

MUNICIPAL GUIDANCE

Comprehensive Plan | Section 6

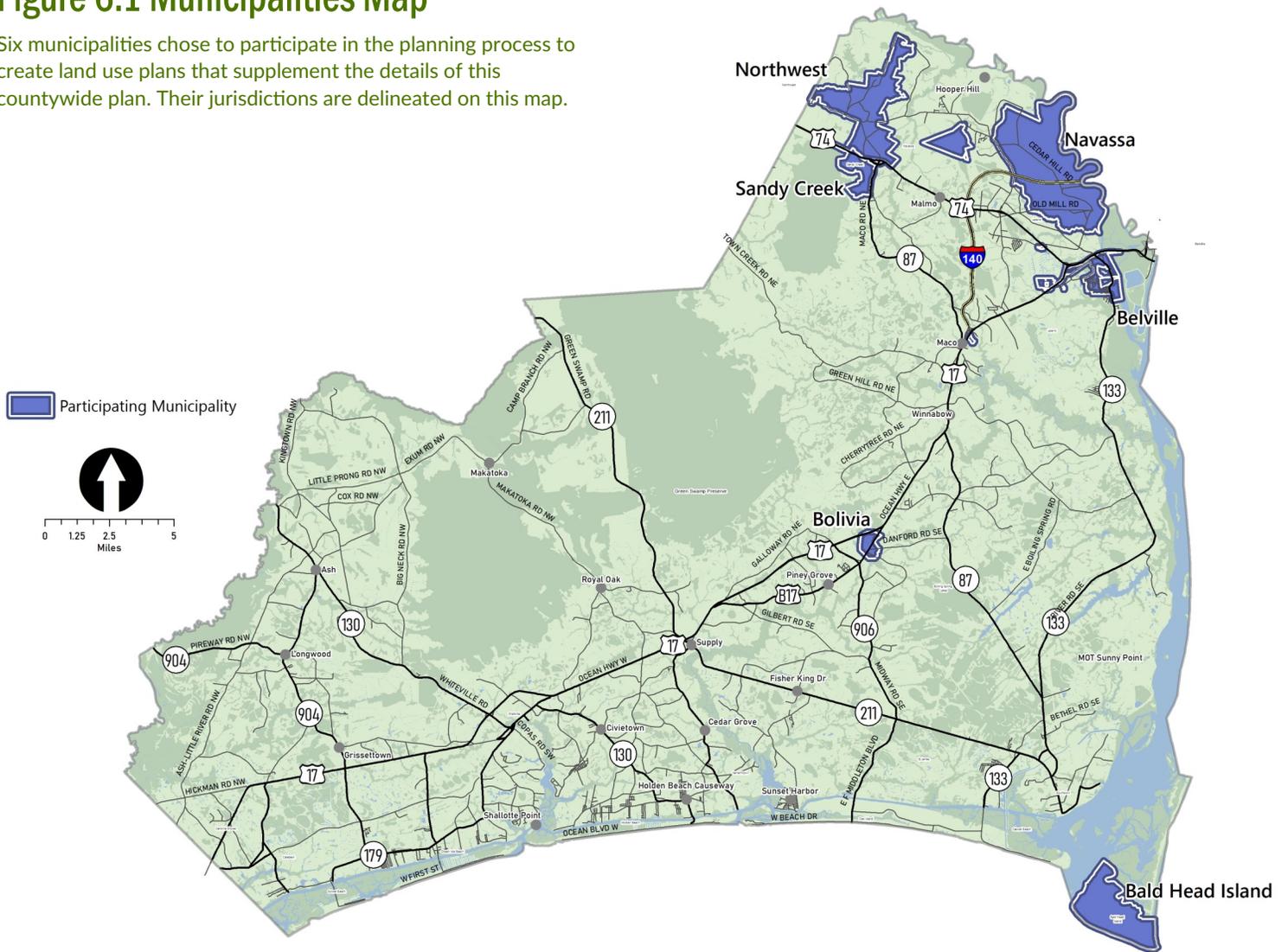


Municipal Plans

As part of the planning process to develop *Blueprint Brunswick 2040*, six municipalities within the county chose to engaged citizens and other stakeholders to define a future land use vision specifically for their respective jurisdictions. The pages that follow contain the plans developed for each town. The plans summarize relevant background information, present the outcomes of the community engagement activities, and highlight the major issues and opportunities identified. The plans for each also feature a future land use map. Maps are supported by recommendations that relate to the recommended policies for The County (refer to Section 4).

Figure 6.1 Municipalities Map

Six municipalities chose to participate in the planning process to create land use plans that supplement the details of this countywide plan. Their jurisdictions are delineated on this map.



Bald Head Island

The Village of Bald Head Island is a small community that incorporated in 1985, just two years after development began. Here, planning for the future means striking a balance between conserving the natural and cultural features of the island and providing the infrastructure and services that meet the needs of a community that is still in the process of developing. This plan defines ways the development pattern can shift to accommodate the uses and activities the community desires while preserving the special characteristics of the village and the island it occupies.

Existing Land Use & Development Pattern

Created originally as a resort community for people to “live in harmony with nature,” the development on the island is comprised primarily of single-family homes around a golf course, a marina and various amenities, and some commercial uses in a few locations. (See Figure 1.) The commercial areas are devoted to restaurants, small shops, convenience grocery, and personal services and serve both the residents of the island as well as the many visitors that travel to the island for day trips or longer stays. The environmental constraints and lack of automobiles have limited the scale of development. The natural and cultural assets are prominent features of the community. “Old Baldy,” for example, is the iconic lighthouse. Constructed in 1817, this historic structure is an important relic of Brunswick County’s seafaring past.

Environment

Bald Head Island is the southernmost of North Carolina's cape islands. With most of its 12,000 acres permanently protected as open space, the island boasts ecological diversity with ecosystems comprised of beachfront, dune ridge, maritime forest, and marshland. Through the work of BHI Conservancy, it is nationally recognized for its sea turtle nesting activity. The State of North Carolina manages most of the land as the Bald Head Island State Natural Area. Within the Village, Smith Island Land Trust (SILT) has been instrumental in protecting over 40 properties with conservation easements, bringing the total area of conservation land inside the village to almost 600 acres. The easements encompass some of the areas delineated as “Natural Heritage Natural Areas,” which support rare plant and animal habitats (see Figure 2). Subject to barrier island dynamics, the island has evolved over time, particularly in response to the impacts of tropical storms and hurricanes.



A limited amount of commercial development can be found on the island. Much of it is clustered around the marina where the ferry from Southport docks.



Single family homes are the predominant land use in the village. For many of the homeowners, these are vacation homes, not their primary residences.



Figure 6.2.1 Existing Land Use (2020)

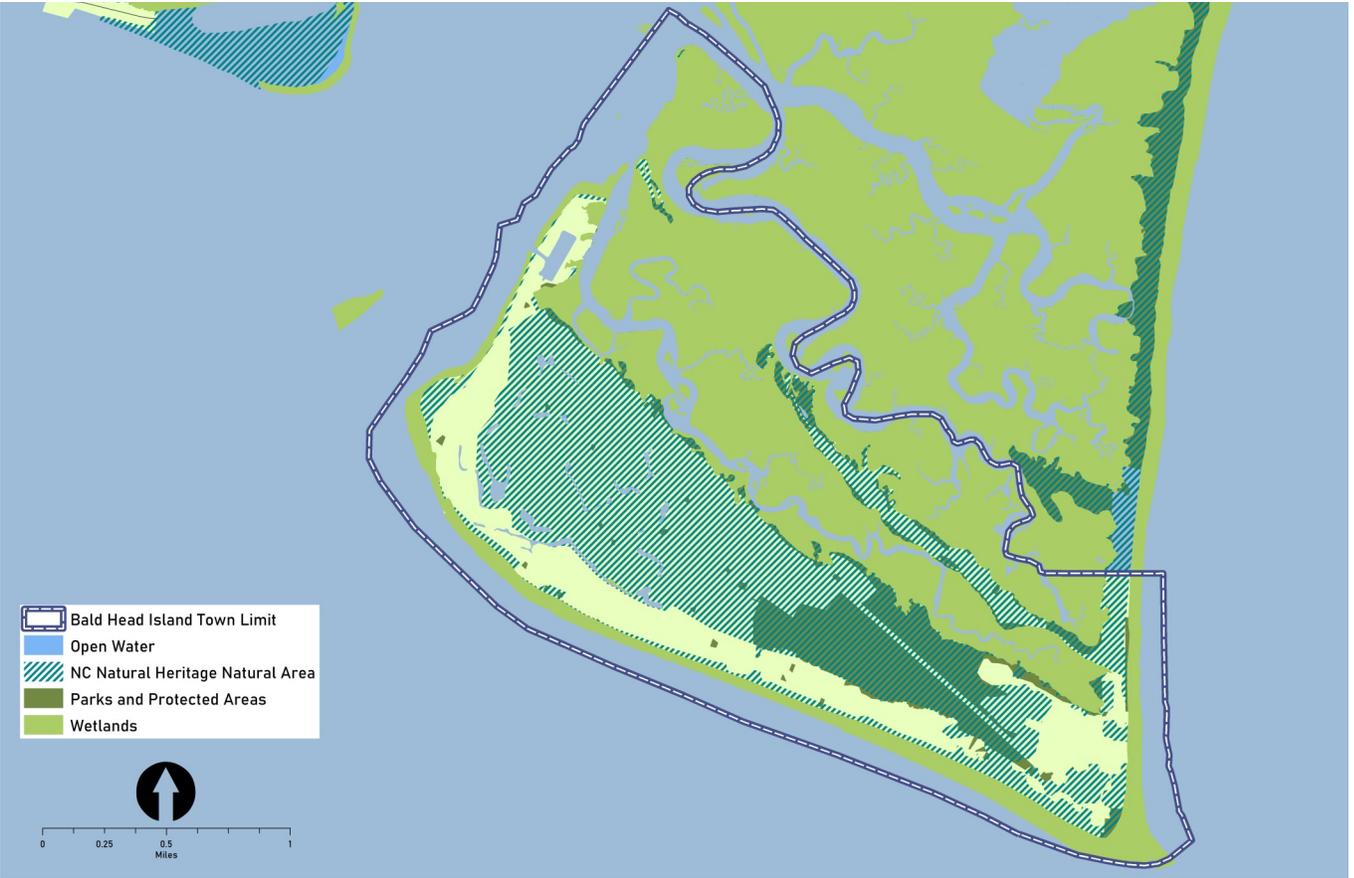


Figure 6.2.2 Existing Environmental Features (2020)

Bald Head Island by the Numbers

Estimated
Population
(2020)

209

Projected
Population
(2040)*

307

Median
Age
(2020)

72

Median
Household Income
(2020)

\$119k

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Population

The population of Bald Head Island, according to the US Census Bureau, is just over 200. However, the seasonal population raises that number, as more than 1,000 dwelling units (almost 90% of all homes) are classified as vacation homes. With an increasing growth rate, the population is expected to grow by roughly 50% by 2040.

The permanent population is comprised of older adults with a median age of 72 and, as shown in Figure 3, most residents are between 65 and 74 years of age.

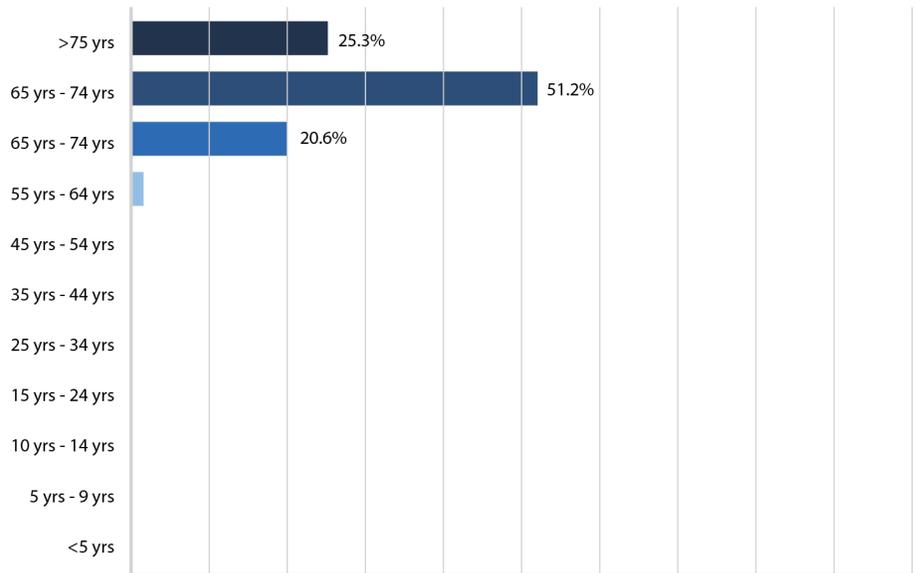


Figure 3. Population by Age (2020)

*Note: The increased rate of development approvals is not reflected in the population projections developed in 2020, so the 2040 population could be higher than the number shown.

Figure 4. Estimated and Projected Population Growth (2000-2040)

Year	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	173	75	205	209	229	252	278	307
Growth Rate		-5.7%	34.7%	0.4%	1.9%	2.0%	2.1%	2.2%
Capture Growth		-0.3%	0.9%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Housing & Households

Almost 100% of the housing on Bald Head Island is comprised of single-family detached homes. Approximately 10% of all homes are considered to be owner- or renter-occupied, which indicates a high number occupants are seasonal residents or are short-term renters. In fact, more than 1,000 dwelling units (almost 90% of all homes) are classified as vacation homes. Of those households with permanent residents, more than half have an annual household income above \$100,000, which is substantially higher than the median household income of the County.

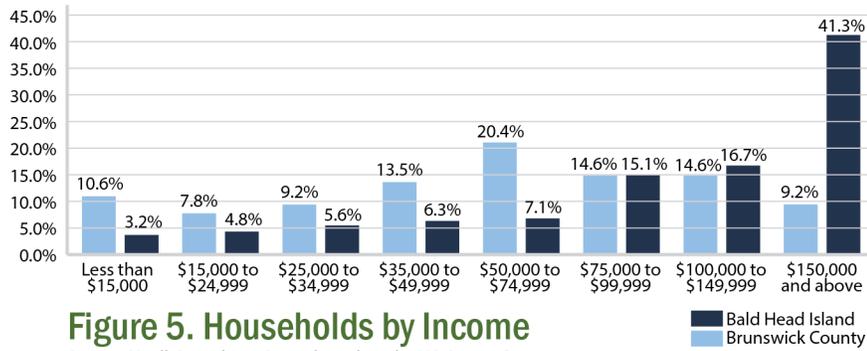
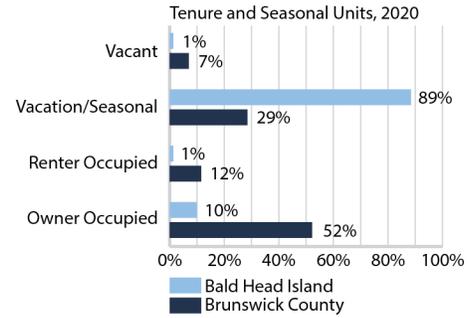


Figure 5. Households by Income
Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

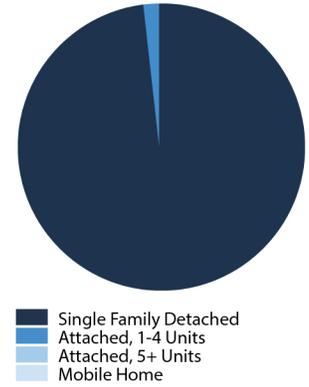


Figure 6. Housing Tenure/Type

Employment & the Economy

The Bald Head Island economy is relatively small, comprised of around 500 total jobs; up significantly from 2010 yet off somewhat from 2015. Unsurprisingly, these jobs are heavily clustered to cater to tourism and seasonal residents, focused largely in Retail Trade, Recreation, and Transportation.

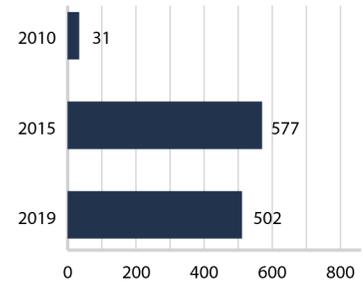


Figure 7. Jobs, 2010-2019

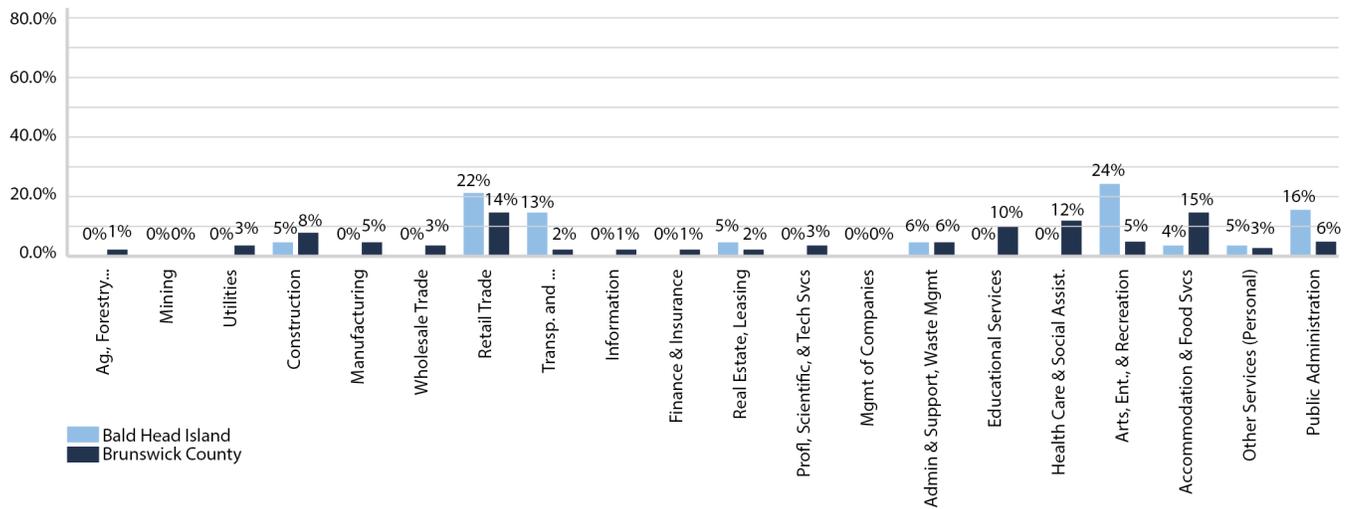


Figure 8. Employment by Industry Sector

Key Issues & Opportunities

Through the community engagement activities, the residents and other stakeholders shared concerns about future growth, anticipated changes to the development pattern, and potential impacts. While meeting participants and survey respondents identified several issues to be addressed in the coming years, they also highlighted some opportunities to consider as change occurs. The following summary reflects some the concerns and ideas expressed.

Transportation

Residents and visitors rely on electric carts and bicycles to travel around the island. Residents and business owners noted concerns ranging from the long-term viability of ferry service to the island, as automobiles are not permitted, to the challenges of feasibly maintaining the streets (roads and “wynds”), to safety, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

Environment

Though much of the land is protected as undisturbed open space, residents are concerned that impacts stemming from new development and increasing tourism could jeopardize the health of the fragile ecosystems.

Housing

Though some desire more housing diversity, residents seemed equally interested in better management of properties used as short-term rentals.

Other Uses

The level of activity on the island is presenting opportunities for a few more commercial services as well as beach-related facilities distributed to improve access.



Beach renourishment and channel dredging are two key island management activities.



The ferry from Deep Point Marina in Southport is the primary mode of transportation to Bald Head Island.

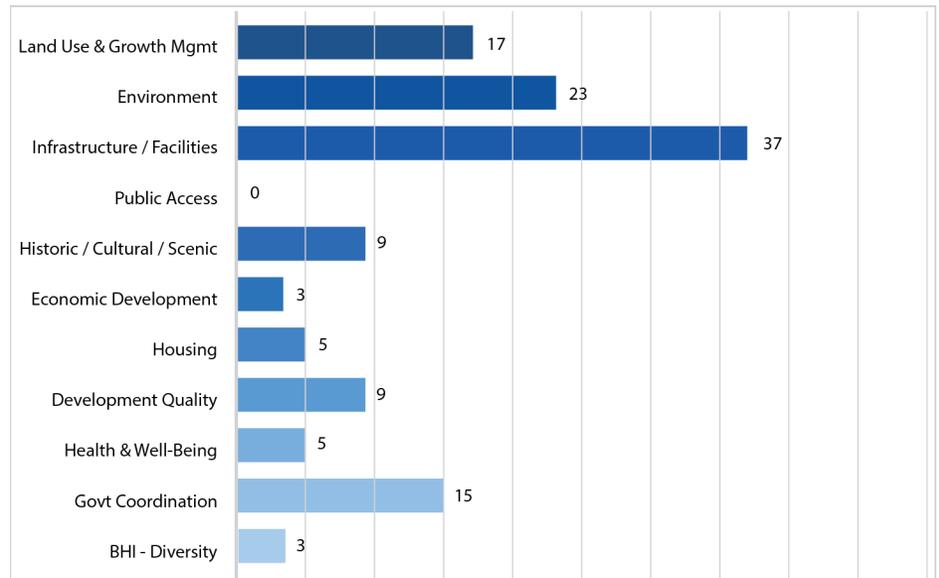
Community Engagement

During the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 planning process, Bald Head Island residents and property owners participated in district level meetings. In addition, community meetings were held at the Village offices on Bald Head Island in March and April of 2022. All such meetings were structured and facilitated to gather input on issues, opportunities and aspirations related to the future development pattern and conservation efforts. Feedback provided through online surveys (22 responses) augmented the input recorded at the in-person meetings.

- * District 3 County Meeting attendees: 38
- * March 2022 Bald Head Island Meeting attendees: 42
- * April 2022 Bald Head Island Meeting attendees: 12

Top-Ranked Goals

When asked to review the goals for the future of Brunswick County, meeting participants shared their opinions and voted for those they believe are most relevant to Bald Head Island. The goals pertaining to infrastructure, the environment, and land use and growth management ranked first, second, and third, respectively.



Note: The full set of Goals are presented on page 68-69 in Section 3 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

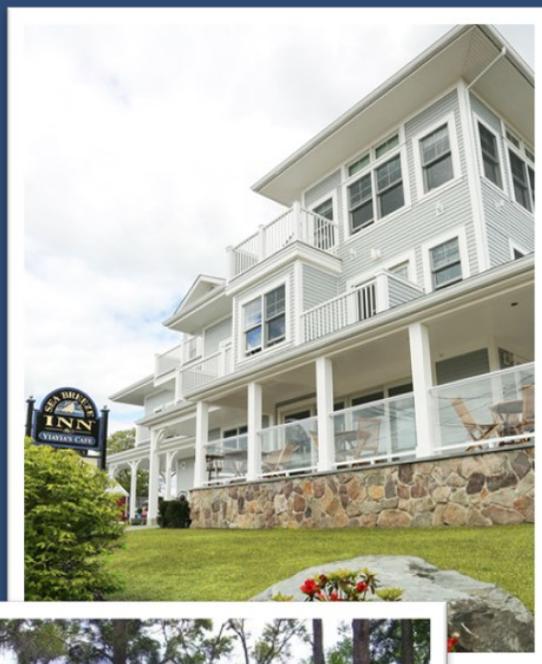
Figure 9. Results of Goal Ranking



Meeting attendees examined draft land use maps and shared ideas about specific details to reflect their vision for the future of the village.

Ideas for Land Use + Precedents

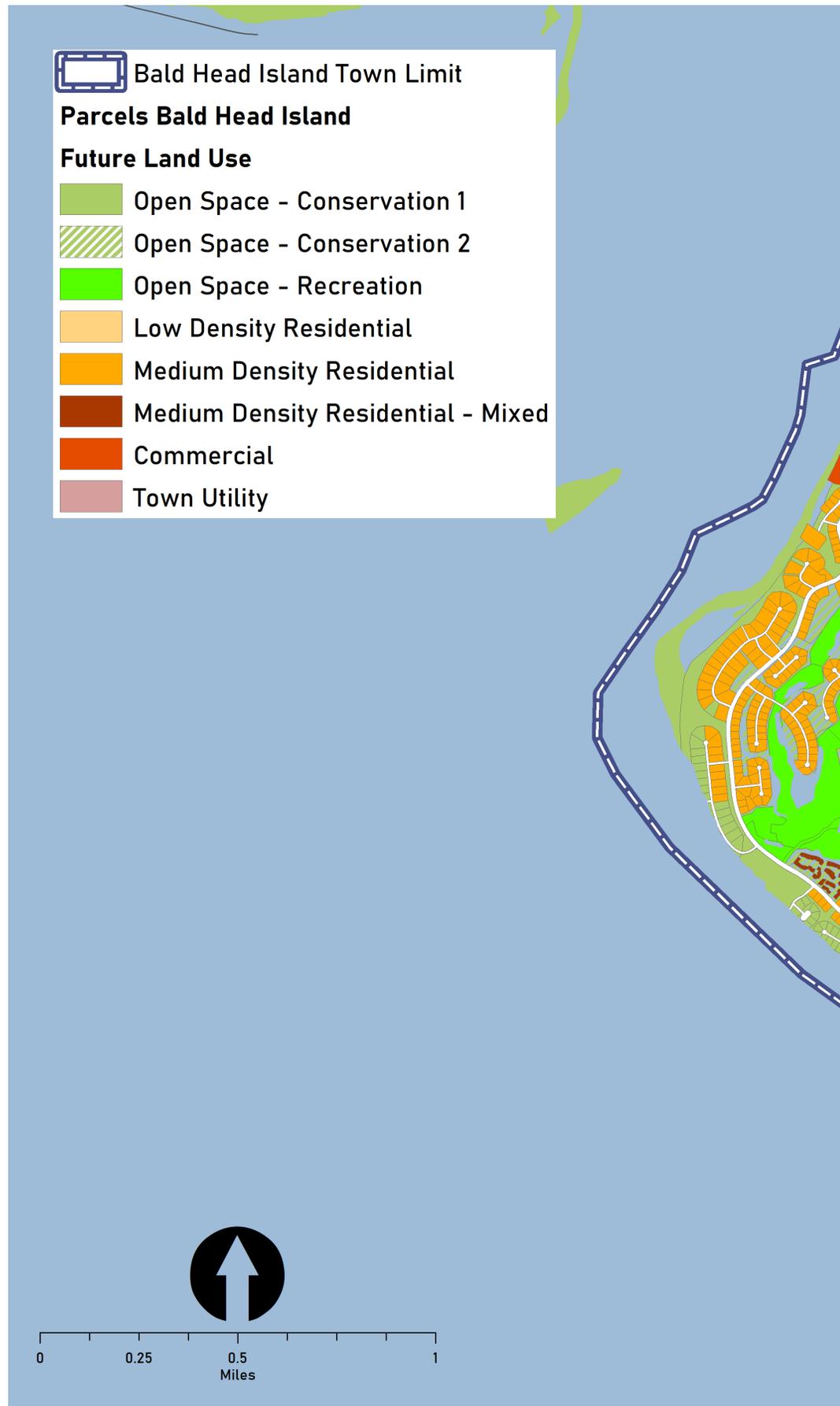
- Health services, senior care/support
- School (charter)
- Lodging
- Temporary / pop-up businesses
- ABC Store
- More restaurants, bakery
- Dog grooming, boarding
- Accessory dwelling units (ADUs), garage apartments
- Access points to beaches (with parking and restrooms)
- Playground(s)
- Dog park
- Agriculture



Examples of lodging (Newport, RI), accessory dwelling unit (Charleston, SC), and restaurant (Oriental, NC) from other waterfront communities.

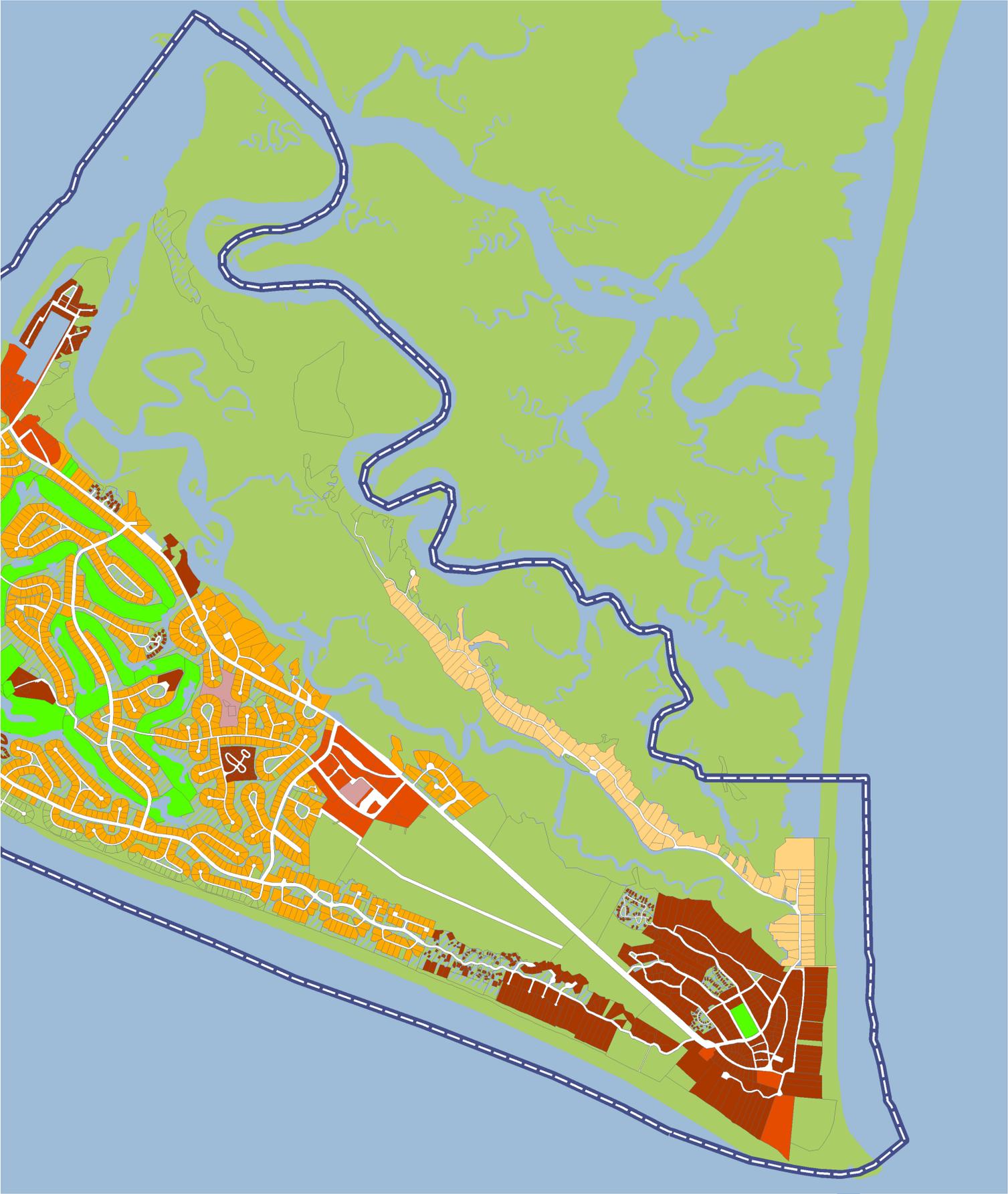
Future Land Use

The community's vision for Bald Head Island is depicted on the Future Land Use and Conservation Map (Figure 10). The majority of the development pattern is envisioned to remain intact. Most of the new development in the future will consist of housing units on existing home lots. Through infill development and redevelopment in the current commercial nodes, the community will support a limited amount of additional nonresidential uses.



Note: The Place Type descriptions are presented on page ___ in Section 3 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

Figure 6.2.10 Future Land Use & Conservation Map



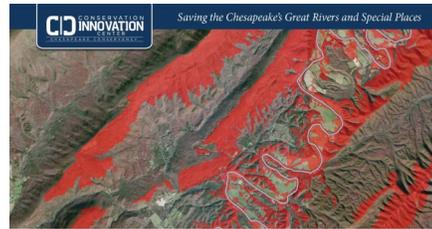
Policy Recommendations & Strategies

The following are a series of policy recommendations and supporting implementation strategies. As indicated in the column on the right, each has a connection to one or more of the recommendations outlined in Section 4 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

	Related Recommendations of Blueprint Brunswick 2040
1. Maintain development quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop clearer design standards and landscaping/screening requirements for new development, particularly commercial buildings and parking lots. 	DQ-1, DQ-2
2. Improve mobility and access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue conducting pavement study of roads and wynds to determine needs for improvements as well as the associated costs and funding strategy. Conduct mobility study to evaluate how to safely accommodate walkers, bicyclists, and golf carts. Consider a study to determine locations and amenities (parking and restrooms) for beach access. Work with the private owners (and NCDOT) to ensure reliable ferry service well into the future. 	ITR-1
3. Increase efforts to conserve natural resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote land dedication and conservation easements. 	NR-1
4. Foster an environment of collaboration to advance shared goals of protecting the special attributes of BHI. Consider formalized engagement with property owners (including nonresidents), business owners, BHI Club, SILT, NCDOT, etc.	GC-1
5. Assess infrastructure demands and strategies for managing capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct build-out analysis of island to determine future needs and allocation policies. This should take into consideration existing development rights, vacation rental uses, and desired commercial development. 	IWS-1
6. Consider integration of desired uses while respecting the original vision for the island	LU-2
7. Examine the regulatory framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine enforcement limitations and creative solutions to address issues. Examine covenants and restrictions to define specific barriers to desired changes. Consider possible zoning ordinance update regarding new commercial development in the village. 	G-5, LU-1, LU-6
8. Support the tourism industry while mitigating the impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the experience (better mobility, wayfinding) Protect the environmental assets through education (e.g., orientation at ferry terminal) Seek creative solutions to issues associated with tourism, such as traffic, parking, and noise due to congregation of groups (vacation rentals, beach access) 	ED-3
9. Conduct housing study, with a focus on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing large vacation rentals and developing short-term rental policies, and Providing housing options for island workers, extended family, etc. 	HN-1



Mebane Landscaping Ordinance Updates: In 2022, the City of Mebane, NC updated its landscaping requirements and a variety of other ordinance standards to better match its expectations for new development.



Viewshed Protection and Impact Analyses
Mapping the visible landscape to understand the impacts of and guide strategic development that maintains the beauty of special vistas

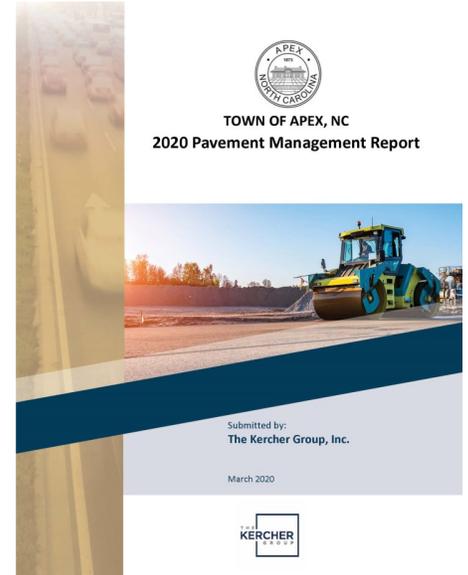
The Chesapeake Conservancy is conducting extensive visibility analyses to support strategic conservation and restoration efforts in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. These studies provide a visual representation of which areas of land are seen from a particular location. This information is helpful when deciding how to preserve and enhance visible landscapes that are an essential element to many hiking and water trails, scenic roadways, and historic vistas.

Our work is being applied in the real world, most notably in association with George Washington's historic estate, Mount Vernon. The Conservancy has developed a web application (shown on right) to visualize how potential development would affect the estate's viewshed. The tool accepts a user-defined height and polygon of a proposed development, displaying it and by how much, it would be visible from Mount Vernon and which trees would block the development from view if it was not visible.



Chesapeake Conservancy
info@chsepaconservancy.org
chsepaconservancy.org
 (410) 321-5610

Chesapeake Conservancy Viewshed Studies: The Chesapeake Conservancy is conducting viewshed studies to help prioritize land for protection in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and protect signature views from scenic roads, hiking routes, and water trails.



Apex Pavement Management Study: In 2020, the Town of Apex, NC conducted a pavement management study for Town streets using special software to estimate the cost of pavement improvements and identify which repairs would deliver the greatest benefit for the resources available.

Recommended Action Plan

The conservation and development of Bald Head Island has always been about balance – enabling people to experience the special attributes of the place without degrading the qualities they came to see. As the island continues to develop on remaining vacant and underdeveloped lots, preserving the island’s natural qualities and mitigating the impacts of more people are paramount. As a result, the Village should prioritize the following action steps:

- 1 **Clarify the rules that control new development:** Update the Village Zoning Ordinance to clarify the screening requirements for new development, especially commercial buildings and parking lots; evaluate potential additions to permitted nonresidential uses in some zoning districts to meet the changing needs of the island.
- 2 **Improve the condition and safety of roads and wynds:** Continue conducting a pavement management study to identify location and cost of needed improvements to roads and wynds. Conduct a mobility study to improve the safety of walkers, bicyclists, and carts.
- 3 **Protect the land that protects the island experience:** Continue working with the Smith Island Land Trust and Bald Head Island Conservancy to identify and protect signature view-shaping lands and sensitive areas to maintain the island’s natural qualities as development continues.

Belville

Incorporated in 1977, the Town of Belville is poised for development that is in response to demands for housing, commercial services, and industrial space in the greater Wilmington area. This plan builds on the work completed more than a decade ago and updated in 2021 to determine the vision for Belville’s downtown and waterfront area. The plan conveys ideas for future land use throughout the Town’s jurisdiction. Those ideas are supported by recommendations for policies and strategies for implementation over the next 20 years. The plan was created with thoughtful input of the Town’s elected and appointed officials, staff, and residents who attended the community meetings.

Existing Land Use & Development Pattern

Early development in the town included primarily industrial uses located to take advantage of access to the road network. More recently, development in neighboring Leland and nearby Wilmington is influencing land use changes in Belville. Today, most of the developed portions of the town are devoted to residential neighborhoods. Local- and region-serving commercial development is also part of the development pattern. Undeveloped and underdeveloped sites comprise 37% of the total land area, and some of it will support future development. However, 32% of the town’s jurisdiction is constrained by environmental features, including wetlands, floodplains, and high-risk flood areas and will likely remain as open space as the development pattern evolves over the next two decades.

Environment

The town is located along the Brunswick River and some of its tributaries. As shown in Figure 2, most of the environmental features are creeks, floodplains, and wetlands. While these features present constraints to development, they are also the assets that can enhance development, providing areas for passive recreation as well as scenic views. Currently, the Town is pursuing funding to construct an extended “Riverwalk” greenway that leverages the visual and physical access to the river to provide a recreational destination within one of these environmentally sensitive areas.



The Riverwalk is planned to be extended to maximize the visitor experience along and enjoyment of the Brunswick River.



Keeping pace with change, the Town constructed a new town hall in 2017. It is prominently located along NC-133 close to the area delineated for the future downtown.

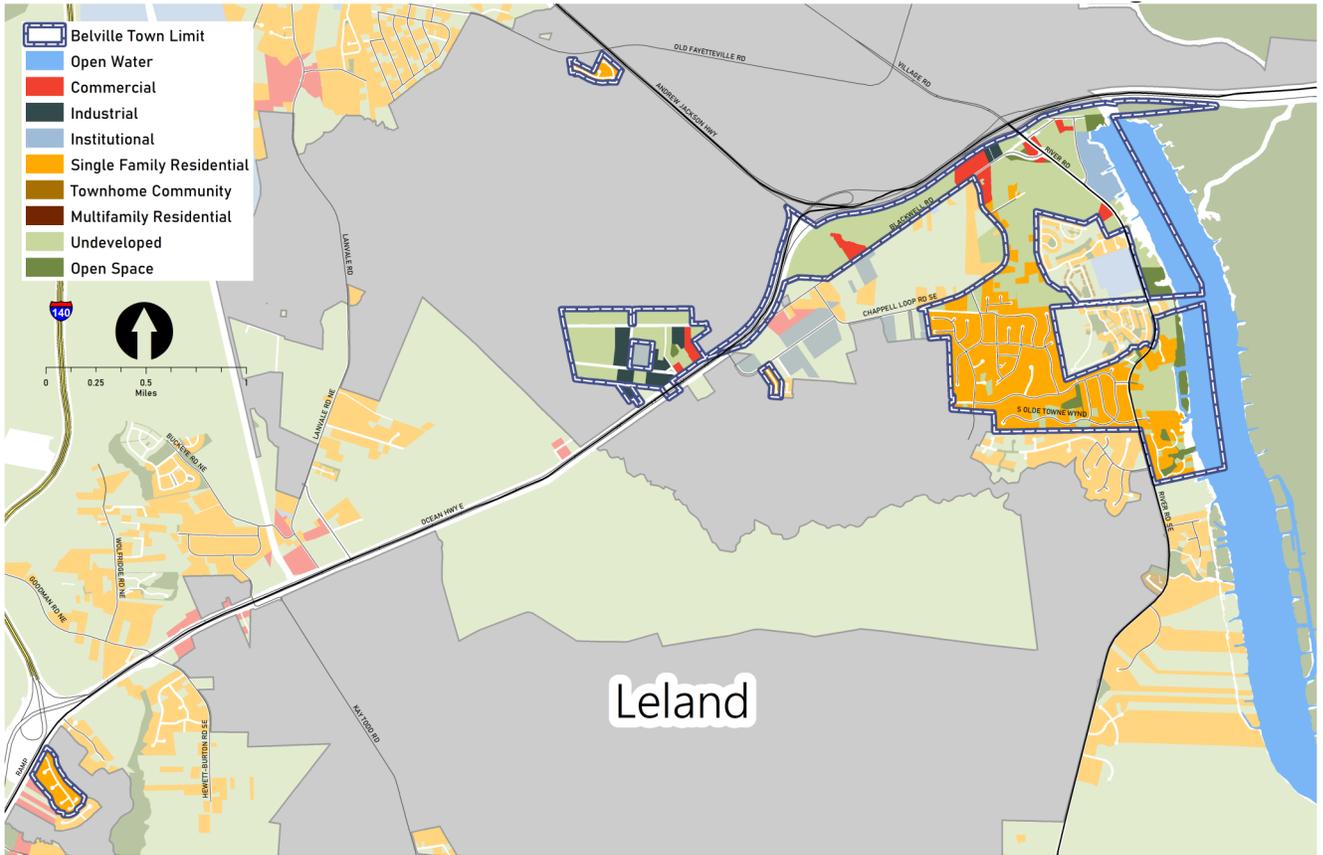


Figure 6.3.1 Existing Land Use (2020)

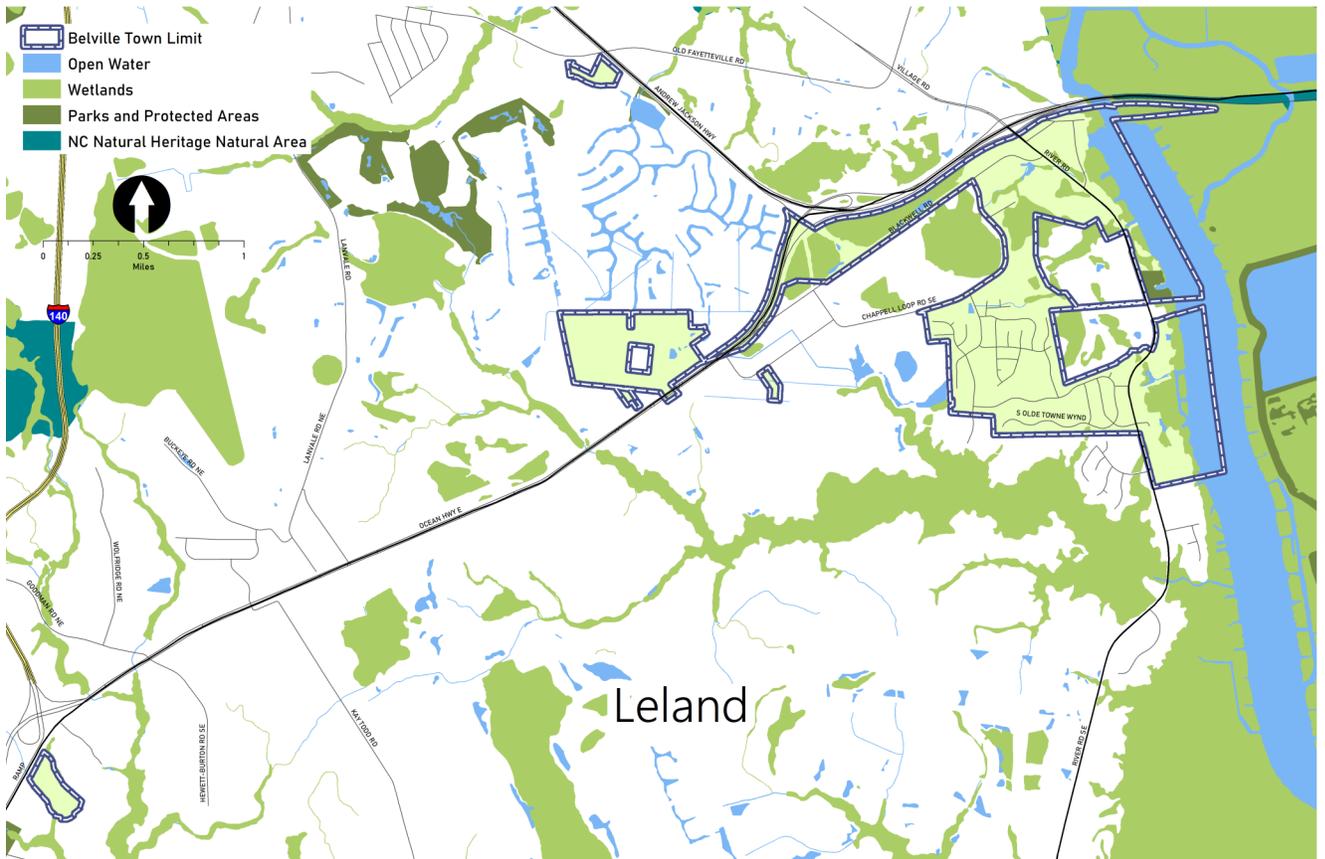


Figure 6.3.2 Existing Environmental Features (2020)

Belville by the Numbers

Estimated
Population
(2020)

2,696

Projected
Population
(2040)*

4,666

Median
Age
(2020)

41

Median
Household Income
(2020)

\$62k

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Population

Sitting in the path of metropolitan growth, the Town of Belville is anticipating a significant increase in its population, which is expected to nearly double over the next 20 years.

Figure 3 displays the distribution of the population across several age groups. The highest concentration is between ages 25 and 64, indicating that a high percentage of the population is of workforce age. Coupled with commuting pattern data that indicate almost 30% of the county's workforce travels to New Hanover County daily, the population age suggests Belville is an attractive place to live for people employed in Wilmington.

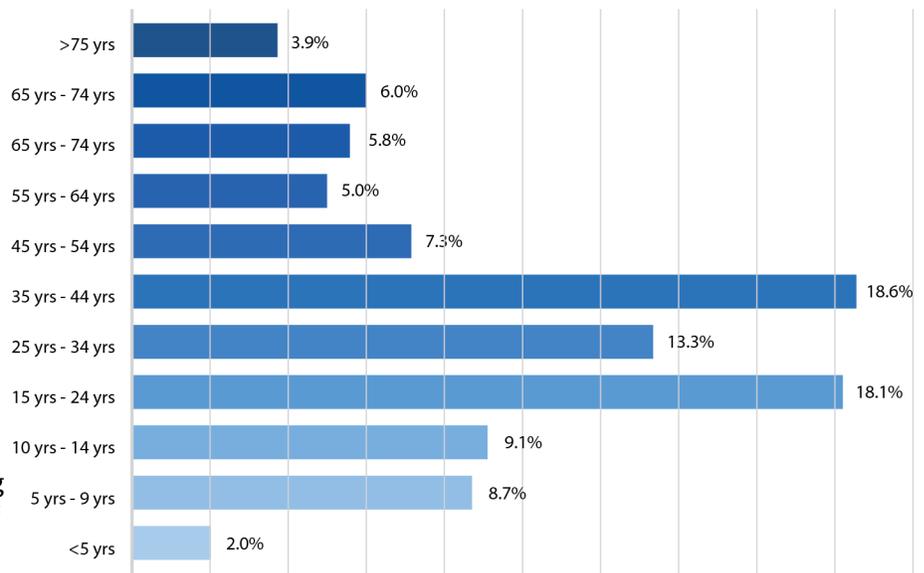


Figure 3. Population by Age (2020)

*Note: The increased rate of development approvals is not reflected in the population projections developed in 2020, so the 2040 population could be higher than the number shown.

Figure 4. Estimated and Projected Population Growth (2000-2040)

Year	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	285	1,884	2,437	2,696	3,093	3,548	4,069	4,666
Growth Rate		56.1%	5.9%	2.1%	2.9%	3.2%	2.9%	3.1%
Capture Growth		4.7%	3.9%	1.8%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Housing & Households

Almost 80% of the housing in Belville consists of single-family detached homes. More than 60% of all homes are owner-occupied and another 32% are rental units. Unlike the beach communities in the county, very few are classified as short-term rental or vacation homes.

At just over \$62,000, the median household income is higher than that of North Carolina by about \$5,000. As shown in Figure 5, over 40% of the households are bringing in more than \$75,000 annually.



Figure 5. Households by Income

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

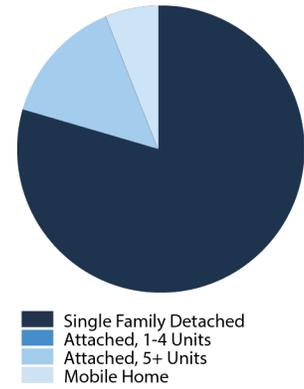
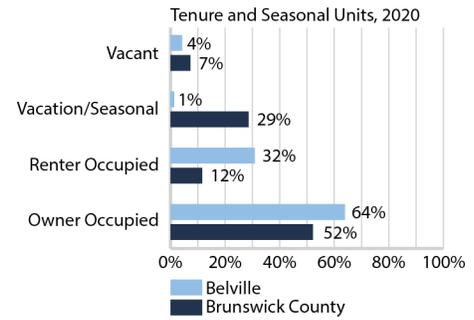


Figure 6. Housing Tenure/Type

Employment & the Economy

Belville today has around 775 total jobs and is a relatively more diverse job base than other cities and towns in Brunswick County. Specific key job clusters can be found in Construction, Professional Services, Health Care, Education, and Accommodations & Food Services. Belville's location along US-74 and proximity to Wilmington have made its economy less tourism focused and more oriented toward servicing the local market.

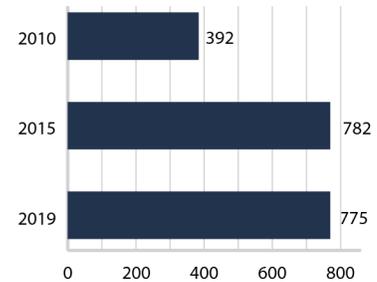


Figure 7. Jobs, 2010-2019

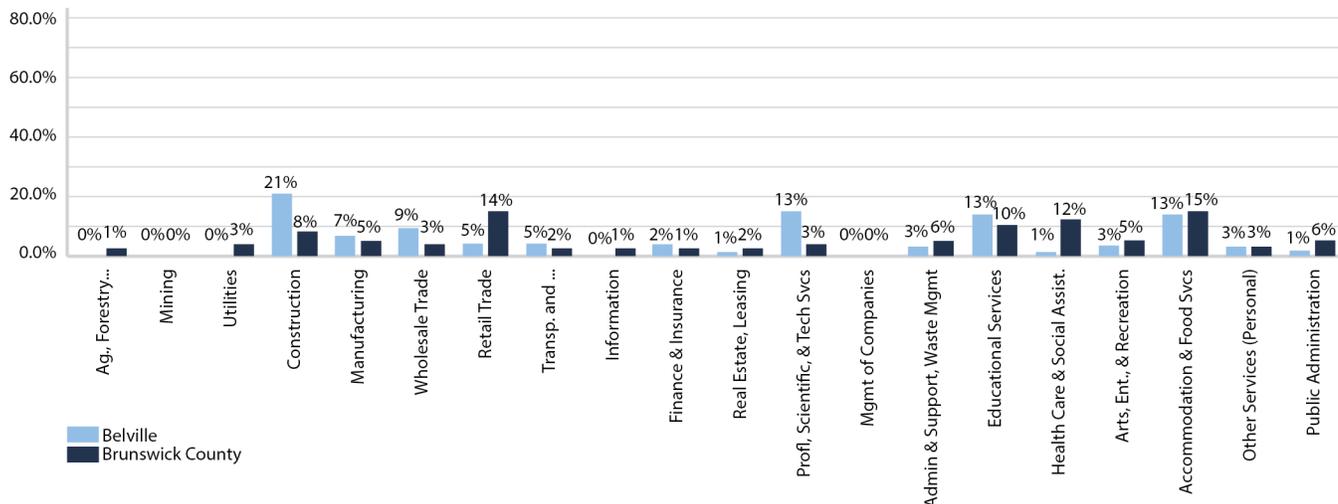


Figure 8. Employment by Industry Sector

Key Issues & Opportunities

Through the community engagement activities, the residents and other stakeholders shared concerns about future growth, anticipated changes to the development pattern, and potential impacts. While meeting participants and survey respondents identified several issues to be addressed in the coming years, they also highlighted some opportunities to consider as change occurs. The following summary reflects some the concerns and ideas expressed.

Downtown Development

Support has been building for the creation of a downtown that can support retail shops, restaurants, office, and civic uses. With open space along the waterfront and places for more public spaces that can support programmed events, the community anticipates opportunities for creating a destination to which residents and visitors will gravitate for social gatherings and entertainment. The concept was defined during the development of the Vision 2030 Plan. Citizens expressed support for partnerships the Town is forming with NCDOT, private property owners, and investors to facilitate the changes envisioned.

Traffic on NC-133

A NC Scenic Byway, NC-133 south of Belville offers views of natural areas and historic sites that contribute to the identity of Brunswick County. Traffic is building on this roadway that provides local access to neighborhoods and Belville Elementary School. The route is also a key connection between Wilmington and Southport, particularly for tourists. Meeting attendees shared concerns about safety for motorists exiting the neighborhoods as well as for pedestrians crossing to access the public park at the Riverwalk trailhead.

Active Recreation

While a few parks provide recreational opportunities within the town limits, most residents rely on the parks of neighboring jurisdictions and The County in meeting the full range of recreational needs. Those who participated in the planning process indicated support for improvements to existing public parks as well as new parks with ballfields, provided locations can be identified.

Community Engagement

During the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 planning process, Belville residents and property owners participated in district level meetings. In addition, community meetings were held in Belville in March and April of 2022. All such meetings were structured and facilitated to gather input on issues, opportunities and aspirations related to the future development pattern and conservation efforts. Feedback provided through online surveys augmented the input recorded at the in-person meetings.

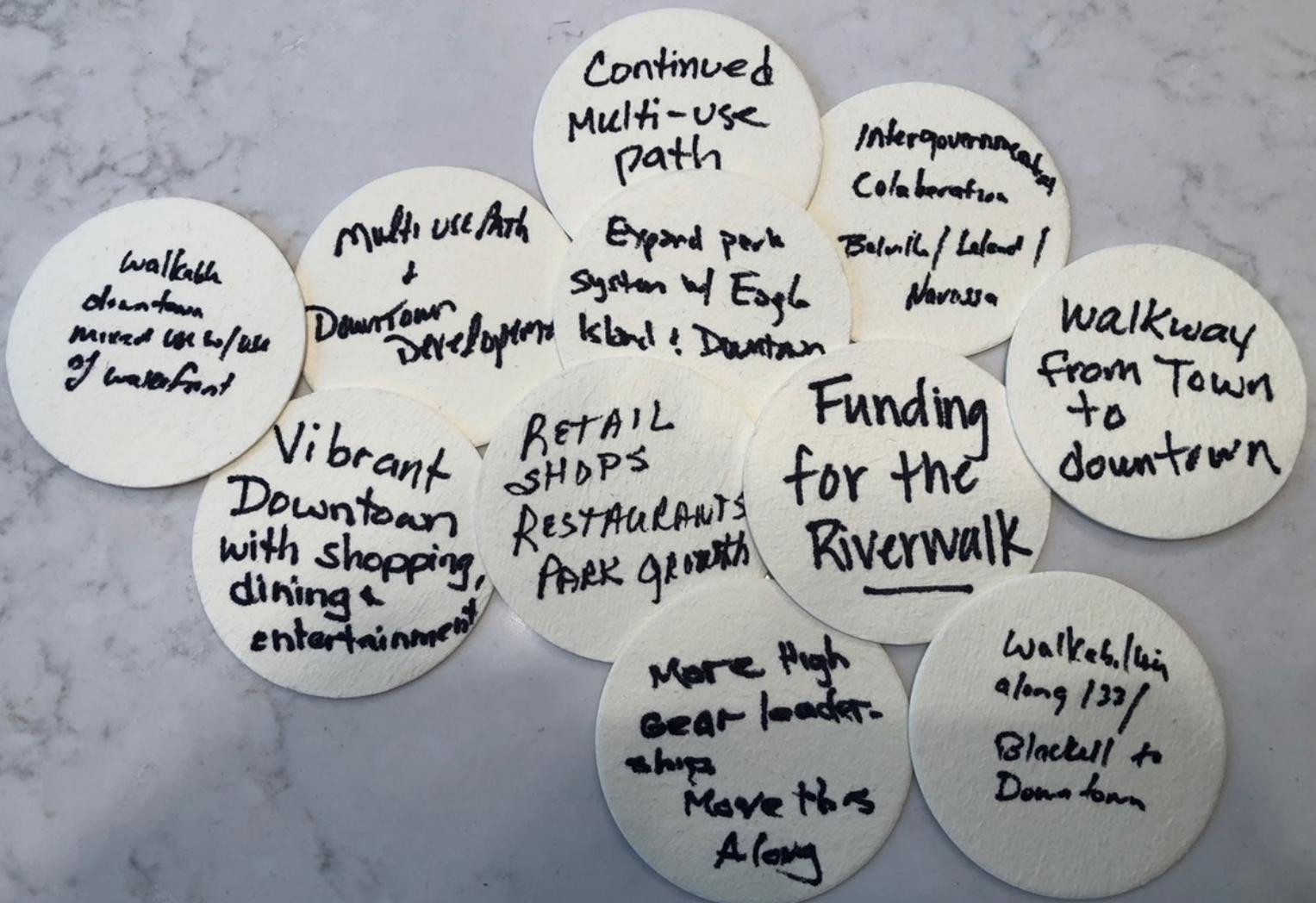
- * District 5 County Meeting attendees: 26
- * March 2022 Belville Meeting attendees: 8
- * April 2022 Belville Meeting attendees: 15

Wish List

- Vibrant downtown
- Recreation, river access
- Cultural assets, history
- Collaboration, coordination

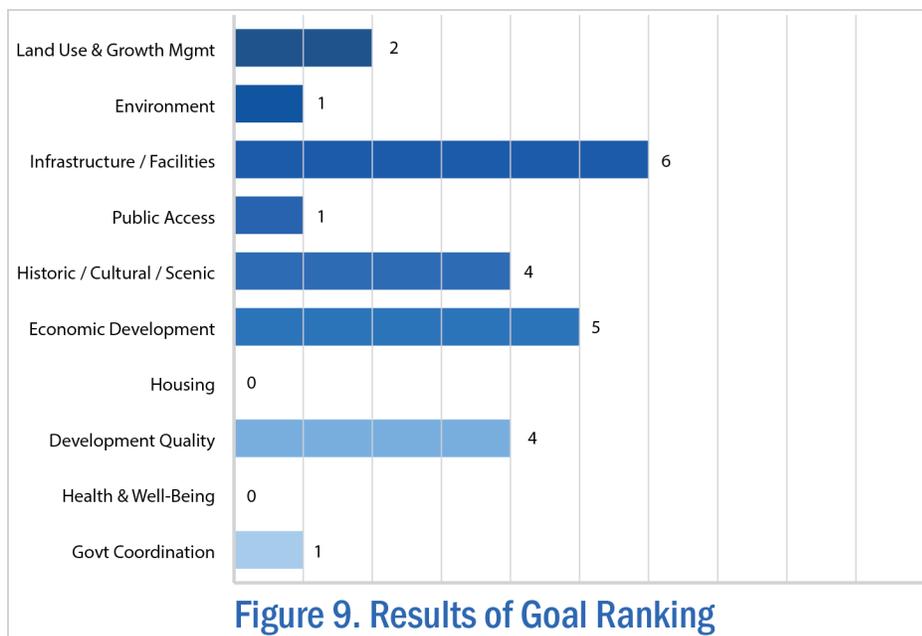


Redevelopment of sites between the Brunswick River and NC-133 will provide opportunities for the creation of a downtown for Belville.



Top-Ranked Goals

When asked to review the goals for the future of Brunswick County, meeting participants shared their opinions and voted for those they believe are most relevant to Belville. The goals pertaining to infrastructure and economic development ranked first and second, respectively. Goals related to historic, cultural, and scenic resources as well as development quality were also important.



Note: The full set of Goals are presented on page 68-69 in Section 3 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.



Meeting attendees examined draft land use maps and shared ideas about specific details to reflect their vision for the future of the town.

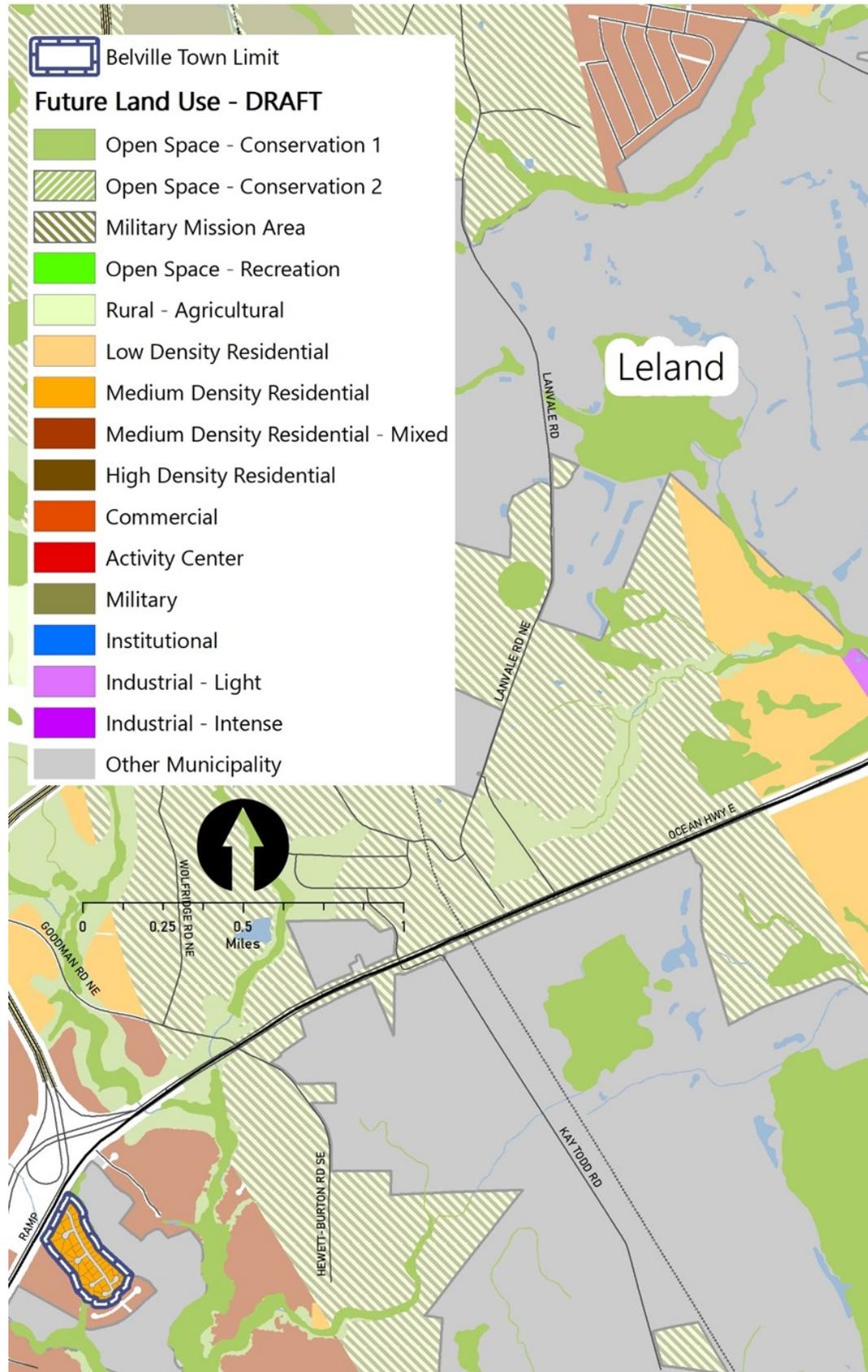
Ideas for Land Use + Precedents

- Retail shops
- Restaurants
- Entertainment
- Parks, ballfields, greenspace, splash pad
- Riverwalk



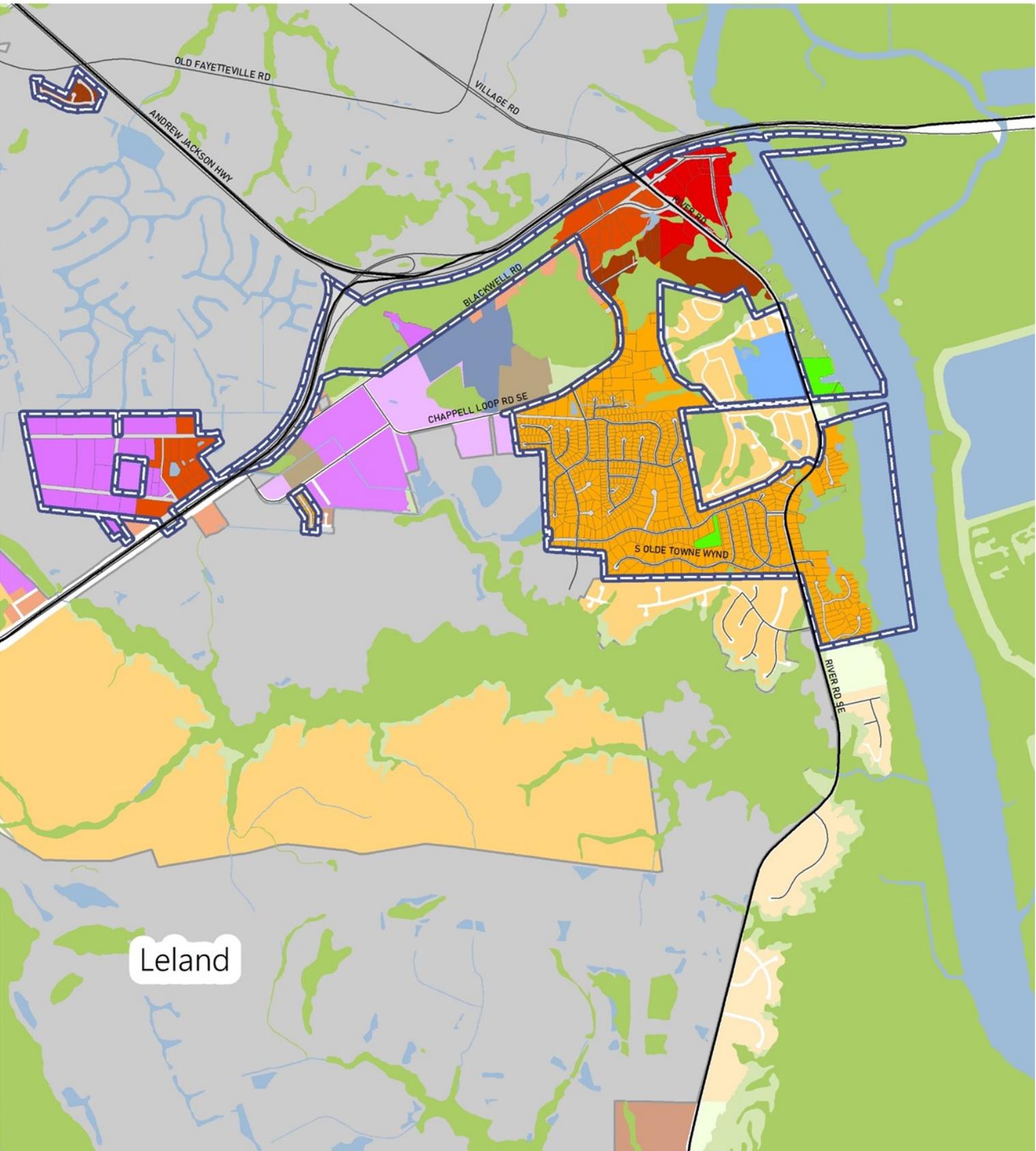
Future Land Use

The focus of future development is the mix of uses, primarily commercial and civic, that are envisioned for the heart of the town. The development pattern depicted in the Future Land Use & Conservation Map (Figure 10) also indicates support for higher density residential as well as a desire for more employment uses supported by complementary commercial uses.



Note: The Place Type descriptions are presented on page 72 in Section 3 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

Figure 6.3.10 Future Land Use & Conservation Map



Policy Recommendations & Strategies

The following are a series of policy recommendations and supporting implementation strategies. As indicated in the column on the right, each has a connection to one or more of the recommendations outlined in Section 4 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

Related Recommendations of Blueprint Brunswick 2040

<p>1. Create a downtown for Belville, building on current efforts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a more detailed market study of Downtown that addresses delineation and development of catalyst site(s). Based on this, continue to refine the strategy for public investments, including land acquisition and partnerships with private property owners to implement the first phase of the Downtown project. • Consider using the new market study to project tax base, revenue growth, and bonding capacity for public improvements that new development could support (“Synthetic TIF”). • Encourage commercial development that includes the range of shopping, dining (including some upscale restaurants), and entertainment that the community desires and the market will support. Draft design principles and partnership terms to prepare for developing effective public-private partnerships. • Evaluate the possibility of establishing a larger farmers market downtown. 	<p>LU-2</p>
<p>2. Enhance walkability and recreation opportunities with an expanded trails system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move forward with Brunswick Riverwalk Park improvements called for in Vision 2030 Plan. • Continue to extend Riverwalk north. • Seek funding from MPO and collaborate with the County to fill gap in multi-use trail along NC-133, particularly in areas not in the Town’s jurisdiction. 	<p>NR-3, CF-3</p>
<p>3. Increase recreational opportunities and access for residents and tourists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the feasibility of a Town-owned/maintained facility for active recreation and determine potential locations. • Evaluate building canoe/kayak launch on land in the future downtown area. • Address safety on NC-133 between the school and the existing park. 	<p>CF-3, PA-1, PA-2, PA-3</p>
<p>4. Celebrate natural and cultural heritage of the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with National Park Service, Navassa, Leland, and Brunswick County for a broader sequence of destinations and interpretive displays that helps tell the story. • Support efforts to define the alignment of and construct the segment of the Gullah Geechee National Heritage Trail through Belville. • Develop an exhibit and information kiosk along Gullah Geechee National Heritage Trail. 	<p>HCR-1</p>
<p>5. Support the expansion of housing options with attached and multifamily development near commercial nodes in Belville and Leland</p>	<p>HN-1</p>
<p>6. Maintain tax base and jobs with industrial development along Blackwell Road</p>	<p>ED-1</p>



The Town of Knightdale, NC made \$20 million in public investments in sidewalk, park, and streetscape improvements to leverage \$250 million in private investment to date to revitalize its main street and create a vibrant center of community.

(Photo courtesy of Town of Knightdale)

The Town of Cary and the Town of Morrisville, NC collaborated to secure federal funding to fill a gap in the Crabtree Creek Greenway, creating a continuous 4.5-mile segment of trail that now serves both communities.

(Photo courtesy of Town of Cary)



Recommended Action Plan

When a new bridge over the Brunswick River re-routed the main drag through town, Belville lost its downtown. Now, it is working to re-establish a vibrant civic and commercial center for the community. At the same time, the Town is working to create a linked network of trails and greenways and tell the story of the community.

1

Set the table for public and private investment downtown. Key steps in advancing the re-establishment of a vibrant downtown include identifying some catalyst sites, acquiring land, and drafting design principles and preliminary partnership terms to prepare for developing effective public-private partnerships with private property owners and developers. A more detailed market study and revenue and bonding analysis could help support this work.

2

Continue creating a linked network of parks and trails. Belville has had great success securing grant funds to leverage Town investment in the Riverwalk. It can build on its accomplishments by locating the next installments of grant funding to continue the job to extend the Riverwalk north, improve the Riverwalk park, and work with The County to fill a gap in the multi-use trail on NC 133.

3

Develop new recreational facilities. The construction of a second canoe/kayak launch at the Downtown site would enable paddlers to make trips between there and the Riverwalk Park. The Town should also study creation of a facility for active recreation, and address safety crossing NC-133 to the school.

Bolivia

Bolivia is the seat of Brunswick County. As such, it is the location of the County Government Complex. Though the growth has been slow, the town aspires to become a family-friendly community with places and activities that bring residents of all ages together. This plan sets the stage for change that will meet the needs of the existing community, introduce uses that will attract more private investment, and preserve the natural features that are part of the community landscape. The plan conveys ideas for future land use throughout the Town's jurisdiction. Those ideas are supported by recommendations for policies and strategies for implementation over the next 20 years. The plan was created with thoughtful input of the Town's elected and appointed officials, staff, and residents who attended the community meetings.

Existing Land Use & Development Pattern

Most of the jurisdictional area of Bolivia is developed for low density residential and commercial uses. Many of the commercial uses are oriented toward US-17 Business, which functions as the town's main street. Just outside of the Town limits and inside the Town's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), the land has remained relatively undeveloped. The Government Complex encompasses almost 140 acres, which is equal to almost half the area of the Town and is in the unincorporated area of The County.

Environment

Wetlands and creeks are the primary natural features that, together, generally define the northern and southern edges of the town. The wetlands on the north side of town are extensive and particularly challenging for development. Therefore, future changes in the development pattern will be limited to the southern side of US-17. The locations of wetlands and creek corridors lend themselves to passive recreation opportunities.



Bethel United Methodist Church is one of a few institutional uses located on Old Ocean Highway, Bolivia's main street.



The Brunswick County Government Complex is the primary anchor in the Bolivia community.



Figure 6.4.1 Existing Land Use (2020)



Figure 6.4.2 Existing Environmental Features (2020)

Bolivia by the Numbers

Estimated
Population
(2020)

177

Projected
Population
(2040)*

222

Median
Age
(2020)

46

Median
Household Income
(2020)

\$50k

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Population

Bolivia is a small town that functions much like a neighborhood. Over the previous two decades, the town lost population but recovered and returned to a growth position. The town is projected to have moderate growth over the next 20 years. However, a recently approved subdivision is likely to quickly increase the population in the short term.

The community is aging. With more than 40% of the population over the age of 65, it is home to retirees, many of whom have lived in the community for many years.

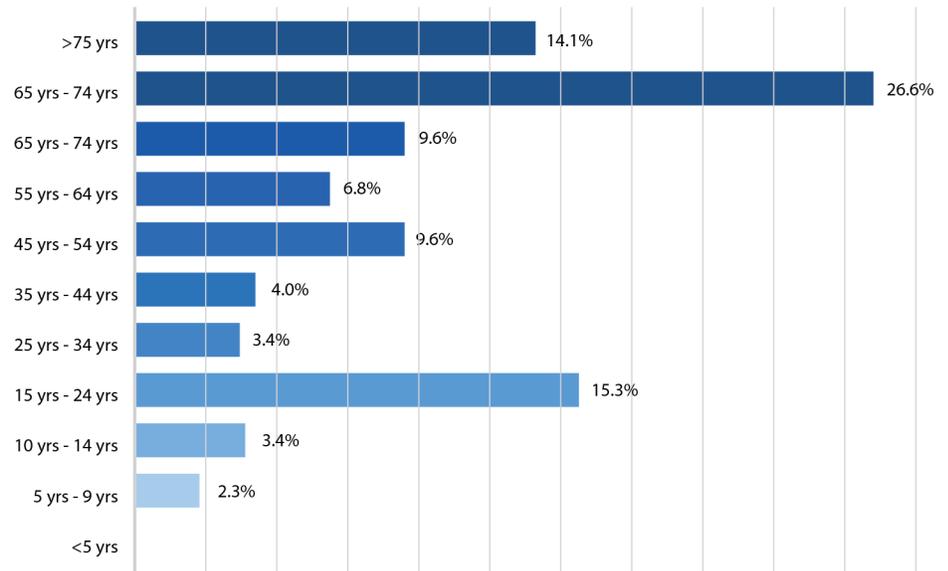


Figure 3. Population by Age (2020)

*Note: The increased rate of development approvals is not reflected in the population projections developed in 2020, so the 2040 population could be higher than the number shown.

Figure 4. Estimated and Projected Population Growth (2000-2040)

Year	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	148	137	310	177	186	197	209	222
Growth Rate		-0.7%	25.3%	-8.6%	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%	1.3%
Capture Growth		0.0%	1.2%	-0.9%	0.05%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Housing & Households

The housing in Bolivia is predominantly comprised of single-family detached homes. Mobile homes are also part of the housing mix. Not surprisingly, a high number (55%) of the homes are occupied by full-time residents. As a percentage of the total number of dwelling units, the number of vacant units is nearly double that of the county.

As the data in Figure 5 reveals, more than half of the households in the community have an annual income under \$35,000.

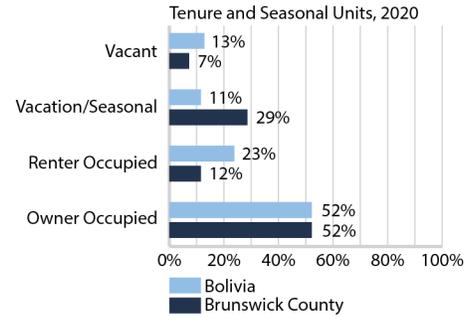


Figure 5. Households by Income

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

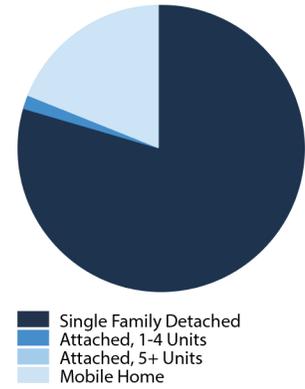


Figure 6. Housing Tenure/Type

Employment & the Economy

The Bolivia economy is relatively small, having a total of around 107 jobs in 2019. These jobs are heavily clustered in Education, with smaller Retail and Administrative/Waste Management sectors.

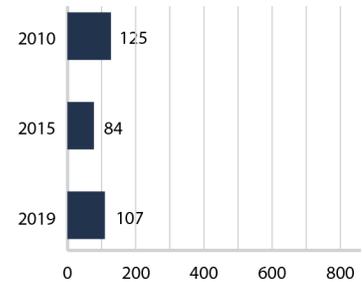


Figure 7. Jobs, 2010-2019

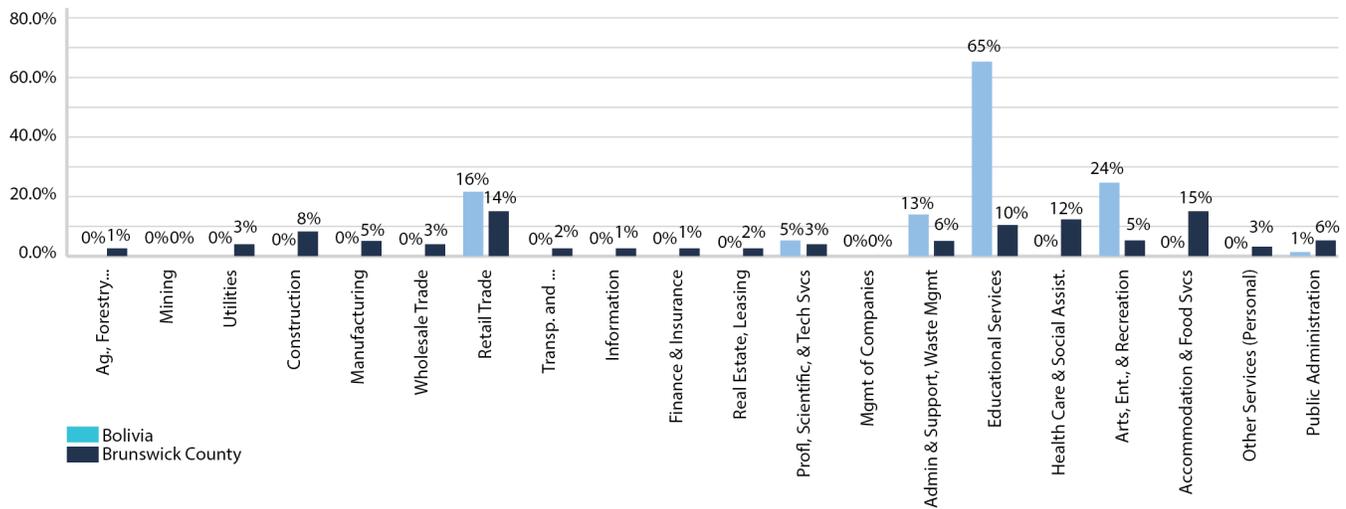


Figure 8. Employment by Industry Sector

Key Issues & Opportunities

Through the community engagement activities, the residents and other stakeholders shared concerns about future growth, anticipated changes to the development pattern, and potential impacts. While meeting participants and survey respondents identified several issues to be addressed in the coming years, they also highlighted some opportunities to consider as change occurs. The following summary reflects the concerns and ideas expressed.

Community Engagement and Gathering Spaces

In a small town with a limited budget, engagement of residents in leadership, social events, and other community-focused activities can be challenging. The citizens that participated in the planning process noted opportunities to leverage the presence of county government to expand civic spaces and amenities. Such investments are viewed as a step toward more programming that could foster connections between neighbors.

Aging

To stay in the community over the long term, some residents recognize the need for support services, such as home health, and housing that is appropriate for senior living. This coupled with efforts to build a sense of community and attract younger people, are considered to be the necessary steps to helping residents age in place.

Traffic and Circulation

The roads through this community support not only local traffic but that which is generated by people traveling between US-17 and destinations at the waterfront, including Oak Island and Southport. The configuration of the road network forces most vehicles onto segments of US-17 (Old Ocean Highway) in the center of Bolivia, creating high levels of congestion. Residents have expressed interest in better connectivity, traffic management techniques and road realignments to alleviate some of the issues.

Stormwater

Stormwater conveyance is primarily handled by ditches and culverts along the roadways, so NCDOT has maintenance responsibility. Going forward, residents are concerned the flooding caused by obstructions in the system (i.e., litter, debris, beaver dams, etc.) will increase if a more proactive approach to managing these facilities—or stormwater in general—is not employed.

Community Engagement

During the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 planning process, Bolivia residents and property owners participated in district level meetings. In addition, community meetings were held in Bolivia in March and April of 2022. All such meetings were structured and facilitated to gather input on issues, opportunities and aspirations related to the future development pattern and conservation efforts. Feedback provided through online surveys augmented the input recorded at the in-person meetings.

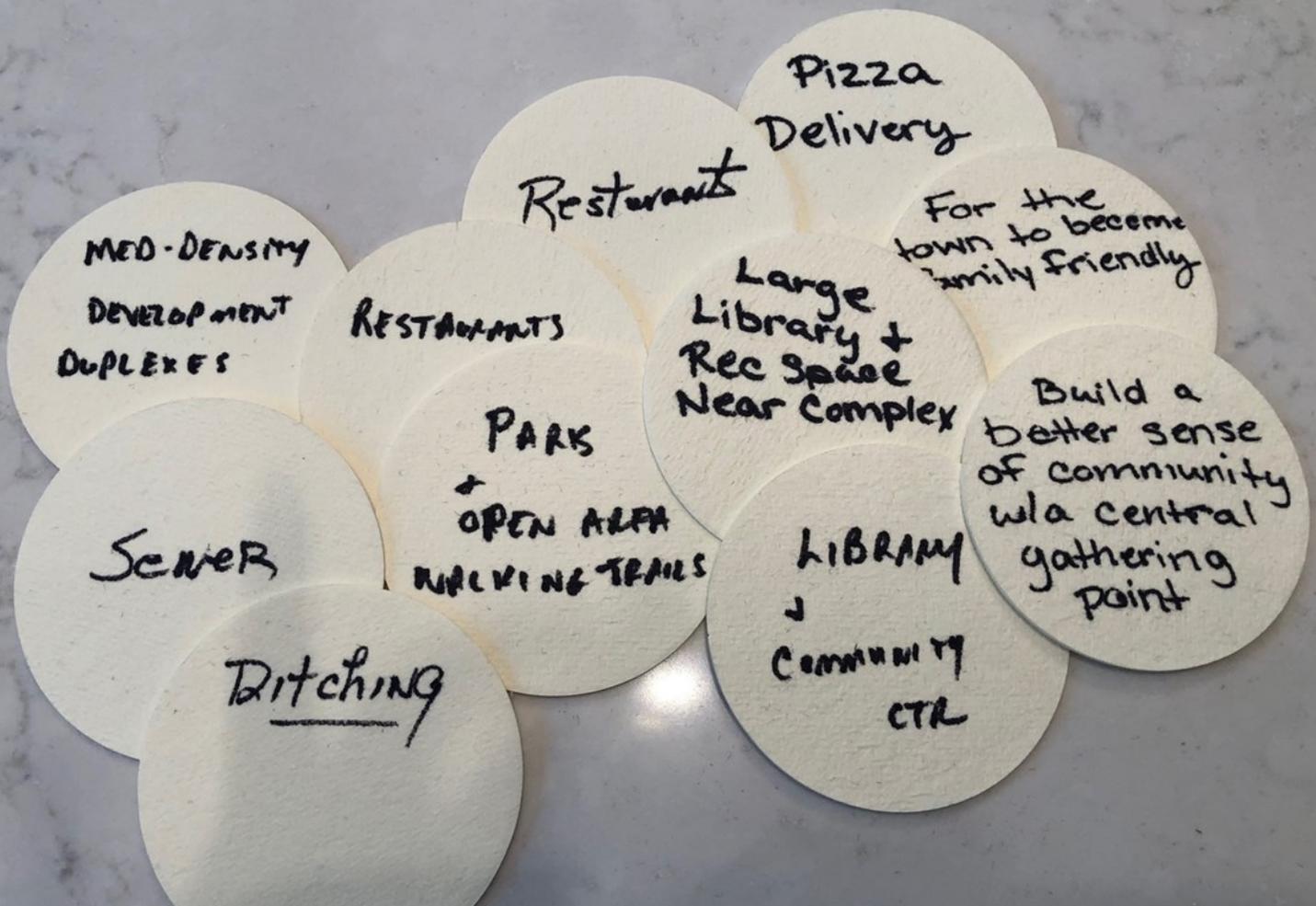
- * District 4 County Meeting attendees: 9
- * March 2022 Bolivia Meeting attendees: 5
- * April 2022 Bolivia Meeting attendees: 5

Wish List

- Traffic management, safety
- Stormwater management
- Community center, engagement, sense of community
- Recreation
- Affordable housing



Creating community gathering spaces that bring people of all ages together is thought to be a step toward stronger community engagement.



Top-Ranked Goals

When asked to review the goals for the future of Brunswick County, meeting participants shared their opinions and voted for those they believe are most relevant to Bolivia. The goal pertaining to infrastructure, ranked highest in importance. Goals related to the environment, housing, and governmental coordination were given equal weight.

Note: The full set of Goals are presented on page 68-69 in Section 3 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

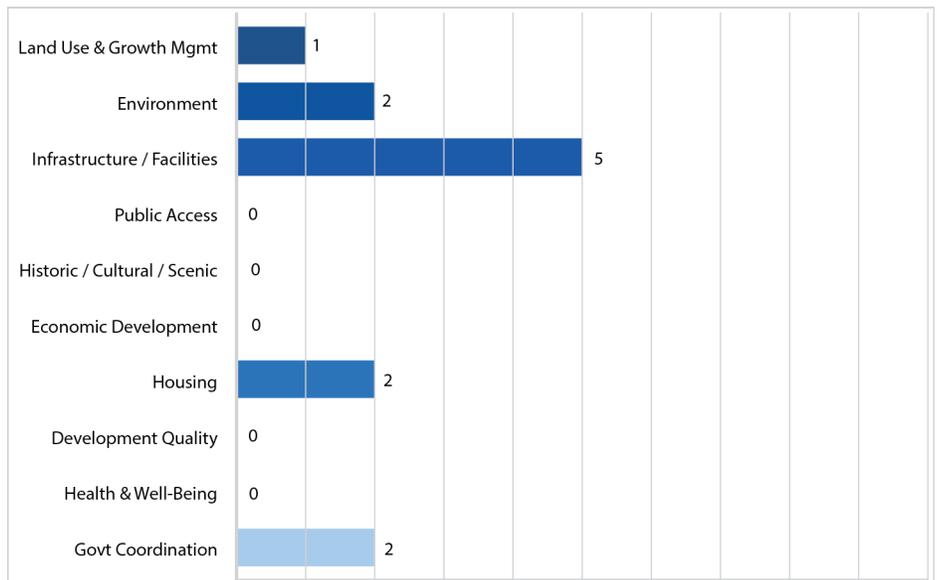


Figure 9. Results of Goal Ranking



Meeting attendees examined draft land use maps and shared ideas about specific details to reflect their vision for the future of the town.

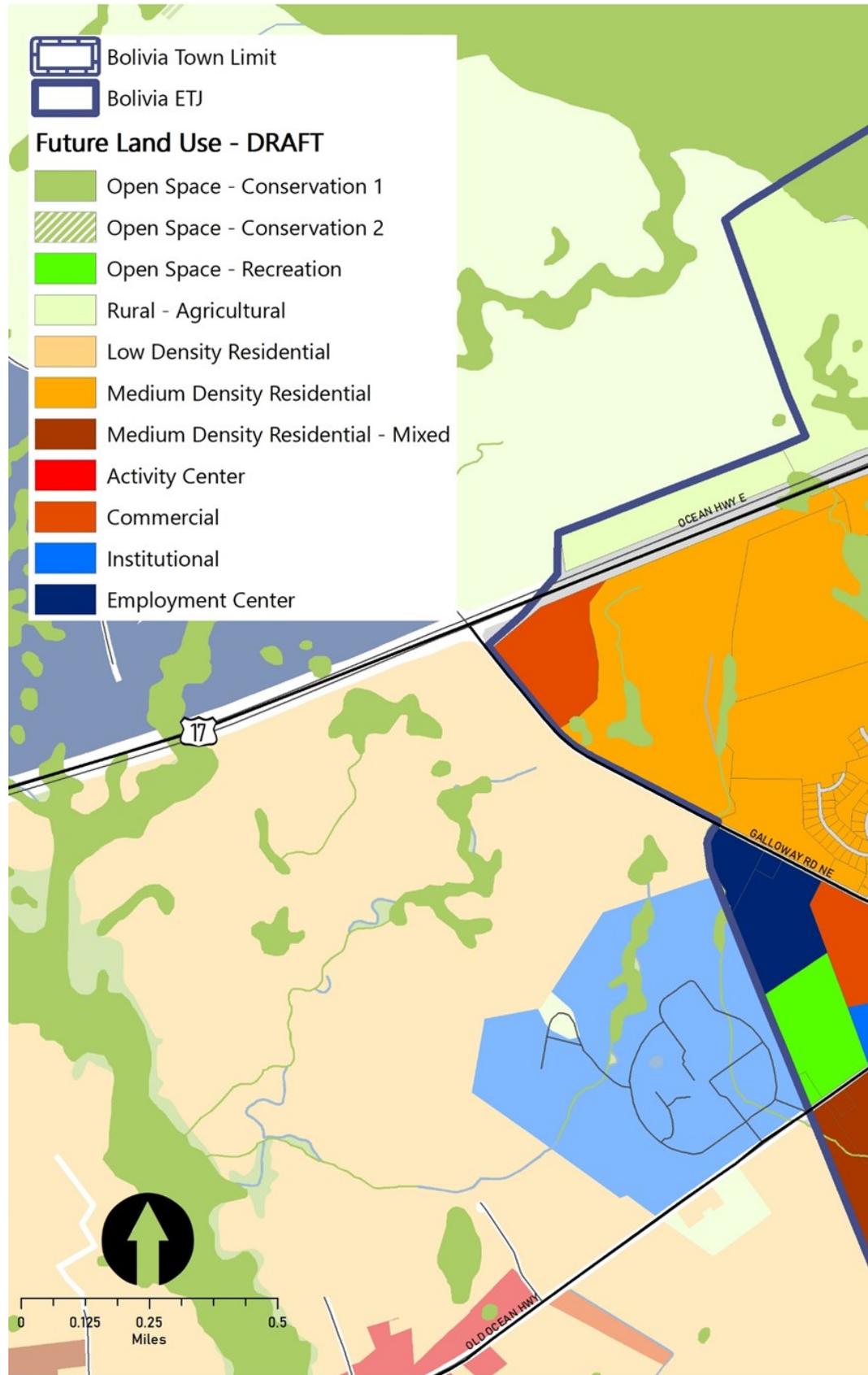
Ideas for Land Use + Precedents

- Central gathering place
- Library (large), community center
- Recreation space (maybe near government complex)
- Parks, open area, walking trails
- Food service: restaurants, pizza delivery
- Medium-density residential development (apartments, duplexes)
- Neighborhood commercial
- Senior Center



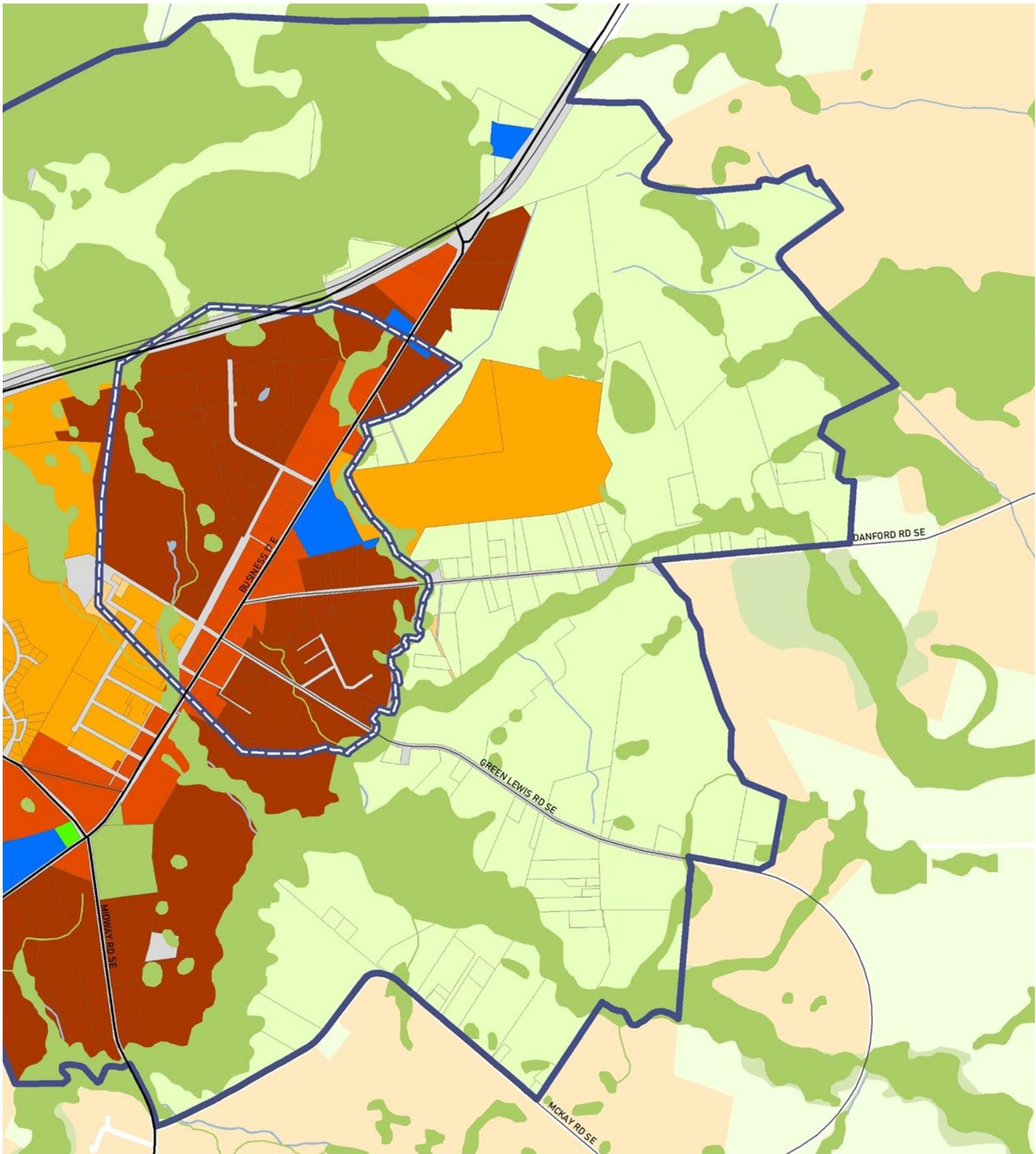
Future Land Use

The Future Land Use & Conservation Map (Figure 10) depicts the community's vision for future development pattern. Key aspects of the plan are the concentration of commercial development along the main street and around a proposed new alignment of Galloway Road intersection serving the resident, employees, and visitors passing through from Southport and Oak Island; a civic and recreational complex with community green space designed for gatherings and events; and opportunities for higher density housing to expand choices in town, particularly for older residents and essential workers in the County.



Note: The Place Type descriptions are presented on page 72 in Section 3 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

Figure 6.4.10 Future Land Use & Conservation Map



Policy Recommendations & Strategies

The following are a series of policy recommendations and supporting implementation strategies. As indicated in the column on the right, each has a connection to one or more of the recommendations outlined in Section 4 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

Related Recommendations of Blueprint Brunswick 2040

<p>1. Address local and regional traffic impacts. Work with NCDOT to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a traffic study of US-17 Business to determine ways to better manage traffic and improve safety for all modes. • Explore the feasibility of designing and constructing a minor road realignment project with a possible traffic circle to provide an alternate route for through traffic (i.e., from Oak Island to US-17 along Midway Road/Galloway Road). Note: The alignment of Galloway Road and Midway Road (NC 906) will allow access from NC-211 to US-17 without routing traffic through the center of the town. This improvement is on the County’s list for the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). 	<p>ITR-2</p>
<p>2. Adopt an effective approach to local stormwater management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate property owners and encourage management of ditches on private property. • Explore cost share with NCDOT and the County to address stormwater management solutions and clear clogged ditches. • Consider adopting the current Brunswick County Stormwater Management Ordinance and Stormwater Manual. 	<p>NR-5</p>
<p>3. Provide community gathering places in conjunction with town and county facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support desired commercial development as infill to reinforce the “downtown” area. Consider preparing a concept for downtown to convey the ideas for integrating retail, restaurants, services, civic uses, and streetscape. • Develop a town park and trail as possible focal point for community. Assess sites in downtown Bolivia near the school and/or Town Hall. • Engage the County in a study to evaluate the siting of a library and/or community center at or adjacent to the County government complex, and work with the County to prepare a preliminary concept. 	<p>NR-2, DQ-1</p>
<p>4. Expand housing variety, taking into consideration affordability (especially for teachers, service providers, etc.) and stage of life (seniors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider allowing attached single family, multifamily, and accessory dwelling units to provide more housing options and give property owners more potential for income. 	<p>HN-1</p>
<p>5. Explore the extension of sewer service and residential capacity allocation, which could increase the potential for more housing options</p>	<p>IWS-2, IWS-4</p>
<p>6. Encourage more community engagement</p>	<p>G-8</p>

Stormwater Facility Maintenance Manual



Updated August 2021
(2015 Edition)

For Private Stormwater Facilities

The Town of Mooresville, NC has developed a Stormwater Facility Maintenance Manual for private stormwater facilities to help property owners ensure the continued functioning of drainage ditches and other stormwater control measures.

The Town of Morrisville, NC partnered with the Western Wake Farmers, the Morrisville Community Garden, and the John Rex Endowment to construct a farmers market site and demonstration community garden at a major intersection of the local greenway network to promote physical activity and access to healthy food.



Recommended Action Plan

As Brunswick County and Bolivia grow, they face increasing challenges with traffic congestion and stormwater runoff. At the same time, new development brings new opportunities, such as a chance for the Town to leverage growth to strengthen the downtown area, provide new amenities like parks and trails, and work with partners like the County to construct desired community facilities. As a result, the Town will pursue the following priorities:

1

Improve the road system: Work with the County, the Cape Fear RPO, and/or NCDOT to conduct a traffic study of US-17 Business and assess the feasibility of a minor road realignment project with a possible traffic circle to provide an alternate route for through traffic (i.e., from Oak Island to US-17 along Midway Road/Galloway Road).

2

Ensure proper design and maintenance of stormwater facilities: Educate property owners about good stormwater maintenance practices, work with the County and NCDOT to provide stormwater management assistance and clear clogged ditches, and consider adopting the current Brunswick Stormwater Management Ordinance and Stormwater Manual, and continuing to arrange to have the County administer it.

3

Strengthen downtown and provide community gathering spaces: Support desired commercial development as infill downtown, build a park and trail as a community gathering; update the development ordinance to establish a parkland dedication requirement or fee in lieu of dedication and allow for accessory dwelling units; and engage the County in studying the possible siting of a library/community center next to the County government complex.

Navassa

Incorporated in 1977, the Town of Navassa is positioned for development that is in response to demands for housing, commercial services, and industrial space in the Wilmington area. This plan conveys ideas for future land use throughout the Town's jurisdiction while emphasizing opportunities for conservation of the town's rich history and culture. Those ideas are supported by recommendations for policies and strategies for implementation over the next 20 years. The plan was created with thoughtful input of the Town's elected and appointed officials, staff, and residents who attended the community meetings.

Existing Land Use & Development Pattern

From rice plantations to fertilizer production to modern residential and industrial development, Navassa's development pattern has been evolving for more than three centuries. Prior to the introduction of the automobile, boat and rail trade routes that eventually connected to Wilmington's seaport, influenced the location of development in the 19th century. Rice plantations and fertilizer plants were among the uses. Over time, highway access has shaped the development pattern, bringing more opportunities for commercial and residential development, particularly near the I-140 interchanges. The town is now experiencing an increase in private investment. New residential neighborhoods between the industrial sites at the northern and southern parts of the town are being constructed to meet the growing demand in the region for housing. The town has an opportunity to harness the current and projected growth to realize some desired land use changes that could result in economic benefits for the community.

Environment

The natural heritage of the area is in some ways as rich as the cultural heritage. Located on the west side of the Cape Fear River, the town has many contiguous acres of wetlands, which serve as important habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal species. Just outside the town limits are NC Natural Heritage Program areas that are valued for their biodiversity, as they "contain the best rare species populations, habitats, and communities."



Navassa has grown up around access to the rivers, rail, and highways.



Navassa is investing in government buildings and other public facilities as the growth in the town has warranted.

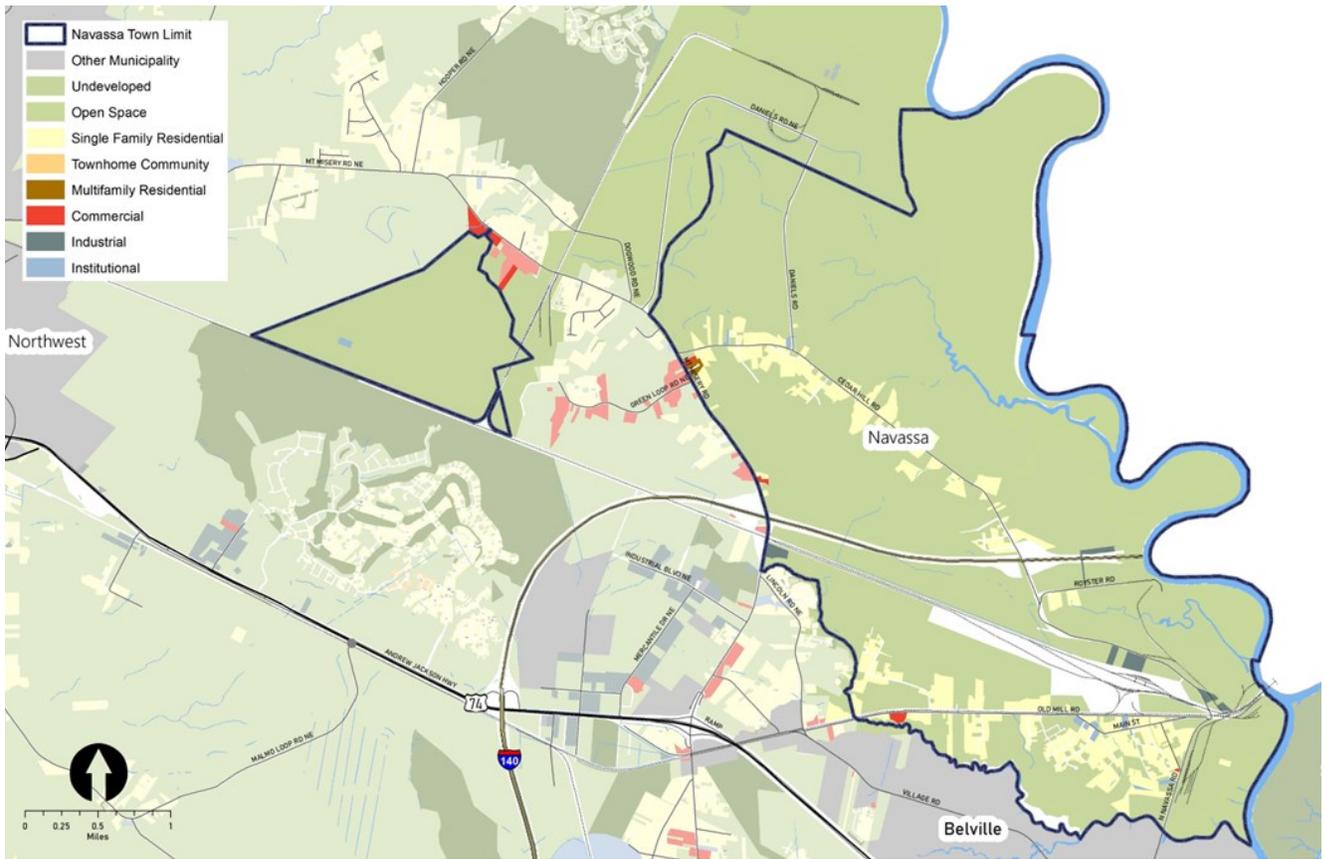


Figure 6.5.1 Existing Land Use (2020)



Figure 6.5.2 Existing Environmental Features (2020)

Navassa by the Numbers

Estimated
Population
(2020)

2,135

Projected
Population
(2040)*

3,612

Median
Age
(2020)

48

Median
Household Income
(2020)

\$37k

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Population

Navassa's population is increasing as people move in for employment or retirement. Also, the population is becoming more diverse, particularly in terms of age. With a median age of 48, the town's population is younger than that of the county as a whole, which is over 50 years of age.

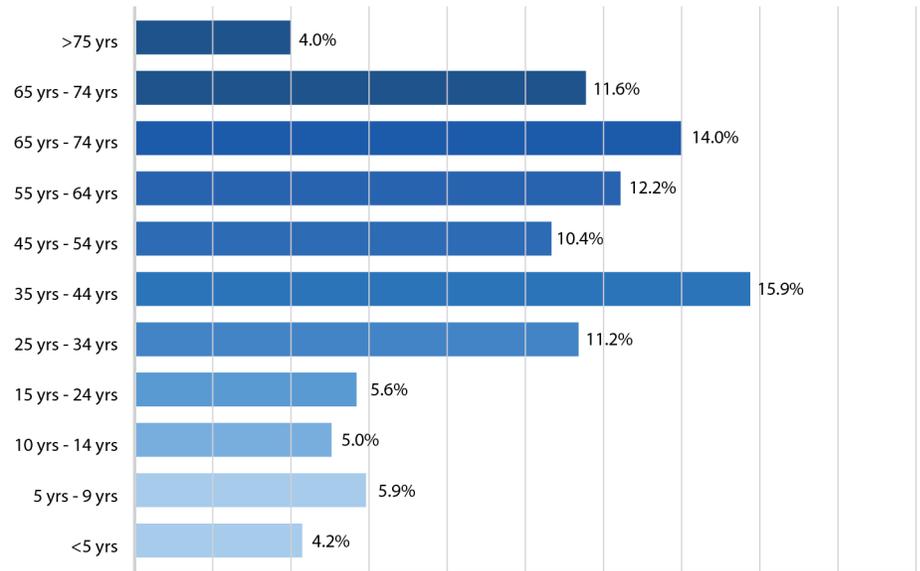


Figure 3. Population by Age (2020)

*Note: The increased rate of development approvals is not reflected in the population projections developed in 2020, so the 2040 population could be higher than the number shown.

Figure 4. Estimated and Projected Population Growth (2000-2040)

Year	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	479	1,809	1,887	2,135	2,433	2,774	3,165	3,612
Growth Rate		27.8%	0.9%	2.6%	2.8%	3.0%	2.8%	3.0%
Capture Growth		3.9%	0.6%	1.7%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Housing & Households

Over 90% of the homes in Navassa are single-family detached or mobile homes. While 13% of all homes are vacant, a high percentage are occupied full time by owners or renters. Very few (7%) are used as vacation homes.

With a median household income just under \$37,000 annually, the income level is lower than that of the county by more than \$20,000. As shown in Figure 5, approximately 60% of all households have annual income below \$50,000.

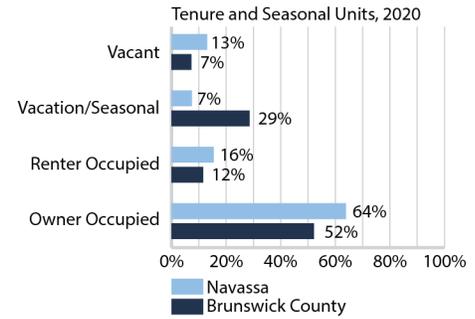


Figure 5. Households by Income

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

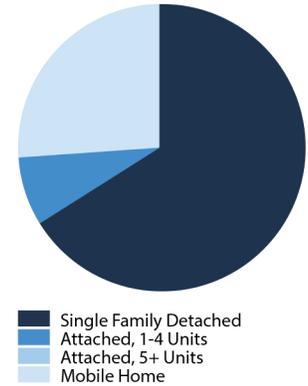


Figure 6. Housing Tenure/Type

Employment & the Economy

Navassa's economy is very different than that of most Brunswick County, with Construction, Manufacturing, and Transportation/Warehousing being the primary drivers of the local economy.

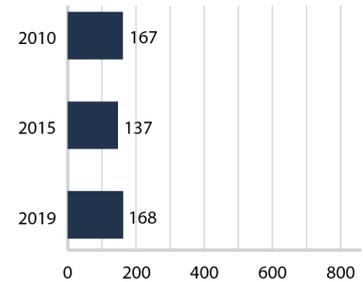


Figure 7. Jobs, 2010-2019

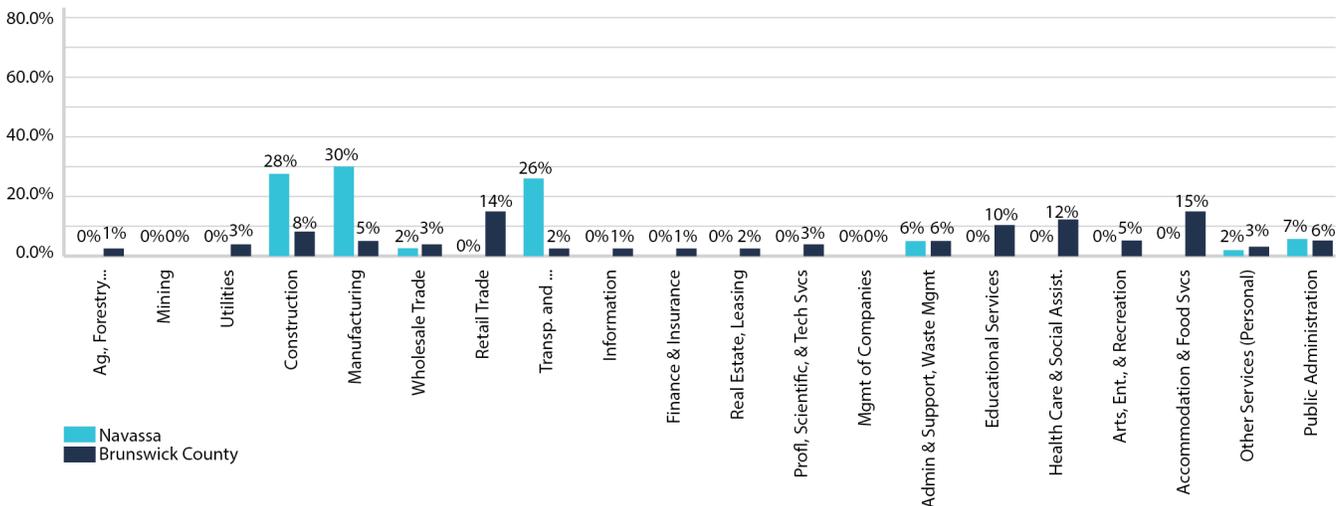


Figure 8. Employment by Industry Sector

Key Issues & Opportunities

Through the community engagement activities, the residents and other stakeholders shared concerns about future growth, anticipated changes to the development pattern, and potential impacts. While meeting participants and survey respondents identified several issues to be addressed in the coming years, they also highlighted some opportunities to consider as change occurs. The following summary reflects some of the concerns and ideas expressed.

Economic Development

Increasing the local tax base and expanding job opportunities in the community are among the primary interests of the citizens of Navassa. The community boasts a history of high employment when the fertilizer plants and other industries were in operation. Ideas shared by members of the community included leveraging the access through new interchanges along I-140 and utilizing the existing industrial sites to support more nonresidential development.

Infrastructure

From broadband to transportation, the desires of the community as expressed by meeting attendees include a wide range of infrastructure improvements. Understanding that expansions and upgrades across all systems will attract the investments that will improve the economic conditions of the community, the citizens favor changes that will result in equitable access to facilities and services.

Pairing Cultural and Recreational Assets

The story of the town's rich history can be told as visitors enjoy the waterfront as a recreational amenity. Participating in the implementation of plans to create the Gullah Geechee National Heritage Trail is viewed as an opportunity to be more connected locally and regionally while raising awareness of and celebrating the community's unique past.

Community Involvement

As the population grows and diversifies, community members are keenly aware of the need to engage residents, including those who are young or new to the town, in taking leadership roles and advancing the interests of the town.

Community Engagement

During the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 planning process, Navassa residents and property owners participated in district level meetings. In addition, community meetings were held in Navassa in March and April of 2022. All such meetings were structured and facilitated to gather input on issues, opportunities and aspirations related to the future development pattern and conservation efforts. Feedback provided through online surveys augmented the input recorded at the in-person meetings.

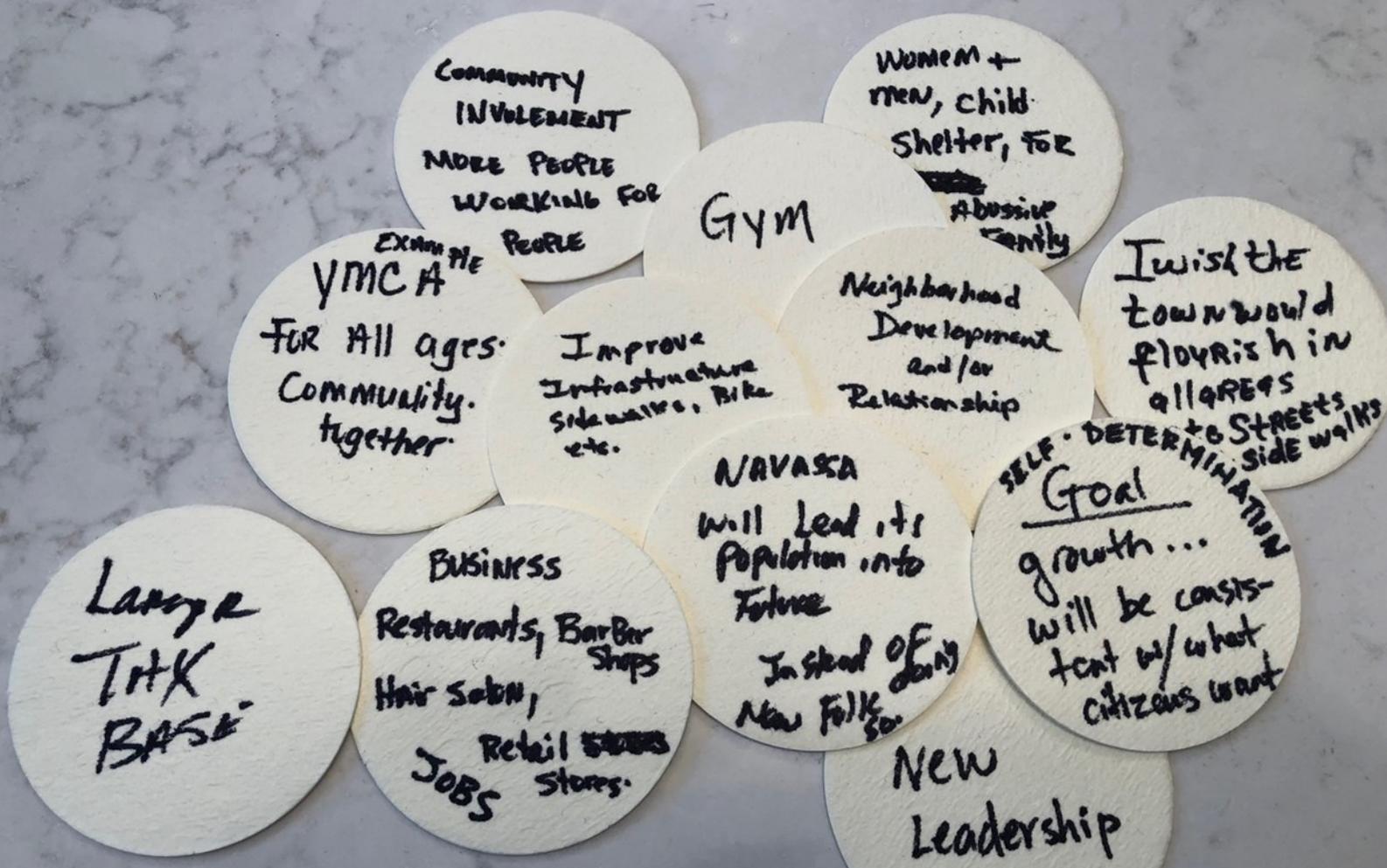
* District 5 County Meeting attendees:	26
* March 2022 Navassa Meeting attendees:	8
* April 2022 Navassa Meeting attendees:	2

Wish List

- Community engagement, local determination of future
- Infrastructure
- Tax base, job creation
- Recreation for all ages
- Collaboration, partnerships



The community envisions a visitors center on the waterfront to help tell the story of the community's past. It would be a destination along a future segment of the Gullah Geechee National Heritage Corridor trail. Pictured here is the center in Savannah, GA.



Top-Ranked Goals

When asked to review the goals for the future of Brunswick County, meeting participants shared their opinions and voted for those they believe are most relevant to Navassa. All but public access to water, development quality, and health and well-being were deemed to be equally important.

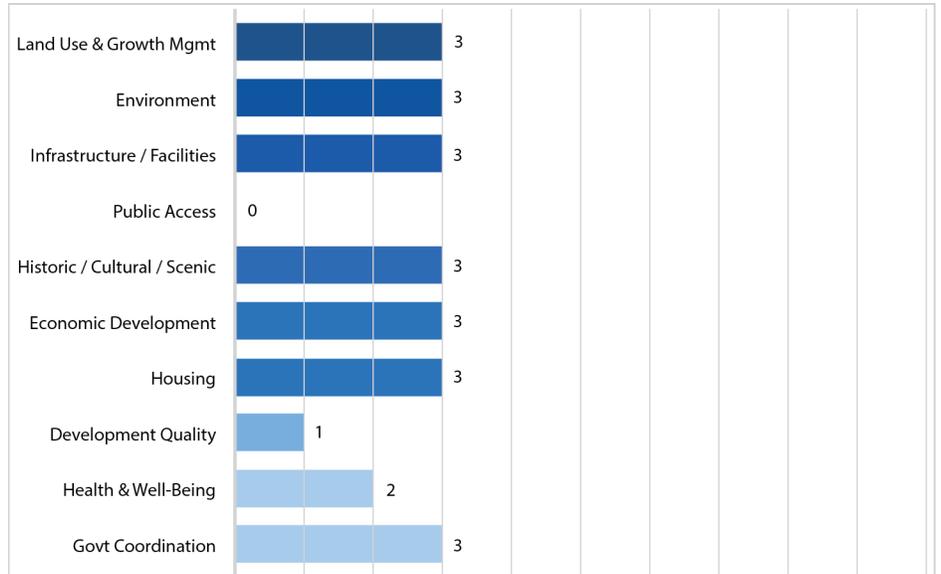
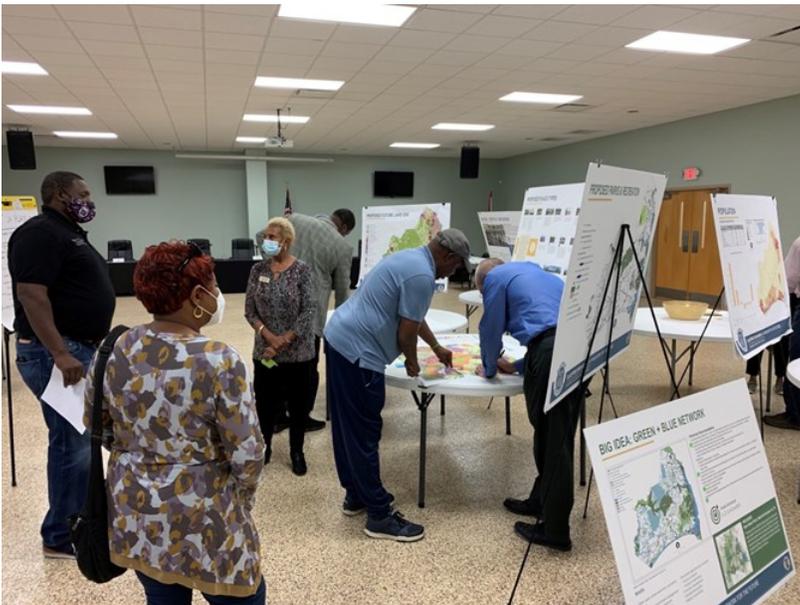


Figure 9. Results of Goal Ranking

Note: The full set of Goals are presented on page 68-69 in Section 3 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.



Meeting attendees examined draft land use maps and shared ideas about specific details to reflect their vision for the future of the town.



Ideas for Land Use + Precedents

- Restaurant
- Retail, shops
- Personal services (barber, hair salon)
- Entertainment
- Industrial (for tax base and job creation)
- Affordable housing
- Shelters (domestic abuse)
- Recreation facilities—one in district 3 on Cedar Hill Rd. (with new development); behind Town Hall for Districts 1 & 2
- YMCA, gym
- Parks, splash pad
- Library, community center



Future Land Use

The vision for the future of the community emphasizes private investment in existing and future industrial development. Recognizing the growth that is already occurring in the town, the community's vision also indicates support for new residential development that includes affordable housing, local-serving commercial development, and areas for passive and active recreation.

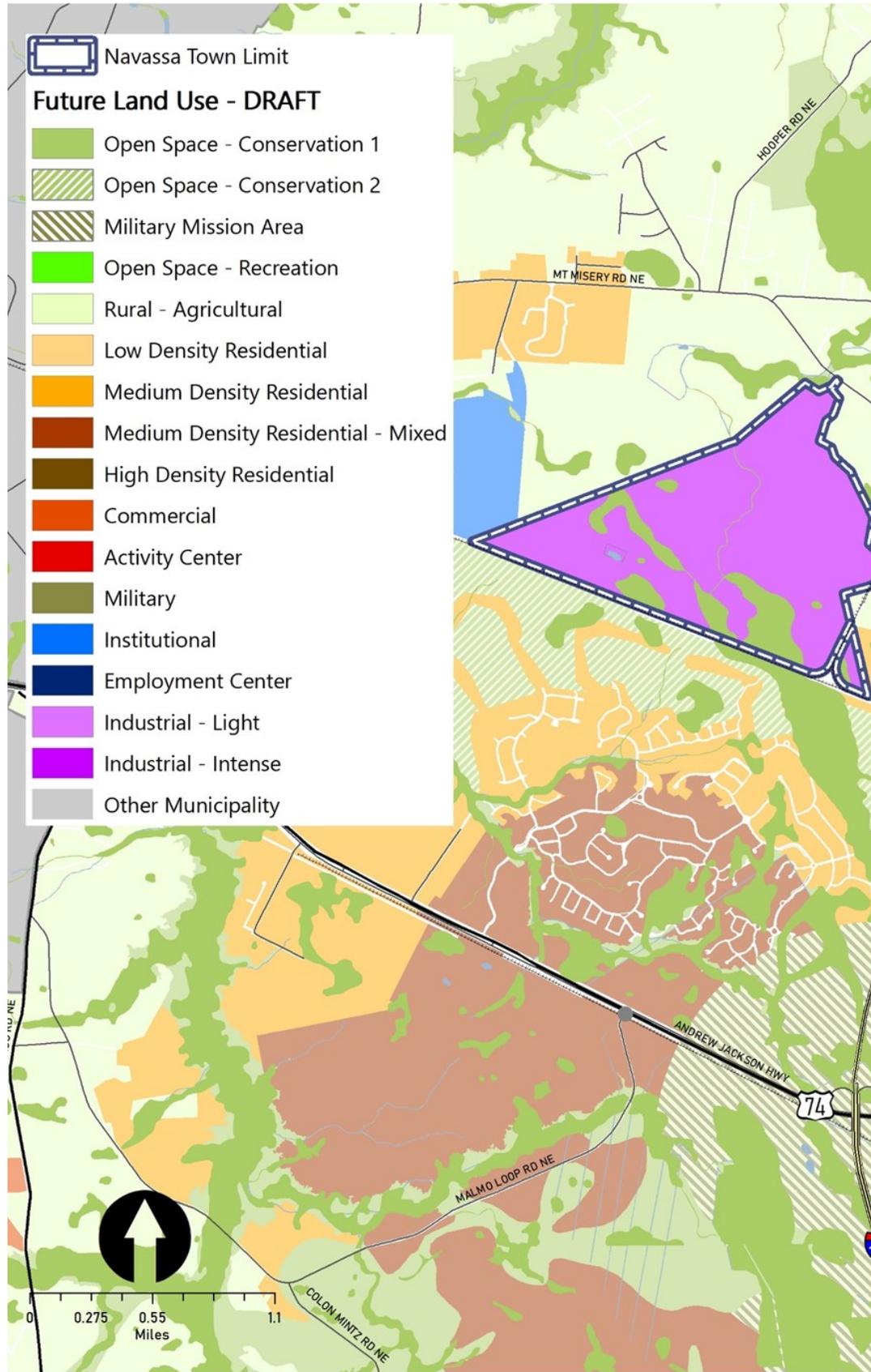
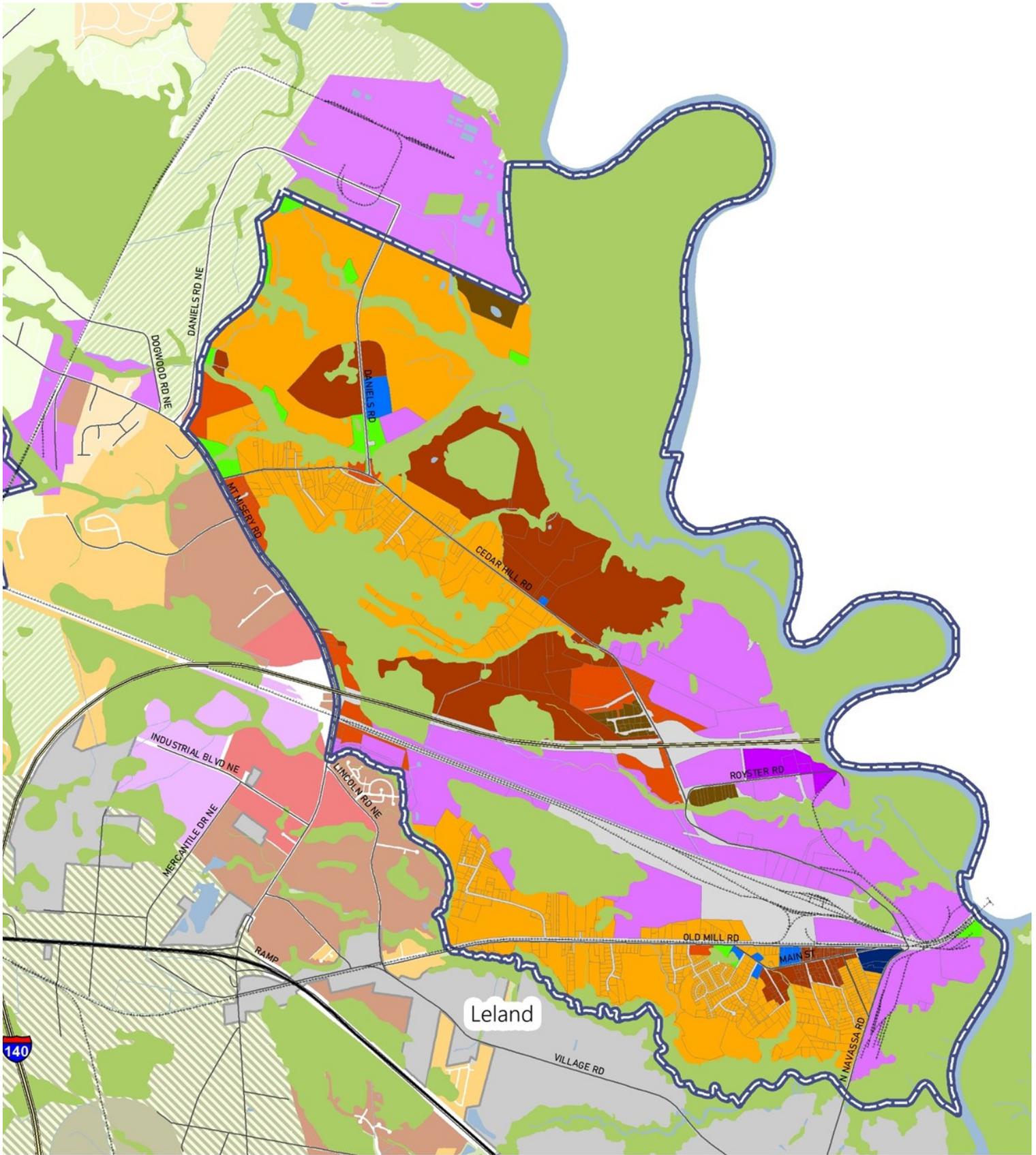


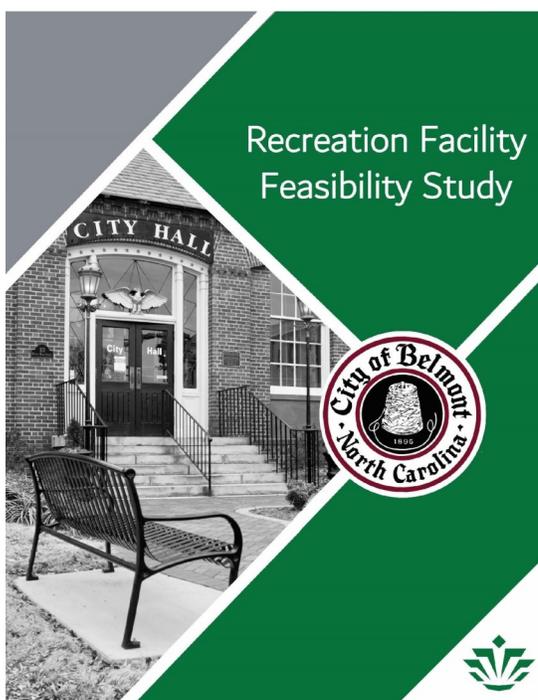
Figure 6.5.10 Future Land Use & Conservation Map



Policy Recommendations & Strategies

The following are a series of policy recommendations and supporting implementation strategies. As indicated in the column on the right, each has a connection to one or more of the recommendations outlined in Section 4 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

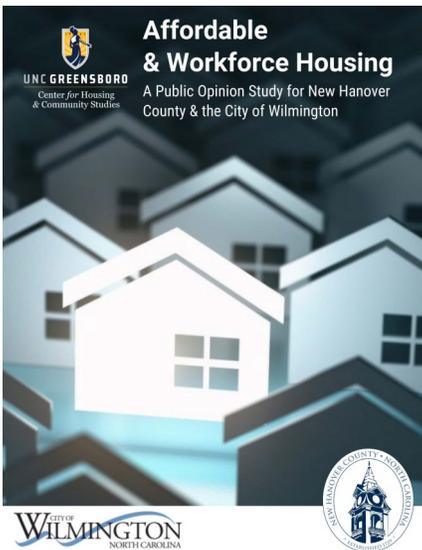
	Related Recommendations of Blueprint Brunswick 2040
1. Conduct a feasibility study for a community/recreation center that residents, especially children, can walk and bike to safely	CF-3
2. Coordinate with National Park Service, Belville, Brunswick County, and community partners to implement the Gullah Geechee National Heritage Trail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an exhibit, information kiosk, and possible visitor center as a destination along the Gullah Geechee National Heritage Trail. 	HCR-1
3. Evaluate the expansion of the industrial corridor along Cedar Hill Road connecting to I-140, and evaluate ways to mitigate the impacts of related truck traffic	ED-1
4. Conduct an affordable housing study to explore ways to provide more affordable housing in the community	HN-1
5. Improve mobility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore possibility of a water taxi landing site to connect the community with Wilmington’s waterfront. Consider a site at Quality Drive near railroad bridge and Pacon Manufacturing. Explore ways to accommodate safe movement for cyclists and pedestrians along Cedar Hill Road. 	ITR-1
6. Discuss the possibility of establishing an extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) to manage land uses on the edge of the community	GC-1
7. Examine ways to provide secondary access to the neighborhood along Magnolia Drive	ITR-1
8. Explore the possibility of updating the stormwater management ordinance to match standards and procedures contained in the Brunswick County Stormwater Ordinance and Stormwater Manual	NR-5



Belmont Recreation Center Feasibility Study: In 2018, the City of Belmont, NC engaged a class from the Master of Public Administration program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to prepare a feasibility study for a new recreation facility. The students conducted a survey and analysis to assess community needs, identify what type of facility would be most beneficial, and estimate construction and operating costs.



Chattahoochee, FL Park and Trail Improvement Study: The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program of the National Park Service is working with the City of Chattahoochee, FL to study how to improve recreational amenities, build a heritage trail, and protect the archeological resources at River Landing Park on the Apalachicola River. (Photo courtesy of City of Chattahoochee, FL)



New Hanover County/Wilmington Affordable Housing Study: In 2021, the UNC Greensboro Center for Housing & Community Studies prepared an affordable housing report for New Hanover County and the City of Wilmington, with significant public input and recommendations on how to address the issue. This could serve as a model for Brunswick County.

Recommended Action Plan

Navassa is a small town near Wilmington that is working to improve life for its residents and celebrate its longstanding African-American history as it grows. The Town has been skilled at securing state and federal grants to improve its infrastructure, and should draw on these skills and connections to implement the goals of this plan.

- 1** Conduct a feasibility study for a community/recreation center that residents, especially children, can walk and bike to safely. Identify appropriate facility features, location, safe connections to the community, projected cost, and potential funding sources.
- 2** Coordinate with National Park Service, Belville, Brunswick County, and community partners to implement the Gullah Geechee National Heritage Trail. The Town should build on its existing efforts to develop an exhibit, information kiosk, and possible visitor center as a destination along the Gullah Geechee National Heritage Trail to tell the story of early residents of the community.
- 3** Evaluate the expansion of the industrial corridor along Cedar Hill Road connecting to I-140, and evaluate ways to mitigate the impacts of related truck traffic. This provides an opportunity to increase the job opportunities and tax base for the community in a community-compatible way.
- 4** Conduct an affordable housing study to explore ways to provide more affordable housing in the community. Evaluate community needs and workable implementation measures.

Northwest

The Town of Northwest was incorporated in 1993. For decades, the railroad town has enjoyed a quiet existence with a rich agricultural history. However, with proximity to the industrial “megsites” along US-74/76 and access to I-140, the town is now positioned for development that is in response to demands in the larger Wilmington area for housing, commercial services, and industrial space. This plan conveys ideas for future land use throughout the Town’s jurisdiction. Those ideas are supported by recommendations for policies and strategies for implementation over the next 20 years. The plan was created with thoughtful input of the Town’s elected and appointed officials, staff, and residents who attended the community meetings.

Existing Land Use & Development Pattern

Historically, the town and its surroundings have been part of the larger agricultural community of Brunswick County, and much of the land at the edges remains as working lands primarily for timber production. Over time, development has continued incrementally and at relatively low densities. Single-family homes and large residential lots are located along the few roads that provide a limited amount of circulation around the community. Small-scale light industrial uses are also part of the mix. Several large parcels within the town limits and just beyond are the sites of sizable sand mining operations. Most of the commercial development in the town is oriented toward US-74/76, though some local-serving commercial uses occupy a few parcels internal to the community.

Environment

Few environmental constraints exist within the town limits. Creek corridors and a few wetland areas depicted in Figure 2 contribute to the natural landscape that is the backdrop to the existing development. East and west of the town are areas that have been delineated as by the NC Natural Heritage Program as ecologically important areas valued for the biodiversity within each.



Northwest has a long-standing tradition of small-scale agriculture.



Commercial development is concentrated at the intersection with US-74/76.

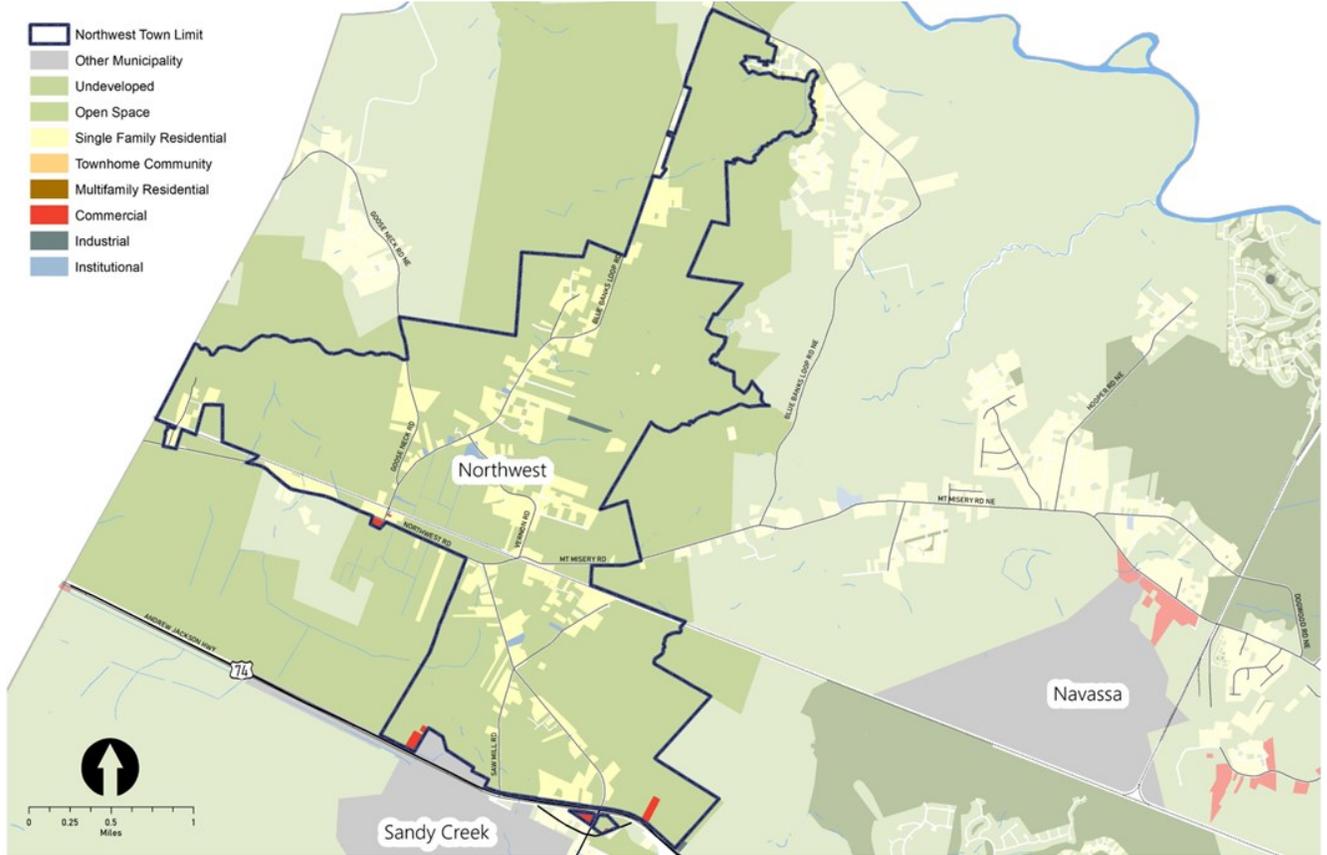


Figure 6.6.1 Existing Land Use (2020)



Figure 6.6.2 Existing Environmental Features (2020)

Northwest by the Numbers

Estimated
Population
(2020)

778

Projected
Population
(2040)*

945

Median
Age
(2020)

51

Median
Household Income
(2020)

\$39k

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Population

The population of Northwest has been increasing over the last two decades at a very slow rate. Though projections indicate the population will not exceed 1,000 by 2040, recent development approvals point to an increase of more than 2,000 more residents within the next few years. However, the proximity to the megasites along US-74/76 could spur some future growth that could bring more people to the Northwest community in the coming years.

The existing population is generally older with almost 50% over the age of 55. As shown in Figure 3, nearly a quarter of the population is between the ages of 55 and 64.

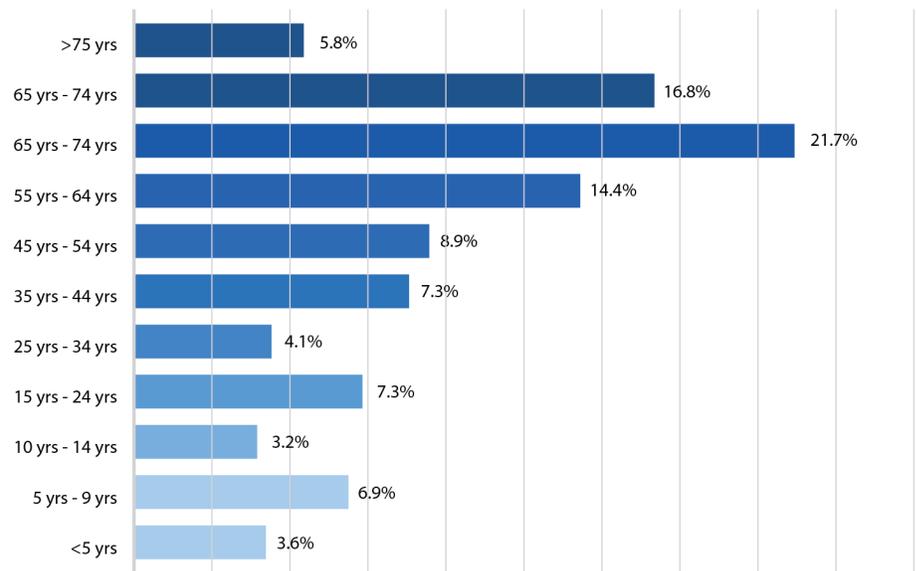


Figure 3. Population by Age (2020)

*Note: The increased rate of development approvals is not reflected in the population projections developed in 2020, so the 2040 population could be higher than the number shown.

Figure 4. Estimated and Projected Population Growth (2000-2040)

Year	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	671	677	684	778	812	850	895	945
Growth Rate		0.1%	0.2%	2.7%	0.9%	0.9%	1.0%	1.1%
Capture Growth		0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.17%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Housing & Households

Like many other Brunswick County communities, the homes in Northwest are predominantly single-family detached homes. They comprise more than 70% of the housing in the town. The remaining 30% are almost entirely mobile homes. Almost 100% of these homes are occupied full time by the owners or renters. No homes are classified as vacation or short-term rental homes.

The annual median income of households in the town is well below that of Brunswick County. As shown in Figure 5, more than 60% of households brought in less than \$50,000 in 2020.



Figure 5. Households by Income
Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

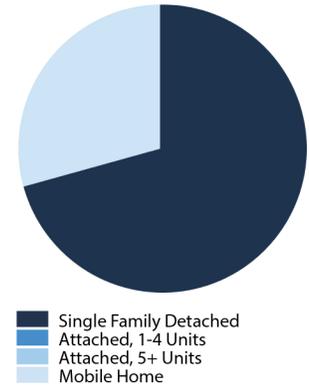
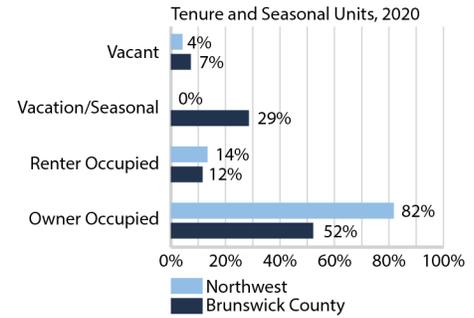


Figure 6. Housing Tenure/Type

Employment & the Economy

The Northwest economy is heavily focused on local-serving industries, including Retail (27% of all jobs), Construction (24%), Agriculture/Mining (14%) and Accommodations/Food Services (14%).

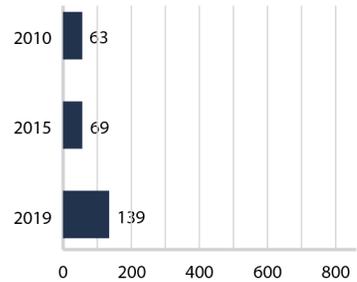


Figure 7. Jobs, 2010-2019

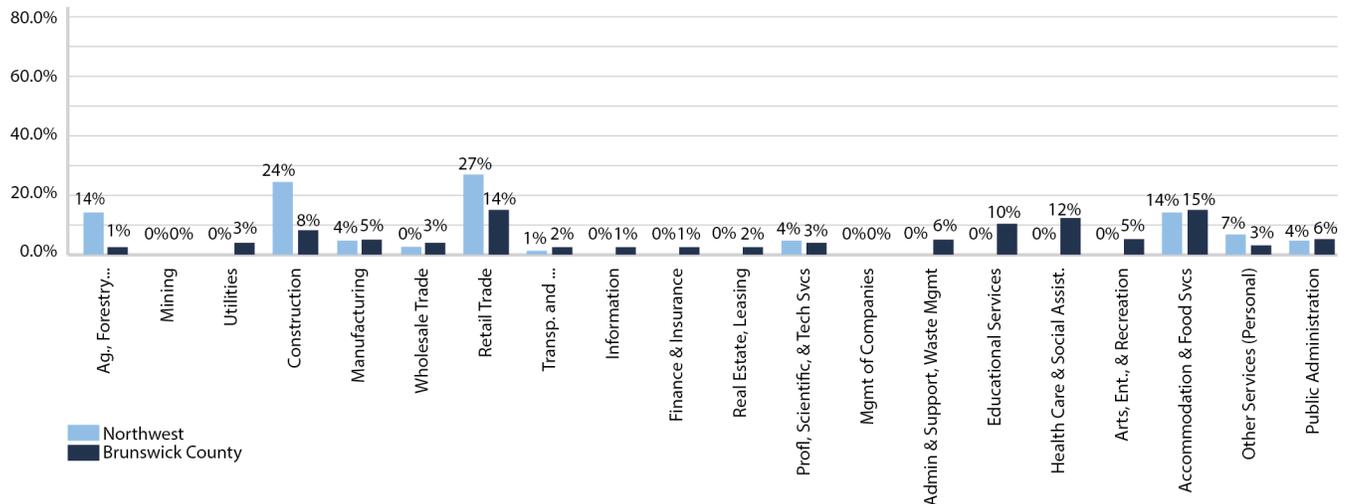


Figure 8. Employment by Industry Sector

Key Issues & Opportunities

Through the community engagement activities, the residents and other stakeholders shared concerns about future growth, anticipated changes to the development pattern, and potential impacts. While meeting participants and survey respondents identified several issues to be addressed in the coming years, they also highlighted some opportunities to consider as change occurs. The following summary reflects the concerns and ideas expressed.

Economic Development

Citizens recognize that the growth in the region as well as the potential for jobs in the adjacent megasite could spur changes in the community over the next two decades. They view these changes as an opportunity to grow the tax base and create jobs within the town.

Community Involvement

The town is seeking ways to build citizens' interest in participating in community activities and possible leadership roles. Creating community amenities and other facilities to bring neighbors together is one way the town is planning to foster a sense of community in Northwest.

Healthy Living

Social connections, access to healthy food, and recreation that promotes exercise outdoors are among the ideas community leaders are contemplating to ensure the residents of Northwest can have a healthier lifestyle.

Affordable Housing

As the community develops over time, community leaders are supporting the addition of residential development that meets the needs of the future population. Among them is affordable housing. The variety of unit types is already shifting toward smaller products to include apartments.



Ideas for public parks in town included fitness equipment in addition to trails and playgrounds.

Community Engagement

During the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 planning process, Northwest residents and property owners participated in district level meetings. In addition, community meetings were held in Northwest in March and April of 2022. All such meetings were structured and facilitated to gather input on issues, opportunities and aspirations related to the future development pattern and conservation efforts. Feedback provided through online surveys augmented the input recorded at the in-person meetings.

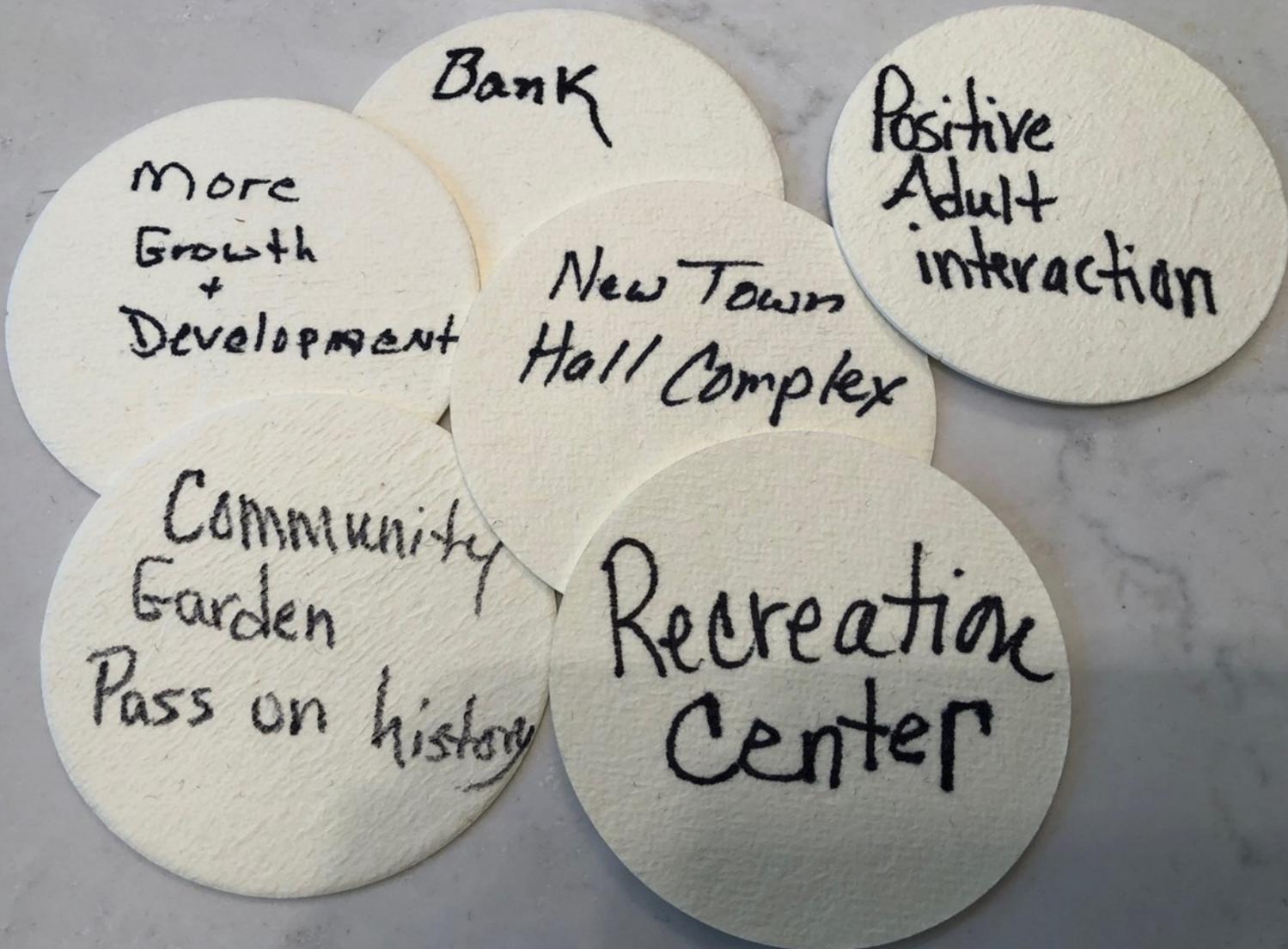
- * District 5 County Meeting attendees: 26
- * March 2022 Northwest Meeting attendees: 4
- * April 2022 Northwest Meeting attendees: 2

Wish List

- Economic growth, jobs
- Community engagement, health, well-being
- Environmental conservation
- Connection to history
- Affordable housing

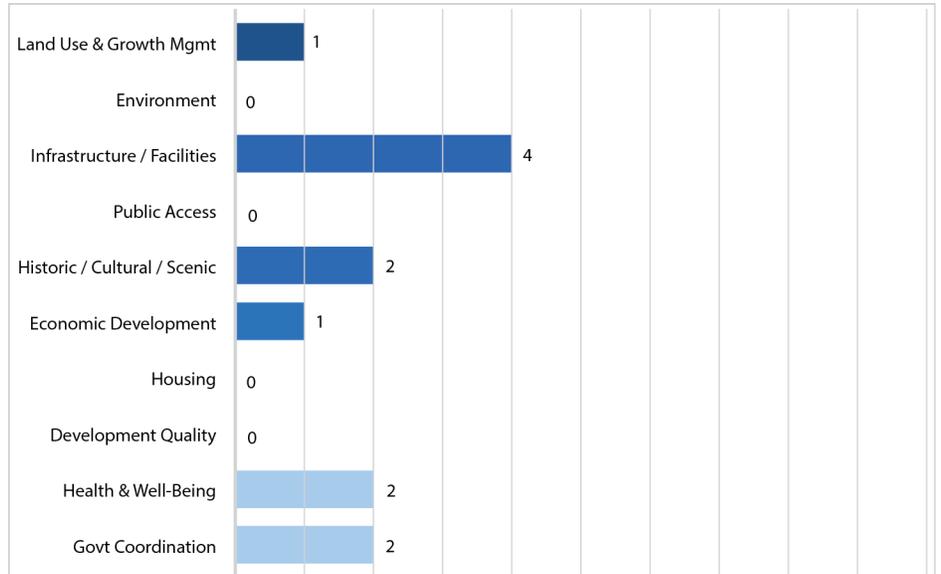


Teaching younger generations how to grow—and share—healthy food is a priority for town leaders.



Top-Ranked Goals

When asked to review the goals for the future of Brunswick County, meeting participants shared their opinions and voted for those they believe are most relevant to Northwest. Meeting attendees agreed the goal pertaining to infrastructure and facilities was the highest priority.

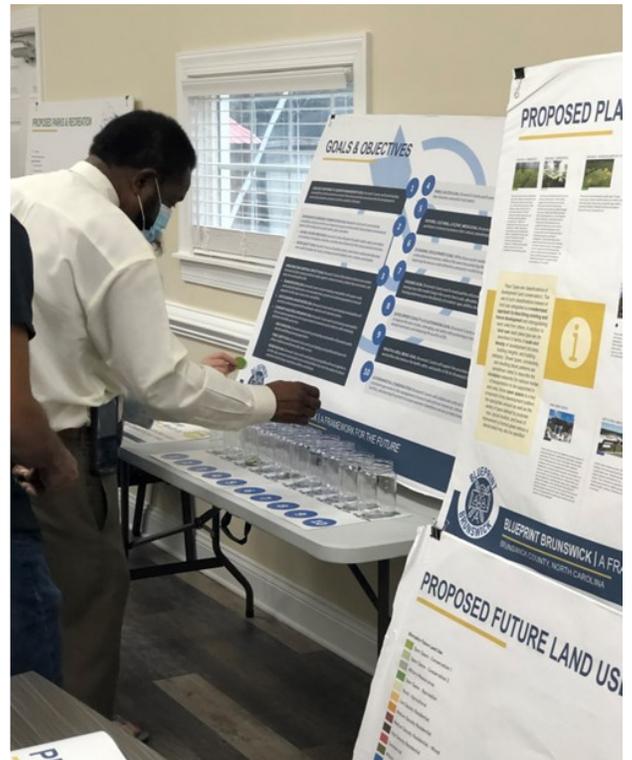


Note: The full set of Goals are presented on page 68-69 in Section 3 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

Figure 9. Results of Goal Ranking



Meeting attendees examined draft land use maps and shared ideas about specific details to reflect their vision for the future of the town.



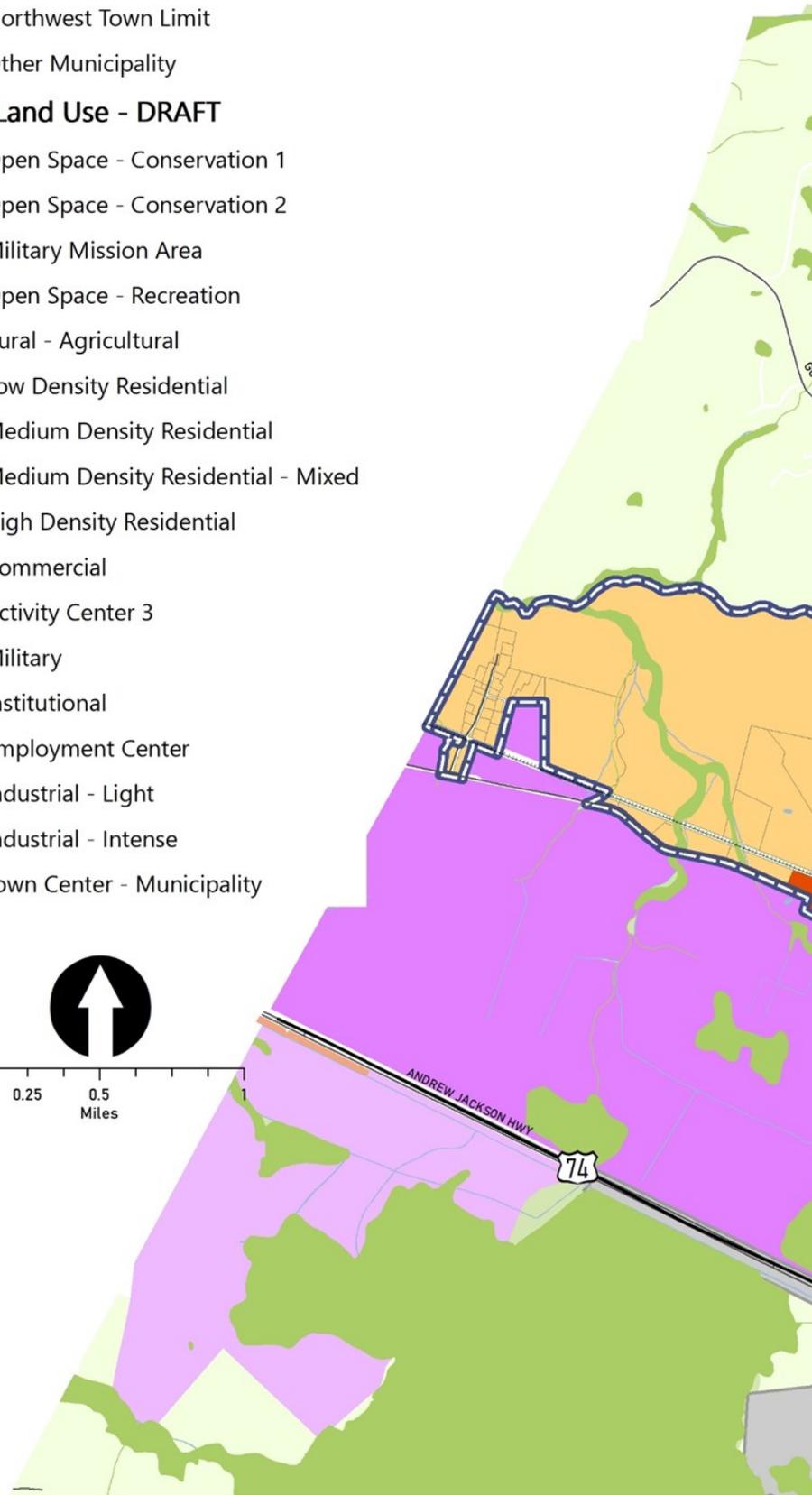
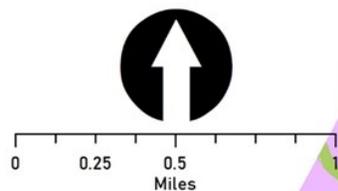
Ideas for Land Use + Precedents

- Mom-n-Pop businesses
- Housing—affordable, senior
- Healthcare, community clinic
- Town hall complex
- Community garden
- Recreation center
- Light industrial
- Bank
- Daycare



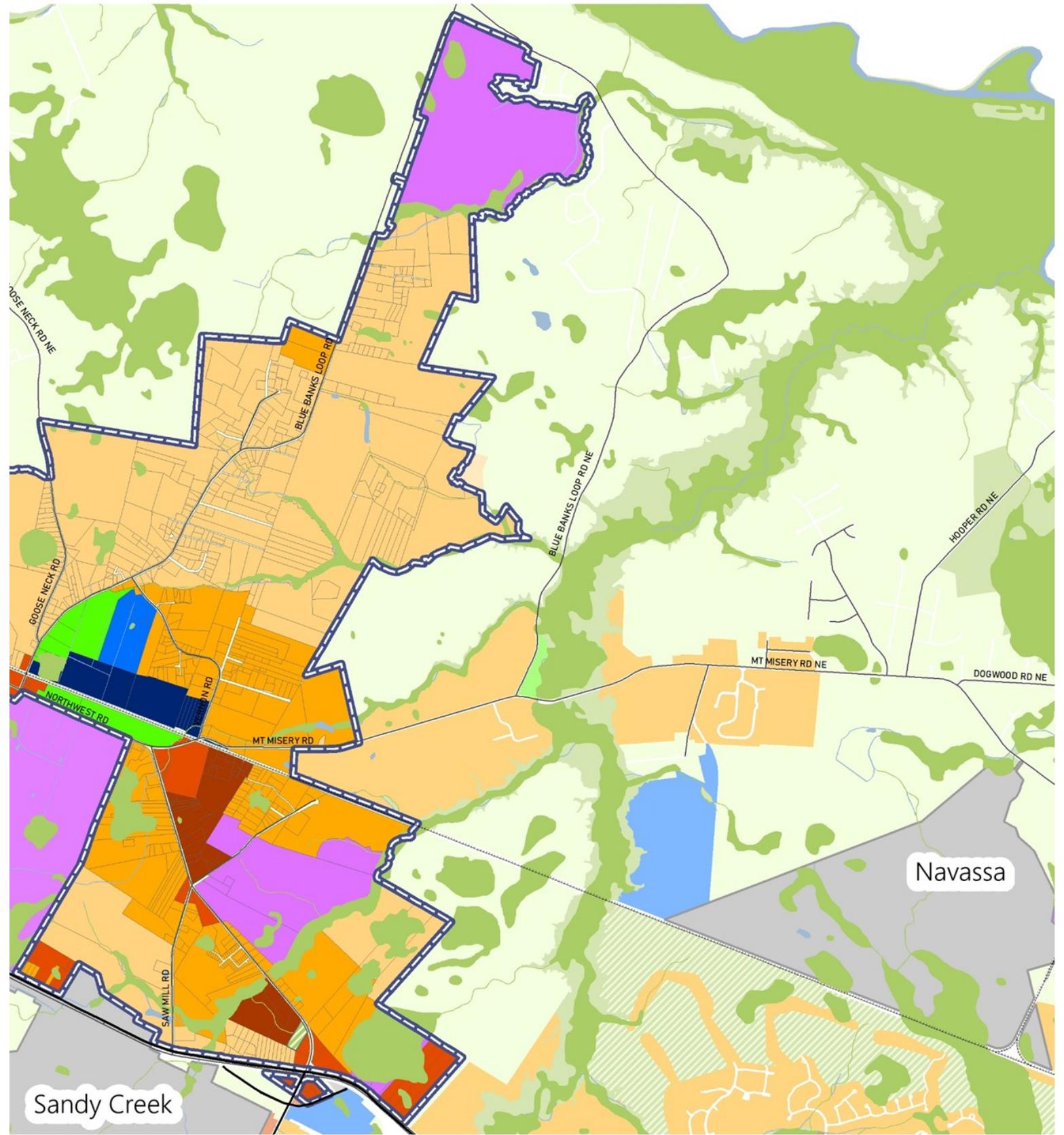
Future Land Use

The community's vision for the future of Northwest indicates support for the creation of a town center where a government complex would be flanked by recreational facilities, community garden space, and some complementary employment uses. Nearby commercial development would be located to also serve the larger daytime population (i.e., people working within and close to Northwest) as well as visitors with access from US-74/76. The plan also accommodates a variety of housing and envisions retention of some of the working lands.



Note: The Place Type descriptions are presented on page 72 in Section 3 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

Figure 6.6.10 Future Land Use & Conservation Map

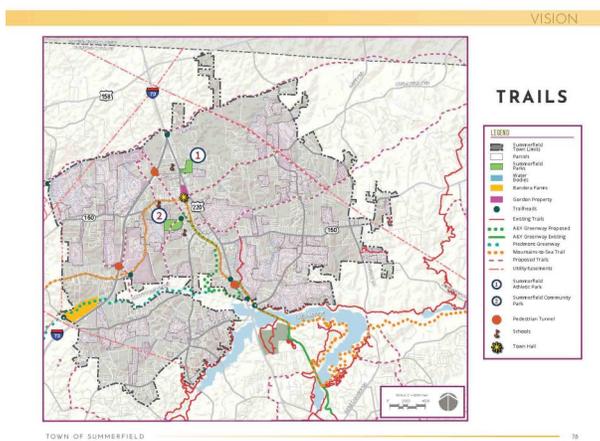


Policy Recommendations & Strategies

The following are a series of policy recommendations and supporting implementation strategies. As indicated in the column on the right, each has a connection to one or more of the recommendations outlined in Section 4 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

Related Recommendations of Blueprint Brunswick 2040

<p>1. Foster a sense of community, one of mutual support and healthy living</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance communication. Seek ways beyond the Town’s website to expand outreach for disseminating information and provide mechanisms for citizens of all ages to participate in the decisions of the Town. Encourage engagement, volunteerism in government functions and schools. Promote the opportunities and assist citizens with making connections. Formalize the community center. Prepare concept for center of community that includes a park, a trail, a community center building, community garden, and associated programming. 	<p>HW-2</p>
<p>2. Improve access to food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with NCSU Cooperative Extension, schools, and property owners to develop a young farmers program (like 4H) to teach the next generation how to grow—and share—food. Identify site for farmers market and work with property owners to allow this use. 	<p>LU-4, HW-4</p>
<p>3. Establish a trail system that addresses mobility, recreation, and conservation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare trail master plan for the town. Develop signage and/or a walking trail to tell the story of the community. 	<p>NR-3, CF-3</p>
<p>4. Adopt an effective approach to local stormwater management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate property owners and encourage management of ditches on private property. Explore cost share with NCDOT and the County to address stormwater management solutions and clear clogged ditches. Consider adopting the current Brunswick County Stormwater Management Ordinance and Stormwater Manual, and arranging with the County to administer it. 	<p>NR-5</p>
<p>5. Manage commercial development along US-74</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct study to establish standards for design and access. 	<p>ITR-2, DQ-3</p>
<p>6. Seek partnerships with businesses and institutions to advance economic opportunities</p>	<p>ED-1</p>
<p>7. Update development ordinance to help implement the plan</p>	<p>G-5, LU-1, LU-6</p>



Summerfield Parks, Trails, & Open Space Master Plan: In 2021, the Town of Summerfield, NC hired a consultant to prepare a *Parks, Trails, and Open Space Master Plan*. The resulting document shows how existing trails can be connected with new facilities to create a linked pedestrian and bicycle network for the community.



Morrisville Town Center Project: The Town of Morrisville, NC located a trailhead park, a farmers market, a demonstration community garden, and a library in its Town Center to help create a vibrant center of community. These facilities are sited near an intersection in the Town greenway system to help residents access them on foot or by bike. The Town partnered with the Western Wake Farmers Market, the Morrisville Community Garden, and Wake County on different components of the project.

Image source: Cary Magazine

Recommended Action Plan

The Town of Northwest has a long history of small-scale agriculture, semi-rural living, and mutual support, which it will make a high priority to preserve, even as its proximity to Wilmington and US 74 brings new growth to the community. The following action steps will help the Town to pursue this vision.

1

Create a vibrant focal point for community engagement and healthy living. Build upon the existing Town Hall and ballfield to create a dynamic center of community that includes a park, trail, community center building, and community garden, along with programming to engage and connect community residents.

2

Improve access to locally-grown food. Work with NCSU Cooperative Extension, schools, property owners, and others to develop a young farmers program to teach the next generation how to grow—and share—food. Identify a site for farmers market and work with local property owners to allow this use.

3

Develop a community trails system to support mobility, recreation and conservation. Work with the Cape Fear Rural Planning Organization and other partners to hire a consultant to prepare a Trails Master Plan for the community. Develop a walking trail with signage to help tell the story of the community.

Sandy Creek

The Town of Sandy Creek began as a private, rural community along US-74. Preserving access was the primary reason the town incorporated in 1988. This plan is a tool for managing change to meet the needs of the existing and future population, introduce uses that will enhance the quality of life in the community while maintaining the “small hometown feeling,” and establish a path forward for sound delivery of infrastructure and services. The plan conveys ideas for future land use throughout the Town’s jurisdiction. Those ideas are supported by recommendations for policies and strategies for implementation over the next 20 years. The plan was created with thoughtful input of the Town’s elected and appointed officials, staff, and residents who attended the community meetings.

Existing Land Use & Development Pattern

Development in the town is characterized by neighborhoods of large-lot, single-family homes. In fact, the existing lots are each an acre or larger. The few commercial uses are oriented toward US-74 and Maco Rd. NE. Encompassing just 1.3 square miles, most of the area inside the Town limits has remained relatively undeveloped.

Environment

Wetlands and creeks are the primary natural features of the town. The locations of wetlands and creek corridors lend themselves to passive recreation opportunities. The land west of the town is part of a large area of managed timber. It is comprised of wetlands, ensuring adjacent future development immediately surrounding the town will be limited.



The community of Sandy Creek has maintained a relatively rural feel with homes situated on large lots.

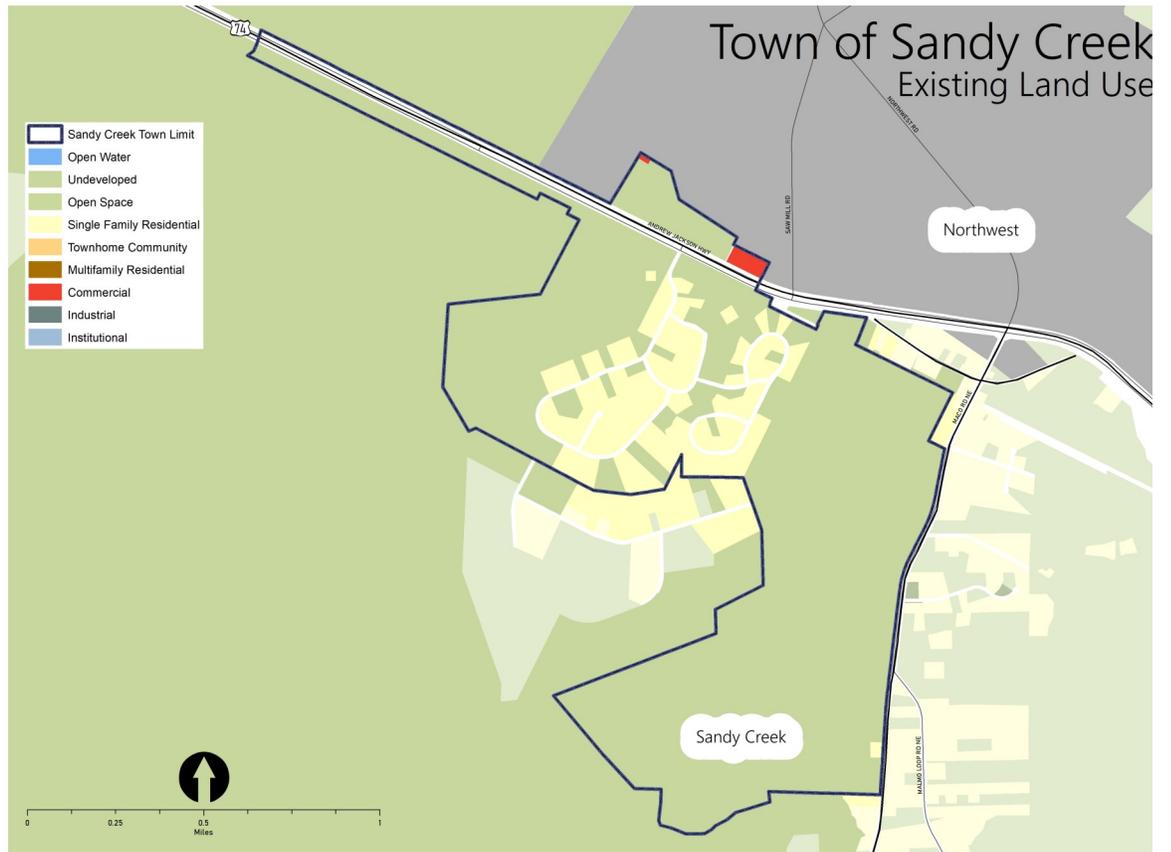


Figure 6.7.1 Existing Land Use (2020)

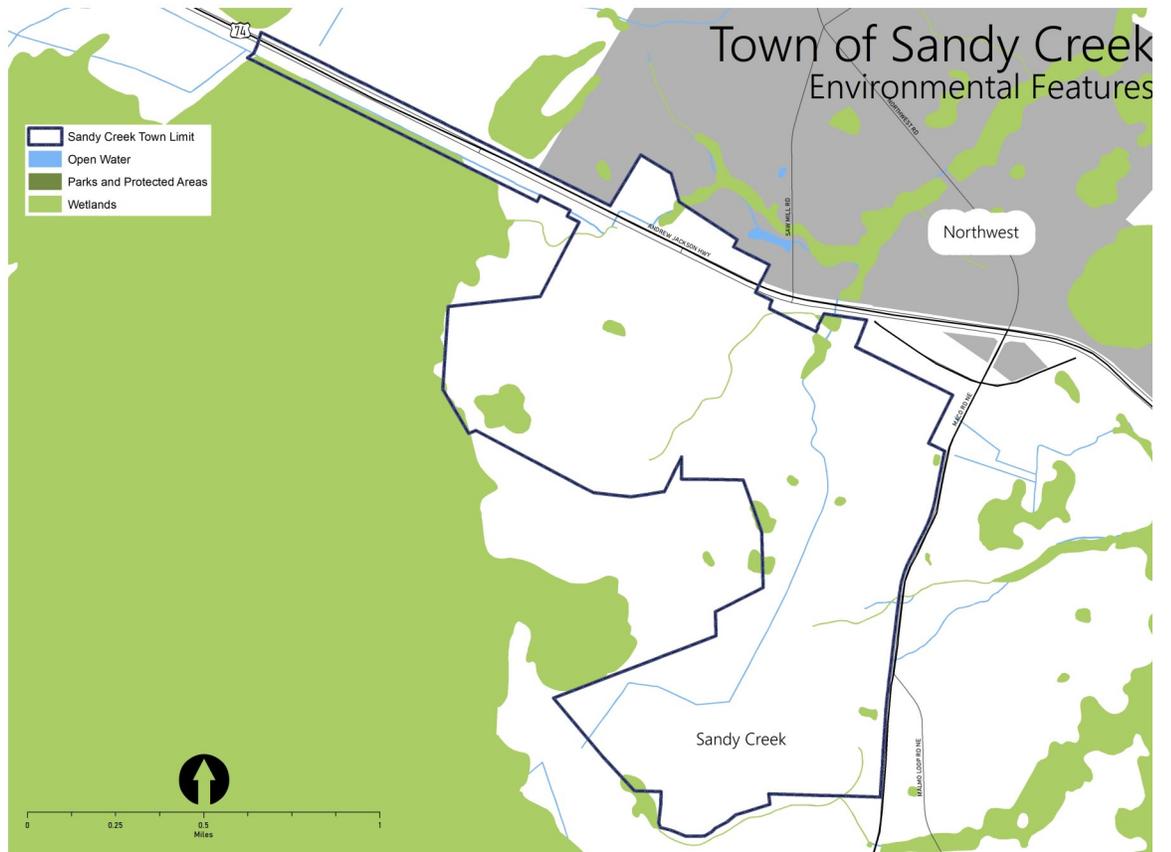


Figure 6.7.2 Existing Environmental Features (2020)

Sandy Creek by the Numbers

Estimated
Population
(2020)

212

Projected
Population
(2040)*

297

Median
Age
(2020)

55

Median
Household Income
(2020)

\$54k

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Population

Sandy Creek is a small town that functions much like a neighborhood. Over the previous two decades, the town lost population but recovered and returned to a growth position. The town is projected to have moderate growth over the next 20 years.

The community is aging. Almost 50% of the population is over the age of 55. It is home to retirees, many of whom have lived in the community for many years.

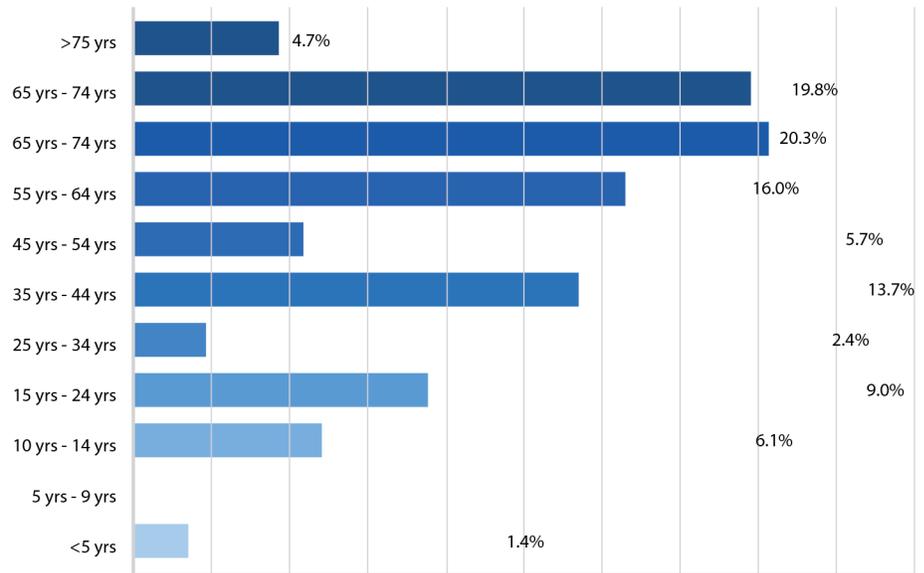


Figure 3. Population by Age (2020)

*Note: The increased rate of development approvals is not reflected in the population projections developed in 2020, so the 2040 population could be higher than the number shown.

Figure 4. Estimated and Projected Population Growth (2000-2040)

Year	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Population	246	221	187	212	229	249	271	297
Growth Rate		-1.0%	-3.1%	2.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%	1.9%
Capture Growth		-0.1%	-0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

Housing & Households

The housing in Sandy Creek is comprised mostly of single-family detached homes. Mobile homes make up half of that housing mix. Not surprisingly, almost 100% of the homes are occupied by full-time residents. As a percentage of the total number of dwelling units, the number of vacant units is lower than that of the county.

As the data in Figure 5 reveals, over 40% of the households in the community have an annual income over \$50,000.

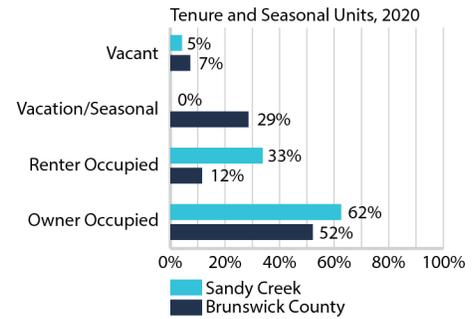


Figure 5. Households by Income

Source: Noell Consulting Group based on the US Census Bureau

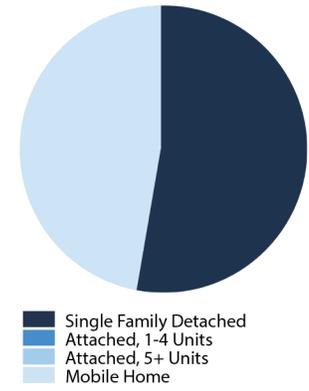


Figure 6. Housing Tenure/Type

Employment & the Economy

The Sandy Creek economy is very small, with less than 10 jobs being present in 2019. These jobs are largely found in Public Administration and Professional Services.

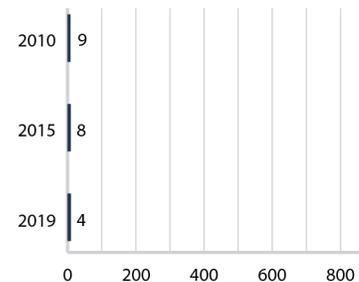


Figure 7. Jobs, 2010-2019

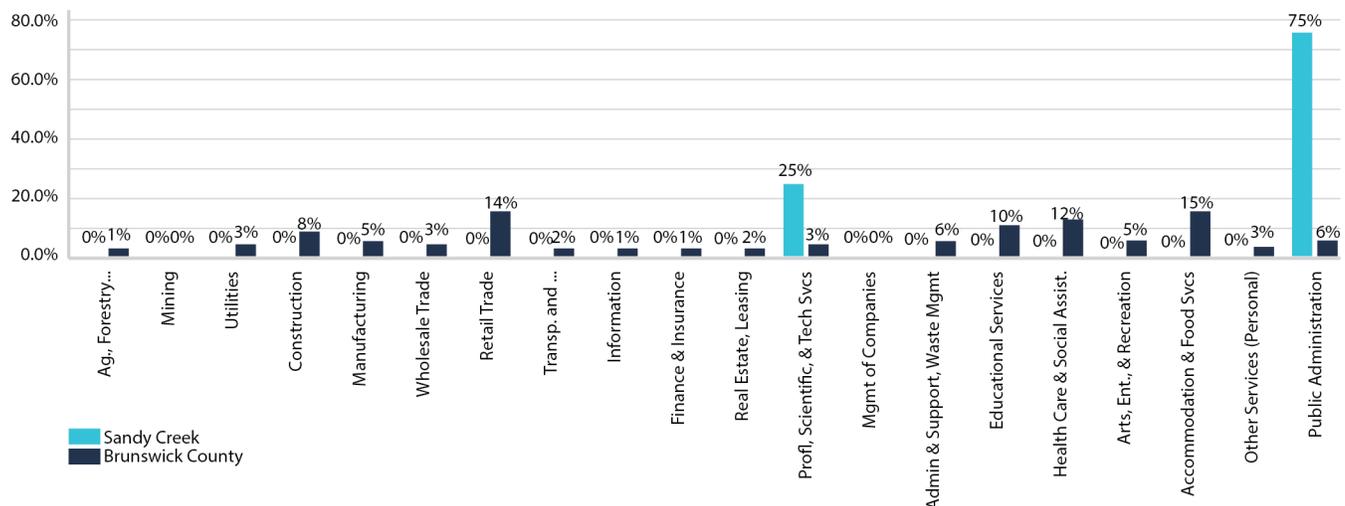


Figure 8. Employment by Industry Sector

Key Issues & Opportunities

Through the community engagement activities, the residents and other stakeholders shared concerns about future growth, anticipated changes to the development pattern, and potential impacts. While meeting participants and survey respondents identified several issues to be addressed in the coming years, they also highlighted some opportunities to consider as change occurs. The following summary reflects the concerns and ideas expressed.

Community Gathering Spaces

In a small town with a limited budget, engagement of residents in leadership, social events, and other community focused activities can be challenging. The citizens that participated in the planning process noted opportunities to utilize undeveloped lots to create public space for gatherings and bring neighbors together.

Access and Circulation

Issues include diminished access for residents and emergency vehicles from the future limitations with the planned conversion of US-74 to a controlled access highway where the town's sole entrance currently exists; access to new development in town via existing streets; funding to maintain the existing local streets; and safety for pedestrians as there are no sidewalks in the community.

Stormwater

Residents are concerned the flooding caused by obstructions in the ditches and culverts (i.e., litter, debris, etc.) will increase if a more proactive approach to managing these facilities is not employed with adequate funding.



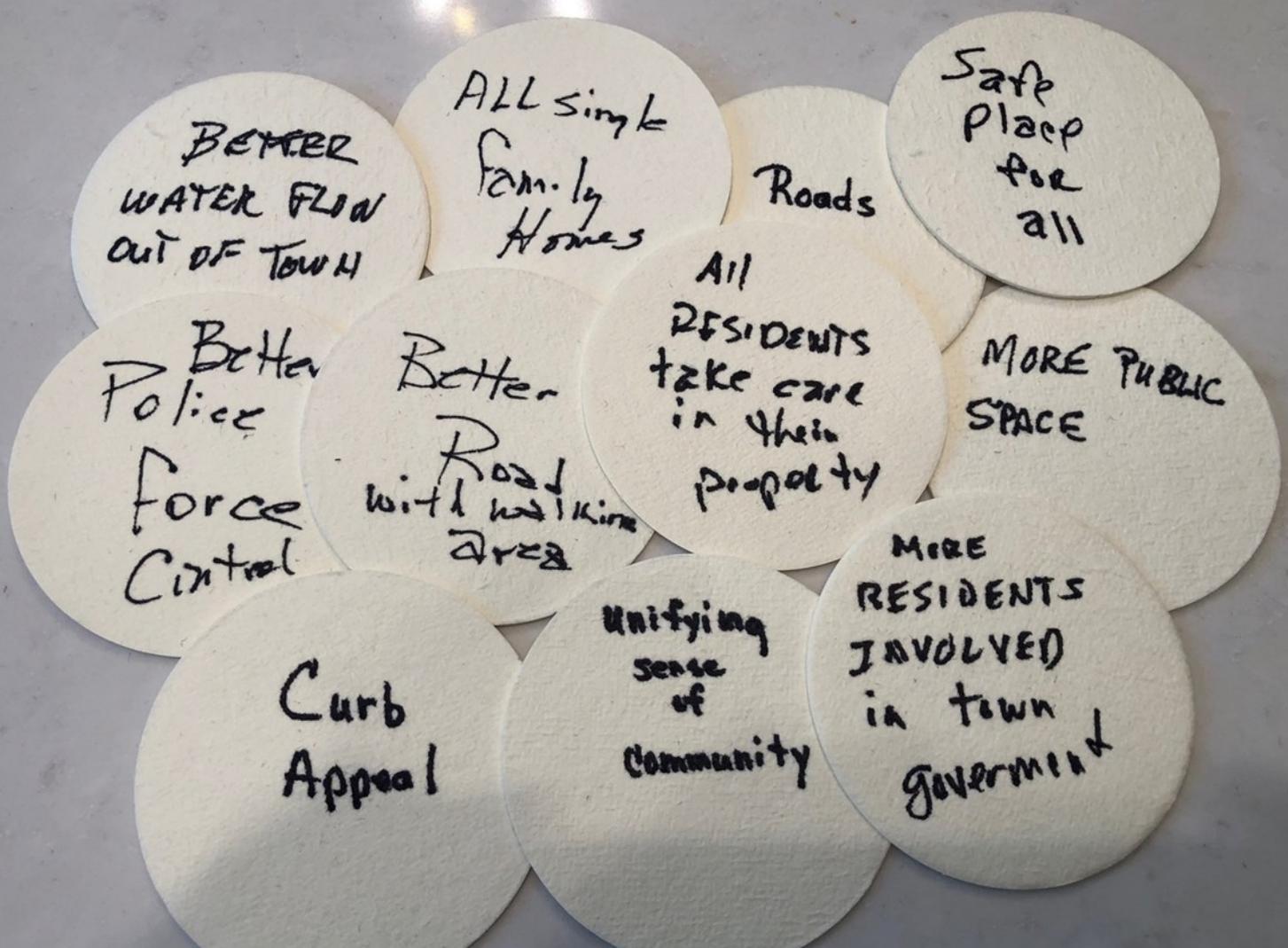
Community Engagement

During the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 planning process, Sandy Creek residents and property owners participated in district level meetings. In addition, community meetings were held in Sandy Creek in March and April of 2022. All such meetings were structured and facilitated to gather input on issues, opportunities and aspirations related to the future development pattern and conservation efforts. Feedback provided through online surveys augmented the input recorded at the in-person meetings.

- * Districts 4 & 5 County Meeting attendees: 26
- * March 2022 Sandy Creek Meeting attendees: 4
- * April 2022 Sandy Creek Meeting attendees: 5

Wish List

- Infrastructure (roads, stormwater, WiFi)
- Sense of community, engagement
- Public spaces, gathering place
- Safe, attractive community



Ideas for Land Use + Precedents

- Essential commercial—
café, small-format grocery
- Gathering place
- All single family homes

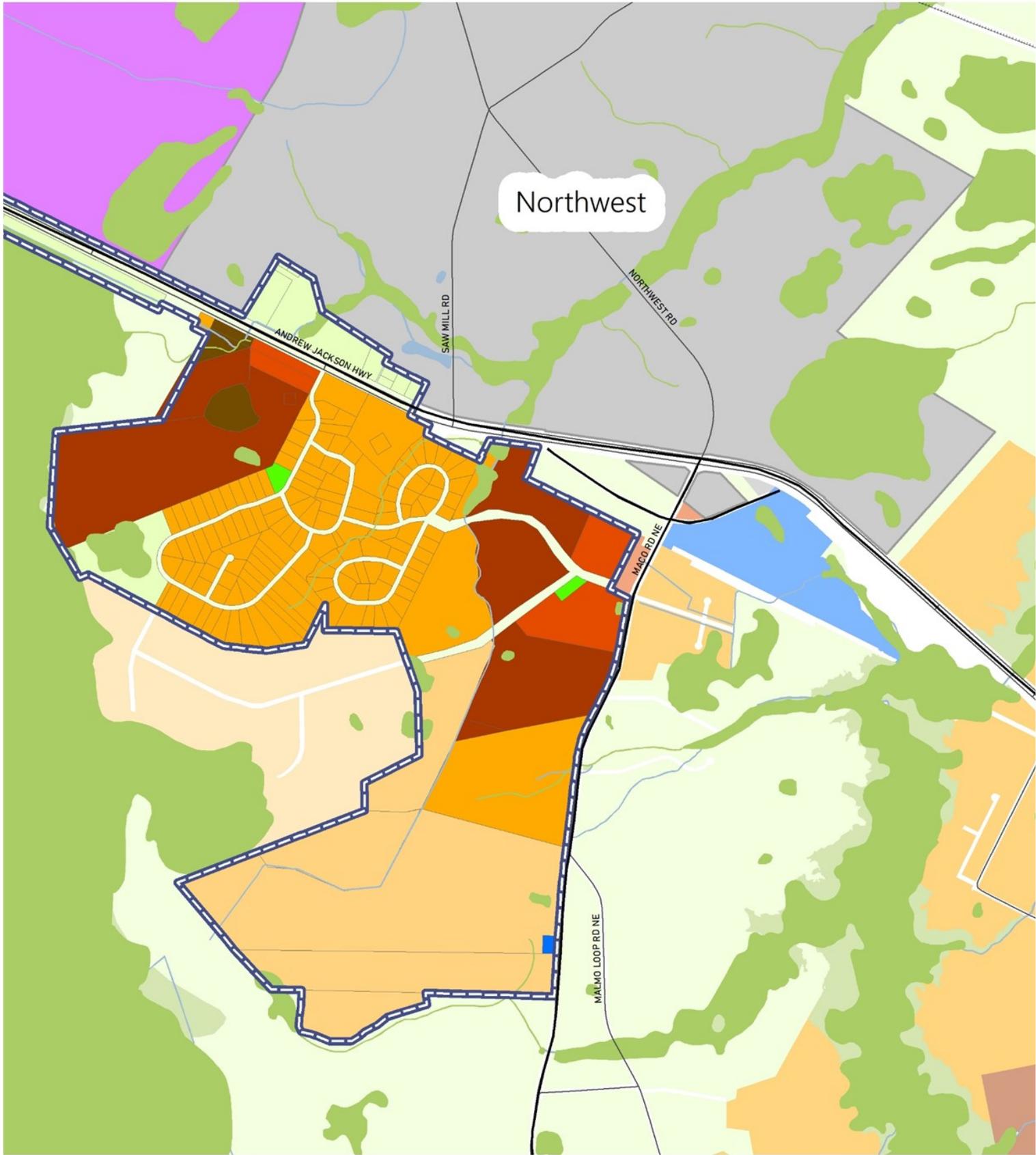


Future Land Use

The Future Land Use & Conservation Map (Figure 10) reflects a desire to maintain the existing residential area. Consistent with recent approvals, the map also indicates support for new development that offers a broader range of housing types. The vision for future development acknowledges the potential for primary access to shift from US-74 to NC-87 (Maco Rd. NE), which will connect to a planned interchange and redistribute traffic flow. The new entrance would be the place to accommodate small-scale commercial spaces flanked by civic uses (i.e., a new town hall or town green oriented to become a welcoming feature as residents and visitors access the community via a new point of entry).



Figure 6.7.10 Future Land Use & Conservation Map



Policy Recommendations & Strategies

The following are a series of policy recommendations and supporting implementation strategies. As indicated in the column on the right, each has a connection to one or more of the recommendations outlined in Section 4 of Blueprint Brunswick 2040.

Related Recommendations of Blueprint Brunswick 2040

<p>1. Improve the road and sidewalk network</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct pavement management study to determine the costs associated with needed roadway repairs. • Make—or require through private development process—street connections to ensure the creation of multiple points of ingress/egress. • Evaluate the potential for obtaining grants from the Cape Fear Regional Planning Organization (RPO) to extend sidewalks, particularly from Town Hall to arterial roads. 	<p>ITR-1</p>
<p>2. Update the zoning ordinance to help manage growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorize conditional zoning to help the Town negotiate with developers on appropriate community improvements, such as infrastructure and town facilities (or sites for them). • Prepare design standards for commercial development on US 74 and Maco Road NE 	<p>G-5, LU-1, LU-6</p>
<p>3. Define a primary center and new point of entry for the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorient the entrance of the town toward Maco Rd. Consider future access challenges from US-74 as NCDOT implements plans for a controlled-access highway. At this location, a true town center could be created that is visible from Maco Road and takes advantage of the access to be provided by a future interchange at US-74 (I-74). • Work with the property owner/developer to prepare concept for a new town center with commercial, civic, and residential uses. Support the center with zoning that permits the uses reflected in the concept. • Conduct a feasibility study for a new Town Hall and green space (gathering place) in a new town center. 	<p>DQ-3</p>
<p>4. Adopt an effective approach to local stormwater management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate property owners and encourage management of ditches on private property. • Explore cost share with NCDOT and the County to develop stormwater management solutions and clear clogged ditches. 	<p>NR-5</p>
<p>5. Anticipate and accommodate future highway improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish design standards to minimize conflicts between new development and roadway features, including transitional setbacks to preserve future right-of-way. 	<p>ITR-2, DQ-3</p>



Johnston County Conditional Zoning Authorization: In 2021, the Johnston County Board of Commissioners approved a zoning text amendment to authorize the use of conditional zoning to help it work with developers to negotiate site-specific conditions of approval. In so doing, the Board enabled a new tool to help mitigate the impacts of new development and address community needs.

Matthews Main Street Extension: The Town of Matthews, NC worked with a private developer to build a new street with a town hall, library, and shops as part of an extension of its existing commercial district. The result was to create a more dynamic and walkable center of community and add important new public facilities.



Apex Pavement Management Study: In 2020, the Town of Apex, NC conducted a pavement management study for Town streets using special software to estimate the cost of pavement improvements and identify which repairs would deliver the greatest benefit for the resources available.

Recommended Action Plan

The Town of Sandy Creek is poised for rapid growth, with major road improvements planned on US 74 and new subdivisions and commercial development proposed near existing residences. The Town has a chance to leverage this new investment to help address infrastructure needs and create a dynamic center of community. The following actions will help the Town pursue these opportunities.

- 1 **Improve the road and sidewalk network:** Conduct a pavement management study to estimate the cost of needed road repairs. Make or require road connections to ensure a linked network of streets. Work with Cape Fear RPO to explore grants to extend sidewalks to improve pedestrian safety.
- 2 **Update the zoning ordinance to help manage growth:** Authorize conditional zoning to help the Town negotiate with developers on appropriate community improvements, such as infrastructure and town facilities (or sites). Prepare design standards for commercial development on US 74 and Maco Road NE.
- 3 **Define a primary center and new point of entry for the community.** Reorient the entrance of the town toward Maco Road. Consider creating a true town center that is visible from Maco Road and takes advantage of access provided by future interchange at US-74 (I-74). Work with the property owner/ developer to prepare a concept design for a new town center with commercial, civic, and residential uses. Support the center with zoning that permits the uses reflected in the concept. Conduct a feasibility study for a new Town Hall and gathering space in a new town center.
- 4 **Adopt effective approach to stormwater management:** Educate property owners about proper ditch management on private property. Explore cost share with NCDOT and County to develop stormwater management solutions and clear clogged ditches.

