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Craven County Selects First New Planning and Community Development/Inspections Director in 45 Years

NEW BERN, N.C. – Chad Strawn of Cove City, North Carolina has been selected as Craven County's first new Planning and Community Development/Inspections Director in 45 years. Strawn replaced longtime Planning and Community Development/Inspections Director, Don Baumgardner, who retired March 28, 2023 after serving the citizens of Craven County since 1978.

Strawn most recently served as the Assistant Planning and Community Development/Inspections Director for Craven County since 2007. Originally from Monroe, North Carolina, he has served within the Craven County Planning and Community Development/Inspections Department for the last 19 years in various positions such as Assistant Director, Planner I and Planning Technician. Before starting with Craven County, Strawn served as Planner and Code Enforcement Officer with the Town of Williamston, North Carolina for just over a year.

Strawn has 20 years of experience in the public planning sector, and he is a Nationally Certified Floodplain Manager and North Carolina Certified Zoning Official. Strawn earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Urban and Regional Planning with minors in Environmental and Coastal Resources from East Carolina University.

"Replacing a long-time, experienced department head is not easy to do. Chad has worked hard for Craven County for 19 years. As the former Assistant Planning and Community Development/Inspections Director, Chad served alongside Don Baumgardner and me through some of the toughest challenges Craven County has faced," stated Jack B. Veit, III, Craven County Manager.

Strawn began his new role of Planning and Community Development/Inspections Director on March 29, 2023.

"Chad knows Craven County, its geography, its communities, and its culture well."

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