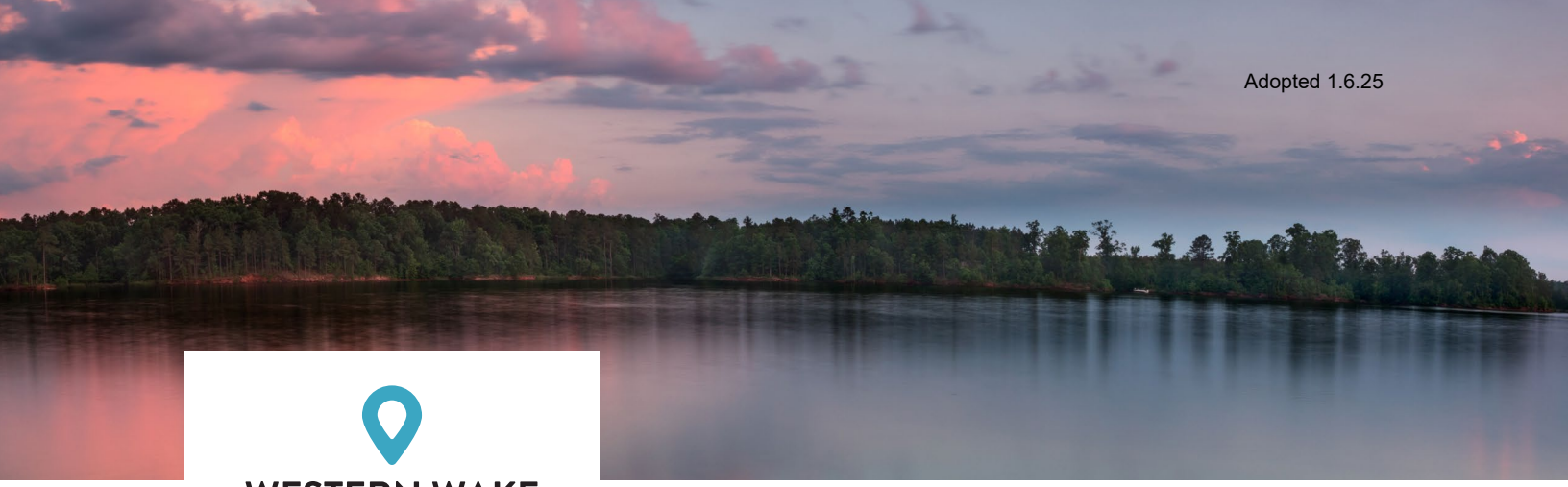


Adopted 1.6.25

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

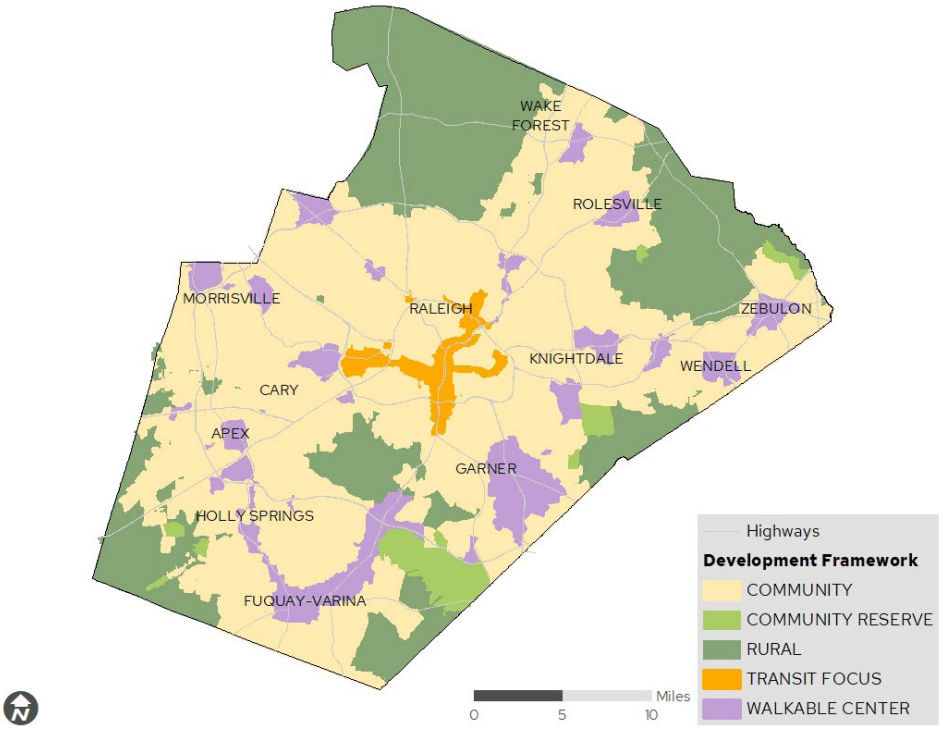
While PLANWake will continue to serve as the overarching vision for Wake County, the Western Wake Area Plan will provide more localized land use and development goals. The study process will also specifically create opportunities for localized public input and engagement.

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



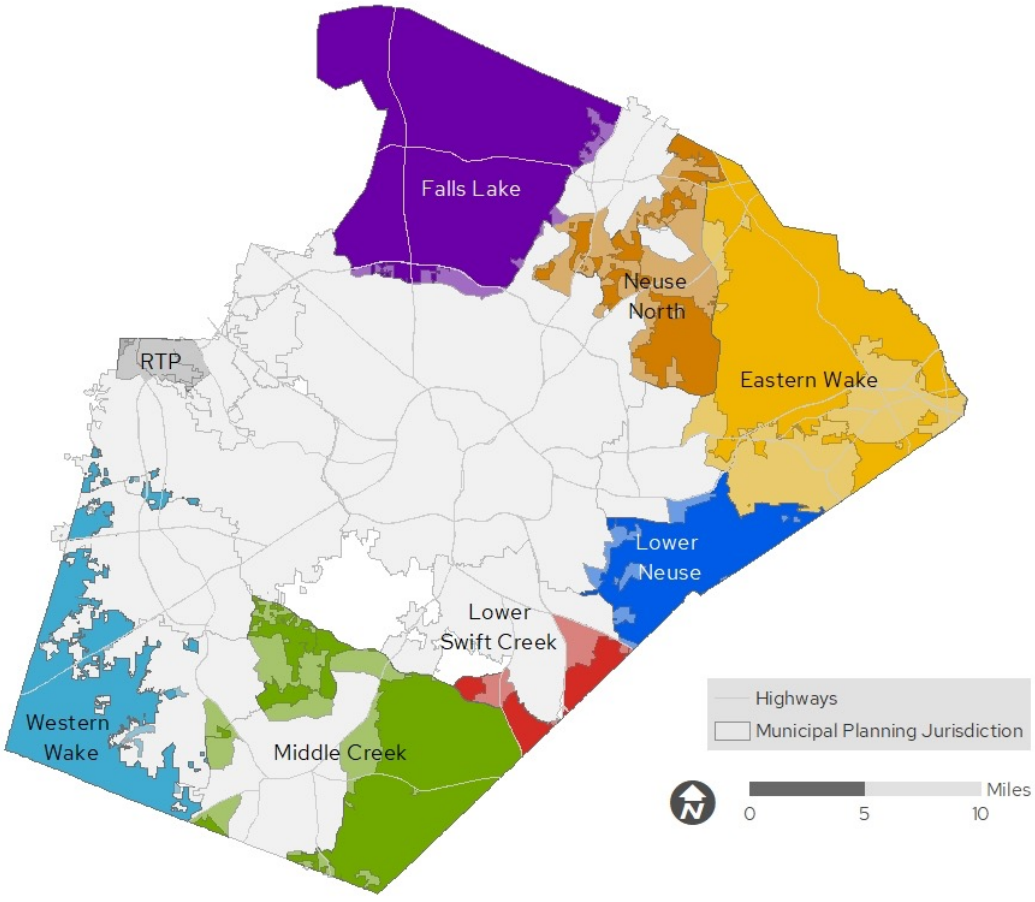
Area Plans

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.

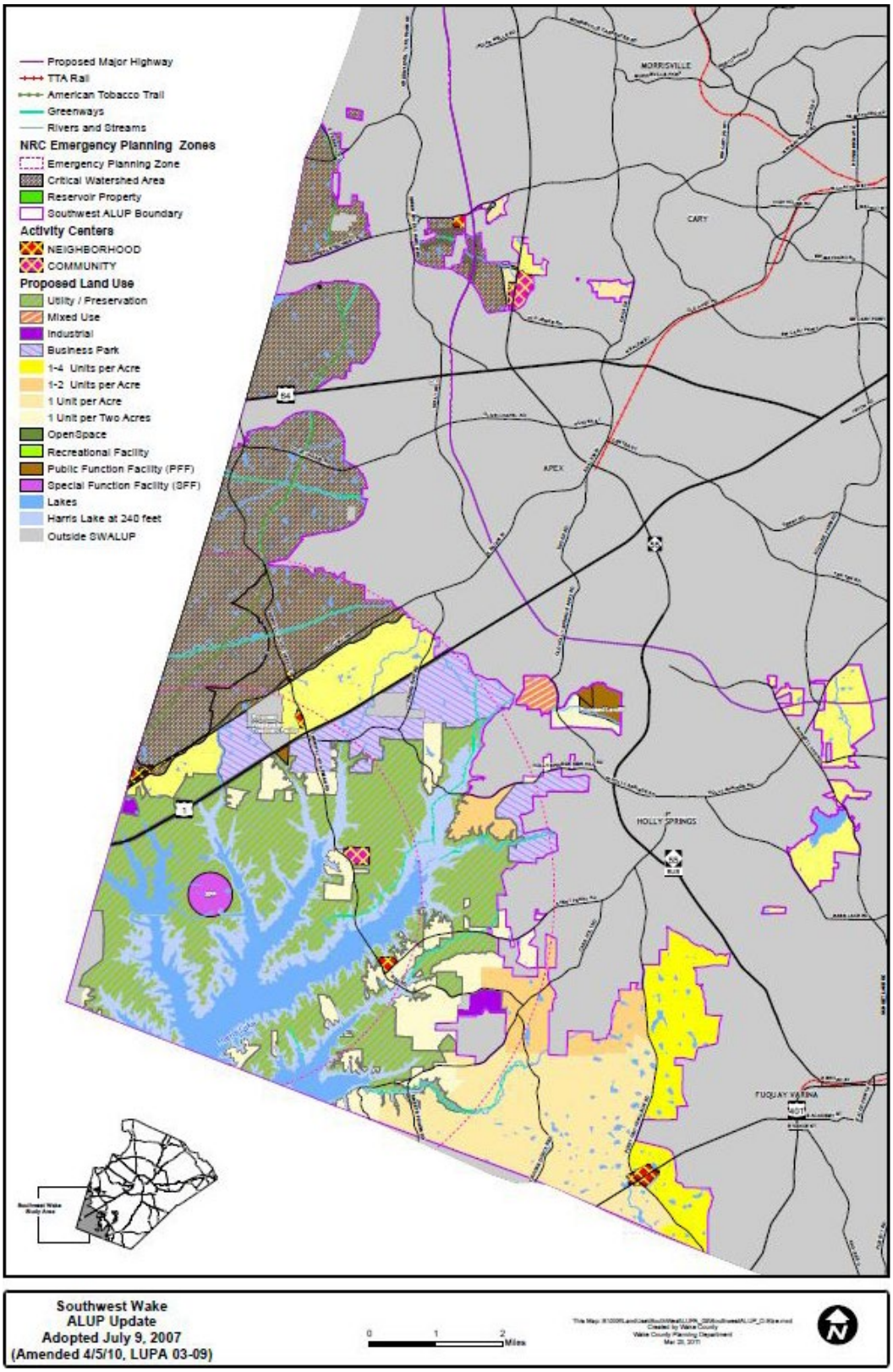
While PLANWake will continue to serve as the overarching vision for the county, the area plans can and should be used as an opportunity for certain elements — i.e., the development framework — to be modified, updated or amended as necessary.

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



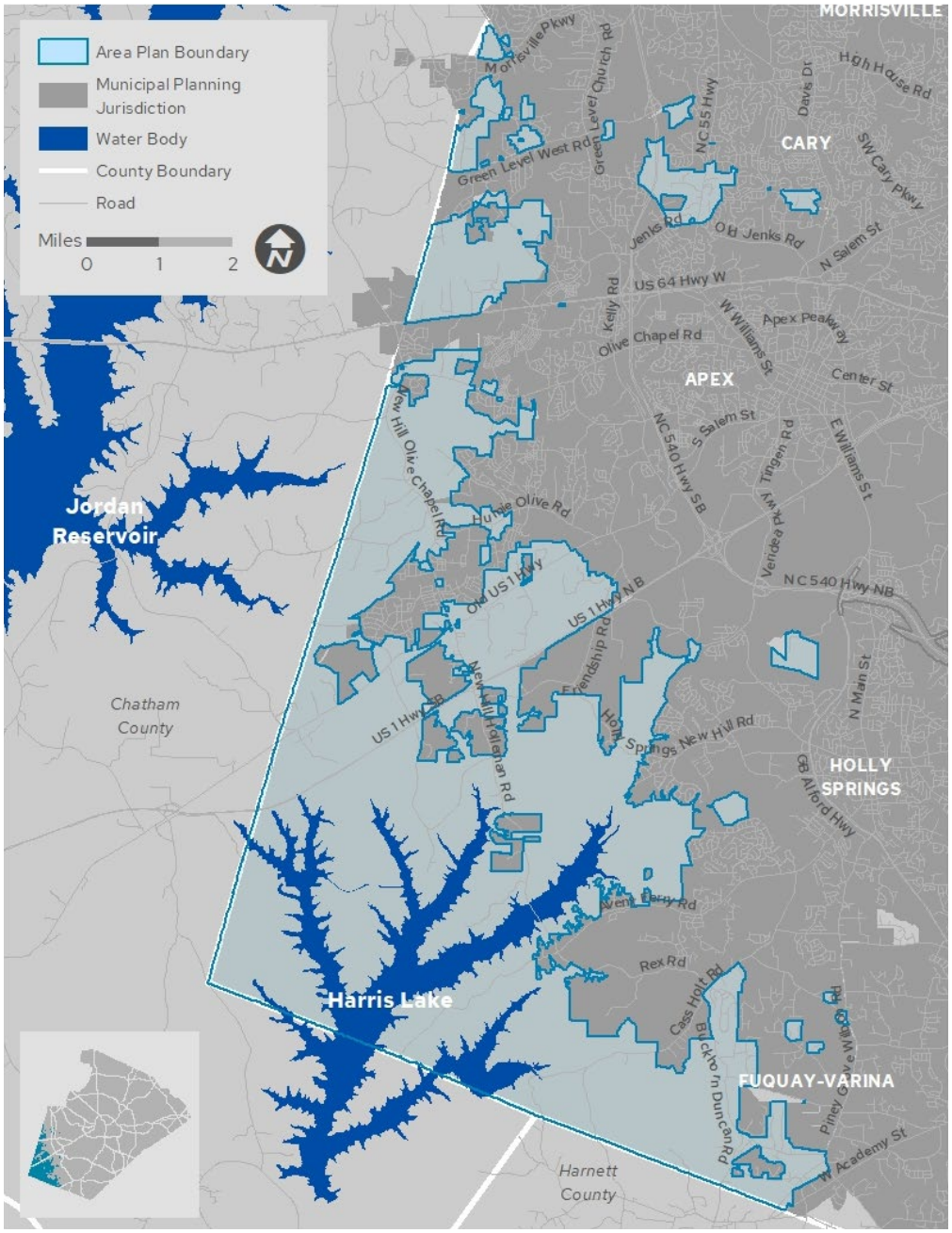
Western Wake Study Area

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



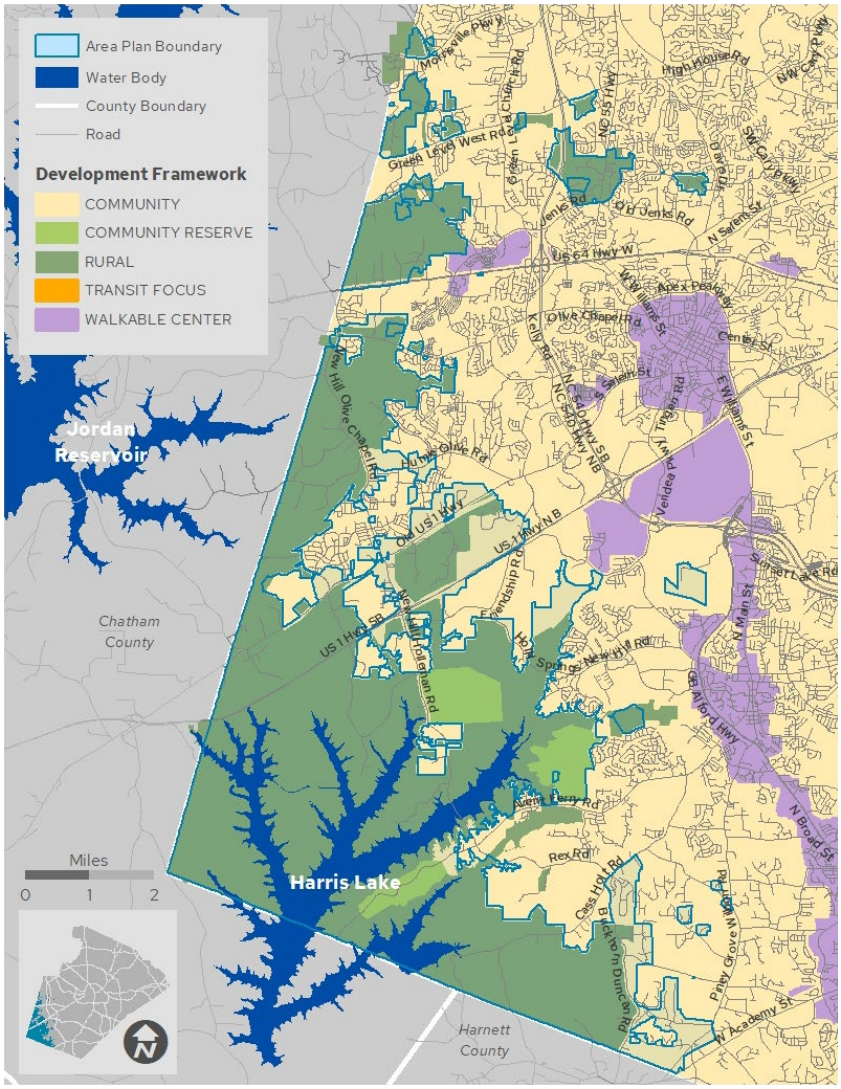
Western Wake and PLANWake

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.

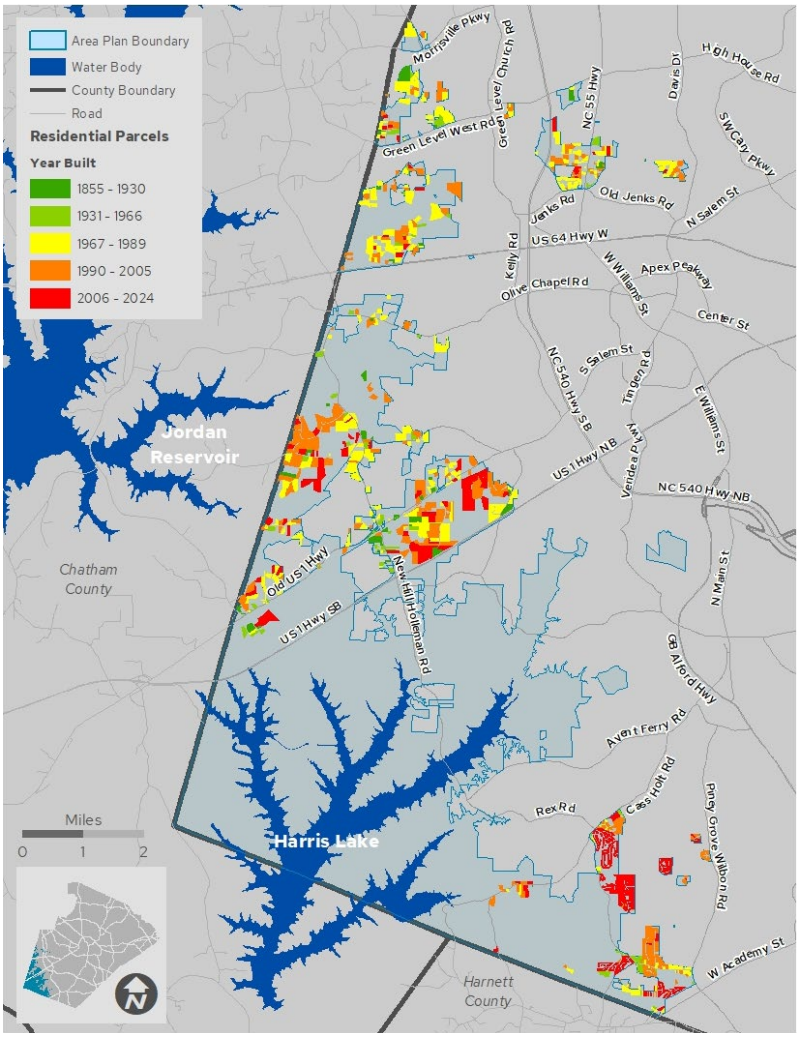
To put these trends into a real-world context, there is a current shortage of approximately 56,000 homes in Wake County that are affordable to households earning less than 50% of the County's Area Median Income (AMI), which equates to $61,650 annually for a four-person household. Further, approximately 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.

Residential Parcels by Build Year



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**.

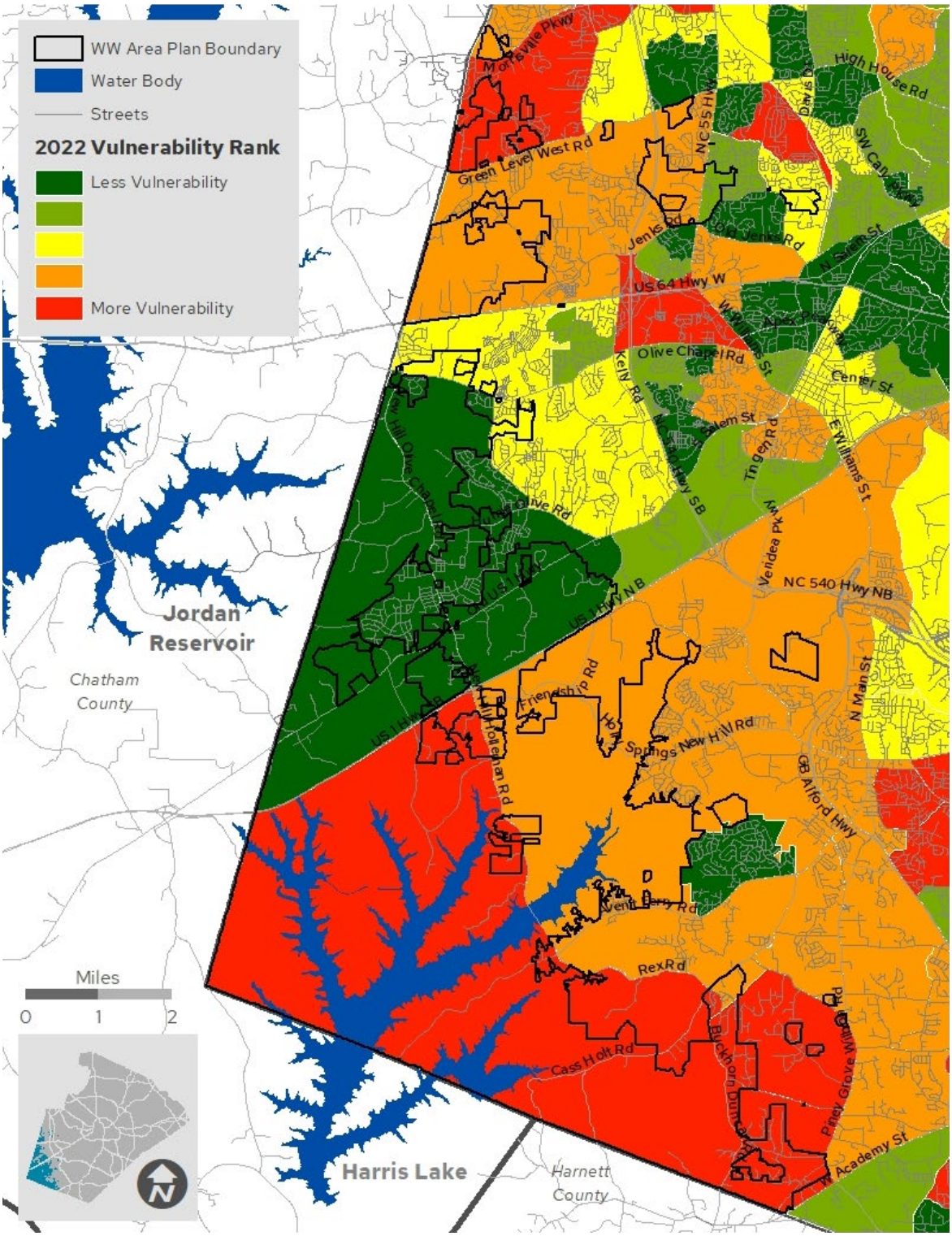
COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY INDEX

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



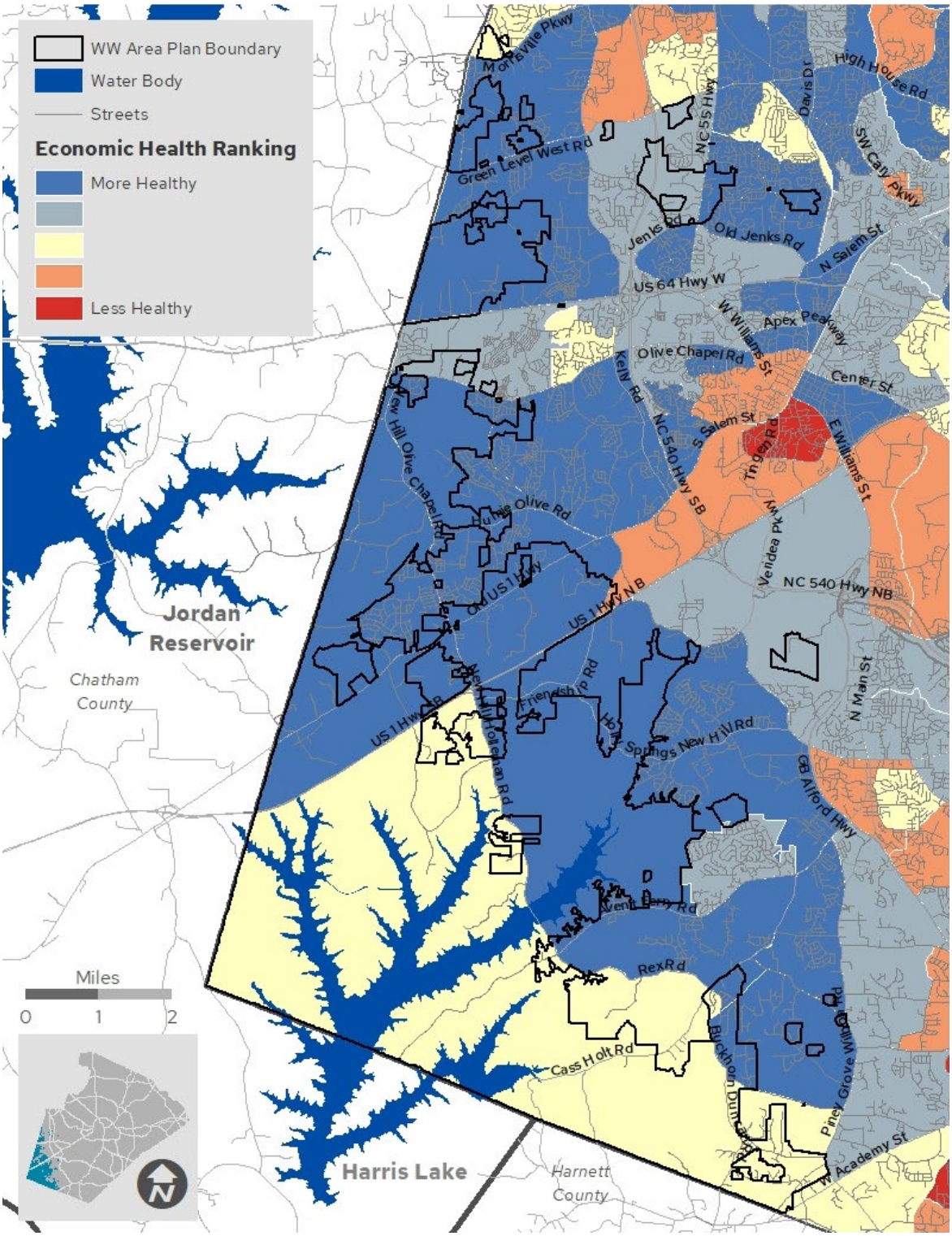
ECONOMIC HEALTH INDEX

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 of 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 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.

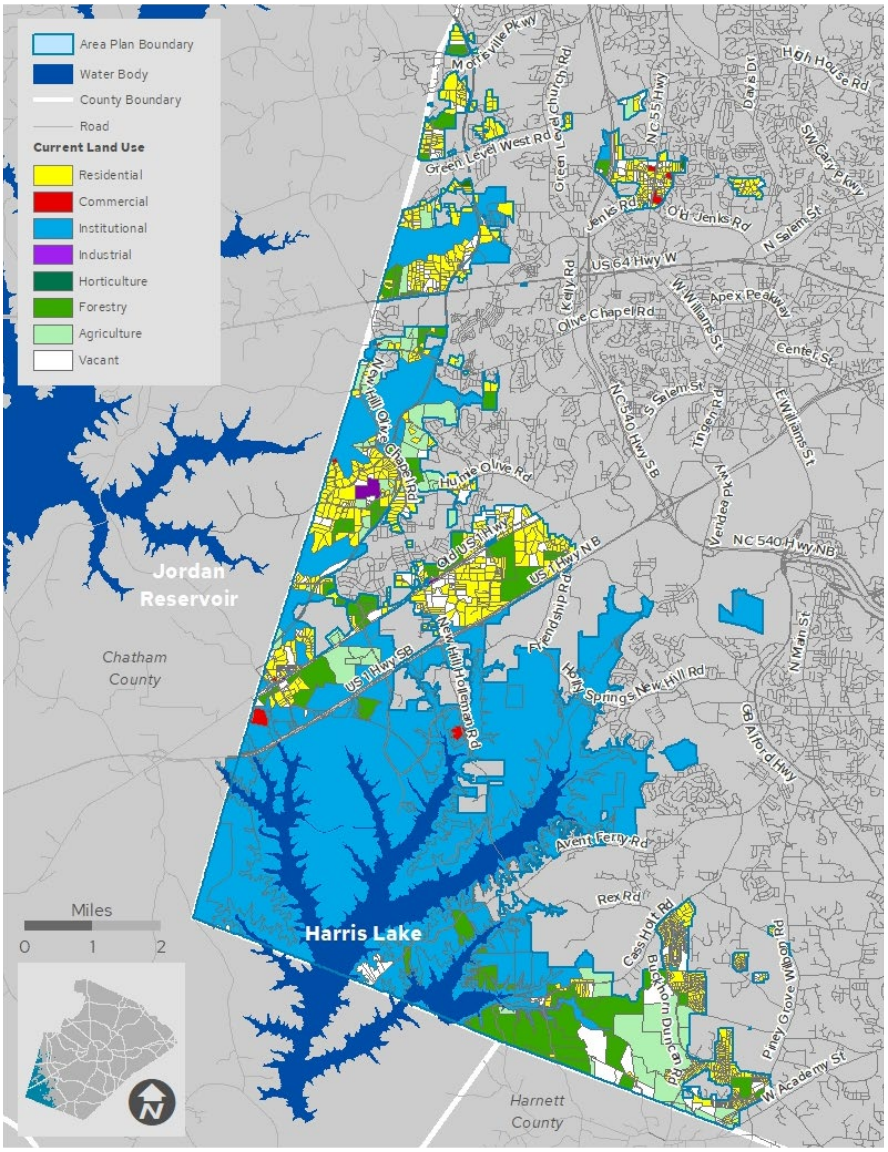
NOTE: While this analysis can be useful in observing overall land use trends, some of the land uses displayed may not be completely reflective of how the land is presently being used. This could be due to a discrepancy in the tax code, or it has not been updated as of this writing.

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%**

Current Land Use



Agriculture and Farmland Preservation

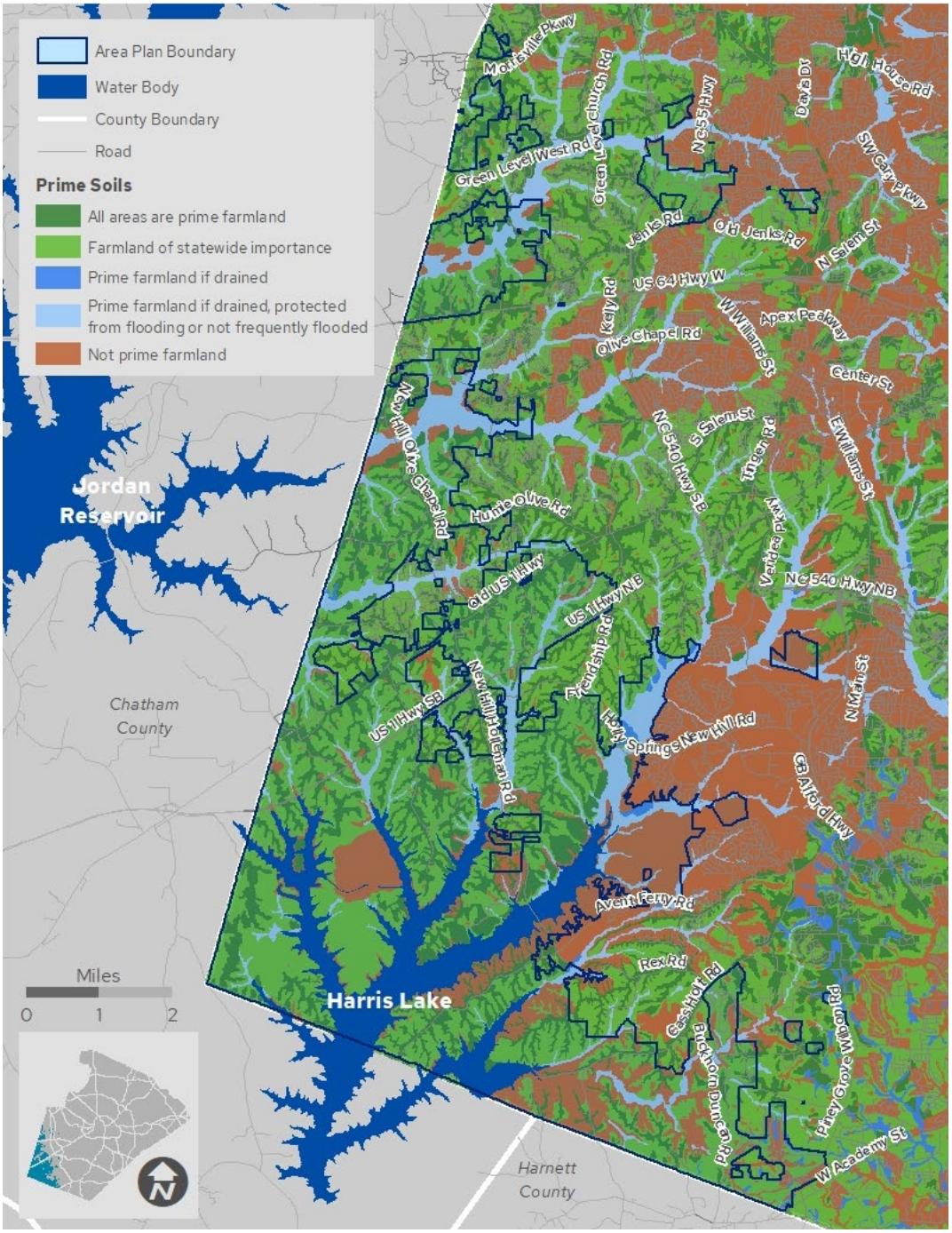
The 2040 Farms Under Threat Report is a multi-year initiative conducted by the American Farmland Trust to document the country's farmland status. The report projected that, at the current rate of development, North Carolina will have lost nearly 1.2 million acres or 11.6% to development between 2016 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.

Prime Farmland

The Prime Farmland map shows varying types of soils in the WW area that are or are not considered prime farmland. In addition, that map shows areas where there is the potential for farmland if the land is drained, or if the land is drained and either protected from flooding or doesn't frequently flood during the growing season.

Prime Soils



Western Wake Farmland and Agriculture

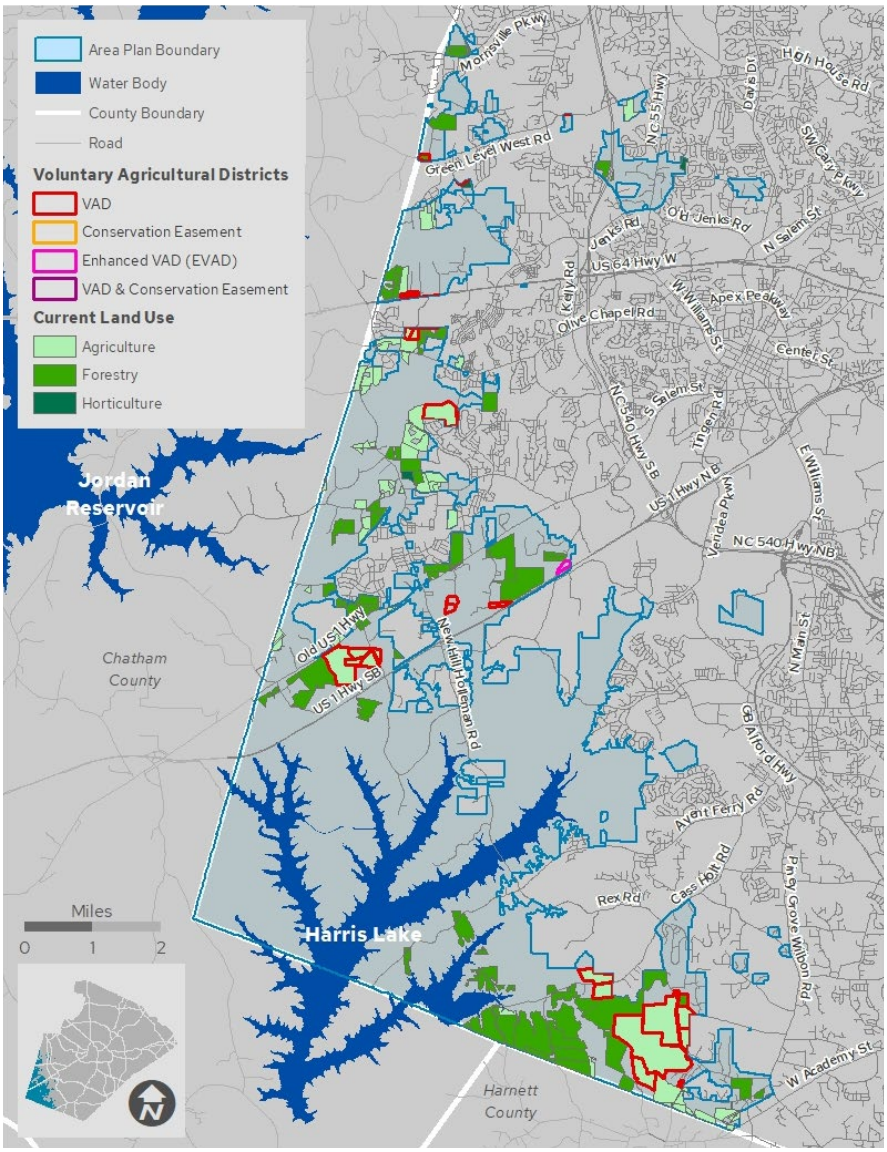
According to the Wake Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) in 2022, there are more than 77,000 acres of farmland and 691 farms in Wake County. In the WW area, there are 1,783 acres on 60 agricultural parcels. In other words, Western Wake is home to approximately 2% of the farmland in all of Wake 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.

Agricultural Lands



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.

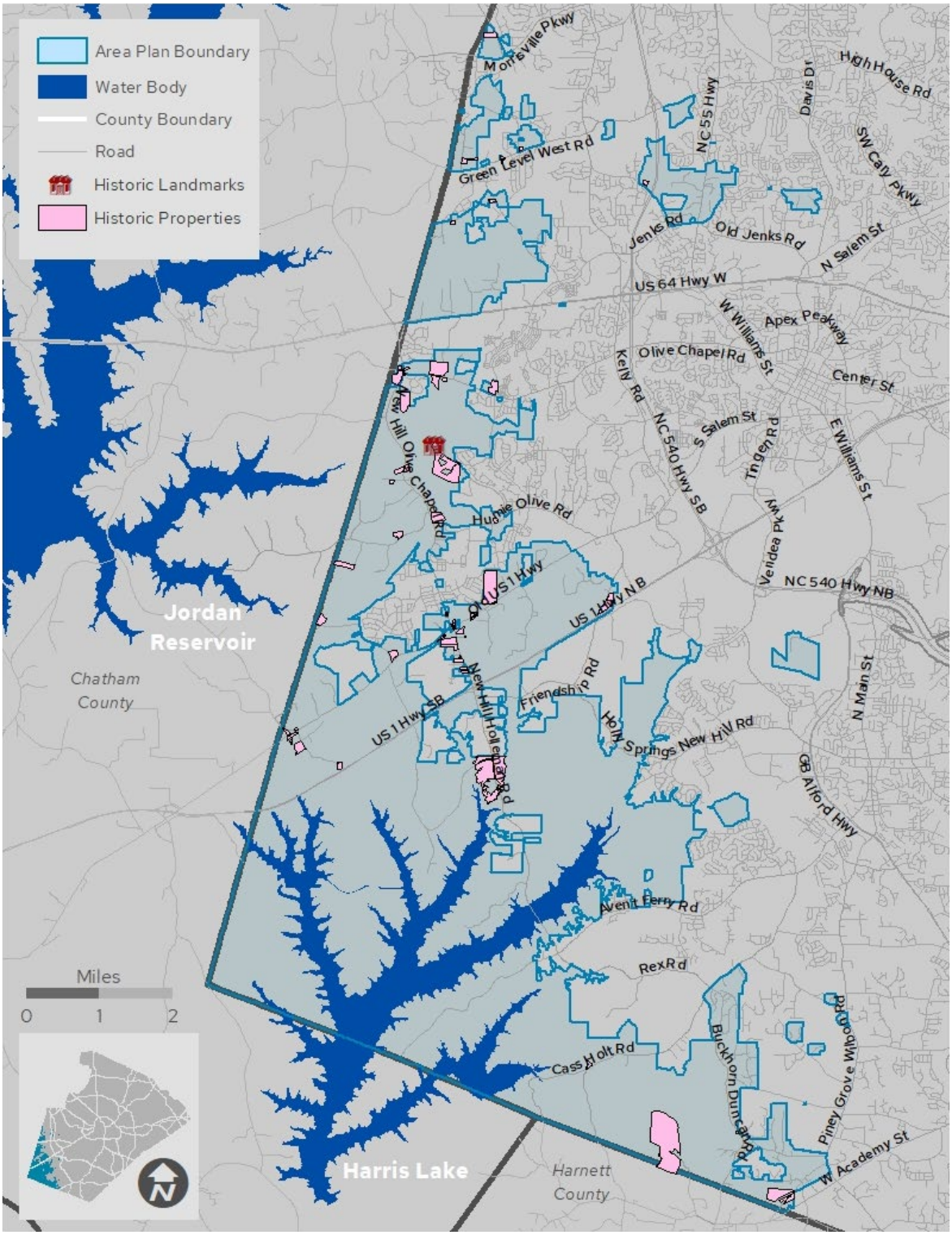
There are six religious institutions cited in the parcel data in the WW area: Cedar Rock Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of New Hill, New Hill Baptist Church, Olive Chapel Baptist Church, Scotts Grove Church and Sweet Spring Methodist Church.

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



SECTION 3
Community Engagement and Outreach

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.

Many community members are often not able to attend an in-person community meeting for many reasons, including childcare, transportation, work or 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.

Online / Virtual Engagement

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.

As in prior area plans, staff utilized an online engagement platform specifically designed for 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.

Wordcloud of Most Upvoted Comments in First Round of Online Engagement



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.

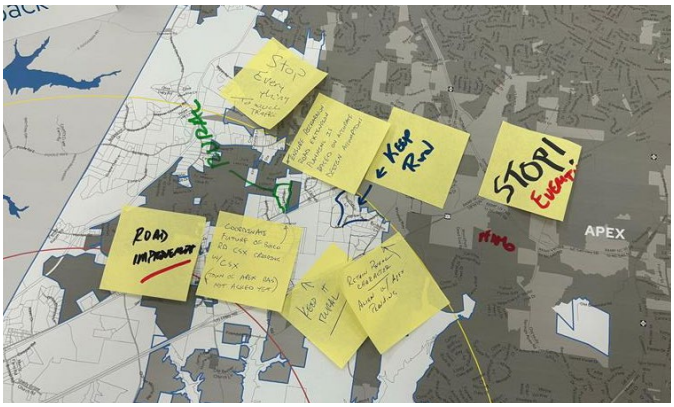
New Hill Community Center



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



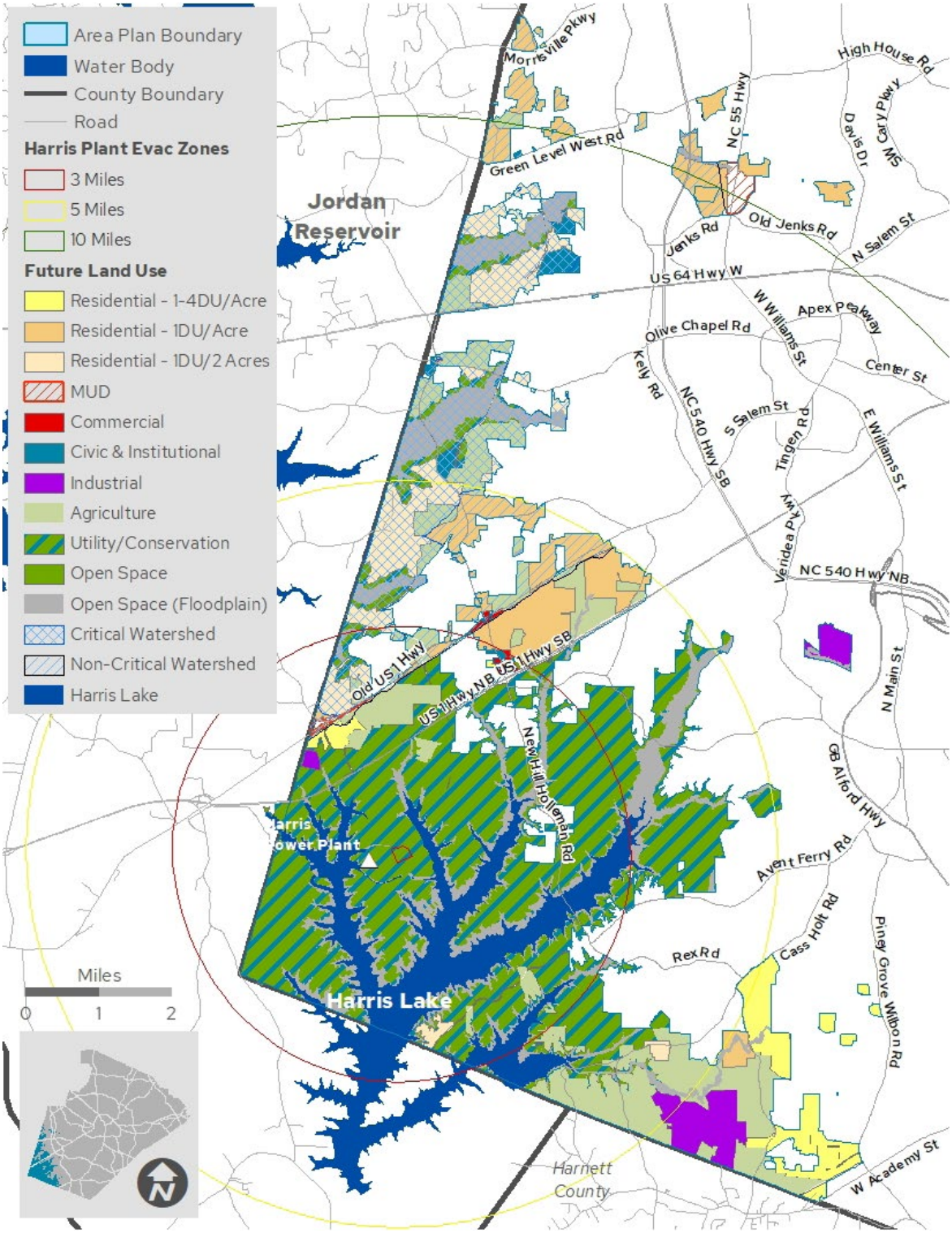


SECTION 4
Western Wake Future Land Use Map

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 Corps 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

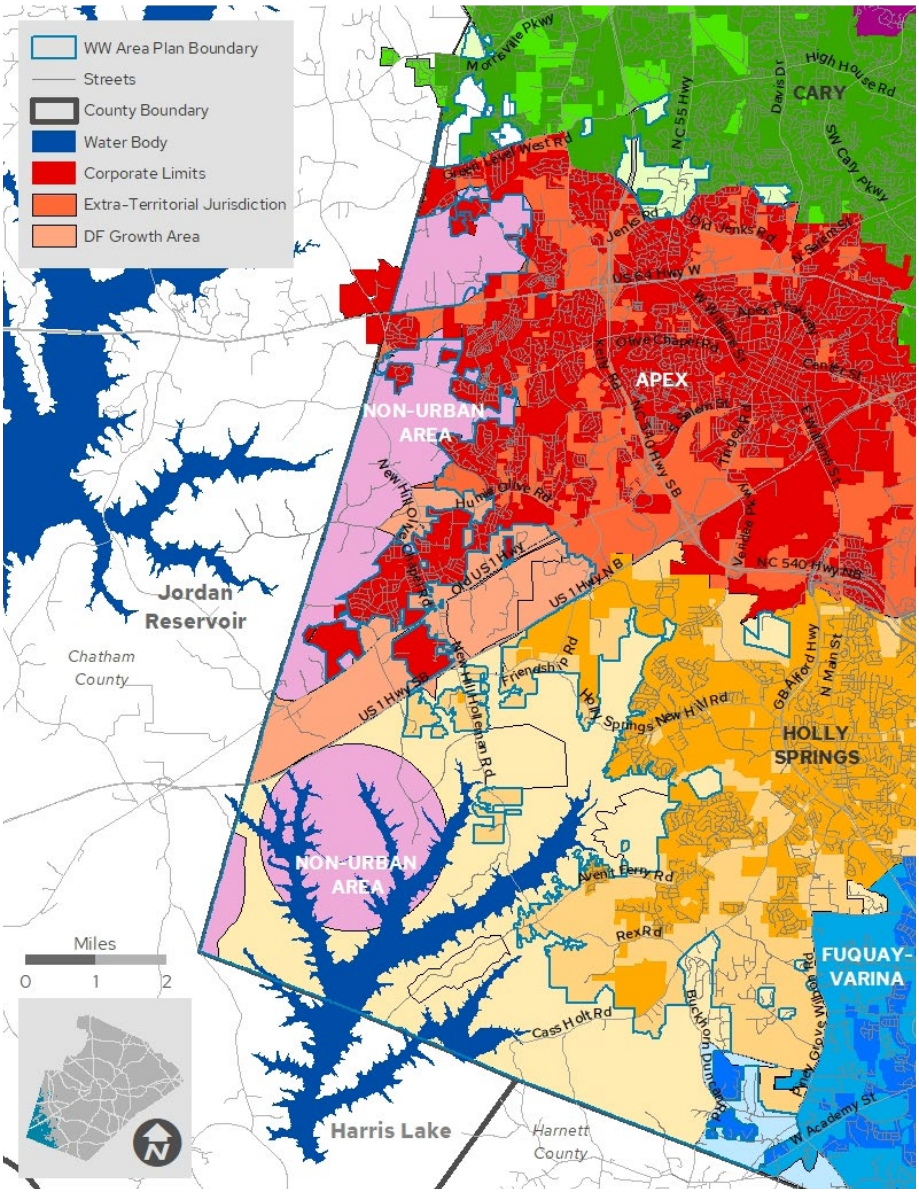


SECTION 5
Additional Planning Elements

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 Planning Jurisdictions



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

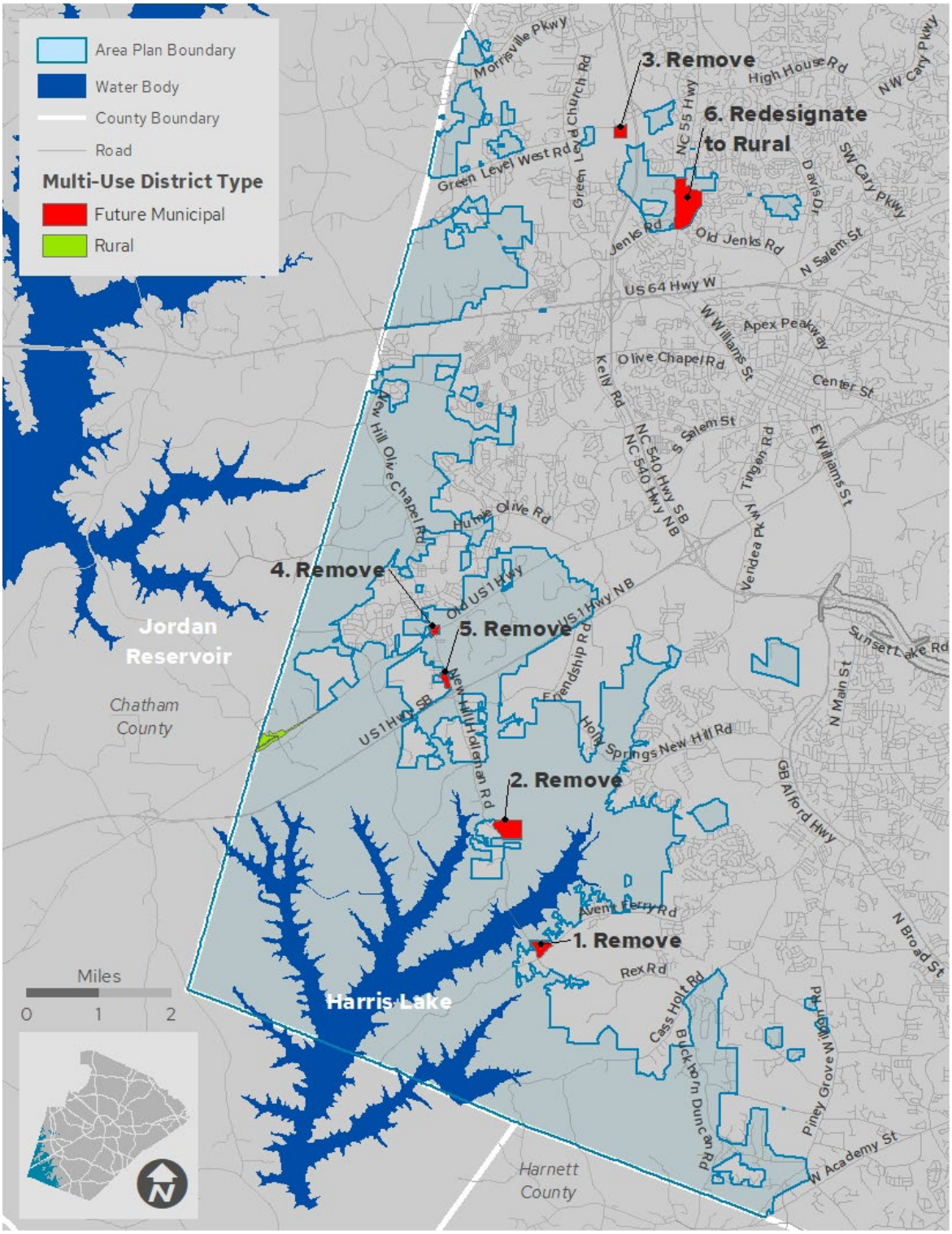
- **Remove** two MUDs with portions that are both in municipal jurisdictions and have been rezoned to a commercial Wake County zoning district.

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.

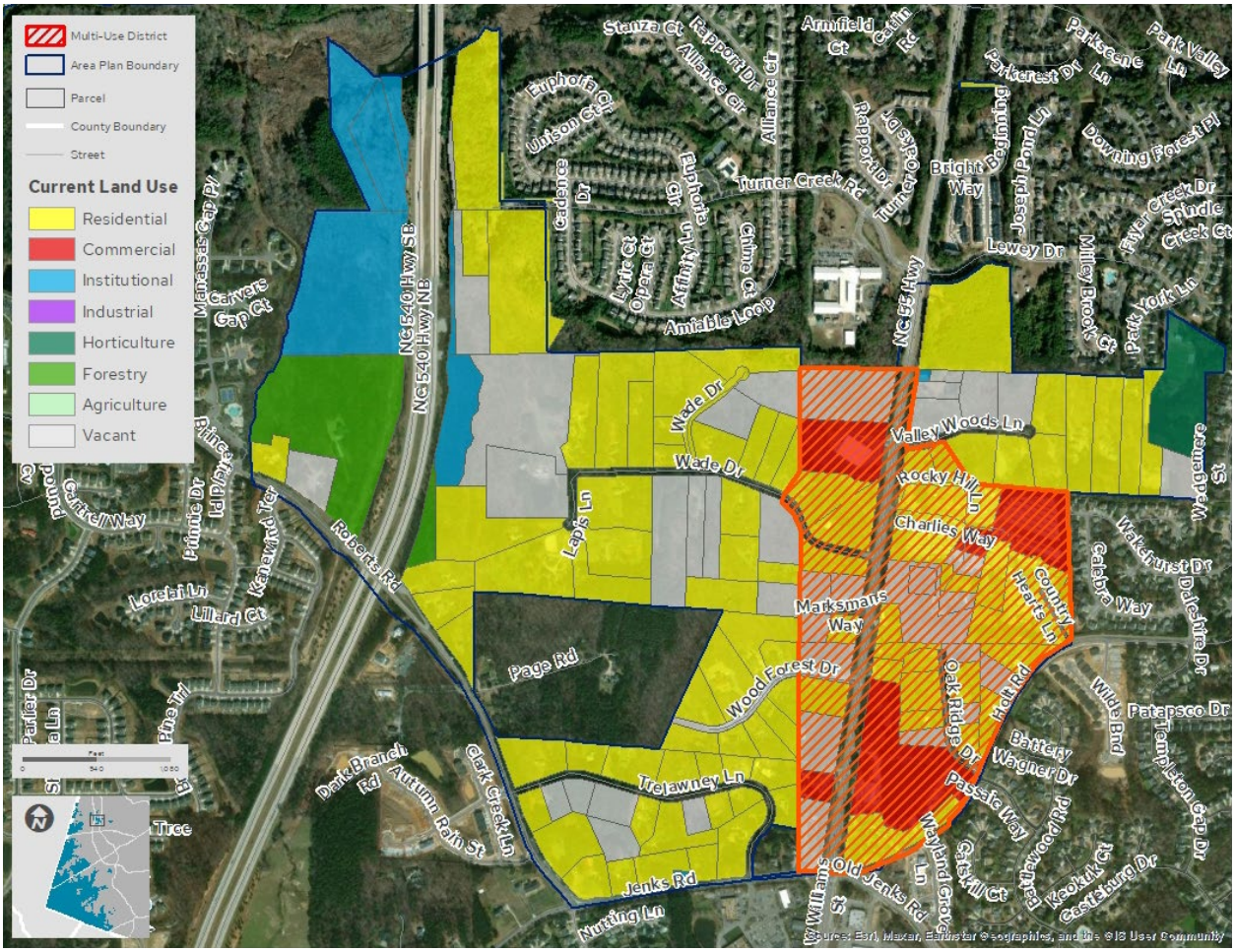
It is currently a mix of residential, commercial and vacant lots. These include single-family homes, a mobile home park, storage facility and a plant nursery.

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.

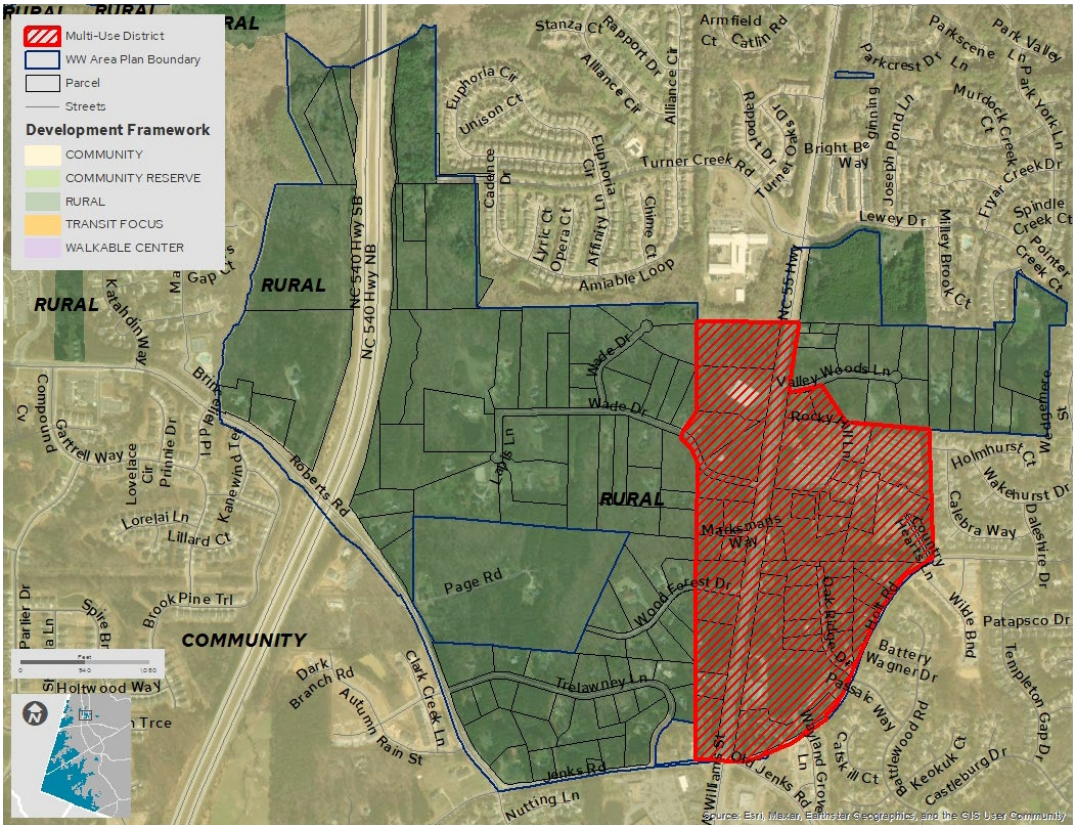
This MUD is currently zoned Highway District (HD), Conditional Use Heavy Commercial (CU-HC) and Residential-40 Watershed (R-40W). While HD is intended to accommodate residential development, it allows several types of nonresidential development with a Special Use Permit approved by the Board of Adjustment. 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.

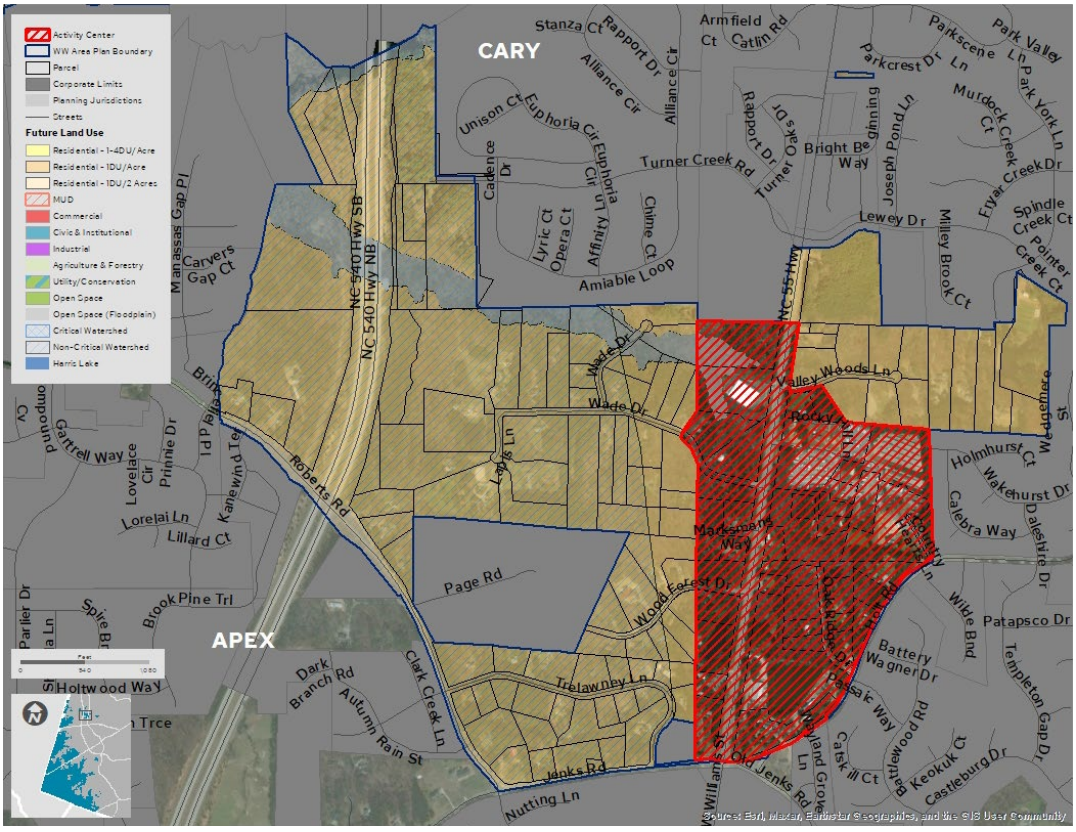
Current Land Use



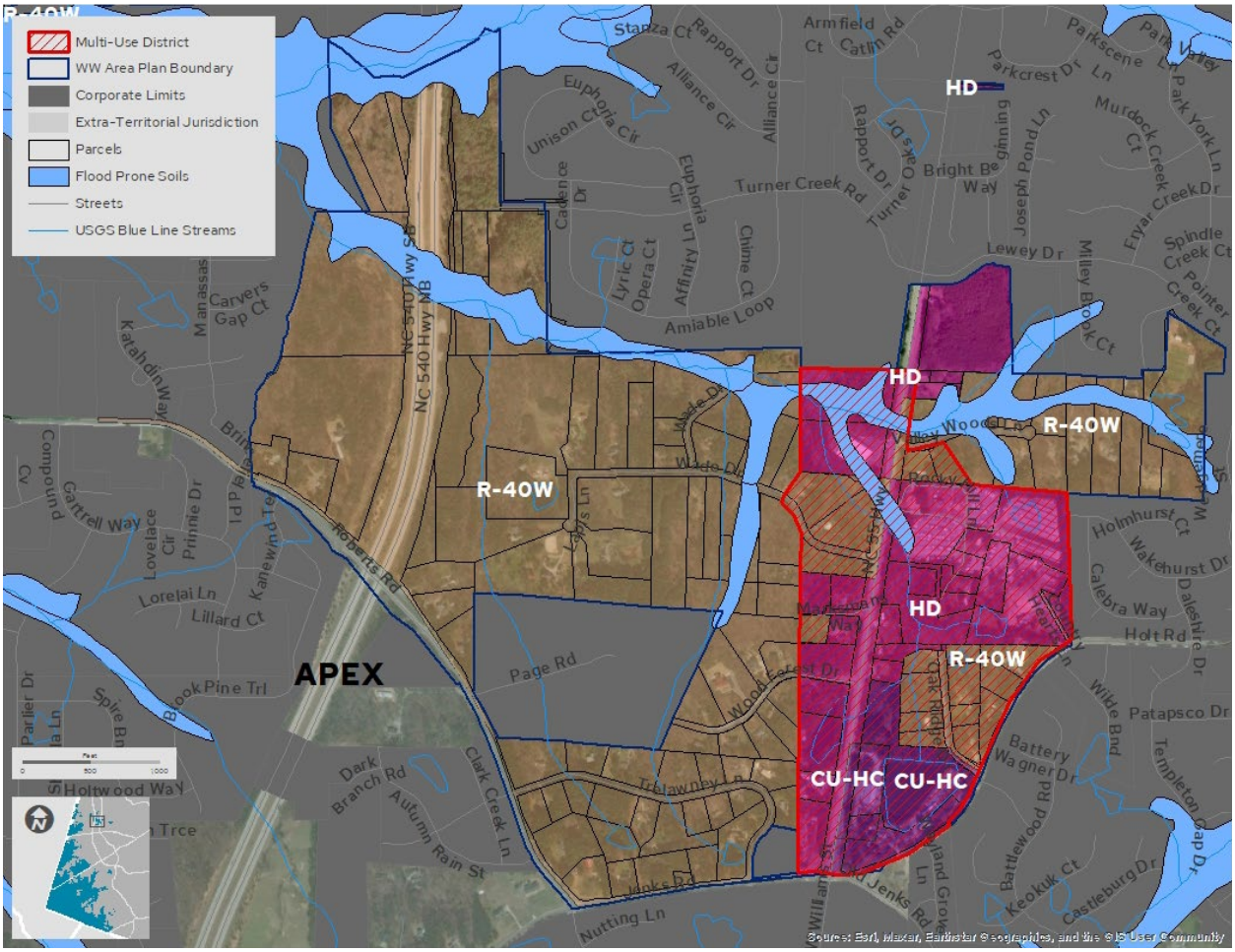
Development Framework



Future Land Use



Zoning


Multi-Use District
WW Area Plan Boundary
Corporate Limits
Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction
Parcels
Flood Prone Soils
Streets
USGS Blue Line Streams
HD
R-40W
CU-HC
APEX
Page Rd
Roberts Rd
Turner Creek Rd
Amiable Loop
Lewey Dr
Holt Rd
Patapsco Dr
Battery Wagner Dr
Battlewood Rd
Keokuk Ct
Castleburg Dr
Nutting Ln
Jenks Rd
Clark Creek Ln
Dark Branch Rd
Autumn Rain St
Holtwood Way
Lillard Ct
Lorelai Ln
Gartrell Way
Carvers Gap Ct
Katahdin Way
Manassas
Stanza Ct
Rapport Dr
Alliance Cir
Euphoria Cir
Unison Ct
Cadence Dr
Lyric Ct
Opera Ct
Affinity Ln
Chime Ct
Armfield Ct
Catlin Rd
Parkcrest Dr
Parkscene Ln
Park Valley
Park York Ln
Murdock Creek Ct
Fryar Creek Dr
Spindle Creek Ct
Pointer Creek Ct
Milley Brook Ct
Joseph Pond Ln
Bright Beginning Way
Turner Oaks Dr
Wade Dr
Lewis Ln
Holmhurst Ct
Wakehurst Dr
Calebra Way
Daleshire Dr
Wilde Bnd
Templeton Gap Dr
Wood Forest Dr
Trelawney Ln
Williams St
Oak Ridge
Lovelace Cir
Prinnie Dr
Kanewind Ter
Brook Pine Trl
Parlier Dr
Spire Bn
Compound Cv
Sources: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

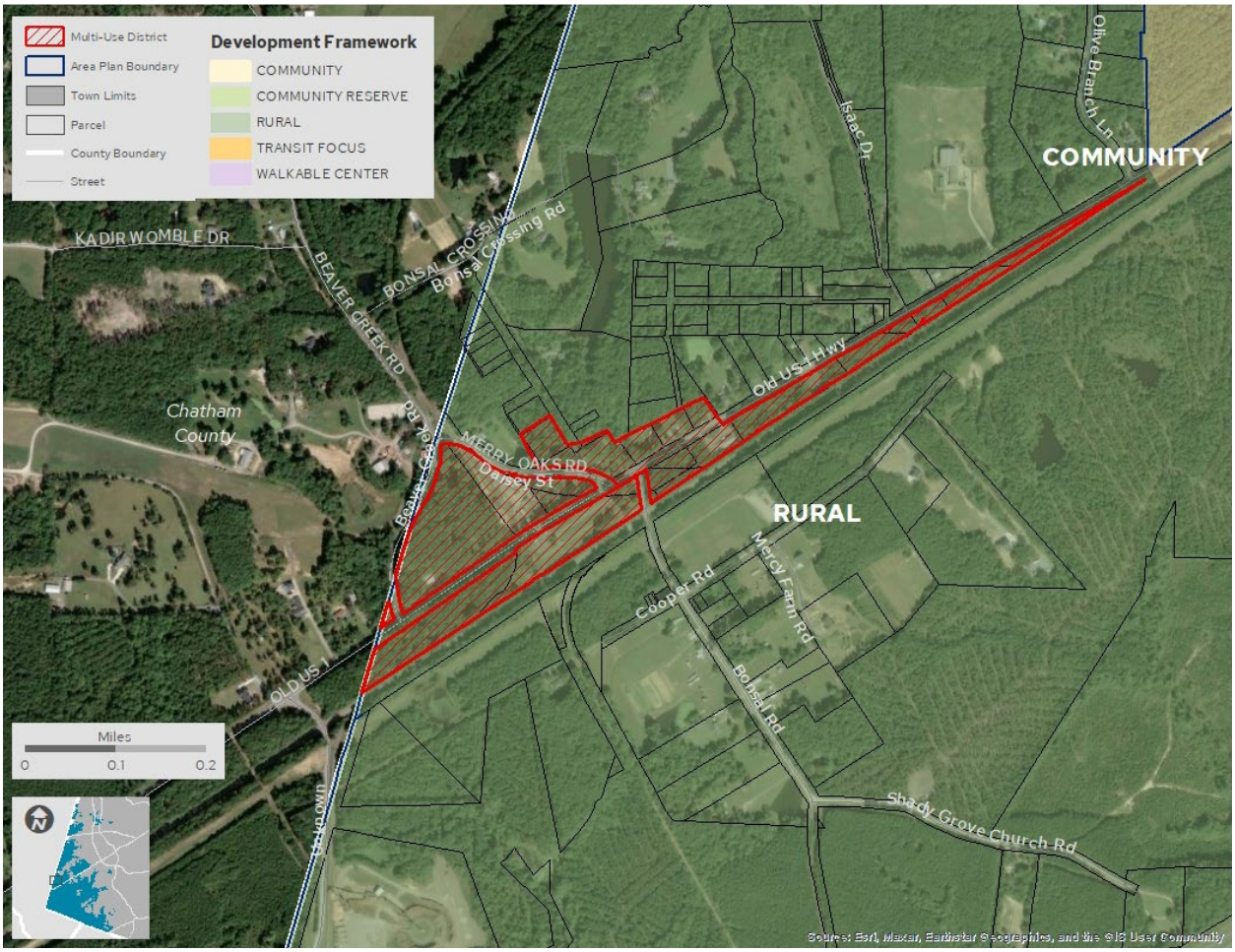
Old US 1 Hwy Multi-Use District

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).

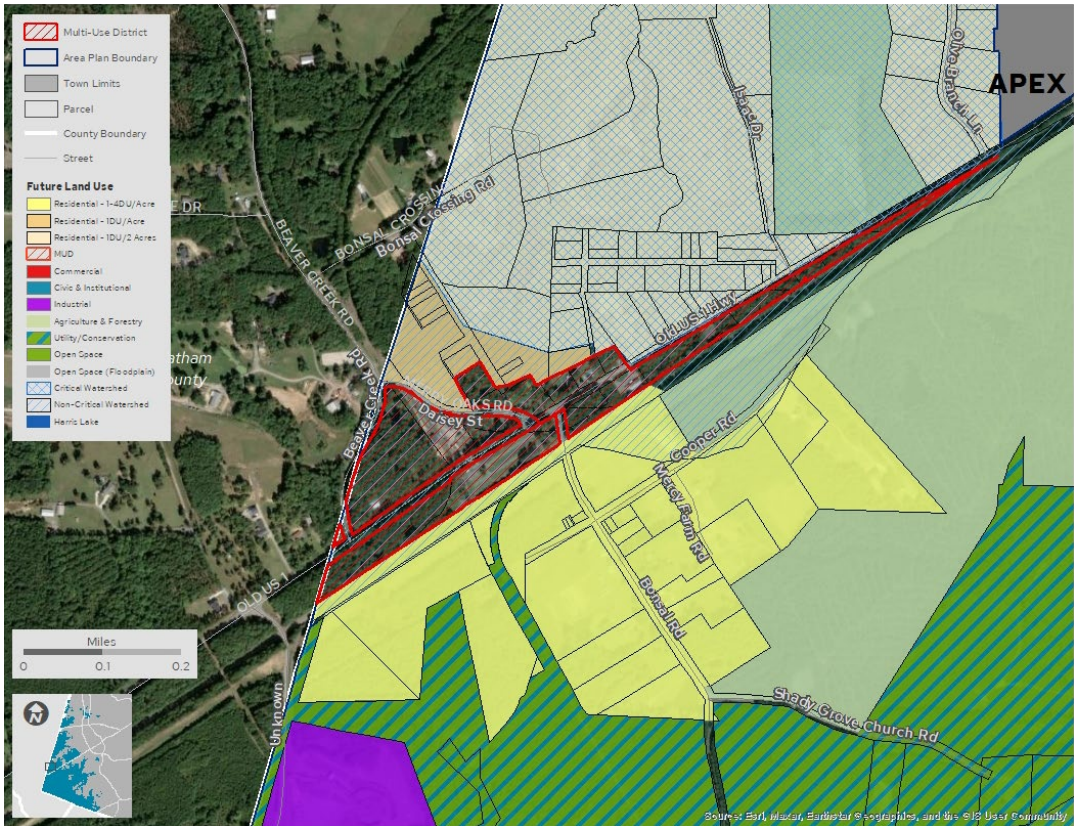
Development Framework



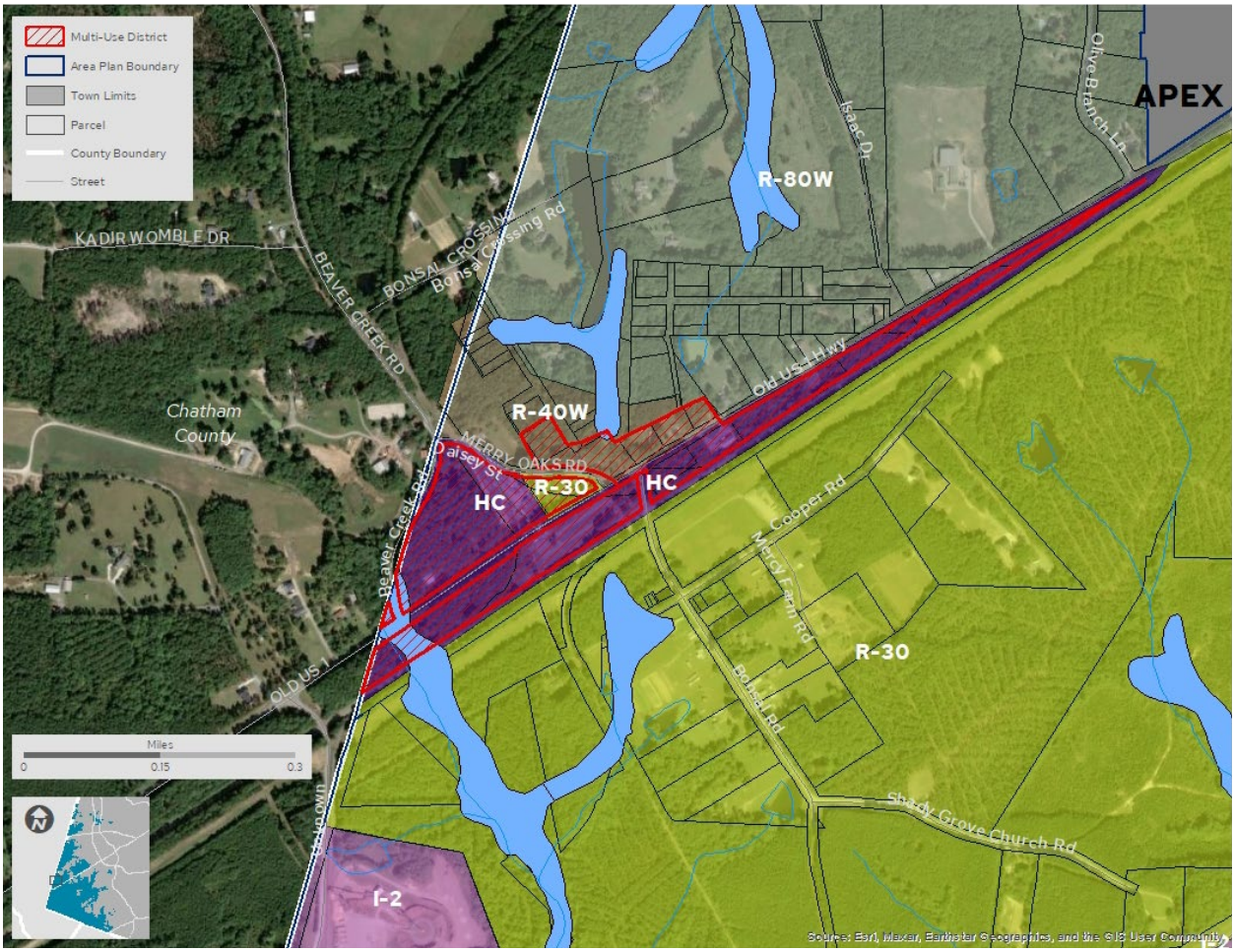
Current Land Use



Future Land Use



Zoning

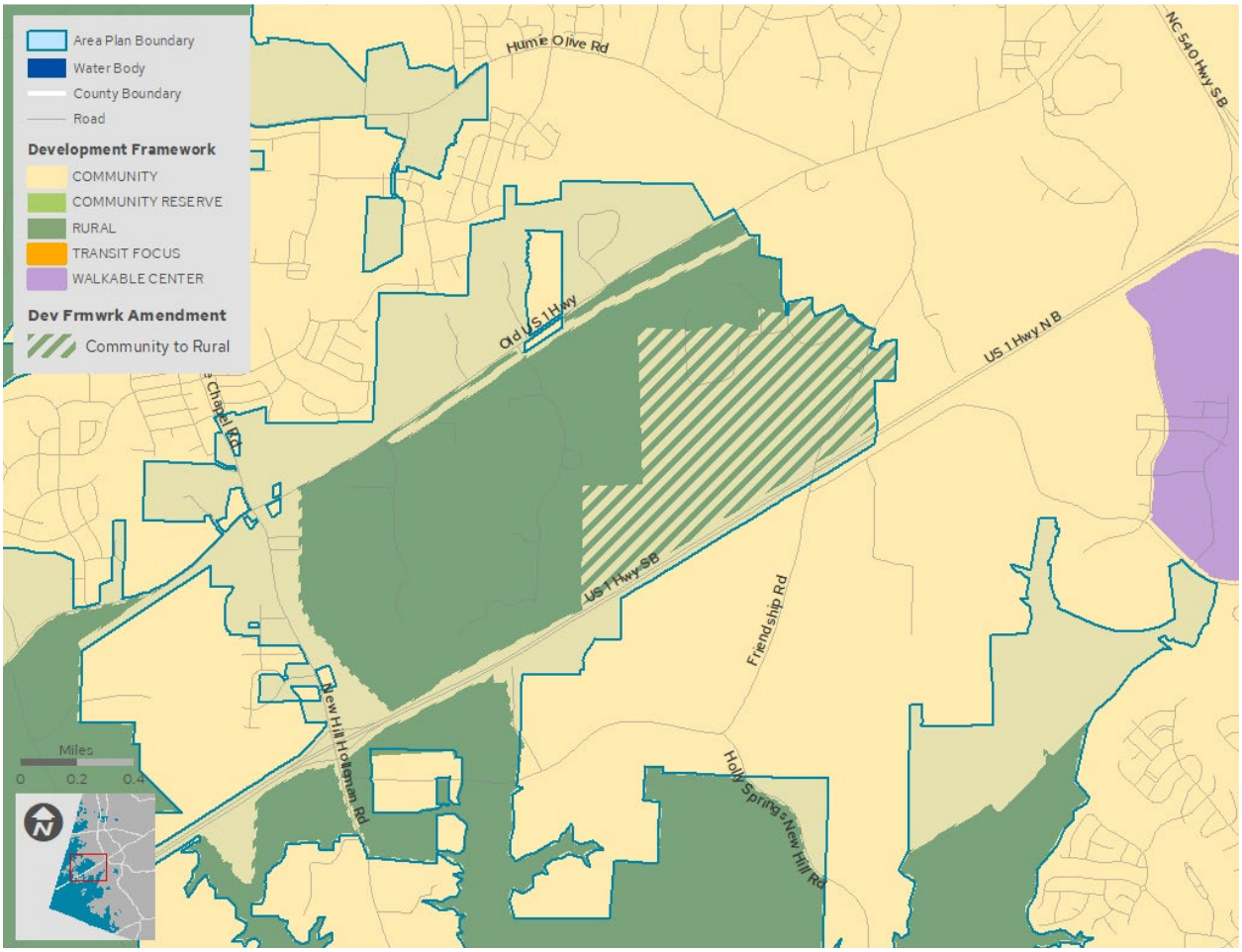

Multi-Use District
Area Plan Boundary
Town Limits
Parcel
County Boundary
Street
APEX
R-80W
R-40W
R-30
HC
HC
I-2
Chatham County
KADIR WOMBLE DR
BEAVER CREEK RD
BONSAL CROSSING
Bonsal Crossing Rd
Isaac Dr
Olive Branch Ln
Old US 1 Hwy
MERRY OAKS RD
Daisey St
Beaver Creek Rd
Cooper Rd
Merry Forth Rd
Bonsal Rd
Shady Grove Church Rd
OLD US 1
Miles
0
0.15
0.3
Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

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.

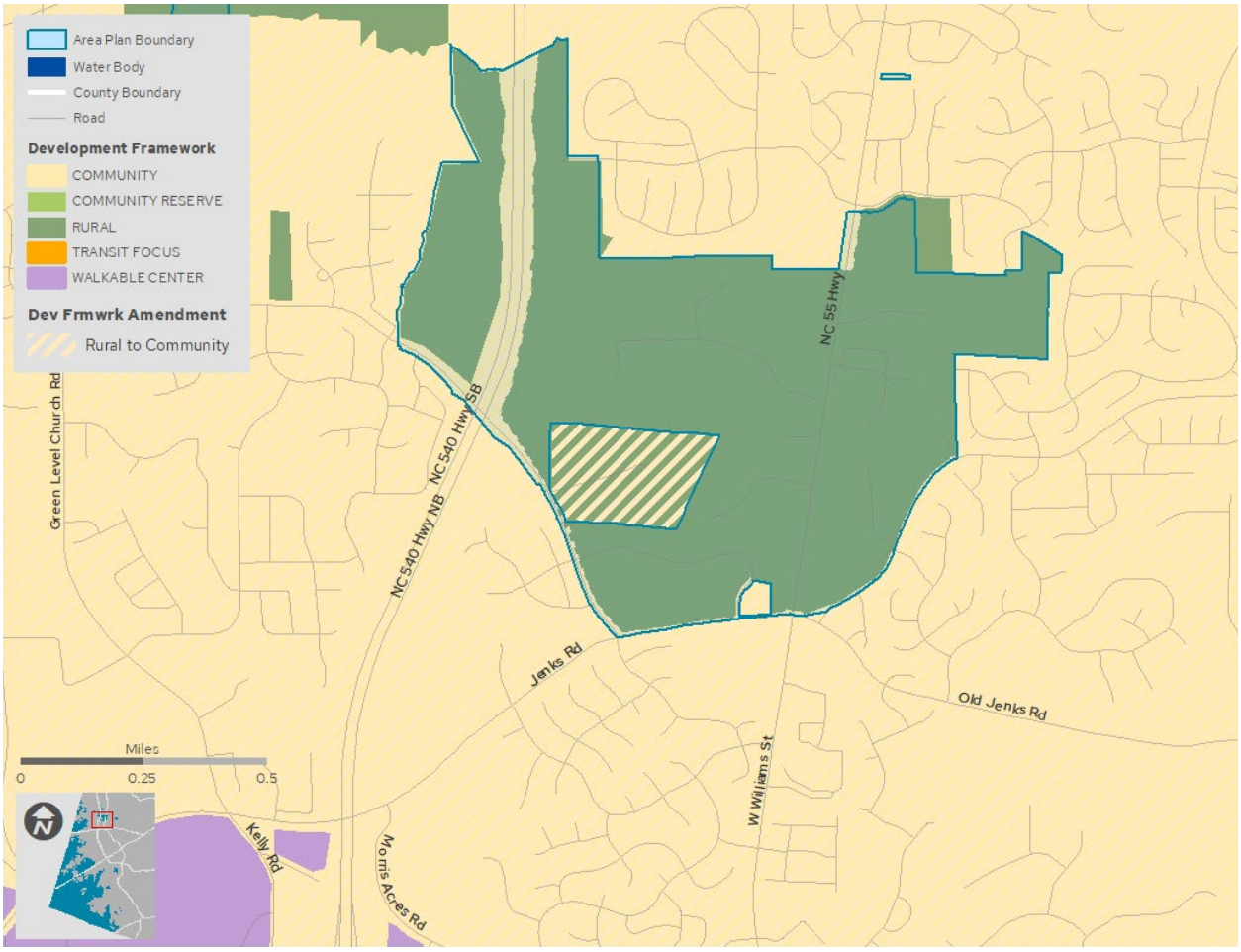
For the WW Area Plan, residents of the New Hill and Friendship communities voiced their concern over the development pressures their neighborhood face. Moreover, the Development Framework map designated much of this area as Community or an area that is envisioned to become municipal in the future should 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

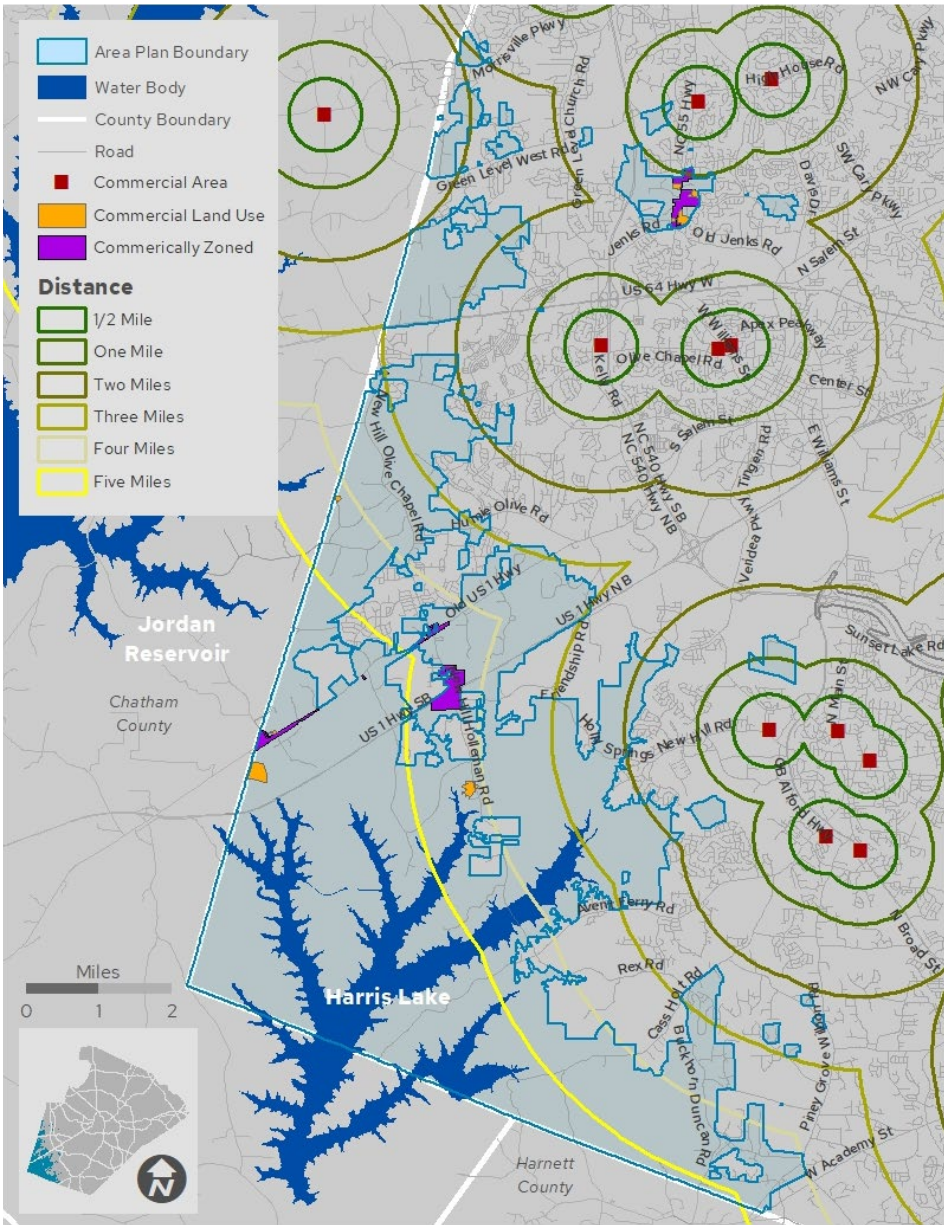


Commercial Area Location Strategy

Overall input from residents suggested that a lack of retail locations within WW was not an issue as a 15-minute drive is part of living in a rural area. However, there should be some discussion as to where such locations could be in the WW area should an opportunity arise in the future.

As the map shows, most of the WW area is at least two miles from the nearest commercial area, including in neighboring Chatham County, and at most more than five miles away. There are various properties within the WW area that are either zoned for a commercial use or are currently operating as a commercial land use. Two of these areas are profiled in the section detailing multi-use districts. To minimize the negative impacts that large-scale commercial developments may cause, there may be some advantages to supporting smaller-scale commercial establishments such as corner stores or local shops to serve the community.

Commercial Area Distances

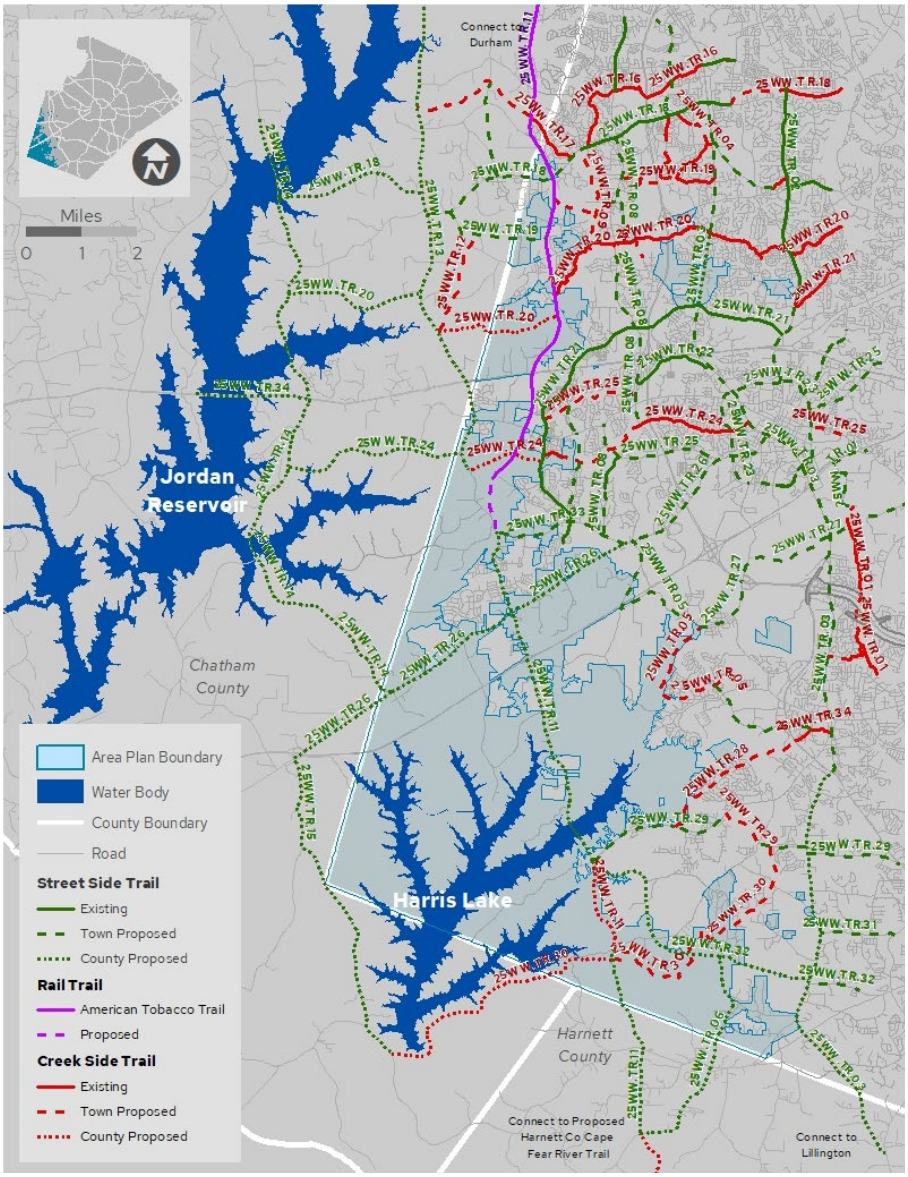


Greenway / Walkability Network

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



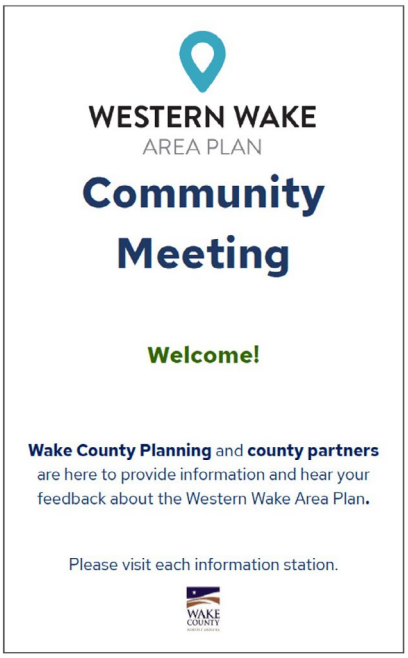
Trail Segment	Common Name	Notes
25WW.TR.01	Middle Creek Greenway	Connects from Apex to Holly Springs. Key connection to major east/west greenway along Middle Creek.
25WW.TR.02	Davis Drive	Connects from Morrisville Parkway to Apex Peakway.
25WW.TR.03	NC 55 / Piney Grove Wilbon	Connects from Morrisville 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.

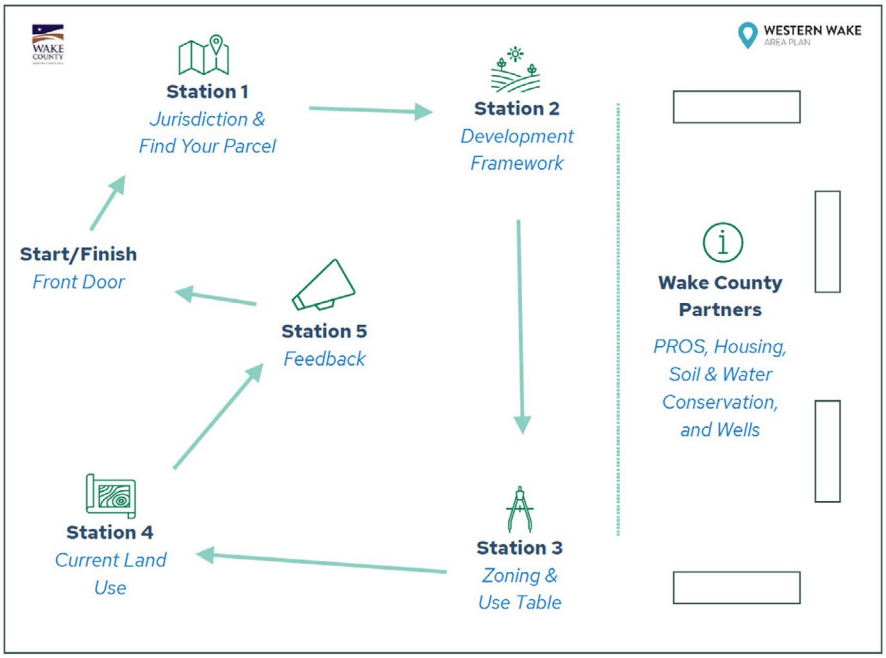
Trail Segment	Common Name	Notes
25WW.TR.21	Jenks / Richardson Road	Connects from Davis Drive to Old US 1.
25WW.TR.22	Beaver Creek Commons	Connects from NC 55 to Kelly Road.
25WW.TR.23	Apex Peakway	Provides a loop around downtown Apex. Links to radial trails.
25WW.TR.24	Beaver Creek Greenway	Connects 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 or rail or both.
25WW.TR.34	US 64 Lake Jordan Crossing	Provides a connection across Jordan Lake east / west.

SECTION 6
Appendix

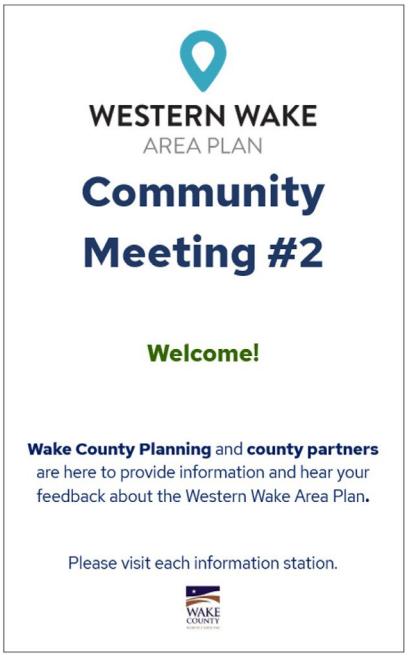
- Community Meeting Booklets

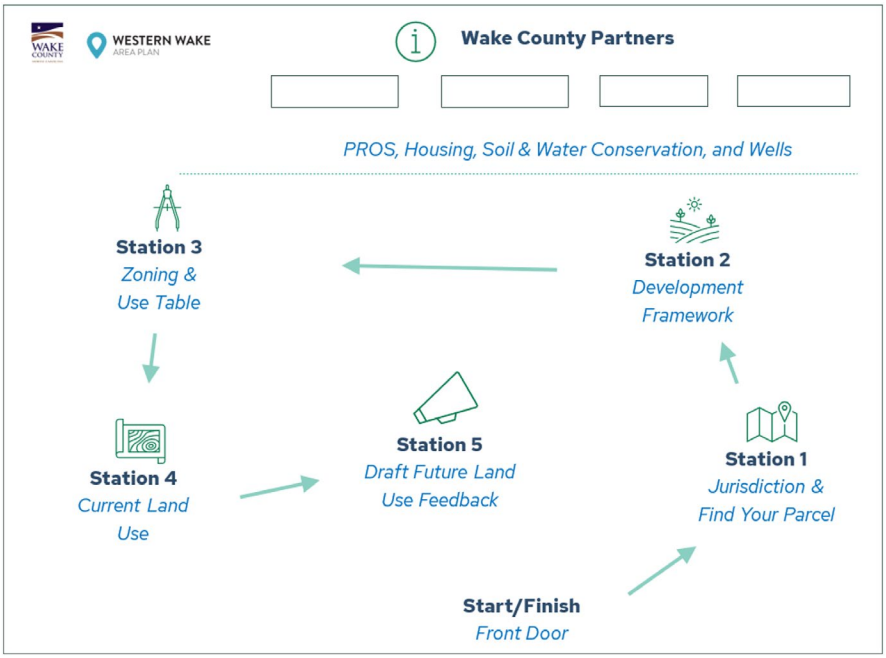







WAKE COUNTY
Thank you for attending this meeting. Your participation and feedback are crucial to the planning process.
WESTERN WAKE
AREA PLAN
For more information and ways to engage:
Email: areaplan@wake.gov
Phone: 919-856-6310, press 8
Website: www.wake.gov/ww


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.
WAKE COUNTY


WAKE COUNTY
WESTERN WAKE AREA PLAN
Wake County Partners
PROS, Housing, Soil & Water Conservation, and Wells
Station 3
Zoning & Use Table
Station 2
Development Framework
Station 4
Current Land Use
Station 5
Draft Future Land Use Feedback
Station 1
Jurisdiction & Find Your Parcel
Start/Finish
Front Door

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT 02-24 TO INCORPORATE THE WESTERN WAKE AREA PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK MAP AMENDMENT INTO THE WAKE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, PLANWAKE

WHEREAS, the Wake County Board of Commissioners adopted the Wake County Comprehensive Plan on March 22, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the area plans that carried over from the old Wake County Land Use Plan to PLANWake need to be updated; and

WHEREAS, Wake County staff have updated the Western Wake Area Plan and initiated the amendment request; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment to the Development Framework map reflects the recommendations of the Western Wake Area Plan; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment provides an update to the existing area plan policies and land use designations within the area plan's boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment solicited community engagement throughout the process; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment incorporates input from the adjacent municipalities since portions of this area plan are within their future growth area; and

WHEREAS, the proposed land use plan amendment is consistent with the Wake County Comprehensive Plan policies and goals; and

WHEREAS, on December 4, 2024, the Wake County Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend that the Board of Commissioners adopt the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment 02-24; and

WHEREAS, the Wake County Board of Commissioners held a duly-noticed public hearing to consider amending the Wake County Comprehensive Plan as proposed; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE WAKE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS THAT:

The proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment 02-24 is found to be consistent with the Wake County Comprehensive Plan and to otherwise promote the public health, safety, and general welfare, and the Wake County Comprehensive Plan is hereby amended as follows:

1. Adopt the Western Wake Area Plan as an amendment to the Wake County Comprehensive Plan.

2. Amend the Development Framework map to reclassify 383 acres of Community to Rural classification.

3. Amend the Development Framework map to reclassify 36 acres from Rural to Community classification.

Adopted this 6th day of January, 2025.

ATTEST:

Antoinette H. Womack

~~Yvonne Gilyard, Clerk to the Board~~

ANTOINETTE H. WOMACK
DEPUTY CLERK to The Board

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR
THE COUNTY OF WAKE

Matthew M. Calabria, Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Scott h. Warren

Scott Warren, County Attorney