

RESOLUTION NO. 2014-12

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF THE TOWN OF GRIFTON, NORTH CAROLINA
ADOPTING A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

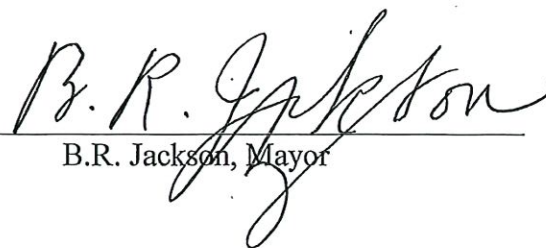
WHEREAS, A comprehensive plan has been prepared and is intended to provide guidance in the Town's implementation of zoning decisions, subdivision reviews, and capital improvements programming; and

WHEREAS, The proposed Comprehensive Plan brings together and coordinates all of the other respective Plans of the Town of Grifton.

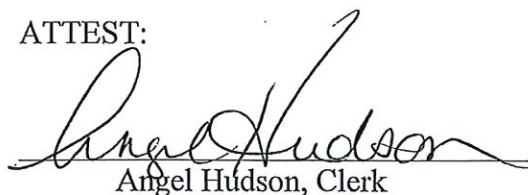
NOW THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners, as follows:

1. **Adoption**. The Town of Grifton Comprehensive dated December 2014 is hereby adopted.
2. **Publication of Plan**. Town staff is directed to publish the adopted Comprehensive Plan and make it available for use by the public.

RESOLVED this 9th day of December, 2014.


B.R. Jackson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Angel Hudson, Clerk

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	xi
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION	1
VISION STATEMENT	2
CHAPTER 2 POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS	3
POPULATION TRENDS	3
HOUSEHOLD AND GROUP QUARTERS POPULATIONS	4
FAMILY AND NONFAMILY HOUSEHOLDS	4
AGE OF THE POPULATION	5
Up and Coming Seniors (55 to 64 Year Olds)	6
Prime Working Age (25 to 54 Year Olds)	6
Youth and Young Adults (0 to 24 Year Olds)	6
POPULATION BY RACE	7
HISPANIC ORIGIN	7
EDUCATION OF THE POPULATION	8
INCOME OF THE POPULATION	9
POPULATION PROJECTIONS	10
Metropolitan Region Overview	10
Components of Population Change	11
Natural Increase or Decrease of the Population	11
Net In-Migration	12
Forces Contributing to Migration	13
Population Forecast	13
CHAPTER 3 HOUSING	15
TYPES OF HOUSING UNITS	15
OCCUPANCY AND VACANCY	15
TENURE, HOUSEHOLD SIZE, AND OVERCROWDING	16
AGE OF HOUSING UNITS	18
VALUE AND COST BURDEN	19
HOUSING UNIT PROJECTIONS	20
ASSESSMENT	21
Types of Housing Units	21
Senior-Friendly Housing	21
Age of Housing Units	21
Manufactured Housing	22
Healthy Homes	22

CHAPTER 4 LABOR FORCE AND ECONOMY	23
LABOR FORCE	23
EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT	24
PLACE OF WORK	24
OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY COMPARISONS	25
AREA EMPLOYMENT	27
WAGES	27
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES	30
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISIONING, PLANNING AND MARKETING	31
Contentnea Creek	31
Grifton Museum	31
Indian Village	32
Shad Festival	32
John Lawson Legacy Days	32
ASSESSMENT	32
CHAPTER 5 NATURAL RESOURCES	34
SOILS	34
NEUSE RIVER BASIN	34
FLOOD PLAIN DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION	38
HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING	39
WILDLIFE HABITAT AND SPECIES	40
WETLANDS	41
CHAPTER 6 LAND USE	42
EXISTING LAND USE	42
Agriculture / Forestry	42
Conservation / Open Space	43
Residential	43
Public-Institutional	43
Downtown Commercial	43
Highway Commercial	44
Industrial	44
FUTURE LAND USE	49
Expansion of Grifton's Neighborhoods	52
Expansion of Highway Business	53
Golf Course Redevelopment	54
IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS	54

CHAPTER 7 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES	56
PUBLIC SAFETY	56
Police	56
Fire Services	56
Emergency Medical Services	57
HEALTH AND EDUCATION	57
Health Care	57
Schools	58
Library	59
UTILITIES	59
Electricity	59
Water	59
Sewer	59
Solid Waste Management	60
PARKS AND RECREATION	60
GREENWAYS	62
 CHAPTER 8 TRANSPORTATION	 64
HIGHWAYS	64
STREET CONDITIONS	66
THOROUGHFARE PLAN	66
RAILROADS	66
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION	67
SIDEWALKS	67
PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN	67
 CHAPTER 9 POLICIES	 69
NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT	69
ENERGY EFFICIENCY	70
CULTURAL RESOURCES	70
HOUSING	70
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	71
LAND USE	71
Generally	71
Food, Agriculture and Conservation Lands	72
Housing and Neighborhoods	72
Central Business	72
Highway Business	72
Industry	73
URBAN DESIGN	73
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES	74
TRANSPORTATION	75

CHAPTER 10 IMPLEMENTATION WORK PROGRAM	77
ANALYSIS OF CURRENT POLICY IMPLEMENTATION	77
Natural Resources and the Environment	77
Energy Efficiency and Cultural Resources	77
Housing	78
Economic Development	78
Land Use	79
Design	79
Community Facilities	79
Transportation	80
SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAM	80
APPENDIX: COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS	82

LIST OF MAPS

No.	Title	Page
1.1	Grifton Location	2
1.2	Aerial View of Grifton	2
5.1	Prime Agricultural Soils, Grifton Extraterritorial Jurisdiction	35
5.2	Soils with Severe Limitations on Septic Tanks	36
5.3	Topography, Grifton Area	37
5.4	Flood Prone Areas, Town of Grifton	39
5.5	Wetlands, Grifton Area	41
6.1	Existing Land Use in 2013, Grifton Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)	46
6.2	Town Core Existing Land Use, 2013	47
6.3	Future Land Use 2035, Grifton Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)	50
6.4	Town Core Future Land Use 2035	51
7.1	Grifton Area Greenways Plan	63
8.1	Greenville Southwest Bypass	65
8.2	Thoroughfare Plan (1997), Town of Grifton	66
8.3	Recommended Downtown Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements, Grifton	68

LIST OF TABLES

No.	Title	Page
2.1	Historic Population Trends, 2000, 2010 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Town of Grifton and Pitt County	3
2.2	Percent Change of Population, 1990-2000 and 2000-2010, Town of Grifton, Pitt County, and North Carolina	4
2.3	Historic Household and Group Quarters Populations , 2000, 2010 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Town of Grifton	4
2.4	Households by Type of Household, 2000, 2010 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Town of Grifton	5
2.5	Population by Age, 2000-2010, Town of Grifton and State of North Carolina	6
2.6	Racial Composition of the Population, 2000, 2010, and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Town of Grifton	7
2.7	Hispanic or Latino Population, 2000, 2010, and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Town of Grifton	8
2.8	Educational Attainment, 2000 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates Persons 25 Years and Over, Town of Grifton	8
2.9	Comparison of Median Family and Median Household Income, 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Town of Grifton, Pitt County, and North Carolina	9
2.10	Number of Households by Income Grouping, 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Town of Grifton and Pitt County	10
2.11	Population Projections, 2015-2030, Greene County, Pitt County, and Greenville, NC Metropolitan Statistical Area	11
2.12	Vital Statistics Data, 2006-2011, Pitt County	12
2.13	Estimated Net In-Migration, Pitt County, 2003-2012	12
2.14	Forecasts of Population and Households, 2010-2035, Town of Grifton	14
3.1	Types of Housing Units, 2000 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Town of Grifton	15
3.2	Occupancy and Vacancy of Housing Units, 2000 and 2010, Town of Grifton	16

3.3	Owner and Renter Occupied Housing Units, 2000 and 2010, Town of Grifton	16
3.4	Average Household Size by Tenure, 2000 and 2010, Town of Grifton	17
3.5	Overcrowded Housing Units by Tenure, 2000, Town of Grifton	17
3.6	Age of Housing Units, 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Grifton, Pitt County, and North Carolina	18
3.7	Value of Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units in 2000 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Town of Grifton and North Carolina	19
3.8	Gross Rent, Specified Renter-Occupied Housing Units, 2000 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Town of Grifton and North Carolina	20
3.9	Housing Unit Projections, 2010-2035, Town of Grifton	20
4.1	Labor Force Participation, 2000, and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates Persons 16 Years and Over, Town of Grifton	23
4.2	Labor Force, Pitt and Lenoir Counties, Selected Years	23
4.3	Employment Status of the Labor Force, 2000 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Persons 16 Years and Over, Town of Grifton	24
4.4	Unemployment Rates, Selected Years, Pitt and Lenoir Counties	24
4.5	Place of Work of Town Residents, Persons 16 Years and Over, 2000 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates	25
4.6	Comparison of Employment by Occupation, 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over, Town of Grifton, Pitt County, North Carolina, and the United States	26
4.7	Comparison of Employment by Industry, 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over, Town of Grifton, Pitt County, North Carolina, and the United States	27
4.8	Total Employment, Pitt and Lenoir Counties, 2006-2012	28
4.9	Employment by Industry, 2001 and 2011, By Place of Work in Pitt County	28
4.10	Total Employment and Establishments by Industry, 2006 and 2011, Grifton Zip Code (28530)	29

4.11	Annual Average Wages, Pitt County and State, 2006-2012	30
6.1	Existing Land Use, Town of Grifton and Grifton ETJ, 2003	42
6.2	Land Use Category Descriptions	48
7.1	Pitt County Health Personnel and Facilities in Comparison with State, 2010	57
7.2	Parks and Recreation Facilities, Town of Grifton	61
8.1	Existing and Proposed Sidewalk Mileage	68
10.1	Short-term Work Program, 2015-2019, Town of Grifton	81

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Grifton Comprehensive Plan was finalized by Jerry Weitz, Ph.D., FAICP, Associate Professor and Director of the Urban and Regional Planning Program at East Carolina University (Department of Geography, Planning, and Environment) in February 2014.

A team of seven undergraduate planning majors, identified below, contributed major components of this comprehensive plan for their Planning Studio project during Fall 2013.



The Grifton Student Planning Team

Left to Right: Bradleigh Sceviour, Eric Vitale, Dustin Carney, Jarrod Carr, Matthew Moy, Sarah Davis, and Nathan Williams

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TOWN OF GRIFTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Grifton has an impressive history of planning for roads, greenways, land use, hazard mitigation, water and sewer, pedestrian facilities, economic development, downtown development, marketing, and parks and recreation. This comprehensive plan is a long-range (i. e., 20 year) guide to future community building and improvement in Grifton. It adopts by reference all prior plans except land use, which is superseded by this comprehensive plan. The following subject matters are included: population; housing; economic development; natural and historic resources; land use; community facilities and services, and transportation.

POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS

In 2010, Grifton had a population of 2,617 persons – an increase of 26.2% over the 2000 U.S. Census figure of 2,073 persons. About 7 of 10 households residing in Grifton are families. Age of the population is an important variable – by the year 2020 Grifton may have a higher percentage of seniors than the state as a whole. Racial and ethnic composition as well as education and income are examined in the population chapter. The Greenville metropolitan region will continue to grow in the future, and this plan forecasts that Grifton's population will grow to approximately 3,455 persons by the year 2035; this translates into a net increase of 250 households from 2010 to 2035.

HOUSING

Because Grifton is a family-oriented community, about three out of four of the town's housing units are detached, single-family dwellings. Multi-family residences and manufactured homes constitute less than ten percent each of the total housing stock in Grifton. Housing vacancy rates are considered low, and the vast majority of housing units are owner occupied. The town's housing stock is significantly older than that of the county or the state as a whole. Given comparatively low values of housing units, the town's housing stock is affordable but may not appeal to upper-middle and upper-income households. Approximately 260 net housing units will be added in town between 2010 and 2035. Town housing policies call for some housing diversification – to include senior-friendly housing, more opportunities for renters, and new higher-priced housing – while maintaining the town's family atmosphere. Increased attention may be needed in the future to address the aging housing stock, to avoid neighborhood problems that a declining housing stock can bring.

LABOR FORCE AND ECONOMY

A majority of Grifton's residents are in the labor force. Only about 14% work in Grifton; many commute north in Pitt County for employment. Grifton residents work disproportionately in production, transportation, and material moving occupations when compared with Pitt County, the state, and the nation. However, one-third of the town's

labor force is employed in managerial positions and related jobs. This means the town's residents are a combination of "blue" and "white" collar.

The comparatively higher percentage of town residents employed in manufacturing may be a concern, because manufacturing has been a declining sector in terms of employment, locally, statewide, and nationally. There were an estimated 707 jobs in the Grifton Zip Code (28530) in the year 2011.

The town has adopted an Economic Development Strategic Plan and a marketing plan to stimulate and expand the economic status of the town. Town assets on which leaders can capitalize include Contentnea Creek, Grifton Museum, Indian Village, and major events such as the Shad Festival and John Lawson Legacy Days. A key strategy is to continue to improve the downtown. In 2010 the Town of Grifton prepared a Downtown Conceptual Master Plan to help guide growth and to create a consistent and unified feel and appearance.

NATURAL RESOURCES

This chapter focuses on soil and water resources. Within Grifton's extraterritorial jurisdiction, there are large amounts of prime farmland and also soils which have severe limitations on septic tanks. A chief concern is that Grifton is susceptible to flooding; this was fully realized in 1999 with flooding resulting from Hurricane Floyd. The town has a flood damage prevention ordinance and has actively participated in countywide hazard mitigation planning. Wetlands are also abundant in the Grifton area.

LAND USE

The vast majority of land in the town's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) is farmland and undeveloped. As a family-oriented town, much of the town's land use is detached, single-family neighborhoods. There are a few multi-family residential developments, and institutional land uses are also present in the town. Grifton's downtown is no longer the center of economic activity that it was in earlier times, but it still has a variety of businesses and public services. Much of the anticipated land use change will occur in the form of commercial development north of the town limits in the ETJ. The land use plan for the town anticipates "infill" residential development in a number of locations, mostly north and east of downtown.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The town provides a police force and for fire protection is served by the Grifton Rural Community Fire Association. The Grifton Rescue Squad is a non-profit, county-funded paramedic agency that provides emergency medical services. The town funds the Grifton Public Library which provides library collection materials for all age groups and cultures.

Maps of the town's water system are kept up to date by the town's consulting engineers. A five-year water and sewer capital improvement plan, prepared in 2008 and updated in 2013, recognizes both long and short term capital improvement needs for the water and

wastewater system. The wastewater collection system in Grifton is operated and maintained by the town. Grifton is a participant in the Pitt County Solid Waste Management Plan (2012). Grifton also offers several parks and recreational activities, and the town adopted a Greenway and Trails Master Plan in 2004.

TRANSPORTATION

A thoroughfare plan was adopted in 1997 for the town and includes a bypass around the south side of town. Also, a new Greenville southwest bypass is planned north of Grifton which will improve travel times between the town and Greenville. Responding to the need to address worsening local road conditions, the town passed a bond referendum for major local street repairs. Except for possible service arrangement through Pitt Area Transit Services (PATs), there is no public transportation serving Grifton.

The Town of Grifton prepared a Pedestrian Master Plan in 2008 that upon implementation will create a network of trails/sidewalks that provide safe and convenient places to walk or ride for all pedestrians and bicyclists. The plan calls for more than five linear miles of sidewalk construction in town.

POLICIES

Chapter 9 of the comprehensive plan contains a list of policies on several subject matters: natural resources and the environment; energy efficiency, cultural resources, housing, economic development, land use, urban design, community facilities, and transportation. These policies should be consulted in rezoning and future development proposals, as well as in the town's own future decisions.

IMPLEMENTATION

The comprehensive plan includes an analysis of the extent to which the town is implementing the policies of this plan. It also includes a work program which primarily represents the need to implement the different plans that have been adopted by the town.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The most all-encompassing type of community plan is the “comprehensive plan.” A comprehensive plan is a long-range (usually 20 years) guide to future community building and improvement, adopted by the local governing body. In North Carolina, city and county zoning regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan; and when considering zoning amendments, a statement describing whether the action is consistent with an adopted comprehensive plan and other officially adopted plan must be approved (NC Gen. Stat. § 160A-383 and § 153A-341, respectively). A comprehensive plan therefore must be consulted under North Carolina’s planning and zoning enabling statutes when local governments evaluate rezoning decisions.

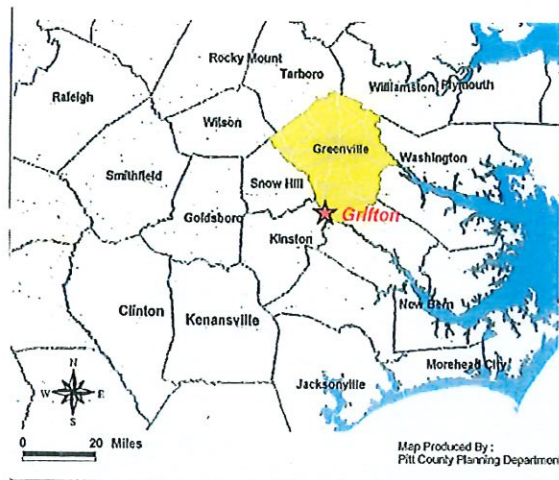
There is no universally accepted standard for the elements that go into a comprehensive plan, and states and localities vary considerably but they will usually address the following: population; housing; economic development; natural and historic resources; land use; community facilities and services, and transportation). Comprehensive plans also provide an implementation program specifying actions that will be undertaken during the five or six years following adoption of the comprehensive plan.

Local governments will frequently prepare and adopt separate plans for functional facilities like transportation, water and sewer, and parks and recreation master plan. Functional plans adopted by Grifton are adopted by reference in this comprehensive plan. They include a Thoroughfare Plan (1997); Greenway Plan (2004), Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan (2006), Water and Sewer Capital Improvement Plan (2008, updated in 2013), Pedestrian Master Plan (2008), Economic Development Plan, Downtown Conceptual Master Plan (2010), Marketing Plan (2010), and Park and Recreation Master Plan. The Land Use Plan, adopted in 2004, is superseded by the land use chapter in this comprehensive plan.

In addition to all the aforementioned plans developed specifically for the Town, Grifton is also included in several Pitt County plans, including the Pitt County Greenway Plan (2006), an Emergency Operations Plan (2009), and a Solid Waste Management Plan (2012) which are also adopted by reference in this comprehensive plan.

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The Town of Grifton was incorporated in 1883. It is located in Pitt and Lenoir Counties, but most of the town limits is in Pitt County. Grifton is the only Pitt County municipality located partially outside the county. Grifton incorporates 1.97 square miles of land area and has an extraterritorial jurisdiction of more than 15 square miles. (Pitt County Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2030, p. A-10). See Map 1.1 and 1.2.



Map 1.1 Grifton Location



Map 1.2 Aerial View of Grifton

VISION STATEMENT

The Town of Grifton is, and will be, a safe, healthy, quiet, peaceful, comfortable, small town community with welcoming and friendly people and a family orientation. The town will strive to grow responsibly by expanding its economy with more jobs, restaurants, tourist attractions, and community and commercial services while protecting the natural environment, the town's neighborhoods, and its unique character. Through planning and deliberate follow-through, the town will, by 2035, become widely admired in the region because of its healthy and active lifestyle and pedestrian orientation, facilitated by safe roads, great sidewalks, and a greenway system throughout the town.

CHAPTER 2 POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS

This chapter provides an inventory and analysis of past and present population and household characteristics for the Town of Grifton. An understanding of population growth and general population characteristics is an important first step in planning. Analyzing where the people are, in what amounts and composition, and at what rates they are expected to increase in number helps to determine the location and need for public facilities, capital improvements, housing, and employment opportunities in Grifton.

POPULATION TRENDS

Table 2.1 shows past and current populations in the Town of Grifton and Pitt County as a whole. Table 2.2 shows the percentage change in population between the decennial censuses for the Town of Grifton, Pitt County, and North Carolina. Grifton's population data shows a steady increase from 2000 to the most current population count using 2007-2011 5-year estimates.

Growth in neighboring Greenville and in Pitt County as a whole could be a significant factor in Grifton's population growth. Hurricane Floyd caused significant damage to many Grifton residences, resulting in a sharp population decline represented in the 2000 Census data. Nearly one-fifth of the Grifton's population left after the hurricane. Rebuilding efforts by Grifton's residents and disaster relief from organizations like FEMA help to explain Grifton's population growth between 2000 and 2010.

In the 2010 U.S. Census, Grifton had a population of 2,617 persons (Table 2.1) – an increase of 26.2% over the 2000 U.S. Census figure of 2,073 persons (Table 2.2). In 2010, the majority of the town's residents – 2,431 or 93% - lived in Pitt County and only 186 persons – 7% - lived in Lenoir County (Pitt County Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2030, p. A-10).

Table 2.1
Historic Population Trends, 2000, 2010 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Town of Grifton and Pitt County

Jurisdiction	2000	%	2010	%	2007-2011 5-year Estimates	%
Town of Grifton	2,073	1.5	2,617	1.6	2,733	1.5
Pitt County	133,798	100	168,148	100	182,451	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census; American Community Survey, 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates.

Table 2.2
Percent Change of Population, 1990-2000 and 2000-2010
Town of Grifton, Pitt County, and North Carolina

Jurisdiction	Percent Change 1990-2000	Percent Change 2000-2010
Town of Grifton	-14.2	26.2
Pitt County	24.0	25.7
North Carolina	21.4	18.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 1990, 2000, and 2010 Decennial Census.

HOUSEHOLD AND GROUP QUARTERS POPULATIONS

The total population is divided into “household” and “group quarters” (e.g., college dormitories, nursing homes, and correctional facilities) populations. The number of households is important in part because it reflects the needs for housing units. However, the group quarters population is generally not considered in estimating needs for future housing units.

Table 2.3 shows the number and percentage of the population in group quarters for the Town of Grifton. The data illustrate a sharp decrease in the number of people living in group quarters from 53 in 2000 to only 6 in 2010.

Table 2.3
Historic Household and Group Quarters Populations
2000, 2010 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Town of Grifton

Type of Population	2000 Census	%	2010 Census	%	Current (Est.)	%
Household Population	2,020	97.4	2,611	99.8	2,689	98.4
Group Quarters Population	53	2.6	6	0.2	44	1.6
Total Population	2,073	100	2,617	100	2,733	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census; American Community Survey, 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates; Table DP-1, DP01, DP02, and B26001.

FAMILY AND NON-FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS

Table 2.4 shows the number and percentage of family and non-family households in Grifton. The data show that about 70% of households are family households, reflecting the family-oriented lifestyle evident in Grifton. There has been no significant change in the distribution of family and non-family households from 2000 to the most current estimate. That finding is contrary to many communities which are experiencing an increase in non-family households.

Table 2.4
Households by Type of Household, 2000, 2010 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Town of Grifton

Households By Type	2000 Census	%	2010 Census	%	2007-2011 5-year Estimates	%
Family Households	583	71.8	713	68.6	779	68.9
Nonfamily Households	229	28.2	327	31.4	351	31.1
Total Households	812	100	1,040	100	1,130	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census; American Community Survey, 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates, Table DP-1, DP01, and DP02.

AGE OF THE POPULATION

Age is the most important dimension to consider regarding any community's population. There can be vast differences in the needs of children versus the elderly. Household income varies with the age of householders. Age has a relationship to the labor force. Workers include the population ages 16 years and over through retirement age and sometimes beyond. Age has important relationships to housing and can help predict such things as likely first-time homebuyers, renters, and owners of second homes. The relationship of the age of Grifton's population to the needs for community facilities and services in Grifton is also very important. For instance, a high elderly population often translates into a need for health care and personal care homes. On the other hand, a town with many children signals a need for schools, day care centers, and playgrounds.

Table 2.5 shows population age ranges for the Town of Grifton and North Carolina. Grifton's child and teenage population (0-19) increased by 40.9% between 2000 and 2010 and increased from 25.7% to 29.8% of total population. A majority (53.8%) of the population is working age (20-64). The working age population decreased as a percentage of the total population from 56.4% in 2000 to 53.7% in 2010. Grifton's elderly population (65+) increased from 2000 to 2010 but decreased as a percentage of total population from 17.9% in 2000 to 16.4% in 2010. This runs counter to a general trend that many communities are experiencing – an increase in the proportion of total population that is elderly.

Up and Coming Seniors (55 to 64 Year Olds)

It is worth examining the 55 to 59 and 60 to 64 year old age groups in Grifton in 2000 and 2010, which are shown in Table 2.5. Grifton's population contains a larger percentage of people in the 55-59 and 60-64 age groups than the state's population as a whole in 2010. In the year 2000, 55 to 64 year olds constituted 11.3% of the town's total population (235 people total). As of the year 2010, 55 to 64 year olds constituted 326 persons, or 12.5% of the total town population. By the year 2020, if this segment of the population ages in place, Grifton will have an even higher percentage of seniors than the state as a whole. A larger

senior population is likely to signal demand for senior services, such as a larger senior center.

Table 2.5
Population by Age, 2000-2010
Town of Grifton and State of North Carolina

Age Group	2000	Grifton %	North Carolina %	2010	Grifton %	North Carolina %
0-4	122	5.9	6.7	202	7.7	6.6
5-9	146	7.0	7.0	196	7.5	6.7
10-14	155	7.5	6.8	174	6.6	6.6
15-19	109	5.3	6.7	178	6.8	6.9
20-24	112	5.4	7.2	159	6.1	6.9
25-34	215	10.4	15.1	187	10.9	13.1
35-44	316	15.2	16.0	311	11.9	13.9
45-54	292	14.1	13.5	371	14.2	14.3
55-59	116	5.6	5.0	161	6.2	6.3
60-64	119	5.7	4.0	165	6.3	5.6
65-74	214	10.3	6.6	212	8.1	7.3
75-84	125	6.0	4.1	154	5.9	4.0
85+	32	1.5	1.3	47	1.8	1.5
TOTAL	2,073	100%	100%	2,617	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census.

Prime Working Age (25 to 54 Year Olds)

People between the ages of 25 to 54 could be considered the prime or a primary working age group. Clearly, Grifton's population contained a smaller proportion of persons ages 25 to 54 than the state population as a whole in 2000 and 2010. In 2000 in Grifton, this age grouping accounted for about two-fifths, or 39.7% of the town's total population (823 persons); in 2010, the 25 to 54-year old age group increased over 2000 in absolute terms but declined slightly to 37.0% (869 persons) of the total population.

Youth and Young Adults (0 to 24 Year Olds)

The youth and young adult population can be defined broadly to include infants, teenagers, and young adults. In today's economy, some of the 20 to 24-year olds may be employed, but unemployment remains generally higher for that age group than the population as a whole. The vast majority of people in this age group (except for infants) are education-age population (from elementary school to undergraduate to graduate school students).

In Grifton in 2000, there were 644 persons in this age group (31.1% of the total population). In 2010, there were 909 persons in that age group, constituting 34.7% of the

town's total population. The total number and percent share of this age group increased from 2000 to 2010 in Grifton. This is considered a positive finding in that some communities are experiencing declining youth populations.

It is also worth noting that there was a significant increase in the number of people ages 0 to 4 from 2000 to 2010 in Grifton. Similarly, the 5 to 9 years old age group also increased during that time period. The significant increase in the number of people ages 0-4 and 5-9 is a positive finding, in that it shows an increase in the number of households with young children. In short, Grifton is appealing to families with young children. This also means that the public school-age population is likely increasing.

POPULATION BY RACE

The racial composition of Grifton's population is shown in Table 2.6. Although whites constituted the majority of Grifton's population in 2000 and 2010, African-Americans constituted the vast majority of the population increase from 2000 to 2010 in Grifton. The white population remained relatively stable, but decreased significantly as a percentage of the total population from 2000 to 2010. The five-year estimates for 2007-2011, which are less reliable than the decennial census data, indicate growth in the white population and decline in the Black population.

Table 2.6
Racial Composition of the Population, 2000, 2010, and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Town of Grifton

Race	2000	%	2010	%	2007-2011 5-year Estimates	%
White	1,324	63.9	1,356	51.8	1,579	57.8
Black or African American	693	33.4	1,069	40.9	945	34.6
American Indian & Alaska Native	6	0.3	2	0.08	2	0.1
Asian	1	0	1	0.1	8	0.3
Other race alone	60	2.9	127	4.9	158	5.8
Two or more races	16	0.8	62	2.4	41	1.5
Total	2,073	100%	2,617	100%	2,733	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census; American Community Survey, 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates, Table DP-1.

HISPANIC ORIGIN

Table 2.7 shows the Hispanic composition of Grifton's population. Hispanic origin is not classified as a race in census statistics and is noted separately from race. The Hispanic population in Grifton increased significantly from 2000 to 2010, though the numbers remain relatively small. The more recent estimates (2007 to 2011) suggest that the town's

Hispanic population has nearly doubled from the 2010 decennial census figure. If the estimates are accurate (and there is some doubt that they are), the town's population could be as much as 10.1% Hispanic or Latino.

Table 2.7
Hispanic or Latino Population, 2000, 2010, and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Town of Grifton

Origin	2000	%	2010	%	2007-2011 5-year Estimates	%
Not Hispanic	1,975	95.3	2,463	94.1	2,456	89.9
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	98	4.7	154	5.9	277	10.1
Total Population	2,073	100%	2,617	100%	2,733	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census; American Community Survey, 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates, Table DP-1.

EDUCATION OF THE POPULATION

Table 2.8 shows the educational attainment of persons 25 years and over for the Town of Grifton. The data suggest that Grifton's population is becoming more educated.

Table 2.8
Educational Attainment, 2000 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Persons 25 Years and Over
Town of Grifton

Educational Attainment	2000 Census	%	2007-2011 5-year Estimates	%
Less than 9 th grade	141	9.6	105	5.5
9 th to 12 th grade (No Diploma)	255	17.3	182	9.6
High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)	452	30.7	749	39.4
Some College (No Degree)	328	22.3	326	17.1
Associate Degree	118	8.0	206	10.8
Bachelor's Degree	106	7.2	181	9.5
Graduate or Professional Degree	71	4.8	153	8.0
Total Adult Population 25 Years and Over	1,471	100%	1,902	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census; American Community Survey, 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates, Table DP02 and DP-2.

For those 25 years of age or older, the proportion of high school graduates increased significantly from 30.7% in 2000 to 39.4% according to the American Community Survey estimates. The proportion of the total population with Associate, Bachelor's, and

Graduate/Professional degrees all increased in Grifton over time. The proportion of those with Graduate/ Professional degrees increased the most, from 4.8% in 2000 to 8.0% according to the most current estimate. These are positive findings, suggesting that Grifton is capturing an increasing share of the more educated population in Pitt County and Lenoir County. This is probably driven by enrollments at Pitt Community College, East Carolina University, and Lenoir Community College and the relatively convenient location of Grifton to area community colleges and East Carolina University. Note however, that the American Community Survey data for 2007 to 2011 in Table 2.8 are “estimates” and therefore not as reliable as the decennial census which no longer reports data on educational attainment.

INCOME OF THE POPULATION

Table 2.9 shows recent estimates of median family and household income for Grifton, Pitt County, and North Carolina. Grifton’s median family income is about \$8,600 less than Pitt County and about \$11,200 less than North Carolina. Grifton’s median household income is about \$1,300 less than Pitt County and about \$7,800 less than North Carolina. This has some significant implications for economic activity in town, as the buying power of families and households has a significant bearing on which businesses and services may locate in the town.

Table 2.9
Comparison of Median Family and Median Household Income, 2007-2011 5-year
Estimates
Town of Grifton, Pitt County, and North Carolina

Income	2007-2011 5-year Estimates		
	Town of Grifton	Pitt County	North Carolina
Median Family Income (\$)	46,013	54,603	57,171
Median Household Income (\$)	38,500	39,824	46,291

Source: American Community Survey, 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates, Table DP03

Table 2.10 shows estimates of the number of households by income category in Grifton and Pitt County (2007 to 2011). When compared with Pitt County as a whole, Grifton has a larger proportion of low-income households, as well as a smaller proportion of the highest income families. The income figures can also be generally interpreted in terms of poverty status (specific data not shown). If these estimates are valid, then more than one-quarter of Grifton’s households have incomes below \$25,000 a year, which is generally indicative of poverty status.

The income figures in Table 2.10 also have important implications in terms of housing. More than two-thirds (69.1%) of households in Grifton have incomes of less than \$50,000. This suggests that there will be a strong and continuing demand for low and moderately priced housing in town and that there is likely to be little demand for higher-priced housing.

Table 2.10
Number of Households by Income Grouping, 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Town of Grifton and Pitt County

Income Grouping	2007-2011 5-year Estimates			
	Pitt County		Town of Grifton	
	Households	% Total Households	Households	% Total Households
Less than \$10,000	8,647	13.4	166	14.7
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4,919	7.6	120	10.6
\$15,000 to \$24,999	8,293	12.9	148	13.1
\$25,000 to \$34,999	7,365	11.4	122	10.8
\$35,000 to \$49,999	9,293	14.4	225	19.9
\$50,000 to \$74,999	10,370	16.1	98	8.7
\$75,000 to \$99,999	6,325	9.8	160	14.2
\$100,000 to \$149,999	5,819	9.0	74	6.5
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1,755	2.7	17	1.5
\$200,000 or more	1,721	2.7	0	0
Total Households	64,507	100%	1,130	100%

Source: American Community Survey, 2007- 2011 5-Year Estimates,, Table DP04.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Metropolitan Region Overview

Projecting population for a county and town should be done only after considering larger regional or metropolitan trends. Grifton is a part of the Greenville, NC Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Pitt County and Greene County are the only counties in the MSA. Projections of population for counties and MSAs are available from the North Carolina Office of Budget and Management as well as a private company, Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. Table 2.11 compares projections from these two sources. The planning team had access to the private company data for MSAs but not individual counties. Table 2.11 provides population projections from these two sources to the year 2030.

Pitt County's population as of the 2010 decennial census was 168,148. From Table 2.11, it is apparent that the state expects Pitt County to increase substantially in population through the year 2030. Pitt County is projected by the state to increase by 39,384 people, from 168,148 (2010 decennial census) to 207,532 people in the year 2030, or a 23.4 percent increase during the twenty-year time period. Annual estimates of housing units prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau indicate that total housing units in Pitt County have increased from 75,080 in 2010 to 75,543 in 2011 and 75,684 housing units in 2012.

Table 2.11
Population Projections, 2015-2030
Greene County, Pitt County, and Greenville, NC Metropolitan Statistical Area

	Greene County, NC (NCOBM)	Pitt County, NC (NCOBM)	Greenville MSA (NCOBM)	Greenville MSA (Woods & Poole)
Population 2015	21,244	178,386	199,630	205,470
Population 2020	21,226	188,099	209,325	221,060
Population 2025	21,226	197,816	219,042	236,690
Population 2030	21,226	207,532	228,758	252,150

Source: NC Office of Budget and Management (NCOBM), downloaded September 16, 2013. Woods & Poole data from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2011, 2012 MSA Profile.

The population projections prepared by Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. for the Greenville MSA are significantly higher than those prepared by the state. According to Woods & Poole, the Greenville MSA will have a population of 252,150 in the year 2030, an increase of 46,680 from 2015 to 2030 (a 22.7% increase in 15 years). The MSA projections alone do not show a distribution of population growth between Greene and Pitt Counties in the MSA. However, it is likely that Pitt County will absorb the majority of the future projected population growth for the MSA. Grifton may witness a share of Pitt County's future population growth; however, Grifton has not experienced growth at the same rate as the rest of the county and therefore may not benefit proportionally from the anticipated population growth in Pitt County.

Components of Population Change

Local jurisdictions (counties, cities and towns) can change population through two major factors: natural increase (births minus deaths) and net in-migration. Municipalities (cities and towns) can also increase population by a third factor: annexation; however, annexation practices cannot be predicted in this comprehensive plan.

Natural Increase or Decrease of the Population

Table 2.12 shows births, deaths, and natural increase in Pitt County from 2006 to 2011. From these data it is evident that natural increase of the population of Pitt County has been extremely healthy during the period, averaging 1,119 persons annually. One cannot determine how much of the natural increase in population occurred in Grifton itself. It is worth noting, however, that Grifton has declined as a share of the total population of the county from 2000 to 2010.

Table 2.12
Vital Statistics Data, 2006-2011, Pitt County

Year	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase
2006	2,196	1,081	+1,115
2007	2,336	1,097	+1,239
2008	2,345	1,166	+1,179
2009	2,303	1,136	+1,167
2010	2,148	1,098	+1,050
2011	2,144	1,178	+966
Total 2006-2011	13,472	6,756	+6,716
Annual Average	2245	1,126	+1,119

Source: LINC data (State Agency Data, Department of Health and Human Services).

Changes in the age of the population, as indicated in Table 2.5, from 2000 to 2010 in Grifton, may yield additional insights. From 2000 to 2010, persons in Grifton ages 0 to 4 increased by 80, from 122 to 202. At the same time, the cohort sizes at the other end of the population pyramid have also grown. This suggests that there has been a fair amount of natural increase in the town.

Net In-Migration

Net in-migration data is available for Pitt County. Table 2.13 shows net in-migration, or the difference between the total number of in-migrants to and the total number of out-migrants from Pitt County for the past ten years. The source of these data indicates that "migration estimates are highly volatile in nature and are not recommended for tracking year-to-year trends." Note how net in-migration was substantial in Pitt County from 2006 through 2009 but then dropped off considerably as the great recession progressed, then recovered again to some extent in 2012.

Table 2.13
Estimated Net In-Migration, Pitt County, 2003-2012

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Net In-migration	485	1,417	891	3,329	3,516	3,416	2,794	416	150	1,910

Source: State Agency Data, Office of the Governor, Accessed on the LINC website.

Net in-migration cannot be determined for the Town of Grifton. However, the American Community Survey, 2007-2011 five-year estimates, Table S0701 yields some insights with data showing the percentage of people who moved to Grifton in the last year. According to those estimates for Grifton, approximately 10.7% of the total population moved to their current residence in Grifton from somewhere else during the prior year in which the estimates were taken. Considering the margin of error reported in the data, this estimate

could fall to as low as 3.3% of the total population. There are no data sources for the number of people who moved out of Grifton, however, so net in-migration cannot be computed or estimated. Without complete migration data, a reliable population projection for the town cannot be completed.

Forces Contributing to Migration

As indicated in a subsequent chapter, Grifton's economy (as represented by employment in the Grifton zip code) has decreased significantly. Substantial job growth in the area would suggest that people will follow (i.e., population would increase). However, without evidence of job growth and the outlook for economic recovery uncertain, employment will not be a positive factor with regard to population growth in Grifton, at least in the short term. To the contrary, employment declines (if they should continue) could be a negative factor stimulating some decline in the town's population.

The Pitt County portion of Grifton is part of the Greenville MSA. Grifton, which is some 18 miles from Greenville, may attract new residents working in Greenville and other places. Grifton has potential to attract such workers to reside in town, thereby increasing its current status as a "bedroom community," because of several factors including its small town character, a low level of congestion, and affordable housing.

People cannot move into Grifton unless they have a place to reside. As the land use element of this plan indicates, there are significant vacant residential lots and vacant, residentially developable lands in Grifton. This would suggest that additional housing will be constructed in Grifton and occupied by households over time. Vacant housing is not in oversupply, when considering that about one-fifth of the 90 homes vacant in Grifton in 2010 were available for rental or owner occupancy (U.S. Census Bureau 2010 decennial Census Table QT-H1). It also suggests that full or near full occupancy of inhabitable homes in Grifton would increase the town's population by only about 50 people.

Another important variable, alluded to already in this chapter, is the status of the town's senior population. If Grifton's seniors stay in town as they age further, the population may be stable. However, if suitable housing opportunities for seniors are not provided, they may move to other locations, closer to health care or with housing characteristics more suitable for elderly households.

Population Forecast

Making an accurate projection for the Town of Grifton's population is difficult, given the limited data available. Table 2.14 provides a future population forecast for the Town, based mostly on past trends, as well as projections of household and group quarters populations and total households. The forecast suggests that Grifton's group quarters population will increase given the anticipated building of nursing home and housing units appropriate for retirees, as well as a modest increase of about 10 households annually during the planning horizon. The projections assume an average household size of 2.5 persons per unit, which is very close to the figure provided in the 2010 decennial census for Grifton.

Table 2.14
Forecasts of Population and Households, 2010-2035
Town of Grifton

Grifton	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Total Population	2,617	2,775	2,975	3,125	3,280	3,455
Household Population	2,611	2,725	2,850	2,975	3,100	3,225
Group Quarters Population	6	50	125	150	180	230
Households	1,040	1,090	1,140	1,190	1,240	1,290

Source: 2010 data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census. Forecasts by East Carolina University, Urban and Regional Planning Program, January 2014.

CHAPTER 3 HOUSING

The housing element (this chapter) provides an inventory of the existing housing stock in the planning area and helps to establish existing and emerging trends. These data are used by planners, stakeholders, and public officials to assess the adequacy and suitability of the existing housing stock for serving the current population, determine future housing needs, establish goals to guide long-range needs, and prepare strategies for the adequate provision of housing for all sectors of the population.

TYPES OF HOUSING UNITS

Table 3.1 shows the types of housing units in Grifton in 2000 and according to the estimates from the American Community Survey. The 2000 data are more reliable because they were based on a 100% count, whereas the American Community Survey estimates in Table 3.1 are less reliable because they are estimates based on a sample. The numbers in Table 3.1 reflect more significant housing growth in the past decade than is evident in the 100% count of housing units provided in the 2010 decennial census (see Table 3.2).¹ Approximately three-quarters of the town's housing stock are detached, single-family dwellings. Multi-family residences and manufactured homes constitute less than ten percent each of the total housing stock, according to recent estimates. The fact that the overwhelming majority of homes in Grifton are detached, single-family dwellings is not surprising, given the family orientation of the community.

Table 3.1
Types of Housing Units, 2000 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Town of Grifton

Type of Unit	Units 2000	%	Units 2007 - 2011	%
One family, detached	711	72.3	1,013	76.1
One family, attached	16	1.6	70	5.3
Multiple family	96	9.8	118	8.9
Mobile Home	160	16.3	129	9.7
Total Housing Units	983	100%	1,331	100%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census, Table H30; American Community Survey 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates, Table DP04 and DP-1.

OCCUPANCY AND VACANCY

Table 3.2 provides data on occupancy and vacancy for Grifton's housing stock in 2000 and 2010. Note that the 2010 data are from the decennial census and are considered reliable.

¹ Note, for instance, that the 100% count of housing units in Table 3.2 for the year 2010 is some 200 housing units lower than the total provided in the American Community Survey estimates for 2007 to 2011 (Table 3.1).

Table 3.2
Occupancy and Vacancy of Housing Units, 2000 and 2010
Town of Grifton

Status	Units 2000	%	Units 2010	%
Occupied	799	81.3	1,040	92.0
Vacant	184	18.7	90	8.0
Total Units	983	100%	1,130	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census; 2010 Decennial Census, Table DP04 and QT-H1.

Vacant housing units have decreased significantly in total number and as a percentage of total housing stock from 2000 to 2010. The high vacancy rate for Grifton's housing stock in 2000, as shown in Table 3.2, may be explained in part by the effects of flooding from Hurricane Floyd in 1999. Grifton as of 2010 had 1,130 housing units, of which only 8% were vacant.

Of the 90 units that were vacant in Grifton in 2010, the decennial census indicates that 19 were for rent, 15 were for sale, 4 were sold but not occupied, and 4 were held for seasonal, recreational, or other occasional use. Further, about half (44 units) were classified as "other vacant," meaning generally that they are not being used and not contemplated to be used for any purpose. It is those "other vacant" units that may be cause for concern; a large number of boarded up housing units can result in significant community concerns such as blight, property value depreciation, and possibly criminal activity.

TENURE, HOUSEHOLD SIZE, AND OVERCROWDING

Table 3.3 shows owner and renter occupied housing units for the 2000 and 2010 decennial censuses. The number of owner-occupied homes increased to some extent in Grifton from 2000 to 2010. However, there has been a much more significant increase in the number of renter-occupied housing units during that time period. Owner-occupied housing units declined as a percentage of the total housing stock from 2000 to 2010, but owner-occupied housing units still represent a majority of the housing stock in Grifton as of 2010. The increase in number of renter-occupied units may be partially explained by poor economic conditions which resulted from the Great Recession.

Table 3.3
Owner and Renter Occupied Housing Units, 2000 and 2010
Town of Grifton

Occupancy of Units	Units 2000	%	Units 2010	%
Owner	582	71.7	648	62.3
Renter	230	28.3	392	37.7
Total Occupied	812	100%	1,040	100%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census 2000, SF 1, Table DP-1. Census 2010, Summary File 1, Table DP-1.

Table 3.4 shows housing unit occupancies (persons per unit or average household size) by tenure. Household size is important because it is a statistic that can be used to project the future household population. As is typical of most places, in Grifton owner-occupied housing units had a higher average household size than renter-occupied housing units in 2010, but not in 2000. Interestingly, the average household size of renter-occupied housing units in Grifton has decreased from 2000 to 2010, while the average household size of owner-occupied housing units increased during the same time period.

Table 3.4
Average Household Size by Tenure, 2000 and 2010
Town of Grifton

Tenure	2000 Average Household Size	2010 Average Household Size
Persons Per Unit, Owner-Occupied Housing Units	2.46	2.54
Persons Per Unit, Renter-Occupied Housing Units	2.55	2.47
All Occupied Housing Units	2.49	2.51

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Census 2000, SF 1, Table H12. Census 2010, Summary File 1, Table DP-1.

Overcrowding is a measure of inadequate housing conditions. An overcrowded housing unit is one that has 1.01 or more persons per room. Severe overcrowding is considered to occur when units have 1.51 or more occupants per room.

Table 3.5 shows data on overcrowding for the town's housing stock in 2000. It shows data for both renter-occupied and owner-occupied housing units. A total of 27 housing units in Grifton were overcrowded in 2000, with renter-occupied units constituting the sizable majority.

Table 3.5
Overcrowded Housing Units by Tenure, 2000
Town of Grifton

Occupants Per Room	Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied	
	Units	%	Units	%
1.01 to 1.50 occupants per room (overcrowded)	4	66.7	10	47.6
1.51 or more occupants per room (severely overcrowded)	2	33.3	11	52.4
Total overcrowded or severely overcrowded	6	100	21	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, SF 3.

A review of data from the American Community Survey, 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates (Table S2501) reveals that only five housing units in Grifton were considered overcrowded, all of which were owner-occupied units. While the American Community Survey data are based on a sample only, then tend to suggest that housing overcrowding is not a serious issue in Grifton.

AGE OF HOUSING UNITS

Data on age of housing units are not published for the 2010 decennial census. Estimates of the age of housing are available from the American Community Survey. Table 3.6 provides estimates of the age ranges for housing units constructed for the town's housing stock in comparison with the housing stocks of the county and state as a whole.



Residence on Queen Street

Table 3.6
Age of Housing Units, 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Grifton, Pitt County, and North Carolina
(Housing Units by Range of Years Structure Was Built)

Year Structure Built	Town of Grifton	%	Pitt County	%	North Carolina %
Built 2000 or later	114	8.6	20,574	27.8	19.4
Built 1990 to 1999	130	9.8	17,676	23.8	20.9
Built 1980 to 1989	31	2.3	10,772	14.5	16.8
Built 1970 to 1979	148	11.1	10,435	14.1	15.0
Built 1960 to 1969	398	29.9	6,069	8.2	10.0
Built 1950 to 1959	399	30.0	4,274	5.8	7.8
Built 1940 to 1949	70	5.3	1,508	2.0	4.1
Built 1939 or earlier	41	3.1	2,809	3.8	5.9
Total	1,331	100	74,117	100	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey 2007-2011 5-year Estimates, Table DP04.

Note again that the figures for Grifton over-represent the actual size of the housing stock in Grifton as of 2010, according to the decennial census. That fact reduces the reliability of the statistics in Table 3.6. However, the general comparative trend is still instructive; the town's housing stock is significantly older than that of the county or the state as a whole. Implications of an older housing stock include the need for greater maintenance and possibly the "filtering" of the housing stock over time from owner occupancy to renter occupancy.

VALUE AND COST BURDEN

The cost of housing in the community, both for owners and renters, is an important factor to consider in the community. Table 3.7 shows values of owner-occupied housing units in 2000 and a more recent estimate from the American Community Survey for the housing stock in Grifton, as well as a comparison percentage for the housing stock in North Carolina as a whole.

Table 3.7
Value of Specified Owner-Occupied Housing Units in 2000
and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Town of Grifton and North Carolina

Range of Value (\$)	2000		2007-2011 5-year Estimates		2007-2011 State %
	Units	%	Units	%	
Less than \$50,000	79	16.4	42	5.3	9.6
\$50,000 to \$99,999	283	58.7	346	44.0	18.5
\$100,000 to \$149,999	93	19.3	250	31.8	20.8
\$150,000 to \$199,999	20	4.1	113	14.4	17.3
\$200,000 to \$299,999	7	1.5	23	2.9	17.0
\$300,000 or more	0	0	13	1.7	16.8
Total	482	100%	787	100%	100%
Median (all owner occupied units) (\$)	80,000	--	100,900	--	152,700

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, SF 3, Tables H74 and Table H85. American Community Survey, Tables DP-4 and DP04.

Although the data in Table 3.7 are based on a sample only, the trends are revealing. For the 2007 to 2011 estimates, almost half of the housing units in Grifton were valued at less than \$100,000 whereas for the state's housing stock as a whole less than one-third were so valued. As of 2000, more than three-quarters of Grifton's housing stock were valued at less than \$100,000. At the upper end of the housing value spectrum, Grifton had only a very small percentage of homes valued at \$200,000 or more in the year 2000 and according as of the 2007 to 2011 estimates provided by the American Community Survey. The median value of owner-occupied housing units in Grifton is approximately 52% of the value of owner-occupied housing units in the state. These data may be considered positive in that housing is affordable in Grifton. On the other hand, the town's housing stock probably has relatively little appeal to upper-middle and upper-income households.

Table 3.8 shows gross rent data for renter-occupied housing units in 2000 and as of the 2007 to 2011 estimates reporting period. The number of renter-occupied homes in Table 3.8 is significantly higher than the number of renter-occupied housing units in Grifton as of 2010 (392) per the decennial census. Therefore, these data should be considered with some caution.

According to the data in Table 3.8, 49% of renters in the town pay less than \$500 in rent every month, whereas less than one-fifth of renters across the state have monthly rents for rental housing that low. The data in Table 3.8 are also somewhat suspect given the differences between the year-2000 and 2007 to 2011 estimates for Grifton. For instance, as of 2000 the town had no housing units renting for \$1,000 a month or more, and the American Community Survey estimates suggest that number has increased to 70 units as of the 2007 to 2011 reporting period (higher than the state percentage).

Table 3.8
Gross Rent, Specified Renter-Occupied Housing Units,
2000 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Town of Grifton and North Carolina

Gross Rent (\$)	2000 (Census)		2007-2011 5-year Estimates		2007- 2011 State
	Units	%	Units	%	%
Less than \$300	34	17.6	140	44.0	5.6
\$300 to \$499	70	36.3	18	5.7	11.3
\$500 to \$749	77	39.9	51	16.0	34.1
\$750 to \$999	12	6.2	39	12.3	28.1
\$1000 or more	0	0	70	22.0	20.9
Total Units With Cash Rent	193	100%	318	100%	100%
Median Gross Rent (\$)	466	--	503	--	744

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census, SF 3, Tables H62 and Table H63. American Community Survey, Table DP04.

HOUSING UNIT PROJECTIONS

Housing unit projections have been provided in Table 3.9 on the basis of the household projections indicated in Table 2.12 of this plan. These projections assume a 7 percent vacancy rate in housing units. These projections do not include or account for increases in group quarters housing occupancy as also forecasted in Table 2.12 of this comprehensive plan.

Table 3.9
Housing Unit Projections, 2010-2035
Town of Grifton

Town of Grifton	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Housing Units	1,130	1,166	1,220	1,273	1,327	1,380

Sources: 2010 data from U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census. Forecasts by East Carolina University, Urban and Regional Planning Program, January 2014.

ASSESSMENT

Types of Housing Units

Data analyzed in this chapter indicate the town's housing stock is predominantly comprised of detached, single-family dwellings. However, because the in-town areas of Grifton are served by sanitary sewer, there is an opportunity to provide a more diverse housing stock. In particular, due in part to the lingering effects of the economic recession, there is some trend nationally as well as locally toward higher percentages of households that are renters as opposed to owners. While renters can occupy detached, single-family residences, many of them prefer smaller units specifically designed for renters, such as apartments. The comprehensive plan, specifically the future land use plan, should accommodate this trend and provide for more opportunities for apartments and renter-occupied housing units. This admittedly goes against the trend of Grifton being a predominantly family-oriented town.

Senior-Friendly Housing

It will become more difficult for an increasing number of seniors to continue to reside (i.e., "age in place") in Grifton. A big reason for that is because presumably many seniors live in detached, single-family dwellings that require maintenance and which may be larger than needed to serve their purposes. Furthermore, older, existing homes in Grifton were generally not designed for older people who may have various disabilities and mobility limitations. And there are few if any facilities in town available for retirement living, personal care, and nursing care. In order to maintain its senior population, Grifton's housing stock needs to become more senior-friendly, with handicapped-accessible (e.g., no-step entrance) designs and other characteristics. This means that some houses need to be retrofit for senior living, more retirement housing needs to be constructed, and institutional living options will need to be promoted.

Age of Housing Units

While age in itself is not necessarily a negative, there are a whole host of issues that can surface with an older housing stock such as Grifton's. For instance houses built before 1978 may have included lead-based paint, which is a hazard to public health. Maintenance issues can become more costly and frequent with older homes. When older homes are not maintained, it can have negative repercussions for the stability of the neighborhood. Grifton may need to pay increasing attention over time to housing and neighborhood conditions given its comparatively older housing stock. There also may be accelerating pressure to demolish older, smaller, or obsolete housing units.

Manufactured Housing

Manufactured housing is an economically efficient method of providing affordable housing, and it is more prevalent in rural areas and small towns than cities. Manufactured housing “land lease communities,” more commonly referred to as trailer or mobile home parks, have helped to meet housing needs in rural areas and small towns for decades. However, manufactured housing, if not properly placed and sited, can conflict with established neighborhood development patterns. Nonetheless, municipalities in North Carolina cannot adopt regulations which have the effect of excluding manufactured homes from the entire zoning jurisdiction, yet they can adopt and enforce appearance and dimensional criteria for manufactured homes to protect property values and preserve character of neighborhoods (NC General Statutes 160A-383.1). The Grifton zoning ordinance already governs the placement of manufactured homes in the town and the development standards they must follow.

Healthy Homes

Because homes are where people spend most of their time, they have a greater potential to impact human health if unhealthy conditions exist. Homes with moderate or severe physical problems place residents at increased risk for fire, electrical injuries, falls, rodent bites, and other illnesses or injuries. Lead from paint, including lead-contaminated dust, is one of the most common causes of lead poisoning, and homes built before 1978 have a greater likelihood of having lead-based paint. A healthy home is free of moisture and leaks, adequately ventilated, free of exposure to contaminants (lead, radon, formaldehyde, etc.), free of pests, clean, well maintained, and safe and free of injury hazards. Cities are authorized to create an inspections department (NC Gen. Stat. § 160A-411) to enforce state and local laws relative to buildings, structures, systems, and building maintenance to ensure safe and healthful conditions (NC Gen. Stat. § 160A-412). Cities and towns may adopt ordinances that provide standards for determining the fitness of dwellings for human habitation (NC Gen. Stat. § 160A-444). The town’s elected officials should be cognizant of these potential threats to the basic health of residents and monitor housing conditions generally over time to ensure proper health standards are met.

CHAPTER 4 LABOR FORCE AND ECONOMY

This chapter provides an investigation of the town's labor force, economic base, and general economic trends. Relevant information for Pitt County is also provided where appropriate. The intent of this chapter is to provide background data necessary to determine needs and establish economic development strategies for the town.

LABOR FORCE

Table 4.1 shows the number of Grifton residents participating in the labor force in 2000 and estimates for the 2007 to 2011 reporting period. The total number of persons ages 16 years and over in the 2007-2011 five-year estimates (shown in Table 4.1) is higher than the 2010 decennial census count for persons ages 16 years and over. The figures show that labor force participation has remained relatively stable from 2000 to present estimates. As the population ages over time in Grifton, the labor force participation rate will likely decrease some.

Table 4.1
Labor Force Participation, 2000, and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Persons 16 Years and Over
Town of Grifton

Labor Force Status	2000		2007-2011 5-year Estimates	
	Persons 16 Years and Over	% Total 16 Years and Over	Persons 16 Years and Over	% Total 16 Years and Over
In Labor Force	916	55.9	1,233	56.8
Not in Labor Force	722	44.1	936	43.2
Total 16+ Years	1,638	100	2,169	100

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau. Census 2000, Summary File 3, Table P43. American Community Survey, 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates, Table B23001.

Table 4.2 shows the labor force in Pitt County and Lenoir County for selected years.

Table 4.2
Labor Force, Pitt and Lenoir Counties, Selected Years

	2000	2003	2006	2009	2012
Pitt County Labor Force	72,298	72,983	76,671	79,975	89,351
Lenoir County Labor Force	30,302	29,822	27,576	28,305	29,121

Source: State Agency Data, Department of Commerce. From LINC site.

Pitt County's labor force has continued to increase during the past decade. On the other hand, Lenoir County's labor force declined from 2000 through 2006, then increased thereafter. Lenoir County's labor force in 2012 is smaller than it was in 2000. The probable implication of these data in Table 4.2 for Grifton is that area businesses may be more likely to draw their labor from Pitt County rather than Lenoir County in the future.

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Table 4.3 shows employment and unemployment for Grifton's residents in 2000 and for the 2007 to 2011 reporting period. The increase in unemployment from 2007 to the current estimate is not surprising, given the impact of the Great Recession on the availability of jobs.

Table 4.3
Employment Status of the Labor Force, 2000 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Persons 16 Years and Over
Town of Grifton

Labor Force Status	2000	%	2007-2011 5-year Estimates	%
Employed	855	93.8	1,123	91.1
Unemployed	57	6.3	110	8.9
Total 16+ Years	912	100	1,233	100

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau. Census 2000. Summary File 3, Table P43. American Community Survey, 2007 -2011 5-Year Estimates, Table

Table 4.4 shows unemployment rates for selected years in Pitt and Lenoir Counties as a basis of comparison. Unemployment was highest in 2009 and has since decreased significantly in both counties. Unemployment rates are generally higher in Lenoir than in Pitt County.

Table 4.4
Unemployment Rates, Selected Years
Pitt and Lenoir Counties

	2000	2003	2006	2009	2012
Pitt County Unemployment Rate	4.5%	6.7%	5.3%	10.3%	9.3%
Lenoir County Unemployment Rate	5.5%	6.8%	5.7%	11.4%	10.0%

Source: State Agency Data, Department of Commerce. From LINC site.

PLACE OF WORK

Table 4.5 shows the place of work of Grifton's working residents in 2000 and for the 2007 to 2011 reporting period. A relatively small percentage (13-14%) of the town's resident labor force works in Grifton. The vast majority of Grifton's labor force participants work in

their county of residence; for most of Grifton's residents, this means they work in Pitt County, although for residents of the Lenoir County portion of Grifton it means they work in Lenoir County. The data in Table 4.5 indicate that Grifton is more of a bedroom community than an employment center, and that most town residents expect to commute outside the town for work.

Table 4.5
Place of Work of Town Residents
Persons 16 Years and Over
2000 and 2007-2011 5-year Estimates

Place of Work	2000		2007-2011 5-year Estimates	
	Number of Residents Working	% of Total	Number of Residents Working	% of Total
Worked in place of residence	132	13.6	182	14.2
Worked in County, not in Town	565	58.2	900	70.3
Worked Outside County of Residence	268	27.6	186	14.5
Worked Outside State	6	0.6	13	1.0
Total	971	100	1,281	100

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census. Summary File 3. Tables P26, P27, and P28. American Community Survey, 2007 - 2011 5-Year Estimates, Tables B08007 and B08008.

OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY COMPARISONS

Table 4.6 provides employment by occupation for Grifton as of the 2007 to 2011 reporting period. Percentages for the town, county, state and U.S. are also provided for comparative purposes. The most significant finding is that Grifton residents work disproportionately in production, transportation, and material moving occupations when compared with Pitt County, the state, and the nation. An estimated 28.7% of the town's labor force was employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations, whereas the proportion in the county, state, and nation is less than half of that of Grifton's labor force.

Another significant finding is that Grifton residents are underrepresented in sales and office occupations when compared with Pitt County, the state, and the nation. Whereas sales and office occupations comprise almost ¼ of all occupations for Pitt County, the state, and the nation, Grifton's percentage of total labor force working in sales and office occupations is only about half that (12.7%). This may not be surprising, given that there are relatively few retail or wholesale trade establishments in and near Grifton.

The high percentage of the town's labor force employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations would tend to suggest that the town's labor force is mostly "blue collar." However, that is only part of the story; an estimated one-third of the town's

labor force is employed in managerial positions and related jobs. This means that a sizable segment of Grifton's labor force participants are "white collar."

Table 4.6
Comparison of Employment by Occupation, 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over
Town of Grifton, Pitt County, North Carolina, and the United States

Occupation	Town of Grifton	Town of Grifton %	Pitt County %	North Carolina %	U.S. %
Managerial professional, and related	378	33.7	37.7	35.0	35.7
Service	187	16.7	18.5	16.7	17.5
Sales and office	143	12.7	23.4	24.2	25.1
Construction, extraction, and maintenance	98	8.7	8.8	10.5	9.5
Production, transportation, and material moving	317	28.2	11.6	13.7	12.2
Total	1,123	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates DP03.

Table 4.7 provides data on the industries in which Grifton's working residents are employed, along with percentages that enable a comparison with Pitt County, the state, and the nation as a whole. The majority of Grifton's resident labor force works in educational, health and social services (31.2%) and manufacturing (24.2%). The number of town residents working in the educational, health and social services industry is similar to that of Pitt County but higher than that of the state and nation as a whole. This is most likely explained by the fact that Vidant Medical, East Carolina University, Pitt County Community College, and Pitt County Schools are major employers in Pitt County; similarly, medical and educational employers in Lenoir County are very significant. By and large, educational and health and social services are considered growing industries, so the high percentage of Grifton residents employed in that industry is not any cause for concern.

However, the comparatively higher percentage of town residents employed in manufacturing may be of concern. Manufacturing has been a declining sector in terms of employment, locally, statewide, and nationally, although there have been some more recent increases in manufacturing employment. The implication is that, if manufacturing jobs continue to decrease as has been the historic trend, Grifton residents may be affected more substantially than other communities.

Other industry employment trends are also worth noting. Grifton has a substantially higher percentage of residents working in wholesale trade when compared with the county, state, and nation. Retail trade, on the other hand, is underrepresented with regard

to industries employing Grifton residents. That may not be surprising given the lack of retail trade establishments in the Grifton area.

Table 4.7
Comparison of Employment by Industry, 2007-2011 5-year Estimates
Employed Civilian Population 16 Years and Over
Town of Grifton, Pitt County, North Carolina, and the United States

Industry	Town	Town %	County %	State %	U.S. %
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	39	3.5	1.2	1.5	1.9
Construction	78	6.9	6.4	7.7	6.8
Manufacturing	272	24.2	10.1	13.1	10.8
Wholesale trade	81	7.2	2.8	2.9	2.9
Retail trade	64	5.7	11.4	11.6	11.5
Transportation and warehousing and utilities	29	2.6	2.9	4.4	5.1
Information	0	0	1.6	1.9	2.3
Finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing	34	3.0	4.8	6.5	6.9
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	98	8.7	6.2	9.5	10.5
Educational, health and social services	350	31.2	32.8	22.9	22.5
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	44	3.9	11.0	8.7	9.0
Other services (except public administration)	12	1.1	4.6	4.8	4.9
Public administration	22	2.0	4.2	4.4	4.9
Total	1,123	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, American Community Survey 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates DP03.

AREA EMPLOYMENT

Table 4.8 provides employment by place of work for recent years in Pitt and Lenoir Counties. These data represent the total number of jobs within these counties. Pitt County's total employment has increased by more than 3,000 from 2006 to 2012 and seems to have recovered to about the same level existing before the Great Recession. Lenoir County's total employment decreased from 2006 to 2012, and employment as of 2012 in Lenoir County has apparently not rebounded to pre-recession levels. The low point for total employment for both Pitt and Lenoir Counties was the year 2010.

Table 4.8
Total Employment, Pitt and Lenoir Counties, 2006-2012
(Place of Work)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Pitt County	68,957	72,392	72,572	69,809	69,729	69,787	72,008
Lenoir County	28,087	28,280	27,396	25,682	25,360	26,349	27,486

Source: State Agency Data, Department of Commerce. From LINC site.

Table 4.9 provides a comparison of employment by industry in Pitt County for the years 2001 and 2011. These data inform planners and economic developers of industry employment trends that have implications for the town's labor force and economy.

Table 4.9
Employment by Industry, 2001 and 2011
By Place of Work in Pitt County

Industry(NAICS code)	2001	%	2011	%
Manufacturing (31-33)	9,169	20.1	4,870	10.0
Wholesale trade (42)	1,692	3.7	1,587	3.0
Retail trade (44-45)	8,161	17.9	9,108	19.0
Real estate & rental & leasing (53)	612	1.3	688	1.0
Professional, scientific, & technical (54)	2,085	4.6	1,785	4.0
Admin. & support & waste mgmt & remediation services (56)	3,850	8.0	3,315	7.0
Educational services (61)	494	1.1	759	2.0
Health care & social assistance (62)	10,729	23.5	15,283	32.0
Arts, entertainment, & recreation (71)	497	1.0	546	1.0
Accommodations & foodservices (72)	6,537	14.3	7,749	16.0
Other services (except public admin.) (81)	1,897	4.0	2,025	4.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, County Business Patterns, 2001 and 2011.

Of greatest significance is the massive increase in employment in the health-care and social assistance industry from 2001 to 2011 in Pitt County and the substantial decrease in the number of manufacturing jobs in Pitt County during the same time period. Health care and social assistance employment represented almost one-third (32.0%) of the total employment reported in County Business Patterns for Pitt County in 2011. Manufacturing jobs in Pitt County as of 2011 have decreased to nearly half of total manufacturing employment in 2001. These data represent a major economic transformation in Pitt County away from manufacturing and toward health care.

In Pitt County, retail trade and accommodations and foodservices increased employment in Pitt County from 2001 to 2011 and also increased their shares of total employment. The number of wholesale trade employees in Pitt County declined during the last decade; that is

a significant finding in light of the prior observation that a significant share of Grifton's working residents were employed in wholesale trade industries.

Countywide trends in employment are useful for purposes of perspective on the area economy. However, they do not reveal much knowledge with regard to the Grifton area specifically. Data for employment at small levels of geography such as towns are not published. The U.S. Census Bureau does collect employment and establishment data by zip code. We can look to employment data for the Grifton zip code for more insights.

Table 4.10 provides total employment and the number of establishments by industry for 2006 and 2011 for the Grifton Zip Code (28530). The years were selected because 2011 is the most recent year available, and the year 2006 preceded the great recession. Hence, an impact of the great recession on the area's economy can be estimated by viewing the data in Table 4.10. Note that the Grifton Zip Code is much larger than the town limits. It includes lands well outside the town limits of Grifton in unincorporated Pitt County. It does not include the entire ETJ of Grifton, as it excludes some of the area closer to Ayden.

Table 4.10
Total Employment and Establishments by Industry, 2006 and 2011
Grifton Zip Code (28530)

Type of Establishment (except as shown)	2006	2011
Employment	779	707
Total Establishments	109	94
Forestry, fishing, hunting, and agriculture support	2	2
Utilities	0	1
Construction	32	26
Manufacturing	2	3
Wholesale Trade	4	2
Retail Trade	16	16
Transportation and warehousing	3	5
Information	2	1
Finance and insurance	3	2
Real estate and rental and leasing	2	2
Professional, scientific, and technical services	3	3
Management of companies and enterprises	1	1
Administrative and support and waste management and remediation	9	6
Educational services	1	1
Health care and social assistance	15	11
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	1	1
Accommodation and food services	5	3
Other services (except public administration)	8	8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Zip Code Business Patterns, 2006 and 2011 data.

The data in Table 4.10 show that the Grifton Zip Code's total employment decreased by 72, and total establishments decreased by 15, from 2006 to 2011. Several industries witnessed decreases in the total numbers of establishments: construction, accommodation and food services, finance and insurance, wholesale trade, health care and social assistance, information, and administrative and support and waste management and remediation. However, other industries remained stable and yet others increased in number of establishments: the retail trade, arts entertainment and recreation, management companies, real estate, professional scientific and technical services as well as forestry, fishing hunting and agriculture support industries stayed the same in zip code 28530 from 2006 to 2011. Other industries such as transportation and warehousing, as well as, utilities and manufacturing increased slightly in terms of total establishments during the time period. An increase in the number of establishments in a given industry does not necessarily imply an increase in employment, however.

WAGES

Table 4.11 shows annual average wages for jobs in Pitt County versus the state as a whole for several recent years. Although average wages in Pitt County have consistently remained below those of the state, wages in Pitt County are slowly catching up to average wages at the statewide level.

Table 4.11
Annual Average Wages, Pitt County and State, 2006-2012
(Place of Work)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Pitt County	\$32,812	\$34,008	\$35,100	\$36,036	\$36,972	\$38,064	\$39,357
North Carolina	\$37,440	\$38,896	\$39,728	\$39,832	\$41,132	\$42,120	\$43,115

Source: NC Department of Commerce, LINC data.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

The Pitt County portion of Grifton is served by the Mid-East Commission (Region Q), a multi-county planning and development agency in Washington, North Carolina. The Lenoir County portion of Grifton is served by the Eastern Carolina Council (Region P). Both regional agencies have prepared comprehensive economic development strategies for their regions. Both counties provide countywide economic development commissions with services and resources that may be made available to Grifton. Regional educational institutions such as Lenoir Community College, Pitt County Community College, and East Carolina University may serve as economic development resources for the town as well.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISIONING, PLANNING AND MARKETING

In 2009, the Town of Grifton prepared a Vision 2015 Economic Development Strategic Plan. The Town of Grifton followed up that effort with a marketing plan, prepared in 2010 by Greta Anita Lint, LLC, using funds from the Small Towns Economic Prosperity (STEP) Program of the North Carolina Rural Center. The stated goal of the marketing plan is to stimulate and expand the economic status of the Town of Grifton. The plan is also intended to identify and pursue strategies to increase awareness of the town, its services, its natural resources, and its people. Significant advantages of Grifton are noted in the marketing plan. Specific recommendations of the Vision 2015 Economic Development Strategic Plan (2009) and the 2010 marketing plan are incorporated into this chapter and the short-term work program of this comprehensive plan, as appropriate.

Contentnea Creek

Contentnea Creek is a huge potential resource and is already being used on a seasonal basis for adventure tours. The creek bisects Grifton and separates Pitt from Lenoir County. The town grew up along both banks, and the creek was a major transportation and commerce artery. Steamboats carried produce, fertilizer and farm supplies up and down the Neuse River/ Contentnea Creek twice weekly between New Bern and Grifton. The steamboat "Phillips" had a "wildcat whistle" which the captain pulled upon approaching Grifton, and the children raced to the boat landing to watch the excitement. Early names for Grifton reflect the influence the creek had: Peter's Ferry (1753), Blount's Ford (1764), and Bell's Ferry (1850).

Grifton Museum

The Grifton Historical Museum at the Civic Center presents the story of the past and present culture of an area within 100 miles of Grifton. The Grifton Museum is an important resource, though hours of operation are limited. Natural history exhibits at the museum include fossils that show that Grifton was once beneath the ocean. Cannonballs and other Civil War artifacts are from battles fought in the area.



Farm and home tools, clothing, and early photographs depict lifestyles. A display about DuPont's first polyester plant near Grifton shows that company's products and how DuPont's arrival had a major impact on Grifton's growth. The Indian Heritage Room has a wealth of information on prehistoric and Tuscarora Indians native to Grifton, and tells of New Bern's founder who was captured by Indians at Catechna which was in or near present-day Grifton. Museum outreach programs by volunteers include working with area schools, especially during Heritage Week in the spring, and tape recording interviews.

The Grifton Museum was originally built as a school for African American children and was later developed as a Museum of Area Culture for the Bicentennial project in 1976. The Town acquired the civic center/museum property under a federal Community Development Block Program grant in 1975. An art Room, a craft room and senior fellowship rooms, town utilities headquarters, storage space and two tennis courts are also part of the complex.

Indian Village

The Catechna Indian Village was constructed as a result of the North Carolina Rural Center's NC STEP grant. It showcases Grifton's rich Native American history, through the construction of a longhouse similar to that of the Tuscarora Tribe, which is said to have occupied the area before white settlers moved in. The Catechna Village is located across from the Grifton Museum and adjacent to Overlook Creekside Park and the North Carolina Wildlife boat ramp.

Shad Festival

The Grifton Shad Festival, which began in 1970, is one of the most time-honored and longest running festivals in North Carolina. It is the oldest festival in Pitt County and the second oldest in eastern North Carolina. The Town of Grifton has even been recognized by the NC State Legislator as the Official Shad Capital of North Carolina. The Shad Festival stands for fun and fellowship and working together toward a common goal. In 1974, graffiti appeared on the drawbridge over Contentnea Creek saying, "Eat Mo Shad." That has since become the slogan for the festival.



John Lawson Legacy Days

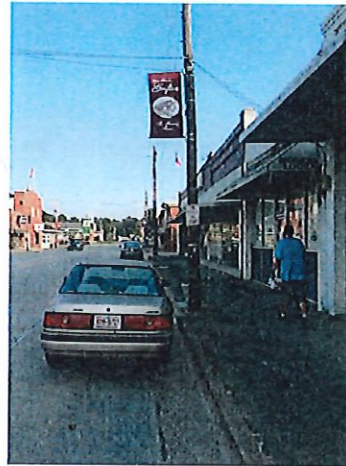
John Lawson Legacy Days is an event held in Grifton, on Contentnea Creek, celebrating the rich history of the region. It gets its name from John Lawson (1674-1711), a British explorer, writer, naturalist and surveyor who visited the area and was killed nearby in the village of Catechna by the Tuscarora Indians. Legacy Days celebrates the full range of area history, including the earliest Native Americans, European settlement, colonial times, the American Revolution and the Civil War. The event has included demonstrations and costume reenactments of many historical events.

ASSESSMENT

A big disadvantage cited in the marketing plan is that the downtown empties out in the evenings. According to the plan downtown "suffers from a lack of retail operations and showcases empty storefronts." The plan explains that businesses in downtown Grifton have

either closed or relocated due to a lack of downtown shoppers and high rents. Town residents typically work in Greenville or Kinston and tend to do their shopping in those larger municipalities. On the other hand, the marketing plan cites past efforts to improve the streetscape in downtown Grifton which has helped to improve the overall image.

In response to these identified needs, in 2010 the Town of Grifton prepared a Downtown Conceptual Master Plan. The purpose of this plan is to help guide growth by providing design recommendations and guidelines to create a consistent and unified feel and appearance.



Grifton's downtown