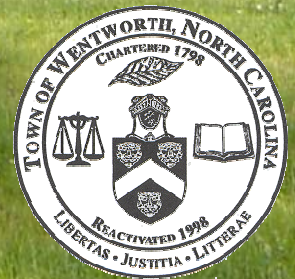


**Town of Wentworth**  
**Land Use Plan**  
*January, 2006*



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# **Town of Wentworth Land Use Plan**

**Adopted by Town Council January 3, 2006**

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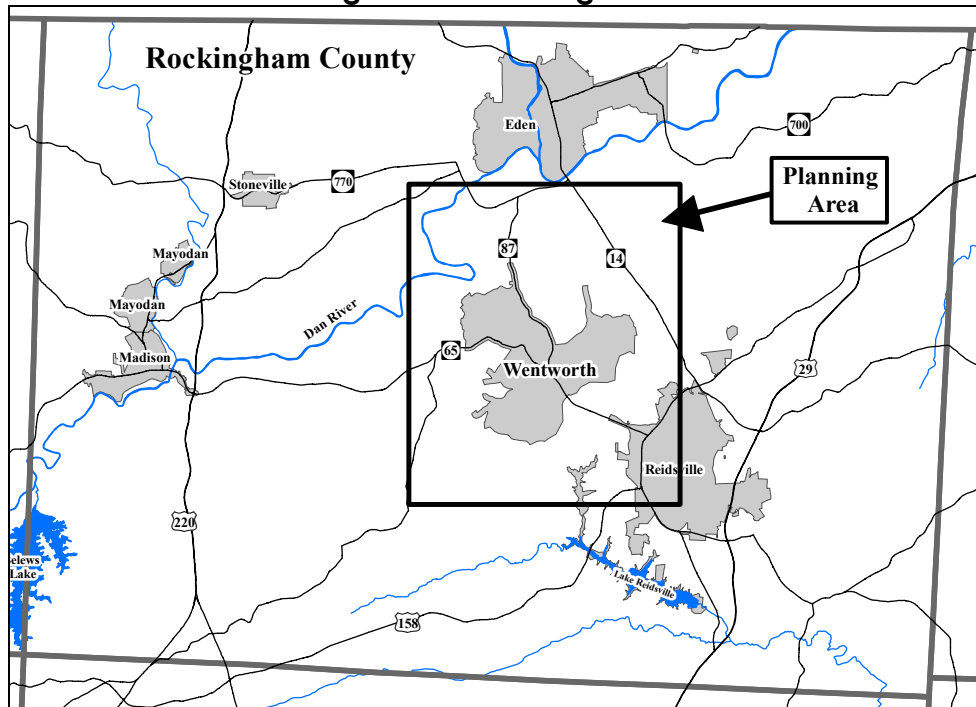
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## COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

### 1.1 THE PLANNING AREA

The Town of Wentworth is the county seat of Rockingham County, and lies in the North Carolina Piedmont -- part of the Piedmont Plateau that extends from New York to Alabama, where the terrain rises gradually from the coastal plain to the base of the Appalachian Mountains. (Bashir and Southern, 2003). Wentworth is situated near the center of Rockingham County, sitting at an approximate elevation of 800 feet above sea level. The area included in this plan encompasses the current boundaries of the Town of Wentworth and its surroundings, approximately 45 square miles.

Figure 1.1 Planning Area



### 1.2 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Human habitation of this area stretches back more than 12,000 years. When Europeans first entered Rockingham County, the Saura tribe inhabited a string of villages along the Dan River. (Bashir and Southern, 2003), (Butler, 1971). A four-foot wide, 15 mile footpath called the Indian Trail which connected the Middle and Upper Sauratown villages passed through modern day Wentworth, the remnants of which are still visible in isolated locations today (RHS, Inc., 1983).

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Beginning in the 1740s, the area that would become Rockingham County began to experience rapid settlement, primarily from Scotch-Irish and German immigrants arriving from the north on the Great Wagon Road from Philadelphia or the Trading Path from Virginia. During the American Revolution, the nearby Troublesome Creek Ironworks played a significant role in providing materials in support of the revolution (Bashir and Southern, 2003).

Population increases following the Revolutionary War led to the formation of new counties, Rockingham being one of these. In 1785, Rockingham County was formed from a portion of Guilford County and named for Charles Watson Wentworth (1730-82), the Marquis of Rockingham who had served as British Prime Minister and supported American independence. A centrally located county seat was established in 1796 by the North Carolina General Assembly to be sited, "...on the lands of Charles Mitchell on the east side of Big Rock House Creek." Known at the time as Rockingham Courthouse, the community was established with the construction of a small clapboard courthouse, jail, and post office. To help spur interest in development around the courthouse, the General Assembly called for a town to be established. In 1799, following the purchase of 125 acres for 15 shillings from Robert Galloway, the Town of Wentworth was formed, and 20 one acre lots were surveyed and offered for sale to the public.

For many decades the Piedmont was considered the 'back country': a place of small farms, minor industries and tiny towns. When the first census was taken in 1790 a mere 3.9 million people resided in the United States, 393,000 of which inhabited North Carolina, with 6,219 people calling Rockingham County home. (Bashir and Southern, 2003), (US Census Bureau, 1790).



Wright's Tavern, circa 1816

*Courtesy, the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments*

Wentworth today still reflects the nature of a rural nineteenth century county seat, its core consisting of a courthouse and jail surrounded by a collection of small supporting businesses, homes and churches (Bashir and Southern, 2003). While no structures from these formative years remain standing, several significant landmarks from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century provide a strong link to the past.

The oldest standing landmark in Wentworth is Wright Tavern, circa 1816. Established by William Wright, it was operated by the Wright family for decades, and later became the Reid Hotel. It is one of the state's best examples of the types of inns that played an essential role in antebellum courthouse towns by housing judges and attorneys during the weeks that court was in session (Bashir and Southern, 2003). Wright Tavern was restored in 1980 to provide office space for the Rockingham County Historical Society, museum space and Post Office (Butler, 1982).

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Other landmarks include the Wentworth United Methodist Church and cemetery constructed in 1859, and the Wentworth Presbyterian Church constructed in 1860 (Bashir and Southern, 2003).

Wentworth played a central role in organizing and assembling local volunteers during the Civil War. However, with no direct access to shipping routes on the Dan River or the new rail line in Reidsville, investments in business and industry in Wentworth were limited during the booming Reconstruction period following the war (RCHS, 1983), a trend that would carry into the modern era.



Main Street, Wentworth circa 1908

*Courtesy, the Historical Collections, Rockingham Community College*

In 1906 a fire claimed several buildings in downtown Wentworth, including the courthouse. The courthouse you see today was constructed in 1907 on the same site for a mere \$25,000 (RCHS, 1983). Designed by architect Frank Milburn, the courthouse is one of four buildings in Wentworth listed on the National Register of Historic Structures (Bashir and Southern, 2003).

In the early twentieth century, the community of Wentworth was known locally as the "garden spot of the world" for its tree lined streets and old, gracious homes. It served as a community gathering spot hosting festivals, concerts and bonfires on courthouse square (RCHS, 1983). Camp Cherokee was originally formed in 1922 as the "Rockingham County Playground" for camping, recreation and leisure activities before becoming a boy scout camp and later home to the Rockingham Opportunity Center (RCHS, 1999).

As a result of the Community College Act of 1963, the voters of Rockingham County approved 1.25 million dollars in bonds to establish Rockingham Community College in Wentworth, which opened its doors of higher learning in 1966 (RCHS, 1983). During the 1970's, consolidation of county services in Wentworth began, resulting in the construction of the county government center across from the Community College (RCHS, 1998). Wentworth today is a vital hub of public institutions.



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In 1996, efforts to incorporate the community of Wentworth began largely in response to annexation plans in Reidsville. The first bill for incorporation passed in the state House, but failed in the Senate. Finally in the spring of 1997, a revised bill was passed permitting a referendum on the incorporation of a town containing 12-13 square miles and approximately 2,100 residents.

On November 4, 1997, voters overwhelmingly approved the referendum by a vote of 570 to 88. The 1798 Wentworth charter was amended to allow for incorporation of the community, and on July 1, 1998, the modern-day Town of Wentworth came into being (RCHS, 1998).

### **1.3 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN**

This plan represents the Town of Wentworth's first foray into future land use planning. The primary purpose of this plan is to provide guidance for making strategic decisions about future growth and development in the community. The plan also serves as a(n):

- Source of factual information
- Guide to local government decisions
- Opportunity for community involvement
- Outline for strategic action



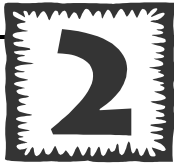
Wentworth Post Office, Circa 1956  
Courtesy, the Historical Collections,  
Rockingham Community College

The plan is intended to serve as a guide to the property owners and developers who propose site improvements, the staff who review and comment on these proposals and the elected and appointed officials who consider these requests.

### **1.4 PLANNING PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY**

A detailed analysis of existing conditions was conducted to ensure the plan responds adequately to the most relevant and current land development issues and trends facing the Town. Computerized mapping and database technology known as geographic information systems (GIS), was used to map and analyze a wide variety of demographic, economic, environmental and urban service growth factors.

Extensive input from the Citizens for Community Improvement Committee and the public was used to identify core community values, and build support for the plan. This framework of community values was applied to the detailed analysis of existing conditions and growth factors to draw conclusions and make recommendations about future development patterns. Recommended land use designations were developed to provide a strategic, proactive vision of where and how the Town of Wentworth wishes to grow in the future.



## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 2.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

Because Wentworth is newly incorporated, there is little historical data for comparison purposes available. For this reason, the demographic analysis relies more heavily on benchmark data for similar towns for comparison purposes. The following statistics highlight the demographic factors which impact growth and development, and may influence land use priorities.

**Table 2.1 Town of Wentworth Demographic Overview**

<b>Demographic Feature</b>	<b>Statistic</b>
Population, 2003	2,868
Land Area, 2003 (square miles)	14.301
Persons per Square Mile, 2003	200.5
Population gained, 2000-2003	89
Population Growth Rate this decade	3.2%
Percent Minority Residents	19.6%
Median Age	37.5
Average Household Size	2.6
Homeownership Rate	85.8%
Percentage of Adults with a High School Diploma	74.6%
Median Household Income	\$39,083
Poverty Rate	4.5%
Number of Private Sector Businesses	5

Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management, State Demographer, 2003 estimates released in November of 2004 and the US Census Bureau, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, SF1 and SF3 file, US Census Bureau, County Business Patterns by Zip Code, 2002.

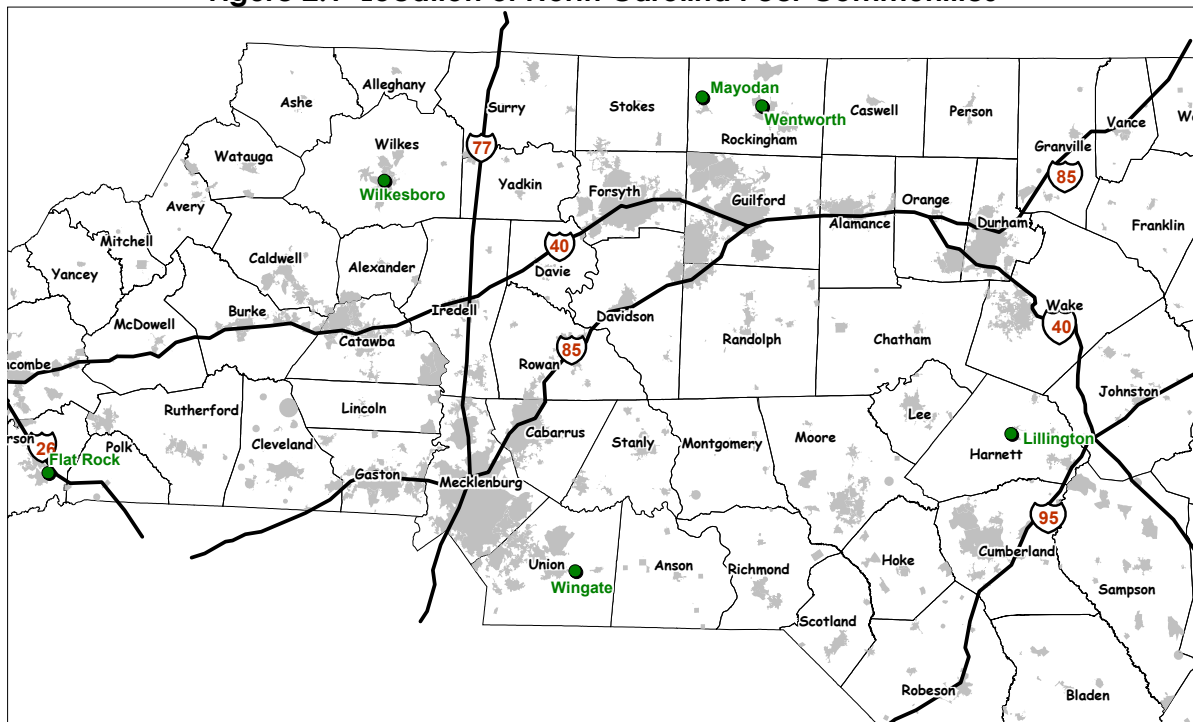
### PEER COMMUNITIES

Comparing the characteristics of the Town of Wentworth to peer communities in North Carolina can provide the Town with valuable insight into trends, patterns and issues that are unique to the community. Statistical information has also been included on five comparison communities. Selection of the comparison towns was based on population size, geographical attributes, and similar organizational structure or community makeup. In addition, benchmark data for Rockingham County and for the state of North Carolina are included where appropriate. The peer communities are:

- **Lillington** (County seat of Harnett County) Lillington has roughly the same population as Wentworth, and Harnett County has a number of similarities to Rockingham County. Harnett County was previously a textile mill county, but in recent years has seen a surge in the number of people commuting to nearby jobs in Wake County. Lillington does have a relatively high proportion of residents in group quarters primarily due to a prison facility within the town.

- **Flat Rock** (Henderson County) Flat Rock has almost the same number of people as Wentworth, is also a newly incorporated municipality (incorporated in 1994). Flat Rock is the home of Blue Ridge Community College, an institution similar to Rockingham Community College.
- **Mayodan** (Rockingham County) Geographically, Mayodan is the most similar to Wentworth due to its location. It is the municipality in Rockingham County closest to Wentworth in size.
- **Wilkesboro** (County seat of Wilkes County) Wilkesboro is only slightly larger than Wentworth, but it is similar to Wentworth in that it is home to Wilkes Community College. Wilkesboro was also chosen for its differences. Wilkesboro has a larger business and commercial base than most small towns.
- **Wingate** (Union County) The town of Wingate is primarily centered around Wingate University. In many ways, Wingate University defines the town of Wingate. Wingate has approximately the same population as Wentworth.

**Figure 2.1 Location of North Carolina Peer Communities**

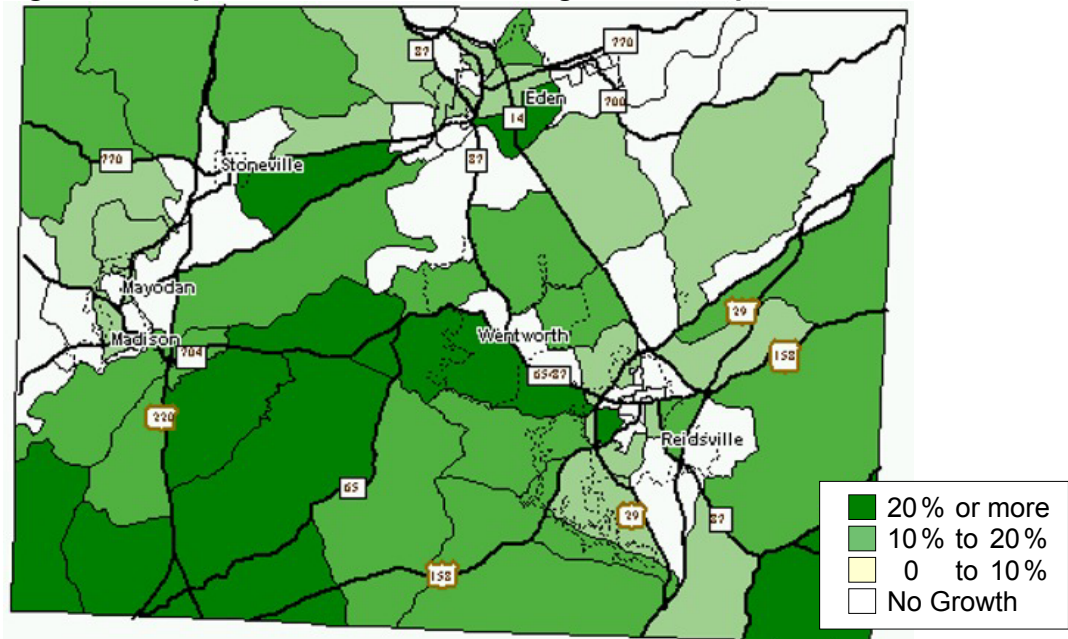


## **POPULATION AND GROWTH**

At the time of incorporation, the Town of Wentworth's population was estimated at 1,989. The 2000 Census count for the town was 2,779. Although Wentworth maintains the rural character of a small town, an estimated 12,500 people live within just 5 miles of the center of town. Within 10 miles of Wentworth live another 65,000 people, and 615,000 people live within 30 miles of Wentworth.

Population growth in Rockingham County over the last decade was highest in the southwestern corner of the county – the area in and around the Highway 220 corridor south of Madison. Portions of Wentworth have been within the growth corridor of the county. Wentworth has led all other incorporated areas in Rockingham County in population growth during the 1990's and in this decade.

**Figure 2.2 Population Growth in Rockingham County, 1990-2000**



Source: 1990 & 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF1 file.  
 Mapped by the Piedmont Triad Council of Governments Regional Data Center.

**Table 2.2 Population Growth in Rockingham County Jurisdictions, 1990-2000**

Jurisdiction	Population			Growth Rate	
	2003	2000	1990	1990-2000	2000-2003
Rockingham County	92,423	91,928	86,064	6.8%	0.5%
Eden	15,834	15,908	15,238	4.4%	-0.5%
Madison	2,243	2,262	2,371	-4.6%	-0.8%
Mayodan	2,405	2,417	2,471	-2.2%	-0.5%
Reidsville	14,630	14,485	12,183	18.9%	1.0%
Stoneville	994	1,002	1,109	-9.6%	-0.8%
Wentworth	2,868	2,779	1,989	39.7%	3.2%

Source: US Census Bureau, NC Office of Budget & Management, 2000 & 2003.

Wentworth is the largest of the comparison areas in land area, but is similar to the others in population size. Three of the comparisons, Mayodan, Wilkesboro, and Lillington, had less population growth in the previous decade, while Flat Rock and Wingate had substantially higher population growth.

**Table 2.3 Population, Growth and Density Comparison**

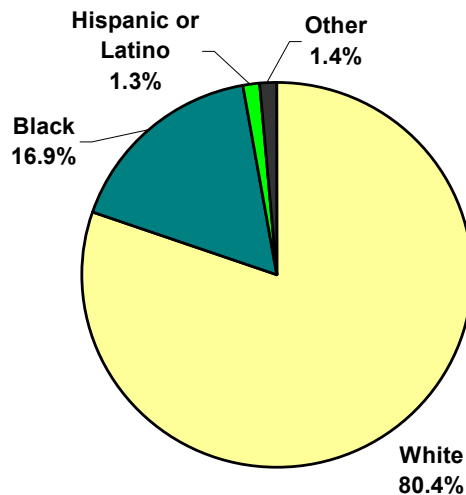
Jurisdiction	Population, 2003	Land Area (square miles)	Persons per Square Mile	Population Growth, 2000-2003
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>2,868</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>200.5</b>	<b>3.2%</b>
Lillington	3,005	4.0	751.3	3.1%
Flat Rock	2,738	7.8	351.0	6.7%
Mayodan	2,405	2.3	1,045.7	-.5%
Wilkesboro	3,186	5.8	549.3	.9%
Wingate	2,685	2.0	1,342.5	11.6%

Source: US Census Bureau, population division.

**RACE AND ETHNICITY**

Wentworth's population is predominantly white, non-Hispanic. Less than 17% of residents are African American, and just 1% are of Hispanic origin. Wentworth has a slightly lower proportion of minorities than Rockingham County overall.

**Figure 2.3 Population Breakdown by Race and Ethnic Origin, 2000**



**Table 2.4 Comparison of Race and Ethnic Origin, 2000**

Jurisdiction	White non-Hispanic	Black non-Hispanic	Other race non-Hispanic	Hispanic or Latino
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>80.4%</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
Flat Rock	97.7%	0.5%	0.6%	1.2%
Lillington	53.6%	40.3%	2.0%	4.1%
Mayodan	84.5%	10.4%	1.1%	4.0%
Wilkesboro	82.7%	9.8%	3.4%	4.1%
Wingate	68.5%	26.0%	1.3%	4.2%
Rockingham County	76.2%	19.5%	1.2%	3.1%
North Carolina	70.2%	21.4%	3.7%	4.7%

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF1 File.

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## **AGE**

The highest proportions of residents in Wentworth are ages 35–39, followed closely by baby boomers ages 40-44. Interestingly, Wentworth has a higher proportion of residents in most “younger and middle” age ranges than the county overall. Wentworth has a much lower proportion of those over the age of 55 than the county overall.

**Table 2.5 Population by Age Range, Wentworth & Rockingham County, 2000**

<b>Age Range</b>	<b>Population In Wentworth</b>	<b>Wentworth %</b>	<b>Rockingham County %</b>
0 - 4	148	<b>5.3%</b>	6.2%
5 - 9	186	<b>6.7%</b>	6.7%
10-14	194	<b>7.0%</b>	6.7%
15-19	203	<b>7.3%</b>	6.0%
20-24	151	<b>5.4%</b>	5.4%
25-29	191	<b>6.9%</b>	6.6%
30-34	196	<b>7.1%</b>	7.1%
35-39	251	<b>9.0%</b>	7.7%
40-44	250	<b>9.0%</b>	8.0%
45-49	238	<b>8.6%</b>	7.6%
50-54	202	<b>7.3%</b>	7.0%
55-59	135	<b>4.9%</b>	5.5%
60-64	119	<b>4.3%</b>	4.7%
65-69	100	<b>3.6%</b>	4.1%
70-74	96	<b>3.5%</b>	3.9%
75-79	60	<b>2.2%</b>	3.1%
80-84	31	<b>1.1%</b>	2.0%
85+	28	<b>1.0%</b>	1.8%

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF1 File.

With a median age of 37.5, Wentworth's population is just below the North Carolina median age, and about average in comparison to the peer communities.

**Table 2.6 Median Age Comparison, 2000**

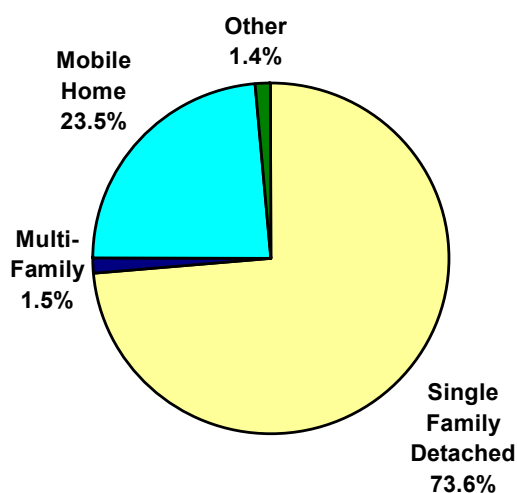
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>37.5</b>
Flat Rock	58.1
Lillington	37.0
Mayodan	42.7
Wilkesboro	42.3
Wingate	23.0
Rockingham County	38.5
North Carolina	35.3

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF1 File.

## HOUSING

The 1,081 homes that make up the housing stock in Wentworth consist primarily of single family, detached dwellings. Manufactured homes make up the next largest percentage of residential units. The majority of housing units in Wentworth are owner occupied, with a median home value 25% higher than in Rockingham County overall. There are few rental housing units available in Wentworth.

**Figure 2.4 Housing Units by Type in Wentworth, 2000**



Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF3 File.

Of the comparison areas, Wentworth is about average in its proportion of single-family homes, but it has the highest proportion of mobile homes and the lowest proportion of multi-family units among its peer communities.

**Table 2.7 2000 Housing Characteristic Comparison**

Jurisdiction	Housing Units	% Vacant*	% Single Family Detached	% Multi-Family Units	% Manufactured Homes
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>1,081</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>73.6%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>23.5%</b>
Flat Rock	1,459	3.0%	90.2%	7.0%	0.0%
Lillington	894	9.8%	61.9%	23.3%	11.9%
Mayodan	1,268	6.9%	75.7%	22.1%	1.7%
Wilkesboro	1,382	5.0%	62.9%	28.8%	5.0%
Wingate	825	7.7%	67.2%	26.7%	2.5%
Rockingham County	40,208	7.4%	71.6%	8.0%	19.4%

\* Not including units for seasonal or recreational use.

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF1 and SF3 Files.

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**Table 2.8 Household Tenure Comparison, 2000**

	<b>% Owner Occupied</b>	<b>Median Value</b>	<b>% Renter Occupied</b>	<b>Median Rent</b>
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>85.8%</b>	<b>\$102,200</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>\$378</b>
Flat Rock	91.3%	\$285,500	8.7%	\$832
Lillington	55.3%	\$91,000	44.7%	\$501
Mayodan	61.0%	\$58,700	39.0%	\$395
Wilkesboro	57.4%	\$112,500	42.6%	\$433
Wingate	56.2%	\$99,900	43.8%	\$526
Rockingham County	73.7%	\$81,400	26.3%	\$437

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF1 and SF3 files.

### **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

One of every four adults living in Wentworth lacks a high school diploma. Wentworth's educational attainment rates compare favorably against Rockingham County overall, but do not compare favorably with among its peer communities.

**Table 2.9 Education Attainment Comparison, 2000**

	<b>% without a High School Diploma</b>	<b>% with some college course work</b>	<b>% with a Bachelor's Degree or higher</b>
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>25.4%</b>	<b>42.2%</b>	<b>13.4%</b>
Flat Rock	2.3%	82.7%	61.4%
Lillington	27.3%	43.8%	13.2%
Mayodan	42.2%	26.6%	8.2%
Wilkesboro	18.3%	54.3%	26.2%
Wingate	23.4%	51.6%	26.8%
Rockingham County	31.1%	35.6%	10.8%

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF3 file.

### **LABOR FORCE**

Wentworth has a relatively high proportion of its population in the workforce. This is primarily due to the demographic age groups that comprise the majority of its population. Of the comparison areas, only Wingate has a higher proportion of adults in the workforce, but Wingate has a disproportionately high level of unemployment. This is probably due to a large student population – many of whom are not currently employed. Overall, the unemployment rate in Wentworth is similar to that of Rockingham County overall.



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**Table 2.10 Labor Force Comparison, 2000**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Labor Force</b>	<b>% of adults in labor force</b>	<b>Unemployment Rate</b>
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>1,339</b>	<b>62.2%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
Flat Rock	809	36.9%	1.6%
Lillington	940	37.2%	4.7%
Mayodan	1,107	59.0%	5.1%
Wilkesboro	1,587	56.4%	4.0%
Wingate	1,431	71.1%	34.3%
Rockingham County	45,044	61.8%	5.8%

*Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF3 File.*

## **PLACE OF WORK**

A little over a third of Wentworth's workers commute out of Rockingham County to work. This is just slightly lower than the county average, but higher than the other comparison areas except for Lillington. Wentworth workers also have the highest average travel time among the comparison communities. Most jobs in Wentworth are located in the governmental center or in the community college – two of the largest employers in the county – but it appears that many Wentworth residents are not employed in these locations based on average travel time.

**Table 2.11 Commuting Comparison, 2000**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Average Travel Time to Work</b>	<b>% of workers commuting outside of the county to work</b>
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>35.7%</b>
Flat Rock	19.4	16.5%
Lillington	26.1	42.2%
Mayodan	23.0	31.1%
Wilkesboro	13.7	9.0%
Wingate	21.2	18.7%
Rockingham County	26.1	38.7%

*Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF3 File.*

## **OCCUPATION**

Workers in Wentworth are more likely to be in traditionally 'white-collar' occupations than others within Rockingham County. However, the proportion of white-collar workers residing in Wentworth is lower than any of the peer communities outside of Rockingham County.

**Table 2.12 Occupation Comparison, 2000**

Jurisdiction	White Collar*	Blue Collar**
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>39.1%</b>
Flat Rock	87.6%	12.4%
Lillington	70.1%	29.9%
Mayodan	53.6%	46.4%
Wilkesboro	75.0%	25.0%
Wingate	73.4%	26.6%
Rockingham County	57.4%	42.6%

\* 'White-collar' jobs include professional, managerial, technical, sales and clerical occupations.

\*\* 'Blue-collar' jobs include construction, maintenance, farming, production, transportation, and material moving.

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF3 File.

## **BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS**

The number of businesses within the Wentworth zip code is substantially lower than any of the comparison communities. The next closest area – Mayodan – has 12 times as many privately owned businesses as Wentworth. This illustrates the fact that Wentworth is foremost a residential community. The number of businesses located in the Wentworth vicinity has declined over the past five years.

**Table 2.13 2002 Business Establishment Comparison, by 5-Digit Zip Code**

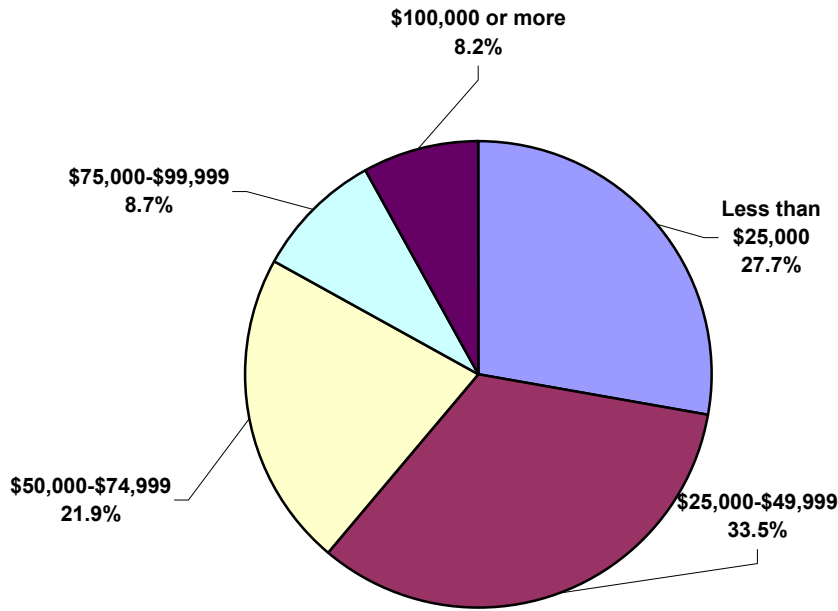
Jurisdiction Zip Code	Number of private businesses		Employment in those businesses	
	2002	1998	2002	1998
<b>27375 (Wentworth)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>32</b>
28731 (Flat Rock)	126	96	1,228	1,031
27546 (Lillington)	249	241	2,746	3,921
27027 (Mayodan)	60	70	1,392	1,946
28174 (Wingate)	79	80	1,005	1,076
28697 (Wilkesboro)	430	412	10,912	10,213

Source: US Census Bureau, County Business Patterns by Zip Code, 2002 data released in 2004.

## **HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

Approximately one of every four households in Wentworth had an annual income of less than \$25,000 in 1999, but the majority of households could be considered middle income.

**Figure 2.5 Wentworth 2000 Household Income by Range**



Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF3 File.

Only one comparison community, the affluent retirement community of Flat Rock, had a lower proportion of low income households -- those earning less than \$25,000 per year. Wentworth has the highest proportion of middle and upper middle income households, defined as having a household income of between \$25,000 and \$99,999, of any of the comparison communities.

**Table 2.14 2000 Comparison Household Income, by Range**

Jurisdiction	Less than \$25,000	\$25,000-\$99,999	\$100,000 or more
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>27.7%</b>	<b>64.1%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>
Flat Rock	12.0%	58.5%	29.5%
Lillington	39.8%	55.1%	5.1%
Mayodan	48.2%	50.3%	1.5%
Wilkesboro	38.3%	46.6%	15.1%
Wingate	37.3%	59.6%	3.1%
Rockingham County	36.0%	54.6%	9.4%
North Carolina	30.7%	64.0%	5.3%

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF3 File.

**Table 2.15 Household, Family, and Per Capita Income Comparison**

Jurisdiction	Median Household Income	Median Family Income	Per Capita Income	Median Earnings
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>\$ 39,083</b>	<b>\$ 45,865</b>	<b>\$ 18,071</b>	<b>\$ 21,792</b>
Flat Rock	\$ 67,813	\$ 81,811	\$ 42,222	\$ 28,472
Lillington	\$ 30,670	\$ 42,366	\$ 13,664	\$ 17,800
Mayodan	\$ 25,980	\$ 36,328	\$ 15,607	\$ 17,784
Wilkesboro	\$ 40,982	\$ 53,355	\$ 24,300	\$ 24,207
Wingate	\$ 33,750	\$ 45,250	\$ 13,884	\$ 8,420
Rockingham Co.	\$ 33,784	\$ 40,821	\$ 17,120	\$ 21,380

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF3 File.

## **POVERTY**

There is very little poverty in Wentworth. A total of 120 people in Wentworth were living below the poverty line in 2000, with the highest poverty rates among female heads of household. Only the affluent retirement community of Flat Rock has a lower poverty rate among the peer communities.

**Table 2.16 2000 Poverty rates in Wentworth by demographic category**

Demographic Category	Wentworth	Rockingham County
All Persons	<b>4.5%</b>	12.8%
All Children under age 18	<b>1.1%</b>	16.3%
Preschool age children	<b>2.1%</b>	20.1%
Age 18-64	<b>4.9%</b>	10.7%
Age 65 and older	<b>9.9%</b>	15.5%
Families	<b>3.9%</b>	10.2%
Married Couple Families	<b>3.3%</b>	6.0%
Female Head of Household	<b>10.5%</b>	28.2%
Female Head of Household with children	<b>9.7%</b>	34.2%

Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF3 File

**Table 2.17 Poverty Rate Comparison, 2000**

Jurisdiction	Poverty Rate	Poverty Rate - Children	Poverty Rate - Elderly
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>9.9%</b>
Flat Rock	1.5%	0.0%	2.5%
Lillington	20.3%	31.2%	20.4%
Mayodan	16.0%	20.5%	17.9%
Wilkesboro	11.6%	14.4%	9.4%
Wingate	20.0%	20.9%	21.0%
Rockingham Co.	12.8%	16.3%	15.5%

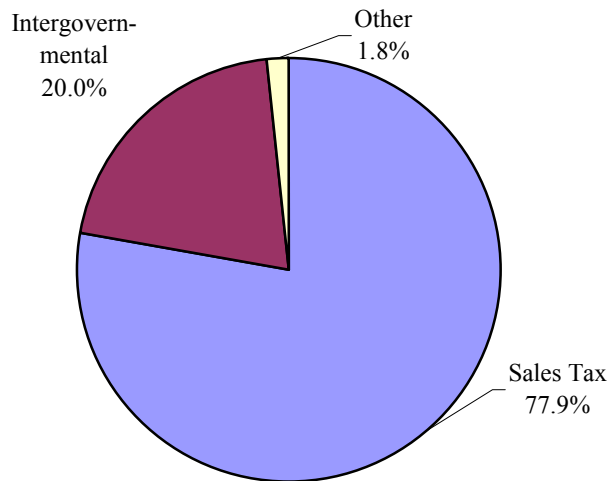
Source: 2000 Census of Population & Housing, SF3 File.

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## **MUNICIPAL FINANCES**

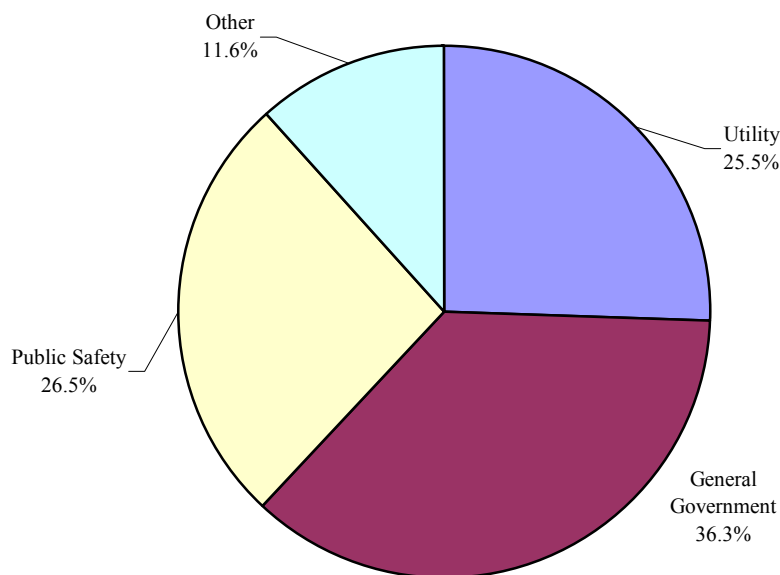
Because Wentworth has no property taxes, the majority of funds come to the town through a distribution of sales tax revenue. The proportion of the Town's revenue from sales tax has been about the same since the Town was incorporated.

**Figure 2.6 Wentworth Revenues by Source, 2004**



Source: NC Department of State Treasurer, local government finance division.

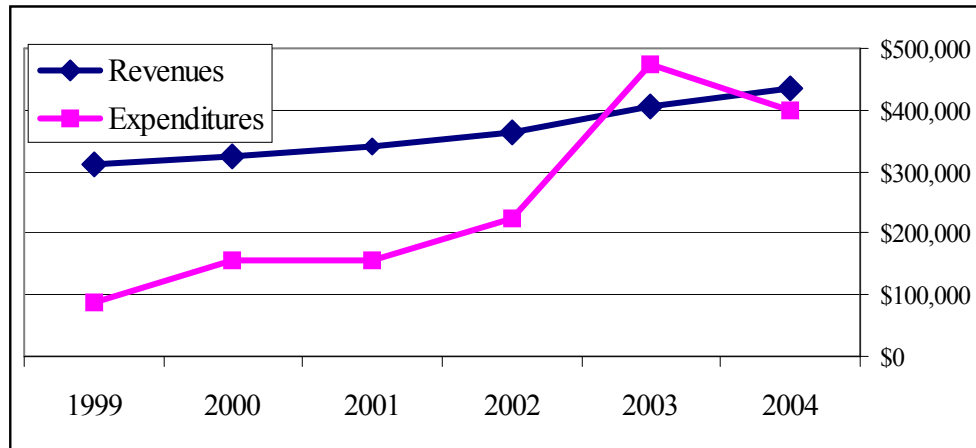
**Figure 2.7 Wentworth Expenditures by Function, 2004**



Source: NC Department of State Treasurer, local government finance division.

Revenues for the Town have climbed slowly but steadily over the past five years. Expenditures also slowly rose until 2003, when a municipal debt was paid off. That expense caused expenditures to jump for that fiscal year. Expenditures leveled back off in the 2004 fiscal year.

**Figure 2.8 Revenues & Expenditures for the Town of Wentworth, 1999-2004**



Source: NC Department of State Treasurer, local government finance division.

Like Wentworth, Flat Rock also has no property tax. However, the per capita revenues of Flat Rock exceed per capita expenditures, and municipal revenues there are abundant. Wentworth's revenues per capita are the lowest among the comparison communities, but per capita expenditures are also proportionately low. The municipal fund balance is high.

**Table 2.18 Municipal Financial Comparison, 2003-04**

Jurisdiction	Tax Rate, 2003-04	Per Capita Revenues	Per Capita Expenditures	Fund Balance	Fund Balance as % of expenditures
<b>Wentworth</b>	<b>\$0.0000</b>	<b>\$ 143</b>	<b>\$ 167</b>	<b>\$ 552,518</b>	<b>116.21%</b>
Flat Rock	\$0.0000	\$ 249	\$ 65	\$ 1,862,942	575.56
Lillington	\$0.6300	\$ 884	\$ 1,040	\$ 1,419,623	72.06
Mayodan	\$0.5000	\$ 1,571	\$ 1,857	\$ 931,359	47.86
Wilkesboro	\$0.3400	\$ 1,951	\$ 2,016	\$ 1,430,106	44.66
Wingate	\$0.4000	\$ 678	\$ 814	\$ 636,048	51.03

Source: NC Department of State Treasurer, local government finance division.

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## **2.2 ANALYSIS OF URBAN SERVICE GROWTH FACTORS**

### **WATER SYSTEM**

#### **ANALYSIS**

Dan River Water, Inc. provides water service to the citizens of the Town of Wentworth. Dan River Water, Inc. utilizes the City of Eden's municipal water treatment facility to obtain potable water. The City of Eden draws raw water from the Dan River at the south end of Bridge Street. Eden's plant has a present design flow capacity of 20.6 million gallons per day (MGD). Dan River Water, Inc. has a contract with the City of Eden to purchase up to 1.670 MGD, of which .884 MGD is currently being utilized. The expiration date of the current contract is 2029.

Dan River Water, Inc. is in the process of designing an elevated water tank (roughly .5 MGD capacity) that would be constructed in Wentworth and aid in the distribution of water throughout the Town. The water lines operated by Dan River Water, Inc. primarily serve the areas of Wentworth north, northeast, and west of NC 65. Water lines can be found along NC 65, NC 87, Ashley Loop, Wentworth Street and Cedar Lane.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

The Town of Wentworth does not provide any water service directly to its citizens. The water system that is in existence is part of a larger Dan River Water, Inc. system that serves customers throughout Rockingham County. Dan River Water, Inc. is currently utilizing slightly more than half of its allocated capacity. This should allow for future growth of water service in the Town of Wentworth. Negotiations with Dan River Water, Inc. may be required to identify future water extension projects and timelines.

### **WASTEWATER SYSTEM**

#### **ANALYSIS**

Town of Wentworth residents currently receive limited sewer service through Rockingham County's Wastewater Treatment System. The City of Eden owns and operates a sewage treatment plant that receives and treats the wastewater from the Rockingham County Wastewater Treatment System. Eden's existing sewage treatment plant has a capacity of 13.5 MGD. The annual average daily flow through the Town of Eden's existing sewage treatment plant is approximately 7.5 MGD.

County sewer lines feed the Wentworth area from the north. Sewer lines are located along NC 87, and travel from the Town of Eden south into Wentworth. Access to sewer is provided to a limited portion of the Town of Wentworth, including most of the historic core of Wentworth located along NC 65, the county government complex, county schools and Rockingham Community College.

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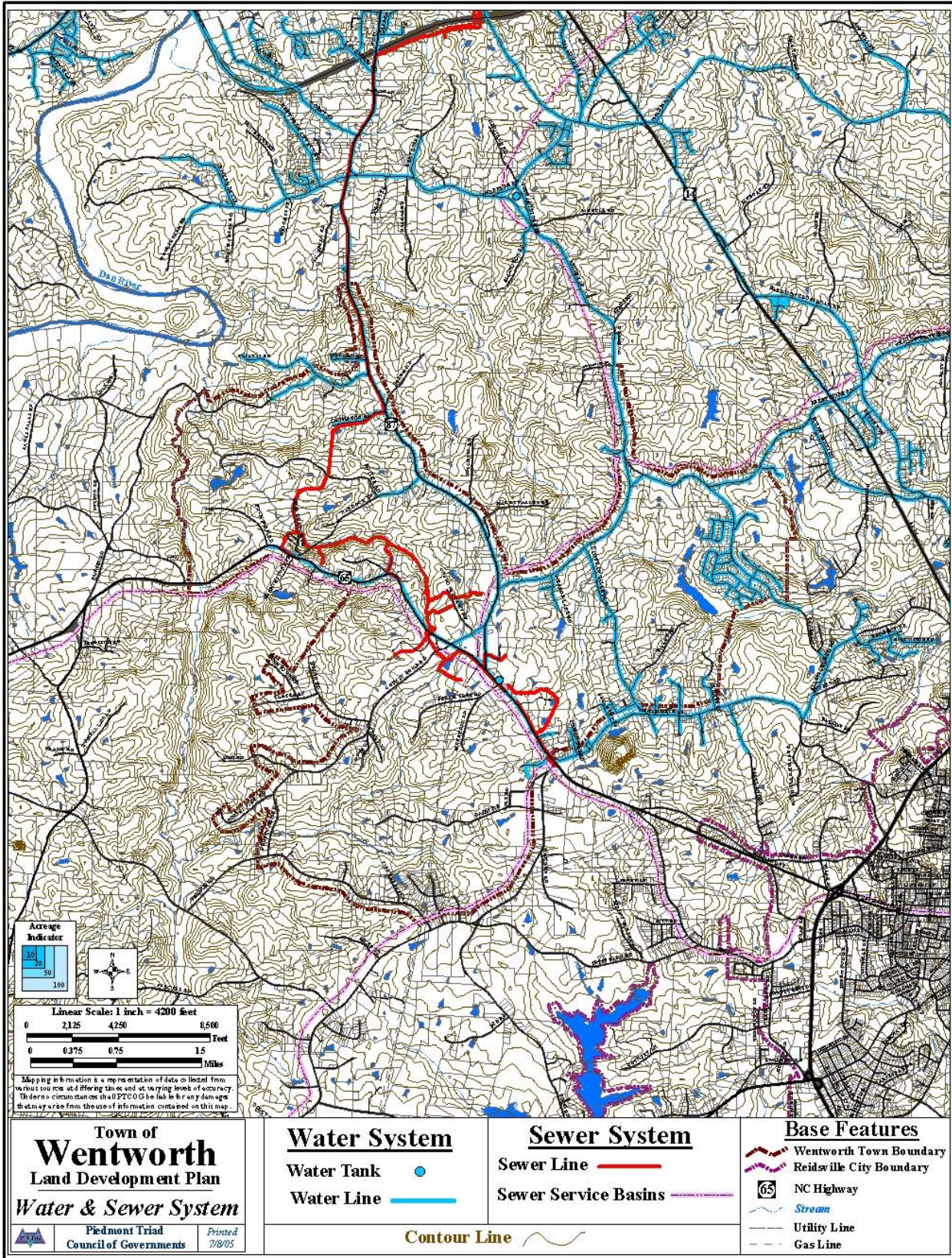
The remainder of the Town and future planning area utilize individual septic systems. Several factors impact the location and performance of these systems, including: undersized septic tanks unable to handle peak loads; undersized leaching fields; clay and hydric soils which reduce system capacity; inadequate maintenance; migration of pollutants into groundwater and storm-water runoff; concentration of development; and water supply watershed protection requirements.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Rockingham County provides limited sewer service to some areas of Wentworth. Rockingham County's sewer is treated by the City of Eden which currently has over 6 MGD of excess sewer capacity. Therefore, it appears that Rockingham County's sewer service could continue to serve the Town of Wentworth and handle development over the next ten to twenty years. Negotiations with Rockingham County Wastewater Treatment System may be required to identify future wastewater extensions and timelines.



Figure 2.9 Water and Sewer System



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## **TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

### **ANALYSIS**

In 1997 Rockingham County conducted a transportation planning study in conjunction with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT). The purpose of the study was to create a thoroughfare plan for the Towns of Rockingham County. Although the transportation plan was never adopted, it does offer some insight into potential transportation needs for the Town of Wentworth.

While the Rockingham County Transportation Plan completed by NCDOT in 2002 was never adopted, the document identifies road segments likely to exceed their capacity by the year 2025, and recommends road improvements and additions necessary to satisfy the Town's anticipated transportation needs through the year 2025. Recommended roadways and improvements within Wentworth's jurisdiction are listed below and illustrated on the Thoroughfare Plan Map:

- Northern Route (also called New US 158, Rockingham Connector) – Construction of a four lane divided expressway between US 158 (near Sandy Cross Road (SR 1001)), traveling north through Wentworth, north of Reidsville, and tying into existing US 158, east of Reidsville. The facility would help east-west traffic through the county and connect almost every major route in the County.
- Wentworth Bypass – Construction of a NC 65 bypass south of Wentworth. The project limits are from near Sandy Cross Road (SR 1001) to the bridge over Rock House Creek. The project is recommended to be a four lane divided facility and will serve through traffic not destined for Wentworth.
- Bridge #54 Replacement – Replace Bridge #54 over Rock House Creek on NC 65.
- NC 65 – Widening of NC 65 between the proposed Northern Route to the proposed Wentworth bypass to increase safety and capacity.
- NC 87 – Widening of NC 87 to five lanes and the relocation of a section of NC 87 from near Raven Road (SR 2112) to Harrington Highway (SR 1533) near Eden.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

NC 65 and NC 704 serve as a major east-west route through Rockingham County. Any additional road widening or construction projects will tend to increase economic development opportunities for the Town as well as improve traffic.

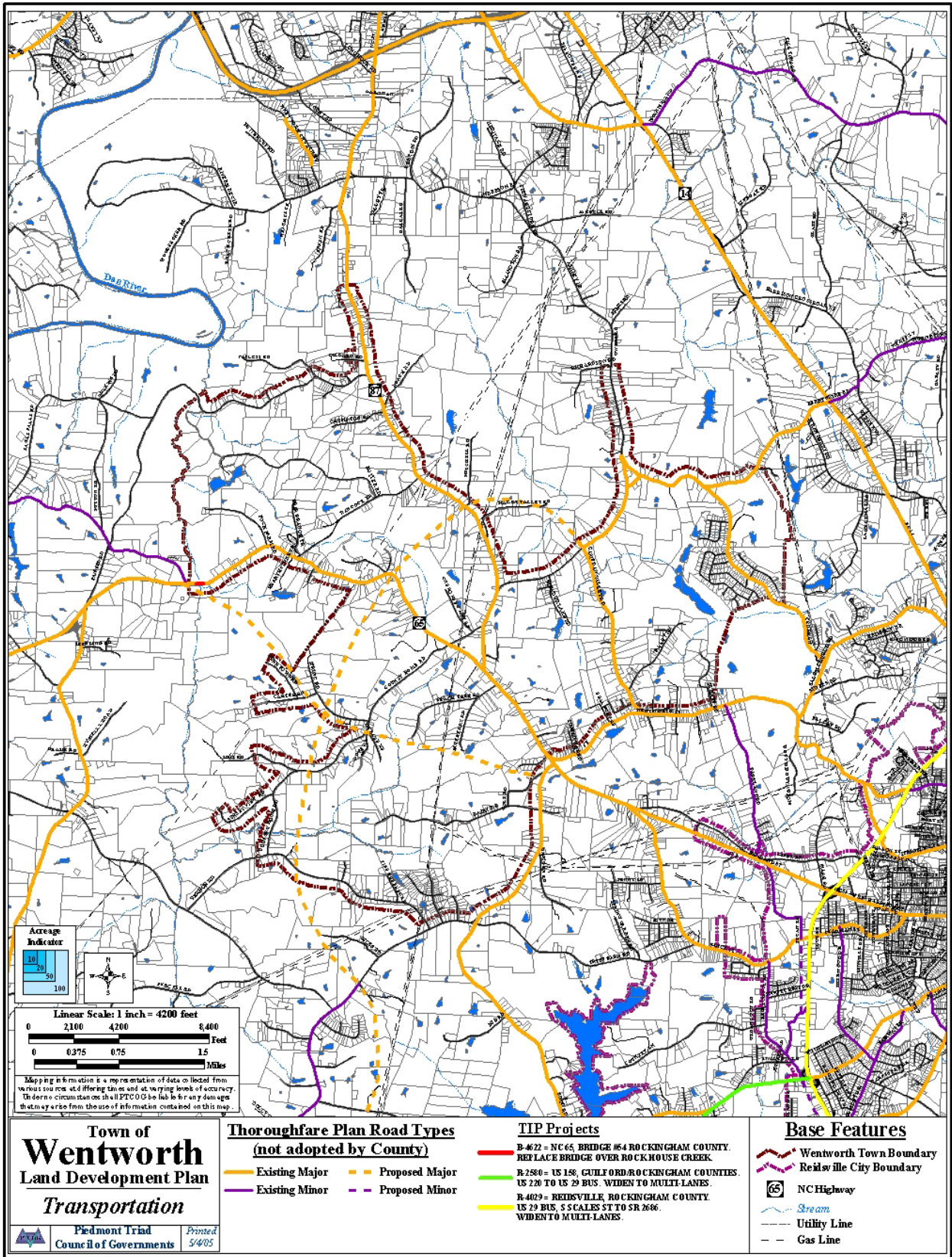
With increased access to transportation facilities, comes increased pressure for land development. Road access needs to be carefully managed to preserve the function of major thoroughfares throughout Wentworth's jurisdiction, and to preserve the community's character and quality of life as growth occurs. A comprehensive access management policy would be a useful tool for managing access along major thoroughfares. In addition, proposed roadway corridors recommended in the Town's Land Use Plan should be protected from encroachment by new land development. Right-of-way dedication and reservation for future thoroughfares would facilitate the construction of the Town's future street network.

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Encouraging the development and use of public transportation and pedestrian facilities would also help relieve traffic congestion and maintain community character as Wentworth grows. Commuters could benefit from regional public transportation with connections to Greensboro, Reidsville, Eden, Winston-Salem, and other urban destinations throughout the region.

In the process of planning recommended future land use patterns and relationships in Wentworth, potential road projects may be identified to serve likely future development areas. Potential corridors should be considered an important part of the proposed future land development vision for our community, and therefore, be included on the Proposed Land Use Map. Suggested road and greenway corridors should be incorporated into the design of new neighborhoods as land development occurs in and around Wentworth.

Figure 2.10 Transportation



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## **PARKS AND RECREATION SYSTEM**

### **ANALYSIS**

The Town of Wentworth does not currently own or operate any recreational facilities. The residents of the Town can find recreational facilities located within the planning area at the following locations:

- Wentworth Elementary School
- Rockingham Middle School
- Rockingham High School
- Old Wentworth School
- Rockingham Community College
- Betsy-Jeff Penn 4-H Center

These sites offer numerous recreational opportunities including: walking tracks, running tracks, hiking, baseball/softball fields, soccer fields, basketball courts, tennis courts and open spaces.

In the future the Town of Wentworth may desire to complete a Parks and Recreation Master Plan. A plan would provide strategies for developing and maintaining a parks and recreation system to meet current and future needs.



Wentworth Elementary School  
*Courtesy, Piedmont Triad Council of Governments*

### **CONCLUSION**

At the conclusion of the land use planning process the Town may update its development regulations. In an effort to more fully meet the parks, recreation and open space needs of citizens in Wentworth, and to make necessary connections among greenways and other land uses, the Town may consider regulations requiring open space, greenways, and pedestrian facilities as land development and transportation improvements occur. Conservation corridors, proposed greenway corridors, and suggested future park sites will be included on the Proposed Land Use Map.

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## **2.3 ANALYSIS OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**

### **NATURAL AND HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES**

#### **ANALYSIS**

The Town of Wentworth and the surrounding planning area include a wide-range of unique natural and human environmental features. These range from historic sites to areas of high quality farmland. The Natural and Human Environmental Features Map provides a geographic illustration of the natural and human environmental features described in more detail below.

#### **Natural Heritage Areas**

In 1999, an inventory of significant natural areas was conducted in Rockingham County by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. Natural Heritage areas are sites which support natural assemblages of fauna and flora which are significant to the county, our region or state. Of the six natural heritage areas identified within the study area, two are located within the town limits.



Golden Seal  
Courtesy, NC State  
University

The College Woods site, located adjacent to Rockingham Community College follow a creek that flows from a small lake westward to Rock House Creek. This is a natural area of local significance, noteworthy for its high quality, undisturbed forests. College Woods is a valuable resource, and could be utilized for education and passive recreation.

The natural heritage area found at the Betsy-Jeff Penn 4-H Center lies to the west of Lake Hazel, and along a portion of Carroll Creek. The natural area is of county-wide significance, and noteworthy for its mature forest, and varied flora and fauna. This site is recognized for its extensive use for outdoor education and recreation and wildlife habitat.

#### **Natural Heritage Elements**

Natural Heritage Elements represent the occurrence of a rare plant or animal species confirmed at the time of the Natural Heritage Inventory. Of the seven natural heritage element occurrences within the study area, none lie within the town limits.

#### **Historic Sites**

The Office of State Historic Preservation conducted an inventory of historic properties in Rockingham County in 1997-98. During the course of this survey, numerous historically significant structures were identified in Wentworth, ranging in age from the 1820's to the 1950's. The inventory includes public buildings, private residences and outbuildings. Three sites are included on the National Register of Historic Places:

- Rockingham County Courthouse and Jail (listed in 1979)
- Wentworth United Methodist Church and Cemetery (listed in 1986)
- Wright Tavern (listed in 1970)

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A number of other significant historical resources are clustered around the 'Town Square' on NC 65, and a historic district has been proposed to recognize and conserve these properties.

### **Wetlands**

The US Fish and Wildlife Service maintains the National Wetlands Inventory, which was used to identify wetlands located within the study area. Small areas of wetlands can be found in Wentworth, typically limited to areas adjacent to streams or other bodies of water.

### **High Quality Farmlands**

According to the North Carolina Agricultural Extension Service, high quality farmland in Rockingham County generally consists of Cecil and Applain soils, with a slope of less than 8%. Based on these criteria, limited high-quality farmland lies within the existing Town limits.

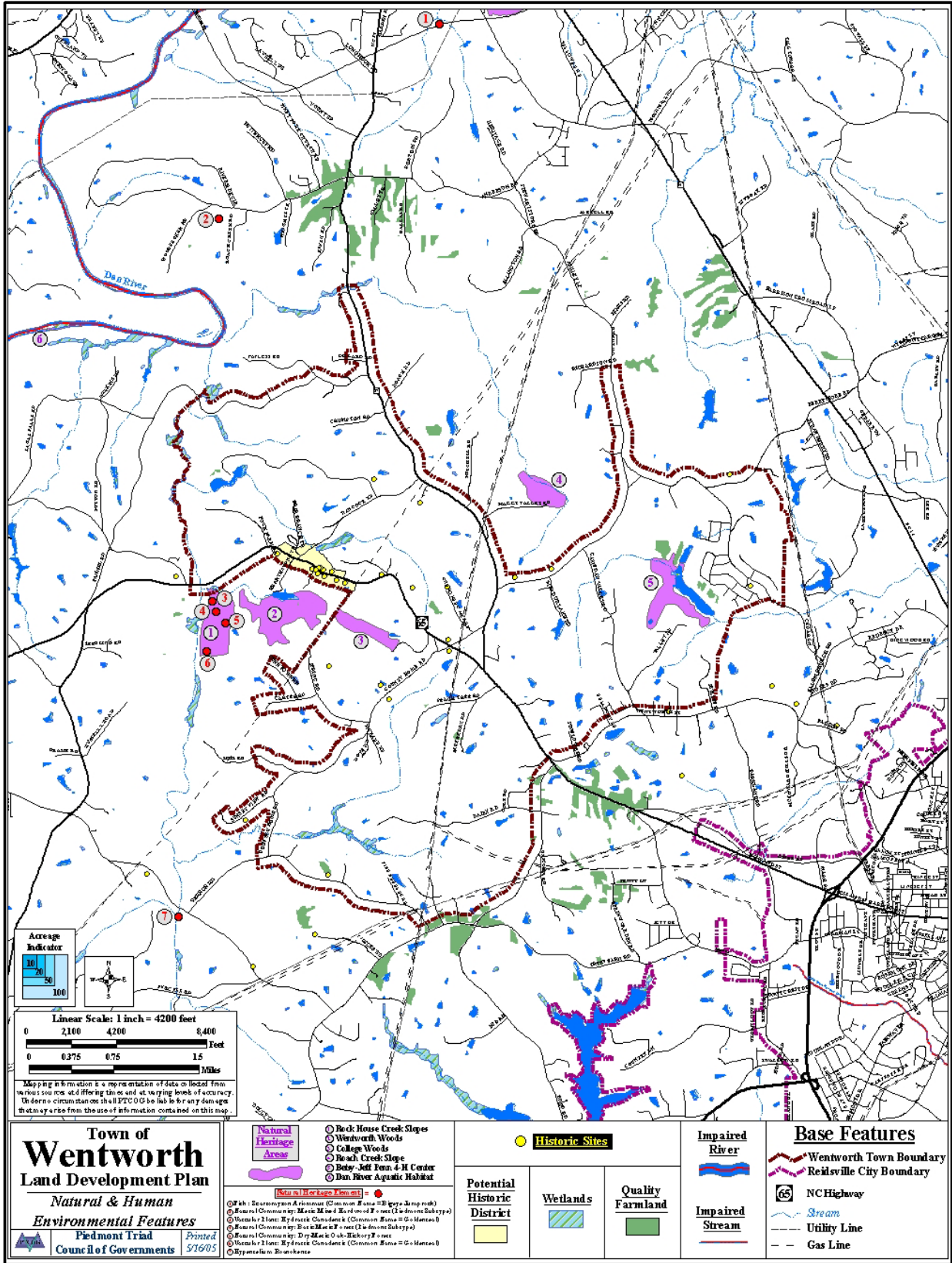
### **Impaired Rivers and Streams**

Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act requires states to identify rivers and streams which do not meet water quality standards or have become impaired. 14 miles of the Dan River are included on the State of North Carolina 303(d) list of impaired streams due to turbidity. No streams within the town limits of Wentworth are listed as impaired.

### **CONCLUSION**

A goal of the Land Use Plan is to build upon important existing features found within Wentworth and make certain that they are preserved for future generations. The location and distribution of these features can have a substantial influence on recommended future land uses. For example, placing the area around the Rockingham County Courthouse on the National Register of Historic Places would enable property owners in the historic district to obtain federal and state tax credits for rehabilitation and restoration projects. Knowing the location of high quality natural areas and farmland can be valuable in guiding the location of future development to avoid impacts to these areas.

Figure 2.11 Natural and Human Environmental Features





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## **LAND DEVELOPMENT SUITABILITY**

### **ANALYSIS**

Three key environmental growth factors were mapped and analyzed to identify physical limitations and regulatory constraints affecting future land development as shown on the Development Limitations Map. Results of this analysis were used to determine the potential suitability of vacant land for urban uses, and to formulate strategies for future growth.

#### **Topographic Slope Limitations**

The degree of slope throughout the planning area was calculated using topographic contour data provided by Rockingham County, and supplemented by USGS topographic contour data for portions of the study area. This data was used to generate a topographic contour map with a contour interval of 20 feet. Potential future land uses are quite variable in their sensitivity to steep topographic conditions. Structures such as houses and small commercial and institutional buildings may have more topographic flexibility because their small footprints which require less grading than large industrial buildings, shopping centers, or schools.

Another consideration is the land value of developable sites. For high-value sites such as those designated for industrial or commercial use, the costs of grading typically represent a smaller share of total development costs than on lower value sites. Thus, a developer proposing a project on a commercial site may view it as economically feasible even if steep topography calls for excessive grading. As a middle ground estimate for most land uses, a 20% slope (20 feet of fall per 100 horizontal feet) was used as the threshold for "severe" slope limitations. Compared with other jurisdictions in the Piedmont region, Wentworth has a moderate number of areas with severe topographic slope constraints. Steeply sloping topography is generally concentrated along multiple tributaries flowing into the Dan River and Rock House Creek, making these areas inappropriate for most intensive land uses.

#### **Soil Limitations Analysis**

Some soil conditions can make potential land development more difficult or expensive. In the Piedmont region, dominant soil limitations include hydric or wetland conditions, rock content, or high shrink-swell potential due to high clay content and moisture fluctuations. Digital soils maps and attribute data from the Rockingham County Soil Survey (Soil Conservation Service) were used to identify areas containing one or more of these soil limitation conditions. Because the mapping units for soils are only indicative of prevailing soil types in those areas, the actual distribution of hydric, rocky, or shrink-swell soils may differ somewhat from what is shown. Even where such conditions actually occur, there would probably still be a means to undertake development, although with greater difficulty or expense. Another limiting factor is poor percolation, as it can make the sighting of septic systems difficult. This applies to areas without access to Wentworth's public sewer services. Soil survey data indicate only a few small areas within the Town's planning area as having slow percolation. Thus, poor percolation soils are not a significant growth factor in Wentworth's current jurisdiction or potential growth areas.

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**Floodplain**

Development suitability is also affected by the location of the floodway and 100-year flood zone. There are limited floodplain areas within the planning area, focused primarily around the Dan River and its main tributaries: Rock House Creek and Roach Creek.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The Town's land supply appears adequate to meet its needs for land development over the next 30 years. About 59 percent of the land within Wentworth's Town Limits (5,111 acres) is categorized as vacant or under-utilized. Of the 5,111 acres, roughly 36% is capable of being developed when limiting factors are taken into account. Much of this vacant land, especially along high points and ridge lines, contains relatively few constraints due to severe soil and slope limitations or 100-year flood zones. Therefore, the Town appears to have an abundant supply of suitable land for future development.

Figure 2.12 Elevation Profile

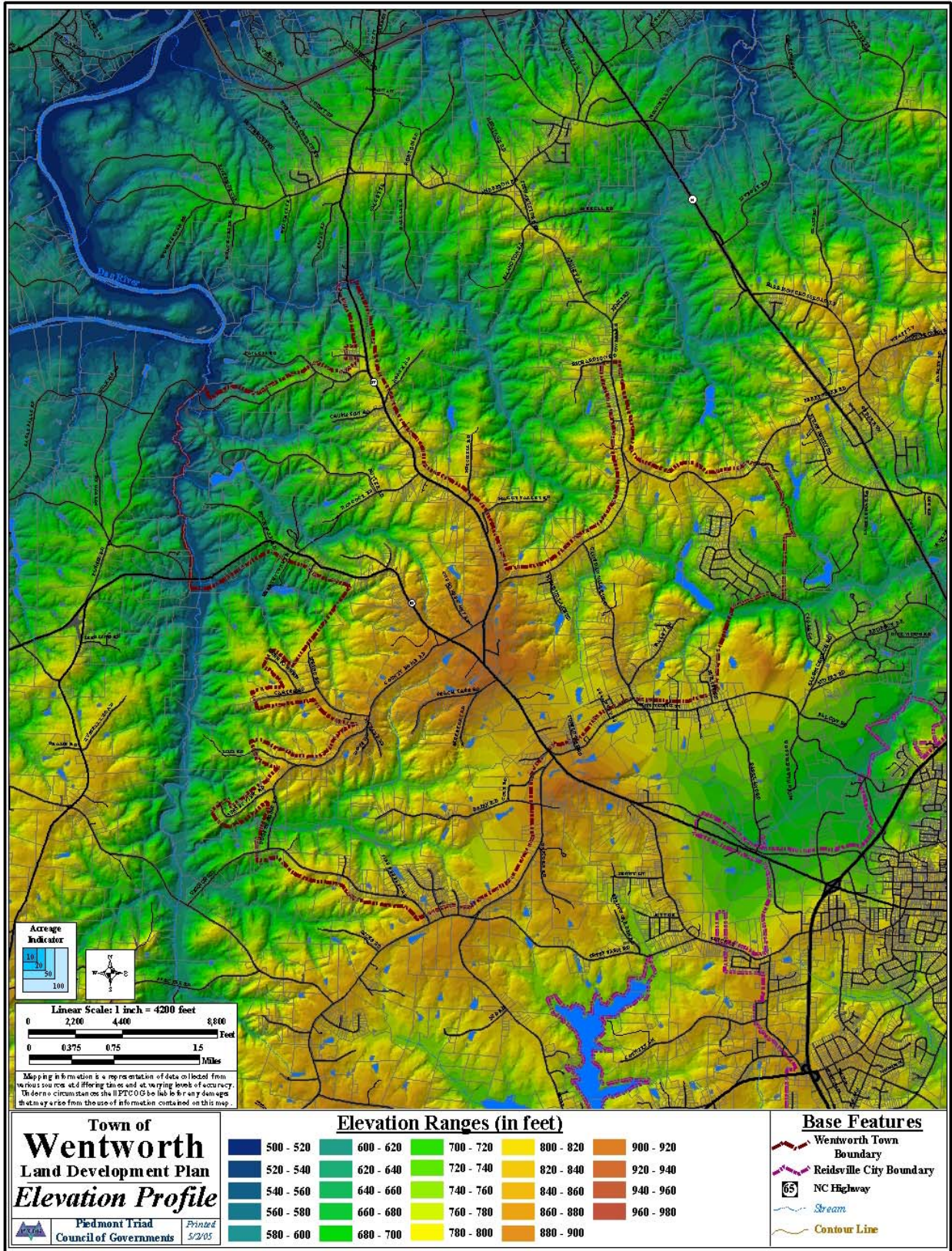
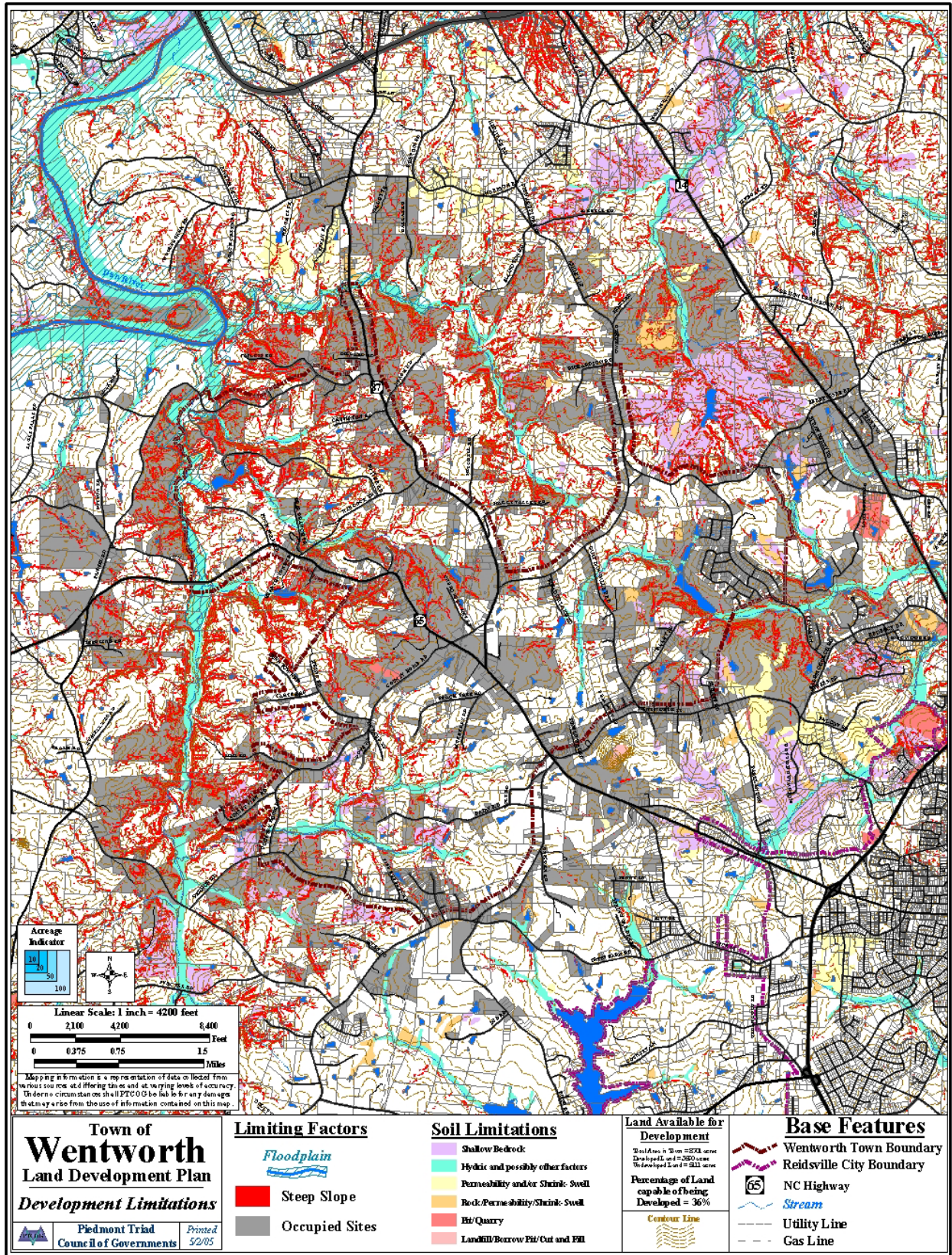


Figure 2.13 Development Suitability Analysis



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## **EXISTING LAND USE**

### **ANALYSIS**

Land uses were mapped and analyzed to identify existing land development patterns and vacant or underutilized land within the Town's jurisdiction and future growth area. The Existing Land Use Map was developed using data from the County tax assessor records in April 2005 and refined using field survey data collected in May 2005.

The entire planning area is approximately 44.95 square miles. Planning recommendations from this study focus primarily on the area within the existing town limits (about 13.60 square miles). Analysis maps for this study include future growth areas outside the Town's limits (approximately 31.35 square miles).



Wentworth is home to numerous public institutions  
*Courtesy, Piedmont Triad Council of Governments*

The following Table shows acreage and share totals for each major land use category within the existing town limits and the Town's future growth area and for the two areas combined. Acreage and percentage numbers are based on land area within parcels and do not include land area within road and railroad rights-of-way.

Acreage totals are calculated as sums of any parcel either entirely or primarily within the planning area. In cases of single-family uses (houses or mobile homes) on tracts greater than 10 acres, the acreage totals are calculated at 10 acres for each parcel, based on the assumption that any land area over this total can be considered under-utilized excess land, and essentially vacant. The actual amount of excess land in each individual case may be more or less. The estimated acres for some of the other land use categories also take excess land into account. The amount considered excess is calculated on a parcel-by-parcel basis.

**Table 2.19 Acreage and Share Totals, By Existing Land Use Category**

<b>LAND USE CATEGORY</b>	<b>TOWN ACRES</b>	<b>TOWN %</b>	<b>FUTURE GROWTH AREA ACRES</b>	<b>FUTURE GROWTH AREA %</b>	<b>TOTAL ACRES</b>	<b>TOTAL %</b>
Agriculture	3,280	38%	8,865	44%	12,145	42%
Single-Family	1,715	20%	5,546	28%	7,261	25%
Multi-Family	<1	<1%	6	<1%	6	<1%
Manufactured Home	683	8%	417	2%	1,100	4%
5+ Manufactured Home Parks	31	<1%	36	<1%	67	<1%
Institutional	997	11%	849	4%	1,846	6%
Offices	19	<1%	12	<1%	31	<1%
Commercial	71	1%	154	1%	225	1%
Industrial	0	<1%	118	1%	118	0.5%
Recreational	1	<1%	107	<1%	108	0.5%
Open space	67	1%	125	1%	192	1%
Infrastructure (Utilities)	6	<1%	26	<1%	32	<1%
Vacant / Minimal Use	1,831	21%	3,806	19%	5,637	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,701</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>20,067</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>28,768</b>	<b>100%</b>

The following section provides a more detailed description of the approximate amounts and general patterns of existing residential and non-residential land uses throughout the planning area.

**Agricultural Land Uses**

About 38 percent of the land within the Town limits (3,280 acres) is categorized as being used for agriculture. The agricultural production of these acres varies considerably throughout the Town. Approximately 44 percent of the land within the Town's future growth area (12,145 acres) is used for agriculture. Many of the land parcels used for agriculture within the Town's future growth area are quite large -- greater than 200 acres. Scattered pockets of high quality farmland can be found in the southern most reaches of the Town limits, and to the north in the future growth area.

**Residential Land Uses**

*Single-Family Residential Uses*

About 20 percent of the land within the Town limits (1,715 acres) is occupied by site-built, single-family homes. Lot sizes are extremely variable, and range from as small

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as about one-sixth of an acre (7,000 square feet) to greater than 10 acres in size. Approximately 28 percent of the land within the Town's future growth area (7,261 acres) is used for single-family homes. Many of the land parcels used for residential purposes within the Town's future growth area are relatively large, many greater than 100 acres. There are also numerous tracts of under-utilized land, parcels greater than 10 acres with only one house throughout the future growth area. The predominant pattern of residential development throughout the study area is characterized by the construction of single-family homes on larger lots along the existing road network. There is a more typical suburban style housing development located off of Cedar Lane.

#### *Multi-Family Residential Uses*

Less than 7 acres of land within the Town limits and future growth area are used for multi-family residences. This represents less than 1 percent of the total land use within the planning area.

#### *Manufactured Homes*

For the purpose of this planning analysis, manufactured home parks are defined as having five or more units in a unified grouping. About 8 percent of the land within the Town limits is used for manufactured homes on individual lots (683 acres). Approximately 2 percent of the Town's future growth area (417 acres) is composed of manufactured housing on individual lots. There are 7 manufactured home parks located on 67 acres within the Town limits and future growth area.

#### **Non-Residential Land Uses**

The table below presents the main types of buildings or facilities included in each major non-residential land use category. The current main function of each parcel was the primary factor used in determining an existing land use designation, regardless of ownership or original purpose of the structures, if different from the current use.

#### **Facilities Included in Major Non-Residential Land Use Categories**

**Commercial** - retail stores, restaurants, convenience stores, bank branches, hotels and motels, automobile dealers, automobile service facilities, auto salvage yards, and mini-storage facilities.

**Office** – professional offices, including those offering insurance and real estate services, governmental offices (including town hall), offices for civic and non-profit organizations, and medical office buildings.

**Institutional** – Schools, hospice, churches, day care centers, meeting facilities for civic or non-profit organizations (i.e. fraternal lodges), police and fire stations, nursing homes, and cemeteries.

**Industrial** – manufacturing and assembly facilities, truck terminals, warehouses, and lumber yards.

**Infrastructure** – municipal treatment plants, utility substations, sewer pump stations, and water towers.

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### *Commercial*

The predominant commercial development pattern in and around Wentworth consists of stand alone convenience stores, gas stations and small, locally-owned restaurants. Most commercial uses within the Town limits are scattered along major roads. Approximately 1% of the land within the Town limits is used for commercial purposes (71 acres). The commercial uses within the Town's future growth area are widely scattered and consist of approximately 154 acres. In total, 1 percent of the planning area is utilized for commercial land uses.

### *Office*

A small percentage of the property located in the planning area is utilized for office uses. There are approximately 19 acres of land that are used for offices within the Town limits. This land is primarily utilized for professional offices and some governmental uses. The majority of this acreage is found in the historic center of Wentworth and at the intersection of NC 87 and NC 65. The Town's future growth area contains 12 acres of land classified as office according to the land use survey. In total, less than 1 percent of the planning area is utilized for office land uses.

### *Institutional*

The Town of Wentworth is rich in a wide variety of institutions. Therefore, the existing land use map specifically labels many of the major institutional facilities located within the planning area. Roughly 11% (997 acres) of the land within the Town limits is used for institutional purposes. This includes the Rockingham County Governmental Center, Rockingham County High School, Rockingham County Middle School, Wentworth Elementary School, Department of Transportation maintenance yard, and Rockingham Community College. Approximately 1,846 acres of land in the Town's future growth area are also listed as institutional, with the majority of the acreage being contained in the Chinqua-Penn site.

### *Industrial*

There are only 118 acres of industrially classified land found within the entire planning area. The Town limits have no industrial land uses at all. The majority of the 118 acres categorized as industrial are located on the northern side of NC 87/65, entering the Town from the east. The industrial properties found along this stretch of NC 87/65 include Martin Marietta (APAC), Chandler Concrete, and Isometrics. An industrial parcel is also located in the extreme northeastern part of the planning area along NC 14.

### *Infrastructure*

Relatively little land in the study area is used for infrastructure. Presently 6 acres within the Town limits are used for infrastructure-related uses and an additional 26 acres of land are utilized for the same purpose in the future growth area. In total, less than 1 percent of the land found within the planning area is classified as being used for infrastructure purposes.



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### **Recreational and Open Space**

There is only one acre of existing recreational space within the Town limits. An additional 108 acres of recreational land can be found in the Town's future growth area, which includes the Wentworth Recreation Center. A total of 191 acres of designated open space can be found in the planning area. The Town contains 67 acres of open space and an additional 125 acres of open space is located near the eastern limits of the planning area along Wentworth Street.

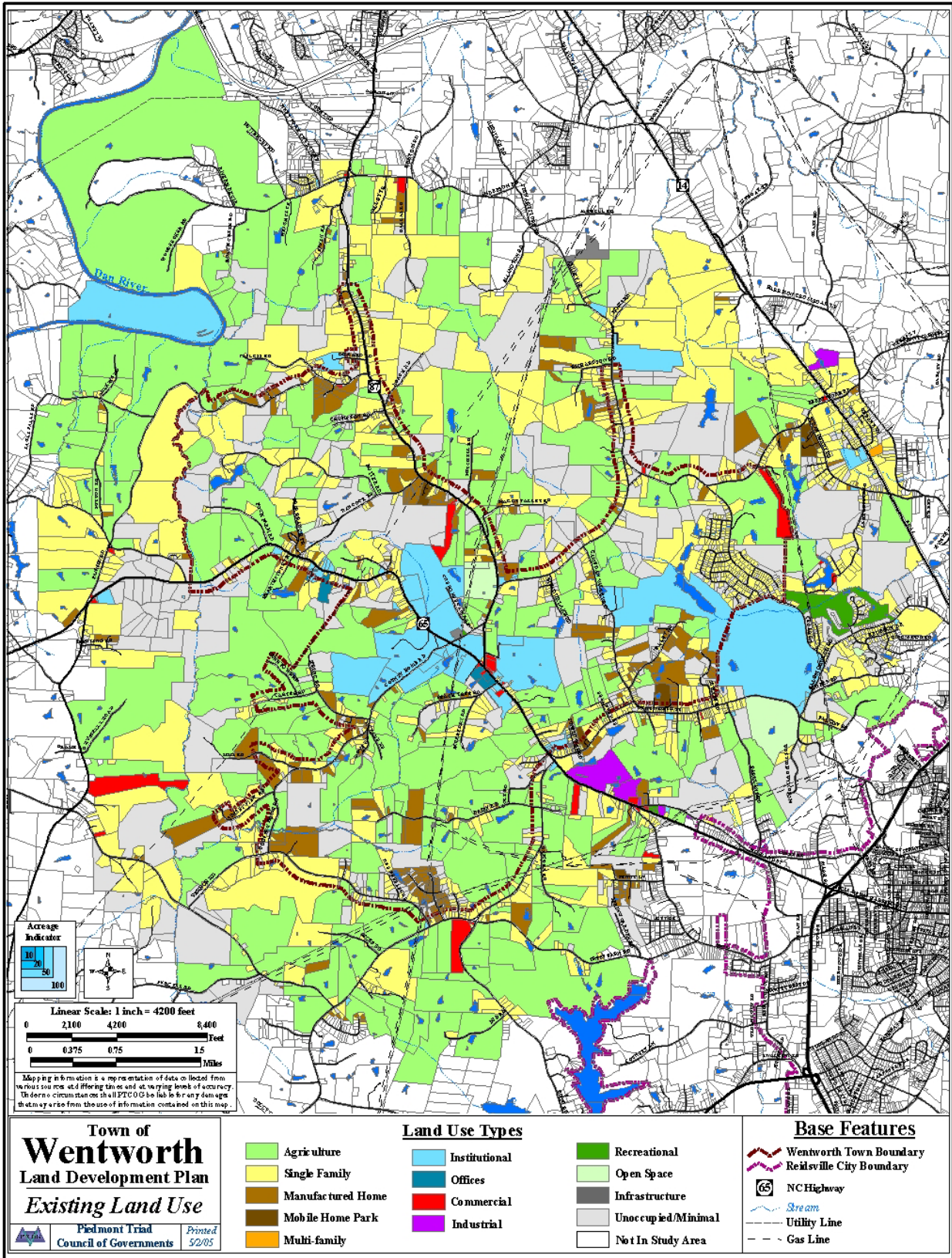
### **Unoccupied/Minimal Use**

Land classified as unoccupied or in minimal use include undeveloped parcels or excess land on under-developed tracts. A few parcels are classified as unoccupied due to abandonment or due to the fact that they contain uninhabitable structures. Parcels used solely for parking are not classified as unoccupied, but rather are classified according to the type of facility served by the parking. About 21 percent of the land within the Town limits (1,831 acres) is unoccupied or in minimal use, scattered around the Town. Some 5,637 acres of land (19 percent) of the future growth area is unoccupied or in minimal use.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Approximately 822 acres of land within the Town limits and future growth area consist of road rights-of-way. Of the remaining land approximately 28,768 acres, about 20 % of the land (5,637 acres) is vacant or minimally used land. There is a healthy amount of vacant or minimally used land within the Town limits (1,831 acres). A substantial amount of vacant land also exists within the future growth area (5,637 acres). Therefore, there appears to be ample opportunities for future growth in and around Wentworth. This finding generally supports to the Town's desire to encourage new land development to occur within the existing Town limits and to most efficiently use existing infrastructure investments.

Figure 2.14 Existing Land Use



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## **2.4 ANALYSIS OF REGULATORY FACTORS**

### **EXISTING LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS**

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Town of Wentworth uses two main tools to regulate land development within its jurisdiction, a zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. The zoning ordinance is a legal and administrative tool to insure land uses within the community are properly situated in relation to one another, and that adequate space is provided for each type of land development. It allows the control of development density so that property can be provided with adequate public services such as streets, schools, recreation, utilities, and fire and police protection. Zoning can also help to direct new growth into appropriate areas and protect existing property by requiring that new land development provide adequate light, air and privacy for persons already living and working within the community.

If a property is currently zoned for its intended use, then necessary permits are obtained through application and the payment of fees. If a land development proposal does not coincide with a parcel's current zoning designation, rezoning approval from the Town Council is required. This process may take several months, depending on the magnitude or complexity of a proposal, and the level of controversy generated by a proposed project. Zoning is the most commonly used legal device for implementing a community's Land Use Plan. It plays a role in stabilizing and preserving property values through predictability of land use, but usually lacks specific design guidelines. Zoning allows for the division of a jurisdiction into districts, and for the establishment of specific regulations, requirements, and conditions to be applied within each district in order to address the following types of issues:

- The height or bulk of buildings and other structures.
- The minimum lot size, yard setbacks, maximum ratio of building floor area to land area, and minimum requirements for on-site open space and recreation areas.
- The maximum number or density of dwelling units.
- The desired use of buildings and land for various purposes.

The Town's zoning jurisdiction is presently within the Town limits. According to state statutes, Wentworth may adopt an extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) with the approval of the Rockingham County Board of Commissioners. Any extension of extraterritorial jurisdiction requires consideration of growth boundary agreements with the City of Reidsville and the plausibility of future annexation, based on local legislation requiring 51% approval of any annexation by referendum.

Wentworth presently operates under a general use district type of zoning ordinance, commonly referred to as a conventional zoning ordinance. Conventional ordinances were first established in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to divide land into districts (or zones) for the purpose of separating uses. The rationale for this separation of uses was to protect public health and safety by providing minimum distances between noxious uses like polluting smokestacks, coal-burning factories, and the offensive odors of slaughter houses and high-density residential areas. Over time, jurisdictions

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established specific zoning districts and a list of permitted uses within each district. The basic authority to protect public health and safety has evolved from increasing the distance between polluting factories and houses, to dividing housing types by size and cost, and separating residential areas from daily shopping and services. As zoning categories became more exclusive, and automobiles became more prevalent, fewer provisions were made for walking and bicycling to “other use” districts and eventually the car became the only viable mechanism to cross zoning district boundaries regardless of the actual distance.

By design, a conventional ordinance is limiting in two ways. First, it works on the basis of separation, not on compatibility which undermines the function of traditional neighborhoods and often leads to sprawl. Secondly, a conventional ordinance applies blanket regulations to all parcels within a district, often ignoring the individual natural characteristics of each parcel, and thereby reducing the opportunities for creative site design solutions. After nearly a century of developing and operating under conventional zoning schemes, communities around the country are beginning to realize their displeasure with new land development is often a direct result of existing zoning regulations.

### **ALTERNATIVES TO CONVENTIONAL ZONING ORDINANCES**

Conventional zoning regulations are only indirectly concerned with achieving aesthetic ends. However, because many communities have realized the effect and potential that these regulations have in shaping their landscapes and townscapes, there is a trend toward acceptance of aesthetic control as a proper function of zoning ordinances, based on interpretation of statutory intent to protect the public’s general health and welfare.

Most conventional zoning ordinances do not regulate the design of streets, the installation of utilities, or the reservation or dedication of parks, street rights-of-way, or school sites. However, communities around the country, including several in North Carolina (e.g. Davidson, Cornelius, Huntersville, Mocksville, Elon) have adopted development ordinances based on new urbanism and smart growth principles. Design-based ordinances combine zoning and subdivision rules to encourage pedestrian-friendly, traditional neighborhood land use patterns. Proposed developments are then reviewed holistically to evaluate how the existing site features, proposed land use, infrastructure, and site design will function together. Greater emphasis is placed on design guidelines to achieve a vibrant mixture of compatible uses and housing types, rather than the conventional approach of strictly separating uses and housing types.

### **ANALYSIS**

#### **Zoning Districts in Wentworth**

The following is a description of Wentworth’s current zoning districts. The portion in italics is an excerpt from the Zoning Ordinance, followed by non-italicized comments on how the district has been applied and its impact on land use patterns in Wentworth. Conditional use districts are provided as an option for each district, with a description of the scope of their use in Wentworth at this time.

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**RA Residential Agricultural District:** *The purpose of this district is to provide a place for agricultural and very low-density residential uses.*

The RA District is by far the most utilized zoning district in the Town of Wentworth with over 80% of the property in Wentworth zoned RA. Most of the acreage outside the historic core and governmental operations of Wentworth is zoned RA.

**RA-CU Residential Agricultural Conditional Use District:** *Identical to the Residential Agricultural District except that a Conditional Use Permit is required as a prerequisite to any use or development as provided in this chapter.*

The RA-CU District is not currently applied within the Town of Wentworth.

**RP - Residential Protected District:** *The purpose of this district is to provide a place for low density single-family residential uses where water and sewer needs are met by individual wells and septic tanks. Requests for rezoning to a higher intensity use district must demonstrate that the proposed development will be adequately provided with water and sewer services to specifications approved by the county health department, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Community Development or the Department of Human Resources.*

The RP District is applied throughout the Town of Wentworth and encompasses a total of 10.8% of all zoned property in the Town. Most of the property zoned RP is on smaller tracts of less than 5 acres and included in newer subdivisions.

**RP-CU Residential Protected Conditional Use District:** *Identical to the Residential Protected District except that a Conditional Use Permit is required as a prerequisite to any use or development as provided in this chapter.*

The RP-CU District is applied to four properties totaling 101 acres within the Town of Wentworth.

**RM Residential Mixed District:** *The purpose of this district is to provide a place for medium density residential uses of all types (single family residences; multi-family dwellings; mobile home parks; Class A or B manufactured housing) providing that water and sewer systems are provided and approved by appropriate authorities.*

The RM District is applied to less than 1% of the zoned land in the Town of Wentworth. The majority of parcels zoned RM have manufactured houses located on them and are located on secondary roads. The RM District has been utilized to regulate manufactured homes on individual lots or as part of manufactured housing parks at medium densities.

**RM-CU Residential Mixed Conditional Use District:** *Identical to the Residential Mixed District except that a Conditional Use Permit is required as a prerequisite to any use or development as provided in this chapter.*

The RM-CU District applies to three properties totaling 18.8 acres within the Town of Wentworth.

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**CS Community Shopping District:** *The purpose of this district is to provide a place for crossroads shopping and community center shopping establishments.*

The CS District is applied to roughly a dozen parcels scattered around the intersection of NC 65 and NC 87. These parcels represent some of the only commercial-retail establishments in the Town and represent less than 1% of zoned land within the Town.

**CS-CU Community Shopping Conditional Use District:** *Identical to the Community Shopping District except that a Conditional Use Permit is required as a prerequisite to any use or development as provided in this chapter.*

The CS-CU District applies to two properties equaling 3.5 acres within the Town of Wentworth.

**O-I Office and Institutional District:** *The OI District is established primarily for office and institutional uses.*

The O-I District is predominately applied to property located around the intersection of NC 65 and County Home Road. Much of the property zoned O-I is currently being used for County offices, NCDOT facilities, and County schools. The historic core of Wentworth, which is home to the Rockingham County Courthouse, is also zoned O-I. A little more than 7% of all property in Wentworth is zoned O-I.

**OI-CU Office and Institutional Conditional Use District:** *Identical to the Office and Institutional District except that a Conditional Use Permit is required as a prerequisite to any use or development as provided in this chapter.*

The OI-CU District is not currently applied within the Town of Wentworth.

**HC Highway Commercial District:** *The purpose of this district is to provide a place in which the principal use of land is for the retailing of durable goods, the provision of commercial services to industrial areas, and the provision of services to tourists.*

The HC District is not currently applied within the Town of Wentworth.

**HC-CU Highway Commercial Conditional Use District:** *Identical to the Highway Commercial District except that a Conditional Use Permit is required as a prerequisite to any use or development as provided in this chapter.*

The HC-CU District is not currently applied within the Town of Wentworth.

**LI Light Industrial District:** *The LI District is established as a place for light industrial, warehousing, and distribution and sales of large-item products.*

The LI District is not currently applied within the Town of Wentworth.

**LI-CU Light Industrial Conditional Use District:** *Identical to the Light Industrial District except that a Conditional Use Permit is required as a prerequisite to any use or development as provided in this chapter.*

The LI-CU District is not currently applied within the Town of Wentworth.

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**HI Heavy Industrial District:** *The HI District is designed to accommodate those industries whose normal operations include dust, noise, odor, or other emissions which may be deemed objectionable.*

The HI District is not currently applied within the Town of Wentworth.

**HI-CU Heavy Industrial Conditional Use District:** *Identical to the Heavy Industrial District except that a Conditional Use Permit is required as a prerequisite to any use or development as provided in this chapter.*

The HI-CU District is not currently applied within the Town of Wentworth.

### **Watershed Overlay Districts**

Watershed Overlay Districts have been developed to impose higher standards on lands located upstream of and draining into drinking water supplies than is generally imposed by zoning alone. The general intent is to exclude certain activities and maintain a low density development pattern in order to prevent the risk of pollution from more intense land uses. Within the planning area the following watershed overlay districts have been established and applied:

- Troublesome Creek WS-III-CA (Critical Area)
- Troublesome Creek WS-III-BW (Balance of Watershed)
- Dan River – Eden WS-IV-PA (Protected Area)
- Dan River – Eden WS-IV-PA-CU (Protected Area)

The following is a description of Wentworth's current watershed overlay districts. The portion in italics is an excerpt from the Watershed Ordinance, followed by comments on how the district has been applied and its impact on land use patterns in the area.

**(WS-III-CA) Watershed III Critical Area:** *The purpose of this district is to protect a water supply by maintaining a low to moderate development pattern in the critical area adjacent to a water supply reservoir or immediately upstream from a water supply intake.*

The WS-III-CA Watershed Overlay District is not applied to any land within Wentworth's jurisdiction. Generally, the WS-III-CA district is located to the north and west of Lake Reidsville.

**(WS-III-BW) Watershed III Balance of Watershed:** *The purpose of this overlay district is to protect the balance of the WS-III Watershed from contamination. Because the risks are lower the further away from the reservoir or intake the activity is located the intensity of development can be higher here than in the WS-III CA District.*

The WS-III-BW Watershed Overlay district is not applied to any land within Wentworth's zoning jurisdiction. However, part of the WS-III-BW is located in the planning area, southeast of Iron Works Road and south of NC 65 and NC 87.

**(WS-IV PA) Watershed IV Protected Area:** *New development activities that require an erosion/sedimentation control plan under State Law or approved local program are required to meet the provisions of these watershed regulations when located in a WS-IV watershed.*

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The WS-IV PA Watershed Overlay District is applied to all of the zoned land in the planning area lying generally to the north and west of ridgeline comprised of Sandy Cross Road, NC 65/87, NC 87 and Ashley Loop Roads. The overlay impacts a wide range of existing residential, agricultural, office and commercial uses.

**(WS-IV PA-CU) Watershed IV Protected Area Conditional Use:** *Identical to the WS-IV-PA except a conditional use permit is required as a prerequisite to any use or development. Within this overlay district a conditional use permit may be issued to a non-residential development to increase the impervious limits from twenty-four (24) percent and thirty-six (36) percent to a maximum of seventy (70) percent. However, this increase in intensity is limited to 5% of the balance of the watershed in Wentworth's jurisdiction. The North Carolina Environmental Management Commission can authorize the county to increase this figure up to 10%.*

The WS-IV PA-CU Watershed Overlay District is currently applied to three acres within Wentworth's zoning jurisdiction.

### **Subdivision Ordinance**

Subdivision regulations are locally adopted laws that govern the process of converting raw land into individual building sites. Regulation is accomplished through subdivision plat approval procedures, under which a land owner or developer is not permitted to make improvements or to divide and sell lots until a proposed subdivision plat has been approved. Approval is based on compliance of the proposal with development standards set forth in the subdivision regulations. Attempts to record an unapproved plat with the local registry of deeds, or to sell lots by reference to such a plat, are subject to various civil and criminal penalties. Subdivision regulations serve a wide range of purposes.

The stated purposes of the Town of Wentworth Subdivision Regulations are to:

- Assure the appropriate layout and use of land
- Provide safe, convenient, and economic circulation of vehicular traffic
- Provide for the dedication of street rights-of-way, utility easements, and public facility sites
- Assure the proper installation of streets and utilities
- Avoid undue concentrations of population
- Insure proper legal description, identification, monumentation, and recordation of property boundaries

To a health official, for example, they are a means of insuring that a new residential development has a safe water supply and an adequate sewage disposal system. To a tax official, subdivision regulations help to secure adequate records of land titles. To realtors and homebuyers, they are an assurance that home sites are located on suitable, properly oriented, well-drained lots, and are provided with the services and facilities necessary to maintain and enhance property values.

### **Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance**

The Town of Wentworth utilizes a flood damage prevention ordinance to provide extra protection for public health, safety, and general welfare in flood prone areas beyond those provided through the underlying zoning.



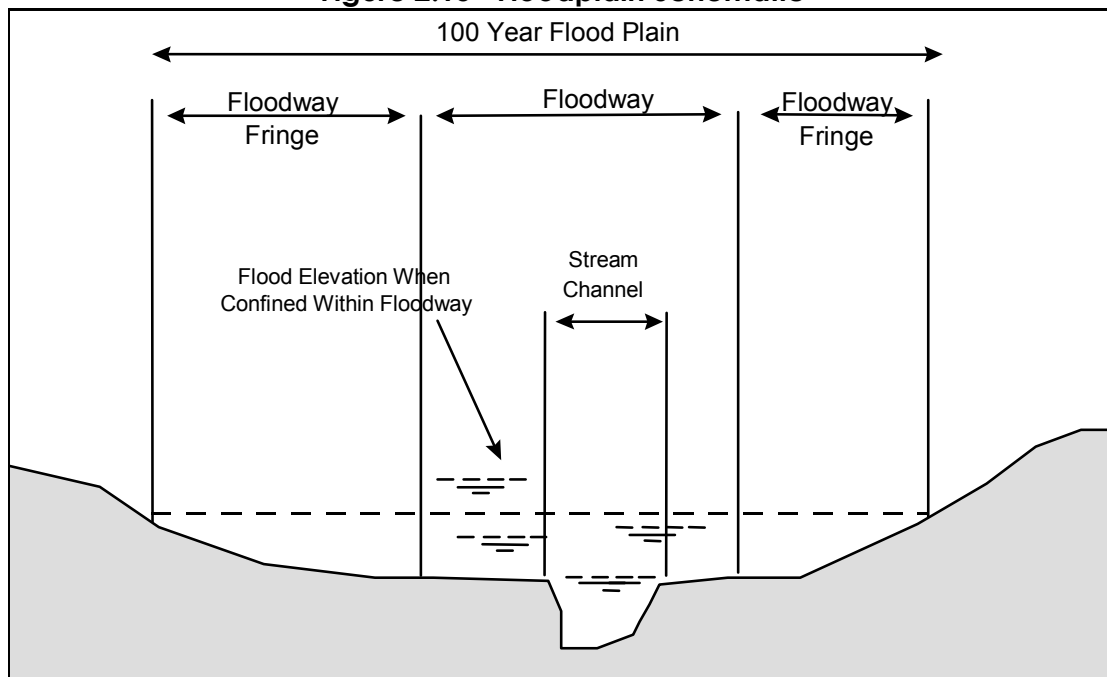
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In all areas of special flood hazard, Wentworth's ordinance requires the lowest floor elevation of any new or substantially improved existing structure to be elevated so that the reference level of the structure is no lower than the regulatory flood protection elevation, generally the 100 year flood. In areas where base flood elevation data is not available, the Town requires the lowest floor elevation including the basement to be at least two feet above the highest adjacent grade. All encroachments including fill material or structures must be located at least twenty feet away from the top of the bank, or one times the width of the stream at the top of the bank, which ever is greater.

The Town participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to promote sound development practices within areas vulnerable to potential 10, 50, 100, and 500-year flood events as administered by Rockingham County Emergency Management.

A flood event refers to the probability that a flood will occur in any given period. Each of these events has a 10, 2, 1, and .02 percent chance of being equaled or exceeded during any year respectively. For example, the likelihood of a 10-year flood event occurring every year is 10%. This does not mean that every 10 years a flood of this magnitude will occur; the actual probability is much higher.

**Figure 2.15 Floodplain Schematic**



The 100-year floodplain area is divided into the floodway and a floodway fringe. The floodway is the channel of a stream plus any adjacent floodplain that must be kept free of encroachment so that a 100-year flood can be carried without substantial increase in flood heights. The area between the floodway and the 100-year floodplain boundaries is called the floodway fringe.

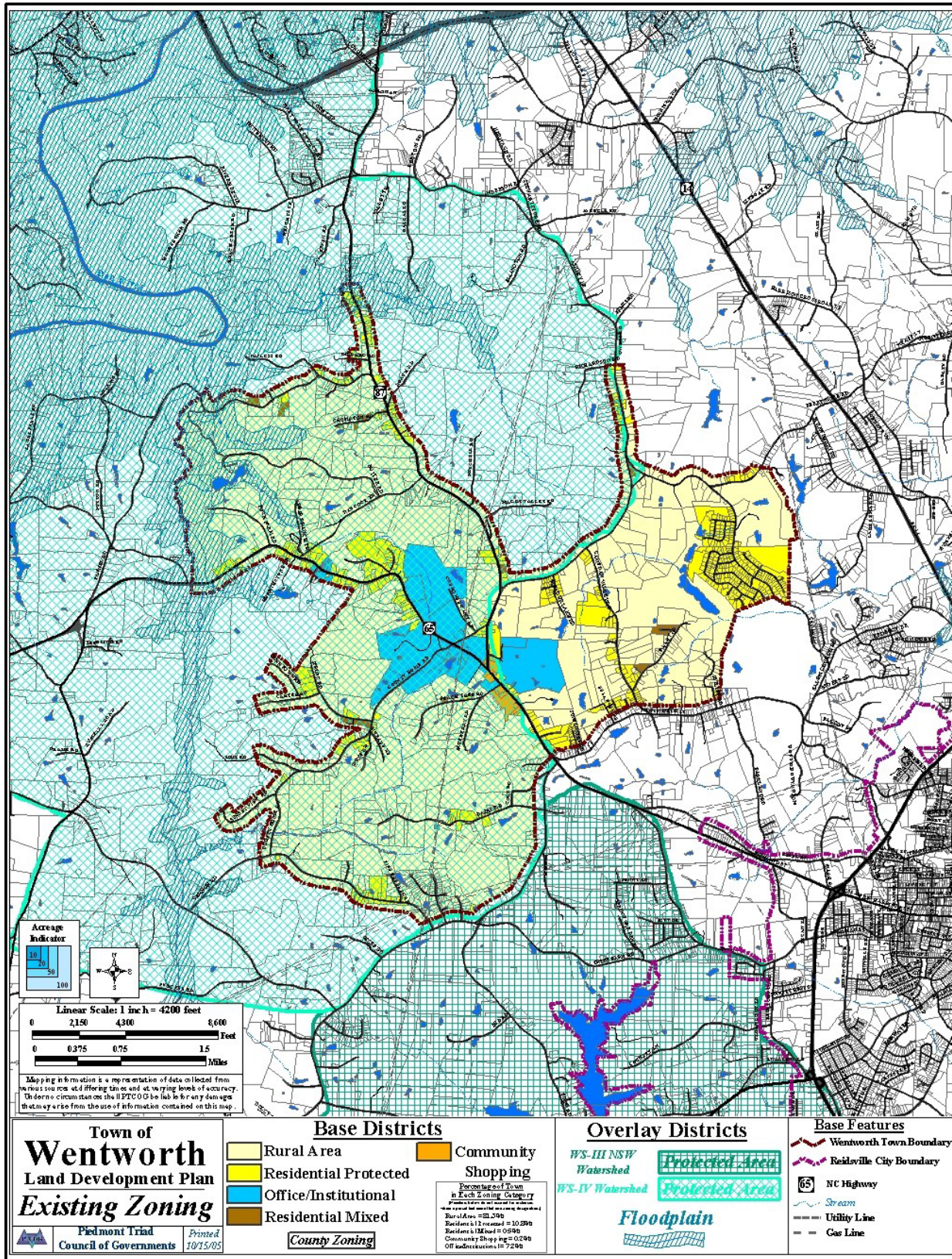
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## **CONCLUSIONS**

The Town of Wentworth has adopted and amended zoning and subdivision regulations over the years to improve the quality of development in the community. As an outgrowth of this Land Use Planning process, the Town will continue to refine its ordinances to reflect community values and encourage quality development as the Town grows. Some of the key issues the Town may need to address as an outgrowth of this Land Use Plan include:

- The design, appearance, function and compatibility of new land development.
- New types of development and greater creativity in meeting community needs.
- Site analysis process to identify key environmental features, opportunities, and constraints.
- Open space, parks, greenways, trails and sidewalks, integrated into the existing community.
- A network of inter-connected streets and greater flexibility in street design.
- Historic preservation district and adaptive reuse opportunities.

Figure 2.16 Existing Zoning





# COMMUNITY VALUES

## 3.1 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

### CITIZENS COMMITTEE

Public involvement is the cornerstone of a successful future land use planning process. An eleven member Citizens for Community Improvement Committee was formed to provide in-depth insight and guidance to the plan. Committee members include a Town Council member, Planning Board members, town staff and interested citizens. The Committee began meeting monthly in January, 2005.

With the facilitation and technical assistance from PTCOG staff, the Committee reviewed a variety of factual information about the Town's demographics, utilities and environmental features. The Committee used this information to temper and refine their vision for the future growth of Wentworth, and drafted a set of goals and policies to achieve this vision. Committee members also participated in a variety of workshops to refine key issues, analyze existing conditions, and establish recommended implementation strategies.

### TOWN MEETINGS



Town Meeting Participants  
*Courtesy, Town of Wentworth*

In May, 2005 a Town Meeting was held in which the 25 participants were asked to identify issues and concerns related to future development within the town and prioritize these for the Committee. This was done in small groups facilitated by CCI Committee members. Results from the small group exercise were posted, and participants were asked to identify their 'top ten' issues. These results were tallied as the prioritized list of issues shown below. A complete summary of the results of the May 2005 Town Meeting can be found in the Appendix.

**Table 3.1 'Top Ten' Issues, Wentworth Town Meeting, May 2005**

Rank	Votes	Issue
1	27	Continue... No property tax in Wentworth
2	24	Start... Widening of NC 65/NC 87 – "Main Street"
3	18	Start... Post Office and local mail delivery
4	16	Continue... Small Town Atmosphere
5	16	Continue... Farmland protection
6	15	Start... Shopping and retail
7	15	Start... Activity Center for all ages
8	12	Stop... Traffic congestion and speeding
9	11	Continue... Wentworth deputy
Tie	11	Continue... Paving dirt roads
Tie	11	Start... Sidewalks, walking trails and street lighting
Tie	11	Start... Town Hall

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This information was used to help clarify priority issues to address with the plan, and identify implementation strategies which are discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

To assess how well the plan reflects the values of fellow citizens, the CCI Committee hosted a final Town Meeting in November, 2005. This open-house style meeting gave members of the public an opportunity to review and comment on the recommendations of the plan as well as the future land use map. Surveys were distributed to the 30 attendees to compile their comments on the draft plan, and to assess the general level of support for the results. Of the fourteen surveys returned, thirteen were generally positive in their comments. A complete summary of the results from the survey can be found in the Appendix.

Finally, a public hearing process was used to present the Land Use Plan to the Planning Board and Town Council for their recommendations and final adoption.

## **VISION AND VALUES**

The values of the community and a shared vision for its future provide the foundation for the Committee to make future land use recommendations.

### **VISION**

The Citizens for Community Improvement Committee developed the following vision statement to guide the development of the plan's recommendations, which was developed for the horizon year of the plan, and describes the positive changes that have occurred in the community due in part to this planning process.

*In 2035, The Town of Wentworth is a safe, attractive community that provides a high quality of life for its residents.*

*The rural setting of the town has been preserved with ample farmland and open space surrounding a walkable, compact community that supports a range of residential, commercial and institutional uses.*

*Development within the town has been focused in the village core by restoring and reusing historic structures and blending new developments to mimic the historic qualities of the town. Local street connectivity and pedestrian facilities have helped to alleviate traffic congestion.*

*The Town Hall and community park complex provide opportunities for citizen interaction and recreation. Citizens are active participants in the life of the community, and welcome new residents, businesses and ideas.*

This vision for the future was used by the Committee to help shape core community values, identify the key issues to address with the plan and influence future land use themes.

### **VALUES**

Based on the above vision statement, the Committee identified applicable core values of the community, and goals that aligned with these values.

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### **Community Identity**

The Wentworth community has a long, rich history which has a significant influence on the Town's physical character and its identity. The historical significance of specific buildings, places and crossroads should be celebrated and protected.

### **Safety**

The Wentworth community desires safe roads, neighborhoods and schools for its citizens and visitors. This includes providing lighting, pedestrian facilities and road improvements where warranted.

### **Aesthetics**

The environs in and around the Town of Wentworth should be aesthetically pleasing, with new structures built to blend in with the historical character and small town feel of the community.

### **Economic Vitality**

New growth in the community should be compatible with existing development and occur in a way that encourages a diverse mixture of commercial ventures.

### **Rural Heritage**

The rural areas surrounding the Town of Wentworth have special significance to the community, and should be supported through development strategies which direct growth into the developed areas of the Town, and preserve and protect the rural landscape just outside the Town.

These values were used to shape the primary goal of the committee: to encourage compact, pedestrian friendly development that supports the look and feel of a small town, while preserving the rural character of the farmland surrounding the community. A detailed description of the goals the Committee developed can be found in the Appendix.

## **ISSUES**

The following list of key issues facing the Town of Wentworth was developed by the Committee with significant public input from the first town meeting.

- Traffic
- Public Water and Sewer
- Residential Development Patterns and Housing Options
- Shopping and Retail Opportunities
- Farmland Protection
- Recreation
- Small Town Atmosphere
- Sidewalks and Walking Trails

A detailed action plan for each key issue was drafted by the Committee and can be found in the Appendix. A complete discussion of the recommendations related to these issues can be found in Chapter Four.

# 4

## LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1 FUTURE LAND USES

A joint work session with the Town Council and Planning Board was held in September, 2005 to receive guidance on refining the draft plan and arranging future land uses on the ground. Small groups worked together to draw up future land use scenarios, which were compiled to create a draft future land use map. This draft map was further refined by the Committee for presentation to the community at the final Town Meeting.



Committee members participate in the Future Land Use Charette  
*Courtesy, Town of Wentworth*

### 4.2 FUTURE GROWTH SCENARIO

The arrangement of land use categories on the map are a visual representation of the primary goals the committee: to encourage compact, pedestrian friendly development that supports both the look and feel of a small town, while preserving the rural character of the farmland surrounding the community. Strategies to support this scenario include creating more connectivity as development occurs, providing pedestrian facilities within identified activity centers and encouraging a mixture of moderately intense, compatible land uses where water and sewer services are available.

### 4.3 GROWTH CATEGORIES

The Committee adopted the following categories to identify the future location, scale and mixture of uses within the future growth boundary. The descriptions below provide a general sense of the type and intensity of land uses desired within the areas shown of the Future Land Use Map.

#### **RURAL**

This land use category encompasses a wide range of uses found in rural areas, including active and passive agricultural uses, very low density residential (one unit per 5 acres or more), and commercial uses supporting or complementing agriculture.

#### **RURAL RESIDENTIAL**

This land use category facilitates the transition between primarily rural areas to the more developed town core. This category supports agricultural uses similar to those within the rural category and low density residential uses (one unit per 2 acres or more) on lots fronting on existing roadways. This category would not be appropriate for new major subdivisions.

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## **RESIDENTIAL**

This category describes primarily low to medium density residential uses, single family homes in neighborhoods, and uses which support or complement residences. This could also accommodate limited neighborhood services, parks, schools and neighborhood scale commercial uses.

## **MIXED USE**

This category includes a mixture of moderately intensive uses ranging from medium density housing, community scale office or commercial properties, and 'cottage' style industries.

## **INSTITUTIONAL**

This category is primarily reserved to accommodate the large number of public and quasi-public agencies located within the community. This can include schools, parks, recreation facilities, government complexes or other public properties.

## **CONSERVATION**

This category describes areas which should be preserved as natural areas or open space. This includes floodplains, steep slopes, and natural areas with significant flora and fauna. Limited open recreational uses, including greenways and interpretive nature trails would be appropriate in these areas.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITY CENTER**

These areas are focused on 'cross-roads' located at some distance away from the primary development area of the town that would allow a variety of low intensity uses to provide services to nearby farms, residents and businesses.

## **VILLAGE ACTIVITY CENTER**

This area is the historical center of the community, and has been designated to allow for a variety of medium intensity uses that are compatible in scale and design with a pedestrian friendly 'village' concept.

## **COMMUNITY ACTIVITY CENTER**

This area is focused on a mixture of larger-scale, more automobile-oriented developments in conjunction with its location at the junction of NC 65 and NC 87. Uses within this area should be compatible with the large number of institutional uses within this activity center. New developments should seek to provide greater connectivity with new secondary roads to improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation.



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## **4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **PRINCIPLES**

Based on the work of the Committee, several guiding principles regarding land use and development patterns emerged. These principles provided the conceptual framework used by the Committee to consider future land use patterns.

#### **ACTIVITY CENTERS**

Mixed use activity centers can be developed at different scales to serve the general community or nearby neighborhoods. This development pattern features a mixture of compatible commercial, office, institutional and residential uses in a compact form that encourages pedestrian movements between uses within the activity center. Design consideration should be given to building style, mass and orientation; the location and interaction of pedestrian and vehicular accommodations; and the relationship between complementary land uses.

#### **CONNECTIVITY**

Connectivity is a primary consideration for a transportation network that accommodates all users: cars, trucks, bicycles and pedestrians. A network of facilities for motorized and non-motorized users maximizes route and mode choices to reduce congestion, maximize capacity on existing roadways and improve access. Features of a connected network are short blocks, a hierarchy of street types and accommodations for all users.

#### **HERITAGE**

The history and traditions of rural Rockingham County and the community of Wentworth go back more than 200 years. The community has indicated a strong desire to preserve the look and feel of a small, rural town. This includes encouraging the restoration and adaptive reuse of historic structures, focusing new development in the town core and supporting efforts that preserve the agricultural operations that serve as a rural greenbelt for the community.

### **STRATEGIES**

Committee members crafted implementation strategies to address the goals and key issues identified during the planning process. These strategies fall into four categories: policies, ordinances, programs and projects.

#### **POLICIES**

The Committee recommends that existing policies be revised and new policies be considered regarding (in no particular order):

- An agreement with NCDOT to lay out an ongoing working relationship
- An agreement with the Rockingham County Sheriff's Department for enforcement of speed limits and other traffic laws within the Town limits
- Continuation of small town atmosphere as new development occurs
- Actively seeking out desirable businesses for location within the Town
- Seeking out grant funding for infrastructure improvements
- Securing local business and institution support for recreational activities

- 
- Agreements with the City of Eden and Dan River Water, Inc. to reserve water and sewer capacity to accommodate for future growth

### **ORDINANCES**

The Committee recommends that existing ordinances be revised and new ordinances be considered regarding (in no particular order):

- Sidewalks to be installed as development and redevelopment occur
- Access management requirements for high-traffic generating developments
- Appearance and design standards for new developments, particularly in the Village Center
- Development standards to guide the appearance and location of new commercial development and redevelopment
- Requirements for connecting new developments to water and sewer service based on proximity to existing lines
- Encouragement for higher density development where water and sewer service are available
- Encouragement of mixed use development
- Encouragement of mixed housing types

### **PROGRAMS**

The Committee recommends that new, on-going programs be established by the Town regarding (in no particular order):

- Establishment of an Agricultural Committee to promote a 'farm-friendly' atmosphere that encourages farmland protection, participation in voluntary agriculture districts and agricultural economic development within the Town limits
- Establishment of a Recreation and Wellness Committee to identify recreational needs, sponsor and promote healthy activities in the Town, plan for recreational facilities and seek grants for project funding
- Establishment of a water and sewer administrator staff position to explore grant opportunities for infrastructure and maintain close relationships with service providers
- Establishment of a program to improve outdoor lighting throughout the Town, including matching funds for new lighting and a system for reporting damaged existing lighting
- Establishment of a Historic Preservation Committee to explore grant opportunities for preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures
- Establishment of an Appearance Committee to guide development standards, establish a theme or 'look' for new development and improve community aesthetics
- Establishment of a Housing Authority to encourage a wider range or residential options within the Town limits

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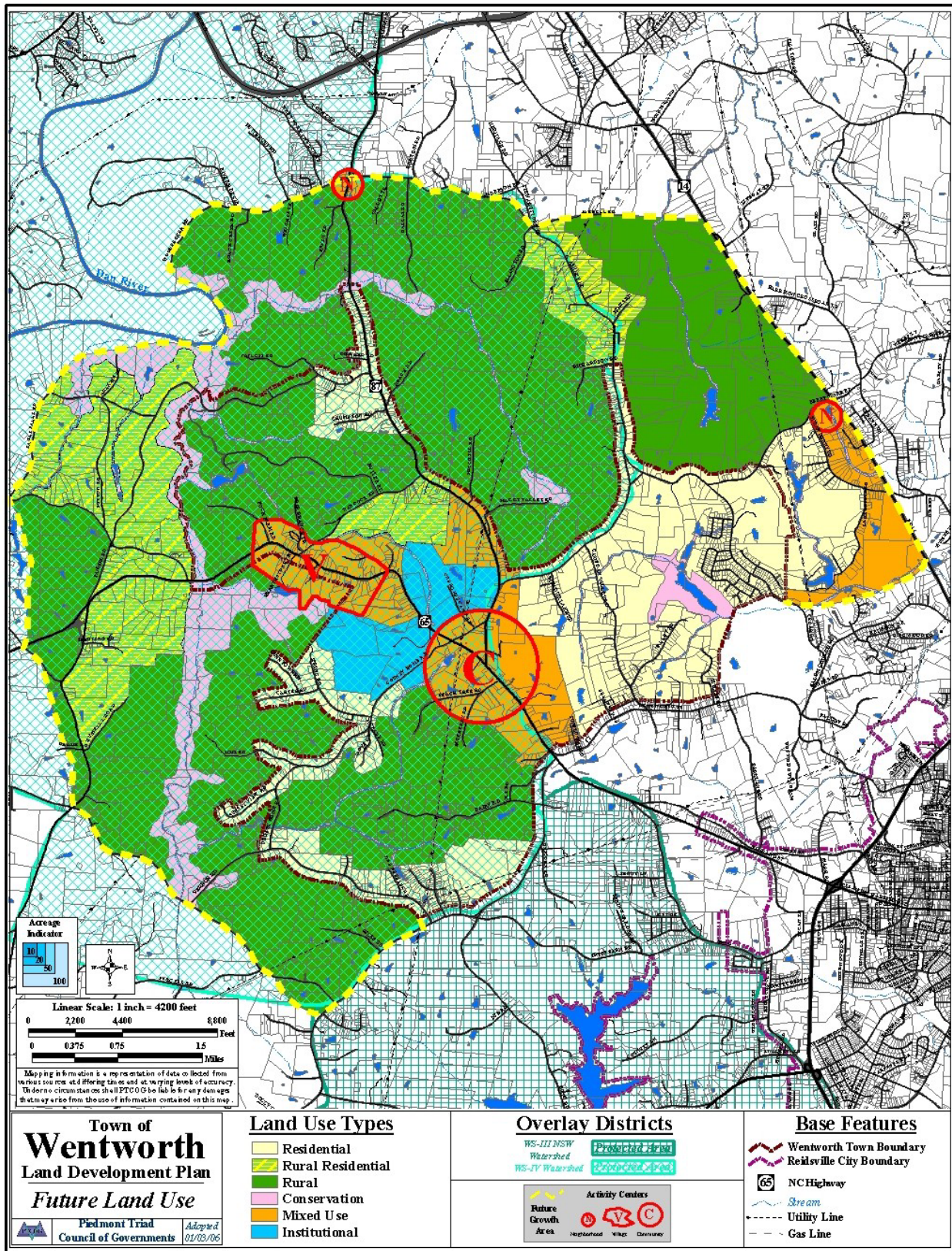
## **PROJECTS**

The Committee recommends that new, short term projects be undertaken by the Town, including (in no particular order):

- A Greenway Plan for the Town to identify desired trail locations, provide cost estimates for facilities and potential phases for implementation
- Establish a historic district congruent with the Village Center
- A detailed review of existing ordinances to recommend changes congruent with the recommendations found in the Land Use Plan
- Development of a detailed implementation strategy to act on the other recommendations found in the Land Use Plan

Detailed implementation strategies organized by individual issues can be found in the Appendix.

Figure 4.1 Future Land Use





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# IMPLEMENTATION

## 5.1 USING THE PLAN

### GENERAL IMPLEMENTATION

A new land use plan raises awareness in the community about its development potential, which often results in an increase in development interest and activities. A new plan can also be the catalyst for creating new public programs and initiatives.

Successful implementation of a land use plan requires cooperative action on the part of elected officials, property owners and the development community. The primary implementers of this plan will be the elected officials of Wentworth who will be responsible for interpreting and acting on the recommendations of the plan when considering development proposals and infrastructure investments, revising policies and ordinances and establishing new programs and initiatives.

### THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map provides a graphic representation of the recommended arrangement of specific land uses. The map should be used to guide the general location, scale, type, pattern and relationship of development proposals. The boundaries between recommended future land use categories should be considered areas of transition, where good judgment and common sense guide interpretation based on the characteristics of the specific development proposal. As conditions change over time, individual land development decisions may differ from the land use vision represented on the map. Deviations from the recommendations should have a clear basis, and may trigger an update of the plan or map.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The principles and strategies outlined in Chapter Four provide a conceptual framework for considering individual land development decisions. These concepts should be referenced to help analyze the potential impacts of individual development decisions. Implementation of the recommendations from the Committee for specific policies and programs will help to encourage the type of growth desired by the community.

## 5.2 MONITORING THE PLAN

The horizon year for this plan is 2035. As growth and development occur within the Town over the coming decades, it may be necessary to make periodic revisions to keep the plan up-to-date. Major changes in infrastructure, roads and development patterns could trigger an update of the plan. A periodic review of the document by staff, Planning Board members and the Town Council will insure that the document remains a vital reference and guide for the community.



# APPENDIX

## A.1 REFERENCES

Wentworth Bicentennial, Part One. The Journal of Rockingham County History and Genealogy, Rockingham County Historical Society, Inc, Volume XXIII, Number 2, December, 1998.

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Rockingham County: A brief history. Butler, Lindley S. North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Archives and History. 1992.

Our Proud Heritage: A Pictorial History of Rockingham County, North Carolina. Butler, Lindley A. Bassett Printing Corporation, Bassett, Virginia. 1971.

The Heritage of Rockingham County, North Carolina. Charles Dyson Rodenbough, Editor. Rockingham Historical Society, Inc., Wentworth, North Carolina. 1983.

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## A.2 VISION AND GOALS

### Citizens for Community Improvement Committee

#### Vision for the Future

The Town of Wentworth is a safe, attractive community that provides a high quality of life for its residents.

The rural setting of the town has been preserved with ample farmland and open space surrounding a walkable, compact community that supports a range of residential, commercial and institutional uses. Development within the town has been focused in the village core by restoring and reusing historic structures and blending new developments to mimic the historic qualities of the town. Local street connectivity and pedestrian facilities have helped to alleviate traffic congestion.

The Town Hall and community park complex provide opportunities for citizen interaction and recreation. Citizens are active participants in the life of the community, and welcome new residents, businesses and ideas.

#### Community Goals

##### 30-Year Goals

- Expand sidewalk system community-wide
- Encourage under-grounding of existing utilities
- Investigate Powell Bill funding for roads

##### 15-Year Goals

- Expand access to water and sewer services
- Expand sidewalk system beyond town core
- Participate in local fire and police protection

- Promote local road connectivity
- Encourage expansion of technology infrastructure
- Encourage retail development (grocery)
- Partner with RCCC to provide a high-tech community library facility

##### 5-Year Goals

- Construct a town hall
- Establish building design standards
- Pursue local postal delivery
- Encourage compact development pattern
- Encourage local economic growth
- Encourage rehabilitation of existing building stock
- Encourage a wider array of housing options
- Encourage citizen participation
- Provide adequate street lighting
- Provide community recreation facilities
- Provide way-finding signage
- Increase opportunities for walking in village core
- Increase recreation opportunities

### A.3 MAY, 2005 TOWN MEETING RESULTS

Facilitated by Committee members, groups of five to six participants brainstormed answers to three questions: What do you want to see continued, started or stopped in Wentworth? After the small groups reported out their results, each participant received ten 'votes' to select their 'top ten' issues. The lists below are broken into the three categories and ranked by number of votes. Similar items have been grouped into color blocks, with a combined total provided.

#### Let's Continue...

Votes	Issue
27	No property tax in Wentworth
	No taxes (Wentworth)
	No additional taxes
	No city taxes
	No town real estate taxes
16	Farm land protection
	Small farming/rural atmosphere
16	Small town atmosphere
	Small town atmosphere
	Stay small
11	Wentworth deputy
11	Paving all dirt roads, improve intersections and add turn lanes
	Pave roads in town
4	Backup water supply to Dan River system
4	Better control of traffic speed limits
3	Expand water to all town residents
3	No new post office
2	Growth; very slow growth
2	Increase commercial opportunities
1	Portion on sales tax revenues
	Improve schools

#### Let's Stop...

Votes	Issue
12	Traffic congestion
	Present traffic flow pattern
	Speeding in school zones and around courthouse
9	Destroying rural character of our town (unsightly garbage, junk cars)
6	Unnecessary restrictions on property
3	Crime
	Drug traffic
3	Commercial zoning on NC 87 south of High School to Calvary Church
3	Tax paid recreation - not start
3	Full time (40 hours) policeman - day



## Let's Start...

Votes	Issue
24	Center turn lane going down Main Street from Calvary Baptist Church to Wentworth Old School (tie in existing three lane 65/87)
	Third lane on NC 65 all the way to Calvary Church
	Widen 87/65 to four lanes
	Improve traffic
18	Rural route mail delivery
	Bottom line mail
	New post office
	Post Office
15	Movie cinema complex (4-6 screens) with meeting rooms for club/civic groups/youth
	Senior citizen and youth center (old Wentworth gym and ball field)
	Activity center for all ages - youth to senior citizen
15	Future well planned development including: small shopping center and grocery and extended restaurant hours
	Grocery store
	Drug store
	Good restaurants, grocery store
	Restaurants
	Fast food
11	Build post office/Town Hall
	Town Hall
10	Sidewalks and street lights on Main Street
	Sidewalks, walking trails
9	Consideration of Wentworth bypass
	Bypass
9	Water and sewer
	Sewage plan to include all residents
	Extending sewer lines
6	Cell tower
4	Recreation and parks
	Drug free playground
4	Stoplights at schools (RCHS and RCMS)
4	All courts held in local town (e.g. Eden, Reidsville, etc...)
4	Demolish abandoned buildings
2	Street lights
	Creating new jobs
	24 hour police force
	Beautification
	Commercial office space

## A.4 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES, BY ISSUE

Following the Community Meeting, Committee members were asked to identify the key issues facing the Town of Wentworth, and devise a strategy to address these issues.

<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Traffic</b>	
<b>Values:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Aesthetics</li> </ul>
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better traffic flow</li> <li>• Encourage 'stop and shop'</li> <li>• Utilize traffic calming devices when needed</li> <li>• Better signage</li> <li>• Encourage enforcement of traffic laws</li> <li>• Improve appearance of roadways with street trees, plantings and sidewalks</li> <li>• Provide street lighting along major corridors to improve safety</li> </ul>	
<b>Tools:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Ordinances</u> for sidewalks, traffic flow (access management)</li> <li>• <u>Project</u> to establish an Appearance Commission</li> <li>• <u>Policy</u> to establish agreements with NCDOT</li> <li>• <u>Policy</u> to work with Sheriff's Department (in the future, a municipal police department) on enforcement</li> </ul>	

<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Small Town Atmosphere and Village Center</b>	
<b>Values:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Continuity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aesthetics</li> <li>• Cultural development</li> </ul>
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appearance standards</li> <li>• Establish scenic corridors and economic corridors</li> <li>• Apply design standards for lighting, sidewalks, buildings</li> <li>• Identify or develop facilities where activities can occur</li> </ul>	
<b>Tools:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Ordinance</u> to set appearance and design standards</li> <li>• <u>Project</u> to define theme or direction (define a 'look')</li> <li>• <u>Policy</u> to foster continuation of small town atmosphere</li> </ul>	

<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Farmland Protection</b>	
<b>Values:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community identity</li> <li>• Aesthetics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic development</li> <li>• Preservation of rural heritage</li> </ul>
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify land for protection as farmland</li> <li>• Encourage agricultural related economic development</li> <li>• Encourage larger lot sizes in agricultural areas</li> <li>• Establish a reduced rate for active farmland if local property tax is levied</li> </ul>	
<b>Tools:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Program</u> to establish Agricultural Committee</li> <li>• <u>Project</u> to conduct a detailed review of existing ordinances that effect farmland uses</li> <li>• <u>Project</u> to promote a 'farm-friendly' atmosphere</li> <li>• <u>Program</u> to encourage participation in Voluntary Agriculture Districts</li> </ul>	

<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Shopping and Retail</b>	
<b>Values:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convenience</li> <li>• Local Economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Identity</li> <li>• Aesthetics</li> </ul>
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify land for future commercial use</li> <li>• Encourage appropriate infrastructure to support growth in designated areas</li> <li>• Identify types of businesses desired and encourage their development</li> <li>• Encourage business to locate in Wentworth</li> </ul>	
<b>Tools:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Ordinance</u> regarding zoning for commercial use of land</li> <li>• <u>Policy</u> that identifies the types of businesses desired</li> <li>• <u>Project</u> to enlist community input on types of businesses desired</li> <li>• <u>Policy</u> to actively seek out grant funding for infrastructure</li> </ul>	

<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Recreation</b>	
<b>Values:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Economics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aesthetics</li> <li>• Community</li> </ul>
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities for organized outdoor activities: ball fields, parks, walking trails</li> <li>• Businesses to support activities</li> <li>• Facilities for organized indoor activities: gymnasium, recreation center</li> <li>• Reduce crime</li> </ul>	
<b>Tools:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Project</u> to use grant writer to secure project funding</li> <li>• <u>Policy</u> to secure business support to promote activity days</li> <li>• <u>Program</u> to establish a Wellness Committee</li> <li>• <u>Program</u> to establish a Recreation Committee</li> </ul>	

<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Water and Sewer*</b>	
<b>Values:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economics</li> <li>• Growth</li> </ul>
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of water and sewer system by basins</li> <li>• Identify priority basins and develop plans</li> <li>• Hire Engineer to explore possibilities of expansion</li> <li>• Explore commercial possibilities with sewer</li> <li>• Expand water and sewer based on demand</li> </ul>	
<b>Tools:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Program</u> to explore grant opportunities</li> <li>• <u>Ordinance</u> to require expansion of water and sewer in new development within certain distance of existing lines</li> <li>• <u>Policy</u> to establish agreements with Eden and Dan River Water to reserve water and sewer capacity</li> <li>• <u>Program</u> to establish local water and sewer administrator</li> </ul>	

\* In order to implement, local property tax would be required.

<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Sidewalks, Walking Trails and Street Lighting</b>	
<b>Values:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Continuity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aesthetics</li> <li>• Health</li> </ul>
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make visible trail and sidewalk connections to existing facilities throughout the community</li> <li>• Control access to trails; provide adequate lighting, signage and support facilities</li> <li>• Coordinate sidewalks with other road improvements like curb and gutter, signalization and striping</li> </ul>	
<b>Tools:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Ordinance</u> requiring new sidewalks (already exists; make sure it is clear and proactive)</li> <li>• <u>Program</u> to promote wellness and develop Town sponsored activities</li> <li>• <u>Program</u> to provide local funding or matching funds to provide lighting based on established criteria or 'dark spots'</li> <li>• <u>Program</u> to encourage reporting broken or burned-out lights and areas for new lights; coordinate with deputy</li> <li>• <u>Project</u> Undertake a town-wide Greenway Plan to identify desired trail locations, cost estimates and potential phases for implementation</li> </ul>	

<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Residential Development Patterns and Housing Options</b>	
<b>Values:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic Preservation</li> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Mental well-being</li> <li>• Diversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aesthetics</li> <li>• Economics</li> <li>• Social Tolerance</li> </ul>
<b>Desired Outcomes:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mixed Use/Mixed Size/Mixed Type</li> <li>• Higher Density where water and sewer are available</li> <li>• Rehabilitation of existing housing stock and adaptive reuse</li> <li>• Family friendly developments (life-cycle housing)</li> </ul>	
<b>Tools:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Ordinance</u> changes to direct higher densities with water and sewer</li> <li>• <u>Ordinance</u> to encouraging mixed use</li> <li>• <u>Ordinance</u> requiring mixed housing types</li> <li>• <u>Program</u> to seek or establish local historic preservation grants</li> <li>• <u>Project</u> to establish a historic district and commission</li> <li>• <u>Project</u> to establish housing authority</li> </ul>	

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## **A.5 TOWN MEETING RESULTS, NOVEMBER 2005**

*A five question survey was distributed to the 30 participants at the November 1, 2005 drop-in meeting. Below, the answers we received have been compiled.*

### **What did you see or hear that interested you? ...excited you? ...surprised you?**

- The plan was almost finished
- That Wentworth is planning for the future so that we can determine the kind of Town that we will have
- Water and Sewer
- Construction of new town hall, local postal office
- Good overall plan for continued controlled growth
- Construction of town hall and pursuing a post office
- All maps interest me, but the one showing 'rough' land in red was the most interesting.
- Excited – the prospect of a post office and rural routes with a Wentworth address
- Surprised that DOT has moved the Wentworth bypass corridor to the eastern side of our land, rather than straight through the middle.
- ✓
- ?
- Water and sewer

### **What is most significant about the draft plan?**

- It looks well thought out
- The maps demonstrate a portrait of our assets, and help to lay out how we should treat certain areas. A blueprint for town development
- Preservation of rural, small-town character of Wentworth
- Establishing an identity for Wentworth as a small town with big ideas
- It covers commercial use, infrastructure, residential and mixed use
- Direction for the Town of Wentworth
- Proper lighting and sidewalks and planned development
- Building a new post office and having street lights
- ✓
- This seems to me to be very realistic

### **What do you like best about the draft plan?**

- It was thorough
- Natural areas, the historic district, sidewalk and/or walking trails
- Pedestrian corridors, natural areas, open space, preservation of historic structures
- Blending of new growth with existing town buildings so as not to totally lose town's historic significance in Rockingham Co
- It is very complete
- Short as well as long term goals
- Organized growth
- Balance use of land while preserving an overall rural atmosphere
- The goal of expanding the water and sewer systems

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### **What do you like best about the draft plan? (continued...)**

- ?
- It reflects the community input from spring

### **What would you change?**

- My land & Anne & Pete Paschal's to rural
- Some of the information on natural resources is out of date or incomplete. Camp Cherokee/Saurakee should be a natural area, open space. Why not develop Wentworth School as a town center.
- Camp Saurakee (end of Cherokee Camp Road) is a Natural Heritage Area
- Continue to push for good cell tower coverage in Wentworth (technology infrastructure). Combine with Wi-Fi technology for internet access at schools, government, college
- Nothing that I can see
- Encourage retail development (grocery) as a five-year goal
- Encourage expansion of technology infrastructure as a five-year goal
- Have grocery store within five years
- Pursue local postal delivery in the next year
- Street lights within one year
- ----
- No taxes
- See water and sewer lines run on all roads

### **Will you support the draft plan? ... Why?**

- Yes, especially if they change my land
- The plan was almost finished
- Yes! We have the opportunity to plan our future
- Yes
- It attempts to promote growth compatible with maintaining the town's existing character while promoting community
- Yes, shows positive planning in a controlled way for the county
- Yes, it is well thought out
- Yes, workable goals and realistic
- I will support. I think the plan was well done
- Yes – (unintelligible) growth
- ✓
- No
- Yes. I helped with the planning last spring
- Yes. Appears to be well thought-out proposal for regulating future growth. This took a lot of hard work by a lot of people. Thank you.