

# GUIDING GUILFORD

*Moving Forward Together*

## GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

DRAFT | APRIL 2025

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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**Thank you to everyone in the community for your participation, time and contributions!**

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# DEFINITIONS

**Agritourism:** Any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, ranching, historic, cultural, harvest-your-own activities or attractions. A building or structure used for agritourism includes any building or structure used for public or private events that are taking place on the farm because of its farm or rural setting.

## **Area Plans and Small Area**

**Plans:** These Plans identify a set of specific goals and strategies for specific geographic areas and serve to guide decisions about the physical development of the county. Guilford County has 9 Area Plans and 1 Small Area Plan, illustrated in [Map 3](#).

**Attainable Housing:** Attainable housing refers to unsubsidized housing that is affordable to middle-income households.

## **Community Benefits**

**Agreement:** A Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) is a contract between developers and host municipalities and/or local community groups that aims to mitigate local impacts of large development projects.

## **Census-Designated Place**

**(CDP):** Statistical geography representing closely settled, unincorporated communities that are locally recognized and identified by name.

**Complete Streets:** Complete Streets is a process and approach to planning, designing, and

building streets that enables safe access for all users, regardless of mode, age, or ability.

## **Comprehensive Plan:**

A Comprehensive Plan is a visionary strategic planning document, required by state law (NCGS 160D), used for land use policy related decisions and priorities.

## **Context Sensitive**

**Infrastructure:** Infrastructure that is developed in a way that is reflective of and sensitive to the surrounding area characteristics, rather than developed with only functionality in mind. Context sensitivity can better integrate community vision and values into infrastructure, such as streets and sidewalks.

**Equity:** The recognition that each person has a different set of circumstances, and resources should be allocated based on the goal of creating more equal outcomes across different groups and individuals.

## **Extra-territorial Jurisdiction**

**(ETJ):** Extra-territorial jurisdiction refers to a government exercising authority outside its legal boundaries. In North Carolina, cities can exercise their power over a defined area up to 1-2 miles outside the legal limits depending on the population of the city.

**Heat Island:** Urbanized areas that experience higher temperatures than outlying areas due to the impact of structures such as buildings and roads, which absorb and re-emit the sun's heat more than natural landscapes.

**Mega Site:** A Mega Site is an area of land larger than 1,000 acres in size intended for industrial-scale development and to promote business clusters. There is a Mega Site located in Liberty, NC, just south of the Guilford County line accessed from Highway 421, that is being developed as a Toyota battery plant.

## **Missing Middle Housing:**

A term that refers to creating a spectrum of housing types that are typically absent from more recent housing development. Is a range of medium-density multi-family units – from duplexes to cottage units to apartments – that can provide housing opportunities that are in scale with single-family neighborhoods but can house more people and are often at a lower, more attainable price point.

**Special District:** A Special District is a governmental organization separate from other jurisdictional bodies that performs a specific function or set of functions, like providing emergency services or utilities.

**Tax Increment Financing:** Tax Increment Financing (TIF) creates a redevelopment district in which infrastructure improvements and/or project developments are financed based upon an anticipated future increase in property values.

## **Unified Development**

**Ordinance:** A Unified Development Ordinance, or UDO, is a regulatory document adopted by local governments to guide development. A UDO identifies the limitations and allowances for

development. Guilford County last updated the UDO in 2020.

**Viticulture:** Land that is primarily used for the cultivation or culture of grapes especially for winemaking.

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Our Vision: Rooted in rich history, Guilford County is a welcoming and increasingly diverse community featuring rural landscapes, working farms, thriving businesses, and healthy neighborhoods. The County will foster a resilient and vibrant future by promoting sustainable and responsible development patterns, supporting innovative businesses, facilitating a variety of housing types, and protecting a unique culture so that it can be enjoyed and appreciated by all.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Photo source: Design Workshop

## BACKGROUND

In 2023, Guilford County embarked on a journey to define its future, resulting in the updated Guiding Guilford Comprehensive Plan. This Plan was developed through extensive community outreach and engagement that invited residents, workers, and visitors to come together and articulate a shared vision - rooted in rich history, Guilford County is a welcoming and increasingly diverse and inclusive community featuring rural landscapes, working farms, thriving businesses, and healthy

neighborhoods. This vision is supported by guiding principles, planning themes, and a future land use framework that provide foundational policies to guide future land use and growth decisions.

These elements of the Guiding Guilford Comprehensive Plan were informed by a multi-phased engagement process. Through virtual focus groups, a Community Pulse Survey, and in-person and virtual workshops, the community

expressed key priorities and concerns to shape the plan's direction.

The Comprehensive Plan has a long range view and supports the County in policy and program development into the future. Guiding Guilford has a 15-20 year view, and provides guidance for the County and partners on policies, programs, and codes to support the community's vision.

Key themes that emerged from community engagement

included increasing housing options, preserving agricultural heritage, improving transportation access, and balancing economic development with environmental stewardship. Additionally, the community underscored the importance of equitable access to services, protection of natural resources, and support for diverse housing and mixed-use development.

## THEMES:

**Community Character:** The plan celebrates Guilford County's unique sense of place by striking a balance between agricultural preservation and thoughtful development patterns. Through context-sensitive site design and inclusive placemaking, the county aims to preserve its cultural heritage while accommodating responsible growth.

**Attainable Housing:** Guilford County prioritizes the creation and retention of a diverse range of housing options to meet the needs of all residents. Emphasizing safety and sustainable design, the county seeks to ensure that housing is accessible and of high quality.

**Resilient Economy:** The plan advocates for a sustainable economy that nurtures partnerships, supports small businesses, and incentivizes the retention of farmland. By creating an environment conducive to job growth and retention, Guilford County seeks to attract businesses and talent, ensuring long-term economic prosperity.

**Diversified Transportation and Mobility:** Collaboration with transportation authorities is key to ensuring safe and efficient transportation infrastructure. By providing access to multiple modes of travel, Guilford County aims to connect strategic areas while promoting accessibility and reducing congestion.

**Equitable Services Distribution:** Land use decisions will prioritize equitable access to essential services such as healthcare, education, and recreation. Guilford County is committed to ensuring that all residents have convenient access to amenities that enhance quality of life and promote well-being.

**Protected Natural Environment and Greenspace:** Preservation of natural resources is paramount to Guilford County's identity. By managing soil erosion, stormwater, and conservation programs, the county aims to safeguard its rich biodiversity and scenic landscapes, providing residents with ample green spaces to enjoy and explore.

**Quality and Context-Sensitive Infrastructure:** Collaboration with external agencies is essential to developing a resilient and coordinated infrastructure system. Guilford County is committed to providing high-quality services that adapt to evolving community needs, enhancing the overall quality of life for its residents.

The goals and strategies outlined in this document will enable the County to realize its vision and foster a resilient and vibrant future. The plan serves as a guiding framework for decision-making. It provides a roadmap for prioritizing funding and policies while keeping a steadfast focus on the community's values and aspirations.

As Guilford County evolves, the plan underscores the need for adaptability, recognizing that certain elements may require adjustment over time to address emerging challenges and opportunities. While the core principles remain constant, flexibility ensures the plan remains relevant and responsive to evolving needs. The Guiding Guilford Comprehensive Plan reflects the aspirations of Guilford County's residents and serves as a collective commitment to plan responsibly for its future.

# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

## GOAL STATEMENT

Celebrate Guilford County's unique sense of place by balancing agricultural preservation with desired development patterns, context-sensitive site design and inclusive placemaking.



## COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE

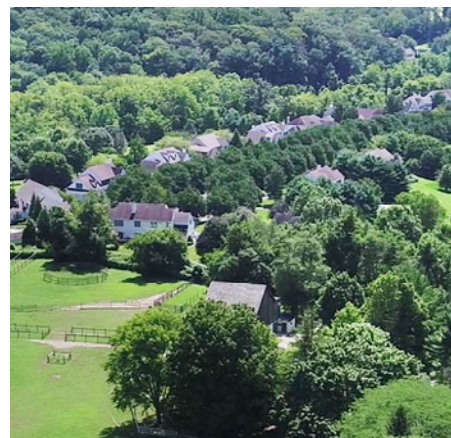
In the Northeast and Southeast portions of the County, preservation and protection of agricultural land uses were among the top priorities indicated for the future.



**POLICY 1:** Continue to document historic resources and increase the visibility of historic preservation program.

**POLICY 2:** Celebrate cultural resources and continue to invest in the arts.

**POLICY 3:** Prioritize high-quality design and distinctive character in new development and redevelopment, recognizing variations across Guilford County.



## NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

Actions are the specific implementation items that the County can take to realize the planning theme goal and policies. The actions below are the actions recommended within 1-3 years or that are ongoing. The Action Playbook chapter of the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan describes the full list of actions recommended.

### POLICY 1: Continue to document historic resources and increase the visibility of historic preservation program.

- ✓ ACTION C 1.1 Continue to designate historic resources that are eligible for the National Register, including architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources.
- ✓ ACTION C 1.2 Evaluate means to strengthen the County's landmark designation process and consider adopting a Preservation of Demolition by Neglect Ordinance outlining standards and best practices to prevent demolition of historic resources by neglect.
- ✓ ACTION C 1.3 Explore additional financial and development incentives that will provide assistance for private property owners to preserve or rehabilitate historic structures and spaces.
- ✓ ACTION C 1.4 Incentivize restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of designated local landmark and National Register properties through expedited permit review, or through regulatory reliefs for site planning such as parking reductions or reduced setbacks. Encourage evaluations of Certificates of Appropriateness and conducting site visits for building permits to ensure compliance.
- ✓ ACTION C 1.5 Continue to use outreach campaigns, websites, publications, and educational forums to increase public awareness and appreciation of Guilford County's rich historic and cultural traditions.
- ✓ ACTION C 1.6 Fund an updated historic architectural resources survey.

### POLICY 2: Celebrate cultural resources and continue to invest in the arts.

- ✓ ACTION C 2.1 Support the installation of public art on County-owned properties.
- ✓ ACTION C 2.2 Continue to support community cultural festivals, performances, and events to celebrate diversity within Guilford County.
- ✓ ACTION C 2.3 Encourage collaborations among businesses, artists, educators, and the technology sector to promote cross-sector innovation.
- ✓ ACTION C 2.4 Work with stakeholders and community members to incorporate policies for diverse and inclusive public art and cultural expression throughout Guilford County.

### POLICY 3: Prioritize high-quality design and distinctive character in new development and redevelopment, recognizing variations across Guilford County.

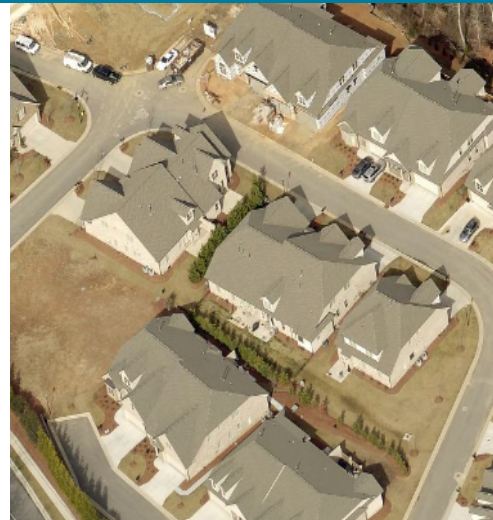
- ✓ ACTION C 3.1 Explore the use of character-based pattern books, design guidelines and manuals, or a hybrid approach to establish intended character and design elements for different Place Types as identified on the FLUM.
- ✓ ACTION C 3.2 Focus on creating active, walkable, and universally accessible public realms in all new Activity Centers. Incentivize existing Activity Centers and private developments to retrofit accessibility features.
- ✓ ACTION C 3.3 Encourage the design of new development that is compatible with historic structures and landscapes to both maintain a sense of place and highlight historic integrity.
- ✓ ACTION C 3.4 Support existing and implement new policies that prioritize preservation of farmland, as further outlined in Resilient Economy Policy 4.
- ✓ ACTION C 3.5 Update the Liberty Road/ Woody Mill Small Area Plan.



# ATTAINABLE HOUSING

## GOAL STATEMENT

Focus on supporting the creation and retention of a diverse range of housing types to accommodate all residents while emphasizing safety and high-quality, sustainable design.



## COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE

Housing affordability was the #1 response when asked “What would you most like to improve about Guilford County to promote a higher quality of life”



**POLICY 1:** Enable the creation of new housing units that will provide a diverse mix of housing types that meet the needs of residents.

**POLICY 2:** Enable housing creation and preservation throughout Guilford County that is attainable and accessible for all income levels.



BEFORE

AFTER

**POLICY 3:** Update policies to maintain housing affordability in existing units throughout Guilford County.

**POLICY 4:** Encourage the preservation, maintenance, and development of high-quality and safe housing.

## NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

Actions are the specific implementation items that the County can take to realize the planning theme goal and policies. The actions below are the actions recommended within 1-3 years or that are ongoing. The Action Playbook chapter of the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan describes the full list of actions recommended.

### POLICY 1: Enable the creation of new housing units that will provide a diverse mix of housing types that meet the needs of residents.

- ✓ ACTION H 1.1 Support residential development in and near Activity Centers, consistent with the Future Land Use Map.
- ✓ ACTION H 1.2 Update the UDO to provide an administrative review path for attainable housing development located in Activity Centers.
- ✓ ACTION H 1.3 Encourage housing opportunities that support existing and new agricultural operations. This could include use of the USDA Farm Labor Housing Loan and Grant opportunities, or the addition of housing facilities for farm workers.

### POLICY 2: Enable housing creation and preservation throughout Guilford County that is attainable for all income levels.

- ✓ ACTION H 2.1 Work with municipalities, homebuilders and developers to support a range of housing development types that meet the needs of different socioeconomic groups.
- ✓ ACTION H 2.2 Continue to work with non-profit and private-sector housing partners to identify funding, through sources like the HOME program, that can assist low- and moderate-income households with the rent and/or purchase of a home and find innovative solutions for expanding housing choices and availability county-wide.

### POLICY 3: Update policies to maintain housing affordability in existing units throughout Guilford County.

- ✓ ACTION H 3.1 Continue to allow the creation of accessory dwelling units and live/work units in areas that are currently developed and have access to reliable sources of water and sanitation facilities.
- ✓ ACTION H 3.2 Continue to use HOME allocation funds for down payment assistance.

### POLICY 4: Update policies to maintain housing affordability in existing units throughout Guilford County.

- ✓ ACTION H 4.1 Work with partners to complete training for home builders on the land development and building permit processes, including education on how to integrate materials that are durable and long-lasting into new developments.
- ✓ ACTION H 4.2 Create updated forms and informational handouts to explain applicable review processes and opportunities for financial incentives or support, and to encourage the private sector to create and preserve high-quality housing units.
- ✓ ACTION H 4.3 Continue to use funding sources such as the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME) and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to maintain and rehabilitate substandard housing and create new attainable housing.

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# RESILIENT ECONOMY

## GOAL STATEMENT

Promote a healthy, sustainable economy that fosters partnerships, supports small business, incentivizes retention of farmland, and creates an economic climate that will attract and retain both job-generating businesses and their employees.



## COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE

Focus group participants suggested to address lack of workforce retention and leveraging aerospace, life sciences, food processing/production and furniture design and textile industries as well as supply chain industry opportunities from the Megaside.



**POLICY 1:** Align economic development efforts with the future land use map and NC Carolina Core.

**POLICY 2:** Support existing businesses and industries, while seeking to increase high-wage jobs and employment opportunities throughout the county.

**POLICY 3:** Cultivate and support workforce training programs to support residents in gaining the skills needed for emerging job opportunities, fostering a dynamic and adaptable workforce.

**POLICY 4:** Prioritize the preservation of agricultural uses and working farms as a strategic economic development initiative.



## NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

Actions are the specific implementation items that the County can take to realize the planning theme goal and policies. The actions below are the actions recommended within 1-3 years or that are ongoing. The Action Playbook chapter of the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan describes the full list of actions recommended.

### POLICY 1: Align economic development efforts with the Future Land Use Map and NC Carolina Core.

- ✓ ACTION E 1.1 Ensure areas best suited for economic development, such as the US 421 Corridor, are secured for such use, while balancing the needs for housing, recreational amenities, agricultural, and commercial uses.
- ✓ ACTION E 1.2 Evaluate economic development opportunities through their potential impacts on equity in the community.
- ✓ ACTION E 1.3 Support development of Neighborhood Centers as identified on the Future Land Use Map to support rural commercial uses that are appropriately scaled, and which fit with the rural character of Guilford County.
- ✓ ACTION E 1.4 Locate jobs near municipalities where housing is most concentrated, as well as in close proximity to employment centers outside of environmentally sensitive areas, to reduce impacts on those sensitive areas, as well as carbon footprint, traffic and commuting times.

### POLICY 2: Support existing businesses and industries, while seeking to increase high-wage jobs and employment opportunities throughout the county.

- ✓ ACTION E 2.1 Ensure that investments of public funds support targeted business sectors and promote the growth of new businesses.
- ✓ ACTION E 2.2 Seek to prioritize Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funding to reinvest in areas with economic disparities.
- ✓ ACTION E 2.3 Explore the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) / Project Development Financing to support the creation of high-impact business development, including new employment sectors or development that will create high-wage jobs and increase tax revenue for Guilford County.
- ✓ ACTION E 2.4 Ensure building permit processes are streamlined for small businesses.
- ✓ ACTION E 2.5 Offer economic incentives and assistance for small businesses.

### POLICY 3: Cultivate and support workforce training programs to support residents in gaining the skills needed for emerging job opportunities, fostering a dynamic and adaptable workforce.

- ✓ ACTION E 3.1 Continue to support funding and identify sites to support the needs of workforce development partners, such as NCWorks, GuilfordWorks, and others.
- ✓ ACTION E 3.2 Collaborate with local business incubators to understand and support growth opportunities for business start-ups.
- ✓ ACTION E 3.3 Provide support, such as grants, expedited permit reviews, and education opportunities, for small businesses to expand in Guilford County.
- ✓ ACTION E 3.4 Continue to work with educational and training partners to tailor educational programs that support green industry.
- ✓ ACTION E 3.5 Explore opportunities to support statewide efforts to increase the number of students seeking post-secondary education through the myFutureNC program and continue to prioritize partnerships with higher education institutions.

# RESILIENT ECONOMY

## NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

Actions are the specific implementation items that the County can take to realize the planning theme goal and policies. The actions below are the actions recommended within 1-3 years or that are ongoing. The Action Playbook chapter of the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan describes the full list of actions recommended.

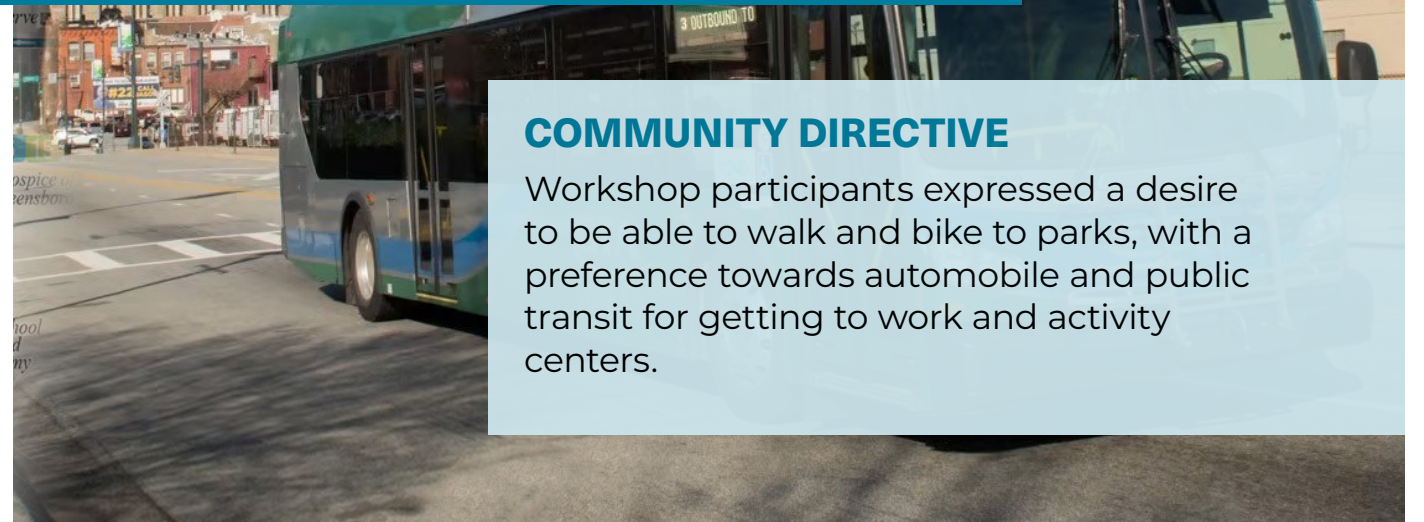
### POLICY 4: Prioritize the preservation of agricultural uses and working farms as a strategic economic development initiative.

- ✓ ACTION E 4.1 Support and expand existing programs to support Guilford County's agricultural industry and farmland preservation.
- ✓ ACTION E 4.2 Explore economic development opportunities specifically tied to rural and agricultural land uses in Guilford County.
- ✓ ACTION E 4.3 Continue to promote the County's Voluntary Agricultural District and Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance as a way to preserve working farmlands in Guilford County.
- ✓ ACTION E 4.4 Provide additional incentives for agricultural properties to become an Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD).
- ✓ ACTION E 4.5 Establish a Farmland Preservation initiative or program in the Guilford Soil and Water District Office or Cooperative Extension Office to establish a more robust farmland preservation program.
- ✓ ACTION E 4.6 Consider funding for local public service announcements to create more awareness of and to promote Guilford County farm producers and operators.

# DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

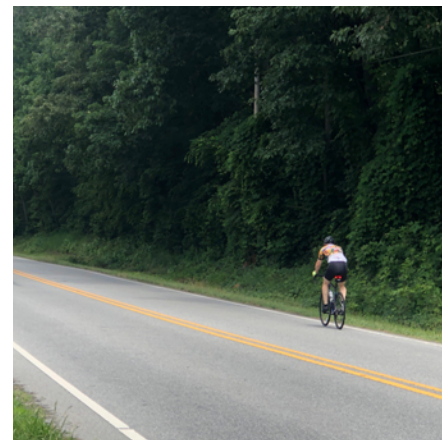
## GOAL STATEMENT

Coordinate with the NCDOT, transit and transportation planning organizations, and local jurisdictions to facilitate safe and efficient transportation infrastructure that serves strategic areas of Guilford County through access to multiple modes of travel.



## COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE

Workshop participants expressed a desire to be able to walk and bike to parks, with a preference towards automobile and public transit for getting to work and activity centers.



**POLICY 1:** Provide ongoing support of the existing countywide transportation networks, focusing on universal access, safety, efficiency and climate-friendly options for residents and visitors.

**POLICY 2:** In order to identify opportunities for funding options and expansion into regional services, the county should maintain its active role in MPO's that serve the county, in addition to other regional transportation organizations, which provide regional connectivity and transit expansion opportunities that serve Guilford County residents.

**POLICY 3:** Actively plan for the impacts of climate change on the transportation system.

# DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

## NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

Actions are the specific implementation items that the County can take to realize the planning theme goal and policies. The actions below are the actions recommended within 1-3 years or that are ongoing. The Action Playbook chapter of the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan describes the full list of actions recommended.

### POLICY 1: Provide ongoing support of existing county wide transportation networks focusing on universal access, safety, efficiency, and climate-friendly options for residents and visitors.

- ✓ ACTION T 1.1 Continue to support regional partners in creating efficient and functional future transportation and transit network components.
- ✓ ACTION T 1.2 Identify major transportation projects from MTPs in any future updates to quadrant mapping or Area Plans to ensure ongoing transportation and land use coordination.
- ✓ ACTION T 1.3 Coordinate with partners to ensure that the transportation system is equitable and that it addresses access to jobs, housing, healthcare, education, and other community services. The County should also advocate for the transportation system to close mobility gaps.
- ✓ ACTION T 1.4 Provide support for and enhance mobility-based programs for seniors and those living with disabilities.
- ✓ ACTION T 1.5 Leverage Guilford County's geographic accessibility to multiple major cities to advance policies and transportation projects that have both regional and local impacts. These efforts should focus on governance, accountability, and strategies to address county needs that are not presently being met.
- ✓ ACTION T 1.6 Continue to engage in regional discussions about state and federal funding and investments in the area to ensure that Guilford County projects meet the goals and vision in the Plan.
- ✓ ACTION T 1.7 Support the school district to provide equitable transportation to assist all students with getting to and from school both safely and efficiently. Consider updating the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Guilford County Public Schools to require consultation for potential school sites or expansion projects during the site identification phase of the planning process to ensure that transportation impacts to local areas are identified prior to site acquisition.

### POLICY 2: The County should maintain its active role in MPOs in addition to other regional transportation organizations, which provide regional connectivity and transit expansion opportunities that serve Guilford County residents.

- ✓ ACTION T 2.1 Actively participate in all regional transportation efforts and seek and maintain participation on all MPOs that serve Guilford County.
- ✓ ACTION T 2.2 Continue to engage and participate in regional and state discussions and planning activities to ensure the need for movement of goods and freight throughout Guilford County is considered and supported.
- ✓ ACTION T 2.3 Consider funding strategies that will improve mobility options throughout Guilford County.
- ✓ ACTION T 2.4 Assist PART in continuing to identify key connections throughout Guilford County that are prime locations for remote parking sites.
- ✓ ACTION T 2.5 Investigate opportunities to work with NCDOT to establish or modify context-sensitive roadway designs.

### POLICY 3: Actively plan for the impacts of climate change on the transportation system.

- ✓ ACTION T 3.1 Consider evaluating parking and land use development requirements to reflect the future land uses identified in the FLUM to respond to changing development patterns and mobility needs.
- ✓ ACTION T 3.2 Amend the design standards in the UDO to ensure resilience.

# EQUITABLE SERVICES

## GOAL STATEMENT

Support land use decisions that create equitable distribution of and convenient access to health and emergency services, schools, and parks.



### COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE

When asked what is most important in terms of managing future growth, access to services was in the top three responses. *In 2020 and 2022, Guilford county votes a total of \$2 Billion in school bond funds.*



**POLICY 1:** Work with Strategic Partners to increase equitable access to services that promote a high quality of life.

**POLICY 2:** Ensure adequate parks and recreation facilities and amenities are located in proximity to existing and planned neighborhoods.



# EQUITABLE SERVICES

## NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

Actions are the specific implementation items that the County can take to realize the planning theme goal and policies. The actions below are the actions recommended within 1-3 years or that are ongoing. The Action Playbook chapter of the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan describes the full list of actions recommended.

### POLICY 1: Work with strategic partners to increase equitable access to services that promote a high quality of life.

- ✓ **ACTION S 1.1** Complete the 2023 Community Health Assessment to understand the social determinants of health. Include an analysis of the impacts from the built environment on health outcomes.
- ✓ **ACTION S 1.2** Hold annual conversations between the Board of Commissioners (BOCC) and the Guilford County School Board to discuss priorities and trends related to schools.
- ✓ **ACTION S 1.3** Coordinate directly with service providers to understand trends, land use needs, and anticipated growth to ensure equitable distribution of those services.
- ✓ **ACTION S 1.4** Work with the County Emergency Management Director or designee to help coordinate needs among Guilford County's different fire districts.
- ✓ **ACTION S 1.5** Support efforts to advance early childhood educational and childcare access through an analysis to determine gaps in service.

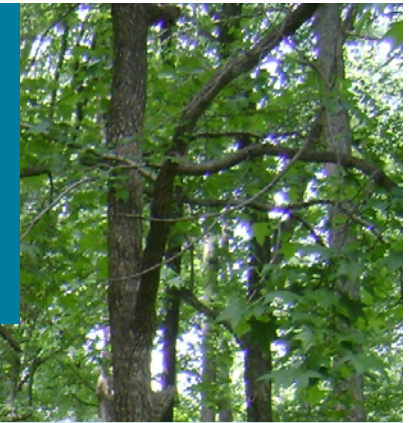
### POLICY 2: Ensure adequate parks and recreation facilities and amenities are located in proximity to existing and planned neighborhoods.

- ✓ **ACTION S 2.1** Complete the Guilford County Parks Master Plan and prioritize funding to implement the Plan's priority initiatives.
- ✓ **ACTION S 2.2** Analyze parks and recreation service throughout Guilford County, identifying areas where there are existing service gaps, maintenance needs, and facility upgrades, and establish policies and funding to address these gaps.
- ✓ **ACTION S 2.3** Review the inventory of County-owned properties to determine if any of them could be used to address gaps in the parks and recreational infrastructure.
- ✓ **ACTION S 2.4** Analyze potential health disparities resulting from limited access to the outdoors and recreational services and programming for those residents living in the rural areas of Guilford County.
- ✓ **ACTION S 2.5** Expand overall accessibility and inclusiveness in all recreation facilities, including implementing ADA improvements.
- ✓ **ACTION S 2.6** Link transportation improvements with opportunities for providing walking and biking connections to recreational amenities.
- ✓ **ACTION S 2.7** Provide residents living in established communities with access to parks, trails, recreational facilities, or natural areas within a 15-minute drive.

# PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREENSPACE

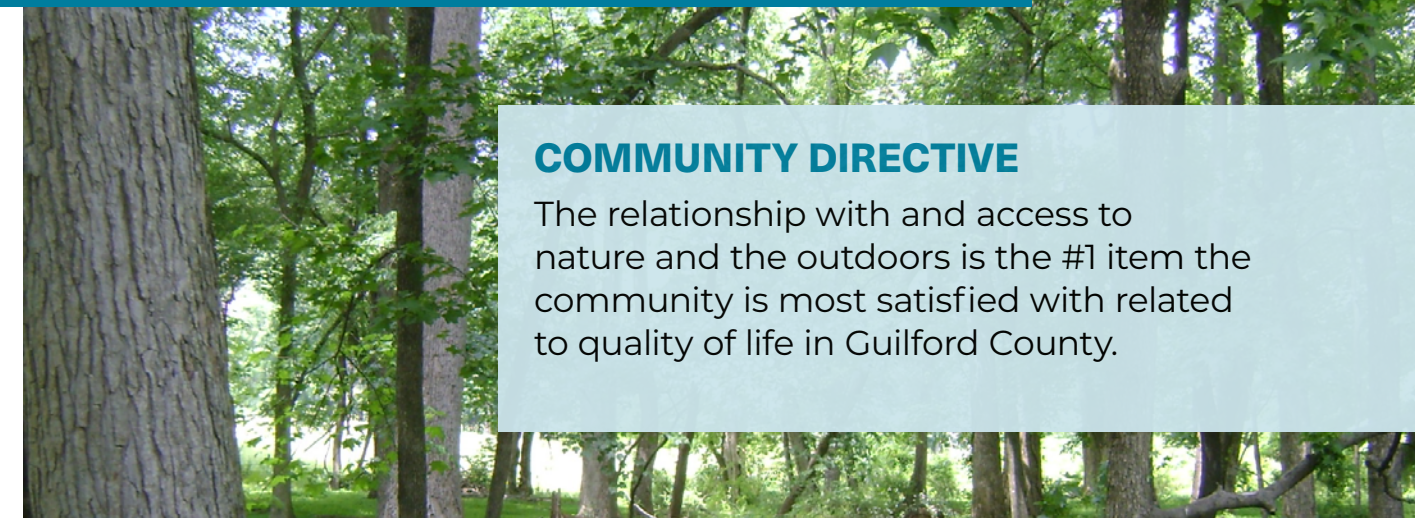
## GOAL STATEMENT

Ensure the provision of abundant parks, as well as the protection of natural vistas and green space, through County-managed soil erosion, stormwater, and conservation programs so that diverse natural resources are valued and preserved.



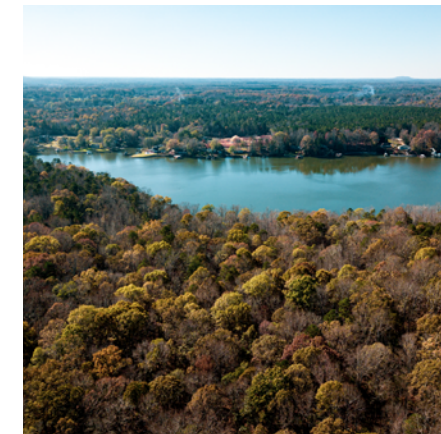
## COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE

The relationship with and access to nature and the outdoors is the #1 item the community is most satisfied with related to quality of life in Guilford County.



**POLICY 1:** Improve the quality of Guilford County's natural resources through regional partnerships and implementation of preservation and protection measures.

**POLICY 2:** Safeguard the environmental integrity of regional water sources and recreational water bodies.



**POLICY 3:** Protect natural features and sensitive areas (riparian areas, floodplains, vegetation and tree cover).

**POLICY 4:** Emphasize connectivity for parks, greenways, and broad open spaces and protect scenic and environmental corridors and buffer areas.

# PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREENSPACE

## NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

Actions are the specific implementation items that the County can take to realize the planning theme goal and policies. The actions below are the actions recommended within 1-3 years or that are ongoing. The Action Playbook chapter of the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan describes the full list of actions recommended.

### **POLICY 1: Improve the quality of Guilford County's natural resources through regional partnerships and implementation of preservation and protection measures.**

- ✓ **ACTION N 1.1** Continue promoting the preservation of agricultural lands, which are a declining resource in Guilford County.
- ✓ **ACTION N 1.2** Focus on strategic partnerships with local and regional conservation organizations.
- ✓ **ACTION N 1.3** Evaluate opportunities for enhancements to the UDO to implement measures that align with the Future Land Use Map, including mixed-use activity centers, natural resource protections, and provisions for renewable energy measures.
- ✓ **ACTION N 1.4** Enhance opportunities for land preservation through housing development patterns that reduce emissions.
- ✓ **ACTION N 1.5** Incentivize environmental restoration when properties are redeveloped, such as expedited permit reviews or reduced fees.
- ✓ **ACTION N 1.6** Incentivize trail corridors in new development areas to protect water and air quality, benefit health and home values, and provide needed connectivity to larger trail systems.
- ✓ **ACTION N 1.7** Incentivize the retention of tree canopy across Guilford County, specifically on new development sites and planned communities.

### **POLICY 2: Safeguard the environmental integrity of regional water sources and recreational waterbodies.**

- ✓ **ACTION N 2.1** Promote more compact development patterns closer to major 'nodes' in Guilford County to mitigate the impacts of development, such as emissions, development waste, and site runoff, on the county's environment and natural resources.
- ✓ **ACTION N 2.2** Evaluate and enhance measures, such as erosion and sediment control, steep slopes, and species habitats in the UDO, for sensitive environmental resources.
- ✓ **ACTION N 2.3** Expand on existing watershed management policies to set goals and priorities for protecting, restoring, and improving the county's environmental resources.
- ✓ **ACTION N 2.4** Develop options for improving, enforcing, and funding long-term inspection and maintenance of stormwater management facilities.
- ✓ **ACTION N 2.5** Continue to coordinate and cooperate with other local, regional, and state agencies and organizations, such as the NC Division of Water Quality, on joint watershed planning and management.

## NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

Actions are the specific implementation items that the County can take to realize the planning theme goal and policies. The actions below are the actions recommended within 1-3 years or that are ongoing. The Action Playbook chapter of the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan describes the full list of actions recommended.

### **POLICY 3: Protect natural features and sensitive areas.**

- ✓ **ACTION N 3.1** Establish and achieve measurable goals for tree canopy, forest cover, and riparian forest buffers in all Guilford County watersheds.
- ✓ **ACTION N 3.2** Prioritize native tree plantings in communities that are economically vulnerable in order to mitigate heat island impacts.
- ✓ **ACTION N 3.3** Continue to update the County's GIS system with layers locating natural assets and amenities, protected lands, current and future parks, dedicated open spaces, and places designated through the Historic Inventory List.
- ✓ **ACTION N 3.4** Conduct a study and update the Guilford County Natural Heritage Inventory to identify the areas of most ecological significance and prioritize conservation efforts within the county.
- ✓ **ACTION N 3.5** Create incentives that reward innovation and green designs, and which respect, assimilate, and protect on-site and adjacent assets and amenities, as well as natural, cultural, historic and recreational uses.

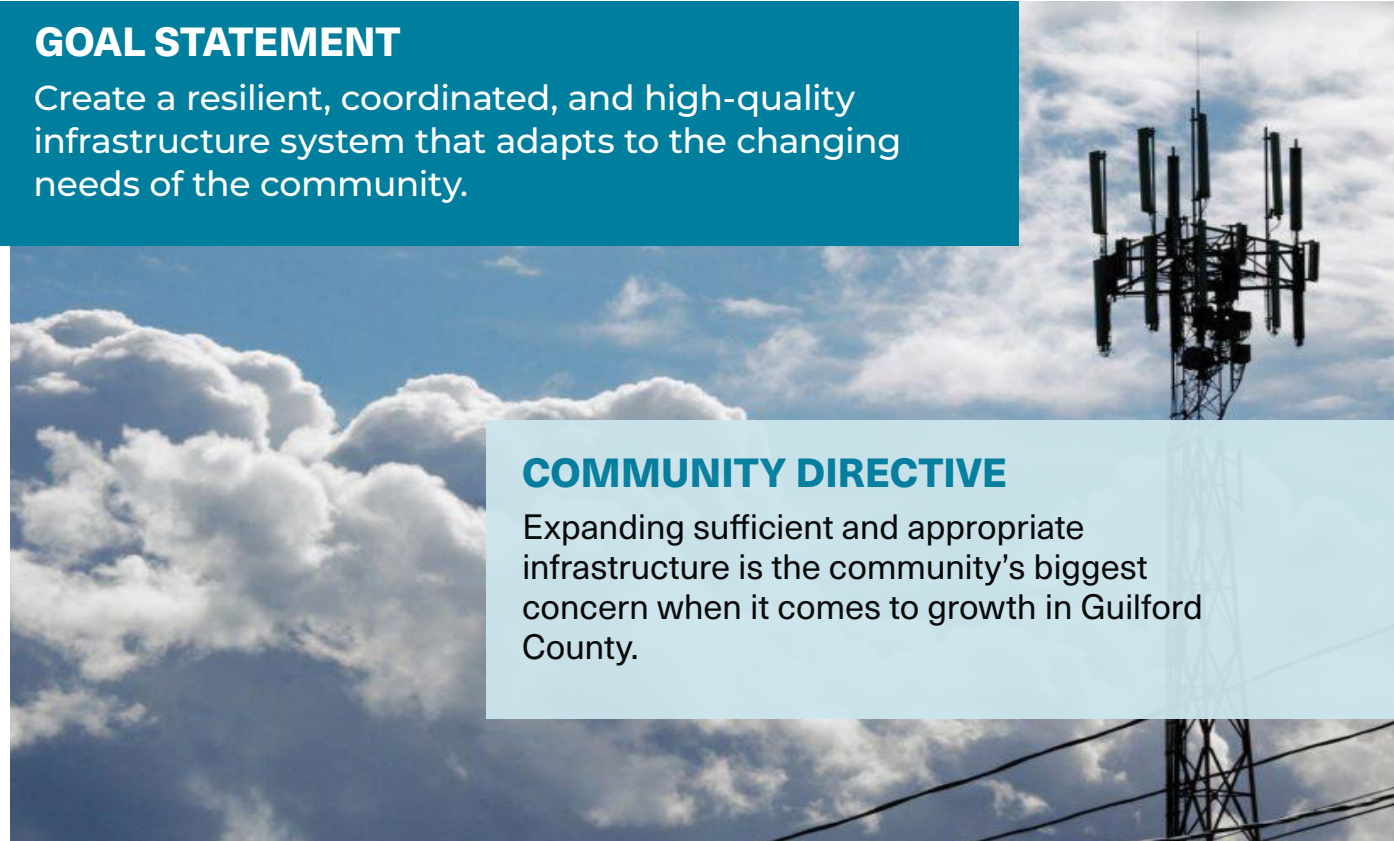
### **POLICY 4: Emphasize connectivity for parks, greenways, and broad open spaces and protect scenic and environmental corridors and buffer areas.**

- ✓ **ACTION N 4.1** Explore funding options to support the acquisition and expansion of open spaces with a focus on filling in existing service gaps and reaching underserved populations within the County.
- ✓ **ACTION N 4.2** Support retention of viable agricultural lands through the encouragement of both traditional and nontraditional farm uses, including agritourism, organic farming, and viticulture, and provide assistance in partnership with conservation organizations, state, and federal cost-share programs, and the North Carolina Cooperative Extension.
- ✓ **ACTION N 4.3** Create a Green Infrastructure Network Plan that provides strategic guidance on conservation and environmental initiatives and recreational planning to support the acquisition of large contiguous areas of natural spaces throughout the county. A formalized network will provide additional protections for habitats, migration corridors, and wildlife.
- ✓ **ACTION N 4.3** Identify locations within Guilford County where safe passage for wildlife at road crossings is needed, and work with NCDOT to fund and implement crossings as part of its TIP or STIP. County design standards for roads, bridges, and culverts to facilitate safe passage for wildlife at county road crossings within the Green Infrastructure Network.

# QUALITY & CONTEXT SENSITIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

## GOAL STATEMENT

Create a resilient, coordinated, and high-quality infrastructure system that adapts to the changing needs of the community.



## COMMUNITY DIRECTIVE

Expanding sufficient and appropriate infrastructure is the community's biggest concern when it comes to growth in Guilford County.



**POLICY 1:** Meet changing demands for infrastructure through regional partnerships and cooperation with service and utility providers.

**POLICY 2:** Plan for the true cost of Infrastructure.



## NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

Actions are the specific implementation items that the County can take to realize the planning theme goal and policies. The actions below are the actions recommended within 1-3 years or that are ongoing. The Action Playbook chapter of the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan describes the full list of actions recommended.

### POLICY 1: Meet changing demands for infrastructure through regional partnerships and cooperation with service and utility providers.

- ✓ **ACTION I 1.1** Support digital connectivity throughout Guilford County by working with partners to provide reliable broadband and cellular services.
- ✓ **ACTION I 1.2** Advocate for and support the provision of water and sewer services by identifying where service provision is feasible and cost-effective and will support the growth goals in the Future Land Use Map, while also protecting areas identified for preservation.
- ✓ **ACTION I 1.3** Ensure that the design and location of infrastructure enhances Guilford County's sense of place.
- ✓ **ACTION I 1.4** Expand business opportunities in Guilford County that promote recycling and reuse of resources, or that repurpose solid waste.

### POLICY 2: Plan for the true cost of infrastructure.

- ✓ **ACTION I 2.1** Evaluate long-term needs for waste management, processing facilities, recycling streams, and landfill needs in Guilford County.
- ✓ **ACTION I 2.2** Explore opportunities and funding mechanisms for the provision of services and utilities in the future.
- ✓ **ACTION I 2.3** Focus higher density and commercial development near areas that are served by existing services and infrastructure.
- ✓ **ACTION I 2.4** Prioritize investments to support infrastructure development near Regional Employment Centers.



# INTRODUCTION

## IN THIS CHAPTER:

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

WHY WE PLAN

REQUIREMENTS

WHAT INFLUENCES GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

VISION

PLANNING THEMES

RELEVANT PLANS

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN



# INTRODUCTION

In 2023, Guilford County embarked on a process to update its vision for growth and development through a new Comprehensive Plan called *Guiding Guilford*. Seven key planning themes emerged through engagement with a broad cross-section of the community and are addressed in this Plan.

## KEY PLANNING THEMES

- » Community Character
- » Attainable Housing
- » Resilient Economy
- » Diversified Transportation and Mobility
- » Equitable Services
- » Protected Natural Environment and Green Space
- » Quality and Context-Sensitive Infrastructure

Guilford County has a rich and long-standing history in North Carolina, which has cemented its role as a regional center for government, education, commerce, and distribution. The area's climate, natural beauty, historic character, and access to interstates, highways, and the Piedmont Triad International Airport (PTIA) all support a quality of life that is attractive to both existing residents and newcomers.

*Guiding Guilford*, the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan, ("the Plan") is a visionary document that reflects one of the few opportunities where the community can dream big and create a sense of ownership in planning its future. The vision in the Plan sets the stage for planning themes, policies and objectives to be implemented incrementally over time. It takes into account input from the public, key stakeholders, municipalities, and coordination with other regional planning processes including, but not limited to, the High Point 2045 Comprehensive Plan,

the City of Greensboro's 2040 Comprehensive Plan (GSO2040), and other coordinated efforts in identified growth areas and/or corridors.

This collective vision requires actionable policies to be in place so the County can enable implementation. Community members want to see the County grow in an intentional way with a focus on implementation and expansion of environmental protections, preservation of agricultural and cultural heritage, improvements to community infrastructure, and an emphasis on quality development design, which will contribute to a high-quality of living and help ensure that Guilford County continues to be an attractive place to live, work and play for existing and future residents. As a document focused on Guilford County, many of the policies and recommendations focus on the unincorporated areas, while recognizing county-wide dynamics and seeking to support policies that are mutually beneficial for citizens in both unincorporated areas and incorporated areas.

# STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Guilford County has an adopted strategic direction that defines what makes our People Successful, our Community Strong, and our Government of Excellent Quality, and how to demonstrate this work to the community to remain accountable. It identifies the County's operational purpose, which is the unifying force that gives meaning to the work we do every day: **Empower Successful People to thrive in a Strong Community supported by Quality Government.**

To take advantage of opportunities and address challenges, the Board of Commissioners adopted Service Area Vision Statements for Guilford County's key service

areas: **Successful People, Strong Community, and Quality Government.** These statements clarify the outcomes the County strives to achieve, help County departments align to Board directives and deliver on Guilford's long-term goals, and coordinate efforts between departments serving similar populations. These are further guided by the Core Values listed below. These Core Values provided the foundation for the *Guiding Guilford* process, seeking to ensure that the county's many diverse populations and communities had an opportunity to participate in the plan making process. More information on the plan and the core service areas is available on the [Guilford County Website](#).



Source: Guilford County Government

## KEY VALUES

- » **Transparency & Communication**  
*We are committed to open and accessible government, driven by information sharing.*
- » **Equity & Inclusion**  
*We celebrate diversity and support equitable service delivery and stakeholder inclusion.*
- » **Accountability**  
*We are stewards of the public's resources and accept responsibility for the fiscal and physical health of the county.*
- » **Service & Outcomes Excellence**  
*We strive for compassionate and professional service delivery provided in an innovative and effective way.*
- » **Our People Matter**  
*We provide a positive and compassionate work environment that supports the financial, physical, mental, and social wellbeing of our Team Members.*

# WHY A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Planning process for Guilford County.

The Plan considers the relationships between land uses, infrastructure (including such items as public water, sewer, and transportation), the economy, and the natural environment, and it identifies policy guidance to address these relationships. The Plan does not create any new regulations, and it does not change, remove, or replace any existing regulations. It should, however, be used to evaluate priorities for funding and policies in Guilford County.

As the community moves forward, decisions will need to be evaluated based on how the overall vision for Guilford County is achieved and the extent to which those decisions reflect the community's values as outlined in the Plan. While things like the Community Vision, Planning Context, Planning Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

should remain constant and keep Guilford County on a focused path for success, other parts of the document, such as the Place Types, the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), and any other supporting maps, may need to evolve over time as conditions change that were not contemplated at the time of document adoption.

Any actions should be evaluated using the community vision, planning context, planning goals, and objectives and strategies found within the Plan to determine if they are in the best long-term interests of the County and its residents, businesses, and property owners.

# COMPREHENSIVE REQUIREMENTS

Comprehensive Plans can take many forms, and there is often confusion about what a Comprehensive Plan can actually do or accomplish. A Comprehensive Plan describes a community's preferences for the future, its distribution of land uses, management of community infrastructure, and the preferred character, form, and intensity of new development. It is a policy document that should be reviewed and updated at least every 10-15 years and serves to capture existing conditions and provide clear direction about how, when, and where the community will develop and grow as it adjusts to changing economic, environmental, and social conditions and trends.

The best plans are able to clearly define community preferences using major themes and providing direction for the future – guiding land use policies and informing many subsequent decisions related to land use management controls, transportation, open space, natural environment, community facilities, community design, historic preservation, housing, economic development, and quality of life.

The State of North Carolina is a Dillon's Rule state, which means that local governments may only exercise those powers expressly granted to them by the State, those powers necessarily and fairly implied from the grant of power, and those powers that are crucial to the existence of local government. As such, land use policies and development

regulations are based on the authority granted through North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 160D (2021). Article 5 requires the adoption of Comprehensive Plans for jurisdictions that employ and administer zoning. These plans must be 'reasonably' maintained and respond to recommended topics.

While there is not a set timeline for how often a Comprehensive Plan must be updated, a typical horizon is 10-15 years between plan updates. The recommended topics include:

- » Issues and opportunities facing local governments,
- » Patterns of desired growth, development, and design,
- » Economic and community development,
- » Housing including a range of types and affordability,
- » Recreation and open spaces,
- » Mitigation of natural hazards,
- » Protection of the environment and natural resources,
- » Protection of significant architectural, scenic, cultural, historical, or archaeological resources, and
- » Analysis and evaluation of implementation measures.

Comprehensive Plans must be adopted through a legislative process, which includes public noticing, legislative hearing(s), review and recommendation by the Planning Board, and eventual action by the Governing Board to adopt.

## A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS...

- » A strategic guidebook for policy decisions and priorities;
- » An integration of existing planning work;
- » A long-range tool for planning, policy, financing and action;
- » A reflection of the community's desires;
- » Aspirational to establish goals;
- » Required by State Statute for zoning.

## A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS NOT...

- » Zoning;
- » A set of land use code standards;
- » A detailed budget document;
- » Specific regulations, requirements or ordinances.

# WHAT INFLUENCES GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT



**POPULATION GROWTH**



**HOUSING AFFORDABILITY/ COST OF LIVING**



**SHIFTING ECONOMY AND INDUSTRIES**



**DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES ON WATER, AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

The Comprehensive Plan is one document of many that influences how and when development takes place, and what it looks like upon completion. Development patterns and intensities in Guilford County are generally driven by several growth factors, including, but not limited to, local economy and market demand, past and future growth, County regulations and policies, and the availability and capacity of infrastructure. These factors have some degree of influence over each other and can change over time, which affects the location and type of development that is experienced in the community.

While all these factors tend to work together, in Guilford County, a lack of County-managed water and sewer infrastructure increasingly plays a larger role than typical in how growth occurs in the unincorporated areas of the county. The County may consider alternative options for provision of water and sewer options both from providers within and external to Guilford County. Potential costs and benefits, including long-term impacts for the citizens of Guilford County, should be considered carefully and thoughtfully given the options that may be available. Guilford County is part of the State's "Carolina Core," a 120+ mile stretch of the state from west of Winston-Salem to Fayetteville encompassing Greensboro and High Point, along future Interstate 685. This creates additional opportunities to coordinate growth and development in the larger

region. As the County moves forward, it will be of particular importance to ensure that the regulations and policies related to land use and infrastructure improvements create a strong foundation for attracting and increasing market demand for different types of land uses in targeted growth areas, ensuring that Guilford County is able to fully participate in and benefit from this economic growth. Additionally, working farms and agricultural lands are a key part of the Guilford County economy and character, and have an estimated economic value of \$68 million.<sup>21</sup> Policies and programs that strengthen these uses are a key part of implementing the plan.

This Plan encourages multi-jurisdictional collaboration between municipal partners and the County as each moves forward to address respective Plan elements. In cases where adopted long-range policies and/or plans may present conflicting land uses, it is critical that review of a development proposal in the county or in a municipality determines appropriateness of proposed use(s), assesses surrounding development patterns, and reviews relevant jurisdictional studies and plans impacting the particular areas, including the availability of existing and planned infrastructure.

# VISION

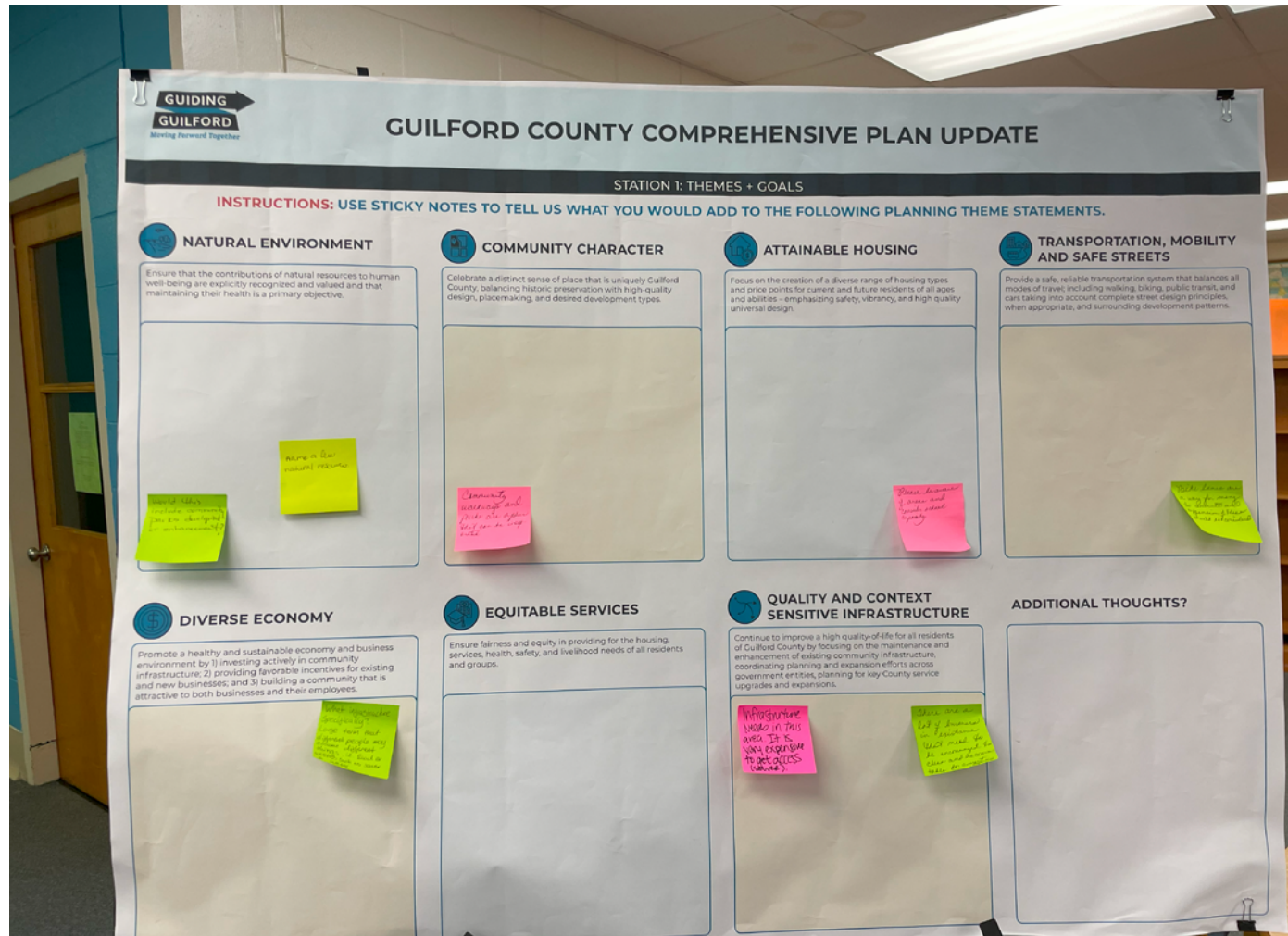
The community's vision for Guilford County was defined through extensive community engagement throughout 2023, when residents, workers and visitors were asked what their priorities were for the future of the county. This vision serves as a guiding statement for the Plan, and it is supported by the Planning Themes, Guiding Principles, and Future Land Use Framework found within.

Rooted in rich history, Guilford County is a welcoming and increasingly diverse community featuring rural landscapes, working farms, thriving businesses, and healthy neighborhoods. The County will foster a resilient and vibrant future by promoting sustainable and responsible development patterns, supporting innovative businesses, facilitating a variety of housing types, and protecting a unique culture so that it can be enjoyed and appreciated by all.



Company Mill Preserve, Guilford County. Photo credit: Design Workshop

# PLANNING THEMES



Community feedback used to inform the development of Planning Themes.

Comprehensive Plans seek to promote the health, safety, prosperity, and general well-being of the inhabitants of the county in an efficient manner. *Guiding Guilford* looks ahead to the next 15-20 years, providing strategic vision and direction for decision-making, growth, and development during that period.

To accomplish this, general analyses are conducted to develop actionable goals and objectives that preserve and enhance the quality of life within unincorporated portions of the county and ensure that development is compatible with its present and future needs.

This information is included in Chapter 5 of the Plan and helps provide context for the 20-year planning horizon.

The overarching Theme Statements or “Goals” within the Plan expand upon the community’s vision and preferences for the future. How the County achieves these goals over time may evolve, but they should endure beyond the horizon of the Plan. Any potential changes to policies or direction for the County should be evaluated against the vision statement, themes, policies and objectives, to determine if they are in the best, long-term interest of the County,

its residents, businesses, and property owners.

It is important to note that the goals are interrelated and interdependent. The County should recognize that opportunities in the future may require a choice, such as prioritization of one goal over another. While balancing or prioritizing competing interests, it will be important to consider the Plan’s foundational elements to ensure that decisions reflect the Plan’s intent and protect the community’s health, safety, well-being, and prosperity.

The Plan goals are divided into seven different Planning Themes, based on the community’s feedback throughout the process. Each of these themes reflect the vision for Guilford County and will include regional cooperation and partnerships to implement the Plan goals.



## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Celebrate Guilford County’s unique sense of place by balancing agricultural preservation with desired development patterns, context-sensitive site design, and inclusive placemaking.



## ATTAINABLE HOUSING

Focus on supporting the creation and retention of a diverse range of housing types to accommodate all residents while emphasizing safety and high-quality, sustainable design.



## RESILIENT ECONOMY

Promote a healthy, sustainable economy that fosters partnerships, supports small businesses, incentivizes retention of farms, and creates an economic climate that will attract and retain both job-generating businesses and their employees.



## DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Coordinate with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and regional transit and transportation planning organizations to facilitate safe and efficient transportation infrastructure that serves strategic areas of the county and region through access to multiple modes of travel.



## EQUITABLE SERVICES

Support land use decisions that create equitable distribution of and convenient access to health and emergency services, schools, and parks.



## PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND GREENSPACE

Ensure the provision of abundant parks, as well as the protection of natural vistas and greenspace through partnerships and County-managed soil erosion, stormwater, and conservation programs so that diverse natural resources are valued and preserved.



## QUALITY AND CONTEXT-SENSITIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

Collaborate with external agencies through measured cooperation, funding, and provision of planning services to provide a resilient and coordinated infrastructure system, including potential for future water and sewer provision, that adapts to the changing needs of the community and provides a high quality of life for all.

# RELEVANT PLANS

This Plan establishes the overarching vision for Guilford County that will guide the development of future operational plans, but it is influenced and informed by many other plans and documents. The documents listed below all contribute to the County's development and administration of various land use and planning policies, and they influence the decisions that are being made throughout the state and region.

## **GUILFORD COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2006)**

The 2006 Guilford County Comprehensive Plan provides strategic guidance for growth and development in the county over a 20-year period. The plan outlines a vision for balancing economic growth with the preservation of natural and historic resources, fostering sustainable land use patterns, provide a variety of housing options for residents, and coordinating the implementation and delivery of governmental programs and services. The land use component of the Comprehensive Plan included nine Area Plans and one Small Area Plan. Seven of these were updated in 2016 to reflect changes in development patterns.

## **GUILFORD COUNTY UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (UDO) (2020)**

The Guilford County Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) is a comprehensive legal document that regulates the County's

zoning and subdivision controls, consolidating them into a single document. This document also includes other development standards, which outline permitted land uses, individual zoning districts, and appropriate agricultural, residential, and non-residential activities. The UDO also contains regulations for such things as landscaping, parking, signage, environmental protections, and stormwater management.

## **GUILFORD COUNTY AREA PLANS AND SMALL AREA PLAN (2008-2016 UPDATES)**

The Guilford County Area Plans consist of several planning documents that provide land use and development guidance within focused geographies in the county. Each document addresses coordination of land uses between Guilford County and municipalities. These plans are designed to address the different needs and characteristics of various areas of the county taking into account existing development patterns, natural and historic resources, and anticipated growth.

## **PIEDMONT TRIAD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT NOISE EXPOSURE MAP AND NOISE COMPATIBILITY PROGRAM (2020)**

The Piedmont Triad International Airport Noise Exposure Map and Noise Compatibility Program is a strategic framework designed to quantify noise exposure from aircraft operations, assess compatibility of land uses

around the airport, and evaluate current measures to determine their continued effectiveness in reducing noncompatible land uses.

## **PIEDMONT TOGETHER COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL PLAN (2014)**

The Piedmont Together Comprehensive Regional Plan is a regional planning effort that targets a more sustainable and prosperous future for a 12-county area known as the Piedmont Triad. The plan addresses regional development through an ambitious effort to support the region's economy by looking to innovation and workforce development, expansion of integrated transportation systems, development of diverse housing options and healthy living, and prioritization of green infrastructure and conservation.

## **GSO2040 (GREENSBORO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN)**

The City of Greensboro updated their Comprehensive Plan, the *GSO2040*, to document community existing trends and conditions in Greensboro and the region, and identify the City's vision and goals for the future land use decisions. This visionary policy document provides guidance on City policy directions, partnerships, and implementation.

## **GREENSBORO MPO 2045 MTP (2020)**

The Greensboro Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) anticipates the area's

growth over the next 25 years and discusses policies, programs, and projects to enhance the region's multi-modal transit endeavors, including vehicular, public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian pathways. This plan also considers evolving transportation technologies and aims to address existing system deficiencies while preparing the region for future demand. An MTP is a blueprint document, similar to a comprehensive plan, that outlines the region's vision for transportation planning over an extended period of time, guiding and prioritizing investments to shape the short-term and long-term improvement projects that will enhance the community's transportation infrastructure and connectivity.

## **GETTING THERE 2045 (2020)**

Getting There is the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). It is similar in scope and content to the Greensboro 2045 MTP described above, but it prioritizes projects within the Burlington-Graham MPO region.

## **HIGH POINT MPO 2045 MTP (2020)**

The High Point Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) includes the typical scope and content for an MTP, with a focus on identifying transportation facilities that can function as an integrated metropolitan transportation system.

## **HIGH POINT COMMUNITY GROWTH VISION STATEMENT (2006) AND HIGH POINT 2045 UPDATE**

The 2006 High Point Community Growth Vision Statement is a document that outlines the vision and roadmap for the future growth and development in High Point, the second largest municipality in Guilford County. This plan guides land use-based decisions on transportation, community design, economic development, housing, infrastructure and public services. The City of High Point has recently adopted the High Point 2045, its new Comprehensive Plan, which will replace the existing Plan and will re-prioritize themes from the existing plan while also establishing new goals and objectives based on existing conditions and changing demographics.

## **NCDOT TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (2024)**

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) is a collaborative document that prioritizes transportation projects throughout the state that reflect a variety of transportation needs based on input from local governments, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and rural planning organizations (RPOs). These projects cover all forms of publicly-funded transportation infrastructure, including highways, public transit, aviation, rail, ferry, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.

The document also identifies specific projects, schedules, and funding allocations to ensure transparency and accountability. The program is designed to support growth, enhance safety, improve mobility, and foster environmental sustainability.

## **GUILFORD COUNTY ARPA COMMUNITY SURVEY (2022)**

The Guilford County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Community Survey document contains extensive feedback from county residents regarding the allocation of the ARPA funds provided by the federal government to support the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Through this survey, residents identified their desired funding priorities including public health, economic recovery, small business assistance, job creation, investments in infrastructure including expansion of broadband, improvements to water and sewer systems, diversified housing options, enhanced learning support and additional opportunities for affordable childcare. The survey results assist the County's elected officials in making strategic decisions and ensuring that the funds are meeting the community's preferences and needs.

## **PIEDMONT TRIAD RPO COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANS (DATES VARY)**

The Piedmont Triad Rural Planning Organization (RPO) publishes Comprehensive Transportation Plans (CTPs) in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and local governments. CTPs are long-range multimodal planning documents which identify transportation needs and develop long-term (25-30 year) solutions.

## **PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN**

The Parks Department's mission is to enhance residents' lives through a comprehensive system of diverse, safe, accessible, and culturally enriching recreational opportunities. In alignment with Guilford County's core values, the Guilford County Parks system is developing a Ten-Year Comprehensive Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan. We highly value input from residents of all ages, abilities, and interests to ensure inclusive and equitable recreational opportunities for the entire community. During the development of the Guilford County Comprehensive Parks, Trails, and Open Space Masterplan, and the preparation of the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan, information sharing facilitated the alignment of initiatives with park and recreational opportunities. Both plans are designed to be supportive and complementary as they are implemented.

## **REGIONAL WATER WASTEWATER CONCEPT PLAN US 421**

The Regional Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Concept Plan for the US Hwy 421 Corridor in North Carolina was developed by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to evaluate current and future utility needs. This plan addresses the concern that the current infrastructure needs along the US Hwy 421 Corridor will be unable to meet future economic and residential demand. This plan is intended to be a high-level analysis of the region's water and wastewater needs and the potential methods to address future growth and environmental challenges in a responsible way.

In Guilford County, the plan recommends the development of a regionalized wastewater facility due to future capacity limitations in the City of Greensboro. To meet future demands, this will require local governments, city, and other regional utility providers along with neighboring counties, to work together to solve and address this challenge.

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# HOW TO USE THE PLAN

This plan belongs to the Guilford County community and is a reflection of all the residents, stakeholders, and community partners who contributed to and participated in the Guiding Guilford process. It outlines the future of the community in broad strokes, and there will be an ongoing process to implement its vision. The Plan is the culmination of over eight months of collaborative, equitable, and transparent community engagement efforts providing for quantitative and qualitative feedback that directly informed the development of the Plan's vision, planning themes,

future land use framework and map, and policies.

The spectrum of feedback received represented a variety of opinions, which were recorded, summarized, and used to inform the incremental development of the Plan. Ideas and contributions from the Guilford County community are threaded throughout the document, and it will be the responsibility of the community-at-large to continue participating and working with decision-makers through the implementation process to

ensure that the Plan reflects the community's vision for the future.

The Plan is divided into the following key plan components:

- » Planning Themes
- » Goals
- » Policies
- » Actions

Each Planning Theme includes an aspirational Goal statement and tangible, specific Policies and Actions.

## PLANNING THEME

The seven key planning themes identified through community feedback.

## GOAL STATEMENT

Each of the seven planning themes has a goal statement that identifies the desired outcomes for each topic. These identify what the community hopes to achieve within each planning theme.

## POLICIES

These are specific statements that provide direction on how to achieve the goals. These are primarily focused on opportunities for the County to identify a specific opportunity or position on a topic. As appropriate, these statements can focus on collaboration with other governmental or private entities.

## ACTIONS

These are specific implementation items that the County can take to realize the planning themes, goals, and policies. These are divided into additional plans or studies, new or updated policy statements, opportunities to facilitate or coordinate action, and items that should be considered or further explored.



Workshop held at the Alamance Presbyterian Church.

## EQUITY FRAMEWORK

As Guilford County implements the ideas in this plan, it is critical to consider how decisions are made relative to implementation. Seeking equity in the decision-making process is paramount to sustainable long-term solutions. The equity framework, adapted from the Sustainability Directors Network<sup>1</sup>, provides considerations for future decision making in the County.



### PROCEDURAL EQUITY

"Inclusive, accessible, authentic engagement and representation in processes to develop or implement sustainability programs and policies."



### DISTRIBUTIONAL EQUITY

"Programs and policies that result in fair distributions of benefits and burdens across all segments of a community, prioritizing those with highest need."



### STRUCTURAL EQUITY

"Decision-makers institutionalize accountability, and decisions are made with a recognition of the historical, cultural, and institutional dynamics and structures that have routinely advantaged certain groups in society and resulted in chronic, cumulative disadvantage for other groups."

**DRAFT**

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# 2

## **PROCESS**

**IN THIS CHAPTER:**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

OUTREACH BY THE NUMBERS

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Community engagement has been at the heart of the Guiding Guilford process, ensuring that the community's ideas for the future, current insights, and lived experiences form the basis for the Plan contents. The project included four phases of work from the spring of 2023 to summer of 2024.

The diversity of Guilford County was a key consideration in the community engagement process, and the team sought to provide access for all community members. During each phase, extensive advertising through flyers, social media, newspapers, e-mails, press releases, local magazines, and church bulletins helped get the word out about how to engage. All project flyers and the Community Pulse Survey were provided in both Spanish and English language. Additionally, the survey was available both online and in paper format to ensure residents without internet access could participate. See Appendix for survey questions and engagement summaries.

## PHASE 1 (FOCUS GROUPS)

This phase launched the project and included a series of topical focus groups and interviews to understand the current conditions in the county. A project website and Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) sheets were developed, and the project team held a community open house to inform the community about the Plan process and existing conditions.

## PHASE 2 (COMMUNITY WIDE SURVEY)

This phase focused on understanding the community's vision and priorities for Guilford County. Feedback was gathered through a Community Pulse Survey with more than 1,400 participant responses, as well as through various pop-up events held throughout the county. Questions posed to the community included topics such as housing, economics, growth, and infrastructure.

## PHASE 3 (COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS)

This phase consisted of a series of six workshops that were open to the public. Five of these workshops were held in locations throughout Guilford County, and Spanish language translation was available. One workshop was also held virtually to solicit additional public input and to provide accessibility and convenience for those unable to attend the in-person workshops. The workshops included a mapping exercise so participants could identify which different types of growth and development they believe are appropriate in different areas of the county. Participants were also asked to provide feedback on a draft vision statement and draft theme areas.

## PHASE 4 (PLAN SHARING)

This phase focused on plan sharing, revision, and adoption.



Workshop at Northeast Park.



Gain a nuanced understanding of current conditions and issues related to land use, future plans and vision.

Gain community input on the goals and vision for the future, on topics such as growth and land use, housing, economics, services, and infrastructure.

Gain community input on the aspirations and vision for the county and input on key issues and opportunities. Discuss open space, land use and future growth and engage community in interactive planning exercise.

Report how engagement has influenced the plan. Share key outcomes of the planning process and draft plan recommendations for final round of input.

## STEERING COMMITTEE

A 16-person Steering Committee representing a broad cross-section of community members and institutions served as an advisory group to provide guidance and high-level perspective throughout each phase of the project, working collaboratively with the project team to review and offer input and differing viewpoints as the plan was drafted. The organizations represented by the Steering Committee are listed below:

- » Piedmont Triad Regional Water Authority
- » Piedmont Land Conservancy
- » Guilford County Soil and Water Conservation District Board
- » Guilford County Voluntary Agricultural District Board
- » High Point University
- » NAACP - High Point Branch
- » Guilford County Public Schools
- » Guilford County Planning Board
- » Greensboro Chamber of Commerce
- » East Greensboro Now
- » Greensboro Human Rights Committee
- » Greensboro Regional Realtors Association
- » NC A&T University
- » Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART-NC)
- » Piedmont Triad Airport Authority
- » Triad Real Estate and Building Industry Coalition (TREBIC)
- » University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNC-G)

# OUTREACH BY THE NUMBERS

**1,684**

**Social media post link clicks / shares**

(Facebook -81 shares/727 clicks; Twitter/X - 37 shares; Instagram - data not available)

**200**

**Direct mail letters sent**

(Property owners adjacent to Planning Board zoning cases)

**1,643**

**Total number engaged**

(Includes survey participants, and combined workshop attendees)

**8**

**Stakeholder interviews/focus group meetings**

**45,358**

**Social media impressions**

(Facebook - 28937; Twitter/X - 16,014; Instagram - 407))

**150**

**Flyers distributed**

(Does not include those sent from other organizations )

**24**

**Total hours of meetings and presentations**

(Includes public workshops, steering committee meetings, focus group meetings, and presentations to commissions and community groups)

**7**

**Workshops and open house events**

(1) introduction workshop in April, (5) open house workshops and (1) virtual workshop in September.

**3,309**

**Views to the project webpage**

**44**

**Days run of print advertisements**

(NW Observer print ads- 14 days; The Latino print ads - 30 days)

**1,413**

**Survey responses received**

(814 completed surveys)

**12**

**Pop-up station events**

**546**

**Email addresses received newsletters**

(Planning and Development Distribution list, Non-profit stakeholder group, Guilford Soil and Water)

**8**

**Ads placed in transit buses**

**230**

**Total workshop attendees**

(Includes survey participants, and combined workshop attendees counted)

**6**

**Steering committee meetings**

(16 members representing a diversity of organizations)

# COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

## PHASE 1 ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

This phase of engagement included a series of focus groups, from whom the team learned about key issues and opportunities in Guilford County. Six virtual focus groups were comprised of stakeholders with relevant knowledge and experience in the areas of Housing and Economics, Environment and Natural Resources, Transportation and Mobility, Utilities, Community Services, and Historic Preservation, Culture and Arts. These focus groups, as well as the make up of the Steering Committee, included individuals and entities with multiple perspectives and subject matter working knowledge of Guilford County, the City of Greensboro, and the City of High Point. The following key themes emerged from these conversations:

- » Increasing housing options throughout the county, particularly for missing-middle housing, rental housing, and workforce housing, is critical to ensuring that long-time community members can stay in Guilford County and that new residents can find housing that matches employment opportunities.
- » There are existing growth pressures, and it is important that the Plan provide direction about how this development should occur. New development and redevelopment should be

done in an equitable way that reinforces the character of the County.

- » Guilford County has a rich agricultural history that is being lost, particularly dairy farms. Celebrating and protecting the County's agricultural uses and heritage should be considered in the planning process.
- » The new Mega Site will bring new job opportunities and economic development. It will be important to address infrastructure needs for the Mega Site and development that will likely come as a result of the Site, particularly related to water, sewer, and transportation.
- » Transportation access exists throughout the county, but improvements are needed, particularly related to transit access, walkability, and school bus routes. Areas of unincorporated Guilford County could benefit from policies and funding to support sidewalk infrastructure and transit service.
- » There is a complex mix of emergency services in Guilford County. Additional coordination and funding could address issues related to staffing and resource shortages.
- » The northern portions of Guilford County have parks and trail infrastructure, but the

southeast portion has less. The eastern and western portions of the county are connected to the Mountains-to-Sea Trail, but additional connections in the northern and southern portions of the county could be added.

- » Guilford County has a well-documented cultural history and there are many programs that celebrate and provide education about it. Continuing to celebrate the architectural and cultural history of the county is important.

## PHASE 2 ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

This phase of engagement included a 28-question Community Pulse Survey with more than 1,400 participants. The Steering Committee helped get the word out about the survey, and Guilford County staff held pop-up events and sent a direct mailing that increased participation from a broader cross section of the county. The following key themes emerged from this feedback:

- » The community is concerned about the cost of living and affordability in Guilford County. This was most often identified as an area of concern or an area on which the Plan should focus.
- » Housing should be located near public transit and permitted in more places than it is currently.

» The community would like to see more transportation services, including county-wide transit service, complete streets, and bike and pedestrian infrastructure.

- » There are high quality parks, open spaces, and access to nature in the county.
- » Protecting the environment is important to the community. Specific strategies could include habitat protection/restoration, water/soil conservation, and retention of the tree canopy.
- » Policies about growth should balance environmental preservation, coordinate development with long-range plans, and be more forward-thinking than reactive.
- » Access to public services, including internet/broadband, quality schools, job training, and support for seniors, is important to the community.
- » The community is concerned about the availability of infrastructure necessary to support growth and supports more coordinated planning between different jurisdictions.
- » Overall, the community is interested in seeing parks and open space, agricultural uses, single family homes, and mixed uses in the county.

← [Complete Streets](#)

**Preserve and protect the natural environment and restore native habitats.**

**Plan infrastructure and public services ahead of growth**

**Address cost of living, housing attainability and choices**

**Manage growth and development**

**DRAFT**

### PHASE 3 ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

During this phase of engagement, 230 community members joined in-person and virtual workshops that sought to refine the themes heard in the previous engagement. This engagement focused on different types of land uses and growth, as well as transportation opportunities. The following themes emerged in this engagement.

- » Economic diversification is important to the community, including workforce training and balancing different types of land uses.
- » While the County does not directly provide certain infrastructure services, such as water and sewer, it is responsible for school facilities. The community would like to see context-sensitive infrastructure improvements that respect Guilford County's character.
- » Preservation of agricultural lands and working farms is important to much of the community.
- » The ability to use multiple methods of transportation is important to the community. Infrastructure should support continued use of cars, while integrating opportunities for alternative forms of transit. The ability to safely walk and bike to key destinations is a priority, as

is increasing opportunities to take public transit to work and shopping areas.

- » Parks and outdoor recreational opportunities should be located within walking distance of neighborhoods.
- » Green infrastructure, renewable energy, and sustainability should be included in policies related to context-sensitive infrastructure.
- » Policies to support preservation of natural areas should be included in the plan.
- » There is a preference for single-family and duplex development, and support for more diverse housing types including townhomes, accessory dwelling units, and live-work units.
- » Commercial development should include a mix of uses.
- » Policies that support niche and local shopping and dining, as well as encourage outdoor retail and restaurant experiences are important to the community.
- » There should be more regulation of offices, and limitations on industrial and big box style development.

### PHASE 4 ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

The draft Guiding Guilford Plan was shared with the community in the summer through early fall of 2024. Community feedback was gathered at a public openhouse

and through an online survey. More than 100 community members attended an online and in person open house and requested additional information and document adjustments to clarify the planning themes. Based on these comments, updates were made to the document format and Executive Summary.

The survey captured feedback from 433 respondents who represented a cross section of community members. 154 respondents completed the survey with approximately 279 survey participants who began the survey but did not complete it. Based on the open-ended responses, 80.77% of survey participants expressed support for the plan direction. The most commonly expressed sentiment was excitement about the plan

providing direction to preserve rural character, agricultural heritage, and environmental spaces. Respondents appreciated the focus on protecting green spaces and offering a vision beyond just economic growth.

Overall, the responses indicated concern about development in rural areas, and reflect a desire to protect the rural character of the County. This is addressed in sections related to the land use framework (pg. 68–85), as well as in the economy chapter (pg. 185–197)."

**Address quality of and access to schools and education**

**Protect water quality and soil**

**Agricultural land protection**

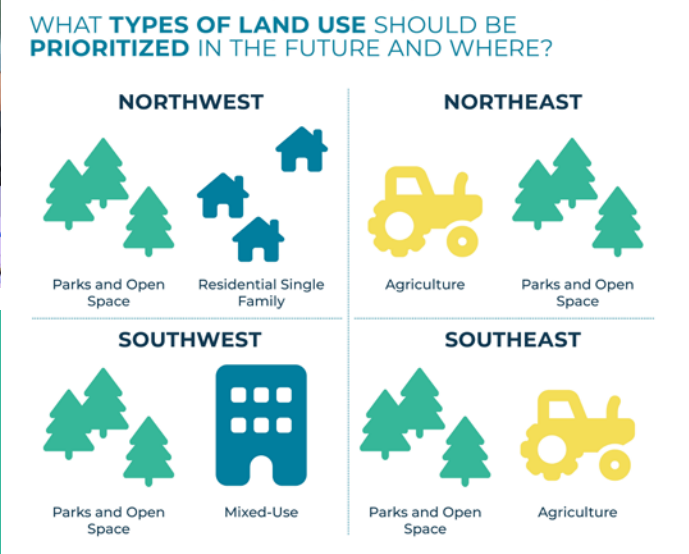
**Improve county-wide transit options and multi modal/complete streets**



**9 WORKSHOPS AND OPEN HOUSES**

**330+ TOTAL WORKSHOP ATTENDEES**

**1,413 SURVEY RESPONDENTS**



**DRAFT**

**DRAFT**

# 3

## **CONTEXT**

### **IN THIS CHAPTER:**

REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

HOUSING

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

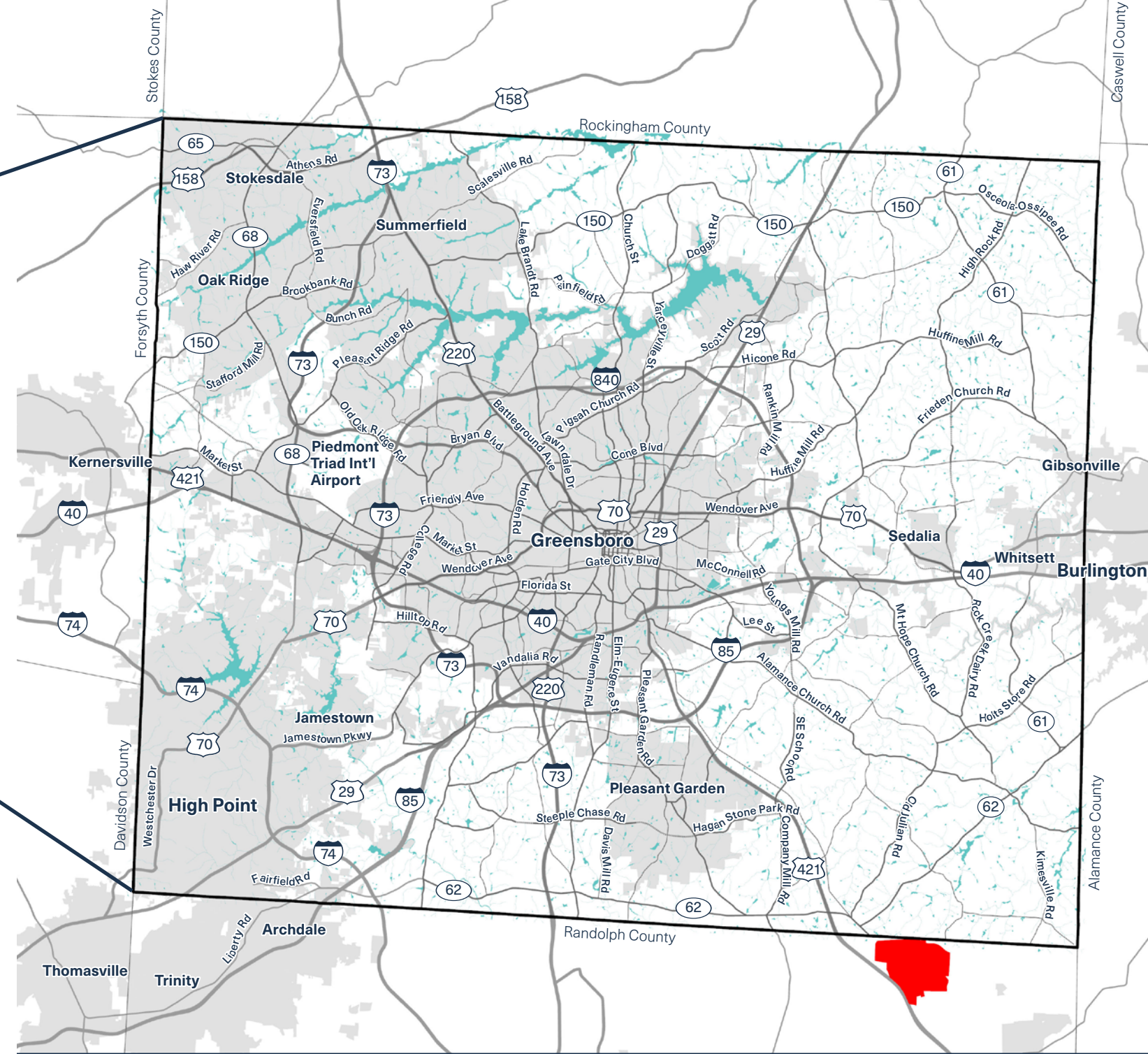
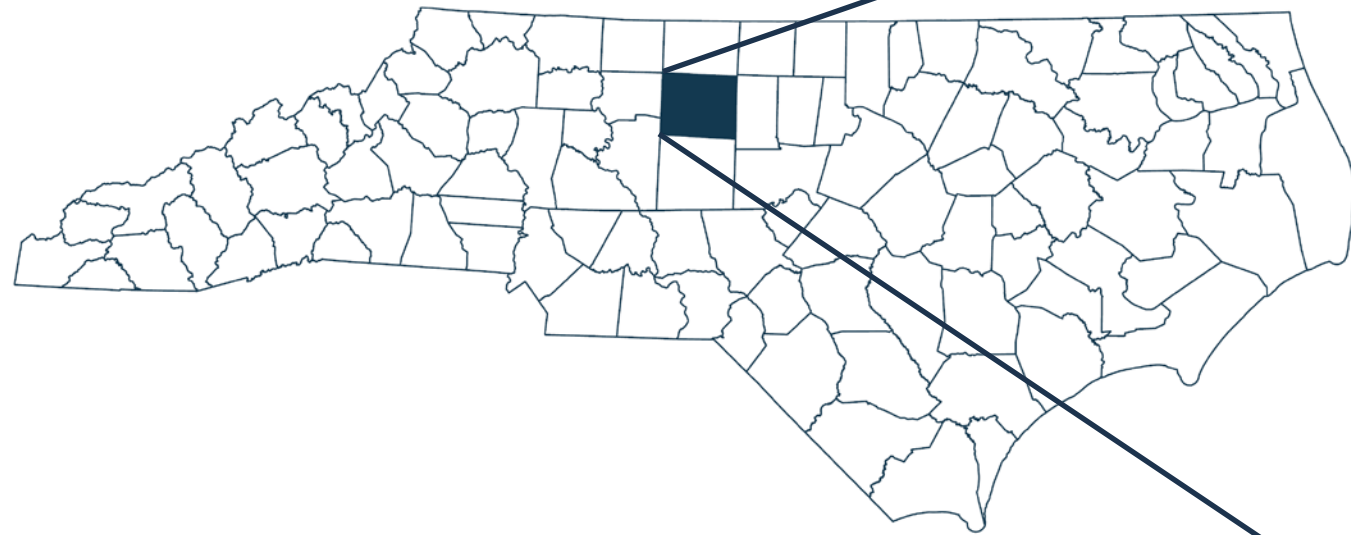
ECONOMY

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

SERVICES






INFRASTRUCTURE

# REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT



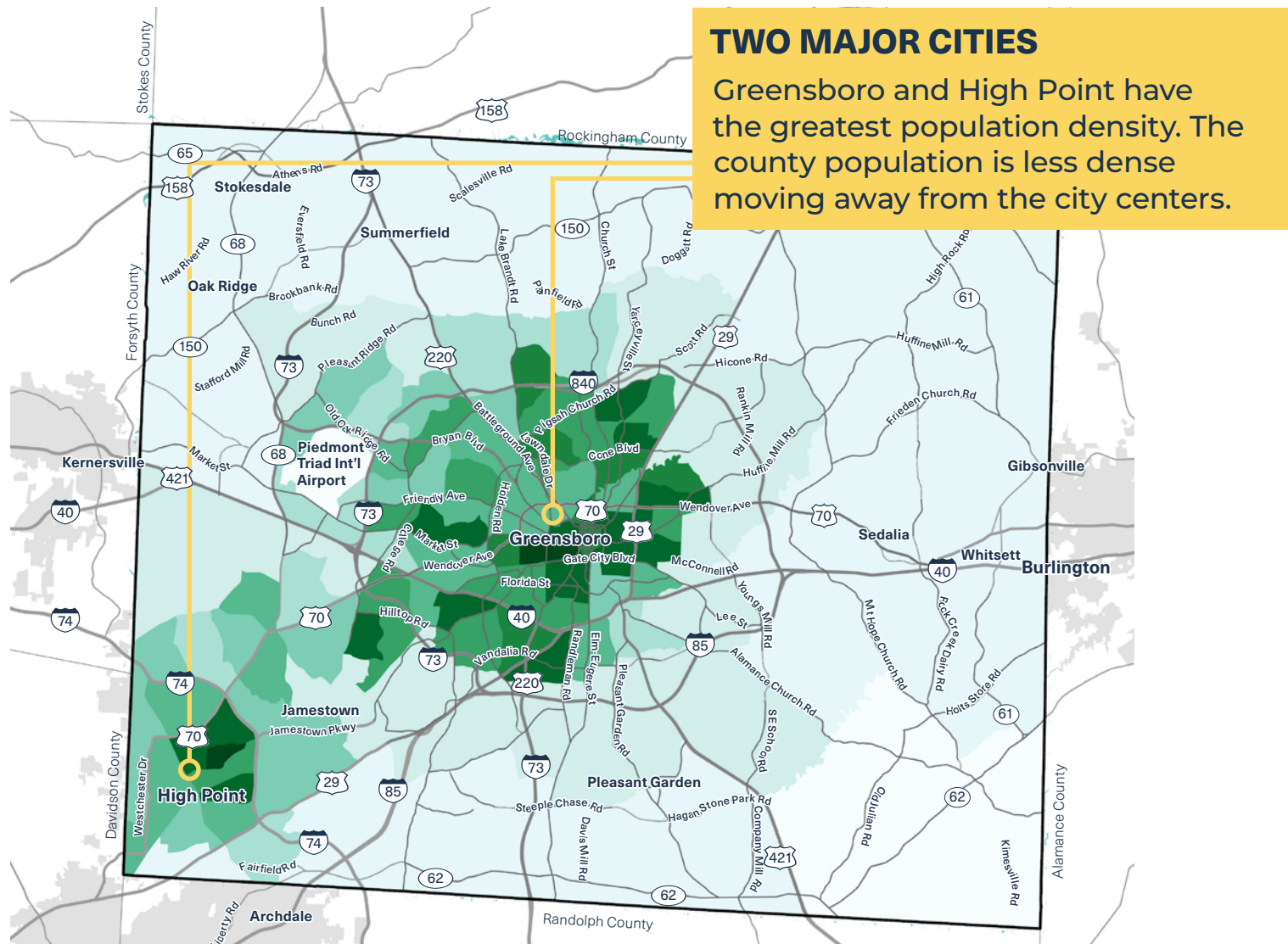
Guilford County, with an area of approximately 658 square miles, has remained relatively rural with areas of development focused within two major cities (High Point and Greensboro), seven census-designated places (CDPs) and multiple unincorporated neighborhoods. The incorporated cities and towns contain approximately 83% of the County's total population<sup>2</sup> and covers approximately 44% of its land area based on GIS analysis. Greensboro and High Point have the greatest population densities in the county, with populations becoming less dense moving away from these city centers.

**MAP 1: REGIONAL CONTEXT**

-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  WATERBODIES
-  INCORPORATED AREA
-  MAJOR ROAD
-  GREENSBORO-RANDOLPH MEGA SITE

*Note: effective June 30, 2024, the NC General Assembly approved HB909 which de-annexed from the corporate limits of the Town of Summerfield certain described properties totaling approximately 1,000 acres. Due to the timing of the release of this draft document and passage of HB909, Guilford County was in the process of updating its digital GIS files, zoning and land use designations.*

Source: Guilford County GIS, 2023

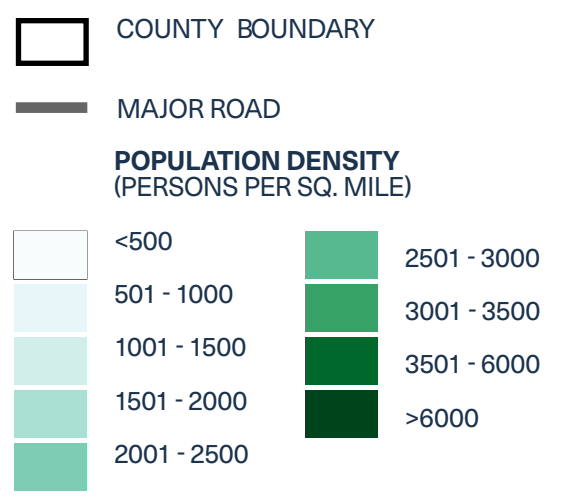


**TWO MAJOR CITIES**  
 Greensboro and High Point have the greatest population density. The county population is less dense moving away from the city centers.

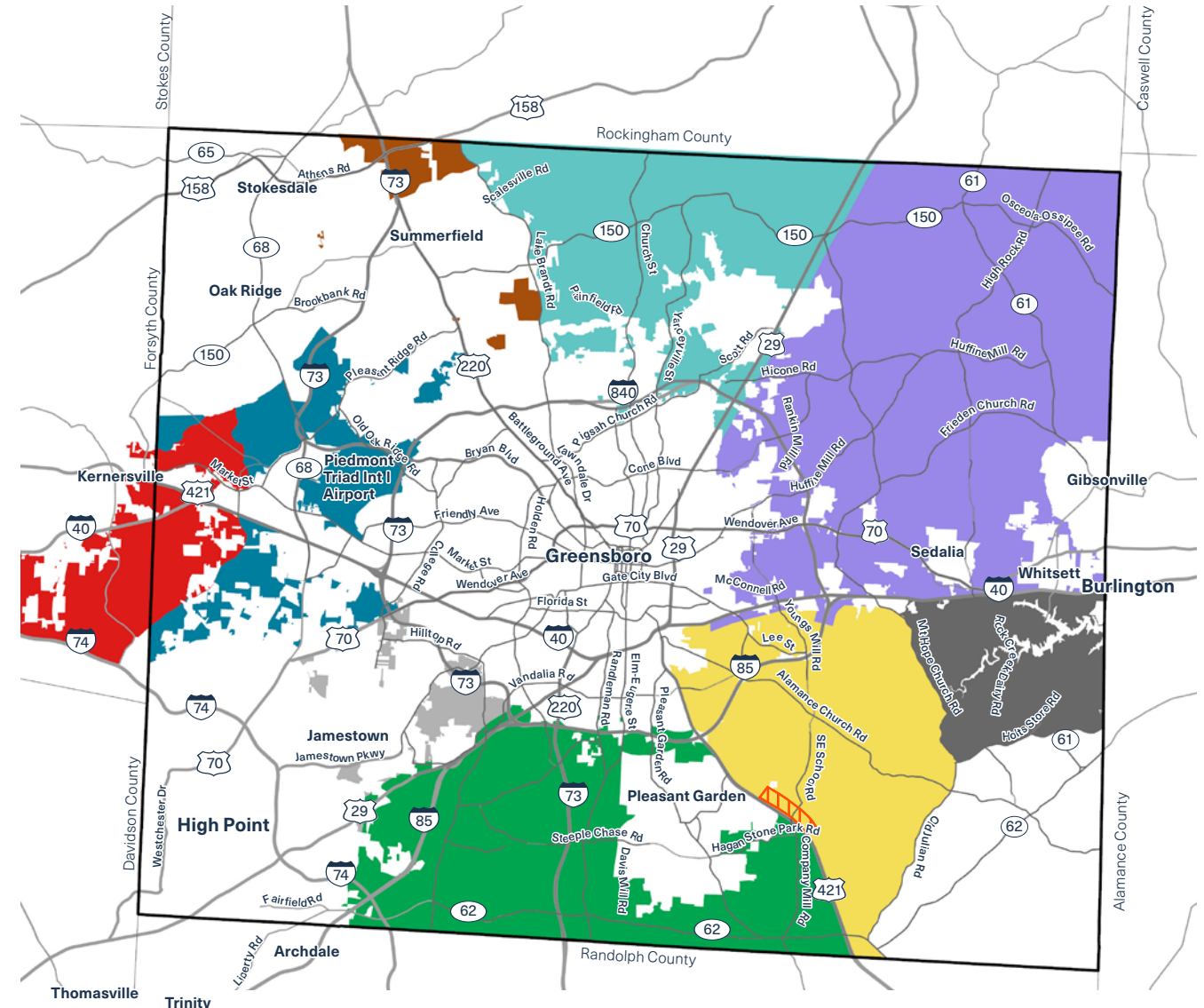
**POPULATION**

Guilford County is the third most populous county in the state.<sup>2</sup> It is expected that by 2040 Guilford County will experience an increase in population of 86,322 people.<sup>2</sup> The state of North Carolina is expected to experience a projected annual growth rate of 1.1% compared to a 0.8% growth rate in Guilford County.<sup>2</sup> Growth has slowed over the past ten years from 15.9% (2000-2010) to 10.6% (2010-2020). Unincorporated areas have seen slightly slower growth at 9.4% (2010-2020).<sup>2</sup>

**MAP 2: POPULATION DENSITY**

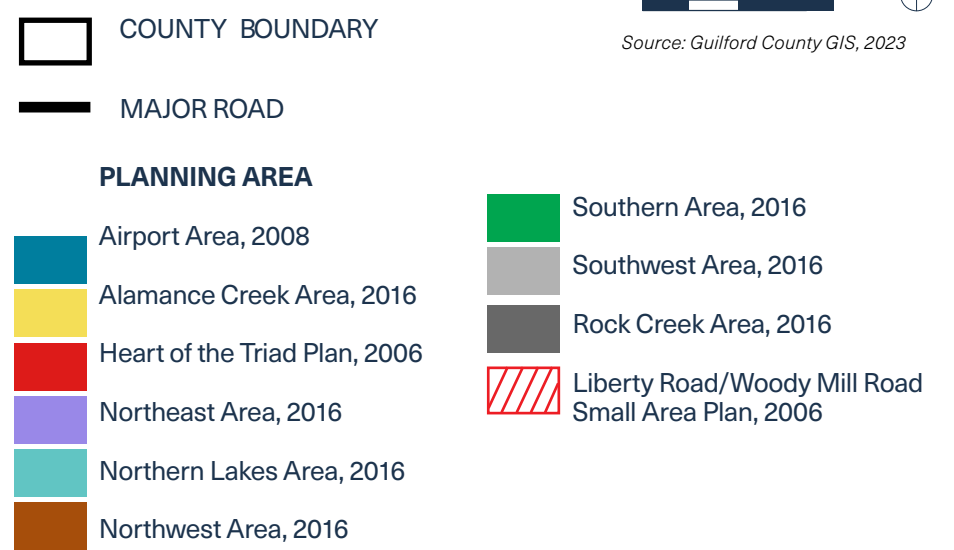


Source: Esri estimates for 2022 from American Community Survey data



**MAP 3: AREA PLANS**

Guilford County has adopted Area and Small Area Plans for certain unincorporated areas, which identify policies, land uses, and long-range planning guidance. Over time, voluntary annexation has shifted these area boundaries. As a starting point for infrastructure discussions, the County is transitioning to quadrants as planning areas. Each area includes specific land uses that relate to the geography and community feedback from the *Guiding Guilford* process and previous engagement specific to each area.



Source: Guilford County GIS, 2023

# KEY DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS

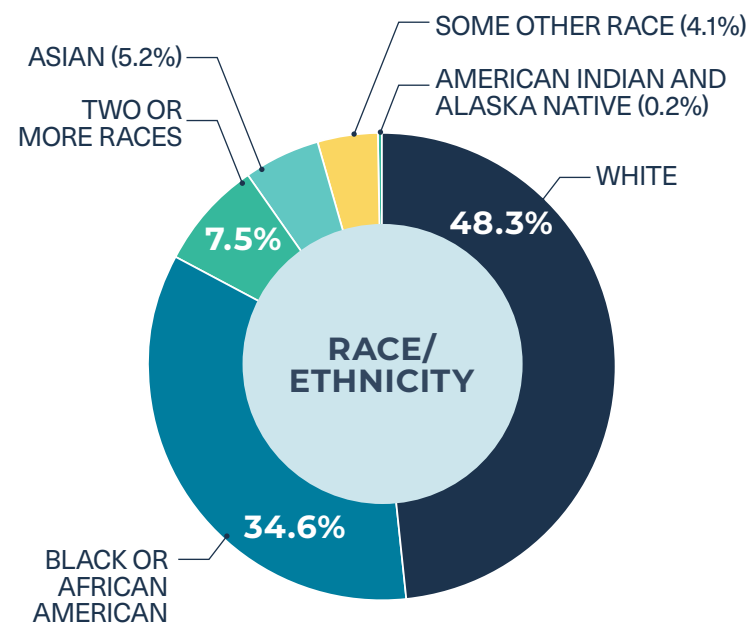
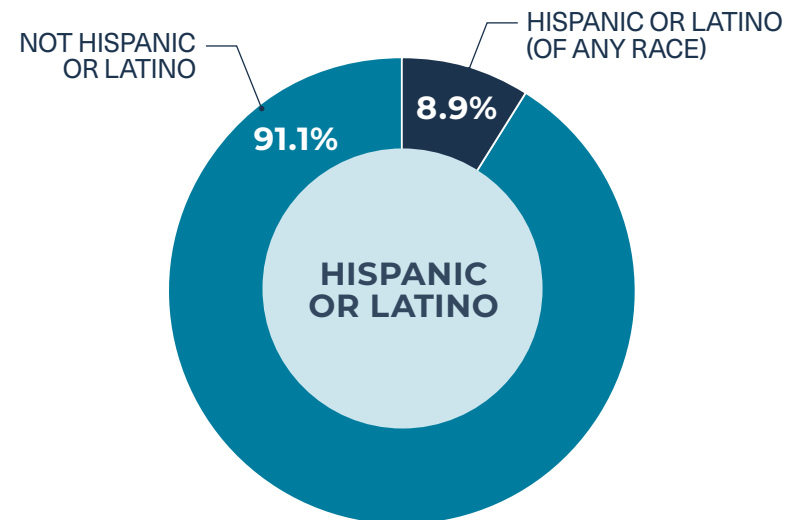
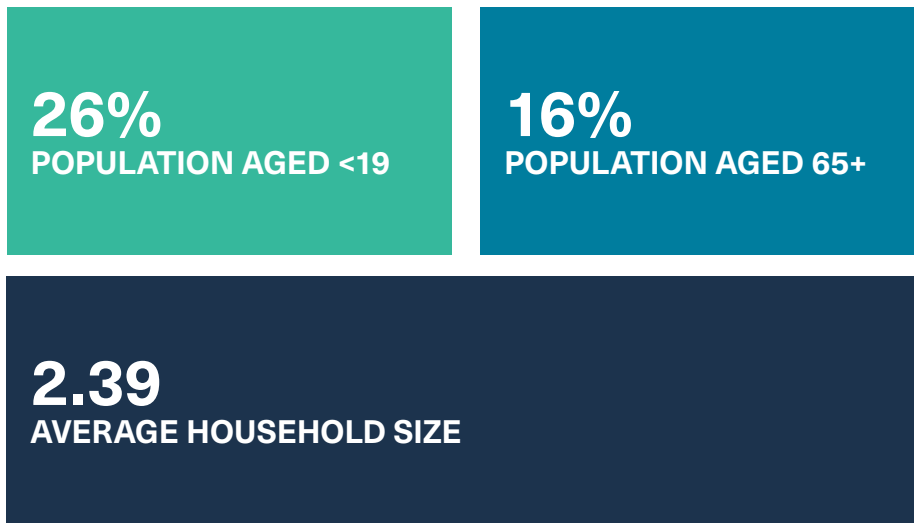
## HOUSEHOLD SIZE

The average household size in Guilford County is 2.39 residents per household.<sup>3</sup> The county has approximately 209,602 households, with a total population of 542,451 in 2022.<sup>4</sup> Median household income for the county (\$59,876) is lower compared to median household income in North Carolina (\$62,513).<sup>4</sup>

## AGE

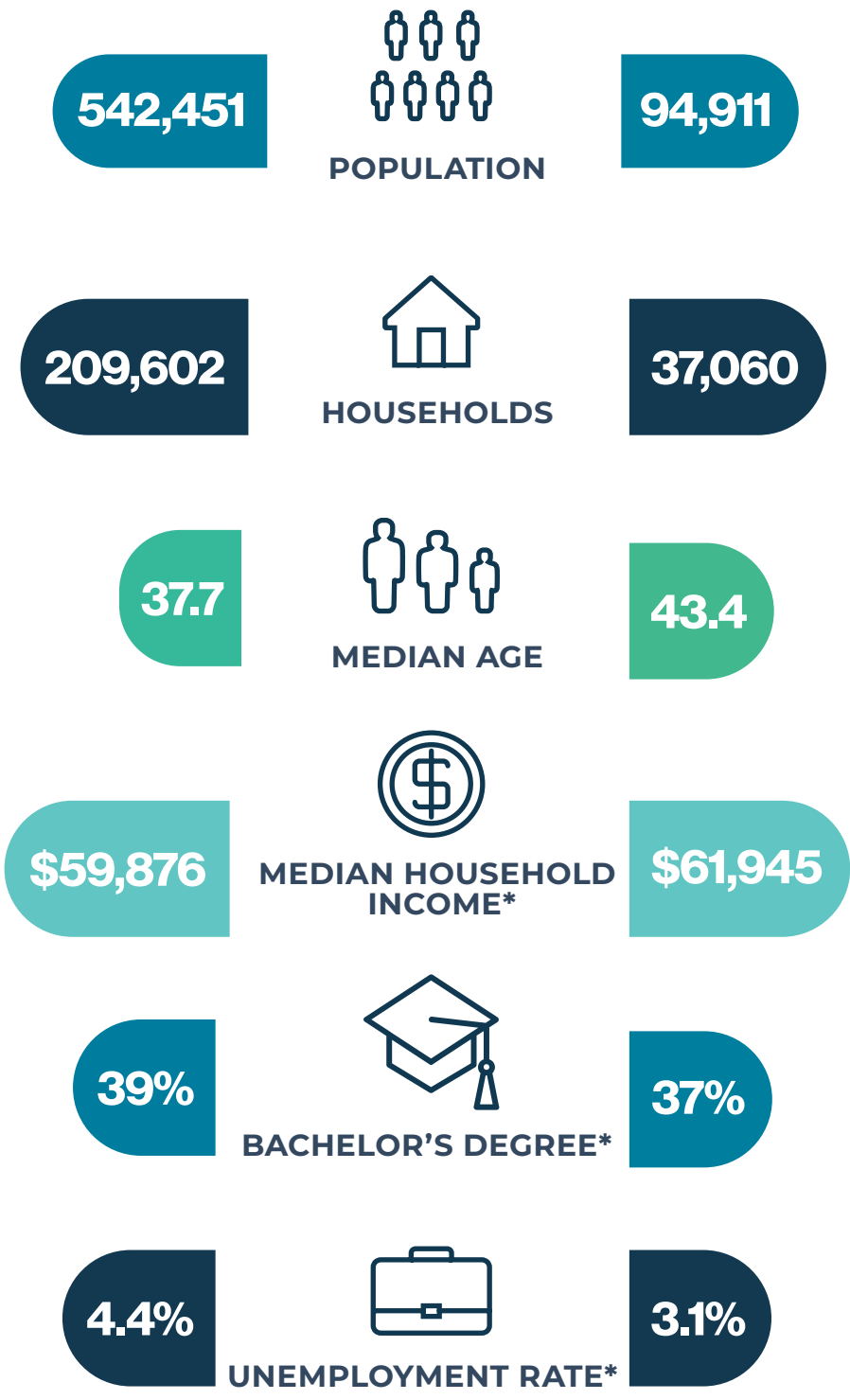
The county has a slightly lower median age (37.7 years old) compared to the state median age (39.2 years old).<sup>2</sup> The distribution of residents living in Guilford County is comprised largely of adults aged 20 to 64 (58%), with a relatively distribution of ages within that range, and youth aged 0 to 19 (26.1%).<sup>2</sup> Approximately 52.8% of the county identifies as female, which is slightly higher than the state average.<sup>2</sup> In Guilford County, 90.2% of the population has a high school diploma or higher, with 37.2% of the population having attained a bachelor's degree or higher, which is slightly higher than the state average.<sup>2</sup>

Seniors aged 65 and over comprise 16% of Guilford County's population.<sup>2</sup> This age distribution will influence how the county addresses some of its priorities and future investments, especially in terms of parks, transportation, and senior services. Aging populations also require special considerations for housing and community amenities, such as access to essential services like grocery stores, medical care, and retail.



## COUNTY-WIDE

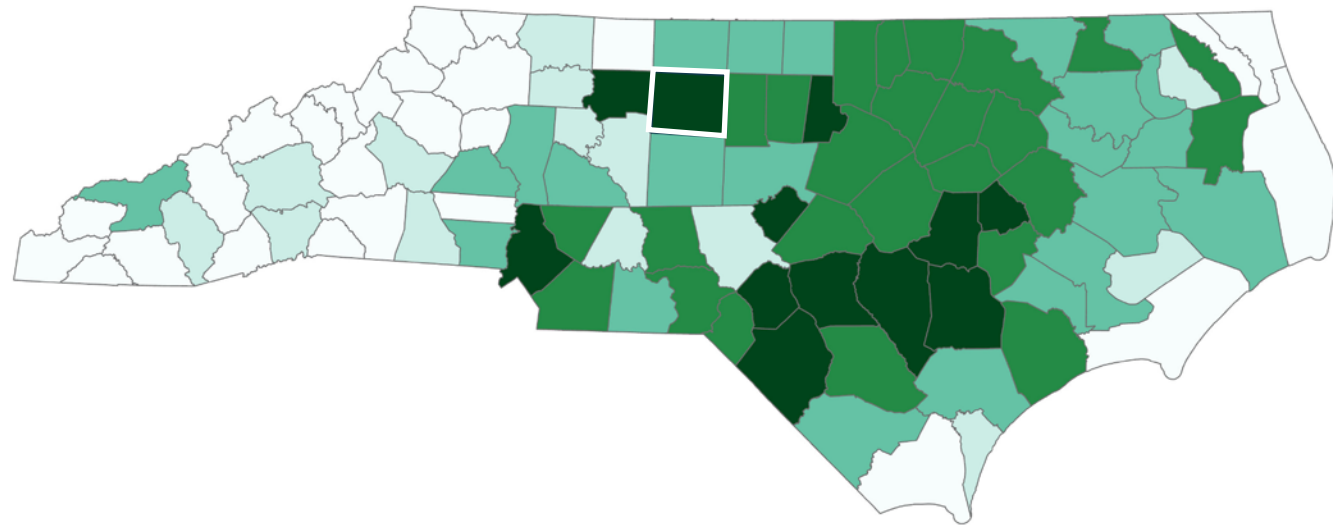
## UNINCORPORATED COUNTY



Source: North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management State Demographer 2022, \*Esri estimates from American Community Survey data



**+8.4%**  
INCREASED DIVERSITY SINCE 2010



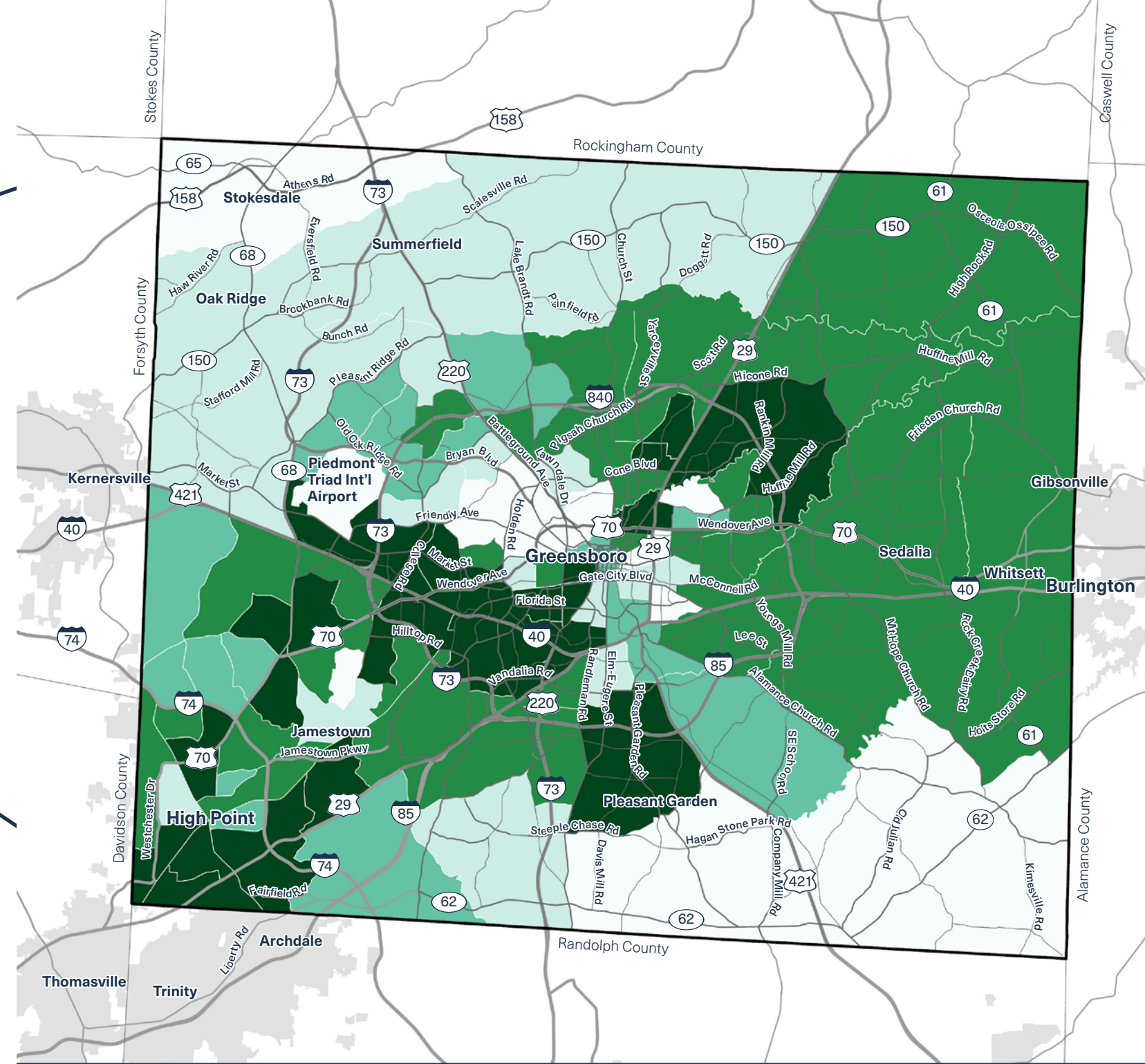
**DIVERSITY**

Guilford County is one of the more diverse counties in the state, with an Esri Diversity Index (DI) score of 70.7% (up from 62.3% in 2010).<sup>5</sup> As defined by Esri, the DI represents the likelihood that two persons, chosen at random from the same area, belong to different races or ethnic groups. The index provides a measure that ranges from 0 (no diversity) to 100 (complete diversity).<sup>5</sup>

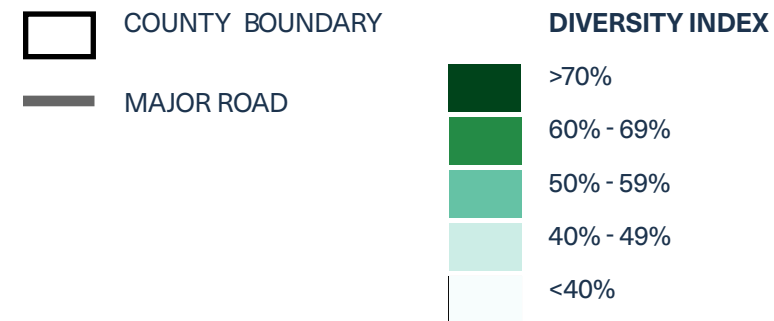
This is higher than the DI average score for the state of North Carolina (65.1%) and slightly lower than the national average (71.6%).<sup>5</sup> The DI score for unincorporated areas of Guilford County is 56.9%.<sup>5</sup> The following community profile has been derived from data

available in the 2020 Census and includes key datapoints from population, income, housing, education, employment, and economy figures. All data is reported for the most current year available.

The 2022 State Demographer updates indicate that approximately 48.3% of the county identifies as White, 34.6% as Black or African American, 7.5% as Two or More Races, and 5.2% as Asian, and 4.2% as Other Race.<sup>5</sup> The 2022 American Community Survey reports that 8.6% of the population identifies as Hispanic or Latino of any race<sup>6</sup>, an increase from 7.5% in 2015.<sup>7</sup>



**MAP 4: DIVERSITY INDEX**



Source: Esri estimates for 2022 from American Community Survey data

# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

**+26 sq mi**  
INCREASED DEVELOPED  
LAND SINCE 2001

**+12 sq mi**  
INCREASED IMPERVIOUS  
LAND SINCE 2001

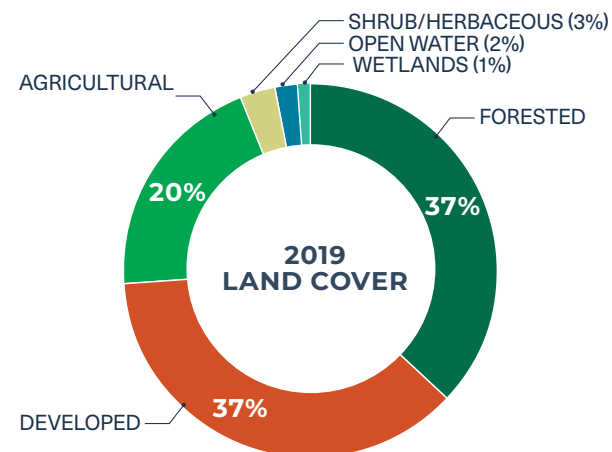
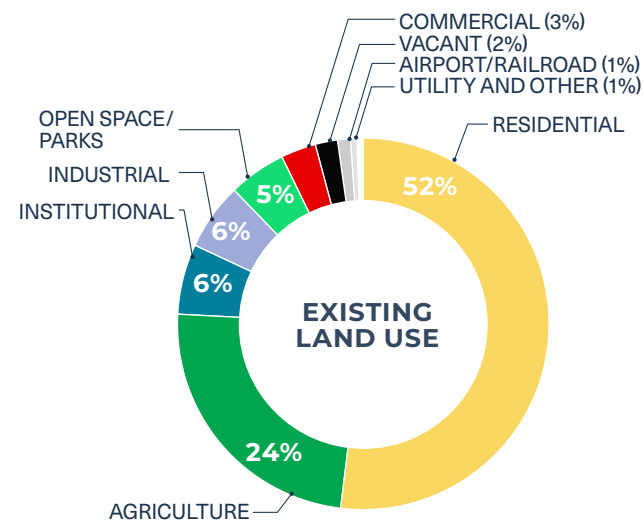
**> 700**  
SITES LISTED ON THE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
INVENTORY LIST



Photo source: Guilford County Historic Landmark Story Map



Sedgefield Planned Community, Guilford County. Photo source: Design Workshop



**-9%**  
DECREASE IN FORESTED  
LAND SINCE 2001

**-12%**  
DECREASE IN  
AGRICULTURAL LAND  
SINCE 2001

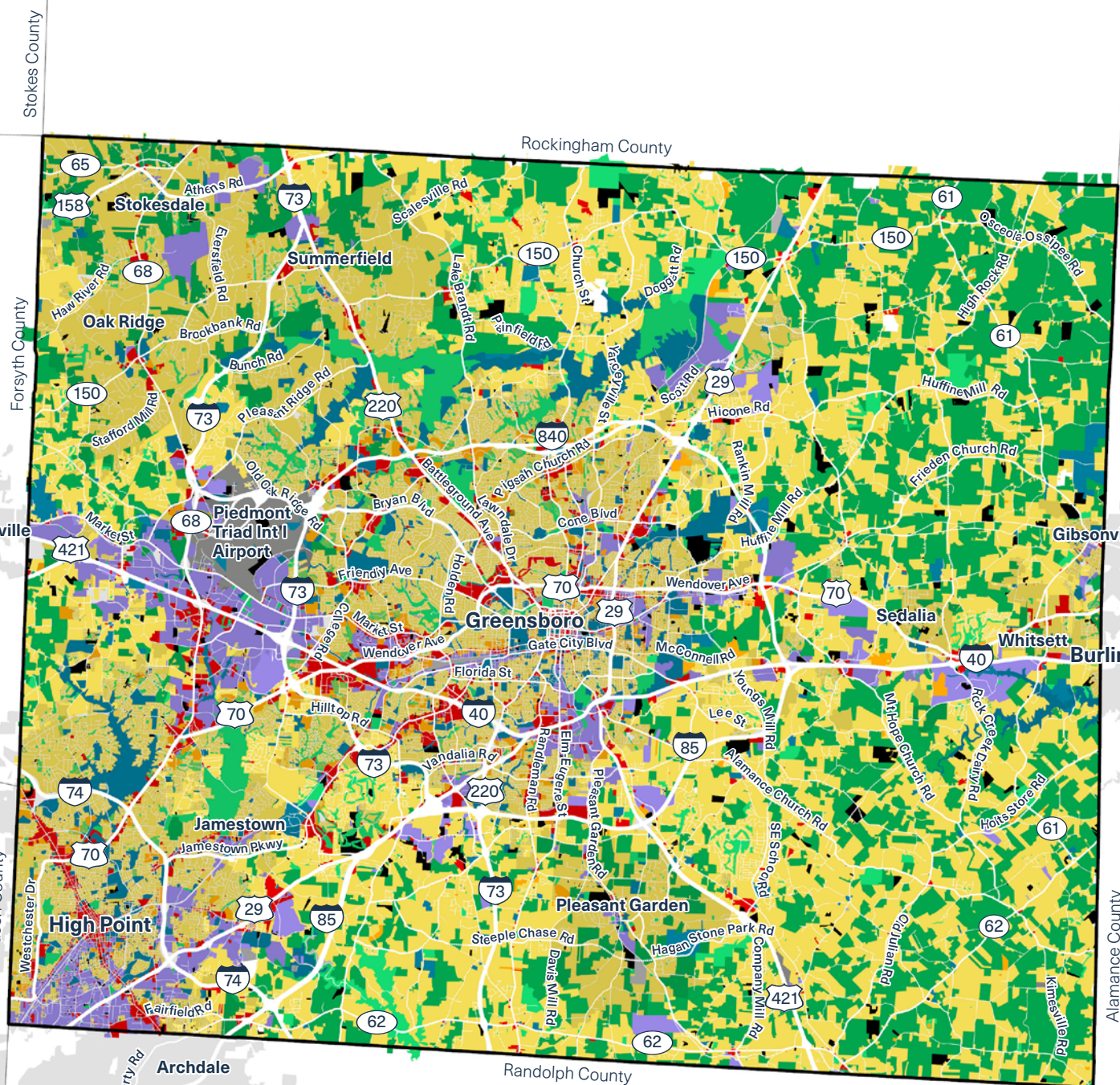
## EXISTING LAND USE AND LAND COVER

Between 2001 and 2019, Guilford County increased developed land by 26.13 square miles, 11.6 square miles of which is considered impervious.<sup>8</sup> As defined by the Multi-Resolution Land Characteristics Consortium (MRLC), developed land refers to any land with some constructed materials and may include open space that is slotted for future construction but where vegetation remains.<sup>9</sup> MRLC

defines impervious land as the percentage of developed land that includes constructed materials like buildings or roads.<sup>9</sup> Forested land decreased by nearly 9% between 2001 and 2019, and agricultural land decreased by nearly 12% in that same time period.<sup>9</sup>

## HISTORIC SITES

There are more than 700 sites listed on the Historic Preservation Inventory List in the county with a high concentration of historic sites within districts in Greensboro, Jamestown, High Point and Oak Ridge.

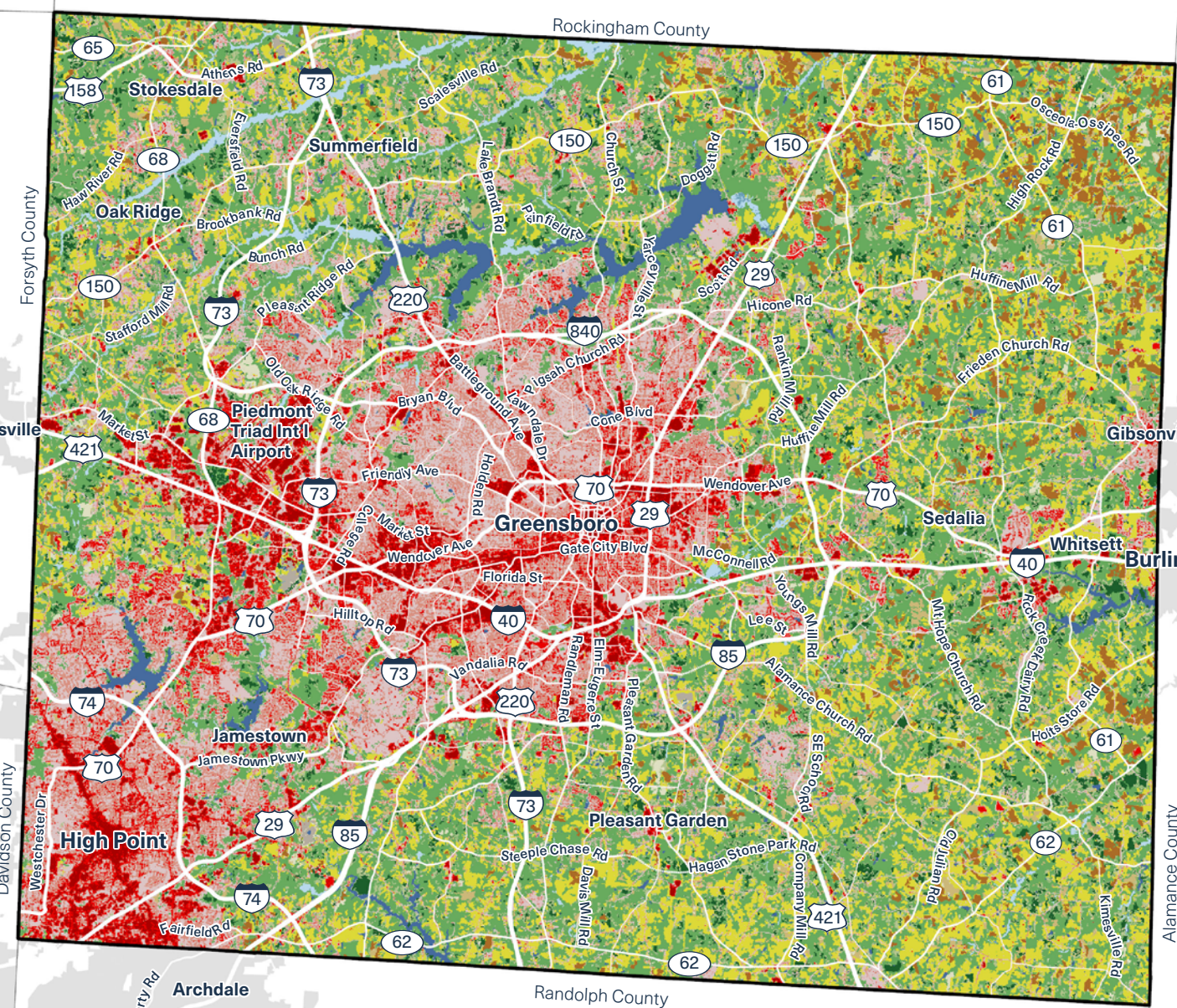
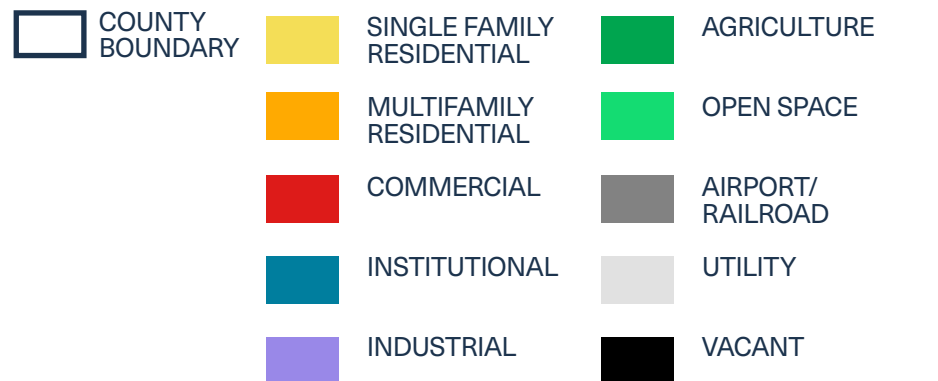


**MAP 5: LAND USE**

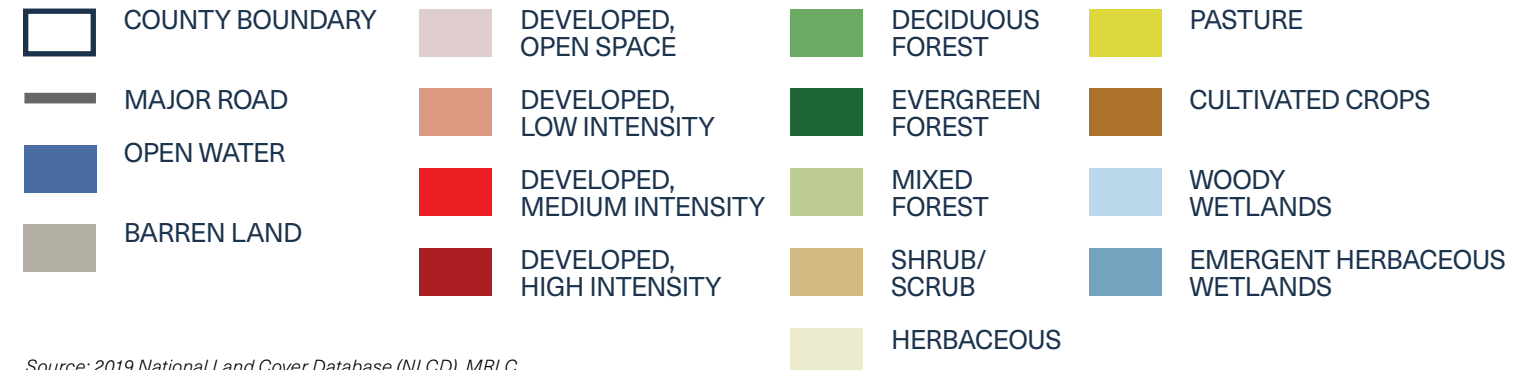
**EXISTING LAND USE**

The majority (52%) of the County consists of residential land uses, followed by agricultural land uses at 24%.<sup>9</sup>

Source: Guilford County GIS, 2023



**MAP 6: LAND COVER**



Source: 2019 National Land Cover Database (NLCD), MRLC

**DRAFT**

# HOUSING

**\$230,836**  
MEDIAN HOME VALUE,  
GUILFORD COUNTY

**\$59,876**  
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD  
INCOME, GUILFORD  
COUNTY

Guilford County has an estimated 236,180 housing units with 55% of units being identified as owner-occupied.<sup>4</sup> In unincorporated areas, 76% of housing units are owner-occupied.<sup>4</sup> There has been a general decline in home ownership in the county with owner-occupied units having decreased from 63% in 2000.<sup>4</sup> The median home value in Guilford County is \$230,836 and is expected to increase within the next five years.<sup>4</sup>

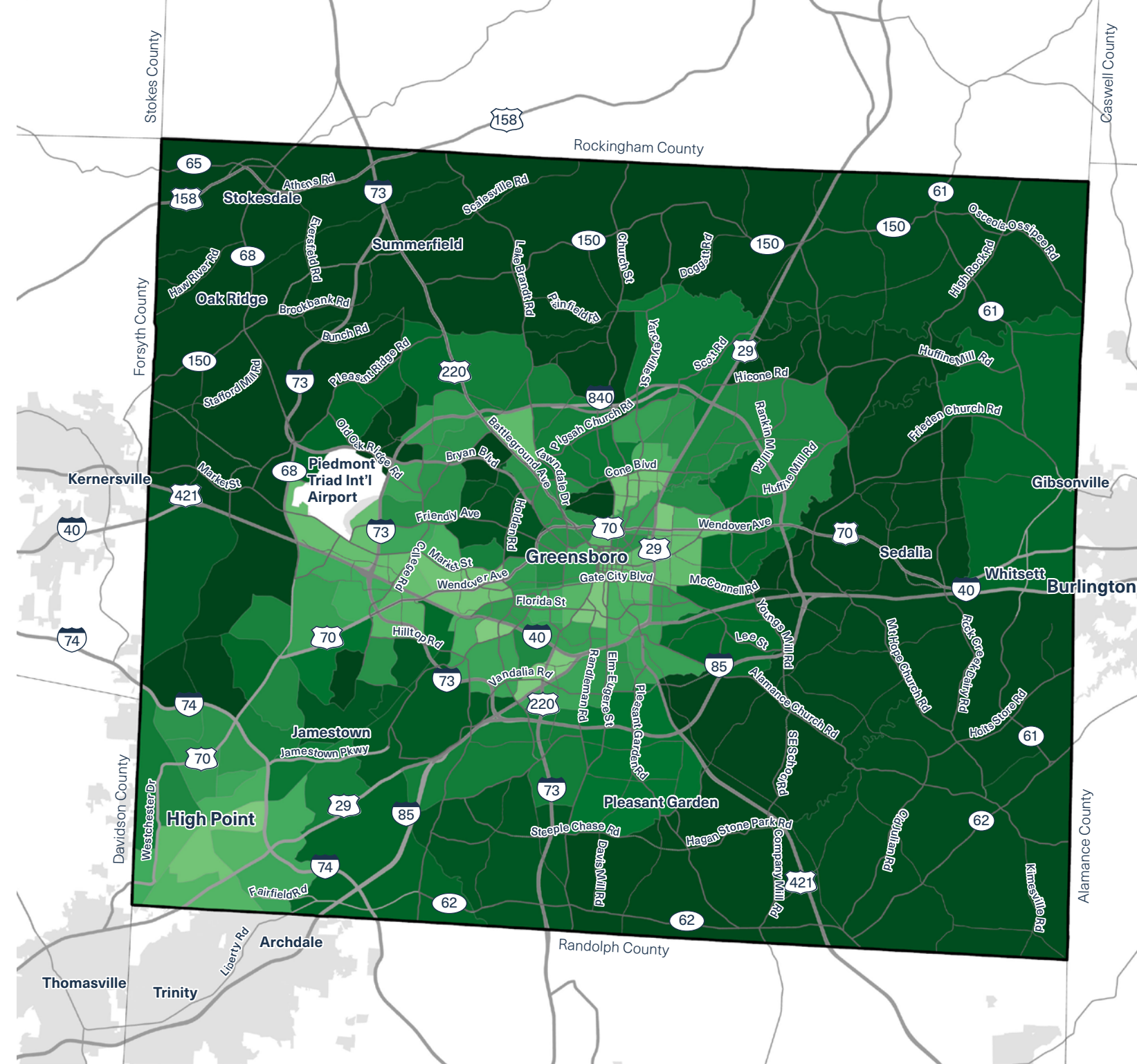
Since 2009, there have been zero housing unit permits for multi-

family housing in unincorporated areas (due in part to the lack of water and sewer infrastructure).<sup>10</sup> This may, in part, be due to ongoing annexations whereby former County areas are annexed and developed.

The total number of housing units in both unincorporated and incorporated areas have increased since 2010 and are expected to see continued growth over the next five years.<sup>4</sup> Vacancy rates are 6.27% in unincorporated areas in Guilford County, compared to a 13.8% vacancy rate statewide.<sup>4</sup>

	Incorporated Areas	Unincorporated Areas	Guilford County, NC
2010 Total Housing Units	187,588	30,427	218,015
2010 Owner Occupied Housing Units	50.93%	79.01%	54.84%
2010 Renter Occupied Housing Units	38.86%	13.66%	35.34%
2010 Vacant Housing Units	10.21%	7.33%	9.81%
2023 Total Housing Units	201,169	36,566	237,735
2023 Owner Occupied Housing Units	51.10%	75.56%	54.86%
2023 Renter Occupied Housing Units	41.72%	18.17%	38.09%
2023 Vacant Housing Units	7.18%	6.27%	7.04%
2028 Total Housing Units	205,194	38,239	243,433
2028 Owner Occupied Housing Units	51.94%	76.32%	55.77%
2028 Renter Occupied Housing Units	40.72%	17.86%	37.13%
2028 Vacant Housing Units	7.34%	5.82%	7.10%
2023 Median Home Value	\$228,582	\$310,509	\$240,016
2028 Median Home Value	\$296,773	\$390,544	\$309,860

Figure 1: Housing Characteristics



MAP 7: LOCATION AFFORDABILITY

The Location Affordability Index (LAI) is a national data set from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and uses American Community Survey data to determine the percentage that median-income families can expect to spend of their income on housing and transportation costs.

Source: Location Affordability Index, HUD Exchange, 2019

45% is considered the threshold for affordability.

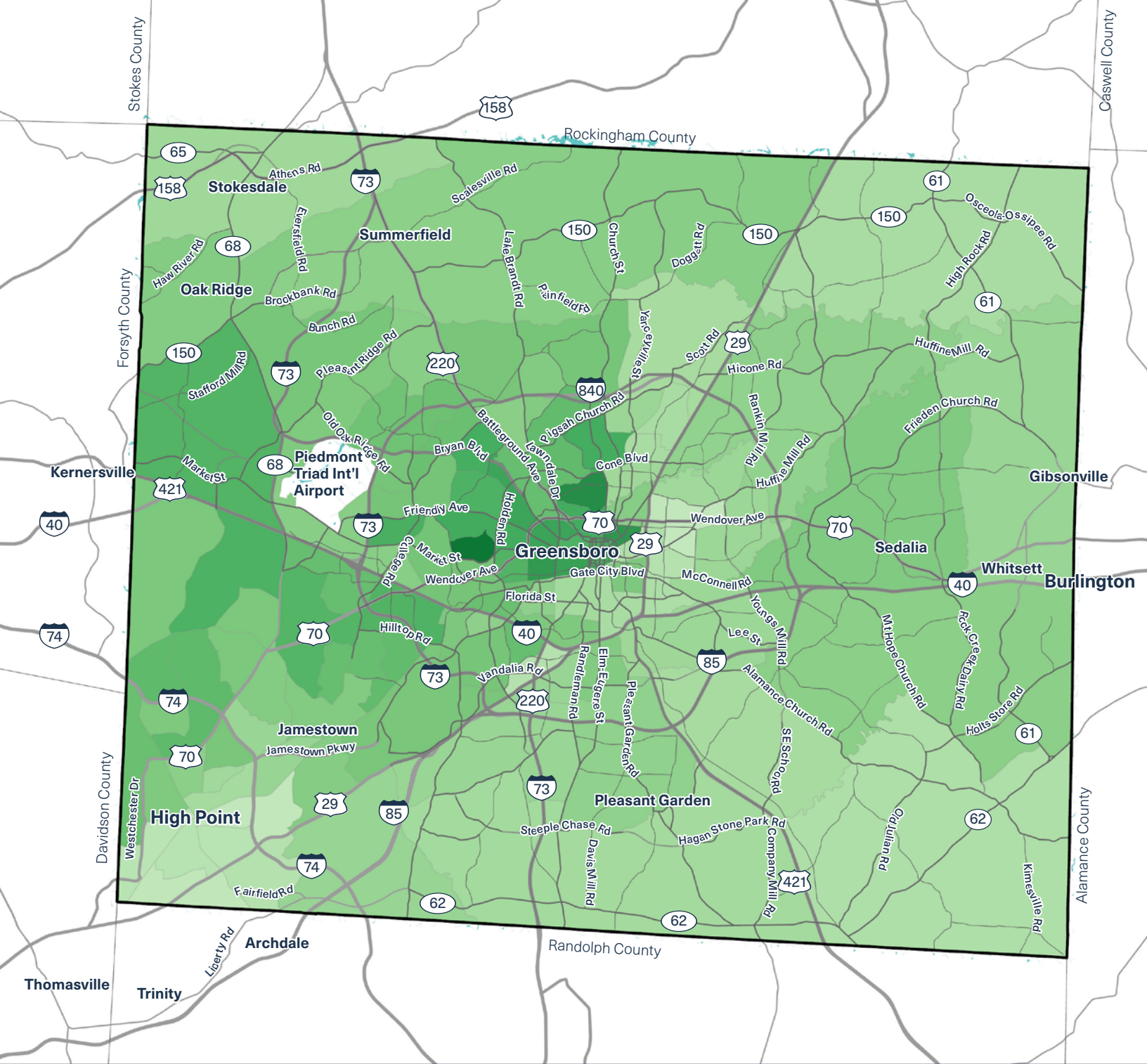
Housing and transportation costs are approximately 53% to 66% of gross income for those earning the median household income in Guilford County.<sup>11</sup>

**LOCATION AFFORDABILITY INDEX (HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION COSTS AS A PERCENT OF INCOME FOR MEDIAN-INCOME FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS)**

**66% (LEAST AFFORDABLE IN GUILFORD COUNTY)**

**44% (MOST AFFORDABLE IN GUILFORD COUNTY)**



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### MAP 8: HOUSING AFFORDABILITY



The Housing Affordability Index (HAI), is a national dataset that looks at the ability for a typical household to purchase an existing home in an area based on housing costs as a percent of income. A household is typically considered cost-burdened if they spend more

than 30 percent of their income on housing-related costs.

-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  MAJOR ROAD



**HOUSING AFFORDABILITY INDEX**  
(HOUSING COSTS AS A PERCENT OF INCOME FOR MEDIAN-INCOME FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS)

-  37% (LEAST AFFORDABLE IN GUILFORD COUNTY)
-  15% (MOST AFFORDABLE IN GUILFORD COUNTY)

Source: Housing Affordability Index, HUD Exchange, 2019

# TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

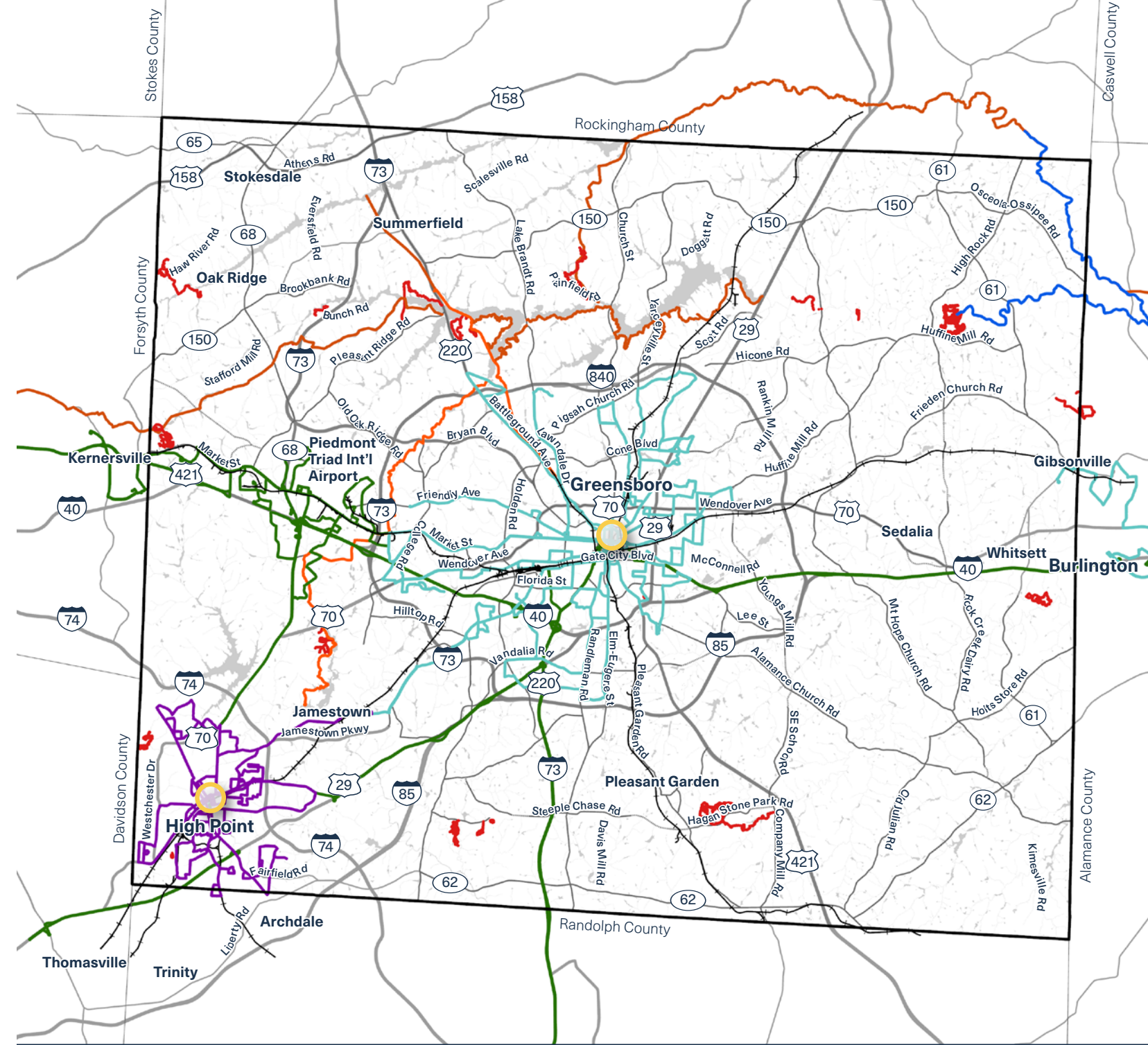
## MOBILITY PLANNING

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Planning Organizations (RPOs) conduct planning studies on a regular basis to update their planning documents, which identify state- and federally-funded transportation projects within the MPO and RPO service areas and outline scheduling and funding.<sup>14</sup> These planning studies result in detailed plan documents, which are referred to as a Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP), Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan (MTIP). These plans identify key projects and funding priorities for each area. An MTP and MTIP are long-range plans that are developed by the MPO and articulate the community's goals and vision for transportation-related improvements.

- » The **MTP** identifies a list of projects and goals that are relevant to the community. These are required to be funded in the plan cycle, which is typically five years.
- » An **MTIP** identifies the funding mechanisms and schedules for programs and improvements included in the MTP. These are typically updated on an annual basis.
- » A **CTP** is a long-range planning document that is developed by NCDOT with input from each individual MPO to ensure the plan addresses the needs of the area. The projects identified in a CTP may not have funding immediately available, but are included to address a specific long-term need in the community.

Guilford County has an extensive multi-modal network consisting of roads, trails, railways, greenways, and regional trails, including the Mountains-to-Sea Trail. Over 78% of residents in Guilford County commute to work by car, while 8.7% work from home, 8.2% carpool, 1.8% walk, 1.5% take public transportation, and 0.2% bike to work.<sup>4</sup> The average commute time in Guilford County is 22.4 minutes.<sup>12</sup> There are 211,905 residents who stay within the county for work while 44,256 residents commute outside of the county.<sup>4</sup>

Approximately 80% of roads in North Carolina are managed by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).<sup>13</sup> The planning process for transportation, which includes the area's highways, public transit, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure and facilities, is primarily managed by the Greensboro Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (Greensboro MPO), the High Point Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (HPMPO), the Burlington Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization (BGMP), and the Piedmont Triad Regional Planning Organization (PTRPO), which are described in greater detail on page 48.



MAP 9: MULTIMODAL NETWORK

- |                      |                |                        |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| COUNTY BOUNDARY      | RAILROAD       | EXISTING TRAIL         |
| MAJOR ROAD           | AMTRAK STATION | PROPOSED TRAIL         |
| PART ROUTE           | GTA/LINK ROUTE | EXISTING ON-ROAD TRAIL |
| HIGH POINT BUS ROUTE | BLUEWAY        |                        |



Note: Not reflected in this map, the PART route in the vicinity of the Piedmont Triad Int'l Airport will be converting to a service area or demand response system beginning August 2024.

The Greensboro MPO's recently adopted transportation plan, the 2024-2033 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Plan (MTIP), includes the Highway Program, Non-Highway Programs (aviation, rail, transit, pedestrian and bicycle networks), and the Statewide Program.<sup>14</sup> The Statewide Program consists of umbrella projects that can be anywhere in the state. The MTIP is considered to be a subset of the state of North Carolina's plan, the 2024-2033 State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP).<sup>14</sup>

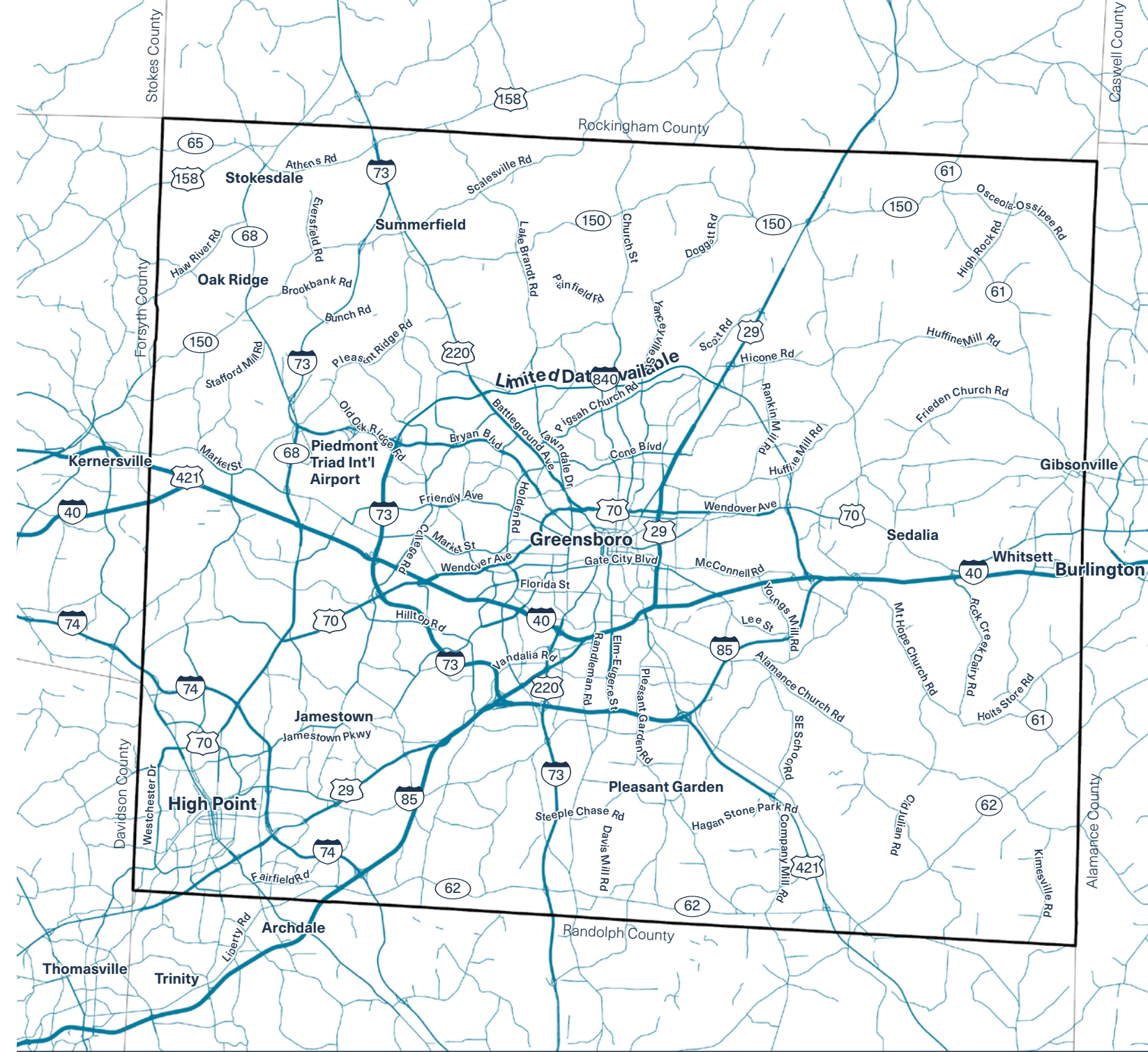
The High Point MPO adopted its Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) in 2010, with updates in 2020 for bike and pedestrian facilities, highways, public transportation, and rail.<sup>15</sup> Its 2045 MTP was adopted in 2020, with

goals related to supporting the efficiency of the transportation system, increasing the safety and security of the transportation system for all users, and supporting the economic vitality of the metropolitan area.<sup>16</sup>

The Burlington Graham MPO adopted its CTP in 2022, and their 2045 MTP in 2020, which included goals around safety, mobility choices, equity in access to transportation options, and integration of land use and transportation planning.<sup>17</sup>

The Piedmont Triad RPO has adopted a number of transportation and other planning documents for the region. It also provides planning assistance to communities in the region.<sup>18</sup>

The Greensboro metropolitan planning area includes all of Greensboro, Oak Ridge, Sedalia, Summerfield, Stokesdale, Pleasant Garden, and most unincorporated areas in Guilford County. Remaining areas fall within the High Point Urban Area MPO and Burlington Graham MPO planning areas, respectively. The 2024-2033 MTIP provides for \$1,144,007,000 in future investments into the Greensboro MPO planning area over a ten-year period.<sup>19</sup> The majority of monies are allocated to regional and division roadway improvements (52.05%) and statewide roadway improvements (21.01%), respectively. Public transit will receive approximately 7.85% of funding, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities will receive 3.39% of total funding over the course of ten years.<sup>19</sup>



MAP 10: AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC COUNTS\*

AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (1000s)

- <10
- 10-25
- 25-50
- >50

Source: NCDOT ADT, 2023  
\* Limited data associated with newly opened roadway.

**22.4 minutes**  
AVERAGE COMMUTE TIME

**211,905**  
RESIDENTS STAY WITHIN THE COUNTY FOR WORK

**44,256**  
RESIDENTS COMMUTE OUT OF THE COUNTY FOR WORK



Covington Neighborhood, Guilford County. Photo source: Design Workshop

# ECONOMY

Guilford County is part of the Piedmont Triad Regional Council (PTRC), with Greensboro and High Point serving as centers for the highest concentration of jobs in the county. Business profiles in Guilford County as a whole largely fall into three main categories: Service (38.8%), Retail Trade (19.36%), and Finance/Insurance/Real Estate (10.28%).<sup>4</sup> This trend is also generally consistent throughout incorporated areas of the county as well as unincorporated areas, although it should be noted that unincorporated areas have a much

larger percentage of construction businesses at 13.46%.<sup>4</sup> The table below includes a breakdown of business profiles in the county, and it distinguishes the incorporated and unincorporated areas from one another.

When looking at the number of employees by sector (Figure 3), the top employment sectors within unincorporated areas include Service (39.76%), Transportation (17.48%), and Education (13.48%).<sup>4</sup> Within incorporated areas, the top employment sectors were Service (38.75%), Retail Trade

(20.99%), and Manufacturing (13.30%).<sup>4</sup> It is worth noting that the emerging regional Greensboro-Randolph Mega Site, shown in Map 10, is expected to create more than 5,000 jobs within the manufacturing industry.<sup>20</sup> The county is also experiencing an aviation employment cluster around the airport, with the introduction of HAECO, HondaJet, Marshall, and Boom facilities.

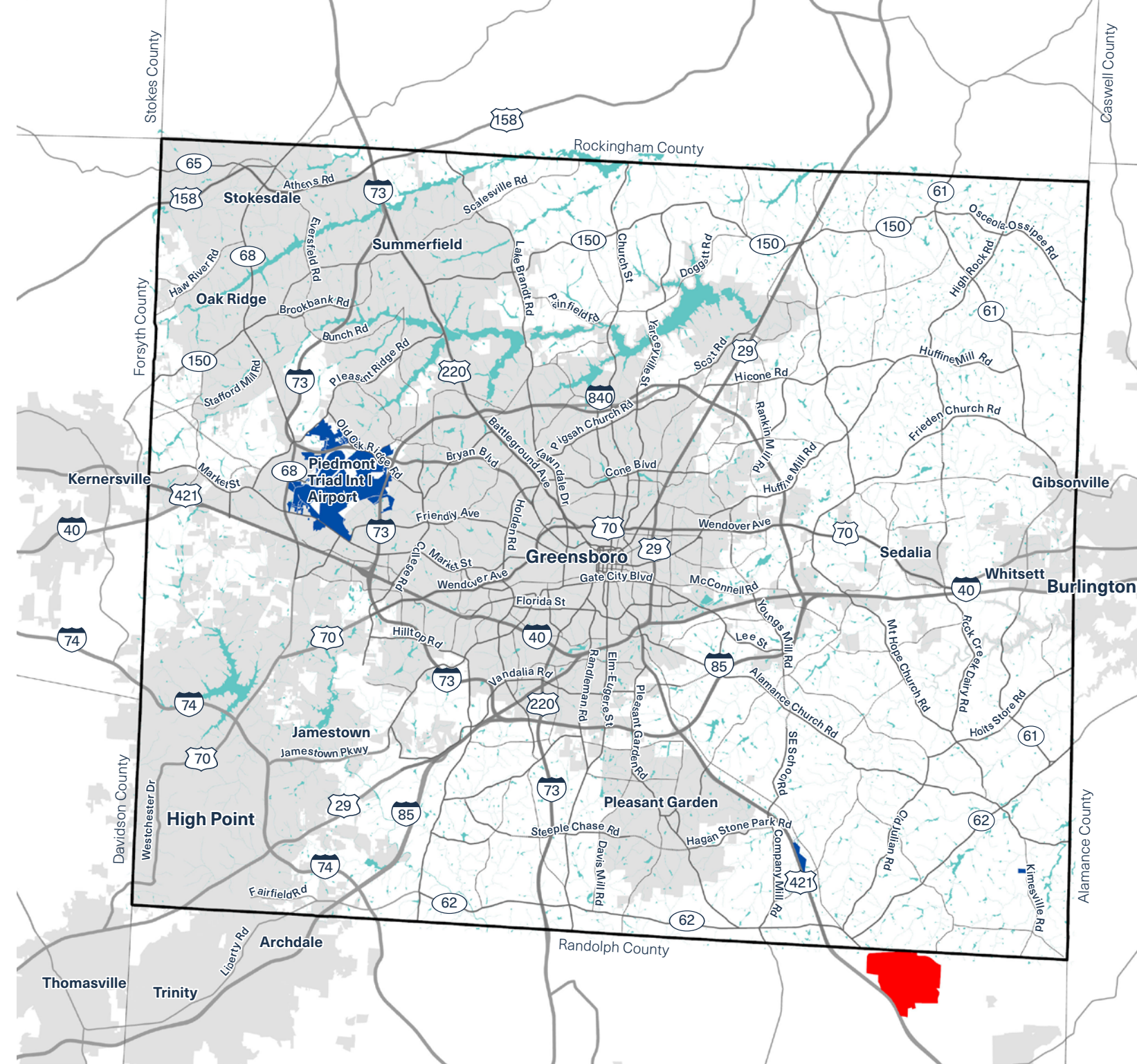
Health services jobs fall under the Service business employment sector and make up the largest sector in the county with over 35,000 employees.

Business	Incorporated Areas	Unincorporated Areas	Guilford County, NC
Government	1.87%	1.73%	1.86%
Manufacturing	4.04%	3.4%	3.99%
Wholesale Trade	3.87%	3.76%	3.86%
Transportation	2.86%	5.03%	2.89%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	10.71%	5.84%	10.28%
Agriculture/Mining	1.5%	6.75%	1.97%
Unclassified Establishments	10.3%	9.75%	10.25%
Retail Trade	19.94%	13.46%	19.36%
Construction	4.99%	13.46%	5.74%
Service	39.06%	36.16%	38.8%

Figure 2: Business Profile

Business	Incorporated Areas	Unincorporated Areas	Guilford County, NC
Government	4.35%	2.50%	4.22%
Manufacturing	13.30%	10.30%	13.08%
Wholesale Trade	5.38%	3.11%	5.21%
Transportation	2.47%	17.48%	3.57%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	6.82%	2.10%	6.47%
Agriculture/Mining	0.80%	3.26%	0.98%
Unclassified Establishments	1.42%	0.65%	1.36%
Retail Trade	20.99%	12.74%	20.39%
Construction	4.31%	7.80%	4.57%
Service	38.75%	39.76%	38.82%
Education	6.04%	13.48%	6.58%

Figure 3: Top Employment Sectors

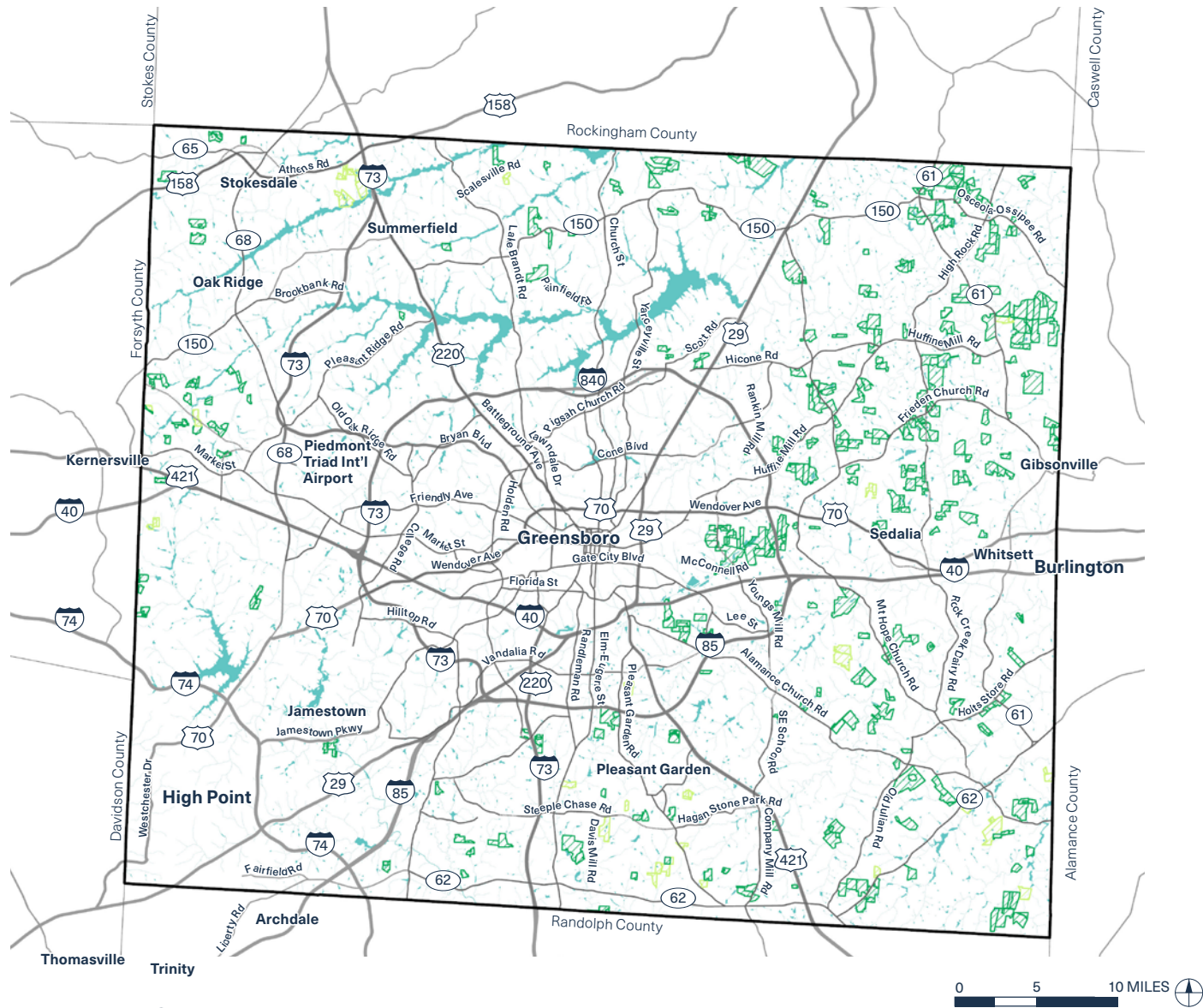


MAP 11: MEGASITE LOCATION

- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- AIRPORT
- WATERBODIES
- GREENSBORO-RANDOLPH MEGA SITE
- INCORPORATED AREA
- MAJOR ROAD

Source: Guilford County GIS, 2023





**MAP 12: VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS (VAD)**

- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- MAJOR ROAD
- WATERBODIES
- VAD BOUNDARIES
- ENHANCED VAD BOUNDARIES

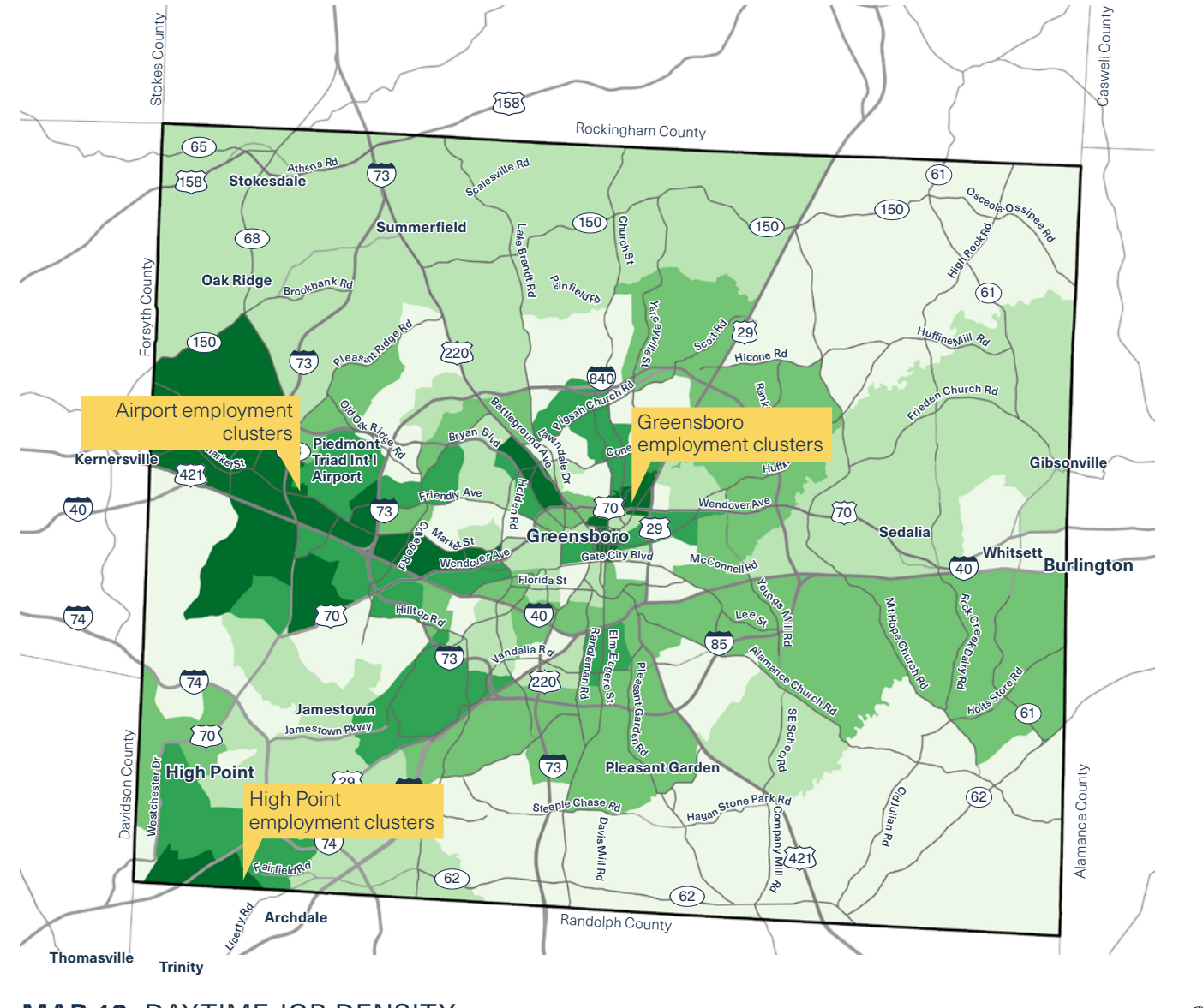
**AGRICULTURE**

As illustrated in Figure 3, the Agriculture and Mining sector includes more jobs in the unincorporated portions of the county when compared to the incorporated areas or the state as a whole (3.26% compared to 0.80% and 0.98%, respectively).<sup>4</sup> As of 2022, the value of livestock, dairy and poultry, crops, and agriculture-related government payments was over \$68 million.<sup>21</sup>

While Guilford County has a robust program to protect agricultural lands and working farms, which contributes to the higher percentage, further opportunities for farmland preservation is of interest. The Voluntary Agricultural District (VAD) program enables farmers to protect areas of their land from development to enable commercial agricultural uses. This is part of a larger program in North Carolina to protect the agricultural industry.<sup>22</sup>

Source: Guilford County GIS, 2023

**DRAFT**



**MAP 13: DAYTIME JOB DENSITY**

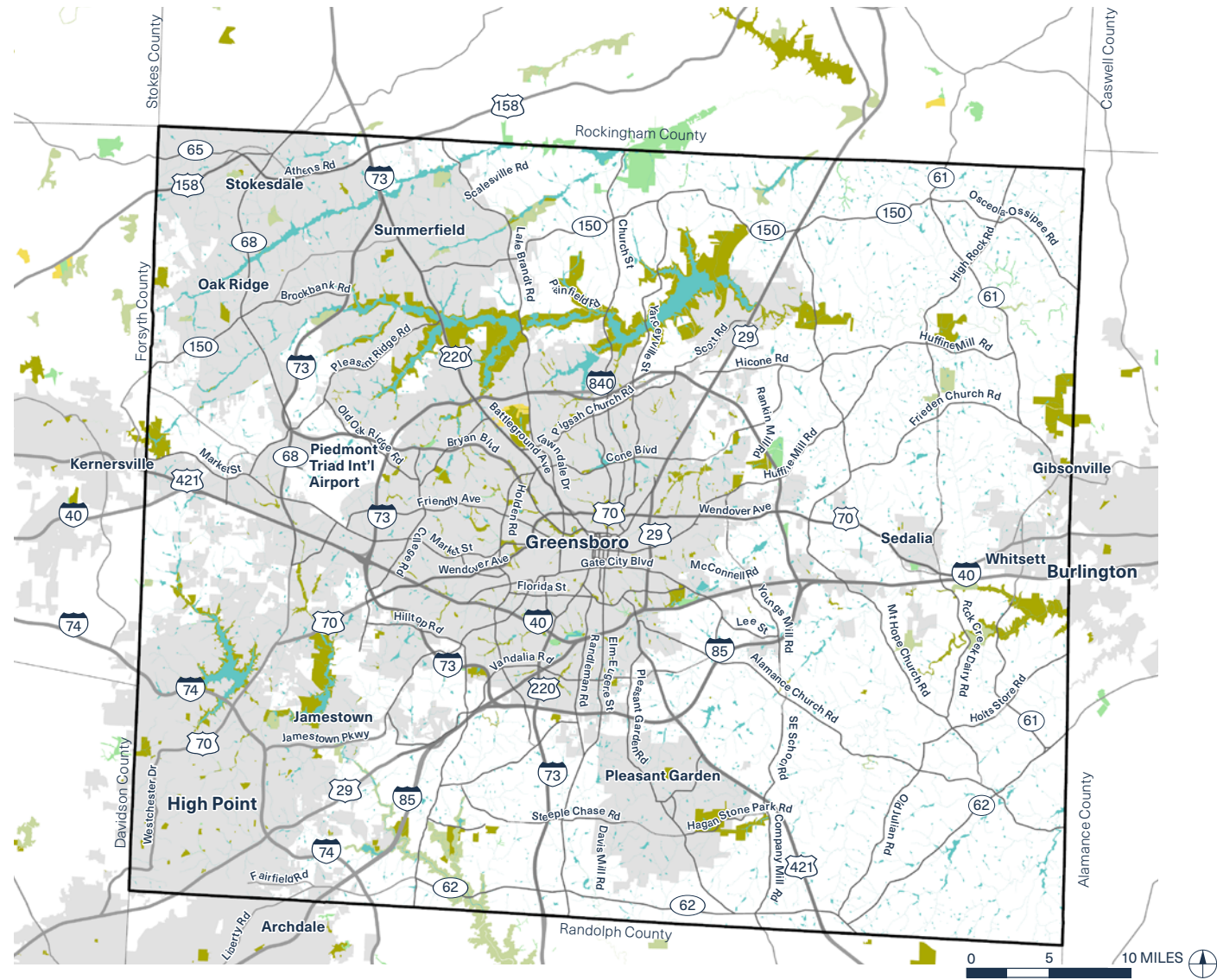
- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- MAJOR ROAD
- DAYTIME POPULATION OF WORKERS**
- <1000
- 1000 - 2000
- 2000 - 3000
- 3000 - 6000
- >6000

**DAYTIME POPULATION**

As shown in the Daytime Job Density map, the distribution of jobs in the county by the daytime population of workers is disproportionately skewed to the western and southwestern areas of the county near the Piedmont Triad International Airport and High Point, with more targeted pockets dispersed across Greensboro, including downtown and the Cone Helath center along Wendover.<sup>4</sup>

Source: Esri estimates for 2022 from American Community Survey data

# NATURAL ENVIRONMENT



**MAP 14: OPEN SPACES**

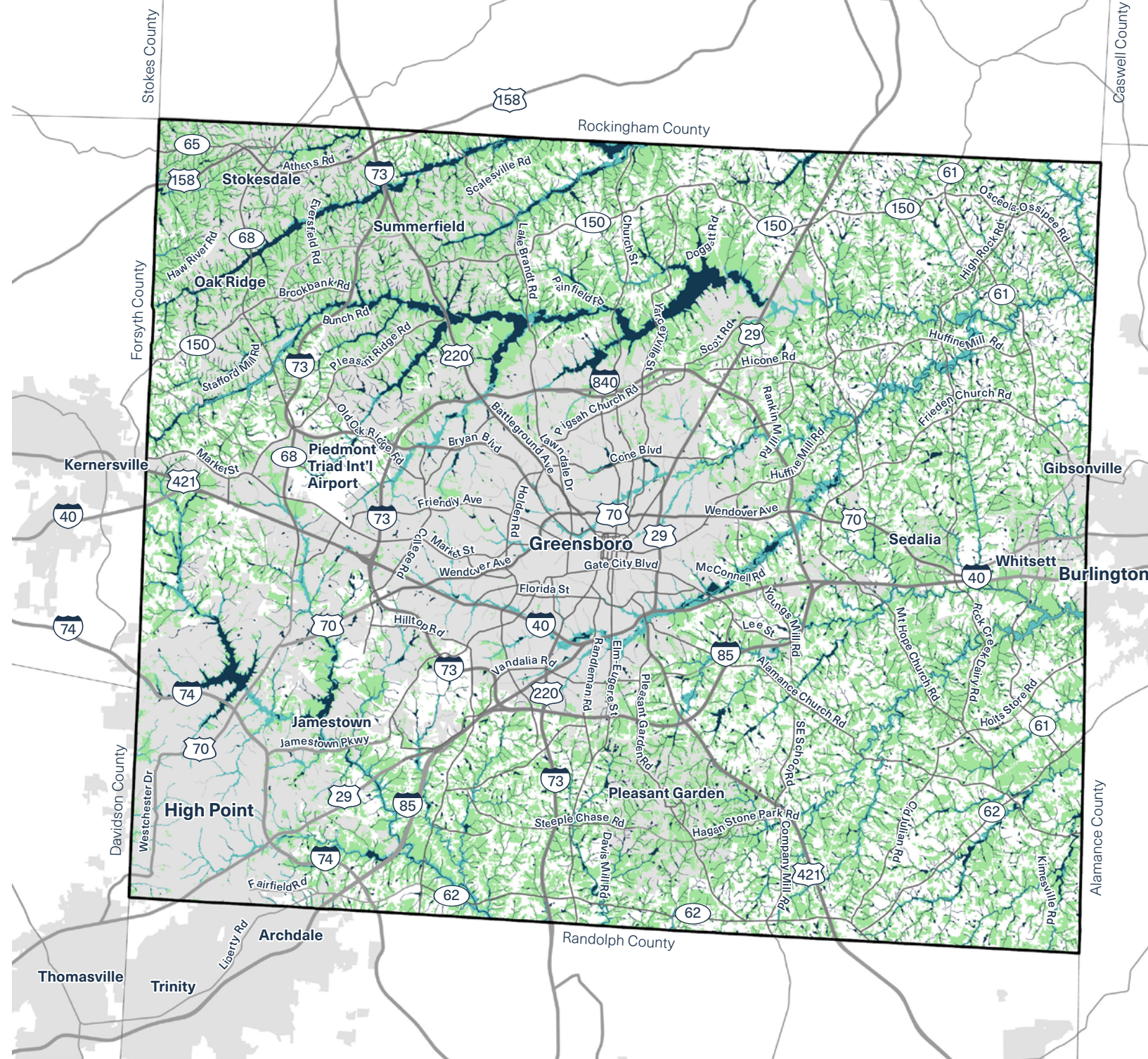
- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- MAJOR ROAD
- WATERBODIES
- INCORPORATED AREA
- MANAGEMENT ENTITY**
- FEDERAL
- LOCAL
- PRIVATE
- STATE

There are more than 32,000 acres that are considered to be managed for conservation within the county.<sup>23</sup> Approximately 5,110 acres of those managed areas are either owned entirely by Guilford County or jointly with another municipality.<sup>8</sup>

The majority of conservation lands in Guilford County are managed by the County and municipalities, along with several privately-managed conservation areas in the southwestern part of the county.<sup>8</sup>

Conservation lands in the county are documented by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP). This program produces a map of conservation lands that are held in permanent conservation, and those that are managed by federal, state, local, and private entities. NCNHP also identifies natural areas as sites of special biodiversity significance due to the presence of rare species, unique natural communities, important animal assemblages, or other ecological features.<sup>22</sup>

Source: Guilford County GIS, 2023



**MAP 15: ENVIRONMENT**

- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- INCORPORATED AREA
- MAJOR ROAD
- FOREST LAND COVER
- WATERBODIES
- STREAM
- FLOODWAY
- 100 YEAR FLOOD

Source: Guilford County GIS, 2023, North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (NCNHP), Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Division of Land and Water Stewardship, National Landcover Database (NLCD)

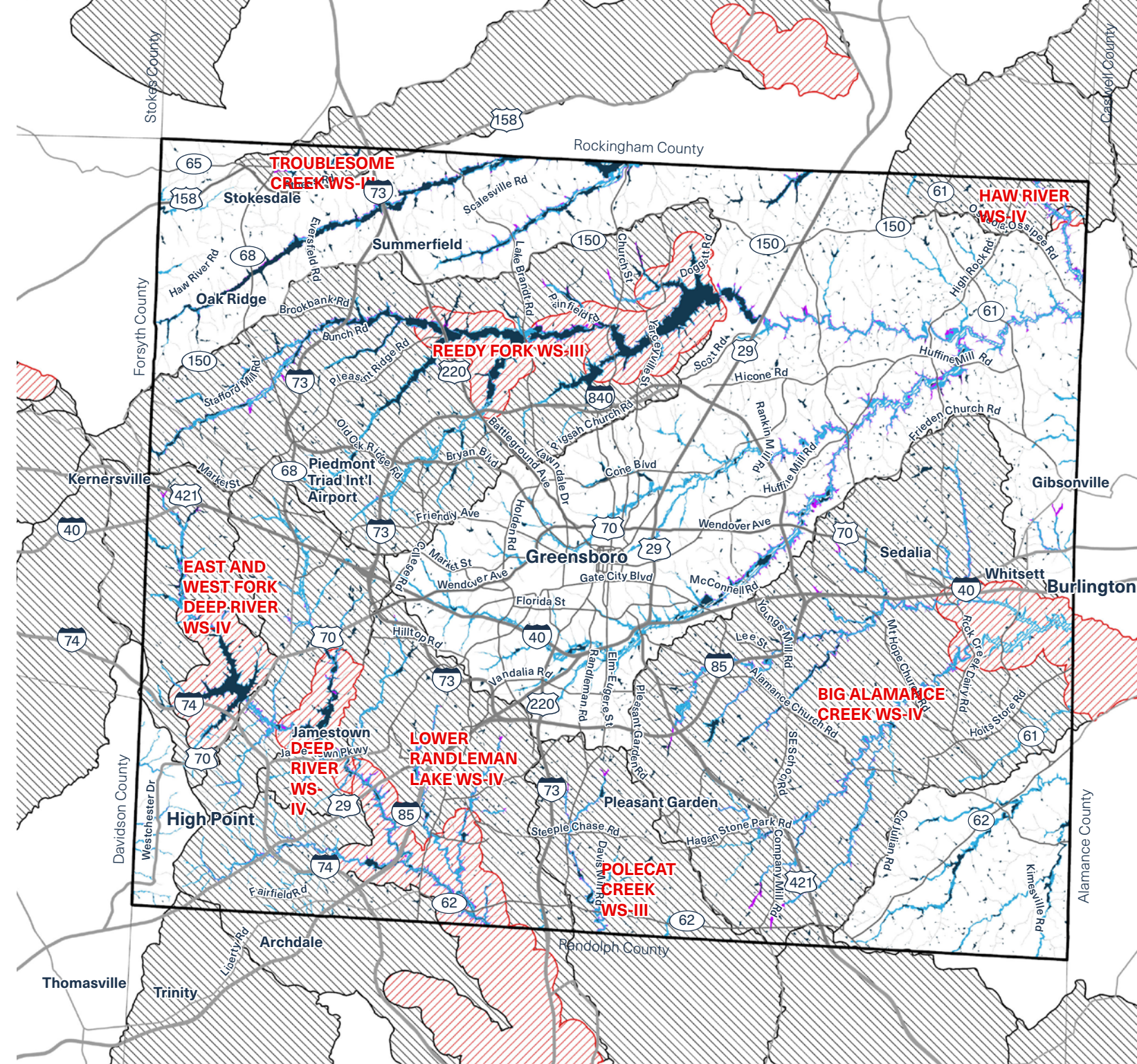
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County Floodplain Regulations →

Approximately 7% (almost 30,000 acres) of the county is within either the 100-year or 500-year floodplain.<sup>8</sup> Guilford County has floodplain regulations in place and requires minimum stream buffers based on the watershed tier classification and development requirements.



Company Mill Preserve, Guilford County. Photo source: Design Workshop



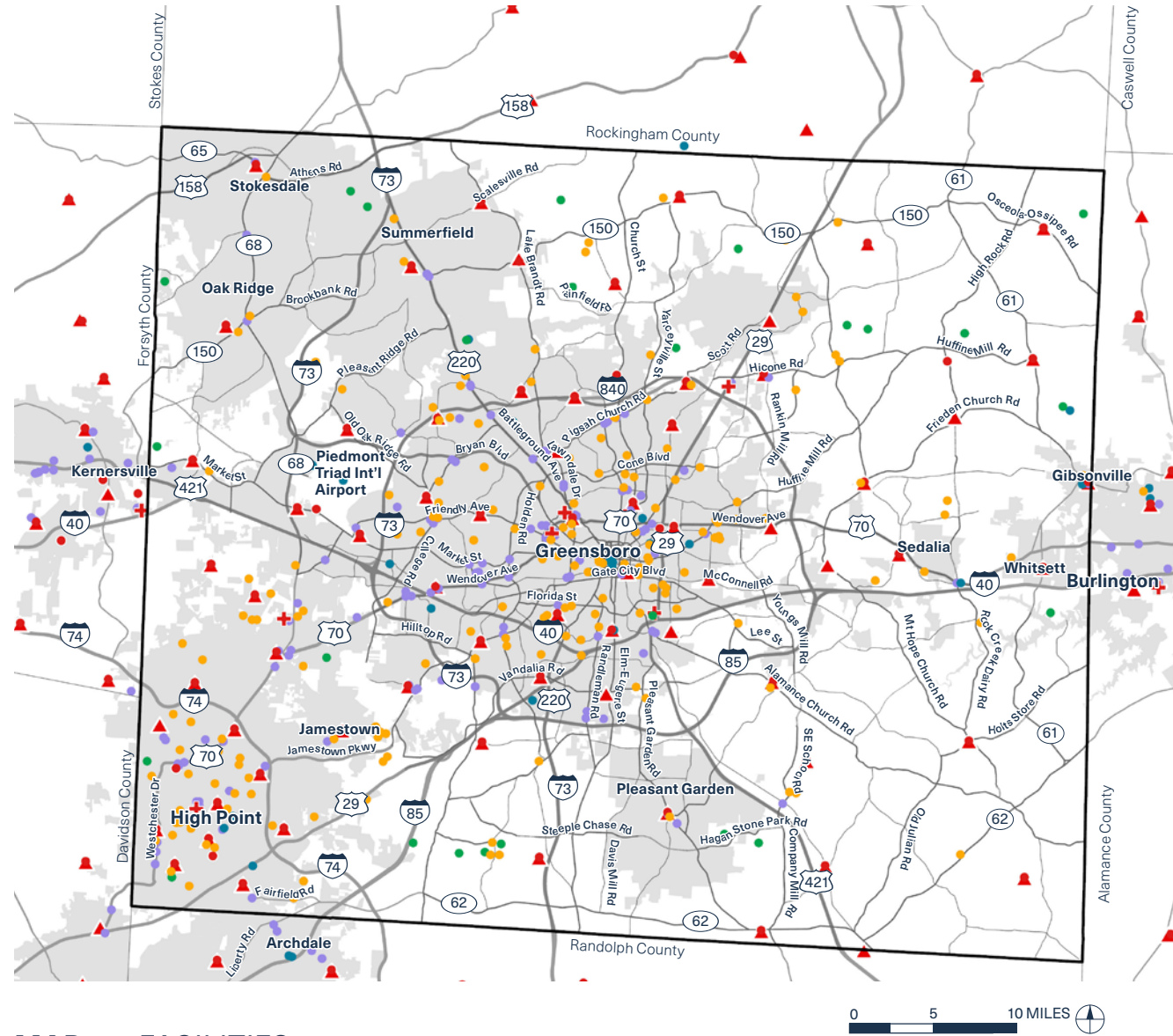
**MAP 16: HYDROLOGY**

- |                     |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| COUNTY BOUNDARY     | FLOOD ZONE                  |
| MAJOR ROAD          | 100 YEAR (1% ANNUAL RISK)   |
| PROTECTED WATERSHED | 500 YEAR (.02% ANNUAL RISK) |
| CRITICAL WATERSHED  |                             |
| WATERBODIES         |                             |



Source: Guilford County GIS, 2023

# SERVICES



**MAP 17: FACILITIES**

- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- MAJOR ROAD
- FACILITY**
- FIRE STATION
- HOSPITAL
- EMS
- PHARMACY
- POLICE STATION
- SCHOOL\*
- PARK

The facilities map illustrates the dispersal of key services throughout the County, including fire stations, hospitals, EMS, pharmacies, law enforcement, schools, and parks. The majority of services and facilities are located in areas with higher population density and within incorporated areas. This can make it more difficult to serve the unincorporated portions of the County where services are more spread out.

Source: Guilford County GIS, 2023; NC One Map

\* Schools include charter, private and public schools as well as colleges and universities.



73 Fire Stations	125 Pharmacies
7 Hospitals	25 Police Stations
69 EMS Locations	184 Schools
	25 Parks



Northeast Park, Gibsonville, North Carolina. Photo source: Design Workshop

## HEALTH

[Community Health Assessment](#) →

Guilford County completed a Community Health Assessment in 2019 and is in the process of updating it to reflect post-pandemic trends and health outcomes. The assessment identifies community health concerns that can be addressed. The county has one of the highest infant mortality rates in the state, and significant effort and resources have been directed toward improving these statistics.<sup>24</sup>

## PARKS AND RECREATION

Guilford County owns or manages a system of seven regional parks, ten passive parks, over 4,500 acres of open space, and over 60 miles of trails. The County is currently drafting a Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan to identify a vision for the future of the parks system.

## EMERGENCY SERVICES

Guilford County provides some emergency services throughout the county, including EMS, fire, Sheriff, fire inspections, and emergency management. The County's EMS is the only paramedic-level provider of pre-hospital services in the unincorporated part of the county.<sup>25</sup> The Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is a 501(c)(3) organization that works to improve coordination between public and private sectors, particularly related to hazardous waste.<sup>24</sup>

There are 22 Fire Districts in the county, many of which are staffed by volunteers. The County provides fire inspection services for development and fire investigation throughout the county, with the exception of Greensboro and High Point.

## EDUCATION

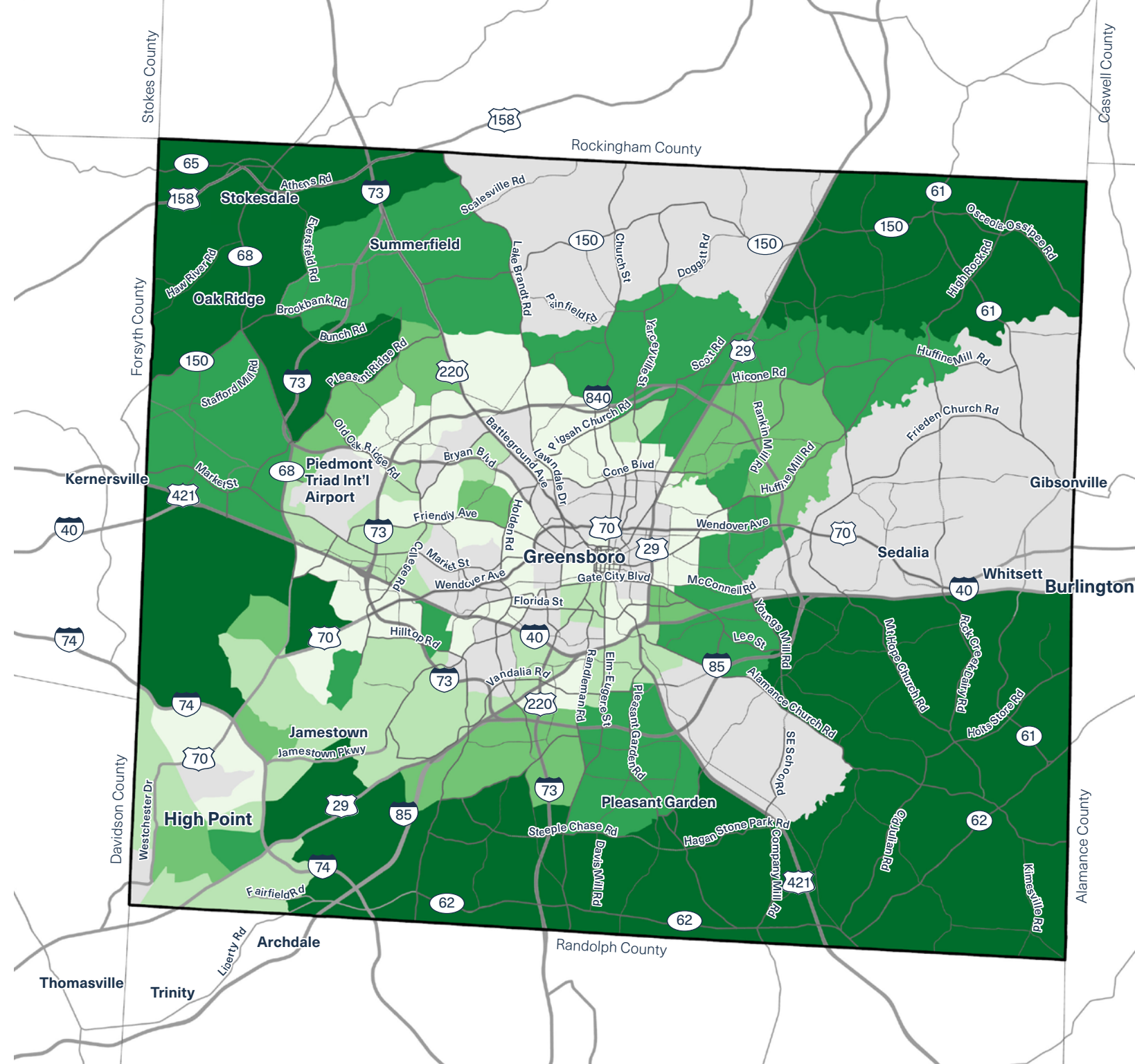
Guilford County Schools serves nearly 70,000 students at 126 schools. It is currently the third largest school district in the state and one of the forty largest in the nation. In 1991, the community voted to combine three different districts into a single unified school district to better serve the educational needs of the community's children. The school district has completed a strategic plan to support learning and opportunity into the future. Additionally, the school district passed two bond referendums totaling \$2 billion in 2022 to provide technology upgrades,

safer and healthier learning environments for Guilford County students.<sup>26</sup>



## FOOD ACCESS

It is important to note that people in rural areas of the county are less likely to have nearby access to a supermarket. This is also true in some central areas, including Southeast Greensboro. Higher scores, as denoted by the darker shades of green on the Food Access Map (MAP 18) reflect the percentage of the population who reside more than one mile from a grocery store or supermarket.







The data mapped is a national data set from the USDA Food Access Research Atlas (FARA) which includes supercenters, supermarkets and large grocery stores and excludes stores such as convenience and dollar stores. Smaller stores are excluded because there is a lack of consistent data on where the food sources are, what they carry and when they are open.



MAP 18: FOOD ACCESS

-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  MAJOR ROAD

### PERCENT OF POPULATION BEYOND 1 MILE FROM A SUPERMARKET

-  80-100 (LOW ACCESS)
-  60-80
-  40-60
-  20-40
-  <20
-  NO DATA (DATA FOR EVERY VARIABLE IS NOT AVAILABLE FOR ALL CENSUS TRACTS)

Source: USDA Food Access Research Atlas (FARA), 2019

[Ignite Learning Strategic Plan](#) →

DRAFT

# INFRASTRUCTURE

Changes in the economy, climate, and shifts in lifestyle choices may affect how Guilford County and its partners plan for maintaining and investing in future infrastructure. For Guilford County, there are both positives and negatives associated with not being at the helm of the provision of typical public services – including the development, operations, maintenance, and expansion of public infrastructure. The County is reliant on its partnerships and ongoing collaborations with local and regional organizations to fulfill its residents' needs and its vision for the future.

Guilford County does not currently provide public water or sewer services; however, the City of Greensboro has plans for water and sewer service extensions in the immediate and near future, which are illustrated in Map 17, which include the limits of the county's incorporated areas. The availability of the water and sewer service extensions, or growth area tiers, are governed by connection policies that can influence development through either rate structures or connection restrictions.

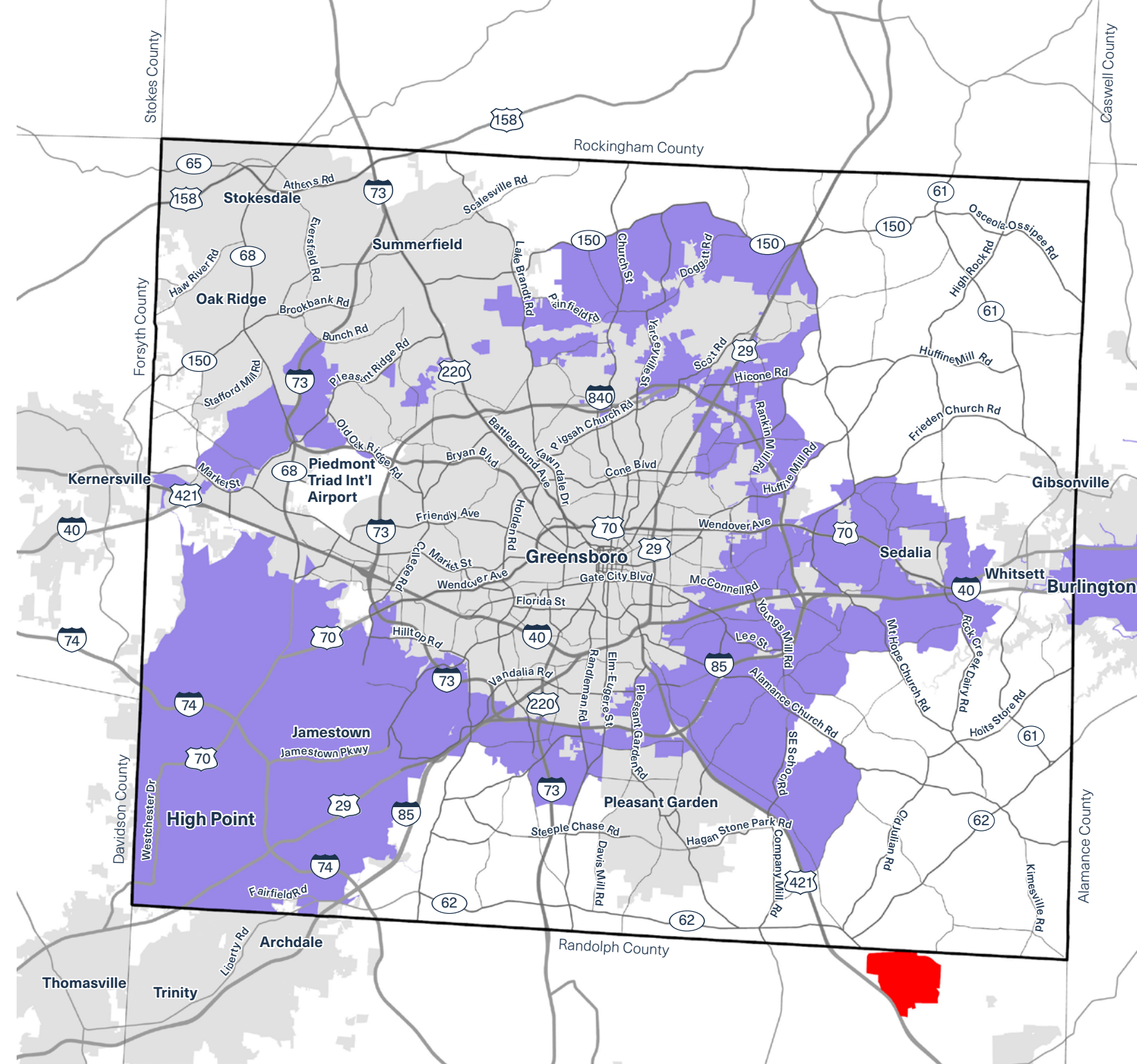
Additional services are provided by Burlington, High Point and Kernersville. Projects like the

Mega Site will provide for site-specific availability and provision of infrastructure, public services, and other resources necessary to support economic development efforts in the county.






As the county considers future expansions to infrastructure it will be important to work with existing regional drinking water authorities and plan to coordinate as an active partner in any regional wastewater authorities that may develop. This will be of particular importance in areas such as the southeast where existing soil characteristics limit the use of septic systems for wastewater treatment.



Guilford County Farm. Photo source: Design Workshop



MAP 19: SERVICES

-  COUNTY BOUNDARY
-  MAJOR ROAD
-  AREAS IDENTIFIED WITHIN FUTURE GROWTH TIERS FOR WATER AND SEWER
-  INCORPORATED AREA
-  GREENSBORO-RANDOLPH MEGASITE



Source: Guilford County GIS, 2023

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**DRAFT**

# 4

## **FUTURE LAND USE FRAMEWORK**

### **IN THIS CHAPTER:**

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

SENSIBLE GROWTH

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

LAND USE TYPOLOGIES

ACTIVITY CENTERS

LAND USE POLICIES

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Guiding Principles are the first element of the Future Land Use Framework and are intended to inform future development within the unincorporated areas of the county. These guiding principles also serve as the foundation for the [Future Land Use Map \(FLUM\)](#), which is a tool for use by the County and its constituents. FLUM is not a zoning map, but rather, it will be utilized by the County to guide land-use decisions, such as rezonings or policy planning for growth management, to ensure that these decisions align with the County's vision for the future.

The guiding principles offer insight on areas within the county that might be preserved, enhanced, or transformed so that the County poised for the most appropriate future growth based upon community context, character, and the provision of coordinated infrastructure. Utilizing input from the Steering Committee members and the community engagement process, a Guiding Principles Map has been developed that takes into account areas that need to be considered for either preservation, enhancement, or transformation.

## AREAS TO PRESERVE

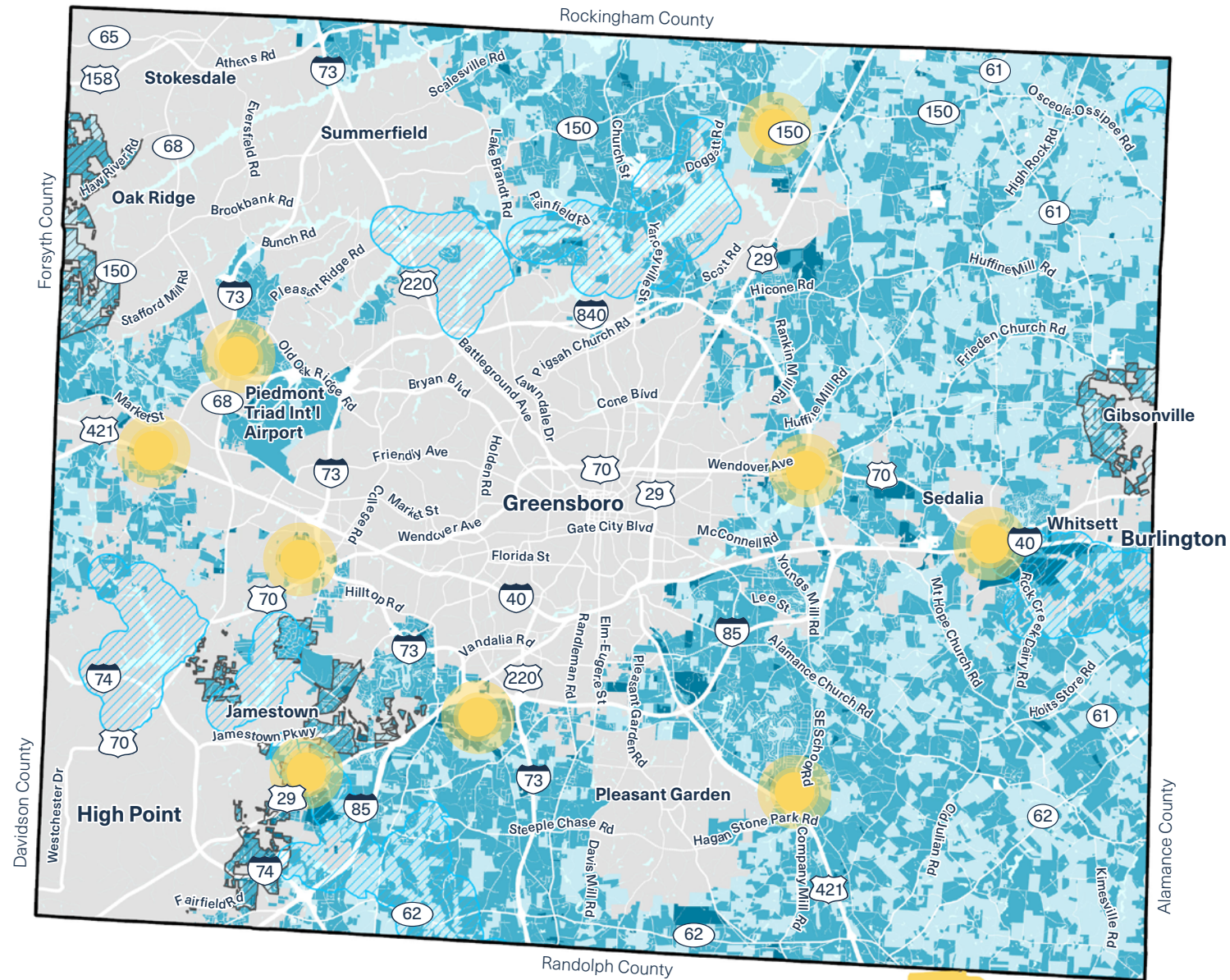
Areas to Preserve include natural and environmentally-sensitive areas, agricultural lands, rural communities, and historic resource properties. For Guilford County, these locations include natural areas, open spaces, forested areas, historic areas, and rural viewsheds that have started to experience development pressures from municipal expansion and county growth. Development within the County's unincorporated areas primarily consists of low-scale and low-density development, including single-family residential development, agricultural lands and associated uses, parks and recreation activities, cross-county trails, and historic sites. By safeguarding these areas for the future, county residents will continue to be connected to these vital resources.

## AREAS TO ENHANCE

Areas to Enhance include existing developed areas, such as established residential communities and employment hubs such as office and retail centers, that are now stable, but which should consider small-to-medium improvements over the long-term to keep up with changing economics, technologies, consumer preferences, and age-related deterioration. These areas are not likely to experience wholesale change or redevelopment but could benefit from strategic infill development or precise tactical improvements to meaningfully enhance the quality of life for the people who inhabit those areas.

## AREAS TO TRANSFORM

Areas to Transform represent places that already have positive momentum, but which need additional investment to re-imagine new energized activity areas. They provide key locations for sites that can act as a catalyst for additional development, such as new employment centers, regional shopping centers, entertainment areas, and mixed-use residential development in appropriate locations. These areas require more deliberate planning and phasing to keep them viable through longer periods of change, and they have the potential to serve as new and reinvigorated activity centers for Guilford County.



MAP 20: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- |  |                                  |  |  |
|--|----------------------------------|--|--|
|  | COUNTY BOUNDARY                  |  | AREAS TO PRESERVE                              |
|  | INCORPORATED AREA                |  | AREAS TO ENHANCE                               |
|  | WATERBODY/STREAM                 |  | AREAS TO TRANSFORM                             |
|  | OVERLAY                          |  | MAJOR MIXED USE CENTER/<br>REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT |
|  | ETJ                              |  |  |
|  | CRITICAL WATERSHED               |  |  |
|  | GREENSBORO-RANDOLPH<br>MEGA SITE |  |  |





# SENSIBLE GROWTH

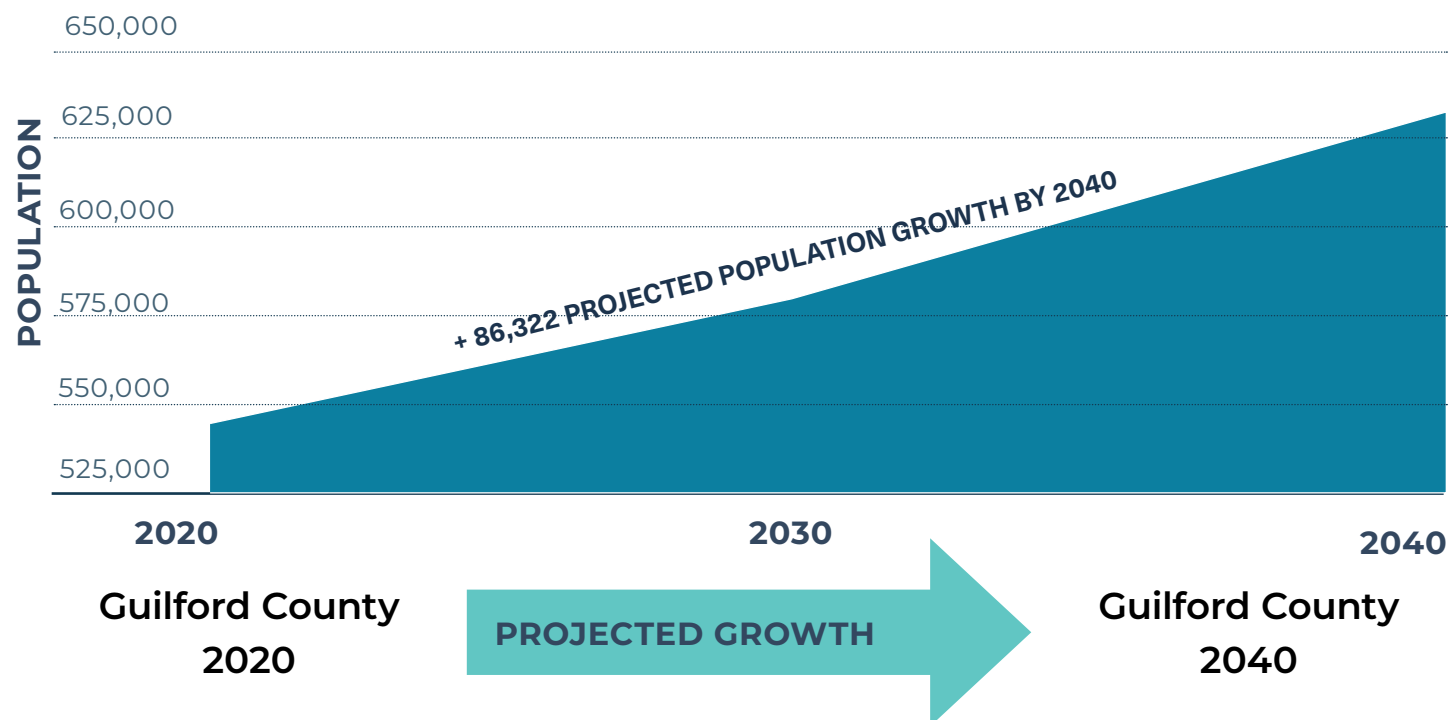
Municipalities like the cities of Greensboro and High Point are poised for continued growth, and unincorporated areas in Guilford County stand to house a portion of that anticipated growth based upon population, job, and housing projections through 2040.<sup>27</sup> The county as a whole is expected to see an increase of 86,322 people over 20 years, including both incorporated and unincorporated areas.<sup>2</sup>

In order to house this growth, the County needs to begin implementing measures, policies, and regulations to ensure that future development patterns are reflective of the community's Vision. The County also needs to be aware that there are real limitations to potential growth, which include hydrology,

environmental resources, infrastructure, and transportation connections. There are also policy-oriented limits to growth, such as water and sewer service policies and political factors.

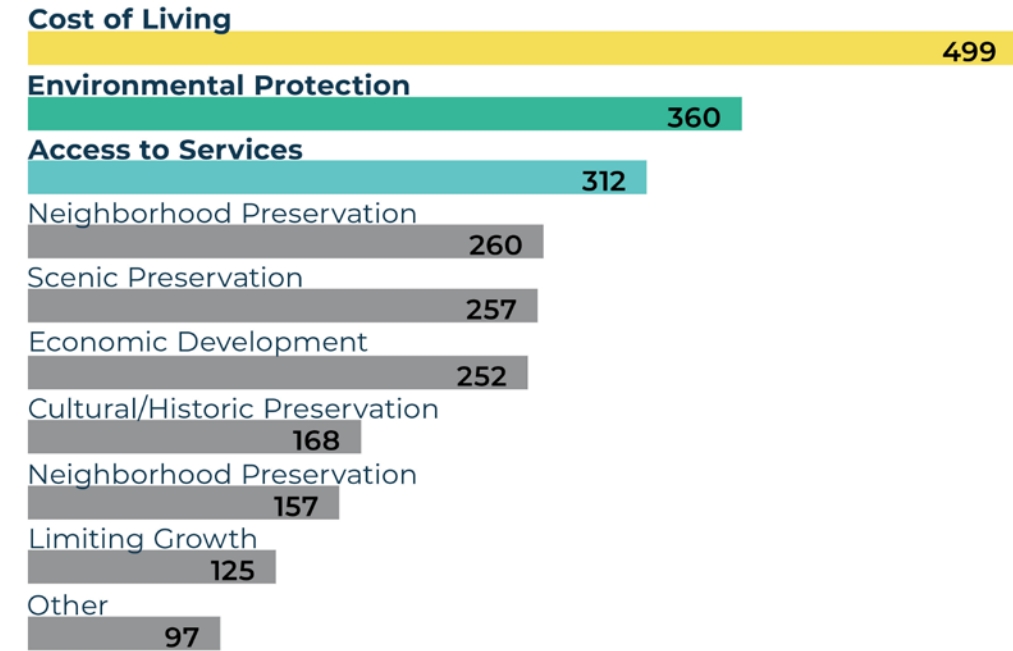
As growth spills over from municipalities into unincorporated Guilford County, the County will be tasked with meeting the needs of an expanding community. The County should focus its planning efforts on a sensible growth approach, which looks different across communities, but which typically includes support for a mixture of building types and uses, diverse housing options, and walkable development within existing developed areas.

[Vision Statement](#) →

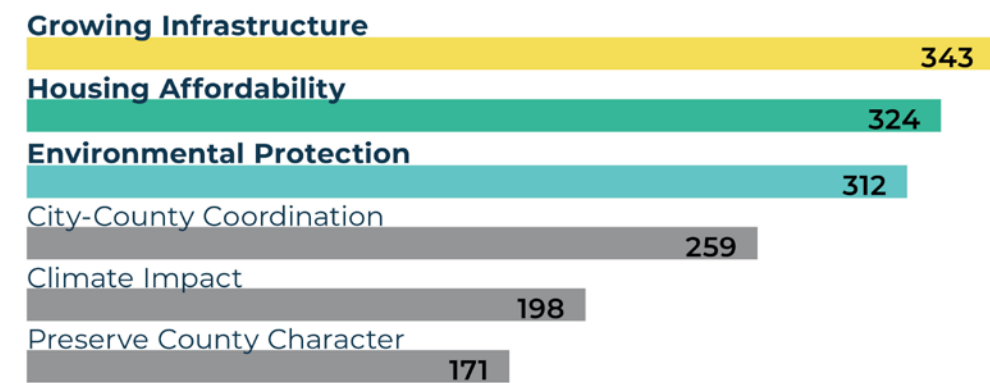


Source: North Carolina State Demographer

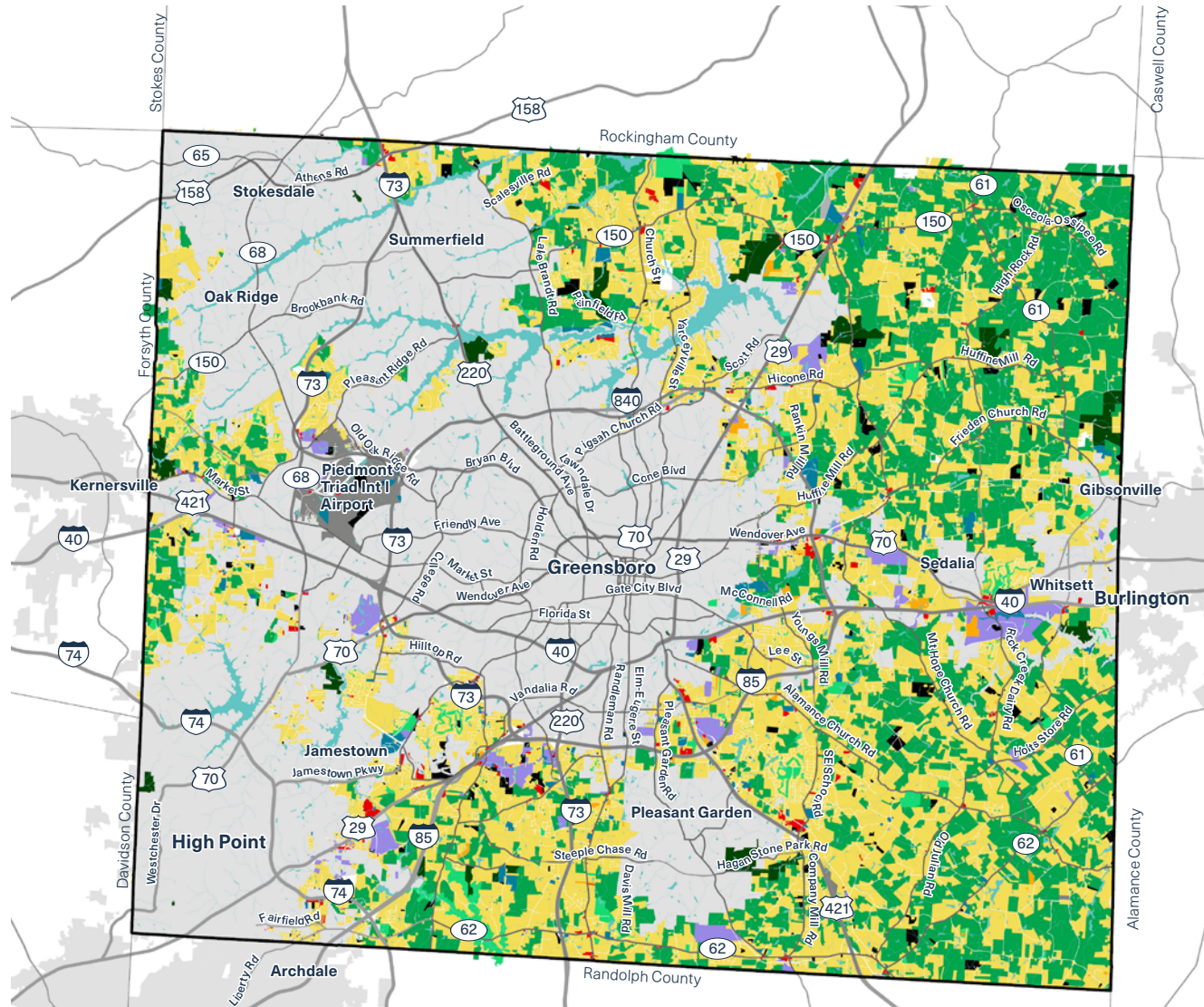
## WHICH ITEMS BELOW ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU IN TERMS OF MANAGING FUTURE GROWTH?



## WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST CONCERNS RELATED TO GROWTH IN GUILFORD COUNTY?



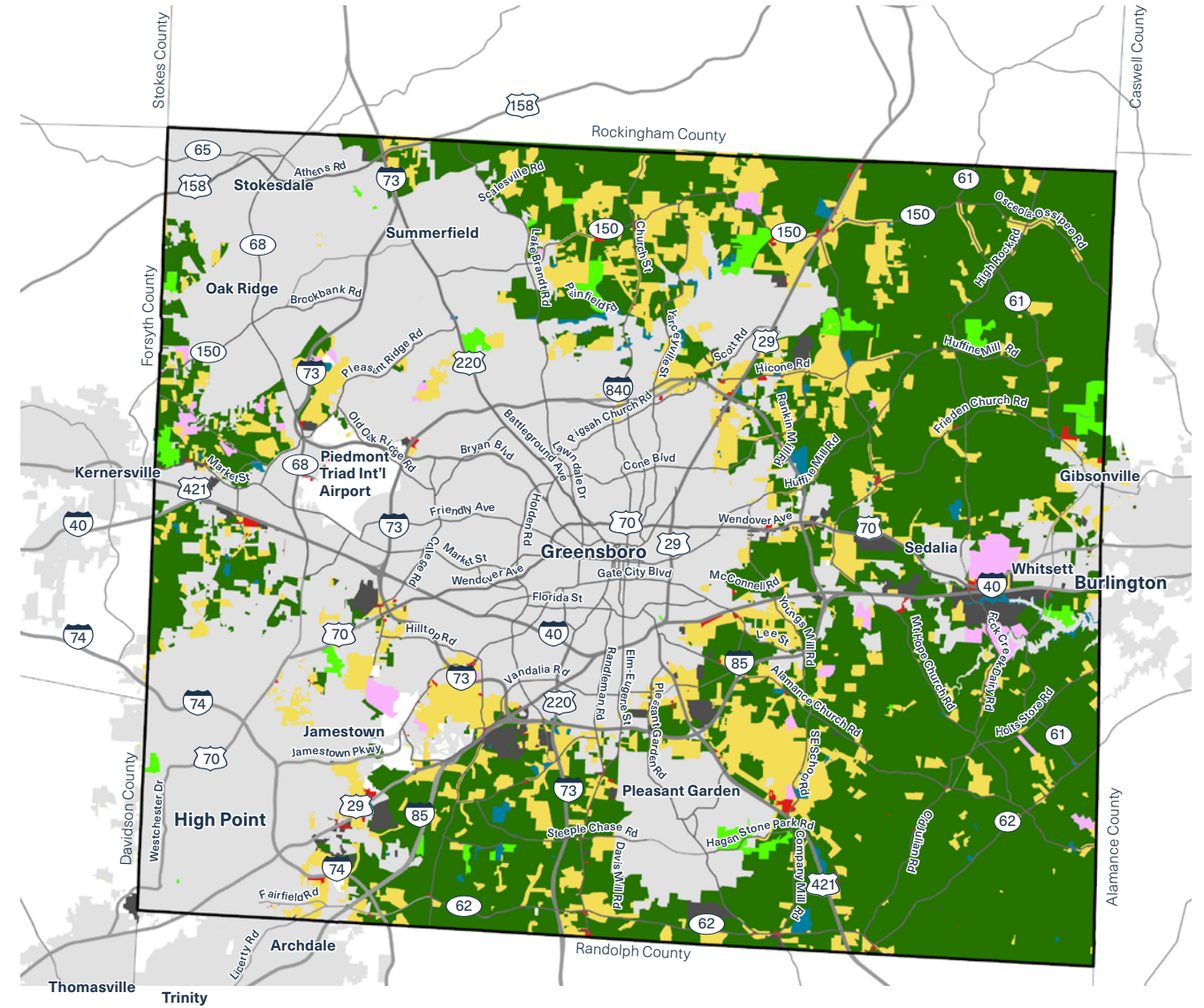
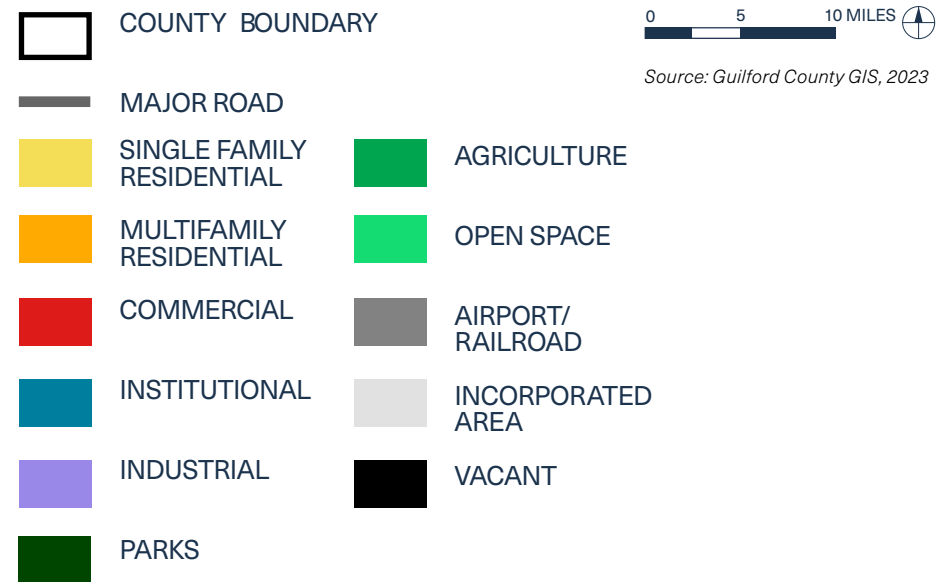
In the activities that are represented above, respondents were asked to pick their top 3 choices. These questions were posed across multiple engagement activities including digital and in-person engagement initiatives.



Existing land uses in Guilford County are broken down into general categories:

- » Agriculture
- » Open Space / Parks and Recreation
- » Airport / Railroad
- » Institutional
- » Industrial / Extraction
- » Residential (Single- and Multi-Family)
- » Commercial
- » Vacant Lands

**MAP 21: CURRENT UNINCORPORATED LAND USE**



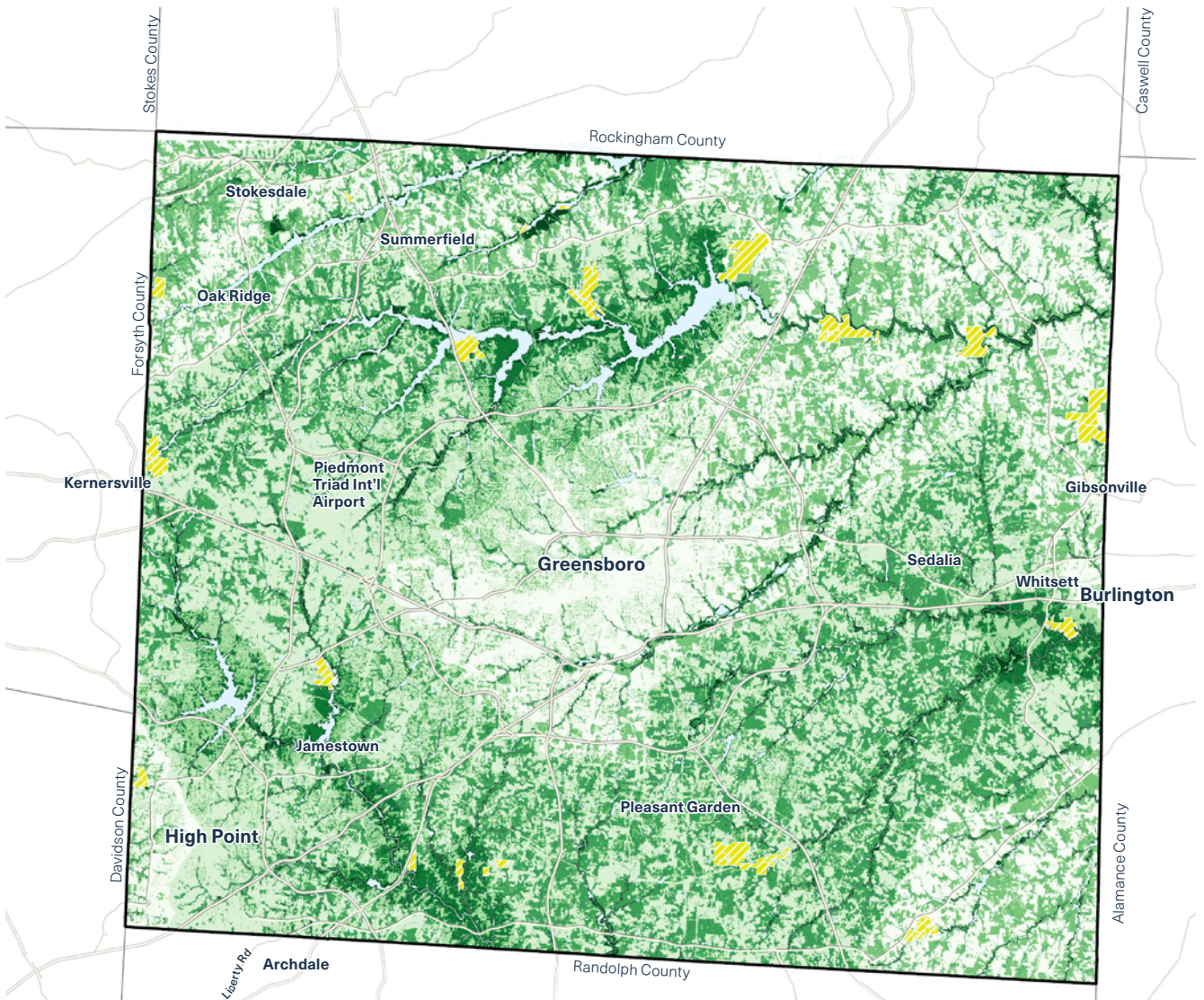
➔ [Official Guilford County Zoning Map](#)

The map above is a simplified classification map based on the official Guilford County zoning map. The areas zoned as Agricultural include rural residential land.

**MAP 22: CURRENT COUNTY ZONING MAP**



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An environmental suitability analysis was conducted to identify key areas to preserve in Guilford County. Areas with the highest ecological priority and lowest development potential were classified as natural areas/preserves on the FLUM.

The following variables were used to assess ecological priority: existing conservation easements, flood zones, proximity to waterbodies, steep slopes, habitat conservation value, tree canopy cover, and proximity to protected watersheds.

**MAP 23: ENVIRONMENTAL SUITABILITY**



# FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) depicts the preferred development types, locations, and patterns desired by Guilford County in concert with the future land use policies, objectives, and outcomes identified in the Plan. It reinforces the County's Growth Framework while introducing new ideas based on discussions with the community throughout the Plan process. The FLUM reinforces several growth strategies that will assist the County in creating clarity in its future land use policy decisions related to subdivision regulations, zoning, and its Area Plans. The FLUM will help policymakers align development and land use decisions with their vision and expected outcomes, while also providing the development community with a degree of clarity regarding those land use decisions.

Some of the land use classifications from the FLUM are a departure from the status quo in the County and serve to establish a long-term vision for more diverse development patterns that:

1. Are forward-thinking;
2. Prioritize economic vitality;
3. Are mindful of supporting infrastructure;
4. Promote residents' quality of life; and
5. Aim to balance high-quality development with the preservation of natural resources, historic communities, and landscapes.

As mentioned previously, the FLUM is not a zoning map; rather, it is a visual guide to future planning. The land uses depicted on the FLUM are focused on the Guiding Principles of Areas to Preserve, Enhance, and Transform by introducing to the County Place Types and land use management controls in the forms of rural stewardship principles, planning buffer areas, and targeted investment areas.

The FLUM is shown at the county-wide scale in Map 21 and Map 22, as well as in quadrants in Map 23, Map 24, Map 25, and Map 26, so the maps can be viewed holistically, as well as at a more detailed scale. The use of quadrants, rather than the Area Plan scale, ensures that all areas of the county are represented on the FLUM.

## RURAL STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLES

Rural stewardship principles have been applied to areas of the county that fall into the Open and Green Spaces, as well as some of the Residential Place Types. These principles have specific goals and objectives to address additional regulatory measures pertaining to land conservation, environmental protection, and water quality measures.

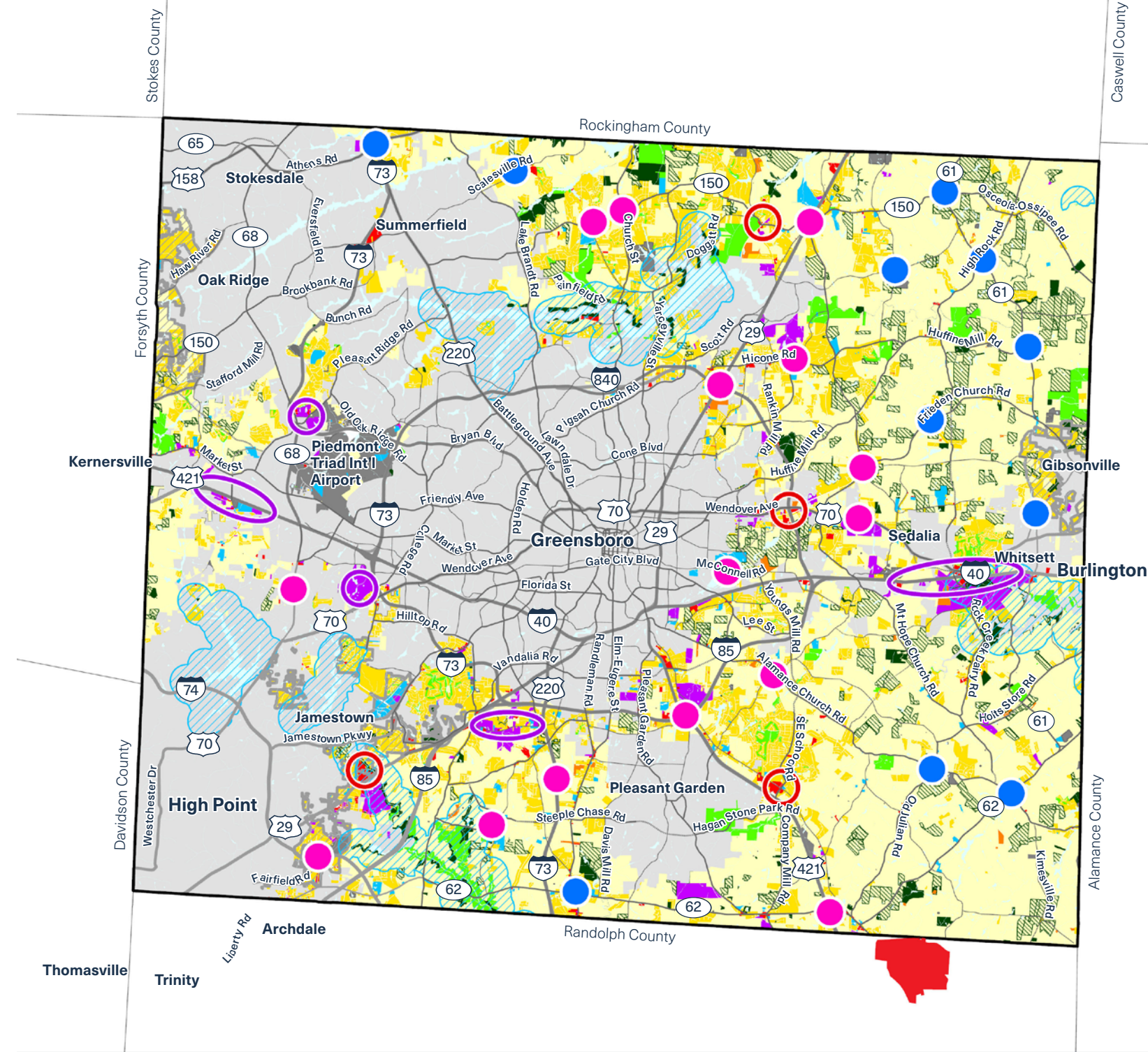
## PLANNING BUFFER AREAS

The concept of providing buffers between municipalities to support the rural character of Guilford






















County is included in the FLUM. These planning buffer areas around the municipalities make a more seamless transition from municipal lands to County lands. This will allow the County to leverage opportunities for high-quality development that is located within or adjacent to existing community infrastructure service areas, transportation corridors, and public services and amenities.

## TARGETED INVESTMENT AREAS

Targeted investment areas have been identified based upon findings from the community engagement and planning processes. These areas are identified as different types of nodes on the FLUM and are intended to be areas for prioritized investment that seek to increase the quality of life for residents through the use of economic development initiatives, increased connectivity, potential for mixed-use, walkable development, and access to open spaces and parks. These nodes are identified based on anticipated growth and availability of community water and sewer systems that could service these levels of development. Any extension of utilities must be consistent with the City of Greensboro's adopted Utility Extension Policy, or feasible alternative(s) for the provision of water and sewer. In addition, there are key watersheds, conserved lands, and natural areas in Guilford County. As part of creating the FLUM, these areas have been mapped to ensure future development is located in areas



MAP 24: FUTURE LAND USE MAP

 COUNTY BOUNDARY	 REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT CENTER	 FLUM PLACE TYPES NATURAL AREA/PRESERVE*
 MAJOR ROAD	 MAJOR MIXED USE CENTER	 RURAL LIVING
 INCORPORATED AREA	 NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER	 OPEN SPACE/RECREATION
 WATERBODY/STREAM	 RURAL CROSSROAD	 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
 ETJ		 RESIDENTIAL
 CRITICAL WATERSHED		 COMMERCIAL
 VAD (VOLUNTARY AG DISTRICTS)		 CIVIC/EDUCATIONAL
 GREENSBORO-RANDOLPH MEGA SITE		 INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION
		 AIRPORT/RAILROAD

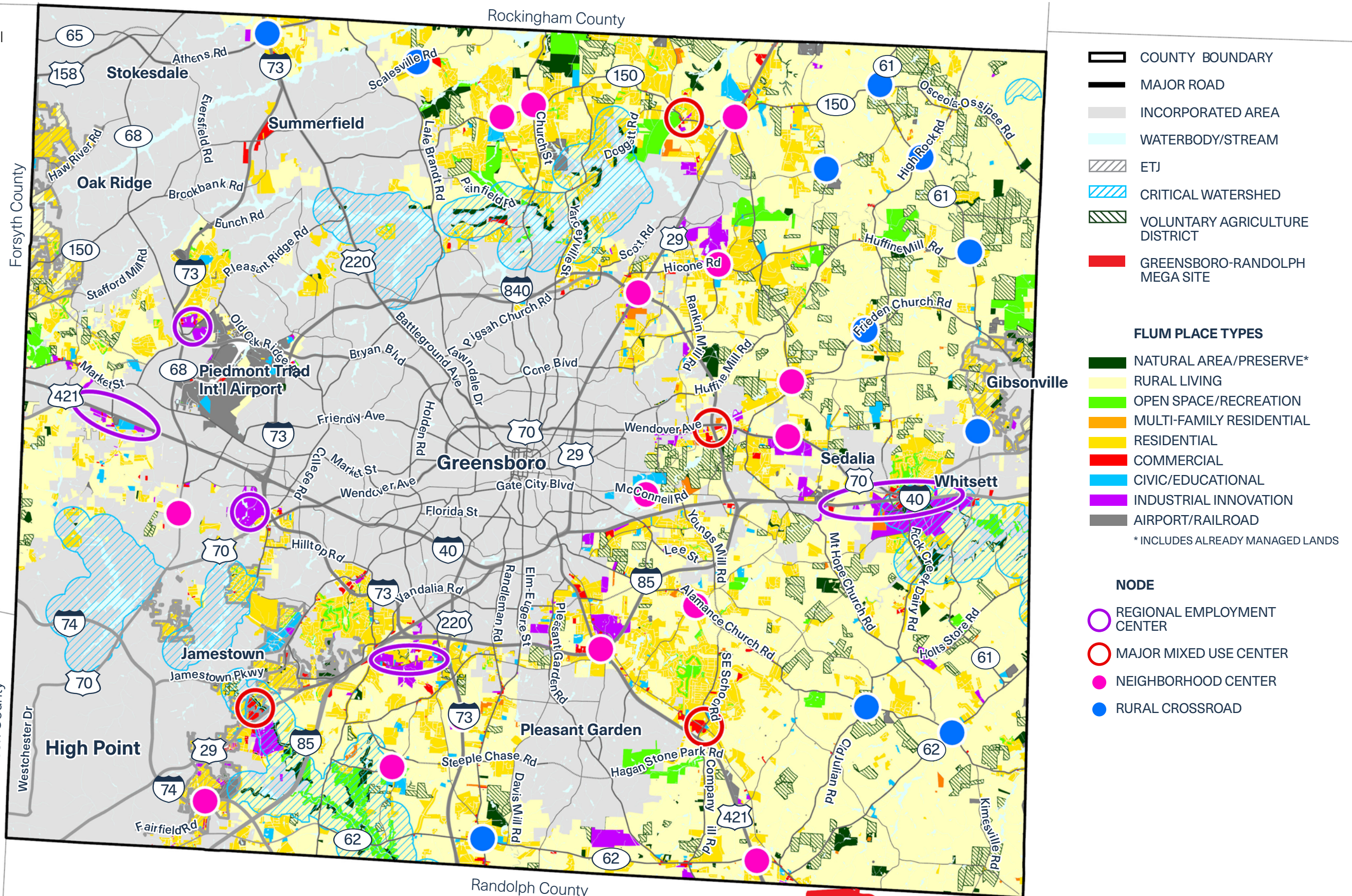
\* INCLUDES ALREADY MANAGED LANDS  
Future Land Use Framework | 93

most appropriate and that are less likely to be in an area with potential environmental hazards.

It is anticipated that the Mega Site will influence adjacent development and the County will need to further study where adjacent Nodes may be most appropriate.

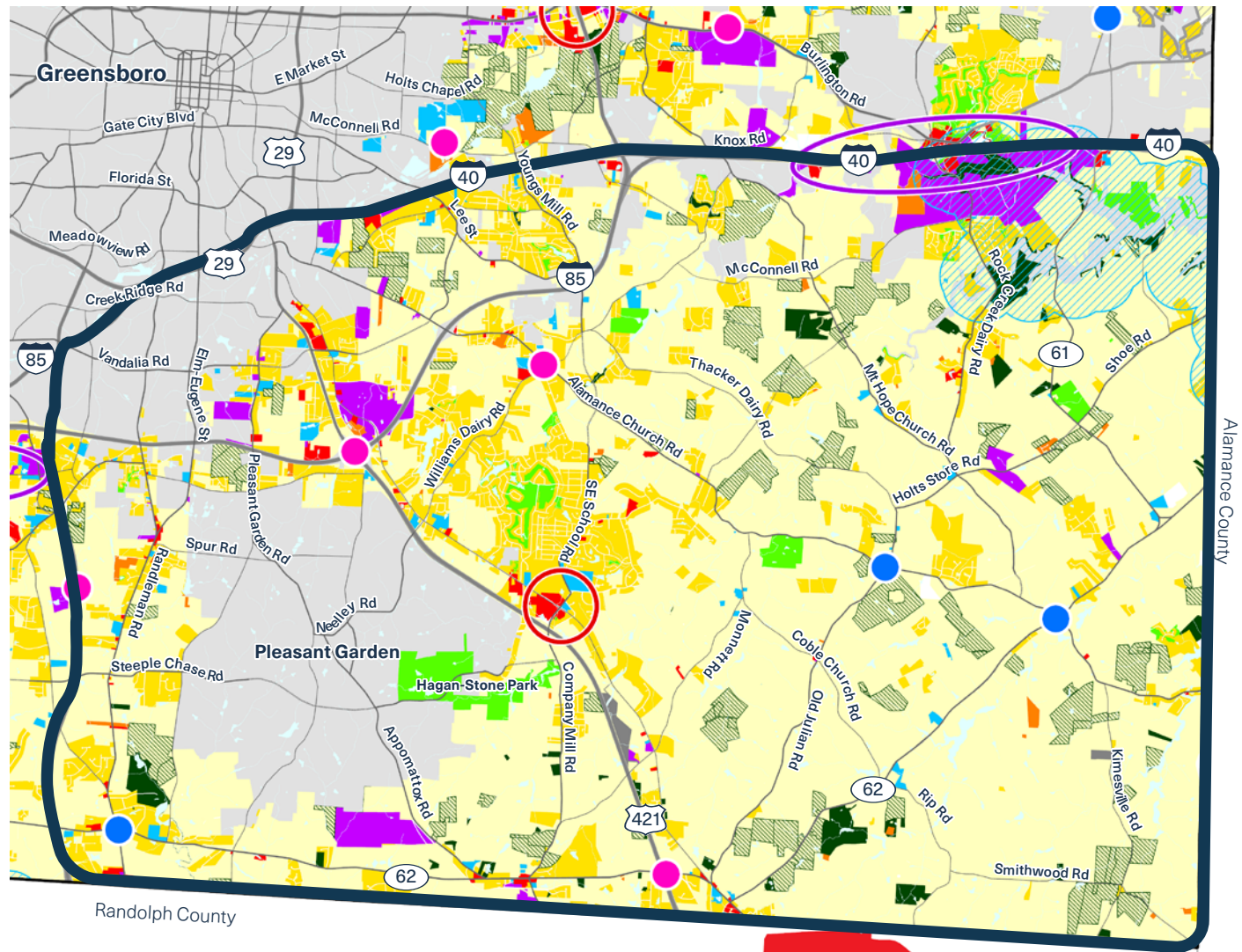
→ To see how the current land use categories in the Area Plans relate to the proposed place type categories in the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), refer to the [Appendix](#) for the FLUM - Area Plans Crosswalk.

→ Note: effective June 30, 2024, the NC General Assembly approved HB909 which de-annexed from the corporate limits of the Town of Summerfield certain described properties totaling approximately 1,000 acres. Due to the timing of the release of this draft document and passage of HB909, Guilford County was in the process of updating its digital GIS files, zoning and land use designations. This change is reflected in the FLUM map series.



**MAP 25: FUTURE LAND USE MAP ENLARGEMENT**





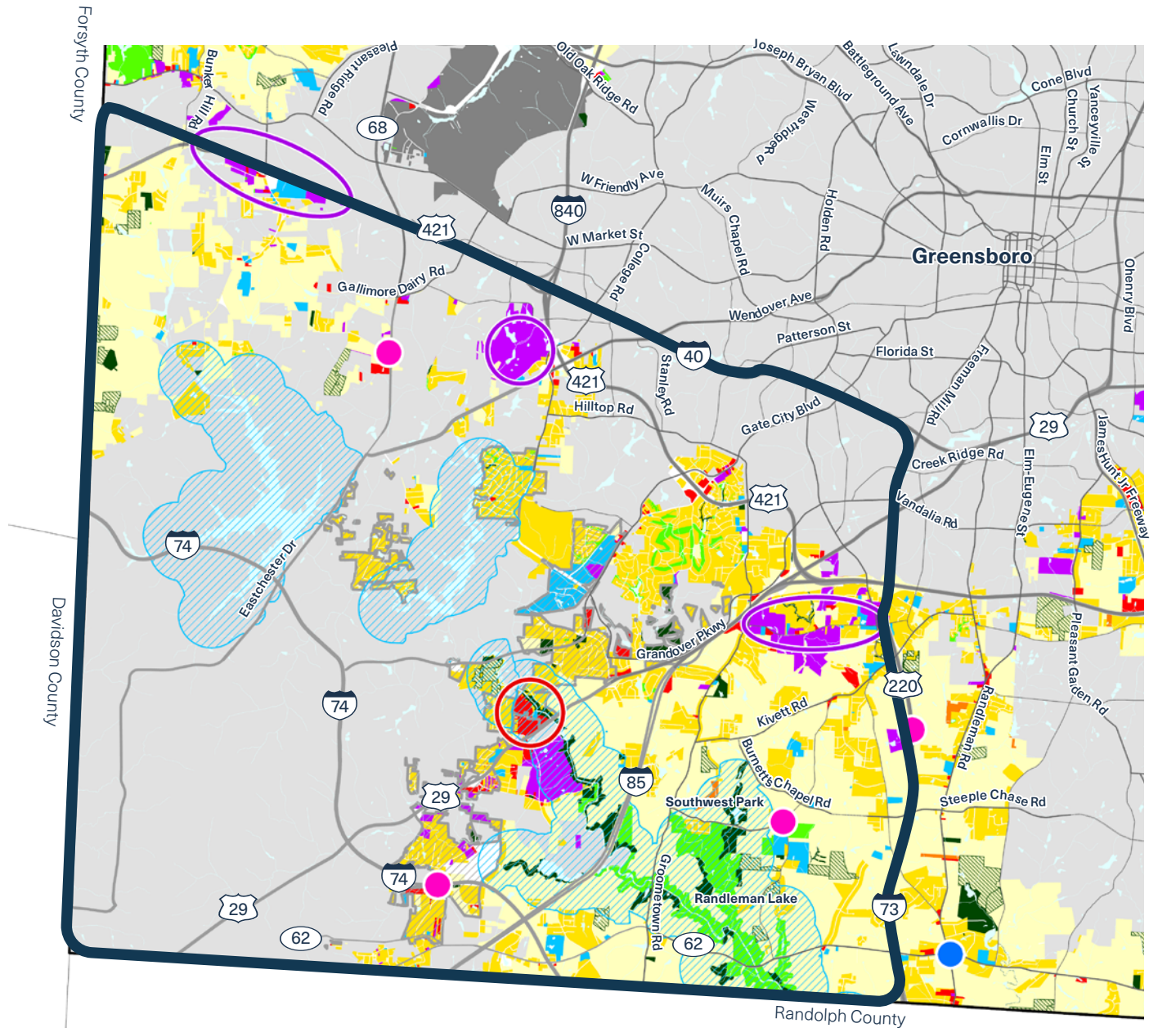
**MAP 26: FUTURE LAND USE MAP: SOUTHEAST**

- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- MAJOR ROAD
- INCORPORATED AREA
- WATERBODY/STREAM
- ETJ
- CRITICAL WATERSHED
- VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURE DISTRICT

- NODE**
- REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT CENTER
  - MAJOR MIXED USE CENTER
  - NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER
  - RURAL CROSSROAD
  - GREENSBORO-RANDOLPH MEGA SITE

- FLUM PLACE TYPES**
- NATURAL AREA/PRESERVE\*
  - RURAL LIVING
  - OPEN SPACE/RECREATION
  - MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
  - RESIDENTIAL
  - COMMERCIAL
  - CIVIC/EDUCATIONAL
  - INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION
  - AIRPORT/RAILROAD
- \* INCLUDES ALREADY MANAGED LANDS

**DRAFT**

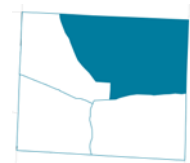
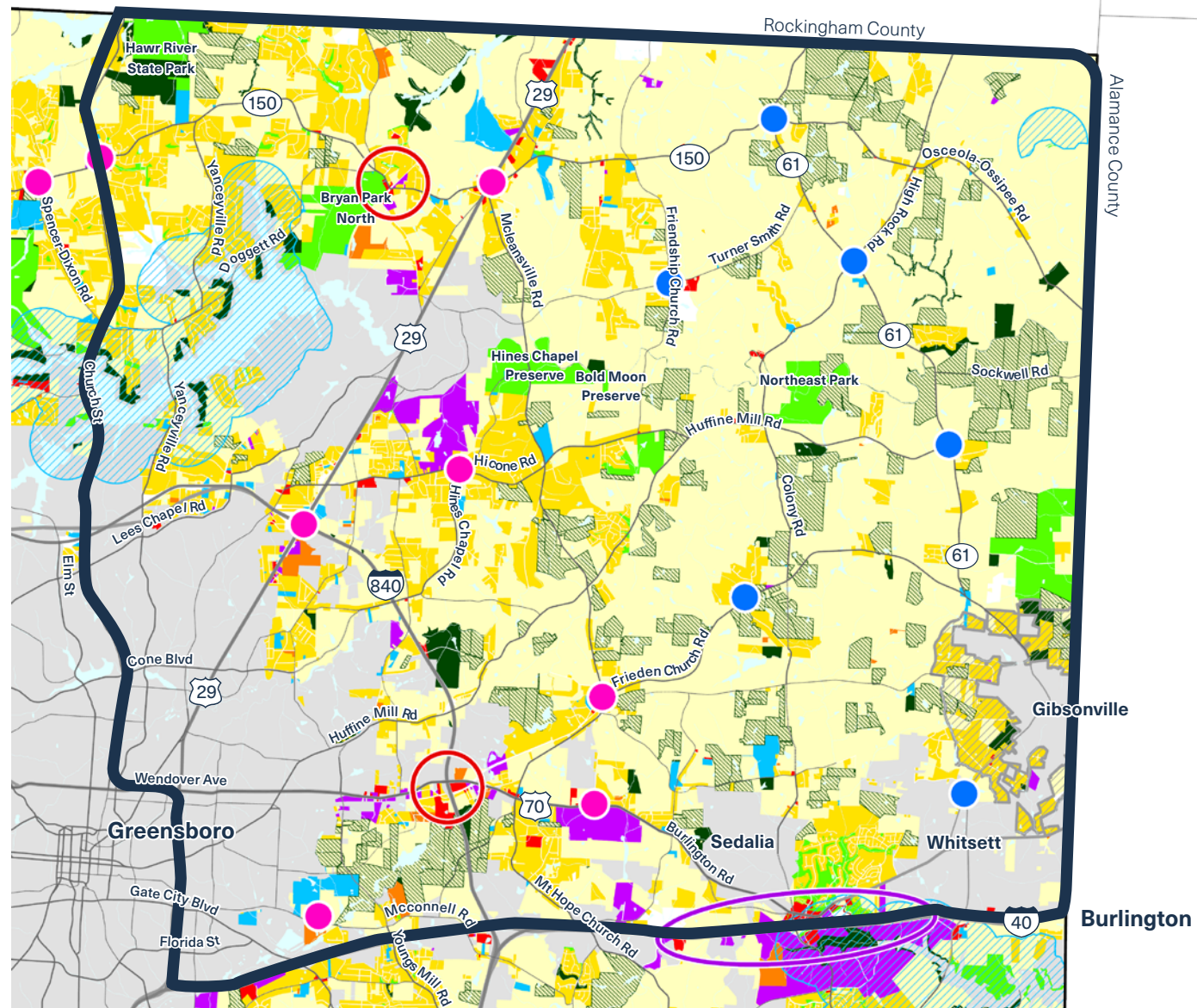


**MAP 27: FUTURE LAND USE MAP: SOUTHWEST**

- COUNTY BOUNDARY
- MAJOR ROAD
- INCORPORATED AREA
- WATERBODY/STREAM
- ETJ
- CRITICAL WATERSHED
- VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURE DISTRICT

- NODE**
- REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT CENTER
  - MAJOR MIXED USE CENTER
  - NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER
  - RURAL CROSSROAD

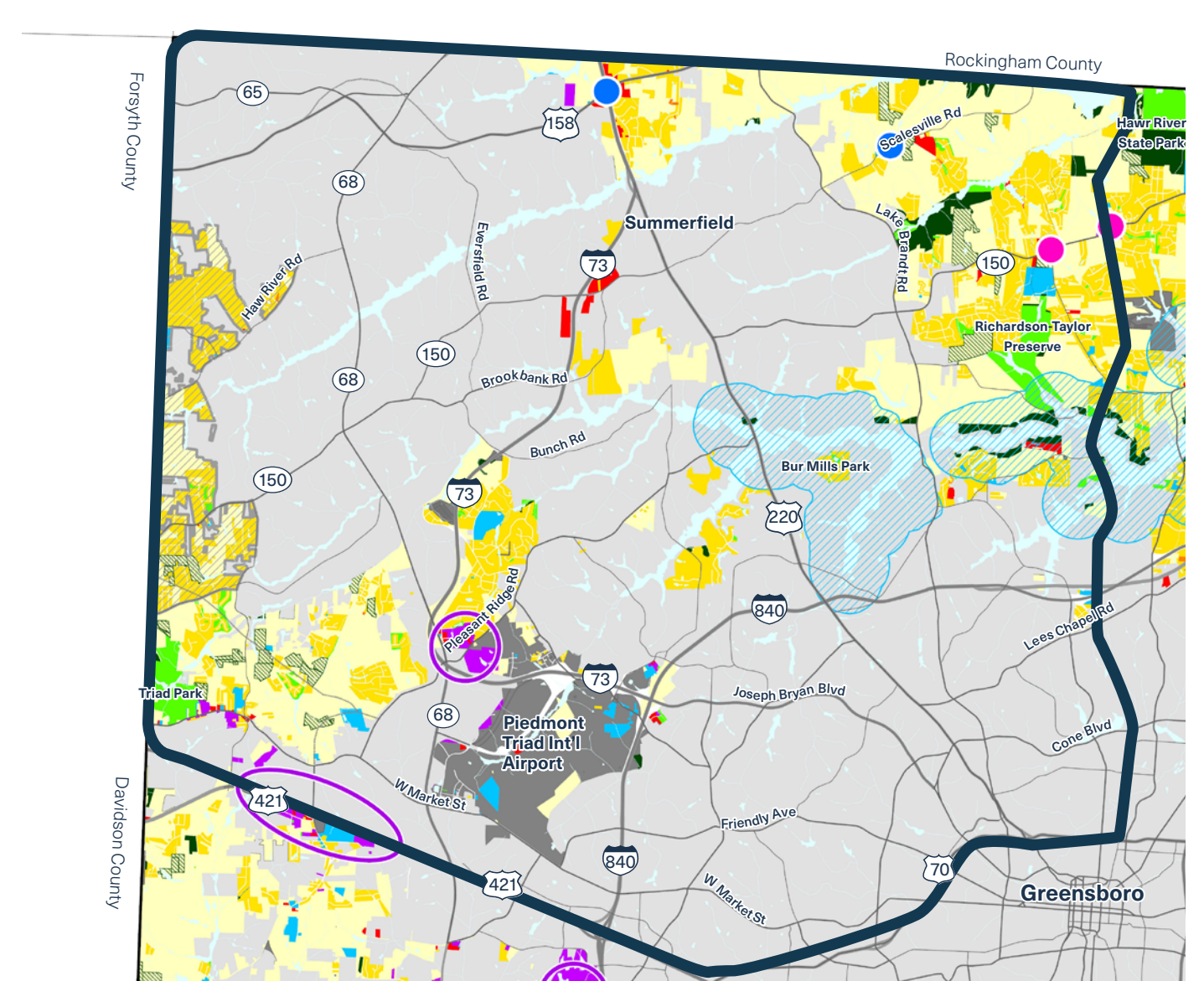
- FLUM PLACE TYPES**
- NATURAL AREA/PRESERVE\*
  - RURAL LIVING
  - OPEN SPACE/RECREATION
  - MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
  - RESIDENTIAL
  - COMMERCIAL
  - CIVIC/EDUCATIONAL
  - INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION
  - AIRPORT/RAILROAD
- \* INCLUDES ALREADY MANAGED LANDS



**MAP 28: FUTURE LAND USE MAP: NORTHEAST**

- |                                |                            |                          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| COUNTY BOUNDARY                | REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT CENTER | NATURAL AREA/PRESERVE*   |
| MAJOR ROAD                     | MAJOR MIXED USE CENTER     | RURAL LIVING             |
| INCORPORATED AREA              | NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER        | OPEN SPACE/RECREATION    |
| WATERBODY/STREAM               | RURAL CROSSROAD            | MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL |
| ETJ                            |                            | RESIDENTIAL              |
| CRITICAL WATERSHED             |                            | COMMERCIAL               |
| VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURE DISTRICT |                            | CIVIC/EDUCATIONAL        |
|                                |                            | INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION    |
|                                |                            | AIRPORT/RAILROAD         |
- \* INCLUDES ALREADY MANAGED LANDS

**DRAFT**



**MAP 29: FUTURE LAND USE MAP: NORTHWEST**

- |                                |                            |                          |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| COUNTY BOUNDARY                | REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT CENTER | NATURAL AREA/PRESERVE*   |
| MAJOR ROAD                     | MAJOR MIXED USE CENTER     | RURAL LIVING             |
| INCORPORATED AREA              | NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER        | OPEN SPACE/RECREATION    |
| WATERBODY/STREAM               | RURAL CROSSROAD            | MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL |
| ETJ                            |                            | RESIDENTIAL              |
| CRITICAL WATERSHED             |                            | COMMERCIAL               |
| VOLUNTARY AGRICULTURE DISTRICT |                            | CIVIC/EDUCATIONAL        |
|                                |                            | INDUSTRIAL INNOVATION    |
|                                |                            | AIRPORT/RAILROAD         |
- \* INCLUDES ALREADY MANAGED LANDS

# LAND USE TYPOLOGIES

The Plan uses the term “Place Types” to describe discernible areas that are present in unincorporated areas of Guilford County. Place Types represent different development types, patterns, and intensities observed in the region.

Each Place Type includes the following information:

- » **General Character Description:** Describes the overall characteristics of the Place Type related to how land is used and the types of residential land uses.
- » **Approach for Wastewater Treatment:** Identifies the anticipated system approach to wastewater infrastructure. Areas that are likely to have lower density or less intensity

of land uses will typically have a private septic system. Areas that are likely to have a higher density or intensity of use will connect to a community-based system where feasible.

- » **Approach for Water Access:** Identifies the anticipated approach to water service. The use of private wells or a community system are anticipated to follow the same process as wastewater systems.
- » **General Residential Density:** States the anticipated amount of residential development in each Place Type.
- » **Primary Land Uses:** Identifies the main land uses that are anticipated to occur in each Place Type.

» **Secondary Land Uses:** Identifies supporting and accessory land uses that are anticipated to occur in each Place Type.

Because Guilford County is not a water or wastewater service provider, any type of community system connection will require coordination with regional partners. In areas that are unlikely to be served by community water and sewer systems, private wells and septic systems are identified, but that does not preclude connection to a community system in the future should the opportunity be available.

In addition, there are four scales of Activity Centers that include the same information as well as a link to Area Plans.

# OPEN AND GREEN SPACES

## NATURAL AREAS AND PRESERVES

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These lands are typically undisturbed or undeveloped and are protected from future development. This Place Type includes lands owned by governments (federal, state, municipal, or county), and lands maintained in a natural state or through conservation easement. In more passive settings, open and green spaces are generally represented by large, irregularly-shaped parcels that should not be subdivided.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Private septic systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Private wells

### GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

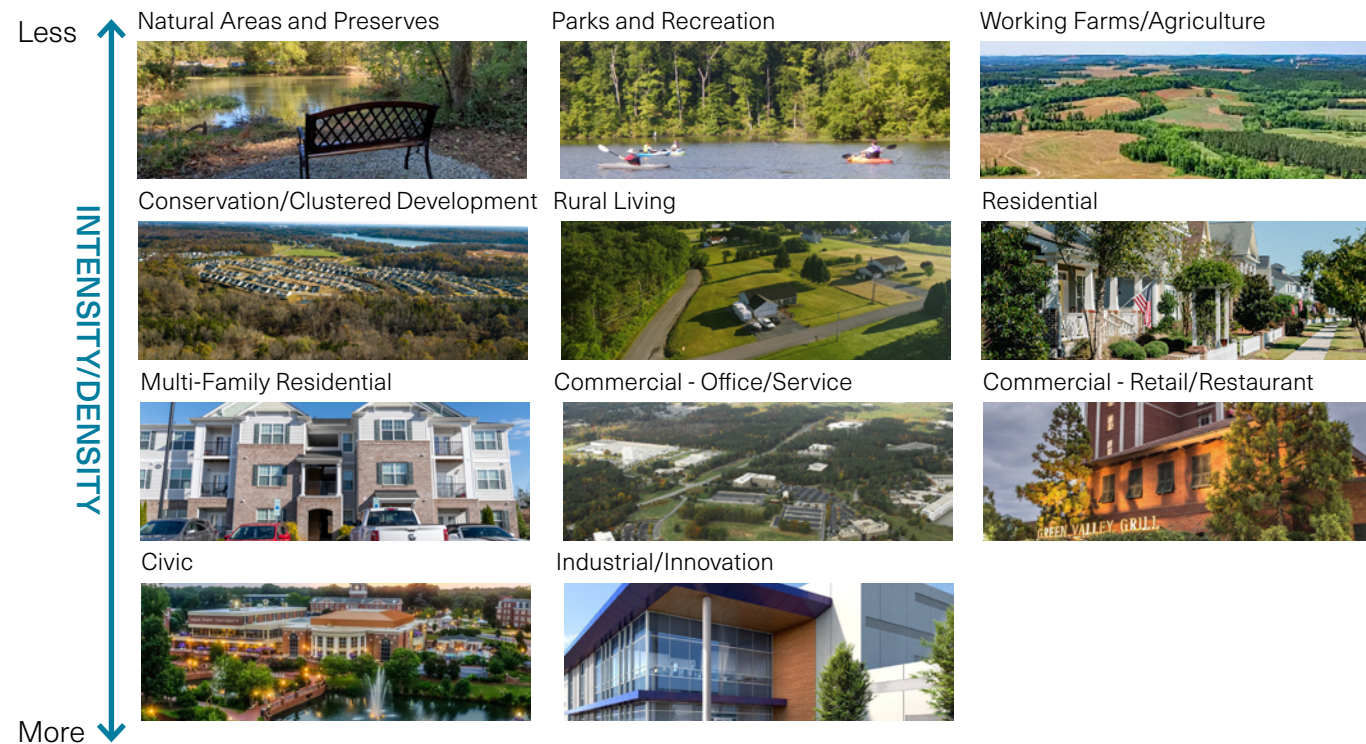
While there may be some existing residential properties in these areas or adjacent to these areas, overall residential development patterns are typically low density and development should be limited.

### PRIMARY LAND USES

State parks, watershed management areas, and County-managed lands

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Conservation lands (including those under the NC Natural Heritage Program and those that are managed by federal, state, local, and private entities)



Anne Hice Wetland Overlook at Company Mill Preserve. Photo source: Design Workshop



## PARKS AND RECREATION

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These lands are typically dedicated for active and passive recreational uses including parks, athletic fields, open air sports complexes, golf courses, greenways, and trails. This place type includes lands owned by government. Development on lands for passive or active recreational spaces should be sensitive to existing character, protecting wildlife and water quality, and conditions specific to topography, tree-stands and depth or width of lots.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Private septic systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Private wells

### GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

While there may be some existing residential properties adjacent to these areas, overall residential development patterns are typically low to medium density.

### PRIMARY LAND USES

State parks, watershed management areas, and County-managed lands or parks that include passive and active recreational uses

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Buildings if present, may or may not be oriented towards roads. They typically provide services or information related to the specific park or recreational use. Access to buildings should be provided via access drives or driveways.



Northeast Park, Gibsonville, NC. Photo source: Design Workshop

## WORKING FARMS AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These lands are actively used for agriculture or forestry activities, including cultivated farmland, livestock, woodlands, or timber harvest. The lands may or may not support the primary residence of the property owner and outbuildings associated with activities on the property. Working Farms and Agricultural Lands may contain both residential and non-residential uses and typically have parcel sizes that are much larger than five or ten acres.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Private septic systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Private wells

### GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Working Farms and Agricultural Lands host low density residential development, typically clustered on the site and including customary accessory structures.

### PRIMARY LAND USES

Agriculture, forestry, agritourism operations, and low density residential

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Accessory uses to agriculture, forestry, and distribution facilities include production and distribution facilities, greenhouses, and rural businesses



Rudd Farm. Photo source: Design Workshop

# RESIDENTIAL TYPES

## CONSERVATION/CLUSTERED DEVELOPMENTS

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These lands are typically characterized by various lot sizes ranging from large lots, abundant open spaces and small clusters of development along rural highways or crossroads. They include both existing development and new areas that are currently undeveloped, which may include medium and high density uses in areas where municipalities continue to grow outward into the county, and could be served by municipal or other public water and sewer services in the future.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Private septic systems or community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Private wells or community systems

### GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Low density clustered development, typically with lots clustered in the usable portions of land surrounded by large areas of environmentally-sensitive land that is often preserved through conservation easements

### PRIMARY LAND USES

Single-family detached, duplexes, cottage-style single-family residential

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Residential uses serving nearby commercial, retail, office, civic, and public uses and services



## RURAL LIVING

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These lands are typically characterized by various lot sizes with low density residential, typically in the form of single-family detached homes. These lands include both existing development and new areas that are currently undeveloped, which may experience increased density along major transportation corridors over time, but which will remain largely rural the farther away properties are located from established corridors and community services.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Private septic systems or community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Private wells or community systems

### GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Low density development, typically with one dwelling unit located on several acres, and where densities on individual properties will vary based on site conditions

### PRIMARY LAND USES

Single-family detached residential, duplexes, cottage-style single-family, and mobile home parks

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Residential land uses serving nearby commercial, retail, office, civic and public uses and services



## RESIDENTIAL

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These lands typically consist of lots of varying sizes that are in a grid or curvilinear pattern and primarily consist of low-density, single-family residential uses. They include both existing development and new areas that are currently undeveloped, which may experience development in the form of medium and high density uses in areas where municipalities continue to grow outward into the county or along primary transportation corridors.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Private septic systems or community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Private wells or community systems

### GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Low and medium density development, typically consisting of densities up to four dwelling units per acre

### PRIMARY LAND USES

Single-family detached and duplex

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Residential uses serving commercial, retail, office, civic, and public uses and services



## MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These lands are typically characterized by complexes or communities that have a uniform housing type and density. These lands support the highest residential density in suburban areas and can be found near suburban commercial and office destinations. These lands include both existing development and undeveloped areas that may experience development in the form of medium and high density residential uses in areas where municipalities continue to grow outward into the county or along primary transportation corridors.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Public water

### GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Medium and high density development, typically consisting of 5-26 dwelling units per acre to accommodate a variety of residential forms

### PRIMARY LAND USES

Townhomes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage-style single family, mobile home parks, and multi-family residential development (apartments and condominiums)

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Residential serving commercial, retail, office, civic and public uses and services



# COMMERCIAL TYPES

## OFFICE/SERVICE

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are lands that provide opportunities for concentrated employment in Guilford County and include various forms of commercial enterprises, such as rural office and retail services, large-scale buildings with numerous employees, and areas that encompass several businesses that support and serve one another. This category also includes businesses that provide services to individuals, such as commercial shopping areas.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Community systems

### GENERAL COMMERCIAL DENSITY

Densities and building forms vary from small to large building footprints on parcels typically starting at 9,000 square feet with heights typically no taller than three stories above grade.

### PRIMARY LAND USES

Administrative offices, professional offices, medical offices, personal services, and corporate parks

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Retail, parks, and restaurants that support office uses



## RETAIL/RESTAURANT

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are lands that are typically located near key intersections and busy corridors that serve the daily needs of local residential neighborhoods. These uses typically are accessed by car and public transit or via bicycle and pedestrian connections. Larger retail uses are set back from the road with surface parking, while retail integrated in a mixed-use development typically has street parking or parking behind the building. They may or may not include multi-tenant commercial strip centers, big box stores, shopping centers or malls, mixed-use, live/work developments and outparcel buildings.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Community systems

### GENERAL RETAIL DENSITY

Retail uses will vary from smaller neighborhood serving retail on parcels typically starting at 9,000 square feet to auto-oriented retail uses and commercial areas along corridors with parcel sizes over 20,000 square feet, with buildings up to three full or partial stories entirely above grade.

### PRIMARY LAND USES

The sale of personal or household items, such as grocery stores, pharmacy and drug stores, gas stations, hardware stores, and clothing stores

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Parks, restaurants, and office uses



# CIVIC/EDUCATIONAL

## CIVIC

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These lands host a variety of civic or educational purposes and include public or private elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as charter schools and higher education campuses, that typically serve students from preschool through twelfth grade and beyond. Civic uses can include government properties, community services such as health care campuses, libraries, post offices and utilities.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Community systems

### GENERAL CIVIC DENSITY

Lands are typically developed as campuses with primary and accessory buildings.

### PRIMARY LAND USES

Medium to large campus-style development with either private or public institutions that are overseen by a single entity

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Parks, associated restaurant uses, and occasionally residential uses



# INDUSTRIAL

## INDUSTRIAL/INNOVATION CENTER

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are lands that provide opportunities for concentrated employment clusters in Guilford County. They support single-tenant industrial, warehouses and distribution centers, flex building spaces, and large-scale multi-tenant properties where several buildings may support and serve each other. In addition, Guilford County is becoming a hub for warehouse and distribution centers, due in part to the transportation network.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Community systems

### GENERAL INDUSTRIAL DENSITY

Lot sizes will vary, typically starting at 20,000 square feet, with building heights ranging from three full or partial stories above grade to seven or eight stories above grade depending on the intensity of the use.

### PRIMARY LAND USES

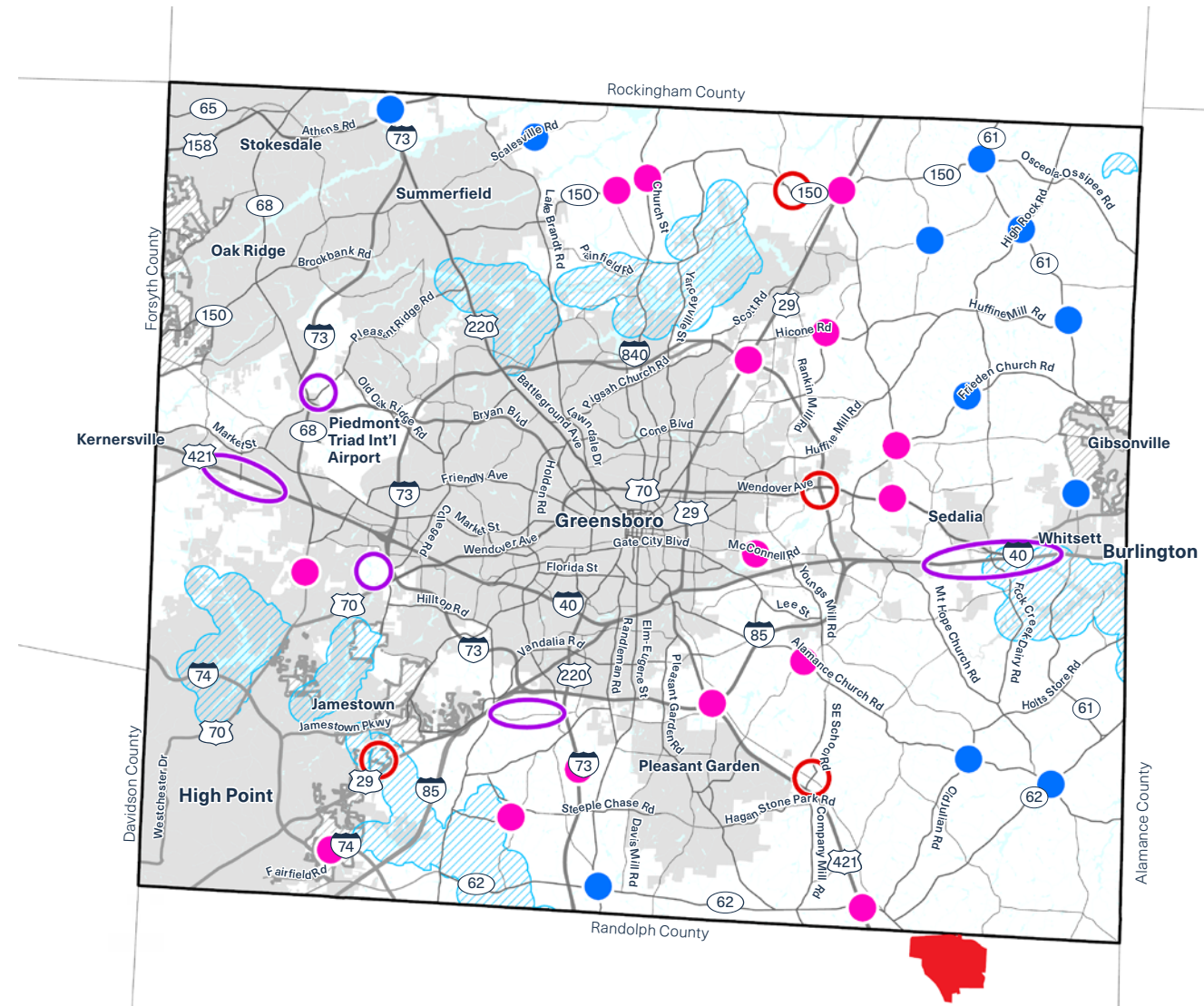
Land uses will range from light industrial, including limited small-scale manufacturing, wholesaling, research and development, to heavy industrial uses, including manufacturing, wholesaling, fabrication, resource extraction, and specialized industrial operations.

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Processing and storage facilities

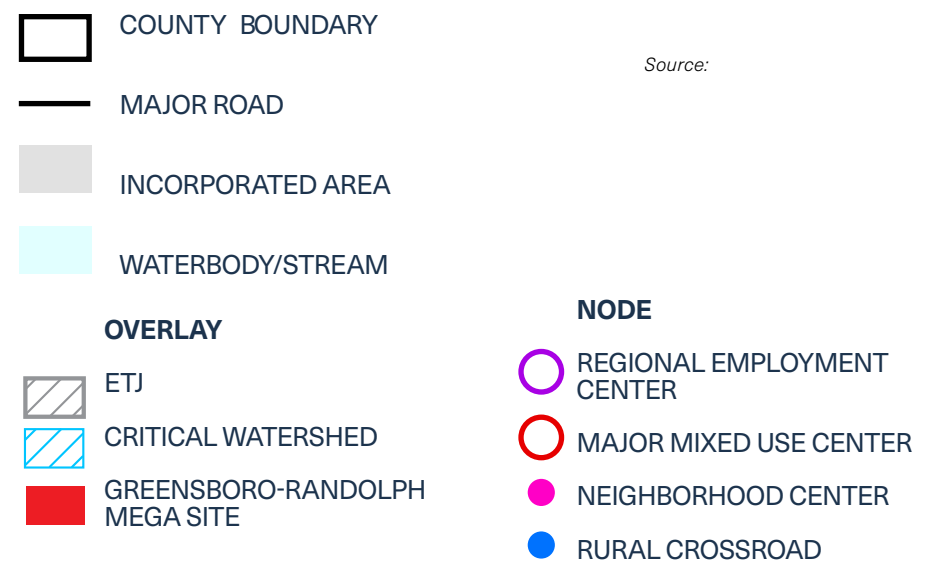


# ACTIVITY CENTERS



The Future Land Use Map identifies certain areas of Guilford County that are appropriate for mixed-use development. From an intersection in a rural area that might have a small gas station and café to a large employment center, these areas provide key services and businesses for the community at different scales that represent the unique features of these areas. Four types of Activity Centers are identified in this Plan: Rural Crossroads, Neighborhood Center, Major Mixed-Use Center, and Major Employment Center.

**MAP 30: NODES AND OVERLAYS**



Source:

## RURAL CROSSROADS

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Lands are composed of small neighborhood nodes serving mixed-use development along rural highways, corridors, or intersections. Small businesses are typically oriented towards the street and serve as gathering places or destinations that meet the daily needs of surrounding residential areas. These areas may offer opportunities for residential development above first-floor non-residential uses.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Private septic systems and community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Private wells

### GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Low and medium density development, typically consisting of densities up to five dwelling units per acre.

### PRIMARY LAND USES

Small commercial businesses, such as gas stations, small grocery stores, convenience stores, and restaurants.

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Wholesale and service businesses, such as auto repair, are also typical.

### LINK TO AREA PLANS

Guilford County has existing place types within the adopted Area Plans and Small Area Plan, which includes "Light Commercial Node." These are incorporated into the Rural Crossroads definition in *Guiding Guilford*.



## NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are lands consisting of mixed-use developments designed to be gathering places or community focal points for surrounding neighborhoods. These areas also provide for the entertainment, civic, and economic needs of communities and are intended to accommodate moderate intensity shopping and services.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Private septic systems and community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Private wells and community systems

### GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Low and medium density development, typically consisting of densities up to five dwelling units per acre.

### PRIMARY LAND USES

Neighborhood-oriented commercial, office and retail.

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Civic and public uses, such as parks, schools, and government service buildings and small multi-family residential development (apartments, townhomes, and condominiums).

### LINK TO AREA PLANS

Guilford County has existing place types within the adopted Area Plans and Small Area Plan, which includes “Moderate Commercial Node.” These are incorporated into the Neighborhood Center definition in *Guiding Guilford*.



## MAJOR MIXED-USE CENTER

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are lands focused on meeting the broad economic, entertainment, and housing needs of the greater Guilford community. These areas typically are intended for high-density residential, retail, and other commercial uses that are compatible with surrounding development patterns. Adjacent residential areas are walkable with an interconnected network of walkable streets or pedestrian pathways.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Private septic systems and community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Private wells and community systems

### GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Medium and high density development, typically consisting of 5-26 dwelling units per acre with a variety of residential forms.

### PRIMARY LAND USES

Community-serving commercial, office, and retail operations, as well as some limited manufacturing uses with flex spaces for larger-footprint business or industrial park uses.

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage-style single family, mobile home parks, and multi-family residential development.

### LINK TO AREA PLANS

Guilford County has existing place types within the adopted Area Plans and Small Area Plan, which includes “Heavy Commercial Node.” These are incorporated into the Major Mixed Use Center definition in *Guiding Guilford*.



## REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT CENTER

### GENERAL CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

These are lands that are typically high intensity activity centers located outside the immediate municipal corporate limits. These areas often have a diverse mix of land uses including office, retail, and residential buildings, but which may serve a singular use and purpose, such as manufacturing or distribution. Mega sites, such as the Greensboro-Randolph Mega Site, would also fit in this category.

### APPROACH FOR WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Community systems

### APPROACH TO POTABLE WATER ACCESS

Community systems

### GENERAL RESIDENTIAL DENSITY

Where Regional Employment Centers are mixed use, the residential density is similar to that found in Major Mixed Use Centers.

### PRIMARY LAND USES

Regional land uses serving commercial, office, and retail operations, as well as manufacturing uses with flex spaces for larger-footprint business or industrial park uses.

### SECONDARY LAND USES

Duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage-style single family, mobile home parks, and multi-family residential development.

### LINK TO AREA PLANS

Guilford County has existing place types within the adopted Area Plans and Small Area Plan, which includes “Central Business District.” These are incorporated into the Regional Employment Center definition in *Guiding Guilford*.



## LAND USE POLICIES

The State of North Carolina outlines the requirements for extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) expansion. Within that framework, counties can identify policies to support decision makers in their evaluation of these requests.<sup>28</sup> This section is intended to provide guidance so the County can work with municipalities to ensure the effective provision of public services and infrastructure, support economic development, and keep development patterns consistent with the County’s desired community character.

It should be noted that the state legislature passed a bill in 2023 that requires the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NC DEQ) to assess current and future water and wastewater capacities in Guilford County.<sup>29</sup> As that work progresses, it is important that any proposed development incorporate the assessment once it is complete.

### POLICY 1: CONNECTION TO THE GUILFORD COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The proposed ETJ should be located in an area identified as an Activity Center on the Future Land Use Map. A proposal that is located in an area identified as Agriculture or Natural Area shall require an amendment to the *Guiding Guilford* Plan and any applicable Small Area Plans to change the area’s designation to a more suitable land use category that can support the level of development anticipated by the municipality seeking to exercise its zoning authority in that area.

### POLICY 2: ALIGNMENT WITH THE MUNICIPALITY’S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The proposed ETJ should be located in an area identified for such development in the municipality’s comprehensive plan. This should be coordinated, to the greatest extent possible, with the future land use categories identified in the County’s Future Land Use Map and Plan.

### POLICY 3: INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICE PLAN

The municipality should demonstrate to the County that critical infrastructure, including water, sewer, and roads with sidewalks can be provided to the targeted ETJ area. Inclusion in an applicable Capital Improvement Plan is needed to address this policy. In addition, it is essential that key municipal services, such as police and fire, trash collection, and building permit review be provided in an efficient and equitable manner.

### POLICY 4: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Genuine community engagement is a key value in Guilford County. It is important that members of the community have input into the development and land use decisions that could affect them. The municipality should demonstrate that meaningful community engagement regarding the proposed ETJ has occurred with residents, landowners, and business owners and have been incorporated into the proposal.



**DRAFT**

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# 5

## **PLANNING THEMES**

### **IN THIS CHAPTER:**

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

ATTAINABLE HOUSING

DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

RESILIENT ECONOMY

EQUITABLE SERVICES

PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREENSPACE

QUALITY & CONTEXT SENSITIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

# COMMUNITY CHARACTER



## GOAL STATEMENT

Celebrate Guilford County's unique sense of place by balancing agricultural preservation with desired development patterns, context-sensitive site design and inclusive placemaking.

Photo source: Design Workshop



## COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

In the Northeast and Southeast portions of the County, preservation and protection of agricultural land uses were among the top priorities indicated for the future.

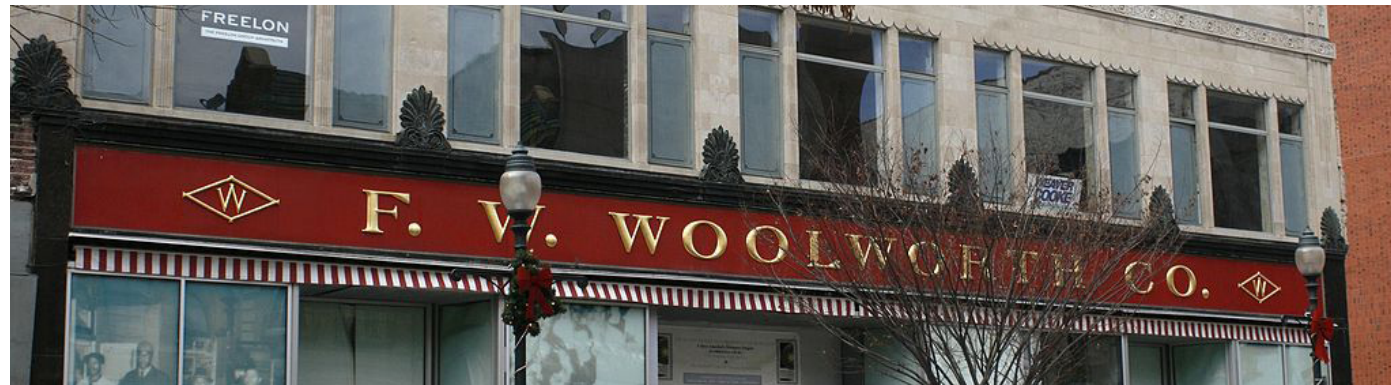
Photo source: Design Workshop

## INTRODUCTION

The County currently has a Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) which is comprised of 11 members appointed by the Board of County Commissioners or represented jurisdictions. It is responsible for overseeing the designation and inventory of landmark properties within Guilford County, in addition to making recommendations on nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. The County HPC, with support from Planning staff, currently utilizes the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation when reviewing proposed changes to designated landmark properties and resources under its purview. These Standards for Rehabilitation were created and are governed by the National Park Service. There are currently three primary benefits of designating a property as a historic landmark in Guilford County. Those benefits include the honor of historic landmark designation, deferral of up to 50% of property taxes, and design

and technical assistance regarding proposed upkeep, maintenance, and changes to the designated features of the landmark property. As of December 2023, Guilford County had over 700 properties in its Historic Resource Inventory, as well as more than 115 designated landmarks.

The County should continue to act as a steward of its historic resources, which include architectural, archaeological, and cultural sites and structures within the planning area. The County should bolster its historic preservation program through ongoing historic inventory surveys and protection of its designated landmark properties. To ensure Guilford County's heritage and history is protected while also allowing for the evolution and progression of uses within its landmarks, it is important to incentivize ADA-compliant structures, adaptations, or upgrades involving restoration, rehabilitation, and/or adaptive reuse.



Historic Downtown Greensboro.

### **POLICY 1: CONTINUE TO DOCUMENT HISTORIC RESOURCES AND INCREASE THE VISIBILITY OF THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM.**

The County should explore potential partnerships and funding mechanisms to incentivize preservation of locally significant historic properties in order to retain culturally and historically significant landscapes, sites, properties, or developments that may not meet the National Register’s designation standards, but which have significance to local communities.

<b>ACTION C1.1</b>	Continue to designate historic resources that are eligible for the National Register, including architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources.
<b>ACTION C1.2</b>	Evaluate means to strengthen the County’s landmark designation process and consider adopting a Prevention of Demolition by Neglect Ordinance outlining standards and best practices to prevent demolition of historic resources by neglect.
<b>ACTION C1.3</b>	Explore additional financial and development incentives that will provide assistance for private property owners to preserve or rehabilitate historic structures and spaces.
<b>ACTION C1.4</b>	Incentivize restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of designated local landmark and National Register properties through expedited permit review, or through regulatory reliefs for site planning such as parking reductions or reduced setbacks. Encourage evaluations of Certificates of Appropriateness and conducting site visits for building permits to ensure compliance.
<b>ACTION C1.5</b>	Continue to use outreach campaigns, websites, publications, and educational forums to increase public awareness and appreciation of Guilford County’s rich historic and cultural traditions.
<b>ACTION C1.6</b>	Fund an updated historic architectural resources survey.
<b>ACTION C1.7</b>	Research and develop a local designation program for landscapes, sites, properties, or developments that are culturally significant but do not meet State or National Register requirements.

### **POLICY 2: CELEBRATE CULTURAL RESOURCES AND CONTINUE TO INVEST IN THE ARTS.**

The County should celebrate cultural resources and the arts within its communities in by expanding opportunities for partnerships and collaborations with local non-profit and educational organizations.

<b>ACTION C2.1</b>	Support the installation of public art on County-owned properties.
<b>ACTION C2.2</b>	Continue to support community cultural festivals, performances, and events to celebrate diversity within Guilford County.
<b>ACTION C2.3</b>	Encourage collaborations among businesses, artists, educators, and the technology sector to promote cross-sector innovation.
<b>ACTION C2.4</b>	Work with stakeholders and community members to incorporate policies for diverse and inclusive public art and cultural expression throughout Guilford County.
<b>ACTION C2.5</b>	Identify potential partnerships and establish programs for strengthening public art and art education opportunities.

### **POLICY 3: PRIORITIZE HIGH-QUALITY DESIGN AND DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER IN NEW DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT, RECOGNIZING VARIATIONS ACROSS GUILFORD COUNTY.**

Guilford County is rooted in a rich history, which is reflected in its built form. The County should prioritize high-quality design as it continues to grow.

<b>ACTION C3.1</b>	Explore the use of character-based pattern books, design guidelines and manuals, or a hybrid approach to establish intended character and design elements for different Place Types as identified on the FLUM.
<b>ACTION C3.2</b>	Focus on creating active, walkable, and universally-accessible public realms in all new Activity Centers. Incentivize existing activity centers and private developments to retrofit accessibility features.
<b>ACTION C3.3</b>	Encourage the design of new development that is compatible with historic structures or landscapes to both maintain a sense of place and highlight historic integrity.
<b>ACTION C3.4</b>	Support existing and implement new policies that prioritize preservation of farmland, as further outlined in the Resilient Economy Policy 4.
<b>ACTION C3.5</b>	Encourage universal access to stores, parks, community amenities, and employment centers.
<b>ACTION C3.6</b>	Prioritize the orientation of new commercial and office buildings toward the street to promote walkability.
<b>ACTION C3.7</b>	Integrate additional environmentally-sustainable design standards in future updates to the UDO, as well as site design requirements, and/or environmental programs to further green initiatives in Guilford County.

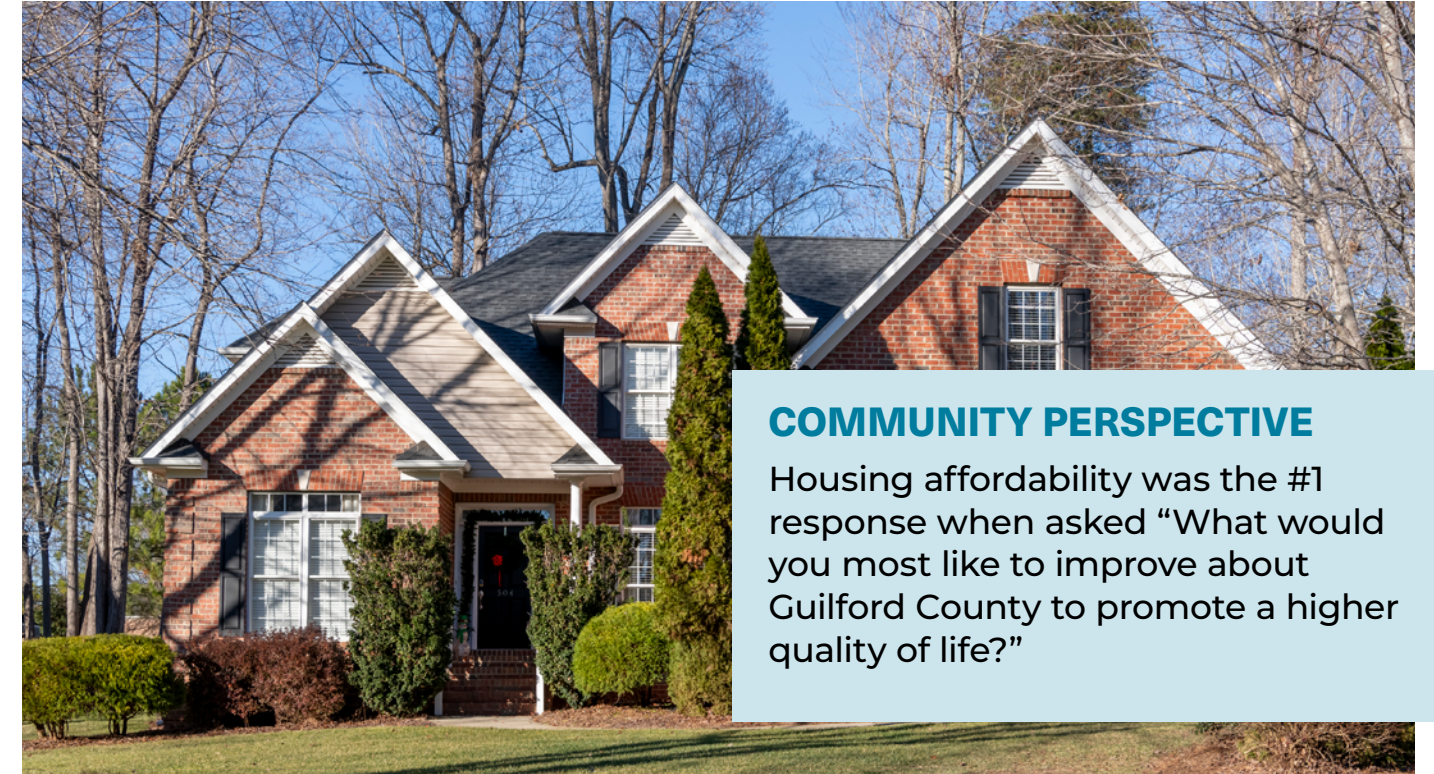
# ATTAINABLE HOUSING



## GOAL STATEMENT

Focus on supporting the creation and retention of a diverse range of housing types to accommodate all residents while emphasizing safety and high-quality, sustainable design.

Photo source: Design Workshop



## COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

Housing affordability was the #1 response when asked “What would you most like to improve about Guilford County to promote a higher quality of life?”

Photo source: Design Workshop

## INTRODUCTION

Housing availability at varying price points across varying household income levels plays a crucial role in Guilford County's community fabric. Over the past twenty years, the housing market has changed. There has been a reduction in housing starts (the creation of new housing) and home ownership, thus emphasizing the need for diverse housing types and price points to meet the evolving needs of residents. Additionally, housing affordability and cost of living, including for students, long-term Guilford County residents, and seniors stood out as leading themes during the Guiding Guilford engagement process. Addressing these concerns will require coordination with policies on transportation, infrastructure, land use, and economic development.

From 2010-2020, Guilford County's population increased by 11%, but housing units only increased by 6.5%, indicating a gap in the housing market.<sup>2</sup> Notably, there have been no new housing permits for multi-family housing in unincorporated Guilford County since 2009.<sup>3</sup> Homeownership declined from 63% in 2000 to 58% in 2020.<sup>3</sup>

Housing and transportation costs consume a significant portion of household income (ranging from 53% to 66%).<sup>11</sup> This underscores the pressing need to diversify housing types, not only to enhance affordability but also to reduce the burden on families striving to make ends meet. It also reinforces the need to expand public transit routes and frequency, and to encourage the creation of jobs closer to where people reside to reduce the dependency on private vehicles. To make meaningful progress on this topic, Guilford County supports the development of new housing to help meet the increased demand for housing, as well as the preservation of housing that currently exists, and will continue to support and enable partnerships to meet these community needs. Locating new housing opportunities near multi-modal transportation options will also be critical to connect attainable housing to job centers. Additionally, coordination on the implementation of water and sewer service for multi-family development is necessary. Updates to land use codes and policies to encourage development near services and with a high-quality design are also a priority.

- [USDA Farm Labor Housing Loan and Grant](#)  
Action 1.5
- [HOME Program](#)  
Action 2.2



Photo source: Design Workshop

**POLICY 1: ENABLE THE CREATION OF NEW HOUSING UNITS THAT WILL PROVIDE A DIVERSE MIX OF HOUSING TYPES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS.**

Guilford County includes many different housing styles and types, each meeting the unique needs of different neighborhoods and communities. As new housing options are developed, it is important they reflect the specific needs of Guilford County’s residents. New development on all scales is appropriate in Guilford County, and policies should be updated and adopted to promote the creation of new housing in all parts of the county.

<b>ACTION H1.1</b>	Support residential development in and near Activity Centers, consistent with the Future Land Use Map.
<b>ACTION H1.2</b>	Update the UDO to provide an administrative review path for attainable housing development located in Activity Centers.
<b>ACTION H1.3</b>	Encourage housing opportunities that support existing and new agricultural operations. This could include use of the USDA Farm Labor Housing Loan and Grant opportunities <sup>30</sup> , or the addition of housing facilities for farm workers.
<b>ACTION H1.4</b>	Incentivize development of housing located within ¼ mile of transit services, such as a simplified review process, reductions in required parking, or additional height allowances.
<b>ACTION H1.5</b>	Coordinate with municipalities regarding desired housing types in ETJ areas.
<b>ACTION H1.6</b>	Offer housing density bonuses for land conservation subdivisions.
<b>ACTION H1.7</b>	Update the UDO to allow developers of new subdivisions to provide multiple lot sizes and/or house types to encourage additional housing diversity.
<b>ACTION H1.8</b>	Explore the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) / Project Development Financing to fund the inclusion of affordable housing in development.

<b>ACTION H1.9</b>	Incentivize the creation of new housing options for seniors to enable residents to remain in Guilford County as they age.
<b>ACTION H1.10</b>	Work with private developers, economic development agencies, municipalities, businesses, and others to enhance local development expertise and create public-private and non-profit partnerships for the development and preservation of attainable housing.
<b>ACTION H1.11</b>	Decrease the minimum lot size for residential development in areas identified on the Future Land Use Map as Activity Centers and Multi-Family Residential.
<b>ACTION H1.12</b>	Require new large-scale development to provide a study of anticipated housing needs resulting from the development.

**POLICY 2: ENABLE HOUSING CREATION AND PRESERVATION THROUGHOUT GUILFORD COUNTY THAT IS ATTAINABLE FOR ALL INCOME LEVELS.**

It is critical that diverse housing choices at different price points exist for the community to meet residents’ varying needs. Housing should be provided throughout the county to maintain a balanced housing mix, and to ensure housing is connected to necessary services.

<b>ACTION H2.1</b>	Work with municipalities, homebuilders and developers to support a range of housing development types that meet the needs of different socioeconomic groups.
<b>ACTION H2.2</b>	Continue to work with non-profit and private-sector housing partners to identify funding, through sources like the HOME <sup>31</sup> program, that can assist low- and moderate-income households with the rent and/or purchase of a home and find innovative solutions for expanding housing choices and availability county-wide.
<b>ACTION H2.3</b>	Complete a code audit to identify any barriers related to the creation of missing middle housing and implement recommended code changes from the audit.
<b>ACTION H2.4</b>	Encourage employer-funded or assisted affordable housing as part of major employment center development to provide housing opportunities for those working in the area served by the employment center.
<b>ACTION H2.5</b>	Encourage and support private sector businesses to establish employer-assisted housing (EAH) programs to increase housing opportunities for their employees, such as through home-buyer education, rental and down payment assistance, and the like.
<b>ACTION H2.6</b>	Incentivize property owners to pursue zoning that is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and who provide multi-family housing units as part of that zoning approval.

- [North Carolina Housing Finance Agency](#)  
Action 3.4
- [Community Benefits Agreement](#)  
Action 3.5



Backyard cottage in Seattle's Greenwood neighborhood, CAST Architecture.

### **POLICY 3: UPDATE POLICIES TO MAINTAIN HOUSING AFFORDABILITY IN EXISTING UNITS THROUGHOUT GUILFORD COUNTY.**

Preservation of existing housing units is essential for protecting residents and maintaining stable communities. These policies seek to enable existing residents to afford to stay in their homes, promoting a secure and inclusive environment for all.

<b>ACTION H3.1</b>	Continue to allow the creation of accessory dwelling units and live/work units in areas that are currently developed and have access to reliable sources of water and sanitation facilities.
<b>ACTION H3.2</b>	Continue to use HOME allocation funds for down payment assistance.
<b>ACTION H3.3</b>	Encourage the retrofitting of existing buildings that can or will be converted to housing, or which will help preserve existing housing.
<b>ACTION H3.4</b>	Explore funding opportunities from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency <sup>34</sup> or USDA that can support retention of existing housing stock.
<b>ACTION H3.5</b>	Explore the creation of an affordable housing preservation fund or other funding mechanism, such as HOME funds, to support preservation of existing housing units and the development of new multi-family units, using Wake County's as an example. <sup>35</sup>
<b>ACTION H3.6</b>	Prioritize the renovation of existing housing units over demolition through incentive programs in an effort to preserve existing housing stock.
<b>ACTION H3.7</b>	Encourage the use of Community Benefits Agreements <sup>36</sup> to address the potential for housing displacement related to large development.

- [Resilience Hubs](#)  
Action 4.4
- [Community Development Block Grant Program](#)  
Action 4.5



Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU).

### **POLICY 4: ENCOURAGE THE PRESERVATION, MAINTENANCE, AND DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH-QUALITY AND SAFE HOUSING.**

While access to attainable housing is critical, it is equally important that housing units are safe and are built for longevity. Updated policies and procedures to encourage the upkeep and remodeling of homes to be safe will support the long-term quality of life for Guilford County residents.

<b>ACTION H4.1</b>	Work with partners to complete training for home builders on the land development and building permit processes, including education on how to integrate materials that are durable and long-lasting into new developments.
<b>ACTION H4.2</b>	Create updated forms and informational handouts to explain applicable review processes and opportunities for financial incentives or support, and to encourage the private sector to create and preserve high-quality housing units.
<b>ACTION H4.3</b>	Continue to use funding sources such as the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME) <sup>29</sup> and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) <sup>37</sup> to maintain and rehabilitate substandard housing and create new attainable housing.
<b>ACTION H4.4</b>	Explore the creation of Resilience Hubs <sup>38</sup> that can support neighborhoods in times of natural disaster and support post-disaster relief.
<b>ACTION H4.5</b>	Prioritize the location of new housing in locations that are accessible to employment, schools, parks, services, and transit.

# RESILIENT ECONOMY



## GOAL STATEMENT

Promote a healthy, sustainable economy that fosters partnerships, supports small business, incentivizes retention of farmland, and creates an economic climate that will attract and retain both job-generating businesses and their employees.

Photo source: Design Workshop



Mega Site location.  
Photo source: Triad Business Journal

[Guilford County Economic Development Alliance](#) ←

[Piedmont Triad Partnership](#) ←

## COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

Focus group participants suggested to address lack of workforce retention and leveraging aerospace, life sciences, food processing/production and furniture design and textile industries as well as supply chain industry opportunities from the Megasite.

## INTRODUCTION

Regional cooperation is necessary to support a robust economy. The Guilford County Economic Development Alliance (GCEDA) provides a key framework to support economic development and diversification efforts in the county.<sup>44</sup> The Piedmont Triad Partnership supports economic development in the larger region.<sup>45</sup> Local economic development agencies also often work in tandem with regional or state-funded initiatives to attract larger Regional Employment Centers. For example, the Greensboro-Randolph Mega Site, located in Liberty near the Guilford and Randolph County border, is under construction and will host Toyota battery manufacturing facilities. Originally anticipated to bring over 1,700 jobs to the region, with additional investment commitments in late 2023, it has since expanded its proposed footprint and is now estimated to bring over 5,000 jobs to the area.<sup>20</sup> Additionally, the Publix Distribution Center in the McLeansville area is anticipated to provide up to 1,000 jobs by 2025.<sup>46</sup> The aviation sector has also experienced growth.

In October of 2023, the unemployment in the Guilford County was 3.7%, and overall employment has once

again reached pre-pandemic levels.<sup>47</sup> According to the North Carolina Department of Commerce, an annual employment growth rate of 0.7% through 2030 is anticipated in Guilford County.<sup>39</sup> Certain sectors are anticipated to continue to grow including the construction, transportation and warehousing, retail trade, accommodation and food services, education, and health care and social assistance. Beyond these sectors, support for small business is important to create a range of business and employment opportunities in the County. Farming has also historically been a key sector of Guilford County's economy and overall character, and preservation of farmland and natural areas was identified as a priority throughout the community engagement process.

As municipalities grow over the next decade, some of that growth will extend into the unincorporated areas of Guilford County. To guide this growth responsibly, the County needs to work with municipalities to create and commit to policies that will balance economic progress and growth with the preservation of agricultural lands and natural areas.



Photo source: Design Workshop

## POLICY 1: ALIGN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS WITH THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP.

As Guilford County continues to grow and attract new businesses and industries, it is important that these businesses and industries reflect the overall character of the county and follow the goals for growth management identified in the Plan.

<b>ACTION E1.1</b>	Ensure areas best suited for economic development, such as the US 421 Corridor, are secured for such use, while balancing the needs for housing, recreational amenities, agricultural, and commercial uses.
<b>ACTION E1.2</b>	Evaluate economic development opportunities through their potential impacts on equity in the community.
<b>ACTION E1.3</b>	Support development of Neighborhood Centers as identified on the Future Land Use Map to support rural commercial uses that are appropriately scaled, and which fit with the rural character of Guilford County.
<b>ACTION E1.4</b>	Locate jobs near municipalities where housing is most concentrated, as well as in close proximity to employment centers outside of environmentally-sensitive areas, to reduce impacts on those sensitive areas, as well as carbon footprint, traffic and commuting times.
<b>ACTION E1.5</b>	Update the Liberty Road/Woody Mill Small Area Plan.



Photo source: High Point Economic Development

→ [Tax Increment Financing](#)  
Action 2.3

## POLICY 2: SUPPORT EXISTING BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES, WHILE SEEKING TO INCREASE HIGH-WAGE JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY.

As economic development occurs, it is important to bolster the stability of established businesses and industries while also actively pursuing initiatives to create high-quality jobs. By strategically focusing on the expansion of employment opportunities, Guilford County and its partners can cultivate a thriving economic landscape that benefits both businesses and the broader community.

<b>ACTION E2.1</b>	Ensure that investments of public funds support targeted business sectors and promote the growth of new businesses.
<b>ACTION E2.2</b>	Seek to prioritize Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funding to reinvest in areas with economic disparities.
<b>ACTION E2.3</b>	Explore the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) <sup>48</sup> / Project Development Financing to support the creation of high-impact business development, including new employment sectors or development that will create high-wage jobs and increase tax revenue for Guilford County.
<b>ACTION E2.4</b>	Ensure building permit processes are streamlined for small businesses.
<b>ACTION E2.5</b>	Offer economic incentives and assistance for small businesses.
<b>ACTION E2.6</b>	Expand the County's Economic Development Investments. <sup>49</sup>



- [NCWorks](#)  
Action 3.1
- [GuilfordWorks](#)  
Action 3.1
- [MyFutureNC](#)  
Action 3.5



Photo source: Design Workshop

**POLICY 3: CULTIVATE AND SUPPORT WORKFORCE TRAINING PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT RESIDENTS IN GAINING THE SKILLS NEEDED FOR EMERGING JOB OPPORTUNITIES, FOSTERING A DYNAMIC AND ADAPTABLE WORKFORCE.**

A vital economy relies on Guilford County residents having the skills needed to work in the jobs being created. The County and its partners can take proactive measures to bridge skill gaps and enhance employability, fostering a resilient community that is ready to meet the challenges of a modern workforce and business climate.

<b>ACTION E3.1</b>	Continue to support funding and identify sites to support the needs of workforce development partners, such as NCWorks, GuilfordWorks, and others.
<b>ACTION E3.2</b>	Collaborate with local business incubators to understand and support growth opportunities for business start-ups.
<b>ACTION E3.3</b>	Provide support, such as grants, expedited permit reviews, and education opportunities, for small businesses to expand in Guilford County.
<b>ACTION E3.4</b>	Continue to work with educational and training partners to tailor educational programs that support green industry.
<b>ACTION E3.5</b>	Explore opportunities to support statewide efforts to increase the number of students seeking post-secondary education through the myFutureNC program and continue to prioritize partnerships with higher education institutions.

- [Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance](#)  
Action 4.3



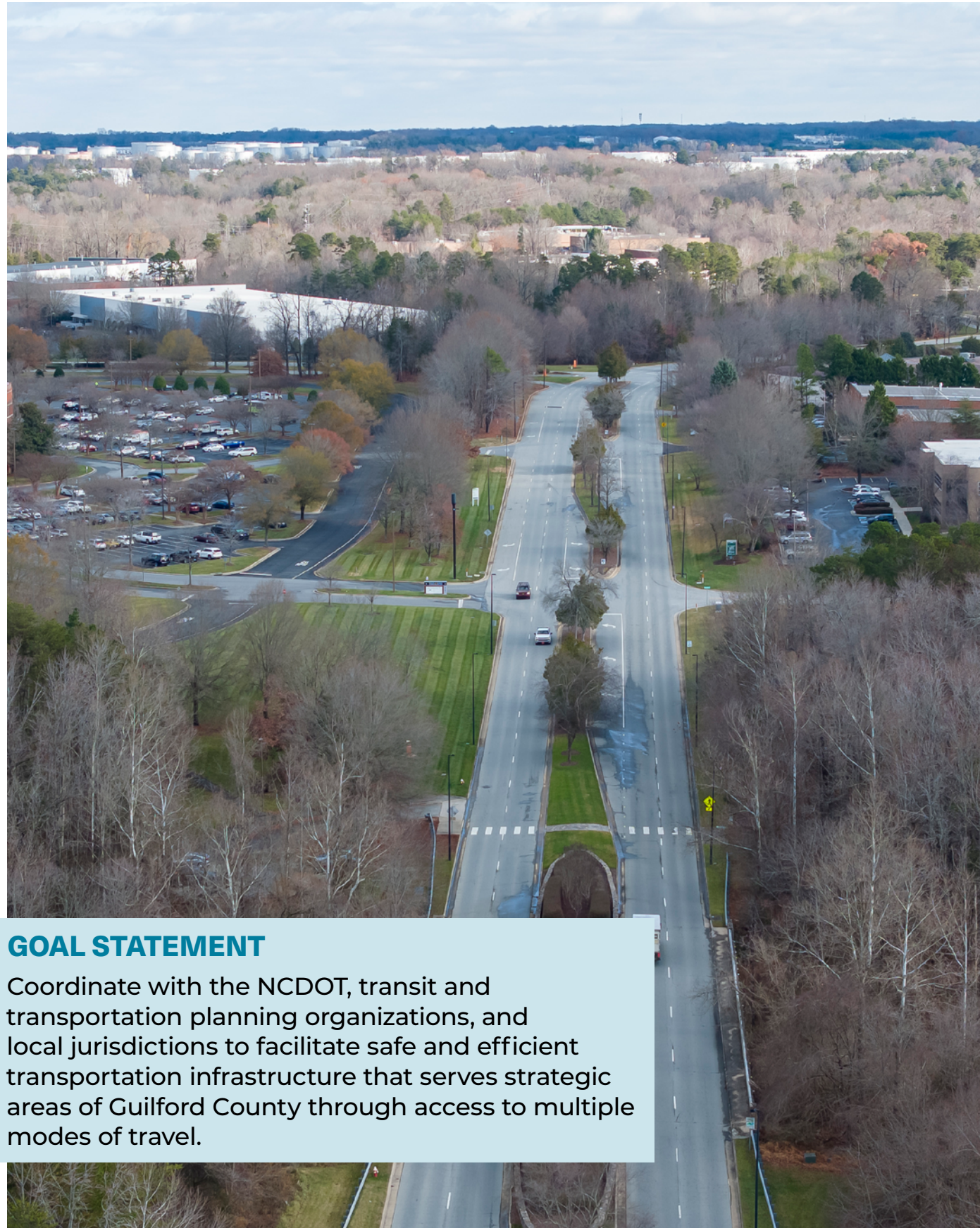
Photo source: Design Workshop

**POLICY 4: PRIORITIZE THE PRESERVATION OF AGRICULTURAL USES AND WORKING FARMS AS A STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE.**

Guilford County has a rich history of agriculture that is important to preserve to protect community character and a rural way of life. Economic development should balance new industries with the protection of working farms that have inherent economic value and environmental benefits.

<b>ACTION E4.1</b>	Support and expand existing programs, and work with partners to develop new programs, to support Guilford County's agricultural industry and farmland preservation.
<b>ACTION E4.2</b>	Explore economic development opportunities specifically tied to rural and agricultural land uses in Guilford County.
<b>ACTION E4.3</b>	Continue to promote the County's Voluntary Agricultural District and Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance <sup>52</sup> as a way to preserve working farmlands in Guilford County.
<b>ACTION E4.4</b>	Provide additional incentives for agricultural properties to become an Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD). <sup>21</sup>
<b>ACTION E4.5</b>	Establish a Farmland Preservation position or program in the Guilford Soil and Water District Office or Cooperative Extension Office to establish a more robust farmland preservation program.
<b>ACTION E4.6</b>	Consider funding for local public service announcements to create more awareness of and to promote Guilford County farm producers and operators.

# DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY



## GOAL STATEMENT

Coordinate with the NCDOT, transit and transportation planning organizations, and local jurisdictions to facilitate safe and efficient transportation infrastructure that serves strategic areas of Guilford County through access to multiple modes of travel.

Photo source: Design Workshop



## COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

Workshop participants expressed a desire to be able to walk and bike to parks, with a preference towards automobile and public transit for getting to work and activity centers.

Photo source: City of Greensboro

## INTRODUCTION

While the County does not lead transportation efforts within its boundaries, it plays an integral role as a regional partner to the NCDOT, municipalities, and other organizations located within the areas served by MPOs and RPOs to which the County belongs. This helps ensure that its residents have access to regional transportation and employment centers. The City of Greensboro Transit Authority (GTA) operates over 15 bus routes throughout the

city that connect into areas of the county, including transfer points with PART, the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation, which provides bus services throughout the Piedmont-Triad area.<sup>53</sup> This agency provides services to Greensboro, Winston-Salem, High Point, and other regional locations with connections to other transit services in the area, such as High Point Transit in Guilford County and Link Transit in Alamance County.

- [Greensboro Transit Authority](#)
- [Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation](#)
- [High Point Transit](#)
- [Link Transit](#)



Photo source: Design Workshop

→ [Complete Streets](#)  
Action 1.2



Photo source: Design Workshop

**POLICY 1: PROVIDE ONGOING SUPPORT OF THE EXISTING COUNTYWIDE TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS FOCUSING ON UNIVERSAL ACCESS, SAFETY, EFFICIENCY, CLIMATE-FRIENDLY OPTIONS FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.**

Land use and transportation are intrinsically tied together. The County has been a long-time partner to regional transportation operators and planning organizations, including GTA, PART, High Point Urban Area MPO, Burlington Graham MPO, PTRC, Piedmont Triad RPO, Carolina Core, and the Greensboro Urban Area MPO, and it should continue building on these relationships to provide additional transit opportunities for its residents. Specifically, the County should focus on coordination to assist in the delivery of programs and projects outlined in the Metropolitan Transportation Plans (MTP), which are regularly updated. The MTPs takes into account land use plans from Guilford County and its municipalities in order to create a generalized future land use plan (an example of which is provided above from the Greensboro Urban Area MPO MTP). The generalized future land use plans help to determine future road projects and their impact on adjacent communities.<sup>14</sup> Uncontrolled development and land use changes without corresponding changes to roadways can contribute to overcapacity, congestion, and sprawl.

**ACTION T1.1**

Continue to support regional partners in creating efficient and functional future transportation and transit network components.

**ACTION T1.2**

Identify major transportation projects from the MTPs in any future updates to quadrant mapping or Area Plans to ensure ongoing transportation and land use coordination.

**ACTION T1.3**

Coordinate with partners to ensure that the transportation system is equitable and that it addresses access to jobs, housing, healthcare, education, and other community services. The County should also advocate for the transportation system to close mobility gaps.

**ACTION T1.4**

Provide support for and enhance mobility-based programs for seniors and those living with disabilities.

**ACTION T1.5**

Leverage Guilford County's geographic accessibility to multiple major cities to advance policies and transportation projects that have both regional and local impacts. These efforts should focus on governance, accountability, and strategies to address county needs that are not presently being met.

**ACTION T1.6**

Continue to engage in regional discussions about state and federal funding and investments in the area to ensure that Guilford County projects meet the goals and vision in the Plan.

**ACTION T1.7**

Support the school district to provide equitable transportation to assist all students with getting to and from school both safely and efficiently. Consider updating the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Guilford County Public Schools to require consultation for potential school sites or expansion projects during the site identification phase of the planning process to ensure that transportation impacts to local areas are identified prior to site acquisition.

**ACTION T1.8**

Ensure that changes to the UDO related to transportation will enhance safety, calm traffic, and improve efficiency and connectivity.

**ACTION T1.9**

Advance complete street principles<sup>54</sup> through updates to the UDO to better support access to transit options and institute climate-friendly policies.

<b>ACTION T1.10</b>	Support efforts to reduce reliance on automobile trips to improve air quality through more compact development that reflects the future land uses identified on the FLUM.
<b>ACTION T1.11</b>	Continue to plan and coordinate investments with Guilford County Public Schools to increase safe routes to schools and assess walking routes for student safety and equity.
<b>ACTION T1.12</b>	Support “park once” behavior through the implementation of standards that require safe, non-automobile pathways or sidewalks that connect buildings in Activity Centers, Office, or Retail complexes as indicated on the FLUM.

**POLICY 2: IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND INTO EXISTING REGIONAL SERVICES, THE COUNTY SHOULD MAINTAIN ITS ACTIVE ROLE IN MPOS THAT SERVE THE COUNTY, IN ADDITION TO OTHER REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATIONS, WHICH PROVIDE REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY AND TRANSIT EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES THAT SERVE GUILFORD COUNTY RESIDENTS.**

As a regional partner to transportation operators, the County should focus efforts on keeping the public aware of key projects and improvements that occur within county boundaries, and which serve county residents. As projects are implemented by the MPO over the lifespan of the Plan, it will be important for the County to take an active role in regional transportation discussions and assist in creating public awareness of the need for improved connectivity and trail opportunities.

<b>ACTION T2.1</b>	Actively participate in all regional transportation efforts and seek and maintain participation on all MPOs that serve Guilford County.
<b>ACTION T2.2</b>	Continue to engage and participate in regional and state discussions and planning activities to ensure the need for movement of goods and freight throughout Guilford County is considered and supported.
<b>ACTION T2.3</b>	Endorse funding approvals that will expand transit services to unincorporated areas of Guilford County.
<b>ACTION T2.4</b>	Assist PART in continuing to identify key connections throughout Guilford County that are prime locations for remote parking sites.
<b>ACTION T2.5</b>	Investigate opportunities to work with NCDOT to establish or modify context-sensitive roadway designs.
<b>ACTION T2.6</b>	Continue to support the MPOs and RPOs to which the County belongs, as well as the GTA, High Point Transit Authority, and PART to improve collaborative efforts.
<b>ACTION T2.7</b>	Ensure that the County regularly assesses the UDO for its landscaping and buffering standards to use best practices to address noise impacts, reduce air pollution, and to promote safe and aesthetically-pleasing design outcomes.



A reimagined boulevard in Carmel, Indiana provides multimodal connectivity and environmental resilience. Photo source: Landscape Performance Series, Landscape Architecture Foundation

**POLICY 3: ACTIVELY PLAN FOR THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.**

Over the lifespan of the Plan, Guilford County and the surrounding region will experience more extreme changes in weather patterns and should proactively identify areas within its limits that may be more susceptible to the impacts of these extreme weather events.

<b>ACTION T3.1</b>	Consider evaluating parking and land use development requirements to reflect the future land uses identified in the FLUM to respond to changing development patterns and mobility needs.
<b>ACTION T3.2</b>	Amend the design standards in the UDO to ensure resilience.
<b>ACTION T3.3</b>	Encourage and facilitate the installation of public and private electric vehicle charging stations with particular attention to shared or remote parking lots.
<b>ACTION T3.4</b>	Remove regulatory barriers for property owners or companies that deploy electric vehicle charging infrastructure and other technologies that assist in the reduction of emissions.
<b>ACTION T3.5</b>	Participate in regional and state coordination efforts to ensure state and federal transportation efforts and plans reflect opportunities for electric and autonomous vehicles and safety considerations for bicycles and pedestrians.
<b>ACTION T3.6</b>	Support efforts to improve air quality, considering those populations and communities that are most impacted by air pollution.
<b>ACTION T3.7</b>	Work with the Piedmont Triad Airport Authority to identify and support ways to reduce the impacts of noise and air pollution from air travel.
<b>ACTION T3.8</b>	Develop regulatory standards for low impact design and green infrastructure.

# EQUITABLE SERVICES



## GOAL STATEMENT

Support land use decisions that create equitable distribution of and convenient access to health and emergency services, schools, and parks.

Photo source: Design Workshop



## COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

When asked what is most important in terms of managing future growth, access to services was in the top three responses.

Photo source: Design Workshop

## INTRODUCTION

Fostering a high quality of life throughout Guilford County includes the equitable distribution of key services that people use in their everyday lives. While many of these services are indirectly influenced by county government, the Plan can help guide where these services should be located and can support partnerships with organizations that provide these services, including education, healthcare, and emergency services.

By strategically guiding land use, the County can ensure that essential services and amenities are

accessible to all residents, irrespective of their location or socioeconomic status. This approach promotes community well-being by fostering equal opportunities for key services, thus contributing to a more inclusive and resilient county where every individual can better thrive. Residents should have access to equitable services that support their overall health and improve health outcomes, and growth and development should enable residents to age in place and have easy access to the outdoors.



Photo source: Design Workshop

**POLICY 1: WORK WITH STRATEGIC PARTNERS TO INCREASE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SERVICES THAT PROMOTE A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE.**

The location of services throughout Guilford County is important to create a community where every person has equal opportunities to enjoy a high quality of life. The County is committed to working with partners to increase inclusivity and address disparities in the provision of services.

<b>ACTION S1.1</b>	Complete the 2023 Community Health Assessment to understand the social determinants of health. Include an analysis of the impacts from the built environment on health outcomes.
<b>ACTION S1.2</b>	Hold annual conversations between the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and the Guilford County School Board to discuss priorities and trends related to schools.
<b>ACTION S1.3</b>	Coordinate directly with service providers to understand trends, land use needs, and anticipated growth to ensure equitable distribution of those services.
<b>ACTION S1.4</b>	Work with the County Emergency Management Director or designee to help coordinate needs among Guilford County's different fire districts.
<b>ACTION S1.5</b>	Support efforts to advance early childhood educational and childcare access through an analysis to determine gaps in service.



Photo source: Design Workshop

**POLICY 2: ENSURE ADEQUATE PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND AMENITIES ARE LOCATED IN PROXIMITY TO EXISTING AND PLANNED NEIGHBORHOODS.**

Access to the outdoors and recreational opportunities improves overall health outcomes for people. By strategically locating these amenities so all residents can access them, the County seeks to improve quality of life and promote active and healthy lifestyles.

<b>ACTION S2.1</b>	Complete the Guilford County Parks Master Plan and prioritize funding to implement the Plan's priority initiatives.
<b>ACTION S2.2</b>	Analyze parks and recreation service throughout Guilford County, identifying areas where there are existing service gaps, maintenance needs, and facility upgrades and establish policies and funding to address these gaps.
<b>ACTION S2.3</b>	Review the inventory of County-owned properties to determine if any of them could be used to address gaps in the parks and recreational infrastructure.
<b>ACTION S2.4</b>	Analyze potential health disparities resulting from limited access to the outdoors and recreational services and programming for those residents living in the rural areas of Guilford County.
<b>ACTION S2.5</b>	Expand overall accessibility and inclusiveness in all recreation facilities, including implementing ADA improvements.
<b>ACTION S2.6</b>	Link transportation improvements with opportunities for providing walking and biking connections to recreational amenities.
<b>ACTION S2.7</b>	Provide residents living in established communities with access to parks, trails, recreational facilities, or natural areas within a 15-minute drive.

# PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREENSPACE



## GOAL STATEMENT

Ensure the provision of abundant parks, as well as the protection of natural vistas and green space, through County-managed soil erosion, stormwater, and conservation programs so that diverse natural resources are valued and preserved.

Company Mill Preserve, Guilford County. Photo source: Design Workshop



## COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

The relationship with and access to nature and the outdoors is the #1 item the community is most satisfied with related to quality of life in Guilford County.

Company Mill Preserve, Guilford County. Photo source: Design Workshop

## INTRODUCTION

Guilford County has abundant natural, recreational, scenic, cultural, and historic resources within its boundaries and should continue its focus on environmental stewardship and conservation

principles in future expansions of park lands, open spaces, green spaces, recreational trails, cultural facilities, arts facilities, and public programming.



Company Mill Preserve, Guilford County. Photo source: Design Workshop

### **POLICY 1: IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF GUILFORD COUNTY'S NATURAL RESOURCES THROUGH REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION MEASURES.**

The County's environmental and ecological health should be considered equally important as other County resources. Addressing the impacts of extreme weather events and a changing climate should be integrated into County programs and future policies to ensure that Guilford County is prepared to address development pressures to its natural resources.

<b>ACTION N1.1</b>	Continue promoting the preservation of agricultural lands, which are a declining resource in Guilford County.
<b>ACTION N1.2</b>	Focus on strategic partnerships with local and regional conservation organizations.
<b>ACTION N1.3</b>	Evaluate opportunities for enhancements to the UDO to implement measures that align with the Future Land Use Map, including mixed-use activity centers, natural resource protections, and provisions for renewable energy measures.
<b>ACTION N1.4</b>	Enhance opportunities for land preservation through housing development patterns that reduce emissions.
<b>ACTION N1.5</b>	Incentivize environmental restoration when properties are redeveloped, such as expedited permit reviews or reduced fees.
<b>ACTION N1.6</b>	Incentivize trail corridors in new development areas to protect water and air quality, benefit health and home values, and provide needed connectivity to larger trail systems.
<b>ACTION N1.7</b>	Incentivize the retention of tree canopy across Guilford County, specifically on new development sites and planned communities.



Company Mill Preserve, Guilford County. Photo source: Design Workshop

### **POLICY 2: SAFEGUARD THE ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY OF REGIONAL WATER SOURCES AND RECREATIONAL WATER BODIES.**

The county has nine drinking water supply sheds which are protected under the Watershed Protection/Stormwater Management Section.<sup>56</sup> In addition to protecting watersheds, the Section also enforces National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase 2 rules and Jordan Lake rules. The County should focus its efforts on implementing natural stormwater management measures and consider policies for green streets for new developments and subdivisions.

<b>ACTION N2.1</b>	Promote more compact development patterns closer to major 'nodes' in Guilford County to mitigate the impacts of development, such as emissions, development waste, and site runoff, on the county's environment and natural resources.
<b>ACTION N2.2</b>	Evaluate and enhance measures, such as erosion and sediment control, steep slopes, and species habitats in the UDO, for sensitive environmental resources.
<b>ACTION N2.3</b>	Expand on existing watershed management policies to set goals and priorities for protecting, restoring, and improving the county's environmental resources.
<b>ACTION N2.4</b>	Develop options for improving, enforcing, and funding long-term inspection and maintenance of stormwater management facilities.
<b>ACTION N2.5</b>	Continue to coordinate and cooperate with other local, regional, and state agencies and organizations, such as the NC Division of Water Quality, on joint watershed planning and management.
<b>ACTION N2.6</b>	Work to reduce stormwater runoff through redevelopment and ensure that site redevelopment meets minimum stormwater management requirements.
<b>ACTION N2.7</b>	Incentivize development and redevelopment to address environmental concerns, flood risks, and watershed health. Incentivize the preservation of open space along waterways within future developments.



→ [Heat Islands](#)  
Action 3.4



Photo source: Design Workshop

### **POLICY 3: PROTECT NATURAL FEATURES AND SENSITIVE AREAS (RIPARIAN AREAS, FLOODPLAINS, VEGETATION/TREE COVER).**

The integrity of natural features and sensitive areas, including riparian zones, floodplains, and vegetation/tree cover, is critical to the long-term character of Guilford County. Protection and restoration of these areas should be integrated into planning and resource management County-wide.

<b>ACTION N3.1</b>	Establish and achieve measurable goals for tree canopy, forest cover, and riparian forest buffers in all Guilford County watersheds.
<b>ACTION N3.2</b>	Prioritize native tree plantings in communities that are economically vulnerable in order to mitigate heat island impacts. <sup>57</sup>
<b>ACTION N3.3</b>	Continue to update the County's GIS system with layers locating natural assets and amenities, protected lands, current and future parks, dedicated open spaces, and places designated through the Historic Inventory List.
<b>ACTION N3.4</b>	Conduct a study and update the Guilford County Natural Heritage Inventory to identify the areas of most ecological significance and prioritize conservation efforts within the county.
<b>ACTION N3.5</b>	Create incentives that reward innovation and green designs, and which respect, assimilate, and protect on-site and adjacent assets and amenities, as well as natural, cultural, historic and recreational uses.
<b>ACTION N3.6</b>	Continue to support regional efforts for multi-jurisdictional open space and recreational initiatives.
<b>ACTION N3.7</b>	Manage forests to ensure their long-term health and sustainability, including addressing threats from climate change and invasive species.
<b>ACTION N3.8</b>	Support public information campaigns related to water conservation use and reduction efforts as part of an overarching effort to implementation of more sustainable water usage policies.
<b>ACTION N3.9</b>	Institute natural stormwater management measures, consider green street policies, and incentivize installation of on-site stormwater management for new commercial developments and residential subdivisions.
<b>ACTION N3.10</b>	Continue the annual stormwater pond maintenance inspection program.
<b>ACTION N3.11</b>	Continue monitoring the quality and quantity of groundwater resources.

→ [Agritourism](#)  
Action 4.2

→ [Viticulture](#)  
Action 4.2

### **POLICY 4: EMPHASIZE CONNECTIVITY FOR PARKS, GREENWAYS, AND BROAD OPEN SPACES AND PROTECT SCENIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS AND BUFFER AREAS.**

The County should focus on retention of its Green Infrastructure Network that incorporates environmental and conservation initiatives into recreational planning. These initiatives can help create large contiguous areas of open and natural spaces that offer better protections for wildlife and natural habitats, and that link informal or programmed recreational opportunities.

Guilford County will continue to experience growth over the next twenty years that will impact its existing land use patterns. It will become increasingly important for the County to safeguard the large areas of lands in the eastern half of the county in order to proactively secure and maintain connectivity between parks, greenways, and broad open spaces.

<b>ACTION N4.1</b>	Explore funding options to support the acquisition and expansion of open spaces with a focus on filling in existing service gaps and reaching underserved populations within the County.
<b>ACTION N4.2</b>	Support retention of viable agricultural lands through the encouragement of both traditional and nontraditional farm uses, including agritourism, organic farming, and viticulture <sup>58</sup> , and provide assistance in partnership with conservation organizations, state, and federal cost-share programs, and the North Carolina Cooperative Extension.
<b>ACTION N4.3</b>	Create a Green Infrastructure Network Plan that provides strategic guidance on conservation and environmental initiatives and recreational planning to support the acquisition of large contiguous areas of natural spaces throughout the county. A formalized network will provide additional protections for habitats, migration corridors, and wildlife.
<b>ACTION N4.4</b>	Identify locations within Guilford County where safe passage for wildlife at road crossings is needed, and work with NCDOT to fund and implement crossings as part of its TIP or STIP. County design standards for roads, bridges, and culverts to facilitate safe passage for wildlife at county road crossings within the Green Infrastructure Network.
<b>ACTION N4.5</b>	Use regulatory measures, such as zoning overlays, to target resource protection measures for the Green Infrastructure Network.

# QUALITY & CONTEXT SENSITIVE INFRASTRUCTURE



## GOAL STATEMENT

Create a resilient, coordinated, and high-quality infrastructure system that adapts to the changing needs of the community.

Photo source: Design Workshop

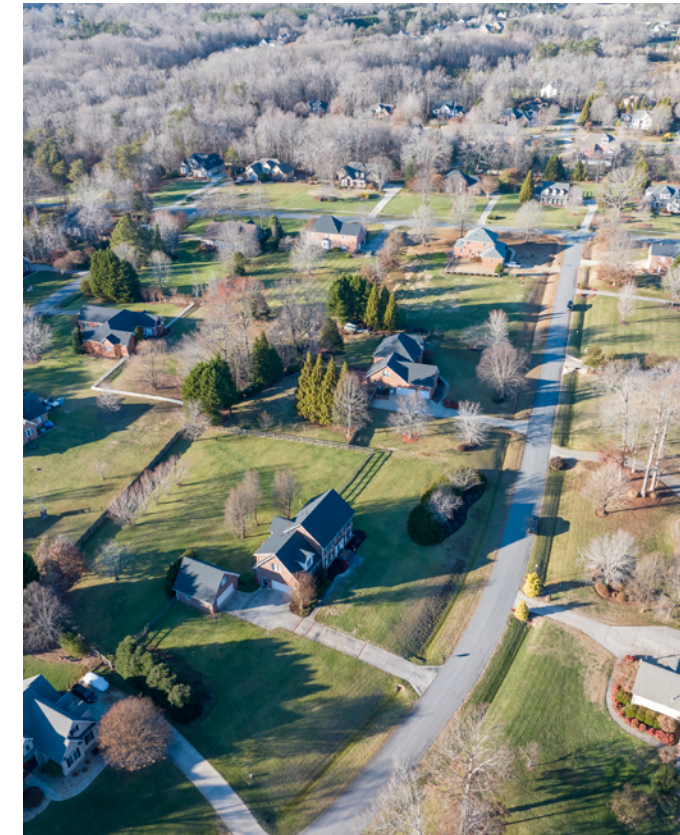


Photo source: Design Workshop

[GSO2040](#) ←

[Land Development Ordinance](#) ←

## COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

Growing infrastructure is the community's biggest concern when it comes to growth in Guilford County.

## INTRODUCTION

The County currently does not provide water and sewer services; however, the County's vision for a balanced approach to development using municipal services will require coordination with municipalities, including, but not necessarily limited to, City of Greensboro, City of High Point, Town of Jamestown, Sedgefield Sanitary District, City of Burlington and the Town of Stokesdale and Kernersville. In particular, the County must coordinate with the City of Greensboro to ensure that expansions to its Water Sewer Service Area (WSSA) are appropriately timed to accommodate increasing intensity and expansion of development. Water and sewer services support a range of public efforts, from parks and recreation to community facilities like libraries to public safety measures. As the City of Greensboro implements its 2023 updates to its water and sewer policies based on the policies included in its Comprehensive Plan, GSO2040, it will be important for the City and County to coordinate land use policies regarding those areas specifically targeted for annexation and service by City utilities.

The City of Greensboro has identified key corridors, interchanges, and catalyst sites (such as the Mega Site) that will influence its growth through 2040 and affect demand for the provision of water and sewer services. Extensions of these services will be provided only to areas that can be immediately annexed.<sup>60</sup> Conditions allowing for properties to receive services without being immediately annexed take into account economic development projects and development within the boundary of an area that has either been designated as mixed use through a planning process or a Small Area Plan.<sup>47</sup> These mixed use areas must be able to comply with the GSO2040 Plan and Land Development Ordinance.<sup>61</sup>

The County will also need to continue coordinating with utility providers in the region to assist in the delivery of resources, including the extension of broadband internet and wireless telecommunication service network expansion and upgrades.



Photo source: Design Workshop

**POLICY 1: MEET CHANGING DEMANDS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATION WITH SERVICE AND UTILITY PROVIDERS.**

The County will need to continue to partner with municipalities and utility providers in the provision of services throughout the county to support the development and growth that is anticipated through 2040.

<b>ACTION I1.1</b>	Support digital connectivity throughout Guilford County by working with partners to provide reliable broadband and cellular services.
<b>ACTION I1.2</b>	Advocate for and support the provision of water and sewer services by identifying where service provision is feasible and cost-effective and will support the growth goals in the Future Land Use Map, while also protecting areas identified for preservation.
<b>ACTION I1.3</b>	Ensure that the design and location of infrastructure enhances Guilford County's sense of place.
<b>ACTION I1.4</b>	Expand business opportunities in Guilford County that promote recycling and reuse of resources, or that repurpose solid waste.
<b>ACTION I1.5</b>	Embrace new technologies in solid waste removal and management to reduce waste footprints in the future.



Photo source: Design Workshop

**POLICY 2: PLAN FOR THE TRUE COST OF INFRASTRUCTURE.**

While the County does not currently provide water and sewer services or utilities, it should begin to plan for potential changes in the future. The County should explore strategies and policies for taking a more active role as a service provider to adequately provide services to its communities.

<b>ACTION I2.1</b>	Evaluate long-term needs for waste management, processing facilities, recycling streams, and landfill needs in Guilford County.
<b>ACTION I2.2</b>	Explore opportunities and funding mechanisms for the provision of services and utilities in the future.
<b>ACTION I2.3</b>	Focus higher density and commercial development near areas that are served by existing services and infrastructure, and prioritize infrastructure expansion in areas where future development is expected.
<b>ACTION I2.4</b>	Prioritize investments to support infrastructure development near Regional Employment Centers.
<b>ACTION I2.5</b>	Assess existing community facilities and future needs to identify key locations for expansion or additional stations (fire, sheriff, etc.).

**DRAFT**

**DRAFT**

# **ACTION PLAYBOOK**

## **IN THIS CHAPTER:**

POLICY

ACTION

RELATIVE INVESTMENT

TIMING

ENTITY

# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

## POLICY

**C1** Continue to document historic resources and expand the historic preservation program.

## ACTION

**C 1.1** Continue to designate historic resources that are eligible for the National Register, including architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources.

**C 1.2** Evaluate means to strengthen the County's landmark designation process and consider adopting a Preservation of Demolition by Neglect Ordinance outlining standards and best practices to prevent demolition of historic resources by neglect.

**C 1.3** Explore additional financial and development incentives that will provide assistance for private property owners to preserve or rehabilitate historic structures and spaces.

**C 1.4** Incentivize restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of designated local landmark and National Register properties through expedited permit review, or through regulatory reliefs for site planning such as parking reductions or reduced setbacks. Encourage evaluations of Certificates of Appropriateness and conducting site visits for building permits to ensure compliance.

**C 1.5** Continue to use outreach campaigns, websites, publications, and educational forums to increase public awareness and appreciation of Guilford County's rich historic and cultural traditions.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low

Medium

Low

Medium/High

Low

## TIMING

Ongoing

Ongoing

1-3 Years

1-3 Years

Ongoing

## ENTITY

Planning and Development,  
Historic Preservation Commission

Planning and Development,  
Historic Preservation  
Commission

Planning and Development,  
Historic Preservation Commission

Planning and Development,  
Historic Preservation Commission

Information Department,  
Communications and Public  
Relations

# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

## POLICY

**C1** Continue to document historic resources and expand the historic preservation program.

**C2** Celebrate cultural resources and continue to invest in the arts.

## ACTION

**C 1.6** Fund an updated historic architectural resources survey.

**C 1.7** Research and develop a local designation program for landscapes, sites, properties, or developments that are culturally significant but do not meet State or National Register requirements.

**C 2.1** Support the installation of public art on County-owned properties.

**C 2.2** Continue to support community cultural festivals, performances, and events to celebrate diversity within Guilford County.

**C 2.3** Encourage collaborations among businesses, artists, educators, and the technology sector to promote cross-sector innovation.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low/Medium

High

Low/Medium

Medium/High

High

## TIMING

3-6 Years

3-6 Years

Ongoing

Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

## ENTITY

Historic Preservation Commission, Planning Staff, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), County Commissioners

Planning and Development, Historic Preservation Commission

Economic Development, Planning and Development, Parks and Recreation, Facilities

Economic Development, Planning and Development, Emergency Management, Health Department, County Administration

Economic Development

# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

## POLICY

**C2** Celebrate cultural resources and continue to invest in the arts.

**C3** Prioritize high-quality design and distinctive character in new development and redevelopment, recognizing variations across Guilford County.

## ACTION

**C 2.4** Work with stakeholders and community members to incorporate policies for diverse and inclusive public art and cultural expression throughout Guilford County.

**C 2.5** Identify potential partnerships and establish programs for strengthening public art and art education opportunities.

**C 3.1** Explore the use of character-based pattern books, design guidelines and manuals, or a hybrid approach to establish intended character and design elements for different Place Types as identified on the FLUM.

**C 3.2** Focus on creating active, walkable, and universally-accessible public realms in all new Activity Centers. Incentivize existing activity centers and private developments to retrofit accessibility features.

**C 3.3** Encourage the design of new development that is compatible with historic structures and landscapes to both maintain a sense of place and highlight historic integrity.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium/High

Low

Medium/High

Low/Medium

Low

## TIMING

1-3 Years, Ongoing

3-6 Years

1-3 Years

3-6 Years

1-3 Years, Ongoing

## ENTITY

Economic Development, Planning and Development

Economic Development

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Planning and Development, Historic Preservation Commission

# COMMUNITY CHARACTER

## POLICY

**C3** Prioritize high-quality design and distinctive character in new development and redevelopment, recognizing variations across Guilford County.

## ACTION

**C 3.4** Support existing and implement new policies that prioritize preservation of farmland, as further outlined in Resilient Economy Policy 4.

**C 3.5** Encourage universal access to stores, parks, community amenities, and employment centers.

**C 3.6** Prioritize the orientation of new commercial and office buildings toward the street to promote walkability.

**C 3.7** Integrate additional environmentally-sustainable design standards in future updates to the UDO, as well as site design requirements, and/or environmental programs to further green initiatives in Guilford County.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low/Medium

Low

High

Low/Medium

## TIMING

1-3 Years, Ongoing

3-6 Years, Ongoing

3-6 Years, Ongoing

3-6 Years

## ENTITY

Economic Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development

Planning and Development, Facilities and Property Management

Planning and Development



# ATTAINABLE HOUSING

## POLICY

**H1** Enable the creation of new housing units that will provide a diverse mix of housing types that meet the needs of residents.

## ACTION

**H 1.1** Support residential development in and near Activity Centers, consistent with the Future Land Use Map.

**H 1.2** Update the UDO to provide an administrative review path for attainable housing development located in Activity Centers.

**H 1.3** Encourage housing opportunities that support existing and new agricultural operations. This could include use of the USDA Farm Labor Housing Loan and Grant opportunities, or the addition of housing facilities for farm workers.

**H 1.4** Incentivize development of housing located within ¼ mile of transit services, such as a simplified review process, reductions in required parking, or additional height allowances.

**H 1.5** Coordinate with municipalities regarding desired housing types in ETJ areas.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

## TIMING

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

3-6 Years, Ongoing

3-6 Years

## ENTITY

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

# ATTAINABLE HOUSING

## POLICY

**H1** Enable the creation of new housing units that will provide a diverse mix of housing types that meet the needs of residents.

## ACTION

**H 1.6** Offer housing density bonuses for land conservation subdivisions.

**H 1.7** Update the UDO to allow developers of new subdivisions to provide multiple lot sizes and/or house types to encourage additional housing diversity.

**H 1.8** Explore the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) / Project Development Financing to fund the inclusion of affordable housing in development.

**H 1.9** Incentivize the creation of new housing options for seniors to enable residents to remain in Guilford County as they age.

**H 1.10** Work with private developers, economic development agencies, municipalities, businesses, and others to enhance local development expertise and create public-private partnerships for the development and preservation of attainable housing.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low/Medium

Medium/High

Medium

Low

Medium/High

## TIMING

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

3-6 Years

3-6 Years, Ongoing

3-6 Years

## ENTITY

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners, Finance Department

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners, Finance Department

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

# ATTAINABLE HOUSING

## POLICY

**H1** Enable the creation of new housing units that will provide a diverse mix of housing types that meet the needs of residents.

**H2** Enable housing creation and preservation throughout Guilford County that is attainable for all income levels.

## ACTION

**H 1.11** Decrease the minimum lot size for residential development in areas identified on the Future Land Use Map as Activity Centers and Multi-Family Residential.

**H 1.12** Require new large-scale development to provide a study of anticipated housing needs resulting from the development.

**H 2.1** Work with municipalities, homebuilders and developers to support a range of housing development types that meet the needs of different socioeconomic groups.

**H 2.2** Continue to work with non-profit and private-sector housing partners to identify funding, through sources like the HOME program, that can assist low- and moderate-income households with the rent and/or purchase of a home and find innovative solutions for expanding housing choices and availability county-wide.

**H 2.3** Complete a code audit to identify any barriers related to the creation of missing middle housing and implement recommended code changes from the audit.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium

Medium

Medium/High

Medium

Medium/High

## TIMING

3-6 Years, 6-10 Years

3-6 Years, 6-10 Years

Ongoing

Ongoing

3-6 Years

## ENTITY

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

# ATTAINABLE HOUSING

## POLICY

**H2** Enable housing creation and preservation throughout Guilford County that is attainable for all income levels.

**H3** Update policies to maintain housing affordability in existing units throughout Guilford County.

## ACTION

**H 2.4** Encourage employer-funded or assisted affordable housing as part of major employment center development to provide housing opportunities for those working in the area served by the employment center.

**H 2.5** Encourage and support private sector businesses to establish employer-assisted housing (EAH) programs to increase housing opportunities for their employees, such as through home-buyer education, rental and down payment assistance, and the like.

**H 2.6** Incentivize property owners to pursue zoning that is consistent with the Future Land Use Map and who provide multi-family housing units as part of that zoning approval.

**H 3.1** Continue to allow the creation of accessory dwelling units and live/work units in areas that are currently developed and have access to reliable sources of water and sanitation facilities.

**H 3.2** Continue to use HOME allocation funds for down payment assistance.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium

Medium

Low/Medium

Low

Low/Medium

## TIMING

3-6 Years, 6-10 Years

3-6 Years, Ongoing

3-6 Years, Ongoing

Ongoing

Ongoing

## ENTITY

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

# ATTAINABLE HOUSING

## POLICY

**H3** Update policies to maintain housing affordability in existing units throughout Guilford County.

## ACTION

**H 3.3** Encourage the retrofitting of existing buildings that can or will be converted to housing, or which will help preserve existing housing.

**H 3.4** Explore funding opportunities from the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency or USDA that can support retention of existing housing stock.

**H 3.5** Explore the creation of an affordable housing preservation fund or other funding mechanism to support preservation of existing housing units and the development of new multi-family units, using Wake County's as an example.

**H 3.6** Prioritize the renovation of existing housing units over demolition through incentive programs in an effort to preserve existing housing stock.

**H 3.7** Encourage the use of Community Benefits Agreements to address the potential for housing displacement related to large development.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium

Low

Medium

Low/Medium

Medium/High

## TIMING

3-6 Years, Ongoing

3-6 Years

3-6 Years, 6-10 Years

3-6 Years, 6-10 Years

3-6 Years, 6-10 Years

## ENTITY

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

# ATTAINABLE HOUSING

## POLICY

**H4** Encourage the preservation, maintenance, and development of high-quality and safe housing.

## ACTION

**H 4.1** Work with partners to complete training for home builders on the land development and building permit processes, including education on how to integrate materials that are durable and long-lasting into new developments.

**H 4.2** Create updated forms and informational handouts to explain applicable review processes and opportunities for financial incentives or support, and to encourage the private sector to create and preserve high-quality housing units.

**H 4.3** Continue to use funding sources such as the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME) and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to maintain and rehabilitate substandard housing and create new attainable housing.

**H 4.4** Explore the creation of Resilience Hubs that can support neighborhoods in times of natural disaster and support post-disaster relief.

**H 4.5** Prioritize the location of new housing in locations that are accessible to employment, schools, parks, services, and transit.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium/High

Low

Medium

Medium

Medium

## TIMING

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

3-6 Years, 6-10 Years

3-6 Years, 6-10 Years

## ENTITY

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Economic Development, Planning and Development

County Administration

Planning and Development

# RESILIENT ECONOMY

## POLICY

**E1** Align economic development efforts with the future land use map and NC Carolina Core.

**E2** Support existing businesses and industries, while seeking to increase high-wage jobs and employment opportunities throughout the county.

## ACTION

**E 1.1** Ensure areas best suited for economic development, such as the US 421 Corridor, are secured for such use, while balancing the needs for housing, recreational amenities, agricultural, and commercial uses.

**E 1.2** Evaluate economic development opportunities through their potential impacts on equity in the community.

**E 1.3** Support development of Neighborhood Centers as identified on the Future Land Use Map to support rural commercial uses that are appropriately scaled, and which fit with the rural character of Guilford County.

**E 1.4** Locate jobs near municipalities where housing is most concentrated, as well as in close proximity to employment centers outside of environmentally-sensitive areas, to reduce impacts on those sensitive areas, as well as carbon footprint, traffic and commuting times.

**E 1.5** Update the Liberty Road/Woody Mill Small Area Plan.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium/High

Medium

Medium/High

Medium

Medium/High

## TIMING

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

## ENTITY

Economic Development, Planning and Development, County Commissioners

Economic Development, Planning and Development

Planning and Development, Economic Development

Economic Development, Planning and Development

Planning and Development, Economic Development

# RESILIENT ECONOMY

## POLICY

**E2** Support existing businesses and industries, while seeking to increase high-wage jobs and employment opportunities throughout the county.

**E3** Cultivate and support workforce training programs to support residents in gaining the skills needed for emerging job opportunities, fostering a dynamic and adaptable workforce.

## ACTION

**E 2.1** Ensure that investments of public funds support targeted business sectors and promote the growth of new businesses.

**E 2.2** Seek to prioritize Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funding to reinvest in areas with economic disparities.

**E 2.3** Explore the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) / Project Development Financing to support the creation of high-impact business development, including new employment sectors or development that will create high-wage jobs and increase tax revenue for Guilford County.

**E 2.4** Ensure building permit processes are streamlined for small businesses.

**E 2.5** Offer economic incentives and assistance for small businesses.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium/High

Medium/High

Medium/High

Low

Medium

## TIMING

Ongoing

Ongoing

Ongoing

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

## ENTITY

Economic Development

Economic Development, Planning and Development, Finance, County Administration, County Commissioner

Economic Development, Planning and Development, Finance, County Administration, County Commissioner

Planning and Development

Planning and Development, Economic Development, County Commissioners



# RESILIENT ECONOMY

## POLICY

**E3** Cultivate and support workforce training programs to support residents in gaining the skills needed for emerging job opportunities, fostering a dynamic and adaptable workforce.

**E4** Prioritize the preservation of agricultural uses and working farms as a strategic economic development initiative.

## ACTION

**E 2.6** Expand the of the County’s Economic Services program.

**E 3.1** Continue to support funding and identify sites to support the needs of workforce development partners, such as NCWorks, GuilfordWorks, and others.

**E 3.2** Collaborate with local business incubators to understand and support growth opportunities for business start-ups.

**E 3.3** Provide support, such as grants, expedited permit reviews, and education opportunities, for small businesses to expand in Guilford County.

**E 3.4** Continue to work with educational and training partners to tailor educational programs that support green industry.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium

Medium

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

## TIMING

3-6 Years, 6-10 Years

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

Ongoing

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

## ENTITY

Economic Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, Economic Development, County Commissioners

Economic Development

Economic Development, Planning and Development

Economic Development, Planning and Development

# RESILIENT ECONOMY

## POLICY

**E4** Prioritize the preservation of agricultural uses and working farms as a strategic economic development initiative.

## ACTION

**E 3.5** Explore opportunities to support statewide efforts to increase the number of students seeking post-secondary education through the myFutureNC program and continue to prioritize partnerships with higher education institutions.

**E 4.1** Support and expand existing programs to support Guilford County's agricultural industry and farmland preservation.

**E 4.2** Explore economic development opportunities specifically tied to rural and agricultural land uses in Guilford County.

**E 4.3** Continue to promote the County's Voluntary Agricultural District and Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District Ordinance as a way to preserve working farmlands in Guilford County.

**E 4.4** Provide additional incentives for agricultural properties to become an Enhanced Voluntary Agricultural District (EVAD).

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium

Medium

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

Medium

## TIMING

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

## ENTITY

Economic Development, County Administration

Economic Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Economic Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Economic Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Economic Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

# RESILIENT ECONOMY

## POLICY

**E4** Prioritize the preservation of agricultural uses and working farms as a strategic economic development initiative.

**T1** Provide ongoing support of the existing countywide transportation networks focusing on universal access, safety, efficiency, climate-friendly options for residents and visitors.

## ACTION

**E 4.5** Establish a Farmland Preservation position or program in the Guilford Soil and Water District Office or Cooperative Extension Office to establish a more robust farmland preservation program.

**E 4.6** Consider funding for local public service announcements to create more awareness of and to promote Guilford County farm producers and operators.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium/High

Medium/High

## TIMING

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

## ENTITY

Economic Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

Economic Development, County Administration, County Commissioners

# DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

**T 1.1** Continue to support regional partners in creating efficient and functional future transportation and transit network components.

**T 1.2** Identify major transportation projects from the MTPs in any future updates to quadrant mapping or Area Plans to ensure ongoing transportation and land use coordination.

**T 1.3** Coordinate with partners to ensure that the transportation system is equitable and that it addresses access to jobs, housing, healthcare, education, and other community services. The County should also advocate for the transportation system to close mobility gaps.

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

Medium/High

Ongoing

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

Ongoing

County Administration, Transportation and Mobility, Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Planning and Development, Transportation and Mobility, County Administration, County Commissioners

# DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

## POLICY

**T1** Provide ongoing support of the existing countywide transportation networks focusing on universal access, safety, efficiency, climate-friendly options for residents and visitors.

## ACTION

**T 1.4** Provide support for and enhance mobility-based programs for seniors and those living with disabilities.

**T 1.5** Leverage Guilford County's geographic accessibility to multiple major cities to advance policies and transportation projects that have both regional and local impacts. These efforts should focus on governance, accountability, and strategies to address county needs that are not presently being met.

**T 1.6** Continue to engage in regional discussions about state and federal funding and investments in the area to ensure that Guilford County projects meet the goals and vision in the Plan.

**T 1.7** Support the school district to provide equitable transportation to assist all students with getting to and from school both safely and efficiently. Consider updating the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Guilford County Public Schools to require consultation for potential school sites or expansion projects during the site identification phase of the planning process to ensure that transportation impacts to local areas are identified prior to site acquisition.

**T 1.8** Ensure that changes to the UDO related to transportation will enhance safety, calm traffic, and improve efficiency and connectivity.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low/Medium

Medium

Low

Low

Medium

## TIMING

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

3-6 Years, Ongoing

## ENTITY

Planning and Development, Transportation and Mobility, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, Transportation and Mobility, County Administration, County Commissioners, Greensboro Urban Area MPO, City of High Point MPO, NCDOT, Community Partners

Planning and Development, Transportation and Mobility, County Administration, County Commissioners

County Commissioners, Guilford County Schools

Planning and Development

# DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

## POLICY

**T1** Provide ongoing support of the existing countywide transportation networks focusing on universal access, safety, efficiency, climate-friendly options for residents and visitors.

**T2** In order to identify opportunities to expand existing regional services, the County should maintain its active role in MPOs in addition to other regional transportation organizations, which provide regional connectivity and transit expansion opportunities that serve Guilford County residents.

## ACTION

**T 1.9** Advance complete street principles through updates to the UDO to better support access to transit options and institute climate-friendly policies.

**T 1.10** Support efforts to reduce reliance on automobile trips to improve air quality through more compact development that reflects the future land uses identified on the FLUM.

**T 1.11** Continue to plan and coordinate investments with Guilford County Public Schools to increase safe routes to schools and assess walking routes for student safety and equity.

**T 1.12** Support “park once” behavior through the implementation of standards that require safe, non-automobile pathways or sidewalks that connect buildings in Activity Centers, Office, or Retail complexes as indicated on the FLUM.

**T 2.1** Actively participate in all regional transportation efforts and seek and maintain participation on all MPOs that serve Guilford County.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium

Low/Medium

Medium

Medium/High

Medium

## TIMING

3-6 Years

Ongoing

Ongoing

Ongoing

Ongoing

## ENTITY

Planning and Development, Transportation and Mobility, County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Commissioners

County Commissioners, Guilford County Schools

Planning and Development, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Commissioners

# DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

## POLICY

**T2** In order to identify opportunities to expand into existing regional services, the County should maintain its active role in MPOs that serve the County, in addition to other regional transportation organizations, which provide regional connectivity and transit expansion opportunities that serve Guilford County residents.

## ACTION

**T 2.2** Continue to engage and participate in regional and state discussions and planning activities to ensure the need for movement of goods and freight throughout Guilford County is considered and supported.

**T 2.3** Consider funding strategies that will improve mobility options throughout Guilford County.

**T 2.4** Assist PART in continuing to identify key connections throughout Guilford County that are prime locations for remote parking sites.

**T 2.5** Investigate opportunities to work with NCDOT to establish or modify context-sensitive roadway designs.

**T 2.6** Continue to support the MPOs and RPOs to which the County belongs, as well as the GTA, High Point Transit Authority, and PART to improve collaborative efforts.

### RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium

Medium/High

Medium/High

Low

Low

### TIMING

Ongoing

Ongoing

Ongoing

1-3 Years

Ongoing

### ENTITY

Planning and Development, County Commissioners

County Administration, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Commissioners

Planning and Development

Planning and Development, County Commissioners

# DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

## POLICY

**T2** In order to identify opportunities to expand into existing regional services, the County should maintain its active role in MPOs that serve the County, in addition to other regional transportation organizations, which provide regional connectivity and transit expansion opportunities that serve Guilford County residents.

**T3** Actively plan for the impacts of climate change on the transportation system.

## ACTION

**T 2.7** Ensure that the County regularly assesses the UDO for its landscaping and buffering standards to use best practices to address noise impacts, reduce air pollution, and to promote safe and aesthetically-pleasing design outcomes.

**T 3.1** Consider evaluating parking and land use development requirements to reflect the future land uses identified in the FLUM to respond to changing development patterns and mobility needs.

**T 3.2** Amend the design standards in the UDO to ensure resilience.

**T 3.3** Encourage and facilitate the installation of public and private electric vehicle charging stations with particular attention to shared or remote parking lots.

**T 3.4** Remove regulatory barriers for property owners or companies that deploy electric vehicle charging infrastructure and other technologies that assist in the reduction of emissions.

### RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

### TIMING

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

3-6 Years

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

3-6 Years

3-6 Years

### ENTITY

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Planning and Development,  
County Commissioners

# DIVERSIFIED TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

## POLICY

**T3** Actively plan for the impacts of climate change on the transportation system.

## ACTION

**T 3.5** Participate in regional and state coordination efforts to ensure state and federal transportation efforts and plans reflect opportunities for electric and autonomous vehicles and safety considerations for bicycles and pedestrians.

**T 3.6** Support efforts to improve air quality, considering those populations and communities that are most impacted by air pollution.

**T 3.7** Work with the Piedmont Triad Airport Authority to identify and support ways to reduce the impacts of noise and air pollution from air travel.

**T 3.8** Develop regulatory standards for low impact design and green infrastructure.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium

Medium

Low

Low

## TIMING

Ongoing

Ongoing

Ongoing

3-5 Years

## ENTITY

Planning and Development, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Commissioners

Historic Preservation Commission, Planning Staff, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), County Commissioners



# EQUITABLE SERVICES

## POLICY

**S1** Work with strategic partners to increase equitable access to services that promote a high quality of life.

## ACTION

**S 1.1** Complete the 2023 Community Health Assessment to understand the social determinants of health. Include an analysis of the impacts from the built environment on health outcomes.

**S 1.2** Hold annual conversations between the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and the Guilford County School Board to discuss priorities and trends related to schools.

**S 1.3** Coordinate directly with service providers to understand trends, land use needs, and anticipated growth to ensure equitable distribution of those services.

**S 1.4** Work with the County Emergency Management Director or designee to help coordinate needs among Guilford County's different fire districts.

**S 1.5** Support efforts to advance early childhood educational and childcare access through an analysis to determine gaps in service.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium/High

Low

Medium

Medium

Medium/High

## TIMING

1-3 Years

Ongoing

1-3 Years

1-3 Years, Ongoing

Ongoing

## ENTITY

County Administration, County Commissioners

County Commissioners, Guilford County Schools

Planning and Development, Technology Department, Fire, Emergency Management, Sheriff's Department, Health Department, Social Services

Planning and Development, Technology Department, Fire, Emergency Management

County Administration, Guilford County Schools

# EQUITABLE SERVICES

## POLICY

**S2** Ensure adequate parks and recreation facilities and amenities are located in proximity to existing and planned neighborhoods.

## ACTION

**S 2.1** Complete the Guilford County Parks Master Plan and prioritize funding to implement the Plan's priority initiatives.

**S 2.2** Analyze parks and recreation service throughout Guilford County, identifying areas where there are existing service gaps, maintenance needs, and facility upgrades, and establish policies and funding to address these gaps.

**S 2.3** Review the inventory of County-owned properties to determine if any of them could be used to address gaps in the parks and recreational infrastructure.

**S 2.4** Analyze potential health disparities resulting from limited access to the outdoors and recreational services and programming for those residents living in the rural areas of Guilford County.

**S 2.5** Expand overall accessibility and inclusiveness in all recreation facilities, including implementing ADA improvements.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium

Medium/High

Low

Medium

Medium

## TIMING

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

3-6 Years, Ongoing

## ENTITY

Parks Department, Property Management Administration, Planning and Development, Technology Department

Parks Department, Property Management Administration, Planning and Development, Technology Department

Parks Department, Property Management Administration, Planning and Development, Technology Department

Parks Department, Property Management Administration, Planning and Development, Technology Department

Parks Department, Property Management Administration, Planning and Development, Technology Department, County Administration, County Commissioners

# EQUITABLE SERVICES

# PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREENSPACE

## POLICY

**S2** Ensure adequate parks and recreation facilities and amenities are located in proximity to existing and planned neighborhoods.

**N1** Improve the quality of Guilford County's natural resources through regional partnerships and implementation of preservation and protection measures.

## ACTION

**S 2.6** Link transportation improvements with opportunities for providing walking and biking connections to recreational amenities.

**S 2.7** Provide residents living in established communities with access to parks, trails, recreational facilities, or natural areas within a 15-minute drive.

**N 1.1** Continue promoting the preservation of agricultural lands, which are a declining resource in Guilford County.

**N 1.2** Focus on strategic partnerships with local and regional conservation organizations.

**N 1.3** Evaluate opportunities for enhancements to the UDO to implement measures that align with the Future Land Use Map, including mixed-use activity centers, natural resource protections, and provisions for renewable energy measures.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium

Medium/High

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

Medium/High

## TIMING

Ongoing

Ongoing

Ongoing

Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

## ENTITY

Parks Department, Property Management Administration, Planning and Development, Technology Department, Transportation and Mobility, County Administration, County Commissioner

Parks Department, Property Management Administration, Planning and Development, Technology Department, Transportation and Mobility, County Administration, County Commissioner

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioner

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioner

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioner

# PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREENSPACE

## POLICY

**N1** Improve the quality of Guilford County's natural resources through regional partnerships and implementation of preservation and protection measures.

**N2** Safeguard the environmental integrity of regional water sources and recreational waterbodies.

## ACTION

**N 1.4** Enhance opportunities for land preservation through housing development patterns that reduce emissions.

**N 1.5** Incentivize environmental restoration when properties are redeveloped, such as expedited permit reviews or reduced fees.

**N 1.6** Incentivize trail corridors in new development areas to protect water and air quality, benefit health and home values, and provide needed connectivity to larger trail systems.

**N 1.7** Incentivize the retention of tree canopy across Guilford County, specifically on new development sites and planned communities.

**N 2.1** Promote more compact development patterns closer to major 'nodes' in Guilford County to mitigate the impacts of development, such as emissions, development waste, and site runoff, on the county's environment and natural resources.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low

Low

Medium

Medium

Medium

## TIMING

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years

Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

## ENTITY

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioner

Planning and Development

Parks and Recreation, Planning and Development, Planning Board, Board of County Commissioners

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioner

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioner

# PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREENSPACE

## POLICY

**N2** Safeguard the environmental integrity of regional water sources and recreational waterbodies.

## ACTION

**N 2.2** Evaluate and enhance measures, such as erosion and sediment control, steep slopes, and species habitats in the UDO, for sensitive environmental resources.

**N 2.3** Expand on existing watershed management policies to set goals and priorities for protecting, restoring, and improving the county's environmental resources.

**N 2.4** Develop options for improving, enforcing, and funding long-term inspection and maintenance of stormwater management facilities.

**N 2.5** Continue to coordinate and cooperate with other local, regional, and state agencies and organizations, such as the NC Division of Water Quality, on joint watershed planning and management.

**N 2.6** Work to reduce stormwater runoff through redevelopment and ensure that site redevelopment meets minimum stormwater management requirements.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium

Medium

Medium/High

Low

Low/Medium

## TIMING

Ongoing

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

1-3 Years, Ongoing

Ongoing

3-6 Years, Ongoing

## ENTITY

Planning and Development

Planning and Development,  
Technology Department

Planning and Development,  
Technology Department

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

# PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREENSPACE

## POLICY

**N2** Safeguard the environmental integrity of regional water sources and recreational waterbodies.

**N3** Protect natural features and sensitive areas.

## ACTION

**N 2.7** Incentivize development and redevelopment to address environmental concerns, flood risks, and watershed health. Incentivize the preservation of open space along waterways within future developments.

**N 3.1** Establish and achieve measurable goals for tree canopy, forest cover, and riparian forest buffers in all Guilford County watersheds.

**N 3.2** Prioritize native tree plantings in communities that are economically vulnerable in order to mitigate heat island impacts.

**N 3.3** Continue to update the County's GIS system with layers locating natural assets and amenities, protected lands, current and future parks, dedicated open spaces, and places designated through the Historic Inventory List.

**N 3.4** Conduct a study and update the Guilford County Natural Heritage Inventory to identify the areas of most ecological significance and prioritize conservation efforts within the county.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low

Medium

Low/Medium

Medium

Medium

## TIMING

3-6 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years

## ENTITY

Planning and Development

Planning and Development,  
Technology Department

Planning and Development,  
Property Management  
Administration

Technology Department

Planning and Development,  
Technology Department

# PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREENSPACE

## POLICY

**N3** Protect natural features and sensitive areas.

## ACTION

**N 3.5** Create incentives that reward innovation and green designs, and which respect, assimilate, and protect on-site and adjacent assets and amenities, as well as natural, cultural, historic and recreational uses.

**N 3.6** Continue to support regional efforts for multi-jurisdictional open space and recreational initiatives.

**N 3.7** Manage forests to ensure their long-term health and sustainability, including addressing threats from climate change and invasive species.

**N 3.8** Support public information campaigns related to water conservation use and reduction efforts as part of an overarching effort to implementation of more sustainable water usage policies.

**N 3.9** Institute natural stormwater management measures, consider green street policies, and incentivize installation of on-site stormwater management for new commercial developments and residential subdivisions.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

Medium/High

## TIMING

1-3 Years

Ongoing

Ongoing

3-6 Years, Ongoing

3-6 Years, Ongoing

## ENTITY

Planning and Development

Planning and Development, County Administration, County Commissioner

Planning and Development

Information Department

Planning and Development

# PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREENSPACE

## POLICY

**N3** Protect natural features and sensitive areas.

**N4** Emphasize connectivity for parks, greenways, and broad open spaces and protect scenic and environmental corridors and buffer areas.

## ACTION

**N 3.10** Continue the annual stormwater pond maintenance inspection program.

**N 3.11** Continue monitoring the quality and quantity of groundwater resources.

**N 4.1** Explore funding options to support the acquisition and expansion of open spaces with a focus on filling in existing service gaps and reaching underserved populations within the County.

**N 4.2** Support retention of viable agricultural lands through the encouragement of both traditional and nontraditional farm uses, including agritourism, organic farming, and viticulture, and provide assistance in partnership with conservation organizations, state, and federal cost-share programs, and the North Carolina Cooperative Extension.

**N 4.3** Create a Green Infrastructure Network Plan that provides strategic guidance on conservation and environmental initiatives and recreational planning to support the acquisition of large contiguous areas of natural spaces throughout the county. A formalized network will provide additional protections for habitats, migration corridors, and wildlife.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low

Low/Medium

Medium

Medium/High

Medium

## TIMING

Ongoing

Ongoing

Ongoing

1-3 Years, Ongoing

1-3 Years

## ENTITY

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Property Management  
Administration

Planning and Development,  
Economic Development,  
County Administration, County  
Commissioner

Planning and Development,  
Technology Department



# PROTECTED NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREENSPACE



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## POLICY

**N4** Emphasize connectivity for parks, greenways, and broad open spaces and protect scenic and environmental corridors and buffer areas.

## ACTION

**N 4.4** Identify locations within Guilford County where safe passage for wildlife at road crossings is needed, and work with NCDOT to fund and implement crossings as part of its TIP or STIP. County design standards for roads, bridges, and culverts to facilitate safe passage for wildlife at county road crossings within the Green Infrastructure Network.

**N 4.5** Use regulatory measures, such as zoning overlays, to target resource protection measures for the Green Infrastructure Network.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low

Medium

## TIMING

1-3 Years

3-6 Years

## ENTITY

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

# QUALITY & CONTEXT SENSITIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

## POLICY

I1 Meet changing demands for infrastructure through regional partnerships and cooperation with service and utility providers.

## ACTION

I 1.1 Support digital connectivity throughout Guilford County by working with partners to provide reliable broadband and cellular services.

I 1.2 Advocate for and support the provision of water and sewer services by identifying where service provision is feasible and cost-effective and will support the growth goals in the Future Land Use Map, while also protecting areas identified for preservation.

I 1.3 Ensure that the design and location of infrastructure enhances Guilford County's sense of place.

I 1.4 Expand business opportunities in Guilford County that promote recycling and reuse of resources, or that repurpose solid waste.

I 1.5 Embrace new technologies in solid waste removal and management to reduce waste footprints in the future.

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Medium/High

Medium/High

Medium/High

Low/Medium

Low/Medium

## TIMING

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

3-6 Years, 6-10 Years

## ENTITY

County Administration, County Commissioner

Planning and Development

Planning and Development

Economic Development

County Administration, Environmental Health

# QUALITY & CONTEXT SENSITIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

## POLICY

I2 Plan for the true cost of infrastructure.

## ACTION

I 2.1 Evaluate long-term needs for waste management, processing facilities, recycling streams, and landfill needs in Guilford County.

I 2.2 Explore opportunities and funding mechanisms for the provision of services and utilities in the future.

I 2.3 Focus higher density and commercial development near areas that are served by existing services and infrastructure, and prioritize infrastructure expansion in areas where future development is expected.

I 2.4 Prioritize investments to support infrastructure development near Regional Employment Centers.

I 2.5 Assess existing community facilities and future needs to identify key locations for expansion or additional stations (fire, sheriff, etc.).

## RELATIVE INVESTMENT

Low/Medium

Medium

Medium/High

Medium/High

Low

## TIMING

1-3 Years, 3-6 Years

Ongoing

Ongoing

Ongoing

3-6 Years

## ENTITY

County Administration,  
Environmental Health

County Administration

Planning and Development,  
Economic Development, County  
Administration

Economic Development, County  
Administration

County Administration

**DRAFT**

**DRAFT**

# **APPENDIX**

## **IN THIS CHAPTER:**

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

SURVEY SUMMARY

FLUM AREA PLANS CROSSWALK

AREA PLANS AND QUADRANTS

# WORKSHOP SUMMARY



## DESIGNWORKSHOP

Landscape Architecture  
 Planning  
 Urban Design  
 Strategic Services

621 Hillsborough Street  
 Suite 202  
 Raleigh, North Carolina 27603  
 919-973-6254  
 designworkshop.com

## MEMORANDUM

To: Guilford County  
 From: Design Workshop  
 Date: 10/31/23  
 Project Name: Guilford County Comprehensive Plan  
 Subject: Public Workshop 2 Summary

### Overview

Below is a summary of feedback received during Workshop #2 for the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan Update. Five in-person open-house workshops were held from September 18 – 20 in locations throughout the county. The locations were Alamance Presbyterian Church, Bryan Park, Frazier Elementary School, Nathanael Greene Elementary School, and Northeast Park. In addition, one virtual workshop was held on September 28 to ensure feedback could be collected from those unable to attend in-person.

The goals of Workshop #2 were to:

- Provide an update on work completed to date and the current understanding of trends derived from public feedback collected during the community pulse survey.
- Solicit feedback from community members across the county to understand overall needs and desires for future development, as well as any differences based on where they live, work, and spend leisure time, and the unique needs of their communities.
- Maintain an open, inclusive, and transparent public engagement process by providing clear, consistent, and easily understandable information.

Workshops were organized as five (5) "stations" where participants engaged with different content and activities to provide input. The stations were as follows:

- **Station 0:** Sign In / Background + What We've Heard
- **Station 1:** Community Vision + Themes + Goals for the Future
- **Station 2:** Community Character and Design
- **Station 3:** Transportation Choices
- **Station 4:** Dollars and Sense
- **Station 5:** Growth Priorities and Future Land Use

### Workshop Response Summary

1. **Station 1: Community Vision**
  - **Instructions:** Use sticky dots to indicate how much you support the draft vision statement on a scale of 1-5 (1 being "could support with edits," 5 being "fully support").

**Summary:** This question aimed to gauge the accuracy of the plan's vision statement in capturing the goals of residents that were identified from responses to the community pulse survey. Overall, most responses indicated full support for the draft vision



statement (30). Levels 4, 3, and 2 closely followed. The least number of responses indicated Level 1 or "Do not support." A majority of participants at Nathanael Greene Elementary and Northeast Park selected 1 or 2, indicating they would like to see changes to the statement, while a majority of participants at Alamance Presbyterian, Bryan Park, and Frazier Elementary supported the statement.

Comments expressed a desire for the county to grow slowly while investing in the community through consideration of landowners and farmland preservation. Infrastructure to support walkability and bikability were key themes and a request for defining the term "environmental stewardship".

Level of Support	Total Sticker Dots	Alamance Presbyterian	Bryan Park	Frazier Elementary	Nathanael Greene Elementary	Northeast Park	Virtual Workshop
1 (Do not support)	10	3	0	0	0	5	2
2	16	2	0	0	10	2	2
3 (Could support with edits)	17	7	2	0	4	0	4
4	22	6	2	1	1	1	11
5 *Fully Support	30	13	1	3	0	0	13

In-person Workshop Comments:

- No "future growth needed." Expect that being forced on us.
- Slow or no growth. Stay the same!
- Who is investing in our community?
- How is environmental stewardship defined?
- Predictable? By what measures?
- Outdoor lighting focused rather than general.
- Vegetative buffer enhanced between commercial.
- Traffic circles rather than lights.
- We need community input to affirm small area plans. Be more specific about changes.
- Would like to see the statement include something about work/economic opportunity.
- Against cookie cutter neighborhoods.
- Must prioritize environmental stewardship, natural environment, agricultural heritage.
- Infrastructure to support walkability surrounding new development. For example, sidewalks and bike lanes. Especially in the southwest and older neighborhoods.
- Be considerate of landowners.
- Keep farmland.

Virtual Workshop Comments (If you don't fully support the draft vision statement, what is missing?)

- Economic development and reality
- Jobs, economic development
- More focus on ending poverty
- Economic development
- Make it shorter
- Doesn't address economic development and growth
- It addressed the future and sustainable growth, but it still needs to indicate that the County will be proactive with respect to the climate crisis and how it is going to be affecting all of us here.
- It's a little long
- Education and workforce readiness
- Intergovernmental cooperation
- Not sure about expanded infrastructure
- Environmental justice
- Economic development, job growth and prosperity

- Adult literacy
- Commitment to ending poverty, 21<sup>st</sup> century development and school infrastructure, economic development for young citizens
- Reducing GHG emissions
- Incentivize land preservation
- Sustainability and agricultural resilience
- Sustainability as the top priority
- Economic development, better education for everyone, homelessness
- Promoting renewable energy use
- I would love for there to be something about protecting the potential of all citizens. Ensuring that no individual is left behind.
- Accessibility
- Recycling and repurposing waste
- Everyone should be welcome
- Green infrastructure
- I didn't see mention of the school system and numerous, exceptional higher education
- Workforce housing

**2. Station 1: Themes & Goals**

- **Instructions:** Use sticky notes to tell us what you would add to the following planning theme statements.

**Summary:** There were seven theme areas participants were asked to provide feedback on: Natural Environment, Community Character, Attainable Housing, Transportation, Mobility and Safe Streets, Diverse Economy, Equitable Services, and Quality and Context Sensitive Infrastructure. Economic diversification was a concern, with a focus on balancing industrial development with recreation and other non-industrial opportunities. Workforce training through partnerships with local colleges was seen to support a more diverse economy. Access to food and healthcare infrastructure were important topics related to equitable services, along with public safety funding and diversifying housing options. Regarding infrastructure, providing adequate and context-sensitive water, sewer, school, healthcare, and road maintenance surfaced as key goals, though accessing such infrastructure can be expensive. There were calls for property owners to maintain their properties properly, fill the early childhood development void, and extend participation to agricultural properties to disincentivize selling, subdividing, and rezoning. In summary, key goals are diversifying the economy while preserving character, ensuring equitable access to services, and providing quality infrastructure in a cost-effective manner. Differing perspectives remain on issues such as affordable housing and funding sources.

Individual comments from each workshop are provided at the end of this memo.

**3. Station 2: Community Character Preferences (residential development)**

- **Instructions:** Utilize the sticky dots to indicate the residential development types most appropriate for Guilford County.
  - Green sticker dots indicate a type of development you would like to see encouraged in the future.
  - Yellow sticker dots indicate a type of development that you would like to see more regulated in the future.
  - Red sticker dots indicate a type of development that you would like to see less of in the future.

**Summary:** This question was intended to understand the types of residential development community members feel are most appropriate in Guilford County. Participants were asked to identify uses they would like to see more of, uses they would like to see regulated more, and uses they would like to see less of. Participants were able to provide feedback on 8 categories.

Single-Family Housing outweighed other residential development options during each workshop with the exception of the virtual workshop. Of the 93 votes in this category, 78% identified it as a residential development type they would like to see more of, while nearly 12% would like to see it more regulated, and 10% would like to see fewer single-family homes.

Duplexes were also identified as a residential development type most participants agreed wanting to see more in the future. Of 69 votes for this type, 62% indicated they would like to see more, nearly 22% would like to see it more regulated and almost 16% would like to see less duplexes.

Of the 82 votes for Townhomes nearly 48% were in favor of more, 34% were in favor of less, and 18% were in favor of more regulation.

Accessory Dwelling Units were most often identified as a type participants would like to see more of. Of the 71 votes, almost 54% indicated they would like to see more, 32% indicated it should be regulated more, and 14% would like to see less.

Regarding Live-Work Units, most votes were in favor of more. Of 75 votes, 48% were in favor of more, 29% were in favor of less, and 23% were in favor of more regulation.

Most participants identified Tiny Homes/Shipping Container Homes as a type they would like to see less of in the future, with 44% of the 79 votes. 39% would like to see more, and 17% would like to see them more regulated.

Most participants identified Quadplexes as a type they would like to see less of in the future, with 47% of the 72 votes. 40% would like to see more, and 13% would like them more regulated.

Most participants identified Apartment Living as a type they would like to see less of in the future, with 51% of the 84 votes. 25% would like to see them more regulated, and 24% would like to see less.

In summary, responses indicated desires for less accessory dwelling units, apartments, tiny homes/shipping container homes, townhomes, and quadplexes. Residential development responses indicated a preference for more duplexes and single-family homes. The residential development types that most responses indicated a desire for more regulation in the future were duplexes, live-work units, and townhomes. These trends correlate with desires to maintain existing community character seen throughout responses for the other workshop stations.

Community Character Preference (residential development)	Total Sticker Dots	Alamance Presbyterian	Bryan Park	Frazier Elementary	Nathanael Greene Elementary	Northeast Park	Virtual Workshop
Single-Family	70 / 12 / 11	36 / 1 / 0	2 / 0 / 2	1 / 1 / 0	14 / 0 / 0	8 / 0 / 0	9 / 10 / 9
Duplex	43 / 15 / 11	13 / 7 / 4	2 / 1 / 0	3 / 0 / 0	1 / 4 / 0	0 / 1 / 3	24 / 2 / 4
Townhomes	39 / 15 / 28	8 / 9 / 9	1 / 2 / 0	4 / 0 / 0	0 / 2 / 7	0 / 0 / 6	26 / 2 / 6
Accessory Dwelling Units	38 / 10 / 23	5 / 6 / 10	0 / 1 / 1	2 / 0 / 1	0 / 1 / 3	1 / 0 / 8	30 / 2 / 1
Live-Work Units	36 / 17 / 22	3 / 11 / 7	4 / 0 / 0	4 / 0 / 0	0 / 0 / 8	1 / 2 / 4	24 / 4 / 3
Tiny Homes/Shipping Container Homes	31 / 13 / 35	3 / 5 / 15	2 / 1 / 2	1 / 1 / 1	4 / 0 / 0	2 / 1 / 8	19 / 5 / 9
Quadplex	28 / 9 / 34	0 / 4 / 21	2 / 0 / 0	3 / 0 / 0	0 / 3 / 1	0 / 1 / 5	23 / 1 / 7
Apartment Living	20 / 21 / 43	2 / 4 / 22	0 / 2 / 0	4 / 0 / 0	0 / 2 / 9	0 / 1 / 6	14 / 12 / 6

**4. Station 2: Community Character Preferences (commercial and industrial development)**

- **Instructions:** Utilize the sticky dots to indicate the commercial and industrial types most appropriate for Guilford County.
  - Green sticker dots indicate a type of development you would like to see encouraged in the future.
  - Yellow sticker dots indicate a type of development that you would like to see more regulated in the future.
  - Red sticker dots indicate a type of development that you would like to see less of in the future.

**Summary:** This question was intended to understand the types of land uses community members feel are most appropriate in Guilford County. Participants were asked to identify uses they would like to see more of, uses they would like to see regulated more, and uses they would like to see less of. Participants were able to provide feedback on 8 categories.

Agricultural uses were identified in every engagement event as a use participants would like to see more of. Of the 96 votes in this category, nearly 90% identified it as a use they wanted to see more of, and just 10% indicated it was a use they wanted to see less of.

Mixed-Uses were also identified as a use most participants would like to see more of. Of the 81 votes in this category, 54% indicated they would like to see more, 30% indicated it should be regulated more, and 16% (from Alamance Presbyterian, Nathanael Greene Elementary, and Northeast Park) stated they would like to see less mixed-use.

Shopping Corridors received relatively split responses, with about a third of participants selecting each answer option.

Office uses were most often identified as a use participants would like to see regulated more. Of the 71 votes on this use, 44% indicated the use should be regulated more, 39% indicated they would like to see less of the use in the future, and 17% indicated they want to see more of it in the future.

Flexible Industrial, which includes uses like commercial and offices, was split in the overall participation, with near equal numbers identifying it as a use they would like to see more of (27, primarily from the virtual workshop) and see less of (28, primarily from Alamance Presbyterian). Of the 68 votes, 40% selected more of the use, 20% selected regulated more, and 40% selected less of this use.

Heavy Industrial / Manufacturing uses were identified in nearly every engagement event as a use participants want to see less of. Of the 89 votes in this category, 67% indicated it's a use they want to see less of, 29% indicated it's a use that should be more regulated, and 4% indicated it is a use that should be encouraged.

The majority of participants identified Big Box Stores as a use they would like to see less of in the future. Of the 73 votes on the Big Box use, 65% indicated they would like to see less of this use in the future, 25% indicated it should be regulated more, and 10% indicated they would like to see more in the future.

Warehouse/Distribution Center uses were most often identified as a use that participants want to see less of in the future. Of the 76 votes on this use category, 65% indicated they would like to see less of this use in the future, 29% indicated it should be regulated more, and 6% indicated they would like to see more in the future.

In summary, responses indicated desires for less heavy industrial/manufacturing, warehouse/distribution centers, and big box stores. Commercial/industrial development responses indicated a preference for more agriculture based and mixed use developments. The commercial/industrial development types that most responses indicated a desire for more regulation in the future were office, mixed use, and shopping corridors.

Community Character Preference (commercial & industrial development)	Total Sticker Dots	Alamance Presbyterian	Bryan Park	Frazier Elementary	Nathanael Greene Elementary	Northeast Park	Virtual Workshop
Agriculture	95 / 0 / 1	37 / 0 / 0	4 / 0 / 0	3 / 0 / 0	16 / 0 / 0	9 / 0 / 0	26 / 0 / 1
Mixed Use	44 / 24 / 13	14 / 13 / 5	1 / 4 / 0	4 / 0 / 0	0 / 2 / 3	0 / 1 / 5	25 / 4 / 0
Shopping Corridors	28 / 24 / 23	11 / 11 / 6	0 / 3 / 1	3 / 1 / 0	0 / 1 / 5	0 / 1 / 5	14 / 7 / 6
Flex Industrial (incl. commercial uses like offices)	27 / 13 / 28	0 / 6 / 18	1 / 1 / 0	3 / 0 / 0	0 / 0 / 5	0 / 0 / 5	19 / 6 / 3
Office	12 / 31 / 28	5 / 17 / 9	0 / 3 / 2	1 / 1 / 0	0 / 0 / 1	0 / 0 / 5	6 / 10 / 11
Big Box Stores	7 / 18 / 48	3 / 7 / 22	0 / 1 / 2	2 / 0 / 2	0 / 0 / 0	1 / 0 / 5	1 / 10 / 17

Warehouse/Distribution Center	5 / 22 / 49	0 / 4 / 25	0 / 0 / 5	1 / 1 / 1	0 / 1 / 5	0 / 1 / 5	4 / 15 / 8
Heavy Industrial/Manufacturing	3 / 26 / 60	0 / 0 / 30	0 / 2 / 3	0 / 2 / 0	0 / 4 / 10	0 / 0 / 9	3 / 18 / 8

5. Station 3: Transportation Choices

- Instructions: Use sticky dots to indicate the method(s) of transportation you would like to use to travel from your home to the destinations listed below.

**Summary:** This question asked participants to identify the modes of transportation they would like to be able to use to reach different destinations in order to understand what types of broad transportation systems and investments should be considered in the future. Participants were asked to identify if they would like to walk, bike, use transit, or use an automobile to get from their home to six different destinations. The destinations were school, work, restaurants, shopping, activity center, and parks. Overall, the highest scoring method was a desire to be able to walk to parks (52), followed by using an automobile to get to work (49) and restaurants (48).

Most responses indicated the desire to utilize automobiles to access work and restaurants; bikes to access parks, schools, and activity centers; transit to access schools and activity centers; and walking to access parks and restaurants. The least number of responses indicated utilizing automobiles to access schools; bikes to access work and restaurants; transit to access restaurants; and walking to access work and activity centers. Responses indicated automobiles as the most popular method of transportation and transit as least popular.

Method of Transportation/ Destination	Total Sticker Dots	Alamance Presbyterian	Bryan Park	Frazier Elementary	Nathanael Greene Elementary	Northeast Park	Virtual Workshop
Auto/Work	49	14	2	1	0	10	22
Auto/Restaurants	48	13	4	0	0	9	22
Auto/Activity Center	39	8	2	1	0	9	19
Auto/Shopping	39	13	3	1	0	0	22
Auto/Parks	36	9	2	0	0	7	18
Auto/Schools	25	1	1	0	0	10	13
Bike/Parks	46	10	4	3	1	2	27
Bike/Activity Center	34	7	2	2	0	1	22
Bike/Schools	31	7	1	2	1	1	19
Bike/Work	27	5	1	1	0	0	20
Bike/Restaurants	21	4	1	1	1	0	14
Bike/Shopping	19	6	0	2	0	0	11
Transit/Work	38	4	2	3	0	0	29
Transit/Activity Center	33	7	2	2	0	0	22
Transit/Shopping	32	6	1	2	0	0	23
Transit/Restaurants	26	4	1	1	0	0	20
Transit/Schools	25	5	2	3	0	1	14
Transit/Parks	24	6	1	2	0	0	15
Walk/Parks	52	14	5	3	0	1	29
Walk/Restaurants	45	14	2	4	0	1	24
Walk/Activity Center	33	5	1	3	0	1	23
Walk/Schools	31	11	1	2	0	1	16
Walk/Shopping	29	10	1	2	0	0	16
Walk/Work	25	6	0	3	0	1	15

6. Station 4: Dollars and Sense

- Instructions: What types of shopping and dining experiences would you like to see prioritized in the future? Vote by placing up to 3 pom poms in the jars representing the type of places you would like to shop.

**Summary:** This question was intended to understand how individual community members would prioritize different shopping and dining experiences. Overall, respondents indicated niche and local as the shopping and dining experience most would like to see prioritized in the future, followed by shopping and dining that incorporates outdoor experiences, and corner convenience stores. Overall, big box stores and auto-oriented drive-thrus were identified as the least desired as priorities. This ordering was similar across all in-person engagement events. However, when looking at the individual engagement events, big box and auto-oriented drive-thrus were identified most in the online session, followed by corner convenience stores.

Shopping/Dining Experience	Total Pom Votes	Alamance Presbyterian	Bryan Park	Frazier Elementary	Nathanael Greene Elementary	Northeast Park	Virtual Workshop
Niche & Local	108	50	1	5	13	13	26
Outdoor Experience	90	41	6	4	9	6	24
Corner Convenience Stores	73	15	0	3	14	5	36
Delivery & Takeout	55	9	2	1	7	2	34
Auto-oriented & Drive-Thru	52	6	2	0	1	2	41
Big Box Stores	49	0	1	1	3	2	42

7. Station 5: Future Land Use – Growth Patterns

- Instructions: Use the corresponding-colored flags on the map(s) to indicate what types of communities or nodes would be most appropriate in different areas of the county.

**Summary:** The goals of this activity were two-fold in that it aimed to provide further clarity on resident priorities for community and node types and identify opinions on where the types and nodes should be sited throughout the county. Of 417 flags placed, most participants, at 23% placed flags for Agriculture, followed by Natural Areas/Preserve at 12%, Rural Living/Low Density Residential with 10% of votes, Neighborhood Centers at 9%, Traditional/Suburban, Rural Crossroads, and Commercial/Retail at 8%, respectively. The lowest number of flags were placed for Conservation/Clustered Development (6%), Regional Activity/Employment Center (6%), Industrial/Innovation Center (5%), and Major Mixed Use Center (5%)

Growth Patterns	Total Flags	Alamance Presbyterian	Bryan Park	Frazier Elementary	Nathanael Greene Elementary	Northeast Park	Virtual Workshop
Agriculture	97	12	2	0	23	37	23
Natural Areas/Preserve	52	9	0	2	1	14	26
Rural Living/Low Density Residential	45	10	4	0	6	1	24
Neighborhood Center	35	7	0	3	0	2	23
Traditional/Suburban	32	5	4	1	0	0	22
Rural Crossroads	30	3	3	1	1	3	19
Commercial/Retail	29	2	0	1	3	1	22
Conservation/Clustered Development	26	1	0	0	2	0	23

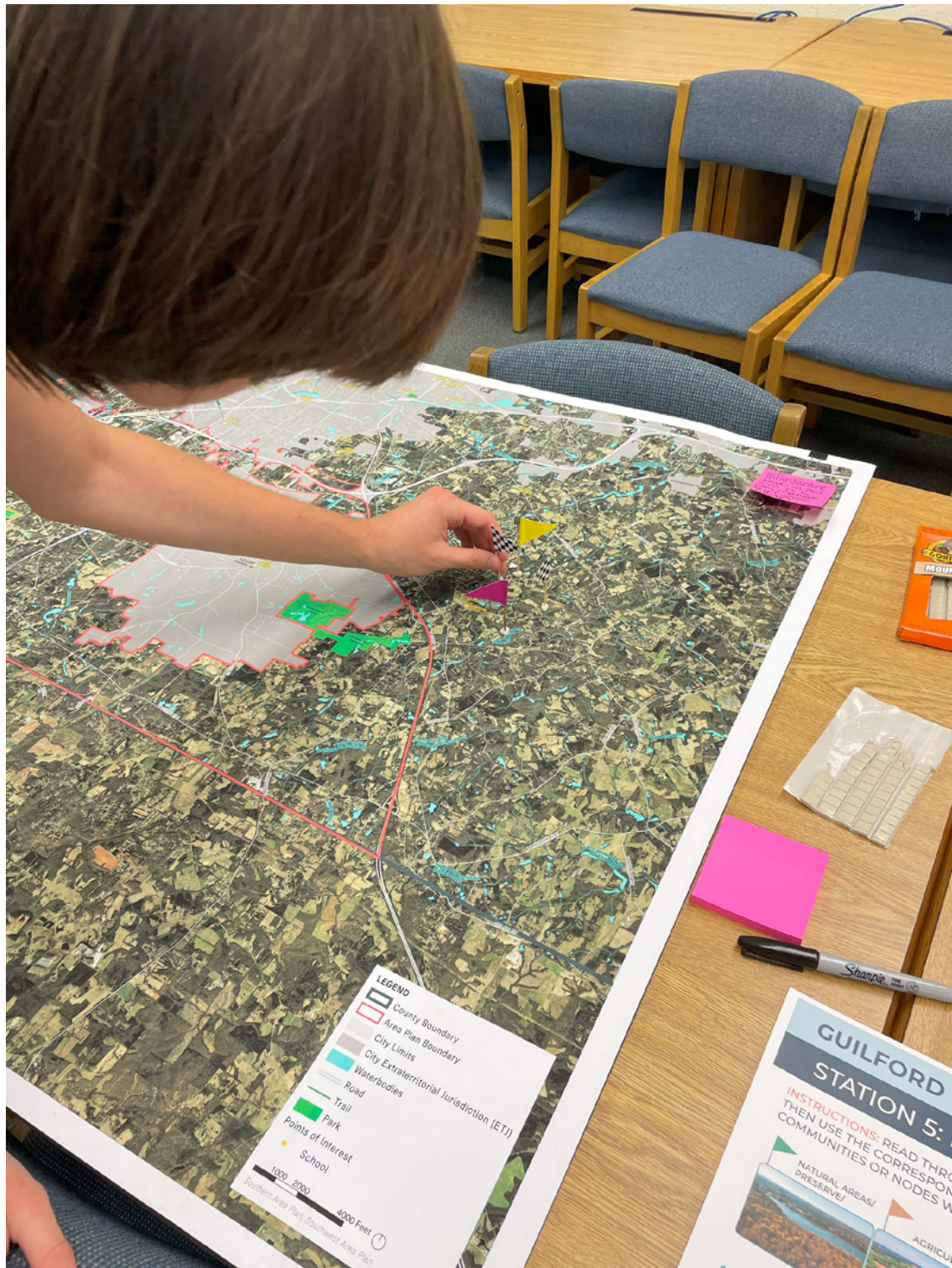
Regional Activity/Employment Center	25	1	1	0	1	0	22
Industrial/Innovation Center	23	2	0	0	0	1	20
Major Mixed Use Center	23	0	0	1	0	1	21

Comments:

- Safe bike paths
- Multipurpose complex
- Pump track for cyclists at Hagan Stone
- Urgent care
- Two grocery stores
- Regional healthcare center at interchange
- Current neighborhood mixed use designation in small area plan to extend the cover between interchanges
- No annexation into Greensboro

Images on the following page display participants interacting with Station 5 at in-person workshop locations and virtually via Mentimeter.



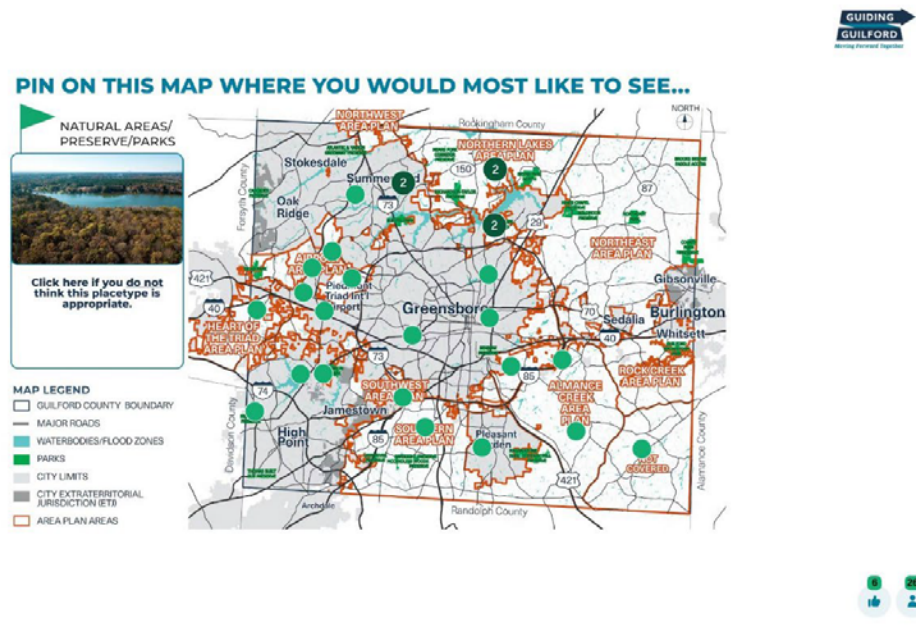


Workshop attendee participating in Station, Future Land Use – Growth Patterns, at Frazier Elementary School.

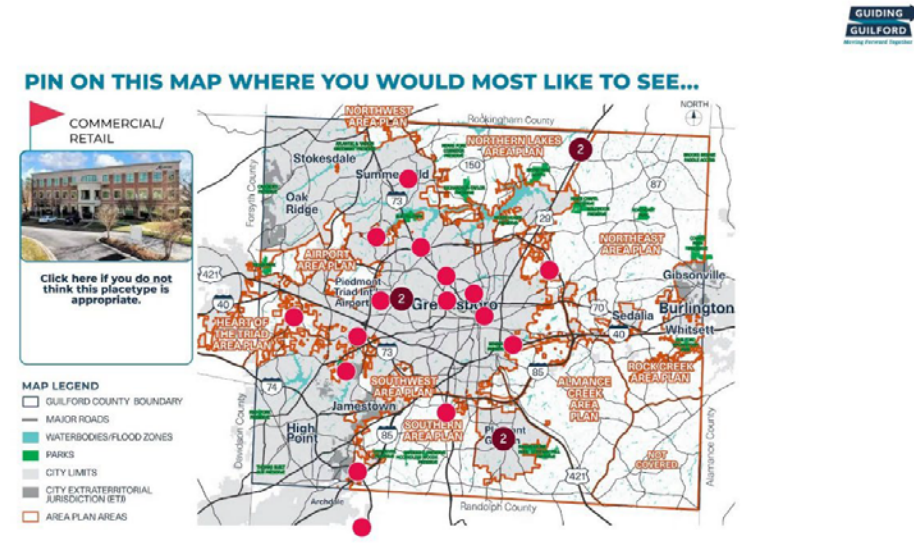
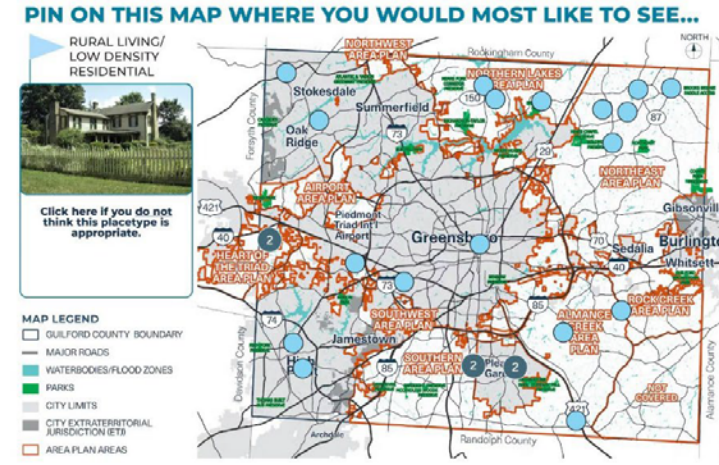


Workshop attendee participating in Station, Future Land Use – Growth Patterns, at Bryan Park.

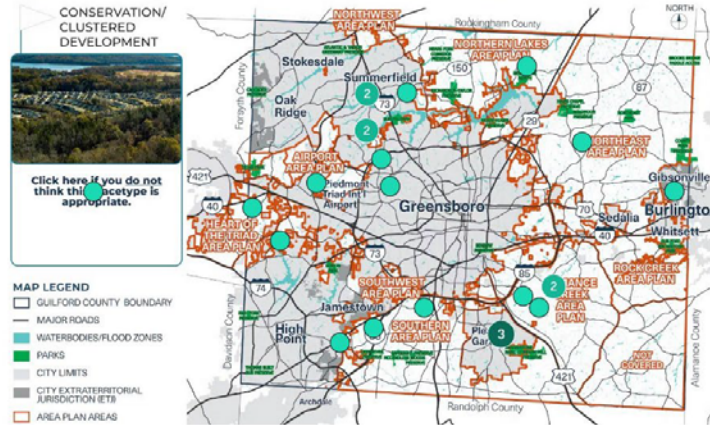
The maps below demonstrate how virtual workshop participants chose to place community and node types as part of the virtual Station 5 activity via Mentimeter.



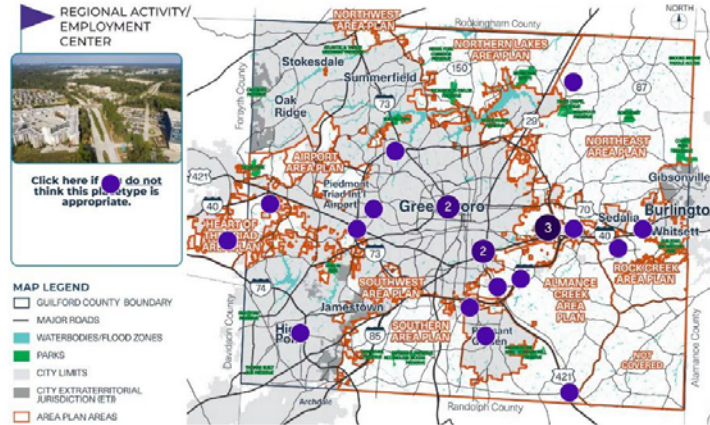
**DRAFT**



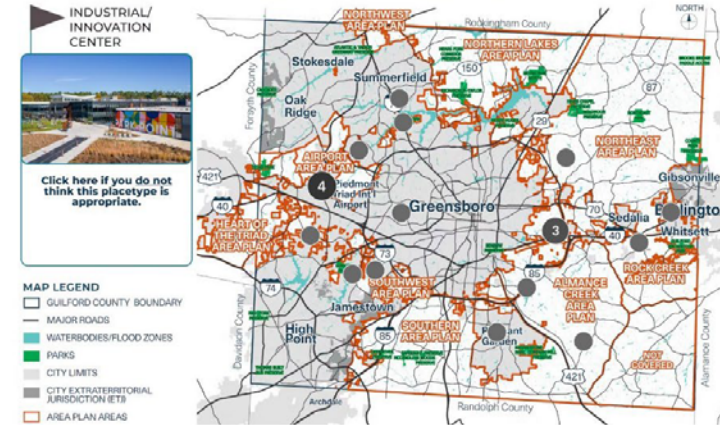
**PIN ON THIS MAP WHERE YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO SEE...**



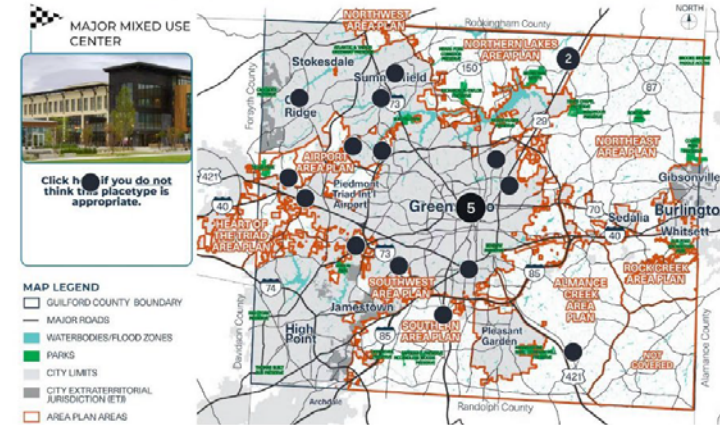
**PIN ON THIS MAP WHERE YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO SEE...**



**PIN ON THIS MAP WHERE YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO SEE...**



**PIN ON THIS MAP WHERE YOU WOULD MOST LIKE TO SEE...**





### 8. Demographics

Participants were provided with a station passport that asked them to answer demographic questions. These questions were optional and intended to provide insight into who attended the workshops and from what areas of the county.

**Gender Summary:** Of the 123 participants who indicated their gender, 64% were male and 33% were female. One (1) participant indicated they were non-binary/non-conforming, and three (3) participants indicated preferring not to answer.

Gender	Total	Alamance Presbyterian	Bryan Park	Frazier Elementary	Nathanael Greene Elementary	Northeast Park	Virtual Workshop
Male	79	24	3	2	11	4	35
Female	40	17	1	2	1	3	16
Prefer not to answer	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Non-binary/non-conforming	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Prefer to self-describe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Age Summary:** Of the 104 participants who indicated their age range, most were 70 or older at 28%, 26% were 60-69, 17% were 50-59, 10% were 30-39 and 40-49, 6% were 21-29, 3% were Under 18. No participants indicated being 18-20 years old.

Age	Total	Alamance Presbyterian	Bryan Park	Frazier Elementary	Nathanael Greene Elementary	Northeast Park	Virtual Workshop
70 or older	29	22	1	0	3	1	2
60-69	27	16	1	1	3	2	4
50-59	18	3	1	0	1	1	12
30-39	10	0	1	1	2	1	5
40-49	10	0	0	1	3	0	6
21-29	6	0	0	1	1	1	3
Under 18	3	1	0	0	0	1	1
Prefer not to answer	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
18-20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Race/Ethnicity Summary:** Of the 106 participants who indicated their race/ethnicity most were White/Caucasian at 79%. 12% of participants identified as Black or African American, and nearly 2% identified as Asian or Pacific Islander. Another 2% selected preferring not to answer.

Race/ethnicity	Total	Alamance Presbyterian	Bryan Park	Frazier Elementary	Nathanael Greene Elementary	Northeast Park	Virtual Workshop
White/Caucasian	84	39	2	2	12	7	22
Black or African American	13	1	2	2	0	0	8
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
Asian or Pacific Islander	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Prefer not to answer	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
Two or more races	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hispanic/Latino/	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Other	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hispanic/Latino/ Spanish	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Primary Language Summary:** All participants indicated English being the primary language spoken in their homes.

Language	Total	Alamance Presbyterian	Bryan Park	Frazier Elementary	Nathanael Greene Elementary	Northeast Park
English	71	43	4	4	13	7
Asian and Pacific Islander languages	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Indo-European languages	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spanish	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other languages	0	0	0	0	0	0
Prefer not to answer	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Years Lived in Guilford County Summary:** Most participants indicated living in Guilford County for more than 20 years (85% of 71). 10% of those who submitted demographic information have lived in the county for 11-20 years, and nearly 3% of participants indicated living in the county for 1-5 years or 6-10 years. No participants indicated living in the county for less than a year, not living in the county, or no longer living in the county.

Number of Years	Total	Alamance Presbyterian	Bryan Park	Frazier Elementary	Nathanael Greene Elementary	Northeast Park
Over 20 years	60	37	3	3	11	6
11-20 years	7	4	0	0	2	1
1-5 years	2	0	1	1	0	0
6-10 years	2	2	0	0	0	0
Less than a year	0	0	0	0	0	0
I don't live in Guilford County	0	0	0	0	0	0
I no longer live in Guilford County	0	0	0	0	0	0

**Home ZIP codes Summary:** More than half, 56% of 71, of participants who shared their home ZIP code live within 27406. This ZIP code is partially contained within the city limits of Greensboro. Overall, the ZIP code covers a suburban part of Greensboro anchored by shopping centers and established residential neighborhoods.

13 Unique ZIP codes	In-person Workshops
27406	40 occurrences
27283	7 occurrences
27298	6 occurrences
27249	4 occurrences
27214	2 occurrences
27244	2 occurrences
27313	2 occurrences
27358	2 occurrences
27410	2 occurrences
27301	1 occurrence
27377	1 occurrence
27401	1 occurrence
27403	1 occurrence

## Appendix

### Station 1: Themes and Goals

Individual comments for this station activity from each workshop are provided below.

#### Attainable Housing

##### Alamance Presbyterian

- Maintain open space and trees
- Parks and trails open spaces
- Retain open space and rural environment

##### Bryan Park

- Universal design
- Diverse neighborhood types in addition to housing types

##### Frazier Elementary

- Please be aware of the areas and consider school capacity

##### Nathanael Greene Elementary

- No comments

##### Northeast Park

- We have enough affordable housing occurring in Guilford County. We do not have schools to accommodate this nor roads.
- Do not ruin our community history

##### Virtual Workshop

- Explicitly support higher density
- It's good
- Add sustainable, energy efficient housing
- Sustainable development using LEED standards
- More affordable family housing
- Energy efficient development not reliant on fossil fuels like gas
- Regulate rent prices
- Reject sprawl
- No more mandated HOA
- Not sure what universal means
- More affordable and market rate housing
- Use existing unused developed lands for affordable housing
- No additional adds
- Focusing growth within current limits of incorporated municipalities
- Accessibility
- Building housing that accommodates roommate situations
- Prioritize mixed use housing
- Add in proximity to employment and daily needs (mixed use)
- Diversity
- Increase affordable housing; there is already a lot of more expensive housing
- Multimodal connectivity
- Sustainable design; energy efficiency; LEED standards
- Covered bus shelters
- Guilford County has limited options for truly diverse types and density of housing when they do not have control of utilities

#### Community Character

##### Alamance Presbyterian

- Keep us residential

- Additional parks for nature appreciation, not sports parks. Sports parks should be separate and smaller than nature parks.
- Maintain land for farming
- Large buffers between communities and businesses with different zoning codes – at least 300 feet
- Celebrate, encourage, and maintain
- No subsidized housing, housing development should include natural areas, play/park areas
- Multipurpose facilities at company mall
- Asphalt pump track at Hagan Stone Park

##### Bryan Park

- More recreational facilities here at Bryan Park, like Keeley Park
- Maybe multiple distinct places instead of Guilford County as a whole
- Tanger Center has contributed heavily to arts and character

##### Frazier Elementary

- Community walkways and parks are a plus that can be incorporated

##### Nathanael Greene Elementary

- No comments

##### Northeast Park

- Incorporate planned living communities where a transit/work/play/housing are part of a designated area community all in one place

##### Virtual Workshop

- Something that attracts young professionals
- Best education possible for our children
- Young citizens seeing a future in staying here
- Are desired development types inclusive and sustainable?
- Identify what is a distinct sense of place
- I second ensuring an appropriate mix of housing types
- Protecting historic homes and historic sites

#### Diverse Economy

##### Alamance Presbyterian

- And current residents
- Yes!
- Will law enforcement be increased to take care of increased housing?
- No Greensboro or other annexation

##### Bryan Park

- Northeast area is becoming an industrial hub without anything to balance it out
- Very few options for entertainment/recreation in northeast; becoming an industrial hub
- Support workforce training. Work with GTCC and area colleges.

##### Nathanael Greene Elementary

- Incentives? Who pays for the cost?
- Who pays?

##### Northeast Park

- No comments

##### Virtual Workshop

- Clarity. I'm not sure what this means overall.
- Support for immigrant and minority owned businesses
- A healthy economy must promote environmental sustainability
- Clarify if sustainable means environmentally sustainable
- Community infrastructure is very vague
- Promote local businesses and don't let malls such as Friendly Center push them out
- No more incentives for businesses but invest in small businesses and entrepreneurs
- Workforce training opportunities
- What is meant by community infrastructure?
- Clarify meaning of "sustainable" economy
- Remove roadblocks for success

- Clarity
- More libraries
- Develop unused lands around airport for new businesses

**Equitable Services**

**Alamance Presbyterian**

- Southeast area – food desert
- Regional healthcare campus
- Yes!
- Health clinic
- We need a grocery store and a walk-in clinic like urgent care in Southeast County
- Grocery stores, restaurants, healthcare
- Residential housing should be privately owned not by rental corporations. No rental apartments.
- Any development should be done with goal of no two limited tax increases

**Bryan Park**

- More diverse housing throughout county, including Northwest

**Frazer Elementary**

- No comments

**Nathanael Greene Elementary**

- Funding for the local fire department
- Public safety
- No comments
- It's good
- May be worth calling out internet access as key system
- It's okay, really doesn't say much
- Too much of a blanket statement
- More libraries
- The statement covers equity for all people
- Fairness and equity, same term?
- Listening to those that are vulnerable in these areas of concern
- Lower income families are going to be the most vulnerable to the impacts of the climate crisis. We need to provide resources to address this issue.
- How this would be ensured...by...
- Emphasis on ALL including refugees, immigrants, etc.
- Focus on improving adult literacy rates
- More specific about what types of "services"
- It's good

**Natural Environment**

**Alamance Presbyterian**

- Maintain open space and trees
- Parks and trails open spaces
- Retain open space and rural environment

**Bryan Park**

- No comments

**Frazier Elementary**

- Name a few natural resources
- Would this include community parks, development, or enhancement?

**Nathanael Greene Elementary**

- Farmland preservation
- Funding to preserve farms under private ownership
- This needs to be studied for farms

**Northeast Park**

- Preservation of farmland

**Virtual Workshop**

- How does this relate to new development

- Land preservation
- Emphasize local agricultural resilience
- This is important in addressing the climate crisis and being good stewards of land
- Maintenance of those natural resources
- More specifics about the work of increasing tree canopy and limiting clear cutting in areas to be developed
- Value for wildlife and just to have passive open space that helps the climate
- Human well-being and the environment
- Incentivize land preservation
- Focus on diversity
- Sustainability
- Environmental justices
- As long as it's inclusive
- Diversity, history, and recognition
- Nothing, sounds good

**Transportation, Mobility and Safe Streets**

**Alamance Presbyterian**

- Safe bike paths
- No more major thoroughfares. If additional traffic management is needed, add lanes to existing roads.
- Transportation. Availability outside of the city.
- Bike yes – no major bus, lines too far out
- Develop safe, residential area, controlling car speed
- Yes!

**Bryan Park**

- Street design should be appropriate for intended development
- New Garden and Westridge/Battleground Road needs sidewalks
- Work on fear of public spaces/parking lots. I would get out more if I wasn't fearful.
- Continue hiking/park access

**Frazier Elementary**

- Bike lanes are a way for many to commute, and expansion of these should be considered

**Nathanael Greene Elementary**

- No comments

**Northeast Park**

- No comments

**Virtual Workshop**

- Vision Zero
- Multimodal
- Efficient
- Affordable transit for all
- Deemphasize cars
- Charging stations for EVs
- In conjunction with Greensboro and High Point
- I hate driving
- Safe streets for all
- Include sidewalks
- Emphasize bikes
- Charging stations
- Access to the County from all corners
- Expansion of public transportation systems
- Monorail
- Sidewalks
- Multimodal connectivity
- Support for rural walkability
- Safe streets speak to lighting

- Something that indicates development does not dictate transportation patterns, but transportation needs are well integrated into development
- Guilford County roads and transportation are immaculate. Remove this to put more emphasis on housing. That will make us safer.

**Quality and Context Sensitive Infrastructure**

**Alamance Presbyterian**

- Doctors' office
- Additional work to update/create small area plans to ensure best locations
- Support community by having adequate water and sewer with no annexation
- Define sensitive infrastructure!
- Particular attention to water/wastewater. Sustainable.

**Bryan Park**

- Better suburban school infrastructure

**Frazier Elementary**

- Infrastructure needs in this area; it is very expensive to get access for sewer.
- There are a lot of businesses in existence that need to be encouraged to clean and be accountable for their properties

**Nathanael Greene Elementary**

- Funding for the local fire department
- Road maintenance

**Northeast Park**

- No comments

**Virtual Workshop**

- Not clear
- Put an emphasis on outdated infrastructure like the electrical grid
- Tree canopy analysis and environmental services maintenance budget
- Focus new development in the current boundaries of the municipalities
- Before planning state "inclusive"
- How do we implement a high quality of life? Who determines what is high?
- The County needs to commit to acting sustainably, using only clean energy, and building to LEED standards
- Schools must be called out specifically
- What is "context sensitive" infrastructure? Sounds a bit wonky
- LEED principles, green planning
- Homelessness needs to be addressed
- Little long winded and vague regarding community infrastructures (schools, parks, water and sewer, roads)
- United Way of Greensboro has a bold goal to lift 300 families out of generational poverty. Greensboro has a very high level of poverty. What are we going to do as a community to work together?
- Improvements to schools should be explicitly cited

**Additional Thoughts**

**Alamance Presbyterian**

- Schools
- Healthy food desert
- Early childhood development void

**Bryan Park**

- Diverse economy, attainable housing, equitable services: the devil is in the details
- Create policy to extend participation in the present use value program to all agricultural properties to disincentivize selling, subdividing, and rezoning

**Frazier Elementary**

- No comments

**Nathanael Greene Elementary**

- Continue the right to farm

- Land preservation for farmland
- High speed internet
- Farm preservation
- Art
- Walking trails in nature areas
- Did not receive notice of survey
- Farmland preservation
- Public safety, fire station funding

**Northeast Park**

- Monorail communities, (e.g., Irving Texas)

**Virtual Workshop**

- Be concise
- Do we have adequate county services to address natural disasters and high temperatures?
- Unsure how this really applies to those of us living in cities
- How to accomplish since County doesn't provide infrastructure services?
- Adult literacy rates have not improved in years. Literacy is a path out of poverty and directly impacts quality of life.
- Clarify what the county is responsible for and not responsible for
- Include refugees, immigrant communities. Don't forget them.
- Wildlife corridors need to be developed and protected for wildlife
- Incentives for land preservation
- Development in depressed areas
- Ditto to "clarify what county is responsible for and not."
- Generating funding for schools specifically is important
- High Point's utilities are extensive – not included in preliminary infrastructure map (only Greensboro's)
- Included our wealth of Colleges and Universities along with GCS ability to educate children of all learning abilities and disabilities
- Given that so much of the county's budget goes to the public schools, it seems to me the school system should have a number of explicit citations
- Development in depressed areas
- Generating funding for schools specifically is important

# SURVEY SUMMARY



## DESIGNWORKSHOP

Landscape Architecture  
 Planning  
 Urban Design  
 Strategic Services  
 621 Hillsborough Street, Suite 202  
 Raleigh, NC 27603  
 update to Raleigh  
 designworkshop.com

## MEMORANDUM

To: Guilford County  
 From: Design Workshop: Brenna Laffey, Corey Dodd, Emily McCoy, Jessica Garrow, Reilly Thimons  
 Date: October 27, 2023  
 Project Name: Guilford County Comprehensive Plan  
 Project #: 7027  
 Subject: Community Survey Summary

### Overview

The Guilford County Comprehensive Plan Community Survey was conducted online from April 1 through August 1. The survey was hosted via the Qualtrics XM survey platform. The survey was accessible via a link on Guilford County's Comprehensive Plan website and distributed through advertisement campaigns, including newspaper, the County's social media platforms, via email, and through physical flyers. Advertisements and the survey were provided in English and Spanish.

### Executive Summary

The survey captured feedback from 1,413 respondents who represented a cross section of community members (see Questions 18-25 for more about survey demographics). 814 respondents completed the survey with approximately 599 survey participants that began the survey but did not complete it.

The Community Survey was administered in Phase 1 (Consult & Engage) of the planning process's timeline. The purposes of the survey included:

- Understanding what is top of mind for community members related to quality of life and topics that the County should focus on over the next 10-20 years.
- Gaining initial feedback related to desired land uses and housing types in specific locations throughout the defined unincorporated areas of the county.
- Understanding desired priorities for key topics such as economic development, growth, affordable housing strategies and environmental preservation.
- Understanding perspectives from the unincorporated portions of the county. Divided into northeastern, southeastern, northwestern and southwestern.

The following summary reflects the responses of all survey participants. Not every survey participant answered every question and as a result, summaries of each set of results are based on the individuals who answered the specific question. Each question identifies the total number of individual respondents for that question, the specific methodology of the question, as well as key understandings derived from the responses. If the survey allowed participants to select more than one response, the total number of responses is identified. Data is represented by total participant responses which are inclusive of the entire County. Additional key findings focus on cross-tabulations by available data and represent unique findings specific to filtering out municipal zip codes that were located

predominantly within the municipal boundary. Filtered zip codes include: 27260, 27262, 27265, 27310, 27313, 27357, 27401, 27403, 27406, 27407, 27408, 27409, 27410, 27411, 27412, 27413.

The survey results will be used to refine focal points of the Comprehensive Plan and to identify plan themes and goals. It is considered one of the major inputs in the overall engagement throughout the process to hear from the community and draft a new plan for Guilford County.

### Questions

#### 1. What items do you feel most satisfied with as they relate to quality of life in Guilford County?

Methodology: Multiple selection question. Choose top 3.

	All Participants%	Count	Filtered%	Count
Relationship and access to nature/outdoors	51.83%	564	52.60%	324
Affordability/cost of living	29.96%	326	28.90%	178
Educational opportunities	27.75%	302	28.90%	178
Demographic diversity	26.93%	293	24.51%	151
Arts and culture	26.01%	283	25.32%	156
Recreational opportunities	24.54%	267	25.81%	159
Feeling of safety and security	18.56%	202	18.67%	115
Economic conditions/strength and stability	18.29%	199	18.67%	115
Feeling of community	15.99%	174	14.12%	87
Employment opportunities	12.86%	140	12.50%	77
Accessible public services	8.45%	92	8.60%	53
Other	6.98%	76	7.14%	44
Transportation options	6.25%	68	6.66%	41
Housing options	4.79%	52	4.55%	28
<b>Total number of selections of all answer choices</b>		<b>3,038</b>		<b>1,706</b>
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>1,088</b>		<b>616</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified the relationship to nature/outdoors as the items they are most satisfied with (51.83%), followed by affordability/cost of living (29.96%), and educational opportunities (27.75%). Importantly, Housing options (4.79%), Transportation options (6.25%), and Accessible public services (8.45%) received less than 10% indicating these may be areas for the County to focus on in the future.

Utilizing the cross tabulation, findings are generally the same with some minor differences when the filtered zip codes are removed, showing those in unincorporated areas slightly less satisfied with arts and culture, and recreational opportunities. There is also a slightly higher majority score for participants' satisfaction with their relationship and access to nature and the outdoors.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all-participant percentages.



## 2. What would you most like to improve about Guilford County to promote a higher quality of life?

Methodology: Multiple selection question. Choose top 3.

	All Participants%	Count	Filtered%	Count
Housing affordability and choices (Diversify the housing stock)	40.62%	442	38.15%	235
Preserve and protect natural resources	38.23%	416	39.29%	242
Increase affordable food retailer access and choices (e.g. Grocery stores, farmer's markets or produce stands)	28.21%	307	26.30%	162
Connection between political leaders and the public	22.70%	247	22.56%	139
Access to public spaces, parks, and open space	20.68%	225	21.10%	130
Increase employment opportunities	20.68%	225	21.43%	132
Increase transportation options	19.02%	207	16.23%	100
Increase entertainment and cultural events/experiences	15.80%	172	16.56%	102
Preserve and protect cultural/historic resources	15.80%	172	17.21%	106
Other	14.88%	162	13.15%	81
Increase educational opportunities	13.69%	149	16.07%	99
Reduce traffic congestions	12.40%	135	13.64%	84
More economic and social diversity	11.94%	130	12.18%	75
Increase development opportunities	11.39%	124	10.71%	66
<b>Total number of selections of all answer choices</b>		<b>3,113</b>		<b>1,753</b>
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>1,088</b>		<b>616</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified housing affordability and choices as what they would like to improve about Guilford County to promote a higher quality of life (40.62%), followed by preserving and protecting natural areas (38.23%), and increasing affordable food retailer access and choices (28.21%). Increase development opportunities (11.39%) and "More economic and social diversity" (11.94%) received the lowest number of responses.

Utilizing the cross tabulation, findings are generally consistent with the exception of preserve and protect natural resources scoring slightly higher than housing affordability and choices, and increased affordable food retailer access and choices. Scores for increased transportation options, preserving and protecting cultural/historic resources, and increased educational opportunities illustrate slightly different needs in unincorporated areas.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all-participant percentages.

## 3. The most important topics to focus on in this Comprehensive Plan are...

Methodology: Multiple selection question. Choose top 3.

	All Participants%	Count	Filtered%	Count
Affordability/cost of living	44.94%	489	45.29%	279
Managing growth	27.75%	302	27.92%	172
Environmental protection	21.32%	232	21.43%	132
Housing opportunities	21.13%	230	20.45%	126
Access to nature and outdoors	19.39%	211	19.97%	123
Employment opportunities	16.08%	175	15.91%	98
Neighborhood revitalization	15.53%	169	14.61%	90
Communication/connection between political leaders and the public	14.61%	159	8.12%	50
Public parks and open space	13.60%	148	13.15%	81
Transportation options	13.41%	146	11.85%	73
Educational opportunities	13.14%	143	13.64%	84
Access to emergency services	11.02%	120	12.01%	74
Development opportunities	10.56%	115	10.71%	66
Other	9.83%	107	8.28%	51
Arts, culture, and historic preservation	9.65%	105	10.06%	62
Transportation congestion	8.54%	93	8.60%	53
Community connections	8.45%	92	8.12%	50
Water conservation	7.44%	81	7.95%	49
Recreation programs and opportunities	6.06%	66	6.66%	41
<b>Total number of selections of all answer choices</b>		<b>3,183</b>		<b>1,754</b>
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>1,088</b>		<b>616</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified affordability/cost of living as the most important topics to focus on in this Comprehensive Plan (44.94%), followed by managing growth (27.75%), and environmental transportation (21.32%). Affordability/cost of living was identified significantly more than the other options, indicating this is an important area for the Plan to focus on.

Utilizing the cross tabulation, findings are generally consistent with participants being most interested in affordability and cost of living, managing growth, and environmental protections. There were slightly higher scores for access to emergency services, development opportunities, arts, culture and historic preservation and transportation congestion from unincorporated County participants.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all-participant percentages.

4. Guilford’s greatest assets are...

Methodology: Open response question



Image: Word cloud representing words most frequently contained in response to Question 4.

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified park space, diversity, people, and community as Guilford County's greatest assets.

5. Guilford County’s greatest challenges today are...

Methodology: Open response question



Image: Word cloud representing words most frequently contained in response to Question 5.

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified housing, public safety, and local government as Guilford County's greatest challenges today. This is consistent with the feedback in Question 3 regarding the most important topics for the Plan to focus on.

6. What one word best describes your vision for Guilford County?

Methodology: Open response question



Image: Word cloud representing words most frequently contained in response to Question 6

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified an inclusive community culture, growth opportunities, and a green/environmental focus as words that best describe their vision for Guilford County.

7. In general, I think future growth in Guilford should...

Methodology: Multiple selection question. Choose top 3.

	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
Be balanced with environmental preservation	47.91%	413	50.13%	193
Better handle land development with plans and policies	44.89%	387	45.97%	177
Be forward looking and visionary	43.96%	379	42.34%	163
Provide more housing opportunities to low-income citizens	36.42%	314	34.29%	132
Focus on preserving/maintaining what we have	25.98%	224	28.83%	111
Prioritize job opportunities	23.08%	199	22.60%	87
Be balanced with cultural and historic preservation	21.69%	187	22.34%	86
Other	15.08%	130	11.69%	45
Be restricted to certain areas of the County	9.51%	82	11.43%	44
Let the market decide	8.12%	70	7.27%	28
Stay the course on the way things are going	3.71%	32	4.16%	16

Total number of selections of all answer choices		2,417		1,082
Total survey respondents to this question		862		385

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified being balanced with environmental preservation as what they generally think growth in Guilford County should do (47.91%), followed by better handling land development with plans and policies (44.89%), and being forward looking and visionary (43.96%). These three responses had significantly more responses than the other topics, indicating these are key areas for the Plan and future policies to address. Importantly, “Stay the course” received significantly less responses are 3.71% than any other option.

Utilizing the cross tabulation, findings are generally consistent with participants being most interested in being balanced with environmental preservation, having a better handle on land development with plans and policies, and being forward looking and visionary. There were slightly higher scores for a focus on preserving/maintain what we have and being balanced with cultural and historic resources from unincorporated County participants.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all-participant percentages.

## 8. Which items below are most important to you in terms of managing future growth?

**Methodology:** Multiple selection question. Choose top 3.

	All Participants %	Count	Filtered %	Count
Cost of living	58.22%	499	55.84%	215
Environmental protection	42.00%	360	42.86%	165
Access to needed services	36.40%	312	34.03%	131
Preservation of neighborhood character	30.33%	260	31.17%	120
Preservation of scenic qualities	29.98%	257	31.17%	120
Economic development	29.40%	252	27.53%	106
Preservation of unique cultural assets/historic resources	19.60%	168	20.52%	79
Preservation of scenic qualities	18.31%	157	31.17%	120
Limiting growth	14.58%	125	17.92%	69
Other	11.31%	97	10.13%	39
<b>Total number of selections of all answer choices</b>		<b>2,487</b>		<b>1,164</b>
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>857</b>		<b>385</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified cost of living as most important in terms of managing future growth (58.22%), followed by environmental protection (42%), and access to needed services (36.40%).

Utilizing the cross tabulation, findings are generally consistent with cost of living, environmental protection and access to needed services being highlighted as the most important items for managing future growth. There were slightly higher scores for preservation of neighborhood character, preservation of scenic qualities, and preservation of neighborhood character from unincorporated County participants.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all-participant percentages.

## 9. What are your biggest concerns related to growth in Guilford County?

**Methodology:** Multiple selection question. Choose top 3.

	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
Infrastructure to support growth	39.88%	343	37.66%	145
Housing affordability and choices	37.67%	324	34.03%	131
Protecting the natural environment	36.27%	312	36.62%	141
Coordination among cities, towns, and county on growth	30.11%	259	30.13%	116
Adaptation and impact on climate	23.02%	198	22.08%	85
Changes to the County's character	19.88%	171	21.82%	84
Increased traffic and delays	18.37%	158	18.70%	72
Availability of water and sewer	17.20%	148	18.44%	71
Condition of roads	16.86%	145	17.92%	69
Crowding of recreational assets and open space areas	15.46%	133	18.96%	73
Cost of providing County services	12.67%	109	14.03%	54
Protecting unique cultural assets/historic resources	11.51%	99	11.95%	46
Other	10.93%	94	8.31%	32
<b>Total number of selections of all answer choices</b>		<b>2,493</b>		<b>1,119</b>
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>860</b>		<b>385</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified infrastructure to support growth as their biggest concerns related to growth in Guilford County (39.88%), followed by housing affordability and choices (37.67%), and protecting the natural environment (36.27%).

Utilizing the cross tabulation, findings are generally consistent infrastructure to support growth, housing affordability and choices, and protecting the natural environment being highlighted as the biggest concerns related to growth in the County. There were slightly higher scores for changes to the County's character, increased traffic and delays, availability of water and sewer, conditions of roads and crowding of recreational assets and open space areas from unincorporated County participants. This may be reflective of a general concern around how growth pressures will impact existing services and the look and feel of the County.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all-participant percentages.

**10. What types of land use should be prioritized in the future and where?**

Methodology: Multiple selection question.

Northeast Quadrant	All Count	Filtered Count
Agricultural (e.g. livestock, farmland, crops)	386	177
Parks and open space	376	180
Mixed-use (combines neighborhood commercial and residential uses)	302	126
Residential single family	288	148
Residential multifamily (apartments, townhouses, condos)	255	110
Institutional (e.g. educational, medical, religious uses)	254	121
Commercial (e.g. retail, restaurant, office personal service uses)	234	103
Industrial (e.g. warehouses, manufacturing uses)	188	76
Other	78	38
<b>Northwest Quadrant</b>		
	Count	Filtered Count
Parks and open space	381	169
Residential single family	308	144
Mixed-use (combines neighborhood commercial and residential uses)	291	124
Residential multifamily (apartments, townhouses, condos)	255	105
Agricultural (e.g. livestock, farmland, crops)	235	121
Institutional (e.g. educational, medical, religious uses)	233	91
Commercial (e.g. retail, restaurant, office personal service uses)	223	125
Industrial (e.g. warehouses, manufacturing uses)	158	113
Other	67	31
<b>Southeast Quadrant</b>		
	Count	Filtered Count
Parks and open space	417	167
Agricultural (e.g. livestock, farmland, crops)	393	171
Residential single family	313	132
Mixed-use (combines neighborhood commercial and residential uses)	297	123
Residential multifamily (apartments, townhouses, condos)	295	138
Commercial (e.g. retail, restaurant, office personal service uses)	291	125
Institutional (e.g. educational, medical, religious uses)	280	129
Industrial (e.g. warehouses, manufacturing uses)	253	113

Other	85	33
<b>Southwest Quadrant</b>		
	Count	Filtered Count
Parks and open space	317	126
Mixed-use (combines neighborhood commercial and residential uses)	305	138
Residential multifamily (apartments, townhouses, condos)	296	137
Commercial (e.g. retail, restaurant, office personal service uses)	262	120
Institutional (e.g. educational, medical, religious uses)	261	115
Residential single family	258	110
Industrial (e.g. warehouses, manufacturing uses)	221	98
Agricultural (e.g. livestock, farmland, crops)	154	62
Other	61	27

**Key Understanding:** This question allowed participants to identify the land use types they feel are appropriate in different areas of the county. Parks and Open Space was in the top three responses for each area. Other common responses included agriculture, single family, and mixed-use.

For the **northeast quadrant**, most respondents identified agricultural land use should be prioritized in the future, followed by parks and open space, and mixed-use land use. Utilizing the cross tabulation, most respondents in unincorporated areas identified agricultural, parks and open spaces and single-family residential land uses to be prioritized.

For the **northwest quadrant**, most respondents identified parks and open space land use should be prioritized in the future, followed by single family residential, and mixed-use land use. Utilizing the cross tabulation, respondents in unincorporated areas identified parks and open space, residential single family and commercial as land uses to be prioritized.

For the **southeast quadrant**, most respondents identified parks and open space land use should be prioritized in the future, followed by agricultural, and single-family residential land use. Utilizing the cross tabulation, respondents in unincorporated areas identified parks and open space, agricultural and residential multifamily as land uses to be prioritized.

For the **southwest quadrant**, most respondents identified parks and open space land use should be prioritized in the future, followed by mixed use, and multifamily residential land use. Utilizing the cross tabulation, respondents in unincorporated areas identified parks and open spaces, mixed-use and residential multi-family as land uses to be prioritized.

### 11. Which of the following should Guilford County's natural resource protection efforts prioritize?

Methodology: Multiple selection question. Choose top 3.

	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
Habitat protection/restoration	37.95%	312	34.29%	132
Water/soil conservation and water quality	34.30%	282	29.61%	114
Retention of tree canopy	33.33%	274	27.53%	106
Protecting agricultural land	31.02%	255	34.29%	132
Cleaning up illegal landfills, dumping and vehicle junk/salvage yards	27.12%	223	29.09%	112
Protecting open space	26.76%	220	23.38%	90
Location of new development	23.96%	197	22.08%	85
Integration of green infrastructure for stormwater drainage management	22.74%	187	16.88%	65
Coordination amongst jurisdictions	22.62%	186	18.18%	70
Cultural/historical sites	16.42%	135	16.62%	64
Planning for increased flooding	10.58%	87	8.05%	31
Other	2.55%	21	1.56%	6
<b>Total number of selections of all answer choices</b>		<b>2,379</b>		<b>1,007</b>
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>822</b>		<b>385</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified habitat protection/restoration as Guilford County's natural resource protection effort that should be prioritized (37.95%), followed by water/soil conservation and water quality (34.30%), and retention of tree canopy (33.33%).

Utilizing the cross tabulation, findings are generally consistent however habitat protection/restoration and protecting agricultural lands were equally prioritized with high interest water/soil conservation and water quality and cleaning up illegal landfills, dumping and vehicle junk/salvage yards also receiving high levels of interest from unincorporated County participants.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all participant percentages.

### 12. Which community type best represents where you live?

Methodology: Single select question.

	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
Suburban subdivision	25.33%	213	24.25%	89
Traditional/historic neighborhood	21.64%	182	12.81%	47
Rural subdivision	21.52%	181	24.25%	89
Rural living or farmstead	16.05%	135	24.52%	90
Multi-family subdivision (Apartments/townhouses)	8.56%	72	7.63%	28
Mixed-use community (City/town outskirts/fringes)	3.92%	33	3.27%	12
Lakefront/waterfront community	2.97%	25	3.27%	12
<b>Total Survey Respondents</b>		<b>841</b>		<b>367</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified living in suburban subdivisions (25.33%), followed by traditional historic neighborhoods (21.64%) and rural subdivisions (21.52%).

Utilizing the cross tabulation, findings slightly varied with suburban subdivision, rural subdivision, and rural living or farmstead receiving almost identical scores from unincorporated County participants.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all participant percentages.

### 13. Affordable housing should be...

Methodology: Multiple selection question. Select all that apply.

	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
Located near public transit	68.12%	560	28.40%	234
Allowed in more places than currently developed	48.17%	396	18.81%	155
Mixed into existing communities/subdivisions	43.43%	357	17.48%	144
Developed with Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)	39.78%	327	15.17%	125
Limited to areas adjacent to towns/cities	18.00%	148	9.71%	80
Left to the market to sort out	15.69%	129	6.92%	57
Other	7.42%	61	3.52%	29
<b>Total number of selections of all answer choices</b>		<b>1,978</b>		<b>824</b>
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>822</b>		<b>347</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified that affordable housing should be located near public transit (68.12%), allowed in more places than currently developed (48.17%), and mixed into existing communities/subdivisions (43.43%). Being located near public transit was significantly higher than any other option in this question, and is the highest percentage in the entire survey, indicating a very strong desire to plan jointly for housing and transportation.

Utilizing the cross tabulation, findings are generally consistent with those from respondents from across the County.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all participant percentages.

#### 14. As it relates to transportation planning, we need...

**Methodology:** Multiple selection question. Choose top 3.

	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
Better county-wide transit service	47.93%	394	47.26%	164
Multi-modal/complete streets (Street design that emphasize safety, mobility and accessibility for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, and individuals of all ages and abilities)	43.18%	355	38.90%	135
Bike and ped infrastructure	35.15%	289	34.01%	118
More trails and greenways	35.03%	288	33.43%	116
Regional transit service	22.74%	187	22.77%	79
Electric vehicle charging stations	22.62%	186	22.19%	77
Higher levels of service/capacity	15.93%	131	16.43%	57
Access management	15.08%	124	15.56%	54
Higher levels of street connectivity	11.92%	98	12.97%	45
Other	9.00%	74	9.51%	33
Carpool/ride-share parking	6.93%	57	7.49%	26
Planning for autonomous vehicles	3.89%	32	2.02%	7
<b>Total number of selections of all answer choices</b>		<b>2,215</b>		<b>911</b>
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>822</b>		<b>347</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified better county-wide transit service growth (47.93%) as a priority for transportation planning, followed by multi-modal/complete streets (43.18%), and bike and pedestrian infrastructure (35.15%). Alternative modes for cars, such as autonomous vehicles (3.89%) and parking for carpools / rideshares (6.93%) received less than 10% support indicating these are not currently key considerations in the community.

Utilizing the cross tabulation, findings are generally consistent with those from respondents from across the County with slightly lower scores for multi-modal/complete streets (Street design that emphasize safety, mobility and accessibility for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, and individuals of all ages and abilities) and bike and ped infrastructure.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all-participant percentages.

#### 15. Which do you believe are the critical social, demographic, and economic equity issues that need to be addressed in the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan?

**Methodology:** Multiple selection question. Choose top 3.

	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
Housing affordability	46.35%	381	43.23%	150
Quality of and access to schools and education	39.78%	327	35.45%	123
Internet/broadband access	25.79%	212	29.11%	101
Job training and education	25.30%	208	24.21%	84
Services for aging populations	24.20%	199	23.92%	83
Environmental sustainability	23.47%	193	24.78%	86
Housing security	22.14%	182	21.33%	74
Rural lifestyle/agriculture opportunities	18.12%	149	25.65%	89
Youth and teen programs and activities	17.15%	141	17.58%	61
Additional and more diverse employment opportunities	15.93%	131	13.26%	46
Cultural diversity	11.43%	94	11.24%	39
Other	5.59%	46	4.03%	14
Physical accessibility to public facilities	5.59%	46	5.48%	19
Bilingual services	4.25%	35	4.32%	15
<b>Total number of selections of all answer choices</b>		<b>2,344</b>		<b>984</b>
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>822</b>		<b>347</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents identified housing affordability as the critical social, demographic, and economic equity issues that need to be addressed in the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan (46.35%), followed by quality of and access to schools and education (39.78%), and internet/broadband access (25.79%). Bilingual services (4.25%) and Physical accessibility to public facilities (5.59%) were not identified as a key consideration for the Comprehensive Plan but could be important areas for future policies given some of the open-ended responses and areas of support elsewhere in the survey (For instance 22.7% of respondents in Question 2 indicated the "connection between political leaders and the public" is an area to improve in the county.)

Utilizing the cross tabulation, findings are generally consistent with those from respondents from across the County with slightly lower scores for housing affordability and quality of and access to schools and education. Unincorporated County residents also expressed a higher level of interest in environmental sustainability, rural lifestyle/agricultural opportunities and youth and teen programs and activities as critical issues to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all-participant percentages.

### 16. What geographical areas of the County do you feel have been historically or are presently overlooked regarding issues that need to be addressed by the County government?

Methodology: Open response question

Geographical Area	All Participant%	Count
Responses that could not be coded by quadrant	49.49%	244
Southeast	28.39%	140
Northeast	14.40%	71
Southwest	4.86%	24
Northwest	2.83%	14
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>493</b>

**Key Understanding:** Of the responses coded by quadrant, the Southeast is the geographical area of the County that residents feel has been historically or presently overlooked regarding issues that need to be addressed by the County government (28.39%), followed by the Northeast (14.40%), and Southwest (4.86%).

## DEMOGRAPHICS

The following questions are related to characteristics of the survey respondent. Answering these questions was not required but requested to get an understanding of respondent demographics.

### 18. What gender do you identify as?

Methodology: Single select question.

	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
Female	54.36%	443	51.91%	177
Male	34.36%	280	34.02%	116
Prefer not to answer	8.96%	73	12.02%	41
Non-binary/gender non-confirming	1.72%	14	1.17%	4
Transgender	0.37%	3	0.29%	1
Prefer to self-describe	0.25%	2	0.59%	2
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>341</b>

**Key Understanding:** Respondents from across County identified as female (54.36%), followed by male (34.36%), and non-binary/gender non-confirming (1.72%), which generally mirrors the filtered results.

Findings highlighted in green represent the two highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the two lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all-participant percentages.

### 19. What is your age?

Methodology: Single select question.

	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
50-59	20.12%	163	21.73%	73
40-49	19.51%	158	20.83%	70
60-69	18.89%	153	16.07%	54
30-39	17.90%	145	17.26%	58
70 or older	11.23%	91	9.52%	32
Prefer not to answer	6.67%	54	9.52%	32
21-29	5.19%	42	4.76%	16
18-20	0.49%	4	0.30%	1
Under 18	0.0%	0	0.00%	0
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>336</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents fall within the 50-59 age range (20.12%), followed by 40-49 (19.51%), and 60-69 (18.89%) which generally mirrors the filtered results.

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses.

### 20. What is your race/ethnicity?

Methodology: Single select question.

	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
White/Caucasian	67.85%	553	61.01%	205
Prefer not to answer	13.25%	108	16.67%	56
Black or African American	11.04%	90	14.29%	48
Two or more races	3.56%	29	4.46%	15
Hispanic/Latino/Spanish	1.72%	14	1.79%	6
Other	1.47%	12	2.08%	7
Asian or Pacific Islander	0.98%	8	0.89%	3
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.12%	1	0.30%	1
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>336</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents were White (67.85%), followed by Black or African American (11.04%), and two or more races (3.56%), which generally mirrors the filtered results.

## 21. What is your primary language spoken at home?

**Methodology:** Single select question.

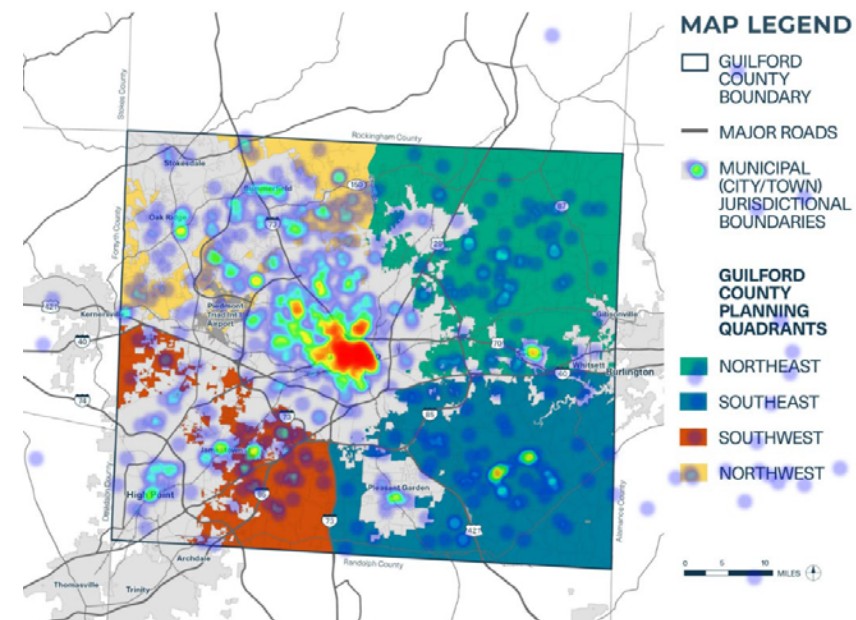
	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
English	92.88%	757	90.32%	308
Prefer not to answer	5.64%	46	7.33%	25
Spanish	0.86%	7	1.47%	5
Other languages	0.37%	3	0.59%	2
Other Indo-European languages	0.37%	1	0.29%	1
Asian and Pacific Islander languages	0.12%	1	0.00%	0
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>341</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents speak English at home (92.88%), followed by Spanish (0.86%). 5.64% of respondents identified as preferring not to answer, which generally mirrors the filtered results.

Findings highlighted in green represent the two highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the two lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all-participant percentages.

## 22. Where in the County do you live? (Click on the map to drop a pin on where you live within the County)

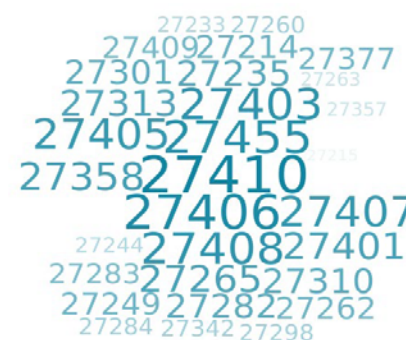
**Methodology:** Respondents clicked on the map to drop a pin where they live within the County



**Key Understanding:** Most respondents live in the central part of the County. The northwest, southwest, and southeast quadrants display higher levels of respondents than the northeast quadrants.

## 23. What is the zip code of where you live?

**Methodology:** Single select question.



**Key Understanding:** There were over 30 unique zip codes captured as part of the data set with the most predominant zip codes represented in the word cloud above.

## 24. What is the zip code of where you work?

**Methodology:** Single select question





**Key Understanding:** There were over 75 unique zip codes captured as part of the data set with the most predominant zip codes represented in the word cloud above.

### 25. How long have you lived in Guilford County?

**Methodology:** Single select question

	All Participant%	Count	Filtered %	Count
Over 20 years	56.43%	456	53.67%	183
11-20 years	16.08%	130	15.25%	52
1-5 years	11.88%	96	12.61%	43
6-10 years	11.26%	91	10.26%	35
Less than a year	2.59%	21	2.35%	8
I lived in Guilford County previously but no longer do	1.23%	10	2.64%	9
I do not live in Guilford County	0.49%	4	1.19%	4
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>341</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondents have lived in Guilford County for more than 20 years (56.43%), followed by 11-20 years (16.08%), and 1-5 years (11.88%) which generally mirrors the filtered results.

Findings highlighted in green represent the two highest findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the two lowest scoring results from participant responses. Findings highlighted in blue are intended to illustrate findings that have a higher score than the all participant percentages.

### 26. If you would like to be contacted, please share your email and/or phone number

**Methodology:** Optional open response.

**Key Understanding:** 156 respondents provided their email address, and 90 respondents provided their phone number.

### 27. Anything else you would like to be considered or any other comments?

**Methodology:** Open response question

Categories were determined based on common themes found in responses.

Common Response Themes	%	Count
General or non-applicable responses	19.04%	36
Politics and Taxes	14.81%	28
Growth	13.75%	26
Mobility	10.58%	20
Safety and crime	7.40%	14
Cost of living and housing affordability	7.40%	14
Education	7.40%	14
Economic diversity	4.23%	8
Environmental preservation, sustainability, and agricultural heritage	4.23%	8
Recreation	3.70%	7
Public health	3.17%	6
Diversity/inclusion and community culture	2.11%	4
Workforce retention	1.05%	2
Quality of life	1.05%	2
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>189</b>

**Key Understanding:** Most respondent's comments for consideration highlighted local politics and taxing (14.81%), followed by growth (13.75%), and mobility (10.58%).

Findings highlighted in green represent the three highest occurrence of topical findings from participant responses. Findings highlighted in red correspond with the three lowest scoring results from participant responses.

### 28. How did you hear about this survey?

**Methodology:** Single select question

	%	Count
Social media	37.62%	304
Email	22.52%	182
Other	16.96%	137
Word of mouth	14.98%	121
County website	7.92%	64
<b>Total survey respondents to this question</b>		<b>808</b>

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**Key Understanding:** Most respondents heard about the survey from social media (37.62%) and by email (22.52%).

Findings highlighted in green represent the highest occurrence of topical findings from participant responses.  
Findings highlighted in red correspond with the lowest scoring results from participant responses.

# FLUM - AREA PLANS CROSSWALK

Guilford County currently has Area Plans that include land use designations. In order to ensure clarity in administration of the Comprehensive Plan and those plans, the following tables identify how the current land use categories in the Area Plans relate to the categories in the Future Land Use Map (FLUM).

Area Plan	Land Uses	FLUM DESIGNATIONS																	
		Natural Area / Preserve	Working Farm / Agriculture	Open Space / Recreation	Conservation / Clustered Developments	Rural Living	Residential	Multi-Family Residential	Commercial	Civic / Education	Industrial / Innovation	Rural Cross Road	Neighborhood Center	Major Mixed Use Center	Regional Employment				
Airport	Low Density Residential						X												
	Mixed Density Residential							X											
	Mixed Use															X	X		
	Commercial								X										
	Nonresidential										X								
	Public Institutional Open Space								X										
Alamance Creek	AG Rural Residential		X				X												
	Conditional SFR						X												
	Rural Residential					X													
	Residential Single Family						X												
	Residential Multi Family							X											
	Light Commercial										X								
	Moderate Commercial								X										
	Heavy Commercial								X										
	Light Industrial										X								
	Heavy Industrial										X								
	Office								X										
	Public Institutional Open Space									X									
	Mixed Use														X	X	X		
Moderate Commercial Node														X	X				
Heart of Triad	Parks	X		X															
	Environmental Protected	X																	
	Private Open Space	X		X															
	Private Recreation	X		X															
	Rural Residential Agricultural		X			X													
	Low Density Residential						X												
	Medium Density Residential							X											
	Traditional Neighborhood Development						X												
	High Density Residential							X											
	Business Center															X	X		
	Business Support								X										
	Activity Center														X	X			

Area Plan	Land Uses	FLUM DESIGNATIONS																	
		Natural Area / Preserve	Working Farm / Agriculture	Open Space / Recreation	Conservation / Clustered Developments	Rural Living	Residential	Multi-Family Residential	Commercial	Civic / Education	Industrial / Innovation	Rural Cross Road	Neighborhood Center	Major Mixed Use Center	Regional Employment				
Liberty Road Woody Mill Road	Greenspace	X																	
	Commercial											X							
	Commercial/Office/Institution					X						X	X						
	Office/Institutional											X	X						
	Multi-Family Residential											X							
	Multi-Family Residential/Office/Institutional																X	X	
	Single-Family Residential										X								
Northeast Area	AG Rural Residential		X				X												
	Residential Single Family							X											
	Residential Multi Family								X										
	Light Commercial															X			
	Moderate Commercial											X							
	Heavy Commercial											X							
	Light Industrial													X					
	Heavy Industrial													X					
	Office												X						
	Public Institutional Open Space													X					
	Mixed Use															X	X		
Northern Lakes Area	AG Rural Residential		X				X												
	Residential Single Family							X											
	Light Commercial															X			
	Moderate Commercial											X							
	Light Industrial													X					
	Heavy Industrial													X					
	Public Institutional Open Space												X						
	Mixed Use																X	X	
	Light Commercial Node													X					
Moderate Commercial Node												X							
	Central Business District															X	X		

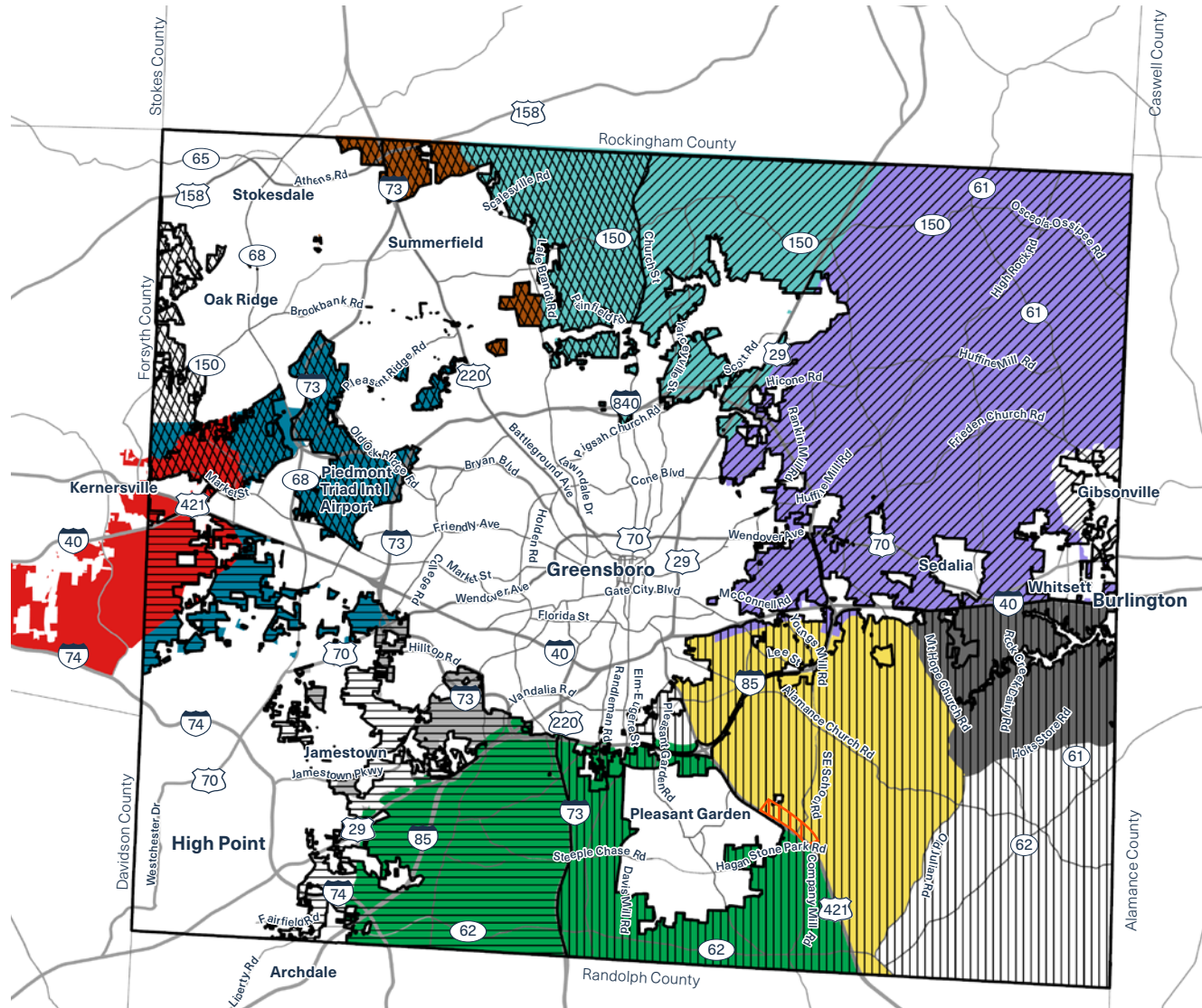
# FLUM - AREA PLANS CROSSWALK

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		FLUM DESIGNATIONS													
Area Plan	Land Uses	Natural Area / Preserve	Working Farm / Agriculture	Open Space / Recreation	Conservation / Clustered Developments	Rural Living	Residential	Multi-Family Residential	Commercial	Civic / Education	Industrial / Innovation	Rural Cross Road	Neighborhood Center	Major Mixed Use Center	Regional Employment
Northwest Area	AG Rural Residential	X			X										
	Residential Single Family					X									
	Moderate Commercial							X							
Rock Creek Area	AG Rural Residential	X			X										
	Residential Single Family					X									
	Residential Multi Family						X								
	Moderate Commercial							X							
	Light Industrial									X					
	Heavy Industrial									X					
	Public Institutional Open Space								X						
Southern Guilford	Rural Residential	X			X										
	Agricultural														
	Residential Single Family					X									
	Residential Multi Family						X								
	Light Commercial										X				
	Moderate Commercial							X							
	Light Industrial									X					
	Heavy Industrial									X					
	Public Institutional Open Space								X						
	Mixed Use											X	X		
	Light Commercial Node										X				
Moderate Commercial Node								X							
Central Business District											X	X			
Southwest Area	AG Rural Residential	X			X										
	Residential Single Family					X									
	Residential Multi Family						X								
	Moderate Commercial							X							
	Heavy Commercial							X							
	Light Industrial									X					
	Office							X							
Public Institutional Open Space								X							

# AREA PLANS AND QUADRANTS

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**MAP 31: AREA PLANS AND QUADRANTS**



□ COUNTY BOUNDARY

— MAJOR ROAD

**PLANNING AREA**

- Airport Area, 2008
- Alamance Creek Area, 2016
- Heart of the Triad Plan, 2006
- Northeast Area, 2016
- Northern Lakes Area, 2016
- Northwest Area, 2016

- Southern Area, 2016
- Southwest Area, 2016
- Rock Creek Area, 2016
- Liberty Road/Woody Mill Road Small Area Plan, 2006

**QUADRANT**

- Northeast
- Northwest
- Southeast
- Southwest

Source: Guilford County GIS, 2023

**DRAFT**

## Endnotes

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- 11 HUD Exchange 2019 Location Affordability Index
- 12 North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Annual Average Daily Traffic, 2022
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- 35 Wake County Housing Affordability and Community Revitalization
- 36 Community Benefits Agreements Database, Columbia Law School
- 37 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant Program
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- 45 Piedmont Triad Partnership, <https://www.piedmonttriadnc.com/>
- 46 Publix Newsroom, <https://corporate.publix.com/newsroom/news-stories/governor-cooper-announces-up-to-1000-new-jobs-in-guilford-county>
- 47 Guilford Works, <https://guilfordworks.org/news-information/workforcedata/labor-market-overview/>
- 48 American Planning Association, <https://www.planning.org/divisions/planningandlaw/propertytopics.htm#Tax>
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