

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FOR THE TOWN OF
WENDELL

03.16.2022 DRAFT



Blueprint Wendell 20 30



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INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

AN INTRODUCTION TO *BLUEPRINT WENDELL 2030*

Like much of Wake County, Wendell is growing and many of its residents have been a part of that recent boom - nearly 70% of the survey responses the project team received were from people that had lived in Wendell less than five years. And yet it is the historical nature of the Town, the sense of stability and familiarity that motivates people to stay, move to, and come back to Wendell.

In North Carolina, plans are policy guides without the force of law but instead establish a "vision" for the future that is reflective of community expectations.

Plans are implemented through a variety of tools, including the zoning ordinance, which *does* carry the force of law. Zoning puts into place the rules to be followed as property is developed or redeveloped. Such rules should be consistent with the intent of the adopted plan.

Blueprint Wendell 2030 is organized by describing the Past (history, introduction, context), Present (assets, land development, public engagement process), and Future (goals, recommendations, and implementation actions). Please contact Wendell's Planning Department to get involved and for further clarification - and thank you for being a part of the future.

Special thanks to everyone that participated in the plan - it was done for you and couldn't have been done without you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TOWN BOARD

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JEANNINE NGWIRA - PLANNER II
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LINDA BARBOUR - PERMIT TECHNICIAN

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| TAULBEE DAVIS | LEE MABRY |
| MATTHEW PELLAS | DEANS EATMAN* |
| HANNAH PERRY HOPKINS | BRENT HENNINGTON* |

OTHERS

MEG NEALON / NEALON PLANNING (LEAD CONSULTANT)
SCOTT LANE / J. S. LANE COMPANY
J.J. ZANETTA / ZANETTA ILLUSTRATION

TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, PEOPLE INTERVIEWED,
SURVEY RESPONDENTS: THANK YOU FOR YOUR EFFORTS.

Cover Image: J. J. Zanetta / Zanetta Illustration

PAST

It is said that we never escape our past, but in our case **Wendell should both savor its history and build on its best aspects.** It's important to **know where we came from to direct where we are going.** That understanding starts in our **history**, then moves into **living and working** in our Town.





A BRIEF **HISTORY** OF OUR PLACE

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS, WENDELL HAS CONTINUED TO GROW AND PROSPER FOR OVER A CENTURY. THE PEOPLE AND PLACES THAT HELPED MAKE US WHAT WE ARE TODAY STILL RESONATE IN OUR TOWN.

Wendell, like many towns in North Carolina, owes much of its origin to two seemingly unrelated things: trains and tobacco. Settlers came to the area from Granville County in the mid-1800s after disease decimated crops. When the train came to the Town in 1906 (the depot was demolished in 1970) porters would call out Wendell station clearly, enunciating each syllable separately, making it sound different than its namesake, Oliver Wendell Holmes.

The founding of the Town occurred in 1903, well after the initial settlements. The Great Depression helped construct many of the sidewalks in Wendell through public works projects. Wendell weathered the Depression well, and small shops including a general store, Bank of Wendell, post office, and schools filled out the community, although some of these are long gone now. Two historic districts and five structures are registered landmarks.



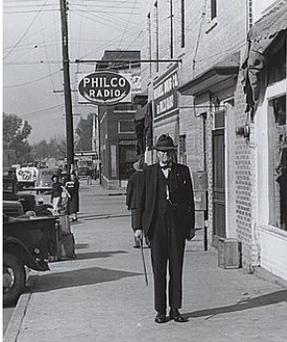
Above: Population of Wendell from 1910 to 2020 (est.); farm scene.

Opposite, top row left-to-right: Post Office, Ralph Whitley (Bank of Wendell founder), base ball team, ca. 1912

Middle: Train Depot

Bottom row left to right: Jake May, professional baseball player from Wendell. May struck out Babe Ruth in consecutive at-bats in the 1932 World Series; scenes from downtown Wendell.

All images provided with permission of Wendell Historical Society.





LIVING IN WENDELL

OVER 120 YEARS SINCE ITS FOUNDING, WENDELL IS STILL A GREAT PLACE TO SETTLE. HOUSING IS A CRITICAL ISSUE, BOTH CREATING A DEMAND FOR BUSINESSES AND DICTATING UTILITY, TRANSPORTATION, SCHOOL, AND OTHER SERVICE DEMANDS.

Wendell is somewhat fortunate to still have relatively affordable housing compared to some of its peer towns and cities, but there are signs that this trend is changing. A potential home buyer is faced with housing stock that has zero percent vacancy rates for single-family detached (3% for rentals), and that was largely built after 1990 (60% - 70% of housing in Wendell was constructed post-1990).

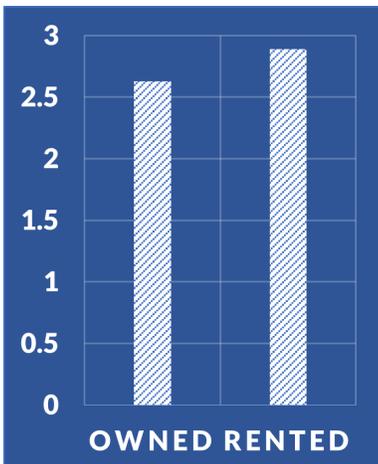
on average, the occupancy per housing unit is slightly higher for rentals than owned-home housing in Wendell. The people in Wendell are diverse, with 90% of households having a broadband internet connection and yet 20% of the population is living below the federal poverty line. One in six Wendell residents have a disability. Addressing the "missing middle" elements of housing (see opposite page) is increasingly important.

It might surprise some people to find out that,

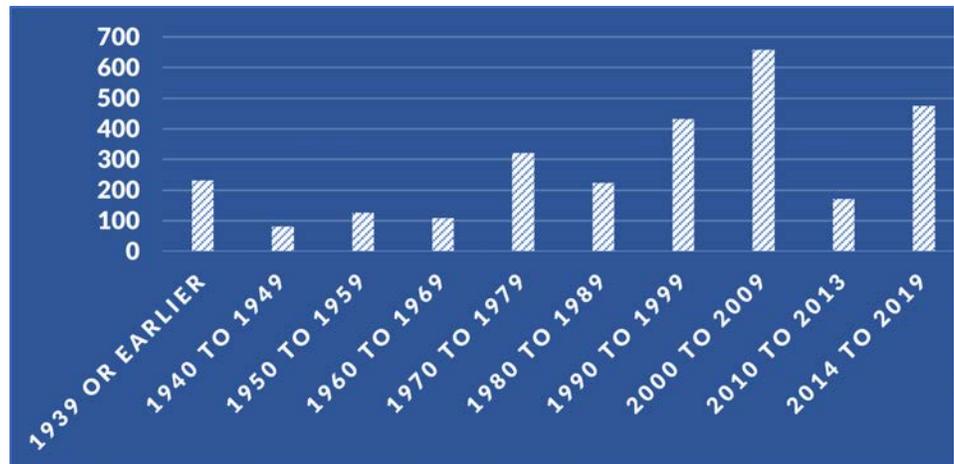


Only 1% of Wendell households making at least \$75,000 a year are paying more than 30% of their total household income for housing. The picture is very different for those households earning \$20,000 or less: housing costs consume at least 30% of the budget for 77% of those families.

About 45% of households in Wendell are single-parent families or persons living alone. Women are far more likely to be single-parent heads of household than men in Wendell.



The average occupancy (number of people living in a household) is slightly higher for rental units. Renters are often families now.



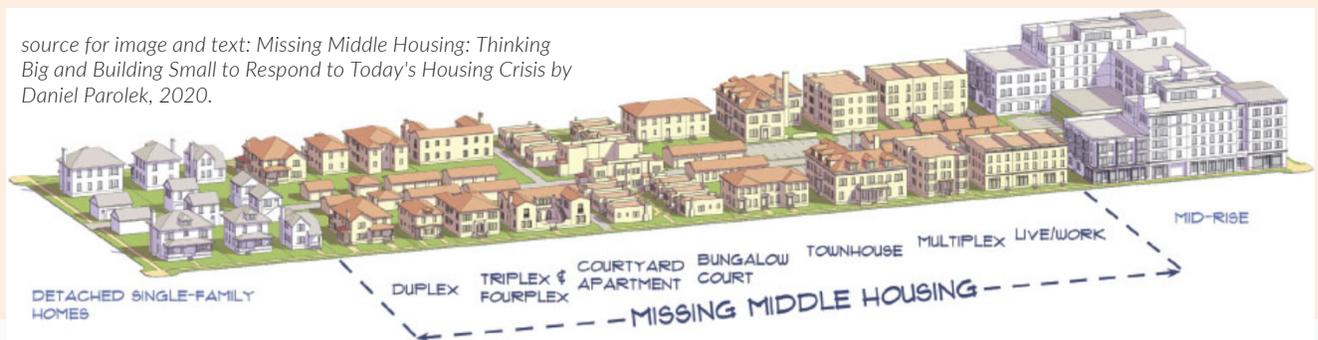
Much of Wendell's housing stock was constructed after 1990. If the U.S. Census data had extended to the current time (mid-2021) the percentage constructed after 1990 would be considerably higher than that shown. New residential permits will continue to expand housing quantity and options.



THE MISSING MIDDLE OF THE HOUSING MARKET

In many historic cities, a mixture of housing types create opportunities for families and individuals of different wealth backgrounds to live nearby. The "missing middle" of housing refers to "plexes" (duplex, fourplex, etc.), townhomes, courtyard apartments / cottages, and live-work arrangements. In Wendell, larger single-family homes, live-work units, and senior housing are also under-supplied.

source for image and text: *Missing Middle Housing: Thinking Big and Building Small to Respond to Today's Housing Crisis* by Daniel Parolek, 2020.



Filling housing gaps is important for several reasons. Increasing density with traditional apartments is not popular with some current residents, so buildings that fit the same depth, width, and height of surrounding single-family homes are often a preferred option. Moreover, middle housing supports transit and alternative modes of transportation as well as attracting customer-focused businesses, younger workers, and allows key people that make a town work stay here: teachers, policemen, and the local barista.

Obstacles that keep more missing middle housing from happening include overly restrictive parking minimum requirements that chew up a lot of land area for little return. Density-based zoning encourages larger, more-expensive houses where two-to-four-unit solutions are otherwise possible. Identify underused commercial corridors, infill projects, and transition areas are important to create middle housing opportunities in the future land use map.

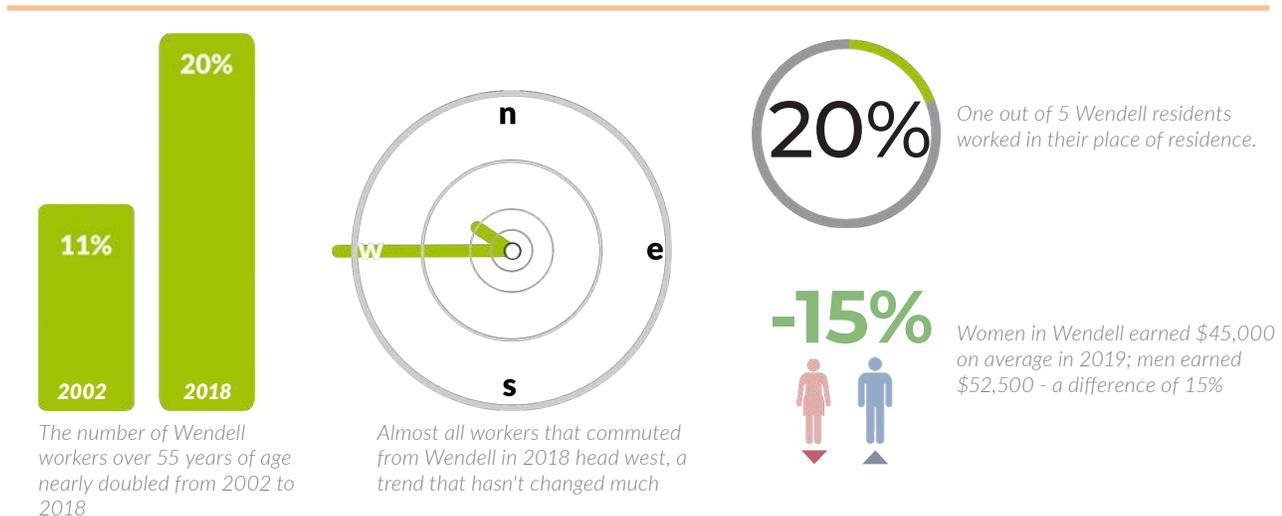


WORKING IN WENDELL

MORE PEOPLE LIVING IN WENDELL OPENS OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND ENCOURAGES NEW COMMERCIAL, MANUFACTURING, OFFICE-BASED, HEALTH, AND OTHER TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS.

Few topics receive as widespread support as that of job creation. Along with owned housing, a career path is a cornerstone of American wealth creation and self-sufficiency. People living in Wendell have seen a sea change in where they work: in 2002, 15% of the population was employed in the manufacturing sector. By 2018, that figure had fallen to under 5% and been replaced by health care employment (over 15% in 2018) and a variety of professional, real estate, and other trades. Wendell's workforce is aging: 20% of Wendell workers were over 55 in 2018.

Wendell has opportunities to expand a great variety of work options, with interchange-style retail development, downtown co-working, and health care, industrial / manufacturing, and increasingly popular teleworking from home. Raleigh and the Research Triangle Park (RTP) areas remain major job attractors, containing over 50% of Wendell's workers with the result that nearly one-third of Wendell's workers travel at least 25 miles to work one-way. Ideal businesses support the needs of the town's residents, which is the subject of the next page.



Major employers in Wendell include Wake County Public Schools, grocery chains, government services, package delivery (USPS, UPS, FedEx), banks, and some individual operators like Kioti Tractor. Employees are attracted to Wendell by proximity to major urban and job centers (Raleigh, RTP) and

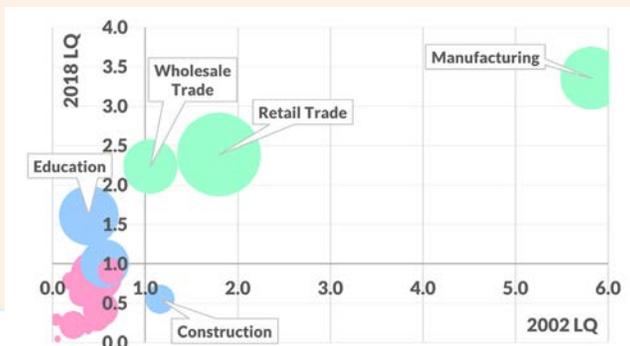
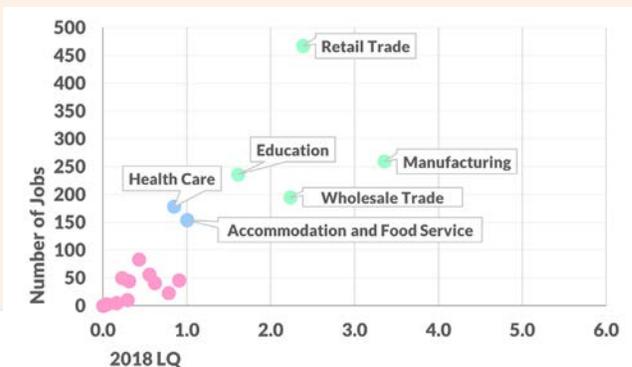
a transportation system that gets them there reliably, including Interstate and US Highway accessibility. The Wendell Economic Development Plan cites supporting existing businesses; creating a vibrant, connected downtown; infill opportunities; and industry targeting as primary development strategies.

We're
HIRING

THE MARKETPLACE WE HAVE AND THE ONE WE WANT

While the U.S. Census makes studying work-related trips easy, those trips only account for about 25% of the total number of trips the average household makes in a day, week, or year. Many of the other trips are to procure goods (groceries) or services (childcare). Here we study ways that land use and transportation demand are connected by developing internal suppliers.

A Location Quotient (LQ) is simply a representation of the relative importance of the jobs in one industry in a smaller area (Wendell) to a larger area (Wake County). A value of less than 1.0 indicates that the industry is something that is traveled to from Wendell and could be developed successfully locally; a number greater than 1.0 indicates that Wendell has more than its share of that type of job and may even be an "exporter" to other places.



2018 Location Quotient. The chart on the left is a simple LQ for Wendell/Wake County for 2018. Manufacturing, Construction, Wholesale Trade, and Education are all jobs that Wendell has more of relatively speaking than Wake County; we likely provide these services to others outside of Wendell. The jobs represented by blue dots are important because there are a lot of them in Wendell, but about the same proportionally as Wake County. The cluster of red dots at bottom-right represent growth opportunities, and include Arts/Entertainment, Real Estate, and Professional and Administrative jobs.

2002 to 2018 Location Quotient Comparison. The graph at right shows BOTH 2002 (horizontal axis) and 2018 (vertical) location quotients, with the size of the bubble representing the number of 2018 jobs in Wendell (bigger bubble, more jobs). This allows a view of change. For example, Manufacturing is nearly 6.0 in 2002 and dropped to (a still very respectable) value of 3.5 in 2018. This means either Wendell got more of these jobs or Wake County lost them faster than Wendell (in this case the latter is true).



PAST **PLANS** & RELEVANCY ○ ○ ○

PAST PLANNING DOCUMENTS PROVIDE VALUABLE INSIGHT AND BACKGROUND ON THE COMMUNITY AND HAVE INFLUENCED THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAN. THE FOLLOWING PLANS WERE REVIEWED EARLY IN THE PLANNING PROCESS AS THEY RELATE TO EXISTING CONDITIONS AND FUTURE NEEDS FOR THE TOWN.

2007

2014

2016

2017

Comprehensive Plan

- Transportation Network improvement and policy changes/additions
- Ensure housing choices
- Mixed-Use development and walkable neighborhoods
- Economic development enhancement
- Design standards
- Improvements in downtown

Northeast Area Study

- Bikeway along Wendell Falls Parkway, Wendell Boulevard and US 64 towards Zebulon
- Greenway addition east of US 64 to Zebulon
- Buffalo Creek Greenway north to Rolesville
- Short greenway connections around schools and parks
- Express bus route
- Commuter rail service

Arterial Plan

- Intersection improvements, roadway widening projects, and new-location roadway projects
- Traffic Improvements in new development areas

Pedestrian Plan

Specific sidewalk, intersection, landscaping, and multi-use path additions and improvements that improve walkability, enhance safety, and enhance the Town's economic position.

THE BLUEPRINT WENDELL 2030 PLAN SHOULD GUIDE THE TOWN FORWARD DURING A PERIOD OF RAPID CHANGE. PAST TRENDS FOR GROWTH ARE LIKELY TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY EXCEEDED IN THE NEXT TEN YEARS.

2019

2021

Economic Strategic Plan

- Create vibrant downtown
- New library
- Develop infrastructure plan
- Water and sewer additions
- Transportation improvements prioritized based on Economic Development
- Parks and Recreation plan implementation
- Improve greenways
- Improve tourism
- Improve local events

Parks & Recreation Plan

- Need for connectivity
- Desired neighborhood parks
- About 75% of those surveyed say they have traveled outside of Wendell to reach a park
- Greenways, walkways and programs cited as top needs

Northeast Area Study

The NEAS Update Project is focusing again on transportation, and transportation-land use relationships. Emphasizing public transportation more than its predecessor, the project also identified some connections in the northwest quadrant of Town. An updated Policy Guide was also completed, and could be referenced extensively going forward for generating ideas in Wendell. CAMPO, the sponsor of the study, is also likely to encourage and reward communities that preserve the transportation system through better access management, multi-modal design, and land use that accommodates modes other than single-occupancy vehicles.

Blueprint Wendell 2030

The timeline and major tasks for this project, a major update to the 2007 *Comprehensive Plan*, are those shown below.

- Initiation (02.20)
- Data Collection (10.20)
- Public Outreach (throughout)
- Existing Conditions (12.20)
- Draft Plan (10.21)
- Final Plan (06.22)

PRESENT

The Blueprint Wendell 2030 Plan has to respect the **many influences that are shaping its trajectory**: population growth, an expanding set of employment opportunities, and **changes to both internal and external demographics, technologies, and lifestyles**. The present is filled with opportunity, and this is reflected in **demographic trends, adopted plans, resources, and infrastructure** as described in the following pages.





PLANNING AHEAD IS IMPORTANT

...BUT WHY?

Planning is important to different places for different reasons. The project team spent so much time gathering information from survey-takers, stakeholders, residents, and the Steering Committee was to accurately calibrate the plan to respond to this very question.

In Wendell, planning should safeguard the things the community values, such as the neighborhoods, the parks and open spaces, the historic properties, the people, our livelihoods, and our quality of life - all the things that caused people to move, or move back, and stay here in the first place. This response implies that the inverse is also true: planning should help mitigate or avoid the negative impacts of future growth and development. Instead, future development should open living opportunities for people of different means to work in different kinds of professions that strengthen the town, contribute to services that everyone can enjoy, enhance the town's appearance, and generally create more of the things we want to see without creating too much of the things we don't want to see.

Through the planning process, the community examines the relationships between land uses, local economy, transportation, utilities, recreation, resource conservation, and community health, and seeks to set goals for the future. A plan establishes a path forward that is understood and endorsed by the local citizenry. The successful process reveals and protects what the community values and leverages these assets for positive economic growth. The process also should honestly address challenges faced by the community and then seize opportunities as they arise.

The authority to plan is granted to local governments by the state. Unlike some other states, plans in NC are policy guides, and are not legally binding. But they are typically implemented by land development ordinances. Plans inform a wide variety of local government activities, particularly decisions about public investments.

The most common uses of the plan are for development approvals, marketing, and investment decisions. As we discussed previously, the plan informs decisions about development and redevelopment. It also serves as a compelling marketing tool, conveying the opportunities to potential investors. This is especially important in retaining and attracting employers and their employees. Through the plan, the Town can instill confidence so folks will choose to live here and locate businesses within the community. Some of that confidence is built with the implementation of the plan. With investments in infrastructure, services, and amenities, the Town can demonstrate its commitment to the plan and to improving the quality of life in the community.

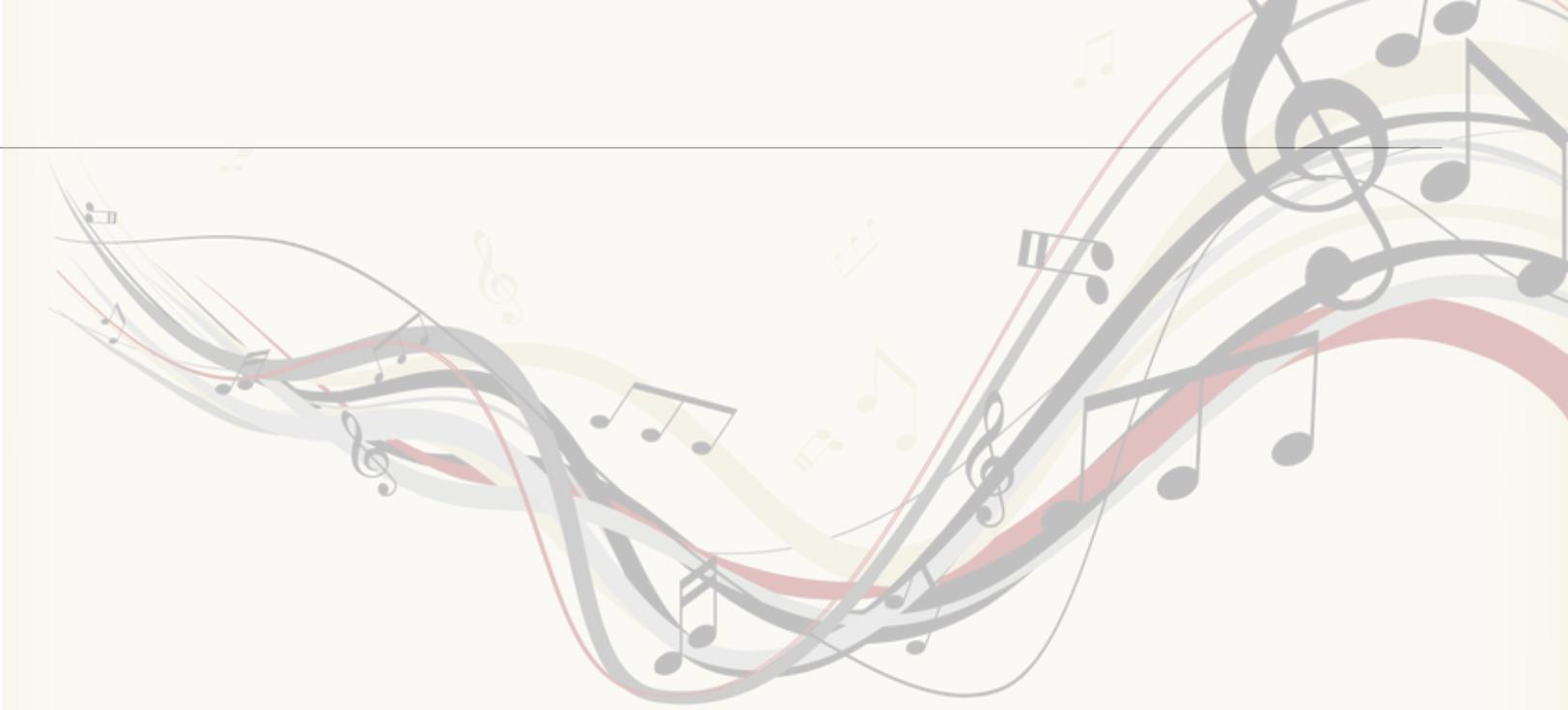
- The chambered nautilus symbolizes stages of evolution.
- Wendell, like the shell, will grow out from its center over time. Unlike the animal within, the Town will not leave the old behind as we "stretch" into the new. Instead, downtown will be elevated as the social and cultural center of the community. Through future growth, the Town will strengthen and enhance the core area and surround it with complementary neighborhoods and centers that expand opportunities to live, work, and play in Wendell.

The Chambered Nautilus (part)

*...Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more....*

- Oliver Wendell Holmes





There are six objectives of all community planning processes and the resulting plans that help communities sing from the same sheet of music to achieve their goals.

1

The first is framing issues and opportunities. By defining them, we can create a “snapshot” of what’s happening today to move forward with purpose.

2

We can then focus on what we want for the future of the community. We need a clear view of that future condition. We can all move in the same direction if we’re working toward a shared vision.

4

The plan, which has detailed recommendations and implementation strategies, should serve as a guide in all decision-making. This is especially important when Town leaders are faced with decisions about development approvals and the use of tax revenue for capital investments, such as utilities to support desired development or parks and other public amenities to improve the quality of life in the community.

3

The plan should also have everyone singing from the same sheet of music, so to speak. By communicating what the community wants and how to achieve it, all department and partner agencies can coordinate efforts to maximize available resources.

5

When pursuing grants, the adopted plan can increase chances of obtaining funding. It can strengthen the application by demonstrating the Town’s commitment to specific improvements.

6

Finally, the plan is a step toward compliance with State statutes... among other things, an up-to-date plan is required as a foundation for local land development regulations, such as zoning and rezoning decisions that are required to align with the Plan’s future land uses.



DEMOGRAPHICS

PEOPLE ARE ATTRACTED TO WENDELL BECAUSE OF THE PROXIMITY TO MAJOR CITIES AND THE SMALL TOWN CHARM. WENDELL IS ONE OF THE FASTEST-GROWING MUNICIPALITIES IN CENTRAL NORTH CAROLINA.

A critical part of the Plan was to understand the context of Wendell, in part through an analysis of data relevant to facts and issues facing the Town today and in the future. This understanding can lead to strategies to address future issues that arise from growth

and changing - sometimes rapidly changing - contexts. Survey information collected from the public is presented throughout the document.



POVERTY

According to the 2018 American Community Survey, nearly 20% of the population is considered to be living at or below the federal poverty level. Affordable housing is important to consider for disadvantaged communities.



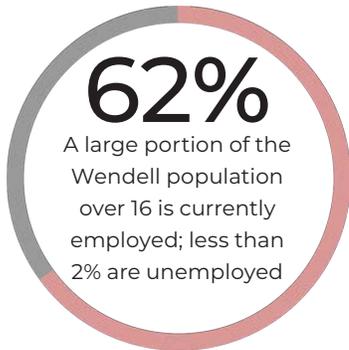
VEHICLE AVAILABILITY

Census data reports that 99% of Wendell's households have access to a vehicle. Alternative means of transportation and accessibility are critical factors to consider for integrating development and mobility needs of Wendell's citizens.

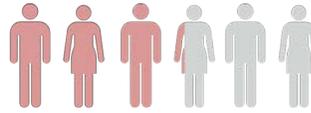
PEOPLE AND WEALTH (NEXT PAGE)

While affordability regularly appears as a reason people choose to live in Wendell, there are substantial variations in the population densities and wealth of residents of Wendell compared to nearby towns. Rolesville's median housing cost is nearly twice that of Wendell, while there appears to be little or no relationship between population density and wealth or housing costs.

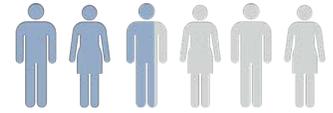
The unemployment rates in Wendell are low, and slightly lower than in nearby communities



54% FEMALE

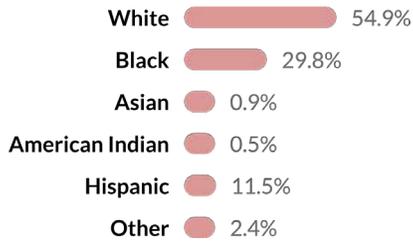


46% MALE



+86%

Population increase from 2000 to 2018

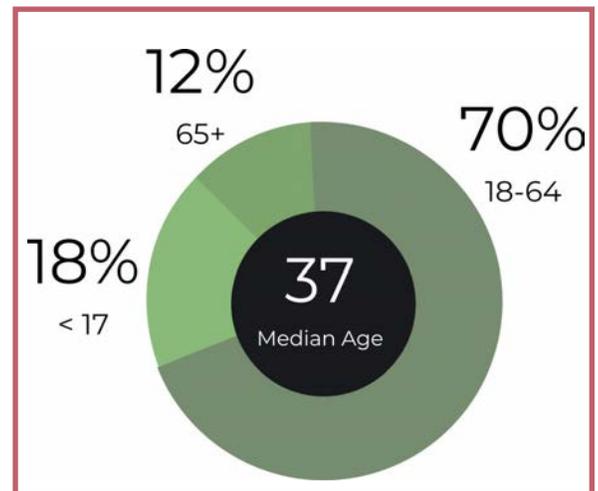


Wendell is diverse culturally, ethnically, and racially



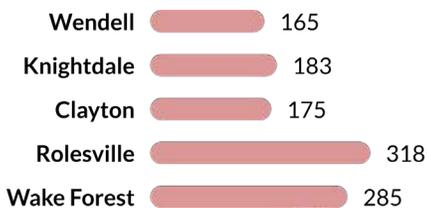
HOMELIFE

The average household size in Wendell is 2.74 persons, slightly lower than or similar to nearby communities like Rolesville, Knightdale, and Clayton. About 13.5% of households have at least one person living with a disability, the highest percent of any of the nearby towns. Median household income has increased by nearly a third from 2010 to 2018 (\$62,651).



WENDELL HAS A MORE YOUTHFUL POPULATION COMPARED TO SEVERAL NEARBY COMMUNITIES

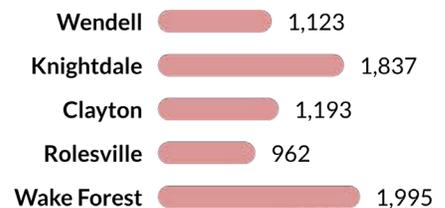
For-Sale Home Costs (\$1,000s)



Percent Living in Poverty



Population Density (person per square mile)





NATURAL & CULTURAL ASSETS

The area in and around Wendell is rich in pristine green pastures, tall trees, and open spaces that provide an enjoyable setting while walking or driving through Town. The Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of programs for citizens of all ages and abilities; events like the Fourth of July 4th Parade and Winter Wonderland; and high-quality facilities and parks. The town maintains 140 acres of parkland within the planning area. The centerpiece of the system is Wendell Park, which is also the location of the Community Center. Baseball fields, tennis courts and more than two miles of walking trails are among the amenities at this recreation destination. A 2019 *Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan* calls for a new community park to address the growing need for the expansion of athletic programming; three neighborhood parks to make recreational amenities more accessible to a higher percentage of the current and future residents; and a splash pad downtown to activate and add more vibrancy to the heart of the community.

The Hugh T. Moody trail (right) includes a two-mile walking trail, utilizing protected areas of the floodplain along Buffalo Creek offering a shady walk among many species of plants and trees. Three creeks in the study area include Buffalo Creek in the center of the study area, and the Little River to the east. Much of the area along Buffalo Creek is preserved for open space and include planned greenway connections. The southern portions of the study area along Lake Myra Road have also been preserved as open space to preserve, protect, maintain, and improve quality of life.



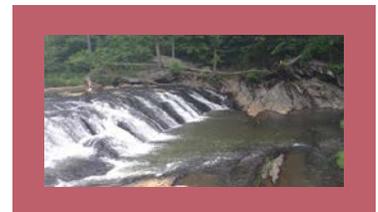
New development and redevelopment affect the environment. Future planning must include ways to protect and improve existing natural resources while improving the area. The Capital Area Preservation (CAP) non-profit organization is responsible for establishing two National Register districts in Wendell and has helped the Wendell Historical Society designate the Hales-Tunnell-Bunn House, the M.C. and Martha Todd House, and the R.B. Whitley House as historic landmarks.

IT'S IN OUR NATURE

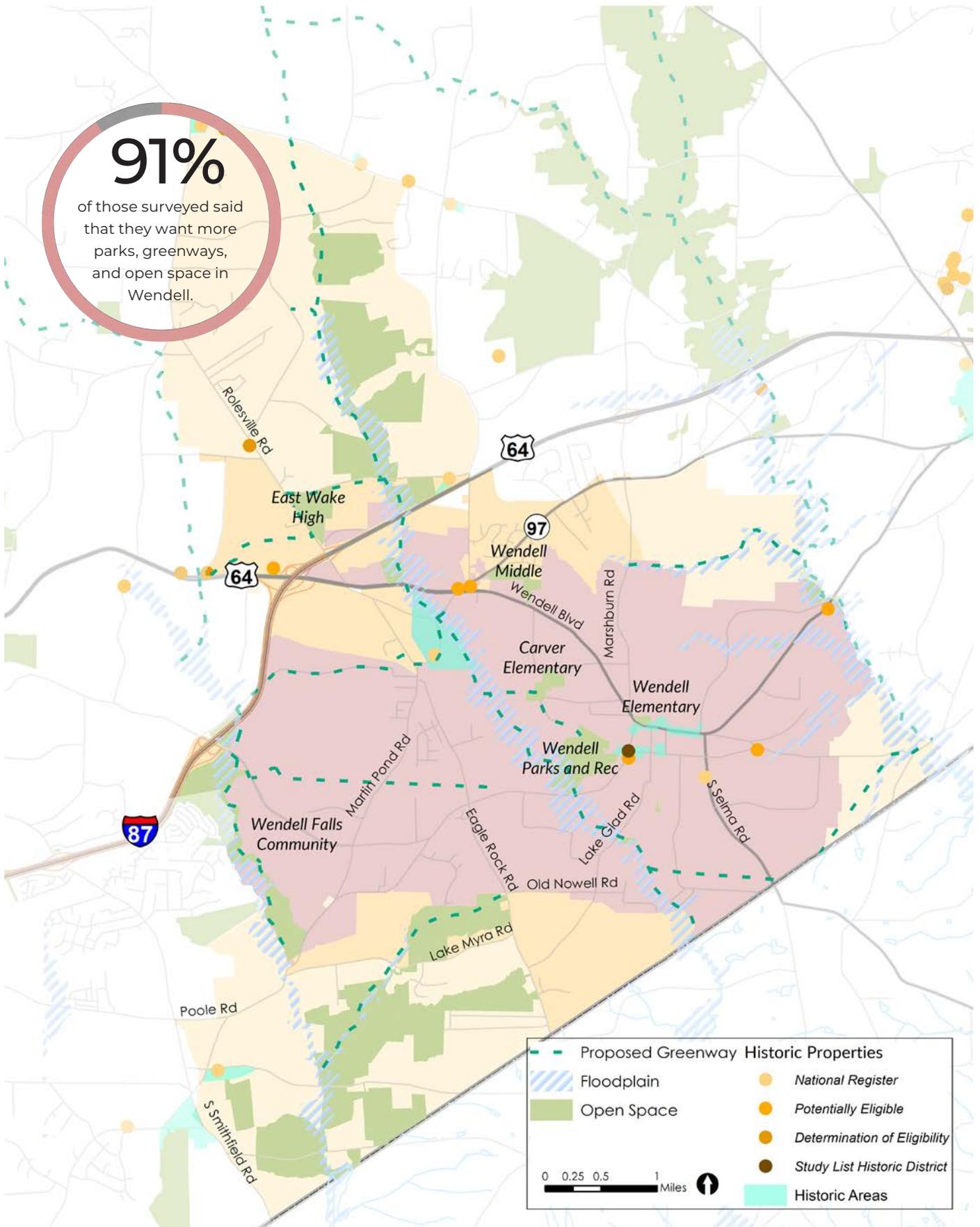


Robertson Millpond Reserve was integral to a 600-acre farm and a gristmill. The dam and remaining foundation of the mill have been designated a Wake County Historic Landmark. The reserve has been identified by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program as a significant natural area and a "wetland treasure," acknowledging the presence of high-quality swamp forest as well as the only bald cypress habitat in Wake County. Approximately 70 bird species inhabit the swamp forest around Robertson Millpond. The forest is has a dense canopy comprised of bald cypress, sweetgum, swamp chestnut oak, and red maple trees.

South of town, **Turnipseed Nature Preserve** is "a significant natural area in Wake County as part of the larger Marks Creek area" by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. Visitors enjoy the granite outcroppings, forests, and wildlife of this preserve, which is located in a transitional area between the Coastal Plain and the Piedmont regions of North Carolina. The granite of the Rolesville batholith, which was formed about 300 million years ago, is accessible in the Turnipseed Nature Preserve.



91%
 of those surveyed said
 that they want more
 parks, greenways,
 and open space in
 Wendell.



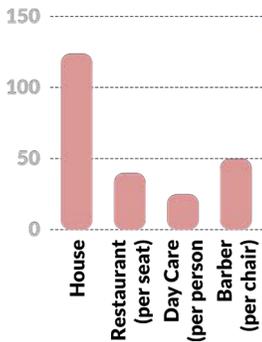
Environmental Features Map



UTILITIES

WATER, SEWER, TRAVEL, AND COMMUNICATION INFRASTRUCTURE

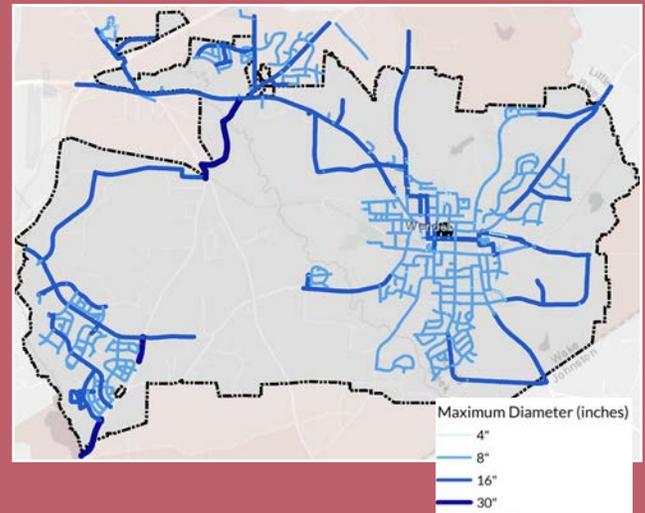
Water and sewer infrastructure play key roles in the continued development and economic health of Wendell. The *Blueprint Wendell 2030 Plan* will employ typical consumption figures for houses and commercial properties to help tie future land use recommendations back to supply, which is governed by Wendell's utility service agreement with the City of Raleigh. Conversations with Raleigh Utilities indicates that no capacity issues are on the horizon.



Typical Water Usage
Gallons per Day (gpd)

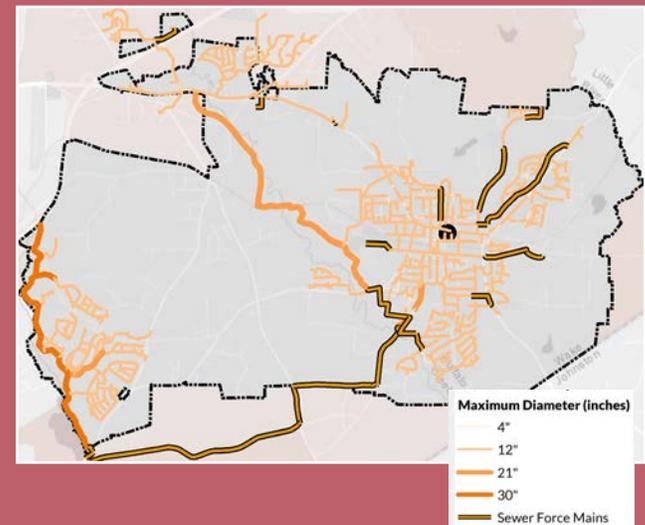
Water

The map to the right illustrates the location and sizing of water mains inside the current Town of Wendell limits. Note the gap along Wendell Falls Parkway in the center of town.



Sewer

The map to the right shows both the gravity and force (pumped) sewage lines within Wendell. A 30" gravity main does traverse Eagle Rock Road north-south, but the gap between that line and the Wendell Falls community is still prominent.



It is now nearly impossible to consider transportation in the absence of Internet-enabled technology. Apps on smartphones tell us when the bus will arrive, that the Lyft vehicle is five minutes away, and the best route to take whether driving, walking, or riding a bicycle. These trends will accelerate, merging different travel modes into a more seamless realm of transportation possibilities where shared vehicles, services, and parking become the norm.

Only about 4% of Wendell workers commute to jobs in town and the work-from-home trend (and meet-from-home, dine-from-home, etc.) became stronger during a pandemic-induced lockdown. Some of these cultural shifts showed the vulnerability of our transportation system to freight disruptions and the potential for having smaller warehousing / distribution facilities in and near town.

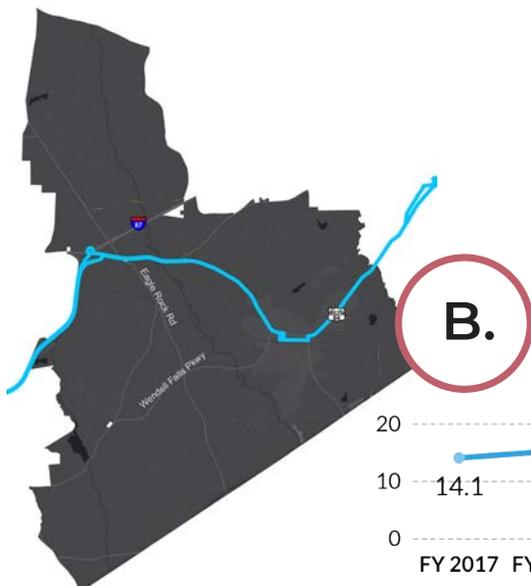


A.

INTERNET ACCESS AND SPEEDS. Nearly all of the Wendell planning area has access to 500+mgb / second download speeds; access from certain locations may be more spotty or have fewer providers.

B.

Transit Service. Fixed-route service (on-demand service for eligible populations is also available) is provided by GoRaleigh and the ZWX express from the East 4th Street/Main Street park-and-ride lot.



TRAVEL PATTERNS. Most (93%) workers living in Wendell tend to travel in their own car to work, most of them alone. Wendell has one bus stop for an express route operated by GoRaleigh that provides service to and from WakeMed and Raleigh daily for \$3 one way. This reliance on one mode of transportation has resulted in an average travel time to work of almost 26 minutes. Wendell-based workers traveling less than 10 miles to work fell by 35% between 2002 and 2017, while those traveling between 25 and 50 miles rose by 50%. Women drive, on average, five minutes longer to work than males living in Wendell.

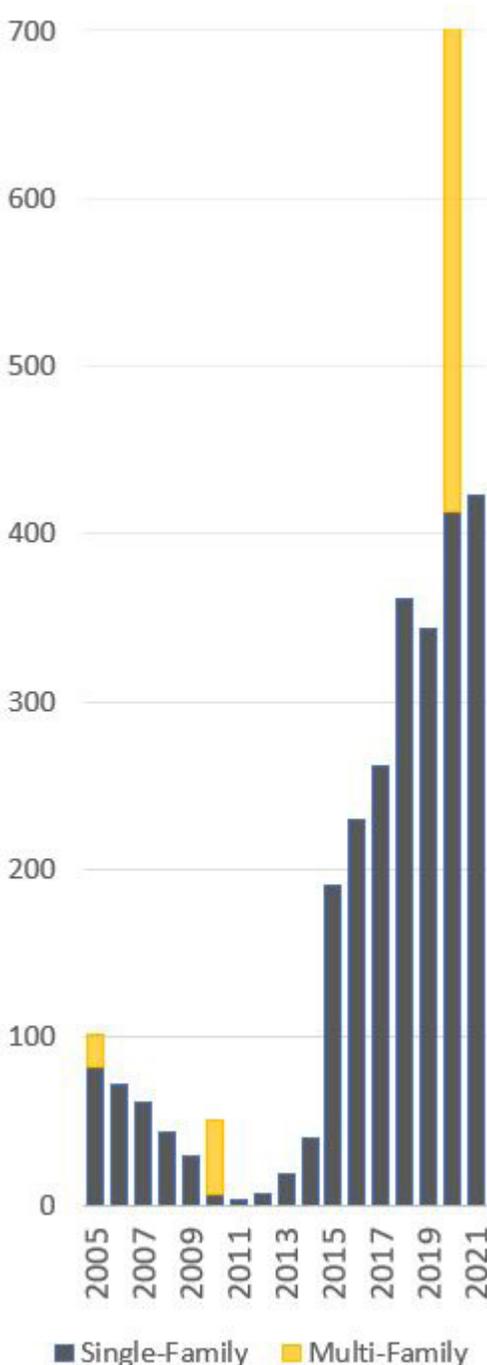


ZWX Ridership, FY 2017-2019 (000s)



LAND & DEVELOPMENT

DEMAND FOR AND SUPPLY OF LAND



Residential and Non-Residential Building Permits, 2005 - 2021

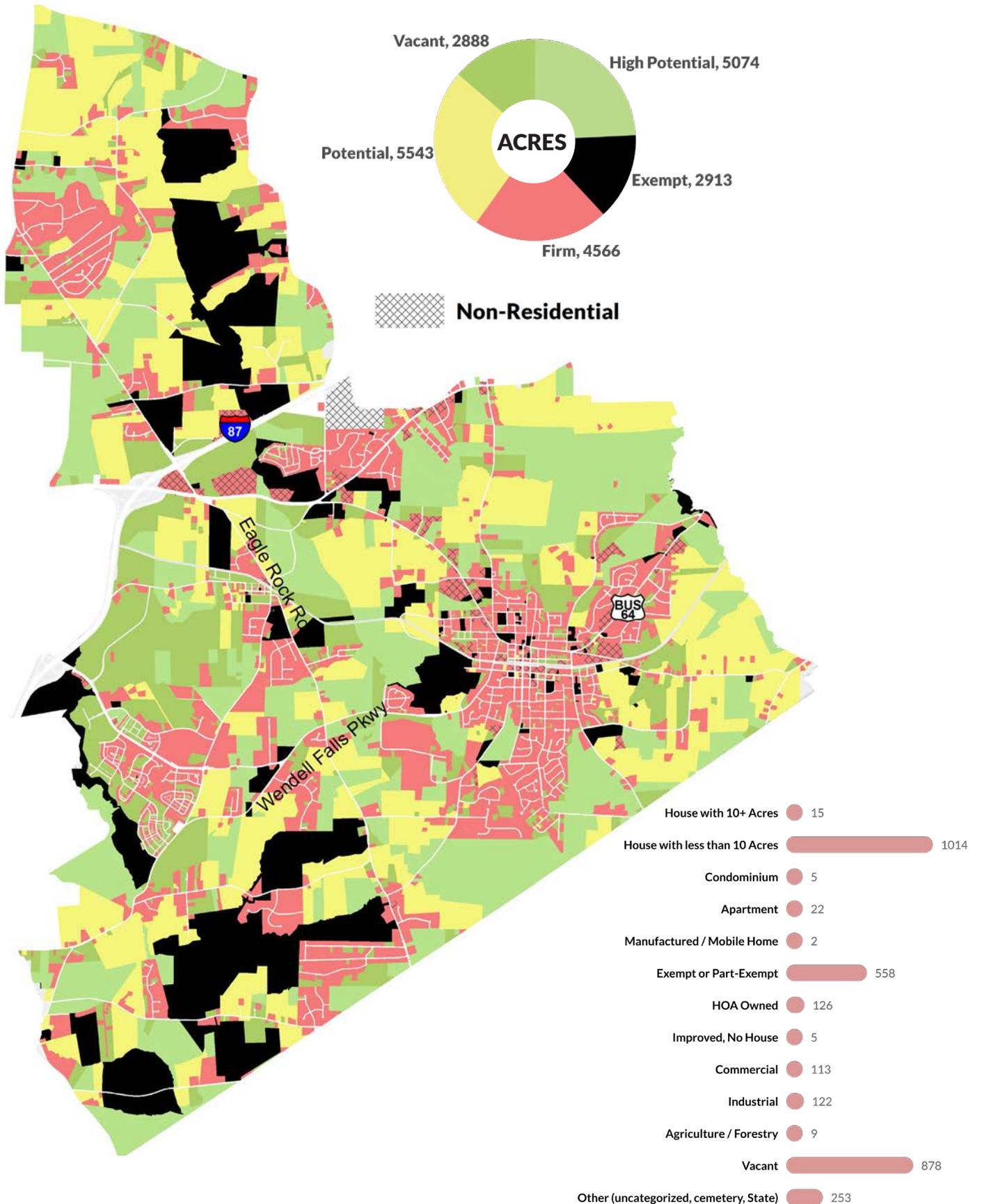
DEMAND. Wendell is a fast-growing town in a fast-growing state. Larger macroeconomic forces, affordable land prices, and proximity to regional destinations like Research Triangle Park (RTP), Raleigh-Durham International Airport (RDU), and other large employers around the Raleigh urban area will continue to foster growth. Residential permits have increased each year since 2014. Commercial and non-residential uses have lagged behind residential growth, particularly since 2014.

SUPPLY. Land is Wendell's most precious resource, irreplaceable and increasing in value. It is estimated that 13,500 acres in Wendell are vacant or have the potential to redevelop to a more-intense use. Lands classified as "High Potential" for redevelopment include agricultural lands without a building on them now. Lands with "Potential" for redevelopment include other agricultural lands, residential lots greater than 10 acres in size, and lots with manufactured homes. Some lands are unlikely to be redeveloped, like schools, churches, preserved areas, and government facilities.

THE FUTURE. This study forecasted between 714 and 1,408 housing units would be needed through 2030 based on past trends, but recent growth in building permits and planned units greatly exceeds those figures. Accommodation, food service, retail, and health care are promising future employment areas and show a relative deficit compared to Wake County as a whole.

| Industry | Wendell Employees (2017) | L.Q. (Wake Co. baseline) | Average Annual Wages | Jobs Added by 2030 |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Public Administration | 50 | 3.4 | \$33,000 | 43 |
| Educational Services | 243 | 1.8 | \$35,000 | 628 |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical | 60 | 1.6 | \$39,000 | 99 |
| Construction | 138 | 1.4 | \$29,000 | 184 |
| Manufacturing | 268 | 1.4 | \$28,000 | -21 |
| Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation | 7 | 1.1 | \$19,000 | 140 |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 138 | 1.0 | \$13,000 | 1207 |
| Retail Trade | 447 | 0.7 | \$21,000 | 654 |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 1 | 0.6 | \$38,000 | 17 |
| Information | 8 | 0.6 | \$30,000 | -17 |
| Other Services (except Pub. Admin.) | 41 | 0.5 | \$20,000 | 117 |
| Finance and Insurance | 45 | 0.4 | \$49,000 | 169 |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 196 | 0.3 | \$33,000 | 994 |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | 24 | 0.2 | \$25,000 | 188 |
| Administrative, Support, Waste Management, Remediation | 41 | 0.2 | \$20,000 | 238 |
| Wholesale Trade | 202 | 0.1 | \$42,000 | 88 |

Employment (2017) in Wendell, showing wages, location quotient compared to Wake County (greater than 1.0 indicates surplus of jobs in that sector), and forecasted jobs to be added by 2030 based on trends.



Existing Land Availability in Wendell, Acres

The Value of Land. Continuing to think about land supply, as population growth continues in Wendell competition for land for new development will increase, promoting rising property values on land that is available for development. Parcels that have been part of an agricultural heritage are quickly converting to new neighborhoods and the shops, restaurants, and schools to meet the needs of new residents. At least 28% of the land within the planning area is classified as “vacant” or undeveloped. However, a portion of that land is unsuited to development due to environmental constraints or insufficient infrastructure, and some parcels are permanently protected through conservation easements or public park designations. The remaining land could be considered available for future development. The combination of these areas and properties that are “ripe” for redevelopment total roughly 13,500 acres of land (65% of land area) have potential or high potential for future development or redevelopment.

Development Pattern. Until recently, the planning area has remained a relatively undeveloped area of Wake County. The upgrade of US 64 that is now part of the I-87 corridor between Raleigh and Virginia, has made Wendell more accessible. It is a 20-minute commute to downtown Raleigh and 30 minutes to Research Triangle Park. This accessibility, combined with rising housing prices in the rest of Wake County, has led to increased interest in residential development to accommodate newcomers. One aspect of the development pattern that is evident in the mapping of land uses across the planning area is the presence of three hubs of activity: the existing downtown and two emerging centers at along Wendell Falls Boulevard and the interchange of I-87 and Rolesville Road. While the three will likely have a similar mix of uses, the function, scale, and service area of each will be distinctly different. The likely buildout of each should result in three complementary centers.

Character Areas. The existing land use map (opposite page) displays land use categories based on data from the Wake County Tax Administration office. This generalized depiction of the development pattern does not reveal the variation in development character across the planning area. For example, commercial development in downtown is not distinguished from the commercial establishments at the edges of Wendell, though they differ in terms of scale, circulation, open space, and architectural materials. Differences in residential neighborhoods are also apparent though they are classified the same way. Single-family homes in the historic core of the community, for instance, tend to be situated on lots that are relatively large compared to the small lots of the newly-constructed single-family homes on the western edge of the planning area.

Recent Development Activity. Most of the recent development activity in the last decade has occurred in the western part of the planning area. The average number of building permits issued annually has increased. In 2019, there were 623 residential housing permits issued, falling to 189 in 2020. The number in 2021 is expected to exceed that of the prior year by as much as a factor of two. In addition to new construction, investors are changing the development patterns in Wendell with redevelopment, infill development, and the adaptive reuse of existing structures, particularly in and near downtown. So, while 75% of the building permits issued in 2019 were for new construction of homes or commercial buildings, almost one-fourth were for permits to expand or renovate existing buildings.

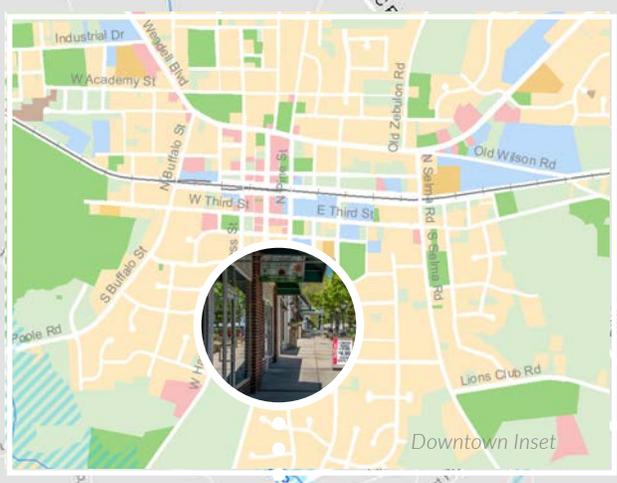
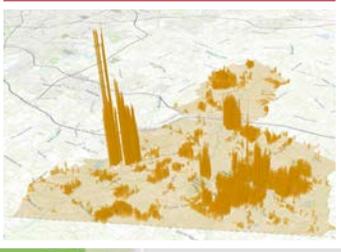
Quality of Life & Development. *Wendell's development pattern and styles impact services and opportunities in many different ways. Below are three examples of how Wendell's place in the region (provision of public services), its own cultural leanings (public arts), and the kinds of people we're attracting (advanced educational opportunities) are impacting what happens here.*

1 Education at Every Age. *The Wake County Public School System operates three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school within the planning area. The quality of the educational programs is attracting more families to the area. In 2015, the Wendell Magnet Elementary School was the recipient of a national merit award. One charter school and one private school expand the options for K-12 education within the community. Higher education is also expanding in Wendell. In 2020, Wake Technical Community College announced its plans for a new campus in Wendell. Advancing “technology-forward” education and workforce development programs, this campus will help facilitate “the convergence of machines and processes with information and communications technology.” Wake County Public Libraries (WCPL) has more than 20 facilities in its system, including the Wendell Community Library located in downtown Wendell. In addition to reading materials, this branch offers free WiFi, access to public computers, and printing services. Consistent with the WCPL mission, the library serves the community as a center for lifelong learning for all ages.*

2 Health and Safety. *The planning area is served by the Wendell Fire Department, which is not operated by the Town but funded in part by the Wake County Fire Tax paid by Wendell residents. With three stations staffed 24 hours a day, the Department answers fire, rescue, and medical emergency calls in the Town of Wendell and the surrounding areas. Wendell's Police Department will be getting a renovated new location for their offices. Additionally, the Wake County Department of Emergency Medical Services is responsible for providing paramedic-level EMS in the Wendell community and throughout Wake County.*

3 Arts & Entertainment. *Through food, music, and various forms of art, we continue to come together as a community. Our connections are strengthened by events and art installations, especially those that celebrate the local cultural traditions, and help build a sense of place and community pride.*

Land value is increasing with rising demand to find developable land, which is uneven throughout Town (map: price per acre 2020)



Unique two-story commercial buildings create a defining edge along Main Street, whereas auto-oriented retail has typically dominated development patterns at interchange areas

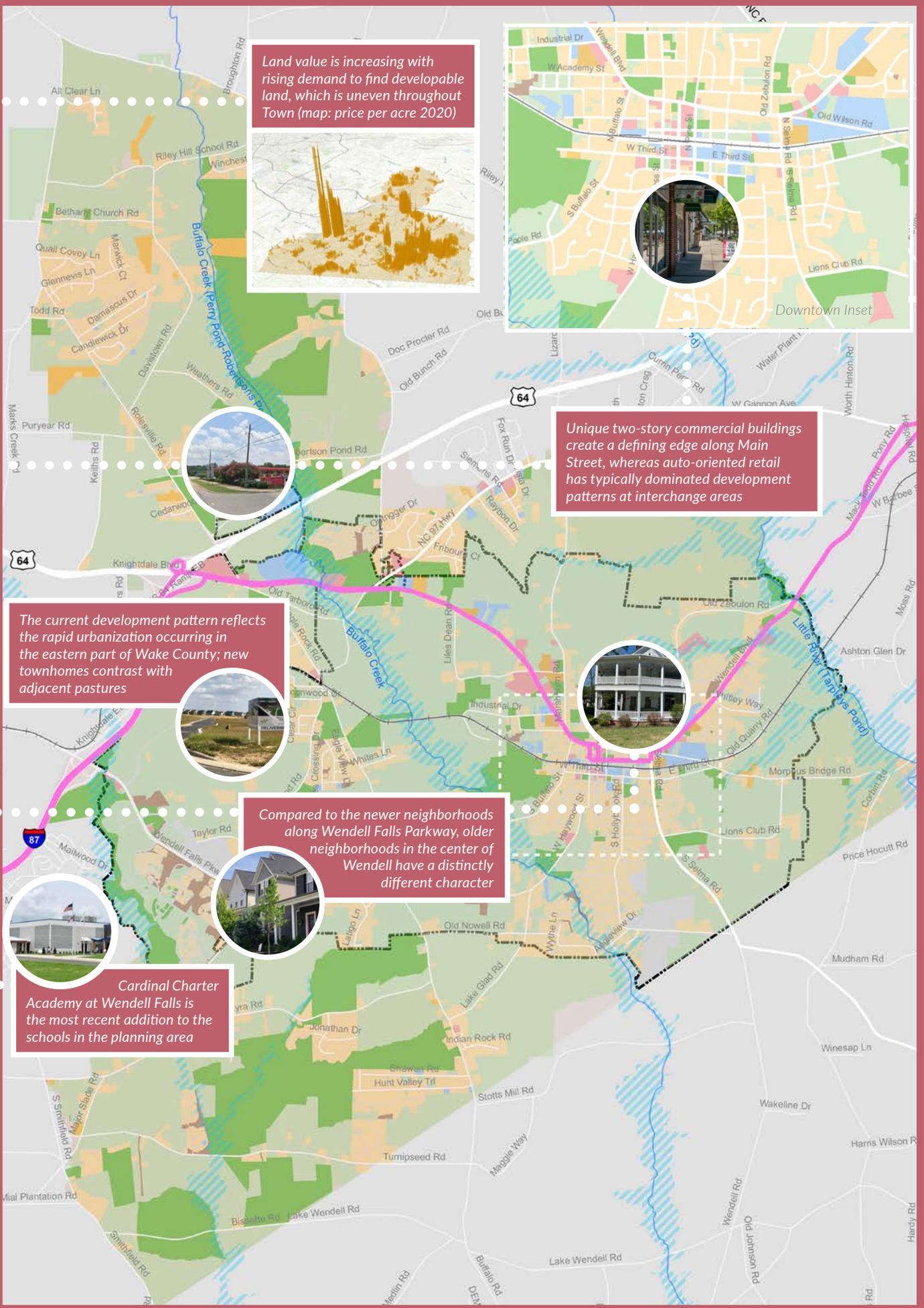
The current development pattern reflects the rapid urbanization occurring in the eastern part of Wake County; new townhomes contrast with adjacent pastures



Compared to the newer neighborhoods along Wendell Falls Parkway, older neighborhoods in the center of Wendell have a distinctly different character



Cardinal Charter Academy at Wendell Falls is the most recent addition to the schools in the planning area





ENGAGING EVERYONE

A NECESSARY PART OF TAILORING A PLAN AND RECOMMENDATIONS IS BEING AN ACTIVE LISTENER. BLUEPRINT WENDELL 2030 WAS FORMED BY PUBLIC INPUT; FEEDBACK FROM STAKEHOLDERS AND A DEDICATED STEERING COMMITTEE; AND INTERPRETING WHAT'S HAPPENING LOCALLY, REGIONALLY, AND NATIONALLY THAT WILL HAVE A BEARING ON WENDELL'S FUTURE AND THE FOLKS WHO WILL BE HERE IN THE FUTURE.

Images

*bottom-left: July 4th 2021 parade saw people regathering after a long period of isolation
top-right: June 9th public workshop, and cake
top-left: project website, updated over 25 times over the course of the project*

Welcome to the **Blueprint Wendell 2030**

The Town of Wendell is updating its Comprehensive Plan to meet the needs of the next 10 years. This site provides information regarding the Plan and how you can help develop a Plan that meets the Town's needs and desires.

 **NEW!** Couldn't make the Public Workshop on June 9th? No worries! Listen to the presentation [HERE](#)



DISCOVER

Conducted a series of town department meetings; launch first survey; advertise charrette drop-in opportunities; launch Meeting-in-a-Box; prepare and review Conditions & Directions Report with Steering Committee

INITIATE

Data collection; base mapping; create Work Plan; define three concept areas for detailed study; initiate and complete preliminary market position study. Formed the Steering Committee and launched the project website with polling questions.



2030 Comprehensive
help guide development
how residents of Wendell
Check back often for

9th?

1> The global
and local
additional
retail e
that w
feeling



ADOPT
Reviews
by Town
Boards and
project website
updates and
comments

DISCUSS

Conduct three-day charrette; update project website; conduct additional focus groups; launch land use survey; prepare first version of future draft land use plan map and related policies

REFINE

Prepare draft plan document elements for Staff and Steering Committee review; conduct public workshop (June 9, 2021); review all comments and iteratively revise draft plan

charrette

a charrette is a focused collaboration of the project team and stakeholders to drive a project forward

A three-day virtual design charrette was held in March 2021 with on-line interviews and presentations. In June, a public workshop was conducted with five stations taking input from the approximately 25 participants that showed up in person, with an **equivalent experience created on-line on the project website (www.BlueprintWendell2030.com)**.

These events informed land use directions, overarching policies, and specific comments that helped shape the recommendations.



OCT
2020

JUN
2021

APR
2022

WE HEARD YOU....

A BIG PART OF A GREAT PLAN IS GETTING AS MUCH INPUT AS POSSIBLE...AND THEN USING IT TO HELP REFINE THE UNDERSTANDING OF ISSUES, POINT THE WAY TOWARDS RECOMMENDATIONS, AND ESTABLISH WHICH STRATEGIES TO PURSUE FIRST.

The Wendell Blueprint 2030 Plan used a lot of on-line techniques, including surveys and interactive mapping, as well as focus groups to get at this all-important information and insight.

If you could change one thing about Wendell, it would be...

better roads and a plan starting now to improve them ● feeling of acceptance to diversity and inclusion ● improve walkability and bikability of the town ● more restaurants ● more affordable for small businesses to open ● less bars and drinking establishments. No golf carts outside of subdivisions ● use space in downtown for new restaurants, offices, shopping ● more shopping, restaurants, especially restaurants! ● make sure new growth does not overtake downtown and surround areas or lower property values in older neighborhoods ● more sidewalks ● get from Wendell Falls to downtown safely on a bike ● more places to shop and entertain ● downtown can be upgraded and more inviting while keeping the small town friendly safe feel ● the excessive growth has caused a surge in property values. Residents on fixed incomes are struggling to maintain while paying higher tax rates for both the county and the town ● no affordable houses are being built, people are building \$240k townhomes and calling them affordable. If you are going to regulate at least make it benefit someone other than a developer ● more industrial/business development ● more restaurants and shopping. Spruce up Main Street ● more pedestrian friendly ● more non alcohol related recreational activities for adults ● yard waste pickup would go back to the way it was... ● congestion on the roads especially at Wendell Falls Pkwy/Eagle Rock and Buffalo ● we need to bridge the gap between downtown and Wendell Falls ● kindness from the people who have always lived here. They treat others like outsiders when we are all Wendell residents ● A lot of Wendell's future success, lies in town appearance and maintenance, and recruiting small businesses to our already existing infrastructure, when possible, and better utilizing the community spaces we have ● love the small town vibe ● keep small town feel without adding all the housing and restaurants ● more parks - each neighborhood should have a play area ● if it ain't broke, stop trying to fix it ● parking ● sidewalk & crosswalks on Hollybrook ● less mega neighborhoods ● we would hope to enjoy more eat-in restaurants & a few other fast food options, along with better shopping areas. However, we love the downtown charm

 **715 surveys completed** *(all surveys)*

 **60% completion rate** *(for the "big" survey)*

 **12:37 time to complete** *(for the "big" survey)*

let's hear it for the home team...



of respondents live and / or work in Wendell

... as the rookies take the field...



of resident respondents have lived here less than five years

...and play well with others...



of Wendell worker respondents have worked here less than five years

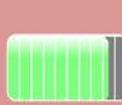
...for the love of of our game.



why respondents came to the Wendell area

58%  agree or strongly agree that **landowners should be able to do whatever they want with their land**

31%  agree or strongly agree that the **free market should determine what is best** for land & development

84%  agree or strongly agree that **new development should have to pay** for improvements to public roads, schools, and utilities that their development impacts or uses

23%  agree or strongly agree that **land use policy should restrict future growth**, even including no new development

91%  agree or strongly agree that **land use policies should protect neighborhoods** from noise, pollution, traffic, and other negative consequences of land use development

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?

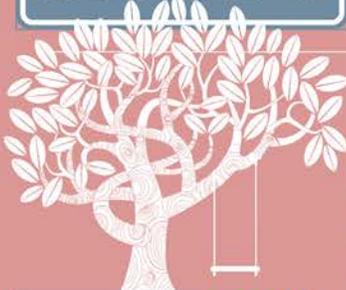


76%

SAID IT'S US:

we support the idea that "elected officials, their appointees, and staff have to make case-by-case land use policy decisions with guidance from adopted plans and the public."

DEAD END →



GO BIG & GO GREEN

TRANSPORTATION CONCERNS RANKED HIGHLY FOR MANY, FROM CONGESTION TO LOSS OF MOBILITY FOR SENIORS TO THE NEED FOR MORE TRAVEL OPTIONS.

Few issues enjoyed support as strong as the greening of Wendell, regardless of how the question was asked. About 75% gave greenway connections their highest rating; more parks/outdoor recreation and concerns about loss of open space scored very highly as well. Walking and sidewalks were important to you as ways of getting to and around Wendell.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE....

This is just a small sample of the survey input; see the full results on-line at:

WWW.BLUEPRINTWENDELL2030.COM

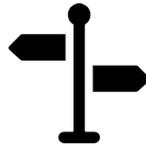


DIRECTIONS

BASED ON WHAT THE STUDY TEAM LEARNED FROM THE PUBLIC AND RESEARCH, WHAT ARE THE KEY IDEAS THAT THE FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS NEED TO EXPLORE IN BLUEPRINT WENDELL 2030?

Before getting into specific recommendations, it's important to pause and get a clear understanding of the key issues that are confronting Wendell. Albert Einstein is attributed with the saying, "If I had an hour to solve a problem I'd spend 55 minutes thinking about the problem and 5 minutes thinking about solutions." The Directions that the

recommendations should take will be based on the information the study team received from many sources, observations, and analysis. Some directions will seem more urgent than others, some will resonate more with one person than with another. But all have their basis in the understanding developed during the planning process.



DIRECTION #1. HOW DO WE GROW?

As growth continues, the town has several opportunities to direct it in a manner that benefits the town over the long term. The following three growth concepts, which complement each other, reflect the input received from the community early in the process and influenced the direction of the plan.

A. Grow from the Center

Downtown will be the social and cultural center of the community. The Town will strengthen and enhance the core area and surround it with complementary housing and commercial developments that expand opportunities to live, work, and play in Wendell.

- Downtown is the focal point and a priority for future investments (public and private)
- Surrounding areas develop in a complementary manner
- Other activity centers are self-sufficient and have their own identity
- Diversity of housing is concentrated near Downtown where services are accessible
- A local circulator as well as complete streets expand options for travel

B. Grow Green

Integrated green space becomes a primary component of the development pattern. Growth is respectful of and oriented toward the intricate, connected system of open space. Like a vine, it grows as the town grows, binding the ever-evolving community together while deepening its roots.

- Connected system of open space with equitable access
- Linear park along Buffalo Creek corridor serves as a spine along which existing and future development is organized
- More recreation opportunities – trails to connect parks
- More feasible non-motorized transportation network connects destinations in community
- Quality of life remains high, attracting desired investment

C. Grow with the Region

Wendell recognizes its role in the region and, more importantly, the opportunities of partnerships forged by building on existing, constructive relationships. Environmental, social, and economic systems are linked. When the region is successful, Wendell benefits.

- Seamless connections to neighboring communities
- Broader geography for mixed-use activity centers
- Stronger justification for transit, especially an extension of the regional system with a transit hub (Wake Technical College)
- Efficient provision of infrastructure and services result in lower taxes compared to operating in isolation



DIRECTION #2. A CENTRAL PARK

The Buffalo Creek corridor serves as a green north-south spine connecting Robertson Mill Pond Preserve to Turnipseed Nature Preserve and points in between, such as Downtown Wendell. In addition to a greenway trail, this linear park could be the location of playgrounds, outdoor music venues, public art, gardens (incl. edible gardens), and environmental educational center/kiosks.



DIRECTION #3. GREENWAYS

Create a connected system of greenways with "Central Park" long Buffalo Creek as the featured destination and central spine. Connect neighborhoods to each other, Downtown, local shops and restaurants, parks, jobs, and schools.



DIRECTION #4. LIZARD LICK

The area along Marshburn Rd. between I-87 and NC-97 is currently in Wake County's jurisdiction. Over time, this area is likely to be the focus of development pressure, especially as development restrictions are lifted in conjunction with modifications to the water supply watershed delineation. This can create a new, attractive "front door" to Wendell.



DIRECTION #5. DOWNTOWN

Downtown is the heart of the community. Even with the emergence of centers in other areas of town, Downtown Wendell should serve as the central gathering place for all residents and the cultural focal point. The combination of uses and public spaces should work in concert to support a range of activities and programming to ensure an active, vibrant destination for residents and visitors.



DIRECTION #6. ARTISTIC LICENSE

Art in its many forms, especially murals, is finding its way into the public realm. Art can be used to improve aesthetics but can also have a higher purpose, such as sharing the story of Wendell's history, creating a focal point (in Town Square, along a trail, or in a park), or welcoming visitors by marking a gateway into town. Art can also be functional (play structures, shelters, bike racks, seating, musical instruments). This is a concerted effort to create a path forward that encourages and celebrates the arts.



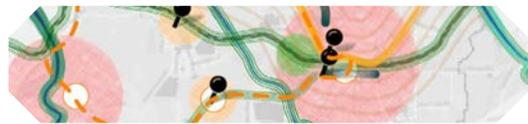
DIRECTION #7. INNOVATE

Innovation exists at the intersection of business, education, technology, and creativity. The concentration of "innovation assets" (anchor institutions, co-working spaces, accelerators, research) can contribute to the creation of collaborative spaces that are conducive to innovation, spin-off creations, and opportunities to increase and diversify the workforce.



DIRECTION #8. HOUSING CHOICE

Growing families often seek larger homes while empty nesters tend to downsize to smaller, lower-maintenance homes. Having housing choices that are sufficiently diverse helps people age in the same community as their housing needs change with each chapter of life. Staying in community can sometimes be achieved by making modifications to an existing home.



DIRECTION #9. MOBILITY CHOICE

Transportation is something we take for granted, right up until it doesn't work as expected. With 4 out of 5 Wendell commuters heading west each day, and one-third travel at least 25 miles, there is a lot that can happen. Travel in Wendell is largely not determined by others flowing in and through town. Internally, we want to have streets that reflect a closer character match, emphasizing safety and connectivity over width and speed.

FUTURE

A plan enables communities to **manage change with intent**. With a vision for the future in mind, leaders can determine **steps forward to achieve community goals**. The vision for the future of Wendell is reflected in **Goals and Objectives**, and depicted in the **Future Land Use and Conservation Map**, created with input from the community sharing their expectations and aspirations regarding the evolution of the Town. The vision is further articulated by **conceptual illustrations of key areas**, or “Focus Areas,” that demonstrate the application of land use and conservation policies. Finally, **recommendations and an action plan** are developed to implement positive changes.

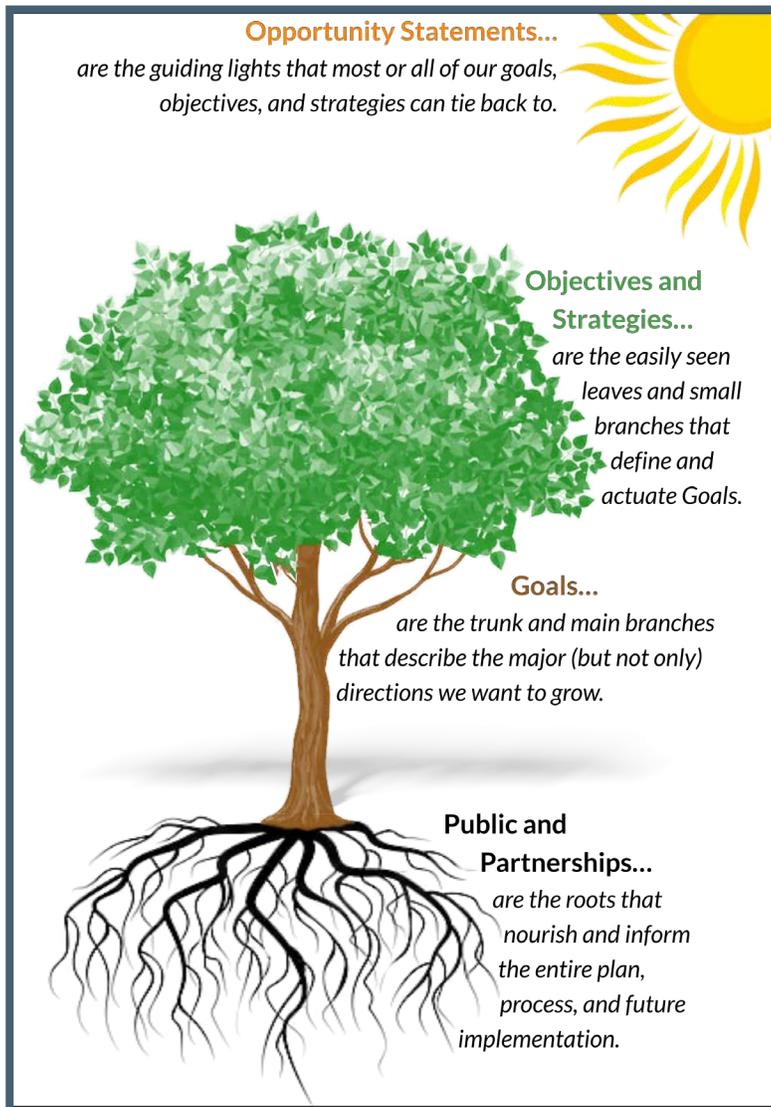




THE GOALS WE SET

THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR BLUEPRINT WENDELL 2030 WERE BASED ON THE PUBLIC OF WENDELL AND REFINED BY OUR STEERING COMMITTEE.

Vision Statements and Goals for a comprehensive plan are like guiding lights that help direct the plan and process. But goals alone won't make a plan a reality: that requires more detailed objectives, action strategies, and an implementation narrative that describes how partnerships, resources, and performance markers that describe how to get where we want to be in the future. The Goals and Objectives on the next page are sourced from the Steering Committee, Surveys, and Town's Strategic Plan.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

(next page)

The goals and objectives, which guided the development of Blueprint Wendell 2030 and shaped the Future Land Use Map, were developed with thoughtful input from the community and refined with feedback on conceptual ideas for improving Wendell as it grows and develops over time. They will continue to provide direction for the future of the planning area, informing decisions of Town leaders as they manage change over the next decade.

GOAL 1: Effective Growth Management

To support new growth with adequate infrastructure, which improves the quality of life for residents and provides for a clean and green environment.

To support reliable and cost-effective utilities in designated growth areas.

To strike a balance between the preservation of small-town charm and the accommodation of sensible development.

To ensure the growth of a vibrant Downtown.

GOAL 2: Conservation of Community Assets

To honor and embrace the past.

To build on what we have now while creating new assets.

To elevate the importance of downtown as a cultural & historic hub as we grow and maintain it.

To preserve agricultural heritage and support niche agriculture.

To have access to greenspace (e.g., Lake Myra and Marks Creek).

GOAL 3: High Level of Connectivity

To improve the number, reliability, and equity of transportation choices.

To reduce traffic congestion, particularly connecting to major east-west arterials.

To expand the network of safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities (e.g., crosswalks and bike lanes).

To link to regional (Mingo/MTS) trail connections.

To connect neighborhoods to Downtown.

To connect Wendell to communities in all directions for work, recreation, school, etc.

To interconnect utility systems with those of neighboring jurisdictions for better service.

To strengthen social connections, especially for seniors, to foster an intergenerational community.

To enable low-impact, technology-based solutions including telework, co-working, and broadband internet access.

To preserve contiguity of greenspace and enable better access to nature.

GOAL 4: Economic Vitality

To offer a mix of uses to increase the tax base.

To live, work, learn, recreate, shop, etc. in Wendell.

To leverage our unique community character.

To increase employment opportunities, especially at Interstate 87.

To support small businesses.

To attract visitors with more hotels and restaurants, especially for revenue-generating events.

To optimize the design, accessibility, and capacity of existing parking facilities.

GOAL 5: Quality of Life + Equity

To have a safe and secure community that nurtures livable and well-maintained neighborhoods.

To provide facilities, events, and programs connect the community, promote healthy lifestyle opportunities, and culturally engage citizens and visitors.

To increase activities for families.

To be able to offer quality education, bolstering the County's efforts by adding resources to ensure value and increasing engagement with local businesses.

To engage our citizens in decision-making, especially our youth, elderly, minorities, and other under-represented segments of the population.

To create a sustainable community where people want to stay.

To connect neighborhoods to Downtown.

To improve public transportation options and connections, internally and regionally.

To update park(s) in terms of the offerings, parking, and circulation.

To maintain more "greenery," particularly tree-lined buffers.

To provide equitable access to utilities, particularly in older parts of the town (i.e., subdivisions formerly in the County's jurisdiction).



PLACETYPES

DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF BLUEPRINT WENDELL 2030, PLACETYPE CATEGORIES WERE USED TO HELP DESCRIBE IN LAY TERMS WHAT DIFFERENT PARTS OF WENDELL WOULD LOOK LIKE, FUNCTION, AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE TOWN.

The placetype categories, beginning with Downtown and Downtown Fringe, below, were developed in their form and description through interactions with people; existing uses; and market assessments of what uses are likely to succeed in the future. This typology is applied to the Future Land use Map on the opposite page.

PLACETYPE DOWNTOWN CORE / DOWNTOWN FRINGE

DTN/F

Wendell's downtown is one of three major development "nodes" in the study area, but it is unique as a link to community, history, and source of identity for the Town. Commercial buildings have distinct characters, with events and public art contributing to the sense of place. The Downtown Fringe relies more on residential development, with many structures dating back 50 or more years. The synergy between the Downtown Core and Fringe is important to both placetypes, as is creating walking connectivity between them, developing consistent streetscapes, and quality of maintenance to what amounts to the calling card of the Town.

USES + BUILDINGS

Downtown Core:

- Commercial uses in two-to-four stories including retail restaurants, personal services, and small-to-medium offices
- Co-Working space/Makerspace
- Attached single-family (townhome)
- Multi-family (condominiums, apartments)
- Lodging, hotels
- Civic uses including government offices and services such as library branches
- Event spaces such as greens or amphitheaters

Downtown Fringe:

- One- and two-story homes
- Institutional (religious and school)
- Small-scale neighborhood commercial
- Attached single-family (townhome)

STREET PATTERN

Street Pattern: Grid/Modified Grid
Max Block Length: n/a

Connectivity:

- 400'
- 600' with mid-block pedestrian connections
- Highly connected internally and externally (to adjacent development); alleys in Core and pedestrian walkways in Fringe

Street Types:

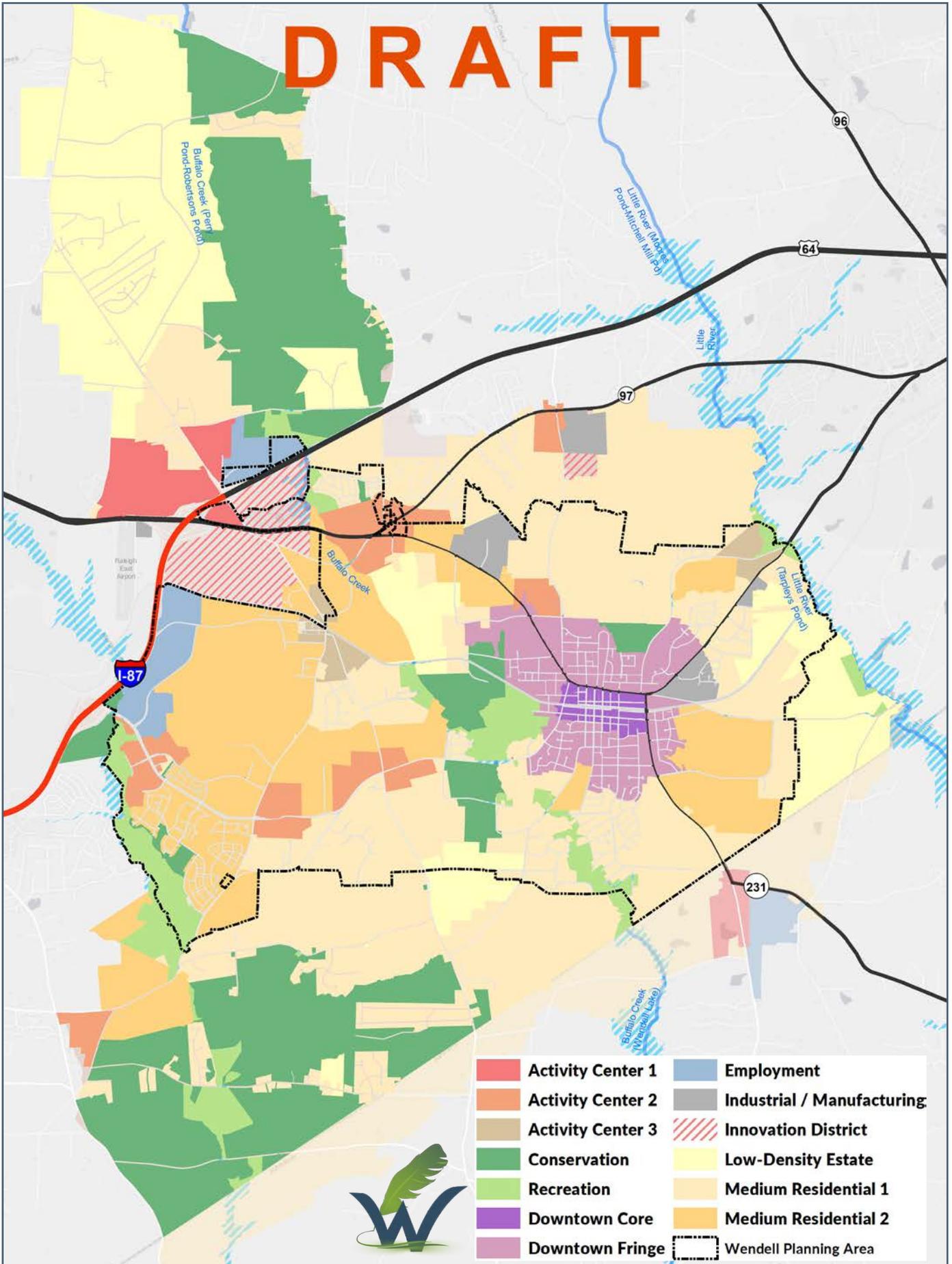
- Private
- Local 2-lane
- Local 2-lane divided

OPEN SPACE

- Pocket parks
- Formal and informal greens
- Neighborhood parks
- Streetscaped hard-surface trails



DRAFT





OPEN SPACE - CONSERVATION

OS-C

These areas consist primarily of floodways and floodplains; parks and protected lands (like conservation easements); and historically or culturally significant areas or properties. Though some development can be supported in these areas, most is very low-density residential and uses associated with access to protected open space (frequently nature preserves) and natural resource management. Conservation design, which includes more open space in exchange for smaller minimum lot sizes, may be a preferred approach to contemporary residential development, especially if higher gross densities can be achieved.

USES + BUILDINGS

Existing Development:

- Single-family detached homes, up to 0.5 units per acre
- Agricultural uses

New Development:

- Nature preserves
- Parks
- Visitors' centers, bathrooms, visitor parking, picnic shelters, and other day use amenities
- Single-family detached homes, up to 1 unit per acre
- Conservation subdivisions (medium-density single-family homes in cluster arrangement to preserve open space)
- Agricultural uses

STREET PATTERN

Street Pattern: Curvilinear

Max Block Length: n/a

Connectivity:

Minimal; one or two access points to surrounding development and road network and access for management/maintenance

Street Types:

- Private
- Local 2-lane

OPEN SPACE

- Natural areas
- Floodplain preservation
- Trails and other passive, low-impact amenities



OPEN SPACE - RECREATION

OS-R

These areas may be developed as public parks. Though various types of passive and active recreation spaces are suitable uses in other place types, these areas are typically large, publicly-maintained facilities, including ballfields, golf courses, gardens, arboretums, etc.

USES + BUILDINGS

Primary Uses:

- Ballfields, playgrounds, tennis courts, and golf courses
- Arboretums and gardens.

Accessory Uses:

- Restrooms, visitor parking, picnic shelters, and other day use amenities
- Indoor public recreation facilities, including gyms, pools, and community centers
- Pools and splash pads

STREET PATTERN

Street Pattern: Curvilinear

Max Block Length: n/a

Connectivity:

- Several access points to surrounding development and road network
- Connectivity via trails, sidewalks, and bike paths encouraged

Street Types:

- Private
- Local 2-lane

OPEN SPACE

- Wide variety of passive uses like walking paths, bike trails, open fields and natural areas
- Active uses including ballfields, dog parks, frisbee golf, playgrounds, pools, recreation spaces



PLACE TYPE

LOW-DENSITY ESTATE RESIDENTIAL

This area is likely to remain predominantly rural while allowing residential uses at very low densities. Natural areas and agricultural lands continue to dominate the landscape. Architecture is sensitively integrated, avoiding valuable natural and cultural features. The density of neighborhoods is up to two dwelling units per acre. Improved open spaces are in the form of private yards and greenway trails, which are located to provide neighborhood access to area trail networks. Conservation design, which includes more open space in exchange for smaller minimum lot sizes, may be a preferred approach to residential development, especially if higher gross densities can be achieved.

USES + BUILDINGS

- Existing Development:**
- Single-family detached homes, up to 1 unit per acre
 - Accessory dwelling units
- New Development:**
- Large-lot single-family detached homes
 - Medium-lot single-family detached homes
 - Accessory dwelling units

STREET PATTERN

- Street Pattern:** Curvilinear
- Max Block Length:** 1,000'
- Connectivity:**
Connectivity is low, as these areas are located where topography, floodplains, and other natural features present challenges. Many streets terminate with cul-de-sacs and closes.
- Street Types:**
- Private
 - Local 2-lane

OPEN SPACE

- Private yards
- Greenway trails
- Natural areas
- Former agricultural lands



PLACE TYPE

MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL LIVING - 1

This area is characterized by moderate-density residential development. It is comprised of single-family detached homes and many are on small lots. The mix of housing types are intended to create intergenerational neighborhoods. The average density of these neighborhoods is between 2 and 4 dwelling units per acre. Improved open spaces in the form of pocket and neighborhood parks are interspersed, and greenway trails within are located to connect such parks as well as provide links to trails and walkways in neighboring development.

USES + BUILDINGS

- Existing Development:**
- Single-family detached homes, up to 2 units per acre
- New Development:**
- Large-lot single-family detached homes
 - Medium-lot single-family detached homes
 - Small-lot single-family detached homes

Both:

- Accessory dwelling units*
- Neighborhood centers and amenity buildings (clubhouses)

STREET PATTERN

- Street Pattern:** Grid / Modified Grid
- Max Block Length:**
- 400'
 - 800' with mid-block pedestrian connections
- Connectivity:**
Highly connected internally and externally (to adjacent development)
- Street Types:**
- Private
 - Local 2-lane
 - Local 2-lane divided

OPEN SPACE

- Pocket parks
- Informal greens
- Neighborhood parks
- Greenway trails





MEDIUM RESIDENTIAL LIVING - 2

MRL-2

Characterized by moderate-density residential development, this area is composed of predominantly single-family detached homes but may have attached single-family units such as townhomes and duplexes. The mix of housing types is intended to create intergenerational neighborhoods. The average density of these neighborhoods is between 4 and 8 dwelling units per acre. Improved open spaces in the form of greens, pocket parks, and neighborhood parks are interspersed. Greenway trails connect internally as well as provide links to trails and walkways in neighboring development.

USES + BUILDINGS

Existing Development:

- Single-family detached homes, up to 4 unit per acre sf/ac
- Attached single-family: Duplex

New Development:

- Medium-lot single-family detached homes
- Small-lot single-family detached homes
- Pocket neighborhood cottages
- Attached single-family: Duplex, Triplex, Townhome

Both:

- Accessory dwelling units*
- Neighborhood centers and amenity buildings (clubhouses)
- Off-street parking

STREET PATTERN

Street Pattern: Grid / Modified Grid

Max Block Length:

- 400'
- 800' with mid-block pedestrian connections

Connectivity:

Highly connected internally and externally (to adjacent development)

Street Types:

- Private
- Local 2-lane
- Local 2-lane divided

OPEN SPACE

- Pocket parks
- Formal and informal greens
- Neighborhood parks
- Greenway trails



ACTIVITY CENTER 1

AC-1

These areas are intended to be centers of activity that include a mix of retail, restaurant, service, office, and civic uses in addition to a variety of residential housing types. The mix of uses can be horizontal as well as vertical where a change in use can occur between floors of the same building. Buildings of two or more stories are common, and connected streets include short block lengths and pedestrian facilities. Open space is integrated in the form of plazas and formal greens.

USES + BUILDINGS

- Retail, including specialty and large-format
- Restaurants
- Movie theaters
- Personal services (branch banks, dry cleaners, tailors, hair and nail salons)
- Small to medium-sized offices
- Attached single-family (townhome)
- Multi-family (condominiums, apartments)
- Lodging, hotels
- Civic uses including governmental offices and services such as library branches
- Event spaces such as greens or amphitheaters

STREET PATTERN

Street Pattern: Grid, Modified Grid

Max Block Length: 500'

Connectivity:

- High internal and external connectivity (to adjacent development and roadways)
- Includes many pedestrian amenities

Street Types:

- Private
- Local 2-lane with on-street parking
- Collector

OPEN SPACE

- Plazas and formal greens
- Gathering spaces that can be used for events, such as greens and amphitheaters



ACTIVITY CENTER 2

This area encourages the blending of complementary commercial, office and a mix of residential housing types. These areas typically offer a horizontal mix of uses where changes in use occur between adjacent buildings. Buildings are typically one and two stories. Designed to facilitate access via walking and biking, mixed-use areas should be located where access via the road network, sidewalks, greenways, and/or local shuttle/circulator service is feasible.

USES + BUILDINGS

- Grocery stores
- Pharmacies
- Retail
- Restaurants
- Gyms, Fitness studios
- Personal services (branch banks, dry cleaners, tailors, hair and nail salons)
- Small to medium-sized offices
- Medical (office, urgent care)
- Attached single-family (Townhome)
- Multi-family (Condominiums, apartments)
- Event spaces such as greens or amphitheaters

STREET PATTERN

- Street Pattern:** Grid, Modified Grid
Max Block Length: 500'
Connectivity:
- Moderately connected externally (to adjacent development and roadways)
 - High internal connectivity with many pedestrian amenities

Street Types:

- Private
- Local 2-lane with on-street parking
- Collector

OPEN SPACE

- Walking and biking paths and trails
- Courtyards and gathering spaces
- Stormwater as an amenity (to include trails, green space, recreation)



ACTIVITY CENTER 3

Small centers with local-serving uses may be located within walking distance of and complement surrounding residential uses. Typical uses include grocery and drug stores, coffee shops, dry cleaners, branch banks, and restaurants. Open space is in the form of small greens and courtyards.

USES + BUILDINGS

- Grocery stores and in-line tenants (drug stores, restaurants, branch banks, personal services)

STREET PATTERN

- Street Pattern:** Grid, Modified Grid
Max Block Length: 500'
Connectivity:
- Moderately connected externally (to adjacent development and roadways)
 - High internal connectivity

Street Types:

- Private

OPEN SPACE

- Small gathering spaces such as courtyards, outdoor dining areas, and greens





INNOVATION DISTRICT

Innovative businesses here benefit from co-locating with uses that are complementary. The mix of uses ranges from light industrial operations and makerspaces to office, retail, and service. The presence of incubator and accelerator spaces, coworking, and educational facilities expands both the range and complementarity. Open space is comprised mostly of informal green spaces, plazas, trails, and special use areas (e.g., demonstration garden) that can serve as an amenity, a learning space, and/or a buffer to surrounding development. Portions of this area may be suitable for residential uses.

USES + BUILDINGS

- Light industrial – manufacturing, research and development, distribution, logistics
- Flex space and makerspaces
- Offices
- Educational facilities – private or public, (i.e. community college satellite locations, magnet high schools)
- Restaurants
- Breweries and Distilleries
- Lodging, hotels
- Retail, especially small independent shops or those selling goods created in the district
- Personal services
- Live/work units
- Multi-family: Condominiums, apartments

STREET PATTERN

Street Pattern: Grid, Modified Grid
Max Block Length: 500'
Connectivity:

- High internal and external connectivity (to adjacent development and roadways)

Street Types:

- Local 2-lane
- Local 2-lane with on-street parking
- Collector

OPEN SPACE

- Walking trails and paths
- Parks
- Gathering spaces like greens and amphitheaters that can host events



EMPLOYMENT CENTER

Employment centers contain a mix of uses including office, light industrial, and institutional. These areas offer traditional workspace and can be supplemented by unconventional, collaborative workspace where innovation and education can be fostered. Incorporating some retail, recreational, and residential uses to create a live, work, and play environment is supported. Open spaces are in the form of formal and informal parks and green spaces connected by trails. Flexible open space that can be programmed for gatherings of various sizes and purposes are also integrated.

USES + BUILDINGS

- Offices, corporate HQ
- Light industrial – research and development, manufacturing, warehousing, logistics
- Institutional – utilities, community college satellite facilities
- Flex space
- Hotels
- Restaurants
- Personal services
- Multi-family: Condominiums, apartments

STREET PATTERN

Street Pattern: Curvilinear, Modified Grid
Max Block Length: 600'
Connectivity:

- Highly connected externally to collectors and arterials via multiple entry points to streamline commuter traffic
- Moderate internal connectivity

Street Types:

- Private
- Local 2-lane
- Collector

OPEN SPACE

- Walking trails and paths
- Formal parks
- Informal parks
- Stormwater as an amenity (to include trails, green space, recreation)



INDUSTRIAL / MANUFACTURING

IND

This area accommodates manufacturing and production uses, including heavy manufacturing, light manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, assembly operations, water and sewer treatment plants, major power plants, and landfills. They are found in close proximity to major transportation corridors and are generally buffered from surrounding development by transitional uses or landscaped areas that shield the view of structures, loading docks, or outdoor storage from adjacent properties. Typically, both parcels and building footprints are large. Most of the open space is on site, privately managed, and intended for use by the building occupants. Most streets are private, designed for truck access, and access is limited by security mechanisms (gates, etc.).

USES + BUILDINGS

- Heavy manufacturing (advanced manufacturing, biotech)
- Light industrial – research and development, light manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, logistics
- Institutional – utilities, water and sewer treatment plants, power plants, landfills
- Flex space

STREET PATTERN

Street Pattern: Curvilinear

Max Block Length: n/a

Connectivity:

- Highly connected externally to nearby Interstates and other arterials
- Moderate internal connectivity

Street Types:

- Private
- Local 2-lane
- Collector

OPEN SPACE

- Walking trails or paths
- Private outdoor spaces
- Stormwater as an amenity



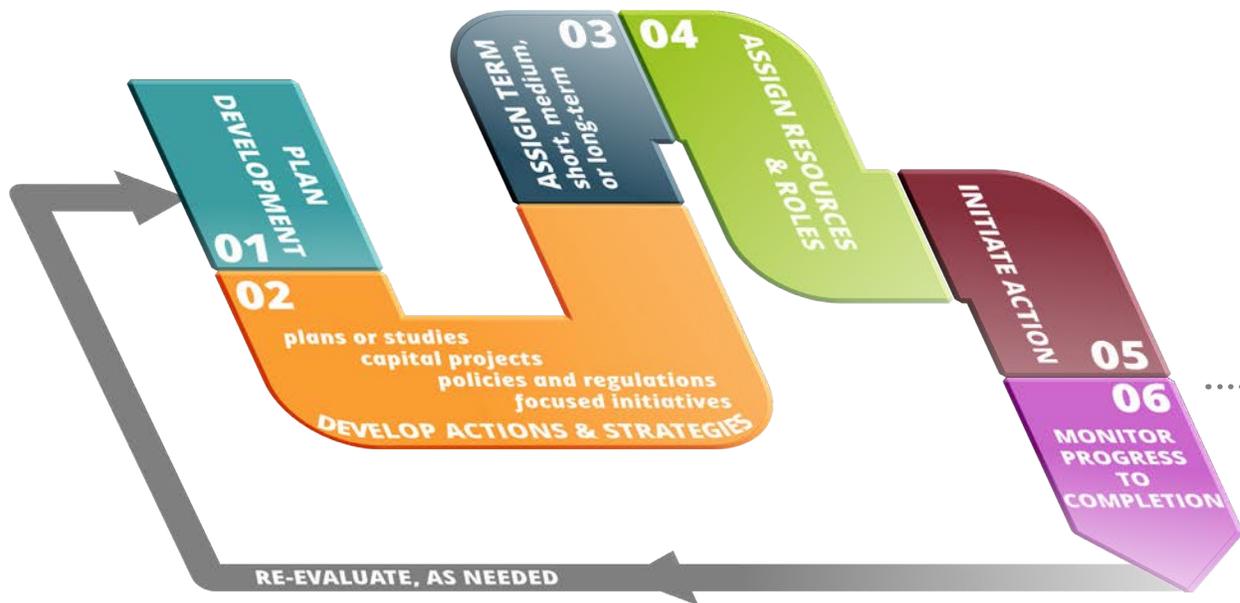


RECOMMENDATIONS

BASED ON THE GOALS AND CONTEXT PRESENTED THROUGHOUT BLUEPRINT WENDELL 2030, RECOMMENDATIONS ARE PRESENTED THAT MAKE THE MOST OF CHANGES AND PRESERVE CELEBRATED PARTS OF THE PAST AND PRESENT.

Blueprint Wendell 2030 should inform decisions at all levels and across all departments of local government related to development and conservation as growth continues. By doing so it helps ensure desired changes occur while the many attributes that provide the town its identity are retained.

Successful plan implementation requires Town leaders and staff to be very intentional. Following plan adoption, they should take steps to initiate implementation, engage partners, align related policies and regulations, and otherwise make necessary adjustments to maintain the usefulness of the plan over the long term. The Plan's implementation of recommendations should be done with changing conditions in mind, generally following a six-step process from this plan's development (and amendment) to monitoring progress and re-evaluation.





GROWTH MANAGEMENT

How we grow is as important as how much we grow. Change is inevitable. Over time, the urbanization of the town will transform it into a place that is different from the Wendell we know today. A proactive approach to managing change is required to ensure the evolution of the town is in accordance with the community's vision and goals. Through the planning process, the citizens expressed support for growing the town in three ways: from the center, around a system of green space, and as an integral component of the larger region. All three approaches can be accomplished simultaneously with attention to details, such as investment in downtown, open space conservation, and the facilitation of infrastructure expansion. For guidance over the next 10 years or more, the Town will refer to *Blueprint Wendell 2030*, which will serve as the primary tool to employ for a coordinated approach to growth management. The tools for managing growth—encouraging some uses and designs in defined areas while discouraging them in other areas—are described in subsections that follow. Among them are zoning and land development regulations and public investments in infrastructure, services, and amenities.

GM1. Set implementation in motion with an Action Plan of Top Priorities. While the planning process is relatively brief, plan implementation is a long-term commitment. Recommendations in the Plan provide guidelines, targets, and priorities for shaping future growth and development in the community. They can generally be categorized into one of four types: plans (or studies), capital projects, policies /regulations, and focused initiatives related to economic development, service provision, and programming. Some actions are easily accomplished in the near-term while others will likely be more feasible later. Taken together, the recommendations might seem to be a lengthy and daunting list of tasks. Knowing where to begin requires a focus on near-term activities, which could also bring about some early “wins” that motivate commitment in the long term. Monitoring these actions – and celebrating their completion – provides valuable insights to the staff and community about how to proceed with subsequent actions.

..... Implementing Actions *(opposite page)*

The recommendations of Blueprint Wendell 2030 were created through extensive involvement, connecting cross-cutting issues and initiatives based on current and anticipated conditions. Plan actions travel a typical course from developing and amending the Plan to assigning and monitoring responsibilities to re-evaluation, if it becomes necessary.



GM1.1. Utilize the Plan Implementation Matrix to guide the work of the Town and partner organizations. The Town has developed an action plan process centered on a Plan Implementation Matrix, a tool for initiating near-term implementation activities. Created as a separate, stand-alone document, it is maintained by Town staff and updated from adopted plans and policies. Since implementation is a shared responsibility, the matrix is intended to guide the work of the Town as well as partner agencies and area organizations as they work collaboratively to realize the vision. Coordination is key to efficiently and effectively achieving results. Therefore, Town departments should consider the potential for identifying common interests and needs and sharing appropriate resources. For this reason, the matrix suggests assignments to responsible parties who can take the lead or supporting roles. The matrix should be used as a tool to record advancement toward milestones. Regular meetings should be held to evaluate progress and adjust course as necessary to ensure implementation efforts remain strong. In addition to a brief description, timeframe and assignments are also provided for each near-term action item.

GM1.2. Acknowledge progress. Monitoring the plan's implementation should be an open and ongoing process, summarized each year in a community report card that examines performance, measures achievement, and reflects changes set forth in the plan. When milestones are reached, celebrate! Reporting success maintains momentum and helps build community pride and ownership of the plan.

GM2. Encourage use of the Plan in Everyday Decision-Making.

GM2.1. Refer to the Plan in all aspects of local government. Elected and appointed officials as well as Town staff should make a habit of consulting the plan for guidance in all activities. Familiarizing these individuals with the document, particularly during the formal orientation conducted in conjunction with the filling of positions on boards and in Town departments, is an important first step. Awareness of the plan, its purpose, and common usage will increase the likelihood of it becoming a useful resource that all rely upon.

GM2.1.1. Direct development to realize the land use pattern envisioned. One of the most common uses of the plan is informing decisions about land use. Elected and appointed officials as well as Town staff should direct development in a manner that achieves the "vision" or desired future development pattern as expressed in the future land use and conservation map. Using the details of the place types described and depicted on the map as a guide, examine all future development proposals through a new lens. Specifically, in evaluating site plans, subdivision plans, and rezoning applications, refer to the adopted Blueprint Wendell FLUP. Subsections that follow provide additional policy guidance pertaining to the various place types.

GM2.1.2. Rely on the goals set forth in the plan in all future decision making. Though amendments to the map and plan may be made from time to time to respond to unforeseen circumstances and opportunities that would benefit the whole community, the goals should remain static and serve as guideposts to inform Town leaders' decisions, especially in the absence of specific policies.

GM2.2. Promote the use of the Plan by local organizations, area businesses, and private citizens. The

document should be widely accessible to residents, business owners, and property owners throughout the Town. Hard copies should be available in community buildings (i.e., Town Hall, library, public schools, etc.) and a downloadable copy should be available from the Town's website and the websites of partner agencies (e.g., Wendell Chamber of Commerce, Wendell Historical Society, etc.). Social media should be used to announce the document's adoption, and then remind people of its importance and availability for review periodically. In-person forums with elected officials, area developers, advocacy groups, and other organizations should be used to highlight key points in the document, and answer questions about the plan's role in the Town's decision-making processes.

GM2.3. Raise awareness of the community's vision and goals regionally. To maximize resources and ensure the Town's vision is considered in broader planning initiatives, the Town should seek opportunities to coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions, regional agencies, the State, and other organizations whose decisions have an impact on the future of the town.

GM3. Review and Revise Town Documents.

GM3.1. Update Adopted Plans. The Town's plans and regulations should work in concert to provide a clear path forward and advance the community toward its vision for the future. To that end, the Town should allocate resources to review and revise, as needed, the various adopted plans of the Town, including transportation plans, small area plans, utility development, and strategic or economic plans. Examine each through the lens of *Blueprint Wendell 2030* and amend each one accordingly.

GM3.2. Area Plans. Study specific geographies (i.e., subareas, corridors, etc.) within Wendell that capture, preserve, and build upon the unique characteristics and needs of each community. Starting points are expressed here in the conceptual designs for downtown, Wake Tech / I-87 interchange, and Marshburn Road / NC 97, but these areas could be further detailed and updated as the needs or external conditions change. Work with developers, when the opportunities present themselves, as small area plans are created and updated to ensure that they are practical and will achieve the community's vision.

GM3.3. Amend or Rewrite the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The recommendations are supported by strategies that include suggested amendments to the UDO. Some of these modifications can be accomplished in the short term and may be necessary to proactively manage change in areas that are in the path of near-term development. However, all local land development regulations may need to be updated simultaneously to adequately implement the Plan. Consider rewriting the UDO to ensure it is an up-to-date tool to effectively facilitate desired development and conservation, facilitate administration, provide clarity and predictability, and otherwise ensure the implementation of the community's vision for the future of the Town. Generally, the strategies call for the following:

- Reviewing and amending development standards to enhance development. Several recommendations in the subsections that follow suggest amendments that would facilitate mixed-use development, expand housing choices, upgrade design site standards, increase conservation of meaningful open space, and improve connectivity for several modes of transportation.
- Evaluating the existing zoning districts. Amendments should align districts with the Place Types depicted on the Land Use and Conservation Map and described herein. In connection with the changes to the zoning districts, the official zoning map should be amended to strengthen the



connection between land use policy and zoning regulations.

GM4. Expand Staff Resources. Consider building on existing staff capacity and expertise as the Town grows. The rapid urbanization of towns in fast-growing metropolitan areas can quickly outpace the expansion of local government resources. The complexity of such changes, and the need for coordination with other agencies such as Wake County and the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO), could warrant additions to the departments of the Town. This will help ensure the Town's ability to proactively manage change over time and implement the Plan.

GM5. Maintain the Plan. The Town is encouraged to make long-range planning a routine endeavor. The Comprehensive Plan should be reviewed regularly to contemplate changing conditions in the market, demographics, residents' values, and state and federal legislation. Typically, minor updates are made every five years while a major update should occur every 10 years. However, amendments can and should happen at any time to conform with future land use changes not in alignment with the Future Land Use Map, or when recommendations and priorities shift to meet changing circumstances.



DOWNTOWN

Let's create a place where people will linger, longer. A successful downtown is one where visitors are enticed by the quality and "texture" of the place as well as activities to enjoy. Though they may arrive with the intention of dropping in to patronize one shop or dine in one restaurant, visitors choose to stay and experience downtown for an extended period, which is good for all businesses located there. The significance of Wendell's downtown doesn't end there: downtowns are living embodiments of a town's history and character. The healthy mixture of land uses, walking destinations, public amenities, and dynamism create a palette of opportunities that have proven extremely hard to recreate in other parts of town. The following recommendations acknowledge these statements, which in turn are reflections of what we learned from the public and Steering Committee during the course of *Blueprint Wendell 2030*.

D1. Strengthen downtown as the heart and central gathering place of the community.

D1.1 Prepare and adopt a Downtown Master Plan. A sound decision-making guide, a master plan will not only solidify a community-supported vision but establish a path forward so leaders' decisions can take advantage of external and expert opinions as well as their own intimate knowledge of Wendell. Using the conceptual illustrations prepared for Focus Area 2 (Downtown) as a starting point, prepare a Downtown Master Plan that accomplishes several objectives, including:

- Create a more concrete vision for the future of downtown and the functions it should support, both for the immediate surrounding neighborhoods and for the Town as a whole.
- Seize opportunities that are defined through a market assessment. The market assessment should build upon the 2020 Economic Strategic Plan but focus on how partnerships identified in that plan can expand on the market potential of specific properties within the downtown area.
- Explore opportunities to re-purpose existing buildings. Existing downtown school structures, for instance, can lend themselves to new uses and advance economic development as new anchors. An example is the Third Street Large Industrial Area, re-envisioned with a flexible space anchor tenant modeled after the Loading Dock (Raleigh), combining warehousing, kitchen preparation / food storage, restaurants, and niche retailing opportunities. Supporting uses may include a

community center, auditorium, senior housing, food incubator with a commercial kitchen with an integrated adult education / re-training component.

- Define more specifically the expectations for development on a block-by-block basis. Consider the creation of a form-based district informed by the plan, which would serve as the regulating plan.
- Balance competing objectives of (1) allowing the downtown to evolve to support the desire for “more things to do,” and (2) preserve the character.
- Define what constitutes “charm” and seek to preserve the features that contribute.

D1.2 Seek missing opportunities for programs in downtown Wendell. Downtown should be the primary location of town-wide celebrations and events, reinforcing the downtown has the heart of the community and elevating its importance as the place for civic engagement.

- Expand the types and number of town-sponsored events that are hosted downtown. This would expand the range of things to do and give residents more reasons to go downtown. Currently, the Town participates in a number of events, such as the Spring into the Arts, 4th of July, Farmers Market, Wendell Wonderland, and Big Truck Day. Incorporate public art into these outdoor festivals as well, sponsoring temporary and “pop-up” art kiosks and stations.
- Encourage programming and events hosted by other entities within the public spaces in downtown to help leverage and extend limited public resources. One example is the International Food & Music Festival (Third and Cypress streets).
- Create a downtown organization that can focus on programming while helping strengthen the relationship between local government officials and downtown businesses.

D1.3 Invest in public spaces and amenities to support the range of uses and level of activity desired for downtown.

- Acquire and improve the site where Town Square is located today. This programmable space can become the focal point of town-sponsored activities downtown as well as a regular meeting spot for residents to meet and gather informally.
- Provide a splash pad or similar interactive water feature to increase play for people of all ages. The activity a feature such as this provides helps create a lively, inviting place and a reason for residents and visitors to frequent the downtown.

D1.4 Improve the streetscape and treat the streets as accessible, versatile, multi-purpose public spaces.

- Enhancing the landscaping (street trees) by providing supplemental plantings (e.g., planters featuring annuals for color) and encouraging building tenants and owners to do the same.
- Provide furnishings that make the streets and other public spaces in downtown more comfortable for visitors.
- Modify amenities, curbing, lighting, and pedestrian movement infrastructure to accommodate all users in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and supporting guidelines.
- Be creative with lighting, which can also add artful elements.
- Expand sidewalks and paved plazas for use by restaurants and shops. Allow these businesses to “spill out” into the public spaces with seating and displays of merchandise, blurring the line between private interiors and adjacent public spaces.



D2. Grow downtown as a larger, mixed-use center to better position Wendell as a destination in the region and competitive investment location.

D2.1 Consider opportunities to diversify the uses, including residential. Having a critical mass of local businesses, workers, and residents helps create a more vibrant place. Young people and old benefit from living in downtown and mixed-use environments. To make this happen in Wendell:

- Consider the creation of a form-based district informed by the downtown master plan (see D.1 above), which would serve as the “regulating plan.” Consider two tiers to acknowledge the differences in scale between “Downtown” and “Downtown Fringe” as described herein and displayed on the Future Land Use Map.
- Allow compatible uses by right, provided the development standards are achieved. Barriers to this now are requirements for special use permits to allow compatible uses that are commonly found in downtowns.

D2.2 Redesign Third Street in two phases (S. Main to the east and west) to connect Pleasant Grove with Town Park, provide axis to South Main, and connect underutilized buildings on the east side of downtown.

D2.3 Participate in efforts to redevelop sites and reuse existing buildings. The Town can play an important role in enabling private investment in redevelopment, infill, and reuse of existing buildings. In doing so, the Town can expedite revitalization efforts especially if they can be flexible and responsive on a timescale that works with private developers and investment schedules.

- Consider a town-based revolving loan program, not unlike the state’s façade improvement grant, but make it available to help expedite the upfit of buildings and make innovative, strategic investments. Apex, Orange County, and Wake Forest have similar programs, with the latter operating outside of a formula grant program structure to purchase space for two years to help get a co-working space up and running in the early period while the developers were building their client base. Focus especially on downtown building rehabilitation for kitchens, sprinklers, and other adaptive upfits in the core downtown and fringe downtown areas noted in the Future Land Use Plan.
- Seek grants from the USEPA Brownfields Program or designation under the North Carolina Inactive Hazardous Sites Program and develop a one-page summary of the various program pathways to redevelop hazardous sites as well as benefits to both sellers and buyers. The federal brownfields program must be applied for by local or regional government, and not an individual private developer.



CENTERS OF ACTIVITY

Directing growth to areas where private market forces and infrastructure (e.g., water lines, sewer lines, roads, or emergency services) are supportive makes sound, long-term economic sense. Wendell now finds itself in a strong position to dictate where, when, and how new residential and non-residential developments are actuated. The following are recommendations that take advantage of the town's strengthening position to demand long-term quality in private developments that benefit new and existing residents. Although it's a longer and more challenging prospect to create new walkable, accessible centers of development, it is possible. Some of these centers don't necessarily focus on mixed-use, walkable developments: some can be focused on manufacturing or highway commercial uses integrated with medical, hospitality, education, or other complementary uses.

CA1. Support development of key nodes (large and small) where commercial uses can be concentrated and benefit from proximity to each other. Consistent with the Future Land Use map, delineate centers of activity where the more intense development includes a mix of uses that can be accommodated.

CA2. Amend zoning to accommodate mixed-use development in key nodes, including downtown, so developers have more by-right options, where appropriate. Currently, the PUD (Planned Unit Development) process is used to accomplish some of the more complex development programs that align with a unifying vision but can only be applied through the rezoning process. Given a choice, some developers would rather invest in amenities instead of the more circuitous and uncertain procedures associated with the PUD process.

- *CA2.1. Consider the creation of multiple types of mixed-use districts.* This action will increase allowable density and expand the range of permitted uses to make desired shopping, dining, entertainment, employment, and transit services more feasible. Refer to the descriptions of the following Place Types for guidance in the creation of the various broad categories of districts as described in *Blueprint Wendell 2030*:
 - Activity Center 1
 - Activity Center 2
 - Activity Center 3
 - Employment Center
 - Innovation District

CA2.2. Update the PUD language. Currently, the PUD option is only open to tracts of land in a proposal that collectively are larger than 200 acres that have included Wendell Falls and Village of Wendell. As Wendell continues to infill with new development, these larger tracts of land are becoming increasingly rare. Additionally, PUDs, like many other planning topics, have continued to evolve as local and regional contexts change. The PUD process is desirable for these larger tracts because they allow more creativity and opportunities for community amenities, among other objectives. Potential modifications to the PUD ordinance (Section 2.19 of the Wendell Code of Ordinances, but also referenced in Section 2.15) include lowering the 200-acre threshold that is now required to initiate a PUD process to 25 acres for mixed-use development proposals; modify minimum standards to show not just greenways but sidewalks, common areas, open space and other public spaces; and provide greater clarity in areas such as "building design.



DEVELOPMENT DESIGN

How important is the design of a community? If 1970s “brutalist” architecture that generated concrete block government complexes or turn-of-the-century airless, lightless high-rise apartments (which in turn were as responsible as the private auto for generating separatist zoning codes) are any indication then design can determine the health, use, criminal activity, prosperity, and modes of travel in every part of the town. For example, the Centers for Disease Control are strongly supportive of “healthy community design,” that promotes placing homes, schools, churches, and parks close enough to each other to walk to and that allow residents to stay healthy and stay in their familiar surroundings as they age. Many of the CDC’s principles cite the things that are already an integral part of Blueprint Wendell 2030: mixtures of housing, walkability, clear signage, access to green space, community centers, and access to quality public transportation. The following are recommendations to strengthen the design principles that favor Wendell’s character and strengths.

DD1. Strengthen design standards for mixed-use and non-residential development in key growth areas to influence quality and mitigate potential impacts of change on existing neighborhoods. This can be accomplished with amendments to land development regulations (site design standards) in the UDO, or a set of design guidelines that are encouraged but not codified.

- Building relationships to the following elements activate the streetscape:
 - to streets – setbacks affect visual interest and create enclosed spaces;
 - to each other – quality/use of spaces between buildings, as remnant spaces can become usable spaces that positively connect adjacent uses; and
 - to parking – buildings can serve to screen surface lots.
- Infill, redevelopment, and new development should generally conform to the place type description(s), as designated on the Future Land Use and Conservation Map. Furthermore, specific design details dictated by the adjacent use(s) should be based on the place type assigned to the adjacent parcel(s) rather than the existing use. For example, to create the appropriate transitions between uses, a proposed structure may be subject to increases in building setbacks as well as reductions in the maximum building height within a specified distance of the property line. The effect is a stepped down scale in the vicinity of adjacent uses. Where adjacent existing uses do not conform to the designated place type, the developing use should not be subject to the more restrictive conditions. Instead, the designated place type should determine the applicable standards.
- Open space requirements that require a percentage of sites to be devoted to improved open space, such as plazas, greens, courtyards, and pocket parks. Most of these spaces should be publicly-accessible. Consider creative uses of exterior spaces, such as rooftop gardens, as areas to be included among the improved open spaces satisfying the requirements.
- Façade details, such as fenestration and materials.
- Landscaping for streetscape enhancements as well as screening.
- Scale transitions, such as the stepping down of building heights for a more compatible relationship to adjacent development.
- Connectivity – enhanced pedestrian facilities that provide linkages within and across sites

and through blocks.

DD2. Couple higher design requirements with incentives to attract desired investment that maintains the character of Wendell. These areas would be prioritized over others for Town-funded financial incentives and capital investments. Incentives may include:

- Density bonuses in exchange for meeting higher requirements; and
- Façade and landscape grants – more allocation of grant funding based on location in defined areas (or districts) and potential impact, as determined through a point-based system that encourages short- and medium-term improvements until market is ready to support them without public incentives.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION

One of the acknowledged strengths of Wendell is its history. Even though there have been many changes from rural to agriculture to suburban hub to independent town, each step of this process has left its mark on Wendell. The configuration of streets downtown, highways on the periphery, building heights, design elements, construction materials, and emphasis on green spaces have been influenced by historical factors. The current Wendell Elementary School sits on the same land as the original 1861 Rhodes School, a one-room schoolhouse named after its sponsor Ambrose Rhodes. Historic designations can help preserve specific locations or districts, but ultimately it is up to the Town and its priorities to help protect the areas around historic sites and celebrate their ongoing importance in an era where there is a real danger of every commercial district or new residential subdivision looking much like any other. The following concepts are put forth to help Wendell continue to use historic character to define the import aspects of the Town to preserve and build upon in the future.

H1. Make a more concerted effort to protect historic properties/areas, particularly the contributing structures on the two National Register districts to maintain the integrity of each.

H1.1 Appreciate history. Working with the Wendell Historical Society, increase awareness of and appreciation for the historic assets of the community to get community—and owners of properties—on board with protecting.

- In addition to education about the importance of historic preservation, communicate the benefits, such as tax credits, character definition, authenticity, sense of community and source of community pride, economic (home values, tourism), etc.
- Develop a campaign that employs social media and other forms of online communication to share information and promote specific events that highlight historic assets.
- Draw attention to awards for historic preservation.
- Shed light on the losses. Example: Home on Richardson farm.
- Promote the walking tour, and on the website, provide an interactive map to enhance the tour experience. Figure 2 is an image of an interactive walking map mounted to a Google Map framework, with both points of interest and various walking paths described.
- Celebrate history, heritage, and traditions. Define mechanisms, such as public art and events, to honor and embrace the community's past. Use these opportunities to tell the story of the town's past (tobacco, agriculture, rail stop), and pass the story down for generations.



H1.2 Work with Capital Area Preservation and Wendell Historical Society to bolster historic preservation efforts. Seek assistance for the following:

- Helping owners of historic properties with efforts to register structures on the National Register or understanding tax credits.
- Increasing the number of landmark structures. Help people understand differences between districts and landmarks, and help people understand the lack of or weaknesses in current protection tools. Support owners who have National Register designated and eligible structures to seek or maintain registration to protect them. This may require one-on-one discussions with owners of such properties.
- Strengthening local regulations to minimize the loss of historic structures through demolition. The Town would have to modify zoning to protect character of historic areas. Consider the following:
 - If local districts are established, create a corresponding overlay district. This involves pursuing the establishment of a local historic district (or more, if warranted) and associated local commission to review applications for changes to structures in accordance with guidelines.
 - Adopt regulations that discourage demolition of contributing structures in National Register districts. Seek state enabling legislation to establish small-town character district and demolition ordinance (48-month delay after tear down is disincentive).
 - Creating design guidelines for National Register district and other properties that have historic significance. This could serve as the precursor to guidelines for a local historic district, if established.
 - Target owners of historic structures (contributing) as the primary audience. Offering incentives for adhering to guidelines in making changes to structures, such as ____.
 - Develop downtown design standards for streetscapes, landscaping, buildings, etc. to inform the decisions of all property owners.

H1.3 Participate in additional initiatives to conserve historic sites and structures. Consider the Town's role in following strategies as a starting point.

- Preserve old Carver School (Morphus Bridge Road) through adaptive reuse. Work with the church that owns the property to study the possibilities and support options to support and build on the work that the church has started with the Carver Center of Eternal Hope.
- Create a preservation plan and address what to do with structures to be moved.

H1.4 Carefully consider how libraries contribute to various neighborhoods and their residents.

In 2017 the Brookings Institution ([link](#)) published a summary of the important factors in determining where to locate libraries based on their thoroughly modern uses. Libraries, function as important “third places” that bridge work and home, just like churches, parks, bars, or salons. They are one of the few places where people from diverse backgrounds still congregate. Librarians function as information providers for everything from health to housing and employment. Key location factors therefore include accessibility for people with different mobility limitations, age and income demographics, and suitable building (if adaptive reuse is a possibility) and site characteristics, such as being located on a transit line. Downtown locations have remained viable for all of these reasons, although libraries can also be located in other major, mixed-use centers of development.



ART & CULTURE

The role of art in Wendell has a significant precedent, with murals, events, and small-scale installations being a favorite part of the discovery process for new and old residents alike. Like historic features, art and cultural events can serve important roles in making a town unique and increase its importance and visibility to business interests, new employees, and civic promotion efforts. The following recommendations help build upon the already evident successes in promoting a vibrant cultural and artistic environment in Wendell.

AC.1 Expand opportunities for art in various forms in downtown and other key locations.

AC1.1 Prepare and implement a public art master plan to ensure a coordinated approach to documenting the current inventory, expanding and diversifying public art, and allocating funds to implement the plan. In addition to defining locations for artistic expression, the master plan should consider a range of art objectives, including the following.

- **Landscape.** Natural elements can be grouped to create an unexpected composition.
- **Lighting.** Bridges and bridge abutments, paths, and walls provide ideal spaces for lighting displays.
- **Interactive installations.** (e.g., art that uses water, is musical, or inputs from the viewer).
- **Education.** Learning about Wendell's considerable history and new things that are happening or are going to happen soon.
- **History.** Art can tell the story of the past, sharing the town's origins and heritage.
- **Environment.** Art can raise awareness of important flora and fauna of the area or highlight the connected systems, such as waterways, that support our wildlife.
- **Connectivity.** Artwork should draw attention to connections across Wendell.
- **Cultural Diversity and Inclusion.** Art should celebrate the diversity of the community today and over time. Include a range of installations and programs that engage all groups regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, and physical ability. Advocate for cultural inclusivity on art councils and other review agencies.
- **Variety.** Expand beyond visual arts, gathering examples from other places for inspiration and ideas, including performing arts (especially music) and culinary arts.
- **Whimsy.** Art that is playful attracts the attention of people of all ages.

AC1.2 Seek to activate indoor and outdoor venues. These include greenways, utility corridors, and public rights-of-way sites for visible public art that commits to the goal of becoming the arts community of the Triangle Region.

AC1.3 Strengthen the commitment to public art in the Town's Water Allocation Policy. Modify the existing point allocations for outdoor art in Category 3 (amenities) and add to Category 4 (recreation).

AC.2 Establish Wendell as an arts community of the Triangle Region. In addition to disseminating information through the website, the websites of partner agencies, and printed material, explore ways to utilize social media, town ordinances, and other means to reinforce and maintain the cultural and artistic aspects of Wendell.



AC2.1 Become a destination with an Art Trail. Building on the collection of murals that are already featured on the sides of downtown buildings, encourage more murals as well as other forms of public art. Similar to Raleigh’s Mural Project ([link](#)), this expanding collection could be mapped to create a self-guided walking tour for visitors to see, engage with, and learn from the art.

AC2.2 Encourage residents and visitors to promote the art with their posts by establishing “selfie” opportunities with public art installations or suggest places as compositions in key locations that are “Instagrammable.”

AC2.3 Use events and activities to create memorable art experiences. Wendell’s events (e.g., art walks) and rotating exhibits can contribute to the arts of the community. Examples include the Plein Air Festival, arts walk, Harvest Festival, and International Food Festival, kids’ art events, Meet on Main, etc.

AC2.4 Consider artist-in-residence in empty storefront. These can simply be temporary installations that work in concert with local artists, craftsmen, and entertainers.

AC2.5. Consider how the library location affects impacts the lives of senior citizens, families, and children. Relocating the Wendell library to a highly accessible location in the center of downtown, enlarging it to accommodate civic functions, lectures, poem readings, skills workshops, and other events to bring people of all ages together.

AC2.6. Preserve existing public art located on private property. Require preservation of publicly accessible art like murals, outdoor amenities, landscaping, and statuary into redevelopment plans.



NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

As noted elsewhere, the importance of celebrating and conserving the natural resources and environment of Wendell was ranked as high or higher than any other factor by the plan participants. The following are based on those sentiments, and seek to not only protect what is here, but expand those resources and weave the natural environment into the built aspects of the Town.

N1. Conserve valuable natural resources. Conserve natural resources and open space, especially areas to north and south that also provide passive recreation.

N1.1 Adopt regulations to limit encroachment on existing conservation open space. Conservation tools should be applicable primarily in a few key areas. Open space protection should be required as part of future annexations north of town in the Buffalo Creek area, Little River Watershed, and Marks Creek watershed.

N1.2 Protect and minimize encroachment on conservation areas and corridors located at the northern and southern edges of town: Turnipseed Nature Preserve and Robertson Millpond. These two areas act as “bookends” at either end of the town’s future greenspace network. Protection strategies include working with utility providers, other towns, development of a purchase of development rights (PDR) program, and other strategies contained in *Blueprint Wendell 2030* and the town's parks master planning documents.

N1.3 Collaborate with public utility providers, NGOs, and private sector partners (City of Raleigh, Town of Knightdale, Town of Clayton, NC Conservation Fund, Triangle Land Conservancy, private utility providers / developers, etc.) to identify important resources areas and strategies for minimization and avoidance of growth impacts.

N1.4 Collaborate with other entities (i.e., neighboring towns, Wake County, Triangle Land Conservancy, developers) to advance conservation at a regional scale to maximize quality, quantity, and contiguity of conservation areas. A regional perspective will ensure the creation of a system of contiguous open space that encompasses land that is crucial for maintaining biodiversity, habitat value, and unique natural features.

N1.5 Consider opportunities to facilitate conservation through transfer and/or purchase of development rights. Purchase / Reserve connected open space networks (work with adjacent towns and county) including greenways, watersheds, and stream corridors.

N1.6 Promote conservation design in future residential subdivisions, particularly where such development lies within areas designated as “Conservation” on the Future Land Use Map. Setting aside open space that encompasses land that has high natural resource value can be rewarded with increases in gross density of development. In other words, development standards can be structured to permit more lots at smaller sizes in exchange for open space designated as permanently protected. The standards could be targeted to achieve several objectives:

- set a minimum amount of open space to be provided with the conservation design option;
- provide a sliding scale that increases the allowable density as open space area increases;
- require a minimum area (percentage of total set aside) that should be improved for active or passive recreation;
- require contiguity so preserved open space is adjoins the open space of the neighboring development(s);
- require a portion of open space to be publicly accessible; and
- give additional density credit (or reduce the total required) for providing open space that meets a stated community need (i.e., a greenway segment that implements the system delineated in an adopted plan).

N1.7 Discourage development in flood-prone areas. Amend the standards in the UDO to include density allowances through clustering of buildings and complementary mixed-use developments. Note that the incentives and requirements (e.g., coordinating adjacent open spaces to create larger wildlife “patches” and corridors) should be designed so that the option is exercised often.



N1.8 Conserve existing vegetation. Improve local regulations for buffers to emphasize preservation of existing vegetation. Address standards to ensure existing vegetation is being maintained and supplemented as needed between incompatible development; along road corridors for visual relief; and along waterways to maintain or improve water quality, and around other natural features to ensure the integrity of the resource is maintained.

N1.9 Enact Stormwater Low-Impact Design Best Practices. Sometimes conservation and avoidance are not feasible, so attention must turn to minimization of development impacts to conservation areas. One such area of practice is called Low-Impact Development (LID). The NC Cooperative Extension and NC State University published a comprehensive manual ([link](#)) on these practices, while classes are occasionally offered on LID through the state's Department of Environmental Quality. Some of these practices are more affordable than others (e.g., low-input landscaping) or are in some parts of the Wendell ordinance for some types of developments but could be expanded in concert with other objectives such as conservation of watersheds or stream buffer areas.



GREEN SPACES & GREENWAYS

No other concept received as consistently favorable reactions during the development of *Blueprint Wendell 2030* as the expansion and preservation green spaces and their linear counterpart, greenways. Conservation is accurately viewed as an indicator of how well Wendell preserves its open, more rural feel but these spaces serve concrete purposes like connectivity for zero car households, opportunities to improve physical and mental health, and supporting property values of parcels adjacent to these spaces. Green spaces and greenways can be constructed by private development or through active public acquisition of lands or supportive policies and ordinances that enforce preservation of existing and development of new spaces, as illustrated in the following recommendations as well as those contained in Wendell's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

G1. Increase public access to outdoors, open space, and nature, including through the existing and expansion of Wendell's recreation system.

G1.1 Upgrade existing parks by expanding the hours of operation at parks so people do not have to travel to recreational opportunities at parks outside of Wendell, and updating Wendell Community Park. Park improvements should anticipate current and future needs for use by community members. Consideration should also be given to the feasibility of hosting sports events (tournaments), which the Town currently is not able to do due to parking and traffic issues.

G1.2 Implement the 2019 Park and Recreation Master Plan by creating more green space and connections, and implement park amenities and land acquisition to ensure equitable access across the Town and its various demographics. These actions may include:

- Create more parks, including pocket parks.
- Provide a community park on the east side of downtown.
- Implement the plan for 20-acre park site acquired by the Town.

- Complete Lake Myra per the master plan for the site.
- Investigate ways private developers can play a role in implementing the Park and Recreation Master Plan, such as redefining open space requirements in the UDO for new development or adjusting fee-in-lieu options.
- Consider POPS (Privately Owned Public Space). Sites and facilities that are owned and managed by private entities lessen some of the Town's burden to meet recreation needs of the community. In providing the spaces, developers may satisfy an open space requirement. All such POPS should be identified with a uniform set of signage and furnishings specified by the Town to indicate they are accessible to the public.

G1.3 Equitable access to comparable amenities. Ensure most residents live within a quarter mile of a park (including pocket parks), greenway, or trail. Prioritize sidewalk connections within these "walk sheds."

G2. Expand the park, greenway, and trail network by developing new facilities and connecting to existing ones. The opportunities include connecting wildlife corridors and habitat patches, promoting walking transportation, and increasing business accessibility.

G2.1 Create a linear "Central Park" along Buffalo Creek. Develop a Buffalo Creek Corridor Park Master Plan and, in accordance with the plan:

- Acquire land—or easements—along Buffalo Creek to create a continuous linear park and greenway trail.
- Create points of interest or "park destinations" along the greenway path.
- Establish buffers along Buffalo Creek to minimize encroachment of new development on the corridor and maintain the integrity of the natural resources that are among the focal points of the park, including the water.
- In open space requirements for new development and redevelopment, prioritize land suitable for greenway connectivity and stubouts from new development to open space. To meet open space requirements in conjunction with development occurring on such parcels adjacent to Buffalo Creek, the portions of parcels adjoining Buffalo Creek should be the primary focus of site design and the provision of improved open space amenities.

G2.2 As secondary, parallel greenway routes, protect greenspace along Marks Creek and Little River. These creek corridors offer potential connections from the west and east sides of Wendell, respectively, to nature preserves and sites of historic and cultural importance, such as Turnipseed Nature Preserve Robertson Millpond Preserve.

G2.3 Develop, with private sector partners, a connected greenway system within town and to surrounding networks. Ultimately, greenways should connect the "two sides" of town and be part of the regional system, connecting to the Neuse River and Marks Creek greenways.

- New developments should have connections (or provide fee-in-lieu of construction) to parks, open space, greenway, and sidewalk networks through public dedication or HOA maintenance agreements.
- Develop and include standard language for public greenway access for all future utility



easements or expansions / major modifications to existing easements to encourage connectivity

G.2.4 Connect neighborhoods to downtown with greenways and/or a 10' sidepath along major corridors that provide bicycle and pedestrian connections to existing and planned public parks, greenways, and open space networks. Prioritize the completion of the sidepath along Wendell Falls Parkway.

G.2.5 Coordinate greenway locations at jurisdictional boundaries and connect to area greenways. to be sure paths are on same sides of creeks.

- Seek connections to segments that tie Wendell's system to regional and state trails, such as the Mingo Creek Greenway in Knightdale. An extension of it could connect Wendell to the Neuse River Greenway, which is also part of the Mountains-To-Sea Trail. Similarly, the proposed Marks Creek Greenway that would follow Marks Creek south into Johnston County could also connect the town to the Neuse River Greenway.
- Partner with Zebulon for Little River Greenway and trailhead at the US-BUS-64 crossing of Little River, utilizing land controlled by Town of Wendell.
- Work with CSX and Carolina Railroad to develop a Rail-with-Trail option, including developing fencing and liability features in cooperation with Wake County and municipalities.
- Where trails are joined at jurisdictional boundaries, be sure paths are on same sides of creeks and roads or that crossings are easily provided.
- Partner with Johnston County to connect to the mill site just south of the county line.

G.2.6 Utilize the floodplains for additional greenways (as well as other suitable recreation facilities). In open space requirements for new development, allow floodplain areas on sites to be designated for recreational purposes provided the integrity of the floodplains are maintained. Amend the UDO to clearly define circumstances for use of floodplain areas to meet open space requirements in new development.

G.2.7 Connect agricultural uses to connectivity and preservation efforts. Offer additional opportunities through a purchase of development rights (PDR) program or work with farm owners to apply conservation easements to reduce tax exposure on productive farm properties.

G3. Support remaining agriculture and, as practical, help conserve sites that are reminders of the Town's agricultural heritage. Existing farms, though small, can become part of the development pattern as urban agriculture and enhance access for local food. The Town may assist with such conservation by connecting interested owners with Triangle Land Conservancy to establish conservation easements or creating and funding a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program for vulnerable farmlands.

G4. Work, and work with others, to implement the Wendell Parks and Recreation Master Plan

recommendations. The 2019 Master Plan provides details on existing and proposed future facilities including those listed below.

G4.1 Complete the Lake Myra County Park. Work with Wake County to identify funding sources and complete this 224-acre park located off of Elk Falls Drive in the Marks Creek watershed. This project has had a master plan completed ([link](#)) that should be recognized in future, adjacent development / redevelopment projects.

G4.2 Increase the number of active use facilities and lands. The *Parks and Recreation Master Plan* calls for doubling (to four) the number of softball, soccer, lacrosse, and baseball fields as well as similar increases in the number of basketball, and tennis courts. Work with partners such as the NCFC (for soccer facilities) to leverage public investments. More picnic shelters and playgrounds are also recommended. The total figures (for 2029) are listed below (*derived from Table 3.6-1, page 48*) for facilities that are at least double the existing quantities.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|
| • Adult & Youth Baseball | 8 (total) | • Volleyball | 4 |
| • Softball | 4 | • Horseshoes | 10 |
| • Soccer | 4 | • Picnic Shelters | 6 |
| • Lacrosse | 4 | • Playground | 8 |
| • Basketball | 4 | • Walking Trails | 4.8 miles |
| • Tennis | 10 | • Streams / Shoreline | 3.8 miles |

G4.3 Connect recreation to Wendell's arts programs. This connection was cited as the number three priority in the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan*. The opportunities include, but are not limited to, the following examples.

- Permanent art installations in public parks, rights-of-way and other spaces
- Temporary art installations, or "rotating" exhibitions
- Interactive art
- Multi-sensory installations that utilize wind forces to create movement (wheels, fabrics, etc.)
- Use a more whimsical and unexpected design for benches, trash cans, and trail surfaces that can connect to history or expand the concept of Wendell as a safe place (see example images below)





NEIGHBORHOODS & HOUSING

Compared to the rest of Wake County (and other rapidly growing counties in the country) Wendell has so far remained a semblance of affordability in housing, although there are signs that this position is changing. Housing and transportation costs, when combined, consume nearly 50% of the average Wendell household's budget (source: Center for Neighborhood Technology's Housing and Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index). While growth in residential units in the near- and mid-term is assured – over 600 residential building permits were issued in 2019 and there are over 12,000 acres of land that may be candidates for new residential properties in Wendell – the ultimate completion of the various Wendell Falls projects may signal a slower pace of residential development if market forces aren't the only force shaping growth. The following recommendations acknowledge these trends and needs, and builds on the past successes in growing housing stock in Wendell.

NH1. Maintain the value in older neighborhoods with investments in amenities. Wendell is incredibly fortunate to have a fairly traditional downtown and surrounding residential areas relatively intact from its earliest days of development. Treating these areas with respect means that parks, sidewalks, utilities, streets, and public infrastructure need to be well-maintained, placing a priority on them over expansions and the associated costs into new are-as.

NH2. Reduce displacement and gentrification by restricting infill development and redevelopment in the interior of existing neighborhoods while connecting to non-residential, complementary uses at the edge of these neighborhoods and nearby. In the areas designated for mixed-use and diverse housing, the zoning codes should limit the size of new lots and structures to dimensions that respect the established scale and density.

NH3. Diversify housing to appeal to different groups: age, income, lifestyle preferences, family situations. Encourage a mix of products in new development by:

- Expediting development processes in areas that are master-planned (including small-area plans) that are in conformance with the stated directions of those areas;
- Allowing smaller homes consistent with Wendell's scale; and
- Encouraging variety of housing, especially within the same development: Sf at 40/50/60/70/80-foot lots as well as townhomes.
- Encourage housing product distribution amongst neighborhoods and within them. The multigenerational nature of mixed-residential neighborhoods not only facilitates aging in place but fosters relationships necessary for a creating strong social support networks.

NH4. Address current and future gentrification effects sooner. North Carolina's restrictions on inclusionary housing specifically and Dillon's Rule framework generally make combating gentrification of housing more difficult, but Wendell should also consider gentrification effects on cultural and historical values.

- Strengthen the sense of community, culture, and history through neighborhood-level event planning and programming - provide easy access to street closures and small "seed" funds (or gift certificates from local restaurants and caterers) for neighborhoods to hold

their own events.

- Support the construction of new, complementary housing of a price point that is similar to the value of existing, nearby homes.
- Consider developing a program that offsets and stabilizes property tax increases for senior homeowners.
- Stage quarterly events (with a virtual option) to help educate residents about existing and proposed development actions and the complex ways that gentrification effects can occur.
- Review and adjust regulations that pertain to accessory dwelling units to make them easier to create in existing neighborhoods for long-term rentals (and rental income for in-place residents).

NH5. Collaborating with private developers for housing mix to have varied price points and options. Many people make the mistake of seeing all the single-family home construction and assume that is the “normal” and broadly desired choice. In reality, lower-density living, while it has advantages for some, has been dictated as much by lending practices as market demand, making less sense when compared with open space consumption, service provision, tax revenues, alternatives to car travel / traffic, and affordability for mid- and lower-income residents. The following are some options to consider in areas that would make suitable mixed- and higher-density developments.

- Allowing infill in existing development by right or clearly defined if pursued through special use.
- Facilitating the integration of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) with single-family housing, including increasing allowable size of ADUs – above 750 square feet.
- Adjust housing height limits to be no more than three (3) stories and regulate maximum depth and width lot dimensions to be in keeping with Wendell’s current patterns of development.
- Adjust parking requirements downward, albeit carefully and in areas or proposals that support travel options.
- Consider regulating maximum building width to ensure that if lots are aggregated the same number of housing units get constructed and are more likely to be in character with surrounding units.

NH6. Go Form-Based, somewhat. It may be easier to support mixed-use, missing-middle, and affordable housing if everyone has a better feel for what these units will look like, and can go further than simple density allowances and floor-area ratios (FAR, the amount of usable floor space divided by the total lot or parcel size on which it is built) to articulate a community vision. Hybrid zoning models that have form-based elements are more common-place than “pure” form-based zoning codes, however, so creating flexible housing elements that respect existing zoning categories may make the process of establishing a practice easier. Care should be taken to ensure that these new elements are really based on form and well-crafted metrics, not a narrowed definition of use.

NH7. Partner with the Wake County Housing Authority to encourage redevelopment and improvements to existing sites for a better quality of life. Legislation in North Carolina, market forces, and concerns of existing homeowners make creating housing options more complex and challenging. Finding knowledgeable, enthusiastic partners is invaluable in navigating the options. Assistance with Housing & Urban Development (HUD) grants, homeownership programs, rent assistance, veteran’s housing, and neighborhood rehabilitation grants are a few of the aspects of the Housing Affordability and Community Revitalization program.



HEALTH & WELL-BEING

While many of the recommendations in Blueprint Wendell 2030 help support our residents' health and their overall well-being, it is important to further state specifically what is meant by these concepts. The following recommendations are supportive of more transparent and involved decisionmaking by residents, including those that are disadvantaged in traditional processes.

HW.1 Consider health and well-being of all current and future residents in decision-making. A commitment to be intentional and conscious of various infrastructure and policy decisions on the health of everyone in town is required, but it's easier now than ever to do that. The ability of smaller communities to undertake health-based assessments of decisions has increased tremendously over the past decade. Several dimensions of health should be considered in every major decision (an action that can be formalized or invoked by the Planning Commission or Town Council on a case-by-case basis). These health and well-being measures should be tracked annually and available through an on-line "dashboard" that is clear and enhanced with descriptive text.

HW.2 Examine all decisions through an equity lens. Expressly consider the impact of the proposal on those least able to weather the negative consequences: the poor, the infirm, persons of color, elderly, and youth. In order to provide context for these evaluations, it is necessary to use consistent policy analysis to provide decisionmakers with information about impacts to vulnerable people and places. The numbers of these at-risk populations collectively are substantial (refer to chart). As appropriate, conduct health impact assessments (HIAs) to evaluate the potential public health benefits and issues associated with major public investments.

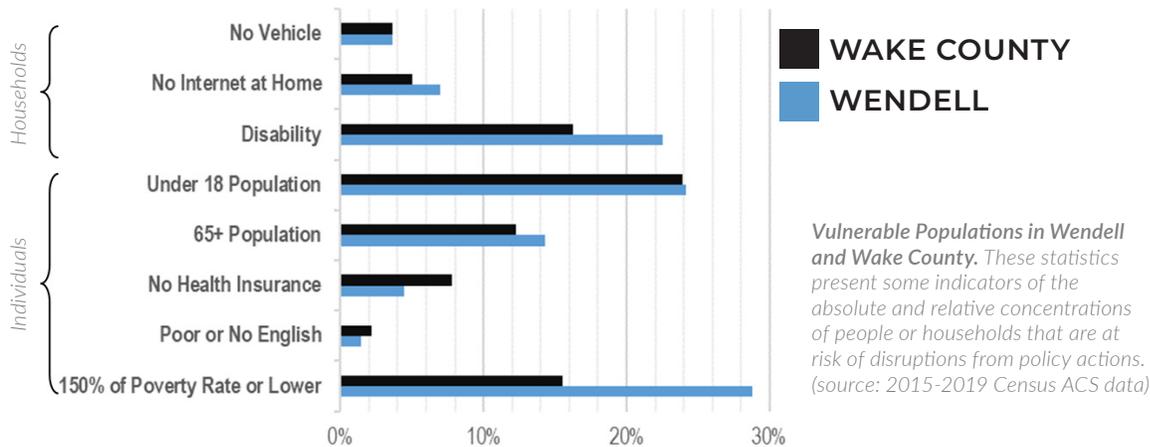
HW.3 Increase access to care, which is a priority noted in the 2019 Wake County Community Health Needs Assessment.

HW3.1 Partner with Wake County Health & Human Services to identify specific barriers, such as availability of healthcare providers and mobility issues. (Refer also to the "Connectivity" subsection for more information about transportation, which was identified as a top need in Wake County communities to facilitate access to care.)

HW3.2 Support investments in healthcare facilities in key locations. WakeMed is planning a location in Wendell Falls, which will address some of the growing demand for services in Wendell and its immediate surroundings. As the population numbers rise, the need for more support facilities in town such as urgent care will also increase.

HW.4 Foster an environment for healthy living, which includes creating a physical environment that supports active transportation (walking and biking), improves access to healthy foods (think: local agriculture and community gardens), and increases access to nature and recreation (refer to the "Green Spaces & Greenways" subsection). Existing organizations, such as Wake County Health & Human Services and NCSU Cooperative Extension, offer information and programs online but can also effectively deliver services and educational

programs for healthier choices and skills in person, if the physical locations are made available with assistance from the Town.



HW.5 Foster social connections, especially for seniors, with programming and places to gather. The global pandemic experienced in 2020-2021 underscored the need to make human connections to avoid despair and ensure the ongoing mental and physical health of people – especially older people or those with a limited ability to get outside often. Emphasize (1) senior citizens and reducing social isolation issues unique to that demographic, (2) persons and households with physical disabilities present; and (3) creating more opportunities for family activities and civic involvement.

HW5.1 Reuse the downtown library building or other underutilized space as a community room, a space for civic activities and services as well as indoor community gatherings.

HW5.2 Promote assets to build a sense of community pride and ownership. Attachment to a place begins with awareness of the local assets. As stewards of the assets of the Town, the citizens and property owners must first be aware of Wendell's inventory and recognize the value of each type of asset. Consider grassroots advocacy organizations with members representing the whole community in efforts to protect the shared assets: parks, downtown, natural environment, historic districts and landmarks, agricultural vestiges, etc.

HW5.3 Recognize people of Wendell, including youth, as its major community asset. Great ideas come from people of all ages and backgrounds. Make listening, especially to those in their youth, a regular practice as new initiatives to improve the quality of life in Wendell are contemplated.

HW6. Stop crime before it happens. The collective term for incorporating considerations of crime reduction into public and private planning, design, and maintenance is Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED). Certified CPTED Specialists can help conduct an audit of community elements like greenways, schools, parks, parking areas, or other public spaces to ensure that aspects like territoriality, maintenance, and natural surveillance. The same considerations should be incorporated into site plan reviews and police training priorities to become CPTED Specialists on-site. Many resources are on-line, but the American Planning Association has a good summary suitable for municipalities ([link](#)). A commitment to CPTED principles has reduced crime in some areas by 40% or more.

HW7. Start community reporting of needed maintenance items on-line (and when they have been addressed). Keeping streets, public spaces, landscaping, streetscaping, and lighting in good repairs



isn't just a good idea to present positive images to the outside world – it stops a percentage of crime before it starts.

- The Tell Wendell app helps residents communicate with the Town staff and leaders; make sure that it is widely promoted at public events and develop a PowerPoint slide that can be added at the end of every public presentation telling people where to find it and its use.
- Engage the community consistently - and innovatively - at the outset of every public project. Opportunities to engage the public should be considered all the time and they should happen consistently. Develop a set of evolving engagement strategies that are undertaken each time a Wendell, Wake County, NCDOT, or other public sector entity engages a project in town.



ECONOMY / MARKET / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The residents of Wendell will travel to Raleigh or other places for the services, jobs, goods, or opportunities that can't be found in town. One of the goals is to reduce the car trips and enrich the local business environment through a diversified economy. Further, Wendell can become over time an important regional destination thanks to investments in education (e.g., Wake Tech campus), medical facilities, and recreational opportunities. The following are recommendations positioning Wendell to support growth that creates the most positive benefits to current and future residents, development that supports green spaces, trails, and diverse retail in and near cohesive communities.

E1. Support development of key nodes (big and small) where commercial uses can offer the most benefit. Not every shop can be local and “unchained;” sometimes a carload of paper towels or a quick meal is needed. So-called big-box retailers, chain stores, auto services / dealers, and some manufacturing, industrial, or education-oriented businesses need to be proximate to a big highway. That's a good thing, not just because it supports more diversity and opportunity in town without driving to a bigger city, but also because if these high traffic generators are closer to the big roads they are less likely to significantly impact smaller, neighborhood roads. Wendell has three major “nodes” of development (downtown, Wendell Falls, and the I-87 / Wendell Boulevard (US Business 64) interchange area) and numerous smaller ones that can serve more localized needs. It is possible to say “I'm from Wendell” but feel an equally close connection to these smaller communities. Here are some ways to help strengthen those community connections. (Refer to the “Downtown” and “Centers” subsections.)

E2. Leverage access to existing and potential greenway corridors to transition them from barriers within the community to corridors to enjoy outdoor life and connect with different places without a car. To maximize this potential, it is recommended that (1) Wendell partner with Zebulon to prepare a corridor plan for development around the proposed Little River Greenway trailhead at the US Bus 64 (Wendell Boulevard) crossing of the Little River (including ultimate roadway cross-section, which differs now for the two towns; and (2) Promote more density that requires clustering, conservation design, and connected open space preservation practices in these sensitive locations. These greenway corridors should also be viewed as an opportunity to diversify the economy with “Trail-Oriented Development” and lock in place the natural beauty that is valued so highly in Wendell.

E3. Diversify the local economy and increase employment opportunities in Wendell. Economic advisors to small towns and big cities alike favor diversifying local economies so that in the event of a downturn industries that are less affected will be able to stabilize and support employment and fiscal revenues. This phenomenon was on full display during the 2020 – 2021 pandemic-induced economic downturn, when in-person shopping and office life turned to personalized delivery and remote working for many households. In the past, this practice of economic diversification was often focused on creating opportunities for industrial and manufacturing sites to lure good-paying jobs to an area. However, the practice of economic diversification itself has diversified, encompassing technology, remote learning, micro-scale services, and start-up companies exemplified by the flourishing of co-working spaces and ghost kitchens. The following recommendations seek to capitalize on some of the positive trends, although by its nature local economies and business opportunities change frequently, so that flexibility and openness to change are central to longer-term successes.

E3.1 Execute the economic development strategy outlined in the 2020 Wendell Economic Strategic Plan to prioritize some actions over others, and leveraging partnerships with partners like the Wendell County Economic Development, as noted multiple times in the Economic Strategic Plan. One part of that strategy needs to recognize not just the proximity of Wendell to Raleigh and Research Triangle Park, but its reliability to these locations.

E3.2 Don't chase every sector but do identify and target the types of industries the Town needs and wants. The following are like candidates based on recent trends but, as noted, these trends tend to shift over time and need to be reevaluated in a formal, cooperative effort.

- Develop logistics, distribution, and other supply chain elements. It's likely that the trend towards suburban communities will include more reliance on smaller distribution centers. Food processing and cold storage are obvious contenders, but intriguing examples like ghost kitchens (see text box) are going to be more commonplace – many of these delivery / retail combinations could actually fit into smaller spaces that don't need to be next to a big highway – and they likely will be offering higher starting salaries than a traditional fast-food restaurant.
- Support supply chain resilience partnerships. These partners should include Wake County and Wake Technical College, as the former is interested in developing this sector and the latter offers courses in supply chain management. One novel approach to resiliency is to consider the phenomenon of "Gig Workers" well beyond the stereotypical computer-based technician operating from home. During the COVID-19 pandemic, people were producing facemasks from home using 3-D printing technology. Another phrase for this type of worker is electronically mediated: think of short-term contracts like TaskRabbit, book editing, Uber, DoorDash, or Gray Box (like Uber for freight shipments). These jobs can be either primary employment or a used as an important, secondary source of income; they can be in-person or done entirely over the Internet. Co-working spaces, "maker spaces," and scholastic partnerships – including at the high school level – can be leveraged to help grow these industries locally.

E3.3 Create space (land and buildings) to meet varied demands. Smaller spaces and integration with other businesses and non-traditional (read: homogenous) locations are more important now. Identifying and securing land for employment-related developments early is important. Think creatively – Wake Forest leased space for two years in a new co-warehousing concept that helped reduce private sector risk in the early stages of the project while occupancy reached sustainable levels. Lastly, identify and correct procedural, permitting, and regulatory constraints to collocating,



expansions, and design for small-footprint business, particularly in the major and minor development nodes identified in the Blueprint Wendell 2030 Plan.

E3.4 Focus on job creation. Building a job-creation machine is accomplished in many ways. The 2020 Economic Strategic Plan spoke to this concept in many respects, but the following are key highlights recommended here.

- Recruit by promoting Wendell's assets. Promote Wendell's talent, innovation, quality of life, low cost of doing business, and (so far) relatively affordable living on the town website, in partnership with the Wendell Chamber, and through development of easy-to-access materials like one-page hit sheets and self-directed slide decks. Consider the investments being made at local and national levels in broadband internet capacity and education at both the primary and secondary levels with the new Wake Tech Campus coming into play. Actively tout eastern Wake primary public schools, their curricula, and extra-curricular programs.
- Connect the dots between education and other aspects of the community. Counties finance schools in North Carolina, but the Town can still reward great teachers and schools with special recognition events and incentives. Higher education through Wake Tech can be directly supportive of the targeted industries that the Town wants to develop or already has in place through active town-gown collaborations.
- Locate, grow, and expand local businesses. Many downtown businesses are supported by Wendell and government actions. Promote the façade program; increasing maintenance levels in downtown for sidewalks, lighting, and landscaping; and (continuing) to develop incubator, co-working, group kitchens (ghost kitchens), and co-warehousing spaces in conjunction with temporary housing. Developing a one-stop source of information for would-be entrepreneurs or small business owners looking to relocate that is a companion to the LaunchWendell effort (see below) is also recommended.
- Continue and Expand LaunchWendell. A legitimate best practice for other communities to consider, LaunchWendell includes one-on-one mentoring, business training classes, and networking opportunities with other business owners. Wake Medical, and Wake Tech Community College (already a partner) are good partners to continue to develop.

E3.5 Strengthen partnerships with businesses, institutions, and neighboring jurisdictions. Wendell frequently coordinates with Wake County, Raleigh, Knightdale, and Zebulon as well as Johnston County for various shorter-term needs. More ideas for promoting these relationships in the long- and short-term follow, but new opportunities arise periodically that may be deemed more important.

- Existing employers can and should be communicated with directly to gain insights into market trends, barriers, and opportunities as well as collaborative actions. It may sound obvious, but it still requires dedicated time, preferably as part of a formalized work program assigned to one or more staff positions, to make this happen. Having a "remote" staff meeting at a place of business or inviting a businessperson into town-wide staff meetings can help lend important perspectives and remind town staff of how important

their jobs are, every day.

- As noted in the Economic Strategic Plan, the Town should develop an apprenticeship program in partnership with local businesses and East Wake High School, or with Wake Technical Community College. An apprenticeship is a good way to get affordable labor, but also promotes long-term possibilities for trained long-term employees of the Town and local businesses.

E3.6 Expand the brand. It's easy to think of branding as only targeting potential new residents and businesses, but with so many people arriving in town in just the past few years it's a good way of reminding people of these strengths to generate pride and involvement in their unique town. The following are some preliminary recommendations, some of which incorporate the concepts from the 2020 Economic Strategic Plan.

- The Town has a positive image now, and that can be strengthened by incorporating the advanced medical and educational opportunities coming online. While east Wake County schools are not as well-known as some of their central and western counterparts for quality, an earlier recommendation for promoting both quality of core education and ancillary programs can help bolster that image of public schools.
- Factor in that higher levels of maintenance, particularly in some older parts of town and downtown, creates an atmosphere of respect and value that quickly becomes part of a Town's concept of itself. Repairing cracked sidewalks, ensuring prompt trash removal, and maintaining public spaces to a higher degree send a clear signal not only to residents or future residents and businesses, but also help reduce criminal activity.
- Communicate these high standards to future development to support quality-based regulations and standards, too, including coordinated streetscaping, lighting, facades, and building upfits. These all tend to be particularly important in private retail agglomerations with big parking lots – parking that could be moved to the rear and sides of buildings during site plan reviews for new development and major redevelopment projects.
- Fund the Neighborhood Improvement Program focuses on four downtown improvement zones and four areas of improvement: infrastructure/environment, vibrancy/economic growth, safety, and parks/recreation/culture. Based on small area plans like the Wake Tech plan, develop specific actions and reporting on them annually will help make this valuable program more solid in the eyes of decisionmakers and stakeholders in its success.
- Consider that design flexibility can go further in some cases than hard-edged requirements. Trading some additional density (more units per acre) or reduced parking requirements in exchange for affordable housing, connected (and larger) open spaces, and public amenities is something that Wake County does now. But, based on the lack of usage of those concessions it's important to (a) make them substantial enough to warrant consideration by developers, (b) advertise them frequently before and during project submittals, and (c) marry these “carrots” to “sticks” that help make choosing the desired course of action easier. Consider a points-based system that incorporates utilities, parking, densities, appearance factors, amenities, and affordability to create a more dynamic development environment (and one that should be monitored and adjusted, as needed).
- Hold Wendell's public developments to the same or higher standard as their private counterparts. Every park, building, bench, median, and light post is an opportunity to express the Town's perspective on quality, making sure that it communicates the right message is important to other,



private players as well as residents and businesses making their lives and livelihoods here now.

- Make a good impression with gateway and wayfinding improvements. Wendell has been successful using standardized wayfinding signage to help distinguish itself from its neighbors as well as communicate important information. Consider adding new signage for outdoor destinations and gateways; a variable message sign could also be useful to create a more flexible information tool. As noted elsewhere, major town entrances, such as Wendell Boulevard, Wendell Falls Parkway, Marshburn Road, and Rolesville Road / Eagle Rock Road, can be enhanced with gateway treatments, including public art.

E3.7 Reduce retail leakage and increase spending on businesses here. As the commercial environment grows and develops, more time and dollars will be spent in Wendell rather than driving to a bigger place for goods and services. Older plans would have only emphasized diversifying business types to reduce retail and job “leakage” (the amount of money or jobs that people in Wendell use that aren’t actually in Wendell). Blueprint Wendell 2030 recognizes that times have and will continue to change, so incorporating mixed-use development at appropriate locations, marrying service jobs to affordable housing opportunities, and recognizing how technology and shared work environments are changing the way people consider remote work options are now just as important, if not more so, than landing the next big box retailer or industrial plant (but, in the right place, those are great, too).

- Emphasize the Bigger Brother(s). People are realizing that downtown Raleigh is 20 minutes from Wendell, and that they can have the easier pace and small-town charm and still dress up for attending the symphony on Saturday. These two facts – capability of teleworking from a great place and proximity to every amenity – need to be in nearly every promotional opportunity.
- Target hotels for more development, including smaller boutique establishments. Most of the big corporate brands have launched specialized hotels for submarkets, like Tru (Hilton) and Unbound (Hyatt). The latter looks to repurpose buildings and lots in historic downtowns, for example. These and more commonplace options that tend to locate at major highway crossroads are vital to encouraging more attendance at events, business-supportive tourism, and raising the awareness of Wendell to potential, future businesses.
- Support eco-tourism and recreational tourism in Wendell. Investments in parks, sports fields, greenways and “hard” elements of the recreational system can produce spinoff benefits. Conduct sports-related events like bicycle rides, fun walks, or half-marathons that make use of these facilities. Eco-tourism is an underutilized tool in Wendell and Wake County generally, and it is recommended that Wendell work with Wake County and private sector partners to develop outdoor education programs that can bring kids and adults from surrounding communities to view, interact, photograph, draw, and use the stream corridors and parks.

E3.8 Create more value by investing in spaces that don’t directly generate any revenue at all. Creating more parks, both passive open space and active facilities, improves surrounding property values. What would New York City be like without Central Park? More to the point,

one researcher considered 30 studies of the impact of parks on adjacent and nearby property values, suggesting that 20% increases were a reasonable assumption. However, if the park is heavily used, the effects are minimal so building more parks to distribute their usage is recommended .

E3.9 Provide more options to live and work in Wendell. Diversification isn't only applicable to businesses, but to residences as well. Integrating varying styles and price points of homes is crucial to supporting a wide range of lifestyle preferences and life stages. Aging in place is becoming a more important point for many Americans who are now entering or have been in retirement. Bonus: those same people often don't carry a lot of student debt and have time on their hands to contribute to the public sphere by volunteering time and talent to make Wendell a better place to live.



CONNECTIVITY

Transporting people and things from one place to another is surprisingly complicated involving a lot of players. Recently, technology has and continues to rapidly transform every aspect of transportation, from parking to knowing when the bus will arrive to getting a third-party ride on a smartphone to simply teleworking from home two days a week. The following recommendations in the realm of transportation recognize the long-term nature of getting major capital investments completed through state funding, but also the mercurial nature of how people are perceiving transportation and using technology to make transportation options more flexible and accessible to more people.

C1. Create land use patterns that work with, not against, the transportation system. A robust economy is something that is taken for granted by almost everyone in the Triangle Region, but with that dynamism comes more demand for services, housing, schools, and transportation infrastructure. Most of the options available to alleviate traffic congestion are either extraordinarily costly to fund and in their impact on the environment; or require a land use pattern of proximate and highly integrated homes, shops, businesses, schools, places of worship, and other common needs. While denser, mixed-use development patterns create more localized congestion, the viability of options, reliability, safety, equity, resiliency (options in case of a failure in the preferred travel choice), reduction in vehicle miles of travel (VMT), pollution, injuries, and secondary effects on the economy can offset congestion costs in the short- and long-term. There is little to no evidence to support the position that expensive roadway expansion projects alleviate traffic congestion in the long-term, as land use patterns and travel behaviors also adjust to overwhelm the added capacity. To create a better outcome, Wendell or any municipality will consider how its policies, regulations, and ordinances work to promote or hinder quality, mixed-use and infill developments in the major and minor development nodes depicted in this plan. Every land use decision should consider both the short- and long-term impacts to every mode and element of the transportation system, and how it contributes to or hinders mobility options as one of many objectives.

C2. Improve the connectivity, robustness, and resiliency of the transportation system within and near Wendell. Wendell is part of a much larger region of North Carolina, which in turn is part of an important, growing subregion of the U.S. The scale is important: high-speed commuter rail between states is being planned for now, and advancements in express bus and bus rapid transit (BRT) technologies are being considered for the region. The following are ways to ensure that the perspective and needs of Wendell are memorialized in the decision-making at both the regional and local levels.

C2.1 Work with NCDOT, Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Knightdale, Zebulon, Wake



County, and Johnston County to coordinate road improvement plans.

- Coordinate roadway improvements with neighboring communities, NCDOT, and the Capital Area MPO. Roadway cross-sections (lanes and design) should be coordinated with Zebulon (US 64 Business and NC 97) particularly, as well as how the roadway network is improved in the vicinity of the I-87 / Wendell Boulevard interchange (Knightdale).
- Develop, with private sector partners, a connected greenway system within town and to surrounding networks to augment existing and future transportation options. Coordinate greenway locations at jurisdictional boundaries to be sure paths are aligned and connect seamlessly. (Refer to “Green Space and Greenways” subsection.)
- Continue to develop transit partnerships and opportunities, including microtransit offerings. These actions should include transit services to Wake Tech campus and Wendell Falls (on existing ZWX express route), as well as a new circulator route connecting the three major development nodes in Wendell. CAMPO, the City of Raleigh, and GoTriangle have regular transit meetings that offer coordination opportunities, and the long-term phasing of the New Bern / US 64 BRT line terminating at the new Wake Medical complex should be “on the table” for planning and design Wendell as early as 2030. Support ongoing efforts to create micromobility, ridesharing, and car sharing options in cooperation with eastern Wake County communities. During the preparation of *Blueprint Wendell 2030*, an eastern Wake County study and subsequent launch of micromobility services was led by the county but input from local governments was important. Continuing this service will in part rely on financial contributions from local governments, including Wendell.

C2.2 Implement the existing Bicycle and Pedestrian plans. These plans contain recommendations that were carefully considered and are still viable. The plans will also need to be periodically updated or incorporated into the development of a multimodal transportation plan (e.g., comprehensive transportation plan, or CTP). In the short term, ensure that development ordinances for commercial and large (50 units or more) residential developments construct covered accommodations for bicycle parking.

C2.3 Connect neighborhoods to downtown with greenways and/or a 10' sidepath along major corridors. Buffalo Creek runs from Robertson Millpond to the Town Park and south towards the Neuse River Greenway, huge corridor that needs to connect many parts of town. Greenways should connect the different “sides” of Wendell.

- When roads are designed or redesigned for gateway corridors and circulator route(s), they should be considered in the context of complete streets, the name given to roads that can accommodate all users and manner of travel safely.
- Define role, geographic extent, and parking needs of golf carts in Wendell, especially the downtown. NCDOT has a model golf cart ordinance ([link](#)) that can be used as a starting point for delineating where carts can be driven and the driver requirements. It is recommended, however, that the suggested speed limit ceiling in this model ordinance be lowered from 35mph to 25mph. Such an ordinance process could be expanded to incorporate other motorized vehicles, such as scooters, mopeds (motorcycles with

engines smaller than 50cc), and e-bikes.

- Seek creative ways—and partnerships—to deliver more transportation options. Partner with private sector to create a shuttle or small circulator bus connecting the three development centers of Wendell. An example is the microtransit program launched by Wake County and in collaboration with other eastern Wake communities. Finally, acknowledge an affordable trend (Figure 19) in the form of car-sharing that is likely to see more adoption in satellite communities where workers have occasional needs for a car. Carsharing can be as small as an individual loaning their car to pooled vehicles to multi-national companies with pickup and drop-off locations in many cities.

C3. Use traditional and non-traditional ways of alleviating traffic congestion but don't let traffic that happens for two hours five times a week take a front seat in every decision. Wendell is a growing town in a growing region and is fortunate to have all of the opportunities that come with that energy. One of the negative consequences of these changes may be increased traffic congestion. As of this writing, communities are recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and its dampening effects on employment and travel; traffic levels are also returning to pre-pandemic levels. In order to comprehensively address these effects traditional and non-traditional expansions of roadway capacity will continue to be important.

C3.1 Traditional capacity improvements will stay play a leading role. Physical improvements to the transportation system are necessary as is recognizing an emphasis on smaller, high-value projects that are more likely to earn high marks from the Strategic Prioritization methodology employed for determining state-funded construction priorities throughout North Carolina. Improving Eagle Rock Road / Wendell Falls intersection and widening Marshburn Road and Wendell Boulevard, as well as improving signalization in these corridors, will be necessary. A long-standing issue is the Wendell Boulevard / Wendell Falls Parkway intersection in front of Wendell Elementary School, with a need for geometric and crossing treatment revisions needed to improve safety. This intersection is programmed now for design and construction. Improvements to intersections along NC 97 and Eagle Rock Road / Martin Pond (and nearby railroad crossing) are also identified priorities. Additional improvements should be financed entirely or in partnership with new, proposed development, including intersection and roadway shoulder / median / signalization improvements within the Wendell Falls Parkway, Marshburn Road, and Rolesville Road corridors. Some of these locations were identified as “hot spots” in the most recent planning completed by the Capital Area MPO in 2021 as part of the Northeast Area Study and are therefore poised to received funding from CAMPO's locally administered projects program (LAPP).

C3.2 Use policy to influence long-term decision-making and the resulting built environment. Policy modifications or new policies are also important to long-term success in alleviating congestion, or at least making the alternative modes more convenient and used more frequently. These policy changes should include connectivity / stub-out street / cross-connectivity policies; getting in front of downtown parking demand with the potential for structured parking at some point in the future; and streetscaping improvements like extending the Main Street lighting, median, and streetscaping improvements. Land development policies that sharply segregate uses create artificial barriers that promote more automobile use, even for short trips. Not just allowing more mixed-use developments in zoning categories, but actually encouraging those developments to take place, will create a richer tapestry uses that foster community as well as alternatives to driving alone.

C3.3 Create a sense of arrival with gateways. This recommendation includes location for public



art visible from a car, since entryways need to clearly announce Wendell's presence to travelers (who were just on an Interstate traveling 65mph) as well as welcoming home residents from travels. Redesigning Wendell Falls Boulevard and Parkway are the key current entrances to focus on, but also Lizard Lick / Marshburn Road and Eagle Rock / Knightdale road(s). Consistent, attractive street-level lighting is key to brand Wendell as a place standing apart from the surrounding unincorporated areas and small towns. Refer to Figure 2 on the following page.

C3.4 Similarly, focus on ensuring that every Wendell resident has access to high-speed broadband internet service. Digital communications have emerged to represent far more than a better way to make phone call. Access to broadband ensures that people have the opportunity to work from home (and stay off the roads), keep up with important information, and provide a channel of communication with Wendell's government, their own neighbors, emergency service notifications, and national news media.

C3.5 Integrate aesthetics with capacity improvements. Look for opportunities to phase in aesthetic treatments downtown that build upon existing successes. These would include:

- Wendell Falls Pkwy Improvement Projects: Phase I: Martin Pond Road to Eagle Rock Road; Phase 2: Eagle Rock Road to Third Street: Sidepath (north side); street trees; pedestrian-scale lighting
- South Main Street Improvement Projects: Phase I: sidewalks to Fowler; Phase 2: connect two sides of South Main with roadway and / or pedestrian connection

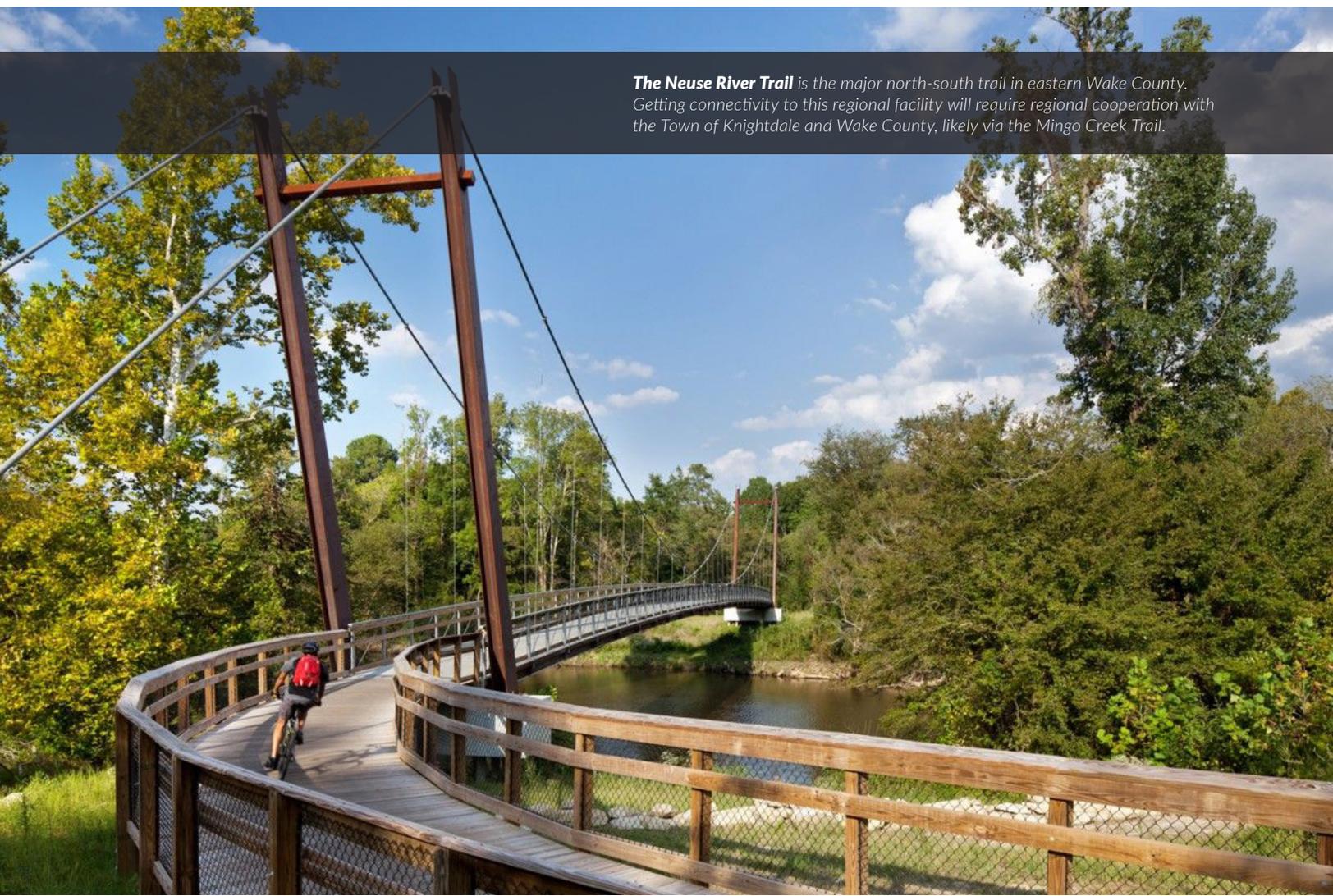
C4. Evaluate future utility extensions and costs carefully, considering how locations align with the Future Land Use Map of Blueprint Wendell 2030. Wendell and other eastern Wake County municipalities are in contractual agreements with the City of Raleigh for the provision of water and wastewater treatment services. In essence, Wendell purchases a "package" of capacities through merger agreements and amendments for both water and wastewater treatment. Peak flows for both services are not expected to exceed 45% to 55% of capacity through 2025 (source: City of Raleigh, Merger System Capacity Tracking, 9/2020). To ensure a continued strong position and mitigate long-term capacity-related improvements, the following actions should be initiated in the short-term.

C4.1 Wendell should use the same consumption factors as those used by Raleigh to evaluate the impacts of all new and proposed developments. Impacts will include not only consumption (and movement towards capacities that would require an amendment to the current agreement) but also water pressures necessary for fire suppression.

C4.2 Conduct a focused Cost of Services Study (COSS) before accepting any annexation of properties in outlying areas. Rural communities typically have houses serviced by package or individual septic systems and wells, both of which are potential liabilities for any community to annex if they fail. New, voluntary annexations need to be attached to public water and sewer services; otherwise, by-right zoning for anything except for extremely low-density developments should be prohibited and also support rural character in areas at the periphery of town. Reaching across the county line into Johnston County has been discussed for annexations into the town, and there are precedents in other Wake County communities (e.g., Cary and Wake Forest). A COSS doesn't have to be as comprehensive as those done for larger communities and longer timeframes but should indicated short-

and long-term impacts to the town in terms of revenues, costs for services provided (and not only utilities), and other categories of impact.

C4.3 Conduct annual reviews of water, wastewater, and storm drainage infrastructure and capacities in collaboration with the City of Raleigh. This action could also be another opportunity to coordinate with Knightdale and Zebulon, since some of this infrastructure (e.g., treatment facilities) are multi-jurisdictional in scope.



The Neuse River Trail is the major north-south trail in eastern Wake County. Getting connectivity to this regional facility will require regional cooperation with the Town of Knightdale and Wake County, likely via the Mingo Creek Trail.



IMPLEMENTATION

KNOWING WHERE TO GET STARTED WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO TACKLE FIRST, WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING IT HAPPEN, AND GETTING INSPIRATION FROM ACCOMPLISHED CASE STUDIES ARE ALL CRUCIAL TO OUR SUCCESS.

First, this section highlights 10 immediate action items happening or getting ready to happen as *Blueprint Wendell 2030* was being adopted that are short-term ways of creating positive energy and motivating even more successes later. Next is a quick summary of all of the recommendations cited in *Blueprint Wendell 2030*, as well as which of the major goals from the Plan (see the Goals below) they support. Finally, four focus areas and a series of case studies are used to illustrate how the recommendations could be achieved.

Blueprint Wendell 2030 Goals

These are simpler re-statements of the detailed goal and strategy statements cited earlier in the report. The two-letter codes are used in the table on page 90-94, designed to be printed as a double-sided 11x17" sheet.



GM

EFFECTIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT that supports new growth with adequate, reliable, and cost-effective infrastructure while preserving small-town charm and accommodating sensible and sensitive development.



CA

CONSERVATION OF COMMUNITY ASSETS that honors and embraces the past by protecting, enhancing, and expanding on agricultural, green, and historic elements.



HC

HIGH LEVEL OF CONNECTIVITY to improve the number, reliability, and equity of transportation choices with local connections, green technologies, and regional collaborations that enhance our ways getting to the places we want to go: work, school, shopping, and downtown.



EV

ECONOMIC VITALITY that fosters development supporting all aspects of life, increasing wealth opportunities that leverage our community assets, such as green spaces and the innovations brought by small businesses.



QL

QUALITY OF LIFE + EQUITY for every Wendell resident to have access to decision-making processes, family events, high-quality education, green spaces, recreation, jobs, and downtown resources.

TEN IN TEN

10 PRIORITY ACTIONS FROM BLUEPRINT WENDELL 2030 *(in no order...)*

a ● Raise awareness of the goals and objectives in this plan with local and regional partners

b ● Complete a downtown master plan to guide redevelopment, parking, and economic / housing diversity

c ● Complete a Public Art Master Plan, including addressing locations, funding, and preservation during redevelopment

d ● Continue to work towards creating a central park / Buffalo Creek greenway and connections

e ● Focus on creating short, neighborhood connections for existing residents and ensuring that new developments have these connections "built in to their design"

j ● Be intentional in plan development, project reviews, and policy updates to be inclusive and equitable in access to parks and public facilities

i ● Diversify the local economy to make it more resilient to downturns and provide more opportunities to create wealth

h ● Provide a broader range of housing choices, including "missing middle" types like cottages, senior housing, duplexes and larger single-family houses

g ● Update the Town's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), including changes suggested by this plan

f ● Work with partners to increase the mobility and accessibility transportation options through road, transit, walking, biking, and technology improvements



| GROWTH MANAGEMENT | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|--|---|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| GM1. Set implementation in motion with an Action Plan of Top Priorities | GM1.1. Utilize this Plan Implementation Matrix to guide the work of the Town and partner organizations. | • | • | | • | • |
| | GM1.2. Acknowledge progress. | | | | | |
| GM2. Encourage use of the Plan in Everyday Decision-Making | GM2.1. Refer to the Plan in all aspects of local government. Elected and appointed officials as well as Town | | | | | |
| | GM2.2. Promote the use of the Plan by local organizations, area businesses, and private citizens. | • | • | • | • | • |
| | GM2.3. Raise awareness of the community's vision and goals regionally. | | | | | |
| GM3. Review and Revise Town Documents | GM3.1. Update Adopted Plans. | | | | | |
| | GM3.2. Area Plans. Study specific geographies (i.e., subareas, corridors, etc.) within Wendell that capture, preserve, and build upon the unique characteristics and needs of each community. | • | • | • | • | • |
| | GM3.3. Amend or Rewrite the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). | | | | | |
| GM4. Expand Staff Resources | | • | | | • | |
| GM5. Maintain the Plan | | • | • | • | • | • |

| DOWNTOWN | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|--|--|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| D1. Strengthen downtown as the heart and central gathering place of the community | D1.1 Prepare and adopt a Downtown Master Plan | | | | | |
| | D1.2 Seek missing opportunities for programs in downtown Wendell | | | | | |
| | D1.3 Invest in public spaces and amenities to support the range of uses and level of activity desired for downtown | • | • | • | • | • |
| | D1.4 Improve the streetscape and treat the streets as accessible, versatile, multi-purpose public spaces | | | | | |
| D2. Grow downtown as a larger, mixed-use center to better position Wendell as a destination in the region and competitive investment location | D2.1 Consider opportunities to diversify the uses, including residential | | | | | |
| | D2.2 Redesign Third Street in two phases | • | • | | • | |
| | D2.3 Participate in efforts to redevelop sites and reuse existing buildings | | | | | |

| CENTERS OF ACTIVITY | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|--|---|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| CA1. Support development of key nodes (large and small) | | • | | | • | • |
| CA2. Amend zoning to accommodate mixed-use development in key nodes | CA2.1. Consider the creation of multiple types of mixed-use districts | | | | | |
| | CA2.2. Update the PUD language | • | | | • | • |

| DEVELOPMENT DESIGN | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|---|--|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| DD1. Strengthen design standards for mixed-use and non-residential development in key growth areas | | • | • | | • | • |
| DD2. Couple higher design requirements with incentives to attract desired investment that maintains the character of Wendell | | • | • | | • | • |

| HISTORIC PRESERVATION | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|--|--|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| H1. Make a more concerted effort to protect historic properties/areas | H1.1 Appreciate history | | | | | |
| | H1.2 Work with Capital Area Preservation and Wendell Historical Society to bolster historic preservation efforts | | | | | |
| | H1.3 Participate in additional initiatives to conserve historic sites and structures | | • | | | • |
| | H1.4 Carefully consider how libraries contribute to various neighborhoods and their residents | | | | | |

| ART & CULTURE | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|---|---|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| AC.1 Expand opportunities for art in various forms in downtown and other key locations | AC1.1 Prepare and implement a public art master plan | | | | | |
| | AC1.2 Seek to activate indoor and outdoor venues | | • | | • | • |
| | AC1.3 Strengthen the commitment to public art in the Town's Water Allocation Policy | | | | | |
| AC.2 Establish Wendell as an arts community of the Triangle Region | AC2.1 Become a destination with an Art Trail. | | | | | |
| | AC2.2 Encourage residents and visitors to promote the art | | | | | |
| | AC2.3 Use events and activities to create memorable art experiences | | | | | |
| | AC2.4 Consider artist-in-residence in empty storefront | • | • | | • | • |
| | AC2.5. Consider how the library location affects impacts the lives of senior citizens, families, and children | | | | | |
| | AC2.6. Preserve existing public art located on private property. | | | | | |

| NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|--|---|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| N1. Conserve valuable natural resources | N1.1 Adopt regulations to limit encroachment on existing conservation open space | | | | | |
| | N1.2 Protect and minimize encroachment on conservation areas and corridors | | | | | |
| | N1.3 Collaborate with public utility providers, NGOs, and private sector partners | | | | | |
| | N1.4 Collaborate with other entities | | | | | |
| | N1.5 Consider opportunities to facilitate conservation through transfer and/or purchase of development rights | • | • | | | • |
| | N1.6 Promote conservation design in future residential subdivisions | | | | | |
| | N1.7 Discourage development in flood-prone areas | | | | | |
| | N1.8 Conserve existing vegetation | | | | | |
| | N1.9 Enact Stormwater Low-Impact Design Best Practices | | | | | |

GM EFFECTIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT
CA CONSERVATION OF COMMUNITY ASSETS
HC HIGH LEVEL OF CONNECTIVITY
EV ECONOMIC VITALITY
QL QUALITY OF LIFE + EQUITY



| GREEN SPACES & GREENWAYS | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|--|---|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| G1. Increase public access to outdoors, open space, and nature, including through the existing and expansion of Wendell's recreation system | G1.1 Upgrade existing parks | | | | | |
| | G1.2 Implement the 2019 Park and Recreation Master Plan | | • | • | • | • |
| | G1.3 Equitable access to comparable amenities | | | | | |
| G2. Expand the park, greenway, and trail systems | G2.1 Create a linear "Central Park" along Buffalo Creek | | | | | |
| | G2.2 As secondary, parallel greenway routes, protect greenspace along Marks Creek and Little River | | | | | |
| | G2.3 Develop, with private sector partners, a connected greenway system within town and to surrounding networks | | | | | |
| | G2.4 Connect neighborhoods to downtown with greenways | • | • | • | • | • |
| | G2.5 Coordinate greenway locations at jurisdictional boundaries and connect to area greenways | | | | | |
| | G2.6 Utilize the floodplains for additional greenways | | | | | |
| | G2.7 Connect agricultural uses to connectivity and preservation efforts | | | | | |
| G3. Support remaining agriculture and, as practical, help conserve sites that are reminders of the Town's agricultural heritage | | • | | | • | |
| G4. Work, and work with others, to implement the Wendell Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommendations | G4.1 Complete the Lake Myra County Park | | | | | |
| | G4.2 Increase the number of active use facilities and lands | | • | | • | • |
| | G4.3 Connect recreation to Wendell's arts programs | | | | | |

| NEIGHBORHOODS & HOUSING | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|--|--|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| NH1. Maintain the value in older neighborhoods with investments in amenities | | • | • | | • | • |
| NH2. Reduce displacement and gentrification | | • | • | | • | • |
| NH3. Diversify housing to appeal to different groups | | • | | | • | • |
| NH4. Address current and future gentrification effects sooner | | • | • | | • | • |
| NH5. Collaborating with private developers for housing mix to vary price points & options | | • | | | • | • |
| NH6. Go Form-Based, somewhat (in the next UDO update) | | • | | | • | • |

GM EFFECTIVE GROWTH MANAGEMENT
CA CONSERVATION OF COMMUNITY ASSETS
HC HIGH LEVEL OF CONNECTIVITY
EV ECONOMIC VITALITY
QL QUALITY OF LIFE + EQUITY

| HEALTH & WELL-BEING | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|---|--|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| HW.1 Consider health and well-being of all current and future residents in decision-making | | | • | | | • |
| HW.2 Examine all decisions through an equity lens | | | • | | | • |
| HW.3 Increase access to care | HW3.1 Partner with Wake County Health & Human Services to identify barriers | | • | | | • |
| | HW3.2 Support investments in healthcare facilities in key locations | | | | | |
| HW.4 Foster an environment for healthy living | | | • | | | • |
| HW.5 Foster social connections, especially for seniors, with programming and places to gather | HW5.1 Reuse the downtown library building or other underutilized space | | | | | |
| | HW5.2 Promote assets to build a sense of community pride and ownership | | • | | • | • |
| | HW5.3 Recognize people of Wendell, including youth, as its major community asset | | | | | |
| HW6. Stop crime before it happens | | | • | | • | • |
| HW7. Start community reporting of needed maintenance items on-line | | • | • | | • | • |

| ECONOMY / MARKET / ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|---|---|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| E1. Support development of key nodes where commercial uses can offer the most benefit | | • | • | | • | • |
| E2. Leverage access to existing and potential greenway corridors | | | • | • | • | • |
| E3. Diversify the local economy and increase employment opportunities in Wendell | E3.1 Execute the strategies outlined in the 2020 Wendell Economic Strategic Plan | | | | | |
| | E3.2 Identify and target the types of industries the Town needs and wants | | | | | |
| | E3.3 Create space (land and buildings) to meet varied demands | | | | | |
| | E3.4 Focus on job creation | | | | | |
| | E3.5 Strengthen partnerships with businesses, institutions, and neighboring jurisdictions | • | | | • | • |
| | E3.6 Expand the brand | | | | | |
| | E3.7 Reduce retail leakage and increase spending on businesses here | | | | | |
| | E3.8 Create more value by investing in spaces that don't directly generate revenue | | | | | |
| | E3.9 Provide more options to live and work in Wendell | | | | | |

| CONNECTIVITY | | PLAN GOALS | | | | |
|---|---|------------|----|----|----|----|
| | | GM | CA | HC | EV | QL |
| C1. Create land use patterns that work with, not against, the transportation system | | • | | | • | • |
| C2. Improve the connectivity, robustness, and resiliency of the transportation system | C2.1 Work with NCDOT, CAMPO, Knightdale, Zebulon, Wake County, and Johnston County to coordinate road improvement plans | • | | • | • | • |
| | C2.2 Implement the existing Bicycle and Pedestrian plans | | | | | |
| | C2.3 Connect neighborhoods to downtown with greenways and/or a 10' sidepaths | | | | | |
| C3. Use traditional and non-traditional ways of alleviating traffic congestion | C3.1 Traditional capacity improvements | | | | | |
| | C3.2 Use policy to influence long-term decision-making & the built environment | | | | | |
| | C3.3 Create a sense of arrival with gateways | • | | • | • | • |
| | C3.4 Ensure every Wendell resident has access to high-speed broadband service | | | | | |
| C4. Evaluate future utility extensions and costs carefully | C4.1 Use the same consumption factors as Raleigh to evaluate development impacts | • | | | • | |
| | C4.2 Conduct a focused Cost of Services Study (COSS) prior to annexations | | | | | |

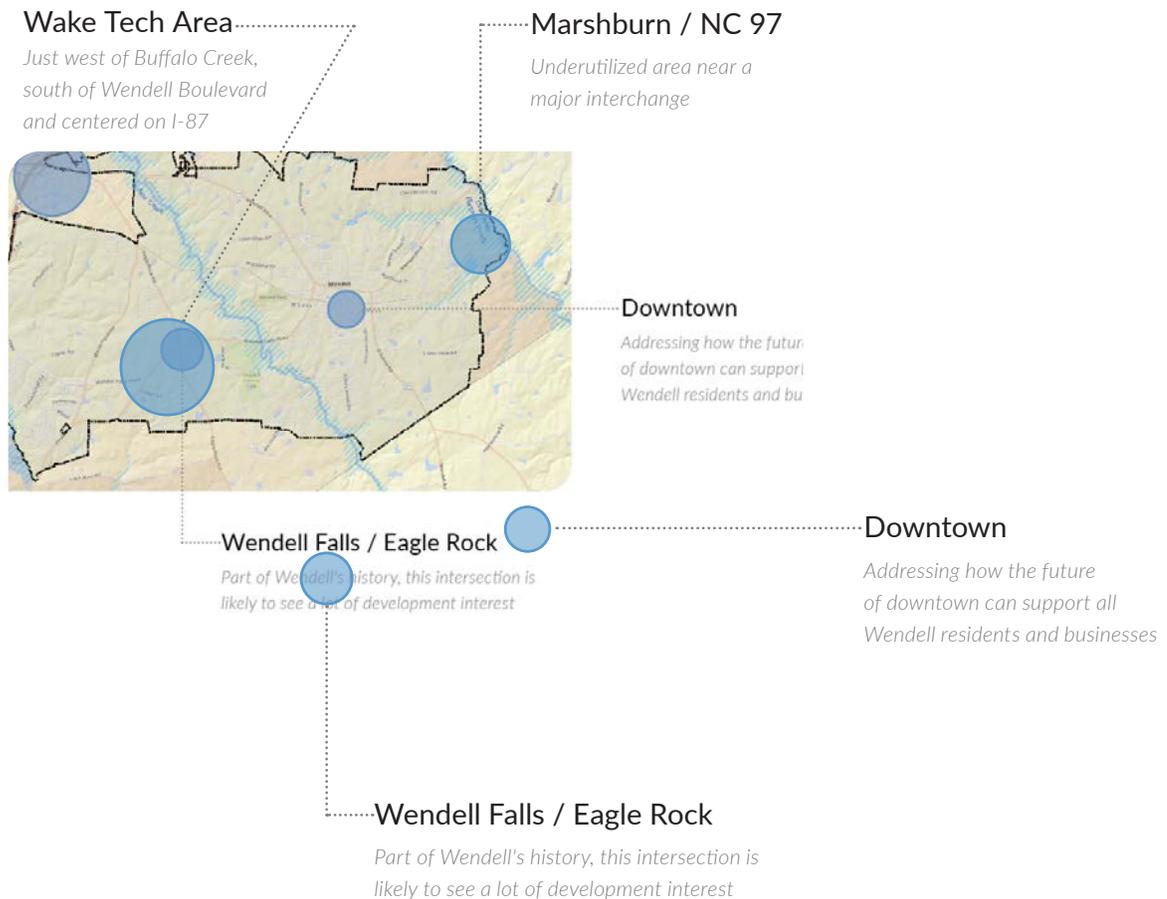


FOCUS AREAS

UNDERSTANDING HOW THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF BLUEPRINT WENDELL 2030 LOOK IF FOLLOWED IS AN IMPORTANT WAY OF COMMUNICATING THEIR VALUE. THE FOLLOWING FOUR CONCEPTUAL DESIGNS ILLUSTRATE THESE VALUES.

The following four locations (*see location map below*) were chosen because of their potential for near-term development or redevelopment. The following concepts are just that: they are not intended to be rigidly prescriptive or disallow other design elements that adhere to the values discussed in *Blueprint Wendell 2030*. However, they do provide guidance for private and public actors to use as examples of designs that bring value to all parties, including the larger community of Wendell.

These four concept designs are not shown in any particular ordering.



WAKE TECH AREA



- a. The walkable, mixed-use center offers commercial services for employees, students, and nearby residents, including restaurants, lodging, office, and coworking space.
- b. Other commercial uses, such as lodging, meet the demand created by area businesses, college, and the traveling public.
- c. Flex space supports a variety of businesses, facilitating job growth in the area. The location with easy access to the highway system is attractive to logistics businesses.
- d. The new road provides a north-south route connecting Wake Tech to the activity center at the heart of the Wendell Falls community as well as points in between.
- e. Heavy industrial development transitions to light industrial uses, creating a more compatible relationship with nearby, low-density residential neighborhoods. The second point of access along Robinson Mill Road offers a safer way in and out of this business location.
- f. Existing historic home is conserved, buffered from adjacent development, and provided direct access to road network.
- g. The northwest quadrant is predominantly employment with office uses and supporting commercial development in a mixed-use core that is accessible to the neighboring residential development.
- h. Formal greenspace acts as a gathering place within the office complex.
- i. Access to the future greenway is provided via a future park-like trailhead
- j. Overflow parking for office uses doubles as weekend parking for the greenway trail users. This parking area could be utilized for future structured parking in connection with a future park-and-ride transit stop.
- k. Possible locations for future transit stops.
- l. Improved intersection
- m. Streetscape includes enhanced pedestrian facilities.
- n. The school site remains and is improved to support additional capacity.
- o. Sidepaths are enhanced to provide safe access to the Robinson Mill Pond Preserve and future greenway along Buffalo Creek.

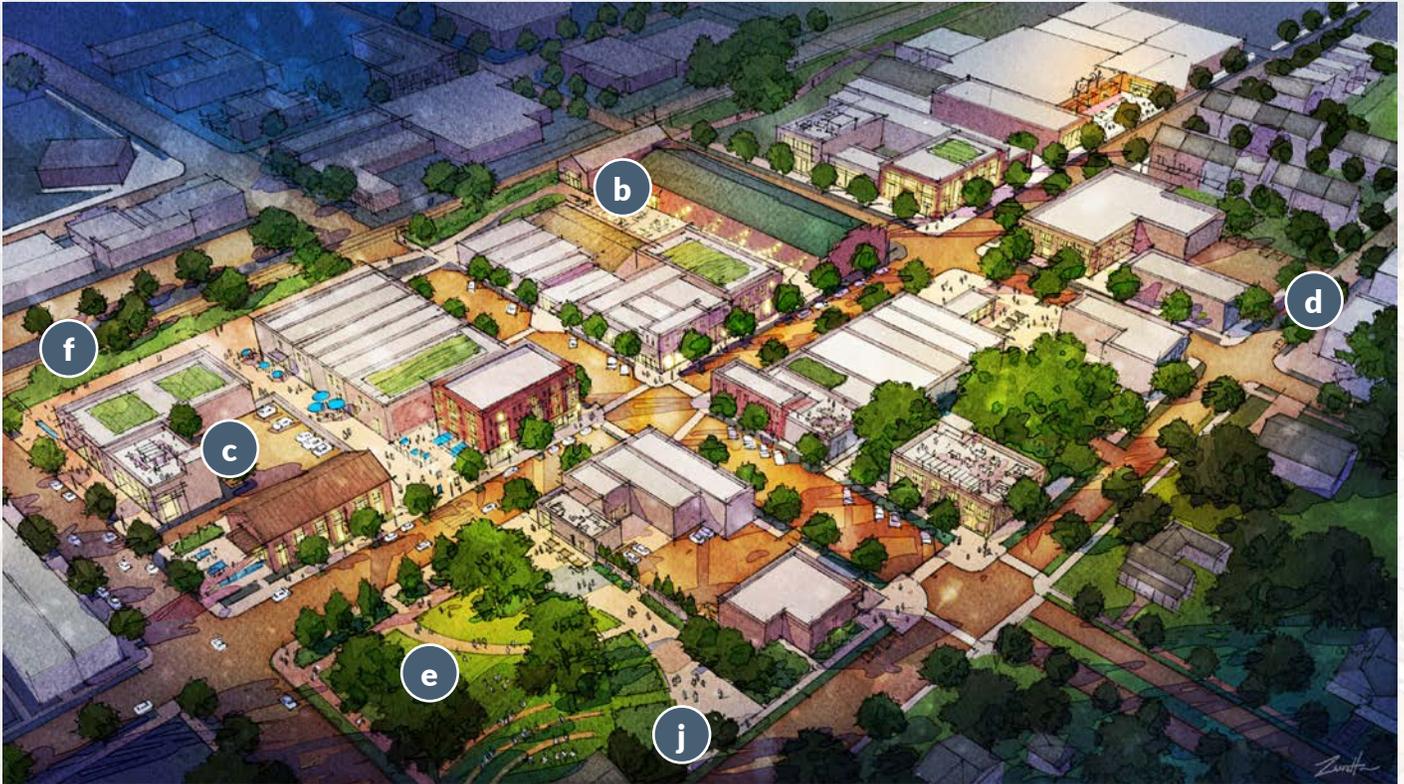


MARSHBURN ROAD / NC 97



- a. The concentration of flex-tech space is located with easy access to I-87.
- b. Innovation is fostered with a mix of complementary uses including a variety of employment types: office, makerspaces, and light industrial manufacturing.
- c. Supporting commercial uses serve employees and area residents.
- d. Access to the future greenway network.
- e. Housing choices include attached single-family (townhouse) and small-lot detached single-family homes.
- f. Medium density single-family homes offer a compatible transition to adjacent residential development.
- g. Neighborhood amenities include pocket parks and community centers for recreation and social activities.
- h. Civic uses are integrated into development to be accessible to the area residents via walking or biking. They supplement neighborhood amenities to offer a broader array of gathering spaces.
- i. The internal network of streets support various modes, providing trucks direct access to loading areas while accommodating local traffic to shops, restaurants, services, and flanking neighborhoods.
- j. The greatest mix of uses is organized around a greenspace that supports informal gatherings as well as programmed events. The location makes the space accessible to the workday population but remains usable for area residents' enjoyment at night and on weekends.
- k. The visibility of development to both pass-through and local traffic improves the viability of this crossroad as a commercial location.

DOWNTOWN



- a. Infill opportunities help expand the mix of uses, activity, and vibrancy of downtown.
- b. Adaptive reuse opens up the possibility of small businesses and start-ups operating downtown.
- c. Rooftop gardens and bars maximize the utilization of available space while enhancing the experience of downtown as a destination.
- d. Streetscape is enhanced so the streets are treated as important public spaces.
- e. The public realm is enhanced, offering a combination of passive and active spaces for residents and visitors to enjoy being outdoors.
- f. Pedestrian connections include enhanced alleys and crosswalks.
- g. Hardscape and landscape combine with permanent structures and seating in Town Park to create an inviting public space within downtown.
- h. A splash pad adds to the variety of things to do in downtown and activates the street.
- i. The residential product mix expands to include more attached and accessory units to appeal to a broader range of prospective residents.
- j. Space for public art adds interest to the streetscape and provide opportunities to creatively tell the story of Wendell. Celebrating the history and culture of the town, art can be used to help deliver a distinct, memorable, authentic experience



WENDELL FALLS / EAGLE ROCK



a. The grocery-anchored commercial center serves both local and regional needs.

b. The variety of housing types creates options for living in a walkable, mixed-use environment that appeals to people of different ages, income levels, and lifestyle preferences.

c. The residential mix includes housing options ranging from multifamily units to townhomes to patio homes.

d. Independent/assisted living located within walking distance of commercial and service uses help seniors maintain some of their independence.

e. The transition to existing neighborhoods is accomplished through compatible development at the edges of the center.

f. Office space integrated into the center provides opportunities for working close to home. Live-work units are also a possibility at this location.

g. The internal network of public streets and private drives allow for connectivity across development while minimizing trips added to the arterial roads of Wendell Falls Parkway and Eagle Rock Road.

h. The network of sidewalks, sidepaths, and trails connects residents and workers to the future Buffalo Creek Greenway and Central Park.

i. The sidepath along Wendell Falls Parkway becomes part of the town's trail network, connecting this destination to other places in town while enhancing the streetscape and the "front yard" of new development.

j. Sidewalks and plazas combine to provide ample space for restaurants and shops to "spill out" and liven up the activity on the street.

k. Pocket parks and green spaces enhance the public realm while providing improved outdoor spaces for residents.

CASE STUDIES

As Wendell begins to implement the recommendations of Blueprint Wendell 2030, the Town can take inspiration and insight from comparable implementations completed in other places in North Carolina and beyond.



CASE STUDY: THE DOWNTOWN SCHOOL, WINSTON-SALEM, NC

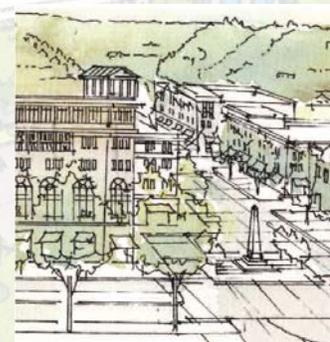
1

Making a lifelong commitment to learning. Some North Carolina communities are having success with new downtown schools occupying vacant or underutilized spaces and historic structures. In Winston-Salem, for example, The Downtown School is a magnet school established in the old City Market building through an original partnership with Reynolds, a private company, over 30 years ago. In this location, it leverages all of downtown as the learning environment and partners with area businesses to enhance the curriculum.

CASE STUDY: DOWNTOWN DULUTH, GEORGIA

2

Downtown Duluth is enjoying a renaissance. Downtown-focused charrettes (2005) and plan (2013) got the ball rolling. While setting the vision for the future, the plan recommended a mix of uses and investments in public spaces, which were conceptually designed. In addition, the Plan called for code changes to enable the land use changes desired. The public investments have resulted in improvements and a level of activity that have spurred privately-funded rehabilitation of existing buildings as well as new development, including multifamily residential units. The Duluth Downtown Development Authority is responsible for leading downtown promotion and financing public projects that will advance revitalization efforts.



CASE STUDY: TULSA'S LOAN PROGRAM

3

Tulsa ties its downtown aspirations to financial backing. The City of Tulsa created a Downtown Revolving Loan Fund to attract investment within in a delineated geography: the Inter Dispersal Loop (IDL). Qualifying applicants can receive construction loans for zero interest for a maximum of six years. To qualify, the applicants must contribute to the creation of the development pattern envisioned for Downtown Tulsa.



The Boxyard is one of several developments in Downtown Tulsa this was enabled by the no-interest loan program.



CASE STUDIES (CONT'D)

4

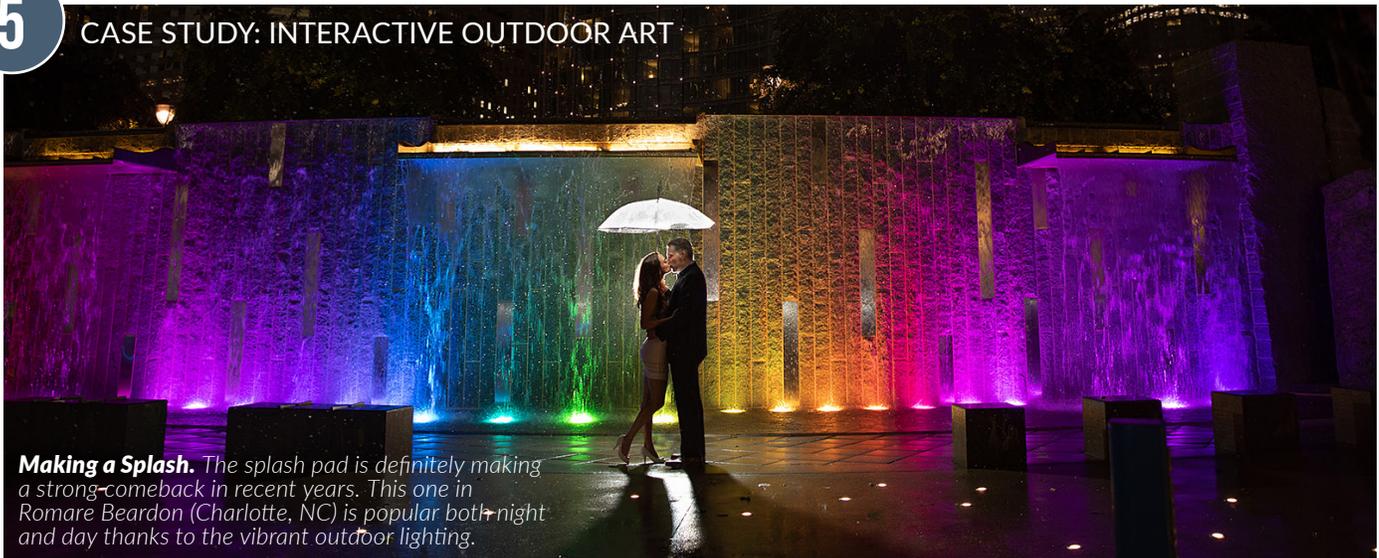
CASE STUDY: APPEARANCE GRANT PROGRAM

A mountain city grows, beautifully. The City of Hickory's Appearance Commission is responsible for reviewing and recommending applications for City-funded assistance with improvements to buildings and sites in the form of façade and landscape grants. Understanding the positive economic impacts of improvements, a higher level of funding is available to some key areas where reinvestment would benefit the city as a whole. The Commission has devised a point system that is tied to geographic locations to ensure the incentives align with the City's economic development objectives. Companion actions include the Adopt-a-Spot Program (individuals beautify public properties with flowers) and Treasured Trees Program (large, old, or otherwise significant trees are inventoried and preserved).



5

CASE STUDY: INTERACTIVE OUTDOOR ART



Making a Splash. The splash pad is definitely making a strong-comeback in recent years. This one in Romare Beardon (Charlotte, NC) is popular both night and day thanks to the vibrant outdoor lighting.

6

CASE STUDY: PUBLIC ART, BOTH TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT

Left: Incorporating Art Outside
(source: Andy Goldsworthy)

Right: The Popular Nashville Wings
Mural (Nashville, TN).



CASE STUDIES (CONT'D)

7 CASE STUDY: SEATTLE-STYLE POPS (PRIVATELY OWNED PUBLIC SPACES)

An evolutionary event. Seattle is probably the best-known example of intentional POPS, which are encouraged through the code of ordinances by allowing higher densities if more public amenities are constructed.

Over 40 locations (link) have been designated so far, including those at 20 Mad apartments (courtyard at far right) and the Seattle Children's Hospital (steps, gardens at left). Flexibility is key to allow private development to adapt their designs to the site's characteristics. In return, communities expand the number and type of amenities without public investments.



CASE STUDY: GHOST KITCHENS

8

BOO! Also, Steve, your food is ready. Reef Technologies, a former parking lot operator, is helping Wendy's launch 50 new ghost kitchens that supply delivery and pick up food orders only...no front door service (or queuing traffic). McDonalds, Chipotle, Doordash, and Kroger's are also exploring this option, in part because 60% of Americans in a National Restaurant Association survey said that they are more likely now (post-pandemic) to order takeout. Their latest successes include a ghost kitchen opening at Raleigh-Durham International Airport. Travelers can order before they leave the ground and find their meal waiting for them in a locker when they arrive. (sources: Daily Upside; RAL Today)



9 CASE STUDY: CAR SHARING

A trend to watch. Car sharing fits a growing niche of people that don't want or can't afford to spend money on buying and maintaining a private car. Car-sharing models include co-ops, sharing clubs, peer-to-peer options, and business-to-consumer (like the Zipcar brand). Sharing a car is a greener, more-affordable option for those that don't drive very often. And each car shared removes as many as 15 private cars from the road.

