



Nash County

Land Use Plan Update

Stakeholder Meeting Summary

Meeting 1: Economic Development and Tourism

Date: 10/05/2021

Time: 9:00am

Attendees

Theme	Name	Affiliation
Economic Development & Tourism	Andy Hagy	Nash County Economic Development
	Susan Phelps	Nash County Economic Development
	David Farris	Rocky Mount Area Chamber of Commerce
	Ethan Vester	Spring Hope Chamber of Commerce
	Barbara Green	Tourism Development Authority
	Thomas Gillespie	Nash County Parks & Rec

Major Themes

- County is in a great location near the Triangle for future commercial, residential, and industrial growth.
- Need utility planning and industrial sites to attract large companies
- Employers will also be looking at how Nash County can support their employees: schools, housing, and parks are important attractors

Discussion Summary

- What are the biggest opportunities you see in Nash County?
 - Bailey Middlesex park still needs development. At about 30% developed. Park has potential to be a big asset. People are relocating from Raleigh area and want those amenities.
 - Proximity to the Triangle and Wake County is an economic advantage. Nash offers cheaper land and is still accessible to Raleigh. All types of growth. People can commute to Raleigh or work at home.
 - They will need internet
 - TDA is giving out relocation packets
 - Two Zebulon businesses joined the Chamber.
 - Bailey and Spring Hope are growing.
 - Industrial manufacturing – companies are looking to be near the Triangle.
 - Spring Hope hasn't identified industrial area yet.
 - Rocky Mount put a bid in for CSX intermodal hub.
 - Hotspots/Criteria
 - Near international airport
 - Near ports

Project Website: www.nashcolanduseplan.com

Contact: Adam Tyson, Planning Director, nashpermits@nashcountync.gov, 252-459-9809



- Utilities
- Near highway
- Water
- Available land for ind. AND residential
- Broadband
- County is doing okay with industrial land supply now, but in five years they will need to reassess.
- 340 acres at Middlesex is being cut down.
- County is marketing themselves in WRAL and other places.
- People are coming because of low housing costs, small town feel. Some moved because of DMV, CSX. Some manufacturers in Tarboro. Homes are being snatched up quickly when they go on market.
- Longtime landowners are not keen to sell. Want to keep things rural.
- Developers take a long time to do road construction. Housing builders are cheap.
 - Road front lots are becoming an issue.
 - A lot of development is in the process of permitting but not on our map because roads haven't been built yet.
 - Area along 64, between Wake County and Nashville lacks utilities (water and sewer). Can't do density.
 - Spring Hope is going to get a large subdivision because they have utilities.
- Sunset Avenue extension and i95 interchange being developed – will it make it more desirable for development?
- Oak Level corridor to 97 – lots of residential of 1-acre lots on septic
- Some municipalities are beholden to others for utilities
- County has put in for a grant for a feasibility for a regional sewer system near Middlesex-bailey
 - Bailey is on a moratorium
 - Middlesex is beholden to Raleigh.
 - Board is keen to look at infrastructure
 - 200-home development in the books outside of Bailey
- Need a utility plan. Then developers are more likely to wait for construction and you can recruit employers.
- Municipalities and county need to work together on this planning.
- Need to also think about schools. New residents will have children.
- Nash has consolidated some schools due to low attendance and/or deteriorating buildings.
- Need to consider how the employers can contribute to building infrastructure.
- Spring Hope – 192 homes on 8,000 square foot lots.
- County could consider buying land for schools ahead of time. Need to communicate that there will be need in the future.
 - Some private school presence in the county.



- If they county chooses to land bank for schools, need to make sure it'll be near homes.
- Need to also consider school to employer pipeline.

Meeting 2: Transportation, Education, and Healthcare

Date: 10/05/2021

Time: 10:15am

Attendees

Theme	Name	Affiliation
Transportation, Education, & Healthcare	Bobby Liverman	NCDOT District Engineer
	Bob League	Rocky Mount Urban Area MPO Planner
	Jordan Reedy	Rocky Mount Urban Area MPO Planner
	Lew Hunnicutt	Nash Community College, President
	Jason Brand	Hospital;
	Dorsey Tobias	Hospital;
	James Alston	Mayor of Castalia,
	Thomas Gillespie	Nash County Parks & Rec
	Lee Isley	Nash UNC Health Care, President & CEO

Major Themes

- Attracting employees to all industries is a struggle right now
- NCC is working with Hospital, but doesn't currently offer agriculture training
- Resources to attract employees and residents needed, like middle class housing and internet

Discussion Summary

- *Nash County, US 64 to I-87 is a significant impact, future of I-95 – keeping it up to date maintenance ride, always a question on it becoming a toll road
- Rocky Mount Airport, growing, transportation service to the airport, DOT assistance, and potential for industrial park near airport
 - Airport recently redid runway (last year), 170, 28 T hangers built, all are rented, aircraft fuel cells capacity is increased, operations have increased.
 - T hangers are both individual and company use,
 - CCZ terminal opening this month, concerns about rail crossings for ped and vehicular, with increased rail traffic that is a concern
- Neighborhood Design
 - Control neighborhood access, one in one out is unsustainable
 - Making neighborhoods/communities walkable and bikeable
 - New completes street policy, if facility is up for upgrade dot will pay for previously planned facilities



- College expansion, old carriage expansion, I-95 interchange at Sunset Boulevard
- Communal/student living housing to attract younger adults, college wants mixed income housing nearby
- Hospital
 - Hospital in year 3 of 5 year strategic plan, focused on internal structures (financial, community partnerships, physician engagement, quality of service)
 - Second strategic plan from the hospital is coming, will include stakeholder meetings, secondary services, 50% of customers are from outside of the county, Facilities in Middlesex, demand for PCP services, demand for specialty – possibly having medical campus
 - Telehealth, broadband access
 - Master plan for hospital, do we have the sq footage to meet demand, do we have the capacity for current and future needs? Inventory of built square footage and facilities
 - Challenges in hospital for employment: Top issue is workforce, nursing shortage was coming, pandemic worsened, across services have needed more staff
 - Recruitment for in community staff was not prioritized until recently
 - Challenges in providing market rate housing for recruiting physicians
 - Medical Physicians must live within 30 minutes, staff has no recruitments
- Nash Community College
 - 42 nursing students in NCC, 200 applicants, not enough clinical sites to expand
 - College is targeting agricultural next, no ag component currently. Value added ag, certificate programs related to food or beer
 - Can't start a program without jobs for them ready to go
 - STEP with Nash and Edgecombe, school fairs, job shadowing, learning what fields are available for students, how we can get them experienced early to know they are opportunities available locally. Junior Volunteer program for high school students over summer and winter breaks. An NA in the RN track currently is a former JV participant.
 - NCC 4th grade program for students to find what do you want to be when you grow up
 - Rocky Mount Prep facilities this 4th grade program, NCC has skills high school and early college, starting 4th grade program at Spring Hope
 - NCC for 2 years and Wesleyan College for 2 more years, finding funding to pay for/reduce costs Wesleyan
 - Not enough inventory for middle income homes,
 - Hospital has other like-age or like-interest folks meet with candidates to drive interest
- Internet access is limited in the county. Some folks like rural living, want land, but still want internet, a lot of homes are coming in on top of each other
- Castalia, ongoing internet issues major interest in getting for in Castalia



- Can county require sidewalks in neighborhoods? And have connections ready for future developments, neighborhoods are far apart.
- What kind of facilities do we have in the area already and how can we add connections? Complete Streets policy?
- GTSP, Medoke Park connection to Roanoke Rapids Long term vision
- Transit
 - Updates for Raleigh-RM light rail? No, Amtrak has always focused on Raleigh to Charlotte, wishes Amtrak would extend that focus to the East to RM
 - Rail plans to connect Raleigh to Fayetteville, Extend Piedmont to Selma, Connect Raleigh to Wilmington, Main line through RM is the L line which is focused on freight first and foremost
 - TRT provides services, TRT has started a dial-a-ride and evening services in last two years that have been successful. On-Demand Services in Wilson have worked better than fixed routes, "The Ride" app or phone line, works well for them, typically can arrive within 15 minutes of a call.
 - Can we identify areas to make a targeted approach for a sidewalk requirement? Lands near planned greenways? Sidewalk links to Middle Sex and Bailey is one area.
 - Providing precedence to show great things, greenway planning to spur development
 - NC 11 greenway, Tarboro greenway

Meeting 3 Municipal Representatives

Date: 10/05/2021

Time: 11:30am

Attendees

Theme	Name	Affiliation
Local Municipalities	Will Deaton	City of Rocky Mount, Development Services Director
	Lu Harvey Lewis, Jr.	Town of Middlesex, Mayor, Administrator
	Nancy Nixon	Town of Dortches, Town Administrator
	JoSeth Bocook	City of Rocky Mount, Planning Administrator
	Jackie Vick	Town of Dortches
	James Alston	Town of Castalia

Main Themes

- Infrastructure and utility planning is badly needed
- Would like to see Internet connectivity

Discussion Summary

- Middlesex area



- Development of the Middlesex corporate center is important to the southern area.
 - Water service is adequate; Sewer capacity is the limiting factor.
 - Residential development
 - ~90 homes on Claude Lewis Road
 - ~118 homes on west side of Town anticipated soon, served by CORPUD (City of Raleigh Public Utilities Division)
 - Sewer service from CORPUD
 - Significant I&I problem has been remediated partially by recent upgrade project.
 - ~\$3M of upgrades anticipated to alleviate I&I issues.
 - 270,000GPD current capacity; likely no more capacity from CORPUD. Some expansion possible but might not happen because of where and how it discharges (Moccasin Creek).
 - Desire to grow but controlled.
 - Castalia
 - Would like to connect to sewer, to attract business, residents, etc.
 - Would like better internet access. Opportunity to partner with local municipalities.
 - County has acquired the Town's water system and water tower. County is in the process of assessing the potential for wireless/broadband access.
 - Rocky Mount
 - Basically requires annexation to get public utilities.
 - More development interest in the past 18 months about developing in/near Rocky Mount.
 - Sunset Ave and new interchange is a major development opportunity area.
 - Seeing push for dense single family detached residential.
 - Dortches
 - Better and more stable internet service desired.
 - Water and (limited) sewer provided by Nash County services, which was a recent transfer.
 - Community does not want more development or smaller lots.
 - Most of jurisdiction is on septic, which restricts lots size.
 - All roads are NCDOT roads.
 - General
 - Without County water access, you can't get lots lower than 30,000 sqft, because lots are septic limited.
 - No comments on the current County FLUM.
 - Communities agreed that the County is in general a good partner.
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Meeting 4 Agriculture

Date: 10/05/2021

Time: 1:30pm

Attendees

Theme	Name	Affiliation
Agriculture	Maryanna Waters	N.C. Cooperative Extension, Agriculture Field Crop Agent
	Edward Long	Soil & Water Conservation District, Resource Conservation Director
	Johnny Barnes	Barnes Land Corporation
	Linda Fisher	Fisher Pumpkin Farm
	Freddy Howell	H.S. Howell Farms
	Jeff Tyson	Tyson Family Farms

Major Themes

- Landowners should be educated on their options for their land, other than just selling when they retire
- Need to plan for orderly, contextually appropriate growth and development
- Soil and water quality protections needed

Discussion Summary

- Traffic around Nashville. Would be nice not to have to drive through it.
- Want to preserve soil and water quality. Also, could address noise pollution.
- Written statement provided by attendee:
 - Need to plan for orderly growth and development.
 - Roads and schools are needed.
 - Wants residential development near municipalities.
 - Bailey sewer moratorium since early 1990s.
 - Limit road-front lots, build more interior roads.
- Farm equipment on roads. How can we safely accommodate?
- County Commissioners are of two schools of thought.
 - One is to limit to 1-acre lots.
 - Other is that smaller lot sizes help limit sprawl.
- Areas with sandy soil, good for sewer systems and sweet potatoes.
- Impact fees on new residential development for schools?
- Not about lot size, more about not fronting thoroughfares. Just want homes in subdivisions with interior roads.
- Need appropriate infrastructure to support growth.
- Traffic volume is an issue for ag.
- Need to be conscious of water quality. Swift creek and other creeks have high water quality, and it should be kept that way.
- Retiring farmers



- need more alternatives.
 - Need to know about selling for conservation
 - Orange county – small farm grants
 - Alamance county sets aside money for buying farmland.
 - Growth of solar farms
 - good for poor-quality farmland
 - should avoid on high-quality soils and near interchanges
 - Need to consider wholesale retail
 - Can the County study the possibility of a PPP for getting water and sewer to encourage development at interchanges?
 - More broadband connectivity would help.
 - Would be nice if processing were closer to raw product.
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Meeting 5 Building and Development

Date: 10/05/2021

Time: 2:45pm

Attendees

Theme	Name	Affiliation
Building & Development	Jason Walters	Walters Team (Realtor)
	Ron Sutton	Herring-Sutton & Associates (Engineer/Surveyor)

Main Themes

- Need to figure out how smaller lots will be dealt with by the County
- People want large lots
- Need to consider stormwater treatment and anticipating urbanization by strengthening regulations

Discussion Summary

- Schools needed to serve the new residential growth.
- Local home builders are now in competition with regional home builders.
- There is interest in the County’s position on smaller (i.e. - ~20,000-25,000 sqft) lots and whether those are appropriate or if they compromise the municipalities that might otherwise absorb that growth.
- Stormwater treatment will also be an issue (otherwise negative water quality impacts) and needs specific attention to accommodate the future growth.
- Expected that nutrient regulation will expand into the Neuse River watershed soon, as well as the existing regulation in the Tar/Pamlico watershed.
- Current development pressure wherever County waterlines exist, because then residential lots can be physically accommodated on ~20,000 sqft lots.
- There is less developer risk associated in rural, suburban residential septic lots than impact fees and other costs associated with developing in the municipalities.



- In part, this is driven by land costs and street/right-of-way improvements.
- House prices in Nash County are significantly cheaper than in neighboring areas just across the Wake County line.
- Homes on greater than one acre are difficult to find.
- Starter homes are now roughly \$250,000. Housing affordability will be a bigger issue in the future than supply.
- Drinking water and sewer system development will be the largest factor holding back growth in Nash County.
 - Water:
 - Drinking water source is important. Tar River Reservoir is the main provider, but likely limited expansion potential.
 - Supply from drilled wells is a significant cost and limiting factor to development.
 - Discussion about private community wells (private community water systems) and how they are regulated by the current land use plan.
 - Public provision of water supply is viewed as more reliable (long-term responsibility) and a good way to regulate growth. The public is better served by public water service provision. If community systems are used, it should be only as a stop gap measure with a clear path toward eventual public absorption and control.
 - County extension of water service (through a master planned water system) would be beneficial, especially if there is interconnection with municipal systems. County could take a leading role in coordinating and master planning. Placing this infrastructure in areas that can adequately accept and support growth is key (i.e. – schools, roads, social services, suitable soils, etc.). However, legacy placement of water lines does not necessarily correlate with a coordinated, thoughtful growth management strategy, since these projects may have been constructed based on grants and not necessarily comprehensive planning.
 - Water conservation will be more of an issue in the future. County should mandate water-saving fixtures.
 - Sewer:
 - Wastewater treatment is a huge limiting factor, too.
 - Discussion around off-site septic systems generally discussed the drawbacks associated with them.
 - County should not necessarily get in the sewer system business.
- How can the land use plan address the conflict where farmland is pitted against development potential (i.e. – both want the good soils), in an area with limited sewer service.