



Planning, Development & Inspections

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TO: Planning Board Land Use Committee

FROM: Terry Nolan, Planner III

SUBJ: Town of Garner ETJ Request

DATE: December 4, 2024

REQUEST: Extend Town of Garner's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) by 8,858 acres.

PETITIONER: Town of Garner

On May 7, 2024, the Garner Town Council adopted a resolution requesting that the Wake County Board of Commissioners consider granting extension of the town's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction by 8,858 acres. The request includes areas east along US 70, south along the extension of NC 540, and northwest along US 401 within the Town of Garner future growth area.

State Law

By State law, a municipality of more than 25,000 in population may exercise ETJ over an area not more than three miles beyond its corporate limits. The area beyond the corporate limits is defined as extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). In determining the population of a city for the purposes of an ETJ extension, the town council and the board of county commissioners may use the most recent annual estimate of population as certified by the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Administration. The State Demographer released the most current certified municipal population estimates in July 2023. The July 1, 2023 certified population estimate for the Town of Garner is **38,211**.

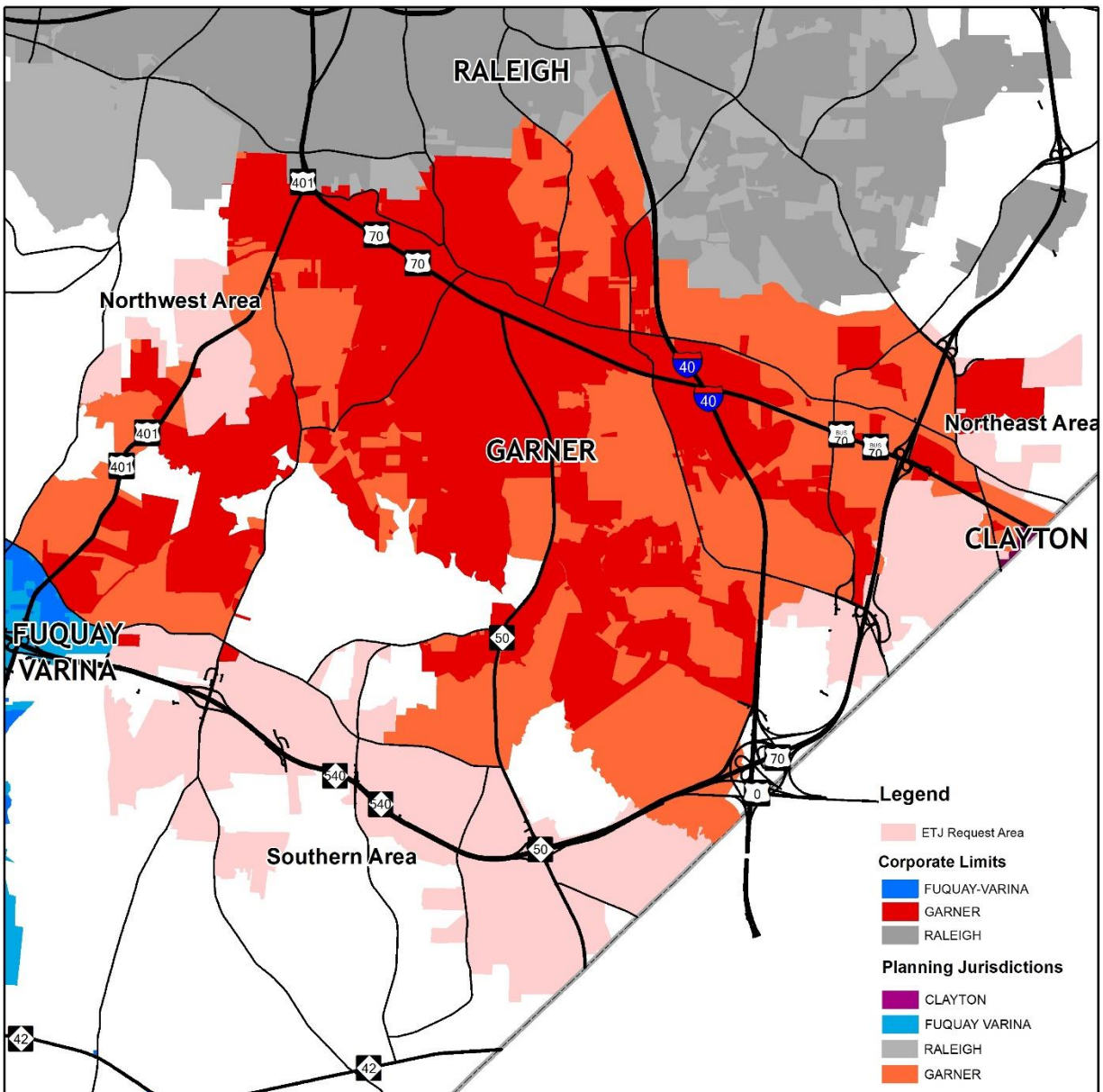
In accordance with North Carolina General Statutes, if you operate a bona-fide farm and are added into a municipality's ETJ, only land area being used for bona-fide farm purposes is exempt from the municipality's zoning and building requirements. Once a bona fide farm use ceases, the land area is subject to the municipality's development regulations.

Requested Area

The largest area of request (Southern) is along the NC 540 extension between Fanny Brown Road and the new NC 540/I-40 interchange. This area is roughly 5,973 acres and generally follows the NC 540 corridor. The area is a mix of Wake County residential subdivisions and land in present-use-value. **Present Use Value** is a program that allows property owners to defer some of their property taxes on land used for agriculture, horticulture, or forestry.

The second largest area of request (Northeast) is along the US 70 and I-40 corridors. This area is roughly 1,949 acres. Municipal public utilities have been extended east to Guy Road and north along Rock Quarry Road to serve new residential and industrial development.

The smallest area of request (Northwest) is on both sides of US 401 and Simpkins Road. Wake Christian Academy and Wake County Speedway are in the vicinity, although it should be noted the speedway is not included in the ETJ request. The northwest area is roughly 936 acres in size and is primarily older residential single-family or manufactured homes.



Although state law specifies the requirements for municipal ETJ expansion, it does not provide detailed evaluation criteria. PLANWake outlines six criteria to be used when the county evaluates municipal ETJ requests. The ETJ criteria are used to determine a municipality's ability to provide services and its capability and commitment to good planning and managing of development in the area requested. The Planning Board Land Use Committee discussed the first three criteria at their November meeting. This report analyzes Garner's ETJ request against Criteria 4-6 in anticipation of the Planning Board's December Land Use Committee meeting.

Criteria 4 - Municipal Capital Improvement Plan/Program and Service Expansion Plan Alignment

The municipality must demonstrate that it is ready to provide appropriate infrastructure to the requested ETJ area. The provision of infrastructure, including water and sewer lines, vehicle capacity, storm water, sidewalks, greenways, parks and other capital projects, shall be documented in a multi-year Capital Improvement Plan/Program. The municipality must also demonstrate that it is ready to provide appropriate municipal services to the requested ETJ area. These services shall include police, fire, trash collection, inspections, and other municipal services.

- [Garner Forward \(2023\)](#)
 - Garner is using 31% of its allocated water/sewer capacity. This allocation is projected to meet Garner's needs through 2040.
 - Garner anticipates needing more resources for fire protection. Garner Forward identifies future sites for safety services. The Caddy Road improvement accommodates police services.
- Municipal [Capital Improvement Plan](#) (CIP) FY 2025-2029
 - Garner's CIP identifies capital projects that may require funding within a five-year period. Projects in the FY2025-2029 CIP address sidewalk gaps, road improvements, stormwater facilities, dam safety, vehicles, and equipment.
 - Garner's current bond ratings are AAA by Standard and Poor's and Aa1 by Moody's Investors Service.
- Transportation Plan (2018)
 - Garner's transportation plan identifies road, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities needed to provide safe and reliable transportation. The plan looks beyond current town limits and identifies future connections and expansions.
 - Non-motorized projects of note: Greenway, bike lanes, or paved shoulder extensions south of NC 540 along Old Stage Road, Benson Road, Swift Creek, White Oak Creek. (pg. 54)
 - Roadway projects of note: Expansion of Rock Quarry Road, expansion of Ten-Ten Road, the Banks Road extension from Old Stage Road to Holland Church Road would create a new east-west connection.
- Fire Station Study (~2024)
 - Garner Fire Department study includes assessment of future needs in ETJ request area.

Criteria 5 – Community Engagement

The municipality must demonstrate that it conducted meaningful public engagement with impacted residents and landowners and document how the concerns of residents and landowners have been addressed by the municipality (such as UDO changes or modification of the request). The municipality shall document all outreach activities to all populations.

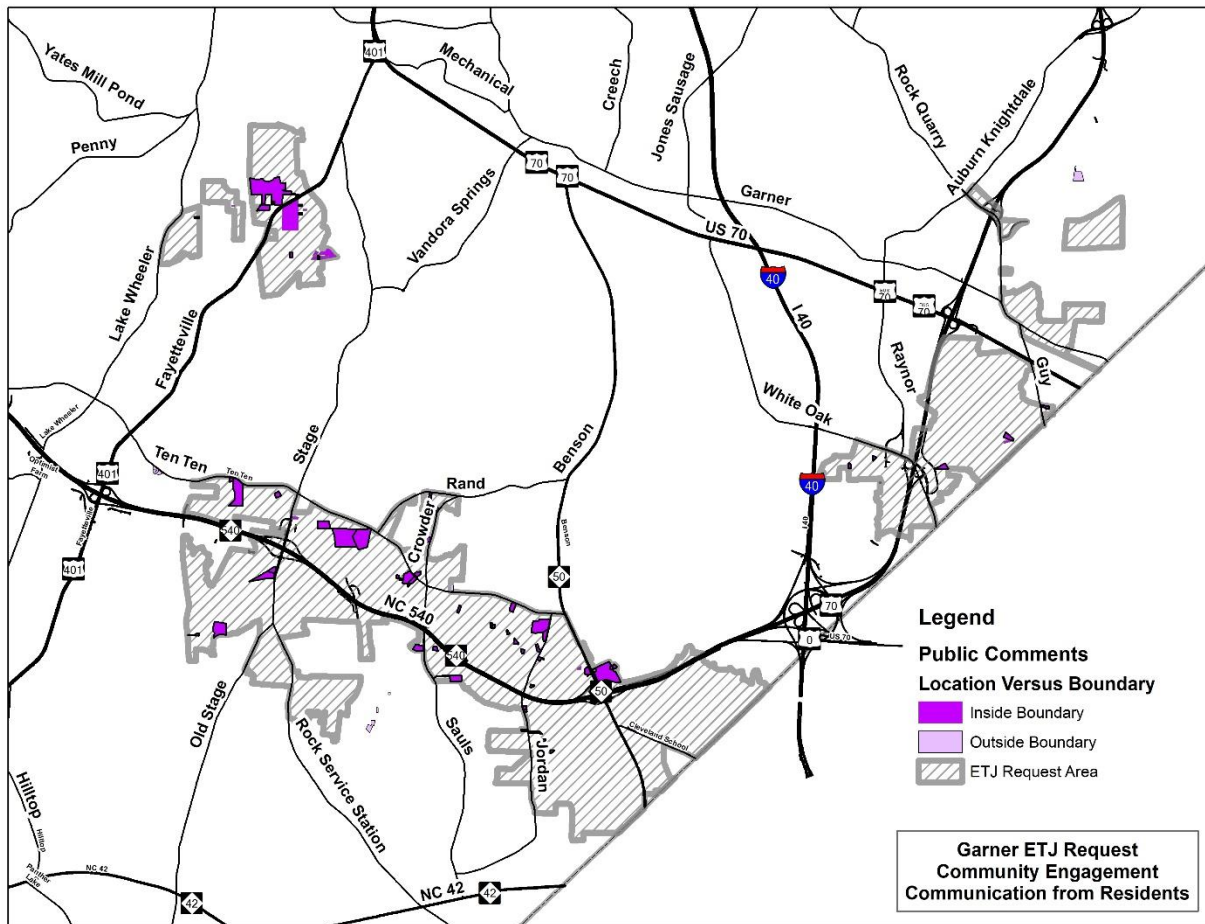
In May, Garner sent a mailing to all property owners within the request area. The letter included information about four public drop-in sessions, an FAQ insert, a map, website information, and direct contacts for staff including phone and email.

The drop-in sessions were hosted at community meeting places throughout the request area and each session was scheduled from 4-7PM. Garner staff provided maps and information about the request and opportunity to discuss the request one-on-one. 52 individuals attended a public drop-in session.

Garner and Wake County staff logged all interactions and responses with the public. Comments and questions received via email, phone, or in person included: opposition to being in Garner ETJ, interest in water/sewer service, impact on bona fide farms, road maintenance, whether the property address, taxes, voting districts, emergency response will change, and other non-ETJ related development questions. The map below reflects all public interactions (Garner and Wake County) in which the commenter provided an address.

Wake County is hosting a community meeting on December 3rd. The purpose of the meeting is to engage with property owners and operators of agricultural, horticultural, and forestry land uses in the request area. Garner planning, Wake County Soil & Water, and County planning staff will participate. Staff will discuss property owner feedback at the December Land Use Committee meeting.

Garner did not amend their ETJ request based on community engagement.



Criteria 6 - Achieving Comprehensive Community Goals

The municipality must demonstrate a track record of working with the County to achieve county-wide comprehensive goals. This track record will be assessed on the following factors: support and actions related to affordable housing, walkability, transit use, vulnerable communities, storm water and green infrastructure.

PLANWake added Criterion 6 and this is the first time the Planning Board will evaluate an ETJ request against this criterion. Municipalities play an essential role in implementing the policies and investments needed to achieve county-wide goals. For example, certain housing types and public transportation services are only achievable in municipalities. In this section, staff attempts to highlight the ways Garner is advancing goals and best planning practices as well as evaluate the request area itself against those goals.

The following are some highlights of Garner's contributions to county-wide goals.

- Housing
 - Garner Forward makes recommendations such as housing incentive overlays, housing partnerships, and encouraging a variety of housing types at different price points.

- Garner has a local affordable housing task force working on policy and program improvements and opportunities.
- Garner has a track record of providing public utilities to property owners needing water/sanitation because of well or septic failure without requiring annexation. Note that the user rates are doubled if the property does not annex into the municipality. This flexibility benefits lower/middle income owners who may be financially burdened by town taxes.
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) are permitted by right. Garner Forward recommends exploring ways to incentivize and encourage ADU's.
- Garner partners frequently with Habitat for Humanity to provide affordable housing units and Rebuilding Together of the Triangle to assist with repairs and accessibility modifications to homes. Two projects – Creech Rd/Gatewood and Weston Rd – are proposed to provide over 400 affordable units in partnership with Habitat for Humanity.
- Transportation
 - Garner adopted a multi-modal Transportation Plan in 2018. Significant projects are noted in this report in the Capital Improvement Program section.
 - Garner adopted a Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan in 2024. Funding to fill sidewalk gaps have been included in the last two bonds.
 - Sidewalk is required on both sides of new development. In rare cases developers are allowed to pay fee in lieu.
 - The Wake Transit Plan identifies Garner as having the highest transit propensity after Raleigh. A Garner 2020 Transit Plan studied fixed route options to complement three existing routes provided by Go Raleigh with anticipated implementation in 2025/2026. Route 20 began weekend operations in September 2024. Garner Forward identifies much of the 70 corridor (Vandora Springs Rd. to White Oak Rd.) as a Tier 1 Priority Investment Area. Garner Forward says, “Specific projects should be considered that might transform specific areas of Garner into more urban, walkable, and vibrant places.”
 - Garner continues to have conversations with the Amazon distribution center on Jones Sausage Road and the Veteran's Administration Clinic on Hwy 50 about serving those locations, as well as the US 401 corridor.
- Vulnerable Communities
 - Garner identifies vulnerable communities along the US 70 corridor and in northern Garner.
 - Garner Forward makes a recommendation to “Explore ways to consider neighborhood vulnerabilities, including displacement, when evaluating development applications”.
 - Bilingual staff provide interpretation at public meetings when needed.
- Economic Diversification
 - Garner officials participated in the Wake County Economic Development Commission's 2023 Industrial Sites Identification Study. More than 8,000 acres of potential industrial land in and around Wake County's 12 municipalities was assessed as part of this study. Future 540 will open significant acreage for industrial development. Garner had the most overall acreage reviewed in this study - 1,960. A key to maximizing the potential in Garner will be infrastructure extension.
- Sustainability/Environment

- Garner implemented goals in the Wake County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan related to stream buffers, at-risk populations, outreach, and a conservation subdivision ordinance.
- Garner's UDO requires electric vehicle charging stations in private parking lots for developments of a certain size.

How does the request align with Wake County goals? This section discusses vulnerable populations within the request area and identifies concerns.

Wake County Housing Affordability Department has a strategy of preserving and rehabilitating naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH) where possible. Housing and planning staff met to review the ETJ request and discussed NOAH units and manufactured home parks within the request area. Manufactured home parks are often particularly vulnerable to redevelopment because the residents own their housing units but not the land. Generally, housing staff recommended excluding manufactured home parks from ETJ where possible. Following is a brief analysis of NOAH within the ETJ request area.

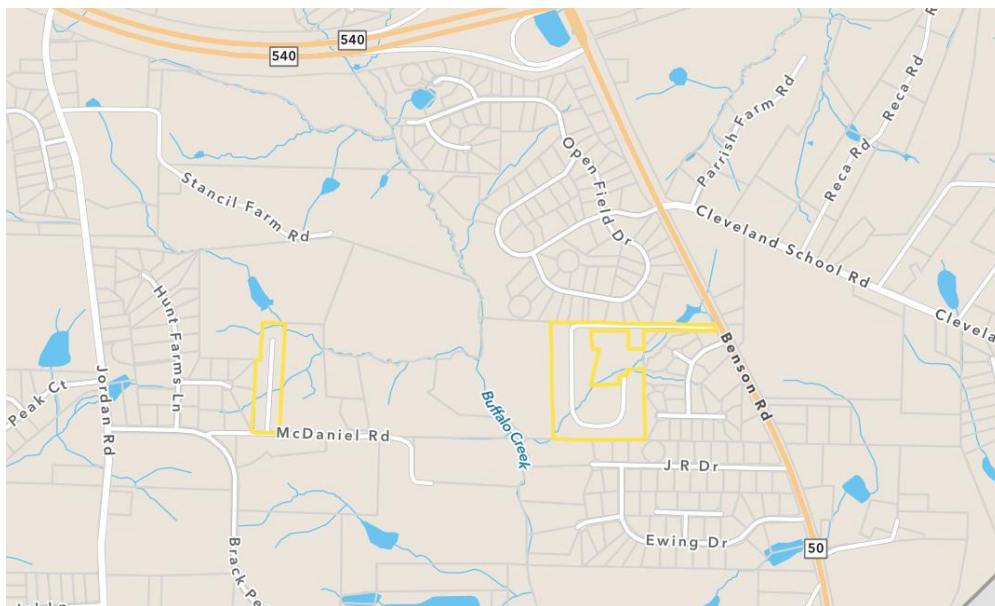
- The Northwest area of the request bounded by Lake Wheeler Road & Simpkins Road has older housing units and manufactured housing. Along Melbourne Road and Sidney Road, owner occupied housing is about 30%; remaining lots are vacant or rental units. Many of the lots are owned by a few entities. Staff are concerned development demand could drive redevelopment and displacement of vulnerable residents.



- The Northeast area of the request south of White Oak Road and east of I-40 has manufactured home parks interspersed with county residential development consisting of a mix of stick-built and manufactured homes. Staff are concerned development demand could drive redevelopment and displacement of vulnerable residents.



- In the Southern area of the request there are two small, manufactured home parks south of NC 540 between Jordan Road and Benson Road.



Housing staff supports Garner's decision to exclude manufactured home parks in the Northwest area. All Star Mobile Home Community (north of Simpkins Road and not included in the request) is adjacent to a large parcel in the request area that is currently a privately operated landfill. Garner Forward shows the area as future industrial. Staff noted potential impacts of an industrial use on the vulnerable population.

Extra-Territorial Planning Jurisdiction

Garner ETJ Request

Terry Nolan, Planning Development & Inspections

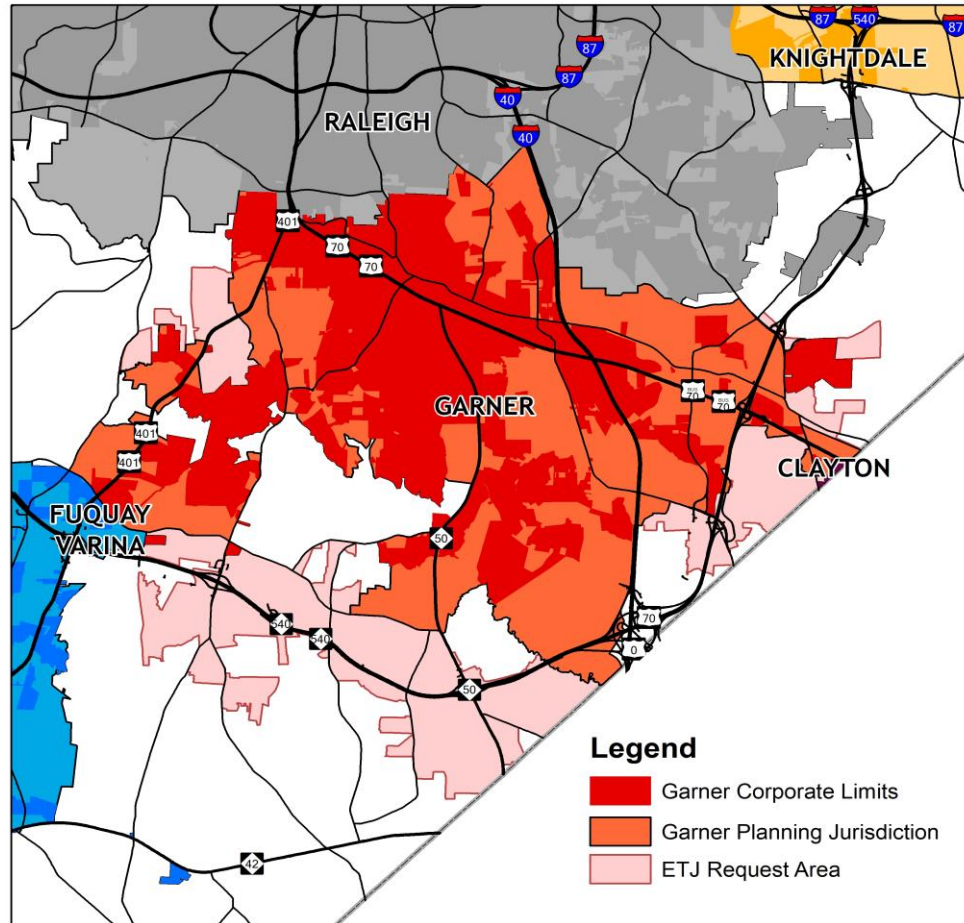
December 4, 2024



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Garner ETJ Request



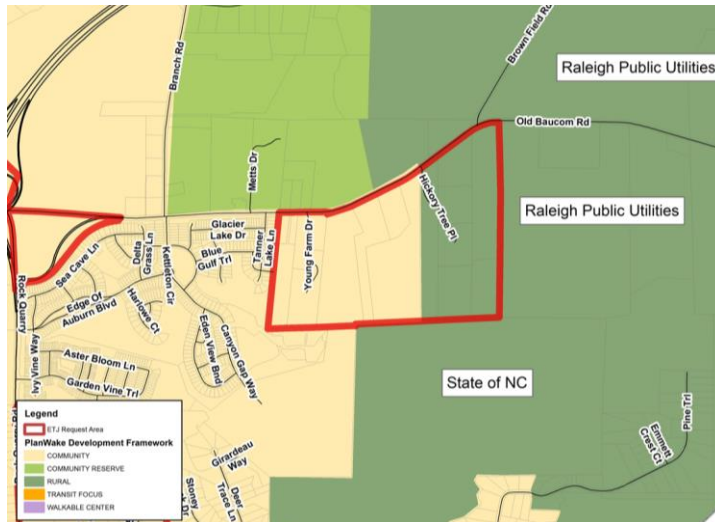
- Submitted May 2024
- Garner held public drop-in sessions June
- 8,858 acres total
 - Northwest = 936 acres
 - Southern = 5,973 acres
 - Northeast = 1,949 acres

Summary

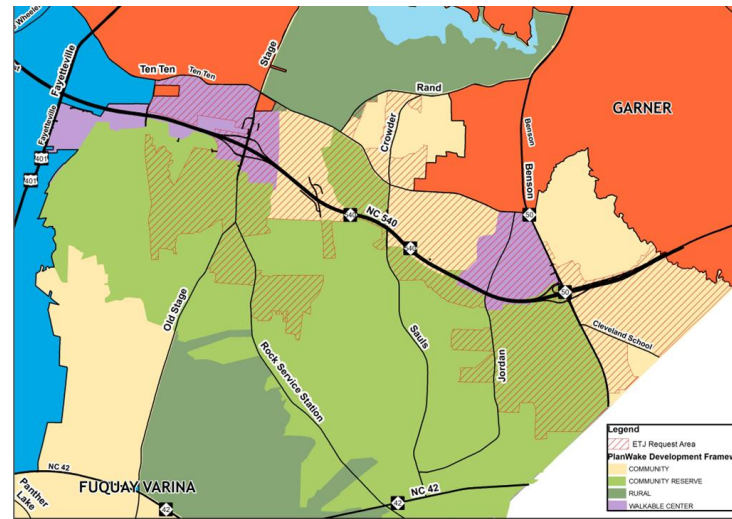
1. Alignment with the County's Comprehensive Plan
 - What has changed since PLANWake? Is an amendment appropriate?
2. Progress of Municipal Development in existing ETJ
 - What is the demand for municipal services?
3. County/Town plan alignment
 - "Plan Together" effectively achieved overall, but some discrepancies in the Southern Area.

Development Framework Map Amendments

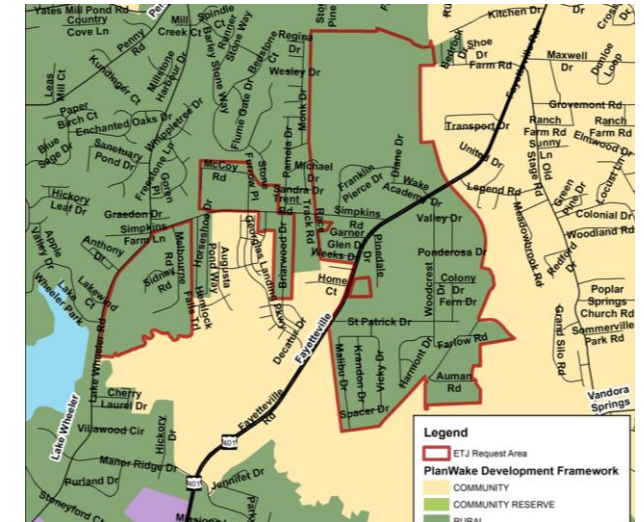
Planning Board will evaluate appropriateness of amendment



Northeast Area
Amendment
Rural to Community



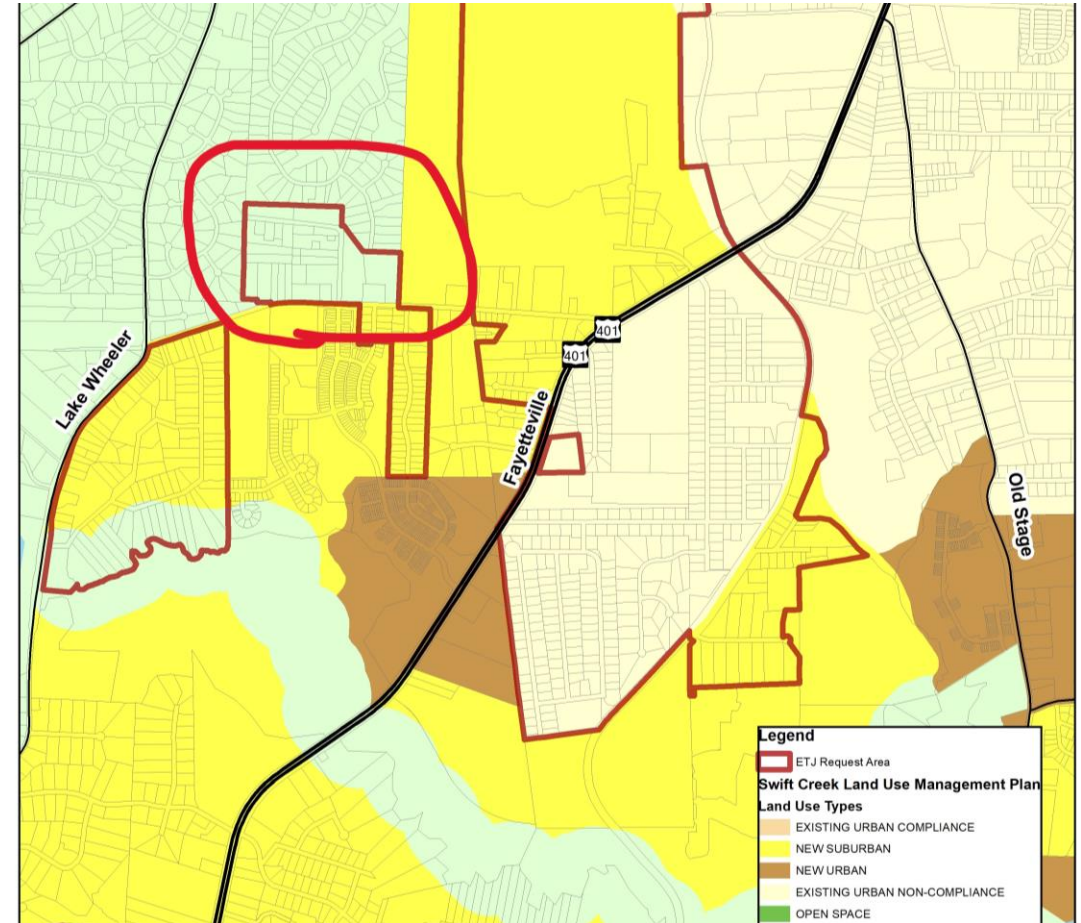
Southern Area
Community Reserve to Community
and/or Walkable Center



Northwest Area
Amendment
Rural to Community

Swift Creek Land Management Plan

- Request includes an area designated “Rural”, which doesn’t allow public utilities.
- Granting of ETJ extension would require an amendment to the plan and the multi-jurisdictional interlocal agreement.



ETJ Criteria

1. Alignment with the County's Comprehensive Plan
2. Progress of Municipal Development in existing ETJ
3. County/Town plan alignment
- 4. Readiness (Capital improvement plans)**
- 5. Community Engagement**
- 6. County-wide goals**

4. Capital Improvement Plan and Service Expansion

Municipal Capital Improvement Plan/Program and Service Expansion Plan Alignment.

- Demonstrate that it is ready to provide appropriate infrastructure to the requested ETJ area.
- The provision of infrastructure shall be documented in a multi-year CIP.
- Demonstrate that it is ready to provide appropriate municipal services to the requested ETJ area.

CIP FY 2025-2029

- ✓ Garner's CIP identifies capital projects that may require funding within a five-year period. Projects in the FY2025-2029 CIP fill sidewalk gaps, road improvements, stormwater facilities, dam safety, park investments, public facilities, vehicles, and equipment.
- ✓ Garner's current bond ratings are AAA by Standard and Poor's and Aa1 by Moody's Investors Service.

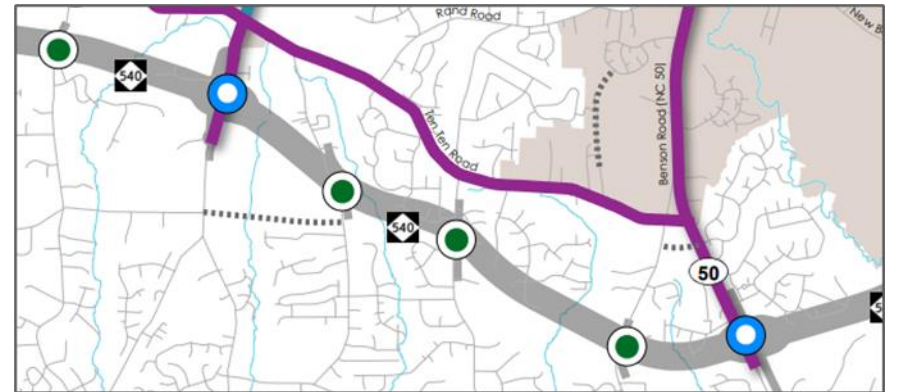
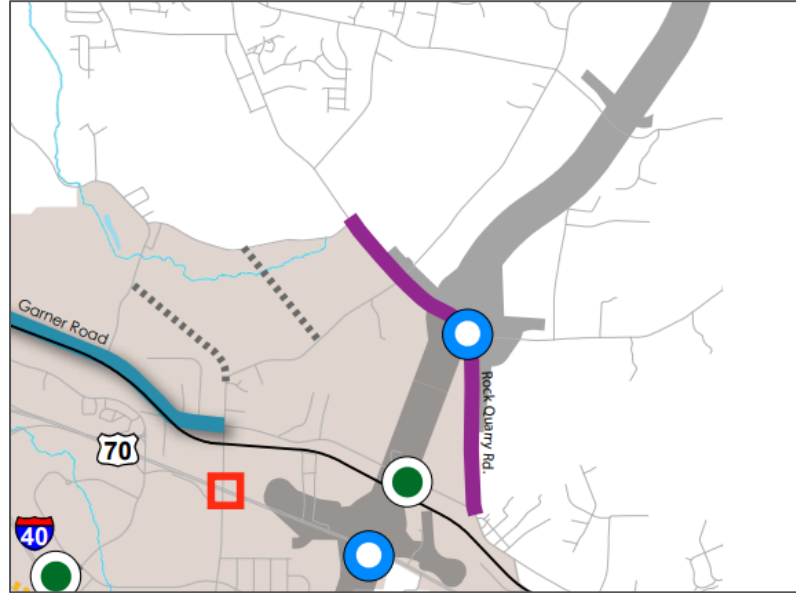
Planning For Infrastructure & Services

✓ **Transportation Plan**

- ✓ Rock Quarry Rd. Expansion
- ✓ Ten-Ten Expansion
- ✓ Extension of Banks Rd.

✓ **Fire Station Study**

- ✓ Includes growth areas



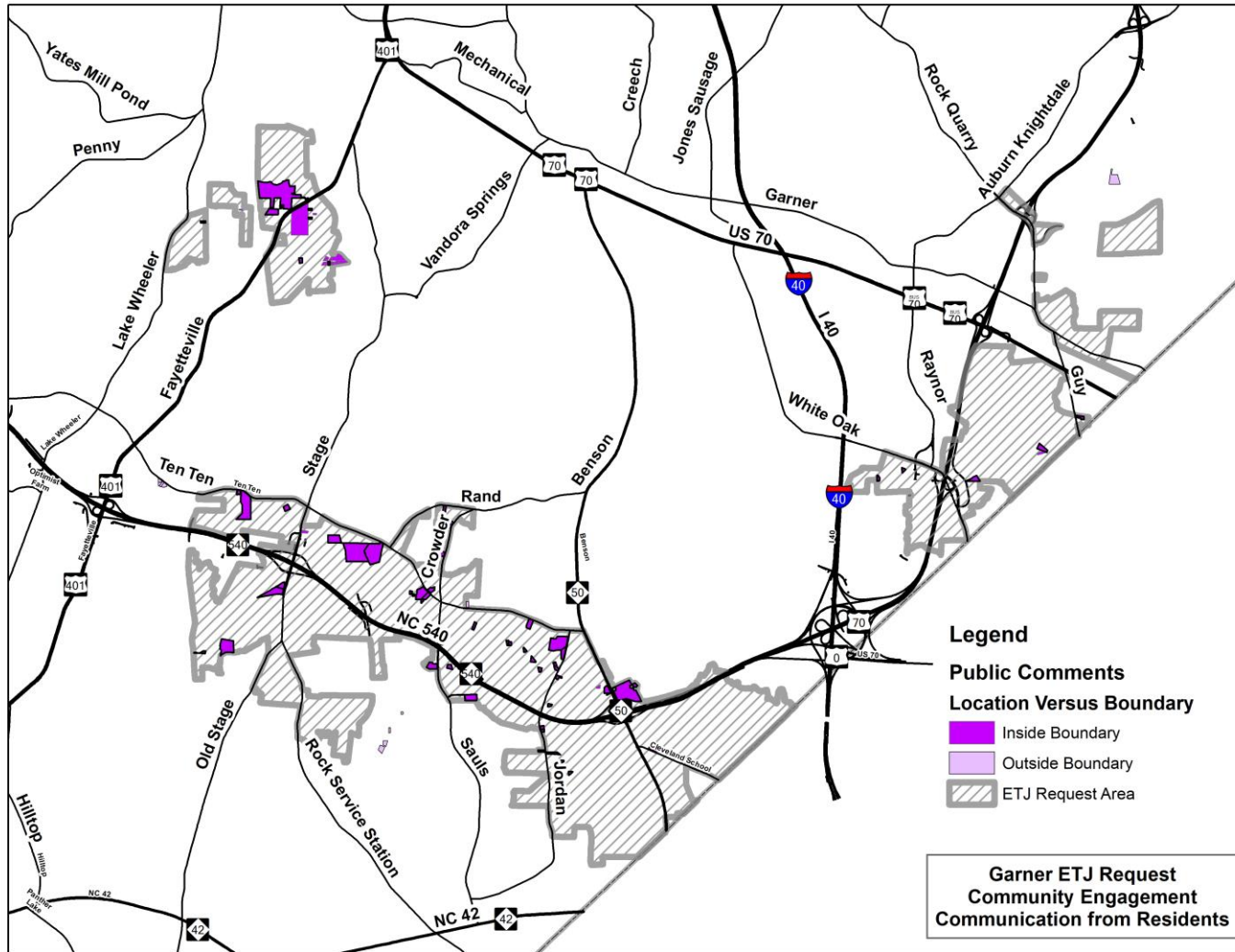
5. Community Engagement

The municipality must demonstrate that it conducted meaningful public engagement with impacted residents and landowners.

Garner mailed a packet to every property owner in request area

- Map, FAQ, contact info, meeting info
- Website info, interactive map
- Garner hosted four (4) drop-in sessions
- All feedback was shared with Wake County

Community Engagement



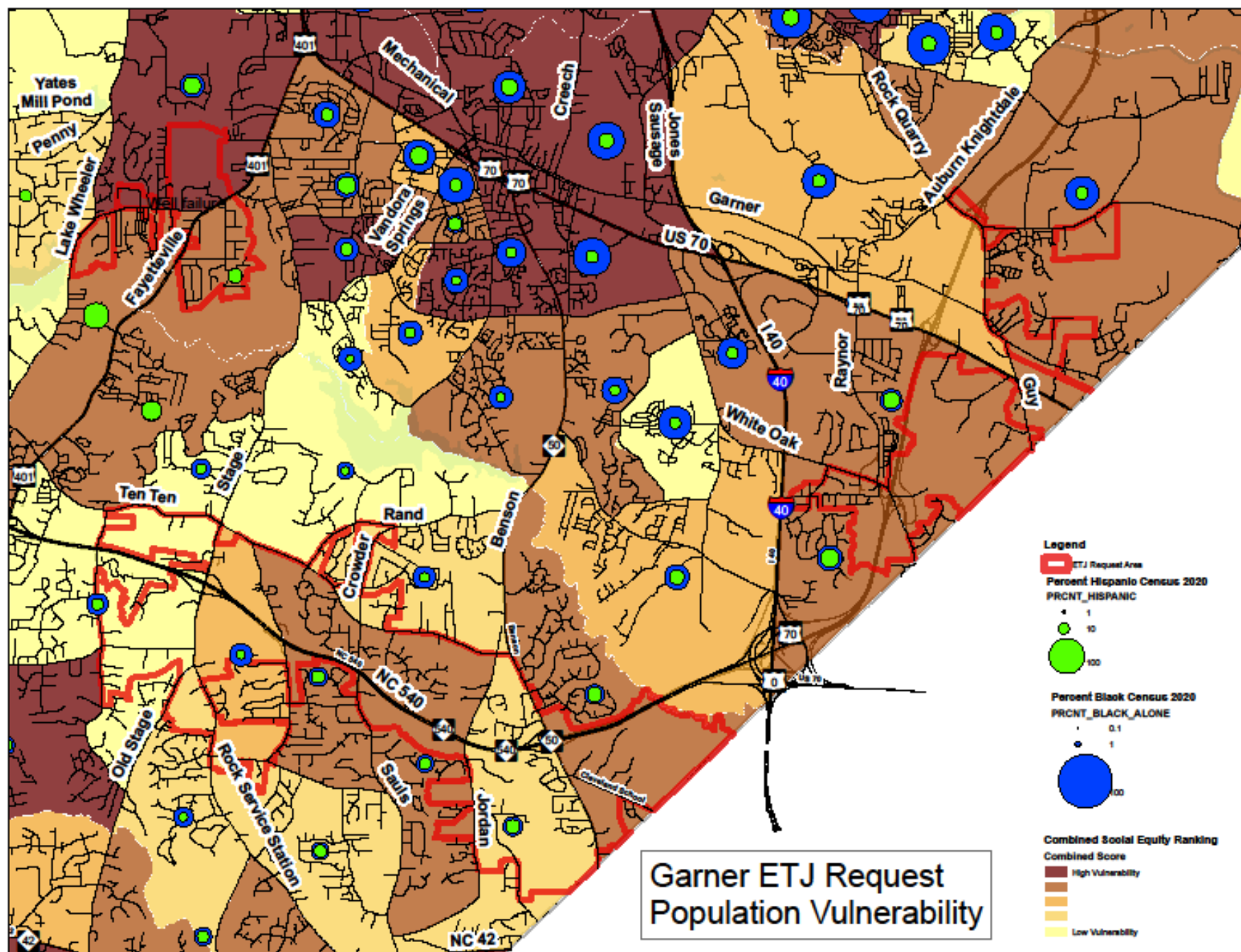
- Crowder Road – why some pieces included but not others?
- Road repair
- Interest in permanently protecting their land
- Interest in public utilities

Agricultural Community Meeting 12/3

- Purpose: hold a meeting specifically for property owners with land in agriculture, horticulture, forestry.
- Present information about ETJ, planning & zoning regulations, farmland preservation.
- Hear from property owners about the future of their land.

6. Achieving Comprehensive Community Goals

- The municipality must demonstrate a track record of working with the County to achieve county-wide comprehensive goals (support and actions related to affordable housing, walkability, transit use, vulnerable communities, storm water and green infrastructure).
 - Municipalities are essential partners.
 - Report highlights housing partnerships, development standards, transit service studies and service, etc.
 - Staff report identifies vulnerable populations within the request area.



Next Steps

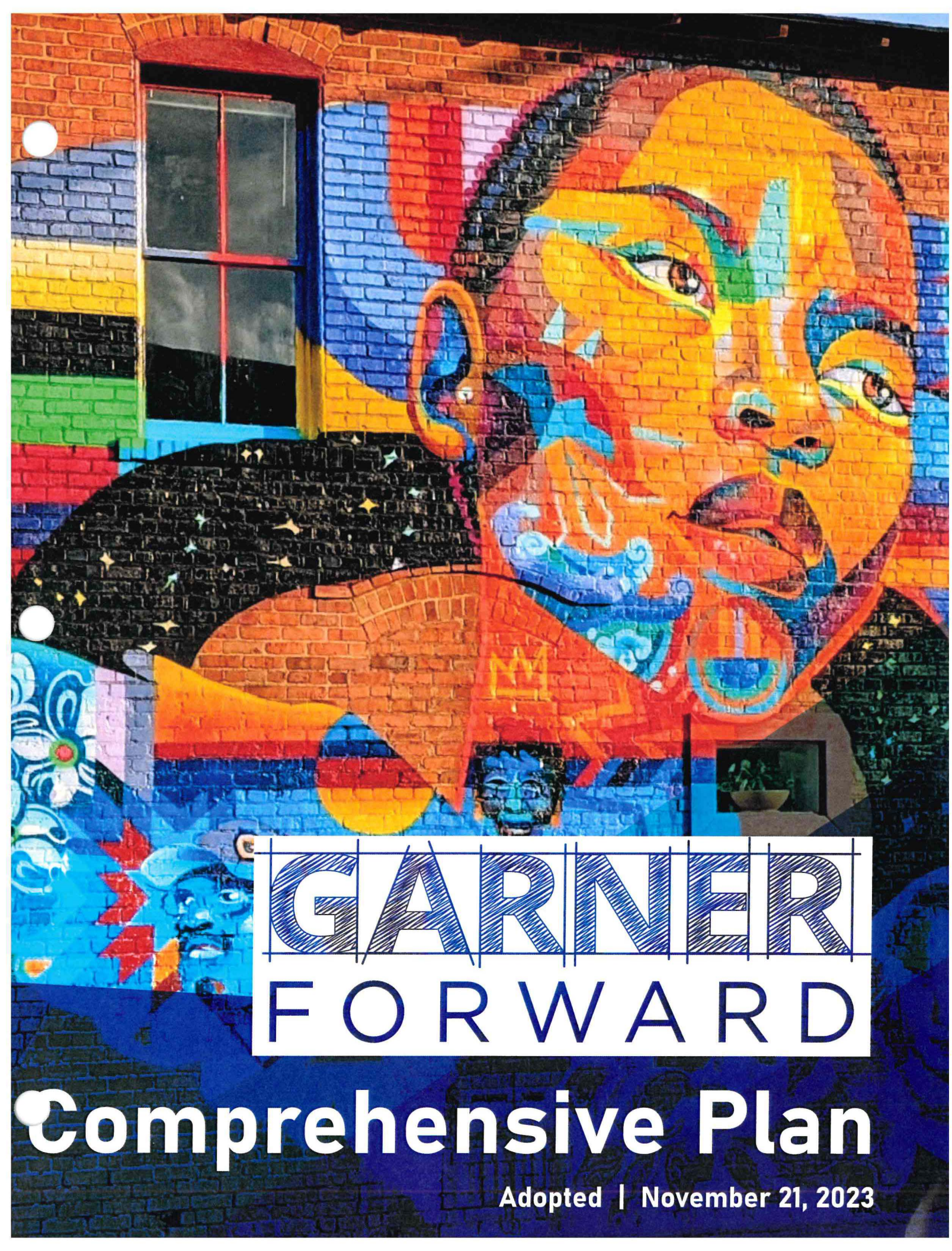
- **Are there recommendations that can be made?**
- **What other information does the Land Use Committee need?**
- **Does the Land Use Committee need another meeting?**

Questions & Discussion



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GARNER FORWARD

Comprehensive Plan

Adopted | November 21, 2023

Acknowledgments

Town Council

Ken Marshburn, Mayor
Kathy Behringer
Demian Dellinger
Phil Matthews
Gra Singleton
Elmo Vance, Mayor Pro Tem

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GARNER FORWARD

1	Introduction	2
2	Growth Framework	28
3	Land Use and Community Character	84
4	Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources	216
5	Transportation	220
6	Supporting Infrastructure	224
7	Implementation	256



The background of the document is a photograph of a night festival. On the left, a large, bright firework bursts in the dark sky. Below it, a large crowd of people is gathered on a grassy field. In the center, there is a white pop-up tent. The scene is illuminated by the firework and other ambient lights, creating a festive atmosphere. The text is overlaid on a solid purple rectangular box in the upper right portion of the image.

Garner Vision Statement

The Town of Garner nurtures a hometown charm and natural environment for residents and businesses while encouraging new economic, recreational, and cultural opportunities through wise planning and investment.

The Town of Garner is committed to making this vision and its supporting maps, policies and recommendations a reality.





Chapter

1

Introduction

Introduction

The Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan was developed to guide future growth, conservation, and development decisions throughout the community. It is intended to relate to other town plans, policies, and ordinances in place, or that may be developed in the future, and provide guidance to other government agencies preparing plans or programming projects that may affect the town's planning area.

The document builds upon the vision, guiding principles, and recommendations presented in the 2018 Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, and provides more focus and clarity related to expectations for community character, land use mix, and quality development expected in the planning area. Important and relevant items from the 2018 plan are presented again in this version of the document. The new document also contemplates a future where Garner is a major center of economic activity in eastern Wake County.

The ability to look across many topics at once is an asset for the comprehensive plan. It allows the opportunity to both prioritize outcomes and balance needs within the community in a single document. It moves the community to "intended outcomes" and "coordinated efforts" for the future. The plan is a visionary document, a blueprint for the future, and one of the few times the community dreams big and really challenges itself to think about its long-term future.

The comprehensive plan will help town leaders make decisions that will guide future development and achieve the goals of the community. Patience may be needed for some aspects of the plan to evolve as it sets a long-term vision for growth and conservation over an extended period of time.

Emphasis on Community Character

Early ideas in the planning process for the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan helped reprioritize "land use", "development", "open space", and "infrastructure" topics all as contributing factors to "community character" for the document. The emphasis on physical form and design considerations over simple land use and density criteria (demand) and available infrastructure

capacity (supply) for determining the town's best path forward is a significant change from past comprehensive plans.

The chapters that follow in the document focus on identifying, preserving, and perpetuating desirable development patterns in the community, while also making deliberate changes to areas that do not meet the community's expectations for character or sense of place. Policies and recommendations in the document strategically accommodate future growth and change while preserving and enhancing the qualities and characteristics that make the town a desirable place to live, work, learn, and play. They aim to enhance the town's neighborhoods, downtown, development districts, and public spaces with an attractive mix of uses and amenities that expand the local economy, enhance social interaction, protect environmental resources, instill a unique sense of place, and improve the overall quality-of-life for residents.

Ideas about community character extend to all chapters of the comprehensive plan, and together reinforce a unified vision for community character and a positive community image that create functional, aesthetically-appealing, and people-oriented places.

Document Organization

The Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan is divided into seven chapters: (1) Introduction, (2) Growth Framework, (3) Land Use and Community Character, (4) Parks, Recreation, and Cultural resources, (5) Transportation, (6) Community Facilities and Services, and (7) Implementation. Each chapter is grounded in the need to promote and protect a unifying character for the Town of Garner.

Some chapters of the comprehensive plan incorporate other town plans or studies by reference. These documents, as amended, should have the same standing and authority provided under Chapter 160D of the North Carolina General Statutes and the town's Unified Development Ordinance as if they were physically included in the comprehensive plan document. Collectively, the comprehensive plan and the documents incorporated by reference ensure a comprehensive and coordinated plan for future growth,

conservation, character, and development topics in the Town of Garner.

More information about the comprehensive plan and its relationship to other town documents is presented in the Library of Town Plans and Ordinances section of Chapter 1.

Planning Area Description

The planning area for the new Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan includes town limits plus the town's extra-territorial jurisdiction and urban services area. Each of the geographies is described below.

Garner Town Limits

The town limits of Garner — its corporate limits — represent the official boundaries of the town as referenced in the original Town charter plus any alterations (annexations) made over time (the area shaded in red on the map). Residents living inside town limits are empowered to vote for local officials, and may pay additional taxes for town services.

Garner Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction

The State of North Carolina grants cities and towns extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) for areas outside corporate limits that are expected to be inside corporate limits sometime in the future. It is intended to allow for smoother transitions from county to town services, and makes areas of the county subject immediately to the town's zoning and subdivision rules and requirements and floodway management regulations.

All cities and towns in North Carolina may exercise extraterritorial jurisdiction for a distance of one mile from corporate limits. With Wake County approval, the ETJ may be expanded up to two miles if the population is greater than 10,000; or up to three miles if the population is greater than 25,000. The population numbers used to determine eligibility are the most recent state-certified statistics at the time ETJ expansion is requested. The certified population of Garner is currently 32,393 using data published by the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management. The certified population estimate for Garner is used for distribution of state funds and per the N.C. Office

of State Budget and Management should not be used for planning purposes. For planning purposes, the comprehensive plan assumes a base year population of 30,617 per Claritas (2020).

The Town of Garner generally maintains a three-mile ETJ that was approved by Wake County on March 16, 2017 (the area shaded in gold on the map). The three-mile buffer is reduced in some locations to recognize the agreed-upon jurisdictional boundaries with Raleigh, Fuquay-Varina, Wake County, and Johnston County.

Residents living inside the ETJ may not vote for town officials that enforce local zoning and subdivision rules and requirements and floodway management regulations. However, one or more positions on the town's planning commission and board of adjustment are reserved for an ETJ resident, which provides a platform for expressing official comments and voting on development applications considered in the Garner planning area.

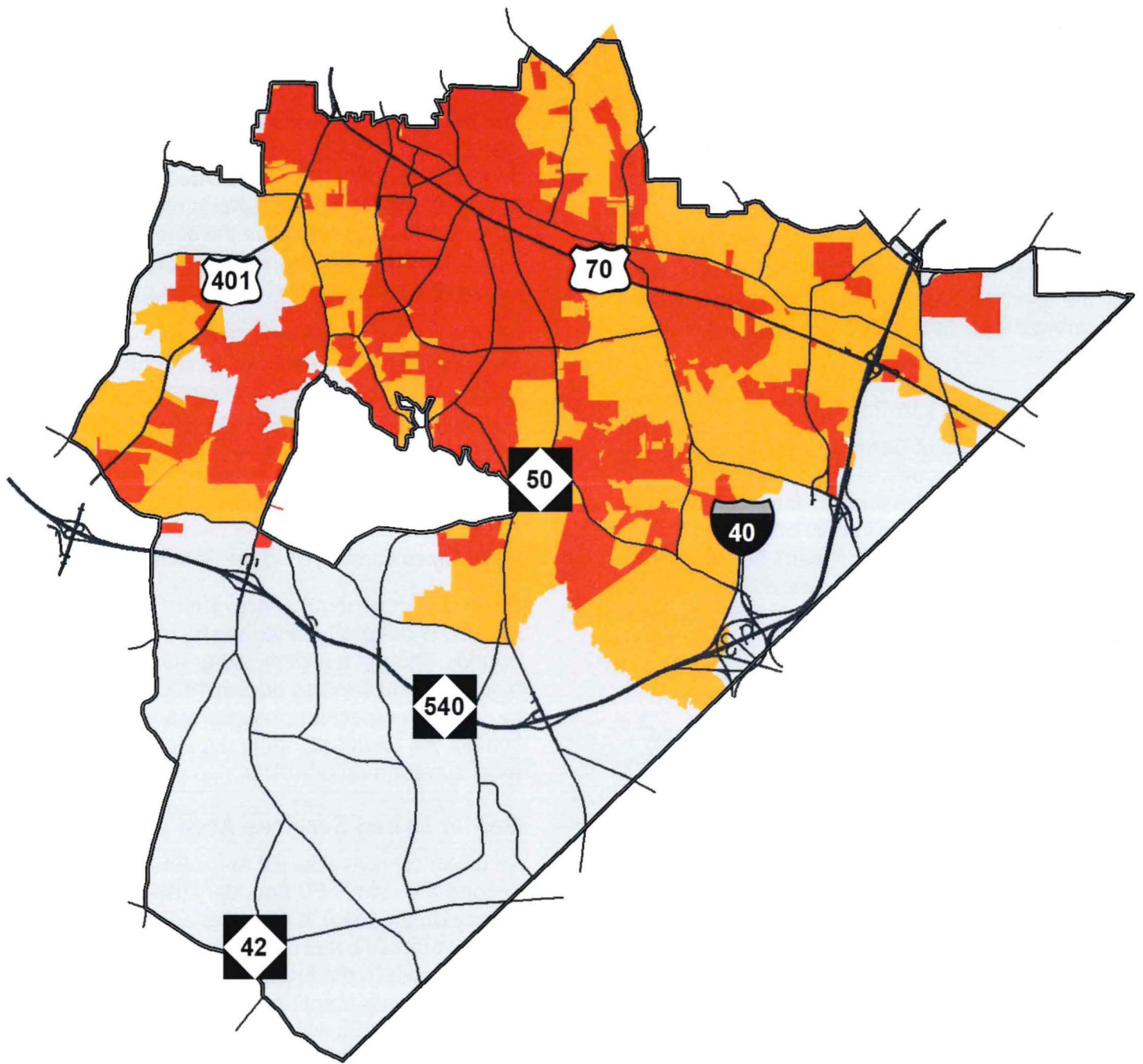
Given Garner's irregular town limits, its three-mile ETJ is not easily described by metes and bounds. Though it is depicted graphically in maps presented in this document, users wishing to determine specific applicability are urged to contact the town's planning department for the most current map or online map service.

Garner Urban Services Area

An urban services area (USA) for Garner extends beyond the town's ETJ boundary (the area shaded in gray on the map). It identifies an area that Wake County officials believe could be served by town infrastructure in the future. Within the full USA, a smaller area is identified that could be served by town resources within the next five years (the "short-term USA"). The remaining area of the USA would be served by town resources sometime in the future, but likely beyond the five-year horizon (the "long-term USA").

Garner Full Planning Area

The full planning area for Garner — town limits plus town ETJ plus town urban services area — is considered for the comprehensive plan, including its maps, policies, and recommendations for the future.



- Garner Town Limits (March 22, 2023)
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Urban Services Area

Enabling Legislation for Local Comprehensive Plans in North Carolina

Chapter 160D of the North Carolina General Statutes requires local governments “reasonably maintain” a comprehensive plan for the jurisdiction to exercise its authority to adopt and enforce zoning regulations. The comprehensive plan should present goals, policies, and programs intended to guide existing and future physical, social, and economic considerations, which may be influenced, in part, by growth, development, or conservation measures enacted in the jurisdiction (N.C.G.S. 160D-501, Section A1).

The term “reasonably maintained” is not defined in the General Statutes; however, professional practice for comprehensive plans recommends plan updates every five to ten years. The frequency of plan updates may be influenced by the rate of growth or change in a community, or the influence of outside forces in and around the region where the jurisdiction is located. The previous version of the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan was adopted on June 12, 2018.

The General Statute does not require specific elements or chapters in the comprehensive plan. Nonetheless, topic areas to address in the plan are suggested in N.C.G.S. 160D-501(b): preferred growth and development patterns, supporting infrastructure needs, housing choices, recreation and open space opportunities, natural resource protection, historic-scenic-cultural resource preservation, and actions, items, or programs to implement the comprehensive plan.

Comprehensive plans in North Carolina are adopted as a legislative action by the local governing board after a recommendation is made from the local planning commission. Future zoning amendments considered by the local government must include a statement of consistency with the adopted comprehensive plan; however, the statement is advisory in nature and not subject to judicial review.

What Influences Growth and Development in the Town of Garner?

The Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan is a document that influences how and when development takes place, and what it looks like upon completion. The comprehensive plan provides a primary source of guidance for the Town Council’s decisions in rezoning requests and by Town staff and Planning Commission in making recommendations regarding these decisions. Developers should reference the comprehensive plan for initial guidance when exploring the development potential of a property.

Development found in Garner — both patterns and intensities — are generally driven by five growth factors: (1) market demand; (2) local economies and growth outlooks; (3) property owners’ willingness to participate; (4) government regulations and policies; and (5) the availability and capacity of infrastructure. These factors have some degree of influence over each other and can change over time, which affect the location and type of development that is experienced in the community.

Market Demand, Available Capital, and Developer Interests

The demand for different development types, patterns, and intensities is established by future buyers or renters attracted to the area — and their purchasing power — that fill new products or pay different price points. Developers and private parties decide where and when to pursue a project based upon several considerations, including their own interests, market demand, available financing, and the probability of success. Private land development is financed by banks and other institutions who establish the minimum lending criteria (and are oftentimes conservative or cautious by nature). These organizations must have reasonable confidence that a project will succeed within the community.

The Local Economy and Growth Outlook

Future development is directly influenced by the strength and resilience of the local and regional economies where the private sector takes into consideration projected employment rates and population forecasts and the general demographics of an area before investing in new development projects.

Willing Property Owners

Property owners in Garner decide whether land becomes available to develop or redevelop, or if land becomes available to acquire for permanent open space. New growth in the community is the result of property owners' tolerance for selling property, whether to developers or conservation groups, or even developing the land themselves.

Government Regulation and Infrastructure

Development can be either promoted or restricted through government policies to keep growth in alignment with the community's overarching vision. This can be achieved through zoning and land development controls, environmental policies, programs and protections, and through the administration of regulations by local land use boards or professional staff. Regulations and zoning restrictions control permitted uses on a parcel, allowances for height and density, and design standards or considerations. While the government has a crucial role in development, it is limited to working within the regulations available and cannot restrict or promote a project beyond the limitations provided through ordinances, regulations, and laws

Available Infrastructure Capacity

The delivery and location of available infrastructure capacity is an important component for development projects — whereby if the capacity is not yet available, some projects must wait until new capacity is added from either government or third-party service providers. There are opportunities, in some cases, for developers to fund certain on- or off-site infrastructure investments themselves to unlock available capacity and begin their projects on an accelerated timeline. Joint-funding agreements can be

utilized by governments and third-party service providers to reimburse developers for expediting infrastructure projects.

Some infrastructure in the town's planning area is provided by outside agencies or organizations (e.g., Raleigh Water, Wake County Schools, or the NCDOT). The service providers, to varying degrees, may be more or less reactive (versus proactive) in providing new or expanded infrastructure to meet the needs of town residents. The town is limited in its abilities to prioritize or fund infrastructure improvements that are the responsibility of other service providers, which has caused frustration in the past for some town residents.

Library of Town Plans and Ordinances

Broad policies and recommendations in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan are implemented in more-detailed plans, studies, ordinances, or budgets that follow Plan adoption. Each document refines the big ideas and concepts presented in the comprehensive plan using specific rules, requirements, or initiatives needed to create greater predictability and intended outcomes in the community.

A description of plans and studies with a relationship to the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan is provided below. It is assumed the rules, requirements, and standards presented in these documents implement the maps and broad policies and recommendations presented in the comprehensive plan. All of the documents described below are assumed to holistically guide future growth, conservation, character, or development decisions in the town's planning area.

The *Town of Garner Strategic Plan* was adopted in October 2016, and serves as a concise summary of the town's priorities for resource allocation, policy direction, and the general work of town staff and elected officials. It includes a vision statement, four goal statements, and numerous objectives and initiatives for each goal statement. The plan is reviewed and updated, when needed, to align with new town expectations or initiatives.

The Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan implements ideas for all four goal statements in the Strategic Plan. Amendments considered for the comprehensive plan in the future should be evaluated against the Strategic Plan, and inconsistencies explored and/or described for reference in a decision-making process.

The ***Town of Garner Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Comprehensive Master Plan*** was adopted in January 2020, and provides a framework for future park and recreation planning to meet the needs of a growing community. It includes service delivery standards, a potential park acquisition plan, greenway concept plan, facilities needs inventory, and specific recommendations to improve and expand services for town residents.

An update to the master plan should consider the role of parks, recreation, and greenways for reinforcing the preferred community character and future land uses summarized in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, and the level of information needed in a document to help secure new parks, plazas, recreation facilities, and greenways as part of the development review and entitlement process.

The ***2018 Garner Forward Transportation Plan*** and ***2010 Garner Transportation Plan*** include maps and recommendations for building a sustainable, multi-modal transportation system that serves future growth while preserving the environmental, cultural, and social character of the community. An update to the transportation plans should consider new transportation facilities, routes, and other recommendations to serve the walkable neighborhoods and development activity centers proposed on the Character Typology Map.

The ***Town of Garner Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan*** will be completed in 2023. It identifies infrastructure improvements, targeted investment areas, education programs, and policies that make the town safe and inviting for pedestrians. Maps in the plan expand on the existing network of sidewalks and greenways in the community with an emphasis on connecting new or existing parks, schools, employment centers, and neighborhoods. Recommendations in the pedestrian plan should

supersede recommendations in the two previous transportation plans, if applicable. Updates to the town's transportation plans should incorporate recommendations from the new pedestrian plan to streamline implementation.

The Town of Garner prepares, adopts, and administers an ***annual budget*** in accordance with the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act in North Carolina. The budget book includes an annual operating budget and a five-year capital improvements plan.

Updates to the annual operating budget for the town should consider priorities expressed in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, and target areas for infrastructure improvements that may prime future development and redevelopment.

The ***Town of Garner Unified Development Ordinance*** (UDO) combines traditional zoning and subdivisions rules and requirements, design guidelines, sign regulations, and floodplain protection measures into a single document. It generally implements broad policies and recommendations in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan in great detail, and transitions from "suggestions" in the comprehensive plan to "laws" in the UDO.

Updates to the UDO should consider the preferred community character and future land uses summarized in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, which may include new zoning districts or design requirements to implement intended outcomes expressed in the comprehensive plan.

The Town of Garner ***Engineering Design Manual and Standard Details*** supplement the UDO and provide specific information to ensure new development is designed and constructed in accordance with minimum town standards.

An update to the manual and its standard details should consider the preferred community character and future land uses summarized in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, and the level of information needed in the document to help ensure streets are classified and designed to reinforce an intended character, sense of place, or preferred mode of travel.

Small area plans may be prepared by town staff, or their hired consultants, in the future, which will provide more detailed information for a specific geography within the town's planning area. Upon adoption of a small area plan, the Character Typology Map in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan should be amended, as needed, to be consistent, and the small area plan should be included in an appendix for the comprehensive plan to strengthen its findings and recommendations.

A User's Guide for the Document

The Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan captures a vision for growth, conservation, and community character in the planning area, which is focused on an end game and implemented over a long period of time. It includes policies, maps, and recommendations for some of the town's most important decision-making processes, and establishes the vision and starting position for other town policies, ordinances, master plans, and documents to follow.

People are encouraged to read the entire document to fully understand the town's philosophy and position on future growth, conservation, and community character in the planning area. It includes a call-to-action for stakeholders in the town's future summarized below as four key considerations — a user's guide — to remember when reading the document.

Treat the Plan as a Playbook

The Town of Garner should be able to take advantage of opportunities when they present themselves, so the comprehensive plan uses a playbook approach to guiding future growth and development in the community. Some parts of the document — things like the vision statement, guiding principles, general framework map, and development change and intensity map — should remain constant and keep Garner on a focused path for success. Other parts of the document — things like general policies and recommendations, the character typology map, focus area study recommendations, or other supporting maps — may need to evolve over time as conditions

change that were not contemplated at the time the document was adopted.

All changes considered under the playbook mindset for the document should be evaluated against the vision statement, guiding principles, general growth framework map, and development change and intensity map to determine if they are in the best long-term interests of the town and its residents, businesses, and property owners.

Be a Champion of the Plan

The comprehensive plan is the culmination of an extensive and transparent community planning process that reflects many differing points of view. Garner residents, business owners, visitors, and supporters participated in the process and contributed to the creation of the comprehensive plan. Engagement opportunities for the plan update included twenty-nine stakeholder interviews, two community workshops, three community-organized meetings about the town's future, five meetings with a project steering committee, eight total meetings with three different strategic advisory committees, and a project website. While there is something for everyone contained within these pages, not everyone is going to love everything in the plan. Consider the big picture when thinking about the plan, and whether the documents-as-a-whole takes Garner in the right direction. We hope that everyone can find something to get excited about and become a champion for bringing the community's vision to life!

Understand the Element of Time

At first glance, the comprehensive plan may seem ambitious or daunting. It is important to understand not everything in the document will happen all at once, and some things may not happen at all. Included are some big ideas that, if implemented, would bring about transformative change to Garner, likely taking years to come to fruition. Other ideas are smaller and can happen right away.

Help Make It Happen

Although we all wish our tax dollars bought us unlimited town services, the reality is that there is more work to do than staff and resources to do it. All of these great ideas take time, money, and capacity. For the comprehensive plan to become a reality, a large number of people must decide they care enough to stay involved and help implement the plan. Serve on a town board, join a citizen task

force, or turn out to support new projects that help move Garner forward. We will need everyone to actively engage and support the comprehensive plan over the years to come. Communities that work together, and work smartly, often succeed in achieving their goals.



Brief Town History

Land in and around Garner was first settled in 1751 by cotton and tobacco farmers. It remained a rural, agrarian community for nearly one hundred years after settlers first arrived. Rail service came to the town in 1847 — connecting Goldsboro to Charlotte via the North Carolina Railroad — and forever changed the landscape and the town's trajectory. Notable events following the train's arrival in 1847 included: a wood-and-water stop for the railroad established in the community (1870s), a post office opened (1878), a formal train station built (1878), town incorporation as Garner's Station (1883), and repeal of the town charter for Garner's Station (1891). The community was incorporated again in 1905 as the Town of Garner. It quickly became an important place for mail delivery, passenger service to the capital city of Raleigh, and a shipping point for cotton.

The town also witnessed skirmishes in the closing days of the Civil War (1865). Bullet holes from these events are still preserved at New Bethel Baptist Church and the Samuel Depree house. Today, the Downtown Garner Historic District, Edenwood (Smith-Williams House), and Meadowbrook Country Club are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Garner High School, the Banks House, the Train Depot, and several downtown buildings are recognized as Historic Landmarks by the Wake County Historic Preservation Commission.

The first businesses in Garner were started by Henry Fort and Thomas Bingham circa 1874. Fort was an African American farmer, cabinetmaker, and carpenter. Other African American families joined Fort in the years following. Local historians have commented about how well white and black citizens in Garner worked together, and lived in a community where property ownership and daily interactions between the races were mixed and well-intentioned.

The Central Highway, now known as Garner Road, ran from the mountains to the sea and traversed Downtown Garner. It was the state's first paved road in 1916, and like the railroad, reinforced the town's visibility and position as an important destination in the state. Electricity, extended to Garner in 1921, and the Central Highway created a favorable environment for further development,

including subdivisions. Garner High School was constructed along Garner Road in 1922. Garner Consolidated School was built in 1935 at the present site of East Garner Middle School. Large estate homes along Garner Road built in years past signified a time when the area was highly-desirable by very affluent citizens. They used these lots to build ornate homes with manicured lawns (trophy homes in highly visible locations) so everyone could see their wealth. Older neighborhoods adjacent to, or nearby, Garner Road and the historic downtown reinforced a small-town atmosphere.

Garner Road continues to carry traffic everyday for motorists traveling between Raleigh and Garner. Continued growth in the region and its demands for faster, more-direct vehicle connections between the mountains and the sea led to the construction of a bypass around downtown in the 1950s. This is the present-day US 70 that extends through Garner. The bypass attracted businesses away from downtown with new shopping centers (Forest Hills and Garner Plaza) and suburban neighborhoods. Today, large, suburban-scale businesses have become a dominating feature for long stretches of the highway as it runs through Garner.

Culture, community pride, and volunteerism also run deep in Garner. Deliberate efforts by community members in the past, in close partnership with town leaders, have established places like the Garner Performing Arts Center, Garner Veterans Memorial, Garner Seniors Center, and Nature Center at White Deer Park. These unique destinations and the programming they provide were critical to forming the town's unique character and sense of community. Special interest groups and organizations in the community — civic clubs, churches, school PTAs, and other advocacy groups — also provide energy to these efforts, and a sense-of-belonging to community members that strengthen bonds between the town and its residents. Today, the pride associated with being from Garner is strong and contagious.

The town of Garner was named an All-America City in 2013 by the National Civic League, which recognizes exemplary citizen engagement, cross-sector collaboration, and inclusiveness

in the United States. Award winners showcase grassroots solutions for meeting challenges and critical needs in the community. Garner was the first municipality in the Triangle Region to win the award since Durham in 1983. The last Wake County municipality to win the award was Raleigh in 1975.

In future years, Garner will continue to be a booming community. But, it must remember its hometown charm and atmosphere when making decisions for the well-being of the community. Recommendations throughout the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan consider its past, including the location, intensity, and compatibility of historic growth and development. The intention of this plan is to not overrun the historic downtown and the neighborhoods around it with incompatible development. More intense development and

taller buildings are targeted at the fringes of the planning area, in part, to preserve the small-town feel of the town's older development core described in this history section of the document.

Sources:

This section of the document was written using information published on the Town of Garner website, Brief Town History page; the Garner Area Historical Society web page, Garner's History page; GarnerBiz.com website, All-America award announcement; and Wikipedia. More specific works cited in these three sources are provided on the individual websites.



Brief Town Highlights

yum.

Favorite Local
Restaurants

Angie's

Krafty's
Burgers
and Brews

Simple Twist

BUFFALO
BROTHERS

La Roma
Pizza

sip.

Moon
Runners

Carolina
Billiards

Locked n
Loaded

fun.

Local Things
to Know

Lake Benson
was owned by
King George
in 1759...

Country singer
Scotty McCreery
was born in
Garner!

Garner got its
name from a church
of England Paris
around 1756!

Basketball
player
Jonathan Wall
Jr. went to
Garner Magnet
Highschool

buy.

THE SHOPS AT
GARNER PLAZA

Garner
Towne
Square

Favorite Local Bars

Pet friendly:

RALEIGH
BREWING CO.

Aviator
Brewing

Mason Jar

Favorite Local Attractions

see.

Garner
Performing
Arts Center

Railroad
Museum

ICE PLEX

Garner
Depot

Lake Benson

Local Shopping & Retail

White Oak
Shopping
Center

Forest Hill
Shopping
Center

etc.

Things to Know

Garner is a fast-growing community in Wake County, consistently ranked as one of the best places to live in North Carolina

The Town was named an All-America City in 2013 because of innovative citizen-led projects that improve the quality of life

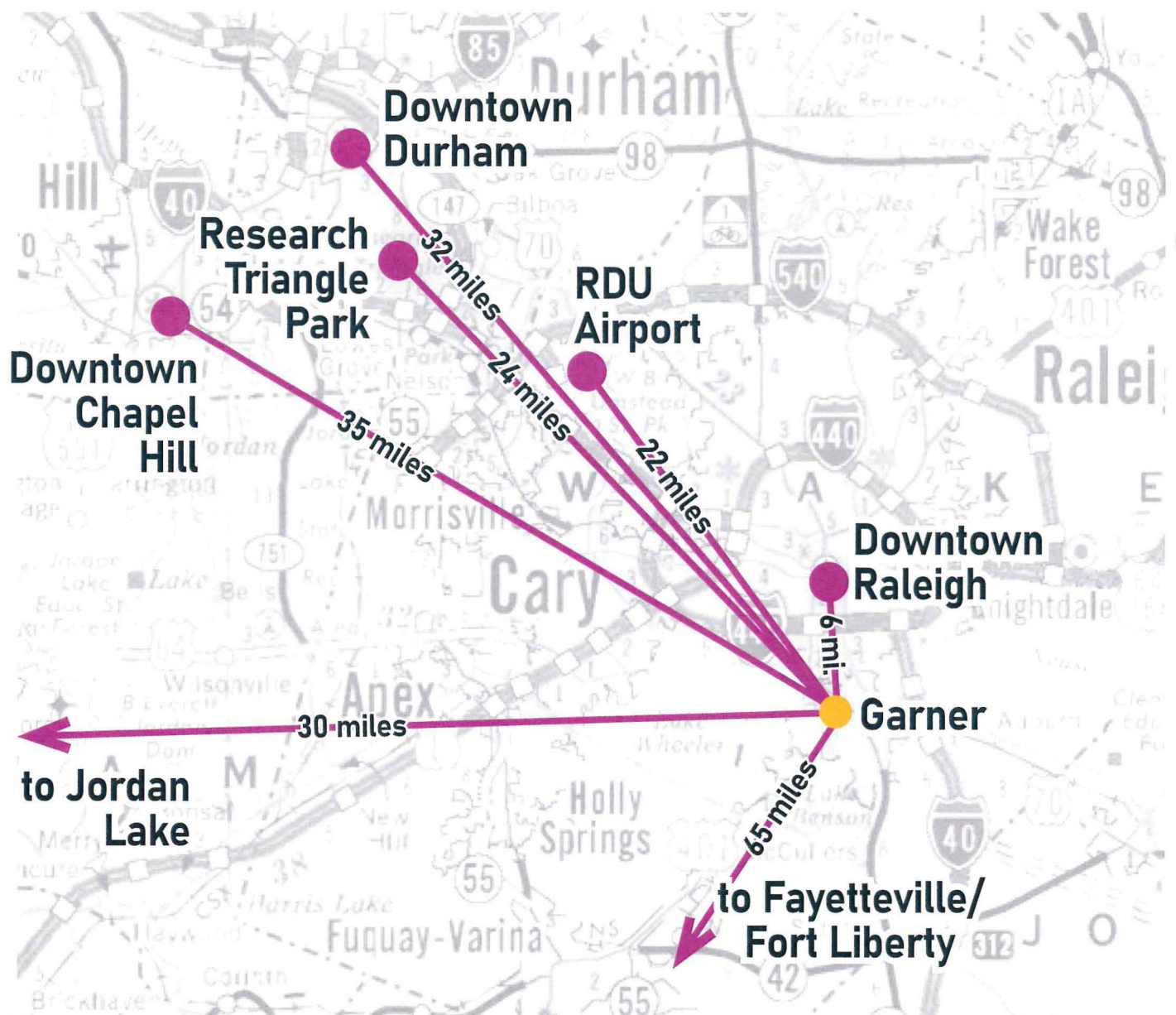
And you can find this all just a few minutes from Downtown Raleigh!

Regional Context

The Town of Garner is a fast-growing community in desirable Wake County, centrally located in a region with over one million people and hundreds of successful businesses. Research Triangle Park, three top-tier and nationally-ranked universities, and Fort Liberty (fka Fort Bragg), the largest military base in the United States, are close by and connected to Garner via a network of efficient interstates and highways. Jordan Lake, Umstead Park, Eno State Park, and an abundance of open space in communities connected by miles of greenways provide residents numerous opportunities to live life outdoors.

Decades removed from a small settlement along the railroad, Garner is a thriving suburban community that is setting its sights on new opportunities for urban activity centers, premium bus rapid transit, and major employment centers. Its population of 30,617 is anticipated to double in the next twenty or thirty years.

Garner will continue to benefit from the positive energy and ideas flowing from Downtown Raleigh while providing its residents and visitors something a little different: small town charm, a diverse community, arts and culture, and homes and neighborhoods ideal for makers, entrepreneurs, young professionals, families, and retirees.



Town Demographic Profile

Garner has experienced rapid population growth over the past two decades. The population in the town limits grew by 30.7% from 2000 to 2010 and by another 21.6% from 2010 to 2022. The Urban Services Area experienced similar rates of population growth. Population is projected to continue to grow, though at a more modest rate, approximately 5% from 2022 to 2027.

New residents are attracted to the area because of its small-town charm, affordability, and access to education, technology, and health care. The average household size in Town is smaller compared to Wake County and larger compared to the State of North Carolina (2.51 in the town vs. 2.57 in Wake County and 2.46 in North Carolina). Median household income in the Town of Garner (\$70,007) is significantly lower than Wake County (\$891,299), but higher than North Carolina (\$61,972).

The distribution of residents living in Garner is comprised largely of adults age 20 to 60 (53.6%) and their children age 0 to 19 (23.4%). Seniors over 60 (22.9%) represent the rest of the community. These three age groups will influence how Garner prioritizes its priorities and future investments, especially in terms of parks, transportation, housing, and senior services.

Underrepresented groups in Garner (in terms of age, race, income, household size, marital status, etc.) will be attracted to a variety of housing and neighborhood options, shopping and dining opportunities, entertainment and recreation facilities.

Demographic data collected for the Town of Garner, with selected data for the Urban Services Area, is presented on the following pages. All data is reported for the most current year available.

\$70,007

Median Household
Income in Town of Garner

\$61,972

Median Household
Income in North Carolina

\$91,299

Median Household
Income in Wake County

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year
Estimates, 2016-2021, Table DP03

Median Home Value

\$242,200

Unit with a
Mortgage

\$222,400

Unit without a
Mortgage

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year
Estimates, 2016-2021, Table B25097

3.07 Average
Family
Size

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year
Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S1101

Town Demographic Profile

	Garner Town Limits	Urban Services Area	ETJ
2000 Census	20,119	40,735	5,258
2010 Census	25,745	55,362	6,872
2022 Estimate	30,617	67,186	8,355
2027 Projection	32,058	70,733	8,775
2000 to 2010	30.7%	35.9%	28.0%
2010 to 2020	21.6%	21.4%	18.9%
2022 to 2027	5.0%	5.3%	4.7%

Source: Claritas, 2022

Absolute
Growth,
2010 to 2020
(Town Limits) **5,626**

30.7% Percent
Change

Absolute
Growth,
2010 to 2022
(Town Limits) **4,872**

21.6% Percent
Change

Insight:

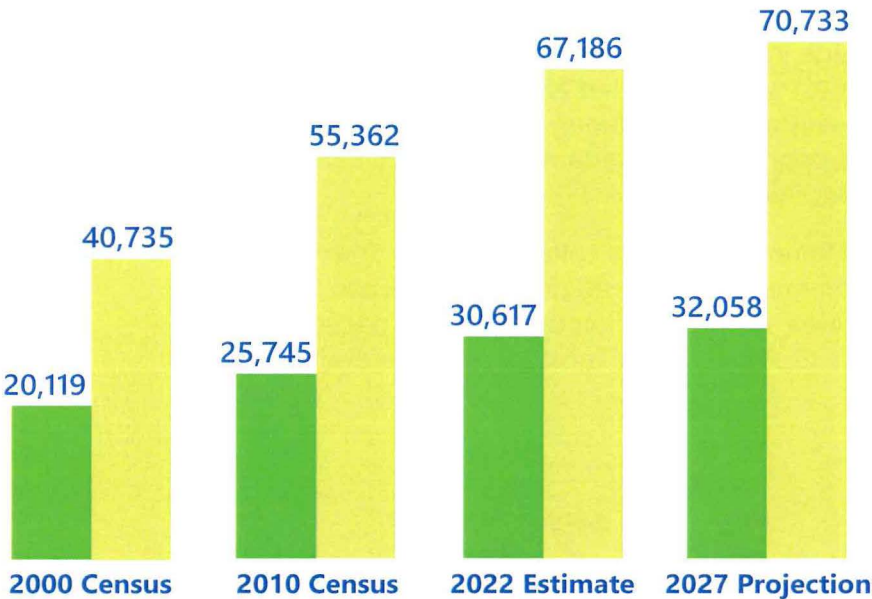
With a healthy mix of age groups with fairly even splits between population brackets, the community has become a prime location for Generation X and Older Millennials seeking proximity to the region while living in a smaller community.

Population Growth 2000-2027

2.51
Average Household
Size (Garner)

2.57
Average Household
Size (Wake County)

2.46
Average Household
Size (North Carolina)



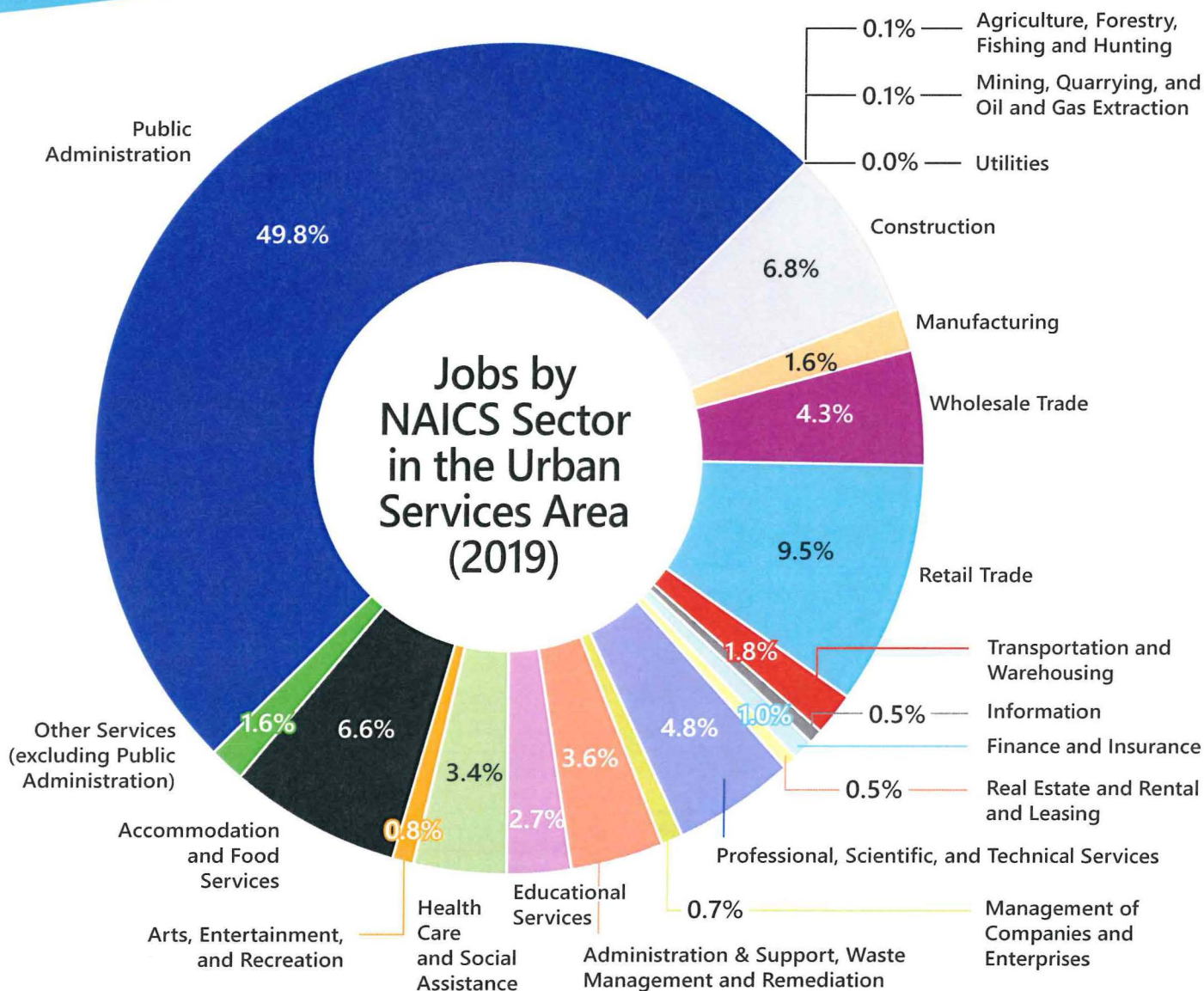
Garner Town Limits

Urban Services Area

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year
Estimates, 2016–2021, Table S1101

Source: Claritas, 2022

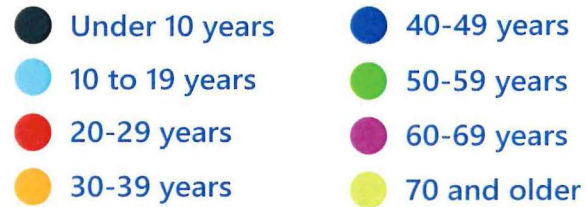
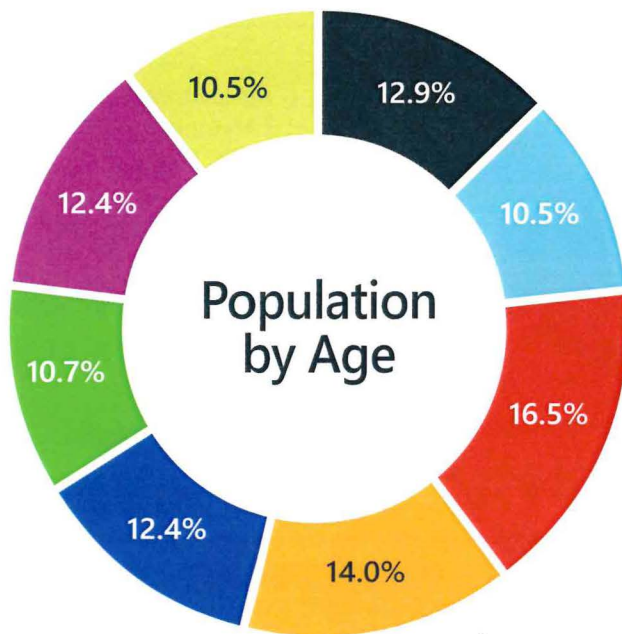
44,602 Total Jobs



Insight:

There are a total of 44,602 jobs in the Garner Urban Services Area. Residents work in a variety of disciplines, but the majority are employed in Public Administration (49.8%), Retail (9.5%), Construction (6.8%), and Accommodation and Food Services (6.6%).

Town Demographic Profile



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S0101

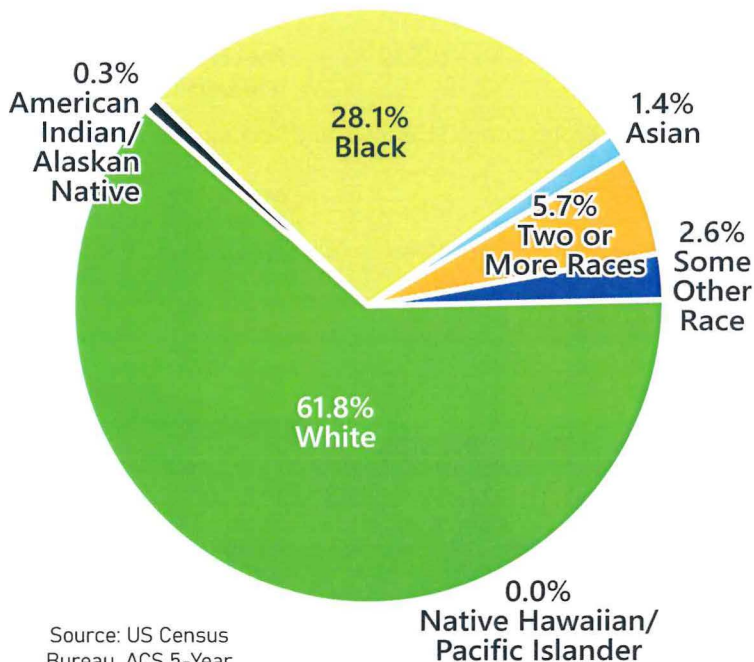
36.8 Median Age in Garner

37.4 Median Age in Wake County

39.4 Median Age in North Carolina

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S0101

Population by Race

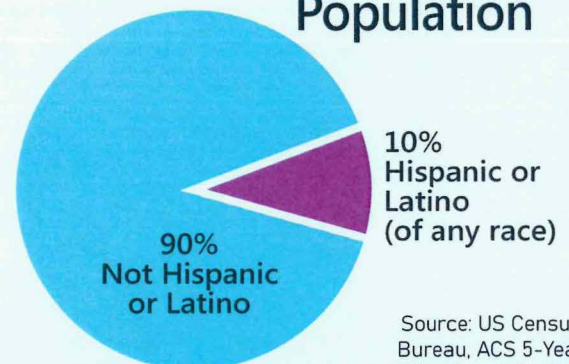


Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table DP05

Insight:

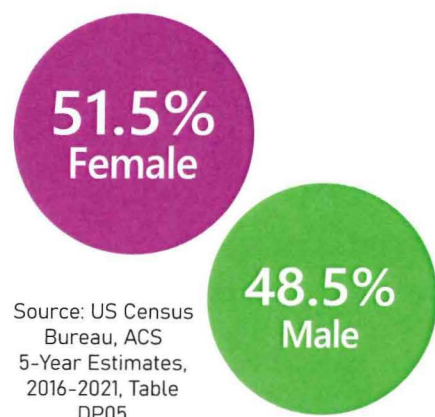
The Town of Garner is generally younger and more diverse than other communities in the Triangle region, and this diversity should be celebrated in the comprehensive plan.

Hispanic or Latino Population

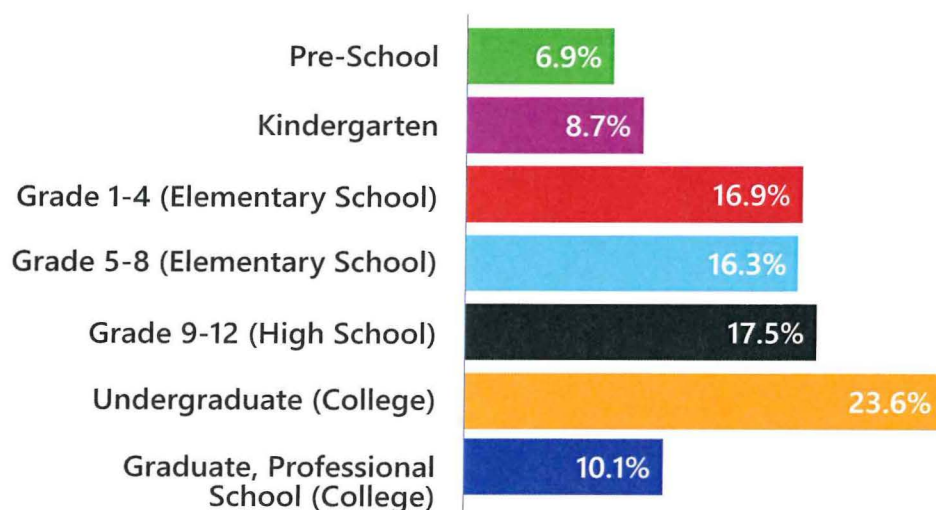


Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table DP05

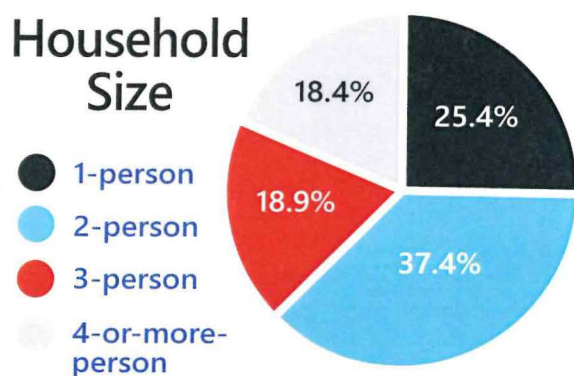
Population Gender Breakdown



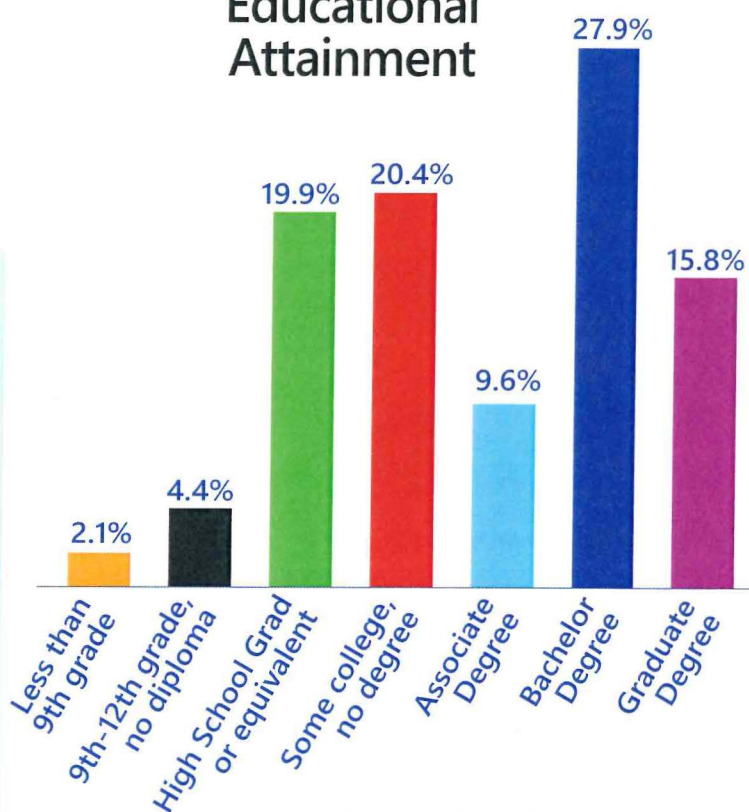
School Enrollment



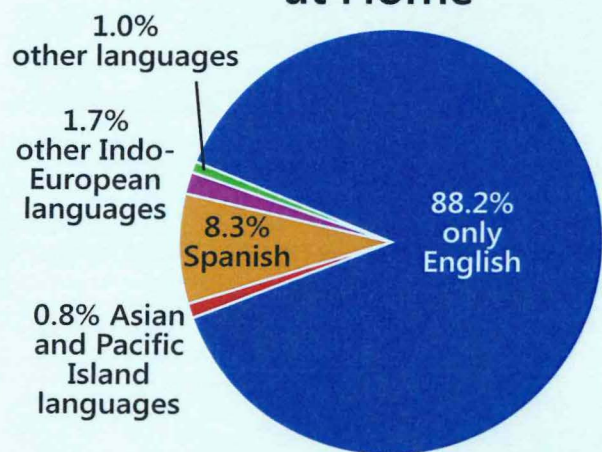
Household Size



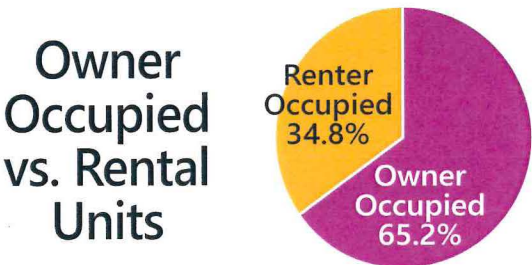
Educational Attainment



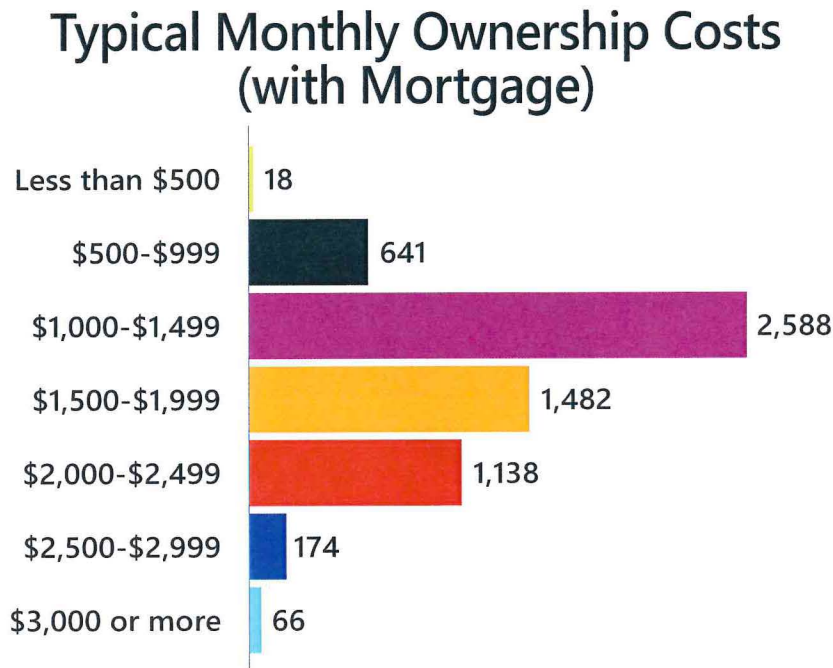
Language Spoken at Home



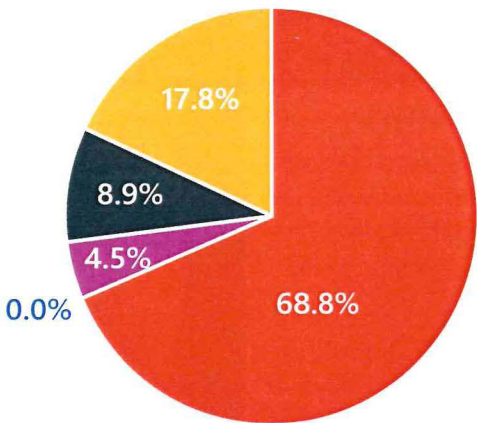
Town Demographic Profile



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table B25002 & DP04



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table DP04



Housing Types

- Single-family Detached
- Single-family Attached
- Small Apartment Building (2-9 units)
- Small Apartment Complex (10 or more units)
- Mobile Homes

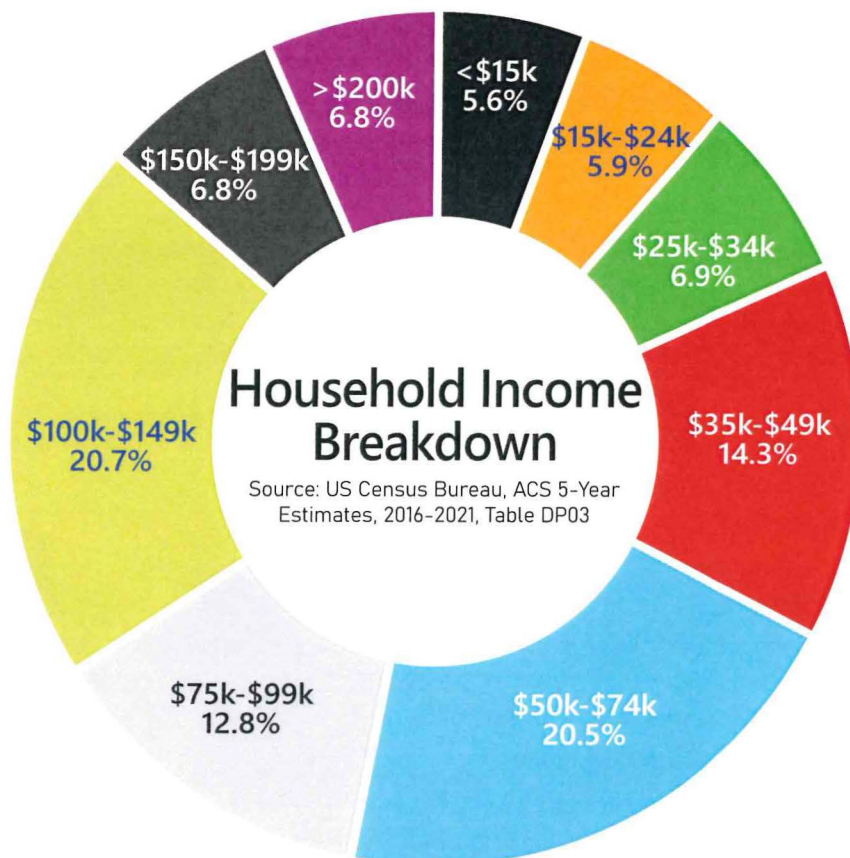
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S2504



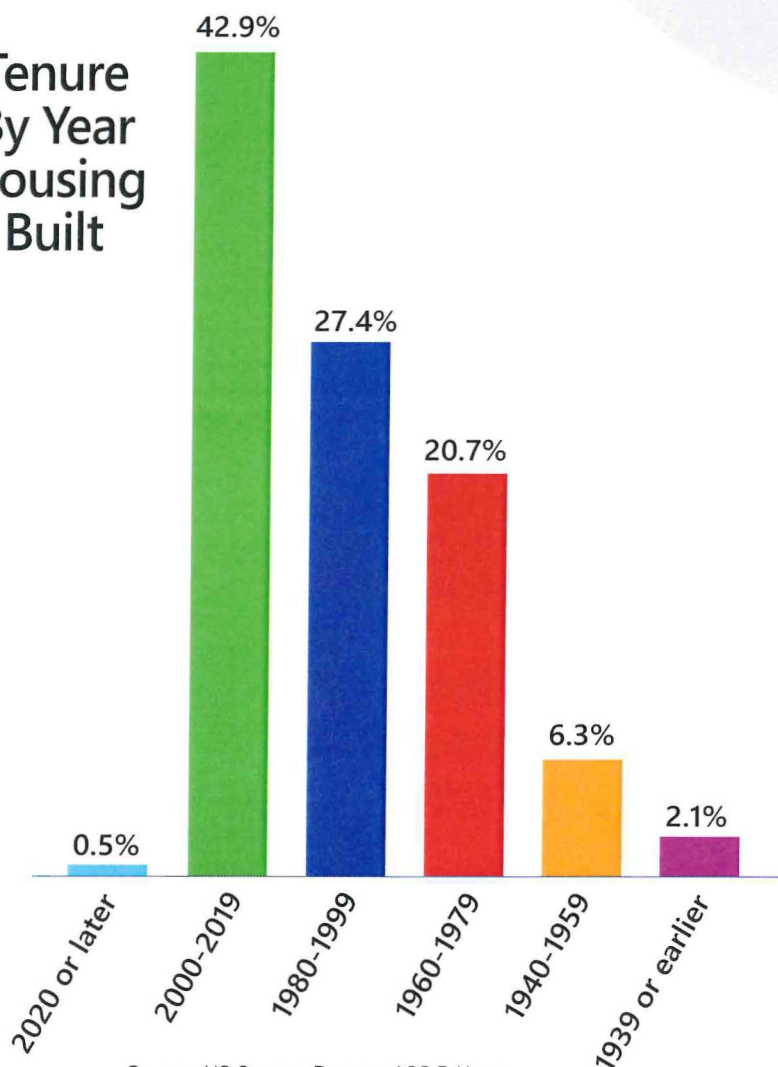
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table DP04

Insight:

The overwhelming number of homes (94.5%) in Garner are occupied (not vacant), and the majority of those are owner-occupied (65.2%), which means the homeowners are paying a mortgage with the intent to eventually own the home they are living in. Single family detached homes continue to be the dominant choice in the community (68.8%).



Tenure By Year Housing Built



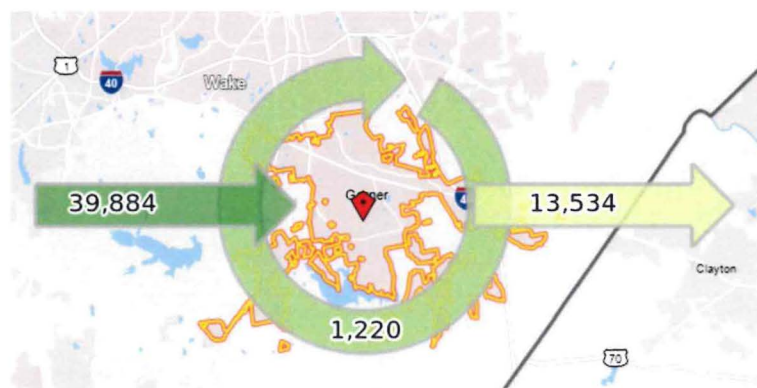
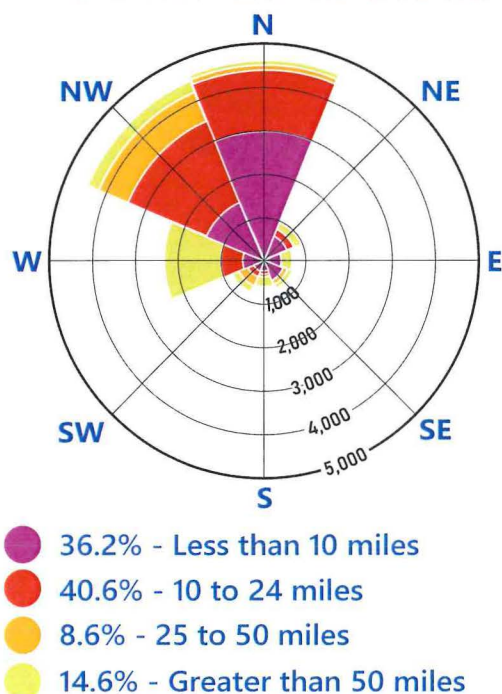
Insight:

Almost half of the homes in Garner were built between 1960 and 1999, with another 42.9% built between 2000 and 2019, representing a substantial increase in the number of homes built over the past two decades. A significant number of new homes in Garner are multifamily (apartment or condo), ranking second only to Morrisville in the Triangle Region.

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016–2021, Table S2504

Town Demographic Profile

Where Residents of Garner Go To Work



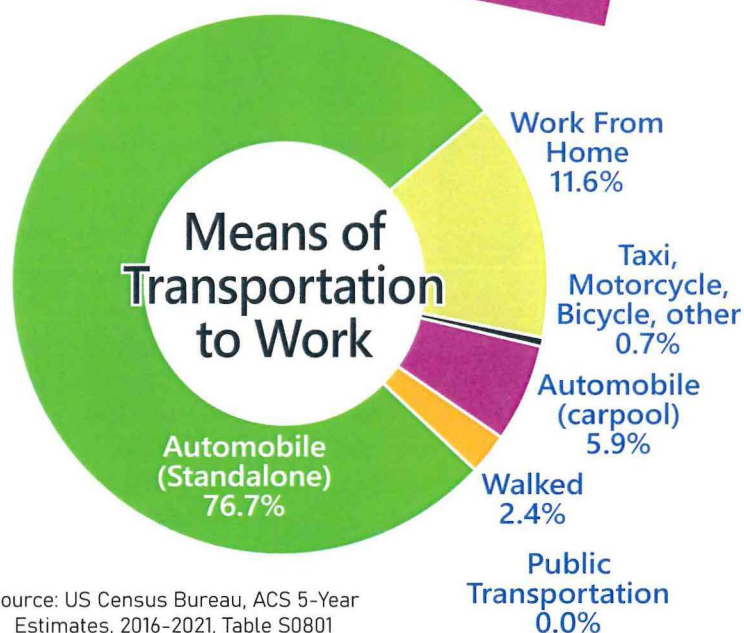
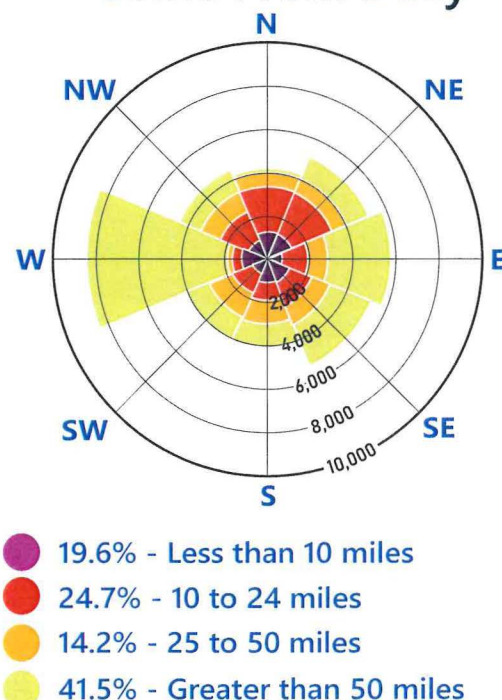
Source: US Census On The Map Product; Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2019, All Workers

Insight:

People who live in Garner are predominantly traveling north to Raleigh, Cary, or points beyond for work. Those leaving Garner for work are traveling a significantly shorter distance than people who work in Garner.

People who work in Garner are traveling from the west, and nearly three times as many people are traveling to Garner for work than are leaving Garner for work.

Where Workers in Garner Come From Daily



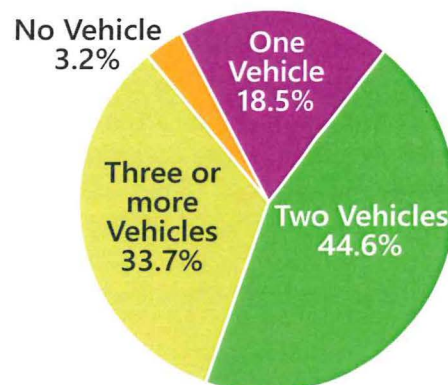
Source: US Census On The Map Product; Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2019, All Workers

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016–2021, Table S0801

	Where Workers Are Employed		Where Workers Live	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
All Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.)	30,573	100.0%	44,602	100.0%
Raleigh city, NC	11,789	38.6%	5,536	12.4%
Cary town, NC	2,661	8.7%	1,341	3.0%
Garner town, NC	2,369	7.7%	1,219	2.7%
Durham city, NC	1,846	6.0%	932	2.1%
Charlotte city, NC	1,091	3.6%	763	1.7%
Morrisville town, NC	600	2.0%	758	1.7%
Fuquay-Varina town, NC	538	1.8%	740	1.7%
Apex town, NC	478	1.6%	507	1.1%
Clayton town, NC	441	1.4	488	1.1%
Greensboro city, NC	440	1.4%	410	0.9%
All Other Locations	8,320	27.2%	31,908	71.5%

Source: US Census On The Map Product; Job Counts by Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.); Where Workers are Employed - All Jobs, and Where Workers Live - All Jobs

Vehicles Available

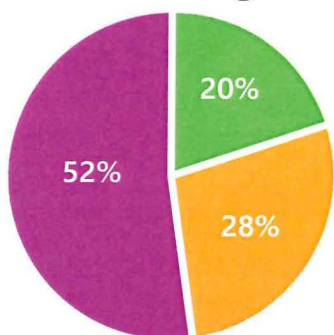


Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S0801

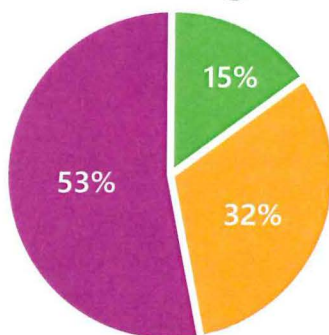
Insight:

Nearly all households in Garner have access to one or more vehicles for travel (96.8%), which creates significant demand for safeguarding, and likely improving through expansion, streets and highways in the planning area to keep vehicle movements safe and efficient. However, the percentage of people that reported working from home (11.6%) nearly doubled from 6.3% in the 2016 survey, and the percentage of those who walked also nearly doubled from 1.3% in 2016 to 2.4%. This figure, though small, is congruent with a national trend toward multi-modal transportation alternatives and the need to improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to provide more automobile alternatives.

Residents' Earnings



Workers' Earnings



- \$1,250 per month or less
- \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month
- More than \$3,333 per month

Source: US Census on the Map, 2019

Twenty Year Market Potential

Residential Outlook

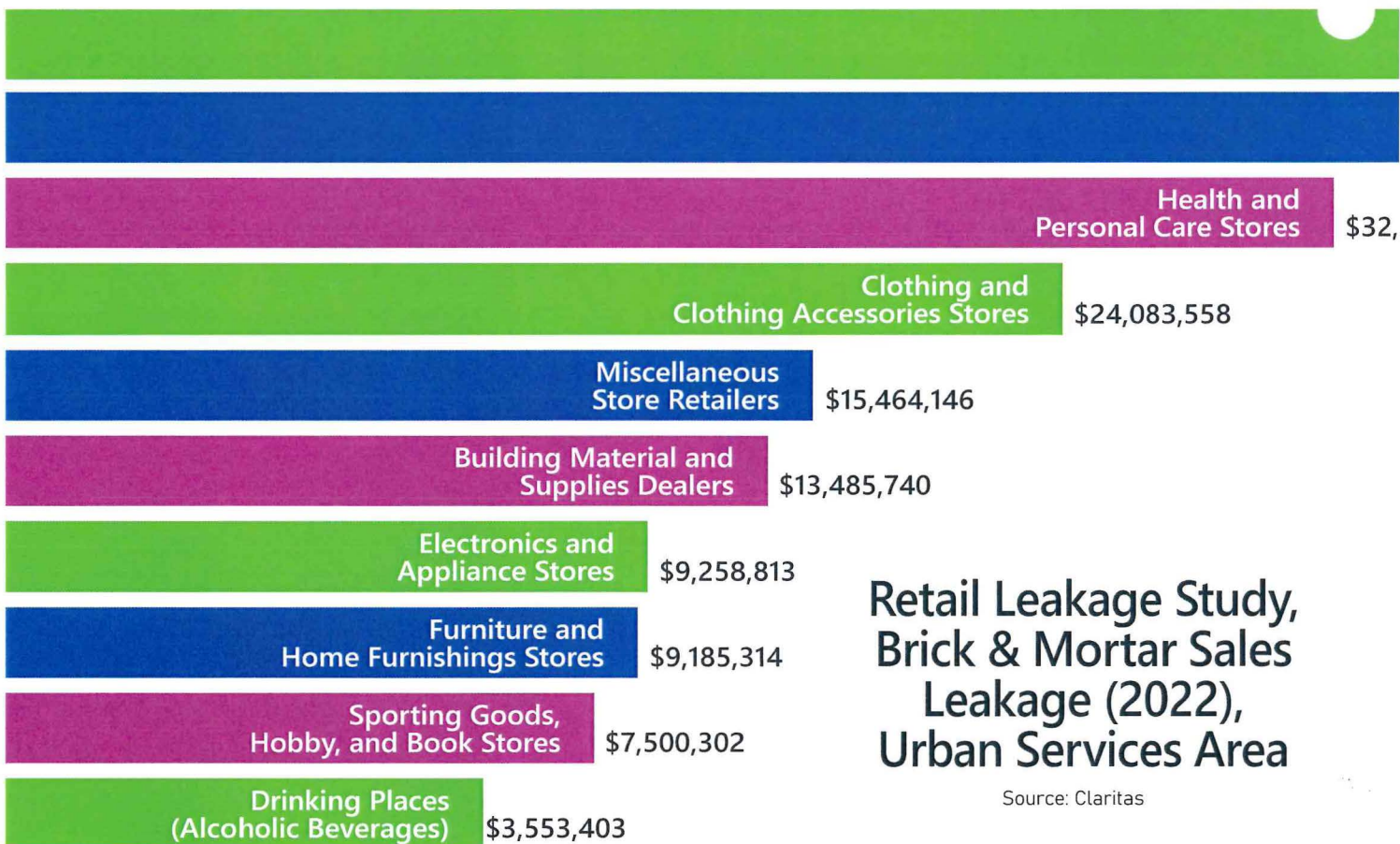
Garner has traditionally been a community centered around single-family neighborhoods with a smaller proportion of multifamily units. Local market forces and developer preferences have changed the complexion of the housing market in the community with 20.7% of the new residential units permitted in the community over the past decade being single family attached housing (townhouses). Forward trends show the shift to multifamily housing being strong with 45% of the pipeline units of housing being in multifamily complexes.

This trend is not unusual for communities across the United States housing trends for both active empty nesters and young professionals seeking a greater variety of housing options. Forecasts show that by 2040 Garner will absorb another estimated 16,000 residential units. Currently, the community has over 12,000 of those units already at some point in the development pipeline.

Retail Outlook

The influx of new residents to Garner (and their above average household incomes) provides the community with a great opportunity to attract additional retail uses throughout the community including a combination of basic retail like grocers and pharmacies alongside specialty retail like sporting goods, books, gifts, home furnishings, and clothing.

Current retail demand of \$1.09 billion in the Urban Services Area exceeds supply by \$45 million. Sales per capita in the market equals nearly \$16,000 per resident. Population increase in the market will increase demand by another \$693 million by 2040 resulting in the potential retail demand increase of 1.38 million square feet of retail space. It is important to note that this assessment is for bricks and mortar retail and already accounts for online sales.



**Retail Leakage Study,
Brick & Mortar Sales
Leakage (2022),
Urban Services Area**

Source: Claritas

General Office Outlook

Garner has successfully recruited additional employment uses and continues its trend of having a larger share of in-commuting compared with out-commuting.

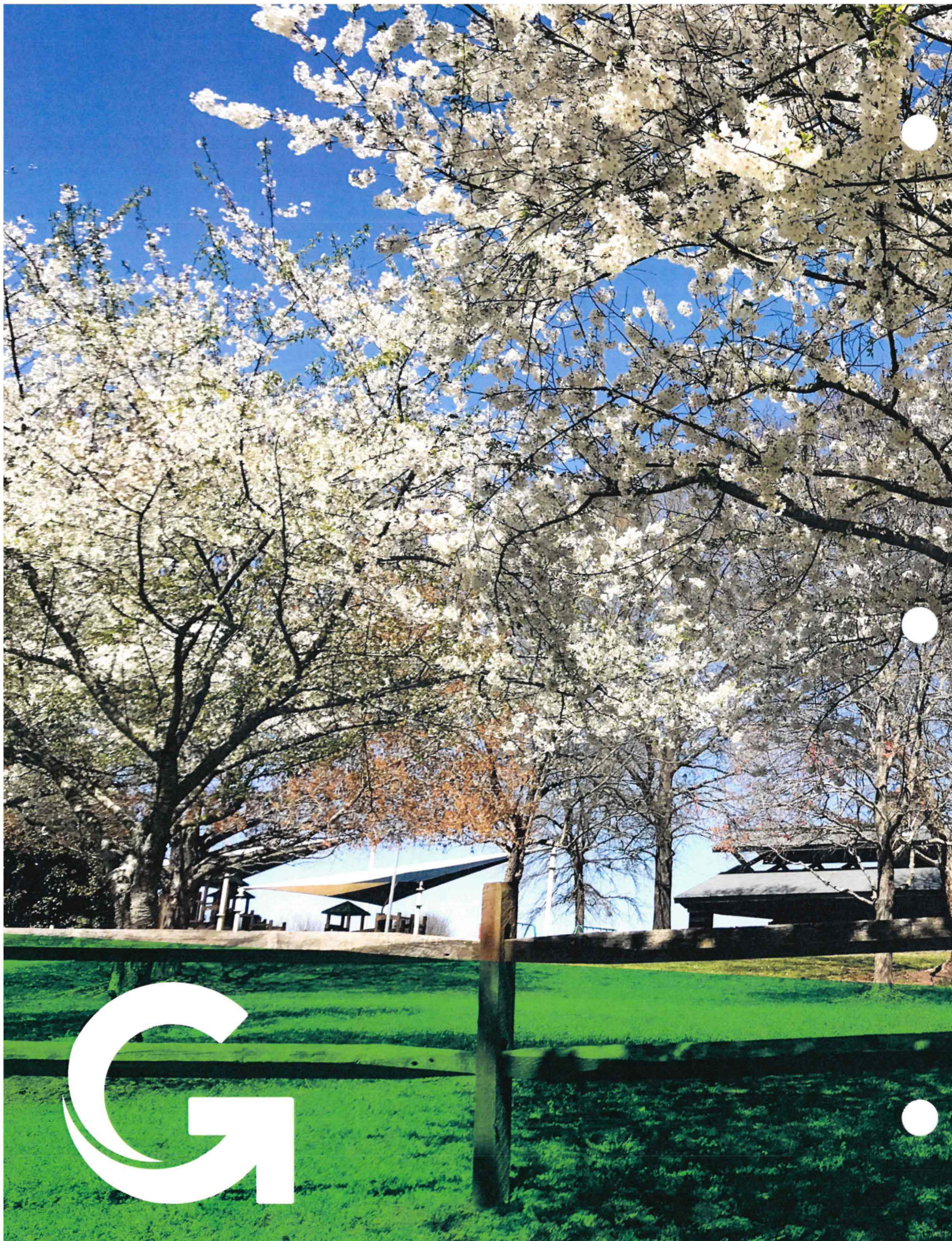
Employment forecasts from CAMPO indicate that office demand will continue to increase by 1.9 million square feet of space by 2040 with over 6,800 new office jobs coming to the market.

General Industrial Outlook

The industrial, warehouse, and service spaces in Garner have experienced continued growth and the pipeline for development is strong with 3.4 million square feet of industrial, flex, and service space already under consideration. Using CAMPO employment numbers, these types of land uses will increase in demand by 10 million square feet of space occupied by over 25,000 new employees in the market.

Food and
Beverage Stores \$56,835,526

Gasoline
Stations \$43,684,818





Chapter

● Growth
Framework

2

Growth Framework

Chapter 2 of the comprehensive plan presents the guiding principles, general framework map, development change and intensity map, character typology map, and character area typology for the town planning area. Collectively, the information contained in this chapter and outlined at right provides clear intent and direction for shaping preferred development and conservation initiatives for a seventeen-year planning horizon, 2023 to 2040.

A series of supporting infrastructure maps and tables presented in Chapter 6 of the comprehensive plan provide general guidance for future investments in the community to support the character typology map. More detailed master plans completed by individual service providers will take their direction from the comprehensive plan, and influence the type, timing, location, and magnitude of new infrastructure needed to keep pace with preferred conservation and development initiatives depicted on the character typology map.

Growth Framework

Guiding Principles

General Framework Map

Character Typology

Character Typology Map

Character Area Typology Descriptions

Character Area Crosswalk

Building Typology Crosswalk, Zoning

Development Change and Intensity

Development Change and Intensity Map

Development Change and Intensity Map Level Descriptions

Development Intensity Metrics

Building and Site Design Considerations

Building Typology Crosswalk, Residential

Building Typology, Residential

Building Typology Crosswalk, Non-Residential

Building Typology, Non-Residential

Block Sizes and Patterns Crosswalk

Block Patterns

Open Space and Natural Features Crosswalk

Open Spaces & Natural Resources

Guiding Principles

Thirteen guiding principles are presented in the comprehensive plan to expand on the vision statement and clarify goals and aspirations for Garner. The principles are critical to preserving and enhancing a high quality-of-life for town residents, and position town leaders well for the future as markets, technologies, and demographics may change over time. The principles in this document are rooted in those presented in the 2018 Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan. They were refined or expanded based on 1) new opportunities for the town not considered during the previous plan update, 2) the need for more detailed preference statements to influence intended outcomes, and 3) comments received from residents during the planning process to develop the 2023 Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan.

The means by which the town achieves the community's goals may evolve over time, but the guiding principles themselves should endure for generations. Changes to policies or direction considered for the town planning area should be evaluated against both the vision statement and the guiding principles to determine if they are in the best long-term interests of Garner and its residents, businesses, and property owners. One guiding principle is no more important than the others, rather they are all interrelated and interdependent acting as an organizing element for the comprehensive plan.

The Town Council recognizes that opportunities in the future may bring into conflict full and simultaneous implementation of the thirteen principles collectively, and necessitate a choice or prioritization of different principles, or the policies and recommendations that implement them. While balancing competing interests, it is the intent of the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan and its guiding principles to protect the health, safety, welfare, and prosperity of the community in all of its decision-making.



Strength and Conviction

Town leaders should be bold, lead with purpose, and take proactive steps to plan for the community's future.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity

Promote a healthy, welcoming, and inclusive town for both long-time residents and newcomers of all ages, races, and income levels, as well as for businesses both large and small.

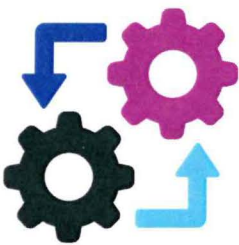
Quality of Life



Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Promote and expand opportunities where people can be more involved in an active community lifestyle represented, in part, by the presence of high-quality parks and recreation facilities located near where residents live and work, and the bicycle and pedestrian connections between them.

Capitalize on connections to open space and natural areas throughout greater Wake and Johnston Counties, and work with partners in the greater Triangle Region to increase system size, connections, and cohesiveness



Community Facilities and Services

Continue to improve quality-of-life for all residents of Garner by maintaining and expanding facilities and services (infrastructure) to meet current and future demands, including: water, sewer, roads, parks, police, and fire; while ensuring elected officials are good stewards in allocating finances toward town-provided services that promote a high quality-of-life.

Focus infrastructure investments in identified activity centers on the General Framework Map, and maintain a strong partnership with outside service providers to ensure infrastructure capacity is available to support intended growth and development depicted on the Character Typology Map.



Natural Environment

Promote and preserve Garner's green advantage, including ponds, streams, wetlands, woodlands, and tree canopy, and the services they provide. Create an interconnected network of green space that conserves critical natural areas, provides recreation linkages, protects water quality and quantity (stormwater), and contributes to the identity and sense-of-place within the community.

Fiscal Sustainability and Stewardship



Long-Term Financial Stability

Remain a town dedicated to delivering excellent municipal services to the community in a financially-responsible manner — especially in terms of evaluating opportunities that increase local revenues to maintain a high quality-of-life for residents in Garner.

Promote a more diverse development portfolio for the community that starts to balance the town's residential to non-residential tax base, while requiring high-quality design principles and elements in new development to help increase value capture potential (the ability to recover and reinvest revenue from land value increases that result from public investment or other government actions).



Land Use

Encourage a mix of land uses and development intensities throughout the town's planning area that promote economic development, sense of place, social interaction, community-building, and the efficient use of town facilities and services.

Emphasize the development of unique activity centers throughout the community that vary in scale, use, and intensity. Also, proactively plan for the neighborhoods and public spaces adjacent to activity centers or along premium transit corridors that make the entire community more vibrant and connected.



Economic Vitality

Promote a healthy and sustainable business environment by 1) investing actively in infrastructure; 2) providing favorable incentives; and 3) building a community that is attractive to businesses and their employees. Future investment and recruitment initiatives should realize "triple bottom line" fiscal benefits for town residents by seeking to improve the tax base, promote economic development and investment, and increase access to diversified employment opportunities in the town's planning area.



Right-Size the Community

Right-size Garner to balance its needs between community character and authenticity, available infrastructure, and continued economic vitality. Communities that continue to grow — no matter how slowly they grow — avoid increased taxes to pay for similar services as infrastructure ages.

New development should be purposeful and closely-tied to the community values, lifestyle preferences, and economic needs highlighted in the comprehensive plan, and should demonstrate available or planned infrastructure capacity exists to meet new demands in the future. New development should not be promoted solely as a means to generate additional revenue.

Smart Development & Growth



Community Design

Celebrate a distinct brand and sense of place that is uniquely Garner, while still tapping into the talent and creativity of the people that shape it — residents, business owners, property owners, developers, planning and design professionals, etc. — to keep things relevant and authentic. Emphasize community character and high-quality-design ideas that make Garner distinct from surrounding communities.



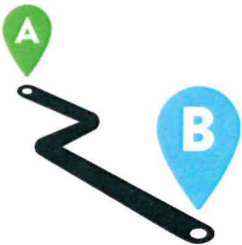
Home and Neighborhood Choices

Protect the character and quality of existing neighborhoods in Garner. Promote distinct, safe, and vibrant new neighborhoods in the town planning area that provide greater access to a diverse range of housing types and price points for current and future residents, including young adults, families, retirees, and seniors. Organize new neighborhoods around a continuous and connected system of open space that represents a prominent feature of the development.



Infill Development and Redevelopment

Promote infill development and redevelopment activities for vacant and under-utilized areas of Garner. In doing so, prioritize the transformation of older properties throughout town's planning area that might not be economically viable in the decades to come (such as declining suburban retail shopping centers).



Transportation

Provide a safe, reliable transportation system that balances all modes of travel; including walking, biking, public transit, rail, and cars. Consider land use and infrastructure investments together, promoting a network of complete, connected, and walkable streets that emphasize the quality and character of both the street design and surrounding development pattern (whether rural, suburban, or urban in nature).

Safeguard our transportation connections to important destinations outside of Garner — Raleigh, Research Triangle Park, Durham, and Clayton — and work with partners in the greater Triangle Region to build an efficient and multimodal regional transportation system.

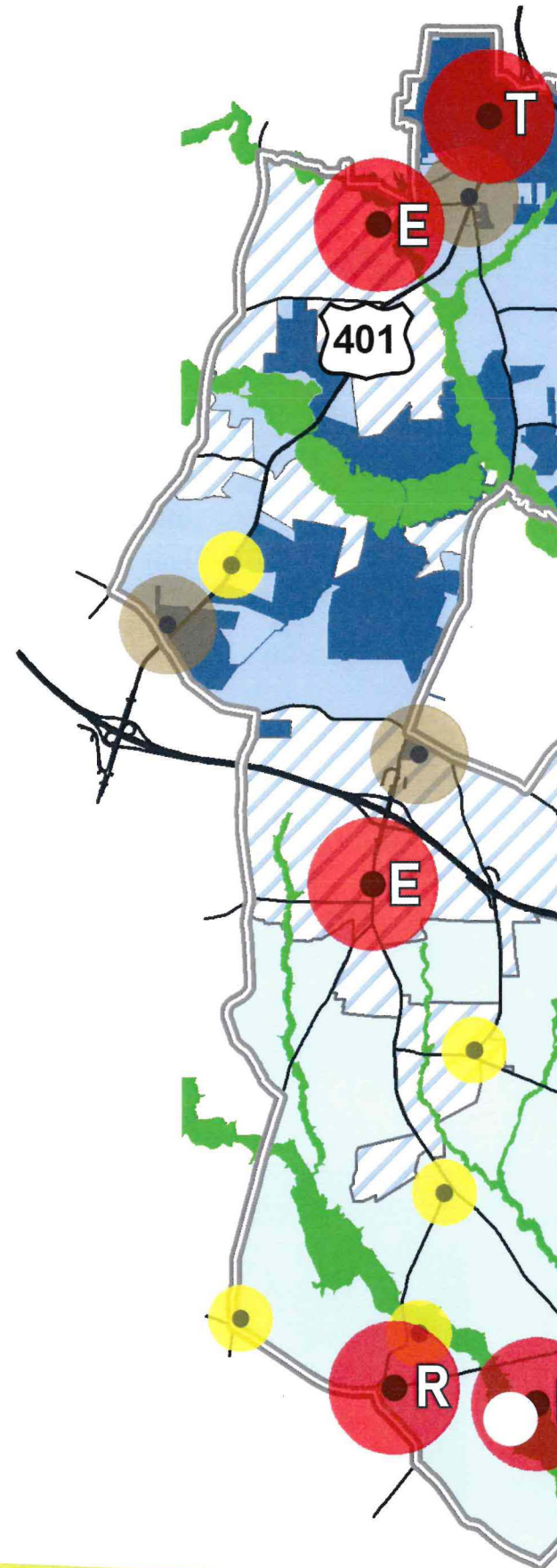


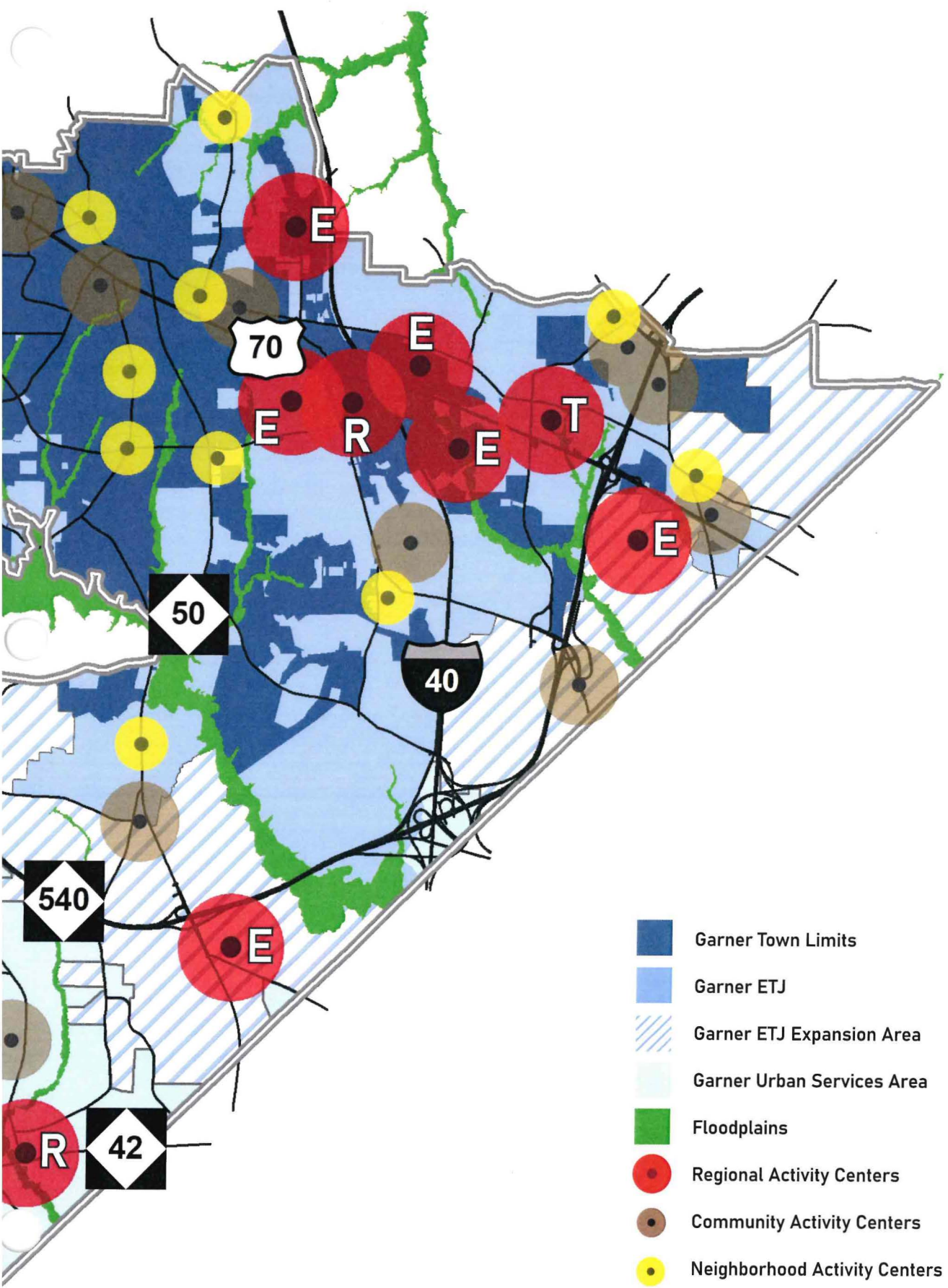
General Framework Map

Town leaders understand that purposeful, proactive planning for growth and development will result in a stronger local economy, greater financial sustainability, and a better quality of life for existing and future residents. This section of the comprehensive plan describes the town's General Framework Map, which should guide growth decisions, infrastructure investments, infill development and redevelopment initiatives, open space protection, and general town policy revisions.

The General Framework Map provides a means to quickly organize and illustrate a hierarchy of growth and conservation priorities for Town leaders to start implementing immediately. Commitment to the General Framework Map will 1) bring public and private decision-making processes closer together, 2) leverage town resources with other public and private investment dollars, 3) manage the amount and timing of new infrastructure required to support future development, 4) implement a town-wide strategy for identifying and securing open space, and 5) increase the town's influence in future development decisions that directly impact quality-of-life for everyone living in the area.

The General Framework Map should remain constant, and keep the Town of Garner on a focused path for success. Nine important initiatives that support the General Framework Map are presented on pages 36 through 40.





- Garner Town Limits
- Garner ETJ
- Garner ETJ Expansion Area
- Garner Urban Services Area
- Floodplains
- Regional Activity Centers
- Community Activity Centers
- Neighborhood Activity Centers

Initiative

1

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

Wake County must approve any request for expanded extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) because it enforces its own zoning and subdivisions ordinances in the potential area of ETJ expansion for Garner. In the application for ETJ expansion, the town must demonstrate it can provide services and commit to comprehensive planning and growth management principles for the areas under consideration.

Expanding extraterritorial jurisdiction in Garner accomplishes three goals. First, it limits widespread use of sewer treatment package plants in unincorporated areas that may fail in the future because of inappropriate design or poor maintenance, which is expensive to repair for the homeowner(s) and could render a home as uninhabitable if land is not available for new drain field(s). Second, it may improve water quality in the planning area by reducing the number of individual septic systems used in unincorporated areas, lowering the amount of nitrogen discharged into groundwater aquifers. Third, it provides ETJ residents with opportunities to serve on the town's Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment, giving residents a voice in growth and development decisions that impact their community.

Town officials should immediately expand the current ETJ area south to the areas generally south of NC 540, and east and west to the ETJ boundaries of Fuquay-Varina and Raleigh or the Johnston County line (subject to authority in pending state legislation).

Initiative

2

Floodplain Protection

Floodplains represent the area of land near a lake or stream that regularly floods during a significant rain event. Permanently protecting these areas from increased storm water run-off offers both environmental benefits and place-making qualities that are important to the new comprehensive plan. Protecting floodplains throughout the planning area provides the opportunity to create a complete and connected network of open space. The floodplain protection areas, as proposed, should be accessible to the public via new trails or greenways.

In protecting floodplains, town officials should require protection levels at or above state requirements to protect vulnerable areas from future storm events. Furthermore, low-impact development principles and new storm water retention/detention technology should be considered to protect floodplains and make storm water retention or detention features an attractive focal point in new development. Considerations should be made for the site and downstream development that may be impacted by the increase in impervious surface.

Individual development applications should be reviewed with the intention of connecting green infrastructure (open space) throughout the community. Floodplain protection offers great opportunities to protect a complete and connected system of open space in the community. Floodplains spanning multiple properties should be connected in the same manner streets are "stubbed out" for future connections.

Initiative

3

Historic Downtown Settlement

Town leaders are committed to promoting their historic downtown as a focal point in the community. Plans, programs, and projects identified for the area should encourage mixed-use, walkable development for in-town living and provide ample public space for the community to come together for major events, evenings out, etc.

Long-term, downtown could be expanded to include the area generally bounded by Vandora Springs Road on the west, Seventh Avenue on the south, Aversboro Road on the east, and US 70 on the north. Ideas to eliminate some of the physical or psychological divides between the two areas will be needed in the future. Ideas may include, but are not limited to, opportunities to increase the number and quality of crossing over US 70, and consistent design elements or treatments on both sides of US 70 that better reinforce a single, unified district.

Initiative

4

Regional Employment Activity Centers (E)

Regional employment activity centers emphasize traditional mixed-use development principles, including a concentration of employment uses in a discernible center with small-scale retail uses intermixed in the same buildings or nearby blocks to support employees' daily needs. The centers are generally large in size with convenient access to the transportation system and existing (or planned) access to municipal water and sewer services. In larger developments, the employment center may be surrounded by one or more neighborhoods that support a variety of home types and lot sizes, including live-work units. Some regional employment activity centers may include residential units above office, retail, or university uses in the same building.

The design, scale, character, and intensity of development in regional employment activity centers emphasize technology, creativity, and innovation, and may support a corporate headquarters, university, hospital, research and development campus, manufacturing center, or other centers of excellence and the nearby retail businesses and housing options needed for their employees.

Unfortunately, many of these areas are also attractive for low-density, suburban-style neighborhoods or retail shopping centers. Losing strategic sites for economic development, now or in the future, would be detrimental to the town's future financial well-being. Town leaders should resist character typology map changes or zoning map amendment requests to low-density, single land use, unconnected development for any of the regional employment activity centers identified on the General Framework Map.

Standalone residential uses in larger employment activity centers should be secondary to non-residential uses and open spaces (combined) in terms of building square footage, land area, and intensity of development. Homes in an activity center should vary in building type, size, and format to avoid design monotony, and help transition effectively to existing land uses and development intensities observed on adjacent properties.

Initiative

5

Regional Retail Activity Centers (R)

Regional retail activity centers serve as focal points for high-quality, experiential retail in eastern Wake County and western Johnston County. They are hubs for shopping, entertainment, or cultural activities with a mix of housing types and prominent open space for active living. As a magnet to surrounding towns and neighborhoods, regional retail activity centers become iconic symbols for the larger region. Regional retail activity centers tend to locate near major transportation corridors and often at the intersection of two major highways or an interstate exit. Small-scale retail and office space should be incorporated into new development with one or more anchor businesses depending on the size of the development (usually a large business or entertainment use). Multifamily buildings may be integrated into a portion of the center as a supporting land use. Some retail activity centers may include residential units above retail uses in the same building.

Town leaders should resist character typology map changes or zoning map amendment requests for homogeneous residential or non-residential development (mixed-use projects are preferred) for any of the regional retail activity centers depicted on the General Framework Map.

Standalone residential uses in a regional retail activity center should be secondary to non-residential uses and open spaces (combined) in terms of building square footage, land area, and intensity of development. Homes in an activity center should vary in building type, size, and format to avoid design monotony, and help transition effectively to existing land uses and development intensities observed on adjacent properties.

Initiative

6

Regional Transit Activity Centers (T)

Regional transit activity centers for bus rapid transit (BRT) or commuter rail transit (CRT) include a concentration of mixed-use, dense buildings focused around a premium bus or rail transit stop. Uses and buildings are located on small blocks with streets designed to encourage bicycle and pedestrian activity. The highest density development is located within one quarter mile of the transit station, with progressively lower densities spreading out into neighborhoods surrounding the center. Small-scale retail and office space should be incorporated into new development with one or more anchor businesses depending on the size of the development (usually a grocery store). Multifamily buildings — apartments or condominiums — should be integrated into the activity center to increase the number of transit riders in close proximity to BRT or CRT service. A concentration of residents in the center also provides nearby customers for local storefronts and employees for local businesses. Residential units above retail or office uses in the same building should be encouraged to energize streets with more pedestrians.

Town leaders should resist character typology map changes or zoning map amendment requests for homogeneous residential or non-residential development (mixed use projects are preferred) for any of the regional transit activity centers depicted on the General Framework Map.

Standalone residential uses in a regional transit activity center should be secondary to commercial and office uses or open spaces (combined) in terms of building square footage, land area, and intensity of development. Homes in an activity center should vary in building type, size, and format to avoid design monotony, and help transition effectively to existing land uses and development intensities observed on adjacent properties.

Initiative

7

Community Activity Centers

Community activity centers should include a mix of land uses that serve multiple nearby neighborhoods (e.g., grocery store, restaurant, book store, school, or multitenant building). A discernible center or corridor in the development should include a main street, park, square, or plaza. Anchor businesses for the activity center should front on the center or corridor. Secondary buildings should also front on the center or corridor and be pulled close to the street with wide sidewalks in front. Small-scale, compact businesses radiate out from the center or corridor and include public gathering places for the community in multiple locations. Large multi-tenant building footprints are broken up with alleyways or breezeways to facilitate shorter walking distances.

Residential units or office space may be found above storefronts. Homes in and surrounding the center of development may offer several choices to live in and experience the activity center — including, but not limited to, home choices such as apartments, condominiums, townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, or quadplexes — and accessory dwelling units. Homes in an activity center should vary in building type, size, and format to avoid design monotony, and help transition effectively to existing land uses and development intensities observed on adjacent properties.

Some areas identified as community activity centers are currently suburban shopping centers. Transformation of these areas to support mixed-use development will require deliberate planning and phasing to keep the areas viable during their transition.

Town leaders should resist character typology map changes or zoning map amendment requests for homogeneous residential or non-residential development (mixed-use projects are preferred) for any of the community activity centers depicted on the General Framework Map. Standalone residential uses in a community activity center should be secondary to commercial and office uses or open spaces (combined) in terms of building square footage, land area, and intensity of development.

Initiative

8

Neighborhood Activity Centers

Neighborhood activity centers try to locate retail destinations close to residential neighborhoods throughout the town's planning area. Each activity center is expected to be "neighborhood-serving" with land uses that meet the daily needs of nearby residents. Their proximity to neighborhoods requires that operations be low-intensity, unobtrusive, and at a scale and design compatible with nearby residential development. The design of neighborhood activity centers should effectively transition between residential and non-residential uses, and include safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access for nearby residents.

Neighborhood activity centers should effectively minimize the impact of cut-through traffic on nearby neighborhood streets by orienting vehicle access, circulation, etc. away from adjacent residential neighborhoods. Access between residential neighborhoods and adjacent commercial uses may be limited to pedestrian facilities.

Town leaders should resist character typology map changes or zoning map amendment requests for homogeneous residential development (mixed-use projects may be acceptable based on specific conditions for each site) for any of the neighborhood activity centers depicted on the General Framework Map.

Standalone residential uses, if appropriate, in a neighborhood activity center should be secondary to commercial and office uses or open spaces (combined) in terms of building square footage, land area, and intensity of development. Homes in an activity center should vary in building type, size, and format to avoid design monotony, and help transition effectively to existing land uses and development intensities observed on adjacent properties.

Initiative

9

Rural Planning Areas

Rural areas in the town's urban services area (generally south of NC 540) support low-density residential neighborhoods developed under Wake County zoning, large parks, and natural areas. The area is currently unserved or underserved by municipal water and sewer utilities. It would be expensive to expand in this direction because very low development densities, the distance infrastructure would need to extend to reach potential customers, and the need for force mains and pump stations to transmit wastewater uphill to the treatment plant. For all these reasons, it is appropriate to maintain a rural setting in this area of the town's urban services area at this time.

Town leaders may want to reconsider this decision sometime in the future if water and sewer infrastructure could be extended along NC Highway 42 from Johnston County.



Character Typology

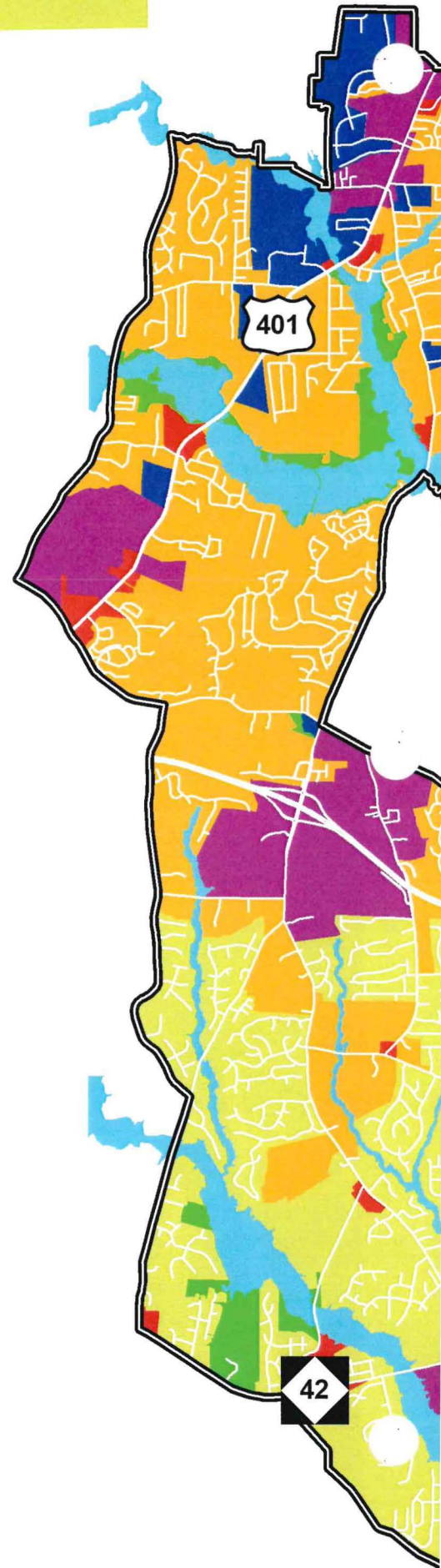
Character Typology Map

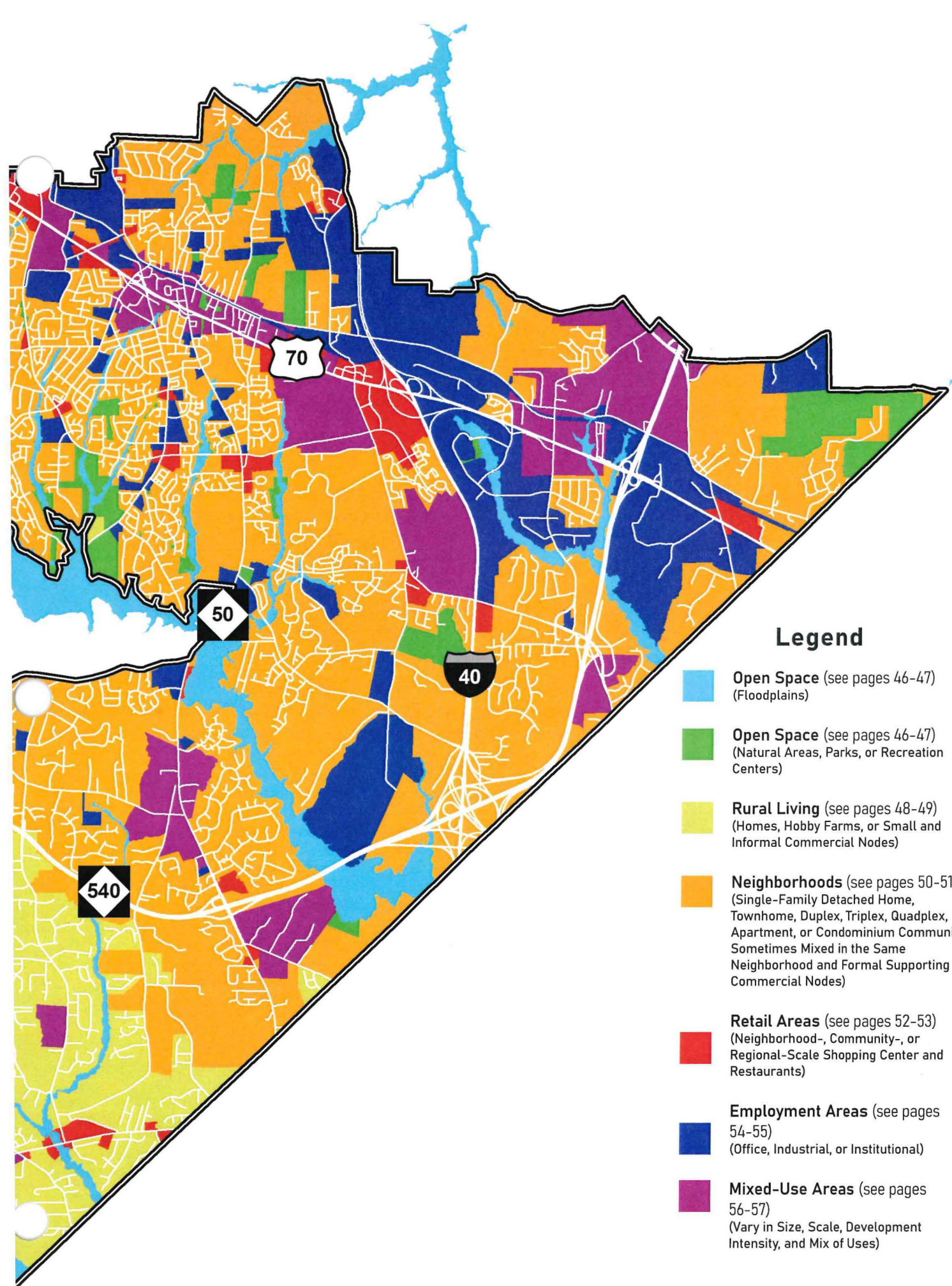
The Character Typology Map depicts preferred development types, locations, patterns, styles, and intensities for the planning area assuming full build-out of the community. It also provides a physical framework to more effectively realize the vision statement and guiding principles presented in the comprehensive plan. Some recommendations for the Character Typology Map are somewhat bold, and set a long-term vision for a more diverse development portfolio in Garner that is 1) forward-thinking, 2) focused on economic development, 3) mindful of supporting infrastructure, 4) aware of residents' quality of-life, and 5) aimed to be financially-rewarding for the Town of Garner.

The Character Typology Map is not a zoning map. Some areas on the Map reflect what currently exists today, some are more aspirational in nature, and others are a mix of what exists today and what could be in the future. The character areas depicted on the Character Typology Map are described in Chapter 2. They articulate how specific areas in the community should look and feel in the future if new development is contemplated by the property owner.

The Character Typology Map and its character areas serve as the foundation for near-term revisions to the Town of Garner's Unified Development Ordinance, which should ensure rules and regulations are consistent with the vision for conservation, character, and development set forth in the comprehensive plan. More information on the relationship between character areas in the comprehensive plan and zoning districts in the UDO is provided on pages 58 and 59.

Future employment, retail, transit, or mixed-use areas envisioned for the Character Typology Map may take longer to implement compared to building more suburban-style residential neighborhoods. However, the benefits of these uses to safeguard and promote the long-term viability of Garner as a leading community in eastern Wake County is worth the wait. In addition, build-out of the Character Typology Map is a long-term endeavor, whereby it might be several

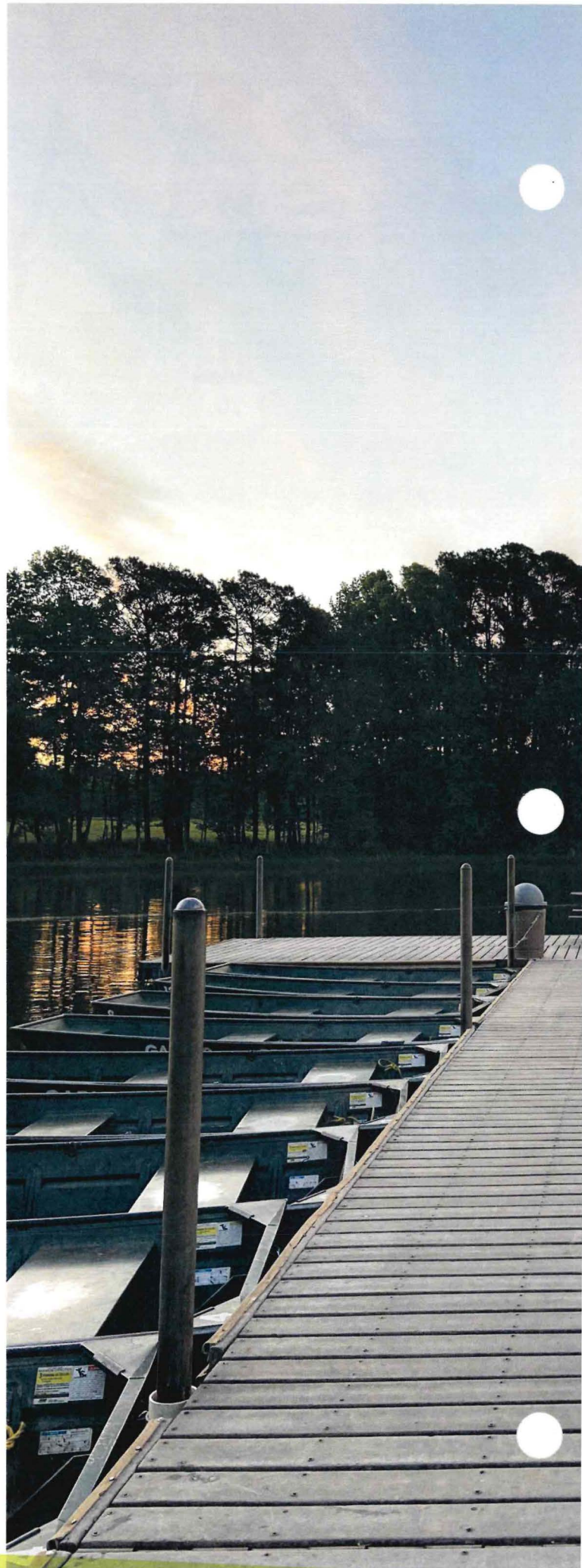




decades before all of the land in the planning area is developed, redeveloped, or preserved. Town officials should influence the timing, magnitude, and location of growth in the planning area using local infrastructure investment policies and partnerships with regional service providers (see more on this topic in Chapter 6).

From time to time, revisions to the Character Typology Map may be needed to reflect new realities in the future. Changes considered to the map should be evaluated against the vision statement and guiding principles presented earlier in the document to determine if the town's best interests are improved because of the proposed change.

Town officials should also evaluate proposed changes to the map using an "if-then-what else" approach to decision-making, whereby potential ripple effects or unintended consequences associated with a proposed change are evaluated to see what else might be impacted as a result. For example, character areas assigned in the Character Typology Map may need to be revised if the town or their partners decide to support a major economic development decision, or if a regional or state agency programs improvements for the area not previously anticipated in the comprehensive plan. All amendments to the Character Typology Map should follow a public process, involving both the Town Planning Commission and Town Council.





Character Area Typology Descriptions

The comprehensive plan uses the term “character areas” to describe unique and discernible areas of the community depicted on the Character Typology Map. The categories describe important elements that work together to instill a sense of place or experience for residents, visitors, or employees in the character area. Organizing the town’s planning area using character prioritizes site design, public space, building form and massing, and quality architecture over general land use and density.

More specific rules and standards for the character areas — including provisions for permitted or prohibited land uses, densities or intensities, block sizes, setbacks, parking, or landscaping considerations — will be addressed in the town’s Unified Development Ordinance using the general guidance and recommendations for the character areas provided in the comprehensive plan.

Some of the character areas presented in this chapter are represented by plan concepts or renderings presented in Chapter 3. The areas shown in the plans or renderings are conceptual in nature, and illustrate visually some of the big ideas described in the text for the character areas. Build out of the plan concepts may vary significantly from the drawings presented in the comprehensive plan based on landowner interests, market timing, lending conditions, available infrastructure, or other factors. However, the general concepts and design elements presented in the plan concepts or renderings represent preferred development principles for the character area category.

Open Space

Open space in Garner may be used for passive or active purposes.

More passive areas are represented by undisturbed land protected from future subdivision or development by federal, state, county, or town entities, or by public, private, or non-profit organizations. The areas may be preserved because of their outstanding natural beauty, environmental sensitivity, stormwater management benefits, viewsheds, or the protection of wildlife management areas. Examples of passive open spaces in the town's planning area may include, but are not limited to, preservation or conservation easement areas, natural parks or preserves, cemeteries, or land dedicated as passive open space within residential neighborhoods, non-residential centers, or mixed-use activity centers.

More active open space in the town's planning area is used for parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, or open air sports complexes. Facilities may be operated by the local government, non-profit organizations, or private sports clubs.

There are no discernible blocks in open space areas with the exception of land dedicated to passive or active open space inside residential neighborhoods, non-residential centers, parks, or mixed-use activity centers, which incorporate a block pattern prevalent for the surrounding character area category. In more passive settings, open space land is generally represented by large or irregular-shaped parcels that should not be subdivided. In more active settings, parcel sizes may vary depending on use, ranging from small, informal park or recreation areas included with other uses on a single parcel to large parcels dedicated solely for park or recreation uses.

Buildings are generally discouraged in open space areas with the exception of those needed to support outdoor recreational facilities or experiences with nature; including, but not limited to, bathrooms, visitor centers, concessions, sports equipment sales or rental, and shelters. Any such buildings should be contextually appropriate in design to the surrounding landscape.





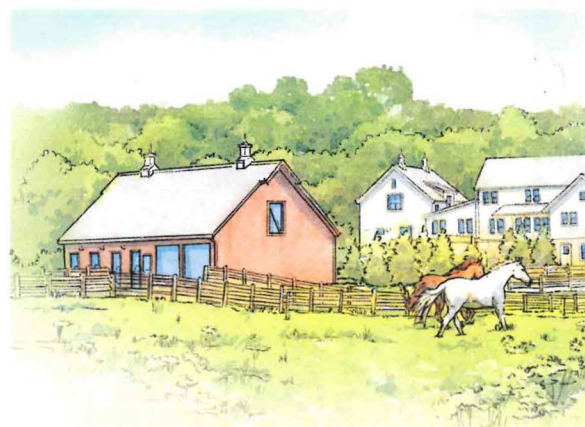
Rural Living

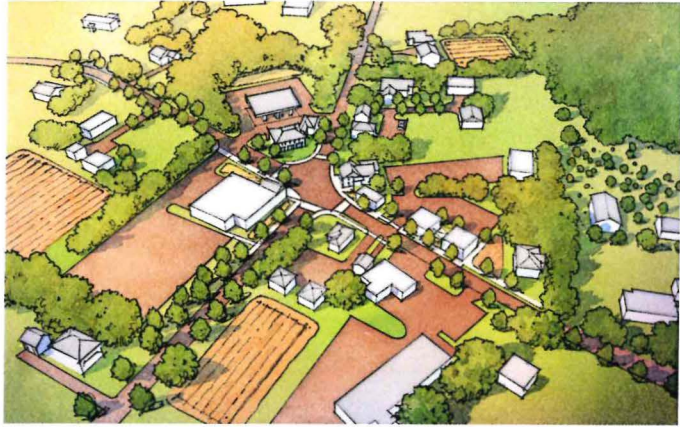
This typology describes land characterized by large lots and a high degree of separation between buildings. Homes and hobby farms are scattered throughout the countryside and integrated into the landscape. Lots are generally large and irregularly-shaped, with large front, rear, and side setbacks providing a high degree of separation between buildings on adjacent lots. Homes are generally oriented toward internal neighborhood streets or rural highways and have direct access via private driveways. The most-dense residential development patterns in the character area are represented by "county subdivisions" approved by Wake County for several decades. Future residential development in rural living areas should be sensitive to existing natural resources, including tree stands and natural drainage ways. Mass grading or tree clearing should be avoided.

Residential development in rural living areas is served by private or shared wells and septic systems.

A limited number of rural scale Activity Centers noted on the General Framework Map are intended to be rural in character. They represent small nodes of commercial activity along rural highways at important intersections. Typical land uses in the centers may include gas stations, convenience stores, or restaurants. Small-scale, compact businesses in a crossroads are oriented toward a main street, public square, or important intersection, and serve as gathering places for the community, or as nearby destinations to meet some of the daily needs of the surrounding rural population. The general layout of a rural crossroads should be organic and with a character that reinforces the surrounding rural landscape. Frankly speaking, crossroads are not a place to spread suburban development into southern portions of the planning area.

Rural crossroads in the area are also served by private or shared wells and septic systems. This will limit the size and intensity of development in each location, which keeps individual crossroads intentionally small and more like the "historic settlements" that were so important to the old farming communities in Wake County a long time ago.





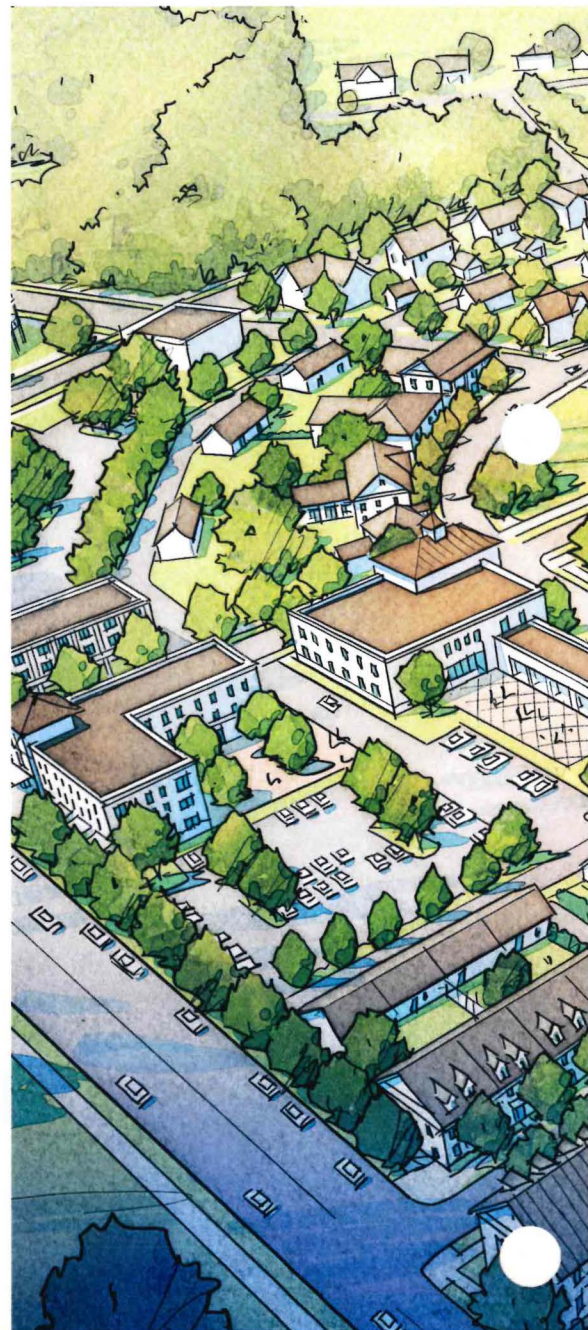
Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods in Garner historically included a limited number of home choices — single-family detached homes, townhomes, apartments, or condominiums — in a single development. Most neighborhoods provided a relatively uniform housing type and density throughout with buildings oriented toward the interior of the site and buffered from surrounding development by transitional uses, topography, or vegetative buffers. Adjacent developments were not well-connected in terms of street network or open space elements. Large blocks and cul-de-sacs in some neighborhoods created inefficient travel patterns and an over-reliance on the automobile for short trips. Large surface parking lots, entrance gates, and limited street connectivity were common in apartment or condominium neighborhoods.

New neighborhoods are required to provide different home types on different lot sizes that vary enough to provide a range of home choices in the same neighborhood. Some new neighborhoods may mix home types, lot sizes, or home sizes on the same block and provide accessory dwelling units. Multifamily development in a new neighborhood should consider home choices such as duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, or cottage courts to create more variety in terms of size and scale of buildings. Principal dwelling units should be oriented toward streets with rear yards larger than front yards. Small blocks and a grid street network support a well-connected, cohesive community in new neighborhoods.

New neighborhoods should also include a comprehensive and connected network of open space throughout the site. Development should be organized around a public square or common green that serves as a central gathering place. Smaller open spaces like pocket parks and community gardens are distributed throughout the neighborhood and within a short walk of homes. Lot sizes in the neighborhoods are smallest around the central gathering place, where attached and multi-dwelling home types like townhouses, apartments, and condominium buildings define the space. Moving out from the center, lots transition from smaller to larger, and become exclusively for single-family dwelling units at the edges. Internal streets and open space in new neighborhoods should connect to existing or future neighborhoods nearby.

Neighborhoods are primarily residential in nature, but may include limited civic or ancillary non-residential uses. Neighborhoods are served by municipal water and sewer systems.





Retail Areas

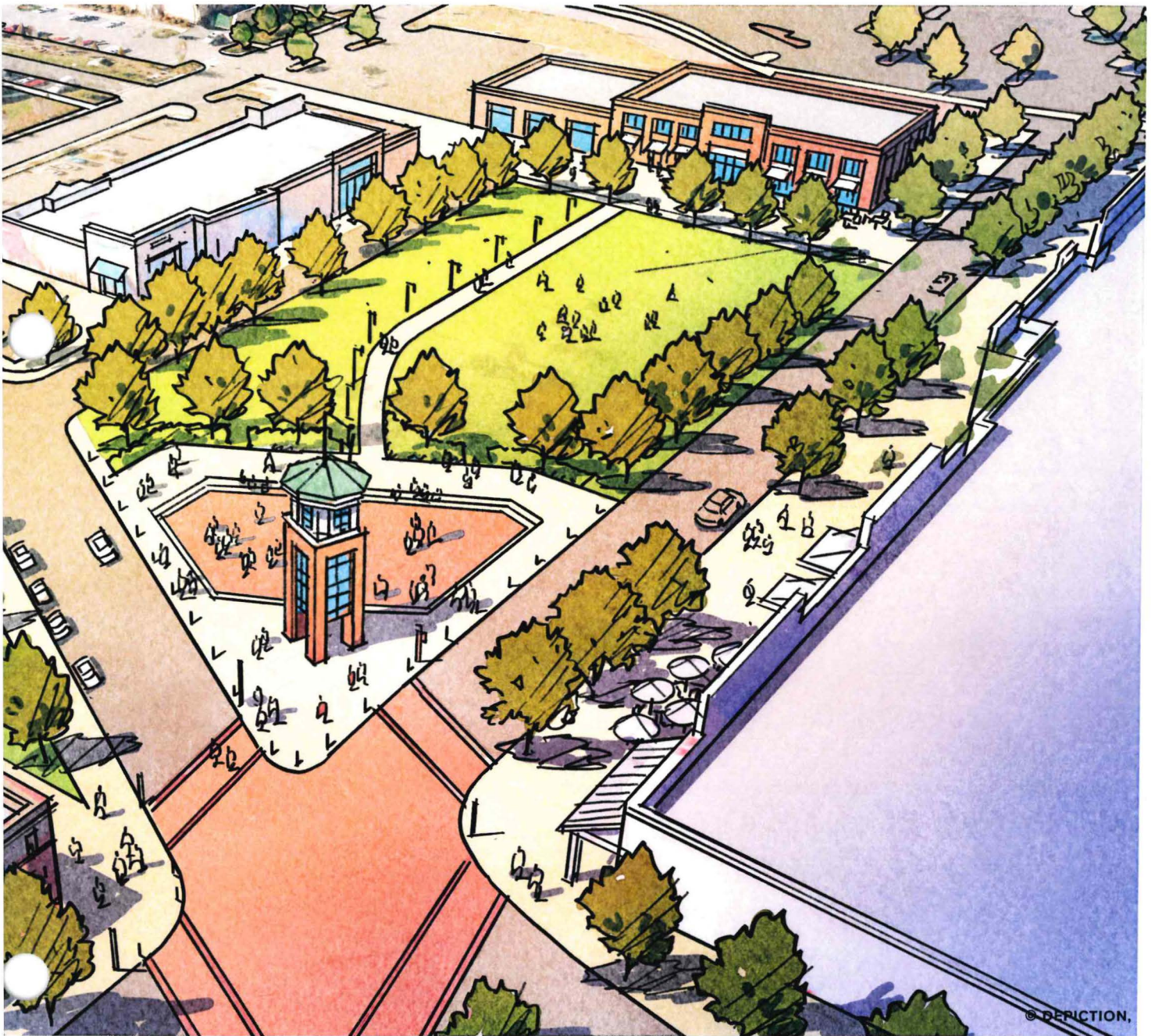
Retail areas in Garner serve the daily needs of surrounding residential neighborhoods. They typically locate near high-traffic-volume roads and key intersections. In larger centers, buildings are set back from the road behind surface parking lots with little or no street connectivity between adjacent businesses. Larger centers may support multi-tenant strip commercial centers, big box stores, and outparcel buildings near big box stores. The largest centers in Garner may emphasize retail, dining, entertainment, hotel, and leisure uses in a single power center that draws visitors from southern Wake or western Johnston Counties.

Smaller retail areas in Garner provide goods and services to nearby neighborhoods. Their proximity to neighborhoods requires that operations be low-intensity, unobtrusive, and at a scale and design compatible with nearby residential development. The design of a small retail area transitions effectively between residential and non-residential uses, and includes safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access for nearby residents. Sites also effectively minimize the impact of cut-through traffic on nearby neighborhood streets by orienting vehicle access and circulation away from the neighborhood.

Both large and small retail areas should include multiple buildings oriented toward a system of walkable internal streets. A centralized common green and pocket parks throughout the development should encourage community-gathering and people-watching activities. Iconic building architecture and unified project development standards in new or reimagined centers should reinforce a unique sense of place for the site. Cross-access between retail destinations should be provided via internal roads with provisions for mobility access between buildings that support a park-once mentality (or walk-to, bike-to environment from nearby residential neighborhoods).

Redevelopment of some areas to meet new expectations for large and small retail areas will require deliberate planning and phasing to keep the areas viable during their transition.

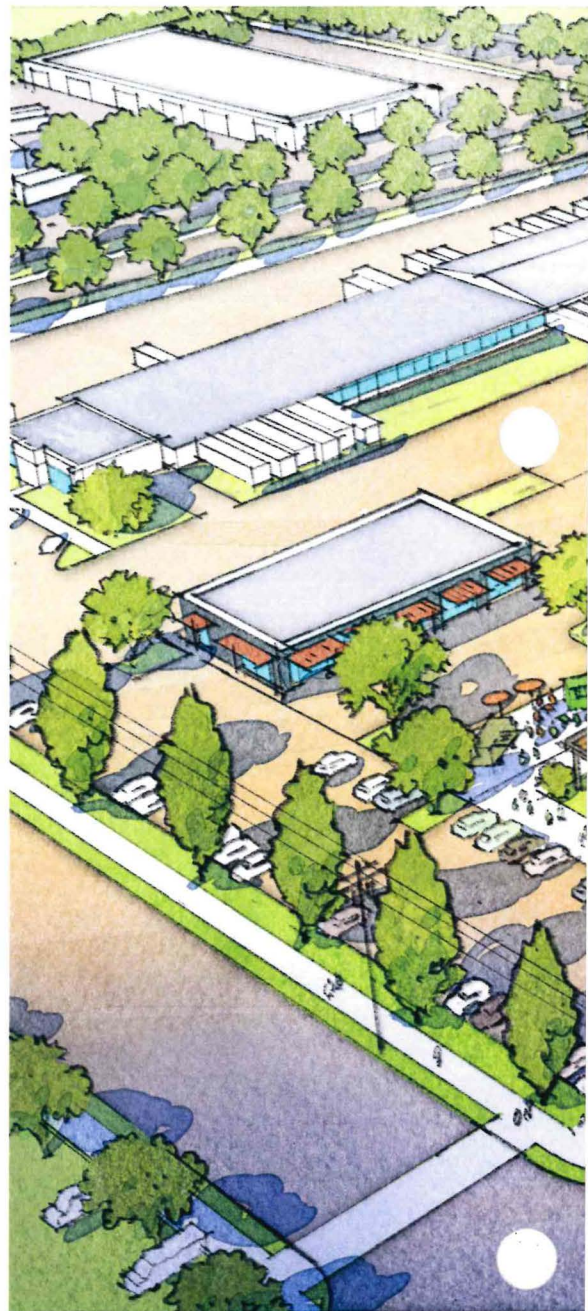


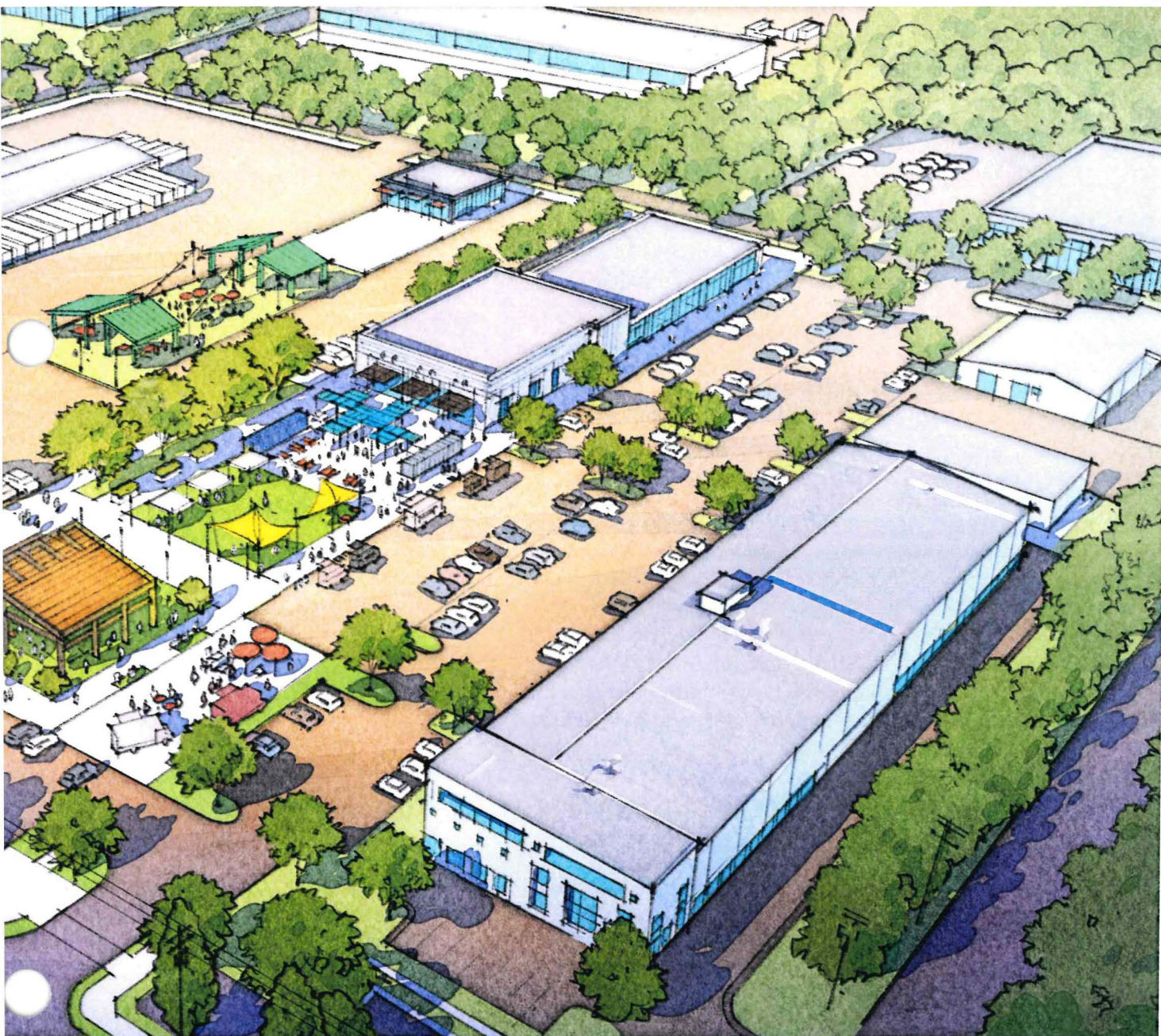
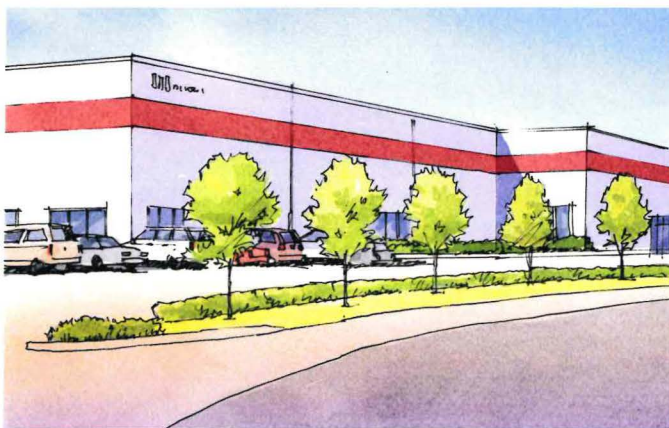


Employment Areas

This typology describes land providing opportunities to concentrate employment in the town's planning area on normal workdays. They support both large- and small-scale offices, warehouses, manufacturing centers, or flex space buildings organized as 1) giant, single-use centers or 2) multi-business centers that support and serve one another. Office developments are typically buffered from surrounding development by transitional uses or landscaped areas, and are often located in close proximity to major highways or thoroughfares. Industrial developments are typically buffered from surrounding development by tree preservation areas or landscaped areas that vary in type and size as a function of the activities being performed on the site. They are often located in close proximity to major highway or rail corridors.

Blocks in employment areas are large and may not have a discernible block structure because of the development scale or access requirements for specific buildings. Parking is provided in surface parking lots surrounding the building. New or redeveloped employment areas are encouraged to include an internal network of walkable streets and multiple park or open space features to improve conditions for employees.





Mixed-Use Areas

This typology describes land offering the opportunity to serve broader economic, entertainment, and housing needs in the community. Land uses and buildings on small blocks encourage active public spaces between buildings. Public spaces are sized and designed to be gathering places for the mixed-use area and its surrounding neighborhoods. Residential units or office space may be found above storefronts. Homes in and surrounding the center of development may offer several choices to live and experience the mixed-use area — including, but not limited to, home choices such as apartments, condominiums, townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, or quadplexes — and accessory dwelling units. Larger developments may include single dwelling homes on small lots further away the discernable center of a mixed-use area. Single dwelling homes should vary in building size and format to avoid design monotony, and help transition effectively to existing land uses and development intensities observed on adjacent properties.

Parking is satisfied using on-street parking, structured parking, and shared rear-lot parking strategies. The compact, walkable environment and mix of residential and non-residential uses in the area supports multiple modes of transportation, including the potential for moderate transit-oriented development if-when-where a decision is made to invest in premium transit along major transportation corridors in the town's planning area. Mixed-use areas should also maximize their connections to the town's open space network, including safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to the centers from nearby neighborhoods.

The discernible center of a mixed-use area should be sited in accordance with the Activity Centers depicted on the General Framework Map. A larger mixed-use area may include one or more mixed-density residential neighborhoods with it, which provide additional nearby home choices and encourage active living with a comprehensive and interconnected network of walkable streets. In some cases, a large mixed-use area may be proposed as an alternative to more conventional employment centers in Garner. The design, scale, character, and intensity of development in larger centers should emphasize technology, creativity, and innovation, and may support a corporate headquarters, university, research and development campus, manufacturing center, or other centers of excellence and the nearby retail businesses and housing options needed for their employees.

Some areas in Garner designated as mixed-use areas are currently suburban shopping centers. Transformation of these areas to support mixed-use development will require deliberate planning and phasing to keep the areas viable during their transition.





Character Area Crosswalk

The Character Typology Map presented in Chapter 2 is largely implemented through the Town’s Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Character areas depicted on the Character Typology Map are translated into one or more compatible zoning districts, and the Town’s Official Zoning Map is used to organize the zoning districts spatially to implement the preferred development locations, types, patterns, styles, and intensities depicted on the Character Typology Map. The direct connections between the Character Typology Map, character areas, UDO, and Official Zoning Map help meet the minimum rules and requirements for local governments in North Carolina that want to enact and enforce zoning laws in their jurisdiction (see N.C.G.S., Chapter 160D 501(a)).

Each zoning district in the UDO provides more detailed interpretation of the broader character areas. The districts take into account site-specific issues or conditions (e.g., topography, environmental features, existing development patterns, lot shape or size, available infrastructure, or development compatibility). General statements for the character areas are also refined further in the zoning districts with specific design and development standards created to regulate permitted uses or activities, building height and setbacks, lot size and coverage, landscape, lighting, parking, etc.

Town officials should consider modifications to its UDO immediately that implement policies and recommendations in the comprehensive plan as laws. In essence, this is the process of changing phrases with reference to “should” in the comprehensive plan — noting recommendations or desired outcomes — to phrases with reference to “shall” in the UDO — indicating requirements or absolute standards — for a development application.

The Character Area Typology Crosswalk to the right summarizes the relationships between character areas in the comprehensive plan and zoning districts in the UDO. Town officials should start with this information to identify zoning districts that may need amendments to better implement specific recommendations for the various character areas.



Open Space

Zoning Districts

Town UDO

Commercial Mixed Use
Heavy Industrial
Light Industrial
Multifamily A
Multifamily B
Neighborhood Mixed Use
Residential 2
Residential 4
Residential 8
Rural Agricultural
Manufactured Home Park
Activity Center
Traditional Business District

County Zoning Ordinance

General Business
Heavy Commercial
Highway District
Industrial-1
Residential-20
Residential-30
Residential-40W
Residential-80W
Residential Mobile Homes



Rural
Living

Neighborhoods

Retail
Areas

Employment
Areas

Mixed-Use
Areas



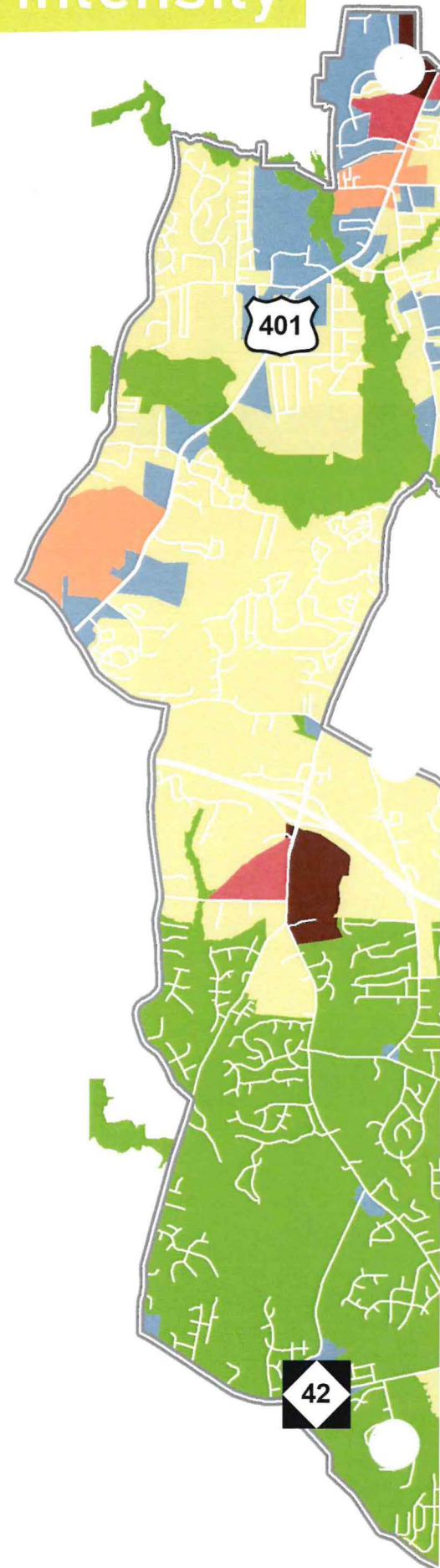
Development Change and Intensity

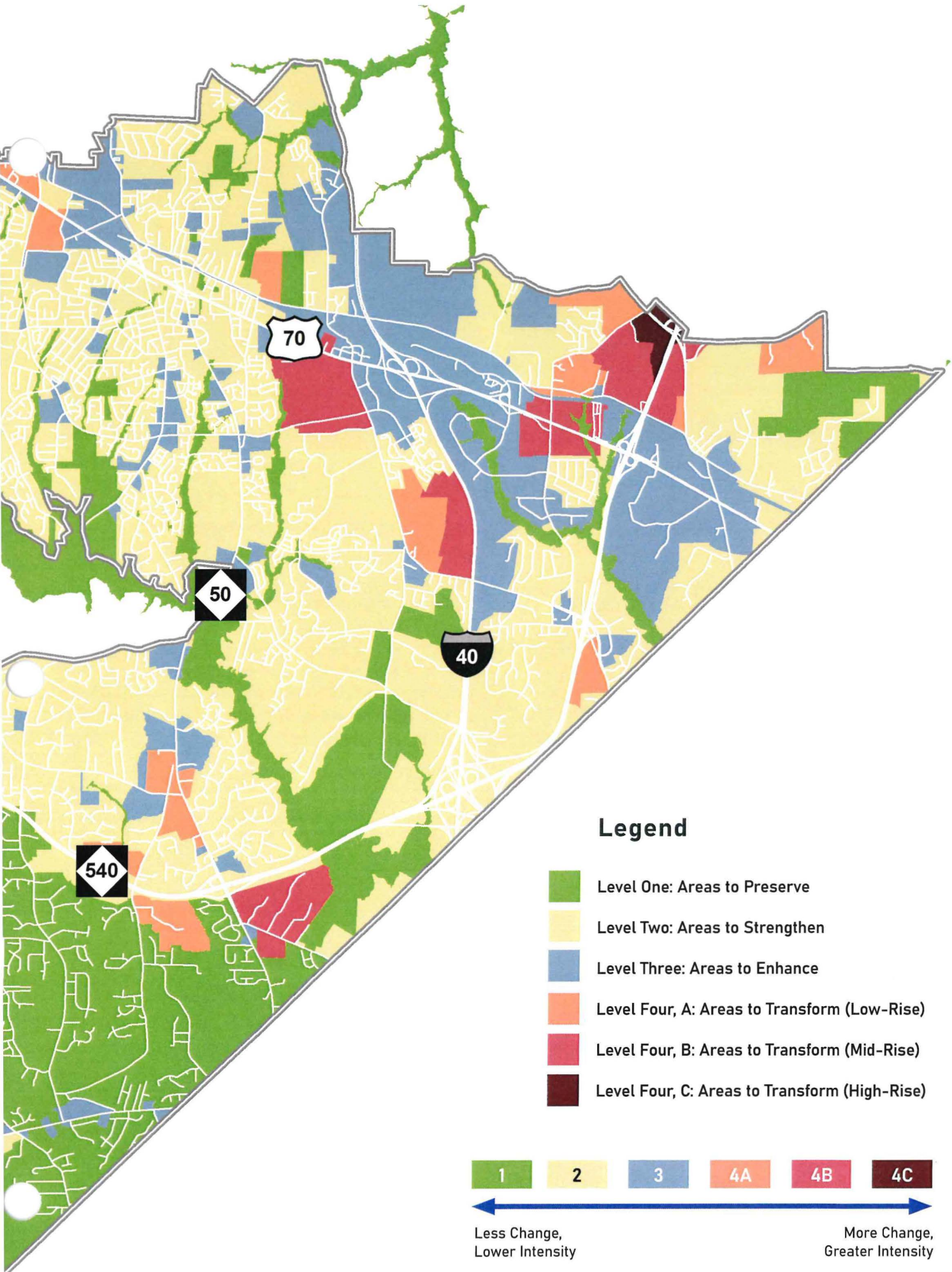
Development Change and Intensity Map

The Development Change and Intensity Map (DCIM) is a companion to the Character Typology Map, and presents the intensity of development most appropriate throughout the town's planning area. Each level on the map depicts different density, intensity, land use mix, building size and scale, open space, or mobility options, intended for specific areas in the community. The DCIM, along with the character areas depicted on the Character Typology Map, should be used when considering development applications and programming capital improvements.

Clear purpose and intent for intended development change and intensity overlaid on top of the character areas in the Character Typology Map provides focus for the community, elected officials, town staff, development interests, conservation partners, and other agencies in terms of their mission and expected outcomes to implement the comprehensive plan. It should also inform future revisions to zoning districts or regulations in the town's Unified Development Ordinance.

Four development intensity categories are represented on the DCIM: level one (areas to preserve), level two (areas to strengthen), level three (areas to enhance), and level four (areas to transform). Each category is described below with a general objective, important considerations, and targeted treatments. The DCIM applies the four categories spatially in the town's planning area, which quickly sets expectations in terms of the amount of change expected for an area — less change to more change — and intended development intensity — lower intensity to greater intensity — expected through 2040. The matrix on pages 64 and 65 summarizes minimum and maximum height, bulk, and density expectations for each of the development intensity categories.







Level One: Areas to Preserve

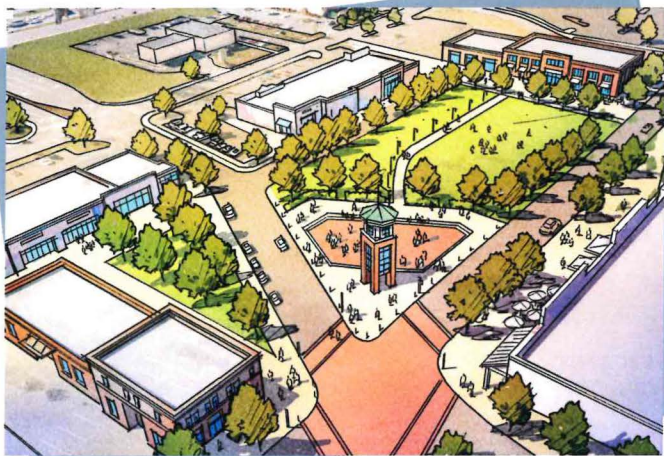
Areas to Preserve safeguard rural and environmentally-sensitive lands and provide meaningful opportunities to link residents with parks, recreation facilities, and nature. Future development is discouraged in these locations to protect open space, natural areas, and rural viewsheds in the community with the exception of farms, homes on very large lots scattered throughout the countryside, previously approved county subdivisions, park-related activities, and cross county trails or greenways.

Areas to Preserve also include historic properties — areas of particular historic or cultural significance — where protection of historic integrity is paramount, and new buildings are sensitively-designed for the area's context.



Level Two: Areas to Strengthen

Areas to Strengthen represent places that already have positive momentum in the right direction, but may need some additional, intentional support to overcome specific hurdles preventing them from reaching their full potential. They may include certain activity centers near existing neighborhoods. Physical improvements in all Areas to Strengthen should build upon, and contribute to, their continued success.



Level Three: Areas to Enhance

Areas to Enhance include existing developed areas — established residential communities, employment hubs, or retail areas — that are now stable, but should consider small-to medium improvements over the long-term to keep up with changing economics, technologies, consumer preferences, or age-related wear and tear. These areas are not likely to witness wholesale redevelopment, but could benefit from strategic infill development or precise, tactical improvements capable of meaningfully enhancing the quality-of-life for the people that inhabit those areas.

Infill development in neighborhood enhancement areas should be small-scale and sensitive to the uses, densities, and character of surrounding homes and neighborhoods. Infill development in retail and employment enhancement areas could be more intense and provide significant numbers of jobs and services for nearby residents and the larger community.

Level Four: Areas to Transform

Areas to Transform provide opportunities to re-imagine Garner's future, and introduce new, energized activity areas that provide key locations for new employment areas, regional shopping centers, entertainment areas, and upper story or adjacent residential units in appropriate locations. Within Level Four there are multiple subcategories that represent further nuanced development intensities (particularly, building heights). These areas may require more deliberate planning and phasing to keep them viable over longer periods of change and have the potential to serve as new and reinvigorated activity centers for the whole of Garner and surrounding areas.

Development Intensity Metrics

Development Intensity Category		Development Priority	Prevailing Development Pattern	Prevailing Building Heights
Level 1	Areas to Preserve	Preservation	Separated Uses	1 to 2 Stories
Level 2	Areas to Strengthen	Strategic Investments	Separated Uses	1 to 3 Stories
Level 3	Areas to Enhance	Infill Development	Separated Uses	1 to 3 Stories
Level 4A	Areas to Transform, Low-Rise	Redevelopment	Mix of Uses (Stacked or In-Block)	3 to 5 Stories
Level 4B	Areas to Transform, Mid-Rise	Redevelopment	Mix of Uses (Stacked)	6 to 10 Stories
Level 4C	Areas to Transform, High-Rise	Redevelopment	Mix of Uses (Stacked)	11 to 20 Stories

**Minimum Building
Enclosure Ratio
for Streetscape
(width:height)**

**Typical Block
Lengths**

Transportation Choices

**Parking
Provisions**

**Setback or
Build-To Line**

**Typical Street
Cross Section**

4:1	400 to 1,500 Feet	Bicycle-Walking	Surface Lot	Setback	Rural- Suburban- Urban
3:1	300 to 800 Feet	Bicycle-Walking-Auto	Surface Lot	Setback	Suburban
3:1	300 to 800 Feet	Bicycle-Walking-Auto	Surface Lot	Setback	Suburban
2:1	300 to 600 Feet	Bicycle-Walking-Transit	Surface Lot	Build-To	Urban
2:1	300 to 600 Feet	Bicycle-Walking-Transit	Parking Deck	Build-To	Urban
1:1*	300 to 600 Feet	Bicycle-Walking-Transit	Parking Deck	Build-To	Urban

* = Buildings in Level 4C should consider a step-back condition in building height and massing away from the edge of a public space for any portion of the building over 40 feet tall to preserve the target building enclosure ratio.

Building and Site Design Considerations

The comprehensive plan presents four crosswalks (matrices) on pages 66 through 83 that establish clear relationships between character areas and 1) residential building types, 2) non residential building types, 3) block sizes and patterns, and 4) open space or natural resource features.

The information presented is the first step in a series of actions required to influence preferred development or character considerations for the community. Town officials should reference this information when it makes amendments to the local unified development ordinance, various construction and design standard manuals, small area plans, topic specific master plans, or the capital improvement plan.

Revisions to each of the documents identified above will fine tune the big ideas and concepts presented in the comprehensive plan. New or updated documents should transform policies and recommendations in the comprehensive plan into laws, standards, system maps, service plans, schedules, and capital projects that guide town investments and hold developers accountable for delivering high quality projects that reinforce Garner's expressed community character.

Building Typology Crosswalk, Residential*



Accessory Dwelling Unit



Single Family Detached, Large Lot



Single Family Detached, Small Lot



Duplex, Side-by-Side Units



Duplex, Stacked Units

	Accessory Dwelling Unit	Single Family Detached, Large Lot	Single Family Detached, Small Lot	Duplex, Side-by-Side Units	Duplex, Stacked Units
Open Space					
Rural Living	■	■			
Neighborhoods	■	■	■	■	■
Retail Areas					
Employment Areas					
Mixed-Use Areas	■		■	■	■

* = Definitions for the different home categories presented in the matrix are provided on pages 68 through 71

“Information presented in the four crosswalks is intentionally simple. The details for implementation will be worked out in subsequent plans, studies, and ordinances used to refine big ideas in the comprehensive plan.”



**Triplex,
Stacked Units**



**Quadplex,
Stacked Units**



**Courtyard
Cottages**



Townhome



**Stacked
Multifamily**



**Live-Work
Units**



Building Typology, Residential



Accessory Dwelling Unit

An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is a small, independent home located on the same lot as a larger single family detached home. ADUs may be used as rental apartments for people not related to the homeowner, secondary suites for young or old family members, or separate offices for homeowners that elect to work from home. The unit may be attached to the larger home, detached from the larger home, above a detached garage, or in the attic or basement of the larger home. ADUs have a separate entry from the street or driveway.



Single Family Detached Home, Large Lot

A medium to large (one to three stories tall) detached building used for a single dwelling unit. Large lots for a single family detached home typically exceed one-quarter of an acre (10,890 square feet), and include both a front and rear private yard. An attached or detached garage typically serves the home via a driveway connected to the street.



Single Family Detached Home, Small Lot

A small to medium (one to three stories tall) detached building used for a single dwelling unit. Small lots for a single family detached home are typically less than one-quarter acre in size (10,890 square feet). The rear yard of the lot is generally larger than the front yard of the lot. Each unit has an entry from the narrow side of the home, and most include porches or stoops to transition between public and private spaces. The dwelling unit may or may not include a detached garage.



Duplex, Side-by-Side Units

A small (one to two stories tall) detached building with two separate dwelling units arranged in a side-by-side configuration. Each unit has an entry from the street. The two units together appear to be one medium to large size single family detached home. The units may or may not include a rear yard or detached garage.



Duplex, Stacked Units

A small (one to two stories tall) detached building with two separate dwelling units stacked one above the other. Each unit has an entry from the street, typically on different sides of the building. The two units together appear to be one medium to large size single family detached home. The units may or may not include a rear yard or detached garage. A stacked duplex accommodates a more narrow lot compared to a side-by-side duplex.



Triplex, Stacked Units

A small (three to four stories tall) detached building with three separate dwelling units stacked one above the other. Each unit accesses a single entry from the street via a shared stairwell. The three units together appear to be one large size single family detached home. The units may or may not include a rear yard or detached garage.

Building Typology, Residential



Quadplex, Stacked Units

A detached building (two to three stories tall) with four dwelling units inside. Units are single-story and stacked within the building — two ground floor units and two units above. Units may be accessed via individual entryways from the street, or a shared entry central to the building. The four units together appear to be one medium to large size single family detached home. The units may or may not include a rear yard or detached garage.



Courtyard Cottages

A group of small, detached buildings oriented toward a central green or courtyard. The public space is typically visible from the street. Homes are accessed from the side facing the central green or courtyard. Some courtyard cottages may include a mix of one and two story buildings.



Townhome (Row Homes)

A small to medium (two to three stories tall) building with up to six dwelling units arranged in a side-by-side configuration. Each unit has an entry from the narrow side of the home, and most include porches or stoops to transition between public and private spaces. Townhome buildings may face a street or common green. Some townhome buildings may include a detached garage behind the units. The space between the home and the rear detached garage is available as a private courtyard for the homeowner.



Stacked Multifamily, Apartment or Condominium

A medium to large (three to five stories tall) building with up to sixteen dwelling units inside. Units are typically one story each, and arranged in a stacked configuration where most units share a floor, ceiling, or multiple walls with an adjacent neighbor. Each unit is accessed from one of several entry points to the building from the street. An interior elevator or shared stairwell is used to access units above the ground floor. Some units may include a detached garage. Other units are served by nearby surface parking lots.



Live-Work Unit

A small to medium (two to three stories tall) attached or detached building with one living unit above or behind a flexible ground floor space that can be used for various non-residential uses. Both the living unit and the flexible ground floor space are accessed from the street. Some live-work units have separate entrances, while others use a shared entry and secured access to the living unit above via features internal to the building.

Building Typology Crosswalk, Non-Residential*



Industrial or Warehouse

Neighborhood Commercial

Big Box, Multitenant Shopping Center

Office

Open Space
Rural Living
Neighborhoods
Retail Areas
Employment Areas
Mixed-Use Areas

		■		
		■		
		■	■	
■	■			■
■	■	■	■	■

* = Definitions for the different non-residential building categories presented in the matrix are provided on pages 74 through 75



**Institutional (Church,
School, Etc.)**



**Stacked Mixed-Use
Building**



**Mixed-Use
Buildings on the
Same Block**



Building Typology, Non-Residential



Industrial or Warehouse

A large (one to three stories tall) building with a footprint that may reach several hundred thousand square feet in size. Some industrial or warehouse buildings will include outdoor storage or equipment to meet the needs of the business inside the building.



Neighborhood Commercial

One or more small buildings (one to two stories tall) organized around a central green or main street. Buildings serve various non-residential uses, and typically avoid franchise architecture to reinforce a unique sense of place in the community. A limited number of neighborhood commercial buildings in a development may include residential units above storefronts (see the definition of live-work units).



Big Box, Multitenant Shopping Center

A single development that may include one or more big box stores as anchor tenants, and several smaller buildings for multiple tenants nearby. Buildings may stand one to two stories tall. The preferred configuration of buildings on a site minimizes the visual impact of a big box store from the street. Some big box stores or multitenant buildings include entrances from multiple sides of the same building.

Office or Institutional

A small to large (one to three stories tall) building with a footprint that may reach several hundred thousand square feet in size. The preferred configuration of buildings on a site orient towards a common green or main street. Several small buildings are preferred to fewer big buildings on a site, which should reinforce the feel of a campus or urban, walkable block depending on the context of surrounding development.



Stacked Mixed-Use Building

A small to large (one to two stories tall) building with different non-residential land uses on the ground and upper floors. Some mixed-use buildings have separate entrances, while others use a shared entry and secured access to the business above via features internal to the building. Several mixed-use buildings in a development may include residential units above storefronts (see the definition of live-work units).



Mixed-Use Buildings on the Same Block

A mix of buildings that support residential and non-residential uses on the same block of a community, or the same block of a single development. Architectural features on different building types in the same block are used to reinforce a cohesive brand or identity for the area. Buildings are placed along the street to encourage active streetscapes and high levels of pedestrian traffic.



Block Sizes and Patterns Crosswalk*

	Rural Highways	Curvilinear Streets with Cul-de-Sacs	Curvilinear Streets in Modified Grid	Traditional Grid of Streets
Open Space				
Rural Living				
Neighborhoods				
Retail Areas				
Employment Areas				
Mixed-Use Areas				

* = Definitions for the different block sizes and patterns presented in the matrix are provided on pages 76 through 77

Block Patterns



Rural Highways

There is no discernible street network or block structure. Rural highways are designed to move traffic efficiently over long distances, with limited intersections. Many areas do not have lot frontage, and those that do have lots with varying sizes and setbacks. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are limited to a side use path separate from the travel lane.

Curvilinear Streets with Cul-de-Sacs

The street network is curvilinear and irregular, with most streets terminating in a cul-de-sac. This type of network has a low level of connectivity, requiring vehicles and pedestrians to make long trips to travel short distances. There is no discernible block structure, and varying lot sizes and setbacks. Streets have sidewalks on one or both sides of the street and bicycle facilities, when present, are provided on-street. The use of curvilinear streets with cul-de-sacs is not encouraged in future development unless a specific environmental or landscape condition dictates the need.

Curvilinear Streets in Modified Grid

The street network is curvilinear and semi-regular, though there is some irregularity, often due to topography or natural features. This type of network demonstrates a fair level of connectivity, with limited or no cul-de-sacs. Vehicles and pedestrians are able to move around the neighborhood with relative efficiency. Blocks range in size from small to large, and neighborhoods with fewer intersections have less connectivity and walkability than those with more intersections. Varying block sizes result in varying lot sizes and setbacks. Streets have sidewalks on one or both sides of the street and bicycle facilities, when present, are provided on-street.

Traditional Grid of Streets

The street network is very regular, though there may be small areas of irregularity due to topography or natural features. Cul-de-sacs and dead end streets should only be used in the case of environmental or infrastructure constraints. Blocks sizes range from small to medium, and a high number of intersections and a regular grid pattern provides good connectivity and walkability. The regularity of block sizes and shapes results in regular lot sizes and setbacks. Streets have sidewalks on both sides of the street and bicycle facilities are provided on-street.

Open Space and Natural Features Crosswalk*



	Natural Area	Trail or Greenway	Common Green	Athletic Field or Sport Court
Open Space	■	■		■
Rural Living	■	■		
Neighborhoods	■	■	■	
Retail Areas	■	■	■	
Employment Areas	■	■	■	
Mixed-Use Areas	■	■	■	■

* = Definitions for the different open space and natural feature categories presented in the matrix are provided on pages 80 through 83



Playground

Pocket Park

Community Garden

Public Square

Public Plaza



Open Spaces & Natural Resources



Natural Areas

Natural areas are open spaces that are typically undisturbed and dedicated for permanent conservation: water bodies, meadows, woodlands, or other land with environmentally-sensitive features. Use of these areas is reserved for passive and unstructured recreation activities. Some natural areas are protected from future development by local, state, and federal agencies or public, private, or non-profit organizations.

Natural areas may be found in various shapes and sizes following the trajectory of natural corridors or elements in the landscape. There is no minimum or maximum size for a natural area.



Trails or Greenways

Trails or greenways are linear parks or open spaces that provide passive recreation opportunities for pedestrians or bicyclists. Trails or greenways may connect parks, schools, neighborhoods, and businesses together, and support both "recreational" and "functional" trips between destinations. All greenways should also be considered transportation corridors for programing funds or prioritizing improvements.

Trails or greenways should be designed within the context of their surrounding environment: natural, rural, suburban, or urban. Trailheads may be located along a trail or greenway and provide parking lots, drinking fountains, restrooms, or signage needed to support use of the facility.



Common Greens

Common greens are open spaces located in a residential, non-residential, or mixed-use development. They are used primarily for informal recreation or civic purposes. The perimeter of a common green may be defined by landscaping versus buildings and streets depending upon the context of surrounding development. Greens are less formal, and may be more irregular in shape, compared to public squares or public plazas.

Greens include lawns, trees, paved paths, public art, and seating areas. Some may include playgrounds or water bodies. The minimum size of a common green is 0.5 acres. The maximum size is typically 10.0 acres, but some greens may be larger, encompassing one or more entire blocks, based on the size of the development.



Athletic Fields or Sport Courts

Athletic fields or sport courts are open spaces sized and designed to support one or more sporting events played by individuals or teams. Some athletic fields or sport courts are designed to accommodate multiple activities in the same location depending upon the season or time of year (e.g., soccer, football, ultimate Frisbee, or lacrosse). A facility typically includes the field or court plus parking lots and one or more ancillary buildings to support the activities. Some locations are lighted for nighttime use.

The minimum or maximum size of an athletic field or sport court depends on the number of facilities provided at the location.

Playgrounds

Playgrounds are open spaces designed and equipped for children's play. Playgrounds should be accessible to the public. Some playgrounds may include an open shelter for small community gatherings. Playgrounds should be included in all residential neighborhoods, and may also be appropriate in larger parks, employment areas, or mixed-use developments.

There is no minimum or maximum size for a playground.





Pocket Parks

Pocket parks are small, sometimes irregular, open spaces located more randomly in a residential, non-residential, or mixed-use development. Multiple pocket parks should be located in a single development. Overall, pocket parks in a development may seem scattered or disconnected from one another because locations are chosen opportunistically. Each park location should be chosen and programmed with consideration of the residents, visitors, or businesses they serve nearby. Pocket parks may include small event space, play areas for children, spaces for relaxing or meeting friends, or places to take lunch breaks.

Generally speaking, higher-density development in the town's planning area should include more pocket parks to offset the loss of private open space. Park locations should be visible from a street and well-connected to the larger open space network via sidewalks or greenways.

There is no minimum size for a pocket park. The maximum size is usually 1.0 acres, but some pocket parks may exceed the maximum size based on the shape or location of the parcel.



Community Gardens

Community gardens are comprised of multiple garden plots in one location made available to individuals via membership or lease for small-scale, non-commercial farming. Individual gardens may be raised or fenced, and a small shed may be located adjacent to the garden for short-term storage needs. Other community gardens may include larger sheds on site for shared-storage of tools, seed, or fertilizers. Running water is required for a community garden.

Community gardens may be dispersed in residential neighborhoods or natural areas. There is no minimum or maximum size for a community garden.



Public Squares

Public squares are formal open spaces located near the center of activity in a residential, non-residential, or mixed-use development. They are used primarily for informal recreation or civic purposes, and may include temporary (pop up) spaces for special events. Buildings and streets frame the outside of a public square on all sides. Public squares include lawns, trees, paved paths, public art, and seating areas. Some may include playgrounds. Larger squares may include a small commercial space as the focal point of activity.

The minimum size of a public square is 0.5 acres. The maximum size is typically 3.0 acres, but some squares may be larger, encompassing an entire block, based on the size of the development. Larger developments may include multiple public squares in their design concept. Each public square should be a focal point in the development (or smaller defined areas within a development, if applicable)



Public Plazas

Public plazas are formal open spaces located near the center of activity in a mixed-use development. They are used primarily for informal recreation or civic purposes, and may include temporary (pop up) spaces for special events. Buildings and streets frame the outside of a public plaza on all sides. Public plazas include hardscape materials (no lawns), knee walls, public art, and seating areas. Larger squares may include a small commercial space as the focal point of activity.

The minimum size of a public square is 1.0 acres. The maximum size is typically 2.0 acres, but some plazas may be larger, encompassing an entire block, based on the size of the development. Larger developments may include multiple public plazas in their design concept. Each public plaza should be a focal point in the development (or smaller defined areas within a development, if applicable).





Chapter

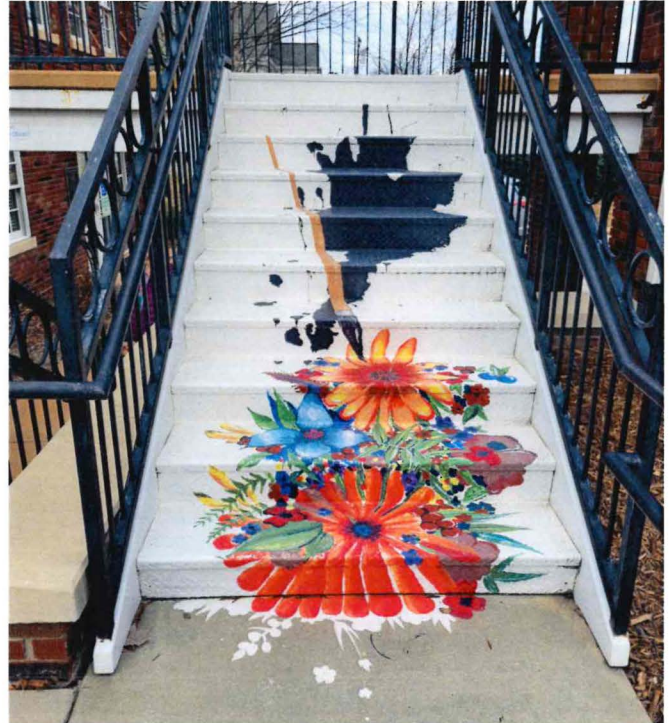
3

Land Use and
Community
Character

Introduction

In describing a town, “character” refers to the features that make up and distinguish a place. As noted in the first two chapters of this document, land use, development, open space, and infrastructure all contribute to “community character.” Therefore, physical form and design considerations are emphasized in the plan.

The supporting recommendations provided in this chapter give guidance for accommodating future growth and change while preserving and enhancing the qualities that make the town a desirable place to live, work, learn, and play. They aim to improve the town’s neighborhoods, activity centers, and public spaces with policies that address a range of attributes, including a mix of uses and amenities that expand the local economy, enhance social interaction, protect environmental resources, instill a unique sense of place, and improve the overall quality-of-life for residents.



Planning Themes

Planning effectively for the future requires awareness of the character-defining features that are or can be exhibited in the built environment and establishing a policy guide that ensures those features remain key elements even as change occurs over time.

In the early stages of this planning process, a group of stakeholders, which included design professionals, were assembled to assess the character of Garner. The participants explored the character-defining features to express the “essence” of the town.

Essence - The intrinsic nature and indispensable qualities exhibited in abundance, as if in concentrated form, that make a place what it fundamentally is.

As the committee members described the town as a whole and the places within, they organized their thoughts into three categories:

Appearance

The aesthetics of the place resulting from the combination of physical characteristics.

Function

The purpose of the place, taking into consideration the activities the spaces within can support.

Feel

Experience (or memories) associated with the physical environment, such as elements that give a nod to the history and heritage of the place, that connect people to it.

The resulting list of descriptors refers to the experience of living in, working in, and visiting Garner, now and in the future. These terms and phrases were offered by the committee members to acknowledge the current conditions they have observed in the town and to note some of their aspirations.

Quality of Development

Building materials, trees, landscaping, art

Diversity / Sense of Community

Mix of housing products within neighborhoods, more activities for all age groups, engagement is fostered, pride

Local

Accommodating, facilitating, supporting local businesses

Community Support

More places to come together, hubs, parks, fun places

Scale

Walkable streets/areas, less automobile use (and less traffic)

Safety

Visibility, lines of sight keep eyes on the street (and other spaces)

Historic Preservation

Conservation (i.e., buildings, rail, water tank), features to connect to past

Natural Environment

Conservation, natural elements are integrated

The input from the committee helped inform ideas about how to evaluate existing and future development. This level of detail can better equip Garner to conserve, create, leverage, and celebrate the features that give—or will give—Garner its distinct identity.

Six themes emerged from the exploration of the character-defining features. These themes are associated with those features, which are informed by the desired future development pattern and can be reinforced through policies. The recommendations presented in this section are organized around these six themes:

Emphasis on the Public Realm

Land Use Mix and Development Intensity

Home and Neighborhood Choices

Site Design and Development Scale

Community Connections

Natural Conservation and Historic Preservation

Town Initiatives

Several ideas related to enhancing the quality of life and economic prosperity in Garner were explored during the planning process. Integrated into the recommendations are explanations of proposed initiatives to advance these ideas, and they are presented on pages distinguished with a blue background.

About the Focus Areas

This chapter concludes with a series of focus area illustrations prepared to demonstrate conceptually how the recommendations under each planning theme might be applied in future development and redevelopment. Specific recommendations are provided with each to identify the opportunities while adjusting for the context of each focus area.

Theme 1: Emphasis on the Public Realm

Every place a person visits leaves an impression – sometimes referred to as its “sense of place” – that gives it a distinct identity and reputation. Factors influencing sense of place may include street network, size and scale of buildings, number and quality of public spaces, connections between destinations, streetscape, lighting, landscaping, and art. The comprehensive plan recognizes sense of place as a strong influencer for promoting transformational change in specific areas of Garner, especially in terms of investments in the “public realm” that may leverage other public and private investments throughout the planning area.

Market activity and private investments in some of Garner’s identified activity centers may transform them into more urban places. Town leaders also recognize major investments in the spaces around, between, and within buildings are needed to keep pace with development. Thinking about a more complete and more consistent public realm, and coordinating investments in the public spaces and transportation corridors that primarily make up the public realm, offers the opportunity to synchronize projects that reinforce a common vision and work together to make great spaces for the community. The ability to create walkable environments through investments in the public realm can also influence travel behavior and nearby land uses and development densities.

Coordinating investments in the public realm – whether by public or private interests – has the potential to significantly influence the form and function of Garner’s planning area, and create a sense of place for pedestrians and the community. Establishing a framework for investing in the public realm starts with the recommendations presented in the comprehensive plan and continues with new rules and requirements in the town’s Unified Development Ordinance or capital projects in the town’s Capital Improvements Plan. It should also include coordinated private investments within and adjacent to the public realm. The context of buildings, their uses, and interactions near the public realm (especially within the first thirty feet of a building) will also be important for instilling a distinct identity and sense of place for a street or activity center.

The recommendations that follow under the topic of public realm will help unify the natural and built environments in the town’s planning area. They emphasize a comprehensive and connected brand for the town that will create a unique sense of place and community pride for living and working in Garner. More specific concepts and recommendations for some elements of the public realm are also covered in the themes that follow public realm in Chapter 3.



Prepare a public realm master plan for specific neighborhoods, parks, districts, or corridors in town with partnerships from the private sector and other public organizations.

Prepare public realm master plans for specific areas in town that each define a common design vision, unifying design treatments, programmed public investments, and expectations for private investment within and adjacent to a public realm. Town officials should use each public realm master plan to program capital projects, coordinate planned activities, and administer requirements for a development application within or adjacent to the public realm identified in the specific master plan.

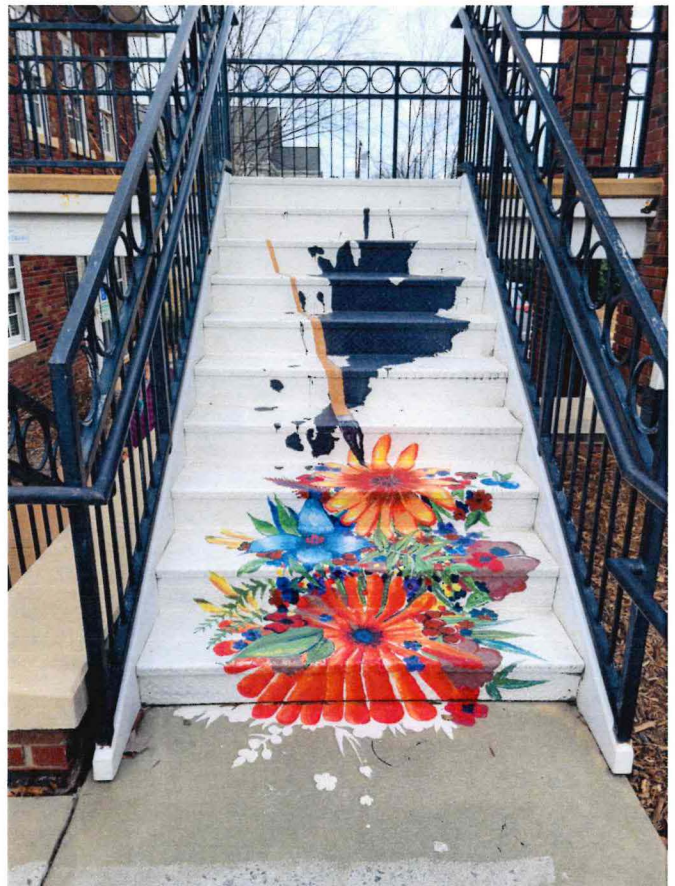
A public realm master plan prepared for a specific neighborhood, park, district, or corridor in town should tie into the larger green infrastructure network.

Individual public realm master plans created for the town should consider connections to a larger, or longer, framework of open space, greenways, or parks advocated for in the comprehensive plan. Portions of the town-wide green infrastructure network should be preserved (or constructed) by developers if-when-where it crosses private property.



Develop a public arts program for specific areas within the town's public realm.

A public arts program administered by town officials for specific areas in the public realm offers and opportunity to show off the community's creativity and appreciation for unique experiences. Similar communities in the United States have included sculptures, murals, memorials, digital media, and live performances in their public art programs. Rotating exhibits keep spaces interesting and encourage repeat visitors for an area.

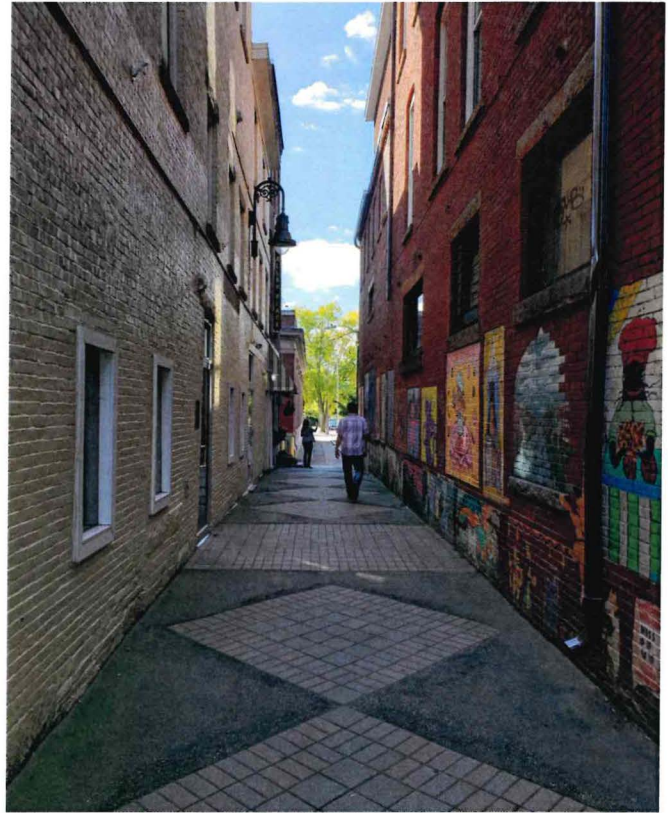


Emphasize the public realm as a unifying feature when contemplating new development and redevelopment projects.

Public spaces in Garner should make a positive and consistent statement about the high-quality of life and positive experiences desired in the community. Private property along a street, park, or other (quasi) public space in town should include lighting, landscaping, signage, art, or other design features that complement a common vision for the larger district, destination, or corridor it is adjacent to or within. Design features that enhance aesthetics, increase the comfort and safety for users, and reinforce the human scale of places and spaces should be the priority for improvements targeted in or adjacent to the public realm.

Some corridors or destinations in town may have a public realm master plan to guide investments. In the absence of a specific plan, the goals for investments within and adjacent to the town's entire public realm include:

- Use elements of the public realm as organizing features for a neighborhood, district, or activity center.
- Emphasize consistent design features or treatments for a corridor or destination that create a common sense of place for users.
- Think of streets as linear parks with public spaces and activated private spaces (e.g., outdoor seating) located throughout the corridor.
- Increase minimum open space requirements for private property adjacent to the public realm in terms of size, shape, and location to activate spaces.
- Reimagine the definition of open space adjacent to the public realm to include, but not be limited to, plazas, outdoor seating, and pocket parks that activate spaces. The expanded definition of open space should create a vibrant public realm while recognizing the needs of private investment to make a project viable.



Spotlight on: US 70 Bridges

Work with Others to Program Design Treatments for the Bridges over US 70 that Project a Unique Identity and Sense of Place for Garner

US 70 was originally part of the Central Highway system that ran adjacent to downtown via Garner Road. Continued growth in the region and its demands for faster, more-direct vehicle connections between the mountains and the sea led to a bypass around downtown built in the 1950s. This is the present-day US 70 that extends through Garner. Today, large, suburban-scale businesses have become a dominating feature for long stretches of the highway as it runs through Garner — places that look like anywhere else in suburban USA.

The highway creates a physical, visual, and psychological divide in the community. Other communities in the United States are working with their local departments of transportation to stylize certain bridges and underpasses that accompany the highway. Most aesthetic improvements are programmed with other safety or capacity improvements identified for the bridges or underpasses.

Recommended aesthetic improvements for bridges or underpasses on US 70 in Garner should consider unique colors, materials, shapes, lettering, art, or structures that say “I am in Garner” and welcome visitors traveling east or west between home, work, shopping, and entertainment destinations.



Image and Source Credits:

Above: City of Mauldin, SC, Mauldin City Trail Bridge Over I-385, 2022
(www.greenvillejournal.com)

Right: Image and Source Credit: The Villages Community, Connectivity Bridges and Tunnels, FL, 2023 (www.thevillages.com)



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Top: CODAworx, Petersburg, VA
Community Gateway, 2020
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Above, left: Vicki Scuri Siteworks,
Capital Boulevard Bridges Raleigh,
NC, 2021 (www.vickiscuri.com)

Above, right: : Wikipedia, Ybor City
Entrance Signage, Tampa, FL, 2023
(www.en.Wikipedia.org)

Right: Dreamspider's Blog, NCDOT,
town, and local artists beautify
Asheville bridge, 2009
(www.dreamspider.wordpress.com)



Theme 2: Land Use Mix and Development Intensity

Land use mix and development intensities greatly influence a community's abilities to provide home choices and greater home affordability, reduce traffic congestion, make more efficient use of infrastructure, and create more livable communities. Built examples from across the United States demonstrate the potential for creating "great places" in a community that balance land use mix and development intensities with aggressive positions for high-quality urban design and place-making strategies. Coordinated recommendations for these topics generally improve an area's economic vitality, perceived security, and sense-of-place or character. Additional standards enacted by a community for land use mix and development intensities ensure places are compatible with adjacent properties and contribute positively to the character of surrounding streets and neighborhoods.

Considerations for a comprehensive plan focus on more generalized recommendations for land use mix and development intensities, including a preferred proportion of land uses, the physical relationship between uses, and the compatibility of land uses to each other. Stated preferences for maximizing opportunities in Garner are presented in Chapter 2 of the document, including the General Framework Map, Character Typology Map, and Development Change and Intensity Map. Additional considerations to influence preferred land use mix and development intensity topics are largely addressed in the town's Unified Development Ordinance, including setbacks, parking standards, open space requirements, privacy and compatibility between land uses, and buffers.

One type of project gaining in popularity in the United States is mixed-use development. By creating places where people can live, play, work, and shop all in one general area, these projects are able to combine various public amenities with compatible land uses in a centralized location. Successful mixed-use developments noted around the country generally include residential uses and one or more of the following: commercial, office,

light industrial, civic, hotel, public parks or plazas, and dedicated open space.

While mixed-use developments come in a variety of forms, they typically are categorized as either vertical mixed-use buildings or horizontal mixed-use sites (or blocks). As described in Planning and Urban Design Standards published for the American Planning Association (APA), "Vertical mixed-use buildings combine different uses in the same building. The lower floors generally have more public uses, with private uses on the upper levels. Examples include residential space over commercial establishments, street-level retail with floors of office above, residential and hotel uses in the same building, and retail wrapped around a parking structure with multiple uses above. Vertical mixed-use development may have any number of revenue-producing and mutually-supportive uses in the same building."

The APA's Planning and Urban Design Standards also describes how "Horizontal mixed-use development combines single-use buildings on distinct parcels (or blocks) in one planned development project (or blocks identified for a specific place, like downtown) with a range of uses. Examples include residential neighborhoods surrounding commercial or office development adjacent to a major highway, or a medical campus with surrounding professional offices. This approach avoids the financing and code

complexities of vertical mixed-use buildings while achieving the goals of place-making made possible by conveniently bringing together complementary land uses in one place." Both vertical and horizontal mixed-use developments contribute positively to the creation of places that enliven activity centers while meeting the everyday needs of the community.

Generally speaking, town officials prefer vertical mixed-use buildings for the discernable center (or core) of a development. One or more blocks radiating out from the discernable center may include horizontal mixed-use development; with different single- or multi-use building types

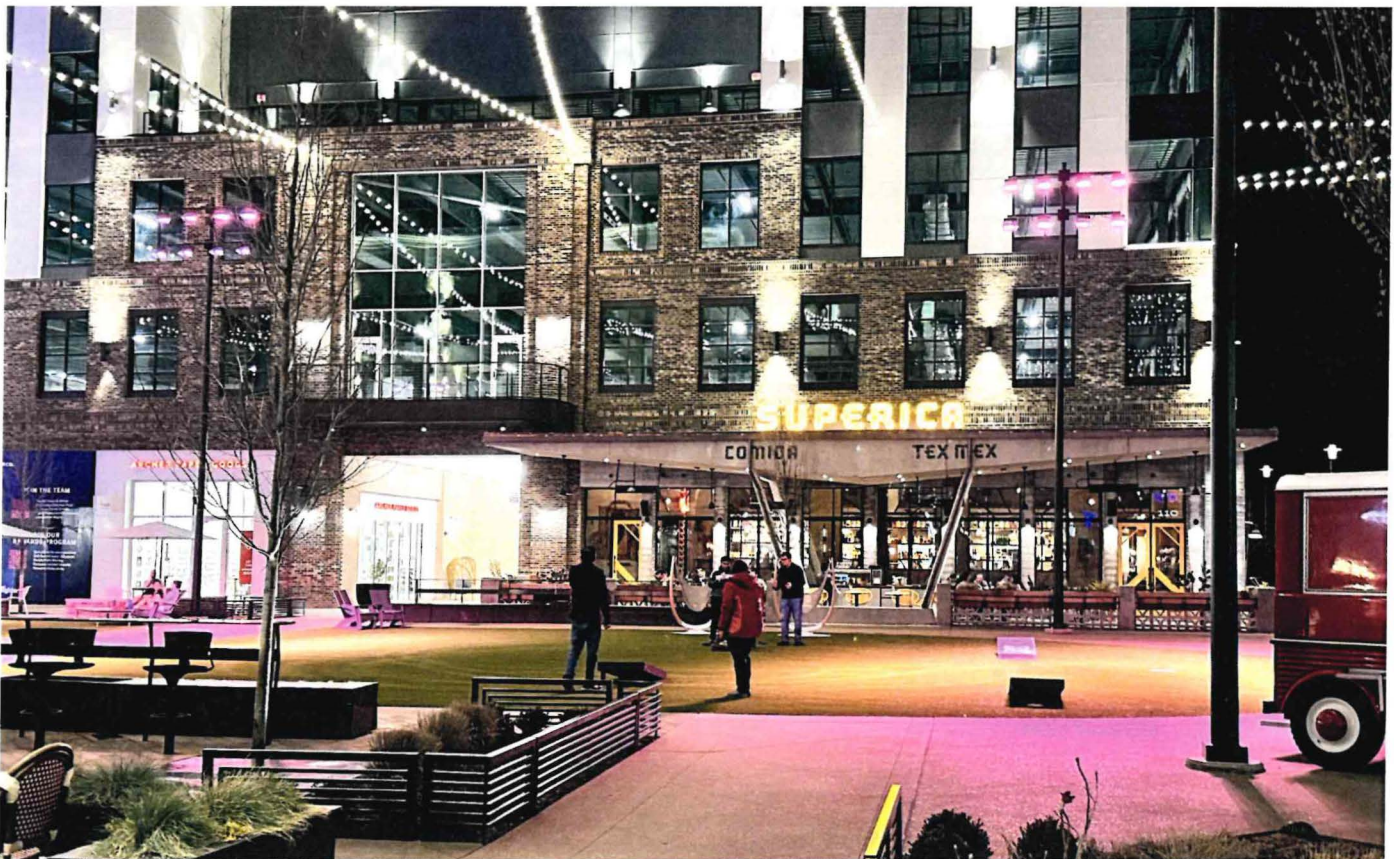
"As cities grow, suburban nodes will become denser and start to take on certain characteristics that we identify as urban. They will have more mixed-use development, taller buildings, formal public spaces, and have more people commute into them. These are gradual processes, but will change the perception that you have about a more-reliant suburban community versus a self-sustaining city."

- Laura Vaughan, Editor of Suburban Urbanities

Coordinate changes in the town with a single purpose to make it a more complete and self-sustaining community.

Evaluate future opportunities presented to the town in the context of an overarching goal to create a self-sustaining community in the future. This means, in part, an emphasis on bringing new employment, retail, and services to town residents, and providing greater home choices in the community to support different backgrounds: the creative class, working class, retirees, and children.

intermixed in the same block. Larger mixed-use developments may also include single use blocks further away from the discernable center and the horizontal mixed-use transition areas. Single use blocks should include a variety of building sizes and formats to avoid design monotony, and help transition effectively to existing land uses and development intensities observed on adjacent properties.



Concentrate future development in Mixed-Use Activity Centers.

The General Framework Map in Chapter 2 identifies multiple locations for development activity centers. They should be places where people can live, work, shop, play, and be entertained. Several activity centers located in close proximity to one another should be connected via bus circulator, bicycle lanes, sidewalks, or greenways to minimize the number of vehicle trips in the community.



Support transformation of newly-identified mixed-use activity center sites.

Support through town policies and ordinance the redevelopment of existing suburban-scale, automobile-oriented shopping centers into mixed use activity centers sometime in the future, which would provide new opportunities to work, live, shop, play, and entertain in Garner. Promote specific locations along US 401, US 70, and NC 50 as new mixed-use activity centers when their existing buildings and uses become obsolete. Coordinate with officials at the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, and Wake County to target future premium transit service (bus rapid transit) in these corridors with major stops serving the activity centers.



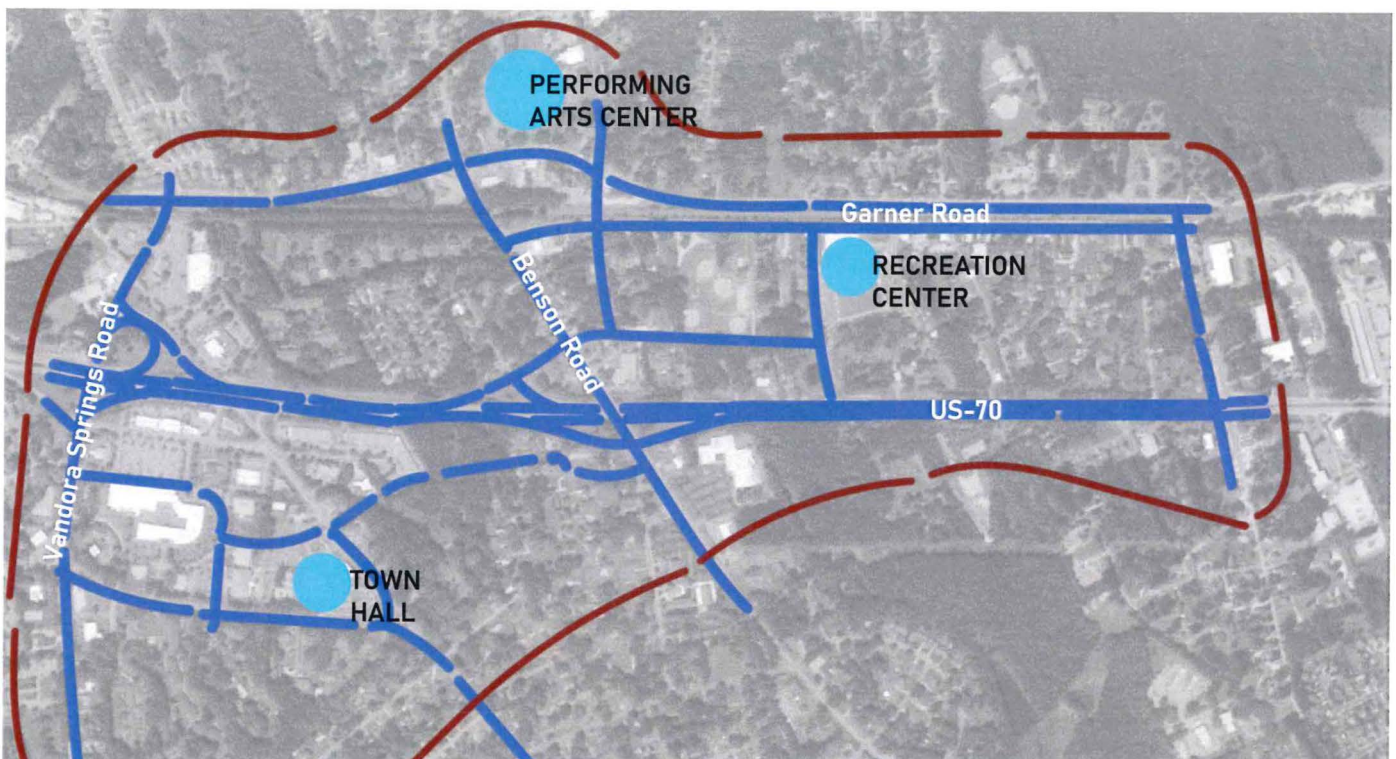
Consider the possibility for an expanded civic center in the town that extends on both sides of US 70.

Downtown Garner supports many elements of a traditional downtown in North Carolina. However, some features — like town hall, the library, and police department — are located in a nearby activity center centered near Fifth Avenue and Aversboro Road. This is not a dire situation, but building synergy between the two locations will improve opportunities for both in the future. The shared goal for both locations should be to anchor community activities and civic life in a predictable manner.

A broader focus area boundary encompassing the area marked in red on the figure below contemplates a more complementary relationship between the two discrete centers today. A strategy to elevate the stature and prominence of civic buildings in the larger focus area — town hall, the recreation center, performing arts center, library, and police station — should consider one or more design elements that brand the destinations as unique elements of the Garner community.

Connections between the destinations should evaluate opportunities to stitch back the two areas divided by US 70, including vehicle, bus circulator, bicycle, and pedestrian connections. Open space throughout the focus area would provide order in the landscape and provide numerous opportunities for informal community gathering and programmed civic events.

The neighborhoods between civic buildings, open spaces, and commercial destinations throughout the focus area provide the opportunity to increase the number of residents living in or near the area. This would increase the vibrancy of the area, and provide built-in customers to keep local businesses going strong. The integration of new housing through infill development or redevelopment of existing sites should be done in a manner that establishes a stronger relationship to the surrounding community character and context. Consideration should be given to building orientation to streets, public spaces, and surrounding non-residential development.

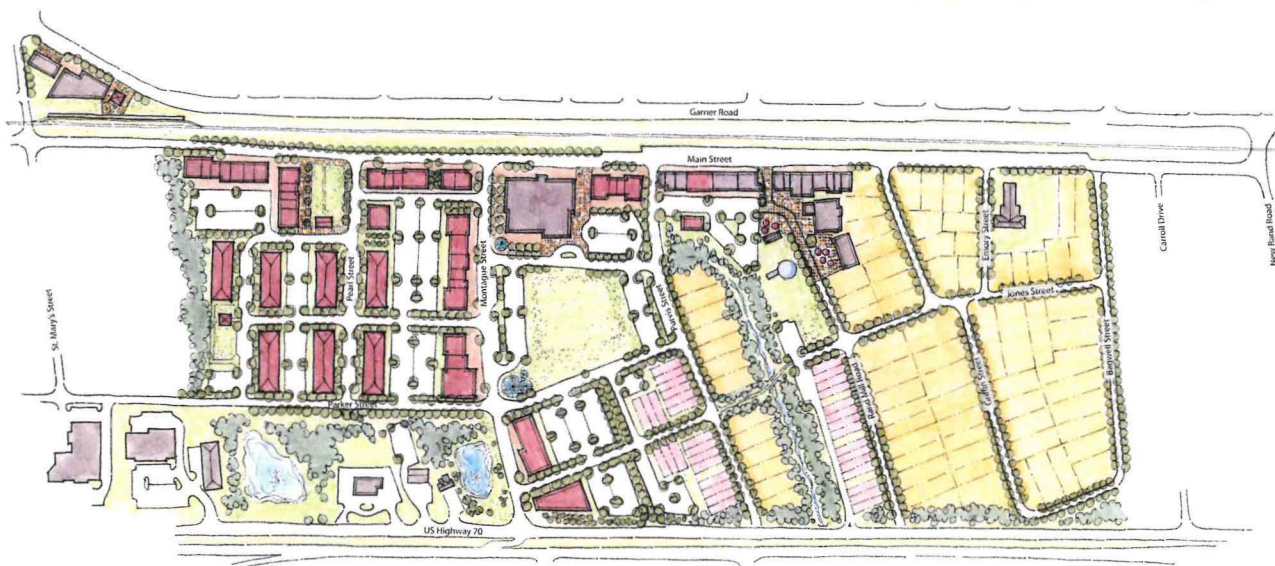


Continue implementing recommendations for downtown from previous town plans and studies.

The previous Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan included a concept for infill development and design enhancements in the historic center of Garner. The vision suggested in this work reinforced Garner Road and the immediate area as a more traditional, small-town downtown area with activity on both sides of the railroad. Neighborhoods surrounding the historic

downtown provide stability for the area. The previous comprehensive plan also noted the need for recreation uses in, and leading into, the historic downtown.

The changes that have occurred in downtown since the previous comprehensive plan was adopted have helped reinforce its place as an important destination in the community. Continuing these efforts will create more benefits for the immediate area and all Garner residents that associated with the downtown.



Support redevelopment efforts on the north side of Garner Road in downtown to create a complete 'main street' environment.

The overall width of the main street corridor in downtown, which includes the rail line and Garner Road, in combination with one-story architecture creates a dimension that makes the two sides seem almost completely disconnected from one another. However, many railroad

towns with thriving downtowns are organized around a railroad and street corridor with similar dimensions.

Physically and psychologically connecting the two sides of downtown across the railroad tracks could be achieved with more buildings facing the corridor and building heights of at least two stories. Over time, town officials should also encourage the redevelopment of parcels that adjoin the corridor to create a more vibrant main street experience.



Identify and protect areas in town for future non-residential development, particularly those uses that generate jobs and bolster the tax base.

Competition for land in a fast-growing area can sometimes result in parcels that are ideally situated for commercial, office, or industrial uses converting to residential development. The short-term gain realized on these parcels precludes opportunities in the future for job creation and higher levels of tax revenue generation. Delineating key parcels in the community and protecting them for highest and best uses in the future ensures the town has long-term opportunities to be a regional jobs center in the Triangle region.

To this end, town officials should resist reclassifying activity centers, character areas, or development intensities on the maps in Chapter 2 to residential uses unless it is part of a mixed-use development proposal. And, even in this situation, the residential component of a proposed mixed-use development should be subservient to the non-residential components of the same development.

Town officials should also proactively align the zoning with the Character Typology Map in Chapter 2 to protect important areas for future employment opportunities.

Support opportunities to retain or expand businesses with more flexible uses or site design considerations.

Development patterns in Garner support more intense non-residential land uses in some areas. In order to retain existing businesses and attract new ones, it may be necessary to allow more flexibility in land use and parking requirements. Such flexibility can help current owners maintain their presence and improve the overall experience for their workers.



Encourage infill development and redevelopment in existing-developed areas.

Intensification of existing developed areas using infill development and redevelopment principles can help ensure the community thrives, and resources are managed well. Town officials should advocate for and, if possible, incentivize infill development and redevelopment projects inside town limits as a way to reinvest in areas with existing infrastructure capacity. Doing so will shorten vehicle trip lengths (both in distance and time), minimize expensive infrastructure expansion investments, and avoid the loss of rural areas for future development beyond municipal limits. It will also simultaneously increase land values, sale values, and potential tax revenues (without an increase in tax rates) inside town limits.

Think about new or expanded community facilities needed to serve future residents when reviewing development applications.

Additional roads, parks, schools, fire stations, or other community facilities and services will be needed in the future to meet new residents' needs. Town officials should consider future year needs when reviewing development applications. Sometimes new development or redevelopment affords the opportunity to request land or building space dedication for new parks, schools, or something else needed to meet future year demands. Or, (re)development of a property affords the opportunity to make new street connections that lowers congestion on nearby roads.

If appropriate, the town should ask development applicants to consider some of these needs in their site concept plans. In some cases, the town, or their service provider partners, may need or want to compensate the developer or landowner for upsized infrastructure or dedication of land or building space for a public purpose.



Infill development that utilizes the parking areas in front of existing buildings helps make a stronger connection to the street, improves visibility of the development, enhances the streetscape and maximizes utilization of the site.

Build a community attractive to today's businesses and their employees.

In today's idea-based economy, where creativity and innovation are often valued more than experience and seniority, a new type of business environment has taken shape. The internet and other technologies have minimized old ways of doing business based on the physical office, time spent at your desk, and a long commute. The new resource is creative people and finding ways to attract them with incentives such as flexible schedules and telecommuting.

The office park of the 80's and 90's has been replaced with mixed-use corporate campuses

and urban lofts and warehouses. Previously, municipalities competed to attract business with the tax breaks or Class A office space. Today, many companies will only locate in a community that is walkable, mixed-use, and diverse. This is because the best employees will no longer settle for a suburban lifestyle and are seeking employment in vibrant communities with active street life and culture.

To take advantage of this shift in culture and mindset, the town should promote the creation of high-quality built environments through smarter land use regulations and development incentives, and then tailor a marketing message to feature this aspect of Garner.



Spotlight on: Suburban Retrofit

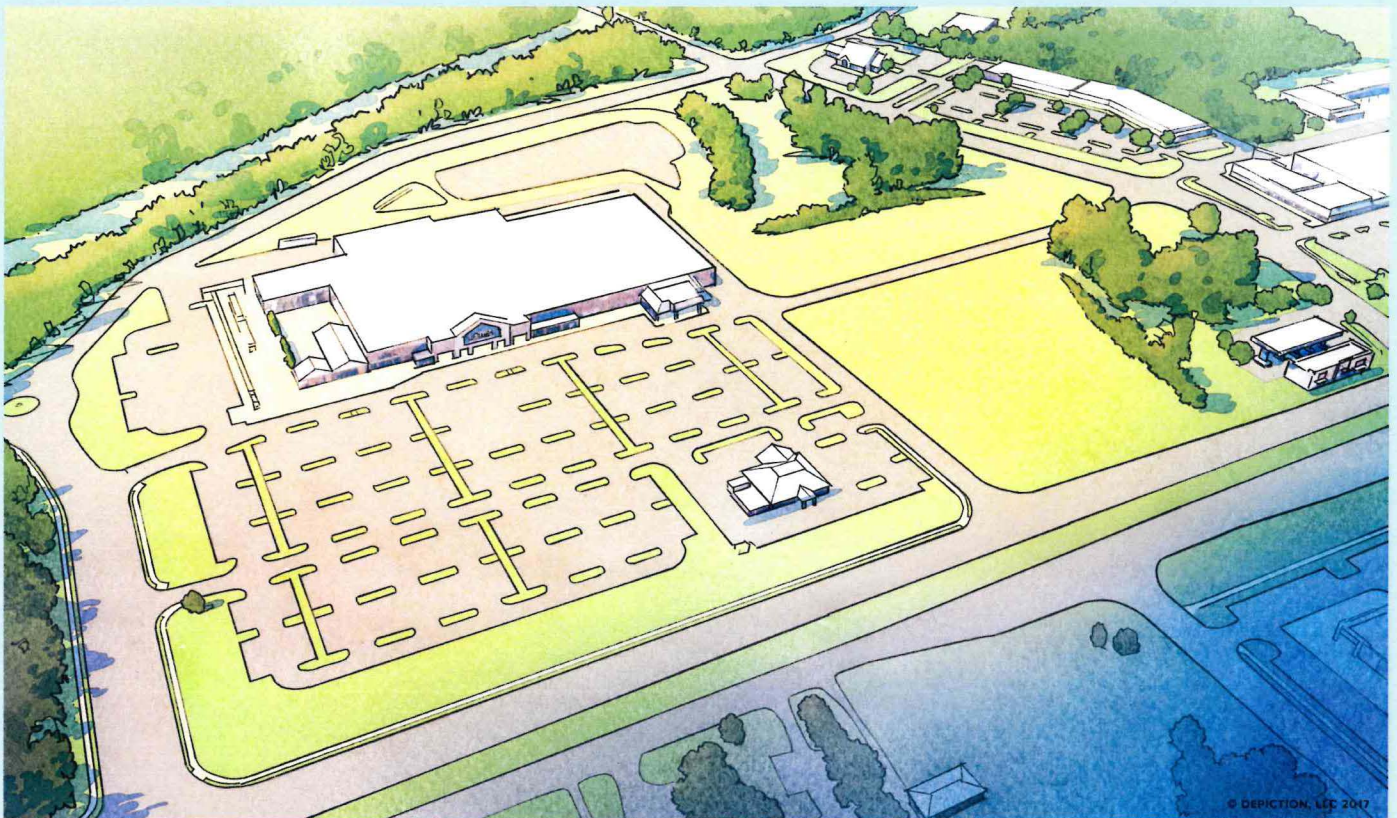
Suburban Retrofit is the process of converting areas that are already developed in conventional suburban patterns into mixed-use, multi-modal, activated corridors or centers. This approach reflects a change in preference from suburban, auto-oriented development to a more traditional mixed-use form, where people can and will want to walk between new residences and a range of small and large retail shops, businesses, offices, and recreational opportunities. Context-sensitive Suburban Retrofit addresses typical conflicts between commercial and residential uses by carefully transitioning from small- to large-scale building types.

Suburban retrofit occurs in areas that are mostly developed, but may have underutilized parcels or excessive surface parking. Retrofitting existing building sites allows developers to take advantage

of existing infrastructure and services, and helps to mitigate the effects of sprawl by improving transportation connections.

Suburban retrofit also helps address barriers to bicycle and pedestrian connectivity in places like aging shopping centers by enhancing pedestrian connections and recreating internal driveways and internal streets with infill buildings fronting onto them. This redevelopment approach relocates parking to the rear of buildings, rather than having large surface parking lots between the building and the street.

The illustrations show a conceptual and incremental approach to suburban retrofit of a suburban, big-box shopping center with a large parking lot between the street and the building.



A typical layout for a suburban, big box shopping center located several hundred feet back from the public street with a large surface parking lot in between. One or more outparcels in the shopping center support restaurants with drive-throughs, banks or other uses. The outparcel buildings appear to almost float in the sea of asphalt allocated for surface parking.



Early infill development on vacant property next to the existing big box shopping center is sensitive to the overall vision and plan for the new activity center. Buildings are oriented toward the access driveway that will become a new main street in future phases of the project. Parking is located behind buildings to reinforce a walkable and activated streetscape planned for the new main street.



Infill development on vacant property next to the big box shopping center continues. In this case, new townhouses are added to the activity center. A new park is also built behind the big box store that is phased in construction to allow for continued operations at the declining business. The park is also connected with the adjacent greenway. Redevelopment on some portions of the existing surface parking lot swap under utilized parking areas for new buildings and civic spaces.



Redevelopment on the remaining portions of the existing surface parking continue as the big box store is now closed. A new block pattern for the activity center is complete by converting additional drive aisles to walkable streets.



The closed big box store is demolished to make room for additional mixed-use development , which brings new residential uses (in this case townhouses) into the activity center. Access to the new park built in an earlier phase is also increased via the new grid street network. The former suburban shopping center is now a mixed-use activity center.

Theme 3: Home & Neighborhood Choices

Preferences for different housing products and price points vary by community. Market conditions are influenced by consumer groups represented and the decisions they are making based on income, age, household size, and available financing. Historically, residential growth patterns in Garner favored suburban, greenfield development where buyers were willing to “move for value” to afford single-family homes on individual lots. More recently, residential growth within and in the vicinity of Garner has followed national trends toward higher density housing, which is emerging as either 1) standalone, suburban apartment complexes, 2) standalone townhome communities, or 3) a mix of housing types, some with a mix of for-sale and for-rent products, integrated within mixed-use, walkable environments.

Housing variety should expand over time to accommodate the demands of Garner’s current and future residents. Retirees, empty nesters, and young professionals are among the segments of the population expected to drive real estate preferences in the next few decades. Young professionals, especially single and newly married,

will continue to drive demand for rental and higher density housing products in more urban, walkable activity centers. Young professionals starting families may seek ‘near-in’ neighborhoods close to the downtown, or new activity centers identified in Chapter 2 that emphasize safety, schools, privacy, convenience, and more space, but are more walkable than some single-use, conventional Garner suburbs of the last several decades.

“Boomers” will be aging out of conventional single-family dwellings and looking for lower-maintenance housing products. Many may choose to live in multifamily housing (condominiums or apartments) in more walkable locations, which may offer greater independence in future years. Others may choose to ‘down-size’ into patio homes or townhouses, especially as they acquire second homes in other places. There is also a need for senior housing to allow and encourage seniors in Garner to age in place. These types include age-restricted and assisted living developments as well as accessory dwelling units where seniors can be close to family and caregivers.



Recognizing neighborhoods in the town's planning area as the "connective tissue" between activity centers is an important concept for the comprehensive plan. Neighborhoods provide a place for social interaction and foster connections between residents that create a source of pride and belonging in the community. Ideally, the predictable actions or routines of residents in a neighborhood contribute positively to the area's attractiveness and desirability. The sense of predictability created by repeated (positive) actions or routines in the neighborhood leads to the willingness of residents to stay, to put down roots, to keep the streets and parks clean, and to invest in private property.

Sometimes the most desirable neighborhoods in a community are influenced by the actions (and interactions) of the residents that live in them. Positive vibes in a neighborhood promote a place that is stable or on the rise, which significantly increases the interest and desirability for others to find a way into the neighborhood. Developers see this phenomena and create new neighborhoods that replicate the environment present for highly-

desirable neighborhoods already in the community. It is critical that existing neighborhoods in Garner remain stable and desirable places for residents.

Residents also provide regular and loyal customers for nearby businesses and should be connected to them in meaningful ways. Physical connections may include new street connections or greenways that strengthen the relationship between origin and destination. Visual connections may include special paving treatments, street lighting, landscaping, or coordinated signage that reinforce a connection between homes and businesses. Social connections may include district names or special events held to present the activity center and nearby neighborhoods as a unified and desirable location.

The recommendations that follow under the topic of home and neighborhood choices provide clear targets and expectations for existing and future neighborhoods in the community, including the type, location, and price points of homes neighborhoods provide to existing and future residents.



Provide for greater home choices at different price points in the community.

Demographic diversity of people in terms of age, income level, culture, and race provides a sense of interest and vitality within the most loved places in the world. In order to attract this type of diversity to a community, the physical form must be conducive to the varied lifestyles of these groups. A key component of creating an environment where diversity thrives is the provision of a mix of housing options. Encouraging a variety of housing options also encourages variety in price points.

There should be many different types, sizes, and price points of homes intermingled in close proximity, with a range of living experiences from rural to more-dense, so that there is something for everyone, regardless of income level, lifestyle, or family size.

The variety of dwelling types in a community should include: different sizes of detached single family houses, duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhouses, multifamily condominium and apartment buildings, and live/work buildings. In addition, accessory dwelling units with a living space (above the garage, for instance) should be permitted within the rear yard of each principal building for renters, extended family, tenants, or guests to stay or live.

Residential units should be available either for lease or for ownership. This allows young and old, singles and families, and residents having a range of income levels to find a dignified home that suits their preferences and lifestyles.



Neighborhoods in Garner should reflect the community's values and preferences toward housing mix, building quality, and neighborhoods amenities.

A neighborhood is more than just the homes within it. The most memorable neighborhoods people visit are well-thought out and designed with intended outcomes in mind. General design elements favored in Garner should include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Homes should include architectural details that provide visual interest along the street, including façade treatments, front porches, roof eaves, roof pitches, and windows.
- The scale of homes and the spaces between them should convey a welcoming environment, including maximum fence heights and minimum materials, landscaping, or driveway placement.
- Similar home types and styles should face each other on a street, meaning transitions between home types should occur at the rear lot line or along an alleyway.
- A connected network of streets and sidewalks should serve the neighborhood. Cul-de-sacs should be limited to areas with environmental concerns or steep slopes.
- Street trees, and tree canopy over the street when trees are mature, should be the dominate feature for a neighborhood street.
- Garages, and especially garage doors, should be secondary in size, scale, and design as compared to the principle structure.
- Different types of open space should be included in a neighborhood, and located as a prominent feature (like a central green as the focal point and small neighborhoods parks in close proximity to residential blocks).
- Emphasis on neighborhood design that defines a center and edges to the neighborhood in terms of mixing home densities or housing types.

Specific rules, requirements, or standards to implement the list of general design elements for a neighborhood should be included in the town's Unified Development Ordinance.



Homes on small lots (opposite page), townhomes (above, left) and condominiums (above, right) are among the unit types that seniors, empty-nesters, young professionals and many others are seeking. These and other products can be mixed in a single development to facilitate multi-generational neighborhood living as well as aging in place.

Spotlight on: Sense of Enclosure

Design professionals use the term “sense of enclosure” to describe the relationship between height and width for a defined space with the idea being that right-sizing the proportion of height to width in a space makes it more comfortable and inviting for visitors. Elements of height for a space may include buildings, trees, walls, or other permanent vertical features. Elements of width for a space may include streets, planting areas, plazas, outdoor seating areas, or other horizontal features that separate elements of height. Target ratios for instilling a sense of enclosure are expressed as the ratio of width to height. The ratio is measured using building-face-to-building-face distances on either side of the defined horizontal space.

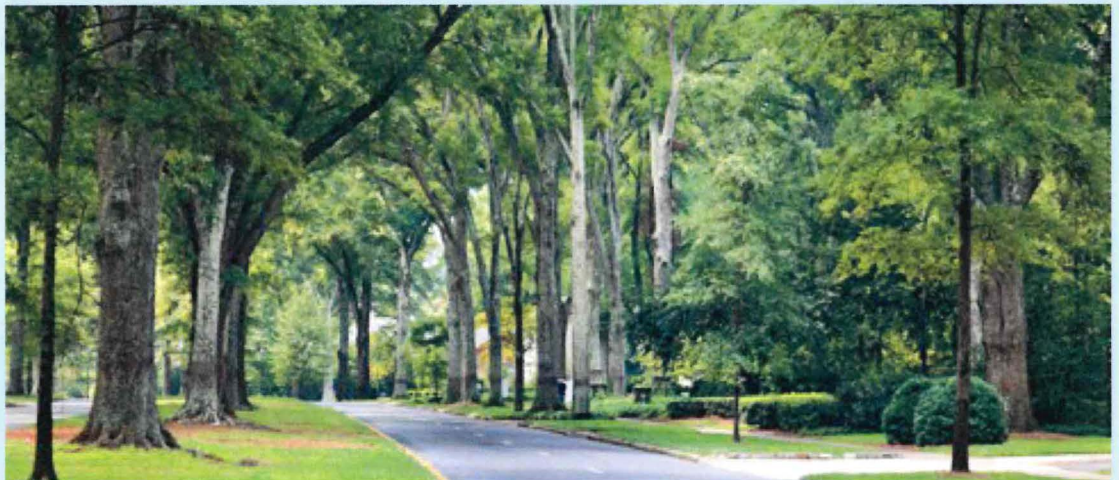
Target ratios for sense of enclosure may vary by development intensity category— preserve, enhance, strengthen, or transform — and sometimes by general development category — residential neighborhood versus mixed-use

area — within the same development intensity category. The Development Intensity Metrics Matrix in Chapter 2 identifies minimum building enclosure ratios for each of the development intensity categories.

In suburban areas, the placement of buildings, the relative sizes of each, and the presence of large surface parking lots in some locations may create broken lines in the landscape that dilute a sense of enclosure for the corridor or public space. Other vertical elements — especially trees — should be used in these conditions to span large gaps between buildings, including a planted center median to span very wide streets.

Town officials may also consider tree preservation buffers along specific roads in the planning area to help reinforce a sense enclosure for more rural or suburban landscapes.

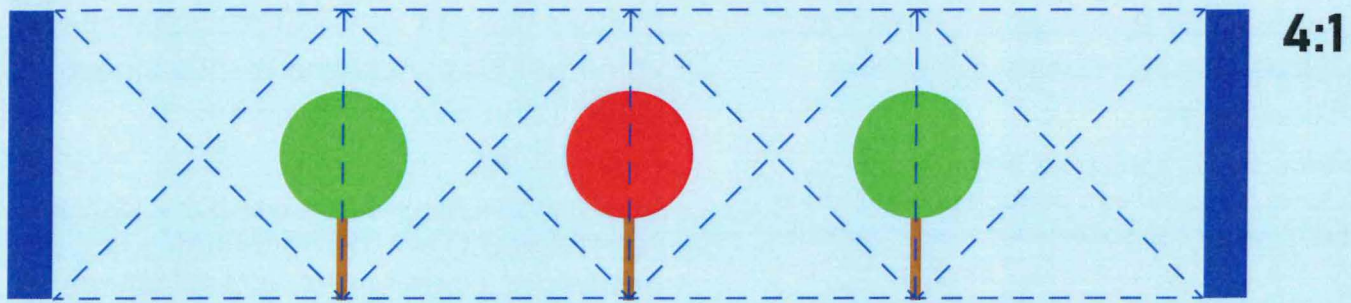
Example of a sense of enclosure created by street trees.



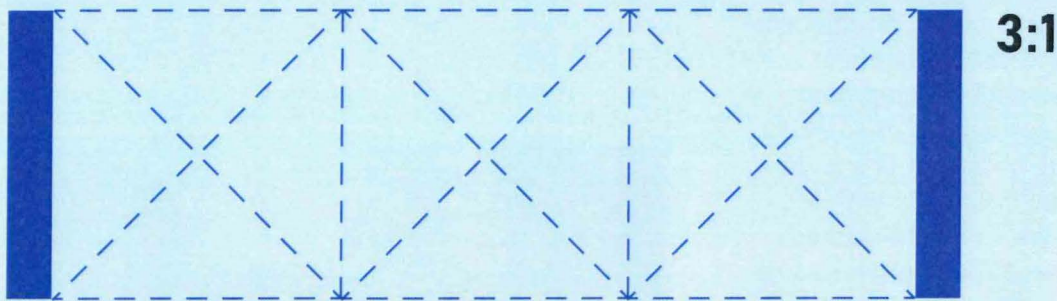
Example of a sense of enclosure created by a continuous building face.



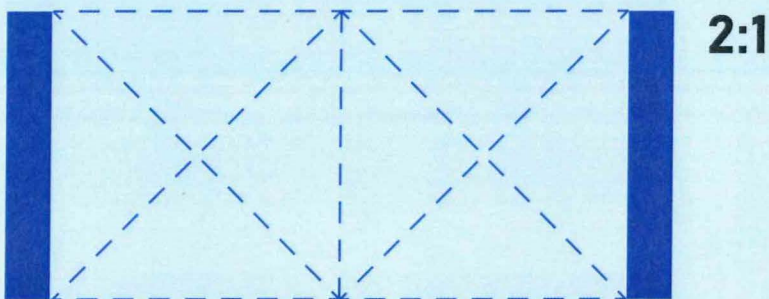
Spatial Definition by Width-to-Height Ratio:



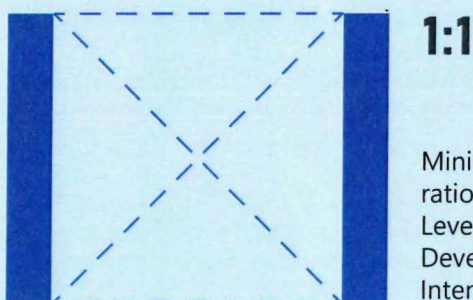
Minimum building enclosure ratio recommended for Level 1 areas on the Development Change and Intensity Map (Chapter 2). In some areas, street trees (or other vertical elements) may be used to reduce the perceived sense-of-enclosure. Adding street trees in the green locations creates a 2:1 sense of enclosure for the street and a 1:1 sense of enclosure between the street and buildings. Adding street trees in the red location creates a 2:1 enclosure between the street and buildings. Adding street trees in both the green and red locations creates a 1:1 sense of enclosure for the street and the area between the street and buildings.



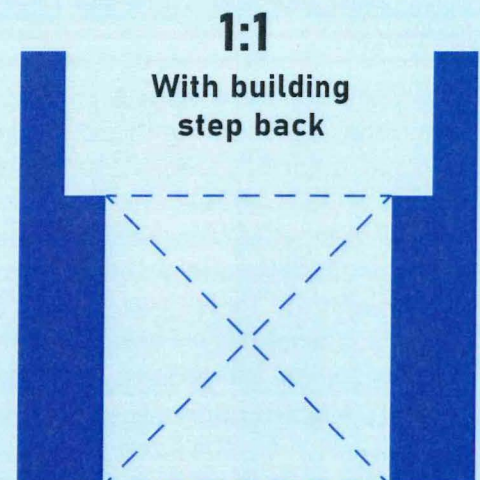
Minimum building enclosure ratio recommended for Levels 2 and 3 areas on the Development Change and Intensity Map (Chapter 2).



Minimum building enclosure ratio recommended for Levels 4A and 4B areas on the Development Change and Intensity Map (Chapter 2).



Minimum building enclosure ratio recommended for Level 4C areas on the Development Change and Intensity Map (Chapter 2).



Buildings in Level 4C should consider a step-back condition in building height and massing away from the edge of a public space for any portion of the building over 40 feet tall to preserve the target building enclosure ratio.

Ensure Nearby Development Reinforces the Character and Quality of Existing Neighborhoods

The town should implement new rules and processes in its Unified Development Ordinance that provide higher-scrutiny for a development application that proposes infill development or redevelopment in, or adjacent to, an existing neighborhood. The purpose of new rules and processes should be to ensure new development in an existing neighborhood maintains a certain character that is consistent and complementary to the surrounding homes.

For implementation purposes, development of under-utilized and vacant land within, or adjacent to, an existing neighborhood should be the target of this policy. A small infill development or redevelopment project, sometimes as small as a single lot in an existing neighborhood, should adhere to stricter rules of compatibility with the surrounding environment since it is considered an incremental change to an already existing and defined neighborhood character. This does not mean a new land use should not be considered for an existing neighborhood in the future if the size, shape, height, and massing of the building, and its setbacks from property lines, can be made compatible with lots visible from the project location.

Larger development or redevelopment projects, sometimes representing the last tract of vacant land surrounded by one or more existing neighborhoods, should emphasize varying rules of compatibility for the site proportionate to the project size and visibility from adjacent neighborhoods. More strict rules of compatibility with the surrounding environment should be enforced where the project property abuts an existing neighborhood. More flexible rules of compatibility with the surrounding environment should be considered on a case-by-case basis for portions of the project further away from abutting neighborhoods.

Explore Ways to Consider Neighborhood Vulnerabilities, Including Displacement, When Evaluating Development Applications

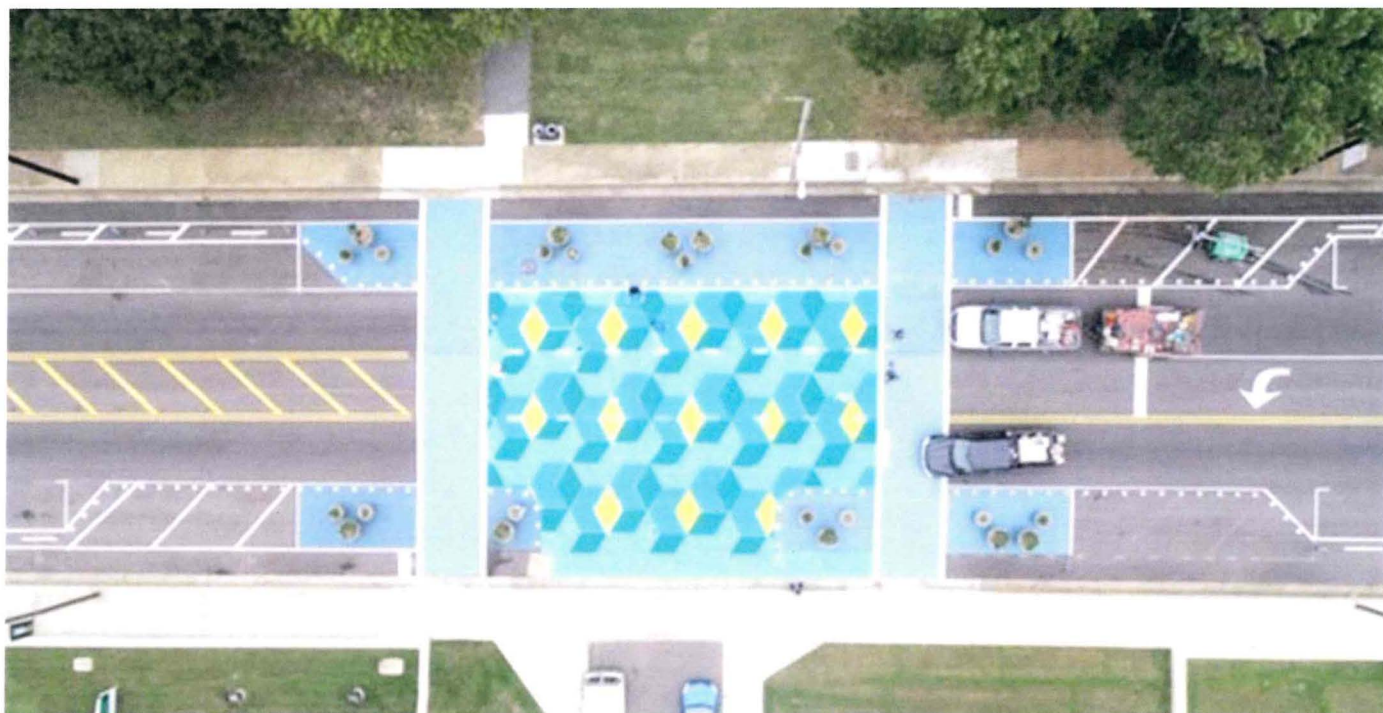
Town staff should conduct research that identifies potential ways to consider vulnerabilities to neighborhood gentrification and displacement during the review of development applications in, or immediately adjacent to, existing neighborhoods. This research should include case studies and practices for how to provide an equitable distribution of the benefits associated with a development application for the neighborhood where the project is located.



Support neighborhood brand and identity initiatives, including unique entrance signs, street blade signs, landscaping, public art and painted crosswalks.

Neighborhoods are much more than homes and open space to the residents that live there. A neighborhood's successes or failures are often influenced by the people that live in the homes, and the connections people make to their neighborhoods or the routine activities they experience or associate with as "living life" in the neighborhood.

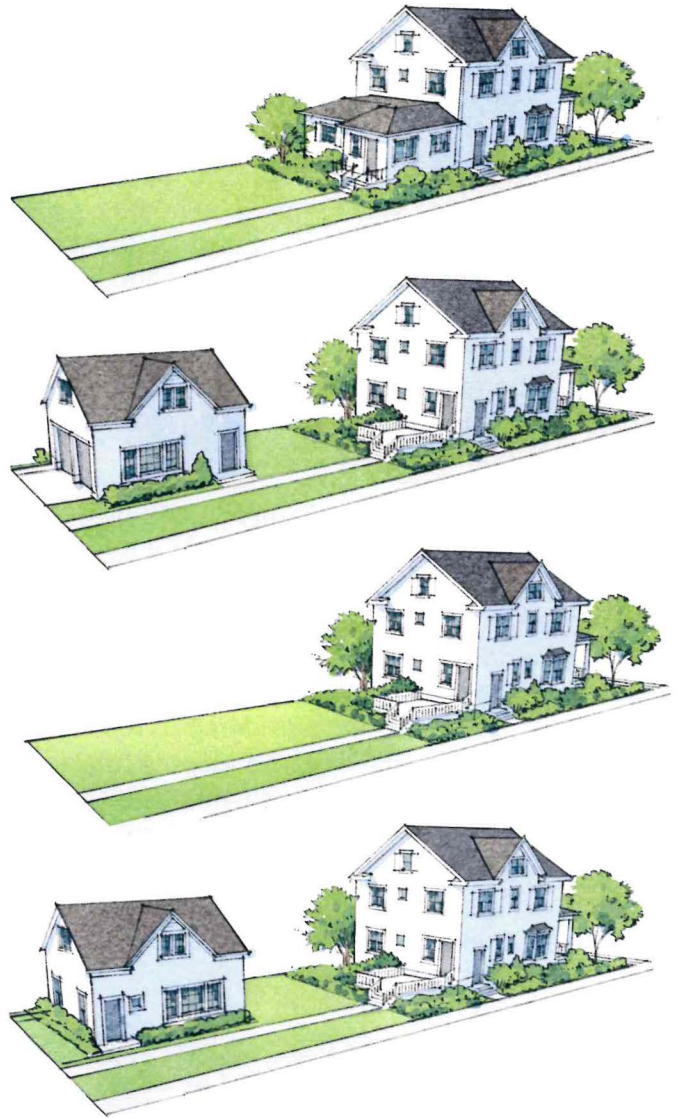
Existing neighborhoods in Garner should be recognized and celebrated for their unique characteristics. In some cases, this begins with a specific name chosen to represent the neighborhood. Unique entrance signs, street blade signs, landscaping, public art, or painted crosswalks should also be considered to reinforce a unique sense of place or brand identity for the neighborhood. Some improvements may be programmed and funded as town projects, but others should be accomplished organically by the residents of the neighborhood with support (or acknowledgment) from town officials.



Support initiatives or incentives in Garner to introduce accessory dwelling units in new or existing neighborhoods.

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) represent small, independent living units located on the same lot as a stand-alone single-family home. They are self-contained residences, and include a bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen. The units can be in the basement or attic of the single-family home; a ground-level addition to the single-family home; over a detached garage on the lot; or a standalone structure on the lot. Planning professionals sometimes refer to ADUs as “invisible density” because they are more easily hidden by the existing single-family home on the lot, they are spread out in a neighborhood so residents do not see a concentration of multiple units in a larger building; and they happen more organically over time as property owners decide to reinvest in their properties.

ADUs are presently allowed in the town’s planning area subject to the rules and requirements in Section 6.12.3(B) or the unified development ordinance. Town officials should monitor residents’ interest in building ADUs in the community and make adjustments to the ordinance, or provide incentives, if interest seems low in the years to come.



Find Partners to Join in Exploring Ways to Support More Local Workforce Housing

Collaborate with neighboring communities and agencies that are looking at workforce housing needs in the Triangle region. Demand for more homes means prices will continue to rise for both land and houses. Home costs in Garner are rising quickly and may preclude many would-be residents from moving into the community. While multi-dwelling development creates the quantity of housing that can address some home affordability issues, not all multi-dwelling housing should be in the form of large, apartment-style complexes. Small homes, townhomes, duplexes, cluster housing, row homes, and small condominium buildings should be a significant part of the product mix aimed at workforce housing.

Study Opportunities to Establish Affordable Housing Incentive Overlays

The 2017 Wake County Affordable Housing Plan recommends adoption of affordable housing incentive overlays (floating zones) in municipal zoning maps and ordinances to help provide more affordable housing units in the area. Alternative standards for development could serve to either increase the value that developers realize for a site — increased allowable densities — or reduce development costs like reduced parking requirements, expedited review processes, infrastructure cost-sharing, or tax rebates — as an incentive to build affordable housing in Garner.

Town officials should study the merits of affordable housing incentive overlays in Garner and determine if-when-how-where they might be best used to increase affordable housing supply in the community. Reasonable conclusions and recommendations from the study should guide revisions to the town's Unified Development Ordinance.



Spotlight on: Small-Format Multifamily Housing

Support initiatives or incentives in Garner to introduce “small-format multifamily” housing opportunities in new or existing neighborhoods.

Dynamic neighborhoods are places that provide exceptional quality of life, attainable and diverse housing options, and connections to neighborhood-serving uses like community gardens, parks, schools, retail areas, or employment areas. In some communities, these aspirations are captured in local initiatives to create or support “small format multifamily housing” options for residents. The term refers to a range of small- to medium-size home choices provided at different price points. The homes are compatible in scale and character to an existing surrounding neighborhood (infill development), or made part of the solutions identified to effectively transition between land uses and densities in a new activity center (development or redevelopment).

Small-format multifamily housing types are represented by single buildings with multiple units on a single lot, multiple buildings with multiple units on multiple lots, or a cluster of single- or multi-unit homes oriented toward a common green. Common home types in this category include duplex, triplex, quadplex, courtyard apartments, live-work units, cottage courtyards, townhomes, and small-scale apartments.

Small-format multifamily housing in Garner would increase home choices for both renters and owners, and provide more diverse home types in the community to foster socioeconomic diversity. The scale of small-format multifamily housing in the community would be a dramatic change compared to large-scale, stand-alone apartment complexes built in Garner over the last decade.

Town officials should create policies, ordinance, or incentives that advocate for small-format multifamily housing types in the community. Special considerations should be developed for infill development opportunities in existing neighborhoods, which are focused on 1) building architecture, orientation, and compatibility with adjacent homes; 2) potential issues with flooding associated with changed amounts of impervious surface; or 3) parking provisions to accommodate the target number of residents for the building.



Detached Single-Family Houses

Duplex:
Side-By-Side
Stacked



Copyright © 2020
Opticos Design, Inc.



Fourplex:
Stacked

Courtyard
Building

Cottage
Court

Townhouse

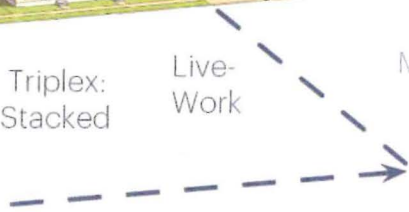
Multiplex:
Medium

Triplex:
Stacked

Live-
Work

Mid-Rise

Small-Format Multifamily Housing



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Theme 4: Site Design and Development Scale

High-quality site design and development scale topics are critical to creating an attractive and more-lively community. Purposeful actions in these topic areas promote visual interest, create unique sense of place, and increase residents' pride in their community. It also creates places that are desirable for visitors, which draws more people to the area and supports a sustainable local economy.

Generally speaking, topics considered for site design and development scale in a comprehensive plan include: building form and massing, building location, building architecture, open space, development compatibility, site transitions, and redevelopment of existing shopping centers as mixed-use areas. The topics presented in this section of the document further refine and implement some of the ideas presented for the land use mix and development intensity theme.

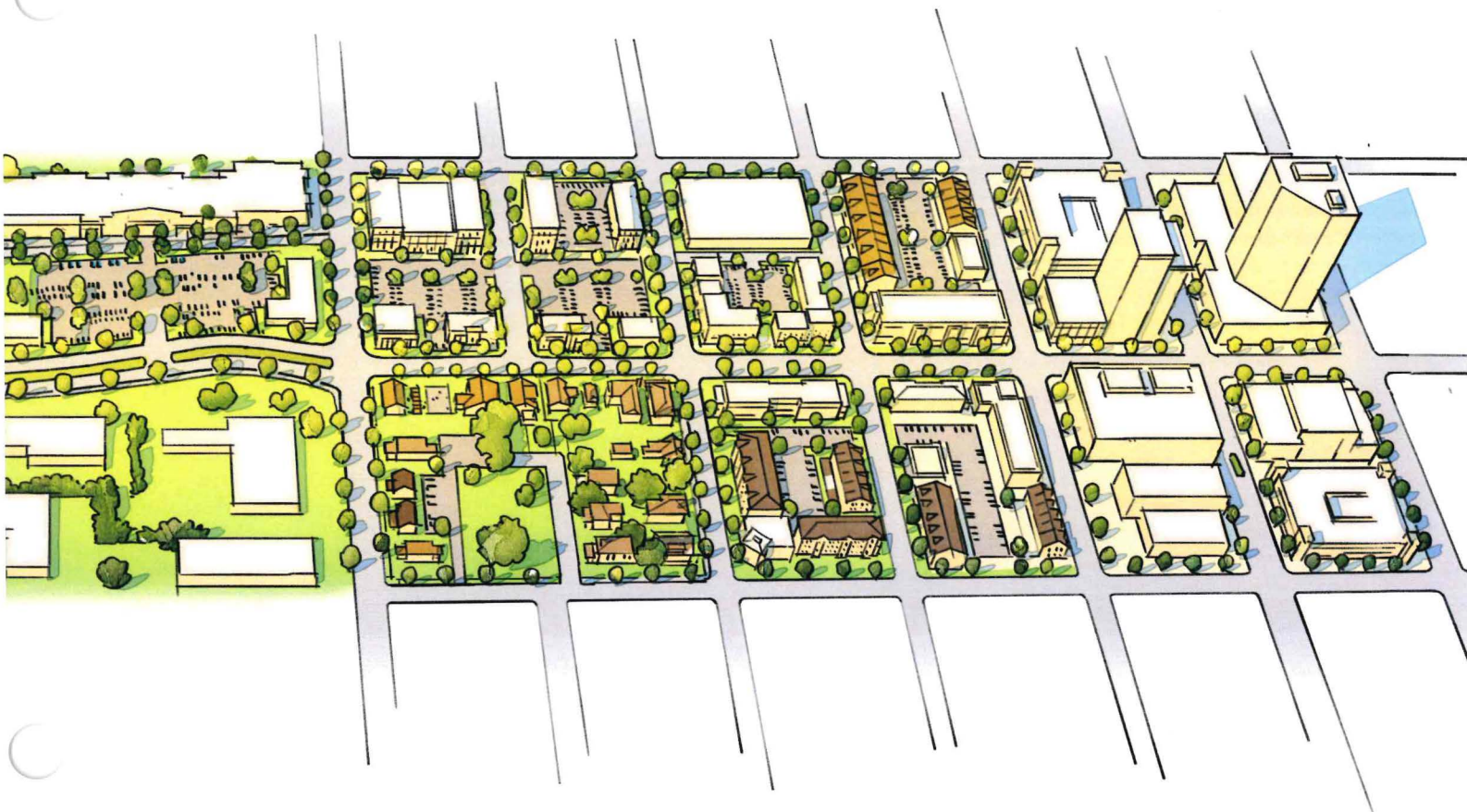
The focus area studies presented in Chapter 3 test some of the themed-recommendations presented for the topic of site design and development scale. Additional considerations, usually more refined, to influence preferred site design and development scale topics are largely addressed in the town's Unified Development Ordinance, including setbacks, parking standards, buffers, parking provisions, landscaping, lighting, and street furniture.

One primary goal for recommendations under this theme is to create "highly-sociable" places for the community. It is a difficult quality to instill for some places, but once accomplished, it is hard to undo and the places become highly-desirable destinations. Finding opportunities for people to see friends, meet neighbors, and feel comfortable interacting with strangers creates a strong sense



of place and attachment to the community. Creating spaces that are comfortable and present well provides the framework for creating highly-sociable places in Garner — places that are safe, clean, energized, accessible, and with enough capacity to accommodate formal or informal events at the location.

The recommendations that follow under the topic of site design and development scale provide clear targets and expectations for shaping the built environment, including certain criteria or expectations that reinforce a coordinated character and unique sense of place for locations in the community.



Build support in Garner to use design and development standards that enhance community appearance and maintain a unique sense of place.

Town officials should create a more predictable environment for development in terms of size, scale, orientation, landscaping, and general aesthetic using new rules or standards in the local unified development ordinance (UDO). In essence, it will be the process of implementing many of the policies and recommendations presented in the comprehensive plan as laws. It would change phrases in the comprehensive plan using “should” or “would” — noting recommendations or desired outcomes — to phrases with reference to “shall” or “will” in the UDO — indicating requirements or absolute standards — that would significantly influence a development application.

Specific to community appearance, the UDO should adopt new rules, requirements, or standards that address topics important to community character:

- Signature building architecture unique to specific districts, neighborhoods, or corridors in the community.
- Preferred building façade details, building materials, building heights, and building setbacks in the community.
- Design standards for mixed use activity centers that achieve high-quality building architecture, public spaces, and mix of land uses within the same building or block.



- Design standards for employment or retail areas that achieve high-quality building architecture, open spaces, and parking solutions.
- Design standards for standalone multifamily development that achieve high-quality building architecture, public spaces, parking solutions, orientation of buildings to streets, and potential mix of home types in the same development.
- Compatibility standards for infill development or redevelopment projects that recognize existing development adjacent to the site.
- Land use and design relationships between buildings, streets, and open space (location and orientation) that contribute to a high-quality public realm for the community.
- Clear and predictable relationships between land use, design, massing, and orientation statements for the character areas in the comprehensive plan and zoning districts for the UDO.
- Open space requirements that require minimum size, location, and design qualities to integrate open spaces within a development and activate spaces with people. Most open spaces in the town should be accessible to the public.
- Landscaping and streetscape improvements that instill a shared sense of place in the public realm, and that helps transition between different land uses or development intensities.
- Connectivity between adjacent development, and the importance of block size and shape for influencing direct routes between complementary land uses.

Alternatively, town officials may prefer to implement one or more of the items in the list above as design guidelines, or a pattern book, that is referenced by the UDO. This approach does not codify intended outcomes for an area as law like an ordinance, but it does instill clear expectations for investments in specific areas.

In addition, town officials should consider resolutions that communicate formal positions or opinions about community character that may influence the work of other public or quasi-public agencies in the future. This includes separate town resolutions stating the importance of, and town preferences for, the appearance and aesthetic of railroad or highway bridges and water towers in the community.

Above all — town officials should recognize that high-quality design and development standards for the community will create additional costs to the town and their partners for public projects and additional costs to developers or quasi-public organizations for private projects. A consistent message and application of the policies and recommendations in the comprehensive plan is critical to realizing a vision for high-quality development, with high-quality finishes, in the community. Everyone must be held to the same standard.

Financial or policy incentives may be needed to reach the town's aspirations for community character in some cases until minimum expectations in the market are established (e.g., density or intensity bonuses to offset development costs; town-funded building façade, landscape, or signage grants; or outside funding opportunities from non-profit organizations or advocacy groups).



Amend the town's Unified Development Ordinance to strengthen design standards for non-residential development.

Suburban-scale, non-residential development in Garner generally follows the same principles:

Buildings are placed at the center or rear of a site and surround with fields of surface parking and drive aisles. It is not an environment that promotes walking between offices or businesses in the same center. Furthermore, open space is limited and not a prominent feature of the development. Landscaping is typically used at the edges of the development to buffer or screen office or business activities from nearby neighborhoods.

New or redeveloped non-residential development in the town should include a common green or other public space throughout the development to encourage community gathering, outdoor dining, employee breaks, product demonstration areas, or people-watching. Cross-access between buildings and destinations should also be provided via internal roads with provisions for pedestrian mobility access between buildings that support a park-once mentality (or walk-to, bike-to environment from surrounding residential neighborhoods). Building architecture in a reimagined centers should reflect a unique and consistent character for the development.

In addition, buildings over 20,000 square feet in footprint, or two stories in height, should include design features that make the building more interesting in appearance. Considerations for more interesting building architecture may include, but is not limited to, façade articulation that brings the focus of the building to the first floor, upper-story step backs that limit the presence of taller buildings, or building materials that break up the façade of a building. Landscaping, paving, and street furnishings may also help enclose spaces on the site and reduce the expanse of land between buildings.

Spotlight on:

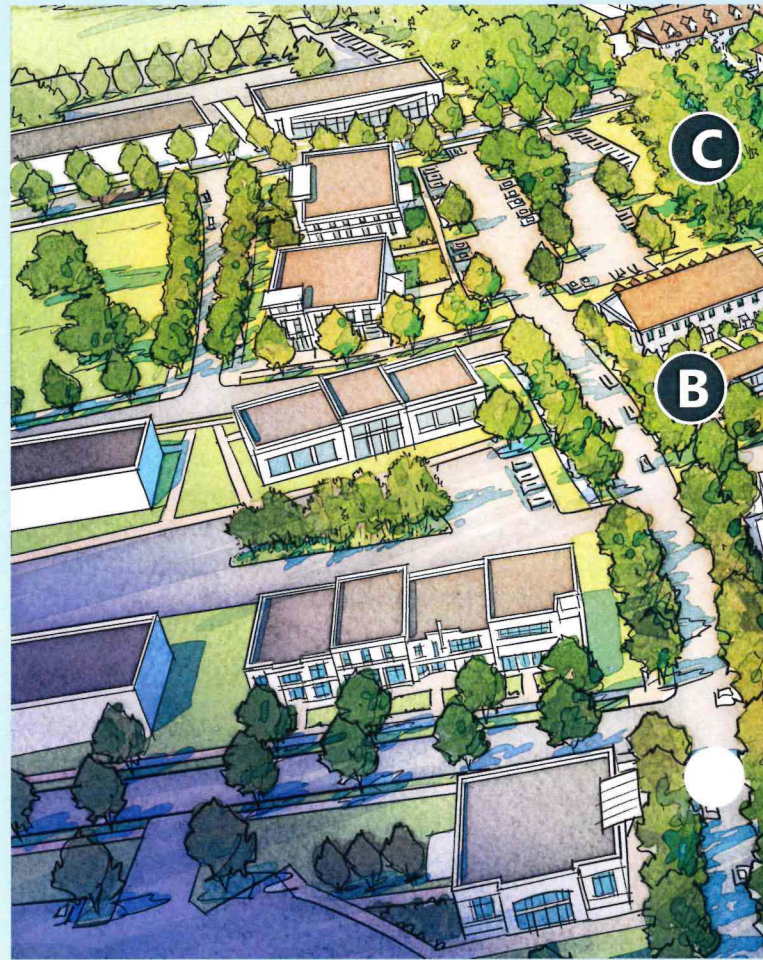
Development Compatibility & Site Transitions

The Town of Garner will have opportunities to support infill development and redevelopment in the future. And, it is important new buildings, open space, parking lots, landscaping, or outdoor facilities in new neighborhoods or activity centers complement existing development intensities and patterns to avoid incompatible adjacencies. Areas to prioritize new rules, requirements, or procedures that address development compatibility or site transition issues should include the “Areas to Transform” presented on the General Growth Framework Map.

On smaller infill or redevelopment sites where existing development patterns are established and expected to remain in the future, the massing and scale of new buildings should be similar to nearby surrounding buildings. On larger infill or redevelopment sites, new lots or buildings that are significantly different in mass or scale from adjacent development should be located toward the center of the site, with lots and building sizes near the perimeter graduating to transition to the massing or scale of existing surrounding development.

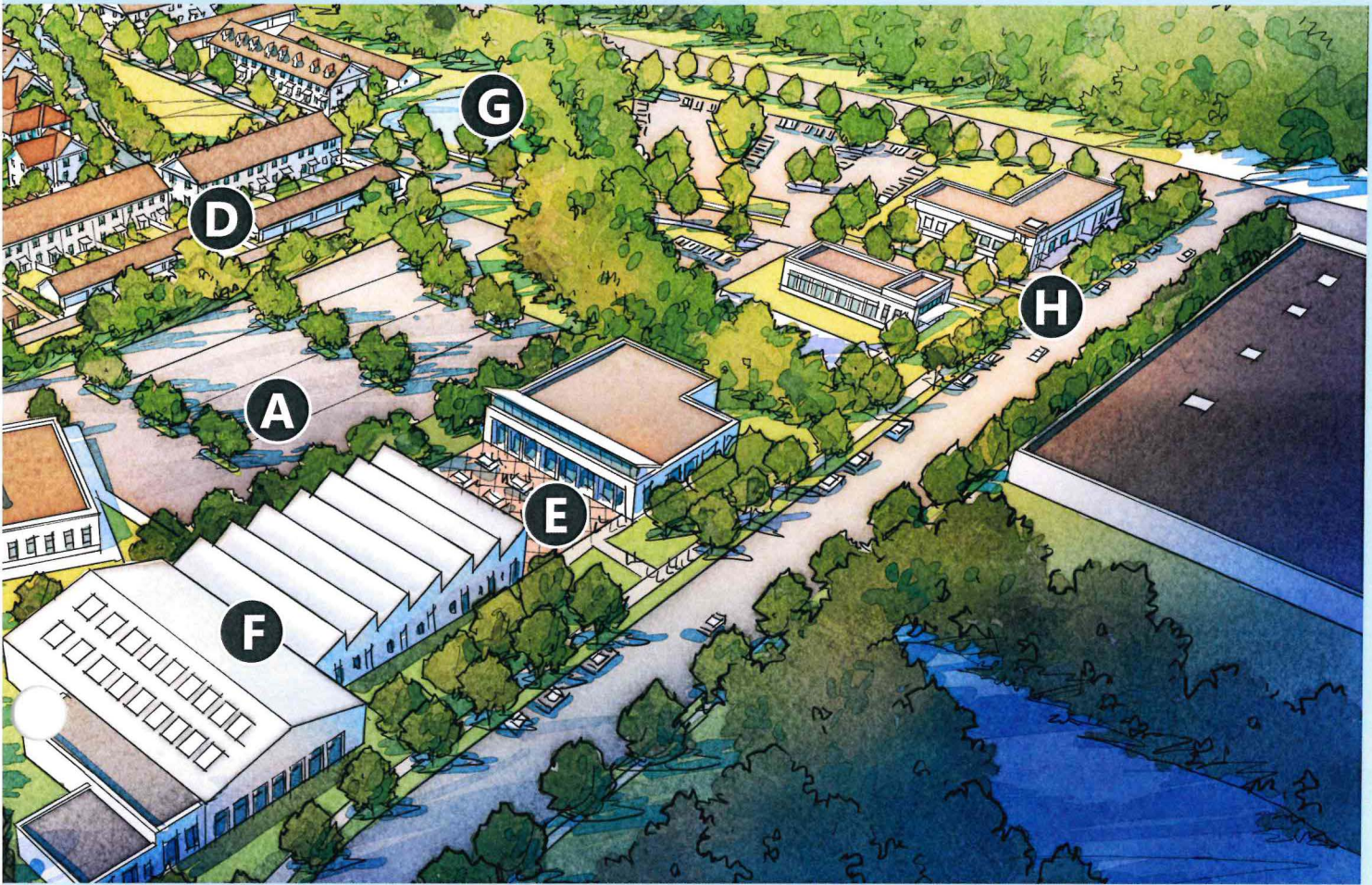
New commercial, light industrial, or flex space developments in close proximity to residential areas should limit their operations to those considered low-intensity, unobtrusive, or at a scale and design compatible with nearby neighborhoods. The design of new activity centers should also transition effectively between residential and non-residential uses, and include safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access for nearby residents. Future development in larger activity centers should focus density and intensity around existing or new street intersections on or adjacent to the site, and provide appropriate transitions to less intense edges of the site compatible with existing development.

New development across the street from existing development should be complementary in lot size, building mass, and placement. Development in the Town’s identified Areas to Transform should specifically follow a “like vs. like” approach, where buildings facing each other are similar in scale and massing. Changes in scale or massing may take place along the face of a street.



For example, taller, more dense buildings may occur at one end of the street (like in a town center), with medium, less dense buildings in between, and smaller, low-density buildings further away from the town center (as a transition to adjacent neighborhoods). Transitions may also take place at the rear lot line (especially in a site with alleyways), where one side of a block may have a different character and intensity than the opposite side of the block.

Architectural elements should also serve as important transitional features for new infill development or redevelopment sites. Where a clearly established building character is expected to remain in an area of Garner, new buildings and site design elements should be similar in size and architectural detail, including roof types, windows, doors, awnings, arcades, cornices, façade materials, outdoor furniture, or other building and site details.



- A** An interior parking lot provides separation between light industrial or flex space uses in the buildings along the primary street and nearby townhomes interior to the site.
- B** Rear-facing garages serving the townhomes provide a physical and visual barrier between private home space and the parking lot.
- C** A community green with an abundance of trees (potentially a tree save area from the site's original condition) provides separation between single-family detached homes and a parking lot and adjacent low-profile office buildings.
- D** Bicycle and pedestrian access between buildings provides safe and efficient connections between destinations in the activity center and nearby homes.
- E** Public space is integrated into the overall design of the activity center, providing connected "outdoor rooms" for employees, residents, and visitors.
- F** Architecture for non-residential buildings in the development (in this case flex space/makers space) is interesting and complements more historic elements from older building periods.
- G** Stormwater features on the site are designed to be community amenities and include green space or walking trails adjacent to activate the space.
- H** Building heights in the new activity center reflect the condition of existing development across the street.

Require multiple buildings on the same lot or parcel be architecturally-unified.

Quality, cohesive building design in site development helps enhance community character and improve quality-of-life. Promoting architectural unity on a site ensures quality projects, lends credibility and professionalism, and often promotes a unique brand identity in the area.

Requiring architectural unity in large site developments allows developers and staff the opportunity to consider the interplay between buildings, ultimately preventing inconsistencies and the uncoordinated feel that arises from ad hoc development. It is recommended that all new development and redevelopment in the planning area consisting of two or more buildings on a single lot or parcel be required to construct architecturally unified buildings and use compatible quality and type of building materials.



Promote adaptive reuse of existing non-residential buildings that are abandoned or in decline.

Adaptive reuse represents a change in use or activity for an existing building that was previously used for something different. It is generally credited with being faster, more cost-effective, and more sustainable for bringing new or expanded businesses online in a community compared to constructing new buildings on undeveloped land. Old shopping centers, old school sites, and old warehouses are all candidate locations for adaptive reuse. In Garner, the former K-Mart building on

Fayetteville Road is currently being reimagined as INQ 4300, a new life science building.

Reuse of an existing site or building provides the opportunity to reinvest in building architecture, parking lot design, landscaping, or open space that addresses potential eyesores in a community. It furthers the belief that an active property will always create more value in a community compared to an inactive property.

Town officials should encourage adaptive reuse of existing non-residential buildings in the planning area, and incentivize such actions using its policies and ordinances.

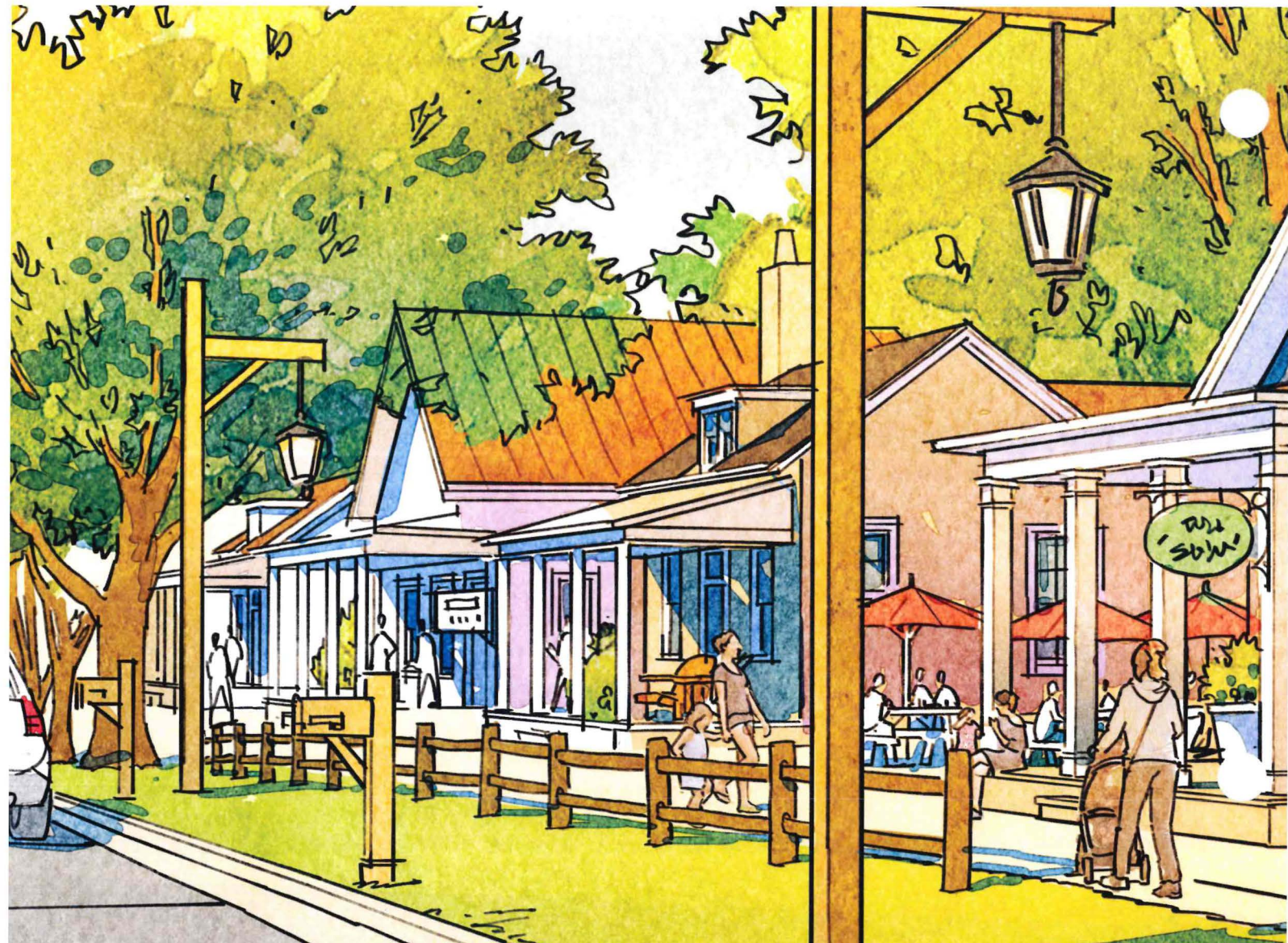


Encourage retrofit and adaptive reuse of existing residential structures for commercial uses in some portions of the planning area.

In some areas, existing residential homes fronting a busy street will be negatively impacted when transportation officials decide to widen the street, which will encroach on the front yards of existing homes if-when-where additional right-of-way is needed to accommodate the widening. Allowing these areas to transition from residential uses to small-scale commercial or office uses provides homeowners with opportunities to maintain or increase their property values.

The town should consider the following topics before allowing non-residential uses in former residential homes:

- Implementation of an overlay district in the local Unified Development Ordinance to expand the range of permitted uses in a specific area along the street being widened.
- Adjustments to parking requirements for the corridor to recognize the small-scale nature of commercial and office uses in structures previously used as a home. Solutions may include shared-use parking agreements or credit for on-street parking nearby.

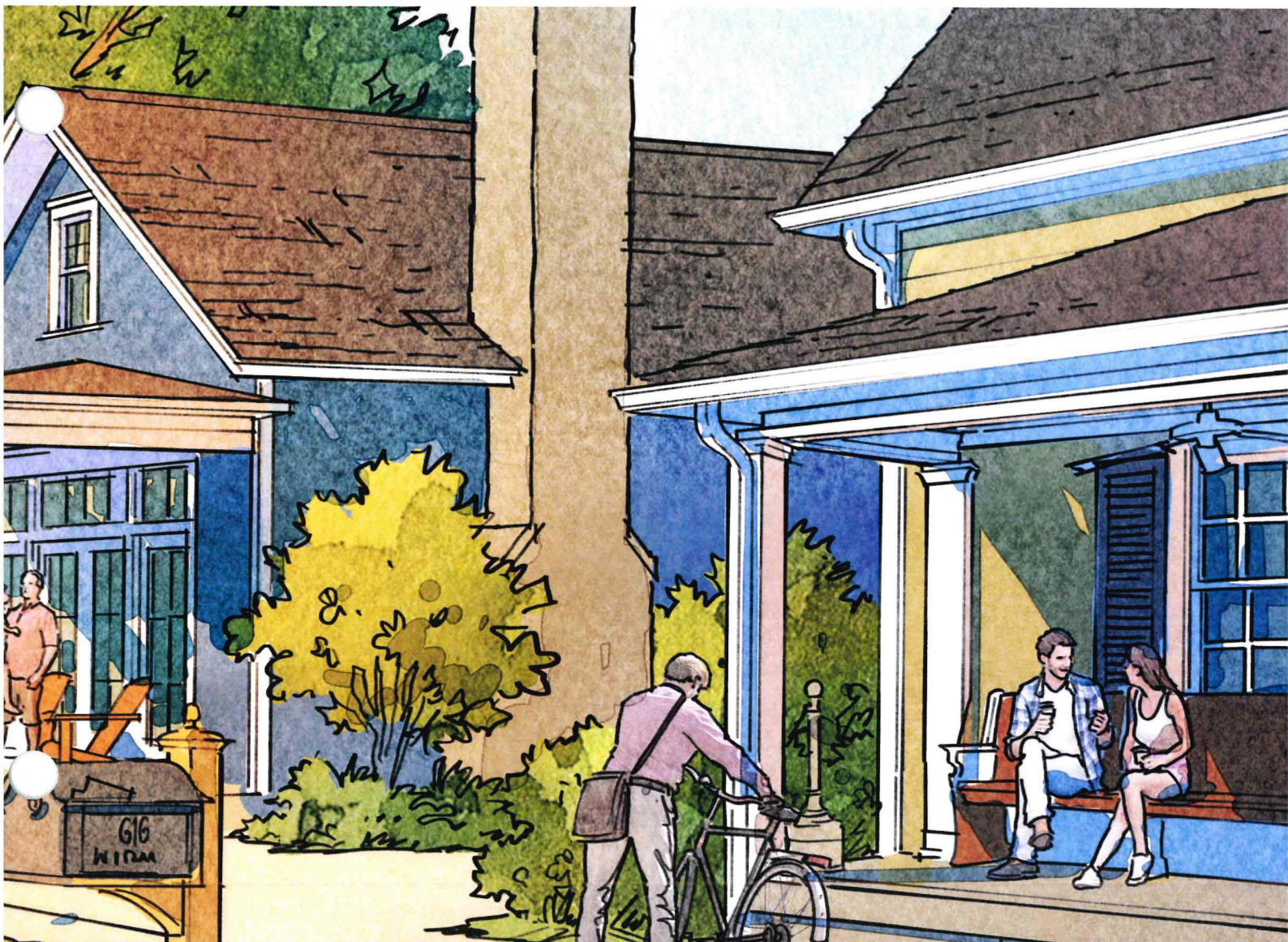


- Reductions in setback requirements to support adaptive reuse of existing buildings. Front yard setbacks could be used for outdoor dining or merchandise displays associated with the business. Side and rear yard setbacks could be used for parking, driveways, or small-scale ancillary uses. (Note: building code requirements for fire safety topics would need to be met).
- Impervious surface requirements could be relaxed to accommodate surface parking lots needed for the business.

Specific rules, requirements, or standards to address the list of topics for retrofit or adaptive reuse of existing residential structures for commercial uses should be included in the town's Unified Development Ordinance.



Existing homes and the sites on which they are located can be converted to commercial uses to adapt to the changing corridor conditions, when they are no longer conducive to residential living. Parking, setback, and pervious area standards need to be addressed to allow such conversions to occur.



Establish compatibility and transition standards that respect the spaces between existing and future development.

The town will have opportunities to realize infill development and redevelopment in the future. New buildings, open space, and parking lots should respect existing development types, patterns, and intensities to avoid incompatible land uses or buildings.

On smaller infill or redevelopment sites where existing development patterns are established and expected to remain the same in the future, the massing and scale of new buildings should be similar to nearby surrounding buildings. On larger infill or redevelopment sites, new lots or buildings that are significantly different in mass or scale from adjacent development should be located toward the center of the site, with lots and building sizes near the edge of the site designed to transition to the scale or massing of existing surrounding development.

New commercial, light industrial, or flex space developments in close proximity to residential areas should limit their uses to those considered low-intensity, unobtrusive, or at a scale and design compatible with nearby neighborhoods.

New neighborhood, community, or employment activity centers should transition effectively between residential and non-residential uses and include safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access for nearby residents. Future development in larger activity centers should focus density and intensity around existing or new street intersections on or adjacent to the site. It should also provide appropriate transitions to less intense edges of a site more compatible with existing development.

New development across the street from existing development should be complementary in lot size, building mass, and placement. Similar building types should face each other on a public street to protect the character of the streetscape. Land use transitions are preferred in alleyways, the abutment of two rear yards, or across a large common green.

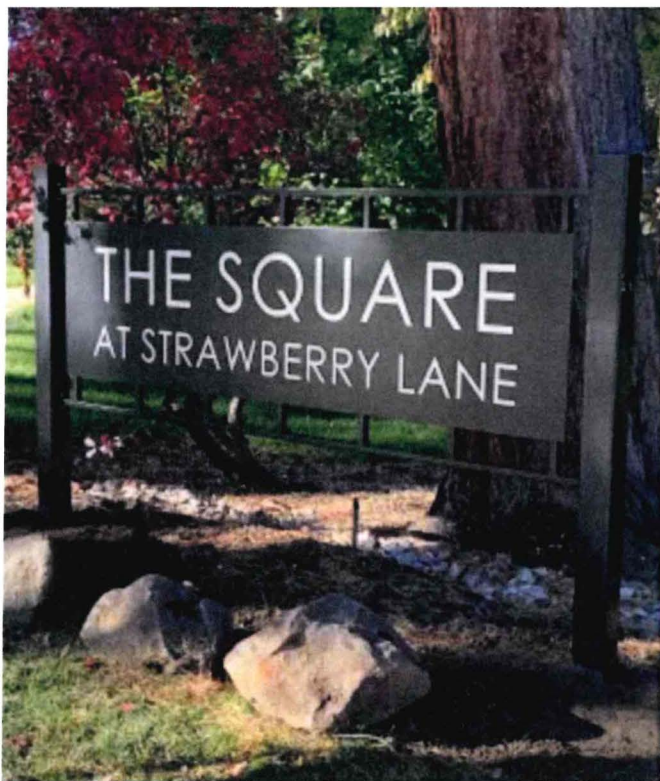
Architectural elements should be transitional features for new infill development or redevelopment sites. Where a clearly established building character is expected to remain in an area of town, new buildings or site design elements should be similar in size and architectural detail, including roof types, windows, doors, awnings, arcades, cornices, façade materials, outdoor furniture, and other building or site design details.



Establish a discernible structure for new neighborhoods in the town's planning area.

New neighborhoods in the town should contain a discernible center and a clear edge. This is an organizational concept that provides a clear identity to the neighborhood. While it may be more difficult to have well-defined edges surrounding a neighborhood, it is imperative that its center be well-formed. The center of the neighborhood should include a civic open space such as a park, square, or plaza, depending on its location within the range of contexts from suburban to urban.

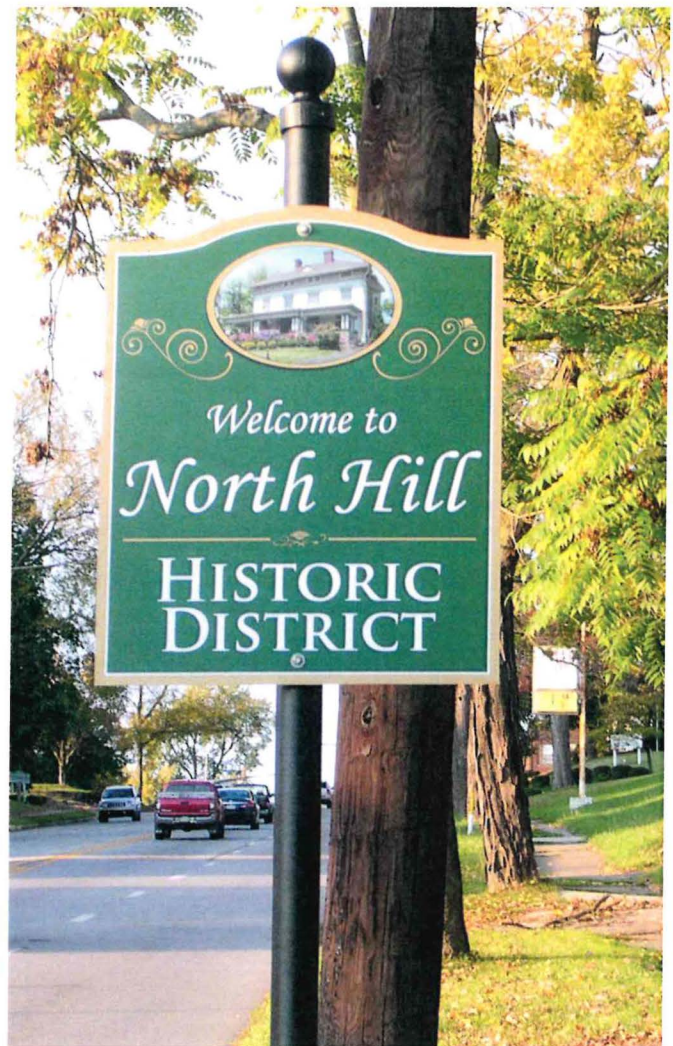
Neighborhoods should be organized around a pedestrian shed, or a circle with a radius approximately one-quarter mile in length, which represents a five-minute walk distance from the center to the edge. The pedestrian shed concept ensures that all residents are within a short walk of a meaningful destination. These destinations may include mixed-use areas or other civic open spaces. In the case of corridor development, the pedestrian shed may be linear.



Create recognizable entrances (gateways) into Garner.

One of the first ways to establish a defined character for the town is to announce that it is different and new. Public investment in gateway treatments should be considered to reinforce the brand identified for the town and stimulate private investment in the corridor consistent with the new brand.

Next steps for bringing gateway treatments to the planning area should include: identify appropriate locations for new signage, prepare design concepts, reach out to local property owners for easements, develop construction documents, and identify available funding sources.



Spotlight on:

Long-Term Financial Stability

Simply stated: attractive building architecture and good site design sells, and sells at a premium, which increases total assessed values for neighborhoods, shopping centers, business parks, and mixed-use areas and the real property taxes they generate for the town. Emphasizing community character in Garner, and increasing minimum building architecture and site design standards to instill a unique brand or identity for the town, has the potential to increase total assessed values in the future.

Some design considerations that promote community character may also have direct impacts on the efficiency of providing town services. For example, some communities find smaller minimum lot sizes increase lot values while lowering infrastructure costs, which results in higher net real property tax revenue for the local government. Other communities observe a premium paid for buildings or lots sold in an area with a strong locational brand or sense of place, which translates to higher total assessed values for the tax roll because assessed value is calculated as a portion of the market (transaction) value.

Below are three topics to consider for improving Garner's overall financial stability when 1) contemplating town-led capital investments in the public realm, 2) deciding whether or not to require high-quality site design, open space, or building architecture for a site or concept plan, or 3) considering the merits of land use mix and development intensity for a private development application.

Value Capture

The term "value capture" for town planning purposes refers to a belief that local governments or developers can recover some, or in some cases all, of the costs associated with providing public infrastructure or amenities in a specific location because the value of nearby land or real estate increases as a result of the investment. Capturing the value increase from proximity to the investment area generates additional (and reoccurring) tax revenue for the local government and increases sale

or rent prices for the developer to offset the costs of the improvement.

An article published by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) in 2020 (see Note #1) quantified the value capture added for residential development located

near a passive or active park. Citing thirty-three case studies, the authors concluded a premium of eight to ten percent on total assessed value was reasonable as a guide – especially for homes located within 500 to 600 feet of the park. A larger park was generally associated with higher premiums in the case studies. Premiums associated with multifamily buildings or small-lot single-family homes were higher compared to large-lot, single-family homes because nearby access to public open space was deemed highly-desirable by homeowners without large front or rear yards for private open space.

A separate study of residential neighborhoods in Austin, Texas (see Note #2) by researchers from Texas A&M University found a one percent increase in walkability score for a place translated into a \$1,329 increase in total assessed property value. A one percent increase in sidewalk density for a place translated into a \$785 increase in total assessed property value.

Other studies and reports have been published documenting increased values observed in mixed-use developments that are focused on creating vibrant, pedestrian-friendly destinations with a mix of complementary land uses and public spaces. The experiences created for visitors using high-quality and well-thought-out site design, building architecture, and public amenities generally creates desirability for the development and increases total assessed values for homeowners and businesses located within it. Capturing the value increase for properties in desirable locations of town generates additional (and reoccurring) tax revenue for the local government and increases sale or rent prices for the developer to offset the costs of the improvement.

(Re)development Intensity and Efficient Infrastructure Service Areas

One factor that increases the total assessed value for a parcel is its (re)development potential, which includes the land uses and development intensities programmed for the property. Increasing development potential on a property may significantly increase tax production and the amount of taxes collected for a parcel. Local governments typically update total assessed value for a property at the completion of a construction project, which generates additional revenue for the local government immediately without raising tax rates.

Communities may also experience efficiencies through density when it comes to providing public facilities and services. Certain economies of scale result in cost advantages that are realized in smaller service areas that use capacity fully before extending services to new areas. Cost per unit decreases in these areas, which creates a direct

monetary benefit to the service provider and grows net revenue potential for the local government. The combination of increased tax production and reduced service costs create a strong argument for increasing development density and the mix of uses allowed in specific areas of the community (i.e., the activity centers presented in Chapter 2).

Active Property Values

Generally speaking, an active property that is well-maintained creates higher total assessed value, and thus more tax revenue to the local government, compared to an inactive or declining property. To this end, some communities are proactively evaluating their development activity and its quality in town, and identifying quickly locations in decline as candidates for beautification grants or infill development and redevelopment initiatives. Reinvesting in these properties eliminates potential blight in a community and maintains strong property values, which generates strong reoccurring real property taxes for the town.



Note #1: The information presented was summarized from an article “How Much Impact Do Parks Have on Property Values?” published in NRPA Magazine on March 26, 2020. The author was John L. Crompton, Ph.D. from Texas A&M University.

Note #2: The information presented for Austin, Texas was summarized from an article “Assessing Benefits of Neighborhood Walkability to Single-Family Property Values, A Spatial Hedonic Study in Austin, Texas” published in the Journal of Planning Education and Research in 2015. The authors were Wei Li and Kenneth Joh from Texas A&M University. (Walkability = the ability to safely walk to services and amenities within a reasonable distance, usually defined as a walk of thirty minutes or less. [Planetizen Website, 2023]. The study in Austin, Texas used a web application, Walk Score, to quantify the walkability of residential neighborhoods. It can be accessed at www.walkscore.com.)

Theme 5: Community Connections

Individual properties in a community are connected to one another using a series of “infrastructure systems” that provide access to, or provide for movement between, different destinations: home, work, school, shopping, parks, or entertainment. Systems considered for a comprehensive plan include roads, greenways, transit, parks, utilities, natural areas, and floodplains. Chapters 2 and 6 in the document provide system-wide recommendations for these topic areas. Recommendations for the community connections theme in Chapter 3 focus on place-making principles that should guide investments in the different systems, including several value-based statements that should influence the type, location, and connectedness of infrastructure to reinforce a unique community character for Garner. Coordinated investments in the different infrastructure systems should also reinforce the town’s commitment to conservation and development principles that instill a specific sense of place for Garner and make locations in the community more desirable for private investment.

Improve street connectivity in new and existing neighborhoods, retail areas, employment areas and mixed-use areas.

Streets should be connected to another street unless there are topographic or ecological constraints, or neighborhood safety concerns (e.g., excessive cut-through traffic or the absence of sidewalks to reduce vehicle-pedestrian conflicts), that would prohibit it. The street network provides a multitude of routing alternatives to and from all destinations in a development, dispersing traffic and limiting congestion. Having a street network with a high degree of connectivity also enables individual streets to become narrower, which slows traffic and increases vehicular and pedestrian safety. High connectivity allows emergency service vehicles many options for site access during an emergency.

Connectivity standards in Garner should not be limited to streets and automobiles. Encouraging a network of connected sidewalks, side paths, and pedestrian passages makes walking more convenient and enjoyable, and increases pedestrian access throughout the community. Finally, by increasing the number of routes through the community, pedestrians are provided more interesting and direct walking and jogging routes, access to a variety of neighborhoods and destinations, and more opportunity for social interaction.

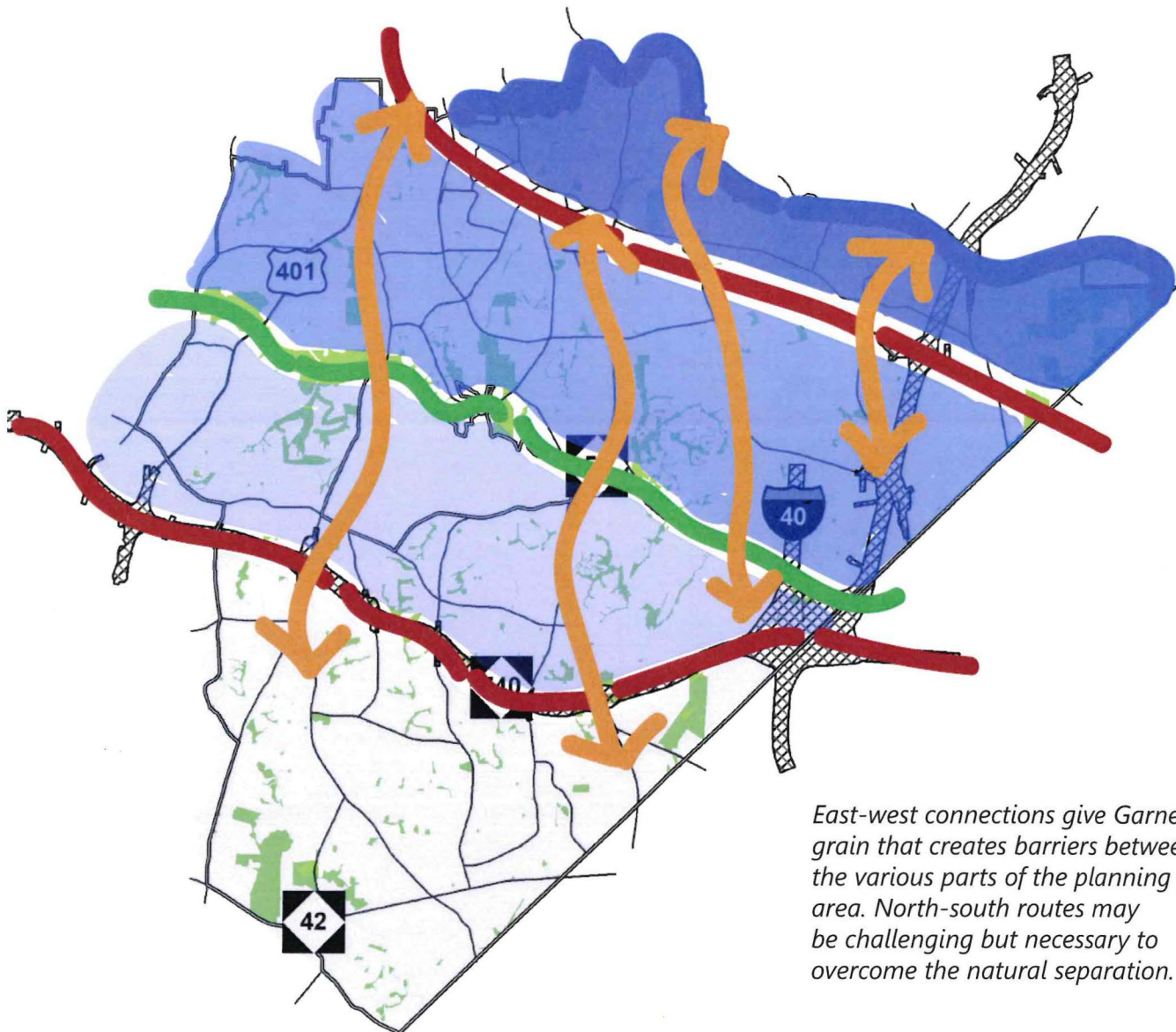
Protect important mobility corridors in the planning area.

Much of the town's growth — residential, commercial, office, and industrial — occurs along and within proximity to a handful of primary mobility corridors — US 70, US 401, and NC 50 — or along local thoroughfares, including: Timber Drive, White Oak Road, Ten-Ten Road, Creech Road, Garner Road, Aversboro Road, and Vandora Springs Road.

Existing mobility corridors and local thoroughfares are essential to providing access and mobility throughout the community and need to be protected and in some cases enhanced. As growth

and development pressure increases, it will be important to protect these corridors through access management and better development design standards (ingress/egress, circulation, stub outs, cross access, connectivity, etc.). Not having enough access to a property may inadvertently limit its use or attractiveness, but too much may cause spillback effects on the surrounding road network.

The development review process should consider development frontage and how it interacts with the corridor. Specific centerline setbacks identified by roadway classification should be identified and referenced during the town's site plan review process.



East-west connections give Garner a grain that creates barriers between the various parts of the planning area. North-south routes may be challenging but necessary to overcome the natural separation.

Increase coordination between transportation, land use, and urban design goals and decision-making processes.

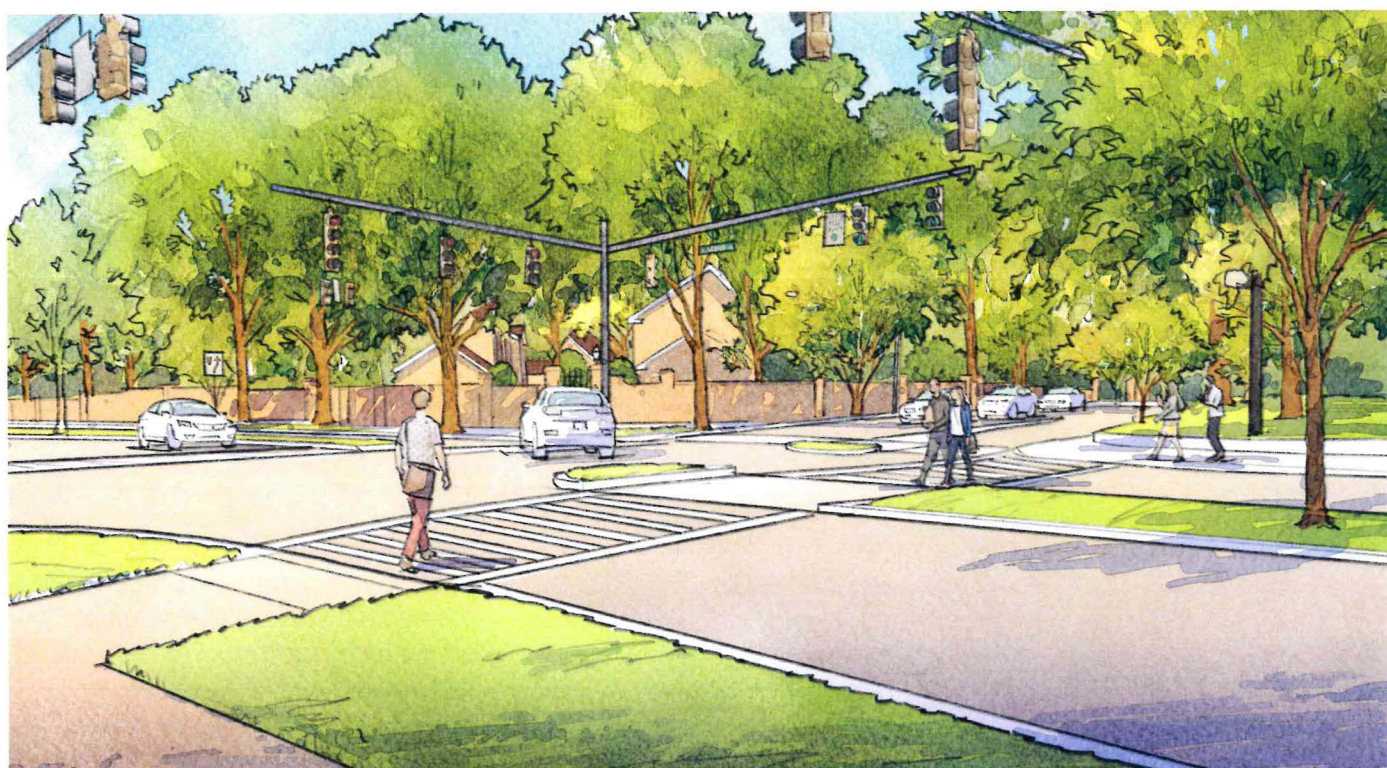
In recent years, there has been a movement to reduce or reverse some of the negative transportation impacts associated with low-density, single-use development patterns in the Triangle region: increasing traffic congestion, costly expansion of infrastructure, and lost time commuting. Future year forecasts in the Triangle Regional Travel Demand Model for 2050 predict these unintended consequences will continue if changes are not made to better integrate transportation, land use, and urban design decision-making processes.

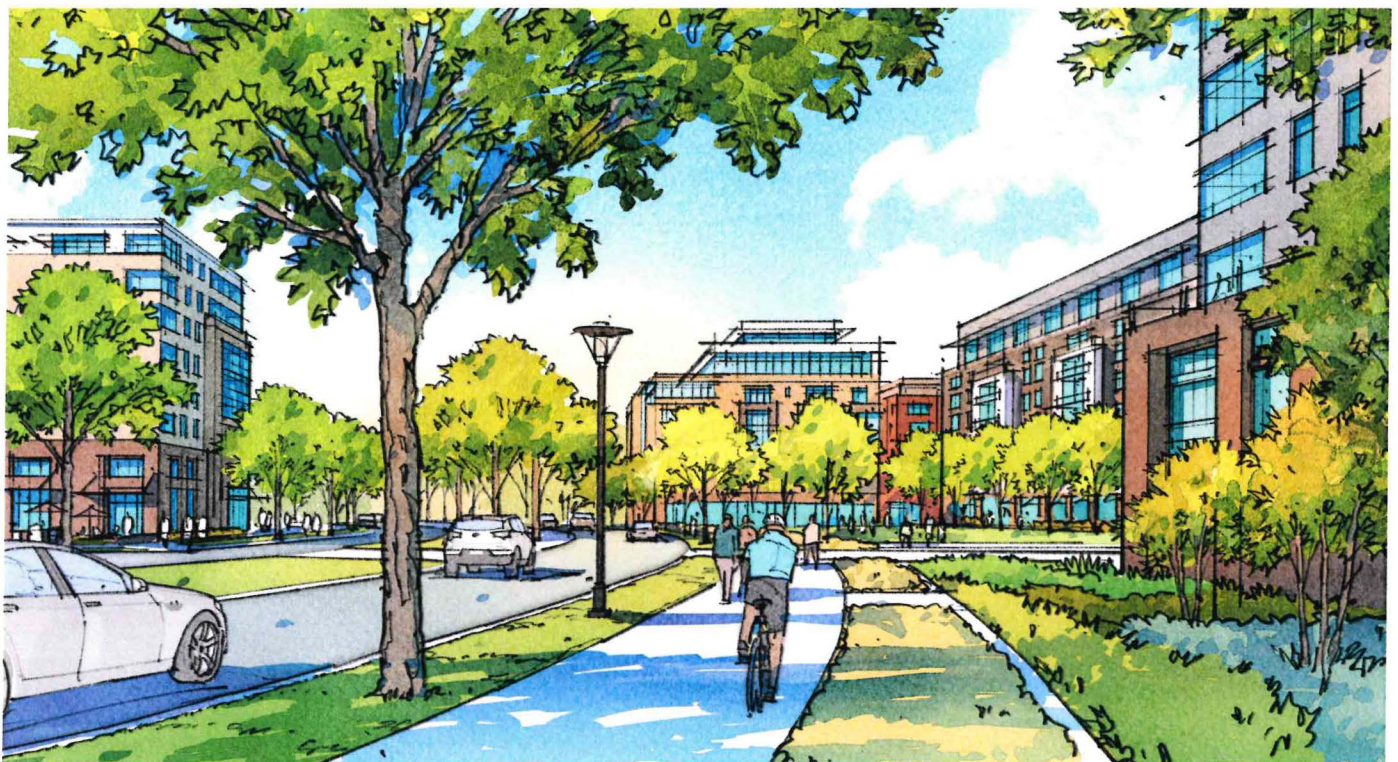
The comprehensive plan advocates for a transportation system that safely and efficiently moves 'people' throughout the study area. Equal emphasis on land use (demand), transportation (supply) and urban design (environment) should improve overall efficiency of the transportation system while promoting livability principles important to several new or expanded activity centers identified on the General Framework Map in Chapter 2.

Supply-side solutions for the transportation should system include: a complete and integrated grid street network for major roads and local streets, complete street principles, access management standards, minimum street spacing guidelines, special intersection treatments, and different street design standards for rural, suburban, and urban development conditions.

Demand-side solutions for improving the transportation system focus on land use, development density and urban design principles that promote lower vehicle trip generation (internal capture), shorter travel distance, and the use of non-vehicular travel modes. Land use mix; development location, pattern and intensity; and important site design considerations presented in the comprehensive plan should help improve overall efficiency of the transportation system by lowering demand for long-distance vehicle trips.

Street design standards for urban conditions serving new walkable, mixed-use areas in the planning area will also bind together land use, transportation, and urban design decisions.





Build complete streets throughout the town's planning area, acknowledging different needs and priorities for streets based on the context of surrounding development.

Traditional suburban street design standards emphasize the function of vehicle movement over the creation of place for a street (National Association of City Transportation Officials, Urban Street Design Guide, 2012). Growing trends toward more urban, walkable, and mixed-use development patterns necessitate a change in conventional street design standards to: 1) balance the needs of vehicle, bus, bicycle and pedestrian within the right-of-way; 2) reduce travel lane width; 3) match design speed to posted speed limit; 4) control the number, location and spacing of driveways; 5) complement adjacent development; and 6) design intersections for multi-modal turning or route conflicts. Together,

these changes will help move people (versus vehicles) and create memorable places that are great for the community, great for business, and great for creating safer environments for everyone.

Town officials should review the street standards included in the local Engineering Manual and determine if modifications are needed to better represent conditions for different development context areas: rural, suburban, and urban. Unique needs for sidewalks, greenways, bicycle lanes, planting areas, on-street parking, or the number and width of lanes that serve adjacent development or preferred travel modes in each of the three context areas may warrant different street design treatments or minimum standards.



Consider the feasibility of a local transit circulator service in Garner.

A local transit circulator service (small bus) could connect proposed mixed-use areas using a continuous loop route with short headways. A transit circulator feasibility study should be completed for the area including Gateway Station, downtown, and the Forest Hills shopping center to confirm when demand for such a service would make it feasible, and establish appropriate service parameters — technology, exact route, bus size, and headways — and cost estimates for implementing a preferred system.

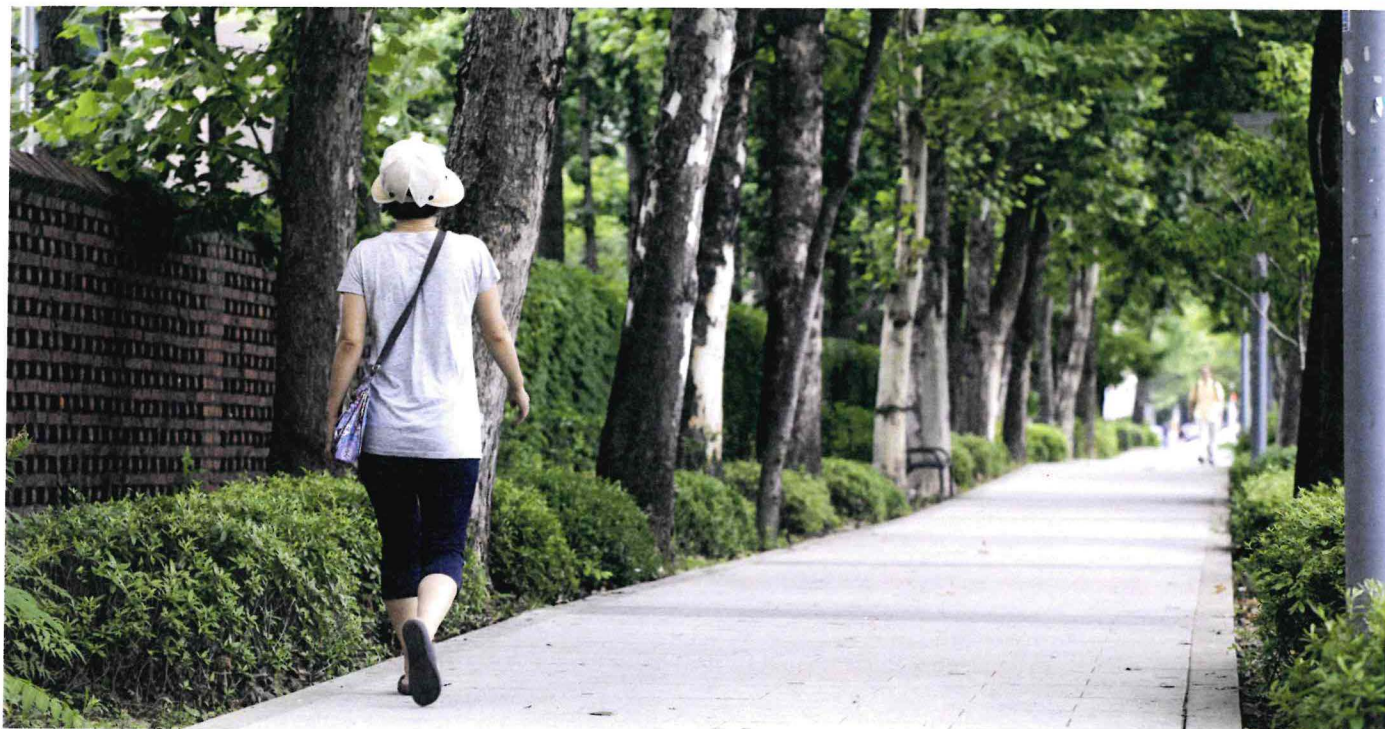


Build a comprehensive and connected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to connect important destinations in the planning area.

A complete network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the planning area — bicycle lanes, bicycle routes, greenways and sidewalks — should connect nearby destinations for meeting daily needs while also providing an extensive network for recreation purposes. Most bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure should be included in street construction following complete street design principles.

Town officials should strictly enforce the need for bicycle or pedestrian facilities in new development with preferred facility types, locations, and design treatments influenced by the character of the surrounding area (see the Character Typology Map and Character Area Typology descriptions in Chapter 2 for guidance).

Town officials should also identify an annual fund balance to fill in small gaps in the sidewalk, bicycle, or greenway systems. Specific projects should be programmed in the town's capital improvements plan.



Create a comprehensive and connected green infrastructure network for the town's planning area.

Green infrastructure includes all of the parks, greenways, floodplains, and forested areas now or planned for in the planning area. Together, they form a green infrastructure network (GIN) that helps town officials prioritize land acquisitions, infrastructure projects, and development conditions. Individual decisions about open space in Garner should consider the context and needs of a larger green infrastructure network, which is aimed at maximizing a comprehensive, connected, and continuous open space network that is easily recognizable and accessible to residents.

A parks and open space map, and greenway network map, presented in Chapter 6 support recommendations for the community connections theme in Chapter 3 to create a green infrastructure network. Specific recommendations are also provided in the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources 2020 Comprehensive Master Plan. The areas identified for the GIN should become gathering places for young families, children, retirees, and single professionals, and be viable trade-offs for accepting higher densities and less private open space in residential or mixed-use living environments.

Town officials should partner with state, regional, or other nonprofit groups working in the area to mitigate the impacts of new development on existing natural systems. At a minimum, include new rules and standards in the town's unified development ordinance that incorporate open space as a meaningful component of new development; including parks, tree preservation, floodplains, other stormwater retention, recreation, animal habitat protection, or preserving scenic views.

Incorporate natural stormwater management strategies in new developments or stormwater restoration projects.

Town officials should incorporate low impact or light imprint development strategies to find ways to reduce dependence on complicated infrastructure systems for stormwater management. Explore more sustainable solutions, including natural drainage and infiltration practices. All sustainable stormwater solutions should begin with the least technologically complex actions.

The simplest technique is to preserve the existing hydrological pattern of drainage and percolation. This allows the land to handle the water naturally with minimal, if any, human intervention. By following natural hydrological patterns and using them as the framework, sustainable stormwater practices can alleviate much of the need for expensive conventional engineering approaches and will inform the planning and design of communities as a design element.

Town officials may consider requiring floodplain protection that exceeds the state minimum requirements, protecting vulnerable areas from future storm events.



Consider green streets for stormwater management in areas of the community.

Green streets are thoroughfares that capture, temporarily store, and treat road runoff at its source by incorporating vegetated water catchment and filtration devices in the form of small rain gardens and bioretention systems. Components such as bioswales, infiltration planters, and flow-through planters, and other sustainable stormwater solutions allow plant material to remove impurities before water naturally infiltrates into the soil or into a storage or stormwater system. Water-loving plants as well as plants that are able to remove the impurities while thriving close to traffic and in more urban environments are used in green street design, adding beauty and function. Additional infiltration may be achieved through the use of pervious paving materials for sidewalks and streets.

Town officials should consider the application of green streets during the development application process.

The town should act quickly to secure additional park space in the community as land values are rising in the area.

In November 2021, Garner voters overwhelmingly approved a bond program that programs funds for two new parks and additional amenities at an existing park. Additional parks will be needed in the future to serve residents in new or expanded activity centers or neighborhoods. Some of the parks will be built by the town while others will be built by developers and made accessible to the public.

Town officials should plan for new park expenditures in the future and, if possible, secure land for future parks early before acquisition prices increase significantly.



Spotlight on: Complete Streets

What are Complete Streets?

Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations.

Creating Complete Streets means Town governments and their partner transportation agencies must change their approach to building community roads. By adopting a Complete Streets policy, communities direct their transportation planners and engineers to routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This means that every transportation project will make the street network better and safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists— making your town a better place to live.



What does a Complete Street look like?

What are the benefits of Complete Streets? There is not a singular design solution for Complete Streets; each one is unique and responds to community needs and development context. A complete street may include: sidewalks, bicycle lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, roundabouts, and more. A Complete Street in a rural area may look different from a Complete Street in a highly urban area, but both are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road.

What are the benefits of Complete Streets?

Complete Streets help create livable communities for various types of users, including children, people with disabilities, and older adults. Complete Streets improve equity, safety, and public health, while reducing transportation costs and traffic congestion. Please see the website www.smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition/ for more information on Complete Streets, their design characteristics, and impact on creating more complete, livable communities.

— Source: Smart Growth America Organization Website, July 17, 2018



Theme 6: Natural Conservation and Historic Preservation

Both natural areas and historic properties have a significant role in safeguarding a specific community character for Garner. Protection, and sometimes restoration, of natural resources and historic properties in the planning area are important to making the area more authentic and unique in the larger Triangle region. One-of-a-kind areas like Lake Benson and the old Garner train depot create “Kodak moments” for residents, employees, and visitors in the area. Natural areas and historic properties throughout the community also make residents feel more connected to, and take more pride in, their town.

Natural resource topics important to the comprehensive plan include: environmental stewardship, floodplains, tree canopy and forest cover, and a comprehensive and connected green infrastructure network that links important natural features in the community via a system of natural corridors. Increased conservation efforts for the comprehensive plan are also acknowledged as a viable trade-off for accepting higher densities and less private open space in some of the activity centers identified for the planning area. Recommendations for the natural resource topics in Chapter 3 should be refined in subsequent plans and studies completed by the town or its partners. Additional, often more detailed, considerations should also be addressed in the town’s Unified Development Ordinance.

Historic preservation topics important to the comprehensive plan are focused on protecting structures, properties, and resources that tell the history of Garner: from its agrarian roots in 1751, to the arrival of the train in 1847, to buildup of the downtown in 1874, to designation of the Central Highway through Garner in 1916, to relocation of the Central Highway in the 1950s, and the town’s recognition as an All-America City in 2013 (see Chapter 1). Protecting historic places in the town ensures an understanding of its past is handed off to future generations.

Implement a tree canopy preservation program for the planning area.

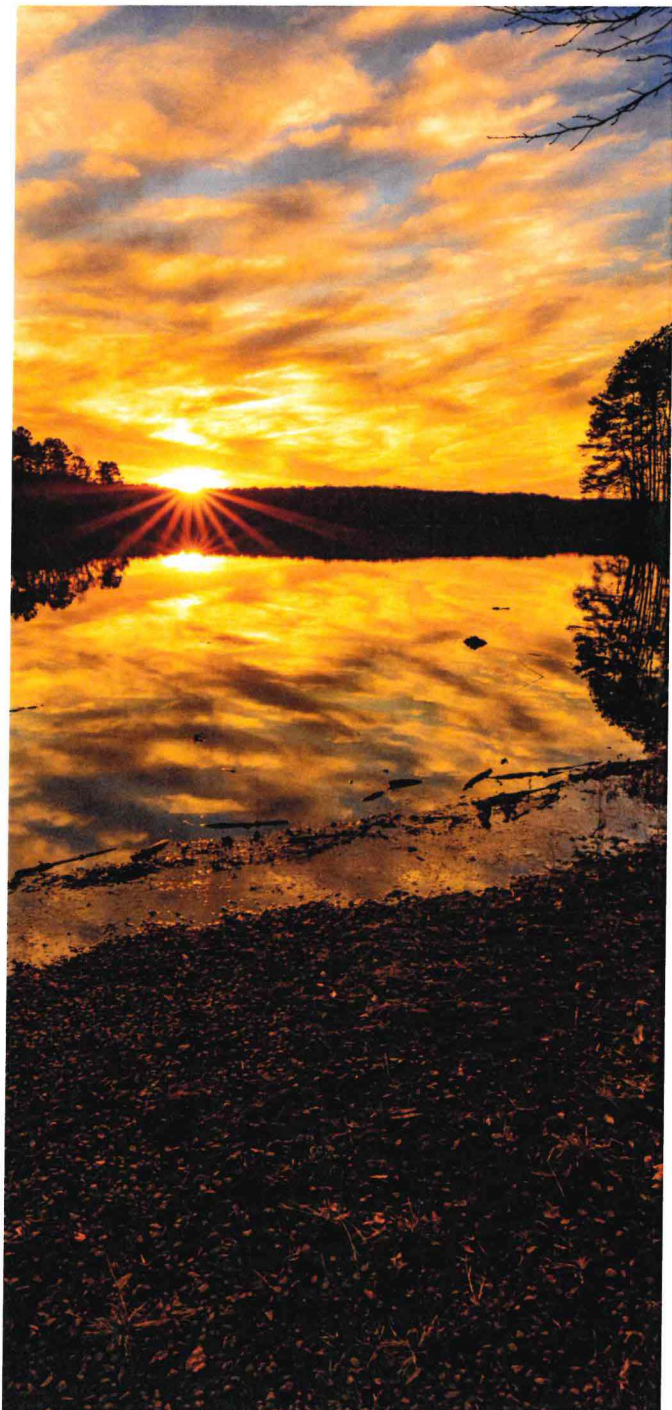
Undeveloped land in Garner generally includes a mixture of grasslands and tree stands. Older neighborhoods in the town have mature street trees and landscaping. Some newer neighborhoods display minimal tree-save canopy in aerial photography; however, new plantings along streets and in parking lots, common areas, and private yards are expected to replace a portion of the tree canopy lost to new development.

Shade trees planted throughout the community provide simple and beautiful solutions to clean the air, prevent stream erosion, save energy, and cool streets and buildings. Tree planting and preservation programs, a tree advisory committee, tree care ordinance, conservation easements, and capital investments should all be considered as ways to increase and sustain the town’s tree canopy in the future.

Recognition of the town’s future efforts to sustain meaningful tree canopy in the community should include a Tree City USA designation application. American Forests — a national conservation and advocacy group for creating healthy and resilient forests throughout the country — recommends a target of 40% to 60% urban tree canopy for a forested state.

Town officials should implement local tree planting and tree care policies and ordinances to include minimum criteria for tree save areas, preferred number of new tree plantings, native species list, tree caliper at planting, and tree spacing criteria. In some instances, town officials may want to consider payment-in-lieu provisions in the tree ordinance for more dense, urban development projects where tree save area requirements adversely impact other goals of the comprehensive plan. The funds collected should be used to purchase tree save areas in other parts of the community. New single-family neighborhoods should not participate in the payment-in-lieu program.

In addition, Town officials may want to fund an awards program to celebrate urban forestry and the people who advocate for it. For example, the City of Charlotte makes annual awards for specimen tree of the year, personal connection to a tree (story submission), corporate friend of the urban forest, and proud partner of the tree canopy for advocacy.



Protect natural areas and environmental assets throughout the community.

Town officials should safeguard natural areas and environmental assets in the community using information presented in the comprehensive plan and more-specific functional plans to follow (e.g., an update to the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Master Plan or an update to the Wake County Open Space Plan).

A comprehensive and connected system of green space should be integrated into the built environment as 1) a deliberate effort to protect natural areas, and 2) as amenity accessible to citizen to enjoy the outdoors. Two specific considerations for protecting natural areas in the community include:

Lake Benson and the Swift Creek Corridor

Lake Benson and the Swift Creek corridor constitute an important wildlife corridor, habitat for plants and animals, and population destination for recreational amenities. The area should be managed and protected to ensure all three assets thrive long into the future.

Swift Creek Tributaries

Tributaries for Swift Creek extend north and south to points throughout Garner. Preserving, or sometimes restoring, the tributaries as natural, open drainage ways in the community will help with stormwater management and provide opportunities for new greenways that can link neighborhoods with nearby commercial areas, parks, or natural areas.

Identify and protect important and historic structures, properties, and resources in the community that provide connections back to the town's past.

Town officials should work with their partners at state and county governments to identify and protect historic properties in the community either in place or, if needed, as structures relocated to another location suitable for their preservation.

Provide more opportunities to share the culture and history of the town with residents and visitors.

Celebrate local history with planned events and a dedicated history page on the town's website. Consider creating a storytelling portal in conjunction with the website, or independently, so that residents can share family history and other information with others. Provide tools for uploading and sharing images, recipes and more, in order to preserve traditions for generations to come.



A Place for Notes (page left intentionally blank)

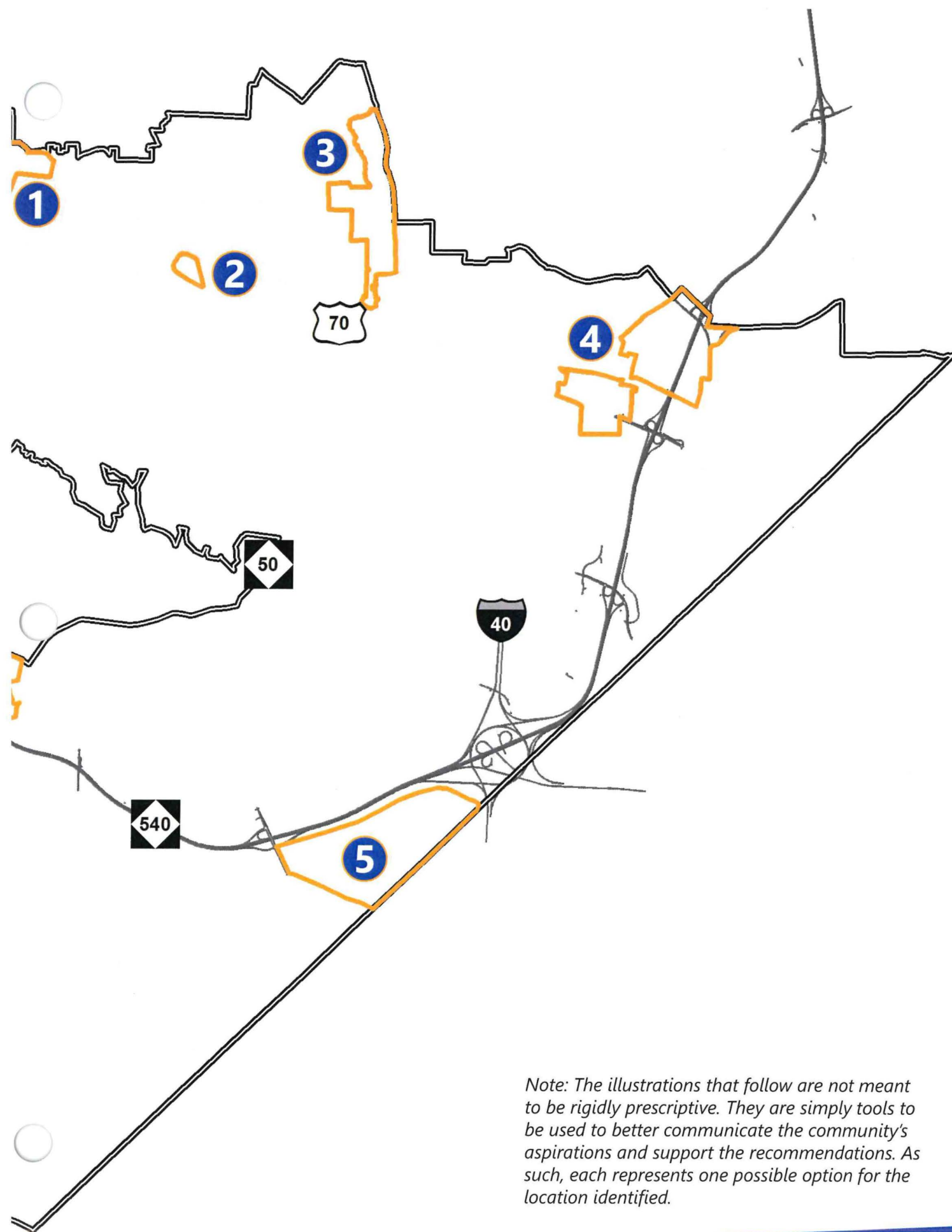
Focus Areas

Six focus areas were delineated for further study. Their locations (shown on the map at right) were chosen because of their potential for near-term development or redevelopment and the opportunities that each could offer in shaping the future of Garner. The concepts that follow are intended to provide guidance for private and public sector decision makers. As examples of potential development in accordance with the Character Typology Map on pages 42 and 43, they demonstrate the ways in which development might adhere to the guiding principles as well as applicable development policies set forth in this long-range plan for Garner.

The evolution of the Garner's planning area will occur over a period of years. However, some areas will be subject to development pressures in the near future. Each focus area identified has been studied as part of the planning process to better understand development potential consistent with the future land use vision. Each set of conceptual illustrations on the pages that follow convey one of several possibilities. Considering the potential use of parcels collectively, decisions about future development on individual parcels can be made in a manner that optimizes the utilization of land while adhering to the community's objectives.

1	Garner Station	148
2	Fifth Avenue	156
3	Northeast Gateway	166
4	NC-540 @ Rock Quarry Road / Auburn Station	172
5	NC-540 @ NC-50	184
6	NC-540 @ Old Stage Road	198





Note: The illustrations that follow are not meant to be rigidly prescriptive. They are simply tools to be used to better communicate the community's aspirations and support the recommendations. As such, each represents one possible option for the location identified.





Garner Station (Area 1)

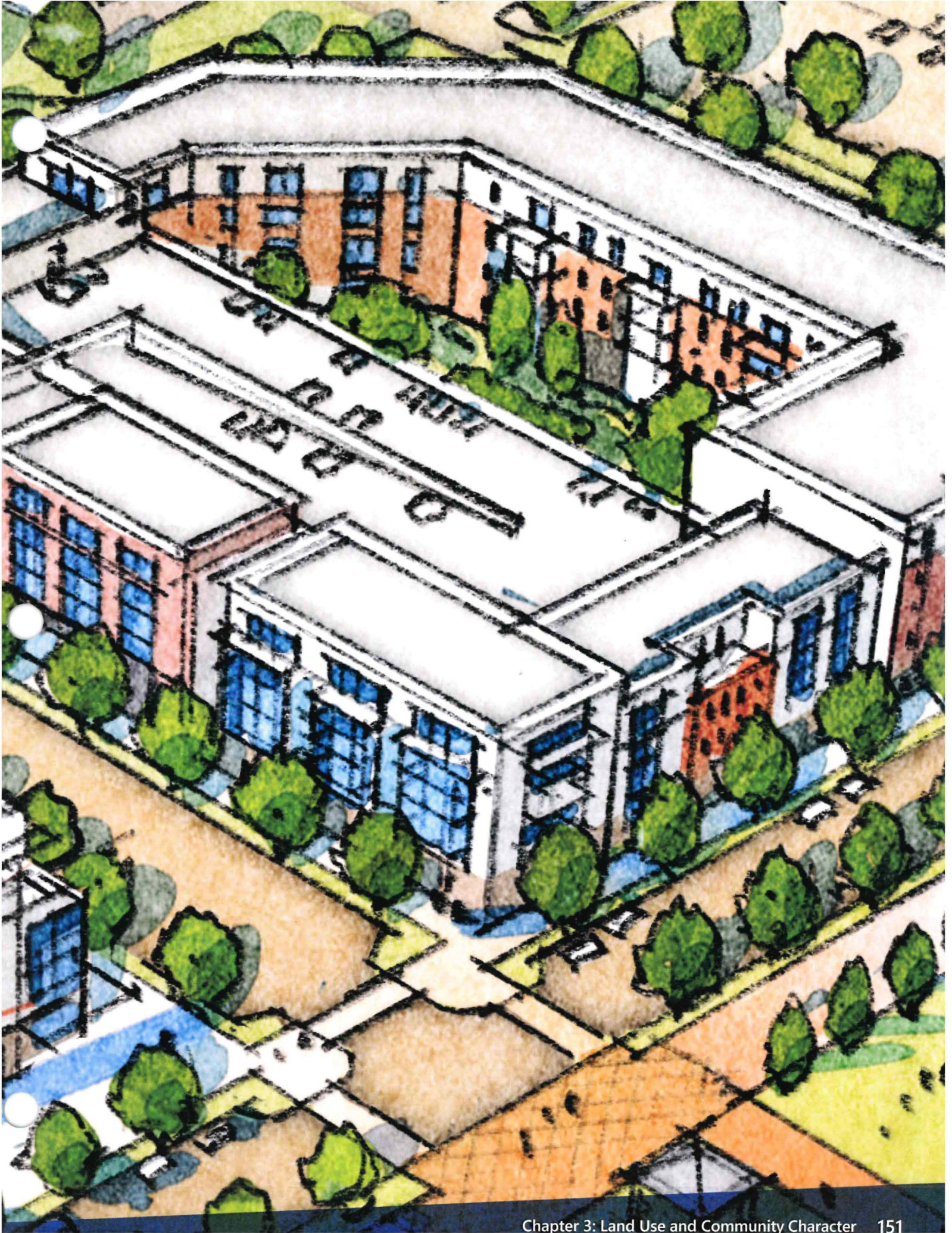
As a western gateway into the town, Garner Station presents an opportunity to redevelop existing commercial spaces and make a statement about the town at this critical point of entry. In addition to maximizing the utilization of the real estate, more intense development that features signature architecture could welcome visitors and help establish a new image for Garner.

- 1 Signature architecture facing the main traffic routes can serve to welcome those arriving from points north.
- 2 Central green is also a gathering space near a possible transit stop location.
- 3 An internal network of streets provides local access while reducing connections to and vehicular trips on the highways (i.e., US-401 and US-70).
- 4 The potential redevelopment of big-box stores opens up opportunities for more intense development needed for a successful transit service in this node.
- 5 Structured parking allows more real estate to be devoted to building space and amenities.

This conceptual illustration is one of several possibilities for development. It conveys the intended scale, mix of uses, organization of buildings and public spaces, locations for parking, and streetscape design. It is not meant to be prescriptive. Instead, it is a guide, expanding on the direction provided by the Character Typology Map.



Redevelopment of the parcels at this western gateway into Garner would provide an opportunity for introducing more intensity with multi-story, mixed-use buildings. Modifications to the street network to create a grid of local streets would improve access and circulation, particularly for bicyclists and pedestrians.





B

Small public spaces, such as this formal green, edged by small buildings (or one-, two-, and three-story facades) help create a pedestrian scale in the midst of larger, multi-story structures. Spaces like the one pictured in this illustration provide seating areas for those transferring to and from transit as well as areas into which businesses can extend functional space.



Establish a welcoming gateway that makes a positive statement about Garner.

Change the perception of Garner with investment in key development sites and the public realm. The organization of buildings, streets, and public spaces within could help create an inviting environment. Detailing of architecture and public spaces can be used to convey the community's commitment to quality development.

- Utilize streetscape, signage, landscaping, and art in combination to influence the visual experience on the approach into the area.
- Delineate sites to be the locations of key buildings, which should be the anchors within the center and focal points of the entry experience. These may be buildings that are taller than surrounding buildings and require more detailed architectural elements to distinguish them from adjacent structures.

Intensify development for a more viable business location and transit service.

The access via the road network, supplemented in the future by transit, makes this area suitable for more intense development. New development can be a continuation of the urbanization of the southern edge of Raleigh. By reimagining the sites within, a broader mix of uses can be accommodated. The adaptive reuse of existing buildings (i.e., INQ) coupled with additional square footage provided in new buildings could expand available floor area to house a wider variety of retail, restaurant, office, and service uses. Flanking and nearby residential development would help justify a mix of uses needed to create a more vibrant center and ensure a viable business location option for potential investors.

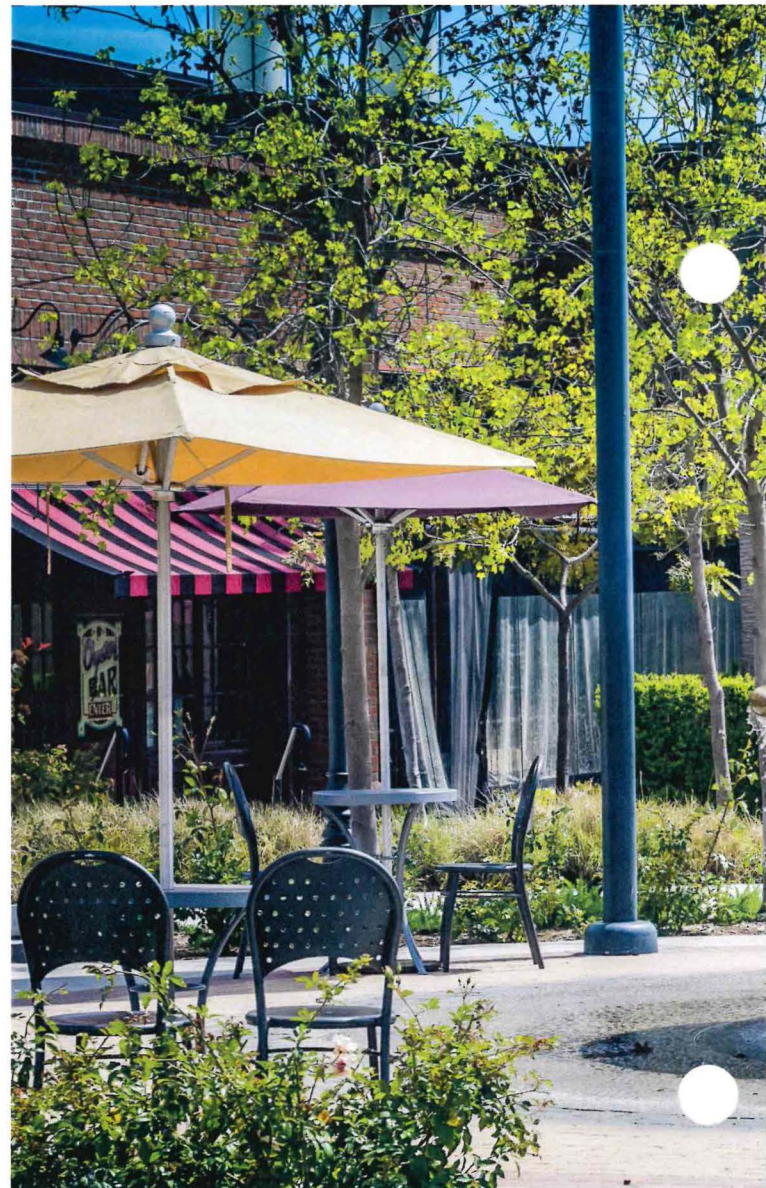
Reference:



Integrate appropriately sized public spaces as organizing elements that also support a variety of gatherings.

Carefully designed public spaces surrounded by well-articulated building facades and streetscape elements can help achieve a human scale and support a range of activities to enliven the place. Green spaces and plazas can serve as foregrounds to key structures as well as places for people to gather for formal events and informal socializing.

Reference:



Connect to the greenway planned for the US-401 corridor.

Design the sidewalk network to be a continuation of the greenway (or sidepath) to be constructed on the east side of the US-401 highway corridor, connecting this western gateway to neighborhoods that lie south.





Fifth Avenue (Area 2)

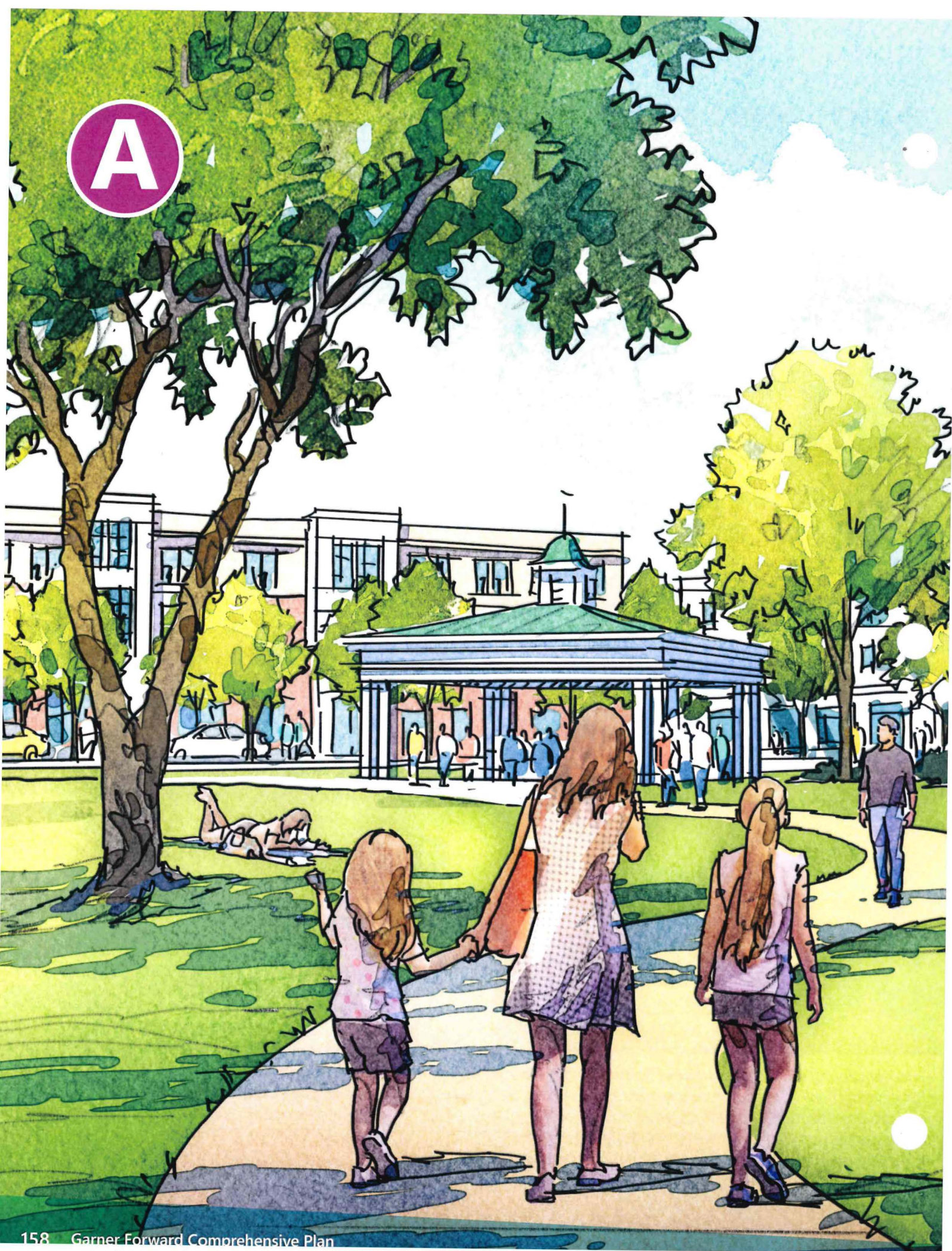
Recent investments in the vicinity of the Fifth Avenue area are facilitating the transition of this area into a center for governmental activities as well as a neighborhood gathering space. While it will not replace the historic town center, it can serve as the town's new "front door." An orderly arrangement of municipal buildings, particularly in a campus-like setting, conveys a sense of organization and sound management. Infill and redevelopment along with some street realignments and closures will help create a walkable, mixed-use destination. Here, civic functions can be enhanced by commercial activity and amenities to be enjoyed by the community.

- 1 Existing town-owned facilities can be maintained or reused for municipal purposes.
- 2 Additional buildings intended for municipal functions could reinforce the emerging center for the concentration of governmental uses..
- 3 A public green would give visual access to existing commercial, which in turn would activate this space once supplemented by new commercial uses around the green.
- 4 Changes in the street network could divert pass-through traffic around this area and offer more pedestrian-friendly streets where local traffic is maneuvering.
- 5 Infill development will help build a critical mass necessary for this location to become more viable for businesses.
- 6 The redevelopment of existing multifamily sites could allow for more housing, which is suitable given the access to the area and places more households within walking distance for key civic anchors and businesses.



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A



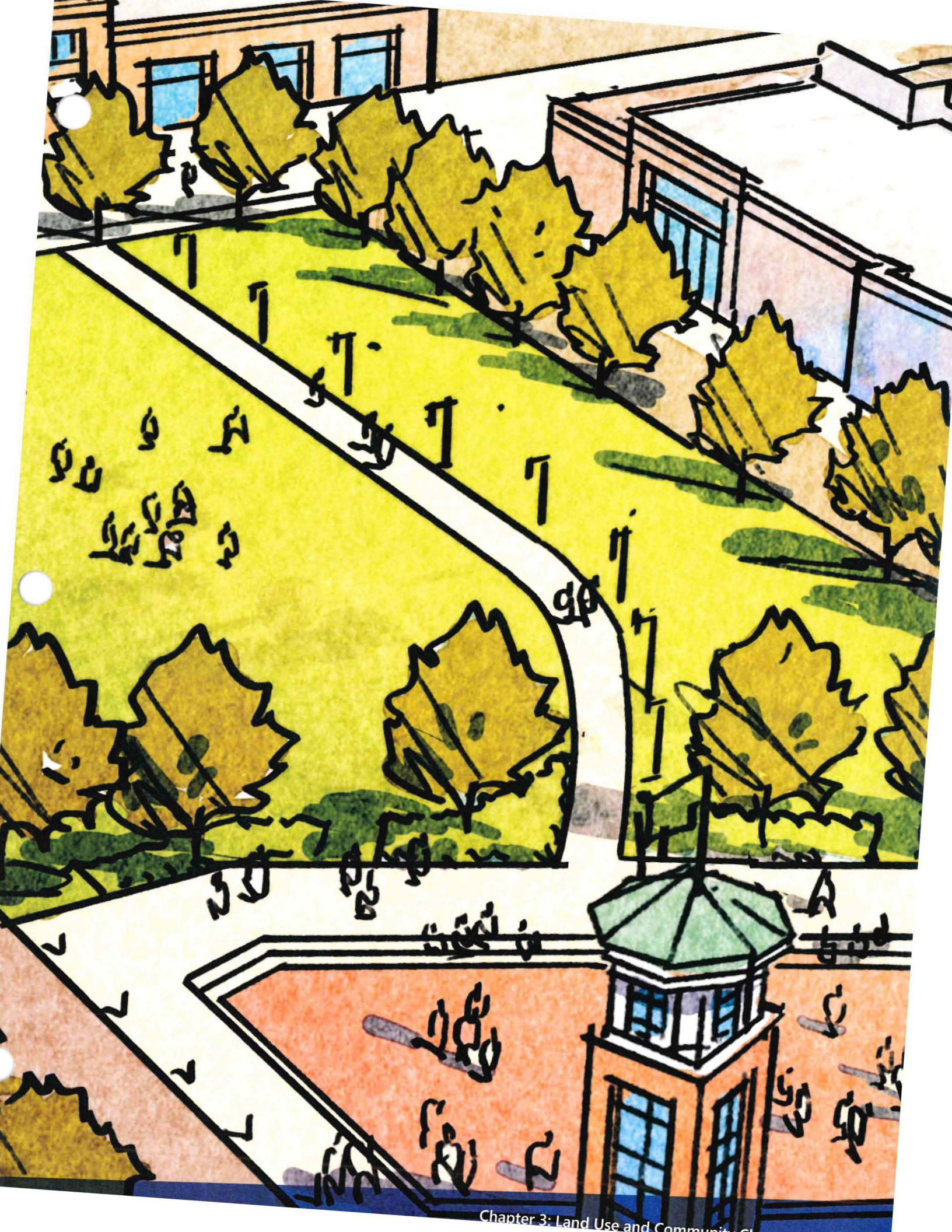



Ample green space around Town Hall lends itself to a wide variety of civic events and activities. Here, the community can feel a sense of ownership of the town properties, enjoying the grounds as another park space. It can be programmed throughout the year to bring the community together.



B

A formal public green can help organize an emerging neighborhood-scale, commercial center while providing a civic event space. A new street in front of the existing shopping center building, which may be adapted for new uses and tenants, provides an edge to the new park space. Together, they open up views to the existing commercial buildings along 5th Avenue. This visual access will be especially important if the connection between 5th Avenue and Vandora Springs Road is modified in the future.





Reaching a critical mass of commercial space will ensure this government center becomes a more viable location for existing and future businesses. The parcels that lie south of 7th Avenue are underutilized and could be redeveloped into a mix of residential and commercial development. This illustration depicts a vertical mix of uses in a single building (apartments above first-floor retail, restaurant, and/or office space). It may be an appropriate use of the land at the corner of 7th Avenue and a new intersecting street.



Re-imagine the Fifth Avenue focus area as a government center for Garner.

This area has been the focus of the town's recent investments in civic buildings and spaces, including the Town Hall building. The town should build on both public and private investments to create a cohesive mixed-use area.

- Continue public investments that contribute to the creation of a more cohesive, campus-like setting for municipal activities.

Reference: **A**

- Expand the geography associated with this area. For example, the parcels that lie south and east of the core area could become extensions of the area.



Enhance the public realm to support civic activities and maintain the viability of commercial development.

A variety of formal greens that support programming, an enhanced streetscape, and greenways should be integrated into the center to provide amenities while introducing a level of organization that knits the component parts together.

- To ensure the viability of existing commercial development, create a public space as a foreground to the existing buildings. New buildings can organize around this same green space creating an edge condition that frames the space and reinforces the pedestrian scale.

Reference: **B**

- Invest in streetscape that highlights the pedestrian spaces adding street trees, furnishings, and other elements to create a more comfortable, inviting environment. Install specialty pavers to physically delineate the "main street" loop.
- Treat the streets as linear parks and pedestrian connections that lead to the future greenway along the Creek.
- Create front-facing edges. Encourage site design that orients new buildings toward public spaces and the future greenway.



Modify the street network.

Circulation patterns should be easily understood to ensure navigation to and around the center is intuitive. Redirect pass-through traffic while creating safe, connected system of pedestrian-scaled streets. Improvements may include the following:

- Close the access road at Aversboro Road and utilize that area which is also under the power lines for surface parking.
- Close access to Fifth Avenue while opening up the drive aisle in front of the existing Food Lion to become a new street.
- Study the possibility of connecting Fifth Avenue to Dupree Street via Village Court. This connection would improve accessibility to the area from US-70 (via Benson Road) but would involve a creek crossing. The cost of permitting and providing the culvert might only be warranted by the level of investment in infill development shown.
- Reconstruct Aversboro Road intersection with Seventh Avenue to create a fluid vehicular movement to Vandora Springs Road and US-70.

Expand the range of land uses that are included in the focus area.

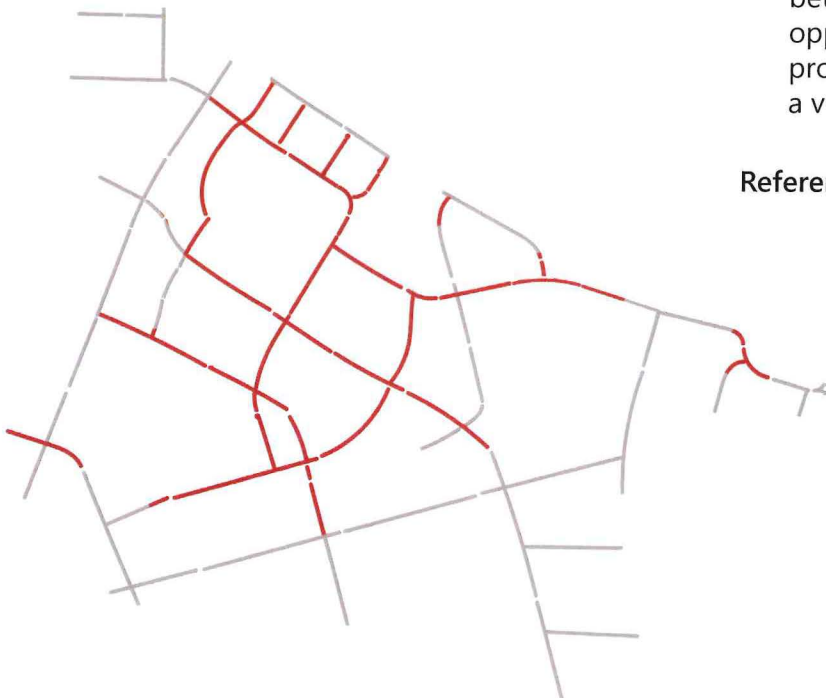
Maximize the utilization of existing publicly-owned buildings and sites.

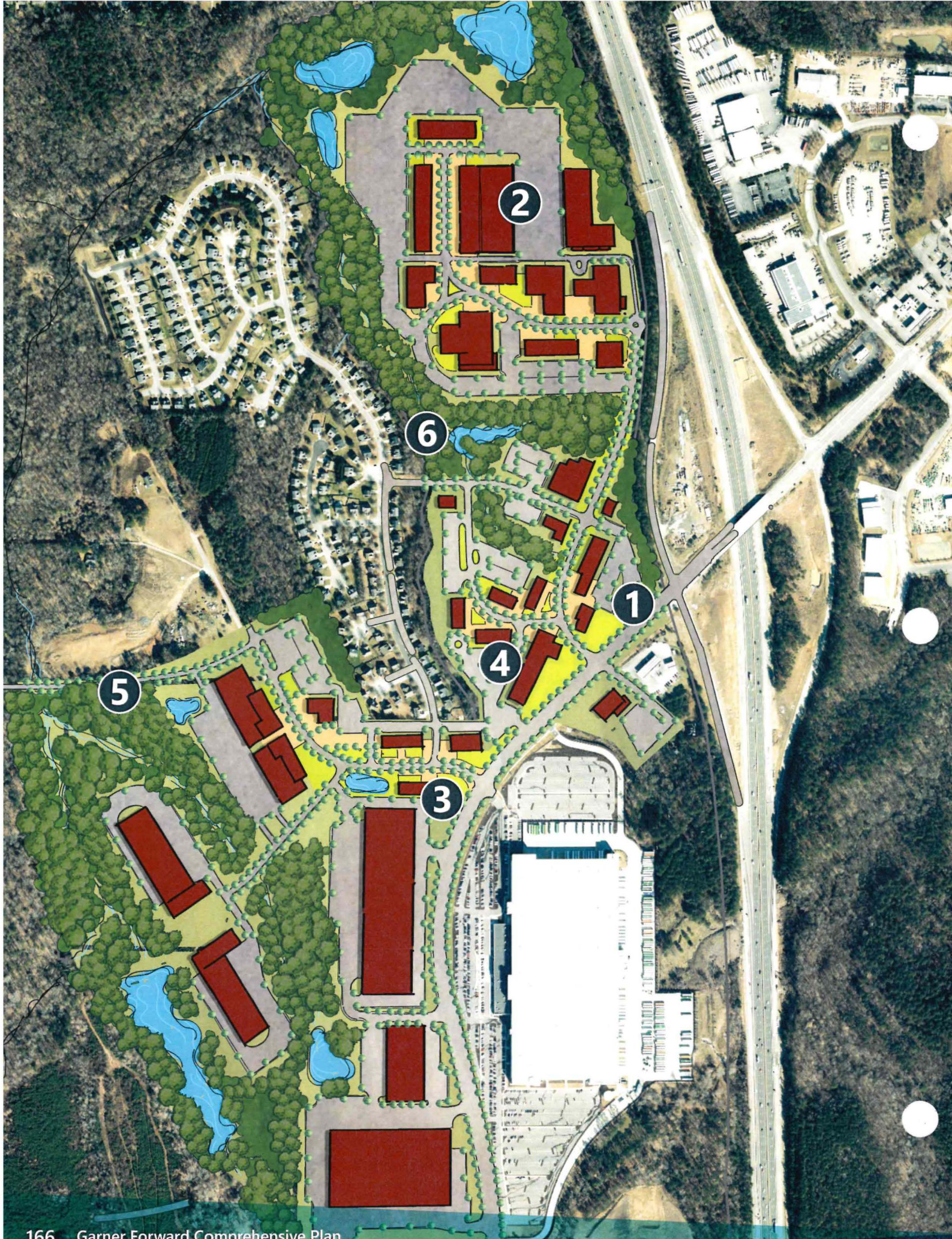
- Supplement the town-owned buildings with additional structures that can house more government functions while reinforcing a more organized pattern of development.

Encourage reinvestment in underutilized properties.

- Allow the intensification of underdeveloped sites to enable infill development that increases the mix of uses.
- Facilitate the reuse or redevelopment of existing buildings to accommodate additional commercial (retail, restaurant, office, and service) uses that would complement the existing commercial development and enhance the vibrancy of the center.
- Work with property owners and investors to secure parcels for redevelopment to increase the intensity of development around this area.
- Encourage the redevelopment of the existing multifamily sites for higher density multifamily and mixed-use buildings. This would lead to better utilization of available land, expand opportunities for business locations, and help provide the critical mass necessary for creating a viable center.

Reference:





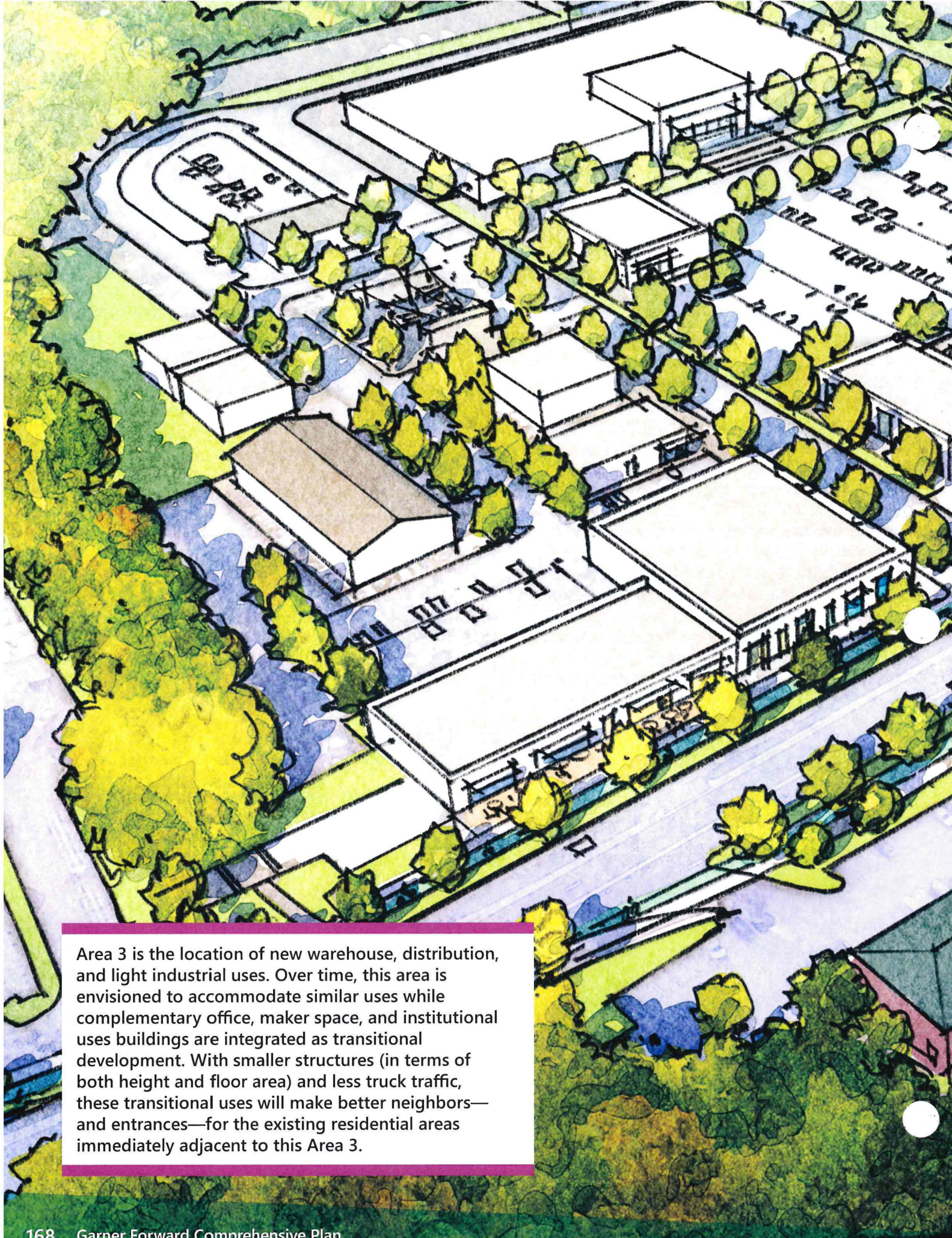
Northeast Gateway (Area 3)

Considered by some as the “backdoor” into Garner, this area at Jones Sausage Road is emerging as a regional employment center. It has become a desirable location for warehousing and distribution uses. With minor improvements to access, the land available in the area can accommodate more of these uses. The scale of such development is in sharp contrast with existing residential development that predates it. Such uses can peacefully coexist with the introduction of complementary transitions in the form of mixed-use nodes. The nodes can serve as local destinations comprised of retail shops and restaurants to be enjoyed by the residents and workers of the area. The stepped-down scale of the structures within the nodes along with a range of neighborhood-compatible uses, including small office spaces, can create better entrances into the existing neighborhoods and generally help present a more approachable entry into the town. The enhancements achieved with well-designed structures and public spaces can elevate this route into Garner to a “side door,” the place through which friends and family enter.

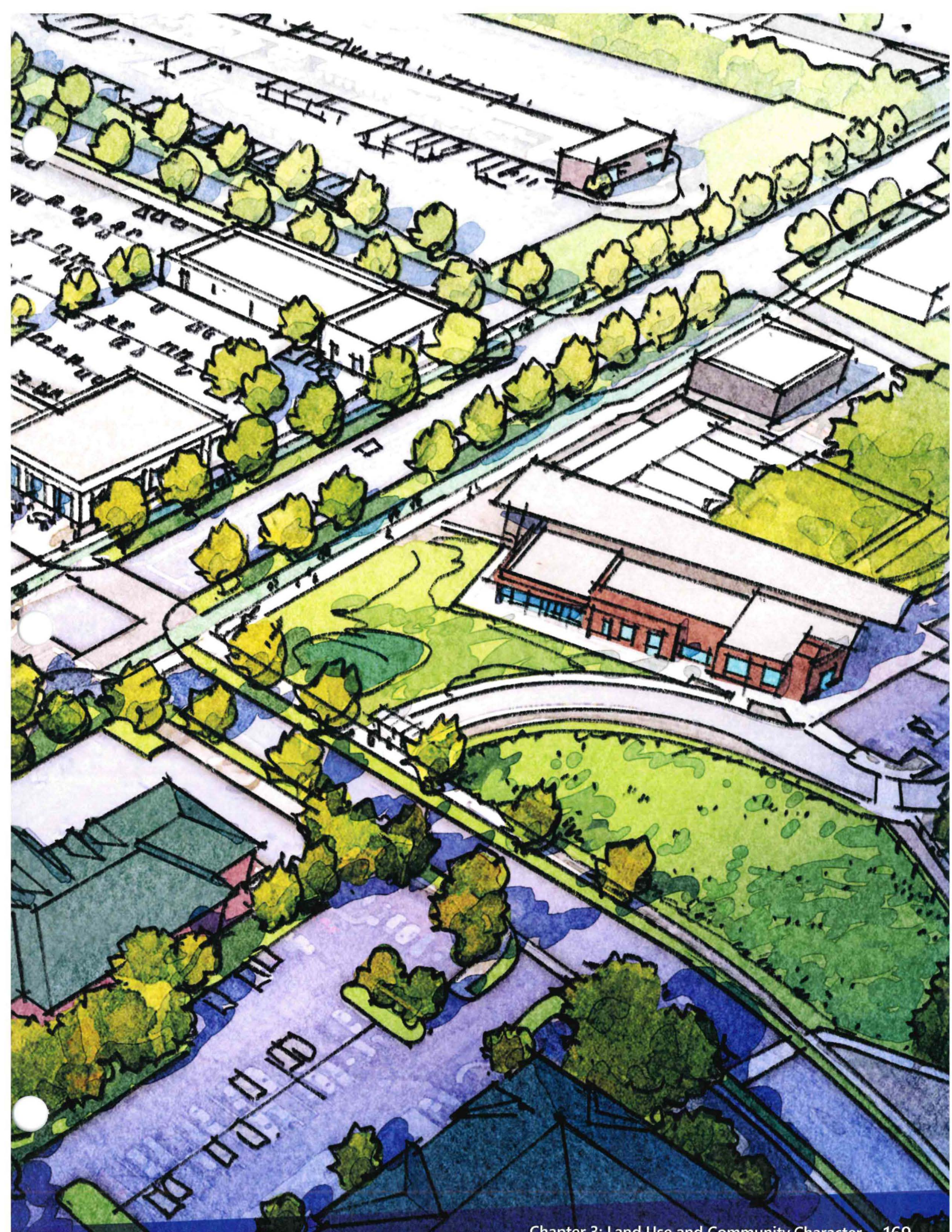
Focus Area Highlights:

- 1 Enhanced, manicured streetscape along Jones Sausage Road can present a well-organized, pleasant east entrance.
- 2 Building on the existing pattern of light industrial and warehouse/distribution can advance economic development efforts.
- 3 Commercial buildings with smaller footprints can mitigate the impacts of larger buildings by reducing the scale in the foreground. These buildings could be a combination of employment (office and service uses can be compatible neighbors for the) and retail uses, which would be compatible neighbors for the existing residential development and provide a positive transition to area homes.
- 4 Nodes of commercial uses could be destinations for both residents and workers in the area. Such uses should be organized around small plazas with well-articulated landscaping.
- 5 New street connections could help alleviate traffic congestion on Jones Sausage Road.
- 6 Natural open space along creek corridors may serve as greenway corridors, connecting this area to its surroundings.

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Area 3 is the location of new warehouse, distribution, and light industrial uses. Over time, this area is envisioned to accommodate similar uses while complementary office, maker space, and institutional uses buildings are integrated as transitional development. With smaller structures (in terms of both height and floor area) and less truck traffic, these transitional uses will make better neighbors—and entrances—for the existing residential areas immediately adjacent to this Area 3.



Expand employment opportunities.

Large- and small-scale industrial development is locating in this area. The benefits of job generation and increased tax revenue are being realized. Continue to support the development of sites in this area to ensure economic development objectives are being achieved while mitigating the impacts of such development on surrounding neighborhoods.

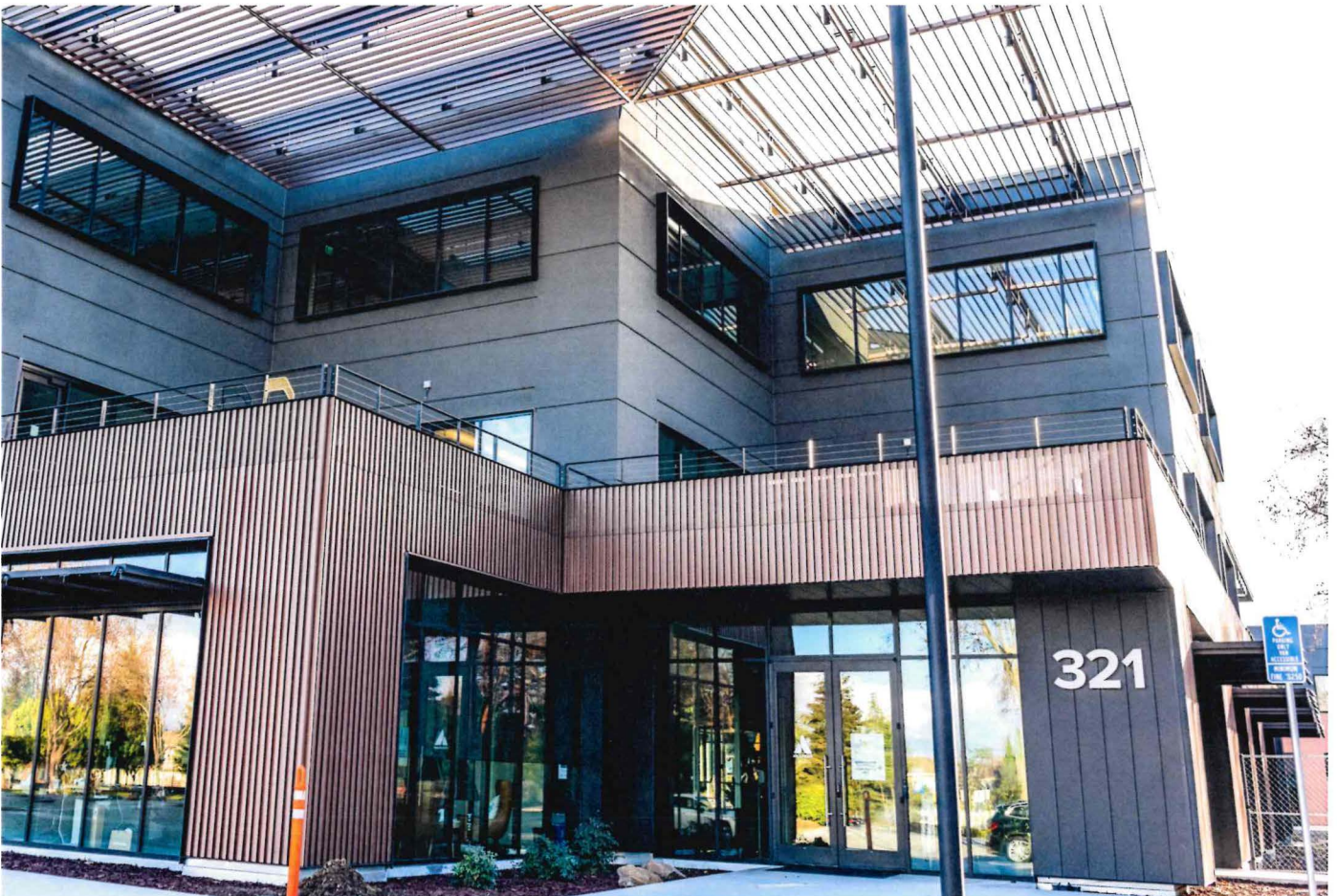


Enhance the streetscape of Jones Sausage Road for a quality appearance.

One way to create an inviting entrance into the town as large-scale development finds its way to sites along this road corridor is to focus on enhancements to the streetscape that improve aesthetics and address the scale issues.

Create nodes of activity for transitions to existing development.

The newer industrial sites stand in sharp contrast to the existing residential development in the area. The places that join them can be the focus, designed to include a mix of uses around public spaces. As such, they address the scale of the larger buildings and provide a more hospitable entrance to the adjacent neighborhoods.





Details in small spaces, such as colorful plantings and decorative elements, along with the furnishings placed in the streetscape, combine to create a more hospitable environment.

Well-located, small buildings can help create the transition from large structures to the public spaces that surround them. Stepped-down building heights, tree canopy, art, and plazas with multiple seating areas can be designed to reinforce a human scale.





NC-540 at Rock Quarry Road / Auburn Station (Area 4)

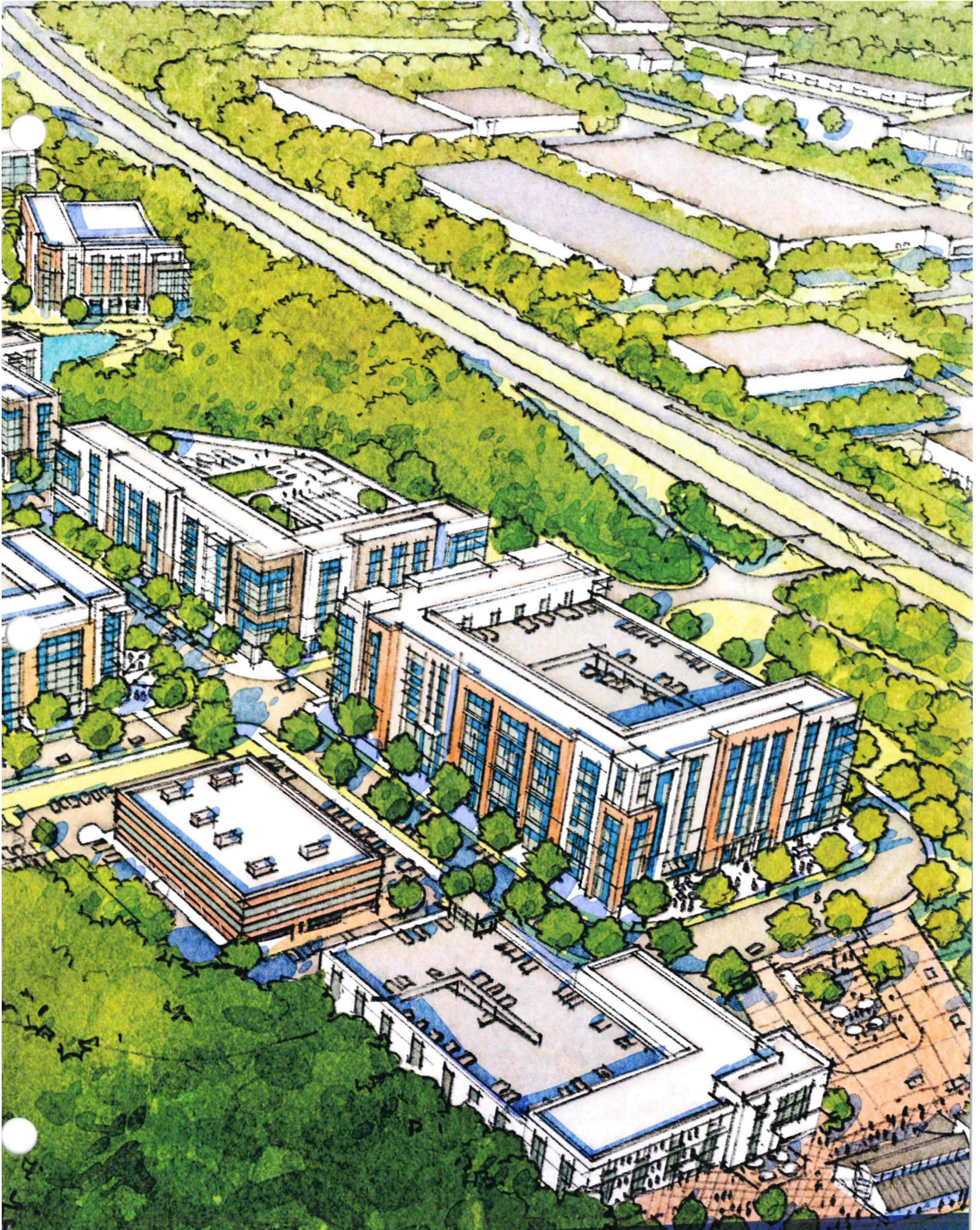
This area presents an opportunity for the town to create an eastern gateway into the town and do so with a level of development that also supports future transit service. This area is envisioned as a stop for regional rail service at “Auburn Station” and a place to accommodate a development activity center with employment, commercial, and institutional uses. The residential neighborhoods in between are an expansion of development already emerging in this area. The mix of housing types would offer options to meet a broad range of demand based on life-stage preferences.

- 1** Access to NC-540 via Rock Quarry Road makes the northern part of this focus area a key location in the region for employment growth, which can be created as a mixed-use environment that includes attached residential and multifamily units.
- 2** The southern portion, with proximity to US-70 and the rail corridor, is ideally suited for transit-supportive development, which should also consist of a mix of uses, including multifamily units in a walkable environment.
- 3** New neighborhoods with a mix of housing products would complement existing residential development while expanding housing choices and increasing population around the area with future transit access.
- 4** Institutional uses, including existing churches, will be components of the mixed-use center and be integrated sensitively.
- 5** Logical connections to existing streets tie compatible neighborhoods together.
- 6** Greenway connections through this area may be accessible from various points, including trailheads that can utilize excess commercial parking on weekends.

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This area is well located for regional access. The adjacent highway network provides a direct link to available land that is situated to attract employment and supporting commercial uses in a mixed-use node. Here, residential options nearby help create opportunities to live close to work. A system of green spaces, including greenway connections, help expand recreational amenities.





B

Streetscape elements may include green spaces that can be designed and function as linear parks.





Mixed-use buildings along new streets help create a walkable village near the transit stop where pedestrian activity will likely be high as people transfer to and from transit vehicles. The mix of uses may include retail, restaurants, and services that can be supported by daily commuters as well as residents of upper floor residential units and nearby apartments and townhouses.





Formal greens and pocket parks punctuate the built environment, providing relief from the hard edges and offering places to sit and enjoy the outdoors. In this area, such spaces should also provide a variety of seating for the comfort of those making the shift from one mode of travel to another (i.e., transit).



Create a new eastern gateway into Garner.

Following the completion of the NC-540 corridor, many traveling into Garner from eastern destinations will likely enter the town through the interchange at Rock Quarry Road. Similar to the impact the western gateway will have once reinvestment introduces the town through a new front door, this eastern gateway is an opportunity to reinforce a new image for Garner. The mix of uses will include employment as well as supporting retail and services. Attention to the details of the architecture and public realm will help make a lasting positive impression.

Reference: **A B**

Leverage the location for investment in employment uses.

The connection to the new interchange will make this area a highly accessible—and therefore attractive—location for employment. In addition to the ease of access to other places in the Triangle Region, the area is convenient to a broad range of housing, which will make attracting talent easier for employers choosing this location.

Create a vibrant transit station area with approachable mixed-use development.

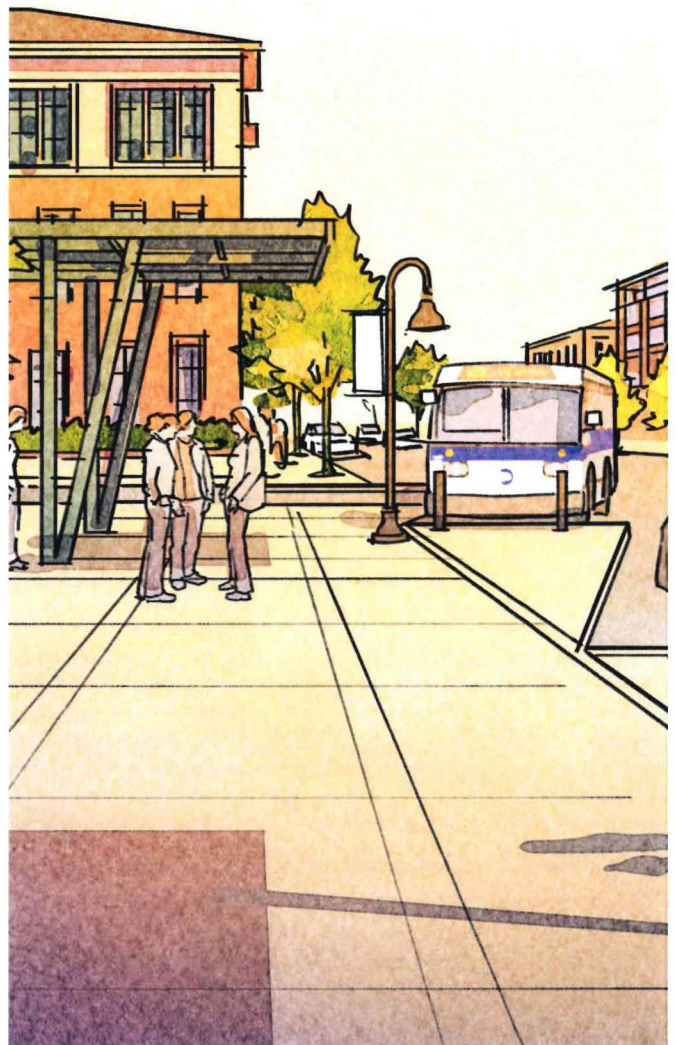
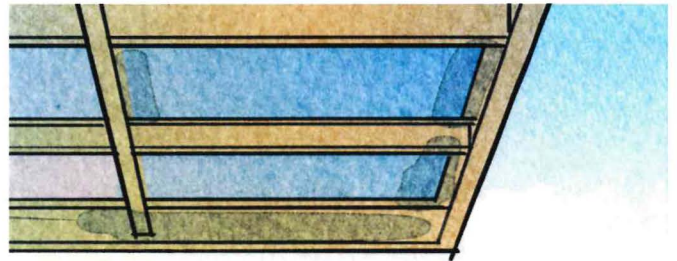
In contrast to the auto-oriented development of US-70, this station area offers an opportunity to create a mixed-use environment where the pedestrian takes priority. Access to the transit stop requires riders to be pedestrians for part of each trip. Here, the elements should help establish a sense of safety and ease navigation. Structures that frame the streets and public spaces near the station should reinforce a pedestrian scale, though higher building heights may be accomplished behind.

Reference: **C**

Use public spaces for smooth transitions.

Design public spaces to be the links between modes. Plazas and small parks can welcome those arriving and provide comfortable places to wait for the next leg of the trip to begin. Mobility hubs can be enhanced by co-location with these spaces.

Reference: **D**



Organize development around public spaces such as formal greens.

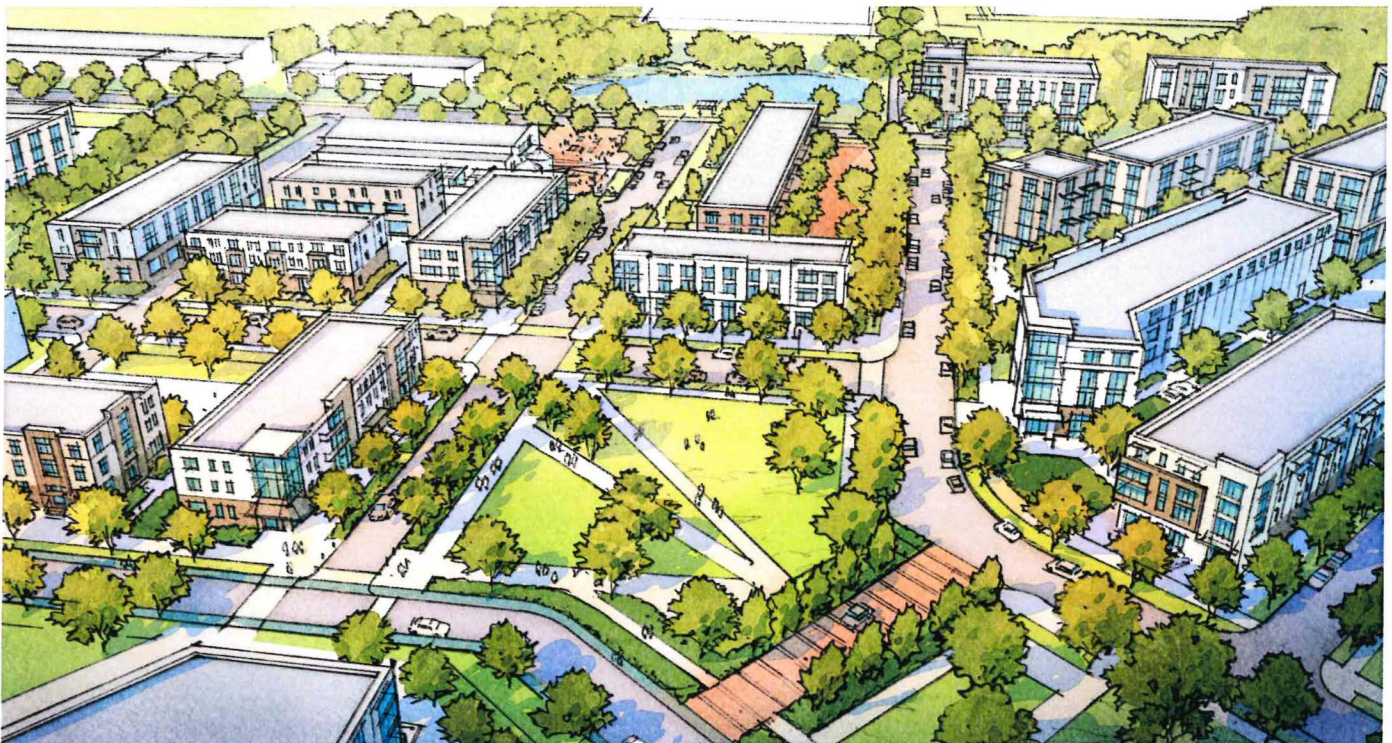
In addition to providing amenities in this mixed-use area, well-designed green spaces provide relief from the hard edges of the built environment and help with orientation. To reinforce scale, the space should be flanked by buildings to create an edge. Facing the spaces, these buildings also provide a sense of safety with an “eyes-on-the-park” relationship.

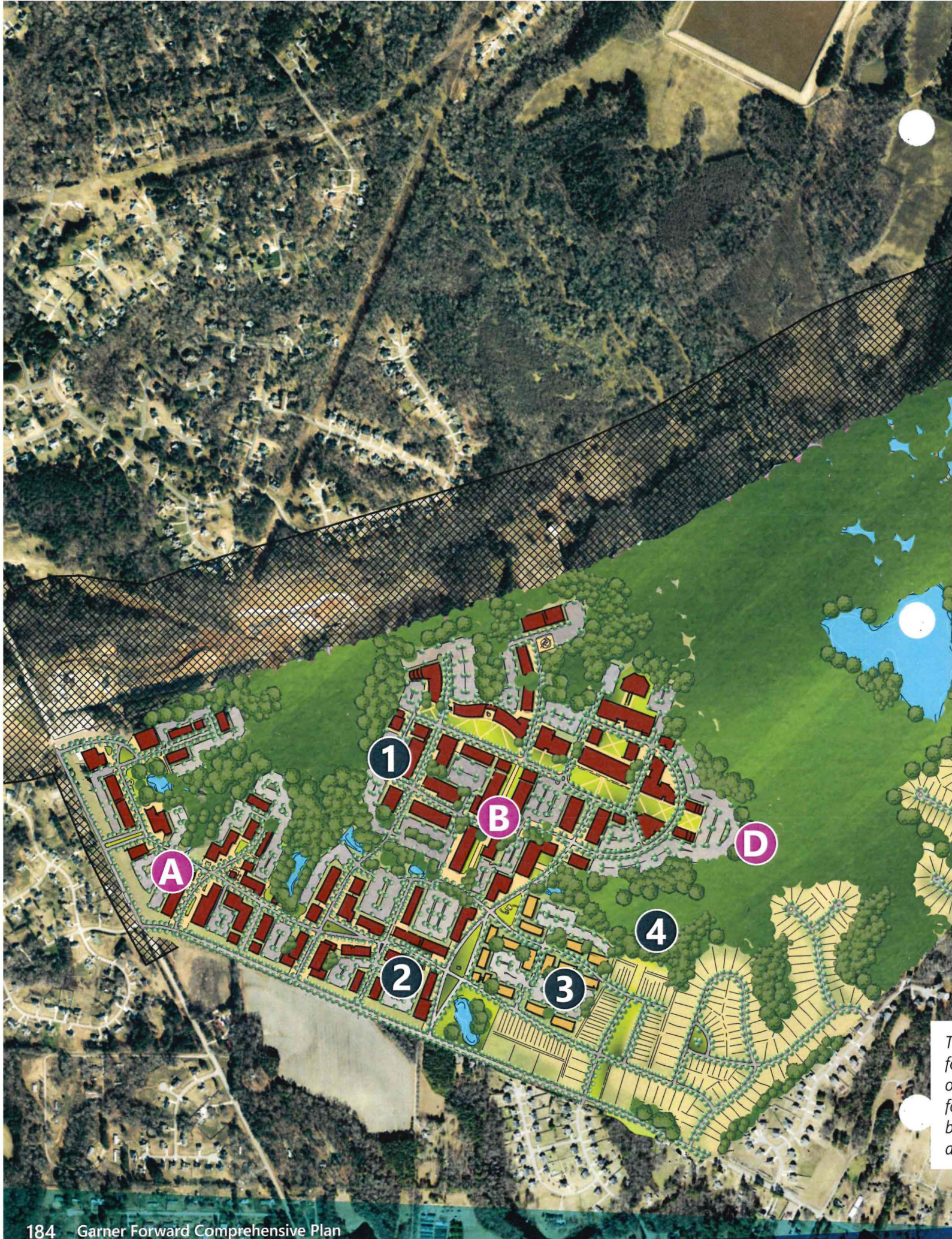


Accommodate a range of attached and detached single family homes to complement existing housing in adjacent neighborhoods.

Support more intense residential development in this area, including on sites north of the future commuter rail station, to support transit ridership.

- Encourage new multifamily development to locate near the planned station to expand housing options near transit access points. This type of housing is compatible with the non-residential development that will likely be drawn to this transit stop location and the employment that can be supported on sites having desirable highway visibility and access via the future Rock Quarry Road / NC-540 interchange.
- Adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods, increases in density should be permitted in a manner that respects the established scale of existing development and serves as a transition to the mixed-use and commercial areas in the vicinity. Consider a variety of single-family housing types with small footprints and small lot size requirements





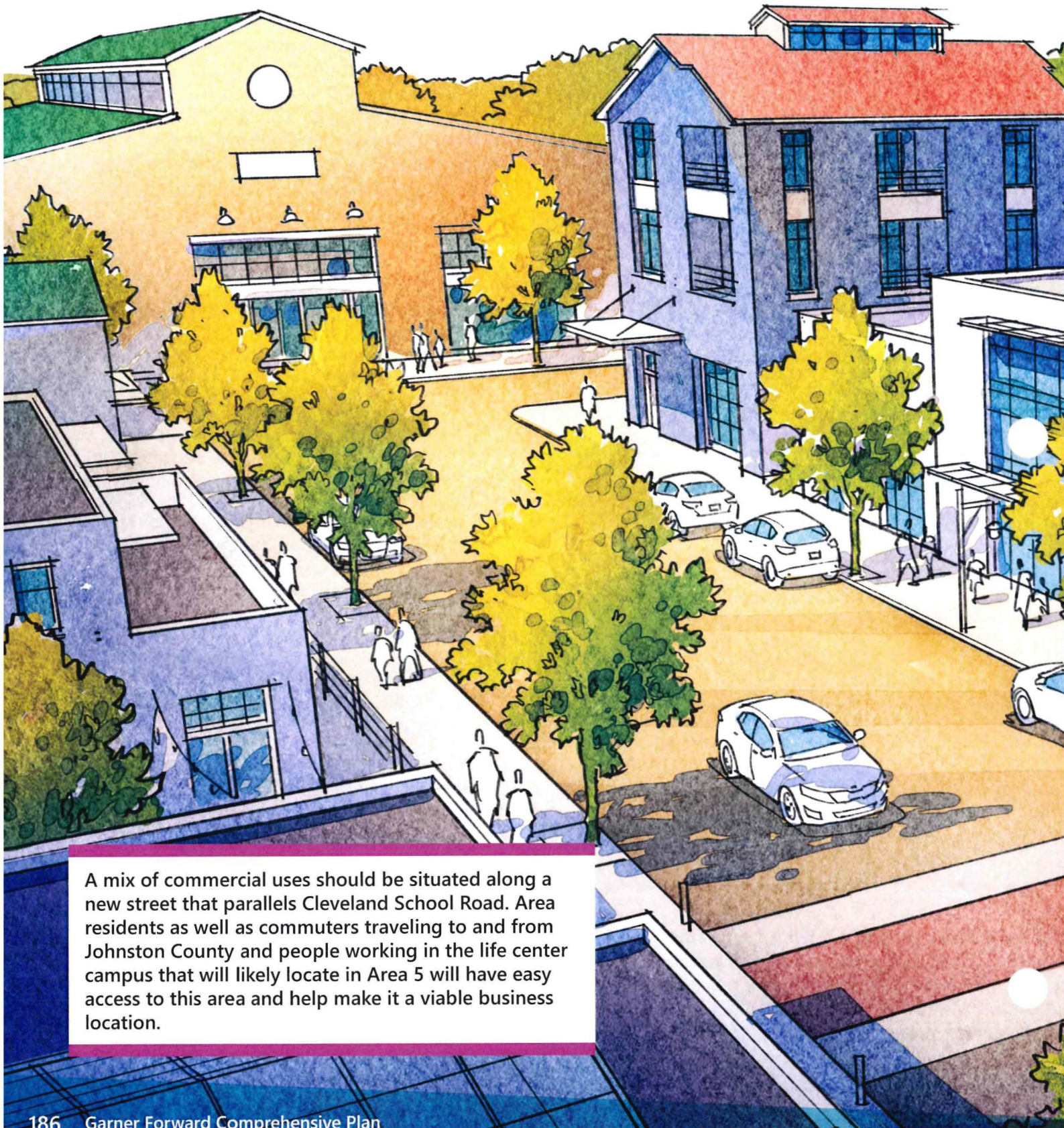


NC-540 at NC-50 (Area 5)

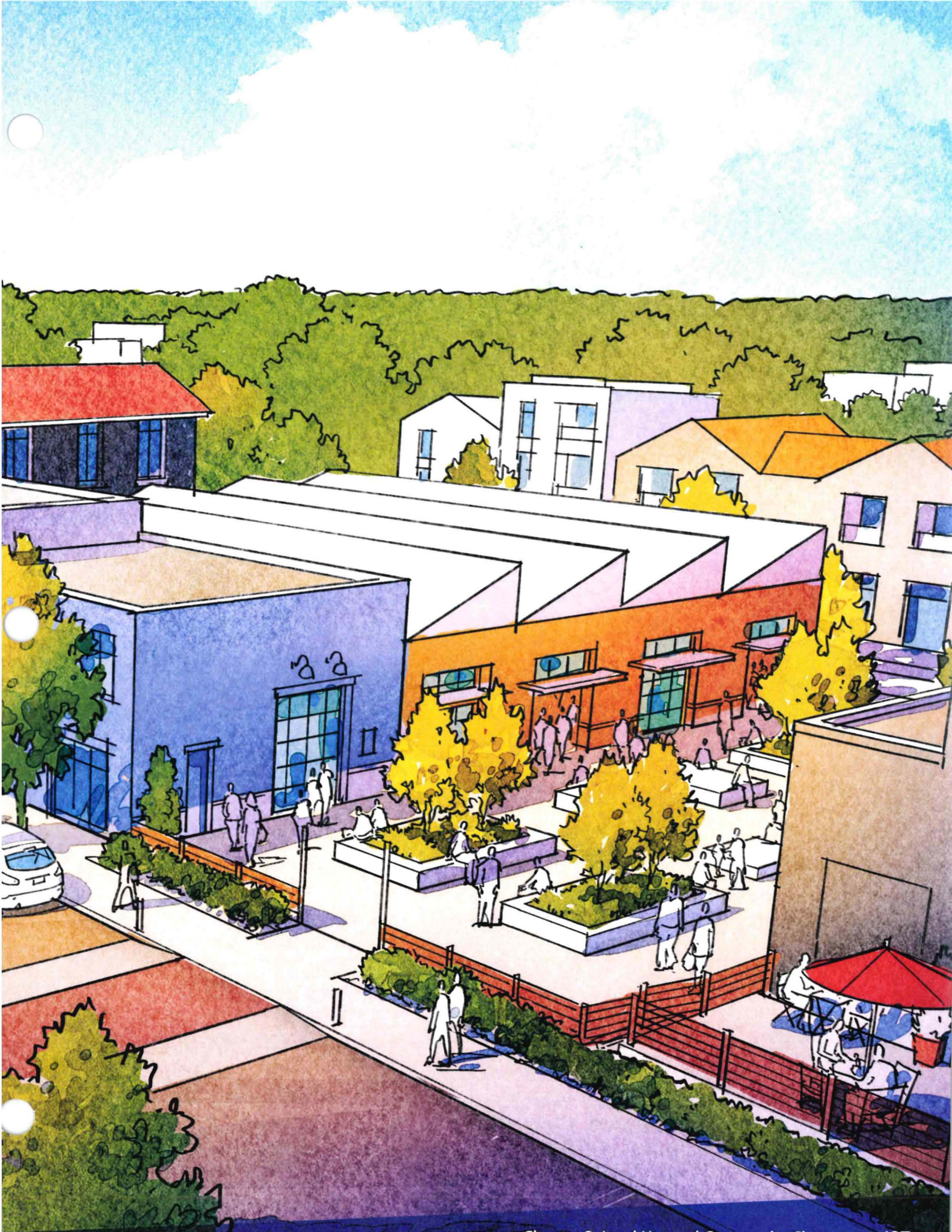
The interchange area around NC-540 and NC-50 (Area 5) is a key link to I-40 and US-70, placing this site in a strategic logistics location. This presents an opportunity to locate flex space for warehousing and distribution. It is also a gateway into Johnston County, one of the fastest growing counties in the state and the US. The direct access to NC-50 and the connecting road, Cleveland School Road, opens up this area for commercial development that capitalizes on the traffic anticipated in the future. Blending these uses and complementing them with a range of residential products help create a different type of mixed-use development that supports a live-work environment.

- 1 A mix of employment uses organized around a life science center campus will be drawn to this strong logistics location.
- 2 Commercial development here is locally-serving. It will also serve the traveling public passing through this area, a key entry into Johnston County in the near future.
- 3 A mix of residential uses offers a live-work opportunity. It transitions in density as it steps toward the single-family neighborhoods at the Johnston County edge.
- 4 Remnant land maintained by NCDOT could lend itself to a significant passive recreation and nature preserve connecting people to the larger Swift Creek corridor which will offer a wide variety of recreational activities.
- 5 At the county line in an area where the topography is challenging for development, hard-to-access land can be an extension of existing single-family neighborhoods.

Conceptual illustration is one of several possibilities for development. It conveys the intended scale, mix of uses, organization of buildings and public spaces, locations of streetscape design. It is not meant to be descriptive. Instead, it is a guide, expanding on the information provided by the Character Typology Map.



A mix of commercial uses should be situated along a new street that parallels Cleveland School Road. Area residents as well as commuters traveling to and from Johnston County and people working in the life center campus that will likely locate in Area 5 will have easy access to this area and help make it a viable business location.





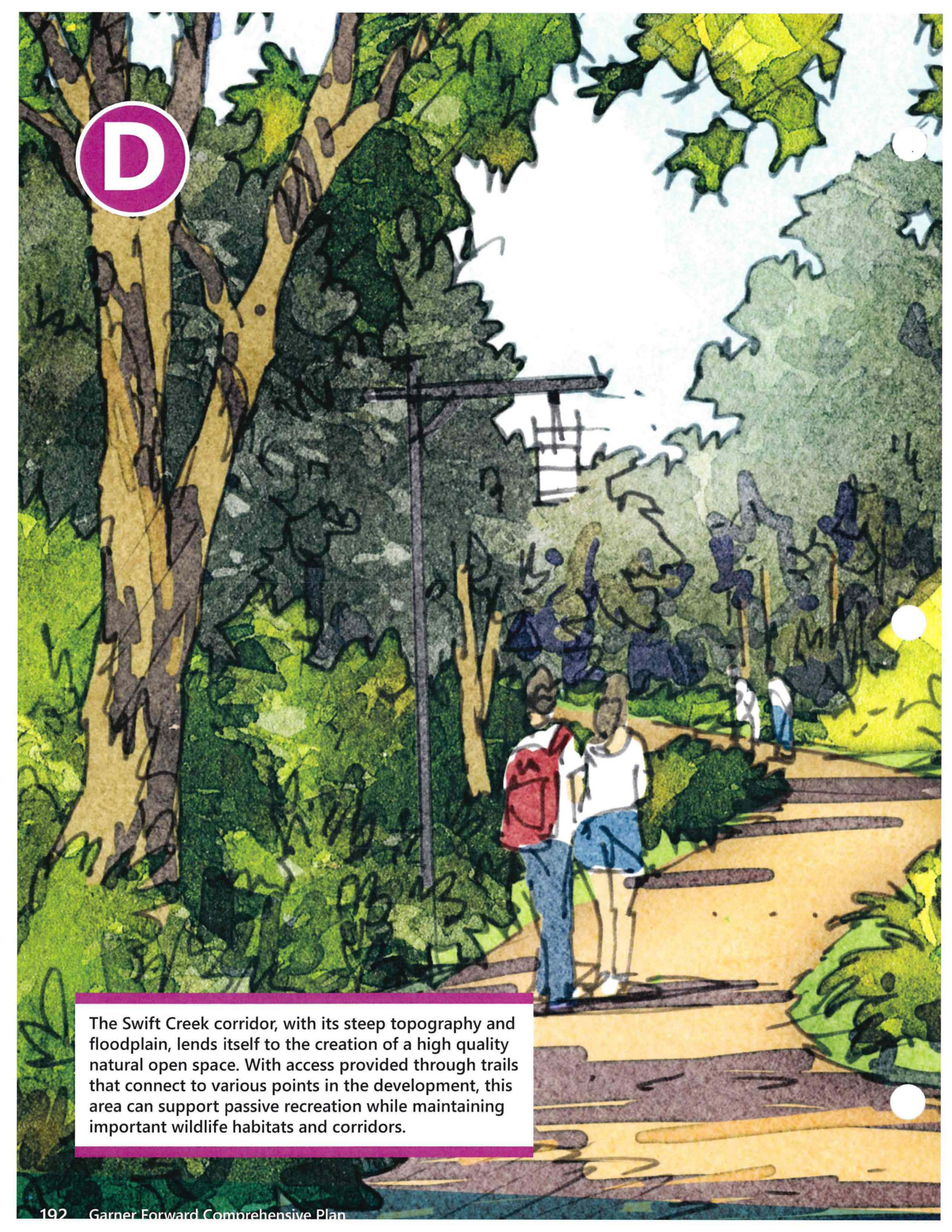
Area 5 is located with ideal highway access for life sciences and industrial uses. Flex buildings will likely comprise much of the development in this area.





Residential development in this area may include single-family development as an extension of the residential neighborhoods in adjacent Johnston County. Open space should be a key element in new neighborhoods, which should include natural areas, more formal greens around which houses would be located (as shown), and links between them to create access for passive recreation.





The Swift Creek corridor, with its steep topography and floodplain, lends itself to the creation of a high quality natural open space. With access provided through trails that connect to various points in the development, this area can support passive recreation while maintaining important wildlife habitats and corridors.



Leverage the access to the highway network to achieve economic development objectives.

With a connection to several federal highways, the town has an opportunity to attract and locate businesses interested in highly accessible sites to this area. As a gateway into Johnston County where growth is exceeding all projections, this area can also support a range of commercial development that meets the needs of workers and residents in the immediate areas as well as pass-by commuter traffic as Johnston County residents make their way home from work in Raleigh and other places in the Triangle Region.

- Prepare an area plan that demonstrates how various parcels can be developed in concert to deliver a mix of complementary uses:

- Retail, restaurant, office and service uses;
- Industrial development of varying sizes, including makerspaces;
- Life sciences; and
- Housing, including townhomes, and multifamily units in the form of lofts, condominiums, and apartments.

A

B



Introduce a gradation of housing density: low at the county line and increasing as development approaches NC-540.

Low density single-family housing in Johnston County can be continued in the southern part of this area but could quickly transition to higher density. The town should consider the following:

- Allow a mix of housing types that creates options for living close to this employment center.
- Increase housing density closer to the commercial uses and with availability of utility infrastructure. Consider attached single-family homes, such as lofts, townhomes, and multifamily units.

Consider connectivity a key ingredient for successful development of this area.

Over time, traffic volumes building on the existing roads will warrant capacity increases with new facilities. Some such facilities can be part of the internal network created within this site. Consider the following options to optimize mobility in this interchange area:

- Create a parallel road as part of a walkable network of local streets to ensure fewer vehicular trips on Cleveland School Road.
- Establish a hierarchy in the street network to separate truck traffic from areas where pedestrian traffic will likely be higher.
- Encourage a linked system of sidewalks, sidepaths, and trails designed for active recreation and non-motorized transportation.



Maximize open space as a primary element in the development pattern.

Open space, whether improved for public access or conserved to protect natural resources, can be thoughtfully integrated into the design of new development at this interchange area. The spectrum of possibilities ranges from formal greens to natural areas disturbed only to sensitively incorporate a greenway trail.

- Preserve existing vegetation to the extent practical so the natural environment is protected and new development is buffered from the traffic noise of the adjacent highway.

- Locate and design public greens, plazas, and trail access areas to serve as usable amenities. These features can take the place of buffers, creating positive connections at transition points rather than separating different uses unnecessarily.
- Require open space with all types of residential development, particularly that which serves as an extension of publicly-protected, accessible open space.

Reference:



Preserve large, contiguous areas of open space for their natural resource value and function as buffers.

Steep topography and floodplains flanking an intricate system of creeks combine to offer a natural amenity unmatched in the Garner jurisdiction.

- Work with NCDOT and Triangle Land Conservancy to maintain the area owned by NCDOT as open space for the long term.
- Allow limited access to this potential conservation area, which may include low-impact trails. Multiple access points, such as improved green spaces at trailheads located in both residential and commercial areas, should connect hikers to the trails.

Reference:



An aerial photograph of a rural area with a conceptual development plan overlaid. The plan features a central cluster of red buildings, a network of roads, and green spaces with trees. Several areas are marked with numbers and letters: '6' in a black circle at the top left and middle right; '1' in a black circle in the center; '2' in a black circle at the bottom left; 'A' in a purple circle near the center; and 'B' in a purple circle at the bottom left. A winding blue stream flows through the green spaces. The background shows a mix of fields, some with a grid pattern, and scattered trees.

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NC-540 at Old Stage Road (Area 6)

Along the NC-540 route in the southwestern area of Garner's planning jurisdiction is an opportunity for a new mixed-use development node.

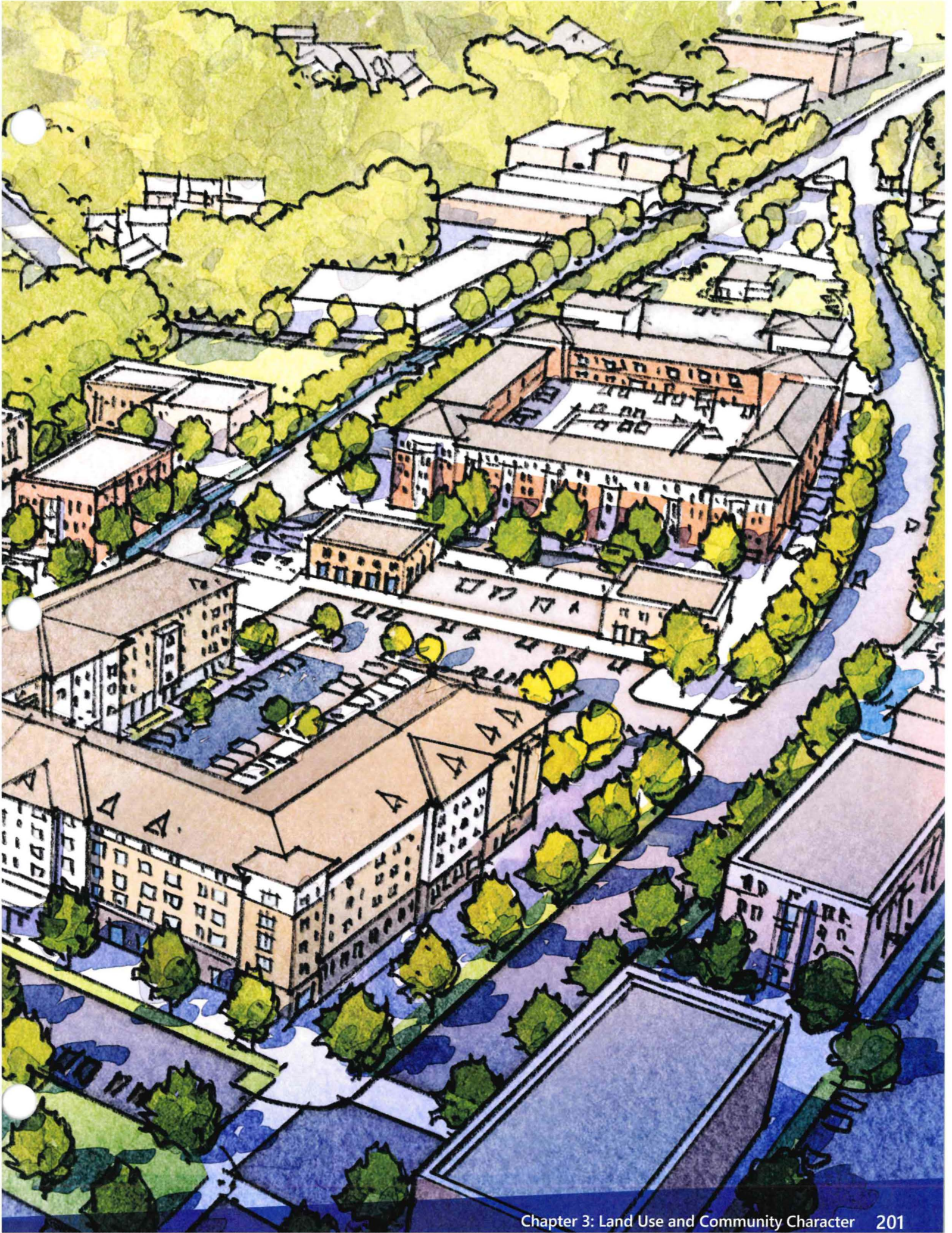
The south side, oriented toward Fuquay-Varina, is suited for more intense development due to access and gently rolling topography. It lends itself to a mix of employment and supporting commercial uses.

On the north side of the interchange, a mix of neighborhood serving commercial uses can be flanked by residential, institutional, and recreational uses that make a smooth transition to existing neighborhoods and the more rural areas to the southeast.

- 1** A mix of employment and commercial uses at this interchange would take advantage of the location in the region.
- 2** Institutional uses, including community facilities, may be part of the mix of uses.
- 3** Locally-serving commercial should include a grocery-anchored center organized to relate to the grid street network.
- 4** The transition from higher density housing to rural uses can be accomplished with decreasing housing density.
- 5** Local roads form a loop to enable vehicular circulation around the interchange.
- 6** Greenway connections help overcome the barriers to mobility created by NC-540 and utilize utility easements.
- 7** Community amenities, such as parks, will be needed to serve the new residents.



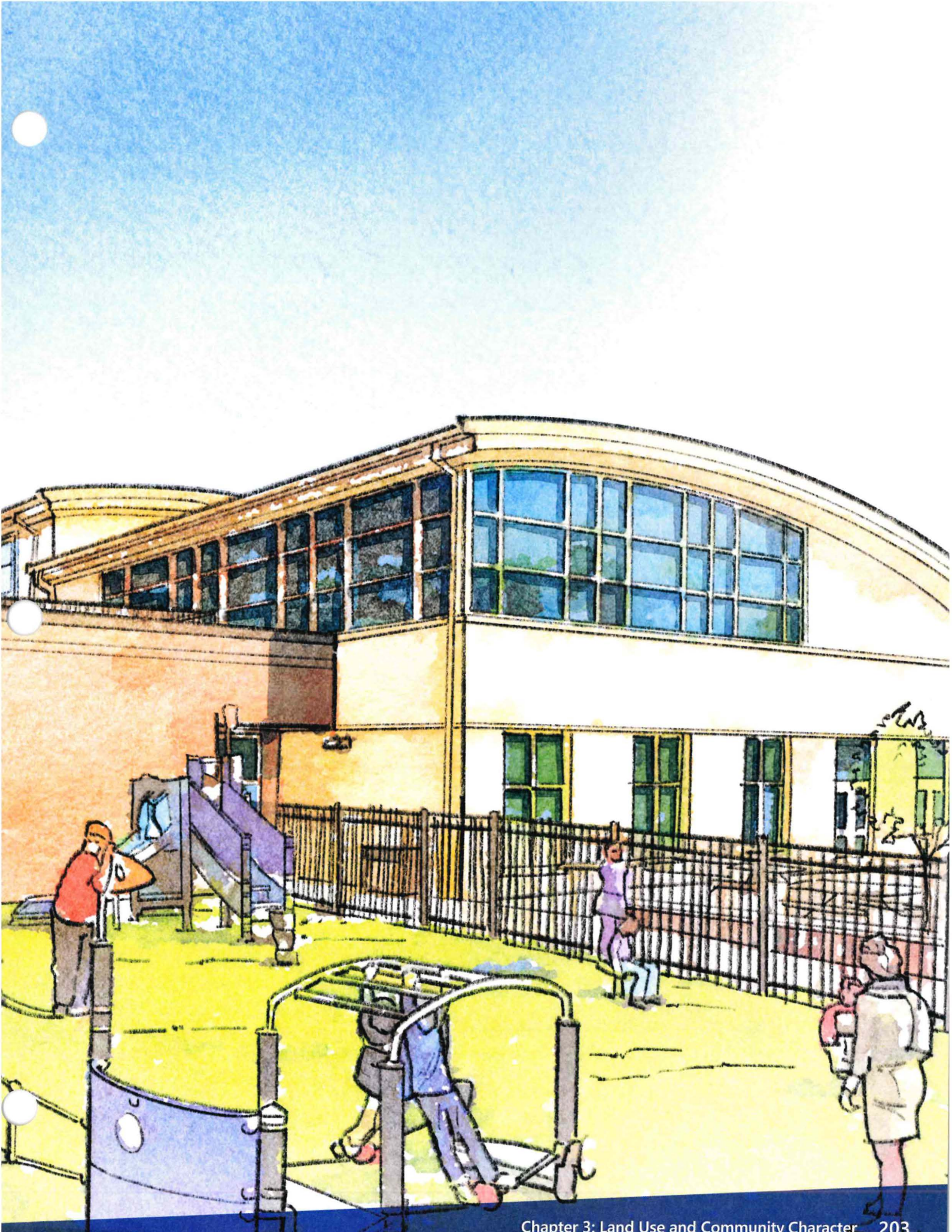
Situated along the NC-540 corridor and easily accessible to key destinations in the western part of the Triangle Region, the south side of this Area 6 can support a broad range of employment uses. Locating them in a mixed-use environment with supporting commercial uses, it can become a key regional destination.





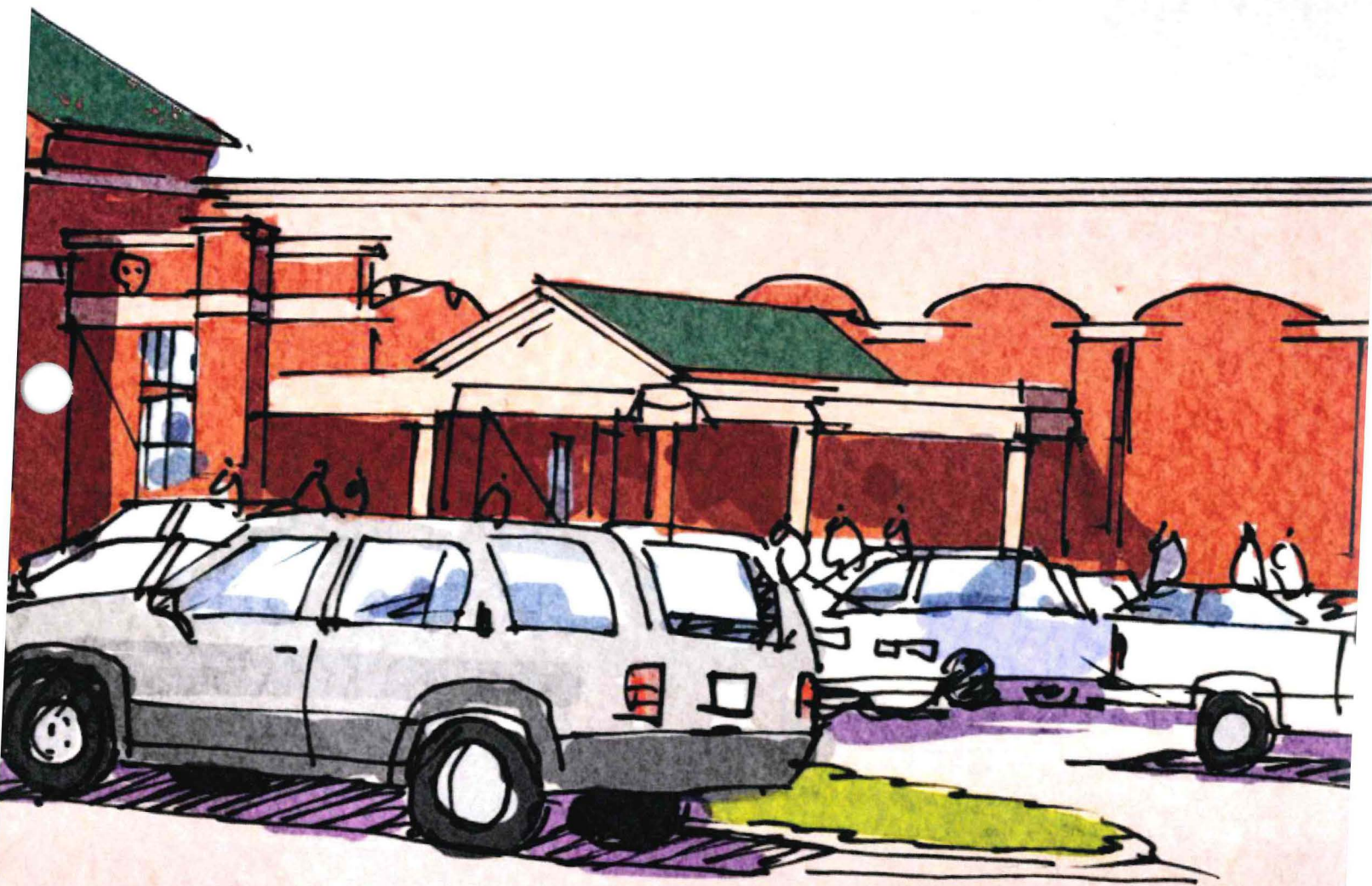
B

Population growth in the southern part of the planning area will drive increased demand for more community facilities and institutional uses. Therefore, schools, daycare, and senior activity centers may be part of the mix of uses.



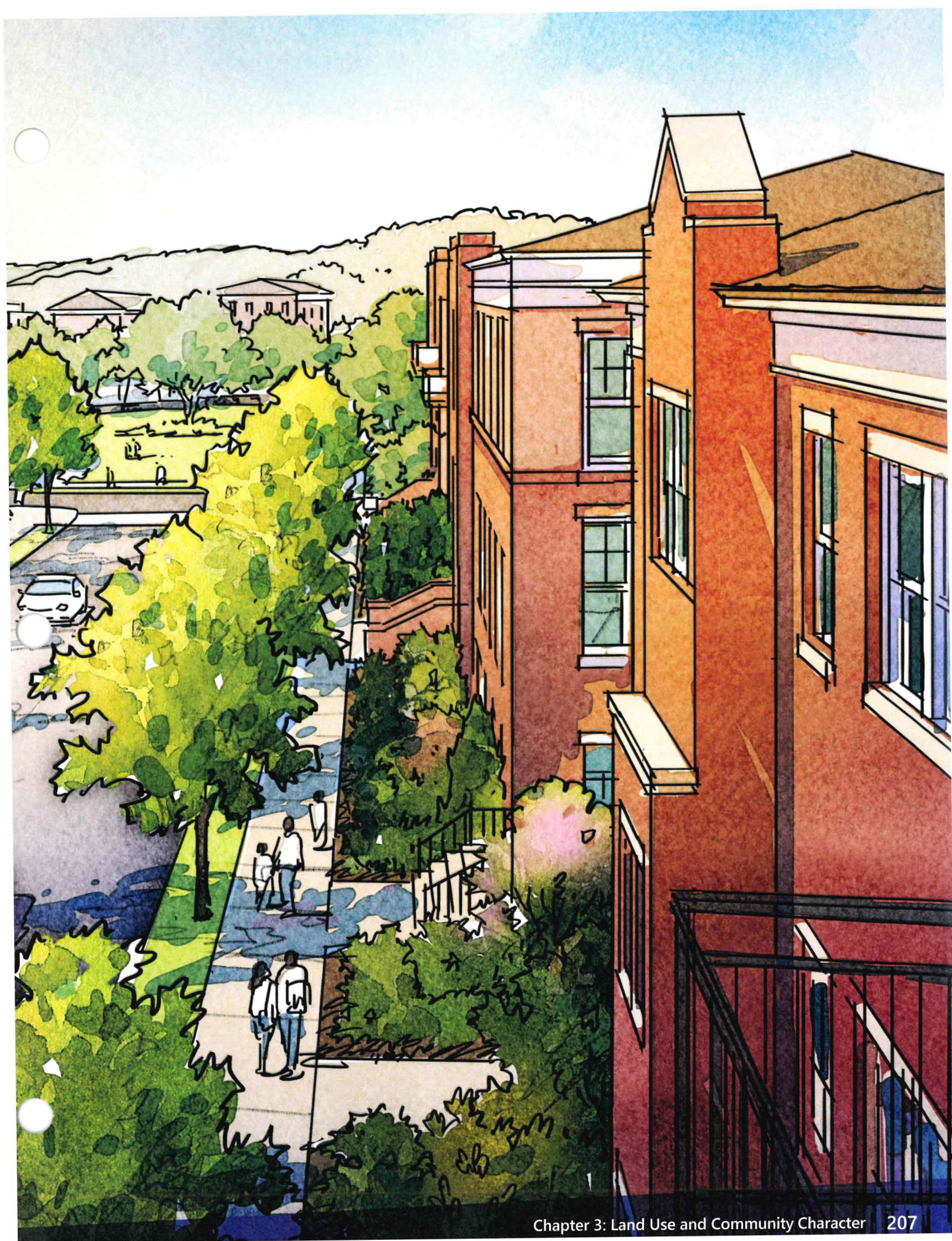


The north side of the interchange area, with its orientation toward Garner, is suited for more local-serving uses. Grocery-anchored shopping centers will offer convenient access to goods and services, meeting the daily needs of people living in the area.





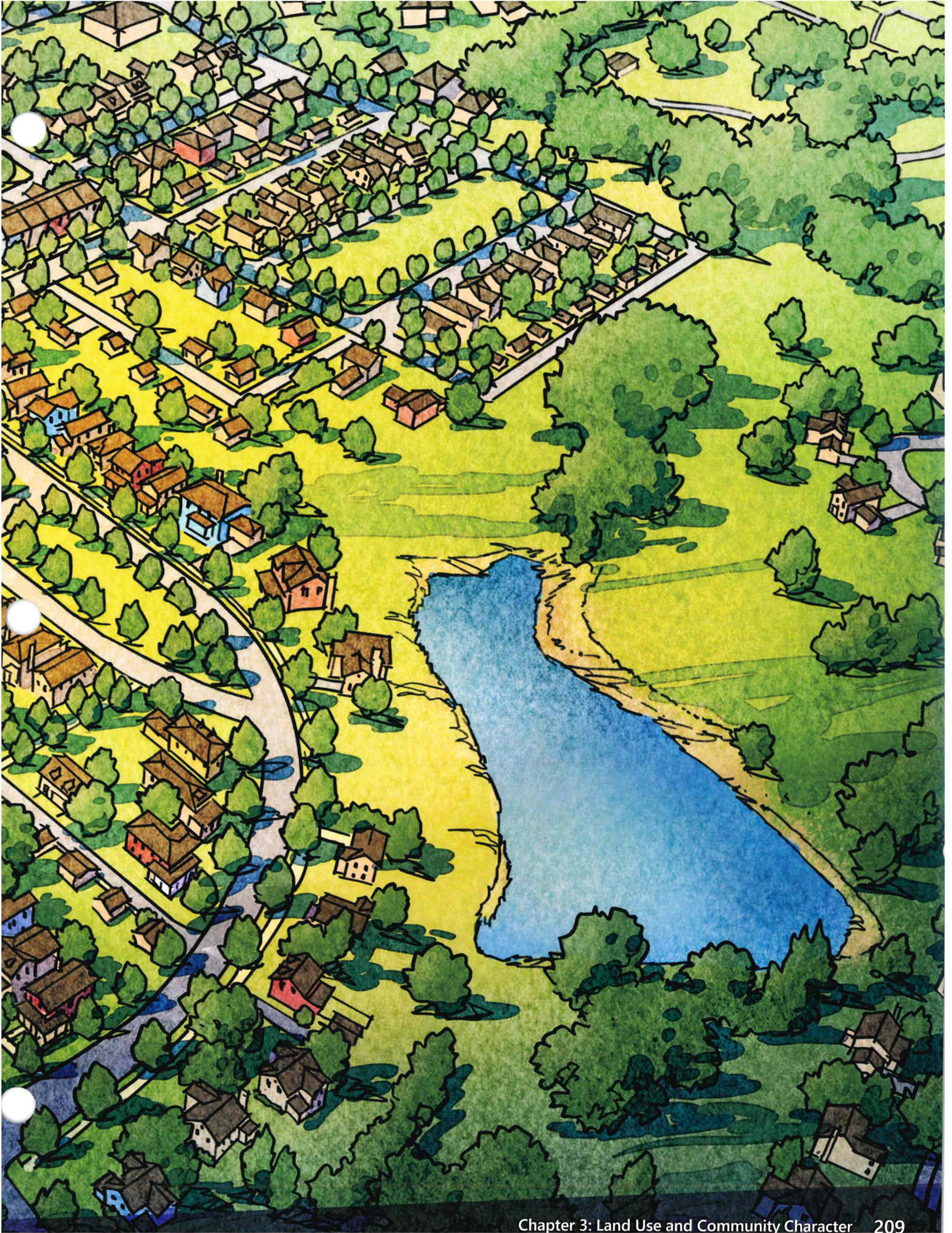
Higher density housing can be supported in this area and, as part of the broader mix of uses, this type of housing development can be seamlessly integrated along the local streets that are created through the private development process. Such development can be part of the urban fabric and, unlike conventional apartment development, should be organized around the local street network rather than isolated in a single-entry complex. The position, orientation, entryways, and façade treatment of each building should be considered so that they strengthen the relationship to the public street and enhance the streetscape. Parking can be off-street located behind buildings in addition to on-street spaces.



An aerial illustration of a mixed residential neighborhood. The scene shows a winding river or stream flowing through the area, surrounded by lush green trees and grass. Various types of housing are depicted, including small detached single-family homes and larger, more complex structures with multiple units. The layout is designed to integrate open space and greenery with the built environment, creating a buffer and connector between different land uses. A large purple circle with a white letter 'E' is positioned in the upper left corner of the illustration.

E

Mixed residential neighborhoods that consist of attached and detached single-family homes provide a smooth transition to the more lower density residential areas that lie south of Area 6. As shown in the illustration, a connected system of open space around clusters of housing can help preserve elements of the rural landscape and also serve as both a connector and a buffer to existing development.

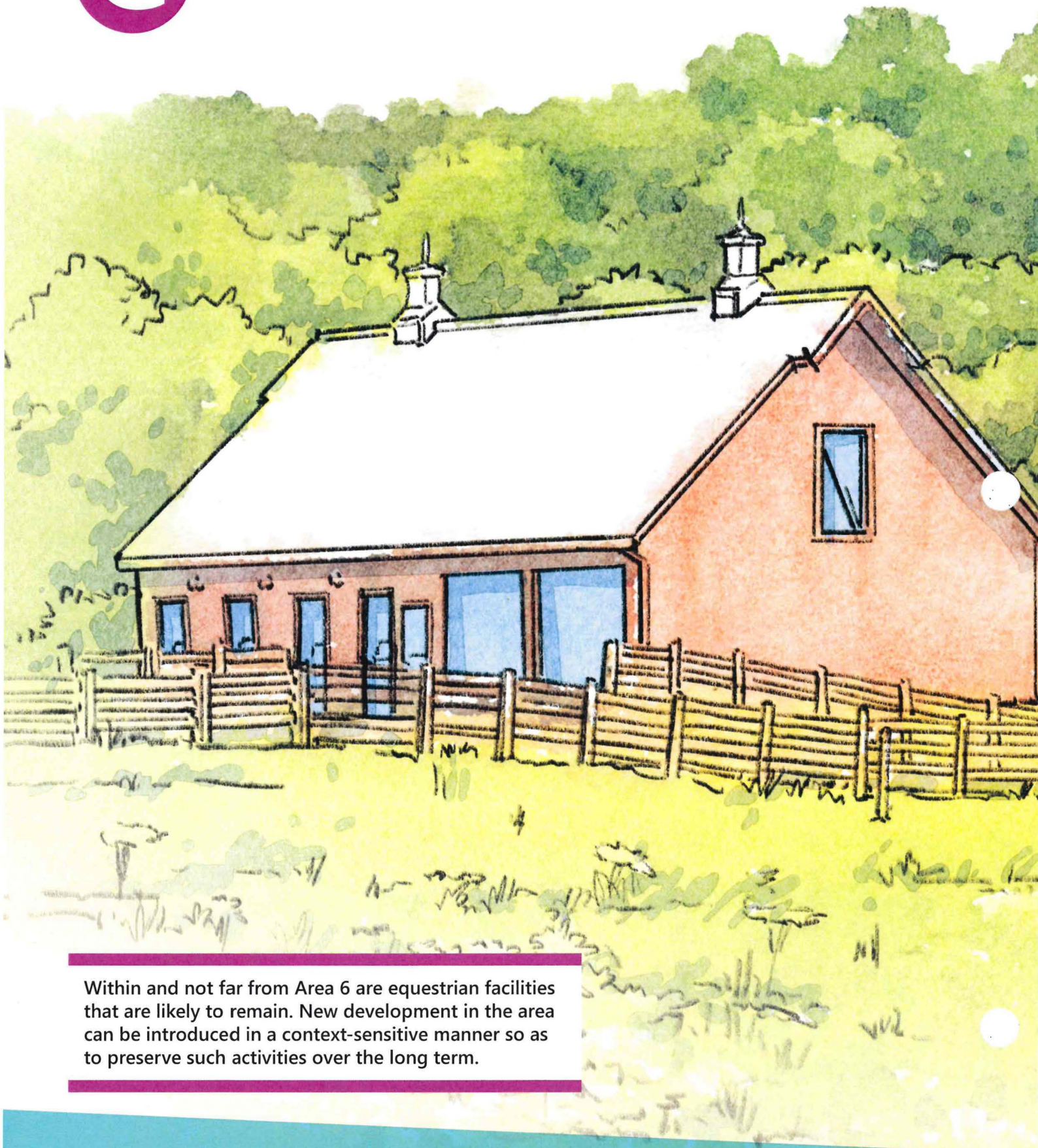




F

A park with some active courts and ballfields would be an appropriate amenity, particularly with access from nearby neighborhoods via a segment of the planned greenway.





Within and not far from Area 6 are equestrian facilities that are likely to remain. New development in the area can be introduced in a context-sensitive manner so as to preserve such activities over the long term.



Position this future development area to become a destination and, in doing so, meet economic development objectives.

Allow for a mix of land uses that create two distinct but complementary development activity centers. Prepare a small area plan to determine the appropriate mix and distribution of such uses to ensure compatibility across the two sides and with surrounding development.

Facilitate mobility around the interchange.

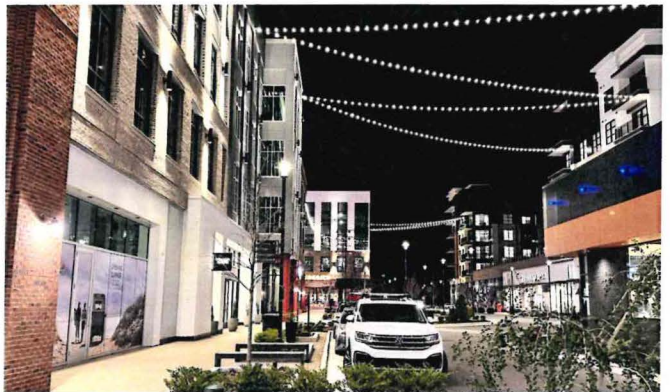
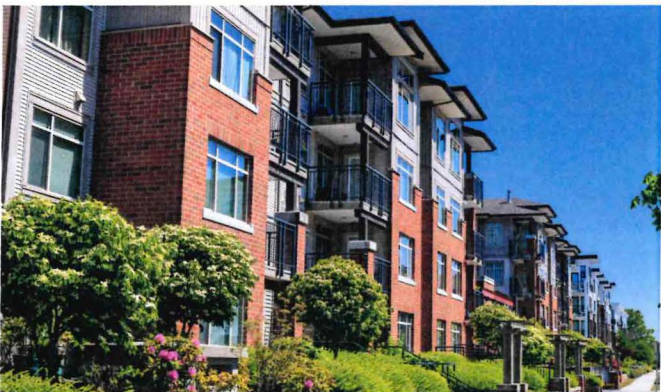
The introduction of an interstate highway in a relatively rural area can create a barrier, separating future development on the north and south sides. Key connections in various transportation facilities can facilitate movement, minimizing the hindrances caused by the highway.

- Complete, through the private development process, the road connections that together form a loop connecting the north and south sides.
- Seek connections via a greenway trail along the creek through an underpass of NC-540.
- Design spaces within utility easements for greenway connections and landscape them to improve the aesthetics, drawing the eye closer to the ground level.



Encourage a mix of residential types that gradually transition from multifamily to low density single family.

Existing residential development at the periphery is relatively low density. As development occurs, respect the existing rural areas of the county (in the town's planning and zoning jurisdiction) by gradually decreasing density.







Chapter

4

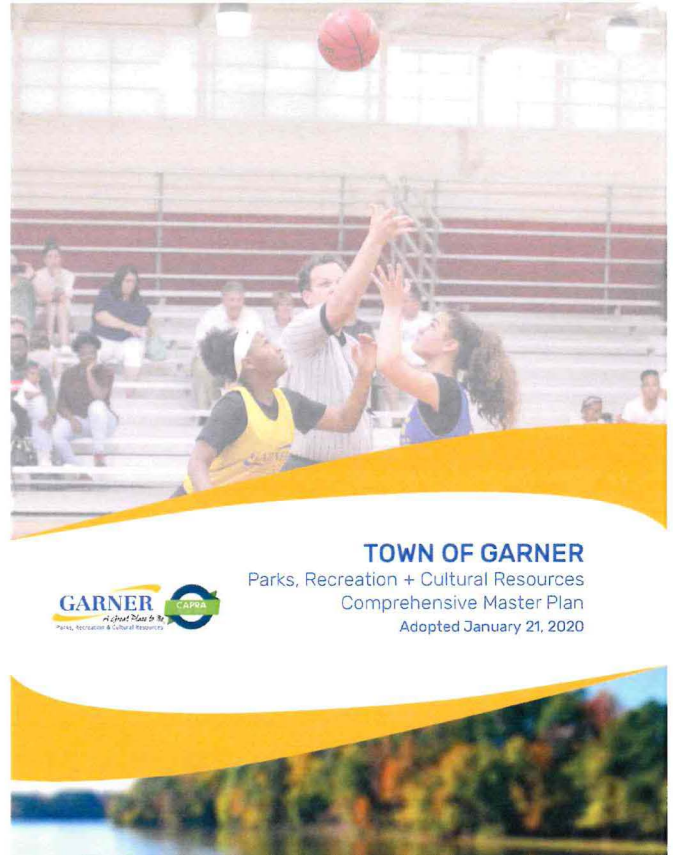
Parks, Recreation,
and Cultural
Resources

Parks & Recreation and Cultural Resources

The Town of Garner Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Comprehensive Master Plan, as amended, is incorporated into the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan by reference as Chapter 4. The maps, policies, and recommendations presented in the master plan, in their entirety, should have the same standing and authority provided under Chapter 160D of the North Carolina General Statutes and the Town's Unified Development Ordinance as if they were physically included in the comprehensive plan document.

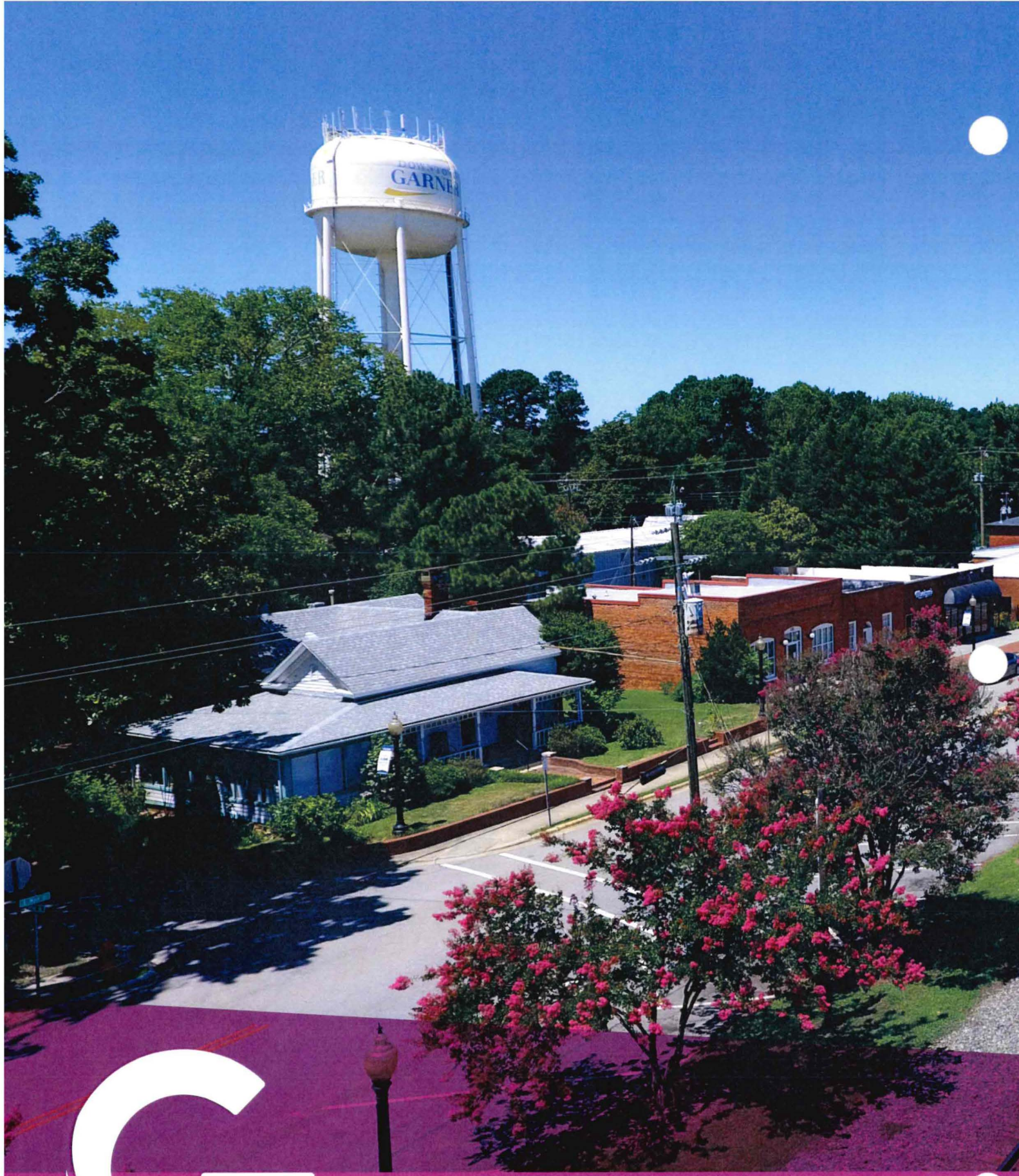
An update to the master plan should be completed in the future, which considers the role of open space, parks, recreation, and greenways for reinforcing the preferred community character, future land uses, and development change and intensity summarized in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan. It should also consider the level of information needed to help secure new parks, plazas, recreation facilities, and greenways as part of the development review and entitlement process.

Immediate recommendations for open space, parks, recreation, and cultural resources are included in Chapters 3 and 6 of the comprehensive plan (Land Use and Community Character and Supporting Infrastructure) to supplement the existing Town of Garner Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Comprehensive Master Plan. An amendment to remove the provisions in Chapter 6 of the comprehensive plan should be filed once an update to the master plan is complete.



TOWN OF GARNER
Parks, Recreation + Cultural Resources
Comprehensive Master Plan
Adopted January 21, 2020





G

A photograph of a town street with railroad tracks, a red train car, and an American flag. The scene is viewed from an elevated perspective, looking down the street. On the left, there are several buildings and trees. In the center, railroad tracks run parallel to the street. To the right of the tracks, there is a red train car and an American flag on a pole. The street continues into the distance, flanked by trees and more buildings. The sky is clear and blue.

Chapter

5

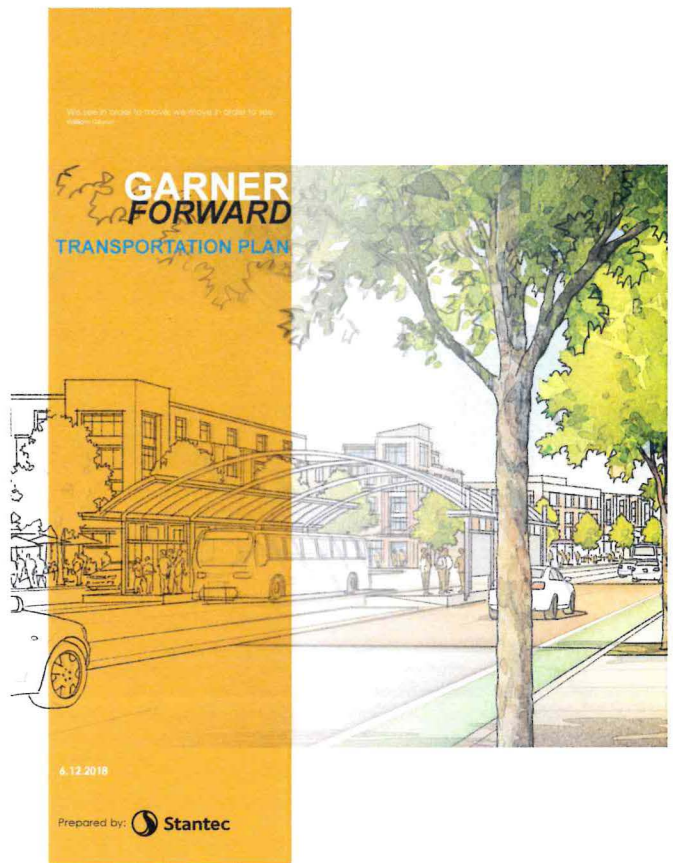
Transportation

Transportation

Four transportation documents — the Garner Forward Transportation Plan, Town of Garner Transportation Plan, Town of Garner Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan, and Town of Garner Engineering Design Manual and Standard Details — are incorporated into the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, as amended, by reference as Chapter 5. The maps, drawings, tables, policies, and recommendations presented in the three documents, in their entirety, should have the same standing and authority provided under Chapter 160D of the North Carolina General Statutes and the Town's Unified Development Ordinance as if they were physically included in the comprehensive plan document.

The four transportation documents should be updated, as needed, soon after adoption of the new Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan. The primary goal of the update is to consolidate and prioritize transportation recommendations among various town documents. The update should also consider 1) new transportation facilities, routes, and other recommendations that will serve the walkable neighborhoods and development activity centers proposed on the Character Typology Map, 2) the role of greenways as a transportation improvement versus a park or recreation improvement, and 3) new street classifications and design standards that reinforce an intended character, sense of place, or preferred travel mode.

Immediate recommendations for transportation are included in Chapter 6 of the comprehensive plan (Supporting Infrastructure) to supplement the three transportation documents. An amendment to remove the provisions in Chapter 6 of the comprehensive plan should be filed once updates to the three documents are complete.







G

A photograph of a retaining wall and a pile of rocks. The wall is made of concrete and is covered in dark, possibly moldy, patches. To the right of the wall is a large pile of light-colored, irregularly shaped rocks. In the background, there is a grassy hill, a blue car on the left, and a white house with a grey roof on the right. The sky is blue with some clouds. The text 'Chapter' is overlaid on the right side of the image, and a large number '6' is overlaid on the bottom right. The text 'Supporting Infrastructure' is overlaid on the bottom left.

Chapter

6

● Supporting Infrastructure

Supporting Infrastructure

Governments have certain responsibilities to construct, operate, maintain, and replace community facilities and services (infrastructure) to keep pace with existing and future year development patterns. Some infrastructure categories are planned and funded solely by the Town of Garner, while others are provided by City of Raleigh Public Utilities, Wake County Schools, the State of North Carolina, or other partners.

The type, location, and capacity of infrastructure in the community (its service delivery) are critical to the town's ability to grow and develop in accordance with the Character Typology Map presented in Chapter 2, and its desire to offer a high quality-of-life for Garner residents. Service delivery is also critical to managing the cost and timing of needed improvements, which can dramatically impact property owners with increased taxes if expenditures are not well-planned and well-funded in future year capital and operating budgets.

Chapter 6 of the comprehensive plan highlights background information, baseline conditions, future year needs, policy statements, and coordination activities for six different infrastructure categories: water, sewer, stormwater, fire protection, police protection, and solid waste collection. Parks, recreation, and cultural resources are discussed primarily in Chapter 4. The transportation system is discussed primarily in Chapter 5. Information presented in Chapter 6 for these two topic areas — parks, recreation, and cultural resources and transportation — is temporary and should be moved to the appropriate location in the companion document as updates to other town plans and studies are completed. Information for the infrastructure categories presented here should also be shared with the different infrastructure providers serving Garner, and refined further in future master plans or feasibility studies completed after the comprehensive plan is adopted.

Background Information

The information that follows provides general background on the topic of infrastructure and its role in supporting the Character Typology Map in Garner.

Who is Responsible for Providing Infrastructure in Garner?

Residents, business owners, and visitors in Garner expect a well-coordinated and streamlined system of infrastructure to meet existing demands and future year needs. A brief summary of service provider responsibilities in the area follows.

Town of Garner

The Town of Garner is responsible for many of the public facilities and services provided in the community, including stormwater management; police protection; solid waste collection; parks, recreation facilities, and cultural resources; and some components of the transportation system. Responsibilities for the different categories are spread among multiple departments using in-house staff and equipment to build, operate, maintain, and replace infrastructure. Some services within each department are contracted out each year.

City of Raleigh Public Utilities

The Town of Garner and City of Raleigh merged their water and sewer systems in March 2001. The City of Raleigh owns and operates the treatment plants, water towers, pump stations, distribution pipes (for water), and collection pipes (for sewer) used to provide services in the town's urban services area. The Town of Garner retains its powers and responsibilities to determine when and where service is extended to new customers. However, the timing of service extensions or capacity upgrades is subject to available funds and capital improvement planning at Raleigh Water.

Specific rules, requirements, and procedures governing the merger are included in an interlocal agreement between the two jurisdictions.

Wake County Schools

Wake County Schools is responsible for student instruction, facility operations, and capital planning for future education needs in the town's planning area.

North Carolina Department of Transportation

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is responsible for building, operating, maintaining, and replacing specific roads serving the town's planning area; including interstates, toll roads, US highways, NC highways, and State Routes.

Wake County Environmental Services

The Wake County Environmental Services department administers the sediment and erosion control program for areas in Garner.

Private Developers

Private developers build some infrastructure — streets, water lines, sewer lines, etc. — to serve new neighborhoods, employment areas, or shopping centers and dedicate it to the town, public utility agency, or NCDOT when the project is completed. All of the receiving agencies operate and maintain the infrastructure after it is accepted and are responsible for increasing system capacity or replacing deteriorating infrastructure once its useful life has expired.

Changing Infrastructure Needs

Infrastructure needs in Garner change over time as some portions of the community transition from rural to suburban to urban. Demands for service generally increase over time in these areas, and existing facilities expand, or new facilities are built, to provide minimum levels of service to existing and new customers.

Solutions for meeting new infrastructure demands also change as portions of the community transform. In more rural areas, minimal infrastructure is provided by the town and its partners to meet existing needs, and local residents or businesses rely on private solutions to meet at least some of their demands (e.g., well and septic systems, private open space, etc.). In more suburban areas, infrastructure investments are increased and provide either “point-of-service delivery” at the property line (water distribution and sewer collection systems or curbside trash

pickup) or “close proximity to nearby facilities” in defined services areas for the different providers (e.g., parks and recreation facilities, schools, fire and rescue services, or police protection). In many U.S. cities, providing infrastructure to serve areas that are primarily single land use, low-density, and not well-connected is expensive, and over time, demands for service eventually surpass available supply to the point that systems break down.

As the town grows, some activity centers or development nodes identified in Chapter 2 may become more dense and take on certain urban characteristics: mixed-use development, taller buildings, different living options, different mobility solutions, or formal public spaces. Increased density or new land uses not anticipated at the time original infrastructure was provided may create various stresses on the system and needs to retrofit (make larger) existing systems to accommodate increased demands. In addition, one or more suburban models used previously for delivering specific facilities and services — such as school location and construction standards or park design and location standards — may need rethinking to meet the needs associated with a more urban area.

Changes in the economy, consumer preferences, climate, and lifestyle choices may also impact how the town and its partners plan for and invest in new infrastructure. Forward-thinking and close coordination with officials that influence land use and development standards — the demand factors for the various systems — will be needed to control costs and manage the timing of new infrastructure to meet demand.

True Cost of Infrastructure

Some communities struggle with managing the true cost of providing infrastructure — starting with construction or acquisition of the facility or equipment, budgeting for its annual operating and maintenance costs, and programming funds for future years to eventually rehabilitate or replace the asset because it has reached its useful life. These communities are surprised by large, unanticipated budget requests because departments or elected officials are not prepared

for the full-accounting of providing infrastructure. Unplanned expenditures lead to unfortunate budget discussions where priorities are triaged because there is not enough money for everything.

Rising debt burden for the town because of deferred maintenance may result in less capacity to authorize new debt for capital projects in the future. And, with debt less affordable, the town may need to make difficult decisions to control expenditures and prioritize competing infrastructure requests.

Continued unmet operating and maintenance costs for existing infrastructure deferred to future years may also lead to larger, more expensive capital costs when facilities fail and lead to emergency repairs or replacement. The cost to complete these improvements could place additional long-term burdens on future budgets for decades to come that could be managed with regular spending on maintenance of existing infrastructure.

Baseline Conditions

Information presented in the baseline assessments provide a 2022 snapshot of Garner's community facilities and services, and highlight different needs to address existing capacity deficiencies or deferred maintenance responsibilities. They also provide a baseline for comparing future year infrastructure needs identified to support the Character Typology Map presented later in Chapter 2.

Water Service

The City of Raleigh Public Utilities Department, Raleigh Water, provides water service to customers in Garner and surrounding areas. Raw water for the town's service area is supplied from two sources: Falls Lake and Lake Benson. Water is treated at either the E.M. Johnson Water Treatment Plant or the Dempsey E. Benton Water Treatment Plant before being delivered to customers using a system of pump facilities, storage tanks, and water mains.

The Town of Garner is allocated a portion of the Raleigh Water's total treatment capacity under

an interlocal agreement. The current allocation is 6.742 million gallons per day (MGD). On average, the town uses 2.068 MGD or 31% of its allocated capacity. Town leaders and utility officials are confident that available water supply under the current allocation program will be sufficient to serve the community's needs through 2040.

The timing, size, and priorities for system expansion are critical to the town as it contemplates economic development opportunities on large tracts outside Raleigh Water's current water service areas; especially for areas around the interchanges for the new NC 540 toll road. The town, and the region, would benefit from a more efficient and predictable process to expedite system expansion for specific areas of Garner in partnership with Raleigh Water.

Sewer

Raleigh Water also provides sewer service to customers in Garner and surrounding areas. Wastewater is collected via a system of pipes and pump stations and treated at the Neuse River Resource Recovery Facility.

The Town of Garner is allocated a portion of the department's total treatment capacity under the same interlocal agreement. The current allocation is 7.490 MGD. On average, the town uses 2.332 MGD or 31% of its allocated capacity. Town leaders and utility officials are confident that available sewer treatment capacity under the current allocation program will be sufficient to serve the community's needs through 2040.

Similar to water service, economic development interests in Garner would benefit significantly from an effective and coordinated effort to extend sewer service to large, undeveloped parcels outside the current sewer service area; especially for areas around the interchanges for the new NC 540 toll road.

Storm Water

Impervious surfaces such as roads, parking lots, and buildings, interfere with the ability of rain water to soak naturally into the ground. Storm water runoff from a rain event travels quickly

across impervious surfaces — picking up sediment and pollutants — and carrying them to nearby lakes or streams. The simultaneous increase in water quantity and suspended sediments in some areas may lead to stream erosion and degraded water quality (i.e., non-point source pollution).

Federal mandates in the Clean Water Act require some towns, like Garner, to obtain permits to meet National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements, including a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Phase II Permit. Specifically, the NPDES MS4 Phase II Program requires policies and projects to address six minimum criteria:

- (1) Public Education & Outreach;
- (2) Public Participation & Involvement;
- (3) Illicit Discharge & Detection;
- (4) Construction Site Run-Off;
- (5) Post Construction Run-Off Control; and
- (6) Pollution Prevention & Good Housekeeping.

The town maintains a system-wide stormwater management plan to comply with the Federal MS4 Phase II Permit requirements. It also enforces the Neuse Rules for Nitrogen Control, Swift Creek Land Management Plan, and Water Supply Watershed Protection Program to protect water quality in and around Lake Benson. The town's Engineering Design Manual and Standard Details formalize minimum rules and design requirements for storm water facilities within the planning area.

Storm water control measures require annual inspection to remain compliant with their development approvals. Policies and rules for storm water enacted by the town are formally administered through the local unified development ordinance.

The existing storm water system in Garner consists primarily of pipes, catch basins, and permanent ponds. Residents' complaints are focused on stream bank erosion and occasional flooding of side and backyards of personal property. The town

completed a study of its storm water infrastructure in 2017 and prioritizes replacement of aging infrastructure each year.

Fire Protection

The town contracts its fire and rescue services with Garner Volunteer Fire-Rescue, Inc. (GVFR). The company is a combination department serving 64,746 people in Garner and surrounding Wake County. It operates four stations that are each staffed twenty-four hours per day. Services provided include fire suppression, first responder medical services, basic emergency medical technician services, technical rescue, and fire prevention and education.

Firefighters at GVFR are not employees of the town, and as an independent organization, the organization is governed by a Board of Directors autonomous from the Town of Garner. The cost of services for the town are formalized in an annual contract. Wake County Government provides additional funds to GVFR for services provided outside town limits.

In 2022, the department reported 7,233 calls for service inside town limits, including 3,750 calls for service at resident addresses. Most calls were for medical assistance. Average travel time to an incident was seven minutes and thirty-three seconds. GVFR staff logged 23,622 training hours in the year to maintain certifications and be ready for service calls.

Long-term, GVFR officials see needs to expand services south of Ten-Ten Road; especially after completion of the NC 540 toll road. New fire equipment may also be needed in the future if development includes buildings over five stories tall, which is the safe reach of their current aerial fire truck.

Police Protection

Police protection for Garner' residents and business owners is provided by eighty-three sworn officers and support personnel. Police Headquarters is located on Seventh Avenue near Town Hall. Officers patrol in the community twenty-four hours a day. General services for

the department include: traffic enforcement, criminal investigation, wellness checks, education, and special events. Popular programs within the department include Achievement Academy, Citizens' Police Academy, Community Watch, and School Resource Officers.

In 2022, the department reported 36,474 calls for service inside town limits, including 6,866 traffic stops. Average travel time to an incident was six minutes and forty-two seconds. GVFR staff logged 4,323 training hours in the year to maintain certifications and be ready for service calls.

As the population grows, so will the volume of calls the Police Department will respond to, and this may vary by the type and location of development. For instance, single-family detached neighborhoods historically generate fewer service calls compared to shopping centers or multifamily buildings based on town call data. Furthermore, the density of a community may influence the number and type of police officers needed to adequately cover a beat patrol or meet the local community's needs. Specific patrol districts within the town may be needed in the future to organize police resources and improve incident response times. Town leaders may also consider one or more police substations in areas south of Town Hall to adequately meet the needs of officers and the residents they serve.

Solid Waste Collection

The town contracts its trash collection services for single-family homes to a private company. Businesses and multifamily homes contract separately for trash collection services.

Residential curbside pickup is provided on a weekly basis. Curbside recycling collection is also provided to customers every two weeks. Yard waste, from November 1 to February 28 each year, and bulk pickup programs are also provided to customers.

Solid waste collected in the town is sent to the South Wake Landfill that is operated by the Wake County Solid Waste Management Division.

Likely Impacts Analysis

Realizing the community's vision for growth and development requires that adequate infrastructure capacity be available concurrent with the timing and location of new development. This section of Chapter 6 summarizes future year impacts to supporting infrastructure anticipated through 2040 based on the Character Typology Map and the town's current service delivery standards.

When appropriate, national or regional standards are also provided for the different infrastructure categories to compare with local service delivery standards. In the future, town officials may consider investing in one or more of the infrastructure categories to raise their service delivery standards to mimic national or regional standards.

Previous sections of Chapter 6 provide a detailed summary of existing conditions or emerging trends for infrastructure in the town's planning area — including available capacities and the ability of different infrastructure to support existing development patterns and intensities.

Methodology

The consultant team for the comprehensive plan completed a likely impacts analysis for the Character Typology Map using CommunityViz and Microsoft Excel software. The methodology used for the likely impacts analysis meets the criteria and intentions for preparing a comprehensive plan stated in Section 160D-501(b) of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Anticipated Growth, 2020 to 2040

Growth anticipated between 2022 and 2040 is presented in Chapter 1 of the comprehensive plan. This information was used for the likely impacts analysis, which is reported below:

Residential	17,229 d.u.
Single Family Detached	5,175 d.u.
Townhome	3,450 d.u.
Apartment or Condominium	8,624 d.u.
Non-Residential	12,759,050 s.f.
General Retail	2,786,835 s.f.
General Office	2,930,532 s.f.
Industrial	7,041,683 s.f.

Portions of the growth anticipated for the planning horizon are considered committed development or development-plans-in-review. Committed development represents active (or soon to start) construction projects in the town that were approved by Town Council, the Planning Commission or town staff. Development-plans-in-review include new applications for development under review at the time of the impacts analysis, which may, or may not, be approved by Town Council or town staff in the future. Hard-coding committed development and recent development applications for the likely impacts analysis ensures future year growth and development is consistent with the type, location, pattern, and intensity of development presented (or approved) during recent town land use or zoning cases. Projects included in the analysis were approved or submitted for approval before November 6, 2022. A list of projects is available from the town’s planning department.

Future Year Needs by Service Category, 2022 to 2040

Future year impacts to supporting infrastructure anticipated for the planning horizon were calculated assuming implementation of the Character Typology Map presented in Chapter 2 and future year growth forecasted for the town presented in Chapter 1. Impacts summarized in the tables that follow represent new (additional)

demand for the infrastructure categories. This is the absolute demand that should be accommodated in the future to keep pace with new development.

Water

The demand for water in the service area is expected to increase by 4.74 million gallons per day (MGD), assuming the residential and non-residential growth forecasted between 2022 and 2040. The demand generally equates to 2.96 MGD inside existing town limits and 1.78 MGD inside the town’s expanded extraterritorial jurisdiction. The comprehensive plan assumes land inside the rural planning area identified on the General Framework Map remains on private well systems.

Sewer

The demand for sewer in the service area is expected to increase by 4.23 million gallons per day (MGD), assuming the residential and non-residential growth forecasted between 2022 and 2040. The demand generally equates to 2.69 MGD inside existing town limits and 1.54 MGD inside the town’s expanded extraterritorial jurisdiction. The comprehensive plan assumes land inside the rural planning area identified on the General Framework Map remains on private septic systems.

Storm Water

Continued growth and development in Garner could negatively impact water resources — namely because of vegetation removal, disturbed and compacted soils for construction, or increased impervious surface associated with new buildings, roads, and parking lots. When the land’s capacity to absorb and hold water is decreased, it generates more storm water runoff, which flows at a faster rate into local streams and lakes.

Generally speaking, the amount of impervious surface — buildings, roads, and parking lots — in the community will increase over time assuming the residential and non-residential growth forecasted between 2022 and 2040.

The town should continue enforcing its rules, requirements, and procedures for storm water management in the planning area. It should also

plan for its future storm water needs with a new master plan, which reaffirms appropriate rain event design conditions to assume for locating and sizing storm water infrastructure throughout the community. In the new master plan, the town should also focus on storm water management as an opportunity to increase property values, create scenic views, anchor large parks, manage flood events, or attract wildlife.

A comprehensive strategy focused on large storm water facilities — ponds, streams, or storage tanks — to prioritize water quantity reduction goals, and smaller storm water facilities — bioretention facilities or rain gardens — to prioritize water quality improvement goals will best benefit the town and its residents.

Police Protection

The demand for sworn police officers serving the town limits is expected to increase by 45 assuming the residential and non-residential growth forecasted between 2022 and 2040 and the current service delivery of 2.20 sworn officers per 1,000 residents.

Generally speaking, the Garner Police Department is behind the national average in terms of the number of sworn officers provided for a town of similar size. A service delivery rate of 2.40 sworn officers per 1,000 residents is more appropriate based on standards published by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Under this scenario, the demand for sworn police officers serving the town limits is expected to increase by 49 assuming the residential and non-residential growth forecasted between 2022 and 2040.

Continued expansion of the town's (sub)urbanizing area away from its traditional development core may also require one or more police patrol districts or substations be established in the future to organize resources and maintain reasonable incident response times.

Fire Protection

Demands for fire protection and emergency medical services will continue to increase as Garner grows. More equipment, personnel, and stations will be needed to maintain and improve the department's protection and response times.

Both the concentration of new employment or population centers in far reaches of the community and significant redevelopment in specific areas of the town as urban centers could increase demand for new fire stations and fire equipment significantly. Unlike police departments, fire departments are more dependent on a network of fire stations and fire hydrants located near neighborhoods, businesses, and industrial centers to house needed fire personal, vehicles, and equipment. Town leaders should anticipate two new fire stations near the NC 540 toll road will be needed in future years to keep up with new demand. Fire Station Two should be retired in the future as new and updated resources are programmed nearby. New equipment in existing stations may also be needed to serve taller buildings and more dense development patterns, and fire hydrants in future growth areas may be needed to maintain minimum fire flow rates.

Solid Waste Collection

The demand for curbside trash collection and recycling for single-family homes is expected to increase in the future assuming the residential growth forecasted between 2022 and 2040. The Character Typology Map presented in Chapter 2 assumes up to 4,129 new single-family detached or single-family attached (townhome or multiplex building) homes may be built inside town limits. New customers will need to be considered during future contract negotiations with the private company that provides trash collection and recycling services in Garner.

Recommendations

Update the land development regulations.

The recommendations in chapters 2 through 6 are supported by strategies that include suggested amendments to the local land development regulations. Some of these modifications can be accomplished in the short term and may be necessary to proactively manage change in areas that are in the path of near-term development. However, all local land development regulations may need to be updated simultaneously to adequately implement the plan. Consider potential amendments to the UDO to ensure it is an up-to-date tool to effectively facilitate desired development and conservation, facilitate administration, provide clarity and predictability, and otherwise ensure the implementation of the community's vision for the future of the Town. Generally, the strategies call for the following:

- Evaluate the existing zoning districts and make amendments that align districts with the Character Areas depicted on the Character Typology Map and described herein. In connection with the changes to the zoning districts, amend the official zoning map to strengthen the connection between land use policy and zoning regulations.
- Review and amend development standards to enhance development. Several recommendations suggest amendments that would facilitate mixed-use development, expand housing choices, upgrade design site standards, increase conservation of meaningful open space, and improve connectivity for several modes of transportation.

Extend the Town's planning and zoning jurisdiction.

The Town can better manage development and realize the benefits if the areas near the town limits is within the Town's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). This action requires positive intent on the part of the Planning Board, Town Council, and cooperation with Wake County and City of Raleigh (water and sewer utilities) to ensure that the development opportunity is maximized to the Town's benefit. More influence over development activity can be exercised as land is subsequently annexed voluntarily.

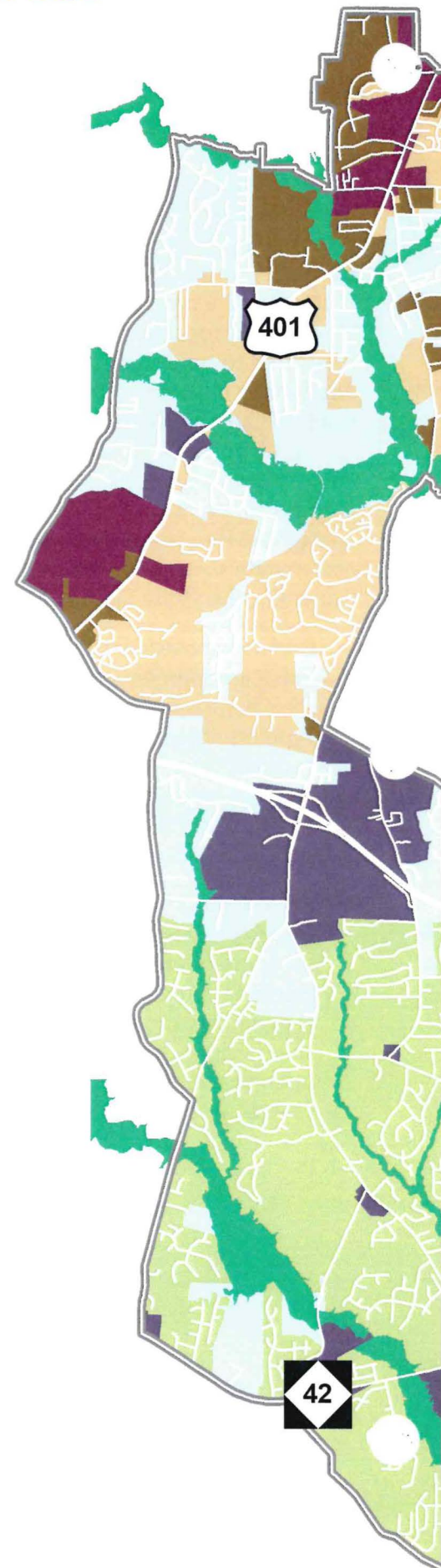
Priority Infrastructure Investment Areas

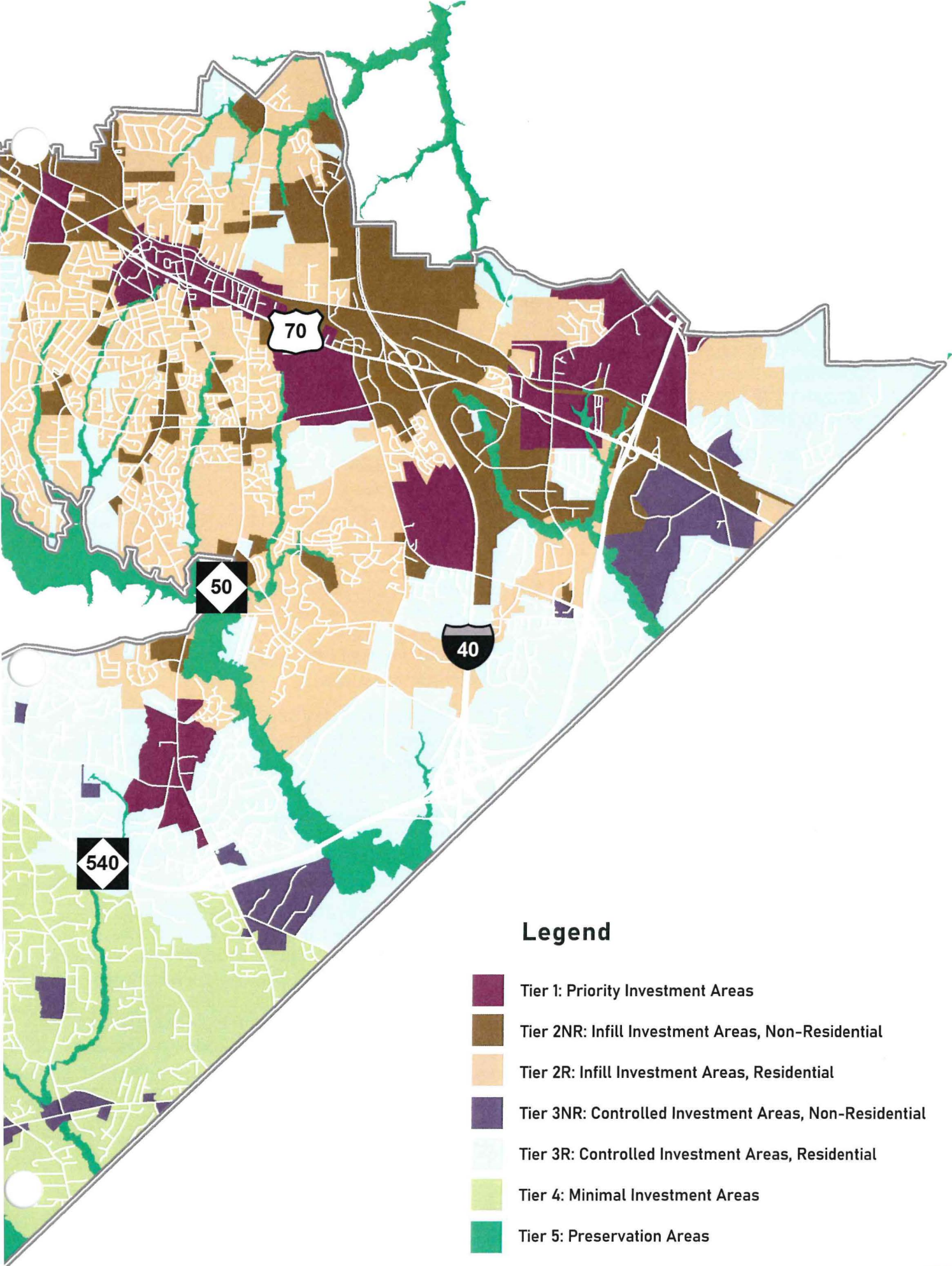
Continued growth in the planning area places new demands on infrastructure that lowers levels of service and ultimately requires increased capacity or new service areas to keep pace with growth. Future investments in infrastructure should support build out of the Character Typology Map presented in Chapter 2. Generally speaking, the Character Typology Map advocates for more compact and efficient development patterns that will help manage the timing, location, and magnitude (length and size) of expensive infrastructure investments. The town should prioritize infill development and redevelopment within its existing service areas to manage large-cost infrastructure expansion unless it supports clear economic development goals for the town.

With limited resources, the town may also need to prioritize capital project funding and programming in future years to 1) encourage growth and development in some areas of the community and discourage it in others, 2) manage limited resources across several departments to be more impactful with intended outcomes, and take advantage of potential economies-of-scale, 3) incentivize development in new or improved areas depicted on the Character Typology Map, and 4) help link neighborhoods with activity centers, create new public spaces between them, and generally support the overall transformation of some areas in the community from a more automobile, suburban character to a more walkable and vibrant environment.

Market activity and private investments in Garner will help drive the need for capital projects within defined investment tiers, and especially for improvements in the spaces around, between, and adjacent to buildings (i.e., the public realm). Coordinating investments in public spaces — public and private — offers the opportunity to significantly influence the form and function of Garner and create a positive sense of place for the community.

A Priority Infrastructure Investment Areas Map for the town's planning area is presented on this and the following page. It will help officials manage the amount and timing of new infrastructure needed to support future (re)development in the





Legend

-  Tier 1: Priority Investment Areas
-  Tier 2NR: Infill Investment Areas, Non-Residential
-  Tier 2R: Infill Investment Areas, Residential
-  Tier 3NR: Controlled Investment Areas, Non-Residential
-  Tier 3R: Controlled Investment Areas, Residential
-  Tier 4: Minimal Investment Areas
-  Tier 5: Preservation Areas

community — understanding finite resources are available to expand infrastructure capacity and, in many cases, infrastructure projects may take ten- to twenty-years to build out when accounting for the time needed to plan, design, fund, and build large projects.

Service providers should count on the location and distribution of development change or intensity depicted on the Priority Infrastructure Investment Areas Map to prepare their own long-range master plans and programs, or phase infrastructure improvements to keep pace with development.

A description of five different investment tiers depicted on the map and the intentions to manage future development with each follows.

Tier 1: Priority Investment Areas

Areas identified as high-priority for new infrastructure, which will provide new capacity in existing service areas to keep pace with infill development envisioned on the Character Typology Map. Continued investments in these areas should maximize return-on-investment potential for the town and initiate or welcome public-private partnerships to increase density and improve the public realm — the space between buildings — during the development entitlement process.

Infrastructure investments in these areas should keep pace with changing economics, evolving technologies, and aging-infrastructure. Advancing infrastructure investments in these areas should be considered to incentivize concurrent investments by developers or private property owners. Specific projects should be considered that might transform specific areas of Garner into more urban, walkable, and vibrant places.

Tier 2-NR: Infill Investment Areas, Non-Residential

Areas with commercial, office, or industrial development envisioned on the Character Typology Map that are inside existing utility service areas and now stable. These areas should be targeted for small- to large-scale infrastructure investments that keep properties economically

viable in the future. Town leaders should prioritize new infrastructure projects that upsize for additional capacity and fill-in missing segments for important street, water, or sewer connections.

Continued investment in these areas should maximize return-on-investment potential for the town by 1) minimizing utility expansion costs and 2) maximizing land productivity for private property owners that increases tax revenues for the town. Infrastructure investments that support economic development (new jobs or new sales tax revenue) should be a high priority.

Tier 2-R: Infill Investment Areas, Residential

Areas with residential development envisioned on the Character Typology Map that are inside existing utility service areas and now stable. These areas should be targeted for small- to medium-scale infrastructure investments that help overcome specific hurdles or challenges, or fill-in missing segments for important street, water, or sewer connections.

Specific projects should be considered that link neighborhoods to parks or greenways, address reoccurring flooding issues, mitigate vehicle congestion, or relieve school-overcrowding.

Tier 3-NR: Controlled Investment Areas, Non-Residential

Areas with commercial, office, or industrial development envisioned on the Character Typology Map that are outside existing utility service areas and currently undeveloped. The town should limit its role in extending new infrastructure in these areas to opportunities for public-private partnerships, where the private interest assumes a significant responsibility (funding and construction) to extend service to their property. The only exception to this policy should be for opportunities where infrastructure expansion supports clear economic development goals for the town.

Tier 3-R: Controlled Investment Areas, Residential

Areas with residential development envisioned on the Character Typology Map that are outside existing utility service areas and currently undeveloped. The town should limit its role in extending new infrastructure in these areas to opportunities for public-private partnerships, where the private interest assumes a significant responsibility (funding and construction) to extend service to their property.

Tier 4: Minimal Investment Areas

Areas identified for minimal infrastructure investments to meet property-owner needs; acknowledging many responsibilities to live and work in these areas are borne by private landowners as a trade-off for the opportunity to live in a more rural setting (e.g., well and septic systems, private open space, long travel distance to schools, etc.).

Infrastructure investments in these areas should be limited to items that safeguard the community's health, safety, or welfare with the exception of above or below ground transmission lines that may be used to connect areas in Tiers 1 through 3. For example, a water or sewer main, major thoroughfare, or greenway may traverse land in Tier 4 if it connects two areas designated either Tier 1, 2, or 3. Under no circumstances should service from a main line be provided to property in Tier 4.

Tier 5: Preservation Areas

Areas identified as permanent open space in the community. Infrastructure investments in these areas should be limited to items that safeguard the community's health, safety, or welfare with the exception of above or below ground transmission lines that may be used to connect areas in Tiers 1 through 3. For example, a water or sewer main, major thoroughfare, or greenway may traverse land in Tier 5 if it connects two areas designated either Tier 1, 2, or 3. Under no circumstances should service from a main line be provided to property in Tier 5.

General Policy Statements

Make Greater “Cents” of the Town’s Character Typology Map to Fund Infrastructure Needs in the Future

The comprehensive plan should focus on long-term priorities to improve the town’s financial outlook by increasing its overall tax base and its diversity. Be creative in implementing strategies that maximize sustainable revenue streams for future year infrastructure investments, and reconsider rules and requirements in the town for commercial, office, industrial, or mixed-use areas related to densities, land use mix, building heights, or parking requirements that depress development potential (and thus tax and fee generation potential). Consider incentives that encourage redevelopment of underutilized commercial parcels in the town to increase property and sales tax revenues.

Capitalize on Strategic Partnerships to Implement Future Infrastructure Projects

Different stakeholders in Garner — town government, other service providers, state and regional agencies, developers, investors, business owners, neighborhoods, etc. — have a shared responsibility for implementing the vision and guiding principles in the comprehensive plan. This group is stronger when working together to identify, prioritize and fund capital projects in the community, and leveraging their individual investments in the town will maximize benefits for all.

Town leaders should look for opportunities to ‘connect the dots’ with their partners when implementing improvements in the community — 1) convene a professional and community leaders committee to regularly discuss public and private infrastructure projects in the town, 2) coordinate individual private sector projects to meet shared town goals, 3) contribute to upsizing certain infrastructure beyond the needs of an individual project to serve larger community needs, 4) sync individual project schedules to minimize disruptions in the community, 5) look for economies-of-scale with multiple projects to build

infrastructure more efficiently, and 6) coordinate design details for individual projects to reinforce a common brand and sense of place unique to Garner.

Also, consider how town and private investments — street improvements, utilities, public spaces, lighting, landscaping, art, etc. — might leverage other investments on private property in terms of building use, scale, placement, materials, and interactions with the public realm.

Address Deferred Maintenance Concerns in Future Year Budgets

An increasing gap between annual maintenance funding for infrastructure and the funds identified as needed to maintain existing infrastructure across the town is expected to grow in future years based on current policies, practices, and funding formulas. As a result, the critical maintenance backlog may steadily grow over time for all categories as existing infrastructure ages-in-place. Each year of delay to address needed maintenance obligates the town to larger, more expensive capital costs in the future when facilities fail and lead to emergency repairs or replacement. The cost to complete these improvements could place long-term burden on future budgets for decades to come that could have been managed with regular spending on maintenance of existing infrastructure.

Town leaders should set aside and commit to a minimum guaranteed fund allocation for maintaining critical infrastructure categories in town as a component of the annual budget process.

Supporting Infrastructure Maps

A series of supporting infrastructure maps are presented on pages 240 through 255, which recommend new or expanded infrastructure to keep pace with growth and development envisioned for the community. Information for the infrastructure categories presented in the map series should be refined further in future master plans or feasibility studies completed after the comprehensive plan is adopted.

General expectations for number, location, alignment, spacing, connectivity, or service

area depicted on the supporting infrastructure maps should instill “minimum expectations” or “intended outcomes” for development applications considered by town leaders. The actual location or design of a facility on the maps may change for a specific site during site development activities; however, the omission of a recommended facility or feature from one of the maps is prohibited on a site unless approved by town leaders during the development review process. The opportunity to create comprehensive, continuous, and connected infrastructure throughout the community is critical to realizing the vision and guiding principles presented in the comprehensive plan.

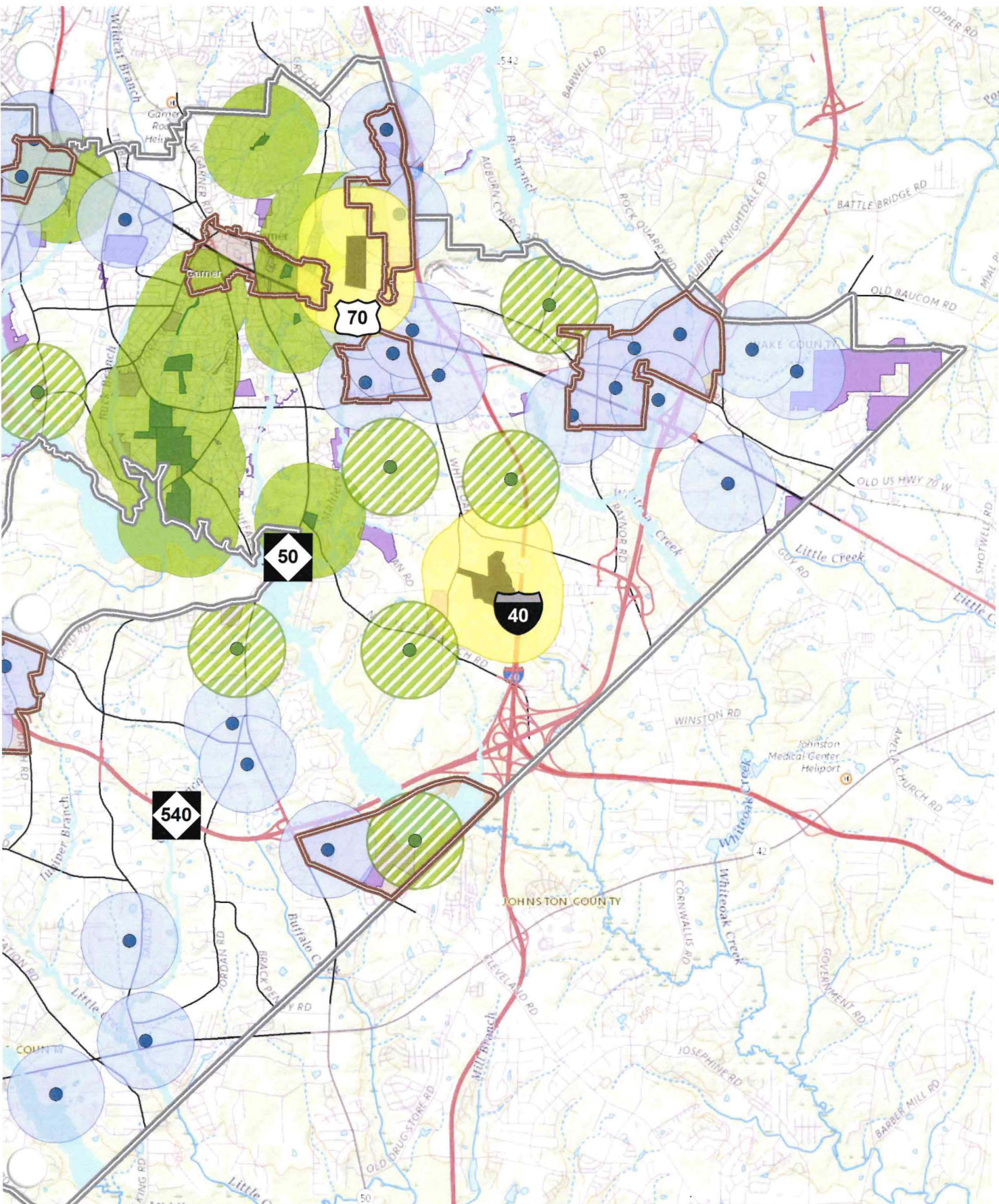
Coordination Activities

Anticipating new infrastructure needs for the town’s planning area is essential to planning, programming, and funding new capacity for the future. Direct coordination with the different service providers, and the officials that influence development patterns and intensities in and around Garner, is critical to ensuring capacity (supply) keeps pace with new development (demand) throughout the community.

Town leaders should communicate with service providers on future year needs associated with the Character Typology Map. General priority investment areas for managing the timing, location, and magnitude of growth consistent with available resources should also be shared with service providers using the Priority Infrastructure Investment Areas Map as a guide. Both activities should begin within the year following adoption of the comprehensive plan.

Information for the infrastructure categories provided in the comprehensive plan should be refined further in future master plans or feasibility studies completed after the plan is adopted. They should also provide more detail — refined service area maps, preferred technologies or solutions, level of service standards, candidate projects, and more specific policies — to implement broad ideas or concepts in the comprehensive plan. The follow up plans and studies also serve as another bridge between the policies in the comprehensive plan and specific rules and requirements in the town’s unified development ordinance.





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Greenway Network






The comprehensive plan proposes a system of greenways and trails that create a comprehensive, continuous, and connected network of off-street facilities to serve pedestrians and bicyclists. Regional greenways recommended on the map (brown lines) are consistent with recommendations in the Wake County Greenway System Plan. Each of the facilities extends for miles outside of the town's planning area and will connect residents to regional destinations and several surrounding cities or towns. Proposed "cross-town trail connectors" on the map (purple lines) branch off from the regional greenway system and better connect local parks, schools, neighborhoods, and mixed-use areas anticipated for the target investment areas by walking or bicycling. Local greenways and trails (not shown on the map) should be included in new developments to the maximum extent possible to connect residents, employees, and visitors to the larger network.

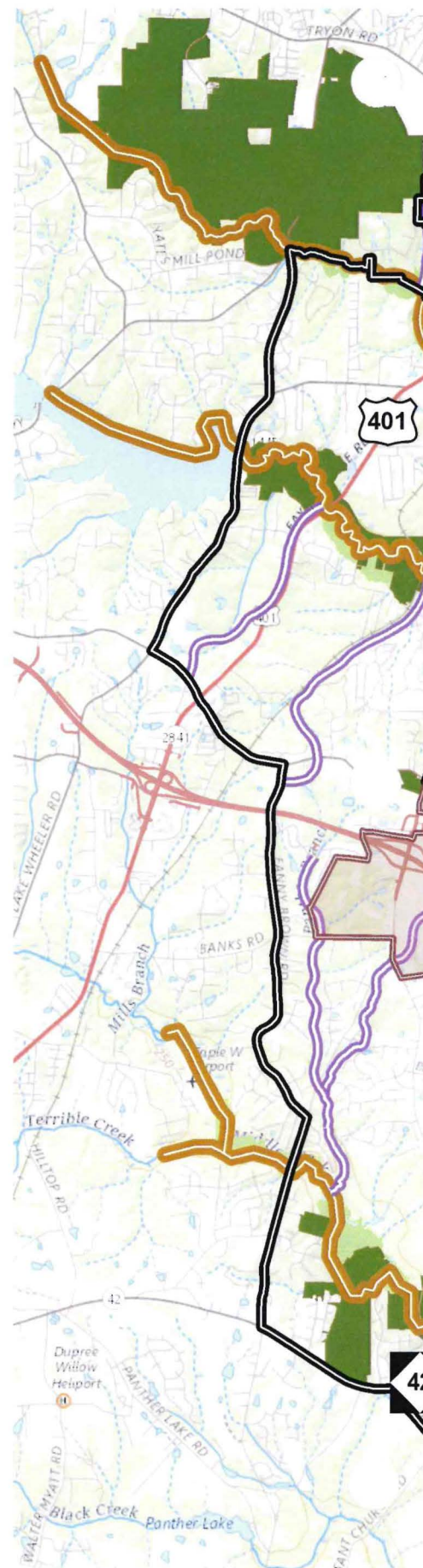
A system of greenways and trails at the scale proposed in the comprehensive plan will make Garner an attractive destination for recreation enthusiasts, residents seeking active lifestyles, or businesses focused on outdoor living. Some communities like Greenville, SC or Travelers, SC prepare entire economic development plans around a regional greenway system. Some studies find home values increase up to five percent if they are located within 600 feet of a greenway (Student Corner: The Value of Greenways, UNC School of Government, 2017).

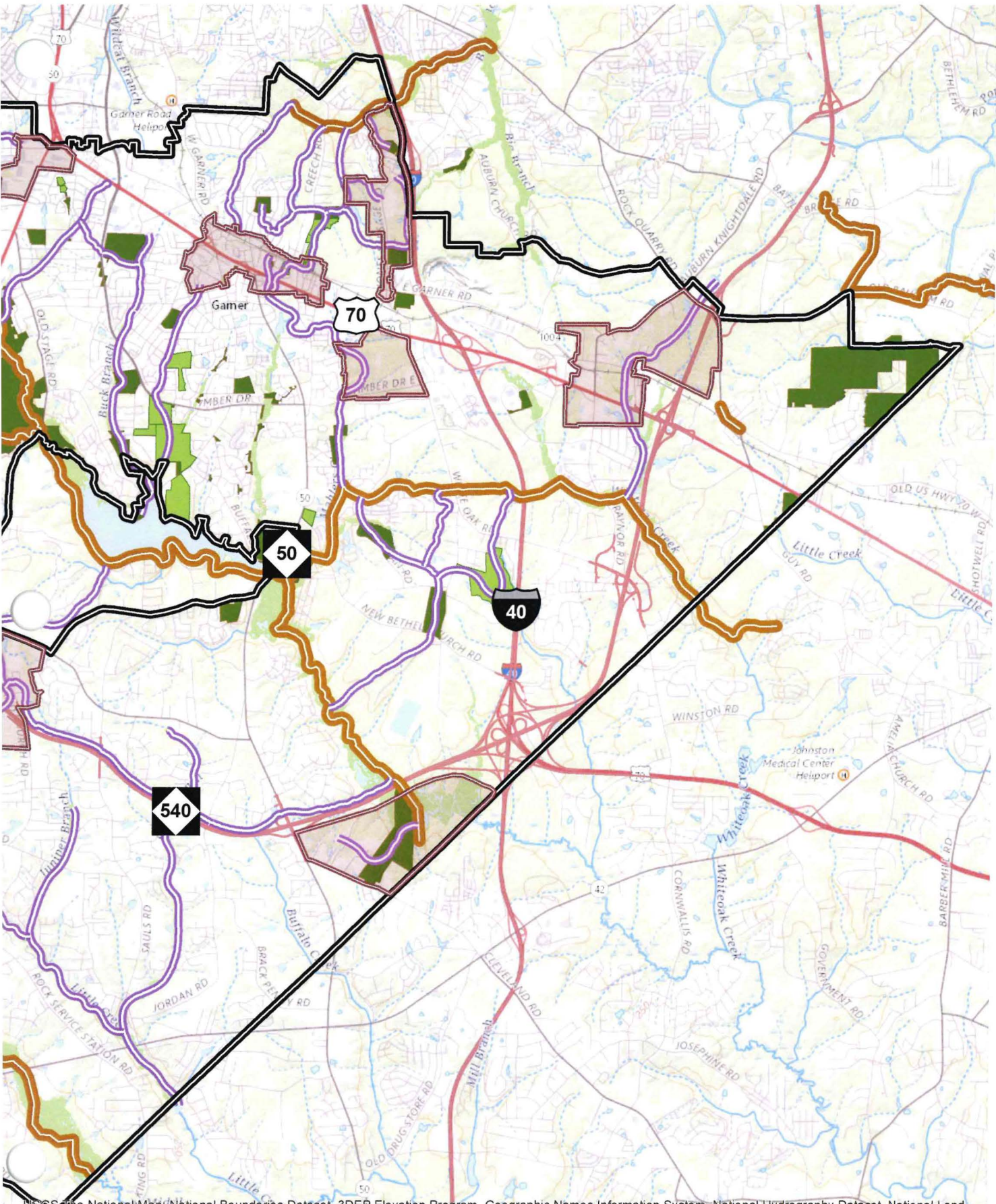
The general alignment of greenways or trails depicted on the map is for illustrative purposes only. Their actual location and routing may differ from the map to the right based on specific site development conditions. However, the number of corridors, their general routing, and the spacing between them should be implemented. Developers are encouraged to design portions of the greenway system traversing their property as a prominent feature in the landscape.

Recommended design characteristics — final alignment, typical cross section, construction material, right-of-way needs, etc. — will be refined in a future update to the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Comprehensive Master Plan for the Town of Garner, and/or the Town of Garner Engineering Design Manual and Standard Details. Both documents should be updated after completion of the comprehensive plan.

Legend

-  Wake County Parks and Open Space
-  Town of Garner Parks and Open Space
-  Regional Greenway Corridor
-  Cross-Town Trail Corridor
-  Target Investment Areas (Tier 1)
See page 234 in Chapter 6 for more information





USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road Data;





Fire Protection

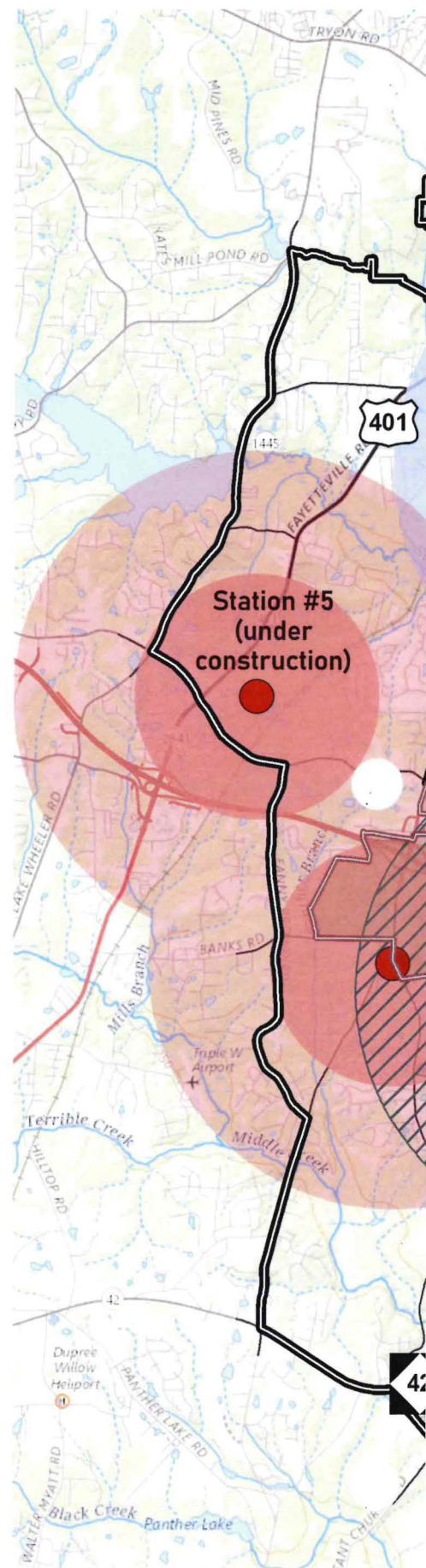
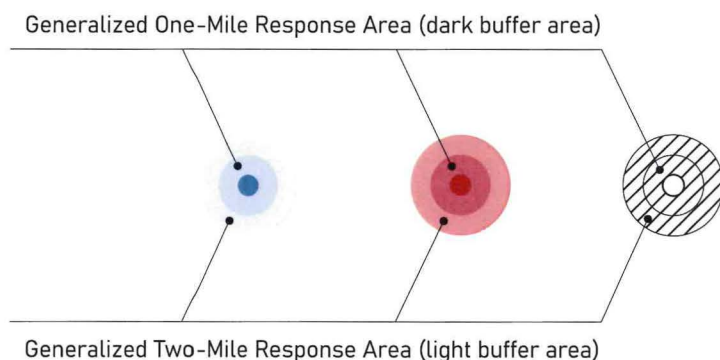
Fire Station Locations

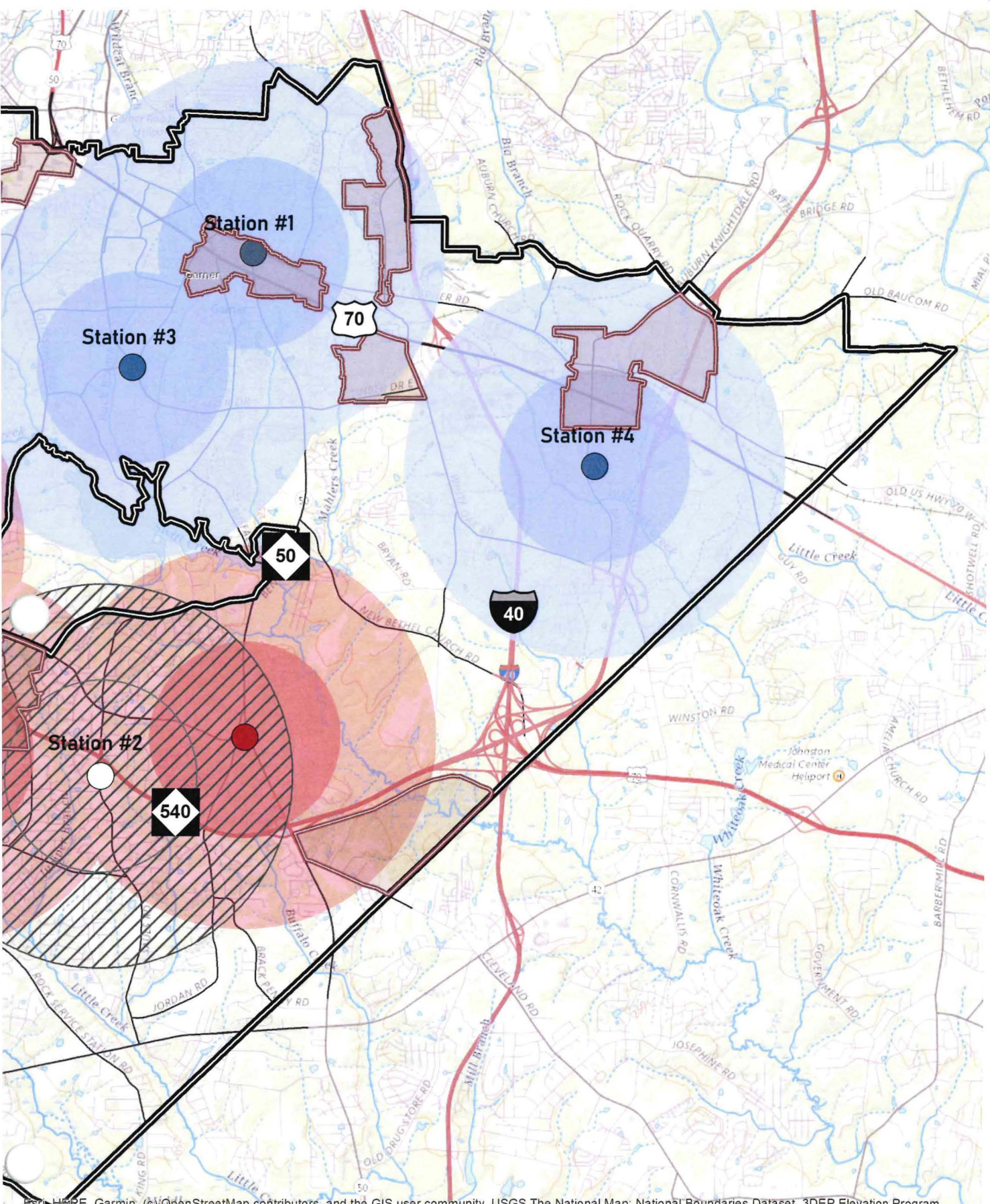
Demands for fire protection and rescue services will increase over time as Garner grows and develops. Both the concentration of new employment or population centers in far reaches of the community, and significant redevelopment anticipated for the targeted investment areas, could increase demand for new fire stations and fire equipment significantly. Existing fire stations serving the town's planning area (blue dots) may need to be expanded to store larger equipment. A new Fire Station 5 (red dot) is already planned near the intersection of US 401 and Ten-Ten Road. Two additional fire stations (red dots) will be needed near NC 540 at Old State Road, and at NC 540 at NC Highway 50, in the future to serve an expanding development footprint. New fire stations proposed near NC 540 could replace aging buildings and obsolete resources at Fire Station 2.

Crossing NC 540 north and south may increase response times as there are a limited number of bridges over the toll road. A reduction in ISO Class Rating is possible in the future if resources are stretched too thin, which could create increased insurance premiums for residents and business owners. The town should coordinate with Garner Volunteer Fire-Rescue to ensure resources are available in the future to keep pace with development patterns and intensities depicted on the Character Typology Map.

Legend

-  Existing Fire Station (Current Location)
-  Future Fire Station (General Location)
-  Existing Fire Station to be Replaced (Current Location)
-  Target Investment Areas (Tier 1)
See page 234 in Chapter 6 for more information





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Fire Protection

Fire Hydrant Locations

Minimum fire flow and flow duration requirements for a structure fire in suburban or urban areas of a community require a system of fire hydrants to meet anticipated needs. Generally speaking, fire hydrants should be located within the public right-of-way at a spacing not to exceed 300 feet for commercial or industrial areas and 600 feet for residential areas. Existing fire hydrants (blue dots) on the map depict adequate coverage for existing development locations, patterns, and intensities. However, the expanded development footprint associated with the Character Typology Map requires an expansion of the hydrant system to keep pace with demands.

Fire hydrants should be required to serve development in all of the character areas presented in Chapter 2 with the exception of open space and rural living. The priority for extending fire-flow water supplies to serve new development should be the target investment areas depicted on the map.

Legend

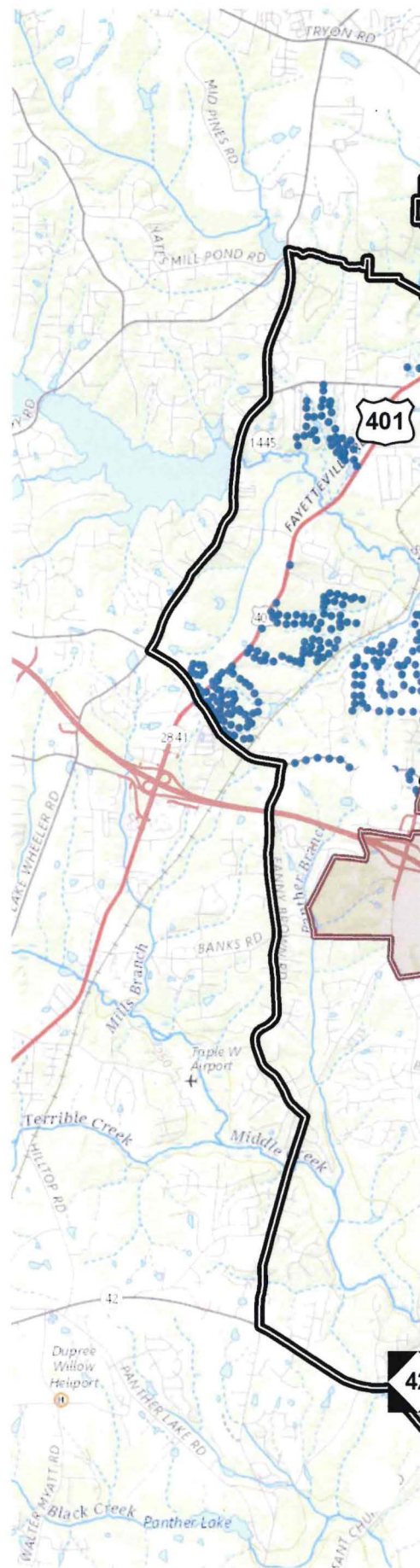


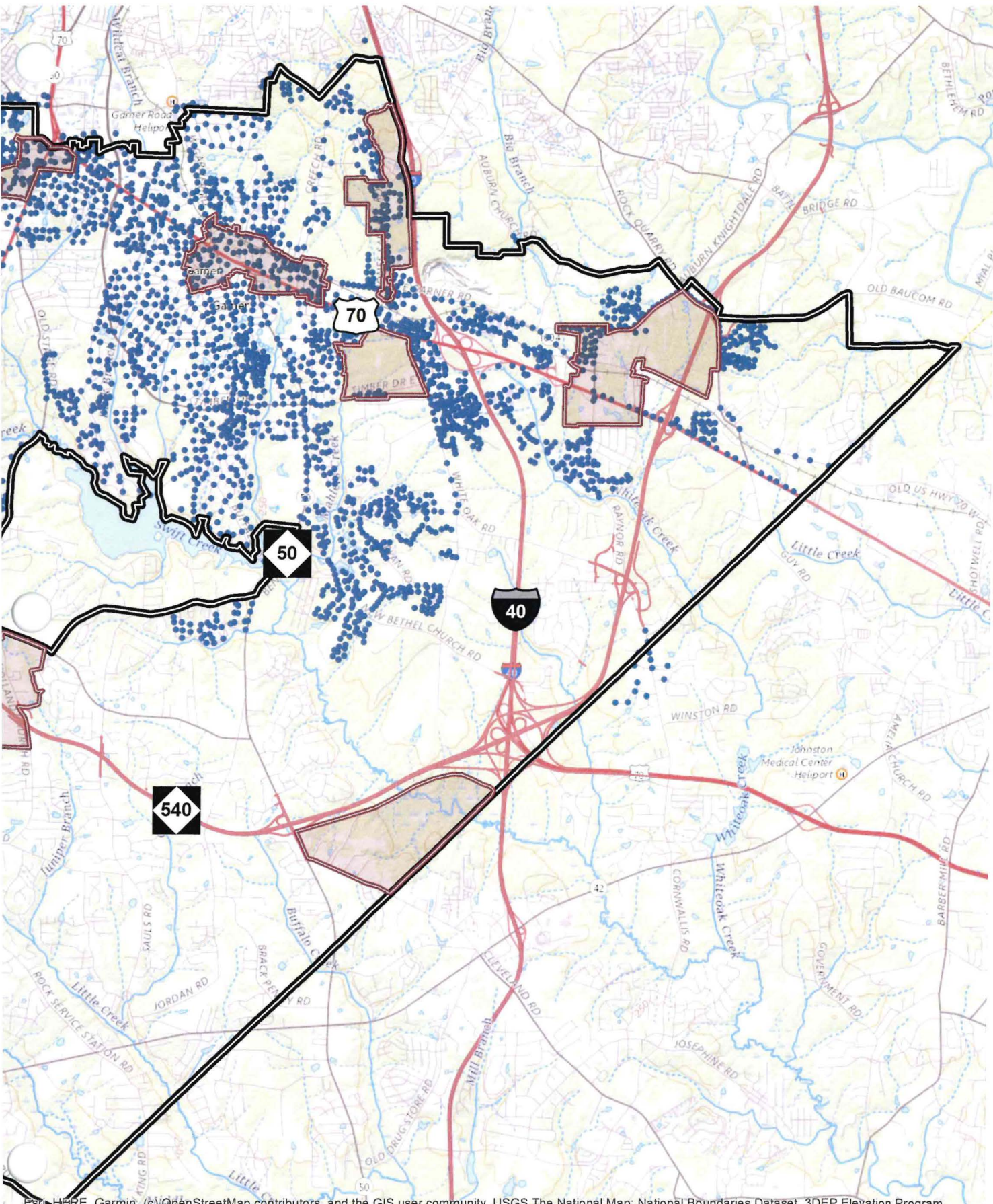
Existing Fire Hydrant Location



Target Investment Areas (Tier 1)

See page 234 in Chapter 6 for more information





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Police Protection

The Garner Police Department patrols areas inside town limits, which is the area represented in dark blue on the map. The Wake County Sheriff's Office patrols all other areas in the town's planning area. Expansion of the town's police patrol area would expand only when new land is annexed into town limits.

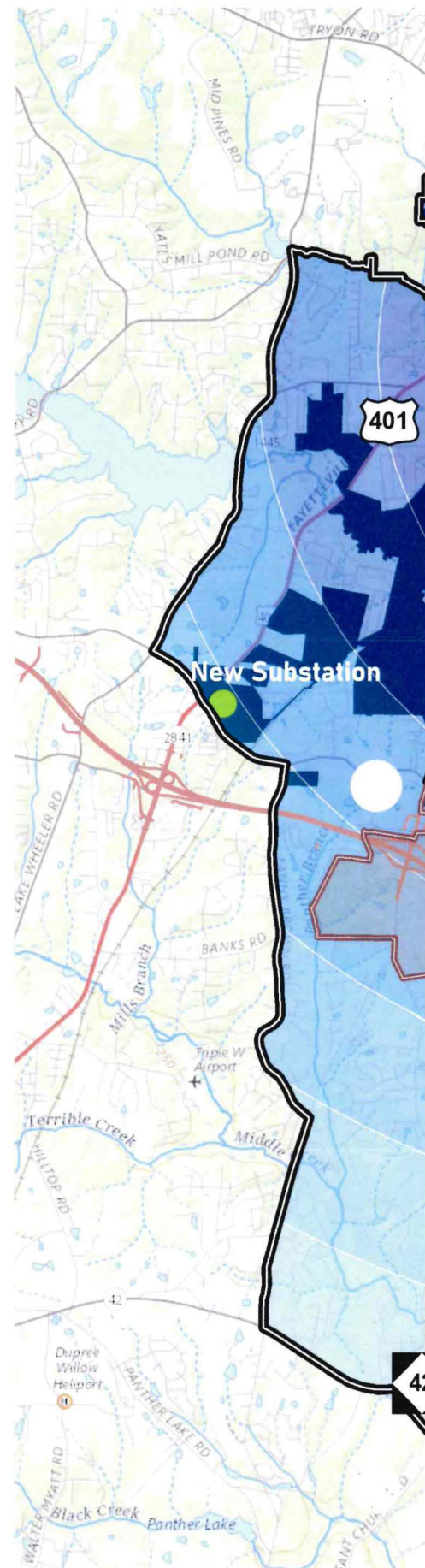
Continued expansion of the town's (sub)urbanizing area away from its traditional development core may require one or more police patrol districts or substations be established in the future to organize resources and maintain reasonable incident response times. Two candidate locations for substations are recommended for future study: US Highway 70 at Auburn-Knightdale Road and US Highway 401 at Ten-Ten Road. Like the fire department, crossing NC 540 north and south may increase response times for police officers as there are a limited number of bridges over the toll road. Substations are one solution for addressing the issue in the future. Admittedly, the problem is exacerbated only if, or when, areas south of NC 540 are annexed into town limits.

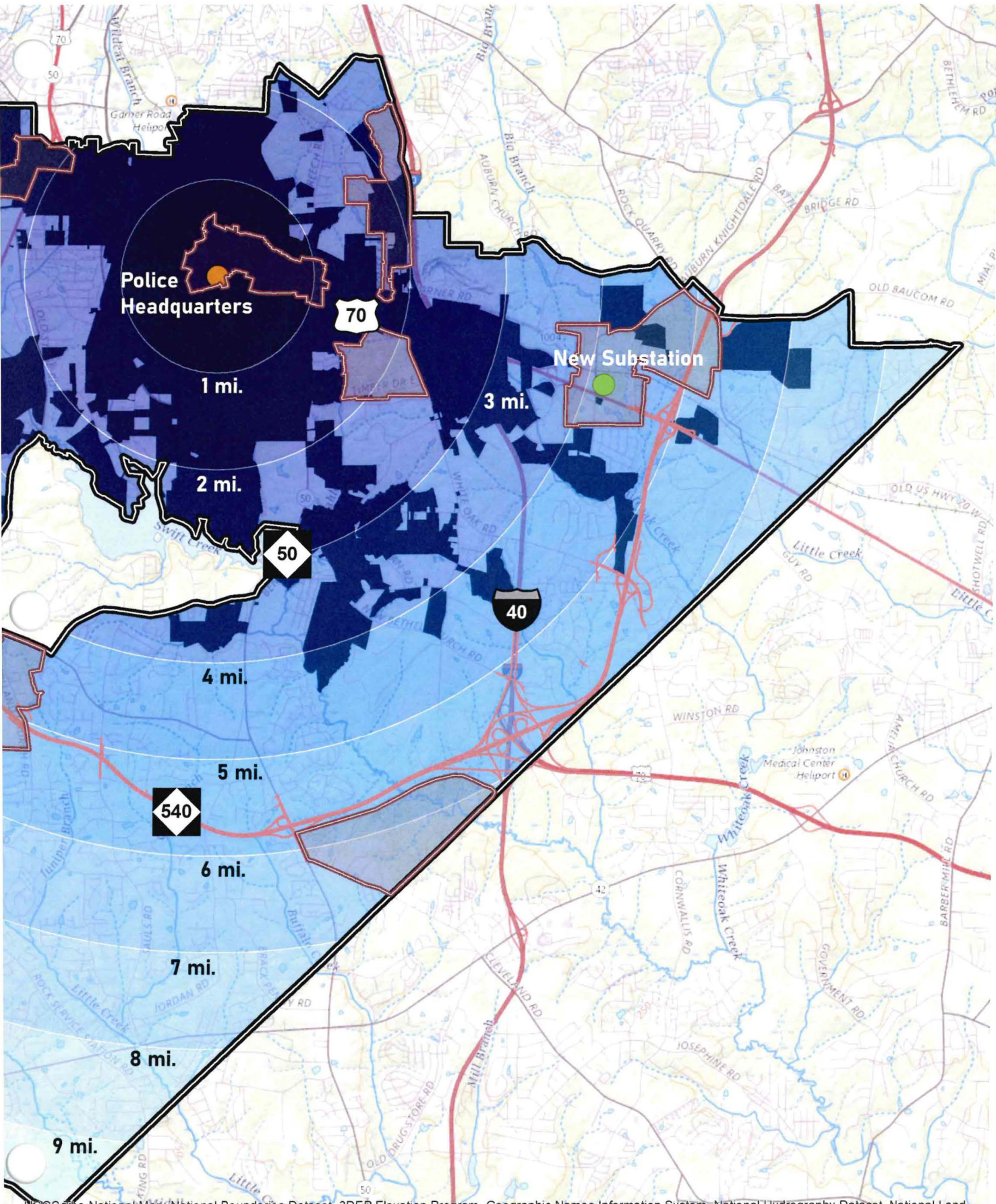
Many of the target investment areas depicted on the map are envisioned as new mixed-use areas on the Character Typology Map. Future planning for the town's bike lanes, sidewalks, and greenways should consider opportunities for police patrol by bicycle or foot (vs. automobile) in more densely populated areas. The police department should be a partner in systems-level planning for transportation that re-think or reconnect portions of the community via walkways, bikeways, and greenways.

Legend

-  Existing Patrol Areas
-  Target Investment Areas (Tier 1)
See page 234 in Chapter 6 for more information
-  Existing Police Station
-  Potential Future Substation

Radiating Distance from Police Headquarters (in miles)





USGS The National Map: National Boundaries Dataset, 3DEP Elevation Program, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrography Dataset, National Land Cover Database, National Structures Dataset, and National Transportation Dataset; USGS Global Ecosystems; U.S. Census Bureau TIGER/Line data; USFS Road Data;




Water Service Area

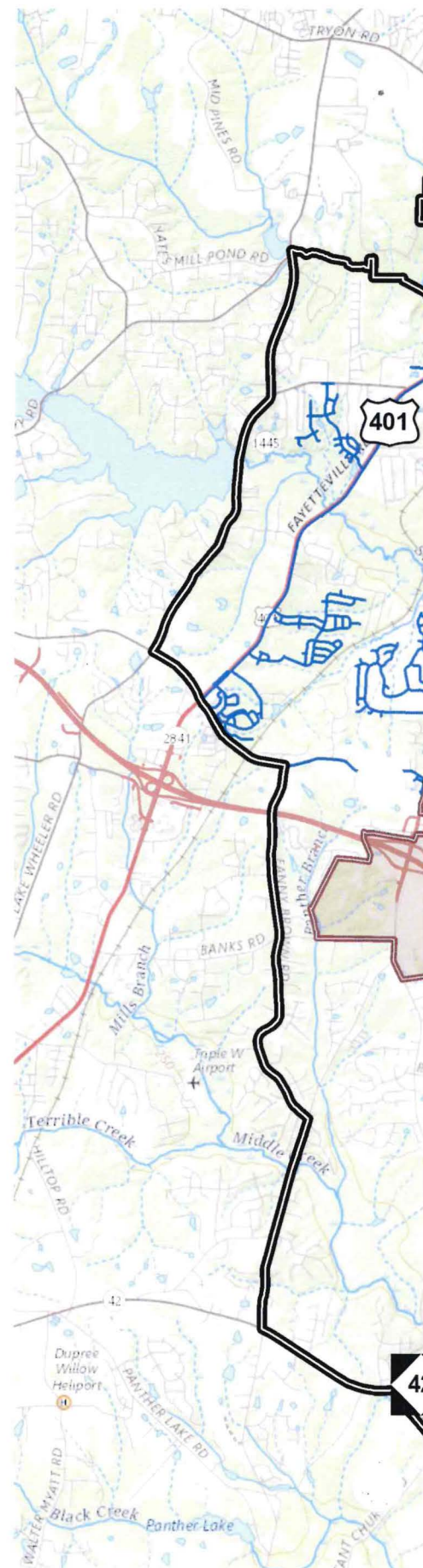
The City of Raleigh Public Utilities Department, Raleigh Water, provides water service to customers in Garner and surrounding areas. The town has no responsibility (or authority) related to the design, permitting, or construction of the water system for the entire town planning area. The town is allocated a portion of the utility department's total treatment capacity under an interlocal agreement, which it uses to influence the location, timing, and intensity of development allowed in the planning area.

The timing, size, and priorities for system expansion are critical to the town as it contemplates economic development opportunities on large tracts outside Raleigh Water's current water service areas; especially for areas around the interchanges for the new NC 540 toll road. The town, and the region, would benefit from a more efficient and predictable process to expedite system expansion for specific areas of Garner in partnership with Raleigh Water.

The comprehensive plan prioritizes service expansion to the targeted investment areas on the map. Town leaders should coordinate with their peers at Raleigh Water after adoption of the comprehensive plan to program improvements as soon as possible.

Legend

-  **Water Main (Existing)**
-  **Target Investment Areas (Tier 1)**
See page 234 in Chapter 6 for more information
-  **Full Extent of Raleigh Water Service Area**
(Water service is not guaranteed to be provided to all of these areas in the future)






Sewer Service Area

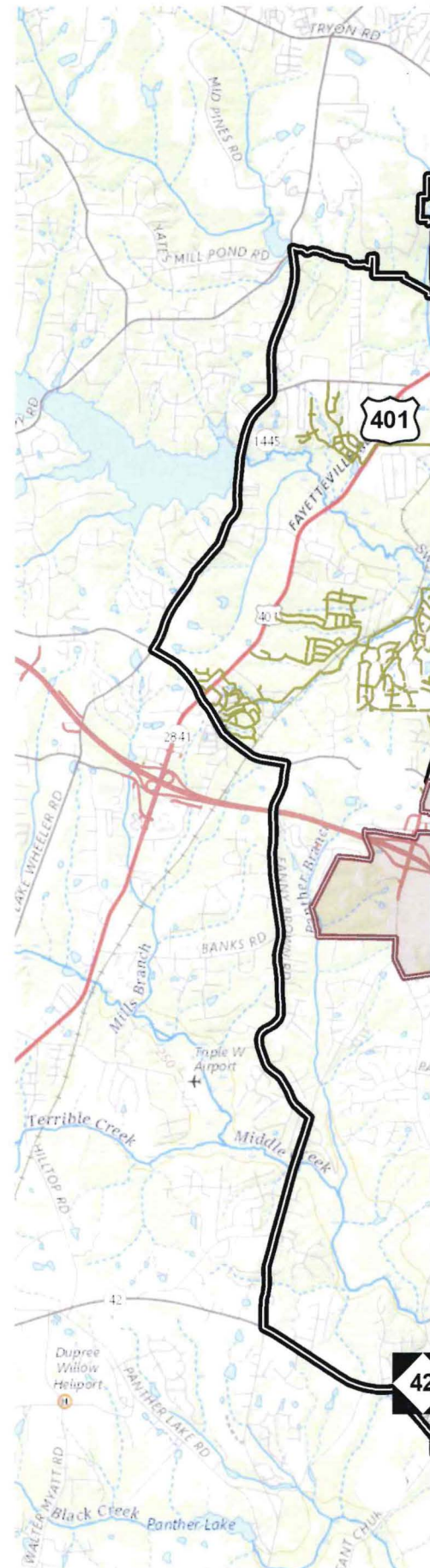
The City of Raleigh Public Utilities Department, Raleigh Water, provides sewer service to customers in Garner and surrounding areas. The town's role is limited to its allocation limits, which it uses to influence the location, timing, and intensity of development allowed in the planning area. The town has no responsibility (or authority) related to the design, permitting, or construction of the sewer system for the entire town planning area.

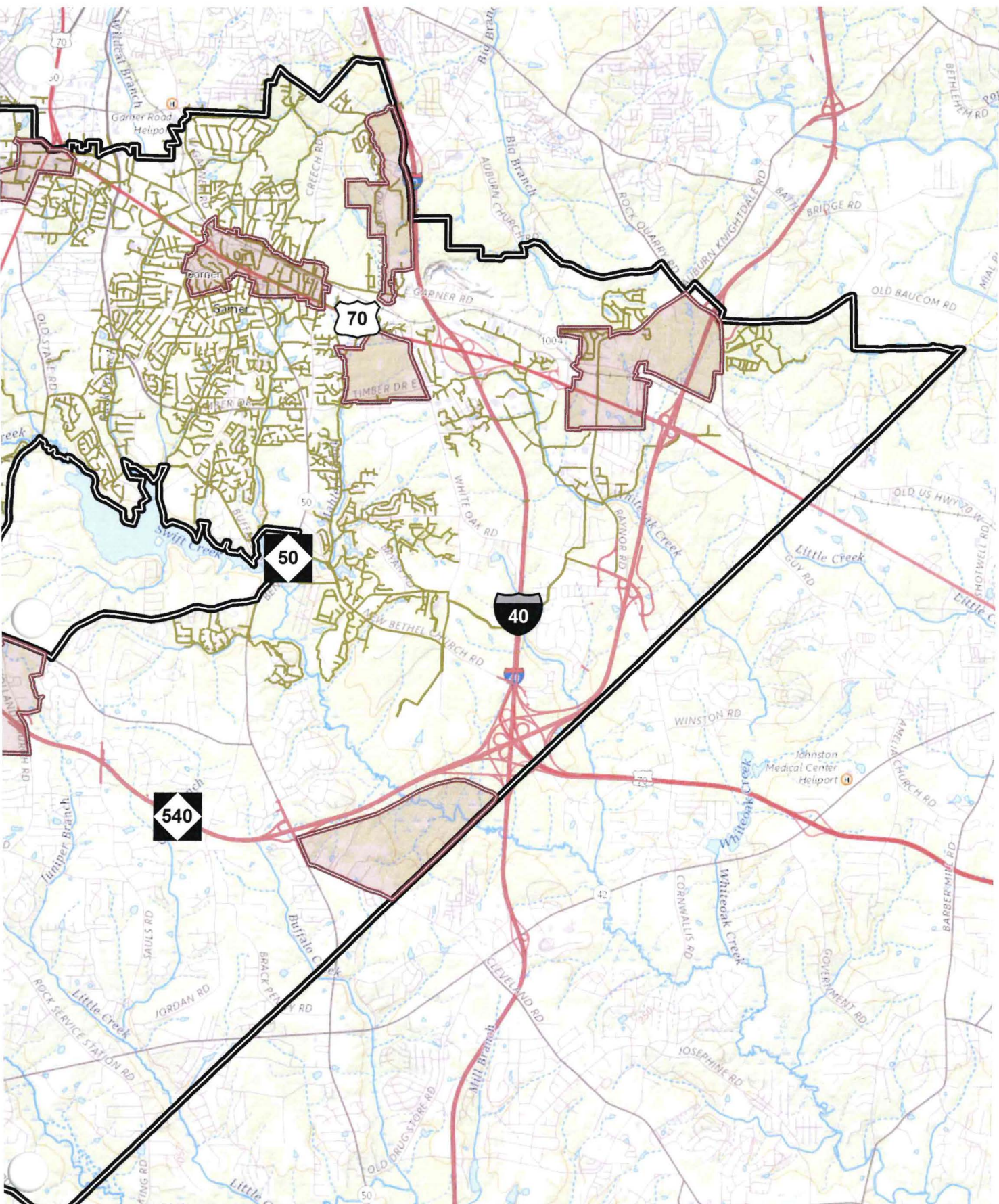
Similar to water service, economic development interests in Garner would benefit significantly from an effective and coordinated effort to extend sewer service to large, undeveloped parcels outside the current sewer service area; especially for areas around the interchanges for the new NC 540 toll road.

The comprehensive plan prioritizes service expansion to the targeted investment areas on the map. Town leaders should coordinate with their peers at Raleigh Water after adoption of the comprehensive plan to program improvements as soon as possible.

Legend

-  Sewer Main (Existing)
-  Target Investment Areas (Tier 1)
See page 234 in Chapter 6 for more information
-  Full Extent of Raleigh Sewer Service Area
(Sewer service is not guaranteed to be provided to all of these areas in the future)





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Premium Transit Network

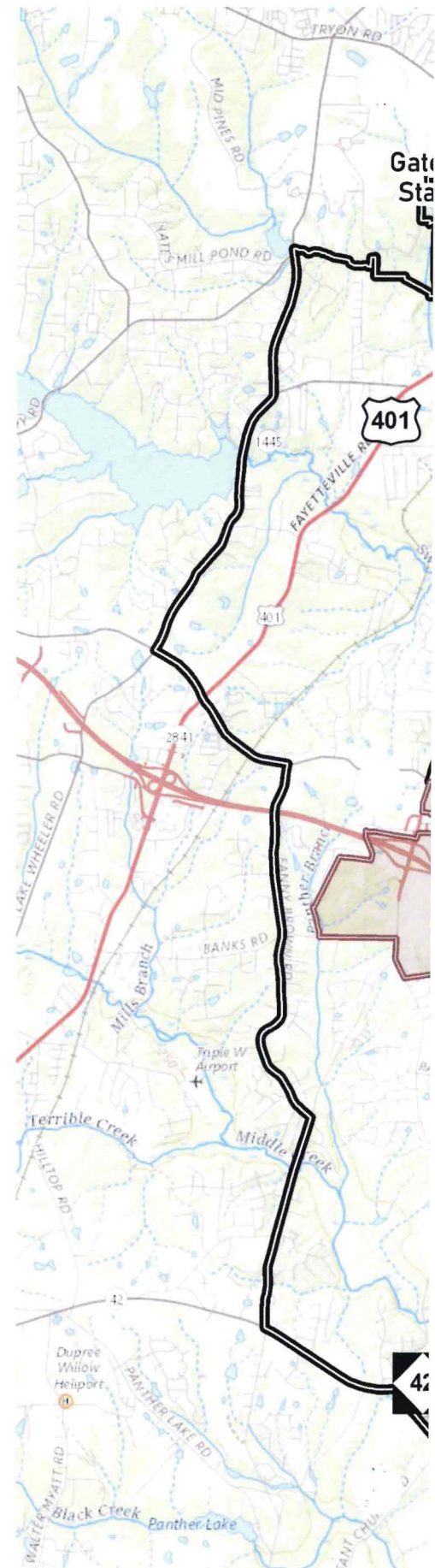
Increasing the frequency of peak period bus service throughout the town is important as mixed-use areas develop and redevelop at densities and intensities that support frequent transit trips. Bus rapid transit (BRT) is likely to be the intermediate goal for providing premium regional transit service in southeastern Wake County and western Johnston County. The town should be an active partner in the region during discussions being held to refine and implement BRT in the Wake County Transit Strategy Plan and CAMPO 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Town leaders should advocate for extending the proposed BRT route on US Highway 70 to Clayton with stops generally located as shown on the map. Town leaders should also advocate for new commuter rail transit (CRT) service in Garner as part of the Triangle Commuter Rail project. Two train stations are shown on the map for consideration in Garner: 1) at the historic train station in downtown, and 2) at the proposed transit-oriented development at Auburn Station.

Part of improving transit service in Garner should be a focus on creating attractive and accessible stop locations, building complete and safe pedestrian and bicycle networks surrounding stop locations, and targeting development at densities and intensities to justify transit investments. A local transit circulator study should also be completed in the near-term to identify methods and opportunities that connect existing and proposed activity centers in the US Highway 70 corridor (via rubber tire bus) with the premium BRT and CRT transit services.

Early concepts and recommendations in the comprehensive plan should be refined in a future update to the Garner Forward Transportation Plan, which should follow after completion of the comprehensive plan.

Legend

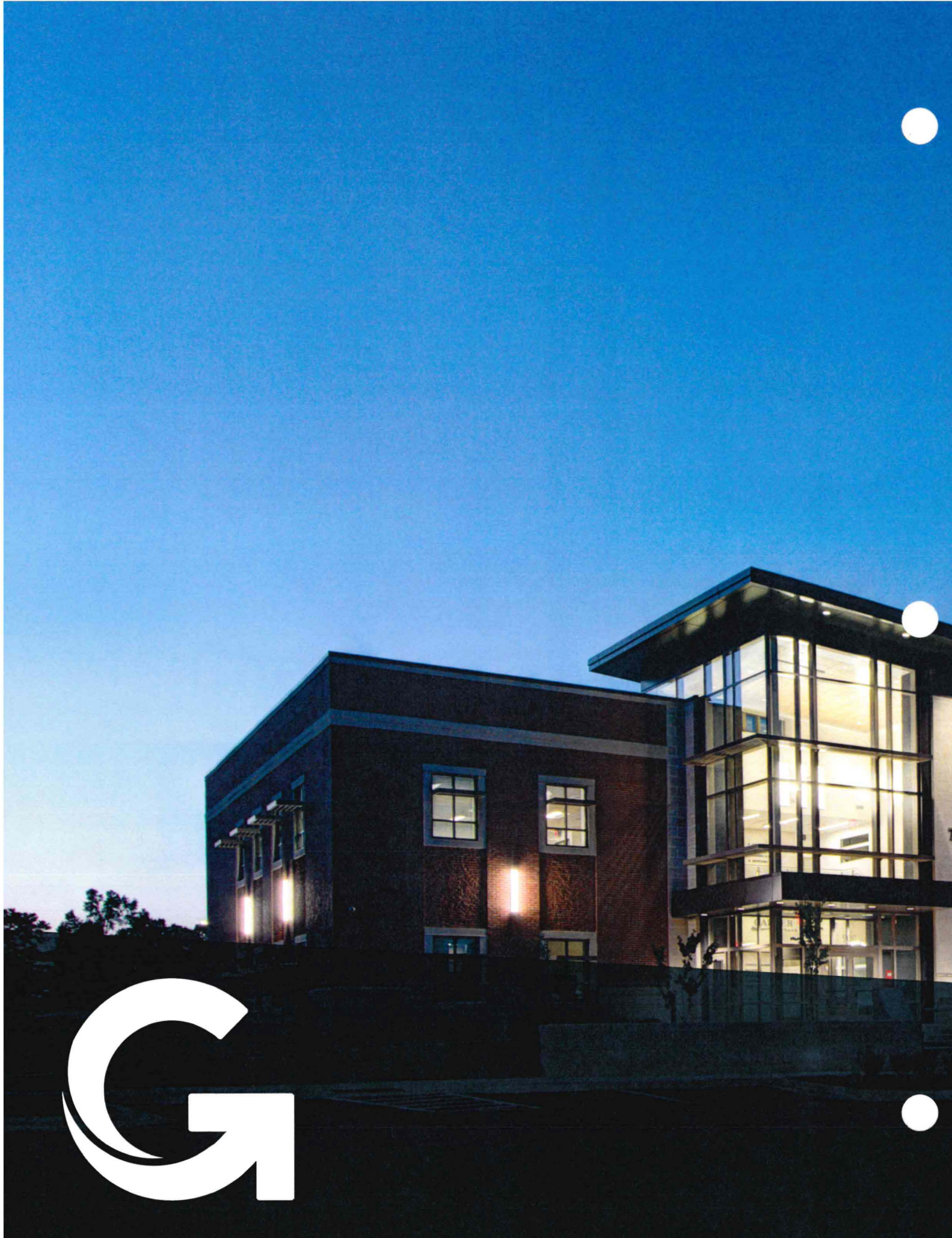
-  Proposed BRT Station (General Location)
-  Proposed CRT Station (General Location)
-  Proposed BRT Corridor (Phase 1, Raleigh to Gateway Station + Phase 2, Gateway Station to Clayton)
-  Proposed CRT Corridor (Triangle Commuter Rail)
-  Proposed Local Transit Circulator (Concept)
-  Target Investment Areas (Tier 1)
See page 234 in Chapter 6 for more information



From Raleigh

To Clayton

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G

A nighttime photograph of a building with several tall, illuminated columns. To the right, two flagpoles stand against a dark blue sky, with the American flag and another flag visible. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light sources being the building's columns and the ambient light from the sky.

Chapter

7

Implementation

Implementation

Implementing ideas, policies, and concepts from the town's comprehensive plan depends greatly upon the ability of property owners, developers, town staff, elected officials, and the general public to work together for a common purpose. The recommendations in the comprehensive plan begin and end with the needs of Garner in mind. Balancing local needs with those of partner agencies and organizations will be important for implementation. The "action plan" presented in Chapter 7 organizes projects, initiatives, and investments important to helping Garner fulfill its guiding principles and meet its long-term goals.

The intent of the action plan is three-fold. First, it provides decision-makers with a playbook for implementation. Second, clearly defined projects and action items identify public or private investment opportunities that are healthy, sustainable, and achievable. Third, regularly measuring achievements against the action plan — the "community report card" described on page 261 — enables stakeholders the opportunity to track progress and hold elected officials accountable for implementing the comprehensive plan.

The structure of the action plan does not require all projects or action items be completed in sequence. Instead, it promotes flexibility and partnership opportunities between the town and other stakeholders for implementing the vision in several phases; consistent with the pace of growth, emerging local or regional initiatives, or available funding.

The information that follows summarizes key components of the town's action plan.

Target Setting

Targets in the comprehensive plan define a desired, promised, minimum, or aspirational level of service for the town and its residents. They are implemented through specific projects, investments, or policies recommended in the plan implementation matrix.

Balanced Budget

Keep a structurally-balanced budget for the town

each year that does not borrow large sums of money from fund reserves to cover regular and on-going operating expenses. Promote a more diverse development portfolio for the community that seeks a 50:50 residential-to-non-residential tax base. (Note: In Wake County, apartments are classified and assessed as a commercial property.)

Economic Development

Capitalize on new economic development opportunities that bring in at least 100 new jobs per year. Jobs should be in target industries identified for the Triangle Region: advanced manufacturing; agriculture technologies; clean technologies; life sciences; information technologies; and energy and green technologies (Research Triangle Regional Partnership, 2023). New jobs should provide wages that let workers live comfortably in the Town of Garner.

Police Protection

Keep a consistent ratio between the number of sworn officers and population inside town limits as it continues to grow. Invest in the police department with the intention of providing 2.40 sworn officers per 1,000 residents. Improvements should focus on police department readiness (vehicles and equipment), foot and bicycle patrols in identified activity centers, and communications.

Fire Protection

Allocate resources to the fire department (via contractual services) to maintain an ISO Class 1 fire protection rating inside town limits. Improvements should focus on fire department readiness (stations and equipment), water supply, and communications.

(Note: An Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating is a score between 1 and 10 that rates a fire district's ability to handle fire emergencies. A lower score indicates better fire protection abilities and generally translates to lower property insurance rates for residents and businesses.)

Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources

Maintain a level of service of 10.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents to keep pace with anticipated



population growth. Land should be dedicated to the town and improved for public use.

Maintain a level of service of 1 mile of paved, public trail per 1,000 residents to keep pace with anticipated population growth. Require private development to construct and dedicate for public use connections and segments of the Town greenway system located on private property.

Construct additional indoor recreation facility space for public use to maintain a level of service of 4.38 square feet per resident to keep pace with anticipated population growth.

(Source: Town of Garner Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Comprehensive Master Plan)

Plan Implementation Matrix

A plan implementation matrix helps stakeholders implement recommendations in the comprehensive plan. Each project, policy, or initiative identified in the document is also listed in the matrix. A brief description, time frame, and responsible party provided for each item will help guide town staff and elected officials with implementation activities.

Some items in the matrix are underway, while others should be started with adoption of the comprehensive plan. Near-term and long-term items in the matrix address new challenges and opportunities anticipated for the planning area.

A copy of the plan implementation matrix is available from the town's planning department.

Projects, Plans, Policies, and Initiatives

Projects, plans, policies, and initiatives are recommended throughout the comprehensive plan to fulfill the community's vision for growth, conservation, character, and development. A brief summary of these items follows.

Town Plans and Policies

Many recommendations in the comprehensive plan will require revisions to the town's unified development ordinance, master plans, or other supporting policies and ordinances. Additional plans and studies for specific geographic areas

or planning themes may be needed in the future to support their implementation. Plans or policies affected by recommendations in the comprehensive plan are included in the plan implementation matrix.

Capital Projects

Capital projects identified for the town's planning area address existing deficiencies and/or anticipated future year needs. Implementation of the recommended projects provides additional capacity to serve the magnitude and timing of development depicted on the Character Typology Map. Some of the projects listed in the plan implementation matrix will require coordination with responsible state agencies or local utility service providers.

Town Initiatives

Initiatives led by the town should address a wide range of topics important to promoting economic development, neighborhood revitalization, and improving residents' quality of life. These initiatives are critical to building local capacity in the community to see through the recommendations of this plan.

Specific Plans & Studies

Some recommendations in the plan implementation matrix will require additional resources to complete. Town Administration should coordinate with other town departments to program funds and schedule special studies consistent with the time frames presented in the plan implementation matrix.

Monitor the Plan

The town should convene a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee made up of staff from town departments. The Committee should be responsible for prioritizing recommendations in the plan, establishing performance measures for tracking progress, and developing action plans.

Following adoption of the comprehensive plan, amendments to the town's UDO should be completed to codify big ideas from the plan into specific rules, requirements, and expectations for development.

A community report card should be used to monitor and evaluate progress for implementing recommendations in the comprehensive plan. A citizen survey may be administered as a part of the community report card to incorporate real-time citizen concerns. It should give a full and honest assessment of conditions in the planning area; and be used specifically to monitor performance, measure achievement, and reflect changes generated by the comprehensive plan.

Formal presentation of the community report card should be made to Town Council in the first quarter of the calendar year. Adjustments to the plan's implementation program, if necessary, should be made during the annual Town Council retreat. The report card may be combined with the performance measures summary included in the annual budget document to present a full picture of conditions in the town.

Plan Updates

An update to the comprehensive plan should occur every five to ten years to take advantage of changing technologies, new market and economic development realities, or other opportunities when they present themselves. Some parts of the document — things like the vision statement, guiding principles, general framework map, and development change and intensity map — should remain constant and keep Garner on a focused path for success. Other parts of the document — things like general policies and recommendations, the Character Typology Map, focus area study recommendations, or other supporting maps — may need to evolve over time as conditions change that were not contemplated at the time the document was adopted.



A Place for Notes (page left intentionally blank)



Planning, Development & Inspections

TEL (PLANNING) 919 856 6310
TEL (INSPECTIONS) 919 856 6222

A Division of Community Services
P.O. Box 550 • Raleigh, NC 27602
www.wakegov.com

To: Wake County Planning Board
From: Akul Nishawala, AICP - Planner III
Subject: Comprehensive Plan Amendment #02-24
Date: December 4, 2024

Requests

Recommend adoption of the Western Wake Area Plan as an amendment to PLANWake, the Wake County Comprehensive Plan; and recommend amending the PLANWake Development Framework.

Applicant

Wake County

Location

The Western Wake planning area is in the southwestern portion of Wake County and borders Chatham and Harnett Counties. East of the area plan lie four of Wake County's 12 municipalities (from north to south): the Town of Cary, the Town of Apex, the Town of Holly Springs and the Town of Fuquay-Varina. The largest feature of the area plan is Harris Lake, which is also the site of the Harris Nuclear Plant.

Background

Wake County's comprehensive plan, PLANWake, was adopted in 2021 as a tool to manage the substantial growth that the county has and will continue to experience. The plan articulates the new vision for the greater Wake County community—one that will build off recent planning advancements made through the Wake Transit Plan, the Wake County Affordable Housing Plan, the Wake County Greenway System Plan and others to account for the next wave of growth in a manner that enhances quality of life for all residents. This new course directs growth to existing towns, supports the development of connected and walkable transit-supportive centers and works with rural landowners to protect important open spaces, farms and forests.

To meet the goals set forth in PLANWake, numerous Wake County policies and documents had to be updated or overhauled as part of the implementation process. One such example is adoption of area plans encompassing the unincorporated areas of Wake County. These area plans are designed to provide more localized land use decisions, analysis, and public engagement. The Western Wake (WW) Area Plan is the fourth of seven area plans that will replace the current area land use plans.

Analysis

Western Wake Area Plan

Municipalities have grown significantly over the past 20 years, either through annexation or expansions of extra-territorial jurisdictions. This growth has resulted in the considerable reduction of Wake County's planning jurisdiction, which rendered the former area land use plan geographies obsolete, and its policies outdated. The new boundaries for the area plans represent the logical and updated geographic groupings of the remaining area. Additional considerations such as watersheds, rights-of-way and U.S. Census block groups contributed to the updated area plan boundaries.

While PLANWake will continue to serve as the overarching vision for the county, the area plans can and should be used as an opportunity for local land use planning decisions, identify needs for an area, and adjustments to the growth development framework map.

The Western Wake Area Plan is the culmination of a months-long process to conduct research, analysis, and outreach to implement the vision and goals of PLANWake in a localized manner. Wake County planning staff took this opportunity to reassess its past policies and methods and employed new tactics and avenues to create a long-term planning document.

Carrying on the lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic, planning staff harnessed virtual or online methods to interact with the community and garner feedback throughout the process. Along with a central website and social media posts, staff utilized an online platform that was able to capture feedback from the public in an engaging and interactive way. Since April 2024, 2,613 unique users visited the plan's online engagement platform and 140 of them interacted with it, meaning they either commented or completed a survey. Additionally, the site received 4,169 total visits, 80 survey responses and 119 comments.

Staff held one virtual and two in-person meetings within the study area. The virtual meeting was held on May 21, 2024, and the in-person meetings were held at the New Hill Community Center in New Hill on June 12, 2024, and the White Oak Foundation Center in Cary on September 11, 2024. The information and conversations during these events directly contributed to Western Wake's content and overall direction.

The predominant future land use of the Western Wake Area Plan is the Utility/Conservation classification. These are largely owned by Duke Energy and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and intended to serve as natural buffers between developed areas and the Harris Nuclear Plant, Harris Lake, and the Jordan Lake water supply watershed.

An important aspect of the Western Wake Area Plan is the Agriculture land use classification. This designation was first introduced in the previously adopted Lower Swift Creek Area Plan. The Agriculture & Forestry designation is unique in that it specifically calls out farming practices as the primary and intended long-range use instead of utilizing a passive term like rural to describe the area. Much of the feedback staff received were from the agricultural community who expressed their desire to continue farming their land into the future and not to sell to developers. This is underscored by the Voluntary Agricultural Districts (VADs), Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural Districts (EVADs), and conservation easements in the area as well as the overall interest and support of these programs by local landowners.

PLANWake Development Framework

Along with the adoption of the Western Wake Area Plan, staff recommends two amendments to the PLANWake Development Framework map. The first is to reclassify 383 acres in the Friendship Community from Community to Rural. This is around Friendship Road between Old US 1 and US 1 and is an established residential community with large lots. Residents have made it clear to staff that they wish for things to remain as they currently are in terms of density and development. This amendment is also consistent with the Western Wake Area Plan's land use classifications of Residential 1 Dwelling Unit/Acre and Agriculture.

The second amendment is to amend a 36-acre parcel on Page Road from Rural to Community in order to reflect its annexation by the Town of Apex. As it is no longer in the county's jurisdiction, the parcel's Rural classification is inappropriate.

Staff included municipal planning staff (i.e., Apex, Cary, Holly Springs, and Fuquay-Varina) in the updates and development of the Western Wake Area Plan throughout the process.

Findings

- 1. The Western Wake Area Plan is consistent with the goals and visions set forth in PLANWake.**
- 2. The Western Wake Area Plan received input from residents, municipal partners, and stakeholders.**
- 3. The Western Wake Area Plan provides an update to the existing area land plan policies, development framework map, and land use designations.**

Staff Recommendation

That the Planning Board recommend that the Board of Commissioners adopt the Western Wake Area Plan as an amendment to the Wake County Comprehensive Plan, PLANWake.

Attachments:

- Western Wake Area Plan
- CPA-02-24 Staff Presentation



WESTERN WAKE AREA PLAN

Table of Contents

Section 1: Study Overview	2
Area Plans	3
Western Wake Study Area	5
Western Wake and PLANWake	6
Section 2: Existing Conditions	7
Population and Housing	7
Affordable Housing	7
Race and Ethnicity	9
Social Equity	10
Current Land Use	14
Agriculture and Farmland Preservation	15
Prime Farmland	16
Western Wake Farmland and Agriculture	17
Retail and Commercial Locations	18
Institutional & Civic Uses	18
Historic Properties & Landmarks	18
Chapter 3: Community Engagement and Outreach	20
Online / Virtual Engagement	20
In-Person Community Meetings	22
Chapter 4: Western Wake Future Land Use Map	25

Section 5: Additional Planning Elements	27
Municipal Planning Jurisdictions	27
Municipal Transition Standards (MTS)	28
Multi-Use Districts	28
Multi-Use District Amendment Recommendations	29
NC 55 Hwy Multi-Use District	31
Old US 1 Hwy Multi-Use District	34
PLANWake Development Framework Map Amendment Recommendations	37
Commercial Area Location Strategy	39
Greenway / Walkability Network	40
Section 6: Appendix	43

SECTION 1

Study Overview

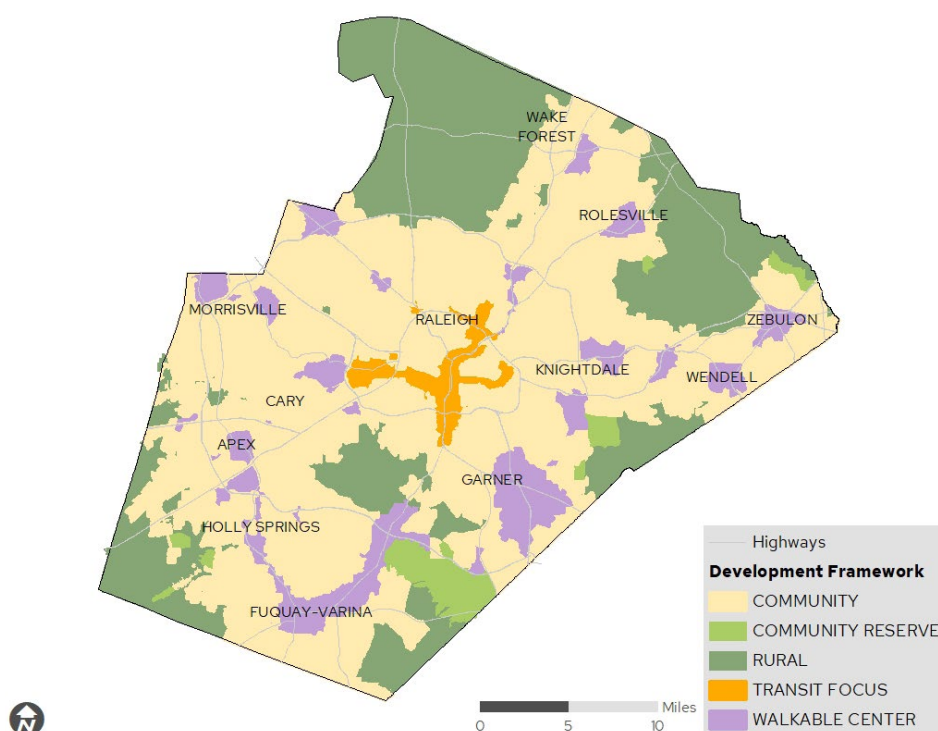
While PLANWake will continue to serve as the overarching vision for Wake County, the Western Wake Area Plan will provide more localized land use and development goals. The study process will also specifically create opportunities for localized public input and engagement.

Purpose of the Plan Update

The County is working with its partners and the public to update the Western Wake (WW) Area Plan to:

- Modernize the plan.**
 Previous planning studies were completed as part of the Southwest Area Plan adopted in 2011. This area plan will replace and supplant the portions of those plans covered by the WW study area.
- Align with the Wake County Comprehensive Plan, PLANWake.**
 Adopted in 2021, PLANWake established notable new goals for the Western Wake study area and county at large.
- Align with municipal plans.**
 The towns of Cary, Apex, Holly Springs and Fuquay-Varina have all updated their municipal plans multiple times since 2011.
- Address resident and stakeholder concerns.**
 This study will build off the community-wide engagement efforts conducted as part of PLANWake and will focus on resident and stakeholder concerns within the WW study area.
- Set the groundwork for next steps.**
 Issues identified by the WW study will be programmed for follow-up activities. For example, recommendations from this plan will be considered for inclusion in county-wide updates to related plans, i.e., transportation, housing affordability and preservation.

PLANWake Development Framework Map



Area Plans

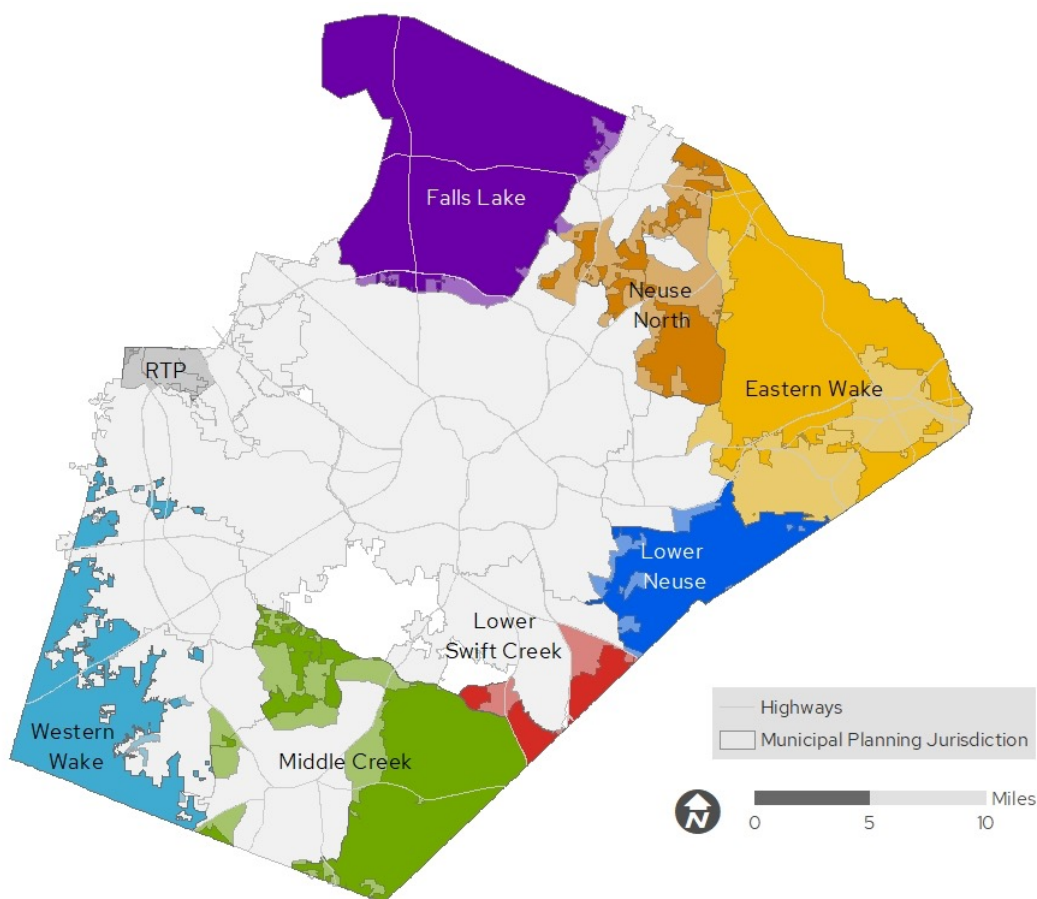
To meet the goals set forth in PLANWake, numerous Wake County policies and documents had to be updated or overhauled as part of the implementation process. One such example is adoption of area plans encompassing the unincorporated areas of Wake County. These area plans are designed to provide more localized land use (applications) analysis and public engagement. The Western Wake Area Plan is the fourth of seven area plans that will replace the current area land use plans. In this case, the Western Wake Area Plan will replace and update the Southwest Area Land Use Plan that was adopted in 2007 and updated in 2010.

Municipalities have grown significantly over the past 20 years, either through annexation or expansions of

extra-territorial jurisdictions. This growth has resulted in the considerable reduction of Wake County's planning jurisdiction, which rendered the former area land use plan geographies obsolete and their policies outdated. The new boundaries for the area plans represent the logical and updated geographic groupings of the remaining area. Additional considerations such as watersheds, rights-of-way and U.S. Census block groups contributed to the updated boundaries.

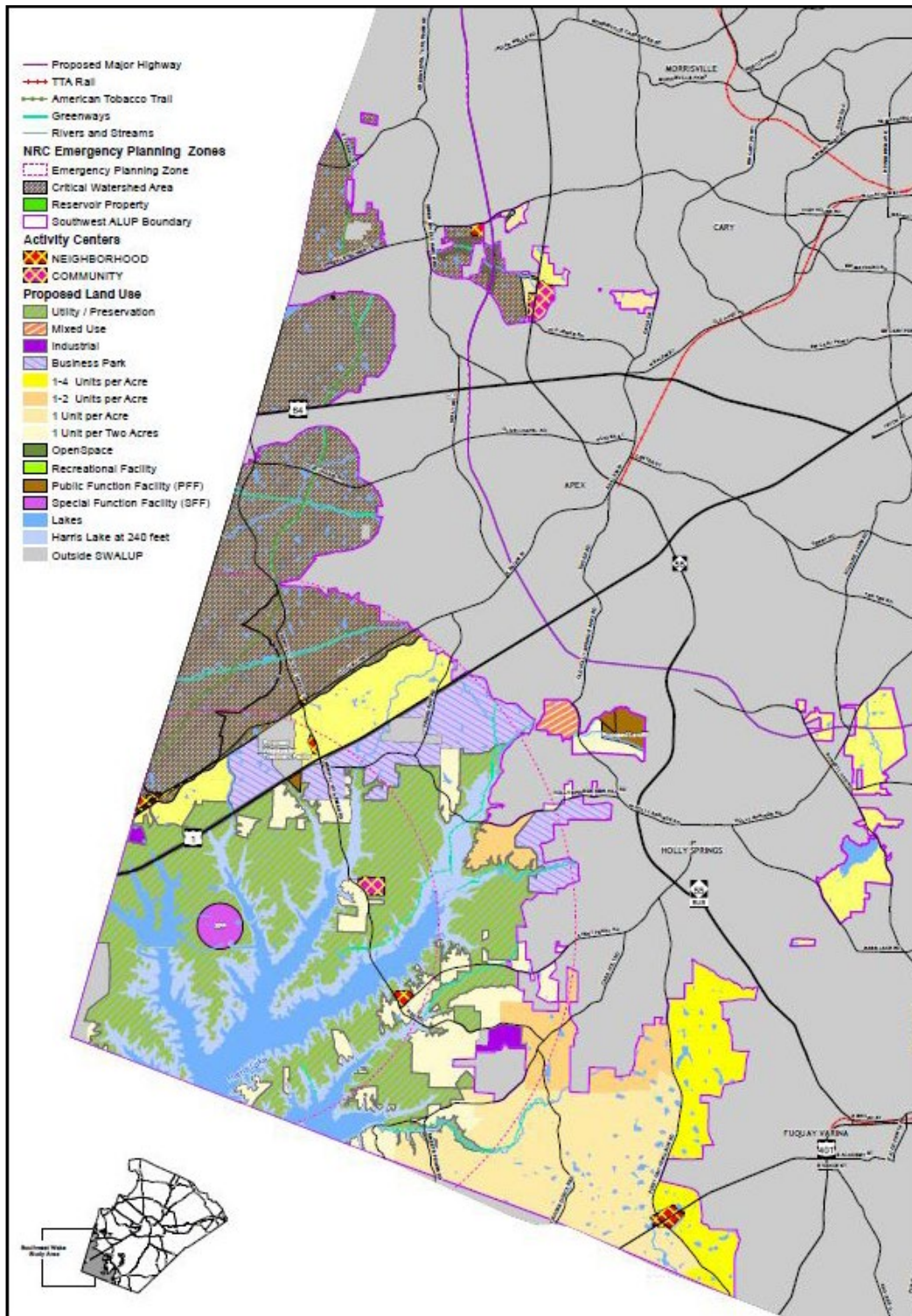
While PLANWake will continue to serve as the overarching vision for the county, the area plans can and should be used as an opportunity for certain elements — i.e., the development framework — to be modified, updated or amended as necessary.

Wake County Area Plans



NOTE: While there is an area plan on the map for the Research Triangle Park (RTP), the RTP Foundation is responsible for any long-range or master planning initiatives in this area. Its inclusion is to identify it as an unincorporated area in Wake County's jurisdiction. Wake County will NOT be conducting an area plan in RTP.

Southwest Area Land Use Plan



Southwest Wake
ALUP Update
Adopted July 9, 2007
(Amended 4/5/10, LUPA 03-09)

The Map: 810005 and 810006 (Southwest ALUP) 030500SouthwestALUP_030500.mxd
Created by: Wake County
Wake County Planning Department
Mar. 20, 2011

Western Wake Study Area

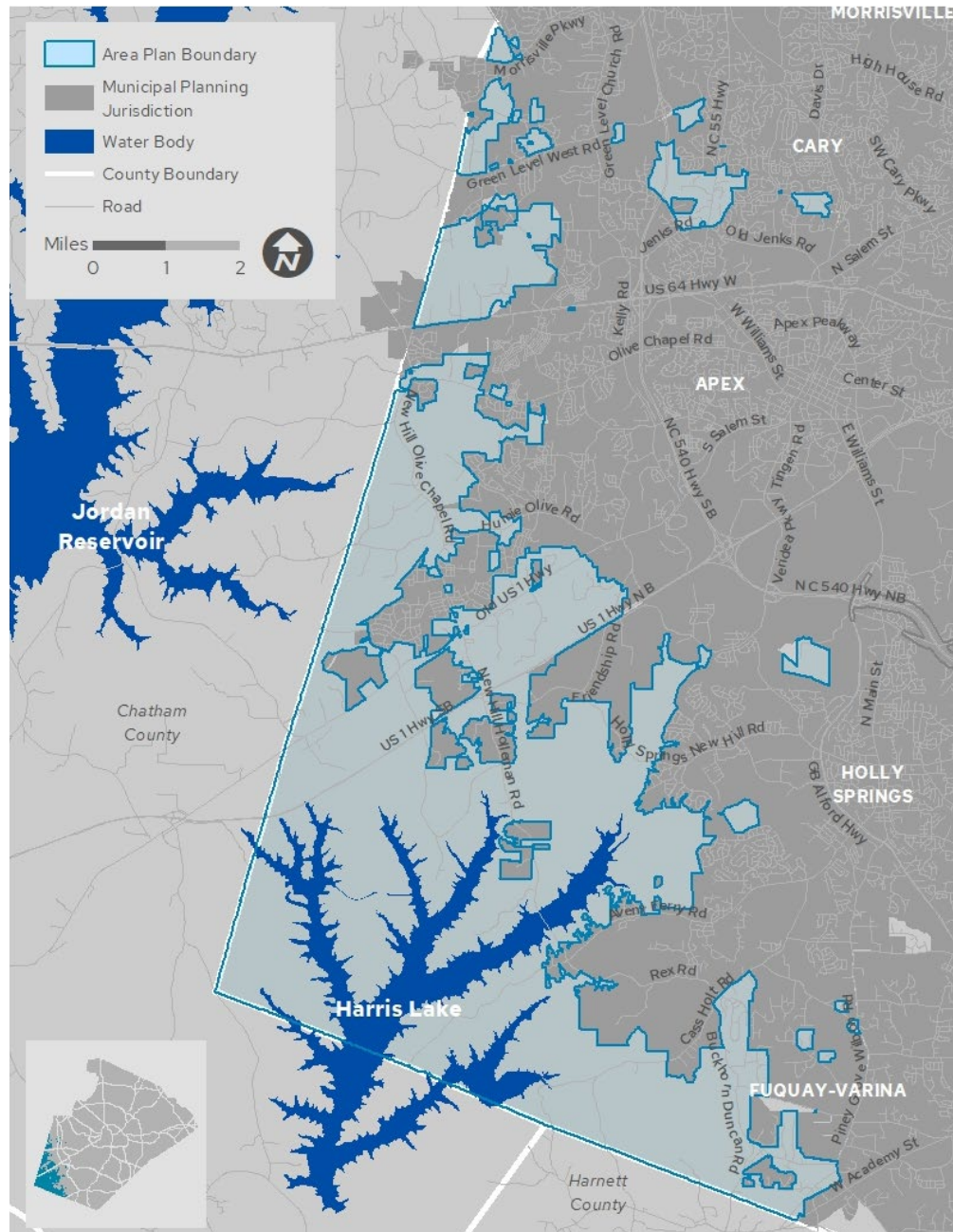
The Western Wake Area Plan covers approximately 27,480 acres or just under 43 square miles. It is in the southwestern portion of Wake County and borders the Chatham and Harnett county lines on its southern and western edges.

East of the area plan lies four of Wake County's 12 municipalities (from north to south): the Town of Cary, the Town of Apex, the Town of Holly Springs and the

Town of Fuquay-Varina. An aspect of the WW Area Plan is that it split up into multiple islands; some of which are planned to remain county and others that are expected to become municipal in the future.

The largest feature of the area plan is Harris Lake, which is also the site of the Harris Nuclear Plant.

**Area Plan
Base Map**



Western Wake and PLANWake

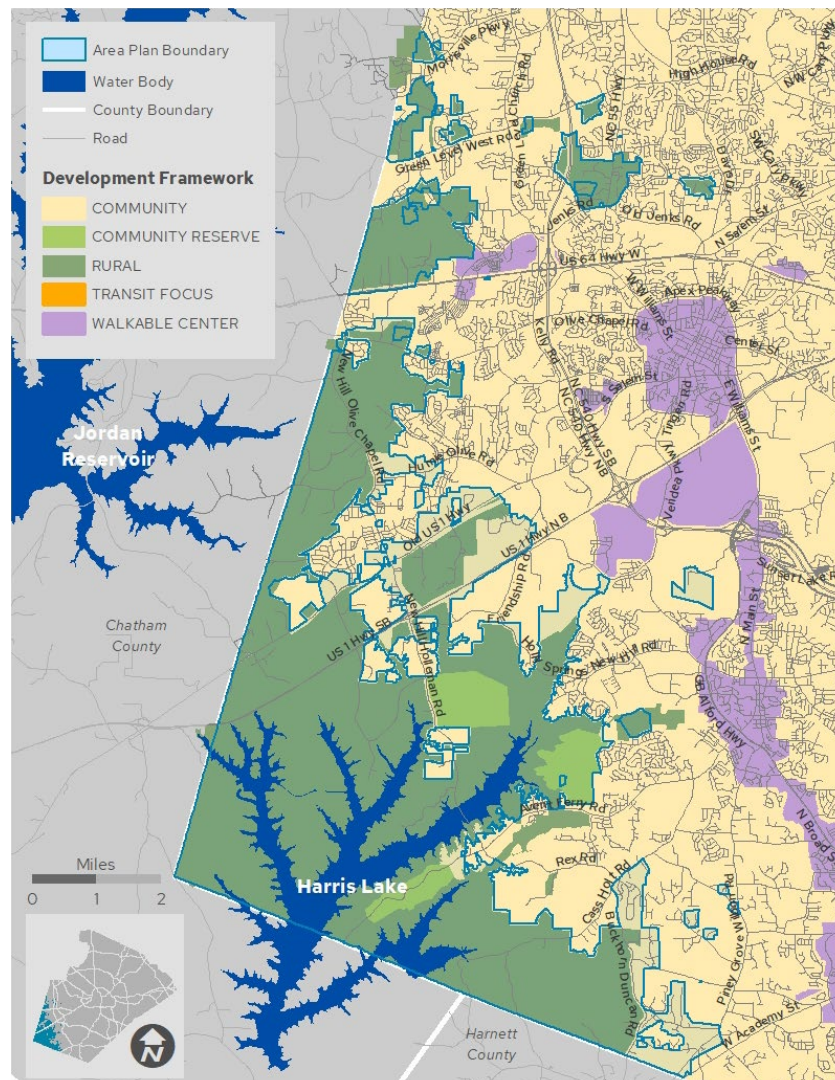
Based on current trends and expected projections, every community plan completed in Wake County must have a strategy for allocating continued job and population growth. As of July 1, 2023, Wake County's estimated population was 1,190,275. We frequently use the people-per-day metric to describe growth—now 51 people per day. This is due to a variety of reasons, namely thriving industries, education and live/work/play opportunities around 12 municipalities. Over the next decade, these population growth trends are expected to continue, and another 225,000 new residents will likely call Wake County home.

PLANWake articulates the vision for how the greater Wake County community should account for the next wave of growth in a manner that enhances quality of life for all residents. This vision directs new

growth to existing towns, supports the development of connected and walkable transit-supportive centers and works with rural landowners to protect important open spaces, farms, forests and historic resources.

The Development Framework map shows PLANWake's vision for the WW area as mostly Rural or expected to remain in the county's jurisdiction. While subject to change, the assumption is that the majority of municipal development/expansion has already occurred. The Community designation does appear in certain sections of the WW area. While it is anticipated the adjacent municipalities (Apex, Holly Springs) will continue to expand and densify in these sections, there are also instances where more dense residential developments have already occurred.

Development Framework



SECTION 2

Existing Conditions

Population and Housing

The population of the WW study area has bucked the trend of rapid growth that Wake County at large as seen over the past 20 years. While the number of residential units has gone up slightly, the overall population has remained largely the same.

It is worth noting that while the WW study boundary was used for both the 2014 and 2024 data, Wake County’s jurisdiction has shrunk considerably since then. The Southwest Area Land Use Plan that preceded this current plan was much larger. Most of the growth that has occurred in this area is due to municipal annexation.

The physical constraints to development in this area, such as the lake, the county boundary and large tracts of land owned by Duke Energy and United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) are the most likely causes. These constraints are not as common in other parts of the county nor are they grouped together in such a geographically small area, allowing for development to occur at much more robust scale.

This is consistent with PLANWake’s Development Framework map, which has designated this area as Rural (expected to remain in the county’s jurisdiction).

Western Wake Area Plan Housing 2014-2024				
	Residential Units	Manufactured Homes	Total Units	Total Occupied Units
2014	1,099	194	1,293	1,215
2024	1,311	166	1,477	1,344

Western Wake Area Plan Population 2014-2024			
	Household Population	Group Quarters Population	Population Estimate
2014	3,403	19	3,422
2024	3,454	0	3,454

Sources: Wake County Property Data, U.S. Census

Affordable Housing

The Wake County Affordable Housing Plan, adopted in 2017, identifies challenges to housing affordability in the county, namely population growth, an incommensurate household income-to-cost ratio, lack of affordable housing options among new residential development, and loss of existing affordable housing to redevelopment or market conversion.

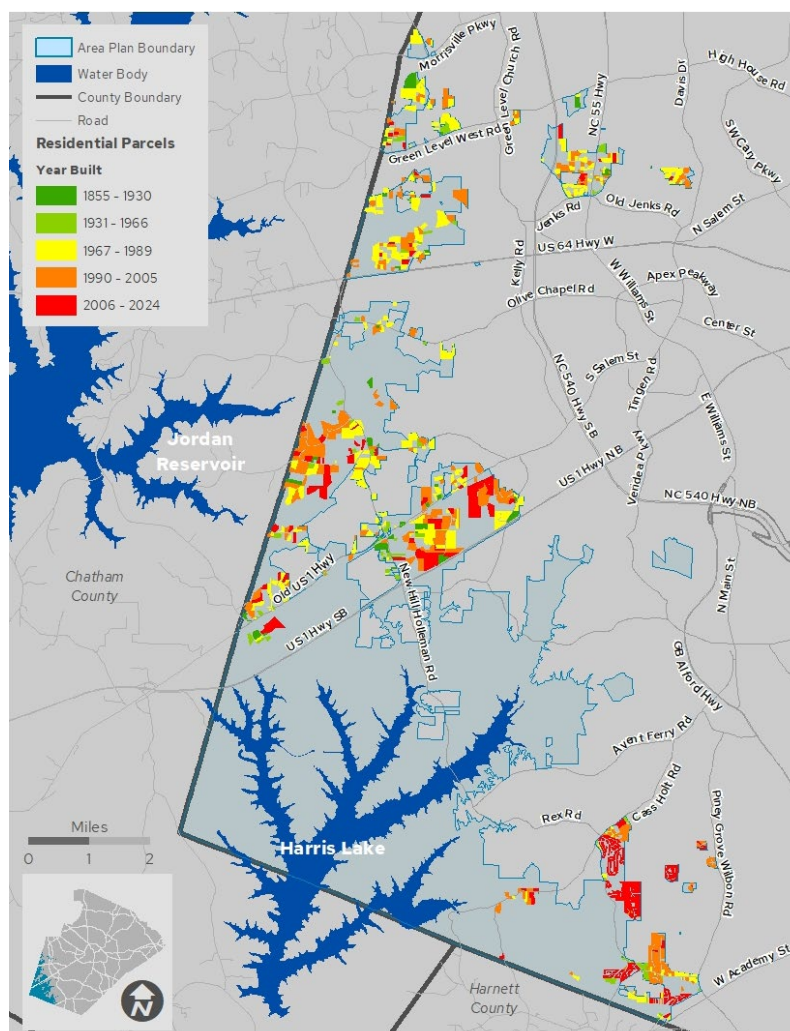
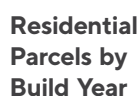
To put these trends into a real-world context, there is a current shortage of approximately 56,000 homes in Wake County that are affordable to households earning less than 50% of the County’s Area Median Income (AMI), which equates to \$61,650 annually for a four-person household. Further, approximately 3,000 people in Wake County experience homelessness in a given year.

The housing plan looks to ensure that quality affordable housing is available for all Wake County residents. Housing that is close to transit, employment centers, and other amenities is crucial to improving equity across the county. It also goes far in reducing affordability challenges to low-income households and improving health, community connectivity and mobility to jobs and necessary services.

According to Wake County Parcel Data, there are a total of 1,067 residential parcels in the WW study area where the average home sale price is \$334K and the median sales price is \$304K. According to Redfin, the median sales price for homes in all of Wake County was \$490,420 as of August 2024, indicating that housing in the study area is relatively more affordable than Wake County as a whole. Approximately 52% of the homes in the study area were built since 2000, and the median year built is 2001. Housing values in the study area have been largely affected by the

recent conditions of the housing market. Units built since 2020 have a median sales price of \$460,000, a significant increase compared to units built in between 2000 and 2023 which have a median sales price of \$331,000.

There are over 100 manufactured homes in the study area with a median year built of 1993 and a median sales price of \$64.5K. Manufactured housing in Wake County tends to serve very low-income households, and the data indicate that manufactured homes in the study area may face more prevalent age and quality issues than conventional or “stick-built” homes. Climate resiliency, a concern for all residential construction, is of particular concern for older manufactured housing. Addressing necessary repairs can be a burden for low-income households, which threatens manufactured housing residents’ ability to remain safely and stably in their homes.



Race and Ethnicity

The WW area's population has experienced somewhat of a diversification from 2010 to now. Most notably, the percentage of the area's Asian population has seen the most growth, increasing by 113% from 2010 to 2020.

Western Wake			
	Percent Race and Ethnicity		Percent Change
	2010	2020	2010-2020
Asian	15.32%	32.67%	113.23%
Black	5.43%	5.12%	-5.68%
White	70.15%	50.29%	-28.3%
Hispanic	6.76%	7.04%	4.12%
Two or More Races	2.35%	4.88%	108.3%
	100%	100%	

Source: 2010 and 2020 U.S. Census by Block Group

When compared to the rest of Wake County, the WW area does show similar growth patterns in the Asian population; however, there are stark differences in the other categories. Namely, where the Black and White populations are decreasing in the WW area, they are increasing countywide.

Wake County		
	Total Percent	Total Percent Change
	2020	2010-2020
Asian	9%	100%
Black	18%	12%
White	57%	15%
Hispanic	11%	46%
Two or More Races	5%	22%
	100%	

Source: 2010 and 2020 U.S. Census by Block Group

NOTE: The U.S. Census Block Group sizes are based on population; less populated areas tend to have larger geographic block groups as a result. Over time, these are amended to reflect the increase/decrease in population. As Wake County has grown the number of block groups has increased, and the WW area experienced this as well.

Social Equity

Social Equity identifies the health and well-being characteristics of the community by analyzing socioeconomic statistics (U.S. Census) including housing, education, food security, poverty levels and income, among others.

Wake County has created a Social Equity Atlas that combines these factors to indicate populations with varying degrees of vulnerability. Community Vulnerability and Economic Health are two key indices

that the Social Equity Atlas uses to identify and measure our communities' socioeconomic conditions. The main source of these data is the most recent 5-year estimates of U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey at the Block Group level.

For the most up-to-date information, refer to [Wake County's Social Equity Atlas webpage](#).

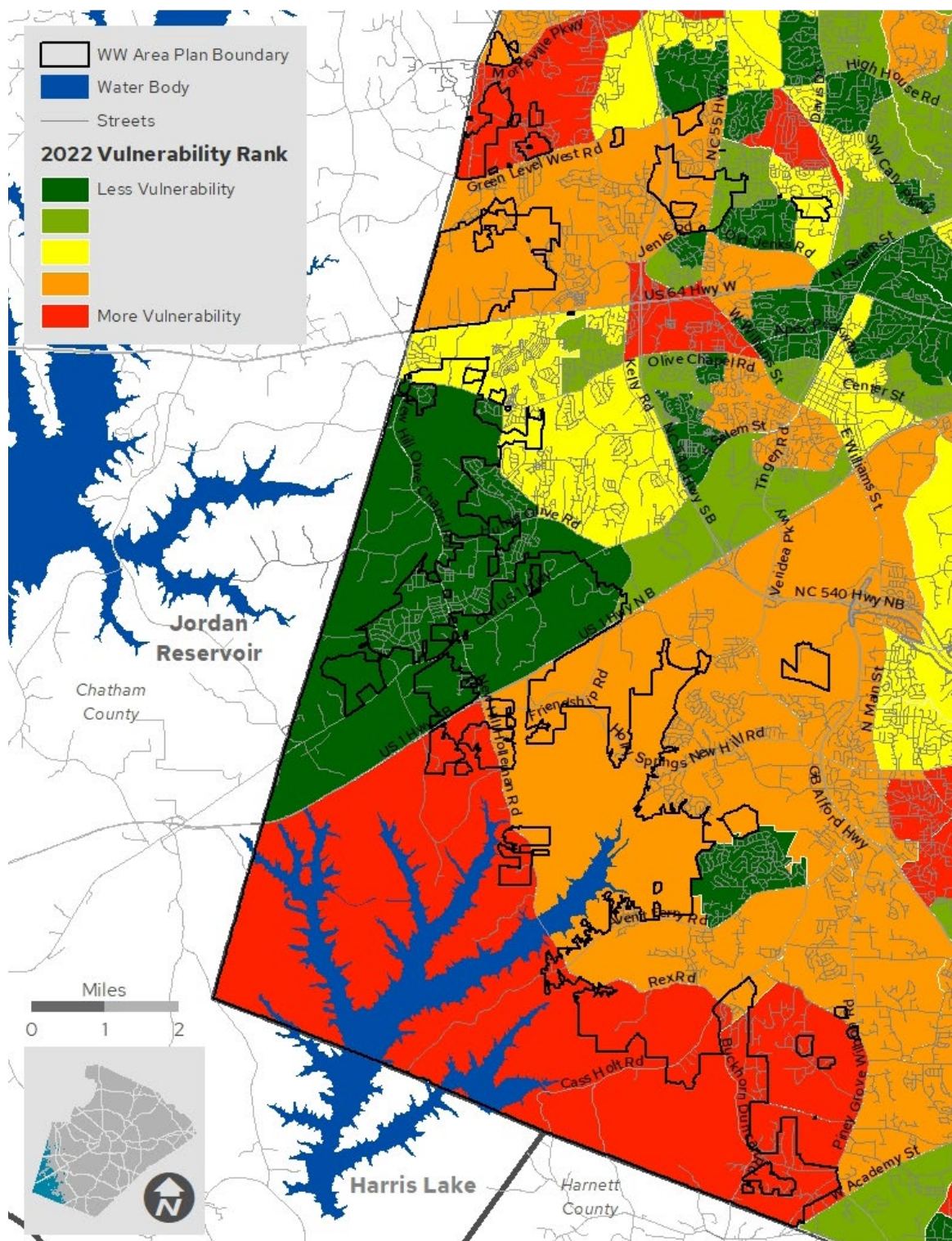
COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY INDEX

The Community Vulnerability Index helps determine where resources and initiatives are lacking by using a combination of the following factors.

- **Unemployment** - The population age 16 and older who are unemployed in the civilian labor force.
- **Age Dependency** - The population younger than the age of 18 and older than the age of 64 combined.
- **Low Educational Attainment** - The population of ages 25 and older who have less than a high school diploma.
- **Housing Vacancy** - The total number of vacant or unoccupied housing units in a block group.
- **Below Poverty Level** - The population living below the federal poverty threshold in Wake County.

In terms of the WW study area, the community vulnerability is higher in the areas south of US 1 to the county line. The main driver in this area is the higher percentages of residents being younger than 18, but high percentages of residents over 65 and those living below the poverty level contribute as well. It should be noted that this area has a small population relative to its large size, and that may contribute somewhat to the overall score. For context, the entire Western Wake study area, including the green areas, has higher percentages of residents younger than 18, regardless of how the other factors stacked up. This represents a strong need for community infrastructure, such as schools, to support these residents.

Community Vulnerability Index



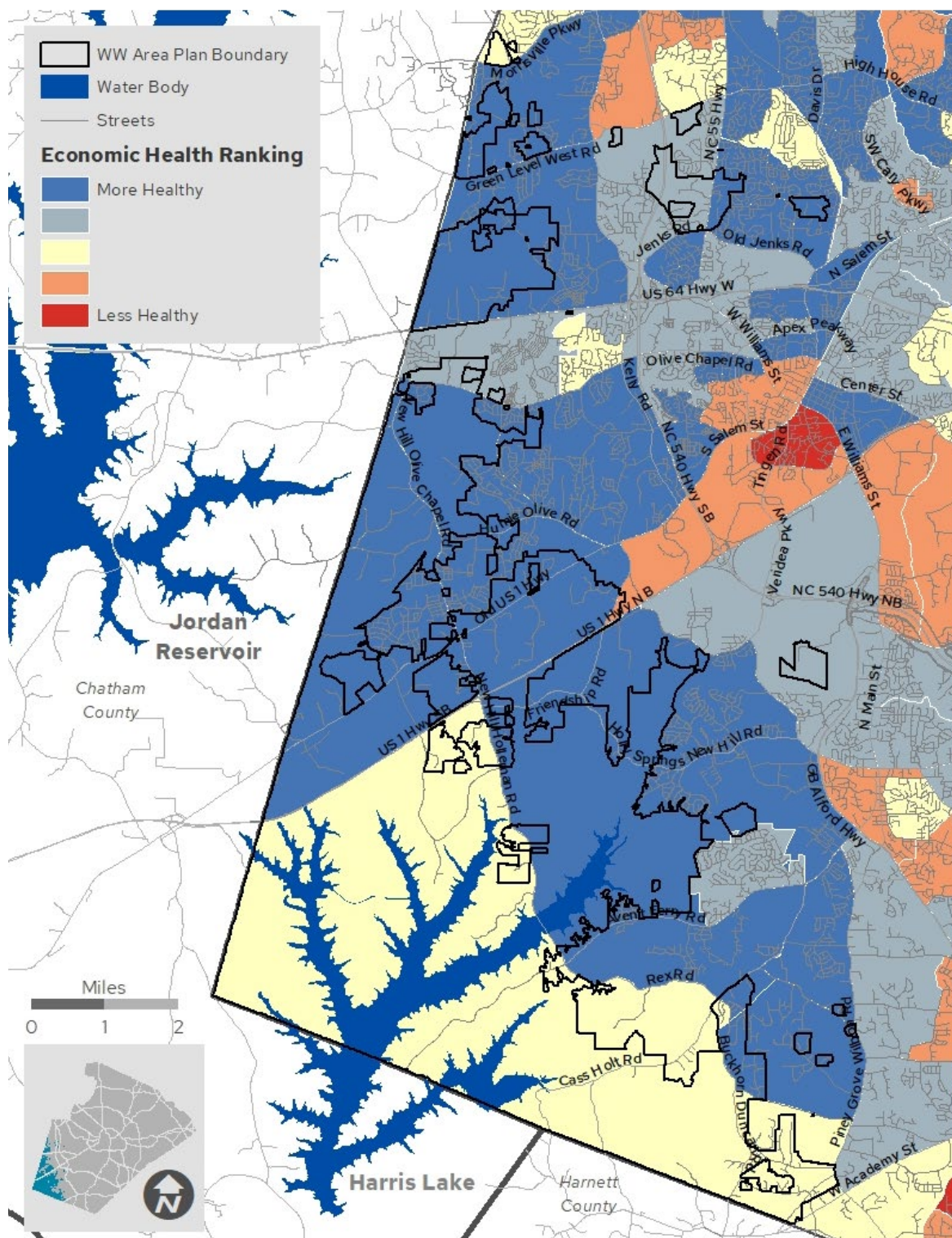
ECONOMIC HEALTH INDEX

The Economic Health Index uses the following factors to compare the conditions within each community to better understand what type of financial constraints residents within that community may be facing. Federal initiatives, such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Program and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, utilize similar factors to identify low-income neighborhoods and household types, respectively.

- **Median Household Income** – The median household income in the past 12 months.
- **Food Stamps** – Measured as a percentage of households in each block group.
- **Rent as Greater than 30% of Income** – Gross rent as a percentage of household income.
- **Home Mortgage as Greater than 30% of Income** – Mortgage status by owner cost as a percentage of household income.
- **Persons Living 100%–200% of Federal Poverty Level** – Ratio of income to poverty level for whom poverty status is determined between 100 and 200 percent.

Overall, the WW area is economically healthy, and there are no areas that are considered the least healthy. However, similar to the social vulnerability map, the southern portion has a lower score due to higher percentages of the population spending 30% of their income on their mortgage or rent. Again, the large size of the area relative to its smaller population may contribute to this. Also similar to the social vulnerability map is the consistency of higher percentages of residents spending at least 30% of their income on either rent or mortgage regardless of the other metrics.

Economic Health Index



Current Land Use

In order to get a better understanding of how land in the study area is being utilized (instead of how it is zoned), staff grouped and analyzed the current land use via property data and how it is being taxed.

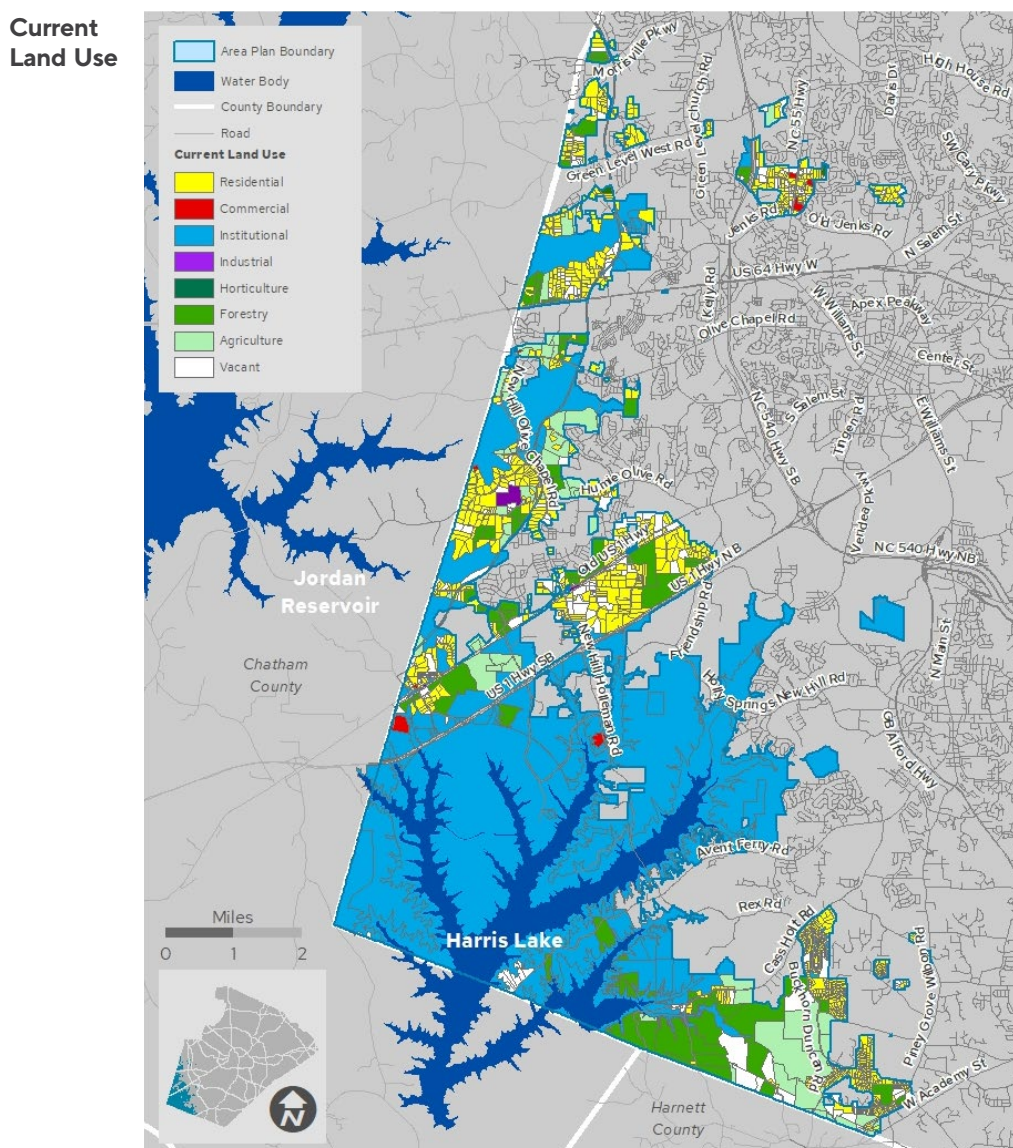
The predominant land use in the WW area is Institutional, totaling 5,465 acres with 133 parcels. This is unusual for unincorporated Wake County in that residential land uses tend to hold that rank. The study area's proximity to the Harris Nuclear Plant and the associated lands owned by Duke Energy creates most of this land use in the southern portions; and property owned by the United States Army Corps of Engineers buffering the Jordan Lake watershed comprises the institutional lands in the north.

Despite the expected higher percentages of residential and institutional uses in the study area, it is important to highlight just how much land is still being used for agriculture and forestry despite development pressures and other constraints in this part of the county. Agricultural uses comprise 60 parcels spanning nearly 1,800 acres, and forestry still occurs on 81 parcels over 2,300 acres. Most of the larger parcels that account for this are located in the southern part of the WW study area.

NOTE: While this analysis can be useful in observing overall land use trends, some of the land uses displayed may not be completely reflective of how the land is presently being used. This could be due to a discrepancy in the tax code, or it has not been updated as of this writing.

Western Wake Study Area			
Property Owner	Acres	Parcels	
Duke Energy	16,811	54	
US Army Corps of Engineers	1,562	3	
Private Owner	707	8	
Private Owner	237	2	
Martin Marietta	231	7	

Current Land Use	Acres	Parcels	Percentage
Institutional	5,465.57	133	37%
Residential	3,646.61	1,428	25%
Forestry	2,316.20	81	16%
Agriculture	1,782.92	60	12%
Vacant	1,457.46	365	10%
Industrial	57.20	3	0.4%
Commercial	33.38	11	0.2%
Horticulture	32.77	4	0.2%
TOTAL	14,792.11	2,085	100%



Agriculture and Farmland Preservation

The 2040 Farms Under Threat Report is a multi-year initiative conducted by the American Farmland Trust to document the country's farmland status. The report projected that, at the current rate of development, North Carolina will have lost nearly 1.2 million acres or 11.6% to development between 2016 and 2040, which rank No. 2 and No. 6 nationally. Wake County, specifically, is projected to lose 46,600 acres between 2016 and 2040.

PLANWake has a goal to help preserve rural areas by easing the development pressures that they face. This is inherent in its policies to direct more dense development to the municipalities as opposed to low density development that takes up more land, which contributes to a loss of natural resources and increases roadway congestion. The process to develop PLANWake included in depth discussions and planning exercises about where growth should be directed and where land should be prioritized for protection.

Western Wake Farmland and Agriculture

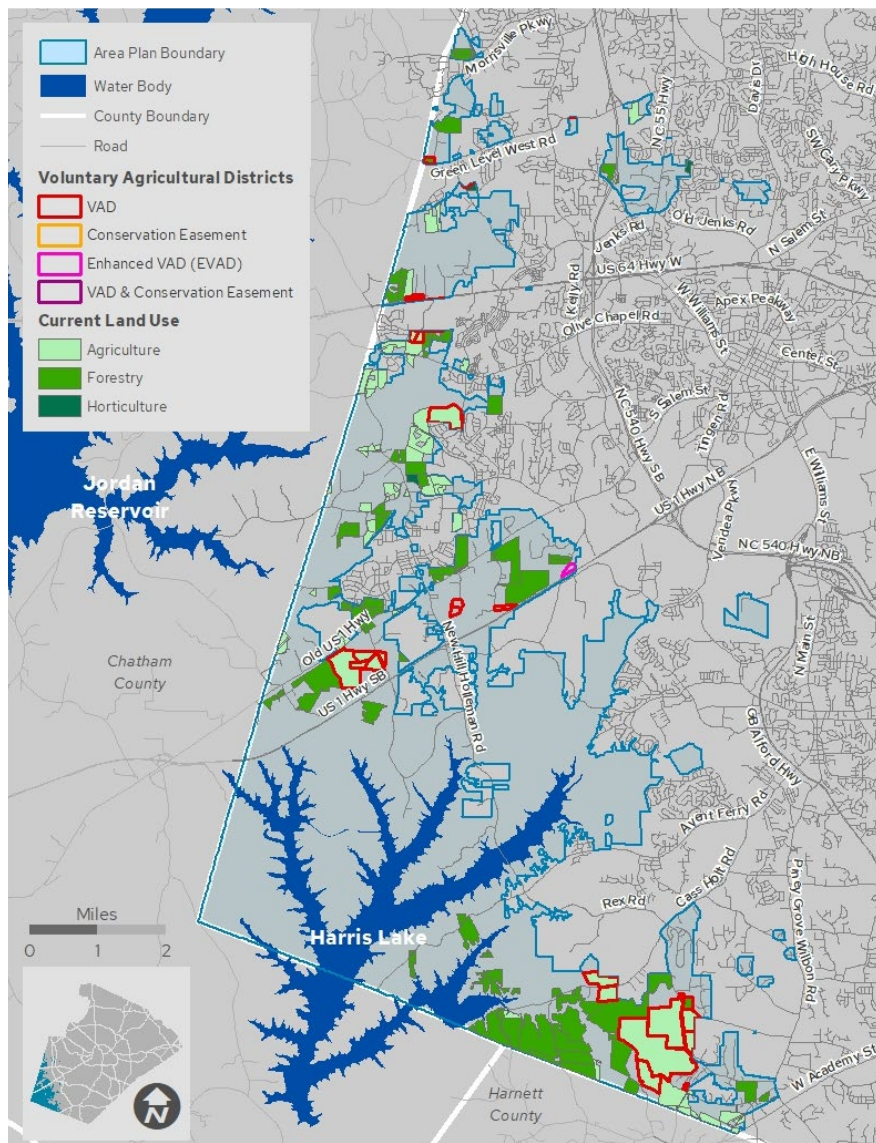
According to the Wake Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) in 2022, there are more than 77,000 acres of farmland and 691 farms in Wake County. In the WW area, there are 1,783 acres on 60 agricultural parcels. In other words, Western Wake is home to approximately 2% of the farmland in all of Wake County.

There are also 19 properties within the WW area that are designated as Voluntary Agricultural Districts (VADs) and one designated as an Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD). This is a program overseen by SWCD that allows owners of farmland to voluntarily agree to keep their land in agricultural use for 10 years. Where VAD farmers are able to

withdraw from the program before the 10 years are up, EVAD farmers are committed to the full 10 years and also have additional requirements in order to be considered.

A third program, conservation easements, is not present within the WW area; however, it is a valuable tool that permanently preserves the existing farmland from growth and development. As the easement is a recorded deed, the agreement is binding and stays with the land even if the ownership changes.

Presently, there are 374 total properties in all of Wake County that are in one of these three programs.



Retail and Commercial Locations

According to Wake County parcel data, there are 11 commercial parcels within the WW study area, but they are mostly a mix of offices, warehouses and bars. While there are some residents who felt strongly about having closer commercial/retail locations to

them in the WW study area, the majority of residents were satisfied with (and even preferred to) driving 10–15 minutes to where they currently are in Holly Springs and Apex.

Institutional & Civic Uses

Duke Energy, which operates the Harris Nuclear Plant, is the largest landowner in the WW study area with 54 parcels totaling 16,800 acres. The plant itself is located on 5,400 acres of that land, and Harris Lake, which provides the cooling water for the plant, is 4,100 acres.

Wake County Parks, Recreation and Open Space has leased 680 acres of Duke Energy's land for its Harris Lake County Park since 1985, and the park opened in 1999.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers owns and operates on three parcels covering 1,500 acres in the northern part of the study area. These are Jordan Lake floodplains that extends into Wake County from Chatham County.

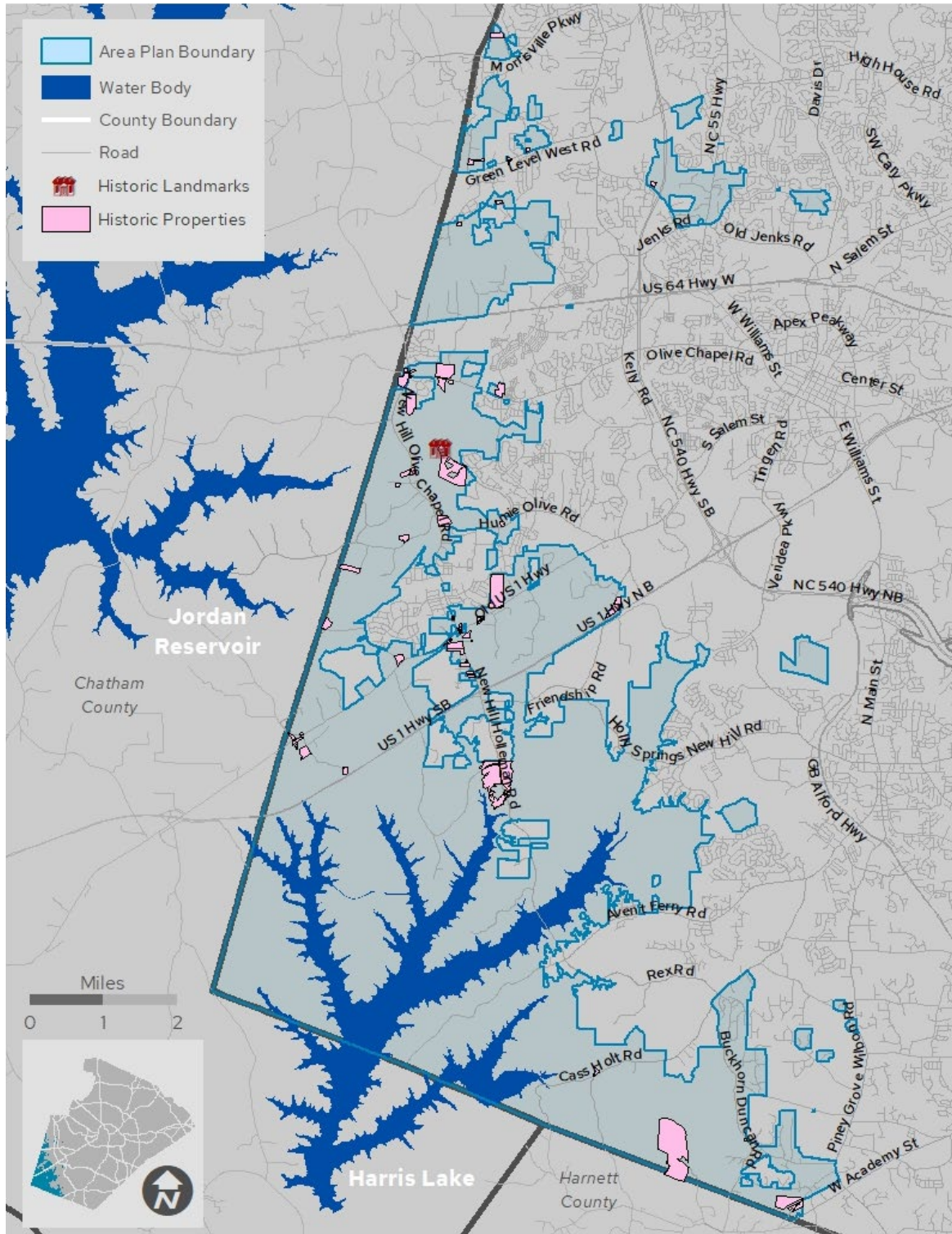
There are six religious institutions cited in the parcel data in the WW area: Cedar Rock Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of New Hill, New Hill Baptist Church, Olive Chapel Baptist Church, Scotts Grove Church and Sweet Spring Methodist Church.

Historic Properties & Landmarks

According to Capital Area Preservation, in order for a building, structure, site or object to be considered a historic local landmark, it must have "historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural significance and integrity and has been recognized by official designation for its importance." This is a different designation than the National Register of Historic Places, which is a federal program administered by the state.

Within the WW area, there is currently only one historic landmark that meets these criteria: the Calvin Wray Lawrence House on Ragan Road. There are 49 historic properties within the study area, but they were deemed either not significant to achieve landmark status or they lost their historic significance over time for various reasons.

Historic Landmarks & Property



While the COVID-19 pandemic caused disruptions to traditional in-person engagement, the lessons learned from these experiences have only served to improve the notion that many planning agencies have on what engagement can and should look like. Virtual or online options are no longer looked down on, but instead, are now a vital part of any conversation to engage residents.

finances, and others may not have even known about it. As a result, the responses and input received were often not representative of the community at large. Moreover, even as the restrictions from the pandemic continually lessen and more in-person events take place, portions of the population who are unable to attend for various reasons will always exist. Virtual or online community engagement can bridge this gap and allow more members of the community to provide their input and be heard, and even more so when it is accessible from a cell phone.

Wake County staff kicked off the online engagement with a virtual community meeting on May 21, 2024. In the meeting, staff provided background information about planning in Wake County, the goals of the area plan and ways to participate in the process. The meeting was livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube and is available to view on the WW Area Plan webpage at wake.gov/ww.

this type of community participation. Through an interactive map, email listservs and online surveys, staff was able to get a better understanding of those issues that affected the WW area or that were important to residents.

Staff used the interactive map platform for two separate rounds: one to gather initial thoughts and comments about the area, and a second to receive comments on the proposed draft land uses. The draft land use map went live in August 2024.

development

traffic

please

school

roads

chapel

greenway

pedestrian

turning

street

along

local

crossing

olive

historic

density

getting

water

county

trail

access

rural

store

light

residents

intersection

pleasant

neighborhoods

commercial

provide

holleman

friendship

planning

american

people

housing

property

lanes

needed

option

properties

library

tobacco

advent

included

Most upvoted comments in First Round of online engagement



Ideas and Suggestions

Public Library for kids. This area has schools. Please consider constructing a library in this area.



Ideas and Suggestions

This intersection is getting too much volume with people turning left in the morning and evenings. A turn lane and light would help significantly.



Ideas and Suggestions

Improved bike trails along Avent Ferry/New Hill Holleman for people to access Harris Lake. The two lane road is very unsafe!



Leave a Comment

It would be nice if we could have something commercial here. A gas station or restaurant for folks who want to spend the day outdoors but need some supplies/sustenance.



Ideas and Suggestions

Construct a road from buckhorn duncan road to connect to biogen new campus. Once biogen opens we have to travel to long to reach corporate park in Holly Springs

Wordcloud of Most Upvoted Comments in Second Round of Online Engagement



Most upvoted comments in Second Round of online engagement



Ideas and Suggestions

Secure unused rail corridor for Greenway path. Preserves rail corridor while providing spur to link Fuquay, Cape Fear River basin, etc. with primary route south to Lillington and Fayetteville that would extend American Tobacco Trail.



Ideas and Suggestions

Not sure why this is up for discussion to do anything with this land. It should all be protected as a watershed, agricultural use or parks. Any other use is just poisoning our water and destroying our important natural environment.

Most upvoted comments in Second Round of online engagement, continued



Ideas and Suggestions

How about leaving these beautiful horse properties alone. There are limited spaces available in Wake County for these families and their furry family members



Ideas and Suggestions

Consider adding an on/off ramp from Friendship road to US1. Would help take pressure off saturated intersections from the industrial businesses in the area as that traffic tries to get to the highway. Might solve a lot of other congestion problems in other areas.



Leave a Comment

This area does not contain developments with 4 units per acre. For example, Duncan's Ridge has around 1 per acre. Why on earth would you allow development adjacent to that with up to 4 units per acre? That does not fit in with the surrounding areas at all. It destroys the serenity of this part of Western Wake County

In-Person Community Meetings

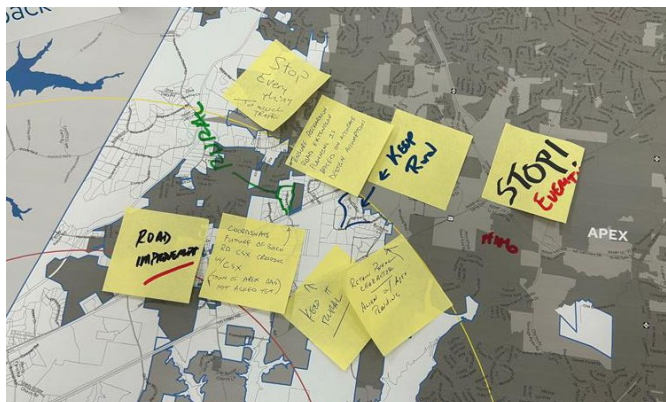
The first in-person community meeting took place on June 12, 2024, at the New Hill Community Center. The drop-in style meeting included four informational

stations and a fifth feedback station. Much of the feedback centered around the rate of development, growth and ways to protect the area's character.

New Hill Community Center



First Community Meeting



The second community meeting occurred on Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2024, at the White Oak Foundation Community Resource Center in Cary. At this meeting, along with informational stations, residents were able to view and comment on the draft land use plan and greenway maps. While the drafts utilized information received from the first community

meeting, this was an opportunity to further refine the map as a way to reflect the community's vision.

Similar to the first meeting, Wake County partner agencies (Soil and Water, Water Quality and Affordable Housing) set up tables in order to promote and answer questions about various services they provide.

White Oak Foundation, Inc.



Second Community Meeting



SECTION 4

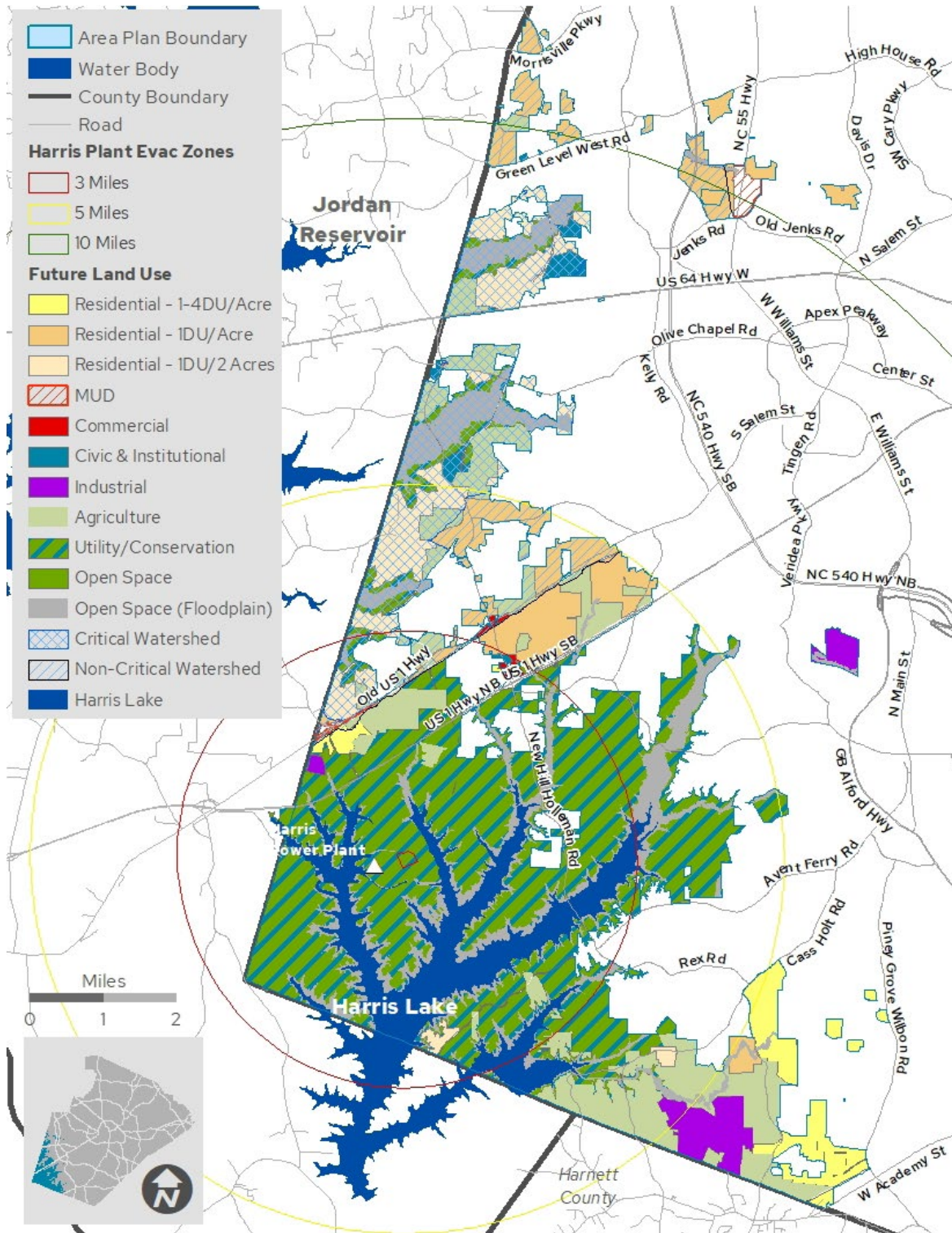
Western Wake Future Land Use Map

Land use planning is typically performed by looking 20 to 30 years into the future to establish the best possible uses of land as determined by the public, planning staff and stakeholders. However, it is reasonable to assume what is considered the best use of this land now can and often does change well before the 20 years are complete. For this reason, planning documents are referred to as

“living documents” in that they can and should be amended and updated as necessary. Amendments can be requested by individual property owners, which undergo a public hearing process, and updates are typically conducted by planning staff every five years or so to ensure the data and information are still accurate and relevant. The future land use map is based on the most recent and up-to-date information.

Land Use Classification	Description
Residential – 1-4 DU/Acre	The Residential classification indicates future areas for any residential land uses with a maximum density of four dwelling units per acre.
Residential – 1 DU/Acre	The Residential – 1 DU/Acre classification indicates future areas for any residential land uses with a maximum density of one dwelling unit per acre.
Residential – 1 DU/2 Acre	The Residential – 1 DU/2 Acre classification indicates future areas for any residential land uses with a maximum density of one dwelling unit per two acres.
Commercial	The Commercial classification indicates commercial uses outside of Multi-Use Districts (MUDs) that are currently in existence.
Multi-Use District	Formerly known as Activity Centers, Multi-Use Districts are areas near transportation corridors where non-residential development is envisioned to serve the community.
Civic & Institutional	The Civic & Institutional classification indicates areas intended for neighborhood-oriented non-residential development including schools, religious institutions or community centers. This classification is intended to be less intensive than other non-residential areas such as Multi-Use Districts.
Industrial	The Industrial classification indicates areas with existing or future industrial operations.
Utility / Conservation	The Utility / Conservation classification indicates areas owned by Duke Energy or the United States Army Corp of Engineers. These are areas that are intended to serve either as natural buffers between developed areas and the Harris Nuclear Plant, Harris Lake, and the Jordan Lake watershed.
Agriculture	The Agriculture classification identifies areas where agricultural, horticultural or forestry uses are expected to continue.
Open Space (Floodplain)	The Open Space (Floodplain) classification indicates areas that are restricted from development or redevelopment to reduce impacts from regular flooding. These areas can be used for appropriate active or passive recreation, including greenways.
Open Space	The Open Space classification indicates areas that are intended to be used for appropriate active or passive recreation, including greenways.

Future Land Use



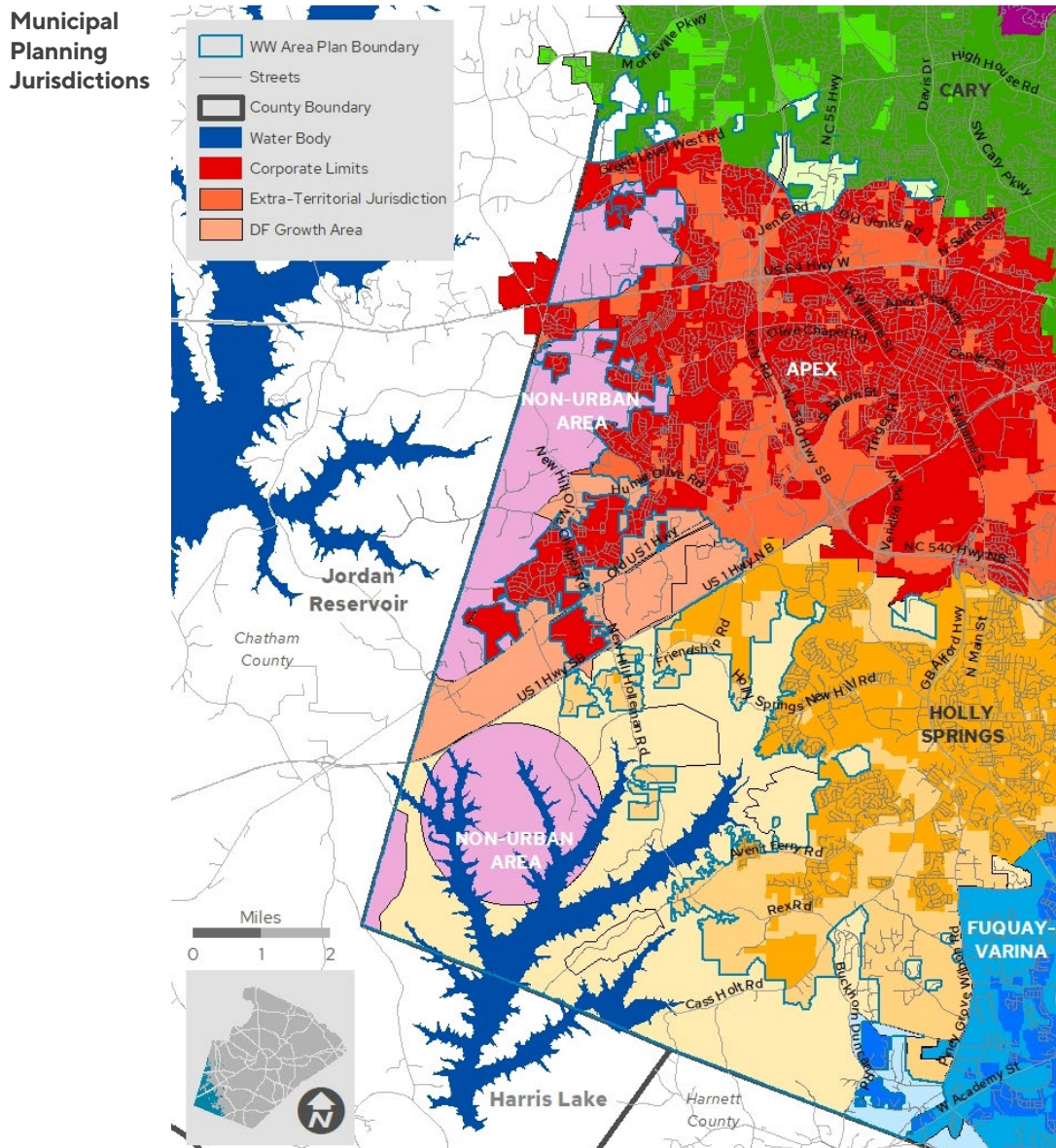
SECTION 5

Additional Planning Elements

Municipal Planning Jurisdictions

A municipality's planning jurisdiction includes the land within its corporate limits plus the land within its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). North Carolina state statutes have authorized municipalities to regulate development in their ETJs through their zoning laws and development ordinance since it is expected

that they will become part of the corporate limits in the future. Wake County does not provide water and sewer services — this allows municipalities to better ensure development patterns and associated infrastructure will allow the efficient provision of urban services.



Municipal Transition Standards (MTS)

In 2022, to better align policies with the goals of PLANWake, Wake County adopted its MTS policy. This policy builds off and expands the requirements of the Transitional Urban Development Policy (TUDS) that was put in place around the time the area plans were originally adopted in 2000-04. The older TUDS policy applied to residential developments proposed in Wake County's jurisdiction that were located less than 2,500 feet to an existing public water or sewer line (utilities). The TUDS policy required the developments to either connect to utilities and become municipal or to justify why a connection was not feasible.

The MTS policy expanded applicability of the policy to commercial as well as residential developments. It included all properties designated as Community, Walkable Center or Community Reserve on the PLANWake Development Framework Map well as those within proximity to an existing utility. The policy requires any potential developer in these areas to talk with the municipality before applying to the County. The MTS tool, combined with many of the other planning elements listed, will better link municipal and developer efforts to achieve important goals set forth in PLANWake.

Multi-Use Districts

Formerly known as Activity Centers, Multi-Use Districts (MUDs) are the places stakeholders have felt are most appropriate for commercial and mixed-use development to occur. Typically, these are located at the intersections of major or moderate-sized roadways. In many instances, the district is centered around a location that is or has historically been a commercial use. A good example of this would be a gas station or community store that historically served the needs of the area population. The County uses MUDs to guide decisions on rezoning requests and development permits.

Multi-use districts are intended to play two primary roles. The first is to identify the most appropriate location for commercial development to help serve the daily needs of the surrounding neighborhoods. In this role, the county uses multi-use districts to guide decisions on rezoning requests and development permits. The county is also interested in how a proposed use fits and serves the existing population. The second role of the multi-use district is to preserve opportunity areas for commercial development to occur as the municipal areas expand to accommodate continued population growth.

The multi-use district policy provides guidance on the intended maximum size of each multi-use district category. In this role, the county's interest is how a proposed use would serve the needs of a future population.

To align multi-use districts with the intentional growth framework set out in PLANWake, the county will take a two-tiered approach (Rural and Municipal) with multi-use districts.

Rural Multi-Use Districts are multi-use districts designated as Community Reserve or Rural on the PLANWake Development Framework Map. These areas are intended to either remain in county jurisdiction in perpetuity or are not intended to become municipal in the foreseeable future. Non-residential development will occur on well and septic or private utility and will be small-scale in nature, especially within water supply watershed areas.

Municipal Multi-Use Districts are multi-use districts designated as Community or Walkable Center on the PLANWake Development Framework Map. These areas are intended to be annexed and served with municipal public utilities in the future. Multi-use districts in these areas generally align with municipal plans for development. The goal of development that occurs in the county jurisdiction is to harmonize with future expected municipal development.

Multi-Use District Amendment Recommendations

There are seven multi-use districts located in, adjacent to or in the vicinity of the Western Wake study area. There is one rural-designated MUD and six municipal-designated MUDs.

The Western Wake Area Plan makes the following recommendations:

- **Remove** three MUDs located outside of the study area, and by extension, outside of Wake County's jurisdiction.

Location	Acres	Parcels
1. Avent Ferry Road and New Hill Holleman Road	25	5
2. New Hill Holleman Road (N) of Ironrod Way	175	4
3. Green Level West Road (W) of NC 540	20	3

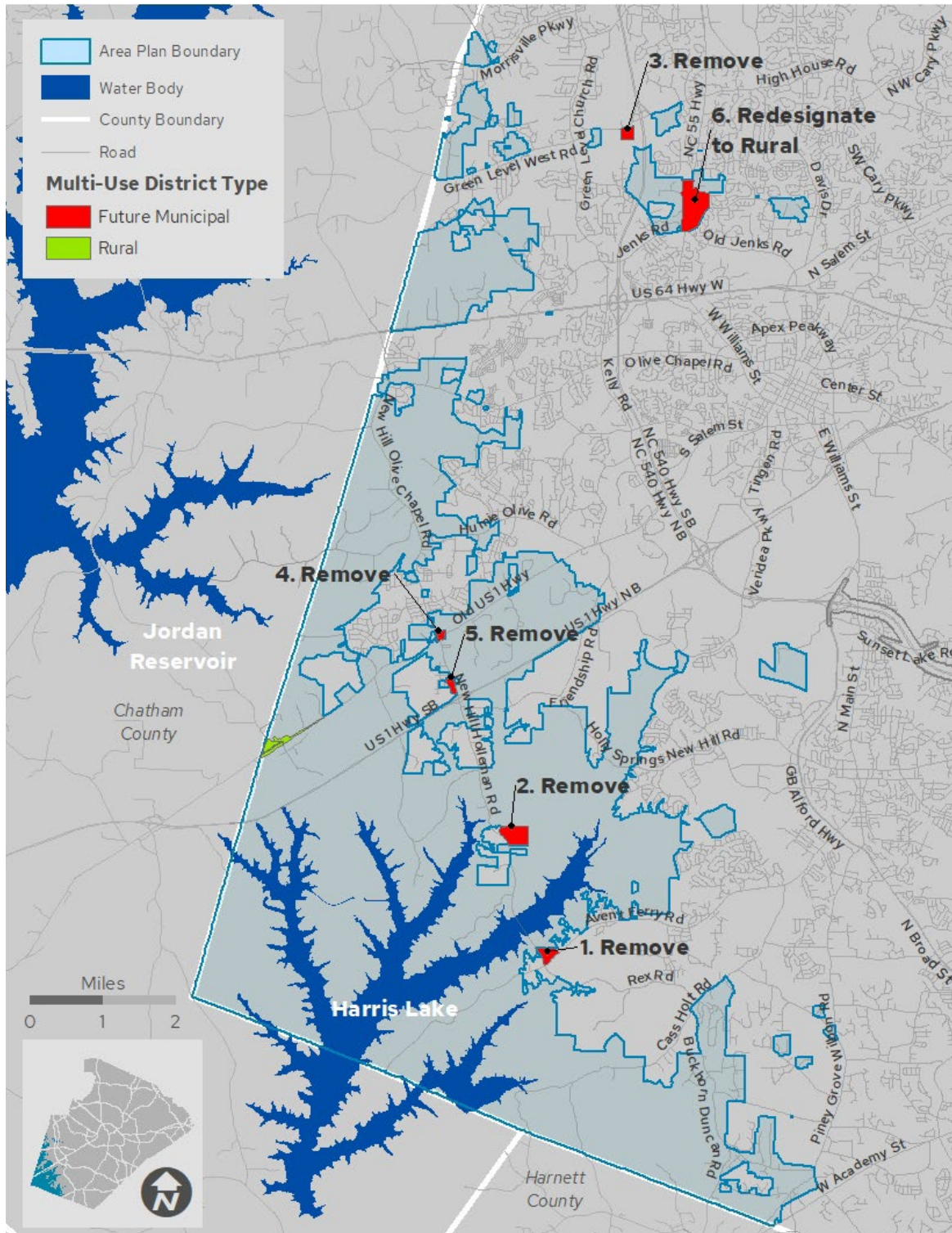
- **Remove** two MUDs with portions that are both in municipal jurisdictions and have been rezoned to a commercial Wake County zoning district.

Location	Acres	Parcels
4. New Hill Holleman Road and Old US 1 Hwy	8	13
5. New Hill Holleman Road and US 1 Hwy	12.5	13

- **Redesignate** one MUD from Municipal to Rural where the municipality has expressed no interest in extending water/sewer in order to be eligible for future annexation. This MUD is designated in the WW Area Plan's Future Land Use map and profiled below.

Location	Acres	Parcels
6. NC 55 Hwy (N) of Jenks Road	175.5	42

Multi-Use District Amendments



NC 55 Hwy Multi-Use District: Redesignate from Municipal to Rural

This MUD is located on NC 55 Hwy north of Jenks Road and east of NC 540, which are both major regional transportation corridors. It is within the Town of Cary's growth area and in the northern portion of the WW study area. The Town of Apex's growth area is just to the south.

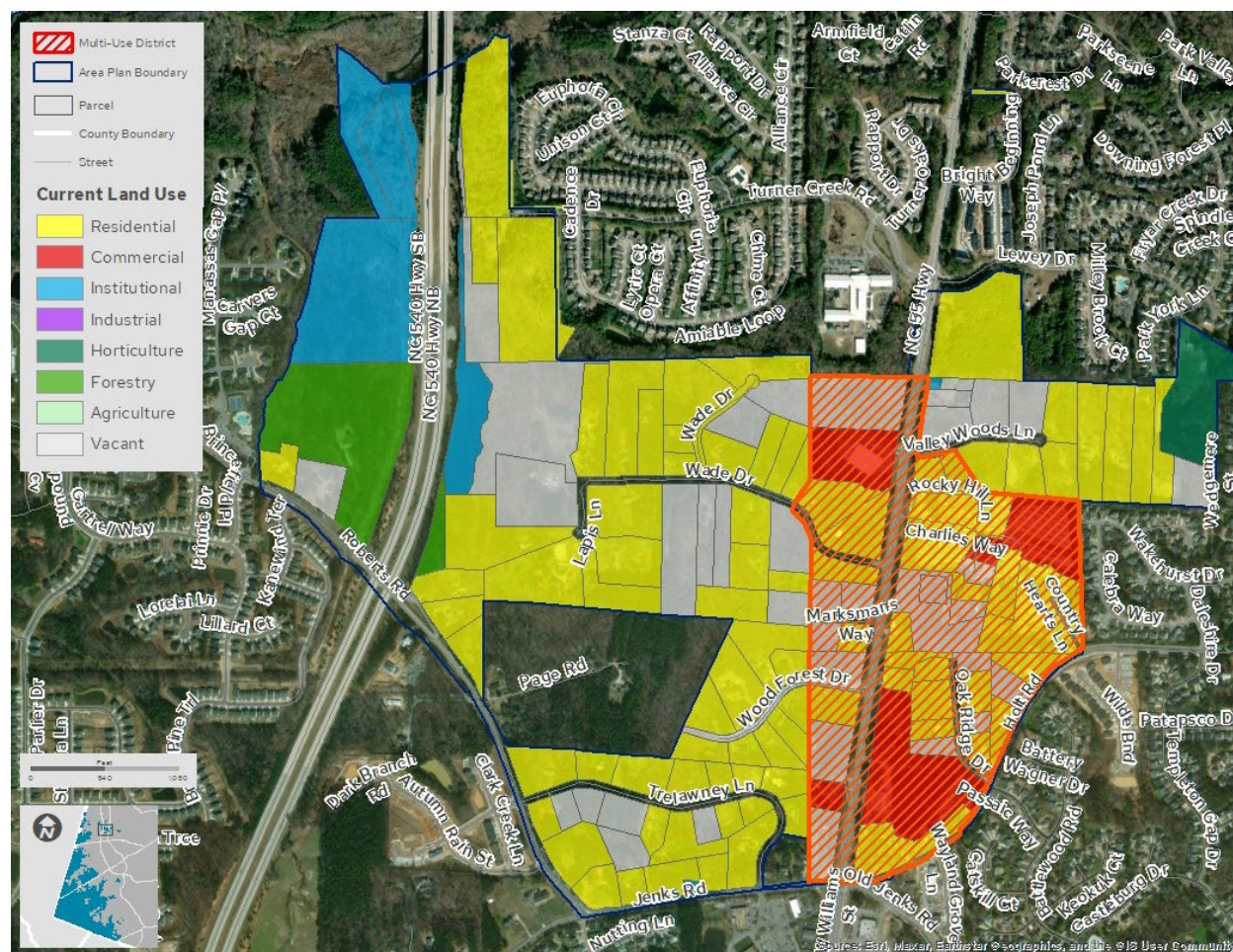
It is currently a mix of residential, commercial and vacant lots. These include single-family homes, a mobile home park, storage facility and a plant nursery.

In terms of PLANWake's Development Framework, the MUD is within the Rural designation, which is intended to remain in the county's jurisdiction. This area's scale and character is also expected to remain rural despite the municipal growth that is occurring around it.

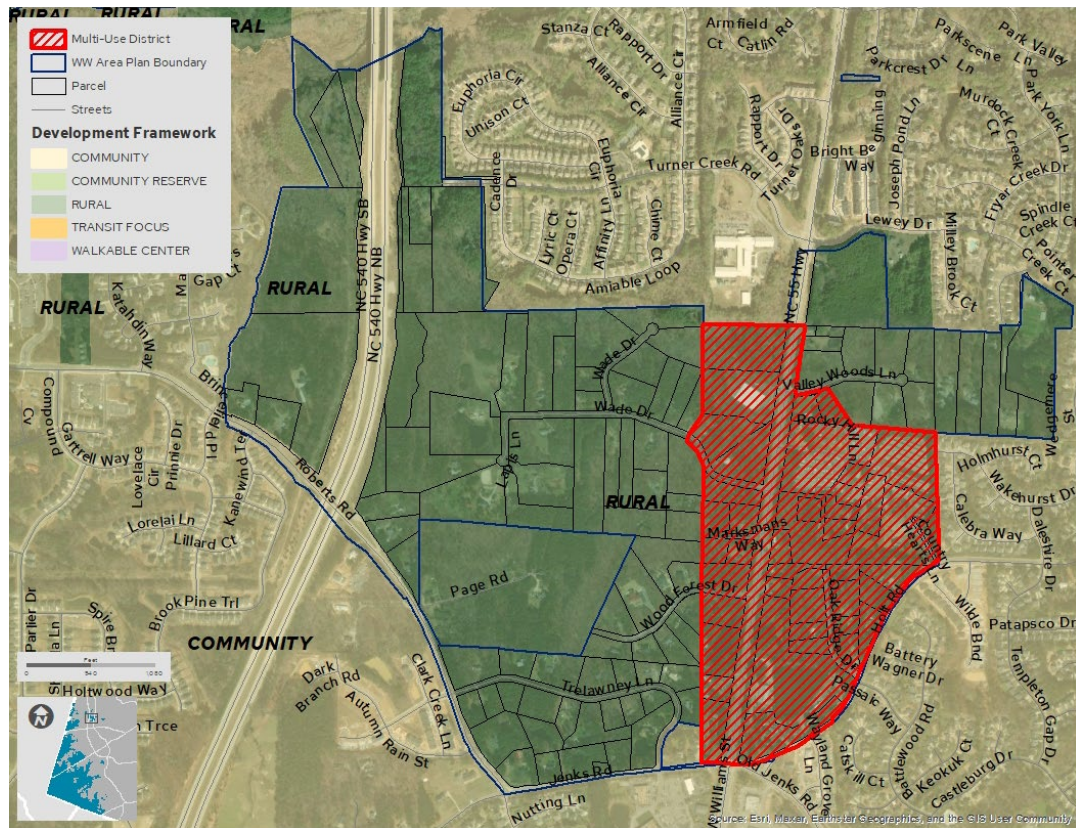
This MUD is currently zoned Highway District (HD), Conditional Use Heavy Commercial (CU-HC) and Residential-40 Watershed (R-40W). While HD is intended to accommodate residential development, it allows several types of nonresidential development with a Special Use Permit approved by the Board of Adjustment. The HC district allows various commercial activities that are served by major thoroughfares. R-40W is a residential watershed district that allows very low-density residential development such as single-family homes.

The Future Land Use map has this MUD remaining in place with the surrounding area designated as Residential -1DU/Acre to align with the Rural designation mentioned above.

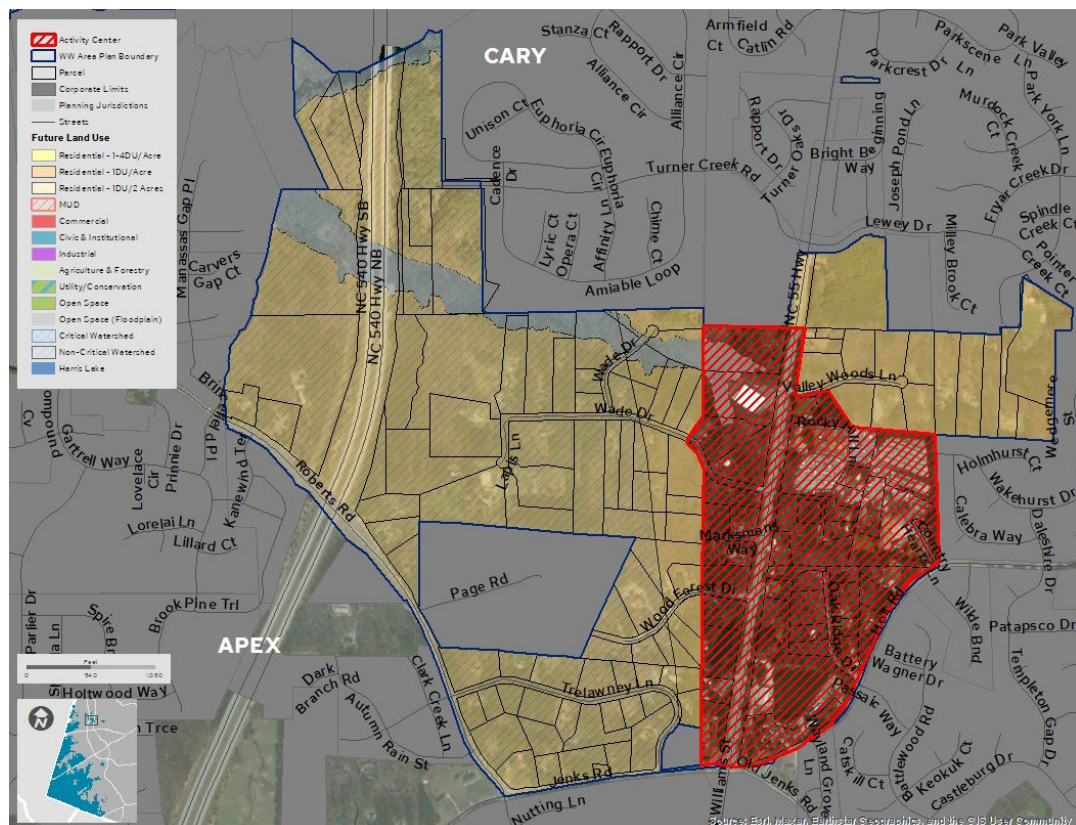
Current Land Use



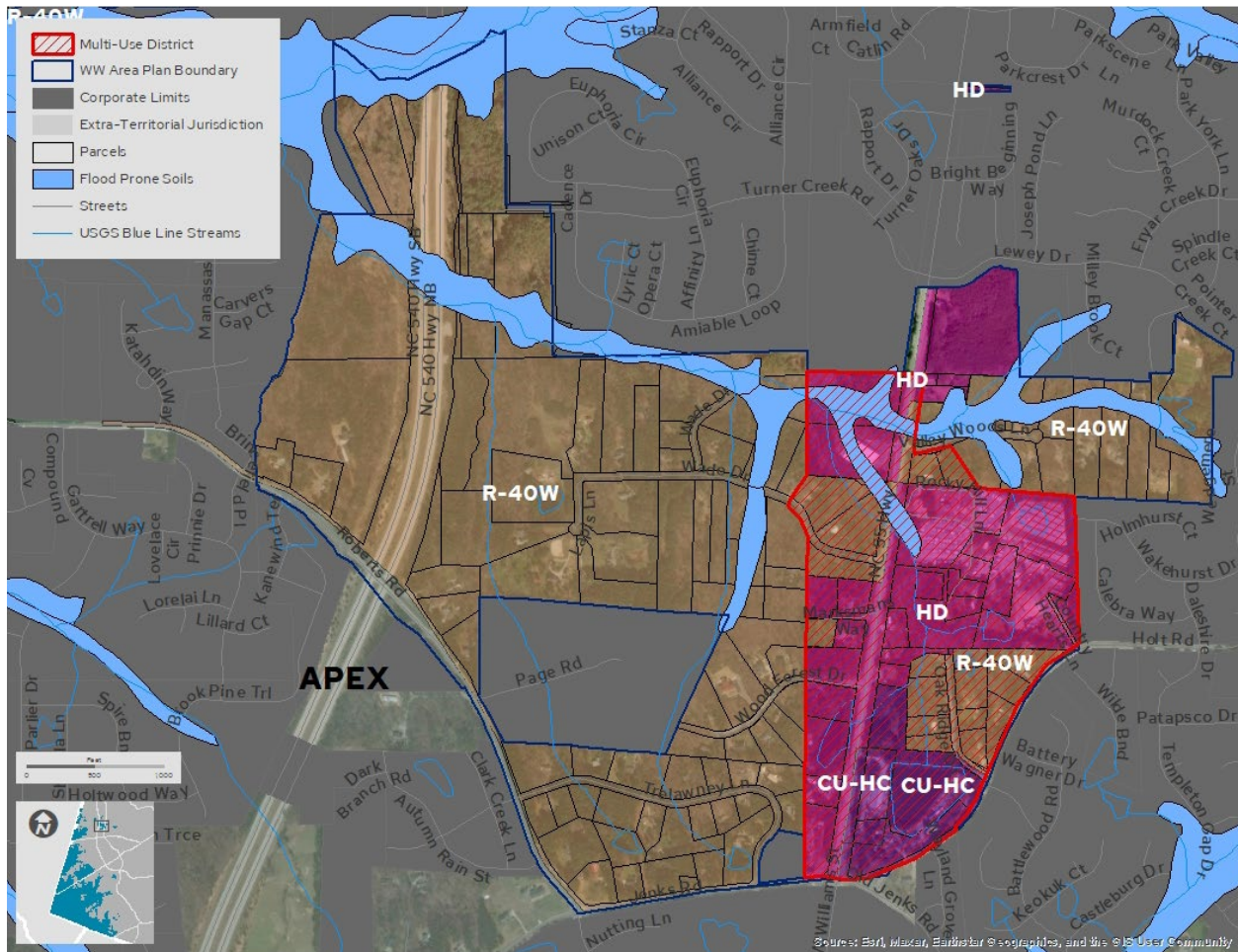
Development Framework



Future Land Use



Zoning



Old US 1 Hwy Multi-Use District

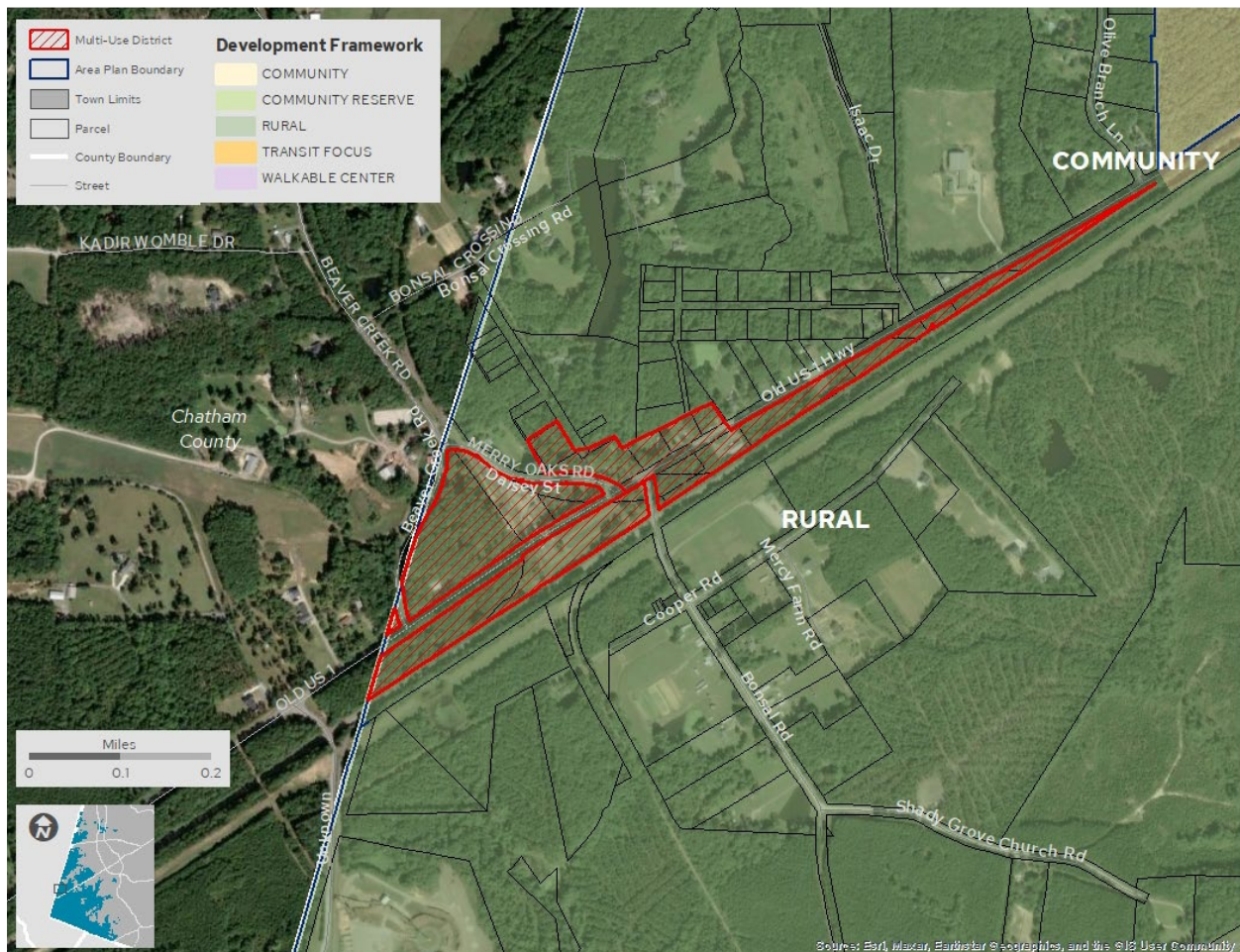
This MUD is located on Old US 1 Highway adjacent to the county boundary with Chatham County. It is 32.5 acres comprising 19 parcels in the western portion of the WW study area. It is a mix of residential, vacant, commercial and institutional uses. The largest use is the North Carolina Railway Museum, which has three parcels totaling 13.68 acres and promotes the state's railroad history to the public.

This MUD is within PLANWake's Rural Development Framework designation as it is expected to remain

within the county's jurisdiction for the foreseeable future. There are currently no plans to extend water and sewer utilities to this area.

The MUD parcels are zoned Heavy Commercial (HC), Residential-30 (R-30) and Residential-40 Watershed (R-40W).

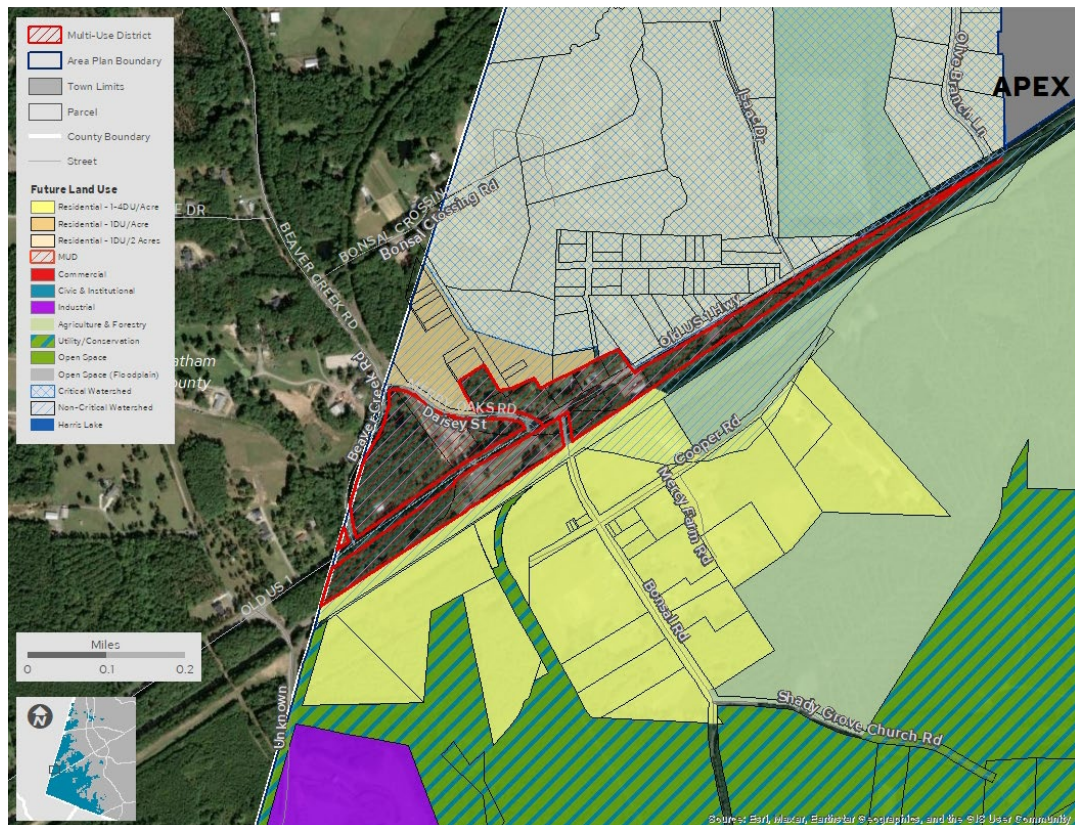
Development Framework



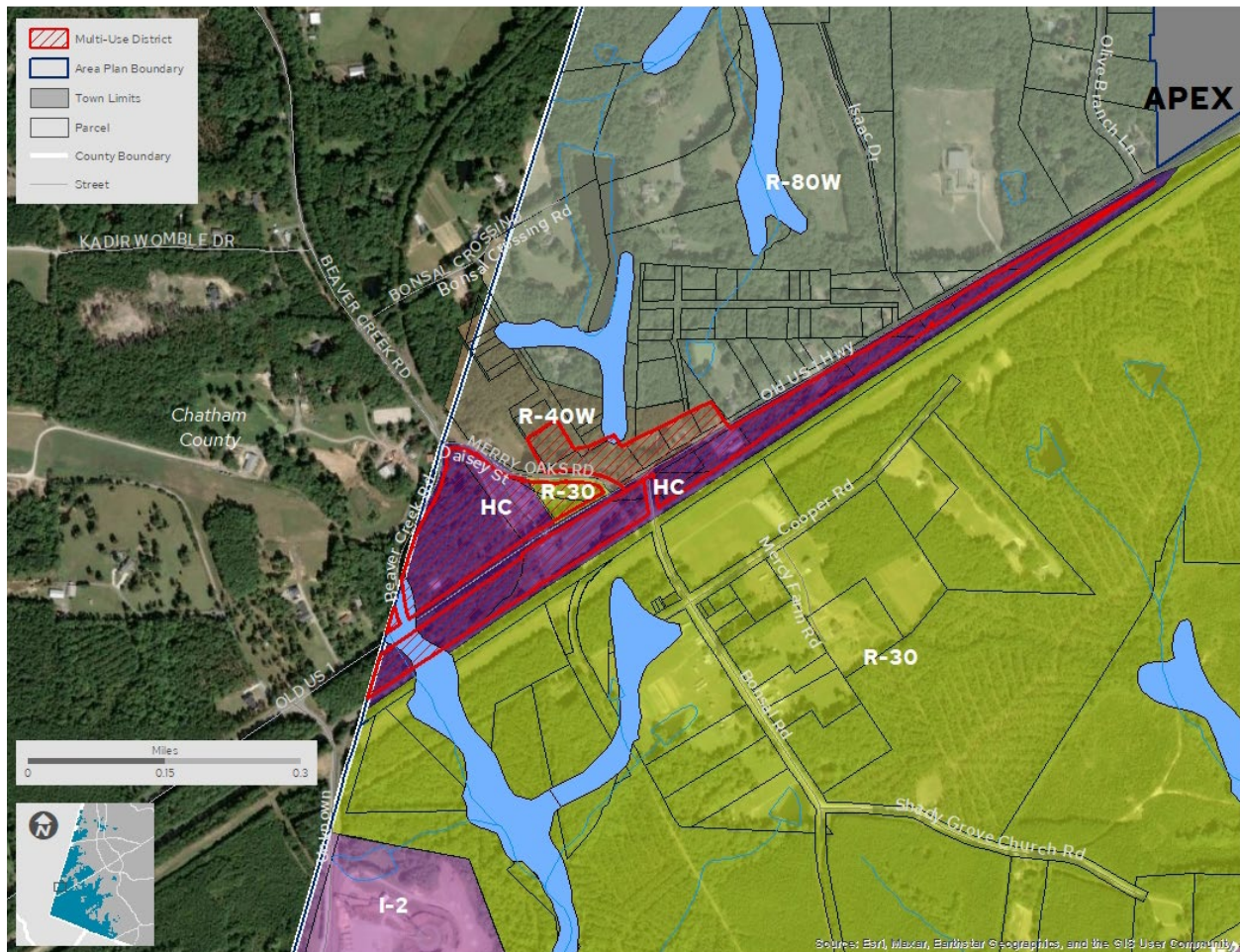
Current Land Use



Future Land Use



Zoning



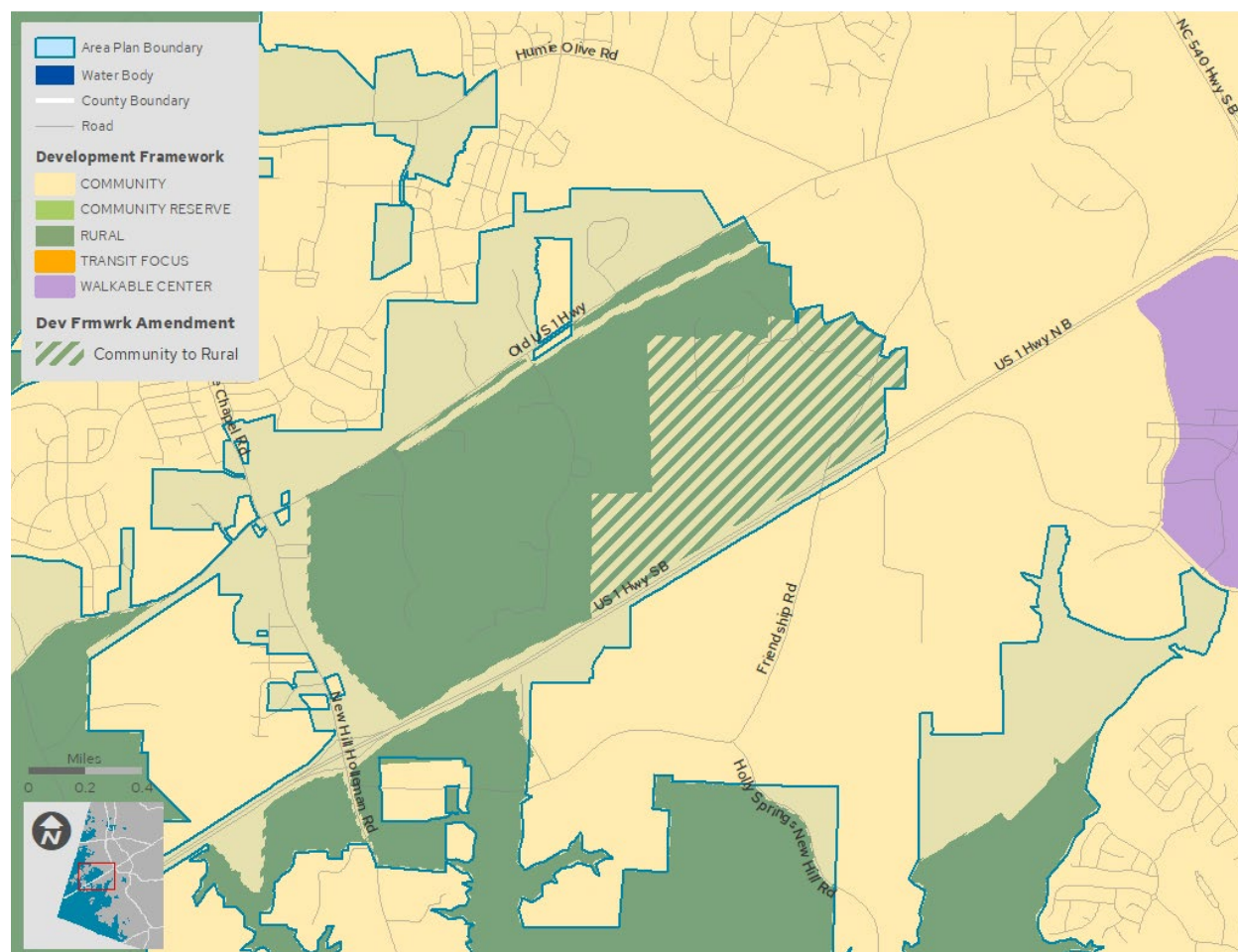
PLANWake Development Framework Map Amendment Recommendations

The PLANWake Development Framework Map is expected to stay conceptually the same for a long time. This works because the map is big picture with resiliency built in and no single development is required to move the needle over time. That said, it was always expected that the Development Framework Map would be changed and adjusted to best project is fine the overarching vision and align with new information.

For the WW Area Plan, residents of the New Hill and Friendship communities voiced their concern

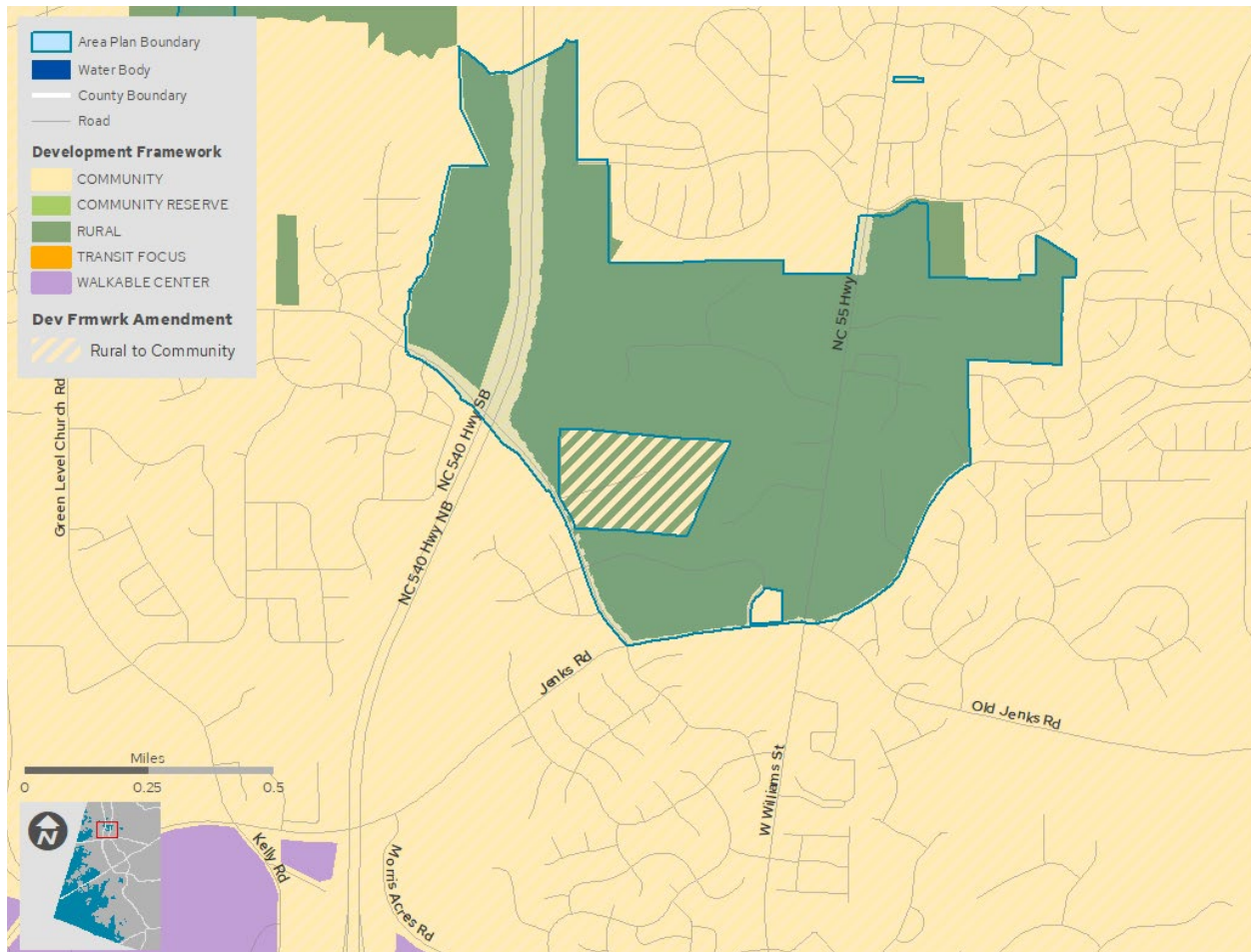
over the development pressures their neighborhood face. Moreover, the Development Framework map designated much of this area as Community or an area that is envisioned to become municipal in the future should any development occur. After discussions with the Town of Apex, which was undertaking its own Western Big Branch Area Plan, and hearing from residents on the matter, it is recommended that this portion totaling approximately 383 acres be amended to the Rural Designation.

Development Framework Amendment #1



Additionally, it is recommended that a 36-acre parcel on Page Road be amended from Rural to Community to reflect that parcel's annexation by the Town of Apex.

Development Framework Amendment #2

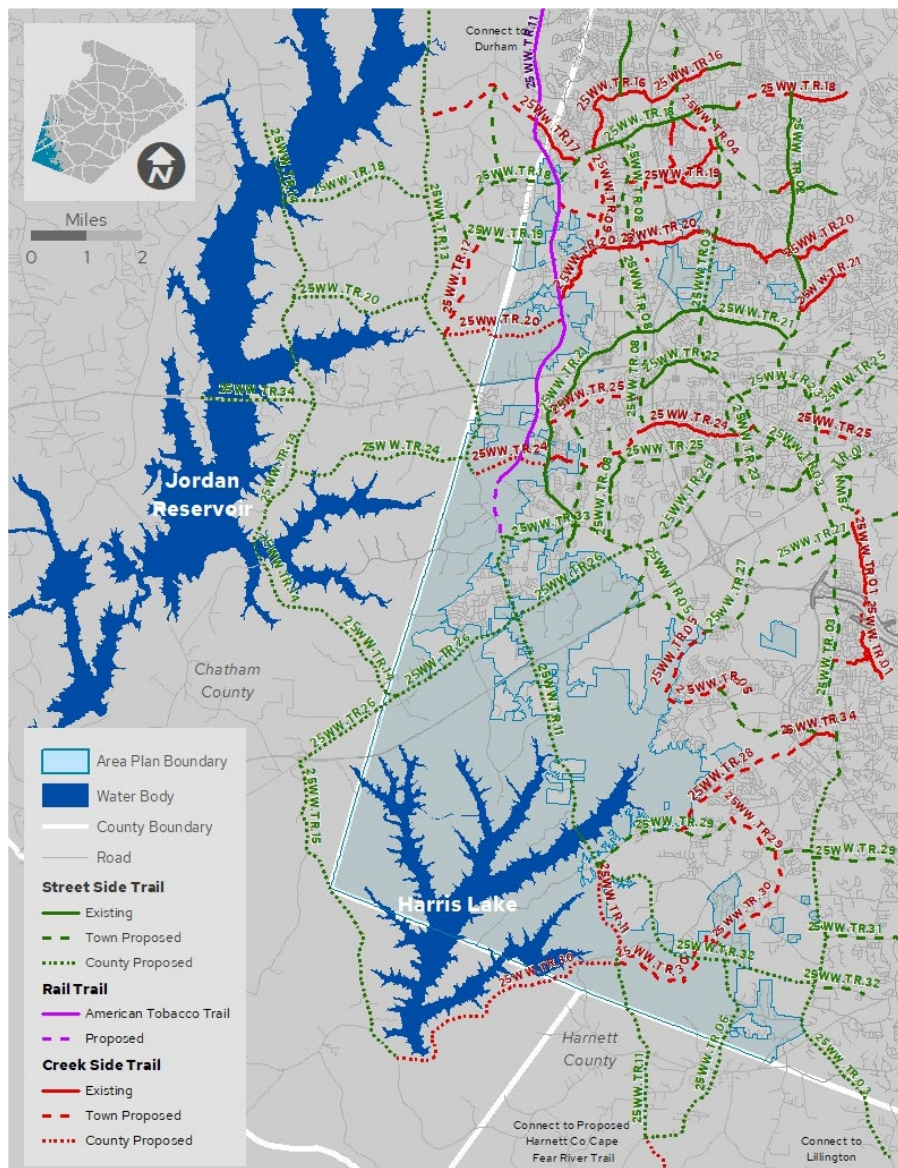


Greenway / Walkability Network

Wake County has an amazing existing trail network with segments in each municipality. Many of the segments connect between communities. Wake County also has a good track record of finding the right solutions for different areas with the county, NCDOT and the municipalities experimenting with creek-side trails, road-side trails and through-trails across new development, park land and open space. These trails, especially the long and connected segments, do not happen by accident or overnight. Completing these trails take a broad vision and years or decades of commitment.

The Wake County Greenway Systems Plan focused on the greenways aspect as it is a “[unique] investment that can be made on a local and regional scale that provides such a wide range of positive impacts. Greenway trails – and the on-road bicycle facilities and sidewalks that connect them – improve quality of life by providing opportunities for transportation, recreation, public health, economic development and environmental stewardship.”

Greenway/ Walkability Network



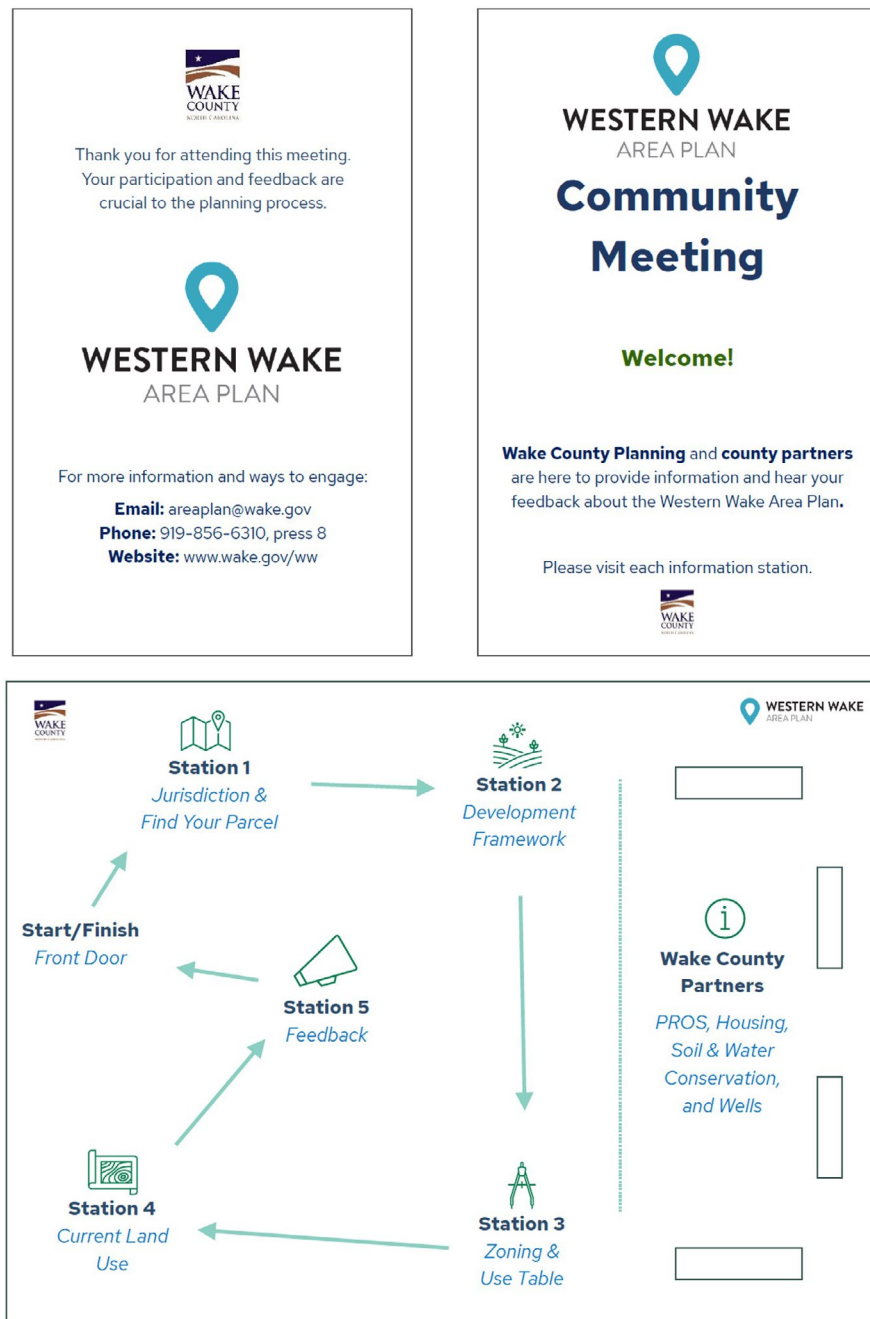
Trail Segment	Common Name	Notes
25WW.TR.01	Middle Creek Greenway	Connects from Apex to Holly Springs. Key connection to major east/west greenway along Middle Creek.
25WW.TR.02	Davis Drive	Connects from Morrisville Parkway to Apex Peakway.
25WW.TR.03	NC 55 / Piney Grove Wilbon	Connects from Morrisville Parkway to Harnett County. Runs through the downtowns of Apex and Holly Springs. Runs parallel to NC 540 on the eastside.
25WW.TR.04	High Croft Village Greenway	Local greenway between Morrisville Parkway and Batchelor Branch greenway.
25WW.TR.05	Friendship / Woods Creek	Connects north south in western Holly Springs. Connects from Avent Ferry Road to Old US 1.
25WW.TR.06	Cokesbury Road	Connects from Phelps West Road to American Tobacco Trail Extension in Harnett County.
25WW.TR.07	High Croft Drive Greenway	Connects from NC 55 to Batchelor Branch greenway. Runs parallel to NC 540 on eastside.
25WW.TR.08	Green Level Road / Kelly Road	Connects from Morrisville Parkway to Olive Chapel Road. Runs parallel to NC 540 on westside.
25WW.TR.09	Flat Branch Greenway	Connects from Morrisville Parkway to American Tobacco Trail.
25WW.TR.10	Mt Zion Church Extension	Connects from Jenks Road to Apex Barbeque Road.
25WW.TR.11	American Tobacco Trail	Connects from North of Durham to Cape Fear River. Major intercounty trail.
25WW.TR.12	Thompson Creek Greenway	Connects from Indian Creek greenway to White Oak Greenway.
25WW.TR.13	NC 751	Connects from Lake Jordan to Beaver Creek Greenway. Major north south connection from Chatham to Wake County.
25WW.TR.14	Beaver Creek Rd / Farrington Road	Connects from Chatham County to Old US 1. Lake Jordan Access.
25WW.TR.15	Christian Chapel Church Road	Connects from Old US 1 to Buckhorn Creek greenway. Part of Harris Lake Trail.
25WW.TR.16	Park Lake Greenway	Connects from Morrisville to Flat Branch greenway.
25WW.TR.17	Indian Creek Greenway	Connects from Morrisville Parkway to NC 751.
25WW.TR.18	Morrisville Pkwy / Lewter Shop Road	Connects from Davis Drive to Lake Jordan.
25WW.TR.19	Batchelor Branch / High House Road	Connects from American Tobacco Trail to NC 751.
25WW.TR.20	White Oak Greenway	Connects from Umstead Park to Lake Jordan. Major regional trail.

Trail Segment	Common Name	Notes
25WW.TR.21	Jenks / Richardson Road	Connects from Davis Drive to Old US 1.
25WW.TR.22	Beaver Creek Commons	Connects from NC 55 to Kelly Road.
25WW.TR.23	Apex Peakway	Provides a loop around downtown Apex. Links to radial trails.
25WW.TR.24	Beaver Creek Greenway	Connects from north of US 64 to NC 751.
25WW.TR.25	Laura Duncan / Apex Barbeque	Connects from eastern Apex to Beaver Creek greenway.
25WW.TR.26	Salem Street / Old US 1	Connects from downtown Apex into Chatham County.
25WW.TR.27	Veridia Parkway	Connects from Middle Creek greenway to NC 1154.
25WW.TR.28	Braxton Village Greenway	Connects from NC 55 to Avent Ferry Road.
25WW.TR.29	Wade Nash / Avent Ferry	Connects from Fuquay-Varina to American Tobacco Trail Extension.
25WW.TR.30	Buckhorn Creek Greenway	Connects from Honeycutt Road to Christ Chapel Church Road. Part of the Harris Lake Loop Trail.
25WW.TR.31	Wilbon Road	Connects from Fuquay-Varina to Piney Grove Wilbon Road.
25WW.TR.32	Rex / Phelps West Road	Connects from Fuquay-Varina to American Tobacco Trail Extension.
25WW.TR.33	Humie Olive	Runs between Old US 1 and American Tobacco Trail Extension.
25WW.TR.34	US 64 Lake Jordan Crossing	Provides a connection across Jordan Lake east / west.

SECTION 6

Appendix

- Community Meeting Booklets






Thank you for attending this meeting.
Your participation and feedback are
crucial to the planning process.



WESTERN WAKE
AREA PLAN

For more information and ways to engage:

Email: areaplan@wake.gov
Phone: 919-856-6310, press 8
Website: www.wake.gov/ww




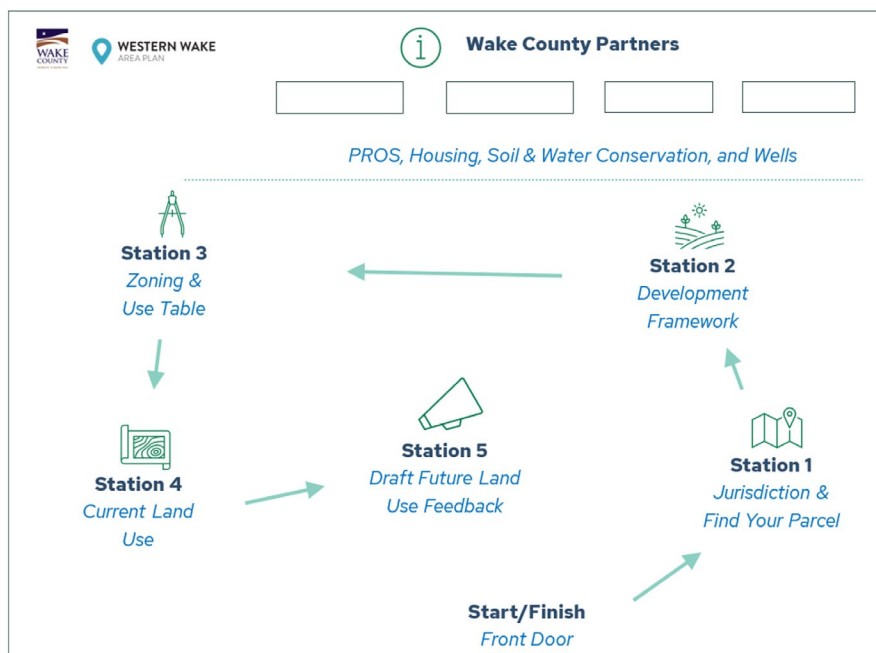
WESTERN WAKE
AREA PLAN

**Community
Meeting #2**

Welcome!

Wake County Planning and **county partners**
are here to provide information and hear your
feedback about the Western Wake Area Plan.

Please visit each information station.

Western Wake Area Plan

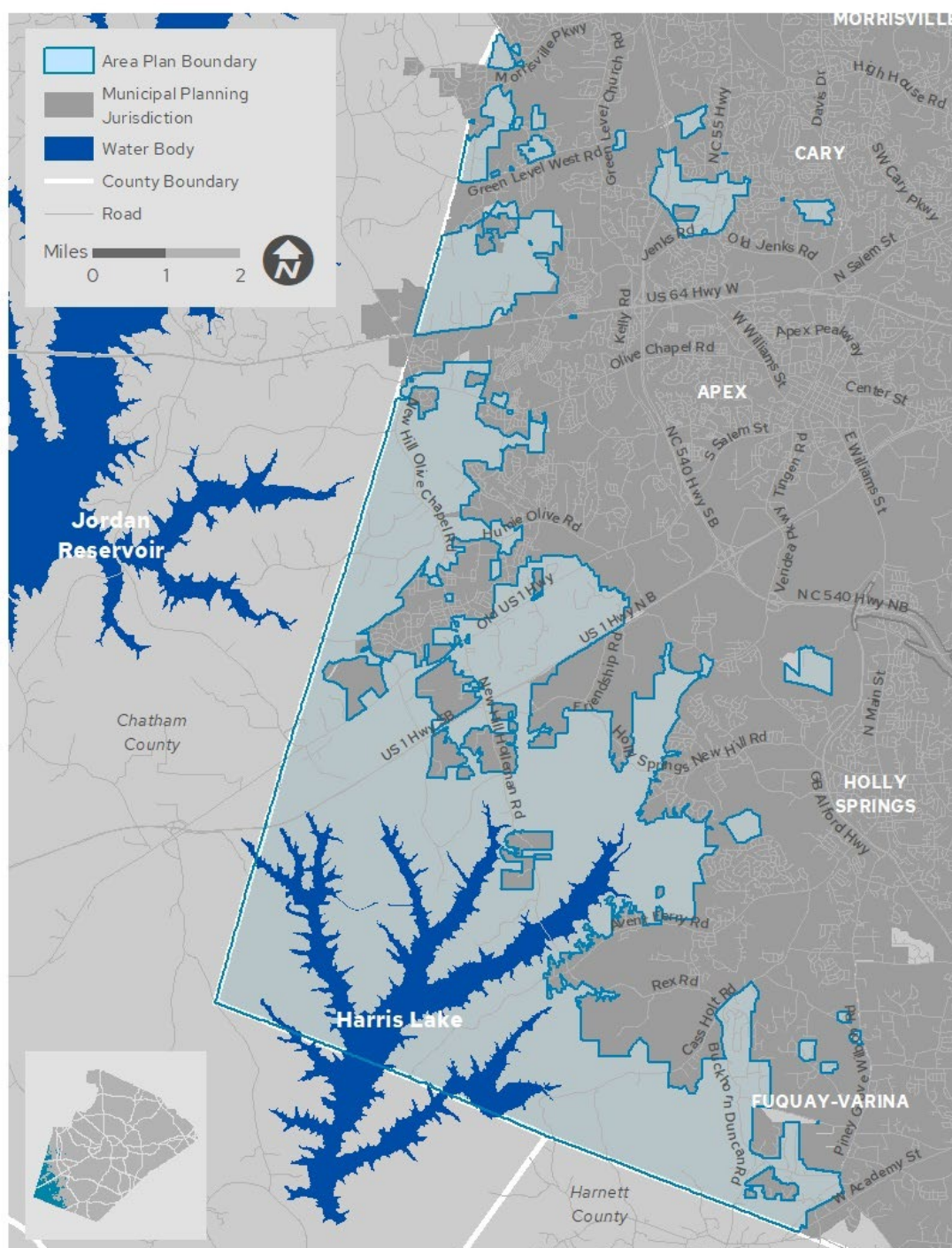
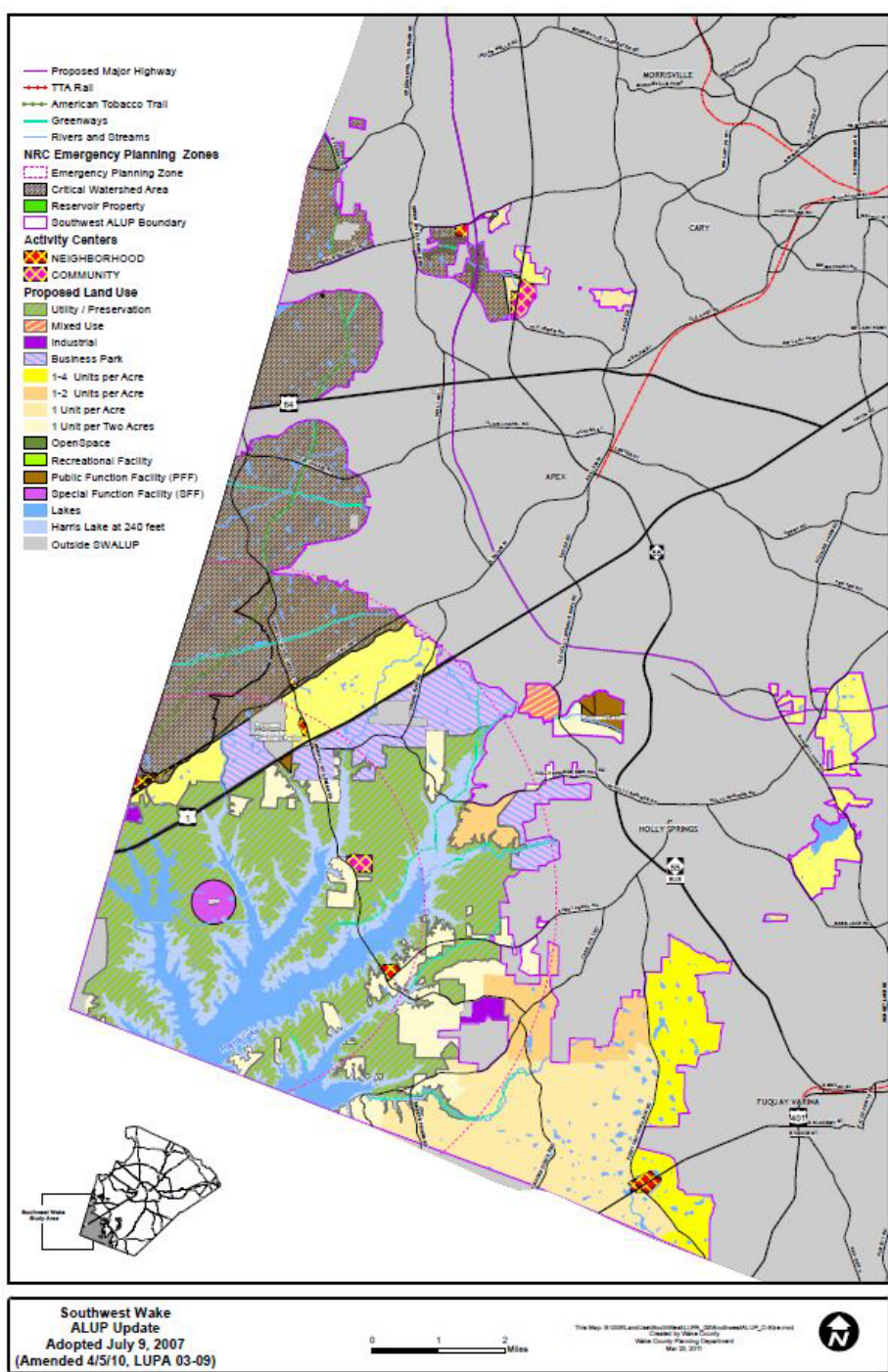
Wake County Planning Board

Akul Nishawala, AICP – Planner III
December 4, 2024



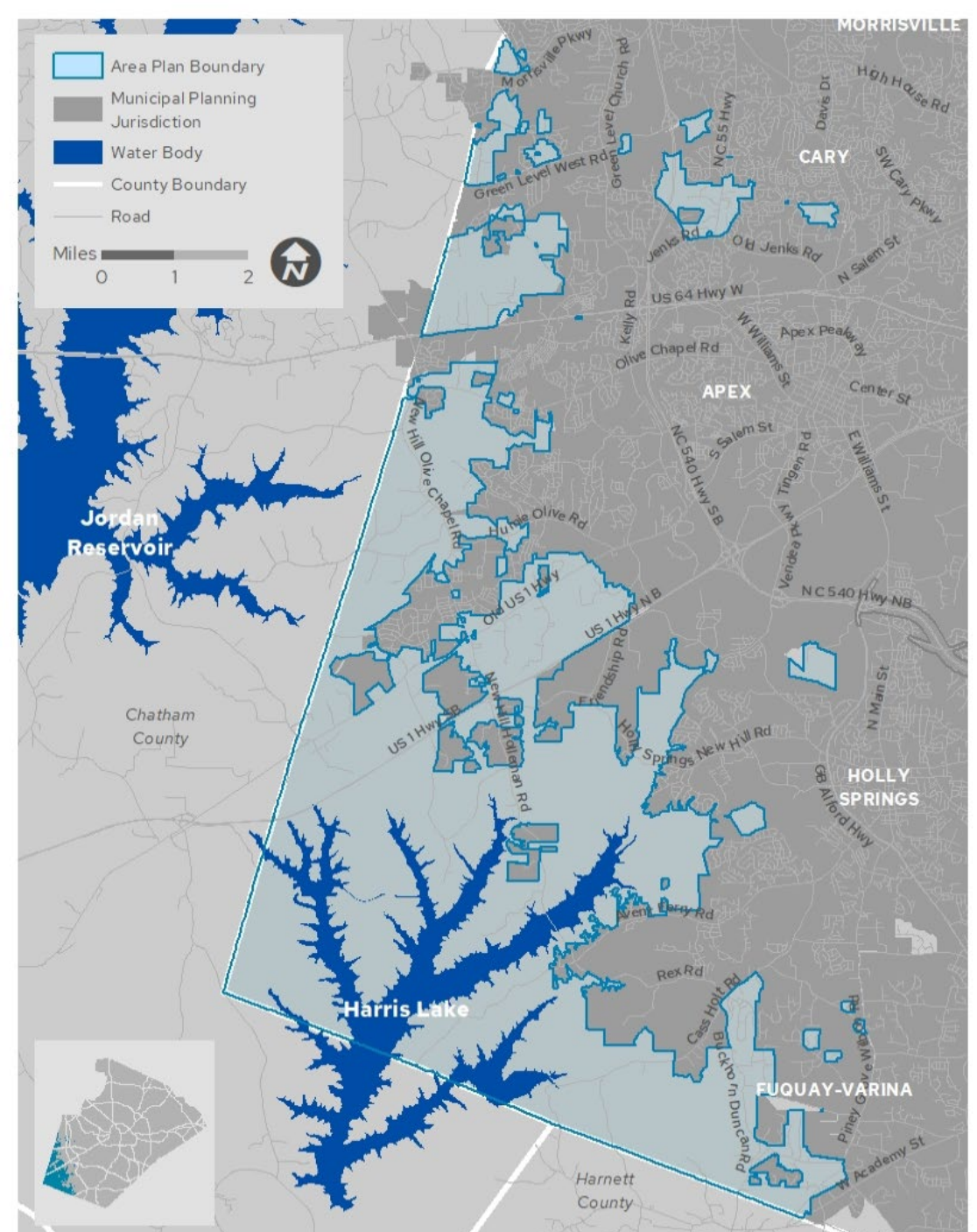
@wakegov    

wake.gov



Overview

- Approx 43 sq. mi (27,480 acres)
- Cary, Apex, Holly Springs, Fuquay-Varina
- Chatham County
- Harris Lake
- Harris Nuclear Plant





Existing Conditions

Western Wake Area Plan

Population & Housing

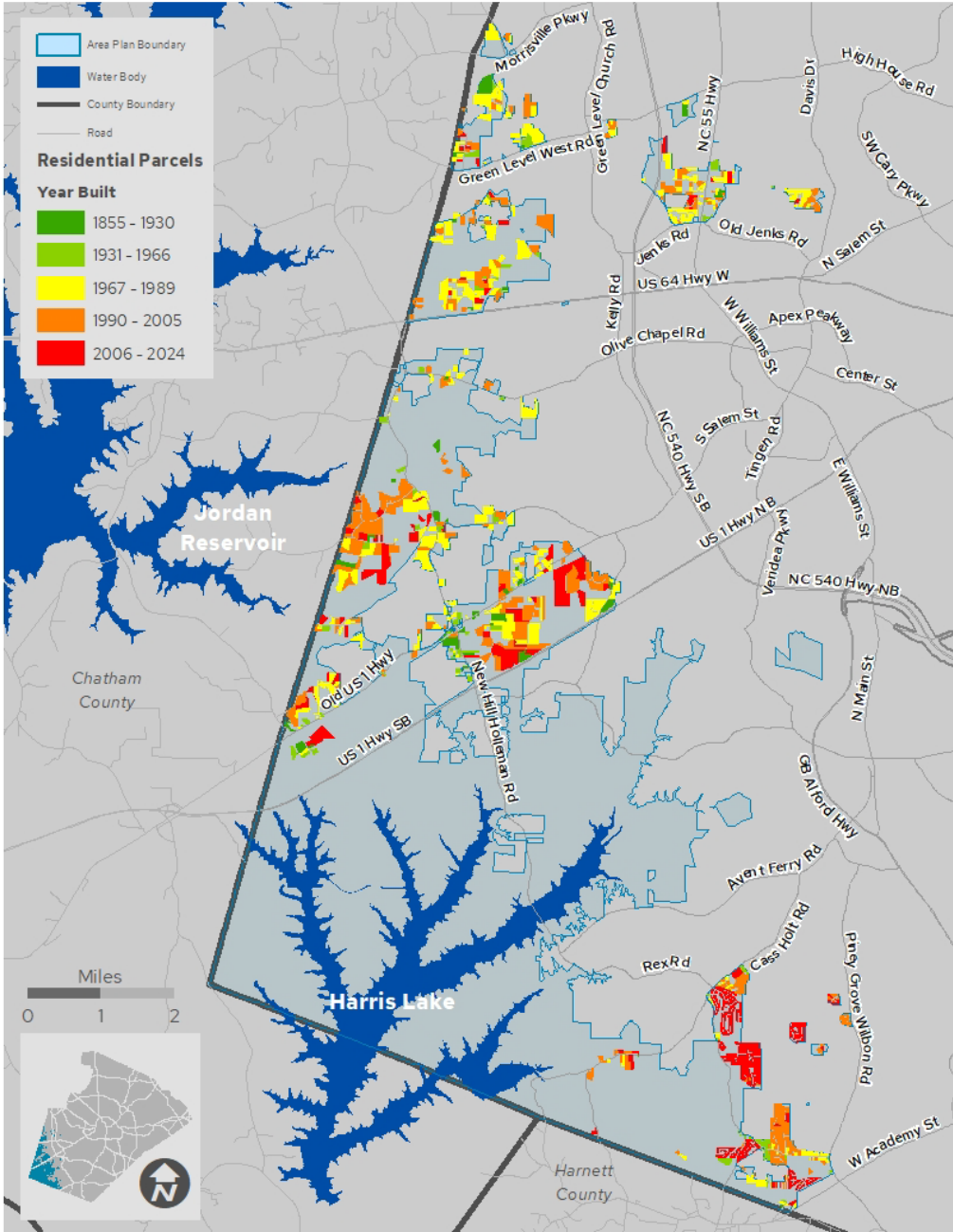
Western Wake Area Plan Housing 2014-2024

	Residential Units	Mobile Homes	Total Units	Total Occupied Units
2014	1,099	194	1,293	1,215
2024	1,311	166	1,477	1,344

Western Wake Area Plan Population 2014-2024

	Household Population	Group Quarters Population	Population Estimate
2014	3,403	19	3,422
2024	3,454	0	3,454

Sources: Wake County Property Data, U.S. Census



Race and Ethnicity

Western Wake			
	Percent Race and Ethnicity		Percent Change
	2010	2020	2010-2020
Asian	15.32%	32.67%	113.23%
Black	5.43%	5.12%	-5.68%
White	70.15%	50.29%	-28.30%
Hispanic	6.76%	7.04%	4.12%
Two or More Races	2.35%	4.88%	108.03%

Wake County		
	Total Percent	Total Percent Change
	2020	2010-2020
Asian	9%	100%
Black	18%	12%
White	57%	15%
Hispanic	11%	46%
Two or More Races	5%	22%

Sources: U.S. Census by Block Group

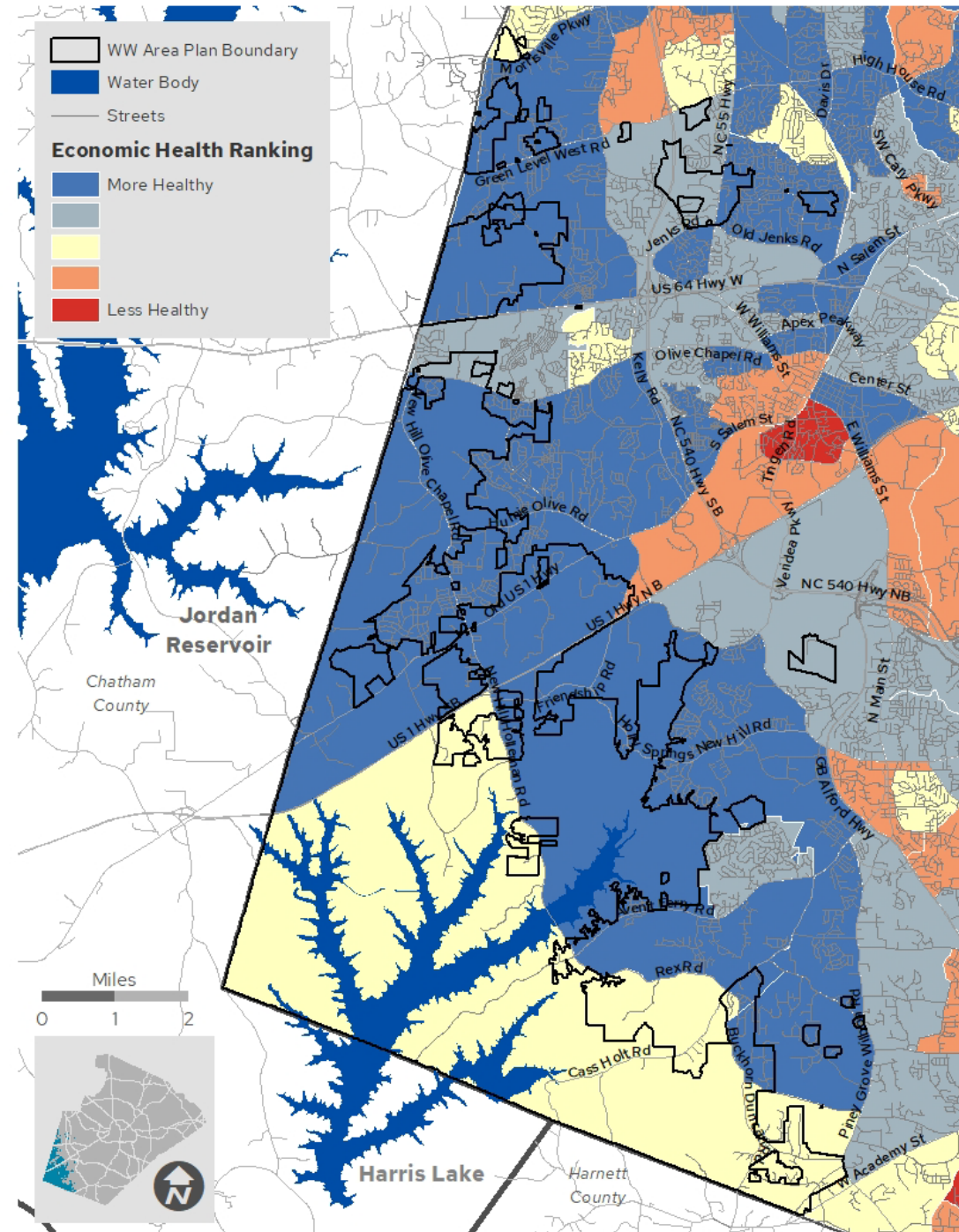
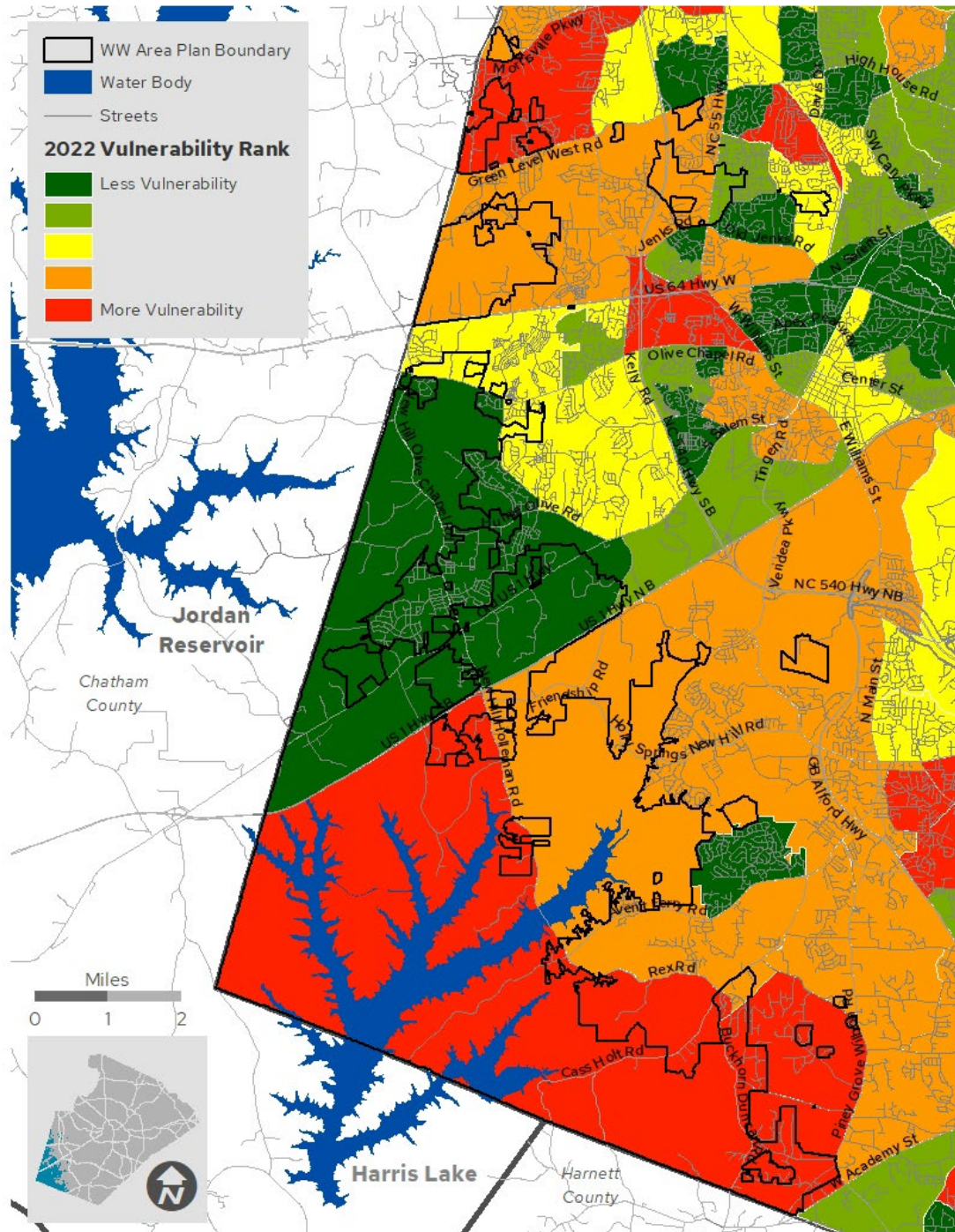
Social Equity

- **Community Vulnerability**

- Unemployment
- Age-Dependency (under 18; over 64)
- Low Educational Attainment (over 25 w/o HS diploma)
- Housing Vacancy
- Below Poverty Level

- **Economic Health**

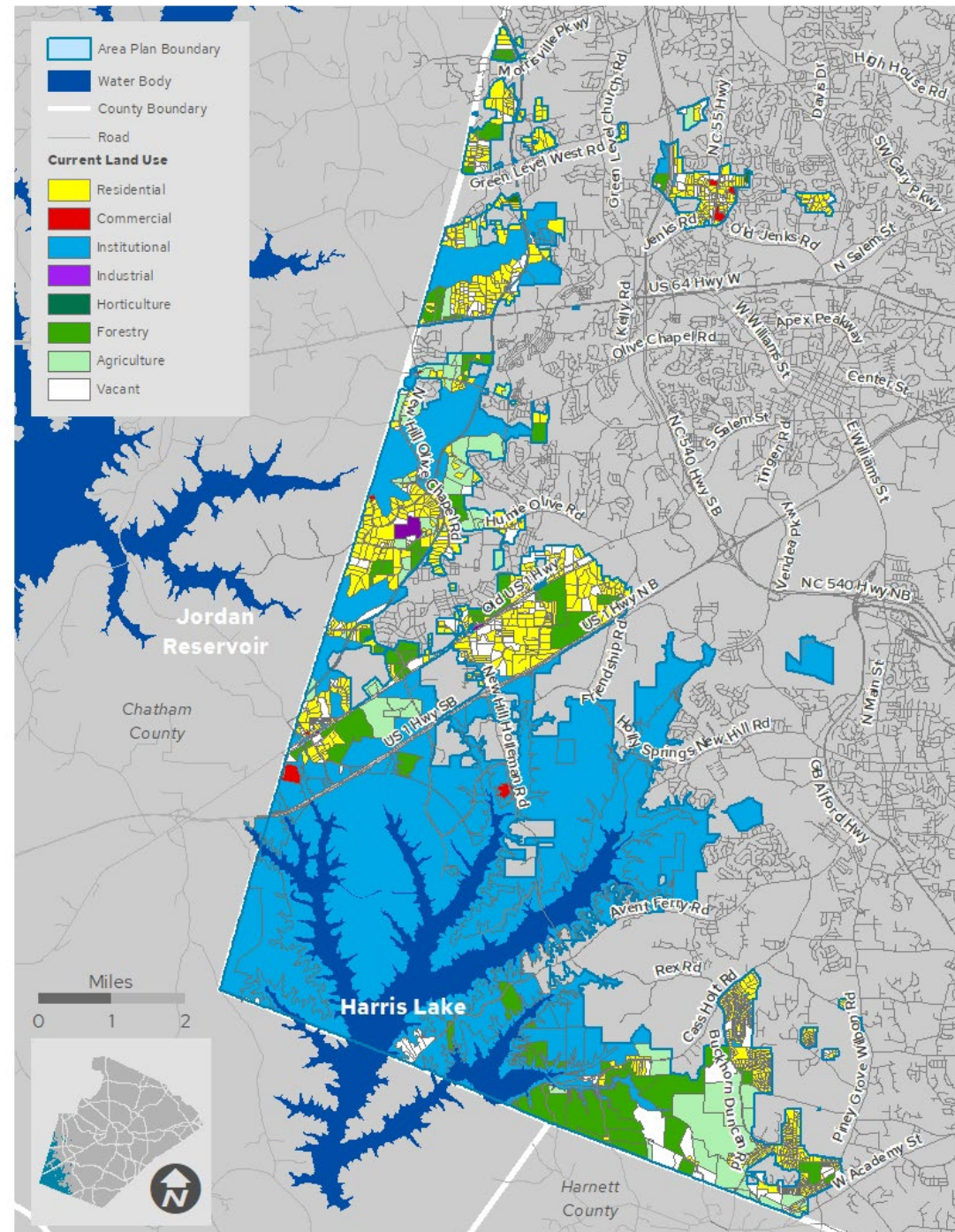
- Median Household Income
- Food Stamps
- Rent Greater than 30% Income
- Home Mortgage Greater than 30 % Income
- Persons Living 100-200% of Federal Poverty Level



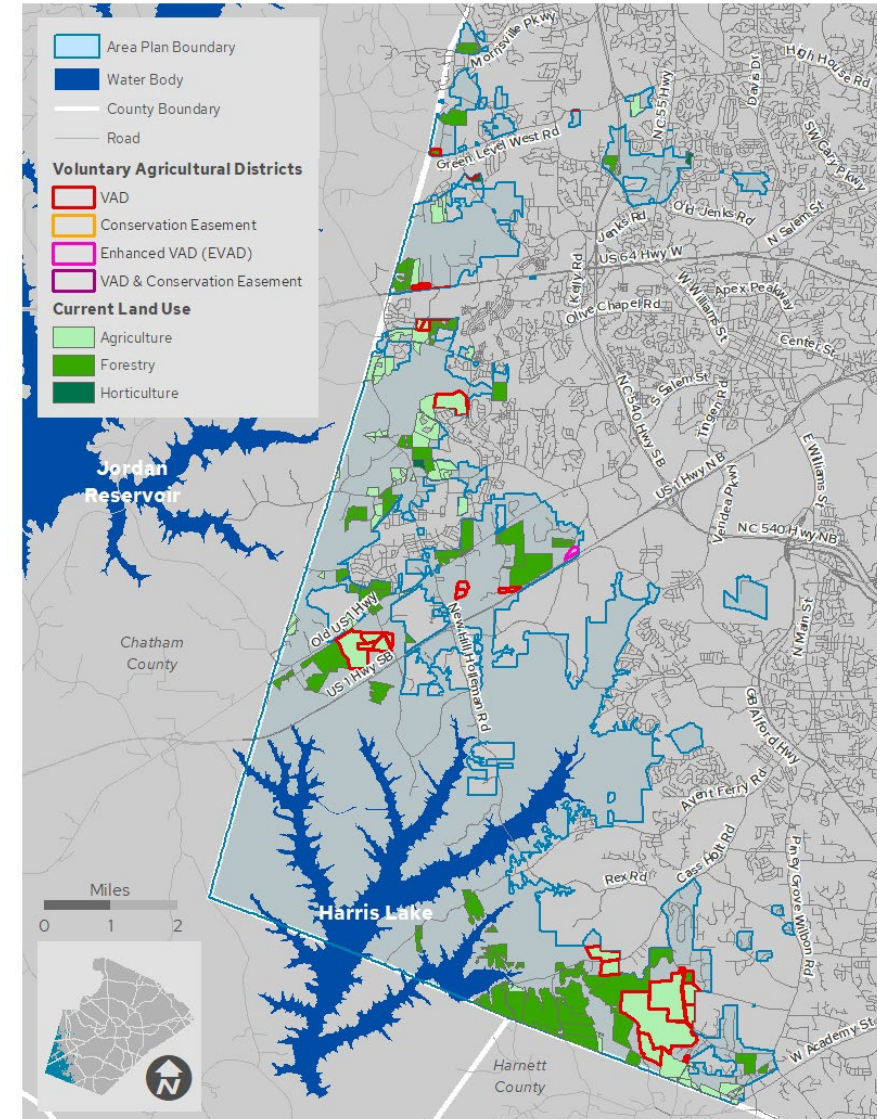
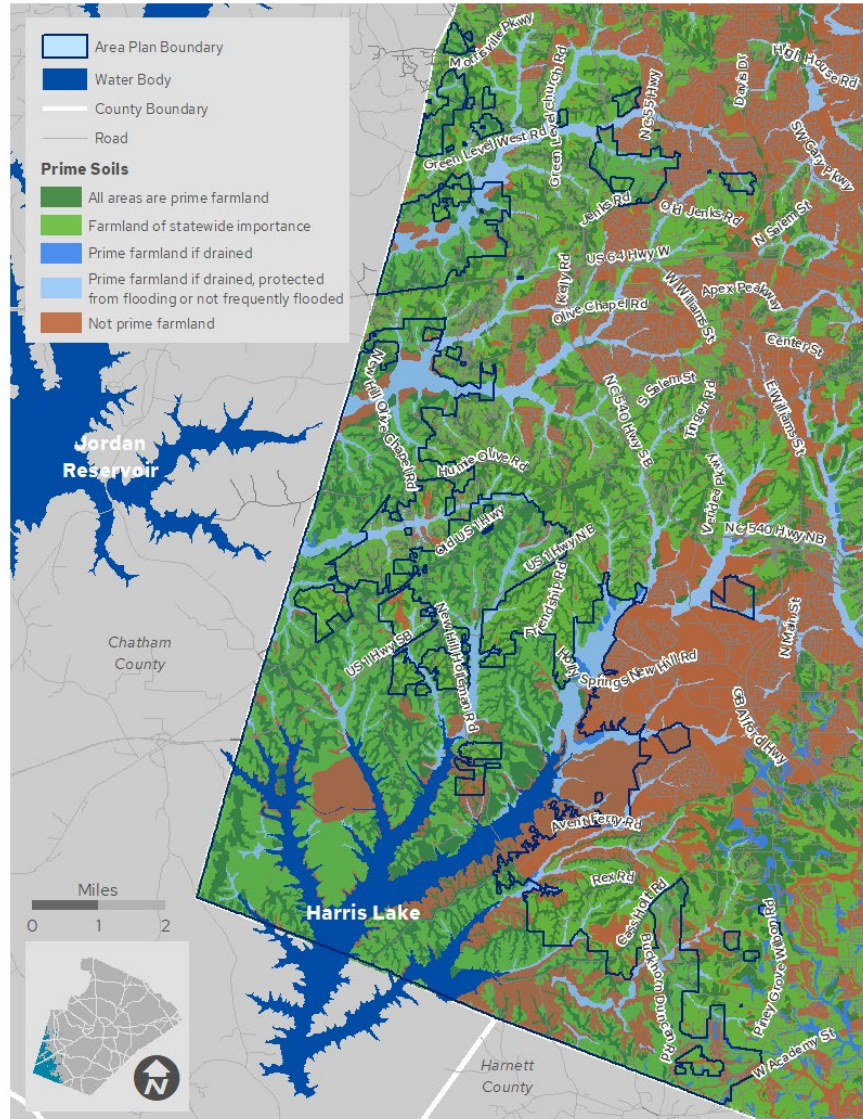
Current Land Use

Property Owner	Acres	Parcels
Duke Energy	16,811	54
US Army Corps of Engineers	1,562	3
Private Owner	707	8
Private Owner	237	2
Martin Marietta	231	7

Current Land Use	Acres	Parcels	Percentage
Institutional	5,465.57	133	37%
Residential	3,646.61	1,428	25%
Forestry	2,316.20	81	16%
Agriculture	1,782.92	60	12%
Vacant	1,457.46	365	10%
Industrial	57.20	3	0.4%
Commercial	33.38	11	0.2%
Horticulture	32.77	4	0.2%
Total	14,792.11	2,085.00	100%



Agriculture





Community Engagement

Western Wake Area Plan

Engagement Summary

- Webpage
- Social Media
- ArcGIS StoryMap
- Interactive Maps
 - General Comments
 - Draft Land Uses
- Online Surveys
 - Community
 - Proximity and Access
- Road Signs
- Email Listservs
- Virtual Community Meeting
 - May 21
- In-Person Community Meetings
 - New Hill Community Center – June 12
 - White Oak Foundation – September 11

New Hill Community Meeting





White Oak Center Community Meeting







Future Land Use

Western Wake Area Plan

Overview

-



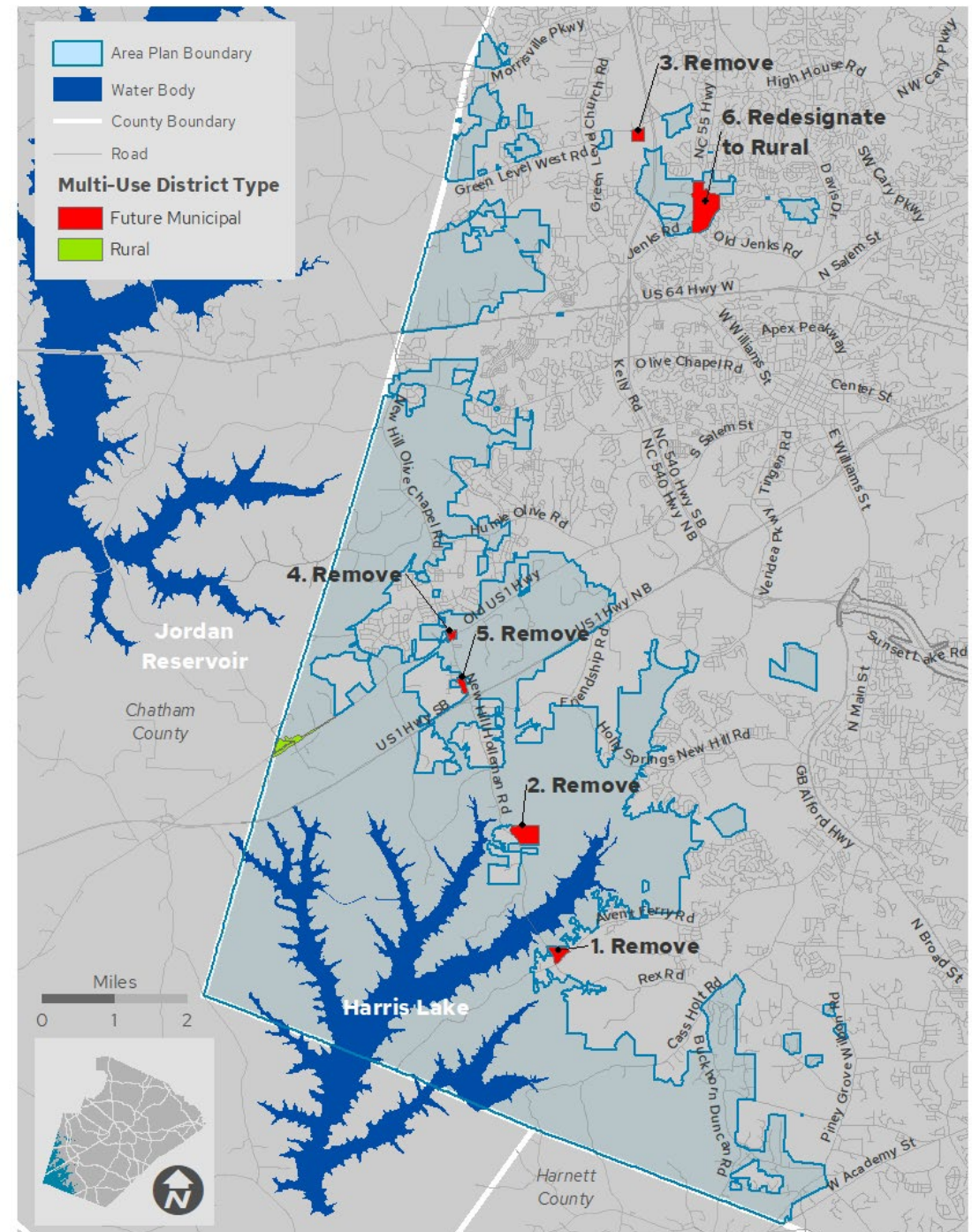
Additional Planning Elements

Western Wake Area Plan

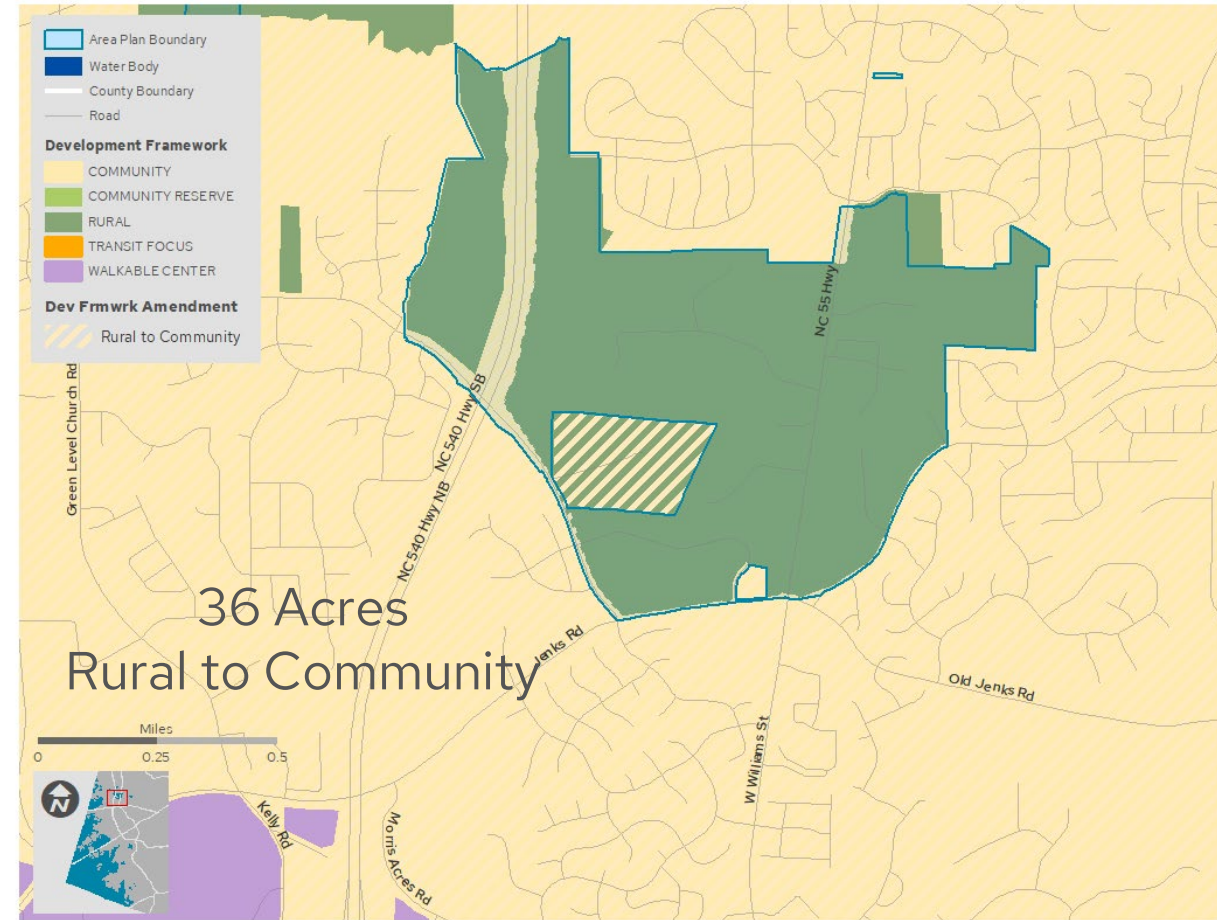
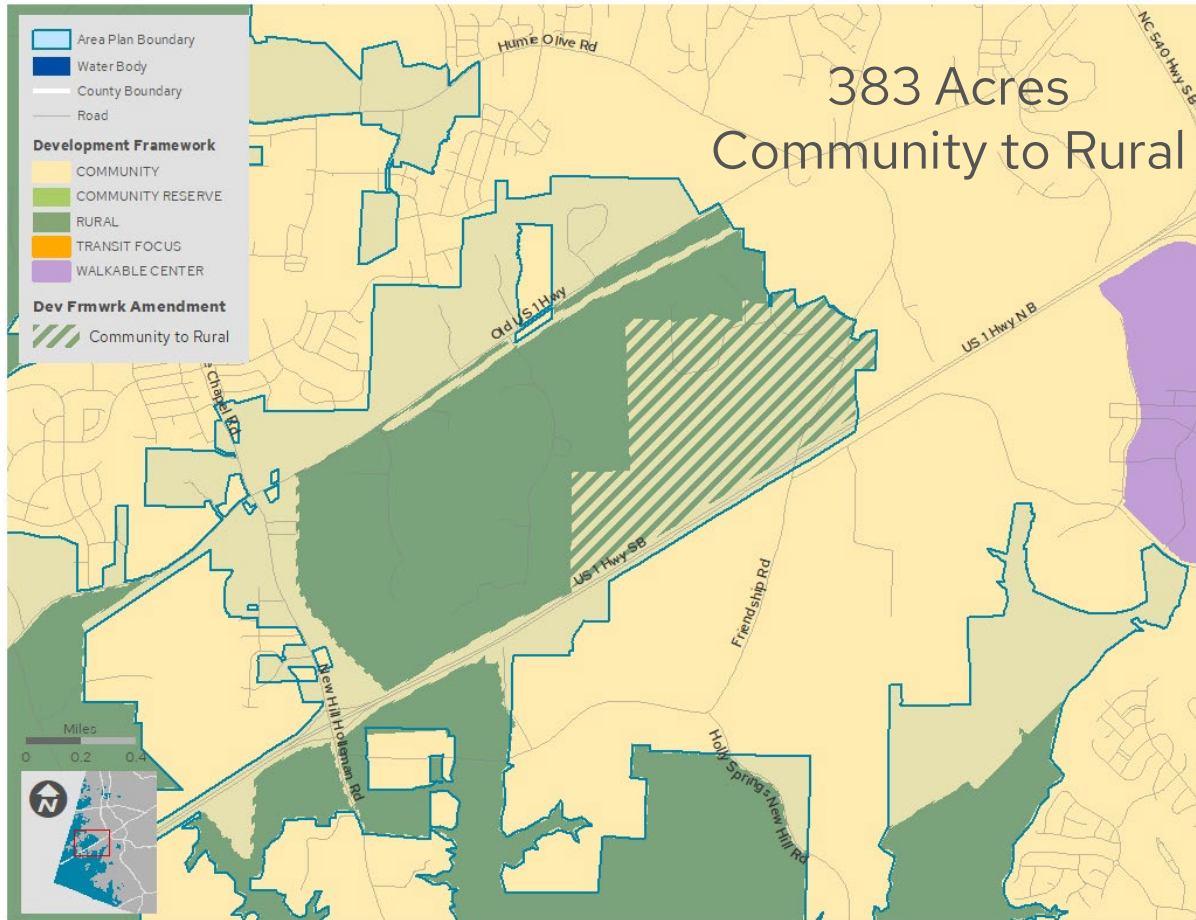
Multi-Use Districts

Remove	Acres	Parcels
1. Avent Ferry Rd & New Hill Holleman	25	5
2. New Hill Holleman Rd & Ironrod Way	175	4
3. Green Level West Rd & NC 540	20	3
4. New Hill Holleman Road and Old US 1 Hwy	8	13
5. New Hill Holleman Road and US 1 Hwy	12.5	13

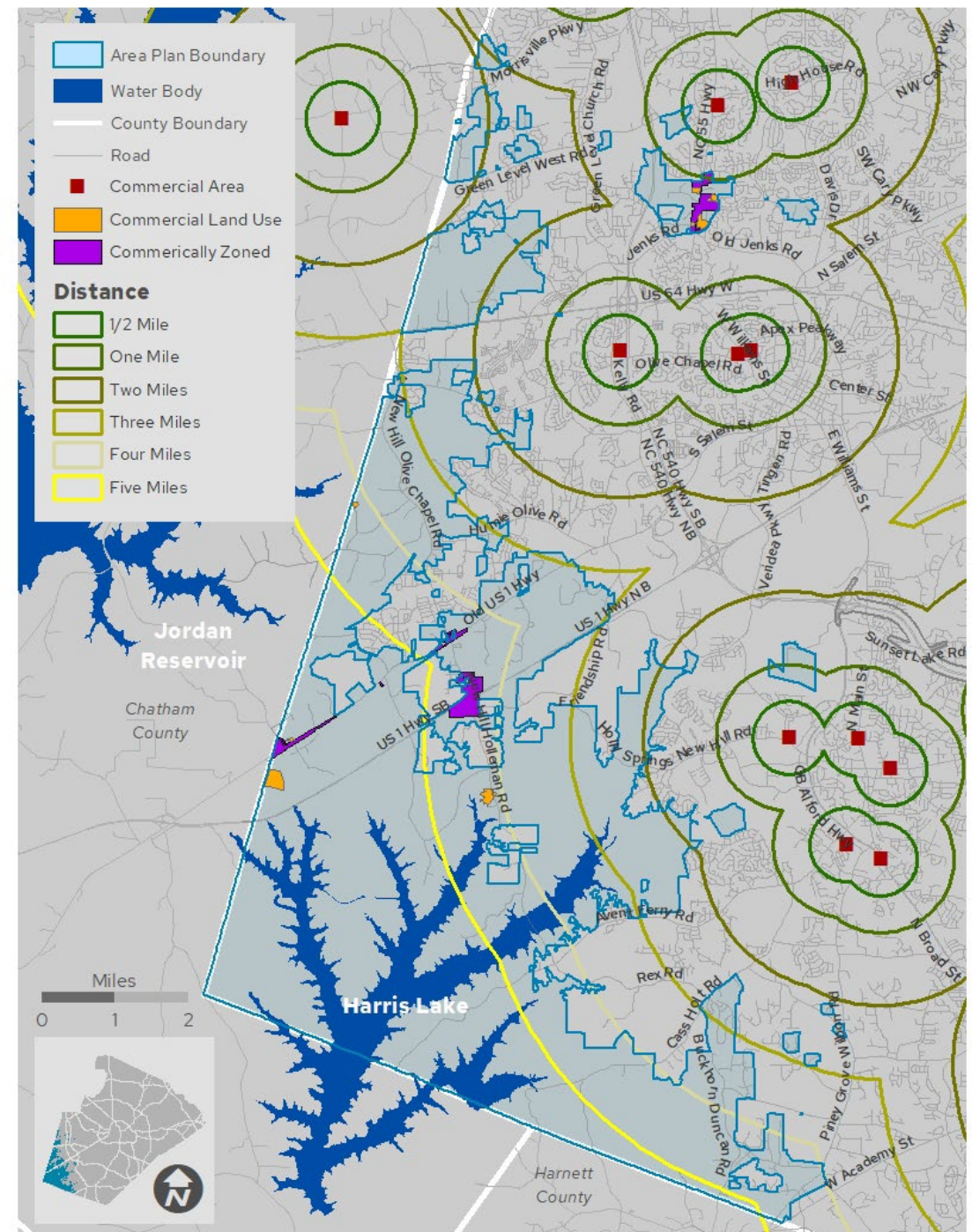
Redesignate	Acres	Parcels
6. NC 55 Hwy (N) of Jenks Road	175.5	42



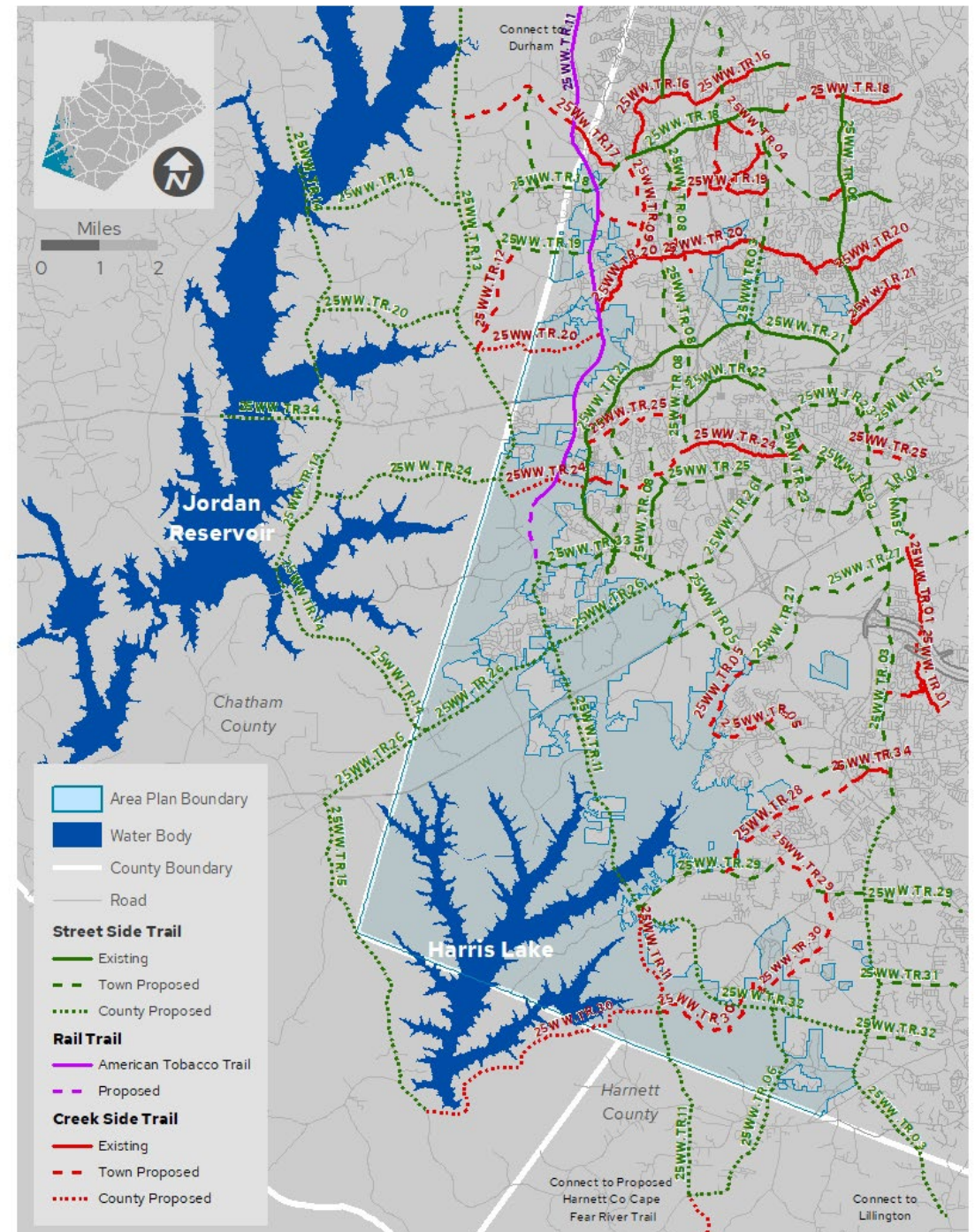
Development Framework Amendments



Commercial Area Location Strategy



Greenway and Walkability Network



Land Use Plan Feedback

- **Town of Apex**
- **New Hope Valley Railroad**
- **New Hill/Friendship community email**

Western Big Branch Area Plan

Overview

- Town of Apex
- Friendship & New Hill Communities
- Revisions to 2045 Land Use & Transportation Plans
- Protection of rural and agricultural character
- [Project website](https://publicinput.com/i5237#tab-45672)

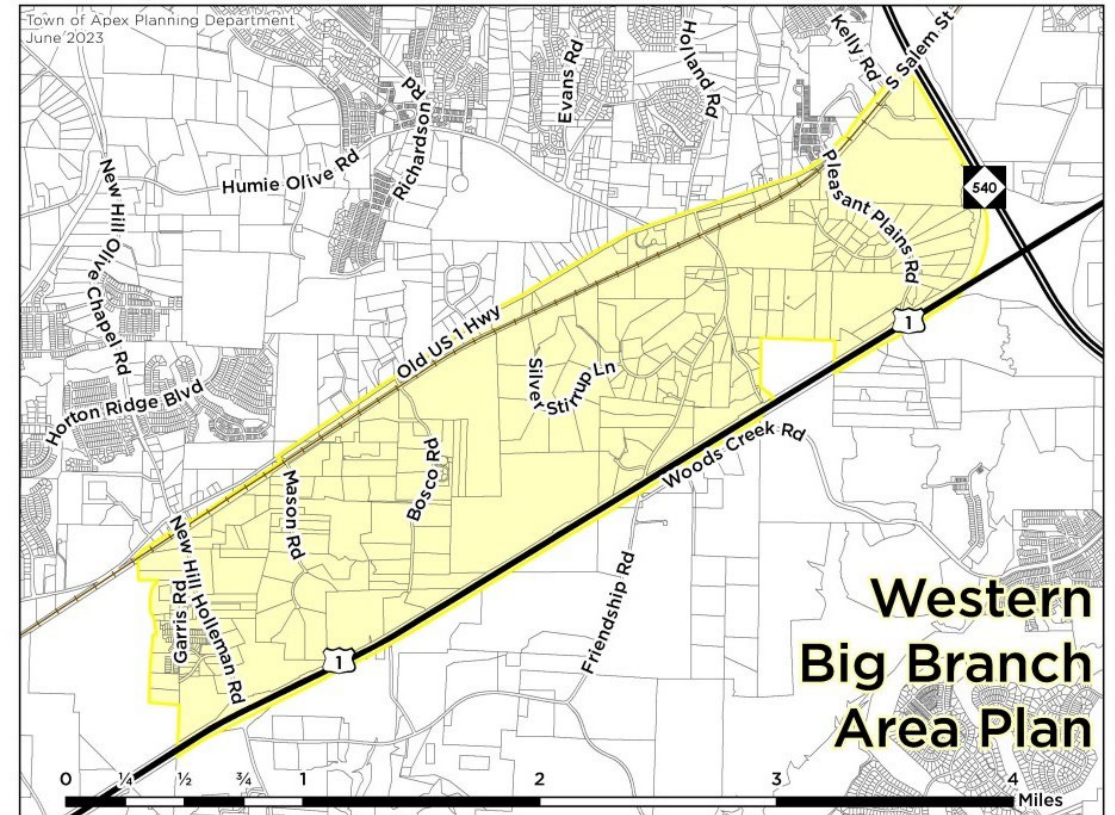


Image Source: <https://publicinput.com/i5237#tab-45672>

Staff Findings

1. The Western Wake Area Plan is consistent with the goals and visions set forth in PLANWake.
2. The Western Wake Area Plan received input from residents, municipal partners, and stakeholders.
3. The Western Wake Area Plan provides an update to the existing area land plan policies, development framework map, and land use designations.

Next Step

**Wake County Board of Commissioners
January 6, 2025**



Public Comment

Western Wake Area Plan

Staff Recommendation

That the Planning Board recommend that the Board of Commissioners adopt the Western Wake Area Plan as an amendment to the Wake County Comprehensive Plan, PLANWake, and amend the Development Framework Map.



WAKE.GOV

Tree Canopy

Planning Board

December 4, 2024

Tim Maloney, Planning Development and Inspections Director



@wakegov



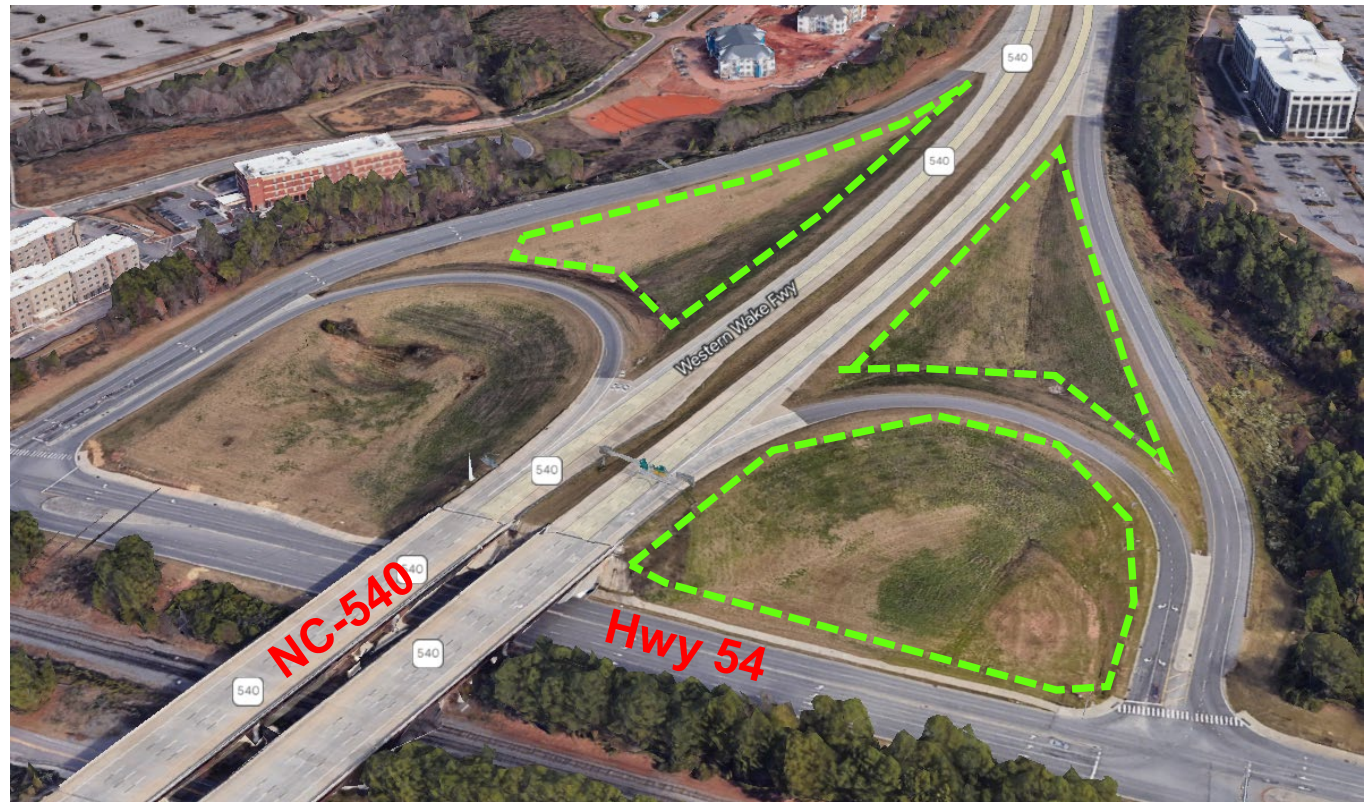
wakegov.com

Our Next Pilot Project

1. Turnipseed Nature Preserve
2. Partnering with Leaf & Limb
3. Donating multiple pocket forests
4. Demonstration/educational opportunity
5. Target 2025 winter spring planting

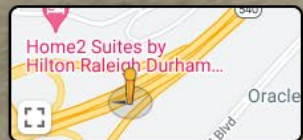


NC-540 & Hwy 54



NC-540 & Hwy 54

← NC-540
Morrisville, North Carolina
Google Street View
Jul 2022 [See more dates](#)



NC-540 & Green Level W. Road



NC-540 & Green Level W. Road



NC-540 & US 1



NC-540 & US 1

North Wake Fwy
North Carolina
Google Street View
See more dates



Questions/Discussion



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