and residential growth.

INF 2: Evaluate additional fees necessary to fund utility expansions to pay for growth.

INF 3: Utilize the Future Land Use Map to estimate future demand for water and sewer.

INF 4: Update the Future Land Use Map based on changes to sewer capacity and transportation plans.

INF 4.1: Evaluate potential revisions based on additional small area planning, development trends, transportation planning an/or utility planning efforts.

- ▶ The southwestern area is a candidate location for a future small area plan that factors in future sewer capacity.
- ▶ Evaluate planned commercial / mixed-use areas based on revisions of planned roadway alignments and access.

INF 5: Support development in areas where infrastructure is already present to reduce the costs associated with development.

INF 6: Prioritize infrastructure improvements in Downtown Pittsboro

- ▶ These areas include the Town Center and

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY GOALS

Primary Goals

- Grow strategically by investing in infrastructure, facilities, and programs that improve the quality of life for all residents.
- Collaborate with public and private partners, state and regional agencies, and neighboring jurisdictions to address cross-boundary opportunities and constraints.

Secondary Goals

- Support a vibrant, energetic downtown with housing, entertainment, employment opportunities, gathering spaces, and investments in infrastructure
- Protect natural resources with best practices in land use planning, green infrastructure, low-impact development, and conservation development design.

Downtown Support areas identified on the Future Land Use Map.

INF 7: Improve methods used to analyze and track proposed and approved developments and associated service and infrastructure needs.

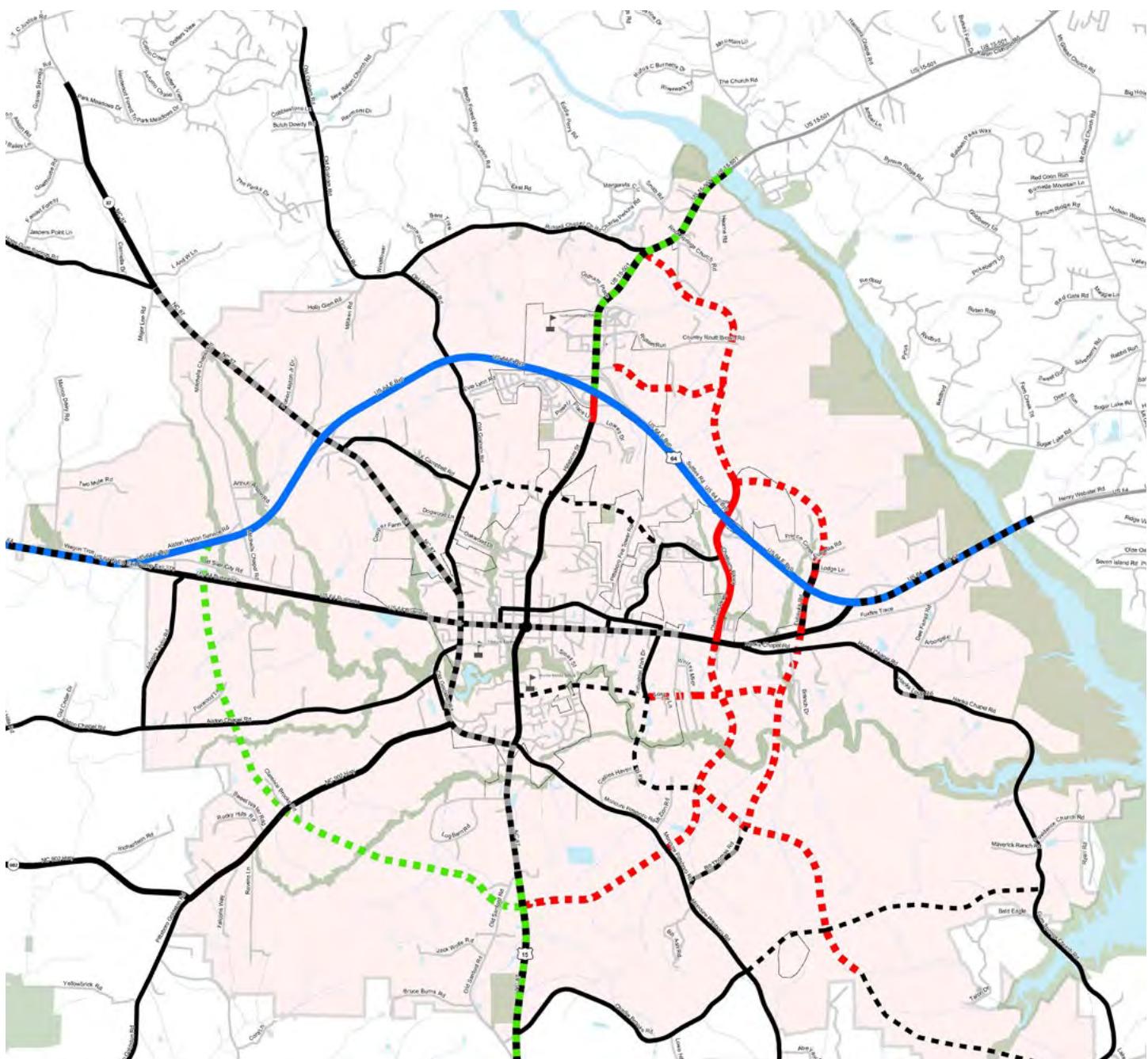
INF 7.1: Create an online map showing approved developments.

INF 7.2: Increase coordination with Chatham County Schools related to capacity needs.

INF 8: Plan for future roadway connections and capacity improvements.

INF 8.1: Coordinate with NCDOT and other partners on the planned alignments and design of future roadway projects.

Map 8. Roadway System Map



Roadway System

- Freeway, Existing
- Freeway, Needs Improvement
- Expressway, Needs Improvement
- Expressway, Recommended
- Boulevard, Existing
- Boulevard, Needs Improvement
- Boulevard, Recommended

- Major Thoroughfare, Existing
- Major Thoroughfare, Needs Improvement
- Minor Thoroughfare, Existing
- Minor Thoroughfare, Needs Improvement
- Minor Thoroughfare, Recommended

Context

- Town Limits
- Pittsboro ETJ
- Schools

Recommendations Continued

INF 8.2: Update the Comprehensive Transportation Plan to show and refine new road connections.

INF 8.3: Determine needs and reserve right-of-way for future roadways as shown in adopted plans.

INF 8.4: Require adequate roadway connections in new development to relieve demands on existing thoroughfares.

INF 8.5: Study future improvements to NC 87 to better accommodate freight movement.



Rain gardens and other bioretention areas are designed to collect and clean stormwater runoff.

INF 9: Study future improvements to US 64 Business east and west of downtown with a focus on access management, improving aesthetics and pedestrian and bicycle safety.

INF 10: Study and address intersection improvements needed to accommodate anticipated traffic increases and address safety issues.

INF 11: Improve sidewalk connections downtown and between existing neighborhoods and destinations.

INF 11.1: Evaluate existing roadways for potential pedestrian facilities.

INF 11.2: Pursue grants to fund sidewalk connections and identify funds for required local match.

INF 12: Prioritize the completion of sidewalks, greenways and trails as shown on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

INF 13: Consider ways to encourage transportation alternatives within the town limits (e.g. bikes, scooters, or golf carts).

INF 14: Coordinate with major developments and the Chatham Transit Network to locate new transit stops and expand transit service between destinations.

INF 15: Maintain and improve stormwater management.

INF 15.1: Maintain stormwater regulations that encourage best practices in managing post-development stormwater runoff.

INF 15.2: Maintain adequate staffing resources to ensure adherence to stormwater regulations.

INF 15.3: Plan for and encourage Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) including limiting land disturbance and impervious surface and employing bioswales, pervious pavements and green roofs.

INF 15.4: Consider the creation of one or more "green streets" through upgrades to streets in downtown Pittsboro.

- These streets could have integrated stormwater management such as stormwater planters or bioswales.



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Overview

Downtown Pittsboro is the historic heart of the community and central to civic life and activities in the town. Downtown is also a regional arts and cultural destination and plays an important role in the physical structure of Pittsboro. Preserving and enhancing the unique character and small-town charm of the community, especially the Town Center, is a priority when planning for the future of the Town.

Together, the evolving vision for downtown and recommendations in this section describe a path forward that is intended to build on the special attributes of the area, add to the mix of uses and amenities, and, ideally, create a vibrant, livable town center where existing and new businesses can thrive. Compact development patterns are key to the Town Center and necessary to create a place with a mix of housing, employment, and recreation opportunities in a centralized area.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY GOALS

Primary Goal

- Support a vibrant, energetic downtown with housing, entertainment, employment opportunities, gathering spaces, and investments in infrastructure.

Secondary Goals

- Grow strategically by investing in infrastructure, facilities, and programs that improve the quality of life for all residents.
- Balance the preservation of existing neighborhoods with the need to increase and diversify housing opportunities.

Recommendations

DT 1: Support new and existing businesses.

DT 1.1: Continue Main Street Program and four point approach:

- ▶ Design
- ▶ Promotion
- ▶ Economic Vitality
- ▶ Organization

DT 1.2: Continue meeting regularly with the Pittsboro Downtown Advisory Board to develop strategies to enhance the downtown.

DT 2: Recruit new businesses (including shops and restaurants).

DT 2.1: Promote existing and proposed innovative opportunities in downtown.

- ▶ Develop a campaign to market downtown as a sound business investment.
- ▶ Utilize the town's website to feature available sites and buildings as well as the amenities and



**Attracting New Business #1
in recent downtown business
survey, More places to shop
#2 in survey.**

infrastructure (including planned improvements) within downtown that can enhance the viability of downtown as a business location.

- ▶ Raise awareness of available grants and provide assistance with grant applications to increase private investors' funding of improvements to buildings and sites.

DT 2.2: Facilitate downtown development or re-development for properties within the district.

- ▶ Provide guidance to property owners' in building upfits that meet the following:
 - ▶ NC State Building Code requirements, including those set forth in the NC Rehabilitation Code.
 - ▶ NC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) requirements to be eligible for tax credits.
- ▶ Consider expedited plan review or other incentives.
- ▶ Develop a grant program that provides funding for upfits that enable the adaptive reuse of existing buildings. The façade grant program may serve as a model for creating this complementary grant opportunity. Funding considerations may include financial assistance for a variety of interior and exterior modifications that are common barriers to investment, such as commercial kitchen equipment purchase and installation, upgraded fire protection per the NC State Building Code, structural reinforcement, or roof repairs.

Downtown Vision:

"Encircled by an eclectic and innovative economy and supportive of its rich agrocentric heritage, Downtown Pittsboro is a vibrant arts and cultural destination that inspires visitors and brings pride to the community. With its own unique character, Downtown Pittsboro is an inclusive and welcoming place for everyone." – Downtown Work Plan FY 23

brochures can define specific attractions and include a map that highlights the recommended walking tour route that links all such destinations.

- ▶ In business recruitment efforts, target arts-related businesses.
- ▶ Focus on programming, ensuring that the downtown functions as the primary community gathering place to enjoy many forms of art and entertainment.
- ▶ Expand the current range of events to include additional seasons and times that do not currently have scheduled events.
- ▶ Develop a public art program to encourage the installation of art by both public and private entities.
 - ◆ Prepare a public art master plan that addresses the types art to be encouraged and defines location criteria for both public and private properties.
 - ◆ Implement the art master plan.
 - ▶ Creating incentives for private installations that may include funding assistance or credit for meeting open space requirements.
 - ▶ Sponsor competitions. For publicly-owned and publicly-maintained sites identified in the art master plan, invite professional artists to submit art to be selected by an appointed art jury.
 - ▶ Actively market downtown as a prime business location to expand food and beverage selection in Downtown Pittsboro.

DT 3: Support Pittsboro, and specifically Downtown, as a vibrant arts and cultural destination.

DT 3.1: Continuing to organize and provide inclusive community events to build community spirit and foster relationships between neighbors.

DT 3.2: Expand existing arts and entertainment offerings Downtown and in other areas.

- ▶ Create and regularly update marketing materials to promote the various ways visitors can experience downtown. Hard copy and digital

Recommendations Continued

DT 4: Continue to promote first floor retail and destination uses on the street level on main corridors, with office and residential uses on upper levels.

DT 5: Encourage compact development in the Downtown area.

- ▶ Developing in a more compact and higher density pattern, where multistory, mixed-use buildings are located closely together, is encouraged, which is both environmentally sustainable and conducive to the creation of more walkable, activated neighborhoods.

DT 6: Expand residential options within walking distance to downtown Pittsboro.

DT 6.1: Support concentrating development in areas that are already connected, or have the potential to be connected, to other development and neighborhoods.

DT 6.2: Consider housing products that appeal to several segments of the existing and future population.

- ▶ Small units in the form of condominiums, lofts, townhouses, cottages, and accessory dwelling units, for example, may be attractive to the empty-nesters who choose to downsize. Young professionals may be drawn to the lower price points that can be achieved with smaller units.

DT 6.3: Consider increases in allowable density in key areas.

- ▶ Increasing the number of households living within a 10-minute walk of the historic center (courthouse) can help support businesses and contribute to a vibrant center.
- ▶ Consider a range of opportunities, including infill development through the subdivision of existing lots to accommodate new units and redevelopment to incorporate new attached single-family and multi-family products.

DT 7: Continue planning and design efforts to address priority issues in and around downtown, including walkability and context-sensitive redevelopment.

DT 7.1: Update the Downtown Vision Plan. Examine land use, development scale, parking, circulation for a variety of modes, public space and streetscape enhancements, art, aesthetics, and safety.

DOWNTOWN HOUSING

Housing options are key to attracting a critical mass of residents within walking distance of downtown businesses. The variety of housing types could also attract the “creative class,” which includes entrepreneurs and artists that seek a live-work environment the downtown area can foster. Supporting development near downtown can reduce vehicle miles traveled by enabling more people to walk or bike to work, shop or run errands.



DT 7.2: Undertake a parking study downtown to determine available parking, usage trends and opportunities to add additional parking options.

DT 8: Update downtown overlay to include form-based design criteria to match Downtown Vision Plan and allow for flexibility in redevelopment.

DT 8.1: Utilize an updated Downtown Vision Plan as the basis for the form-based code. In developing the updated plan, consider the following:

- ▶ Maintain the scale of development along Hillsboro Street, especially between Salisbury Street and the Courthouse.
 - ◆ 2-3 stories, with residential or office above active uses.
- ▶ Allow larger buildings on key sites and east of Hillsboro Street and south of the Courthouse.
- ▶ Consider updates to design standards to accomplish goals and allow flexibility in design.
- ▶ Update long-term vision for public spaces, including function and aesthetics.



The historic courthouse anchors the center of Downtown Pittsboro.

DT 9.2: Preserve character of intact historic neighborhoods.

- ▶ Limit commercial conversions and uses along Hillsboro Street north of the Thompson House (the French Connections) unless such conversions would justify the level of investment required to preserve structures.
- ▶ Consider the establishment of one or more local historic districts to increase preservation efforts. Refer to General Statutes 160A-400.1-400.14 for procedures and requirements for the creation and administration of a local district.

DT 10: Coordinate with Chatham County on future uses of the county owned property.

DT 11: Improve utilization and add on-street and/or off street public parking.

- ▶ Improve access and signage to existing parking facilities.
- ▶ Promote and enable shared parking opportunities.

DT 9: Preserve historic neighborhoods.

DT 9.1: Update the inventory of existing assets.

- ▶ Review the historic assets of the downtown areas to determine the currency of the inventory of properties and districts.
- ▶ Identify the sites, structures, and districts that are on the National Register of Historic Places.
 - ◆ Note those that have achieved and maintained Landmark status.
 - ◆ Evaluate the delineated district(s) to determine the erosion, if any, of the district(s), as changes (e.g., loss of contributing structures) can threaten the integrity of a district and result in removal from the National Register.

DT 12: Study potential streetscape updates to include additional pedestrian space.

- In advance of, or as part of, an effort to update the Downtown Vision Plan, examine the public streets, particularly where heavy pedestrian traffic is anticipated, to define places where streets can be redesigned/reconstructed to accommodate the foot traffic. Consider expanded spaces where the downtown restaurants can “spill over” into the sidewalks to provide outdoor seating options without impeding safe pedestrian movements.

DT 13: New public spaces.

- Prepare a public realm master plan that defines the range of public spaces that should comprise a system for downtown. The plan should acknowledge existing and planned parks and other spaces within and near downtown. More importantly, the plan should specify opportunities for the following:
 - New spaces varying in size and level of improvement to support a range of activities, which may be programmed events or informal gatherings. Consider plazas, courtyards, formal greens, pocket parks, and larger parks at the periphery.
 - Links between spaces to facilitate access and create a connected system. These links may be in the form of enhanced greenways, side paths, and other urban trails. Downtown streets improved with streetscape should also be considered as potential links and function as linear parks.

CONCEPT PLAN FOR LEWIS FREEMAN HISTORIC PARK



Lewis Freeman Park is planned in an area between Salisbury Street and Rectory Street. Lewis Freeman was the first recorded and most prosperous free black settler in Pittsboro. At one time he owned most of the block containing the park.



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Background / Analysis

Environmental Features and Threats

The Town of Pittsboro has grown by over 2,000 people in the last 20 years. This growth is expected to continue and accelerate due to the ongoing build out of Chatham Park and other approved subdivisions. In addition, recent economic development announcements related to major employers coming to the Moncure and CAM megasites will likely exacerbate development interest in the area.

There are numerous natural resources within the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of the Town of Pittsboro, these include the Haw River and Jordan Lake which provide drinking water to over 700,000 water customers in the region and also serve as regional recreation destinations. There are steep, forested slopes that provide valuable habitat and protect against erosion. There are 6 designated Natural Heritage Natural Areas (NHNA) and other areas high in biodiversity and wildlife habitat value—including rural and forested lands surrounding the headwaters of Robeson Creek, Turkey Creek and Brooks Creek, and land surrounding the 1,600 acres of managed lands along the Haw River and Jordan Lake which includes the Lower Haw River State Natural Area and state game lands.

Although the town is still surrounded by farms and forests, there have been a number of large developments approved in the town's planning area and in Chatham County. As the Town grows it will be increasingly important to protect sensitive natural resources through growth management and improving development design.

Priority Habitats and Species

In addition, there are a number of priority habitats that occur throughout the planning area. These habitats and the species they support are described late in this chapter.

Priority habitats include:

- ◆ Mixed Hardwood / Pine Forests
- ◆ Early Successional Communities
- ◆ Wetlands
- ◆ Headwater Creeks and Rivers
- ◆ Riparian Areas & Floodplains
- ◆ Lakes

These habitats support a variety of rare species. There are two federally endangered species that live in the planning area. One of these is the Cape Fear Shiner, an endemic fish species that lives in the Haw River and spends time in the lower end of tributaries. Many of these streams suffer from degraded water quality due to non-point source pollution and sedimentation related to development activities.

A few Species of Greatest Conservation Need (designated by the NC Wildlife Action Plan) that have the potential to occur in the planning area are:

- ◆ Bald Eagle
- ◆ Acadian Flycatcher
- ◆ Four-Toed Salamander
- ◆ Carolina Ladle Crayfish
- ◆ Eastern Box Turtle
- ◆ Various mussel species
- ◆ Tricolored Bat (listing likely)

Community Priorities

Environmental protection and conservation was ranked as the #2 priority in the community survey. Maintaining and improving water quality was ranked as the #1 environmental priority in the survey and access to parks and greenways was a high priority for new neighborhoods. Overall 69% of survey respondents preferred conservation subdivision design to conventional subdivision design. Conservation subdivision design clusters development away from natural resources and includes a higher percentage of open space preservation in new development.

Previous Planning Efforts

The Town and local conservation groups have a long history of parks, natural resource and conservation planning.

The previous land use plan, adopted in 2012 emphasized the need to reduce erosion and nutrient pollution in Jordan Lake to protect drinking water, recreational use and wildlife habitat. It also discussed implementing better stormwater management requirements to reduce non-point source pollution.

The Town of Pittsboro Commissioners adopted a resolution in support of the Lower Haw Trails Plan in October of 2018.

A new Parks & Recreation System Master Plan was adopted in March 2019. Conservation areas are identified in the plan. Among a list of 12 potential benefits of parks, recreation, and open space systems, conservation of natural areas and community character were the two potential benefits that respondents indicated were most important.

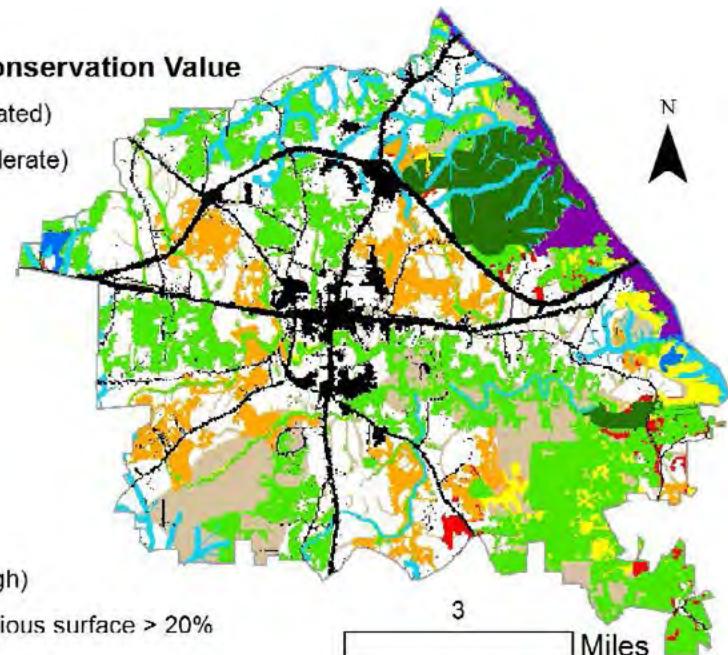
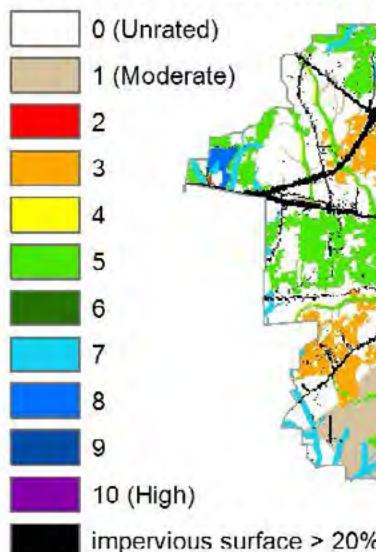
The Town of Pittsboro Unified Development Ordinance was adopted on May 24, 2021. This included an update of many standards that result in environmental protection (including riparian buffer regulations and open space requirements).

There are a number of non-governmental organizations working on conservation efforts in the area including Friends of the Lower Haw River, the Haw River Assembly and the Chatham Conservation Partnership.

The Chatham Conservation Partnership published a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for Chatham County in 2011 (<https://www.chathamconservation.org/home/chatham-conservation-plan>). The Conservation Plan was published in 2011 and was the first comprehensive, county-wide conservation plan developed in North Carolina. The Conservation Plan resulted from a collaborative process among many partners and individuals and included an identification of key resources, information on threats and recommendations to protect and manage important natural resources in the county.

In 2014, funding was secured from the USFS Redesign Program with the goal to take the plan and other available resources and tailor them to Pittsboro's local conservation needs. This effort resulted in the Natural Resource Planning Tools project (www.chathamconservation.org/home/natural-resource-planning-tools-project). This project tailored information from the CCP to the Town of Pittsboro. A citizen's advisory committee was created and then developed recommended updates to the Unified Development Ordinance.

Relative Conservation Value



The map to the right shows relative conservation value as mapped during the 2014 Natural Resources Planning Tools Project.

PRIORITY HABITATS & WILDLIFE

Mixed Hardwood/Pine Forests

Undeveloped land in Pittsboro is composed primarily of contiguous Mixed Hardwood/Pine Forests. These forests were once the most common natural community type in the Piedmont ecoregion, occurring over most of the uplands. They provide habitat for many species, both common and rare.

Eastern box turtles, red-headed woodpeckers, brown-headed nuthatch are some of the species living in our mixed hardwood/pine forests. Many species that use these forests are sensitive to small areas, meaning that they will only persist in large contiguous patches of forests. When these forests become fragmented by development, many types of wildlife will not use the forests anymore.

Conservation Recommendation: In the Piedmont, it is recommended that communities aim to conserve contiguous blocks of forest that are at least 75 acres.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need: Brown-headed Nuthatch (*Sitta pusilla*), Tri-colored Bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*), Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina Carolina*)

Early Successional Communities

While Pittsboro is mostly forested, there are patches of early successional habitats. These are uplands dominated by herbaceous vegetation and/or shrub cover because most trees have been removed, either through natural means or by human activity. Clearcutting is an example of a human activity that creates early successional habitat. These habitats provide food and cover for wildlife but need to be maintained by mowing, grazing, or burning to be conserved. Because it does require some level of disturbance to be maintained on the landscape, it is one of the habitats most in decline in our country and in the Piedmont of NC. Species associated with early successional habitat are among our most threatened, including Northern bobwhite and loggerhead shrike.

Conservation Recommendation: Encourage farmland protection. Within agricultural landscapes, patches of early successional habitat are recommended to be at least 20 acres; in a more developed landscape, patches of early successional habitat should be larger and aim to provide at least 250 acres of habitat within 1 mile of one another.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need: American Kestrel (*Falco sparverius*), Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*), Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), Yellow-throated Warbler (*Setophaga dominica*), Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*)



Photo Credit: Missy McGaw
(NCWRC)

PRIORITY HABITATS & WILDLIFE

Wetlands

Wetlands include forested wetlands, impoundments (e.g., dammed streams that develop into ponds), marshes, and small, non-jurisdictional wetlands. All provide water quality, water quantity, and wildlife habitat benefits. In upland depression swamps, which are isolated from streams and only hold water in wetter parts of the year, amphibians, like spotted salamander and upland chorus frogs, lay their eggs in fish-free ponds that are safe from predation. In Pittsboro, there are historical records of four-toed salamander, which is a state special concern species, and it may persist in isolated wetlands and headwater seeps.

Marshes, such as those along Bush Creek near Jordan Lake, will usually have fish in them and are important places for young fish to mature. There are also upland seepages in this area; these are wetlands that occur on sloping uplands. They are generally small and contrast sharply with adjacent communities. They are fed by groundwater seepage and their soils are saturated for much of the year, but they are seldom, if ever, flooded. In this area there are a few known wetland complexes; animals will move between wetlands, so it is important to protect the habitat around the wetlands and between the wetlands.

Conservation Recommendations: Protect wetlands, jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional, from development. Protect a 150-foot critical habitat buffer around each wetland to protect water quality and wildlife habitat. Protect a wider 600-foot buffer beyond this critical habitat buffer to provide upland habitat protection for the wildlife using the wetlands and to facilitate migration and dispersal from wetlands. Within this upland buffer, development can be clustered within a concentrated 25% area; orient this disturbed area so that it is not between adjacent wetlands or within a known animal movement corridor.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need: Mole Salamander (*Ambystoma talpoideum*), Four-toed Salamander (*Hemidactylum scutatum*), Tri-colored Bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*), Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*), Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*)



Photo Credit: Missy McGaw
(NCWRC)

PRIORITY HABITATS & WILDLIFE

Headwaters & Small Creeks

The headwater stream and small creek community includes intermittent and ephemeral streams. Headwater streams are very important as they influence water quality and quantity. Carolina ladle crayfish is a rare species that occurs in a small creek in this area. Chatham County also has many rare species of mussels that may occur within the streams in Pittsboro.

Small & Medium Rivers

Small river communities represent the next stream order above headwater streams and typically consist of third- and fourth-order perennial large creeks or streams and small river systems. Medium river communities drain watersheds 200 to 3,800 square miles in size and have an average bankfull width of 115 feet. The Haw River is considered a medium-sized river community. Species richness increases significantly in these systems and larger and more diverse fish and mussel assemblage are found as compared to the headwater stream community.

Conservation Recommendations: To maintain the aquatic habitat for the animals living in our streams, protect at least a 50' buffer along intermittent and ephemeral streams and a minimum 100' buffer along perennial streams and rivers. Streams draining to the Rocky River, where there are known federally listed endangered species, should be buffered by a minimum of 200'. Aim to conserve 300' wildlife corridors for key linkages, many of which can be accomplished along streams and rivers.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need: Carolina Ladle Crayfish (*Cambarus davidi*), Cape Fear Shiner (*Notropis Mekistocholas*), Freshwater Mussels: Triangle Floater (*Alasmidonta undulata*), Brook Floater (*Alasmidonta varicose*), Creeper (*Strophitus undulatus*), Savannah Lilliput (*Toxolasma pullus*), Eastern Creekshell (*Villosa delumbis*), Carolina Creekshell (*Villosa vaughaniana*), Rayed Pink Fatmucket (*Lampsilis splendida*)



Photo Credit: Top: Missy McGaw
(NCWRC), Bottom: Allison Weakley

PRIORITY HABITATS & WILDLIFE

Riparian Areas & Floodplains

Floodplains are areas where flood waters collect, in this area they are naturally forested habitats that provide important habitat for species like prothonotary warbler, Louisiana waterthrush; mole salamanders will breed in floodplain pools. Floodplain forests occur throughout Pittsboro.

Conservation Recommendations: It is important to protect the 100-year floodplain in its entirety from development in order to protect wildlife habitat, property, and human lives in the event of a flood. Protecting the 500-year floodplain is also advisable for the same reasons, especially as storm events are intensifying with climate change.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need: Northern Slimy Salamander (*Plethodon glutinosus*), Mole Salamander (*Ambystoma talpoideum*); Yellow-crowned Night-Heron (*Nyctanassa violacea*), Louisiana Waterthrush (*Parkesia motacilla*), Prothonotary Warbler (*Protonotaria citrea*), Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*)

Lakes

Jordan Lake is important habitat for many wading birds and fish. It is one of only three places in the state, and the only place in the Piedmont, where double-crested cormorant breeds. The lake and the lands surrounding Jordan Lake are important habitats for wildlife and for recreation, including fishing, boating, hunting, and hiking. Jordan Lake Game Lands are managed with prescribed fire.

Conservation Recommendations: It is recommended that communities encourage conservation and/or working farms and forests adjacent to protected lands, like Jordan Lake. This buffers protected lands from many of the direct, indirect, and some of cumulative impacts of development, like invasive species, pets (especially cats), noise, light pollution, etc. It also allows for important management activities, such as thinning and burning, to continue with less impediments.

Protected Species: Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Wildlife listed in this document are species that are currently known to occur in, or within 1 mile, of Pittsboro's ETJ. Not all of Pittsboro's ETJ has been surveyed for wildlife, the absence of data on a particular species does not mean that it is not present. Some of the data on these species was obtained from: North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. <2022>. Natural Heritage Data Explorer [web application]. NCDNCR, Raleigh, NC. Available at www.ncnhp.org. (Accessed: <November 2022>).



Photo Credit: Missy McGaw
(NCWRC)

SPECIES OF GREATEST CONSERVATION NEED

Species of Greatest Conservation Need		Habitats					
Common Name	Scientific Name	Mixed Hardwood / Pine Forests	Early Successional	Streams and Rivers	Lakes	Wetlands	Floodplains
AMPHIBIANS							
Dwarf Salamander	<i>Eurycea quadrivittata</i>	X		X			X
Four-Toed Salamander	<i>Hemidactylum scutatum</i>	X				X (isolated wetlands)	X
Mole Salamander	<i>Ambystoma talpoideum</i>	X				X (isolated wetlands)	X
Northern Slimy Salamander	<i>Plethodon glutinosus</i>	X		X			X
Northern Two-Lined Salamander	<i>Eurycea bislineata</i>	X		X			X
BIRDS							
Acadian Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax virescens</i>	X		X			
American Black Duck	<i>Anas rubripes</i>				X		
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>		X				
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>			X	X		
Bobolink	<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>		X				
Brown-headed nuthatch	<i>Sitta pusilla</i>	X					
Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>				X		
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>				X		
Hermit Thrush	<i>Cathartes guttatus</i>	X					
Hooded Merganser	<i>Lophodytes cucullatus</i>						
Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>		X				
Louisiana Waterthrush	<i>Parkesia motacilla</i>			X			X
Northern Bobwhite	<i>Colinus virginianus</i>		X				
Prairie Warbler	<i>Setophaga discolor</i>		X				
Prothonotary Warbler	<i>Protonotaria citrea</i>			X			X
Red-Headed Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i>	X				X	X
Rusty Blackbird	<i>Euphagus carolinus</i>				X		X
Yellow throated warbler	<i>Setophaga dominica</i>	X		X			X
CRAYFISH							
Carolina Ladle Crayfish	<i>Cambarus davidi</i>			X			
MAMMALS							
Little Brown Bat	<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>				X		
Tricolored Bat	<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>	X			X		
FISH							
Cape Fear Shiner	<i>Notropis mekistocholas</i>			X			
MUSSELS							
Brook Floater	<i>Alasmidonta varicosa</i>			X			
Yellow Lampmussel	<i>Lampsilis cariosa</i>			X			
Carolina Creekshell	<i>Villosa vauhnianaria</i>			X			
Creeper	<i>Strophitus undulatus</i>			X			
Notched Rainbow	<i>Villosa constricta</i>			X			
REPTILES							
Eastern Box Turtle	<i>Terrapene carolina carolina</i>	X		X			

****Not all of these species have been documented in the study area, but they have the potential to occur.**

Overview

Preserving the natural assets in the planning area, including water quality, mature forest and unique habitats is essential to maintaining the character of the Pittsboro area, protecting rare species and providing recreational opportunities.

Recommendations

NRC 1: Preserve high quality habitat and key connections through reservations of open space in new development.

NRC 1.1: Maintain open space requirements in Unified Development Ordinance and update to specify priority open space types.

► Priority open space types include:

- ◆ Riparian areas (forested areas near streams are key to maintaining and improving water quality).
- ◆ Other priority habitats which are described earlier in this chapter and include floodplains, wetlands, lakes, headwater streams and areas recommended for conservation associated with these features.

BENEFITS OF RIPARIAN BUFFERS

Preserving vegetated areas adjacent to streams has been shown to have significant water quality. Minimum riparian buffers (50ft) are required by the Town, however incentivizing additional buffers can lead to improved water quality and have wildlife benefits. For instance 100ft buffers have been shown to greatly improve nutrient and sediment removal and once buffers reach 150ft on each side of a stream it can provide a key wildlife corridor.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY GOALS

Primary Goal

- Protect natural resources with best practices in land use planning, green infrastructure, low-impact development, and conservation development design.

Secondary Goals

- Grow strategically by investing in infrastructure, facilities, and programs that improve the quality of life for all residents.
- Collaborate with public and private partners, state and regional agencies, and neighboring jurisdictions to address cross-boundary opportunities and constraints.

- ◆ Wildlife corridors that connect patches of high-quality habitat and conserved open space.
- ◆ Mature forest and/or meadows particularly along road frontages or adjacent to existing low-density residential development.*

*Although not a priority for habitat or species protection this open space type can result in tree protection and conserving rural character in less developed areas.

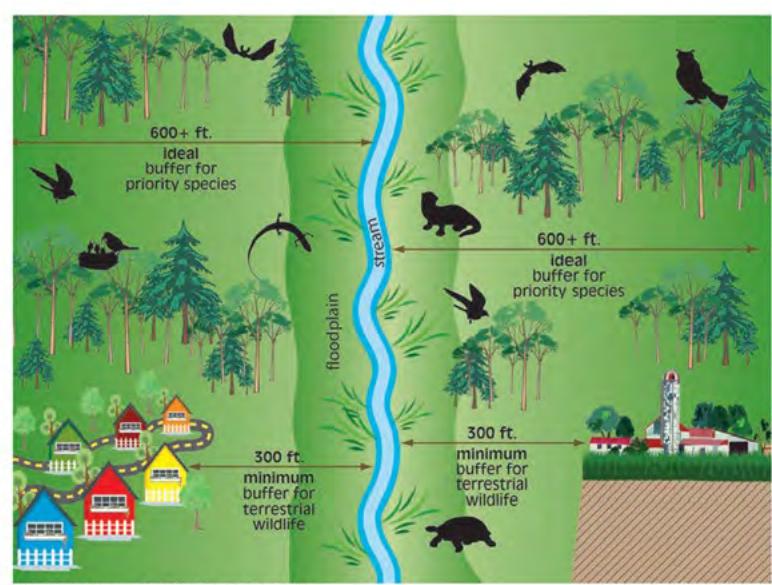


Image source: Green Growth Toolbox (Graphic by Kimberly KC Schott, Red Gate Design)

Recommendations Continued

NRC 2: Maintain and improve water quality through encouraging the preservation of stream buffers and riparian forests.

NRC 2.1: Maintain existing riparian buffer requirements.

NRC 2.2: Encourage additional riparian buffers through the conditional zoning process.

- Encourage buffer width of ideally at least 100ft on perennial streams and buffers along intermittent and ephemeral streams.

NRC 2.3: Incentivize additional riparian buffers in the design of conservation subdivisions (see NRC 4).

NRC 3: Monitor, enforce and improve stormwater management.

- See Infrastructure section.

NRC 4: Incentivize conservation design in areas with key natural resources.

NRC 4.1: Update Unified Development Ordinance to clarify conservation subdivision design option and requirements.

- Clarify process and consider administrative approval.
 - ◆ Administrative approval contingent upon meeting design requirements could reduce up-front costs and make conservation design more attractive in certain instances.
- Specify minimum open space requirements and priority open space types and natural resources.
 - ◆ Minimum open space percentage (e.g. 40%) and other criteria such as size, width, and/or minimum upland open space amount. Allowances for recreation facilities or infrastructure should be specified.
 - ◆ Open space should also be deed restricted or be part of a conservation easement to ensure permanent protection.
- Specify site analysis and field visit requirements.
 - ◆ Consider requirement for showing conservation data on sketch plan for projects within the Natural Resources Conservation Target Area or those receiving incentives.

NRC 4.2: Consider the creation of an Natural Resources Conservation Overlay District.

- Consider potential incentives for conservation

CONSERVATION SUBDIVISIONS

Conservation design is encouraged in areas with vulnerable natural resources, with the goal of clustering development away from sensitive natural resources. The design of subdivisions in these areas can be improved by maintaining flexibility in a few key dimensional requirements in exchange for preservation of more quality open space. The graphic on the right shows a conservation style subdivision with a low overall density, more open space, greater tree preservation, and preservation of agricultural fields fronting a rural road.



Image source: Nealon Planning

design in areas with sensitive natural resources, especially in areas identified on the Natural Resources Conservation Target Areas in Map 9.

► Incentives could include:

- ◆ Allow for lot size flexibility.
- ◆ Consider a density bonus if the development meets certain design criteria (e.g. 50% open space and >=100ft stream buffers).
- ◆ Allow for attached housing.
- ◆ Allow for some non-residential uses footprint (maximum amount based on development size).

NRC 4.3: Consider utilizing public water and sewer extensions as a way to allow for clustering development and encouraging conservation development design in areas with rural character or high value natural resources.

NRC 5: Maintain and create key open space connections.

NRC 5.1: Encourage connected open space within developments and to adjacent properties.

NRC 5.2: Encourage the reservation of open space and the construction of greenways along key corridors including:

- Town to Haw River.
- Town to west side / Agricultural Center.
- New development to blocks of permanently preserved open space including the Lower Haw River Natural Area, Army Corps Land near Jordan Lake and conservation easements held by the Triangle Land Conservancy.

NRC 5.3: Cluster development near existing roadways and developed areas to protect and connect high quality habitat.

NRC 5.4: Encourage development and infrastructure design that enables the movement of wildlife.

- Encourage the utilization of bottomless culverts, spanning bridges and other crossing structures to preserve the ability for wildlife movement in



Pittsboro has three trees that have qualified for North Carolina's Champion Tree Database including the white oak above that measures 112 feet tall.

Image source: NC Forest Service

streams and in riparian areas.

- Consult with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission during the design of large projects.

NRC 6: Pursue additional funding for land conservation in the Town's planning area.

REC 1.1: Consider the creation of a Purchase of Development Rights Program.

NRC 7: Encourage conservation of heritage trees and planting of pollinators and native plants in new development.

NRC 7.1: Consider the preservation of existing trees a primary focus of open space conservation.

- Encourage conservation design in new residential development that preserves stands of trees, heritage trees, etc.

Recommendations Continued

- ▶ Evaluate buffer standards in the UDO to determine whether modifications would increase the preservation of existing trees. Consider more substantial buffers widths to protect existing trees.
- ▶ Create incentives for tree preservation. For example, give additional credit for tree save areas in the delineation of required open space. Establish standards for meeting the intent of this open space standard, such as minimum area, minimum number of trees per acre, and/or minimum number of trees over a specified size.

NRC 7.2: Investigate options for effectively preserving trees with tree protection standards.

- ▶ Consider developing a minimum tree canopy protection requirement for certain zoning districts or as part of the conservation subdivision option.

▶ Consider implementing a more formal intent of the current Heritage Tree Survey requirement in preventing mass clear cutting of land for development, with pursuit of the following:

- ◆ Special legislation from the State to adopt a tree protection ordinance and resources to enforce it. Consider the potential conflicts with the Town's objective to intensify downtown development to a level that ensures the vibrancy desired by the community.
- ◆ Opportunities to educate property owners and developers of the value of tree preservation, such as soil conservation, water quality protection, reduced utility bills, etc.

NRC 8: Encourage the use of native plants and pollinators on public lands and in private development.

NRC 8.1: Conduct a tree inventory on public lands and right of ways.

KEYSTONE TREE SPECIES IN EASTERN TEMPERATE FORESTS

Plant Genus	Sample of Common Species (not all encompassing)	# Caterpillar Species that Use this as a Host Plant
<i>Quercus</i>	White oak (<i>Quercus alba</i>), Black oak (<i>Quercus velutina</i>)	436 
<i>Prunus</i>	American plum (<i>Prunus americana</i>), Black cherry (<i>Prunus serotina</i>), Chokecherry (<i>Prunus virginiana</i>)	340 
<i>Betula</i>	River birch (<i>Betula nigra</i>), Sweet birch (<i>Betula lenta</i>)	284 
<i>Populus</i>	Eastern cottonwood (<i>Populus deltoides</i>)	249 
<i>Acer</i>	Box elder (<i>Acer negundo</i>), Silver maple (<i>Acer saccharinum</i>), Sugar maple (<i>Acer saccharum</i>)	238 
<i>Malus</i>	Southern crabapple (<i>Malus angustifolia</i>), Sweet crabapple (<i>Malus coronaria</i>)	237 
<i>Carya</i>	Bitternut hickory (<i>Carya cordiformis</i>), Pignut hickory (<i>Carya glabra</i>), Mockernut hickory (<i>Carya tomentosa</i>)	213 
<i>Pinus</i>	Pitch pine (<i>Pinus rigida</i>), Eastern white pine (<i>Pinus strobus</i>), Virginia pine (<i>Pinus virginiana</i>)	200 

Source: National Wildlife Federation Garden for Wildlife

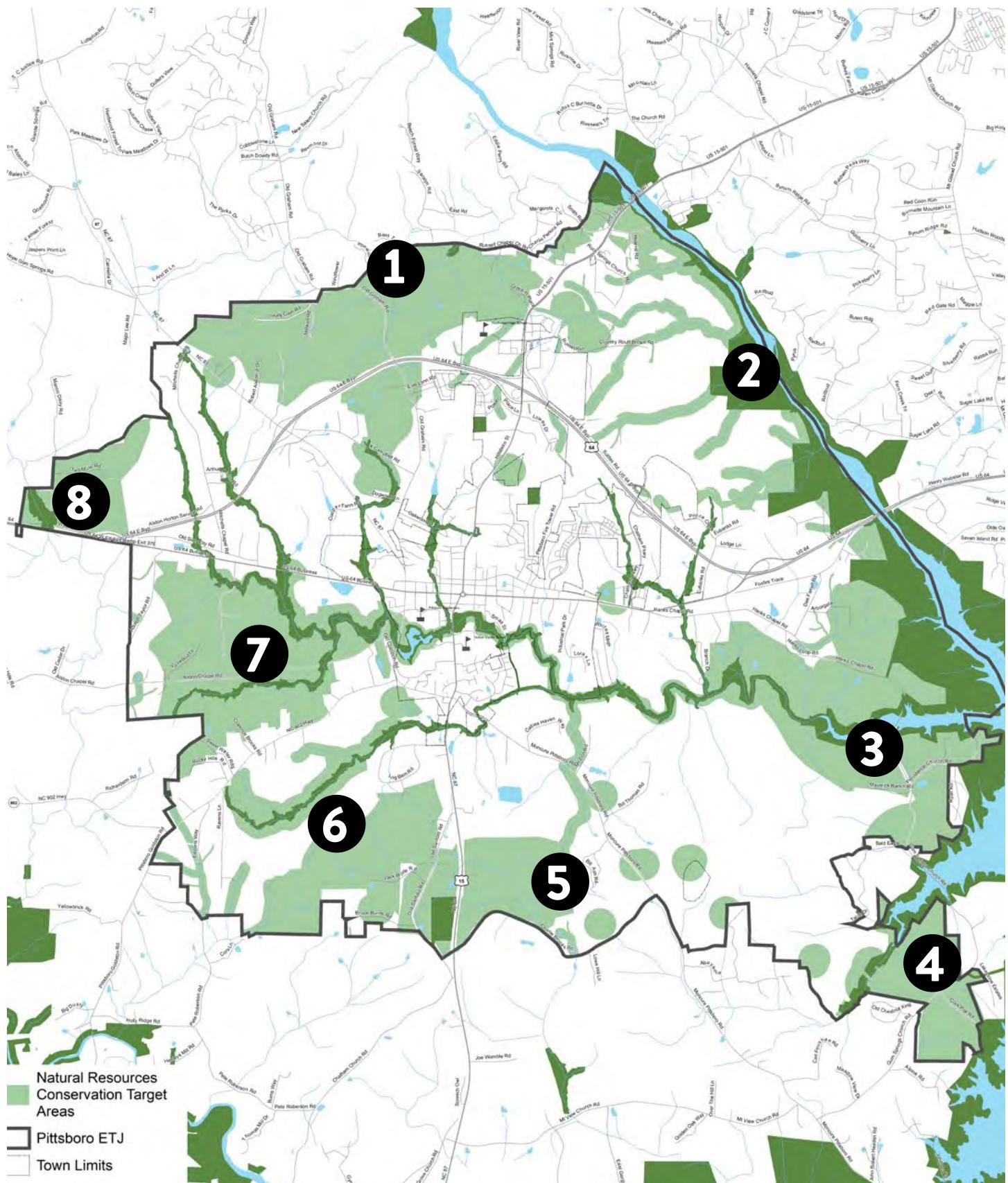
- ▶ Develop a plan to maintain and improve tree canopy diversity on publicly-owned lands and rights of ways.

NRC 8.2: Support research and projects related to increasing native plantings and wildlife habitat on public lands including town-owned properties, rights of way and school sites.

- ▶ Consider development a goal of 5-10 acres of habitat restoration or native plantings / pollinators by 2040.

- NRC 8.3:** Continue to encourage the use of native species in required plantings.
- ▶ Maintain and update recommended and invasive plant lists in UDO.
 - ▶ Consider amendments to increase the number of canopy trees and/or keystone species (trees, shrubs, and flowering perennials) in new residential and commercial developments.

Map 9. Natural Resources Conservation Target Areas



Description of Major Natural Resource Target Areas

1

Brooks Creek Watershed: Relatively undeveloped area that drains to Pittsboro drinking water supply above Bynum Dam on the Haw River. This area also includes connected forest habitat that extends south to X-Campbell Road. This forest and connected floodplains and wetlands are utilized by a population of spotted and marbled salamanders.

2

Lower Haw River State Natural Area Headwaters: Tributaries that drain to the Haw River through the planned Chatham Park development. Environmental commitments for the project include 100 foot stream buffers.

3

Robeson Creek Slopes: Includes a designated Natural Heritage Natural Area and highly erodible soils on hillsides with greater than 15% slope. Also includes large sections of forested uplands adjacent to the Robeson Creek Floodplain.

4

Stinking Creek: Includes high quality and rare Dry-Mesic Oak-Hickory Forest (Piedmont Subtype). This area ranks very high in terms of biodiversity and wildlife habitat value and provides connections to Army Corps land surrounding Jordan Lake.

5

Camp Creek Headwaters: Protects the headwaters of the only tributary of Robeson Creek watershed that has a good aquatic life water quality rating.

6

Turkey Creek Headwaters: Area surrounding the headwaters of Turkey Creek including forested uplands adjacent to the floodplain along the main stem and headwaters to the south that rank high for biodiversity and wildlife habitat value.

7

Robeson Creek Headwaters: Area surrounding the headwaters of Robeson Creek which includes forested areas with high biodiversity and wildlife habitat values.

8

Lesser Forest: Designated Natural Heritage Natural Area of high rating with known occurrences for hardpan forest and the species of concern, the four-toed salamander. This area is mostly conserved with a conservation easement held by Triangle Land Conservancy.



4 APPENDIX



The Appendix is available at [https://nc-pittsboro.civicplus.com/387/
Land-Use-Plan-Update](https://nc-pittsboro.civicplus.com/387/Land-Use-Plan-Update) and includes
additional mapping, survey results,
notes from stakeholder meetings and
a summary of comments received at
public meetings.