

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
EDGECOMBE COUNTY, NC
2014 – 2034



History



Industry



Education



Agriculture



Resources



Health



Crossroads



Lifestyle



Community

Recommended by the Planning Board May 2014
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INTRODUCTION

Great communities can happen without planning, but the community faces better prospects of success if it has engaged in planning for the future. Some might say that the most important function of a comprehensive plan is that it is a sales pitch -- one meant to inspire the community to adjust its priorities and seek certain outcomes.

Plan recommendations should be feasible, and planners preparing plans must avoid proposing grandiose visions that can never be implemented; yet it is expected that planners will still dream of achieving big things in the future that might seem improbable today.

Great comprehensive plans are built on great community involvement. However, multiple committees and countless community meetings do not necessarily constitute great community involvement. It is the quality, not quantity of public input that is important. In preparing the comprehensive plan, planners need to avoid designing solutions that the planners think are best. Rather, the plan should seek those solutions the community asks for.

The key to a good comprehensive plan in a given community is how much change is seen on the ground. A good comprehensive plan focuses on impact, not artwork. In producing a comprehensive plan, planners and the community share responsibility for creating full potential for positive change. A comprehensive plan consumes a great deal of attention and energy in a community for a brief period of time, but the adopted product is sometimes cast aside and forgotten. Some comprehensive plans sit on a bookshelf in the planner's office, gathering dust. The comprehensive plan should be more than just a symbol of an effort to improve the community. It needs to include coherent strategies and solutions for a better future.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A comprehensive plan is a long-range (usually 20-year) guide to future community building and improvement, adopted by the local governing body. A comprehensive plan considers several different facets of community planning in a single, unified document, crafted so that each element or component of the comprehensive plan is consistent with one another.

Frequently, local governments prepare and adopt many different types of plans (e.g., transportation) but they exist as stand-alone, independent creations that may not relate well to other plans. A comprehensive plan recognizes and incorporates these "functional" plans into the comprehensive plan or adopts those plans by reference.

Cities, towns and counties in North Carolina are encouraged but not required (except in the Coastal Area Management Act jurisdiction) to prepare and adopt comprehensive plans or land use plans. There are no statewide standards for preparing comprehensive plans in North Carolina. However, a guidebook on local comprehensive planning for healthy communities was released by the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Community Assistance Division, in 2014 which provides some suggestions which are integrated in the county's comprehensive plan. That guidebook finds that comprehensive plans usually address the following: population; housing; economic development; natural and historic resources; land use; community facilities

and services (including especially transportation); and intergovernmental coordination. The comprehensive plan also articulates goals, policies, and objectives to be accomplished in the future. Comprehensive plans provide a detailed implementation program which specifies actions that will be undertaken during the five or six years following adoption of the comprehensive plan.

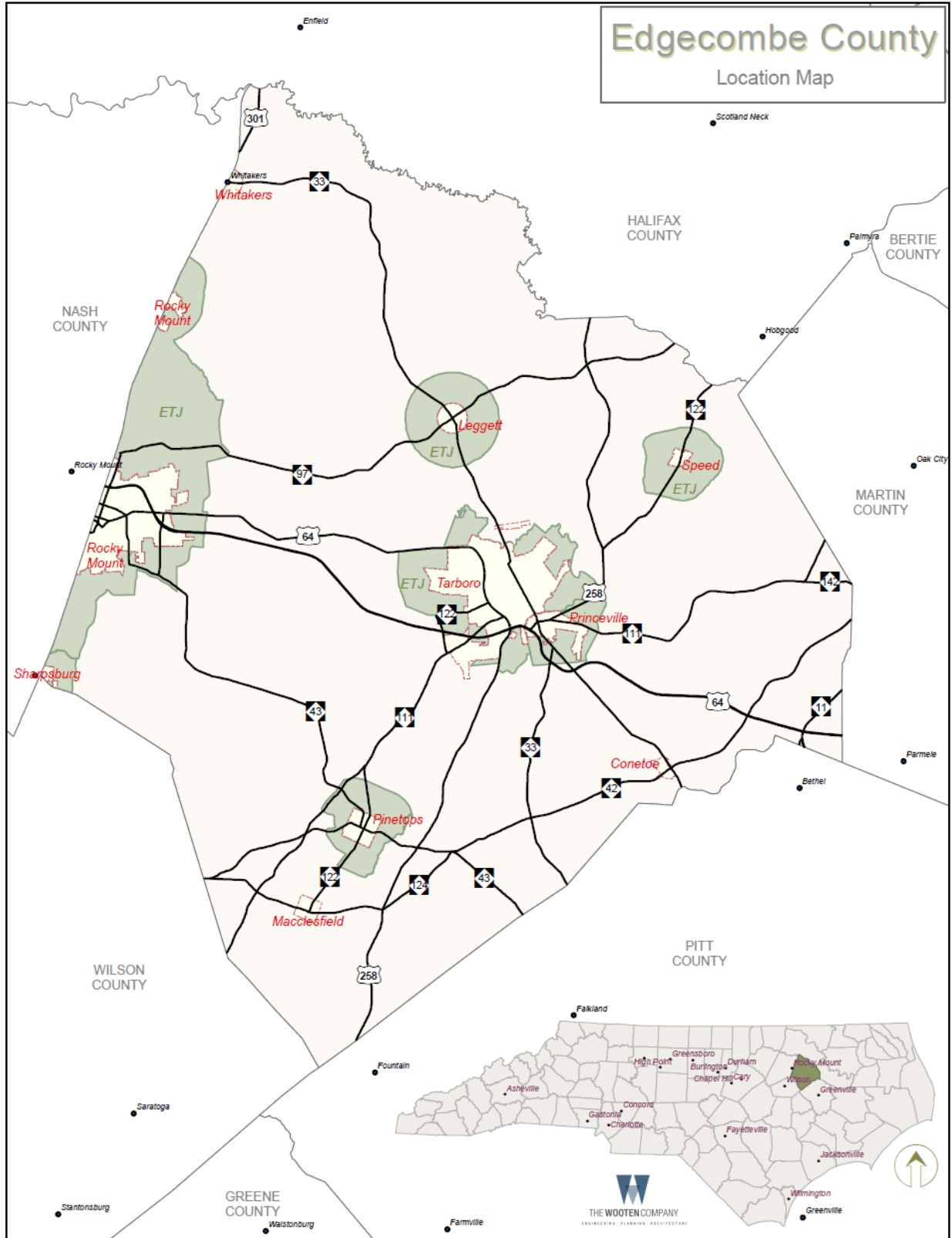
The comprehensive plan is used by the local government as a guide to the programs, regulations, capital improvements and other actions that are needed to improve the community and address issues it is likely to confront. It does not carry any weight of law; however, in North Carolina, city and county zoning regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan; and when considering zoning amendments, a statement describing whether the action is consistent with an adopted comprehensive plan and other officially adopted plan must be approved (NC Gen. Stat. § 160A-383 and § 153A-341, respectively).

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation consisted of meetings held during 2014 to ascertain issues to be addressed in the comprehensive plan, as well as a community survey. Results from the survey are included in an appendix to this comprehensive plan. The planning process relied on extensive prior public participation processes and steering committees, which have addressed land development, transportation, community health assessment, and many other topics.



Public Meeting in Tarboro on the Comprehensive Plan Update



Edgecombe County and Municipalities

CHAPTER 1 POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS

This chapter provides an inventory and analysis of past and present population and household characteristics. An understanding of population change and general population characteristics is an important step in completing a comprehensive plan. Analyzing where the people are, in what amounts and composition, and at what rates they are expected to increase or decrease in number helps to determine the changes in demand for public facilities, housing, and employment opportunities.

TOTAL POPULATION

County Population Trends

Edgecombe County's population has declined in past decades, but from 2000 to 2010, it experienced a slight net positive population growth (Table 1.1).

**Table 1.1
Total Population 1990, 2000, and 2010 and Decennial Percent Change
Edgecombe County**

Jurisdiction	1990	2000	Percent Change, 1990-2000	2010	Percent Change, 2000-2010
Edgecombe County	56,558	55,606	-1.7%	56,552	+1.7%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Census 1990, Summary Table File 1; Census 2000 Summary File 1, Table P1; 2010 Census.

Current Estimates of Total Population

**Table 1.2
Population Estimates, 2010 and 2012
Edgecombe County and Municipalities**

Jurisdiction	2010 Population Estimate	2012 Population Estimate	Net Change, 2010-2012	% Change, 2010-2012
Conetoe	294	290	-4	-1.3
Leggett	60	59	-1	-1.67
Macclesfield	471	465	-6	-1.2
Pinetops	1,374	1,351	-23	-1.67
Princeville	2,082	2,125	43	2.07
Rocky Mount (part)	17,527	17,068	-459	-2.62
Sharpsburg (part)	209	206	-3	-1.44
Speed	80	79	-1	-1.25
Tarboro	11,415	11,255	-160	-1.4
Whitakers (part)	402	394	-8	-1.99
Edgecombe County	56,552	56,039	-513	-0.9

Source: July 2012 Municipal Estimates by County and 2012 Certified County Population Estimates, North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management.

As indicated in Table 1.2, Edgecombe County's 2012 total population estimate provided by the state reflects a decrease of more than 500 persons from the 2010 decennial census. Almost all of the population decline has occurred within the Edgecombe County portion of the City of Rocky Mount. Tarboro has also witnessed a significant population decrease from 2010 to 2012. Since declines have occurred in all towns in the county except Princeville, this appears to mean a slight population increase in unincorporated areas of the county from 2010 to 2012. Although the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management shows a decrease in total population from 2010 to 2012, the North Carolina Department of Commerce's economic development division indicates that Edgecombe County's total population in 2013 was 56,790, slightly above the 2010 Decennial Census County and some 700 persons above the 2012 certified estimate of the Office of State Budget and Management.¹

POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY AGE

In 2011, the North Carolina State Office of Management and Budget projected that Edgecombe County's population would increase by 6,147 people from 2010 to 2030. Those projections also indicated that from 2010 to 2020, the county's population was expected to increase by 3,672 people. However, 2012 certified projections by the same agency now show that Edgecombe County's total population will decrease from 2010 to 2030, as described further below. The economic development division also indicates that Edgecombe County's total population in 2018 will be 56,743, or about 1,400 more persons than the Office of Management and Budget projects for the total county population in the year 2020.

The Significance of Age

Age is the single most important dimension of the population. There can be vast differences in the needs of children versus the elderly. Household income varies with age of householders. Age has a relationship to the labor force – workers include the population ages 16 years and over through retirement age and sometimes beyond. Age has important relationships to housing and can help predict likely market trends. The relationship of the age of population to the needs for community facilities and services is also very important. For instance, a high percentage of seniors often will translate into a need for health care and personal care homes. On the other hand, a town with declining youth populations signals an important decrease in demand for schools and day care centers.

Table 1.3 indicates current and projected countywide population by age cohort for 2000 through 2030 in Edgecombe County.

¹ Thrive in North Carolina, Edgecombe County, NC Profile, March 2014, North Carolina Department of Commerce, Economic Development Division.

**Table 1.3
Population Projections by Age Cohort, 2000-2030
Edgecombe County**

Age Group	2000	%	2010	%	2020	%	2030	%
0-4	3,754	6.8%	3,706	6.6%	2,468	4.5%	2,467	4.5%
5-9	4,346	7.8%	3,769	6.7%	2,953	5.3%	2,489	4.6%
10-14	4,442	8.0%	3,791	6.7%	3,740	6.8%	2,598	4.8%
15-19	4,025	7.2%	4,077	7.2%	3,781	6.8%	3,093	5.7%
20-24	3,308	5.9%	3,459	6.1%	3,538	6.4%	3,632	6.7%
25-34	6,983	12.5%	6,504	11.5%	7,129	12.9%	7,493	13.8%
35-44	8,790	15.8%	6,775	12.0%	6,433	11.6%	7,360	13.5%
45-54	7,931	14.3%	8,550	15.1%	6,551	11.8%	6,483	11.9%
55-59	2,670	4.8%	4,254	7.5%	3,898	7.1%	3,071	5.6%
60-64	2,394	4.3%	3,563	6.3%	3,979	7.2%	3,205	5.9%
65-74	3,844	6.9%	4,558	8.0%	6,645	12.0%	6,757	12.4%
75-84	2,376	4.3%	2,594	4.5%	3,107	5.6%	4,524	8.3%
85+	733	1.4%	952	1.7%	1,085	2.0%	1,305	2.3%
TOTAL	55,606	100%	56,552	100%	55,307	100%	54,477	100%

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Census 2000 Summary File 1 Table P12; 2010 Census. 2020 and 2030 Data from NC Office of State Budget and Management.

Senior Population (65 and Over)

In the year 2000, 12.6% of Edgecombe County’s total population consisted of seniors (65+). The percentage of seniors (65+) increased to 14.2% of the total population in 2010, for a net addition of 1,151 seniors from 2000 to 2010.

According to state population projections, the county’s senior population as a percentage of total population will increase to 19.6% in 2020 and 23.0% in 2030. This means that between 2010 and 2030, Edgecombe County will increase its senior population by 4,482 persons, or a 55.3% increase from 2010 to 2030. A larger senior population in Edgecombe County will signal increased demand for senior services, including more and larger senior centers. The increasing elderly population will also signal a change in demand for housing, as seniors may desire to move to housing units that are more senior friendly (i.e., smaller units with few or no yard maintenance requirements and accessible to the disabled).

Up and Coming Seniors (55 to 64 Year Olds)

As a percentage of the total population, this age cohort will increase from 2010 to 2020 but then decline from 2020 to 2030, according to state population projections for Edgecombe County.

Prime Working Age (25 to 54 Year Olds)

People between the ages of 25 to 54 could be considered the prime or a primary working age group. This age group comprised 42.6% of the total county population in 2000 and 38.6% in 2010. According to state population projections, this age group will further decline as a

percentage of total county population to 36.3% in 2020 but then increase to 39.2% in the year 2030.

Youth and Young Adults (0 to 24 Year Olds)

The youth and young adult population can be defined broadly to include infants, teenagers, and young adults. In today’s economy, some of the 20 to 24-year olds may be employed, but unemployment remains generally higher for that age group than the population as a whole. The vast majority of people in this age group (except for infants) are education-age population (from elementary school to college to graduate student).

In 2000 in Edgecombe County, the youth and young adult population (0 to 24 years) constituted 35.7% of the total population, and by 2010, that proportion was 33.3%. According to state projections, this age grouping (0 to 24 years) will decline to 29.8% of the total county population in 2020 and 26.3% in 2030. The 10 to 19 year old grouping will also witness decreases from 2010 to 2030.

The implications for public school facilities are significant. There will be a projected decrease from 2010 to 2030 of 1,280 persons living in the county ages 5 to 9, suggesting that class sizes in elementary school will decline and there may be future pressure to close one or more elementary schools during the planning horizon. The decline in 10 to 19 year olds is projected to be even more substantial, with a net loss of 2,177 persons of this age group from 2010 to 2030. This, too, signals a huge decline in middle and high school class sizes and possibly a need to close one or more elderly or high schools in the county.

POPULATION BY RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN

Tables 1.4 and 1.5 show changes in Edgecombe County’s population from 2000 to 2010 with regard to Hispanic origin and race, respectively. Note that Hispanic origin is not a race.

**Table 1.4
Hispanic or Latino Population, 2000 and 2010
Edgecombe County**

Origin	2000	%	2010	%
Not Hispanic	54,052	97.2%	54,448	96.3%
Hispanic or Latino	1,554	2.8%	2,104	3.7%
Total Population	55,606	100%	56,552	100%

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Census 2000 Summary File 1, Table P4; 2010 Census.

The number of persons in Edgecombe County that are of Hispanic or Latino origin have increased during the last decade, but not dramatically. The racial composition of the population in Edgecombe County has not changed significantly either. The White and Black or African American populations increased slightly in absolute terms but stayed virtually the same percent of the total population in 2010. Edgecombe County has witnessed an increase of more than 1,000 persons of “other races” in the 2000s.

**Table 1.5
Racial Composition of the Population, 2000 and 2010
Edgecombe County**

Race	2000	%	2010	%
White	21,838	39.3%	21,929	38.8%
Black or African American	31,790	57.5%	32,435	57.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	92	0.1%	169	0.3%
Asian	62	0.1%	114	0.2%
Other race	18	0.0%	1,326	2.4%
Two or more races	1,806	3.0%	579	1.0%
Total	55,606	100%	56,552	100%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Census 2000 Summary File 1, Table P3; Census 2010.

HOUSEHOLD AND GROUP QUARTERS POPULATION

Table 1.6 provides data regarding the household and group quarters population in 2000 and 2010 in Edgecombe County. The household population in Edgecombe County has increased from 2000 to 2010 but by only 638 persons. A group quarters is a place where people live or stay, in a group living arrangement, that is owned or managed by an entity or organization providing housing and/or services for the residents. The group quarters population increased by 308 persons during the last decade. As a percentage of total population, the group quarters population increased from 2.0 percent to 2.5 percent. While that change in percentage may seem to be insignificant it is instructive to note that the group quarters population increase comprised almost one-third (32.6 percent) of the total population increase in Edgecombe County from 2000 to 2010. That observation is particularly important when projecting household population needs. One might tend to overestimate housing demands if the significant group quarters population is not taken into account.

**Table 1.6
Household and Group Quarters Populations, 2000 and 2010
Edgecombe County**

Type of Population	2000	%	2010	%
Household Population	54,484	98.0%	55,122	97.5%
Group Quarters Population	1,122	2.0%	1,430	2.5%
Total Population	55,606	100%	56,552	100%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Census 2000 Summary File 1 Table P1, P16, P37. U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

TYPES OF GROUP QUARTERS RESIDENTS

Table 1.7 shows details for the group quarters population in Edgecombe County in 2010. Edgecombe County in 2010 did not have any people living in college/university student housing or in military quarters. “Other non-institutional facilities” are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau

as emergency and transitional shelters (with sleeping facilities) for people experiencing homelessness.

**Table 1.7
Types of Group Quarters Residents, 2010
Edgecombe County**

Type of Group Quarters	2010 Total Persons	% of 2010 Total Group Quarters Population	% of Total Population
Adult Correctional Facilities	832	58.2%	1.5%
Juvenile Facilities	25	1.7%	0.0%
Nursing and Skilled Nursing Facilities	366	25.6%	0.6%
Other Non-institutional Facilities	207	14.5%	0.4%
All Group Quarters	1,430	100%	2.5%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2010 Census, SF 1.

HOUSEHOLDS AND HOUSEHOLD TYPES

Households can be classified as family and non-family. Table 1.8 shows the total number of households and family households in Edgecombe County in 2000 and 2010. The total number of households in Edgecombe County increased by 1,288 from 2000 to 2010. However, it is very significant to note that the number of family households increased by only 30 in absolute terms and declined in percentage terms during the decade. The growth in households were therefore almost entirely comprised of “non-family” households, which increased by 1,258 during the decade. These trends in households are important from the perspective of housing needs – since non-family households are less likely to have children and are very likely to be smaller in terms of average household size than family households, they are likely to signal a change in housing demand from suburban, single-family dwellings on suburban lots to somewhat smaller sized homes in more urban areas, including multi-family residential dwelling types.

**Table 1.8
Households by Type of Household, 2000 and 2010
Edgecombe County**

Households By Type	2000	%	2010	%
Family Households	14,812	72.6%	14,842	68.5%
Nonfamily Households	5,580	27.4%	6,838	31.5%
Total Households	20,392	100%	21,680	100%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Census 2000, Summary File 1, Table P26; 2010 Census.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

The average household size for Edgecombe County households in 2010 was 2.54 persons, and the average family size was 3.08 persons (2010 Census, SF 1, Table QT-P11). Table 1.9 shows average household sizes for owner-occupied and renter-occupied households in 2000 and 2010 for Edgecombe County and the State of North Carolina as a whole.

Table 1.9
Average Household Size by Tenure 2000 and 2010
Edgecombe County and State of North Carolina
(Persons per Unit, Occupied Housing Units)

Average Household Size by Tenure	Edgecombe County		North Carolina	
	2000	2010	2000	2010
Persons per Unit, Owner-Occupied Housing Units	2.66	2.52	2.56	2.52
Person per Unit, Renter Occupied Housing Units	2.69	2.58	2.43	2.40

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census, Summary File 3, Table H18; 2010 Census.

In Edgecombe County, the average household size for owner-occupied housing units was higher than the state in 2000, but it decreased to the state average in 2010. That decline is not surprising in light of the changes to the age composition of the population reviewed earlier. The average household size for renter-occupied households also decreased significantly from 2000 to 2010 in Edgecombe County, as shown in Table 1.9. Note that the average household size for renter-occupied households in Edgecombe County in 2010 is significantly higher than that for the state as a whole. Furthermore, it is somewhat unusual to find, as is the case in Edgecombe County, that the renter-occupied average household size is higher than the average household size for owner-occupied housing units. That is an important implication that needs to be factored into housing needs assessments – if that trend continues into the future, owner-occupied units in Edgecombe County will have smaller households than renter-occupied housing units.

Detailed data from the 2010 census with respect to the number of persons in households were released for North Carolina on June 30, 2011. Table 1.10 shows households by number of persons in the household in Edgecombe County in 2000 and 2010. The major trend is the increase in number of small (1 and 2 person) households since 2000. Edgecombe County between 2000 and 2010 gained 1,288 total households, but the number of two-person households increased by 1,343.

Table 1.10
Households by Number of Persons per Household, 2000 and 2010
Edgecombe County

Household by Number of Persons	2000	%	2010	%	2000-2010 Change
1-person household	5,580	27.0%	5,877	27.1%	+297
2-person household	5,708	28.0%	7,051	32.5%	+1,343
3-person household	3,893	19.0%	3,842	17.7%	-51
4-person household	2,895	14.0%	2,677	12.3%	-218
5-person household	1,374	7.0%	1,256	5.8%	-118
6-person household	532	3.0%	572	2.6%	+40
7-or-more person household	410	2.0%	405	2.0%	-5
Total households	20,392	100%	21,680	100%	+1,288

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Census 2000 Summary File 1, Table P26; Census 2010 Summary File 1, Table P28.

INCOME

Income data are important when considering housing affordability and needs. Table 1.11 provides a comparison of per capita income for residents of Edgecombe County, the state, and the nation for selected years.

**Table 1.11
Comparison of Per Capita Income 2000, 2005-09, and 2007-09
County, State, and Nation**

Jurisdiction	2000	% of Nation	2005-09	% of Nation	2007-09	% of Nation
Edgecombe County	\$14,435	66.9%	\$16,417	60.7%	\$17,027	63.1%
North Carolina	\$20,307	94.1%	\$24,547	90.8%	\$24,588	91.0%
United States	\$21,587	100%	\$27,041	100%	\$27,001	100%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Census 2000 Summary File 3, Table P82; 2005-2009 American Community Survey, Table B19301; 2007-2009 American Community Survey, Table B19301.

Edgecombe County’s per capita income was only two-thirds that of the nation as a whole in 2000 and has declined below two-thirds of the nation’s per capita income in recent estimates. It is also instructive to note that per capita incomes have not risen between the 2005-09 and 2007-09 estimates for the nation as a whole. Again, these figures have wide margins of error and so they should be interpreted with caution.

Table 1.12 provides median income data for Edgecombe County per the 2000 Decennial Census and for the recent estimates reporting periods. Note that 2010 income data (reported for the year 2009) have not yet been published by the U.S. Census Bureau. The data in Table 1.12 show that some increases have occurred in median family incomes in Edgecombe County. However, note that non-family households, which comprise a minority of all households but a growing share of total households in Edgecombe County, have experienced decreases in incomes since 2000. That is also significant in terms of the housing needs assessment, suggesting that existing non-family households are finding it more difficult to make ends meet with less income.

**Table 1.12
Median Income in 2000, 2005-09, 2007-09, and 2009
Edgecombe County**

Income	2000	2005-09	2007-09	2009
Median Family	\$35,902	\$39,059	\$40,408	\$39,059
Median Nonfamily Household	\$17,059	\$15,093	\$15,287	\$15,093
Median Household	\$30,983	\$30,734	\$32,082	\$30,734

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, Summary File 3, Table P77, P80, and P53; 2005-2009 American Community Survey, Tables B19113, B19201, and B19013; 2007-2009 American Community Survey Tables B19202 and B19113; 2009 American Community Survey, Tables B19113, B19202, and B19013.

Table 1.13 compares incomes of Edgecombe County residents as a whole with residents of the urbanized areas in the county: Rocky Mount (Edgecombe County portion), Princeville, and Tarboro. From these data, it is evident that by far the lowest incomes are for residents of the Town of Princeville. Residents in the Edgecombe County portion of the City of Rocky Mount are also substantially below incomes for the county as a whole. Tarboro has considerable higher incomes than the county as a whole.

**Table 1.13
Comparison of Incomes, 2009
Edgecombe County and Selected Urban Areas**

Income	Edgecombe County	City of Rocky Mount in Edgecombe County	Town of Princeville	Town of Tarboro
Median Family	\$39,059	\$29,687	\$25,898	\$46,426
Median Nonfamily Household	\$15,093	\$12,775	\$9,549	\$21,813
Median Household	\$30,734	\$23,083	\$19,412	\$34,628
Per Capita	\$16,417	\$12,337	\$11,554	\$20,766

Source: American Community Survey, 2009 1-Year Estimates, Various Tables.

Table 1.14 shows the number of households by income grouping in 1999 and for the 2005-2009 5-year estimates reporting period.

**Table 1.14
Number of Households by Income Grouping, 1999 and 2005-09
Edgecombe County**

Income Grouping in 1999	1999		2005-09	
	Households	Percent of Total Households	Households	Percent of Total Households
Less than \$10,000	3,327	16.4%	3,598	16.4%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1,587	7.8%	2,121	9.6%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	1,883	9.2%	1,814	8.3%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	1,567	7.7%	1,735	7.9%
\$25,000 to \$29,999	1,496	7.3%	1,429	6.5%
\$30,000 to \$34,999	1,476	7.2%	1,459	6.6%
\$35,000 to \$39,999	1,506	7.4%	1,047	4.8%
\$40,000 to \$44,999	1,238	6.1%	1,156	5.3%
\$45,000 to \$49,999	1,005	4.9%	931	4.2%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	1,754	8.6%	1,803	8.3%
\$60,000 to \$74,999	1,566	7.7%	1,796	8.2%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	1,158	5.7%	1,631	7.4%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	380	1.9%	762	3.5%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	176	0.8%	326	1.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	159	0.7%	233	1.1%
\$200,000 or more	134	0.6%	80	0.4%
Total Households	20,412	100%	21,921	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, SF 3, Table P52; 2005-2009 American Community Survey, Table B19001.

The data in Table 1.14 should be interpreted with caution since the 2005-09 data are estimates with wide margins of error. Of immediate significance with regard to housing needs is the increasing number of household with incomes of less than \$30,000. In 1999, Edgecombe County had 9,860 households (almost half the total households, or 48 percent) with incomes of less than \$30,000. As of the 2005-2009 estimates reporting period, the number of households with incomes of less than \$30,000 was 10,697 (48.8 percent of total households), constituting an increase of 837 households below the \$30,000 household income threshold. That observation also has major implications for the housing needs assessment – the need for affordable housing is definitely on the increase in Edgecombe County.

POVERTY STATUS

Table 1.15 provides poverty statistics for individual in Edgecombe County as of 2000 (1999 reported income) and for two later periods. The 2013 Community Health Assessment Executive Summary found that “the percentage of Edgecombe County residents below the poverty level has remained relatively stable since 2005, but remains at 23.6 percent, with the state at 17.2 percent.” However, based on a comparison of the 2007-2009 3-year estimates and the 2000 Decennial Census, the number of persons below poverty level has increased in Edgecombe County by 1,461 persons; this represents a 13.7 percent increase in total persons in poverty in Edgecombe County. Recall that the high margins of error in the estimates published by the American Community Survey would suggest these figures should be interpreted with caution. Again, however, the implications for the housing needs assessment are clear – it is likely that an increase in subsidized housing will be needed.

**Table 1.15
Persons below Poverty Level by Age Group in 2000, 2005-09 and 2007-2009
Edgecombe County**

Age Group	2000		2005-09		2007-09	
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
Under 5 years	1,202	11.2%	1,692	17.5%	1,953	16.0%
5 years	294	2.8%	319	3.3%	389	3.2%
6 to 11 years	1,303	12.2%	1,481	15.3%	1,696	14.0%
12 to 17 years	1,346	12.6%	1,450	15.1%	1,005	8.3%
18 to 64 years	5,290	49.5%	3,741	38.8%	6,254	51.5%
65 to 74 years	608	5.7%	458	4.8%	402	3.3%
75 years and over	640	6.0%	501	5.2%	445	3.7%
Total persons with income below poverty level	10,683	100%	9,642	100%	12,144	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, SF 3, Table P87; 2005-2009 American Community Survey, Table B17001; American Community Survey 2007-2009 Table B17001.

SOURCES OF INCOME

The source of income can be important in considering housing needs and public welfare requirements. Table 1.16 provides the sources of income for Edgecombe County households as of 2000 and two recent estimates reporting periods.

Table 1.16
Sources of Household Income, 1999, 2005-09 and 2007-2009
Edgecombe County

Source of Household Income	1999		2005-09		2007-09	
	Number of Households	% Total	Number of Households	% Total	Number of Households	% Total
With earnings	15,794	33.1%	16,233	34.9%	16,317	34.8%
With wage or salary income	15,375	32.2%	15,686	33.7%	15,855	33.9%
With self-employment income	1,691	3.5%	1,536	3.3%	1,264	2.7%
Interest, dividends, or net rental income	3,621	7.6%	2,196	4.8%	2,165	4.6%
Social security income	6,182	12.9%	6,726	14.5%	7,014	15.0%
Public assistance income	1,436	3.0%	621	1.3%	538	1.1%
Retirement income	3,655	7.7%	3,487	7.5%	3,695	7.9%
Total households	47,754	100%	46,485	100%	46,848	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, Summary File 3, Tables P58, P59, P60, P61, P62, P63, P64, and P65; 2005-2009 American Community Survey, Tables B19052, B19053, B19054, B19055, B19057, and B19058; American Community Survey 2007-2009, Tables B19051, B19052, B19053, B19054, B19055, B19057, B19059.

Data in Table 1.16 show that the percentage of households with earnings has increased slightly since 2000 (1999 incomes reported). The number of households with “public assistance” income seems to have fallen dramatically. The data in Table 1.16 also show, however, a spike in the number of households with social security income (+832) between 1999 and the 2007-2009 estimates. The number of households with retirement income appears to be relatively stable, and households with self-employment income have declined moderately. The 2013 Community Health Assessment Executive Summary found that “Edgecombe County has a disproportionate percentage of households receiving food stamps benefits compared to North Carolina. This percentage has markedly increased from 17.9 percent in the 2005-2007 time period to 28 percent in the 2009-2011 time period.”

EDUCATION

Educational attainment is a strong indicator of a community’s economic vitality and stability. Higher educational achievement levels lead to more employment opportunities and higher paying jobs and a general overall improvement in the standard of living in the community. A sound, successful public and public/private higher education system is often cited as a key component in measuring quality of life and overall economic vitality of a community (Source: 2007 Land Development Plan). The following assessment was provided in the Community Health Assessment Executive Summary (2013) for the education of the Edgecombe County population.

According to the 2009-2011 three-year estimates, 20.5% of the population have not completed high school or received an equivalency diploma, compared to 15.5% of North Carolina adults.² Edgecombe County has a much lower percentage of adults who report having a bachelor’s

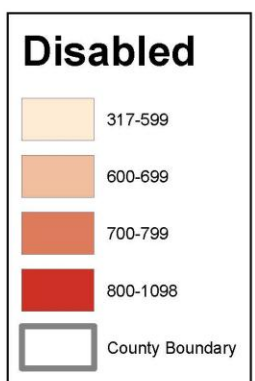
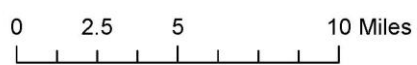
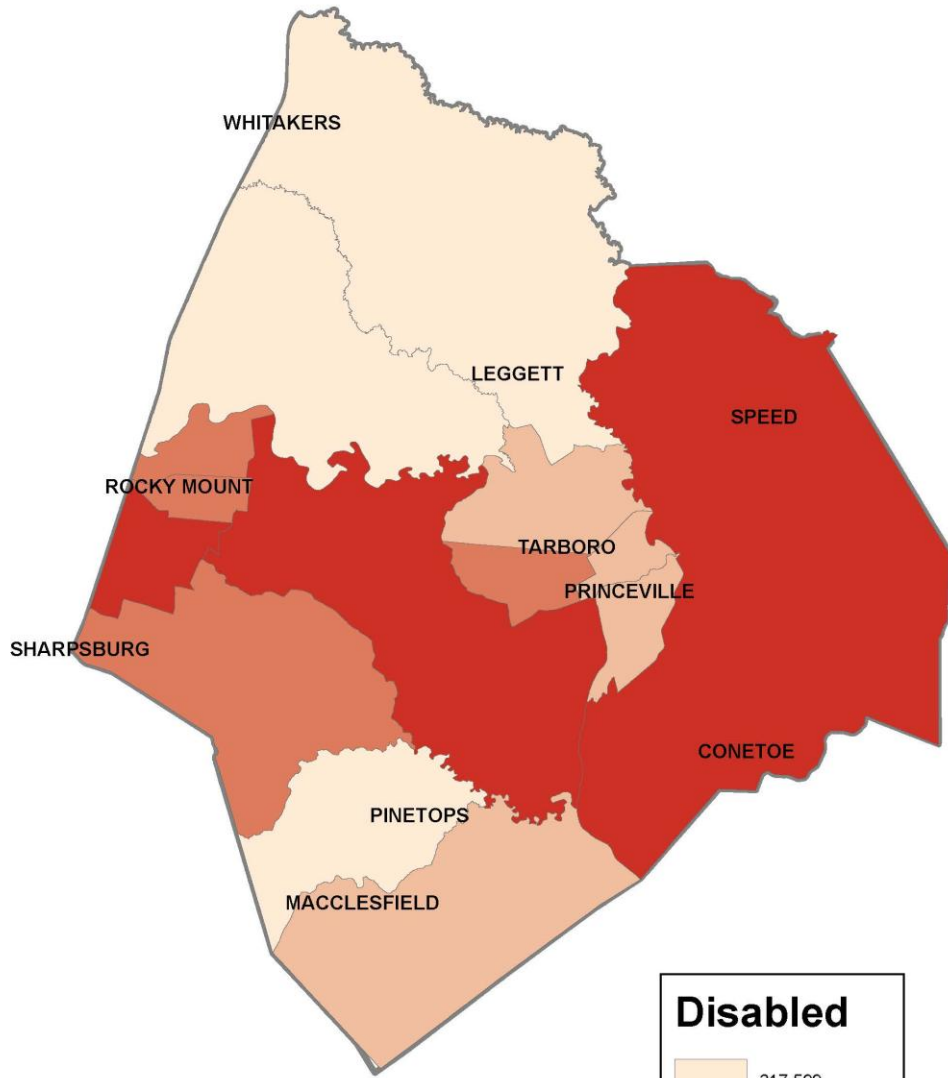
² The North Carolina Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Division, in its County Profile (March 2014) shows similar percentages for 2011.

degree or higher (10.5%) than the state (26.6%). While the dropout rate in Edgecombe County has decreased from 6.83 to 4.81 per thousand students in this time period, the 2011-2012 estimate for Edgecombe County (4.81) remains higher than North Carolina (3.01). Edgecombe County high school graduation rates are the highest that they have been in the last five school years at 79.8%. This positive trend represents a dramatic increase from the 2007-2008 (59.2) and 2008-2009 (58.2) percentages. Edgecombe County has successfully closed the gap with the high school graduation percentages of North Carolina, which was 80.2 percent in the 2011-2012 school year. However, Edgecombe County average SAT scores have remained lower than North Carolina, with the average SAT scores in 2012 being 876 and 997, respectively (Source: Community Health Assessment Executive Summary (2013)).

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS ANALYSIS

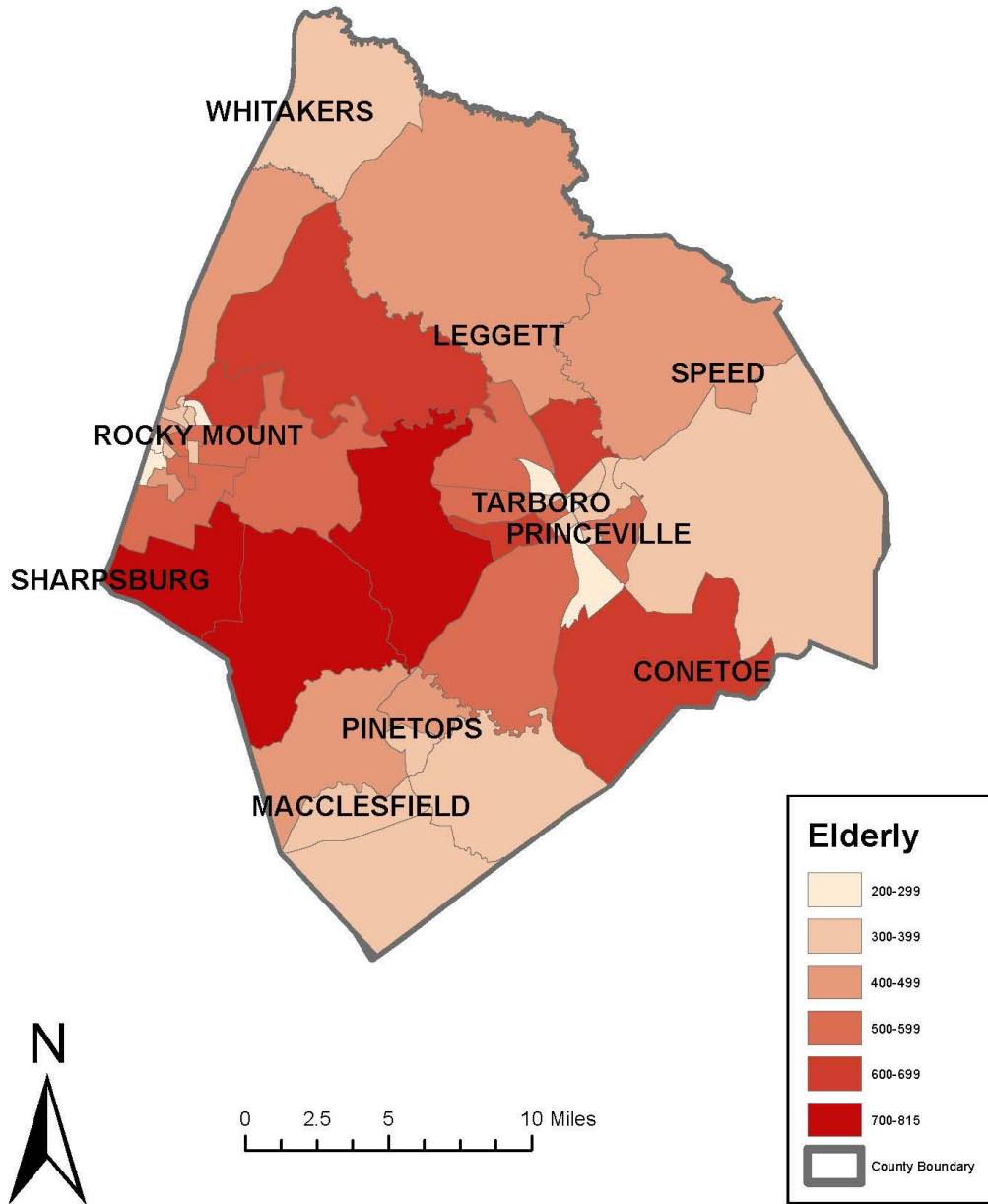
As a part of the comprehensive planning process, the distribution of the disabled, elderly, and minority populations in Edgecombe County was examined based on census tracts and census block groups. Maps of these population distributions are shown on the following pages. These maps reveal that there is no consistent pattern of concentration of these variables in Edgecombe County. The largest numbers of disabled are spread throughout the central and eastern portions of the county. These do not correspond with census block groups containing the largest numbers of elderly persons. Similarly, disabled and elderly population concentrations are not the same as minority population concentrations. Given this analysis, no recommendations are made with regard to the targeting of potentially vulnerable population segments within Edgecombe County.

Disabled Population by Census Tract



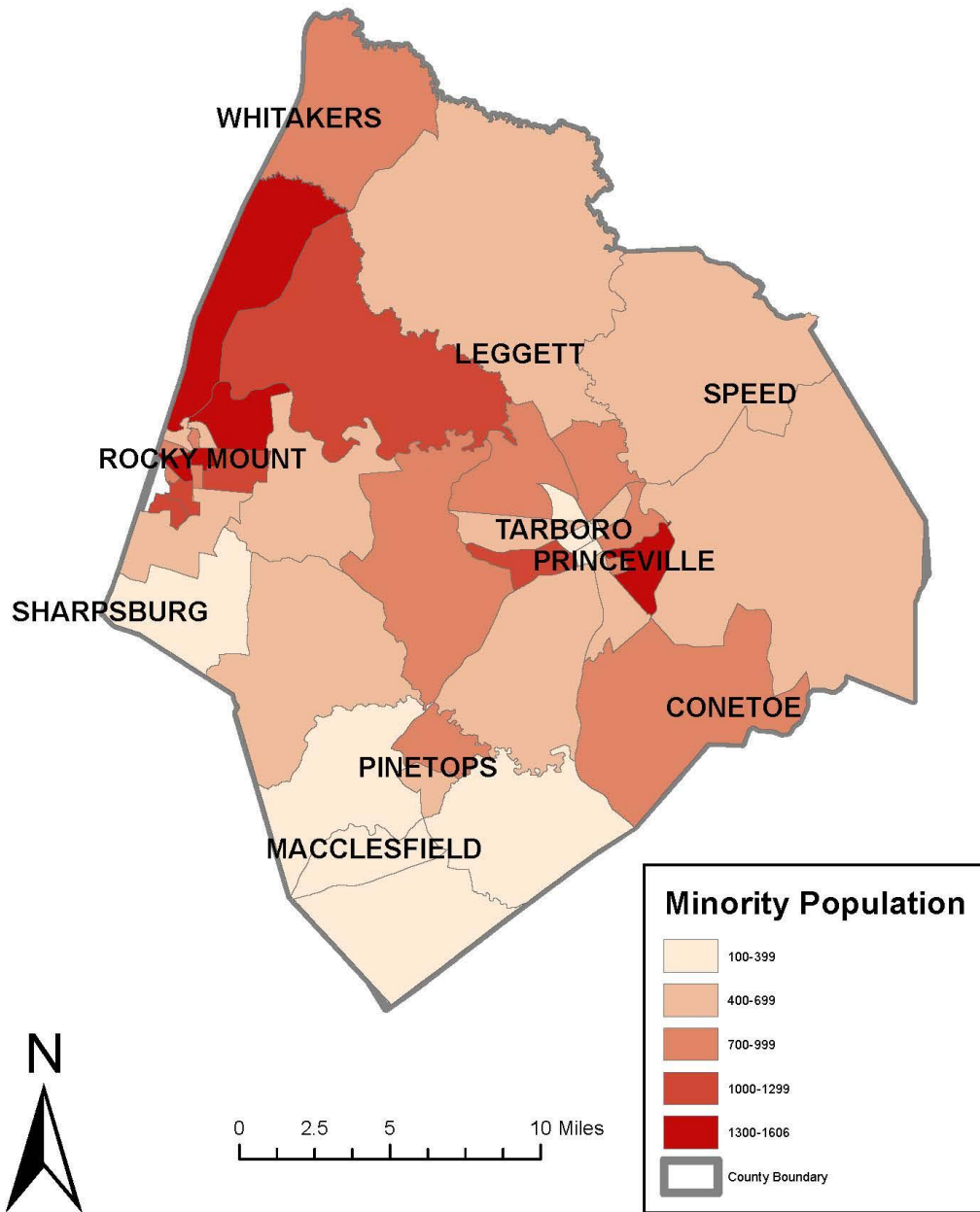
Author: Bradleigh Sceivour
Data Source: 2010 Census

Elderly Population by Census Block Group



Author: Bradleigh Sceviour
Data Source: 2010 Census

Minority Population by Census Block Group



Author: Bradleigh Sceviour
Data Source: 2010 Census

CHAPTER 2 HOUSING

Housing is special in terms of the comprehensive plan for a variety of reasons. Housing provides the shelter for households in the community, protecting its occupants from weather and hostile environments. Because homes are where people spend most of their time, they have a greater potential to impact human health if unhealthy conditions exist. Collections of homes make up neighborhoods, and residential land use almost always comprises the largest land area of a given community. The quality of homes is a major indicator of neighborhood quality. For these reasons, it is prudent to single-out housing for detailed attention in the comprehensive plan.

The housing element (this chapter) provides an inventory of the existing housing stock in the planning area and helps to establish existing and emerging trends. These data are used by planners, stakeholders, and public officials to assess the adequacy and suitability of the existing housing stock for serving the current population, determine future housing needs, establish goals to guide long-range needs, and prepare strategies for the adequate provision of housing for all sectors of the population.

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS

Edgecombe County's total housing stock increased from 24,002 units in 2000 to 24,838 units in 2010. This represents a total increase of 836 housing units between 2000 and 2010. According to the most recently available estimates of the American Community Survey (2010-2012), Edgecombe County had 24,794 total housing units, representing a slight decrease since 2010. However, the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Economic Development Division, in its County Profile for Edgecombe County (March 2014), indicates that as of 2013 Edgecombe County had a total of 24,957 housing units, representing a slight increase from the 2010 decennial housing unit count of 24,838 housing units.

It is important to consider change in the housing stock by geographic division in the county from 2000 to 2010. The housing stock declined from 2000 to 2010 by 473 housing units in the northern portion of Rocky Mount and adjacent unincorporated areas in Edgecombe (Census Tract 206). Similarly, north Tarboro and the adjacent unincorporated area (Census Tract 211) witnessed a significant decrease in housing units between 2000 and 2010. The housing stock increased in other parts of the county, however. In terms of additions to the county's housing stock during the 2000s, south Rocky Mount (Census Tract 202) led the way with an increase of 403 units. Ironically, this census tract decreased in population by 961 persons. Other census tracts in southwest Edgecombe County increased their housing stocks from 2000 to 2010, as described further in the land use chapter of this plan.

TYPES OF HOUSING UNITS

Types of housing units in Edgecombe County are shown in Table 2.1. In 2000 in Edgecombe County, one-family detached homes dominated the housing stock (62.5% of the total). In that same year, there were 5,533 manufacturing homes in the county, constituting 23.1% of the total housing stock. There were only about 3,300 housing units that were classified as multi-family

(about 15.4% of the total housing stock) in Edgecombe County in 2000 (2011 housing needs assessment). The Census Bureau no longer provides 100% counts of housing units by type as part of the Decennial Census program, but Estimates of housing by type are available from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey.

Table 2.1
Types of Housing Units, 2000 and 2010-2012
Edgecombe County

Type of Unit	2000	%	2010-2012	%	2000 to 2010-2012 Change
One family, detached	14,761	62.5%	16,054	64.7%	+1,293
One family, attached	327	1.4%	252	1.0%	-75
Multiple Family	3,030	14.0%	3,540	14.3%	+510
Mobile Home	5,533	23.1%	4,948	20.0%	-585
Total	24,002	100%	24,794	100%	+792

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Census 2000, Summary File 3, Table H30; 2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Table DP04.

The composition of the county’s housing stock has changed slightly during the last decade. One-family detached dwelling units and the number of multiple-family housing units increased in absolute terms and in percentage share from 2000 to the 2010-2012 estimates reporting period. Mobile (manufactured) homes declined significantly but still comprise one-fifth of the total county housing stock. One-family attached units declined slightly.

OCCUPANCY AND VACANCY

Table 2.2 provides a comparison of Edgecombe County’s housing stock with that of North Carolina in 2000 and 2010. North Carolina as a whole had a relatively high vacancy rate for housing units in 2010, but that may be explained by seasonal, recreational and vacation housing units in mountain and coastal regions. The number of vacant housing units in Edgecombe County decreased significantly between 2000 and 2010, as did the vacancy rate. However, an overall housing unit vacancy rate of 12.7 percent in Edgecombe County in 2010 is considered somewhat higher than typical even though less than the state’s figure.

Table 2.2
Occupied and Vacant Housing Units, 2000 and 2010
Edgecombe County and North Carolina

Occupancy	Edgecombe County				North Carolina			
	2000	%	2010	%	2000	%	2010	%
Occupied Units	20,392	85.0%	21,680	87.3%	3,132,013	88.9%	3,745,155	86.5%
Vacant Units	3,610	15.0%	3,158	12.7%	391,931	11.1%	582,373	13.5%
Total Housing Units	24,002	100%	24,838	100%	3,523,944	100%	4,327,528	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Census 2000. SF 3 (sample data). Table H6; 2010 Census, Table H1.

The most significant change in housing occupancy between 2000 and 2010 occurred in the Princeville area (Census Tract 209). In that area in 2000, 673 housing units (more than one-half) were vacant. The number of vacant units in Census Tract 209 decreased to 96 vacant housing units in the year 2010, suggesting a large-scale re-occupancy of homes in the Princeville area during the 2000s, following the devastating flood in 1999 due to Hurricane Floyd.

The highest vacancy rates for housing units in 2010 were in north Rocky Mount (Census Tract 204) and south Rocky Mount (Census Tract 202), which had vacancy rates of 21.3 and 20.8 percent, respectively. Clearly, Census Tracts 202 and 204 (Rocky Mount) have serious housing issues and community development needs. The Edgecombe County portion of the City of Rocky Mount had an estimated 650 “other vacant” housing units in 2009; a large number of these are presumably boarded up and may not be habitable. Princeville and Tarboro also had significant percentages of total vacant units that are “other vacant,” but the total numbers were much less significant than for the Edgecombe County portion of the City of Rocky Mount (2011 housing needs assessment).

The lowest vacancy rates in 2010 in Edgecombe County were in south Tarboro (Census Tract 212) and southwest Edgecombe County (Census Tract 214), which had housing unit vacancy rates of 5.9 percent and 6.9 percent, respectively.

The overall vacancy rate for housing in Edgecombe County has increased since 2010 to 16.6% according to the American Community Survey 2010-2012 estimates. According to these same estimates, the renter vacancy rate was 11.8%, while the homeowner vacancy rate was quite low at 1.6%. The North Carolina Department of Commerce, Economic Development Division, in its Edgecombe County Profile (March 2014), indicates that as of 2011 the rental vacancy rate was only 7.4% and the homeowner vacancy rate was even lower, at 1.4%.

Housing unit vacancies additional examination. Table 2.3 shows the vacancy status of housing units in 2010 in Edgecombe County. In the county, 44 percent of the vacant housing units were considered “other vacant.”

**Table 2.3
Status of Vacant Housing Units, 2010
Edgecombe County**

Vacancy Status	Number of Vacant Units	% of All Vacant Units
For rent	1,113	35.2%
Rented, not occupied	53	1.7%
For sale only	286	9.1%
Sold, not occupied	72	2.3%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	214	6.8%
For migratory workers	32	1.0%
Other vacant	1,368	44.0%
Total vacant	3,158	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, Summary File 1, Table QT-H1.

The Census Bureau defines “other vacant” to include year-round units which were vacant for reasons other than those specifically otherwise listed in the table. This appears to mean that the houses are “boarded up,” or in other words not on the market, not for rent, and not being used even occasionally.

TENURE (OWNER AND RENTER)

Table 2.4 shows the mix of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units in Edgecombe County and North Carolina for the years 2000 and 2010.

**Table 2.4
Tenure of Housing Units, 2000 and 2010
Edgecombe County and North Carolina**

Occupancy Type	Edgecombe County				North Carolina			
	2000	%	2010	%	2000	%	2010	%
Owner-Occupied Units	13,060	64.0%	13,477	62.2%	2,172,270	69.4%	2,497,900	66.7%
Renter-Occupied Units	7,332	36.0%	8,203	37.8%	959,743	30.6%	1,247,255	33.3%
All Occupied Units	20,392	100%	21,680	100%	3,132,013	100%	3,745,155	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 Census, Summary File 3, Table H7; U.S. Census 2010.

Almost two-thirds of the occupied housing stock in Edgecombe County was owner occupied in 2000 and 2010, and those percentages are not much lower than for the State of North Carolina as a whole. Renter-occupied housing units as a percentage of total housing units increased in both Edgecombe County and the state as a whole, but they increased faster in the state as a whole than in Edgecombe County. In terms of absolute numbers, Edgecombe County added 1,288 occupied housing units from 2000 to 2010 (some of those units already existed); of those, two thirds (871, or 67.6 percent) were renter-occupied housing units. That is a significant finding in terms of the housing needs assessment, in that it appears the trend is toward more rental housing (of any and all housing types).

Table 2.5 provides year 2000 and 2010 data on owner-occupied and renter-occupied households in Edgecombe County by the number of persons living in the unit.

Since 2000, the number of one-person and two-person households has increased significantly. Single-person, owner-occupied housing units in Edgecombe County increased from 2000 to 2010 by 473 housing units, and single-person, renter occupied housing units increased by 505 housing units. Two-person, owner-occupied housing units in Edgecombe County increased from 2000 to 2010 by 372 units, while two-person renter-occupied housing units increased by 402 units.

For owner-occupied households, there was a decrease in housing units with households containing three or more persons, except that the number of 6-person households increased slightly from 2000 to 2010. For renter-occupied households, there was a decrease in households of 3 persons, 5 persons, and 6 persons, but renter-occupied households with 4 persons and 7 or more persons increased from 2000 to 2010.

Table 2.5
Tenure by Number of Persons per Household, 2000 and 2010
Edgecombe County
(Number of Occupied Housing Units)

Number of Persons in Unit	2000				2010			
	Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied		Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied	
	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	Units	%
1 person	2,738	21.0%	2,161	29.5%	3,211	23.8%	2,666	32.5%
2 persons	4,610	35.3%	1,667	22.7%	4,982	37.0%	2,069	25.2%
3 persons	2,451	18.8%	1,518	20.7%	2,440	18.1%	1,402	17.1%
4 persons	2,003	15.3%	914	12.5%	1,634	12.1%	1,043	12.8%
5 persons	803	6.1%	578	7.9%	697	5.2%	559	6.8%
6 persons	255	2.0%	333	4.5%	322	2.4%	250	3.0%
7 or more	200	1.5%	161	2.2%	191	1.4%	214	2.6%
Total	13,060	100%	7,332	100%	13,477	100%	8,203	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, SF 3, Table H17; Census 2010, Summary File 1, Table H16.

VALUE AND RENT

Table 2.6 shows ranges of values of specified owner-occupied housing units in Edgecombe County in 2000, 2005-2009, and 2010-2012, as well as percentage comparisons. Edgecombe County has had much higher percentages of housing stock in the lower value categories (under \$100,000) than the state as a whole (not shown). This means that on the basis of value, housing is much more affordable in Edgecombe County than in the state as a whole. On the other hand, Edgecombe County has much smaller percentages of its housing stock in the higher home value ranges than the state as a whole.

Table 2.6
Value of Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units
2000, 2005-2009, and 2010-2012
Edgecombe County

Range of Value (\$)	2000 Units	2000 %	2005-09 Units	2005-09 %	2010-12 Units	2010-12 %
Less than \$50,000	2,124	23.9%	2,738	20.7%	2,779	21.2%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	4,936	55.6%	5,971	45.1%	6,003	45.7%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1,298	14.7%	2,332	17.7%	2,085	15.9%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	340	3.8%	1,193	9.0%	1,299	9.4%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	134	1.5%	663	5.0%	602	4.6%
\$300,000 or more	44	0.5%	330	2.5%	435	3.2%
Total	8,876	100%	13,227	100%	13,133	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, SF 3, Tables H74 and Table H85. 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates and 2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, Table DP04.

As of 2010-2012, two-thirds of the county's owner-occupied housing stock has a value of less than \$100,000. From 2000 to 2010-2012, the number of homes valued at from \$100,000 to

\$199,999 increased substantially, which may suggest an affordability problem. On the positive side, according to these estimates, the number of homes valued at \$200,000 or more has increased slightly since 2000.

Shifting to the renter side, Table 2.7 shows households in Edgecombe County divided into ranges of gross monthly rents paid in 2000, the 2005-2009 5-year estimates reporting period, and the 2010-2012 3-year estimates reporting period, along with percentages for purposes of comparison.

Table 2.7
Gross Rent, Specified Renter-Occupied Housing Units, 2000 and 2005-2009
Edgecombe County and State of North Carolina

Gross Rent (\$)	2000 Units	2000 %	2005-09 Units	2005-09 %	2010-12 Units	2010-12 %
Less than \$250	1,031	16.2%	636	8.3%	1,794	27.1%
\$250 to \$499	2,930	46.2%	2,198	28.6%		
\$500 to \$749	1,835	28.9%	2,502	32.6%	2,629	39.7%
\$750 to \$999	303	4.8%	1,513	19.7%	1,381	20.9%
\$1,000 or more	249	3.9%	828	10.8%	816	12.3%
Total Units With Cash Rent	6,348	100%	7,677	100%	6,620	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, SF 3, Tables H62 and Table H63; American Community Survey 2005-2009 5-Year Estimates, and 2010-2012 3-Year Estimates. DP04.

Rents have increased in Edgecombe County, since the numbers of homes renting for less than \$500 have decreased substantially between 2000 and the 2010-2012 3-year estimates reporting period. Edgecombe County’s rents are still much lower than the state as a whole. However, affordability is negatively impacted by the significant increases in the number of homes renting for \$500 or more.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has an affordable housing standard that households should not pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing. Table 2.8 shows burdens for Edgecombe County renter households in 1999, 2005-2009, and 2010-2012. From 2000 to the 2005-2009 reporting period, there was a substantial increase in the number of renter-occupied households that are paying 30 percent or more of their incomes for rent.

This information reinforces the finding that rental housing is become more difficult to afford in Edgecombe County. That number decreased, however, between the 2005-2009 and 2010-2012 reporting periods, suggesting that there may be some beneficial improvement in the percentage and absolute number of cost-burdened households.

Table 2.8
Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in 1999, 2005-2009, and 2010-2012
Edgecombe County
(Specified Renter-Occupied Housing Units)

Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income	1999		2005-2009		2010-2012	
	Specified Renter-Occupied Housing Units	% of Units Computed	Specified Renter-Occupied Housing Units	% of Units Computed	Specified Renter-Occupied Housing Units	% of Units Computed
Less than 30 percent (not cost burdened)	3,401	56.2%	2,872	39.6%	2,963	46.4%
30 or more percent (cost burdened)	2,649	43.8%	4,378	60.4%	3,417	53.6%
Units computed	6,050	100%	7,250	100%	6,380	100%
Units not computed	1,194	16.5%	1,444	16.6%	1,160	15.3%
Total Specified Renter-Occupied Housing Units	7,244	83.5%	8,694	83.4%	7,540	84.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, SF 3, Tables H69 and Table H70; American Community Survey 2005-2009 5-Year and 2010-2012 3-Year Estimates, Table DP04.

HOUSING UNIT PROJECTIONS

Because total population in Edgecombe County is projected by the state Office of Budget and Management to decline, one might believe that the number of housing units will also decline during the planning horizon. However, additional households are likely to form, even when population is in decline. The housing market may also exceed expected demand, thus leaving a significant number of vacant, obsolete housing units and other housing vacancies.

The North Carolina Department of Commerce, Economic Development Division, in its Edgecombe County Profile (March 2014) projects the total housing stock in the year 2018 to rise to 25,261 housing units. Similarly the Carolina Population Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has projected housing units in Edgecombe County by Census Tract, and these projections show steady increases during through the year 2030 and beyond, as indicated in Table 2.9. Therefore, the county should anticipate significant changes in its housing stock, and some overall increase in the total number of housing units over time, even if the total population of the county does decline during the planning horizon.

**Table 2.9
Housing Unit Projections by Census Tract, 2010 - 2030
Edgecombe County**

Census Tract	Area of County	2010	2020	2030	Net Change, 2010-2030
202	Rocky Mount	3,086	3,357	3,630	544
203	Rocky Mount	2,283	2,483	2,686	403
204	Rocky Mount	2,559	2,784	3,012	453
206	Rocky Mount	1,218	1,351	1,432	214
207	Whitakers	984	1,071	1,157	173
208	Eastern part	1,619	1,762	1,905	286
209	Princeville	1,195	1,301	1,406	211
210	Tarboro	1,583	1,722	1,864	281
211	Tarboro	1,616	1,759	1,901	285
212	Tarboro	2,232	2,429	2,625	393
213	Central	1,999	2,801	3,028	1,029
214	Sharpsburg	1,701	1,851	2,001	300
215	Pinetops	1,480	1,610	1,741	261
216	Macclesfield	1,283	1,396	1,509	226
Total	Edgecombe County	24,838	27,677	29,897	5,059

Source: Carolina Population Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2014.

ISSUES AND ASSESSMENT

The 2007-2012 Consolidated Plan of the Down East HOME Consortium (DEHC) makes the following findings with regard to housing needs. Elderly renters and homeowners disproportionately suffer from excessive housing cost burdens. The housing needs of an increasingly older population must be addressed, and most of the elderly population is concentrated in the cities and towns of the county. Demolition of severely deteriorated dwelling units throughout the DEHC area is a continuing need. Housing rehabilitation continues to be a serious need, with approximately 26,570 households in the DEHC area reported to have some housing problems. And housing affordability remains a problem, as there are 11,681 households in the DEHC area paying more than 30% of their income for housing costs (Source: 2011 housing needs assessment).

Housing Market Implications

The future housing market is likely to emphasize smaller, energy efficient homes appropriate for 1 or 2-person nonfamily households. Recent growth in households has been comprised almost entirely of “non-family” households. This has an important implication for the future housing market in the county: with smaller additions of family households, larger homes in suburban settings with larger yards are not a product that will best meet future housing needs in the county. Furthermore, nearly 60 percent of the households in Edgecombe County in 2010 consisted of only one or two persons. This implies to some extent that the future housing market would likely favor smaller (i.e., 1,250 square feet or less), energy-efficient housing units.

While the housing market does point to smaller homes for an increasing number of renter households, homeownership is still a dominant factor. More than two-thirds (68.5%) of the households in the county in 2010 were “family” households, and almost two-thirds (62.2%) of the county’s housing units were owner-occupied in 2010. Statistics in this chapter show that vacancy rates are low for owner-occupied units; there was a decline in the number of vacant homes in the county from 2000 to 2010. And there were only 286 homes for sale in all of Edgecombe County in 2010 according to the decennial census. This suggests to some degree that family and non-family households desiring to own homes are not finding much opportunity and choice in the county. Hence, there is, and will continue to be, a strong market for homes for family households desiring homeownership.

The county’s 2011 housing needs assessment provided the following estimates of housing unit demand between 2010 and 2020 (see Table 2.10). This forecast was based on population increases in the county through 2020, rather than a decrease in total population as now projected. However, these forecasts should still be considered a reasonable indicator of what types of housing units are needed in the county in the future.

The housing market in Edgecombe County is unlikely to provide subsidized apartments, low-rent manufactured homes, and apartments with rents up to \$625 and detached single-family homes with purchase prices of \$105,000 or less. Hence, these housing options may be the best ones to target for public housing programs in Edgecombe County.

**Table 2.10
Housing Unit Demand Forecast by Type of Housing Unit, 2020
Edgecombe County**

Type of Housing Unit	Owner	Renter	Total
Subsidized apartments and manufactured homes	0	231	231
Units with rents up to \$625 (single-family, duplex, townhouse, apartment)	0	175	175
Homes up to \$105,000 purchase price (single-family detached, townhouse, condo)	190	0	190
Homes \$105,000 to \$210,000 (single-family detached, townhouse, condo)	300	0	300
Rents up to \$1,250 (single-family, condo, high-end apartments)	0	86	86
Homes more than \$210,000 purchase price and rents more than \$1,875 more (single-family)	386	41	427
All housing units	876	533	1,409

Source: Urban and Regional Planning Program, East Carolina University, July 2011.

Aging, Increasingly Obsolete Housing Stock

Although this chapter does not present detailed statistics on the age of the county’s housing stock, it is apparent to stakeholders that the existing housing products and stock in county are considered mostly unappealing to young professionals and increasingly inappropriate for housing large percentages of the elderly population. Neighborhoods in Rocky Mount are under some substantial disinvestment and deterioration to the point that available vacant rental housing units in that part of the county might not be considered competitive in the marketplace; stated differently, those existing vacant, for-rent units in the Rocky Mount area are unlikely to satisfy

much of any demand created by new renter households moving into Edgecombe County during the upcoming decade to 2020 (2011 housing needs assessment).

The concentration of aging, obsolete homes in the Edgecombe County portion of Rocky Mount presents substantial community and neighborhood development problems and issues. These are the responsibility of the City of Rocky Mount, and various policies and programs have been established to address these pressing community and neighborhood development needs. For instance, The City of Rocky Mount is a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement community, and CDBG is money that can be used for community development purposes if it benefits low- and moderate-income households.

Rural and Small Town Housing Needs

Yet the problem of an increasingly aging and obsolete housing stock is not limited to the City of Rocky Mount, or just the more urban areas of the county. There is a need to improve housing opportunities in small town and rural areas as well. The 2011 housing needs assessment focused on the urban areas of Rocky Mount, Tarboro, and Princeville. There is an increasing need to upgrade housing in the small towns and rural portions of the county, as well.

Furthermore, there is very little multi-family residential or rental housing available in rural areas and small towns of the county. Multiple-family residential development will generally require connection to sanitary sewer given dwelling unit densities. This means one cannot usually build higher density housing in rural areas. However, small towns in the county with excess sewer capacity can present significant opportunities for additional multi-family housing developments.

Housing Code and Healthy Homes

One area where the county will have to lead is in the inspections and enforcement of minimum housing and building codes. The county's minimum housing standards ordinance may require additional amendment and enforcement over time. Additional resources devoted to these activities from the county's general fund should be anticipated during the planning horizon.

There are a number of homes in the county that were flooded in 1999, especially in the Princeville area. Several of the homes flooded in 1999 in parts of the county have been acquired and demolished through disaster mitigation programs. However, over time, residents have re-occupied flooded structures, raising some concern about health, safety, and habitability.

Seniors and Retirement Housing

As implied in this chapter and the population analysis, there is good reason to focus future residential development on the housing needs of seniors. There is a possible niche market for innovative, senior-friendly housing. Given a strategy to invite seniors back to the county to retire, some of demand for retirement housing might be provided by the private sector at market rates.

However, one has to acknowledge that the buying power of many of the county’s seniors will be challenged to pay for market-rate senior housing. For instance, the 2011 housing needs assessment forecasted that, of the 1,409 households that will move into Edgecombe County during the upcoming decade to 2020, 284 will have a senior householder (65 or more years old). As indicated in Table 2.11, the assessment found further that the vast majority of these senior households (228, or 80.3 percent) will have incomes of less than \$50,000, and a majority of them (157 households, or 55 percent) will have household incomes of less than \$25,000. This suggests that senior housing must also be especially targeted at lower and moderate income seniors.

**Table 2.11
Projection of New Senior Households Moving Into Edgecombe County
By Range of Household Income, 2020**

Household Income	Monthly Housing Budget @ 30% of Income	% of Edgecombe County Households in 2009 with a Householder 65+ Years	Additional Households with a Householder 65+ Years by 2020
Less than \$10,000	< \$250	3.7%	53
\$10,000-\$24,999	\$250-\$625	7.4%	104
\$25,000-\$49,999	\$625-\$1,250	5.0%	71
\$50,000-\$74,999	\$1,250-\$1,875	2.7%	38
\$75,000-\$99,999	\$1,875-\$2,500	0.8%	11
\$100,000 or more	\$2,500+	0.5%	7
Total Households	--	20.2%	284

Source: Edgecombe County Housing Needs Assessment, 2011.

As already noted, these projections were based on a projected increase in total population in Edgecombe County through 2020. Although projections now suggest total population decline in the county, these projections are still considered a reasonable indicator of demand for senior housing through 2020.

Manufactured Housing

Approximately one-fifth of the county’s housing stock is comprised of manufactured homes, which provide an affordable option for many lower income households. Manufactured homes will continue to be an important component of the housing stock in Edgecombe County. Further, the 2011 housing needs assessment recommended specific projects in Princeville that would provide additional manufactured home subdivisions to serve low- and moderate income needs in central Edgecombe County. Another issue with manufactured homes is the need to dispose of older, deteriorated units, as well as their replacement.

Affordable Housing and Housing Assistance

In 2000 and more recently, nearly one-half of Edgecombe County’s households have had incomes of \$30,000 or less. These lower income households do not have significant buying power when it comes to housing. Furthermore, poverty is increasing in the county.

The City of Rocky Mount and the Town of Tarboro have housing authorities which assist with placement of households in affordable housing. Edgecombe County has significant share of government-assisted housing, yet needs are increasing to provide Section 8 vouchers to low-income households for help in paying rents. While some urban housing programs exists, they are not funded strongly enough to meet needs. More housing assistance programs will be needed.

The 2011 housing needs assessment provided a forecast of low- and moderate-income households in Edgecombe County by 2020. These are provided in Table 2.12. These estimates or forecasts were based on the assumption that year 2005-2009 estimates hold true into the future in terms of the distribution of income by households.

**Table 2.12
Projection of Households by Household Income Group, 2020, Edgecombe County**

Income Category	Income Grouping	Households in 2020
Extremely low (< 30% of AMI)	Less than \$10,000	3,776
Very low (30% to 50% of AMI)	\$10,000 to \$20,000	4,122
Low (51% to 80% of AMI)	\$20,000 to \$25,000	1,819
Moderate (81% to 100% of AMI)	\$25,000 to \$30,000	1,497
Total, Income-Constrained Households		11,214

Source: 2011 Housing Needs Assessment.

PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES

Existing Programs

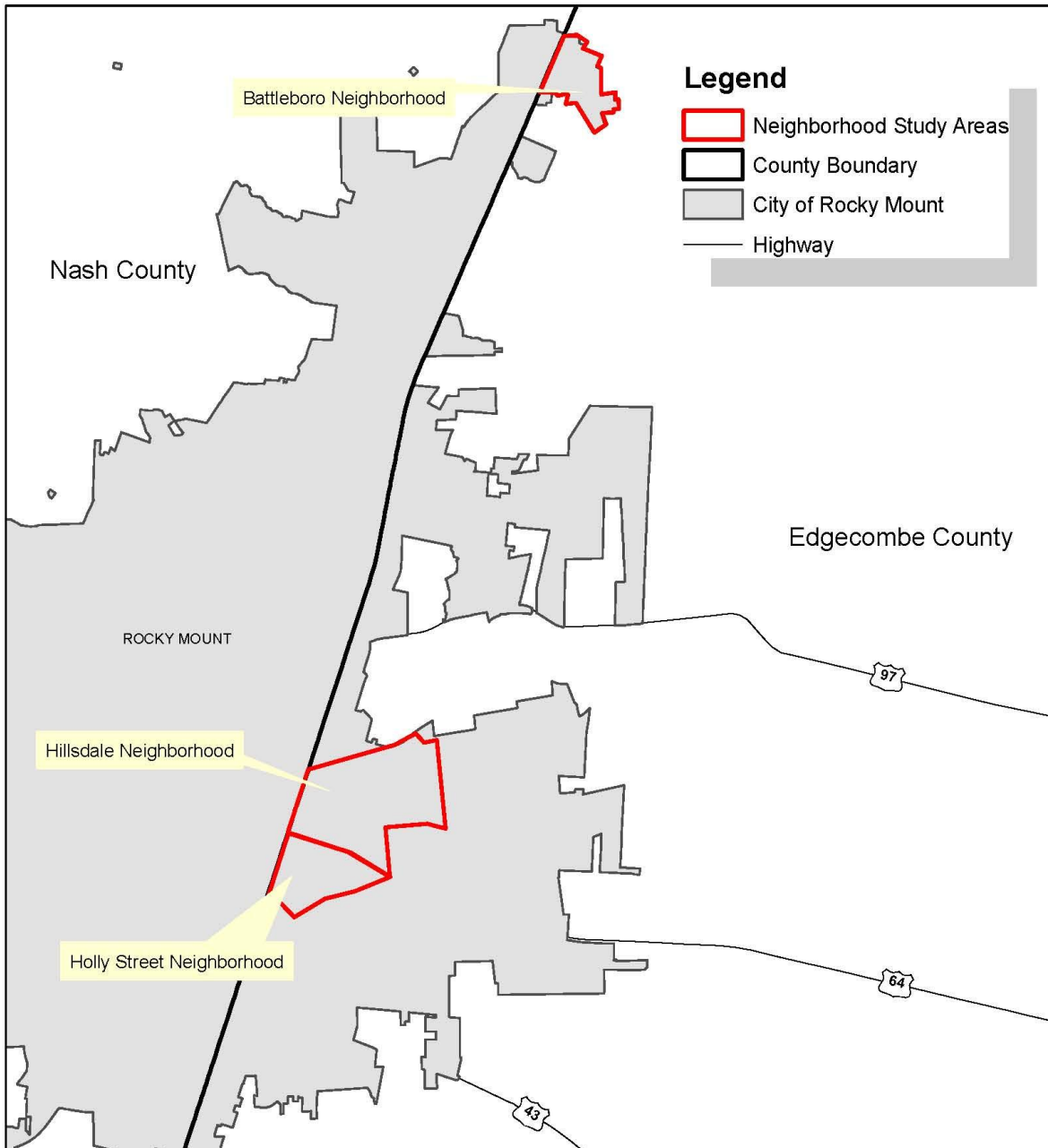
In late 1996, ten local communities in Nash and Edgecombe Counties formed the Down East HOME Consortium (DEHC). With the City of Rocky Mount, already a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement City, and the Lead Entity, the Consortium began receiving Home Investment Partnership Program funds (HOME) in 1997. In late 2001, two more communities, Middlesex and Pinetops, decided to join the DEHC. (Source: DEHC).

The City of Rocky Mount has its own community development program, and as such, it is the primary unit of government responsible for addressing community development and affordable housing issues within the city, including the Nash County and Edgecombe County portions. Furthermore, the City of Rocky Mount has its own housing authority which is actively engaged in providing public and affordable housing projects. However, Edgecombe County can be a partner with the City of Rocky Mount in addressing housing needs in the Edgecombe County portion of the City of Rocky Mount. Again, the 2011 housing needs assessment provides a major basis for recommending specific actions and programs.

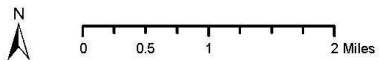
City of Rocky Mount Including Battleboro

One of the highest priorities for Edgecombe County is to assist the City of Rocky Mount and its housing authority with the stabilization and improvement of housing conditions in three identified neighborhoods (see map), especially Holly Street (see map) where the need appears to be the greatest.

City of Rocky Mount in Edgecombe County Neighborhood Study Areas in Consolidated Plan 2007-2012

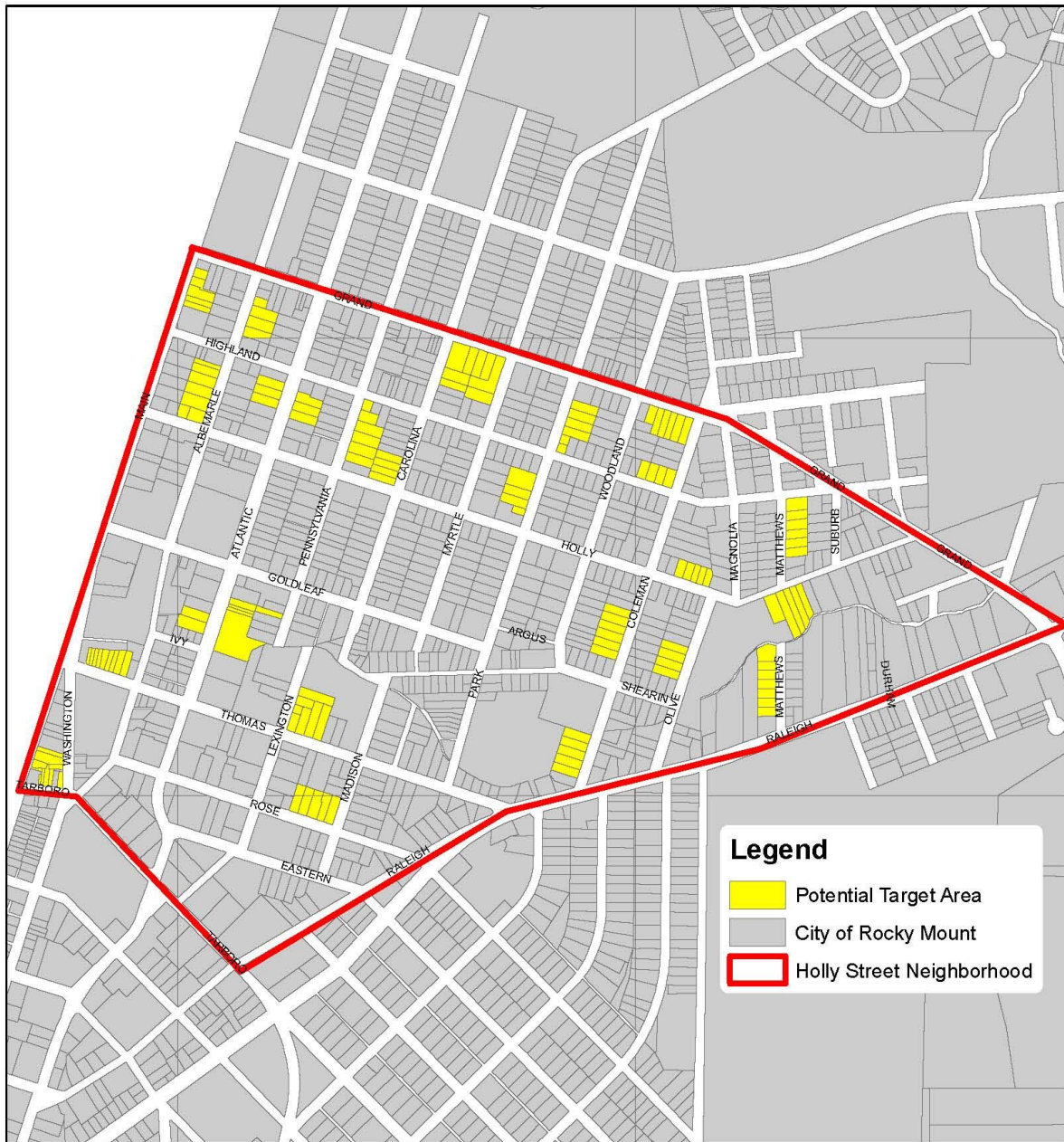


Source: 2007-2012 Consolidated Plan

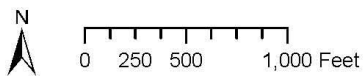


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Potential Target Area of Deteriorated/Dilapidated Housing Holly Street Neighborhood Study Area City of Rocky Mount in Edgecombe County



Source: 2007-2012 Consolidated Plan



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The housing programs should include: rehabilitation of existing units that are still structurally sound and can be brought up to building and housing codes; demolition of units that are dilapidated or that threaten neighborhood stability; and construct infill affordable housing units on vacant lots and lots where units are demolished.

A general “prototype” approach to community development for these target areas is provided in the 2011 housing needs assessment. Illustrations of the prototype approach to urban infill housing improvement are provided below, which can then be modified as appropriate to fit individual neighborhoods and target areas within them.



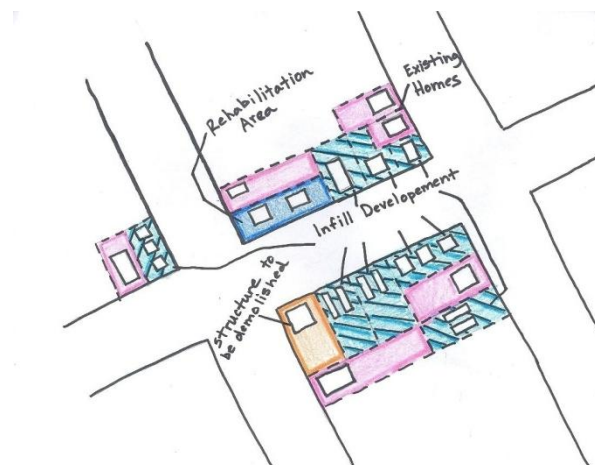
**Homes to be Rehabilitated
(Representative)**



Representative New Housing



Prototype: Existing Conditions



Prototype: Infill Housing

Basically, the idea behind the targeting strategy and housing improvement prototype is to select an area that has multiple lots and structures in need of rehabilitation and/or demolition and reconstruction. If there are vacant lots in the target area for the prototype, they can be selected for new housing unit construction with an affordable prototype dwelling. In most cases, the lots in need of assistance are privately owned. Some privately owned lots may be under foreclosure, or tax liens may exist on the properties. The City of Rocky Mount, a redevelopment corporation, the Rocky Mount Housing Authority itself, or another community housing organization can

acquire one or more of the vacant lots in the target area, if privately owned. Building new, affordable infill housing on vacant lots in the target area will bring investment into those neighborhood blocks and hopefully spur additional housing investment.

Also in the same target area, after inspecting homes for compliance with building and housing codes, those dwellings that are still structurally sound can be renovated; this can be accomplished through direct loans to individual private property owners, a public-private partnership, or some other means of public acquisition. For those lots with dilapidated housing, the city or other agents of the city or county should consider using its condemnation powers to acquire those lots, demolish the dilapidated structures, and build new affordable dwellings according to a pre-determined dwelling prototype.

Town of Princeville

The Town of Princeville is another area that is targeted to be a part of Edgecombe County's affordable housing program, for two reasons: first, the town has its own housing authority which may be able to take the lead role in various housing programs and projects. Second, Princeville appears to be an area with among the lowest incomes in the county, and therefore the greatest affordable housing needs. The next map shows vacant lands which may be suitable for affordable housing projects in Princeville. Public and private lands are shown separately on the same map. One of the chief limitations of placing more affordable housing in Princeville is the susceptibility to flooding. One strategy is to select an area around town hall which has a combination of properties that could be targeted for affordable housing development.

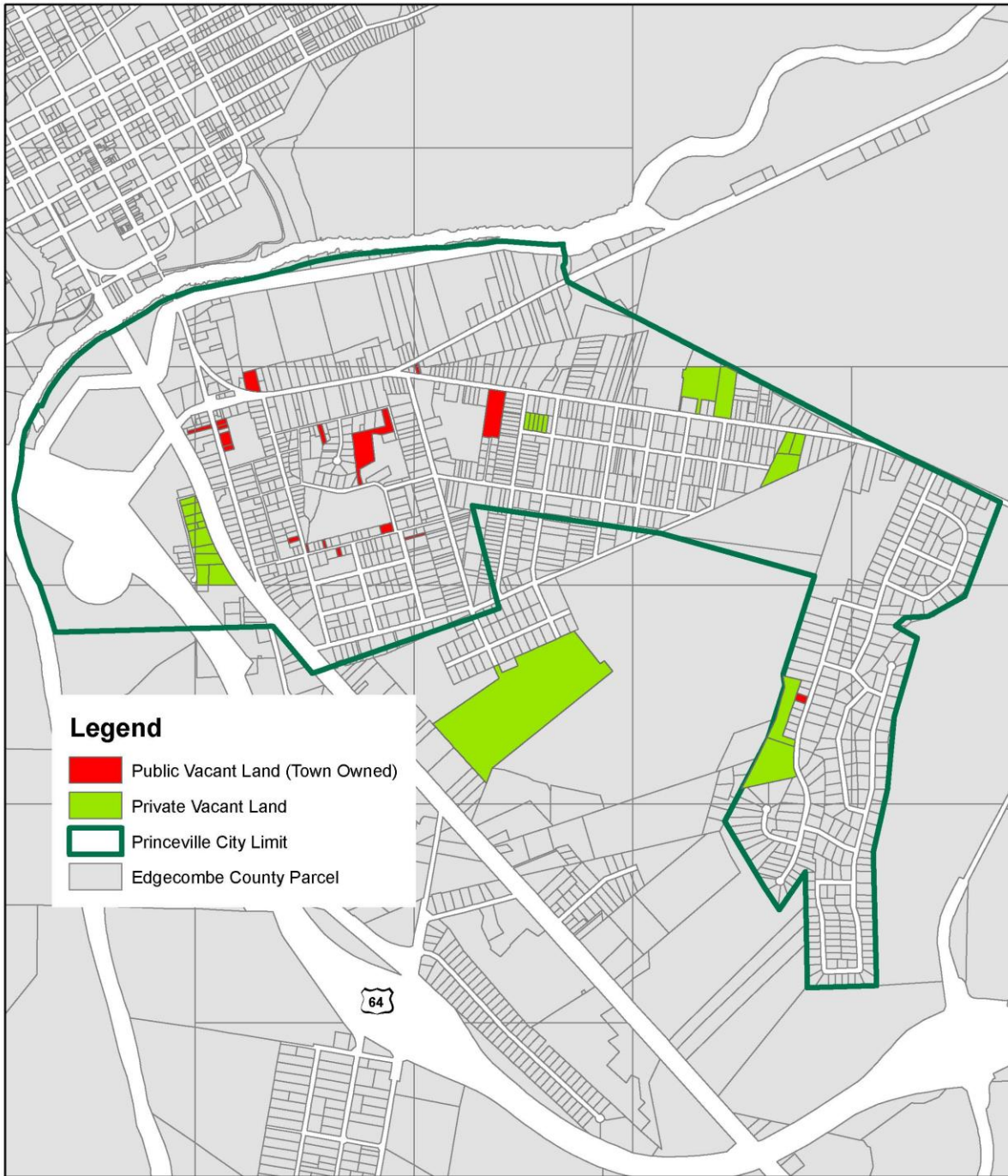
The largest of these sites is in private hands and has an apartment complex on it already, yet it is partially vacant and has the potential for additional apartment or mixed-income housing units (see an illustrative prototype of mixed income housing in the same building). If the properties in this area are combined, they would provide a significant collection of new affordable housing constructed by a combination of private and public providers. It is not known exactly how many housing units might result from the combination of these public and private sites, but an estimated 25 to 40 units should be considered a target range.



Illustrative Elevation of Mixed Income Housing

In addition to the Town Hall area project, a second project is recommended for the Princeville area. There is a large, privately owned parcel just outside the town limits of Princeville, adjacent to an existing manufactured home park (see map). Manufactured housing offers an attractive and affordable housing option. The site shown on the following map should be an appropriate site for additional manufactured housing development to serve future affordable housing needs in the Princeville area.

Vacant Land in/near Town of Princeville Potentially Suitable for Housing



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



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1 inch = 300 feet



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Potential Affordable Manufactured Home Park Site in Princeville Area

Town of Tarboro

Although incomes are higher in Tarboro than in most of the rest of the county, the town is the county seat and is centrally located within Edgecombe County. It also has its own housing authority. Tarboro should be considered a partner in affordable housing programs that Edgecombe County might elect to sponsor. The 2011 housing needs assessment suggested that a 64-acre town-owned parcel should be a high priority for a mixed-unit affordable housing development, and a conceptual site plan (included here) was suggested for the property.

The conceptual site plan calls for a combination of detached single-family units, duplexes and triplexes, a small number of attached single-family (fee simple) townhouses, two separate apartment projects, and an elderly housing or nursing home complex. This project, if constructed, would yield at total of 183 units plus units for the elderly in the senior living or nursing home facility. It is ambitious and would therefore need to be developed in phases.

The following table summarizes affordable housing projects in Edgecombe County, recommended by the 2011 housing needs assessment, to be undertaken either by the county, or in partnership with the City of Rocky Mount, the Town of Princeville, or the Town of Tarboro and their housing authorities.

**Table 2.13
Recommended Housing Projects, 2012-2017
Edgecombe County and Affordable Housing Partners**

Priority	Location	Project Description (Responsibility)	Time Frame	Estimated No. of Units
1	City of Rocky Mount	Rehabilitation and new construction (200 units) with target areas of neighborhoods (Edgecombe County, City of Rocky Mount, Rocky Mount Housing Authority, community housing organizations)	2012-2017 (annually)	Target: 40 units (new and rehabilitated) annually
2	Town of Princeville	Town Hall area affordable housing, including mixed-income building (Edgecombe County, Town of Princeville, Princeville Housing Authority, private developers)	2014	25-40 (infill)
3	Town of Tarboro	Mixed-Unit Affordable Housing Project	2014 and long range	183 units plus senior/assisted living
4	Town of Princeville	Manufactured home park on private property (Edgecombe County, Princeville Housing Authority, private developer)	2017 or long range	24-50 units

Source: 2011 Housing Needs Assessment



1 inch = 400 feet



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Development of a County Housing Policy

At issue is the exact role that Edgecombe County Government should play in future years, in responding to these identified housing needs. Housing services are not typically provided by rural county governments to any significant degree. Edgecombe County has maintained involvement as a partner in community development programs and projects, disaster mitigation as it relates to housing (e.g., purchasing and demolishing flooded housing units), the provision of water and sewer services for affordable housing development, and sponsoring a countywide housing needs assessment in 2011.

Yet, the housing situation in Edgecombe County now requires that the county assume even greater roles, responsibility, and leadership. The county might even be reluctant to assume greater roles in housing programs, because it has few resources at its disposal for improving the housing stock and does not qualify in its own right for some housing and community development programs. Nonetheless, Edgecombe County will need to be open about pursuing multiple efforts to improve housing in the county. While the county will need to lead in some instances, successful housing programs will certainly require additional, innovative arrangements and the extensive involvement with private homebuilders, community housing development organizations, and other non-profit entities.

CHAPTER 3

LABOR FORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This chapter provides an investigation of the county's labor force, economic base, and general economic trends in regional economic context. The intent of this chapter is to provide background data necessary to determine needs and establish economic development strategies for the county.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Tobacco, textiles, and furniture (i.e., the “big three”) dominated the state of North Carolina's economy for many decades. The economy of the connected age (from the 1970s forward) dramatically changed these industries. Many counties, including Edgecombe, have suffered due to the downsizing of the big three industries. Agriculture in North Carolina has been remade from a crop industry (emphasizing tobacco) to a livestock industry (poultry and hog production). Employment in textile industries decreased by more than two-thirds between 1970 and 2007, and by 2007 employment within furniture manufacturing establishments was only two-thirds of its peak levels (Walden 2008).

Walden (2008) divides the state of North Carolina into 21 commuting zones to define local economies. Edgecombe County lies within the “Rocky Mount-Wilson” local economy comprised of Nash, Edgecombe, and Wilson Counties. Of the 21 local economies in the state, Rocky Mount-Wilson ranked 17th in terms of employment growth from 1970 to 2004 but fared better in terms of average real salaries per job, ranking 10th of the 21 local economies. Rocky Mount-Wilson has clearly suffered from the decline in traditional industries. Between 1990 and 2004, the area lost almost half of its traditional industries jobs in tobacco, textiles, and apparel. There was only a four percent increase in jobs in the area from 1990 to 2004. The region's leaders have promoted the area's accessibility to the large Triangle economy and proximity to the medical campus at East Carolina University, and these efforts appear to have paid off. Pharmaceutical production has become the Rocky Mount-Wilson local economy's largest industry. Food processing is also an up-and-coming sector. Tire production, electronic components, glass products, and farm machinery are small but important parts of the Rocky Mount-Wilson local economy (Walden 2008).

Two of the weakest local economies in the state lie due north and due south of the Rocky Mount-Wilson local economy. To the north is the Roanoke local economy, comprised of Halifax, Northampton, Hertford, and Bertie counties; that multi-county local economy ranked last in terms of employment growth from 1970 to 2004 and last in average real salaries per job. To the south of Rocky Mount-Wilson is the “Down East” local economy comprised of Wayne, Sampson, and Duplin Counties; the Down East local economy ranked 19th of the 21 local economies in terms of employment growth between 1970 and 2004 (Walden 2008).

LABOR FORCE

The availability of labor is a critical consideration when industries and businesses decide whether to locate in a given community. The skill level of the labor force is also critical. If an

industry or business requires skilled labor and a skilled labor supply is not available locally or regionally, it will be fruitless for the county to attempt to attract that type of industry or business. If the labor force is increasing in the county and/or region, that trend is a positive sign which suggests that future employers will have an adequate labor supply, though again labor specialization and skill levels must be taken into account. It is therefore prudent to examine details of the county’s labor force. The more we know about working residents of Edgecombe County, the better one can advise the county on how economic development programs might benefit the resident labor force in Edgecombe County.

Table 3.1 shows total labor force as well as employment and unemployment of the resident labor force in Edgecombe County from 2005 to 2013. The resident labor force and unemployment peaked in 2010, which was the height of the Great Recession. The labor force in the county has been mostly stable, however, and as of the year 2013 is about what it was in the year 2005.

**Table 3.1
Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment
Edgecombe County, 2005-2013
(Unadjusted for March each year)**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Labor Force	24,209	24,013	24,205	24,479	24,189	25,778	25,246	24,875	24,492
Employed	22,080	22,107	22,479	22,315	20,589	21,672	21,445	21,351	21,097
Unemployed	2,129	1,906	1,726	2,164	3,600	4,106	3,801	3,524	3,395
Unemployment Rate (%) Edgecombe County	8.8%	7.9%	7.1%	8.8%	14.9%	15.9%	15.1%	14.2%	13.9%
Unemployment Rate (%) North Carolina	5.3%	4.6%	4.5%	5.3%	10.2%	11.4%	10.2%	9.3%	8.4%

Source: North Carolina Employment Security Commission, Labor and Economic Analysis Division, Demand Driven Data Delivery System, Accessed March 2014.

Unemployment in Edgecombe County has remained much higher than in the state as a whole, which has also been generally higher than unemployment rates of the U.S. Since 2010, the unemployment rate in Edgecombe County has decreased; however, the labor force has decreased during the same period, and unfortunately the total number of Edgecombe County’s residents has also continued to decrease since 2010. This means that the improvement in unemployment rate is a function of more people leaving the labor force, as opposed to improvement in employment.

Commuting

Employers in Edgecombe County in 2000 drew their labor primarily from within Edgecombe County but also significantly from Nash County. Commuting by residents of Halifax, Pitt, Wilson, and Martin Counties into Edgecombe County for work was also significant in 2000. The North Carolina Department of Commerce, Economic Development Division (in its Edgecombe County Profile dated March 2014), estimates that as of 2011, a slight majority (11,057, or

50.7%) of working residents of Edgecombe County worked in Edgecombe County. The remainder worked in North Carolina outside of Edgecombe County (10,406, or 47.7%), or outside of North Carolina (347, or 1.6% of the total). Estimates available from the American Community Survey (2010-2012 3-year estimates) indicate that these numbers have not changed significantly a decade later.

Resident Labor Force by Industry

The City of Rocky Mount and the Town of Tarboro are the two major concentrations of population and labor force in Edgecombe County. The labor force in the Edgecombe County side of Rocky Mount and the Town of Tarboro, combined, constituted the majority (51.5 percent) of the labor force in Edgecombe County according to the American Community Survey’s 2005-2009 estimates (Source: 2011 Shell Building Feasibility Study).

Table 3.2 shows the industries in which Edgecombe County’s resident labor force were employed in 2000 and 2012.

**Table 3.2
Employed Civilian Labor Force by Industry, 2000 and 2012
Employed Persons Ages 16 and Over
Edgecombe County**

Industry	Edgecombe County	
	2000	2012
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	639	713
Mining	14	28
Construction	1,938	1,102
Manufacturing	5,923	3,504
Wholesale Trade	723	599
Retail Trade	2,492	2,786
Transportation and Warehousing	851	1,190
Utilities	146	227
Information	783	642
Finance and Insurance	598	592
Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	179	181
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	465	344
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	40
Administrative Support and Waste Management	655	1,076
Educational Services	1,173	1,535
Health Care and Social Services	2,623	3,234
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	121	234
Accommodation and Food Services	1,283	1,839
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	987	809
Public Administration	1,127	735
Total	22,720	21,410

Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce. Thrive North Carolina, Custom Report, March 2014.

From 2000 to 2012, Edgecombe County’s working residents (labor force) have decreased their participation in some industries but increased in others. The number of county residents working in manufacturing and construction has declined substantially. More residents are employed in 2012 than in 2000 in several industries, including administrative and waste management support, educational services, health care and social services, accommodation and food services, and retail trade, among others.

Resident Labor Force by Occupation

Table 3.3 compares occupations of the civilian labor force residing in Edgecombe County in 2000 and 2012. Some of the categories have changed slightly between the years. The most significant decrease over time has occurred in production occupations, which corresponds mostly with the decline in manufacturing jobs. Sales and office support occupations have also decreased from 2000 to 2012. Significant increases have occurred in health care-related and food-serving occupations. Generally, these occupational changes reflect a move to lower wage positions.

**Table 3.3
Employed Civilian Labor Force by Occupation, 2000 and 2012
Employed Persons Ages 16 and Over
Edgecombe County**

Occupation	Edgecombe County	
	2000	2012
Management	1,079	1,198
Farmer and farm managers	271	n/c
Business and financial	589	322
Computer and mathematical	105	102
Architecture and engineering	112	144
Life, physical and social science	63	57
Community and social services	315	398
Legal	69	72
Education, training, and library	832	1,036
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	108	155
Health care practitioners and technicians	408	973
Health care support	333	793
Protective services	479	410
Food preparation and serving	1,033	1,507
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	820	940
Personal care and services	560	745
Sales and related	2,111	1,941
Office and administrative support	3,310	3,137
Farming, fishing and forestry	252	347
Construction and extraction	145	857
Maintenance and repair	1,214	949
Production	4,685	2,437
Transportation and Material Moving	1,774	2,890
Total	20,667	21,410

Source: North Carolina Department of Commerce. Thrive North Carolina, Custom Report, March 2014.

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

Table 3.4 provides total nongovernment employment for Edgecombe County for several recent years. Total employment in Edgecombe County peaked in 2002, then as of 2008 employment returned to basically the level it was in 2000, and then declined precipitously during the Great Recession.

**Table 3.4
Total Nongovernment Employment, 2000-2011
Edgecombe County**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Edgecombe County	17,181	19,200	24,209	21,310	19,938	19,353
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Edgecombe County	19,077	18,530	17,117	15,778	14,184	13,873

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business Patterns, 2000-2011.

EMPLOYMENT BY ZIP CODE

Tables 3.5 and 3.6 provide total employment data by zip code in Edgecombe County in recent years. The data in Table 3.5 show precipitous declines of thousands of jobs in the Rocky Mount (27801) zip code, and loss of more than 1,000 jobs in the Tarboro zip code, from 2001 to 2005.

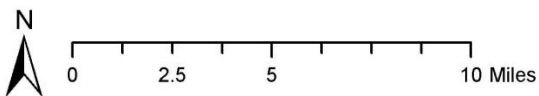
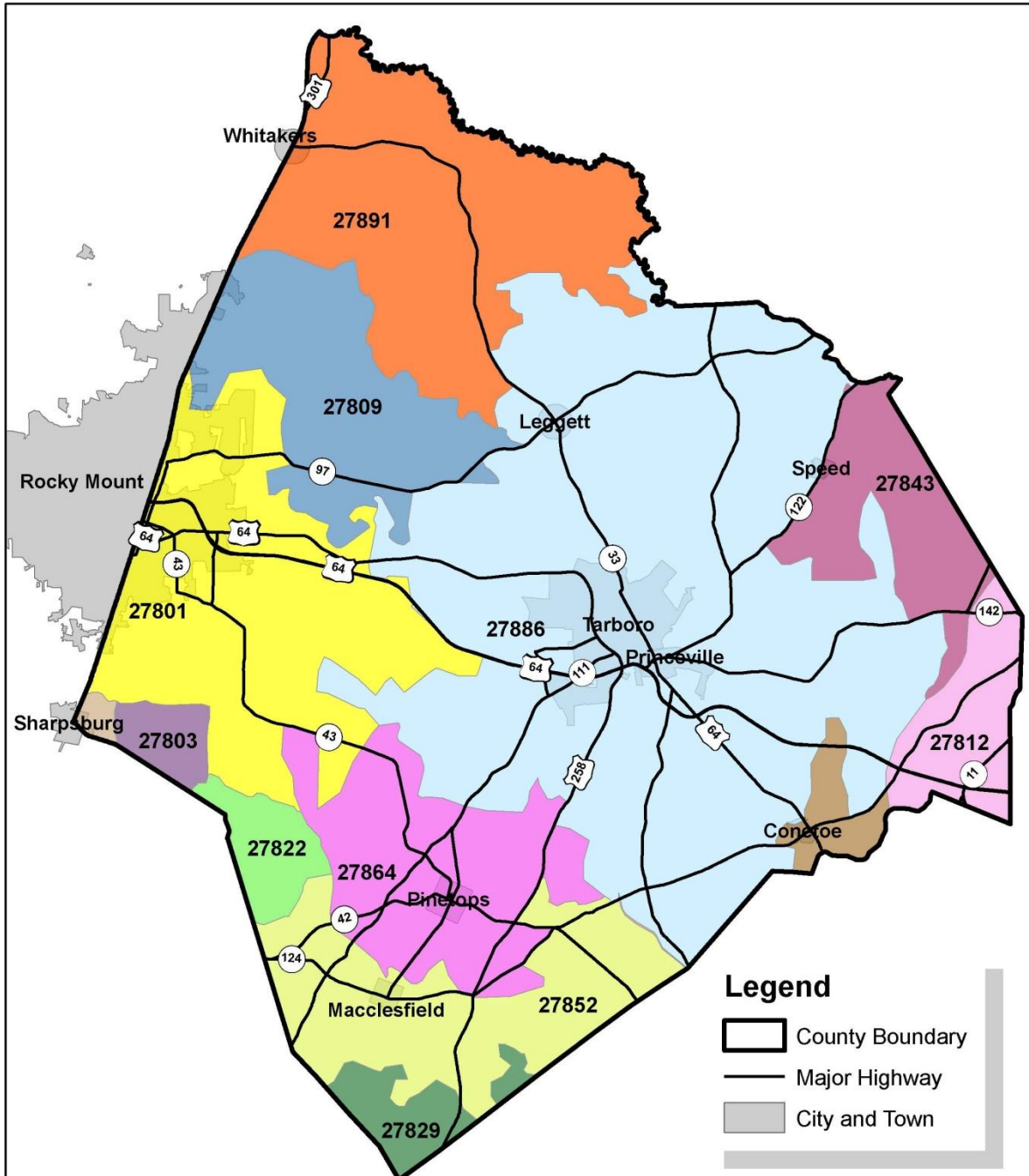
**Table 3.5
Total Nongovernment Employment, 2000-2005
Zip Codes in Edgecombe County**

Zip Code	Name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
27891	Whitakers	1,771	1,656	1,552	1,575	1,354	1,459
27886	Tarboro	10,174	10,407	9,602	9,453	9,428	9,039
27801	Rocky Mount	12,388	12,526	11,887	8,636	8,837	6,598
27803	Rocky Mount	3,884	3,453	3,349	3,026	3,368	3,234
27809	Battleboro	2,432	2,052	2,091	2,228	2,113	1,881
27864	Pinetops	707	649	667	616	575	578
27852	Macclesfield	189	218	153	146	264	258
27843	Hobgood	81	68	65	63	58	66
27812	Bethel	282	332	335	343	348	284
27822	Elm City	1,813	1,202	1,207	1,272	1,688	1,370
27829	Fountain	90	114	119	99	92	121
27819	Conetoe	35	41	23	17	46	82

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Zip Code Business Patterns, 2000-2005.

From 2006 to 2011, as shown in Table 3.6, total nongovernment employment has continued to decline in virtually all zip codes within or partially contained within Edgecombe County.

Zip Codes in Edgecombe County, North Carolina



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Table 3.6
Total Nongovernment Employment, 2006-2011
Zip Codes in Edgecombe County

Zip Code	Name	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
27891	Whitakers	1,552	1000-2499	1000-2499	1000-2499	1000-2499	1000-2499
27886	Tarboro	8,821	11,147	9,110	8,394	7,938	7,796
27801	Rocky Mount	6,665	6,690	7,439	6,787	5,625	5,889
27803	Rocky Mount	3,080	2,960	2,966	2,655	2,741	2,633
27809	Battleboro	1,933	2,045	2,017	1,716	1,733	1,403
27864	Pinetops	645	670	647	616	600	651
27852	Macclesfield	157	107	132	100	83	82
27843	Hobgood	51	20-99	20-99	43	20-99	20-99
27812	Bethel	282	310	350	265	245	277
27822	Elm City	1,543	1,431	1,325	944	847	1,293
27829	Fountain	101	81	122	86	116	108
27819	Conetoe	7	0-19	0-19	0-19	0-19	0-19

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Zip Code Business Patterns, 2006-2011.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Table 3.7 shows changes in annual employment by industry from 2005 to 2012 in Edgecombe County. Changes within selected industries are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Table 3.7
Annual Employment by Selected Industry, Edgecombe County, 2005-2012

Industry	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Construction	1,749	1,657	895	797	692	701	700	725
Manufacturing	4,707	4,310	4,237	3,899	3,309	3,171	2,874	2,928
Wholesale Trade	2,442	2,572	1,336	1,275	1,263	905	891	846
Retail trade	1,804	1,749	1,690	2,735	2,704	2,642	2,636	2,683
Transportation and warehousing	886	952	2,105	903	820	742	548	453
Educational services	2,017	2,019	1,951	1,913	1,932	1,971	1,941	1,888
Health care and social assistance	2,236	2,052	1,958	2,051	2,367	2,319	2,431	2,385
Accommodation & food services	1,174	1,202	1,148	1,014	926	931	957	1,057
Public Administration	2,308	2,301	2,325	2,362	2,409	2,502	2,428	2,444
Total shown	19,323	18,814	17,645	16,949	16,422	15,884	15,406	15,409
Total	22,528	22,100	20,990	20,099	19,234	18,823	18,201	18,017

Source: North Carolina Employment Security Commission, Labor and Economic Analysis Division, Demand Driven Data Delivery System, Quarterly Census Employment and Wages, Accessed March 2014.

Agriculture

Agricultural operations occupy the majority of the land mass and contribute millions of dollars annually to the local economy. As noted in the 2007 Land Development Plan, almost 50% of the soils within Edgecombe County are classified as prime farmland.

The 2012 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the 5-county region of the Upper Coastal Plain Economic Development District (which includes Edgecombe County) finds that Edgecombe County was in the top ten counties of the state with regard to cash receipts for agricultural products, including tobacco (#8), cotton (#4), and peanuts (#4).

According to the 2012 county financial statements, agriculture is a growing foundation of the county's economy. The year 2012 was one of the best in terms of production and marketing, in the county's history. Tobacco remains an important crop, but farmers have been changing crops that they grow each year depending on market prices, and tobacco buyout payments to landowners are ending or have ended. Some farmers continue to work with vegetable crops and develop new opportunities to replace traditional crops. For instance, a new crop, clary sage, began production in Edgecombe County in 2012. Clary sage is used in the fragrance industry. Animal agriculture also is providing an increasing share of farm income, representing almost half of total farm income in 2011 (Source: Edgecombe County 2012 Financial Statements).

Construction

Construction employment in Edgecombe County has been severely reduced in the last several years. It was reduced by almost half between 2005 and 2007, even before the effects of the Great Recession. Construction employment continued to decrease through 2009, then somewhat ironically stabilized during the Great Recession years.

Manufacturing

As described in the examination of state and regional trends at the beginning of this chapter, annual (for March of each year) manufacturing employment in Edgecombe County has consistently declined throughout the years. Whereas manufacturing employment decline was already substantial prior to 2000, manufacturing employment in the county was reduced by 2012 to less than two-thirds (62%) of its total in the county in 2005.



**Representative Industry
in Edgecombe County**

Wholesale and Retail Trade

Employment in wholesale trade in Edgecombe County has declined severely from 2005 to 2012. Employment in wholesale trade as of 2012 is only about one-third (34.6%) of its total employment level in the county in 2005. Employment in retail trade has shown a net increase from 2005 to 2012; however, it has not rebounded to meet the high point of employment in 2008, before the Great Recession.

Transportation and Warehousing

Employment in transportation and warehousing industries has also declined substantially during the 2005 to 2012 time period according to County Business Patterns data (Table 3.7). In 2007, there were more than 2,000 jobs in this industry in Edgecombe County. As of 2012, transportation and warehousing employment was hardly one-fifth (21.5%) of its level in 2007.

Education and Health Care

Both education and health care industries have not suffered as significant employment declines as other industries, but they too have not increased. Health care is one of the few industries that has weathered the Great Recession well, statewide and nationally. While there have been fluctuations over time, a net increase in health care employment occurred in Edgecombe County between 2005 and 2012.

Government

Table 3.8 shows government and nongovernment employment in Edgecombe County. The data in Table 3.8 also show government employment totals for local, state, and national governments in Edgecombe County. Of most significance, government is an important industry in terms of total employment in Edgecombe County. And its significance has increased over time from about 21% of total jobs in the county as of 2005, to about 25% of total jobs in the county in 2012.

**Table 3.8
Private and Government Sector Annual Employment
Edgecombe County, 2005-2012**

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Private	17,755	17,335	16,275	15,388	14,470	13,981	13,553	13,431
Local	3,529	3,507	3,456	3,455	3,482	3,524	3,484	3,422
State	803	816	849	857	896	955	936	938
Federal	442	443	410	399	385	364	228	226
Total Government	4,774	4,766	4,715	4,711	4,763	4,843	4,648	4,586
Total	22,529	22,101	20,990	20,099	19,233	18,824	18,201	18,017

Source: North Carolina Employment Security Commission, Labor and Economic Analysis Division, Demand Driven Data Delivery System, Quarterly Census Employment and Wages, Accessed March 2014.

Local government comprises the largest amount by far (about three quarters as of 2012) of government employment in Edgecombe County. Local government employment has remained relatively steady throughout the years, despite the effects of the Great Recession. State employment within Edgecombe County has increased from 2005 to 2012, while federal government employment within Edgecombe County has decreased. Local government employment constituted 18.7% of total employment in Edgecombe County as of 2012. From the county's 2012 Financial Statements, it is evident that Edgecombe County Schools employed 1,000 (down from 1,100 in 2011), while Edgecombe County government employed 471.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

This section examines the potential for Edgecombe County to employ various economic development strategies.

Speculative Industrial Building

In 2011, with a grant from the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Edgecombe County completed a "shell building feasibility study." This section summarizes major findings of that study. A speculative building is constructed without a tenant or buyer but with the hope that it will be purchased or rented by an industry or manufacturing establishment in the future. A shell building has four walls (or three with one temporary) and a roof but is otherwise unfinished on the interior. Speculative buildings are meant to induce economic development that would not occur otherwise. A search on the North Carolina Department of Commerce's Thrive NC website in 2011 revealed some 288 spec/shell buildings statewide. Of those 288 shell/spec buildings, 130 of them were manufacturing and 54 are categorized as flex buildings. This shows just how pervasive shell buildings are as a local economic development strategy in North Carolina. Speculative industry building remains a popular economic development strategy in eastern North Carolina, including Nash, Pitt, Martin, and Wayne Counties, among others.

There are significant advantages as well as disadvantages to engaging in a speculative industrial building program in Edgecombe County. The chief advantage of a spec/shell building is that a prospective industry would have shorter building construction times and would not have to deal with uncertainty of building permitting. Constructing a shell building can also provide real and tangible evidence to prospective companies that the county is serious about attracting employers; shell buildings raise the industrial profile of the community and can thus dramatically increase the likelihood that prospective industries will visit the host community.

The disadvantages of a shell building program are also substantial. Such programs are risky in that they require investing large amounts of capital for an undetermined length of time with no guarantee of lease or sale. It can be also difficult to get all aspects of a speculative building correct in terms of the marketplace.

The 2011 shell building feasibility study did not recommend that Edgecombe County pursue this strategy. The study suggested that the time (as of 2011) did not appear ripe for the county to pursue a shell building program. Multiple reasons were given for that conclusion. It was found that a new industry or occupant of a spec building would not positively improve employment of

the county's own residents; rather, it would likely employ more workers residing outside Edgecombe County than inside the county. Concern was raised in the study about the potential risk of investing in capital construction of a shell building, only to have the building potentially sit vacant for a number of years. Labor availability to a prospective shell building occupant is very important, and manufacturing labor forces are projected to decline in both Edgecombe County and Nash County during the upcoming years. Furthermore, in terms of employment, manufacturing has been and will continue to be a declining industry, and a shell building strategy targeted at manufacturing would be in effect targeting a declining industry. Yet another consideration was that in Edgecombe County, there was as of 2011 at least 2.4 million square feet of vacant, available building space consisting of manufacturing, warehouse, and supportive office space (though it was noted that about one-half of the available space is within a single establishment, the General Foam Plastics Building).

Reuse of Existing Buildings

The 2011 shell building feasibility study mapped locations of existing manufacturing and warehousing buildings already built and available in Edgecombe County. The competitiveness of these buildings was also evaluated in the 2011 study. Maps showing available buildings (including a Tarboro area detail map) are shown on the following pages. Edgecombe County should aggressively market these buildings, while recognizing that they may not be modern or competitive enough to meet tomorrow's market demands.

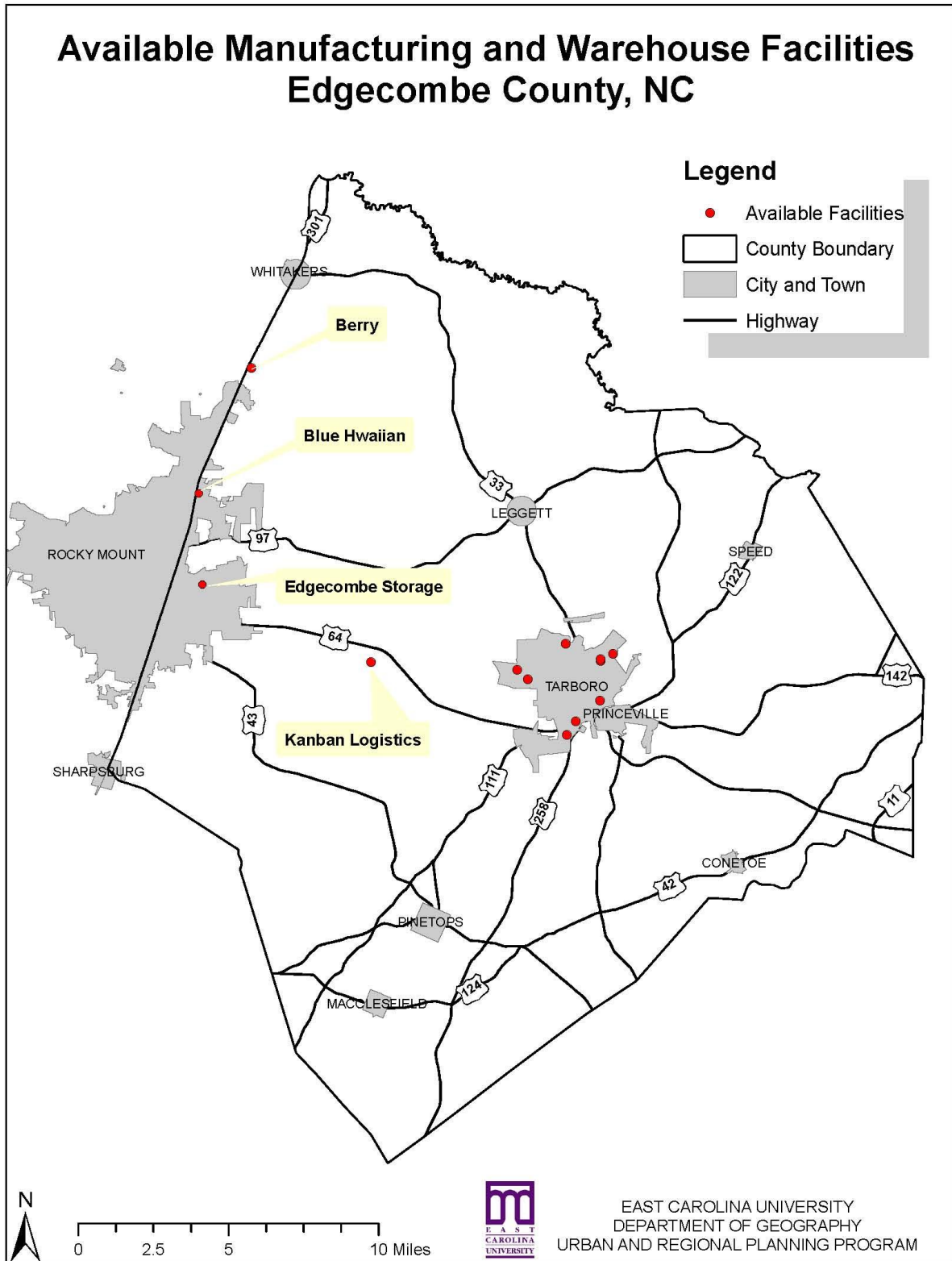


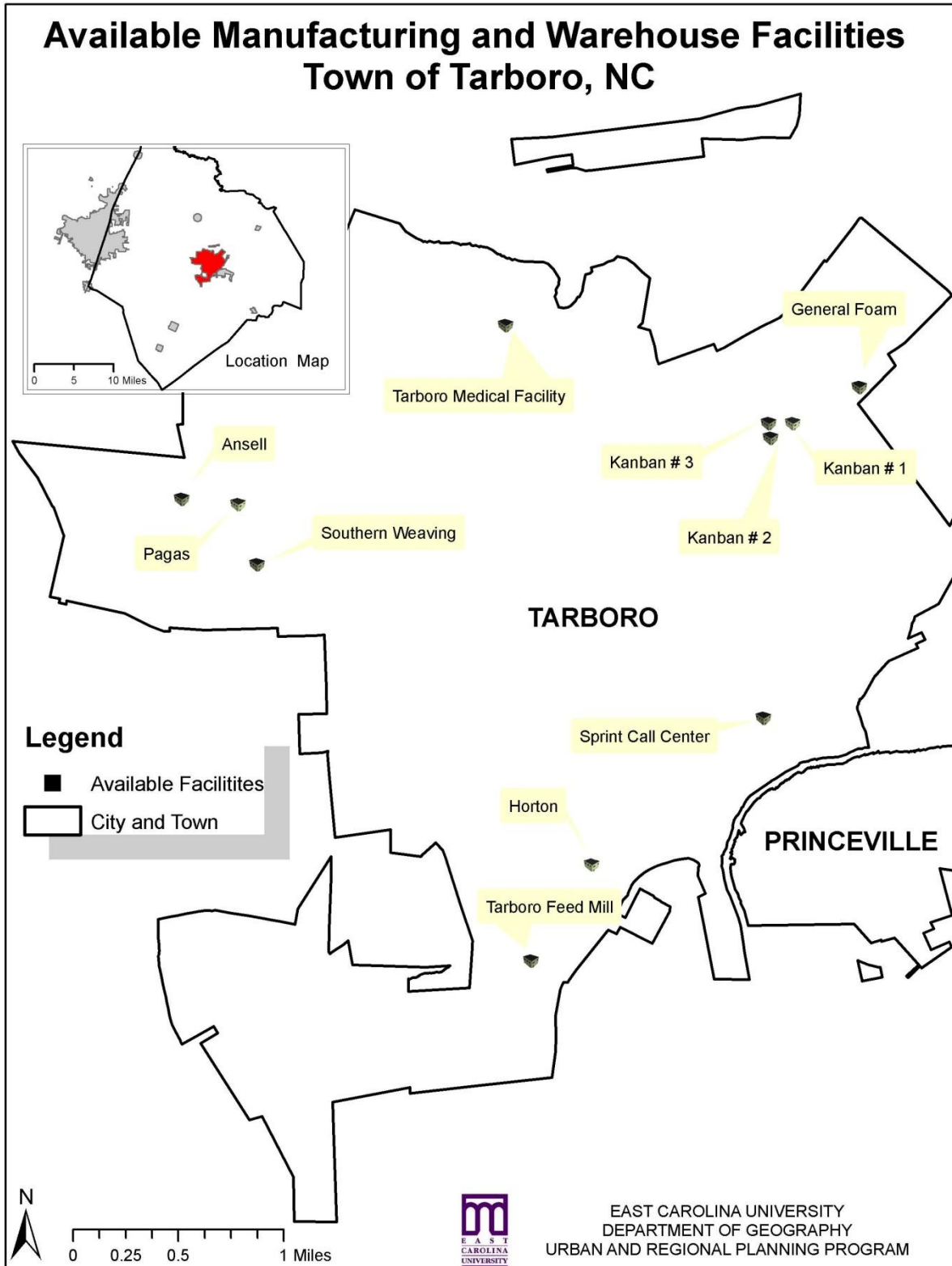
A building representative of reuse possibilities

Industrial Sites and Industry Targeting

Edgecombe County has positioned itself well to attract new industry with pre-developed industrial sites. Of special note is the Kingsboro Industrial Park, which is one of the largest and best economic development preferred site as awarded by CSX in its Select Site Program (Source: Edgecombe County 2012 Financial Statements).

The 2011 shell building feasibility report suggested that wholesale trade was an appropriate industry to target, even though shell buildings are not usually designed specifically for wholesale trade establishments. While the payoff in jobs statewide is small for wholesale trade when compared with manufacturing (14.3 employees per establishment in wholesale trade statewide in 2007 versus 50.6 employees per establishment in manufacturing statewide in 2007), the average was about 61 employees per wholesale trade establishment in Edgecombe County in 2007. Furthermore, wholesale trade would match the county's labor force needs better than manufacturing, and wages paid by wholesale establishments have been higher in Edgecombe County, Nash County, and the state than corresponding jobs in manufacturing.





Agriculture

Agriculture remains a viable use of the land in the county, not only because of the inherent value of feeding the population, the financial contribution to the local economy, and the traditional agricultural lifestyle and beauty of the rural areas of the county, but also because, for the most part, agricultural land uses do not require expensive public infrastructure services such as water, sewer, sanitation services, recreation facilities, and local government management services. Agriculture will continue to be a key economic sector to maintain and develop in Edgecombe County for years to come. The 2007 Land Development Plan recommended that agricultural preservation districts be established to help farmers preserve large tracts of prime agricultural land from premature development and to ensure that farming remains a viable part of the local economy.

Infrastructure Development

Edgecombe County has planned and invested public funds to prepare for growth and development, including especially economic development. Such infrastructure investment has included extending public sewer services to key growth areas. Specifically, Edgecombe County provides public sewer to the Kingsboro Industrial Park on the south side of US Highway west of Tarboro. Furthermore, the growth that has occurred in Edgecombe County has been spurred by major transportation investments, in particular U.S. Highway 64 through the county.

Currently, Edgecombe County does not have full internet service coverage (see e-NC Map of DSL Access for Edgecombe County). Expanding internet access will improve individual citizen opportunities and will attract more business development and investment (2007 Land Development Plan). In 2009, the county had solicited preparation of a broadband plan which calls for major improvements to the county's broadband infrastructure.

Education "infrastructure" is also important. Edgecombe County Community College offers a number of technical and associate degree programs that support education and development of the local labor force.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Edgecombe County is included in the Upper Coastal Plain Economic Development District, which has prepared a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the 5-county region which also includes Halifax, Nash, Northampton, and Wilson Counties. The Upper Coastal Plain Council of Government serves as the lead planning organization for the Economic Development District.

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is designed and required to bring together the public and private sectors in creating a comprehensive and performance-based plan to strengthen the regional economy. A CEDS is required to participate in financing programs of the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The most recent CEDS update covers the 2012-2017 time period.

The CEDS document is very much like a strategic plan for the 5-county region, covering strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Highly valued existing assets in the region include transportation, proximity to community and four-year colleges, adequate broadband internet, health care, natural gas, water and sewer, and other utilities and infrastructure. Regional economic development challenges include funding for education, workforce limitations including unwillingness to work, poverty, lack of jobs/unemployment, and lack of regional vision and collaboration. Barriers include lack of education (e.g., dropouts), lack of a skilled workforce, lack of leadership, and lack of funding for rural areas. Education is considered the investment that would have the greatest impact on economic development in the region. Persistent weaknesses include education, substantial employment declines, low wages, poverty, crime, unsafe rental housing, and high debt investment in the Electric Cities system. Emerging weaknesses include the lack of a skilled labor force, increasing poverty, and homelessness.

Opportunities identified in the CEDS report include: better utilization of the region's community colleges to explore new opportunities that address the area's shortcomings; and regional approaches to increasing the region's work force qualifications. Threats include an aging workforce, high unemployment, reduction in federal and state funding for education and economic development; perception of a substandard education system; and a regional youth exodus.

Key economic clusters for the economic development district (5-county region) include biotechnology and pharmaceutical manufacturing, food and value-added agriculture, advanced manufacturing (e.g., motor vehicles manufacturing, paper products manufacturing, nonwoven goods), health care, hospitality and tourism, and distribution and logistics. There is recognized potential in the region for these economic clusters.

The goals, objectives, strategies and actions of the CEDS document are incorporated as appropriate into this comprehensive plan (see Policies chapter). Projects suggested in the CEDS document as they relate to Edgecombe County include: construction of a wastewater pretreatment facility for further development in the Kingsboro area; roadway, water, and sewer extensions for Phase 3 of Crossings at 64; installation of infrastructure at an existing certified industrial site in Tarboro Commerce Center; construction of a methane gas collection and electricity generation system at Edgecombe County solid waste landfill; construction of a shell building (50,000 square feet, expandable to 100,000 square feet) in Phase 2 of Fountain Industrial Park; a new water reuse plant in Rocky Mount; countywide broadband deployment; a worker training program; a countywide, themed tourism plan incorporating all of the county's tourism assets; strengthened vocational-technical and adult literacy programs; the building of three community centers in rural areas of the county to provide family services, recreation and outreach posts for county services; and building a speculative facility to be marketed to firms in high-growth sectors (i.e., Edgecombe County Economic Development Center).

Statewide Economic Development Strategies

The State of North Carolina uses a tier designation to identify and assist more economically distressed counties, such as Edgecombe, with economic development. The three tier designations, which are mandated by State law, determine eligibility levels for a variety of state

funding opportunities to assist in economic development. The tier designations are intended to help ensure that less prosperous counties have the economic tools and assistance they need to attract economic development. The tier system calls for the 40 most distressed counties to be designated Tier 1 counties, the middle 40 counties to be designated as Tier 2, and the 20 most prosperous counties to be designated Tier 3 counties. Edgecombe County is designated as a Tier 1 County. Businesses locating or expanding in counties that are more economically distressed received greater tax credits than those that locate in more prosperous areas. Potential benefits to companies locating in Edgecombe County as a Tier 1 county include a \$12,500 tax credit per new job (2007 Land Development Plan).

In 2001, in response to business and industry closures and the loss of thousands of jobs in the manufacturing and textile industries, the State of NC initiated the 21st Century Community program. Through this program, Edgecombe County, along with 25 other counties within the state, was targeted to receive special attention for economic development. The program encourages investment in education and a skilled workforce, recognizes communities with local leaders who are committed to making progress that will yield the greatest results; and builds upon the specific strengths of each individual county as the foundation for economic development strategies (2007 Land Development Plan).

Federal Economic Development Strategies

The White House Council on Strong Cities, Strong Communities Initiative is a new approach to economic development support at the federal level that combines funding and hands-on technical assistance services for distressed communities across the country. The SC2 initiative was first launched in July 2011 with six participating pilot communities across the country and it has since been expanded to include additional communities, including Rocky Mount. Local officials hope this program will strengthen the City's struggling local economy (UNC School of Government Webpage).

Tourism

Edgecombe County has many notable tourist attractions that draw more and more visitors every year, many of whom decide to move to the county. Tourism has grown to generating nearly \$40 million yearly for the local economy (Source: Edgecombe County website).

The 2007 Land Development Plan suggested that Edgecombe County needs to work with state and federal agencies to expand tourism opportunities as another means for rural economic development. As noted above, a countywide tourism plan and marketing strategy is suggested for Edgecombe County in the CEDS document. Components of tourism include natural resources (ecotourism or sustainable tourism), heritage tourism, and agri-tourism. Tourism development has the potential to attract retirees, entrepreneurs and younger workers to diversify the local economy and improve quality of life.

In 2008, a sustainable tourism plan was prepared for Edgecombe County. That plan provides recommendations, including hiring a county tourism director, and suggestions for how to best market the County's assets. It addressed not only recreation-based tourism but also heritage

tourism. The recommendations related to heritage tourism are summarized in Chapter 4 of this comprehensive plan.

The 2008 sustainable tourism plan recognizes that the landscape of Edgecombe County is ideal for many outdoor recreation activities. There are also opportunities to discover the arts in Edgecombe County. The plan calls for a Tourism Development Authority to maximize assets as tourism products, and a Tourism Development Authority is in the process of being established in the county. The 2008 plan also contains many specific recommendations which are integrated into the comprehensive plan implementation work program.

Branding and Cataloging

During one of the stakeholder meetings convened for the comprehensive plan update in 2014, it was strongly suggested that the county reconsider its economic development strategies to focus on smaller, incremental steps, such as branding and cataloging local products (e.g., locally grown foods) for sale. This strategy is largely consistent with detailed suggestion in the 2008 sustainable tourism plan and is suggested as a high priority for the county.

Renewable Energy and Green Industries

Another potential economic development strategy is to pursue renewable energy resources, especially solar electricity (photovoltaics). The QVC facility in Edgecombe County already has an extensive array of solar electricity panels (pictured right). With so much land available and good climate for solar energy production, Edgecombe County has considerable promise for the development of green industry.



Solar Electric Panels at QVC

CHAPTER 4 HISTORY AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

HISTORIC NARRATIVE

This historic narrative emphasizes evolution of the settlement pattern in Edgecombe County and factors influencing those changes (especially transportation), as well as town planning in Tarboro. The narrative is adapted from Monika Fleming's *Edgecombe County: Along the Tar River* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing 2003).

Though settlers arrived in the Edgecombe County area before hand, it wasn't established until 1741 when Edgecombe was made the 14th county in the colony. During the 1740s and 1750s, Edgecombe County was the most populated county in the colony, with more than 10,000 residents. In 1746 the General Assembly divided Edgecombe County in half to create Granville County and part of Warren and Vance Counties. The population in the 1750s in Edgecombe County was approximately 11,000. In 1758, the 1,200 square miles north of Fishing Creek was removed by act from Edgecombe County to create Halifax County. In 1777, yet another part of Edgecombe County was taken to form Nash County. The Town of Tarboro was incorporated in 1760.

Early Transportation and Community Settlement

The Tar River was an early transportation route for Tuscarora Indians, and river transportation had a major initial influence on settlement patterns as the major transportation means during the first two centuries in Edgecombe County. Early settlers used boats to travel up the Tar River from the coast. Other early settlers migrated using horses and wagon, many of them moving south from Virginia.

Tarboro was the most inland point of navigation on the Tar River and is one of the ten oldest towns in North Carolina. It grew up as a river port trading center with warehouses along the river for storage of goods. Tarboro was chartered by the General Assembly on November 30, 1760, as "Tarborough." The initial town limits consisted of about 150 acres laid out in a grid system with streets 70 feet wide and 121 one-half acre lots. There were 50 acres surrounding the town which were set aside as the town common. In 1800, Tarboro had only about 500 residents.

Edgecombe County's early settlers also chose Sparta (now referred to as "Old Sparta"), which was also a river port with storage warehouses in early times. Flat bottom boats, and later steamboats, carried products downriver to Washington. Other early settlers chose land along Autry's (Otter's) Creek in the southern portion of the county.



Sign Commemorating Old Sparta Settlement

A textile mill was established at the Falls of the Tar River in 1818 which became the center of a new community named Rocky Mount. The first steamboat arrived in Tarboro in 1836. The first railroad—Wilmington & Weldon—was completed through Edgecombe County in 1840. Later, the railroad line became the dividing line between Edgecombe and Nash Counties. A supply area set up for railroad crews and supplies between Rocky Mount and the Halifax County line evolved into Battleboro.

By 1850 Tarboro was home to more than 1,000 persons. In 1851 there were post offices in Tarboro, Sparta, Battleboro, Rocky Mount, Joyner's Depot and Statonsburg (the latter two are now in Wilson County). In 1855 the General Assembly created Wilson County from parts of Edgecombe, Nash, Johnston, and Wayne Counties. Except for a few minor boundary adjustments, Edgecombe County has remained the same size (507 square miles) since 1855.

In the 1850s the county had eighteen industries, including eight turpentine distilleries. The largest employer in the county at that time was Battle Cotton Mills, which used mostly cotton grown locally. Tarboro continued to grow through the 1850s, and a Wilmington & Weldon Railroad spur line opened up from Rocky Mount to Tarboro in the summer of 1860. Rocky Mount's population in 1860 was about 400 persons.

The Civil War

In November 1862 Union troops from Plymouth advanced toward Tarboro, destroying the town of Hamilton, but then retreated to Plymouth after hearing of a heavy Confederate troop concentration in the Tarboro area. A second Union raid was planned for Tarboro in July 1863; a Union Cavalry force left New Bern, spent time in taverns in Greenville, burned the Greenville bridge across the Tar River, and then marched to Sparta. The Union force split into two forces, with one heading to Tarboro and the other to Rocky Mount. Union troops succeeded in reaching Rocky Mount and dismantled the railroad and burned factories (including the Battle Mills) there. When Union troops reached Tarboro, they destroyed steamboats and railroad equipment. Confederate forces in Tarboro forced the Union troops back across the Tar River Bridge at Tarboro, where it was set on fire by the Union troops but Confederate troops extinguished the blaze before much damage was done. Union troops were pursued down through the Sparta area, but most of them escaped across Otter's Creek and eventually returned to New Bern. Confederate troops took approximately 2,400 Union captives back to Tarboro, where they were kept in a stockade built on the town common until they could be transported elsewhere to Confederate prisons. Federal troops occupied Tarboro for a short period of time in 1865.

Post Civil War Transportation and Settlement

After the Civil War, steamboat river traffic resumed with regular routes from Washington to Tarboro, bringing fresh seafood upriver. Also after the Civil War, immigrants came to Edgecombe County from various parts of Europe. The Battle Mill in Rocky Mount was rebuilt, but it was destroyed again by arson in 1867. It was rebuilt yet again. Rocky Mount incorporated as a city in 1867.

In 1870, Tarboro was home to 1,300 residents, and Main Street in Tarboro by 1873 boasted five different oyster bars. In 1878, Tarboro expanded Main Street from the town common north to the railroad depot. A railroad line was extended from Tarboro to Williamston in 1882. The Tar River and railroads continued to be the most common means of travel and transport of goods. High yields of cotton continued to be transported downriver to Greenville and Washington.

By the 1870s, Edgecombe County had grown to more than 23,000, almost two-thirds of whom were former slaves. Town of Whitakers incorporated in 1875, and the Town of Sharpsburg incorporated in 1883. Many former slaves from Tarboro moved across the Tar River and created the community of Liberty Hill (now Princeville). African-American churches were established in Liberty Hill (now Princeville) in 1866, at Red Hill near Whitakers in 1875, and in Leggett in 1879. In 1885 the Town of Princeville was incorporated; it was the first Black incorporated town in the U.S. The Town of Conetoe incorporated in 1887 and the Town of Speed incorporated in 1894. Sparta and Whitakers by the 1880s also had commercial activity with general stores and other establishments. Business activities existed by the 1880s also in Battleboro and Hartsboro (between Tarboro and Rocky Mount, today known as Hartsease) in addition to Tarboro, Rocky Mount, Old Sparta, and Whitakers. By 1890 Sparta had eight general stores, three liquor stores, a saloon, and a mill. A serious fire burned much of Princeville in October 1893.

In Tarboro, between 1880 and 1900, another 50 immigrant families had moved into Edgecombe County from Russia, Poland, Holland, and Germany. Tarboro Cotton Mills opened in 1888 and the first tobacco warehouse opened in Tarboro in 1891. Mill villages cropped up during the 1890s, and Jewish immigrants built Victorian mansions along north Main Street by 1900. Also in the 1890s, Tarboro expanded with the suburbs of Hilmaville, West Tarboro, Dancy Field, and the Depot. As of 1896, the county had 34 white public schools and 37 public schools for black students. By 1900, Tarboro had 2,500 residents.

A decision in 1899 by Atlantic Coast Railroad to select Rocky Mount as the location for a railroad repair shop led to growth and development in that area. By 1898, the East Carolina Railway was constructed from Tarboro south to Hookerton in Greene County, leading to the development of the communities of Macclesfield (incorporated in 1901) and Pinetops (incorporated in 1903) and to the demise of Old Sparta as railroads became preferred over river transportation. The community of Knights Station in the eastern edge of the county was renamed Speed in 1901; it was the smallest community in Edgecombe County at that time, with only 70 residents.

By the time of the 1907 Soil Survey of Edgecombe County, Tarboro had a population of about 5,000 (substantial growth in the early 1900s if accurate) and Rocky Mount had a population of about 7,000 residents. In the 1907 Soil Survey it was observed that the county had many beautiful frame houses, neatly painted and surrounded by oak or elm tree groves. The soil surveyor also observed that the county had fairly good dirt roads, good public schools and churches, and rural free delivery of mail. The 1907 Soil Survey also indicates that several large plantations were operating in the county at that time; the smallest farms were about 100 acres and some were as large as 500 to 1,200 acres or more (1907 Soil Survey). A test farm of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture also operated in the county at that time. Whitakers by 1915 was the second largest town in the county with more than 1,000 residents.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

The inventory of historic resources provided here emphasizes resources outside the Town of Tarboro and the City of Rocky Mount. The 2007 Land Development Plan included an inventory of historic resources in the county’s planning jurisdiction; however, it was limited to listings on the National Register of Historic Places shown in dot-map format (see next page).

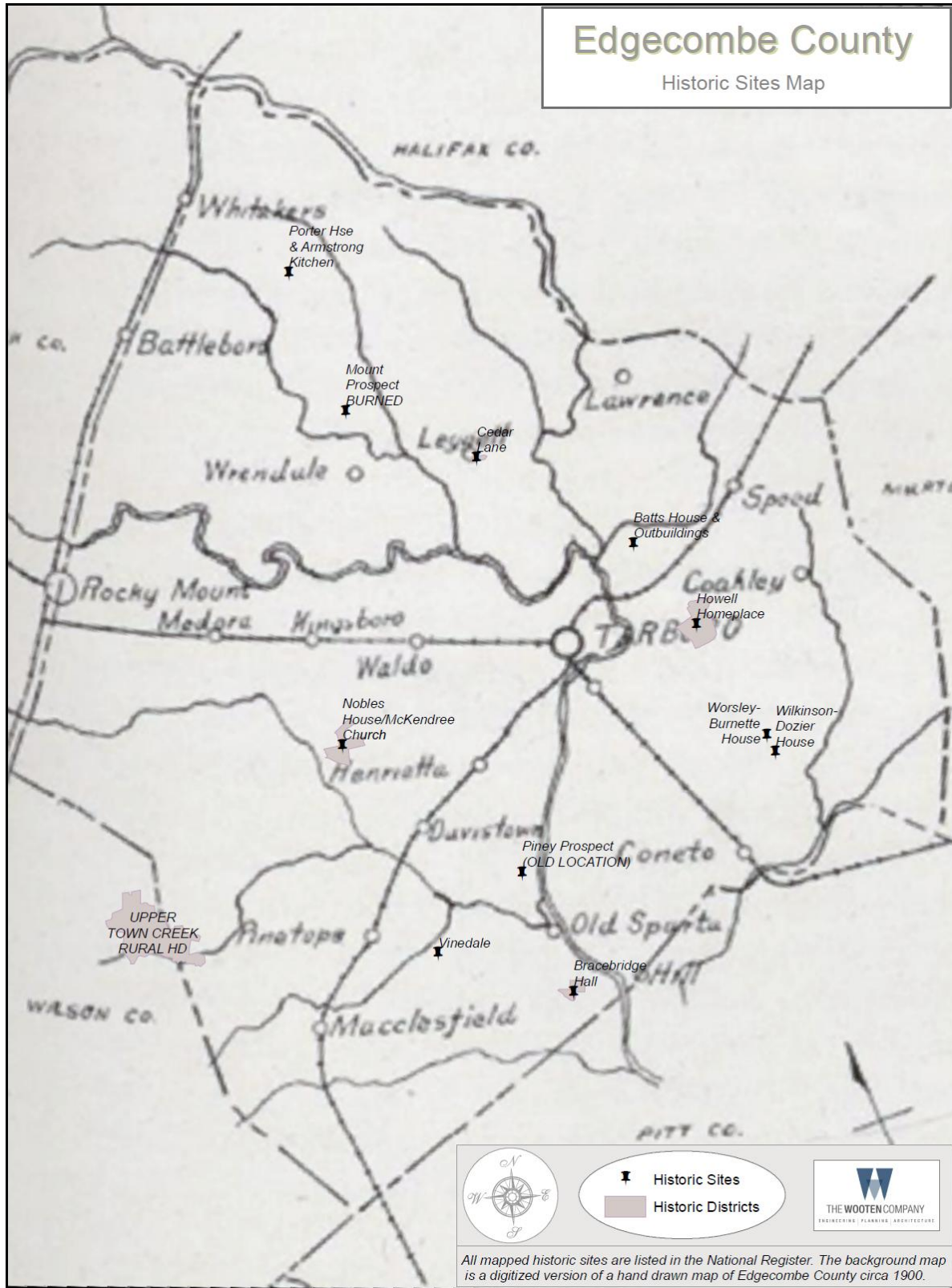
The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts worthy of preservation for their significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, and culture. The National Register was established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. A listing of places on the National Register of Historic Places is available from the National Park Service. There are 36 properties in Edgecombe County listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Table 4.1 shows selected historic resources listed on the National Register; it excludes numerous resources within Tarboro and Rocky Mount.

**Table 4.1
Historic Resources Listed on the
National Register of Historic Places in Edgecombe County
(Excluding Rocky Mount and Tarboro Proper), 2012**

Name	Settlement	Location
Old Town Plantation	Battleboro	NC 97
St. John's Episcopal Church	Battleboro	E. Main Street
Wilkinson-Dozier House	Conetoe	SR 15
Worsley-Burnette House	Conetoe	SR 1526 N of jct. with SR 1540
Cedar Lane	Leggett	N of Tarboro off NC 44
Mount Prospect (gone)	Leggett	Jct. of SR 1409 and SR 1428
Bracebridge Hall	Macclesfield	7714 Colonial Rd., both sides of Colonial Rd. at Carr Farm Rd.
Dr. A. B. Nobles House and McKendree Church	Mercer	NW of Mercer on SR 1224
Vinedale	Pinetops	SW of NC 42/43 and SR 1122
Upper Town Creek Rural Historic District	Wilson	(part in Edgecombe County, listed as Wilson County)
Princeville School	Princeville	US 258, 0.3 mi. E of NC 64
Batts House and Outbuildings	Tarboro	E side of US 258 N, 2.05 mi. S of NC 1513 5098 US 258 N
Howell Homeplace	Tarboro	SR 1517
Piney Prospect	Tarboro	5.7 mi. S of Tarboro off SR 1601
Porter Houses and Armstrong Kitchen	Whitakers	821 Wells Rd.

Note: Excludes multiple properties and districts within Tarboro and Rocky Mount listed on the National Register
Source: National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, 2012.

The source of documentation for the descriptions that follow are the nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, as accessed via the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, State Historic Preservation Office, Office of Archives and History.



Selected Historic Resources (National Register of Historic Places)

Old Town Plantation (ca 1742)

Old Town Plantation is located off US 97 about 4.7 miles east of its junction with US 301 in Battleboro. The plantation house, which is significant architecturally, is a one and one-half story frame gambrel roof dwelling. Several outbuildings including a log storage house are intact. Old Town Plantation House was thought to be built in 1742, and it is thought to be the oldest dwelling in Edgecombe County. It is notable for its long association with the Battle family; in 1747 it was owned by Elisha Battle, who served the state in many capacities, and the property remained with the Battle family for more than a century. The house is an interesting remnant of the early influx of planters into North Carolina's Coastal Plain. The plantation is said to have been placed on the site of an Indian village.

St. John's Episcopal Church (1891)

The church is located on E. Main Street in Battleboro. The church was erected in 1891. It is significant for its contribution to social history religion made by it and other churches of its type. The church building is also significant architecturally.

Wilkinson-Dozier House (1826 or earlier)

The Wilkinson-Dozier House is a traditional federal, two-story frame farmhouse. It is architecturally significant because it is an excellent example of sophisticated vernacular late federal architecture which flourished in eastern North Carolina during the early nineteenth century.

Worsley-Burnette House (ca 1830)

This nationally significant dwelling was constructed in 1830. It is located in the rural southeastern corner of Edgecombe County, off SR 1526 north of its junction with SR 1540 near Conetoe. The Worsley-Burnette House is a representative example of a group of well-detailed Federal style plantation houses built in rural Edgecombe County during the 1820s and 1830s. It is a two-story federal hall and parlor plan house, expanded in 1850 with a Greek Revival style end wing. Four small outbuildings were constructed after 1930 on the site. The boundaries of the Worsley-Burnette House nomination include the house and its accompanying yard. These approximately seven acres of landscaped lawn have historically been associated with the house and provide an appropriate setting for it.

Cedar Lane (late 1840s)

Cedar Lane is located on the east side of NC 44, about 0.35 miles southeast of NC 97 near Leggett. It was the seat of a modestly prosperous Edgecombe County plantation before and after the Civil War. Cedar Lane is one of northern Edgecombe County's finest antebellum houses. It is a substantial, yet simple Greek Revival style farmhouse with contemporary outbuildings. Cedar Lane is representative of a type and kind of vernacular Greek Revival house which helped to create the image of the successful antebellum agricultural complex. The plantation house with

its complex of outbuildings is a representative example of vernacular Greek Revival architecture and with its substantial and straightforward design typifies the antebellum house found on medium size farms throughout eastern North Carolina. The structure is a two-story frame house. Archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure.

Batts House and Outbuildings (ca 1810)

This historic resource is located about seven miles north of Tarboro on the east side of US Highway 258 North, 2.05 miles south of SR 1513 (5098 US Highway 258 North). It includes a single-story house, secondary structure, cemetery, and storage. The house is two-story frame and Italianate-style. It is architecturally significant as an intact example of an Italianate-style house. The period of significance for the house is limited to ca. 1880, the approximate construction date. Contemporary outbuildings associated with the Dr. Batts House include a one-story frame doctor's office and a small dairy. The doctor's office (circa 1880) is located approximately forty feet off the northwest corner of the main house in the front yard. The small dairy sits about twelve feet east of the rear kitchen ell. An early-twentieth-century carriage house, later converted to a garage, sits behind the house as does a mid-twentieth-century metal storage shed. A smoke house, wood shed, and corn barn (ca 1810) also contribute to the resource and are eligible given their architectural significance. A family cemetery containing approximately eighteen graves and head stones is located about fifty feet southeast of the residence. The listed resource is 2.44 acres which is or was part of a 458-acre property.

Howell Homeplace (1830s)

This historic resource is located on the north side of SR 1517 1.4 miles east of its junction with US 258. The Howell Homeplace is a wood frame two-story house built during the second quarter of the nineteenth century, that seems to be the epitome of the mid-19th century farmhouse found in eastern North Carolina. Areas of significant include architecture and art. The Howell Homeplace was a working farm for more than a century. The Howell farm has remained in the hands of a single family for a century and a half.

Bracebridge Hall (ca 1835-1840)

This historic resource is located at 7714 Colonial Road, on both sides of Colonial Road (SR 1601) at its junction with Carr Farm Road (SR 1611) near Macclesfield and Old Sparta. The resources date from 1820 with the establishment of the Carr family burying ground. It is significant in the areas of architecture, agriculture, and politics and government. Bracebridge Hall is a large, imposing two-story weatherboarded frame house whose exterior fabric and appearance reflect major building programs in the Greek Revival and Victorian periods. Two 1880s projects further enlarged its footprint and embellished its appearance. Bracebridge Hall stood in the expansive agricultural landscape of broad flat fields and woodlands of south central Edgecombe County, just north of the Edgecombe/Pitt County line, about ten miles due south of Tarboro. It is one of the best preserved plantation complexes in eastern North Carolina. The nomination site was subsequently enlarged to 149.71 acres.

Dr. A. B. Nobles House and McKendree Church (ca 1875)

The Nobles house is a well-preserved example of the Gothic revival cottage style. The dwelling is notable also because it follows the pattern books of A. J. Downing and Calvert Vaux in building fashionable Gothic cottages. It is located on the east and west sides of SR 1224 north of SR 1222 in the vicinity of Mercer. The rural setting is a complement to the dwelling. The cottage, which was the center of a large working farm, stands amid a grove of large deciduous trees, facing the road across a lawn shaded by large magnolias and other trees. McKendree Church was erected in the 1870s and stands across the road, southwest of the main house. The house is also associated with the efforts of some southern farmers to regain pre-Civil War prosperity in agriculture through the use of the latest farming techniques, put into practice on this farm by A. B. Nobles. Dr. A. B. Nobles was a locally prominent farmer, physician, Methodist layman, and occasional political figure; indeed, Dr Nobles was considered one of the county's most successful and enterprising farmers. There are 354.6 acres, included with the house, and surrounding farmland on site is significant not only as the economic basis and agrarian context for the house, but also because of Noble's farming practices there.

Vinedale (ca 1855)

This house, which sits on 9.55 acres, is located at the southwest corner of the junction of NC42/43 and SR 1122 near Pinetops. It was once the center of a thriving agricultural complex. Vinedale is a two-story, three bay, double pile house with a low hipped standing seam tin roof, and it is related to the more elaborate Italianate villas of northern Edgecombe County and Tarboro. It was built by John A. Vine, a well-to-do Edgecombe County planter. Outbuildings on the site include a pack house, sheep shelter, and garage which are of frame construction, but date from several different periods. Archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. The structure and property are significant architecturally and agriculturally. Architecturally, the main house represents an adaptation of more up-to-date Italianate forms to the more familiar, vernacular understanding of the Greek Revival in North Carolina. The plantation house and its outbuildings recall the flourishing plantation culture of antebellum Edgecombe County and the upsurge in prosperity in the 1850s, as well as the continued agricultural economy of the county. Vinedale, with its main house and collection of contemporary outbuildings is likely to yield information about nineteenth century farm life on a prosperous antebellum Edgecombe County plantation.

Upper Town Creek Rural Historic District (ca 1820 to 1860s)

This resource has a Wilson address and much of the historic district is in Wilson County (lands originally part of Edgecombe County). This district extends into part of what is still Edgecombe County, as well. The historic district comprises an undisturbed agricultural landscape that epitomizes the rural development of an overwhelmingly rural (Wilson) county. It is composed of four farms, each under separate ownership, which are contiguous and which contain farm dwellings and farm buildings from over a century and a half ago. It encompasses more than 1750 acres. This district provides one of the few opportunities to see vestiges of two distinct periods of architectural and agricultural culture: the antebellum plantation culture and the tenant system of the post-Civil War era. The earliest house is the William Davis Petway House and Farm (a

traditional Federal style I-house circa 1820). The Upper Town Creek Rural Historic District provides an unusual and interesting group of pre-Civil War plantations and shows their evolution through the early twentieth century with changes in farming methods and crops. The presence of so many early houses and their accompanying outbuildings is a rare survival in Wilson County.

Princeville School (ca 1935)

The former school stands on the south side of N.C. Highway 258, approximately 0.3 miles east of the NC Highway 64 intersection. For approximately twenty-five years, the building served as the elementary school for the town of Princeville, the nation's first municipality founded by African Americans to be incorporated, in 1885. The school is a one-story weatherboarded building, eleven bays wide and two rooms deep, with a recessed front-gable center entrance. The property is significant in terms of ethnic heritage (Black education) as well as architecture. The period of significance is from the late 1930s to the early 1960s. In 1960, the school closed and became Princeville Town Hall, which operated there until 1999. The property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history. Also, the property qualifies for inclusion on the National Register because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. Three additions to the structure have been made since its circa 1935 construction. The Princeville School was not a “Rosenwald” school, but its interior plan resembles Floor Plan 3 of the Rosenwald Community School Plans.

Porter Houses and Armstrong Kitchen (ca 1850)

The Porter Houses, two of the oldest extant dwellings in Edgecombe County, are important examples of rural North Carolina plantation houses built during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. The historic resources consist of a one-and-one-half story gambrel-roofed house with a hall-parlor plan, a one-room heavy-timber frame house, and a one-room frame outbuilding. They are located at 821 Wells Road approximately four miles south of Whitakers. The buildings are significant architecturally. There are few surviving examples of eighteenth-century houses of this scale and finish built for the emerging planter class in the coastal plain of North Carolina. The kitchen is located at the southwestern corner of the gambrel-roofed Porter House. The Armstrong Kitchen is a representative example of a once common, but now rare type of domestic outbuilding in Edgecombe County. A separate kitchen once accompanied most houses during the eighteenth and nineteenth century, but most have either been demolished or incorporated into a rear service ell.

Piney Prospect (Sugg House) (1800)

Piney Prospect was originally built around 1800 as a one and one-half story frame structure. It is significant architecturally, as it is one of the few surviving works of Peter Evans. In 1820 the original house was raised to two stories. A large barn on the site was constructed about 1860.

Other Historic Resources Not on National Register

In addition to the National Register of Historic Places listing, the North Carolina Office of Historic Preservation provides a Geographic Information System service which shows locations and links to data for historic resources that have been surveyed but which are not necessarily on the National Register of Historic Places. For examples, several historic resources listed on the State Register of Historic Places are not included in the list provided in Table 1. For more information, see: <http://gis.ncdcr.gov/hpoweb/>

HERITAGE TOURISM POTENTIAL

The 2007 Land Development Plan called for the county to promote the Tar River Paddle Trails and Civil War Trail Sites and explore ways to enhance these tourist attractions. The 2007 plan also suggested that the county work in cooperation with local towns to continue to provide places people view as communities, ensuring that local nostalgia is not lost with future development. The preservation of historic resources is therefore a critical component of that strategy.

The 1997 Land Development Plan recommended that the county create a Historic Preservation Advisory Committee to promote interest and education in the preservation of historic landmarks located in the planning jurisdiction and the County in general. This committee would be charged with the preparation of an updated survey of past and present historic properties and structures in the County's jurisdiction, including an interpretation of the historical built environment of the community as it relates to the social, cultural and ethnic background of the community. However, the 2007 Land Development Plan indicated that this goal was not considered a high priority in the future. In 2014, it is time that the county seriously considers the value of its rural historic resources and integrates them more thoroughly into planning efforts, including heritage tourism.

The 2008 Sustainable Tourism Plan prepared for Edgecombe County makes very important connections to heritage tourism efforts that must be connected here. One of the goals of that plan is to preserve and celebrate the small town charm, arts, atmosphere and culture of Edgecombe County. Edgecombe County possesses many unique assets (including historic resources and a rich cultural heritage) that, if properly developed and managed, can create an image as a destination. As noted in the 2008 plan, "Because the county is one of the oldest in the state and almost became the capital, its industrial, political, and social roots are over 250 years deep." The county's agricultural history can be transformed into a tourism product. The plan finds further that "Edgecombe County is a crossroads of history, transportation, and waterways. With the rich history of Tarboro and Princeville, the amenities of Rocky Mount, the recreation opportunities of the Tar River and the easy access to I-95 and US-64, Edgecombe County has the ability to attract many types of visitor markets." The history lessons available in Edgecombe County are invaluable for tourism development and offer one of the most promising avenues for growth in the tourism industry.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The 2008 sustainable tourism plan makes a number of recommendations related to heritage tourism, articulated within a broader context of implementing the sustainable tourism plan:

- 1. Develop a script for 12-15 historic tours of varying length and focus.** These scripts will serve as training materials for a cadre of local guides that must be groomed in the coming years. Historic tours should include: Tarboro Historic District National Recreation Trail; Princeville Community Tour; Historic Homes and Family Stories of the county; Agricultural county heritage (which could include Pinetops and Macclesfield); African-American heritage; and Ghost/historical stories.
- 2. Expand the ghost tour offerings, especially in the historical areas of the county.** Ghost tours have become increasingly popular in places with well preserved historic areas like Edgecombe County.
- 3. Continue efforts to partner with Edgecombe Community College to offer classes in Historical Preservation.** Historic Preservation certificate programs are a growing curriculum across the United States. These programs give students a unique opportunity to learn about such topics as conservation, sustainability, technique and treatment of historic structures. In turn, students can apply their knowledge to assist with the ongoing preservation of Edgecombe County's historical structures and areas.
- 4. Expand the programs of History Days to include more interactive/storytelling activities for children and adults.** Devise a 10-year plan to add new elements each year. A storytelling contest or workshop, brief performances where the public is asked to participate in the acting, cooking and culinary aspects such as a cookbook which includes traditional family recipes handed down generations, dancing lessons with optional dance in period costume, and creation of a county timeline and mural are all activities to expand the popular weekend event. History Days packages should be formed in partnership with local lodging and dining establishments.
- 5. Create an African-American Heritage Trail.** Rocky Mount, Princeville, Tarboro, Bricks, and many, many other sites in the county exemplify the contributions of African-Americans. Work with Phoenix Society, Rocky Mount-Edgecombe County CDC, Buck Leonard Association and many other individual and organizational leaders to create a detailed trail itinerary that would be suitable for self-guided driving tours and tour operators and school groups. Explore opportunities for extending the trail beyond the county borders to establish a larger footprint, increased visibility, and collaborative promotional opportunities with surrounding counties.
- 6. Continue development and promotion of the Princeville Heritage Museum.** Continue to expand interpretation for the museum and the community's story. Increase awareness of the museum by collaborating with other tourism promotions in the county. Create programs within the museum to foster community, children and youth development, and visitor education. Work with North Carolina school districts to create field trips to the

museum. Write grant proposals to create a video of Princeville's history that can be sold on location. Create a brief marketing plan that can be implemented in partnership with the tourism roundtable and/or the Tourism Development Authority.

- 7. Collaborate between Tarboro and Princeville to offer tours that cover the whole area.** Alternatively, create a package where a visitor who pays full price for one town tour receives the other town tour for half price. Tour formats should be varied: driving tours, walking tours, guided and unguided.
- 8. Tap into the African-American group tour market.** Nearly three times as many African Americans participate in group tours compared to travelers overall. Edgecombe County should be listed on the Destination Carolinas motor coach group tour website not only for civil war heritage trails, but also for African American heritage and cultural sites. The Phoenix Society describes many potential tour sites in the brochures they publish.

CHAPTER 5 NATURAL RESOURCES

Physical conditions within a community – both natural and manmade – have a tremendous influence on the pattern and intensity of development. Natural ecological systems – stormwater drainage systems, floodplains, wetlands, and soils – should be considered in terms of how they shape the use of the environment as well as from the point of view of how development impacts these natural systems. There has been a growing realization that protecting the natural environment from undue harm is cost efficient in the long term and also that the wise use of limited resources will ensure that future generations will not be burdened with the cost of cleaning up or restoring damaged ecological systems.

A first step in preserving natural resources is to have a current assessment of the components that make up the ecosystem (2008 Sustainable Tourism Plan). In prior planning efforts, Edgecombe County recognized that its strong assets include beautiful rural vistas, natural areas, and the Tar River and its major tributaries. Treasured natural resources also include prime farmlands. The 2007 Land Development Plan encouraged growth while preserving and protecting the unique physical character and social assets of the predominant rural lifestyle that makes the County a unique place to live.

GEOLOGY AND PHYSIOGRAPHY

Edgecombe County lies entirely within the western plain of the Atlantic Coastal Plain physiographic province (1907 Soil Survey). The Fall Zone, or the boundary between the piedmont and coastal plain, passes through Whitakers, Battleboro, and Rocky Mount. The Coastal Plain province is underlain by a wedge of Tertiary and Cretaceous sediments which are 1,500 to 2,000 feet thick along the coast but become thinner westward until they disappear along the Fall Zone. The Tertiary and Cretaceous formations are covered almost everywhere by Pleistocene terrace deposits (Mundorff 1946). Along the western border of the county, there are several small outcrops of older underlying crystalline rocks; along the Tar River near the Edgecombe County – Nash County line, there are some granite rock outcrops (1907 Soil Survey).

The surface is formed by the terraces of the Penholoway, Wicomico and Sunderland formations of the Pleistocene age. The formations are generally about 20 to 30 feet thick and consist of sands and sandy clays. The Penholoway Terrace lies east of the Wicomico Terrace and includes areas north and west of Tarboro at an elevation 45 to 60 feet above sea level; it is several miles wide on the north and east sides of the Tar River and extends for considerable distances up the principal tributaries of the Tar River. The Penholoway Terrace is very flat, and large areas are poorly drained (Mundorff 1946)

The Wicomico Terrace covers extensive area in eastern and northern Edgecombe County; it is quite flat and poorly drained. This terrace also occupies narrow strips south and west of the Tar River and along its tributaries. The seaward side of the Wicomico Terrace lies at an elevation of about 65 to 70 feet above sea level (Mundorff 1946).

The Sunderland Terrace, which lies chiefly within the Coastal Plain and covers a belt 18 to 25 miles wide across several counties including Edgecombe County, slopes from about 170 feet at its inner boundary to about 110 feet. The Sunderland Terrace occupies a large part of the county south and west of the Tar River (Mundorff 1946).

A small section of the downstream portion of the Tar River basin is part of the Talbot Terrace (Otte 1985).

ELEVATION, TOPOGRAPHY, RELIEF, TERRAIN, AND LAND FORM

The highest elevations in Edgecombe County are at about 137 feet, along the western edge. The lowest elevation in Edgecombe County, at about 35 feet above sea level, is along the Tar River as it leaves the county.¹ The elevation of Rocky Mount is about 115 feet, while Tarboro is at an elevation of 50 feet. Leggett is at an elevation of 63 feet, while Pinetops is at 100 feet mean sea level (1907 Soil Survey). Topography is characterized by broad, flat uplands and broad, sandy drainageways (Mundorff 1946).

Terrain ranges from low, rolling hills in the western part of the county to more subdued topography in the eastern part of the county, where maximum relief is about 50 feet. The county slopes very gently eastward and southeastward. Approximately 82% of the county is considered nearly level, 17% gently sloping, and 1% sloping to strongly sloping. Most of the strongly sloping land in Edgecombe County is located along the south valley slopes of the major streams. Bluffs up to 30 feet high exists on the outside of many of the meandering loops of the Town Creek stream channel, though most of the Town Creek floodplain consists of terraces 5 to 10 feet above the level of the creek (Otte 1985).

About 27% of the county's land lies between 10 and 50 feet mean sea level; The land less than 50 feet above mean sea level is concentrated along the Tar River, Town Creek - Cokey Swamp, Deep Creek, Fishing Creek, and Swift Creek - White Oak Swamp floodplains. 50% of the county's land area lies between 50 and 100 feet; these areas include the flat upland in the eastern part of the county and the valley slopes and some floodplain land in the western half of the county. The land from 100 to 150 feet above mean sea level (23% of the county land area) makes up most of the broad, flat to gently rolling uplands in the western half of the county (Otte 1985).

Based on soil data, Edgecombe County is divided into three land form types: flood plains (9.3% of the county), stream terraces (33.7%), and uplands (56.2%). As of 1985, 0.8% of the county's land area consisted of urbanized land, open pits and open water. Permanent surface water constitutes approximately 0.4% of the county's land area (Otte 1985).

¹ The 1907 soil survey indicates the lowest elevation is approximately 35 feet on the Tar River, which seems much more realistic than that observed by Mundorff (1946) which places the lowest elevation at 10 feet mean sea level.

HYDROLOGY

Edgecombe County is drained by the Tar River and its tributaries. The Tar River is a large, through-flowing stream that has cut down 60 to 70 feet below the general land surface. The principal tributaries of the Tar River in Edgecombe County are Fishing Creek, Swift Creek, Deep Creek, Conetoe Creek, Cokey Swamp, and Town Creek. The largest drainages in Edgecombe County are the Tar River, Fishing Creek, and Swift Creek. Streams in Edgecombe County are nearly parallel and flow southeast (Mundorff 1946).



Tar River at NC Highway 42

The Tar River enters the county just north of Rocky Mount, flows in an easterly direction, swings around Tarboro, and then pursues a southerly course out of the county (1907 Soil Survey). The Tar River is a defining characteristic of Edgecombe County. It is a scenic resource of great value to the community. The 2007 Land Development Plan indicates that efforts should be made to improve views of and access to the river as an asset to citizens and visitors alike.

Except for a small area (approximately 4% of total land) within the Neuse River Basin at the southern tip of Edgecombe County, the County is located entirely within the Tar-Pamlico River Basin. The Tar-Pamlico River basin, one of just four river basins contained entirely within the State of North Carolina, covers 5,440 square miles. The Basin originates in the upper Piedmont region in Person and Granville counties and flows southeast toward the Pamlico Sound. The main stem of the basin is the Tar River. Below Washington, it becomes the Pamlico River. The Tar River is primarily a free-flowing freshwater stream, while the Pamlico River is entirely estuarine.

Ground Water

The water table is usually less than 15 below the surface of the ground (Otte 1985). Edgecombe County is one of fifteen counties in northeastern NC within an identified “capacity use area.” This area, designated in 2002 by the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission, has traditionally relied too heavily on groundwater aquifers that are being overused. If direct withdrawals from the aquifers are not reduced, the aquifers will fail to meet the area’s water supply needs in the future. Although Edgecombe County’s public water supply comes from a surface water intake on the Tar River and does not withdraw water directly from aquifers, ground water must still be considered an important resource that is not entirely replenishable.



Capacity Use Area, NC Division of Water Resources, 2007

Flood Plains and Flood Elevations

Approximately 34% of the county experiences some flooding on a regular or irregular basis (Otte 1985). The largest issue that surfaced most during preparation of the county's sustainable tourism plan (2008) was the flood of 1999. The devastation the county experienced from Hurricane Floyd was unparalleled. At that time, the towns of Princeville and Tarboro faced the prospect of being completely destroyed.

Edgecombe County has extensive floodplains along the Tar River and along major tributaries to the river. Floodplains serve an important function during natural hazard events where flood waters overflow stream banks and rivers. A combination of river basin physiography, amount of precipitation, past soil moisture conditions and the degree of vegetative clearing determine the severity of a flooding event.

Several streams, including Conetoe Creek, Deep Creek, and Cokey Swamp, have been channelized. Several of the larger creeks had their main channels dredged and straightened. The soils and vegetation found on the flood plains in Edgecombe County indicate that most surface water is quickly removed from the system (Otte 1985).

Regulatory flood elevations are described for flood sources by the downstream and upstream locations in Table 5.1. The modified base flood elevations are a part of the floodplain management measures that the county is required either to adopt or to show evidence of having in effect in order to qualify or remain qualified for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). These elevations are used by insurance agents and others to calculate

appropriate flood insurance premium rates for new buildings and the contents in those buildings. The modified base flood elevations together with the floodplain management criteria required by 44 CFR 60.3, are the minimum that are required. The corresponding Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for the base flood elevations are available for inspection at the county’s map repository (i.e., Edgecombe County Planning Department).

**Table 5.1
Flood Elevation Determinations, 2011, Edgecombe County**

Flooding Source	Location of Referenced Elevation	Elevation in Feet (NAVD)	Communities Affected
Bynum Mill Creek	At the Town Creek confluence	48’	Town of Macclesfield, Town of Pinetops, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Bynum Mill Creek	At the downstream side of North Carolina Highway 124	83’	Town of Macclesfield, Town of Pinetops, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Bynum Mill Run	At the Bynum Mill Creek confluence	66’	Town of Macclesfield, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Bynum Mill Run	Approximately 0.5 mile upstream of South 4th Street Extension (State Route 1112)	95’	Town of Macclesfield, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Cokey Swamp	At the Town Creek confluence	54’	Town of Sharpsburg, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Cokey Swamp	Approximately 70 feet downstream of the railroad	118’	Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Cokey Swamp Tributary	At the Cokey Swamp confluence	88’	Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Cokey Swamp Tributary	Approximately 450 feet upstream of Floods Store Road (State Route 1146).	106’	Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Deep Creek	Approximately 1.0 mile downstream of Dickens Road (State Route 1505)	48’	Town of Speed, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Deep Creek	At the Deep Creek Tributary confluence	56’	Town of Speed, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
East Tarboro Canal	Approximately 1,500 feet upstream of the Tar River confluence	45’	Town of Tarboro, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
East Tarboro Canal	Approximately 590 feet upstream of the railroad	57’	Town of Tarboro, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Fishing Creek	Approximately 500 feet upstream of the Maple Swamp confluence	49’	Town of Leggett, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Fishing Creek	Approximately 1,000 feet downstream of the railroad	95’	Town of Leggett, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Indian Branch	Approximately 175 feet downstream of Gay Road (State Route 1268)	70’	Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Leggett Canal	At the Swift Creek confluence	58’	Town of Leggett, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Leggett Canal	Approximately 0.7 mile upstream of the Swift Creek confluence.	58’	Town of Leggett, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Little Cokey Swamp	At the Cokey Swamp confluence	80’	Unincorporated Edgecombe County

Flooding Source	Location of Referenced Elevation	Elevation in Feet (NAVD)	Communities Affected
Little Cokey Swamp	Approximately 250 feet downstream of Greenpasture Road (State Route 1141)	93'	Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Longs Branch	At the upstream side of the railroad	54'	Town of Speed, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Longs Branch	Approximately 0.9 mile upstream of North Carolina Highway 122.	63'	Town of Speed, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Maple Swamp	At the Fishing Creek confluence	49'	Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Maple Swamp	Approximately 0.6 mile downstream of Bethlehem Church Road (State Route 1431)	59'	Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Moccasin Swamp	At the Swift Creek confluence	73'	Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Moccasin Swamp	Approximately 1.0 mile upstream of the Swift Creek confluence	74'	Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Moore Swamp	At the Maple Swamp confluence	56'	Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Moore Swamp	Approximately 1.1 miles upstream of the Maple Swamp confluence	58'	Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Savage Mill Run	Approximately 250 feet downstream of North Carolina Highway 122	56'	Town of Speed, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Savage Mill Run	Approximately 1.2 miles upstream of North Carolina Highway 122	62'	Town of Speed, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Swift Creek	Approximately 300 feet upstream of West Logsboro Road	51'	Town of Leggett, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Swift Creek	Approximately 400 feet downstream of the railroad	90'	Town of Leggett, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
Town Creek	Approximately 2.0 miles upstream of Colonial Road (State Route 1601)	40'	Town of Pinetops, Unincorporated County
Town Creek	Approximately 140 feet upstream of North Carolina Highway 43.	57'	Town of Pinetops, Unincorporated County
White Oak Swamp	Approximately 1,500 feet downstream of White Oak Swamp Road (State Route 1428)	62'	Town of Whitakers, Unincorporated Edgecombe County
White Oak Swamp	Approximately 630 feet upstream of South Cutchin Street (State Route 1410)	124'	Town of Whitakers, Unincorporated Edgecombe County

Source: Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency. July 7, 2011. 44 CFR Part 67 Proposed Flood Elevation Determinations, Edgecombe County, North Carolina, and Incorporated Areas. *Federal Register* Vol. 76, No. 130, pp. 39800-39804. Washington, DC: Federal Emergency Management Agency, Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration, Engineering Management Branch.

The 2007 Land Development Plan articulates an objective to “discourage development in environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains, where environmental hazards can be expected to occur. Another objective of the plan has been to “discourage inappropriate development in unsuitable or sensitive environmental areas which have natural or man-made constraints and limitations, i.e., FEMA-designated floodplains and delineated wetlands.

Edgecombe County uses a Flood Hazard Overlay Zoning District (FHO) to protect delineated flood hazard areas from inappropriate development. The overlay district is intended to protect people and property from the hazards of flooding. Protecting floodplains from inappropriate development will protect lives, reduce losses from future flood hazard events, and save public dollars that would have to be spent on recovery and repair activities.

Wetlands

Wetlands, usually swamps or marshes, are transitional areas between higher dry ground and water bodies such as streams, rivers, and lakes. Considering the relatively flat topography of Edgecombe County, it is not surprising to see scattered wetlands along streams and in other low lying areas not directly associated with streams, e.g., pocosins and low lying pine growths.

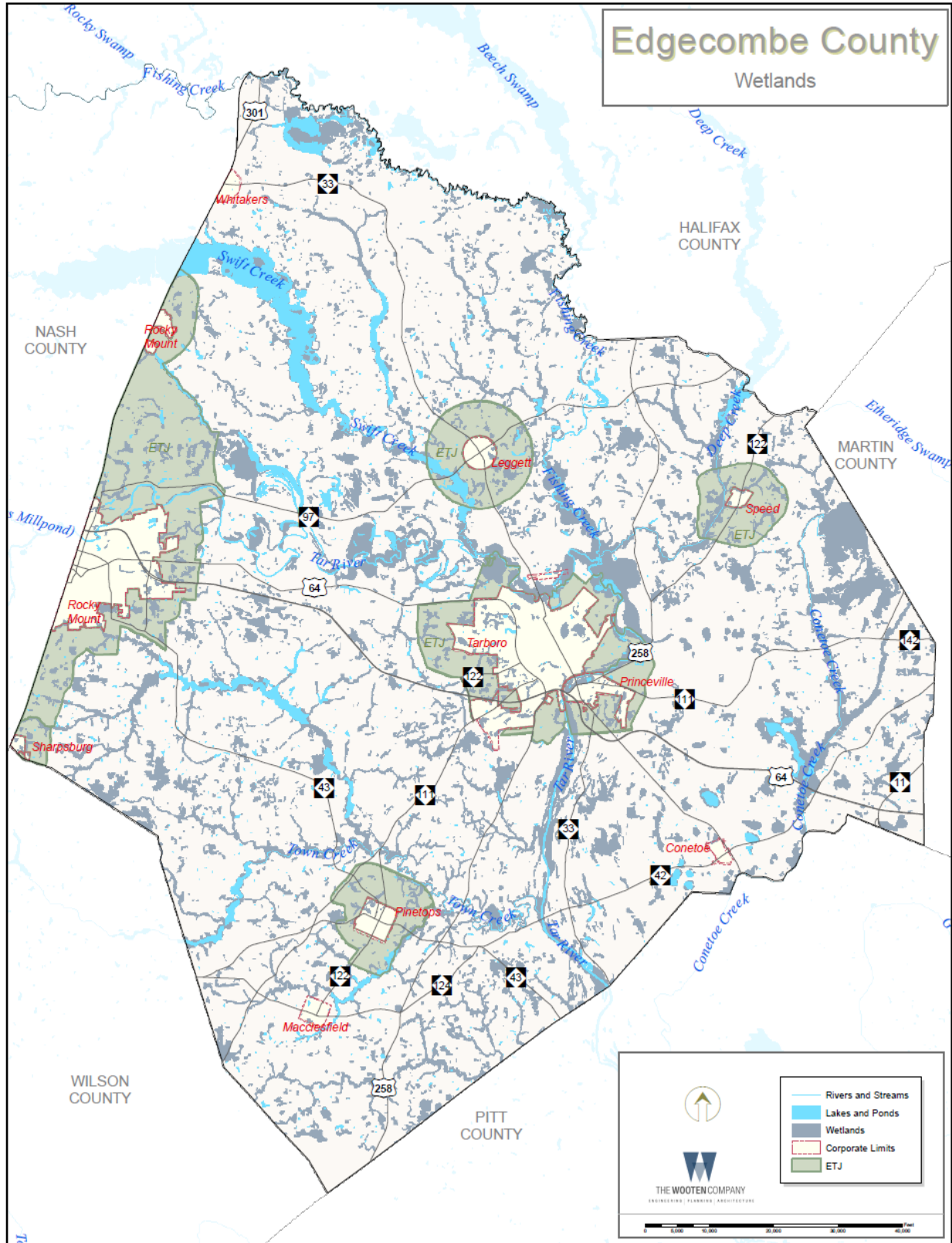
As essential components of the natural ecosystem, wetlands serve to protect water quality and are also important animal habitats. Wetlands need to be identified and considered in land use planning to ensure that these fragile environments are not destroyed by inappropriate development. Historically, those areas with the best soils have been cleared by farmers for row crops, and those areas with less suitable hydric soils (wetlands) have been allowed to remain in or return to tree cover. Thus in rural areas the presence of tree cover can often, but not always, indicate the presence of wetlands.

Wetlands provide a variety of benefits to society and are very important in watershed planning because of the functions they perform. Wetlands provide important protection for flood prevention to protect property values; stream bank stabilization to prevent erosion and downstream sedimentation; water purification and pollutant removal (especially for nitrogen and phosphorus); and habitat for aquatic life and wildlife and endangered species protection. Wetlands adjacent to intermittent and perennial streams are important in protecting water quality in those streams as well as in protecting downstream lakes and estuaries. Wetlands located landward or away from streams also have important water storage capacity and pollutant removal potential. Over the years, approximately half of North Carolina's wetlands have been lost to development, farming and forestry practices. Wetlands now cover only about 25 percent of the state's land area.

Water Quality

An increase in non-permeable surfaces such as roofs and pavement will increase the amount of run-off going into the local streams. Increased run-off can increase the amount of pollutants in waterways and can overwhelm existing storm drain systems. Another objective of the 2007 Land Development Plan is to "require development to use best management practices (BMPs) to reduce storm water runoff and protect water quality."

The NC Department of Water Quality has established minimum development standards within the Tar-Pamlico River Basin, but the State also encourages local governments to be more proactive in planning to assure that new development is done in a manner that does not degrade water quality or increase flooding within the basin.



Wetlands in Edgecombe County

Water Supply Watersheds

In 1989 the North Carolina General Assembly passed the Water Supply Watershed Act which instituted a statewide program to protect drinking water supply watersheds from inappropriate development. The intent of the program was to protect the quality of surface water supplies from non-point source pollution and to minimize stormwater runoff by regulating development densities and the amount of built-upon area within the critical and protected areas of affected watersheds.

In the early 1990s, Edgecombe County adopted a water supply watershed protection ordinance to protect areas designated by the NC Environmental Management Commission (EMC) as WS-IV (Water Supply Watershed Class IV) critical and protected water supply watersheds. As required by the EMC, the ordinance established two protected areas for the Town of Tarboro water supply intake located on the Tar River near the railroad bridge crossing of the river just west of US 258. The ordinance was incorporated as two separate zoning overlay districts when the County's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) was adopted in 1999:

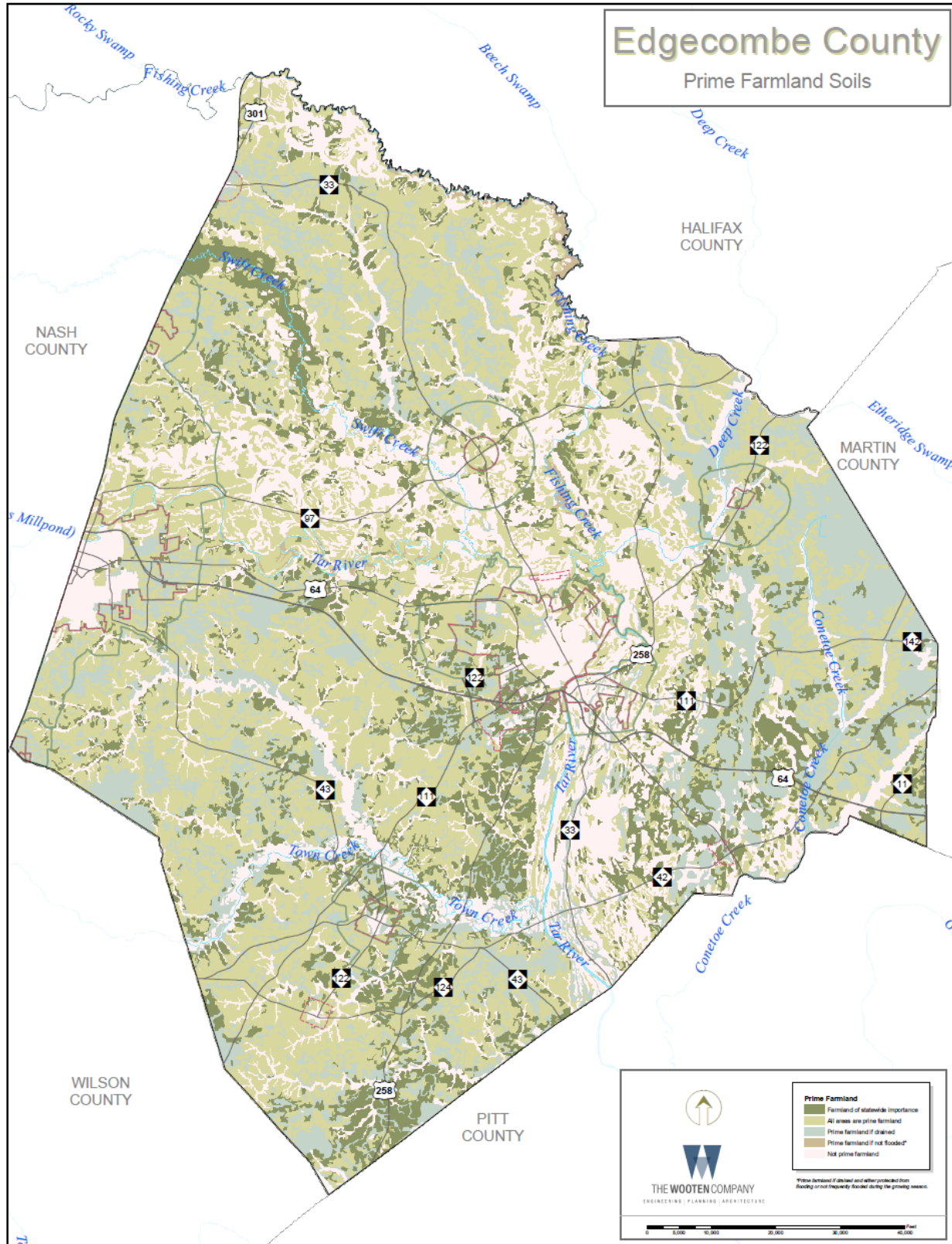
1. The WCA - Watershed Critical Area Overlay District covers the drainage area located one-half mile upstream from the public water supply intake.
2. The WPA - Watershed Protected Area Overlay District is the balance of the protected area located beyond ½ mile but within 10 miles upstream from the public water supply intake.

SOILS

The soils of the county are considered typical Coastal Plain soils. There are two distinct series, the Norfolk and the Portsmouth. The Norfolk Series represents the greater portion of the county. The Portsmouth soil series occupies mainly lowlands along streams (1907 Soil Survey).

There are six major soil associations within Edgecombe County. A soil association is a landscape that has a distinctive proportional pattern of soils normally consisting of one or more major soils and at least one minor soil. Some soils are more suited for construction activities and for septic tank fields than are others. The predominant soil association within Edgecombe County are as follows. Norfolk-Aycock-Wagram accounts for 44% of the total land area within the County; the Goldsboro-Rains Association accounts for 18%; Tarboro-Altavista-Wickham, 17%; Roanoke-Conetoe-Portsmouth, 15%; Wehadkee-Congaree, 3%; and Bibb-Johnston, 3%.

In terms of soil texture, about one third of Edgecombe County is dominated by loamy sands. In terms of drainage, about 40% of the soils in the county are poorly drained, moderately poorly drained, or very poorly drained; these areas are usually found on the floodplains and stream terraces. Better drained soils occupy the upper terraces and uplands in the county (Otte 1985).



Prime Farmland Soils in Edgecombe County

Threats to soils in the county include: loss of topsoil, due to wind and water erosion, related to lack of vegetation; soil compaction; decreased soil moisture, related to compaction and loss of vegetation; and soil erosion, related to vegetation loss (2008 Sustainable Tourism Plan).

PRIME FARMLANDS

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Prime farmland soils produce the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources, and farming these soils results in the least damage to the environment. Prime farmland soils have an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation.



Illustrative Farmland in Edgecombe County

Prime farmlands have few or no rocks, are permeable to water and air, and have acceptable acidity or alkalinity levels. They are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods and are not frequently flooded during the growing season.

Prime farmland slopes range mainly from 0 to 6 percent. The Edgecombe County Soil Survey lists 46% of the County as prime farmlands. The 2007 Land Development Plan update recommended that the County establish farmland preservation programs, such as voluntary agriculture districts.

Other farmland of significance is “farmland of statewide importance.” Soils in this category are ones that nearly meet the requirements for prime farmland and that economically produce high yield crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Table 2 lists prime and other farmland soils in Edgecombe County. As shown on the Prime Farmland Soils Map, Edgecombe County has broad areas of prime farmland soils with lesser quality soils primarily along broad drainageways following the Tar River and its major tributaries.

**Table 5.2
Prime Farmland Soils in Edgecombe County**

Symbol	Soil Type Name	Value
AaA	Altavista fine sandy loam	Prime farmland
AuB	Autry loamy sand	Farmland of statewide importance
AyA/AyB	Aycock very fine sandy loam	Prime farmland
Ba	Ballahack fine sandy loam	Prime farmland if drained
Ca	Cape Fear loam	Farmland of statewide importance
CeB	Conetoe loamy sand	Farmland of statewide importance

Symbol	Soil Type Name	Value
Cc	Chewacla silt loam	Prime farmland if drained and either protected from flooding or not frequently flooded during the growing season
Cn	Congaree silt loam	Prime farmland
Co	Coxville sandy loam	Farmland of statewide importance
DgA	Dogue fine sandy loam	Prime farmland
DpA/DpB	Duplin sandy loam	Prime farmland
ExA	Exum very fine sandy loam	Prime farmland
Fo	Foreston loamy sand	Farmland of statewide importance
GoA	Goldsboro fine sandy loam	Prime farmland
Gr	Grantham very fine sandy loam	Prime farmland if drained
GyC/GyD	Gritney fine sandy loam	Farmland of statewide importance
Jo	Johns fine sandy loam	Prime farmland if drained
KeB	Kenansville loamy sand	Farmland of statewide importance
Lu	Lumbee fine sandy loam	Prime farmland if drained
Ly	Lynchburg fine sandy loam	Prime farmland if drained
MaA/MaB	Marlboro sandy loam	Prime farmland
Me	Meggett loam	Farmland of statewide importance
Na	Nahunta very fine sandy loam	Prime farmland if drained
NoA/NoB	Norfolk loamy sand	Prime farmland
NoC	Norfolk loamy sand	Farmland of statewide importance
Pu	Portsmouth fine sandy loam	Prime farmland if drained
Ra	Rains fine sandy loam	Prime farmland if drained
StB	State loamy sand	Prime farmland
WaB/WaC	Wagram loam sand	Farmland of statewide importance
We	Wahee fine sandy loam	Farmland of statewide importance
WkB	Wickham sandy loam	Prime farmland

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service (www.nrcs.usda.gov). In 2007 Land Development Plan.

CLIMATE AND PRECIPITATION

The climate in Edgecombe County is characteristic of the climate of the Middle Atlantic Coastal Plain (1907 Soil Survey). Edgecombe County experiences hot, generally humid summers and moderately cold winters. Annual precipitation as of 1985 averaged 48 inches and is fairly evenly distributed throughout the year (Otte 1985).

FOREST COVER AND NATURAL HABITAT

As of 1985, Edgecombe County had approximately 150,000 acres of forested land constituting about 47% of the total county land area. The majority of the forests are found on floodplains and adjacent stream terraces. Some of the forested areas cover several thousand acres. For instance, the forested portion of the Town Creek flood plain covers approximately 3,000 acres. Upland forests containing mature hardwoods are scattered throughout the county but are most abundant in the western half of the county (Otte 1985).

Most of the upland terrain in Edgecombe County has been severely altered by man. Very few tracts of any size that support mature forests remain on this higher ground. A large amount of pine has been removed from upland sites, leaving a scrubby mixture of young hardwoods.

Hardwoods and cypress have been selectively removed from the bottomland forests. The hardwoods are regenerating, but Cypress are not regenerating due to dredging and channeling programs. Most of the floodplains in the county are still forested (Otte 1985).

An assessment of the natural areas in the county has been completed by The Natural Heritage Program (Otte 1985). The best natural areas of the county are the following (not listed in priority order): Fishing Creek floodplain, Swift Creek floodplain, Beech Branch (Tar River Meander Loop), Bynum Mill floodplain, Otter Creek tributary floodplain, Conetoe Creek floodplain, Cokey Swamp, and Cokey Swamp tributary floodplain (Otte 1985). Significant natural areas are summarized in Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3
Summary of Selected Natural Areas in Edgecombe County (1985)**

Natural Area	Description of Natural Area
Town Creek	Bluffs, terraces, abandoned meanders, point bars, levees, low lying, swampy floodplain, and the active channel. Each environment supports its own unique vegetation community.
Conetoe Creek Floodplain	Conetoe Creek has been dredged. Minimal recent disturbance or cutting. Mature mixture of hardwoods and pines. Extensive, mature bottomland forest. Population of a least 12 pink lady slipper orchids.
Deep Creek Tributary Floodplain	Minimal development of floodplain. Mixture of bottomland hardwoods. Mature forest that is recovering from a ground fire that swept through within the past several years (as of 1985).
Fishing Creek Floodplain	Large, complex of different floodplain, terrace, and adjacent slope environments. Minimal recent cutting (as of 1985). Multiple terraces, each of which support a different combination of hardwood and conifer species. Many areas support a mature canopy with minimal disturbance.
Maple Swamp	Mixed bottomland hardwood forest along a small, perennial stream which has been channelized.
White Oak Swamp Tributary Floodplain	Flat bottomland along small, intermittent stream. Mature and relatively undisturbed. Includes a stand of large tulip poplars in the upper reaches.
Swift Creek Swamp Forest	Forest cutting evident, but most of the forest is mature and undisturbed. Smooth, flat floodplain. Complex mixture of bottomland hardwood species.
Beech Branch – Tar River Meander Loop	Swamp forest and drier bottomwood forest. Interesting geomorphological feature. Forest reaching early maturity (as of 1985).
Beech Branch Floodplain	Mixed bottomland (hardwood dominated) floodplain forest.
Tar River Floodplain	Complex mixture of bottomland and terrace environments. Large portions of higher terraces are farmland. Numerous tracts still forested.
Cokey Swamp	Forested floodplain, some cut. Large portion of swamp contains semi-mature hardwoods. Sites within containing very large oak trees.
Cokey Swamp Tributary Floodplain	Variety of bottomland forest types, some disturbed by cutting. Contains a stand of very large tulip poplar and loblolly pine trees.
Bynum Mill Creek Floodplain	Bottomland forest with many swampy areas. Lots of standing water. Not cut for a long time. Stays wet for long periods of time throughout the year.
Otter Creek Tributary Floodplain	Mature forest with minimal disturbance. Large, mixed hardwoods and includes a gum swamp.

Source: Otte 1985.

The Swift Creek subbasin (extending through five North Carolina counties including Edgecombe) has received considerable attention. Within Edgecombe County, the Swift Creek

subbasin consists of harvested cropland (31%), forestland (58%), and other (24%). For several years the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission has known of many rare and endangered species of freshwater mussels in the Swift Creek Subbasin. Many of the natural communities are biologically important because of their size and quality or the presence of rare species. Representative communities like Piedmont/low mountain alluvial forests, and mesic mixed hardwood forests are present in the subbasin and are large enough to warrant conservation attention. There are 459 species of animals in the subbasin, and 32 species of rare animals have been documented within the subbasin. The creek is considered critical for the continued survival of many rare animals found in the subbasin. To ensure that the biological integrity of the creek is maintained, the creek and its tributaries could be designated high quality waters. It may be considered critical habitat for the endangered Tar spiny mussel (McGrath and Alderman 1993).

The county's 2008 sustainable tourism plan raised concern about the dramatic reduction over the past 20 years of the striped bass population in Edgecombe County.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The following recommendations, among others, were suggested in the 2008 sustainable tourism plan for Edgecombe County and are integrated into this comprehensive plan:

- 1. Form an inter-agency council to address environmental concerns.** Found an inter-agency council of environmentally-minded organizations and agencies to meet and inform each other and share ideas about current projects and impending issues. Increasing resident knowledge of the current state of natural resources in Edgecombe County is the first step. Having a clear understanding of where the county is now in terms of natural resources is the only way to begin to protect them.
- 2. Divide county into management areas.** Very diverse habitat types exist in Edgecombe County. Use the designated townships as a way to divide the county into 5 or 6 districts, or use existing divisions, making it more manageable. Management strategies and resulting successes could be documented for each area.
- 3. Raise awareness around non-native species.** Develop an educational message to homeowners, landscapers, developers and school nature programs regarding the selection of native species. Incorporate controls of non-native plant and animal species into farm and natural area management so that they do not out-compete and eliminate the native species.
- 4. Designate areas of the county as environmental research regions.** These regions are not meant to be kept "off limits" but merely act as a defined area for scientists, academics and researchers who would like a field laboratory for their own investigation or as a teaching lab. Not only will these audiences bring some "tourism" funds into the county, the new knowledge generated and potential grants they could leverage would further the protection of the delicate ecosystems.

- 5. Embrace Low Impact Development (LID) principles.** Require developers to attend low impact development workshops. Appropriate programs and organizations can be found through the Office of Environmental Education (<http://www.eenorthcarolina.org/>). They help planners learn ways to lessen the impact of development on the ecosystem.
- 6. Monitor changes in ecosystems.** Many sources exist on what resources to monitor as well as monitoring methods. Every five years, thorough assessments of natural resources should be conducted. In addition to the “usual suspects” of interested agencies and citizens, enlist school groups or volunteer tourists to help.
- 7. Reach out to regional and statewide conservation programs to explore and establish mutually-beneficial relationships.** The Tar River Land Conservancy (TRLC) is a non-profit organization working to protect farms, forests, water, wildlife and scenic rural landscapes in the counties of the Upper Tar River Basin. TRLC currently manages a conservation easement along Fishing Creek. Further work and partnership with TRLC could lead to more conservation planning in the county.
- 8. Get involved with the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program.** The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. RTCA staff provide technical assistance to community groups and local, State, and federal government agencies so they can conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways.

CHAPTER 6 LAND USE

This chapter provides descriptions of land use, examines recent development trends, identifies growth areas, summarizes existing land use regulations, and describes the future land use plan.

LAND USE CATEGORIES

The following land use categories are used for purposes of transportation planning and the delineation of existing land uses:

- **Residential:** Land devoted to the housing of people, with the exception of hotels and motels which are considered commercial.
- **Commercial:** Land devoted to retail trade including consumer and business services and their offices; this may be further stratified into retail and special retail classifications. Special retail would include high-traffic establishments, such as fast food restaurants and service stations; all other commercial establishments would be considered retail.
- **Industrial:** Land devoted to the manufacturing, storage, warehousing, and transportation of products.
- **Public/Institutional:** Land devoted to social, religious, educational, cultural, and political activities; this would include the office and service employment establishments.
- **Agricultural:** Land devoted to the use of buildings or structures for the raising of non-domestic animals and/or growing of plants for food and other production.
- **Parks, recreation and conservation:** Areas devoted to active or passive recreation, open space, and land conservation purposes.

CENSUS TRACT GEOGRAPHY

The U.S. Census Bureau divides Edgecombe County into 14 census tracts as of 2010. The 2010 Census Tracts in Edgecombe County are shown on Map 1. Population and housing data by census tract, as provided in tables that follow, help describe residential land use trends in the county from 2000 to 2010 and provide a picture of the current distribution of population and housing in Edgecombe County.

Census Tract 201 was used in 2000 but discontinued in 2010; similarly, there is no Census Tract 205 used in 2010. Census Tracts 202, 203, and 204 apply to the Rocky Mount area, including the city limits but also unincorporated portions of Edgecombe County within and outside that city's extraterritorial jurisdiction. Census Tracts 210, 211, and 212 apply to the Tarboro area, including the town limits but also unincorporated lands within and outside Tarboro's extraterritorial jurisdiction. Census Tract 209 applies to the Town of Princeville and unincorporated land south of town along NC Highway 33. Census Tracts 214 (Sharpsburg and surroundings), 215 (Pinetops area), and 216 (Macclesfield area) cover southwestern and southern Edgecombe County.

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING

It is useful to examine the distribution of population and housing units within Edgecombe County using census tract geography (Map 1). Table 6.1 provides total population data for 2000 and 2010 by Census Tract in Edgecombe County. The range of total population in the census tracts is from less than 3,000 to more than 6,000 persons. From Table 1 and Map 2, which illustrates population change by census tract, some major trends are apparent. The northern and eastern portions of Edgecombe County (Census Tracts 207 and 208) witnessed little change in population during the last decade.

Population Decline, 2000 to 2010

The four census tracts in the Rocky Mount area (202, 203, 204, and 206) experienced significant loss of population during the 2000s. The loss was particularly severe in the southern Rocky Mount area (Census Tract 202), which declined by nearly 1,000 persons from 2000 to 2010 and was the highest decline of all census tracts in the county. The northern Tarboro area (Census Tract 211) experienced the second highest population decline during the same time period.

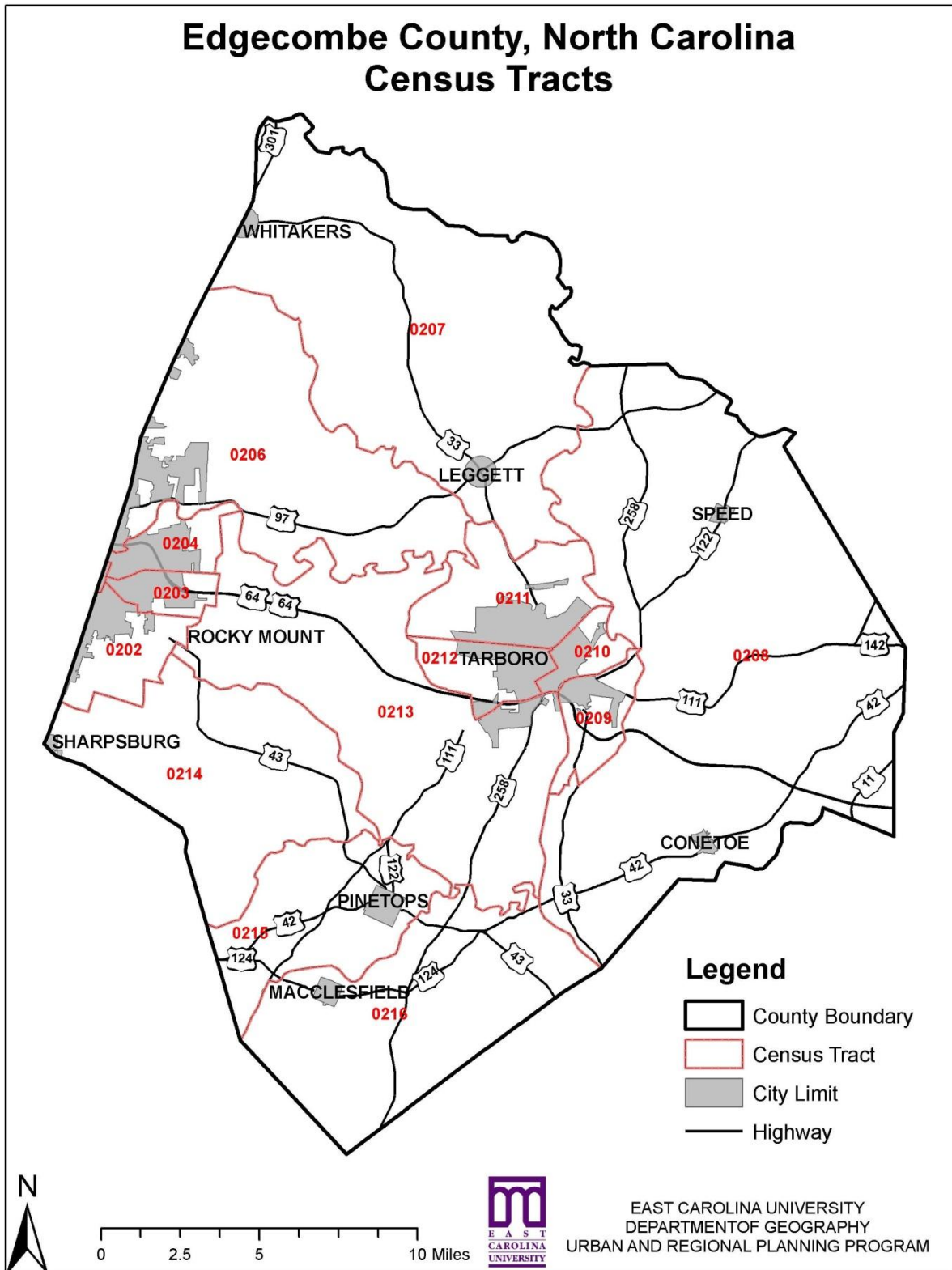
Population Increase, 2000 to 2010

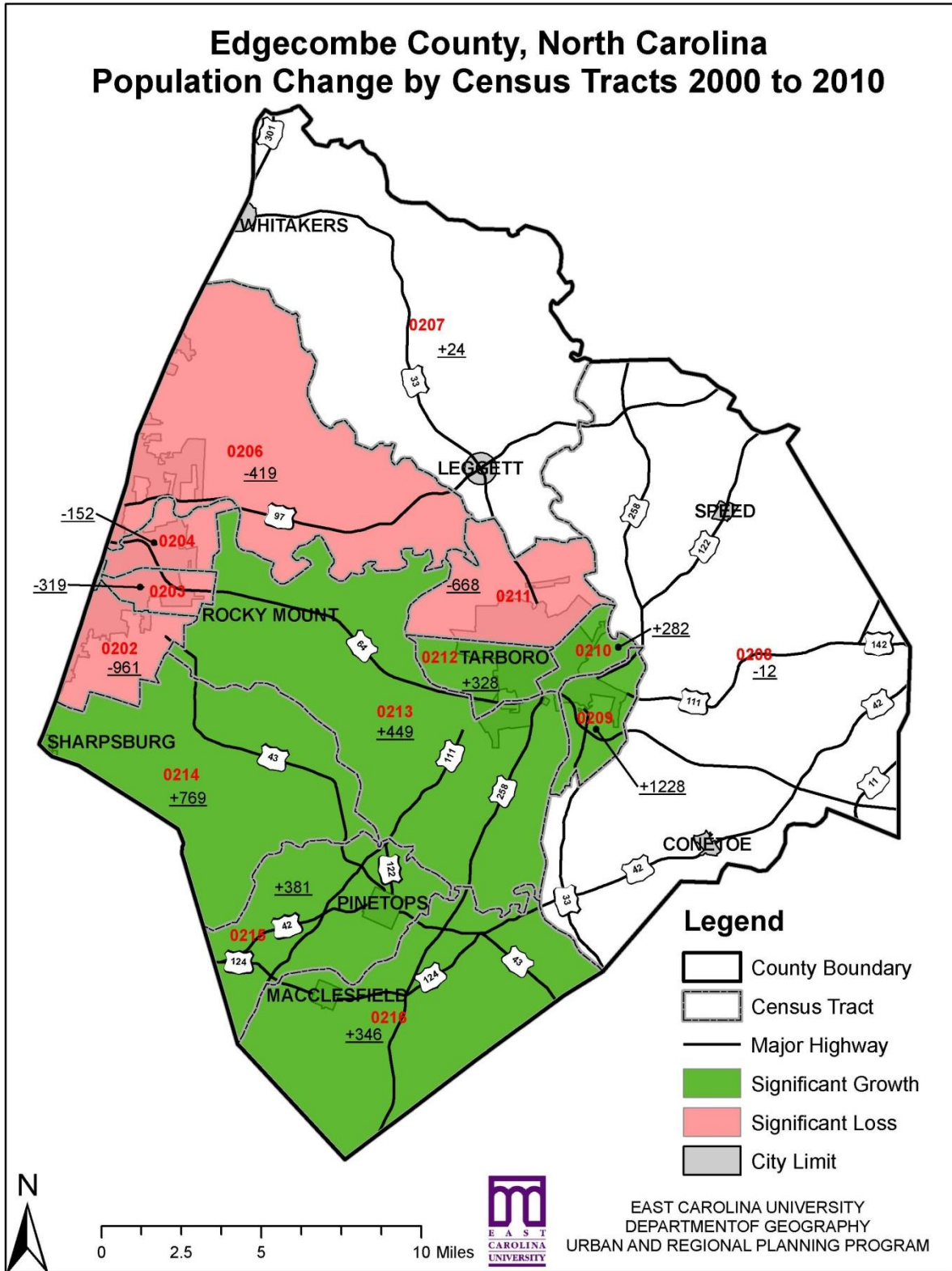
The Princeville area (Census Tract 209) experienced the most significant population increase from 2000 to 2010; however, the substantial increase is attributed to residents returning after flooding in 1999 devastated the town's residential areas. After Princeville, the Sharpsburg area (Census Tract 214) experienced the second highest rate of population growth from 2000 to 2010 in the county, at 22.8%; the absolute increase in the Sharpsburg area was +769 persons.

Table 6.1
Population 2000 and 2010 and Population Change, 2000 to 2010
Census Tracts in Edgecombe County

Census Tract	Area of County	Population 2000	Population 2010	Population Change, 2000-2010	% Change 2000-2010
201	--	330	n/a	n/a	--
202	Rocky Mount	7,020	6,059	-961	-13.6%
203	Rocky Mount	5,689	5,370	-319	-5.6%
204	Rocky Mount	5,110	4,958	-152	-3.0%
206	Rocky Mount	3,944	3,525	-419	-10.6%
207	Whitakers	2,177	2,201	+24	1.1%
208	Eastern part	3,728	3,716	-12	0.3%
209	Princeville	1,711	2,939	+1,228	71.8%
210	Tarboro	3,127	3,409	+282	9.0%
211	Tarboro	4,625	3,957	-668	-14.4%
212	Tarboro	4,879	5,207	+328	6.7%
213	Central	4,411	4,860	+449	10.2%
214	Sharpsburg	3,372	4,141	+769	22.8%
215	Pinetops	2,932	3,313	+381	13.0%
216	Macclesfield	2,551	2,897	+346	13.6%
Total, County		55,606	56,552	+946	1.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, SFI; 2010 Census.





The Pinetops and Macclesfield Census Tracts of Edgecombe County (Census Tracts 215 and 216) experienced population increases from 2000 to 2010, both at a rate of growth of approximately 13%. Central Edgecombe County (Census Tract 213), which extends north and south of U.S. Highway 64 between Rocky Mount and Tarboro, increased population during the decade by about 10%, while the eastern Tarboro area (Census Tract 210) increased in population by almost the same rate at 9%. The rate of population increase in the western Tarboro area (Census Tract 212) was more modest, at 6.7%.

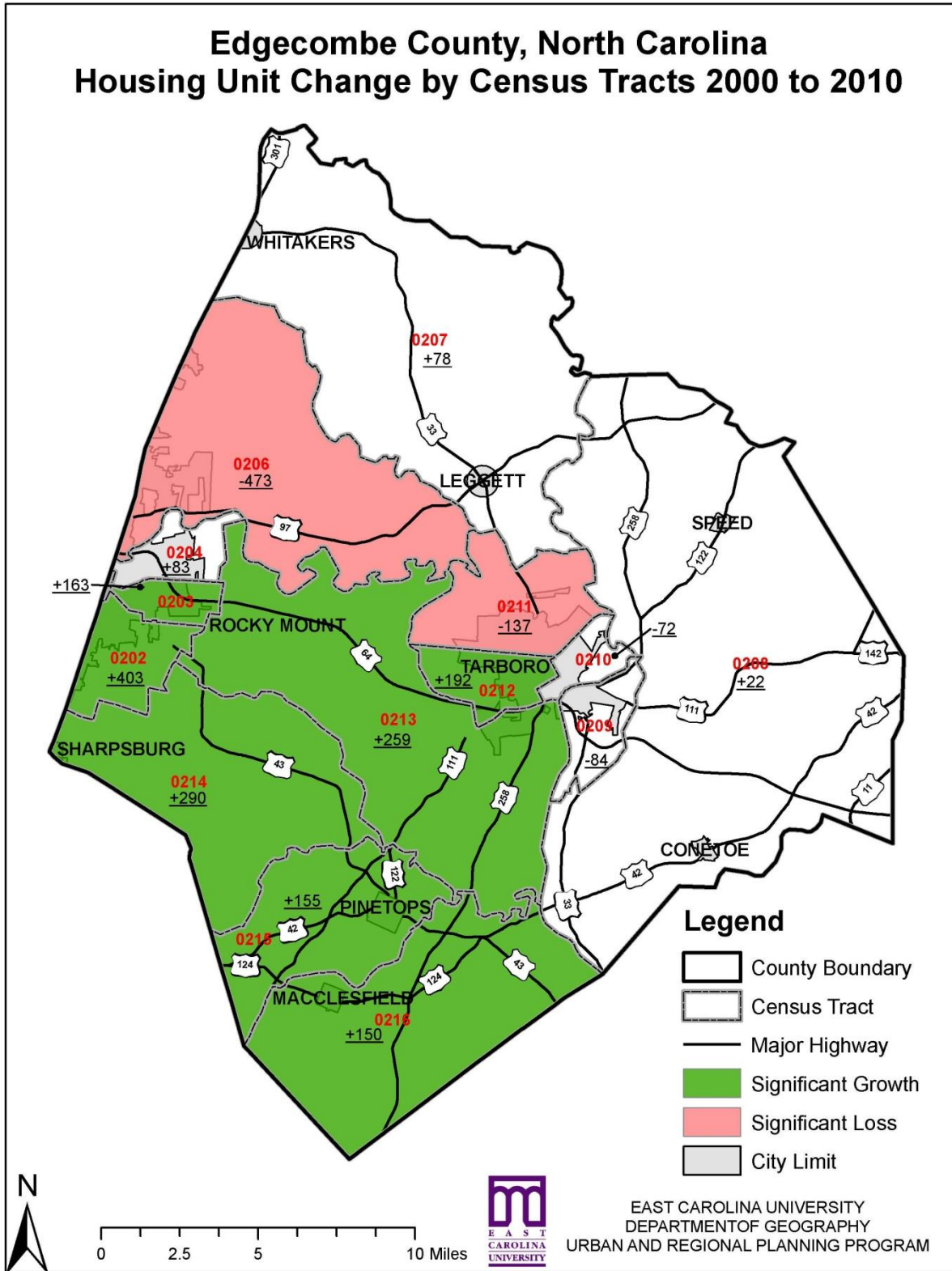
Housing Unit Change, 2000 to 2010

Table 6.2 shows how the distribution of housing units in Edgecombe County by census tract has changed from 2000 to 2010. The housing unit change from 2000 to 2010 by census tract is also shown on the following map. Total housing units increased from 2000 to 2010 in 10 of the 14 current census tracts in the county, while it decreased in four tracts (see Map 3). The most significant decrease was a loss of 473 housing units in Census Tract 206 (the northern portion of Rocky Mount, including Battleboro and adjacent unincorporated areas in Edgecombe County). Census Tract 211 (north Tarboro and adjacent unincorporated area) decreased by 137 housing units between 2000 and 2010, and the eastern Tarboro area decreased by 72 units. The Princeville area (-84 units) also had a net decrease in housing units during the same time period.

**Table 6.2
Housing Units and Housing Unit Change, 2000 to 2010
Census Tracts in Edgecombe County**

Census Tract	Area of County	Housing Units 2000	Housing Units 2010	Housing Unit Change, 2000-2010
201	--	192	n/a	n/a
202	Rocky Mount	2,683	3,086	+403
203	Rocky Mount	2,120	2,283	+163
204	Rocky Mount	2,477	2,559	+82
206	Rocky Mount	1,691	1,218	-473
207	Whitakers	906	984	+78
208	Eastern part	1,597	1,619	+22
209	Princeville	1,279	1,195	-84
210	Tarboro	1,655	1,583	-72
211	Tarboro	1,753	1,616	-137
212	Tarboro	2,040	2,232	+192
213	Central	1,740	1,999	+259
214	Sharpsburg	1,411	1,701	+290
215	Pinetops	1,325	1,480	+155
216	Macclesfield	1,133	1,283	+150
Total County		24,002	24,838	+836

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, SF1; 2010 Census.



RECENT RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

The American Community Survey data base of the U.S. Census Bureau provides relevant information regarding residential land use in the county. The most recent estimates available are for the 2008-2012 five-year period. Data on the range of years housing units were constructed are provided in Table 6.3, which help to determine trends in recent housing construction activity by census tract (2000 to present). These data help to confirm in what areas new housing activity is taking (or not taking) place. The American Community Survey data are estimates and subject to significant margins of error. Therefore, the results should be interpreted with some caution yet they are the most reliable available data. Also, it should be acknowledged that while the data in Table 6.3 indicate the range of years the structure was “built,” the housing stock also includes “manufactured” homes.

Data in Table 6.3 show hardly any very recent housing activity has taken place in most of Edgecombe County. Nine of the 14 census tracts had an estimated zero housing units constructed in 2010 or later (through 2012). Census Tract 202 (Rocky Mount area) is the only tract that witnessed any significant, very recent, residential building activity, with 95 homes built in 2010 or later (3.8% of the total housing stock in that census tract).

Table 6.3
Selected Range of Years Housing Unit Were Constructed
2008-2012 5-Year Estimates
Census Tracts in Edgecombe County

Census Tract	Area of County	Total Housing Units	Built 2000 to 2009	% of Total	Built 2010 or Later	% of Total
202	Rocky Mount	2,902	202	7.0%	13	0.4%
203	Rocky Mount	2,338	120	5.1%	18	0.8%
204	Rocky Mount	2,469	507	20.5%	95	3.8%
206	Rocky Mount	1,283	146	11.4%	0	--
207	Whitakers	1,022	56	5.5%	0	--
208	Eastern part	1,636	281	17.1%	0	--
209	Princeville	1,309	553	42.2%	0	--
210	Tarboro	1,623	123	7.6%	10	0.6%
211	Tarboro	1,752	203	11.6%	0	--
212	Tarboro	2,098	279	13.3%	0	--
213	Central	2,017	227	11.3%	0	--
214	Sharpsburg	1,593	201	12.6%	14	0.9%
215	Pinetops	1,519	118	7.8%	0	--
216	Macclesfield	1,280	198	15.5%	0	--
Total		24,841	3,214	12.9%	150	0.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008-2012 5-Year Estimates. Table DP04, Selected Housing Characteristics.

A substantial share of Princeville’s housing stock appears to have been reestablished during the 2000; after Hurricane Floyd in 1999, residents built 553 housing units in Census Tract 209, constituting 42.2% of the total housing stock in that census tract. Census Tract 204 (Rocky Mount) area also had about one-fifth (20.5%) of its current housing stock built between 2000 and

2010. Eastern Edgecombe County (Census Tract 208) had 17.1% of its housing stock built between 2000 and 2010, while in the Macclesfield area, the percentage was 15.5%.

MANUFACTURED AND MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

The vast majority of Edgecombe County’s housing stock is detached, single-family units (excluding manufactured homes). American Community Survey data also provide estimates of the number of manufactured homes (referred to as “mobile” homes in the original source) and multi-family units. Table 6.4 provides manufactured home and multi-family housing unit data by census tracts in Edgecombe County. Multi-family units include all units which are not manufactured homes or detached, single-family units. These data have important land use planning implications as described further below.

**Table 6.4
Manufactured and Multi-family Residential Units
2008-2012 5-Year Estimates
Census Tracts in Edgecombe County**

Census Tract	Area of County	Total Housing Units	Manufactured Homes	% of Total	Multi-family Units	% of Total
202	Rocky Mount	2,902	220	7.6%	750	25.8%
203	Rocky Mount	2,338	151	6.5%	613	26.2%
204	Rocky Mount	2,469	82	3.3%	624	25.2%
206	Rocky Mount	1,283	676	52.7%	0	--
207	Whitakers	1,022	315	30.8%	0	--
208	Eastern part	1,636	643	39.3%	15	0.9%
209	Princeville	1,309	350	26.7%	218	16.7%
210	Tarboro	1,623	0	--	402	24.8%
211	Tarboro	1,752	450	25.7%	287	16.4%
212	Tarboro	2,098	38	1.8%	566	27.0%
213	Central	2,017	667	33.1%	52	2.6%
214	Sharpsburg	1,593	653	41.0%	0	--
215	Pinetops	1,519	328	21.6%	142	9.3%
216	Macclesfield	1,280	332	25.9%	34	2.7%
Total		24,841	4,905	19.7%	3,703	14.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008-2012 5-Year Estimates. Table DP04, Selected Housing Characteristics.

Manufactured Homes

As of the 2008 to 2012 estimates reporting period, nearly one-fifth (19.7%) of the county’s total housing stock consisted of manufactured homes. Manufactured homes existed in all but one of the census tracts (Census Tract 210, East Tarboro area). Census Tract 206 (Rocky Mount-Battleboro) had more than half of its housing stock comprised of manufactured homes, but the other Rocky Mount census tracts have relatively small percentages.

The majority of Edgecombe County’s Census Tracts (206, 207, 208, 209, 211, 213, 214 and 216) have at least one quarter (25%) of their housing stocks comprised of manufactured homes, according to American Community Survey estimates. Clearly, manufactured housing is prevalent

across the county's geography, including the Rocky Mount area, Central Edgecombe, north Tarboro area, Sharpsburg, Macclesfield and eastern Edgecombe. Zoning districts in unincorporated Edgecombe County must therefore accommodate manufacturing housing in many different parts of the county, from urban to rural.

Multi-family Residential Housing

Multi-family housing typically requires sanitary sewer service and is therefore usually found only within urban and suburban areas with such service. More than 50% of the county's total estimated multi-family housing stock is concentrated in three Rocky Mount-area Census Tracts (202, 203, and 204). About another 40% of the county's multi-housing stock is located in the Tarboro area and Princeville area Census Tracts. The remaining 10% of the multi-family housing stock is scattered in other locations including the Pinetops area, Macclesfield area, and central and eastern Edgecombe. Three Census Tracts have an estimated zero multi-family housing units: Rocky Mount-Battleboro (Census Tract 206), Whitakers (207), and Sharpsburg (214). Multi-family housing, which occurs at densities greater than single-family detached residential subdivisions, cannot realistically be provided for in areas served only by on-site sewage management systems.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The foregoing data analysis yields major implications for residential land use planning in Edgecombe County. The following paragraphs describe various implications for subareas of Edgecombe County using the census tract geography described earlier.

Rocky Mount Area

From 2000 to 2010, the southern Rocky Mount area (Census Tract 202) declined in population by almost 1,000 persons, yet increased substantially (+403) in the total number of housing units. Note that Census Tract 202 is approximately one-half within the city limits of Rocky Mount and about half in unincorporated Edgecombe County. While the data do not show this conclusively, the population and housing unit data appear to suggest that the population has vacated certain housing units (probably neighborhoods in Rocky Mount proper), leaving vacant and perhaps obsolete units. At the same time, new housing units were constructed. New housing construction may have occurred within Rocky Mount, as a result of housing and community development programs, or outside the city in its extraterritorial jurisdiction via new urban and suburban private market housing. Or, perhaps some combination of the two occurred. In any event, these trends for Census Tract 202 seems to suggest the need for housing rehabilitation and/or removal as well as a possible trend toward new housing development spreading east outside of the city limits of Rocky Mount in the ETJ and beyond.

From 2000 to 2010, the total housing stock in Census Tract 206 in Rocky Mount (Battleboro area) declined by 473 housing units, while population declined by 419 persons. This may signal significant housing unit demolition activities in the Battleboro area, although there could also have been some loss of the rural housing stock in the unincorporated area within Census Tract 206.

Paradoxically, Census Tracts 203 and 204 (Rocky Mount area) collectively increased by 245 housing units from 2000 to 2010, yet lost 471 people during the same time period. This suggests some significant community development and/or private housing market activity in or outside of the Rocky Mount city limits. It may also signal some abandonment of existing housing units in the City of Rocky Mount portions of these census tracts, given the loss of population.

Tarboro Area

The Tarboro area (Census Tracts 210, 211, and 212) collectively did not experience an increase in total housing units from 2000 to 2010. Census Tract 212 (southwestern Tarboro area) increased by 192 units and 328 people during the decade, but that gain was offset by declines in total housing units in Census Tract 211 (-137 units in northern Tarboro) and Census Tract 210 (-72 units in Eastern Tarboro). Census Tract 211 experienced a significant loss in population from 2000 to 2010 (-668 persons). Census Tract 210 gained in population during the decade, even though it declined in total housing units.

These data suggest a distinct and significant reorientation of residential development and population closer to U.S. Highway 64 in western Tarboro. The trends may also signal some limited or negative housing market demand in the northern Tarboro area (including unincorporated areas inside and outside of the town's extraterritorial jurisdiction). Household size is bound to have increased in the Eastern Tarboro area (Census Tract 210), given an increase in population and a reduction in total housing units. The housing reduction in Eastern Tarboro may reflect significant removal of flooded housing units but also may reflect some market demand via population gain during the decade.

US Highway 64 Corridor between Rocky Mount and Tarboro

Census Tract 213 stretches from Rocky Mount to Tarboro, north and south of U.S. Highway 64. This Census Tract increased the total housing units by 259 from 2000 to 2010. It also witnessed a corresponding increase of 449 people in the same period, or an average of about 1.7 persons for each new housing unit added. Because this Census Tract does not include any significant urban areas, the increase in housing stock and population likely reflects suburban, private housing market demand. This corridor is located conveniently between Rocky Mount and Tarboro with excellent highway access (U.S. Highway 64) that enables commuting to either urban area. Therefore, this corridor is likely to witness additional pressure for suburban residential growth during the 20-year planning horizon, probably with smaller homes and/or smaller average household sizes than is typical for the county as a whole.

Sharpsburg Area

Census Tract 214 extends from Sharpsburg eastward into unincorporated Edgecombe County. This area witnessed a significant increase in housing units (+290 units) and a sizable net population gain (+769) from 2000 to 2010. These gains represent, on average, 2.65 new occupants for each new housing unit added. Homes have been constructed in this Census Tract since 2010. These trends may signal that southwestern Edgecombe County may continue to be

appealing for family households with larger average sizes than those typical for Edgecombe County as a whole. Because this part of Edgecombe County is reasonably within a commuter-shed convenient to Rocky Mount, Sharpsburg, and Wilson, it is likely that this area will witness some future market demand for suburban housing appropriate for first-time homebuyers (mostly family households).

Southern Edgecombe County

Census Tracts 215 (Pinetops area) and 216 (Macclesfield area) comprise much of southern Edgecombe County. Both of these areas gained about 150 housing units and increased in population by about 13% (+381 and +346, respectively) from 2000 to 2010. On average, these census tracts resulted in new households of approximately 2.3 to 2.5 occupants per unit, about the same as the average household size for Edgecombe County. The population and housing unit increases occurring in southern Edgecombe County appear to signal a trend toward some modest private housing market demand during the 20-year planning horizon. Collectively, Census Tracts 215 and 216 equate more or less with the same housing development levels and population gains as the Sharpsburg area (Census Tract 214) from 2000 to 2010, albeit with slightly smaller resulting household sizes. Census Tracts 215 and 216 are within convenient commuting distance to the Greenville metropolitan area (Pitt and Greene Counties) which is projected to increase in population and economic activity during the planning horizon.

Northern and Eastern Edgecombe County

Census Tract 207 encompasses the northern part of Edgecombe County including the Whitakers area and east of that), while Census Tract 208 encompasses eastern Edgecombe County. These areas are very rural and agricultural and are mostly devoid of organized residential subdivision tract activity. Collectively, these two areas increased by about 100 housing units from 2000 to 2010. Population levels were basically stable from 2000 to 2010. These trends suggest there will be little if any market demand for new housing in these areas, which remain extensively agricultural in nature. However, a very modest housing demand may be evident near Whitakers in the western part of Census Tract 207. This may be unlikely to amount to significant future homebuilding, however.

NONRESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Zip Code Business Patterns, a data set produced annually by the U.S. Census Bureau, is useful in examining the distribution of establishments and employment in Edgecombe County. Table 6.5 shows the total number of establishments by zip code in 2001 and 2011. Note that zip codes are mapped in Chapter 3, and not all of the zip codes listed are located entirely within Edgecombe County.

**Table 6.5
Establishments, 2001 and 2011
Zip Codes in Edgecombe County**

Zip Code	Name	Establishments 2001	Establishments 2011
27891	Whitakers	48	39
27886	Tarboro	429	386
27801	Rocky Mount	350	268
27803	Rocky Mount	298	284
27809	Battleboro	81	87
27864	Pinetops	57	54
27852	Macclesfield	47	33
27843	Hobgood	11	9
27812	Bethel	47	46
27822	Elm City	122	103
27829	Fountain	21	17
27819	Conetoe	10	2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Zip Code Business Patterns, 2001 and 2011.

The establishment data in Table 6.5 show that, in virtually all zip codes, the total number of establishments has decreased during the decade examined. It also shows that nonresidential employment land uses are heavily concentrated in Rocky Mount and to a lesser extent the Tarboro zip code (which extends well beyond the Town of Tarboro’s extraterritorial jurisdiction).

AGRICULTURE

The Census of Agriculture provides useful statistics on farms, farm acreage, and size of farms. Table 6.6 shows farmland acreage from 1992 to 2007. The 2012 census of agriculture was not available at the time of this writing. The amount of farmland acreage has consistently declined in Edgecombe County from 1992 to 2007; however, the amount of land harvested cropland has not declined as significantly.

**Table 6.6
Farms and Farmland Acreage, Edgecombe County, 1992-2007**

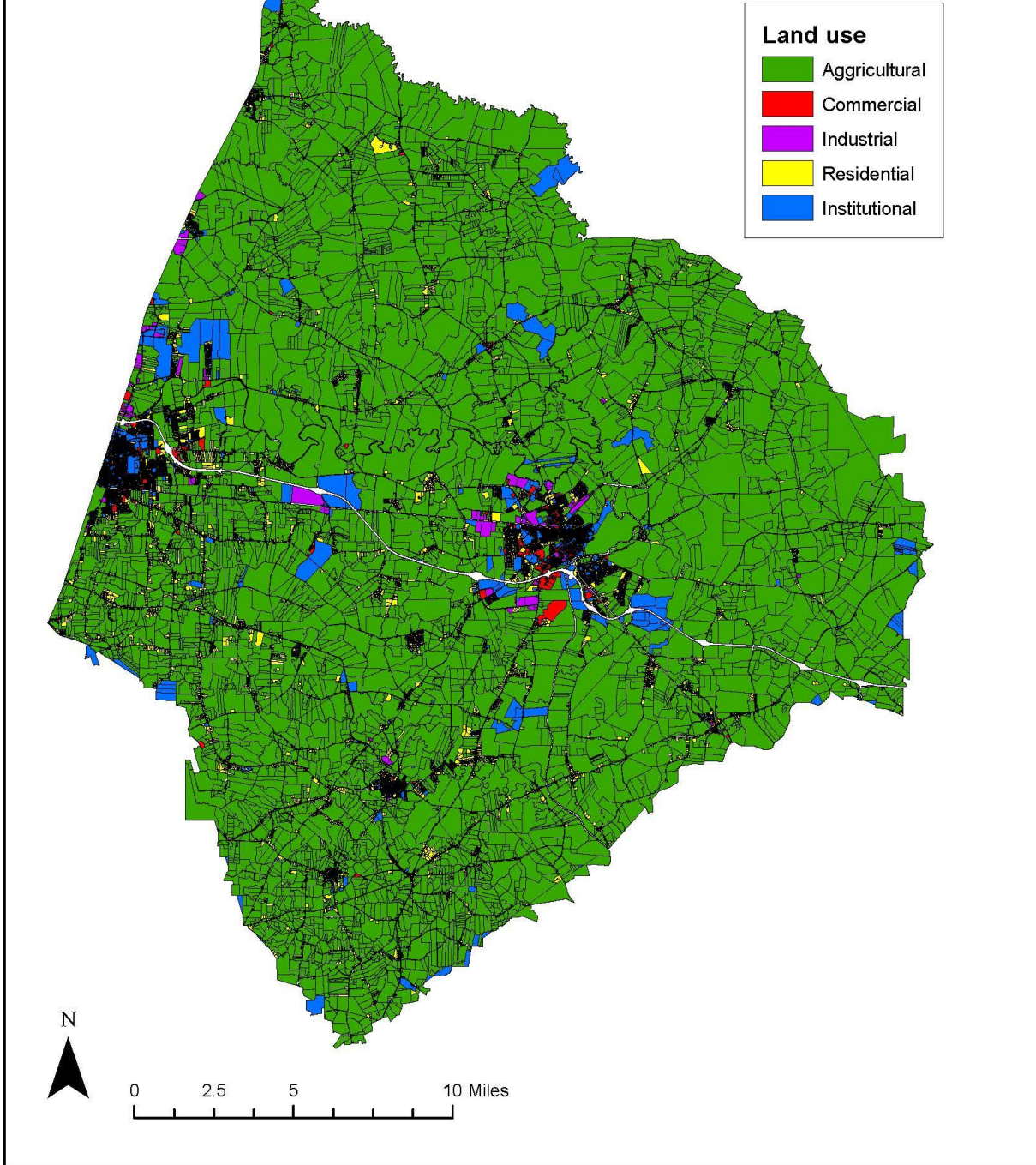
	1992	1997	2002	2007
Farms	376	315	281	300
Land in farms (acres)	180,400	171,589	163,587	139,846
Harvested cropland (acres)	96,898	104,385	96,283	94,988

Source: Census of Agriculture, 1992, 1997, 2002, and 2007

EXISTING LAND USE MAP

The existing land use map shows how land is used currently (2014). It has no regulatory significance. It divides the county into land use classifications simply to describe how each property is being used now. It does not reflect character, future land use, or zoning.

Edgecombe County Existing Land Use



GROWTH AREAS PER THE 2007 LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Quality growth was a guiding principle for developing plan goals, objectives, and implementation strategies. Edgecombe County wants growth but does not want to compromise values, traditions and physical assets that are treasures for both current and future generations. Growing smart, relying on sustainable growth principles and protecting assets, has been the primary goal since adoption of the 2007 Land Development Plan. Edgecombe County has planned and invested public funds to prepare for growth and development. The 2007 plan promotes development in compact, sustainable growth patterns that protect the agricultural economy and maintain the rural vistas that make Edgecombe County such a beautiful place to live and work.

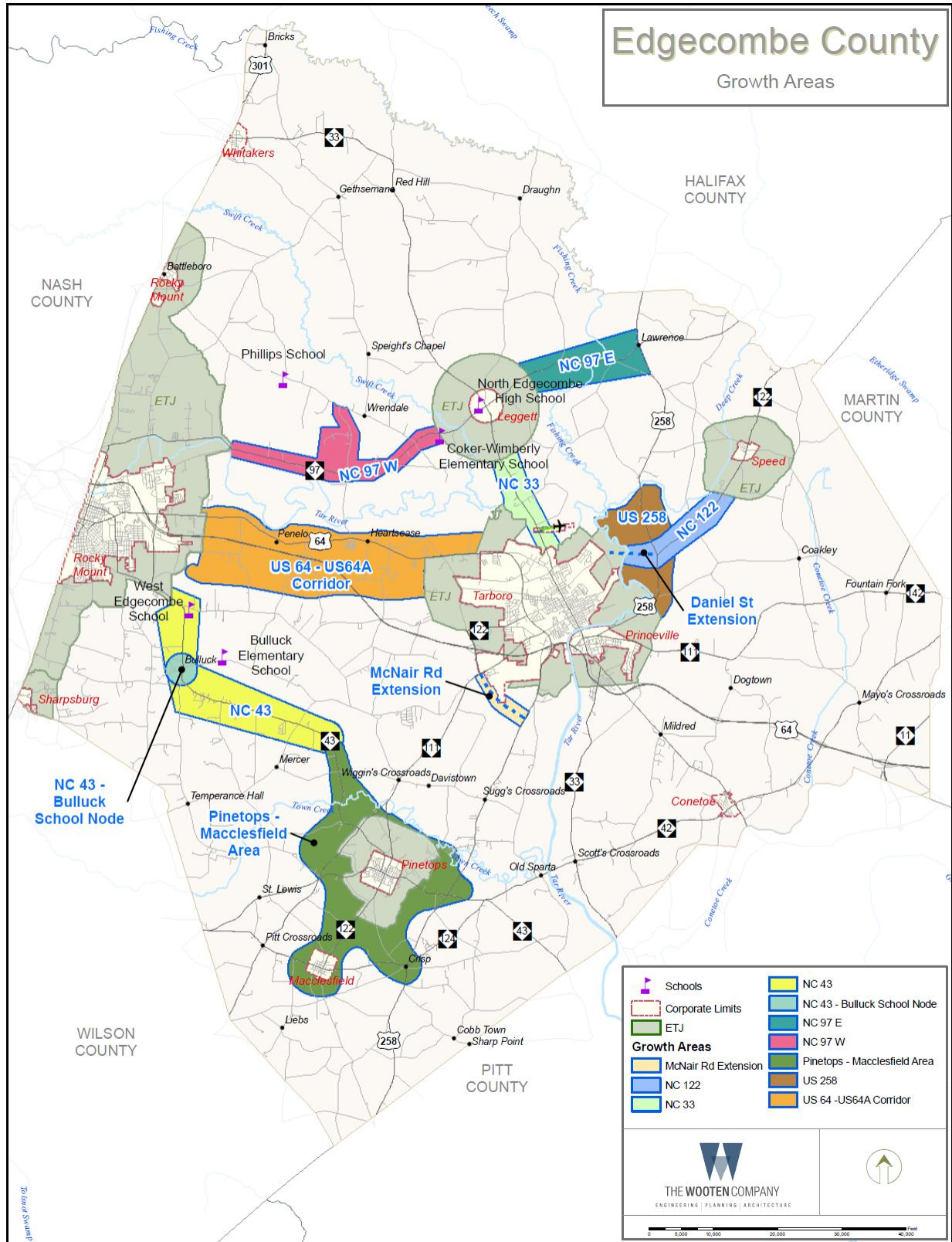
Section IV of the 2007 Land Development Plan described the selection of growth areas and included a Future Growth Area Map that depicted the location of those areas within the county where growth and development would be concentrated. There are corridors and other areas within Edgecombe County that are considered attractive for growth due to location, connectivity, traffic carrying capacity, and availability of public water, and in some cases, public sewer. Community crossroads/schools, and areas adjacent to municipalities are also identified as growth areas. These are described further below.

1. US 64/US 64 Alternate Corridor

US 64 and the older US 64 Alternate route run approximately parallel from the City of Rocky Mount to the Town of Tarboro – the two major municipalities within Edgecombe County. These parallel highway corridors are expected to be the primary locations for non-residential development within the county due to the proximity to Interstate 95 and the provision of both public water and sewer. The area includes two existing industrial parks - Kingsboro Industrial Park at the US 64/Kingsboro Road interchange and the Tarboro Commercial Center located on US 64A just west of Tarboro. The continued promotion and development of these areas for a variety of commercial and industrial uses is a major priority for Edgecombe County. As the public sewer system is extended to nearby areas, lower density office and institutional development and higher density residential development could also be attracted to these corridors.

2. NC 97 West Corridor

The installation of public water lines has brought the potential for primarily residential growth to the NC 97 West corridor between the City of Rocky Mount and the Town of Leggett (and NC 97 East between the Town of Leggett and Lawrence Crossroads). Some retail services are expected to be attracted to the NC 97 and New Hope Church Road/SR1408 intersection. The NC 97 East route between Leggett and Lawrence Crossroads is also expected to grow with the provision of public water but growth should be slower than that expected along the NC 97 West portion between Rocky Mount and Leggett.



3. NC 33 Corridor between Tarboro and Leggett

The installation of public water is expected to spur growth along that portion of NC 33 between Tarboro and Leggett. Primarily residential growth is expected, although there is the potential for development of small retail services near the intersection of NC 33 and Mabrey Bridge Road.

4. Daniels Street/SR 1537 Extension to US 258 and NC 122 between Tarboro and Speed

The extension of Daniels Street to the US 258/NC122 intersection is expected to draw additional traffic and development to this corridor between Tarboro and Speed. Mostly residential development with public water is expected although smaller retail services and office type uses could also be expected at major intersections.

5. McNair Road Extension from NC 111 (Wilson Street) to US 258 southwest of Tarboro

The McNair Road Extension is expected to attract new development just to the southwest of the Town of Tarboro extraterritorial planning jurisdiction. Both residential and smaller retail services and office type uses may be attracted to this area.

6. NC 43 Corridor between Rocky Mount and Pinetops

NC 43 is the primary traffic route from southeastern Rocky Mount to the Pinetops-Macclesfield area. With public water in place, this route is expected to attract primarily residential growth with retail service uses attracted to the NC 43/Bulluck School Road intersection. One major community crossroad intersection – the intersection of NC 43 and Bulluck School Road was identified as a potential growth area. This crossroad community continues to attract residential development which is heightening interest in the provision of more retail services. The intersection of NC43/Coakley Road and Bulluck School Road is expected to be the key intersection for the development of retail services. In addition to public water in the area, Bulluck School is served by public sewer. Availability of public sewer is likely to attract more dense development within the area.

7. Pinetops – Macclesfield Area

The Pinetops-Macclesfield area includes the municipal jurisdictions of Pinetops and Macclesfield but also expands outward into Edgecombe County's planning jurisdiction. The area includes the crossroad community of Crisp and extends along NC 43 east of Pinetops to the intersection of NC 43 and US 258 and along NC 122 between Pinetops and Macclesfield. The area has been experiencing residential growth and is served by county water.

These identified growth areas are still valid conceptually; however, a future land use plan map showing recommended land uses has been prepared and which supersedes the generalized growth area map.

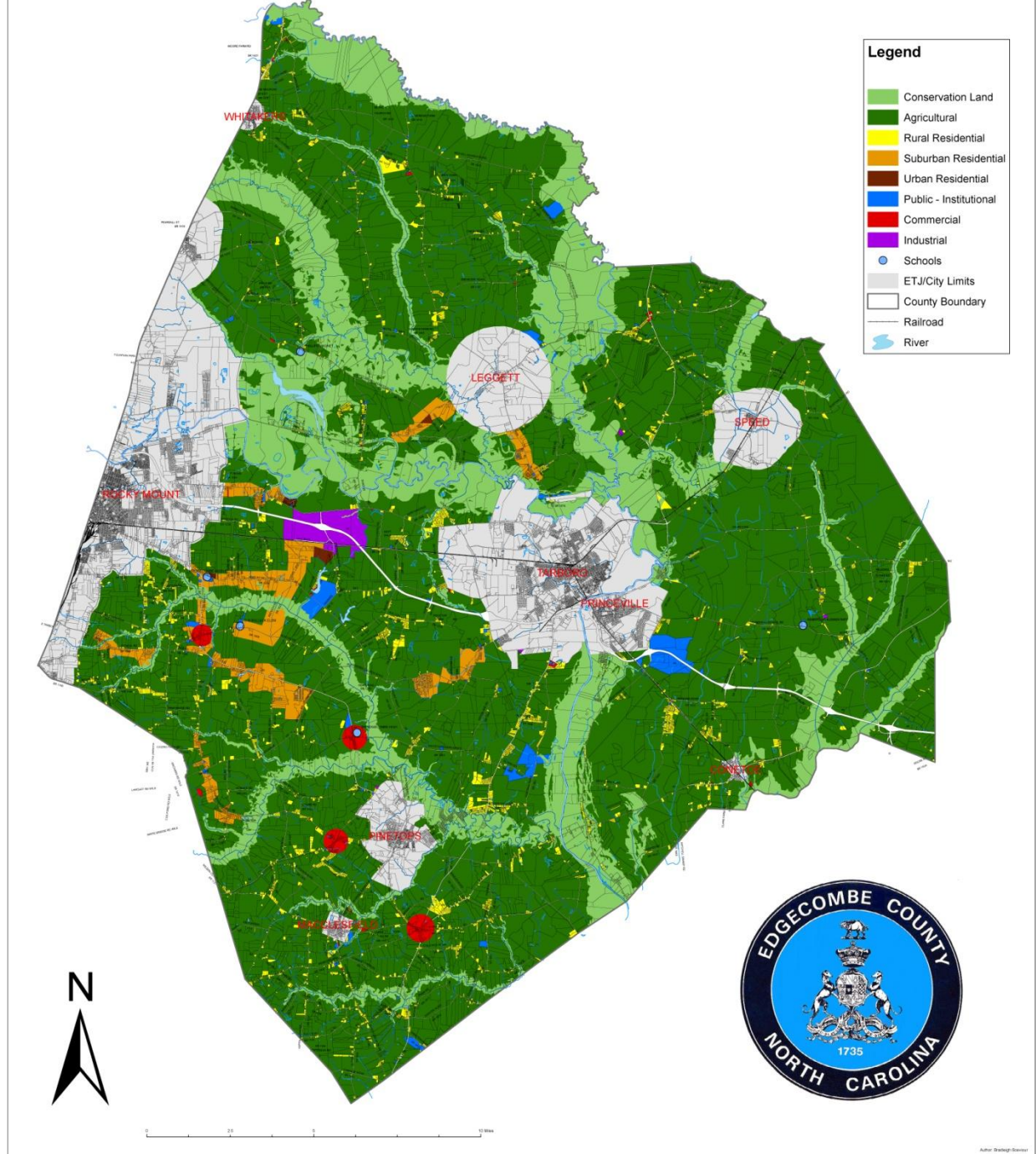
FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

A future land use plan map has been prepared and is included in this comprehensive plan. The plan map utilizes the same categories as the existing land use map (see earlier section of this chapter), with the exception that residential land use is subdivided into rural residential, suburban residential, and urban residential categories corresponding generally to the county's AR-30/R-30, R-20, and R-10 zoning districts, respectively. Also, the future land use plan map designates certain "crossroad communities" consistent with the growth areas map, within which certain neighborhood-serving commercial uses may be appropriate.

Because the population is expected to be relatively stable during the planning horizon, and because many of the suburban and urban land uses built in the future are likely to be located within the extraterritorial jurisdictions of Rocky Mount, Tarboro and other towns, there is limited change proposed from the existing land use pattern. The rationale for the design of the future land use plan is relatively simple and is summarized below:

- Existing land use is the starting point for the design, and existing residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial land uses are indicated.
- The extensive 100-year flood plains are included on the future land use plan map as parks, recreation, and conservation areas; development may still occur within 100-year flood plains in accordance with the county's flood damage prevention regulations, but the overall intent is that these areas will be conserved for flood water storage capacity.
- Some future suburban and urban residential development is proposed within growth areas and in the southwest portion of the county, where demand for residential subdivision tract development is anticipated to be greatest. Most of this future residential development is of the "suburban" category, corresponding with the county's R-20 zoning district. Those properties designated for suburban residential development were selected based on them not being in the county's current use assessment program (primarily agriculture). Plan policies contemplate the prospect that R-20 rezonings may be appropriate within areas served by county water, despite the land use designations of the future land use plan map. Furthermore, limited amounts of urban residential land use are proposed adjacent to the county's future Kingsboro Industrial Park as well as in the Leggett vicinity.
- Commercial and industrial development expansion will occur primarily within extraterritorial jurisdictions; however, the Kingsboro Industrial Park is designated as industrial, and limited neighborhood commercial land use may occur within areas designated as "crossroad communities."

Edgecombe County Future Land Use



Acreage data for existing and future land use by land use category are summarized in Table 6.7.

**Table 6.7
Existing and Future Land Use by Land Use Category
Edgecombe County Planning Jurisdiction**

Land Use Category	Existing Land Use, 2014 (Edgecombe County Planning Jurisdiction)	%	Future Land Use, 2034 (Edgecombe County Planning Jurisdiction)	%
Conservation Land	0	--	60,093	21.8%
Agriculture	256,734	93.0%	193,091	70.0%
Residential, rural	10,250	3.7%	7,620	2.8%
Residential, suburban	0	--	6,742	2.4%
Residential, urban	0	--	222	0.4%
<i>Residential, subtotal</i>	<i>10,250</i>	<i>3.7%</i>	<i>14,584</i>	<i>5.3%</i>
Public/Institutional	5,309	2.0%	2,360	0.9%
Commercial/Crossroads	194	0.1%	1,248	0.4%
Industrial	353	0.1%	1,484	0.5%
Other: Road rights of ways	3,168	1.1%	3,168	1.1%
Total Acreage	276,028	100%	276,028	100%

Source: Edgecombe County Planning and GIS Departments, May 2014.

LAND USE CHANGE AND BUILDOUT

Conservation Land

This section describes anticipated change in land use based on the acreage data in Table 6.7 and explains apparent anomalies. The future land use plan map shows all 100-year flood plains as conservation land. The 21.7% share of land in conservation is significant; however, conservation areas are not necessarily permanently protected as open space, since private lands may still develop according to the floodplain management overlay of the Edgecombe County Unified Development Code.

Agriculture

Data in Table 6.7 would seem to suggest that there would be a significant loss of agricultural land in the county during the planning horizon. However, that is not anticipated to be the case. Note that in Table 6.6 the Census of Agriculture show 139,846 acres of land in farms in Edgecombe County as of 2007, but the future land use plan per Table 6.7 with 193,091 acres of agriculture shows a net increase when the two are compared. Furthermore, lands in conservation may still be farmed, and that fact could increase the total amount of agricultural land to an amount greater than that shown in Table 6.7.

Residential

In the existing land use analysis, residential land use was grouped into a single category. For the future land use plan map, residential land use is divided into rural, suburban, and urban to correspond with the residential zoning districts established in the Edgecombe County Unified Development Code. Comparing rural residential land use, existing and future, in Table 6.7 would suggest that rural residential land use will decrease by about 25% during the 20-year planning horizon. However, rural residential land is not expected to decrease. Some of the rural residential land may be located in 100-year floodplains and thus reclassified as conservation land. Other existing rural residential land uses may be reclassified to other residential categories when considering the future land use plan map. And agricultural properties may also include rural residences that are generalized into the agricultural future land use plan category.

It is important to note that substantial future residential development opportunities exist in the Rocky Mount, Tarboro, Macclesfield and other extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJ) and growth areas. Land within municipal limits and ETJs are excluded from the future land use plan map and from the residential acreages shown in Table 6.7. The lands that are designed on the future land use plan map as suburban residential meet the following criteria: Suburban residential areas are: (1) located outside of flood plains; (2) Not designated by the tax assessor as being within the current use assessment taxation program for agriculture; and (3) Served or easily served by the county's public water system. As noted in the policies (see Chapter 10), rezoning to the R-20 zoning district for suburban residential development on minimum 20,000 square foot lots may be appropriate in areas where they can be connected to the county's public water system. Nonetheless, given that population growth is not projected to increase substantially, and since much future residential growth can occur within ETJs and the 6,700 acres of land designated for suburban residential use in unincorporated areas, there was no need to provide for widespread suburban residential development throughout the county. There was also concern about designated excessive amounts of suburban residential land use in the unincorporated areas of Edgecombe County which would be contrary to the growth management strategy of focusing development in the existing urban areas (cities and towns) and their ETJs.

The future land use plan also shows a limited amount of urban residential development within the county's planning jurisdiction. The urban residential designation indicates opportunities for higher density development in select locations (adjacent to the Kingsboro industrial interchange and southwest of Leggett).

The suburban residential designation on the future land use plan map could result in approximately 14,000 housing units. The urban residential designation on the future land use plan map could result in approximately 1,600 multi-family dwelling units. These plan designations if built out to densities allowed by the Edgecombe County UDC, would greatly exceed housing unit demand in the county. Furthermore, if these same housing units were constructed and occupied, the population within the county's planning jurisdiction would increase by an estimated 31,600 people, vastly exceeding population projections for the county. And that would not include housing unit and population growth within the ETJs. From these buildout figures, one can see why the future land use designers were judicious in designating land for future residential growth in the unincorporated portions of Edgecombe County.

Commercial and Crossroads Communities

The future land use plan map shows several crossroads communities centered on major road intersections, especially where a public school and public water (and in some cases sanitary sewer) are available. Based on acreages shown in Table 6.7, this implies that commercial land use will increase by more than 1,000 acres in the Edgecombe County planning jurisdiction. But such an increase is highly unlikely to occur, since it is not realistic to expect that all lands designated as crossroads community will development with commercial land uses. There is just not sufficient market demand for that much commercial. However, property owners within nodes designated as crossroads communities may seek (and the county may grant) rezoning for neighborhood-serving commercial uses in these circles of land around major intersections. Such crossroads communities are definitely not anticipated to fill up with neighborhood commercial land uses during the 20-year planning horizon. Perhaps 10% or 20% (100 to 200 acres) is a more realistic forecast.

Industrial

The vast majority of industrial land uses in Edgecombe County lie within city or town limits or the ETJs of Rocky Mount and Tarboro. Plan policies call for the continued concentration of industrial land uses within designated urban areas. Nonetheless, the future land use plan map provides for an increase of more than 1,000 acres of industrial land in the Edgecombe County planning jurisdiction – all or virtually all of the new industrial acreage is concentrated around the Kingsboro interchange at U.S. Highway 64. Such designation is consistent with the county’s land ownership and investment in industrial park land and supporting utilities.

ROCKY MOUNT EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION

Rocky Mount will continue as the retail, services, financial, industrial, and cultural leader of the metropolitan area and the larger region. There are areas within Rocky Mount’s ETJ that are predominately agricultural and have been left undeveloped due to a lack of transportation and utility services and amenities such as schools, shopping and entertainment. A lack of water and sewer service outside of the corporate limits of Rocky Mount has prevented intensive development in those areas. Additionally, much of the undeveloped land outside the corporate limits of Rocky Mount will remain so due to flood hazards or threats to the environment. The area outside of the city limits has less established land use patterns and infrastructure and therefore may lend itself to more scattered, less intensive development. Nonetheless, other outlying areas of the city’s ETJ have development opportunities in some cases where infrastructure is present or would easily be extended to those areas with little or no government investment. Rocky Mount’s land use plan cautions against “leapfrog” residential development, which is costly, degrades the environment and results in congestion (Source: City of Rocky Mount, Together Tomorrow, land use element, 2003).

LAND USE REGULATION

Planning Jurisdiction, Zoning, and Subdivision Regulations

The Edgecombe County Planning Jurisdiction consists of the total acreage of the County outside the planning and zoning jurisdictions (corporate limits plus extraterritorial planning jurisdictions) of the ten municipalities. Edgecombe County adopted a zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations in 1979. A Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) was adopted August 2, 1999, incorporated zoning, subdivision, and other land development regulations. The 2007 Land Development Plan indicated that approximately 98.1% of the county planning jurisdiction was zoned Agricultural Residential-30 (agricultural and residential uses on minimum 30,000 square foot lots). All other zoning districts combined accounted for the remaining 1.9% of the county's zoning jurisdiction. The incorporated municipalities accounted for approximately 15% (49,386 acres) of the total land mass of the county. The largest land areas within ETJs are managed by Rocky Mount and Tarboro.

Water Supply Watershed Protection

In the early 1990s, Edgecombe County adopted a water supply watershed protection ordinance to protect areas designated by the NC Environmental Management Commission as WS-IV (Water Supply Watershed Class IV) critical and protected water supply watersheds. As required by the commission, the ordinance established two protected areas for the Town of Tarboro water supply intake located on the Tar River near the railroad bridge crossing of the river just west of US 258. The ordinance was incorporated as two separate zoning overlay districts when the county's Unified Development Ordinance was adopted in 1999. The WCA - Watershed Critical Area Overlay District covers the drainage area located ½ mile upstream from the public water supply intake. The WPA - Watershed Protected Area Overlay District is the balance of the protected area located beyond ½ mile but within 10 miles upstream from the public water supply intake.

Floodplain Management

In accordance with the authority provided in NCGS 153A-121, Edgecombe County uses a Flood Hazard Overlay Zoning District (FHO) to protect delineated flood hazard areas from inappropriate development. The overlay district is intended to protect people and property from the hazards of flooding. The FHO establishes a minimum finished floor elevation of 2' above base flood elevation for all new construction or substantial improvements to residential or non-residential structures with the exception that non-residential structures can use flood-proofing in lieu of elevation in "A" flood zones only.

Transportation Corridors

The Unified Development Ordinance established a Transportation Corridor Overlay District (TCO) to provide specific appearance and operational standards for major highway corridors while accommodating development along the corridors. The manner in which land uses impact interchange ramps and feeder roads was recognized as a particular concern along major highways within the county. Within the TCO, landscaping requirements and access control plans are required. Utility services necessary to support surrounding development as well as to accommodate the motoring public are required in the TCO district.

CHAPTER 7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The quality of life in a given community depends on maintaining existing facilities and adding facility and service capacity in order to continue growing and developing. Without adequate facilities, such as roads, water, sewer, schools, parks, etc., private development will not be possible. The provision of facilities is understandably complex, and the provision of facilities can take several years to plan, design, construct, and operate.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an inventory and assessment of the community facilities and services serving Edgecombe County. Information in this chapter can assist the county in coordinating the planning of public facilities and services with plans for future land use and changes to the population and employment of the county.

OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Facilities and services provided by a local government can be grouped generally into seven categories:

1. Health, Education, Welfare and Social Services
2. Public Safety Facilities and Services
3. Utility-Type Operations
4. Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Cultural Facilities
5. General Administrative Facilities and Services
6. Grounds, Public Works, and Transportation
7. Economic and Community Planning and Development

This chapter, while not necessarily ordered or organized according to the list above, addresses many of these facilities and services. More detailed assessments and capital improvement programs are needed over time, as Edgecombe County seeks to maintain and improve its levels of service.

EDGECOMBE COUNTY EXPENDITURES

Edgecombe County budgets expenditures in a general fund as well as proprietary funds such as solid waste and water and sewer districts. Total capital assets (buildings, land, machinery and equipment, water distribution and equipment, and vehicles) in 2012 were about \$82 million. Expenditures of Edgecombe County government by facility and service are indicated in Table 9.2. Nearly 57% of county expenditures went to human services and education, while another 22% went to public safety (sheriff, fire, emergency medical, etc.). General government constituted another 8.8% of total county expenditures in 2012. With more than three-quarters of total expenditures consumed in these traditional categories of county government, there is relatively little budget share for other facilities and services. Nonetheless, the county also contributes facilities and services such as the sanitary landfill (including a landfill gas project), water and sewer, economic and physical development, and culture and recreation. Borrowing and repayment of long-term debt was only about 1.5% of 2012 total expenditures. Total bond

outstanding debt was about \$20 million in 2012 (general obligation bonds) (Source: Edgecombe County Financial Statements 2012).

**Table 7.1
Edgecombe County Expenditures by Purpose, 2012**

Expenditure Category	Expenditure (\$)	Percent of Total Expenses
General government	\$5,594,312	8.8%
Public safety	\$14,055,195	22.1%
Transportation	\$63,511	0%
Economic and physical development	\$1,656,741	2.6%
Human services	\$21,983,197	34.6%
Culture and recreation	\$608,739	0.1%
Education	\$13,060,349	20.5%
Interest on long-term debt	\$937,988	1.5%
Landfill	\$2,406,161	3.8%
Water and sewer	\$3,236,411	5.1%
All expenditures	\$63,602,604	99.10%

Source: Edgecombe County Financial Statements (2012). Percentages calculated by plan authors.

With regard to revenues, in 2012 ad valorem taxes totaled approximately \$26.6 million, while a variety of special local option sales taxes generated about \$3.8 million. Other significant revenues in 2012 included \$11.2 million from the Department of Social Services, \$6.3 million in various sales (e.g., health fees, inmate housing fees, etc.) and \$1.1 million from NC Lottery Funds (Source: Edgecombe County Financial Statements 2012).

HEALTH SERVICES

Tarboro is home of the main office of the Edgecombe County Health Department. The only hospital in the county is in Tarboro; Vidant Edgecombe Hospital is a full service, 117-bed, not-for-profit community hospital located serving Edgecombe County and surrounding communities. It was formerly Heritage Hospital. The hospital is now part of Vidant Health (formerly University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina), a regional health system serving 29 counties in eastern North Carolina.



Vidant Edgecombe Hospital in Tarboro

A Human Services Building renovation project was completed in 2012, which houses the Department of Social Services and the Health Department (Edgecombe County 2012 Financial Statements).

There are three medical clinics in Tarboro: Tarboro Clinic, Tarboro Women’s Center, and Freedom Hill Clinic. A branch office of the Edgecombe County Health Department is located in Rocky Mount, and that city is also the location of Oakwood Medical Center. In Macclesfield, medical services are provided by Macclesfield Health Care Center, which is affiliated with Heritage Hospital in Tarboro (Edgecombe County Community Health Assessment 2010).

Medical Care Providers

The number of medical personnel and facilities can have an impact on the quality of life of a given community. Without easily accessible physicians and medical facilities, residents in need of medical care may have more difficulty getting the proper care, and longer distances to go for such care may be a disincentive to seek professional care when needed. Finding care in adjacent counties is also usually more costly and time consuming than in-county care.

The availability of medical care providers is lower in Edgecombe County compared to the state averages. The table below compares Edgecombe County to North Carolina rates in 2008. See also Appendix B, “Area Medical Directory & Resource Guide,” of the County Community Health Assessment (2010).

**Table 7.2
Active Health Professionals per 10,000 Population Edgecombe County**

Health Professional	Edgecombe County	North Carolina
Physicians	7.3	21.2
Primary Care Physicians	4.4	9.0
Dentists	1.4	4.3
Registered Nurses	65.0	95.1
Pharmacists	4.8	9.3

Source: Edgecombe County Community Health Assessment (2010)

The national average of 6.0 dentists per 10,000 population. state average of dentists per capita at 2.5 dentists per 10,000 residents; recognized as a federally designated dental shortage area (Martin). The East Carolina University School of Dental Medicine is working to improve access to dentistry throughout eastern North Carolina. This effort will involve the construction of several dental clinics to serve eastern North Carolina.

Special Health and Social Services

Edgecombe County’s Department of Social Services caters to the county’s social service needs. The department has offices in both Tarboro and Rocky Mount which provide a variety of health and other services to local residents.

Edgecombe County has participated with Wilson, Nash, and Greene Counties in operating the Beacon Center, a local management entity of mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services. In 2012, the Beacon Center merged with Southeastern Regional mental

health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services (serving several other counties in the state) to form Eastpointe (Source: Edgecombe County Financial Statements 2012).

EDUCATION

Public Schools

The Edgecombe County Public School System and Edgecombe County Community College are sources of pride for the community. Operation of the community college is financed and operated by a joint venture of the State of North Carolina and the Edgecombe County Board of Education. The public school system has made facility improvements and worked with the County to bring public sewer to public schools sites. The county will continue to work in collaboration with the Edgecombe County Public School System to improve and maintain access to high quality educational services throughout the county (Source: 2007 Land Development Plan).

The county school system consists of several schools as inventoried in Table 7.3. In 2007 the average SAT score was 900 compared to North Carolina with an average score of 1,003. The dropout rate for grades 9-12 in 2007-2008 was 6.83; North Carolina 4.97 (Source: Edgecombe County Community Health Assessment 2010).

**Table 7.3
Edgecombe County Public Schools**

Name of School	Location
Coker-Wimberly Elementary	1619 NC Hwy. 97 W, Battleboro
G W Bulluck Elementary	3090 Bulluck School Road, Rocky Mount
G W Carver Elementary	604 E. Hamlet Street, Pinetops
Edgecombe County Early College High	2009 W. Wilson Street, Tarboro
Princeville Elementary	306 Walston St., Princeville
W A Pattillo Elementary	501 East Avenue, Tarboro
West Edgecombe Middle	6301 Nobles Mill Pond Road, Rocky Mount
Phillips Middle	4371 Battleboro-Leggett Road, Battleboro
South Edgecombe Middle	230 Pinetops-Crisp Road, Pinetops
CB Martin Middle	400 E. Johnston Street, Tarboro
North Edgecombe High	7589 NC 33-NW, Tarboro
Tarboro High	1400 Howard Avenue, Tarboro
Southwest Edgecombe High	5912 NC 43 North, Pinetops
Martin Millennium Academy	412 Pearl Street, Tarboro

Source: Edgecombe County Schools website.

Public school enrollment, including high school enrollment, in Edgecombe County has declined during the last five years for which data are available, as indicated in Table 7.4.

**Table 7.4
Public School Enrollment, Edgecombe County, 2007-2011**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Public High School Enrollment	2,370	2,342	2,262	2,249	2,200
Public High School Graduates	414	422	446	508	463
Public High School Dropouts	160	166	94	105	112
Public School Enrollment (all public schools)	7,733	7,600	7,441	7,417	7,274

Source: NC Department of Public Instruction. State Agency Data accessed from LINC site.

Library

The county participates along with municipalities in a joint venture to operate the Edgecombe Memorial Library and Braswell Memorial (Pinetops) Library. Libraries are governed by a separate board appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The county has contributed about \$0.5 million to the libraries to supplement activities (Source: Edgecombe County 2012 Financial Statements). Many areas of the county lack access to libraries.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

Edgecombe County government provides important services such as overall county administration, public buildings, operation of the Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners, court buildings and services, juvenile detention, elections, finance, legal services, tax collection and assessment, data processing, and department of motor vehicles.

During the comprehensive planning process, the need for additional burial places was identified, particularly in the Princeville area.

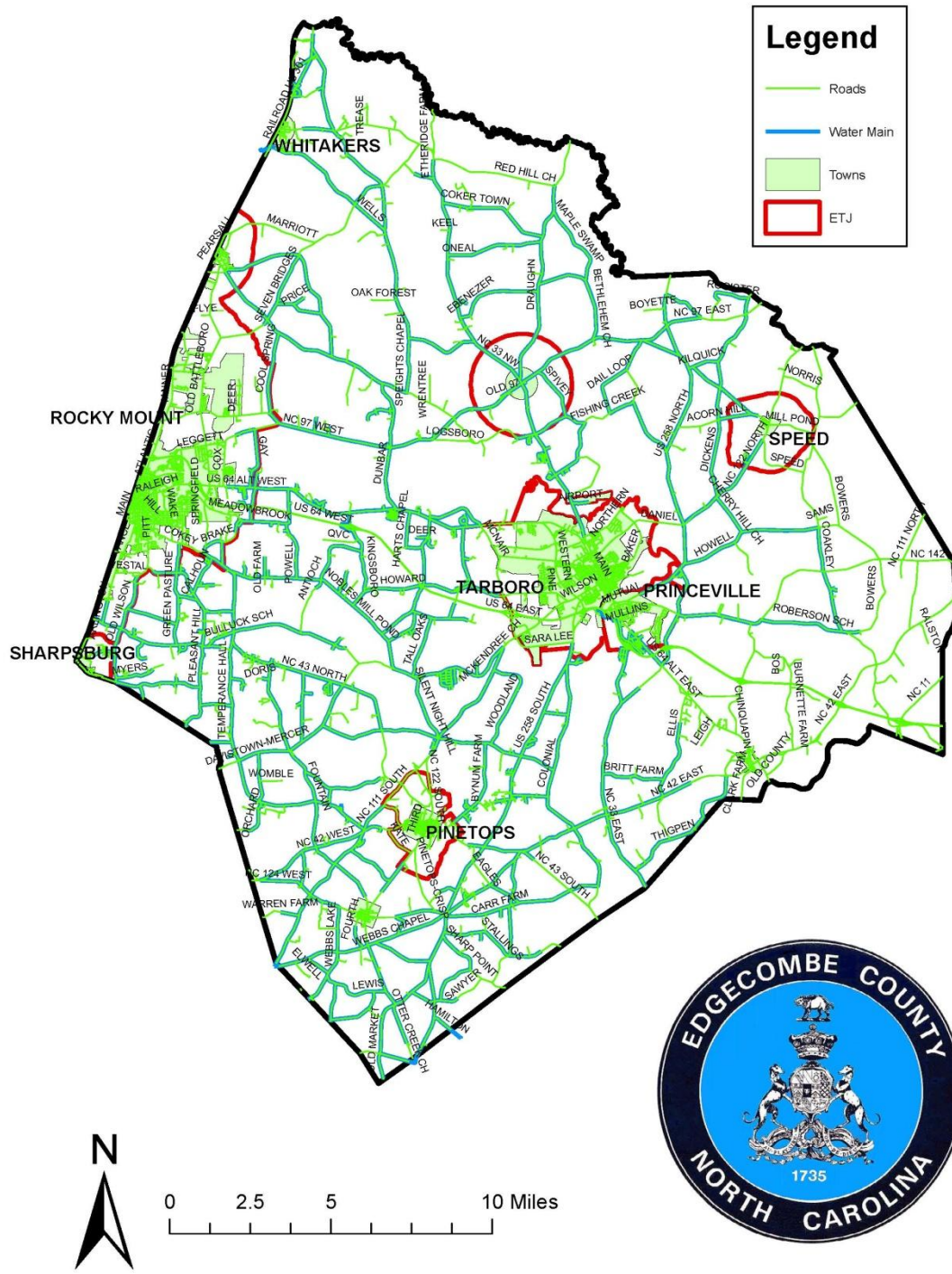
PUBLIC WATER

Water Districts

Edgecombe County has made significant investment in a public water system and plans to invest millions more to expand the system. Edgecombe County has been diligently pursuing a countywide public water system for a number of years. The County has been divided into five service districts to manage financing and construction (see map). Water District #1 serves the southwestern portion of the County and was the first system to be completed. District #2 serves the south central portion of the County and District #3 in the southern most portion of the County. District #4 serves the eastern portion of the County and District #5 serves the north central portion of the County (Source: 2007 Land Development Plan).

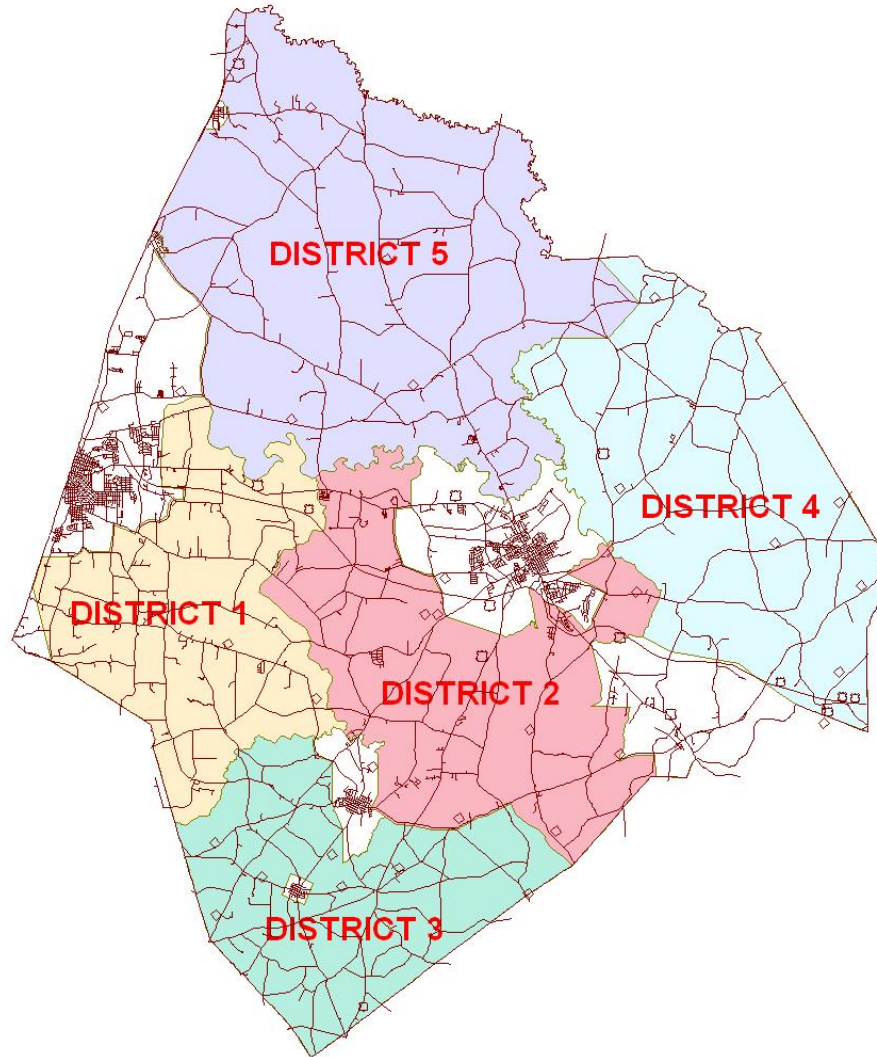
The county will continue to expand water infrastructure service to all districts within the county. Nonetheless, many residents still have wells for water and septic tanks for sewage disposal (Source: Edgecombe County Community Health Assessment 2010).

Edgecombe County Water Mains



Author: Bradleigh Sceviour

The county's water supply is provided by the Town of Tarboro and City of Rocky Mount. Edgecombe County purchases water from the City of Rocky Mount, which withdraws its water from the Tar River and operates two surface water treatment plants with a total available capacity of 30.0 MGD (Million Gallons per Day).



Edgecombe County Water Districts

Water System Planning and Financing

Adequate water supplies are needed for all parts of the county from a public health and also a fire fighting capability standpoint. However, as water lines are run into rural areas, such projects may not be very efficient (i.e., the marginal costs exceed marginal revenues in terms of connecting additional water customers in low-density rural areas). Because water systems are operated as utilities, the revenue produced by the system should be sufficient to pay for all necessary capital expenditures, operation and maintenance costs, debt service, administrative costs, and provide a contingency fund for emergencies. Customers should also pay for the amount of water they use. Flat monthly rates for water encourage wasteful practices. Customers

requiring very large volumes of water should pay additional demand charges. All customer lines should be metered. Developers of new subdivisions should be required to install the water mains and appurtenances through or along the tract and deed the facilities to the county. Regulations should require the connection to public water supply when it is reasonable to extend the water system to new land development. The county should also establish a policy for the “oversizing” of water mains so that when a larger water main is needed than would serve the subdivision or development, the county can contribute a prorated share of the cost to construct a water main that serves a larger population or area.

It is important that governments take steps to promote water conservation. Water conservation efforts can minimize the need to increase water production by cutting down on the amount of water used per capita. Contingency plans should be prepared for dealing with major water line breaks, loss of water sources during drought, and other possible damages to the water system such as flooding. There may be additional opportunities to connect municipal and county water distribution systems in order to move water around the county during periods of drought.

SANITARY SEWER

Sanitary sewer systems are indispensable to maintaining community health. The utility provider must be able to manage water-borne waste by operating, maintaining, expanding, and replacing components of the wastewater system to ensure uninterrupted collection, transport, processing, and treatment. Wastewater systems that discharge into receiving waters must apply for a permit to discharge under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Permits require collection of samples, laboratory analyses, reporting, and periodic inspections to assure compliance with regulatory requirements. A key challenge for the wastewater system is to convey all sanitary wastewater flows to the treatment plant without bypassing flows into receiving waters and without causing waste backups that store sanitary sewage on private properties.

The county has started to provide public sewer service in target areas to encourage higher density development (Source: 2007 Land Development Plan). The County provides public sewer to the Kingsboro Industrial Park on the south side of US 64, and it plans to expand the system to support economic development. The county has also extended or plans to extend sewer to certain schools: West Edgecombe Middle School, (summer 2007), Coker-Wimberly Elementary School, Phillips Middle School, and North Edgecombe High School.

As a general rule of thumb, approximately 70 to 80 percent of the potable water supplied by any given community’s water system is returned to the sanitary sewer collection system. Sanitary sewer systems are usually sized to accommodate average wastewater flows of approximately one hundred gallons per capita per day (Somers, Manning and Tucker 1986). Other sources note that in general “about 60 to 80 percent of the per capital consumption of water will become sewage (Colley 1986).

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

Edgecombe County has adopted a Solid Waste Management Plan which includes municipalities (2012). It covers a ten-year period. The plan also includes a municipal solid waste characterization study. Municipal solid waste generated in Edgecombe County is transported to the East Carolina Regional Landfill located in Bertie County. Facilities are summarized in Table 7.5.

**Table 7.5
Edgecombe County Solid Waste Facilities**

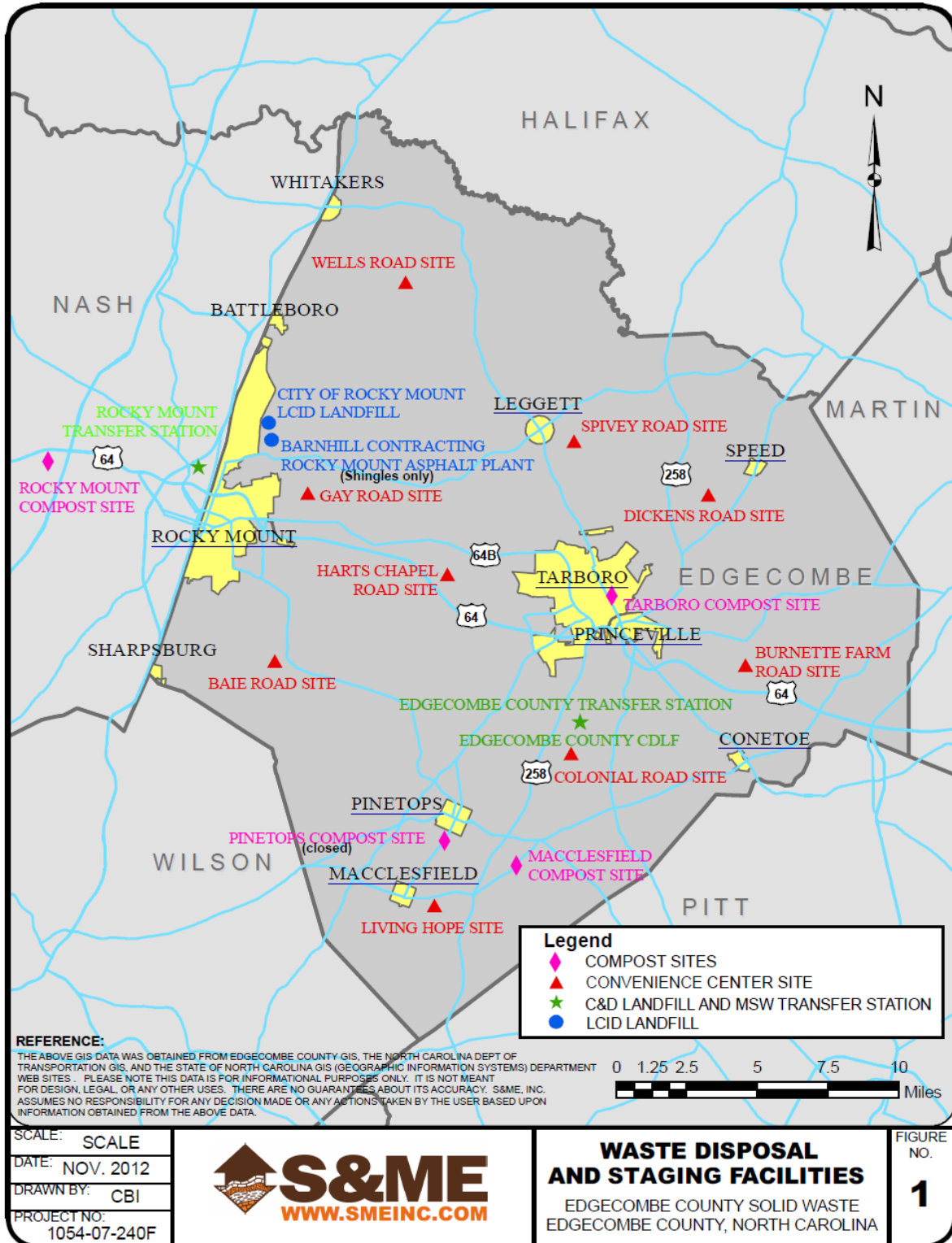
Facility Description	Location
Convenience center	335 Wells Road, Whitakers
Convenience center	1542 Gay Road, Rocky Mount
Convenience center	349 Baie Road, Rocky Mount
Convenience center	1056 Spivey Road, Tarboro
Convenience center	1429 Hart's Chapel Road, Tarboro
Convenience center	442 Living Hope Church Road, Macclesfield
Convenience center	46 Burnette Farm Road, Tarboro
Convenience center	2797 Colonial Road, Tarboro
Compost and yard waste site (Tarboro)	2001 E. Baker Street, Tarboro
Compost and yard waste site (compost site)	451 Daniel Street, Tarboro
Compost site (Macclesfield)	Adjacent to 408 East Green Street, Macclesfield
Land Clearing and Inert Debris (LCID)	3873 Old Battleboro Road, Rocky Mount
Transfer station	2797 Colonial Road, Tarboro
Construction and Demolition (C&D) Landfill	2872 Colonial Road, Tarboro

Source: Edgecombe County Solid Waste Management Plan (2012).

Edgecombe County owns and operates an approximate 270-acre solid waste facility south of Tarboro at 2861 Colonial Road, Tarboro. The facility includes a 65-acre closed municipal solid waste landfill and an approximate 22-acre active C&D landfill. The county is completing a landfill gas project that will convert gas from the landfill into electricity to be sold back to the local Electric Membership Corporation. The county also operates nine convenience centers for recycling and collection of solid waste throughout the county. These are listed in Table 7.4 and shown on a map on the following page.

BROADBAND

Currently the County does not have full internet service coverage (see e-NC Map of DSL Access for Edgecombe County). Expanding internet access will improve individual citizen opportunities and will attract more business development and investment (Source: 2007 Land Development Plan). The county has prepared a broadband infrastructure plan but has not received any funding for its implementation.



Waste Disposal and Staging Facilities, Edgecombe County

Source: Edgecombe County Solid Waste Management Plan (2012)

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety facilities include the Edgecombe County Sheriff, jail, fire, rescue, communications, medical examiner, animal control, inspections, and emergency management.

Sheriff

The Edgecombe County Sheriff's Department is the lead law enforcement agency in the county. Rocky Mount, Tarboro, Pinetops and Princeville maintain their own police services; other small towns in the county rely on the Sheriff's Department for law enforcement.

As indicated on the county's web page, the Edgecombe County Sheriff's Office is responsible for criminal investigations, traffic offenses, service of civil and criminal processes, narcotic investigations, alcoholic beverage control enforcement, court security, transportation of prisoners, gang investigations, animal control, central communications for all county emergency services and operation of the detention center. The sheriff's department is divided into four divisions: records, patrol (25 deputies in five squads), detective, and civil. The Sheriff's department has over 100 employees, more than half of whom are certified officers. The Edgecombe County Sheriff's Office, through generous donations, recently constructed a new state of the art training facility/firing range in Pinetops.

Courts

The Edgecombe County Courthouse is located in Tarboro. It is in the 7BC court district for North Carolina and serves the entire county.

Emergency Services

Edgecombe County's Office of Emergency Services provides three primary functions: emergency management, emergency medical services, and fire marshal.

911 Communications

Edgecombe County operates a 911 communications center. The center receives and dispatches calls for the Sheriff's Office, Edgecombe County Rescue Squads, ten (10) County Fire Departments, Animal Control and the Princeville Police Department. The Communications Center also receives all none business hour calls for the various Departments of Edgecombe County (Source: Edgecombe County webpage).

Jails and Detention Centers

The Edgecombe County Detention Center is located on Anaconda Road. It has the capacity to house up to 255 inmates. The updated facility was completed in 1999. The Detention Center Annex is located within the courthouse at 301 St. Andrews Street. This facility has the capacity to house up to 95 inmates (Source: Edgecombe County webpage).

Fire Protection

Planning for fire protection involves several steps, including the identification of the nature and extent of fire risks, establishment of level of service standards, identification of the most efficient and effective use of public resources to obtain the level of service standards, and implementation of a management and evaluation system. The water system is an integral part of fire protection capabilities. Fire houses must be adequate in terms of size (e.g., equipment storage, number of bays for rolling stock, volunteer or full-time firefighters’ quarters, etc.). Fire protection is broader than many people realize at first glance—fire departments have become providers of emergency medical care, emergency management, disaster assistance, providers of “cat in the tree” calls, rescue services, and many other roles. The overall objective of fire protection services should be to minimize casualties and losses of property from fire by helping to prevent fires from occurring and to reduce losses and casualties from fires that do occur. Edgecombe County is served by a number of in-county and out-of-county volunteer fire departments, as enumerated in Table 7.6.

Table 7.6
Fire Departments Serving Edgecombe County

Station Name and #	Type	Location
Battleboro (Station 9)	Volunteer	4909 Hathway Street, Battleboro
Sharpsburg (Station 11)	Volunteer	300 Taylor Drive, Sharpsburg
Whitakers (Station 10)	Volunteer	104 S.W. Railroad Street Whitakers
Fountain (Station 54)	Volunteer	3642 Lynch Street, Fountain
Rocky Mount	Paid	101 South George Street, Rocky Mount
Sharp Point (Station 56)	Volunteer	4975 Sharp Point Road, Fountain
Conetoe (Station 15)	Volunteer	201 Dawson Drive, Conetoe
Heartsease (Station 19)	Volunteer	8736 Hwy 64 Alt. West, Tarboro
Legggett (Station 18)	Volunteer	29 Draughn Road, Tarboro
Lewis Community (Station 21)	Volunteer	4585 McKendree Church Road, Tarboro
Macclesfield (Station 13)	Volunteer	103 South 3rd Street, Macclesfield
Pinetops (Station 22)	Volunteer	101 West Burnett Street, Pinetops
Princeville (Station 17)	Volunteer	312 Mutual Boulevard, Tarboro
South Edgecombe(Station 14)	Volunteer	101 West Burnette Street, Pinetops
Speed (Station 16)	Volunteer	113 Mill Pond Road, Speed
Tarboro (Station 11)	Paid	205 West Saint John Street, Tarboro
Tarboro (Station 11A)	Paid	2208 Howard Avenue, Tarboro
West Edgecombe (Station 12)	Volunteer	13555 NC 43 North, Rocky Mount

Source: Edgecombe County Website, Fire Department.

Animal Control

Animal Control services in Edgecombe County are staffed by animal control officers who patrol Edgecombe County and respond to calls from citizens dealing with domesticated animals. Animal control is overseen by the Sheriff’s Office. The county has an animal shelter which is located behind the Edgecombe County Health Department at 2909 N Main Street in Tarboro.

ECONOMIC, PHYSICAL, AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Edgecombe County participates with Nash County and the City of Rocky Mount in the Down East Home Consortium. The City of Rocky Mount is the lead agency. Edgecombe County also participates with Nash County in the Carolinas Gateway Partnership, Inc. to promote economic development in the area. Further, Edgecombe County and the City of Rocky Mount operate the Rocky Mount-Edgecombe County Community Development Corporation (Source: Edgecombe County Financial Statements 2012). Physical development services also include County Extension and the Soil and Water Conservation Service. The planning department of the county is also included in this category.

PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE

Per the 2007 Land Development Plan, the county's overall objective for parks and recreation is to "develop a countywide active and passive recreation system that protects water quality, significant natural features, and other natural resources that have ecological, recreational, or other important values." Edgecombe County needs and is already planning for a public parks and recreation system. A well-defined and well-developed park system will better meet the recreational needs of all citizens, will be an attraction to potential new business investment, and will enhance the County's sense of community (Source: 2007 Land Development Plan). Strategies for parks and recreation planning are incorporated herein as follows:

- Develop a recreation and open space plan that identifies and prioritizes locations for both passive and active recreation opportunities. Explore options to encourage and finance the preservation and acquisition of lands for open space.
- Identify and actively seek sources of funding for park development, i.e., NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund.
- Identify significant natural features such as the Tar River and major streams, community landmarks, and important historic and archaeological features that should be preserved as part of the County's heritage. Educate the public about the importance of protecting these assets.
- Establish recreation dedication provisions that provide for recreational areas to be set aside in new residential subdivisions, multi-family developments, and manufactured home parks.
- Work with the Edgecombe County Public School System to develop public recreation sites as part of or adjacent to public schools as a means to provide recreational opportunities in a more cost efficient manner.
- Partner with the Town of Tarboro to promote the Indian Lake Recreation Complex (baseball tournaments), the historic downtown walking tour and access to the Tar River at the Tar River Landing just south of downtown.
- Discourage inappropriate development in unsuitable or sensitive environmental areas which have natural or man-made constraints and limitations, i.e., FEMA designated floodplains and delineated wetlands (Source: 2007 Land Development Plan)

The misfortune of the flooding aftermath of Hurricane Floyd (1999) has left the County with the possibility of transitioning FEMA buyout properties and other low-lying areas prone to flooding into recreational opportunities (2007 Land Development Plan).

Tarboro Park and Recreation Facilities

Existing park locations within the Town of Tarboro include Clark and Braswell Park, Indian Lake Park, Riverfront Park, Town Commons, Livesay Park, E.L. Roberson Senior Recreation Center, and a community swimming pool located on Poplar Street in Tarboro. Clark and Braswell Parks include community centers with gymnasiums and basketball programs, game rooms, meeting rooms, and kitchens. Between the two parks, there are a total of six lighted ball fields with organized civic league programs, a variety of playground equipment, and thirty acres of usable park land. Two tennis courts are also available (Source: Town of Tarboro's Parks and Recreation Department).

The E. L. Roberson Senior Recreation Center offers a variety of programs and opportunities for older Tarboro residents, providing arts and crafts, a woodworking shop, greenhouse, meals program, multi-purpose room for shows and small theater productions, educational programs, game room, library, travel clubs, social, medical and legal services, and outdoor patio areas.

Indian Lake Park is a 52-acre tract that features a six and one-half acre lake, outdoor stage, pavilion, nature trails, nature museum, tennis courts, and campgrounds with tent sites, grills, tables, and toilet facilities. Pedal boats, bingo, horseshoes, volleyball, and fishing permits are also available. Livesay Park in Speight Forest is a landscaped neighborhood garden park designed as an urban greenway.

The Tarboro municipal stadium offers spectators a covered shelter for viewing baseball/softball games and has the capacity to seat approximately 3,000 spectators. The facility was renovated in 1998 and since then has hosted a number of organized youth and regional little league tournaments. The stadium provides a venue for the Town of Tarboro and Edgecombe County to host various levels of sporting events. The municipal stadium is located at 1300 Panola Street in Tarboro.

Riverfront Park is located along the Tar River adjacent to downtown Tarboro. Riverfront Park consists of 25 acres of cypress lowlands, landscaped gardens and trails, and a boat ramp providing direct access to the river for fishing and boating enthusiasts.

The historic Town Common in downtown Tarboro was established by town's founding fathers in 1760 and is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Several historic monuments are located there, as well as the 1860 Cotton Press, herb garden areas, and the McBryde nature trail. Two tennis courts are also available.

Rocky Mount Park and Recreation Facilities

Parks and recreation activities in Rocky Mount range from neighborhood playgrounds to larger community facilities and from walking trails to more intensive programmed activities. Facilities

are summarized based on the City of Rocky Mount's 2005-2015 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan.

Rocky Mount's parks and recreation facilities include: Battleboro Park, an 18.9 acre undeveloped neighborhood park; Booker T. Washington Community Center (a 4.2 acre site with a gym, auditorium, meeting rooms, arts and crafts room, game room, TV room, exercise room, kitchen, and playground equipment); Branch Street Park (includes children's playground equipment); Charter Oaks Park (3.5 acres at the Tar River with a picnic shelter, a lighted basketball court, and playground equipment); Cloverdale Park (3.5 acres with a picnic shelter, basketball court, baseball backstop, and playground equipment); and Daughtridge Park (2.5 acres with a softball field and playground equipment)

Other Municipal Park and Recreation Facilities

The Town of Princeville has two parks. One is Powell Park which is an undeveloped tract of land. The other is Heritage Park which includes a playground. The Town of Pinetops has one park consisting of two baseball fields and a playground; one of the baseball fields is maintained by the Lions Club. The Town of Macclesfield has one park which consists of a playground maintained by the Women's Club.

Culture

Edgecombe County has established a joint venture with the Town of Tarboro in operating the Edgecombe County Cultural Arts Council, Inc. (Source: Edgecombe County Financial Statements 2012).

EVALUATING FACILITIES

In determining the need for new facilities, and in evaluating various existing buildings and structures for their adequacy in the future, the following considerations should be kept in mind. These are provided in this report to assist facility managers with further, more detailed assessments of the adequacy of their facilities and services.

- ***Facility plans.*** Has a space needs study ever been conducted for the facility or service, and have capital plans been developed to meet needs identified?
- ***Legal requirements.*** Are there federal or state mandates with respect to the operation of the facility, and if so, are they met? If not, what is required to comply?
- ***Location and accessibility.*** When planning for new facilities, do they need to be located at a central point in the service area?
- ***Centralization versus decentralization.*** Can the facility or service be provided in smaller, decentralized locations? Or is it important for efficiency that all operations of the facility or service be located in one, centralized place?

- ***Age and condition.*** How old is the facility? When was it constructed and last renovated? Does it have roof leaks, old HVAC equipment, or other immediate maintenance and replacement needs?
- ***Obsolescence.*** Is the facility obsolete in the sense that it has not been modernized to keep up with advances? Were parts of the building designed for certain uses but are now used for other purposes? If so, what are the potential renovation costs, and are they prohibitively expensive?
- ***Expansion potential.*** Is there any expansion potential for the existing building, or does it consume the vast majority of the lot or site on which it is located, thus preventing expansion?
- ***Adequacy of parking.*** Does the facility receive visitors? Are enough parking spaces provided? Is ingress and egress adequate, especially for public safety vehicles?
- ***Adequacy of office space for personnel.*** Are work spaces provided for each employee, and are they adequate? Does office and other equipment spill into halls and entrance ways?
- ***Restrooms facilities and employee support space.*** Are the restrooms adequate and ADA accessible? Is there a “break” room or kitchen for personnel?
- ***Adequacy of storage and on-site records space.*** Has the facility outgrown its storage capacity? To what extent do overcrowded storage spaces increase the time of retrieval and decrease efficiency of departmental operations? Has all existing storage space been maximized in terms of efficiency? Does the department or office have records or equipment stored off-site?

CHAPTER 8 TRANSPORTATION

The adequacy of the transportation infrastructure is a key factor in mobility, accessibility, economic development, land use, public health and safety, and quality of life. Providing appropriate transportation routes and options will promote economic investment. On the other hand, inadequate infrastructure will slow economic growth. Inadequate highway capacities also result in loss of economic productivity and lead to driver frustration over long commuting times (2007 Land Development Plan). In North Carolina, the State assumes the major responsibility for financing and constructing roads. Counties do not have any responsibility for road construction or maintenance.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

In North Carolina, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) (where they exist) are required to develop a comprehensive, multimodal transportation plan; municipalities not located in an MPO shall develop a comprehensive transportation plan; counties may but are not required to adopt a comprehensive transportation plan (NC Gen. Stat. § 136-66.2).

Edgecombe County is a member of the two local transportation planning organizations. The County participates in the Rocky Mount Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) along with the City, Nash County and the Town of Nashville. The County also belongs to the Upper Coastal Plain Rural Planning Organization (RPO) which includes the counties of Johnston, Nash and Wilson (Source: 2007 Land Development Plan).

Edgecombe County adopted a thoroughfare plan in 1996. The 2007 Land Development Plan called for the county to develop and maintain a comprehensive (i.e., one that incorporate multi-modal aspects where appropriate) transportation plan that provides different levels of service for the most cost efficient and effective transportation network. The overall goal for transportation as described in the 2007 Land Development Plan is to “work with the NC Department of Transportation to ensure a transportation system that offers efficient and effective movement of people and goods while preserving the character and livability of Edgecombe County.”

The most recent comprehensive transportation plan for Edgecombe County and the Town of Whitakers was prepared in 2007 but is dated January 2011. Most of this chapter is based on that work. All of the towns in the county participated in the comprehensive plan, but the City of Rocky Mount is not (it is within its own metropolitan planning organization). The Rocky Mount MPO created a travel demand model for its area to assist in the development of its transportation plan. Comprehensive transportation plans are long range, multi-modal transportation plans that cover transportation needs through the year 2035. Modes of transportation addressed in the plan include: highway, public transportation, rail, bicycle and pedestrian. The plan does not cover standard bridge replacements, routine maintenance, or minor operations issues.

MAJOR HIGHWAYS

The following paragraphs describe existing highways and relevant conditions.

US Highway 64

US Highway 64 travels east to west, and it connects Edgecombe County on the west to Raleigh and traveling east to the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

US Highway 64 Alt. and US 258

US 64 Alt. (Western Blvd.) is a three to five-lane highway currently serving as a principal arterial for the Town of Tarboro. US 258 is a two to three-lane highway currently serving as a minor arterial. US Highway 258 runs from north to south through the heart of Edgecombe County. US 258 is a two-lane road that serves as a major north-south route in the county. Currently there are approximately 3,000 to 6,900 vehicles per day (vpd). This facility serves mostly commercial land uses, but includes many uses such as industrial, residential, and recreational developments. Wal-Mart and Lowes are the two major commercial developments along US 258, and they are located just south of the US 64 interchange. The bridge over US 64 that connects US 64 Alt. (Western Blvd.) to US 258 is classified as functionally obsolete. No designated bicycle accommodations currently exist along this facility.

US Highway 13/NC Highway 11

In Edgecombe County, US 13 is a four-lane divided rural highway currently serving as a main connection for the town of Bethel to US 64. The existing facility south of US 64 functions as an expressway. NC 11 is a two-lane rural highway.

NC Highway 33

This route is the most direct link between Greenville (Pitt County) and Tarboro (Edgecombe County). For Edgecombe County residents, Greenville is a major destination for a variety of activities, such as work, shopping and trips to Vidant Hospital. It is presently a two-lane facility but the southern portion in the county is proposed to be widened (see planned highway improvements). Widening NC 33 will support a goal of the CTP to improve connectivity between Edgecombe County and Greenville.

NC 111 (W. Wilson St.) and NC 111/122

NC 111 (W. Wilson St.) and NC 111/122 is identified as a minor arterial and major collector on the Federal Functional Classification System. This is a substantial route leading into the town of Tarboro. The facility serves a wide range of land uses including residential, public, institutional, commercial and industrial developments. Edgecombe Community College is located on NC 111 (W. Wilson St.) east of NC 122 (McNair Rd.). The Keihin Carolina Systems Tech is an existing industry located on NC 122 (McNair Rd.) near its intersection with NC 111 (W. Wilson St.).

These highways are proposed to be improved in the future (see planned highway improvements). There is no existing or proposed fixed bus route utilizing this facility. There are no improvements proposed for pedestrian facilities along this facility.

NC Highway 43

NC Highway 43 travels north and south to the coastal plains and travels through the Town of Pinetops. NC 43 connects Rocky Mount and Pinetops.

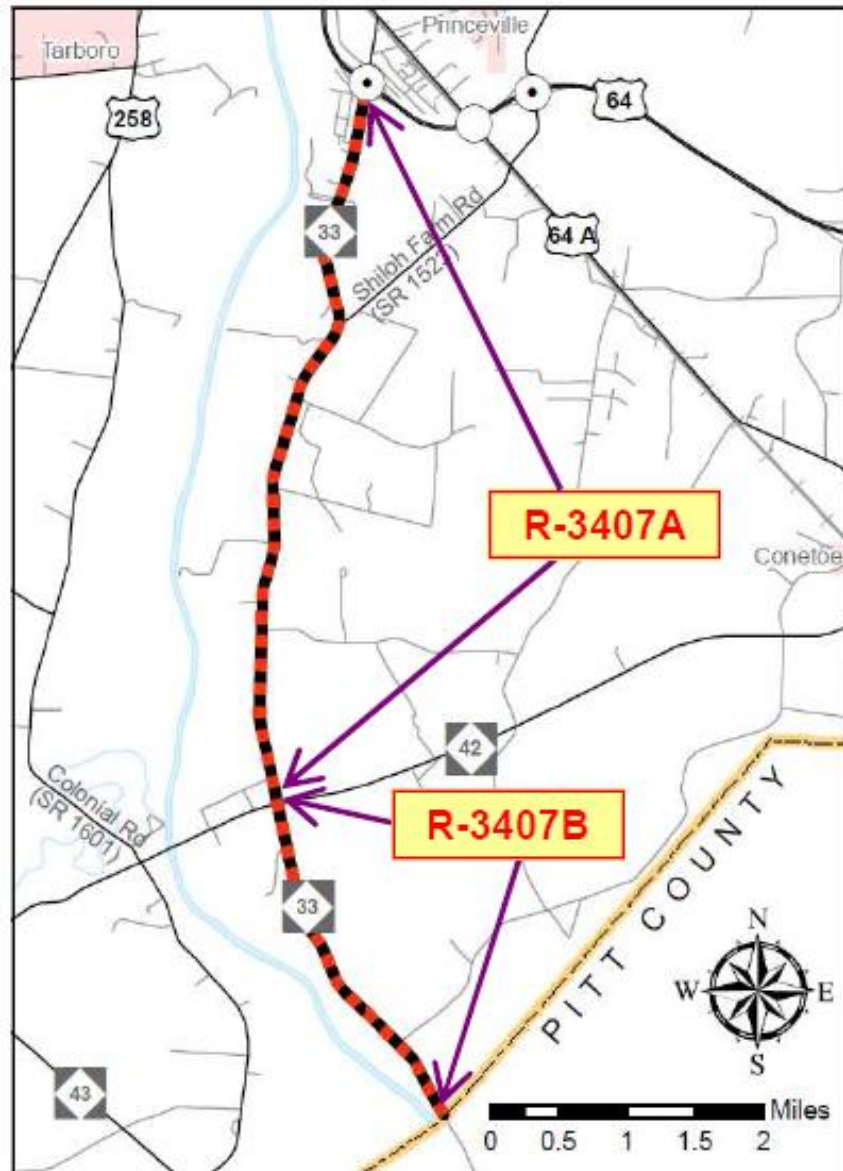
NC Highway 42

NC Highway 42 travels east to west to the Piedmont/Coastal Plain and travels through the Towns of Conetoe and Pinetops.

PLANNED HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

The following major highway improvements are planned, per the Edgecombe County comprehensive transportation plan.

NC 33: Widen NC 33 to a four-lane, median-divided boulevard from US 64 to the Pitt County line. The project will improve safety and add capacity. The road will also be part of the bicycle system: the project is proposed to provide four-foot wide paved shoulders for bicyclists from US 64 to the Pitt County line. The wide paved shoulders will accommodate bicyclists on the existing NC Bicycling Highway Route 2, Mountains to Sea, which runs along NC 33 between NC 42 and Old River Rd. (SR 1401) in Pitt County.

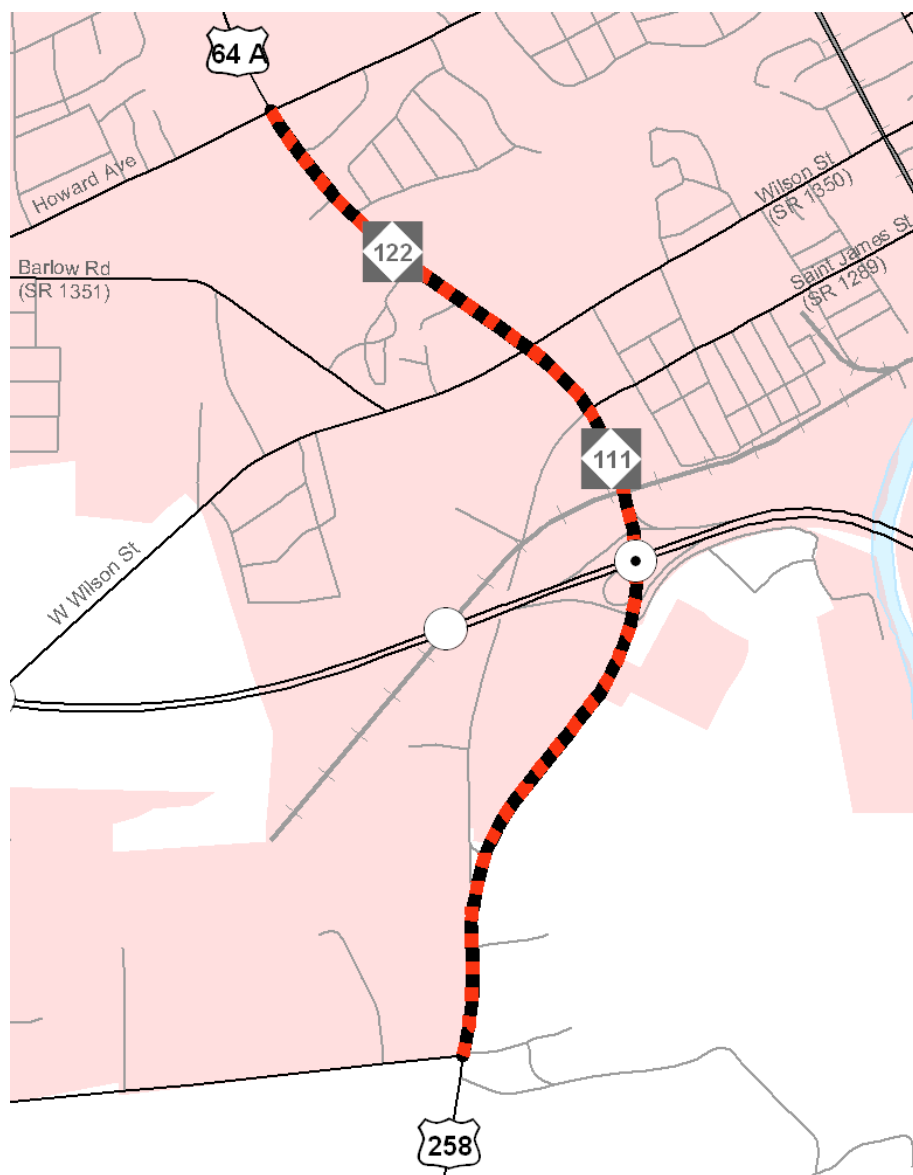


NC 33 Proposed Improvement

US 64 Alt. (Western Blvd.) and US 258

US 64 Alt. (Western Blvd.) and US 258 are recommended to be widened (by 2035) to a four lane divided boulevard facility with raised median or to install a raised median to an existing five-lane section. Widen US 64 Alt. (Western Blvd.) from NC 122 (Howard Ave.) to NC 111 (W. Wilson St.) from a three-lane facility to a four-lane median divided boulevard facility. Install a median on the five-lane section of US 64 Alt. (Western Blvd.) from NC 111 (W. Wilson St.) to US 64. Widen US 258 from US 64 to Sara Lee Rd. (SR 1344) from a two or three-lane facility to a four-lane median divided boulevard facility. For all sections of the project, provide bicycle lanes, striping and signage per the 2006 *Town of Tarboro Bicycle Plan*.

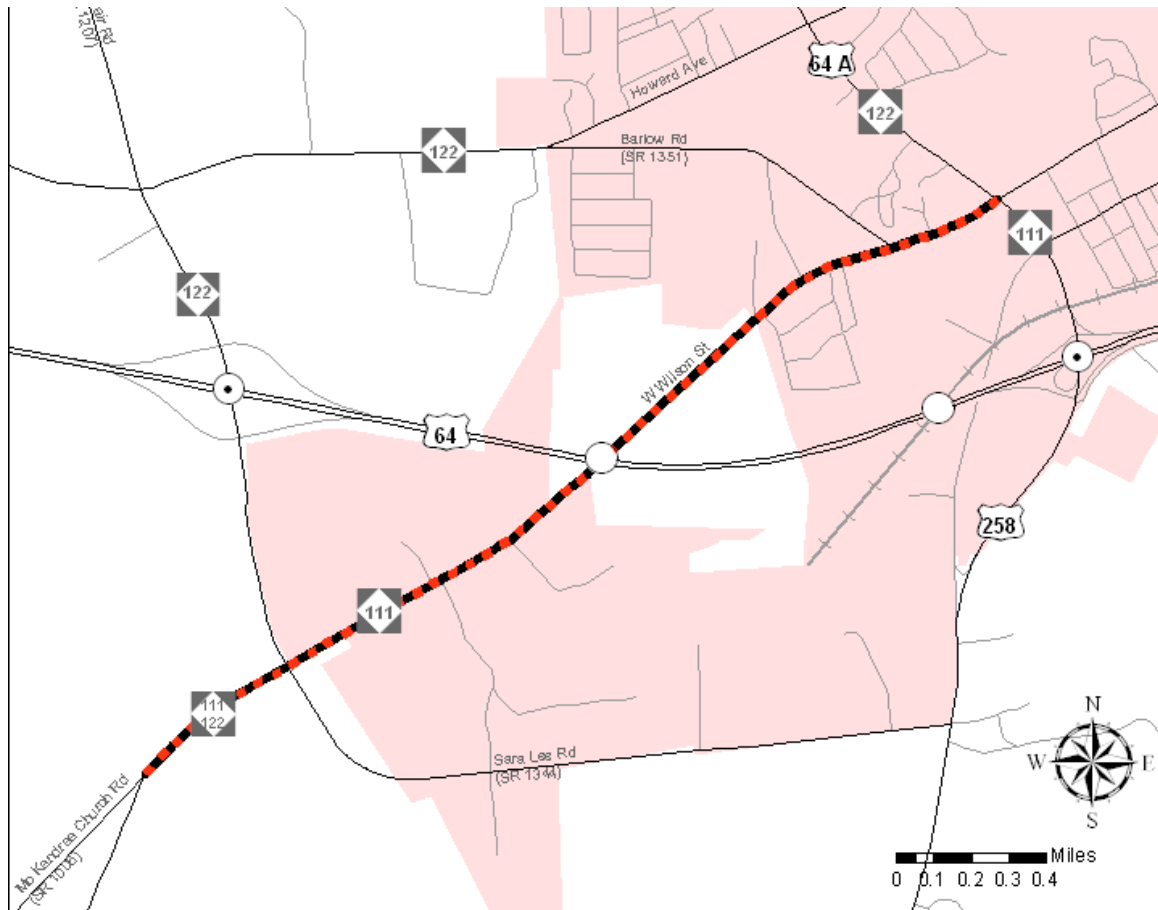
The primary purpose for improving US 64 Alt. (Western Blvd.) and US 258 to a boulevard facility is to provide access control, improve safety and improve capacity of the existing roadway for the businesses, residences and the school along the route. By 2035, projections show U.S. 64 Alt. with 32,700 vehicles per day (vpd) north of NC 111 (W. Wilson St.) and 36,800 vehicles per day south of NC 111 (W. Wilson St.). On US 258 south of US 64, traffic is projected to be 24,700 vehicles per day by 2035. Bicycle lanes are recommended along this facility per the 2006 *Town of Tarboro Bicycle Plan*.



S 64 Alt. (Western Blvd.) and US 258 Proposed Improvement

NC 111 (W. Wilson St.) and NC 111/122

NC 111 (W. Wilson St.) and NC 111/122 is recommended to be widened from a two-lane facility to a four-lane divided boulevard facility with raised median. Widen NC 111 (W. Wilson St.) from US 64 Alt. (Western Blvd.) to NC 122 (McNair Rd.) to a four-lane median divided boulevard facility. Provide bicycle lanes, striping and signage per the 2006 Town of Tarboro Bicycle Plan. Widen NC 111/122 from NC 122 (McNair Rd.) to McKendree Church Rd. (SR 1006) to a four-lane median divided boulevard facility. Provide bicycle accommodations.

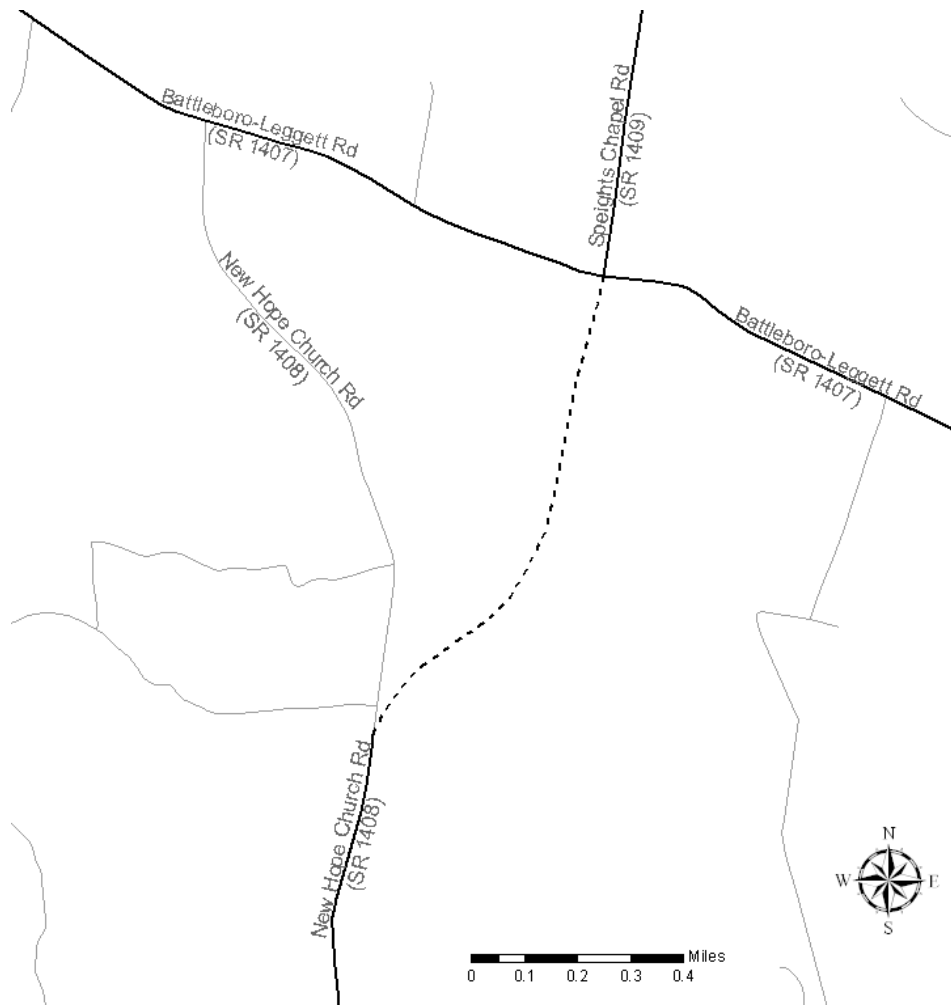


NC 111 (W. Wilson St.) and NC 111/122 Proposed Improvement

The primary purpose is to improve capacity of the existing roadway for the industries, residences and the community college along the route. Traffic on NC 111 (W. Wilson St.) and NC 111/122 is projected to exceed the capacity of the existing facility with 19,000 to 26,300 vehicles per day east of NC 122 (McNair Rd.) and 21,500 vehicles per day west of NC 122 (McNair Rd.) by FY 2035. The 2006 Town of Tarboro Bicycle Plan recommends providing bicycle lanes for this facility from NC 122 (McNair Rd.) and to the east. This proposal recommends extending the town's proposed bicycle lanes to McKendree Church Rd. (SR 1006) to provide connectivity to the rural North Carolina Bicycling Highway in the southern part of the county.

New Hope Church Rd. (SR 1408) Realignment

A new two-lane facility is recommended to be constructed to realign New Hope Church Rd. (SR 1408) to connect to Speights Chapel Rd. (SR 1409). This direct connection will provide better access to US 64 for the northwestern part of the county and will improve mobility in that area of the county. Its purpose is to provide better access to US 64 for the northwestern part of the county and to improve mobility for the residents in this area. On New Hope Church Rd. (SR 1408), the projected traffic (2035 Design Year) is 1,300 to 1,400 vehicles per day. There are no bicycle accommodations recommended for this facility. No existing bicycle accommodations are on this facility. No fixed-route transit uses this facility.



New Hope Church Rd. (SR 1408) Realignment

OTHER HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

US 64 Alt. between McNair Rd. (SR 1207) and Tarboro

US 64 Alt. is projected to be over capacity by the year 2035 from the Rocky Mount planning area boundary to the Town of Tarboro municipal limits. The projected traffic (2035 Design Year) is between 11,500 to 10,200 vehicles per day (vpd) for the section of US 64 Alt. from Dunbar Rd. (SR 1252) to the town of Tarboro municipal limits. To decrease projected congestion, it is proposed to improve the two-lane highway to a three-lane facility from McNair Rd. (SR 1207) to Tarboro municipal limits with bicycle accommodations per the 2006 Town of Tarboro Bicycle Plan.

US 64 Alt. (S. Main St.)/NC 33 (Main St.) between Walston St. and Albemarle Ave. (SR 1308)

The purpose of this project is to replace Bridge No. 24 and provide improvements along US 64 Alt. (S. Main St.)/NC 33 (Main St.) from south of Walston St. in Princeville to Bridge No. 24 to Albemarle Ave. (SR 1308) in Tarboro. US 64 Alt. (S. Main St.)/NC 33 (Main St.) is strategically important to the overall economy and transportation service between the towns of Princeville and Tarboro, which are separated by the Tar River. Bridge No. 24 is a vital transportation link for vehicles and pedestrians between the two towns. This bridge was considered functionally obsolete and structurally deficient, and has been replaced. Providing a continuous center turn lane along US 64 Alt. (S. Main St.)/NC 33 (Main St.) between Walston St. and the intersection of US 258/NC 111/ NC 122 (Mutual Blvd.) and replacing Bridge No. 24 will provide improved traffic operations by separating left turning traffic, such as buses traveling to the Princeville Montessori School located on Walston St. or traffic turning into the Princeville's Government Center, from through traffic. Connectivity between Princeville and Tarboro also will be enhanced. A roundabout is proposed at the intersection of NC 33 (Main St.) and Albemarle Ave. (SR 1308) just north of the new bridge. Bicycle accommodations are also proposed along this facility. This project is near completion. The new bridge structure and road improvements, including the roundabout, are complete at this time; however the old bridge has not been demolished.

US 64 Alt. (S. Main St.) between Walston St. and Mullins St. (SR 1539)

US 64 Alt. is currently near capacity and is projected to be over capacity by the year 2035 in the Town of Princeville. US 64 Alt. (S. Main St.)/NC 33 (Main St.) is being widened from south of the Tar River bridge, Bridge No. 24, to Walston St. through the TIP project No. B-2965, which is near completion. This project would be an extension of TIP project No. B-2965, which is described above. It is proposed to continue the widening of US 64 Alt. to a three-lane section (S. Main St.) to Mullins St. (SR 1539) near the Town of Princeville municipal limits. This recommended improvement would provide better connectivity, reduce congestion and improve safety for the residents and the businesses along this facility.

US 258 between NC 42 and Sara Lee Rd. (SR 1344)

US 258 is a two-lane road that serves as a major north-south route in the county. Currently there are approximately 3,000 to 6,900 vehicles per day (vpd). Traffic is expected to increase to approximately 7,100 to 16,300 vpd by the year 2035. It is recommended that this road be widened to 24 feet with paved shoulders and turn lanes where necessary from NC 42 to Sara Lee Rd. (SR 1344) to improve the safety and capacity of this facility. Improving this facility will provide better connectivity between Tarboro, Edgecombe and Pitt Counties, and turn lanes will improve mobility and safety and provide for better quality of life. The improvement of major intersections to include turn lanes was locally identified as being very important.

US 258 between NC 97 and the Halifax County Line

This two-lane road serves as a major north-south route in the county. Currently there are approximately 3,400 vehicles per day (vpd) on the section between NC 97 and the Halifax County line. This is expected to increase to approximately 7,000 vpd by the year 2035. It is recommended that this segment of US 258 be widened to 24 feet with paved shoulders and turn lanes where necessary to improve safety and capacity.

US Highway 13/NC Highway 11

In Edgecombe County, US 13 is a four-lane divided rural highway currently serving as a main connection for the town of Bethel to US 64, and NC 11 is a two-lane rural highway. US 13 and NC 11 is a proposed freeway in the Strategic Highway Corridors (SHC) initiative, designated as Corridor 53. The purpose of the SHC initiative is to provide a safe, reliable, and high-speed network of highways that connects to travel destinations throughout North Carolina and to areas just outside the state. Currently there are approximately 7,500 vehicles per day (vpd) on US 13 south of US 64 and 3,600 vpd north of US 64 on NC 11. For US 13, traffic is expected to increase to approximately 17,700 vpd by the year 2035. For NC 11, traffic is expected to increase to approximately 6,400 vpd by the year 2035. The existing facility south of US 64 functions as an expressway and in maintaining a LOS “C” it does not need to be improved by year 2035 per the projected traffic. The existing facility north of US 64 is a rural two-lane highway and in maintaining a LOS “C” it needs some improvement by year 2035 per the projected traffic. US 13 and NC 11 currently serve residential and agricultural developments.

NC Highway 33 between Tarboro and NC Highway 97

NC 33 is a two-lane road that serves as a major north-south route in the county. It is recommended that this road be widened to 24 feet with paved shoulders and turn lanes where necessary to improve the mobility of traffic and the capacity of NC 33.

NC Highways 42/43 and NC Highway 43 between US 258 and the Pitt County Line

This route when combined with US 258 provides Edgecombe County traffic an alternate route to Greenville versus NC 33. It is very important to the locals to have good access to Greenville since it is a major destination as evident through the Edgecombe County CTP survey. One of the

goals of the plan is to improve connectivity between Edgecombe County and Greenville. Part of this facility is projected to be near capacity and over capacity by the year 2035 with 5,200 vehicles per day (vpd) and 8,400 vpd. It is recommended that this road be widened to 24 feet with paved shoulders and turn lanes where necessary to improve the mobility of this facility and to support the goal of better connectivity with Greenville.

NC Highway 43 between Temperance Hall Rd. (SR 1124) and Faith Baptist Church Rd. (SR 1126)

From Temperance Hall Rd. (SR 1124) to Faith Baptist Church Rd. (SR 1126), NC 43 is projected to be over capacity by the year 2035 with 8,900 vehicles per day (vpd). NC 43 from Rocky Mount through Pinetops to US 258 is designated as a growth area due to it being a primary route from southeastern Rocky Mount to the Pinetops- Macclesfield area. Just north of this recommendation, NC 43 intersects with Bulluck School Rd. (SR 1006), which is considered an attractable location for retail use growth. This crossroad community continues to attract residential development. The area has public water and Bulluck Elementary School is served by public sewer. With the availability of public sewer, this area is likely to continue to attract more dense development. There are two schools near this location; Bulluck Elementary School is on Bulluck School Rd. (SR 1006) and West Edgecombe Middle School is to the north. It is recommended that this road be widened to 24 feet with paved shoulders and turn lanes where necessary to improve the mobility of this facility and its capacity.

NC Highway 97 between Dunbar Rd. (SR 1252) and Leggett

From Dunbar Rd. (SR 1252) to the Town of Leggett municipal limits, traffic on NC 97 is projected to be near and over capacity with 5,700 vehicles per day (vpd) to 6,900 vpd by the year 2035. NC 97 from Rocky Mount to Leggett is designated as a growth area due to the installation of public water lines. Two schools are located on NC 97; North Edgecombe High School in Leggett and Coker-Wimberly Elementary School located west of town. This area is considered an attractable location for primarily residential growth with some retail use growth at the intersection with New Hope Church Rd. (SR 1408). It is recommended that this road be widened to 24 feet with paved shoulders and turn lanes where necessary to improve the mobility of traffic and the capacity of this facility.

NC Highway 111/122 (Old Saratoga Rd. and Old Tarboro-Pinetops Rd.) between NC Highway 122 to Davistown-Mercer Rd. (SR 1003)

This two-lane road serves as a major north-south route in the county. From NC 122 to Davistown-Mercer Rd. (SR 1003), traffic on NC 111/122 is expected to exceed capacity with 6,500 vehicles per day (vpd) by the year 2035. From Davistown-Mercer Rd. (SR 1003) to McKendree Church Rd. (SR 1006), traffic on NC 111/122 is expected to be significantly over capacity with 10,300 to 9,400 vpd by the year 2035. NC 111 is a narrow road from the Pitt County line to NC 122. It is recommended that this road be widened from NC 42 to McKendree Church Rd. (SR 1006) to 24 feet with paved shoulders and turn lanes where necessary to improve the safety and capacity of this facility. Improving this facility will provide better connectivity and will increase the mobility of traffic between the town of Tarboro and the

Pinetops-Macclesfield area. Providing turn lanes at major intersections is important to the locals. Improving the facility is important for the Pinetops-Macclesfield growth area as it has been experiencing residential growth and it encompasses significant intersections including NC 111 at NC 42, NC 111 at Temperance Hall Rd. (SR 1124) and NC 111 at NC 43.

NC Highway 122 (McNair Rd.) between US 64 and Howard Ave. Ext. (SR 1208)

This two-lane road serves as a vital connection to US 64 for western Tarboro. With industries along Anaconda Rd. (SR 1212) which intersects with McNair Rd. (SR 1207) this is the main route for freight by truck to access the industries from US 64. From US 64 to Howard Ave. Ext. (SR 1208), the traffic on NC 122 is expected to be significantly over capacity with 11,700 vehicles per day (vpd) by the year 2035. The existing land use along NC 122 (McNair Rd.) between US 64 to Howard Ave. Ext. (SR 1208) is agricultural use, and this area is designated by the Town of Tarboro in its land development plan to be a growth area. It is recommended that this road be widened to a three-lane facility with a center turn lane to improve traffic's mobility along this facility and its capacity to accommodate existing through traffic and future growth. Bicycle lanes are recommended per the 2006 Town of Tarboro Bicycle Plan.

NC Highway 122 (Howard Ave. Ext.) between Howard Ave. Ext. (SR 1208) and Tarboro

From Howard Ave. Ext. (SR 1208) to the town of Tarboro municipal limits, the traffic on NC 122 (Howard Ave. Ext.) is expected to be over capacity with 10,800 vehicles per day (vpd) by the year 2035. This facility has mostly agricultural land use with some key facilities such as the fire department and the electric department on the east end just inside the municipal limits. To improve the mobility of traffic on this facility and its capacity, it is recommended that this road be widened to 24 feet with paved shoulders and turn lanes where necessary with bicycle lanes per the 2006 Town of Tarboro Bicycle Plan.

NC Highway 122 between US 258 and the Halifax County Line

NC 122 is frequented by bicyclists and has a bicycle event that connects Tarboro, Princeville and Scotland Neck in Halifax County via NC 122. NC 122 is recommended to be widened to 24 feet with wide paved shoulders to accommodate bicycle use and provide wider travel lanes for motorists. With the recommended widening, connectivity will be enhanced between the northeastern part of the county and Tarboro, especially in conjunction with the Daniel St. Ext. (SR 1537) TIP project.

Daniel St. Ext. (SR 1537)

Daniel St. (SR 1537) is an existing two-lane road in the town of Tarboro on the east side of NC 33 (N. Main St.) that has a couple industrial developments. This road is to be extended from its terminus at Baker St. (SR 1518) eastward over the Tar River with a new bridge to the junction of US 258 and NC 122. The primary purpose of this new facility is to reduce the number of trucks traveling through downtown Tarboro and to reduce the travel distance between northeast Tarboro and routes US 258 and NC 122 to provide a more direct crossing of the Tar River. There are other benefits to this new facility such as potentially boosting the local economy through

improved access to Tarboro from a major transportation corridor including US 258 and NC 122. This project will also improve access to Heritage Hospital in Tarboro. This project is currently being constructed.

S. Fountain Rd./S. Railroad St. (SR 1109) and Otter Creek Church Rd. (SR 1102)

This route serves as an extension of NC 122 that ends at NC 124 (Green St.) in the town of Macclesfield. It is not designated as a primary route due to the below standard pavement width and structure. This extension would create back-to-back turns in the route at NC 124 if designated as NC 122. This could create problems such as a shift of traffic from S. Railroad St. (SR 1109) onto 2nd St. which is a substandard, residential, town street that connects NC 122 with S. Railroad St. (SR 1109). However the locals utilize S. Railroad St. (SR 1109). to S. Fountain Rd. (SR 1109) to Otter Creek Church Rd. (SR 1102) as their primary route to connect to US 258 in Pitt County. This facility needs to be upgraded to standard pavement structure and width and with paved shoulders to better accommodate existing and future traffic.

McKendree Church Rd. (SR 1006)

McKendree Church Rd. (SR 1006) is a twenty-foot, two-lane road that currently carries approximately 2,000 vehicles per day (vpd) between NC 111/122 and Kent Rd. (SR 1209). Traffic is expected to increase to approximately 4,200 to 4,900 vpd by the year 2035. It is recommended that this road be widened to 24 feet with wide paved shoulders to improve the mobility of traffic, the capacity of this facility and to accommodate bicycle use.

McNair Rd. (SR 1207)

McNair Rd. (SR 1207) is a two-lane road that serves as a vital connector between US 64 Alt. and US 64, the main artery for the county. The closest connector to US 64 to the west is approximately 4 miles. With industries along Anaconda Rd. (SR 1212), which intersects with McNair Rd. (SR 1207), this is the main route for freight by truck to access the industries from US 64 and US 64 Alt. It is recommended that this road be widened to 24 feet with wide paved shoulders for bicycle accommodations to improve the mobility of traffic along this facility and its connectivity.

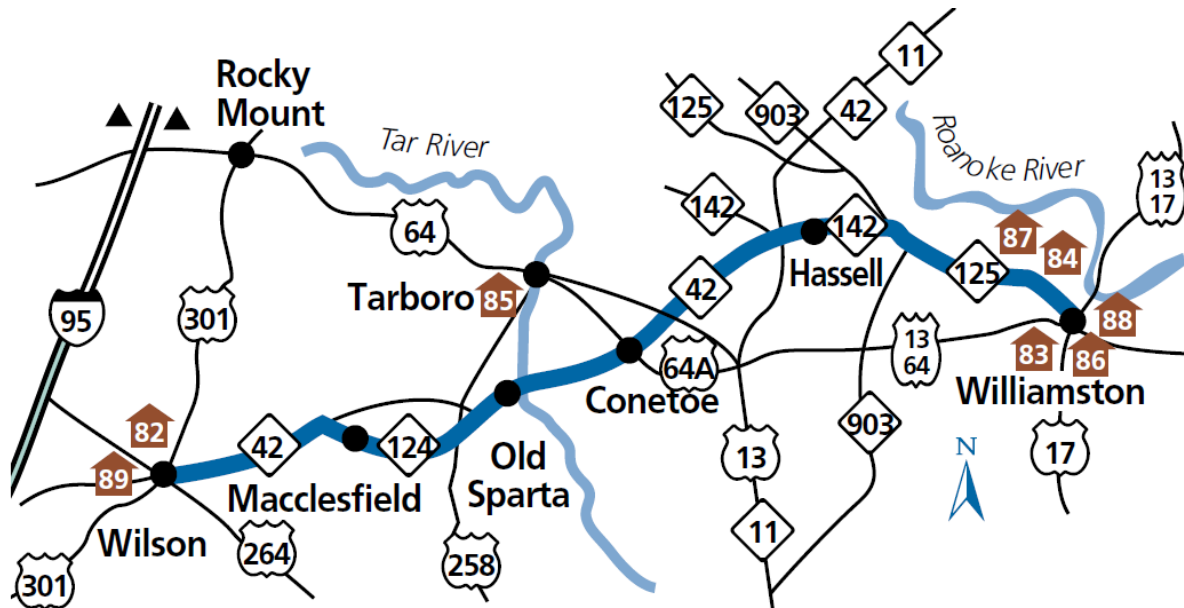
ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Local governments and the North Carolina Department of Transportation share the responsibility for access management. The 2007 Land Development Plan called for the county to implement the following access management standards:

- Along major and minor thoroughfares, establish minimum access spacing standards that will reduce access points, minimize traffic conflicts, and improve public safety.
- Encourage shared driveways for both residential and nonresidential development.
- Require street connections or stubs between current and planned developments to improve circulation and to provide alternate routes that reduce use of major and minor thoroughfares for local trips.

SCENIC BYWAY

Edgecombe County also has a state-designated scenic byway – NC 42 to NC 124. NC 42 to NC 124 is part of the “Tar Heel Trace” scenic byway which runs from the City of Wilson to the Town of Williamston. The route is prized for its aesthetic quality and natural character reminiscent of vanishing rural country sides. The 2007 Land Development Plan recommended that the county, with NCDOT, develop a plan for protecting the scenic value of the NC42-NC 124 highway corridor which is designated by NCDOT as a North Carolina Scenic Byway.



Tar Heel Trace Scenic Byway
(Source: NC Department of Transportation)

The scenic byway is further described in a state transportation document, NC Scenic Byways. The byway begins in the midst of the Toisnot Swamp, some of which has been filled for development. Travel nine miles from the byway’s beginning to the Wilson/Edgecombe County line. Shortly after crossing the county line, turn right onto N.C. 124. Follow N.C. 124 for 3.5 miles to the town of Macclesfield. Leaving town, cross Bynum Mill Creek and continue east for 5.5 miles crossing U.S. 258 before reaching the intersection of N.C. 124 and N.C. 42. Turn right onto N.C. 42 and follow two miles to Old Sparta. Cross the Tar River immediately after passing through Old Sparta. Continue on N.C. 42 for almost six miles passing by vast farms to the town of Conetoe, (pronounced Cuh-knee-ta), Continue on N.C. 42, cross U.S. 64, and travel eight miles to the Edgecombe/Martin County line.

BICYCLE FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS

Discussion of bicycle facilities and improvements within the Rocky Mount MPO are not discussed in this chapter. The Town of Tarboro has a bicycle master plan, and road improvement projects described above implement that plan. The county’s comprehensive transportation plan describes three major bicycle facility improvements (not otherwise incorporated into road improvement plans already described), as summarized below.

N.C. Bicycling Highway Route 2, “Mountains to Sea”

In Edgecombe County the Mountains to Sea route parallels US 64 in the southern part of the county. The route travels along Davistown-Mercer Rd. (SR 1003) starting at the Wilson County line to Suggs Cross Rd. (SR 1603) to Colonial Rd. (SR 1601) to NC 42. NC 42, Colonial Rd. (SR 1601), Davistown-Mercer Rd. (SR 1003), and Suggs Rd. (SR 1603) are two-lane roads that serve as part of the North Carolina Bicycling Highway Route 2, “Mountains to Sea Route,” along with NC 33. The “Mountains to Sea Route” is an east-west route within the southern part of the county connecting Wilson and Pitt Counties. Currently there are approximately 440 to 2,000 vehicles per day (vpd) on these roads. Traffic is expected to increase to approximately 600 to 4,800 vpd by the year 2035. It is recommended that these narrow roads be widened to 24 feet with wide paved shoulders from the Wilson County line to NC 33 to improve safety for bicycle traffic and to encourage bicycle use.

Jenkins Farm Rd. (SR 1130) and McKendree Church Rd. (SR 1006)

With the 2006 Town of Tarboro Bicycle Plan routes and the N. C. Bicycling Highway Route 2 in the southern part of the county, there is a need for connectivity. In connecting these routes, it was important to consider roads that did not have a large amount of traffic and a route that would connect to Edgecombe Community College on NC 111 (W. Wilson St.). It is recommended that these narrow roads, McKendree Church Rd. (SR 1006) and Jenkins Farm Rd. (SR 1130), be widened to 24 feet with wide paved shoulders from Kent Rd. (SR 1209) to Davistown-Mercer Rd. (SR 1003) to improve safety and connectivity for bicycle traffic.

Greenway Connection Trail

To improve connectivity of the off-road bicycle (or greenway) paths in the 2006 Town of Tarboro Bicycle Plan, an off-road bicycle path is recommended to connect River Dr. to E. Saint James St. along the existing canal. This proposed trail creates continuity between the off-road greenway paths along the east side of Tarboro.

PEDESTRIAN NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS

The 2000 NCDOT Pedestrian Policy Guidelines specifies that NCDOT will participate with localities in the construction of sidewalks as incidental features of highway improvement projects. At the request of a locality, state funds for a sidewalk are made available if matched by the requesting locality, using a sliding scale based on population.

NC Highways 42/43 (E. Hamlet St.) Crosswalk

The existing facility is a two-lane road with turn lanes at major intersections. This is a major route through the town of Pinetops and the town staff expressed a concern about safety of pedestrians along NC 42/43 (E. Hamlet St.), particularly near town hall. Due to heavy truck traffic travelling at high speeds through town along this facility, there was a concern about pedestrians crossing the street. Currently there are approximately 6,700 vehicles per day (vpd) on

this road. Traffic is expected to increase to approximately 10,300 vpd by the year 2035. A pedestrian crosswalk, with pavement markings and signage is recommended across NC 42/43 (E. Hamlet St.).

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

There are no existing fixed public transportation routes for the planning area. The Tar River Transit (TRT) operates a county shuttle bus Monday through Friday. It has stops at every municipality in the county. However, six out of the eleven stops are only stopped at upon request. This causes the bus to vary its route through the county. Recommendations for public transportation were coordinated with the local governments and the Public Transportation Division of NCDOT. The local governments did not propose any new transit facilities or routes. The Edgecombe County Transportation Needs Committee considered proposing new park and ride locations for the bus to pick up passengers to ride to Rocky Mount and/or Greenville. The local governments felt that they would consider new recommendations in a future update when a need is foreseen.

RAIL

CSX Transportation is the freight railroad company that serves Edgecombe County. The main rail line runs along the western county boundary, a second section of rail runs between Rocky Mount and Tarboro and then a third section runs from Tarboro down through Conetoe into Pitt County.

The CSX A-line - The line that is the western county boundary is CSX's mainline from Richmond, Virginia to Wilson and Fayetteville, North Carolina, to Florence, South Carolina and to Florida. It carries a lot of important freight and passenger traffic and also provides access to Washington, DC and New York.

The CSX AB-line - CSX's AB-line is the rail line from Rocky Mount east to Tarboro.



Railroad along U.S. Highway 64

The CSX ABC-line - The ABC-line is the rail line from Tarboro southeast toward Pitt County that provides access to Plymouth, North Carolina. It also provides access to Kinston and Greenville, North Carolina via another line that breaks from it at Parmele.

Amtrak runs passenger trains on the main rail line along the western county boundary with a train station in Rocky Mount. CSX also has a rail yard south of Rocky Mount.

In Edgecombe County, there are no new rail recommendations proposed at this time. The local governments for the county study felt that they would consider new recommendations in a future update of the plan when a need is foreseen.

AIR

Edgecombe County, along with Nash County, the City of Rocky Mount, and the City of Wilson, participates in the Rocky Mount-Wilson Regional Airport Authority. There is also a Tarboro-Edgecombe County Airport Authority, which is a joint venture established to facilitate economic expansion in the county. The Tarboro airport is not self-sustaining (Source: Edgecombe County Financial Statements 2012).

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION STANDARDS

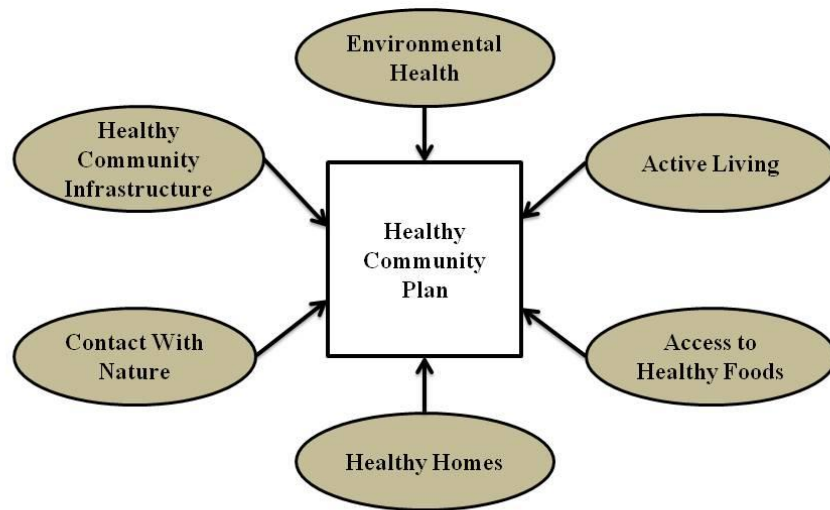
Local government planners are responsible for ensuring that new streets get built as new development occurs. It is important that the “right kind” of transportation improvements get constructed when subdivision or land development occurs. This means that the locality must have fairly detailed standards and construction specifications for the installation of local streets and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Ideally, the transportation element of the comprehensive plan will provide policies on “complete” streets and “context sensitive” designs of roads and pedestrian infrastructure that meets the needs of occupants and also contributes to a “sense of place” for the neighborhood, activity center, or locality.

It is not uncommon for complete streets planning and detailed, urban design plans to be done only for one significant road segment at a time, rather than several road segments at once. Planning that simultaneously considers the land uses and the desired active transportation network usually occurs with a redevelopment corridor planning context. The locality’s comprehensive plan should include cross-section drawings of context-sensitive road designs, and local government engineers should be given wide latitude in regulations to approve innovative designs for the transportation system. Such cross-sections should specifically include greenway trails, sidewalks and bike paths alongside roads, bike lanes within certain road pavements where appropriate, and transit-supportive infrastructure in places that are or can be served by bus, bus rapid transit, or rail transit in the most urban areas. Ideally, the plan and supporting regulations require traffic impact analysis for larger projects and ensure the timely installation of necessary infrastructure.

CHAPTER 9 HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

The health of a community – its people and places – is among the most important factors to address when planning for the future. This chapter reviews data sources with particular attention to public health issues. This chapter helps to assess the built environment conditions that impact public health. This chapter helps in identifying the programs and actions needed to implement healthy planning goals. This chapter supplements and reinforces other elements of the comprehensive plan that specifically address topics discussed in this chapter, including housing, land use, community facilities, and transportation.

Components of a Healthy Community Plan



A healthy community plan takes positive steps to proactively plan and design the built environment to facilitate healthy lifestyles for all residents. A healthy community plan takes positive steps to: increase physical activity; improve access to healthy foods; reduce exposure to environmental health hazards; ensure healthy homes for all households; increase access to greenery and contact with nature; and ensure the quality and accessibility of health services. A healthy community plan (see Figure) also acknowledges that certain segments of the population are affected disproportionately by the health consequences of physical inactivity and poor nutrition, and embraces perspectives of social equity.

Environmental health is regulated (typically at the county level) to ensure potable water and adequate sanitary conditions. As another example, the health and safety of buildings and their occupancy are regulated by state and local building codes. A great deal of “active living” principles involve multi-modal transportation systems, or in other words, encouraging walking, biking, and public transportation use (where available) in addition to conventional reliance on roads and automobiles. Similarly, a great deal of concern about active living focuses on providing park and recreation facilities that will promote human health.

COUNTY COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

The county health assessment addresses health care access, provides health statistics (in comparison with state averages), survey results, action strategies, and appendices containing inventories of health services.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The design of roadways, residential developments, and settlement patterns all contribute to the relative health and wellness of citizens. Land use decisions can also have an effect on the health and wellness of individuals (Martin County 2013 Comprehensive Plan).

This plan differs from a conventional comprehensive plan in that it includes references to health and wellness information gained from the 2010 and 2013 Edgecombe County Community Health Assessments.

There are certain segments of the population that are more likely to be obese as it is more prevalent in the low socioeconomic status (SES) segments of society. In order to prioritize investment, it is important to locate spatially those areas most in need of health and wellness enhancement. Public health officials should strive to focus their efforts in areas that are most vulnerable to wellness issues (Martin County 2013 Comprehensive Plan).

Public Health Issues and Concerns

Local health related data has been gleaned from public health officials, and the County Community Health Assessment. The Top 10 Health Concerns for Edgecombe County are as follows (2010 Community Health Assessment):

1. Heart Disease
2. Cancer
3. Cerebrovascular Disease
4. Diabetes
5. Kidney Disease
6. Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease
7. Alzheimer's Disease
8. Pneumonia & Influenza
9. Septicemia
10. Other Unintentional Injuries

The Edgecombe County Community Health Assessment Advisory Group identified 15 chief health and social concerns for the county. The top health and community concerns are as follows: Lack of Jobs, Unemployment or Underemployment, Teen Pregnancy, Overweight & Obesity, Chronic Disease, Poverty, Drug Abuse, HIV/AIDS/STD's, Crime, Lack of Affordable Medical Care, Lack of Affordable Child Care, Gangs, Family Violence/Child Abuse, Illiteracy, and Alcohol Abuse (2010 Community Health Assessment). Respondents to a survey completed

as part of the 2013 update of the Community Health Assessment indicated that low income/poverty was the most prevalent issue that affects the quality of life in Edgecombe County.

In 2010, issues were ranked according to three criteria: magnitude of the problem, seriousness of the consequences, and feasibility of correcting the problem. selected priority issues and two issues were chosen as priority: Overweight & Obesity; and Chronic Disease (2010 Community Health Assessment).

In 2013, social and health focus areas were selected based on the convergence of stakeholder input, focus group and survey results as well as secondary data sources. Members determined that while the social indicators were very important, it would be more feasible to narrow the focus areas into specific priorities for the action plan. Without addressing both social and health together, significant health improvements will not be accomplished across the community. The eight focus areas were narrowed to four (2013 Executive Summary):

1. Chronic Disease Prevention and Management
2. Access to Care
3. Obesity and Weight Management
4. HIV/AIDS, STDs and Teen Pregnancy

In 2011, the leading causes of death in Edgecombe County were cancer (24.6%), heart disease (20.8%) and cerebrovascular disease (11%) (2013 Community Health Assessment Executive Summary).

Between 2006 and 2010, the percentage of the Edgecombe County population who were obese remained relatively constant. However, the most current reported percentage (2010) was higher than the state (36.9% Edgecombe; 27.9% NC). The majority (85.5%) of survey respondents in 2013 cited overweight/obesity as a problem, and this was the second highest health related concern for Edgecombe County families (2013 Community Health Assessment Executive Summary).

It was also determined that Edgecombe County's rates for sexually transmitted diseases were much higher than North Carolina. HIV and AIDS rates were approximately double those of the state. HIV/AIDS was discussed as a serious health issue in every focus group convened for the 2013 update of the Community Health Assessment, and other STDs were also discussed.

Mental health was cited as a community problem by 76.3 percent of survey respondents (2013) and stress/depression related to economic hardship was discussed in the focus groups (2013 Community Health Assessment Executive Summary).

Action Strategies

Action plans for addressing key community health priorities were to be formulated beginning Fall 2013. The Community Health Advisory Council, will assist in the formulation of objectives and action strategies, but the following have already been identified:

Chronic Disease Prevention and Management

- To improve outcomes and quality of life for adults with chronic illness (i.e. diabetes, heart disease, cancer, asthma)
- To improve access to health care especially for the uninsured/underinsured patient population.

Obesity and Weight Management

- To educate adults and children on the benefits of physical activity and nutrition and provide resources, therefore improving general wellness.

Access to care

- To improve access to health care especially for the uninsured/underinsured patient population.

Action plans for addressing key community health priorities were to be formulated beginning in Fall 2013.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Air Quality

Air pollution can occur naturally from airborne dust generated by winds or other natural events. Air can also become polluted due to the built environment. There are six commonly cited air pollutants which can harm health and cause property damage: particle pollution (i.e., particulate matter), ground-level ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides, and lead. Poor air quality is linked to premature death, cancer, and long-term damage to respiratory and cardiovascular systems. The health effects of toxic substances and hazardous wastes are not yet fully understood, but efforts to reduce exposures continue. Reducing exposure to toxic substances and hazardous wastes is fundamental to environmental health.

Water Quality

Contamination of surface and ground waters by infectious agents or chemicals can cause mild to severe illness. Protecting water sources and minimizing exposure to contaminated water sources are important parts of environmental health. Pollution of water can originate from “point” sources (stationery locations) and “non-point” sources. Non-point pollution sources include urban stormwater runoff as well as agricultural runoff. Agricultural nonpoint pollution is a leading cause of water quality impacts. A customary solution is to have farmers follow “best management practices” as may be prescribed by federal and state agencies in order to prevent water pollution.

Pollutants and pathogens in stormwater runoff have been linked to chronic and acute illnesses when people are exposed to them (Morris 2006). Local governments are authorized to adopt ordinances and regulations to establish and enforce erosion and sedimentation control programs (NC Gen. Stat. § 113A-60). Rules and regulations for stormwater runoff for point and nonpoint sources also exist at the state level via the environmental commission (NC Gen. Stat. § 143-214.7).

Ground-water contamination can originate on the surface of the ground, in the ground above the water table, or in the ground below the water table. From the surface of the ground, polluted surface water can infiltrate, and fertilizers can also enter groundwaters. A major cause of ground-water contamination in many areas of the United States is effluent, or outflow, from septic tanks. As noted by the U.S. EPA, “if these [septic] systems are improperly sited, designed, constructed, or maintained, they can allow contamination of the ground water by bacteria, nitrates, viruses, synthetic detergents, household chemicals, and chlorides.” Leaky underground storage tanks are another hazard that threaten groundwater quality (U.S. EPA 1990).

**Table 9.1
Facilities Operating in Edgecombe County with Potential Toxic or Pollution Releases**

Facility Name	Address	Product	Health Note
DPD Team Concrete - Tarboro	1710 Anaconda Road Tarboro, NC 27886	Ready-Mix Concrete Manufacturing	Stationary source of air pollution; potential uncontrolled emissions
General Foam Plastics Inc.	501 Daniel Street Tarboro, NC 27886	Game, Toy, and Children's Vehicle Manufacturing	Stationary source of air pollution; potential uncontrolled emissions
Glenoit Fabrics (TT) Corporation	3001 North Main Street/ Highway Tarboro, NC 27886	Carpet and Rug Mills	Stationary source of air pollution; potential uncontrolled emissions
Moorecraft Reels Inc.	101 Royster Street Tarboro, NC 27886	Wood Container And Pallet Manufacturing	Stationary source of air pollution; potential uncontrolled emissions
Barnhill Contracting Company	10826 NC Highway 97 West Rocky Mount, NC 27801	Asphalt Paving Mixture And Block Manufacturing	Stationary source of air pollution; potential uncontrolled emissions
Hanson Aggregates Carolina LLC	N.C. 97 East Rocky Mount, NC 27801	Crushed and Broken Stone Mining And Quarrying	Stationary source of air pollution; potential uncontrolled emissions
Parsons' Woodworking Inc.	3109 Parsons Park Drive Rocky Mount, NC 27802	Wood Container And Pallet Manufacturing	Stationary source of air pollution; potential uncontrolled emissions
Ready Mixed Concrete Co. (Plant 29)	621 Old Mill Road Rocky Mount, NC 27803	Ready-Mix Concrete Manufacturing	Stationary source of air pollution; potential uncontrolled emissions
Thorne's Dry Cleaners	502 Rose St, Ste 100 Rocky Mount, NC 27801	Dry Cleaners	Hazardous Waste Report (2011)
Empire Industries	501 Daniel St Tarboro, NC 27886	Game, Toy, and Children's Vehicle Manufacturing	Toxic Release Inventory
Empire Industries Inc. (Button Div.)	710 Poplar St Tarboro, NC 27886	Fastener, Button, Needle, and Pin Manufacturing	Toxic Release Inventory

Facility Name	Address	Product	Health Note
Glenoit Mills Inc.	Hwy.33 W. Tarboro, NC 27886	No Information Available	Toxic Release Inventory
Mayo Knitting Mill Inc.	2204 Austin St. Tarboro, NC 27886	No Information Available	Toxic Release Inventory
Runnymede Mills Inc.	1004 Fountain St Tarboro, NC 27886	No Information Available	Toxic Release Inventory
American Fibers & Yarns (Rocky Mount)	1245 Atlantic Ave Rocky Mount NC 27801	No Information Available	Toxic Release Inventory
Royster-Clark Inc.	3330 Brake Rd. Rocky Mount NC 27801	No Information Available	Toxic Release Inventory
Trinity Containers LLC	1549 Vance St Rocky Mount NC 27801	Fabricated Metals	Toxic Release Inventory

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Envirofacts Website, Accessed April 2014. Note: Results of Search for Rocky Mount and Tarboro Addresses In Edgecombe County)

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Certain segments of the population in a given community may be disproportionately affected by the health consequences of physical inactivity and poor nutrition. For instance, in North Carolina, people with lower income levels have a higher risk for diet-related chronic diseases (Curtis et al. 2010). Children and other vulnerable populations should be kept out of harm’s way with respect to nearby sources of air and water pollution. Planners should also take steps to ensure that vulnerable populations have access to the same choices and opportunities for healthy lifestyles as the population at large.

ACCESS TO NATURE

People have deep-seated connections with the natural environment. People develop “attentional fatigue from excessive concentration, resulting in memory loss, diminished ability to focus, and impatience and frustration in interpersonal interactions,” and contact with nature at least theoretically helps restore their attention; Humans have an ability to find “tranquility, comfort, restoration, and even healing” when in contact with nature. Human health benefits from contact with nature, by reducing stress; people exposed to nature scenes (even if just on a video) are better able to cope with stressors and recover more quickly than people who don’t have that contact with nature (Frumkin and Fox 2011a). Direct exposure to nature is essential for healthy childhood development and for the physical and emotional health of children and adults (Louv 2005). Other research suggests that a lack of near proximity to nature may be associated with numerous deleterious conditions such as asthma, childhood obesity, and childhood diabetes (Martineau 2011).

The Contribution of Trees to Healthy Communities

Trees provide numerous benefits to communities. Trees add natural character by providing colors, flowers, and beautiful shapes, forms, and textures. Trees absorb and block noise from the urban environment and thus provide good buffers between incompatible land uses. Trees also help reduce heating and cooling costs. The community health benefits of trees are less frequently emphasized. Trees directly provide cleaner air by releasing oxygen through photosynthesis, by

absorbing gaseous pollutants through the pores in their leaf surfaces, and by trapping and filtering particulates such as dust and ash until they are washed to the ground by rainfall (Martineau 2011). Trees act as a carbon sink by removing the carbon from carbon dioxide and storing it as cellulose in the trunk while releasing the oxygen back into the air. Trees play an essential role by cooling the atmosphere through shade and evapotranspiration. Trees help reduce the “urban heat island” effect because they absorb rather than reflect heat energy. Trees use sun energy for the production of sugars and leave the air that surrounds them five to eight degrees cooler than ambient air (Condon 2010). Trees also protect people from harmful ultraviolet radiation. Trees also promote positive psychological effects by providing connections with nature. Indirectly, trees provide a more enjoyable environment which can increase outdoor activity and promote a more active lifestyle.

Tree Protection and Enhancement

The county has at its disposal many different possible options for regulations and activities that will maintain and enhance tree retention. Programs and regulations include: rules to protect trees during land development and construction; tree canopy analyses and specifications or recommendations for maintaining a minimum amount of tree canopy when development occurs; street tree planting programs; and urban forestry programs.

Wetlands Protection

This plan acknowledges the importance of wetlands. In addition to providing opportunities for human contact with nature, wetlands provide very valuable and frequently overlooked functions in the ecosystem, including the storage of flood waters, improving water quality by filtering out pollutants, and providing habitat to thousands of wildlife species. This makes wetland protection an important task in promoting a healthier community.

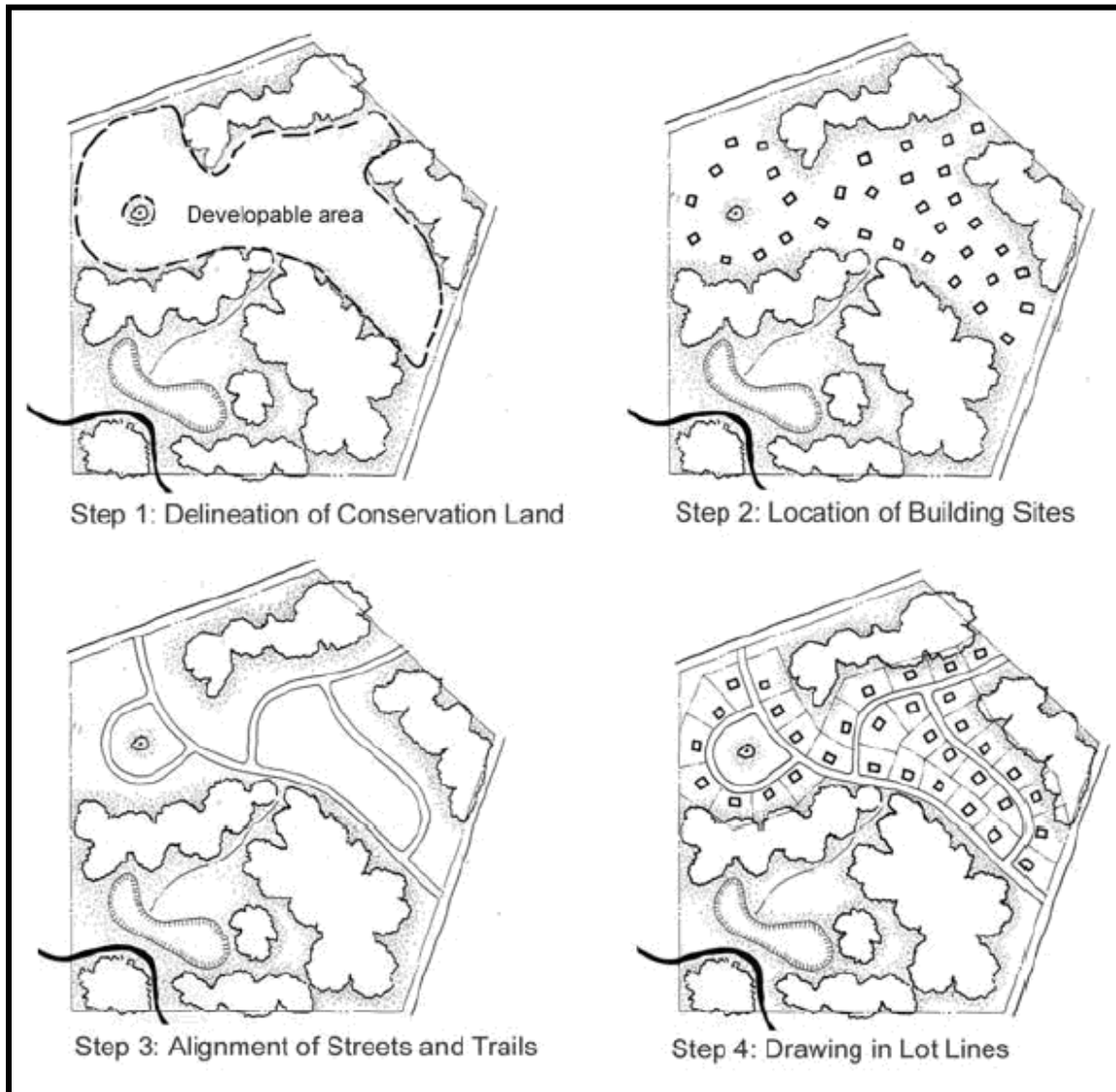
Recreation Set-asides During Land Subdivision

County subdivision ordinances can provide for the dedication or reservation of recreation areas serving residents of the immediate neighborhood or, alternatively, for provision of funds to be used to acquire recreation areas serving such residents (NC Gen. Stat. § 153A-330 and § 153A-331).

Conservation Subdivisions

A conservation subdivision is a division of land into lots, where open space is the central organizing element of the subdivision design and that identifies and permanently protects all primary and all or some of the secondary conservation areas within the boundaries of the subdivision. The 2007 Land Development Plan of Edgecombe County identified conservation subdivisions as a preferred approach for multiple reasons including the protection of farmland. Such conservation subdivision designs will also increase access to nature. Lot owners within conservation subdivisions are able to enjoy views and immediate access to natural areas, farmlands, or other preserved areas, thus contributing to healthy community goals and objectives.

There are other reasons to promote conservation subdivisions. They can help communities to: maintain rural character, protect environmentally sensitive areas, preserve historic resources, establish local and regional networks of open space, and accommodate homes more efficiently on less developed land. Developers should embrace the practice of designing and developing conservation subdivisions because they have been shown to reduce development costs and also result in a “premium” in lot sales because of the proximity of lots to open space (Mohamed 2006).



Conservation Subdivision Layout

Source: Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee

Planned Unit Developments

Planned unit development is a form of development usually characterized by a unified site design for a number of housing units, clustered buildings, common open space, and a mix of building types and land uses in a slightly more dense setting than allowable on separate lots. Like

conservation subdivisions, PUDs tend to involve the clustering of land development in an effort to protect and save open space. PUDs provide for public and/or community open space that is typically not achievable under conventional zoning and standard subdivision platting practices. For these reasons, PUDs need to be viewed as another opportunity for healthier living.

Institutional Campus Designs

Health care facilities, especially hospitals, are increasingly becoming “green” places. Based on increasing scientific evidence of their benefits, hospital campus planners are adding “healing gardens” to increase patient contact with nature (Zimring and DuBose 2011). Similarly, schools, community colleges, and universities should be designed in ways that increase contact with nature, including the provision of windows, plants in classrooms, and access to natural playgrounds and nearby greenspaces (Frumkin and Fox 2011b). Other large institutional campuses such as churches can and should incorporate healing gardens and other strategies for increasing contact with nature into their designs and improvements.

FROM PHYSICAL INACTIVITY TO ACTIVE LIVING

People are becoming less physically active. The building of communities in a suburban, low density, automobile-dependent form is one explanation for why people are less active. Many suburban and rural communities currently lack the design and land use features that enable active living, thus making active and healthy lifestyles much more difficult for residents. One potential solution is to promote an increase in “active living,” which can be defined as a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines” (ICMA 2005).

Physical activity can improve bone health, improve cardiorespiratory and muscular fitness, decrease levels of body fat, and reduce symptoms of depression. Among adults and older adults, physical activity can lower the risk of early death, coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, breast and colon cancer, falls, and depression. Many cancers are preventable by reducing risk factors such as physical inactivity and obesity.

The obesity epidemic our nation faces today could be due not only to bad nutrition but also to severe car dependency brought about by sprawl (Dannenberg et al. 2011). To decrease heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis, depression, and other diseases, the built environment needs to provide convenient opportunities for regular physical activity. Another potential solution to physical inactivity is to improve the built environment in favor of greater physical activity. Living close to parks, trails, and recreation is associated with greater use of facilities and more recreational physical activity (Samit 2011). The built environment can positively influence (rather than discourage) physical activity, especially among children and adolescents, if there is a presence of sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, and parks, and if there is access to neighborhood or school play areas and/or recreational equipment.

Walkability refers to the extent to which a person feels comfortable and safe in walking to and from destinations. It also means that the built environment is planned in a way that facilities for walking are provided and that origins and destinations are close enough that walking is possible. It is desirable from a community health perspective to have significant numbers of workers who

commute to work via walking and biking, because these modes of transportation are “active” (i.e., involving human activity). Active and healthy populations also would have the opportunity to walk and bike to other destinations and purposes besides work. For active transportation to be promoted, the locality’s land use pattern must be relatively concentrated. That is not the case in Edgecombe County, outside of urban areas. The prospect for providing active transportation in rural areas is limited, given their very low density, dispersed nature. It is generally not efficient to construct significant pedestrian and bike facilities rural parts of Edgecombe County. Provisions for improving the walking environment are most efficiently constructed in the urban areas of the county. Nonetheless, the rural environment can still be improved to some extent for walking and biking.

An historic lack of attention to local street patterns is now leading to much greater attention to the “connectivity” of the street network so that travel distances can be minimized and active transportation fostered. Edgecombe County should be cognizant of ways to improve the connectivity of street networks. An analysis of local subdivision and land development regulations can be done to determine if those regulations promote accessibility by foot and bicycle, and if not, what is needed to improve such accessibility.

ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS

Local plans and policies need to encourage strategies that will result in more locally grown, healthy produce. The growing obesity epidemic suggests that the need for healthy food has never been greater. There are several ways localities can provide better access to healthy foods. Localities can increase access to healthy foods by preserving agriculture at the fringe of the community, allowing certain compatible agricultural practices within the community’s developed area, conducting food “desert” analyses, and promoting community gardening practices.

Identifying Existing Healthy Food Production

Communities can learn the degree to which healthy food is produced in an around the locality. Food industries particularly relevant to healthy foods include but are not limited to the following North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) codes: 1112, Vegetable and Melon Farming; 1113, Fruit and Tree Nut Farming; and 1123, Poultry and Egg Production. Many communities have overlooked the importance of having opportunities to grow food locally, and in turn they underemphasize the importance of protecting agricultural lands for food and fiber production.

Urban Agriculture

Farming does not have to be relegated to the periphery of a given town or settlement; it can be interwoven into the fabric of urban and suburban areas (Nordahal 2009). Agriculture in urban areas is now being promoted in part due the recognition that it can improve public health. In Edgecombe County, given an abundance of agricultural land, one would not think there is a great need to promote agriculture in the more urban areas of the county. Nonetheless, opportunities for urban agriculture should be considered in balance with the need to protect residential areas from

farm nuisance characteristics. For instance, chicken farming is often viewed as a potential threat to the health and safety of the urban populations. There is much land available for intensive farming practices throughout most of Edgecombe County, which suggests less of a need to integrate chicken farming or intensive urban agricultural within the county's urban areas.

Food Deserts

Studies show that in many urban areas there is an unequal distribution of food resources, such that supermarkets and fresh food are limited in rural and African American urban neighborhoods. Low-income urban neighborhoods in particular tend to house individuals who do not have access to cars and may lack access to healthy and affordable foods within walking distance or within an easy ride by public transportation (if available). Such residents often must rely on smaller, convenience-oriented markets that tend to offer fewer healthy foods (such as fruits and vegetables), fewer options in general, and higher prices than larger supermarkets (ICMA 2005).

Community Gardens

Community gardens are a means of increasing healthy food access. Community gardens can enable residents to produce healthy foods at low cost, encourage physical activity among residents served by the garden, and increase social ties among neighborhood residents (ICMA 2005).

A community garden has been established in Conetoe by a private church. This comprehensive plan supports establishment of one or more additional community gardens in Edgecombe County. Some suggestions are made here on establishing community gardens based on the work of Schultz, Gallo, and Harkess (2014), who surveyed existing community gardens in smaller cities across the U.S. The average size of the community gardens surveyed is 1.5 acres, and most are less than one acre. The average size plot is 170 square feet, which is about the size two 4 foot by 20 foot raised beds; however, plot sizes ranged from 10 to 625 square feet. The mean number of memberships in each garden surveyed was 42.

Farmer's Markets and Farm Stands

Farmers markets involve the direct sales of farm products to consumers. Another way for farmers to directly sell farm products to consumers is what a so-called "farm stand." In North Carolina, county authority to regulate agriculture and bona fide farm purposes by zoning is limited by statute (NC Gen. Stat. § 153A-340), including the marketing and selling of agricultural products. This means that farmers outside cities and towns cannot be restricted in establishing farm stands.

Edgecombe County has a farmer's market in Tarboro, but for years it has been in decline. What was once a focal point of the local economy became irrelevant as consumers and producers became increasingly separated economically. The market has limited participation from both producers and consumers and is only open sporadically. Currently the market operates only on vendors fees, which total \$210 a year. The county conducted a feasibility study is to find ways to increase farmer's profitability and re-forge a connection between producers and consumers of

food products in the area. The study recommended that the farmer's market be expanded and relocated.

To determine the character of the expansion and the requirements for the new location, a few methods were used to determine needs. First, a survey was distributed to find out about local perceptions of the market and types of expanded goods and services people would enjoy. Next, an assessment of local needs and an examination of other farmer's market studies was conducted. These laid the framework for selecting a new location: an abandoned grocery store at 410 Trade St. in Tarboro was selected, because it had all the qualities required in terms of parking and floor space, as well as a central location.

The study concluded that demand and support for a revitalized farmer's market was high. Market conditions were receptive to the new market and local vendors and farmers were supportive. To certify this interest the study recommended that local stakeholders sign letters of agreement to support the project.

The costs for the expanded farmer's market will be substantial and split into two phases. The first phase has an estimated cost of \$1.2 million and the second, \$1.8 million. While the study concludes that there are funding sources available for the market, they are threatened and need to be acted on soon, or the funds might no longer be available. The study recommends that a marketing cooperative be formed and funded to cover the first year of operating expenses. It also recommends that funds be raised to rehabilitate the selected property at 410 Trade Street (Source: Tarboro-Edgecombe Farmers' Market Relocation Feasibility Study 2011).

HEALTHY HOMES

There are many specific health risks about which homeowners and occupants must be concerned. Homes with moderate or severe physical problems place residents at increased risk for fire, electrical injuries, falls, rodent bites, and other illnesses or injuries. Many older homes in the U.S. still have lead-based paint hazards that can lead to childhood lead poisoning. Other unhealthy living conditions include pests and mold, radon (the second leading cause of lung cancer in America) (Ryan and Bowles 2011), asbestos (which can also cause lung cancer and asbestosis) (Krieger and Jacobs 2011). Persons living in poverty lack the resources needed to maintain or make improvements to their homes. This means that lower income households are more vulnerable to the health risks in their homes. Unhealthy homes can be mitigated with a program of inspection for compliance with housing codes. A county inspector may declare a building unsafe for various reasons, including dilapidated conditions which may cause disease, hazards, or dangers to children (NC Gen. Stat. § 153A-364, and § 153A-366).

HEALTHY COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Public health infrastructure can be broadly described to include all major facilities and services that pertain to community health, including public water, sewage management, hazardous and solid waste management, parks and recreation facilities, transportation, and public health facilities, among others. Many of these considerations are addressed in the community facilities and services element of this comprehensive plan. However, this section serves to underscore the relationships of such facilities to public health.

Health Care Delivery System

The health care delivery system includes hospitals, public health facilities, and private health care practitioners. Access to health care positively impacts overall physical, social, and mental health status, prevents disease and disability, and results in the detection and treatment of health conditions. The countywide community health assessment provides an inventory and assessment of the adequacy of the local and regional health care delivery system, as well as policies for maintaining and improving the system. That inventory need not be repeated here, and the community health assessment should be consulted for existing levels of service and recommendations for improvement.

Water, Sewer, and Hazardous Waste

Public water supplies are regulated by federal and state sources and also at the local level in North Carolina by county boards of health. States pass and implement laws that meet federal requirements when it comes to public water supplies. North Carolina passed a Drinking Water Act in 1979 for the purpose of regulating water systems within the state which supply drinking water that may affect the public health (NC Gen. Stat. § 130A-311 and § 130A-312). There are also drinking water rules to regulate public water systems (NC Gen. Stat. § 130A-315).

Sanitary sewer systems, private community systems, and individual on-site septic tanks are a part of the healthy community infrastructure. Federal and state laws and administrative rules apply to establishing sewer systems. In addition, on-site sewage management systems for individual homes and developments are also regulated. Any proposed site for a residence, place of business, or place of public assembly in an area not served by an approved wastewater system must be evaluated by the local health department in accordance with adopted rules (NC Gen. Stat. § 130A-336). The local health department is charged with determining whether such systems have been installed or repaired in accordance with any conditions of the improvement permit, the state rules, and state law (NC Gen. Stat. § 130A-337).

Hazardous waste is regulated at the state level, and local governments are not authorized to adopt ordinances prohibiting hazardous waste facilities (NC Gen. Stat. § 130A-293). From a public health perspective, planning should focus on measures to mitigate the negative public health impacts of hazardous materials.

Transportation Systems

All of the facilities that allow for mobility should be considered part of the public health infrastructure. Active and healthy living depends on being able to exercise and get around to places. The public street and sidewalk system is therefore an important component of the public health infrastructure system. One can add trails and public transit facilities to the overall healthy community's transportation system.

“Green” Infrastructure

Although natural features are not normally considered to be “infrastructure,” the network of riparian buffers, open space, and other natural amenities must also be considered an integral part of the healthy infrastructure network. For this reason, there are important ties and interrelationships between the natural environment and public health, as described elsewhere in this chapter (see “access to nature”).

CHAPTER 10 POLICIES

HOUSING

1. **Housing Options and Diversity.** Increase housing options to meet the varying needs of diverse populations. Diversify the housing products available in the county, especially for persons who either don't desire or cannot afford a single-family, detached home on a larger lot of land. Strive for well-designed neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing types and densities. Encourage the development of housing suitable for elderly populations.
2. **Affordability.** Increase affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate-income households.
3. **Design of Senior and Disabled Housing.** Houses should be made available for seniors and disabled persons that contain a single-level with no-step entrances and wide doorways.
4. **Housing Programs.** Identify and pursue various private, state, and federal housing programs designed to improve the housing stock, and use a variety of means, actions, and programs to correct housing problems where they exist.
5. **Nonprofit Housing Organizations.** Encourage the creation of, and cooperate with, community-based housing organizations in the pursuit of more affordable workforce housing.
6. **Healthy Home Design.** Encourage designers, architects, and contractors to seek to understand building science and construction methods involving healthy homes.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. **Economic Development Goals.** Enhance the economic growth potential of Edgecombe County, and provide for improved employment opportunities. Diversify the economic base of the county.
2. **Range of Jobs Available.** A range of job types should be available in the town and its vicinity to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.
3. **Incentives.** Consider incentives, such as job tax credits, for current and future businesses to relocate or expand to increase the need for skilled workers.
4. **Agriculture.** Maintain, and if possible, expand the viability of agricultural production as an economic activity.

5. **Tourism.** Expand tourism opportunities as a means for rural economic development. Emphasis should be placed on heritage tourism, agricultural-based tourism, and ecological-sustainable tourism.
6. **Redevelopment and Reuse of Existing Buildings.** Encourage the redevelopment of obsolete industrial and commercial buildings or the adaptive reuse of them.
7. **Small Businesses and Home Occupations.** Promote the establishment and retention of small businesses in the county, including home occupations that meet neighborhood compatibility standards.
8. **Positive Business Climate.** Create and maintain a positive climate for business in the county.
9. **Balanced Regulation.** Balance the need to regulate the design and appearance of commercial and other properties with a positive regulatory environment that is sensitive to the need for businesses to be competitive in the marketplace.
10. **Education and Training.** Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in the county – to permit residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, and to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

1. **Preservation Generally.** The natural environment should be preserved as much as possible. Preserving natural features helps maintain air and water quality, as well as provides visual and recreational amenities for local citizens.
2. **Environmentally Sensitive Areas.** Prevent development from occurring in, or significantly encroaching upon environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains, wetlands, and groundwater recharge areas. Evaluate subdivision proposals for their impacts on sensitive lands and prevent consumption of large amounts of land regardless of suitability for development.
3. **Floodways and Floodplains.** Prohibit development within floodways and restrict or prohibit development in flood plains. If development within flood plains is allowed, flood plain storage should not be decreased from its present state.
4. **Wetlands.** Preserve wetlands where they exist, or as a last resort if they cannot be preserved on-site, mitigate wetland loss by increasing ecologically equivalent wetlands on other appropriate sites (i.e., wetland mitigation through wetland banking).
5. **Wildlife Habitat.** Plan for the preservation of wildlife habitat in order to minimize the possibility of plant and animal species becoming threatened, endangered or extinct.

6. **Environmental Health.** Promote health for all people through a healthy environment, improve air and water quality, and reduce air and water pollution. Reduce the amount of toxic pollutants released into the environment, and reduce waterborne disease outbreaks arising from water intended for drinking among persons served by community water systems. Minimize the risks to human health and the environment posted by hazardous sites.
7. **Stormwater Management.** Manage, mitigate, and reduce negative impacts of increased storm water runoff in all land development practices. Emphasize low impact development techniques for stormwater management in all areas, as appropriate.
8. **Trees.** Encourage the planting of street trees in subdivisions and new land developments. Discourage the cutting of trees when not necessary for land development. Encourage the preservation and enhancement of tree canopy.
9. **Water Conservation.** Promote the conservation of water by residents and businesses.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

1. **Identification.** Identify significant crossroad communities, historic sites and structures, and other physical landmarks for preservation.
2. **Compatible Character.** The historic character of the county should be maintained by encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting historic properties from incompatible intrusions.
3. **Community Support and Awareness.** Strive to increase community support and awareness for historic preservation.
4. **National Register Listings.** Encourage the addition of eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

1. **Growth and Development Goal.** Manage the physical growth and development of Edgecombe County by promoting more intensive land uses in key locations identified for such growth while preserving and protecting the unique physical character and social assets of the predominant rural lifestyle that makes the County a unique place to live.
2. **Extraterritorial Jurisdictions (ETJs).** Develop ETJ establishment and expansion criteria. Before consenting to or approving the extension of municipal extraterritorial jurisdictions (ETJs), ensure that municipalities have the ability to plan for, provide, and administer facilities and services to these areas.
3. **Urban.** Limit higher density/intensity development to areas designated for urban growth (such as ETJs) and with appropriate public facilities and services. Encourage

development in areas where road, water, sewer, school, and other necessary infrastructure is available, planned, or can most cost effectively be provided and extended to serve development. Concentrate employment land use along transportation corridors as well as within existing industrial parks where public infrastructure is available or can be most efficiently extended.

4. **Suburban.** Encourage a compact pattern of suburban development in designated areas within and near existing town limits (including extraterritorial jurisdictions, and discourage suburban sprawl. Identify infill housing opportunities (within the County and within local municipalities) where there is existing public infrastructure. Encourage suburban residential development to locate on infill sites and in places where adequate public infrastructure is available or planned and where adverse effects on sensitive environmental areas can be minimized. This means that suburban residential development may be considered appropriate in areas served by county water, even though the tract to be developed is not designated as suburban residential on the future land use plan map. Discourage the use of conventional suburban residential subdivision designs that consume large amounts of land regardless of suitability for development.
5. **Rural.** Preserve and maintain the rural character of Edgecombe County, including historic sites, structures, crossroad communities, and other physical features that reflect and communicate community heritage. Encourage any new development occurring in such areas be sensitive to and compatible with rural, historic character. Promote the use of land management techniques that reduce the impact of development on rural character, reduce storm water runoff, and conserve sensitive environmental areas. Prevent rural sprawl.
6. **Agricultural.** Preserve large tracts of prime agricultural land and protect them from premature development. Discourage non-farm development and the extension of suburban or urban infrastructure into identified prime agricultural areas. Methods available include but are not limited to zoning, conservation easements, and voluntary agricultural districts.
7. **Conservation.** Promote the conservation of private land through multiple means, such as via tax incentives and conservation easements.

LAND USE

1. **Use of Plan.** Use the future land use plan and the comprehensive plan policies as a guide in considering the rezoning of land and in approving subdivision plats and land development plans.
2. **Conservation Subdivisions.** Provide for and encourage conservation subdivisions, especially in rural and agricultural areas to protect prime agricultural lands, historic sites, sensitive environmental features of the landscape, and scenic rural vistas. Consider regulatory incentives such as additional density in exchange for preserving the most prized natural resources and sensitive or historic sites.

3. **Protect Neighborhoods from Incompatible Land Uses.** Protect the county's established residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses.
4. **Incompatibilities and Screening.** Discourage conflicting and incompatible land uses from abutting one another. Where conflicts and incompatibilities are likely between land uses, screening and buffering requirements should be instituted to reduce incompatibility and enhance the visual appeal of development.
5. **Industry.** Industrial land uses should be limited to areas outside of flood plains, with relatively level topography, adequate water and sewerage facilities, and access to arterial streets. Industrial zoning should generally not be approved in locations not so designated on the future land use plan.
6. **Crossroads Communities.** Neighborhood and other commercial development may be appropriate in areas designated as "crossroads communities" on the future land use plan map.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

1. **Infrastructure Generally.** Give priority to the provision of county public facilities (solid waste collection, fire protection, water and sewer, etc.) to designated growth areas.
2. **Capital Improvement Plan.** Prepare and update at least biennially a capital improvement program and budget. Use the short-term work program in this comprehensive plan as a guide to preparing more detailed capital plans and project descriptions.
3. **Emergency Preparedness.** Periodically review and revise the disaster preparedness and emergency management plans in conjunction with municipalities in the county.
4. **Intergovernmental Agreements.** Periodically assess existing intergovernmental agreements for the provision and delivery of community facilities and services, and develop new agreements as appropriate.
5. **Parks, Recreation, and Conservation.** Define and develop a public parks and recreation system at the countywide level to supplement city and town parks and recreation facilities and recreation sites at public schools. The county should focus on larger scale, regional open spaces providing passive recreation, as opposed to an emphasis on constructing active recreation sites such as ball fields.
6. **Public-Private Commercial Recreation.** Seek opportunities to work with private entities to provide recreational opportunities not normally provided by local governments, i.e., campgrounds, horseback riding, outdoor hunting preserves, motocross racing, etc. Encourage public and private cooperation in providing these types of recreational activities.

7. **Education.** Work in collaboration with the Edgecombe County Public School System to improve and maintain access to high quality educational services throughout the County and to improve employment opportunities.
8. **Broadband.** Expand internet access to provide coverage for all businesses and citizens within Edgecombe County.
9. **Planning, Zoning, and Land Development Management.** Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of municipal land use planning efforts. Provide county planning and land development management assistance to towns where such arrangement is considered necessary and appropriate.

TRANSPORTATION

1. **Goal.** Work with the NC Department of Transportation to ensure a transportation system that offers efficient and effective movement of people and goods while preserving the character and livability of Edgecombe County.
2. **Reservations for Planned Road Improvements.** On corridors designated for future highway or road widening projects, establish larger front setbacks and provide for reservations of land to accommodate future needs for wider rights-of-way.
3. **Street Connections and Inter-parcel Access.** Require street connections or stubs between current and planned developments, where compatible, to improve circulation and to provide alternate routes that reduce the use of major and minor thoroughfares for local trips.
4. **Access Management.** Restrict and manage the practice of rural and suburban single-family residential subdivision lots created in a strip fashion with consecutive, direct driveway access to highways and rural roads. Discouraging this practice will help preserve scenic rural vistas and avoid vehicle turning movements that slow down traffic movement and increase the potential for accidents. Shared driveways and alternative subdivision designs that create shared access via ways other than directly on the highway or rural road should be utilized.
5. **Physical Activity and Active Transportation.** Improve the built environment to enhance access to and availability of physical activity opportunities. Promote “active” transportation (defined as any self-propelled, human-powered mode of transportation) in places where appropriate and efficient to provide. Ensure equitable access to transportation networks.
6. **Multi-use Trails.** Pursue opportunities to construct multi-use trails and greenways in appropriate places in the county.

CHAPTER 11 IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation means the process of carrying out the recommendations and policies of the plan. A comprehensive plan is specific on what is needed to implement the plan during the short term (i.e., five or six years). This chapter suggests the actions that need to be taken, the time frame involved, and who (what agency or department) is responsible for carrying out the implementation measure. Implementation can consist of regulations, programs, budgets, and other activities. Regulations include amendments to a locality's zoning ordinance and maps (or other ordinances). Programs can be wide ranging, from adopting a community development program which addresses substandard housing, to a program that provides incentives for homeownership. Budgets include both "capital" items (i.e., costly items with a useful life usually of ten years or more) and "operating" and are usually separated into those two types. The locality's operating budget may provide for additional staffing or purchase of special equipment identified as recommended by the plan. Other activities might called for in an implementation program sometimes include conducting a study, modifying the development review process, and most anything else not encompassed as a regulation, program, or budget item.

In presenting the short-term work program (the activities described in this chapter), it must be recognized that all of these projects and initiatives are worthy, *if* funding is available. However, this is a time of great uncertainty with regard to county revenues for capital projects and new program initiatives. Similarly, some of the work program initiatives may only be feasible if outside funding is obtained, such as a grant. The lingering effects of the great economic recession significantly limits, and will most likely continue to constrain, the county's spending with regard to funding capital improvements and initiating new projects as suggested in the work program. Therefore, *implementation of the short-term work program is not guaranteed*. Department heads, the general public, and others must keep these points in mind and cannot cite this suggested work program as a financial commitment by the Board of Commissioners. Given the county's current revenue limitations, and uncertainty about its future revenue streams, the projects and activities listed in this chapter may be: (a) deferred for one or more years; (b) moved to long-range; (c) reduced in scope if possible; and/or (d) deleted from the work program altogether.

IMPLEMENTATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The Edgecombe County Planning Department is the primary administrative agency responsible for implementation of the comprehensive plan. However, other county departments have important responsibilities in their respective service areas, and the County Manager must propose and approve funding levels appropriate to carry out the many programs suggested here. Furthermore, the Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners has an obligation to keep the comprehensive plan current in terms of policy. The Edgecombe County Planning Board also has an important role in ensuring the comprehensive plan is implemented through proper rezoning changes and development practices.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Generally

1. Charge the Edgecombe County Planning Board with monitoring the implementation of this comprehensive plan. The Planning Board should review the Plan on an annual basis.
2. Consider updates to the comprehensive plan at five-year intervals.
3. To ensure that it remains relevant without deviating from its long-term vision, the comprehensive plan should not be amended more often than two times in any fiscal year.

Housing

1. Maintain working relationships with the Rocky Mount, Tarboro, and Princeville Housing Authorities to ensure adequate public housing is a viable and realizable option.
2. Support the Rocky Mount Edgecombe Community Development Corporation in efforts to improve and revitalize neighborhoods.
3. Strive to implement the recommendations of the housing element of this comprehensive plan, including affordable housing projects in Rocky Mount, Tarboro, and Princeville.
4. Pursue grant funding sources for housing rehabilitation, repair of substandard housing, and community development activities.
5. Continue to administer and enforce the Edgecombe County Minimum Housing Code ordinance adopted in 2003.
6. Consider establishing a program to demolish dilapidated or derelict housing units in the county's planning jurisdiction.

Economic Development

1. Continue to work with the Carolinas Gateway Partnership to promote continued economic investment through retention and expansion of existing industrial concerns and the recruitment of new businesses.
2. Maintain an inventory of vacant nonresidential buildings for potential reuse. Encourage the redevelopment of obsolete industrial and commercial buildings or the adaptive reuse of them.
3. Continue to promote and encourage development within the two existing state certified industrial parks - Kingsboro Industrial Park and Tarboro Commerce Center.
4. Expand internet service to industrial parks.

5. Participate with Tarboro in the establishment of a Tourism Development Authority.
6. Implement the recommendations of the 2008 Sustainable Tourism plan with regard to natural assets-based tourism.
7. Work with key industry leaders and Carolinas Gateway Partnership to ascertain existing deficiencies in workforce training and work with school districts to develop appropriate programs.
8. Capitalize on good relationships with Edgecombe Community College and East Carolina University to improve economic development prospects and labor force retraining.

Historic Preservation

1. Identify significant natural features, community landmarks, and important historic and archaeological features that should be preserved as part of the County's heritage. Educate the public about the importance of protecting these assets.
2. Create a Historic Preservation Advisory Committee to promote interest and education in the preservation of historic landmarks located in the planning jurisdiction and the County in general. This committee should be charged with the preparation of an updated survey of past and present historic properties and structures in the County's jurisdiction including an interpretation of the historical built environment of the community as it relates to the social, cultural and ethnic background of the community.
3. National Register Listings. Add eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places.
4. Preservation and Heritage Tourism. Promote the Tar River Paddle Trails and Civil War Trail Sites and explore ways to enhance these tourist attractions. Also, implement the recommendations of the Sustainable Tourism Plan as they relate to heritage tourism.
5. Partner with the Town of Tarboro to promote the historic downtown walking tour and other heritage tourism promotional activities.

Natural Resources

1. Continue to implement flood mitigation efforts resulting from Hurricane Floyd.
2. Participate in and actively support stormwater management programs in urban and suburban areas.
3. Institute a street tree planting program to improve the health of the environment in settlement areas.

4. Consider instituting additional farmland preservation programs and regulations to stem the loss of agricultural lands.

Land Use

1. Amend the Unified Development Ordinance as necessary to implement the comprehensive plan.
2. Consult this comprehensive plan when considering administrative and legislative approvals of development proposals, including rezoning and subdivision plats.
3. Cooperate with cities and towns to revise and update their extraterritorial jurisdictions.
4. Assume a position of leadership in countywide growth management, and assist small towns with planning and zoning and other land use management activities.
5. Consider the preparation of land use refinement plans for corridors and/or small areas of the county within the Edgecombe County planning jurisdiction.

Community Facilities and Services

1. Establish and support community-based partnerships to beautify the county.
2. Continue to expand county water and sewer infrastructure to targeted areas.
3. Integrate water conservation into future water system planning and water system management efforts.
4. Continue the established program of providing sanitary sewer service to county schools and major growth areas.
5. Update ten-year comprehensive solid waste management plan (2017).
6. Complete the landfill gas to electricity project.
7. Reconsider, and revise as appropriate, existing intergovernmental agreements for community facilities and services.
8. Prepare and implement a capital improvement program that is coordinated with this comprehensive plan.
9. Consider the capital improvement program and this comprehensive plan during annual budgeting processes.
10. Implement the countywide broadband study if sufficient funding exists.

11. Implement the farmer's market relocation study and establish a new and improved farmer's market in Tarboro as called for in that study.
12. Where required, retrofit existing county facilities for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Parks and Recreation

1. Develop a recreation and open space plan, one that is consistent with any regional open space acquisition strategies, that identifies and prioritizes locations for passive recreation opportunities.
2. Expand access to the Tar River for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hiking, etc. Identify and actively seek sources of funding for park development, i.e., NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (NCPARTF).
3. Establish recreation dedication provisions that provide for recreational areas to be set aside in new residential subdivisions, multi-family developments, and manufactured home parks.
4. Work with the Edgecombe County Public School System to develop and share public recreation sites as part of or adjacent to public schools as a means to provide recreational opportunities in a more cost efficient manner. Adopt or update as necessary shared-use agreements with the local school system for use of park and recreation facilities.
5. Use property acquired via FEMA buyout programs for passive recreation activities.

Transportation

1. Maintain and periodically update the comprehensive transportation plan to provide for a cost efficient and effective transportation network. Incorporate multi-modal aspects where appropriate.
2. With NCDOT, develop a plan for protecting the scenic value of the NC42-NC 124 highway corridor which is designated by NCDOT as a North Carolina Scenic Byway.
3. Maintain support for the Tar River Transit System, and improve access to area health care facilities via transit service for the elderly, disabled and disadvantaged.

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