

CRAVEN COUNTY

CAMA LAND USE PLAN

ADOPTED BY THE CRAVEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS: 11/3/2025

CERTIFIED BY THE NC DIVISION OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT: 12/10/2025



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Appendix A. Citizen Participation Plan



Matrix for Land Use Plan Elements – 15A NCAC 7B .0702	
	Page Reference(s)
ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Matrix that shows the location of the required elements as set forth in this Rule 	viii-xi
COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND ASPIRATIONS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of the dominant growth-related conditions that influence land use, development, water quality and other environmental concerns in the planning area 	51, 57, 68, 70, 72, 75, 88-120, 145
Description of the land use and development topics most important to the future of the planning area, including:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Access 	137-141
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land Use Compatibility 	72-86
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure Carrying Capacity 	68-70
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural Hazard Areas 	88-98
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Quality 	111-118
COMMUNITY VISION	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of the general physical appearance and form that represents the local government’s plan for the future. It shall include objectives to be achieved by the plan and identify changes that may be needed to achieve the planning vision. 	17-21
EXISTING AND EMERGING CONDITIONS	
Population, Housing and Economy	
Discussion of the following data and trends:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent population growth trends using data from the two most decennial Censuses 	57-58
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current permanent and seasonal population estimates 	59-60
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key population characteristics including age and income 	57-61
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thirty-year projections of permanent and seasonal population in five-year increments 	59-60
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimate of current housing stock, including permanent and seasonal units, tenure, and types of units (single-family, multifamily, and manufactured) 	61-65
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of employment by major sectors and community economic activity 	123-125
Natural Systems	
Description of natural features in the planning jurisdiction to include:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Areas of Environmental Concern (AECs) as set forth in Subchapter 15A NCAC 07H 	98-110
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil characteristics, including limitations for septic tanks, erodibility, and other factors related to development 	91-93
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Management Commission (EMC) water quality classifications and related use support designations 	112-118
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) shellfish growing areas and water quality conditions 	110
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flood and other natural hazard areas 	88-91
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storm surge areas 	90-91, 94-96
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-coastal wetlands, including forested wetlands, shrub-scrub wetlands and freshwater marshes 	101-104
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water supply watersheds or wellhead protection areas 	116-118
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary nursery areas 	109
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmentally fragile areas, such as wetlands, natural heritage areas, areas containing endangered species, prime wildlife habitats, or maritime forests 	100-110
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional natural features or conditions identified by the local government 	N/A, only identified requirements of NCDCM

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	Page Reference(s)
Environmental Conditions	
Discussion of environmental conditions within the planning jurisdiction to include an assessment of the following conditions and features:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status and changes of surface water quality; including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impaired streams from the most recent Division of Water Resources (DWR) Basin Planning Branch Reports • Clean Water Act 303 (d) List • Other comparable data 	117-118
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current situation and trends on permanent and temporary closures of shell fishing waters as determined by the Report of Sanitary Survey by the Shellfish Sanitation and Recreational Water Quality Section of the DMF 	118-120
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas experiencing chronic wastewater treatment malfunctions 	N/A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas with water quality or public health problems related to non-point source pollution 	110
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas subject to recurrent flooding, storm surges and high winds 	120
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas experiencing significant shoreline erosion as evidenced by the presence of threatened structures or public facilities 	88-96
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmentally fragile areas (as defined in Part (c)(2)(A)(ix) of this Rule) or areas where resources functions are impacted as a result of development 	98
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resource areas that are being impacted or lost as a result of incompatible development. These may include, but are not limited to the following: coastal wetlands, protected open space, and agricultural land. 	98-110
	100-104, 127, 142
Existing Land Use and Development	
MAP of existing land use patterns	74
Description of the existing land use patterns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimates of the land area allocated to each land use category • Characteristics of each land use category • MAP of historic, cultural, and scenic areas designated by a state or federal agency or by the local government 	72-73
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Descriptions of the historic, cultural and scenic areas	120-122
Community Facilities	
Evaluation of existing and planned capacity, location and adequacy of community facilities to include:	
MAP of existing and planned public and private water supply service areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of existing public and private water supply systems to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing condition - Existing capacity - Documented overflows, bypasses or other problems that may degrade water quality or constitute a threat to public health as documented by the DWR - Future water supply needs based on population projections 	69
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	68-69
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MAP of existing and planned public and private wastewater service areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of existing public and private wastewater systems to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing condition - Existing capacity - Documented overflows, bypasses or other problems that may degrade water quality or constitute a threat to public health as documented by the DWR - Future wastewater system needs based on population projections 	N/A, no County wastewater service area
	70-71
	70
	70
	70
MAP of existing and planned multimodal transportation systems and port and airport facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of any highway segments deemed by the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) as having unacceptable service as documented in the most recent NCDOT Transportation and/or Thoroughfare Plan 	52, 54,56
	53



Community Facilities, contd.	Page Reference(s)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of highway facilities on the current thoroughfare plan or current transportation improvement plan 	53	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of the impact of existing transportation facilities on land use patterns 	51-55	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of the existing public stormwater management system 	51	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of existing drainage problems and water quality issues related to point-source discharges of stormwater runoff 	115	
	Policy Citation(s)	Page Reference(s)
Future Land Use		
Policies		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies that exceed the use standards and permitting requirements found in Subchapter 7H, State Guidelines for Areas of Environmental Concern 	N/A	N/A
Policies that address the Coastal Resources Commission's (CRC's) management topics:		
Public Access Management Goal: <i>Maximize public access to the beaches and the public trust waters of the coastal region.</i>		
The planning objectives for public access are local government plan policies that:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address access needs and opportunities 	1.4.1-1.4.7	25-26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify strategies to develop public access 	1.4.1-1.4.7	25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address provisions for all segments of the community, including persons with disabilities 	1.4.2	25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For oceanfront communities, establish access policies for beach areas targeted for nourishment 	N/A	N/A
Land Use Compatibility Management Goal: <i>Ensure that development and use of resources or preservation of land balance protection of natural resources and fragile areas with economic development, and avoids risks to public health, safety, and welfare.</i>		
The planning objectives for land use compatibility are local government plan policies that:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characterize future land use and development patterns 	13.1.1-13.1.8, 13.2.1-13.2.5, 13.3.1-13.3.9, 13.4.1-13.4.8	34-35
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish mitigation criteria and concepts to minimize conflicts 	6.1.1-6.1.11, 7.1.1-7.1.10	44
Infrastructure Carrying Capacity Management Goal: <i>Ensure that public infrastructure systems are sized, located, and managed so the quality and productivity of AECs and other fragile areas are protected or restored.</i>		
The planning objectives for infrastructure carrying capacity are local government plan policies that:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish service criteria 	10.2.1-10.2.9, 10.3.1-10.3.5	39-40
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure improvements minimize impacts to AECs and other fragile areas 	1.1.1-1.1.6, 1.2.1-1.2.3, 1.3.1-1.3.7, 1.5.1-1.5.4, 1.6.1-1.6.10	24-27

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<p>Natural Hazard Areas Management Goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conserve and maintain barrier dunes, beaches, floodplains, and other coastal features for their natural storm protection functions and their natural resources giving recognition to public health, safety, and welfare issues. 		
The planning objectives for natural hazard areas are local government plan policies that:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish mitigation and adaptation concepts and criteria for development and redevelopment, including public facilities 	1.3.1-1.3.7, 1.6.1-1.6.10	24, 34-35, 44-45
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimize threats to life, property and natural resources resulting from erosion, high winds, storm surge, flooding, or other natural hazards 	1.1.1-1.1.6, 6.1.1-6.1.11, 7.1.1-7.1.10, 13.2.1-13.2.5, 13.4.1-13.4.8	26-27, 34-35, 44-45
<p>Water Quality Management Goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain, protect and where possible enhance water quality in all coastal wetlands, rivers, streams, and estuaries. 		
The planning objectives for water quality are local government plan policies that:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish strategies and practices to prevent or control nonpoint source pollution 	1.5.1-1.5.4	26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish strategies and practices to maintain or improve water quality 	1.6.1-1.6.10	26-27
Future Land Use Map	Page Reference(s)	
MAP of future land uses that depicts the policies for growth and development and the desired future patterns of land use and development with consideration given to natural system constraints and infrastructure	77	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptions of land uses and development associated with the future land use map designations 	75-76	
Tools for Managing Development		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of the role of plan policies, including the future land use map, in local decisions regarding land use and development 	151-156	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of the community's development management program, including local ordinances, codes, and other plans and policies 	151-156	
Action Plan and Implementation Schedule		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of actions that will be taken by the local government to implement policies that meet the CRC's management topic goals and objectives, specifying fiscal year(s) in which each action is anticipated to start and finish 	157-183	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of specific steps the local government plans to take to implement the policies, including adoption and amendment of local ordinances, other plans, and special projects 	157-183	



CHAPTER 1: CRAVEN COUNTY’S FUTURE

Welcome to Craven County’s Future!

Craven County has been a place that provides an outstanding quality of life for its citizens for many decades. The County is comprised of people who are passionate about the sense of community that Craven County offers and the prosperity that can be achieved in Craven County. The natural environment, resources, and community pride that exist within Craven County are valuable and should be celebrated and protected as the County prepares for the future. For the future residents of Craven County, as well as the many other visitors who have identified Craven County as being a preferred place for recreation and enjoyment, it is important that this plan make a concerted effort towards sustainability and preserving the elements of Craven County. Sustainability is best achieved when the community understands its purpose and is working toward its attainment. Sustaining Craven County’s future can be best defined as preserving today’s environment and all that it has to offer so that tomorrow’s generation may reap the benefits. The citizens of Craven County invested their time and attention into ensuring that this document represents all that is to be protected within the County as well as ensuring that the goals and strategies within this plan are designed to create a future that is representative of its history and structured for growth in a sustainable manner.

The American Planning Association provided framework in the form of Sustaining Places: Best Practices for Comprehensive Plans as a guide for communities to develop comprehensive plans in a manner that account for sustainability and resilience. Following the framework provided by the APA allows for plans to be developed using a systems approach. This approach allows for Craven County to plan for its future by moving away from siloed approaches and comprehensively examining the relationship between systems and how they affect one another. By accounting for the interrelationship amongst existing systems, the plan can be developed in a manner that is aimed towards creating a sustainable future. This plan will be developed around 5 principles.

- 1 Livable Built Environment
- 2 Harmony with Nature
- 3 Resilient Economy
- 4 Community Health
- 5 Regional Role

This plan has been designed with an effort to address the built and existing natural environment of Craven County and to include the vision of the community as the basis for the development of goals & policies. The inclusion of CAMA requirements within this Comprehensive Plan aligns with a systems approach to planning and allows for this plan to address the environmental and coastal areas of concern in future planning efforts. This effort is accomplished by determining the value that these areas hold within the community, and the importance that they serve in recreation, mitigation, and the overall health and harmony of the built environment that is Craven County.

Sustainability as defined by the American Planning Association – The balance of needs of current and future generations with the need to preserve the natural environment.

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Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA)

The Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) applies to the 20 coastal counties of North Carolina. These counties, which includes Craven County, are subject to the requirements of the Coastal Resources Commission (CRC) who is the administrator of the Coastal Area Management Act. CAMA requires that the identified counties adopt and maintain a land use plan in accordance with CRC guidelines 15A NCAC 07B. The guidelines may be incorporated into a Comprehensive Plan. The NC Division of Coastal Management utilizes this plan when making decisions regarding CAMA permit applications. The guidelines established by the CRC will be addressed in Chapter 4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies and Chapter 11: Implementation, Prioritization, Management, and Action. The guidelines will be addressed in a unique format through policy that represents best practices and ultimately serves the general interests of the citizens of Craven County.

CAMA Specific Topics

(addressed in Ch. 4 & 11)

- Public Access
- Land Use Compatibility
- Infrastructure Capacity
- Natural Hazard Areas
- Water Quality



Why Plan?

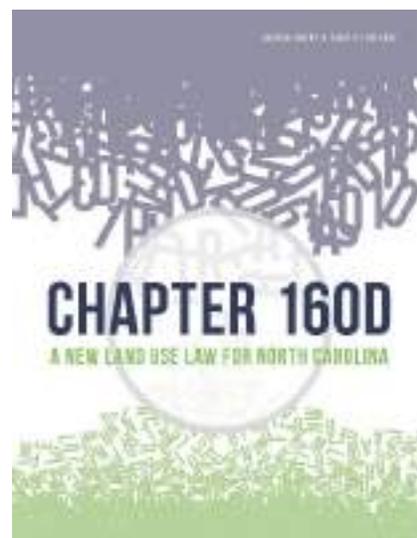
The need to plan and the importance of planning should never be disregarded or ignored. The American Planning Association credits planning as being the elected leaders most effective tool for managing growth, navigating change, and making tough decisions that face communities. Craven County faces unique challenges, as well as other common challenges that many other counties throughout the state experience. As the cost of living fluctuates, populations & job markets change, industries relocate, housing demands and desires evolve, and the global climate changes, this plan should be consulted and provide guidance as to how to address such topics and issues in a manner that is sustainable and is in the best interest of the citizens of Craven County.

This plan includes 30-year projections related to population growth; however, this plan should be periodically reviewed on a 5 to 10-year basis and should not undergo a period of more than 15-20 years without being updated. When this plan is used properly and consulted in decision making, the plan will guide the leaders of Craven County in a direction that is intended to result in the protection of the natural and built environment of the County as well as the public health, safety and welfare of its citizens.



The State of North Carolina recognizes the importance of planning and in the most recent update to the North Carolina General Statutes (NCGS) which resulted in the creation of Chapter 160D, land use planning received its own separate article and acknowledgement of its relevance in regulating land use within the State of North Carolina. NCGS 160D, Article 5, provides statutory language establishing that a comprehensive plan is a legal requirement for the enforcement of zoning within North Carolina. This requirement is because many decisions made under the authority of land use regulations are required to recognize their consistency/inconsistency with the unit of governments adopted comprehensive plan. While Craven County may not have comprehensive county-wide zoning, the comprehensive plan still serves a vital role in guiding development and its contents should be adhered to by all forms of development and land use decisions within the county. NCGS 160D-501 identifies the following topics that may be addressed within the comprehensive plan:

- ✚ Trends, Values, Vision, & Guiding Principles
- ✚ Issues & Opportunities
- ✚ Land Use
- ✚ Transportation
- ✚ Employment
- ✚ Economic Development
- ✚ Infrastructure
- ✚ Community Facilities
- ✚ Housing
- ✚ Recreation
- ✚ Hazards & Mitigation
- ✚ Environment & Natural Resource Protection
- ✚ Implementation Measures



Plan Guidance

This plan provides guidance and serves as a tool for the Craven County Board of Commissioners and Craven County Staff to implement the prioritized actions described in further detail in Chapter 11. The commitment to the implementation of the plan and its inclusion in land use decisions should produce successful scenarios and outcomes for Craven County. This plan is an advisory document in respect to land use planning decisions under the North Carolina General Statutes and is not a regulatory document, meaning that it cannot be legally enforceable in the manner that an Ordinance can. This plan is a regulatory document by the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management. This plan will provide multiple recommendations that are designed to make Craven County more sustainable in the future and to provide avenues for more efficient and environmentally friendly development and types of land uses. Adherence to the contents of this plan will create a future that includes more aesthetically pleasing development, flexible development with a variety of housing options, strategically planned areas for industrial growth and job opportunities, continued protection of prime agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas, and a sustainable distribution of uses.

This plan should be frequently reviewed and consulted by not only members of Craven County Government but by other private stakeholders and potential investors and developers so that development can be provided that is not haphazard in its arrangement and that is identified as being the desirable types of development that meet the identified needs of the citizens of Craven County. The goals, objectives, and policies within this plan have been carefully designed based on the input received from the community and stakeholders of Craven County. They are

1: Sustainable Craven County

intended to guide decisions and be the determining factors in certain situations as to whether the proposed development truly is consistent with the overall vision of this plan.

The involvement of the public to create this plan should not cease with the adoption of the plan. The public should continuously be involved and consulted in land use decisions and have the opportunity to make comments on development. In order for the citizens to be aware of the plan's implementation and use, Craven County is encouraged to release an annual update. This update could include contents such as a matrix or narrative progress report which shows measurable progress concerning the implementation actions indicated in the plan.

This plan is to be heavily consulted and to serve as an influence on any Ordinance or Policy officially adopted and enforced by the Craven County Board of Commissioners. The contents of such documents should be written in a manner designed to achieve the themes and identified goals of this plan, as such documents are the greatest tool to implement the contents of this plan. The plan should also be reviewed annually as the County prepares its Fiscal Year Budget as well as its Capital Improvements Program to implement areas of the plan that are feasible and have received the highest priority for implementation.

In conclusion, this plan will be as effective as Craven County desires it to be. Failure to adhere to the contents or recommendations of the plan could potentially result in a future that does not similarly represent the vision expressed by Craven County citizens during the public engagement portion of the planning process.

Plan Structure

Chapter 1: Sustainable Craven County

An introduction to the CAMA Comprehensive Plan which includes descriptions of the authority and purpose of planning. The basic framework for the design of this plan and the guidance on how this plan is to be utilized in the most efficient manner.

Chapter 2: Craven County Citizens

Establishes why the citizens are the most important part of the planning process and describes the methods in which citizens and stakeholders were engaged to produce the contents of the plan.

Chapter 3: Vision of Craven County

Includes the "Vision Statement" for Craven County and identifies the key themes and principles that guided the development of this plan.

Chapter 4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Contains goals based around key themes & principles of the plan. Goals are developed from a systems approach and will include measurable objectives and policies that correspond to each goal.

Chapter 5: Craven County Today

Provides a brief history of Craven County and includes a summary of Craven County as it exists today. Includes many datasets that were evaluated for projections and making determinations of what areas the County has statistically observable needs.



Chapter 6: Livable Built Environment

The systems approach to creating a better built future environment by evaluating the current physical nature of the County today and how to sustainably plan around what exists and what will be needed in the future to satisfy the needs of Craven County citizens. Includes the following topics: transportation, citizen needs, infrastructure, existing land use, and future land use.

Chapter 7: Harmony with Nature

A comprehensive examination of the environment of Craven County including agriculture, hazards and environmentally protected or sensitive areas, and coastal resources. Includes all relevant portions of the environment and natural resources that must be accounted for in the CAMA planning process.

Chapter 8: Resilient Economy

An evaluation of the current economic climate of Craven County and how to ensure that activities and strategies are established to support economic development in the future as well as recognizing the tourism industry and its importance to Craven County.

Chapter 9: Healthy Community

Addressing the needs of the community and the importance of ensuring that the citizens of Craven County have options and amenities available to them that increase and contribute to their overall health. Topics include food access, public safety, recreation areas, healthy design, and removal of barriers to health.

Chapter 10: Craven County within the Region

Examines the role that Craven County plays within the region and the necessity for regional communication and coordination as well as the importance of partnerships and local municipal support.

Chapter 11: Implementation, Prioritization, Management, and Action

Addresses the “Tools for Managing Development” as required by CAMA as well as includes a prioritized lists of implementation actions.

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CHAPTER 2: CRAVEN COUNTY CITIZENS

Importance of Public Engagement

Historically, comprehensive plans have been developed with public engagement serving as a requirement or a “box to check” in the development of the plan. This mentality and approach to comprehensive planning has resulted in final plans being produced that may be technically accurate from a data standpoint and may present valid solutions to challenges that exist within the community, but the resulting plan is not one that necessarily supports the desires or the vision of the community. Plans developed using this traditional method have resulted in the public feeling undervalued and left out. As a result of this method, they have a lack of faith in the plan itself and a sense of “community buy-in” to the contents of the plan is non-existent. The results of this type of engagement in the development of a plan can result in a lack of trust in the governing body itself and the citizens grow irritable and non-supportive of any type of development or future government initiative. Serving the public interest lies at the core of planning and to adequately serve the public interest, Craven County has made public engagement a priority in the development of the plan.

The success of this plan and effective implementation of its contents begins with ensuring that the plan itself includes a vision and themes that reflect the desires and ideas of the citizens of Craven County. Craven County made a concerted effort throughout the planning process to reach all groups of people within the County. One of the main goals for public engagement in the development of this plan was to achieve maximum participation from the citizens of Craven County by making the engagement events inviting and easily accessible for attendance. The goal of all public engagement meetings was to not simply inform the public of what was taking place but to engage, involve, and empower the public to assist in the formation of the plan. Craven County was committed to ensuring that this plan would be developed with the desires of the public at the core of the process.

The public of Craven County was engaged in the process to build consensus around the principles, vision, ideas, and themes of this plan. Including the public, through extensive outreach and engagement, assists in their understanding that the goals and policies of this plan were developed with their desires at the core of construction. The public of Craven County should have confidence in knowing that every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this plan support and are directed to provide a high quality of life and satisfaction in the place that they call home. Craven County is planning for a sustainable future in which citizen needs are being addressed and met.



2: Craven County Citizens

Methods of Public Engagement

The traditional methods of advertising for a public engagement meeting or public hearing and expecting a diverse representation of the population of Craven County to show up and participate is not only impractical but is outdated in practice. While all hearings and engagement events were advertised in a traditional method, proactive steps were taken to engage the population and garner maximum participation from the public. Community groups and stakeholders were contacted prior to the events to ensure they were aware of and encouraged to attend and participate in the planning process.

Citizen Participation Plan (CPP)

The general framework for the methodology of engaging the citizens of Craven County and the role that the Planning Board, Board of Commissioners, and the Joint Ad Hoc Work Group would serve in this process were established and formally adopted by the Craven County Board of Commissioners on March 18, 2024 (see Appendix A) in the form of the Citizen Participation Plan (CPP). The following provides the roles of each of the groups identified in the CPP.

Craven County Citizens

- Drivers of the planning process. The input provided and direction given by the citizens of Craven County will ultimately dictate the vision of the 2025 Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan.

Planning Board

- Will review the final DRAFT plan and provide a recommendation of approval to the Board of Commissioners for adoption or rejection of the proposed 2025 Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan.

Ad Hoc Work Group

- A joint workgroup composed of two members of the Craven County Planning Board and two members of the Craven County Board of Commissioners. The Ad Hoc Work Group served as the primary body tasked with reviewing the DRAFT chapters of the plan and review of the input received from the Craven County citizens to ensure that the plan was being developed consistent with the desired vision of the citizens of the County and that the plan was one that fostered sustainability and resiliency. The members selected to serve on the Ad Hoc Work Group included Jason Jones (BOC Chair), Denny Bucher (BOC Vice-Chair), Daniel Hill, Jr. (Planning Board Chair), and Thomas Lelli (Planning Board Vice-Chair).

Board of Commissioners

- Tasked with review and adoption or rejection of the final DRAFT and proposed 2025 Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan.

At all public engagement events, citizens had the opportunity to sign up for email notifications which contained status updates of the plan development. Citizens were encouraged to review and provide comments on the DRAFT chapters of the plan as they were added to the project website (plancravencounty.com). Methods of outreach and public engagement are provided below.

- Citizen surveys
- Project website
- Craven County Government website
- Social media (Facebook)
- Outreach to public organizations & community groups
- Identified stakeholder engagement
- Newspaper advertisements



Citizen & Stakeholder Surveys

The surveys made available to the citizens of Craven County were developed and released to the public in May of 2024 and were accessible until September 2024. The citizen survey could be taken either electronically or via hardcopy at the Craven County Planning Department. Online surveys were chosen as the method to receive public input outside of scheduled public engagement meetings due to the accessibility that surveys provide to most of the population as well as the fact that surveys have a proven record of being cost effective. The changing climate of the world to a form of technology driven communication and interaction has also made the surveys an ideal method to reach the citizens of Craven County as well as property owners who may not live within the area. While the survey does have the ability to reach a large portion of the population, Craven County does acknowledge that surveys will not reach all citizens of the County due to limitations to technological access and the overall trend of online surveys typically not being utilized by older members of the population.

The citizen survey was strategically developed based off initial input received from the identified stakeholders, Board of Commissioners, and the input received at the first public engagement meeting. The research conducted prior to the development of the survey was critical for the project team to craft questions that garnered results and answers that would be the most beneficial in determining the vision and needs of the citizens and translating the results into goals and objectives that would meet them.

The identified stakeholders were also provided with a survey that contained questions similar in nature to those that were made available to all citizens; however, the stakeholder survey contained questions requiring a more in-depth response. By providing a separate survey to the stakeholders, we can consider the needs and perspectives of certain organizations and industries and determine how to sustainably plan for a future that not only considers these needs but provides for implementable avenues for the needs to be achieved.

2: Craven County Citizens

Stakeholders

In the initial stages of the planning process, it was determined that engagement with identified stakeholders would be an integral part in shaping the vision for Craven County. Discussions with both the Craven County Planning Department and the Craven County Board of Commissioners led to the establishment of the identified stakeholders who would be contacted throughout the planning process and informed of updates and opportunities to provide comment and review. These stakeholders were personally invited to attend all public engagement meetings and were encouraged to build interest in the planning process amongst their communities and organizations. The following citizens were the identified stakeholders in development of the plan:

- ✚ Leela Baggett, Farm Bureau
- ✚ Myrtle Downing, James City Community Organization
- ✚ Rhonda Murray, MCAS Cherry Point
- ✚ Kevin Roberts, New Bern Area Chamber of Commerce
- ✚ Britt Warren, Craven County Home Builders Association
- ✚ Jeremy Jackson, JC Jackson
- ✚ Bobby Stuart, DR Horton
- ✚ Sydes Construction
- ✚ Jeff Wood, Craven 100 Alliance
- ✚ Whitney Woodall, Neuse River Regional Association of Realtors
- ✚ Bud Salter, Salter Marine/Plantation Harbor
- ✚ Bill Luzadder
- ✚ Ronald Becton
- ✚ Katrina Marshall, City of Havelock
- ✚ Deanna Trebil, New Bern Area MPO
- ✚ David Bone, Eastern Carolina Council of Government
- ✚ Micky Anderson, Down East RPO
- ✚ Jennifer Dacey, Craven County Board of Education
- ✚ Lauren Kitzinger, Craven County Board of Education

Public Engagement Meetings

The development of the plan included four (4) public engagement meetings held at scattered locations throughout Craven County. These public engagement meetings were heavily promoted and advertised as the County fully acknowledged their importance and the opportunity that they provided for authentic community engagement. Each meeting had an established agenda and purpose. These meetings were invaluable in the development of the plan and were a primary source of the development of the vision, goals and objectives of this plan.

Public Engagement Meeting #1

The first meeting was held on April 30, 2024, at the NC Cooperative Extension – Craven County Center. The meeting was attended by 21 citizens, and all participated in the exercises provided at the meeting. The purpose of the first meeting was to establish an understanding of how the citizens felt about the content of the 2009 Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan and determine their thoughts on certain topics and elements of the County that were identified in the existing plan. Citizens were also given the opportunity to provide input on what should be addressed in the development of the 2025 Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan.



The key takeaways from the first public meeting were as follows:

- ✦ It is important to preserve agricultural land and environmentally sensitive areas.
- ✦ Flexible housing is desired.
- ✦ Certain design standards are needed.
- ✦ Expanded transportation options are desired.
- ✦ Committed to supporting the mission of MCAS Cherry Point.
- ✦ New methods of recreation and youth activities.
- ✦ Protect minority groups within Craven County.
- ✦ Provide commercial opportunities in proximity to the waterfront.
- ✦ Provide job training and attract renewable energy industry.
- ✦ Improve internet and service capacity within the County.

Public Engagement Meeting #2

The second meeting was held on June 20, 2024, at Brinson Memorial Elementary School. The meeting was attended by 20 citizens of Craven County and a group of 9 students from East Carolina University who attended for the purpose of observing the planning process. All citizens participated in the exercises and engagement opportunities that were provided at the meeting. The purpose of the second meeting was to determine the vision and direction of the Land Use Plan. A SWOT Analysis and theme prioritization exercise were the main strategies used to help determine the ultimate direction that this plan should take. The input received at the second community meeting aided in establishing the baseline in which this plan was developed. The results of this meeting will help shape policy and the context of the plan's recommendations to maximize on the strengths and the potential that exist within the County while making conscious efforts to address weaknesses and mitigate against potential threats. The second community meeting also provided the project team with insight on the core values of Craven County citizens. Furthermore, the SWOT Analysis made evident the topics and areas of potential that have been addressed in this plan. The key takeaways from the second public meeting were as follows:

SWOT Analysis Results

- ✦ **Strengths:** Craven County benefits from its geographic location due to the access that is available to the Neuse River and the aesthetically pleasing natural landscapes that exist within the County.
- ✦ **Strengths:** Overall, the citizens of the County are knowledgeable of the needs of the County and are willing to help and engage in community initiatives.
- ✦ **Weaknesses:** There is a lack of affordable housing for both citizens who wish to rent and own homes.
- ✦ **Opportunities:** Growth within the County after the NCDOT transportation improvements have been completed.

2: Craven County Citizens

- ✚ **Opportunities:** Revitalization and reuse of areas for recreational purposes.
- ✚ **Threats:** Unregulated land use that has the potential of posing threats to overall quality of life and safety and uncontrolled growth along Interstate 42
- ✚ **Threats:** Haphazard and unorganized land development (housing) that is not meeting the citizens' needs.
- ✚ **Threats:** Loss of environmentally valuable and agriculturally important areas.
- ✚ **Threats:** Properties that experience repetitive flooding and loss due to flooding.

Guiding Themes and Plan Principles Voting Results

Citizens were asked to vote on selected themes/principles for the plan that they desired to be core components of the vision and direction of the plan. Citizens were asked to select the three principles that they believed would be most important in determining the direction and types of goals and policies that the plan should possess. Citizens also had the opportunity to identify themes and principles that were missing. While all these themes/principles have been addressed to a certain extent in this plan, the three that have been identified as most important, **Safety, Housing, and Education**, will be incorporated into the overall vision and direction of the plan and will serve as a reference point as goals and policies are created.

- **Community** – 2 votes
- **Safety** – 9 votes
- **Aesthetics** – 0 votes
- **Preservation** – 5 votes
- **Equity** – 2 votes
- **Diversity** – 1 vote
- **Innovation** – 1 vote
- **Housing** – 7 votes
- **Employment** – 5 votes
- **Environment** – 6 votes
- **Sustainability** – 4 votes
- **Recreation** – 3 votes
- **Education** - 7 votes



Other Takeaways

- ✚ People take pride in the sense of community that exists within Craven County.
- ✚ People value the quality of life that exists and feel confident in the County's leadership and their awareness of the issues that exist within the County.
- ✚ Citizens value the nature within Craven County and the events and activities made available within the County.
- ✚ Citizens feel that opportunities exist within the County and that more job options are available.

Public Engagement Meeting #3

On August 20, 2024, the third community meeting was held at the Township Six Fire Department. There were 34 citizens in attendance at the meeting to provide their thoughts and recommendations for the development of the land use plan. The primary goal of this meeting was to gauge the citizens' thoughts on two DRAFT Vision Statements and to allow for citizens to participate in a future land use map exercise.

To determine the best potential future land use designations, citizens were asked to identify types of uses they wished to see in certain geographic areas of the County. There were 6 separate stations set up in the meeting room that provided citizens with the opportunity to provide input and to learn about existing land use and the purpose of future land use designations. The input received at this meeting has provided necessary data, coupled with public opinion, that served integral in revising the DRAFT Vision Statements into one encompassing statement as well as the foundation to develop a DRAFT Future Land Use Map.

Existing Land Use & Observation Results

The citizens in attendance were able to familiarize themselves with existing patterns of land development within the County as well as have knowledge of where certain lands and adjacent uses may be more susceptible to hazards due to the proximity of the flood zone. The farmland soils map provided citizens with insight as to the amount of valuable land that exists within the County and the production potential that it possesses. The station also included a synopsis of the observations from the first two community meetings so that citizens could be aware of what other members of the County have identified as being important to the development of the plan. The station provided foundational knowledge that allowed the citizens to have a greater understanding of what should be identified in the future land use exercise.



Community Meeting #3 – Township Six Fire Department

Other Takeaways

- ✚ Citizens desire more variety in retail.
- ✚ Open space & recreation play an important role in quality of life.
- ✚ Citizens appreciate the ability to have large lots with distance between residential structures.
- ✚ Friendly communities exist within the County.
- ✚ Value is placed in farmland and its preservation.
- ✚ The history of the County is viewed as a positive aspect of Craven County.
- ✚ Code enforcement was identified as a need for the future.
- ✚ People desire to preserve what exists in Craven County by controlling land development.

2: Craven County Citizens

Public Engagement Meeting #4

The fourth meeting was held on October 22, 2024, at the Godette Headstart Center. This meeting was the most attended and arguably the most successful meeting for engagement in the entire planning process. An estimate of at least 40 citizens were in attendance at this meeting for the purpose of reviewing the DRAFT Future Land Use Map and DRAFT Goals, Objectives, and Policies for the plan.

Citizens were given the opportunity to vote on the proposed Goals, Objectives, and Policies so that a prioritized list of implementation strategies with timelines could be developed. The development base was centered on the emphasis citizens placed on each policy. The DRAFT Future Land Use map allowed citizens to have the opportunity to view the proposed designations for future uses of land and to provide any input and recommendation on the proposed use. There were four separate stations set up in the meeting room which provided citizens with the opportunity to engage and to learn about the next steps in the planning process. The input received at the community meeting provided the data needed to develop implementation strategies and finalize the DRAFT Future Land Use map.

Engagement Techniques

Techniques that were utilized at the public engagement meetings included conducting visioning, SWOT analysis, scenarios, and charrettes.

- ✚ **Visioning.** The visioning tool that was used in this process was based off the Oregon Model which includes asking the citizens a series of questions to determine the vision and desired direction for the plan. The questions asked include:
 - Where are we now?
 - Where are we going?
 - Where do we want to be?
 - How do we get there?

These questions were posed to citizens at different stages throughout the planning process to determine the vision for the plan. The additional step in the Oregon Model is asking the question Are We Getting There? This is an essential component of what the citizens of Craven County as well as County Administration and the respective Boards of Craven County should be asking themselves as they evaluated the implementation and effectiveness of the plan.

- ✚ **SWOT Analysis.** A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis was used to identify the existing and potential factors that will influence Craven County's physical and natural environment as well as its citizens.
- ✚ **Scenarios.** When developing the future land use map, citizens were asked to develop two separate maps that represented two separate growth scenarios for Craven County. The scenarios exercised included conservative growth and accelerated growth. Observing two separate scenarios then allowed for a blended future land use map to be created that represent the most desirable map that would support sustainability and resilience for the future as well as a map that represents the vision for Craven County.



- ✚ **Charrettes.** Visual preference of design regulations were determined using a charette model in which citizens had the opportunity to vote on the best preferred visual preference for how they desired to see the aesthetic of Craven County be represented in the future.

Shaping the Plan

All information received from the citizens, stakeholders, Ad Hoc Working Group, Planning Board, and the Board of Commissioners played a role in shaping the vision and direction of this plan. All feedback was used to construct a plan that promotes a sustainable and resilient future for Craven County. Citizen input and public engagement was valuable in determining the effectiveness of the facilities and services currently in existence as well as to determine changes and improvements that were desired within the County. Consideration of citizen needs when prioritizing future policies will be a great resource for Craven County in determining which projects may be of importance and how funds should be allocated, as well as ensuring that budgets are constructed to meet the needs of the citizens both now and in the future. The citizens of Craven County were empowered to shape this plan. Citizens and stakeholders were engaged and asked to hold the project team accountable for the identified vision and goals in the construction of the plan. Citizens and stakeholders were encouraged to review and provide comments on DRAFTS of the plan throughout the planning process so they could verify that the plan was not deviating from the vision statement.

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CHAPTER 3: VISION OF CRAVEN COUNTY

What is a Vision?

Vision, as defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, is a *thought, concept, or object formed by the imagination*. For planning purposes, we take the concept and idea of Vision and expand it to the practice of Visioning, which is defined by the American Planning Association as **a community activity intended to produce a common vision, accompanied by goals for the future**. For Craven County, the Vision is what guides the goals, objectives, and policies that are included in this plan. The Vision Statement is the engine that propels the Craven County community in one common direction.

Vision Statement

The process of developing the Vision Statement for this plan involved thorough public input, including results from the stakeholder and citizen surveys and input received at the Community Meetings. The Vision Statement was developed to address important themes and characteristics for Craven County in order to provide a statement that acknowledges their value and includes ways to preserve and expand on them in the future. The final Vision Statement that was ultimately determined by the Ad Hoc Workgroup to be the official vision for this plan was developed based on two DRAFT Vision Statements which the citizens of Craven County reviewed at Community Meeting #3. The DRAFT Vision Statements included the following language:

DRAFT VISION STATEMENT #1

Craven County is committed to protecting its agricultural heritage and environmentally sensitive areas while providing opportunities for growth and prosperity. The sense of community that exists within the County will be upheld through responsible regulations that are designed to improve the overall quality of life. Craven County will continue to be a place where people desire to live due to its exceptional geography, housing availability, and the County’s continued support of Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point and the other valuable entities that exist within the County.

DRAFT VISION STATEMENT #2

Craven County will explore funding opportunities to improve upon its existing infrastructure, including its recreation and tourism opportunities within the County while supporting industrial innovation and workforce training and opportunities. The future growth and opportunities that will present themselves to Craven County will not come at the expense of losing its sense of community or agriculturally important areas and must occur in a responsible and regulated manner. Craven County’s future undoubtedly includes supporting the mission of Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point and its continued success within the region.

These DRAFT Vision Statements include elements that were identified as important by the citizens of the County. Both DRAFT statements received support to be the selected Vision for the plan; however, neither received an overwhelming majority. Advisement from the Board of Commissioners, Ad Hoc Workgroup, and discussions with Craven County Staff has resulted in the DRAFT statements being combined into the following Vision, which is the official one for this plan and the one used for dictating the overall policy and direction of the plan.

CRAVEN COUNTY CAMA LAND USE PLAN

VISION STATEMENT

Craven County will provide a future that protects agriculture and other environmentally sensitive lands while also supporting business prosperity and industrial opportunities. The County plans for a future that will include responsible regulations for the sole purpose of upholding the high quality of life and sense of community that the citizens of Craven County value. The mission of Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point shall never be ignored, and Craven County will continue to support their initiatives as well as those of the other valuable entities that exist within the County.

Guiding Themes & Principles

In addition to the Vision Statement, which guides the overall direction of this plan, there are other elements, themes, and principles that should be addressed and ultimately have influence upon the contents and policies that this plan recommends. During community engagement, certain themes were determined to have high priority when determining goals, policies, and objectives for the future of Craven County.





Main Themes

SAFETY

SAFETY can be addressed in a multitude of ways through planning, such as safely planning and preparing for the potential hazards and threats that face Craven County or planning for safety through design and regulation. The people of Craven County place great value upon the sense of community that exists within the County. A strong sense of community is commonly directly affected by how safe someone feels within the community they live in. Safety is also upheld through proper land use regulation by mitigating potential hazards that land uses create as well as providing for safe transportation routes and alternative methods of transportation. Planning for future land use in a responsible and sensible manner can also contribute towards creating situations that allow land uses to safely exist in a harmonious manner. Elements and aspects of safety will be implemented and included in the context of this plan.

EDUCATION

Arguably the most important aspect of life is **EDUCATION**. Education should not be measured in the accomplishment of a certification, degree, or the amount of school one has completed. In the sense of planning for the future, education should be addressed through Craven County taking the proper actions to ensure that citizens of all ages can pursue education in a safe and welcoming environment. Educational initiatives should be supported whether that may be workforce training, school expansion and construction, development and the impact it may have upon the school system, or environmental/agricultural education which allows the citizens to understand how valuable and important the resources are that exist within Craven County. The role of education also directly relates to the responsibility of Craven County to educate its citizens on government initiatives, hazard preparedness, ordinances, plans, and regulations and the role they play in the daily life of the citizen.

HOUSING

All citizens of Craven County should have the assurance that quality **HOUSING** exists at a scale and type that is an adequate fit for their needs. A fluctuating economy, population movement, and a shift in housing trends have resulted in quality housing being a challenge for many areas throughout North Carolina as well as the United States. Housing can be addressed in many ways. Craven County's goal is to provide strategies and a user-friendly framework that will make the County attractive for investment and housing development that is innovative and built in a manner that contributes to a high quality of life. One of the best ways to ensure that a variety of housing can be provided within the County in the future is through the adoption of responsible land use regulations that can establish the foundation for multiple types of housing.

Supplemental Themes

The three Main Themes were not the only themes voted on at Public Engagement Meeting #2. However, they are the themes that were determined to be the most beneficial in developing a plan that achieves the Vision Statement and the best future for Craven County and its citizens. The following additional themes will be used as supplemental themes when shaping goals, policies, and objectives for this plan.

3: Vision of Craven County

Environment

The natural **ENVIRONMENT** of Craven County will continuously be acknowledged throughout this plan for its contributions to the County and the role that it serves. The environment of Craven County is one of the direct influences upon the quality of life people enjoy and the recreational opportunities that exist. The County is committed to the mitigation of negative impacts on the environment through development and land use decisions in the implementation of this plan. As this is a CAMA plan, special consideration was given to the existing natural features in Craven County as they currently exist and the actions that should take place to contribute towards their ability to exist within the County.

Preservation

Craven County has many elements that should be preserved and that its citizens have identified as being important to preserve. **PRESERVATION** can also be achieved in new developments, provided that certain existing natural features of the environment are left undisturbed. Preservation includes the valuable agricultural areas of the County, important environmental features, and other unique elements and landmarks within the County. Agricultural preservation is arguably one of the most important identified elements for Craven County. With North Carolina rapidly losing farmland and development pressures increasing, it is critical that the County acknowledges the importance of preservation of these areas so that sustainable agricultural practice can continue in the future.

Sustainability

The concept of **SUSTAINABILITY** will apply throughout this plan. To achieve the Vision Statement, Craven County will need to continue to develop and grow in a sustainable manner. Sustainability will ensure that tomorrow's generation enjoys the same opportunities that exist in the County today. Sustainability will also contribute towards development and decisions that do not jeopardize citizens' quality of life or the function of the natural environment. Working towards sustainability will include the identification and importance of agriculture to Craven County and ensuring that its future existence is not jeopardized. Responsible regulations will also ensure that irresponsible development does not occur, or at a minimum it does not occur in such an intense manner that the ability to sustain uses around the land is lost. Sustainability, and decisions made with sustainability at the core of the process, will also be important to ensuring that the Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point is able to operate in an uninhibited manner as it works towards its mission.

Employment

It is important to Craven County's future that a wide variety of **EMPLOYMENT** opportunities are provided. This effort will minimize commute times and allow for County citizens to have ample opportunities to pursue their professional interests and provide for their families. Goals, objectives, policies and other County economic development initiatives will be supportive of providing opportunities that utilize the skills and abilities of the people who call Craven County home in addition to taking advantage of Craven County's geographic location. The future also will include the support of the existing employers within the County and their continued success.



Conclusion

Extensive public engagement, stakeholder communication, and conversations with elected officials and board members were required to determine the final vision for Craven County. The efforts that have been made have resulted in a concise statement that provides County staff, elected officials, and citizens with a deep understanding of the purpose of this plan and what will have the greatest influence on land use and investment decisions. This vision statement should be used as a tool to determine if a proposed activity is aligning with the overall vision for the County and not just for a general specific group or interest.

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CHAPTER 4: GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & POLICIES

Introduction

Data analysis in addition to vast public engagement have assisted in the development of goals, objectives, and policies that are designed to preserve and protect the coastal areas of Craven County as well as provide realistic direction for achieving a future that is consistent with the County's vision. All four community engagement events contributed to the final prioritized objectives and policies that are included in this plan. Some policies are carryovers from the previous CAMA Plan. Various engagement exercises were conducted to develop a true sense of what types of policies would be both effective and generate excitement for implementation. Data analysis also revealed certain objectives and policies that should be included to address certain gaps within the County.

The goals, objectives, and policies outlined in this Chapter are required by North Carolina General Statute to be reviewed when decisions are being made regarding zoning map and text amendments. Given that Craven County does not have zoning, the contents of this Chapter will serve in many capacities including the following:

- ✚ A guide for development.
- ✚ Reference and support for CAMA and the requirements of 15A NCAC 07B.
- ✚ Ensuring sustainability in Craven County.
- ✚ Protecting agriculture and other areas of the natural environment.
- ✚ Promoting safety and a high quality of life for the citizens of Craven County.
- ✚ Short- and long-term budgeting.
- ✚ A guide for County initiated projects or programs.
- ✚ A reference for grant applications.

If Craven County determines that zoning or other types of land use regulations are necessary to ensure that the public health, safety, and welfare are being accounted for, the contents of this chapter should be used to influence the text that is drafted for regulatory purposes. Craven County's ability to determine that future proposed uses of land comply or relate closely to these goals, objectives, and policies will result in the vision of Craven County becoming a reality.

Prioritization

The objectives and policies located within this Chapter were reviewed by Craven County citizens at the 4th Community Meeting to determine what priority should be assigned. The Ad Hoc Workgroup reviewed results from the prioritization exercise to determine the final priority of objectives and policies within the plan. The method in which prioritization should be applied is that the highest-ranking objective and policy applicable to the proposal should influence the proposed activity and desired result. If there are equally ranking objectives or policies, Craven County staff should recommend to the Board of Commissioners which policy they believe is of most relevance and will have the most significant positive impact upon Craven County and its citizens. Policies that have received the highest ranking in prioritization should actively be pursued for implementation.

In the event that a policy or objective is not the highest ranking, but due to the proposal or immediate needs of the County certain objectives or policies may be more applicable, the Board of Commissioners may consider a lower ranking policy to have precedence due to the scenario.

4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Annual Review

Craven County is encouraged to annually review the goals, objectives, and policies in this Chapter and determine relevance or effectiveness. Staff may also determine that the citizens of the County should provide input on the policies and undergo a review period in which the existing objectives and policies undergo the prioritization process again. Staff should periodically monitor the effectiveness and applicability of objectives and policies to ensure that they are assisting in achieving the vision of the plan, and not serving in a manner that is detrimental to the overall vision for Craven County.

Coastal Area Management Act

Goal 1: Support the Coastal Area Management Act in all aspects of development, land use, design, infrastructure, and daily life.

#1 Objective: Ensure that development proposals and growth within the County doesn't come at the expense of damaging the natural environment and beauty of Craven County or have a negative effect upon public health, safety, and welfare.

Policies:

1.1.1 - Examine proposals for the potential impacts they may have upon one's quality of life and determine if any significant threats to health or safety could result from the nature of the development.

1.1.2 - Advocate for the protection of wetlands, floodplains, and other areas of the natural environment to be left undisturbed.

1.1.3 - Consider the impact of development when conducted in proximity to the Neuse River and adopt regulations that include appropriate mitigation techniques to lessen the impact upon the waters of the Neuse River.

1.1.4 - Continue to comply with CAMA regulations when reviewing and permitting uses of land through the CAMA minor permitting process.

1.1.5 - Refer to the Future Land Use Map as well as NFIP maps and other surveyed areas of environmental significance when reviewing proposals for development.

1.1.6 - Consider adjacent land uses and trends when reviewing applications for development.

#2 Objective: Protect endangered, threatened, and specially recognized plants and other living species.

Policies:

1.2.1 - Cooperate with county, state, and Federal agencies in protecting wildlife and plant species listed as endangered, threatened, rare, or of special concern, and support their efforts to protect and conserve the habitats in which they reside.

1.2.2 - Research potential regulations to be incorporated into the Craven County Code of Ordinances that includes language specific to the preservation of lands identified as serving as a habitat for endangered species.



1.2.3 - Increase the public appreciation, education, and understanding of these areas through support of public and private ventures designed to educate the citizens of Craven County on how these areas function and ways that these areas can be preserved.

#3 Objective: Preserve the natural environmental areas of Craven County such as floodplains, wetlands, Croatan National Forest, Neuse River, and other coastal features so that they may operate in the way they have been naturally designed and intended to and recognize the benefits that these areas provide the citizens of Craven County.

Policies:

1.3.1 - Support the preservation of wetlands and educate the public on the role that they play in stormwater management, flood mitigation, and as a habitat for multiple species.

1.3.2 - Discourage development of any type that results in the loss or destruction of woodlands that are identified as being part of the Croatan National Forest. *(modified carryover, more protection for CNF, and not just specifically for the areas in proximity to Cherry Point)*

1.3.3 - Support the use of erosion control structures in shoreline areas. *(carryover)*

1.3.4 - Discourage development adjacent or in proximity to natural environmental areas with a high potential of having a direct negative impact on them to reduce their occurrence.

1.3.5 - Encourage the dedication of conservation easements and the formation of land trusts.

1.3.6 - Require all natural environmental areas to be mapped and shown on subdivision plats and site plans as applicable to mitigate impacts.

1.3.7 - Support the US Army Corps of Engineers' regulations and the applicable guidelines of the Coastal Area Management Act and the ability of a UDO to regulate development and its effect upon freshwater swamps, marshes, and 404 wetlands. *(carryover)*

#4 Objective (Carryover): Craven County will develop comprehensive policies that provide access to public trust waters and access along public shorelines via beaches and other access points.

Policies:

1.4.1 - Actively work to establish new access areas and re-establish pre-existing access to areas such as Flanners Beach and other similar areas within the County.

1.4.2 - Support providing shoreline access for persons with disabilities. *(carryover)*

1.4.3 - Seek funding from federal/state/private sources to provide public piers. *(carryover)*

1.4.4 - Require alternative access to be provided when an existing access is proposed to be removed.

1.4.5 - Pursue opportunities and support private ventures that provide access to the Neuse River and its tributaries for public use and enjoyment.

1.4.6 - Implement regulatory language that requires development adjacent to public trust water and shorelines to provide dedicated access for interaction.

4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

1.4.7 - Support the development of estuarine access areas to ensure adequate shoreline areas exist within all areas of the County that provide the potential. *(carryover)*

#5 Objective: Ensure that infrastructure within Craven County is installed, operated, and maintained in a manner that does not detract from the ability of Areas of Environmental Concern (AEC's) and other environmentally fragile areas to enjoy a healthy existence.

Policies:

1.5.1 - Adopt or continue to enforce regulations that deal with stormwater and the usage of land that promote sustainability and overall environmental protection, specifically related to infrastructure design, location, and installation.

1.5.2 - The design and construction of public and private facilities, including but not limited to roads, water, sewer, or stormwater control, should utilize best management practices to minimize impacts on sensitive areas, open space, and conservation areas.

1.5.3 - Adopt regulations to be included in the Craven County Code of Ordinances that includes elements in compliance with the North Carolina General Statutes and other applicable state regulations designed to protect AEC's and environmentally sensitive areas. *(modified carryover)*

1.5.4 - Allow for the option to utilize green infrastructure as opposed to gray infrastructure, or hard infrastructure.

#6 Objective: Maintain, protect, and enhance water quality in all wetlands, rivers, streams, and other bodies of water located within Craven County.

Policies:

1.6.1 - Craven County opposes the disposal of any toxic wastes, as identified in the US Environmental Protection Agency's listing of Hazardous Substances and Priority Pollutants (developed pursuant to the Clean Water Act of 1977) within the planning jurisdiction of Craven County. *(modified carryover)*

1.6.2 - Craven County will rely on the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality at a minimum to protect water quality and will explore potential regulations to adopt that maximize water quality. *(modified carryover)*

1.6.3 - Support municipalities within Craven County as applicable in their efforts to improve upon water quality.

1.6.4 - Require through land use regulations for the installation of buffers along bodies of water to contribute towards the reduction of contaminants and nutrients entering the water body.

1.6.5 - Support the enforcement of local, state, and Federal regulations and their associated programs that protect water quality. *(modified carryover)*

1.6.6 - Support the State of North Carolina policy that all projects should be designed to limit the extent of stormwater runoff into coastal waters.

1.6.7 - Conserve the County's surficial groundwater resources by supporting CAMA and adopted stormwater runoff regulations, and by coordinating local development activities involving chemical storage or underground storage tank installation/abandonment with the Groundwater Section of the North Carolina Division of Water Quality.

1.6.8 - Continue to enforce stormwater requirements.

1.6.9 - Support the Neuse River Basinwide Water Quality Plan.

1.6.10 - Support management of problem pollutants, particularly biological oxygen demand (the measurement of oxygen needed by bacteria to decompose organic matter) and nutrients, to take action on existing water quality problems and to ensure protection of those waters currently supporting their uses in the Neuse River and its tributaries.



4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Recreation

Goal 2: To support a healthy lifestyle and promote recreational opportunities and areas within the County.

#1 Objective: Use recreational areas, parks, and programs as an educational tool and outlet for its citizens.

Policies:

2.1.1 - Encourage schools, community groups, colleges, universities, and other entities to take advantage of the parks and recreational areas within the County and utilize for hands on educational activities.

2.1.2 - Develop programs within the Recreation Department designed to educate citizens on a variety of topics related to recreation such as nature, athletics, and preservation.

2.1.3 - Provide signage with facts and data related to the natural environment within recreational areas.

2.1.4 - Invest in providing outdoor learning spaces within recreational areas.

#2 Objective: Enhance, preserve, and promote the existing public recreational areas within Craven County.

Policies:

2.2.1 - Pursue state and Federal funding to enhance the existing recreational areas within the County through the provision of new recreational facilities and amenities.

2.2.2 - Upfit all parks and recreational areas within the County so that they are able to be enjoyed by persons with disabilities and persons with limited capabilities for activity.

2.2.3 - Promote the use of recreational facilities by increasing their accessibility and through encouraging responsible development to occur in proximity to recreational facilities.

2.2.4 - Educate the public and devote staff and funds to ensure that the recreational areas remain in a clean and safe condition so that they may be enjoyed by all citizens and visitors.

#3 Objective: Provide new recreational opportunities within the County and encourage a variety of activities and recreational use types to be available to both citizens and visitors.

Policies:

2.3.1 - Provide expanded biking trails, walking trails, and other multi-modal paths within parks and recreational areas that can be enjoyed by persons of all ability levels.

2.3.2 - Secure funding or strategically budget to construct a recreational center or complex that includes a variety of recreational facilities that makes both outdoor (athletic fields, playgrounds, etc.) and indoor recreation (gyms, etc.) possible.

2.3.3 - Invest in leagues and activities for both youth, adult, and senior members of Craven County so that all citizens of all ability levels can participate in recreational activity.

2.3.4 - Improve existing parks and recreational areas by providing amenities such as splash pads, skating areas, and other similar types of equipment designed for activity other than traditional playgrounds.

2.3.5 - Pursue new recreational areas or renewed/repurposed areas for recreational use within or in proximity to the areas of natural beauty within Craven County such as the Croatan National Forest and the areas adjacent to the Neuse River.

2.3.6 - Explore partnerships with the municipalities within the County to provide expanded levels of recreational opportunity and to meet recreational needs in proximity to one's place of residence.

2.3.7 - Adopt land use regulations that require recreational areas to be dedicated and provided for certain types of development.



4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Agriculture

Goal 3: Protect the agricultural uses and interests within Craven County and support agricultural expansion.

#1 Objective: Preserve the agricultural character of Craven County.

Policies:

3.1.1 - Discourage the development of prime agricultural land, or land that has a history of producing high yielding crops for the purpose of residential, industrial, or commercial development to include solar farms.

3.1.2 - Support agricultural programs, clubs, and groups that are designed to educate the people of Craven County on the importance of agriculture and the agricultural opportunities that Craven County presents.

3.1.3 - Develop regulations that require the disclosure of agricultural activities taking place for clarity and a general understanding of agriculture's longstanding existence and precedence over new proposed land uses.

3.1.4 - Develop land use regulations that limit the types of uses and the intensity of uses that could occur in proximity to agricultural uses of land.

3.1.5 - Support NCGS 160D-903 and all bona fide agricultural uses within Craven County.

3.1.6 - Require development on prime agricultural lands to occur in a clustered manner for the purpose of preserving cropland.

#2 Objective: Embrace the benefits of agriculture and its ability to stimulate the economy and the overall attraction to Craven County.

Policies:

3.2.1 - Support new crops and types of agriculture to the County that has the potential to provide increased job opportunities and diversify the agricultural industry as a whole.

3.2.2 - Work in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and support its initiatives.

3.2.3 - Encourage and support agritourism within the County and the opportunities, interests, and economic benefits that are associated with agritourism.

3.2.4 - Support the expansion of the agricultural industry and the associated jobs and opportunities that follow the expansion.

3.2.5 - Develop an agricultural committee or partner with existing agricultural groups to determine long range objectives and growth goals and assist in achieving these goals.

3.2.6 - Foster an agricultural industry that is compatible with a high quality of life, as a means to facilitate diversification in the local economy. *(carryover)*



Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point

Goal 4: Support the mission of MCAS Cherry Point and continue to address its current and future needs within the County.

#1 Objective: Create an environment within Craven County that is welcoming, safe, and enjoyable for the marines of MCAS Cherry Point.

Policies:

4.1.1 - Include a base liaison representative as an advisory role member on any County Boards or review committees (excluding the Board of Commissioners) to increase transparency, promote awareness, and ensure responsible planning is occurring.

4.1.2 - In support of military personnel, Craven County will provide for an enhanced quality of life in the area, including increased housing opportunities, enhanced recreation, environmental sustainability, investment in education, responsible land use regulations, protection of natural resources, and economic development and investment. *(carryover)*

4.1.3 - Coordinate with the municipalities within the County and determine needs of the naval aviators and military personnel within their community and how Craven County may assist in meeting these needs.

4.1.4 - Support the development of neighborhoods and communities within the County designed for the workforce, specifically the marines of Cherry Point.

4.1.5 - Continue to support transportation improvements which reduce commute times and improve access to Cherry Point for marines.

4.1.6 - Encourage special committees, advisory panels, educational forums, workshops, leadership seminars, community meetings, and media contact to enhance the level of community involvement and awareness of military-community issues.

4.1.7 - Support MCAS Cherry Point as the primary economic engine of the local economy. County actions shall be consistent with preserving and protecting this pivotal major industry. *(carryover)*

#2 Objective: Provide MCAS Cherry Point with confidence in their ability to operate as necessary with limited impact from the areas outside of the air station through the regulation of incompatible uses.

Policies:

4.2.1 - Support working proactively with Cherry Point to determine policies and actions that the County can take to strengthen the operational viability of the military while also enhancing the community at large. *(modified carryover)*

4.2.2 - Support coordinated intergovernmental and military-community planning for land use and development, transportation, utilities, environmental management, law enforcement and public safety, education, recreation, tourism, and economic development. *(carryover)*

4.2.3 - Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of overlay districts and proposed uses of land within proximity to Cherry Point, or those uses elsewhere in the County that have the potential of adversely affecting Cherry Point.

4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

4.2.4 - Support and assist in the implementation of the identified goals and objectives outlined in the Cherry Point Regional Joint Land Use Study (2016).

Education

Goal 5: Maintain education as being of upmost importance within Craven County and support education for all persons of all ability levels.

#1 Objective: Work together with the Craven County Board of Education, private education, and other State of North Carolina entities to adequately meet the needs of the school age children.

Policies:

5.1.1 - Discourage land uses within proximity to schools that have the potential of presenting an impact upon learning or general safety of the students.

5.1.2 - Invest in the youth of Craven County, acknowledging that their ability to receive a quality education will directly impact the future of the County. Provide programs and activities that are oriented towards building on their knowledge, happiness, and quality of life.

5.1.3 - Communicate with and include a liaison from the Board of Education or other educational institute as an advisory role member upon any County Boards or review committees (excluding the Board of Commissioners) to increase transparency, promote awareness, and ensure responsible planning is occurring.

5.1.4 - Project future needs for schools based off an increase in students and the housing that should be encouraged to locate within proximity to the school.

5.1.5 – Support site planning for traffic management and safety in the vicinity of public and private schools. *(carryover)*

5.1.6 - Encourage offers of land for the siting of new schools, particularly in conjunction with new development. Acceptance of such properties shall be based on approved criteria and cooperative planning with the County school administration. *(carryover)*

#2 Objective: Place value upon continuous learning and support citizens' desires to receive specialized education.

Policies:

5.2.1 - Make efforts to attract jobs and other industries to Craven County that prioritize employing citizens with specialized trade and skill.

5.2.2 - Support the actions of Craven Community College and the value that it brings to not only Craven County but the region in its mission of providing general education and job ready employees to serve. *(modified carryover)*

5.2.3 - Make Craven County facilities available for job fairs and educational seminars to occur that have the result of promoting learning and education within the County.

5.2.4 - Survey members of the population to determine what educational/learning experiences would be beneficial to their quality of life.



5.2.5 - Support the efforts of the Craven-Pamlico Regional Library in fostering the development of a literate and well-informed resident population that has vast access to its resources. *(modified carryover)*

5.2.6 - Place value on and prioritize the attraction of land uses that exist or intend to locate within Craven County that propose to make investments into the education system and overall improvement and availability of educational opportunities to the whole citizenry of Craven County.

5.2.7 - Release educational documents that involve Craven County government activities to inform the citizens of the County, so that a level of awareness exists regarding government actions, their purpose, and the benefits behind them.



4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Hazards

Goal 6: Mitigate the hazards that exist and present themselves to Craven County to reduce damage and loss to life and property.

#1 Objective: Take steps to mitigate the threats posed by the hazards within Craven County.

Policies:

6.1.1 - Use social media as a tool to educate and prepare the citizens of Craven County for hazards as well as post hazard recovery.

6.1.2 - Monitor, update, and enforce the Craven County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance to mitigate against the flood hazards that exist within the County.

6.1.3 - Comprehensively evaluate all proposals for land use or development in an effort to identify the potential conflicts, hazards, or threats that the use or development may face.

6.1.4 - Provide annual citizen education and outreach events or seminars to remind the citizens of Craven County of the hazards that threaten the County and steps that may be taken to prepare for such. Examples include an annual flood preparedness seminar.

6.1.5 - Continue to support the enforcement of all controls and regulations, specifically design standards, tie-down requirements, construction and installation standards, elevation requirements, floodproofing, CAMA regulations, and FEMA regulations deemed necessary by the Board of Commissioners to mitigate the risks of lives and property caused by severe storms and hurricanes. *(carryover)*

6.1.6 - Support Hazard Mitigation Planning and ensure that cohesiveness and consistency exist between the Pamlico Sound Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan. *(carryover)*

6.1.7 - Support the enforcement of local, state, and Federal policies, programs or plans designed to minimize the threat to life and property from flooding. *(carryover)*

6.1.8 - Annually review the potential hazards and threats that are relative to Craven County and keep records of incidents so that data exists for plan revision and future guidance to create a resilient future for Craven County.

6.1.9 - Adopt land use regulations that require certain mitigation elements to be provided with certain types of development as well as the location of the development or use.

6.1.10 - Support all contents of the Pamlico Sound Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan and refer to it frequently when reviewing proposals for land use or development.

6.1.11 - Actively pursue Federal and State funding to improve the conditions and overall resilience of Craven County.



Safety

Goal 7: Ensure Craven County continues to exist as a safe place to live, work, enjoy activities, and visit.

#1 Objective: Provide conditions that are supportive of a high quality of life.

Policies:

7.1.1 - Prioritize funding for emergency services so that the sense of a safe community that Craven County citizens appreciate is maintained.

7.1.2 - Establish regulations that prevent the accumulation of solid waste, rubbish, and other types of accumulations that have the potential of being detrimental to the health of Craven County citizens.

7.1.3 - Continue to support the goals and work of the Craven County Sheriff's Department.

7.1.4 - Require, through land use regulations, minimum access, clearance, setbacks, and other site improvements that are designed to facilitate emergency services to serve in their highest and most efficient capacity as well as ensure that structures and their appurtenant features associated with the use are in a manner that minimizes conflict or injury.

7.1.5 - Develop land use regulations that are designed to responsibly control certain types of land which present potential threats to human life and safety.

7.1.6 - Develop land use regulations that establish minimum design standards for uses so that citizens may be confident that development has occurred in a manner that protects their quality of life, safety, and health.

7.1.7 - Consider entering or requiring Development Agreements (NCGS 160D Article) for development of a certain scale or intensity to provide Craven County with an assurance that any emergency service needs associated with such development will be met.

7.1.8 - Continue to improve upon County wide alerts and other forms of notification that raises awareness related to safety concerns within the County.

7.1.9 - Encourage improved internet and wireless service through responsible land use regulations and recognize the overall benefits these services provide related to safety, accessibility, and connectivity.

7.1.10 - Use social media to raise safety awareness within the County.

4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Transportation

Goal 8: Advocate for the multiple types of transportation needs of Craven County through participation and advocacy with both state and local transportation planning organizations to address both short-term and long-term projects.

#1 Objective: Ensure that safe transportation routes exist within the County and that citizen safety and efficient transportation are considered in all development proposals.

Policies:

8.1.1 - Support the provision of safe evacuation routes. *(carryover)*

8.1.2 - Consider the capacity of the right-of-way when considering proposals for development and if the proposed development is going to present capacity issues, consider adopting regulations that are more stringent than NCDOT requirements to account for potential capacity issues with proposed development.

8.1.3 - Establish threshold limits for means of secondary access.

8.1.4 - Support limited access from development along all roads and highways to provide safe ingress and egress. *(carryover)*

8.1.5 - Support interconnectivity between appropriate uses and street network connections where practical to alleviate stress from the major thoroughfares and primary arterials within the County. *(modified carryover)*

8.1.6 - Require Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) for certain types of development that may cause additional stress and congestion to the transportation network.

#2 Objective: Participate in transportation planning efforts to raise awareness for the needs of Craven County.

Policies:

8.2.1 - Advocate for efficient transportation systems that allow for equipment and personnel to move expeditiously from MCAS Cherry Point to the other military installations within the region. *(modified carryover)*

8.2.2 - Support transportation improvements and planning studies designed to improve access to MCAS Cherry Point and cut down on travel times within the County. *(modified carryover)*

8.2.3 - Continue to support the Coastal Carolina Regional Airport and the method of transportation that it provides Craven County citizens.

8.2.4 - Serve as a liaison between the citizens of Craven County and the regional and metropolitan transportation organizations.

8.2.5 - Monitor areas of high traffic within the County and recommend improvements on an as needed basis.

8.2.6 - Undertake efforts to secure funding and expand upon cost effective public transportation. *(modified carryover)*

#3 Objective: Provide multi-modal transportation options within Craven County.

Policies:

8.3.1 - Advocate for the development of a Craven County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

8.3.2 - Adopt land use regulations that require the provision of multi-use paths and walking or biking trails within the development to meet the needs of the citizens.

8.3.3 - Support the provision of safe coordinated bicycle and pedestrian trails throughout the County. (*carryover*)

8.3.4 - Support planning efforts of the New Bern Metropolitan Planning Organization and Down East Rural Planning Organization to establish multi-modal transportation options within Craven County and the region.

8.3.5 - Advocate for the inclusion of multi-modal projects to be included in the STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Program).



4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Tourism, Culture, and Historic Resources

Goal 9: Preserve the history, beauty, and unique culture of Craven County so that it is enjoyed by residents and attracts visitors to the area.

#1 Objective: Increase tourism within Craven County.

Policies:

9.1.1 - Market Craven County and its natural beauty as an appealing option for tourism and recreation.

9.1.2 - Maintain a visual aesthetic that is pleasing to the citizens and visitors of Craven County so that it is an attractive place to visit and live.

9.1.3 - Support investment in tourism and development along the Neuse River, provided it is done in an environmentally responsible manner.

9.1.4 - Form partnerships with the City of New Bern that introduce agritourism and other tourist ventures within the County to visitors of the City's historic tourism.

9.1.5 - Utilize recreational areas to benefit the tourist market within Craven County.

9.1.6 - Support the development of attractions within Craven County for bypassing visitors to participate in as they travel along Interstate 42.

9.1.7 - Support the efforts of the North Carolina Department of Commerce to increase tourism. *(modified carryover)*

9.1.8 - Utilize the unique geographic location and topography of Craven County to increase interest in tourism.

#2 Objective: Protect the culture and historical resources within Craven County.

Policies:

9.2.1 - Consider the needs of citizens and the impact upon an area's culture based on development proposals and uses of land. Proposals that may significantly alter the nature and culture of an area are not discouraged but should carefully be evaluated prior to approval.

9.2.2 - Pursue state and Federal grants designed to assist in the preservation and promotion of historic structures and features.

9.2.3 - Protect historic and potentially historic properties and perpetuate the County's cultural heritage.

9.2.4 - Support the preservation of important cultural resources and support local, state, and Federal efforts to protect historic properties within the County's borders and to perpetuate its cultural heritage. *(carryover)*

9.2.5 - Support minorities within the County as they identify significant sites, structures, and events that have historic importance or relevance.

9.2.6 - Encourage the enhancement and the educational potential that is offered by the historic resources within the County. *(modified carryover)*

9.2.7 - Develop an inventory of the historic properties and structures within the County and monitor any activity towards being included in the National Register or efforts related to the marketing and use of such structure for tourist purposes.



County Facilities, Services, & Infrastructure

Goal 10: Maintain and invest in the provision of reliable facilities, services, and infrastructure that provide citizens with a sense of safety and high-quality of life, while also attracting investment and relocation to Craven County

#1 Objective: Continue to responsibly manage stormwater within Craven County.

Policies:

10.1.1 - Reasonably maintain, review, and update the Craven County Stormwater Ordinance or incorporate into a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

10.1.2 - Continue to support reducing non-point source pollution including soil erosion, runoff, and sedimentation to minimize the adverse effects on surface and subsurface water quality. (*carryover*)

10.1.3 - Conduct studies to determine if more stringent requirements and expanded capacities are needed rather than the minimum State of North Carolina standards for stormwater regulation.

10.1.4 - Emphasize the importance of natural areas and the benefits they present in stormwater management by reducing the introduction of nutrients and contaminants into the water body.

10.1.5 - Support CAMA and NC Division of Water Quality stormwater runoff regulations.

#2 Objective: Maintain the infrastructure system within Craven County so that adequate service is provided to existing land uses and that future users can confidently integrate into the infrastructure system.

Policies:

10.2.1 - Pursue state and Federal funding for the improvement, maintenance, expansion, and extension of the infrastructure within Craven County.

10.2.2 - Develop land use regulations that establish minimum infrastructure installation requirements for development (including water, sewer, septic, and the methods of inspection and installation.)

10.2.3 - Support central sewer service within the County in areas that have a high potential for growth and identified industrial and commercial growth areas.

10.2.4 - Limit the extension or provision of sewer in prime agricultural areas to prevent unwanted development pressures.

10.2.5 - Require developers to complete the necessary improvements needed to integrate into the existing infrastructure system and do not allow for this cost of extension to fall on Craven County or its citizens.

10.2.6 - Encourage development to provide additional infrastructure when it is determined the provision of such would directly benefit the County and the quality of its citizens lives.

10.2.7 - Develop an inventory of County infrastructure to prioritize an improvement needs list.

10.2.8 - Concentrate infrastructure repairs and expansion in areas with the highest potential for growth and the ability to serve the needs of County citizens. Factor in proximity to resources and transportation routes.

4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

10.2.9 - Encourage redevelopment in areas where adequate infrastructure exists.

#3 Objective: Provide citizens with confidence that adequate facilities are being provided within the County to serve and support their needs.

Policies:

10.3.1 - Actively work to provide County facilities in both areas that have high population and the demand for such as well as the areas that are required to commute a considerable distance to utilize such facilities.

10.3.2 - Pursue state and Federal grant funding for the improvement of existing facilities and the provision of new facilities.

10.3.3 - Perform an internal evaluation of the public facilities that exist within the County and determine their strengths and weaknesses. Develop an action plan to improve these facilities.

10.3.4 - Survey the citizens of the County to determine what additional features they desire to be provided at the facilities within the County.

10.3.5 - Market facilities and use them for the purpose of strengthening the relationships and interactions amongst citizens within the County.





Economic Development

Goal 11: Provide a variety of jobs and opportunities for the citizens of Craven County and to attract investment within both Craven County and the region.

#1 Objective: Attract a variety of development, investment, and industry so that all citizens of Craven County have an opportunity for employment and prosperity.

Policies:

11.1.1 - Ensure that attracting economic development and investment is not at the expense of the County's agricultural industry.

11.1.2 - Support small-businesses, minority-owned businesses, family-owned businesses and family farms and their ability to operate and thrive within the County.

11.1.3 - Target industries and businesses that maximize the abilities of the qualified workforce within Craven County.

11.1.4 - Take advantage of Craven County's geographic location related to the State Port in Morehead City and transportation advantage with the development of Interstate 42 to attract industry that serves the needs of the region and is coordinated with the State Port.

11.1.5 - Consider offering tax incentives to attract business and industry.

11.1.6 - Develop land use regulations that establish a clear and predictable process as well as an expedited process for business and industry to locate and develop within the County.

11.1.7 - Support initiatives for workforce development and workforce grants from the NC Department of Commerce.

11.1.8 - Invest in the development of industrial mega-sites.

11.1.9 - Concentrate economic development efforts in identified locations along the Interstate 42 corridor.

11.1.10 - Support applicable state and Federal programs regarding economic and community development, especially those programs related to expanded job opportunities and innovative industry. (*modified carryover*)

11.1.11 - Participate in regional economic development efforts and initiatives and recognize the benefits associated with such participation.

11.1.12 - Support the recruitment and siting of environmentally compatible industry and commercial establishments in areas that are already similarly developed or in public or private industrial parks to minimize the sacrifice of prime agricultural land for such development. (*modified carryover*)

11.1.13 - Support Craven County Schools and institutions of higher learning and skilled trade schools as the primary educators and developers of the workforce.

11.1.14 - Ensure adequate land is within appropriate land use classifications or zoning districts to support business and industry.

4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Housing

Goal 12: Provide quality housing of various types for all members of Craven County.

#1 Objective: Ensure that safe housing exists within Craven County.

Policies:

12.1.1 - Adopt land use regulations related to minimum standards of fitness for structures.

12.1.2 - Address abandoned residential and commercial structures within Craven County in accordance with the provisions set forth by NCGS 160D.

12.1.3 - Adopt land use regulations that govern the use of residential land regarding solid waste and public nuisances.

12.1.4 - Apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Neighborhood Revitalization and North Carolina Housing Finance Agency funds.

12.1.5 - Continue to enforce the State of North Carolina Building Code.

#2 Objective: Meet the needs for workforce and affordable housing within Craven County.

Policies:

12.2.1 - Recreational vehicles should not be used or accepted as an alternative to affordable housing and should only be permitted as part of an approved recreational vehicle park.

12.2.2 - Develop land use regulations that include provisions for flexible zoning districts that encourage a variety of housing types to occur within the districts.

12.2.3 - Support housing projects within Craven County that receive Federal funding to provide housing that is affordable.

12.2.4 - Limit zoning districts that exclusively permit single-family dwellings, rely on homeowners and property owners' associations to regulate single-family dwellings and large lot sizes. Provide for districts that allow for flexibility in lot size and housing type.

12.2.5 - Allow for rental rooms within single-family residential dwellings as an affordable option for housing.

12.2.6 - Encourage the location of housing in proximity to major employers within the County.

12.2.7 - Provide expedited review or approval for developments that prioritize workforce and affordable housing.

12.2.8 - Introduce land use regulations that require for a determined percentage of new residential development to be reserved for persons of low to moderate income and within an affordable price range of the median annual household income of Craven County.

12.2.9 - Support workforce and affordable housing occurring in existing structures as a repurposed use of the structure, when appropriate.



12.2.10 - Pursue state and Federal grants for the repurpose/reuse of structures that present the potential of being upfit for housing.

12.2.11 - Workforce and affordable housing should not occur in isolated areas with limited accessibility or resources in proximity to the development nor shall it be located in areas that present environmental threats to residents.

#3 Objective: Housing should be provided for the purpose of establishing neighborhoods and enhancing the sense of a tight-knit community that the citizens of the County cherish.

Policies:

12.3.1 - Develop land use regulations that provide recommended standards and encouraged direction for the development of communities with ample open space, amenities, and lot size/square footage requirements.

12.3.2 - Promote and support pocket neighborhoods and communities designed in a manner to increase walkability and multi-modal transit.

12.3.3 - Support the use of accessory dwelling units.

12.3.4 - Through land use regulations, allow for special allowances related to developments that place emphasis upon the clustering of lots or maximum square footage for residential structures.

12.3.5 - Establish land use regulations where sewer is available, especially in agricultural areas that allow for lot size reduction to preserve agricultural land and locate homes in a block or grid system which in turn should enhance the sense of community and preserve valuable land.

12.3.6 - Encourage neighborhood developments to incorporate single-family, multi-family, townhouse, rental, etc. to develop neighborhoods that accommodate for all persons of Craven County.



4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

Land Use

Goal 13: Maximize the use of land within Craven County to its highest potential in a sustainable manner.

#1 Objective: Support the use of land for sustainable development that promotes community health and well-being.

Policies:

13.1.1 - Encourage commercial development to occur in areas that serve close by residential development and does not infringe upon one's ability to enjoy their property or life. Commercial nodes should be supported, and sewer should be readily available.

13.1.2 - The subdivision of land should occur in a manner that preserves as much as possible the natural environment and existing features of the County.

13.1.3 - Establish land use regulations that require a minimum percentage of the total land developed to be dedicated as open space.

13.1.4 - Encourage residential development to occur outside of prime agricultural areas or limit as much as possible the number of developable lots recorded within lands as determined to have the ability to produce high agricultural yields.

13.1.5 - Develop regulations that limit or eliminate the number of lots that can be recorded within or adjacent to natural hazard areas or environmentally sensitive areas.

13.1.6 - Residential development should not be approved that has the potential of presenting hazards to safety or health or development that negatively affects a select group of people.

13.1.7 - An examination of the resources to be lost should occur prior to development approval so that the County may determine if the decision is sustainable for the future.

13.1.8 - Allow for lower-density residential development when utilities are not in existence and when it is determined to not result in the loss of Craven County to continue to provide a sustainable future or result in the significant loss of valuable resources due to the nature of sprawling low-density development.

#2 Objective: Use the future land use map as a guide for future development while also considering the ability to reuse or repurpose existing structures within the County.

Policies:

13.2.1 - Craven County will not unreasonably displace families or require building demolition. (*modified carryover*)

13.2.2 - Utilize state and Federal grants for repurpose and reuse.

13.2.3 - Allow for transportation routes and improvements within the transportation networks to determine where valuable repurpose/reuse areas may exist.

13.2.4 - Encourage infill development to take place by offering incentives and expedited review for infill development proposals.

13.2.5 - Consider flexibility in zoning districts when a direct result would be revitalization or repurposing of an area within the County, that does not result in the loss of valuable agricultural lands or environmentally important areas.



#3 Objective: Develop a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) so that the citizens of Craven County have confidence that their best interests are being upheld and considered in land use decisions.

Policies:

13.3.1 - Establish zoning districts that distribute permitted uses throughout the County in a responsible manner and in accordance with the contents of the Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan.

13.3.2 - Design regulations to not oppress the people of Craven County but to protect them.

13.3.3 - Incorporate regulations for specific uses of land that threaten one's quality of life, safety, and health.

13.3.4 - Educate the citizens of Craven County on the purpose of a UDO and what role it plays in relation to this plan, land use decisions, development, and daily life.

13.3.5 - Ensure that compliance with NCGS 160D is achieved.

13.3.6 – Design the UDO in a manner to contribute to the overall appearance of Craven County.

13.3.7 – Ensure the UDO is comprehensible and easily applied to development requests and uses of land within Craven County.

13.3.8 - The UDO shall require public amenities, open space, and access for certain development types.

13.3.9 - Include landscape and design standards for certain types of development within certain zoning districts. *(modified carryover)*

#4 Objective: Consider environmental and human health impacts in land use decisions.

Policies:

13.4.1 - Carefully examine proposals for use of land and consider the potential impacts to the environment and adjacent land uses.

13.4.2 – Encourage development to not infringe upon identified environmentally sensitive areas. *(modified carryover)*

13.4.3 - Industries that create severe environmental impacts due to extreme emissions of smoke, dust, glare, noise, odor, and vibrations, as well as those that deal primarily with hazardous products such as explosives, should not be located within Craven County. This policy does not apply to such industries that are part of the agricultural economy of Craven County or those that directly support MCAS Cherry Point. *(modified carryover)*

13.4.4 - Defer to the NC Department of Environmental Quality and their land use guidance when determining the potential environmental impact of land uses.

13.4.5 - Comply with CAMA regulations regarding land use and the environmental impacts associated with particular uses.

13.4.6 - Adopt land use regulations designed to mitigate the environmental impacts of certain land uses.

13.4.7 - Prevent intense industrial use and other noxious types of commercial or industrial use from occurring in direct proximity to residential use in an effort to protect human safety and health.

13.4.8 - Adopt land use regulations that include provisions for buffers and other natural breaks between uses to promote human and environmental health and safety.

4: Goals, Objectives, & Policies

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CHAPTER 5: CRAVEN COUNTY TODAY

History of Craven County

Craven County was named in honor of William, Earl of Craven, who lived from 1606-1697. His death preceded the establishment of Craven County, and he never had the pleasure of visiting the County which carries his name. The official Craven County seal was designed and adopted in 1981, using the coat-of-arms of the Earl, which is also the coat-of-arms of his nephew, William, Lord Craven, who succeeded him as Lord Proprietor of Carolina. The motto on the seal, “Virtus in Actione Consistit” translates to “Virtue in Consistent Action.”



Craven County, originally included as a precinct of Bath County, was established in its present form in 1712. New Bern became its county seat in 1722 and was also the capital of the colony and first state capital until 1794. Because of its location, situated between the Albemarle and Cape Fear River, Craven County grew in area and importance during the mid-18th century due to the significance of New Bern’s role as a river port. As Craven County moved into the 19th century, it continued to flourish. As the railroad system became the primary method of transporting goods, New Bern’s commercial dominance, wealth, and cultural sophistication experienced great prosperity. These influences were also felt in the communities surrounding the city. During the Civil War, there was significant activity occurring in Craven County, and the remains of some of the battlegrounds can still be found. New Bern remained a haven of safety for slaves after it was captured by Union Forces. Craven County is also home to Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, an air station that occupies 29,000 acres and has a rich history of protecting not only the freedom of Craven County, but the entire United States of America.

Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point

Established in 1942, MCAS Cherry Point has been a fixture in Craven County for nearly a decade. The air station is a major employer within Craven County with approximately 6,832 active marines (2021 MCAS Cherry Point Economic Impact Report). The air station also provides job opportunities for civilians and contractors as well as a place for retirees and military families to congregate and experience a high quality of life. Many former marines have chosen to remain within Craven County after their period of service. Craven County relies upon the air station as one of the main economic drivers within the County and is in full support of the mission of MCAS Cherry Point. Craven County values its relationship with the air station and shall always take into consideration land uses in proximity to the installation and mitigate them as appropriate to protect and support MCAS Cherry Point. Craven County will always value the sound of freedom and is proud that the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing and Fleet Readiness Center East calls the County home. Throughout the planning process, the citizens acknowledged their support of MCAS Cherry Point and identified the need to support the continued existence and the role that Craven County plays in providing favorable conditions for the continued operation of the air station.

5: Craven County Today

Existing Conditions & Trends

Craven County consists of roughly 706 square miles of land and boasts a diverse composition of uses. The northwestern half of the County is comprised predominantly of agricultural uses. Urban uses are concentrated around the central half of the County in the areas adjacent to New Bern which is the County seat of Craven and includes a population of 31,291, nearly 1/3 of Craven County's total population of 100,720 (US 2020 Census), as of April 2025, it is estimated that the total population is significantly higher than the census count and more closely aligns with the US Census 2024 American Community Survey estimate of 104,167 people. The southern portion of the County provides expansive areas for recreation and enjoyment of the natural environment including the Croatan National Forest and the areas along the Neuse River.

The two largest municipalities within Craven County are New Bern and Havelock. Havelock serves as the home of MCAS Cherry Point and is largely dependent upon the air station to continue to support growth and the population numbers within the city. As New Bern has continued to grow, so have the areas adjacent to the city. North Carolina annexation laws have been amended since the previous update to the CAMA Land Use Plan and now, in order for properties to annex into the City of New Bern, it must be done at the request of the property owner and may not occur involuntarily by the City determining to annex the area. The use of land in the areas of the County that are



adjacent to the City of New Bern must be planned in a manner that do not cater to the negative impacts of urban sprawl but provide a transition from the urban areas of the County to the rural land and uses that are located nearby. The use of land and planned future use of land should not be done in a manner that discourages development but that plans for growth and development to occur in a responsible and sustainable manner that caters to the citizens' needs. The fact that annexation is now voluntary provides citizens within these areas with a confidence that they will be able to remain within unincorporated Craven County.

The remaining municipalities within Craven County include Bridgeton, Cove City, Dover, River Bend, Trent Woods, and Vanceboro. River Bend, Bridgeton, and Trent Woods are the municipalities located adjacent to New Bern in the central portion of the County. Cove City, Dover, and Vanceboro are in the northern and western halves of the County and are comprised of low population numbers and are in a general agricultural setting.



Past Planning Efforts

To fully comprehend the existing conditions within Craven County as it exists today and gain insight in determining how these conditions came into existence, the following documents that resulted from previous planning efforts warranted review. Review of these documents allows us to be aware of the past issues and the elements of Craven County that have consistently been identified as having importance.

- ✚ Cherry Point Regional Joint Land Use Study 2016
- ✚ Craven County CAMA Core Land Use Plan 2009
- ✚ Pamlico Sound Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan 2020
- ✚ Craven County Comprehensive Transportation Plan 2020
- ✚ Craven County Development Regulations (Effective)
- ✚ Craven County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance (Effective)
- ✚ Craven County Zoning Overlay Ordinance (Effective)
 - Air Station/Airport Overlays

Past efforts have revealed that airfields have been recognized as sensitive and important land use and value has been placed upon their protection through the establishment of overlay districts and ordinances that regulate the type and intensity of the use of land within these areas. Craven County faces the reality of flood events and other potential disasters of natural causes due to its coastal location and significant amount of land that falls within a special flood hazard area (SFHA). The flood damage prevention ordinance has been designed to mitigate the potential loss of life and property due to these events and has served as an excellent tool at implementing some of the identified mitigation measures outlined in the Pamlico Sound Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Craven County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) identifies the major transportation improvements that are planned to occur within Craven County, and this allows for informed decisions to be made when determining the best and most sustainable future potential use of land when considering the transportation improvements and the accessibility and demand for the use of the land. The Cherry Point Regional Joint Land Use Study allows us to understand the synergy that is necessary to exist between the land uses within the region and the activities of MCAS Cherry Point to ensure that the contents of this plan do not degrade or inhibit the mission of the air station.

Data Analysis & Trends

When examining Craven County as it exists today, extensive research was conducted to compile datasets that originate from the US Census Bureau, NC Office of State Budget and Management, United States Department of Agriculture and the Craven County Planning Department. In instances where the 2020 US Decennial Census and NC State Demographer didn't provide adequate and comparable datasets, the US Census Bureau American Community Survey was used. The evaluation of the data has revealed certain statistical trends and areas of importance that will need to be addressed in the development of this plan. The data allows us to understand why certain concerns may exist among the citizens and provides a baseline to measure identified objectives within this plan. Observation also allows us to address areas of importance and concern that may not be discerned or evident when engaging the community. It is important to understand Craven County as it exists today to adequately plan for the future.

5: Craven County Today

Analysis has revealed the following trends:

- ✚ Craven County has maintained its population growth and experienced no significant increase or decrease.
- ✚ Craven County is projected to have a population of 107,971 people by 2050.
- ✚ MCAS Cherry Point is a major economic factor within the County.
- ✚ 43,877 people live within the unincorporated areas of Craven County.
- ✚ Over half of the County's population has the education equivalent of either High-School graduate or some College with no degree, providing a work force suited for manufacturing, assembly, specialized trade, and other types of manual labor and production type employment.
- ✚ Seasonal population is on the rise in Craven County.
- ✚ Single-family construction has dominated as the preferred development type within the County.
- ✚ 12.8% of the residential structures within Craven County are vacant.
- ✚ 26.1% of owner-occupied housing is cost burdened (more than 30% of income spent on housing costs).
- ✚ 46.4% of renter-occupied housing is cost burdened (more than 30% of income spent on housing costs).
- ✚ The median household income is \$61,676.00
- ✚ Multiple employment opportunities and industries are located within the County.
- ✚ The average farm size in Craven County is 332 acres; there are estimated to be 245 farms within the County.
- ✚ 2022 USDA Data shows Craven County was a top 25 producing County for corn, cotton, and hogs.
- ✚ Craven County is a Top 10 County for timber production.

The data reveals that Craven County is in a stable position as it plans for its next 20 years. The workforce exists in the County to support the continued success of existing industries and the ability to attract new investment into the County. The scheduled transportation improvements within the County should continue to fuel interest not only within the County but the eastern North Carolina region. The data does reveal that there is a significant portion of the population that is cost burdened as well as a relatively high number of vacant structures. Strategies to address these issues need to be included in the development of this plan to provide affordable living opportunities.

These trends will be analyzed further in the subsequent Chapters of the plan as we work towards planning for sustainable Craven County.



CHAPTER 6: LIVABLE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Overview

One of the main purposes of this plan is to ensure that Craven County develops in a sustainable manner over the next 20 years. This chapter will explore topics and their associated conditions that have an impact on Craven County. Understanding the nature of these topics will inform our ability to work towards achieving sustainability. Further understanding the function and capacity of transportation networks, infrastructure, facilities, and current versus projected land use will assist the decision makers of Craven County in making choices that factor in long-term sustainability and consider overall capability. The American Planning Association considers the Livable Built Environment to be when all elements of the built environment – such as land use, transportation, housing, energy, and infrastructure – collaborate to create sustainable green places for living, working, and recreation, all while ensuring a high quality of life. This chapter, along with subsequent chapters to include goals, objectives, and policies, support the creation of a sustainable Craven County and outline key considerations for reaching this goal. It should be noted that Craven County does not have a public stormwater management system, but is intentional about stormwater management considerations for private development projects and working within the existing and planned rights-of-way to properly address stormwater as needed.

Transportation

Craven County is served by many major transportation routes which are part of the NCDOT transportation system. Transportation plays a major role in the utilization of land including the location of jobs and housing. Transportation networks drive development and have an influence on almost every aspect of daily life. The transportation and infrastructure network will significantly influence the pressures on land in Craven County both now and in the future. Transportation encompasses more than just the roadway system in the County. In recent years, there has been a growing demand at a statewide, regional, and local level to improve alternative transportation routes and to make transportation routes safer. Craven County's geographic location relative to the North Carolina coast makes it an integral part of North Carolina's transportation system as its major routes not only serve the citizens within the County, but also are important to the entire state of North Carolina.

New Bern Area MPO & Down East RPO

Craven County is a member of the New Bern Area Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization as well as the Down East Rural Transportation Planning Organization. These transportation planning organizations are responsible for managing the long-range planning initiatives of NCDOT's transportation system. The MPO and RPO respectively meet with the member organizations in their jurisdiction to determine both existing and future transportation needs. These organizations are responsible for prioritizing projects within the region and submitting needed transportation improvements into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) on a bi-annual basis. These organizations are also involved in the development of regional transportation plans and other specific types of transportation plans, such as bicycle and pedestrian plans which are designed to improve the quality of transportation in both the County and the region. Craven County's active participation and advocacy for certain projects will be critical in the forecasted planning future as all 100 counties as well as

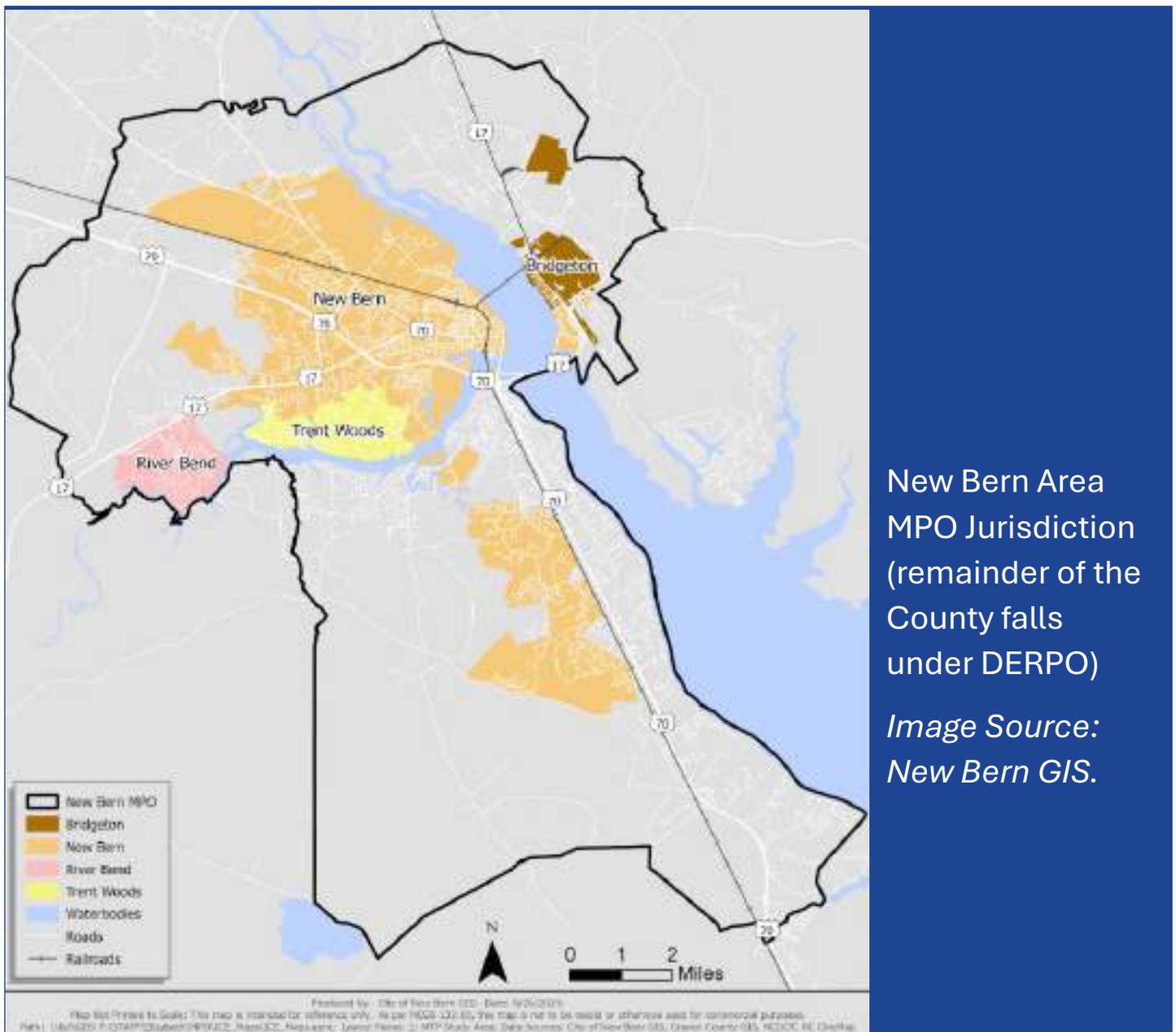


6: Livable Built Environment

municipalities in North Carolina compete for transportation projects. Craven County's ability to adequately provide data and present the need for transportation improvements will allow the County to continue to benefit from the funding that the State of North Carolina provides.

Recent and scheduled major transportation improvements in Craven County include the development of Interstate 42, which is the conversion of Highway 70 to an interstate. This improvement in transportation is anticipated to have an impact on both Craven County and the entire eastern North Carolina region. Interstate 42 is anticipated to be fully completed by 2032, resulting in an interstate extending from Raleigh to the North Carolina coast. Craven County has significant portions of Interstate 42 completed, but the work is not yet done.

The completion of major transportation planning initiatives will improve transportation in the County and provide the citizens with new opportunities, challenges, and land development decisions. Craven County has developed the Future Land Use Map in a manner that plans for increased industrial and commercial interest along the corridor which would utilize its potential to transport products throughout the County and region.





Multi-Modal Transportation

The multi-modal transportation network includes pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation traffic. These methods of transportation are supported by numerous NCDOT initiatives and are an excellent way to navigate within the community and immediate surrounding area. Multi-modal transportation is addressed in Craven County through the 2023 Craven County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). This plan outlines the various methods that exist within the County, including the following:

- ✚ Greyhound Bus Service (located in municipality)
- ✚ Amtrak (located in municipality)
- ✚ Craven Area Rural Transit System (CARTS)
- ✚ Bicycle network (primarily municipal)
- ✚ Pedestrian network (primarily municipal)
- ✚ Multi-use path network

Elderly or disabled citizens of Craven, Jones, and Pamlico counties can rely on CARTS for their transportation needs when traveling for medical or nutritional purposes. Ridership has shown a steady increase with 59,494 riders utilizing the service in 2023 and 63,939 riders in 2024. CARTS and other types of ride share and transportation assistance programs should remain a fixture in the transportation network of the County. Due to the increase in this type of transit use, any parking requirements or standards may need some flexibility to respond.

Bicycle, pedestrian, and multi-use needs within the County are addressed in the 2023 Craven County CTP. However, a specific bicycle and pedestrian plan could be developed to further identify where these types of facilities would be most beneficial and necessary. Craven County should encourage developers and may potentially require, through responsible and limited regulations, the provision of these types of facilities as basic infrastructure. This effort would promote interconnectivity, recreation, and meet the growing demand for multi-modal options within communities.

Transportation Networks

The transportation network of Craven County includes the following major transportation routes. This is a reflection of how the routes are described in the TIP:

- ✚ US Highway 70
- ✚ US Highway 17
- ✚ NC Highway 55
- ✚ NC Highway 43
- ✚ NC Highway 118

The 2023 Comprehensive Transportation Plan reveals that most of the transportation routes are not expected to exceed the design capacity by 2040 (see Map 1). However, this does not mean that the anticipated population increase, growth, and overall interest in the County will not place pressure on the existing transportation system. Craven County should coordinate with NCDOT regarding roadway capacity and proposed future development. Certain developments may also require a traffic impact analysis to ensure that any necessary improvements are made, and that the system can continue to operate in a satisfactory manner. There are no routes that meet the criteria of unacceptable service levels.

MAP 1 Volume and Capacity Deficiencies

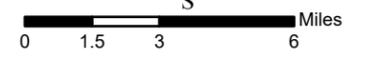


Craven County

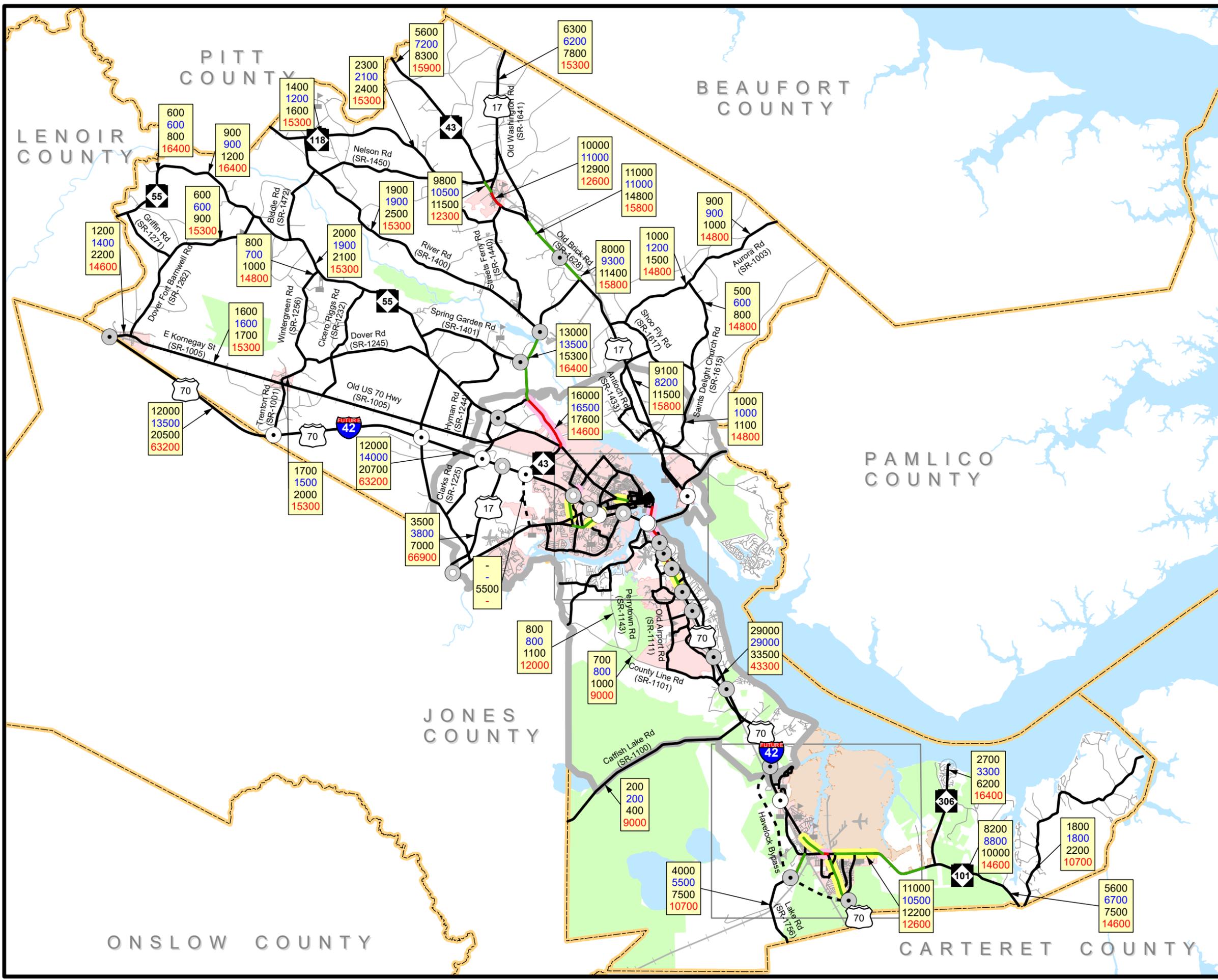
Comprehensive Transportation Plan

- Airports
- Ferry
- Schools
- Near Capacity (2015)
- Over Capacity (2015)
- Near Capacity (2040)
- Over Capacity (2040)
- Road Network
- Railroads
- Rivers and Streams
- Game Lands
- Municipal Boundaries
- County Boundary
- Military Base
- Water Bodies

- 2015 Volumes (AADT)
- 2021 Volumes (AADT)
- 2040 Volumes (AADT)
- 2015 Capacity



Sheet 1 of 3
Base map date: 01-10-2019
Refer to CTP document for more details





Port & Airport

Craven County citizens and other people within the region have access to the Coastal Carolina Regional Airport located at 200 Terminal Drive in New Bern. This regional airport provides connecting flights to larger international airports located in Charlotte, North Carolina; Hartford, Connecticut; and Orlando, Florida. The airport offers Craven County citizens the opportunity to have convenient access to air travel. The presence of a regional airport will benefit future industrial and commercial development by making it convenient for industry leaders to visit and conduct business in Craven County.



There are no ports located in Craven County; however, the Port of Morehead City is located roughly 40 miles away, with direct access via US Highway 70 (future Interstate 42).

Role in Mitigation (Evacuation)

Craven County, along with the counties of Carteret, Beaufort, and Pamlico, participate in the Pamlico Sound Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan which outlines the various hazards that may impact the Region. Some of the most prevalent hazards to impact Craven County include hurricanes, tropical storms, and major flood events. When these events occur, they typically do not have a local impact alone; rather, they threaten the entire east coast of North Carolina. This region predominantly consists of low-lying areas vulnerable to the event's impacts, often resulting in primary and secondary transportation routes becoming impassable due to floodwaters and debris.

Based on the NCDOT Know Your Zone data, Craven County is adjacent to coastal areas most susceptible to an impact from a hurricane or major coastal storm event. This places a high level of importance and reliance on the transportation network of Craven County as it serves as the primary evacuation route for people who reside in Pamlico and Carteret counties. The transportation network also is a direct means to aid these areas in the aftermath of an event. Craven County should be mindful of the crucial role these routes serve and ensure that future development planning does not impair the overall performance of the transportation network, especially when it is used as a primary evacuation route. Craven County should also support NCDOT in their efforts to improve the network and increase its resiliency so that major segments are not inundated and impassable in major events. See Map 2 for NCDOT Coastal Evacuation Routes.

Effect on Land Use

The greatest effect that the transportation network in Craven County should have on land use is the anticipated completion of Interstate 42. The introduction of an interstate and expanded capacity of US Highway 70 should result in a higher concentration of industrial development and limited commercial development in proximity to the Interstate 42 corridor. The ability to move goods in the County and region with relative convenience should contribute towards increased growth and development in the area identified as Industrial on the future land use map, particularly the industrial area west of New Bern and south of US Highway 70 (future Interstate 42) located west of NC Highway 17. The introduction of the interstate should also attract residents to Craven County because of the convenience and ability to commute to work that may be located outside of the County.

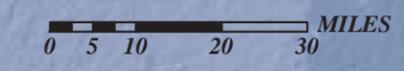


Map 2

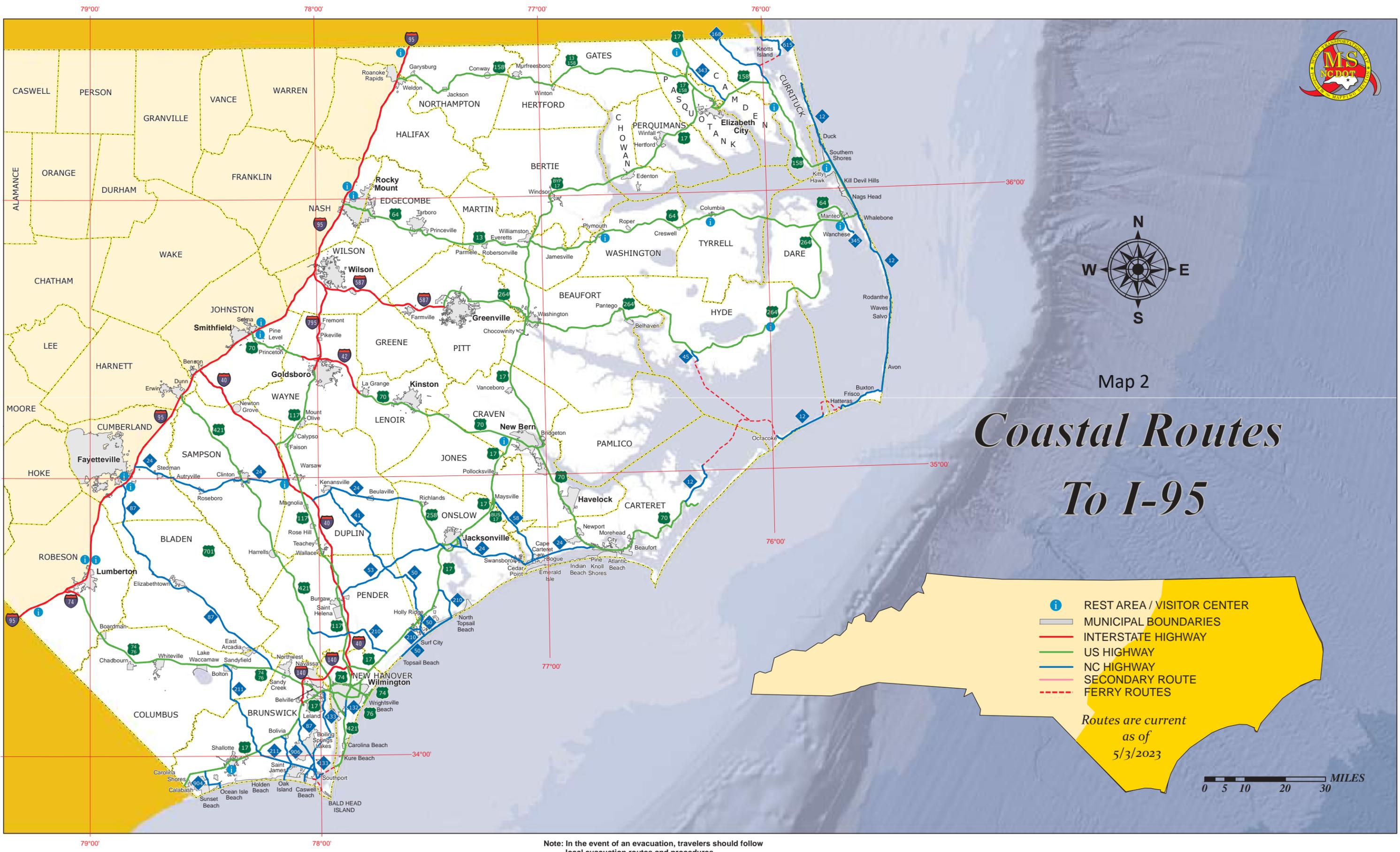
Coastal Routes To I-95

- REST AREA / VISITOR CENTER
- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES
- INTERSTATE HIGHWAY
- US HIGHWAY
- NC HIGHWAY
- SECONDARY ROUTE
- FERRY ROUTES

Routes are current as of 5/3/2023



Note: In the event of an evacuation, travelers should follow local evacuation routes and procedures.





Population & Demographics

The data evaluated originates from the US Census Bureau, NC Office of State Budget and Management, and the Craven County Planning Department. The datasets used were utilized with a conscious effort to produce the highest level of consistency between datasets so that accurate projections and observations can be made. Data from the US Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) was used in instances where there was no data available from the 2020 Decennial Census or the State Demographer. It is important to understand the overall population and demographics of the County, including future population projections, to determine what types of increased level of service may be necessary to accommodate the future population.

Regional Population

The Census data shows that Craven County has consistently remained the 3rd most populous County in Region P over the last 20 years. The two largest counties within Region P are Onslow and Wayne counties. This fact can most likely be attributed to the military installations located within the respective counties which operate on a larger scale and capacity than the Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, located in Havelock. According to the 2022 ACS, Craven County is the 27th most populated county out of the 100 North Carolina counties. Craven County experienced significant growth from 2000 to 2010. However, US Census data indicates a slight decrease in the total population from the 2010 to 2020 Census. This reported decrease can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, which may have led to inaccuracies, as well as the unwillingness of some citizens to participate in the Census. This is a common occurrence not only in Craven County but on a state and national scale as well. Throughout plan development and physical observation of development and proposals for development in the County, it is with great confidence that we can conclude the 2020 Census does not accurately represent the population and growth that is occurring within Craven County. The 2020 Census also does not account for the numerous amount of people who are choosing to relocate to Craven County.

Table 1. US Census Population by County (Region P)

Jurisdiction	2000	2010	2020	2000-2010 Change		2010-2020 Change	
				Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Craven County	91,436	103,505	100,720	12,069	13.19%	-2,785	-2.69%
Carteret County	59,383	66,469	67,686	7,086	11.93%	1,217	1.83%
Duplin County	49,063	58,505	48,715	9,442	19.24%	-9,790	-16.73%
Greene County	18,974	21,362	20,451	2,388	12.58%	-911	-4.26%
Jones County	10,381	10,153	9,172	-228	-2.19%	-981	-9.66%
Lenoir County	59,648	59,495	55,122	-153	-0.25%	-4,373	-7.35%
Onslow County	150,355	177,772	204,576	27,417	18.23%	26,804	15.07%
Pamlico County	12,934	13,144	12,276	210	1.62%	-868	-6.60%
Wayne County	113,329	122,623	117,333	9,294	8.20%	-5,290	-4.31%
North Carolina	8,049,313	9,535,483	10,439,388	1,486,170	18.5%	729,393	7.6%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2000, 2010, 2020)

2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimate & Long-Term Projection

While the 2023 ACS is an estimate and not an absolute approximation, it does more closely represent the growth and prosperity that has occurred in Craven County over the last 25 years. The 2024 ACS Survey estimates that there are approximately 104,167 people that reside within Craven County. This is a moderate estimation. New Bern has continued to receive increased development interest and Craven County has continued to issue an increasing number of permits for development on a per-year basis. Growth in the entire coastal region of North Carolina has

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been on the rise since the turn of the millennium. Craven County experiences a significant population boost from people who desire relocation, whether due to retirement, climate, job opportunities, etc.

In the opinion of the plan development team and Craven County staff, the NC Office of State Budget & Management also does an inadequate job at estimating the forecasted growth for Craven County. This fact is primarily due to the Census data that was used and the aforementioned numerous errors that exist within the 2020 Census Data.

After careful evaluation of many contributing factors, it is moderately estimated that the Craven County population could grow between 5-7% every 10 years. At this rate, based on 2024 ACS estimates, Craven County should have a population projection of the following:

- 2034 estimate (5%) 109,375 persons
- 2044 estimate (5%) 114,843 persons
- 2054 estimate (5%) 120,585 persons

Municipal Population

Of Craven County’s municipalities, New Bern has experienced the most growth and makes up approximately 31.06% of the total population of the County. Havelock was of comparable size to New Bern in 2000 but has not experienced the same level of consistent growth, with the population gradually experiencing a decline over the past 20 years. The remaining municipalities within the County have maintained their population numbers over the past 20 years with no significant increases or decreases in population. Just over half (56.42%) of the population of Craven County live within the corporate limits of a municipality while the remainder reside in the unincorporated areas of the County. Much of the municipal population resides within the central and southern areas of Craven County with the northern and western half of the county being largely unincorporated. The municipalities in the northern half of the County only make up 2.8% of the total municipal population.

Jurisdiction	2000	2010	2020	2000-2010 Change		2010-2020 Change	
				Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Bridgeton	364	454	349	90	24.72%	-105	-23.12%
Cove City	429	399	378	-30	-6.99%	-21	-5.26%
Dover	437	401	349	36	-8.23%	-52	-12.96%
Havelock	22,701	20,735	16,621	-1,966	-8.66%	-4,114	-19.84%
New Bern	22,909	29,524	31,291	6,615	28.87%	1,767	5.98%
River Bend	2,990	3,119	2,902	129	4.31%	-217	-6.95%
Trent Woods	4,145	4,155	4,074	10	0.24%	-81	-1.94%
Vanceboro	885	1,005	869	120	13.55%	-186	-13.53%
Total Municipal Population	54,860	59,842	56,833	4,982	9.08%	-3,009	-5.02%
Craven County	91,436	103,505	100,720	12,069	13.19%	-2,785	-2.69%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2000, 2010, 2020)

Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point Population Impact

This data comes from the Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point 2021 Economic Impact Report. While the data does not identify the percentage of the population which resides in Craven County, it does reveal the impact and volume of people that MCAS Cherry Point adds to the County. Some of these numbers may overlap and be reflected in Census data. The largest group of MCAS Cherry Point’s population is retirees, which establishes the trend of many



marines choosing to reside in Craven County or the surrounding region once their time-of-service ends. The second largest identified group is family members of active-duty marines. The types of facilities and amenities required by these population subsets will include recreation, education, entertainment, and personal service uses. These population subsets will also require adequate housing to meet their needs. These types of services should be concentrated in the southern area of Craven County to conveniently serve the installation in a harmonious manner.

Status	Population
Active Duty	6,832
Reserve	2,732
Civilian	5,356
Contractor Permanent	3,700
Family Member (Active Duty)	7,446
Retirees	12,547
Total	38,154

Seasonal Population

Craven County has experienced a steady increase in seasonal population growth over the past 20 years, especially in the 2010-2020 period. Most of the seasonal population in Craven County is attributed to transient and business-related uses in the County which do not require full-time residency. New Bern attracts most of the seasonal population due to its history, waterfront, and expanding tourist industry.

Jurisdiction	2000	2010	2020	2000-2010 Change		2010-2020 Change	
				Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Craven County	1,074	1,452	2,108	378	35.19%	656	45.17%
North Carolina	342,585	463,438	524,896	120,853	35.27%	61,458	13.26%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 & 2020 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

With the completion of Interstate 42 and the natural features that Craven County offers, the County is expected to continue to see a slight increase in seasonal population over the next 15-20 years. An increase in recreational opportunities and entertainment use within the County may also contribute towards an overall increase in the seasonal population. The provision of services that cater towards seasonal population should be expected in limited quantities and may increase if there is significant interest in the County or interest focused on certain temporary types of events or activity. Limited types of vacation or seasonal housing may be constructed dependent on the demand. This housing is encouraged to be located close to attractions and integrated harmoniously with the existing built environments and community.

Jurisdiction	2020 (Census)	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Craven County	2,108	2,211	2,244	2,253	2,256	2,256	2,256
North Carolina	524,896	559,118	590,563	622,153	653,558	684,890	716,324

Source: NC Office of State Budget & Management.

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Population Forecasts

The 2020 Census data indicates a slight decline in Craven County's overall population. Various factors may contribute to this decrease, but the most probable cause is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on achieving a comprehensive count. Over the next 30 years, Craven County is anticipated to see an increase in its population. The completion of Interstate 42 has the potential to accelerate this growth by bringing more jobs and opportunities to Craven County and the eastern region of North Carolina. Craven County's proximity to the Port of Morehead City presents the opportunity for large scale manufacturing and shipping industries to locate in the County with excellent transportation options to the port. The presence of MCAS Cherry Point and the potential for the installation to expand will require more people. North Carolina is continuously receiving national interest for persons that desire to relocate their residence. The temperate climate that North Carolina provides, and its geographic location make it a desirable state for people to relocate to. Craven County's geographic location, and variety of municipality sizes that it offers, provides many options for people who may be relocating.

Table 6. Craven County Population Projections

Jurisdiction	2020 (Census)	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Craven County	100,720	105,799	107,357	107,800	107,924	107,962	107,971
North Carolina	10,439,388	11,118,657	11,740,822	12,368,843	12,993,208	13,616,096	14,241,032

Source: NC Office of State Budget & Management.

Population by Age

Craven County's 2020 Census total population of approximately 100,720 people experiences a roughly even distribution among age groups with the 25-44 year, 45 to 64 year, and 65 year and over groups all making up 20-25% of the total population. There was a significant increase in the number of people 65 years and over from 2000 to 2020 which could indicate a desire of the population to age in place and remain in Craven County. There has been a slight decrease in the number of people under the age of 15 as well as people between the ages of 25 to 64 over the past 20 years. Efforts should be made to provide services and activities that will accommodate all age groups of Craven County.

Table 7. Craven County Population by Age

Age	2000	2010	2020
Less than 15 years	18,943 (20.7%)	20,428 (19.7%)	17,448 (17.3%)
15 to 24 years	15,466 (16.9%)	16,282 (15.7%)	13,540 (13.5%)
25 to 44 years	25,4399 (27.8%)	25,044 (24.2%)	23,417 (23.3%)
45 to 64 years	19,485 (21.3%)	25,941 (25.1%)	24,769 (24.6%)
65 years and over	12,103 (13.2%)	15,810 (15.3%)	21,546 (21.5%)
Total	91,436 (100.0%)	103,505 (100.0%)	100,720 (100.0%)

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2000, 2010, 2020)

Population by Race

Craven County's majority population is White, accounting for 66.2% of the total population. The Black or African American population has experienced a slight decrease in population over the last 20 years while the population composed of Two or More Races has experienced a significant increase. Craven County will continue to support efforts that promote opportunities for minority populations which may encourage more minorities to locate in the County.



Table 8. Craven County Racial Composition 2000 to 2020

Race	2000	2010	2020	% Change 2000 to 2010	% Change 2010 to 2020	% Change 2000 to 2020
White	64,070	72,441	66,703	13.06%	-7.92%	4.11%
Black or African American	22,968	23,193	20,204	0.98%	-12.89%	-12.03%
Other	3,026	5,099	6,676	68.51%	30.93%	120.62%
Two or More Races	1,372	2,772	7,137	102.04%	157.47%	420.19%
Total Population	91,436	103,505	100,720	13.20%	-2.69%	10.15%

Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census (2000, 2010, 2020)

Educational Attainment

The majority of Craven County’s population has received some level of college education without receiving a degree, with approximately 18,167 people falling in this category. Craven County’s percentage of the population with an associate degree is roughly the same as North Carolina’s at 10.3% and 10.0%, respectively. Approximately 17% of the County’s population have obtained a bachelor’s degree and 11.2% have obtained a graduate level degree. The County’s percentage obtaining a bachelor’s degree is significantly lower in comparison to North Carolina (33.9%). This fact may be attributed to the numerous job opportunities available in Craven County, which require a specialized skilled trade workforce not needing a bachelor’s degree. Improvements in transportation and an overall increase in projected development, paired with the rising prevalence of flexible work schedules, should contribute towards the number of residents with a bachelor’s or graduate degree increasing.

Table 9. Craven County Educational Attainment (Population 25 years and older)

Education Level	Craven County	North Carolina
Less than 9 th Grade	2,071 (2.4%)	286,553 (4.0%)
High School (No Diploma)	4,131 (5.9%)	471,586 (6.6%)
High School (Graduate)	18,206 (25.3%)	1,804,406 (25.2%)
Some College (No Degree)	18,167 (27.2%)	1,460,120 (20.4%)
Associate’s degree	7,983 (10.3%)	720,557 (10%)
Bachelor’s degree	10,281 (17.7%)	1,533,552 (33.9%)
Graduate’s degree	7,167 (11.2%)	895,338 (12.5%)

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Survey

Housing

Throughout the public engagement process of this plan, the topic of quality affordable housing options was frequently discussed by citizens. Given the current economic conditions, this issue has become increasingly challenging. People have sought alternative housing solutions, including shared living arrangements. In some cases, recreational vehicles (RVs) are being used as permanent residences, even though they were not intended for full-time use. These vehicles do not provide an ideal living situation that fosters community or promotes a healthy quality of life. There are several housing types that should be encouraged in Craven County that will assist in meeting the housing needs of its citizens. Steps that Craven County can take to achieve these housing types are described in Chapters 4 and 11 of this plan. Desirable housing types and conditions that can assist in meeting this need include the following:

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- ✚ **Accessory Dwelling Units** – structures with a small square footage footprint which are located on the same parcel as a single-family dwelling can provide a high level of flexibility in its potential for residential use.
- ✚ **Small Single-Family** – developments that include single-family dwellings between 600-900 square feet on small lot sizes not exceeding 4,000 square feet.
- ✚ **In-House Building Plans** – keeping pre-approved building plans at the Craven County offices which provide options for simple yet efficient construction that minimizes the cost upon the developer can help Craven County support affordable housing. This effort will also instill predictability and confidence in the permitting process and the desire to build.
- ✚ **Attached Homes** – allowing for and encouraging townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, etc., to occur should minimize both construction costs as well as ownership costs while also promoting a sense of community.
- ✚ **Encourage Renovations** – in some instances, it is cheaper to renovate rather than demolish. The County can consider modifying the permitting process and review periods to encourage residents to explore the option of renovating an existing structure rather than new construction.
- ✚ **Cottage/Tiny Home Developments** – Craven County can make efforts to address the need for affordable housing by encouraging these types of small, clustered structures to be developed in an organized manner. These structures could serve as excellent homes for unmarried adults, first time home buyers, as well as seniors.
- ✚ **Land Use Regulations** – In the event that Craven County explores responsible land use regulations, it is encouraged to be done in a manner that is not restrictive in a way that makes affordable housing opportunities scarce or impractical.

Structure Age

Most of the housing in Craven County and its municipalities was constructed between 1960 and 2009. With a significant portion of the housing being built prior to 2000, the housing stock in Craven County is steadily aging and has the potential of placing burdens on homeowners due to the repair and increased maintenance associated with older structures. Maintenance and repair of existing housing needs to be a priority to ensure the aging housing stock still can adequately serve the population. An aging housing stock can also present a situation where many structures are non-complaint with current NC Building Code Standards and may present structural fitness and safety issues. Craven County should support streamlined processes and infill redevelopment and upfit that result in bringing aging structures into compliance with NC Building Code. Older structures are also typically not as energy efficient.

Disclaimer: 2020 & later data for New Bern & Craven County should not be considered the primary source of accuracy. County and Municipal data indicates a much higher number. See Table 17 for Craven County data.

Table 10. Craven County & Municipal Housing Age 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Jurisdiction	1939 or earlier	1940-1959	1960-1979	1980-1999	2000-2009	2010-2019	2020 or later
Bridgeton	6	33	38	91	13	20	0
Cove City	27	35	31	46	86	13	6
Dover	26	36	53	56	12	2	0
Havelock	21	499	1,357	1,906	877	478	15
New Bern	884	1,609	2,192	4,175	3,074	2,092	156
River Bend	0	38	440	690	148	0	6
Trent Woods	0	137	800	532	121	68	40
Vanceboro	38	87	69	101	105	6	0
Craven County	1,568	3,683	7,806	14,301	8,693	4,654	299

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Survey



Housing Value

According to ACS 2022 estimates, the majority of owner-occupied housing in Craven County is valued to be between \$200,000 and \$299,000, which is less than the state majority of \$300,000-\$499,000. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, housing costs have steadily increased, placing a strain on residents in both Craven County and across North Carolina. With a median household income of only \$61,676, it is a challenge for the average household in Craven County to afford homeownership.

Table 11. Craven County Owner Occupied Housing Value 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Housing Value	Craven County	North Carolina
< \$50,000	2,161 (7.8%)	173,327 (6.4%)
\$50,000-\$99,999	2,531 (9.1%)	255,590 (9.4%)
\$100,000-\$149,999	4,591 (16.5%)	331,595 (12.2%)
\$150,000-\$199,999	5,192 (18.6%)	365,735 (13.5%)
\$200,000-\$299,999	7,014 (25.2%)	605,026 (22.3%)
\$300,000-\$499,999	4,732 (17.0%)	625,141 (23.0%)
\$500,000-\$999,999	1,343 (4.8%)	301,801 (11.1%)
>\$1,000,000	284 (1.0%)	59,386 (2.2%)
Total Owner-Occupied Homes	27,848 (100.0%)	2,717,601 (100.0%)

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordable housing as housing in which the occupant is paying no more than 30 percent of gross income for housing costs, including utilities. Households that exceed this threshold are considered by HUD to be cost burdened and may not be able to meet other essential living costs to fulfil basic needs, which include food, clothing, healthcare and transportation.

Craven County, as well as the majority of its municipalities, are experiencing a significant burden related to the amount of income spent on housing. Approximately 26.1% of owner-occupied housing and 46.4% of renter-occupied housing are spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Three of the municipalities in Craven County (Bridgeton, Cove City, and Dover) have over 50% of the renter-occupied housing, spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Trent Woods is the only municipality with low percentages of the population who are not significantly cost burdened by housing. A key trend is the high cost of rental housing in Craven County. With fluctuating interest rates and a housing market that has seen a significant increase in home values, it can become increasingly difficult for a population with a median household income of \$61,676 to purchase a home. Efforts should be made to accommodate affordable housing and innovative development that alleviates the burden that a portion of Craven County's population experiences.

Table 12. Craven County & Municipal Housing Costs as a Percentage of Household Income 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Jurisdiction	Housing Units with a Mortgage		Occupied Units Paying Rent	
	<30% of Income	>30% of Income	<30% of Income	>30% of Income
Bridgeton	89.8%	10.2%	37.5%	62.5%
Cove City	77.3%	22.7%	46.9%	53.2%
Dover	74.4%	25.6%	27.3%	72.6%
Havelock	80.5%	19.5%	55.3%	44.7%
New Bern	69.5%	30.5%	50.3%	49.8%
River Bend	77.7%	9.3%	56.2%	43.8%
Trent Woods	90.6%	9.3%	86.1%	13.9%
Vanceboro	63.3%	36.7%	72.8%	27.4%
Craven County	73.9%	26.1%	53.6%	46.4%
North Carolina	76.2%	23.8%	52.3%	47.7%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Survey

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Housing by Type & Total Units

According to the 2022 American Community Survey, 73.8% of Craven County's 47,051 total units were single-family houses, which is consistent with the County's building permit activity. North Carolina had a slightly lower percentage of single-family houses at 69.8%. However, the County's 11.8% multi-family share in 2022 was much less than 18.6% for North Carolina.

Type	Craven County	North Carolina
Single-Family	34,729 (73.8%)	3,306,567 (69.8%)
Multi-Family	5,568 (11.8%)	882,099 (18.6%)
Manufactured Home	6,662 (14.2%)	547,736 (11.6%)
Boat, RV, Van, etc.	92 (0.2%)	3,479 (0.1%)
Total Units	47,051 (100.0%)	4,739,881 (100.0%)

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Housing Occupancy

Most homes within Craven County and its municipalities are owner-occupied with only New Bern and Vanceboro having more renters than owners. According to 2022 ACS Data, of the estimated 47,051 residential structures in Craven County, only 27.96% are renter-occupied.

Jurisdiction	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Vacant	Total
Bridgeton	141	60	44	245
Cove City	168	76	24	268
Dover	123	62	19	204
Havelock	2,176	2,977	702	5,855
New Bern	8,279	5,903	2,083	16,265
River Bend	1,177	145	268	1,590
Trent Woods	1,604	94	115	1,819
Vanceboro	201	205	44	450
Craven County	27,848	13,156	6,047	47,051

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Survey

Housing Vacancy Status

According to the 2020 US Census, there are 5,868 vacant homes located in Craven County, which is a 24.77% increase from the 4,703 vacant homes reported in the 2010 US Census. The 2022 ACS estimates that Craven County has 6,047 vacant homes which is a continuance of the trend of vacant structures in the County.

Status	Craven County	North Carolina
For rent	1,009	103,684
Rented, not occupied	306	24,198
For sale only	336	38,371
Sold, not occupied	402	22,332
For seasonal, recreational use	991	194,988
For migrant workers	14	1,409
Other vacant	2,989	249,387
Total vacant	6,047	634,649

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Year-Round & Seasonal Housing

From 2000 to 2020, Craven County’s total number of housing units and seasonal units have both experienced an increase with seasonal housing experiencing an 87.52% increase from 2000 to 2020.

Unit Type	2000	2010	2020	% Change 00 to 10	% Change 10 to 20	% Change 00 to 20
Total Housing Units	38,150	45,002	46,800	17.96%	3.99%	22.67%
Seasonal Housing Units	433	737	812	70.20%	10.17%	87.52%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000, 2010, & 2020 Decennial Census

Building Permit Trends

Craven County experienced an influx of both single-family and multi-family development from 2003-2008. However, there was a significant decrease in construction in 2009 which can be directly attributed to the Great Recession of 2008 which was a time of global decline in the national economy. The effects of the Great Recession in Craven County had the most significant impact on multi-family development which has yet to experience growth levels of the 2003-2008 era since, with 2019 being the highest year of production with 10 multi-family structures being built. The decrease in single-family residential construction post the Great Recession can be attributed to the lack of demand for housing due to the vacant structures that remained. After 10 years of relatively low single-family development, Craven County has begun to experience an increase in development since 2019, with 2021 and 2023 being the most productive years in residential development since the Great Recession of 2008. The need for affordable housing in Craven County does outweigh the need for new housing; however, new housing will still be needed when the existing housing stock fails to meet the needs of the citizens of Craven County.

Year	Single-Family	Multi-Family	Total
2003	664	101	765
2004	998	34	1,032
2005	1,136	149	1,285
2006	1,021	36	1,057
2007	607	37	644
2008	244	29	273
2009	172	0	172
2010	152	0	152
2011	184	2	186
2012	179	1	180
2013	135	0	135
2014	117	0	117
2015	114	4	118
2016	165	4	169
2017	130	3	133
2018	131	3	134
2019	125	10	135
2020	184	2	186
2021	268	6	274
2022	195	3	198
2023	274	2	276
Total	8,706	705	9,411
Annual Average (2003-2013)	499	35	535
Annual Average (2014-2023)	170	4	174

Source: Craven County Planning & Inspections Department.

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Community Facilities

The facilities discussed in this section are essential to the quality of life in Craven County. It is crucial to thoroughly understand how these services function and operate to accurately assess and anticipate future needs.

Craven County Government

Craven County Government operates primarily at 406 Craven Street, which is where County Administration and other support departments are located. The Board of Commissioners also meets at the 406 Craven Street office building. Other County departments are located at various locations throughout the County. Craven County operates under a Governing Board/Manager form of governance. The Board of Commissioners, which is composed of seven commissioners, are responsible for employing a County Manager and making decisions on policy matters relating to the overall operation of the County government. Craven County maintains 30 different sites in the County that include structures owned and operated for the purpose of improving the lives of its citizens. These sites primarily include County offices, storage areas, and general operations areas. As of December 2024, Craven County employed approximately 717 people, of which 574 were Craven County citizens. The County heavily depends on its citizens to contribute to the function of its government activity and would not be able to succeed without the dedication of its employees.

Fire Protection

Fire protection is provided in the County by multiple departments and volunteer organizations. The Craven County Emergency Services Director serves as the liaison between the 12 volunteer departments in the County and the two municipal departments located in New Bern and Havelock. The following tables illustrate the capability of each department and fire protection that exists within the County. As development occurs, the capability of each department should be continuously evaluated to ensure that resources exist to protect the lives of citizens. The Insurance Services Office (ISO) Rating is very critical to insurance rates in the County. This score is assigned based on factors which include a department's capability, water supply, station locations, and equipment at the station. A lower number indicates a higher capability for protection.

Table 18. Craven County Fire Departments Apparatus

Department	Members	ISO Rating	Engine	Other Trucks*	Ladder	Tanker	Boat
Tri-County Vol. Fire Dept.	49	5/9E	8	3	1	1	1
Little Swift Creek Vol. Fire Dept.	35	5/9E	4	3	0	3	0
Vanceboro Rural Vol. Fire Dept.	50	5/9E	4	4	0	4	0
No. 7 Township Fire and Rescue	65	4/9E	5	7	1	0	0
Township Six Fire Dept.	44	5/9E	4	6	0	2	0
Harlowe Fire Dept.	42	5/9E	5	8	1	1	1
West of New Bern Fire Dept.	65	4/9E	6	4	0	0	0
Cove City Fire Dept.	32	6/9E	3	3	0	1	0
Dover Fire Dept.	27	5/9E	3	4	0	1	0
Fort Barnwell Fire Dept.	40	5/9E	5	3	0	0	1
No. 9 Township Fire Dept.	62	5/9E	4	4	0	1	1
Rhems Fire Dept.	39	4/9E	4	3	0	0	0
City of Havelock Fire & EMS	32 (paid) 10 (volunteer)	4	2	7	1	0	0
City of New Bern	75 (paid) 3 (volunteer) 70 (EMT specific)	75	12	2	3	0	5

*Brush/Service/Utility/Equipment Truck & Other Apparatus including Ambulance. Source: Craven County Fire Marshal



The departments in the County are continuously training in the following types of programs as applicable to their department and needed capabilities:

- ✦ Fire suppression
- ✦ Vehicle extrication
- ✦ Fire boat
- ✦ Confined spaces
- ✦ Hazardous materials
- ✦ Thermal imaging
- ✦ Water rescue
- ✦ In-house continuing education

Craven County Sheriff’s Office

The Craven County Sheriff’s Office upholds the NCGS related to law and the enforcement of law in both the incorporated and unincorporated areas of the County. The office has mutual aid agreements for service with all municipalities in the County so there are instances where services may overlap or work in a concerted effort. The Craven County Sheriff is an elected position currently held by Chip Hughes. There are a total of 193 deputies currently employed at the Sheriff’s Office as of January 2025.

Health Services

Craven County citizens have both local and regional access to CarolinaEast Medical Center in New Bern, NC and ECU Health Medical Center in Greenville, NC. CarolinaEast Medical Center



is located at 2000 Neuse Boulevard in New Bern, NC. It is a full-service multi-facility healthcare provider offering a wide range of inpatient and outpatient services. The medical center is affiliated with UNC Health and encompasses a 125,000 square foot main facility which includes 350 patient beds. Designed specially to meet the health needs of a growing coastal region, the CarolinaEast Medical Center has been approved as a provider of Medicare and Medicaid programs. Since the inception of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) hospital star ratings in 2016, CarolinaEast Medical Center is the only hospital in North Carolina to continuously achieve a five-star rating.



ECU Health Medical Center is the nearest trauma center to Craven County and is located in neighboring Pitt County. ECU Health Medical Center serves as the flagship teaching hospital for the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University. For those living in eastern North Carolina, ECU Health Medical Center provides access to a Level I Adult Trauma Center and Level II Pediatric Trauma Center. With 974 licensed beds, ECU Health Medical Center offers extensive inpatient and outpatient services to more than 1.4 million people across 29 counties.

The Craven County Community Health Center is located at 2818 Neuse Boulevard in New Bern, NC. There is also a location in Havelock at 508 US Highway 70. These centers provide comprehensive primary and preventive care services and are accredited by the NC Local Health Accreditation Board through November of 2027. They are also considered to be Federally Qualified Health Centers.

6: Livable Built Environment

Education

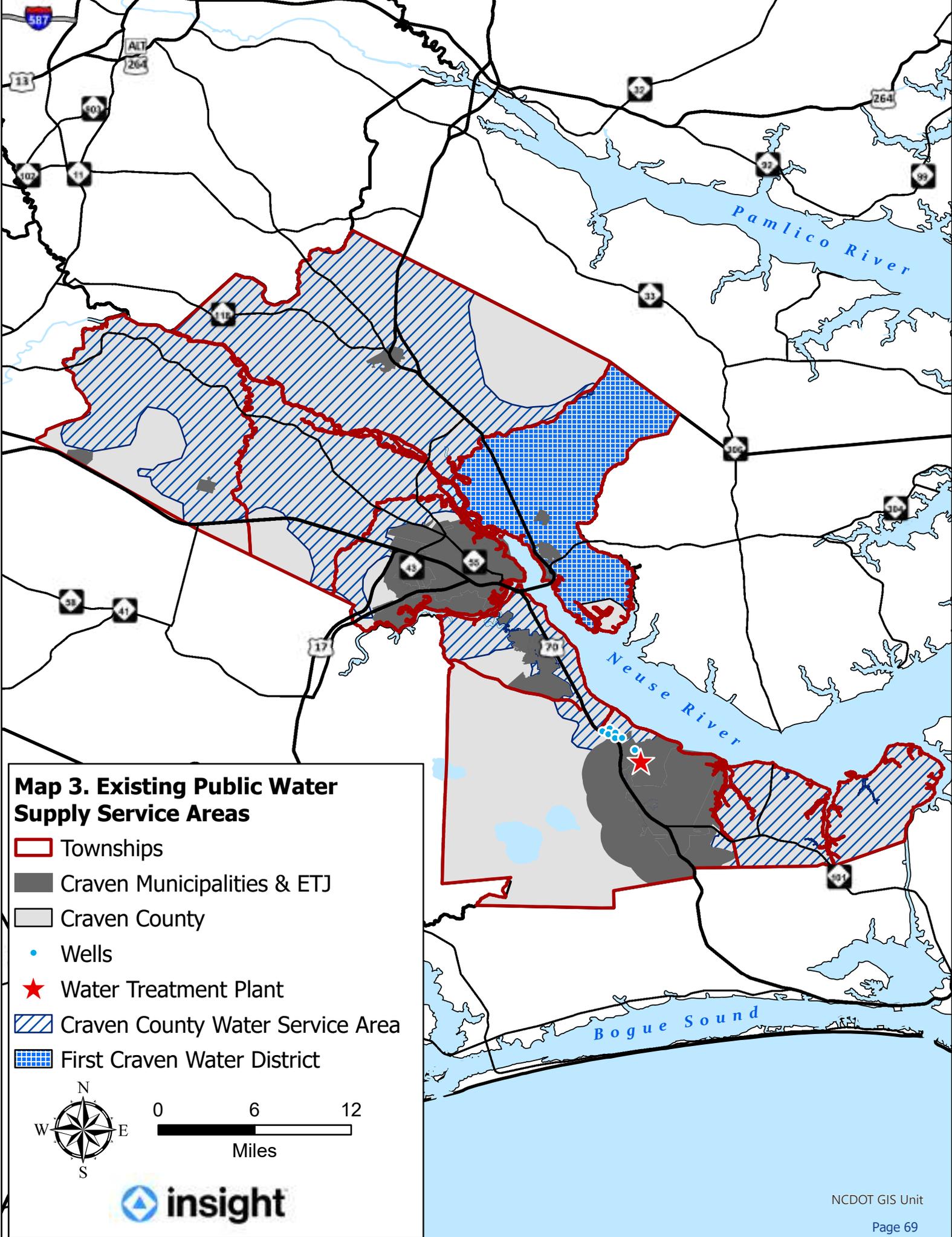
School aged children in Craven County that attend a North Carolina Public School participate in education at a school that falls under the jurisdiction of the Craven County Board of Education. Craven County schools have been recognized as having an outstanding graduation rate, providing outstanding educators, and showing exemplary growth. Table 19 provides the employment and enrollment rates as of January 2025 for each school.

Table 19. Craven County Schools: Enrollment and Employment		
School	Student Enrollment	Employees
<i>ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS</i>		
Albert H. Bangert Elementary	447	60
Arthur W. Edwards Elementary	496	67
Ben D. Quinn Elementary	329	52
Bridgeton Elementary	426	67
Brinson Memorial Elementary	453	63
Creekside Elementary	470	60
Graham A. Barden Elementary	241	38
Havelock Elementary	244	49
JT Barber Elementary	296	53
James W. Smith Elementary	334	45
Oaks Road Academy	346	46
Roger Bell New Tech Academy	415	55
Trent Park Elementary	400	54
Vanceboro-Farm Life Elementary	532	75
W. Jesse Gurganus Elementary	342	46
<i>MIDDLE SCHOOLS</i>		
Grover C. Fields Middle	562	74
HJ MacDonald Middle	649	67
Havelock Middle	315	45
Tucker Creek Middle	472	54
<i>HIGH SCHOOLS</i>		
Craven Early College High	225	12
Craven Virtual Academy	117	3
Early College EAST High	204	14
Havelock High	1,064	100
New Bern High	1,647	139
West Craven High	810	79
<i>Source: Craven County Schools.</i>		

Water

Water service in unincorporated Craven County is provided by the County Water Department. The main goal of the department is to provide the citizens with safe and affordable drinking water. As of January 2025, there were approximately 13,981 residential connections and 1,308 commercial and bulk water connections. There are an estimated 2,322,362 gallons used per day with a permitted capacity of 4,300,000 gallons.

The County water department is being proactive in its planning efforts to address future water supply needs and are currently in the process of developing a 10-year comprehensive Capital Improvements Program to determine needs and opportunities to increase its capacity as well as upgrade and improve the system. The projected increase in population is being considered to provide adequate water supply.



Map 3. Existing Public Water Supply Service Areas

-  Townships
-  Craven Municipalities & ETJ
-  Craven County
-  Wells
-  Water Treatment Plant
-  Craven County Water Service Area
-  First Craven Water District



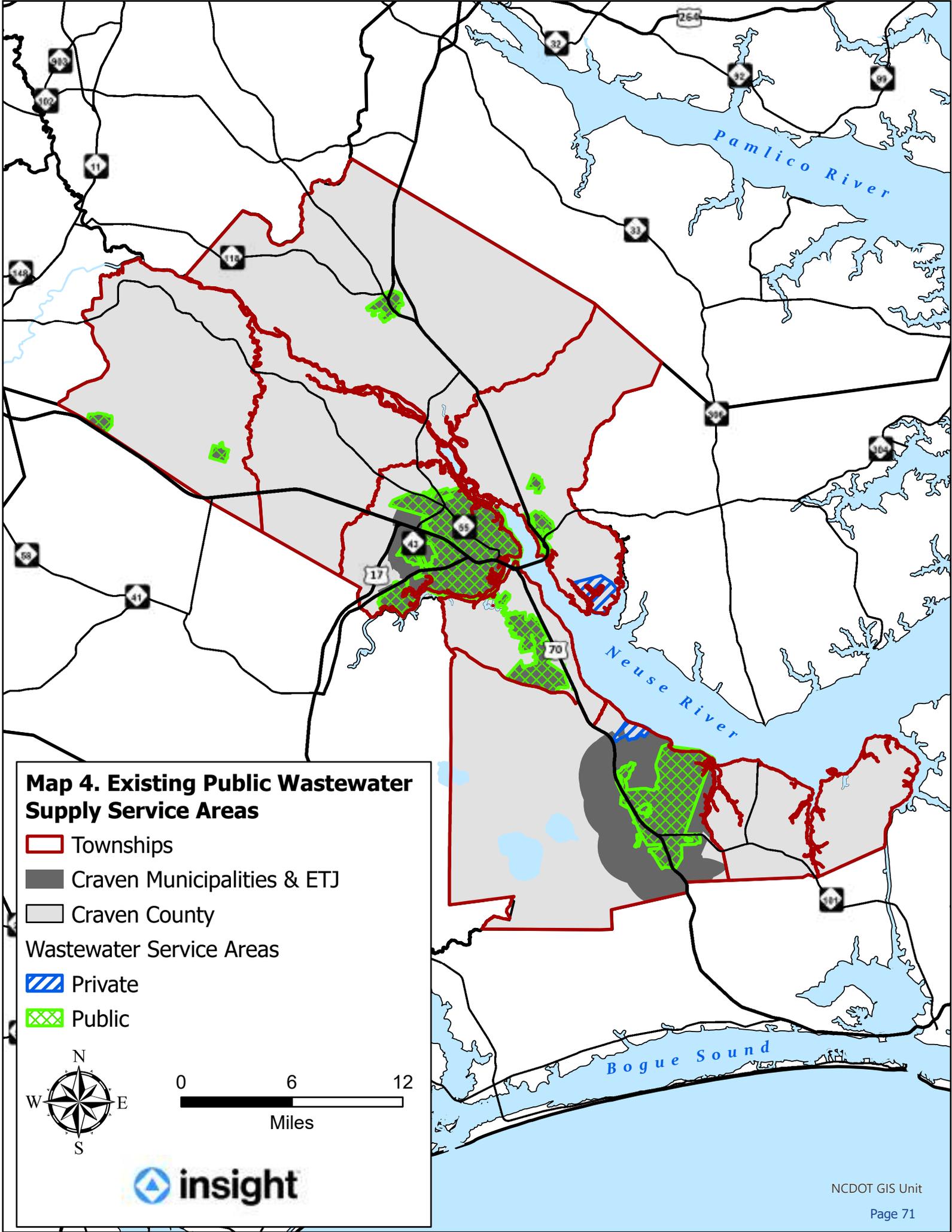
6: Livable Built Environment

Sewer/Septic

The unincorporated areas of Craven County do not receive sewer services from the County, as there is no county-wide sewer system in place. Sewer services are provided by municipalities through extension and acceptance into their existing systems. Development in the County is dependent on utilizing on-site or off-site septic systems. The introduction of sewer services to the unincorporated areas of the County could allow for more dense types of development to take place and reduce pressures on valuable agricultural lands, due to their ability to support septic systems. The responsible provision of limited sewer service should be encouraged in strategically planned areas of the County which will fuel economic development but not detract from the natural and agricultural areas that make up a large percentage of the unincorporated lands in the County. The prevention of urban sprawl shall always be a priority when reviewing developments that propose to utilize sewer service.

Carolina Water Systems is a private package treatment plant in Craven County and the service area is shown on the associated map on the following page. There is at least one other private package treatment plant within Craven County, but data to map the service area was not available at the time of adoption of this plan.

There are no documented overflows within the County.



Map 4. Existing Public Wastewater Supply Service Areas

- Townships
- Craven Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County

Wastewater Service Areas

- Private
- Public



6: Livable Built Environment

Existing Land Use

The following provides a summary of Craven County’s existing land use. Land use patterns with maps and associated data enable policy makers to make more informed decisions about future service needs and future land use demands. This effort, in turn, assists elected officials, planning board members and citizens at-large in making educated decisions about land use and any associated regulations.

Methodology

Existing land use should not be mistaken for zoning. Existing land use categorizes the current utilization of land, which can be different from zoning. As of January 2025, Craven County did not have county-wide zoning; only isolated overlay districts existed. The data on existing land use in Craven County was sourced from the County Tax Department and corroborated through aerial imagery and site visits. The following is a summary of the existing land use categories utilized.

Agricultural

This category applies to lands in active agricultural use. Agricultural land includes crops, groves, and other types of typical agricultural activities as well as residential uses of land in which the density is encouraged to not exceed one dwelling unit per acre.

Commercial

This category accommodates the full range of sales and service activities, including retail, wholesale, personal and professional services, commercial and professional offices, hotels, motels, hospitals, theaters, medical buildings, nursing homes, entertainment and cultural facilities, amusements, and commercial recreation establishments. These uses may occur in self-contained centers, campus parks, or business districts. The specific range and intensity of uses varies based on location as a function of factors such as availability of public services, roadway access, and neighborhood compatibility. The maximum scale and intensity of development should be based on, and compatible with, the proximity and scale of adjacent and nearby residential uses.

Industrial

This category allows manufacturing and production uses, whether capital or labor intensive, including warehouses, shipping facilities, light manufacturing, utility maintenance yards, and assembly operations. Major industrial uses allowed in this category should generally be located away from residential areas.

Office Institutional

This category allows major institutional uses and utilities, including hospitals, non-profit medical facilities, universities and colleges, regional water-supply, wastewater and solid waste utility facilities, governmental offices and facilities, and libraries. The location of neighborhood- or community-serving institutional uses and utilities, including public and private schools, fire-rescue stations, police stations, cemeteries, and churches, are allowed in this category, but may also be approved where compatible in other land use categories described herein, pursuant to any conditions specified in the applicable category.

Park/Recreation

This category applies to lands in current, or designated for, conservation, parks, or recreational use.



Residential Single-Family

This category applies to lands in active single-family use at densities that range from low to medium with limited intense high density single-family development.

Residential Multi-Family

This category applies to lands in residential use with residential densities ranging from a minimum of 2.0 to a maximum of 6.0 dwelling units per net acre or 6 to 12.5 in high density scenarios. The types of housing included are as follows: apartment structures, duplexes, triplexes, and other multi-family type structures and development.

Residential Modular/Mobile Home

This category applies to lands in residential use where the type of housing structure is either a modular or manufactured home. This determination is made based on the structure meeting the NC Building Code for such structure type.

Utility

Lands reserved for and in use by utility companies and Craven County for public service and utility.

Vacant

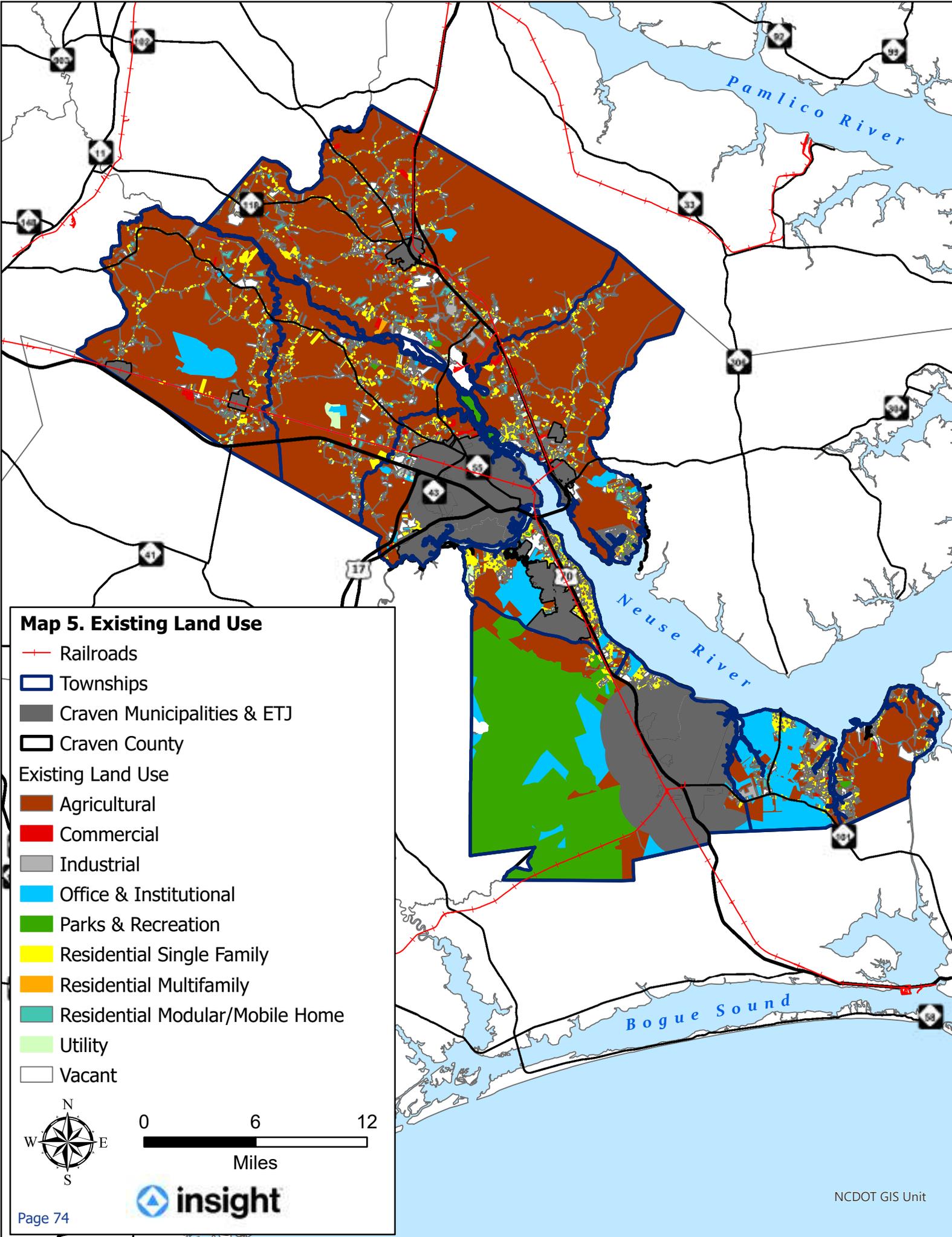
This category is utilized to identify properties that are currently underdeveloped, according to the Craven County tax records, or absent of development entirely.

Existing Land Use Map

Map 5 illustrates the existing land uses in Craven County, including identification of vacant land. The approximate acreage for each land use category displayed on the existing land use map is indicated below.

Table 20. Craven County Existing Land Use		
Land Use Type	Acres	% Total of County
Agricultural	258,499.39	66.10%
Commercial	2,800.59	0.72%
Industrial	5,225.20	1.34%
Office Institutional	27,045.48	6.92%
Park/Recreation	51,914.15	13.27%
Residential Single-Family	16,559.81	4.23%
Residential Multi-Family	219.61	0.06%
Residential Modular/Mobile Home	8,094.16	2.07%
Utility	800.37	0.20%
Vacant	19,915.60	5.09%
Total	391,074.36	100.00%

Source: Craven County Tax Department, Insight Planning & Development.



Map 5. Existing Land Use

- +— Railroads
- Townships
- Craven Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Existing Land Use
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Office & Institutional
- Parks & Recreation
- Residential Single Family
- Residential Multifamily
- Residential Modular/Mobile Home
- Utility
- Vacant





Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Map was crafted through public input, analysis of existing conditions, observation of existing and future infrastructure, realization of future opportunities, and the current strengths and weaknesses of land and how its future designation will best benefit the County and its citizens. The Craven County Planning Department provided critical insight and recommendation in map development. This map is intended to guide the future development of Craven County in a manner that most closely resembles the desirable goals and future needs of the County. This map is not regulatory and is intended to guide growth to the areas that are identified as having the highest potential to support certain future uses of land. The fact that the future projected use of land may not align with how it is proposed to be utilized should not prohibit such use from taking place; however, the users of this map should take its recommendation and designation into consideration. The arrangement of designations on this map and their function have been assigned in a manner intended to support a high quality of life which fosters sustainable and sensible growth for the County. This map was also designed to be consistent with NCGS 160D-501 and guide coordinated, efficient, and orderly development within Craven County based on its present and future needs. Some of the existing land uses have been accounted for under new future designations.

There are no policies within this plan related to future land use that exceed the use standards and permitting guidelines of Subchapter 7H, State Guidance for Areas of Environmental Concern.

Future Land Use Designations

Airport

Designed to preserve the areas adjacent to the Coastal Carolina Regional Airport and the airport itself to promote its continued success and operation.

Commercial

Supports a wide range of commercial uses including large scale commercial retail, commerce and business centers, entertainment and other retail uses that serve the citizens of Craven County and the surrounding counties and communities within the region.

Industrial

Provides for uses that involve the production, manufacture, assembly, utilities, processing, or warehousing of materials and equipment that may produce noise, dust, odors, or other by-products. May also include light-industrial use that presents a less significant impact.

Office & Institutional

Provides for areas where personal business offices, professional services, and institutional offices may compatibly mix and be located in a proximity that is easily accessible to the surrounding community and residential areas within Craven County.

Low Density Residential Agricultural

Accommodates low-density residential dwellings that may have limited access to infrastructure and are generally residences that serve agricultural use. The preferred minimum density is 30,000 to 40,000 square feet per lot when lots are being created for residential purposes associated with agricultural use. Residential development at a large scale when not used for the purpose of serving agricultural use is encouraged to occur in a clustered manner to maximize the agricultural potential of the land. Sprawling large lot single-family subdivisions are discouraged when it comes at the expense of losing lands of agricultural significance and value.

6: Livable Built Environment

Residential

Accommodates residential use occurring at a variety of densities. Density should be dictated by the availability of utilities to support such density. Densities within this designation should include 4,000 square foot to 8,000 square foot lots as well as lots of a medium density (10,000 square feet to 15,000 square feet). The maximum number of units per acre should reflect the density preferred based on the utilities available. These designations are encouraged to be in areas that have water and sewer service or that are scheduled to receive water and sewer service. Residential designations may be served by septic when soil and environmental conditions permit. The designation prefers clustered residential development that preserves open space and the environment. Types of residential uses within the designation should include single-family, multi-family, and innovative residential design such as cottages, multiplexes, pocket neighborhoods, courtyard apartments, and other developments that have design elements intended to promote a strong sense of community and promote walkability.

Conservation

Protects the environmentally sensitive areas of Craven County including areas within the special flood hazard areas, identified 404 wetlands, the Croatan National Forest, and the species that inhabit them. It is also utilized to protect the lands adjacent to MCAS Cherry Point from undesirable development that negatively affects the mission of the installation. Recreation type uses of low intensity are appropriate for conservation areas.

Recreation

Recreation areas such as public parks, water point access, and playgrounds are included within this designation as well as areas with high capability to provide recreational access and opportunity to the citizens of Craven County.

Utility

Designed to be the site for existing and future utilities that serve the City of New Bern and surrounding unincorporated areas of Craven County.

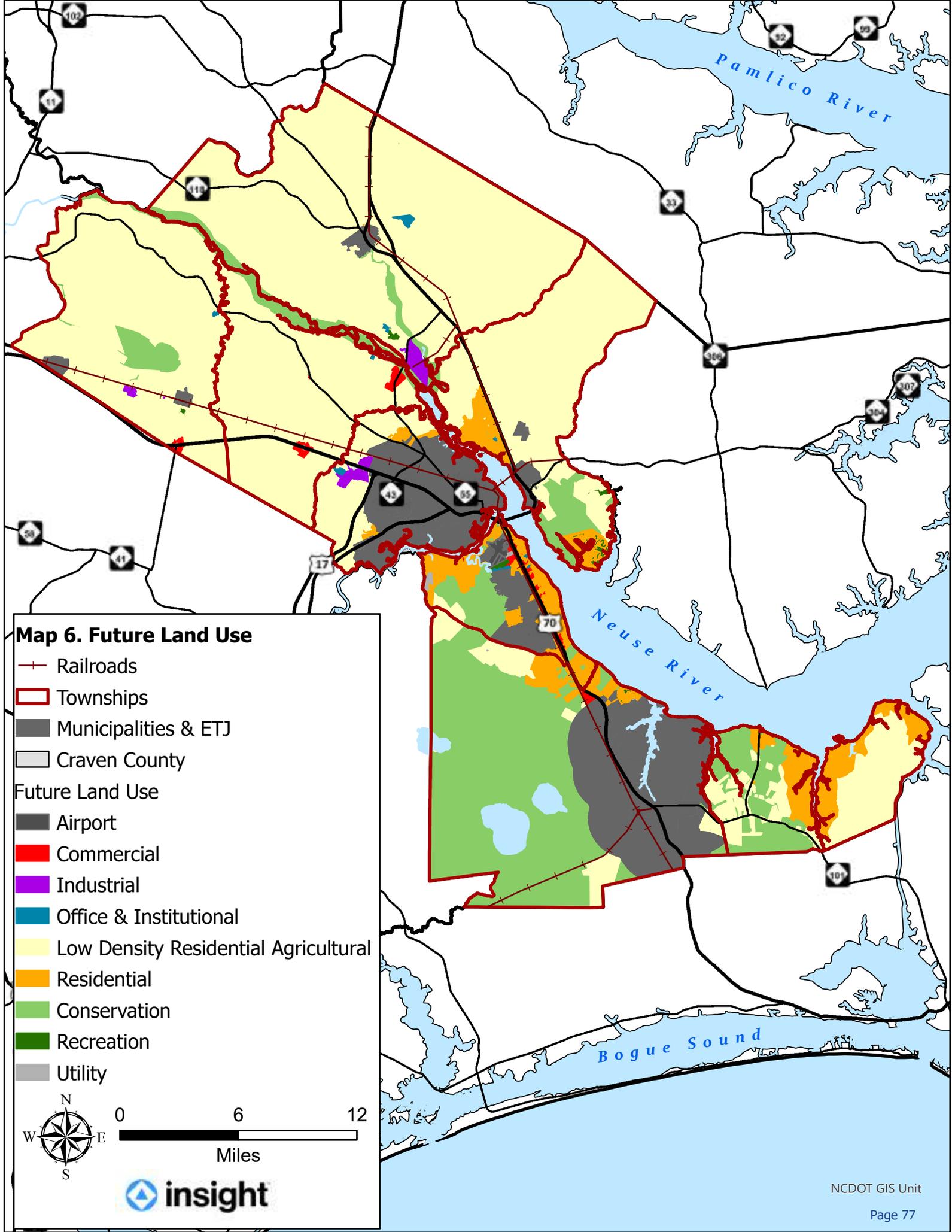
Future Land Use Maps

Map 6 illustrates the County's Future Land Use Map, with Maps 6.1 through 6.9 providing the Future Land Use Maps by Township. The approximate acreage for each future land use category is summarized below.

Table 21. Craven County Future Land Use

Land Use Type	Acres	% of Total County
Airport	742.80	0.18%
Commercial	2,041.35	0.50%
Industrial	1,911.37	0.47%
Office & Institutional	593.49	0.15%
Low Density Residential Agricultural	283,547.04	69.47%
Residential	23,637.19	5.79%
Conservation	94,574.77	23.17%
Recreation	878.54	0.22%
Utility	213.77	0.05%
Total	395,959	100.00%

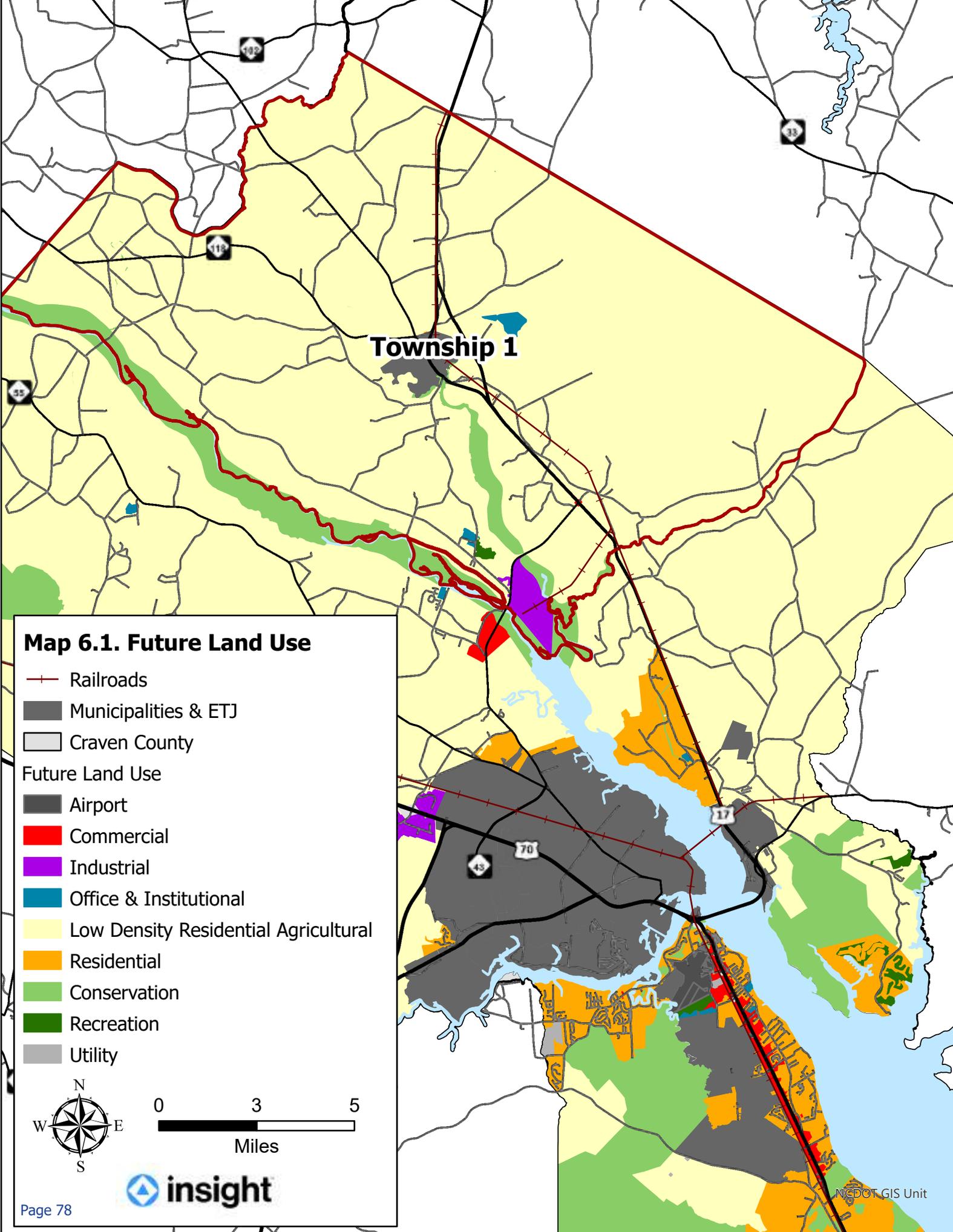
Source: Craven County Planning Department, Insight Planning & Development.



Map 6. Future Land Use

- +— Railroads
- ▭ Townships
- ▭ Municipalities & ETJ
- ▭ Craven County
- Future Land Use
- ▭ Airport
- ▭ Commercial
- ▭ Industrial
- ▭ Office & Institutional
- ▭ Low Density Residential Agricultural
- ▭ Residential
- ▭ Conservation
- ▭ Recreation
- ▭ Utility

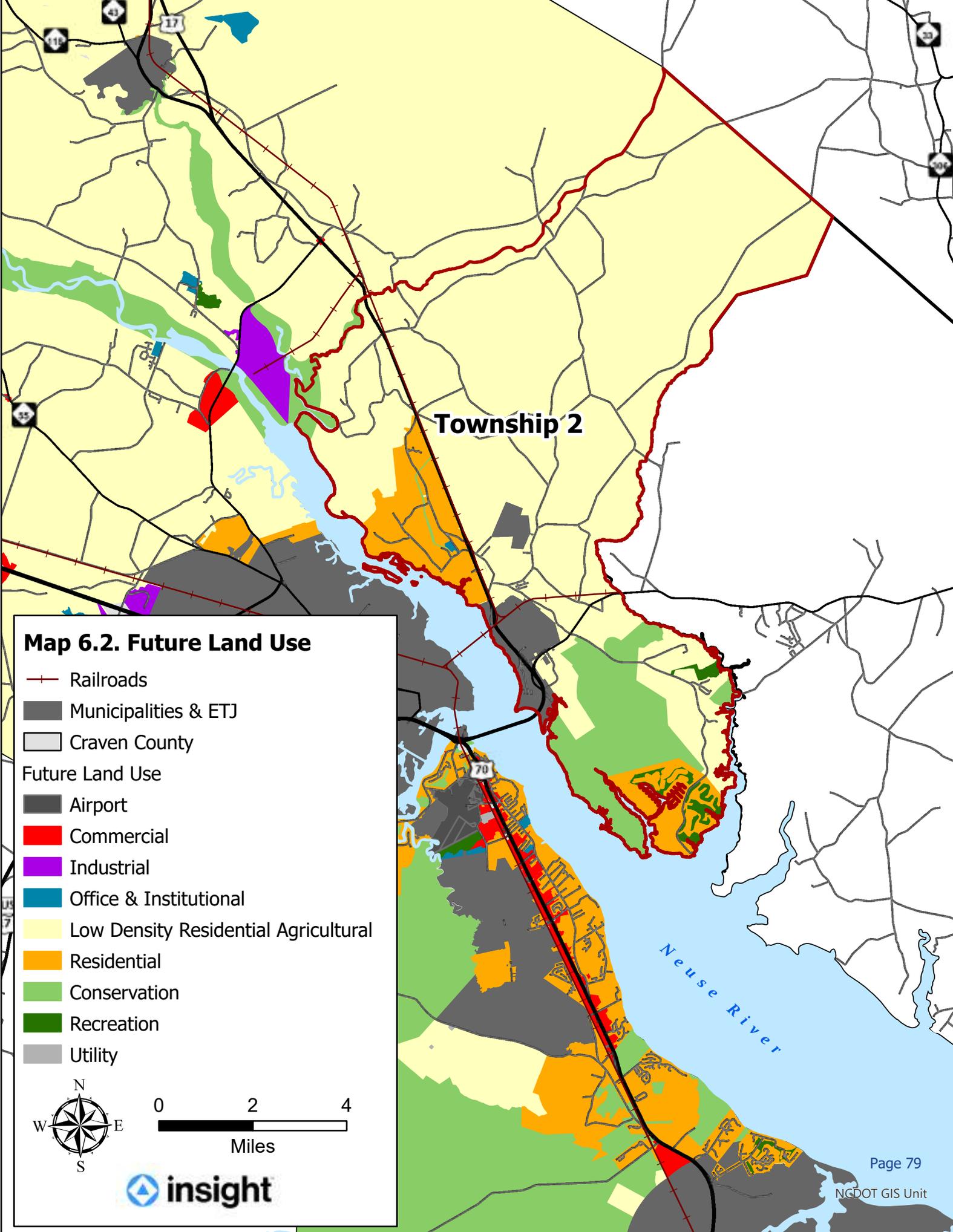




Map 6.1. Future Land Use

- +— Railroads
- Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Future Land Use**
- Airport
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Office & Institutional
- Low Density Residential Agricultural
- Residential
- Conservation
- Recreation
- Utility

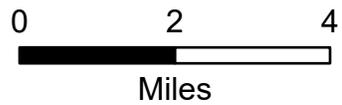


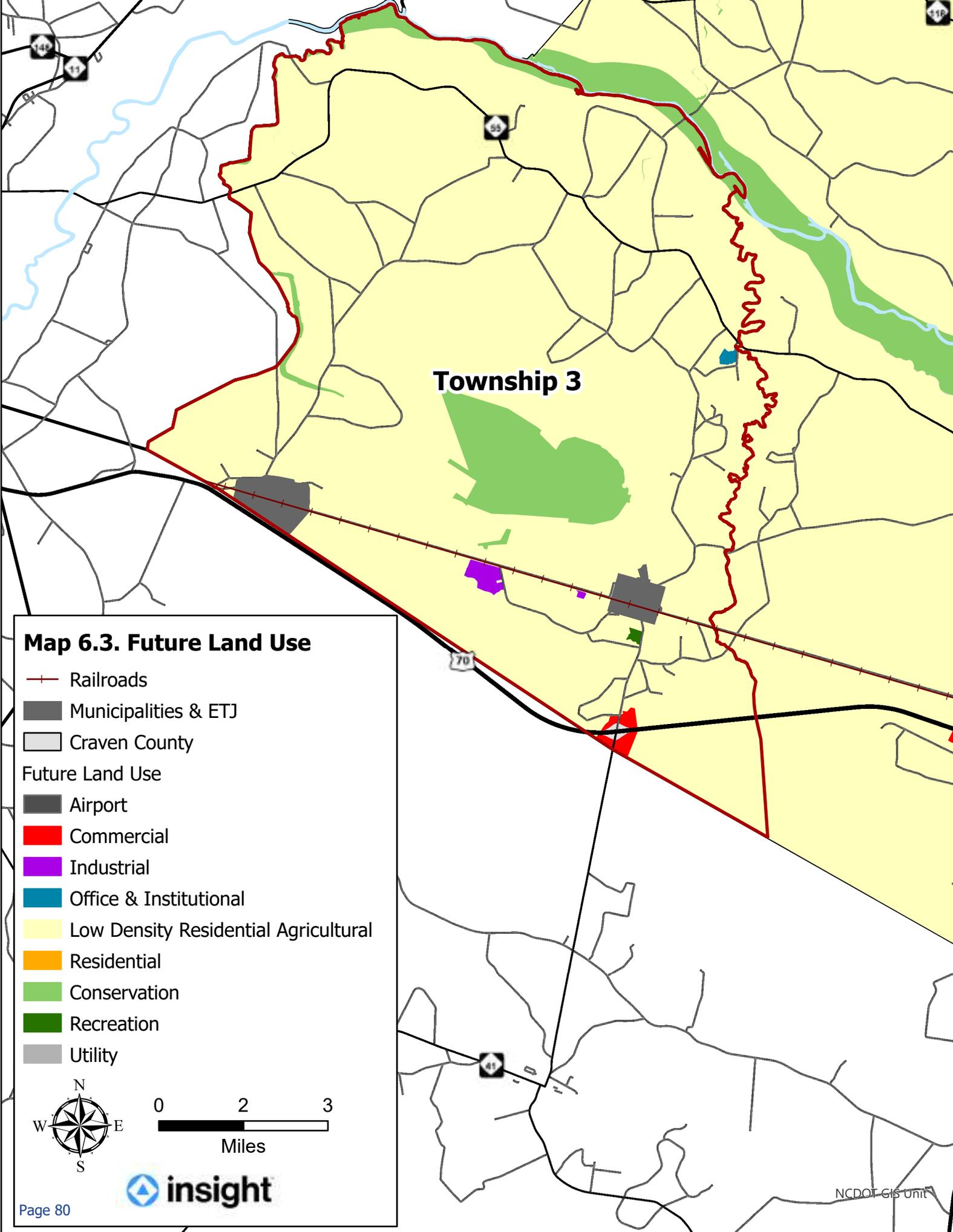


Township 2

Map 6.2. Future Land Use

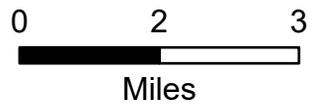
- +— Railroads
- Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Future Land Use
 - Airport
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Office & Institutional
 - Low Density Residential Agricultural
 - Residential
 - Conservation
 - Recreation
 - Utility

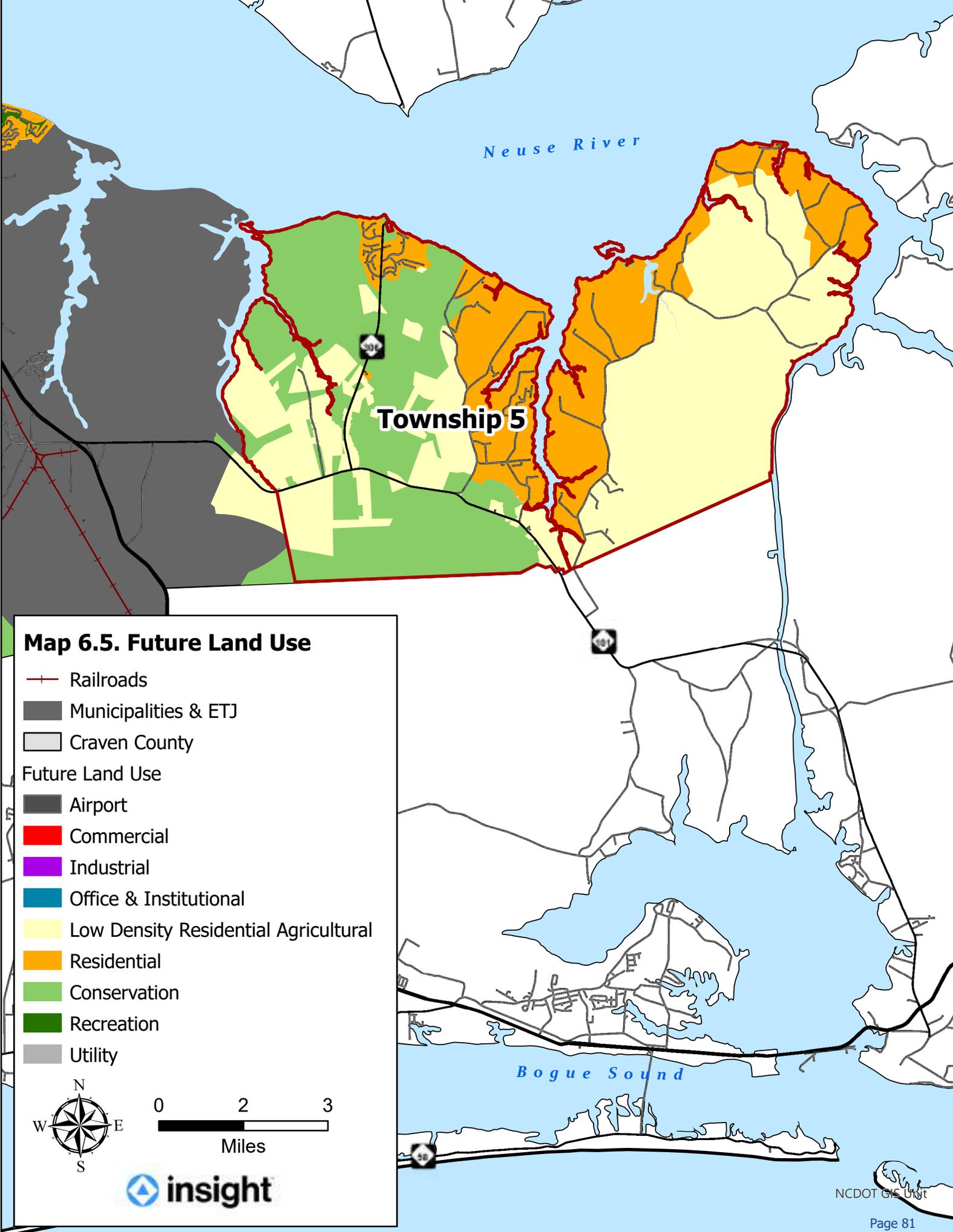




Map 6.3. Future Land Use

-  Railroads
-  Municipalities & ETJ
-  Craven County
- Future Land Use**
-  Airport
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Office & Institutional
-  Low Density Residential Agricultural
-  Residential
-  Conservation
-  Recreation
-  Utility

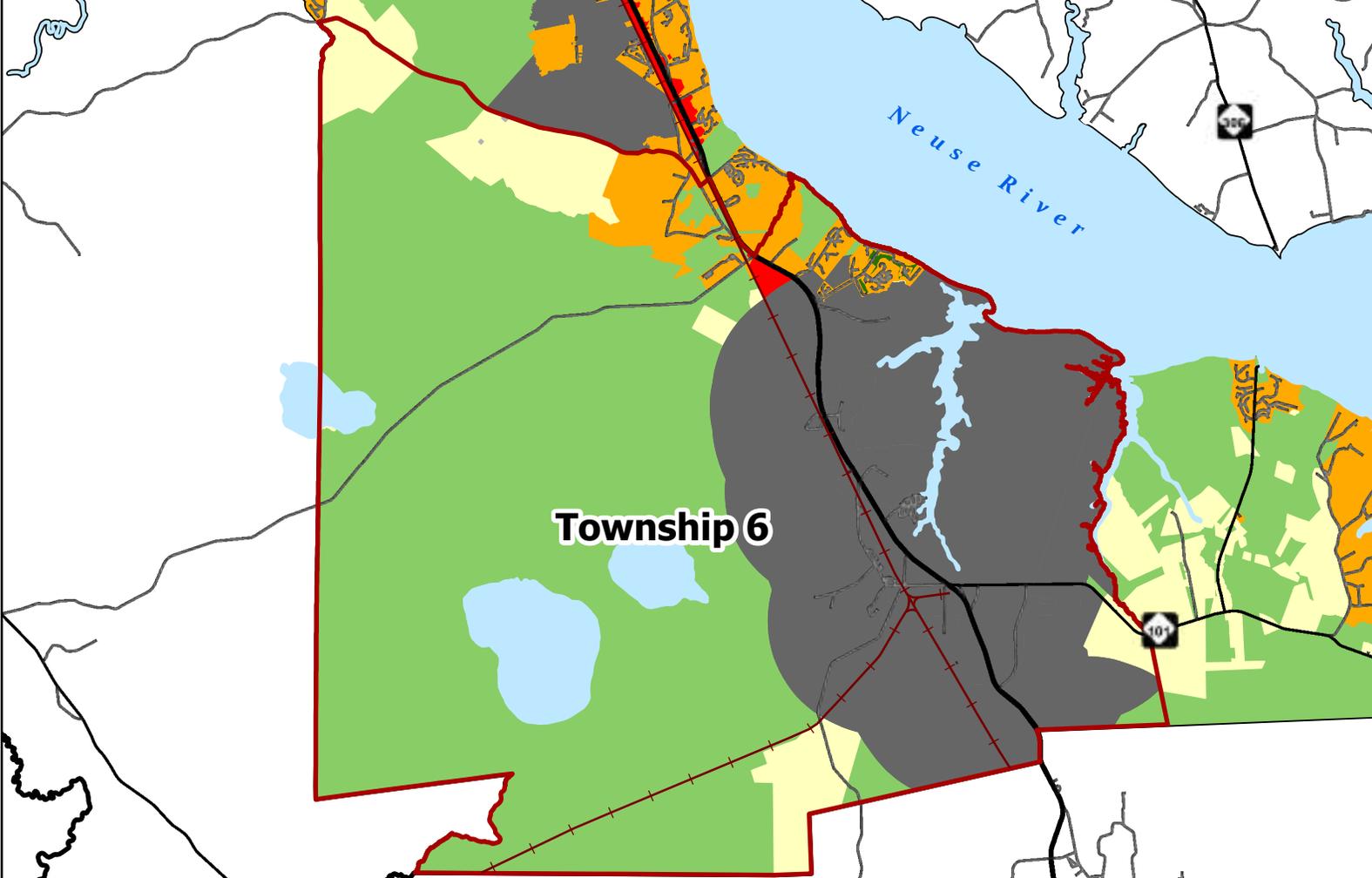




Map 6.5. Future Land Use

-  Railroads
-  Municipalities & ETJ
-  Craven County
- Future Land Use**
-  Airport
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Office & Institutional
-  Low Density Residential Agricultural
-  Residential
-  Conservation
-  Recreation
-  Utility



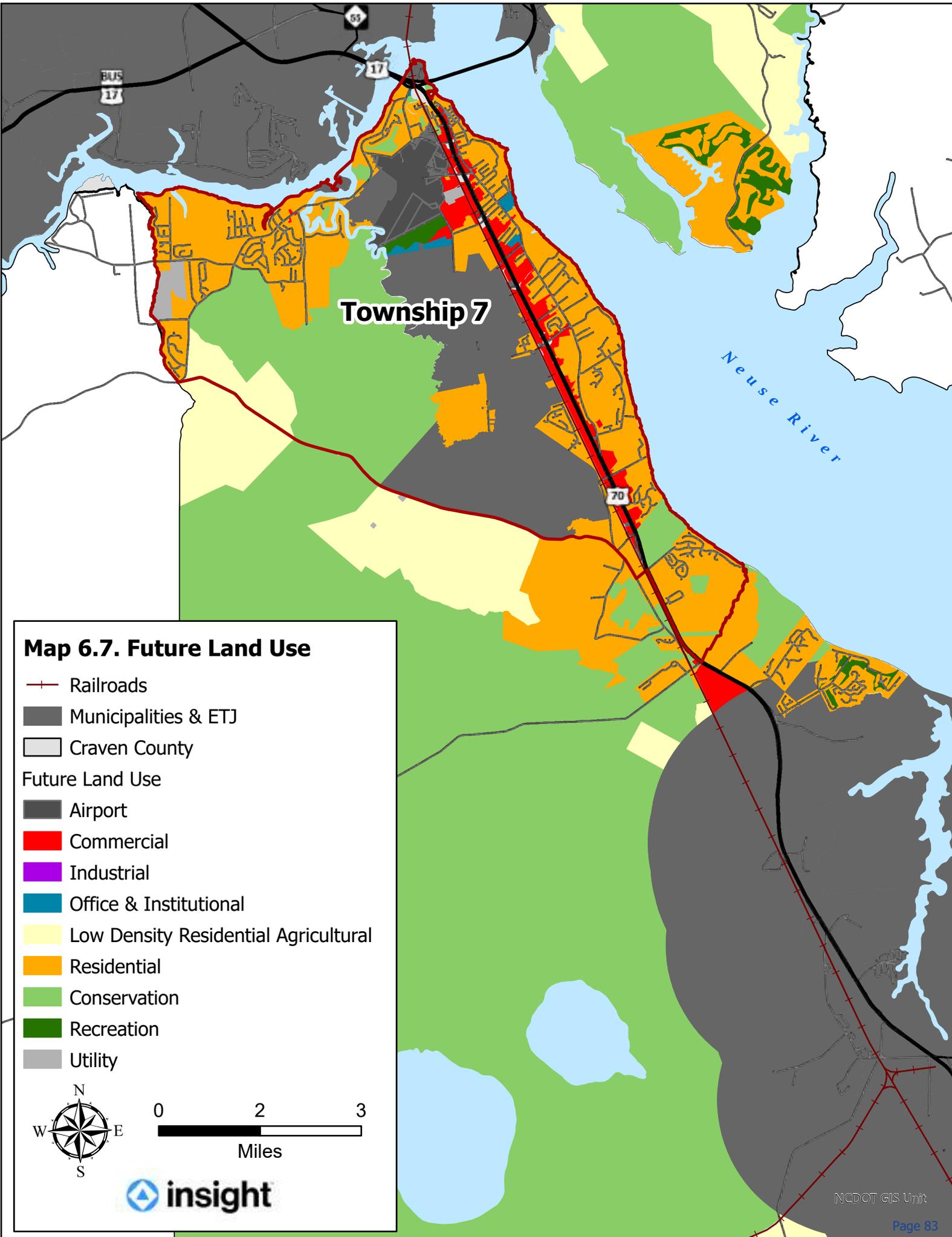


Township 6

Map 6.6. Future Land Use

- Railroads
- Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Future Land Use**
- Airport
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Office & Institutional
- Low Density Residential Agricultural
- Residential
- Conservation
- Recreation
- Utility

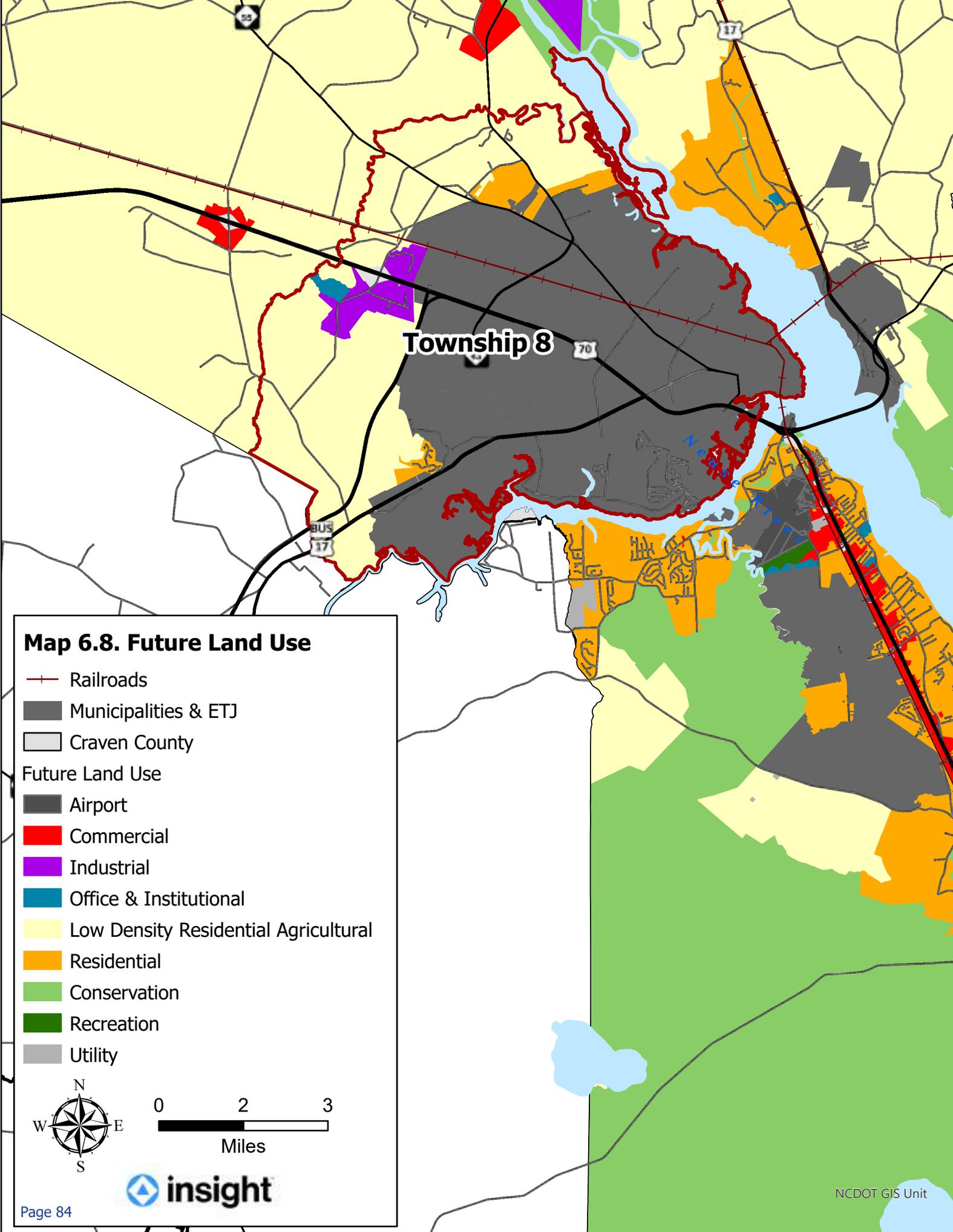




Map 6.7. Future Land Use

- +— Railroads
- Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Future Land Use**
- Airport
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Office & Institutional
- Low Density Residential Agricultural
- Residential
- Conservation
- Recreation
- Utility

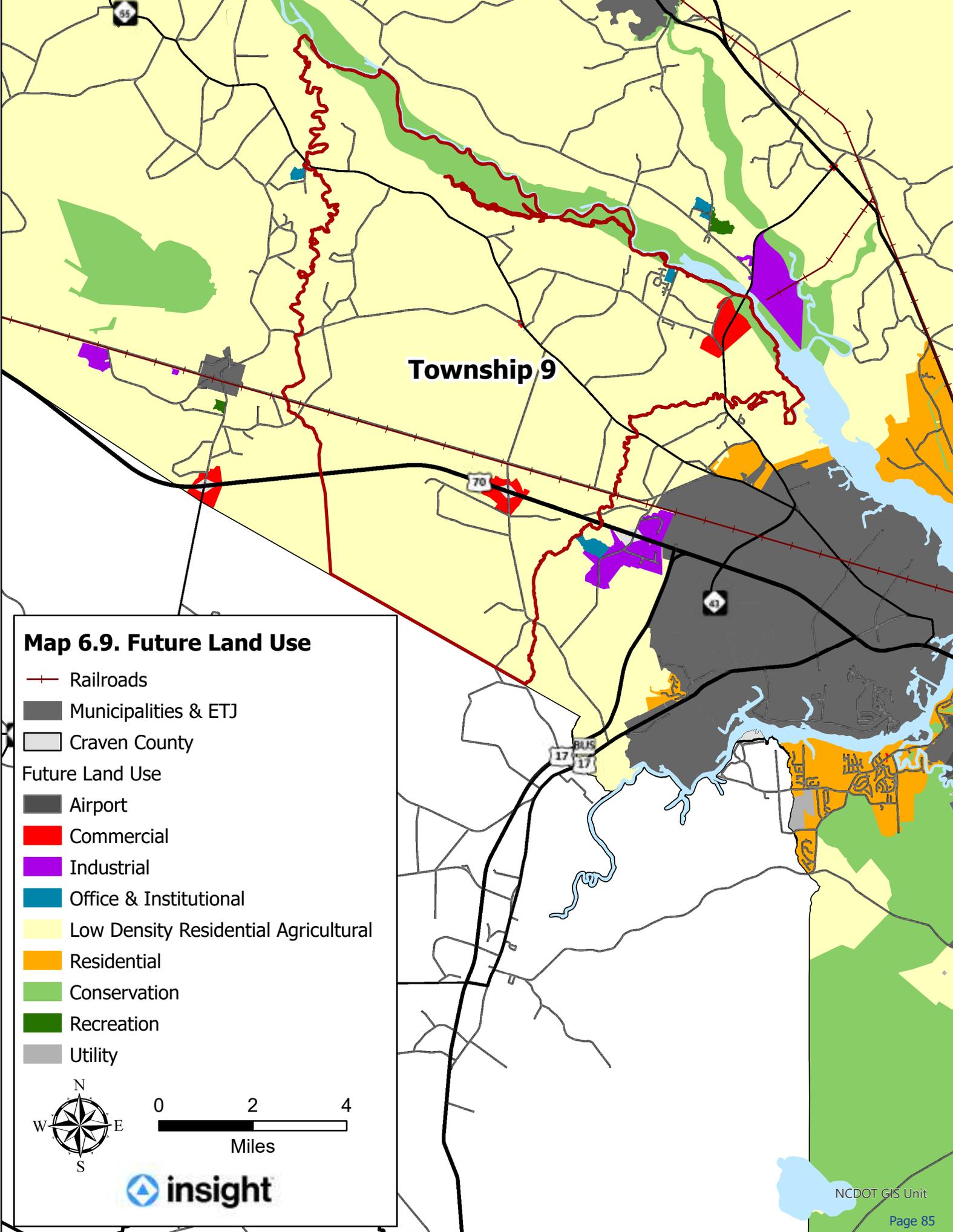




Map 6.8. Future Land Use

-  Railroads
-  Municipalities & ETJ
-  Craven County
- Future Land Use
-  Airport
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Office & Institutional
-  Low Density Residential Agricultural
-  Residential
-  Conservation
-  Recreation
-  Utility





Township 9

Map 6.9. Future Land Use

- +— Railroads
- Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Future Land Use
 - Airport
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Office & Institutional
 - Low Density Residential Agricultural
 - Residential
 - Conservation
 - Recreation
 - Utility



6: Livable Built Environment

Land Use Conclusion

The future land use designations for Craven County differ from the existing land use map in certain areas. The major changes in land use designation include the following:

- ✚ Agriculture decreases from 66.10% to 55.82%, agriculture is still the predominant land use within the County
- ✚ Conservation designation is introduced accounting for 24.67%, nearly a quarter of all land in Craven County
- ✚ Land use designations specifically designed to accommodate residential use have increased from 6.23% (existing land use) to 13.28% (future land use)

The future land use designations that have been provided are advisory designations and should be taken into consideration to guide the development of Craven County in a manner consistent with its visions. These designations may be deviated from when it is determined necessary by the Craven County Board of Commissioners. The specific types of residential designations provided for by the Future Land Use Map should assist in preserving agricultural areas of the County and concentrating development in a manner that does not deter from its operation. The areas designated as conservation will serve the purpose of protecting the natural environment, providing recreational opportunities, and supporting MCAS Cherry Point.



CHAPTER 7: HARMONY WITH NATURE

Introduction

To promote environmental sustainability, it is essential to thoroughly assess the current state of Craven County, identify the future requirements of each system, and analyze how development might impact them. The ability to raise awareness for how these systems exist and what role they play in the overall sustainability of Craven County will enable decision makers to consider impacts and make an informed analysis when deciding on final policy and investment. The topics discussed in this chapter will ensure compliance with the 15A NCAC 7B State Guidelines for Land Use Planning, facilitating certification by the Coastal Resources Commission.

Natural Systems

Climate

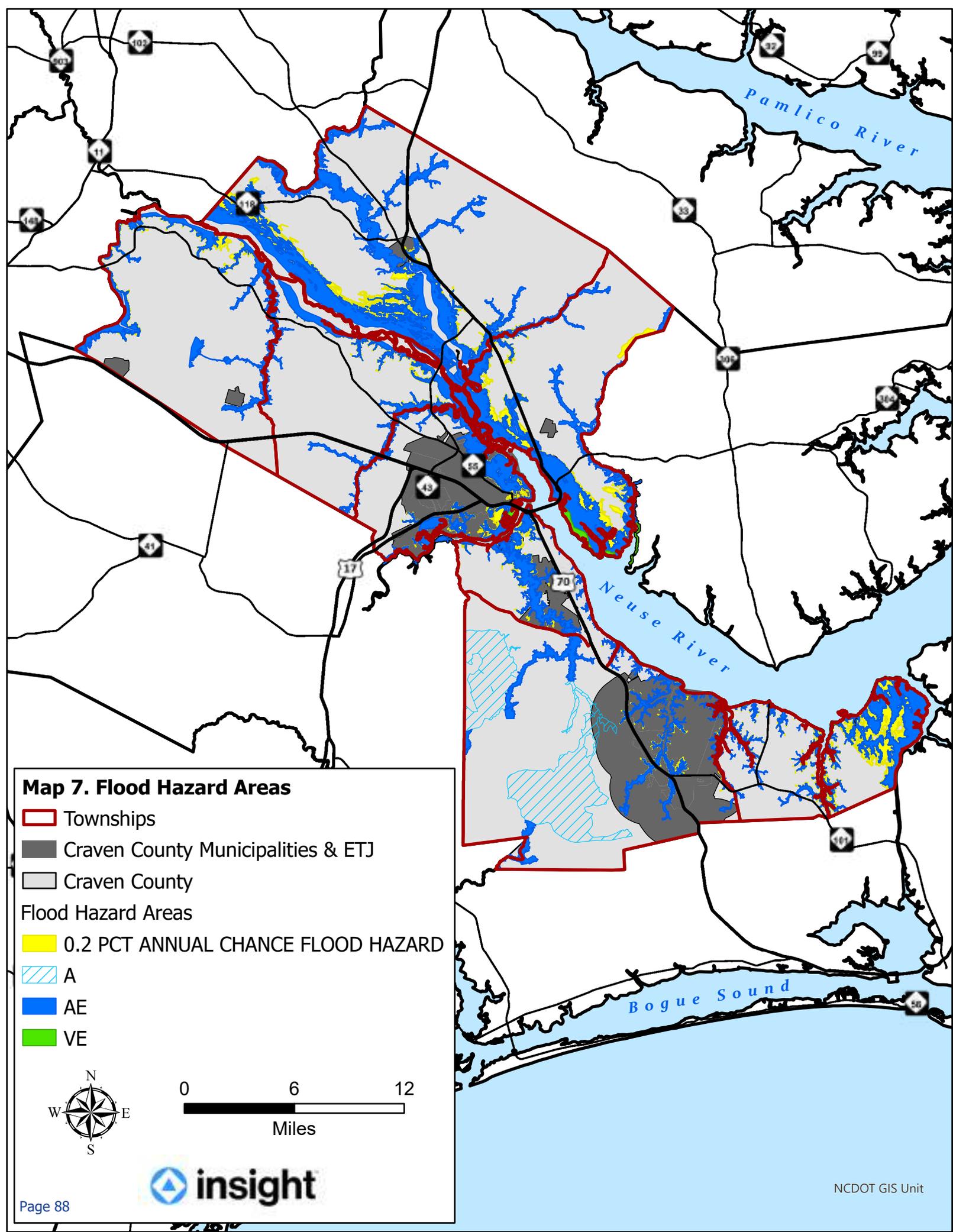
The climate of Craven County is best described as having warm summers and mild winters. Based on US Climate Data for New Bern, the average temperature in July is around 89 degrees Fahrenheit and reaches an average of around 36 degrees Fahrenheit during January. Rainfall is common throughout the year; however, is most likely to occur during the months of June through September. The month with the highest average rainfall is August. Humidity levels tend to stay high for much of the year, making days feel especially hot during the summer months.

Climate change has resulted in an intensification of heat and the heat index. Climate change is being experienced at a statewide level and the impacts from the increasing risks posed by heat have widespread effects on all aspects of commerce and life within the County. As a result of the increase in heat, Craven County should be supportive of innovation in industry and work habits as well as encourage heat mitigation in development to protect its citizens. The North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency has developed a heat action plan toolkit that Craven County is encouraged to use to prepare for extreme heat events that are anticipated to magnify over the next 20 years. Some recommended strategies include the following:

- ✚ Utilize the internet and social media for heat awareness within the County.
- ✚ Provide education on the effects of heat.
- ✚ Develop hydration stations in identified areas of the County, especially within parks and recreation areas.
- ✚ Promote home cooling strategies.

Flood Zones

According to the 2020 Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS), approximately 21.36% of Craven County is located within a regulated special flood hazard area with 3.18% of the County being in the 0.2% chance unregulated special flood hazard area. FIRMS are considered the most reliable and consistent resource for delineating regulatory flood zones. Map 7 outlines the areas of the County that are subject to flood hazard regulations. The North Carolina Flood Risk Information System (FRIS - <https://fris.nc.gov/>) and the Craven County Floodplain Administrator are reliable sources for flood consultation and for future predictions of what impacts may be associated with flood waters. The fringe properties located within the 0.2% annual chance area are always encouraged to construct to regulatory standards to increase resiliency. Craven County should always explore responsible regulations to improve resiliency in flood events.



Map 7. Flood Hazard Areas

- Townships
- Craven County Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Flood Hazard Areas**
- 0.2 PCT ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD HAZARD
- A
- AE
- VE





AE zones, formerly known as the 100-year floodplain, are areas subject to risk of flooding by standing or relatively static waters. VE zones are areas subject to wave action. Shaded X zones, often referred to as the 500-year floodplain, are supplemental flood hazard areas in which there is a 0.2% annual chance of flooding. Regulatory floodways mean the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height. The majority of Craven County flood zones are found in areas directly adjacent to the Neuse River. Table 20 provides acreage breakdowns for each of the respective flood zones impacting the County.

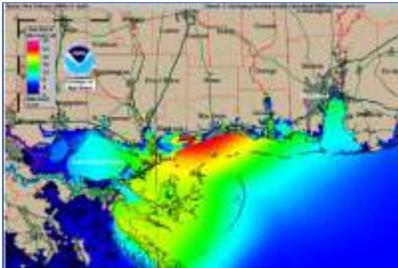
Table 22. Craven County Flood Hazard Area Acreage		
Flood Zone	Acres	% of County
0.2% Annual Chance	14,592	3.18%
A	19,340	4.22%
AE	68,271	14.89%
AE Floodway	8,786	1.92%
VE	1,507	0.33%
<i>Source: NC FRIS</i>		

Storm Surge

Storm surge is the rise in seawater level during a storm event and is measured as the height of the water above the normal predicted astronomical tide. Surge is primarily caused by a storm's winds pushing water on shore. The Saffir-Simpson hurricane scale categorizes five types of storms based on maximum sustained wind. As the severity of the storm increases, the areas impacted by storm surge increases.

Table 23. Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale		
Category	Sustained Winds	Impact Projections due to Hurricane Winds
1	74-95 mph 64-82 kt 119-153 km/h	Very dangerous winds will produce some damage: Well-constructed frame homes could have damage to roof, shingles, vinyl siding, and gutters. Large branches of trees will snap, and shallowly rooted trees may be toppled. Extensive damage to power lines and poles likely will result in power outages that could last a few to several days.
2	96-110 mph 83-95 kt 154-177 km/h	Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage: Well-constructed frame homes could sustain major roof and siding damage. Many shallowly rooted trees will be snapped or uprooted and block numerous roads. Near-total power loss is expected with outages that could last from several days to weeks.
3 (Major)	111-129 mph 96-112 kt 178-208 km/h	Devastating damage will occur: Well-built framed homes may incur major damage or removal of roof decking and gable ends. Many trees will be snapped or uprooted, blocking numerous roads. Electricity and water will be unavailable for several days to weeks after the storm passes.
4 (Major)	130-156 mph 113-136 kt 209-251 km/h	Catastrophic damage will occur: Well-built framed homes can sustain severe damage with loss of most of the roof structure and/or some exterior walls. Most trees will be snapped or uprooted, and power poles downed. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.
5 (Major)	157 mph or higher	Catastrophic damage will occur: A high percentage of framed homes will be destroyed, with total roof failure and wall collapse. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last for weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.
<i>Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency.</i>		

7: Harmony with Nature



The Sea, Lake, and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) model is a computerized numerical model developed and utilized by the National Weather Service to estimate storm surge resulting from historical, hypothetical, and predicted hurricanes.

Storm surge is not just an issue that coastal communities and counties experience, as the effects of storm surge can be felt several miles inland depending upon the characteristics of the storm. The model considers atmospheric pressure, size, forward speed, and track data. Maps 8.1 through 8.3 provide the potential impacts of storm surge in Craven County based on storm category. Due to the areas of Craven County adjacent to the Neuse River having relatively low elevation, the potential exists for these areas to experience significant impact from storm surge. Depending on the category of the storm and other existing factors, Craven County could experience surge and inundation at depths up to 9 feet or more above ground.

Soils

Healthy soils are essential for vegetation, human nutrition, and water filtration. Furthermore, healthy soils support a landscape that is more resilient to the impacts of drought, flood, and fire. Many of the soils present in the County’s planning jurisdiction have severe constraints, including poor drainage. These types of soils are considered hydric because they are formed under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding for prolonged periods of time during the growing season which results in the development of anaerobic conditions. Hydric soils are less likely to absorb stormwater runoff or support septic systems. Map 9 provides a comprehensive layout of the soils in the County and their geographical location. Table 22 summarizes the soil types and their respective limitations related to development suitability.

Craven County also possesses a finite amount of soils that are recognized as being preferable for agricultural crops and production. These soils are irreplaceable due to geographic limitations and other existing soils within the County. Craven County should strive to protect these soils from being lost to low-density residential development, solar farm facilities, and other large scale commercial and industrial use which can render the soils useless for agricultural production and purpose.

Table 24. Soil Types

Map Symbol	Soil Series	Slope	Dwelling w/o Basements	Streets and Roads	Septic Tanks	Prime Farmland	Hydric Soils %
AaA	Altavista loamy fine sand	0-2%	Very limited	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Yes, all areas	4%
AcA	Altavista urban land complex		Very limited	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	0%
Ag	Augusta loamy fine sand	0-2%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, if drained	5%
Ap	Arapahoe fine sandy loam	0-2%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, if drained	90%
AuB	Autryville loamy fine sand	0-6%	Not limited	Not limited	Somewhat limited	Yes, statewide importance	2%

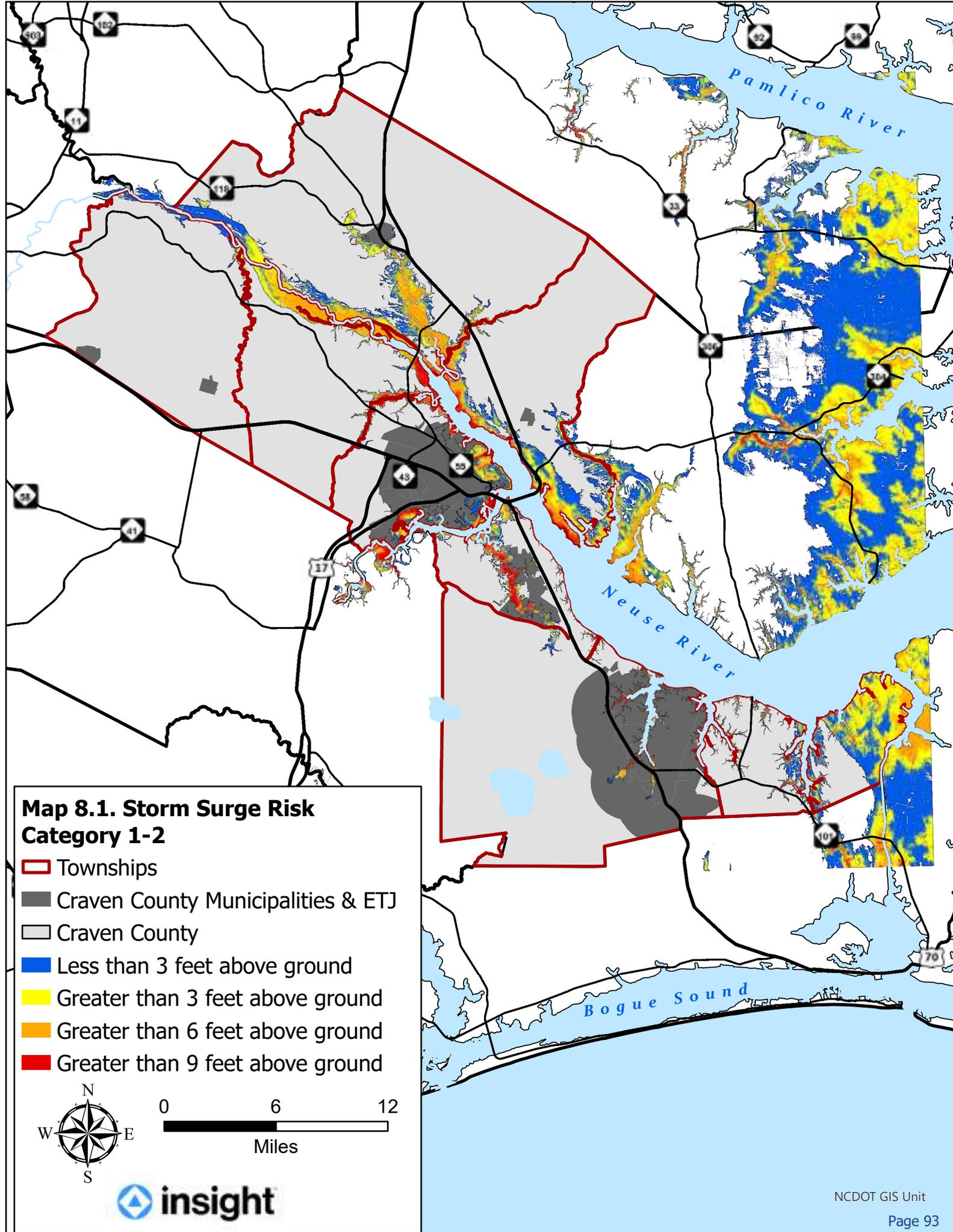


Map Symbol	Soil Series	Slope	Dwelling w/o Basements	Streets and Roads	Septic Tanks	Prime Farmland	Hydric Soils %
Ba	Bayboro mucky loam		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, statewide importance	90%
BrB	Bragg soils	0-8%	Not limited	Not limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	0%
CnB	Conetoe loamy fine sand	0-5%	Not limited	Not limited	Very limited	Yes, statewide importance	0%
CrB	Craven silt loam	1-4%	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, all areas	6%
CT	Croatan Muck	0-2%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	100%
DA	Dare Muck		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	85%
De	Deloss fine sandy loam		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, if drained	90%
DO	Dorovan Muck	0-2%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	97%
ExA	Exum silt loam		Somewhat limited	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Yes, all areas	5%
GoA	Goldsboro loamy fine sand	0-2%	Somewhat limited	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Yes, all areas	6%
Gr	Grantham silt loam		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, if drained	90%
GuA	Goldsboro urban land complex	0-2%	Somewhat limited	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	0%
KuB	Kureb Sand	0-6%	Very limited	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	5%
La	Leaf silt loam		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, statewide importance	90%
Lc	Lynchburg urban land complex		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	5%
Le	Lenoir silt loam		Somewhat limited	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Farmland of statewide importance	8%
LF	Longshoal muck		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited		90%
Ln	Leon Sand	0-2%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, of unique importance	80%
Ly	Lynchburg fine sandy loam	0-2%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, if drained	10%
Me	Meggett sandy loam		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, statewide importance	90%
MM	Masontown mucky fine sandy loam and Muckalee sandy loam		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	70%
Mu	Murville mucky sand	0-2%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, of unique importance	80%

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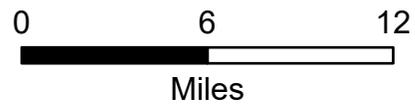
Map Symbol	Soil Series	Slope	Dwelling w/o Basements	Streets and Roads	Septic Tanks	Prime Farmland	Hydric Soils %
NoA	Norfolk loamy fine sand	0-2%	Not limited	Not limited	Somewhat limited	Yes, all areas	0%
NoB	Norfolk loamy fine sand	2-6%	Not limited	Not limited	Somewhat limited	Yes, all areas	4%
NuB	Norfolk urban land complex	0-6%	Not limited	Not limited	Somewhat limited	Not prime farmland	0%
On	Onslow loamy sand	0-2%	Somewhat limited	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Yes, all areas	5%
Pa	Pantego fine sandy loam	0-1%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, if drained	90%
PO	Ponzer muck		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, statewide importance	90%
Pt	Pits		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	0%
Ra	Rains fine sandy loam	0-2%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, if drained	92%
Rc	Rains urban land complex		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	50%
Ro	Roanoke Loam	0-2%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, statewide importance	90%
Sc	Seabrook urban land complex		Very limited	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	5%
Se	Seabrook fine sand	0-2%	Very limited	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	5%
StA	State loamy sand		Very limited	Somewhat limited	Very limited	Yes, all areas	0%
SuD	Suffolk loamy sand	10-30%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	0%
TaB	Tarboro sand	0-6%	Not limited	Not limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	0%
TC	Torhunta urban land complex		Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	60%
Tm	Tomotley fine sandy loam	0-2%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, if drained	91%
To	Torhunta mucky fine sandy loam	0-2%	Very limited	Very limited	Very limited	Yes, if drained	60%
TuB	Tarboro urban land		Not limited	Not limited	Very limited	Not prime farmland	0%
Ud	Udorthents loamy		Not limited	Not limited	Somewhat limited	Not prime farmland	0%
Ur	Urban land		Not rated	Not rated	Not rated	Not prime farmland	0%
W	Water	None	Not rated	Not rated	Not rated	None	None

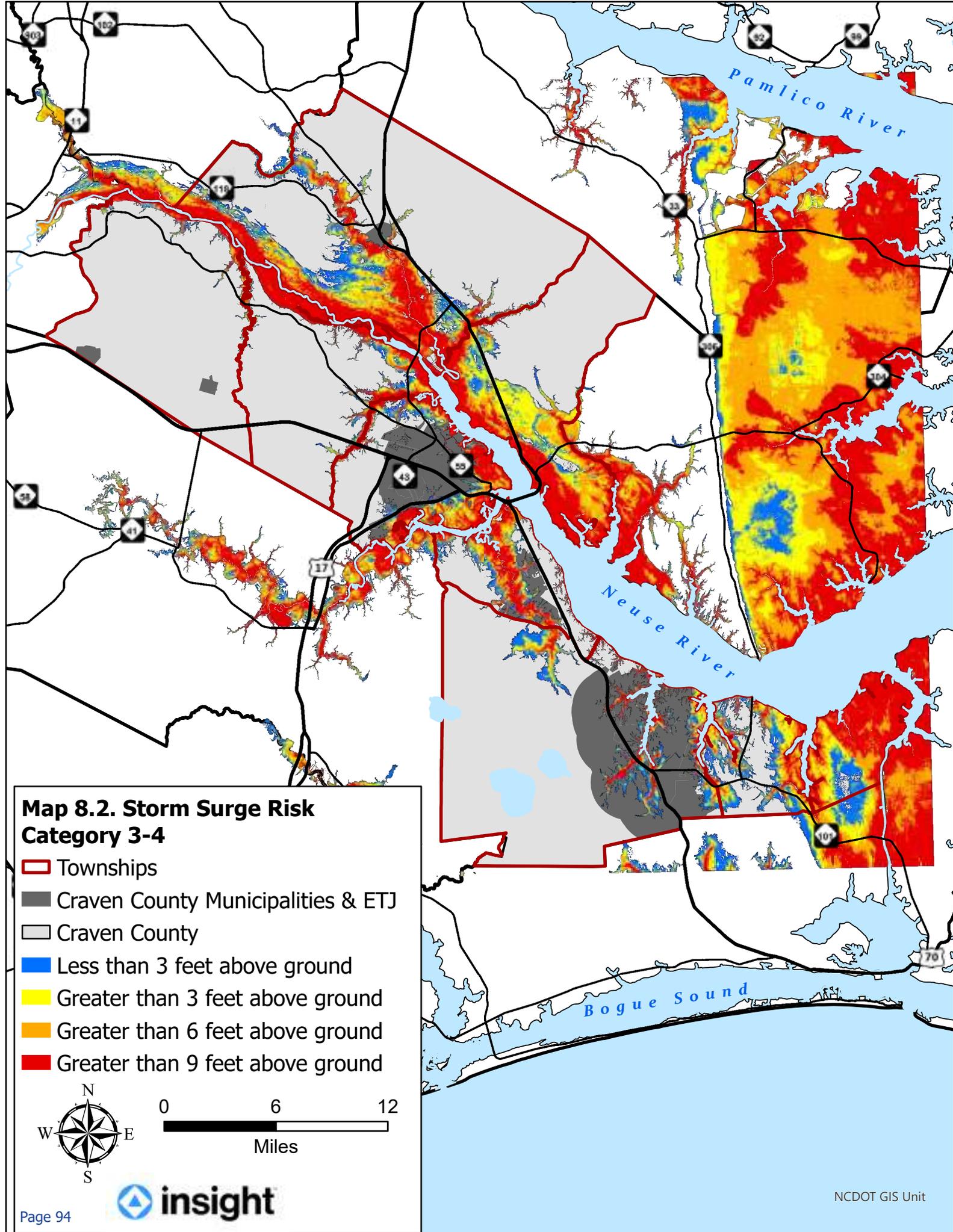
Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Map 8.1. Storm Surge Risk Category 1-2

- Townships
- Craven County Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Less than 3 feet above ground
- Greater than 3 feet above ground
- Greater than 6 feet above ground
- Greater than 9 feet above ground

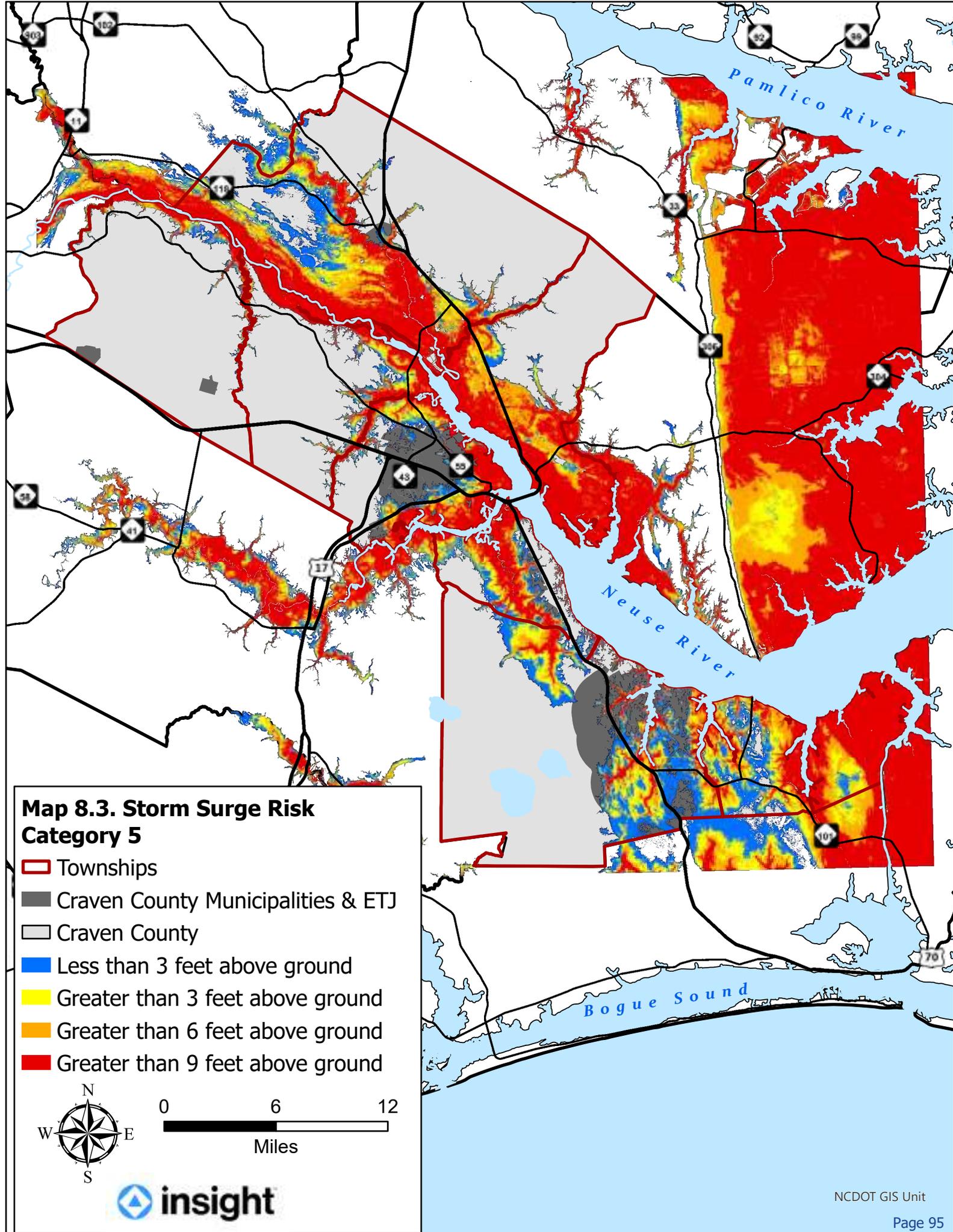




Map 8.2. Storm Surge Risk Category 3-4

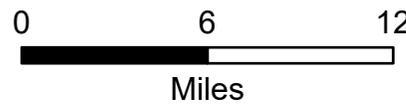
- ▭ Townships
- Craven County Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- ▭ Less than 3 feet above ground
- ▭ Greater than 3 feet above ground
- ▭ Greater than 6 feet above ground
- ▭ Greater than 9 feet above ground

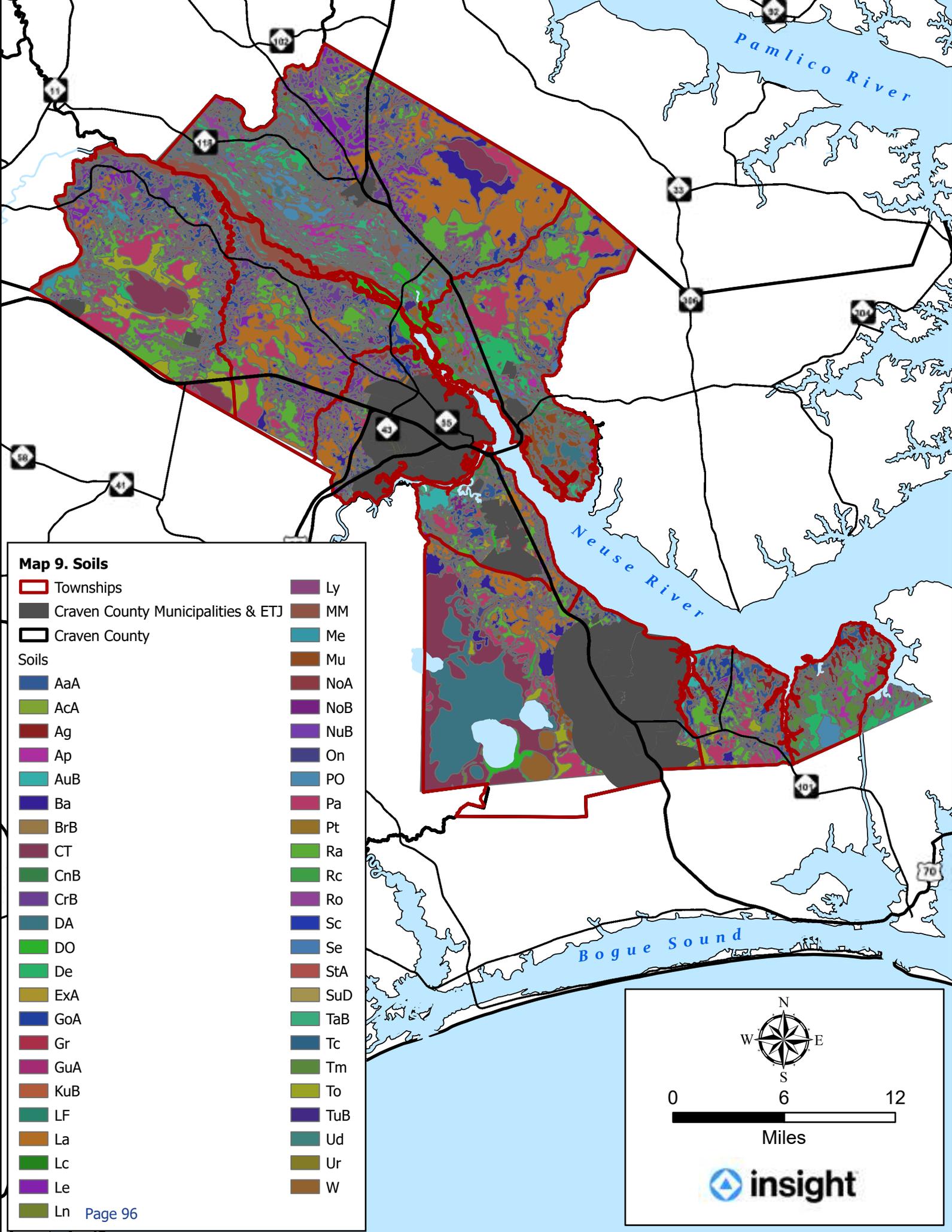




Map 8.3. Storm Surge Risk Category 5

- Townships
- Craven County Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Less than 3 feet above ground
- Greater than 3 feet above ground
- Greater than 6 feet above ground
- Greater than 9 feet above ground





Map 9. Soils

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| Townships | Ly |
| Craven County Municipalities & ETJ | MM |
| Craven County | Me |
| Soils | Mu |
| AaA | NoA |
| AcA | NoB |
| Ag | NuB |
| Ap | On |
| AuB | PO |
| Ba | Pa |
| BrB | Pt |
| CT | Ra |
| CnB | Rc |
| CrB | Ro |
| DA | Sc |
| DO | Se |
| De | StA |
| ExA | SuD |
| GoA | TaB |
| Gr | Tc |
| GuA | Tm |
| KuB | To |
| LF | TuB |
| La | Ud |
| Lc | Ur |
| Le | W |
| Ln | |

0 6 12

 Miles



Areas of Environmental Concern & Fragile Areas

The areas of Craven County in proximity to the Neuse River can be quite fragile, yet because of market conditions, they often develop quickly. These areas often may be vulnerable to natural hazards such as erosion or flooding; or they may be valuable to citizens for environmental, economic, aesthetic, social, or cultural reasons.

Two of the responsibilities of North Carolina's Coastal Resources Commission (CRC) are to establish policies for the Coastal Management Program and to adopt implementation rules for the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA). The Commission designates areas of environmental concern (AECs), adopts rules and policies for coastal development within those environmentally fragile areas, and reviews and certifies local land-use plans as compliant with CAMA regulations. The Division of Coastal Management (DCM), which is contained within North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality, implements the Coastal Resources Commission's rules for development permits in CAMA-compliant areas.

The foundation of the Coastal Resources Commission and Division of Coastal Management's coastal development permitting programs is the designation of Areas of Environmental Concern (AECs). According to the Division of Coastal Management's website, "AEC is an area of natural importance: It may be easily destroyed by erosion or flooding; or it may have environmental, social, economic or aesthetic values that make it valuable to our state." The Coastal Resources Commission designates areas as AECs to preserve their value for the good of current and future state residents. This categorization is designed to protect sensitive areas from irreversible damage to property, public health, or the environment caused by uncontrolled development. Development in almost all coastal waters and in nearly 3% of land in the 20 CAMA-compliant coastal counties is subject to review under the AEC definitions. While Craven County does not abut coastal waters of the Atlantic Ocean, the County does contain the Neuse River, its tributaries, and other sensitive aquatic and environmental areas. As such, development within the County is subject to AEC review, in addition to other local and state restrictions on development within floodplains and other sensitive areas. Craven County has been fortunate to date not to experience significant shoreline erosion as evidenced by the structural integrity of existing structures and public facilities along the shores of the Neuse River.

The Coastal Resources Commission's four Areas of Environmental Concern, abbreviated definitions for each, and their applicability to Craven County are listed in the table below. As the table shows, Craven County does not meet all the requirements for each AEC nor for many of the AEC subsections. Craven County does meet portions of the Ocean and Estuarine System and Natural and Cultural Resource Areas AECs.

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Table 25. Areas of Environmental Concern		
AEC and Subsections	Abbreviated Definition or Note	Presence in Craven County
Estuarine and Ocean System		
Public Trust Areas	<p>All waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the lands underneath.</p> <p>All navigable natural bodies and the lands underneath, to the normal high watermark, not including privately owned lakes where the public does not have access</p>	<p>Alligator Branch, Alum Springs Branch, Bachelor Creek, Bear Branch, Beaverdam Branch, Beaverdam Swamp, Beech Tree Branch, Black Branch, Black Swamp, Black Swamp Creek, Brice Creek, Bushy Fork, Caps Branch, Caswell Branch, Catfish Lake, Clayroot Swamp, Core Creek, Creeping Swamp, Deep Branch, Deep Gully, East Branch, East Canal, East Prong Brice Creek, East Prong Slocum Creek, Fisher Swamp, Flat Swamp, Folley Branch, Fork Swamp, Georges Branch, Grape Creek, Great Branch, Geens Thoroughfare, Grinnel Creek, Gum Swamp, Gum Swamp Long Lake, Halfmoon Creek, Harry's Branch, Hayward Creek, Hollis Branch, Hoods Creek, Hunters Creek, Island Creek, Jack Smith Creek, Joes Branch, Jumping Run, Kit Swamp, Lees Branch, Little Lake, Little Snake Hole Branch, Little Swift Creek, Mauls Swamp, Miry Hole Branch, McCoy Branch, Middle Canal, Mill Branch, Mill Run, Mill Swamp, Morgan Swamp, Mosley Creek, Muddy Cove, Neuse River, Ellis Lake, Palmetto Swamp, Pine Tree Swamp, Pinetree Creek, Pollard Swamp, Reedy Branch, Rocky Run, Rollover Creek, Round Tree Branch, Sandy Branch, Snake Hole Branch, South Canal, Southwest Prong Slocum Creek, Stony Branch, Swift Creek, Taylor Creek, The Gut, Tracey Swamp, Trent River, Turkey Quarter Creek, Upper Broad Creek, Village Creek, West Branch, West Prong Brice Creek, Wilson Creek, Wolf Pit Branch</p>
Estuarine Waters	<p>Oceans, sounds, tidal rivers and their tributaries, which stretch across coastal North Carolina and link to the other parts of the estuarine system: public trust areas, coastal wetlands, and coastal shorelines.*</p>	<p>Neuse River, Adams Creek Canal, Adams Creek, Big Branch, Cherry Branch, Clubfoot Creek, Courts Creek, Delamar Creek, East Prong Mortons Mill Pond, Godfrey Creek, Great Neck Creek, Gulden Creek, Harlowe Canal, Kearney Creek, Kellum Creek, King Creek, Long Creek, Mitchell Creek, Mortons Mill Pond, Sassafras Branch, Snake Branch, West Prong Mortons Mill Pond, Northwest Creek, Trent River, Upper Broad Creek, Alligator Gut, Anderson Creek, Barney Branch, Brice Creek, Bridge Creek, Cahoogue Creek, Cedar Creek, Crooked Creek, Dam Creek, Daniels Branch, Deep Branch, Deep Run, Dolls Creek, Duck Creek, Goodwin Creek, Gum Branch, Hancock Creek, Hunters Branch, Jacks Branch, Lane Branch, Lawson Creek, Little John Creek, Mill Creek, Mills Branch, Miry Branch, Mocoocks Branch, Otter Creek, Reeds Gut, Renny Creek, Sandy Run, Scotts Creek, Shop Branch, Slocum Creek, Spe Branch, Still Gut, Tucker Creek, Swift Creek, Upper Broad Creek</p>



AEC and Subsections	Abbreviated Definition or Note	Presence in Craven County
Coastal Shorelines	All lands within 75 feet of the normal high-water level of estuarine waters. This definition also includes lands within 30 feet of the normal high-water level of public trust waters located inland of the dividing line between coastal fishing waters and inland fishing waters	The coastal shorelines in Craven County consist of all areas within 75 feet of normal high water or normal level of estuarine waters. It also includes all lands within 30 feet of the normal high water or normal water level of public trust waters.
Natural and Cultural Resource Areas		
Coastal Complex Natural Areas	Lands that support native plants and animal communities, providing habitats essentially unchanged by human activity.	Croatan National Forest, Billfinger Road Flatwoods, Brice Creek Swamps, Catfish Lake & South Wilderness, Cherry Point Tucker Creek Natural Area, Cool Springs Sand Ridge and Swamp, Deep Gully, Dover Bay Pocosin, Duck Creek/Upper Broad Creek Natural Area, Flanner Beach Natural Area, Fort Barnwell Bluffs, Great Lake/Pond Pine Wilderness Natural Area, Gum Swamp Bottomland Hardwood Forest, Hancock Creek Forest, Lake Ellis Simon, Little Lake, Long Lake, Sheep Ridge Wilderness, Little Road Longleaf Pine Savannas, Masontown Pocosin, Neuse/Trent River Aquatic Habitat, Neuse River Floodplain and Bluffs, Pocosin Wilderness, Reedy Branch, Riverdale Goldenrod Roadsides, Shell Landing, Smith-Sugg Pocosin, Suffolk Scarp Bogs, Sweetwater Creek/Trent River Natural Area, Trent River Brice Creek Marshes, Union Point Pocosin
*NOTE: For regulatory purposes, the inland, or upstream boundary of estuarine waters is the same line used to separate the jurisdictions of the Division of Marine Fisheries and the Wildlife Resources Commission. However, many of the fish and shellfish that spend parts of their lives in estuaries move between the “official” estuarine and inland waters.		

Environmentally Fragile Areas

15A NCAC 07B defines Environmentally Fragile Areas as being wetlands, natural heritage areas, areas containing endangered species, prime wildlife habitats, or maritime forests. The following subsections are identified in the heading as to whether they are classified as an Environmentally Fragile Area. Craven County recognizes the importance of preserving and protecting these areas. The county is dedicated to supporting policies and regulating development near land uses that fall within this category to ensure responsible and sustainable growth. These areas are valuable not only to the natural environment, but their preservation will contribute to the sustainability and enjoyment of life within Craven County. Many of these environmentally fragile areas are enjoyed and utilized on a regular basis by both citizens of the County and region through active/passive recreation and other uses. While Craven County may not encompass all types of environmentally fragile areas, such areas could exist within the surrounding region. These areas should still be considered, emphasizing environmental stewardship and evaluating how decisions and activities within the County might impact these sensitive areas in the broader region.

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Wetlands (Environmentally Fragile Area)

Wetlands are defined as being lands that are saturated or covered with shallow depths of water for portions of the year and may not be in a permanently wet condition. Many wetlands will occur in areas where underground water is expelled to the surface, or surface water and precipitation accumulates and remains for extended periods. Wetlands include a variety of naturally occurring systems such as marshes, swamps, bottomland hardwoods, pocosins, and wet flats.

Table 26. Wetland Category Descriptions	
Category	Description
Salt/Brackish Marsh	Any salt marsh or other brackish marsh subject to regular or occasional flooding by tides, including wind tides (whether or not the tide waters reach the marshland areas through natural or artificial watercourses), provided this shall not include hurricane or tropical storm waters.
Freshwater Marsh	Herbaceous areas which are flooded for extended periods during the growing season. Included in this are marshes within lacustrine systems, some managed impoundments, some Carolina Bays, and other non-tidal marshes (i.e., marshes which do not fall into the Salt/Brackish Marsh category).
Bottomland Hardwood	Riverine forested or occasionally scrub-shrub communities which are semi-permanently flooded or including temporarily flooded.
Depressional Swamp Forest	Very poorly drained non-riverine forested or scrub/shrub communities which are semi-permanently flooded or including temporarily flooded.
Hardwood Flat	Poorly drained interstream flats not associated with rivers and estuaries. Seasonally saturated by high water table of poor drainage.
Pine Flat	Non-estuarine, seasonally saturated pine communities on hydric soils that may become quite dry for part of the year, generally on flat or nearly flat areas that are not associated with a river or stream system. This category does not include managed pine systems.
Managed Pinelands	Seasonally saturated, managed pine forests occurring on hydric soils. This wetland category may also contain non-managed pine forests occurring on hydric soils. Generally, these are areas that were not shown on National Wetland Inventory maps. These areas may or may not be jurisdictional wetlands.
Drained Wetlands	Any wetland system described above that is, or has been, partially drained/ditched according to the US Fish & Wildlife National Wetland Inventory maps.
Cleared Wetlands	Areas of hydric soils for which satellite imagery indicates a lack of vegetation in both 1988 and 1994. These areas are likely to no longer be wetlands.
Cutover Wetlands	Areas for which satellite imagery indicates a lack of vegetation in 1994. These areas are likely to still be wetlands, however, but they have recently been cut over. Vegetation in these areas may be revegetating naturally or may be in use for silvicultural activities.
Estuarine Shrub/Scrub	Any shrub/scrub dominated community subject to occasional flooding by tides, including wind tides (whether or not the tide waters reach the marshland areas through natural or artificial water courses).
Riverine Wetlands	These wetlands are those in which the hydrology is determined or heavily influenced by proximity to a perennial stream of any size or order. Overbank flow from the stream exerts considerable influence on their hydrology.
Headwater Swamp	Wooded, riverine systems along first order streams. These include hardwood dominated communities with moist soil most of the year. Channels receive their water from overland flow and rarely overflow their own banks.
Human Impacted Wetlands	Areas of human impact have physically disturbed the wetland, but the area is still a wetland. Impoundments and some cutovers are included in this category, as well as other disturbed areas such as powerline.
Pocosin	Non-estuarine scrub/shrub dominated by evergreen shrubs. Typically occur on saturated, acid, nutrient poor, sandy or peaty soils; usually removed from large streams and subject to periodic burning.

Source: NC Division of Coastal Management.



While not all wetlands function in the same manner, there are certain core elements that exist in all wetland systems. These characteristics include wetland vegetation, hydric soils, and hydrologic features. Wetlands are home to multiple varieties of plant species with some of the most common being in the marsh grass and tree family. Plants that thrive in wetlands do so because of their ability to survive in extremely saturated soil limiting the plants' ability to receive oxygen during certain times of the growing season. Plants that have the ability to thrive in saturated soils with little oxygen are commonly found in wetlands, these types of plants include but are not limited to the following:

- ✚ Pond Pine
- ✚ Bald Cypress
- ✚ Swamp Sawgrass
- ✚ Rush
- ✚ Yellow Pond Lilly
- ✚ Broadleaf Cattail

Different types of wetlands perform various natural functions which are important to both Craven County and the entire region. Wetlands serve as an extremely valuable habitat for wildlife, including certain endangered and protected species. Wetlands also serve a valuable role in water quality protection, flood protection, shoreline stabilization, and as a natural buffer between stormwater runoff and bodies of water. The importance of wetlands with regard to flood management cannot be understated – as flood events are projected to be more intense due to the increased potential for more severe storms – the conservation of wetlands is paramount. The specific locations of wetlands areas must be determined by an on-site analysis when land is proposed to be developed. Certain wetlands and Areas of Environmental Concern fall under the jurisdiction of both the US Army Corp of Engineers and the Coastal Area Management Act. Wetlands should be incorporated into development and preserved so that their function and natural beauty can be enjoyed. Wetlands also provide an outstanding opportunity for education and environmental science studies. The Neuse River runs through the entirety of the County, creating numerous wetlands for residents to explore and enjoy. Locally, regionally, and statewide there are multiple organizations (federal, non-profit and local) that work towards the protection, restoration, and establishment of new wetland areas. These organizations include but are not limited to the following:

- ✚ New Bern Ducks Unlimited
- ✚ Carolina Wetlands Association
- ✚ NC Coastal Land Trust
- ✚ Nature Conservancy
- ✚ US Fish and Wildlife Service
- ✚ US Army Corps of Engineers
- ✚ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- ✚ US Environmental Protection Agency

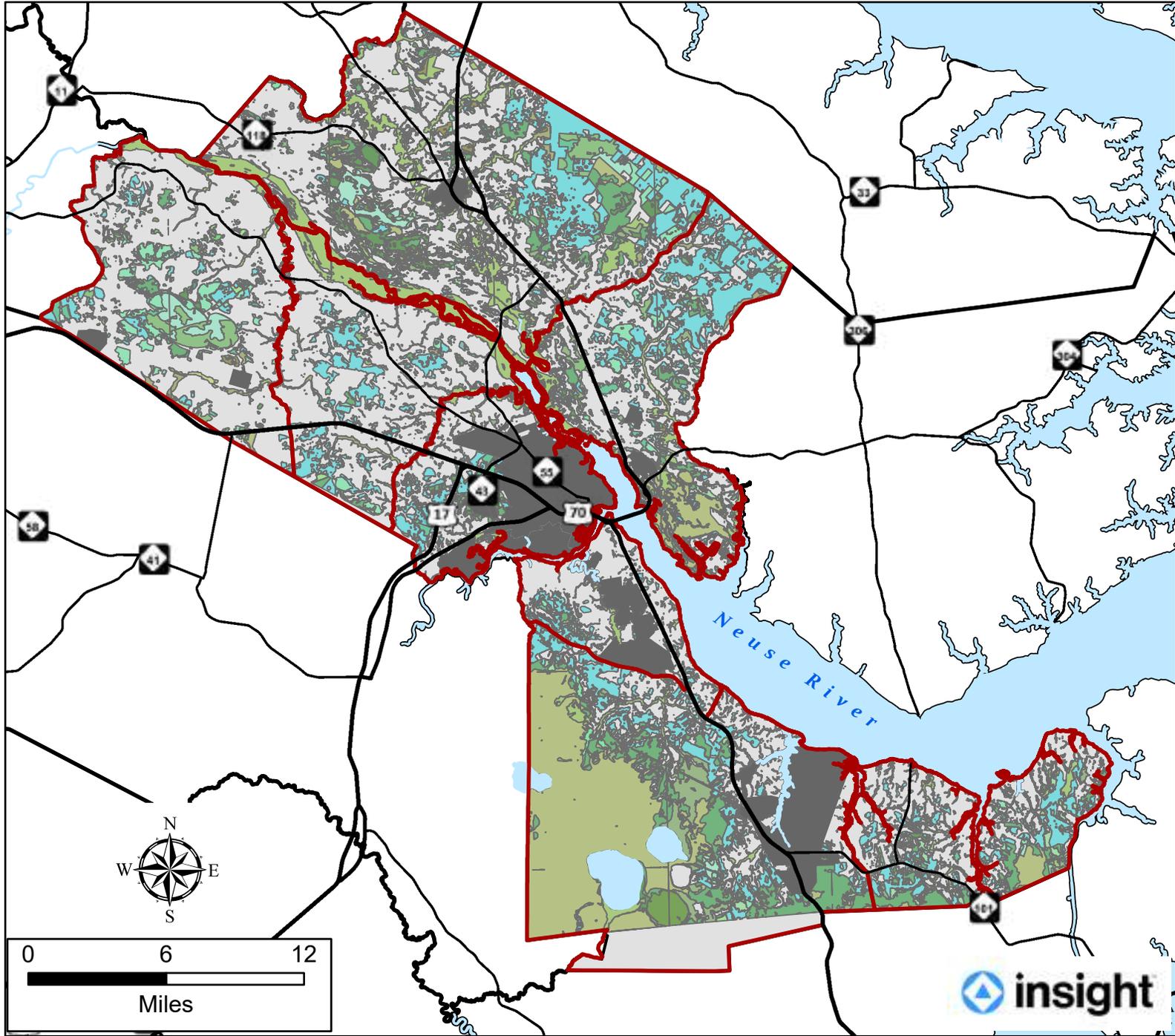
While not all these groups need to be involved, Craven County is encouraged to collaborate with them as needed to ensure that the wetlands within the County function at their intended and optimal capacity.

Protected and endangered species that utilize wetlands as a primary habitat include but are not limited to the following: Red-cockaded woodpecker, Bald Eagle, Timber Rattlesnake, Southeastern Bat, Little Blue Heron.

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Map 10 and Table 25 identifies the acreage of the natural heritage areas within Craven County.

Table 27. Craven County Wetlands	
Type	Acres
Bottomland Hardwood	4,412
Cleared Bottomland Hardwood	46
Cleared Depressional Swamp Forest	100
Cleared Estuarine Shrub/Scrub	< 1 acre
Cleared Hardwood Flat	81
Cleared Pine Flat	177
Cleared Pocosin	25
Cutover Bottomland Hardwood	122
Cutover Depressional Swamp Forest	328
Cutover Estuarine Shrub/Scrub	< 1 acre
Cutover Hardwood Flat	312
Cutover Headwater Swamp	72
Cutover Pine Flat	654
Cutover Pocosin	196
Depressional Swamp Forest	6,624
Drained Bottomland Hardwood	329
Drained Depressional Swamp Forest	5,080
Drained Freshwater Marsh	21
Drained Hardwood Flat	2,665
Drained Headwater Swamp	308
Drained Pine Flat	6,792
Drained Pocosin	3,883
Drained Riverine Swamp Forest	2,024
Estuarine Shrub/Scrub	115
Freshwater Marsh	1,589
Hardwood Flat	5,945
Headwater Swamp	2,772
Human Impacted	1,376
Managed Pineland	50,256
Pine Flat	18,320
Pocosin	34,287
Riverine Swamp Forest	34,288
Salt/Brackish Marsh	1,248
Total Wetlands	184,486
<i>Source: National Wetlands Inventory.</i>	



Map 10. Wetlands

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Townships | Cutover Depressional Swamp Forest | Drained Pocosin |
| Craven County Municipalities & ETJ | Cutover Estuarine Shrub/Scrub | Drained Riverine Swamp Forest |
| Craven County | Cutover Hardwood Flat | Estuarine Shrub/Scrub |
| Wetlands | | |
| Bottomland Hardwood | Cutover Headwater Swamp | Freshwater Marsh |
| Cleared Bottomland Hardwood | Cutover Pine Flat | Hardwood Flat |
| Cleared Depressional Swamp Forest | Cutover Pocosin | Headwater Swamp |
| Cleared Estuarine Shrub/Scrub | Depressional Swamp Forest | Human Impacted |
| Cleared Hardwood Flat | Drained Bottomland Hardwood | Managed Pineland |
| Cleared Headwater Swamp | Drained Depressional Swamp Forest | Pine Flat |
| Cleared Pine Flat | Drained Freshwater Marsh | Pocosin |
| Cleared Pocosin | Drained Hardwood Flat | Riverine Swamp Forest |
| Cutover Bottomland Hardwood | Drained Headwater Swamp | Salt/Brackish Marsh |
| | Drained Pine Flat | |

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Natural Heritage Areas/Managed Lands (Environmentally Fragile Areas)

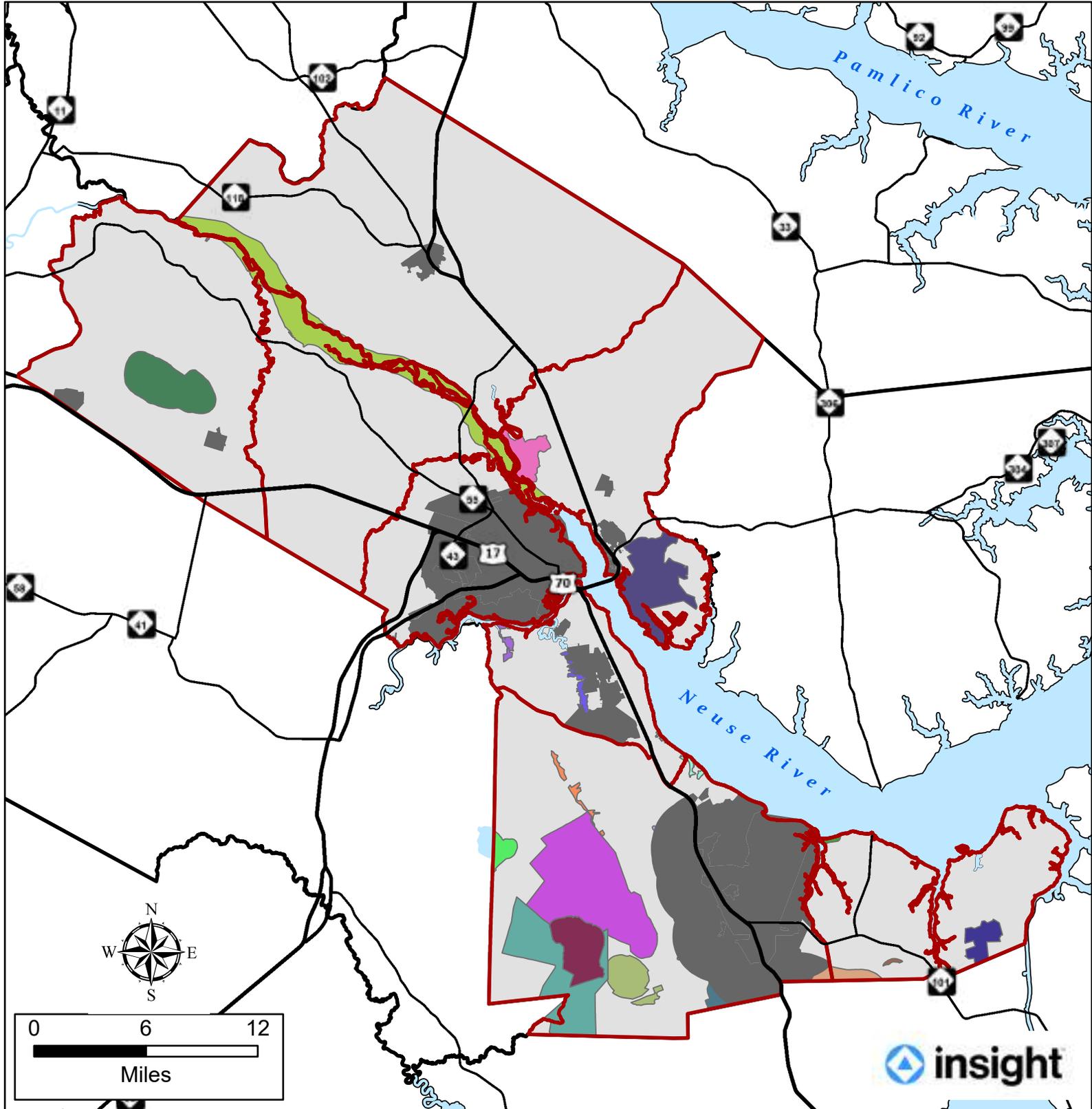
Natural Heritage Areas are places where historic, cultural, and natural resources blend to form cohesive, nationally important landscapes. Natural Heritage Areas are lived-in environments. Map 11 and Table 26 identifies the acreage of the natural heritage areas within Craven County.

Table 28. Craven County Natural Heritage Areas

Area	Acreage	% of all NHA in Craven County
Billfinger Road Flatwoods	73.55	0.076%
Brice Creek Swamps	768.08	0.812%
Catfish Lake/Catfish Lake South Wilderness	9,718.43	10.037%
Cherry Point Tucker Creek Natural Area	1,233.45	1.274%
Cool Springs Sand Ridge & Swamp	1,491.92	1.541%
Deep Gully	71.97	0.074%
Dover Bay Pocosin	4,399.44	4.544%
Duck Creek/Upper Broad Creek Natural Area	5,363.09	5.539%
Flanner Beach Natural Area	256.84	0.265%
Fort Barnwell Bluffs	24.52	0.025%
Great Lake/Pond Pine Wilderness Natural Area	3,186.15	3.291%
Gum Swamp Bottomland Hardwood Forest	34.59	0.036%
Hancock Creek Forest	116.38	0.120%
Lake Ellis Simon	2,158.27	2.229%
Little Lake/Long Lake/Sheep Ridge Wilderness	11,897.45	12.287%
Little Road Longleaf Pine Savannas	403.56	0.417%
Masontown Pocosin	3,643.87	3.763%
NEU/Trent River Aquatic Habitat	503.87	0.520%
Neuse River Floodplain and Bluffs	11,913.64	12.304%
Pocosin Wilderness	18,937.79	19.558%
Reedy Branch	17.81	0.018%
Riverdale Goldenrod Roadsides	12.32	0.013%
Shell Landing	1.96	0.002%
Smith-Sugg Pocosin	1,456.24	1.504%
Suffolk Scarp Bogs	11,103.50	11.467%
Sweetwater Creek/Trent River Natural Area	289.28	0.299%
Trent River/Brice Creek Marshes	244.71	0.253%
Union Point Pocosin	5,747.09	5.935%

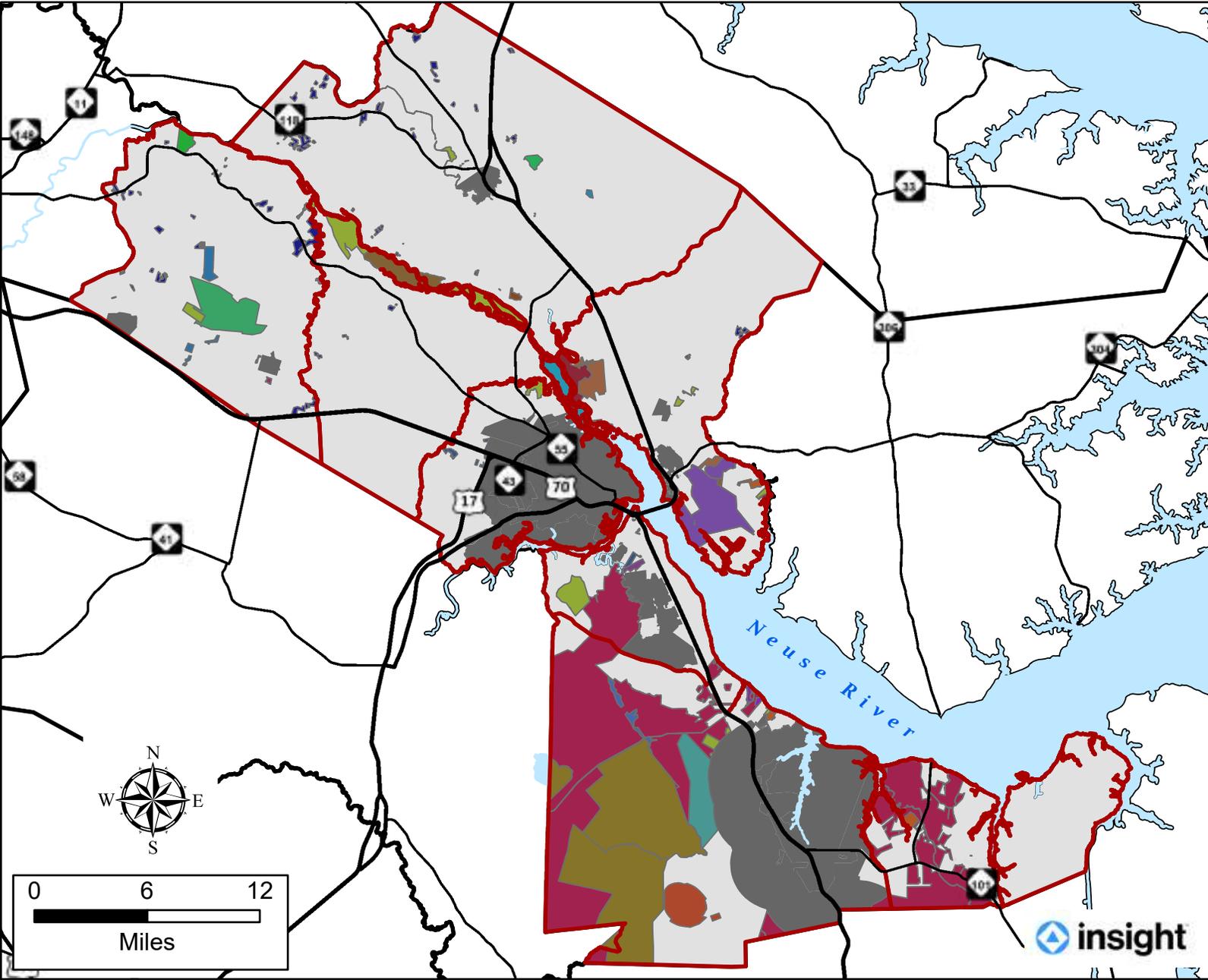
Source: *Natural Heritage Program*

Managed land areas and other natural resource areas are sensitive environmental areas such as the headwaters and shorelines of coastal rivers, creeks, sounds, agricultural areas, and protected open space. It is important to be aware of the existence and function of these areas and to support minimal development occurring. When development does occur, efforts should be made to ensure that the development is not incompatible. Further, these passive recreation areas guarantee residents and visitors beautiful landscapes in which to recreate. Map 12 and Table 27 provide the managed areas located within the County. Efforts to preserve the agricultural and natural areas of Craven County have been made and are evidenced by the designations provided on the Future Land Use Map. Many of the policies and corresponding actions within this plan are also designed to support the mitigation of impacts on natural resource areas and agriculture in the County.



Map 11. Natural Heritage Areas

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| Townships | Duck Creek/Upper Broad Creek Natural Area | NEU/Trent River Aquatic Habitat |
| Craven County Municipalities & ETJ | Flanner Beach Natural Area | Neuse River Floodplain and Bluffs |
| Craven County | Fort Barnwell Bluffs | Pocosin Wilderness |
| Significant Natural Heritage Areas | | |
| Billfinger Road Flatwoods | Great Lake/Pond Pine Wilderness Natural Area | Reedy Branch |
| Brice Creek Swamps | Gum Swamp Bottomland Hardwood Forest | Riverdale Goldenrod Roadsides |
| Catfish Lake/Catfish Lake South Wilderness | Hancock Creek Forest | Shell Landing |
| Cool Springs Sand Ridge and Swamp | Lake Ellis Simon | Smith-Sugg Pocosin |
| Deep Gully | Little Lake/Long Lake/Sheep Ridge Wilderness | Sweetwater Creek/Trent River Natural Area |
| Dover Bay Pocosin | Little Road Longleaf Pine Savannas | Union Point Pocosin |
| | Masontown Pocosin | |



Map 12. Managed Areas

- Townships
- Craven County Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Managed Areas**
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Easement
- Cool Springs Registered Heritage Area
- Craven Correctional Institution
- Craven County - Creekside Park
- Craven County - West Craven Park
- Craven County Open Space
- Croatan Mitigation Site
- Croatan National Forest
- Croatan Pocosins
- Ducks Unlimited (Wetlands America Trust) Easement
- Flanner Beach Natural Area Registered Heritage Area
- Gum Swamp Bottomland Hardwood Forest Registered Heritage Area
- Lake Ellis Simon Registered Heritage Area
- Little Road Longleaf Pine Savannas Registered Heritage Area
- Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point - Main Air Station
- Mountains-to-Sea Trail
- NC Department of Transportation Mitigation Site
- NC Division of Mitigation Services Easement
- NC Forest Service Easement
- NC Hazard Mitigation Buyout Property - Craven County
- NC Land and Water Fund Conservation Agreement
- NC Land and Water Fund Project
- NC Wildlife Resources Commission Easement
- NC Wildlife Resources Commission Maple Cypress Landing Access Area
- Neuse River Game Land
- Neuse River Game Land Dedicated Nature Preserve
- North American Land Trust Easement
- North Carolina Coastal Land Trust
- North Carolina Safe Harbor Agreement - Red-cockaded Woodpecker
- North Carolina Swine Buyout Easement
- Tryon Palace State Historic Site
- USFWS Critical Habitat - Neuse River Waterdog
- Wetland Reserve Program Easement



Table 29. Craven County Managed Areas

Area	Acreage	% of all Managed Areas in Craven County
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Easement	2,117	1.6%
Cool Springs Registered Heritage Areas	148	< 1%
Craven Correctional Institution	182	< 1%
Craven County – Creekside Park	133	< 1%
Craven County – West Craven Park	90	< 1%
Craven County Open Space	398	< 1%
Croatan Mitigation Site	2,804	2.2%
Croatan National Forest	58,854	46.5%
Croatan National Forest – Catfish Lake South Wilderness	15	< 1%
Croatan National Forest – Pocosin Wilderness	469	< 1%
Croatan National Forest – Pond Pine Wilderness	1,134	< 1%
Croatan National Forest – Sheep Ridge Wilderness	9,315	7.3%
Croatan Pocosins (Catfish Lake/Catfish Lake South Wilderness) Registered Heritage Area	667	< 1%
Croatan Pocosins (Little Lake, Long Lake, and Sheep Ridge Wilderness) Registered Heritage Area	10,407	8.2%
Croatan Pocosins (Pocosin Wilderness) Registered Heritage Areas	9,866	7.8%
Ducks Unlimited (Wetlands America Trust) Easement	1,169	< 1%
Flanner Beach Natural Area Registered Heritage Area	202	< 1%
Gum Swamp Bottomland Hardwood Forest Registered Heritage Area	9	< 1%
Lake Ellis Simon Registered Heritage Area	1,878	1.4%
Little Road Longleaf Pine Savannas Registered Heritage Areas	384	< 1%
Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point – Main Air Station	1	< 1%
Mountains to Sea Trail	21	< 1%
NC Department of Transportation Mitigation Site	13	< 1%
NC Division of Mitigation Services Easement	526	< 1%
NC Forest Service Easement	1,111	< 1%
NC Hazard Mitigation Buyout Property – Craven County	54	< 1%
NC Land and Water Fund Conservation Agreement	2,452	1.9%
NC Land and Water Fund Project	4,605	3.65%
NC Wildlife Resources Commission Easement	2,897	2.2%
NC Wildlife Resources Commission Maple Cypress Landing Access Areas	1	< 1%
Neuse River Game Land	5,513	4.3%
Neuse River Game Land Dedicated Nature Preserve	3,955	3.1%
North American Land Trust Easement	820	< 1%
North Carolina Coastal Land Trust – Anderson Creek Preserve	< 1	< 1%
North Carolina Coastal Land Trust – Dam Creek Preserve	24	< 1%
North Carolina Land Trust – Dover Bay Preserve	232	< 1%
North Carolina Land Trust – Neuse River Ellis Preserve	6	< 1%
North Carolina Land Trust Easement	2,812	2.2%
North Carolina Coastal Land Trust Preserve	918	< 1%
North Carolina Swine Buyout Easement	25	< 1%
USFWS Critical Habitat – Neuse River Waterdog	33	< 1%
Wetland Reserve Program Easement	45	< 1%

Source: Natural Heritage Program

7: Harmony with Nature

Primary Nursery Areas (Environmentally Fragile Area)

Primary Nursery Areas, as defined by the Marine Fisheries Commission, are those areas in the estuarine system where initial post larval development takes place. These areas are usually located in the uppermost sections of a system where populations are uniformly very early juveniles. The Division of Marine Fisheries is responsible for preserving, protecting, and developing Primary Nursery Areas for commercially important finfish and shellfish. High productive values in the estuarine waters are the result of three essential processes: (1) circulation patterns caused by tidal energy, freshwater flow, and shallow depth; (2) nutrient trapping mechanisms; and (3) protection offered to many species. Important features of the estuary system are mud and sand flats, eel grass beds, salt marshes, submerged vegetation flats, clam and oyster beds, and important nursery areas. Craven County does contain both Primary and Secondary Nursery Areas as follows:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ✚ Clubfoot Creek (Primary & Secondary) | ✚ Kellum Creek (Primary) |
| ✚ Delamar Creek (Primary) | ✚ Mitchell Creek (Primary) |
| ✚ Godfrey Creek (Primary) | ✚ Neuse River, Pitchkettle Creek upstream to the county line (Primary) |
| ✚ Gulden Creek (Primary) | ✚ Slocum Creek (Primary) |
| ✚ Hancock Creek (Primary) | ✚ Upper Broad Creek (Secondary) |
| ✚ Kearney Creek (Primary) | |

Anadromous Fish Spawning Areas (Environmental Fragile Area)

“Anadromous” fish are those that migrate up rivers (or into estuaries) from the sea to breed in freshwater. The NC Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) defines anadromous fish spawning areas as those where evidence of spawning of anadromous fish has been documented by direct observation of spawning, capture of running trip females, or capture of eggs or early larvae. There are multiple anadromous fish spawning areas in Craven County. These include the following areas:

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| ✚ Neuse River | ✚ Turkey Quarter Creek |
| ✚ Village Creek | ✚ Swift & Little Swift Creek |
| ✚ Kitten Creek | ✚ Bachelor Creek |
| ✚ Core Creek | ✚ Brice Creek |
| ✚ Pitchkettle Creek | ✚ Upper Broad Creek |

Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (Environmental Fragile Area)

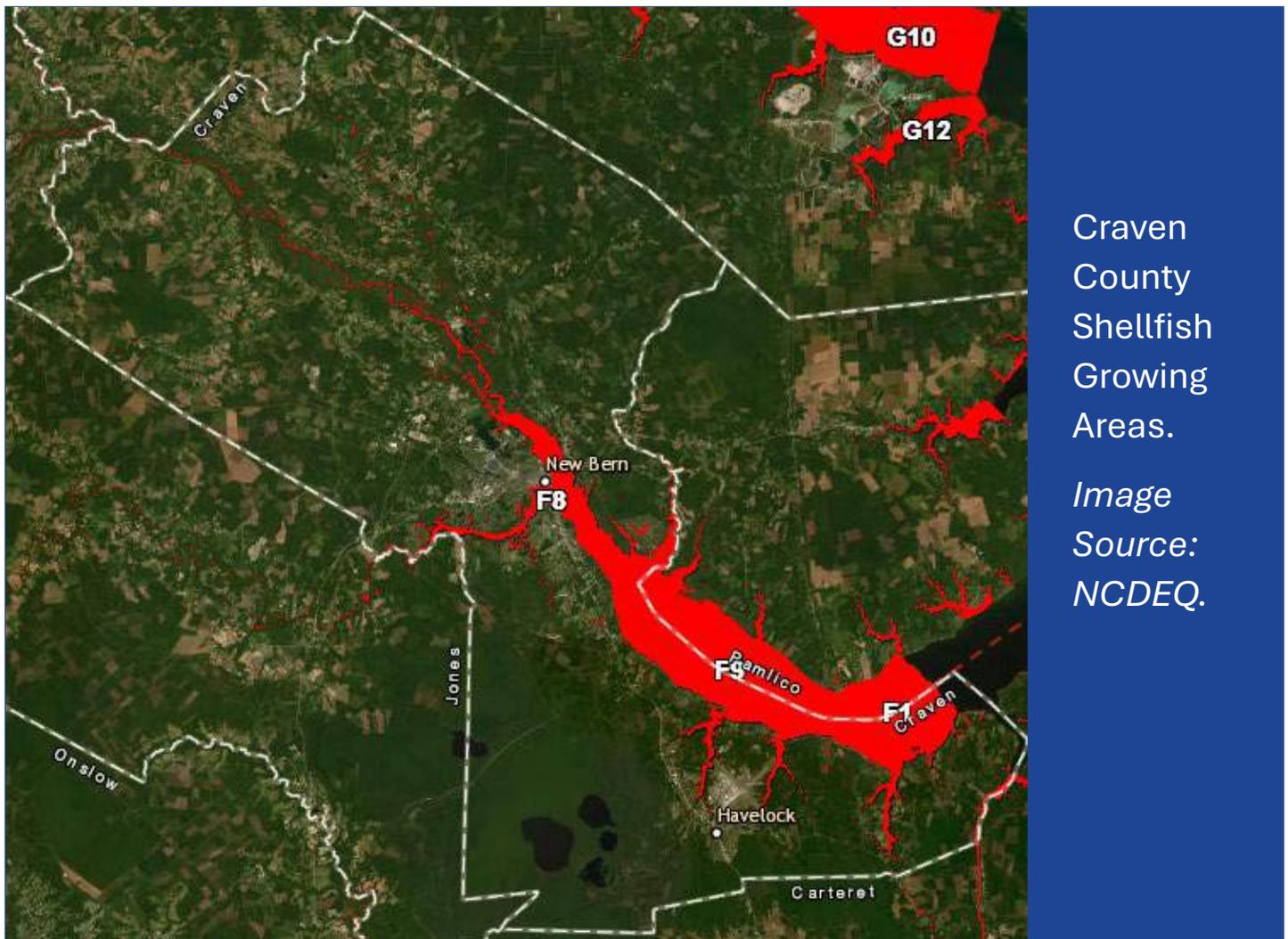
Grasses that grow to the surface of, but do not emerge from shallow water are called submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV). One of the most important ecosystem services of these shallow waters adjacent to the shoreline is to provide refuge in which small fish and shellfish can hide from larger finfish predators. The habitat value of shallow water is greatly enhanced when it has a structure that provides additional cover, and the structure provided by SAV provides some of the greatest habitat value for many species. Craven County contains SAV at the following locations throughout the County:

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| ✚ Neuse River | ✚ Slocum Creek |
| ✚ Trent River | ✚ Hancock Creek |
| ✚ Reedy Branch | ✚ Clubfoot Creek |
| ✚ Goose Creek | ✚ Courts Creek |

Shellfishing Waters (Environmental Fragile Area)

The Shellfish Sanitation and Recreational Water Quality (SSRWQ) Section is responsible for monitoring and classifying coastal waters as to their suitability for shellfish harvesting for human consumption. SSRWQ, which is part of the Division of Marine Fisheries, will close those harvesting waters that have the potential for causing illness in shellfish consumers, and open those that are assured of having clean, healthy shellfish.” As this information is always evolving, current closure locations have not been included in the plan.

“Shellfish growing areas” are management units that help to subdivide the coast into smaller geographic areas for monitoring purposes and to help track where shellfish are being harvested from. Shellfish growing areas in Craven County located along the Neuse River and its tributaries are delineated F-1, F-2, F-8, and F-9. There are no harvestable populations of shellfish in Growing Areas F-1, F-8, or F-9. A portion of Growing Area F-2 (the western half of Adams Creek) is partially open to harvest, and has a small but growing number of shellfish leases within the Craven County portion of the area.



7: Harmony with Nature

Areas of Resource Potential

Marinas and Mooring Fields

Marinas are defined by the NC Division of Coastal Management as any publicly or privately owned dock, basin, or wet boat storage facility constructed to accommodate more than ten boats and providing any of the following services: permanent or transient docking spaces, dry storage, fueling facilities, haul out facilities, and repair service.

A freestanding mooring is any means to attach to a ship, boat, or other watercraft to a stationary underwater device, mooring buoy, buoyed anchor, or piling not associated with an existing or proposed pier, dock, or boathouse. When more than one freestanding mooring is used in the same general vicinity, it is known as a mooring field. CAMA has regulations for the safe sitting and operation of moorings and mooring fields.

Craven County supports the construction of marinas and any associated dry stack storage facilities. The County has not regulated the establishment of mooring fields within its planning jurisdiction and mooring fields have not created any adverse issues.



Northwest Creek Marina *Image Source:*
Northwest Creek Marina Website.

Floating Homes or Structures

A floating home or structure is any structure, not a boat, supported by a means of flotation, designed to be used without a permanent foundation, which is used or intended for human habitation or commerce. A structure will be considered a floating structure when it is used for commercial purposes for more than 30 days in any one location. A boat may be deemed a floating structure if its means of propulsion have been removed or rendered inoperative and it contains at least 200 square feet of living area. Craven County currently does not have any regulations preventing the use of these types of structures and should encourage careful evaluation and thorough review from multiple agencies prior to making final decisions on such types of development. Craven County does acknowledge that certain types of structures provide opportunities for innovative and intriguing types of development which will allow citizens to interact more closely with the natural environment of the County.

Aquaculture

Aquaculture is defined, by the NC General Statutes, as the propagation and rearing of aquatic species in controlled environments. There is limited aquaculture activity in Craven County with the 2022 Census of Agriculture reporting a total of \$757 in revenue for aquaculture.



Surface Waters

Every stream mile in North Carolina is evaluated and rated by the North Carolina Division of Water Resources. Classifications are assigned through studies, evaluations, and public comments. The state water classification system is summarized in Table 28.

Table 30. NC Division of Water Resources Water Body Classifications	
PRIMARY FRESHWATER AND SALTWATER CLASSIFICATIONS*	
Class	Best Uses
C and SC	Aquatic life propagation/protection and secondary recreation
B and SB	Primary recreation and Class C uses
SA	Waters classified for commercial shellfish harvesting
WS	<i>Water Supply Watershed.</i> There are five WS classes ranging from WS-I through WS-V. WS classifications are assigned to watersheds based on land use characteristics of the area. Each water supply classification has a set of management strategies to protect the surface water supply. WS-I provides the highest level of protection and WS-V provides the least protection. A Critical Area (CA) designation is also listed for watershed areas within a half-mile and draining to the water supply intake or reservoir where an intake is located.
SUPPLEMENTAL CLASSIFICATIONS	
Sw	<i>Swamp Waters:</i> Recognizes waters that will naturally be more acidic (have lower pH values) and have lower levels of dissolved oxygen.
Tr	<i>Trout Waters:</i> Provides protection to freshwaters for natural trout propagation and survival of stocked trout.
HQW	<i>High Quality Waters:</i> Waters possessing special qualities including excellent water quality, Native or Special Native Trout Waters, Critical habitat areas, or WS-I and WS-II water supplies
ORW	<i>Outstanding Resource Waters:</i> Unique and special surface waters that are unimpacted by pollution and have some outstanding resource values.
NSW	<i>Nutrient Sensitive Waters:</i> Areas with water quality problems associated with excessive plant growth resulting from nutrient enrichment.
*Primary classifications beginning with an "S" are assigned to salt waters. Source: NC Department of Environmental Quality.	

The water classifications that apply to Craven County are provided in Table 29 and delineated on Map 13.

Table 31. Waterbodies				
Name of Stream	Description	Current Classification	Date	Basin
Adams Creek	Source to Neuse River	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Adams Creek Canal (ICW)	White Oak River Basin Boundary to Adams Creek	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Alligator Branch	Source to Mosley Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Alligator Gut	Source to Slocum Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Alum Springs Branch	Source to Neuse River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Anderson Creek	Source to Slocum Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Bachelor Creek	Source to mouth in Neuse River located 3.2 miles more or less downstream from The Gut	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Barney Branch	Source to Cahogue Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Bear Branch	Source to Swift Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Beaverdam Branch	Source to Bachelor Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Beaverdam Swamp	Source to Fisher Swamp	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Beech Tree Branch	Source to Bachelor Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Big Branch	Source to Mitchell Creek	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Black Branch	Source to Brice Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Black Swamp	Source to Southwest Prong Slocum Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Black Swamp Creek	Source to White Oak River	C	6/1/1956	White Oak

7: Harmony with Nature

Name of Stream	Description	Current Classification	Date	Basin
Brice Creek	Source to Craven County SR 1004	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Brice Creek	From Craven County SR 1004 to Trent River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Bridge Creek	Source to Trent River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Bushy Fork	Source to Little Swift Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Cahoogue Creek	Source to Hancock Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Caps Branch	Source to East Prong Slocum Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Caswell Branch	Source to Bachelor Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Catfish Lake	Source to Black Swamp Creek	C	6/1/1956	White Oak
Cedar Creek	Source to Slocum Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Cherry Branch	Source to Neuse River	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Clayroot Swamp	Source to Swift Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Clubfoot Creek	Source to Neuse River	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Core Creek	Source to Neuse River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Courts Creek (Coaches Creek)	Source to Neuse River	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Creeping Swamp	Source to Clayroot Swamp	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Crooked Run	Source to Otter Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Dam Creek	Source to Neuse River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Daniels Branch	Source to Tuckers Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Deep Branch	Source to Hancock Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Deep Branch	Source to Bachelor Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Deep Gully	Source to Trent River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Deep Run	Source to Upper Broad Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Delamar Creek	Source to Adams Creek	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Dolls Gut	Source to Hancocks Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Duck Creek	Source to Neuse River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
East Branch	Source to Southwest Prong Slocum Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
East Canal	Source to East Branch	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
East Canal	Source to East Branch	C	5/1/1988	White Oak
East Prong Brice Creek	Source to Brice Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
East Prong Mortons Mill Pond	Source to Mortons Mill Pond	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
East Prong Slocum Creek	Source to Slocum Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Fisher Swamp	Source to Little Swift Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Flat Swamp	Source to Core Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Folley Branch	Source to Mosley Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Fork Swamp	Source to Palmetto Swamp	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Georges Branch	Source to Brice Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Godfrey Creek	Source to Adams Creek	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Goodwin Creek	Source to Tucker Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Grape Creek	Source to Core Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Great Branch	Source to Brice Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Great Neck Creek	Source to Neuse River	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Greens Thoroughfare	Source to Neuse River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Grinnel Creek	Source to Neuse River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Gulden Creek	Source to Clubfoot Creek	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Gum Branch	Source to Neuse River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Gum Swamp	Source to Tracey Swamp	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Gum Swamp (Long Lake)	Source to Brice Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Halfmoon Creek	Source to Neuse River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Hancock Creek	Source to Neuse River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Harlowe Canal	From White Oak River Basin Boundary to Clubfoot Creek	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Harrys Branch	Source to Mosley Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Hayward Creek	Source to Trent River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Hollis Branch	Source to Bachelor Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Hoods Creek	Source to Trent River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse

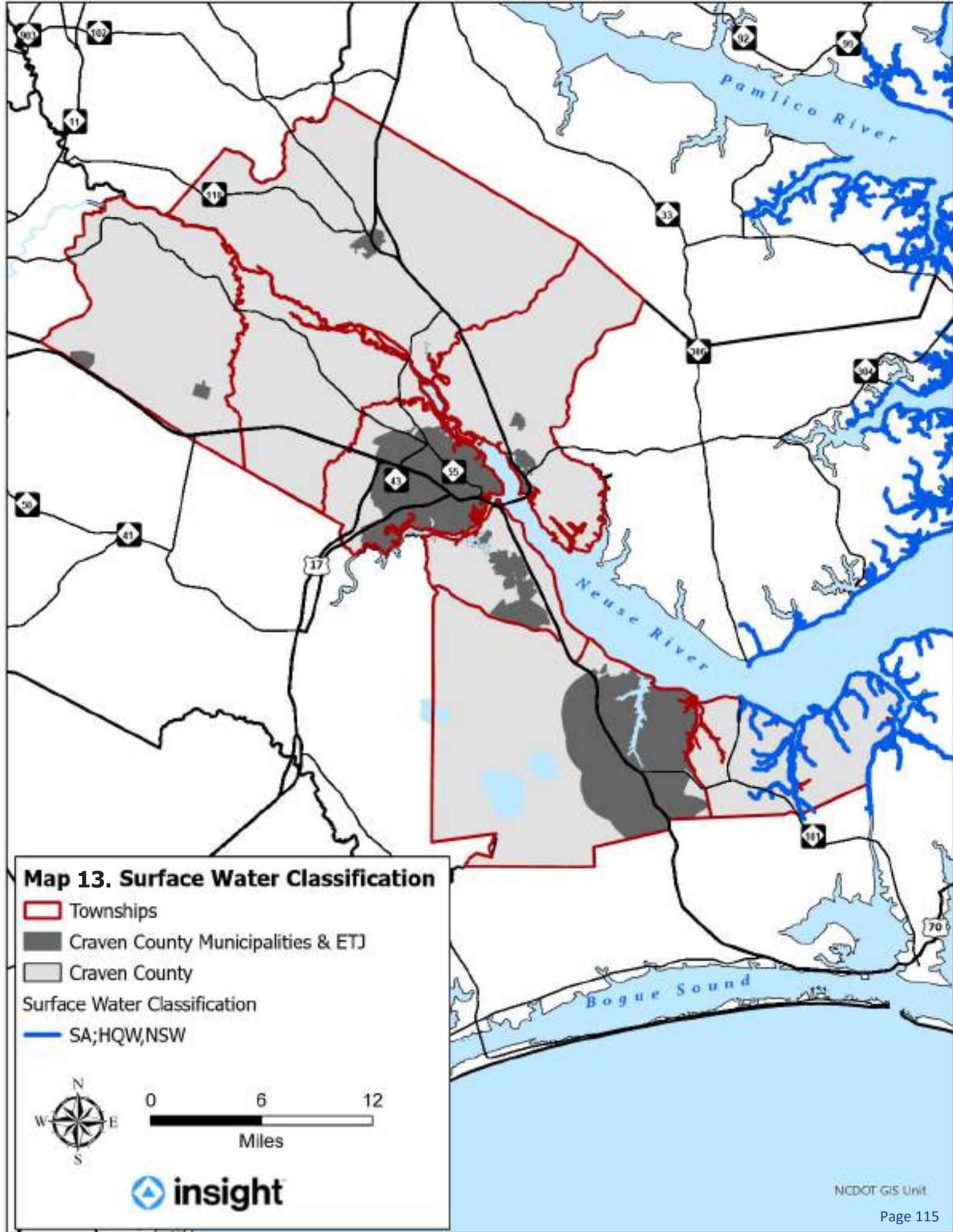


Name of Stream	Description	Current Classification	Date	Basin
Hunters Branch	Source to Mill Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Hunters Creek (Great Lake)	Source to White Oak River	C	6/1/1956	White Oak
Island Creek	Source to Trent River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Jack Smith Creek	Source to Neuse River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Jacks Branch	Source to Hancock Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Joes Branch	Source to East Prong Slocum Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Jumping Run	Source to Bachelor Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Kearney Creek	Source to Adams Creek	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Kellum Creek	Source to Adams Creek	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
King Creek	Source to Neuse River	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Kit Swamp	Source to Little Swift Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Lane Branch	Source to Lawson Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Lawson Creek	Source to Trent River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Lees Branch	Source to Brice Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Little John Creek	Source to Hancock Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Little Lake	Entire Lake and connecting canals to North Canal	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Little Snake Hole Branch	Source to Snake Hole Branch	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Little Swift Creek	Source to Swift Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Long Creek	Source to Neuse River	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Mauls Swamp	Source to Swift Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
McCoy Branch	Source to Mill Run	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Middle Canal	Source to East Canal	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Mill Branch	Source to Core Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Mill Creek	Source to Slocum Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Mill Run	Source to Turkey Quarter Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Mill Swamp	Source to Upper Broad Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Mills Branch	Source to Neuse River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Miry Branch	Source to Sandy Run	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Miry Hole Branch	Source to Trent River	B	5/1/1988	Neuse
Mitchell Creek	Source to Clubfoot Creek	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Mococks Branch	Source to Hancock Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Morgan Swamp	Source to Mill Swamp	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Mortons Mill Pond	Source to Clubfoot Creek	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Mosley Creek	Source to Neuse River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Muddy Cove	Source to Island Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Neuse River	Line across Neuse River from Johson Point to McCotter Point to a line across Neuse River from Wilkinson Point to Cherry Point	SB	5/1/1988	Neuse
Neuse River	Line across Neuse River from Wilkinson Point to Cherry Point to its mouth in Pamlico Sound	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Neuse River	From Lenoir County proposed water supply intake to mouth of Contentnea Creek	C	8/3/1992	Neuse
Neuse River	From mouth of Contentnea Creek to Streets Ferry	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Neuse River	Streets Ferry to a line across Neuse River from Johnson Point to McCotter Point	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
North Canal (Ellis Lake)	Source to West Branch	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Northwest Creek	Source to Neuse River	SB	12/1/1990	Neuse
Otter Creek	Source to Neuse River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Palmetto Swamp	Source to Swift Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Pine Tree Swamp	Source to Little Swift Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Pinetree Creek	Source to Neuse River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Pollard Swamp	Source to Creeping Swamp	C	5/1/1988	Neuse

7: Harmony with Nature

Name of Stream	Description	Current Classification	Date	Basin
Reeds Gut	Source to Hancock Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Reedy Branch	Source to Trent River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Renny Creek	Source to Neuse River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Rocky Run	Source to Hayward Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Rollover Creek	Source to Bachelor Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Round Tree Branch	Source to Bachelor Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Sandy Branch	Source to Tucker Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Sandy Run	Source to Tucker Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Sassafras Branch	Source to Neuse River	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Scotts Creek	Source to Neuse River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Shop Branch	Source to Hancock Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Slocum Creek	Source to Neuse River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Snake Branch	Source to Mitchell Creek	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Snake Hole Branch	Source to Mosley Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
South Canal	Source to East Canal	C	5/1/1988	White Oak
Southwest Prong Slocum Creek	Source to Slocum Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Spe Branch	Source to Cahoon Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Still Gut	Source to Cahoon Creek	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Still Gut	Source to Reeds Gut	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Stony Branch	Source to Neuse River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Swift Creek	Source to mouth of Bear Branch	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Swift Creek	Mouth of Bear Branch to Neuse River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Taylor Creek	Source to Neuse River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
The Gut	Source to Bachelor Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Tracey Swamp	Source to Mosley Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Trent River	Source to the mouth of Deep Gully	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Trent River	Mouth of Deep Gully to mouth of Brice Creek	SB	5/1/1988	Neuse
Tucker Creek	Source to Slocum Creek	SB	5/1/1988	Neuse
Turkey Quarter Creek	Source to Neuse River	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Upper Broad Creek	Source to NC Hwy 55 bridge	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Upper Broad Creek	NC Hwy 55 bridge to Pamlico County SR 1103	SC	5/1/1988	Neuse
Upper Broad Creek	From Pamlico County SR 1103 to Neuse River	SB	12/1/1990	Neuse
Upper Broad Creek	Source to Durham Creek	C	1/1/1990	Tar-Pamlico
Village Creek	Source to Neuse River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
West Branch	Source to Southwest Prong Slocum Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
West Prong Brice Creek	Source to Brice Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
West Prong Mortons Mill Pond	Source to Mortons Mill Pond	SA	5/1/1988	Neuse
Wilson Creek	Source to Trent River	C	5/1/1988	Neuse
Wolf Pit Branch	Source to Southwest Prong Slocum Creek	C	5/1/1988	Neuse

Source: NC Division of Water Resources.



Map 13. Surface Water Classification

- Townships
- Craven County Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Surface Water Classification
- SA;HQW,NSW



7: Harmony with Nature

Additionally, there are four wellhead protection areas affiliated with the River Bend, Havelock, New Bern, and First Craven Sanitary District water systems (see Table 30). These programs were intended by Congress to be a key part of a national groundwater protection strategy to prevent contamination of groundwaters that are used as public drinking water supplies. In North Carolina, development of a local Wellhead Protection Plan is not mandatory but, is viewed as a valuable supplement to state groundwater protection programs. Implemented Wellhead Protection Plans reduce the susceptibility of wells to contaminants.

Wellhead protection is defined as protection of all or part of the area surrounding a well from which the well's groundwater is drawn. The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) further defines a Wellhead Protection Area as the surface and subsurface area surrounding a water well or wellfield, supplying a public water system, through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move toward and reach such water well or wellfields.

System Name	PWSID	Approved	Wells	Population Served
First Craven Sanitary District	NC0425040	11/30/2010	3	6,350
Havelock Water System	NC0425015	3/19/2009	4	12,304
New Bern, City of	NC0425010	3/15/2024	20	37,884
River Bend, Town of	NC0425113	9/20/2024	3	2,846

Source: NC Department of Environmental Quality.

Neuse River Basin

Craven County is regulated by the 2009 Neuse River Basin Water Quality Plan as well as its own recently adopted (2024) Stormwater Ordinance. The Neuse River Basin extends from Person/Orange County southeasterly to the tidal waters near New Bern. This river basin is the third largest in the State of North Carolina and is one of only four river basins whose boundaries are located entirely within the state.

The 2009 plan identified the following major recommendations and research needs within the basin. This is not an extensive list; this list includes topics that are anticipated to have the greatest impact and involvement for Craven County.

- ✚ Develop a more detailed analysis of current and historical data in order to better quantify the status of nutrient loading to the estuary; conduct additional trend and loading analysis upstream of the Neuse River Estuary focusing on smaller watersheds with dominant land use types; this will allow staff to better gauge the effectiveness and progress of strategy implementation.
- ✚ Audit local stormwater programs for effectiveness and work to strengthen its implementation.
- ✚ Implement comprehensive land use planning that assesses and reduces the impact of development on natural resources.

Craven County, due to its size and geographic composition, falls within three separate subbasins of the Neuse River Basin. The County is located in subbasins 3-04-09, 3-04-10, and 3-04-11.

Subbasin 3-04-09 includes Vanceboro and its surrounding areas. This subbasin does not have any newly identified water quality impairments from the 2002 plan. Swift Creek is the primary body of water in this subbasin that is located in Craven County. The plan identifies that Swift Creek may periodically have low dissolved oxygen, low flow, and organic enrichment issues. Swift Creek has been identified as being impaired for aquatic life due to a fair benthic bio classification. The general consensus for subbasin 3-04-09 is that attention and resources should be focused to the subbasin in an effort to address some of the water quality issues that exist.



Subbasin 3-04-10 includes the majority of Craven County and its municipalities except for the northern part of the County which is included in subbasins 3-04-09 and 3-04-11. The subbasin includes waters that are mostly estuarine in nature, these estuarine waters are some of the most highly regulated waters in the state. Common themes throughout the subbasin include increased nutrient input resulting in elevated chlorophyll and low dissolved oxygen levels. The general consensus for subbasin 3-04-10 is that attention and resources should be focused on the subbasin in an effort to address some of the water quality issues that exist. An additional issue that exists within this subbasin includes mercury contamination.

Subbasin 3-04-11 includes the Trent River watershed and includes lands that are mainly flat with swamp like conditions and characteristics. The primary land uses within this subbasin include agriculture, forestry, and limited residential. Water quality in this subbasin receives heavy influence from the agricultural activities that take place. Conservation practices in agriculture such as conservation tillage and natural buffers should benefit overall improvement of water quality within the subbasin.

Water Quality Monitoring

The water quality of the surface waters within the Neuse River Basin were evaluated from 2002 – 2006. This evaluation was conducted through biological, chemical, and physical monitoring practices. The entire Neuse River Basin is comprised of 459 miles of freshwater streams and 35 miles of saltwater streams, all these miles were included in the monitoring and evaluation effort. The water quality of the majority of the freshwater streams are impaired due to an impairment in biological integrity, low dissolved oxygen levels and elevated turbidity. Most saltwater streams have an impaired quality due to elevated chlorophyll, turbidity, and bacteria.

Monitoring has identified excessive nutrient loading as the primary stressor in the Neuse River Basin, leading to chlorophyll impairment.

303(D) Impaired Waters

The following waters are identified as impaired per 2024 NCDEQ Water Resources:

-  Neuse River Estuary
-  Beaver Creek
-  Musselshell Creek
-  King Creek
-  Gatlin Creek
-  Clubfoot Creek
-  Mortons Mill Pond
-  West Prong Mortons Mill Pond
-  Gulden Creek
-  Mitchell Creek
-  Big Branch
-  Long Creek
-  Dawson Creek
-  Fork Run
-  Courts Creek
-  Jerry Bay
-  Godfrey Creek

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-  Adams Creek Canal
-  Isaac Creek
-  Back Creek
-  Kearney Creek
-  Kellum Creek
-  Cedar Creek
-  Cullie Creek
-  Jonaquin Creek
-  Dumpling Creek
-  Delamar Creek
-  Adams Creek
-  Whittaker Creek
-  Pierce Creek
-  Bright Creek
-  Pasture Creek
-  Orchard Creek
-  West Fork South River
-  Eastman Creek
-  Little Creek
-  Royal Creek
-  Coffee Creek
-  Dixon Creek
-  Old House Creek
-  Mulberry Creek
-  Big Creek
-  Hardy Creek
-  East Fork South River
-  Miry Gut
-  Elisha Creek
-  Duck Creek
-  Buck Creek
-  Doe Creek
-  Southwest Creek
-  South River
-  Ship Creek
-  Green Creek
-  Gideon Creek
-  Brown Creek
-  Spice Creek
-  Coffee Creek
-  Tar Creek
-  Pasture Creek
-  Parris Creek
-  Burton Creek
-  Pittman Creek

- ✚ Broad Creek
- ✚ Pamlico Sound
- ✚ Golden Creek
- ✚ West Thorofare Bay
- ✚ Cedar Island Bay
- ✚ Bay River
- ✚ Harper Creek
- ✚ Tempe Gut
- ✚ Moore Creek
- ✚ Chappel Creek
- ✚ Newton Creek
- ✚ Simpson Creek
- ✚ Pasture Creek
- ✚ Ball Creek
- ✚ Bennett Creek
- ✚ Win Creek
- ✚ Plum Creek
- ✚ Riggs Creek
- ✚ Bear Creek
- ✚ Bills Creek
- ✚ Jones Bay
- ✚ Adams Creek Canal

Chronic Wastewater Malfunction

Due to the lack of a centralized sewer service in Craven County, there are no specific areas where there are chronic failures. There are limited instances where due to the age of individual septic systems there are isolated failures that exist but not on a widespread environmentally threatening scale.

Historic Sites & Archeological Resources

There are 57 properties and four historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Craven County. Most of these properties are found in or near New Bern and include many private residences, schools, churches, the Masonic Temple and Theater, and the Municipal Building. A Multiple Property Listing project resulted in the nomination of five African American churches in 1997. A complete listing of the properties is provided below.

Craven County is home to archaeological resources that reflect its historic and prehistoric past, though specific site locations are kept confidential to protect them. Acknowledging their presence can support land use planning and tourism, and a statement about their significance may be requested from the NC Office of State Archaeology.

Craven County Historic Properties. Image Source: NC State Historic Preservation Office (HPOWEB 2.0).



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Table 33. Craven County Historic Properties

Property	Location	Listed
Attmore-Oliver House	New Bern	1/20/1972
Baxter Clock	New Bern	7/2/1973
Bellair	New Bern	8/25/1972
Blades House	New Bern	1/14/1972
Bryan House and Office	New Bern	3/24/1972
Cedar Grove Cemetery	New Bern	12/5/1972
Centenary Methodist Church	New Bern	9/11/1972
Central Elementary School	New Bern	1/20/1972
Christ Episcopal Church and Parish House	New Bern	4/13/1972
Clear Springs Plantation	Jasper vicinity	3/14/1973
Coor-Bishop House	New Bern	11/9/1972
First Baptist Church	New Bern	3/24/1972
Scientist First Church of Christ	New Bern	10/2/1973
First Presbyterian Church and Churchyard	New Bern	2/1/1972
Gull Harbor	New Bern	8/14/1973
Harvey Mansion	New Bern	3/16/1972
Hawks House	New Bern	3/16/1972
William Hollister House	New Bern	6/30/1972
Thomas Jerkins House	New Bern	10/18/1972
Jones-Jarvis House	New Bern	4/11/1973
Ulysses S. Mace House	New Bern	6/4/1973
Masonic Temple and Theater	New Bern	3/16/1972
Tisdale-Jones House	New Bern	4/25/1972
New Bern Historic District	New Bern	6/19/1973
New Bern Municipal Building	New Bern	6/4/1973
Rhem-Waldrop House	New Bern	10/18/1972
Saint Paul's Roman Catholic Church	New Bern	3/24/1972
Simpson-Oaksmith-Patterson House	New Bern	3/24/1972
Slover-Bradham House	New Bern	4/11/1973
Eli Smallwood House	New Bern	12/5/1972
Benjamin Smith House	New Bern	4/13/1972
Smith-Whitford House	New Bern	4/13/1972
Edward R. Stanly House	New Bern	3/24/1972
John Wright Stanly House	New Bern	2/26/1970
Stevenson House	New Bern	2/26/1970
Isaac Taylor House	New Bern	12/27/1972
York-Gordon House	New Bern	6/18/1973
Jerkins-Duffy House	New Bern	3/17/1988
Dr. Earl S. Sloan House	New Bern	8/14/1986
Riverside Historic District	New Bern	2/9/1988
Ghent Historic District	New Bern	3/17/1988
Ebenezer Presbyterian Church	New Bern	6/30/1997
Cedar Street Recreation Center	New Bern	8/21/2003
First Missionary Baptist Church	New Bern	6/30/1997



Property	Location	Listed
Rue Chapel AME Church	New Bern	6/30/1997
Isaac H. Smith Jr. House	New Bern	9/14/2002
Saint Peter's AME Zion Church	New Bern	6/30/1997
St. John's Missionary Baptist Church	New Bern	6/30/1997
New Bern National Cemetery	New Bern	1/31/1997
Mount Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church	James City	3/1/2007
New Bern Battlefield Site	New Bern	10/15/2001
J.T. Barber School	New Bern	12/20/2006
DeGraffenried Park Historic District	New Bern	8/9/2006
New Bern Historic District Boundary Increase II	New Bern	1/5/2016
<i>Source: National Register of Historic Places</i>		

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CHAPTER 8: RESILIENT ECONOMY

Introduction

Craven County boasts a diverse economy that includes many types of thriving industries, such as agriculture, commercial, industrial, health care, military, and tourism industries. The Craven 100 Alliance (C1A) is the primary force in driving interests for economic development in the County. Comprised of members and investment from the private sector in addition to joint efforts from the City of New Bern, City of Havelock, and Craven County, C1A is actively working to achieve both short- and long-term success for the County and its citizens.

Craven County's future is poised to attract heightened interest from businesses both locally and beyond state borders, drawn by the county's numerous geographic and infrastructural benefits. Craven County takes pride in its well-prepared workforce, thanks to the exceptional efforts of Craven Community College in cultivating future professionals highly skilled in their respective trades and expertise.

Jobs & Economy

County & Municipal Household Income

Based on the 2022 ACS estimates, Craven County is home to approximately 41,004 households, with a median income of \$61,676. The County's median income is 7.3% lower than the North Carolina median income of \$66,186. Most households fall within the \$50,000-\$74,999 income range, followed by a significant number in the \$100,000-\$149,999 bracket. Approximately 41% of Craven County households earn less than \$50,000.

According to the 2022 ACS estimates, 14.0% of Craven County's population lives below the poverty level, a figure that is only marginally higher than the 13.3% estimated for North Carolina as a whole. The Census officially determines poverty based on a set of money income thresholds that vary by family and size. If the family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty. The thresholds are updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index. When determining income, money income before taxes is considered without any inclusion of capital gains or noncash benefits. Of all municipalities within Craven County, only River Bend and Trent Woods have a median income that surpasses the median income for North Carolina.

Table 34. Craven County & Municipal Household Income

Household Income	Bridgeton	Cove City	Dover	Havelock	New Bern	River Bend	Trent Woods	Vanceboro	Craven County	North Carolina
<\$10,000	8.0%	2.9%	2.7%	5.4%	7.6%	4.4%	0%	8.4%	5.7%	5.1%
\$10,000-\$14,999	7.5%	2.5%	5.4%	3.2%	6.4%	0%	2.5%	5.4%	4.7%	4.3%
\$15,000-\$24,999	10.0%	2.9%	29.7%	6.5%	6.9%	5.7%	1%	19.2%	8.1%	8.1%
\$25,000-\$34,999	9.5%	23.4%	10.8%	9.1%	11.7%	9.8%	4%	11.1%	10.5%	8.5%
\$35,000-\$49,999	16.9%	17.2%	5.4%	15.4%	14.2%	10.9%	5.9%	12.1%	12.5%	12.3%
\$50,000-\$74,999	19.4%	19.3%	21.1%	23.9%	14.4%	19.4%	15.4%	10.8%	18.1%	17.3%
\$75,000-\$99,999	3.5%	13.5%	13%	14.7%	12.5%	10.3%	13.5%	13.3%	13.4%	12.9%
\$100,000-\$149,999	13.9%	17.2%	9.2%	15.7%	16.1%	31%	22%	16%	16.5%	15.9%

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Household Income	Bridgeton	Cove City	Dover	Havelock	New Bern	River Bend	Trent Woods	Vanceboro	Craven County	North Carolina
\$150,000-\$199,999	8.5%	0%	2.7%	5.1%	5.1%	5.4%	8.9%	3.7%	5.2%	7.2%
\$200,000 or more	3.0%	1.2%	0%	0.9%	5%	3.2%	26.7%	0%	5.3%	8.5%
Median Household Income	\$48,542	\$50,833	\$36,563	\$56,492	\$55,673	\$74,375	\$112,679	\$38,646	\$61,676	\$66,186

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Survey

Labor Force & Employment by Industry

Craven County's workforce consists of approximately 47,537 individuals, with an unemployment rate of just 2.6%. This figure is lower than North Carolina's state unemployment rate of 3.1%. The largest percentage of Craven County citizens work in the Educational Services, Health Care and Social Assistance category (22.13%). Manufacturing (11.61%), Retail Trade (12.98%), and Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services (11.99%) are the other leading categories within the County. With close to 50% of the population over age 16 not in the labor force, there is a large percentage of the population that will be entering the workforce within the next 5-10 years. Craven County's employment landscape is not dominated by a single industry, offering diverse opportunities for residents who are reaching the age to participate in full-time work. With improvements in transportation forecasted to occur within the next 5-10 years, dependent upon the completion of Interstate 42, certain industries such as Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities, Construction, and Manufacturing all have the potential to experience an increase in the percentage of employment. Due to its geographic location and the existence of CarolinaEast Health System, Craven County Schools, and Craven Community College, the Education Services, Health Care and Social Assistance industry should remain the top employment industry for the remainder of this plan's forecast. MCAS Cherry Point will also continue to be an important opportunity for employment and industry of significance in Craven County.

Table 35. Craven County Labor Force

Status	Craven County	North Carolina
Population 16 & older	81,130	8,454,147
Civilian Labor Force	42,311	5,188,874
Employed	40,158	5,230,146
Unemployed	2,153 (2.6%)	263,374 (3.1%)
Armed Forces	5,226	102,000
Not in Labor Force	33,773	3,163,273

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Table 36. Craven County Employment by Industry

Industry Type	Craven County	North Carolina
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining	770 (1.91%)	55,902 (1.13%)
Construction	2,096 (5.21%)	359,844 (7.30%)
Manufacturing	4,663 (11.61%)	584,894 (11.87%)
Wholesale Trade	655 (1.63%)	115,059 (2.33%)
Retail Trade	5,216 (12.98%)	562,168 (11.41%)
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	2,114 (5.26%)	255,853 (5.19%)
Information	429 (1.06%)	82,044 (1.66%)
Finance & Insurance, Real Estate and Rental Leasing	1,601 (3.98%)	340,888 (6.92%)



Industry Type	Craven County	North Carolina
Professional, Scientific, and Management, Administrative and Waste Management Services	3,357 (8.35%)	586,762 (11.91%)
Educational Services, Health Care and Social Assistance	8,888 (22.13%)	1,108,607 (22.5%)
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, Food Services	4,816 (11.99%)	433,609 (8.8%)
Other Services, except Public Administration	2,035 (5.06%)	239,127 (4.85%)
Public Administration	3,518 (8.76%)	200,743 (4.07%)

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Top Employers

Out of the 26 top employers in Craven County, nearly half are in the manufacturing industry. Craven County has two major manufacturing companies with employment that exceeds 1,000 people: Fleet Readiness Center East, which is located at MCAS Cherry Point and is an important component of the defense mission, and BSH Home Appliances Corporation, which is a site for industry leading appliance manufacturing. The majority of the largest employers in Craven County do not require their employees to have a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree. Valuable employment can be obtained for most Craven County citizens with technical training and an Associate’s degree. Craven County offers a wide variety of employment opportunities for people of all education levels and abilities; however, efforts should continuously be made to diversify the industries within the County so that one industry does not employ a significant portion of the population.

Company	Industry	Employment Range (persons)
Department of Defense	Public Administration	1,000 +
Fleet Readiness Center East	Manufacturing	1,000 +
Craven County Schools	Education	1,000 +
CarolinaEast Health System	Health Services	1,000 +
BSH Home Appliances Corporation	Manufacturing	1,000 +
Moen Incorporated	Manufacturing	1,000 +
Marine Corps Community Services	Trade, Transportation, Utilities	500-999
Craven County Government	Public Administration	500-999
Craven Community College	Education	500-999
City of New Bern Government	Public Administration	500-999
International Paper	Manufacturing	250-499
Coastal Carolina Health Care	Health Services	250-499
Hatteras Yachts	Manufacturing	250-499
Pruitthealth	Health Services	250-499
RHA Health Services	Health Services	250-499
Chatsworth Products	Manufacturing	100-249
Trader Construction	Construction	100-249
Carolina Technical Plastics	Manufacturing	100-249
Drahtzug Stein	Manufacturing	100-249
AAR	Logistics & Distribution	50-99
Aylward	Manufacturing	50-99
Urethane Innovators	Manufacturing	50-99
Tandemloc	Manufacturing	50-99
UPS	Logistics & Distribution	50-99
Wheatstone	Manufacturing	50-99
Minges Bottling Group	Beverage Distribution	50-99

Source: Craven County Economic Development

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Work Commute Patterns & Characteristics

As is the trend throughout the State of North Carolina, most of the Craven County workforce commutes to their place of employment with 79.2% of the working population traveling independently. This is most likely related to the average commute time of 20 minutes. With improved transportation routes and the ability to work from home for employment in certain industries, this number may potentially decrease over the next 10-20 years. Efforts should be made to locate housing in close proximity to employment areas and centers to decrease the commute times for Craven County residents. The majority of Craven County residents have also been able to find employment within the County which is a testament to the job opportunities that the County offers.

Table 38. Craven County Work Commute Patterns

Transportation Method	Craven County	North Carolina
Drove Alone	79.6%	75.2%
Carpool	10.1%	8.6%
Public Transit	0.2%	0.8%
Walked	1.6%	1.6%
Other	2.1%	1.4%
Work From Home	6.4%	12.4%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Table 39. Craven County Travel Time

Travel Time	Craven County	North Carolina
< 10 minutes	18.1%	12.4%
10-19 minutes	38.5%	31.1%
20-34 minutes	31%	35.9%
> 35 minutes	12.4%	20.8%
Other	2.1%	1.4%
Work From Home	6.4%	12.4%
Mean Travel Time (minutes)	20.3	25

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Table 40. Craven County Employment Location

Place of Work	Craven County	North Carolina
County of Residence	80.9%	72.4%
Outside of County	17.8%	25.2%
Outside of NC	1.2%	2.4%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Commercial Fishing

Commercial fishing has fluctuated in Craven County over the past twenty years. In commercial fishing, landings are the amount of fish that are unloaded at a dock. The highest number of landings (pounds) occurred from 2002-2006. Since 2011, landings in Craven County have experienced a consistent decline, with the average from 2016 to 2021 amounting to just 357,097 pounds. Despite this, 2021 recorded the highest dollar value for these landings since 2011, reaching \$791,718. This increase is directly linked to inflation and the effects of supply and demand changes caused by the 2019 COVID pandemic.



Table 41. Craven County Commercial Fishing Income 2002-2021

Year	Landings (Pounds)	Dollar Value
2002	873,648	\$740,739
2003	963,336	\$751,616
2004	807,392	\$515,457
2005	699,967	\$533,625
2006	712,691	\$477,929
2007	417,932	\$429,187
2008	579,851	\$604,878
2009	515,899	\$523,024
2010	614,054	\$729,869
2011	717,493	\$807,931
2012	593,407	\$608,674
2013	443,793	\$608,256
2014	389,014	\$608,256
2015	498,110	\$710,452
2016	391,139	\$518,017
2017	324,944	\$442,415
2018	389,913	\$629,376
2019	373,948	\$657,717
2020	349,559	\$678,947
2021	313,076	\$791,718

Source: NC Dept. of Commerce

Agriculture

Agriculture is on the rise in Craven County. The 2022 Census of Agriculture provides statistical results that display where Craven County stands in agricultural production on a state level and also allows us to see where the industry has grown since the 2017 Census. The number of farms in Craven County has increased by 19 and the overall number of acres as well as average farm size have experienced a slight increase. A farm is defined by the Census of Agriculture as being any land that produced and sold over \$1,000 of agricultural products. From 2017 to 2022, Craven County has seen a broad increase in production, signaling a positive outlook for the county's future, even as agricultural production and usage face growing challenges at both regional and national levels.

Table 42. Craven County Farms by Size

Acres	Number	Percent of all Farms
1 to 9	46	16%
10 to 49	76	26%
50 to 179	68	23%
180 to 499	52	18%
500 to 999	23	8%
1,000 +	27	9%

Source: USDA

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Industrial Park

The Craven County Industrial Park is located at the intersection of Clarks Road and US 70 just outside of New Bern. The park is conveniently situated near Greenville, Kinston, Jacksonville, and the Port of Morehead City, while also being within the broader metropolitan regions of Wilmington and Raleigh. The Craven County Industrial Park is served by City of New Bern water and sewer services, enhancing its appeal for new development and ensuring existing businesses within the park can operate effectively to meet their specific needs.

The industrial park is also near the Coastal Carolina Regional Airport which contributes to its potential to operate on a national level. The transportation improvements will only contribute towards the growth of the industrial park. The future land use map reflects the desire to see industry in Craven County grow as there is an industrial corridor designated around the park to contribute towards outside investment and success.



Craven County Industrial Park. Image Source: Craven County Economic Development



Infrastructure

Craven County currently has a County water system, but does not have County-wide sewer service. Infrastructure is described in greater detail in Chapter 6. From an economic standpoint, infrastructure is one of the single most important elements in creating conditions that are favorable for increased development. There are multiple state and federal grants that are designed to assist with the provision, repair, and improvement of infrastructure. Craven County will take the approach that the provision of infrastructure must be done in a responsible manner and that there is an expectation that the prospective developer will contribute towards the cost of infrastructure installation. The County will be proactive in pursuing funds for infrastructure so that the financial burden is not carried by the County or its citizens.

Development Areas

The future land use map has designated certain areas of the County that are more susceptible and appropriate for development in the future. These areas should be prioritized for certain types of infrastructure and improvement to contribute toward the general area’s overall growth. As these areas develop, the areas in the general proximity should be evaluated to determine how they may best be used to support the growth and success of the identified primary development area. Primary areas of development include the following locations.

- ✚ Highway 70 E & Trenton Road (commercial growth area)
- ✚ Highway 70 E & Tuscarora Rhems Road (commercial growth area)
- ✚ Industrial Park (industrial growth area)
- ✚ Washington Post Road (Highway 43) area in vicinity of Spring Garden Road (commercial growth area)

Tourism

Tourism is a strong contributor to Craven County’s economy and has experienced a steady increase in expenditures from 2009-2019. When the plan was adopted, data beyond 2019 was unavailable. Nevertheless, tourism has continued to flourish and grow, contributing significantly to the overall economy. Tourism in the County is largely concentrated within the City of New Bern. Based on trends, tourism is anticipated to generate close to 200 million dollars annually by 2030 in Craven County.

Table 43. Craven County Tourism Income	
Year	Expenditures (\$millions)
2009	\$99.24
2010	\$108.29
2011	\$116.29
2012	\$119.32
2013	\$120.75
2014	\$127.33
2015	\$130.55
2016	\$136.99
2017	\$142.10
2018	\$149.15
2019	\$155.61
<i>Source: NC Dept. of Commerce, Economic Impact Study</i>	

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Economic Development Activities and Strategies

Based on the growth that is anticipated in Craven County for the forecasted future, economic development pressures and opportunities will present themselves within the County. Craven County can offer development opportunities in multiple sectors that may not exist in other areas of both the region and the state. Investment in agriculture, industry, commercial development, and supporting the efforts of entrepreneurs will attract business and growth to Craven County. The County should be open to economic development strategies that make Craven County a desirable place to conduct business or take the risk associated with starting a business. Recommended activities and strategies that should produce desirable results include the following:

- ✚ Encourage processing and marketing of local agricultural commodities. Adopt an “eat local, shop local” mindset.
- ✚ Promote agritourism as well as environmental tourism.
- ✚ Provide tax incentives to businesses.
- ✚ Explore grants and loans that would assist upstart business.
- ✚ Improve all aspects of infrastructure in areas identified for future growth.
- ✚ Coordinate with Craven Community College to focus on developing a workforce that meets the immediate needs of local industry and business.



CHAPTER 9: HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Overview

Community health can have a direct impact on the quality of one’s life. While all citizens of Craven County are not of equal physical ability, all citizens should have the opportunity to participate in activities and receive convenient access to amenities and services that contribute towards a healthy life. There are several elements necessary to establish what a healthy Craven County should be.

The protection and safety of Craven County citizens contributes towards their mental and physical well-being. Public safety should be considered when making decisions. The potential impacts on one’s safety and health should be evaluated or considered prior to a decision being made. A good question for decision makers to ask should be, “Is there a way that this proposal, land use, development, or investment could be made or altered that contributes towards improving the health and safety of Craven County citizens?”

Through communication, planning, and consideration, Craven County can address health and safety while working towards a future that reflects an overall improvement in the health of the Craven County citizen. Citizens should have convenient access or adequate transportation provisions in place to receive access to healthcare, recreation, and food sources.

Craven County Baseline

To develop a strong level of awareness for certain health and safety needs within the County, it is important to compare input received from the community with existing data. Data that was evaluated includes the following sources:

- ✚ Center for Disease Control (CDC)
- ✚ NC Department of Health & Human Services
- ✚ 2021 Craven County Community Health Needs Assessment

TOP 3 QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES

1. Drugs/Alcohol (Substance Abuse)
2. Low Income/Poverty
3. Lack of Affordable Housing

Source: 2021 Craven County Community Health Needs Assessment.

The public engagement process of this plan’s development also revealed that affordable housing is still a concern of Craven County citizens. Substance abuse and poverty can be combatted through strategic land use planning, but land use planning alone will not solve these issues. A concerted effort from multiple organizations and groups within the County and region will need to be relied upon to reduce the number of individuals abusing substances. The poverty level and income will largely be dependent on the economic climate of the County. However, the County will continue to pursue investments to provide more opportunities for its citizens as well as emphasize the importance of education.

Key statistics highlighted by the Community Health Needs Assessment include the following:

- ✚ In 2018, 15% of low-income people experienced food insecurity, which means they were limited in their ability to acquire nutritionally adequate foods (The Journal of Nutrition). These people also reported not being located in proximity to a grocery store, limiting their access.
- ✚ In 2020, there were an estimated 61 deaths due to drug overdose.

9: Healthy Community

- ✚ 14.2% of the population (2019) is estimated to be without health insurance.
- ✚ The County meets the NC Institute of Medicine’s target ratio of 1 primary care provider to every 1,500 people. With many of the surrounding counties in the region not meeting this target ratio, Craven County serves as the hub for regional healthcare.
- ✚ The violent crime rate in the County increased from 2016 to 2019, with 310.9 per 100,000 people being reported for 2019. 2023 data shows that the violent crime rate has decreased to 265.4 per 100,000 people.
- ✚ The property crime rate in the County remained relatively the same showing a slight decrease from 2,605.3 per 100,000 people in 2016 to 2,586.5 per 100,000 people in 2019. However, the property crime rate has significantly decreased showing 1,544.6 per 100,000 people in 2023.
- ✚ In 2018, approximately 27.4% of Craven County adults were considered obese.
- ✚ The 2020 rate of overdose deaths in Craven County was 49 per 100,000 people and emergency department visits were 190.9 per 100,000 people. Craven County was one of the highest-ranking counties in the state and the numbers significantly rose in correspondence with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The socioeconomic factors analyzed in the Community Health Assessment closely resemble the data that was collected in the development of this plan. As identified in the Community Health Assessment, these factors can have a direct correlation with overall community health and influence health issues such as diabetes, obesity, cancer, and mental health, which ultimately have an impact on the overall quality of life.

Data reveals that most of the Craven County population has not obtained a Bachelor’s or Graduate degree. While this factor does not impact the ability of Craven County citizens to find gainful employment, educational attainment can have an impact on the overall health of the community. The health assessment emphasizes the role that education plays in the ability to make healthy choices, contribute towards the reduction of poverty, and have a positive impact on one’s mental health. Education will also often lead to job opportunities that provide increased pay and access to better health care resources and insurance provision through one’s employer.

Cancer is the leading cause of death in Craven County. From 2017 to 2022, there were an estimated 470-500 cancer cases in the County, including the following types: Cervix, Colon, Breast, Lung, Melanoma, and Prostate. In 2018, it was reported that there were 235 deaths in Craven County due to cancer. Projections indicate that in 2024 Craven County is expected to experience 657 total cases with 221 deaths. While there is no known cure for cancer, community health can contribute towards resiliency of developing cancer. The world-renowned Mayo Clinic identifies the following recommended actions, related to community health, that can lower the percent chance of developing cancer.

- ✚ Eat healthy foods (fruits & vegetables)
- ✚ Be physically active
- ✚ Get regular medical care

By understanding the current climate of community health and safety within the County, we can specifically look at key sub elements and the future role that they will play in Craven County.



Healthy Foods & Agriculture

Agriculture should play a pivotal role in Craven County's future by enhancing overall community health. This can be achieved not only by providing exciting recreational activities through agritourism but also by offering opportunities for residents to improve their physical health and learn about the value of agriculture within the county. The County should encourage and support the following types of agritourism activities to exist in the County as an avenue for recreation to provide citizens with options to improve both their physical and mental health:

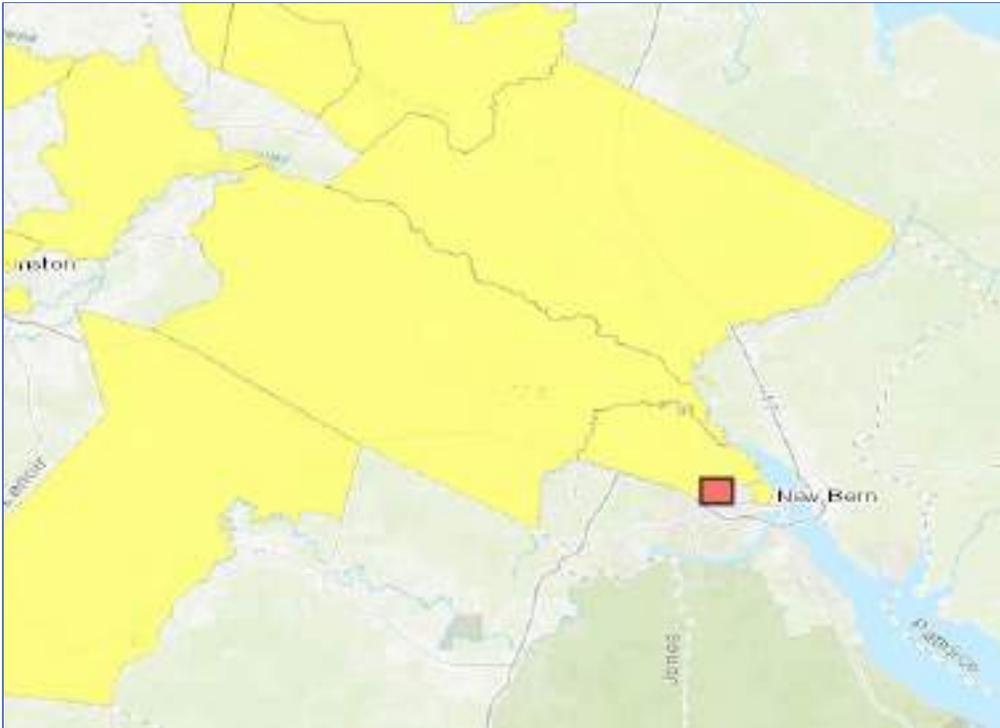
- ✚ Corn maze
- ✚ Hiking/biking in agricultural setting, farm tours
- ✚ Birdwatching
- ✚ Farm direct sales (U-Pick operation)

Citizens also experience significant benefits in overall health when they have access to fresh foods including meat, fruits, and vegetables. Major grocers and food stores within the County carry these food options; however, these types of foods are typically at a higher price point and have a shorter shelf life than processed foods. Local farms & family farms can play a major role in satisfying the needs of County citizens by providing produce at farmers markets and pop-up retail sites. Buying healthy food from local sources will support agriculture within the County and should also be a more affordable option, rather than purchasing at a major food store.

Some residents may have limited transportation options that impact their ability to travel to major food stores or to local farmers markets. Other residents may also live in isolated parts of the County where trips to local and major food stores require them to travel a significant distance. The County should support policies and programs that allow its citizens to establish community gardens as well as other community groups focused on improving access to quality foods. Farmers markets should be encouraged to operate throughout the County. Craven Area Rural Transit System (CARTS) provides transportation for elderly and disabled members of Craven County who may utilize the service for nutritional purposes. CARTS should evaluate the services provided and explore ways in which they can help meet the need to have access to healthy foods through the transportation services that they provide.

The western parts of Craven County are rich in agriculture but are limited in access to food stores and grocers due to the distance that is required to travel to access these services. These areas should receive priority for land use decisions such as farmers market set up and should be considered by new grocers and food stores when locating in the County in order to meet this need. United States Department of Agriculture data indicates that there are large portions of western Craven County in which census tracts report that there are more than 100 households with no access to a vehicle and that are more than ½ mile from the nearest supermarket, with some share of residents being more than 20 miles from the nearest supermarket. This area of the County also has multiple tracts reporting a poverty rate of 20% or higher for the respective tract and a median family income that is less than 80% of the NC median annual income. The limited income and distance from markets and fresh nutritional food sources places citizens in situations where they may be forced to purchase processed foods with longer shelf lives which lack the nutritional value that is needed.

9: Healthy Community

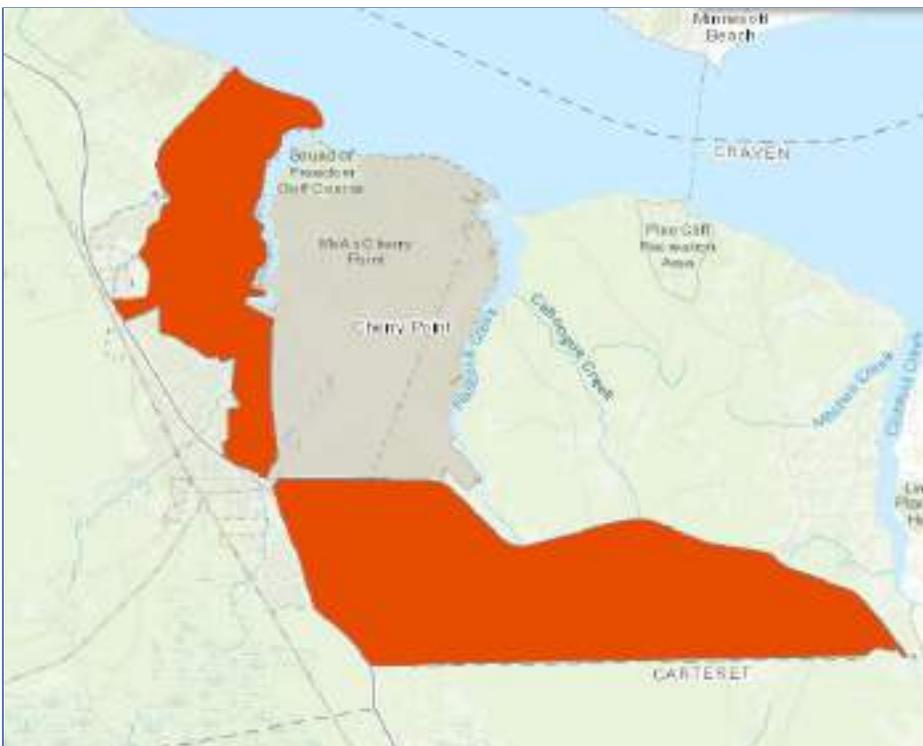


Low Income & Low Access Tract Using Vehicle Access (2019)

NOTE: Highlighted areas delineate impacted census tracts.

Image Source: USDA Food Access Research Atlas.

The USDA defines a food desert as being a census tract that has a poverty rate of at least 20% with 33% of the residents living more than 1 mile away from a supermarket in urban areas and 10 miles away in rural areas. While none of the western areas of the County qualify as being a food desert, this area does have multiple census tracts which classify it as low income and low vehicle access. Concerted efforts should be made in this area to improve access so that this does not one day become a food desert. The southern portion of the County, around Havelock, contains areas identified as low income with low vehicle access that has at least 33% of the census tract that does not live within 1 mile of a supermarket.



Low Income & Low Access 1-Mile Urban (2019)

NOTE: Highlighted areas delineate impacted census tracts.

Image Source: USDA Food Access Research Atlas.

Public Safety

Arguably the most important part of achieving a healthy Craven County is the citizens' ability to feel safe within their community. The citizens provided overwhelmingly positive feedback with their overall satisfaction for Craven County Emergency Services. Craven County Emergency Services in partnership with the Craven County Sheriff's Department and Craven County municipalities consist of the following types of service:

- ✚ Fire Service
- ✚ Law Enforcement
- ✚ Emergency Medical Services
- ✚ E-911
- ✚ Emergency Preparedness and Response

These services frequently intersect, making ongoing communication and planning essential. This ensures that, in responding to unforeseen and unfortunate events, the citizens of Craven County remain safe and can continue to enjoy an exceptional quality of life. These departments should be included in future planning and land use decisions so that both Craven County and its citizens can remain confident that an adequate level of service exists or will be provided for the proposed development or land use.

Citizens have the opportunity to receive notifications through the use of "X" formerly known as "Twitter" as well as CodeRED, a service used to make time specific announcements related to events such as hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, hazardous materials and biological incidents. The use of virtual communication and innovative ways to reach the citizens of the County and raise awareness will be critical for Craven County as it continuously works towards maintaining safety for its residents in the future.

Fire Service

Residents of the County receive service for fire related incidents from one of the following 12 volunteer departments:

- ✚ Cove City
- ✚ Dover
- ✚ Fort Barnwell
- ✚ Harlowe
- ✚ Little Swift Creek
- ✚ Number 7 Township
- ✚ Number 9 Township
- ✚ Rhems
- ✚ Township Six
- ✚ Tri-Community
- ✚ Vanceboro
- ✚ West of New Bern

West of New Bern Volunteer Fire Department. Image Source: Insight P&D.



There are also mutual aid agreements in existence with the City of Havelock and City of New Bern for fire events.

9: Healthy Community

Sheriff's Department

The Craven County Sheriff's Department is responsible for promoting public safety in the County. The department provides the following services:

- ✚ Patrolling unincorporated areas and areas not covered by municipal police forces.
- ✚ Enforcing legal judgements, such as foreclosures, repossessions, and tax delinquencies.
- ✚ Managing county jails and overseeing inmates.
- ✚ Providing community services, such as fingerprinting and handling concealed carry permit applications.



Emergency Medical Services

Emergency Medical Services is a partnership between the County and 8 Emergency Medical Service providers and 4 private providers. These services are provided county-wide through the following providers:

- ✚ Bridgeton EMS
- ✚ CarolinaEast Medical EMS
- ✚ City of Havelock Fire & Rescue
- ✚ Cove City EMS, Inc.
- ✚ Fort Barnwell Rescue Squad
- ✚ New Bern-Craven County Rescue Squad
- ✚ Township Seven EMS
- ✚ Vanceboro Rescue Squad
- ✚ Coastal Medical Transport
- ✚ Friendly Medical Transportation
- ✚ Rhems Volunteer Fire Department
- ✚ Weyerhauser
- ✚ City of New Bern Fire & Rescue



E-911

The Craven Communications Center provides 24-hour telecommunications operations serving the County and the towns of Bridgeton, Vanceboro, Trent Woods, and River Bend. It is also available to back up the cities of New Bern and Havelock, if needed. It also serves as the County's warning point and receives all severe weather warnings and other emergency communications for dissemination to appropriate officials and departments.

Emergency Preparedness & Response

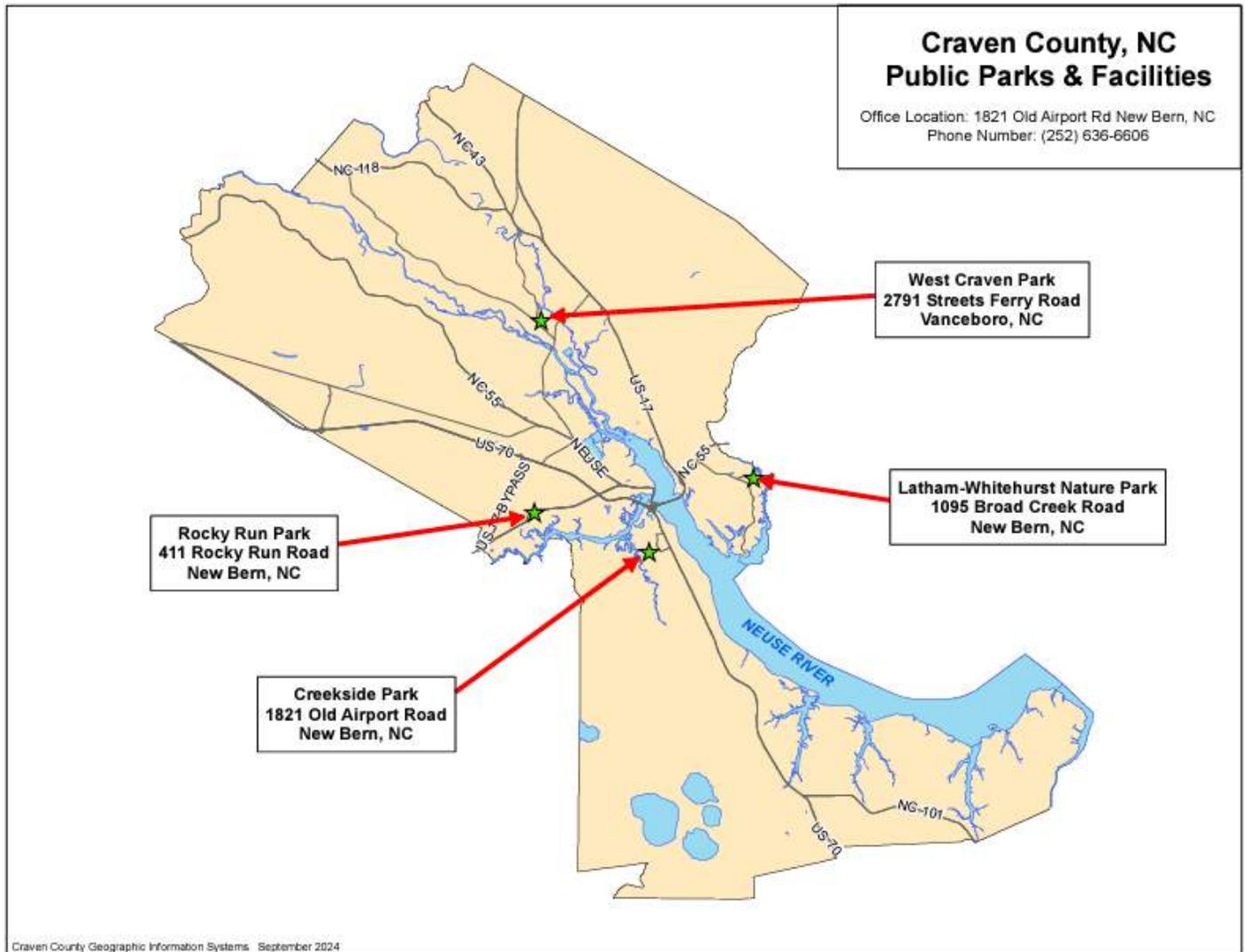
Craven County collaborates with the NC Department of Emergency Management to ensure preparedness and effective response capabilities for major events that may cause widespread or minor damage and catastrophe.



Recreation

Craven County provides a range of recreational activities and areas for both citizens and visitors to enjoy and engage in throughout the region. Recreational amenities and areas provide significant value to the community by enhancing access and opportunities for health improvements and social interaction. The four parks owned and operated by Craven County are located throughout the county and consist of the following:

- ✚ Creekside Park
- ✚ Rocky Run Park
- ✚ West Craven Park
- ✚ Latham-Whitehurst Nature Park



9: Healthy Community

Creekside Park

Creekside Park consists of 111 acres and provides CAMA public water access to Brice's Creek. It boasts the most extensive amenities and is the largest and most frequented park in the County, primarily due to its central location and proximity to densely populated residential areas. The amenities at Creekside Park include the following:

- Picnic shelters & gazebos
- Playgrounds (one being inclusive for handicap use)
- Soccer fields
- Beach volleyball courts
- Outdoor fitness equipment
- Walking track and nature trails
- Tennis & pickleball courts
- Youth baseball & softball fields
- Adult softball/baseball/kickball fields
- Disc golf course
- Bocce courts
- Dock with fishing areas and canoe/kayak landings



Due to the wide availability of amenities provided, Creekside Park should continue to meet many of the recreational needs of Craven County citizens in the future. Development should be encouraged to occur in proximity to Creekside Park so that citizens have convenient access to the activities the park provides.

Rocky Run Park

Rocky Run Park consists of 5 acres and functions as a more traditional park, offering extensive open space but fewer amenities compared to other parks in the County. The amenities at Rocky Run Park include the following:

- ✚ Playground
- ✚ Picnic shelter
- ✚ Basketball court

Rocky Run Park has the potential to become a more inclusive space for all age groups and ability levels, offering amenities on a smaller scale compared to other parks in the County. It should be evaluated for upgrades within the next 5-10 years to ensure it continues to be frequently used and meets the recreational needs of Craven County, preventing it from becoming an underutilized area.

West Craven Park

West Craven Park covers 90 acres and mainly serves as a venue for athletic activities and competitions. It is the only park in the western region of Craven County and is situated a considerable distance from the centrally located parks. Residents in the western part of Craven County depend on West Craven Park to provide ample recreational opportunities, reducing the need for long commutes to other parks like Creekside Park. The amenities at West Craven Park include the following:

- Youth baseball fields
- Adult baseball field
- Football/soccer fields
- Playground & shelter
- Tennis courts
- Beach volleyball courts
- Outdoor exercise equipment & walking trail



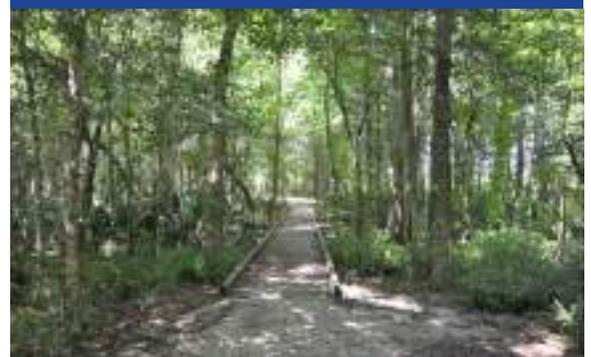
West Craven Park will remain the primary park for residents in the western region of Craven County over the forecasted planning future. The County should encourage residential development in proximity to West Craven Park and continuously evaluate the use and future needs of the park.

Latham-Whitehurst Nature Park

Latham-Whitehurst Nature Park is comprised of 133 acres and includes natural areas, wetlands, and other valuable coastal lands that have been preserved for public enjoyment and recreation. This park is in central Craven County along Upper Broad Creek, a tributary of the Neuse River. The park includes the following amenities:

- ✚ Multiple walking trails
- ✚ Boardwalk pier with observation areas, fishing, and canoe/kayak landings
- ✚ Picnic shelters

Latham-Whitehurst Nature Park serves as an excellent outlet for educational opportunities and passive recreation. As the only park of its specific type in Craven County, it plays a vital role and should not be developed for other types of recreation. Improvements to the park should focus on making it more accessible for all ages and providing multi-use paths.



Latham-Whitehurst Nature Park.
Image Source: Craven County Recreation & Parks.

9: Healthy Community

Parks Future Outlook

Craven County is at a recreational advantage when considering the types of parks that exist within the County and the unique and specialized amenities provided in each. There are few counties in eastern North Carolina and the region that offer the variety of recreational parks that Craven County does. While the parks identified are currently owned and operated by the County, there are other areas within the County in which recreational areas are deficient, or people in isolated areas cannot conveniently access these excellent recreational opportunities. Future recreational plans should include the County working to improve access and transportation to these existing parks as well as offering support and guidance to privately owned parks who may lack funding or organizational structure to improve these areas. Parks or recreational areas under private ownership are encouraged to work with the County or dedicate such land and facilities to the County in order to pursue State or Federal funding to improve the areas. The County may need to invest in the provision of recreational facilities in the western and southern regions of the County if there are significant population increases in these areas in the future. The citizens of the County should also be allowed to provide feedback on the existing facilities so that the County can remain confident they are performing at the most effective capacity based on citizen needs.

Recreation Types & Organizations

Craven County provides a variety of recreational opportunities and organizations to its citizens and support from multiple organizations makes this possible. Future plans should include evaluating the need for or effectiveness of each type of recreation and identifying ways to provide new recreational opportunities that meets the needs of all citizens. Low participation should not lead to the elimination of a particular league or recreation type. Instead, it should be viewed as an opportunity to assess how the league or activity can be adapted to better meet the needs of County citizens. Recreation types include the following:

- ✚ Youth Basketball
- ✚ Adult Kickball
- ✚ Adult Softball
- ✚ Youth Baseball
- ✚ Youth Soccer
- ✚ Youth Football
- ✚ Youth Lacrosse
- ✚ Youth Softball
- ✚ Adult Flag Football
- ✚ Youth Volleyball

Recreational organizations in the County include the following:

- ✚ Babe Ruth League
- ✚ Special Needs Baseball League
- ✚ Coastal United Soccer Association
- ✚ New Bern Sunday School League
- ✚ New Bern Bruins Youth Lacrosse
- ✚ Craven Jaguars Youth Football League
- ✚ West Craven Youth Football League
- ✚ Twin Rivers Paddle Club
- ✚ Craven Chains Disc Golf
- ✚ Twin Rivers Little League Softball



Special Olympics Craven County

Craven County has been committed to offering the Special Olympics to its citizens for over 40 years. Special Olympics Craven County operates in partnership with Special Olympics North Carolina and provides activities for individuals with disabilities to compete and interact with the community. The Special Olympics offers the following types of activities:

- ✚ Bocce (Team Sport)
- ✚ Aquatics (Team Sport)
- ✚ Basketball (Team Sport)
- ✚ Equestrian (Team Sport)
- ✚ Track & Field
- ✚ Basketball Skills



Neuse River Senior Games & Silver Arts

Craven County remains dedicated to offering recreational activities for individuals of all abilities and ages by hosting the Neuse River Senior Games & Silver Arts. These events are open to anyone aged 50 and older, welcoming not only Craven County residents but also those from other counties in the region. As a recreational hub for seniors, Craven County should continue to support these initiatives in the future. A wide range of recreational and athletic activities are available at these annual events.

Achieving Health & Safety: Design and Land Use

Craven County can make concerted efforts to improve and preserve health in its communities through land use decisions, development approvals, and by requiring certain features and design in new proposed uses and development. Health and safety can go beyond the activities that we participate in and the foods that we eat. Craven County should take the necessary steps to ensure that both short term and long-range planning decisions are made to ensure that communities are being designed to support healthy living. Communities should be located in areas that are not detrimental to human health, nor should they be detrimental to the existing uses within the County and region. Understanding where environmental hazards and noxious uses exist will benefit both the continued existence of the use as well as the overall health of the prospective community.

Land Assessment

While there is general knowledge in the County of how properties have been historically utilized through tax records and individuals who are familiar with the area, an Environmental Assessment can be utilized to determine if there are any potential brownfield sites, which are sites that contain hazardous substances, contaminants or pollutants that are present on the land but may not be apparent or visible with the naked eye. Identifying the locations of brownfields and certain types of industrial uses, including future planned industrial activities that could release harmful chemicals or pollutants into the atmosphere, is crucial when working towards a healthy future for the citizens of Craven County. Brownfield redevelopment is a viable option only when existing contaminants have been removed, and the land is in a safe condition for human occupancy. These types of land use should not be discouraged, as they provide job opportunities and are necessary for certain industries. However, their locations and the impacts they present should be carefully considered when permitting for development to take place.

9: Healthy Community

The future land use map has been designed to allocate sufficient areas away from potential conflict zones, primarily due to existing manufacturing and industrial activities. Development in these health-impacting areas should be discouraged. However, when development is unavoidable, it should incorporate buffers and other mitigating features to minimize negative health effects.

Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point

MCAS Cherry Point's impact and significance extend beyond Craven County, influencing the entire eastern region of North Carolina. The operation of MCAS Cherry Point is heavily dependent upon its ability to navigate the airspace with zero impact from land use within the vicinity of the installation. MCAS Cherry Point must have confidence that land under its ownership and associated easements are not threatened by certain types of residential and commercial development. To ensure this, there are adopted overlay districts and ordinances designed for the protection of both the mission of MCAS Cherry Point as well as to protect the health and quality of life for Craven County citizens from the activities that take place on and around MCAS Cherry Point. The adopted overlays and ordinances include the following:

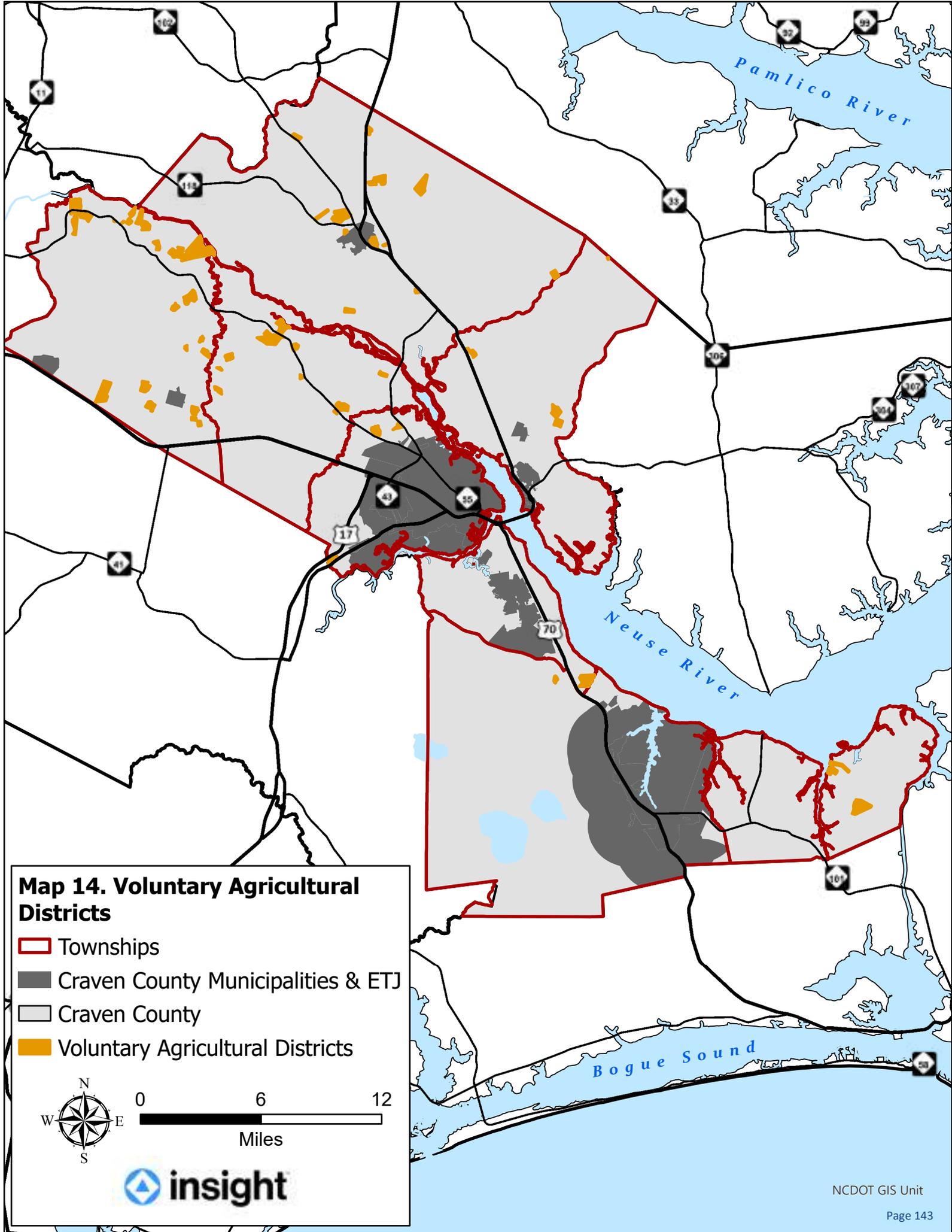
- ✚ Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station Zoning Ordinance
- ✚ AICUZ (Air Installations Compatible Use Zones)

Land use is also regulated adjacent to the Coastal Carolina Regional Airport for the purpose of protecting the health and safety of Craven County citizens. It will be important for Craven County to continuously evaluate proposals of land use adjacent to MCAS Cherry Point as well as Coastal Carolina Regional Airport to ensure that the proposed development and use will protect the health of its citizens but not threaten the existing operation.

Agricultural Land Use

Living in an agricultural setting can provide many benefits to one's physical and mental health. The improved air quality found outside of urban settings paired with low impact development and the natural environment of Craven County proves desirable to many residents. Health benefits are also associated with living in agricultural settings by the potential that exists to be closer to fresh meat and produce. Craven County takes pride in its agricultural industry and welcomes citizens to reside in agricultural areas. However, there are certain agricultural uses that have been in existence and are well established for many generations. These uses should not be infringed upon by development that does not appreciate or recognize its existence. These uses shall also not be infringed upon by developments that may try to claim that their health is affected by existing land uses within an agricultural setting. There are appropriate areas for residential development in agricultural settings in which citizens can reap the health benefits of living in non-urbanized areas and agriculture is allowed to continue its overall success and normal function. Development in agricultural settings should emphasize the preservation of croplands, open space, human interaction with nature, minimal lot sizes, walkability, and opportunities for citizens to interact with both agriculture and the natural environment. Mitigation through buffers and distance separation may be necessary to protect existing agricultural land use.

Health benefits may also result from the education and awareness of agricultural practice that has the potential of resulting from residing within the agricultural areas of the County.



Map 14. Voluntary Agricultural Districts

- Townships
- Craven County Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County
- Voluntary Agricultural Districts



9: Healthy Community

Design for Health

Health improvements within the County can also be achieved through the requirement of certain design standards and the encouragement of certain development types. Encouraging certain types of development to occur in proximity to residential development can result in the improvement of the overall health of the County as a whole. The location of medical services and clinics should be easily accessible by existing neighborhoods. The ability to achieve quality and expeditious health care from the convenience of one's neighborhood increases the likelihood that people will regularly receive medical care. Commercial developments as well as large office parks and other industrial uses should provide walking tracks, open space, and outdoor congregational areas. Structural design is encouraged to provide windows and other articulating features that welcome light into the structure as well as include any types of features that improve or maintain a healthy air quality. Landscaping and green space also can aid in improving the overall appearance and benefit the mental health of both employees and County citizens.

Land use types which sell materials or goods which could be harmful to children should not be permitted to establish themselves within a prescribed distance of schools. Tobacco vape shops, ABC stores, and other similar types that utilize marketing to take advantage of youth should not be allowed to conveniently exist in close proximity to the children of Craven County and threaten their health.

Residential developments should be required to provide an appropriate amount of open space, multi-use paths, recreation, or other types of amenity that caters towards community activity and interaction. The provision of sidewalks within neighborhoods should encourage citizens to become more active and enjoy the community that they reside in. Utilizing multi-use paths and greenways is a practical way to connect neighborhoods and to provide citizens with the opportunity to improve their health while interacting with the natural environment. Safety can be improved within neighborhoods by encouraging developers to provide alternative means of emergency access as well as traffic mitigation techniques designed to slow traffic and make the streets and adjacent sidewalks safer to utilize. Safety can also be achieved by encouraging developers to utilize elements of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) such as lighting, landscaping, access management, and strategic location of units so that site lines remain open.

Conclusion

The well-being of the County's citizens will always be a top priority. As Craven County grows and attracts new interest over the next 20 years, the health and safety of its residents should remain central to discussions. While each citizen has the freedom to choose how they live and what activities they participate in, Craven County wants them to be confident that their health, safety, and recreational needs will be planned for. This ensures that the exceptional opportunities within the County continue to thrive and expand in the future.

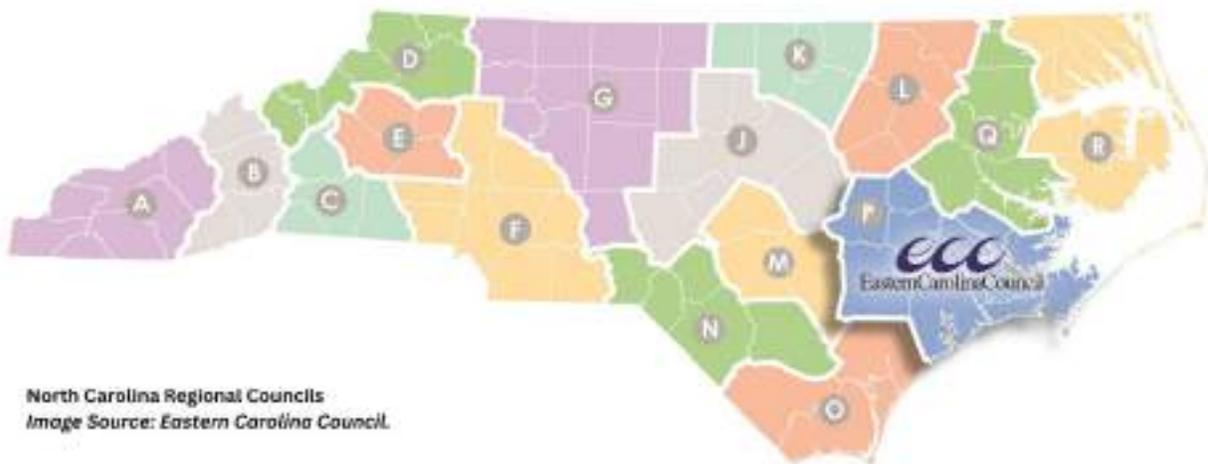
CHAPTER 10: REGIONAL ROLE AND RELATIONSHIP

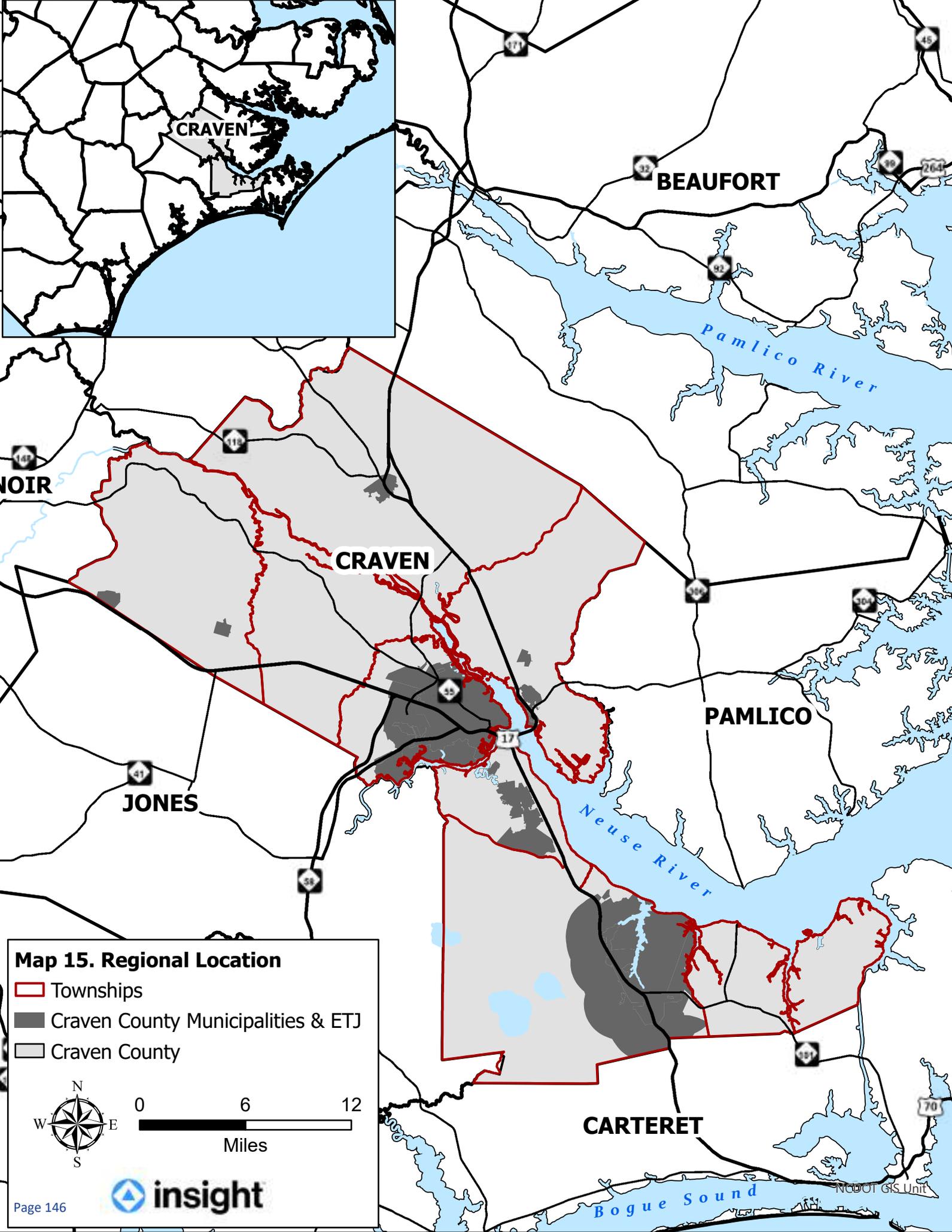
Regional Location

Craven County is located within a relatively central location in eastern North Carolina, which is traditionally considered land located east of Interstate 95. The County is located approximately eighty miles east of Raleigh, the state capital. Map 15 provides the regional location. The County's major waterway is the Neuse River which joins the Pamlico Sound just east of New Bern. Major highways bisecting the County include US 17 (north-south route) and US 70 (east-west route). The southern boundary of the County is only 13 miles from the Atlantic Ocean. The County is home to the United States Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point which gives the County regional, national, and international significance. Craven County's immediate subregion consists of the following counties:

- Carteret
- Duplin
- Greene
- Jones
- Lenoir
- Pamlico
- Onslow
- Wayne

These counties are also members of the Eastern Carolina Council (ECC), a multi-county, local government, planning and development organization. ECC is a conduit between local governments in the region and state/federal partners. Craven County brings value to this regional organization and should support regional planning efforts and recognize the value of regional communication.





Map 15. Regional Location

- Townships
- Craven County Municipalities & ETJ
- Craven County



Regional Coordination

Traditionally, the counties within eastern North Carolina have not been considered for certain developments or investments. This fact is due in part to most counties within the region, specifically within the subregion that Craven County belongs to, lacking the infrastructure and resources that are required to compete and attract certain development and investments. It can be a challenge for counties to compete on an individual basis for certain grants and economic development opportunities. Craven County provides the region with a significant military presence, industry, agriculture, and job opportunities. With a vast amount of land with potential for development, Craven County is poised to compete at a regional and subregional level for commercial and industrial development, provided that strategic investments and planning occurs. Craven County should also use these strengths to compete in partnership with the surrounding counties on certain projects and development initiatives when it is determined to be beneficial for the region as a whole.

Craven County is arguably the most ideal location for certain types of industry to be established within eastern North Carolina due to its proximity to the State Port in Morehead City as well as the general demographic and skilled workforce within the County. The Interstate 42 project will fuel development within Craven County and the region. Also, eastern North Carolina counties and other government entities are now in the process of advocating for major improvements to the Hwy 17 / Hwy 64 corridor. Craven County's ability to effectively communicate with other counties within its subregion will benefit both the County and the subregion in the ability to attract desirable investments and development.

Communication and coordination within the region will also allow for the member counties to both compete against each other and work as a team when necessary to attract investments in this specific subregion of eastern North Carolina. Communication will allow for Craven County to be aware of the specific needs of other counties and how Craven County may be able to assist in meeting these needs, whether it be additional housing to support jobs within the region or mutual aid agreements for certain types of assistance in disaster or special needs scenarios.

Being one of the larger counties within the region in addition to other supporting factors, it is likely that Craven County will be relied upon to provide many job opportunities for both the citizens of Craven County as well as those who inhabit counties in their immediate subregion. Craven, Lenoir, and Wayne counties are all located along the Interstate 42 corridor, where development pressures are likely to be concentrated due to the opportunities that improved transportation routes present. The counties should work together and holistically examine the benefits on a regional scale when pursuing certain types of economic development interests. By establishing this level of communication, each county within the region can understand the role that they play and the specific strengths and benefits that they offer as opposed to other counties in the subregion. Craven County's commitment to teamwork on a regional and subregional basis will benefit its citizens.

“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.”

~Helen Keller



10: Regional Role and Relationship

Regional Reliance

Craven County is relied on in the following ways within its immediate subregion:

Major Employer

- Craven County is a major employer in the region: Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, Fleet Readiness Center East, Carolina East Health System, BSH Home Appliances, Moen Incorporated.

Agriculture

- Craven County has a deep connection and history of agriculture that serves the subregion and links it to other agricultural communities.

Recreation

- Craven County offers recreational opportunities and water access that other counties in its subregion do not have the ability to provide.
- Craven County will continue to welcome members from other counties to enjoy the recreational amenities that exist.

Transportation

- Craven County provides direct and most efficient connection to Carteret County which includes the State Port and is a popular destination for tourism.
- Craven County also links the North Carolina Global Transpark to the State Port. The transportation route that exists between the North Carolina Global Transpark and Craven County opens the possibility for investment and economic development within the County that would serve potential future needs of the Transpark.

Craven County will continue to be relied upon in all the identified areas in the future. A commitment to improving on and supporting investment in these elements will continue to drive the success of eastern North Carolina.

Craven County also serves the role of supporting its municipalities, especially those with limited resources and should remain open to assistance when feasible.



Regional Planning & Opportunities

Craven County participates in multiple regional planning efforts that have officially adopted plans as well as regular membership meetings with the Eastern Carolina Council to collaborate and support the other units of local government within the subregion and their planning initiatives. The regional planning efforts Craven County is associated with includes the following:

-  Eastern Carolina RPO
-  North Carolina Farm Bureau Regional efforts
-  Eastern Carolina Council
-  Pamlico Sound Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

Opportunities for regional planning that Craven County should pursue in a leadership or supporting role include the following:

-  Development of a regional economic development commission
-  Development of a Regional Plan (Comprehensive Land Use Plan)

A key step in moving forward as a region would be through the development of a Regional Plan that addresses the regional environment, population projections, land use within the region, and goals and strategies that would best serve the region and its citizens. Craven County should pursue the development of this plan and recognize the advantages to the County and region that would result from this effort. Similar to the regional hazard mitigation plan, this regional plan could serve as a foundation for initiatives and other planning ventures so that the entire subregion is aware of a common shared vision in its planning, land use, and financial decisions. A regional planning effort could also serve the role of improving relationships and equip the member counties with an advantage in attracting jobs and housing while also informing widespread policy that contributes towards environmental preservation and health.

Craven County is already meeting with counties within its subregion on a regular basis. The next step is forming an official subregional committee, planning group, or task force and building upon the relationships and maximizing opportunity for all.

10: Regional Role and Relationship

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CHAPTER 11: TOOLS FOR MANAGING DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

To provide the citizens of Craven County with a future that reflects the contents of this plan, the Craven County Board of Commissioners as well as County staff should periodically review the contents of this plan and perform a progress analysis on the identified implementation schedule included in this chapter. There should be frequent discussions of the contents of this plan and the Board of Commissioners should determine which implementation actions that the employees of Craven County should be pursuing. For actions that the Board of Commissioners are the primary responsible party, they should be having discussions and strategy meetings to determine their progress and the estimated completion date of the identified actions. This chapter will provide actions for policy and give estimated timelines, and which party should be involved in implementing the action. The indicated responsible party does not have to be the party that pursues implementation of the action, the Board of Commissioners or Craven County Manager may determine that another party is more equipped to achieve implementation. The responsible parties listed in this chapter are recommendations only.

Existing Development Program

The following provides a list of the existing regulations and advisory documents for Craven County, as well as other State of North Carolina regulations, which are enforced by the County as of November 2024.

- ✚ Subdivision Ordinance
- ✚ Code of Ordinances
- ✚ Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance
- ✚ Shooting Range Facilities Ordinance
- ✚ Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station Zoning Ordinance
- ✚ Coastal Carolina Regional Airport Zoning Ordinance
- ✚ Stormwater Ordinance
- ✚ Tall Structures Ordinance
- ✚ Regulation of the Operation and Maintenance of Solar Facilities
- ✚ Manufactured Homes and Trailers Regulations
- ✚ Sign Regulations
- ✚ Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan
- ✚ Cherry Point Regional Joint Land Use Study
- ✚ Craven County Comprehensive Transportation Plan
- ✚ North Carolina State Building & Electrical Code Regulations
- ✚ North Carolina State Stormwater Regulations
- ✚ North Carolina State Sediment and Erosion Control Regulations
- ✚ Coastal Area Management Act
- ✚ National Flood Insurance Program
- ✚ Section 404 Wetland Regulations
- ✚ Pamlico Sound Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

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Future amendments to the regulations and advisory documents listed above should be conducted in a manner that takes into consideration the recommendations and actions listed in this plan. Craven County should review the above-listed documents as well as this plan when making recommendations and decisions on proposed land usage and development. The Board of Commissioners and Planning Board should also refer to these documents for guidance to ensure that the best development practices are being followed. The existing structure within Craven County for determining development decisions and approval is as follows.

Planning Department

- ✚ Responsible for daily review of development proposals and communication regarding the contents of adopted land use regulations and planning documents.
- ✚ Prepares materials for County Administration, Planning Board, and Board of Commissioners
- ✚ Works with citizens and various groups on land use questions and decisions.
- ✚ Engages with the citizens of Craven County to understand needs and better serve them.

Planning Board

- ✚ Serves as the planning advisory board to the Board of Commissioners and may be involved in other administrative or legislative land use matters as required by the Board of Commissioners or requested by the Planning Department or County Administration.
- ✚ Serves as the Board of Adjustment.

Board of Commissioners

- ✚ Responsible for the final decision in all legislative matters.
- ✚ Responsible for the overall direction, growth, finances, and decisions made for Craven County.

Program Description

Below are brief descriptions for the context of each existing Development Program.

Subdivision Ordinance

A subdivision ordinance is a regulatory document that controls land division and requires improvements for such division.

Code of Ordinances

A document that houses all ordinances and regulations for development within an area under the jurisdiction of local government, including regulations not related to land use.

Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance

A flood damage prevention ordinance promotes the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of a community by minimizing public and private losses due to flood conditions within flood prone areas.

Shooting Range Facilities Ordinance

An ordinance designed to regulate the establishment and operation of commercial outdoor shooting range facilities (COSRF).



Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan

The CAMA Land Use Plan sets forth policies for land use decisions and recommendations for future growth based on existing and anticipated factors as well as input from the community. The CAMA component identifies environmental features of importance that should not be neglected and taken into consideration for the overall benefit of the coastal environment. CAMA plans are developed in accordance with 15A NCAC 07B of the Coastal Resources Commission.

Cherry Point Regional Joint Land Use Study

The Cherry Point Regional Joint Land Use Study serves as the guiding document to address development, pressures, and needs of the military community to assist in preserving the military mission and promote economic development.

Craven County Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Adopted by Craven County on April 18, 2013, and updated in 2022, this plan recognizes the inherent relationships between land use and transportation and between state and local governments. These plans help guide long-term investment and decision-making within the community.

Coastal Carolina Regional Airport Zoning and Height Control Ordinance

The Ordinance that regulates uses of land within the immediate vicinity of the Coastal Carolina Regional Airport to ensure the harmony and compatibility of development in proximity to said facilities with the operations of same; to minimize conflict arising from incompatible uses in close proximity to said facilities; and to minimize the risk to the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the County due to the operations of said facilities and the potential for aviation related accidents, as well as regulate height.

Cherry Point Marine Corps Zoning Ordinance

The Ordinance that regulates uses of land within the immediate vicinity of Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point to ensure the harmony and compatibility of development in proximity to said facilities with the operations of same; to minimize conflict arising from incompatible uses in close proximity to said facilities; and to minimize the risk to the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the County due to the operations of said facilities and the potential for aviation related accidents.

North Carolina State Building & Electrical Code Regulations

State building and electrical codes govern the standards of construction in a County.

Craven County Stormwater Regulations

This ordinance establishes minimum requirements and procedures to control the adverse effects of nitrogen in stormwater runoff and nonpoint and point source pollution associated with new development and redevelopment in the watershed of the Neuse Estuary. Stormwater is managed through required stormwater collection areas, swales and ditches.

North Carolina State Stormwater Regulations

The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) is responsible for administering the state's stormwater management program and all National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits. The

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program requires that stormwater be treated to the maximum extent practicable. These regulations apply to all construction sites disturbing more than one acre and many industrial sites.

North Carolina State Sediment and Erosion Control Regulations

Sedimentation and erosion control regulations are triggered during certain land-disturbing activities to control accelerated erosion. The intent of this control is to prevent water pollution and damage to public and private property through sedimentation.

Coastal Area Management Act

The Coastal Area Management Act establishes a cooperative program for coastal management between local and state governments to protect coastal lands and waters.

Tall Structures Ordinance

Ordinance designed to preserve the County's scenic beauty, to protect sensitive environmental areas, and to safeguard the general health, safety, and welfare of Craven County.

Regulation of the Maintenance and Operation of Solar Energy Facilities

Ordinance designed for the purpose of preserving the dignity and aesthetic of Craven County, integrity of land, and enhance economic viability and interests of the citizens of the County.

Manufactured Homes and Trailers Regulations

Regulations that are designed to regulate and control the minimum design standards for manufactured home parks.

Sign Regulations

Regulations that are designed to regulate off-premises signs to promote traffic safety and support public health through increased communication to emergency services through signage.

National Flood Insurance Program

The NFIP is a federal program enabling property owners in participating communities to purchase insurance as protection against flood losses in exchange for floodplain management regulations that reduce future flood damages.

Section 404 Wetlands Regulations

Craven County recognizes the importance of protecting environmentally sensitive areas, which includes those lands designated as wetlands by the US Army Corps of Engineers. It is generally the policy of the local government that all development within these areas conforms to federal, state, and local regulations and relevant development ordinances.

Pamlico Sound Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

This plan identifies mitigation goals and strategies to reduce/avoid long-term vulnerabilities in the County from natural and manmade hazards.



Continuing Planning Process

This plan provides the framework upon which zoning and land use regulations should be based. Additionally, prioritization of capital improvements should be coordinated with review of this plan. The preparation of a land use plan and map is mandated by North Carolina legislation as a prerequisite for zoning for towns and counties, CAMA also requires that a land use map be prepared. Specifically, in implementing this plan, the following should serve as guiding land use and planning principles:

- ✚ Consider the future land use map as part of the policies included in this plan.
- ✚ Consult this plan, including the future land use map, when considering amendments to regulatory text or the introduction of new regulations, as well as when reviewing desired land use and the best location within Craven County.

When using this plan to review decisions related to zoning regulations (Cherry Point Marine Corps Zoning Ordinance and Coastal Carolina Regional Airport Zoning & Height Control Ordinance), the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners should ask the following questions:

- ✚ Is the request in accordance with this plan? (Zoning regulations shall be made in accordance with the Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan. When adopting or rejecting any zoning amendment, the Board of Commissioners shall also approve a statement describing whether its action is consistent with the Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan and any other officially adopted plan that is applicable, and briefly explaining why the Board of Commissioners considers the action taken to be responsible and in the best public interest.)
- ✚ Will the request have a serious adverse impact on traffic circulation and other infrastructure?
- ✚ Will the request have an adverse impact on services, including fire protection and public safety services?
- ✚ Will the request have an adverse impact on Craven County Schools?
- ✚ Is there a good possibility that the request, as proposed, will result in negative impacts of use on adjacent properties?
- ✚ Will the request, as proposed, cause serious noise, odors, light, activity, or unusual disturbances?
- ✚ Does the request raise legal questions such as spot zoning, hardship, or violation of precedents?
- ✚ Does the request adversely impact water quality or other natural resources?
- ✚ Does the request damage or eliminate agriculture or valuable crop land?
- ✚ Does the request serve as a detriment to the citizens ability to enjoy recreation within Craven County?

Following adoption of this plan, the County may implement the following to ensure effective citizen participation:

- ✚ Encourage diverse public participation and citizen input in all land use decisions and procedure development processes.
- ✚ Publicize all meetings of the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners through newspaper advertisements, public service announcements, and the County website.
- ✚ Utilize advisory committees to assess and advise the County on special planning issues and needs, including implementation of this plan.
- ✚ At a minimum, review this plan every five to ten years.
- ✚ Coordinate a citizen planning advisory committee that works in coordination with the Planning Board and County staff.

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Land Use Amendments

When factors and situations present themselves that result in the Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan requiring an amendment or displaying the need for an amendment, the County will apply the guidelines for Land Use Plan Amendments under Subchapter 7B, Section 0800 of the North Carolina Administrative Code. A brief description of the guidelines is provided below.

- ✚ The Land Use Plan may be amended as a whole by a single resolution or in parts by successive resolutions. Successive resolutions may address geographical sections, county divisions, or functional units of subject matter.
- ✚ Amendments to the Land Use Plan shall comply with the provisions of NCGS 160D-601.
- ✚ The County must hold a public hearing which the public has been properly notified about.
- ✚ Copies of the proposed amendments must be available for review at the Craven County Administration Building during designated hours.
- ✚ The executive secretary or designated agent of the Coastal Resources Commission shall be given notice of the public hearing, a copy of the proposed amendment(s), and a reason for the amendment(s).
- ✚ Amendment(s) must be consistent with the Coastal Resources Commission's Land Use Planning Guidelines (15A NCAC 7B) and, if possible, with the Land Use Plans of adjacent jurisdictions.
- ✚ If possible, the County shall adopt plan amendments expeditiously following the close of the public hearing.
- ✚ The County will provide the executive secretary of the Coastal Resources Commission with a copy of the amended text or maps, certification of local government adoption, and documentation that it has followed the public hearing process required in GS 113A-110.



Action Plan and Implementation Schedule

The Action Plan and Implementation Schedule is a tool to help ensure that the County sees the updated plan through to implementation. An implementing action, timeframe, and responsible party are provided for each policy. All policies/implementing actions are prioritized/scheduled by short term, medium term, or ongoing. The scheduling for these priorities following plan adoption is short term – within 2 to 5 fiscal years; medium term – 6 to 10 fiscal years; and ongoing.

Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
COASTAL AREA MANAGEMENT ACT				
1.1.1	Examine proposals for the potential impacts they may have upon one’s quality of life and determine if any significant threats to health or safety could result from the nature of the development.	As part of the staff review, develop criteria that examine the potential hazards and impacts of the development. Utilize local and factual knowledge as well as the contents of the hazard mitigation plan. Utilize data and technology to determine if recommendations can be made that mitigate the potential impact. Utilize sites such as FIMAN, NCFRIS, County GIS, etc.	Short term	Planning Department
1.1.2	Advocate for the protection of wetlands, floodplains, and other areas of the natural environment to be left undisturbed.	Require for wetlands, floodplains and other areas of the natural environment to be delineated on plans and plats and encourage developers to leave these areas undisturbed OR develop land use regulations that require for such	Short term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.1.3	Consider the impact of development when conducted in proximity to the Neuse River and adopt regulations that include appropriate mitigation techniques to lessen the impact upon the waters of the Neuse River.	Continue to enforce the Stormwater Ordinance, consider the requirement of an environmental assessment for all developments within a certain distance from the Neuse River	Ongoing, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.1.4	Continue to comply with CAMA regulations when reviewing and permitting uses of land through the CAMA minor permitting process.	Enforce CAMA requirements on all development and land use decisions as applicable.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.1.5	Refer to the Future Land Use Map as well as NFIP maps and other surveyed areas of environmental significance when reviewing proposals for development.	The policy is the action; further implementation would be coordinating with State and Federal agencies who have jurisdiction over certain environmentally sensitive areas.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.1.6	Consider adjacent land uses and trends when reviewing applications for development.	The policy is the action; this effort should be done to ensure that uses that present conflict to coastal areas do not occur without consideration of impact.	Ongoing	Planning Department

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Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
1.2.1	Cooperate with county, state, and Federal agencies in protecting wildlife and plant species listed as endangered, threatened, rare, or of special concern, and support their efforts to protect and conserve the habitats in which they reside.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.2.2	Research potential regulations to be incorporated into the Craven County Code of Ordinances that includes language specific to the preservation of lands identified as serving as a habitat for endangered species.	Coordinate with NC Wildlife, CAMA and other State agencies to determine the specific locations of these areas and any recommended DRAFT language to preserve lands and endangered species. Considering that endangered species typically live in environmentally sensitive areas, consider prohibiting development within a certain distance of identified areas.	Ongoing, Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.2.3	Increase the public appreciation, education, and understanding of these areas through support of public and private ventures designed to educate the citizens of Craven County on how these areas function and ways that these areas can be preserved.	Host and support annual community events to educate upon the importance of the natural environment and coastal areas. Consider having events in these areas to build a connection and strengthen citizen understanding.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.3.1	Support the preservation of wetlands and educate the public upon the role that they play in stormwater management, flood mitigation, and as a habitat for multiple species.	Have discussions with realtors, developers, and citizens related to the importance of maintaining wetlands within Craven County.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.3.2	Encourage development of any type that results in the loss or destruction of woodlands that are identified as being part of the Croatan National Forest.	Adopt regulatory language that prohibits the destruction of existing wooded areas of the Croatan National Forest	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.3.3	Support the use of erosion control structures in shoreline areas.	Support North Carolina Sediment and Erosion Control regulations and encourage developers to include living shorelines when applicable in development. Pursue grants that improve upon the resilience of shoreline areas	Ongoing, Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.3.4	Encourage development adjacent or in proximity to natural environmental areas with a high potential of having a direct negative impact on them to reduce their occurrence.	Research environmental overlay districts and determine where they would be most effective	Short term	Planning Department, Planning Board
1.3.5	Encourage the dedication of conservation easements and the formation of land trusts.	Offer incentives for development that includes dedication of conservation areas	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
1.3.6	Require all natural environmental areas to be mapped and shown on subdivision plats and site plans as applicable to mitigate impacts.	The policy is the action	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.3.7	Support the US Army Corps of Engineers' regulations and the applicable guidelines of the Coastal Area Management Act and the ability of a UDO to regulate development and its effect upon freshwater swamps, marshes, and 404 wetlands.	The policy is the action. Continue to comply with CAMA regulations in enforcement of development activity.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.4.1	Actively work to establish new access areas and re-establish pre-existing access to areas such as Flanners Beach and other similar areas within the County.	Pursue State and Federal Grants that are designed to increase public access to waters and improve existing access points. Require through regulations that development within a certain distance of public waters provide access for all persons.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.4.2	Support providing shoreline access for persons with disabilities.	Through regulations require that developments adjacent to the Neuse River and other bodies of public water provide access for disabled persons	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.4.3	Seek funding from federal/state/private sources to provide public piers.	Meet with communities and citizens of Craven County to determine where such piers would receive the highest use and where the greatest need is. Use information received from communities in grant pursuits.	Short Term	Planning Department, Board of Commissioners
1.4.4	Require alternative access to be provided when an existing access is proposed to be removed.	Secure public access prior to removing any existing access to public waters or coastal areas. Advocate for multiple access points in the plan development stage.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department, Board of Commissioners
1.4.5	Pursue opportunities and support private ventures that provide access to the Neuse River and its tributaries for public use and enjoyment.	Offer incentives to developments that propose substantial amenities and access points to the Neuse River.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.4.6	Implement regulatory language that requires development adjacent to public trust water and shorelines to provide dedicated access for interaction.	The policy is the action; this effort could be achieved through an overlay district or specific regulatory language.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.4.7	Support the development of estuarine access areas to ensure adequate shoreline areas exist within all areas of the County that provide the potential.	The policy is the action.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners

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Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
1.5.1	Adopt or continue to enforce regulations that deal with stormwater and the usage of land that promote sustainability and overall environmental protection, specifically related to infrastructure design, location, and installation.	Continue to enforce the Craven County Stormwater Regulations, periodically review the regulations to ensure that adequate requirements are in place. Consider adopting regulations that require or encourage for green infrastructure to be used and other types of stormwater mitigation techniques.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department
1.5.2	The design and construction of public and private facilities, including but not limited to roads, water, sewer, or stormwater control, should utilize best management practices to minimize impacts on sensitive areas, open space, and conservation areas.	Comprehensively evaluate impacts to resources and add contingency to all CIP (Capital Improvements Plan) projects.	Ongoing, Short Term	County Administration, Board of Commissioners
1.5.3	Adopt regulations to be included in the Craven County Code of Ordinances that includes elements in compliance with the North Carolina General Statutes and other applicable State regulations designed to protect AEC's and environmentally sensitive areas.	The policy is the action. The Planning Department should periodically conduct research on effective methods of environmental buffers and examine any existing regulations to determine where opportunities exist to further protect AEC's and environmentally sensitive areas. An examination of the uses that are allowed to occur within proximity to these areas should also be conducted.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.5.4	Allow for the option to utilize green infrastructure as opposed to gray infrastructure, or hard infrastructure.	The policy is the action; the most effective implementation would be requiring for green infrastructure in certain development scenarios determined to pose a significant impact.	Short Term	Planning Department
1.6.1	Craven County opposes the disposal of any toxic wastes, as identified in the US Environmental Protection Agency's listing of Hazardous Substances and Priority Pollutants (developed pursuant to the Clean Water Act of 1977) within the planning jurisdiction of Craven County.	Regulate waste disposal and the existence of conditions which contribute to nuisances, wastes and hazards against the environment in general.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.6.2	Craven County will rely on the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality at a minimum to protect water quality and will explore potential regulations to adopt that maximize water quality.	The policy is the action. Regularly coordinate with NCDEQ to determine what best practices are encouraged to improve upon water quality.	Ongoing	Planning Department



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
1.6.3	Support municipalities within Craven County as applicable in their efforts to improve upon water quality.	Attend municipal meetings regarding planning and development as invited and applicable and offer support. Collaborate on ways in which water quality can be improved based on land usage and implementation of more stringent requirements that are designed to improve water quality. Continue to enforce stormwater regulations to reduce pollutants.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.6.4	Require through land use regulations for the installation of buffers along bodies of water to contribute towards the reduction of contaminants and nutrients entering the water body.	The policy is the action.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
1.6.5	Support the enforcement of local, state, and Federal regulations and their associated programs that protect water quality.	Regularly attend meetings and stay up to date on policy to adequately enforce and support the enforcement efforts of other governmental agencies.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.6.6	Support the State of North Carolina policy that all projects should be designed to limit the extent of stormwater runoff into coastal waters.	Continue to enforce stormwater regulations in the County and update as necessary, communicate with NC on any recommended amendments.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.6.7	Conserve the County's surficial groundwater resources by supporting CAMA and adopted stormwater runoff regulations, and by coordinating local development activities involving chemical storage or underground storage tank installation/ abandonment with the Groundwater Section of the North Carolina Division of Water Quality.	Coordinate with County and State officials and agencies in the development review process.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.6.8	Continue to enforce stormwater requirements.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.6.9	Support the Neuse River Basinwide Water Quality Plan.	Review the contents of the plan prior to issuing any development approvals to ensure consistency and support is being maintained.	Ongoing	Planning Department
1.6.10	Support management of problem pollutants, particularly biological oxygen demand (the measurement of oxygen needed by bacteria to decompose organic matter) and nutrients, to take action upon existing water quality problems and to ensure protection of those waters currently supporting their uses in the Neuse River and its tributaries.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department

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Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
RECREATION				
2.1.1	Encourage schools, community groups, colleges, universities, and other entities to take advantage of the parks and recreational areas within the County and utilize for hands on educational activities.	Stay in contact with local schools, communities and institutes of higher education so that they are aware of the recreational amenities that exist and of the opportunities to incorporate them into the curriculum. Offer facilities at a discounted rate for educational purposes.	Ongoing	Planning Department, County Administration, Board of Commissioners, Parks & Recreation, Craven County Schools
2.1.2	Develop programs within the recreation department designed to educate citizens on a variety of topics related to recreation such as nature, athletics, and preservation.	Perform community outreach to determine what programs or interests exist in the County. Based on outreach in the community, internally develop a departmental strategy to address these needs. Provide information to citizens in multiple formats and offer interactive learning sessions.	Ongoing	Parks & Recreation
2.1.3	Provide signage with facts and data related to the natural environment within the recreational areas.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Parks & Recreation
2.1.4	Invest in providing outdoor learning spaces within recreational areas.	Pursue State and Federal grants, such as NC State Parks grants and grants from the NC Board of Education.	Ongoing	Planning Department, County Administration, Board of Commissioners, Parks & Recreation, Craven County Schools
2.2.1	Pursue state and Federal funding to enhance the existing recreational areas within the County through the provision of new recreational facilities and amenities.	The policy is the action. The County should also encourage private entities with a vested interest in the health and enjoyment of Craven County to assist in improving recreational areas when possible.	Ongoing	Parks & Recreation, Planning Department, County Administration
2.2.2	Upfit all parks and recreational areas within the County so that they can be enjoyed by persons with disabilities and persons with limited capabilities for activity.	Pursue ADA compliance grants as well as State and Federal opportunities for execution. Implement an ADA Transition Plan to improve handicap accessibility for all public facilities within the County.	Short Term	Parks & Recreation, Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
2.2.3	Promote the use of recreational facilities by increasing their accessibility and through encouraging responsible development to occur in proximity to recreational facilities.	Encourage residential development in proximity to recreational facilities through the provision of incentives for development OR increase transportation and advertisement of such areas to increase usage.	Ongoing, Short Term	Parks & Recreation, Planning Department
2.2.4	Educate the public and devote staff and funds to ensure that the recreational areas remain in a clean and safe condition so that they may be enjoyed by all citizens and visitors.	Include signage in recreational areas that explain the importance of environmental protection and discouragement of littering. Continue to budget for Parks & Recreation to have adequate resources so that these areas are in a safe and enjoyable condition.	Ongoing	Parks & Recreation, County Administration, Board of Commissioners



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
2.3.1	Provide expanded biking trails, walking trails, and other multi-modal paths within parks and recreational areas that can be enjoyed by persons of all ability levels.	Develop a Parks & Recreation plan.	Short Term, Medium Term	Parks & Recreation, Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
2.3.2	Secure funding or strategically budget to construct a recreational center or complex that includes a variety of recreational facilities that makes both outdoor (athletic fields, playgrounds, etc.) and indoor recreation (gyms, etc.) possible.	Pursue State and Federal grants or explore the option of a bond.	Medium Term	Parks & Recreation, Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners, County Administration
2.3.3	Invest in leagues and activities for both youth, adult, and senior members of Craven County so that all citizens of all ability levels can participate in recreational activity.	Provide for new leagues and flexibility in the season of participation to provide more citizens with the opportunity to participate.	Ongoing	Parks & Recreation
2.3.4	Improve existing parks and recreational areas by providing amenities such as splash pads, skating areas, and other similar types of equipment designed for activity other than traditional playgrounds.	Pursue State and Federal grants or explore the option of a bond.	Ongoing	Parks & Recreation, Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners, County Administration
2.3.5	Pursue new recreational areas or renewed/repurposed areas for recreational use within or in proximity to the areas of natural beauty within Craven County such as the Croatan National Forest and the areas adjacent to the Neuse River.	Evaluate vacant or underused parcels of land or structures within the County and determine the feasibility and protect the use of such land as a recreational facility. Acquire funding through grants or other sources to purchase or encourage the donation of such land or structure for recreational use.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, County Administration
2.3.6	Explore partnerships with the municipalities within the County to provide expanded levels of recreational opportunity and to meet recreational needs in proximity to one's place of residence.	Establish agreements for recreational facility shared use and the ability of County citizens to utilize recreational amenities within municipalities to meet various recreational needs.	Ongoing	Parks & Recreation, County Administration, Board of Commissioners
2.3.7	Adopt land use regulations that require recreational areas to be dedicated and provided for certain types of development.	The policy is the implementing action. Adequate implementation would include minimum amounts of active and passive open space as well as developments of a certain size or scale to provide recreational amenities within the development.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
AGRICULTURE				
3.1.1	Discourage the development of prime agricultural land, or land that has a history of producing high yielding crops for the purpose of residential, industrial or commercial development to include solar farms.	Coordinate with NC Cooperative Extension in the development review process and work to establish a criterion for lands that are considered valuable, based upon yield, soils, etc.	Ongoing, Short term	Planning Department, Craven County Cooperative Extension

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Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
3.1.2	Support agricultural programs, clubs, and groups that are designed to educate the people of Craven County on the importance of agriculture and the agricultural opportunities that Craven County presents.	Offer County facilities for periodic use of educational events. Support agritourism and its role in educating the public.	Ongoing	County Administration, Craven County Cooperative Extension
3.1.3	Develop regulations that require the disclosure of agricultural activities taking place for clarity and a general understanding of agriculture's longstanding existence and precedence over new proposed land uses.	The policy is the action. Annually evaluate the Voluntary Ag District and work towards its promotion and expansion. Require new uses within proximity to established agriculture uses to sign a waiver or acknowledgement statement.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
3.1.4	Develop land use regulations that limit the types of uses and the intensity of uses that could occur in proximity to agricultural uses of land.	The policy is the action. Engage with the agricultural community of Craven County to determine the types of uses that are the most detrimental to their agricultural operation and prohibit these from occurring in the agriculturally valuable areas of the County.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
3.1.5	Support NCGS 160D-903 and all bona fide agricultural uses within Craven County.	The policy is the action. Provide expedited review of bona fide activity.	Ongoing	Planning Department
3.1.6	Require development on prime agricultural lands to occur in a clustered manner for the purpose of preserving cropland.	Amend the subdivision regulations to require this type of cluster development.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
3.2.1	Support new crops and types of agriculture in the County that has the potential to provide increased job opportunities and diversify the agricultural industry as a whole.	The policy is the action. Anticipate the need for regulations to protect certain types of crops and agricultural use that may come to exist in Craven County.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners, Craven County Cooperative Extension
3.2.2	Work in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and support its initiatives.	The policy is the action. Coordination with the Department of Agriculture is required.	Ongoing	Planning Department, County Administration
3.2.3	Encourage and support agritourism within the County and the opportunities, interests, and economic benefits that are associated with agritourism.	Market Craven County's ability to support agritourism, encourage agritourism to occur within the County on agricultural land that has the potential of reuse for agritourism purposes, or may serve a dual role as a tourist attraction outside of its use as cropland, pastureland, or other bona fide use.	Ongoing	Economic Development
3.2.4	Support the expansion of the agricultural industry and the associated jobs and opportunities that follow the expansion.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Economic Development
3.2.5	Develop an agricultural committee or partner with existing agricultural groups to determine long range objectives and growth goals and assist in achieving these goals.	The policy is the action. This should be a committee that meets periodically to pursue agricultural advancement within the County and presents annual or bi-annual directives to County Administration or the Board of Commissioners.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department, Craven County Cooperative Extension, Economic Development



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
3.2.6	Foster an agricultural industry that is compatible with a high quality of life, as a means to facilitate diversification in the local economy.	Host annual education awareness and job fairs with local agricultural industries and farmers to recruit Craven County citizens for employment in the agricultural industry and educate them on the opportunities that exist with a career in agriculture.	Ongoing	Economic Development
MARINE CORPS AIR STATION CHERRY POINT				
4.1.1	Encourage MCAS Cherry Point to engage with existing County resources to stay informed about land use issues, fostering transparency, raising awareness, and supporting responsible planning efforts.	Craven County should inform MCAS Cherry Point of existing County resources including but not limited to, the location of meeting agendas and minutes, public notices, and staff contact information on the County's website.	Ongoing	Planning Department, MCAS Cherry Point
4.1.2	In support of military personnel, Craven County will provide for an enhanced quality of life in the area, including increased housing opportunities, enhanced recreation, environmental sustainability, investment in education, responsible land use regulations, protection of natural resources, and economic development and investment.	Adopt responsible and predictable land use regulations that give assurances that certain housing types and amenities will be located within certain areas of the County. Provide periodic updates to MCAS Cherry Point of County projects and initiatives that should have a direct positive impact upon the military community.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners, County Administration
4.1.3	Coordinate with the municipalities within the County and determine needs of the naval aviators and military personnel within their community and how Craven County may assist in meeting these needs.	The policy is the action. Hold periodic meetings to discuss needs and strategy.	Ongoing	County Administration, Planning Department
4.1.4	Support the development of neighborhoods and communities within the County designed for the workforce, specifically the marines of Cherry Point.	Adopt responsible regulations that permit for types of housing to be constructed that will adequately serve these members of the population. Include incentives and expedited review for this type of housing to encourage construction.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
4.1.5	Continue to support transportation improvements which reduce commute times and improve access to Cherry Point for marines.	Participate in New Bern MPO and Down East RPO to advocate for transportation routes that benefit the County and MCAS Cherry Point.	Ongoing	Board of Commissioners, County Manager, Planning Board, Planning Department
4.1.6	Encourage special committees, advisory panels, educational forums, workshops, leadership seminars, community meetings, and media contact to enhance the level of community involvement and awareness of military-community issues.	Allow for the base liaison to advise the County on opportunities for military community interaction, and awareness initiatives.	Ongoing	Base Liaison, County Administration

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Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
4.1.7	Support MCAS Cherry Point as the primary economic engine of the local economy. County actions shall be consistent with preserving and protecting this pivotal major industry.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	County Administration, Economic Development, Board of Commissioners
4.2.1	Craven County supports working proactively with Cherry Point to determine policies and actions that the County can take to strengthen the operational viability of the military while also enhancing the community at large.	Meet periodically with the base liaison to review plans as well as engage members of the military community to solicit input on policy and needs.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Base Liaison
4.2.2	Support coordinated intergovernmental and military-community planning for land use and development, transportation, utilities, environmental management, law enforcement and public safety, education, recreation, tourism, and economic development.	As policy, review the JLUS in all planning decisions and County decisions to determine the projected impact or influence upon the military community and installation.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Base Liaison, Board of Commissioners, County Administration
4.2.3	Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of overlay districts and proposed uses of land within proximity to Cherry Point, or those uses elsewhere in the County that have the potential of adversely affecting Cherry Point.	Establish a Technical Review Committee with the Base Liaison to conduct thorough review of all proposals as well as determine any amendments that the overlay district requires.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Base Liaison
4.2.4	Support and assist in the implementation of the identified goals and objectives outlined in the Cherry Point Regional Joint Land Use Study (2016).	Include recommendations from the plan when applicable for proposed development, amend regulations to require elements of the plan as policy.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
EDUCATION				
5.1.1	Discourage land uses within proximity to schools that have the potential of presenting an impact upon learning or the students general safety.	Implement land use restrictions related to certain use types that may have negative health impacts on school age children, or target school age children such as vape shops.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
5.1.2	Invest in the youth of Craven County, acknowledging that their ability to receive a quality education will directly impact the future of the County. Provide programs and activities that are oriented towards building upon their knowledge, happiness, and quality of life.	The policy is the implementing action. The County can provide educational programs and student job shadowing opportunities to build awareness for the role of local government and to inspire the next generation of Craven County Government employees	Ongoing	County Administration, Board of Commissioners



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
5.1.3	Communicate with and include a liaison from the Board of Education or other educational institute as an advisory role member on any County Boards or review committees (excluding the Board of Commissioners) to increase transparency, promote awareness, and ensure responsible planning is occurring.	Craven County should communicate with Craven County Schools to determine who the education liaison should be on an annual basis.	Ongoing	County Administration, Craven County Schools, Board of Commissioners
5.1.4	Project future needs for schools based on an increase in students and the housing that should be encouraged to locate within proximity to the school.	Require Craven County Schools education liaison to provide an annual report of estimates or data so that Craven County may review and determine the projected planning needs. Ensure that adequate land is in a designation to support needs for schools in totality to a feasible extent.	Medium Term	Planning Department, Craven County Schools
5.1.5	Support site planning for traffic management and safety in the vicinity of public and private schools.	Coordinate with NCDOT for traffic safety improvements and school needs regarding transportation and safe routes.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department, Craven County Schools, DERPO (Down East RPO, New Bern MPO)
5.1.6	Encourage offers of land for the siting of new schools, particularly in conjunction with new development. Acceptance of such properties shall be based on approved criteria and cooperative planning with the County school administration.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	County Administration, Craven County Schools, Board of Commissioners, Planning Department
5.2.1	Make efforts to attract jobs and other industries to Craven County that prioritize employing citizens with specialized trade and skill.	Keep accurate data of the existing workforce in the County and the specialized abilities in economic development attraction efforts. Support Craven Community College and the specialized trade programs that it offers.	Ongoing	Economic Development, County Administration
5.2.2	Support the actions of Craven Community College and the value that it brings to not only Craven County but the region in its mission of providing general education and job ready employees to serve.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Board of Commissioners, County Administration
5.2.3	Make Craven County facilities available for job fairs and educational seminars to occur that have the result of promoting learning and education within the County.	Offer facilities for use at a discounted or free rate when being used to promote employment and education within the County.	Ongoing	County Administration, Board of Commissioners
5.2.4	Survey members of the population to determine what educational/learning experiences would be beneficial to their quality of life.	Develop surveys available on an annual basis. Make them available both electronically and through mailed water bills.	Ongoing	Economic Development, Planning Department, Water Department, Information Technology

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Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
5.2.5	Support the efforts of the Craven-Pamlico Regional Library in fostering the development of a literate and well-informed resident population, that has vast access to its resources.	The policy is the action. Offer assistance from the Information Technology Department to raise awareness and make these resources known and readily available to all citizens.	Ongoing	Information Technology
5.2.6	Place value on and prioritize the attraction of land uses that exists or intend to locate within Craven County that propose to make investments into the education system and overall improvement and availability of educational opportunities to the whole citizenry of Craven County.	Offer incentives to proposed developments that make a significant contribution to education within the County. Encourage compatible land uses and supportive land uses to locate adjacent and in proximity to County Schools.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Craven County Schools, Economic Development, Planning Board, County Administration, Board of Education
5.2.7	Release educational documents that involve Craven County government activities to inform the citizens of the County, so that a level of awareness exists regarding government actions, their purpose, and the benefits behind them.	Develop quarterly governmental reports informing citizens of recent government activity and opportunities that exists for input and involvement	Ongoing	County Administration
HAZARDS				
6.1.1	Use social media as a tool to educate and prepare the citizens of Craven County for hazards as well as post hazard recovery.	Departmental coordination should lead to valuable data that Information Technology can relay to County citizens so that they are aware and prepared for events and after events.	Ongoing	Information Technology, Emergency Services
6.1.2	Monitor, update, and enforce the Craven County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance to mitigate against the flood hazards that exist within the County.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
6.1.3	Comprehensively evaluate all proposals for land use or development in an effort to identify the potential conflicts, hazards, or threats that the use or development may face.	Utilize GIS and other data to forecast potential conflicts in proposals based on existing use, historical occurrences, and any projected data to determine the risks that exist with the proposal. Require mitigation measures with approval. Involve Emergency Services in review.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Emergency Services
6.1.4	Provide annual citizen education and outreach events or seminars to remind the citizens of Craven County of the hazards that threaten the County and steps that may be taken to prepare for such. Examples include an annual flood preparedness seminar.	The policy is the action. Organize a hurricane or hazard preparedness community meeting or seminar to occur bi-annually.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Emergency Services



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
6.1.5	Continue to support the enforcement of all controls and regulations, specifically design standards, tie-down requirements, construction and installation standards, elevation requirements, floodproofing, CAMA regulations, and FEMA regulations deemed necessary by the Board of Commissioners to mitigate the risks of lives and property caused by severe storms and hurricanes.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Board of Commissioners Planning Department
6.1.6	Support Hazard Mitigation Planning and ensure that cohesiveness and consistency exist between the Pamlico Sound Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan.	As policy, review the contents of both plans when reviewing proposals for development. Incorporate mitigation techniques into adopted regulations. Annually update the implementation that has taken place and pursue implementation through State and Federal grant assistance.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department
6.1.7	Support the enforcement of Local, State, and Federal policies, programs or plans designed to minimize the threat to life and property from flooding.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
6.1.8	Annually review the potential hazards and threats that are relative to Craven County and keep records of incidents so that data exists for plan revision and future guidance to create a resilient future for Craven County.	The policy is the action. Keep a log of weather events so that Craven County has sufficient data to provide when planning for future hazard events as well as mitigating against the potential impacts on proposed development in certain areas.	Ongoing	Planning Department
6.1.9	Adopt land use regulations that require certain mitigation elements to be provided with certain types of development as well as the location of the development or use.	Regulate the number of lots that can be recorded in Special Flood Hazard Areas, require additional emergency access points for development, use crime prevention through design techniques. Consider more stringent Flood Ordinance requirements to increase resiliency.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
6.1.10	Support all contents of the Pamlico Sound Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan and refer to it frequently when reviewing proposals for land use or development.	The policy is the action	Ongoing	Planning Department
6.1.11	Actively pursue Federal and State funding to improve the conditions and overall resilience of Craven County.	The policy is the action	Ongoing	Planning Department
SAFETY				
7.1.1	Prioritize funding for emergency services so that the sense of a safe community that Craven County citizens appreciate is maintained.	The policy is the action. Encourage developers to provide certain amenities that assist emergency services in their ability to serve the citizens of Craven County such as additional security measures.	Ongoing	Planning Department, County Administration, Emergency Services, Board of Commissioners

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Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
7.1.2	Establish regulations that prevent the accumulation of solid waste, rubbish, and other types of accumulations that have the potential of being detrimental to the health of Craven County citizens.	Continue to enforce nuisance ordinances within the County, periodically examine the effectiveness and if other measures should be taken to strengthen existing documents or provide additional staff for enforcement.	Ongoing	Planning Department, County Administration, Board of Commissioners
7.1.3	Continue to support the goals and work of the Craven County Sheriff's Department.	The policy is the action. Include the Sheriff's Department for certain types of development reviews that pose additional threats to public safety.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Sheriff's Department
7.1.4	Require, through land use regulations, minimum access, clearance, setbacks, and other site improvements that are designed to facilitate emergency services to serve in their highest and most efficient capacity as well as ensure that structures and their appurtenant features associated with the use are in a manner that minimizes conflict or injury.	The policy is the action.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
7.1.5	Develop land use regulations that are designed to responsibly control certain types of land which present potential threats to human life and safety.	The policy is the action. Implement policy that mitigates against the impact of certain land uses within the County. Benchmark any proposed regulations with other units of local government	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
7.1.6	Develop land use regulations that establish minimum design standards for uses so that citizens may be confident that development has occurred in a manner that protects their quality of life, safety, and health.	The policy is the action. Implement responsible regulations that provide citizens within the County assurance. Benchmark any proposed regulations with other units of local government	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
7.1.7	Consider entering or requiring Development Agreements (NCGS 160D Article) for development of a certain scale or intensity to provide Craven County with an assurance that any emergency service needs associated with such development will be met.	As a county policy, establish a threshold in which a development agreement is required prior to any approval.	Short Term	Planning Department, County Administration, Board of Commissioners
7.1.8	Continue to improve upon County wide alerts and other forms of notification that raises awareness related to safety concerns within the County.	Survey citizens to determine the effectiveness of the current alert system and what improvements are needed to better serve them.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Emergency Services
7.1.9	Encourage improved internet and wireless service through responsible land use regulations and recognize the overall benefits these services provide related to safety, accessibility, and connectivity.	Amend land use regulations to allow for flexibility in wireless communication towers and other services that improve the ability to communicate using wireless technology within the County. Also, consider requiring minimum technological infrastructure requirements for certain types of development	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
7.1.10	Use social media to raise safety awareness within the County.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Information Technology, Emergency Services
TRANSPORTATION				
8.1.1	Support the provision of safe evacuation routes.	Work with NCDOT and North Carolina Emergency Management in determining the best routes for evacuation, as a regulation require certain developments to provide alternative means of emergency access.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Emergency Services
8.1.2	Consider the capacity of the right-of-way when considering proposals for development and if the proposed development is going to present capacity issues, consider adopting regulations that are more stringent than NCDOT requirements to account for potential capacity issues with proposed development.	As a policy, consider requiring through regulations a Traffic Impact Analysis that exceeds NCDOT requirements.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
8.1.3	Establish threshold limits for means of secondary access.	The policy is the action.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
8.1.4	Support limited access from development along all roads and highways to provide safe ingress and egress.	Follow NCDOT's recommendations.	Ongoing	Planning Department
8.1.5	Support interconnectivity between appropriate uses and street network connections where practical to alleviate stress from the major thoroughfares and primary arterials within the County.	Require through regulations connections for certain types of uses as appropriate.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
8.1.6	Require Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) for certain types of development that may cause additional stress and congestion to the transportation network.	The policy is the action	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
8.2.1	Advocate for efficient transportation systems that allow for equipment and personnel to move expeditiously from MCAS Cherry Point to the other military installations within the region.	Advocate for the needs of MCAS Cherry Point at DERPO and New Bern MPO meetings, include the Base Liaison in discussions.	Ongoing	Planning Department
8.2.2	Support transportation improvements and planning studies designed to improve access to MCAS Cherry Point and cut down on travel times within the County.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
8.2.3	Continue to support the Coastal Carolina Regional Airport and the method of transportation that it provides Craven County citizens.	Market the ability to reach Craven County by air and support land uses within vicinity of the airport that are complimentary to air transit and the opportunities it provides.	Ongoing	Economic Development

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Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
8.2.4	Serve as a liaison between the citizens of Craven County and the regional and metropolitan transportation organizations.	Solicit input from citizens and communicate with them to determine needs in transportation improvement and existing deficiencies so that effective planning may occur with the transportation planning organizations.	Ongoing	Planning Department
8.2.5	Monitor areas of high traffic within the County and recommend improvements on an as needed basis.	Be proactive in requiring transportation improvements required through regulations, monitor areas of potential increased traffic due to the uses in existence, communicate frequently with NCDOT.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department
8.2.6	Undertake efforts to secure funding and expand upon cost effective public transportation.	Utilize available funding from NCDOT and the FHWA as well as other State and Federal monies to provide expanded public transit at a free or minimal cost within the County for persons that do not have access to personal transportation.	Ongoing	County Administration, Craven Area Rural Transit System
8.3.1	Advocate for the development of a Craven County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.	Contract with a consulting firm for the development of this plan.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners, County Administration
8.3.2	Adopt land use regulations that require the provision of multi-use paths and walking or biking trails within the development to meet the needs of the citizens.	The policy is the action. Require for these provisions in areas that are appropriate for the type of development based on nearby recreation or commercial services.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
8.3.3	Support the provision of safe coordinated bicycle and pedestrian trails throughout the County.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
8.3.4	Support planning efforts of the New Bern Metropolitan Planning Organization and Down East Rural Planning Organization to establish multi-modal transportation options within Craven County and the region.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
8.3.5	Advocate for the inclusion of multi-modal projects to be included in the STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Program).	In prioritization, emphasize the importance of these projects and provide evidence to the transportation planning organization of the overall benefits to Craven County citizens.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
TOURISM, CULTURE, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES				
9.1.1	Market Craven County and its natural beauty as an appealing option for tourism and recreation.	Engage with local business in the tourism and agritourism industries to determine ways in which Craven County can assist in promoting awareness. Advertise the recreational areas of Craven County for environmental tourism and general wildlife enjoyment.	Ongoing	Economic Development, Parks & Recreation
9.1.2	Maintain a visual aesthetic that is pleasing to the citizens and visitors of Craven County so that it is an attractive place to visit and live.	Develop regulations that are designed to mitigate against nuisances and other visual disturbances that detract from the beauty of Craven County.	Short Term	Planning Department
9.1.3	Support investment in tourism and development along the Neuse River, provided it is done in an environmentally responsible manner.	The policy is the action. Encourage private investment and tourist types of uses to utilize the advantages presented by the Neuse River.	Ongoing	Economic Development
9.1.4	Form partnerships with the City of New Bern that introduce agritourism and other tourist ventures within the County to visitors of the City's historic tourism.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	County Administration, Board of Commissioners, Economic Development
9.1.5	Utilize recreational areas to benefit the tourist market within Craven County.	Use the recreational areas within the County to host festivals, events and other social gatherings. Incorporate activities within recreational areas that attract people to the area specifically for that activity.	Ongoing	Economic Development, Parks & Recreation
9.1.6	Support the development of attractions within Craven County for bypassing visitors to participate in as they travel along Interstate 42.	Ensure that appropriate land use designations exist within the County to support entertainment types of land use.	Short Term	Planning Department
9.1.7	Support the efforts of the North Carolina Department of Commerce to increase tourism.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Board of Commissioners
9.1.8	Utilize the unique geographic location and topography of Craven County to increase interest in tourism.	Support efforts around agritourism, historic tourism, and ecotourism.	Ongoing	Economic Development
9.2.1	Consider the needs of citizens and the impact upon an area's culture based on development proposals and uses of land. Proposals that may significantly alter the nature and culture of an area are not discouraged but should carefully be evaluated prior to approval.	Require community meetings to occur prior to certain types of development to hear the concerns of citizens and work toward any type of mitigation or conflict avoidance prior to construction. Use new development to strengthen areas and the culture within the community.	Ongoing	Planning Department
9.2.2	Pursue State and Federal grants designed to assist in the preservation and promotion of historic structures and features.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department

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Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
9.2.3	Protect historic and potentially historic properties and perpetuate the County's cultural heritage.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Economic Development
9.2.4	Support the preservation of important cultural resources and supports Local, State, and Federal efforts to protect historic properties within its borders and to perpetuate its cultural heritage.	Pursue inclusion and recognition in the National Register of Historic Places for certain known areas of historical significance within the County.	Ongoing	Planning Department
9.2.5	Support minorities within the County as they identify significant sites, structures, and events that have historic importance or relevance.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Board of Commissioners
9.2.6	Encourage the enhancement and the educational potential that is offered by the historic resources within the County.	Provide County programs and educational opportunities based on the history and existing resources in the County.	Ongoing	County Administration, Parks & Recreation
9.2.7	Develop an inventory of the historic properties and structures within the County and monitor any activity towards being included in the national register or efforts related to the marketing and use of such structure for tourist purposes.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
COUNTY FACILITIES, SERVICES, & INFRASTRUCTURE				
10.1.1	Reasonably maintain, review, and update the Craven County Stormwater Ordinance or incorporate into a UDO.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
10.1.2	Continue to support reducing non-point source pollution including soil erosion, runoff, and sedimentation to minimize the adverse effects on surface and subsurface water quality.	Develop internal stormwater review processes and continuously evaluate proposed development to ensure best practice exists to minimize pollutants. Support agricultural activities that minimize runoff.	Ongoing	Planning Department
10.1.3	Conduct studies to determine if more stringent requirements and expanded capacities are needed rather than the minimum State of North Carolina standards for stormwater regulation.	At a staff level, periodically evaluate the Craven County stormwater regulations in comparison to NC standards as well as benchmark against other stormwater standards enforced by units of local government within the region.	Ongoing	Planning Department
10.1.4	Emphasize the importance of natural areas and the benefits they present in stormwater management by reducing the introduction of nutrients and contaminants into the water body.	Encourage the utilization of natural areas as buffers, allow for these areas to satisfy any buffering requirements for flexibility.	Short Term	Planning Department
10.1.5	Support CAMA and NC Division of Water Quality stormwater runoff regulations.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
10.2.1	Pursue State and Federal funding for the improvement, maintenance, expansion, and extension of the infrastructure within Craven County.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	County Administration, Planning Department, Water Department
10.2.2	Develop land use regulations that establish minimum infrastructure installation requirements for development (including water, sewer, septic, and the methods of inspection and installation.)	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
10.2.3	Support central sewer service within the County in areas that have a high potential for growth and identified industrial and commercial growth areas.	Pursue funding or budget for infrastructure improvements within the Industrial areas and intense Commercial areas of Craven County.	Ongoing	County Administration, Economic Development
10.2.4	Limit the extension or provision of sewer in prime agricultural areas to prevent unwanted development pressures.	Do not use County resources to pursue sewer extension into agricultural areas. Any extension should be from private investment and encouraged to annex into a municipality.	Ongoing	County Administration, Board of Commissioners
10.2.5	Require developers to complete the necessary improvements needed to integrate into the existing infrastructure system and do not allow for this cost of extension to fall upon Craven County or its citizens.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
10.2.6	Encourage development to provide additional infrastructure when it is determined the provision of such would directly benefit the County and the quality of its citizens lives.	Refer to the land use plan to determine what adequate additional infrastructure may be, common additional provisions should be recreational in nature to benefit the health and activity of the community or safety features.	Ongoing	Planning Department
10.2.7	Develop an inventory of County infrastructure to prioritize an improvement needs list.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	County Administration
10.2.8	Concentrate infrastructure repairs and expansion in areas with the highest potential for growth and the ability to serve the needs of County citizens. Factor in proximity to resources and transportation routes.	The policy is the action. Hold annual prioritization workshops to determine the best use of financial resources.	Ongoing	County Administration
10.2.9	Encourage redevelopment in areas where adequate infrastructure exists.	The policy is the action. Using zoning districts and future land use designations, designate areas with the highest ability to support redevelopment. Through regulations, streamline redevelopment applications for a streamlined process with efficiency and predictability	Ongoing	Planning Department

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Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
10.3.1	Actively work to provide County facilities in both areas that have high population and demand for such as well as the areas that are required to commute a considerable distance to utilize such facilities.	The policy is the action. Continuously evaluate where services are needed within the County.	Ongoing	County Administration, Planning Department
10.3.2	Pursue State and Federal grant funding for the improvement of existing facilities and the provision of new facilities.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	County Administration
10.3.3	Perform an internal evaluation of the public facilities that exist within the County and determine their strengths and weaknesses. Develop an action plan to improve upon such facilities.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	All applicable Craven County Departments
10.3.4	Survey the citizens of the County to determine what additional features they desire to be provided at the facilities within the County.	Develop a questionnaire that citizens are asked to complete on a bi-annual basis to determine any new needs or lack of service.	Shor Term	Planning Department
10.3.5	Market facilities and use them for the purpose of strengthening the relationships and interactions amongst citizens within the County.	Make County facilities easily accessible and display their ability to serve multiple needs of the County as a place for meeting, recreation, and congregation.	Ongoing	County Administration
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT				
11.1.1	Ensuring that attracting economic development and investment is not at the expense of the County's agricultural industry.	Review proposals for development in comparison with the Future Land Use Map as well as data related to the agricultural production at the potential site to perform a cost benefit analysis. Use land use regulations to control development within agricultural areas that jeopardizes the loss of agricultural land.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department, Economic Development
11.1.2	Support small-businesses, minority owned businesses, family-owned businesses and family farms and their ability to operate and thrive within the County.	The policy is the action; develop user-friendly regulations and permitting processes that attract business to Craven County.	Short Term	Planning Department, Economic Development
11.1.3	Target industries and businesses that maximize the abilities of the qualified workforce within Craven County.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Economic Development, County Administration
11.1.4	Take advantage of Craven County's geographic location related to the State Port in Morehead City and transportation advantage with the development of Interstate 42 to attract industry that serves the needs of the region and is coordinated with the State Port.	Ensure that adequate infrastructure exists within the County to support the types of uses that serve the region.	Ongoing	County Administration, Board of Commissioners, Planning Department, Economic Development
11.1.5	Consider offering tax incentives to attract business and industry.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Board of Commissioners



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
11.1.6	Develop land use regulations that establish a clear and predictable process as well as an expedited process for business and industry to locate and develop within the County.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
11.1.7	Support initiatives for workforce development and workforce grants from the NC Department of Commerce.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Economic Development, County Administration
11.1.8	Invest in the development of industrial mega-sites.	The policy is the action. Pursue grants individually or as a region through partnerships to attract industry to occupy shell buildings ready to be upfit.	Ongoing	Economic Development, County Administration
11.1.9	Concentrate economic development efforts in identified locations along the Interstate 42 corridor.	The policy is the action; have interdepartmental communication regarding development and available services so that transparency exists and the ability to attract development is streamlined.	Ongoing	All applicable County Departments, Economic Development
11.1.10	Support applicable State and Federal programs regarding economic and community development, especially those programs related to expanded job opportunities and innovative industry.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Economic Development
11.1.11	Participate in regional economic development efforts and initiatives and recognize the benefits associated with such participation.	The policy is the action. Continue to be active in regional planning meetings and collaborate with other counties to pursue joint interest.	Ongoing	County Administration, Planning Department
11.1.12	Support the recruitment and siting of environmentally compatible industry and commercial establishments in areas that are already similarly developed or in public or private industrial parks to minimize the sacrifice of prime agricultural land for such development.	Establish expedited guidelines and approval for infill development.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
11.1.13	Support Craven County Schools and institutions of higher learning and skilled trade schools as the primary educators and developers of the workforce.	The policy is the action. Actively work to attract industry and business that utilizes the local talent and workforce of Craven County. Offer incentives to employers who employ a certain percentage of Craven County citizens.	Ongoing	County Administration, Board of Commissioners
11.1.14	Ensure adequate land is within appropriate land use classifications or zoning districts to support business and industry.	The policy is the action. Be aware of land use and land usage decisions so that a certain type of valuable land isn't lost to other types of development which prevents the highest or most desirable use for such identified land as indicated on the future land use map.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners

11: Tools for Managing Development

Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
HOUSING				
12.1.1	Adopt land use regulations related to minimum standards of fitness for structures.	Adopt regulations based on Article 12 of NCGS Chapter 160D to address blighted structures and abandoned structures within Craven County.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
12.1.2	Address abandoned residential and commercial structures within Craven County in accordance with the provisions set forth by NCGS 160D.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
12.1.3	Adopt land use regulations that govern the use of residential land regarding solid waste and public nuisances.	Periodically update the existing ordinances related to nuisances and waste within the County to ensure that responsible and effective regulations are still in place.	Short Term	Planning Department
12.1.4	Apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Neighborhood Revitalization and North Carolina Housing Finance Agency funds.	The policy is the action; continue to pursue CDBG funding either internally or through a contract.	Ongoing	Planning Department, County Administration, Board of Commissioners
12.1.5	Continue to enforce the State of North Carolina Building Code.	The policy is the action; ensure that Craven County continues to employ licensed NC Building Inspectors.	Ongoing	County Administration, Human Resources
12.2.1	Recreational vehicles should not be used or accepted as an alternative to affordable housing.	Adopt land use regulations related to the usage of RV's	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
12.2.2	Develop land use regulations that include provisions for flexible zoning districts that encourage a variety of housing types to occur within the districts.	Ensure that zoning districts allow for multiple densities and flexibility in lot size and infrastructure locations and provision to make affordable housing more feasible. Incentivize developments to include certain percentages of affordable housing within the development.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
12.2.3	Support housing projects within Craven County that receive Federal funding to provide housing that is affordable.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Board of Commissioners
12.2.4	Limit zoning districts that exclusively permit single-family dwellings, rely on homeowners and property owners' associations to regulate single-family dwellings and large lot sizes. Provide for districts that allow for flexibility in lot size and housing type.	The policy is the action.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
12.2.5	Allow for rental rooms within single-family residential dwellings as an affordable option for housing.	Introduce responsible regulations that outline methods for multi-family living situations, multi-tenants, rental rooms, and other forms of non-traditional housing.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
12.2.6	Encourage the location of housing in proximity to major employers within the County.	Work toward ensuring that adequate infrastructure exists within the vicinity of major employers so that housing is a possibility.	Short Term	County Administration



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
12.2.7	Provide expedited review or approval for developments that prioritize workforce and affordable housing.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
12.2.8	Introduce land use regulations that require for a determined percentage of new residential development to be reserved for persons of low to moderate income and within an affordable price range of the median annual household income of Craven County.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
12.2.9	Support workforce and affordable housing occurring in existing structures as a repurposed use of the structure, when appropriate.	Pursue CDBG grants and other grants that involve structural revitalization for the purpose of housing, encourage infill redevelopment.	Ongoing	Planning Department, County Administration
12.2.10	Pursue State and Federal grants for the repurpose/reuse of structures that present the potential of being upfit for housing.	The policy is the action	Ongoing	Planning Department, County Administration
12.2.11	Workforce and affordable housing should not occur in isolated areas with limited accessibility or resources in proximity to the development nor shall it be located in areas that present environmental threats to residents.	Encourage housing to occur in locations that will best meet the needs of the residents. This effort can be achieved by ensuring that adequate infrastructure and transportation exist in areas. Require natural buffers or transitional land uses to occur in areas that prevent environmental threats.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
12.3.1	Develop land use regulations that provide recommended standards and encouraged direction for the development of communities with ample open space, amenities, and lot size/ square footage requirements.	The policy is the action.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
12.3.2	Promote and support pocket neighborhoods and communities designed in a manner to increase walkability and multi-modal transit.	The policy is the action. This effort can be achieved through responsible land use regulations.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
12.3.3	Support the use of accessory dwelling units.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
12.3.4	Through land use regulations, allow for special allowances related to developments that place emphasis upon the clustering of lots or maximum square footage for residential structures.	The policy is the action.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners

11: Tools for Managing Development

Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
12.3.5	Establish land use regulations where sewer is available, especially in agricultural areas that allow for lot size reduction to preserve agricultural land and locate homes in a block or grid system which in turn should enhance the sense of community and preserve valuable land.	Amend the subdivision regulations to allow for these types of divisions to take place.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
12.3.6	Encourage neighborhood developments to incorporate single-family, multi-family, townhouse, rental, etc. to develop neighborhoods that accommodate for all persons of Craven County.	Incentivize mixed-use developments to occur.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department
LAND USE				
13.1.1	Encourage commercial development to occur in areas that serve close by residential development and does not infringe upon one's ability to enjoy their property or life. Commercial nodes should be supported.	Require landscaping and sidewalk networks linking residential and commercial use. Limit strip commercial development through zoning regulations.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.1.2	The subdivision of land should occur in a manner that preserves as much as possible the natural environment and existing features within the County.	Allow for density bonuses when certain percentages of natural areas are preserved.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.1.3	Establish land use regulations that require a minimum percentage of the total land developed to be dedicated as open space.	The policy is the action.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.1.4	Encourage residential development to occur outside of prime agricultural areas or limit as much as possible the number of developable lots recorded within lands as determined to have the ability to produce high agricultural yields.	The policy is the action; include standards for transfer of development rights to allow for this to take place.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.1.5	Develop regulations that limit or eliminate the number of lots that can be recorded within or adjacent to natural hazard areas or environmentally sensitive areas.	The policy is the action. Mitigate against loss through regulation of development within the SFHA.	Short Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.1.6	Residential development should not be approved that has the potential of presenting hazards to safety or health or development that negatively affects a select group of people.	Evaluate proposals for the impacts that they create on the environment and the people that live adjacent to the proposed development.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
13.1.7	An examination of the resources to be lost should occur prior to development approval so that the County may determine if the decision is sustainable for the future.	Perform a cost benefit analysis and a land use loss analysis to specifically identify what elements are most threatened and lose the ability to sustainably exist.	Ongoing	Planning Department
13.1.8	Allow for lower-density residential development when utilities are not in existence and when it is determined to not result in the loss of Craven County to continue to provide a sustainable future or result in the significant loss of valuable resources due to the nature of sprawling low-density development.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
13.2.1	Craven County will not unreasonably displace families or require building demolition.	The policy is the action. Provide for hardship accommodations for instances of natural disaster or other acts of God.	Ongoing	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.2.2	Utilize State and Federal grants for repurpose and reuse.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	County Administration, Planning Department
13.2.3	Allow for transportation routes and improvements within the transportation networks to determine where valuable repurpose/reuse areas may exist.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
13.2.4	Encourage infill development to take place by offering incentives and expedited review for infill development proposals.	The policy is the action	Ongoing	Planning Department
13.2.5	Consider flexibility in zoning districts when a direct result would be revitalization or repurposing of an area within the County, that does not result in the loss of valuable agricultural lands or environmentally important areas.	Develop zoning districts that allow for wide ranges of use when repurposing and revitalizing structures. Be flexible in a structure's ability to be used for something completely different than what it was originally constructed for.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.3.1	Establish zoning districts that distribute permitted uses throughout the County in a responsible manner and in accordance with the contents of the Craven County CAMA Land Use Plan.	The policy is the action.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.3.2	Design regulations to not oppress the people of Craven County but to protect them.	Educate citizens through workshops and seminars on the purpose of the zoning regulations so that they truly understand how they will operate and why the County is choosing to enforce them.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department
13.3.3	Incorporate regulations for specific uses of land that threaten one's quality of life, safety and health.	The policy is the action.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Emergency Services

11: Tools for Managing Development

Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
13.3.4	Educate the citizens of Craven County on the purpose of a UDO and what role it plays in relation to this plan, land use decisions, development, and daily life.	The policy is the action. Provide virtual and in person learning opportunities as well as education materials available throughout the County on multiple platforms.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department
13.3.5	Ensure that compliance with NCGS 160D is achieved.	The policy is the action. In the event that Craven County pursues the implementation of zoning, have the UDO reviewed by the County Attorney to ensure legality.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, County Attorney
13.3.6	Design the UDO in a manner to contribute to the overall appearance of Craven County.	The policy is the action. Ensure that landscape, buffering, and solid waste standards are incorporated.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.3.7	Ensure the UDO is comprehensible and easily applied to development requests and uses of land within Craven County.	The policy is the action.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.3.8	The UDO shall require public amenities, open space, and access for certain development types.	The policy is the action.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.3.9	Include landscape and design standards for certain types of development within certain zoning districts.	The policy is the action. For commercial and industrial uses, these standards should be required.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.4.1	Carefully examine proposals for use of land and consider the potential impacts to the environment and adjacent land uses.	Develop a Technical Review Committee to evaluate all impacts, consider the impacts environmentally and the consistency with the CAMA Land Use Plan.	Ongoing	Planning Department
13.4.2	Encourage development to not infringe upon identified environmentally sensitive areas.	The policy is the action. Establish additional buffers and setbacks beyond State and Federal requirements from these areas to assist in their preservation.	Ongoing, Short Term	Planning Department
13.4.3	Industries that create severe environmental impacts due to extreme emissions of smoke, dust, glare, noise, odor, and vibrations, as well as those that deal primarily with hazardous products such as explosives, should not be located within Craven County. This policy does not apply to such industries that are part of the agricultural economy of Craven County or those that directly support MCAS Cherry Point.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	County Administration, Planning Department, Board of Commissioners
13.4.4	Defer to the NC Department of Environmental Quality and their land use guidance when determining the potential environmental impact of land uses.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department
13.4.5	Comply with CAMA regulations regarding land use and the environmental impacts associated with particular uses.	The policy is the action.	Ongoing	Planning Department



Policy #	Policy	Implementing Action	Timeframe	Responsible Party
13.4.6	Adopt land use regulations designed to mitigate the environmental impacts of certain land uses.	The policy is the action. Periodically review certain events and common impacts experienced to research and determine best practice for mitigation.	Ongoing	Planning Department
13.4.7	Prevent intense industrial use and other noxious types of commercial or industrial use from occurring in direct proximity to residential use in an effort to protect human safety and health.	Establish land use regulations that prevent these occurrences.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners
13.4.8	Adopt land use regulations that include provisions for buffers and other natural breaks between uses to promote human and environmental health and safety.	The policy is the action.	Short Term, Medium Term	Planning Department, Planning Board, Board of Commissioners

11: Tools for Managing Development

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APPENDIX A. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PLAN

Introduction

Craven County has initiated the preparation of an updated CAMA Land Use Plan (CAMA LUP) for the Craven County planning jurisdiction. The final document will serve as a comprehensive plan for future public investment to achieve the County's overall vision. The intent of this project is to draft a plan that will maintain the positive attributes of the existing Plan, while identifying new and strategic development goals and policies, and new and strategic public initiatives supported by the community.

Recognizing that a collaborative effort with the public is essential, the initial step in the planning process is the adoption of this Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) by the Craven County Board of Commissioners. Approval of the CPP was accomplished on March 18, 2024.

Responsibility

The Craven County Board of Commissioners will appoint an Ad Hoc Work Group comprised of Board of Commissioners and Planning Board members to supervise the preparation of the draft CAMA Land Use Plan. The County's staff and consultant will serve in an advisory capacity to the Ad Hoc Work Group. The updated CAMA Land Use Plan will be drafted by Insight Planning & Development, the County's consultant. Upon recommendation of the Planning Board, final approval will be by the Craven County Board of Commissioners.

Meetings

All meetings will be conducted in an open format which will encourage public involvement/engagement. The Ad Hoc Work Group will conduct up to four (4) work sessions to prepare the draft CAMA Land Use Plan Update. At a minimum, the following meetings will be conducted throughout the plan preparation process:

- ✚ Up to four (4) work sessions with the Ad Hoc Work Group will be conducted. At each meeting, the location, date, and time of the succeeding meeting will be determined.
- ✚ Three (3) community meetings to identify key issues and concerns, develop a plan vision statement, and participate in a future land use map exercise.
- ✚ A mid-project joint Board of Commissioners/Planning Board meeting to report overall project status and to obtain public input on progress to date. This meeting will provide a summary of all data and issues identification obtained to date in the process.
- ✚ Submit the plan to the Ad Hoc Work Group for work session and consideration prior to submittal to the Division of Coastal Management.
- ✚ Following review and comments by the Division of Coastal Management, submit the plan to the Planning Board for review and recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for adoption of the CAMA Land Use Plan.
- ✚ Present the final plan to the Board of Commissioners for public hearing and adoption.

A: Citizen Participation Plan

Public Notification

All meetings of the Ad Hoc Work Group, Planning Board, and Board of Commissioners are conducted in an open and transparent manner. All meetings are open to the public and Craven County citizens are encouraged to attend and participate.

To ensure public awareness of the CAMA LUP project, meeting times and dates, project updates, and public participation opportunities, and to increase ease of access to CAMA LUP-specific information, the following are proposed:

-  The project team will create and maintain an interactive CAMA LUP-dedicated website to both collect and disseminate information. The website will be especially valuable in reaching out to non-resident property owners. Project progress, public notifications, and the draft plan will be posted on this website for ease of public review and comment.
-  Advertisements will be placed on the specialized CAMA LUP-dedicated website, the County's website, the County's social media pages, and posted on County bulletin boards and CTV-10 Craven County Community Television.
-  Sign-up sheets will be placed in the Craven County Administration Building and Planning & Inspections Department in the front lobby and at all Ad Hoc Work Group meetings for interested persons and groups to register to receive electronic messaging, including meeting notifications, updated information, and opportunities for review of the CAMA Land Use Plan Update. Similar opportunities for registration will be placed on the project website. Staff will transmit list updates to the consultant on an at least bi-weekly basis. Individuals who place their names on this list will be sent notices announcing meeting times for review of the CAMA Land Use Plan Update.
-  The County will utilize email and electronic communications on all aspects of the public participation program to notify the public via distribution lists, civic groups, other interested groups, and organizations.

Dissemination of Information

The following procedures will be utilized to ensure the availability of information:

-  Copies of the draft CAMA LUP will be available for public review in the Planning and Inspections Department, 2828 Neuse Boulevard, New Bern, NC.
-  Using the sites and methods of public notification provided in the Public Notification section, the availability of the draft plan will be publicly announced, and the draft document will be posted for public review and/or printing. Information regarding the location of the online document will be included in all published notices of Ad Hoc Work Group meetings and communicated at all meetings of the Board of Commissioners.
-  As they are ready for discussion, sections of the draft plan will be provided to the Ad Hoc Work Group prior to any meetings at which they will be discussed. Ad Hoc Work Group meeting materials, as well as Planning Board and Board of Commissioners meeting materials, will all be posted on the project website and linked to the County's social media pages for public information and review.



Public Comment

Throughout the process, the public will have the following opportunities for input:

- ✚ At each Ad Hoc Work Group meeting, time will be allocated for public comment, both written and oral, which includes the opportunities for questions.
- ✚ At any time during the preparation of the draft plan, the public may submit written or email comments. Information on how to submit such comments will be provided on public notices and advertisements, social media pages, and websites.
- ✚ The mid-project status meeting, Ad Hoc Work Group meetings, community meetings, and public hearing will all provide additional opportunities for public input and questions.

Schedule

The CAMA Land Use Plan planning process will utilize the following schedule:

Phase	Project Task	Timeframe
Phase I:	• Issue Notice to Proceed	January 2024
	• Project Kickoff	February – March 2024
Phase II:	• Plan Development/Public Engagement	April – December 2024
Phase III:	• Completion, Review, and Adoption	January – October 2025

NOTE: This schedule may be subject to change as project milestones are achieved.