

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

#### **SOILS**

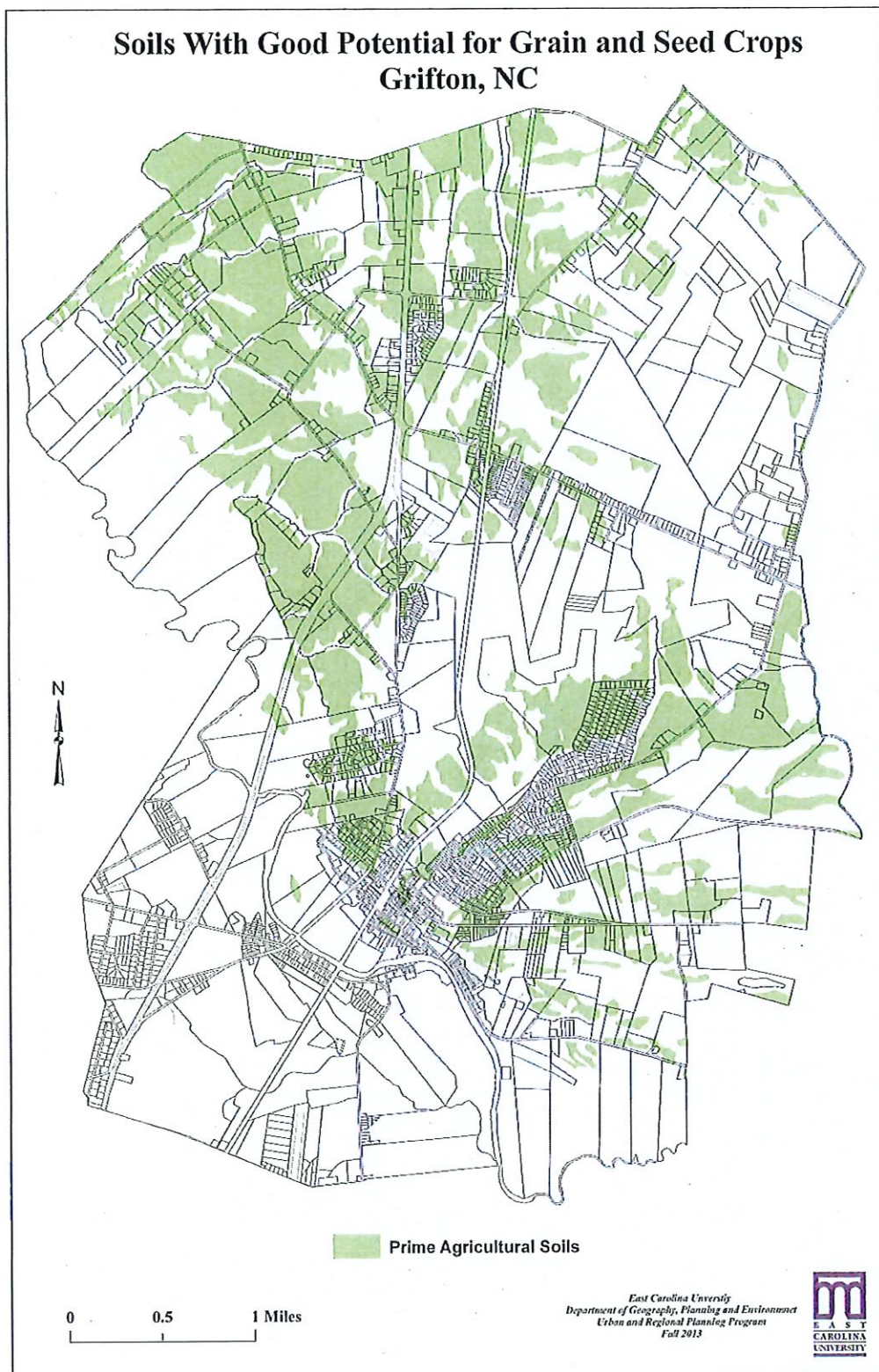
The most important information about soils from a planning perspective is prime agricultural land and septic tank suitability. It is important to know where prime agricultural land is to guide development. Top quality soil should be preserved for agricultural uses. Map 5.1 shows where prime agricultural land in Grifton and the Grifton ETJ in Pitt County are. Some soils have severe restrictions on septic tank absorption suitability. Knowing where these soils are can properly guide development into suitable areas. Map 5.2 shows where there are restrictions on septic tank suitability in Grifton and the Grifton ETJ in Pitt County are. The data for these maps was provided by the Pitt County Planning Department.

#### **NEUSE RIVER BASIN**

Grifton is located within the Neuse River Basin, which is the third largest river basin in North Carolina and is one of only four major river basins whose boundaries are located entirely within the state. It encompasses approximately 6,192 square miles. There are 3,443 miles of freshwater streams, 328,700 acres classified as salt waters, and thousands of acres of impoundments including Falls Lake Reservoir. The basin is subdivided into 14 sub basins (Source: 2004 Grifton Land Use Plan).

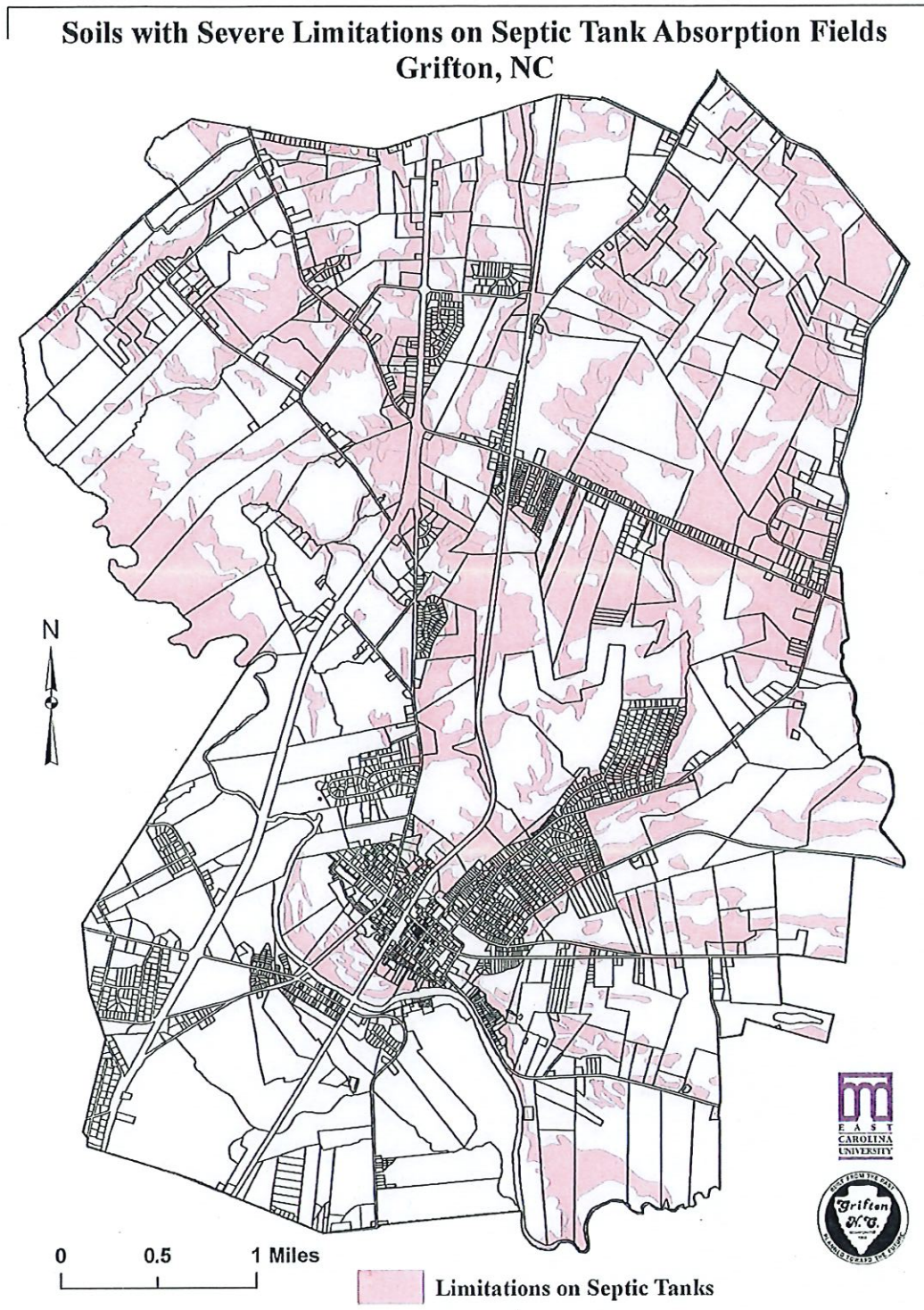
The Neuse River basin originates in north central North Carolina in Person and Orange Counties. The river's main stem once began at the confluence of the Flat and Eno Rivers; however, the first 22 miles of the main stem are impounded behind the Falls Lake Reservoir dam. Falls Lake is a large multi-use reservoir that was constructed by the US Army Corps of Engineers in the early 1980s. The dam is located about 10 miles northeast of Raleigh. Once past the dam, the Neuse flows about 185 miles southeasterly past the cities of Smithfield, Goldsboro and Kinston until it reaches tidal waters near Streets Ferry upstream of New Bern. Major tributaries of the Neuse include Crabtree Creek, Swift Creek, Little River (Wake/ Johnston/ Wayne Counties), Contentnea Creek, and the Trent River. At New Bern, the river broadens dramatically and changes from a free-flowing river to a tidal estuary that eventually flows into Pamlico Sound (Source: 2004 Grifton Land Use Plan).

Because Grifton is in the Neuse River Basin, draining to areas where nuisance growths of algae have been common, the waters were declared as "nutrient sensitive" and have a number of special conditions related to the 'NSW' (an overlay classification). First and foremost for Grifton, the discharge of nutrients from wastewater treatment systems had to be controlled such that the level of nitrogen is reduced by thirty percent of the average annual load that existed in 1991. This required the installation and maintenance of treatment units that would otherwise not be necessary.



**Map 5.1 Prime Agricultural Soils, Grifton Extraterritorial Jurisdiction**



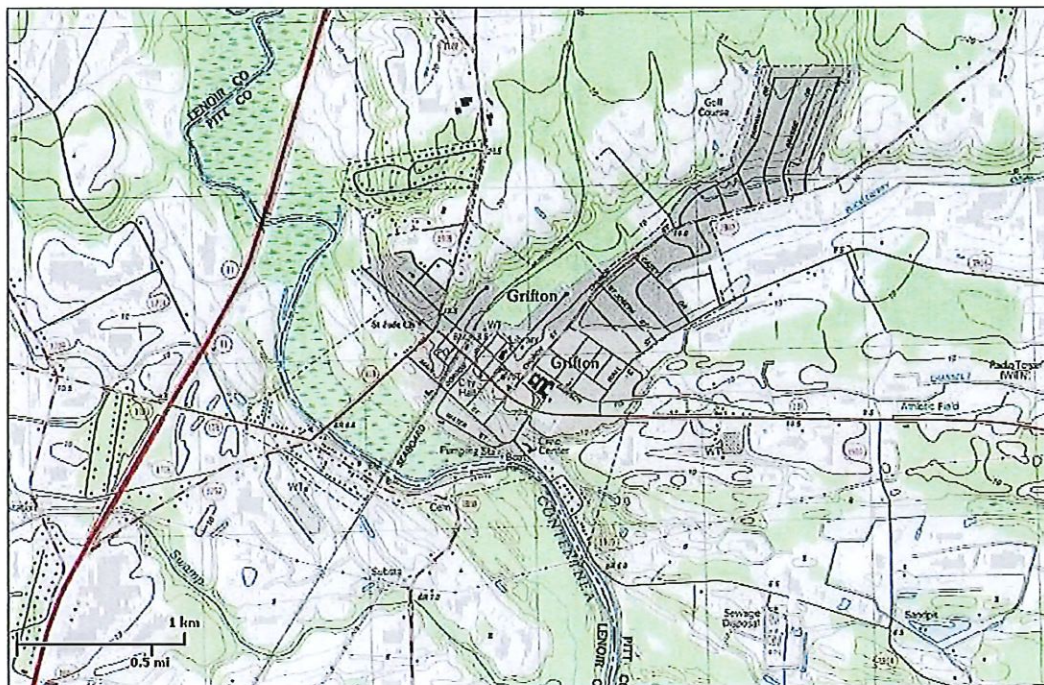


**Map 5.2 Soils with Severe Limitations on Septic Tanks**



In order to help achieve the appropriate reduction in non-point source contributions of nutrients, fifty-foot buffers are required along the riparian stream banks. The intent here is to preserve woody vegetation along streams to intercept surface and subsurface nitrogen that would otherwise directly enter the waters. Further non-point source control programs are specified to target forest practices, agriculture and storm water (Source: 2004 Grifton Land Use Plan).

Neither Grifton nor Pitt County has specific requirements for storm water control under the NSW provisions. Grifton and Pitt County are not required to do generic storm water controls under the Neuse NSW, but major portions of Pitt County are addressing storm water under the Tar-Pamlico NSW rules. These areas are well outside Grifton's immediate area of concern, but they are communities in Pitt County that are required to implement storm water controls to alleviate ongoing contributions of nutrients to similarly classified surface waters (Source: NC Division of Water Quality Stream Classification System and Contentnea Creek Designation near Grifton, as cited in 2004 Grifton Land Use Plan).



Map 5.3. Topography, Grifton Area



## **FLOOD PLAIN DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION**

The Town of Grifton is susceptible to flooding throughout the year. The major source of flooding for Grifton is Contentnea Creek, which drains into the Neuse River. During periods of constant, heavy rains, Contentnea Creek can overrun its banks and flood the surrounding areas within the flood plain. Flood waters can reach in excess of six feet in some areas. Mill Branch Creek and the Grifton Canal are two areas north of Contentnea Creek that are flood prone during and after periods of intense rain. South of Contentnea Creek, Eagle Swamp also is prone to flooding during and after heavy rain.



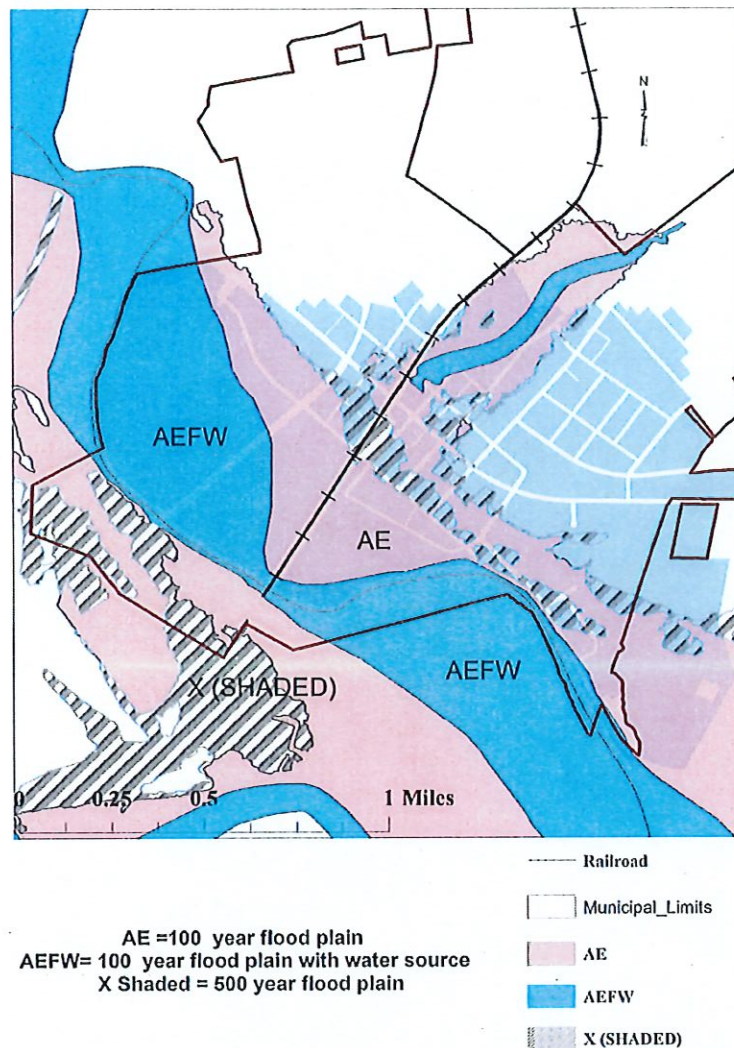
The smaller flood areas can still cause major damage to property, as well as be dangerous to walk or drive through. Water flowing even at a shallow depth can sweep a person off their feet and can even float a car.

Building of homes, apartments, and placement of manufactured homes near the Creek occurred before the Town adopted zoning, subdivision regulations, and floodplain regulations. (There are homes in the area between Queen and Main Streets that are over 100 years old.) Even in the past thirty years with regulatory tools in place, there have been manufactured homes, apartments, and some businesses located in the floodplain.

The potential for disaster was not fully realized or understood until there was significant flooding with Hurricane Floyd in 1999. Other than the required elevation of structures (mobile homes) and building pads (the Piggly Wiggly and Dollar General on Highland Boulevard and the former Bryant Apartments (since demolished following the flood), there were few flood mitigation techniques employed.

The devastation caused by Hurricane Floyd highlighted North Carolina's vulnerability to natural disasters and the need for accurate, up-to-date floodplain maps. In 2002 the State of North Carolina partnered with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to produce new floodplain maps for the State. This partnership designates North Carolina as a Cooperating Technical State and delegates the primary responsibility for the creation and maintenance of all FIRMs to the State of North Carolina. In 2004, updated Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) panels and a new Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Report became effective within the County (Pitt County Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2030, p. A-79).





**Map 5.4. Flood Prone Areas, Town of Grifton**

Grifton's revised floodplain ordinance requires the lowest acceptable elevation standard for new construction in the floodplain at 2 feet above base flood elevation. Some communities have added a safety factor and require development to have their lowest floor even higher. The higher the standard, the lower the cost of flood insurance and risk of damage or recovery costs if flooding exceeds the minimums. By imposing additional costs at the front end, some people will locate elsewhere, outside the floodplain where insurance is not required or structures elevated (Source: 2004 Grifton Land Use Plan).

#### HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING

The Town of Grifton participated in the 2010 Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan led by Pitt County. The plan considers and evaluates the potential impact of thirteen natural hazards that could occur in North Carolina. The plan includes mitigation strategies that the participating local governments can implement to reduce vulnerability to natural



hazards and to speed recovery and redevelopment following natural hazard events. This collaborative, multi-jurisdictional approach has resulted in a more comprehensive, countywide approach to hazard mitigation planning (Source: Pitt County 2030 Comprehensive Land Use Plan).

### **WILDLIFE HABITAT AND SPECIES**

The town of Grifton contains a variety of different vegetative communities based on topography, soils, hydrology, and disturbance. Terrestrial communities within the service area vary from undeveloped wooded areas to cultivated farm fields to disturbed lands. The numerous natural communities and disturbed habitats have been grouped into the following categories: bottomland hardwood forest, upland hardwood forest, pine forest, and disturbed land. The bottomland hardwood forest category is found predominantly on stream floodplains and may include some mesic low-slope woodland. The upland hardwood forest category includes mesic mixed hardwood forest and dry-mesic oak/hickory forest. Forests with greater than 50 percent of the canopy dominated by pines in either uplands or floodplains were designated as pine forest. Disturbed lands include lawns, agricultural fields, un-vegetated land, and infrequently mowed utility rights-of-way. These communities provide suitable habitat for numerous species of terrestrial species and vascular plants.

Good water quality in the Neuse River basin is critical to the survival of a large number of rare freshwater mussels. Eighteen species of rare freshwater mussels, plus one rare snail (panhandle pebble snail) are known from the Neuse River basin; and two species, the dwarf wedgemussel and Tar River spinymussel, are federally-listed as Endangered. The majority of the Neuse River basin mollusks, including the dwarf wedgemussel, inhabit small streams. Many of the larger rivers in the State, such as the main stem of the Neuse River, no longer support populations of rare mussels. Most populations of the rare mollusk species occur in the Piedmont and upper Coastal Plain, in rapidly developing areas (Source: Neuse River Basin Wide Water Quality Plan, 2002, as cited in the 2004 Grifton Land Use Plan).

Shad, an anadromous fish that lives most of its life in the saltwater ocean, spawn and hatch in fresh-water inland streams like Contentnea Creek. The shad is a member of the herring family. In the Grifton area, two types of shad are caught, the White (American) which averages three pounds, and the Hickory shad which ranges from one to two pounds. Both are bluish above, with silvery sides and a forked tail. "We normally catch about twenty Hickory shad to one White." (Source: George Sugg – Shads and Stripes Forever, 33rd Annual Grifton Shad Festival Booklet, as cited in the 2004 Grifton Land Use Plan). The stream classification for the waters of Contentnea Creek at Grifton is C Swamp, Nutrient Sensitive Waters. The classification system assesses each water resource to establish the best use of the waters and for each classification of use, adopt numerical and other standards sufficient to protect those uses (Source: NC Water.org).

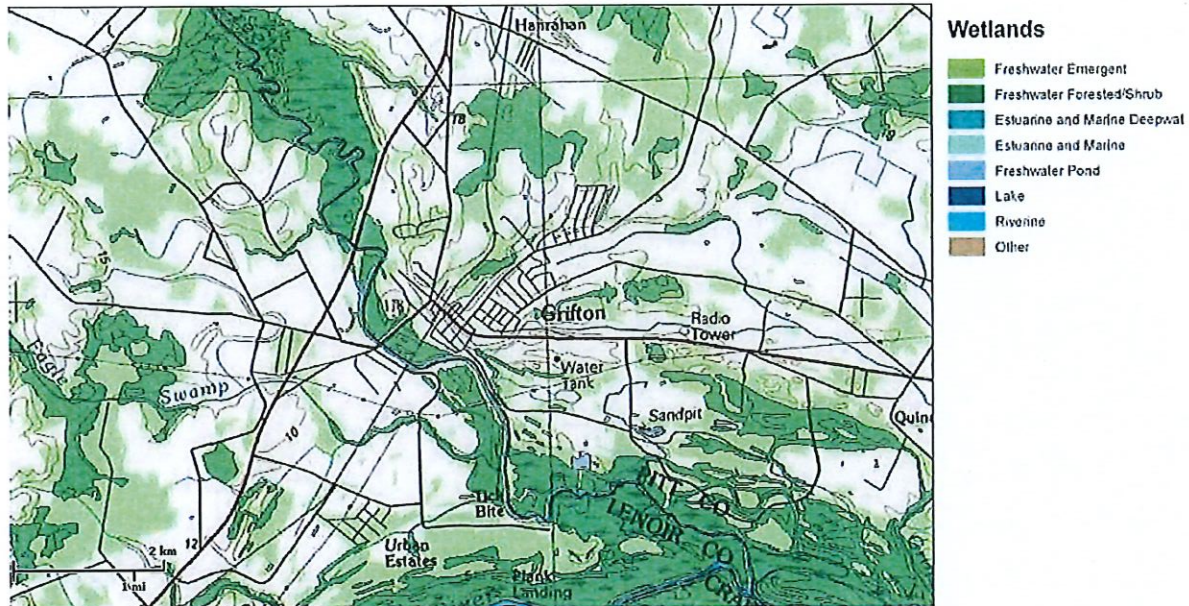
The North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation has identified a number of species of plants and animals and a number of natural communities of significance within Pitt County



(Pitt County Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2030, p. A-89). See Pitt County's comprehensive plan for a full listing.

## WETLANDS

Wetlands are abundant in the Grifton area, particularly along Contentnea Creek. The vast majority of wetlands in the area are freshwater forested/shrub. See Map 5.5.



Map 5.5. Wetlands, Grifton Area



## CHAPTER 6 LAND USE

Grifton's first land use plan was completed in 1977. Since then, Grifton has worked to encourage responsible growth patterns while protecting environmentally sensitive areas within the community. Until this comprehensive plan, land use in Grifton was guided by a land use plan adopted on March 9, 2004. This chapter of the Grifton Comprehensive Plan provides updated information about land use in the town and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), considering changes that have occurred during the last decade.

### EXISTING LAND USE

Grifton's town limits is approximately 1.97 square miles, but its extraterritorial jurisdiction covers more than 15 square miles, second in size only to Greenville's ETJ. An inventory of existing land use was completed by the Pitt County Planning and Development Department in 2003 as a part of the Grifton Land Use Plan. The data from that inventory are shown in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1**  
**Existing Land Use, Town of Grifton and Grifton ETJ, 2003**

Land Use	Grifton Town Limits		Grifton ETJ	
	Acreage	Percent	Acreage	Percent
Open Space/Farmland (undeveloped)	2,289	68.3%	8,998	78.2%
Residential, Single Family	648	19.3%	1,431	12.4%
Residential, Multi-Family	23	0.7%	12	0.1%
Manufactured Home Park	11	0.3%	76	0.7%
Public (government owned)	55	1.6%	29	0.3%
Institutional (churches, cemeteries)	17	0.5%	33	0.3%
Recreation (parks, playgrounds, etc.)	189	5.6%	167	1.5%
Commercial	91	2.7%	122	1.1%
Manufacturing	30	0.9%	641	5.6%
Total	3,353	100.0%	11,507	100.0%

Source: Grifton Land Use Plan 2004.

### Agriculture / Forestry

Not much land within the town limits is used for agriculture or forestry. However, a significant portion of Grifton's ETJ is farmland. Pressure to convert farmland may be more evident during the planning horizon.



## **Conservation / Open Space**

Contentnea Creek provides many of Grifton's recreational activities including fishing, kayaking, hunting, bird watching, and boating. It also holds historical significance and acts as a defining feature for the community. Contentnea Creek is, however, also a major source of flooding in Grifton. Several lands surrounding Contentnea Creek were acquired by the Town of Grifton after flood damage from Hurricane Floyd. Such areas are designated as conservation and open space so as to restrict new development while providing greater public access to Contentnea Creek. Parks and recreational areas in Grifton include St. David Street Park, Mattie's Minipark, Civic Center Tennis Court, Grifton Town Commons, Creekside Overlook Park, and RV and Trail Park.

## **Residential**

In Grifton, housing was originally developed on both sides of Contentnea Creek. Later residential development occurred along Queen Street and other areas outside floodplains. Older residential neighborhoods are characterized by a grid street pattern with small lot sizes in close proximity to schools and downtown businesses. Generally, newer residential areas have developed north of the original downtown area along Church and Highland Streets. Newer neighborhoods and subdivisions tend to be dominated by detached, single-family structures on larger lots fronting on curvilinear streets. Detached, single-family housing constitutes the vast majority of residential housing units in Grifton as well as the majority of residential acreage.

Manufactured homes, including individual manufactured homes and manufactured home parks, comprise about 10 to 15% of Grifton's housing units. Manufactured homes are more common in Grifton's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) than inside the town limits.

Multi-family residential land uses comprise approximately 10 to 15 percent of Grifton's total housing units. Grifton's apartment communities include Grifton Manor, Gray Hill, and River Walk Apartments. Hurricane Floyd destroyed several multi-family dwelling units in 1999. Multi-family housing is generally restricted to Grifton's town limits, because of the need for public water and sewer.

## **Public-Institutional**

Public-institutional institutional land uses include Grifton's fire station, police department, post office, and town hall. Public uses also include Grifton Elementary School. Private institutional uses include numerous churches as well as cemeteries and non-profit meeting halls in Grifton. Public-institutional land uses represent a small proportion of land uses in Grifton. More details on Grifton's community facilities and services are provided in the Chapter 7, Community Facilities and Services, of this comprehensive plan.



### **Downtown Commercial**

Grifton's downtown or central business district (CBD) is bounded by Main Street to the south, McCrae Street to the north, Highland Boulevard to the west, and Grifton Elementary School on Queen Street to the east. Like most other central business districts, Grifton's downtown is characterized by attached buildings with basically no setback from the sidewalk, on-street parking, off-street public parking to the rear of the buildings, and low speeds for pedestrian safety.



**View of Grifton's Downtown**

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. The Town of Grifton has maintained a strong presence downtown with town offices on Queen Street, as well as the police and fire departments on Highland Avenue.

### **Highway Commercial**

In the town's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), highway commercial development is located along NC Highway 11 between Littlefield Road and Hanrahan Road. Several small businesses are scattered throughout the planning area, including an auto sales lot on South Highland Boulevard and an air conditioning contractor on Saw Mill Road. Most highway commercial areas have buildings and site layouts catering to automobile traffic, including large setbacks for buildings from the highways and parking often in front of the building.

Highway commercial land use presents a number of issues. It can be considered an inefficient land use in the form of strip development. Development of new buildings often occurs without considerations for reoccupying existing buildings. Traffic conflicts and safety issues can exist at property entrances and exits. The parking lots facing the highway can be considered unattractive and monotonous. Developments often have limited landscaping, dumpsters in plain view of the highway, and signing that produces a cluttered appearance.

### **Industrial**

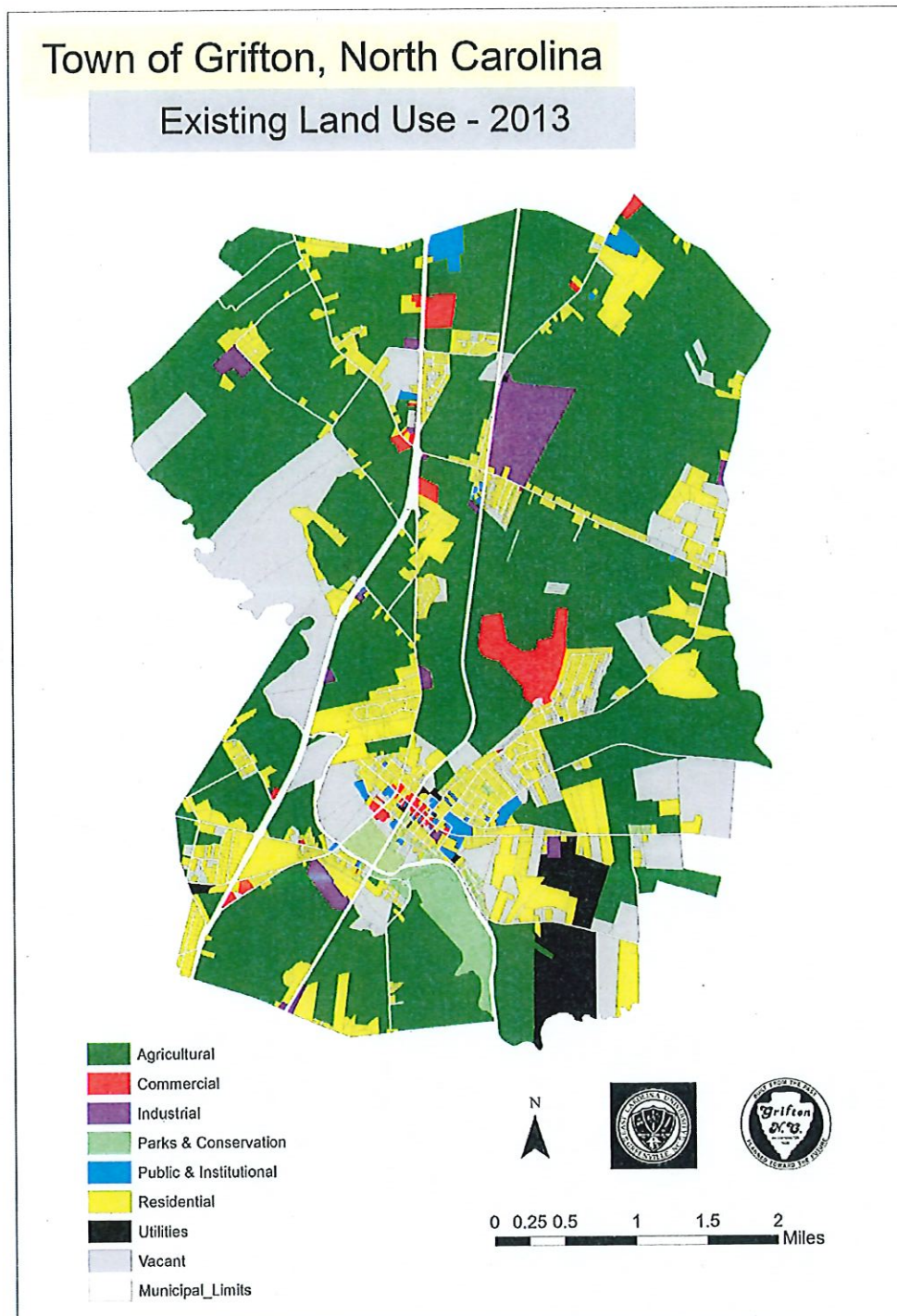
Most Industrial land uses are located outside Grifton's town limits in the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Generally, Grifton's industrial sites are generally large, with adequate parking for vehicles and trucks and access to the highway. Industrial land uses in Grifton include a storage warehouse south of Contentnea Creek on Highland Boulevard,



Weyerhaeuser Co. on Hanrahan Road adjacent to the railroad tracks, an auto salvage yard on Weyerhaeuser Road, and a cotton gin on Gaskins Road on the west side of Grifton.

An updated inventory of land use in the Town of Grifton was completed using information gathered from field reconnaissance and Pitt County's Online Parcel Information System (OPIS). The updated land use inventory used categories shown in Table 6.2.

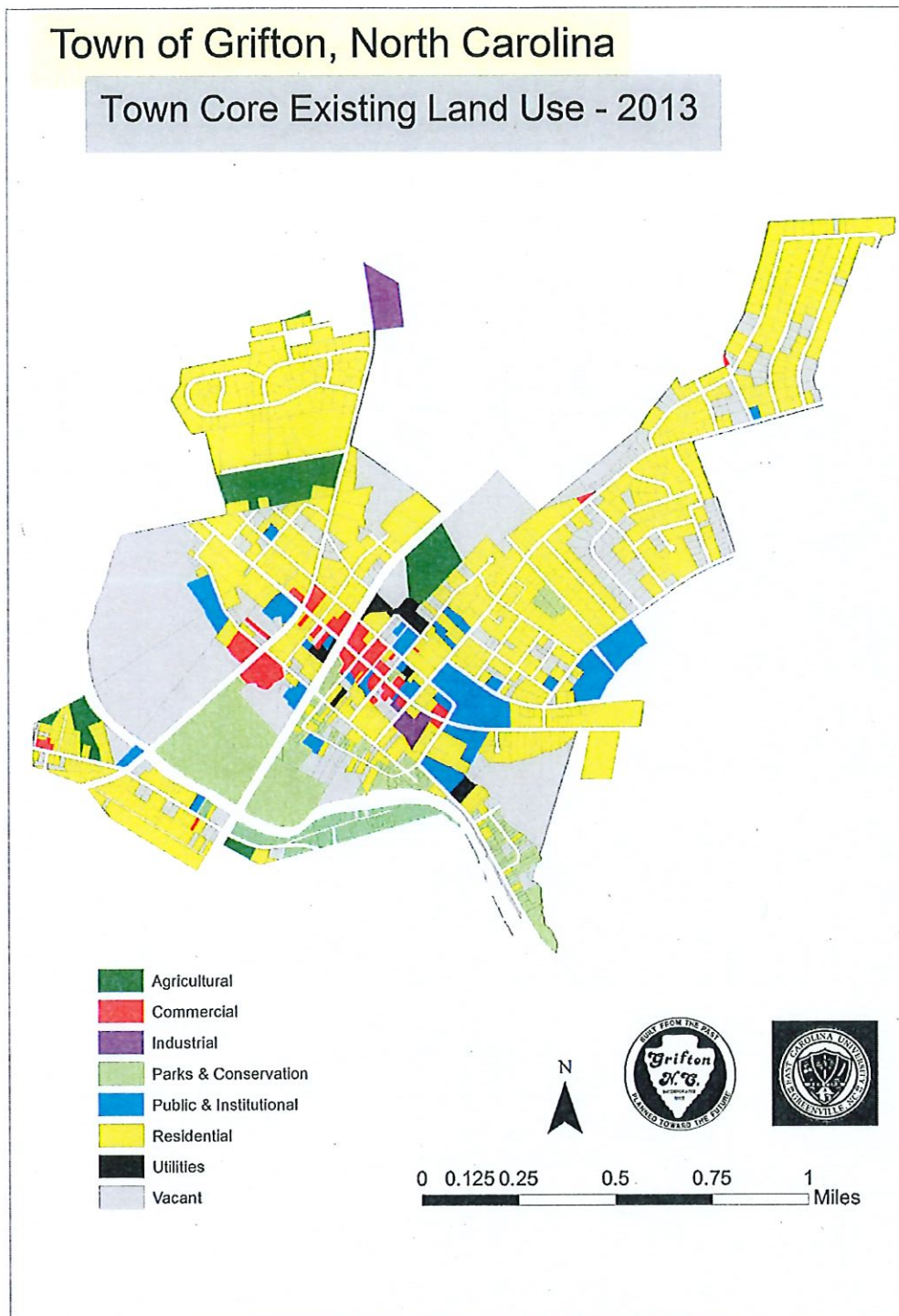




**Map 6.1**  
**Existing Land Use in 2013**  
**Grifton Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)**

Source: East Carolina University, Urban and Regional Planning Program, November 2013.





**Map 6.2**  
**Existing Land Use in 2013**  
**Grifton Town Core**

Source: East Carolina University, Urban and Regional Planning Program, November 2013.



**Table 6.2**  
**Land Use Category Descriptions**

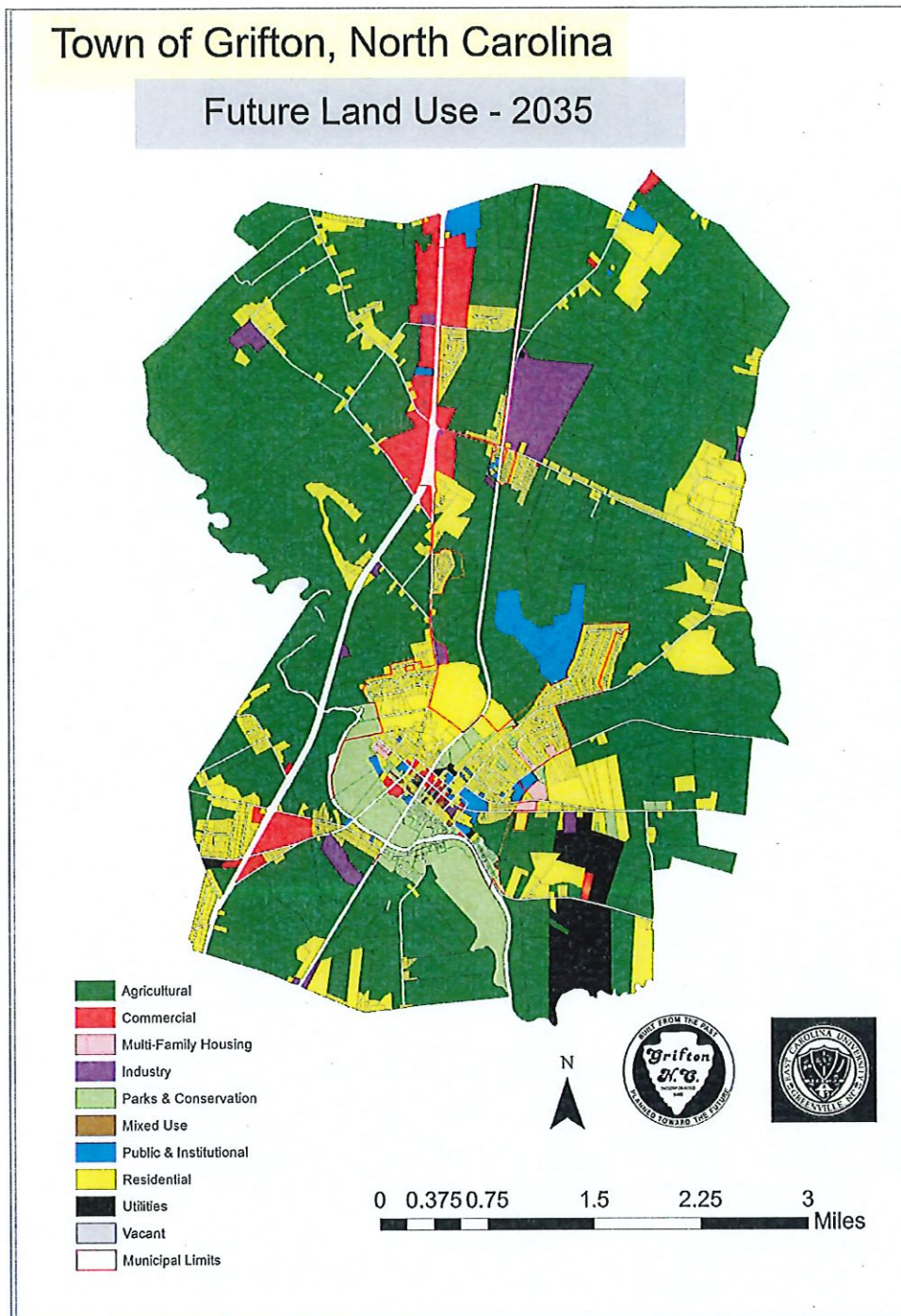
<b>Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
Conservation/ Open Space	Lands dedicated to both active and passive recreational uses. These lands may be either publicly or privately owned, and they may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, forest preserves, golf courses, recreation centers, or similar uses.
Agriculture/ Forestry	Farmland and forests, including the raising of livestock, cultivation of crops, and harvesting of timber. This category includes residential uses that primarily relate to the larger agricultural or forestry tract, but agricultural and forestry uses are intended to be protected from major subdivision tract development.
Residential	This category includes dwellings of all types and densities. This category is further divided into single-family (detached dwelling units on individual lots), multi-family (apartments and other attached dwelling units), and manufactured homes.
Public-Institutional	Federal, state, or local government uses, and a wide variety of institutional land uses. Government uses include county- and city- and town-owned facilities, fire stations, post offices, and schools. Private institutional uses include schools, colleges, churches, cemeteries, and private non-profit meeting halls, among others.
Communications/ Utilities	Water and sewer treatment plants, electric power substations, and major overhead and underground utility transmission lines, and cell towers.
Commercial	Non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, offices, services, and entertainment facilities. This category is further divided into a central business district (CBD) and highway commercial.
Industrial	Warehouses, wholesale trade facilities, research and development facilities, manufacturing operations, processing plants, factories, and mining or mineral extraction activities.
Vacant	Open field or wooded, no building or other development improvement exists.

## **FUTURE LAND USE**

The future land use plan will help guide decisions concerning the community's physical form and development pattern between now and 2035. Because developed land uses do not usually change much even over a 20-year time frame, the existing land use map was used as a starting point for future land use planning. However, the existing land use pattern requires adjustment for evolving or anticipated transitions from one land use to another, intentions for redevelopment of already developed lands, and to reflect the community's goals and overall vision. These adjustments are represented in a future land use map for 2035.

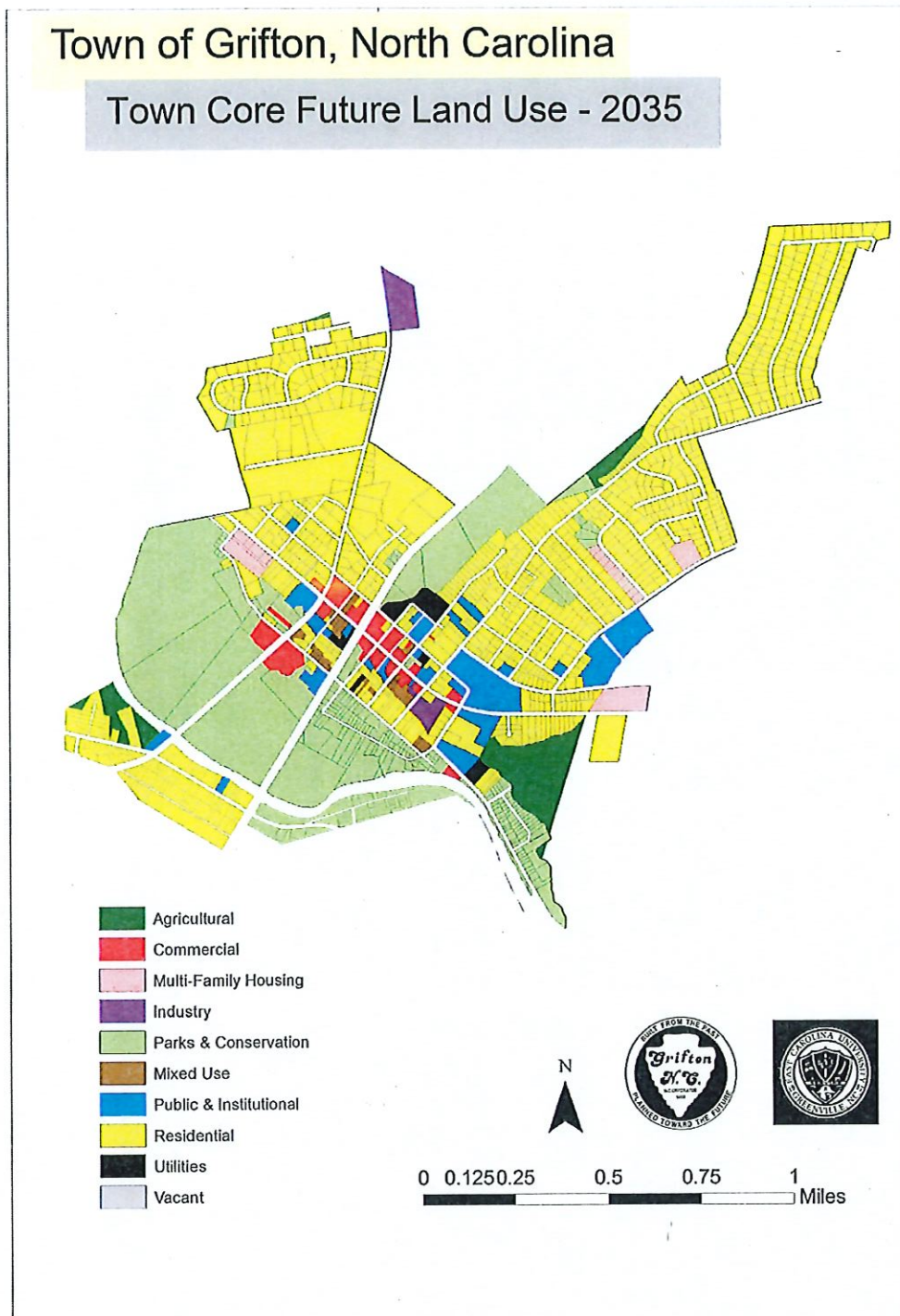
Map 6.3 shows the future land uses in Grifton and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) for 2035. Map 6.4 shows a closer view of future land uses in Grifton's town limits.





**Map 6.3**  
**Future Land Use - 2035**  
**Grifton Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)**

Source: East Carolina University, Urban and Regional Planning Program, November 2013.



**Map 6.4**  
**Future Land Use Plan 2035, Grifton Town Core**  
Source: East Carolina University, Urban and Regional Planning Program, November 2013.

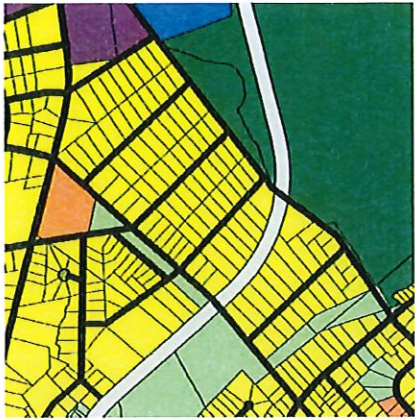


The future land use plan proposes new residential neighborhoods, extension of highway commercial development, and infill development in the central business district (CBD). It also calls for the redevelopment of an unused golf course into a retirement community.

### **Expansion of Grifton's Neighborhoods**

"Leapfrog development" should also be discouraged. Leapfrog development is a scattered land use pattern where land is developed considerable distances from existing land, "leaping" over existing vacant land. It often requires the inefficient extension of public facilities such as water and sewer, electricity, and fire and police coverage. In addition, encouraging residential development in close proximity to Grifton's central business district (CBD) will make walking a more desirable choice for residents. Residential development that occurs adjacent to existing residential land within Grifton's town limits will contribute to a more efficient urban form.

In terms of residential neighborhood design, well-connected streets are preferred over cul-de-sacs. Well-connected streets make walking and biking more convenient as destinations can be reached more directly. Mirroring the existing grid street pattern will help maintain the character of the town's historic form.



The accompanying figures highlight recommended neighborhood design shown on the future land use map. Residential development should occur within Grifton's town limits adjacent to existing neighborhoods, also to take advantage of existing infrastructure such as water and sewer lines. Residential development should not necessarily be encouraged in the ETJ before developing available residential lands inside the town limits. Doing so will prevent the unnecessary conversion of prime agricultural land to residential uses.



**Suggested Future Residential Subdivisions**

### **Expansion of Highway Business**

Figure 6.4 shows an expansion of highway business commercial development on Highway 11 between the border of the Ayden extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) at Ayden-Grifton High School and its intersection with Highland Avenue. Land along this segment will become more attractive for commercial development with the addition of the planned Southwest Bypass. Compared to other areas along Highway 11, this segment is more ideal for development because of existing water and sewer infrastructure and its considerable distance from flood prone areas around Contentnea Creek. This segment is already within Grifton's town limits, where future development will contribute to Grifton's tax base. This



segment of Highway 11 has the additional traffic capacity to support further commercial development.

Development on Highway 11 should not challenge potential development in Grifton's central business district. Highway locations may be reserved for big box retailers and automobile-oriented development. Other commercial uses should be developed in Grifton's central business district (CBD) through infill development and the reoccupation of existing buildings. Allocating additional land to the central business district is not considered necessarily since there is potential for infill and intensification of the existing area. Commercial development centered on the Contentnea Creek may become viable as recreational opportunities expand.



**Future Highway Business Expansion, 2035**

### **Golf Course Redevelopment**

Senior communities are developments for individuals at, or close to, retirement age that provide open spaces, services, and affordable residences. Grifton has an excellent opportunity for a senior community. A former golf course with close proximity to neighborhoods and proposed greenways is in need of new development. The future land use plan calls for redeveloping the golf course into a senior community. Conversion of the golf course to a community for seniors would allow Grifton's seniors to stay in town but in a more supportive environment. Seniors are a valuable asset to any community and deserve a chance to contribute through their talents, knowledge, and personal involvement. Appropriate accommodations for seniors are important when considering the rapid expansion of the elderly population in Grifton. Population data in Chapter 2 support this pursuit.

## **IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS**

The future land use plan map is not just a desirable future, it is something that realistically can be attained, and should be attained. But to implement the future land use plan, the locality must have land use regulations (in particular, zoning and subdivision and land development regulations). Without land use controls, a land use plan is merely a depiction of a desirable future state that is unlikely to be attained. Grifton has the necessary zoning and other land use regulations to implement the future land use plan. However, they may need to be modified to reflect the future land use plan map and policies of this comprehensive plan.



## **CHAPTER 7**

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

#### **PUBLIC SAFETY**

##### **Police**

The Grifton Police Department provides patrol service to the Grifton Town limits. Police protection in unincorporated areas of Grifton is provided by the Pitt and Lenoir County Sherriff's Offices. The police department aims to enhance the quality of life for the citizens of Grifton by making safety a priority through the reduction of crime and increasing roadway safety. The police department is able to accomplish these goals with a full-time staff of six officers and access to six patrol cars. The department response times for emergency calls are between four and five minutes. The department has an appropriate officer to citizen ratio and the necessary vehicles to facilitate these responses.

##### **Fire Services**

The Grifton Rural Community Fire Association is a volunteer fire department providing fire protection and emergency response services to the Grifton town limits as well nearby unincorporated areas of Pitt and Lenoir Counties. The department is located at 6881 S. Highland Blvd, close to downtown between Queen and Main streets. The department is a county funded, non-profit organization, providing services on a contractual basis. In 1997, the department succeeded in its request to implement a fire district tax, securing the necessary funds to better meet the community's needs. In addition to the funding the department receives from the county and tax revenue, community support in the form of donations and fundraisers help fund the department while keeping tax rates to a minimum. A testament to the support and commitment of the community can be seen in day-to-day operations of the department through the volunteers who staff it.

Grifton's fire department is well equipped to serve the needs of its district. The department is staffed with 47 volunteer personnel and has seven vehicles to respond to emergency calls, as well as access to equipment designed to serve the community's unique needs. The department purchased and modified a pick-up truck to address off-road needs such as brush and forest fires and obtained a boat that is used for rescues along the river. The department is the only volunteer station to have access to a Thermal Imaging Camera, allowing firefighters to see through smoke and identify a person by body temperature. The department's large volunteer staff and ample equipment allow the community adequate fire and emergency protection. The department responds to about 150 emergency calls yearly and averages response times between 6 to 8 minutes, well below the national average response time of 11 minutes and on par with county average response times.

## Emergency Medical Services

The Grifton Rescue Squad is a non-profit, county-funded paramedic agency operating with a team of certified paramedics. The rescue squad serves the Town of Grifton in both Pitt and Lenoir Counties. The rescue squad is located at 514 Queen Street in downtown Grifton. The rescue squad is staffed with 18 certified paramedics and equipped with 2 emergency vehicles. The most recent data provided by the Pitt County Government website indicates that in 2011, the squad responded to almost 1,700 emergency calls with an average response time of 8 minutes. The rescue squad is adequately staffed and equipped to serve the Town of Grifton. Although response times are consistent with those both statewide and nationally, transport times to the Vidant Medical Center in Greenville are of some concern. The average transport time is expected to dramatically improve with the construction of the NC 11/264 Greenville Southwest bypass. The new bypass will begin a few miles north of Grifton and facilitate traffic flow close to the medical center in Greenville. Construction on the bypass is expected to start as early as June 2014 (see Map 8.1 in the following chapter).

## HEALTH AND EDUCATION

### Health Care

The Town of Grifton benefits from its close proximity to quality health care. The town is just nine miles away from Lenoir Memorial Hospital and 16 miles from Vidant Health Center, a regional resource for all levels of health services. In addition to the town's close proximity to two hospitals, Grifton is further served by a primary care office, Physicians East. Physicians East provides Grifton with experienced doctors and quality health care for basic, non-emergency visits.

**Table 7.1**  
**Pitt County Health Personnel and Facilities in Comparison with State, 2010**

	Pitt County, NC		State of North Carolina	
	2010	Per 1,000 Population	2010	Per 1,000 Population
Population	168,148	-	9,535,483	-
Active Primary Care Physicians	298	1.8	9,017	0.95
Midlevel Practitioners	259	1.5	7,331	0.77
Registered Nurses	3,379	20.6	93,133	9.77
Active Dentists	64	0.4	4,178	0.44
Beds in General Hospitals	734	4.4	20,699	2.17
Nursing Facility Beds	570	3.4	45,143	4.73
Blind & Visually Impaired Persons	406	2.4	20,971	2.2

Source: University of North Carolina, via LINC, accessed October 27, 2013. Ratios calculated by author.



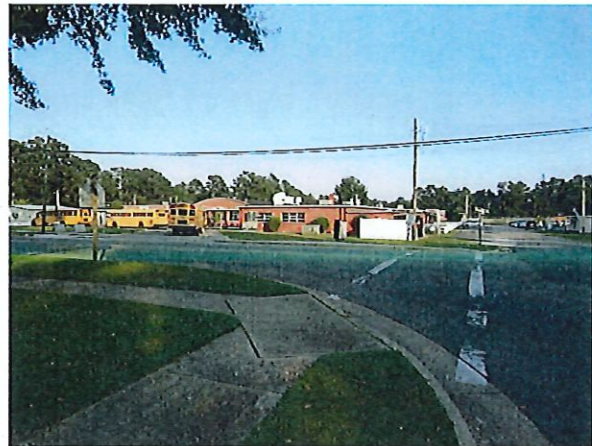
Table 7.1 shows medical personnel and medical facilities in Pitt County in 2010. One can thus compare the county's rates per 1,000 population with those of the state of North Carolina as a whole. As the data in Table 7.1 indicate, Pitt County has many primary care physicians and registered nurses and a low level of dentists when compared to the state as a whole.

Grifton is also home to an assisted living facility. The Dixon House provides assisted living for those who need are not able to live completely independently. With a growing senior population, an assisted living facility is an asset to the community.

### **Schools**

Pitt County Public Schools have operated as a countywide consolidated system since July 1986. In fall 2010, total public school enrollment was approaching 23,000 students. Pitt County currently has 36 public school campuses. The Town of Grifton benefits from a wide range of good quality schools and education opportunities both in the town limits and in neighboring communities. The public schools are adequate and capable of supporting any increase in population. The Town of Grifton has one school within its limits but is served by many others in both Pitt and Lenoir Counties.

The school district includes Ayden-Grifton High School and Grifton Elementary school, and a private school is located nearby in Kinston. Higher education opportunities are available in the neighboring communities of Kinston, Winterville and Greenville. The Ayden-Grifton High school serves students grades 9-12, with a student body of about 700. The school enjoys small class room sizes and stable enrollment trends. The Grifton Elementary school serves students from Pre-K to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Like Ayden-Grifton high school, the elementary school has small class room sizes and stable enrollment trends.



**Grifton Elementary School**

Higher education is provided by two community colleges and a four-year university. Lenoir Community College in Kinston and Pitt Community College in Winterville provide residents of Grifton the opportunity to pursue a number of associate degrees, as well as several certifications and diplomas. East Carolina University offers a variety of bachelor's, master's and doctorate programs and is located in the neighboring city of Greenville.



## **Library**

The Grifton Public Library is a town-sponsored facility that provides library collection materials for all age groups and cultures. The library offers at least 1,000 books, carries three local newspapers and many popular magazines, and new books are continually added to the library's collection in order to keep up with the community's needs. Audio books and VHS movies are also provided. The Grifton Public Library is continuously increasing its supply of books and other materials in order to meet the service needs of the Town of Grifton. Computers with internet access are provided to ensure internet access for everyone in the community. The library also provides summer reading programs for school-age children to encourage reading and learning during the summer months.

## **UTILITIES**

### **Electricity**

Grifton has a utility franchise agreement with Duke Progress Energy for the town's electrical service.

### **Water**

Neuse Regional Water and Sewer Authority (NRWASA) is an organization that was formed in 2000 by five Cretaceous Aquifer-dependent water systems in Lenoir County, including the City of Kinston, Deep Run Water Corporation, North Lenoir Water Corporation, and the Towns of Pink Hill and La Grange. The organization commissioned a regional water supply study to determine the best means of meeting future water supply shortages. The recommended solution was to utilize surface water withdrawn from the Neuse River near the City of Kinston. A state-of-the-art water treatment plant has been constructed that produces up to 15 mgd, and the remainder of the participants' needs are met by utilizing individual groundwater well systems. Several water providers in Pitt County including Bell Arthur Water Corporation, Eastern Pines Water Corporation, and the Towns of Ayden and Grifton have joined as members of NRWASA to meet their future water supply demands (Pitt County Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2030, p. A-72).

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.

### **Sewer**

The wastewater collection system in Grifton is operated and maintained by the town. The system consists of approximately 20 linear miles of gravity sewer lines, 6.4 linear miles of force mains, 10 duplex and 6 simplex pump stations, and all associated piping, valves, and appurtenances necessary to operate a wastewater collection system. Maps of the sewer



system are kept updated by the town's consulting engineers. The waste water collected is pumped to the Contentnea Metropolitan Sewage District (CMSD) treatment plant. The CMSD is jointly owned and operated by the towns of Grifton, Ayden, and Winterville. Water treated by the CMSD is released into Contentnea Creek. The treatment plant has a capacity of 2.85 million gallons per day (mgd) and operates well under that capacity, with an average flow of 1.45 mgd.

In the last five years, Grifton has carefully studied and monitored the collection system in an effort to reduce storm water inflow and ground water infiltration into the system. In 2013, the Town planned for the replacement of approximately 6,300 linear feet of gravity sewer line, rehabilitation of approximately 6,600 linear feet of gravity sewer line, replacement of 54 manholes and 164 4-inch service laterals, and rehabilitation of the three largest sewer pumping stations. The gravity sewer lines are cleaned and inspected at a rate of ten percent per year. In 2013, the 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan for the collection system was updated.

### **Solid Waste Management**

Grifton is a participant in the Pitt County Solid Waste Management Plan (2012). Goals of that plan include: to provide everyone in the community with waste disposal capacity, waste collection services, and waste reduction activities; to increase efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the solid waste program; to strive to meet established waste reduction goals; to decrease improper waste disposal; and to protect public health and the environment.

### **PARKS AND RECREATION**

Grifton offers several parks and recreational activities. They are summarized in Table 7.2 and described further in this section. Contentnea Creek provides many recreational opportunities, such as fishing, kayaking, hunting, bird watching, and boating. The waterway provides year-round fishing and a challenging current for the canoeist. There is a North Carolina State boat landing located in Grifton on the Creek to facilitate these recreational opportunities.



St. David Street Park has a picnic shelter, a playground, and tennis courts, along with a one-quarter mile paved walking trail that surrounds the park grounds. Mattie's minipark is located at the corner of Main and Gordon and is furnished with a children's play area including a swing set, basketball court, slides, a picnic area, and other playground accessories. Grifton also offers two lighted tennis courts at 437 Creek Shore Drive on the



corner of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and Creek Shore Drive, next to the Civic Center and Museum. Just across the street is Overlook Park, Catechna Indian Village and the NC Wildlife boat ramp.

**Table 7.2**  
**Parks and Recreation Facilities, Town of Grifton**

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Area (Acres)</b>	<b>Park Uses</b>
Town Commons	3.5	Open Space
Museum Tennis Courts	3.0	Tennis
Mattie's Mini Park	0.1	Children's Playground
St. David Street Park	1.59	Tennis/Playground
Contentnea Creek Overlook Park	3.7	Boat Launch/Open Space
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.89</b>	

Source: East Carolina University Urban and Regional Planning Department November, 2013

Grifton Town Commons, located at 553 Queen St, was dedicated in January of 1985 to serve as a focal point for the downtown area. It has been center stage for the annual Shad Festival for many years and is a common meeting place for the citizens of the town. In 2011, the Town Commons went through a total transformation to beautify the lot into a more welcoming area. The original circular brick structure was demolished, leaving only the monument seen in the middle. Benches, walkways, landscaping, fences and a trellis were constructed to improve the public space.

Creekside Overlook Park on Contentnea Creek was established in 2002 after the floods of Hurricane Floyd. Overlook Park is located between the Catechna Indian Village and the NC Wildlife Boat Ramp. It is currently dedicated as open space with the exception of a shelter with a cement pad that holds a picnic table and swing.



The Contentnea Creek RV and Trail Park has primitive camping sites as well as 10 hookup sites for recreational vehicles and campers along with three pull through sites. Extended stay along with shaded areas are all available. There are 30 amp and 20 amp powered hookups available for use. Pets are as well allowed. It also has blazed trails.

The town has prepared a parks and recreation master plan that will guide Grifton toward effective use of existing park and recreation properties to enhance recreational activities and ecotourism for all citizens and visitors.



## GREENWAYS

Greenways are linear corridors of open space that are either natural, such as along rivers and streams, or human-made, such as abandoned railways and utility corridors. They allow public access for recreation, bicycle and pedestrian transportation, and other uses such as enjoyment of natural habitat. Greenways offer a pleasant, healthy and safe alternative for driving to local schools, parks, libraries, stores or other places that people visit on a regular basis and improve the overall quality of life in an area (Pitt County 2005 Greenway Plan).

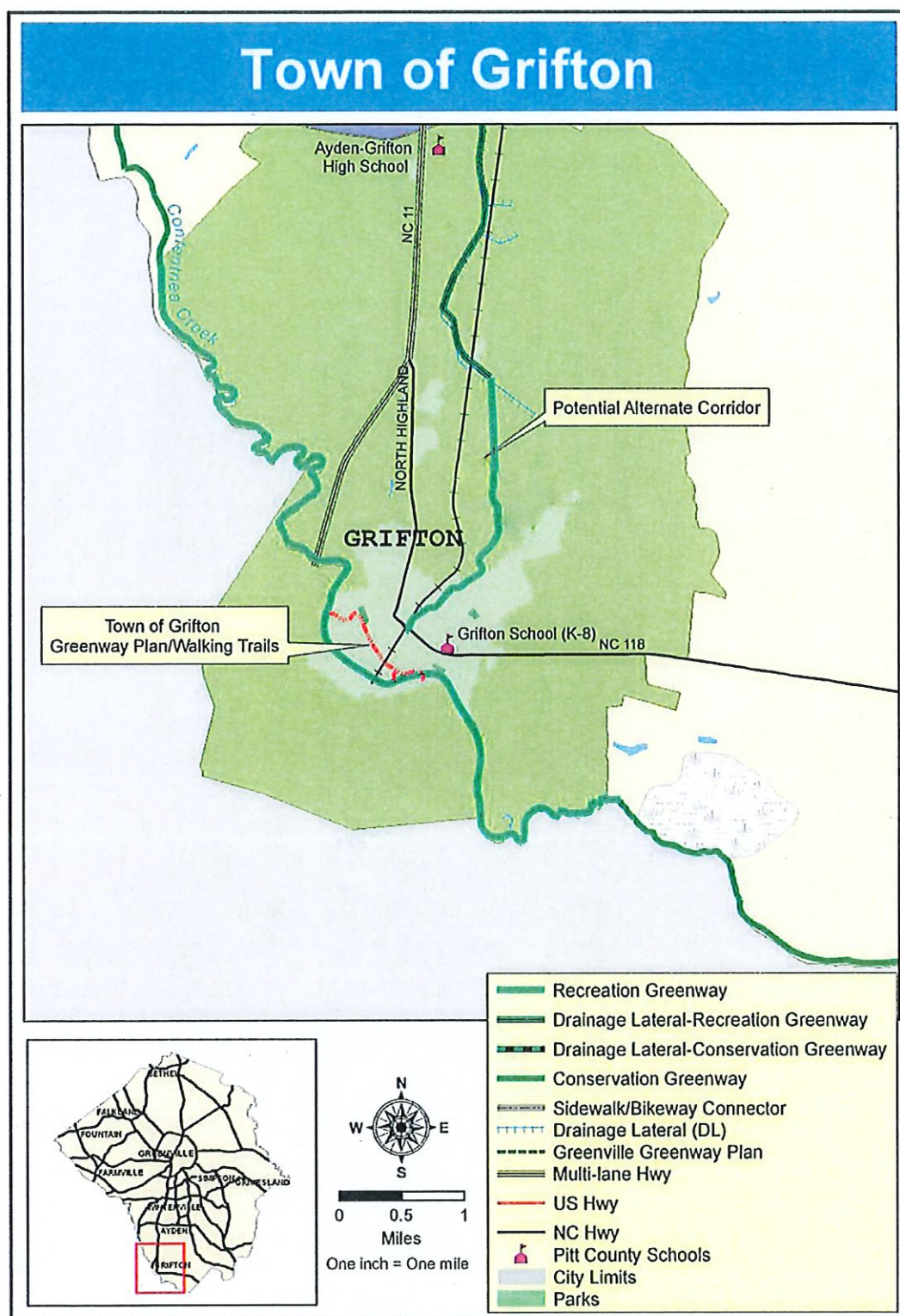
Grifton adopted a Greenway and Trails Master Plan in 2004. The proposed improvements utilize the properties acquired in the Floyd FEMA buyout and other public property in the Grifton area.

Pitt County also has adopted a greenway plan including recommendations for the Grifton ETJ (see map 7.1). The Town of Grifton aims to incorporate an interconnecting greenway and trails system to the community. Grifton's Greenway and Trails plan proposes roughly 12.5 miles of greenway to be added to the town over the next decade. The greenway system plan currently covers 2.24 miles within the town limits and 10.25 miles in the Town of Grifton's ETJ.



Source: Pitt County 2005 Greenways Plan

The greenway and trails system, if implemented, will provide vital community functions for the town. With an interconnecting greenway and trails system, the Town of Grifton will have the potential for many additional recreational opportunities that will support a thriving healthy community.



### Map 7.1 Grifton Area Greenways Plan

Source: Pitt County 2025 Greenway



## **CHAPTER 8 TRANSPORTATION**

In 2005, Pitt County developed its first Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Regional transportation planning agencies in Pitt County include the Mid-East Rural Planning Organization (RPO), covering rural parts of Pitt County, and the Greenville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), which covers Greenville, Winterville, Ayden, and other urban areas (not including Grifton).

### **HIGHWAYS**

NC 11 is the major north-west highway through Grifton. It is four lanes (divided) and connects south to Kinston and North to Greenville (where it joins U.S. Highway 13) and beyond. NC 118 runs east from Grifton to Vanceboro; it is the most congested road in town. Data gathered from Pitt County show a high number of crashes on this road. NC 118 is one of the roads suggested in the Pitt County Transportation Comprehensive Plan (2005) for widening, due to its travel-lane width of less than 12 feet.

The Greenville Southwest Bypass (see Map 8.1) is a planned four-lane divided facility designed to bypass of Winterville. It is 12.2 miles long and currently unfunded (Pitt County Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2030, Table A-34). The Southwest Bypass will go from US 264 west of Greenville to NC 11 south of Winterville. The bypass will be a four-lane, divided highway with controlled access from US 264 near the Vidant Hospital to existing NC 11/Memorial Drive south of Winterville. The bypass will provide more direct access to Vidant Hospital and is expected to reduce traffic congestion along NC 11/Memorial Drive. The bypass is also expected to improve north-south access to the Global TransPark in Kinston.

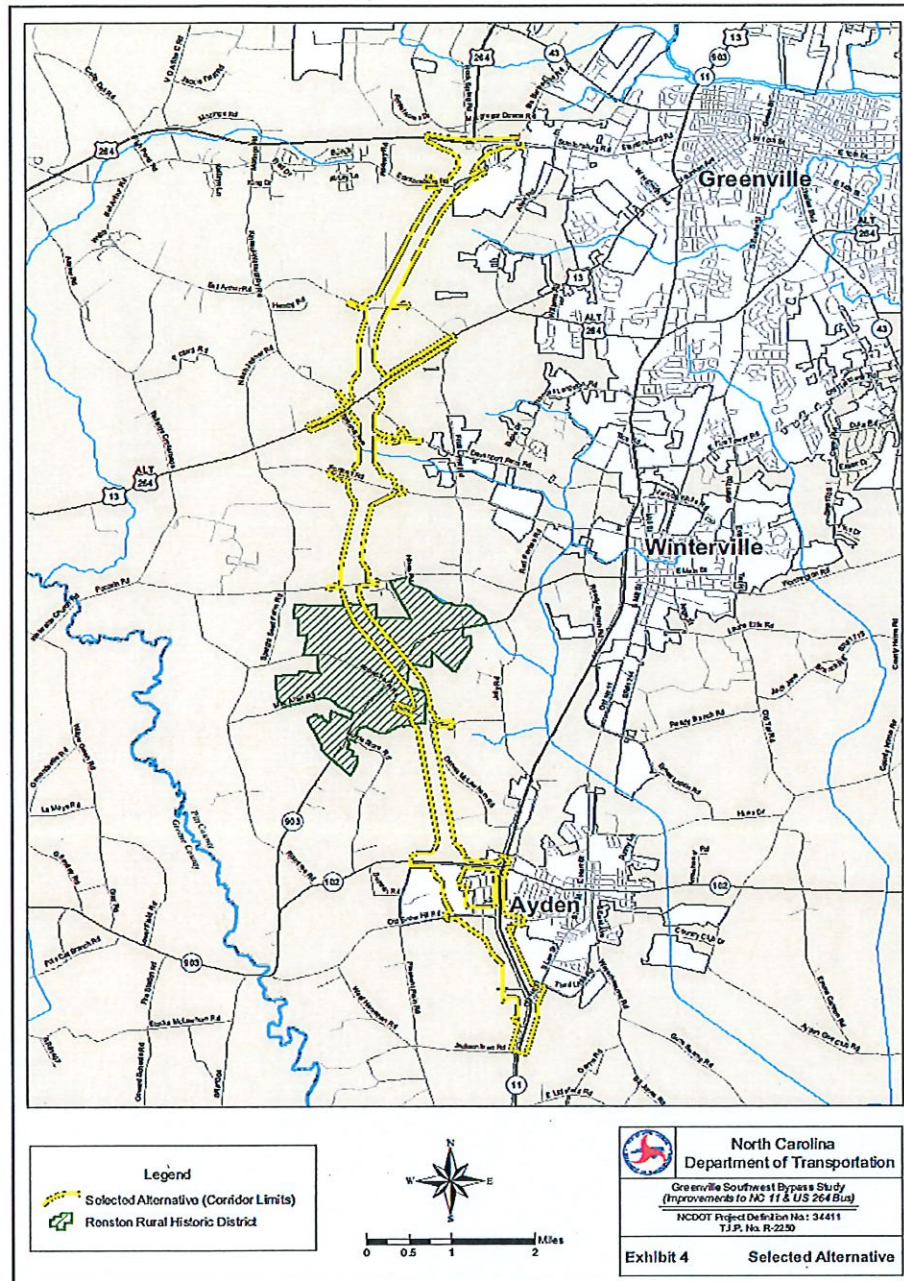
### **STREET CONDITIONS**

The town has almost 14 miles of streets that are not maintained by the NC Department of Transportation. Street conditions have been a growing problem in Grifton. A recent survey showed that 33.4% of roads in Grifton were in very poor to poor condition. In comparison, the same 1997 survey showed that only 5.3 percent of roads were classified as being in that condition. Realizing that actions needed to be taken, the town secured a street assessment by Wooten Company in December 2011. The company evaluated streets under the town's jurisdiction (not maintained by the state) for 8 different distress conditions. These conditions included, alligator cracking, block/transverse cracking, reflective cracking, rutting, raveling, bleeding, ride quality and patching. Three classifications were used for labeling: slight, moderate, and severe. The company developed a report and presented it to the town's Board of Commissioners. The presentation included key elements such as cost estimates and several options for patching and paving.

Several options were put on the table, and from those options, the public chose Option 2B, to provide the necessary base repairs to all streets determined to be in poor or very poor condition. This option also would add an additional inch of pavement to every street in the



town. This option was selected as the best because it was considered the most economically feasible at \$1.94 million, plus it was considered equitable to all residents within the town limits.

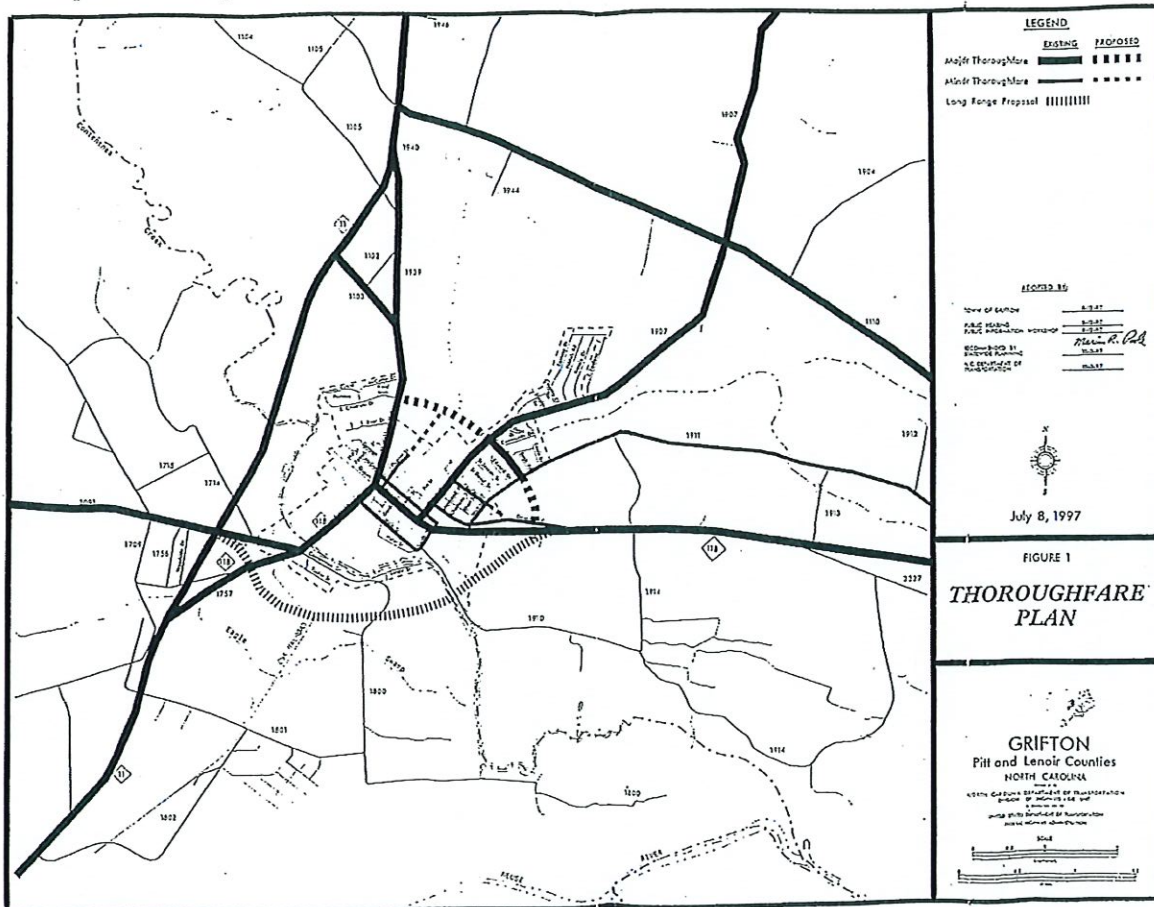


**Map 8.1**  
**Greenville Southwest Bypass**  
 Source: NCDOT



## THOROUGHFARE PLAN

A thoroughfare plan (see Map 8.2) was prepared and adopted in 1997. That plan projected traffic conditions through 2020 and suggested multiple projects based upon anticipated development and growth.



**Map 8.2**  
**Thoroughfare Plan (1997), Town of Grifton**

## RAILROADS

CSX Railroad bisects Pitt County running north-south through Bethel, Greenville, Winterville, Ayden and Grifton. CSX provides rail transportation and distribution services over 22,000 route miles in 23 states in the East, Midwest, and south, the District of Columbia, and Ontario and Montreal, Canada (Pitt County Comprehensive Land Use Plan 2030, p. A-61). There is no passenger stop in Grifton. Atlantic Coast Railroad Depot used to be a stopping point, but now it is used for parties and special events on a rental basis.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

Generally, there is no public transportation serving Grifton. Pitt Area Transit Services (PATS) maintains a fleet of 26 vehicles and provides more than 66,700 trips and over 500,000 miles of service each year; however, it is available primarily to persons referred for special transportation assistance by either the Department of Social Services or the Council on Aging or Vocational Rehabilitation Services (Source: Pitt County 2030 Comprehensive Land Use Plan).

From these 2007-2011 American Community Survey estimates, it is apparent that about 3% of households in Grifton do not have a vehicle available for transportation to work. There is sufficient out-commuting to Kinston and Greenville that some consideration should be given to providing a private, for-profit shuttle service to those locations for workers.

## **SIDEWALKS**

Sidewalks are a major focus in planning for a safe, healthy walking community. The majority of existing sidewalks are located in Grifton's downtown, along major roads. Sidewalks exist on South Highland Ave starting just south of Contentnea Creek, and ending near River Road. Sidewalks exist on both sides of Queen Street from Highland Ave to Church Street. Church Street has fragmented sections of sidewalk extending from just south of Queen Street to Cannon Boulevard. Another section of sidewalk is located on Pitt Street south of Queen Street.

## **PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN**

The Town of Grifton produced a Pedestrian Master Plan in 2008 that describes proposed sidewalks. The goal of this plan is to create a network of trails/sidewalks that provide safe and convenient places to walk or ride for all pedestrians and bicyclist while promoting awareness and safety throughout the community.



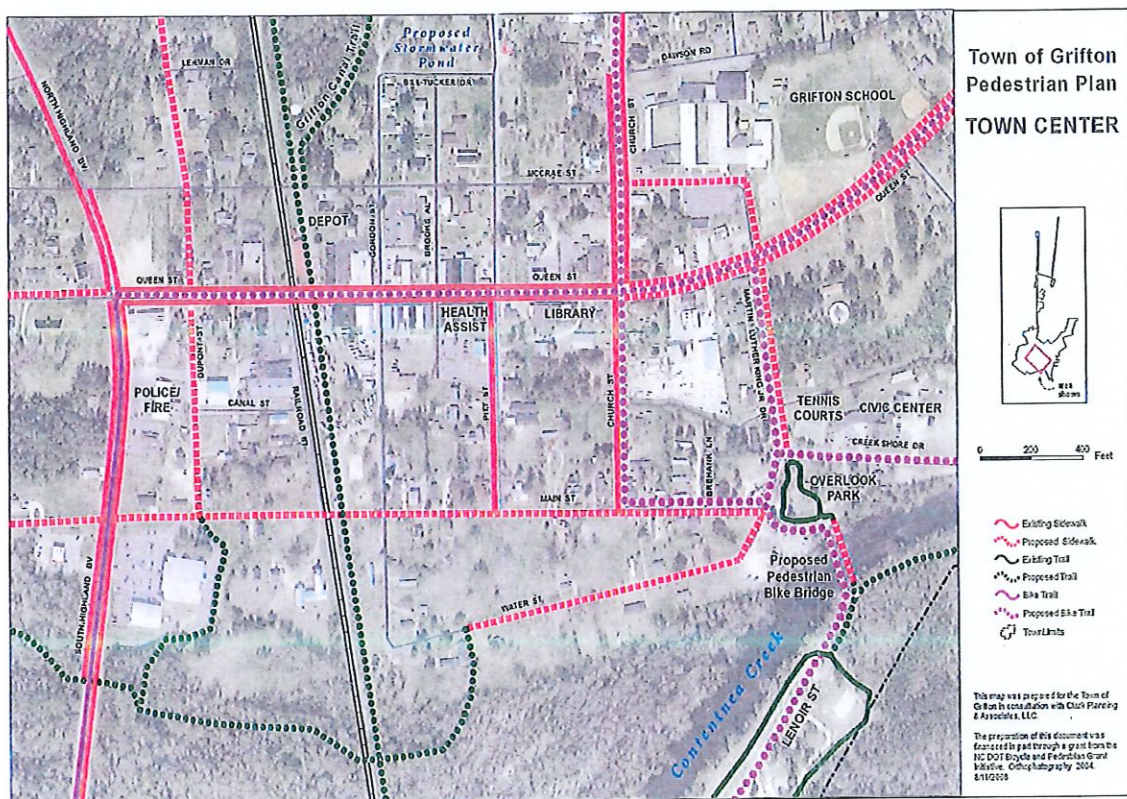
Sidewalks are proposed in areas where pedestrian traffic and vehicle traffic is highest. The goal of the plan is to connect all of the sidewalks in the downtown residential area to create a safe, walkable environment for people in the community.



**Table 8.1**  
**Existing and Proposed Sidewalk Mileage**

	Length (feet)	Length (miles)
Existing Sidewalk	12,881	2.43
Proposed Sidewalk	42,667	8.1

Source: Town of Grifton Pedestrian Plan



**Map 8.3**  
**Recommended Downtown Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements, Grifton**

## CHAPTER 9 POLICIES

### NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

1. **Preservation Generally.** The natural environment should be preserved as much as possible. Preserving natural features helps maintain air and water quality, as well as provides visual and recreational amenities for local citizens.
2. **Environmentally Sensitive Areas.** Prevent development from occurring in, or significantly encroaching upon environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains, wetlands, and groundwater recharge areas.
3. **Floodways and Floodplains.** Prohibit development within floodways and restrict or prohibit development in flood plains. If development within flood plains is allowed, flood plain storage should not be decreased from its present state.
4. **Wetlands.** Preserve wetlands where they exist, or as a last resort if they cannot be preserved on-site, mitigate wetland loss by increasing ecologically equivalent wetlands on other appropriate sites (i.e., wetland mitigation through wetland banking).
5. **Wildlife Habitat.** Plan for the preservation of wildlife habitat in order to minimize the possibility of plant and animal species becoming threatened, endangered or extinct.
6. **Environmental Health.** Promote health for all people through a healthy environment, improve air and water quality, and reduce air and water pollution. Reduce the amount of toxic pollutants released into the environment, and reduce waterborne disease outbreaks arising from water intended for drinking among persons served by community water systems. Minimize the risks to human health and the environment posed by hazardous sites.
7. **Street Trees.** Encourage or require the planting of street trees in subdivisions and new land developments.
8. **Tree Protection and Tree Canopy.** Restrict the cutting of trees, require the replacement of trees with trees of like species and value, and preserve and enhance tree canopy.
9. **Water Conservation.** Promote the conservation of water by residents and businesses.



## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

1. **Sustainability and Energy Efficiency.** Promote sustainable and energy-efficient development.
2. **Reduce Energy Consumption.** Reduce energy consumption through comprehensive planning and urban design that incorporates strategies for energy efficiency.

## CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. **Community Support and Awareness.** Strive to increase community support and awareness for historic preservation.
2. **Reuse Historic Buildings.** The reuse of historic buildings is encouraged, provided the architectural character of the building is retained.

## HOUSING

1. **Housing Opportunities.** Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in the town.
2. **Manufactured Housing.** The town will not exclude manufactured housing entirely from the town limits.
3. **Life Cycle and Mixed Generation Communities.** Encourage "life cycle" or "mixed generation" communities that provide for persons of different age groups (including seniors) to live in the same community as they age.
4. **Senior-friendly Housing.** Encourage the establishment of innovative forms of housing that cater to the specific needs of the town's existing and future population of seniors. This may include projects that incorporate independent living units with various other units providing for continuing care, as well as personal care and nursing homes. Such housing should be permitted in multi-family residential and institutional zoning districts and be located close to services.
5. **Design of Senior and Disabled Housing.** Houses should be made available for seniors and disabled persons that contain a single-level with no-step entrances and wide doorways.
6. **Homes for People with Disabilities.** Community residences for people with disabilities should be allowed as of right in all residential districts under the definition of family.

7. **Housing Programs.** Identify and pursue various private, state, and federal housing programs designed to improve the housing stock, and use a variety of means, actions, and programs to correct housing problems where they exist.
8. **Nonprofit Housing Organizations.** Encourage the creation of, and cooperate with, community-based housing organizations in the pursuit of more affordable workforce housing.
9. **Healthy Home Design.** Encourage designers, architects, and contractors to seek to understand building science and construction methods involving healthy homes.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. **Range of Jobs Available.** A range of job types should be available in the town and its vicinity to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.
2. **Tourism.** Promote tourism and eco-tourism in Grifton.
3. **Small Businesses and Home Occupations.** Promote the establishment and retention of small businesses in the town, including home occupations that meet neighborhood compatibility standards.
4. **Positive Business Climate.** Create and maintain a positive climate for business in the town.
5. **Balanced Regulation.** Balance the need to regulate the design and appearance of commercial and other properties with a positive regulatory environment that is sensitive to the need for businesses to be competitive in the marketplace.
6. **Education and Training.** Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in the town – to permit residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, and to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.

## LAND USE

### Generally

1. **Plans.** Use the Future Land Use Map as a guide to decision-making.
2. **Mixed Use Development.** Promote mixed use developments in appropriate areas.
3. **Active Transportation.** Encourage or require the incorporation of active transportation design features into new development projects. In all land developments, encourage or require pedestrian-friendly site designs.



### Food, Agriculture and Conservation Lands

1. **Healthy Foods.** Increase access to healthy foods. Analyze the food-producing potential of town street rights of ways. Identify and remove zoning and other policy barriers to urban food production. Allow cultivation and sale of herbs, vegetables, or similar crops in residential areas, as an accessory use.
2. **Community Gardens.** Encourage new residential subdivisions and multi-family residential developments to designate common areas for residents to garden. Allow community gardens as a permitted use in all residential zoning districts.
3. **Agricultural Preservation and Open Space Conservation.** Develop and implement mechanisms to preserve large, contiguous blocks of productive agricultural land. Work jointly with Pitt and Lenoir Counties to preserve agriculture land. Maintain, and if possible, expand the viability of agricultural production as an economic activity. Encourage owners of productive agricultural land to enroll in the county tax assessor's present use assessment program. Purchase or encourage land trusts to acquire conservation easements to protect farmland and conservation lands.

### Housing and Neighborhoods

1. **Protect Neighborhoods from Incompatible Land Uses.** Protect the town's established residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses.
2. **Housing Occupancy Mix.** A desirable mix of tenure in the town is 60% owner-occupied housing units and 40% renter-occupied housing units. This policy may be used as a criterion in reviewing discretionary development applications.
3. **Conservation Subdivisions.** Where residential development is called for in the plan or compatible and consistent with comprehensive plan policies, encourage conservation subdivisions in rural portions of the town and its extraterritorial jurisdiction. A conservation subdivision is a division of land into lots, where open space is the central organizing element of the subdivision design and that identifies and permanently protects all primary and all or some of the secondary conservation areas within the boundaries of the subdivision. This technique is particularly relevant to incorporating the proposed town greenway into subdivision proposals as well.

### Central Business

1. **Development Characteristics.** Development in the central business district may consist of greater lot coverage, building heights, and building intensities, as well as shallower or no front and side building setbacks.

2. **Parking.** Development that is adequately served by public parking or on-street parking should be exempted from or have reduced minimum off-street parking requirements.
3. **Auto-related Uses.** Automobile-related commercial facilities and services are considered inappropriate in the central business district because such uses serve primarily auto-oriented traffic and do not facilitate pedestrian friendly design.

### Highway Business

1. **Efficient Use.** Encourage the re-occupancy of existing retail space prior to the construction of new retail spaces.
2. **Design.** Encourage highway commercial building designs which do not locate all of the off-street parking provided on the commercial lot between the highway and the building.
3. **Phased Development.** When commercial development occurs in phases, and for commercial development with outparcels reserved for future commercial development, ensure that the designs of building forms are interrelated and architecturally harmonious.

### Industry

1. **Location.** Industrial land uses should be limited to areas outside of flood plains, with relatively level topography, adequate water and sewerage facilities, and access to arterial streets. Industrial zoning should generally not be approved in locations not so designated on the future land use plan.
2. **Objectionable Uses.** Unless located in a designated industrial park, new industrial operations should be limited to those that are not objectionable by reason of the emission of noise, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors or radiation and that do not create fire or explosion hazards or other objectionable, dangerous, or unhealthful conditions.
3. **Design.** Future industrial developments serving more than one industry are strongly encouraged to be developed within planned industrial parks which are designed with campus-style layouts including generous building setbacks from exterior roads and landscaping.

### URBAN DESIGN

1. **Generally.** Enhance the town's image as a unique community and retain that image with attractive and orderly development that preserves existing character of the community.



2. **Gateways.** Maintain civic gateways (community entrance signs) to the town that produce a sense of arrival.
3. **Beautification.** Establish and support community-based partnerships to beautify the town.
4. **Compatible Character.** Encourage new development to respect the scale and character of nearby structures and minimize or mitigate abrupt and excessive differences.
5. **Streetscape Improvement Standards.** Street signs, lighting, and street furniture should be consistent throughout the downtown business district.
6. **Street Trees.** Street trees should be installed, to create shaded sidewalks for pedestrians and improve the visual quality of local streets and state routes.
7. **Screening.** Screen negative views through appropriate site planning measures such as fences, walls, landscaping, and building placement.
8. **Efficient Lighting Practices.** Develop community based lighting design guidelines that promote energy efficiency and safety while reducing light pollution or "sky-glow," light trespass on adjacent properties, and glare.

#### COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

1. **Level of Service Standards.** Establish and maintain level-of-service and/or performance standards for all community facilities and services provided by the town.
2. **Capital Improvement Plan.** Prepare and update at least every five years a capital improvement program and budget. Use the short-term work program in this comprehensive plan as a guide to preparing more detailed capital plans and project descriptions.
3. **Facility Location.** While abiding by principles of efficiency in terms of optimal geographic locations for town facilities and services, the town should use its investment in civic buildings to strategically leverage and enhance private reinvestment in redevelopment areas.
4. **Emergency Preparedness.** Periodically review and revise the disaster preparedness and emergency management plans in conjunction with Pitt and Lenoir Counties.
5. **Intergovernmental Agreements.** Periodically assess existing intergovernmental agreements for the provision and delivery of community facilities and services, and develop new agreements as appropriate.

## TRANSPORTATION

1. **Physical Activity and Active Transportation.** Improve the built environment to enhance access to and availability of physical activity opportunities. Promote “active” transportation (defined as any self-propelled, human-powered mode of transportation). Ensure equitable access to transportation networks.
2. **Mobility for People with Disabilities.** Remove and correct the physical barriers that inhibit mobility for persons with disabilities, especially for those who rely on wheelchairs and walkers.
3. **Access Management.** Apply state and local standards for access management along arterial and collector streets, including but not limited to specifications for curb cut location and separation, traffic signal spacing, and deceleration lanes.
4. **Inter-parcel Access.** Encourage or require inter-parcel vehicle access points between contiguous and compatible commercial, institutional, and office developments.
5. **Traffic Impact Studies.** When a development proposal would be expected to generate 1,000 vehicle trips or more, or 100 or more vehicle trips during any a.m. or p.m. peak hour, a traffic study should be required.
6. **Traffic Calming.** Reduce traffic speeds in neighborhoods and implement traffic-calming measures where necessary to further slow vehicle traffic and/or discourage cut-through traffic.
7. **Pedestrian/Sidewalk System.** Improve the network of pedestrian facilities (sidewalks) in the town. Create a safe and accessible pedestrian network throughout the town. Sidewalks of required widths, well-marked crosswalks and approved pedestrian-scaled lighting should be installed to create an inviting and well used pedestrian system. All new facilities should meet current American with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Additional funding should be sought to create and improve pedestrian facilities within existing areas of the town, but when development occurs it should be the responsibility of developers to improve facilities along their public street frontages and internal to the development. The town should identify ways to retrofit older subdivisions with sidewalks.
8. **Bike Paths and Bikeways.** Provide bike paths and bikeways in appropriate locations in the town as called for in specific improvement plans made a part of this comprehensive plan. Direct bicycle investments toward those corridors and areas best suited for bicycle traffic and which have the greatest potential to provide convenient and safe mobility alternatives. When specifically called for in this plan or an official map of the town, as land development occurs it should be the



responsibility of developers to dedicate additional road right of way if necessary to provide bike paths and bikeway facilities along their public street frontages.

9. **Multi-use Trails and Greenways.** Pursue recommendations of county and town plans to construct multi-use trails and greenways throughout the town.
10. **Public Transportation.** Consider ways to provide town residents with transportation services to destinations such as Kinston and Greenville; this may be a private, for-profit shuttle.

## **CHAPTER 10 IMPLEMENTATION**

The town will implement the comprehensive plan primarily with its annual operating budget, its capital improvement plans, and its land use regulations. The future land use plan and policies in this comprehensive plan should be used as a guide when considering changes to zoning districts and approval of subdivision plats and development plans for private land developments. The burden of proof should be on the rezoning, subdivision, or land development applicant to demonstrate that the development activity is consistent in all respects with the policies established in this comprehensive plan (see Chapter 9) in addition to the recommendation of the future land use plan map.

### **ANALYSIS OF CURRENT POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

It is important to consider the extent to which the Town has in place the tools and measures needed to implement the policies articulated in Chapter 9 of this comprehensive plan. This section evaluates the town's current land use regulations (zoning and subdivision) and other component plans and identifies whether additional actions are needed to implement the policies.

#### **Natural Resources and the Environment**

Policies call for the protection of wetlands, flood plains, groundwater recharge areas, and other sensitive natural environments. Currently regulations adequately protect the natural resources and environment of the town. The town's zoning ordinance establishes a floodplain overlay district (Sec. 152.099), and the town has adopted a flood hazard ordinance, though it does not appear in the code of ordinances. Wetlands do not appear to be regulated by the town's zoning ordinance, although federal laws apply to disturbance of wetlands under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The FEMA property buyout program has led to the protection of some flooded and potential wetland properties in the town. Policies also suggest the planting of street trees and preservation of tree canopy. The town's zoning ordinance defines certain aspects of trees such as caliper and critical root zone, and trees are required to be planted along property frontages in commercial and industrial areas (Sec. 152.237). Tree protection during construction is optional but strongly encouraged (Sec. 152.261). A list of shade trees is also provided in the zoning ordinance (Sec. 152.267). A water conservation plan is referenced in the town's code of ordinances (Title 5, Chapter 52).

#### **Energy Efficiency and Cultural Resources**

Plan policies call for promoting energy efficiency and protection of remaining cultural resources. Generally, the town has lost many of its historic resources, but it can still implement preservation activities by increasing support for remaining historic resources and also encouraging reuse of historic buildings where opportunities exist.



## **Housing**

Housing policies call for the town not to restrict manufactured homes entirely from the town. The town allows for continuance of nonconforming manufactured home parks, and nonconforming manufactured homes within parks can be replaced with a certain quality of manufactured home (Sec. 152.286). The zoning ordinance establishes development standards for manufactured homes and manufactured home parks (Secs. 152.160 through 152.163). Manufactured homes are also allowed under temporary and emergency circumstances (see definitions). A separate RA-20 MH Residential District is established in the town and permits high quality manufactured homes; a large section of the northern part of the town's extraterritorial jurisdiction is zoned for manufactured homes, though no such zoning is provided within the town limits. Manufactured home parks are permitted in the town's R-6 Residential District. All in all, manufactured homes are not encouraged inside the town limits, but there are limited possibilities for their inclusion through rezoning.

Housing policies also call for the town to allow homes for the disabled in all residential zoning districts. Generally, North Carolina state law requires that family care homes (up to six disabled residents) be allowed in residential zoning districts. The zoning ordinance also defines group homes (which are not necessarily occupied by disabled residents) as well as definitions of "protected" and "non-protected" group homes. Non-protected group homes are allowed only as conditional uses in certain zoning districts. Because the Grifton zoning ordinance addresses applicable laws such as state zoning statutes and the Fair Housing Act amendments, it is believed that the current provisions are adequate.

Generally, the plan policies call for more efforts to diversify the housing stock and to encourage units that will be suitable for seniors. Plan policies also call for mixed-generation communities. One effort to implement the housing policies is the suggestion in the land use plan that the old golf course property be redeveloped for varied and innovative housing arrangements. These newer types of innovative housing will require cooperation of the private sector which cannot be guaranteed. However, town officials should continue to be open to projects that will be more responsive to the housing needs of seniors and multi-generational households. There is also opportunity for the town to seek housing grant funds for various purposes and to work with community-based housing organizations (to the extent they exist or are created) in furthering housing goals.

## **Economic Development**

Generally, the town's practices are consistent with its economic development policies. The town has prepared has an economic development strategic plan and a downtown development design plan to promote future development in the downtown area. The town is quite limited in its abilities to diversify employment opportunities and provide more jobs within the town limits. The town's regulations are sensitive to the need to balance regulatory goals with the need for economic development.



## **Land Use**

There are a number of specific policies in Chapter 9 that relate to land use. One of these includes the promotion of mixed use. Mixed use is defined in the town's zoning ordinance, and mixed use in the form of residential over commercial uses is permitted as a conditional use in the town's CBD and B1 zoning districts. Active transportation is generally promoted in Grifton; although sidewalks are somewhat limited in town, the town has also prepared a pedestrian plan which upon implementation will further that policy. Community gardens are not defined in the town's ordinance and are not permitted now in residential zoning districts as recommended by the planning policies.

One potential deficiency in the town's land use regulations is that they do not appear to define and allow conservation subdivisions. The short-term work program calls for the town to include conservation subdivisions in the town's land use regulations when the next major update of regulations occurs.

A review of the town's permitted uses by zoning district reveals that most auto-oriented commercial uses are not permitted in the town's central business district zoning district, consistent with plan policy. The zoning ordinance is consistent with plan policy to allow structures to be located close to the street in the central business district. Consideration should be given in the future to reducing some or eliminating all of the off-street parking requirements for uses in the central business district, given that on-street and public off-street parking is generally available.

Generally, the town's zoning ordinance has reasonably good design-type controls such as landscaping for parking lots. Other design-related provisions might be considered during the next update of the town's zoning ordinance.

## **Design**

The town has taken positive efforts with a modernized zoning ordinance and design concepts prepared in plans for the town. For instance, gateway improvements are identified, and there are improvements specified for streetscapes in town. The zoning ordinance generally ensures that land uses will be compatible with one another and that screening, where needed, is required (see Sec. 152.239). Lighting is not fully addressed in the zoning ordinance; development plans for planned unit developments (Sec. 152.167) are required to show lighting details at the time of submission and approval. Otherwise, however, the town should add lighting standards to its zoning ordinance during its next update.

## **Community Facilities**

Generally, the town has implemented and continues to implement the various policies specified in this plan for community facilities. Water and sewer plans adopted by the town are based on level of service standards, and the town manager has implemented capital improvement programming as called for in the plan policies.



## **Transportation**

The town is focused on improving pedestrian facilities in that it has adopted a pedestrian facility improvement plan. A greenway plan also exists. The town's transportation plan is dated and should be revised and updated during the next five years. Access management regulations, which also include the necessity to comply with state Department of Transportation permitting and approval processes, are considered generally adequate. However, it does not appear that the town requires inter-parcel access between developments which could become increasingly important when commercial properties develop along major highways as contemplated in the town's future land use plan. Such provisions should be considered for inclusion in the town's land use regulations during the next scheduled update. No provisions are made in the town's regulations for traffic impact analyses for larger developments, but they might be considered, as well. The town generally does not have a need for traffic calming, but town officials should continue to monitor conditions that might necessitate mitigating speeding or unsafe driving through neighborhood areas. Given that public transit is generally not available, the short-term work program calls for the town to investigate additional options for getting residents without vehicles to their destinations in Pitt and Lenoir Counties via some organized fee-based public provider.

### **SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAM**

A short-term work program for the years 2015 to 2019 is provided in Table 10.1. The town planning board and town Manager should periodically assess progress made toward implementing the comprehensive plan.

**Table 10.1**  
**Short-term Work Program, 2015-2019**  
**Town of Grifton**

Element	Description	Year	Responsibility	Estimated Cost (\$)	Possible Funding Sources
Housing	Monitor conditions of older housing units	Ongoing	Town Manager	Staff function	Included in operating budget
Economic Development	Implement the town's economic development strategic plan and marketing plan	2015-2019	Town Manager	Per plan	Capital budget
Economic Development	Participate in county-wide and regional economic development activities	Ongoing	Town Manager	Staff function	Included in operating budget
Downtown Development	Implement downtown conceptual master plan	2015-2019	Town Manager	Per plan	Capital budget
Land Use	Refine future land use map as may be needed	2015	Town Manager	Staff function	Technical Assistance ECU
Land Use	Update Comprehensive Plan	2019	Town Planning Board	TBD	Technical Assistance ECU
Land Use	Update zoning and subdivision regulations	2019	Town Planning Board	TBD	Technical Assistance ECU or County
Parks and Recreation	Implement parks and recreation master plan	2015-2019	Town Manager	Per plan	Capital budget
Water and Sewer	Construct and install water and sewer system improvements as called for in the capital plan	2015-2019	Town Manager	Per plan	Capital budget
Solid Waste	Implement Pitt County Solid Waste Management Plan	2014-2019	Town Manager	Per plan	Capital budget
Transportation	Implement pedestrian master plan	2015-2019	Town Manager	Per plan	Capital budget
Transportation	Study feasibility of public shuttle service to Greenville	2016	Public Works	TBD	NCDOT
Transportation	Update thoroughfare plan; reconsider need for southside bypass	2017	Public Works	TBD	NCDOT
Transportation	Implement street improvement projects per bond referendum	2015-2019	Public Works	Per bond referendum	Capital budget
Transportation	Implement greenway plan for town and ETJ	2015-2019	Public Works	Per plan	Capital budget; Pitt County for ETJ



## APPENDIX COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

1. List the top three things that YOU LIKE MOST about Grifton, NC.

Small-Size Town(6)	Location(2)	Simple
Quiet(2)	Family Town(2)	Home Town Feel
Walkability(2)	Contentnea Creek(2)	People

2. List the top three things that YOU DO NOT LIKE about Grifton, NC.

Lack of Business/Business Variety(4)	Vacant Buildings(2)	Poorly cared for rental properties
Streets(2)	Appearance of Nepotism in Government Offices	Lack of Retail
Lack of Jobs/Opportunity(2)	Too far from Greenville	
Lack of Citizen Involvement(2)	Lack of Sidewalks	

3. Grifton, NC is a unique place with a character that distinguishes it from other places.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion/ Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	2	6	0

If you agree or strongly agree, describe the character in your own words here:

Creek is a tremendous asset that's underutilized, Small town, friendly folks, creek, History (primarily Native American history, Small church, community based-revolves around a small central core, Okay with being a bedroom for Greenville, Unorganized downtown, Businesses come and go-Not enough to keep them going, Love the history

4. There is an adequate supply of housing that is affordable in Grifton, NC.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion/ Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	3	3	2

5. The overall quality of the environment (water, air, etc.) in Grifton, NC is excellent.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion/ Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	0	7	1

6. It is important to protect the historic resources in Grifton, NC.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion/ Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	1	5	2

**Appendix: Community Questionnaire Results, Town of Grifton Comprehensive Plan**

**7. Grifton, NC is doing enough to protect the aesthetic character of the town.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion/ Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	5	3	0	0

**8. In Grifton, NC there are adequate job/employment opportunities.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion/ Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
4	2	1	1	0

**9. Overall, I am satisfied with the services and facilities that the town provides.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion/ Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	0	2	6	0

**10. Please rate your satisfaction with the following specific facilities and services:**

**Roads and Services**

Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1	5	1	2	0

**Park, Recreation, and Open Space Facilities and Properties**

Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
0	5	1	2	0

**Sanitary Sewer**

Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
0	1	0	6	1

**Public Water**

Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
0	0	0	5	3

**Drainage/Stormwater Management**

Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
0	1	0	7	0

**Police Department**

Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
0	0	0	5	3



**Appendix: Community Questionnaire Results, Town of Grifton Comprehensive Plan**

**Fire Protection**

Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
0	0	0	3	5

**Libraries**

Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
0	0	3	4	1

**Public Schools**

Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
0	0	4	4	0

**Government Offices**

Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral/No Opinion	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
0	1	3	2	2

11. **I would characterize overall relationships between the Town of Grifton's government and Pitt County as "excellent."**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
0	2	2	4	0

12. **What, in your opinion, should be the three highest priorities for improvements in Grifton, NC?**

Streets(7)	Recreation(2)	Appearance	Water/Sewer	Enforcement of Existing Covenants
Jobs(4)	Creek utilization	Downtown-Business Buildings	Sidewalks	Family Activities