

# **SANFORD & LEE COUNTY 2020 LAND USE PLAN**

*Adopted by the City of Sanford May 3, 1999*

*Adopted by Lee County May 4, 1999*

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# INTRODUCTION

## The Need for a Plan

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**O**ver the past several decades, Lee County has experienced steady growth and development. Its central importance to adjacent counties as an employment base and financial center, abundant water and sewer services, ample labor force, and the desire of the community to foster and maintain a progressive business climate, help to ensure growth in the future.

However, as growth and development occur, the pressure of development encroaching on the quality of life remains a possibility. Recognizing the need to update the aging Land Use Plan, both Lee County and City of Sanford appointed Steering Committees made up of a broad cross section of area residents. The Steering Committees were charged with guiding the preparation of the County and City of Sanford 2020 Land Use Development Plan, primarily for the physical development of the County and the City. The Comprehensive Development Plan is a policy-oriented document that allows flexibility in the physical development of the community yet at the same time employs sound planning principles to ensure a high standard of quality of life for area residents.

**Throughout the planning process, an extensive public involvement program was attempted for the purpose of identifying issues and determining their relative degree of importance to residents of the planning area.**

### The Planning Process

Throughout the planning process, an extensive public involvement program was attempted for the purpose of identifying issues and determining their relative degree of importance to residents of the planning area. Building upon this information, the Steering Committees reviewed, modified and endorsed a number of specific Policy Statements for consideration by the Lee County Commissioners and Sanford City Council. The policies that are presented in the document are the result of this process. As officially adopted policies of the County and City they will serve as a basis for future decisions on capital improvements, ordinances, zoning matters, subdivision approvals, and other related matters. Because the document refers to two jurisdictions in most cases, the term, “**Community**,” is used to denote both jurisdictions.

## Benefits of Long Range Planning

Planning for the future development of Lee County, North Carolina and its municipalities allows the **Community** to foresee any expansions and changes affecting their growth. It is the responsibility of the local governments and their elected officials to regulate development using the applicable tool, such as the Zoning Ordinance, the Subdivision Ordinance, or the Water Supply Watershed Ordinance.

**The primary function of the plan is to provide a long-range comprehensive planning tool that focuses on the politics guiding physical development.**

The primary function of the plan is to provide a long-range comprehensive planning tool that focuses on the politics guiding physical development. It lists goals and objectives representing a general direction that City and County leaders and citizens desire for the **Community**. The plan is designed to provide guidance during the review of rezoning requests, site plan proposals and subdivision proposals. The plan should be reviewed periodically as needed to update it as a policy document that predicts and responds to the changing conditions of the community.

With a comprehensive land use plan, the **Community** can utilize knowledge of existing conditions – county

land use, community services, population and housing trends – to project future needs. Improved development standards can be expected. Appropriate open space and recreation areas can be established with a land use plan. Future growth trends can reveal which areas are best suited for residential use, commercial use or industrial use.

Future water, sewer and street locations are important mechanisms in land use planning. In general, where there is water, sewer and streets there is development. It is imperative that both the City and County consider these matters when making future land use decisions. With meager planning and inadequate development, the quality of life of the **Community** could deteriorate. Police protection, drug intervention, aesthetics, education, environmental issues and strategic neighborhood planning are all quality of life issues that will be discussed in the 2020 Land Use Plan.



Figure 1. New Development

Regional planning issues outside of the planning jurisdiction of the City and the County that may have an impact on future growth and development should also be investigated. These issues include: the Randleman Dam; proposed designation of NC Highway 27/24 and US Highway 1 as interstate highways; the continued growth and development of the

Figure 2. Carthage Street, Sanford



Fort Bragg military structure; growth of the Triangle as a whole; and the proposed Chatham-Wake nuclear waste site.

Citizen participation enhances the content of this plan by creating goals established by the residents of the **Community**. Overall goals and objectives determined by the citizens will set the tone for future development. The comprehensive planning process has concentrated on “neighborhoods” of similar interest to address the goals and

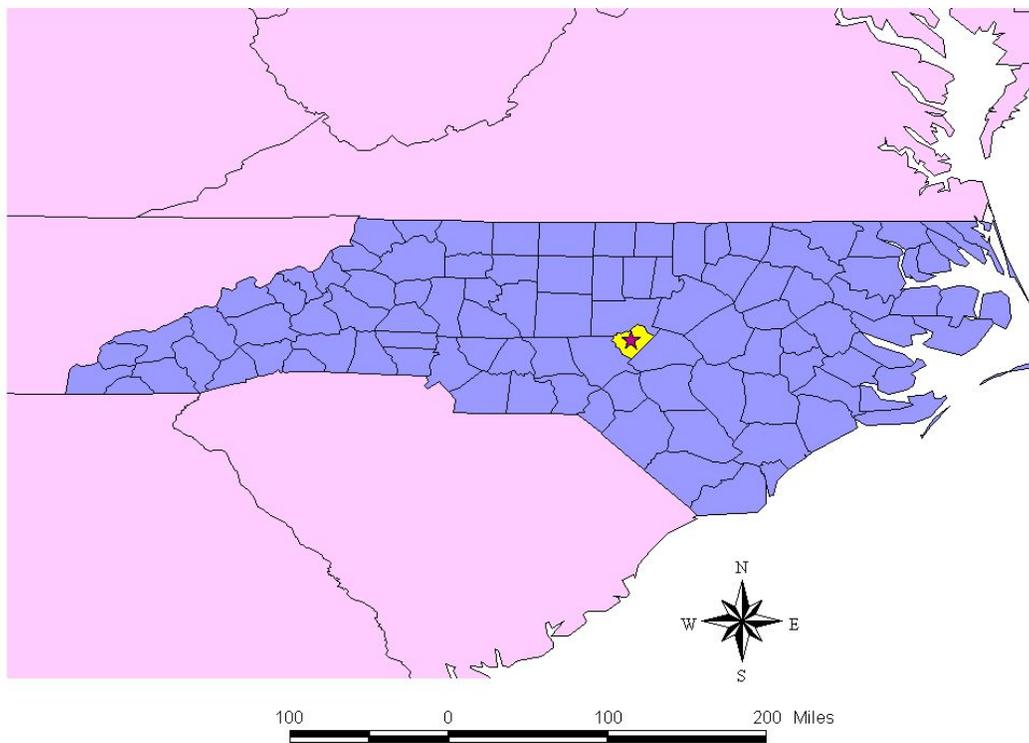
objectives of each neighborhood through strategic neighborhood plans. These strategic neighborhood plans will focus on the established goals, and will recommend action plans and implementation tools that will improve the quality of life within the neighborhoods. Area plans for each neighborhood will be discussed to help decide suitable development patterns.

**T**he City of Sanford and Lee County make up a unique **Community** with a rich history, important natural resources, and a diverse economy.

### Geographic Location

Lee County is situated in the geographic center of North Carolina. It is on the divide of the Coastal Plains to the east and the Piedmont to the west. The City of Sanford (Lee County Seat) is approximately forty-five (45) miles south of Raleigh and Durham. Approximately one hundred fifty (150) miles to the east is the Atlantic Ocean, and one hundred sixty (160) miles to the west are the Appalachian Mountains.

Figure 3. Lee County and the City of Sanford, North Carolina



### The County

Lee County was fashioned from parts of Moore and Chatham Counties on February 16, 1907. It received its name from General Robert E. Lee and was the 98<sup>th</sup> County to be

formed in North Carolina. The County's initial offices were located over Brown's Auto Supply, which was known later as Carter's Furniture Company. One year later (1908) the County's initial court was held in the old Opera House in the Page and Trust Company Building.

Although hunters and traders knew the area as early as the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, permanent settlers did not locate to the area until the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. According to historian Blackwell P. Robinson, the region was largely settled by Scotch settlers, many of them Highland Scots, fleeing oppression in their own country.

Little growth occurred in Lee County until the discovery of coal deposits in adjacent Chatham County. In 1868, Col. Charles O. Sanford arrived in North Carolina to supervise the construction of a railroad line. The line was to run through Chatham County, crossing the existing Western Railroad line just northwest of the Jonesboro area. The small town that developed at the crossroads of these rail lines quickly expanded. Today, the county is known for its extensive railroad system and diverse manufacturing base.

It should be recognized that the largest coal deposits in North Carolina were found in Lee County. During the early years of settlement, extracts from the once plentiful Pine trees supplied many states with tar, pitch and turpentine. Lee County is noted for its valuable shale (clay) deposits and is one of the Nation's largest brick producing centers.

There are several major highways that pass through the Sanford area. These highways include U.S. Highways 1, 15, 501 and 421. Business U.S. Highway 421 and Business U.S. highway 15/501 intersect near the downtown. N.C. State Highways 87, 78 and 42 also pass through the area. U.S. Highway 1 has been widened to a divided four-lane highway from Apex to Sanford and right of way acquisition has begun for the four-lane expansion of the highway south to Southern Pines. N.C. State Highway 87 from Sanford to Fayetteville is under construction to be widened to four lanes. Also, Horner Boulevard (U.S. Highway 421-Business) is currently being widened to a five-lane facility from Fields Drive south to Main Street.

**“The town of Sanford began to have a place on the map of the state about the year 1870 when the Raleigh and Augusta Railroad reached this point on its way south from the state capitol. For several years Sanford was the terminus of the road...”**

Sanford Express; March 15, 1934

## The City

The City of Sanford, established February 11, 1874, is named after Colonel Charles O. Sanford, a civil engineer credited for building the railroad from Raleigh to Sanford in 1872. Sanford had an initial population of approximately two hundred (200) persons.

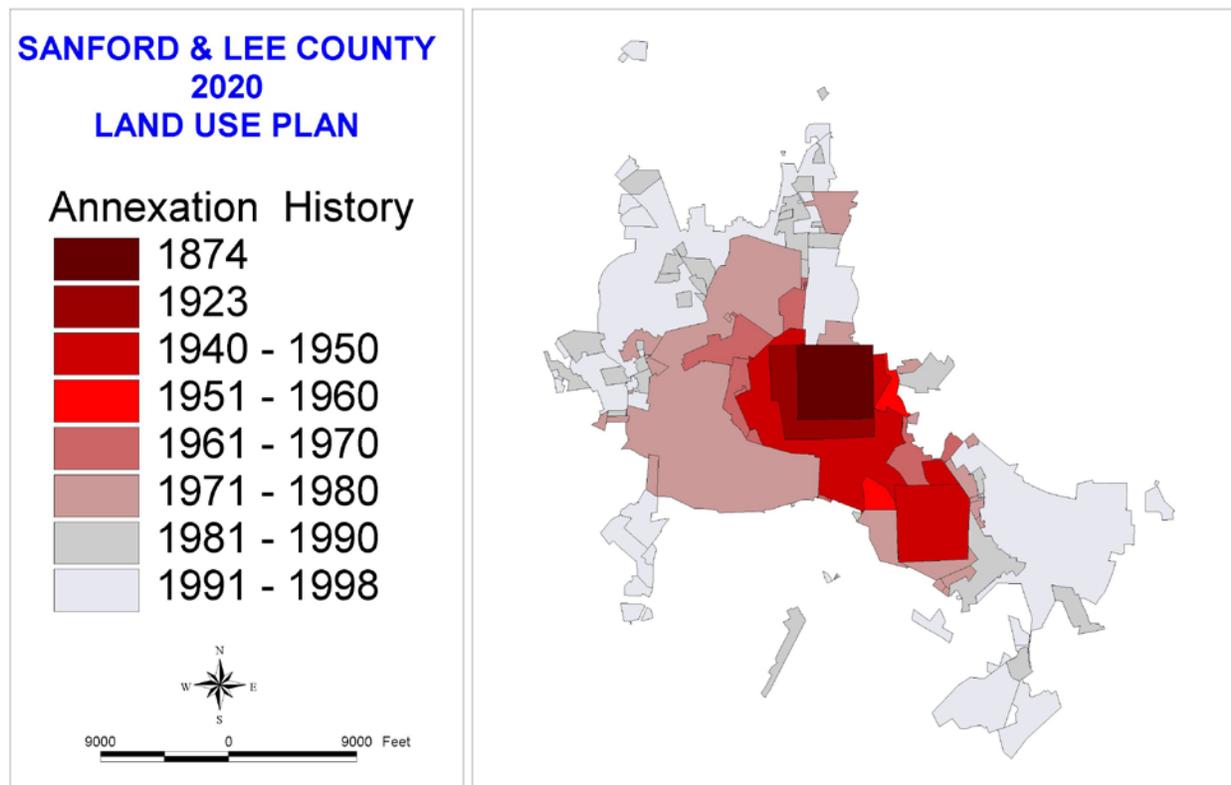
The original town limits were established around the crossing of the railroads. The railroad system had an important impact on the Town of Sanford.

At the time of the Jonesboro-Sanford merger on July 1, 1947, one citizen said, “Jonesboro is about 60 feet higher in elevation than Sanford, and is a suitable location for a city, but unfortunately no Raleigh and Augusta Railroad came to Jonesboro.”<sup>1</sup>

Major John W. Scott is responsible for the layout of the original town limits. He owned much of the land near the railroads where the Central Business District is today. The first school and church were built on land donated by Major Scott.

Around 1896, W. J. Edwards and others derived the idea of pumping water to the town from Lick Creek. Sanford prospered as the water was pumped into the town and the sewerage was pumped out. Industry, banks and medical facilities began to appear as the town grew.

**Figure 4** City of Sanford Annexation History



As more and more people came to Sanford, the economy grew. Banks, industries, schools, churches, and a hospital were needed. The population steadily grew from 236 people in 1880 to 1,044 in 1900. The population of Sanford in 1940 reached 4,960. The Jonesboro merger increased the population of Sanford drastically, and opened Sanford to urbanized areas southeast of the original city limits. By 1950, Sanford had a

<sup>1</sup> “Sanford Herald” interview with Mrs. LP Cox and written by Sandra Let.

population of 10,013. Today, the population is about 21,518. Much of the population increase has occurred because of annexations to the City of Sanford (Figure 4).

## **Climate**

The Atlantic Ocean and the Appalachian Mountains influence climate in Lee County. The Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico are the principal source of precipitation. The mountains provide partial protection from masses of cold air, which flow southward from Canada.

Average length of the frost-free growing season on the area is normally two hundred (200) days. The latest to expect temperatures of 32° F or less is early April. The earliest occurrence of frost in the fall is late October. The average annual temperature for Lee County is approximately 61°F. Seasonal temperatures range from July averages of 79°F to January temperature averages of 44°F. Annual precipitation averages about forty-seven (47) inches with the heaviest rainfall occurring from June to September.

## **Physiography and Geography**

Lee County is located in two (2) physiographic regions. The northwestern two-thirds of the area is in the Piedmont and the southeastern portion lies in the Coastal Plain. This variation is reflected in the geology, soils, topography and drainage of the two areas, and is partially responsible for the expansion of industry in the Jonesboro area over the past few decades. The Jonesboro region is flatter, thus making it a more suitable site for industry.

The fall line that separates the two (2) physiographic regions generally follows Cortland Avenue northeast to Lee Avenue and then turns eastward. North of the fall line, the terrain varies from relatively flat areas, many of which are already developed, to very hilly areas with slopes exceeding twenty (20) percent. The roughest terrain is located east of Sanford near Oldham's Lake.

High density development in areas with slopes over twenty (20) percent should be discouraged because of potential erosion problems and the expense of providing public services and utilities. South of the fall line, slopes are not as steep and are much more favorable to intensive development.

## **Soils**

The soils of Lee County play a major role in determining land use. Some are better suited for agricultural uses, some for industrial uses, and some for residential uses. There are eight (8) different soil classifications in Lee County. Please refer to the 1987 Lee County Soil Survey for each of the classifications. General characteristics, texture, crop rating, septic tank rating, urban use rating, limitations, and hazards are given for each of the different classifications.

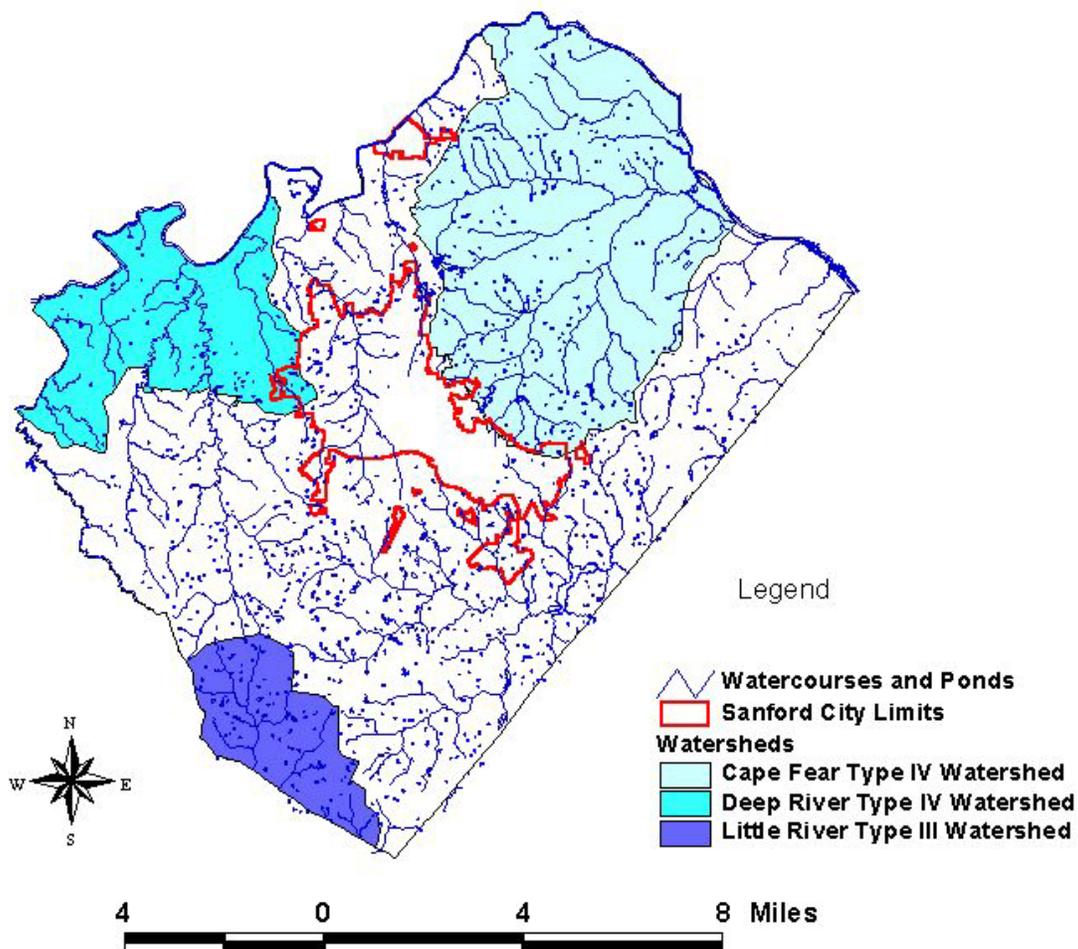
Approximately sixty (60) percent of Sanford is underlain with the Mayodan-Urban (MrB) soil classification. It has a slope of two (2%) to eight (8%) percent. Permeability, water capacity and shrink-swell potential is moderate for this soil. The main limitations for most uses are low strength and moderate shrink-swell potential. Also found is the urban land (Ur) classification, situated in the business districts and dominated by impervious surface.

The Jonesboro area is comprised of the Dothan loamy sand (DoA) with a zero (0) to two (2) percent slope; the Dothan loamy sand (DoB) with a two (2) to eight (8) percent slope; and the Fuquay loamy sand (FuB) with a zero (0) to six (6) percent slope. These soils can be used for cropland. They are also suited for urban uses, and their permeability ranges from rapid to moderate.

## Sensitive Environmental Resources

The Triangle Land Conservancy conducted a preliminary inventory of significant natural areas in Lee County in July 1996. The study identified and ranked natural sites

Figure 5. Lee County Watersheds



according to the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program's significance ratings. The inventory found one site of national significance, three sites of state significance, and 33 sites of County, local, or unknown significance.

Lee County's streams run into the Deep River, the Cape Fear River, and the Little River. The County has three watersheds which have been identified as water supply watersheds by the State of North Carolina. The Cape Fear River Watershed and the Deep River Watershed are Class IV Watersheds and the Little River Watershed is a Class III Watershed.

## Community Profile

- o **Population**
- o **Population characteristics**
- o **Geography**
- o **Taxes**
- o **Development**
- o **Housing**
- o **Economic Characteristics**



### Population

City of Sanford	22,814 (estimate as of July 1, 1998)
Town of Broadway	1,084 (estimate as of July 1, 1997)
Lee County	49,456 (estimate as of July 1, 1998)
North Carolina	7,431,161 (estimate as of July 1, 1997)

### Population Characteristics

75.6% White (1990 Census)  
22.8% Black (1990 Census)  
01.6% other racial group (1990 Census)  
182.81 Person per square mile population density (1996 Lee County)  
921.40 Person per square mile population density (1996 City of Sanford)  
75,601 Population projected for the year 2020

### Geography

Sanford	23.9 square miles
Planning Jurisdiction	9.5 square miles
Broadway	1.3 square miles
Lee County	259.3 square miles

### Taxes

Sanford 1998-1999 Tax Rate	\$ 0.55 per \$100 of assessed value
Broadway 1998-1999 Tax Rate	\$ 0.59 per \$100 of assessed value
County 1998-1999 Tax Rate	\$ 0.71 per \$100 of assessed value

*(Sanford and Broadway residents pay both City and County taxes for real estate and personal property)*

## Development

### Value of Construction Authorized - 1998

Sanford	\$ 37,134,071
Lee County	\$ 20,445,442

### Residential Permits Issued - 1998

Sanford	187
Lee County	392

### Commercial Building Permit Value - 1998

Sanford	\$ 24,295,962
Lee County	\$ 2,942,350

## Housing

Total Number of Housing Units as of July 1998:	19,996 (All of Lee County)
Single-Family Units	68%
Apartment and Condominium Units	14%
Other	18%

Median Contract Rent (1997)	\$ 364
Median Home Sale Price (1997)	\$ 60,593

## Economic Characteristics

Gross Retail Sales 1997:	
Sanford	\$ 545,753,699
Lee County Include Sanford and Broadway	\$ 651,221,398
Average Household Size	2.60
Per Capita Personal Income	\$ 25,252
Median Family Income	\$ 40,100
% Population in Labor Force	54.9% (as of March 1999)
Unemployment Rate	3.5% (as of August 1999)

### Bond Rating for City of Sanford

- Standard & Poor's A1
- Moody's A+

### Bond Rating for Lee County

- Standard & Poor's A+
- Moody's A1

Updated May 1999

### *How Much Will We Grow?*

**S**anford and Lee County are going through an important transition, and planning for the future must be based on the realities of what this **Community** is becoming. The realities of population growth, traffic congestion, and housing and household structure, have

*The realities of population growth, limited land and tax base, traffic congestion, housing and household structure, have contributed to the transformation of Lee County to an urban community with the desire to maintain the small community quality.*

contributed to the transformation of Lee County to an urban community with the desire to maintain a small community quality.

To plan for the future, we need a common base of assumptions about the kind of future taking shape.

*We need to make assumptions about the number of people and where they are expected to live, about the number and type of households and the kind of housing they will need, about the number and mix of jobs and where they are most likely to locate.*

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The Steering Committees examined the trends and made projections about population, households, and jobs. These trends tell us what can be expected by the year 2020 if current growth patterns continue. (These projections will be updated at least every two years to reflect any changes in growth patterns.)

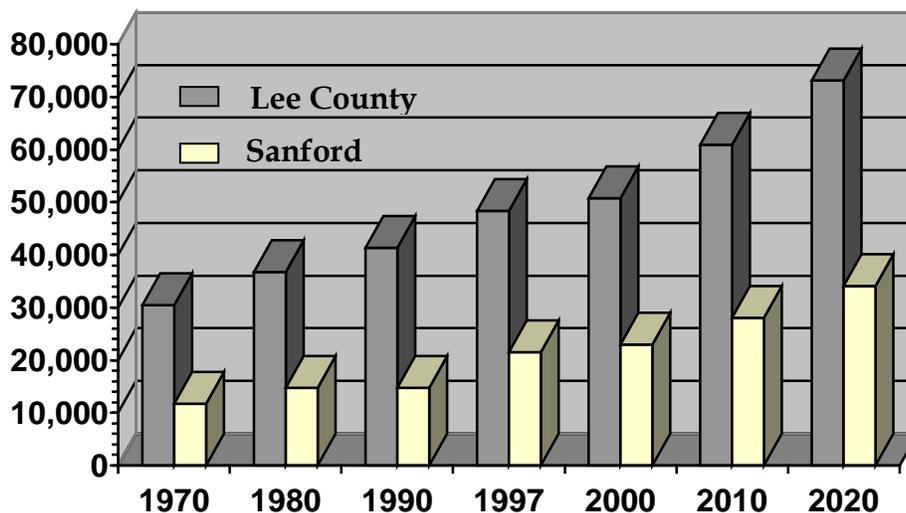
## Population Assumptions

Sanford and Lee County are expected to grow in the years ahead but at a moderate rate: about 2% percent each year. This growth rate means the total county population will increase by a little over 967 persons each year as the **Community** moves from an estimated 48,369 persons in 1997 toward a projected 75,601 persons in the year 2020.

In 1990, Lee County boasted a population of about 41,370 persons. Over the last decade, Lee County experienced population growth due to in migration at an annual rate of about 2 percent. During the same period, The City of Sanford grew somewhat faster, due to annexation, at an annual growth rate of about 21.7 percent.

Population projections are educated assumptions, based on past trends and current information, about how much the community will grow in the future. Lee County is expected to maintain its moderate growth rate into the next century. The County population projected for year 2020 is about 75,601 people, reflecting a long-term annual growth rate of about 2 percent. The City of Sanford growth rate will likely be somewhat higher as annexation takes in more county residents.

**Figure 6** Lee County Population Projection for Year 2020



Sources: US Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, NC Office of State Planning And Planning Department Staff Projections using 2% annual growth rate

Racial composition is another element in the County's demographics. In 1990, 75.6% of Lee County's citizen were white, 22.8% were black and 1.6 % were of Hispanic and other race. For the last seven years, the racial composition in the County has maintained a constant proportionality between the white and black population. However, there has been a big jump in the Hispanic population. Since 1990, the Hispanic population has

increased by at least 200%. The evaluation of the limited data available at Lee County schools, and the 18 top employers in Lee County, shows the Hispanic population grew from an estimated 900 persons in 1990 to an estimated 3,075 persons in 1996. The City of Sanford's inner neighborhoods remain centers for the black population and the emerging Hispanic population, but approximately one quarter of the other neighborhoods in the County now have a significant racial mix. The Sandhills area of Lee County has the largest percentage of minority residents.

### **A population with a substantial number of elderly and young residents.**

The age structure of Lee County's population influences the area's economic dynamics and service needs. The largest segment of Lee County's population (60.6%) falls into the 18 – 64 year old working age brackets. Those in the 18 – 44 age group are now, and will continue to be, the largest segment of this population. However, Lee County's elderly residents, age 65 and over, and youth, age 17 and under, together comprise 39.4% of the county's population. These non-working age groups are a vital

Figure 7 Deep River Elementary Students



part of the community, but do require a variety of health, education, recreation and other human services. The elderly population in Lee County is rising while contributing a smaller share to current county and city revenues.

### **Lee County can share the benefits of the region's growth by continuing its active economic development efforts.**

As the employment center for the region, Lee County must continue to create jobs for its 18 to 44 year old working age groups, maintain efficient means of transportation to the county's principal employment centers for the commuters in the work force, and stimulate growth of retail and other support services for these workers.

### **Housing development will be important to the county's overall health.**

There will be an increase in the need for housing catering to new households comprised of single adults, childless couples or smaller families. The development of new housing or the renovation of existing housing for these groups can be an important factor in attracting new residents to the county. Although stable population levels are forecast, this assumes a dynamic housing market. The more responsive the county's real estate market can be, the larger the share of the region's growth Lee County can attract.

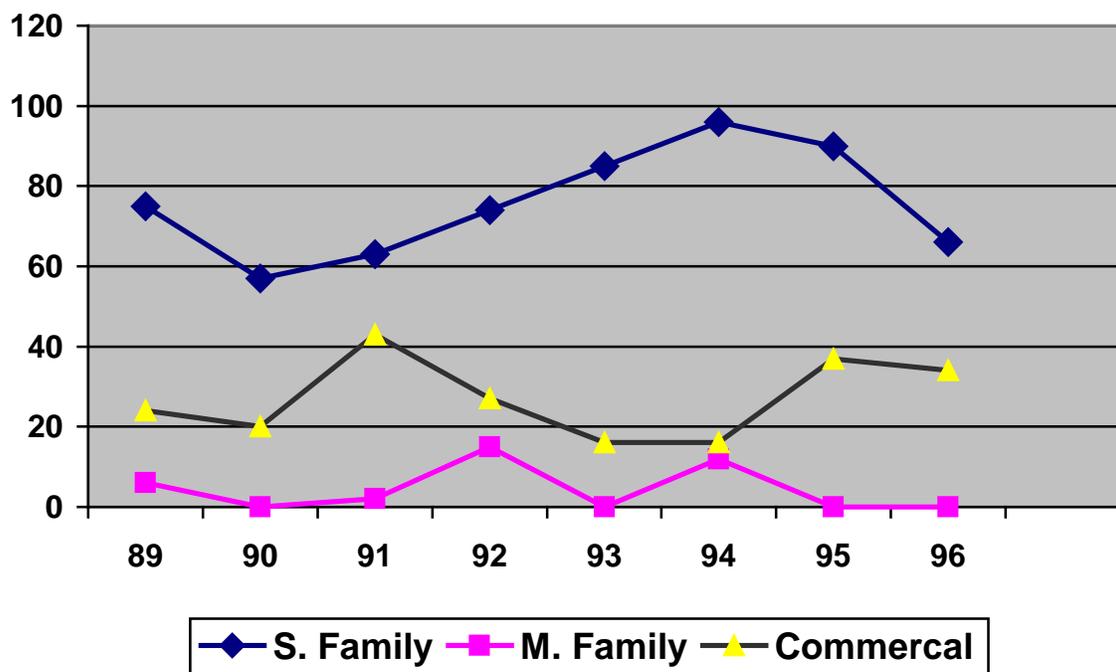
## Changing neighborhood demographics will require adjustments in the locations and types of public services and facilities.

While the overall capacity needs of schools and other public services and facilities are not expected to dramatically increase, demand for services for some groups such as the elderly and lower income residents will increase. In addition, changes in age and household composition will require timely and responsive adjustments in the provision of services. This must be a key strategy if quality services are to be provided for all population groups throughout the county.

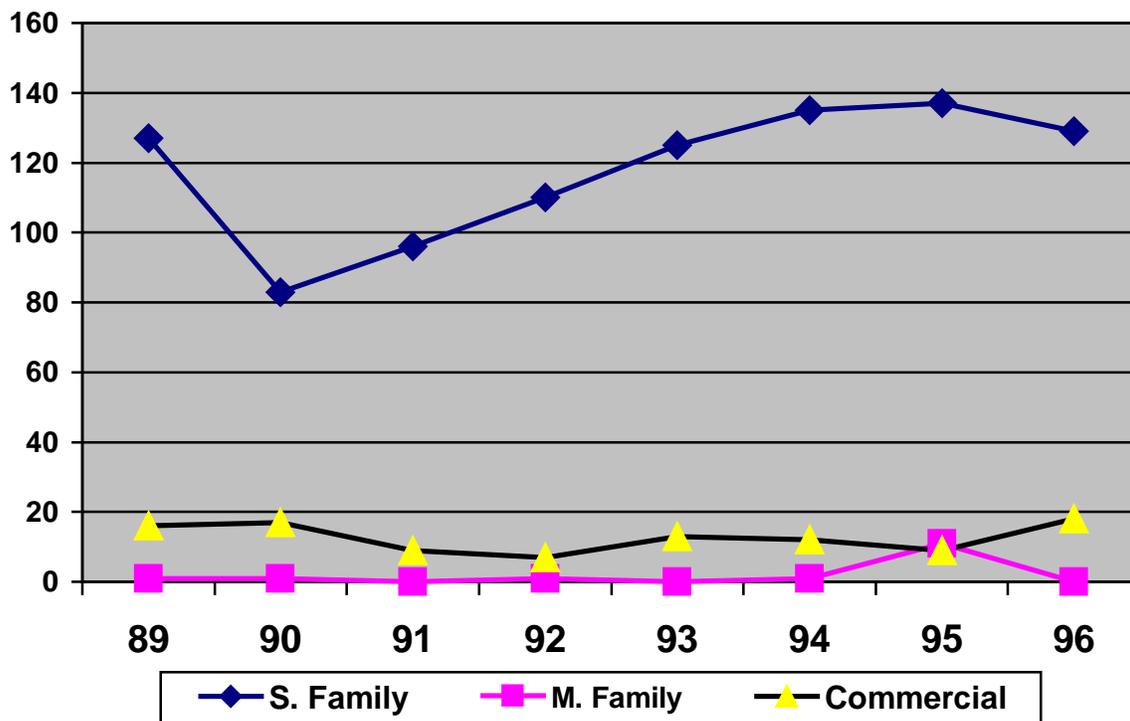
### Population/Building Permit Relationship

A search of the Lee County and City of Sanford building inspections records shows steady growth in the number of housing and building permits. The basic result of this inquiry is set forth in two graphic tables (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

**Figure 8** Construction Permits in Sanford City Limits



**Figure 9** Construction Permits in Lee County

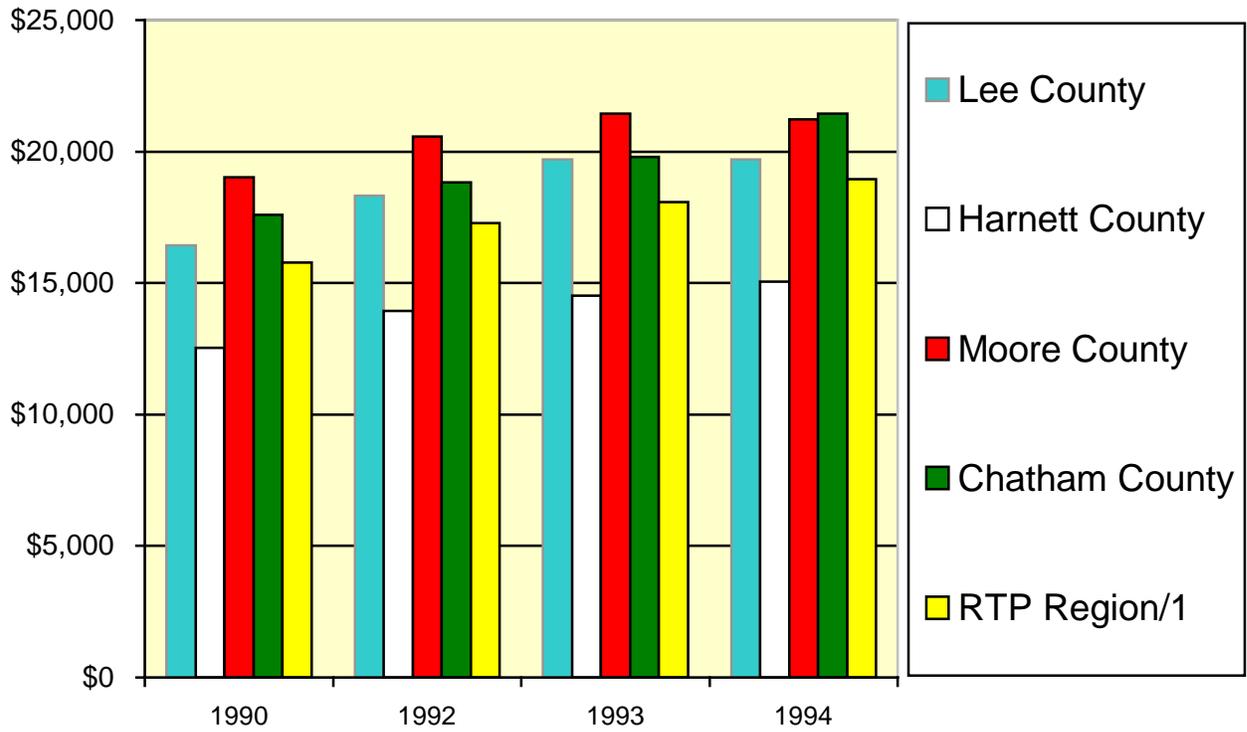


## Income

According to demographic information supplied by Equifax Marketing and Decisions Systems and the U.S. Bureau of Census, per capita incomes in Lee County have risen steadily since 1990. The County's 1997 estimated per capita income was higher than that of the City of Sanford, Harnett County and the greater Research Triangle Park region's average (Figure 5). Both the City and County's per capita and median household incomes were below the State's. The County's 1997 median household income was \$31,697. In comparison, the median household income for both the City was \$25,859, and \$33,360 for the State.

Sales and Marketing Magazine reported that 32% of Lee County's 1996 households had an income of less than \$20,000. This percentage is similar to surrounding Counties and States. Twenty-three percent had incomes over \$50,000. Equifax National Decisions Systems reported that the County had a greater percentage of households under \$25,000, particularly in the \$5,000 - \$15,000 ranges. Both the City and County had a similar percentage of households in the \$75,000 - \$100,000 ranges.

**Figure 10.** Per Capita Income for Lee and Surrounding Counties



1/ Includes the following Counties in N.C.: Chatham, Durham, Franklin, Greenville, Harnett, Johnston, Lee, Moore, Orange, Person, Vance, Wake and Warren.

Source: N.C. State Data Center, N.C. RTRP Data File 1994.

**T**hrough a survey conducted by the Planning staff it was determined that most residents of the **Community** agree that our community is a good place to live, and a good place to do business.

**Community  
Leaders  
Planning  
For A  
Livable  
Community  
In the 21<sup>st</sup>  
Century**

We are proud of our image as a livable **Community** – a community set in the pleasant landscape of the Sandhills and Piedmont countryside, with thriving neighborhoods, stately trees, and a growing array of social, cultural, and educational amenities.

We appreciate, as well, the fact that we are a prosperous community whose leaders are committed to the need for jobs, a strong tax base, and an economic climate attractive to business investment.

Both assets —*Livability and economic vitality*— must be preserved and strengthened as we plan for the future.

The plan provides us with a vision for the future of the **Community** as well as detailed recommendations on how the vision can be achieved over the next 23 years

### Transportation

People wait for what seems like “forever” for the light to change at a major intersection, on-street parking makes the street very narrow, roads need improvement, what can be done? How are the County and the City planning to address these and other transportation problems?

### City Gateways

Sanford’s entrance corridors are not as attractive as they should be. What can be done to improve Sanford’s image?

### Economic Development

Lee County has a wealth of cultural events, availability of open space, a stable tax base, and a good school system. What can the County do to promote tourism and economic development?

***“ If you  
don’t know  
where  
you’re  
going, you  
might end  
up  
someplace  
else.”***

Casey Stengel

## Commercial Revitalization

Some businesses in Sanford's older commercial centers and areas are not doing as well as we would like. What improvements can be made? How can we make downtown and other commercial areas attractive?

## Parks

How many new parks are needed to meet Lee County's population, which is projected to grow? What kind of facilities should these parks include? Bike trail? Walking trail? Swimming pool?

## Shopping Centers

When a new shopping center is proposed – how will the planning commission and board of aldermen assess its impact and appropriateness in that location? What kind of access should there be? How much landscaping and how much off-street parking should be required?

**Figure 11** View of Carthage Street in Sanford

## Downtown

There are vacant buildings and second level vacancies in downtown. What can the City do to promote these sites and make them attractive to the private sector?



## Implementation Priorities

Since there are many improvements necessary to enhance our **Community**, how will priorities be determined?

## Manufactured Homes

Since there is a lot of demand for Manufactured Homes, and a need to provide affordable housing, what we need to do to make sure that these developments are safe, meet all community codes and standards, and all follow uniform development guidelines?

## County Water Lines

Is our community equipped with the necessary public infrastructure to meet the needs of current growth and meet the demands of potential growth in the next 20 years?

## Preservation of Farmland

Do we need growth that strips our community from its farmland or growth that complements its farmland? Will the loss of farmland diminish our quality of life?

## Water, Air Quality and Natural Resources

How can we make sure these natural resources are protected and enhanced for future generations? How can we protect water and air quality? Do we have adequate water and sewer service? How much open space and agriculture will remain in the environment?

### Planning and Development Key Issues

The **Community** has experienced many benefits from its growth. Our local economy is very strong, and the range and number of lifestyle and employment choices are widening. Growth is occurring in almost all parts of the County, reflecting an overall balanced growth pattern. And more emphasis is being placed on the overall quality of life.

But the projections for the growth in the next twenty three years, and the realistic assessment of the mounting problems associated with urban sprawl and an expanding population, alert us to the fact that Sanford and Lee County are in store for tremendous change in the future, change that may not be positive. If we continue to develop and urbanize without changing our current course in many regards, our long term economic prosperity and quality of life will be in jeopardy. We only have to look at other major metropolitan areas ahead of us in their evolution to see how the choices these communities made or didn't make influenced their ultimate urban form.

Figure 12 View of Deep River



***But the projections for the growth in the next twenty three years, and the realistic assessment of the mounting problems associated with urban sprawl and an expanding population, alert us to the fact that Sanford and Lee County are in store for tremendous change in the future, change that may not be positive.***

## KEY ISSUES:

A number of challenges face Lee County and the City of Sanford. Community safety and the cost of and the delivery of public services in light of diminishing resources top the priority list of community elected officials' concerns. These issues must continue to be focused on intently. However, in terms of the future of the community's physical development, Planning Staff suggests that four key issues stand out among all others as the most critical to address in the next five to ten years.

### ✓ **FOUR KEY ISSUE AREAS** *Identified by planning staff:*

- 1- Economic Development**
- 2- Land Use and Transportation**
- 3- Urban Design**
- 4- Regionalism**

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### KEY ISSUE: JOB GROWTH

*Potential Cost of Not Being Economically Competitive*

- 4 Decreasing rate of job growth resulting in loss of tax base to support increasing service and infrastructure costs.
- 4 Higher unemployment in the center of the City due to inaccessibility to jobs, and competition with labor pool in the surrounding areas.
- 4 Weakened downtown due to decentralization of corporate jobs, particularly in the finance, retail and service industries.
- 4 Loss of population to outlying areas where new jobs are relocating.
- 4 Relocation of retail and other industries to the out-lying areas.

## LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION

### KEY ISSUE: DENSITY AND TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

*Potential Cost of Continued Urban Sprawl and Decline in Older Neighborhoods*

- 4 Increased costs of public services and higher taxes.
- 4 Longer driving times and increased traffic congestion and air pollution.
- 4 Loss of open space.
- 4 Higher cost of housing.

- 4 Loss of competitive edge as a place to do business.
- 4 Higher cost to public of protecting air quality.
- 4 Higher rates of unemployment for lower income residents who do not own cars.
- 4 Loss of character and urban scale on older community streets due to road widening.
- 4 Limited options for pedestrians or bicyclists.
- 4 Spread and escalation of the problem, and continued loss of human potential.

## URBAN DESIGN

### KEY ISSUE: COMMUNITY IDENTITY

#### *Potential Cost of Disconnected Development and Design*

- 4 Lack of community identity or “sense of place”, particularly in newly developing areas.
- 4 Loss of competitive edge as a place to locate.
- 4 More vehicular trips and congestion.
- 4 Higher cost of providing services and infrastructure.

## REGIONALISM

### ISSUE: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

#### *Potential Cost of Lack of Coordinated Planning*

- 4 Independent and piecemeal planning and decision making.
- 4 Constant social, economic, and political conflict creating even greater polarization and competition.
- 4 Unnecessary duplication and costs of providing services.





Goals for the future development and growth of the City of Sanford and Lee County will help guide public decisions concerning the built and natural environment for the benefit of existing and future generations. The goals included in our Land Use Plan are based on the ideas, concerns, and visions described by the citizens of this community during the workshops and the plan's development.

*The goals included in the our Land use Plan are based on the ideas, concerns and visions described by the citizens of this Community during the workshops and Plan's development.*

As we move toward becoming an urban community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we need to have a clear vision of the future we want as a community so that we can use our limited resources to their best advantage. We need to establish a community vision, or growth theme, with overall goals; otherwise, we may end up duplicating our efforts and working at cross-purposes.

Our growth theme is based on the belief in the value of a positive image for our community, and on the belief that the best way to grow is to provide opportunities for economic mobility for all segments of the population.

Our growth theme for the **Community** calls for achieving the projected population and economic growth levels through a strategy that addresses the following needs:

- v To market the community as an area that provides a good environment for business, both new and existing.
  - v To direct new development toward less developed geographic areas of the county without encouraging urban sprawl, while providing jobs in a wide spectrum of occupation categories.
  - v To maintain and enhance the quality of life that we have traditionally enjoyed in the community. The best way to meet this need is by the establishment of overall goals. We have defined our overall goals in three terms.
- ✓ Balanced Growth
  - ✓ Compact Land Use Pattern
  - ✓ Livable Community Design Standards

## 2020 Plan Overall Goals

### v **Balanced Growth:** *Why Is This Goal Important?*

**...and the center of the City of Sanford was and is experiencing a gradual loss of population.**

Balanced growth is an important goal because a disproportionate amount of development was and is taking place in the southern and western parts of the **Community**. Other areas of the community were seeing relatively little development activity, and the center of the City of Sanford was and is experiencing a gradual loss of population.

The 2020 plan will show that unbalanced growth is likely to lead to:

- Overburdened roads and utility systems in high growth areas
- Loss of jobs
- Loss of tax base
- Uncontrolled development quality in adjacent counties
- Social and economic problems associated with population loss and economic decline in the center of the city.

Consequently, the plan envisions development of redevelopment in all parts of the community, and identifies growth strategies which will help promote balanced growth.

### v **A More Compact Land Use Pattern:** *Why Is This Goal Important?*

This goal addresses the inevitable problems associated with allowing a low density, dispersed development pattern to dominate. Sprawling development leads to higher infrastructure and service costs, a lack of diversity in housing types and affordability, more traffic congestion and longer driving distances and times, and a lack of unique community identity.

Figure 13. Strip Mall Parking Lot



**...increasing locations for multi-family housing and overall densities; focusing intensive development within corridors and mixed use areas.**

**Figure 14** View of Rosemount McIver Park Historic District



The 2020 plan will identify ways to encourage a more compact urban development pattern. Such strategies include:

- Increasing locations for multi-family housing and overall densities
- Focusing intensive development within corridors and mixed use areas
- Introducing the second floor apartment in Sanford's downtown area
- Improving and rehabbing housing stocks in older neighborhoods.

v **Livable Community Design Standards:** *Why Is This Goal Important?*

**...strip development has flourished with little if any sensitivity to the appearance of the streetscape or the relationship to neighborhoods**

The policies and regulations currently influencing the quality of life aspect of development are generally those established in the 1960's. For example, strip development has flourished with little if any sensitivity to the appearance of the streetscape or the relationship to neighborhoods behind the strip. Similarly, separation requirements between industrial uses and housing were minimal.

Recognizing the importance of maintaining an attractive and livable community, as increasingly more of the landscape will be developed, the 2020 plan emphasizes an agenda that promotes higher design standards. It also recommends that parks, greenways, and environmental planning become a higher priority and that more attention be devoted to neighborhoods, the building blocks of the community.

## Significant Planning Goals to Pursue

*The community's window of opportunity for changing its current course is narrowing. The decisions we make in the next decade will be critical to our ultimate future.*

The community's window of opportunity for changing its current course is narrowing. The decisions we make in the next decade will be critical to our ultimate future. It is important to be strategic and put our collective energy into those things that will make the most significant difference in shaping our future. Planning staff believes the following goals must be achieved in the next five to ten years to support economic growth and an excellent quality of life in the long run.

Figure 15. Steele Street, Sanford



Each of those goals is important to seek in and of themselves; however, all of them are strongly interconnected. For example, the connection between our economic growth, land use pattern, transportation system, and air quality is apparent. How land develops influences the length and number of driving trips throughout the community. The design of our transportation system reinforces how land develops...whether it is

spread out or concentrated. The number of cars on the road impacts air quality. And all of these factors contribute to our local and metropolitan business and jobs climate.

Similarly, the development and transportation pattern and job growth opportunities in the suburban areas affect economic development, accessibility to jobs, and neighborhood revitalization in the central areas of the **Community**. The relationship holds in reverse – the physical, social, and economic stability of the central areas of the community can dramatically influence the economic appeal and quality of life in the suburban areas in the county and region.

## Land Use

- Goal 1. Stabilize and strengthen older in-town commercial centers and residential neighborhoods.
- Goal 2. Achieve quality growth in the **Community**.
- Goal 3. Use existing infrastructure efficiently and attract compact neighborhoods to the center of Sanford.
- Goal 4. Encourage and increase home ownership.

## Urban Design

- Goal 1. Promote high-quality design and reduce vision clutter along major arterial roads and highways.
- Goal 2. Identify mechanisms and tools necessary to provide long term quality development and attractive public space.
- Goal 3. Improve the overall appearance of the **Community**.

*“Our current round of suburban growth is generating a crisis of many facets: mounting traffic congestion; diminishing affordable housing; receding open space; and stressful social patterns. The truth is we are using planning strategies which are 40 years old and relevant to a different culture; our household makeup has changed dramatically; the workplace and workforce has transformed; real wealth is shrinking; and environmental concerns have surfaced. But we are still building World War II suburbs as if families were large and had only one breadwinner, as if the jobs were all downtown, as if land and energy were endless and as if another lane of the freeway would end traffic.”*

**Peter Calthorpe, New Strategies for Suburban Growth**

## Economic Development

- Goal 1. Enhance the tax base and fiscal health of the **Community** through the development of a sound, balanced and diversified economic base.
- Goal 2. Promote the community as a major activity center for retail, recreation, and cultural activities.

## Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

- Goal 1. Provide adequate and accessible park and recreation facilities to meet the needs and interests of the **Community**.

## Transportation

- Goal 1. Develop a transportation system that provides safe, effective, efficient traffic flow.
- Goal 2. Develop a comprehensive pedestrian system for the **Community**.

## Public Facilities

- Goal 1. Provide an adequate sewerage system to meet the current and future needs of the **Community**.
- Goal 2. Provide a safe and adequate water supply.
- Goal 3. Provide adequate and efficient sanitation services.
- Goal 4. Maintain the library in downtown Sanford.

## Regionalism and Planning Coordination

- Goal 1. Build multi-jurisdictional consensus on, and implement a decision-making mechanism to coordinate land use, transportation, utility, and environmental planning and service delivery on a regional scale.

## Environmentally-Sensitive Areas

- Goal 1. Preserve stream valleys for open space corridors and passive recreation.
- Goal 2. Identify, protect and enhance ecologically valuable land and surface water for the present and future of the **Community** residents.
- Goal 3. Promote Lee County as a “GREEN” community.
- Goal 4. Create buffering along all creeks, rivers, and floodplains in the community.

## Historic Preservation

- Goal 1. Maintain the historic character of the **Community**.
- Goal 2. Identify future Historic Districts.
- Goal 3. Maintain the integrity of existing Historic Districts, and expand Historic Districts where possible.

## Housing

- Goal 1. Promote a full range of housing types that include single family, multi-family, group quarters, manufactured homes, and mobile home parks that will allow all persons the opportunity to live in decent, safe, and sanitary housing.
- Goal 2. Develop and maintain viable neighborhoods as the primary element of the residential system.

Figure 16. Manufactured Home Development



- Goal 3. Provide residential areas that support other land use goals by efficient and economical use of resources and minimize their effect on the natural environment.
- Goal 4. Conserve and protect residential areas of historic and architectural significance.
- Goal 5. Allow, but not promote, rural residential development outside the urban services area, and provide standards that protect the rural character of rural areas.
- Goal 6. Protect the viability of existing residential development through conservation, rehabilitation, and redevelopment.

- Goal 7. Improve the quality of residential areas through the use of planning tools and beautification standards.
- Goal 8. Provide amenities convenient to residential areas such as shopping facilities, community facilities and services, parks and open space, natural areas, and mass transit.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## Community-Wide Recommendations

**T**he plan provides guidance for many functions including land use, transportation, the environment, public facilities, historic preservation, urban design, and economic development. The plan is the **Community** - wide policy document that provides integrated guidance on these issues.

*The plan is the community - wide policy document that provides integrated guidance on these issues.*

The plan promotes in-town revitalization, reinvestment and reuse of the existing infrastructure. It also recommends the maintenance of existing agricultural lands, while allowing for moderated, controlled growth to the **Community's** northeast and southwest.

*The plan promotes in-town revitalization, reinvestment and reuse of the existing infrastructure.*

Figure 17. Sidewalk Work on Charlotte Street



## Land Use

*“Powerful forces have been weakening the ties between center cities and their surrounding suburbs...but the long-run welfare of suburban residents is still closely linked to how well center cities and their residents perform significant economic and social functions. The belief that the suburbs are independent of the center city is a delusion.”*

**Anthony Downs**, New Strategies for Suburban Growth

- 1- Promote in-fill development in the **community’s existing neighborhoods** (See Chapter Seven).
- 2- Encourage the **revitalization of existing homes** by working with local banks to provide low interest renovation loans.
- 3- Identify areas for **large lot** residential development.
- 4- Plan for **adequate land** for new community retail center locations. This will promote commercial concentration and discourage strip development and multiple access points along arterial Roadways.
- 5- **Revitalize** existing commercial areas.
- 6- Promote the **US-1 corridor** as location for high-tech and high **quality industrial development**.
- 7- Implement a **zoning corridor district** along major arterial roadways in the **Community**. There are two primary reasons: **1-** regulation of specific traffic-generating activities that may have negative impacts on traffic movement along these arterial roadways; **2-** regulation of the visual appearance of structures and site design to enhance the visual appearance of these corridors through the **Community**.
- 8- **Annexation** should be based on a number of reasons: sound fiscal and economic benefits; protecting and enhancing the character of the **Community**; managing development impacts effectively; and maintaining a beneficial balance of residential, commercial and open space.

## Urban Design

Urban design and image recommendations include the following:

- 1- Improve the **image of Community gateways**.
- 2- Develop and implement **design guidelines** for all commercial areas in the community.
- 3- **Sign policies and standards** should be periodically updated to enhance community identity and create a high quality business image.
- 4- Measures to improve the effectiveness of **landscaping and buffering standards** for new and existing developments shall be encouraged.
- 5- **In-fill development, redevelopment, and rehabilitation** of structures and sites should occur in a manner that is consistent and supportive of the neighborhood and architectural context of the surrounding area.
- 6- The City and the County, along with private property owners and developers, shall endeavor to jointly improve the appearance and design of **major street corridors** through improved landscaping and sign control.
- 7- The City and the County will encourage **land development practices** that preserve the natural beauty of the **Community** as a way of building in value and safeguarding the long-term appeal, marketability, and feasibility of the investment.
- 8- The **underground** placement of **overhead wires** should be strongly encouraged in all public and private development.
- 9- Public and private development should be encouraged to incorporate **visual art** into public and semi-public spaces.

## Economic Development

- 1- The **Community** should encourage **new and expanding industries and businesses** which:
  - A. Diversify the local economy.
  - B. Utilize a more highly skilled labor force.
  - C. Increase area residents' income.
- 2- The **Community** should protect, enhance and encourage an image of a **high quality of life with many cultural amenities** as an effective approach to economic development.
- 3- The benefits of continued economic development should be balanced against the **possible detrimental effects** such development may have on the quality of life enjoyed by area residents.
- 3- Appropriate **educational and training programs** should be encouraged to help unemployed and underemployed local residents take advantage of business expansion and new development.

**Figure 18** An Aerial View of the A.G.A. Industrial Park

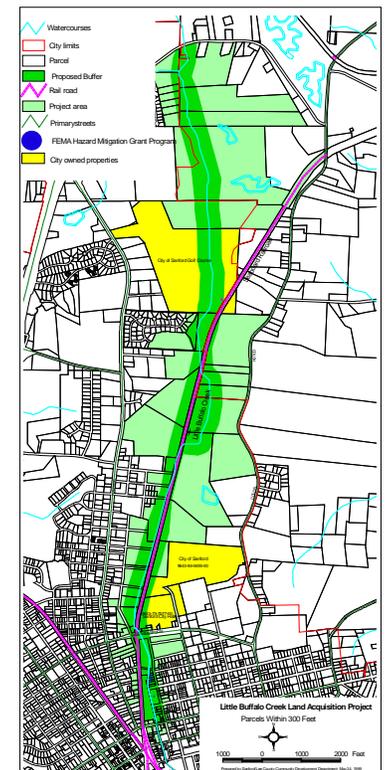


- 5- The **Community** should coordinate carefully **planned and timed infrastructure investment** as a factor in managing and accommodating growth
- 6- Economic Development efforts should encourage the **revitalization and reuse** of currently unused or underutilized structures, sites and infrastructure in appropriately located areas.
- 7- The **Community** should promote **coordination of economic development** resources from various local institutional agencies seek regional coordination and interaction between areas with shared economic interests.

## Parks, Recreation and Open Space

- 1- **Future parks development and open space** should be carefully planned to provide for the rational and equitable distribution of recreation and open space opportunities within the planning area.
- 2- In determining **future sites** for parks, recreation including natural area conservation, visual enhancement, promotion of culture and history, and watershed and floodplain protection, should be emphasized.
- 3- Provision of open space and recreation facilities in **private development** should be encouraged to complement the demand for publicly financed facilities.
- 4- The identification and appropriate recreational development of a system of **open space greenways** within the planning area should be encouraged. The use of natural corridors, such as stream flood plains, and secondarily, man-made corridors, such as utility and transportation right-of-way and easements, should be emphasized.
- 5- **Land acquisition** for new recreation sites in advance of need should be encouraged to achieve desirable location at cost effective levels.

Figure 19. Greenway Plan



## Transportation

- 1- The Thoroughfare Plan should be utilized to promote a **hierarchical, functional road network** and to promote the proper arrangement of land patterns by controlling the location of streets.
- 2- The **Community** should employ the Design Standards of the NCDOT as a general guide in the development of **new thoroughfares**.
- 3- A program of improvements and maintenance to maximize the use of **existing roadways** should be encouraged as a cost-effective and environmentally sound means of meeting area transportation needs.
- 4- **Access to arterial streets** should be minimized and excessive development at critical access points should be restricted.

- 5- The **Community** should require properly designed arterial **intersections** containing both right and left turn bays on the existing and future street systems.
- 6- The **Community** should acquire **sufficient right of way** along new roadways and at major intersections to allow for future expansion.
- 7- The **Community** should use the subdivision review process to prevent the **intersection of arterial and local streets**.
- 8- The **Community** should promote neighborhood designs which **limit access to adjacent arterials** and utilize street patterns which promote slower internal traffic speeds and interesting focal points.
- 9- The completion of a **US Highway 421 Bypass** around the City should be encouraged and supported.
- 10- **Pedestrian, bikeway** and other similar facilities should encouraged as energy-efficient and environmentally sound transportation alternatives.
- 11- The **Community** should identify and annex in a timely manner **land along future major thoroughfares** to allow for advanced planning that is consistent with City/County standards for urban level development.

## Environmental Quality

- 1- The **Community** should promote the **maintenance and enhancement** of the community's natural resources and shall support the enforcement of environmental regulations consistent with local, state and federal regulations.
- 2- The **Community** should prohibit urban development in **unsafe or unfeasible areas** such as areas with excessive slopes or soil constraints or areas within close proximity to facilities that use, manufacture, or store large quantities of hazardous chemicals.
- 3- Development activities in the **100 and 500-year floodplain** should be carefully controlled and should maintain a minimum 100-foot buffer from the base elevation of the stream bank. If development must occur, low intensity uses such as open space, recreation, and agricultural activities shall be preferred.
- 4- A 30-foot minimum buffer along all creeks and streams, and a 300-foot minimum buffer from all riverbanks, should be established in the **Community**.

- 5- **Runoff and drainage** from development and agricultural activities should be of a quality and quantity as near to natural conditions as possible.
- 6- The location of **hazardous waste disposal facilities** within the area should not be supported.
- 7- Research and development for **recycling and resource recovery programs**, whether public or private, should be encouraged and supported.
- 8- **Industries producing excessive noise, odor, air and water pollution**, or other harmful impacts, should be discouraged, unless such adverse impacts can be clearly overcome through effective mitigation.

Figure 20. Deep River



- 9- **Identify** the 100 and 500-year flood plain boundaries and strengthen development standards and limit overall development in the flood plain.

- 10- The Emergency Management Office should be consulted prior to siting major development projects (industry, schools, housing and other commercial developments) in Lee County.

- 11- **In the absence of public utilities**, e.g. water and sewer, development should be discouraged within 300 foot of the Deep or Cape Fear rivers. Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) with a minimum size of 100 acres may be permitted, provided that the overall gross density is less than two (2) residential units per acre; consideration is given to protecting areas adjacent to the rivers and other water bodies; and the PUD is serviced with Public Utilities.

## Regionalism and Planning Coordination

- 1- **Coordinated intergovernmental planning** for land use, transportation, public utilities, environmental quality, economic development and historic preservation should be encouraged.
- 2- **Public involvement** should be encouraged in decisions on land use and development by making the public aware of proposed developments at the

earliest opportunity, as well as fostering communication between developers and the public.

3- **Neighborhood and special area planning** should be encouraged, where feasible and appropriate, to foster public involvement in the production of closely tailored, action-oriented neighborhood plans and programs.

4- Plans, policies, public investments and regulatory tools should be coordinated as appropriate with those of adjacent counties and municipalities, and with those of other government levels.

Figure 21. Historic Homes on Hawkins Avenue



## Historic and Cultural Preservation

- 1- The **identification and active use** of structures, buildings, monuments, and neighborhoods of historic or architectural significance should be encouraged as a means of enhancing their economic and cultural value to the planning area.
- 2- **National registration and designation** of local historic areas should be encouraged, when appropriate.
- 3- Multiple and appropriate **adaptive reuse** of the **Community's** historic resources should be encouraged.
- 4- The **destruction of architectural, historic and archaeological resources** in the planning area should be discouraged.

## Housing

1- **Housing needs** of all area residents should be met in a manner which provides the maximum range of choice in type, density and location while preventing adverse impacts to the environment and the quality of life.

2- Protection and rehabilitation of **viable neighborhoods** should be encouraged to ensure their continued existence as a major housing resource.

3- **Land uses considered harmful** to the health, safety and welfare of area residents should be prohibited from infringing upon the livability of residential areas.

5- **An Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance** should be established to assist elected public officials to evaluate the impact of such development on our schools, streets, water, sewer, police and fire services and facilities.

6- **The Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance** is to ensure that Adequate Public Facilities needed to support new development are available concurrent with impacts of such development.

Figure 22. Home Built by Brick Capital CDC



***Housing needs** of all area residents should be met in a manner which provides the maximum range of choice in type, density and location while preventing adverse impacts to the environment and the quality of life.*

7- Proposed residential development which would expose residents to harmful effects of **incompatible development or environmental hazards** should be prohibited.

8- The **Community** will allow **different housing densities** to abut one another as long as proper buffering and design is provided as needed and traffic generated by such land use does not mix with the neighborhood.

9- An important element of our housing policy is **the promotion of decent housing** affordable to low and moderate income households in suitable living

environments. The community is intended to address siting issues with respect to mobile homes parks and a guide for the standards to be employed in the siting and design of manufactured homes on individual lots.

10-There should be a balance between housing needs and the need for stability of existing neighborhoods. **Manufactured housing, if not properly sited**, can conflict with established neighborhood development patterns.

11-To allow Manufactured housing in an urban environment, owners of this type of homes may be **required to bring their home to the same standards** of other homes in the same sitting.

**H**aving developed a growth theme and basic goals, how can we accomplish and achieve our goals? What techniques, or tools, do we have to implement our plan?

Figure 23. Rosemont – McIver Historic District



As we consider our tools, we must not allow ourselves to be sidetracked or lost in a mass of details. Rather, we must continue to focus on reaching agreement on these key matters that will help us achieve our vision for Lee County as a healthy and livable community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Recognizing the need to focus our resources, our implementation tools are organized into four categories.

- v Continued Planning
- v Regulations
- v Public Investment
- v Organization

Chapter Eight will set forth the specific strategies for each geographic area of Lee County. Chapter Six sets the framework for those individual strategies by explaining the general kinds of tools available to local government – and in what ways these tools need to be improved or strengthened for the strategies to work more effectively.

***We must continue to focus on reaching agreement on these key matters that will help us achieve our vision for Lee County as a healthy and livable community in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.***

## Continued Planning

The Inter-Local Agreement between Sanford City Council and Lee County Board of Commissioners to consolidate the Planning Departments went in to effect on July 1, 1997. The agreement states that inter-local cooperation is a necessity:

1. *For orderly and coordinated growth and development.*
2. *To establish a land planning process and policy framework that ensures a factual base for each decision and action.*

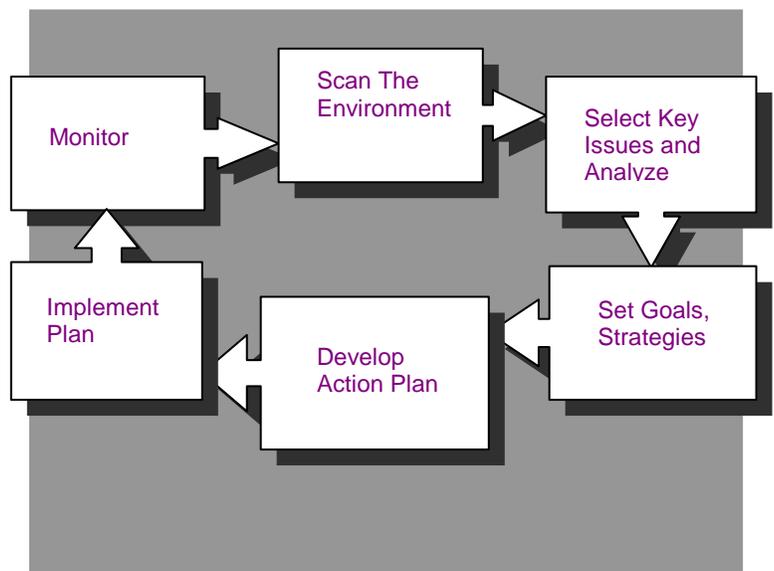
Recognizing the need for continuing planning as a basis for decisions, the following tools are recommended:

**Figure 24 Strategic Planning Process**

### ✓ **Strategic Planning Methods**

*Strategic Planning* has a number of key characteristics that should be incorporated into all land planning activities. These key characteristics are:

1. A focused effort that concentrates on selected issues, resulting goals, and targeted actions.
2. Recognition of strengths and weaknesses, and of available resources.
3. Consideration of major trends, changes, and opportunities occurring outside the region that have local implications.
4. Orientation toward actions necessary for measurable results.



### ✓ **Monitoring the 2020 Land Use Plan**

Both Lee County and City Of Sanford should make major reappraisals of the 2020 Land Use Plan every five years for the purposes of testing the validity of the plan assumptions and extending the plan's time period.

To plan for growth and development, we must recognize the significance of environmental factors as well as the need to maintain a positive business climate. Reappraisal efforts should therefore evaluate the following:

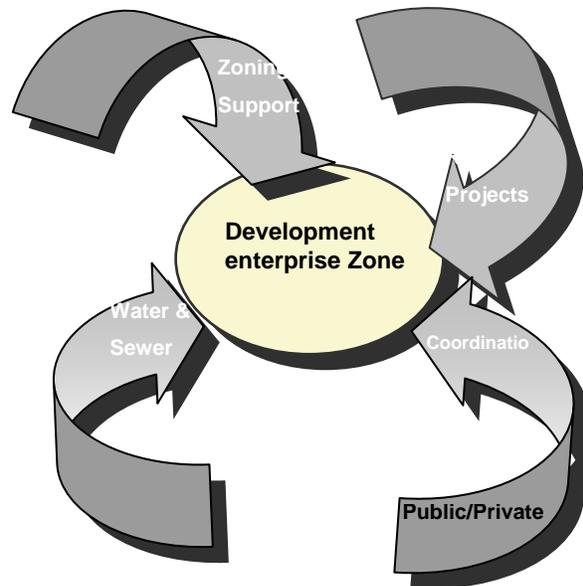
1. Progress in meeting growth assumptions.

2. Economic health and business climate of the community.
3. Environmental health of the community.
4. Capability of local government to provide public services and meet land use goals.
5. General public support of planning goals and tools.

✓ **Development Enterprise Zone**

Lee County and the City of Sanford should support the initiative to designate a *Development Enterprise Zone*, identified by the 2020 Land Use Plan, and take specific actions to:

1. Give priority to publicly funded capital projects such as water, sewer, and transportation that support growth redirection to the enterprise zone.
2. Revise and change zoning regulation to support growth redirection to the enterprise zone.
3. Provide coordination to the public and private efforts that support redevelopment and reinvestment that aid growth redirection to the enterprise zone.



**Figure 25** Development Enterprise Zone

✓ **Area Plans**

The area planning process looks at land use needs and issues of specific geographic areas and makes recommendations to deal with them. These recommendations can serve as a policy guide for public officials.

Area plans generally include:

- ✓ **Township Plans** deal with the issues and needs of large geographic areas.
- ✓ **Neighborhood Plans** deal with overall needs of individual neighborhoods or collections of neighborhoods.
- ✓ **Special Project Plans** deal with specific issues or unique conditions of an area.

Area planning should continue as a major component of the planning program. It should be implemented within the framework developed in the 2020 Land Use Plan.

Area plans subsequent to enactment of the 2020 Land Use Plan represent the specific application of goals and strategies of the 2020 Land Use Plan and are intended to take precedence.

Priorities for area plans will be based on the following five criteria:

1. Critical nature of growth pressures.
2. Need for public action to stimulate reinvestment or rehabilitation.
3. Potential Development Enterprise Zones.
4. Water quality and protection.
5. Public utilities and adequate facilities.

v ***Capital Project Design***

Lee County and the City of Sanford should require all departments responsible for major capital projects to establish citizen involvement procedures. These procedures should emphasize distributing information and beginning to build consensus in the earliest stages. The goal of the inter-local agreement is to foster coordination between the City and County.

v ***Professional Planning Support***

Lee County and the City of Sanford Planning Boards should maintain the staff capability to provide research and land planning support for economic development, to the extent allowed by the approved work program.

v ***Neighborhood Protection***

The long-term livability of our **Community** is anchored by the quality of its neighborhoods. Protection of this resource requires the following action:

1. Change zoning regulations to reflect predominant existing residential use.
2. Use area planning to define the special land use needs for low-income neighborhoods.
3. Use area planning and historic designation to formulate measures for providing protection to neighborhoods and existing structures.
4. Discourage cut-through traffic and avoid street improvements that would be harmful to the livability of an area.
5. Identify any adverse effects that major public capital projects might have on neighborhoods.

v ***Tree Maintenance and Planting***

Lee County and the City of Sanford should jointly support a continuing street planting and maintenance program through annual consideration under the Capital Improvement Program. Particular attention should be given to arterial corridors and gateways.

The private sector should be encouraged to maintain mature trees, and trees of outstanding size or age located on private property and to enlarge the street tree-planting program of the public sector.

v ***Parks Planning***

The **Community** agencies responsible for parks should jointly prepare recommendations for a County-wide park system that would reflect the growing urban character of our area.

v ***Solid Waste Management Coordination***

The **Community** should work together to find ways to meet the solid waste disposal needs of county residents.

Lee County should take the lead responsibility in preparing a long-range Solid Waste Management Plan, based upon a process that consider the following factors:

1. Growth objectives and assumptions of the year 2020 Land Use Plan.
2. Regional perspective, including both public and private roles.
3. An involvement mechanism including provision for citizen, technical and intergovernmental needs.
4. Provisions for incineration transfer stations, recycling, landfill and collection.
5. Definition of ten and twenty year capital project and operating assumptions and needs.
6. Identification of Land Use Plan and zoning actions needed to support Solid Waste Plan.
7. An Action Plan, including five year Capital project and Finance Plan.

v ***Planning Assistance to Small Towns***

Lee County and City of Sanford Planning Boards should, consistent with their annually approved work program and budget, provide technical planning assistance to Broadway.

Particular attention should be given to:

1. Transportation planning coordination.
2. Coordination of regulatory activities and provisions for revision of regulations.
3. Coordination of ongoing land use planning.
4. Technical planning assistance, review and comment related to planning requests.

Figure 26. Apartments, Amos Bridges Road



## Regulations

The **Community** needs housing, jobs, and a growing tax base, but we also need an environment with a high standard of livability and protection of our natural assets (where there is compatibility between existing and new development). Reconciling these needs sometimes requires public regulatory actions.

Recognizing the need to satisfy demands for growth – and to address the increasing expectations for conservation, preservation, and aesthetic qualities, we recommend the following regulatory tools:

### ▼ **Revised Zoning Ordinances and Mapped Districts**

A technical procedure for comprehensively rewriting both the City and County zoning regulations into a single code – in keeping with the goals and recommendations of the 2020 Land Use Plan – should be implemented.

Figure 27. Lee County Farmland



### ▼ **Subdivision Ordinance Revision**

The Planning Staff should prepare a consolidated subdivision ordinance for the City and County.

### ▼ **Sign Regulation Revision**

The planning staff should prepare a consolidated set of sign controls – distinct from the zoning code – for off-site advertising, including billboards, and for on-site advertising and identification.

### ▼ **Voluntary Farmland Preservation**

The county should prepare a policy guide for voluntary farmland preservation, giving attention to:

1. Allowing on-site density transfer under zoning regulations, conditional-zoning districts, purchase of development rights, land purchase, or agricultural districts.

2. Clarifying who has authority for farmland acquisition and leaseback agreements and for authorizing funding for these actions.

▼ **Storm Water Management Coordination**

City and County agencies responsible for storm water management should jointly prepare recommendations for a consistent set of standards for storm water management.

▼ **Lee-County City of Sanford Utility District Service Policy**

The City and County should prepare a policy guide for decisions concerning water and sewer extensions that are consistent with land planning objectives. Particular attention should be given to:

1. Administratively Designate *Development Enterprise Zones*, as identified by the 2020 Land Use Plan. Public funding, to the extent authorized by the City and County, should be allowed to stimulate land development in these areas.
2. Maintain economic feasibility standards for water and sewer service extensions for all areas outside the *Development Enterprise Zones*.
3. Address the issue of package sewer plants and treatment plants, especially construction standards and environmental impacts related to these facilities.

Figure 28. View of Deep River



▼ **Quality of Water Source**

The surrounding towns and counties that draw their drinking water from the Cape Fear River, Deep River, Jordan Lake, or that abut these bodies of water or their tributaries, should establish dialogue about development standards and regulations that maintain the quality and quantity of these vital water resources.

## Public Investment

Strategies are simply actions that define how goals or objectives are to be achieved. However, usually we have more goals and strategies than we have resources to meet them. Therefore, it is very important to understand our resource limitations and define

and set priorities for our capital investment needs to deal effectively with the changes ahead.

Recognizing the need to measure the resources available to use against both long-term and short-term capital needs, the following public investment tools are recommended.

▼ ***Capital Needs Inventory***

The **Community** should continue to use the Capital Needs Inventory Process as a significant planning and budgeting tool. It should also identify major public/private joint use opportunities in order to coordinate capital project decisions and minimize adverse impacts.

The intent of a needs inventory process is that it:

1. Bridges the gap between long-range (20 years) and short-range (1-5 years) planning.
2. Creates a more complete understanding of future capital needs, helping us to gauge their fiscal impact.
3. Focuses attention on the importance of defining the priorities necessary for achieving growth and development objectives.

▼ ***Capital Improvement Program***

The **Community** should continue to use a strong five-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) process. The need for individual CIP projects should be determined according to the following criteria:

1. Based on our adopted goals and the needs inventory, what features justify the proposed project and why?
2. Has the proposed project been evaluated against alternatives?
3. What cost/benefit analysis supports the project?
4. What is the effect of the project on the operating budget during the five year planning period?

▼ ***Revenue Options***

Considering the substantial pressure on local government to fund capital projects, the City of Sanford and Lee County should establish a joint advisory committee to evaluate and recommend needed action concerning:

1. Formulating a means for greater flexibility in finding local revenue sources.

2. Developing a comprehensive general obligation bond program to help meet critical needs.
3. Seek state enabling acts for special assessment districts.

▼ **Planning Board Recommendations**

The Sanford and Lee County Planning Boards should make recommendations for priorities in relation to the 2020 Land Use Plan for capital needs assessment. These recommendations will be forwarded to the City Council and County Board of Commissioners.

Figure 29. San-Lee Park



▼ **Ten-year Referendum**

The strategies recommended in this plan will require more money annually than is expected to be available from state and federal sources, or that is now expended locally for capital improvements.

In order to implement the recommendations of this plan, it is proposed that the following policy be adopted:

1. A joint City – County Comprehensive Ten-Year Bond Program should be set for

transportation, water and sewer, and parks and open space projects. This ten-year program should:

- be directed toward meeting the goals, objectives, and strategies of the 2020 Land Use Plan;
  - be defined through the ten-year Capital Needs Inventory process;
  - be implemented through the five-year Capital Improvement Program;
  - be prepared with the advice of a citizens advisory group appointed jointly by the city and county.
2. A ten-year bond program is to be defined, with a referendum to cover the initial five years. Toward the middle of this initial funding period, a second five-year program would be submitted to the voters. Successive five-year bond programs would follow.

**Organization**

The structure of local government, and the way it works, makes up the framework for implementing our proposed actions. But citizen expectations of local government have changed drastically over the last decade, and they will continue to change. Growth, revenue needs for new services, shifting responsibilities among levels of government, and increasing demands for citizen involvement are some of the reasons for these changes.

Recognizing these changing conditions, we recommend the following organizational tools:

▼ ***Involvement Efforts***

The City and County should continue public support for the educational and consensus-building elements of involvement.

The community should work to create opportunities for positive involvement for all segments of the community and to enhance its ability to anticipate and solve problems before they become a crisis.

▼ ***Structure Modifications***

To respond more effectively to the increasing demands for a high quality of life and for efficient delivery of services, local government is recommended to implement the following structural changes:

1. Both City and County Planning Boards should meet as a Planning Commission to provide consistent and uniform decisions and planning to avoid any conflict between the City and County development decisions
2. The City and County should jointly amend the *Interlocal Agreement* to revise the Planning Board's zoning and planning duties.
3. The City and County should jointly give the Planning Board's the responsibility to define aesthetic issues to promote the community's improved appearance and to make recommendations on how to market an image for the community and its neighborhoods.
4. The City and County should strengthen their support for preservation by expanding the use of historic district designations and by promoting more formal cooperation between the Planning Board and the Historic Preservation Commission.

▼ ***Economic Development***

To ensure a positive business climate, local government should have an effective role in economic development. The City and County should focus on the following:

1. Provide and maintain the effectiveness of the City/County's consolidated one-step permit system.
2. Establishing a joint City-County staff task force to monitor public economic development efforts by reviewing industrial revenue bonds, special low interest loan programs, and other funding mechanisms to encourage economic development.
3. Developing and funding a coordinated public-private marketing program that addresses the area's image and desire for recognition.

v ***Regional Dialogue***

The City of Sanford and Lee County Planning Boards should organize a regional planning meeting to discuss the need for a forum of elected and appointed officials. This forum would identify shared issues and concerns, and would act as a vehicle for building a consensus on any actions to be taken concerning these issues.

Figure 30. Brick-Making, a Traditional Lee County Industry



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Community-Wide Strategies

**T**he chapters of the Land Use Plan describing Goals, Recommendations, and Tools, develop a common theme, or vision, for the future of Lee County and City of Sanford. As our **Community** becomes increasingly urban, we must make decisions now to assure our continuing livability and economic vitality as we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The plan takes a strategic planning approach, focusing on key issues so that we can target limited resources effectively. Goals and Recommendations are established to guide us, and tools we need to implement the Recommendations are identified.

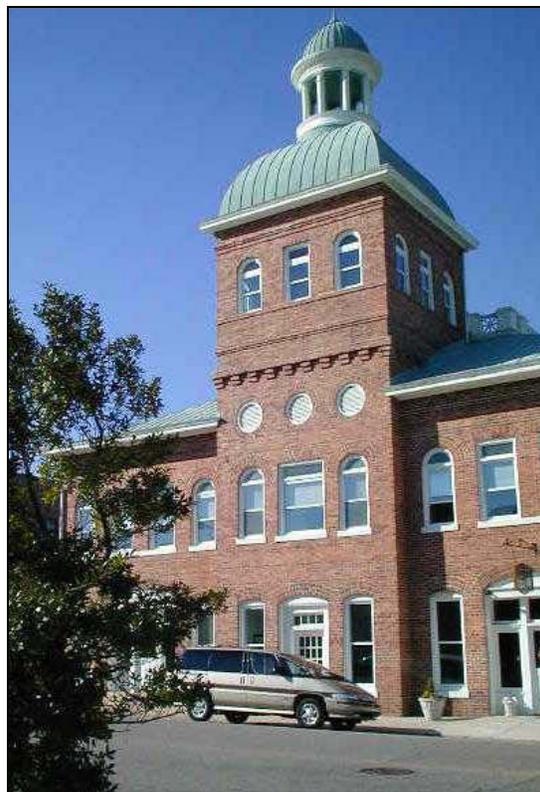
A few of the Recommendations from Chapter Five call for complex, community-wide strategies. In this chapter, we explore six comprehensive strategies in detail:

- Neighborhood Reinvestment
- Development of Enterprise Zones
- In-fill Development
- Greenway Parks
- Streetscape Plans
- Neighborhood Parks

***We must make decisions now to assure our continuing livability and economic vitality as we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century.***

This chapter focuses on the community-wide application of these strategies, and Chapter Eight notes any geographic areas to which those strategies particularly apply.

Figure 31. The Old Sanford City Hall



## Neighborhood Reinvestment

The health of neighborhoods is an important factor in assessing a community's livability. Neighborhoods – as basic building blocks of the community – represent significant physical, economic, and social investments. A declining neighborhood significantly devalues those prior investments.

Factors indicative of declining neighborhoods include:

- Rapid population loss
- A significant increase in the number of deteriorating housing units
- Failing infrastructure through neglect or service demands elsewhere
- An increase in crime and other social maladies
- Inadequate maintenance of yards sidewalks and vacant areas.

### Strategies for Neighborhood Reinvestment

1. Establishing a public-private task force of no more than fifteen persons to look creatively at the neighborhood and housing reinvestment issue, with an emphasis on identifying workable public and private solutions for use in the **Community**.
2. Establishing a neighborhood inventory program at the Sanford and Lee County Planning boards, which identifies neighborhood conditions and changes required public and private reinvestment actions.
3. Based on the neighborhood inventory program, target area plans for declining neighborhoods with an emphasis on:
  - Redevelopment planning
  - Matching existing land use and zoning patterns
  - Capital improvement planning
  - Public facilities and planning
  - Historical and architectural significance areas
  - Market analysis for neighborhood commercial areas.
4. Employ coordinated task force approaches, in concert with other City and County agencies, as part of area plans in addressing declining neighborhoods.
5. Promote the targeting of neighborhood assistance programs.

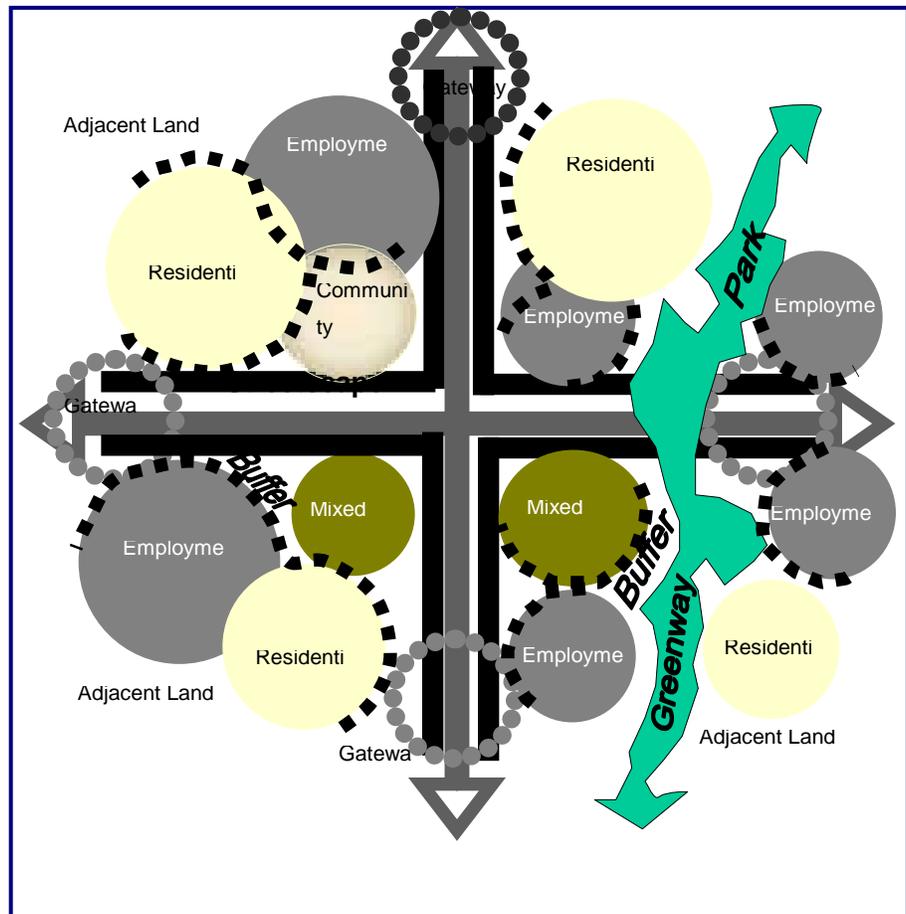
Strategies for reinvestment are aimed at creating stable, pleasant, and safe environments – desirable neighborhoods with a more predictable future, which positively contribute to the community’s tax base, housing choices, and overall livability.

## Development of Enterprise Zones

The basic idea is to use public actions to leverage or stimulate additional private investment in areas that have the potential for becoming new growth areas for residential and non-residential uses, and thus advancing the objectives of redirecting growth. These areas are presently characterized by soft or mixed markets, and are largely undeveloped.

The **Community** should administratively designate *Development Enterprise Zones* that are identified in the 2020 plan, and undertake the following:

- Establishing priority public funding for water, sewer, and transportation capital projects that support growth redirection.
- Pre-zone areas in conformance with an adopted area plan to provide incentives to implement *Development Enterprise Zones*.



**Figure 32** Development Enterprise Zone Concept

- The Sanford and Lee County planning boards should promote and give guidance to the implementation of the *Development Enterprise Zones* and should coordinate public and private organizational and marketing efforts to support both redevelopment and reinvestment, as well as the redirection of growth.

These actions are proactive in defining additional areas for economic development and reinvestment.

## In-fill Development Strategies

In-fill sites are vacant parcels that are already served by public utilities and are surrounded by development. These sites accommodate a small but important share of residential growth at more urban densities.

The development opportunities for in-fill construction will be reflected in the following:

- the extent of physical limitations affecting in-fill sites and how they are addressed in planning and zoning decisions;
- the ability of local government to plan for in-fill growth and provide zoning at appropriate densities;
- availability of reasonably-priced in-fill sites; and
- the extent to which in-fill development upgrades an area or contributes to its long-term stability.

### v *In-fill Strategies for Developed Areas*

1. Arrange meetings for developers and the public to stimulate interest in neighborhoods where in-fill is being promoted.
2. Arrange design competitions or workshops for in-fill opportunities on specific sites or in specific neighborhoods.
3. Review residential zoning, with attention to review and approval procedures, performance standards, and the availability of adequately zoned sites.
4. Arrange the necessary public capital investments to support in-fill areas that have been defined through the area planning process, and assure that the investments are made in a timely manner.
5. Encourage developers and neighborhood groups to use the pre-application stage of the rezoning process to mediate differences or concerns.
6. Improve urban design standards for concept plans in the zoning ordinance, and establish a workable administrative site plan review and approval process.

Figure 33. In-fill Construction Site



7. Give special attention in the area planning process to provide neighborhoods with in-fill development needs or opportunities. Area planning studies are to identify specific in-fill site opportunities, together with design expectations regarding the appropriateness of the development. The appropriateness of a specific in-fill site will vary, considering such criteria as:

***Allow greater flexibility, within applicable minimum standards, for creative approaches to site planning and infrastructure improvements.***

- Stability of the surrounding area
  - Development density and architectural character of the surrounding area
  - Development mix of residential and non-residential uses in the immediate area
  - Conformance with approved plans
  - The site planning approach needed for physical conditions of the site and the adjacent area
  - Adequate public services and facilities to support the site development
  - The need to create open space on the site, which should also improve compatibility of the development with adjoining land and provide for adequate run-off of storm water.
8. Foster local development corporations and sound financing strategies for addressing in-fill needs in weak market areas.
  9. As part of in-fill for weak market areas, evaluate the maintenance and repair needs for roads, utilities, sidewalks, and public buildings.
  10. Encourage the re-use and adaptation of non-residential buildings for residential use. Encourage the rehabilitation of large residential structures, including those, which would increase the number of residential units.
  11. Make surplus public land available at a minimum cost for residential use through sale, land leases, or swapping of sites.
  12. Allow greater flexibility, within applicable minimum standards, for creative approaches to site planning and infrastructure improvements.
  13. Pre-zone sites for residential in-fill under the provisions of revised zoning standards and procedures, and through the area planning process.

Not surprisingly, these factors are often associated with controversy over such concerns as increase in density, the loss of existing structures and building incompatibility.

Improving the feasibility of residential in-fill may require public attention to a variety of strategies addressing such factors as the following:

- Stimulation of developer interest
- Removing obstacles created by government
- Working toward neighborhood support
- Addressing site-specific problems
- Increasing land availability
- Addressing market weaknesses.

#### ▼ ***In-fill in Developed Areas***

Strategies can be directed toward in-fill in older central neighborhoods that have been developed for some time, and in newer areas near the edge of the city that are still developing.

There is a growing interest in in-fill development and the positive benefits it can bring. This reinforces the importance of encouraging residential in-fill that is balanced with existing neighborhood values.

The public role in in-fill development will require effective targeting of tools and resources as part of this community's overall planning strategy.

A growing population creates a demand for new housing on the urban fringe. Whether this growth can occur in a balanced pattern will depend in part on the following:

- The way services are extended at the urban fringe, and how the costs of such extensions are located
- The ability of local government to plan for both redirection and accommodations of market forces, and how they are addressed in planning and zoning decisions
- The availability of residential sites that permit a variety of development opportunities, considering housing cost, type, and density.

Prevailing conditions today, zoning constraints, access problems, water and sewer limitations, and a southerly growth bias, create a need for strategies addressing residential development on the urban fringe. These strategies should give attention to the following:

#### ▼ ***In-fill Strategies in Developing Areas***

1. Arrange meetings for developers and the public to stimulate interest in new growth areas, while also pointing out the limitations of existing areas in regard to environmental capacity, the technical capability to deliver services, and the financial feasibility of providing services.

2. Arrange workshops to promote opportunities in specific areas designated as *Development Enterprise Zones*.
3. Review the zoning ordinance and maps, with particular attention to the review and approval procedures, performance standards, and the availability of adequately zoned land. Special attention should be given to the need for identifying and providing locations for jobs to help lead growth redirection efforts.

Figure 34. Abandoned Cotton Mill



4. Arrange necessary financing methods and priorities for public capital improvements necessary to support objectives in the *Development Enterprise Zones*.
5. Give special emphasis in the area planning process to the planning needs of opportunities in *Development Enterprise Zones*, as well as for major planned development in current growth areas.
6. Make surplus public lands available to help growth

redirection through sale, land leases, or swapping of sites.

7. Pre-zone sites for development within *Development Enterprise Zones*, under the provision of revised zoning standards and procedures.
8. Continue the use of the “conditional district” rezoning procedure outside of *Development Enterprise Zones*, with attention to exaction requirements for mitigating impacts of specific sites.
9. Arrange for the use of limited development rights transfer within planned development sites, with attention to the need for open space, floodplain or agricultural land protection, and public services or facilities.

- 10. Arrange for necessary urban design amenities that promote neighborhood qualities through the zoning and subdivision standards. Give special attention to:
  - Sidewalk and bikeway needs;
  - Street tree planting and buffer area landscaping needs;
  - Compatibility of uses at the edges of the site, considering height, bulk, and general architectural character of the area.
  
- 11. Arrange for protection of dedication of future right-of-way needs through both zoning and subdivision procedures, as well as, through outright public purchase.

**Greenway Parks**

Greenways are looked upon as a very important element of the **Community's** open space network.

Greenways take advantage of unbuildable floodplain areas to provide linear parks. In a number of cases these parks connect to other community facilities such as schools and recreational areas. Greenways also provide alternative pedestrian and bicycle routes through the **Community**.

***Greenways take advantage of unbuildable floodplain areas to provide linear parks.***

***By year 2020, it is envisioned that a number of greenways will tie residential and employment areas together with schools, parks, and other community facilities.***

The 2020 Land Use Plan proposes an aggressive approach to acquiring an integrated greenway system over the next twenty years. The approach is twofold, depending on the extent to which an area is developed.

In built-up areas, an annual funding mechanism will be established for greenway acquisition and development. This anticipates going into developed areas and acquiring as much of 100-year floodplain as feasible to produce a linear green space. It is expected that all greenway within existing developed areas will be acquired in the next ten years.

In developing areas, greenways should be provided through the development process. This means that greenway dedication will be sought through the subdivision, planned multi-family and rezoning processes. The annual funding

mechanism previously mentioned would provide funds.

By year 2020, it is envisioned that a number of greenways will tie residential and employment areas together with schools, parks, and other community facilities.

## Streetscape Plans

No single factor contributes more to the appearance or image of a neighborhood commercial district or employment center than the streetscape along the gateways or major avenues that pass through and help define the **Community**.

By streetscape, we mean the overall peripheral view from the street including the building facades, public and private open spaces, parking lots, signage, and so on.

Typically, what we find in the older declining areas of the community, those that have negative images associated with them, are gateways that have fragmented visually confused streetscapes. The impression of strength and stability which the investor looks for, and which adds to the livability of the area, is missing.

Therefore, a major reinvestment strategy of this plan is to improve those gateways identified as a detriment to an area's image.

This is one of the first steps toward building confidence and subsequently encouraging investment in a community. Streetscape plans are a means for doing just that.

The purpose of streetscape plans is to investigate various design techniques and relationships that will give continuity and a sense of order to street. Design approaches that might be considered in such a plan are:

- Street tree planting
- Creation of linear green space
- Means of reducing sign clutter
- Sidewalk or pedestrian crossing improvements
- Elimination of overhead wires
- Street lighting
- General design guidelines for new development fronting the street
- Reduction of curb cuts and parking lots adjacent to the rights-of-way
- Building façade improvements

Figure 35. Hawkins Avenue



Local government, through a joint public-private effort, or through the development process can finance these plans.

## **Neighborhood Parks**

The development of new neighborhood parks will enhance and expand the existing neighborhood and neighborhood parks system. This is a major element for enhancing the quality of life in our community. Neighborhood parks serve local residential needs and are oriented towards local residents.

Neighborhood parks vary in size from 5-40 acres. The parks provide active and passive recreational facilities, such as play lots, play grounds, basketball and other activities, and passive landscaped areas. The park also serves as an environmental amenity for the immediate neighborhood.

This strategy is needed because of deficits in neighborhood park acreage, based on current needs and projection of future demand.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Land Use Study Areas

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**S**o far, this plan has developed goals and strategies for all of Lee County. Now, in the pages ahead, the plan introduces five specific geographic areas in Lee County, excluding Broadway.

- North Lee County (Deep River Area)
- West Sanford / Pocket Area
- Southern Lee County (Greenwood Area)
- Eastern Lee County (Cape Fear Area)
- Central Lee County (City Of Sanford)

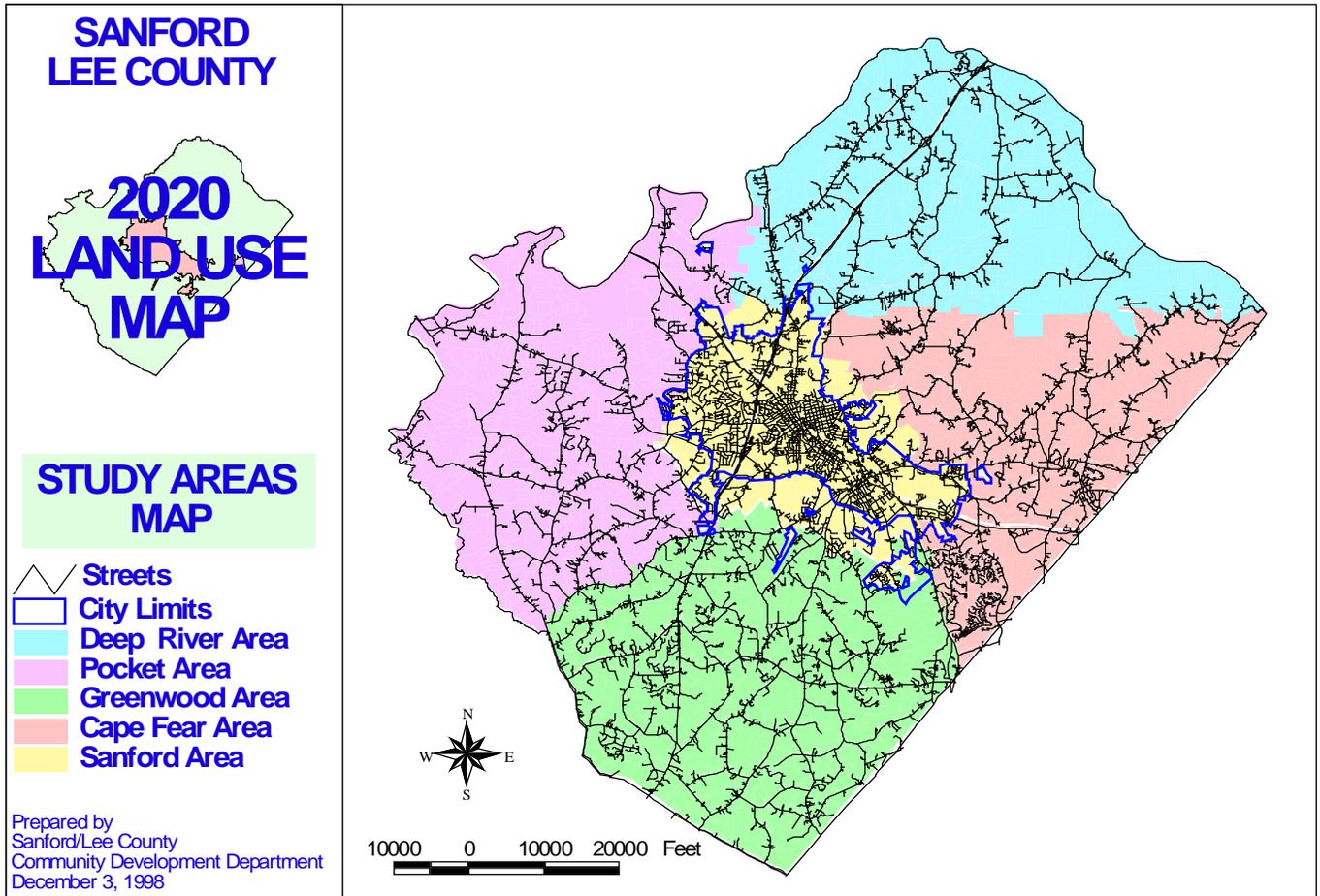
For each geographic area, specific strategies have been developed to accommodate the projected household and employment growth for each area, while still being sensitive to the goals of this community. Each chapter contains background information, an overview of key strategies, and maps showing the geographic location of strategies and the general type of land use expected in the area in the year 2020.

These geographic areas are discussed in general as part of this plan. After the adoption of this plan specific area plans and project plans will be developed for each geographic area. Area plans subsequent to enactment of the 2020 Land Use Plan represent the specific application of goals and strategies of the 2020 Land Use Plan and are intended to take precedence.

Priorities for area plans will be based on the following five criteria:

1. Critical nature of growth pressures.
2. Need for public action to stimulate reinvestment or rehabilitation.
3. Potential *Development Enterprise Zones*.
4. Water quality and protection.
5. Public utilities and adequate facilities.

**Figure 36** Sanford and Lee County 2020 Land Use Plan Study Areas





**N**

orthern Lee county (known as the Deep River area), a predominantly rural area, should see more growth and development in the next twenty years than it has in the past. The plan envisions major economic growth in this area by year 2020, supported by an expanded road system, more housing and more recreational sites.

The Deep River area is bounded by Lick Creek on the east, by the Sanford Extraterritorial Area on the south, by US Highway 421 on the west and by the Deep and Cape Fear Rivers on the north. This area contains the Lee County Industrial Park, the new county airport that is under construction, and US Highway 1, which has been widened to four lanes. Much of this area is within Sanford's Municipal Growth Area, which gives the City exclusive rights to provide water and sewer service.

Soil, geology, water supply watershed restrictions and a lack of widespread water and sewer in this area have kept development at a very low density. Water and sewer do serve the industrial park, and the new elementary school will be served with sewer. Most undeveloped land is forestland, with few row crops, and other farmland used for livestock production.

- In the early growth stages, the construction of the new airport and the widening of US Highway 1 with major interchanges in this area would spur an employment-led development effort. This would support a large employment center along the highway and the interchanges. It would also stimulate other areas for residential development and employment expansion due to the widening and improvement of US Highway 1 that would make Lee County more accessible to the Triangle area.

***In the first five years, the strategies focus on creating a major employment center in the vicinity on the US Highway # 1 and Colon Road and on assuring future public access to the river front areas.***

***The employment area will help promote balanced growth in the County, expand the economic base by attracting new employers to the area, and shorten the home-to-work trip for the Community resident. Acquiring land for parks and greenways and access to the water areas will help meet the recreational and open space needs of the present and future population of the area.***

- Over a period of several years, a major infrastructure investment is anticipated. New roads would be built and water and sewer lines would be extended to encourage orderly development – first in the areas close to the existing lines and around the airport.
- The plan also proposes a significant open space effort and controlled access to US Highway 1. Establishing a Conservation Zone / Large Lot Single Family (3 Acres Minimum) and Highway Overlay District will help protect our water sensitive areas and create a well controlled and organized development enterprise zone along the highway. In addition, acquiring land and then developing major public recreation areas along the Cape Fear River and Deep River areas, opening a multi-county state park, establishing greenways, and preserving farm land will enhance the quality of life in the **Community**.

The population growth in the County is likely to occur in a few areas. The Deep River area will continue to attract development due to the widening of US Highway 1 and the new county airport. As this area begins to grow more rapidly - and as the public issues of providing jobs, protecting our historic and agricultural heritage, and providing for adequate public recreation and open space begin to be addressed - the community will have many opportunities to maintain and improve its quality of life. Many of these opportunities may pass quickly if certain affirmative steps are not taken within the next ten years:

1- Principal among these is the creation of a major new employment area in the North, which will drive additional growth.

2- Supporting this growth will require the timely provision of public services and transportation improvements.

3- Further, to assure the protection of the identity, and quality of life in the Deep River Area, provision must be made for investment in public and open space and recreational facilities.

4- Maintain residential development on the northwest side of US Highway 1.

Figure 37. Banks of Deep River



5- In a development request requiring County Commission or Planning Board approval, an area designated as Conservation Zone shall maintain a very low-density residential development of 3 acres minimum lot size, with a 300-foot minimum buffer from the riverbanks, which must be specified on the recorded plat. Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) with a minimum size of 100 acres may be permitted, provided that the overall gross density is less than two (2) residential units per acre, consideration is given to protecting areas adjacent to the rivers and other water bodies, and the PUD is serviced with Public Utilities.

**T**he Pocket area is bordered by Moore and Chatham Counties on the west, by US Highway 421 and the Deep River on the north, by Sanford's Extraterritorial Area on the east and by Center Church Road on the south. Much of Lee County's protected water supply watershed area is located in this area. Most of this area remains in farmland, forestland, and low-density residential lots.

Soils, geology, and limited water and sewer in this area have kept development at a very low density and limited development primarily to residential use. The only sewer in this area is in the extreme eastern part along US Highway 1, which is provided to businesses by the City of Sanford. There are some limited water lines that have been provided by developers to serve residential subdivisions.

Poor soils north of Steel Bridge Road require that all development be very low density and limit agriculture to pasture/livestock endeavors. South of Steel Bridge Road the soils are better, allowing medium density residential development. There are also more row crops in this area. This area is scheduled for Phase II of the County water system.

Much of the northern half of the Pocket area is in a water supply watershed, which requires that development be large lot with limited built upon areas. This, however, has not caused serious hardship because poor soils are already a limiting factor. Development in the Conservation Zone is limited to low-density residential of 3 acres minimum lot size and farmland.

The plan for the West Sanford / Pocket Area seeks to provide a high quality residential location over the long term, together with employment opportunities and services. The need is to conserve the established residential areas while accommodating the area's strong growth pressures. Initially, emphasis is placed upon matching anticipated growth to the infrastructure of roads, water and sewer within the developing areas. The Pocket area, a predominantly rural area, should see more growth in the next twenty years than it

***Strategies for the first five years are geared toward accommodating the increased levels of growth and development. This means providing additional traffic capacity and system expansions, reinforce the existing water and sewer systems, meeting recreation needs for an expanding population, and planning for reinvestment needs in declining areas as well as for growth opportunities in newly developing areas.***

has in the past. The plan envisions more than twice as many people in the area by 2020, supported by an expanded road system, more housing, and more recreational areas.

Over the next twenty years, the growth pattern is expected to continue – at least initially – in those areas already served by water and sewer. Growth outside these boundaries is expected to occur as part of the planned expansion of the water and sewer system.

This area has sufficient land resources to absorb a large population increase in the next twenty years, but the factors which make the West Sanford / Pocket area so attractive for this growth are fine neighborhoods and convenient services. These resources could be jeopardized however if new growth outstrips the ability of existing public infrastructure – roads, water, and sewer – to handle such growth.

**T**he Greenwood area is bounded by Sanford's jurisdiction on the north, by NC Highway 87 on the east, by Moore and Harnett Counties in the south, and by Center Church Road on the west. The Lemon Springs community is located in this area.

The Soils in this area are the sandy type, providing the best farmland in Lee County, as well as land suited for individual wells and septic tanks. Much of the land is developed for mobile homes and there are several sand and gravel pits located in this area. The Greenwood area will be the first area to receive the county's new water system.

The Southern part of the County traditionally has been an area of good quality development, both residential and non-residential, because of its approximate location to employment areas, and due to the good type of soil in the Greenwood area.

Furthermore, this area's growth rate outpaces all other areas in the County – and will continue to do so for the remaining part of the twentieth century, before it begins to slow as it reaches its practical development limits and its geographical boundaries at the county line. The majority of the Greenwood area is a rural residential development and some subdivision development is spread throughout the southern part of the county. The Greenwood area has historically absorbed the major thrust of population growth in Lee County. It is also the location of much of the county's mobile and manufactured homes. This area is largely rural, with a few scattered subdivisions but mostly farmhouses and open land. Its future as a rural area is in question however, as suburban development moves swiftly southward. The key question is how will this area develop? Will there simply be faceless subdivisions? Or, will we develop a plan that creates a unique community where all people have the opportunity to live and work in an environment that is pleasing and nurturing?

Figure 38. Lemon Springs



Most commercial development in the Greenwood area is expected along US Highway 1 south of Tramway and along NC Highway 87 southeast of Sanford. Both of these areas are likely to continue to be developed for strip commercial development, as both water and sewer is available. Commercial development in the remainder of the Greenwood area will be scattered, with some concentration in the Lemon Springs area.

**T**he Cape Fear area is bordered on the north by Lick Creek, on the east by Chatham and Harnett Counties, on the south by NC Highway 87, and on the west by the City of Sanford's jurisdiction. This area also contains the Town of Broadway and the Carolina Trace planned community. There are several large farming operations in the Cape Fear area, devoted primarily to the cultivation of row crops.

Figure 39. Downtown Broadway



***To stimulate new development in the Cape Fear area, a series of public investments and strategies are necessary. A Development Enterprise Zone at the NC Highway 87 will focus public efforts on building the infrastructure of roads, water, sewer, to spur development there.***

Soils and geology in this area are much like those in the Deep River area, and are not suited for development without water and sewer. The Town of Broadway and Carolina Trace both have water and sewer, and water and sewer serves businesses and industries along NC Highway 87 and US Highway 421. Most of the northern portions of the Cape Fear area are not served with water and/or sewer.

Residential development in the Cape Fear area will continue within Broadway's jurisdiction and further development of existing lots in Carolina Trace is expected. Because of poor soils and lack of water and sewer, development in the north of Broadway is expected to be scattered and very low density. This area is also scenic, with rolling hills and green areas. The northeast part abuts the Cape Fear River and all development will need to be sensitive to the environmental impact of any kind of

development on the quality of our drinking water. In the area designated as Conservation Zone, development will be limited to large lot single family residential development with a minimum three (3) acre lot size. There is much to be safeguarded to prevent degradation of non-replaceable habitat and water quality.

An area east of Sanford's jurisdiction and near the San-Lee Park is targeted for more intense residential development. Water is available to some parts and sewer will have to be extended if this area is to be developed.

Except for scattered convenience stores and miscellaneous small businesses, commercial and industrial development in the Cape Fear area is expected to be limited to the areas along NC Highway 87 and US Highway 421, which is served by water and sewer. No other concentration of businesses is expected in the area in the near future.

**T**hree themes guide strategy development in the City of Sanford, the central area of Lee County. The first is recognition of the area's **composite strengths**. Comprised of a core business area and diverse neighborhoods, the area's strengths are derived from the uniqueness created by the integration of the various parts; living, working, and social, cultural, and entertainment activities.

The **image** of the center of Sanford is the second theme. Often, the official image of Sanford is the one seen from the West End, with up-scale homes, in a nice landscape nestled among the trees and hills of Lee County. However, a different

Figure 40. Depot Park, Downtown Sanford



perception is gained if one approaches the downtown area on a major thoroughfare such as Horner Boulevard or Wicker Street. What one experiences is a sense of growing deterioration together with a jumble of power and telephone lines, competing signs, and wall-to-wall asphalt and concrete. However, a hint of revitalization is appearing in several of these important corridors.

The community's image along a major thoroughfare, which is traveled by large number of people, is probably more important than one obtained from a preferred advantage point. Furthermore, it is important to secure these employment and service corridors along major thoroughfares as sound areas for existing and new small businesses.

The third theme is the **conservation** of neighborhoods and housing therein. These represent important assets to our community and they are irreplaceable. The provision

**Several strategies call for the preparation of specific plans or studies that deal with issues related to neighborhood preservation or commercial revitalization. The first step is an umbrella plan for the City of Sanford that sets policy guidelines in planning for smaller areas and business corridors within the city.**

of housing through in-fill has to be sensitive to maintaining the integrity and character of existing neighborhoods and their established housing stock.

The plan for Sanford concentrates stimulating residential growth while supporting the strong employment patterns that have emerged. The establishment of public open space is intended to further enhance the environmental desirability and the quality of life of the area.

Public initiatives will also emphasize transportation improvements to most of the arterial streets in the area and will center on Horner Boulevard as Sanford's most important scenic corridor. Extensions of both water and sewer service will support both business and industry in the area as well as new housing development.

The principal strategies for Sanford include improving access to US Highways 1, 421, and NC Highway 87, and improving the Horner Boulevard link to the south and east of the City and County.

Open space and recreation facilities will be acquired in advance of development to provide an incentive for growth and to meet long-term needs as the area grows. A number of community parks will be developed and land will be set aside for future greenways and open space, which is currently under study.

With major highways transportation corridors bordering or crossing the city, and with Horner Boulevard undergoing improvement to provide access from the south, the potential for residential and employment development growth is greater than ever. Employment growth will be concentrated in and around NC Highway 87 south and US Highways 1 and 421.

The quality of housing varies substantially in Sanford. Clearly, there are a number of areas in the core area of the City where housing rehabilitation and neighborhood reinvestment are a compelling need, and it is a key thrust of this plan to deal with that need in order to assure a high quality of life for all persons.

At the same time, the most architecturally and historically significant homes in Sanford exist in the core area of the City, with both National Register homes and those eligible to be in the National Register listing scattered throughout Sanford. The character and quality of these neighborhoods make them an important resource, and one that must be preserved. The tree-lined streets of these neighborhoods such as Hawkins Avenue and McCracken Heights as much as anything give Sanford its image.

***Employment growth will be concentrated in and around US Highway 1 and 421 and NC Highway 87 South.***

Several important planning themes emerge from this general assessment. The main themes are the preservation of existing, sound neighborhoods as the foundation for the growth of the whole **Community**; the need for revitalization of deteriorating neighborhoods; and the revitalization of existing business corridors that set the image for both the adjacent neighborhoods and the community as a whole.

The principal strategy will be the preparation and implementation of area plans in the **Community**. Eventually, a small area plan will be prepared for a targeted neighborhood or business corridor in the community.

The main issues these plans will address are:

- Delineation of residential conservation areas
- Identification of suitable in-fill areas
- Inappropriate zoning in neighborhoods and in the buffer areas between residential and commercial development
- Specifying the expansion limits of office, commercial, and industrial areas
- Identifying those commercial corridors where additional public and private support is needed for revitalization
- Identifying potential neighborhoods for designation as historic districts.

***The principal strategy will be the preparation and implementation of area plans in the Community. Eventually, a small area plan will be prepared for every neighborhood or business corridor in the Community.***

## Land Use Definitions

**Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance:**

Regulation which ties new development to the availability of needed infrastructure such as schools, roads, and water and wastewater facilities.

**Airport:**

This land use classification identifies the Lee County airport site.

**Central Business:**

The purpose of this land use classification is to protect the original shopping core. It is intended to allow a wide variety of retail establishments, personal services and professional offices. The development standards for this classification are designed to aid in pedestrian movement and to lessen traffic hazards.

**Commercial – High Density Residential:**

This classification designates areas suitable for commercial and high -density residential uses. Commercial development in these areas should be carefully sited and designed in order to be compatible with residential uses.

**Commercial – Light Industrial:**

This land use classification is intended to designate areas which are appropriate for light industrial and commercial uses.

**Commercial – Office and Institutional:**

This land use classification is intended to designate areas which are appropriate for light industrial and commercial uses.

**Commercial Use:**

An area in which goods and services are sold on-site.

**Community:**

When in bold, capitalized print, the word Community represents Sanford and Lee County as a unified whole.

**Compact Development:**

Development clustered in an efficient and organized manner, in order to preserve open space and achieve other land use goals.

**Conservation Zone:**

Applied to the areas adjacent to the rivers

and other major water bodies in the county. Development in these areas is restricted to large lot single family with a minimum lot size of 3 acres, and a 300-foot minimum buffer from the riverbanks which must be specified on the recorded plat.

**Development Enterprise Zone:**

An area designated by a community to receive incentives for development.

**Duplex Dwelling:**

A detached building containing two (2) dwelling units.

**Dwelling Unit:**

A room or group of rooms forming a single independent habitable unit, containing independent cooking, sanitary, and sleeping facilities, used or intended to be used for owner occupancy or for rental, lease, or other occupancy on a weekly or longer basis.

**Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction:**

The area outside of a city's (or other municipality's) limits, for which the city can develop a plan for the future.

**General Business:**

This type of use describes business, retail and commercial activities not specified elsewhere in the document. Zoning classifications included are General Business (GB), Neighborhood Business (NB) and Highway Services (HS). These uses are usually found along major thoroughfares.

**Heavy Industrial:**

This land use classification district is designed to accommodate those industries whose normal operations include potentially objectionable dust, noise, odor, or other emissions.

**Highway Node:**

A land use classification identifying a major mixed use area of retail/service center of over 200,000 square feet with additional major office and business park employment. Development at a highway node should be sited and designed as a Community gateway.

<b>Highway Overlay:</b>	Areas with high level of design and development standards along major transportation corridors or major highways.
<b>Historic District:</b>	An area designated by a community as historically significant, for the purpose of preserving the area's historic resources. A historic preservation commission guides changes to the area.
<b>Industrial Park:</b>	The purpose of this land use classification is to provide for research and selective manufacturing, with complementary uses, to utilize the advantages of locating these uses near each other, and to buffer them from adjacent uses.
<b>Industrial:</b>	These are areas used for manufacturing. This is to include the Industrial Park (IP), the Light Industrial (LI) and the Heavy Industrial (HI) zoning districts. The areas designated as industrial should be reserved for industry and protected from the intrusion of residential and other incompatible uses.
<b>Industrial-Commercial-Office:</b>	This land use classification designates areas which are suitable for industrial, commercial, or office use.
<b>In-fill Development:</b>	New development which is located between or surrounded by existing development.
<b>Land Use Classification:</b>	Identifies areas on a land use map which are suitable for certain types of uses such as conservation, residential, commercial, office, or industrial uses. A community can use land use classifications to help it designate zoning districts.
<b>Land Use Map:</b>	This map identifies areas which are appropriate for different kinds of development. These areas are called Land Use Classifications.
<b>Land Use Plan:</b>	A document which identifies current conditions in our Community, states our community's concerns, goals, and vision for

the future, and identifies the planning tools we can use to reach our goals and create the kind of community we want. An important part of the Land Use Plan is the Land Use Map, which shows where the community would like to see certain kinds of development, by showing different Land Use Classifications.

**Light Industrial:**

A land use classification designating areas appropriate for the manufacture, service, or repair of products, which results in little or no noise, odor, or other emissions from the property.

**Low / Mid Density Residential:**

This classification designates land which is appropriate for single-family homes, duplexes, and townhomes.

**Low Density Residential:**

This land use is composed of the Residential-20 (R-20) and Residential-14 (R-14) zoning districts. These areas are intended primarily for single family homes on individual lots with certain non-residential and semi-public uses permitted. Land use density is controlled through minimum lot size requirements.

**Medium / High Density Residential – Office:**

The purpose of this classification is to identify areas which are appropriate for medium and high density residential development, including single family, duplexes, and multi-family developments, as well as office development.

**Medium/High Density Residential:**

These areas are comprised of a variety of residential uses including single family, duplexes and multi-family developments. Densities are controlled by minimum lot size requirements. Customary home occupations are permitted with special provisions in this classification.

**Mobile Homes:**

This classification is intended to establish planned facilities for the placement of mobile home parks and subdivisions. Mobile home parks shall be at least eight (8) acres and shall not have less than ten (10)

mobile home spaces available at first occupancy. Subdivisions shall be no less than five (5) acres and shall have at least ten (10) lots available at first occupancy. Mobile home subdivision density is controlled by established minimum lot sizes.

**Multi-Family Dwelling:**

A building containing three (3) or more dwelling units.

**Office and Institutional:**

This land use classification area includes professional, personal and service offices, schools and churches. The intent is to provide for a buffer between high intensity uses such as commercial or industrial areas and lower intensity uses such as residential areas.

**Office Use:**

A room, group of rooms, or building, whose primary use is the conduct of a business, professional service, or governmental activity, excluding on-site retail, or the manufacturing, processing, repair, or bulk storage of materials or products.

**Recreation/Open Space:**

Recreation lands, open space, greenways and cemeteries are included in this land use classification. Floodplains as defined by the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) are noted.

**Residential Agricultural:**

The zoning of this land use classification area is Residential Agricultural-20 (RA-20). Lots are 20,000 square feet or larger and consist primarily of single family development and agricultural uses. Manufactured homes are allowed on a conditional use basis only. The intent of the classification is to preserve agricultural endeavors.

**Shopping Center:**

The purpose of the district is to provide for the development of integrated shopping centers to serve the needs of residential neighborhoods and outlying areas. Population growth and related residential development or construction of major thoroughfares are a prerequisite of well

planned properly located shopping center developments.

**Single-Family Dwelling:**

A detached building containing one (1) dwelling unit.

**Special Area Plan:**

A plan focusing on a particular area of a community in detail, to identify the area's needs, establish goals for the area, and to identify strategies to meet these goals.

**Sprawl:**

Development which is inefficiently located far from historic and planned concentrations of development. This type of development is typically designed around the needs of cars rather than the needs of pedestrians.

**Subdivision Ordinance:**

A group of regulations guiding the division of land.

**Townhome:**

A dwelling unit attached to two (2) or more additional dwelling units, which each have a private entrance leading directly outside, rather than to a hallway, shared balcony, or breezeway, and which are entirely separated from each other by walls that meet North Carolina building standards.

**Use:**

The purpose for which land or a building or structure is arranged, designed, or intended, or for which either land or a building or structure is, or may be, occupied or maintained.

**Zoning District:**

An area in which certain uses of land, densities, and standards for development are required and regulated by a Zoning Ordinance.

**Zoning Ordinance:**

A group of regulations which divides a community into different areas called zoning districts, allows certain land uses and development densities in the different zones, and which requires development to meet certain standards.