

AUGUST 2023



# BLUEPRINT-2043

LAND USE AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Blueprint2043 was adopted by the Lincoln County Commissioners on August 21, 2023. We extend our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the residents and stakeholders who participated in the planning process and guided the development of Blueprint2043. Everyone's time, input, and energy are greatly appreciated.

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# SECTION 1

# Guiding Framework

## THE PROCESS

A well-designed comprehensive plan balances data, analysis, and community input. Blueprint2043 builds upon the 2018 Land Use Plan with a planning process that blended an understanding of baseline conditions with community input to establish a set of guiding principles. This early work laid the groundwork for an updated land use strategy that is supported by various objectives and strategies.









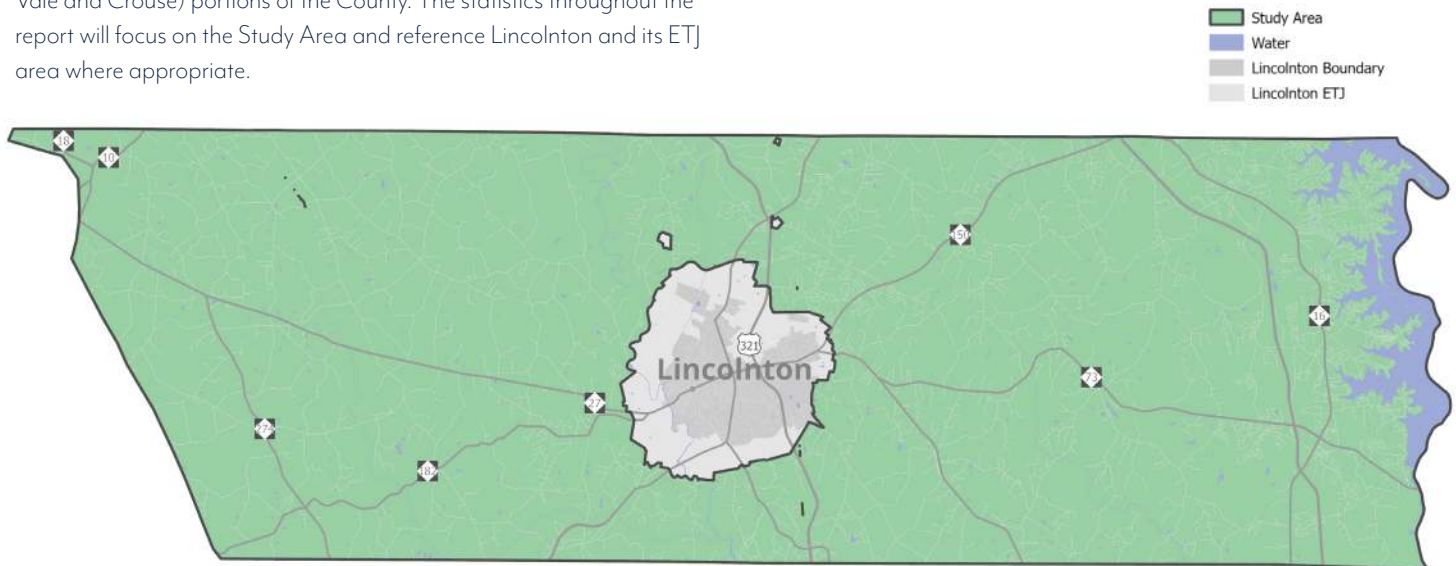
# Introduction

## THE STUDY AREA

Lincoln County is located in southwestern North Carolina. In April 1779, Lincoln County was established and included portions of modern-day Cleveland, Gaston, and Catawba Counties. In 1840, Lincoln County stretched more than 30 miles from east to west and 10 miles from north to south. Today, the County is a part of the Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia North Carolina-South Carolina Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Blueprint2043 focuses on the unincorporated areas of Lincoln County, which includes all of Lincoln County except Lincolnton and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), where the City has planning authority. The Study Area captures the County's rural areas and communities in the eastern (e.g., Denver, Lowesville, and Iron Station) and western (e.g., Vale and Crouse) portions of the County. The statistics throughout the report will focus on the Study Area and reference Lincolnton and its ETJ area where appropriate.

**Blueprint2043 focuses on the unincorporated area of Lincoln County, which excludes the City of Lincolnton and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).**



# USING THE PLAN

## *How the County Will Use This Plan*

Blueprint2043 should be used as a guide for County staff and elected officials to inform future land use decisions. The Plan should be used in the following ways:

**County Staff.** To align department policies, inform financial decisions, and incrementally decide how to fulfill the community's vision as it pertains to development, resiliency, and growth.

**County Commissioners.** To guide decisions about growth and development while allowing staff and elected officials to evaluate the economic conditions and community preferences.

**Boards and Committees.** To promote the community's vision and encourage consistency throughout the town as decisions are made.

## *How Others Will Use This Plan*

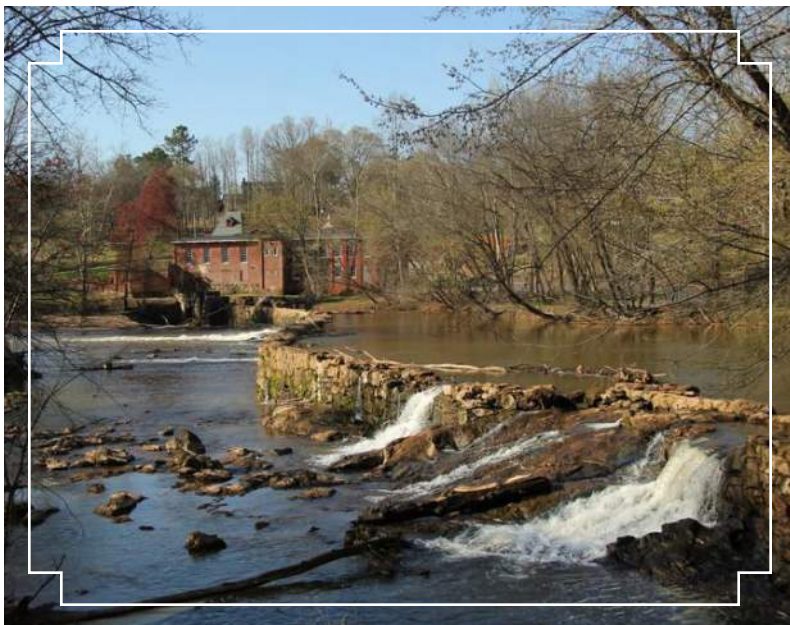
Blueprint2043 will be used by a variety of groups with different interests in the community. The Plan may be used in the following ways by various groups:

**Businesses.** To understand where the County seeks to focus growth and investment and to identify where more concentrated development may occur.

**Residents.** To understand the future vision of growth, development, and resiliency as well as how supportive policies can enhance the quality of life.

**Community Leaders.** To continue the work toward the common community goal.

**Regional Partners.** To streamline cross-jurisdictional recommendations and policy strategies.



# Community Characteristics

Blueprint2043 helps guide future land use decision making in Lincoln County by understanding previous planning efforts, shifting socioeconomic demographics, and current conditions. This review of existing conditions summarized here is an important early step in the planning process and provides a snapshot of the County characteristics. It provides the foundation for considering the interconnected relationship between land use, transportation, utilities, the environment, community resources, and the economy. The section reviews existing conditions and future trends by presenting information on people, housing, the economy, the built environment, and the natural environment.

## COMMUNITY INPUT

Community engagement for Blueprint2043 occurred throughout the planning process and was organized into three phases. Each phase focused on a unique set of questions that brought clarity to a renewed land use vision and supportive strategies.



### *Phase 1 | How should we grow?*

**The Blueprint2043 team gathered community input from the first round of meetings, an online survey, and interactive online map to craft a vision that informed the planning process. You can see the vision expressed as the Desired Outcomes and Guiding Principles on page 20.**



### *Phase 2 | What are our options?*

**The process considered multiple scenarios to determine the best way to achieve the vision. Input from the first round of engagement informed the creation of two growth scenarios to compare against the 2018 Future Land Use Map. You can read a summary of the scenario planning process on page 22.**



### *Phase 3 | What needs to be done?*

**The Blueprint2043 team worked with the community to create a coordinated plan based on the preferred land use strategy. The draft future land use map and nearly 80 strategies were presented at the final round of meetings. Input received is reflected in the future land use map on page 28 and the strategies shown in Section 3.**



# OUR COUNTY – AT A GLANCE

The Study Area for Blueprint2043 focuses on the unincorporated portions of Lincoln County, which excludes the City of Lincoln and its extrajurisdictional jurisdiction (ETJ). The Study Area's population is growing faster than the County overall and the state. The rate of growth and its implications are different in the eastern and western portions of the County. Several key takeaways guided our planning process:

Lincoln County is growing.

Lincoln County is older, more educated, and more affluent than other places in the state.

Lincoln County is becoming a more expensive place to live.

Lincoln County is home to many commuters, whose trips to work take longer.

## PEOPLE



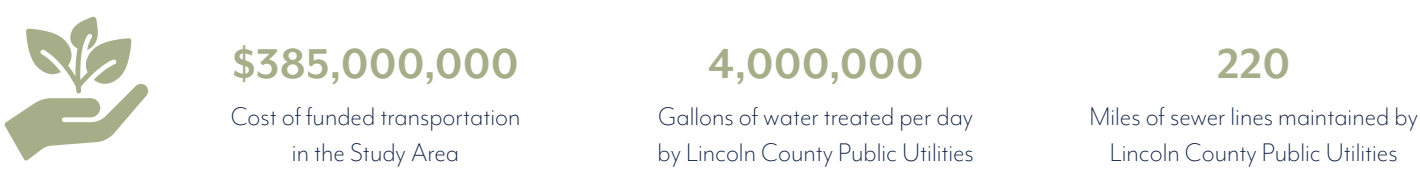
## HOUSING



## ECONOMY



## BUILT ENVIRONMENT



## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT





# PEOPLE

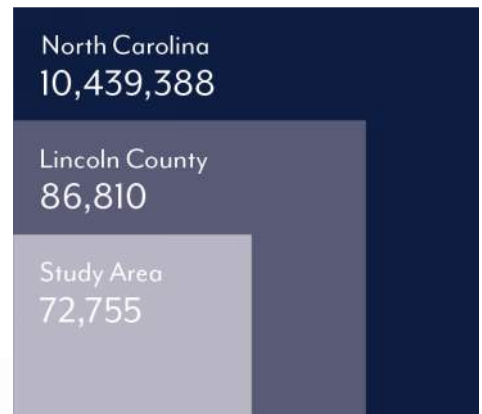
Demographic trends provide important insight into the Lincoln County of today and tomorrow. This section analyzes existing conditions, estimates future conditions, and compares the Study Area to Lincoln County as a whole and the state of North Carolina.

## Population

Unincorporated Lincoln County (also referred to as the Study Area) contains more than 80% of Lincoln County's population (approximately 73,000 of the 87,000 County residents). The Study Area's population is concentrated in eastern Lincoln County and near Lincolnton. The densest unincorporated area is along Lake Norman. Western Lincoln County is notably less dense than the eastern half of the County.

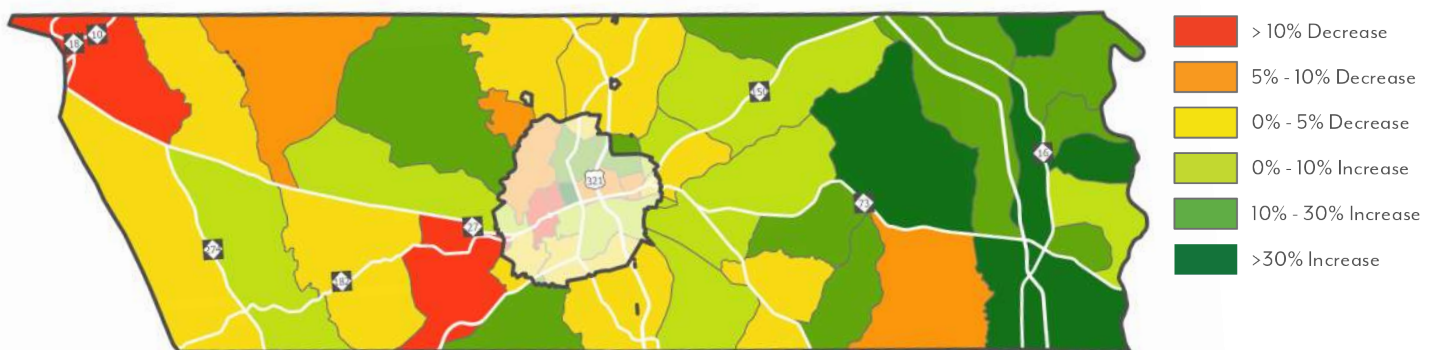
**More than 70% of residents in the Study Area live east of Lincolnton.**

### Population, 2020



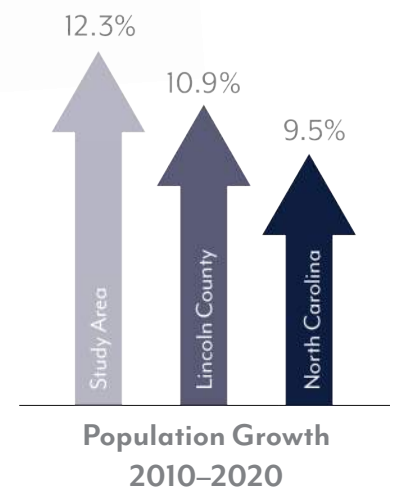
Source: 2020 Decennial Census

Lincoln County's population has grown over the past decade but not uniformly across the County. Portions of eastern Lincoln County have grown notably faster than other locations, with population decreasing since 2010 in a couple areas.



Source: 2010 Decennial Census, 2020 Decennial Census

Since 2010, the Study Area population has grown at a faster rate than Lincoln County as a whole or North Carolina. The Study Area grew 12.3% from 2010 to 2020 and had an estimated population of 72,755 people in 2020. This growth trend is predicted to continue. The following growth chart shows projected population growth according to two sources: the US Census Historical Growth Rate and the NC Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM). If trends continue, the Study Area population will exceed 90,000 and 100,000 by 2050.



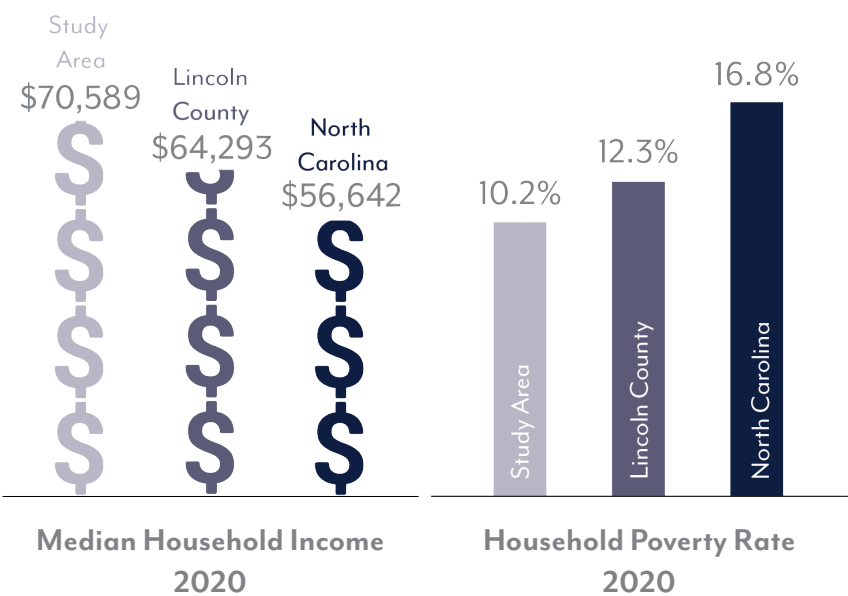
Source: 2010 Decennial Census, 2020 Decennial Census



# Income and Poverty

The Study Area has a higher median household income and lower poverty rate than Lincoln County overall or North Carolina (10.2% of households in the Study Area are below the poverty line compared to 12.3% in the full County and 13.4% in the state). Approximately 26.9% of Study Area households make less than \$50,000 per year compared to 37.3% of the overall County.

**Eastern Lincoln County is more affluent than western Lincoln County. The median household income in eastern Lincoln County is approximately \$75,000, compared to \$57,000 in western Lincoln County.**

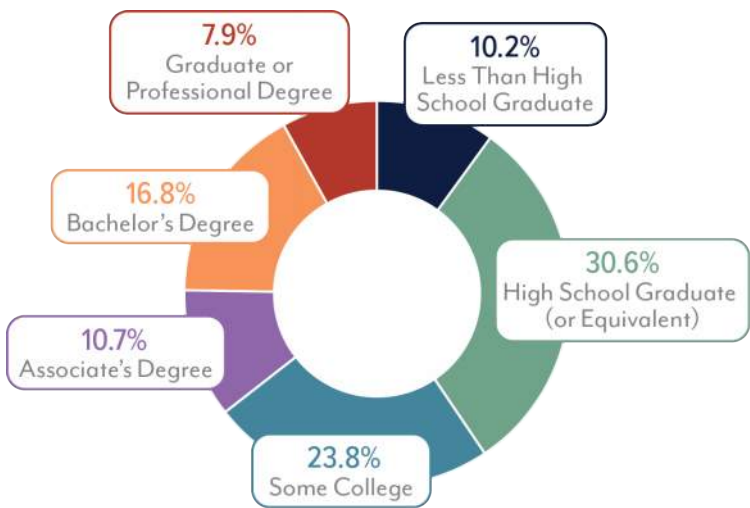


Source: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates

# Education

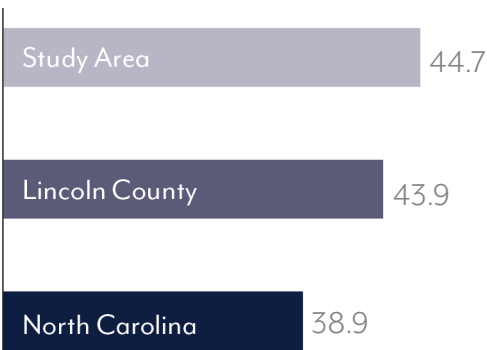
Approximately 25% of adults in the Study Area have a bachelor's degree or higher. An additional 10.7% have an associate degree, and 23.8% attended some college. About 10% of adults received less than a high school degree.

Educational Attainment, Population 25+, 2020



# Age

The median age in the Study Area is 44.7 years, compared to 43.9 for Lincoln County as a whole and 38.9 for the state. Approximately 17.5% of Study Area residents are 65 years or older. The higher proportion of elderly residents is important. Many seniors desire alternate housing options as they age, such as more affordable single-family homes or retirement/ nursing homes.



Source: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates

# Households

The Study Area is home to 27,599 households. The average household size of 2.56 people matches fairly closely with the North Carolina average.



Household Size, 2020

Source: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates



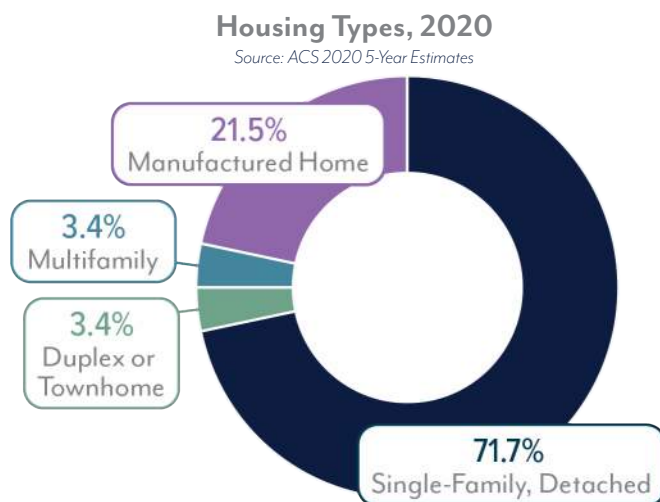
# HOUSING

Analyzing the housing supply and market conditions in Lincoln County helps align policy and future land use decisions with future housing needs and desires. The snapshot of housing in the Study Area shows data from the 2020 US Census American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the Zillow Home Values Index, and Lincoln County property information.

## Housing Types

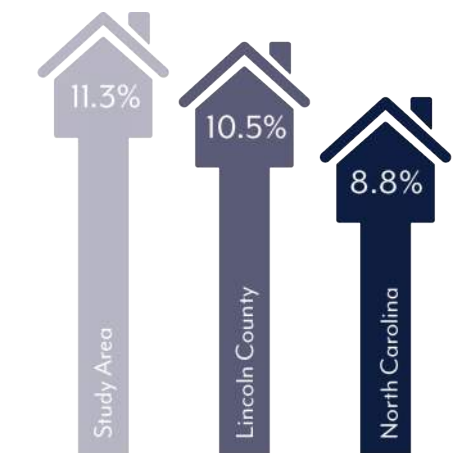
The Study Area's housing is mostly detached single-family homes, comprising more than 70% of all units. Manufactured homes comprise about a fifth of the housing units in the Study Area. Duplexes, townhomes, and multifamily units are rare, comprising a combined 7% of all units.

**Approximately 93% of housing units in the Study Area are single-family detached homes or manufactured homes.**



## Housing Unit Growth

The housing stock in Lincoln County as a whole has grown at a slightly faster rate than the population since 2010. The Study Area has approximately 28,000 housing units as of 2020, representing approximately 75% of all housing units in the County. The County as a whole and the state also have experienced sizable housing unit growth since 2010. Housing unit growth has been more pronounced in the Study Area compared to all of Lincoln County, and this growth is significantly higher than the state average. Housing unit growth both determines and responds to growth in the population of an area.

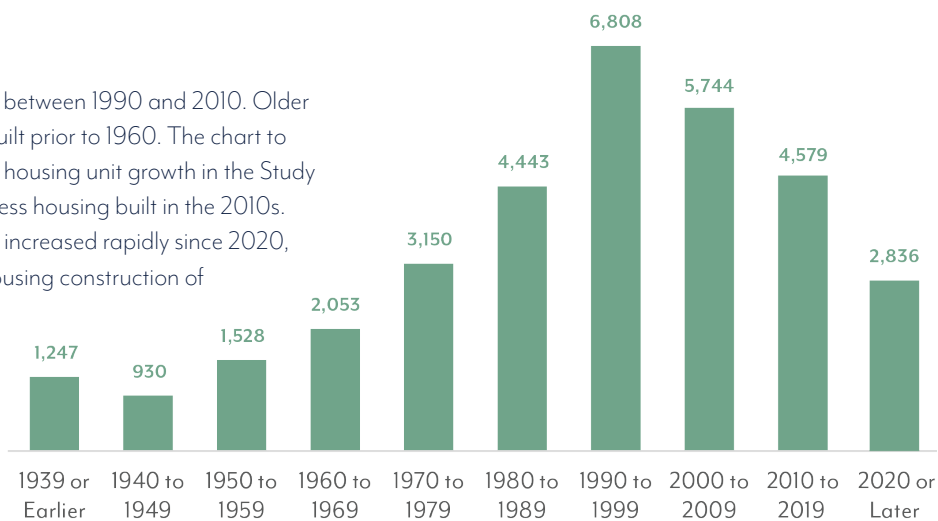


**Housing Unit Growth, 2010 to 2020**

Source: 2010 Decennial Census, 2020 Decennial Census

## Housing Age

Nearly half of units in the Study Area were built between 1990 and 2010. Older homes are uncommon, with just 11.1% of units built prior to 1960. The chart to the right suggests that the primary decades for housing unit growth in the Study Area were the 1990s and 2000s, with slightly less housing built in the 2010s. However, the pace of housing construction has increased rapidly since 2020, with building permits on track to surpass the housing construction of the previous decade during the 2020s.



**Housing Year Built (number of units)**

Source: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates, Lincoln County Tax Administration

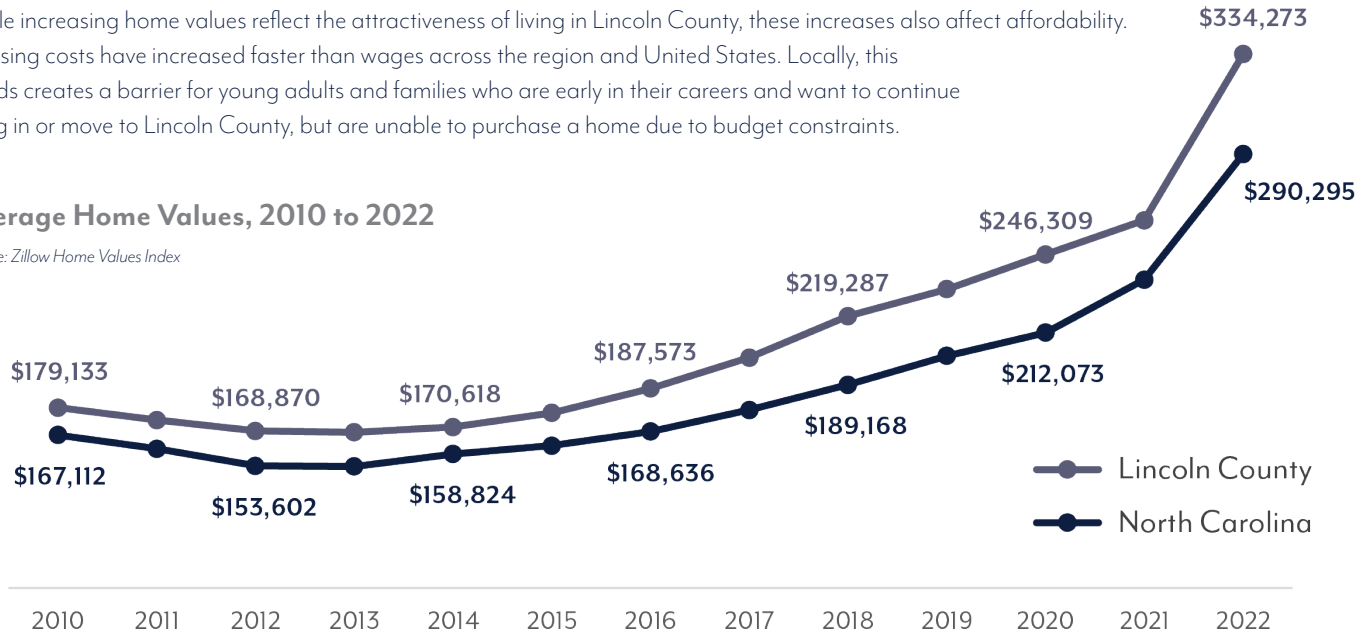
# Home Values

Data from the Zillow Home Values Index shows the change in home values over the past decade. During the 12-year period from 2010 to 2022, home values in Lincoln County as a whole have nearly doubled. This rise in values has been the most extreme in the last five years, increasing from \$201,055 in 2010 to \$334,273 in 2022. Home values in Lincoln County are higher than the state average of \$290,295.

While increasing home values reflect the attractiveness of living in Lincoln County, these increases also affect affordability. Housing costs have increased faster than wages across the region and United States. Locally, this trends creates a barrier for young adults and families who are early in their careers and want to continue living in or move to Lincoln County, but are unable to purchase a home due to budget constraints.

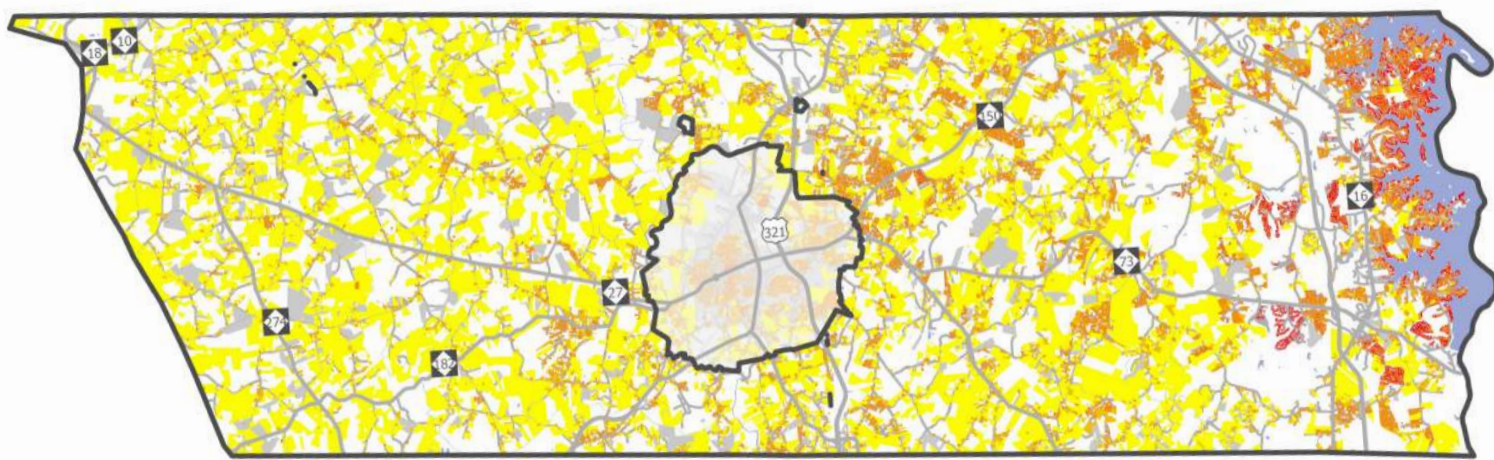
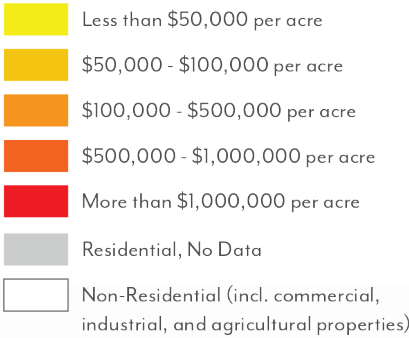
## Average Home Values, 2010 to 2022

Source: Zillow Home Values Index



## Residential Property Tax Value per Acre

The highest values per acre based on assessed tax property value are found in neighborhoods near Lake Norman in eastern Lincoln County. The map below shows all residential properties, excluding undeveloped land zoned for residential use. **Many properties zoned for residential use remain undeveloped in the Study Area.**



Source: Lincoln County Tax Administration



# ECONOMY

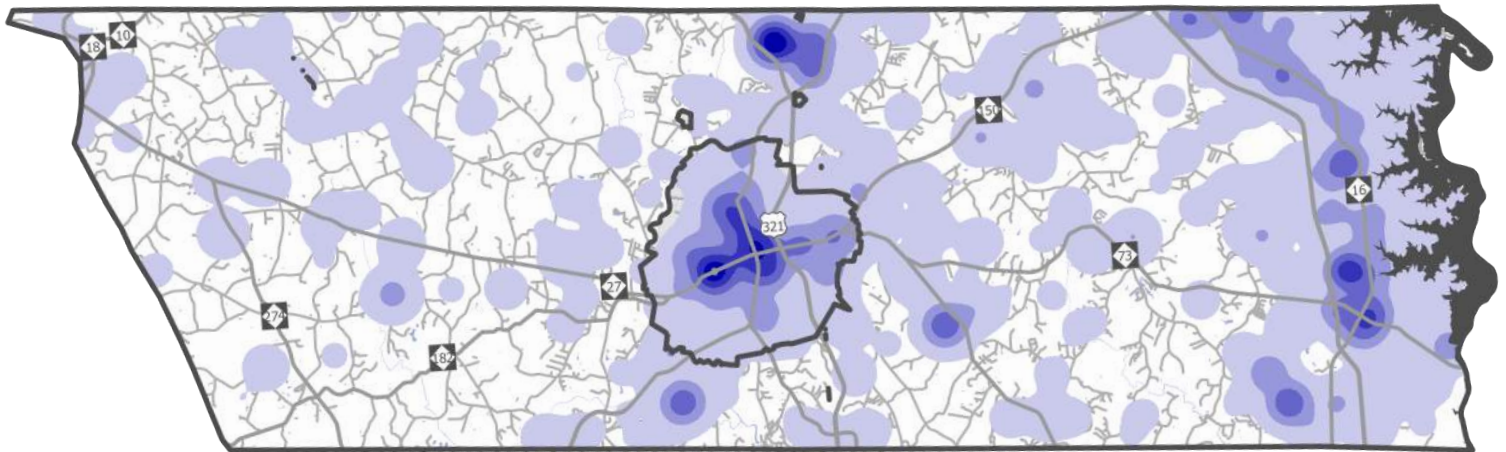
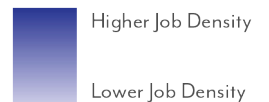
Lincoln County contains numerous economic nodes for commerce and employment. Understanding the County's economic engine helps track and plan investments to drive economic growth where it makes sense. Not all economic activities are appropriate in every area, so being intentional about these activities helps Lincoln County meet the needs of all residents.

## Employment

Most of the economic activity in the Study Area is concentrated along NC 16 on the eastern edge of the County, with an additional major node at Lincoln County Industrial Park north of Lincolnton and a few smaller industrial job centers elsewhere. Manufacturing jobs make up about a third of employment in the unincorporated area, followed by the Construction, Retail Trade, and Educational Services sectors.



Higher job density areas are along NC 16 Business and around Lincolnton.



Source: LEHD OnTheMap

## Commuting Patterns

Most workers who live in Lincoln County leave the County for work, while about 14,500 commute into the County.

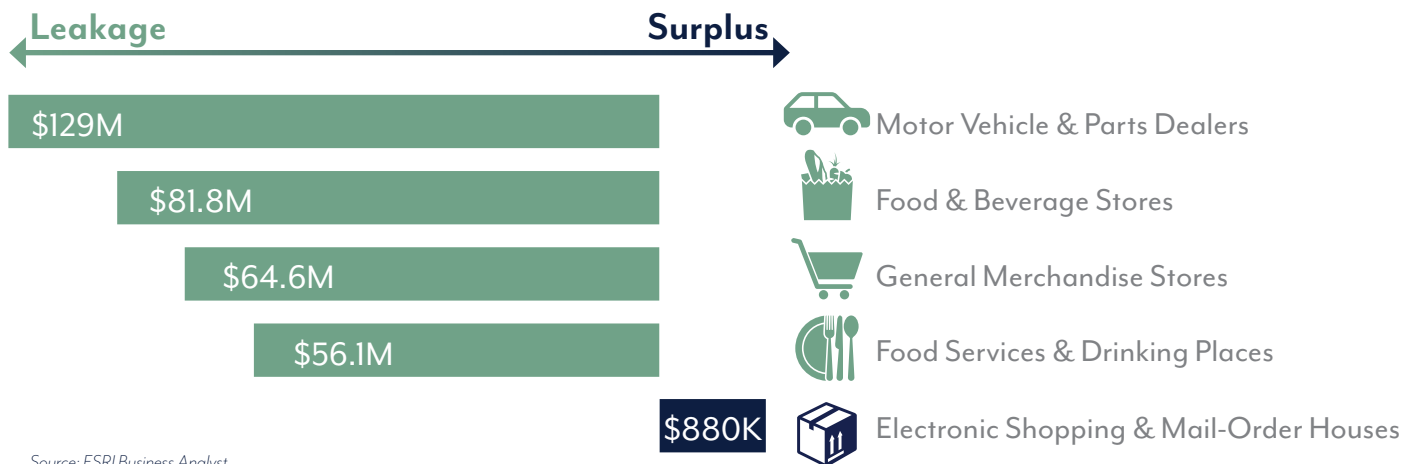


STAY and Work in Lincoln County

Source: LEHD OnTheMap

## Retail

Most residents of the Study Area shop outside the area or online. The difference between the retail spending of an area's residents and the retail sales produced by the stores located in the same area is referred to as retail leakage. Understanding the Study Area's retail market is an important step to diversifying the tax base and creating a more resilient local economy.



Source: ESRI Business Analyst



Spent by  
Study Area residents

**\$959.2 million**



Spent in  
Study Area stores

**\$405.8 million**



Area Leakage

**\$553.4 million**

## Industrial

Manufacturing and other industrial activities are primary engines of Lincoln County's economy. The County is home to multiple industrial parks, the largest being the Lincoln County Industrial Park. The facility's location near US 321 allows strategic access to Charlotte and Interstate highways. Other smaller industrial sites are located throughout the County.



## Office

The Study Area is home to multi-tenant office space, primarily in eastern Lincoln County, and some professional services offices are located throughout the County.

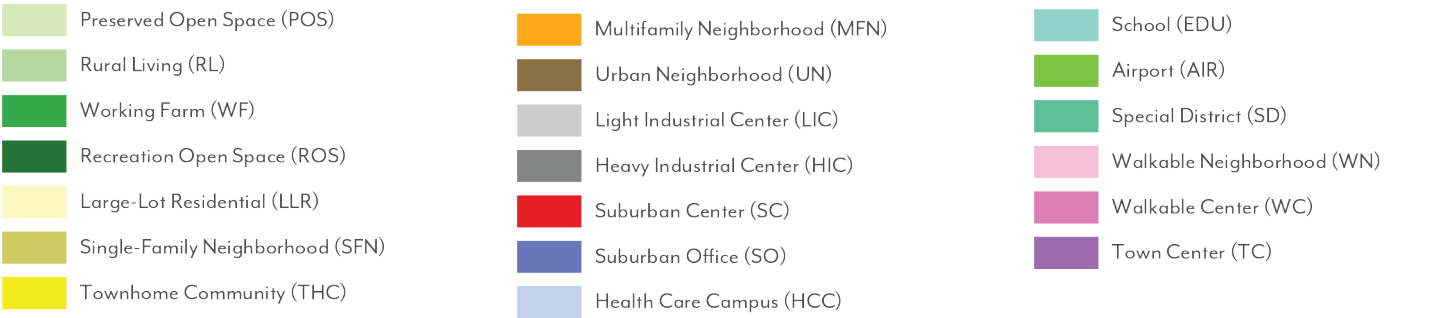




# BUILT ENVIRONMENT

## Existing Land Use

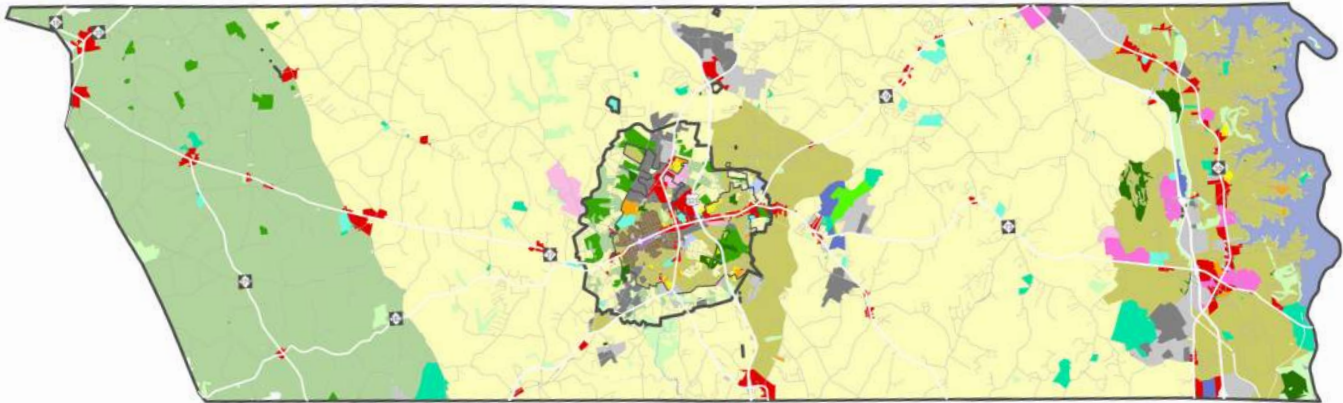
The Blueprint2043 Future Land Use Map was created—in part—from a scenario planning exercise that tested different growth options using the Metrolina CommunityViz Model v2.0. The model includes 26 community type designations (18 of which can be found in the Study Area) that represent existing and/or future land uses. The Existing Land Use Map (shown at right) helps illustrate current development patterns in Lincoln County. Because this data is drawn from a variety of sources, minor discrepancies may be present. Existing land uses in the model were updated during the Blueprint2043 process.



Large-Lot Residential areas comprise more than half of the Study Area’s land area.

Non-residential uses are typically located near major transportation corridors and intersections.

Some parcels may fit the definition of more than one Community Type. For example, many residential parcels also used for agricultural purposes are categorized as Rural Living or Large-Lot Residential.



Source: Metrolina CommunityViz Model

## Development Status

Another way to look at land use is through development status, which shows the locations in the Study Area that could theoretically support new development. Development status was assigned in the Metrolina CommunityViz Model, v2.0 using a combination of aerial photography, property appraisal data, and topic-specific geospatial information systems (GIS) data. This analysis was updated in 2022 for use in Blueprint2043.

Since the CommunityViz model is used for regional analysis and combines a variety of data sources, a grid network is used rather than parcel boundaries. In the map below, **each grid cell shows the predominant development status of the area.**

### Development Status Categories

<b>Preserved Open Space (1.6%)</b>	Active or passive land dedicated to permanent or semipermanent open space, including state parks, conservation areas, parks and recreation fields, and land set aside for open space in residential neighborhoods, commercial centers, and business parks. These areas are considered generally unsuitable for development.
<b>Agriculture (46.7%)</b>	Lots or parcels used for agricultural purposes, including fields, pens, silos, residents' homes, and buildings needed to support the operations of the farm.
<b>Committed Development (0.7%)</b>	Lots or parcels that have been approved for development but not yet built as of January 31, 2019. Some of these parcels may have been developed since these data were published.
<b>Developed (15.7%)</b>	Lots or parcels largely built-out with permanent buildings or structures. Also includes surface parking lots that serve adjoining buildings or other parking lots adjacent to buildings.
<b>Redevelopment Potential (0.5%)</b>	Lots or parcels currently developed inside municipal limits where the reported land value was at least two times greater than the reported building value. <b>These type of lots are only present within the Lincolnton ETJ.</b>
<b>Infill Development Potential (30.6%)</b>	Lots or parcels with permanent buildings or structures that occupy only a small portion of the property, leaving significant area available for future development. The condition of buildings or structures was not considered.
<b>Undeveloped (0.9%)</b>	Lots of parcels without permanent buildings or structures. Undeveloped status was also assigned to more rural parcels with temporary structures.



Source: Metrolina CommunityViz Model; Lincoln County

It is important to note that growth may occur in locations identified as Developed. As market conditions change, transportation networks evolve, and populations shift, redevelopment may occur. This map provides a snapshot based on the most recent data.





## Transportation

Blueprint2043 considers the relationship between transportation and land use to be context-sensitive, meaning that the observations identified in the transportation section reflect the unique circumstances in Lincoln County. The following section explores the existing transportation network. In this section, mobility refers to vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian modes of transportation.

### Traffic Volumes

Annual average daily traffic (AADT) reflects the average number of vehicles on a roadway each day. Ideally, traffic volumes correspond with the function and design of a roadway. For example, freeways or expressways serve long-distance travel and correspond with higher traffic volumes than a local neighborhood street. The AADT helps identify areas and corridors where demand is high. In 2020, several corridors carry more than 15,000 vehicles per day (vpd), including NC 16 and US 321 as well as portions of NC 73, NC 16 Business, and NC 27.

### Funded Roadway Projects

The State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) identifies state-funded projects throughout North Carolina. Lincoln County has several funded projects in the 2020-2029 STIP, including roadway improvements, intersection redesigns, a new interchange, and bridge repairs. The STIP is updated every two years.

### Unfunded Roadway Projects

A project in the STIP must first appear in the region's adopted long-range transportation plan. The Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (GCLMPO) Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is the region's financially constrained, long-range transportation plan. The most recent plan, adopted in March 2022 with a planning horizon of 2050, sets forth a future transportation system to serve existing and projected traffic volumes, public transportation needs, bicycle and pedestrian demand, and aviation. The 2050 MTP includes 28 roadway projects and 19 non-roadway projects.

### Unfunded Active Transportation Projects (the CTP)

As a mostly rural and exurban county, bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Lincoln County are very limited. The GCLMPO Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) is an unfunded list of transportation needs for all travel modes.

## Parks and Recreation

The Lincoln County Recreation Master Plan includes a detailed inventory of the County's existing park facilities. Overall, 16 parks are in Lincoln County, with nine of those located in the Study Area. These parks total more than 300 acres and offer a variety of sports and activities.

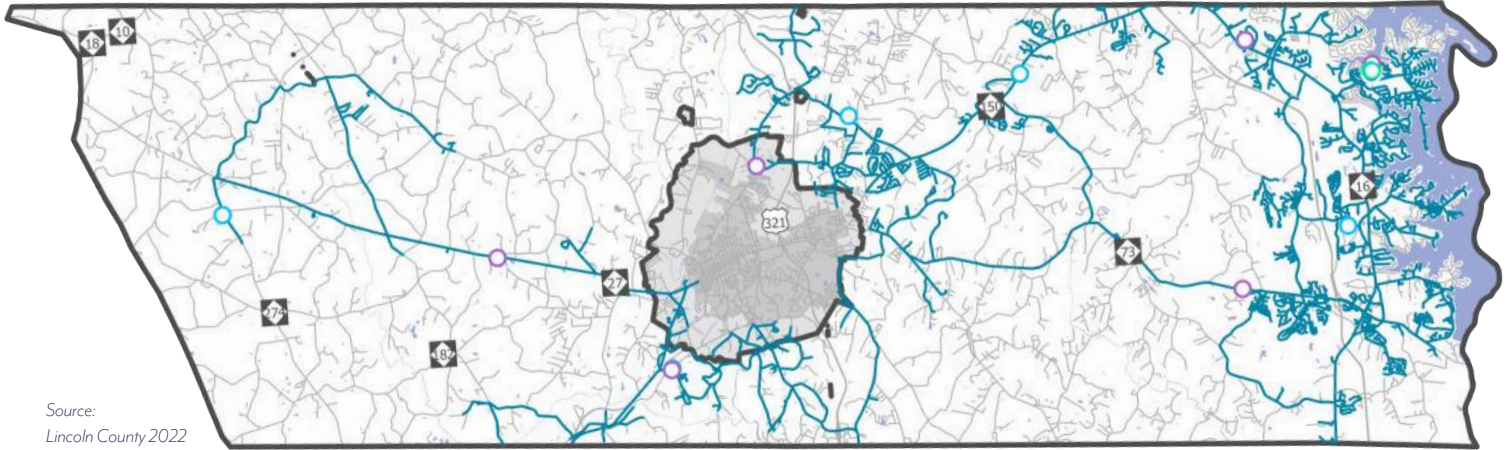


# Utilities

## Water

Lincoln County treats nearly four million gallons of water per day, maintains more than 300 miles of water lines, and serves approximately 15,000 residential and commercial customers. Given the importance of water quality, the County publishes an annual [Drinking Water Quality Report](#).

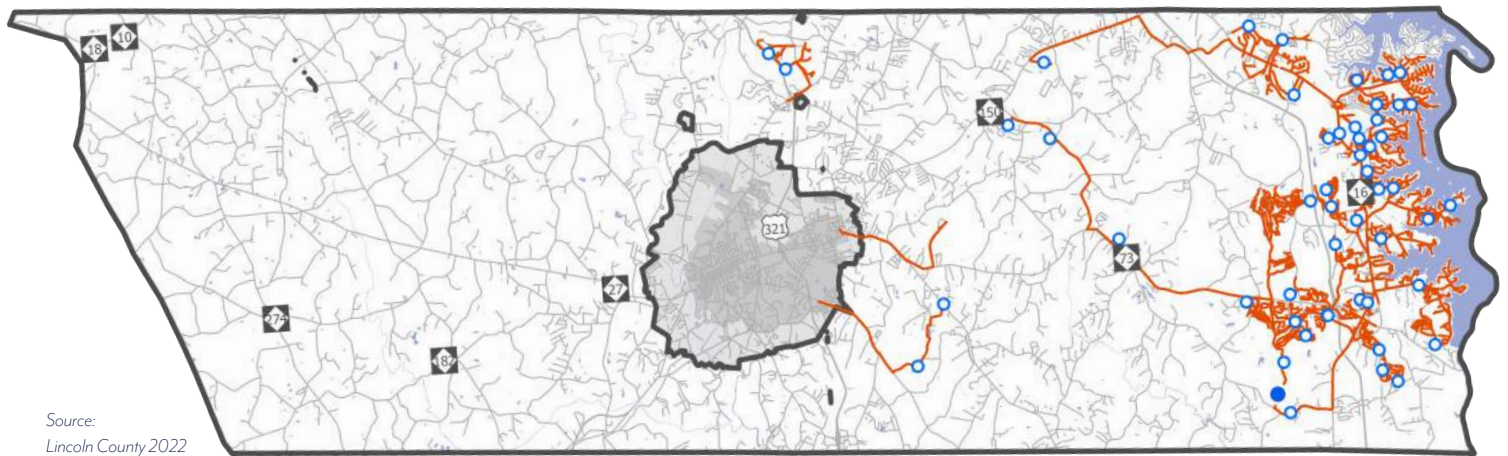
- Enclosed Storage Facility
- Pump Station
- Storage Basin
- Water Main Line



## Waste Water

Lincoln County maintains more than 220 miles of sewer lines in the eastern portion of the County, including 51 lift stations. The system moves waste to the waste water treatment plant (WWTP) on Old Plank Road in the southeast corner of the County. An expansion to the WWTP is expected to be complete in mid-2023. More detailed information on the specifics of the Lincoln County sewer system can be found in the [2021 Annual Report](#). Locations not served by County sewer treat waste with private septic systems, including the entire western portion of the County.

- Lift Station
- Treatment Plan
- Sewer System



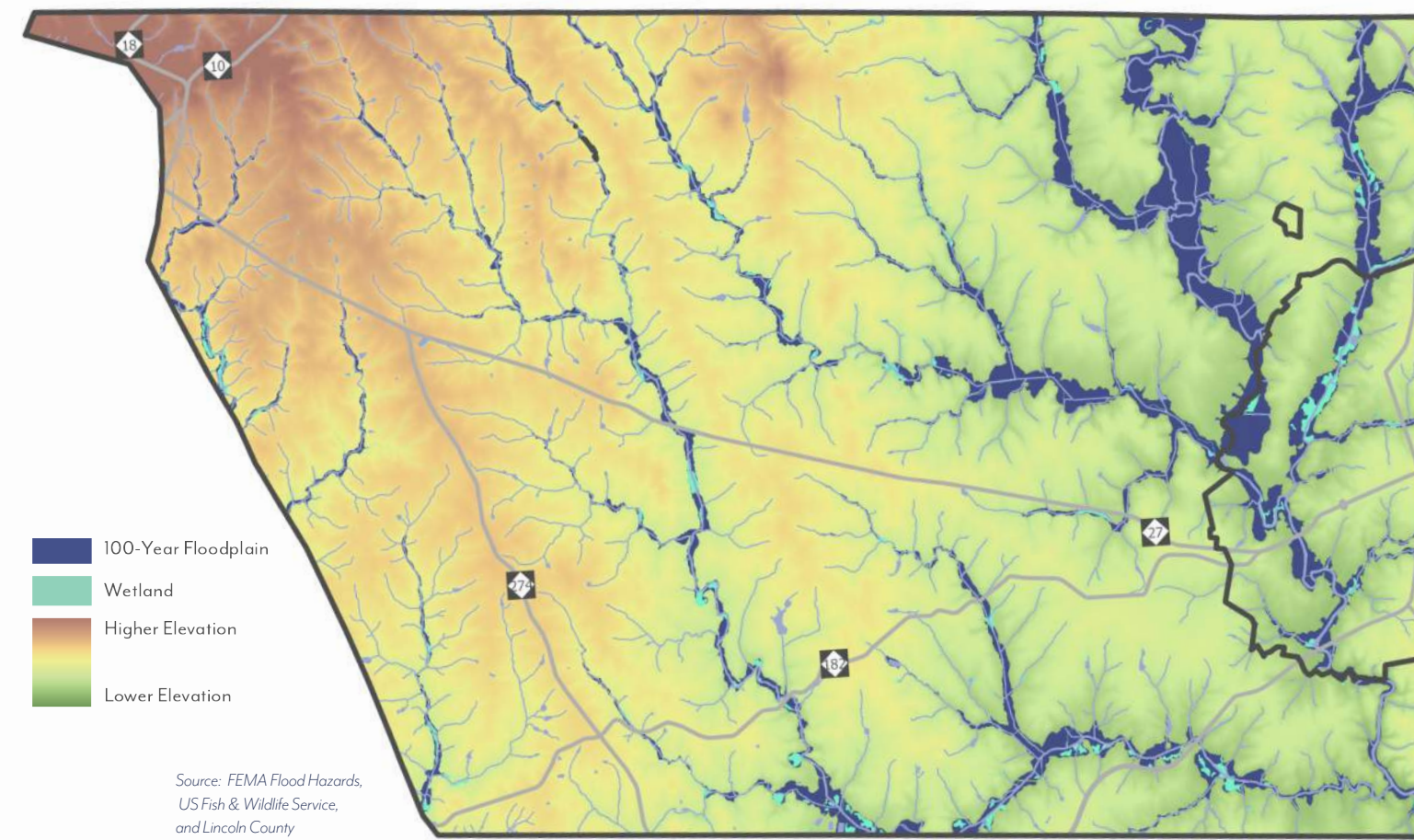
## Historic Sites and Cultural Destinations

Lincoln County is home to 692 historic sites, scattered across the County, though generally concentrated in the more rural western portion of the county. These sites range from farmhouses and mills to homes, schoolhouses, and churches.

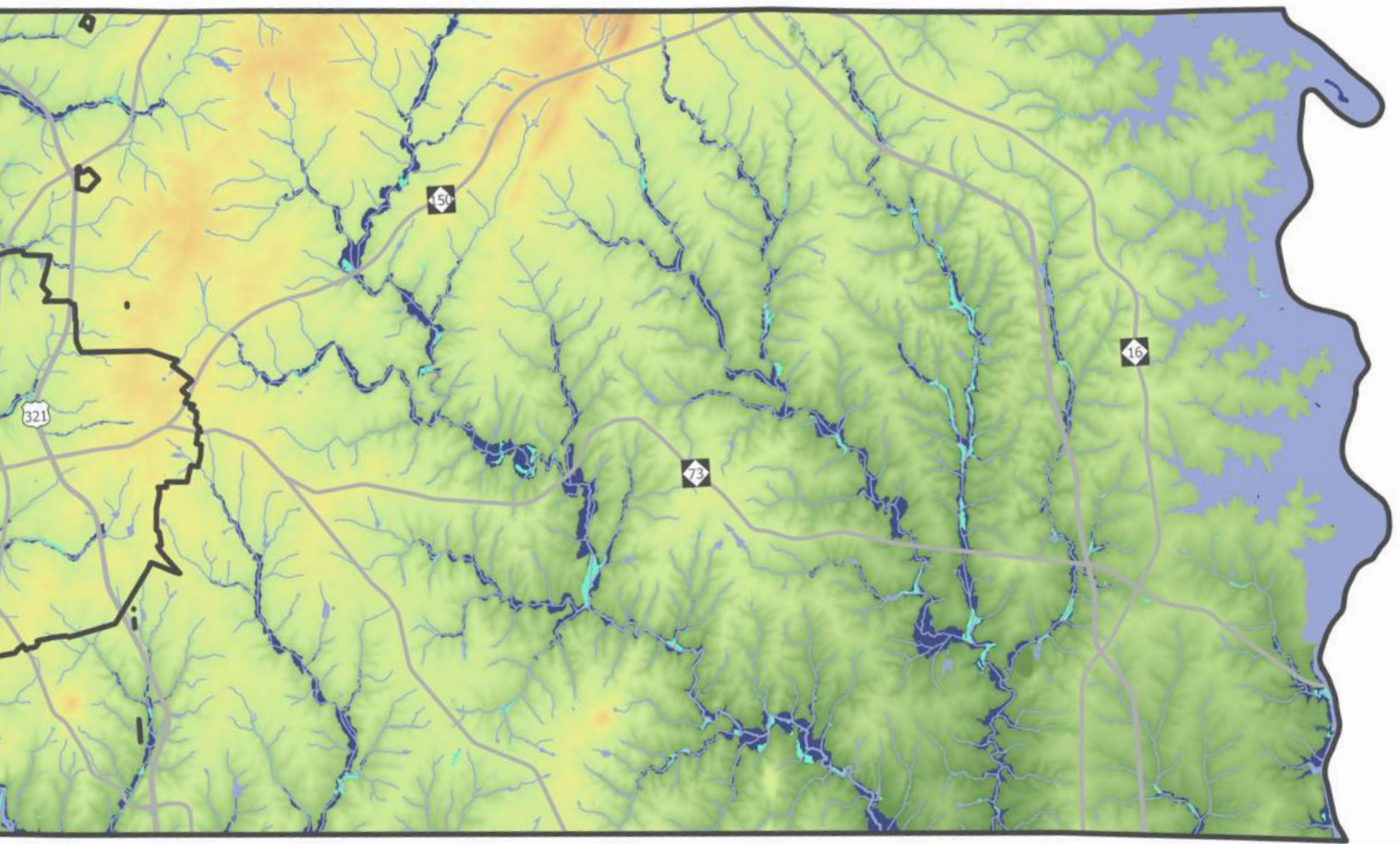


# NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The natural environment includes hydrology (water features) and topography (the physical form of a place). Lincoln County is home to numerous water bodies, including Lake Norman and the Catawba River to the east and many streams throughout. Major rivers include the South Fork of the Catawba River, which runs through the County west of Lincolnton. The South Fork and its tributaries, including Clark Creek and Howards Creek, feature wide 100-Year floodplains that limit development opportunities. More than 25 square miles—totaling 8% of the Study Area—is within the 100-year floodplain.









# Guiding Framework

Blueprint2043 builds upon the County's existing land use plan, completed in 2018, to establish a renewed vision for how we use our land. It blends the latest data, emerging trends, and ongoing conversations with the community. The structure of Blueprint2043 begins by describing three **DESIRED OUTCOMES** in simple and concise terms. Five **GUIDING PRINCIPLES** provide a way to organize the **OBJECTIVES** and **STRATEGIES**.



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## Desired Outcomes

The Desired Outcomes represent the broadest expectations for Blueprint2043 and reflect input from the community as well as previous and ongoing conversations surrounding growth, development, investment, and the general future of Lincoln County. The Desired Outcomes will remain a priority as Blueprint2043 is implemented in the years to come.

### Transparent

Provide clear direction for growth and development, both short-term and long-term.

### Intentional

Align decisions with past and future investments in infrastructure and services.

### Flexible

Provide a framework through which the Plan can be revisited and updated accordingly.



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## Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles describe five broad goals that further define the desired future for Lincoln County. The Guiding Principles for Blueprint2043 are refinements of the principles in the 2018 Land Use Plan and help organize the Objectives and Strategies that can be found in the Strategy Blueprint section.



### Growing Responsibly

Lincoln County will consider how infrastructure, public services, and community facilities respond to and direct growth in ways that promote efficiency and maximize public investments.



### Moving With Ease

Lincoln County will seek ways to provide a safe, connected, and multimodal transportation system that serves the needs of current and future populations.



### Strengthening Our Economy

Lincoln County will create a more resilient local economy by encouraging economic investment that balances residential growth with job-creating land uses in suitable locations.



### Protecting Our Land and Water

Lincoln County will safeguard our natural environment, including our working farms, so these resources can be enjoyed by current residents and future generations.



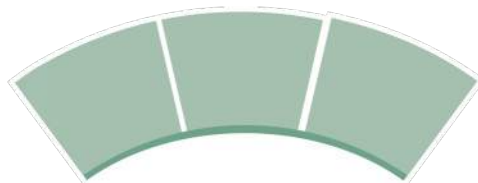
### Creating Quality Places

Lincoln County will balance quality of place based on local context, including well-designed and integrated developments in growth areas and preservation of open space elsewhere.

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## Objectives

More precise directives that help organize specific strategies.



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## Strategies

Plans, projects, programs, and policies that respond to one or more Objectives.





# SECTION 2

## Land Use Blueprint

### THE PATH TO THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The land use blueprint positions the County to direct future growth in a way that makes a positive contribution to the sense of place for those who live, work, and visit Lincoln County. This section highlights the path to a new Future Land Use Map for the County, including a scenario planning process that evaluated different growth options and a Conceptual Growth Strategy that provided a general representation of the preferred path forward. The Future Land Use Map serves as a foundation for local decision-making and a guide for staff, elected officials, property owners, developers, and other community stakeholders.





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## WHY SCENARIO PLANNING?

Scenario planning helps us explore outcomes by creating processes to compare how Lincoln County could change depending on where growth is concentrated and how land uses are organized. This process helps show what approach gets the County closer to achieving the Desired Outcomes as described in the Guiding Framework.

## WHAT ARE THE SCENARIOS?

Two alternative scenarios for use in the digital growth model were created and compared against a baseline scenario that reflected Lincoln County's current plan for growth. The alternative scenarios were developed by assigning different land use types throughout the Study Area that simulate development patterns.

## BASE SCENARIO DESCRIPTION

Each scenario distributes the same amount of growth in Lincoln County. What differs between scenarios is the form and pattern of the growth and where its distributed in the County.

## SCENARIO PLANNING

A critical step of the Blueprint2043 planning process was scenario planning, which allowed the County to explore how and where growth should occur. This tool can be used in a variety of ways to help plan for future investment. Successful communities can often reflect competing interests, allowing them to make strategic, informed decisions. The Blueprint2043 includes strategies to:

- Reflect community values
- Test alternative approaches to create a conceptual strategy
- Align that strategy with supportive infrastructure

The scenario planning process for Blueprint2043 included a digital model to test and report on the performance of different land use strategies. A variety of elements were combined to craft the conceptual land use strategy. The conceptual land use map will help provide direction on the location, intensity, and design of future development.

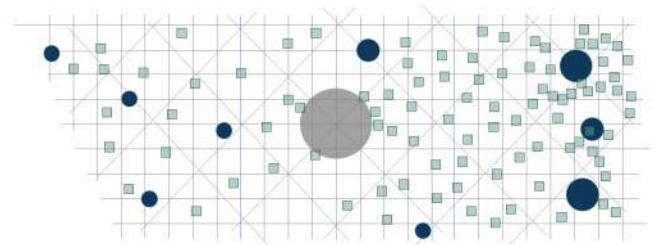
### *Base Scenario*

Reflects the strategy from the 2018 Land Use Plan.



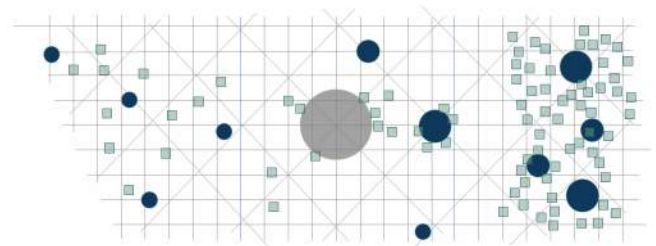
### *Scenario A*

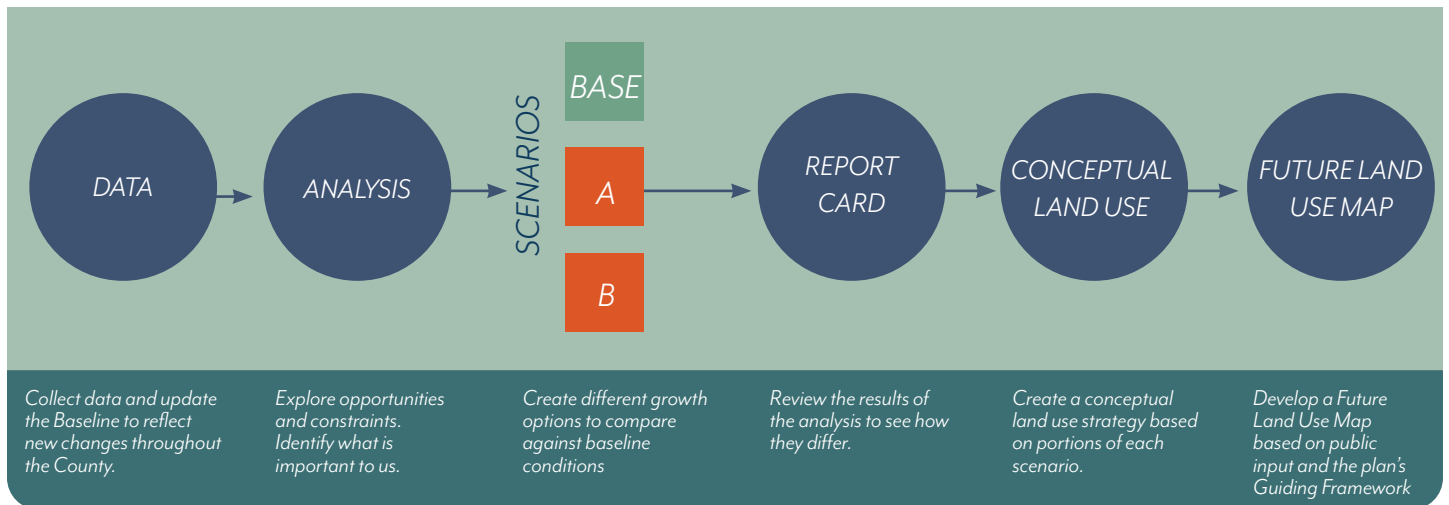
Distributes growth more evenly throughout the County with lower density land uses.



### *Scenario B*

Accommodates pockets of growth while still keeping densities lower.





The following illustrates the results of the scenario planning process as they relate to the plan's guiding principles.



## Growing Responsibly

Throughout the planning process, the County will continuously consider how the built environment will direct growth. Sewer, water, and schools would be impacted. *Scenario B creates more sewer demand in the eastern most part of the County where sewer infrastructure already exists.* However, the more concentrated growth also places more demand on the schools in this area of the County.



## Creating Quality Places

The County is committed to providing quality spaces for residents and visitors alike based on local context. Scenario A distributes new homes across a wider area, which puts many of those homes further from schools and parks. *Nearly 10% more homes would be located within 2 miles of a park in Scenario B compared to Scenario A. More than 4% more homes would be located within 2 miles of a school.*



## Strengthening Our Economy

Strategic economic investment is crucial to a balanced plan. The scenario process also shed light on job creation in Lincoln County. Through the evaluation process, Scenario B created a more diverse set of land uses than Scenario A. *More than 90% of the land use proposed in Scenario A is low-density, Large-Lot Residential.* By promoting a variety of uses in places where it makes sense, the County can balance new residences with sustainable economic opportunities.



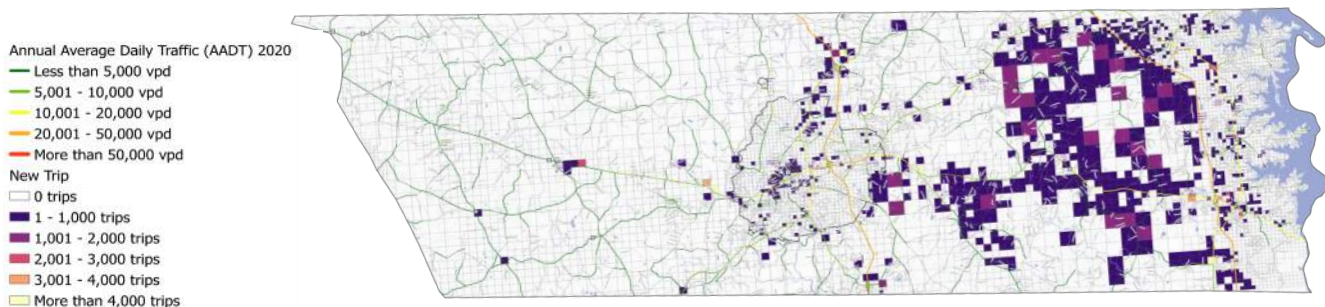
## Protecting Our Land and Water

Lincoln County is also committed to protecting the natural environment for future generations. *Given its more dispersed growth pattern, Scenario A consumes approximately 34% more greenfield land compared to Scenario B.* Scenario B leverages opportunities to redevelop land more so than Scenario A.



## Moving with Ease

The County aims to provide a safe and connected transportation system. A spatial analysis of newly generated trips illustrates that the majority of new trips in will originate west of NC 16. Both Scenarios A and B show a similar distribution of new trips across the County. The map below shows new trips generated in Scenario A, overlaid with the 2020 annual average daily traffic (AADT). *Scenario A will generate almost 5,000 more trips across the County than Scenario B.*













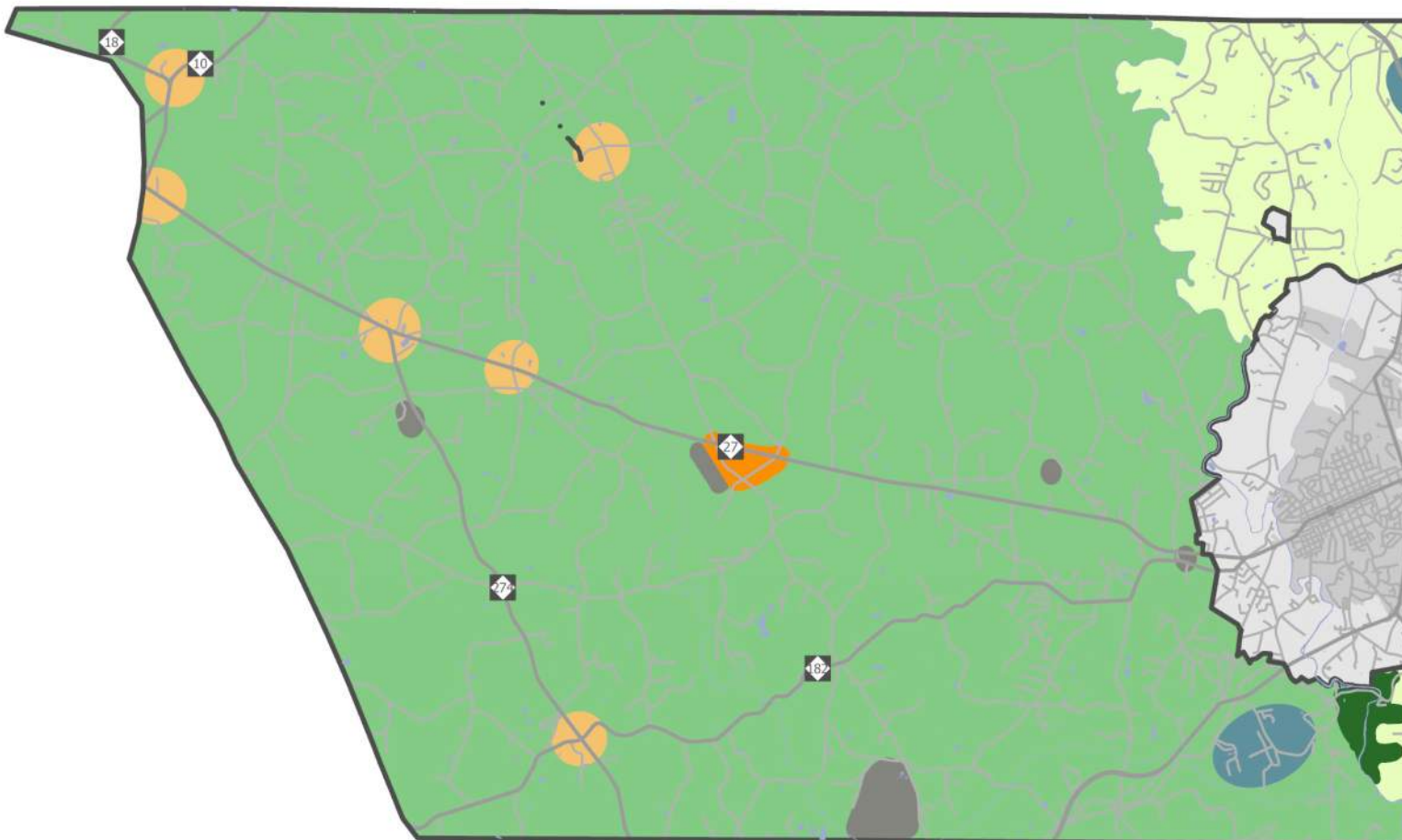


# Conceptual Land Use Strategy

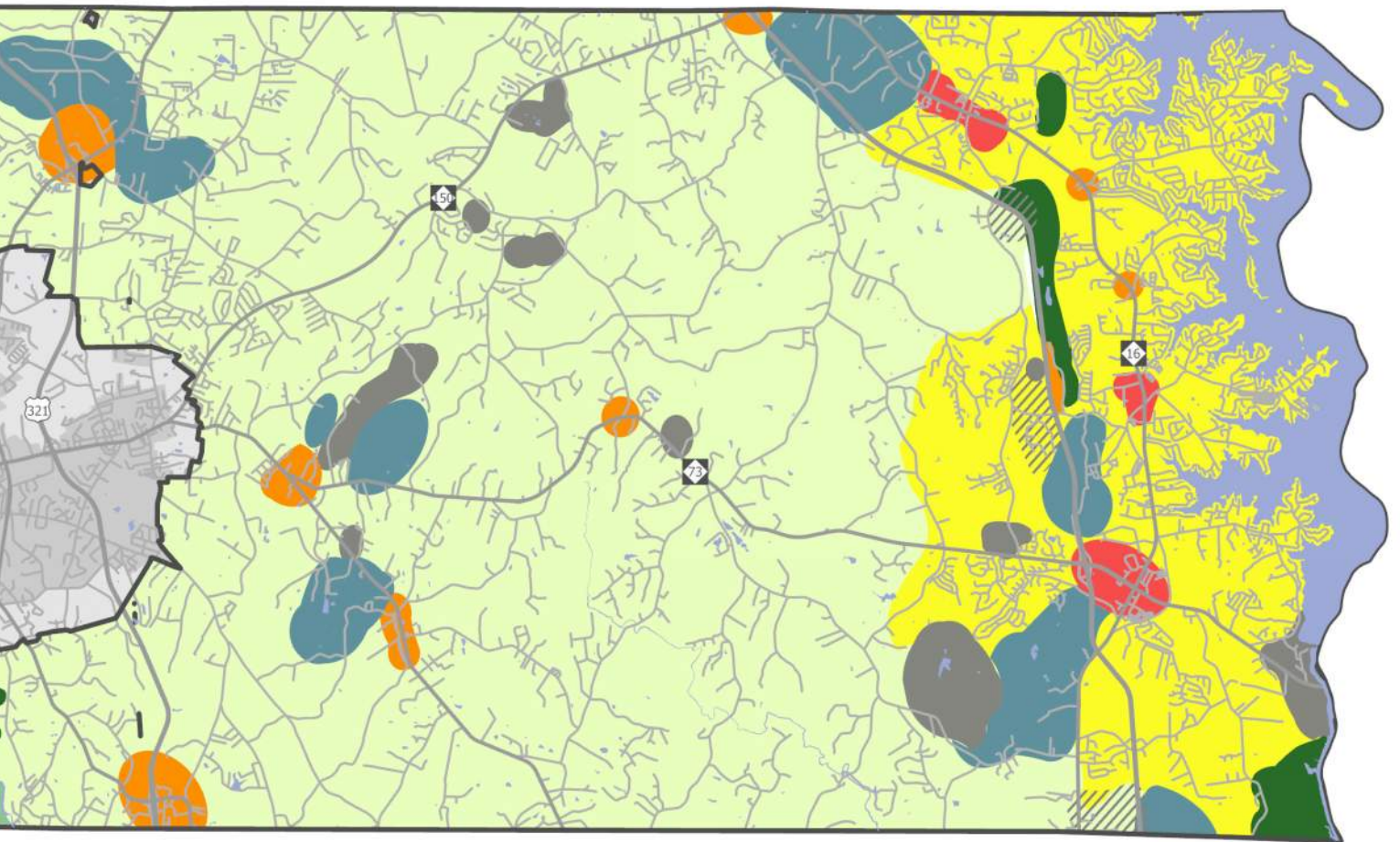
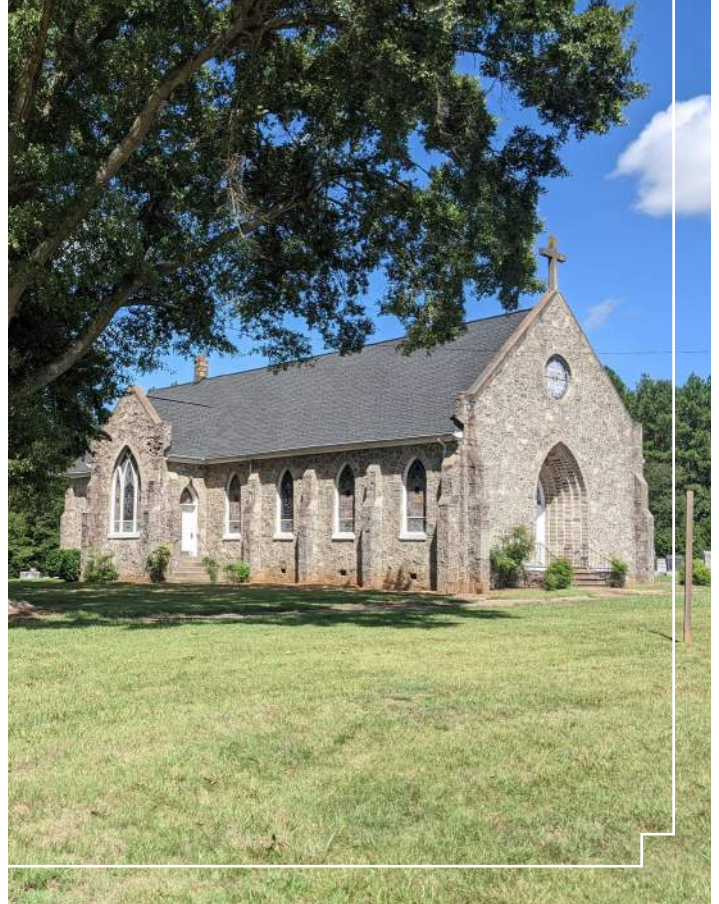
Blueprint2043 includes a Conceptual Land Use Strategy as one step toward creating the Future Land Use Map for the County. By design, this map is not as detailed as the more parcel-specific Future Land Use Map. The Conceptual Land Use Strategy reflects information from the County Characteristics Report, input from the first and second phases of community engagement, and the Guiding Framework. The Conceptual Land Use Strategy informs the Future Land Use Map and the County's approach to land use and development in the years to come.

## Legend

	Promote rural character in Western Lincoln County	<i>Focus office and commercial in nodes based on surrounding context:</i>	<i>Other:</i>
	Encourage economic growth in existing job centers		 School/Special District
	Maintain neighborhood residential uses		 Open Space
	Discourage major subdivisions except neighborhood designs that embrace conservation principles		
			Create nodes at new interchanges



















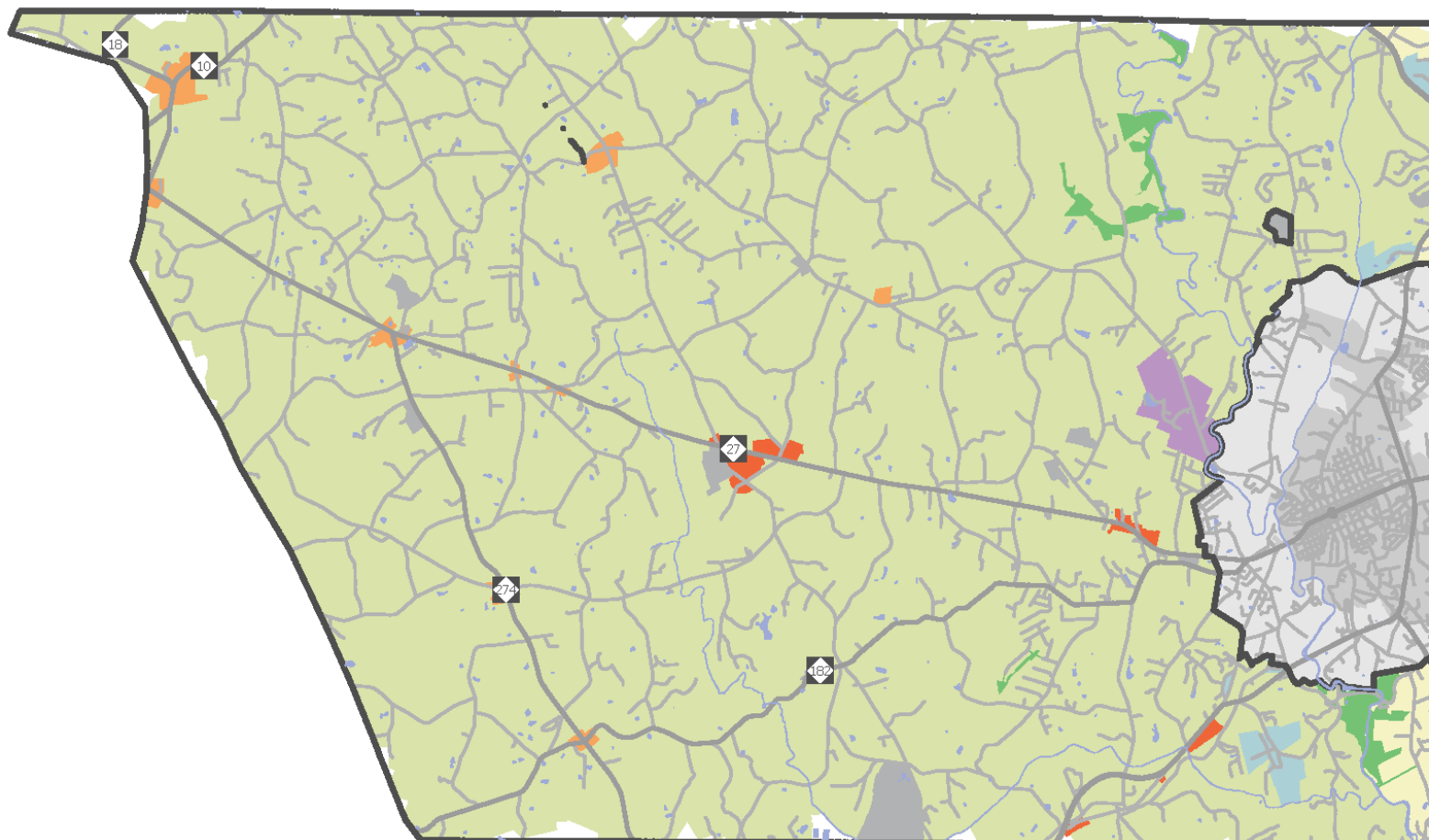


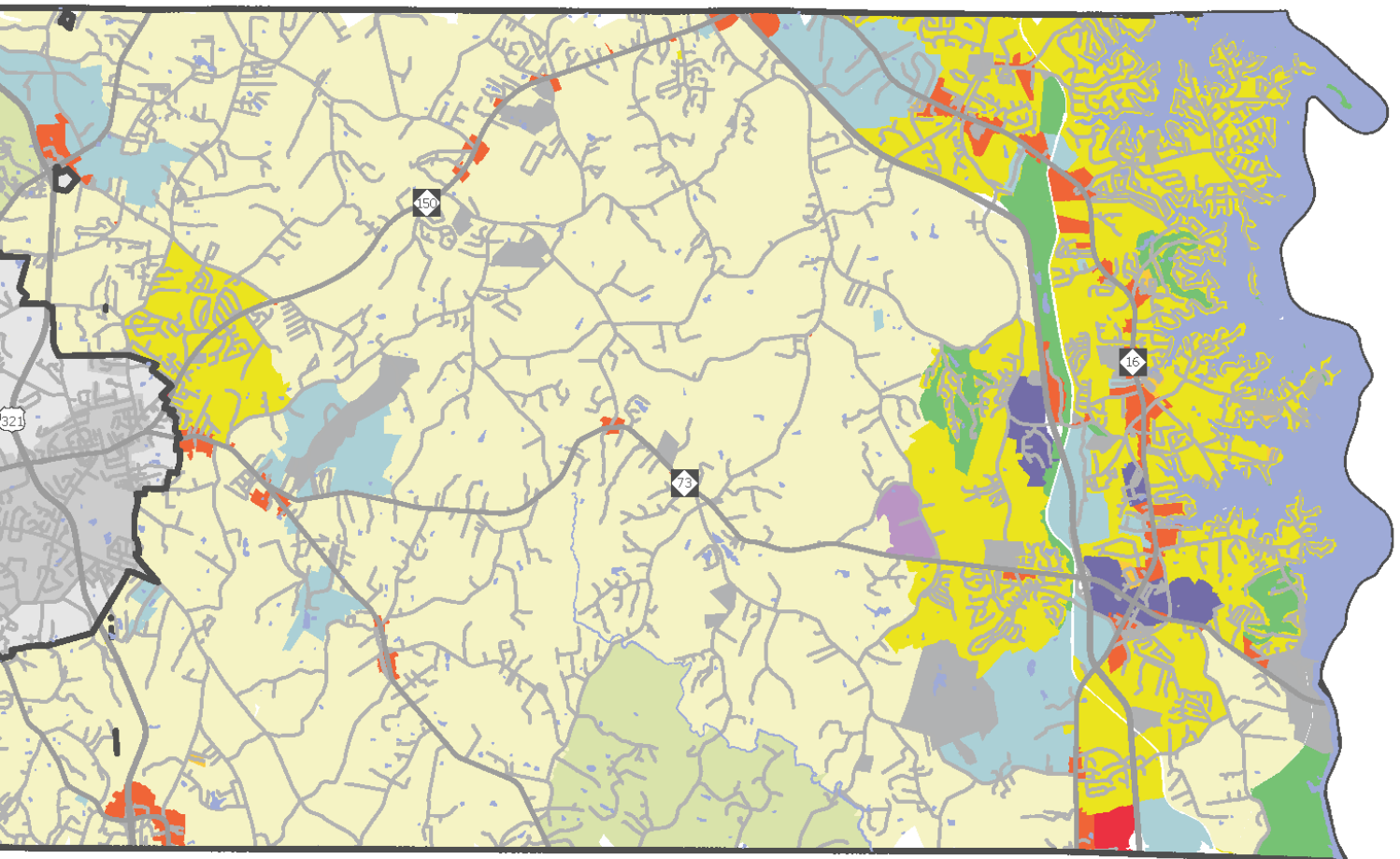
# Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map shows where and how Lincoln County is expected to grow in the future. It does so by expressing the suggested land use and desired character with more specific details, using 12 community type classifications. The community type palette identifies and describes different development patterns, types, and intensities prevalent in the County. The intent of the palette is to include enough diversity between community types so that citizens will have sufficient means to describe their visions and plans for the region. The palette is not intended as an exhaustive list of every potential community type.

## Community Types

	Open Space		Single-Family Neighborhood		Suburban Commercial Center
	Rural Living		Multifamily Neighborhood		Suburban Office Center
	Rural Crossroads		Walkable Activity Center		Industrial Center
	Large-Lot Residential		Walkable Neighborhood		Special District







## Open Space

Recreational Open Space comprises land dedicated for active and passive recreational uses. These areas are designated to provide public access and include municipal and community parks, open air sports complexes, and athletic fields.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

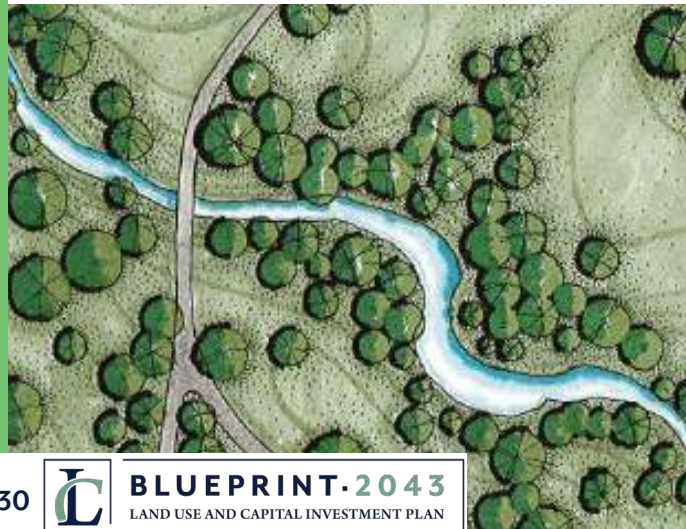
- Community Park
- Athletic Field
- Water-Dependent Recreation Area
- Natural Area
- Greenway
- Stormwater/Retention/ Detention Area

#### Secondary Uses

- Cemetery

### Form and Parameters

General Development Pattern	Separate Uses
Typical Lot Coverage	N/A
Residential Density	N/A
Non-Residential Intensity	N/A
Prevailing Building Height	N/A
Average Dwelling Unit Size	N/A
Average Non-Residential Building Size	N/A
Transportation Choices	Auto/Bicycle/Walking
Typical Block Length	N/A
Open Space Elements	Natural Areas/Greenways
Street Pattern	Curvilinear
Street Connectivity	Low
Parking Provisions	Surface Lot
Typical Street Cross Section	Rural/Suburban/Urban



## Rural Living

Rural living areas are typically characterized by large lots, abundant open space, and a high degree of separation between buildings. Large acreage, rural family homes and "hobby farms" are scattered throughout the countryside and often integrated into the landscape. The lot size and distance between dwelling units decrease with greater development densities. Conservation-based subdivisions in some areas of the region cluster development and leave large areas for permanent open space and uninterrupted views. Small nodes of commercial activity, such as gas stations, convenience stores, or restaurants, are concentrated at rural crossroads, serving some daily needs of the surrounding rural population.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

- Single-Family Detached Homes
- Manufactured Homes
- Hobby Farm

#### Secondary Uses

- Convenience Store

### Form and Parameters

General Development Pattern	Separate Uses
Typical Lot Coverage	5-10%
Residential Density	0.05-1.35-DU/ac
Non-Residential Intensity	N/A
Prevailing Building Height	1-2 Stories
Average Dwelling Unit Size	1,500-3,000 SF
Average Non-Residential Building Size	1,000-10,000 SF
Transportation Choices	Auto
Typical Block Length	2,500-5,000 LF
Open Space Elements	Cultivated Farmlands/ Woodlands
Street Pattern	Curvilinear
Street Connectivity	Low
Parking Provisions	Private Driveways
Typical Street Cross Section	Rural/Suburban



## Rural Crossroads

Rural crossroads represent the small nodes of commercial activity along rural highways. Small-scale businesses, such as gas stations, convenience stores, or restaurants, serve some daily needs of the surrounding rural population. Employment and other commercial needs for rural residents are provided for in other suburban commercial and suburban office centers.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

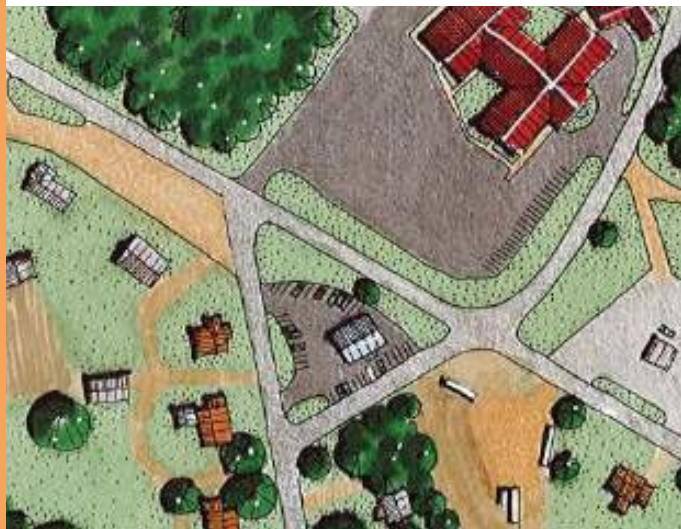
- Gas Station
- Convenience Store
- Sit-Down Restaurant
- Hardware Store

#### Secondary Uses

- Fire Station
- Post Office
- Single-Family Detached Home

### Form and Parameters

General Development Pattern	Separate Uses
Typical Lot Coverage	10–25%
Residential Density	N/A
Non-Residential Intensity	0.10–0.20 FAR
Prevailing Building Height	1 Story
Average Dwelling Unit Size	1,000–2,000 SF
Average Non-Residential Building Size	1,000–2,000 SF
Transportation Choices	Auto
Typical Block Length	N/A
Open Space Elements	Natural Areas/Stream Corridors
Street Pattern	Curvilinear
Street Connectivity	Low
Parking Provisions	Private Driveway
Typical Street Cross Section	Rural



## Large-Lot Residential

Large-lot residential neighborhoods are generally formed as subdivisions and consist almost entirely of single-family detached homes. Buildings are oriented interior to the site and are typically buffered from surrounding development by transitional uses, topography, or vegetative areas. Many neighborhoods "borrow" open space from adjacent rural or natural settings. Blocks are typically large and streets are rural or suburban in character. In some cases, the neighborhood is served by only one long cul-de-sac.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

- Single-Family Detached Homes

#### Secondary Uses

- Church
- Community Center
- Pool and Amenities
- Natural Areas
- Horse Stable

### Form and Parameters

General Development Pattern	Separate Uses
Typical Lot Coverage	30–65%
Residential Density	0.2–1.35 DU/ac
Non-Residential Intensity	N/A
Prevailing Building Height	1–3 Stories
Average Dwelling Unit Size	2,500–7,000 SF
Average Non-Residential Building Size	N/A
Transportation Choices	Auto
Typical Block Length	800–1,500 SF
Open Space Elements	Greenway/Natural Areas
Street Pattern	Curvilinear
Street Connectivity	Low
Parking Provisions	Private Driveways
Typical Street Cross Section	Rural/Suburban





## Single-Family Neighborhood

Single-family residential neighborhoods are formed as subdivisions or communities, with a relatively uniform housing type and density throughout. They may support a variety of single-family detached housing types, from mobile homes, to large-lot, low-density single-family homes, to denser formats of smaller single-family detached homes. Homes are oriented interior to the neighborhood and typically buffered from surrounding development by transitional uses or landscaped areas. Single-family neighborhoods are often found near suburban commercial, office, and industrial centers, and help provide the consumers needed to support these centers.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

- Single-Family Detached Homes

#### Secondary Uses

- Church
- School
- Community Park
- Community Center
- Pool and Recreational Facilities
- Natural Areas

### Form and Parameters

General Development Pattern	Separate Uses
Typical Lot Coverage	50–75%
Residential Density	1.0–2.0 DU/ac
Non-Residential Intensity	N/A
Prevailing Building Height	1–2 Stories
Average Dwelling Unit Size	1,500–5,000 SF
Average Non-Residential Building Size	Varies
Transportation Choices	Auto
Typical Block Length	800–1,500 LF
Open Space Elements	Greenway/Natural Areas
Street Pattern	Curvilinear
Street Connectivity	Low/Medium
Parking Provisions	Private Driveway
Typical Street Cross Section	Rural/Suburban/Urban



## Multifamily Neighborhood

Multifamily neighborhoods are generally formed as complexes or communities, with a relatively uniform housing type and density throughout. They support the highest residential density in the suburban landscape, and may support condominiums or apartments. The neighborhoods are found near suburban commercial, office, and industrial centers, and help provide the consumers needed to support these centers. Buildings are oriented interior to the site and typically buffered from surrounding development by transitional uses or landscaped areas. Large parking lots and low street connectivity are common in suburban multifamily neighborhoods.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

- Apartment
- Condominium
- Senior Housing

#### Secondary Uses

- Church
- Community Center
- Pool and Amenities
- Natural Areas

### Form and Parameters

General Development Pattern	Separate Uses
Typical Lot Coverage	30–60%
Residential Density	6.0–20.0 DU/ac
Non-Residential Intensity	N/A
Prevailing Building Height	1–4 Stories
Average Dwelling Unit Size	800–1,500 SF
Average Non-Residential Building Size	N/A
Transportation Choices	Auto/Bus/Bicycle
Typical Block Length	600–1,200 LF
Open Space Elements	Greenways/Neighborhood Park
Street Pattern	Modified Grid
Street Connectivity	Medium
Parking Provisions	Surface Lot/On-Street Parking
Typical Street Cross Section	Suburban/Urban



## Walkable Activity Center

Walkable activity centers serve broader economic, entertainment, and community activities, as compared to mixed-use neighborhoods. Uses and buildings are located on small blocks with streets designed to encourage pedestrian activities. Buildings in the core of a walkable activity center may stand three or more stories. Residential units or office space may be found above storefronts. Parking is satisfied by on-street, structured, and shared rear-lot parking. A large-scale walkable activity center may be surrounded by one or more neighborhoods that encourage active living, with a comprehensive and interconnected network of walkable streets.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

- Sit-Down Restaurant
- Community-Serving Retail
- Professional Office
- Live/Work/Shop Units
- Townhome
- Condominium
- Apartment
- Public Plaza
- Movie Theater

#### Secondary Uses

- Farmers Market

### Form and Parameters

<b>General Development Pattern</b>	Separate Uses
<b>Typical Lot Coverage</b>	N/A
<b>Residential Density</b>	N/A
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>	N/A
<b>Prevailing Building Height</b>	N/A
<b>Average Dwelling Unit Size</b>	N/A
<b>Average Non-Residential Building Size</b>	N/A
<b>Transportation Choices</b>	Auto/Bicycle/Walking
<b>Typical Block Length</b>	N/A
<b>Open Space Elements</b>	Natural Areas/Greenways
<b>Street Pattern</b>	Curvilinear
<b>Street Connectivity</b>	Low
<b>Parking Provisions</b>	Surface Lot
<b>Typical Street Cross Section</b>	Rural/Suburban/Urban



## Walkable Neighborhood

A walkable neighborhood allows residents to live, shop, work, and play in one community. These neighborhoods include a mixture of housing types and residential densities, integrated with goods and services, in a walkable community that residents visit on a daily basis. The design and scale of the development encourages active living through a comprehensive and interconnected network of walkable streets. Walkable neighborhoods support multiple transportation modes. Residential Density range is inclusive of all housing types but each type should correspond to the density ranges in the UDO.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

- Smaller Lot Detached Homes
- Townhome
- Condominium
- Apartment
- Retail/Office
- Public Plaza

#### Secondary Uses

- Church
- Farmers Market

### Form and Parameters

<b>General Development Pattern</b>	Mix of Uses (Primarily Residential)
<b>Typical Lot Coverage</b>	50–75%
<b>Residential Density</b>	10–20.0 DU/ac
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>	0.50–2.00 FAR
<b>Prevailing Building Height</b>	1–3 Stories
<b>Average Dwelling Unit Size</b>	800–1,500 SF
<b>Average Non-Residential Building Size</b>	10,000–50,000 SF
<b>Transportation Choices</b>	Walking/Bicycle/Transit
<b>Typical Block Length</b>	250–500 LF
<b>Open Space Elements</b>	Parks/Plazas/Pocket Parks
<b>Street Pattern</b>	Modified Grid
<b>Street Connectivity</b>	High
<b>Parking Provisions</b>	Surface Lot/Parking Deck
<b>Typical Street Cross Section</b>	Urban





## Suburban Commercial Center

Suburban shopping centers serve the daily needs of surrounding residential neighborhoods. They typically locate near high-volume roads and key intersections, and are designed to be accessible primarily by automobile. Buildings are set back from the road behind large surface parking lots, with little connectivity between adjacent businesses. Common types of suburban centers in the region include multi-tenant strip centers, big box stores, small outparcels with a drive-through, and large shopping malls.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

- General Commercial Services
- Sit-Down or Fast Food Restaurant
- Multi-Tenant Commercial
- Big Box Commercial
- Bank
- Hotel
- Professional Office

#### Secondary Uses

- Church
- Fire Station
- Police Station
- Stormwater Retention/ Detention Area

### Form and Parameters

General Development Pattern	Separate Uses
Typical Lot Coverage	20–40%
Residential Density	N/A
Non-Residential Intensity	0.10–0.50 FAR
Prevailing Building Height	1–2 Stories
Average Dwelling Unit Size	N/A
Average Non-Residential Building Size	10,000–300,000 SF
Transportation Choices	Auto
Typical Block Length	N/A
Open Space Elements	Natural Areas (Stormwater)
Street Pattern	N/A
Street Connectivity	N/A
Parking Provisions	Surface Lot
Typical Street Cross Section	Suburban



## Suburban Office Center

Suburban office centers provide opportunities to concentrate employment in the region. They include large-scale isolated buildings with numerous employees and areas containing multiple office uses that support and serve one another. They are typically buffered from surrounding development by transitional uses or landscaped areas and are often located near major highways or thoroughfares.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

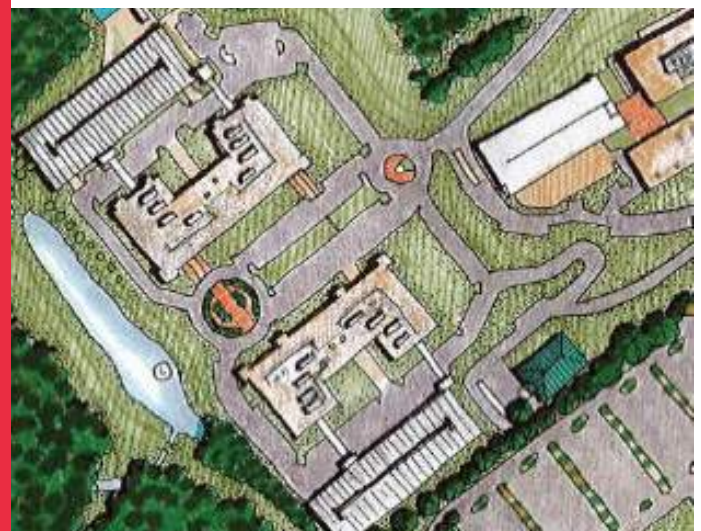
- Multi-Tenant Professional Office
- Corporate Office
- Medical Office
- Call Center
- Research and Development

#### Secondary Uses

- Bank
- Copy and Printing Services
- Restaurants
- Government Services
- Flex Space
- Natural Areas
- Stormwater Retention/ Detention Areas

### Form and Parameters

General Development Pattern	Separate Uses
Typical Lot Coverage	20–40%
Residential Density	N/A
Non-Residential Intensity	0.10–0.50 FAR
Prevailing Building Height	1–3 Stories
Average Dwelling Unit Size	N/A
Average Non-Residential Building Size	10,000–300,000 SF
Transportation Choices	Auto
Typical Block Length	800–1,200 LF
Open Space Elements	Pocket Parks/Landscaped Buffers
Street Pattern	Curvilinear
Street Connectivity	Low
Parking Provisions	Surface Lot
Typical Street Cross Section	Suburban



## Industrial Center

Industrial centers support large-scale manufacturing and production uses, including assembly and processing, regional warehousing and distribution, bulk storage, and utilities. These areas are found near major transportation corridors (i.e., highway or rail) and are generally buffered from surrounding development by transitional uses or landscape areas that increase in size as development intensity increases. Heavy industrial centers may require larger sites because activities are not confined to buildings and may include conveyor belts, holding tanks, smoke stacks, or outdoor storage. Clusters of uses that support or serve heavy industrial centers generally locate nearby.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

- Factory
- Heavy Assembly Plant
- Landfill/Quarry
- Water/Sewer Treatment and Other Utilities
- Regional Warehouse/Trucking Distribution
- Agricultural Storage and Processing

#### Secondary Uses

- Light Manufacturing and Assembly
- Warehouse/Distribution
- Laboratory
- Data Handling
- Storage

### Form and Parameters

<b>General Development Pattern</b>	Separate Uses
<b>Typical Lot Coverage</b>	30–60%
<b>Residential Density</b>	N/A
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>	0.10–0.50 FAR
<b>Prevailing Building Height</b>	1–2 Stories
<b>Average Dwelling Unit Size</b>	N/A
<b>Average Non-Residential Building Size</b>	5,000–1,000,000 SF
<b>Transportation Choices</b>	Auto/Trucks/Rail
<b>Typical Block Length</b>	N/A
<b>Open Space Elements</b>	Natural Areas
<b>Street Pattern</b>	Curvilinear
<b>Street Connectivity</b>	Low
<b>Parking Provisions</b>	Surface Lot
<b>Typical Street Cross Section</b>	Suburban



## Special District

Special districts include uses that defy general definition and warrant their own category. Examples include a regional race track, amusement parks, etc., that are unique in the region and often orchestrated by their own sets of planning and design standards.

### Land Use Considerations

#### Primary Land Uses

- Regional Entertainment Destinations
- Professional Sports Facilities
- Institutional Facilities
- Fairgrounds
- Government Facilities
- Educational Facilities

### Form and Parameters

<b>General Development Pattern</b>	Mix of Uses
<b>Typical Lot Coverage</b>	N/A
<b>Residential Density</b>	10–100 DU/ac
<b>Non-Residential Intensity</b>	0.25–3.0 FAR
<b>Prevailing Building Height</b>	1–15 Stories
<b>Average Dwelling Unit Size</b>	N/A
<b>Average Non-Residential Building Size</b>	Varies
<b>Transportation Choices</b>	Auto/Trucks/Rail/Bicycle
<b>Typical Block Length</b>	N/A
<b>Open Space Elements</b>	Greenways/Natural Areas/Plazas/Recreational Fields
<b>Street Pattern</b>	Curvilinear
<b>Street Connectivity</b>	Varies
<b>Parking Provisions</b>	Surface Lot/Parking Deck
<b>Typical Street Cross Section</b>	Suburban/Urban





# SECTION 3

## Strategy Blueprint

### THE SUPPORTING STRATEGIES

Blueprint2043 provides the strategy blueprint as an important step in achieving the County's land use vision. The structure of Blueprint2043 begins by describing three **DESIRED OUTCOMES** in simple and concise terms and five **GUIDING PRINCIPLES** that provide a way to organize the **OBJECTIVES** and **STRATEGIES**.









# Growing Responsibly

Lincoln County will consider how infrastructure, public services, and community facilities respond to and direct growth in ways that promote efficiency and maximize public investments.



**Objective 1.1: REFERENCING BLUEPRINT2043 AS A GUIDE.** The County will use the Land Use Plan and Capital Investment Plan as the primary plan for future utility, transportation, community services improvements and other public infrastructure improvements.

**Strategy 1.1.1:** Use the Future Land Use Plan (text and map) and other officially adopted planning documents when making all zoning and permit approval decisions.

**Strategy 1.1.2:** Monitor the Plan annually and make incremental changes that align with County's goals.

**Strategy 1.1.3:** Consider expanding community types to adjacent parcels or retracting community type boundaries in locations where doing so will uphold the spirit of the Future Land Use Map and Guiding Principles.

**Strategy 1.1.4:** Identify existing, planned, and expansion areas where public utilities will be provided by the County or another responsible partnership agency.

**Strategy 1.1.5:** Require County departments to review new development and quantify the impact of the development proposal on the services they provide, including new land use decisions that come before the Board of County Commissioners and by-right development.

**Strategy 1.1.6:** Require the expansion of infrastructure (public utilities and local road network) to be done in a way that supports later redevelopment of the area without requiring major infrastructure changes.

**Strategy 1.1.7:** Review the County's standards for mandated connections to public utility systems.

**Strategy 1.1.8:** Continue to engage the community regarding the Plan and retain comments received as input for future updates.

**Objective 1.2: PROTECTING THE COUNTY'S RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER.** The County will promote residential development that provides housing options and aligns with the capacity of existing or planned transportation and public utility infrastructure.

**Strategy 1.2.1:** Encourage residential development that incorporates features of the most "durable" neighborhoods in terms of economic value and adaptability to change.

**Strategy 1.2.2:** Locate denser development in areas where it will be supported by existing public utility and transportation infrastructure with adequate capacity, where such adequate infrastructure will be developed concurrently, or where the local transportation infrastructure can be provided through the development process.

**Strategy 1.2.3:** Allow for density variations within individual zoning districts based on factors such as availability of utilities, location along major or minor corridors, distance from identified nodes or corridors, mix of uses, etc.

**Strategy 1.2.4:** Ensure that the County has an adequate supply of workforce housing. Working with Lincoln Economic Development Association and the industries they support to identify unmet workforce housing needs is crucial to the continued success of the County's economic prosperity.

**Strategy 1.2.5:** Maintain the County's policies regarding the placement of manufactured homes in most, but not all, portions of the County.



**Objective 1.3: SUPPORTING NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT.** The County will make adequate provision for additional major retail development to support the growing population.

**Strategy 1.3.1:** Refer to the Future Land Use Map to identify where major retail development is appropriate.

**Strategy 1.3.2:** Create guidelines for major retail development that ensure suitable connectivity and access management, reuse potential, and appropriate context.

**Strategy 1.3.3:** Modify parking standards to reduce the amount of off-street parking, prohibit or discourage large, expansive parking lots, particularly between buildings and the road, and increase aesthetics within parking lots.

**Strategy 1.3.4:** Apply urban design and development standards to those areas that currently are or are anticipated to be more urban in nature.

**Strategy 1.3.5:** Concentrate major retail developments in Walkable Activity Centers that provide for a mixture and integration of uses.

**Objective 1.4: APPLYING STANDARDS FOR MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT.** The County will consider the appropriate placement and design of mixed-use developments in urban/urbanizing areas in the County.

**Strategy 1.4.1:** Provide preferences/incentives in the County's land use regulations for mixed-use development where targeted in the County.

**Strategy 1.4.2:** Evaluate regulations to ensure compatibility and adequate transition with existing nearby uses, if proposed developments exceed the maximum building height (currently 35 feet in most zoning districts).

**Strategy 1.4.3:** Ensure site plans adequately integrate residential and non-residential development to enhance the access residents have to non-residential uses within the development.

**Strategy 1.4.4:** Emphasize multimodal (i.e., bicycle and pedestrian) connections within mixed-use areas and to compatible adjacent uses.

**Strategy 1.4.5:** Protect viewsheds within and of mixed-use development for residents of the development, adjoining and nearby property owners, and the County as a whole.

**Strategy 1.4.6:** Require adequate green infrastructure within mixed-use developments.

**Strategy 1.4.7:** Allow more land use varieties in residentially oriented zoning districts to encourage a mix of housing types.





# Moving With Ease

Lincoln County will seek ways to provide a safe, connected, and multimodal transportation system that serves the needs of current and future populations.



**Objective 2.1: BEING PROACTIVE IN PLANNING FOR TRANSPORTATION NEEDS.** The County will ensure that transportation facilities are adequately provided for in the development of new projects, both in terms of planning and construction, and that the facilities are appropriately matched to the proposed development patterns.

**Strategy 2.1.1:** Consider major transportation infrastructure in land use planning decisions.

**Strategy 2.1.2:** Reference the Eastern Lincoln Mobility Study for multimodal recommendations and additional considerations for transportation improvements.

**Strategy 2.1.3:** Continue to set aside funds in each budget cycle to help match funding supplied by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) or the private sector to accelerate low-cost, high-impact transportation improvements.

**Strategy 2.1.4:** Coordinate with NCDOT and other local and regional partner agencies (e.g., Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO) in the development of capital improvement programs and road plans sufficient to address projected growth in the County.

**Strategy 2.1.5:** Ensure the development of a local transportation network that facilitates local traffic flow and supports the maintenance of NCDOT's Strategic Transportation Corridors for their primary functions.

**Strategy 2.1.6:** Evaluate funding options to improve substandard subdivision roads in the County.

**Objective 2.2: LEVERAGING NEW DEVELOPMENT TO ENHANCE THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.** The County will use its Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), new policy, and the development process to refine and enhance the County's transportation network.

**Strategy 2.2.1:** Codify connectivity and subdivision road standards to facilitate collector road networks as part of new development and to facilitate the movement of emergency vehicles and citizens.

**Strategy 2.2.2:** Use site development standards to preserve rights-of-way for roads proposed in the current Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP).

**Strategy 2.2.3:** Require new developments to dedicate right-of-way and construct transportation facilities that are in compliance with the proposed cross section of the affected roadways, in accordance with the CTP.

**Strategy 2.2.4:** Strengthen access management standards in the County's UDO, especially in the Eastern Lincoln Development District.

**Strategy 2.2.5:** Ensure that an adequate, hierarchical, and connected road network for local traffic is established through the development process to remove excessive local traffic from major numbered highways.

**Strategy 2.2.6:** Require implementation of multimodal transportation improvements as part of new development when such facilities are adjacent to or traverse a proposed development.

**Objective 2.3: ENHANCING MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS.** The County will plan for enhanced pedestrian, bicycle, and transit options.

**Strategy 2.3.1:** Promote pedestrian facilities, bikeways, and transit options as referenced in the CTP and other officially adopted plans.

**Strategy 2.3.2:** Require pedestrian facilities (e.g., sidewalks, trails, and greenways) in new residential developments in ways that attract walkers for transportation and recreation purposes.

**Strategy 2.3.3:** Prioritize multimodal connections between compatible land uses.

**Strategy 2.3.4:** Ensure that commercial and mixed-use nodes are connected by and well served with safe, functional, and attractive pedestrian facilities.

**Strategy 2.3.5:** Provide bicycle and pedestrian amenities within new developments and along the frontage of existing roads, consistent with NCDOT policies and approved bicycle plans.

**Strategy 2.3.6:** Identify funding to construct sidewalk networks in previously developed areas of the County that see or are likely to experience pedestrian activity if improvements are installed.

**Strategy 2.3.7:** Position the County to maintain transit opportunities into and of Charlotte by preserving the CSX rail corridor for future transit opportunities; identifying the location of a future rail station in eastern Lincoln County; and working with CATS to promote carpool, vanpool, express bus, and bus rapid transit (BRT) opportunities throughout the County.





# Strengthening Our Economy

Lincoln County will create a more resilient local economy by encouraging economic investment that balances residential growth with job-creating land uses in suitable locations.



## **Objective 3.1: PREPARING FOR FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES.**

**The County has designated areas for the siting of future economic development sites.**

**Strategy 3.1.1:** Identify the location of future prime industrial/manufacturing/distribution employment centers.

**Strategy 3.1.2:** Promote the inclusion of appropriate job-creating uses, both in mixed-use areas and adjacent to larger residential areas, to provide the potential of shorter commute times and reduced vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

**Strategy 3.1.3:** Monitor large-acre lots in areas not currently served by water, sewer, and transportation as identified by the Lincoln Economic Development Association through the Developable Property Inventory.

## **Objective 3.2: FOSTERING ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH LAND USE DECISIONS.**

**The County will ensure its land use regulations are written to help foster desired economic growth.**

**Strategy 3.2.1:** Review land use regulations to ensure that desired (and undesired) industrial-type uses are properly addressed in the County's land use regulations.

**Strategy 3.2.2:** Promote Conditional Zoning as a tool for rezoning for land uses that may have significant impact on neighboring land uses.

**Strategy 3.2.3:** Work with developers to make industrial sites more context-sensitive, especially in locations where residential uses are nearby.

**Strategy 3.2.4:** Provide land-use regulations that promote the redevelopment and/or reuse of older/abandoned properties.

## **Objective 3.3: ENCOURAGING ADAPTIVE REUSE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSETS.**

**The County will accommodate different types of uses through the creative reuse of existing buildings and spaces.**

**Strategy 3.3.1:** Evaluate options for reimagining space and deriving value in existing building and infrastructure to promote economic investment (e.g., repurposing a mill or large industrial space as a suite of offices, retail, brewery, entertainment).

**Strategy 3.3.2:** Encourage economic investment through industrial redevelopment by repurposing aging industrial parks with smaller (e.g., 8,000 to 14,000 square foot) buildings.

# Protecting Our Land and Water

Lincoln County will safeguard our natural environment, including our working farms, so these resources can be enjoyed by current residents and future generations.



## **Objective 4.1: PROTECTING WATER QUALITY.**

The County will ensure the County's water resources—including Lake Norman, Mountain Island Lake, and the South Fork of the Catawba River—are not negatively impacted as a result of development occurring in the County.

**Strategy 4.1.1:** Review buffer yard and setback standards for their effectiveness in maintaining water quality.

**Strategy 4.1.2:** Monitor the effectiveness of the County's Sedimentation and Erosion Control Ordinance and Streamside Buffer Regulations. If the effectiveness of these regulations is falling short of what is desired, consider strengthening them.

**Strategy 4.1.3:** Monitor the need for stormwater regulations in the County.

## **Objective 4.2: MAINTAINING THE COUNTY'S AGRICULTURAL HERITAGE.** The County will preserve and enhance its agricultural heritage.

**Strategy 4.2.1:** Maintain larger minimum lot sizes in areas with high concentrations of agricultural activity to help keep sprawling development patterns at bay.

**Strategy 4.2.2:** Establish development buffers for uses that abut agricultural operations.

## **Objective 4.3: PRESERVING SCENIC VIEWSHEDS.** The County will protect viewsheds along the County's road network, especially in those portions of the County that are most likely to retain a rural character.

**Strategy 4.3.1:** Require subdivisions on roads that are not designated as "scenic byways" to have a conservation buffer along the road to preserve the viewshed.





# Creating Quality Places

Lincoln County will balance quality of place based on local context, including well-designed and integrated developments in growth areas and preservation of open space elsewhere.



**Objective 5.1: INTEGRATING DIFFERENT TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT.** The County will identify ways to locate and blend different types of development.

**Strategy 5.1.1:** Develop design criteria to ensure that new multifamily, mixed-use, and non-residential developments are well integrated with their surroundings.

**Strategy 5.1.2:** Require developments to access and integrate with each other, both between adjoining tracts and within master planned developments.

**Strategy 5.1.3:** Provide alternatives to suburban-type commercial development (i.e., developments designed primarily for the automobile, rather than the pedestrian, in mind) at targeted locations.

**Strategy 5.1.4:** Locate multifamily and higher density developments near existing or planned commercial nodes.

**Strategy 5.1.5:** Limit the height of structures to the maximum height that can be reached by the main responding fire department.

**Strategy 5.1.6:** Promote the “transect” concept radiating from the larger nodal developments to include multifamily, denser single-family, and then less dense single-family developments to create a small community center concept surrounded by connected neighborhoods.

**Objective 5.2: CONNECTING PEOPLE TO COMMUNITY FACILITIES.** The County will integrate community facilities into the planning process for new and expanded residential, commercial, and industrial developments in Lincoln County.

**Strategy 5.2.1:** Regularly update the identified proposed locations of public facilities.

**Strategy 5.2.2:** Allow for higher residential densities and encourage connectivity in areas near appropriate current and future community facilities to encourage usage.

**Strategy 5.2.3:** Require pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and accessibility to appropriate community uses.

**Strategy 5.2.4:** Encourage dedication or preservation of land for community facilities, should the development impact potential sites for these uses.

**Strategy 5.2.5:** Coordinate with the other partner agencies in the development of capital improvement programs sufficient to address projected growth in the County.

**Objective 5.3: CREATING MORE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES.** The County will expand the network of parks, greenways, and trails in the County.

**Strategy 5.3.1:** Work toward implementation of the 2020–2021 Lincoln County Recreation Master Plan.

**Strategy 5.3.2:** Partner with Lincoln and the adjoining local governments to expand current greenways and recreational facilities throughout the County.

**Objective 5.4: PRESERVING OUR NATURAL AND HISTORIC PLACES.** The County will preserve and enhance its rural landscape, open spaces, and historic resources.

**Strategy 5.4.1:** Emphasize subdivision designs that preserve open space (e.g., traditional, conservation, rural).

**Strategy 5.4.2:** Amend land use regulations to promote the preservation of the County's tree canopy.

**Strategy 5.4.3:** Limit higher density development to areas with water and/or sewer service to limit sprawl into more rural areas of the County.

**Strategy 5.4.4:** Ensure that new development near sites on the local and national Historic Registers does not detract from the viability and aesthetics of such sites.







# Conclusion

Blueprint2043 is a policy document that provides vision and guidance. It is not a regulation, but it should guide the Unified Development Ordinance and land use decisions at all levels. It also should help prioritize County budget items, including capital projects. Since the Plan represents the County's aspirations and collective vision, it also serves as a guide to other entities with influence over infrastructure, growth, and funding, such as local, regional, and state agencies; non-profits; and utilities. The pace of implementation will be affected by external forces, such as market conditions, and internal factors, such as staff time and funding.









# **BLUEPRINT-2043**

**LAND USE AND CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN**