

WAXHAW North Carolina

Comprehensive Plan

**ADOPTED
OCTOBER 25, 2016**





WAXHAW

North
Carolina

Comprehensive Plan

Prepared for
Town of Waxhaw

Prepared by
Benchmark Planning

Adopted
October 25, 2016



Town of Waxhaw
Comprehensive Plan

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Town of Waxhaw
Comprehensive Plan

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Town of Waxhaw
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01



THIS IS MY WAXHAW

1.1 THIS IS MY WAXHAW

The Town of Waxhaw, once a rural crossroads community with several hundred residents, has grown into a vibrant small city within the dynamic Charlotte Metropolitan Region. Over the last year, a 12-member Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, along with citizens, business leaders, volunteer boards, elected officials and others participated in “**This is My Waxhaw**” -- a comprehensive planning process, sharing their thoughts, ideas, and desires for how Waxhaw should meet the many complex challenges it faces as a rapidly growing community.



▲ Figure 1.1 May 4 Public Meeting - Evening Session

A primary emphasis of the process was a review of the Town’s many adopted small area plans and other plans that have been placed into action since the adoption of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The evolution of the Town’s adopted plans are documented in Figure 1.2. The adopted plans, which remain alive and relevant, served as a recent base of research and policies for the Steering Committee to utilize as they identified the issues that matter most to the future of Waxhaw.

The result of the year-long process is the Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is

a written expression of the community’s vision and aspirations for the future, serving as a dynamic guide for decision making by the Town’s elected officials, volunteer boards and staff.

1.2 PLAN PURPOSE & STRUCTURE

The comprehensive plan establishes the “blueprint” for Waxhaw’s future. It is the vision of what the community wants to become and the steps needed to realize that vision. The plan is comprised of recommendations that form a broad policy document and guide for decision-making on the long-term physical and economic development of the city and its environs. The Comprehensive Plan seeks to build upon the town’s assets and establishes a framework for taking advantage of opportunities as they arise. The Comprehensive Plan is organized into 3 main sections that are highlighted below.

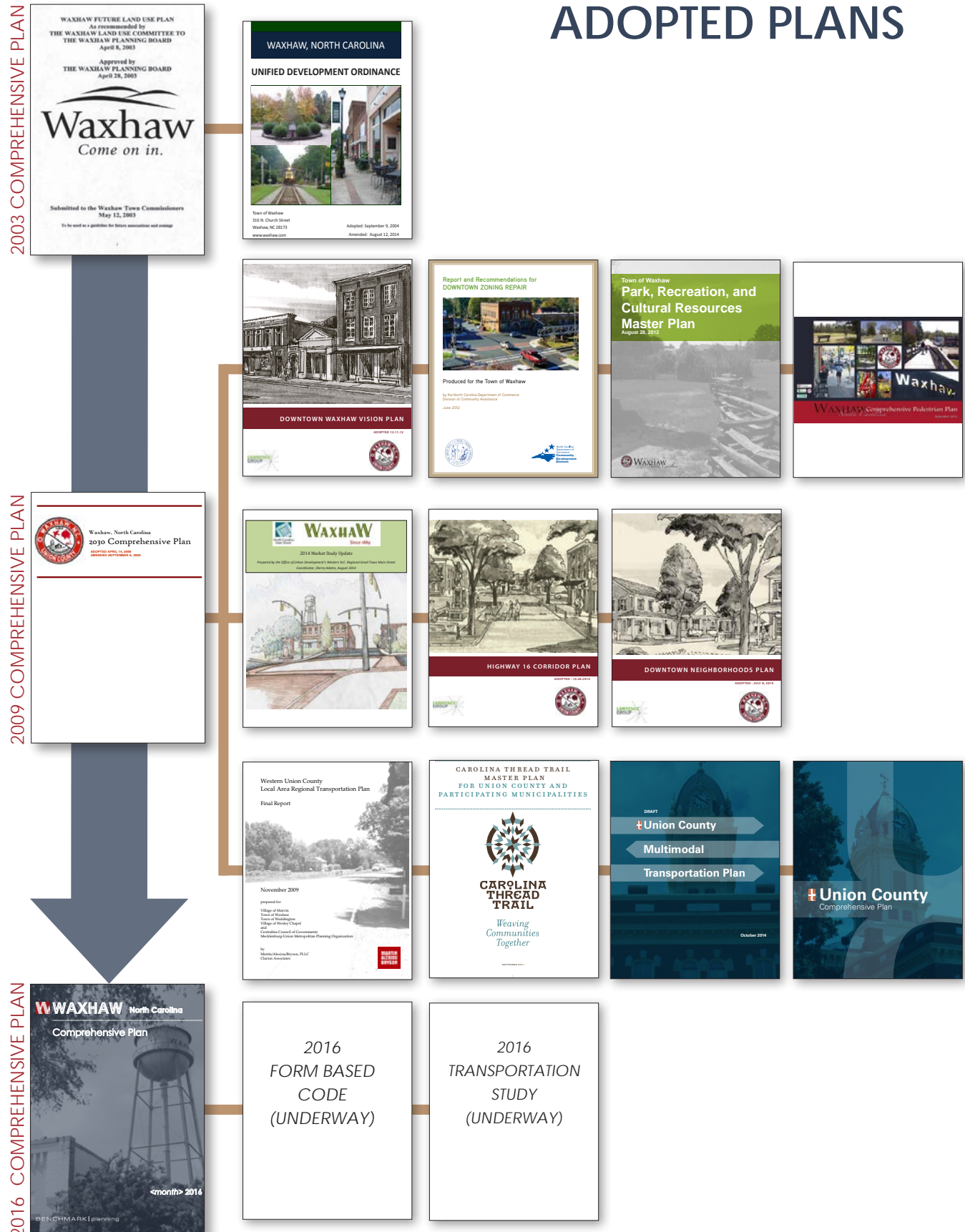
Chapter 1 Introduction

This section of the plan contains background information and an overview of why and how the plan was developed. The vision and guiding principles that emerged from the planning process and set the direction of the plan’s recommendations are included in this section as well.

Chapter 2 Plan Components

Section Two discusses the key elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Each element is discussed and organized in a similar manner, beginning with a discussion of key issues facing the Town, followed by a framework of policies and actions to guide future decision-making.

ADOPTED PLANS



▲ Figure 1.2 Adopted Plans in Waxhaw

Chapter 3 Implementation

This section of the plan includes information regarding the implementation of the plan, including timing and coordination of the collective actions necessary to achieve the plan vision and goals.

The plan considers potential land use and development opportunities for both the private and public sectors. The plan is intended to be implemented over time through many distinct actions including annual budgeting, departmental work programs, land use decisions, and infrastructure projects. North Carolina law does not mandate the adoption of a comprehensive plan; however, when considering zoning amendments, local governments must approve a statement describing whether its action is consistent with an adopted comprehensive plan and any other official plans as applicable.

1.3 PLANNING AREA

In addition to the consideration of existing plans, another focus of the comprehensive plan update was the reconsideration of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Study Boundary, which is displayed in Figure 1.3. The Steering Committee reviewed the overall context of the town and the surrounding area during the early comprehensive plan meetings and determined that a larger area to the south should be included as well as a small area to the north of the 2009 study boundary. As shown in Figure 1.4, the 2015 boundary extends southward along the North Carolina / South Carolina boundary line south from Marvin and generally follows Waxhaw Creek northeast until

it reaches Potter Road where it then follows the Mineral Springs town boundary west. The boundary line along the north extends to the extents of the existing Waxhaw town boundary, generally following the borders of Wesley Chapel and Marvin.

1.4 THIS IS OUR STORY

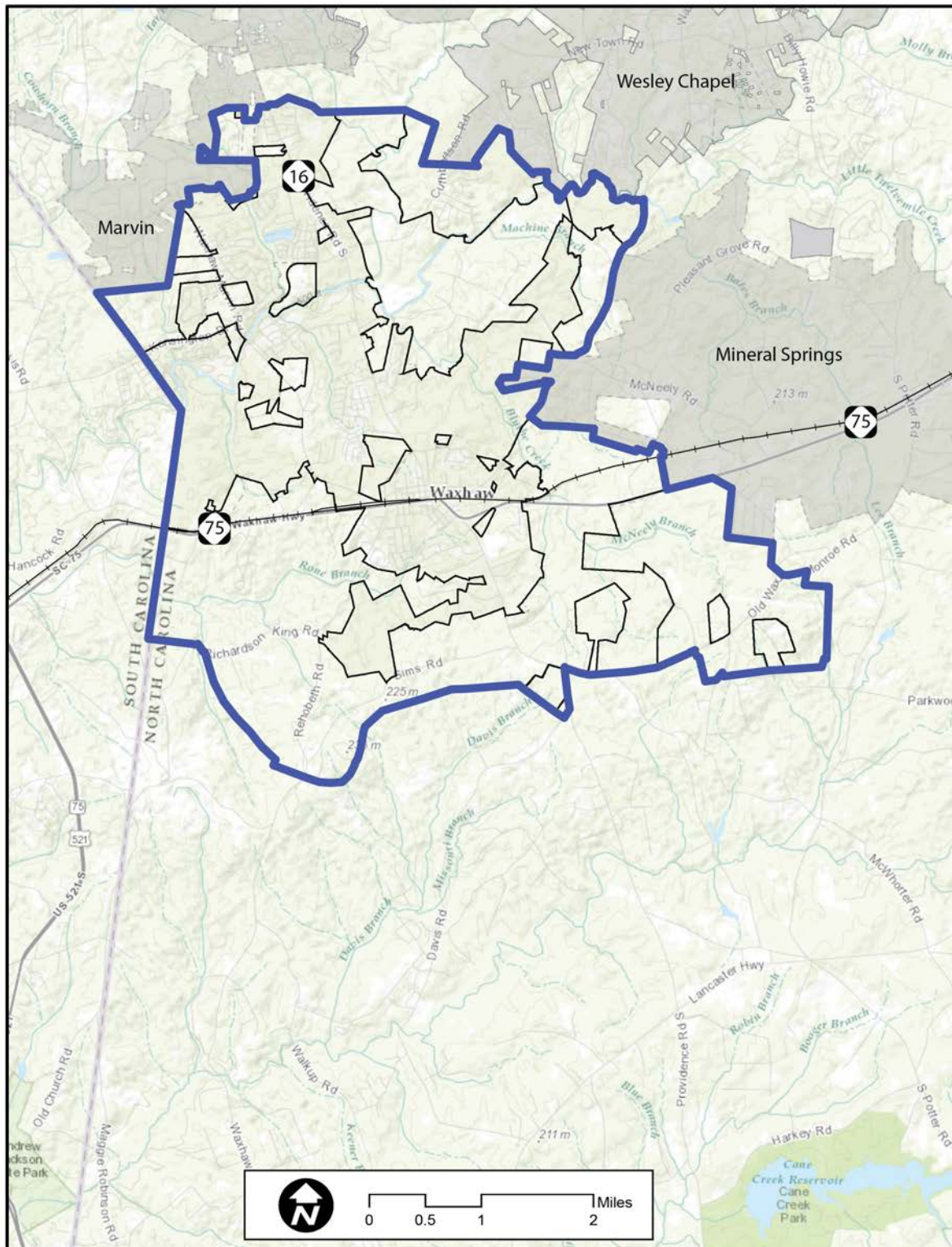
Waxhaw is one of Union County's oldest towns, with early settlers arriving in the 1700s. The town takes its name from the Native American Waxhaw tribe who inhabited the region at the time of European settlement in the area.

In 1888, the town's future was solidified with the construction of the railroad, which made the town a hub for the export of agricultural commodities. The railroad stills runs through the center of town along the green, and is a constant reminder of the origins of this unique community.

Waxhaw's economy was largely based on agriculture and textiles until the latter half of the 20th Century, when market forces helped to reshape the town as a regional destination for the retailing of antiques. The town had a fairly stable population through the 1970s-1990s and was one of the few incorporated towns in western Union County at that time.

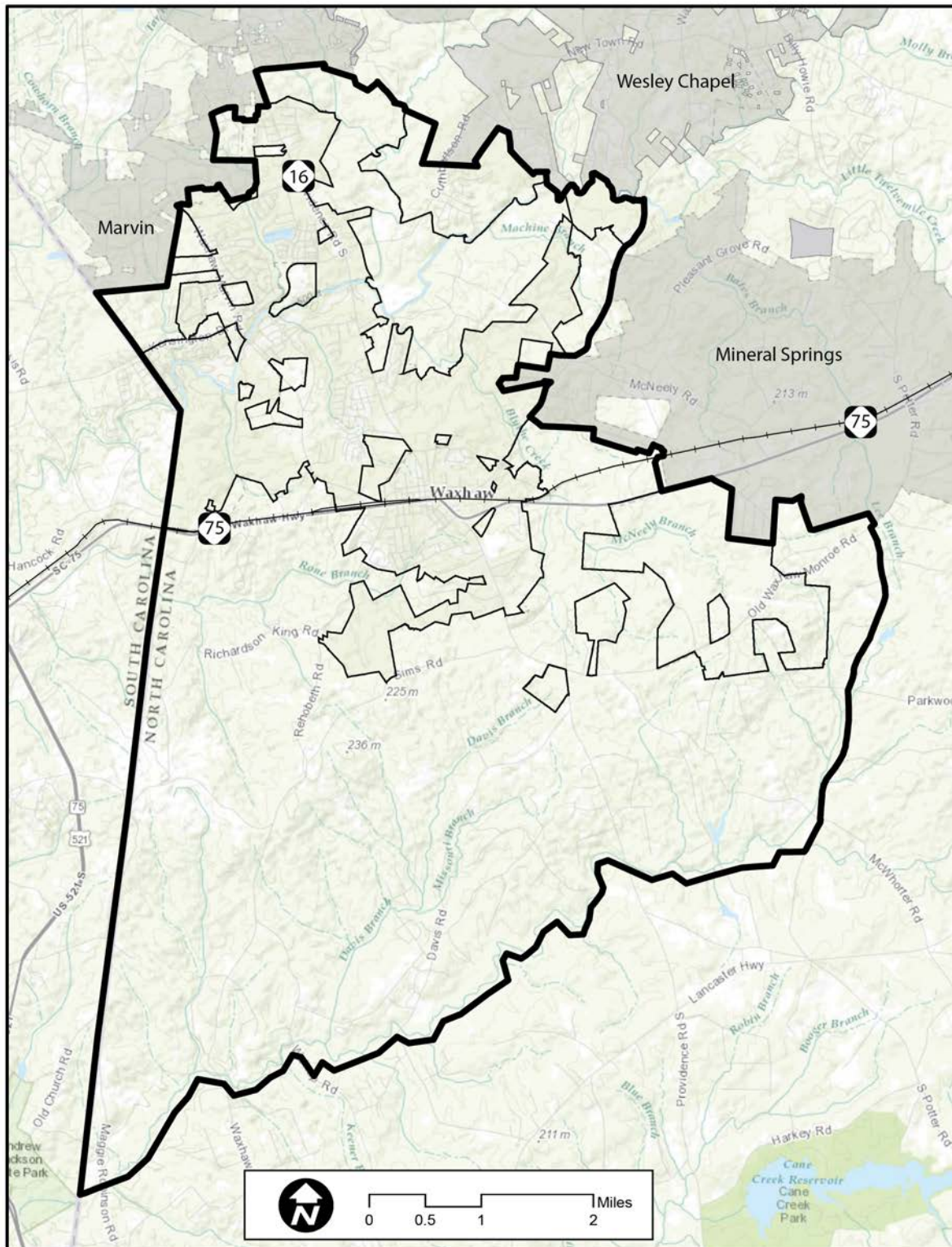
Since 1990, the entire Charlotte Metropolitan Region has been impacted by significant growth in the financial sector of the economy and the associated prosperity that this brought. Union County, and more specifically Waxhaw, has grown significantly in recent years, increasing

2009 STUDY BOUNDARY



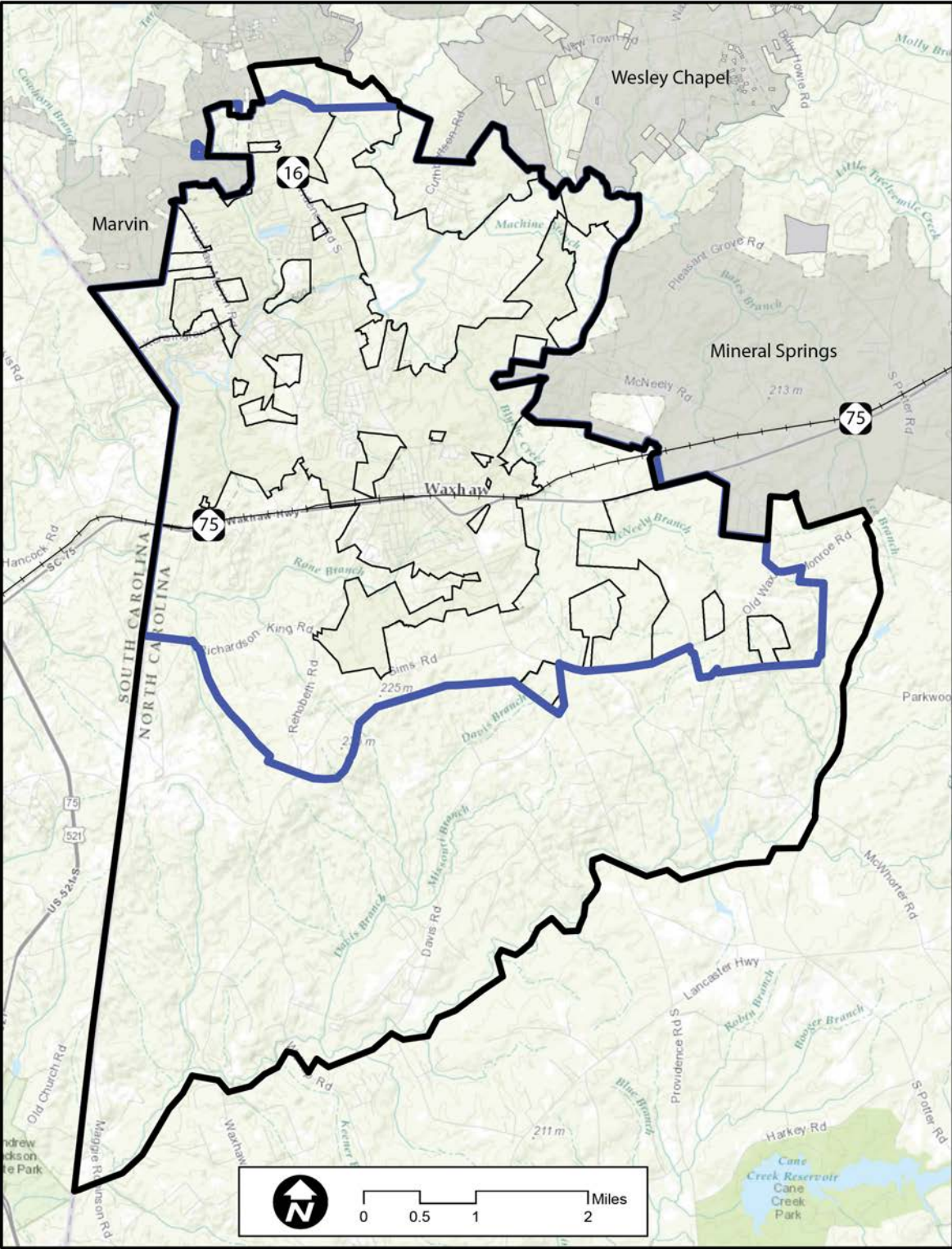
▲ Figure 1.3 Map 2009 Study Boundary

2015 STUDY BOUNDARY



▲ Figure 1.4 Map 2015 Study Boundary

BOUNDARY COMPARISON



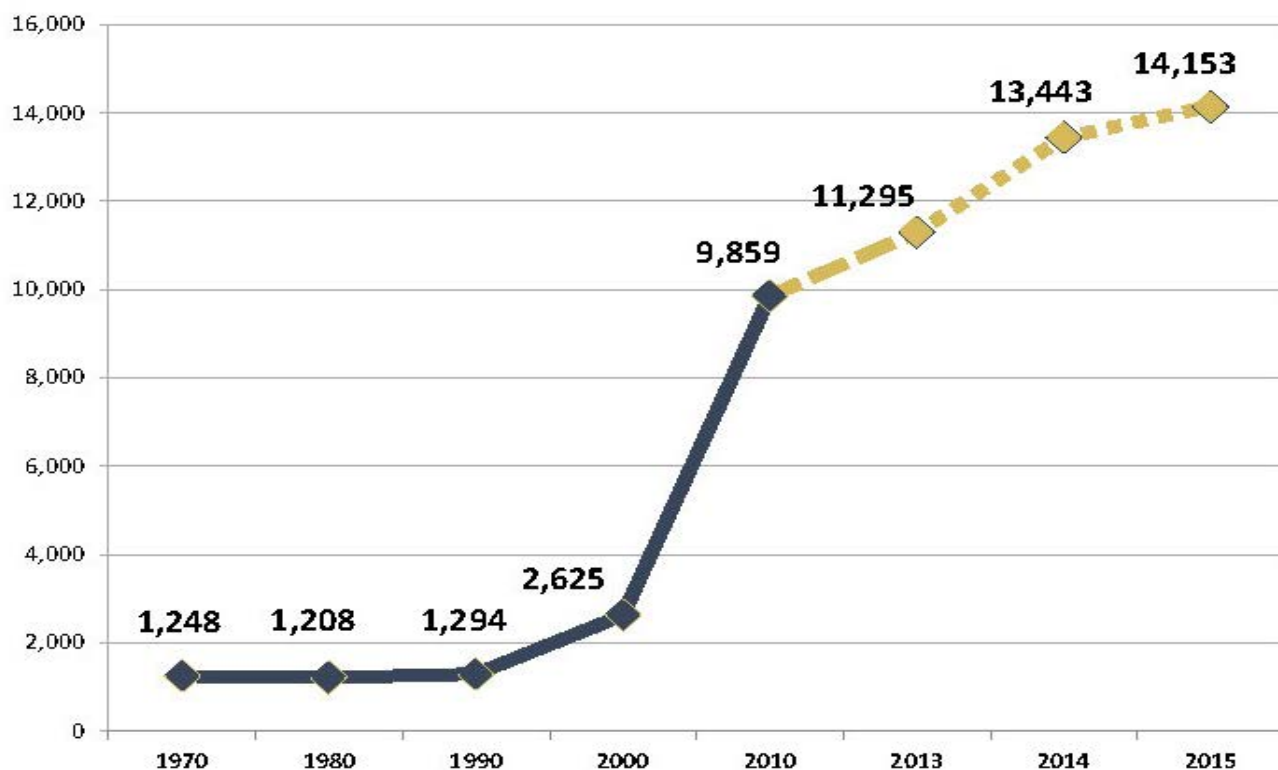
▲ Figure 1.5 Map Boundary Comparison

its population by over 11,500 people since 2000. The town experienced many growing pains during this time, including a significant increase in both commercial and residential development, demand for more public services and infrastructure, challenges to the town's historic core, and the need to better define the town's identity in a way that reflects its changing urban form while preserving its heritage.

As seen in Figure 1.6, Waxhaw's population experienced very little growth from the 1970s until the 1990s when it began to increase rapidly. The U.S. Census Bureau's 2013 estimate for Waxhaw was 11,295 residents. According to recent Waxhaw Planning Department estimates, the population

is now estimated to be 14,153. This estimate is based on a combination of factors including the number of new dwellings identified in 2014 aerial photography, an average household size of 3 persons, an average vacancy rate estimated by the US Census Bureau of 6.2%, and the number of platted parcels.

As shown in Table 1.1, Waxhaw's population growth has set a pace that exceeds all other towns in Union County. The Town's of Marvin, Mineral Springs and Wesley Chapel were newly incorporated municipalities in the 1990s, a decade when newly created cities in North Carolina were only second to the state of Texas. Union County accounted for the most new municipal



▲ Figure 1.6 Waxhaw Population

Source: US Census Bureau and Town of Waxhaw Planning Department Development Statistics

corporations in the state of North Carolina from 1990 to 2013. The newly incorporated municipalities all experienced extreme population change from 2000 to 2010 along with Waxhaw, resulting in many local and regional public service delivery issues, infrastructure demands and transportation challenges.

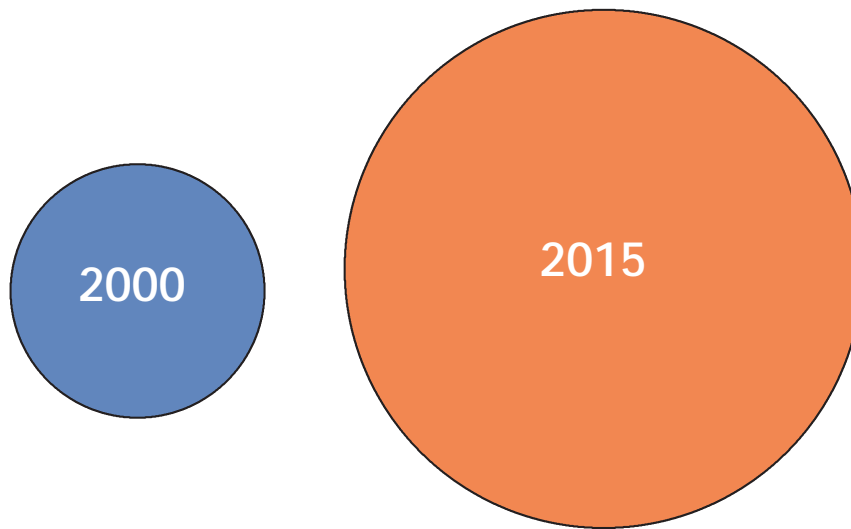
▼ Table 1.1 Waxhaw Population Changes Compared To Regional Population Changes

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2009-2013

	1990	2000	1990-2000 CHANGE	2010	2000-2010 CHANGE	2013 ESTIMATE	2010-2013 CHANGE
Waxhaw	1,294	2,625	103%	9,859	276%	11,295	15%
Union County	84,211	123,677	47%	201,292	63%	212,756	6%
North Carolina	6,628,637	8,049,313	21%	9,535,483	19%	9,651,380	1%
Marvin	--*	1,039	--*	5,579	437%	5,931	6%
Mineral Springs	--*	1,370	--*	2,639	93%	2,793	6%
Weddington	3,803	6,696	76%	9,459	41%	10,101	7%
Wesley Chapel	--*	2,549	--*	7,463	193%	8,015	7%

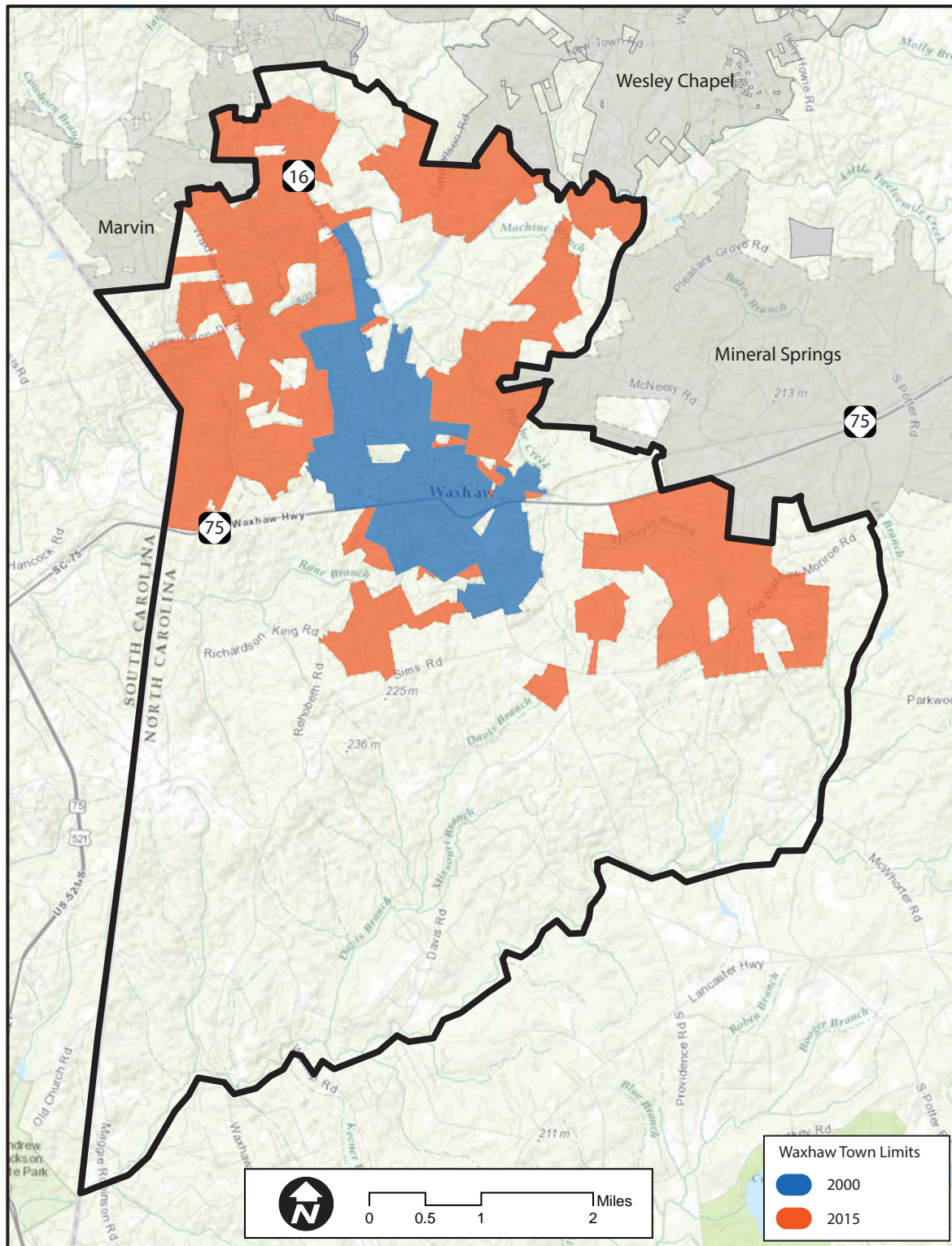
*Note: Towns incorporated after 1990, no Census data available.

Along with the population increase, the Town's boundary and land area expanded greatly as well through annexations. The map shown in Figure 1.8 demonstrates the growth of the physical size of the town during this period. Over that 15 year timeframe, the land area within the Town Limits grew from 1,843 acres (2.9 square miles) to 7,487 acres (11.7 square miles), which is a nearly 400% increase in land area. The relative change in town's land area is shown below, with the blue circle representing the size of the town in 2000 and the orange circle representing the size of the town in 2015.



▲ Figure 1.7 Comparison of Waxhaw's Land Area - 2000 and 2015

2000 / 2015 TOWN LIMIT COMPARISON



▲ Figure 1.8 Comparison of Waxhaw's Town Limits - 2000 and 2015

1.5 THIS IS OUR VISION

In order to address the many challenges and opportunities that lie ahead for our community, this Comprehensive Plan was prepared in order to build upon the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan that was adopted in 2009; updating the plan and establishing a direction for the community to prepare for and handle additional growth and development. The Comprehensive Plan is a written expression of the community's vision and goals for the future, serving as a dynamic guide for decision making by the Town's elected officials, volunteer boards and staff. The plan is guided by a vision that emerged from consistent themes, which were developed from public input and previous planning efforts. The vision captures the essence of present day Waxhaw and describes where Waxhaw aspires to be in 10 years.

Vision

The Town of Waxhaw is a friendly, vibrant and prosperous city where history and creativity form an enduring, safe and healthy community for people of all ages to live, learn, work, play or grow a business. Our government is recognized for the efficiency with which it provides high quality services to its residents and business in a cost-effective manner. We collaborate with regional partners to meet the current and future demands of a growing population with complex needs for transportation, infrastructure, recreation and community services. Our town has built a sound and sustainable economic base by welcoming opportunities for growth that build upon and enhance the community's unique sense of place. We are highly regarded for our regulatory environment, which is focused on clear procedures and predictable standards that have fostered growth that contributes to the sustainment of the Town's character, active lifestyle and overall quality of life.

Guiding Principles

The implementation of the vision will be directed by a series of "guiding principles". The guiding principles reflect the town's highest priority areas, providing general direction for the Town Board of Commissioners and the Town's volunteer boards in determining if their decisions are moving in the right direction to accomplish the vision of the plan. The four guiding principles are as follows:

EFFICIENT TOWN GOVERNMENT

- Establish and maintain a well-organized and effective Town Government structure that operates efficiently, delivering services in an equitable and cost effective manner.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

- Collaborate with regional partners to jointly develop solutions to the complex issues that face the town and its neighbors.

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Foster economic development opportunities that contribute to the long term sustainability of the local economy.

PREDICTABLE REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

- Adopt and implement regulatory processes and standards that provide a clear path to high quality growth and development in the community.

1.6 THIS IS OUR PLAN

Plan Development Process

The Town Board of Commissioners appointed a 12-member Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee to oversee the Comprehensive Plan update. The Committee held its first meeting to begin the process in January 2015. The update process included the major steps outlined below.

- Steering Committee Meetings
- Stakeholder / Focus Group Interviews
- Initial Public Meetings
- Planning Topic Review Meetings
- Plan Drafting
- Public Meetings – Draft Plan
- Plan Adoption

▼ Figure 1.9 Plan Development Process



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROCESS	DATE
STEERING COMMITTEE KICK-OFF	JANUARY 15, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING	MARCH 5, 2015
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS	MARCH 16, 2015
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS UPDATE	MARCH 24, 2015
STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS	MARCH 26, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING	MARCH 26, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING	APRIL 13, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING	APRIL 30, 2015
PUBLIC MEETINGS	MAY 4, 5 & 7, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING	MAY 26, 2015
JOINT MEETING (BOC & STEERING COMMITTEE)	MAY 26, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING/TOPIC #1 & #2	JUNE 29, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING/TOPIC #3 & #4	JULY 16, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING/TOPIC #5	JULY 27, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING/TOPIC #6	AUGUST 12, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING/TOPIC #7	AUGUST 26, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING/TOPIC #8	SEPTEMBER 10, 2015
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING/DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS	SEPTEMBER 22, 2015
PUBLIC MEETINGS	NOVEMBER 9 & 12, 2015
JOINT MEETING (BOC, PLANNING BOARD & STEERING COMMITTEE)	NOVEMBER 12, 2015
PLANNING BOARD RECOMMENDATION	SEPTEMBER 19, 2016
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ADOPTION	OCTOBER 25, 2016



▲ Figure 1.10 May 4 Public Meeting - Evening Session

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Meetings

During the months of January through May, the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee met seven times to establish the framework for the planning process, stakeholder interviews and public input meetings. Some of the primary items covered during the first several meetings included defining the planning area, reviewing previously adopted plans, and identifying the key issues facing the town. Through these discussions, it was determined that the public meetings would focus on transportation, land use and development regulations, growth management and prioritizing investments.

Stakeholder / Focus Group Interviews

As part of the plan update process, the Town engaged the community through stakeholder interviews and focus groups to receive guidance and feedback on the topics covered by the plan. The stakeholder groups included over 75 people representing community interests in:

- Land Use
- Public Safety/Emergency Services/Health Care
- Public Services/Utilities
- Public Schools
- Transportation
- Downtown
- Historic Preservation & Cultural Resources
- Economic Development
- Parks & Recreation
- Real Estate/Developers
- Churches/Non-Profits
- Town Government

Public Input Meetings

Public input meetings were held during the first week of May to gain insight into the issues that matter most to the residents of Waxhaw. The meetings were held at the Waxhaw Woman's Club on May 4th and 5th with a final presentation on May 7th in the Community Meeting Room at the Police Department. On May 4th and 5th, morning and evening sessions were held to encourage participation from a broad cross-section of the community. The sessions included a brief presentation of the demographic and growth



▲ Figure 1.11 May 5 Public Meeting - Evening Session

trends impacting Waxhaw and an introduction to the key issues identified by the Steering Committee. Meeting participants were given the opportunity to discuss the topics in small groups that were facilitated by Steering Committee members. The results of these discussions were summarized and reported to the larger group prior to the conclusion of the meeting. At the end of each meeting, attendees participated in a resource allocation exercise that gave them an opportunity to express their individual opinion on how the town should be investing its resources (time, money, people etc.). At the summary meeting on May 7, 2015, the results of the resource allocation exercise were presented to the public. The results of this exercise indicated that transportation, economic development, historic preservation and parks and recreation are the top four priority areas. The resource allocation areas included:

Comprehensive Plan Topic Review Meetings

- Public Services
- Transportation
- General Government
- Public Safety and Health
- Economic Development
- Cultural Resources
- Historic Preservation
- Utility Infrastructure
- Parks & Recreation
- Environmental Protection

After completing the first round of public input meetings, the Steering Committee held topical review meetings that centered on the elements of the comprehensive plan. This series of meetings ended with a wrap-up meeting to review all of the draft recommendations that resulted from the previous meetings. The topical meetings were led by the Steering Committee and were advertised and open to the public. The topic review meetings included a brief introduction to each topic followed by a facilitated discussion of each topic with the Steering Committee. The Committee provided feedback on key questions and discussion points as input for the development of the plan recommendations. Members of the public also



▲ Figure 1.12 May 4 Public Meeting - Evening Session Resource Allocation Exercise

participated by asking questions and providing input. The final committee meeting focused on the draft recommendations that were a direct result of the Steering Committee and Public input from topic review meetings, stakeholder/focus group meetings and the initial public input meetings. The topics reviewed at this group of meetings included the following:

- Topic #1: Parks and Recreation
- Topic #2: Cultural Resources
- Topic #3: Historic Preservation
- Topic #4: Natural Resources
- Topic #5: Municipal Services & Infrastructure
- Topic #6: Economic Development
- Topic #7: Transportation
- Topic #8: Land Use & Growth Management

Draft Plan Public Presentations

After the Steering Committee completed its final meeting, which included the review of the draft recommendations, a full draft of the Comprehensive Plan update was prepared. The draft plan was posted on the project website prior to the public meetings at which the plan was presented to the public. The public meetings included morning, afternoon and evening sessions on November 9, 2015 at the Community Room in the Police Department and a morning session on November 12, 2015 in the same location. A joint meeting was held the afternoon of November 12, 2015 with the Steering Committee, Planning Board and the Town Board of Commissioners to review the draft plan and discuss implementation priorities prior to moving forward with finalizing the plan and beginning the adoption process.

Plan Adoption

The final draft of the plan was prepared following the joint review meeting held on November 12, 2015. The final draft of the plan received a favorable recommendation from the Planning Board on September 19, 2016 and was considered by the Board of Commissioners on October 11, 2016. The Board of Commissioners adopted the Comprehensive Plan on October 25, 2016.



▲ Figure 1.13 May 4 Public Meeting - Morning Session

Public Engagement Summary

Waxhaw's residents and business community were provided many opportunities to participate during the plan update process. Opportunities included attendance at public input meetings and steering committee meetings, "This is My Waxhaw" submissions, the project website, social media forums (such as MindMixer and Facebook), and public meetings with the Planning Board and Town Board of Commissioners. Overall, nearly 1,700 individuals participated through one of these many methods, generating ideas for the future of Waxhaw.

Public engagement activities began in late March with the launch of a project website and the "This is My Waxhaw" campaign. The kick-off effort included a video that described the project and how to get involved in the planning process. The project website directed online participants to the town's Facebook page and the online forum through MindMixer. Public meetings were held during May and November to gather input from the general public, while the Steering Committee and Town Staff engaged a broader audience at public events such as First Friday and Art Kaleidoscope.

1,650+
Website
Views

140+
Public and
CPSC
Meetings

1,100+
Video
Views

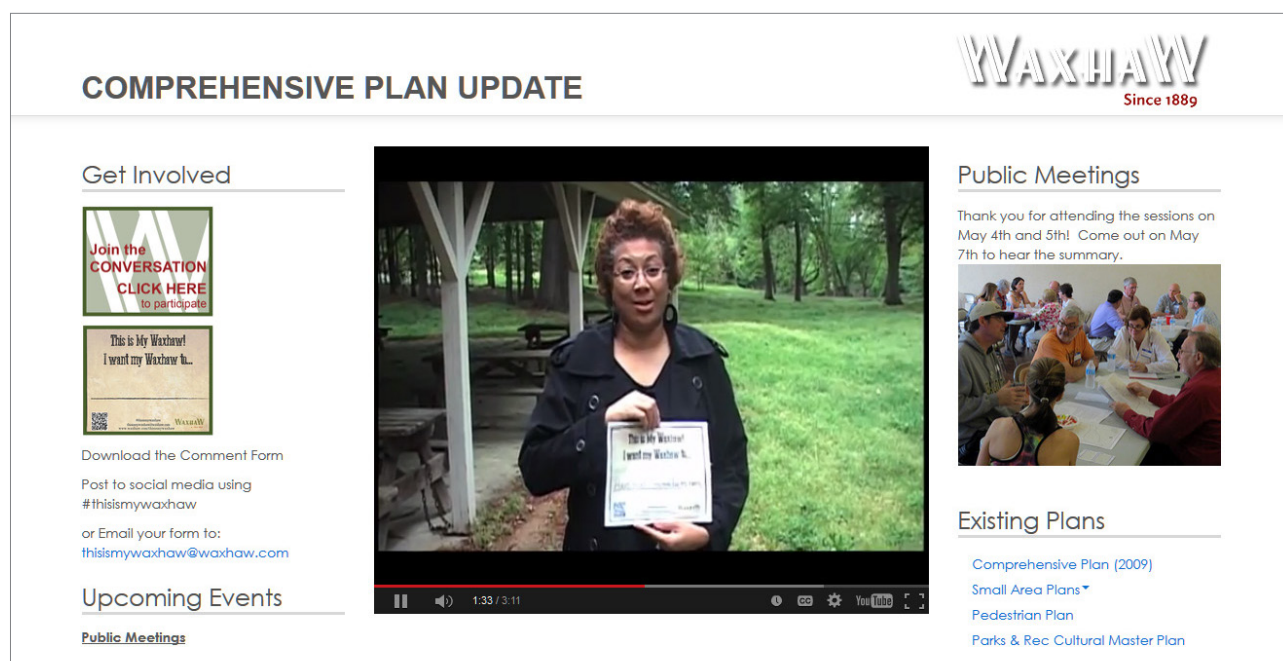
150+
This is My
Waxhaw

15,545
Fliers
Distributed

70+
Stakeholders
Interviewed



▲ Figure 1.14 May 4-5 Public Meetings

▼ Figure 1.15 *This Is My Waxhaw Project Website*▲ Figure 1.16 *This Is My Waxhaw Handouts And Announcements*



Town of Waxhaw
Comprehensive Plan



WAXHAW

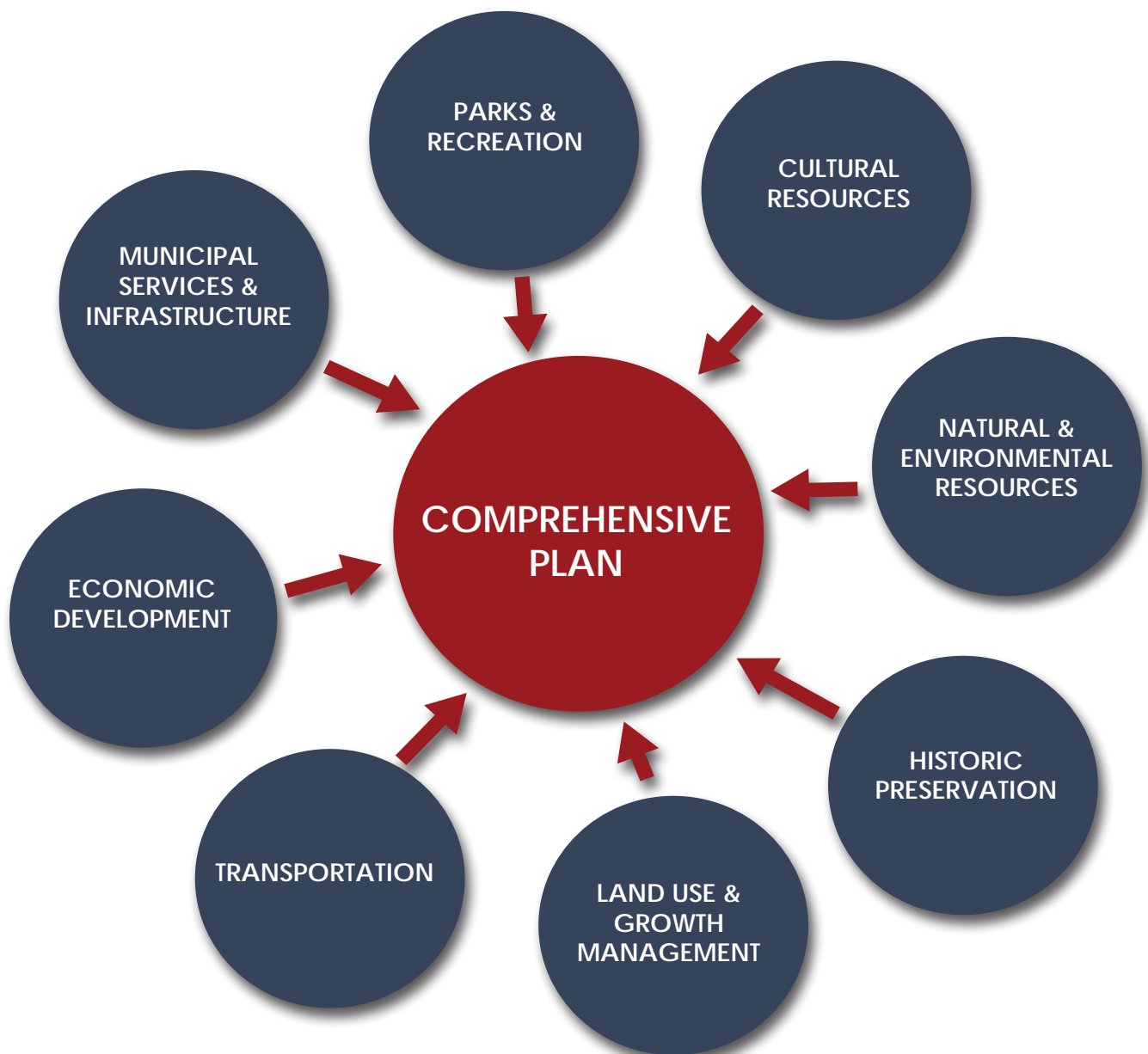
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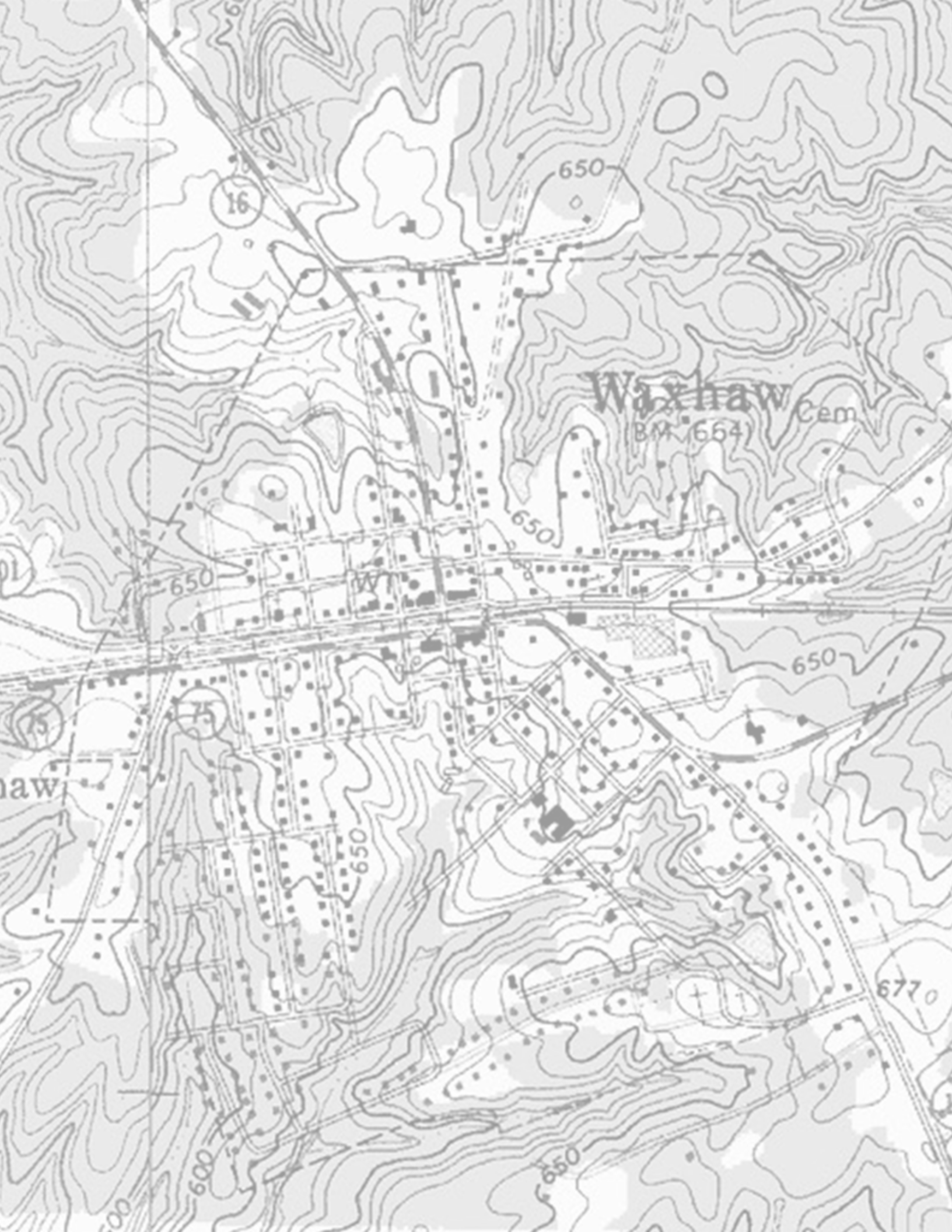


2.1 OVERVIEW

Section Two discusses the main components of the Comprehensive Plan. Each element is organized in a similar manner, beginning with an overview and information relevant to each topic area. Next, each element contains a framework of recommended actions to guide future decision-making for each topic area. The plan components all work together to form the foundation of the Comprehensive Plan as displayed below.

▼ Figure 2.1 Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Elements





2.2 LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

2.2.1 OVERVIEW

The land use and growth management component of the comprehensive plan is intended to establish a clear strategy for the ongoing growth of the community. This strategy is multifaceted, and includes a wide range of land use policy and strategies that, among other things, identify growth and development opportunities, annexation strategies, and a framework for regional cooperation on land use and development matters. In the absence of a clearly defined land use and growth strategy, particularly one that does not adequately differentiate the Town of Waxhaw from its neighboring communities or Union County, the town can expect to continue to experience the types of sometimes haphazard growth that it has been encumbered with in the past. By laying out a set of clear guiding principles that form a logical framework within which development occurs, the town should realize a more beneficial and sustainable model of growth in the future.

2.2.2 FUTURE GROWTH POTENTIAL

The following provides a snapshot of the current and future development potential of the town and the surrounding planning area. This is intended to help inform the conversation regarding growth in the context of the town's land use strategy and growth sector map. Note that this section is intended primarily to present long term scenarios based upon broad assumptions that provide a high level overview of the potential for development, not a prediction of what will occur.

To begin, it is important to understand the amount of development that is currently entitled for development but has not yet been platted. As of early August of 2015, within the town limits, there are approximately 1,681 single family residential lots in active development projects that have received approval for development but have not yet been subdivided. This includes:

- Lawson – 122 lots remaining to be platted
- Millbridge – 1,492 lots remaining to be platted
- Inverness – 37 lots remaining to be platted
- Barrington 2 – 30 lots remaining to be platted

Based on the average household size as measured in the 2010 Census, this would add an additional population of approximately 5,100 residents if all remaining approved lots are subdivided and developed.

Looking at the broader study area, it was determined that the total unadjusted land supply that is available for development is approximately 14,162 acres. Of this amount, approximately 2,877 acres (20%) are

within the town and 11,285 acres (80%) are outside of town in the planning area. This includes only those parcels that are 10 acres or greater in area that are undeveloped, contain a single family dwelling, or are in agricultural use. This also specifically excludes any parcels that have an approved development plan in place and which are in active development. Adjusting the raw land supply for environmental constraints, open space and necessary infrastructure (roads), reduces the available land supply by 35% (using a conservative estimate). This yields a total adjusted land supply of 9,205 acres, (1,870 acres in town and 7,335 acres in the broader planning area).

Using a simple formula to estimate the development potential of the adjusted land supply, where approximately 80% of the land is devoted to residential use and 20% to nonresidential use, the adjusted land supply yields a total of 7,364 acres of land available for residential development and 1,841 acres available for nonresidential development. If the assumption is made that all land will be annexed prior to development, will be served by water and sewer utilities and will develop at urban levels of density and intensity, then it could be expected that the overall yield of the adjusted residential land supply would be 4 dwelling units per acre while the overall yield of the nonresidential land supply would be approximately 10,000 square feet of gross floor area per acre.

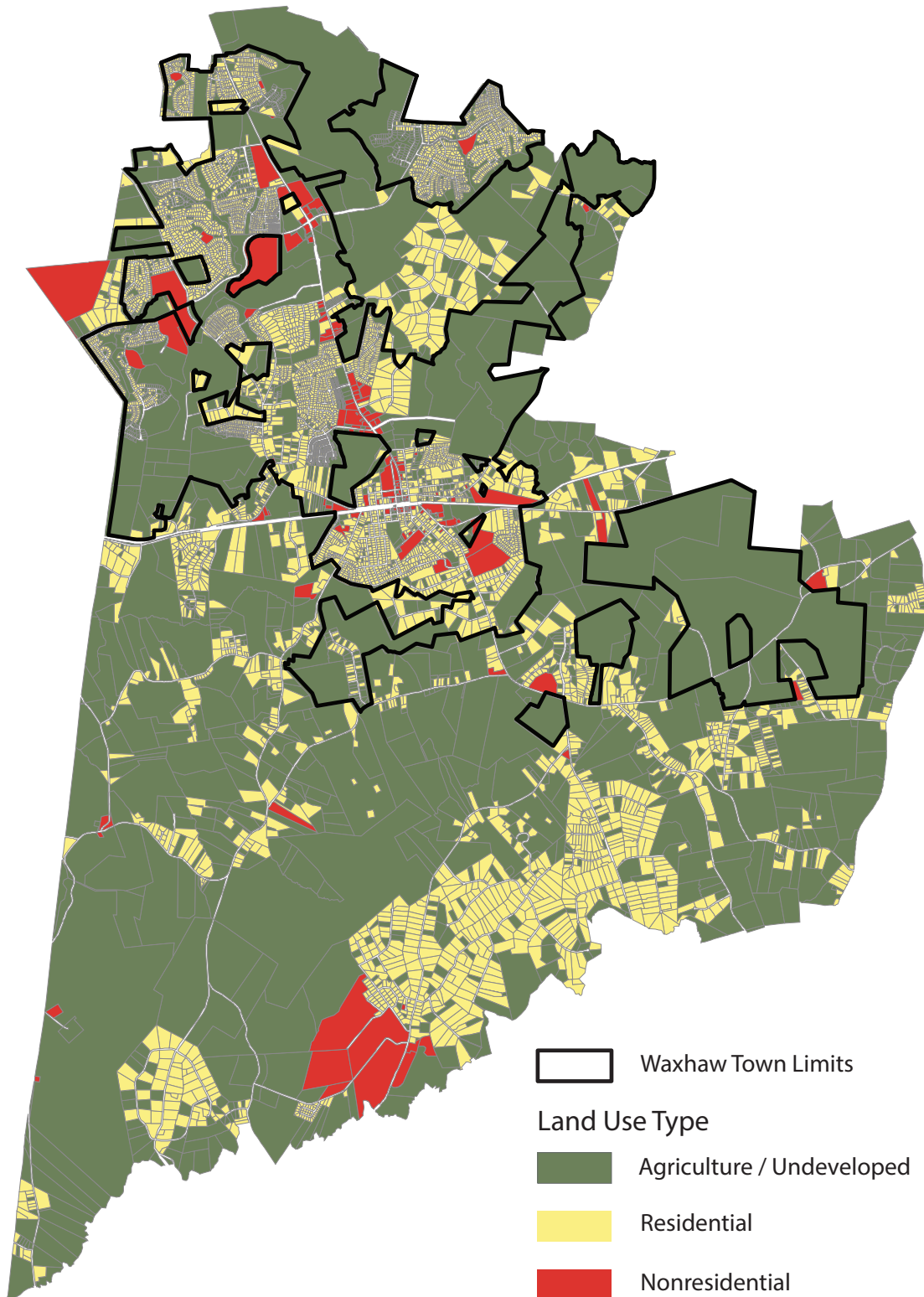
Based on these assumptions, the development potential for the adjusted land supply is detailed in the table on the following page. In the table, the development potential is given based on a high, medium and low growth scenario. These correspond, respectively, to a 70%, 50% and 30% utilization rate for the adjusted land supply. These scenarios are assumed to have a 30 year time horizon to achieve the stated land supply utilization.

It should be noted that the foregoing discussion and tables are only intended to demonstrate the potential for development in the Planning Area, not predict what will occur. Realizing the above stated potential, even for the lowest (30% utilization) scenario, would take a combination of market demand and infrastructure investment that may not exist or occur. Understanding the potential, however, is critical to understanding the potential consequences, both good and bad, of growth based on the amount of land that is potentially available.

Going a step further one can look at what we term the primary land supply. This excludes those parcels that are smaller than 50 acres in size, assuming that only those parcels that are of a more substantial size are likely to attract significant development interest.

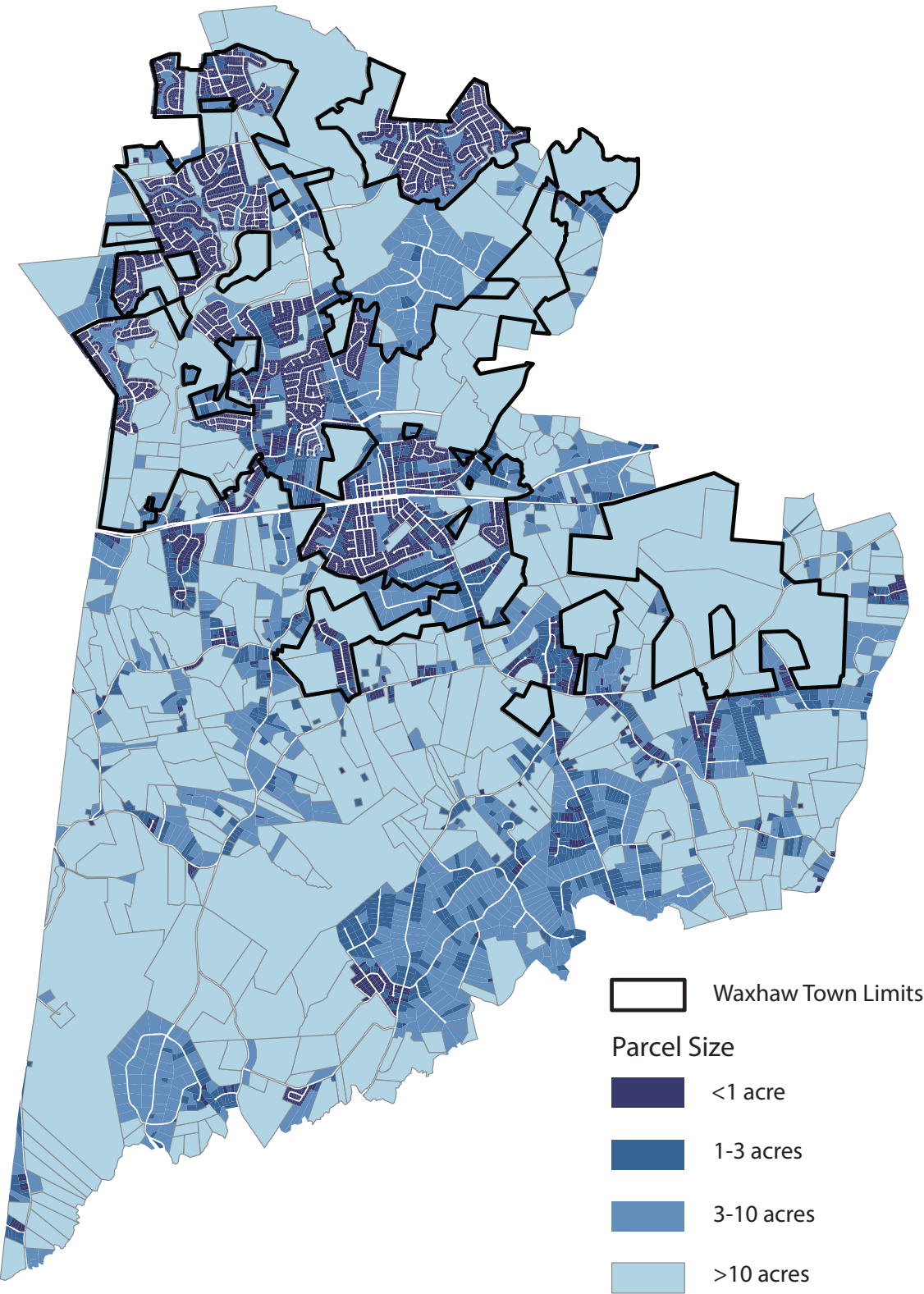
Within the current town limits, there are approximately 2,230 acres of available land in parcels larger than 50 acres, while there are 6,011 acres of land in parcels this size in the remainder of the Planning Area, for a total of 8,241 acres in the primary land supply. This represents approximately 60% of the overall unadjusted

PLANNING AREA GENERAL LAND USE PATTERN



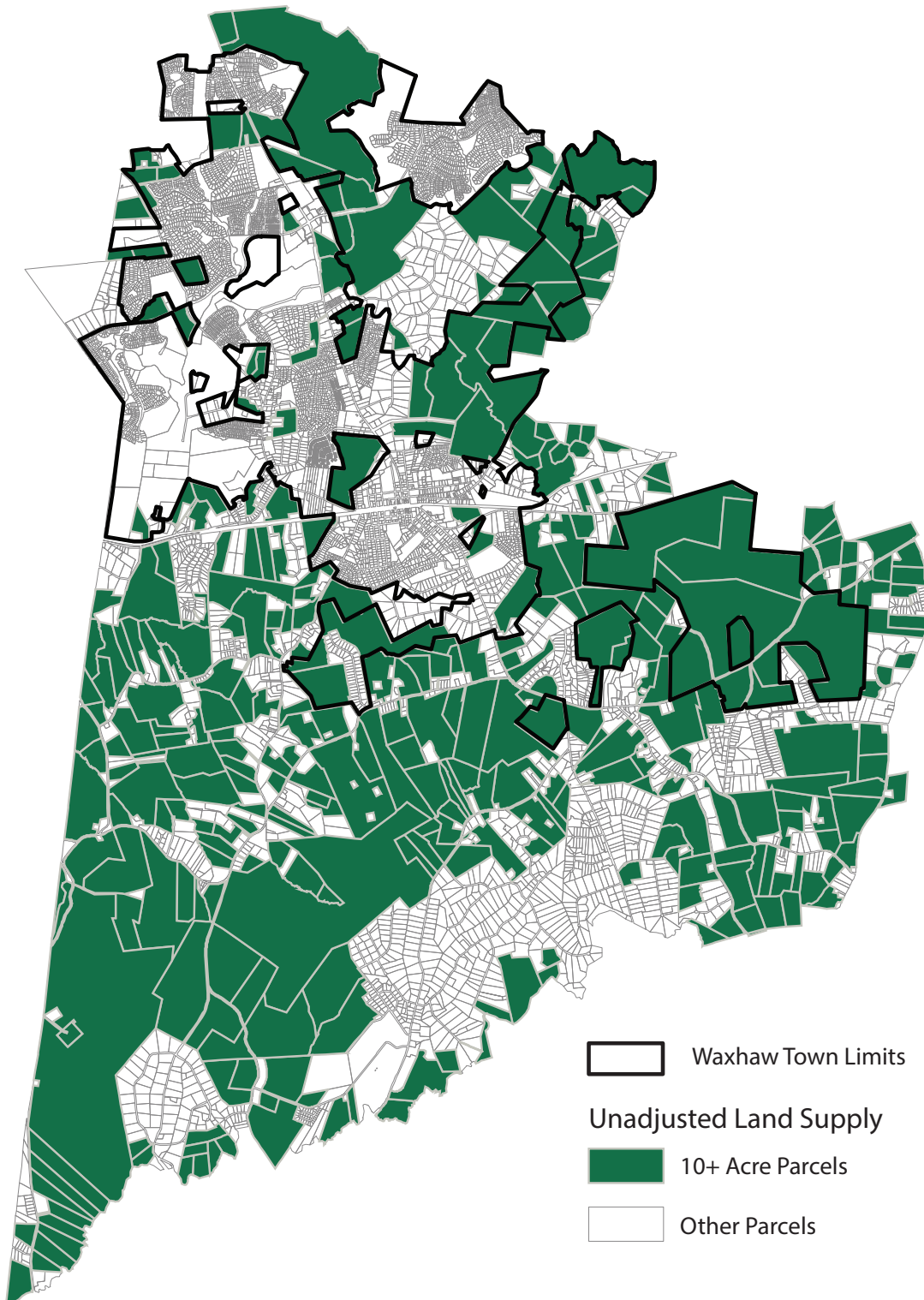
▲ Figure 2.2 General Land Use Pattern

LAND SUBDIVISION PATTERN



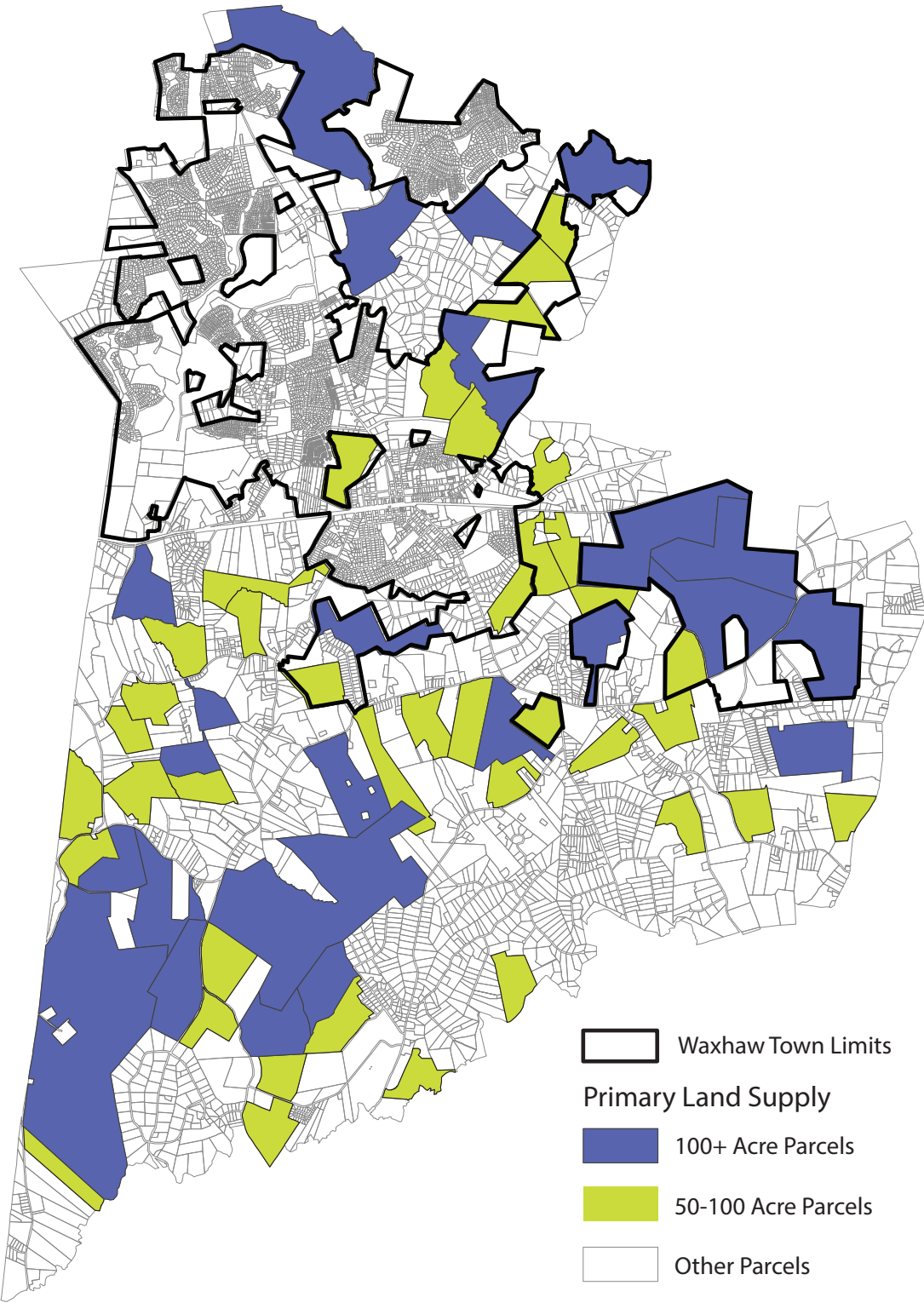
▲ Figure 2.3 Land Subdivision Pattern

PLANNING AREA LAND SUPPLY



▲ Figure 2.4 Planning Area Land Supply

PRIMARY LAND SUPPLY



▲ Figure 2.5 Primary Land Supply

land supply. If the same assumptions and adjustments are applied to the primary land supply, a medium growth scenario (50% utilization) would yield 2,209 acres of residential development (8,837 dwelling units) and 552 acres of commercial development (5.5 million square feet of gross floor area). While this scenario yields a nearly identical amount of development as the low growth scenario utilizing the total land supply, it still represents a significant amount of growth potential. It should be noted that the entire 8,241 acres of land that make up the primary land supply is contained in only 63 separate parcels of land.

Aligning the current county zoning regulations in the area outside of the town in the planning area with the total available land supply is another way of measuring development potential. This too provides a good deal of insight into what may occur outside of the regulatory influence of the town in the future. In total there are 11,095 acres of land in parcels larger than 10 acres in size in the planning area outside of town that comprise the available land supply that falls within the county's R-10, R-20, R/A-20, R-40 and R/A-40 districts. Based on the distribution between these districts and a similar adjustment factor, a medium growth (50% utilization) scenario in the planning area outside of the town limits would yield approximately 3,800 acres of land developed for residential purposes and 4,155 dwelling units (based on the application of the current Union County zoning districts). If there is a significant expansion of utility infrastructure into these areas, it could be assumed that there would be pressure on the county to amend its zoning map (either by individual request or through a wholesale rezoning) to allow more dense residential development in these areas, which would potentially lead to even greater density and a larger number of dwelling units and residents outside of the town limits.

As these scenarios reveal, there is significant potential for growth in the planning area based on the amount of land that is available for development over the long term. This will be affected by changes in the market, either positive or negative, the presence or absence of infrastructure investment, and the regulatory framework that is put into place by the elected leaders having jurisdiction over the land that falls within the planning area. In any case, the significant potential for growth in the area calls for a great deal of communication and cooperation between the agencies responsible for regulating development and providing services to future residents of the town and its planning area to ensure that as growth occurs, it does so in an orderly and sustainable manner.

2.2.3 LAND USE STRATEGY

In contrast to the Future Land Use Map that was adopted as part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan in 2009, the Town has adopted a Growth Sector Map that corresponds more closely to the town's preferred development strategy and desired regulatory framework. The following information provides a basic foundation in how the growth sector map will function and how it relates to the approach to regulation that the town is seeking to implement.

The Growth Sector Map (Figure 2.6) details the geographic framework that seeks to focus future growth at the appropriate scale and intensity based upon a combination of the character, transportation capacity and utility infrastructure availability within the planning area. This map is intended to represent current conditions only, and will change over time as development occurs, transportation improvements are made, and utility infrastructure is extended. Additional maps providing greater detail of each of the four quadrants of the planning area follow the overall growth sector map.

In developing the Growth Sector Map, four standard “growth sector” typologies were used along with three additional “special sectors”. The growth sectors were adapted from the SmartCode, which is a common framework used to implement form based land use regulation. The SmartCode was also the basis for Waxhaw’s downtown form based development regulations and is referenced in the Downtown Plan, the Downtown Neighborhoods Plan and the NC 16 Corridor Plan. The growth sectors (G1 – G4) essentially provide a broad framework within which development regulations are applied, while the special sectors (X1, X2 and CF) provide a framework for the application of legacy development regulations, in the case of the X1 and X2 sectors, and unique regulatory standards for large scale community facilities in the case of the CF sector. The following is a description of the sectors that are used in the Growth Sector Map.

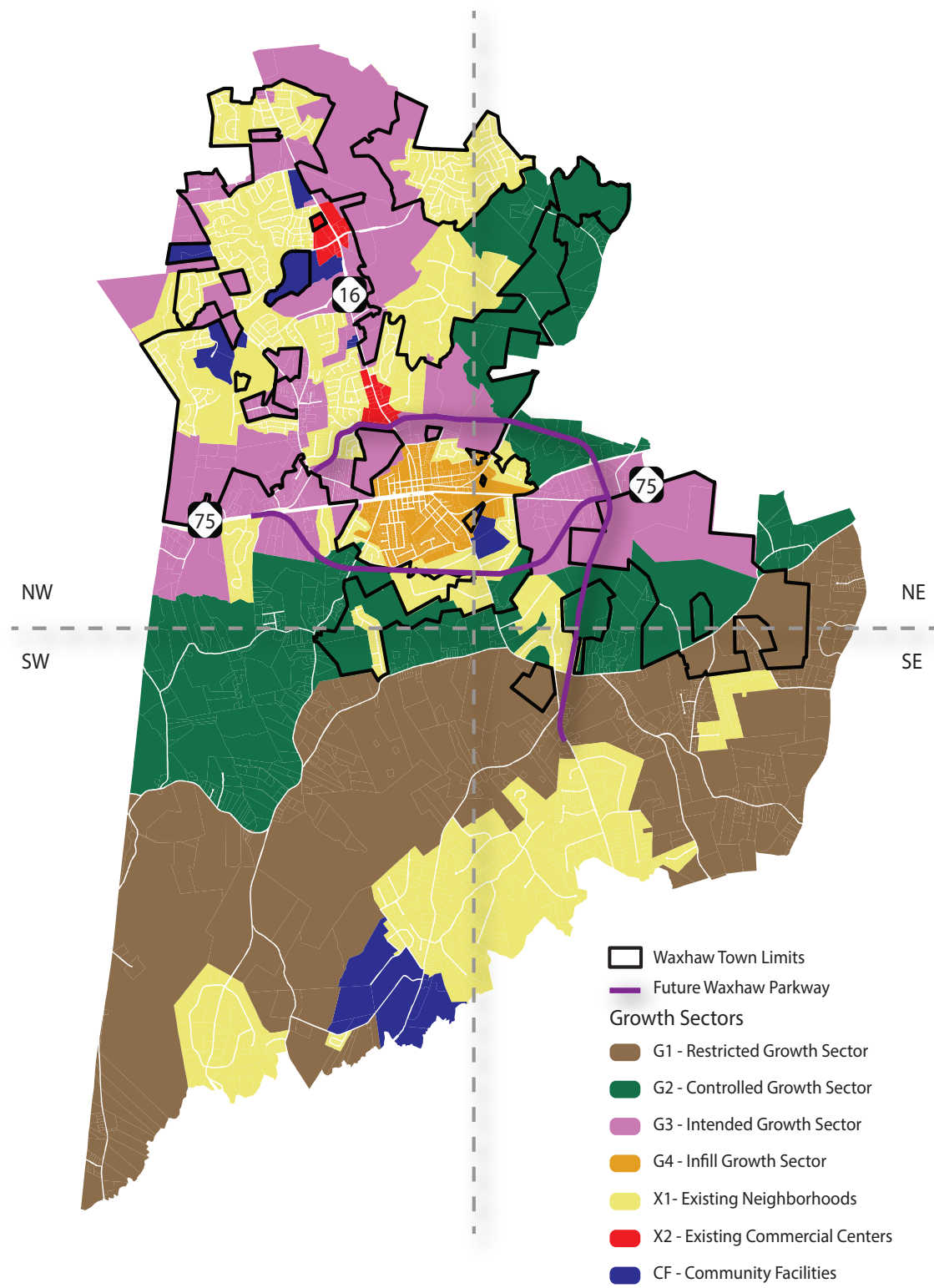
G1 Restricted Growth Sector

This growth sector is intended to be applied to lands that fall outside of utility service areas, have limited transportation connectivity or capacity, and are rural in character. As applied to the Waxhaw Growth Sector Map, this sector is used to designate land that falls within the Waxhaw Creek drainage basin, which currently lacks sewer service (with the exception of a force main serving JAARS), has a legacy rural farm to market road network with limited capacity to support growth, and has a character in which more intensive urban development would be incongruent with the rural land use pattern. It is expected that the area designated by this growth sector will retain its rural character for the foreseeable future, and due to a lack of transportation and utility resources, will generally support only very low density residential development. As a matter of policy, the Town of Waxhaw should not support the extension of utility infrastructure into the Restricted Growth Sector or support major transportation projects in this sector before all of the Town’s needed transportation and utility needs are met within the higher intensity growth sectors within and adjacent to the Town limits.

G2 Controlled Growth Sector

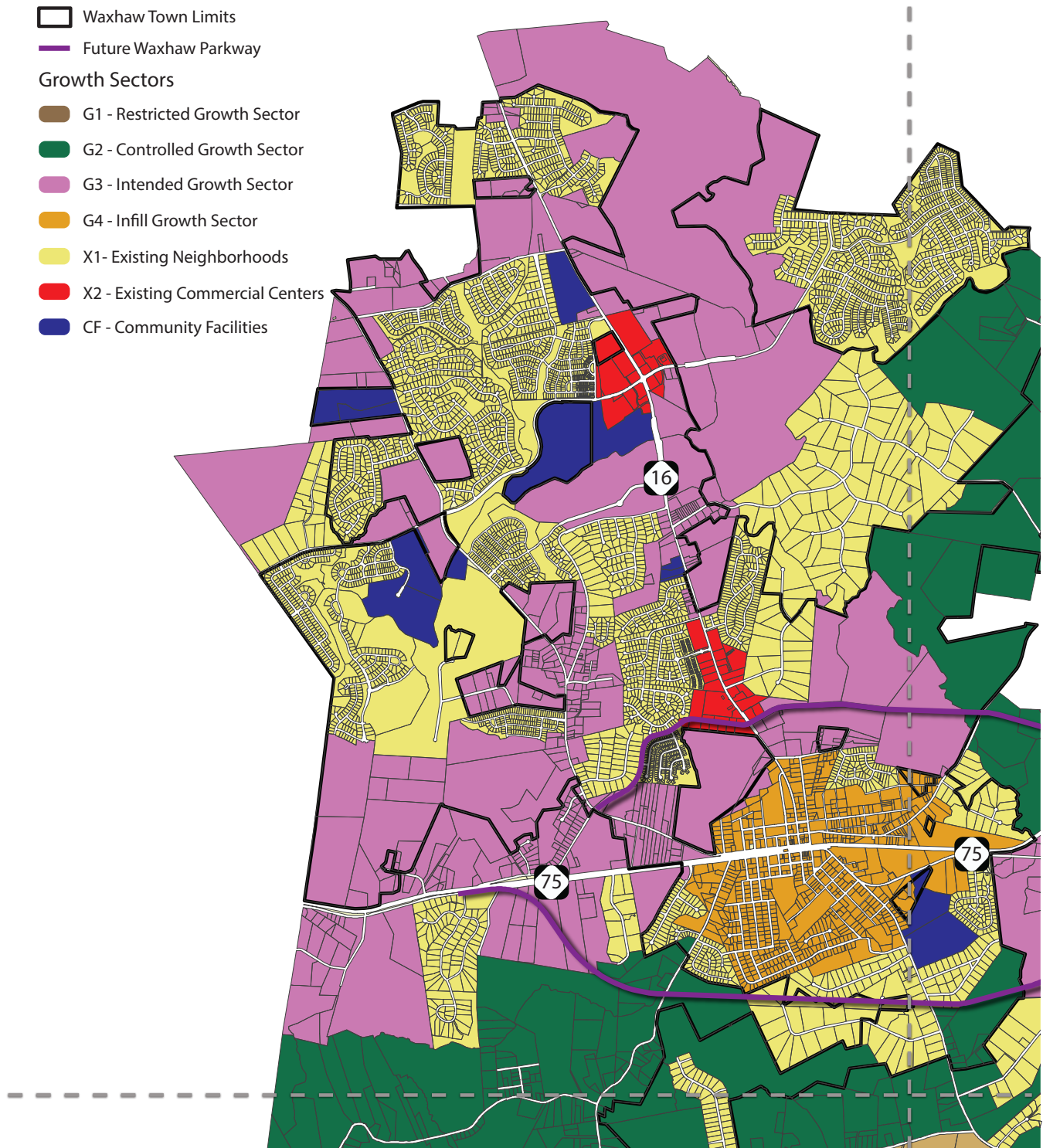
This growth sector is intended to be applied to lands that, while they can support limited growth, have some impairment to their development potential by virtue of a lack of immediately available utility infrastructure and transportation capacity, but are situated in a manner where such infrastructure improvements may be reasonably expected to occur. As applied to the Growth Sector Map, this sector is used to designate

GROWTH SECTOR MAP - PLANNING AREA



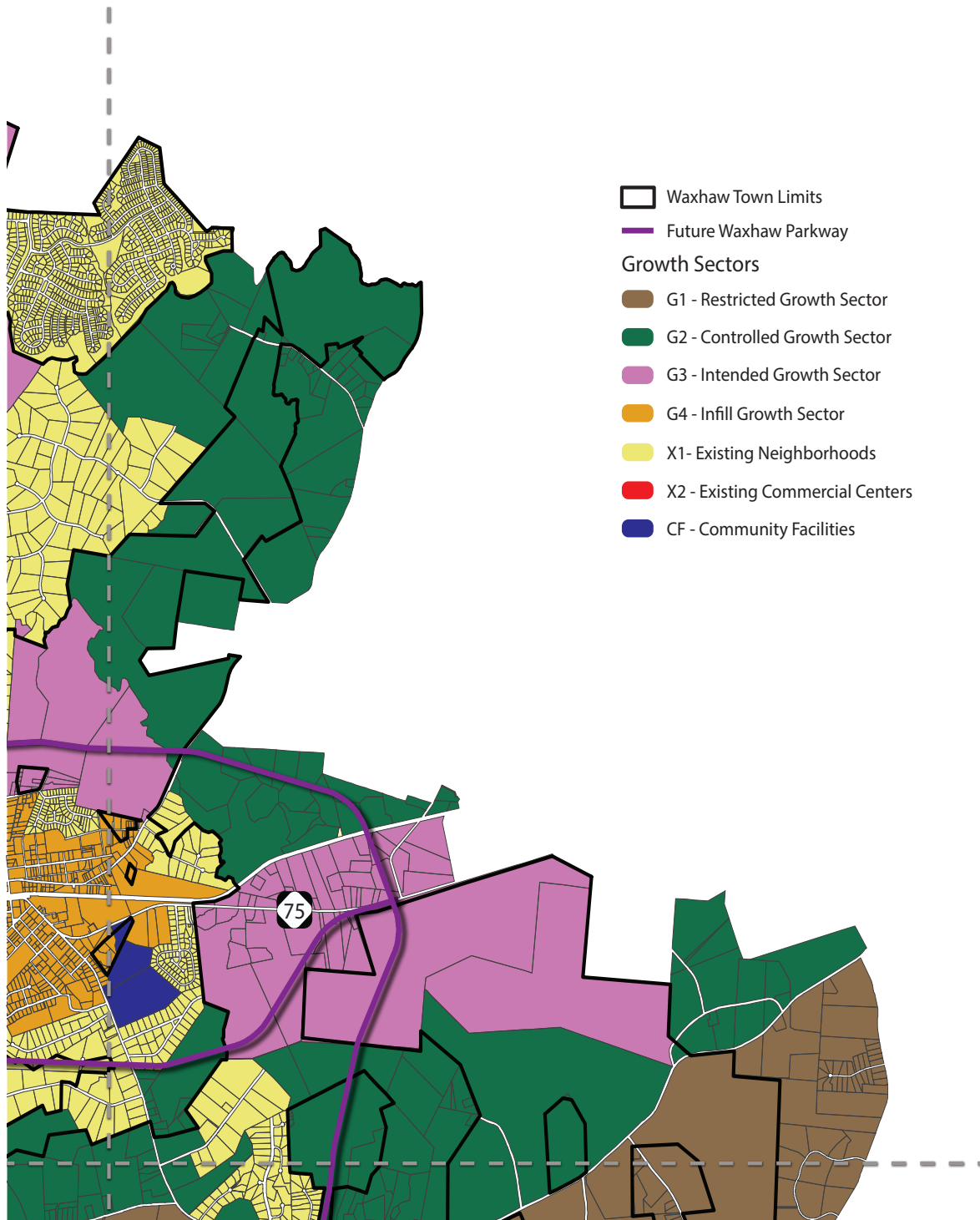
▲ Figure 2.6 Growth Sector Map - Planning Area

GROWTH SECTOR MAP - NORTHWEST QUADRANT



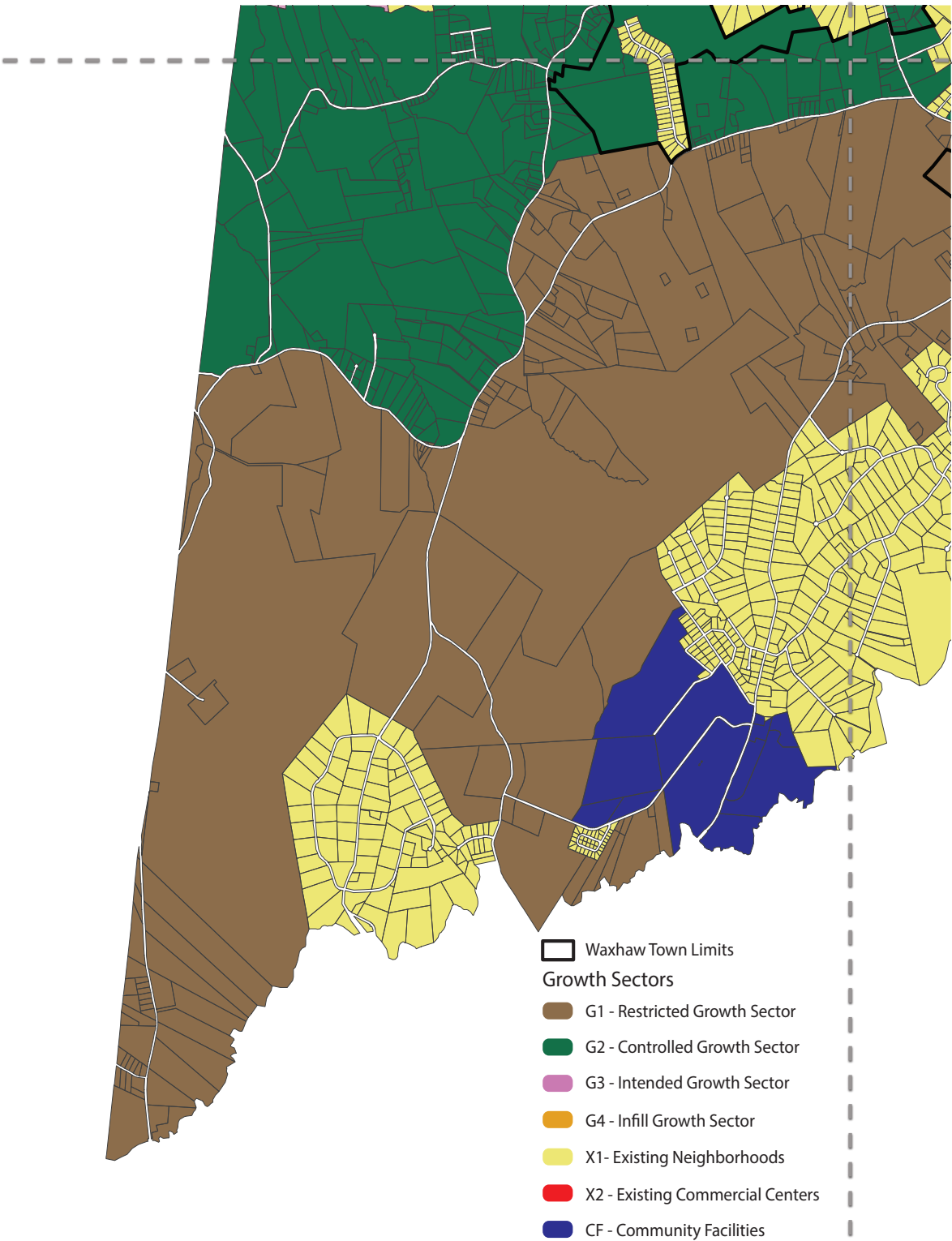
▲ Figure 2.6A Growth Sector Map - Northwest Quadrant

GROWTH SECTOR MAP - NORTHEAST QUADRANT



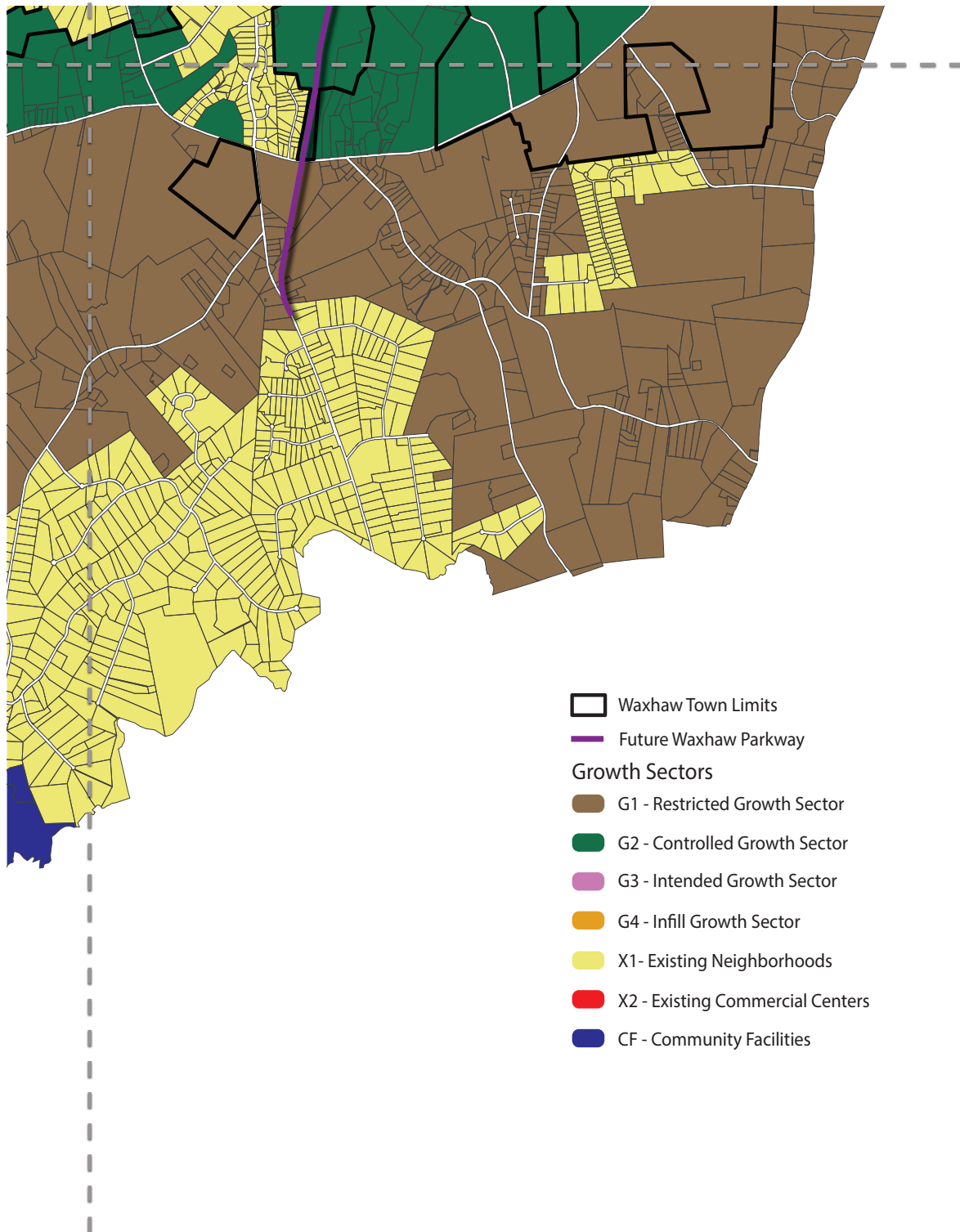
▲ Figure 2.6B Growth Sector Map - Northeast Quadrant

GROWTH SECTOR MAP - SOUTHWEST QUADRANT



▲ Figure 2.6C Growth Sector Map - Southwest Quadrant

GROWTH SECTOR MAP - SOUTHEAST QUADRANT



▲ Figure 2.6D Growth Sector Map - Southeast Quadrant

▼ Table 2.1 Growth Sector Summary

GROWTH SECTOR	PLANNING AREA		INSIDE OF TOWN LIMITS		OUTSIDE OF TOWN LIMITS	
	ACRES	PERCENT	ACRES	PERCENT	ACRES	PERCENT
G1 Restricted Growth Sector	7,750	32.4%	398	5.8%	7,352	43.2%
G2 Controlled Growth Sector	4,941	20.7%	1,389	20.1%	3,552	20.9%
G3 Intended Growth Sector	4,379	18.3%	2,085	30.1%	2,294	13.5%
G4 Infill Growth Sector	502	2.1%	487	7.0%	15	0.1%
X1 Existing Neighborhoods	5,495	23.0%	2,201	31.8%	3,294	19.4%
X2 Existing Commercial Centers	144	0.6%	136	2.0%	8	0.0%
CF Community Facilities	707	3.0%	222	3.2%	485	2.9%
Total	23,918	100.0%	6,918	100.0%	17,000	100.0%

land that falls within drainage basins that are part of the larger Twelve Mile Creek basin, but which require the extension of additional interceptor lines and/or are not adjacent to a thoroughfare with sufficient capacity to support more intensive development. The Controlled Growth Sector essentially provides the Town of Waxhaw with an “urban reserve” of land that it can use to facilitate growth following the market’s exhaustion of the land resources in the Intended Growth Sector (G3). It is expected that, over time, land within the Controlled Growth Sector will transition to the Intended Growth Sector as land resources are consumed by development and utility and transportation projects are funded to extend infrastructure that will support urban scale development into these areas. Until such time, however, the Town should refrain from actively pursuing infrastructure funding for projects that are only intended to serve land within the Controlled Growth Sector. Rather, the town should engage in planning for infrastructure projects to serve these areas over the long term in order to ensure that they are prepared to receive urban scale development over the long term.

G3 Intended Growth Sector

This growth sector is intended to be applied to areas that have the necessary infrastructure to support urban scale mixed use development patterns within and in close proximity to the current town limits. On the Growth Sector Map, the Intended Growth Sector designation has been applied to land that is situated within the Twelve Mile Creek basin where transportation routes and utility infrastructure is either present or can be easily extended to support urban development. Within the Intended Growth Sector, the town should focus its efforts on planning for and funding high priority infrastructure investments to facilitate urban scale growth over the short to medium term. Where land that is outside of the current town limits is designated as being within the Intended Growth Sector, the town should actively pursue partnerships with property owners and developers to encourage voluntary annexation in order to consolidate and rationalize the town’s boundaries, and annexations in these areas should be prioritized over annexations outside of the Intended Growth Sector. Furthermore, development regulations applied

within the Intended Growth Sector should be aligned to ensure that both the density and intensity of permitted development is consistent with existing and planned infrastructure resources and to provide a contrast to the typical suburban development regulations that have been applied by Union County and neighboring communities.

G4 Infill Growth Sector

The Infill Growth Sector is intended to be applied to areas that have been developed in a manner that is generally consistent with the character of a form based regulatory framework for downtowns and traditional neighborhoods. As applied to the Waxhaw Growth Sector Map, this sector has been applied to downtown Waxhaw and the immediately surrounding residential neighborhoods that generally fit within the context of the town's "traditional" urban development pattern. This development pattern has been reinforced through the adopted Downtown Vision Plan and Downtown Neighborhoods Plan as well as the subsequently adopted form based development regulations that have been applied in and around downtown. The primary intent of this sector is to foster ongoing efforts to develop and redevelop land within these well defined areas in a manner that is consistent with the goals of those adopted plans.

X1 Existing Neighborhoods

The Existing Neighborhoods Sector is applied to those portions of the planning area, both inside and outside of the town, that have been developed in the manner of typical suburban or rural residential neighborhoods utilizing standard zoning regulations as the basis for their development. The intent of this sector is to identify these previously developed residential neighborhoods and carry forward the legacy regulatory approach used in their original development to ensure the consistent application of regulations through build-out and ultimately through their life-cycle.

X2 Existing Commercial Centers

This Existing Commercial Centers Sector is applied to those portions of the planning area, both inside and outside of town, that have been developed in the manner of typical suburban commercial centers or strips utilizing standard zoning regulations as the basis for their development. The intent of this sector is to identify such areas and implement a regulatory approach to their continued use and development that is both consistent with their existing pattern of development while also providing opportunities to transition over time as future redevelopment opportunities present themselves.

CF Community Facilities

The Community Facilities Sector is intended for application to those properties whose unique development characteristics require special consideration and recognition. Due to their unique nature, the continued use and development of these identified properties should take place under a regulatory framework

that gives special consideration to the unique aspects of the existing development on the identified sites. Areas designated within the Community Facilities Sector include public schools, the hospital, large public parks, the wastewater treatment facility and similar significant community facilities.

2.2.4 GROWTH THROUGH ANNEXATION

Recent changes in state statutes related to annexation limit the opportunities for the town to initiate the annexation of adjacent land. This means that, moving forward, the Town will need to consider ways in which it can proactively work with the owners or future developers of land adjacent to its boundaries or within designated growth sectors in the Planning Area to provide tangible incentives for the pre-development annexation of property into the town. While the town does not directly provide some of the services offered by other municipalities, such as water, sewer and fire protection, it does offer a wide range of services, including police protection, street maintenance, parks and recreation, and solid waste collection, as well as a host of both tangible and intangible amenities that provide a degree of incentive for property owners and developers to consider when weighing their options.

When considering incentives for annexation (beyond the benefit of the regular services provided by the town), a range of options should be considered in order to ensure that each property owner or developer will have the opportunity to receive a benefit that corresponds to their particular needs. These can include infrastructure partnerships to share in the cost of extending trunk water lines or sewer interceptors, making special infrastructure financing arrangements available, such as the statutory critical infrastructure assessment tool, holding property owners harmless from the financial impact of municipal taxes through an incentive grant program for undeveloped properties, to name a few. Overall, perhaps the most important incentive that the town can provide is a predictable and efficient development process. Eliminating the risks associated with lengthy approval processes and uncertain regulatory standards provide potential developers with a significant incentive to choose to work with Waxhaw rather than remaining under county jurisdiction or annexing their property into one of the neighboring jurisdictions (where such action would be permissible by statute).

The Town should pursue annexations in a strategic and thoughtful manner in order to ensure that the town grows in a logical and orderly way. Among the key considerations for identifying opportunities for annexation are whether a property would help to fill in the numerous “donut holes” (areas of unincorporated land surrounded by the town), whether it is strategically located so that it would help to solidify the town’s boundary in areas adjacent to other municipalities at the edges of its planning area, and whether the parcel or parcels lie within the town’s intended growth sector (G-3). These are the situations in which it will be most appropriate for the town to employ an annexation incentive program. In contrast to the previously described situations, the town should consider deferring annexation when

presented with petitions for parcels that are not contiguous to the town which are outside of the intended growth sector and in areas that have limitations that would prevent urban scale development.

When annexation petitions are submitted to the town, those that are putting forth the petition are most often interested in developing their property (or selling it for development purposes). As they are requesting annexation into the town, it is also likely that they are seeking to develop their property at a scale and level of intensity that is urban in nature. And, since the town does not have extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction, each annexation will also require that an initial zoning designation be placed on the property. If the town were to, by policy, automatically file a zoning map amendment in response to such request (unless otherwise requested by the petitioner) for a zoning designation that would guarantee the ability to develop the property at an urban scale and intensity, as opposed to one that would place the property in the lowest density district, then this would help to ease the path forward for those petitioning for annexation. While the outcome of the Town Board's decision could not be guaranteed, the presence of an adopted policy to that effect would give those considering annexation an implicit degree of approval prior to beginning the process of annexation and development approval.

2.2.5 COORDINATING GROWTH

As discussed previously, the inability of the town to initiate annexations and the lack of extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction limit its ability to influence growth outside of its borders. While the majority of the planning area that lies outside of the town limits is designated by Union County for agricultural use on its future land use map, the permissive nature of the county's zoning regulations permit essentially unchecked suburban scale development outside of the town, particularly in the southern portion of the planning area. This is coupled with a lack of direct control over the timing and location of major utility extensions that could support even greater density in these areas that Waxhaw is seeking to reserve for future growth as it focuses on development in and around the core of the town.

Given this situation, it is imperative that the town move to work proactively with Union County to jointly plan for both managing growth in these areas through enhanced development regulations on the part of the county and developing a joint plan for the growth of the county's water and sewer utility systems in areas outside of town. By cooperatively planning for and directing growth in the town's planning area, both the town and the county can help to ensure a future that is consistent with each entity's vision for the future of the planning area.

2.2.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Focused Urban Growth

The form of future growth in Waxhaw will provide an urban contrast to the suburban and rural character of unincorporated Union County and neighboring municipalities.

1. Utilize the growth sector plan as a guide for the implementation of a development framework that facilitates the creation of cohesive network of well-planned, connected and integrated urban scale mixed use neighborhoods and commercial centers within the Intended Growth Sector and fosters context sensitive development and redevelopment within the Infill Growth Sector.
2. Continually monitor the Growth Sector Map and amend it as necessary to reflect changes in development potential and capacity due to infrastructure improvements and other factors that influence the appropriate scale and intensity of development within the planning area.
3. Proactively prepare and adopt plans for areas within the Intended Growth Sector and for annexed properties within the controlled growth sector that establish the location and extent of contextually appropriate development types (such as traditional neighborhoods and regional commercial centers) with accompanying recommendations for the appropriate mixture, type and scale of development within each defined subarea. Periodically evaluate and revise adopted area plans and amend as necessary to reflect changing conditions.
4. Prepare and implement by-right form based development regulations to facilitate development and redevelopment within the Infill (G4) and Intended (G3) Growth Sectors while retaining legacy zoning regulations to manage existing neighborhoods and commercial centers whose character or development style do not fit within a form based regulatory approach to land use / development regulation.

B. Orderly Expansion

The town will grow in a logical and orderly manner that focuses on expanding the town boundaries within the intended growth sector.

1. Prioritize and incentivize annexation within the intended growth sector, with a particular emphasis on strategic annexations that fill gaps in the town limits, connect the core of the town to previously annexed noncontiguous areas and incorporate large tracts along the northern and eastern perimeter of the planning area adjacent to neighboring towns.

2. Consider adopting annexation incentive policies that provide opportunities for shared infrastructure financing, economic incentives (such as holding harmless from town taxes in pre-development years), enhanced service agreements, and the use of the statutory critical infrastructure assessment tool.
3. Adopt an annexation policy that guarantees urban scale development density and intensity by-right upon initial application of zoning for annexed property within the intended growth sector and which also requires the joint development of a regulating plan (if one is not in place) for proposed annexations in the controlled growth sector prior to the consideration of an annexation petition.
4. Work proactively with property owners to annex properties and neighborhoods that are surrounded by the town's corporate limits. In the absence of voluntary cooperation, the town should develop an annexation services plan in accordance with statute and coordinate with the town's legislative delegation to seek a local act incorporating such properties into the town limits while also requiring the town to provide services in accordance with the plan.

C. Coordinated Growth Management

The town will seek partnerships with its neighbors to coordinate growth and development both in town and throughout the larger planning area.

1. Develop a formal coordination strategy to share information between the town and Union County. This should include a formal liaison to the Union County Planning Board, regular staff level coordination and joint notification of development proposals within the town and surrounding planning area. Establish similar collaborative measures with neighboring municipalities and Lancaster County, SC.
2. Work with Union County to jointly plan for and manage land use in the controlled and restricted growth sectors that lie outside of the corporate limits. Such coordination should focus on reducing permitted density in the restricted growth sector (Waxhaw Creek Basin) and ensuring that development that is not rural in character / density occurs only following annexation into the town.
3. Develop a joint wastewater master plan with Union County to guide infrastructure investments within the planning area, with a particular emphasis on extending major water and sewer lines within the intended growth sector, long term planning for extending service into the controlled growth sector, and limiting utility extensions into the restricted growth sector (Waxhaw Creek Basin).
4. Explore the creation of a joint (Waxhaw – Union County) utility service district that would include the Town of Waxhaw and the unincorporated portions of the planning area to guide and manage utility services and infrastructure investments in the area.

5. Pursue opportunities to collaborate with Union County Schools to plan for the reservation of new school sites that are within close proximity and walking distance of neighborhoods in Waxhaw.

D. Supporting Land Use Strategies

The following strategies are intended to provide general support to the town's overall land use and growth management strategy.

1. Foster and maintain a culture of collaboration between staff, elected and appointed officials, the community and developers that encourages a cooperative and facilitative approach to managing growth and development.
2. Streamline the approval process for development proposals through a combination of proactive planning (the development and implementation of regulating plans), delegation of approval authority to administrative staff, and the removal of regulatory barriers and lengthy approval timeframes.
3. Explore options for expanding the availability of quality workforce housing through policies such as density bonuses, regulatory exemptions, mandatory set-asides and fee-in-lieu programs.
4. Establish clear, illustrated, architectural guidelines for nonresidential and multi-family structures to accompany the form based development regulations.
5. Explore the application of limited residential design standards within the National Register Historic District.



Town of Waxhaw
Comprehensive Plan



2.3 TRANSPORTATION

2.3.1 OVERVIEW

The transportation component of the comprehensive plan draws from a large body of previously adopted plans and studies that provide a holistic view of the town's transportation network. In addition, the Town has recently initiated a transportation study that will be incorporated into this plan when it is completed. Topics covered in this section include major transportation routes, connectivity, complete streets policies, transit service, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, the safety and functionality of the system, and regional transportation considerations. The major plans and studies that contributed to the recommendations include:

- NC 16 Corridor Plan
- Western Union County LARTP
- Union County Comprehensive Plan
- Town of Waxhaw Pedestrian Plan
- Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan
- Downtown Waxhaw Vision Plan
- Waxhaw Downtown Neighborhoods Plan
- Transportation Analysis (currently underway)

Transportation Network

The network of existing and planned routes classified as thoroughfares provides the backbone of the local transportation network and connects the community to the regional transportation network. These high volume roadways are critical to the current and future economic prosperity, development potential and quality of life of the community. As growth continues, improvements to the capacity, functionality and safety of these critical linkages between neighborhoods, employment centers, retail and service centers to ensure that they meet the needs of the community and accommodate both existing and future traffic demands.

Recent changes in project prioritization by NCDOT through the Strategic Transportation Initiative law have caused two major projects, the widening of NC 16 and the completion of the northern half of the Waxhaw Bypass, to be less certain in their timing and funding. While the town is advocating for the continued inclusion of these major thoroughfare improvement projects in the NCDOT Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) project commitments, their inclusion in the program in the short term is not guaranteed.

Key projects being examined through the Town's transportation analysis include improvements to NC 16 and the potential Waxhaw Bypass. The widening of NC 16 would increase the capacity of the roadway, while the completion of the Waxhaw Bypass, particularly the northeastern segment, would provide an alternate route from NC 75 to NC 16 – relieving congestion downtown. The completion of the bypass would also serve to open additional land for development that currently has limited accessibility.

In addition, a number of other thoroughfare improvement projects are identified in the LARTP, including both improvements to existing routes and the development of new roadways. One roadway of focus for the transportation study that is underway is a closer examination of the role of Kensington and Cuthbertson, which are currently identified in the LARTP as being “minor” thoroughfares. This roadway has emerged as an important transportation corridor and will be studied further during the transportation study that is underway.

Connectivity

An ideal town road network consists of an interconnected series of local streets that serve individual homes and businesses, collector roads that carry traffic from neighborhood streets to the regional road network and thoroughfares that serve major commercial development and carry traffic to, from and through the community. Greater degrees of connectivity provide options and alternate routes for drivers, thereby decreasing the demand on any single road in the network and allowing for shifts in traffic patterns during peak traffic times or other congestion causing event. Greater degrees of connectivity will also typically decrease point to point travel time and distance (for instance between home and shopping), reduce service delivery costs for municipal services such as solid waste collection, and improves response times for emergency vehicles. Moving forward, it will be critical to ensure that new development provides the degree of connectivity necessary to limit impacts on the overall transportation network, work with developers to make critical connections, and identify opportunities to improve connectivity where there are gaps in the network.

With respect to connectivity, the majority of the development plans approved in Waxhaw over the years appear to have lacked an external focus with regard to connectivity, sacrificing opportunities to make logical connections between developments and create through streets that could have provided a higher level of functionality to the overall network. In recent years, it appears that greater effort has been made in the development review process to require greater connectivity, such as the extension of the road serving Prescott as recommended in the NC 16 corridor plan. While many of the opportunities that once existed to improve connectivity have been lost (essentially permanently in many cases due to development patterns) there are a number of recommended connectivity improvements that can be made as development occurs or through proactive retrofits to the street network. The Town's transportation study will help identify some of these major connections and identified improvements.

Complete Streets

Streets that are designed and constructed only for automobile traffic to the exclusion of other forms of transportation and without consideration for the land use context in which they exist can have a detrimental effect on a community. The concept of “complete streets” which are designed to accommodate a range

of transportation methods and fit with both the land use and aesthetic context of their surroundings has become the state of the art in transportation planning and design. The concept of providing complete streets applies to both the improvement of existing facilities and the construction of new roadways. The concept is also scalable and therefore applicable to neighborhood roads, thoroughfare streets and every type of facility in-between. By adopting and enforcing local design standards that require the construction of complete streets, ensuring that plans developed by NCDOT contain the necessary elements that form a complete street and making improvements to single-purpose streets on the local street network, the town will eventually have a transportation network that fully integrates the multiple modes of transportation that comprise a truly complete transportation system and the character of the street network will be such that it fits both the aesthetic context of its surroundings and provides the right kind of facility for the context of the land uses that it serves.

Safety and Function

Improvements to the capacity and connectivity of the town's street network have to be coupled with measures to address the safety and functionality of the system as well. High volume interconnected road networks that are not supported by such improvements can lead to additional problems that negate any of the benefits of the original improvements. For instance, adding additional lanes without managing access to a roadway can simultaneously increase speeds and throughput, but those higher speeds may make turning movements onto and off of the roadway more dangerous, while improving connectivity without providing intersection signalization or having poorly timed or uncoordinated signals can impede the functionality of intersections. Conversely, safety and functional improvements can increase the



▲ Figure 2.7 Intersection In Need Of Safety Improvements - Gray Byrum Road at NC 16



▲ Figure 2.8 Traffic At A Standstill At The Railroad Crossing In Downtown

capacity of roadways by increasing the throughput of intersections and eliminating potential conflict points (such as unguarded left turning movements) without having to undertake more expensive capacity improvement projects such as adding travel lanes. Implementing such improvements, in coordination with each other, and identifying the projects that will provide the greatest benefit for their cost will be an important component of the improvement and growth of the local street network in Waxhaw.

There are a number of functional upgrades that could be made to the existing transportation network that would make significant improvements to traffic flow and safety. Examples of potential improvements include the signalization of intersections such as Gray Byrum / NC 16, Bonds Grove / NC 16 and Waxhaw Parkway / NC 16, geometric improvements at Kensington / Cuthbertson / NC 16, and access management improvements along all major roads.

The installation of medians on high volume roadways can significantly improve the safety and function of the facility by eliminating potentially hazardous turning movements and reducing the number of conflict points. In areas where there are large numbers of businesses with individual driveways and limited opportunities for interconnectivity, medians are often viewed by business owners as significant impediments to their operations due to the perception of the elimination of “half of their traffic”. Additionally, opportunities exist to eliminate access points along major roadways by consolidating driveways or improving cross connectivity between properties along major road frontages.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Integrating facilities for non-motorized transportation, particularly sidewalks, into the local transportation network has been a significant focus of the town in recent years. As the community has grown, new development has been required to provide sidewalks in neighborhoods and along commercial frontages, and the town has made investments in extending the network as well, with particular emphasis on providing sidewalks in the vicinity of schools. While the extent of the network has grown exponentially, the primary issue that has emerged is the need to fill gaps between disconnected portions of the network and retrofit older neighborhoods and commercial areas where sidewalks were not constructed at the time they were developed. In addition to expanding the network and filling gaps, particular attention to safety issues need to be addressed in conjunction with new construction, including the need to ensure that adequate crosswalks, signage and signals are provided at intersections and other key locations where pedestrians and vehicles interact.

Although bicycling in Waxhaw is primarily still a recreational pursuit, it too can play a role in the town's transportation network. The lack of dedicated on-street bicycle lanes and multi-use paths make this form of transportation less desirable, especially outside of residential areas. Given the degree of recreational bicycling that takes place in and around town, it would appear that with improved facilities, bicycling could play a greater role as an alternate form of transportation in town.



▲ Figure 2.9 Pedestrians Crossing West South Main Street In Downtown

Transit

While mass transit has not played a significant role in the town's transportation network in the past, recently adopted plans have included recommendations for extending regional transit services to Waxhaw. Whether or not the town will be a good candidate for future transit services will depend on a variety of factors. Among the primary considerations are the potential reduction in cost (measured in both time and money) for system users in contrast to automobile travel, the cost of service to the provider of the transit option (as measured on a per passenger basis) and the potential size of the population that can be served by the route(s), which is, to a high degree, a function of residential density.

User cost-benefit will be influenced by a number of external factors, such as congestion and gasoline prices, while provider cost benefit will be a function of ridership and the degree to which external subsidies are available. The potential population that can be served will be influenced heavily by land use policy, although structured solutions, such as park and ride lots that create artificial service density, can improve this in lower density communities. Identifying the most appropriate mix of transit solutions for the town is also important, and should be based on the needs of the community. For instance, while express commuter bus service may be a cost effective solution, given the nature of the community and its transportation needs, circulator or local bus routes may not be cost effective given the nature of the town and its land use patterns.

2.3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Mobility and Function

The local transportation network will evolve to support both the current and future needs of the community through enhancements that improve mobility and increase functionality.

1. Prioritize the funding and completion of planned capacity improvements on the NC-16 corridor and the construction of Waxhaw Parkway from NC-16 to NC-75.
2. Utilizing the Western Union LARTP, the Union County MTP and this plan as guides, develop an updated transportation plan for the town's planning area that incorporates pertinent recommendations from each document into a cohesive and locally focused transportation network plan. Update the Comprehensive Plan to reflect the results and recommendations of the plan when completed
3. Identify opportunities to improve the function of major roadways through the implementation of targeted upgrades, such as intersection signalization, turn lane installation, access management changes and similar projects that can be funded more easily than major widening projects.
4. Improve access management on major roadways by limiting/consolidating driveway connections and eliminating unsignalized full movement turns on major roadways in favor of directing traffic to signalized intersections and managed directional turning points.
5. Collaborate with developers to revise approved plans to make additional external connections and construct through streets where such opportunities exist.
6. Adopt development standards that require a greater degree of connectivity between development tracts, the external road network and adjacent properties.
7. Require the construction of managed access collector streets within larger developments with through connectivity to adjacent properties and/or thoroughfares.
8. Identify opportunities, plan for and fund street connections that improve strategic mobility and enhance connectivity.
9. Adopt development standards that require internal grid (or modified grid) street networks based on moderate block lengths.

10. Study the feasibility of constructing a grade separated street connection (overpass) between the north and south sides of the railroad downtown.
11. Seek partnerships with developers to construct major transportation network improvements, such as the extension of Waxhaw Parkway.
12. Require the reservation of right-of-way activity for new routes and street connections identified in transportation plans in conjunction with development activity.

B. Inclusive Transportation Network

The town will establish and maintain a safe pedestrian and bicycle network that connects residential areas with major commercial areas, parks, schools and community services. As the town grows more dense and urban in character, the feasibility of regional transit services will be evaluated to expand transportation choices.

1. Prioritize funding for the construction of sidewalks / paths where gaps exist in the network along primary transportation routes.
2. Annually budget capital funds for the construction of pedestrian infrastructure in accordance with the adopted Pedestrian Plan.
3. Integrate the town's greenway system into the overall pedestrian and bicycle network.
4. Explore opportunities to establish additional safe pedestrian crossings across the railroad.
5. Coordinate the installation of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in conjunction with major road projects, including identifying the necessary local share for such improvements and establishing capital reserve accounts to fund these improvements.
6. Prioritize the installation of pedestrian safety features at major intersections, including countdown pedestrian signals, crosswalks, signage and median refuges where feasible.
7. Work with NCDOT and cycling clubs to develop a bicycle route plan that establishes a safe network of routes for recreational bicycling in the area.
8. Plan for and construct separate cycling / multi-modal paths along major roadways where feasible.

9. Require the construction of sidewalks and bicycle facilities to serve all new development.
10. Engage CATS, Union County, the City of Monroe and neighboring communities to develop a long range transit feasibility plan, including potential route identification, required ridership levels, destinations and facilities.

C. Regional Coordination

The town will engage with its partners to plan for, fund and construct an integrated regional transportation network.

1. Continue to engage Waxhaw's regional transportation partners through the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization.
2. Engage both NCDOT and SCDOT in an effort to develop a coordinated approach to the need for additional planning for roadway improvements on cross-border routes connecting Waxhaw and US 521 in Lancaster County.
3. Coordinate major transportation improvements with NCDOT, Union County and neighboring municipalities, particularly with regard to projects that impact multiple jurisdictions.

D. Funding Transportation Improvements

The Town will continually advocate for and seek funding from a variety of sources to ensure that priority transportation improvements are completed to support both the current mobility needs of the community and to facilitate planned growth.

1. Continue efforts to secure funding for planned road improvement and construction projects through the NCDOT Strategic Transportation Investment process.
2. Seek guidance from NCDOT on the feasibility of the town funding the preparation of construction plans and environmental studies for priority transportation improvement projects to improve the possibility of receiving funding for critical transportation enhancements.
3. Explore opportunities to utilize the statutory critical infrastructure assessment tool to partner with developers to facilitate and assist in the funding of new collector roads in conjunction with new development.

4. Explore creative financing arrangements with NCDOT to accelerate the funding of priority transportation projects. An example of such an arrangement could include the Town funding a portion of the construction costs for a project with a contractual guarantee for NCDOT to reimburse the town at the point that state project funding would have been available.
5. Explore opportunities for grant funding to support pedestrian and bicycle facility construction through Safe Routes to School and similar programs.
6. Engage transportation consultants to identify opportunities for the use of NCDOT Spot Safety and CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) funds to complete important safety improvements at critical locations in town.
7. Consider the use of debt financing to fund the construction of critical transportation improvements.



Town of Waxhaw
Comprehensive Plan



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2.4 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2.4.1 OVERVIEW

As Waxhaw continues its growth from a small town into a thriving small city, it faces the challenges of diversifying its tax base, while seeking to maintain its historic charm and high quality of life. In order to address these challenges, the Town Board has made economic development one of its priorities moving forward. The Town Board is continuing to refine its economic development goals that will later be incorporated into this plan. The primary adopted documents supporting this section of the comprehensive plan included the following:

- NC 16 Corridor Plan Market Analysis
- Downtown Market Analysis Update
- Union County Comprehensive Plan Economic Development Report

Existing Economic Development Process

In the past, Waxhaw has relied upon a variety of community, town and county resources to promote economic development. Citizen groups, town staff, elected officials and county officials are often called upon to respond to inquiries regarding potential business opportunities. The lack of organization with regard to handling these matters creates a situation in which no single point of contact or organization has the responsibility for managing the economic development process. In short, the town has lacked an economic development process that is focused, providing clear direction for proactively planning for and developing new business and employment opportunities.

Economic Development and Town Character

While the term “economic development” is often associated with efforts to attract large industrial ventures to a community, this traditional use of the term does not necessarily reflect the town's goals for expanding the local economy and attracting employment opportunities. The Town desires to leverage its quality of life and workforce to attract knowledge based, non-polluting industries and businesses that are compatible with the character of the community.

Business Start-Ups

Resources other than financial assistance can play a significant role in supporting business development, particularly for startups or inexperienced entrepreneurs that lack the experience or capacity to fully realize the potential of their venture. While volunteer groups have helped entrepreneurs in the community move their business plans forward, a greater emphasis and coordinated process is needed to foster entrepreneurs and start-up businesses in Waxhaw.

Downtown

Downtown Waxhaw has evolved several times; first emerging as the hub of the local agricultural community, then becoming the heart of a mill town, and then a regional hub of the antiques market. In recent years, downtown has evolved again into a more diverse economic activity center that is oriented more toward supporting the lifestyle of the residents of the community, while also serving as something of a local tourist destination for those looking to experience an authentic historic downtown with a diverse mix of retail, service and entertainment oriented businesses. Waxhaw is moving forward with its downtown development efforts, recently hiring the first full-time downtown manager to help downtown continue its progress.

Non-Residential Development Trends

Economic activity in Waxhaw has expanded significantly in the past 20 years, but that growth has been primarily oriented toward the retail sector. The Town has relied on the retail sector for much of its growth in tax base, however, a greater diversity of economic activity is needed. Nonresidential development is located in different areas of town that are best suited for a specific type of economic activity. Guiding the most appropriate types of development to these areas is critical to ensuring that the limited amount of land that is most suited for business activity is developed and used for its highest and best use. For instance, downtown serves as the town's center for experiential or "destination" type businesses, while the high volume intersections on NC 16 serve as community or even sub-regional scale shopping destinations. While these areas of town are fairly well defined, it is important to ensure that the gaps between these areas and transitional areas have well defined roles in the local economy as well.

Economic Development Tools

The Town does not have an established set of tools for recruiting the types of economic development that it desires. An opportunity now exists to create the right mix of tools, including both policies and incentives, to ensure the Town will be successful in its efforts.



▲ Figure 2.10 Cureton Town Center Located On NC Highway 16

2.4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Focused Economic Development Process

The Town of Waxhaw will establish a clear and focused economic development process.

1. Identify Union County Economic Development as the chief point of contact for business process and economic development inquiries in Waxhaw to maintain a unified and efficient response to potential investors.
2. Recognize the Town Manager as the key economic development official to serve as the primary liaison with the County EDC, representing Waxhaw during the recruitment and retention process with the County EDC as the lead.
3. Develop an economic development strategy that establishes a focused process, identifies barriers and provides a clear framework for identifying and communicating with business prospects throughout the recruitment and retention process.

B. Economic Development Toolbox

Establish a diverse array of tools for attracting and retaining business that can be tailored to the unique needs of each prospect.

1. Identify potential incentives, financial or otherwise, that can be made available for the relocation or establishment of employment in targeted industry sectors.
2. Review ordinances, policies and regulations on a regular basis to ensure that there are no unreasonable barriers or obstacles to starting or running a business in Waxhaw.
3. Review the permitted uses in all nonresidential zoning districts to ensure that they do not exclude any commercial uses that are appropriate for the district.
4. Develop a long-term strategy for the use, maintenance or sale of town-owned properties that ensures the future use and maintenance of the properties meet the goals and desires of the town.
5. Partner with real estate agents, property owners and economic developers to prepare an inventory of available and underutilized properties in the community that are suitable for commercial development.

6. Building on the existing programs, brochures and other business start-up initiatives, develop a comprehensive process for attracting and educating start-up businesses within the targeted business sectors identified by the town.
7. Maintain and regularly update an existing business database for the town that includes a geospatial (mapping) component.

C. Asset Based Economic Development

Encourage economic and business development that fosters a sustainable and resilient local economy that is built on the town's core assets, including its sense of place, quality of life and highly skilled and educated workforce.

1. Develop a business recruitment plan that focuses on attracting employment in knowledge based economic sectors and related fields that are less dependent on geographic location for site selection, but which seek locations based on quality of life factors that help them recruit and retain employees.
2. Develop economic plans and strategies that support the town's growth sector plan, aligning infrastructure and business site improvements in areas that are compatible with the identified growth sector and surrounding land uses.
3. Utilize downtown Waxhaw as a place based economic development recruitment engine, drawing on its history and character to foster business development that fits within the downtown development framework and unique assets that it has to offer.
4. Encourage the development of small and minority owned businesses that support the town's identified growth sectors.
5. Support the continued development of the creative arts as a key component of Waxhaw's place based economy.

D. Downtown Economic Development

Foster economic development opportunities that support the vibrancy unique character of downtown Waxhaw.

1. Continue to support the professional management of downtown and the Main Street program

organization, its activities and work program as it pursues economic development opportunities and programs within the town's historic district.

2. Identify opportunities for public gathering and arts and entertainment venues to expand opportunities for people to gather in downtown on a consistent basis during the evening hours each day of the week.
3. Identify opportunities to create spin-off businesses as new businesses open in downtown to expand and diversify complementary product lines, entertainment venues and related business types.
4. Develop an action plan in partnership with the County to upgrade the downtown water and sewer infrastructure to encourage the continued revitalization and improvement of business development in downtown.
5. Promote the community as a destination for the creative arts and actively seek to foster the development of this sector through the recruitment of artists, artisans and craft makers.
6. Work with downtown property owners to develop an action plan for the installation of fire prevention and suppression equipment in historic structures.
7. Promote the reuse of historic commercial properties in a manner that maintains the architectural significance of the building while creating opportunities for economic development.
8. Explore the creation of a privately funded preservation and economic development based non-profit organization to further develop incentive packages for the continued preservation and enhancement of historic downtown properties.



TOWN OF WAXHAW
ESTABLISHED 1889

TOWN HALL



2.5 MUNICIPAL SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE

2.5.1 OVERVIEW

The residents of Waxhaw expect the efficient delivery of high quality services throughout the town. The quality of life enjoyed by Waxhaw's residents is directly influenced by the services Waxhaw and Union County provide. Both the strength and prosperity of the local economy are directly impacted by the provision of these important services as well. This section of the plan reviews the wide range of municipal and county-based services to the Town's residents.

Police Services

The Town of Waxhaw Police Department provides police protection within the corporate limits of the town limits on a 24 hour per day / 7 day per week basis. The recently adopted budget provides for a total of 28 full time personnel (including two administrative personnel), who are supplemented by 5 sworn reserve/auxiliary officers. In addition to its primary patrol and investigative functions, the department also provides animal control services, community watch, and a variety of other community oriented programs and services. The unincorporated areas in the planning area are served by the Union County Sheriff's Department.

Fire Protection / Emergency Response Services

The Town of Waxhaw lies primarily within the Waxhaw Fire District, which is a county established fire insurance district. The Waxhaw Volunteer Fire Department is contracted by the county to provide fire protection and emergency response within the district, which is supported through an ad valorem tax levy and supplemented with sales tax distributions based on that levy (the County's current budget estimates that approximately 80% of the revenue that funds the department will be derived from taxes on property that is inside of Waxhaw's town limits). The district covers an area of approximately 40.3 square miles, of which the Town comprises just over 11 square miles, or 27% of the district (approximately 400 acres of land within the town falls within the Mineral Springs Fire District). The total estimated population of the district is approximately 18,000, of which it is estimated that just over 80% reside within the town limits.

The WVFD operates from two stations, with the primary station located on Waxhaw Parkway and a substation located at JAARS to serve the southern rural portion of the district. The department is manned by a combination of volunteers and paid firefighters, with 4 paid staff on duty during weekdays and 2 paid staff on duty on weekend days. Volunteers supplement the paid staff during evening and weekend hours.

The district has a triple split insurance classification, with the urban areas that have access to public water designated as a class 6, the rural areas that are located between 5 and 6 road miles from the nearest

station rated as a 9E and a small mostly undeveloped portion of the district in the southwestern corner of the county rated as a 10 – the lowest classification for insurance purposes.

The WVFD also provides emergency medical services at the EMT level when responding to medical emergencies in support of the Union EMS agency, which the county contracts through CMC-Union for paramedic level emergency medical response and medical transport throughout Union County.

Water and Sewer Utilities

Water and sewer utilities are provided in the town and the urbanized portions of the planning area by the Union County Public Works Department. The primary source of treated potable water is the Catawba River Water Plant in Lancaster County, SC, which is owned in part by Union County. Wastewater treatment from sources within the town is provided at the Twelve Mile Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant on Kensington Drive. UCPW is responsible for all facets of providing utility services, including line maintenance, metering and billing. The department is also responsible for planning for and funding improvements to the system and coordinating line extensions with developers.

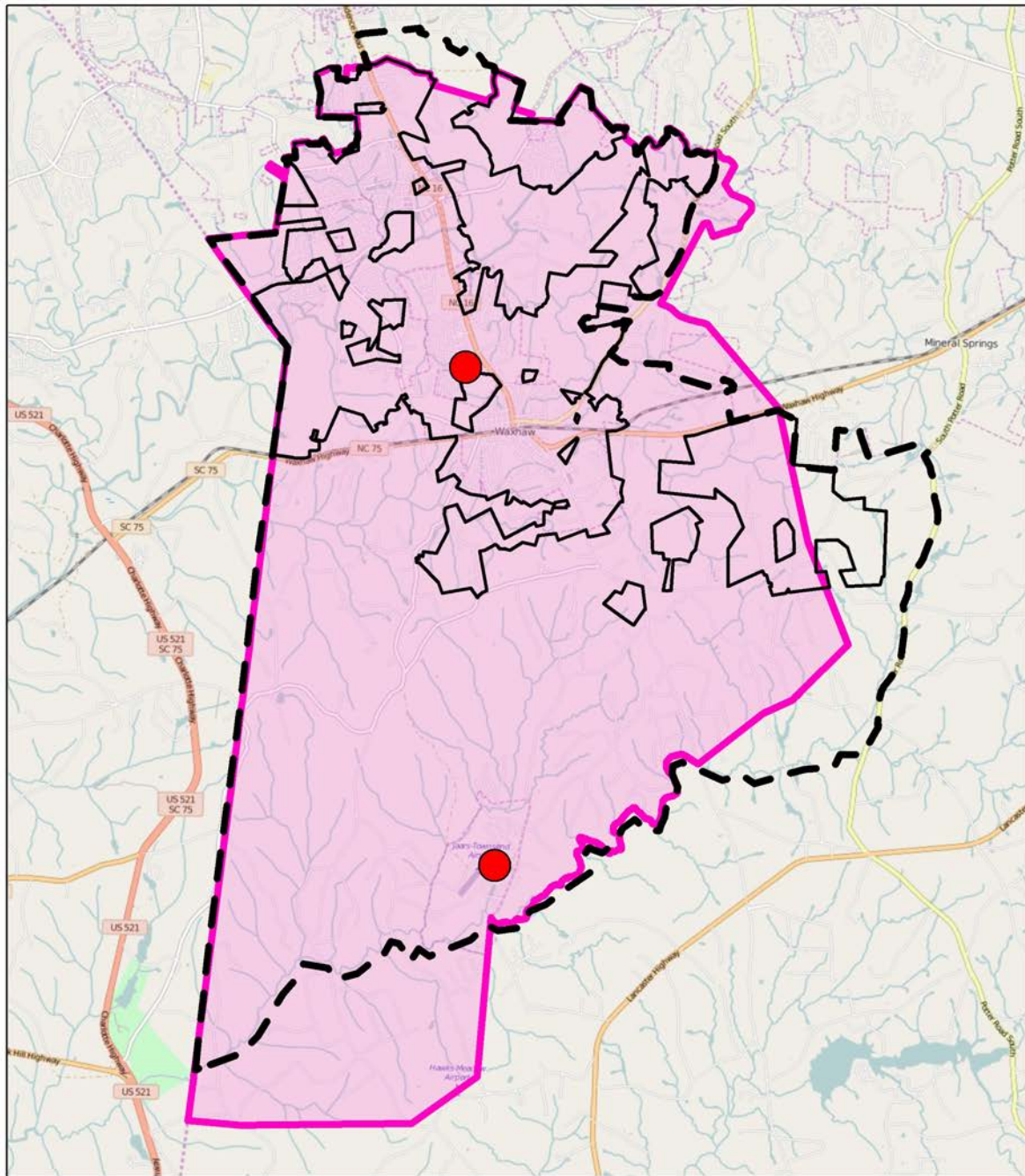
Street Maintenance

The Town of Waxhaw Public Services Department is responsible for all facets of maintaining the town's street network, including the maintenance of town owned sidewalks, coordinating the provision of street lighting and maintaining stormwater conveyances associated with town maintained streets. In the preceding fiscal year, the town reported a total street network length of approximately 36.6 miles, for which it receives approximately \$292,000 in maintenance funds through the Powell Bill program administered by NCDOT.

Solid Waste / Sanitation

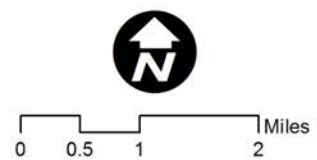
The Town of Waxhaw provides a complete range of solid waste and sanitation services within the town limits. These include contracted services for the weekly pickup of household waste and recyclable materials, and the collection of yard waste by town employees in the Public Services Department.

WAXHAW FIRE DISTRICT



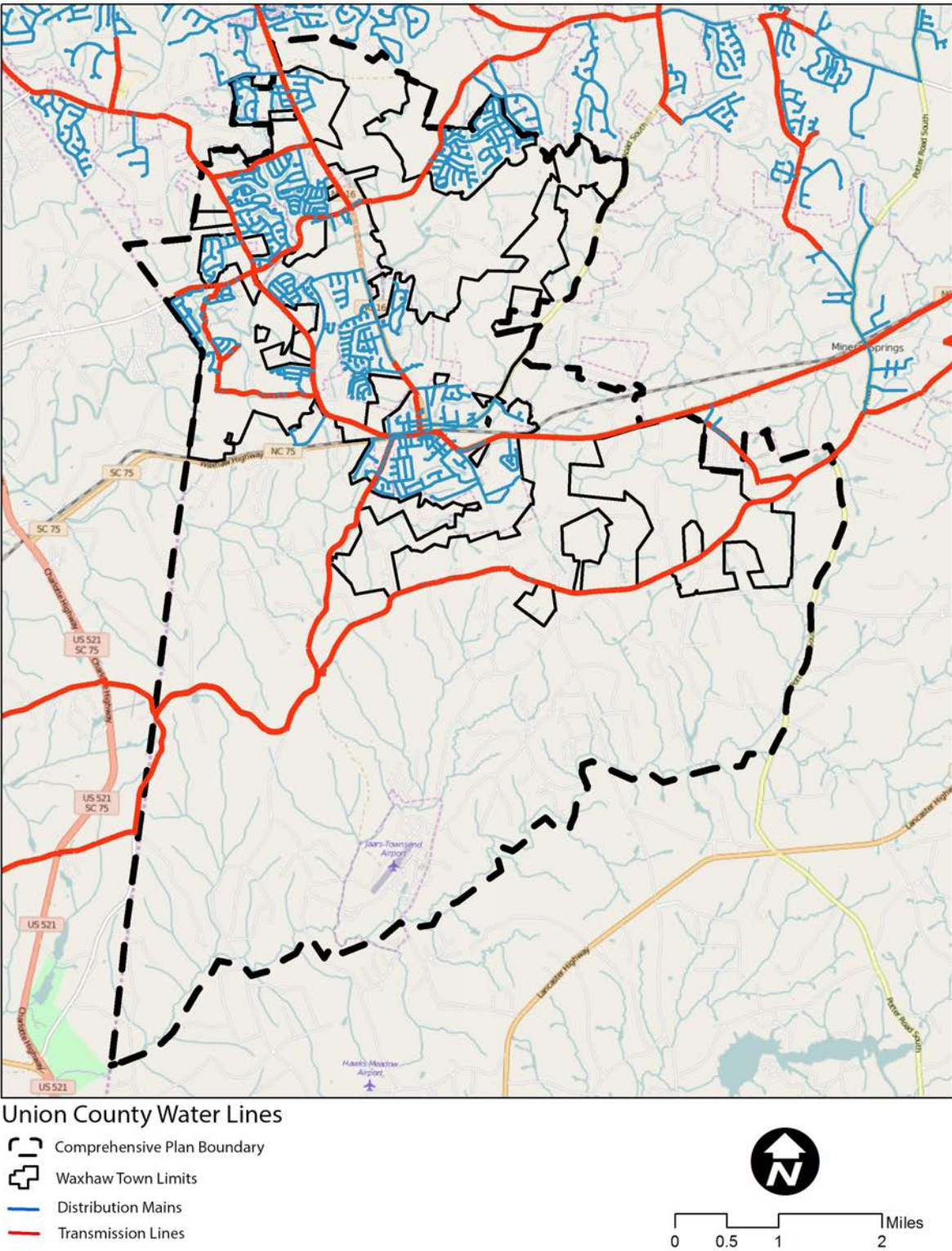
Waxhaw Fire District

- Comprehensive Plan Boundary
- Waxhaw Town Limits
- Fire District Boundary
- Fire Stations



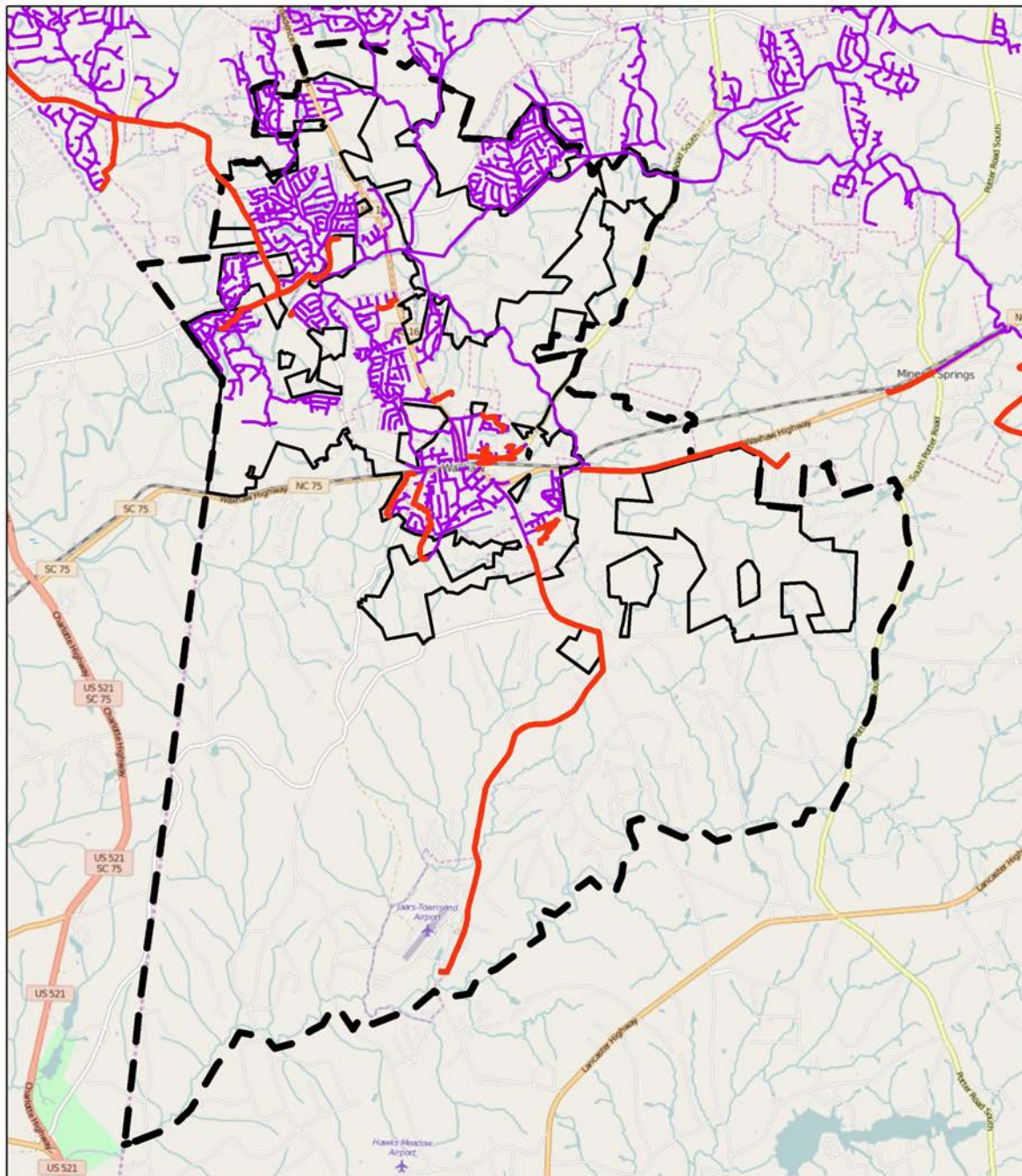
▲ Figure 2.11 Waxhaw Fire District

UNION COUNTY WATER LINES



▲ Figure 2.12 Union County Water Lines

UNION COUNTY WASTEWATER LINES



Union County Wastewater Lines

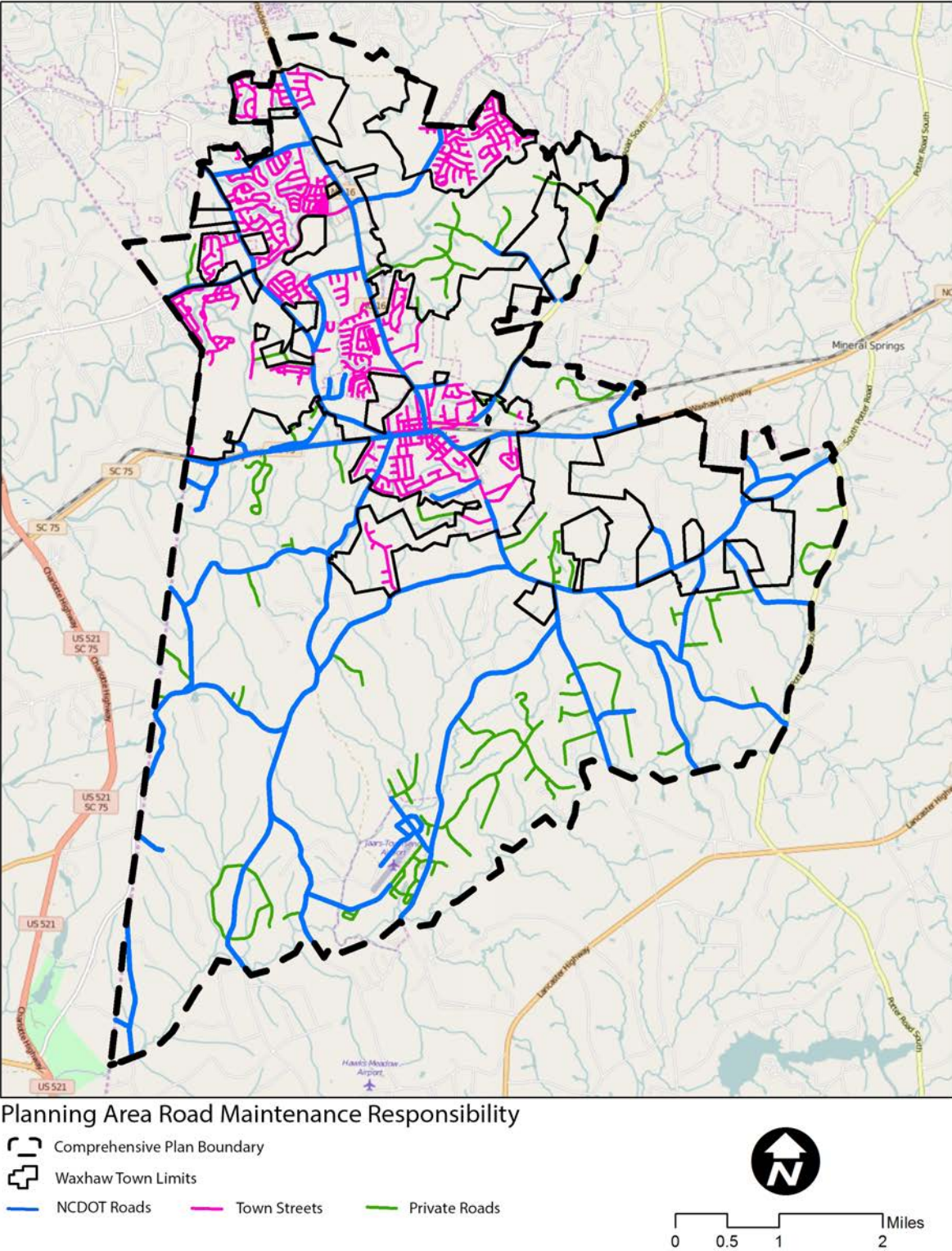
- Comprehensive Plan Boundary
- Waxhaw Town Limits
- Gravity Mains
- Force Mains



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

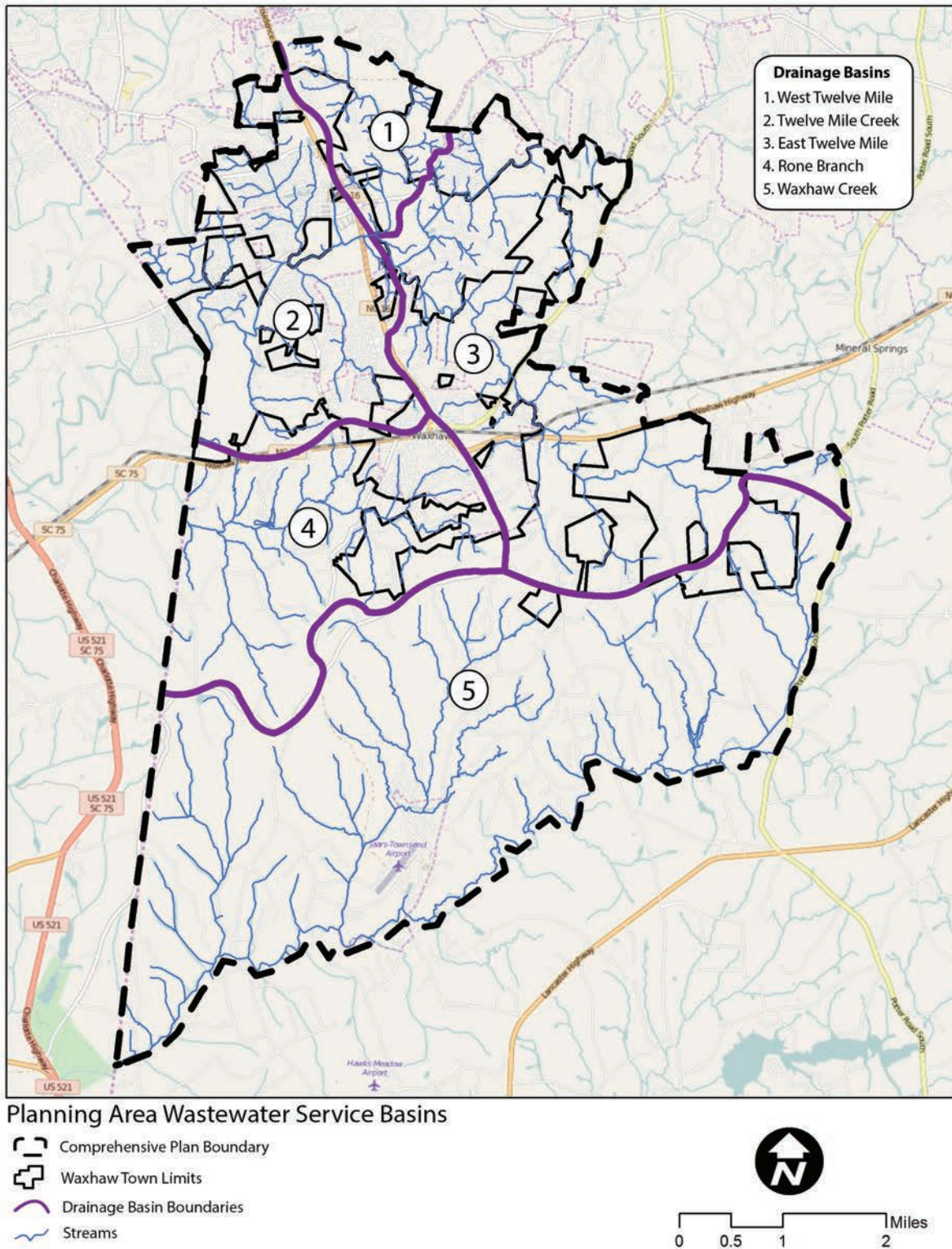
▲ Figure 2.13 Union County Wastewater Lines

ROAD MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITY



▲ Figure 2.14 Road Maintenance Responsibility

WASTEWATER SERVICE BASINS



▲ Figure 2.15 Wastewater Service Basins

2.5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Public Safety Services

1. Continually monitor the staffing needs of the Police Department to ensure that it has sufficient resources available to maintain its current level of high quality, visible and responsive services.
2. Maintain strong relationships with the Union County Sheriff's Department to ensure that supplementary law enforcement resources are available to the community when needed.
3. Continue public outreach meetings with neighborhood and community groups to strengthen relationships between residents and the Police Department and monitor community concerns regarding public safety issues.
4. Actively monitor the deliberations and results of the Union County Fire Service study to determine the impact of any funding or service changes on public safety.
5. Partner with the Waxhaw Volunteer Fire Department to plan for future facility and equipment needs to support the ongoing growth of the community.
6. Support the Waxhaw Volunteer Fire Department's efforts to increase professional staffing levels, develop new facilities and acquire necessary apparatus and equipment.
7. Encourage the Waxhaw Volunteer Fire Department to explore options for lowering the fire insurance rating within the corporate limits.
8. Explore all options to ensure that the residents of the Town of Waxhaw are provided with the highest quality, cost effective and responsive fire and rescue services available.

B. Water and Sewer Utility Infrastructure

1. Develop a joint wastewater master plan with Union County to guide infrastructure investments within the planning area, with a particular emphasis on extending major water and sewer lines within the intended growth sector, long term planning for extending service into the controlled growth sector, and limiting utility extensions into the restricted growth sector (Waxhaw Creek Basin).

2. Create a joint (Waxhaw – Union County) utility service district that would include the Town of Waxhaw and the unincorporated portions of the planning area to guide and manage utility services and infrastructure investments in the area.
3. Seek opportunities to fund utility infrastructure extensions to support development in conformance with the growth sector plan.
4. Explore the feasibility of reserving a portion of the excess capacity of the Twelve Mile Creek WWTP to guarantee the availability of wastewater capacity for future development.
5. Partner with Union County Public Works to accelerate the funding of downtown utility infrastructure improvements.

C. Transportation Infrastructure

1. Adopt a long range street maintenance plan based on a pavement conditions study to guide resurfacing and repair activities.
2. Identify the gap between state funding for local street maintenance (Powell Bill) and the ongoing annual need as identified in the long range street maintenance plan. Identify local funding sources to fill the funding gap to ensure the ongoing maintenance of the local street system.
3. Identify opportunities to partner with developers to make coordinated improvements to local streets that are adjacent to development and redevelopment projects on the town's street network.
4. Annually budget capital funds for the construction of pedestrian infrastructure in accordance with the adopted Pedestrian Plan.

D. Electric and Natural Gas Infrastructure

1. Engage Union Power Cooperative to identify potential electric transmission and distribution upgrades that will be necessary to support Waxhaw's long term growth needs, including the identification of potential locations for future substations and high voltage transmission corridors.
2. Explore opportunities to coordinate the relocation or burial of overhead utility lines in conjunction with downtown water and sewer utility infrastructure improvements.

3. Explore opportunities to jointly plan for the extension of the nearby high pressure natural gas transmission line into Waxhaw, including route planning, to enhance the availability of this fuel source for economic development purposes.

E. Communications Infrastructure

1. Coordinate with broadband / fiber optic communications service providers to study the feasibility of improving the speed, reliability, and capacity of communications services, while avoiding a duplication of services.
2. Plan for the siting of wireless telecommunication infrastructure in coordination with large scale development projects.
3. Encourage the deployment of distributed antenna networks by telecommunications companies to provide enhanced wireless telecommunications and broadband wireless internet service throughout the community.

F. Solid Waste Services

1. Continually evaluate solid waste services to ensure that the correct mix of service types are being offered, with particular regard to the frequency of collection and capacity of household waste vs. recycling collection offered to residents to maximize efficient delivery of this service.
2. Develop programs to encourage waste reduction and increase recycling participation for household solid waste customers.
3. Explore opportunities to partner with neighboring communities to jointly contract for solid waste collection services.
4. Partner with Union County to establish a regional collection site in the area for household hazardous waste and electronics collection.

G. Municipal Facilities / Capital Equipment

1. Develop a long range facilities and space needs study for town government operations and fund needed land acquisition, facility construction and expansion through the capital improvement plan.

2. Coordinate capital expenditure planning with growth projections and fund necessary expenditures on an annual basis to ensure that facilities and equipment are available to maintain service levels.
3. Establish and make annual contributions to capital reserve accounts to fund identified facility construction needs.
4. Develop a long range facilities maintenance plan to identify major capital investments that will be necessary to maintain the integrity of town owned buildings and associated facilities.
5. Establish and make annual contributions to a dedicated capital reserve fund to support facility maintenance needs.

H. Stormwater Management

1. Establish a stormwater utility to manage local stormwater infrastructure and act as a conduit for funding improvements to the system.
2. Develop a reliable and recurring funding mechanism to support the stormwater utility.
3. Consider options for assuming maintenance responsibility for privately maintained stormwater infrastructure that is connected to town owned stormwater infrastructure.



2.6 PARKS AND RECREATION

2.6.1 OVERVIEW

The Town of Waxhaw recognizes the important role that parks and recreation opportunities play in maintaining a high quality of life for its residents. While the Town has taken many steps to implement parks and recreation recommendations from the 2009 Comprehensive Plan and the 2012 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Master Plan, many of those recreational needs remain unmet. As the Town has grown from a small community of several thousand to a place with a population over 15,000 in just over a decade, it has been difficult for the Town to achieve the standards set forth by the Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CARPA), utilizing primarily volunteers during that significant period of growth. According to the 2012 plan, the Town lacks land dedicated for parks, including land for active recreation, greenways, open space and natural protection. The Town's current parks and recreation facilities include:

- Carolina Thread Trail
- David G. Barnes Children's Park
- Sk8 Park
- Dare Steele Garden
- South Providence School Exercise Loop
- Water Tower Open Space
- Town Creek Park
- H.C. Nesbit Park
- Downtown Park Development
- The Meeting Place
- The Green (Downtown)

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Master Plan Adopted Park System Standard:

- 11 acres per 1,000 residents for parks; and
- 17 acres per 1,000 residents including dedicated open space; and
- Town-wide greenway system-with 1/2 mile access points from every residence

Current Supply and Demand

Current Supply: 66 acres

Current Demand: 155 acres (2012 Parks and Recreation Master Plan)

Current Gap: 89 acres

Future Demand (2035): Between 245 and 298 acres based on population estimates (11 acre standard)

▼ Table 2.2 Estimated 2035 Demand Based on Updated Population Estimate

Growth Rate	2035 Population	2035 Demand for Park Land	
		Parks	Including Open Space
		Ratio: 11 Acres per 1,000 residents	Ratio: 17 Acres per 1,000 residents
2%	22,289	245 acres	379 acres
2.5%	24,579	270 acres	418 acres
3%	27,092	298 acres	461 acres

2.6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Outstanding Facilities and Programs

Provide outstanding parks and recreation facilities and opportunities to meet the current and future demands of residents and visitors of all ages, physical abilities and interests.

1. Continue the implementation of identified projects from the 2012 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Master Plan.
2. Prepare an update to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Plan that incorporates revised population growth estimates and corresponding calculations for facility needs based on the town's projected population to better reflect future demand.
3. Develop a variety of park facilities to accommodate the recreational needs of residents with a wide range of interests and abilities.
4. Coordinate the location, development and purchase of facilities within the context of the growth sector plan and identified park standards in Parks, Recreation and Cultural Master Plan once it is updated.
5. Continue to develop recreational program and activities that meet the needs and demands of the entire population.
6. Develop a balance of both passive and active park facilities to meet the needs and demands of the population.
7. Focus on the development of community scale parks, as identified in the 2012 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Master Plan, while requiring the development of neighborhood scale parks in conjunction with development activity.
8. Expand the applicability of the fee-in-lieu program that can be utilized by developers whose properties are too small or not otherwise suited for the development of neighborhood parks or other recreational facilities as required in the town's development ordinances.

B. Promoting a Healthy Community and Active Living

Promote a healthy community by establishing an environment and lifestyle that encourages active living.

1. Develop an equitable, spatial distribution of town park facilities to ensure access for all residents.
2. Plan for and build the physical infrastructure necessary to support an active living community, including bike lanes, sidewalks and greenways to make physical activity safe, accessible, and well connected to existing and planned trail segments that provide convenient access to all areas of town.
3. Require the dedication of park facilities and greenway trail facilities in new development that provides the opportunity for residents to engage in active lifestyles.
4. Partner with local recreational and health related organizations to develop educational programs for use by schools and civic organizations to raise awareness in support of active living.
5. Partner with local recreational and health related organizations to develop health and wellness activities, walking groups and other similar activities to encourage people to exercise and stay fit.

C. Greenway System

The town will continue to expand its greenway system by connecting existing greenway segments with new greenway trails.

1. Continue to plan for and develop the Twelve Mile Creek corridor as the central connecting spine of the town-wide greenway system.
2. Examine opportunities to work with HOAs as a strategic partner to expand connectivity with existing and planned greenway facilities.
3. Adopt development regulations that require the reservation of land for planned trails and potential connections during the development review process.

4. Partner with developers of new communities to leverage public-private participation in the construction of greenway and parks facilities.
5. Provide annual capital funding for the construction of greenway trails, with an emphasis on completing the central backbone of the network and making connections to neighborhoods and existing trails.

D. Foster Partnerships for Parks

Foster private, public, and neighborhood partnerships to support the enhancement of recreational facilities and programs throughout the Waxhaw area.

1. Continue to explore opportunities to partner with the county, school system and other organizations and government agencies to meet the future parks and recreation needs and demands of a growing population.
2. Collaborate with the county to identify, plan, fund and construct parks and recreation facilities where facilities accomplish shared goals and meet regional demands.
3. Explore opportunities to work with HOAs as a strategic partner to plan for the future maintenance and utilization of existing HOA recreational facilities by the public.



Town of Waxhaw
Comprehensive Plan



2.7 NATURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

2.7.1 OVERVIEW

Waxhaw is located in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. The area outside of the urbanized portion of the planning area is generally defined as wooded with rolling hills. The area is defined by a range of distinct, but interconnected, features that contribute to the quality of the natural environment and support the health and diversity of the flora and fauna that make up the local ecosystem.

Hydrology

The planning area contains numerous surface waters, creeks and ponds, as well as federally designated wetland areas within which development is regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Parts of Waxhaw lie within five drainage basins: Twelve Mile Creek, Rane Branch, West Twelve Mile, East Twelve Mile, and Waxhaw Creek. Drainage basins refer to the topographical drainage areas in which water flows. These drainages basins define the direction of stormwater runoff and flows of public water and wastewater. A map showing hydrologic features and drainage basins in the planning area is included in the map supplement.

Flood Hazards

The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has identified floodplain areas in Union County that hold a 1 percent chance of flooding in a given year. Floodplain areas lie in Waxhaw, particularly along the Twelve Mile Creek that runs south of Kensington Drive and Cuthbertson Road. The town's Unified Development Ordinance includes a Flood Hazard Overlay District that restricts development within these areas. A map showing flood hazard areas in the planning area is included in the map supplement.

Stormwater

The entire Waxhaw planning area falls within the regulatory boundary of the state's Phase II stormwater management program, which is focused on maintaining downstream water quality by requiring the removal of water-borne pollutants on sites where runoff is created. The Town of Waxhaw and the unincorporated areas surrounding the town are "tipped in" to the Phase II program and the regulations are currently administered at the state level by the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Since Waxhaw is not a Phase II permit holder, it is not required to operate a separate stormwater utility to maintain stormwater conveyances that channel water from town streets and there is no local responsibility for the town to monitor the maintenance of private stormwater facilities.

Stormwater permitting (with the exception of the review of stormwater structures and conveyances in town rights-of-way) is handled by NCDENR for development projects in Waxhaw. Waxhaw will soon

be required to obtain a Phase II stormwater permit, establish a separate stormwater utility and assume responsibility for reviewing and permitting all stormwater related infrastructure in town. Stormwater infrastructure is primarily intended to control the quality of water entering streams. The quantity of water released from impervious surfaces that is controlled by stormwater structures is a secondary benefit, but not the primary intent of most stormwater infrastructure.

Preserving water quality in local streams, particularly Twelve Mile Creek, is critical to ensuring the town's ability to continue growing since significant impairment of local waterways could lead to additional development restrictions or limits on discharges from the Twelve Mile Creek wastewater treatment plant.

Wildlife Habitat

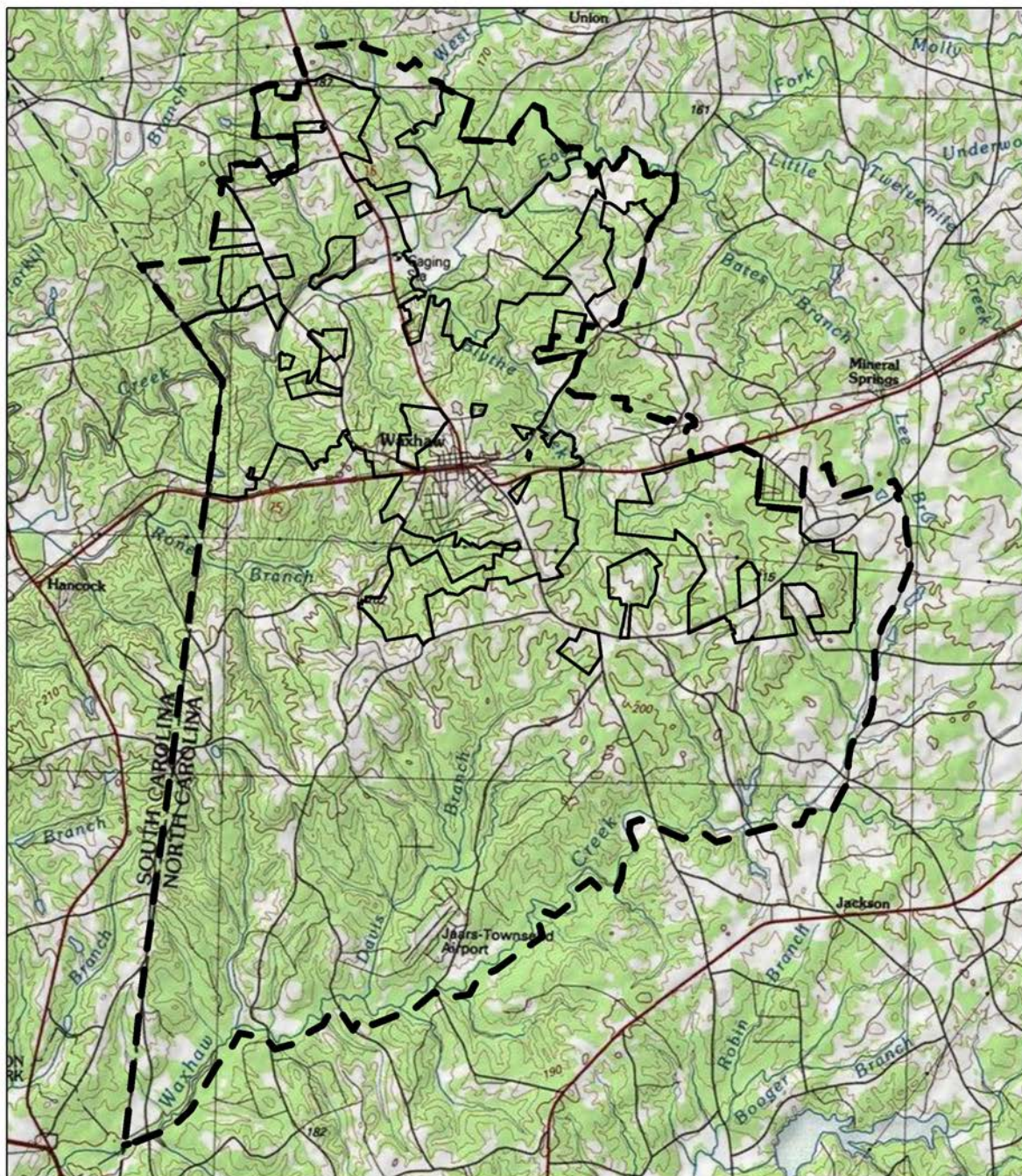
The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program has identified a number of ecologically significant areas in the area surrounding Waxhaw that are integral to supporting the biodiversity of the region by providing both terrestrial (land) and aquatic (water) habitats to species that are native to the area. These areas are considered to be critical to maintaining the health of the wildlife populations that live within them. A map showing hydrologic features and drainage basins in the planning area is included in the map supplement. A map showing priority wildlife habitat areas in the planning area is included in the map supplement.

Natural Heritage Areas

The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program has identified several areas within Waxhaw's Planning Area as having high conservation value due to the quality of their contribution to the natural heritage of the area. These areas, which primarily include the Andrew Jackson Ridges in the southwestern portion of the planning area, the Waxhaw Creek floodplain and the East Twelve Mile Creek floodplain, should be given priority consideration for conservation and additional evaluation when development proposals are submitted for projects in their vicinity. A map showing priority natural heritage areas in the planning area is included in the map supplement.

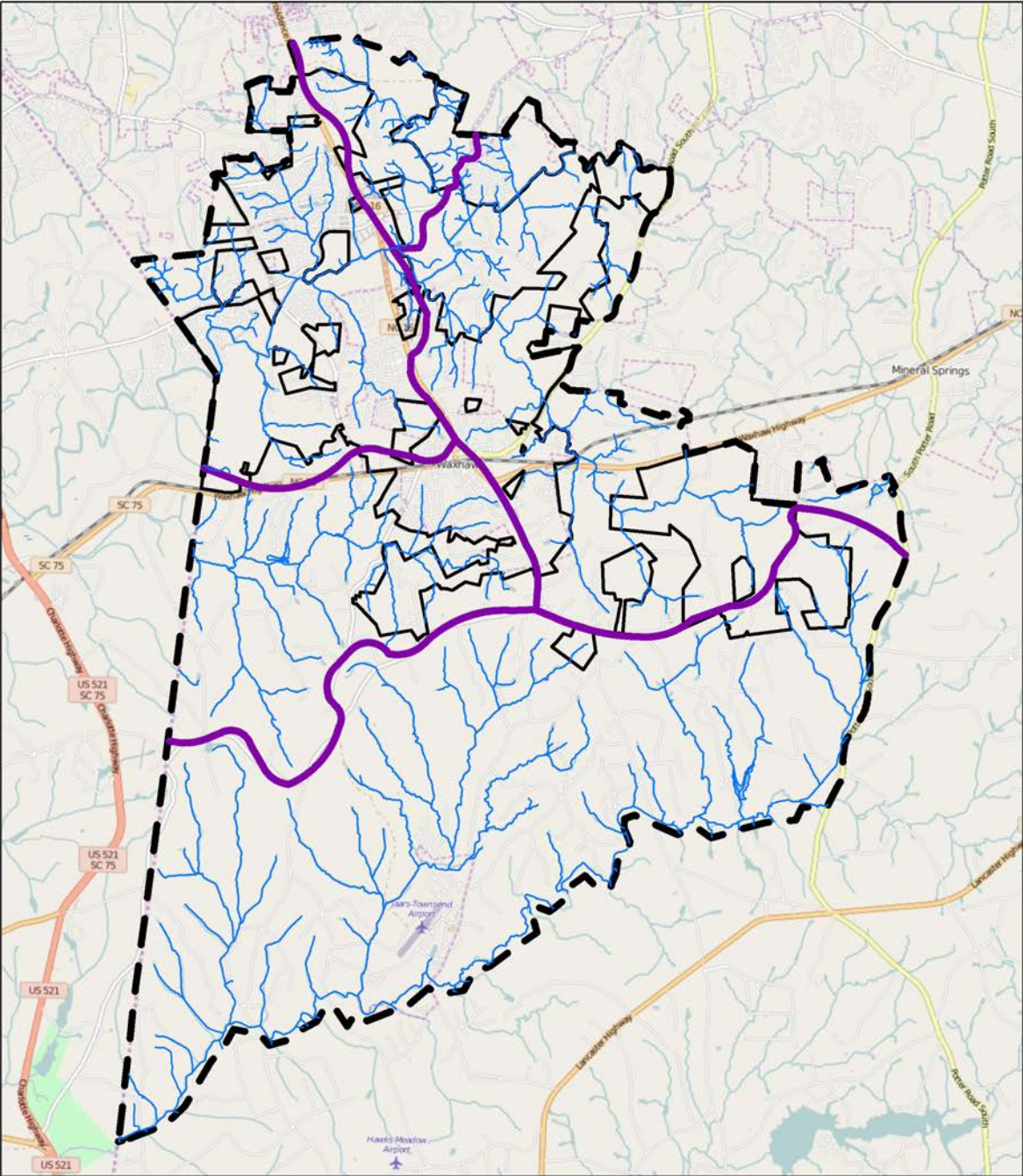


TOPOGRAPHIC MAP



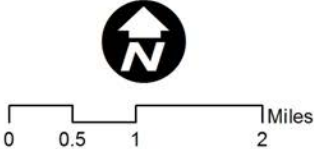
▲ Figure 2.16 Topographic Map

HYDROGRAPHIC MAP



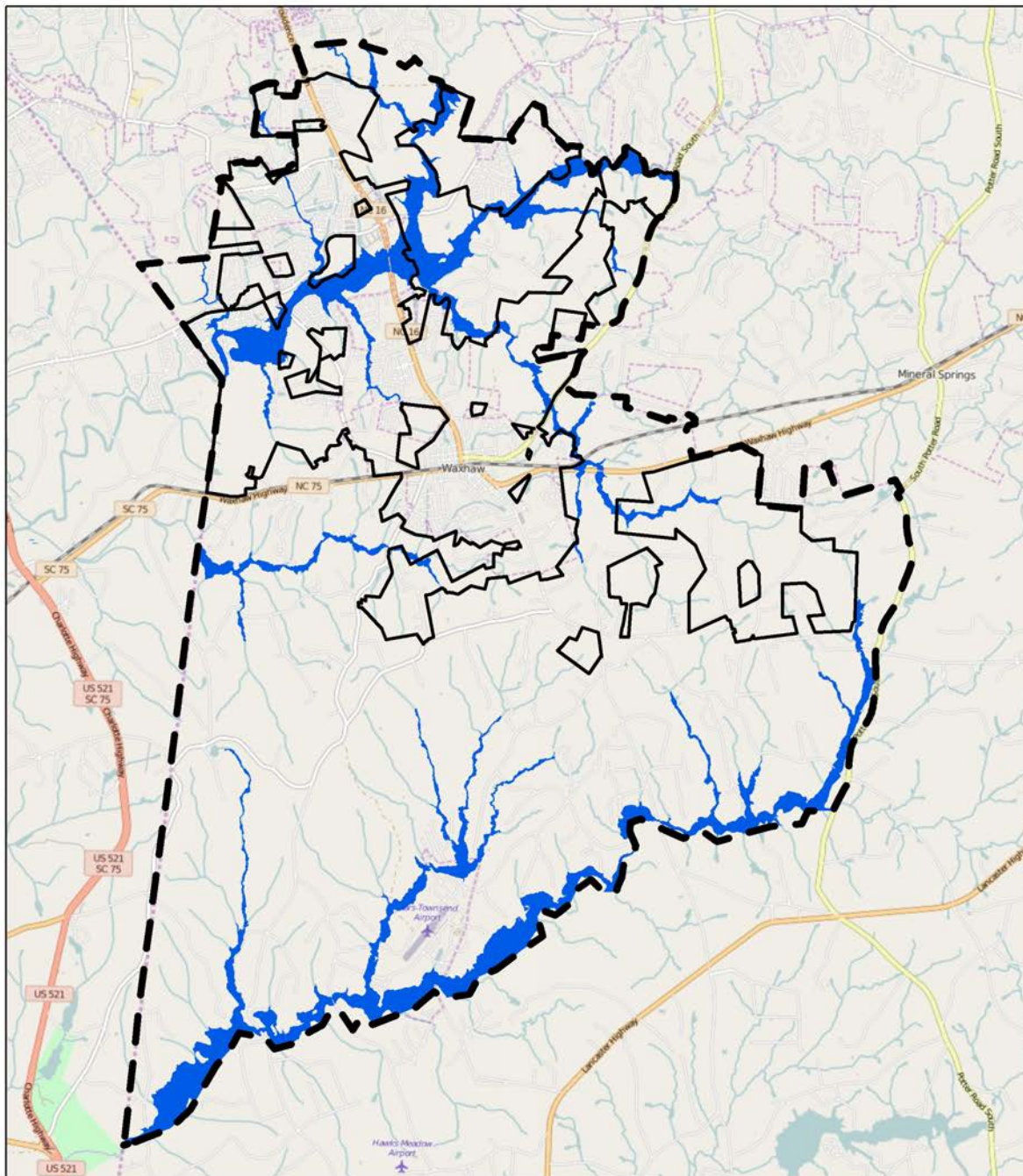
Planning Area Hydrographic Map

- Comprehensive Plan Boundary
- Waxhaw Town Limits
- Drainage Basin Boundaries
- Streams



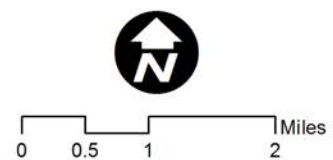
▲ Figure 2.17 Hydrographic Map

FLOOD HAZARD MAP



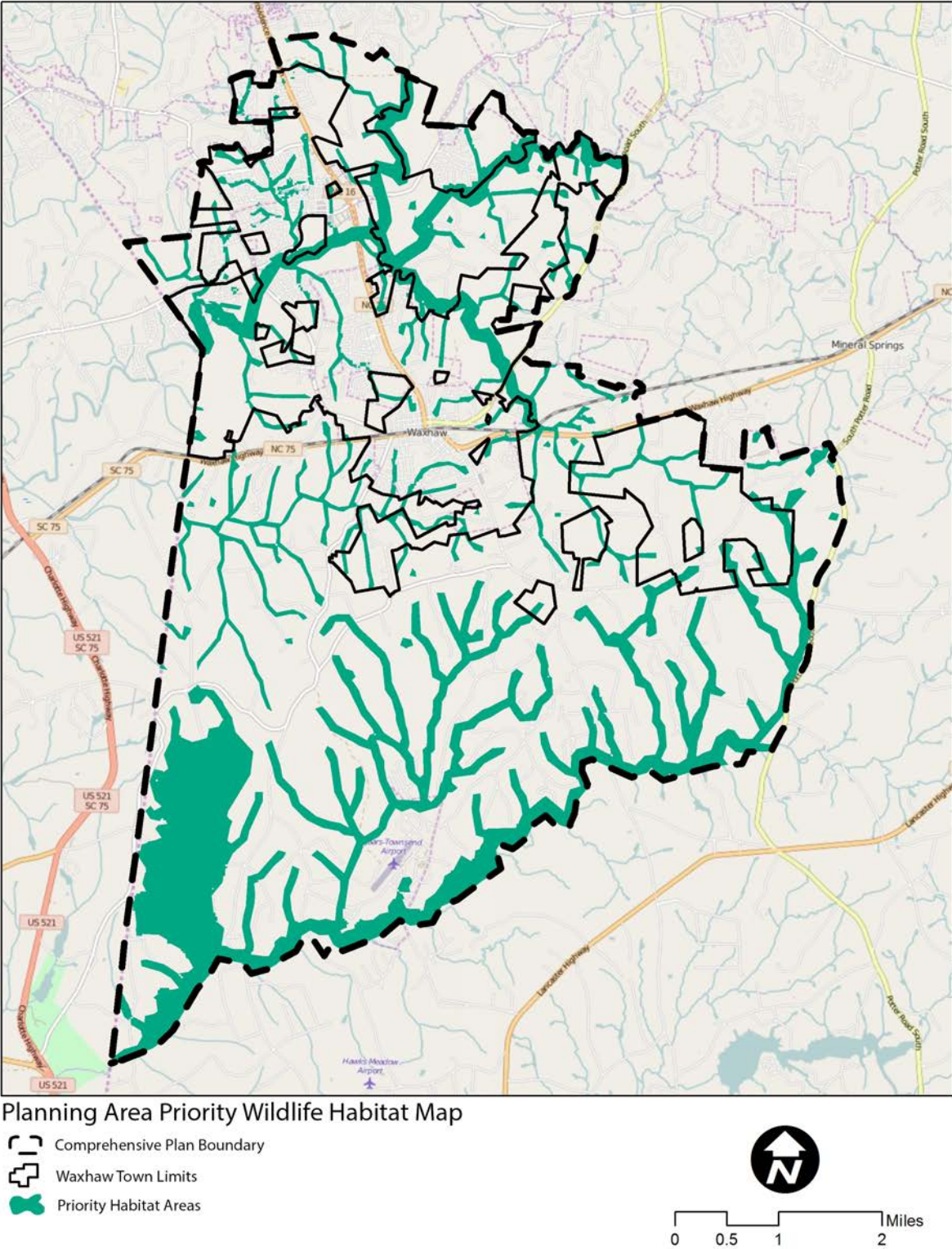
Planning Area Flood Hazard Map

- Comprehensive Plan Boundary
- Waxhaw Town Limits
- Flood Hazard Areas



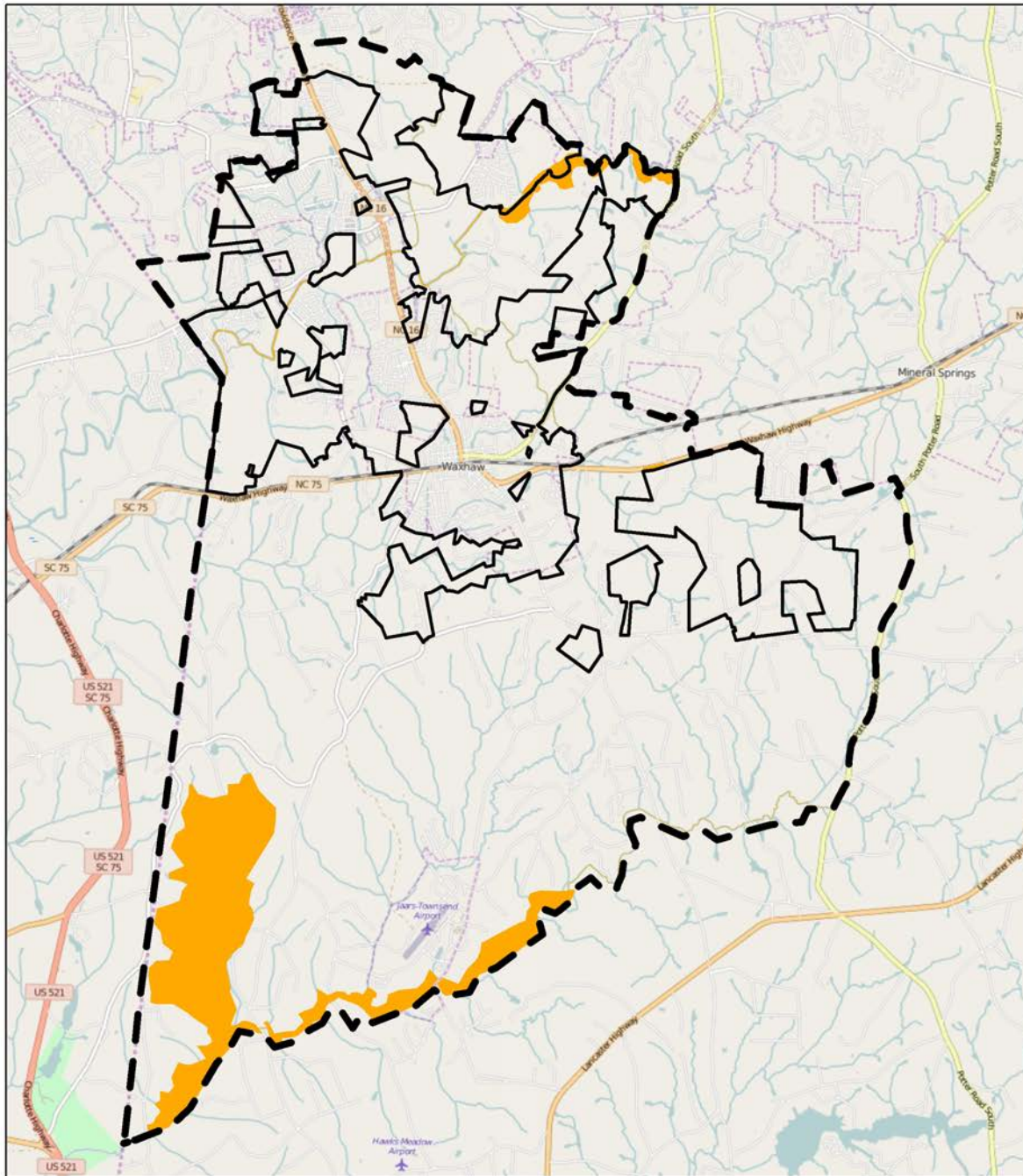
▲ Figure 2.18 Flood Hazard Map

PRIORITY WILDLIFE HABITAT MAP



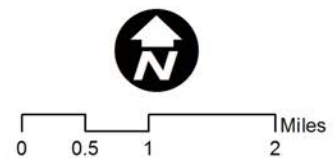
▲ Figure 2.19 Priority Wildlife Habitat Map

NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM MAP



Planning Area Natural Heritage Program Map

- Comprehensive Plan Boundary
- Waxhaw Town Limits
- Natural Heritage Program Priority Areas



▲ Figure 2.20 Natural Heritage Program Map

2.7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Stormwater Management / Water Quality

1. Establish a stormwater utility to manage local stormwater infrastructure and act as a conduit for funding improvements to the system.
2. Prepare for the eventual requirement that Waxhaw obtain a Phase II stormwater permit by implementing those regulatory and operational programs necessary to comply with permit standards prior to them being imposed on the town.
3. Study the potential costs associated with retrofitting those portions of the town that are not served by adequate or up-to-date stormwater infrastructure.
4. Explore opportunities to develop regionalized stormwater management facilities that can accommodate sub-basin level stormwater needs for multiple sites, where practical.
5. Consider options for assuming maintenance responsibility for privately maintained stormwater infrastructure that is connected to town owned stormwater infrastructure.
6. Encourage the use of low impact development techniques, particularly with regard to limiting unnecessary impervious surfaces, using vegetated stormwater conveyances and similar techniques, where possible and in character with the development context of the area.
7. Establish a formal process for monitoring construction sites for compliance with erosion and sedimentation control plans and coordinate response to potential violations with DENR.
8. Monitor the status of water quality rules for the Waxhaw Creek basin and engage in any process that emerges to review those rules or make other regulatory changes for the basin.

B. Flood Damage Prevention

1. Continue to enforce flood damage prevention regulations and establish a method of coordinating with the NC Flood Mapping Program to engage in the periodic evaluation of local flood maps.

C. Open Space / Land Preservation

1. Develop a “greenprint” plan to inventory the community’s natural assets and identify land and associated features that have significant environmental value. Use the plan to establish, either based on characteristics or location, which features should be given priority consideration to be maintained as protected open space as development occurs.
2. Establish regulatory standards for open space preservation whereby, to the extent possible, preserved open space consists of connected and cohesive units of land and not fractured parcels or remnants of undevelopable property scattered throughout a development.
3. Explore the creation of an open space bank which could be used as a mechanism to assist in the preservation of land with significant natural value while allowing for more dense development in areas that are less sensitive.

D. Tree Preservation

1. Consider lowering the threshold for receiving regulatory incentives for tree preservation to help encourage the preservation of a greater number of trees in conjunction with new development.
2. Review options for making regulatory changes to more effectively encourage the preservation of stands of mature trees on development tracts.
3. Enforce post clear cutting development restrictions for properties that have been subject to logging activity in preparation for development, but which were not subject to an active forest management plan.

E. Coordination

1. Establish a formal staff level liaison between the town and the DENR regional office in Mooresville and central office in Raleigh to manage and coordinate communication between the town and the agency.



WW

Waxhaw Woman's Club
Est. 1911

WW

Waxhaw Woman's Club
Est. 1911

2.8 HISTORIC PRESERVATION

2.8.1 OVERVIEW

During the public input meetings, Historic Preservation received a great deal of interest and ranked among the higher priorities for Waxhaw in the future. The character of the town is often identified by the downtown and the neighborhoods that are immediately adjacent to it. Over 97 properties, which included 93 buildings, 3 structures and 1 “object”, were identified as contributing to the integrity of the Waxhaw Historic District in the 1991 National Park Service’s Historic District nomination packet when the town had a total population of approximately 1,200. Today, 85 of the identified “contributing” buildings remain. Efforts to preserve the remaining properties will help maintain the integrity of the historic district that so many in Waxhaw and the surrounding area cherish.

After the adoption of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan a series of actions were taken to implement the historic preservation recommendations. An historic preservation commission (HPC) was appointed and local historic landmark guidelines were developed for voluntary preservation efforts and as guidelines for facade grant applications. The HPC was charged with reviewing historic landmark designations and any request for alterations/improvements, issuing Certificates of Appropriateness to determine if alterations or improvements will maintain the important features that led to its designation. The HPC was also placed in charge of reviewing facade grant application requests, utilizing the Historic Landmark Guidelines to review submissions.

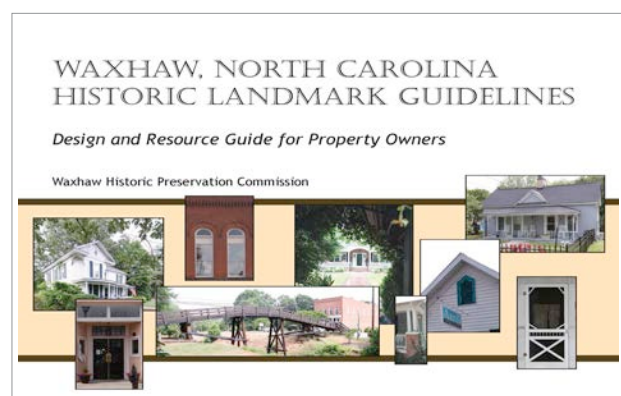
Waxhaw Historic District

The National Register for Historic Places Registration Form - Waxhaw Historic District provides a detailed description of the Waxhaw Historic District contributing and non-contributing buildings, architectural styles, and overall significance of the district. The registration form can be downloaded and viewed on the State of North Carolina's Historic Preservation Office's website listing National Register of Historic Places in North Carolina.

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form			
<small>This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.</small>			
1. Name of Property			
historic name <u>Waxhaw Historic District</u>			
other names/site number _____			
2. Location			
portions of Main, Broad, Church, Broom, Providence			
street & number <u>Old Providence, Brevard & McKibben streets</u> N/A for publication			
city, town <u>Waxhaw</u> N/A for publication			
state <u>North Carolina</u> code <u>NC</u> county <u>Union</u> code <u>179</u> zip code <u>28173</u>			
3. Classification			
Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<u>93</u>	<u>23</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> objects
		<u>97</u>	<u>25</u> Total
Name of related multiple property listing: <u>N/A</u>		Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register <u>0</u>	

Historic Landmark Guidelines

Although not fully implemented by the Town, the guidelines provide insight for property owners that desire to restore, rehabilitate and repair historic structures in a manner that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the treatment of Historic Properties.



State and Federal Historic Tax Credits

The North Carolina General Assembly recently reinstated the state's Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit Investment Program as recorded in Chapter 105 of the General Statutes. The new state historic tax credits will be in place through January 1, 2020.

For a taxpayer that is allowed a federal income tax credit under Section 47 of the Code for making qualified rehabilitation expenditures for a certified historic structure located in North Carolina, the following base amounts are allowed for the state tax credit:

INCOME-PRODUCING PROPERTIES

- 15% credit up to \$10 million
- 10% credit up to \$20 million

RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

- 15% credit (capped at \$22,500 per project)

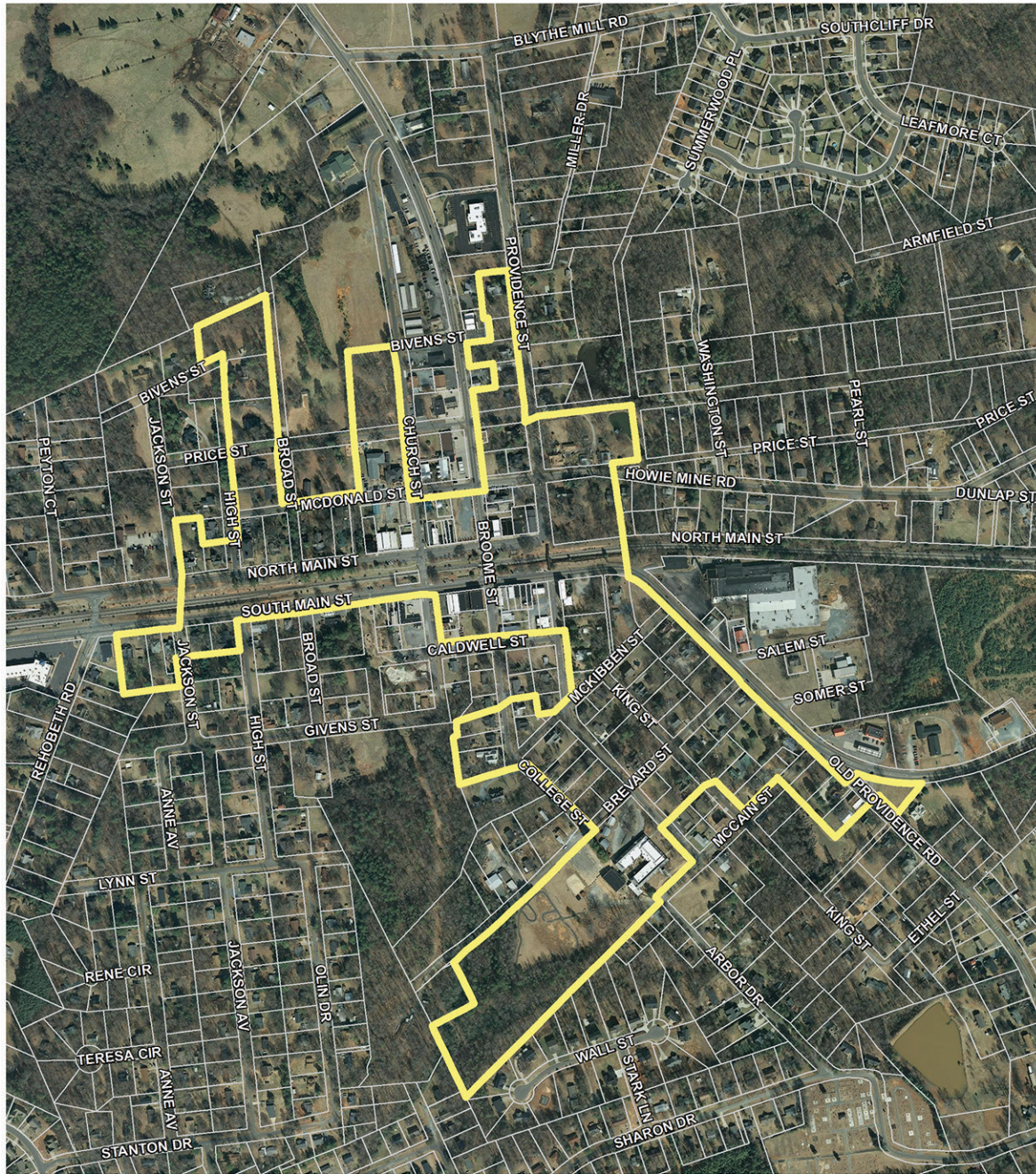
The federal income tax credit returns 20 percent of the cost of rehabilitating historic buildings to owners as federal income tax credit. Qualifying properties must be individually placed on the National Register of Historic places or located within a National Register District. A 10 percent tax credit is offered for non-historic buildings placed in service before 1936 and rehabilitated for non-residential use.

The other avenue for tax incentives is the 50 percent deferral of property tax for local landmarks as long as the property's important historic features are maintained. In Waxhaw, the Historic Preservation Commission, in partnership with the Town Board and the Department of Cultural Resources, work together to recommend the designation of local landmarks. Following a recommendation, the Town Board holds a public hearing and upon favorable consideration, adopts an ordinance designating the landmark. Most state and federal redevelopment related grants require designation of properties in one of the above ways to qualify for the funding.


▼ Table 2.3 Completed Historic Tax Credit Projects in Waxhaw
(Source: State Historic Preservation Office)

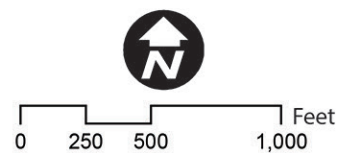
Income-Producing Buildings	Address	Date	Cost
A.W. Heath Company Building	101 West South Main Street	5/2/1995	\$230,724.00
Wagons & Buggies Building (109 Building)	109 West South Main Street	12/15/1995	\$20,792.00
Hardware Building	105 West South Main Street	12/30/1996	\$28,000.00
Old Bank Building	108 East South Main Street	11/1/2007	\$149,900.00
Residential Structure	Address	Date	Cost
George McCain House	515 King Street	2/22/2010	\$299,900.00

WAXHAW NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT



Waxhaw National Register Historic District

-  National Register District Boundary
-  Tax Parcels



▲ Figure 2.21 Waxhaw National Register Historic District

2.8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Promote Historic Preservation

Promote the preservation and enhancement of the town's historic resources through partnerships and incentives.

1. Continue to provide town-led support to the Historic Preservation Commission to administer a work program developed with town leadership and staff.
2. Encourage property owners to utilize the town's Historic Landmark Guidelines when considering rehabilitation of historic properties.
3. Conduct a survey of historic properties within and around the National Register district boundary to identify if there are any boundary adjustments that may be made to expand opportunities for property owners to receive historic tax credits.
4. Conduct a town-wide survey to identify individual historic properties that may qualify for individual listing on the National Register or be candidates for historic landmark status.
5. Pursue discussion with property owners of potential Historic Landmark Properties and other historic properties that may not have considered historic preservation and landmarking as an option.
6. Ensure online resources are readily available, identifying a clear process and associated tools for completing historic renovations and rehabilitation projects.

B. Historic Preservation as an Economic Development Tool

The town will seek to identify economic development opportunities that enhance and preserve the town's historic resources.

1. Continue to support the professional management of the downtown and the small town main street program organization, activities and work program as it pursues economic development opportunities and programs within the town's historic district.

2. Promote the reuse of historic commercial properties in manner that maintains the architectural significance of the building being considered for rehabilitation, while creating opportunities for a mix of uses within the building such as upper floor residential and ground floor retail storefront uses.
3. Include historic preservation as an economic development tool in the development of a focused strategy for economic development in Waxhaw, creating a clear process for undertaking major historic rehabilitation and reuse projects such as the Rodman-Heath Mill.
4. Develop an action plan in partnership with Union County to upgrade the downtown water and sewer infrastructure to encourage the continued revitalization of historic properties and business development in downtown.
5. Consider providing incentives to property owners who rehabilitate and renovate their properties utilizing the town's Historic Landmark Guidelines.
6. Inform and encourage property owners to leverage identified historic tax credits when considering rehabilitation projects within the historic district.
7. Encourage property owners to take advantage of town-funded façade grants to undertake minor rehabilitation and maintenance projects on historic buildings in conformance with the town's Historic Landmark Guidelines.
8. Explore the creation of a private preservation and economic development based non-profit organization to further develop incentive packages for the continued preservation and enhancement of downtown and the historic district.

C. Maintaining Historic Resources

The town will engage property owners within the historic district to develop a voluntary plan for maintaining existing historic architectural resources and landmarks that contribute to Waxhaw's distinctive character and sense of place.

1. Develop resources and incentives, financial or otherwise, to support property owners in their efforts to maintain and renovate historic structures and sites in a manner that is consistent with the town's Historic Landmark Guidelines.

2. Revisit and update the recently adopted form based code for the downtown as the new town-wide development ordinance is prepared to ensure adequate provisions are in place to preserve, enhance and maintain contributing historic structures and properties within and adjacent to the historic district.
3. Develop a comprehensive public outreach program, materials and resources for owners of historic properties to explain the importance of maintaining historic properties within the district, maintenance techniques, and hold workshops to provide this information on a regular and targeted basis.
4. Adopt a policy that requires the town to assess the impact of its construction projects and other capital investments on historic properties.
5. Update existing historic properties inventory, making it readily available online with a geographic component for quickly identifying the location and basic information regarding contributing structures and properties within the historic district.
6. Work with local and state historic preservation organizations to identify threatened historic properties and develop plans for preserving them.
7. As contributing structures are renovated, altered, or demolished, the historic district inventory should be updated to ensure that the inventory is accurate and reflects existing conditions.
8. Monitor the deterioration of buildings within the historic district and note such changes in periodic updates to the historic district inventory.





2.9 CULTURAL RESOURCES

2.9.1 OVERVIEW

Many of the Town's important characteristics are found in its range of cultural resources. The Town's treasured heritage is celebrated through festivals and events, museums, historic architecture, a growing arts community and a proud citizenry. While the Town's cultural resources are widely appreciated, many opportunities exist to enhance its existing resources, while increasing awareness of its cultural resources throughout the community, region and the Carolina's.

Events and Festivals

The Town holds numerous events and festivals throughout the year that highlight many cultural resources. Events and festivals that focus on cultural resources include Art Kaleidoscope (formerly known as Spring Fest), Autumn Treasures, special events at the Military Wall of Honor, First Friday Main Street events, July 4th Parade, Christmas Parade and many others. The Town's Events Division is responsible for the planning, coordination, and execution of all town-sponsored festivals and events, functioning as a resource for individuals or organizations seeking to hold an event within the town limits. The Events Division coordinates street closures, requests for public services, and other special permissions that may need to be obtained from the Town.

Public Library

The Waxhaw Branch Library of the Union County Public Library System is located adjacent to downtown on South Providence Street. The facility, while centrally located in the heart of Waxhaw, lacks adequate space to meet the community's needs. A strong desire exists to work on developing a new facility; however, funding constraints make it difficult to plan for a new facility location and the existing site offers no opportunity for expansion at the South Providence Street location.

Town Iconography

The Town has many structures in town that serve as symbols of the community's heritage. Some of the more identifiable icons include the railroad pedestrian bridge, water tower, Rodman-Heath Mill, Belk Building. The identified icons help make-up the Town's cultural identity.

Area Museums

The museums in and around town include the Museum of the Waxhaws, Museum of the Alphabet, the Mexico-Cardenas Museum, JAARS and others. The museums provide an organized glimpse into the Town's history and the numerous historic events and figures that helped shape Waxhaw.

Historic Architecture

The Town's historic architecture greatly contributes to the understanding of the Town's cultural resources. Like the iconography, the architecture of the structures in town help residents and visitors identify elements of the past that helped make Waxhaw what it is today. The craftsmanship exhibited in the architecture and construction of the downtown buildings provides a window into the dedicated laborers that helped build downtown Waxhaw - one of the most important features in Waxhaw today.

Local Arts

In Waxhaw, the local arts community is growing. Local artists have come together to form the Waxhaw Arts Council. The arts in Waxhaw are celebrated in and around downtown and throughout the community with displays in private galleries and in public buildings and spaces. Many of those displays are coordinated through the town's public art plan. In addition, under Waxhaw's Entrepreneur Program, an incubator exists to help new artists get established and collaborate with other like minded individuals.

Heritage Based Groups, Churches & Non-profit Organizations

Waxhaw is also home to numerous churches, non-profits and heritage based groups that have all played important roles in the development of the Town. These local groups provide needed services within the community at-large and within the immediate region.

2.9.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Expanding the Reach of Cultural Resources and Programming

The town will seek to expand community knowledge of cultural resources, programs and activities in town, while also expanding the reach of cultural programming in the community.

1. Develop an inventory and community guide for cultural resources, organizations and events that can be both published and housed as a digital resource on the town's website.
2. Explore opportunities to coordinate cultural promotions with neighboring communities and outside groups.
3. Work with outside groups such as the YMCA and similar organizations to incorporate cultural displays into their facilities and utilize their space for programming, as needed.

4. Identify opportunities to incorporate a broader spectrum of cultural programming into town sponsored events.
5. Seek opportunities to expand cultural programming and events outside of downtown.
6. Provide support and joint sponsorship for outside cultural organizations who hold events in town through promotion assistance and general event support from the town's public works, police, and fire department as needed.
7. Improve accessibility to information regarding JAARS through a new facility in-town or through rotating displays in a convenient location in the downtown.
8. Develop a downtown kiosk display that is oriented for pedestrians to learn more about JAARS and other historic sites and properties in and around Waxhaw.
9. Continue to develop sites for public art installations throughout town (indoor and outdoor) in Town facilities, schools, new YMCA, hospital, greenway trail heads, and neighborhood clubhouse facilities.

B. Cultural Facilities

The town will support cultural events and organizations by providing and coordinating facilities that support cultural programming and displays.

1. Conduct an inventory and analysis of both public and private facilities that are used for cultural programming, events and support services to determine the current utilization and condition of the spaces and assist with determining future needs.
2. Identify facilities owned by public agencies and the private sector that offer opportunities to expand opportunities the amount of available space for cultural programs.
3. Continue to explore opportunities with the County to plan for a new regional library facility to meet the needs of a growing population in Waxhaw and the region that combines and incorporates other cultural resources, including group meeting rooms, display and demonstration spaces.
4. Consider options to relocate or expand the JAARS museum facilities to a prominent location in town, expanding business growth opportunity for Waxhaw, while raising the awareness and appreciation of the influence JAARS has had on the town and around the world.

C. Local Art Community

The town supports the arts as an integral part of the cultural fabric of the community and a key segment of the local placed based economy.

1. Coordinate the participation of local artists, artisans and craft makers with cultural events in the community.
2. Identify complementary arts and cultural resources and events that can benefit from joint marketing.
3. Develop a local public appreciation campaign in support of the local arts community.
4. Explore opportunities for expanded display and gallery space to promote sales and viewing of local artists' work.
5. Explore opportunities to develop the Old Providence School as an artist incubator or "artists' colony" to enhance the surrounding neighborhood and connection with downtown.

D. Performing Arts

The town will seek partnerships to develop performing arts programming, performance space and opportunities to meet the needs of the growing population.

1. Work with the Museum of the Waxhaw's to redevelop the outdoor amphitheater.
2. Evaluate the need for developing a regional performing arts venue in town to accommodate larger productions.
3. Collaborate with the schools to expand opportunities for holding performances in the community.
4. Work with the Arts Council, local performing arts' groups and others for promotions, performance spaces, and general resources.





WAXHAW MARVIN

RD

QUELLIN

DR

3.1 OVERVIEW

The Comprehensive Plan Update process has produced a document that is intended to guide the actions of the Town's elected and appointed officials and staff, as well as other stakeholders in the community, as they move forward to achieve the vision established by the plan. This is a plan of action, with a significant number of recommendations identified to assist the community in achieving those actions.

3.2 IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

While all of the plans recommendations have an inherent level of importance, a joint work session between the Town Board, the Planning Board and the Steering Committee, was held to identity the highest priority recommendations as being the most important to undertake at the outset of the implementation process. The top priorities are listed below by the corresponding comprehensive plan element.

Land Use & Growth Management

Taken as a whole, the recommendations found in (A) Focused Urban Growth, (B) Orderly Expansion, and (C) Coordinated Growth Management that are set forth in the Land Use & Growth Management section of the plan should be considered as the highest priority for implementation. Some of these recommendations are currently underway as the town undertakes an update to its land use regulations. As that process moves forward, it will be critical to implement the remaining recommendations stated above to ensure that the town's regulatory framework can function as intended and operate in the most beneficial environment possible.

Transportation

- A1 - Prioritize the funding and completion of planned capacity improvements on the NC-16 corridor and the construction of Waxhaw Parkway from NC-16 to NC-75.
- A3 - Identify opportunities to improve the function of major roadways through the implementation of targeted upgrades, such as intersection signalization, turn lane installation, access management changes and similar projects that can be funded more easily than major widening projects.
- C3 - Coordinate major transportation improvements with NCDOT, Union County and neighboring municipalities, particularly with regard to projects that impact multiple jurisdictions.
- D1 - Continue efforts to secure funding for planned road improvement and construction projects through the NCDOT Strategic Transportation Investment process.
- D2 - Seek guidance from NCDOT on the feasibility of the town funding the preparation of construction plans and environmental studies for priority transportation improvement projects to improve the possibility of receiving funding for critical transportation enhancements.

Economic Development

- A1 - Identify Union County Economic Development as the chief point of contact for business process and economic development inquiries in Waxhaw to maintain a unified and efficient response to potential investors.
- A2 - Recognize the Town Manager as the key economic development official to serve as the primary liaison with the County EDC, representing Waxhaw during the recruitment and retention process with the County EDC as the lead.
- C2 - Develop economic plans and strategies that support the town's growth sector plan, aligning infrastructure and business site improvements in areas that are compatible with the identified growth sector and surrounding land uses.
- D4 - Develop an action plan in partnership with the County to upgrade the downtown water and sewer infrastructure to encourage the continued revitalization and improvement of business development in downtown.

Municipal Services & Infrastructure

- B1 - Develop a joint wastewater master plan with Union County to guide infrastructure investments within the planning area, with a particular emphasis on extending major water and sewer lines within the intended growth sector, long term planning for extending service into the controlled growth sector, and limiting utility extensions into the restricted growth sector (Waxhaw Creek Basin).
- B5 - Partner with Union County Public Works to accelerate the funding of downtown utility infrastructure improvements.

Parks & Recreation

- D2 - Collaborate with the county to identify, plan, fund and construct parks and recreation facilities where facilities accomplish shared goals and meet regional demands.

3.3 MONITORING AND UPDATING THE PLAN

It is important to establish a schedule and strategies for the review and periodic update of the plan as it moves from concept to implementation. Advancement strategies will help the Town ensure the plan remains relevant and adaptable to the Town's future needs. The advancement strategies also include recommendations for monitoring progress on implementation that may result in updates to the Comprehensive Plan.

Ongoing Review

During the day-to-day administrative activities carried out by the town staff, the staff may become aware of needed changes in the planning document as it relates to the practical application of the

recommendations and policies. If the needed updates are minor and do not necessitate an immediate suggested change to town policy, the updates can be carried forward through the public hearing process for the Planning Board and Town Board of Commissioners to consider adopting the updates.

Annual Updating

In addition to the potential need for periodic updates, the Town Board of Commissioners and the Planning Board should meet annually during a joint meeting to review the comprehensive plan policies, evaluating the overall effectiveness and relevance of the plan. This annual joint meeting will help ensure the Town Board and the Planning Board are working together on advancing the plan.

Major 5-year Update

A major update of the plan should coincide with the completion and release of the 2020 Census. At this time, the population figures should be updated and the overall future land use and growth strategy should be reevaluated. The new development ordinance will have been in effect for several years as well, which will present an opportunity for the Town to evaluate the effectiveness of the comprehensive plan and new ordinance.

▼ Figure 3.1 Comprehensive Plan Update Cycle





Town of Waxhaw
Comprehensive Plan



04



4.1 STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARIES

The following pages include notes from Steering Committee meetings as follows:

January 15, 2015

March 5, 2015

March 26, 2015

April 30, 2015

May 26, 2015

June 29, 2015

July 16, 2015

July 27, 2015

August 12, 2015

August 26, 2015

September 10, 2015

September 22, 2015

November 12, 2015

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee Kickoff
Meeting Notes
January 15, 2015**

Committee Member Attendance

Amina Lee, Arthur O'Donnell, Bonnie Rusinko, Chris Plate', David Godfrey (Chairman), Don Fisher, Earl Cook, Fred Burrell, Guyton James, Lawrence Karp, Terry Settle, Tony Spellings

Introduction

The meeting was called to order promptly at **6:00 pm**. The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee Chairman, David Godfrey, welcomed everyone and introduced the consultant team. After a few housekeeping items, the chairman turned the meeting over to Jason Epley of Benchmark Planning. Jason introduced the consultant team including Chad Meadows of CodeWright. Each of the Steering Committee members introduced themselves.

Project Purpose

The consultant team presented the primary purposes of the comprehensive plan update. The update will address the following main objectives:

- Community vision
- Update to the future land use map
- Incorporate any changes to development patterns since 2009
- Incorporate the findings, goals and strategies from recently adopted plans/and planning efforts
- Identify and address any inconsistencies and similarities among recently adopted plans
- Coordinate and prioritize implementation

Planning Process

The process to update the comprehensive plan will be 10 months. The first major step in the process is background research including the review of adopted plans and the future land use map. After this research and review with input from the steering committee, the first public workshop will be conducted in April. Based on this public feedback, the team will begin preparing the working draft of the Plan. The first working draft will be reviewed with the Committee prior to a second public workshop and joint meeting of the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners proposed in August. This additional public input will lead the finalization and adoption of the Plan in October.

Overview of Existing Plans

The town has completed extensive small area and neighborhood planning projects since the adoption of the comprehensive plan in 2009. The consultant team discussed the good work that has been completed and

encouraged the committee to review these plans prior the next steering committee meeting February. The Committee will receive an email with a link to a folder that will contain all of these plans clearly named to assist with access and review.

Public Engagement

Public engagement will occur throughout the project through the steering committee, a project website, public workshops, and plan adoption meetings. The project website will allow 24/7 access to project information and input for any citizens that have questions or cannot attend a public meetings. The consultant team will work with the committee at the February workshop to begin making plans for a public meeting in April. By coordinating meeting logistics early, residents of Waxhaw will have more time to learn about the meeting and the comprehensive plan update process.

Committee Meeting Schedule

The Steering Committee is integral to the formulation of the Plan update. The Committee will discuss the plans for public engagement at the February meeting as well as a review of existing plans. The Committee's March meeting will focus on a review of the background research. After the workshop meeting in April, the Committee will have two meetings to review the draft in June and July.

General Steering Committee Comments

- Important to develop a vision of Waxhaw that is big picture, and representative of a holistic view of Waxhaw.
- Important to take a look at Planning Board and Commission meeting minutes as part of the background research.
- A community tour by the consultant team was suggested as part of the background research.
- The current timeframe/horizon of the existing comprehensive plan is 2030. The update will include a framework of goals and strategies that are organized by time frame – from short-term to long-term.
- In relationship to adopted plans, communities that experience more rapid growth and development typically need to update plans more frequently to address the needs and demands of a changing development environment.
- County plans and regional plans impacting Waxhaw will be considered during the background research.
- It is important to provide well-advertised opportunities for public input to help build public support for the plan to ensure it is representative of Waxhaw for years to come.
- The current planning boundary from the comprehensive plan and future land use map should be reexamined as part of the process to ensure potential growth areas adjacent to Waxhaw are being included.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:52pm.

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee Meeting
*Rescheduled From February 19, 2015***

**Meeting Notes
March 5, 2015**

Committee Member Attendance

Arthur O'Donnell, David Godfrey (Chairman), Don Fisher, Earl Cook, Fred Burrell, Guyton James, Lawrence Karp, Terry Settle. Not able to attend: Tony Spellings, Amina Lee, Chris Plate', Bonnie Rusinko

Introduction

The meeting was called to order promptly at **6:00 pm**. Town Commissioner Steve Maher opened the meeting with some information from the Town Board regarding what and why the Board sees this Committee and the Comprehensive Plan as a critical part of the efforts currently underway by the Board. The presentation included a demographic summary, economic development issues and overall Town responsibilities and priorities.

Planning Process Update

The consultant team presented an update stating the project is on schedule. The team reinforced the role of the committee in reviewing information, providing guidance on public engagement and encouraging participation at the public meetings, and providing input on the draft once prepared.

Overview of Existing Plans

The consultant team gave a brief overview of the existing plan review process. The team is working on gathering the information to fill out the information from the existing plans tables that include date adopted and if the goal/strategy was completed. During its initial existing plan review, the team has identified several key issues listed below that appear to be important topics to cover at the public meetings in May. The committee discussed these issues in detail.

- Prioritization of Needs (from adopted plans)
 - Allocation of resources
 - Capital Improvement Planning
- Transportation / Traffic Congestion on NC 16
- Utility / Infrastructure Constraints
- Development Process / Land Use Regulation
- Future Land Use Map

Committee Discussion:

- Ensure we are in sync with Board of Commissioners on the prioritization of needs as the project moves forward beyond the public meetings
- Ensure the transportation discussion includes all routes (not just NC 16)
- Infrastructure includes all public services (schools, utilities, etc)
- Look at the tax base and sources of revenue
- Council of Governments is currently working with Town on Capital Improvement Planning & Budgeting
- Maintain good communication with the Board. David Godfrey explained he is serving as the liaison to ensure that channel is open.

Study Area Discussion

In response to the committee suggestion from the first meeting to examine the expansion of the study area from the adopted 2009 plan, the consultant team reviewed areas around Waxhaw and presented two alternatives for discussion. After discussion, the committee recommended the study boundary should extend southward to Waxhaw Creek similar to Alternate 1.

Public Engagement

The committee reviewed the stakeholder meeting dates and public meeting dates. The committee reviewed the various stakeholder/focus group categories and discussed who might need to be included in each of these. The team explained that each of the committee members would be included in one of the stakeholder/focus group interviews. The committee agreed to forward any additional names and contact information for the groups to the team by the end of the day on March 6. The team will assemble the names and then coordinate with the Town Staff to setup the meeting times on March 16 and 26.

The team discussed the public meetings scheduled for May 4th, 5th and 7th. The public meetings on May 4th and 5th will include day (1:00 – 3:00) and evening sessions (6:30 – 8:30) that are identical to ensure that all residents have an opportunity to participate. The meetings will include a brief presentation followed by small group discussion and a prioritization exercise. The committee encouraged the team to keep the doors open through each day for anyone who could not make a specific meeting time. The Woman's Club is the reserved location at this time; although, some discussion was added to check the availability of holding one of the meetings at a school. The presentation on the 7th will be at the Police Department and will provide a summary of the information gathered on May 4th and 5th. Final plans will be made at the next committee meeting on March 26.

Meeting advertisement will begin shortly after the March 26 meeting and will be coordinated with the Town marketing coordinator. The project website will be launched in coordination with the meeting advertisement.

Committee Meeting Schedule

Important next dates:

March 16 – Stakeholder / Focus Group Interviews (attend group you are assigned to)

March 26 – Stakeholder / Focus Group Interviews (attend group you are assigned to)

March 26 – Steering Committee Meeting (Prepare for public meetings in May)

April 30 – Steering Committee to meet prior to public meetings (most likely a day meeting). Update committee on public response and coaching session for committee members

May 4 – Public Meeting – Woman’s Club (Reserved)

May 5 – Public Meeting Woman’s Club (Reserved)

May 7 – Public Meeting – Present Public Meeting Summary (Police Department Reserved)

May TBD – Steering Committee review of public meeting results

Meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm.

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee Meeting**

**Meeting Notes
March 26, 2015**

Committee Member Attendance

Arthur O'Donnell, David Godfrey (Chairman), Don Fisher, Earl Cook, Fred Burrell, Guyton James, Lawrence Karp, Terry Settle, Tony Spellings, Amina Lee, Bonnie Rusinko. Not able to attend: Chris Plate'

Introduction

The meeting was called to order at **6:00 pm**.

Planning Process Update

The consultant team presented an update on the project timeline, stating that it remained on schedule. The team reported that over 70 people participated in the focus group / stakeholder meetings held on March 16 and March 26. The team also reported on the presentation that was given to the Town Board on March 24.

Study Boundary Update

The team reported the Town Board had a favorable response to the committee's suggestion for expanding the study area boundary from the adopted 2009 plan. The team presented the map to the committee to receive final input. The committee agreed the expanded boundary for the study area was correct as displayed.

Public Engagement

The team reviewed the meeting schedule with the committee. The committee held a lengthy discussion concerning the timing of the public meetings (May 4th, 5th and 7th) and whether or not they were ready to move forward with the dates previously agreed upon at the March 5th meeting. After much debate, the committee appointed Fred Burrell, Don Fisher and Earl Cook as a subcommittee to prepare a public participation/marketing plan for the public meetings. The subcommittee was charged with working with Town Staff to develop the plan and report back on April 13th at a time to be determined by committee members in response to a poll to be sent out by the Town.

The committee as a whole reaffirmed the public meetings scheduled for May 4th, 5th and 7th. The committee determined the public meetings on May 4th and 5th should include morning sessions (10:00 am – 12:00 pm) and evening sessions (6:30 pm – 8:30 pm) that follow an identical program to ensure that all residents have an opportunity to participate. The meetings will include a brief presentation followed by small group discussion and a resource allocation / prioritization exercise. The final public meeting on May 7th will be at the Police Department and will provide a summary of the information gathered during the meetings on May 4th and 5th.

Committee Meeting Schedule

Important Upcoming Dates:

April 13 – Steering Committee Meeting (Receive report from Subcommittee on Public Participation Marketing)

April 30 – Steering Committee Meeting (Dry run of public meetings)

May 4 – Public Meetings at the Waxhaw Woman's Club (10am – 12pm and 6:30pm – 8:30pm)

May 5 – Public Meetings at the Waxhaw Woman’s Club (10am – 12pm and 6:30pm – 8:30pm)

May 7 – Public Meeting to Summarize Public Input (Police Department Community Room)

May TBD – Steering Committee Meeting (review of public input from May 4th and 5th)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 pm.

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee Meeting
Meeting Notes
April 30, 2015**

Attendance

David Godfrey (Chairman), Earl Cook, Don Fisher, Fred Burrell, Terry Settle, Bonnie Rusinko, Arthur O'Donnell, Guyton James, Chris Plate; **Not able to attend:** Tony Spellings, Amina Lee; **Town Staff:** Lori Oakley, Lisa McCarter, Chris Rice, Kurt White

Introduction

The meeting was called to order at **10:00 am**.

Public Engagement

- Public was notified by website, video, MindMixer, selfies (mostly emailed), flyers went on garbage cans, and Facebook
- Steering Committee will work a booth at the first Friday event

Workshop Format (for May 4 and 5 public meetings)

- Provide a planning context for Waxhaw including background information and trends
- Committee request to use the 15,000+ figure for population
- Four part exercise – small group discussions:
 - Transportation
 - Managing Growth
 - Land Use & Development
 - Prioritizing Investments

10 Topic Areas for Resource Allocation / Prioritization Exercise

-Public Safe/Health	-Environmental Protection
-Transportation	-Cultural Resources
-General Government	-Historic Preservation
-Utility Infrastructure	-Public Services
-Parks & Rec	-Economic Development

The Meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee Meeting**

**Meeting Notes
May 26, 2015**

Committee Member Attendance

David Godfrey (Chairman), Don Fisher, Earl Cook, Fred Burrell, Chris Plate', Lawrence Karp, Terry Settle, Amina Lee, Bonnie Rusinko. Not able to attend: Guyton James, Tony Spellings, Arthur O'Donnell

Introduction

The meeting was called to order at **2:00 pm**.

Planning Process Update

The consultant team presented an update on the project timeline, stating that it remained on schedule. The team provided a report on the committee and town staff efforts in getting the word out about the public meetings. Over 15,000 flyers were distributed and 95 people attended the public meetings. The team reviewed the web stats, which included over 790 unique pageviews at an average of 4 minutes on the site. Over 1,000 had viewed the video and over 140 submitted "This is my Waxhaw" forms. The team reported on other meetings/events as well as the various news media and home owner's associations that were notified.

Next Steps for Drafting the Plan

After a lengthy discussion concerning public input and the next steps to review the entire draft of the comprehensive plan at the end of July, the Steering Committee came to a consensus to hold additional meetings with the consultant team to review the draft comprehensive plan in sections as it is developed. The committee members noted that they would like to meet approximately every two weeks to review the plan sections as they are prepared in more manageable pieces rather than waiting to review the entire draft when completed. The Town Manager confirmed that the Steering Committee could ask the Board of Commissioner's at the follow-on Joint Meeting for approval of the additional meetings that budget would not be an issue. All members were polled and unanimously agreed to support reviewing the draft plan in sections as the draft sections are completed at meetings to be held approximately every two weeks.

Committee Meeting Schedule

The consultant team will develop a schedule based on approval from the Board of Commissioners allowing the Steering Committee to hold additional meetings. Town Staff will send the updated meeting schedule to the committee.

The meeting was adjourned for the Joint Meeting between the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the Board of Commissioners at 3:00 pm.

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee Meeting
Meeting Notes
June 29, 2015**

Committee Member Attendance

Don Fisher, Earl Cook, Fred Burrell, Terry Settle, Bonnie Rusinko, Guyton James, Arthur O'Donnell, Tony Spellings, Amina Lee;
Not able to attend: David Godfrey (Chairman), Chris Plate; Town Staff: Lori Oakley, Chris Rice, Lisa McCarter, Maxx Oliver

Introduction

The meeting was called to order at **10:00 am**.

Planning Process Update

The consultant team reviewed the project timeline and reminded the Committee of the future scheduled meetings by topic. The public review is currently scheduled for October and the final plan is targeted for the November – January timeframe. The importance of reviewing the materials prior to the meeting was emphasized. This is a critical preparation step and ensures good discussion during the meetings.

Meeting Topic #1 – Parks & Recreation

The committee discussed 9 topics related to Parks & Recreation.

P&R Discussion Topic #1: A significant investment is required to meet the demand for athletic fields / facilities and programs identified in the Parks and Recreation Plan and additional investments are needed to prepare for growth in demand in future years.

Discussion Points:

- Existing fields are operating at capacity, which limits growth opportunities.
- The Waxhaw Athletic Association has experienced a steady 20 percent annual enrollment increase.
- Structured athletic fields are unlikely to be included “organically” in new residential developments, leaving this responsibility to local governments.
- Opportunities may exist to partner with other local governments to develop a regional athletic facility.
- What role should the town take in this? What about location (generally)?
- Organized athletic programs draw participants from throughout the region, not just residents of the Town of Waxhaw.
- Develop new programs (i.e.: interest in Lacrosse) that are not currently offered in the community to attract a wider range of participants.
- Explore opportunities to develop facilities that can accommodate multiple types of sporting events, which will allow a greater degree of utilization and return on investment.
- Need to ensure gender equity in field development – equal investment in single purpose facilities for gender specific sports.
- Should programming and field development be centered primarily on youth sports? How are organized adult sports accommodated?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- As the Parks & Recreation plan points out, demand for park acreage and facilities is not being met given the Town’s growth in recent years.
- Look for potential partners to help fund a regional facility.
 - Will consider private-public partnerships since these types of partnerships have proven successful locally i.e. the Athletic Barn.
- There is a need to determine what is economically feasible as well as how these assets can be integrated with the Town’s Economic Development goals.
- If the town does not catch up to demand, then residents and visitors will go elsewhere, which is a potential economic loss.

- Similar to retail leakage, there is recreational leakage.
- Summary – the effort required to meet demand is too big a burden for the Town to fund immediately and on its own, it will require partnerships of various kinds. However, the Town does want to lead the effort.

P&R Discussion Topic #2: Park facilities should be distributed throughout the town in a spatially equitable manner; ensuring access for all of the town's residents. In addition to spatial distribution, accessibility also depends on the ability to travel safely to nearby park facilities.

Discussion Points:

- A significant number of the recently developed recreational facilities in town are located within planned neighborhoods. While this ensures good accessibility to residents of the neighborhood, most are private facilities owned and operated by HOAs, leaving nearby residents who live just outside of those neighborhood without access to these facilities.
- How should private recreation facilities in planned developments be accounted for when measuring the distribution of neighborhood parks?
- There is an implied service area radius of 1/2 mile for neighborhood parks in the Parks and Recreation Plan. Is this a reasonable distance and attainable with available funding?
- Develop a land acquisition plan to place neighborhood and community scale parks in strategic locations based on the recommended service area radii established in the Parks and Rec plan.
- Safe Routes to Parks –prioritize the development of sidewalks, bike paths and greenway connections from residential areas to parks, with a particular focus on connecting underserved or disconnected residential areas to public parks.

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Need to shift the focus to larger facilities verses smaller neighborhood parks. This is where the need is, this is where the demand is and the potential for economic development.
- Access and distribution are important (however, not the immediate priority)
- Consider ways of working with HOAs as a strategic partner. Some cities have partnered with HOAs to take over maintenance of recreational facilities in exchange for public use.
- Expressed interest to understand what comes out of the Economic Development meeting (scheduled for July 20th) in order to understand how parks and recreation fits in the economic development vision.
- Need is to finish the many incomplete P&R projects.
- Ensure the right standards are being used to gauge Waxhaw's recreational needs given the growth of the community.
- Need to articulate planning requirements as new areas develop (particular to the south of town) such as requiring developers to connect to existing trails and sidewalks and reserving land now for parks.

P&R Discussion Topic #3: Significant emphasis was placed on greenway trail development in recently adopted plans, as reinforced by public survey results which identified this type of facility as the top need in the community.

Discussion Points:

- Many of the recently developed neighborhoods in town contain walking trails that are private and owned by the neighborhood HOA.
- Should the town approach HOA boards with offers to accept dedication / transfer of properties containing existing trail infrastructure to expand the public trail network?
- Require the development and dedication of publicly accessible trails as outlined in the Carolina Thread Trail and Pedestrian plans in conjunction with new development.
- Prioritize sidewalk construction to close hard to fill gaps and make strategic connections in the trail network.
- Develop public access points in locations that place the maximum number of homes within ½ mile of a trailhead.
- Prioritize the acquisition of land for, and construction of, the Twelve Mile Creek section of the greenway, which serves as the backbone of the Town's overall trail network.
- Connection to Lancaster County provides the opportunity to develop a truly regional trail network.
- Grant funding from Carolina Thread Trail can be used to fund planning, design and construction of priority sections of greenway outline in the CTT plan.

- Establish annual targets for easement or land acquisition. Focus acquisition efforts on Twelve Mile Creek, while also seeking opportunities to acquire land / access to make other connections.
- Dedicate funding annually for trail construction in the budget.
- Design, fund and construct trailheads with parking and restroom facilities in strategic locations along the trail network. Co-locate with park facilities where possible.
- Plan for emergency access to the trail network.

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- The Town has recently established a program to measure park utilization. Barnes park is over capacity and Nesbit park fields are at capacity.
- Since the Town is leading the P&R efforts, then it should approach HOAs to expand connectivity (connectivity is the priority, not just simply open space). It should be expected that some HOAs/neighborhoods will not welcome this. They have legitimate concerns like ensuring ample parking. But there is good precedent in Waxhaw with negotiations with Millbridge with parking for the Thread Trail where it was initially rejected.
- The Twelve Mile Creek section of greenway is the backbone of the trail system.
- Need to promote connectivity through downtown and south of downtown.

P&R Discussion Topic #4: Organizations outside of the umbrella of town government can play a valuable role in filling the town's needs for parks and recreation facilities and programming.

Discussion Points:

- Union County – regional coordination, promotion, grants, regional facility development / funding.
- YMCA – Programming, aquatics, indoor facilities, health and wellness, afterschool programs.
- WAA – Athletic programming, maintenance funding.
- Union County Schools – Joint use of existing athletic fields and joint facility development. Collaborative funding for expanding field types offered for organized athletics. (note that most athletic fields in the area are located at schools that are outside of Waxhaw's town limits)
- Carolina Thread Trail – Partnership on land acquisition, trail construction funding, maintenance and upkeep, planning and engineering.
- Hospital – health and wellness programming.
- County Health Department – health and wellness programming.
- Homeowners Associations – dedication of existing facilities, joint use agreements.
- Churches – development of parks and athletic fields on underutilized land – joint use of fields.

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Need to seek out all options in regard to funding opportunities including grants. This may require a grant writer.
- Long history of partnerships – need to continue to develop with local organizations and businesses – i.e. the Town's first recreation fields were behind the Baptist Church
- Partnering with the realtor's association would be beneficial in identifying stakeholder concerns and assessing value in expanded facility offerings.
- Interested in land grants/land conservation as well as partnering with the County to seek out opportunities for easements.
- The Partners for Parks Committee (recently formed) will be seeking out partnerships with the community.

P&R Discussion Topic #5: Standards are needed to help guide the development of parks and recreational facilities in conjunction with new residential development.

Discussion Points:

- Make fee-in-lieu an option in the UDO - integrate changes in new UDO
- Land / facility dedication vs. fee-in-lieu. Who chooses?
- Ordinance standards are needed for the types of facilities to be developed.
- Need to require land dedication in areas with low levels of service vs. fee?
- Fee option should be based on land acquisition costs at rate of 11(17) acres per 1,000 residents.
- The resulting fee is equal to estimated future population of the development based on 11(17)/1,000 ratio.
- Should the town provide for bonus density or other development considerations for land dedication?
- Development in areas where trails have been identified in planning documents need to dedicate land and construct trail facilities (or town can accept land and construct the trail segment).

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Need to make UDO provisions and standards transparent (both requirements and the process), but also enforceable.
- Fee-in-lieu for park facilities should be considered.
- Density should be utilized as a tool in negotiations with new residential development.

P&R Discussion Topic #6: The town owns land on Waxhaw–Marvin Road that was initially purchased for the purpose of developing a community scale park. The future plan for the site is in some question now, but this is a valuable asset that the town needs to take advantage of.

Discussion Points:

- Proximity to Nesbitt Park is an issue for the equitable spatial distribution of community parks.
- Is there a potential opportunity for a land swap for a similarly sized tract in a location that will achieve better spatial distribution of community scale parks?
- The property may provide an opportunity to develop a park that is not focused on organized athletic facilities and programming.
- Potential for use for other services – public works, fire department, cultural facilities and programming in addition to, or instead of a park.

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Event center being planned for the Horton Property
- There was strong agreement that this is one of the Town’s most beautiful assets and careful consideration is required on how this land should be used in the future. While most agreed it would be best used as a park/open space, the committee sees this as another topic that would benefit from understanding the Economic Development goals and strategies of the town. Probably don’t know enough information at this time to make a good recommendation.
- There was some discussion and potential interest in the benefits of a land swap that could lead to opportunities for an even larger park south of town.

P&R Discussion Topic #7: There is significant pressure and a growing demand for the development of active recreational facilities, such as structured fields for organized athletics. Balancing this demand with the need to provide passive open space and facilities for activities other than organized athletics will be a challenge.

Discussion Points:

- Recent funding initiatives have been heavily weighted toward land acquisition for sports fields.

- Match the development of structured athletic fields / venues with equal funding toward the acquisition of land and development of passive recreational areas until the needs for passive recreational facilities is met.
- Provide equal funding for programs focused on organized athletics and providing opportunities for unstructured / alternate recreation.
- How can the town ensure that facilities are being developed to serve the broad range of age groups and ability levels of Waxhaw's residents?
- Can required open space set-asides in new developments fill the gap for unstructured recreational space?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Agreement that a balance is a priority and the Town must plan for both active recreational facilities as well as passive ones.
- The Town also needs to plan for an aging demographic and plan for shifts in facility demands.

P&R Discussion Topic #8: Planning for the acquisition of land (including timing and funding) for park facilities is necessary to ensure that sufficient funds are set aside to achieve the acreage goals outlined in the Parks and Recreation plan.

Discussion Points:

- Establish a dedicated capital reserve for land acquisition with an established, recurring, annual funding through property tax revenues.
- Capital funding should be sufficient to acquire at least enough land necessary for a neighborhood scale park every 3-5 years.
- The acquisition and development of community scale or larger parks could be financed by general obligation bond revenues given the scale of the investment necessary to acquire and develop these facilities.
- Should funding priorities be for neighborhood or community scale parks?
- Land acquisition strategies should focus on developing park facilities in underserved areas of town.
- The town should actively seek donations of land in areas that meet the spatial distribution goals of park facilities.
- While potentially valuable for other purposes, the donation or dedication of remnant lands (such as floodplains) should not be relied upon heavily to meet park acreage goals.

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- The current budget is leading the way and financing needs to start.
- General agreement that the Town should pursue grants; however, this is not the only tool available and other options will need to be considered.

P&R Discussion Topic #9: Developing the right mixture of programs is critical to ensuring that the town receives a good return on its investment in park facilities. Currently, programming of organized athletics is primarily the responsibility of outside organizations, while the town focuses its programming efforts on other recreational activities. Could such programs be better managed by the town?

Discussion Points:

- Question – if sports leagues remain private, what role should the Town have in developing and maintaining an extensive network of structured athletic fields?
- Moving the programming responsibility for organized athletics to the Town's Parks and Recreation Department would provide the opportunity for full time professional management of leagues and associated matters, such as field maintenance.
- The current fee structure could be supported for in-town residents with premiums for participation by residents outside of town.
- Town sports programming could provide opportunities for the subsidy of participation for youth from low resource households.

- Ability to supplement participation growth through tax revenues.
- Opportunity to expand the number of sports offered to residents – growing demand for organized sports other than those currently offered in the area.

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- No plan at this time to change how the athletics programs are run, although it has been discussed.
- The larger topic will be informed by the Economic Development plan. For example, if the Town wants to be a soccer tournament town, then that needs to be known in order to plan accordingly. This becomes a complex discussion since this becomes integrated with other planning components like infrastructure.
- What is the inventory for the larger areas?
- Does Waxhaw have potential for a hotel(s)?

No other topics were discussed as a group concerning Parks and Recreation.

Meeting Topic #2 – Cultural Resources

The committee discussed 8 topics related to Cultural Resources.

CR Discussion Topic #1: Promotion of Local Cultural Resources

Discussion Points:

- The town lacks a prominent and easily accessible listing of its cultural resources, organizations and events.
- Compile and maintain a comprehensive list of historic, cultural and other heritage based groups in Waxhaw.
- Develop page on the Town's website to post cultural and historical information about the Town.
- Develop portable displays related to the town's culture and history that can move around town and be displayed in public places, businesses, schools and similar locations.
- Explore developing a digital recording and/or video of "Listen and Remember" to increase access to the play.
- Organize a community history day to record an oral history of Waxhaw from long-time residents and make the recordings accessible online.
- Develop interactive walking and driving tours that expand upon web based and printed materials.
- Publish a weekly or monthly podcast / online video of cultural events and activities.
- Look for opportunities to coordinate cultural promotions with neighboring communities and outside groups.
- Work with outside groups such as the YMCA and similar organizations to incorporate cultural displays into their facilities and utilize their space for programming, as needed.

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- The oversight and management of cultural resources is being consolidated under the Parks & Recreation department.
- Waxhaw is a unique part of the County's cultural heritage.
- Desire to bring back Listen and Remember. High Schools used to be involved. Huge effort to coordinate with costumes, etc.
- Interest in a forum or studio for local artists. Horton Park may be a good site for a studio.
- The demand for events and festivals is growing including a covered event venue. There is growing interest in events for the arts – for example a quilt event.

CR Discussion Topic #2: Town Sponsored Events

Discussion Points:

- Identify opportunities to incorporate a broader spectrum of cultural programming into town sponsored events.
- Identify partners to develop themed events that focus on the town's diverse cultural heritage

- Don't only focus on downtown – take advantage of other town properties, partner with businesses, schools etc. to hold events in locations that are most appropriate for the theme, and to broaden the geographic scope of where events are held.
- Provide support and joint sponsorship for outside cultural organizations who hold events in town – promotion assistance, public works, police, fire, etc. to support event needs.

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Agree that events need to be more coordinated with local businesses and other organizations for cross-promotional purposes.
- Online communications including social media are helping with exposure/awareness.
- Interest in partnering with various stakeholders like JAARS to showcase the many interests and assets the Town encompasses.

CR Discussion Topic #3: Cultural Facility Needs

Discussion Points:

- An inventory and analysis of both public and private facilities that are used for cultural programming, events and support services should be conducted to determine the current utilization and condition of the spaces and to aid in determining future needs.
- A strong desire exists for the construction of a new library facility.
- There are limited funding resources
- The existing facility is too small to serve the community's needs
- There is no room for expansion at existing site
- A new library facility could be established that combines incorporates other cultural resources, including meeting rooms, display and demonstration spaces, exhibits, etc.
- The library is a regional facility that serves a population broader than just residents of the town. Should the new facility be of a regional scale in terms of size and programming? What about regional funding?
- What role can facilities owned by other public agencies or the private sector play in expanding the amount of space in town available for cultural programs?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Interest in a partnership with the County to fund a new library within the Town limits (not necessarily downtown). However does not appear to be a County interest to have a new county library in Waxhaw at the moment.
- Mentioned that the community center needs to have meeting rooms.

CR Discussion Topic #4: Public Art and Historic Displays

Discussion Points:

- Contributions from local cultural and arts organizations
- Continue support of the Beautification Committee to implement the Public Art Plan
- Installations throughout town (indoor and outdoor)
 - Schools
 - YMCA
 - Hospital
 - Town facilities
 - Thread Trail / greenways
 - Clubhouses facilities at various clubs in neighborhoods – HOAs

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Need to reinvigorate the Beautification Committee to implement the Public Art Plan as well as a campaign to educate the community about this effort.
- The art policy needs to be revised / rewritten.
- Policies need to be strengthened to be more inviting to local artists.
- Town currently reorganizing committees and functions. Comprehensive Plan needs to incorporate these changes into recommendations.

CR Discussion Topic #5: Local Arts and Crafts Community**Discussion Points:**

- Support the growth and operation of the art incubator. Is new / additional space needed?
- Explore opportunities for expanded display and gallery space to promote sales and viewing of local artists' work.
- What type of support is most appropriate for the Town to provide to the arts community? Funding, space, other?
- Coordination between the arts local community and the town in the promotion of events. Need to regularly include local artisans as part of community events and promote their work.
- Opportunity for adaptive reuse of the Old Providence School? Artist incubator? (Blannahassett Island – Marshall, NC). More opportunity for diverse artistic disciplines. Potential for neighborhood enhancement...creation of an "artists' colony" in the neighborhood?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Art incubator space has worked; however, a new or expanded artist incubator space is not identified – difficulty with finding a space.
- Economic Development work session will provide additional information for this topic.

CR Discussion Topic #6: Town Iconography / Sacred Places and Spaces**Discussion Points:**

- How should the town incorporate its sacred places and spaces into the overall culture (and cultural identity) of the town? Examples of these include:
 - Railroad Bridge
 - Water Tower
 - Rodman-Heath Mill
 - Belk Building
 - Others?
- Alphabets? How can this be incorporated into signage (public / private) to build on the town's connections to JAARS?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- The Mill is a major icon.
- No additional points raised.

CR Discussion Topic #7: Performing Arts**Discussion Points:**

- What is the status of the amphitheater?
- Is there a need or desire for a large performing arts venue in town (regional venue)?

- Need for a permanent outdoor performance space downtown?
- What role do the schools play in providing venues and programming?
- Collaboration between local performing arts groups for promotions, performance spaces, resources, etc. Arts Council as an umbrella organization to coordinate?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- News is pending on the status of the amphitheater.
- Belief that if there was a large performing arts venue there would be interest. The local schools have been the option to date.
- Currently, just small spaces in town that don't require lighting.

CR Discussion Topic #8: JAARS Museums

Discussion Points:

- Is there an opportunity to relocate the museums to a prominent location in town?
- Current location disperses visits – co-locating in town would consolidate trips and increase visibility (more opportunity for impulse visits).
- Opportunity to boost tourism in town and “cross-pollinate” to local businesses.
- An in-town location would provide better accessibility.
- If museums don't relocate, is there an opportunity to have rotating displays from the museums in town?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Appeal for including a location in town for JAARS since it is a unique institution and may not gain awareness otherwise. It was suggested that the McDonald house may be a good candidate or similar site.
- Kiosk downtown with information for visitors
- Marketing is critical.

The Meeting adjourned at 2:00 pm.

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee Meeting**

**Meeting Notes
July 16, 2015**

Committee Member Attendance

David Godfrey (Chairman), Don Fisher, Earl Cook, Fred Burrell, Chris Plate', Terry Settle, Bonnie Rusinko, Guyton James, Arthur O'Donnell. Not able to attend: Tony Spellings, Amina Lee

Introduction

The meeting was called to order at **2:00 pm**.

Planning Process Update

The consultant team presented an update on the project timeline, stating that it remained on schedule.

Meeting Topic #3 – Historic Preservation

The committee discussed 8 topics related to Historic Preservation as follows:

HP Discussion Topic #1: Historic preservation continues to be a priority, as expressed by residents who have participated during community planning meetings. While the 2009 Comprehensive Plan contained recommendations for historic preservation, with several that were implemented, recent plans have included very little specific guidance to continue moving forward with the preservation of important properties in town. Efforts by local residents and the town seem to have slowed down or completely stalled.

Discussion Points

- After the adoption of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan a series of actions were taken to implement the historic preservation recommendations.
 - A historic preservation commission (HPC) was appointed.
 - Historic district guidelines were developed, but not adopted due to opposition.
 - The HPC currently reviews historic landmark designations and any request for alterations/improvements -- issuing Certificates of Appropriateness to determine if alterations or improvements will maintain the important features that led to its designation.
 - The HPC currently reviews façade grant application requests, utilizing the historic district guidelines to review submissions.
- Historic Preservation was listed as two of the top four community priorities in the Downtown Waxhaw Vision Plan; however, the plan only contained one recommendation concerning historic preservation.
- What should the town's role be in the preservation of historic properties and landmarks that contribute to Waxhaw's character? Is it a priority?

- How far should efforts go to preserve historically significant properties? Do they all need to be in or near the National Register District (what about isolated individual historic properties)
- What roles should citizen groups/citizens play in historic preservation?
- Should property owners be responsible for preserving their homes if they significantly contribute to the integrity of the Waxhaw Historic District?
- Should a local non-profit preservation group be formed to lead preservation efforts?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Historic Preservation is important to the future of Waxhaw.
- What steps can be taken to that do not require government intervention and action?
- Education is an important role for town government to take, clearly communicating what is historic and what historic preservation encompasses.
- What should town do with properties it owns – should it be in the “real estate business”?
- Match developers interested in historic buildings with historic properties.

HP Discussion Topic #2: The Rodman-Heath Mill is often a focal point of discussion when residents talk about the future of downtown and preserving Waxhaw’s heritage. However, the building is not listed on the National Register and was not included in the Waxhaw Historic District nomination package (other than anecdotal discussions of its role in the town’s history) when the historic district was approved by the United States Department of the Interior.

Discussion Points

- How can the Town work with the property owner to not only reuse the building, but to also help preserve the historic architectural integrity of the Rodman-Heath Mill?
- Several tax incentives can be made available if the mill becomes listed on the National Register individually, as part of an expanded boundary to the Waxhaw Historic District, or as a designated local landmark.
- Should the Town pursue the nomination and designation of the Rodman-Heath building/property for the National Register of Historic Places or pursue an extension to the existing Waxhaw Historic District to include the mill?
- Should the mill be evaluated as a potential candidate for a local landmark designation?
- What other incentives should be considered in helping to preserve the Rodman-Heath Mill?
- Should the town play any role in the preservation of the mill?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Can the mill be designated as a landmark? Would a potential developer or current owner be interested in the tax breaks offered through the historic landmark’s program?
- Currently, a potential development project is being considered at the mill.

- The mill is iconic and an important piece of Waxhaw's history and important to consider preserving for Waxhaw's future.
- The town does not have the wherewithal to handle a complex redevelopment project that would involve a town-led role in restoring and rehabilitating the mill. Monetary and staff resources would be needed to orchestrate such a large scale project. How can the town move forward and lead verses waiting for things to happen? Direct correlation to economic development.

HP Discussion Topic #3: In addition to the Rodman-Heath Mill, other properties exist outside of the National Register District boundary that may also be contributing to the integrity of the Waxhaw Historic District.

Discussion Points

- Expansion of the National Register District boundary would make available tax incentive and grant opportunities to more historic property owners in Waxhaw.
- When the 2010 Local Historic District Boundary was proposed, it was an expansion of the established National Register Boundary, demonstrating that the area of historical significance (or community importance) was potentially larger than what had been previously defined. Do either one of those boundaries capture the full extent of the historic fabric of Waxhaw or is it something different (smaller or larger)?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Clearly define what is historic in Waxhaw. Is it the period of significance from the current Waxhaw Historic District (Currently, pre-1942).
- The committee did not view studying or changing the boundary a short-term priority for the plan (possibly a long-term strategy)
- A broad area within and immediately outside of Waxhaw should be evaluated in the future to ensure that scattered historic properties and sites are included in the community inventory. This broader review would not be focused on expanding the historic district, but focus on sites or structures that would not have been included in previous surveys.

HP Discussion Topic #4: The façade grant offered by the town focuses on the improvement of building façades in general. While, façade grants can help improve the appearance of a structure, the town could assist historic property owners by establishing a property maintenance grant that could serve as an incentive to encourage stabilization of historic properties, preventing them from becoming unsafe or falling into disrepair. The town could follow-up maintenance grants with façade grant assistance to help further enhance the buildings.

Discussion Points

- Would property owners take advantage of this property maintenance grant if provided the opportunity?
- Would this be an effective way to encourage preservation (offering incentives vs. regulatory approach)?

- Should historic easements be placed on properties as part of the conditional grant approval process to ensure the façade and other exterior improvements are maintained.

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Facade grants, maintenance grants, educational opportunities and other similar efforts would be worth considering in the future, incentivizing the preservation of historic properties in town.
- Fire suppression was a concern, especially for the downtown portions of the historic district.
- One potential solution to the fire protection issues would be for the town to incentivize the installation of sprinkler systems in the downtown area.

HP Discussion Topic #5: The Town owns several downtown properties that are contributing to the Waxhaw Historic District. The properties include the Niven-Price Building, The Meeting Place, Water Tower, and the McDonald House.

Discussion Points

- Should the town work toward designating these properties as local landmarks?
- Should the town consider establishing restrictive covenants to require future owners to maintain the architecturally significant features/elements of the building.
- Are there other properties the town should consider purchasing for historic preservation purposes?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Staff time and resources needed to work on actions the town can take to help preserve these properties now and in the future (i.e. covenants, if a historic property is sold).
- Town continuing to work on redeveloping the McDonald House, but no future use is identified.
- Should the town be in the landlord business? Economic development element should consider the property ownership/landlord role as a topic.

HP Discussion Topic #6: Currently, the town does not have an effective mechanism in place to prevent contributing structures in the National Register District from being demolished unless the structure is a designated a Historic Landmark.

Discussion Points

- Consider establishing a revolving loan fund or a historic preservation trust for use in preserving and protecting threatened historic properties.
- Consider granting the HPC the authority to delay the demolition of contributing structures to the extent allowed by statute in order to provide interested parties with the ability to negotiate for the purchase (or relocation) of the structure from the owner seeking to demolish it.
- Consider adopting a local historic district boundary to enforce the demolition by neglect ordinance to for contributing structures in the National Register District to prevent property owners from allowing these properties to fall into disrepair. This tool will help the town be proactive in

maintaining the integrity of the historic district. This would not be the first path to ameliorating the decline and disrepair of historic properties; it will allow the town to step in when a severe course of action is needed.

- Consider the establishment of historic preservation easements in connection with façade grants or partner with a local preservation group to purchase those easements.

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Explore revolving loan fund – need for a separate group (a non-profit - not town-led) to be responsible.
- The Town has provisions in the town code to address issues with historic structures that are in disrepair / unsafe.
- Provisions in Section 19 of the UDO address demolition by neglect for historic structures but the regulation is not applied since there is not a local historic zoning overlay in place.

HP Discussion Topic #7: One of the most important steps in historic preservation is developing and maintaining a current and accurate accounting of the town’s historic architectural resources and contributing properties. One town resident has maintained a listing of current properties and notes on buildings that have been demolished over time, giving the town a substantial base of information with which it can further develop this potential resource.

Discussion Points

- An accessible online inventory will help establish a baseline of contributing structures and assets.
- The online inventory, if kept up-to-date can assist in:
 - Monitoring improvements or alterations that are made to contributing structures
 - Monitoring the condition of historic properties
 - Identify potential maintenance problems early
- The inventory can also include:
 - Historical information and facts
 - Photographs (historic and current)
 - Interactive map that displays key information about the property

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- A database is maintained by staff, but has not been readily made available to the general public.
- A need exists for a more robust database with photographs and other resources if town staff or other resources can be made available. Are there ways this can be accomplished without hiring new staff (i.e. interns)?

HP Discussion Topic #8: One of the most important steps in historic preservation is developing and maintaining a current and accurate accounting of the town’s historic architectural resources and

contributing properties. One town resident has maintained a listing of current properties and notes on buildings that have been demolished over time, giving the town a substantial base of information with which it can further develop this potential resource.

Discussion Points

- Continue to develop educational materials, resources and workshops
 - Hold regular workshops with experts in various facets of historic preservation to provide property owners with opportunities to educate themselves about the benefits and process of preserving historic structures.
 - Provide digitally accessible online materials, videos of workshops, etc.
- Are there other ways that educational opportunities can be expanded?
- Who are potential partners in providing educational outreach?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- The town should continue and expand upon educational efforts where resources are available.

Meeting Topic #4 – Natural and Environmental Resources

The committee discussed 5 topics related to Natural and Environmental Resources as follows:

NER Discussion Topic #1: Stormwater / Water Quality

Discussion Points

- Since Waxhaw is not a Phase II permit holder, it is not required to operate a separate stormwater utility to maintain stormwater conveyances that channel water from town streets and there is no local responsibility for the town to monitor the maintenance of private stormwater facilities
- Stormwater permitting (with the exception of the review of stormwater structures and conveyances in town rights-of-way) is handled by NCDENR for development projects in Waxhaw.
- It is likely that Waxhaw will eventually be required to obtain a Phase II stormwater permit, establish a separate stormwater utility and assume responsibility for reviewing and permitting all stormwater related infrastructure in town.
- Stormwater infrastructure is primarily intended to control the **quality** of water entering streams. The **quantity** of water released from impervious surfaces that is controlled by stormwater structures is a secondary benefit, but not the primary intent of most stormwater infrastructure.
- Preserving water quality in local streams, particularly Twelve Mile Creek, is critical to ensuring the town's ability to continue growing since significant impairment of local waterways could lead to additional development restrictions or limits on discharges from the Twelve Mile Creek wastewater treatment plant.

- Should the town preemptively establish a stormwater utility to begin proactive management of local stormwater infrastructure?
- Such utilities are typically funded by fees based on the amount of impervious surface on a property.
- Consider developing “regionalized” stormwater control infrastructure that could be developed proactively in areas that are primed for growth to serve multiple properties.
- Private stormwater facilities are frequently neglected by their owners leading to poor function. Should the town take an active role in ensuring the maintenance of such facilities prior to a mandate as part of a Phase II permit? What is the appropriate level of involvement?
- While “wet pond” stormwater control structures are the most common method of dealing with runoff, they are not necessarily the most effective. Should the town actively encourage or require the use of other types of stormwater controls, such as rain gardens or constructed wetlands?
- Green roofs, pervious pavement and similar features can significantly reduce stormwater runoff. Should the town actively encourage or require the use of such features to limit runoff from buildings and parking areas?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- The town should explore taking over the stormwater permitting/control and enforcement. The town managed a local stormwater program in the past.
- Water quality is major concern – especially related to protecting 12-Mile Creek
- Town is currently examining and assessing their overall stormwater needs.
- Need to examine impervious surface issues.
- The land use topic should address recommendations for issues related to regulation in areas that are outside of town, but surrounded by land inside of the town limits.

NER Discussion Topic #2: Tree Preservation

Discussion Points

- Current tree preservation and protection regulations apply primarily to land development activities and to nonresidential properties post-construction.
- Are current tree preservation and protection regulations achieving the community’s goals?
- Are additional regulations needed that would apply to developed residential properties?
- Current regulations require the preservation of trees on development sites that exceed 8” in caliper for overstory trees and 4” in caliper for understory trees in areas that are not proposed for building, parking and similar land disturbing activities.
- Are the current size thresholds reasonable?
- An incentive is currently granted for the preservation of trees with a diameter of 36” or greater in conjunction with nonresidential development.

- Should a similar incentive be granted for residential development?
- Is the threshold of required preservation of 36" diameter trees too high of a threshold?
- What could the town do to incentivize the preservation of trees on developed residential properties instead of regulating the cutting of trees?
- If the town were to regulate the cutting of trees on residential properties, what would be a reasonable threshold in terms of diameter for the basis of regulations?
- Should the town provide technical assistance to property owners to assist in the preservation of "heritage" trees? What about financial assistance or incentives?
- Should the town actively encourage or incentivize the planting of new trees where regulations do not require it?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- The town is doing fair job – it should remain important.
- An asset for the future quality of life in Waxhaw.
- Concern regarding impacts of tree preservation on adjacent property owner's potential to develop.

NER Discussion Topic #3: Land Conservation

Discussion Points

- A review of state maintained data on conservation easements and land conservancy properties shows that no properties in these categories exist within the plan boundary.
- Permanently preserved open space, other than town owned park land is primarily owned and managed by property owners associations.
- Lands with significant conservation values and primary wildlife habitats tend to be in areas that will be protected due to floodplain regulations or required water quality buffers; however, some lowland habitat areas fall outside of required stormwater buffers, and in the case of the Andrew Jackson Ridges, are upland areas with no regulatory protection.
- Where required, development regulations require only a cursory analysis of the quality or function of preserved open space.
- To what degree should the town be involved in land conservation?
- What should the priorities be for land conservation if the town expands its role in this realm?
- Are there significant landscapes or environmental features that deserve protection in the planning area that are outside of the identified wildlife habitat and natural heritage areas?
- How important is the preservation of working farms and forestland to the community?

- Should there be incentives at the local level for the permanent preservation of land containing significant natural features other than those required to be preserved by state or federal regulations?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- New UDO should include conservation subdivision options.
- This is important to the future of Waxhaw.
- Consider potential of developing a “greenspace bank” similar to how “wetlands banks” have worked.

NER Discussion Topic #4: Flood Damage Prevention

Discussion Points

- The Town of Waxhaw currently enforces regulations that are designed to limit the exposure of property and lives to hazardous flooding, primarily by strictly limiting development in flood prone areas.
- These areas are defined by FEMA through studies that determine likely areas of inundation during heavy rains.
- As development occurs and the amount of impervious surface increases, rainfall amounts that are required to cause flooding will decrease, leading to more frequent flooding in low lying areas along creeks.
- Are there any areas outside of the identified flood hazard areas that are prone to flooding?
- What measures should the town consider to minimize the likelihood of significant expansions of flood prone areas in town in the future?
- What is the most appropriate use of flood prone areas?
- Should the town invest in park and greenway infrastructure in flood prone areas?

Are flood prone areas good candidates for acquisition by the town to provide parks and open space?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- The Town has limited power to protect their interest in this topic beyond enforcing current regulations
- The Town is in the process of hiring an engineer who will oversee the planning department and this area of concern.

NER Discussion Topic #5: Air Quality

Discussion Points

- There are few, if any, significant point sources of air pollution in the planning area.

- Non-point source pollution is primarily related to automobile traffic. Congested roadways increase the degree to which vehicles contribute to local air pollution.
- The town is a relatively small contributor to air pollution, primarily through its vehicle fleet.
- Through traffic from trucks and other large vehicles, particularly during periods of congestion, contributes to local air pollution.
- While temporary, dust and exhaust caused by construction activity degrades air quality.
- Improving local air quality can be achieved by:
 - Reducing congestion by improving roadway function
 - Reducing the necessity of vehicle trips by improving infrastructure for bicycles and pedestrians
 - Integrating land uses to reduce the need for additional vehicle trips
 - Improving connectivity to reduce the distance between destinations
 - How can the town most effectively contribute to reducing emissions that impair air quality?
- How should the town respond to any proposal to locate a significant point source of air pollution in the planning area?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Concern about dust and from construction sites, but no major issues that are currently pressing with air quality.

Other issues rose

- Downtown flooding and infrastructure concerns
- Preventing pollution on 12 Mile Creek
- What is the cost of non-compliance

Next Meeting scheduled for July 27, 2015.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee Meeting
Meeting Notes
July 27, 2015**

Attendance

David Godfrey (Chairman), Don Fisher, Earl Cook, Fred Burrell, Terry Settle, Bonnie Rusinko, Arthur O'Donnell, Tony Spellings, Chris Plate, Amina Lee; Not able to attend: Guyton James; Town Staff: Lori Oakley, Lisa McCarter, Chris Rice, Curt White, Natalie Jackson, Michael Eiss

Introduction

The meeting was called to order at **10:00 am**.

Planning Process Update

Benchmark reviewed the scheduled of upcoming meetings.

Meeting Topic #5 – Municipal Services and Infrastructure (MSI)

After reviewing some initial information presented by Benchmark, the committee discussed 5 topics related to Municipal Services and Infrastructure.

MSI Discussion Topic #1 - Police Services**Discussion Points:**

- The Police Department has grown significantly in recent years as a response to the growth of the overall community. Has the department's growth allowed it to maintain the high level of service that the community desires?
- How has growth impacted the types of police services that are needed by the community?
- Has the nature of the development in Waxhaw contributed to, or detracted from, the department's ability to provide its services to the community?
- Does the community feel that it is adequately served by the department? Are there any gaps in the types or levels of service provided?
- Are there any particular areas of town that the community views as having greater (or unreasonable) rates of crime as compared to the town as a whole?
- How important is it for the town to maintain a specific ratio of officers to residents as it grows versus ensuring the equality of outcomes from the services that it provides without regard to the size of the force?
- What type of police force, in terms of its mission orientation, should the town focus on having in the future?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- While growth has had an impact, the Town has managed to meet the high level of service the community desires.
- Police department assigns cars to the north and south side of railroad tracks with a car that is a floater. However, the railroad tracks from time to time impede response times.
- Agreed that decisions to increase resources (both manpower and assets) should not be based on metrics only (i.e. 1 officer per 500 in population), but rather should be the responsibility of the Police Chief to monitor and manage as needed.
- Non-contiguous (donut hole areas) areas are sometimes a challenge; however, mutual aid agreements are in place and responses are well coordinated by the county dispatcher to ensure proper response by municipalities or the county sheriff. Waxhaw police only respond outside of Town Limits when requested.
- Current staffing meets demand, however as the Town's Park & Recreation facilities grow, more staff will be required.
- Replacement plans for equipment and patrol cars is back on track and working well.
- Neighborhood and general community meetings are important.

MSI Discussion Topic #2 - Fire Protection / Emergency Response Services**Discussion Points:**

- The text of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan makes reference to the Town being instrumental in the establishment of the fire district, and further states that the understanding at that time was that the WVFD would be financially independent.
- Does reliance on the Union County Board of Commissioners to set the district tax rate (a potential constraint on the level of service provided in the town limits) each year meet the spirit or intent of “financial independence” with regard to the above statement? How does this reliance on the county affect the town?
- While the WVFD provides exceptional service to the residents of Waxhaw and the district as a whole, the insurance rating that the department has been able to achieve (class 6) is not necessarily reflective of the type of community that Waxhaw has become, particularly given the significant resources that the town has.
- Although improving the insurance rating below a class 6 level will not provide insurance rate reductions to homeowners, improvements in the rating will provide for lower insurance rates for the owners of nonresidential properties, which could, in turn, make Waxhaw a more attractive location for investment.
- The department has made significant investments in its primary station and in purchasing and maintaining the apparatus that are necessary to fulfill its mission. The nature of the district, however, necessitates being prepared, with regard to staffing, station locations, apparatus etc. to respond to emergencies in both urban and rural portions of the district.
- Equipping a department to provide services in rural areas without public water supplies requires tanker trucks and engines with larger capacity tanks that are not necessary in urban environments. The necessity of these resources means fewer resources are available overall and over time to equip the department to fully meet the needs of a growing urban area.
- The lack of a ladder truck, while not a strict requirement, does impair the ability of the department to effectively respond to certain emergencies. When necessary, the closest ladder truck is dispatched from Wesley Chapel Station 26.
- Based on standard measures of response time, the following examples are provided for comparison purposes for a response from Station 26 versus the same response from Waxhaw’s primary station:
 - Intersection of NC 75 and NC 16 – Station 26: 11 minutes Waxhaw: 2.3 minutes
 - CMC Waxhaw – Station 26: 10 minutes Waxhaw: 5.2 minutes
 - Waxhaw Elementary School – Station 26: 12.4 minutes Waxhaw: 3.5 minutes
 - Inter. NC 16/Cuthbertson – Station 26: 9.8 minutes Waxhaw 4.7 minutes
 - Inter. NC 16/ Waxhaw Pkwy – Station 26: 11.9 minutes Waxhaw: 2.2 minutes
 - Kensington Elementary – Station 26: 11.3 minutes Waxhaw: 6.6 minutes
 - Int. Waxhaw-Marvin/Kensington – Station 26: 11.2 minutes Waxhaw: 6.2 minutes
- Traffic congestion during certain times of day place constraints on the department’s ability to respond as quickly as desired to incidents in the northern portions of the town.
- The lack of a grade separated railroad crossing impairs the ability of the department to respond to areas south of the railroad when a train is present.
- Nationally, departments that once relied heavily on volunteers to respond to all emergencies are encountering the realities of changes in work patterns and higher training requirements, both of which limit the ability of the typical resident of a suburban or rural community to participate in the fire service to the degree that such volunteers could have once been relied on.
- The WVFD has responded to this trend by instituting a paid staffing arrangement to ensure that a full engine company can respond during the hours when volunteers are least likely to be available for service.
- Financial constraints have limited the amount of paid staffing available to the department, which means that during weekdays, in particular, response to multiple simultaneous emergencies within the 40 square mile district could be limited by the availability of OSHA compliant staffing levels for certain responses.

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Increased height of buildings beyond 35’ will require a ladder truck; however, it is a tremendous expense. Financial analysis needs to be conducted to take a closer look at a ladder truck.
- Downtown is a major asset for the Town, but there are no fire suppression systems in place. Older buildings typically require faster response times because they burn faster.
- Location and number of fire hydrants are also very important.
- Fire response and insurance rates can be a major impact on future economic development.

- As the area continues to grow, a need may arise to have more professional fire staff and the Town needs to determine how to partner with the County and/or lead the planning for these types of services.

MSI Discussion Topic #3 - Water and Sewer Utilities

Discussion Points:

- Planning for and financing the construction of improvements to the water and sewer system that serves the town is currently the sole responsibility of Union County Public Works.
- The expansion of the system to accommodate growth primarily occurs in response to requests from developers rather than in a manner in which there is coordination of improvements between local plans and the utility system.
- While somewhat constrained to the basins that flow directly into the Twelve Mile Creek WWTP, growth that is dependent on sewer could occur virtually anywhere in the planning area since there is no policy restriction on developer funded pump stations and force mains.
- The Twelve Mile Creek WWTP is currently designed and permitted to accept 6 million gallons per day of wastewater and has flows averaging around 4 million gallons per day.
- An expansion of the permitted capacity of the plant to accept 12 million gallons per day – moving first to 7.5 million gallons per day, is underway and planned for in the UCPW capital improvement plan.
- The additional capacity of the plant will likely be able to accommodate approximately 5,000 new dwelling units when it is expanded to 7.5 million gallons per day and four times that new capacity when it reaches the maximum permitted capacity of 12 million gallons per day.
- The utilities serving downtown Waxhaw are in poor condition and place significant limitations on business operations, particularly given the nature of the downtown sewer system.
- What role, if any, should the town play in advancing the improvement of the downtown utility network?
- Are there opportunities for the town to partner with UCPW to guarantee an allocation of capacity in the Twelve Mile Creek WWTP for new development inside of the town?
- Since UCPW will serve any property which the developer agrees to install the lines, the town has little input into or control over when and where urban scale/density development occurs within its growth areas (other than through zoning inside of the town limits).
- Are there opportunities for the town to partner with UCPW and the county commissioners to develop policies for coordinating water and sewer extensions in the town's planning area?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- The Town needs to actively partner and convey the needs of Waxhaw to the County.
- Continue to build on the relationship through the leadership of the Town Manager.
- How can the Town work closer with the County on development review, planning and zoning?
- Need to work with the County to determine how to address non-contiguous areas.

MSI Discussion Topic #4 - Street Maintenance

Discussion Points:

- While most of the older portions of the town were developed on public streets, newer developments in town have been on a mixture of public and private streets.
- Private streets tend to be maintained by homeowners associations, which have varying degrees of capital funding available for road maintenance.
- It is common for HOAs to request transfer of private streets to the public street network when maintenance costs become excessive or when significant repairs / reconstruction is required.
- While funding such transfers can lead to increased revenues from the Powell Bill program after they become public, the streets do not count towards the town's mileage distribution until they are public – leaving a gap in funding potential between construction and when they become public.
- Should the town be proactive in its approach to bringing legacy private streets into the town street network, or should it wait to react to requests from HOAs on a case by case basis?

- While public streets in new developments tend to be constructed to urban standards with standard widths, pavement composition and stormwater drainage, many of the older roads in Waxhaw is merely ribbon pavement over old roadbeds with nonstandard widths and base quality and open ditch stormwater drainage systems.
- Should the improvement of these legacy streets to higher standards be a town priority? If so, how should it be funded? Note that special assessments for street and sidewalk improvements are generally only available if property owners petition the town for the work.
- Are there any particular areas of town where the quality of the town maintained streets don't meet the community's standards?
- Are sidewalks, storm drainage facilities and street lighting maintained to the community's expectations? Are there any areas of town where these facilities are in generally poor condition?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- An inventory of the condition of town roads is underway.
- The Town needs to put development requirements in place to ensure not only proper installation and specifications, but also appropriate maintenance guarantees. Kensington Road is an example of where it was not done right and Town is paying for replacing/repairing because proper installation and bonding was not in place.
- The Town needs to educate developers/HOAs about the 'real' costs of maintaining roads.
- Anticipate that the new hire for the Town Planning Director with engineering credentials will help with these needs.
- Need to prioritize the sidewalk conditions, as well as roads. Current high safety risk.
- Currently private streets are not allowed, developments are required to turn them over to the Town.
- Further analysis is required to determine the extent of the issues related to maintaining roads and sidewalks. Powell Bill funding provides a very small amount of money for overall maintenance.

MSI Discussion Topic #5 - Sanitation Services

Discussion Points:

- Since the town contracts for household solid waste collection (other than yard waste) it has little direct control over the service beyond specifying the nature and manner of service provision in the contract.
- How well is the contracted service performing for residents?
- Is there demand for additional collection activities beyond typical household waste and recycling collection, such as separate food waste collection?
- Many communities experience demand for recycling collection that is greater than waste collection demand from a growing segment of the population.
- Based on your observations, are recycling containers typically full, or is there obvious demand or desire for additional recycling collection capacity?
- Is the yard waste collection service provided by the town efficient and does it meet the needs and expectations of typical homeowners?
- Many communities are moving away from loose leaf collection due to the costs of manpower and the expense / limited range of utility for the equipment needed to perform this service.
- Does the town's bulky item pickup service meet the needs of the community?
- Is there community demand for electronics recycling or similar specialized collection events or services?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Town residents seem to be very happy with the current solid waste collection services, however as growth continues, are there any issues that should be communicated with the county?
- Other types of recycling (electronics for example) are offered by private businesses and are well utilized.
- Loose leaf collection is also a good service appreciated and utilized in Town.

The Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee Meeting
Meeting Notes
August 12, 2015**

Attendance

David Godfrey (Chairman), Earl Cook, Don Fisher, Fred Burrell, Terry Settle, Bonnie Rusinko, Arthur O'Donnell, Guyton James, Chris Plate; **Not able to attend:** Tony Spellings, Amina Lee; **Town Staff:** Lori Oakley, Lisa McCarter, Chris Rice, Kurt White

Introduction

The meeting was called to order at **10:00 am**.

Planning Process Update

Benchmark reviewed the scheduled of upcoming meetings. Next meeting is August 26th at 10:00 to discuss Transportation.

Presentation by Commissioner Steve Mahar

Commissioner Steve Mahar provided an overview to next week's Board meeting (on the 20th) regarding Economic Development. He presented a drafted agenda for that meeting. The Board will be discussing 5 Competitive Factors, reviewing themes, SWOT analysis and policy questions that will all factor into Waxhaw's Economic Development.

Meeting Topic #6 – Economic Development (ED)

After reviewing some initial information presented by Benchmark, the committee discussed 7 topics related to Economic Development.

Topic #1: In the past, Waxhaw has relied upon a variety of community, town and county resources to promote economic development. Citizen groups, town staff, elected officials and county officials are often called upon to respond to inquiries regarding potential business opportunities. The lack of organization with regard to handling these matters creates a situation in which no single point of contact or organization has the responsibility for managing the economic development process

Observations and Ideas

- While the community has provided leadership when needed, most of Waxhaw's economic development efforts have consisted of a variety of individuals and groups rallying around a project, idea or effort. The Town lacks an economic development process that is focused, providing clear direction for proactively planning for and developing new business and employment opportunities. Is it important for the town to have a more focused economic development process?
- How could the town improve its current economic development process and efforts?
- Can existing groups fill a role or does a new group need to oversee these efforts?
- Does the town need a designated staff person leading this effort?
- How would you describe the role of the county in local economic development efforts?

- Is it appropriate, or would it be beneficial, for the town to lead local economic development efforts, rely on the county to advocate for the town, or should there be a combination of the two that are focused on different aspects of economic development.
- It is important to be nimble and respond quickly when economic development inquiries are made. How well is the town prepared to respond in this manner?
- At what level should economic development inquiries be handled locally? How much authority should this person or group have to make commitments for the town?
- Who should be “in the room” when economic development discussions are held with business prospects?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- When economic development is carried out at the local level, it is a large commitment both in terms of monetary and staff resources.
- Economic Development is bigger in Waxhaw than just downtown.
- Huge expense for Waxhaw to have a dedicated economic development staff.
- County EDC main point of contact. Then, the Town Manager should be liaison / primary point of contact.
- Need to make economic development process easy for potential prospects.
 - Remove roadblocks (what keeps people away?)
 - Work closely with the county – improve coordination of outreach efforts, etc.
 - Focus efforts
- Don’t confuse economic development with community development.
- Waxhaw at ground zero in terms of economic development -- great position with plenty of prime opportunity sites.
- Monroe’s economic development program cost was \$435,000 per year which included 4 staff members. Merged with County and consolidated efforts and resources.
- We need to define where Waxhaw wants to be (great downtown, what else?).

Topic #2: While the term “economic development” is often associated with efforts to attract large industrial ventures to a community, this traditional use of the term does not necessarily reflect the town’s goals for expanding the local economy and attracting employment opportunities.

Observations and Ideas

- What should be the primary focus of the town’s economic development activities?
- What types of economic development activity is the town best suited for?
- What does the community have to offer a company that is looking at expanding in the region? What about these qualities help to differentiate Waxhaw from other communities in the area?
- How would you define the town’s role in the county’s economy, what about the region as a whole? How might this change in future?
- Are there any existing businesses in the community that could be used as a catalyst to develop a niche oriented cluster that builds on these existing resources?
- How do the unique qualities of the local labor force, in terms of the higher than average education levels, higher income levels, professional occupations, affect the types of businesses that may want to locate in the community.
- What types of business ventures best match the skills of the local labor force?

- How does the town's proximity (or distance) from Charlotte affect its ability to attract certain types of businesses?
- How does having the terminus of NC 16 in downtown Waxhaw impact the town's economic development prospects?
- How does the absence of a nearby interstate highway affect economic development?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Develop a list of assets, sites and opportunities (what do we have here to build from). We forget about agriculture and the museums, etc.
- In the County Comprehensive Plan, the Town told the County that Waxhaw was a bedroom community and that they did not want to grow south. Waxhaw's vision needs to be redefined and communicated to the County once ready.
- Waxhaw can have economic development while maintaining a high quality of life – it should not be viewed as "either or." Waxhaw can have an energized downtown, a healthy living community with complementary development like IT, offices, events facility, education facilities, light industrial, etc.
- We need to be a complete community (not just a bedroom community) with the right facilities, schools and mix of uses.
- Parks expansion – recreation use as economic development.
- Need to become a walkable community.
- Light industrial interests are out there, but not the infrastructure to support those interests. No smoke stacks.
- The town needs infrastructure like hotels to support growing interest in events.

Topic #3: Resources other than financial assistance can play a significant role in supporting business development, particularly for startups or inexperienced entrepreneurs that lack the experience or capacity to fully realize the potential of their venture.

Observations and Ideas

- If someone were looking for assistance with a business startup, which local or regional organization would be most appropriate for them to contact?
- What role could or should the Main Street Manager play in this?
- Waxhaw is fortunate to have a large number of successful businesses people residing in town and the surrounding area. How can these individuals, both active and retired, play a role in business development assistance.
- What types of training or educational opportunities exist to help local businesses?
- How do entities like the business incubator fit into the larger economic development picture? Is there a need for additional resources like this?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- No official process now for someone wanting to start a business.
- Some good success stories locally, but more needed.
- SCORE from SBA comes to the meeting to review the steps for up-starts - coaching sessions.
- 'Doing Business In Downtown' (completed by Lori Oakley) that talks about the permit process steps required.
- Lunch and learns have helped.

- Strategy for Town owned properties (possible help for entrepreneurs).

Topic #4: Downtown Waxhaw has evolved several times; first emerging as the hub of the local agricultural community, then becoming the heart of a mill town, and then a regional hub of the antiques market. In recent years, downtown has evolved again into a more diverse economic activity center that is oriented more toward supporting the lifestyle of the residents of the community, while also serving as something of a local tourist destination for those looking to experience an authentic historic downtown with a diverse mix of retail, service and entertainment oriented businesses.

Observations and Ideas

- What gaps exist in the downtown retail and service market that can be most easily filled?
- How does the stock of available buildings affect economic development potential?
- Is there sufficient diversity among the types of downtown businesses?
- How will the proposed brewery impact business development? What opportunities does this type of business bring with it?
- The town owns several downtown properties, including both developed and vacant land. What role should these properties play in the ongoing development of downtown, and how would ongoing town ownership of those properties either improve or detract from their contribution to the downtown economy?
- Are there a sufficient number of entertainment options available downtown?
- How are businesses being recruited to downtown? How do business owners know when space is available?
- Ensuring that sufficient parking is available to support downtown business needs is critical for ongoing success. Are there any opportunities for public/private partnerships to develop additional public parking?
- The physical appearance and condition of downtown buildings affects the perception of the district. What role should incentives like façade grants play in promoting an aesthetically appealing downtown district?
- How would the redevelopment of the Rodman-Heath mill affect the future of the downtown economy?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Brewery should have a significant impact and spin-off.
- The Main Street ERC can work with business and property owners.
- Diversity of businesses is being reviewed. Looking at opportunity sites including those areas where could have living on second floors.
- Downtown does not have a lot of vacant space. It is mostly infill opportunities.
- Housing diversity remains an issue.
- Need more entertainment and opportunities for people to gather and spend time in public spaces.
- A need exists for a separate organization that can help move economic development forward. A group with some authority beyond the ERC.
- Parking study is forthcoming. Trolley service was provided during last event.
- The mill will be an important part.

Topic #5: Economic activity has expanded significantly in the past 20 years, but that growth has been primarily oriented toward the retail sector. Is reliance on the retail sector for ongoing growth desirable, or should the town undertake efforts to promote a greater diversity of economic activity in town?

Observations and Ideas

- How will changes in the overall retail economy, such as a greater portion of retail sales being captured by online merchants, affect future retail growth in Waxhaw?
- What types of business are less likely to be affected by this trend?
- How could focusing too heavily on retail businesses affect the town's long term economic condition?
- How does the town's geographic location affect the types of businesses that it can attract?
- Where are Waxhaw's primary sources of competition for both business development and retail sales?
- Should the town be actively engaged in retail recruitment?
- What are the biggest gaps in the local retail market? Are these gaps that can be filled by local oriented retailers, or are they gaps that would most likely be filled by regional or national retailers?
- In the case of larger regional or national retailers, why would expanding into Waxhaw make good business sense versus capturing sales from existing locations in the region or locating their business where there are greater concentrations of population and higher traffic volumes?
- Large format retail stores ("big boxes") present unique challenges when they remain vacant for extended periods of time. While these are not a predominant feature in Waxhaw's retail environment, planning for the reuse of these buildings after they have outlived their usefulness for their previous occupants is critical to ensuring that they do not become a blighting influence. What are some potential strategies that can be utilized to deal with this potential problem? What opportunities would be presented if such a scenario were to come about?
- Is the local labor supply sufficient to serve a larger retail or service oriented economy?
- Do local housing options support lower paid retail and service jobs?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Morganton works with a third party to develop retail opportunities.
- Plan out where various uses end up – location is important.
- Waxhaw is already on the radar of national retailers and other businesses.

Topic #6: Different areas of town are best suited for different types of economic activity. Guiding the most appropriate types of development to these areas is critical to ensuring that the limited amount of land that is most suited for business activity is developed and used for its highest and best use. For instance, downtown serves as the town's center for experiential or "destination" type businesses, while the high volume intersections on NC 16 serve as community or even sub-regional scale shopping destinations. While these areas of town are fairly well defined, it is important to ensure that the gaps between these areas and transitional areas have well defined roles in the local economy as well.

Observations and Ideas

- What do you think would be the most appropriate types of businesses to be located in the following areas:
 - NC 75 east of downtown
 - NC 75 west of downtown
 - Waxhaw Parkway east of NC 16
 - Waxhaw-Marvin Road / Helms Road – west of downtown
- Do you see significant economic development opportunities in other parts of town or the planning area? Where are they, and what types of business development would be most appropriate?

- Should the town take active measures to protect land for certain types of uses or otherwise guide development through regulation? Or, should the town rely more on the market to make decisions about the most appropriate locations for business development?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- We need to look beyond the NC 16 corridor for locations.
- It is also important to consider how development happens to help prevent unwanted development.
- Consider incentives for encouraging wanted development.
- Coordinate more closely with County on existing industry and ways to retain those jobs as well.

Topic #7: Developing and implementing the most appropriate tools to support an economic development program is critical to the success of the effort.

Observations and Ideas

- Tools to support economic development for Waxhaw could include:
 - Developing and maintaining a local database of available sites and buildings.
 - Developing and adopting a business development incentive program that clearly defines what assistance is available from the town.
 - Developing promotional materials based on the town's established brand identity.
 - Conducting regular studies of the local market to identify opportunities for business growth and promoting the results of the studies.
 - Maintaining an online business development guide.
 - Providing educational opportunities for local businesses
 - Supporting local business associations
 - Developing a formalized business recruitment strategy and process

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Improve databases by adding a picture inventory and other functions to the GIS.
- The committee discussed the number of existing businesses in Waxhaw (about 400)

The Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee Meeting
Meeting Notes
August 26, 2015**

Attendance

David Godfrey (Chairman), Earl Cook, Don Fisher, Chris Plate, Fred Burrell, Bonnie Rusinko, Arthur O'Donnell, Amina Lee, Guyton James; **Not able to attend:** Tony Spellings, Terry Settle; **Town Staff:** Lori Oakley, Maxx Oliver

Introduction

The meeting was called to order at **10:00 am**.

Planning Process Update

Benchmark reviewed the scheduled of upcoming meetings. Next meeting is September 10th at 2:00 to discuss Land Use & Growth Management and then on the 22nd of September will be a review of the draft comprehensive plan.

- Discussed 3 meetings (in a day), on November 9th, November 12th joint meeting with Board and public
- Need to start communicating early again
- Planning staff will start working on the logistics

Meeting Topic #7 – Transportation

After reviewing some initial information presented by Benchmark, the committee discussed 7 topics related to Transportation.

Discussion Topic #1

The network of existing and planned routes classified as thoroughfares provides the backbone of the local transportation network and connects the community to the regional transportation network. These high volume roadways are critical to the current and future economic prosperity, development potential and quality of life of the community. As growth continues, improvements to the capacity, functionality and safety of these critical linkages between neighborhoods, employment centers, retail and service centers to ensure that they meet the needs of the community and accommodate both existing and future traffic demands.

Discussion Points:

- Recent changes in project prioritization by NCDOT through the Strategic Transportation Initiative law have caused two major projects, the widening of NC 16 and the completion of the northern half of the Waxhaw Bypass, to be less certain in their timing and funding.
- While the town is advocating for the continued inclusion of these major thoroughfare improvement projects in the NCDOT Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) project commitments, their inclusion in the program in the short term is not guaranteed.
- What options should the town consider to move these projects forward if they are significantly delayed or completely removed from the STIP?
- What opportunities might exist to partner with developers to complete portions of the Waxhaw Bypass?
- The two previously mentioned projects would provide different types of benefits to the local transportation network. The widening of NC 16 would increase the capacity of the roadway, while the completion of the Waxhaw Bypass, particularly the northeastern segment, would provide an alternate route from NC 75 to NC 16 – relieving congestion downtown. The completion of the bypass would also serve to open additional land for development that currently has limited accessibility.
- Which of these projects is seen as more important to the community? Which would provide the greatest benefit?
- A number of thoroughfare improvement projects are identified in the LARTP, including both improvements to existing routes and the development of new roadways. Excluding NC 16 and the Waxhaw Bypass (northern half), which of these do you feel are most critical to the town's future transportation network? How should these projects be prioritized?
- Should the town prioritize either the western or eastern legs of the northern section of the Waxhaw Bypass over the other, or should the bypass be viewed as a unified project?

- Should the widening of the length of NC 16 from the end of the current 4 lane section at Rea Road to the Waxhaw Bypass be advocated for as a single project, or should the town seek to have the project broken into smaller segments to speed completion of some segments if such an option was feasible and available?
- The majority of the length of Kensington and Cuthbertson are identified in the LARTP as being “minor” thoroughfares, do you feel that this classification is reflective of the role that they play in the network? Does the classification of other roads in the plan (see LARTP map labeled Figure 17) correspond with how they function in the network (or how they will function as growth continues)?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- The Town is working with Kimley-Horn to complete an analysis on transportation, providing more information for making decisions – traffic impact analysis is the framework.
- West side of bypass is low hanging fruit – property available now.
- NCDOT only reacts to stats, accidents and deaths – we need to communicate the issues better.
- Explore quiet zone for trains going through downtown
- We need to break NC 16 into parts, if that will help us get portions of it funded quicker.
- In regard to all of our other transportation problems – what problems are we going to solve first
- The LARTP is a good start, but a lot of old data and maps.
- We need someone to look after our transportation needs and we need to do a good job of communicating our needs.
- Discussion regarding funding alternatives – discussed the special assessments for critical infrastructure legislation needs in Town of Hillsboro, which is the only town in state that’s taking advantage of that legislation currently. It is a self-financed bond that the city finances for infrastructure improvements and paid back by special assessments from the benefitted property owner. Look for ways that could possibly work here.
- Clarification that not all of 16 fell off the list. Part 1 from Rea to Cuthbertson been on list, re-evaluating and then Part 2 is Cuthbertson to Parkway.
- Is there an alternative to an east connector? Will a bridge be required for the eastern leg? Good idea to build one if possible.
- A completion date for the Kimley-Horn study is not known – it will need to be included as part of the comprehensive plan when finished.
- How can the town stay in front of evolving transportation rules and programs?
- We need to hold developers accountable – not an impact fee but an agreement.

Discussion Topic #2 (Connectivity)

An ideal town road network consists of an interconnected series of local streets that serve individual homes and businesses, collector roads that carry traffic from neighborhood streets to the regional road network and thoroughfares that serve major commercial development and carry traffic to, from and through the community. Greater degrees of connectivity provide options and alternate routes for drivers, thereby decreasing the demand on any single road in the network and allowing for shifts in traffic patterns during peak traffic times or other congestion causing event. Greater degrees of connectivity will also typically decrease point to point travel time and distance (for instance between home and shopping), reduce service delivery costs for municipal services such as solid waste collection, and improves response times for emergency vehicles. Moving forward, it will be critical to ensure that new development provides the degree of connectivity necessary to limit impacts on the overall transportation network, work with developers to make critical connections, and identify opportunities to improve connectivity where there are gaps in the network.

Discussion Points:

- With respect to connectivity, the majority of the development plans approved in Waxhaw over the years appear to have lacked an external focus with regard to connectivity, sacrificing opportunities to make logical connections between developments and create through streets that could have provided a higher level of functionality to the overall network.
- In recent years, it appears that greater effort has been made in the development review process to require greater connectivity, such as the extension of the road serving Prescott as recommended in the NC 16 corridor plan.

- While many of the opportunities that once existed to improve connectivity have been lost (essentially permanently in many cases due to development patterns) there are a number of recommended connectivity improvements that can be made as development occurs or through proactive retrofits to the street network.
- Which types of connectivity improvements should the town prioritize? Major connections linking thoroughfares or interconnectivity between neighborhoods.
- Some projects that are currently underway or in the conceptual stage offer opportunities to improve connectivity.
- Should the town approach developers with projects that are underway but not complete to explore opportunities to enhance connectivity? If so, who pays for the changes and improvements?
- How can the town ensure that future opportunities to enhance connectivity are not lost through the approval of plans that sacrifice the greater needs of the transportation network for the convenience of the developer?
- Are there any specific connectivity enhancement opportunities that you feel the town should pursue?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Developers should pay for as many of the improvements as possible. We have had a lot of lost opportunities.
- We need to be careful about neighborhood cut-thru streets.
- You can drive through Millbridge (not easily), however, Lawson has major issues -- no connectivity. Roads in subdivisions are not just for driveways, they are for connecting people places.
- What do we want to happen to enable Staff to have the power to drive this process?
- Transportation Plan and Neighborhood Plans will help.
- We need to be specific with our ordinances – connectivity ratios, standards for collector roads, etc.
- Make sure Kimley-Horn takes a look at our town being bisected by the RR. Safety is an issue. If Main Street burns, Waxhaw is gone. Look at a bridge/overpass for downtown across the tracks – this is a good time to examine how that might help – in addition to the Parkway/Bypass.
- We don't have an analysis of the areas south of town and no incentive to do it right now. However, if it does have potential, we need to start looking at it now from a very high level. Put this in as a recommendation of the plan.

Discussion Topic #3 (Complete Streets)

Streets that are designed and constructed only for automobile traffic to the exclusion of other forms of transportation and without consideration for the land use context in which they exist can have a detrimental effect on a community. The concept of “complete streets” which are designed to accommodate a range of transportation methods and fit with both the land use and aesthetic context of their surroundings has become the state of the art in transportation planning and design. The concept of providing complete streets applies to both the improvement of existing facilities and the construction of new roadways. The concept is also scalable and therefore applicable to neighborhood roads, thoroughfare streets and every type of facility in-between. By adopting and enforcing local design standards that require the construction of complete streets, ensuring that plans developed by NCDOT contain the necessary elements that form a complete street and making improvements to single-purpose streets on the local street network, the town will eventually have a transportation network that fully integrates the multiple modes of transportation that comprise a truly complete transportation system and the character of the street network will be such that it fits both the aesthetic context of its surroundings and provides the right kind of facility for the context of the land uses that it serves.

Discussion Points:

- If someone were looking for assistance with a business startup, which local or regional organization would be most appropriate for them to contact?
- What role could or should the Main Street Manager play in this?
- Waxhaw is fortunate to have a large number of successful businesses people residing in town and the surrounding area. How can these individuals, both active and retired, play a role in business development assistance.
- What types of training or educational opportunities exist to help local businesses?
- How do entities like the business incubator fit into the larger economic development picture? ID there a need for additional resources like this?
- Complete streets consist of both functional and aesthetic components. Which of these should the town prioritize in situations where cost is a significant factor? If the installation of both functional and aesthetic improvements is budget prohibitive, should the other improvement be included in the design plans so that it can be accounted for and installed in the future as funds become available?

- When retrofitting an existing street, the full accommodation of automobile, pedestrian and bicycle traffic on a roadway can require the expansion of width of the right-of-way, which can significantly increase the cost of a project due to land acquisition costs and the potential need to relocate utilities.
- In situations such as this, should the town favor one type of accommodation over the other (pedestrian vs. bicycle) if only designing for one additional type of improvement would allow the project to stay within the existing right-of-way?
- Assuming that the implementation of a complete streets policy is desired by the community, how should the town prioritize such improvements, particularly with regard to roads that are less likely to see major investment by NCDOT in the foreseeable future.
- To what degree should the town seek to implement the functional aspects of complete streets on local streets that serve neighborhoods (with particular regard to internal collector roads that carry traffic in and out of neighborhoods).
- Older roads in the community present significant challenges to making the functional improvements that are necessary to form a truly complete street (particularly with regard to right-of-way width and encroachments). Where these challenges are greatest are also where improvements are often the most needed. Are there some streets in the local network that would never be good candidates for such improvements? Are there any that are ideal for such improvements?
- How should priorities for such improvements be determined? Road volume, prominence / visibility, geographic equity, as a catalyst for development or redevelopment?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Finding funding for these types of projects will be difficult.
- Concern about bicycles at rush hour and large riding groups – safety hazards – any ways to help specify times when large groups can occupy the travel lanes?
- Pedestrians should be priority downtown.
- Walkability and bicycling are clearly very important.
- More focus on crosswalks downtown (flags at pedestrian bridge were improvements)
- We also need to think about evolving and future needs.
- We need criteria – a framework of conditions or priorities to make the decisions?
- Cuthbertson needs to be retrofitted. It is not minor.
- Need to have someone go to the County to discuss our issues/priorities.

Discussion Topic #4 (Safety and Functionality)

Improvements to the capacity and connectivity of the town's street network have to be coupled with measures to address the safety and functionality of the system as well. High volume interconnected road networks that are not supported by such improvements can lead to additional problems that negate any of the benefits of the original improvements. For instance, adding additional lanes without managing access to a roadway can simultaneously increase speeds and throughput, but those higher speeds may make turning movements onto and off of the roadway more dangerous, while improving connectivity without providing intersection signalization or having poorly timed or uncoordinated signals can impede the functionality of intersections. Conversely, safety and functional improvements can increase the capacity of roadways by increasing the throughput of intersections and eliminating potential conflict points (such as unguarded left turning movements) without having to undertake more expensive capacity improvement projects such as adding travel lanes. Implementing such improvements, in coordination with each other, and identifying the projects that will provide the greatest benefit for their cost will be an important component of the improvement and growth of the local street network in Waxhaw.

Discussion Points:

- What gaps exist in the downtown retail and service market that can be most easily filled?
- How does the stock of available buildings affect economic development potential
- Is there sufficient diversity among the types of downtown businesses?
- How will the proposed brewery impact business development? What opportunities does this type of business bring with it?
- The town owns several downtown properties, including both developed and vacant land. What role should these properties play in the ongoing development of downtown, and how would ongoing town ownership of those properties either improve or detract from their contribution to the downtown economy.

- Are there a sufficient number of entertainment options available downtown?
- How are businesses begin recruited to downtown? How do business owners know when space is available?
- Ensuring that sufficient parking is available to support downtown business needs is critical for ongoing success. Are there any opportunities for public/private partnerships to develop additional public parking?
- The physical appearance and condition of downtown buildings affects the perception of the district. What role should incentives like façade grants play in promoting an aesthetically appealing downtown district?
- How would the redevelopment of the Rodman-Heath mill affect the future of the downtown economy?
- There are a number of functional upgrades that could be made to the existing transportation network that would make significant improvements to traffic flow and safety. Examples of potential improvements include the signalization of intersections such as Gray Byrum / NC 16, Bonds Grove / NC 16 and Waxhaw Parkway / NC 16, geometric improvements at Kensington / Cuthbertson / NC 16, and access management improvements along all major roads.
- How should functional improvements be accomplished? Local funding, development exactions, NCDOT funding, a combination of these?
- How should functional improvements be prioritized? Is improving traffic flow the overriding factor or is safety more important to consider?
- The installation of medians on high volume roadways can significantly improve the safety and function of the facility by eliminating potentially hazardous turning movements and reducing the number of conflict points.
- In areas where there are large numbers of businesses with individual driveways and limited opportunities for interconnectivity, medians are often viewed by business owners as significant impediments to their operations due to the perception of the elimination of “half of their traffic”. In such situations, should the primary factor when making decisions on such improvements focus more heavily on the function and safety of the roadway or the concerns of businesses? What types of design and implementation actions should be considered in these situations to limit any negative business impacts?
- Opportunities currently exist to eliminate access points along major roadways by consolidating driveways or improving cross connectivity between properties along major road frontages. How can the town encourage movement toward implementing these types of functional improvements?
- Which roadways, or intersections, would benefit most greatly from functional and safety improvements. What types of secondary effects might these improvements generate?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Safety is critical
- Get all information together, prioritize and get moving
- Several areas need the safety improvements

ED Discussion Topic #5 (Transit Options)

While mass transit has not played a significant role in the town’s transportation network in the past, recently adopted plans have included recommendations for extending regional transit services to Waxhaw. Whether or not the town will be a good candidate for future transit services will depend on a variety of factors. Among the primary considerations are the potential reduction in cost (measured in both time and money) for system users in contrast to automobile travel, the cost of service to the provider of the transit option (as measured on a per passenger basis) and the potential size of the population that can be served by the route(s), which is, to a high degree, a function of residential density. User cost-benefit will be influenced by a number of external factors, such as congestion and gasoline prices, while provider cost benefit will be a function of ridership and the degree to which external subsidies are available. The potential population that can be served will be influenced heavily by land use policy, although structured solutions, such as park and ride lots that create artificial service density, can improve this in lower density communities. Identifying the most appropriate mix of transit solutions for the town is also important, and should be based on the needs of the community. For instance, while express commuter bus service may be a cost effective solution, given the nature of the community and its transportation needs, circulator or local bus routes may not be cost effective given the nature of the town and its land use patterns.

Discussion Points:

- How attractive would the option of express commuter bus service be to current car commuters in Waxhaw?
- What would make express commuter bus service more attractive than driving?
- If an express bus route were implemented, what would the primary destination(s) be?
- Are there any ideal locations for commuter park and ride lots in town?

- What should the town's role be in either advocating for transit service or participating in its funding?
- Would there be demand for point to point commuter bus service outside of the morning and evening rush hours? What about weekends?
- How useful would a local circulator bus route be to the community?
- What would be the primary destinations for the users of a local circulator bus route?
- What would make the use of a local circulator bus attractive as a form of transportation in contrast to other forms of transportation?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Many years ago there was a commuter bus that came into town.
- Park and ride lots – need to make sure destinations are mapped out (places to go).
- Destinations – downtown Charlotte, Ballantyne, I-485
- It is difficult to predict what changes in technology and innovation may bring to transportation.
- There will have to be a reason to ride the bus

Discussion Topic #6 (Ped & Bike Options)

Integrating facilities for non-motorized transportation, particularly sidewalks, into the local transportation network has been a significant focus of the town in recent years. As the community has grown, new development has been required to provide sidewalks in neighborhoods and along commercial frontages, and the town has made investments in extending the network as well, with particular emphasis on providing sidewalks in the vicinity of schools. While the extent of the network has grown exponentially, the primary issue that has emerged is the need to fill gaps between disconnected portions of the network and retrofit older neighborhoods and commercial areas where sidewalks were not constructed at the time they were developed. In addition to expanding the network and filling gaps, particular attention to safety issues need to be addressed in conjunction with new construction, including the need to ensure that adequate crosswalks, signage and signals are provided at intersections and other key locations where pedestrians and vehicles interact. Although bicycling in Waxhaw is primarily still a recreational pursuit, it too can play a role in the town's transportation network. The lack of dedicated on-street bicycle lanes and multi-use paths make this form of transportation less desirable, especially outside of residential areas. Given the degree of recreational bicycling that takes place in and around town, it would appear that with improved facilities, bicycling could play a greater role as an alternate form of transportation in town.

Discussion Points:

- Which roads should have the highest priority for the completion of pedestrian or bicycle facilities? Should certain segments be given higher priority than others?
- Should the construction of linear facilities be prioritized over pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements?
- Should greenway trails be viewed primarily as recreational facilities or as transportation routes?
- Should bicycle traffic be mixed with vehicular traffic (even in dedicated bicycle lanes) on major roads or should multi-use paths or separate cycle tracks be favored to reduce potential conflicts?
- Are there any routes through town that you observe particularly heavy bicycle traffic on? When is it typically observed and do you perceive that the riders are engaged in recreation or using bicycles for point to point transportation?
- Are there any areas that lack sidewalks where you frequently observe pedestrians?
- Should the town focus more on installing pedestrian facilities on major roadways or in neighborhoods that lack sidewalks?
- What are the primary traffic generators and destinations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the community?
- Are there any destinations that you think would generate higher rates of pedestrian traffic if they were served by pedestrian and bicycle facilities?
- Do residents of Waxhaw walk primarily for recreation or for transportation? Are there any segments of the population that walk more frequently for transportation purposes?
- Do you frequently see pedestrians making unsafe crossings at intersections?
- Which intersections do you observe as having the largest volumes of pedestrian crossings?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Bike routes are primarily south of town in the country, but folks ride everywhere
- People walk at the hospital parking lot.
- Hillcrest area could use more sidewalks
- Educational efforts are needed for pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers on proper use of the roads.

- Can bicycles be restricted – some roads are simply not designed for safe road sharing. Road rage sometimes an issue. What do you do about the large groups.
- The bike shop has some route maps
- Connect Cureton to downtown with a sidewalk

Discussion Topic #7 (Regional Network)

Factors that originate from outside of the town and its planning area can have a significant influence on the local transportation network. Understanding these external factors and integrating them into the design of the local network, particularly with regard to planning for the impact of external growth on the local network, is critical to ensuring its long term functionality. For example, roadway improvement projects that affect portions of roads that lead to town can have the effect of altering the timing of when evening traffic returning to town begins arriving and the duration of the heaviest volumes. External changes can also alter commuting or travel patterns, leading to either greater or fewer numbers of vehicles traveling through town. Monitoring these changes and implementing local changes to respond to these external influences will play an important role in ensuring the functionality of the local transportation network.

Discussion Points:

- Continued growth along the US 521 corridor in Lancaster County, SC is likely to generate significant impacts on the local transportation network. How can the town work to coordinate efforts with Lancaster County and SCDOT / NCDOT to address cross-border traffic growth? What would the most likely pattern / destination of this traffic be in future years?
- Industrial growth in areas outside of town, such as in the planned development in Mineral Springs, could have significant impacts on NC 75 if truck traffic to and from that area chooses to utilize NC 75 to reach destinations west and north of Waxhaw. What mitigation measures might be necessary to limit the impact of increased truck traffic downtown, particularly in the absence of a bypass alternative?
- Areas south of Waxhaw may develop outside of the control of the town? How can the town work with Union County and NCDOT to measure and mitigate potential traffic impacts from external growth in this area? Which routes to and through town might be most affected by growth south of the town limits?
- Hypothetically speaking, what would the impact on Waxhaw be in a scenario in which it became necessary to develop a second interstate loop route around the southeastern portion of the Charlotte metro region connecting I-77 to the Monroe Bypass with the route running just south of Waxhaw? How might the community respond to this type of scenario?

Main Points Raised by Committee:

- Lobbying is critical
- We must think of ourselves in the larger community
- Need to work on doughnut holes
- Need to evaluate potential of overpass

The Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Steering Committee Meeting
Meeting Notes
September 22, 2015**

Attendance

David Godfrey (Chairman), Earl Cook, Don Fisher, Chris Plate, Fred Burrell, Terry Settle, Bonnie Rusinko, Arthur O'Donnell, , Amina Lee, Guyton James; **Not able to attend:** Tony Spellings; **Town Staff:** Lori Oakley, Maxx Oliver, Chris Rice, Natalie Jackson

Introduction

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am.

Planning Process Update

Benchmark reviewed the past schedule topic meetings. Public meetings will be in November 9th (3 meetings) and then on the 12th (afternoon work session with Joint Board meeting).

Review of Plan Component Recommendations

Land Use and Growth Management

Comments

- Consider including road maintenance under incentives for town annexation policy.
- Consider including school site reservation
- Consider opportunities to work with Union County Schools to encourage new school sites within close proximity/walking distance to neighborhoods in town

Transportation

Comments

- Consider additional language to focus on an overpass recommendation of the grade separated north/south crossing that can be evaluated by the town's transportation consultant.
- Consider adding clarification to "Require the reservation of right-of-way activity for new routes and street connections identified in transportation plans in conjunction with development activity." – adding the words "both State and Town R-O-W.
- Consider adding "NCDOT" to clarify coordination under the Regional Coordination third bullet point.

Economic Development

Comments

- Remove the work "Corporation" from County Economic Development references.
- Consider adding available properties to County website as well.
- Re-word this bullet point to emphasize the strategy should begin now – not just long-term.

- “Develop a long-term strategy for the use, maintenance or sale of town-owned properties that ensures the future use and maintenance of the properties meet the goals and desires of the town.”
- Consider recognizing existing institutions such as the South Piedmont Community College as part of the knowledge base recruitment.
- Small Town Main Street Program change to “Main Street.”
- Consider adding language to encourage small and minority owned business development.
- Consider adding additional language to support creative arts.
- Consider upper story development for residential in new and older buildings downtown.

Municipal Services and Infrastructure

Comments

- Bullet number 2 under Public Safety, consider adding “partnership” after relationships.
- Consider older neighborhoods with water and sewer infrastructure.
- Consider changing “explore” to “create” concerning the joint Waxhaw-Union County utility service district.
- Consider adding capacity figures for land uses to ensure infrastructure capacity is available for a range of residential and nonresidential uses.

Environment and Natural Resources

Comments

- Consider adding language that encourages the examination of future costs associated with correcting past stormwater management decisions.

Historic Preservation

Comments

- Consider expanding the review of the downtown form based code district to areas adjacent to the historic district – not just in the historic district.

Parks & Recreation Goals & Strategies

Comments

- Consider adding language that recommends a general review/updating of the 2012 Parks, Recreation and Cultural Master Plan.
- Consider adding language that clarifies the fee-in-lieu program be expanded beyond current application.
- Consider reinforcing the north/south connection under the Healthy Community and Active Living recommendation.

Cultural Resources Goals & Strategies

Comments

- Consider adding language that defines cultural resources.
- Consider including the oral history project.
- Consider expanding language concerning marketing potential of cultural resources.

- Consider adding Museum of Waxhaw's for marketing similar to JAARS.
- Consider adding McDonald House as a location for displays.
- Consider adding churches as potential art display locations.
- Consider adding language to Old Providence School that states "if it becomes available in the future."
- Consider addition of African American cultural history.
- Work with both the Union County and Local Arts Council.

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 am

**Waxhaw Comprehensive Plan Update
Joint Meeting
(Steering Committee, Planning Board & Board of Commissioners)
Meeting Notes
November 12, 2015**

Attendance

David Godfrey (Chairman), Earl Cook, Don Fisher, Fred Burrell, Terry Settle, Bonnie Rusinko, Arthur O'Donnell, Guyton James; **Not able to attend:** Amina Lee, Tony Spellings; **Town Staff:** Lori Oakley, Maxx Oliver, Chris Rice, Warren Wood, Kurt White; **Planning Board:** Brenda McMillon, Fred Burrell; **Board of Commissioners:** Steve Mahar, James Warner, Paul Fitzgerald

Introduction

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Chairman David Godfrey.

Public Meeting Summary

Benchmark reviewed the highlights from the past week of public meetings. With about 75 attendees, public comments were general positive about the plan. There were good discussions as well as Q&A dialog among the public and Steering Committee members.

Overview

The Steering Committee, Planning Board and Town of Commissioners were all asked to review the Plan's strategies and rank them according to their perceived prioritization. While all 188 strategies are important, the weighted score of these strategies enables a focus of the implementation plan.

Strategies were weighted on a 1-5 scale with 5 being the most important. Of the 188 strategies, 52 received a rating of greater than 4 and 12 received (*noted below with a **) a score of greater than 4.36.

Land Use and Growth Management

Seven of the Land Use & Growth Management strategies ranked high including:

A1 - Utilize the growth sector plan as a guide for the implementation of a development framework that facilitates the creation of cohesive network of well-planned, connected and integrated urban scale neighborhoods and commercial centers within the intended growth sector and fosters context sensitive development and redevelopment within the infill growth sector.

A2 - Continually monitor the growth sector plan and amend as necessary to reflect changes in development potential and capacity due to infrastructure improvements and other factors that influence the appropriate scale and intensity of development within the planning area.

B1 - Prioritize and incentivize annexation within the intended growth sector, with a particular emphasis on strategic annexations that fill gaps in the town limits, connect the core of the town to previously annexed noncontiguous areas and incorporate large tracts along the northern and eastern perimeter of the planning area adjacent to neighboring towns.

***C1** - Develop a formal coordination strategy to share information between the town and Union County. This should include a formal liaison to the Union County Planning Board, regular staff level coordination and joint notification of development proposals within the town and surrounding planning area. Establish similar collaborative measures with neighboring municipalities and Lancaster County, SC.

D1 - Foster and maintain a culture of collaboration between staff, elected and appointed officials, the community and developers that encourages a cooperative and facilitative approach to managing growth and development.

D2 - Streamline the approval process for development proposals through a combination of proactive planning (the development and implementation of regulating plans), delegation of approval authority to administrative staff, and the removal of regulatory barriers such as requirements for quasi-judicial hearings for certain uses and lengthy approval timeframes.

D4 - Establish clear, illustrated, architectural guidelines for nonresidential and multi-family structures to accompany the form based development regulations.

Comments about Land Use and Growth Management and related strategies included:

- An education process is required; this is NOT 'business as usual' (by right form based code), and promotes density.
- The Land Use section is the highest priority; other sections like Economic Development, Transportation, Historic Preservation, etc. need further analysis in terms of financial budgeting.

Transportation

Ten Transportation strategies were ranked high including:

A1 - Prioritize the funding and completion of planned capacity improvements on the NC-16 corridor and the construction of Waxhaw Parkway from NC-16 to NC-75.

A3 - Identify opportunities to improve the function of major roadways through the implementation of targeted upgrades, such as intersection signalization, turn lane installation, access management changes and similar projects that can be funded more easily than major widening projects.

A11 - Seek partnerships with developers to construct major transportation network improvements, such as the extension of Waxhaw Parkway.

A12 - Require the reservation of right-of-way activity for new routes and street connections identified in transportation plans in conjunction with development activity.

B2 - Annually budget capital funds for the construction of pedestrian infrastructure in accordance with the adopted Pedestrian Plan.

C2 - Engage both NCDOT and SCDOT in an effort to develop a coordinated approach to the need for additional planning for roadway improvements on cross-border routes connecting Waxhaw and US 521 in Lancaster County.

***C3** - Coordinate major transportation improvements with NCDOT, Union County and neighboring municipalities, particularly with regard to projects that impact multiple jurisdictions.

***D1** - Continue efforts to secure funding for planned road improvement and construction projects through the NCDOT Strategic Transportation Investment process.

***D2** - Seek guidance from NCDOT on the feasibility of the town funding the preparation of construction plans and environmental studies for priority transportation improvement projects to improve the possibility of receiving funding for critical transportation enhancements.

D4 - Explore creative financing arrangements with NCDOT to accelerate the funding of priority transportation projects. An example of such an arrangement could include the Town funding a portion of the construction costs for a project with a contractual guarantee for NCDOT to reimburse the town at the point that state project funding would have been available.

Comments about Transportation and related strategies included:

- Developers will be required going forward to have a traffic study done by a 3rd party of the Town's choosing.

Economic Development

Ten Economic Development strategies were ranked high including:

A1 - Identify Union County Economic Development as the chief point of contact for business process and economic development inquiries in Waxhaw to maintain a unified and efficient response to potential investors.

***A2** - Recognize the Town Manager as the key economic development official to serve as the primary liaison with the County EDC, representing Waxhaw during the recruitment and retention process with the County EDC as the lead.

A3 - Develop an economic development strategy that establishes a focused process, identifies barriers and provides a clear framework for identifying and communicating with business prospects throughout the recruitment and retention process.

B1 - Identify potential incentives, financial or otherwise, that can be made available for the relocation or establishment of employment in targeted industry sectors.

B2 - Review ordinances, policies and regulations on a regular basis to ensure that there are no unreasonable barriers or obstacles to starting or running a business in Waxhaw.

C2 - Develop economic plans and strategies that support the town's growth sector plan, aligning infrastructure and business site improvements in areas that are compatible with the identified growth sector and surrounding land uses.

C3 - Utilize downtown Waxhaw as a place based economic development recruitment engine, drawing on its history and character to foster business development that fits within the downtown development framework and unique assets that it has to offer.

D1 - Continue to support the professional management of downtown and the Main Street program organization, its activities and work program as it pursues economic development opportunities and programs within the town's historic district.

D2 - Identify opportunities for public gathering and arts and entertainment venues to expand opportunities for people to gather in downtown on a consistent basis during the evening hours each day of the week.

***D4** - Develop an action plan in partnership with the County to upgrade the downtown water and sewer infrastructure to encourage the continued revitalization and improvement of business development in downtown.

Comments about Economic Development and related strategies included:

- Ensure that the Main Street (ERC Committee) is included in the economic development section.

Municipal Services

Nine Municipal Services strategies were ranked high including:

A1 - Continually monitor the staffing needs of the Police Department to ensure that it has sufficient resources available to maintain its current level of high quality, visible and responsive services.

A3 - Continue public outreach meetings with neighborhood and community groups to strengthen relationships between residents and the Police Department and monitor community concerns regarding public safety issues.

***B1** - Develop a joint wastewater master plan with Union County to guide infrastructure investments within the planning area, with a particular emphasis on extending major water and sewer lines within the intended growth sector, long term planning for extending service into the controlled growth sector, and limiting utility extensions into the restricted growth sector (Waxhaw Creek Basin).

***B5** - Partner with Union County Public Works to accelerate the funding of downtown utility infrastructure improvements.

C2 - Identify the gap between state funding for local street maintenance (Powell Bill) and the ongoing annual need as identified in the long range street maintenance plan. Identify local funding sources to fill the funding gap to ensure the ongoing maintenance of the local street system.

C3 - Identify opportunities to partner with developers to make coordinated improvements to local streets that are adjacent to development and redevelopment projects on the town's street network.

D1 - Engage all power providers to identify potential electric transmission and distribution upgrades that will be necessary to support Waxhaw's long term growth needs, including the identification of potential locations for future substations and high voltage transmission corridors.

D2 - Explore opportunities to coordinate the relocation or burial of overhead utility lines in conjunction with downtown water and sewer utility infrastructure improvements.

E1 - Coordinate with broadband / fiber optic communications service providers to study the feasibility of improving the speed, reliability and capacity of communications services.

Comments about Municipal Services and related strategies included:

- Benchmark noted that Fire Safety was not highlighted as a priority and explained the implications of this.
- A Steering Committee member who spoke to the Chief about Waxhaw's fire response, confirmed that not having a ladder truck is an issue, no current budget dollars to address, but is part of the budget plan.
- A Town Commissioner pointed out that due to the large amount of development all within the same time period means that there will be a large amount of street maintenance required all about the same time in about 20 years. Need to plan the budget accordingly.
- Communications infrastructure unlike other utilities does not have one point of contact. Avoid duplication of these services during the development process.

Parks & Recreation

Six Parks & Recreation strategies were ranked high including:

A3 - Develop a variety of park facilities to accommodate the recreational needs of residents with a wide range of interests and abilities.

B1 - Develop an equitable, spatial distribution of town park facilities to ensure access for all residents.

B2 - Plan for and build the physical infrastructure necessary to support an active living community, including bike lanes, sidewalks and greenways to make physical activity safe, accessible, and well connected to existing and planned trail segments that provide convenient access to all areas of town.

C1 - Continue to plan for and develop the Twelve Mile Creek corridor as the central connecting spine of the town-wide greenway system.

D1 - Continue to explore opportunities to partner with the county, school system and other organizations and government agencies to meet the future parks and recreation needs and demands of a growing population.

***D2** - Collaborate with the county to identify, plan, fund and construct parks and recreation facilities where facilities accomplish shared goals and meet regional demands.

There were no comments about Parks & Recreation and related strategies.

Natural & Environmental Resources

Five Natural & Environmental Resources strategies were ranked high including:

A2 - Prepare for the eventual requirement that Waxhaw obtain a Phase II stormwater permit by implementing those regulatory and operational programs necessary to comply with permit standards prior to them being imposed on the town.

B1 - Continue to enforce flood damage prevention regulations and establish a method of coordinating with the NC Flood Mapping Program to engage in the periodic evaluation of local flood maps.

C1 - Develop a “greenprint” plan to inventory the community’s natural assets and identify land and associated features that have significant environmental value. Use the plan to establish, either based on characteristics or location, which features should be given priority consideration to be maintained as protected open space as development occurs.

D2 - Review options for making regulatory changes to more effectively encourage the preservation of stands of mature trees on development tracts.

There were no comments about Natural & Environmental Resources and related strategies.

Historic Preservation

One Historic Preservation strategy was ranked high including:

B4 - Develop an action plan in partnership with Union County to upgrade the downtown water and sewer infrastructure to encourage the continued revitalization of historic properties and business development in downtown.

There were no comments about Historic Preservation and related strategies.

Cultural Resources

Two Cultural Resources strategies were ranked high including:

B3 - Continue to explore opportunities with the County to plan for a new regional library facility to meet the needs of a growing population in Waxhaw and the region that combines and incorporates other cultural resources, including group meeting rooms, display and demonstration spaces.

C1 - Coordinate the participation of local artists and craft makers with cultural events in the community.

Comments about Cultural Resources and related strategies included:

- It was highlighted that as compared to County’s Plan, Waxhaw has a high priority for a library, but the County does not.

Next Steps

- Town Board members expressed the plan was ready to move forward.
- David Godfrey thanked all of the committee members for their outstanding work on the Plan.
- Benchmark reviewed the steps for the adoption process and the subsequent implementation phase of the plan.
- The Steering Committee agreed that no further meetings were required and that after town staff review, the Final Plan should move forward for the Planning Board and Town Board consideration of adoption.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 pm

4.2 PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY



... Stop building houses!



... Grow but maintain it's character.



... Waxhaw to stay the same



... Bypass



... Double up the lanes on Providence



... be more kid friendly (teens)



... More Summer Festivals



... Finish Waxhaw Parkway!



... Build a new library



... widen Highway 16



... Build a new library



... install a traffic light at Gray Byrum!



... build a new library



... have a vibrant downtown!



... Stay connected as a community
... Preserve the historic buildings



... parks & growth



... Grow in a planned and managed fashion -
focus on the family.



... build overpass on 75 to Waxhaw



... support the equestrian community



... have sustained growth & green parks



... A destination library



... be a Destination



... Larger library



... builders to help fund schools



... have a new library



... larger parks at Harris Teeter



... build up mentoring for our kids & road expansion



... family friendly growth balanced with business success



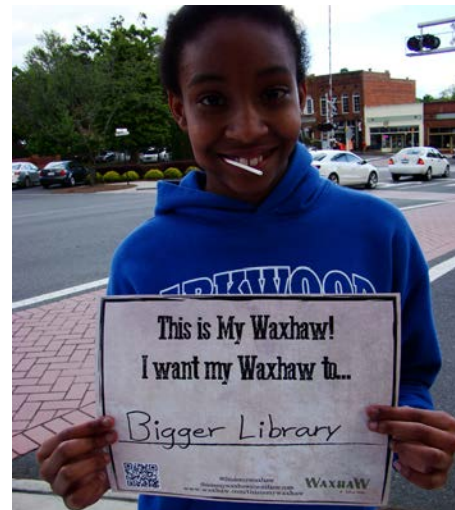
... keep the hometown feel!



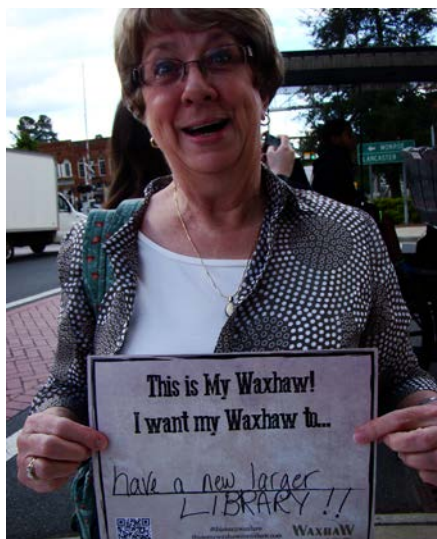
... child declaration for road safety



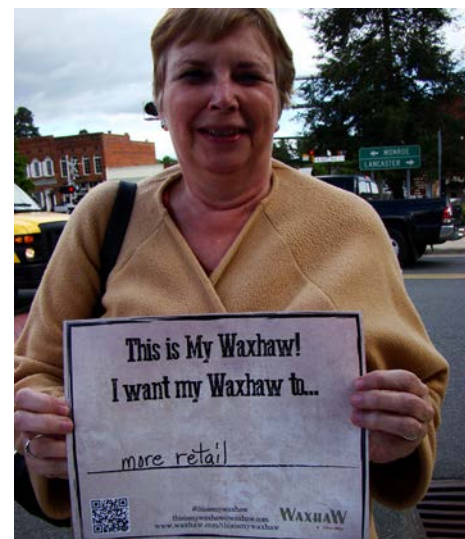
... Shop local



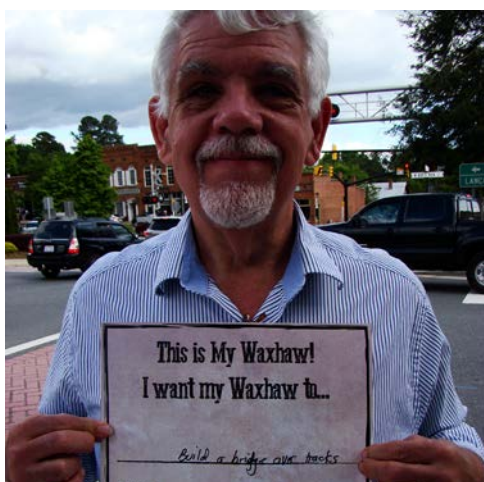
... Bigger library



... have a new larger library



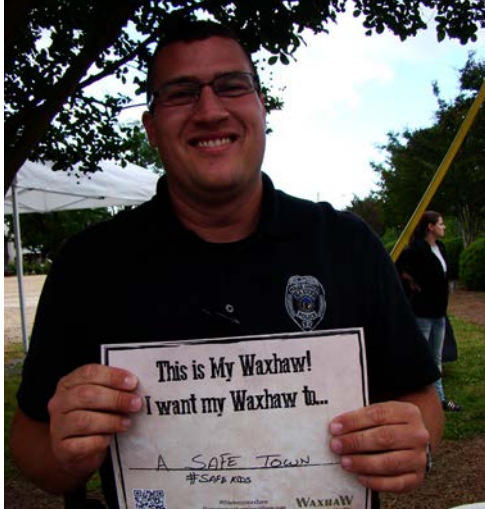
... more retail



... Build a bridge over tracks



... have a center for seniors!



... a safe town



... remain small and cozy



... railroad friendly & safe



... a big new library



... have a mini-golf



... less development



... have a new library



... have more parks for family friendly activities and more places to eat and shop in downtown



... keep its charm while prospering in the retail sector



... more walking trails



... another lending library, teen activities



... be family friendly.



... have more parks and playgrounds



... end traffic bottle necks at 16 & the tracks



... have breweries & a dog park!



... have a big water park



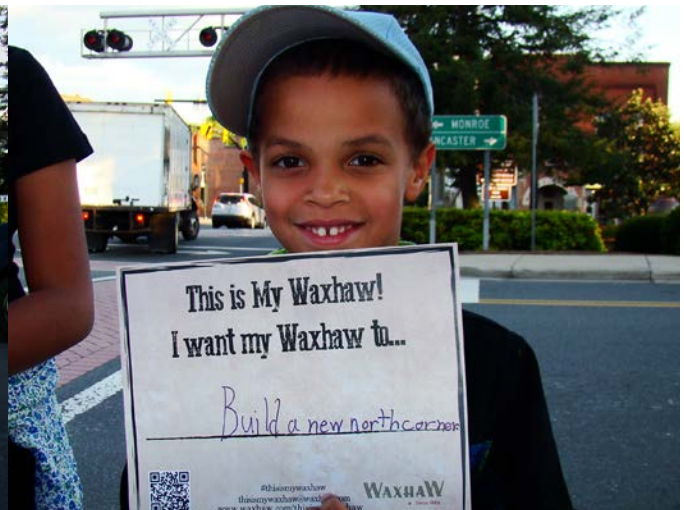
... a new library



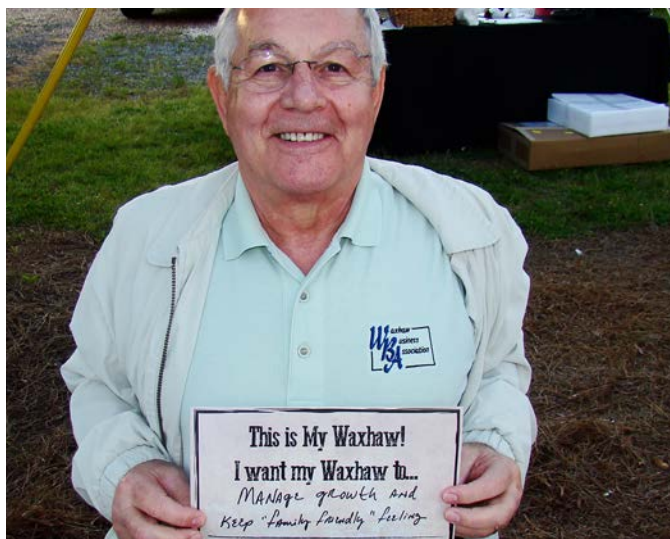
... build a bigger library!



... have another TCBY!



... build a new north corner



... Manage growth & keep family friendly feeling



... have a YMCA



... Family parks & recreation



... more traffic lights! More schools!



... come together as a community



... be family friendly



... be the best place to live



... stay quaint & charming



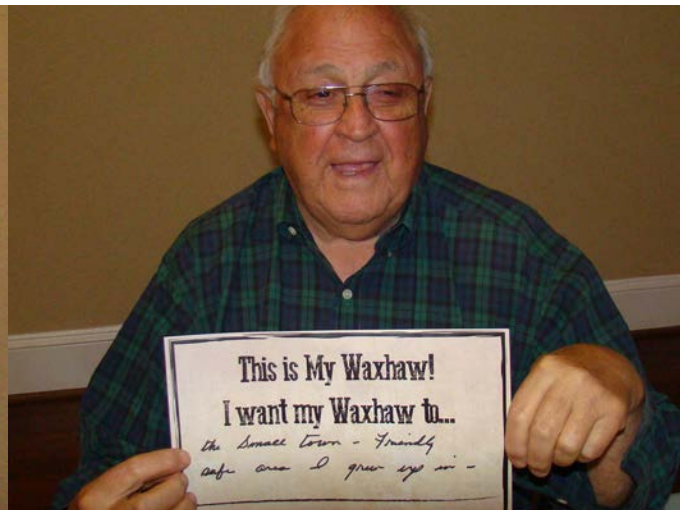
... Be a walking town
... Develop responsibly



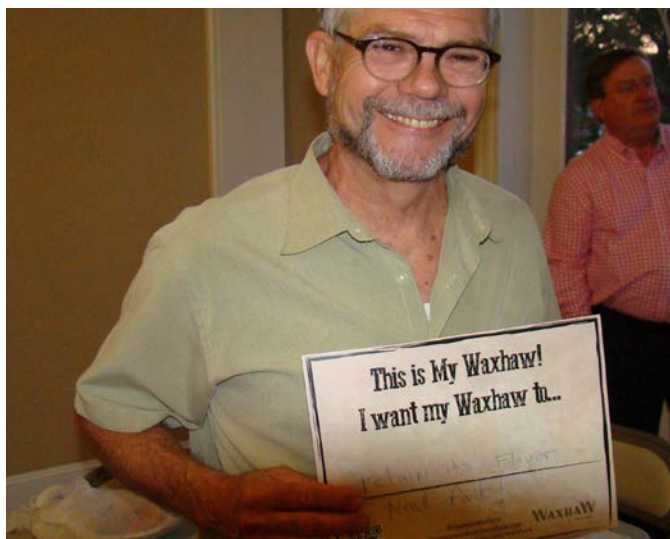
... be safe



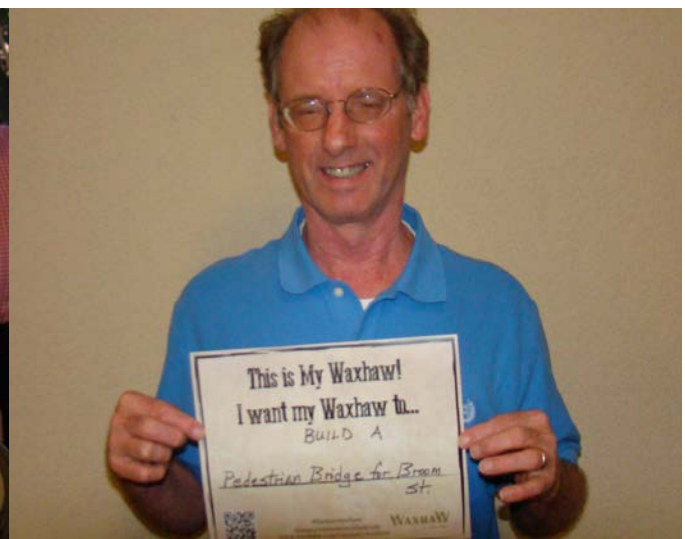
... have center left-turn lanes on Providence Rd.



... the small town friendly safe area I grew up in



... retain its flavor. Need Park!



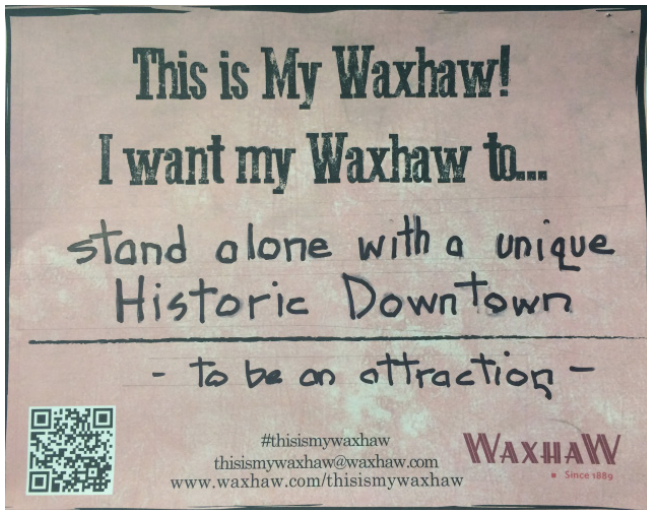
... build a pedestrian bridge for Broom St.



... Parks & recreation/infrastructure, sewage & water



... have wider road & an impact tax



...standalone with a unique Historic Downtown - to be an attraction



... Preserve historic properties and open space. Voluntarily protect natural areas from development. Keep public informed.



... Remove on street parking at Harris Teeter



... have bigger parks



... have a candy shop!



... mini golf



... Chick-Fil-A
... children's water park



... make better crosswalks downtown!



... stay the same



... walking trails



... hiking trails



... stay small & quaint



... brewery



... stay the same



... stay small



Town of Waxhaw
Comprehensive Plan

