



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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Town of Granite Falls

DECEMBER 2021

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

TOWN COUNCIL

Barry Hayes	Mike Mackie	Martin Townsend
Dr. Caryl Burns	Jim Mackie	
Larry Knight	Tracy Townsend	

PLANNING BOARD

Scott Reid	Rita Church	John Coffey (Alternate)
Patrick Barker	Rob Howard	David Kirby (Alternate)
Elizabeth Carswell	Deborah Chernesky (Alternate)	

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Scott Reid	Dr. Caryl Burns	Ed Mangan
Martin Townsend	Rita Church	Philip Shows
Patrick Barker	Lee Huffman	Courtney Wright

TOWN STAFF

Administration

Jerry Church, Town Manager

Planning & Development

Greg Wilson, Town Planner

GRANITE FALLS RESIDENTS

A special thanks to the residents and business owners that participated in this process to plan and shape the future of Granite Falls.

PREPARED BY

Western Piedmont Council of Governments



Creative Regional Solutions Since 1968

* Note: the demographic section of this plan was updated in June 2022, at the request of the Council to include the recently released 2020 Census data.

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Introduction

A large, white, stylized decorative graphic element in the bottom right corner. It features a central circle containing the number '1', with ornate, swirling lines extending upwards and outwards from the top and sides of the circle.

1

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A comprehensive plan is a clear-sighted, thorough, and community-driven vision for the future of the Town. Comprehensive plans are required by state law for towns that have land use regulations, as decisions regarding these regulations (from rezoning decisions to transportation regulations to policies governing the use and subdivision of land) must be in line with an adopted comprehensive plan. Comprehensive plans do more than check a box, however, they provide a roadmap and a vision for how a community wants to evolve. Granite Falls will experience significant change over the coming years, primarily due to the widening of Highway 321 and the Town's proximity to Hickory, the Catawba River, and Interstate 40. Granite Falls Town Council and Granite Falls Staff set the creation of this Plan in motion by partnering with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to assist in its development.

The Plan includes a comprehensive "snapshot" of the Town's current demographics and assets, and includes recommendations for investments and priorities over the coming years for all aspects of the Town, including parks and recreation, land use planning, transportation, natural and economic resources, and more. This document can be referenced by Town Council, Planning Board, and Staff to aid in developing regulations, deciding rezoning cases, developing capital improvement plans, applying for grants, developing its transportation network, extending water and sewer infrastructure, amending its zoning ordinance, drafting its budget, and planning for parks. It is also a ready reference for each Granite Falls citizen to read, plan and revisit over the coming years. By following this Plan, Granite Falls will continue to create the conditions that encourage orderly growth and economic development well into the

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Granite Falls Plan was developed by the Granite Falls Advisory Committee, a 10-person group consisting of Planning Board members, Town Council, Town Manager, Town Planning Staff, and interested citizens. The Committee conducted a 12-month community outreach, education, discussion and strategic thinking process which resulted in the creation of a draft version of this Plan. The draft version was presented to the Town Council. At the heart of the Plan is a series of recommended growth management strategies in the areas of land use, transportation, public services, economic development, and natural and cultural resources. Upon adoption of this Plan by the Town Council, the Planning Board and the Town's planning staff will be charged with prioritizing and implementing the strategies proposed in this document.

The Town Plan Advisory Committee consisted of:

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS	
Scott Reid – Chair	
Martin D. Townsend – Vice-Chair	
Patrick Barker	
Dr. Caryl Burns	
Rita Church	
Lee Huffman	
Ed Mangan	
Philip Shows	
Courtney Wright	
Jerry Church	
Greg Wilson	

CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Several meetings were held to provide opportunities for citizen involvement in the development of this Plan. Early in the process, a public meeting was held to gather citizen input. This public input meeting was held in the Town of Granite Falls Council Room. At the meeting, participants were asked to list the Town's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. An online public survey was also conducted to gather additional public comments. The results of the public survey are provided in Appendix A.

There was a pause in the planning process during 2020 due to the Covid 19 pandemic, but the advisory committee resumed meeting in January 2021. Near the conclusion of the planning process, a final public meeting was held to provide citizens with the opportunity to evaluate whether the draft plan reflected their concerns and interests. The final public meeting was held at Shuford Recreation Center on July 21, 2021. At the final public meeting, citizens reviewed the maps and recommendations in the draft plan and provided additional input. A formal public hearing held at the Town Council meeting provided additional opportunities for citizen input.

THE APPROVAL PROCESS

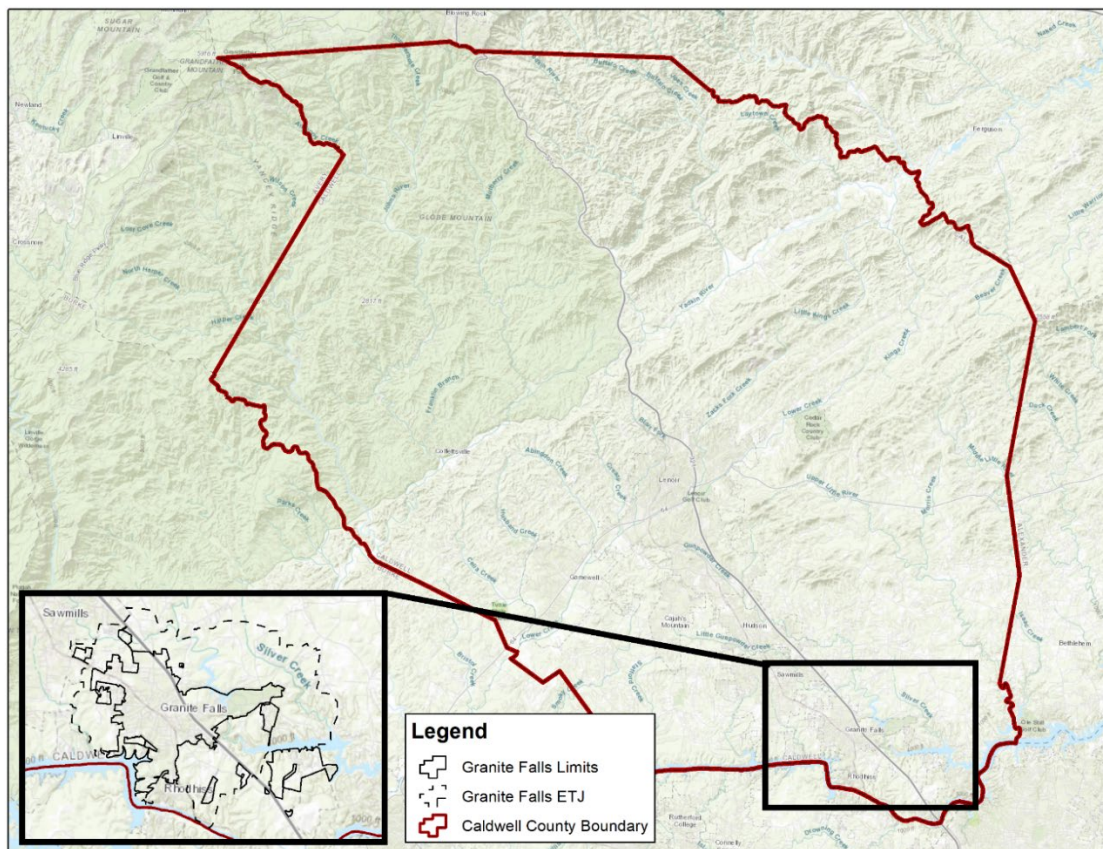
The Granite Falls Advisory Committee was presented the draft plan on October 6, 2021. There was a unanimous decision to approve the document and to send a recommendation for approval of the plan to the Planning Board and then to Town Council. The Planning Board reviewed and unanimously recommended the plan for Council approval during the October 26, 2021 Planning Board Meeting. The plan was then reviewed by the Town Council, and a public hearing was called to discuss the adoption of the draft plan at the special Council meeting on November 15, 2021. The plan was approved by the Town Council on December 6, 2021.

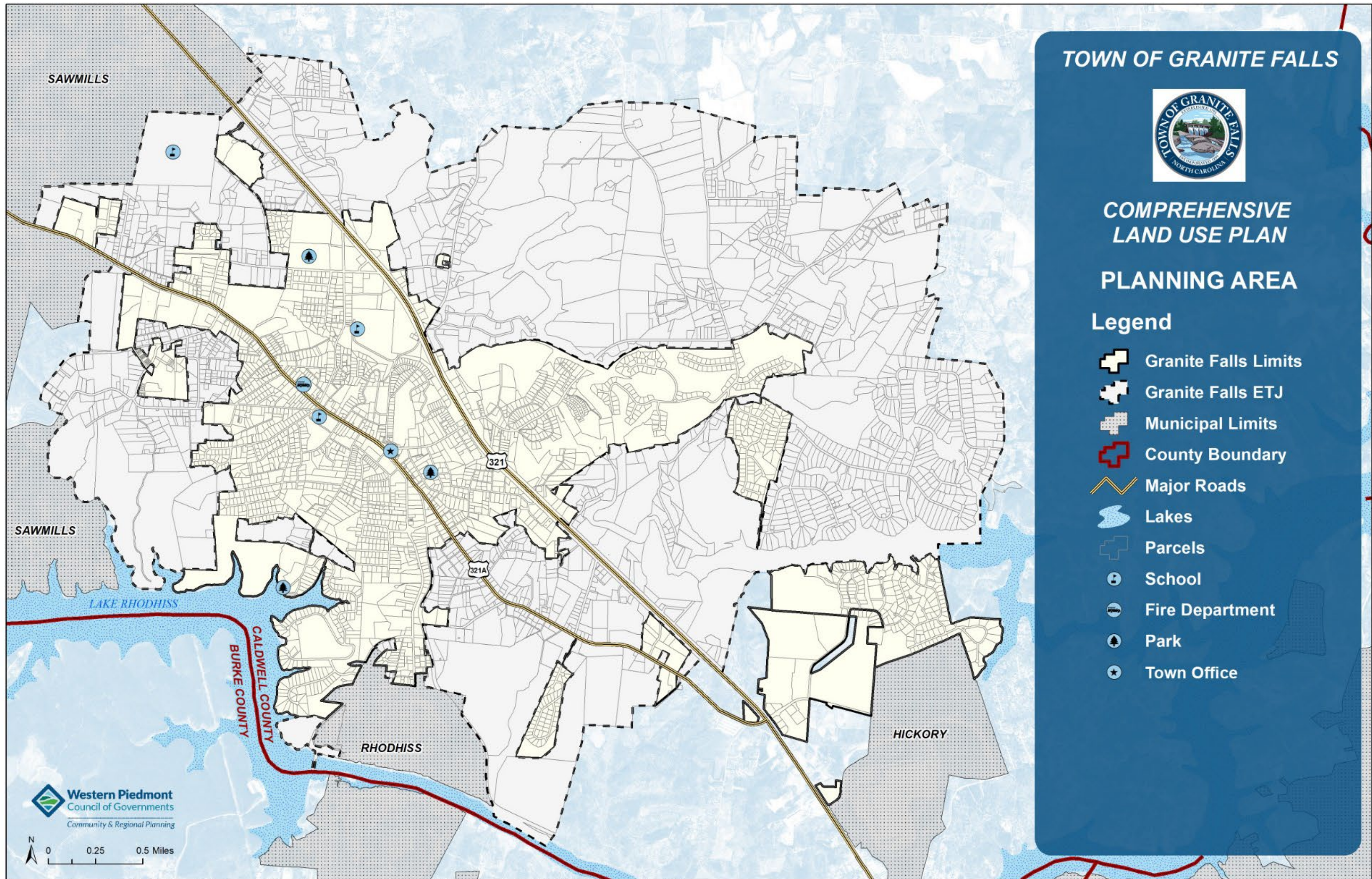
PLANNING AREA

The geographic area included in this Plan includes land located within the Town's limits and Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJs) (See Figure 1-1: Planning Area).

NEXT STEPS

Upon adoption of this Plan, appropriate changes will be made to the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances, and the Future Land Use section of the plan should be referenced when considering rezoning requests. Comprehensive plans are intended to be living documents. Revisions of this Plan may be necessary based on state law and changing economic conditions. The Planning Board and Town planning staff should review this document periodically to evaluate its effectiveness and to determine if revisions are necessary.





TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS




COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

PLANNING AREA

Legend

- Granite Falls Limits
- Granite Falls ETJ
- Municipal Limits
- County Boundary
- Major Roads
- Lakes
- Parcels
- School
- Fire Department
- Park
- Town Office

Demographics

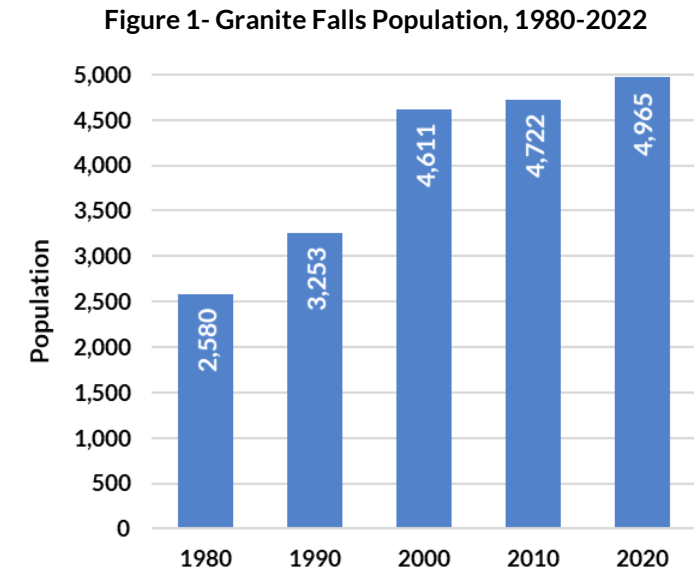
A decorative graphic featuring a large, stylized number '2' in a dark blue color. The number is centered within a white circle that has a thin dark blue outline. The circle is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the image. Above the circle, there are white, flowing, cloud-like or smoke-like shapes that extend upwards and outwards. The background of the entire image is a photograph of a waterfall cascading over a concrete dam structure, surrounded by dense green trees and foliage. The image has a blue tint. The number '2' is the central focus of the graphic.

2

DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION

The Census count in 1980 for Granite Falls was 2,580 (Figure 1). As of 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau shows that the population of Granite Falls is 4,965. Table 1 shows population changes between 2000 and 2020 for Granite Falls, Caldwell County, the Hickory Metropolitan Statistical Area or MSA (Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba Counties), North Carolina and the United States. Granite Falls added 111 people between 2000 and 2010, an increase of 2.4%. The percentage growth was significantly lower than the Caldwell County (6.8%), the Hickory MSA (6.5%) the North Carolina (18.5%) or the US (9.7%) population growth rate. Estimates from the US Census Bureau indicate that Granite Falls lost population between 2010 and 2020. The 2020



Source: 1980-2022 Census, US Census Bureau and WPCOG Data Center, 2022.

Granite Falls population estimate (4,965) is slightly higher than the Census 2000 population count (4,611). Since 2010, Caldwell County experienced a population loss of -2,377 people, a 2.9% decrease. From 2010 to 2020, the population of the Hickory MSA decreased by just 0.1%. North Carolina's population grew 9.5% between 2010 and 2020 to 10.4 million. The number of persons in the United States has increased 5.3% from 308.8 million in 2010 to 331.5 million in 2020.

Table 1 - Population Comparison, 2000-2017							
Location	2000 Census	2010 Census	Change 2000-2010	% Inc.	2020 Estimate	Change 2010-2020	% Inc.
Granite Falls	4,611	4,722	111	2.4	4,965	243	5.0
Caldwell County	77,708	83,029	5,321	6.8	80,652	-2,377	-2.9
Hickory MSA	341,851	365,497	23,646	6.5	365,276	-221	-0.1
NC	8,049,313	9,535,483	1,486,170	18.5	10,439,388	903,905	9.5
US	281,421,906	308,745,538	27,323,632	9.7	331,449,281	22,703,743	5.3

Sources: 2000, 2010 and 2020 Census, US Census Bureau

Whites are the largest race group in Granite Falls. Over 86% of the Town's population is White (Table 2). Between 2010 and 2020, however, the number of Whites decreased by 119 persons to 4,297. Hispanic is the Town's largest minority group (6.8% of Granite Falls' population in 2020). The Town's Hispanic population increased from 247 persons in 2010 to 337 in 2020. Since the 2010 Census, Granite Falls' two or more population has increased by 258 to 329.

Table 2 - Granite Falls Population by Race/Ethnic Group, 2010-2017						
Race/Ethnic Group	2010 Census	% of Pop.	2020 Census	% of Pop.	Change 2010 to 2020	% Change 2010 to 2020
White	4,416	93.5	4,297	86.5	-119	-2.7
African American	81	1.7	166	3.3	85	104.9
American Indian	8	0.2	17	0.3	9	112.0
Asian American	32	0.7	39	0.7	7	22.9
Two or More Races	71	1.5	329	6.6	258	363.4
Some Other Race	144	2.4	115	2.3	1	0.1
Hispanic (Any Race)	247	5.2	337	6.8	90	25.5
White, (Not Hispanic)	4,304	91.1	4,628	94.0	-159	-3.7

Source: 2010 and 2020 Census, US Census Bureau.

Age group population data for Granite Falls from 2010 to the 2016-2020 ACS is displayed in Table 3. Some age groups gained population between 2010 and 2016-2020, while others experienced declines. The older age groups in Granite Falls have had the some of the most significant population gains since 2010 due to the aging of the “Baby Boomers.” The number of people in the 65 to 74 age group, for example, grew by 190 between 2010 and 2016-2020 to 571 persons. The population of 75 to 84 cohort increased 64.8% from 199 in 2010 to 328 in 2016-2020.

Table 3 - Granite Falls Population by Age Group, 2010-2017				
Age Group	2010 Census	2016-2020 ACS Estimate	Change 2010 to 2016-2020 ACS	% Change 2010 to 2016-2022 ACS
Under 5 Years	332	310	-22	-6.6
5 to 9 Years	305	249	56	18.4
10 to 14 Years	317	311	-6	-1.9
15 to 19 Years	323	205	-118	-36.5
20 to 24 Years	269	524	255	94.8
25 to 34 Years	531	522	-9	1.7
35 to 44 Years	711	329	-382	-53.7
45 to 54 Years	699	622	-77	-11.0
55 to 59 Years	295	305	10	3.4
60 to 64 Years	273	257	-16	-5.9
65 to 74 Years	381	571	190	49.9
75 to 84 Years	199	328	129	64.8
85 Years and Over	87	86	-1	1.2
Total	4,722	4,659	-63	-1.3

Source: 2010 Census and 2016-2020 (5-Year) American Community Survey, US Census Bureau.

The largest population loss between 2010 and 2016-2020 was in the age 35 to 44 group due to the two economic recessions between 2000 and 2010 causing some younger people to leave Granite Falls. The population of the 35 to 44 group decreased from 711 in 2010 to 329 in 2016-2020. Besides population losses in the 35 to 44 age cohort, population declines also has occurred in two of the youngest age groups (the under age 5, and 10 to 14 cohorts). The population of the under age 5 and age 10 to 14 groups in Granite Falls decreased by 6.6% and 1.9% respectively between 2010 and 2016-2020. Significant population growth, meanwhile, occurred in the age 20 to 24 cohort. Persons in this group were born during good economic times in the 1990s. The number of persons in age 20 to 24 group grew from 269 in 2010 to 524 in 2016-2020.

The impacts of the increasing older labor force (age 45 to 64) and elderly (age 65 and older) populations on median age can be seen in Table 4. Between 2000 and 2010, the median age in Granite Falls rose by 3.4 years to 38.9. Granite Falls' median age has increased 8.7% since 2010 to 42.3 years. The Town's median age is currently less than the Caldwell County and Hickory MSA, but is slightly higher than North Carolina and the United States.

Table 4 - Median Age, 2000 Census to 2016-2020 ACS					
Location	2000	2010	% Change	2016-2020 ACS	% Change
Granite Falls	35.5	38.9	9.6	42.3	8.7
Caldwell County	37.5	41.3	10.1	45.1	5.3
Hickory MSA	36.7	40.5	10.4	43.2	5.9
NC	35.3	37.4	5.9	39.1	3.7
US	35.3	37.2	5.4	38.5	2.4

Source: 2000, 2010 Census and 2016-2020 (5 year) ACS, US Census Bureau.

Age group projections are not available for Granite Falls. The NC Office of State Management and Budget, however, has generated age group projections for Caldwell County (Table 5). The population of the 65 to 74, 75 to 84 and 85 years and over age cohorts will continue to grow over the next 20 years as the "baby boomers" grow older. The loss of 25 to 44 year-olds in the County from 2000 to 2010 will lead to population declines in the 55 to 59 and 60 to 64 groups through 2041. The population of the age 20 to 24 and 25 to 34 cohorts is anticipated to decrease by more than 13.3% and 1.8% respectively between 2021 and 2041.

Table 5 - Caldwell County Population by Age Group, 2020-2041				
Age Group	2021 Estimate	2041 Projection	Change 2021-41	% Change 2021-41
Under 5 Years	4,076	4,361	285	7.0
5 to 9 Years	4,157	4,682	525	12.6
10 to 14 Years	4,791	5,187	396	8.3
15 to 19 Years	5,224	5,373	149	2.9
20 to 24 Years	5,684	4,930	-754	-13.3
25 to 34 Years	10,362	10,178	-184	-1.8
35 to 44 Years	8,914	12,171	3,257	36.5
45 to 54 Years	11,773	12,112	339	2.9
55 to 59 Years	6,288	5,085	-1,183	-18.9
60 to 64 Years	5,942	5,388	-554	-9.3
65 to 74 Years	10,130	11,572	1,442	14.2
75 to 84 Years	5,465	8,398	2,933	53.7
85 Years and Over	1,726	3,181	1,455	84.3
Total	84,512	92,618	8,106	9.6

Source: NC Office of Management and Budget, 2022.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME

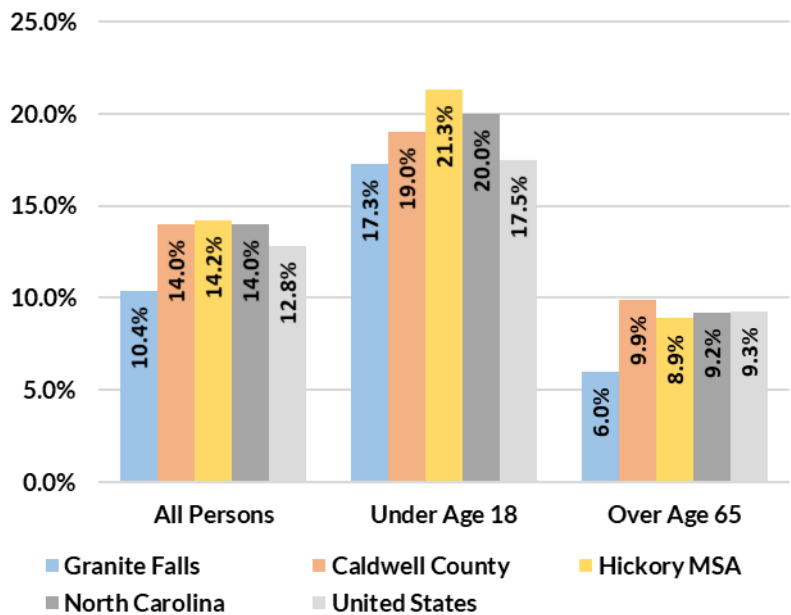
Granite Falls household income data from the 2016-2020 American Community Survey (ACS) is revealed in Table 6. Granite Falls has experienced an 44.1% increase in median household income from \$46,544 in 2006-2010 to \$67,069 in 2016-2020. Granite Falls 2020 median household income is \$20,975 more than the Caldwell County median (\$46,094), \$17,363 more than the Hickory MSA median (\$49,706), and is \$7,343 more than the State median (\$60,266). About 17% of Granite Falls' households in 2016-2020 earn less than \$25,000 a year while 24% of households earn between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per year. Another 38% of households had incomes between \$50,000 and \$100,000 per year. Twenty-one percent (21%) of Granite Falls' households make more than \$100,000 per year.

Households	2016-2020 ACS	% of Households
Total Households	1,782	100.0
Households Earning Less than \$25,000	311	17.5
Households Earning between \$25,000 and \$50,000	426	23.9
Households Earning between \$50,000 and \$100,000	669	37.5
Households Earning more than \$100,000	376	21.1
Median Household Income	\$67,069	

Source: 2016-2020 (5 Year) American Community Survey, US Census Bureau.

According to the Census website, the Bureau "uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty." Results from the 2020 American Community Survey for Granite Falls show that 471 persons, or 10.4% of the population, were at or below the poverty level (Figure 2). The Town's all persons poverty rate was slightly lower than the County's. The Granite Falls' poverty rate for children under age 18 was the lower than the Caldwell County, Hickory MSA or the North Carolina under age 18 poverty rate. The Granite Falls poverty rate for persons over age 65 was also lower than the Caldwell County, Hickory MSA or North Carolina over age 65 poverty rate.

Figure 2 - Poverty Rate Comparison, 2016-2020 ACS



Source: 2016-2020 (5 Year) American Community Survey, US Census Bureau.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment by industry of Granite Falls residents from the 2016-2020 ACS is shown in Table 7. About 22% of total employment in 2016-2020 was in the education and health care industry. Another 16.8% of employed persons worked in the manufacturing industry. About 12% of workers were in the retail trade industry and Arts/Entertainment/Recreation respectively.

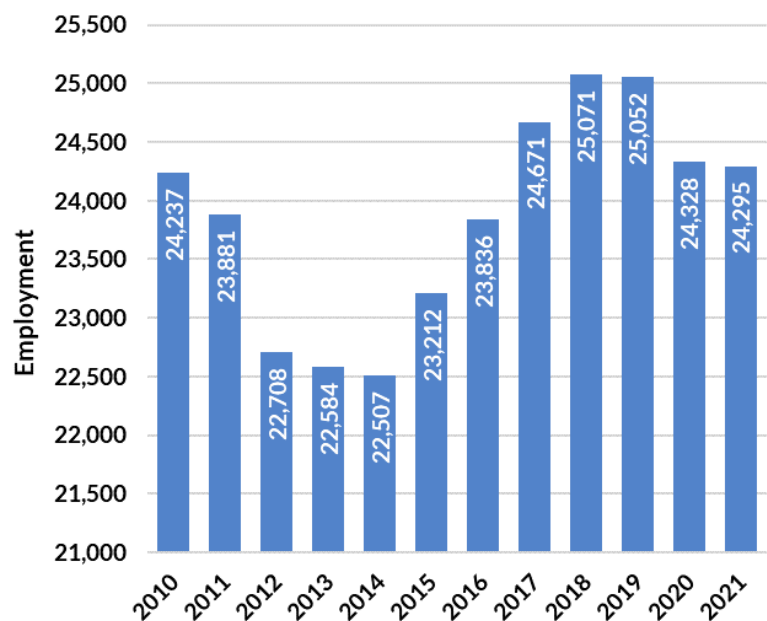
Table 7 - Granite Falls Employment by Industry, 2016-2020 ACS		
Industry	2016-2020 ACS	% of Employed Population
Employed Population	1,948	100.0
Agriculture	19	0.8
Construction	89	4.6
Manufacturing	328	16.8
Wholesale Trade	77	4.0
Retail Trade	232	11.9
Transportation/Warehousing/Utilities	96	4.9
Information	11	0.6
Finance/Insurance/ Real Estate	67	3.4
Professional Services	158	8.1
Education and Health Care	436	22.4
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation	229	11.8
Other Services	109	5.6
Public Administration	97	5.0

Source: 2016-2020 (5 Year) American Community Survey, US Census Bureau.

Between third quarter 2010 and third quarter 2014, Caldwell County employment fell from 24,237 to 22,507 (Figure 3). The economic recovery led to a 2,545 employment increase in Caldwell County between third quarter 2014 (22,507) and third quarter 2019 (25,052). Between third quarter 2019 and third quarter 2021, Caldwell County employment decreased by 756 positions to 24,296, more than likely due to the Covid-19 virus.

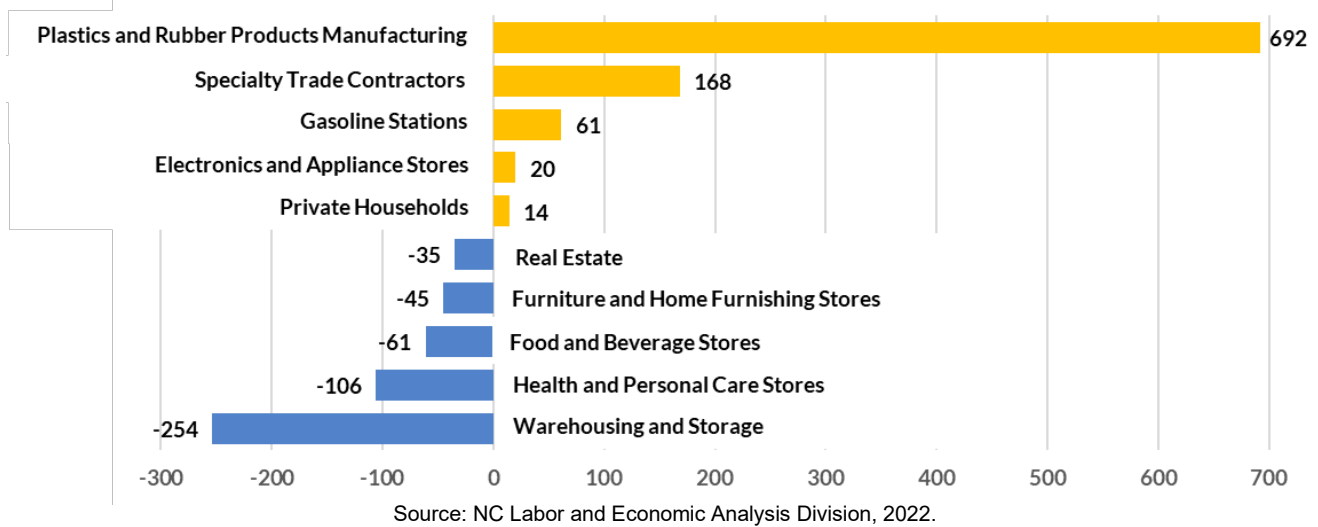
Since third quarter 2010, the biggest employment losses in Caldwell County have occurred in warehousing and storage (254), health and personal care stores (106) and food and beverage stores (61) (Figure 4). The largest employment gains occurred in plastics and rubber products manufacturing (682), specialty trade contractors (168) and gasoline stations (168) (Figure 4).

Figure 3 - Caldwell County Employment, Third Quarter 2010-2021



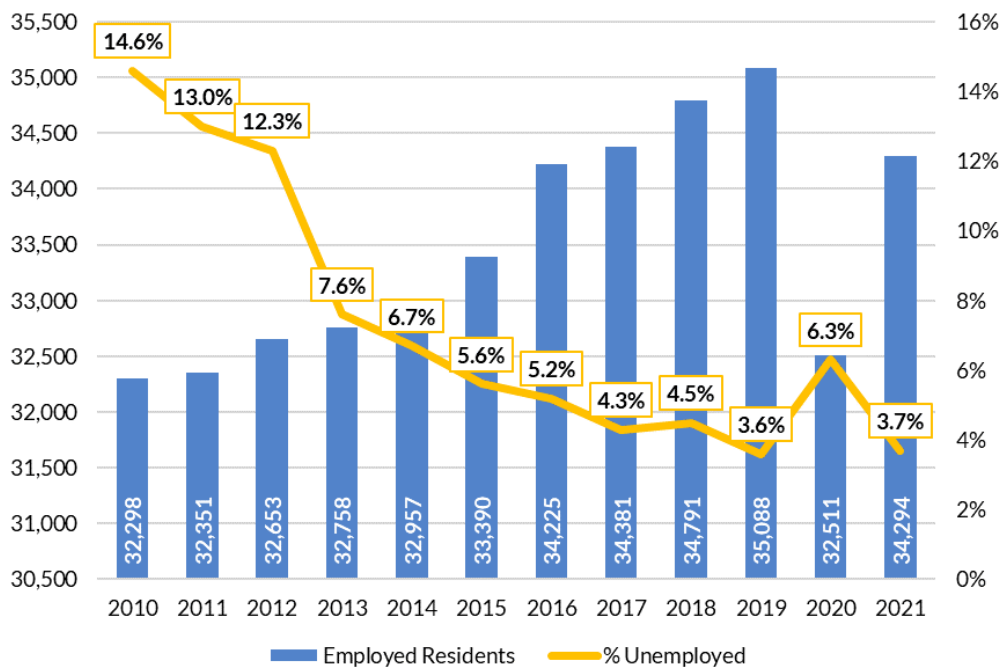
Source: NC Labor and Economic Analysis Division, 2022.

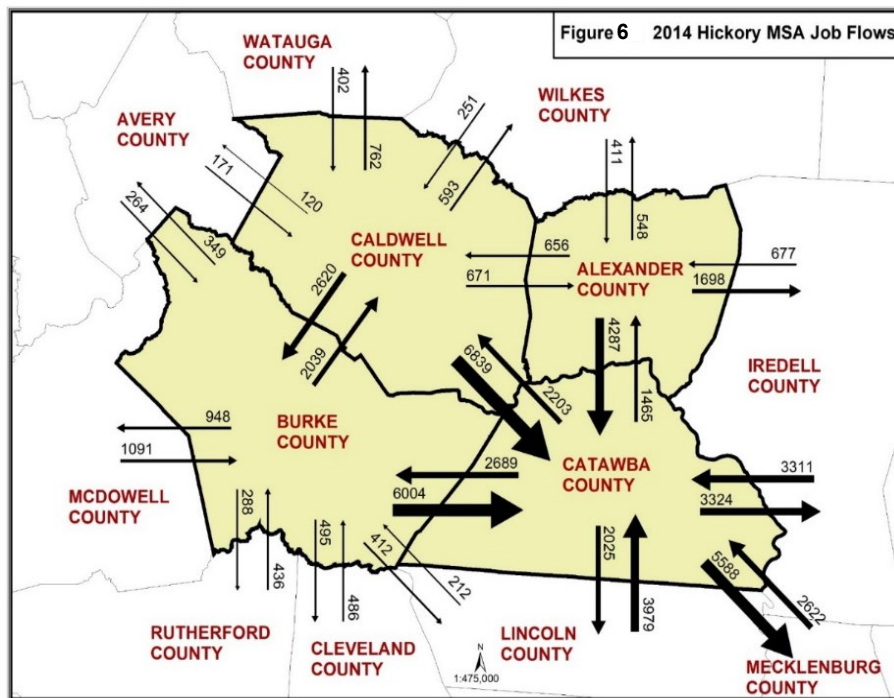
Figure 4
Caldwell County Employment Industry Sector Gains and Losses, 3rd Qtr. 2010-2021



One of Caldwell County's success stories over the past decade is the dramatic drop in its unemployment rate. The County's unemployment fell from 14.6% in January 2010 to 3.7% in January 2021 (Figure 5). The number of employed Caldwell County residents grew from 32,298 in January 2010 to 34,294 in January 2021. Also note that there are about 10,000 more working residents in Caldwell County than the number of Caldwell County jobs. This is due to out-commuting workers from Caldwell seeking employment, mainly in Catawba and Burke Counties (Figure 6)

Figure 5 - Caldwell County Employed Residents and Unemployment Rate January 2010 to January 2021

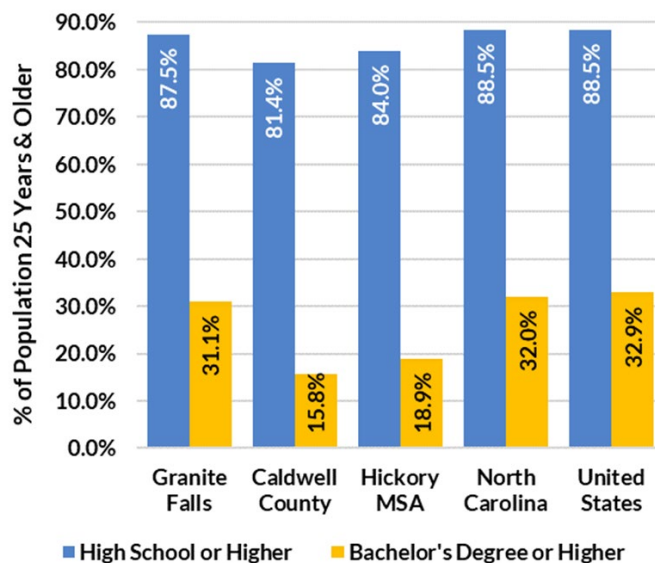




EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Educational attainment levels of the population age 25 and over for Granite Falls, Caldwell County, the Hickory MSA, North Carolina and the United States are shown in Figure 8. Data from the 2016-2020 ACS indicates that 87.5% of Granite Falls' population age 25 and older has an educational attainment level of high school (or equivalent) or higher with 31.1% having a bachelor's degree or higher. Granite Falls has a higher high school or higher (over age 25) educational attainment rate than Caldwell County and the Hickory MSA, and a lower high school or higher (over age 25) than North Carolina and the United States. Granite Falls had a higher Bachelor's Degree or higher (over age 25) education attainment percentage than Caldwell County or the Hickory MSA, but the Granite Falls percentage was slightly less than the North Carolina or United States rate.

Figure 7
Educational Attainment, 2016-2020 ACS

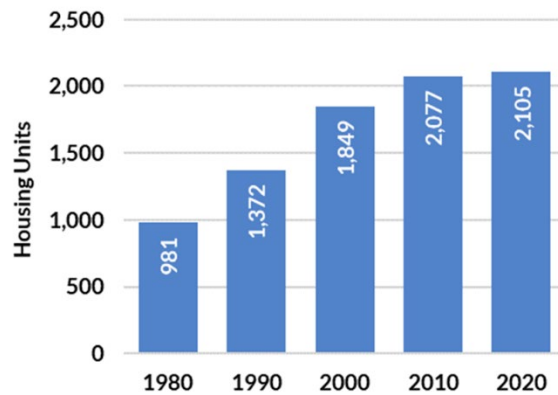


Source: 2016-2020 (5-Year) American Community Survey, US Census Bureau.

HOUSING

The number of housing units in Granite Falls increased from 981 in 1980 to 2,105 in 2020 (Figure 9). Most of the housing growth occurred between 1980 and 2010. From 2000 to 2010, about 250 housing units were added in Granite Falls (Table 8). Granite Falls' 13.7% percentage housing growth between 2000 and 2010 was slightly higher than Caldwell County and the Hickory MSA, but was lower than the State and nearly equal with the US. Granite Falls only added 28 housing units between 2010 and 2020. Granite Falls housing growth rate (1.3%) between 2010 and 2020 was higher than Caldwell County and the Hickory MSA, but was much lower than the State or the US.

Figure 8
Granite Falls Housing Units, 1980-2020



Source: 1980-2010 Census, US Census Bureau

Location	2000	2010	Change 2000-2010	% Inc.	2020	Change 2010-2020	% Inc.
Granite Falls	1,849	2,077	253	13.7	2,105	28	1.3
Caldwell County	33,430	37,659	4,229	12.7	36,931	-728	-1.9
Hickory MSA	144,874	162,613	17,739	12.2	163,160	547	0.3
NC	3,523,944	4,327,528	803,584	22.8	4,708,710	381,182	8.8
US	115,904,641	131,704,730	15,800,089	13.6	140,498,736	8,794,006	6.7

Source: 1980-2020 Census, US Census Bureau

Data in Table 9 reveals that the percentage of renter-occupied units in Granite Falls has slightly decreased between 1990 and the 2016-2020. The percentage of renter-occupied housing in Granite Falls fell from 37.5% of occupied units in 1990 to 31.9% in 2020. This is due to increase in single-family construction and annexation, particularly in the 1990s. As of 2016-2020, Granite Falls had a higher percentage of renter-occupied housing than Caldwell County, the Hickory MSA and North Carolina, and had the same percentage of renter-occupied as United States.

Location	1990 Census	2000 Census	2010 Census	2016-2020 ACS
Granite Falls	37.5	35.4	34.9	31.9
Caldwell County	25.2	25.1	26.1	26.7
Hickory MSA	25.3	25.7	26.6	26.6
NC	28.6	27.2	33.3	34.3
US	35.8	33.8	34.9	35.6

Source: 1990-2010 Census and 2016-2020 (5-Year) ACS, US Census Bureau.

Table 10 shows a significant increase in the median value of owner-occupied housing units in Granite Falls between the 2000 Census and the 2006-2010 ACS (32.9%). Median housing value rose another 35.4% to \$170,000 between the 2006-10 ACS and the 2016-2020 ACS. Median home values gained 37.3% and 27.8% in Caldwell County and the Hickory MSA respectively from 2006-10 to 2020. The 2016-2020 ACS Granite Falls median housing value was higher than Caldwell County or the Hickory MSA, but was less than the North Carolina and United States median value.

Table 10 Median Value of Owner-Occupied Units, 2000 to 2016-2020					
Location	2000	2006-2010 ACS	% Change	2016-2020 ACS	% Change
Granite Falls	\$94,500	\$125,600	32.9	\$170,000	35.4
Caldwell County	\$86,700	\$106,900	23.3	\$146,800	37.3
Hickory MSA	\$93,500	\$118,600	26.8	\$151,600	27.8
NC	\$108,300	\$149,100	37.7	\$202,200	35.6
US	\$119,600	\$188,400	57.5	\$251,700	33.6

Source: 2000 Census, 2006-2010 and 2016-2020 (5-Year) American Community Survey, US Census Bureau.

Transportation



3

TRANSPORTATION

Mobility and connectivity for all modes of transportation have been key to developing the Granite Falls Plan. Town citizens voiced a strong preference for maintaining Town character, while also designing a street network that is efficient, offers a range of route options for emergency access, and promotes a mix of land uses and pedestrian and bicycle options. This chapter analyzes the goals and future vision of the Granite Falls transportation network.

TRANSPORTATION/STREET DESIGN POLICIES

Transportation policies help guide improvements made to existing roadways and set standards for new transportation projects. Policies are in place that require streets to be planned, designed, operated, and maintained to enable safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities regardless of their mode of transportation. These improvements will be planned in conjunction with new development and redevelopment. The general locations of potential improvements are noted on Figure 3-1 and Figure 3-2.

Table 3-1: State and Regional Policies

Policy	Policy Description
Greenway Accommodations	In 2015, NCDOT approved guidelines for the accommodation of future greenways under bridges. The guidelines include a decision-making approach and cost-sharing recommendations.
Complete Streets	This policy requires planners and designers to include other modes of transportation, including bicycle and pedestrian, in all transportation projects in municipal areas under certain circumstances.
Bicycle Policy	This policy details guidelines for the planning, design, construction, maintenance and operation of bicycle facilities and accommodations.
Pedestrian Policy Guidelines	These policies allow NCDOT to work with local governments to add sidewalks in coordination with highway improvement projects. State funds are available on a sliding scale to match funds provided by the local government, which will be responsible for maintaining the sidewalk.
Administrative Action to Include Greenway Plans	In 1994, the NCDOT adopted administrative guidelines to consider greenways and greenway crossings during the highway planning process. This policy was incorporated so that critical corridors, which have been adopted by localities for future greenways, will not be severed by highway construction.
Bridge Policy	NCDOT's Bridge Policy establishes design elements for new and reconstructed bridges on the state road system. It includes requirements for sidewalks and bicycle facilities on bridges, including minimum handrail heights and sidewalk widths.

UPGRADE AREA THOROUGHFARES

The following thoroughfares are recommended for improvement and are included in the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and/or the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) jointly adopted in July 2018. Any projects currently funded include the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) identification number in parenthesis. Otherwise, the proposed project is recommended for the future, but not currently funded.

US 321 (U-4700A)

Funded widening of US 321 to a six-lane, divided facility with reduced-conflict intersections from US 70 in Hickory to US 321A in Granite Falls

US 321

Future widening of US 321 to a six-lane, divided facility from US 321A in Granite Falls to Lenoir, plus future interchange improvement at Falls Avenue

US 321 / Pinewood Road (R-5775)

Funded intersection improvements

US 321 / Dudley Shoals Road (U-6161)

Funded new southbound ramp onto US 321

US 321-A (U-6034)

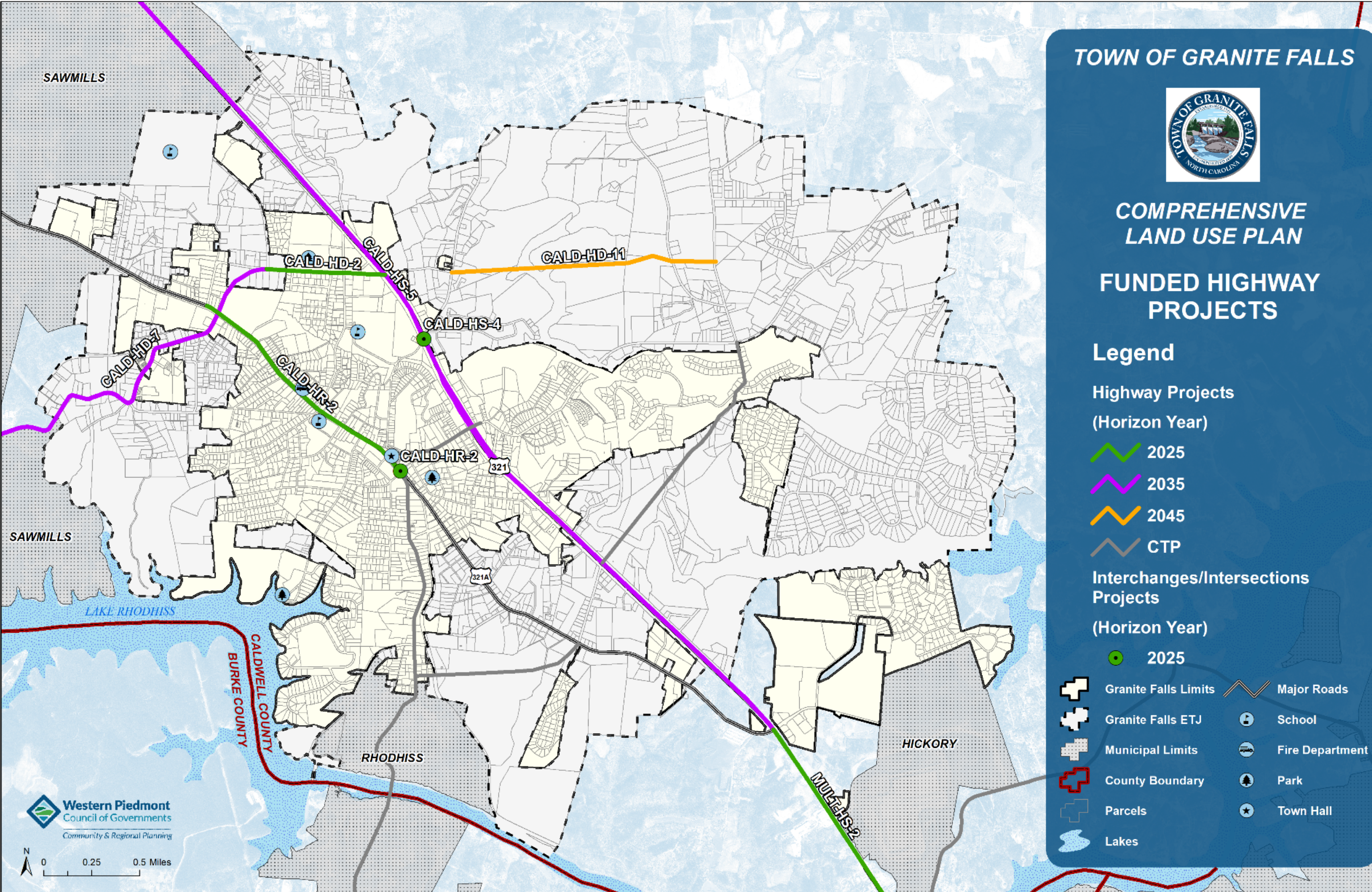
Funded upgrades from Pinewood Road to Duke Street, including new turn lanes and realignment of Dudley Avenue

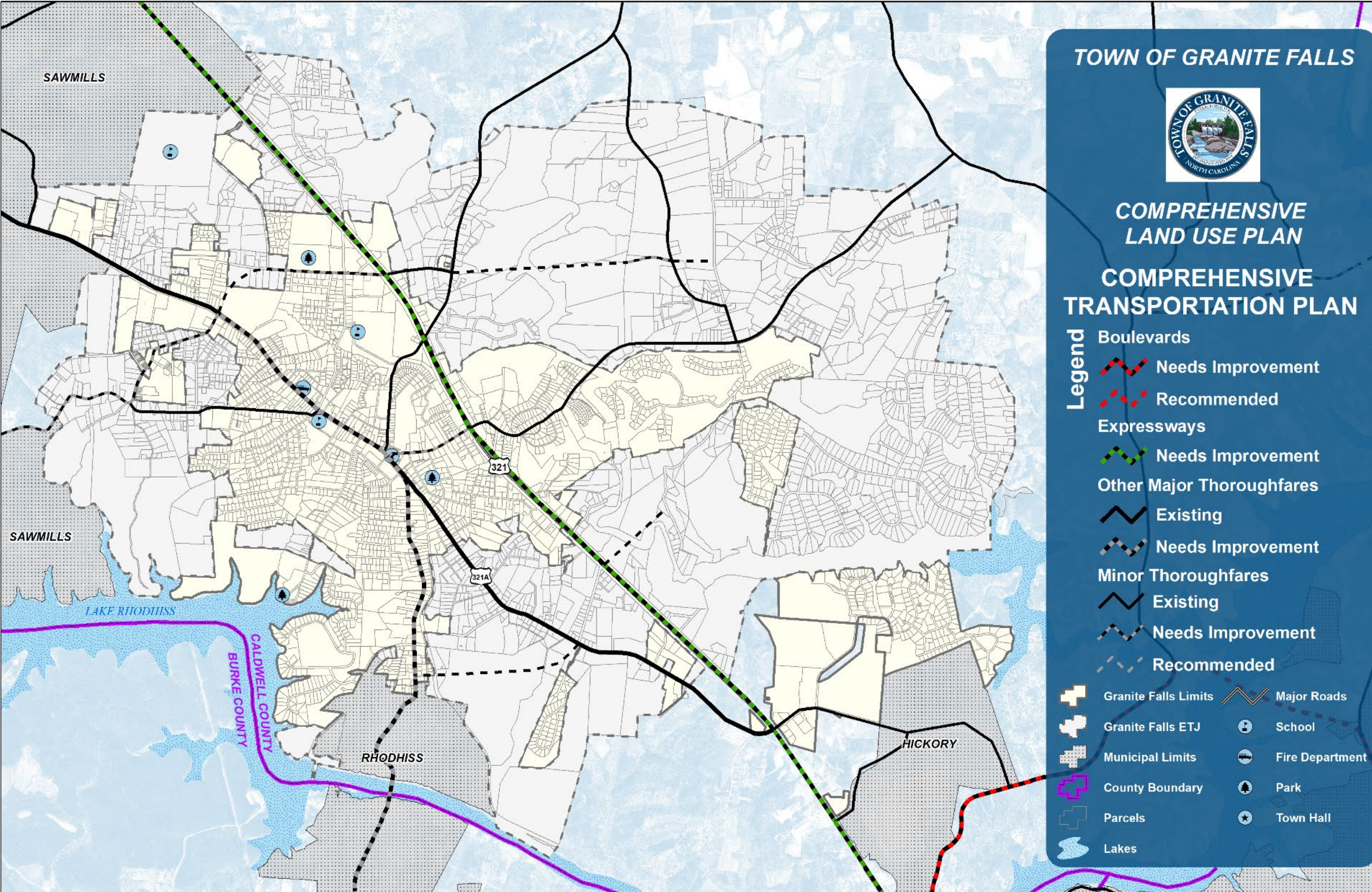
FUTURE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK MAP

Figure 3-1: Granite Falls Funded Highway Projects; displays all transportation projects recommended in the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Figure 3-2: Granite Falls Comprehensive Transportation Projects; displays all planned transportation, including those beyond the financial constraints of the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Note: The project years for these projects have be adjusted by NCDOT due to COVID. The project years on the following Figures have not been adjusted to reflect the changes, however all projects are still scheduled to occur.





MODERNIZE AND EXTEND “CONNECTOR” ROADS TO IMPROVE LOCAL ACCESS

Roadways needing safety improvements are recommended for modernization. Modernization can include safety improvements like realigning sharp curves and turns, as well as adding turn lanes, shoulders, and rumble strips. The type of modernization is contingent upon the roadway needs. The following transportation projects are recommended for modernization (and funded, where a STIP identification number is listed in parenthesis).

Pinewood Road (R-6036)

Funded upgrades from US 321 to Bert Huffman Rd, including new sidewalk, turn lanes, and a roundabout near South Caldwell High School

Dry Ponds Road

Future roadway modernization from US 321A to Connelly Springs Rd, plus future extension of Dry Pond Rd from US 321A to Bert Huffman and Pinewood Roads

Falls Avenue

Future roadway modernization from US 321 to US 321A

Myers Road Extension

Future roadway extension to US 321

Pinewood Road Extension

Future roadway extension from Dudley Shoals Rd to Ike Starnes Rd

INSTALL NEW SIDEWALKS AND PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENTS ALONG THOROUGHFARES

The sidewalk network in Granite Falls outside the downtown core and adjoining residential neighborhoods is limited. Streets should reflect and support a pedestrian-scaled environment that encourages walking, while also supporting other modes of transportation. The following corridors remain sidewalk priorities, as identified and adopted in the Granite Falls Pedestrian Plan:

Short-Term Priorities

- Chestnut St from Sterling St to Falls Ave
- Lakeside Ave from Town Public Facilities Building to Lakeside Park
- Madison Ave from 321A to Midway St
- Midway St (south side of street) from Madison Ave to Lakeside Ave
- S Main St (321A) from Short St to Forest Ave
- Sterling St from S Main St (321A) to Woodlane St

Medium-Term Priorities

- Central Ave from S Main St (321A) to Midway St
- Elgin St from Park Ave to Lakeside Ave
- Forest Ave from Crestview St to S Main St (321A)
- Midway St (north side of street) from Madison Ave to Central Ave
- N Main St (321A) from N Summit Ave to Pinewood Rd
- Pinewood Rd from Bert Huffman Rd to Recreation Center
- W Highland Ave and Woods Dr from Middle School Rd to Park Ave
- Woods Dr and Laurel St from Park Ave to Lakeside Ave

Long-Term Priorities

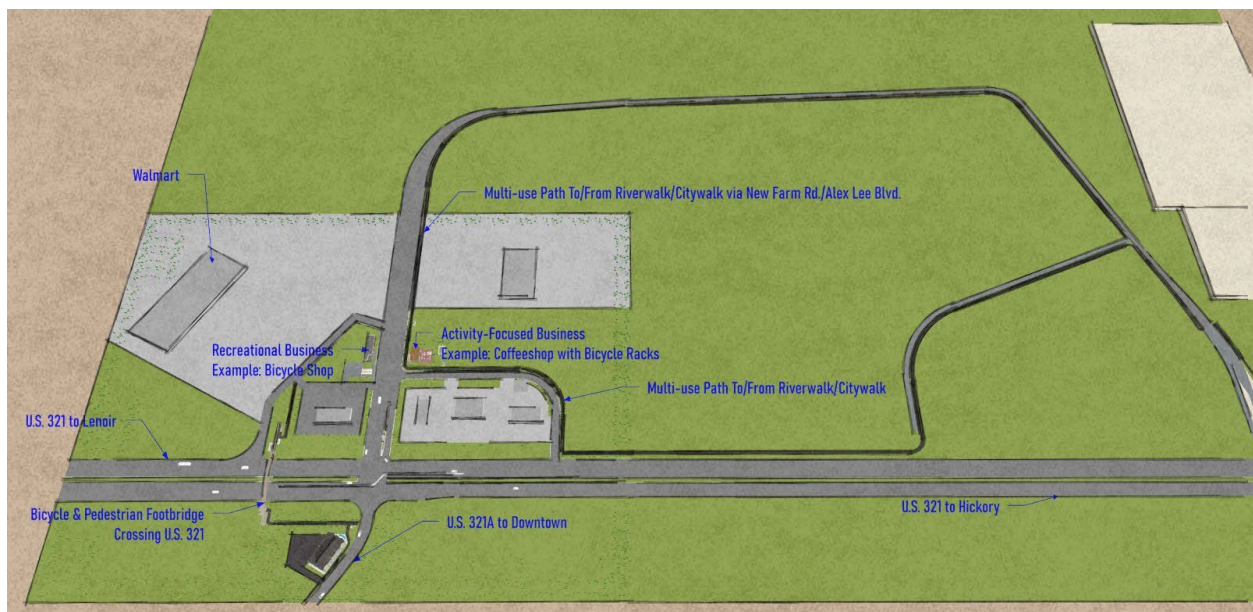
- Bert Huffman Rd from Pinewood Rd to South Caldwell High School
- Colonial Ave and from N Main St (321A) to Sunset St
- Dry Ponds Rd and Turner Rd from N Main St (321A) to Sunset St
- Duke St from Cline Dr to Hickory St
- N Summit Ave from N Main St (321A) to Water St
- Pinewood Rd from N Main St (321A) to Bert Huffman Rd
- Sunset St from Highland Ave to Turner Rd
- Woodlane St from Simmons Ave to US 321
- Woodlane St from Sterling Ave to Forest Ave

EXTEND MULTI-USE PATH ALONG US 321

The funded widening of US 321 (U-4700A) to US 321A will include a new multi-use path along the eastern side of the highway from the Catawba River to Alex Lee Blvd. This plan envisions extending this committed path north of Alex Lee Blvd to the Shoppes at Rivercrest. While it is too late to add this extension to the funded highway project, having this facility recommendation in an adopted plan will enable the Town to apply for future transportation grants

DOWNTOWN ENTRYWAY CONCEPT

By working with Caldwell County and the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Granite Falls may be able to develop a bicycle/pedestrian path extending from the Shoppes at Rivercrest to the City of Hickory's RiverWalk (which will end at MDI on U.S. 321). Such a link could potentially make the Shoppes at Rivercrest an attractive location for businesses that cater to trail users (bicycle shops, coffee shops and outdoor outfitters).



The image below shows a bicycle/pedestrian path located behind the existing gas station, automotive parts store, and Wendy's. This path could extend into and through the Shoppes at Rivercrest.

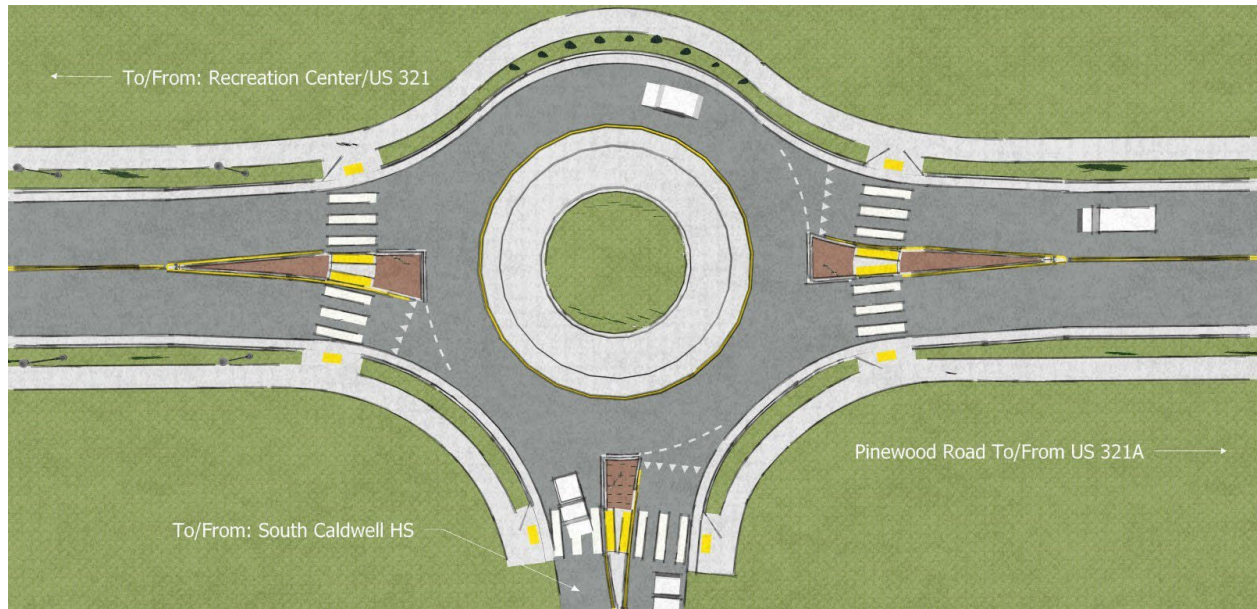


Businesses that cater to trail users – such as coffee shops, bicycle shops and outdoor outfitters – may find the opportunity to locate close to their customers appealing.



PINEWOOD ROAD ROUNDABOUT CONCEPT

This conceptual drawing shows what NCDOT's planned roundabout at the intersection at the intersection of Pinewood Road and Bert Huffman Drive could look like.



CONSTRUCT BICYCLE FACILITIES ALONG RECOMMENDED THOROUGHFARES

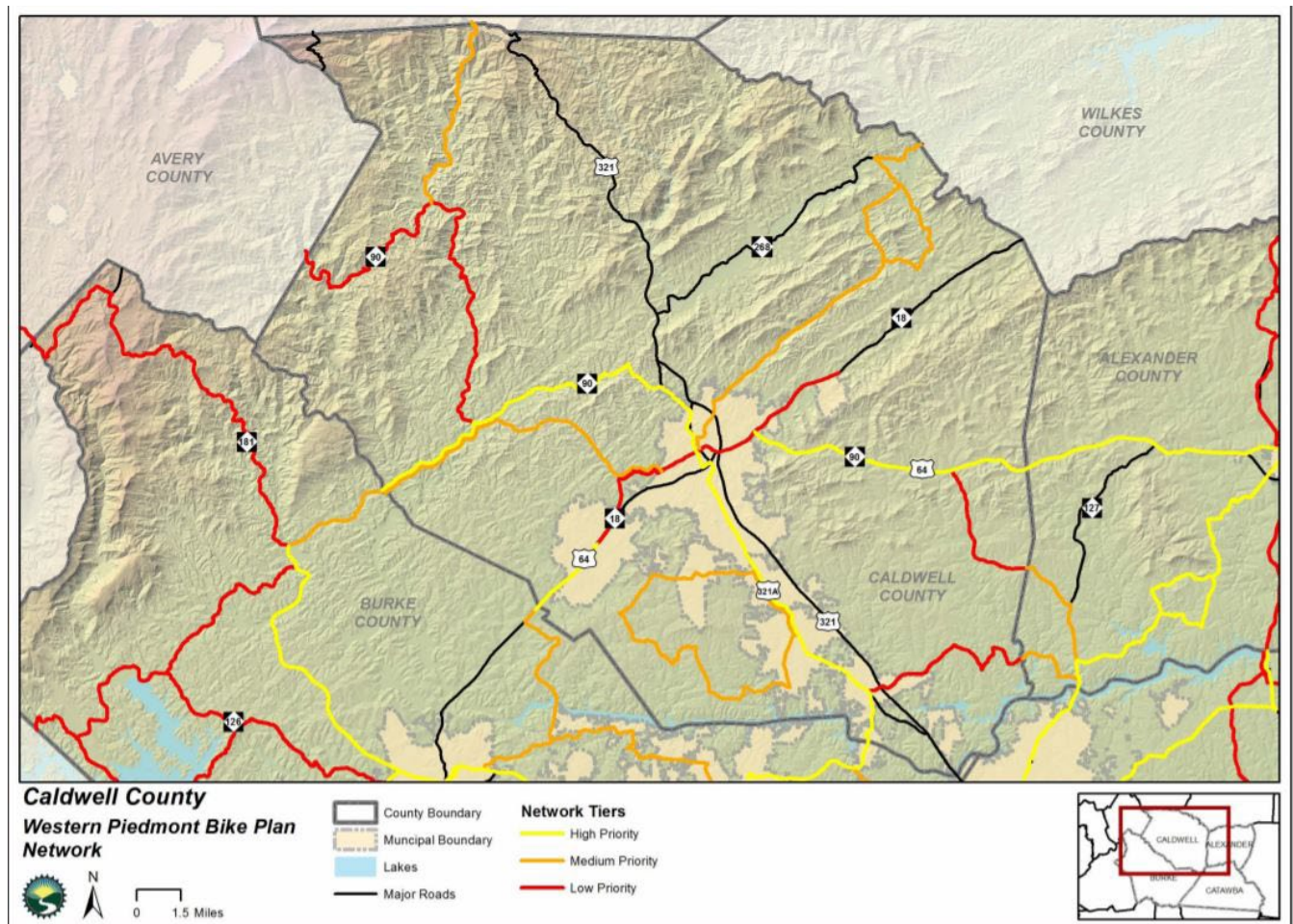
The Western Piedmont Bicycle Plan, adopted in 2016, identifies high, medium, and low priority bicycle routes identified by the four-county region. Granite Falls has one high-priority and one low-priority segment along the following routes (also displayed on **Figure 3-2** below):

Route Segment 10 connects Lenoir to Burke County via Hudson, Sawmills, Granite Falls, and Rhodhiss. The recommendations for Route Segment 10 consist of 6.24 miles of four-foot shoulders on Main Street, North Main Street, Norwood Street, and US 321A; 2.46 miles of four-foot bike lanes on Caldwell Street, Duke Street, Main Street, and North Main Street; 2.98 miles of sharrows (share-the-road arrow pavement markings) on Caldwell Street, Duke Street, Main Street, North Main Street, Norwood Street, Pennton Avenue, and US 321A; and 1.43 miles of bicycle advisory or regulatory signs on Norwood Street.

Low Priority Segments include Falls Avenue and Falls Road between US 321A and Grace Chapel.

WESTERN PIEDMONT BIKE PLAN MAP

The Western Piedmont Bike Plan map displays all bicycle routes recommended in the 2016 Western Piedmont Bike Plan.



EXPLORE EXPANDED TRANSIT SERVICE OPTIONS

Public transportation is a lifeline for many citizens in the Western Piedmont region. Transit services connect people to jobs, schools, grocery stores, medical care, recreational areas, and family.

The Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority (WPRTA) serves the Greater Hickory MPO planning area, currently operating as Greenway Public Transportation. Greenway Public Transportation provides Demand Response Van Service for areas in Caldwell County. Van Service must be scheduled 72 hours in advance at 828-465-7643.

The creation of Flex Bus Route Service is recommended for areas of Caldwell County near and between the communities of Lenoir, Hudson, Sawmills, and Granite Falls. A Flex Bus Route is different from a Fixed Bus Route in that it still covers a regular route with scheduled bus stops, but also can deviate from the route for special pick-up and drop-off, when scheduled more than 24 hours in advance. Hickory, Conover, and Newton have Fixed Bus Routes, whereas Taylorsville, Morganton, Drexel, Valdese and Rutherford College all have Flex Bus Routes.

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Maintain a good working relationship with NCDOT - Division 11 and WPCOG, in order to coordinate land use and transportation planning for new and updated roadway corridors.**
 - a. Promote continued road improvements on unimproved streets and continue to seek dedication of private streets to help improve residential and emergency vehicle access.
 - b. Work with NCDOT on the following programmed projects (STIP Project ID):
 - i. US 321: County line to Southwest Blvd (U-4700)
 - ii. US 321 / Pinewood Rd (R-5755)
 - iii. US 321 / Dudley Shoals Rd (U-6161)
 - iv. US 321A (U-6034)
 - v. Pinewood Rd (U-6036)
 - c. Consider the following recommended future projects:
 - i. US 321 / US 321A intersection
 - ii. Dry Ponds Rd modernization and extension to Bert Huffman Rd
- 2. Incorporate adopted plans to create a community-oriented environment that promotes walkability, while also supporting other modes of transportation.**
 - a. Work with Caldwell County to promote the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities (sidewalks and/or multi-use paths) along US 321 from Alex Lee Blvd to Shoppes at Rivercrest, and from Rivercrest down US 321A toward Downtown Granite Falls.
 - b. Consider the Western Piedmont Bicycle Plan recommendations for future bicycle facilities to create connections with other bicycle routes.
 - c. Work with Caldwell County to evaluate the feasibility and demand for adding public transportation services within the county.
- 3. Create gateways and implement design standards that enhance the streetscape and improve traffic flow.**
 - a. Require adequate transportation access to all developments in order to provide orderly and efficient traffic flow and maintain current and minimum design standards for new subdivision road construction.
 - b. Create gateways and enhance streetscape along:
 - i. US 321A at the Rivercrest intersection.
 - ii. The Downtown Granite Falls exit off US 321 onto Falls Ave.
 - iii. Falls Ave and Crestview St.
 - iv. The streets leading into and within downtown.
 - c. Incorporate decorative directional signage to town attractions and gathering areas.

Resources & Services



4

RESOURCES & SERVICES

PUBLIC SERVICES

The Town of Granite Falls also owns and operates a potable water treatment facility, which is located on Lakeside Avenue and draws water from Lake Rhodhiss. In total, this water system consists of more than 100 miles of water mains and provides service to a significant portion of the Town (See Figure 4-1: Granite Falls Sewer and Water Lines).

EDUCATION

The Caldwell County School System includes six high schools - three traditional high schools, an alternative school, and two innovative high schools located on the campus of Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute (CCC&TI). Students are enrolled in 12 elementary schools, four middle schools serving grades 6-8, and four K-8 schools. There are several institutions of higher education in the area that provide excellent opportunities for advanced learning: Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute, Catawba Valley Community College, Western Piedmont Community College, Appalachian State University, and Lenoir-Rhyne University.

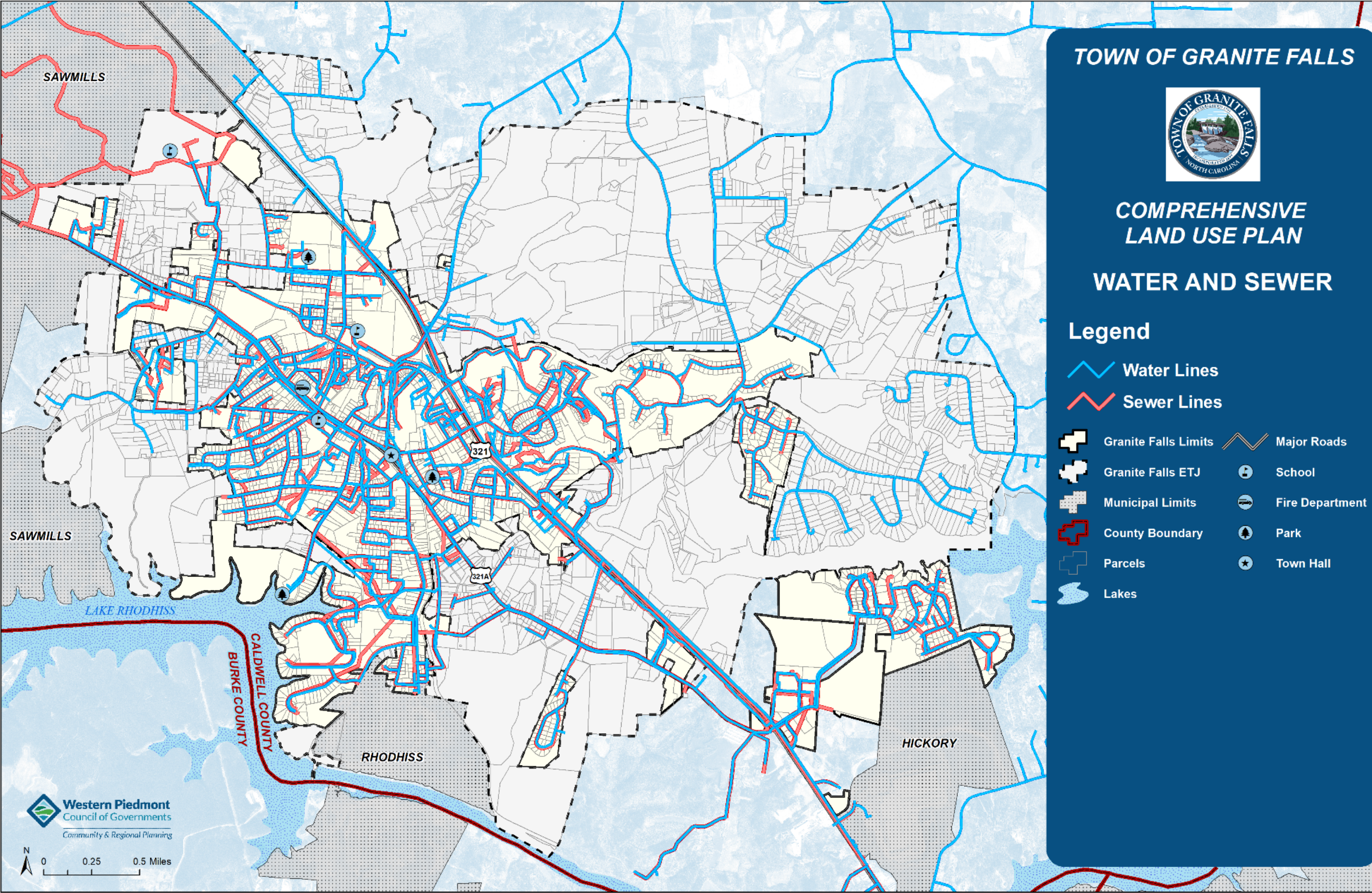
Granite Falls Elementary and Granite Falls Middle School are located within Town Limits, and South Caldwell High School is within the ETJ.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Granite Falls Municipal Fire Department provides 24 hour coverage for fire suppression, medical emergencies, and rescue services within the Town's jurisdiction. The Fire department provides training meetings and hosts an "Explorer Post" for youth ages 14 to 18 that are interested in pursuing a career in firefighting or are looking for volunteer opportunities.

The Granite Falls Police Department employs full-time police officers and handles law enforcement within the Town Limits, while the Caldwell County Sheriff's Department provides dispatch duties, handles the law enforcement in the ETJ, and correctional facility needs for the County. The Town has also adopted ordinances (which are enforced by the Granite Falls Planning Department) that control issues such as refuse and junked vehicles.

Caldwell County provides several public services, including Caldwell County Building Inspections and the Environmental Health Department. These entities ensure that the appropriate standards are followed in new and existing residential, commercial and industrial developments.



TOWN OF GRANITE FALLS

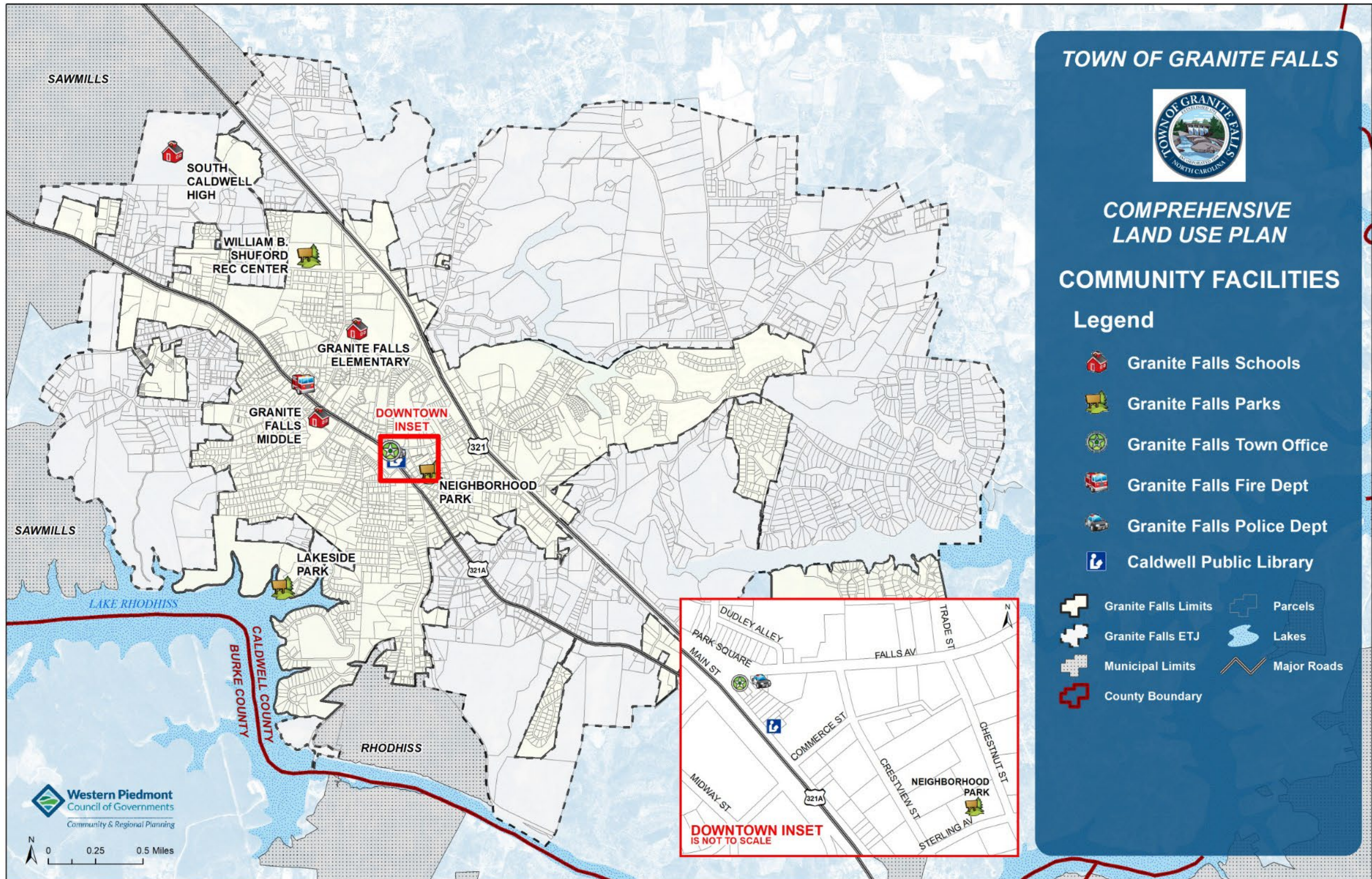


COMPREHENSIVE
LAND USE PLAN

WATER AND SEWER

Legend

- Water Lines
- Sewer Lines
- Granite Falls Limits
- Granite Falls ETJ
- Municipal Limits
- County Boundary
- Parcels
- Lakes
- Major Roads
- School
- Fire Department
- Park
- Town Hall



RESOURCES & SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Decrease nuisance activity by abatement and fixing or demolishing vacant and dilapidated structures.**
 - a. Identify and document nuisance, vacant, and dilapidated structures.
 - b. Abate code enforcement issues in highly visible areas a priority.
 - c. Continue to look for ways to strengthen the Town's code enforcement efforts.
 - d. Coordinate with Caldwell County on implementation of their nuisance ordinances in the Town's ETJ.
2. **Utilize new strategies to promote the growth of fire and emergency volunteer participation.**
 - a. Conduct outreach and education to better inform the citizens of the need for volunteers.
 - b. Continue to conduct a "Fire Academy" in partnerships with schools to inform upcoming volunteers and certify existing volunteers.
3. **Inventory existing water and sewer line accessibility and capacity for future economic development.**
 - a. Refer to areas in the Future Land Use Map that have increased residential density and areas that will allow for up zoning.
 - b. Inventory existing water and sewer infrastructure to identify areas in need of maintenance.
4. **Increase walkability and pedestrian connectivity throughout the planning jurisdiction.**
 - a. Inventory existing sidewalks and identify gaps and problematic areas in the network.
 - b. Correlate with other adopted pedestrian and trail plans within the Town of Granite Falls and surrounding jurisdictions to encourage regional connectivity.
 - c. Refer to ADA standards for accessibility along sidewalks.



Parks & Recreation

5

PARKS & RECREATION

The Town of Granite Falls is one of a few municipalities in Caldwell County that operates its own Parks and Recreation Department. The goal of the Town of Granite Falls Parks and Recreation Department is to provide a variety of quality leisure activities in a clean, safe environment for citizens of all ages. To fulfill this mission, the Parks and Recreation Department currently offers a wide variety of active and passive recreation opportunities for the residents of Granite Falls and the surrounding area.

With projected residential development expanding throughout the Town's jurisdiction, it is reasonable to expect increasing demand for recreation activities and facilities. It is important to envision parks and recreation provision as a service to residents as well as a tool to promote economic development and tourism. The purpose of this section is to establish priorities for recreation development in the Town of Granite Falls over the next ten years.

The Town recently completed a Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan. This plan serves as a guide for the future development of recreation facilities for the Town of Granite Falls Parks and Recreation Department. This section incorporates recommendations to accomplish the objectives set forth in the Master Plan. The town's adoption of a parks and recreation plan this will potentially help with securing funding for future development of recreation facilities when applying to various grants (PARTF, CWMTF, ECT.) and pursuing other funding sources.

COMMUNITY PARKS AND FACILITIES

The Granite Falls Parks and Recreation Department strives to provide state of the art facilities, programs, and activities for citizens. Granite Falls Recreation Department facilities include the William B. Shuford Recreation Center located on Pinewood Road, Lakeside Park located on Lakeside Avenue, and Neighborhood Park located on Chestnut Street.

In recent years, the Town of Granite Falls has completed renovations and upgrades to the swimming pool, men's and women's fitness rooms, multi-purpose field #3, the tennis courts, and the gymnasium at the Shuford Recreation Center. The Town also added the Veterans Monument, permanent bag toss boards, a new meeting space, three single-user ADA-compliant indoor restrooms with an adult changing table, an ADA-compliant playground, and ADA-compliant sidewalks at Shuford Recreation Center. Future Shuford Recreation projects include two additional outdoor ADA -compliant restrooms, additional ADA compliant sidewalks, outdoor senior activity centers, an additional picnic area, a splash pad, a pool slide, a batting cage, and additional ADA playground equipment.

WILLIAM B. SHUFORD RECREATION CENTER

Shuford Recreation Center is the primary park facility for recreation in the Town of Granite Falls. It provides opportunities for both passive and active recreation. Built in the late 1960s, the facility has received improvements and renovations over more recent years to address changing recreation trends. The recently completed swimming pool renovation is an excellent example of an improvement to the existing facility that meets the changing needs of the community. Community input suggests a great level of satisfaction and pride in this new renovation.

The William B. Shuford Recreation Center is the focal point for Recreation Department activities. The center is situated on approximately 19.3 acres of land. The main structure, constructed in 1967, has approximately 16,700 square feet and houses the newly-renovated gymnasium, office spaces, and various multi-purpose rooms. Also on site is a 225,000 gallon swimming pool, which opened in 1971 and was completely renovated in 2015. The facility has four (4) newly renovated tennis courts and three (3) multi-purpose playing fields. In 2018 a new retaining wall and permanent seating was added to multi-purpose field #3. A new ADA-accessible playground was installed beside the existing children's playground, and permanent bag toss boards were added to the picnic area.

Some of the other activities and facilities at William B. Shuford Recreation Center are as follows: ADA-accessible sidewalks, social hall rentals, men's and women's fitness rooms, picnic shelter, beach volleyball court, the Veterans Monument, and a walking track.

William B. Shuford Recreation Center has served the citizens of the Granite Falls for many decades. This is the Town's most used park. Through the years, elected officials have made many investments in Shuford Recreation Center. Overall, the park is meeting most park and recreation needs. The proposed program of developments for this park is closely aligned with the program of development that has guided park improvements through the decades. While some facilities in the park need renovations, there is not demand for a drastic change in park make up. During the planning process, members of the steering committee expressed a need for maintaining and updating existing facilities, increasing programming and promotion, and adding additional recreation facilities when possible.

LAKESIDE PARK

In 2006, the Town of Granite Falls purchased 72 acres of property and developed Lakeside Park on scenic Lake Rhodhiss. Lakeside Park protects the Town's public water supply (located just downstream from this property) and provides recreational opportunities for the citizens of Granite Falls. The Lakeside Park features numerous trails for walking/hiking and mountain biking. The clearly marked trails are interspersed with opportunities to enjoy the water front views, have a picnic or do a little fishing.

The park features three separate fishing decks that have been strategically located to afford the best opportunities for success and provide fantastic views of the lake. Recently, the Town added an ADA accessible fishing deck and a binocular viewing scope. The picnic shelter is available for birthday parties, family gatherings or just relaxing by the lake and enjoying the scenery and wildlife. Restroom facilities are also available.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

Neighborhood Park is located on the corner of Chestnut Street and Sterling Avenue. The park is a one acre facility offering a tennis court, a basketball court, and a playground.

PROPOSALS AND OPPORTUNITIES

PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD PARK OR GREENWAY ADJACENT TO THE MILL POND DAM

The Town of Granite Falls currently owns over 8 acres consisting of multiple parcels that are directly below the existing Mill Pond Dam which is the location of the Granite Falls for which the Town got its name. The Town intends to develop this property as another neighborhood park or greenway for active or passive recreation. This property

has rolling topography and provides the acreage necessary to provide a number of Town desired recreational amenities as well as the ability to preserve natural areas. The property's proximity to Gunpowder Creek would provide opportunities for fishing and excellent views for passive recreation such as walking and picnicking. Restrooms, picnic shelters, parking, and lighting could be considered as part of the park development.

ADDITIONAL FACILITIES

As the population continues to grow in Granite Falls and Caldwell County, the need to provide additional land for active recreation will become inevitable. It is recommended that the Town seek to locate property on the south side of the Town limits for use as an additional community park. It is recommended that the Town seek a property of approximately 30 acres for park development. A 30-acre site would be able to accommodate both an active and passive recreation program.

Potential park improvements at the existing Shuford Recreation Center would allow the Parks and Recreation Department to continue in this role by maintaining the current facility as well as expanding recreation facilities and programming to serve the growing population within this area.

Possible new amenities to consider would be soccer/multi-purpose fields, baseball fields, restroom/concession building, picnic shelters, and walking trails.

ATHLETICS AND PROGRAMS

Granite Falls Parks and Recreation offers adult classes to go along with the numerous activities adults and children can enjoy. The Parks and Recreation Department offers programs and activities for children that include soccer, basketball, baseball, softball, tee-ball, volleyball, swim team, arts and crafts, baton, playground, camps, tennis courts, swimming, and gymnastics. These athletic programs are designated to teach the children to always practice and promote good sportsmanship. Participants in the athletic programs are not professional athletes, score keepers and game officials are also not professionals, and the coaches are volunteers. The Recreation Department also offers programs and activities for adults that include fitness rooms, exercise classes, swimming, senior cards, tennis courts, pickle ball, and walking track and trails.

GREENWAYS AND TRIALS

The Town of Granite Falls currently has no greenway system. Greenway trails are for pedestrian and bicycle access and would provide an excellent recreational and alternative transportation opportunity to users.

Passive recreation can be a very important asset for a community, whether it be for tourism or for its own citizens. The Town of Granite Falls should work together with the County and the other municipalities to identify and acquire land in strategic locations to encourage open space preservation, greenways, parks and other passive recreation opportunities, as well as, provide a community walking trail using sidewalks, greenways and multi-use paths along the major thoroughfares in the county.

Additionally, in order to continue expanding new recreational amenities in addition to the existing facilities, acquisition of adjacent property may be necessary. A number of possibilities exist for future expansion of the programming for this property. The Town should review the pedestrian plan to reevaluate connections to other

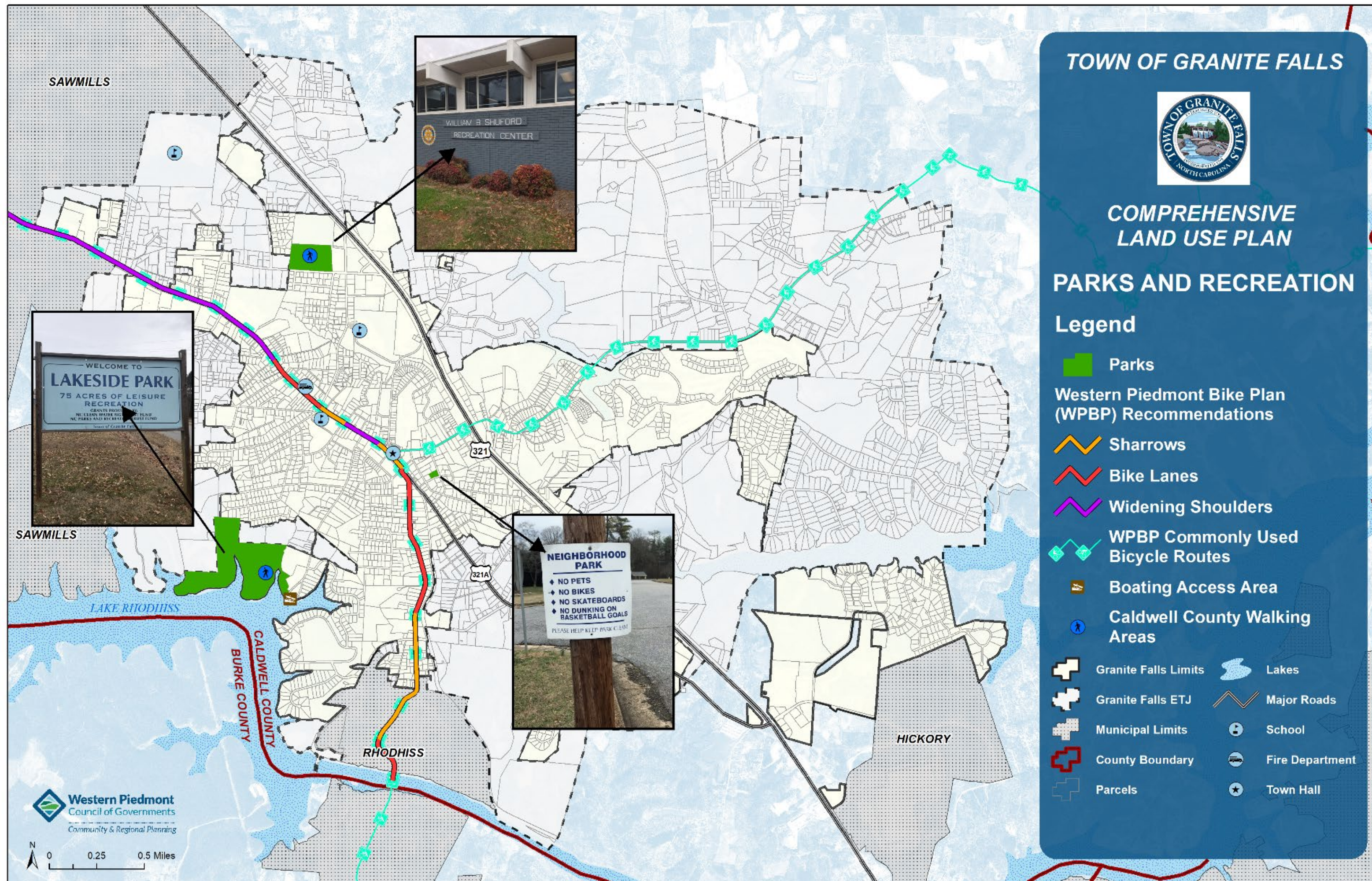
existing trails, popular pedestrian destinations (i.e. schools, assisted living communities, shopping), and other neighboring communities.

Currently, the Town does not have many trails for walking or bicycling. The committee expressed great support for additional trail opportunities. There are paved walking trails at the Recreation Center and soft surface trails at Lakeside Park, but public demand suggests an immediate need for additional walking and bicycle trails.

The committee also suggested trail/pedestrian connectivity to nearby residential areas as well as pedestrian accessibility to the Town's existing and future parks and cultural facilities. The Town should coordinate potential pedestrian connectors with the Town's pedestrian plan to determine priority corridors which can be implemented. The priorities should consider both existing and future residential development.

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

The Town of Granite Falls recently completed a Parks and Recreation Master Plan that includes detailed recommendations and opportunities for additional investment and development of the Town's Parks and Recreation offerings. The Town should consult this master plan in concordance with this comprehensive plan for more detailed review of these items, which include more detailed recommendations regarding improving park accessibility, partnering with area stakeholders and developers, promoting walkability and connectivity between points of interest, and proposed policies that could improve the capacity of the Town to expand its stock of park and recreation space through land donations and contiguous property acquisition.



PARKS & RECREATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Maintain and enhance existing recreational facilities in the Town.**
 - a. Renovate and modernize Neighborhood Park.
 - b. Look at the possibility of adding a dog park to a new or existing facility.
- 2. Explore new, and expand on existing recreational opportunities for the Town when feasible.**
 - a. Look to expand opportunities at Lakeside Park and utilize the park for town events.
 - b. Increase recreation opportunities on Lake Rhodhiss.
 - c. Work with NCDOT in developing a greenway connection that links Lakeside Park to the Falls.
 - d. Work with Caldwell County and NCDOT in developing a greenway connection that links Hickory's City Walk into Downtown Granite Falls and Lakeside Park.
- 3. Add more public space and activate the central park area in Downtown located between Falls Ave and Dudley Ave.**
 - a. Connect the two green spaces in Park Square once Dudley Ave is closed.
 - b. Refer to the conceptual renderings of downtown for possible park layout and elements.
- 4. Utilize the closure of Dudley Ave in Downtown and develop a park space that is connected to the central park area in Downtown.**
 - a. Refer to the conceptual renderings of downtown for possible pedestrian only activation of the Dudley Ave space.
- 5. Incorporate adopted plans for recreational maintenance and expansion to accommodate active and passive recreational needs.**
 - a. As population increases more active recreational areas will be needed. Evaluate areas with planned increase residential density and determine additional demand for recreational needs.
 - b. Refer to the ADA Transition Plan for requirements for ADA access to recreational facilities and other public areas/facilities.
- 6. Evaluated the feasibility of creating a new park or greenway that has access to the Falls.**

Natural & Cultural Resources



6

NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

CALDWELL NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural topographic features and environmental characteristics strongly influence human settlement patterns. For example, flat terrain may lead to the development of agricultural, residential, or industrial land uses, while low lying areas subject to flooding might be developed into recreational fields or be used for agricultural purposes. This chapter will evaluate the Town's existing natural characteristics and its built environment. Information from this chapter should be used to help guide future land use decisions. For example, development within floodplain areas should be restricted or not allowed because flooding can have disastrous impacts, both in terms of private property damage and the use of tax dollars for clean-up and debris removal.

Specifically, this chapter will examine the environmental factors related to land use planning including watershed and floodplain development, conservation easements, land donations, natural heritage areas, wildlife habitat, and water quality.

WATERSHEDS

A watershed is an area of land that drains into a body of water such as a river, lake, or stream. It is separated from other watersheds by high points on the land such as hills or ridges. A water supply watershed is an area where water drains to a point and is collected and held then used as a public drinking water source.

Watershed regulations, which were established by State of North Carolina, protect the County's drinking water supply by limiting the amount of impervious surface that can be developed within a watershed – which in turn reduces the amount of stormwater runoff that enters streams or lakes. Impervious surfaces prohibit water from reaching and percolating into the ground and also facilitate the flow of pollutants such as oil and road salt into nearby bodies of water. Examples of impervious surfaces include paved roads and parking lots, rooftops, sidewalks, and even gravel parking lots.

The entirety of Caldwell County, and therefore Granite Falls, is in the drainage area for the Catawba River watershed. The County's streams and creeks drain into the Catawba River, which then drains into Lake Rhodhiss and into the Catawba River Basin. The entirety of the planning jurisdiction of Granite Falls is subject to the WS-IV (Water Supply Watershed) Catawba River Protected Area (See Figure 6-1: Water Resources). The lake is a major source of drinking water for hundreds of thousands of people throughout the region. More stringent development regulations are imposed in the WS-IV Protected Area and the WS-IV Critical Area. The regulations are a requirement of the North Carolina Division of Environmental Quality, and are based on a template ordinance provided by the State and administered by Caldwell County. The density, or amount, of proposed development is governed by these watershed regulations. Developers may apply for the right to develop more property if they install engineered controls to mitigate stormwater runoff. These laws are designed to protect drinking water from the polluted stormwater runoff that flows into streams, lakes, and rivers from impervious surfaces. In general, development will be more restricted on lands that are closer to drinking water sources.

FLOODPLAIN

Floodplain regulations are another example of locally-enforced, state-mandated laws. Both the County and the State have an interest in discouraging development in the floodplain for public safety reasons. In Granite Falls, floodplain areas can be found primarily along Gunpowder Creek and its tributaries (See Figure 6-1: Water Resources). Within Granite Fall's planning jurisdiction, there are two types of designated flood zones with distinct sets of rules: the Floodway and the Flood Hazard-AE Zone.

The Town participates in FEMA's Flood Damage Prevention and Insurance Program as outlined in the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. Floodplain management is generally defined as a comprehensive program of preventive and corrective measures to reduce losses associated with flooding. Floodplain management measures may include, but are not limited to, land use regulations (including new development and construction policy), construction of flood control projects, flood-proofing, floodplain preservation, acquisition of flood-prone properties, education, and implementation of early warning systems.

The floodway is the channel of a river, or any waterway, and the adjacent land that must be reserved in order to pass the base flood discharge without increasing the identified base flood elevation (BFE). To avoid the risk of sediment, construction, or plant debris being swept downstream, the floodway is classified as a "non-encroachment area" (NEA), meaning that no land-disturbing activity should occur there without the completion of a detailed hydrologic study which proves that the activity will not affect downstream water levels. As a general rule, no structures, other than public bridges, are allowed in the Floodway.

The Flood Hazard-AE Zone denotes areas that have a one percent probability of flooding in any given year. New structures are allowed within the AE Zone if a floodplain permit is obtained. A floodplain permit requires all new construction to meet certain standards. The basement and/or foundation (the lowest floor level) must be elevated to or above the BFE. Many property owners choose to build outside of the floodplain to avoid carrying the necessary flood insurance.

STORMWATER

PHASE II STORMWATER PROGRAMS

EPA's Stormwater Phase II Ordinance is intended to improve water quality by reducing the number of pollutants that are picked up by stormwater, carried into municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s), and ultimately discharged into local rivers streams without being treated.

These pollutants can include oil and grease from roadways, pesticides from lawns, sediment from construction sites, and carelessly discarded trash, such as cigarette butts, paper wrappers, and plastic bottles. These pollutants can impair the waterways when deposited through MS4 discharges and discourage recreational use of the resource, contaminate drinking water supplies, and interfere with the habitat for fish, other aquatic organisms, and wildlife.

The term "Phase II" applies to MS4s that are small, or under 100,000 in population. EPA's Stormwater Phase I dealt with those MS4s over 100,000.

The following are the Six Minimum Measures of a Stormwater Phase II Ordinance as outlined by EPA:

- (1) **Public Education and Outreach**
Distributing educational materials and performing outreach to inform citizens about the impacts polluted storm water runoff discharges can have on water quality.
- (2) **Public participation/Involvement**
Providing opportunities for citizens to participate in program development and implementation, including effectively publicizing public hearings and/or encouraging citizen representatives on a storm water management panel.
- (3) **Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination**
Developing and implementing a plan to detect and eliminate illicit discharges to the storm sewer system (includes developing a system map and informing the community about hazards associated with illegal discharges and improper disposal of waste).
- (4) **Construction Site Runoff Control**
Developing, implementing, and enforcing an erosion and sediment control program for construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land (controls could include silt fences and temporary storm water detention ponds).
- (5) **Post-Construction Runoff Control**
Developing, implementing, and enforcing a program to address discharges of post-construction storm water runoff from new development and redevelopment areas. Applicable controls could include preventive actions such as protecting sensitive areas (e.g., wetlands) or the use of structural BMPs such as grassed swales or porous pavement.
- (6) **Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping**
Developing and implementing a program with the goal of preventing or reducing pollutant runoff from municipal operations. The program must include municipal staff training on pollution prevention measures and techniques (e.g., regular street sweeping, reduction in the use of pesticides or street salt, or frequent catch-basin cleaning).

LAND DONATIONS FOR NATURAL RESOURCE & ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) provides grants to local governments for the acquisition of land to be used for public recreational use. Additionally, PARTF grants can be used to protect natural and scenic resources or to renovate older park facilities.

Because landowners occasionally approach local governments with proposals to sell their land, Granite Falls should be aware of the PARTF program and how it can be used to help the Town achieve its natural resource, recreation, and environmental planning goals. PARTF provides dollar-for-dollar matching grants up to \$500,000. Importantly, the appraised value of land to be donated to an applicant can be used as part of the Town's matching fund requirement. Property acquired with PARTF funding must be dedicated forever for public recreational use.

Similarly, the NC Land and Water Fund (NCLWF) provides grants to local governments for projects that specifically address water pollution problems. NCLWF may fund projects to acquire land that "represents the ecological diversity of North Carolina". Granite Falls should also be aware of the NCLWF program and how it can be used to help the Town achieve its natural resource and environmental planning goals.

CULTURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's preservation-worthy historic places. The Register includes significant properties, which are further divided into buildings, sites, districts, structures, or objects. The National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources.

The North Carolina State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO) carry out many historic preservation responsibilities including surveying, evaluating and nominating properties for inclusion in the National Register.

If a property meets the criteria to be on the National Register, the National Park Service designates the property as "Determined Eligible" for listing. However, a property so designated will not yet be formally listed in the Register. Properties that are eligible for the National Register, but not listed, do not qualify for federal rehabilitation tax incentives, federal tax incentives for preservation easements on historic buildings and sites, or National Park Service grants.

In North Carolina, the placement of a property or district on a "Study List" constitutes the first step toward nomination to the National Register. The Study List identifies properties and districts that are likely to be eligible for the National Register, giving the green light to sponsors and staff to proceed with a formal nomination with reasonable assurance that the property can be successfully nominated.

According to the State Historic Preservation Office, there are forty-one (41) sites in Granite Falls that are either listed in the National Register, Determined Eligible or are on the Study List. The map *Historic Sites* illustrates where those places are located, and Table 6-1 below indicates their description and status.

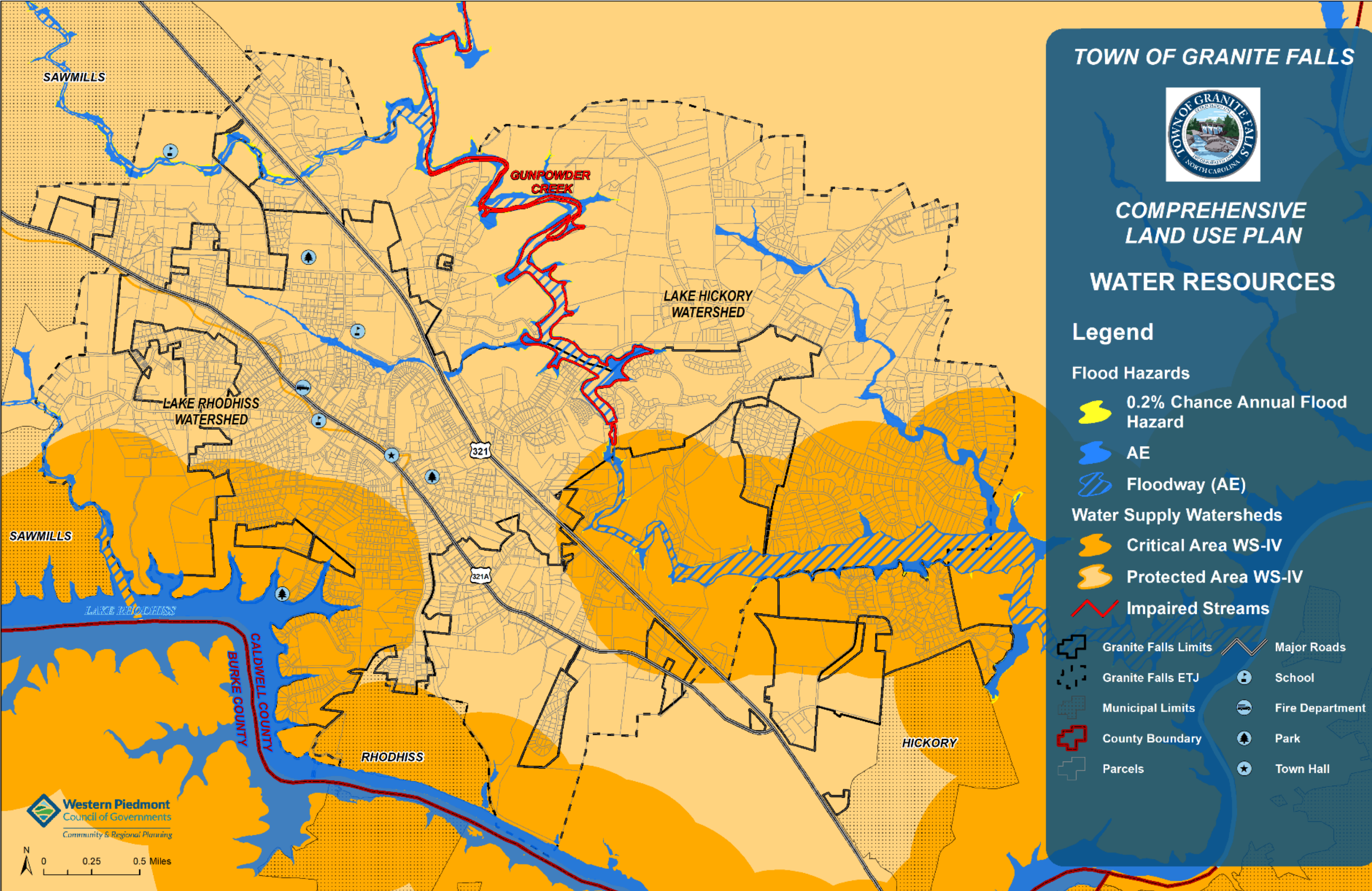
DOWNTOWN HISTORIC STATUS

When the Town participated in the Small Town Main Street Program, the Town of Granite Falls attempted to curate and establish a Historic District within the downtown area. The Town has been evaluated by the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (NCSHPO) in the past and been advised that there are too many “non-contributing” buildings within the district to qualify for Historic District status. The Town has encouraged building renovations of a historic character through the Façade Improvement Incentive Program that has been in place since 2009. Through this program, the Town reimburses building owners for historically appropriate façade improvements up to \$1,000 for most projects and beyond that for projects that can qualify as “high impact”, such as repainting an entire façade to a historically appropriate color. As a result of this effort and continued commitment from the Granite Falls Town Council, the Town’s goal is to be well positioned for a future evaluation as an eligible historic district.

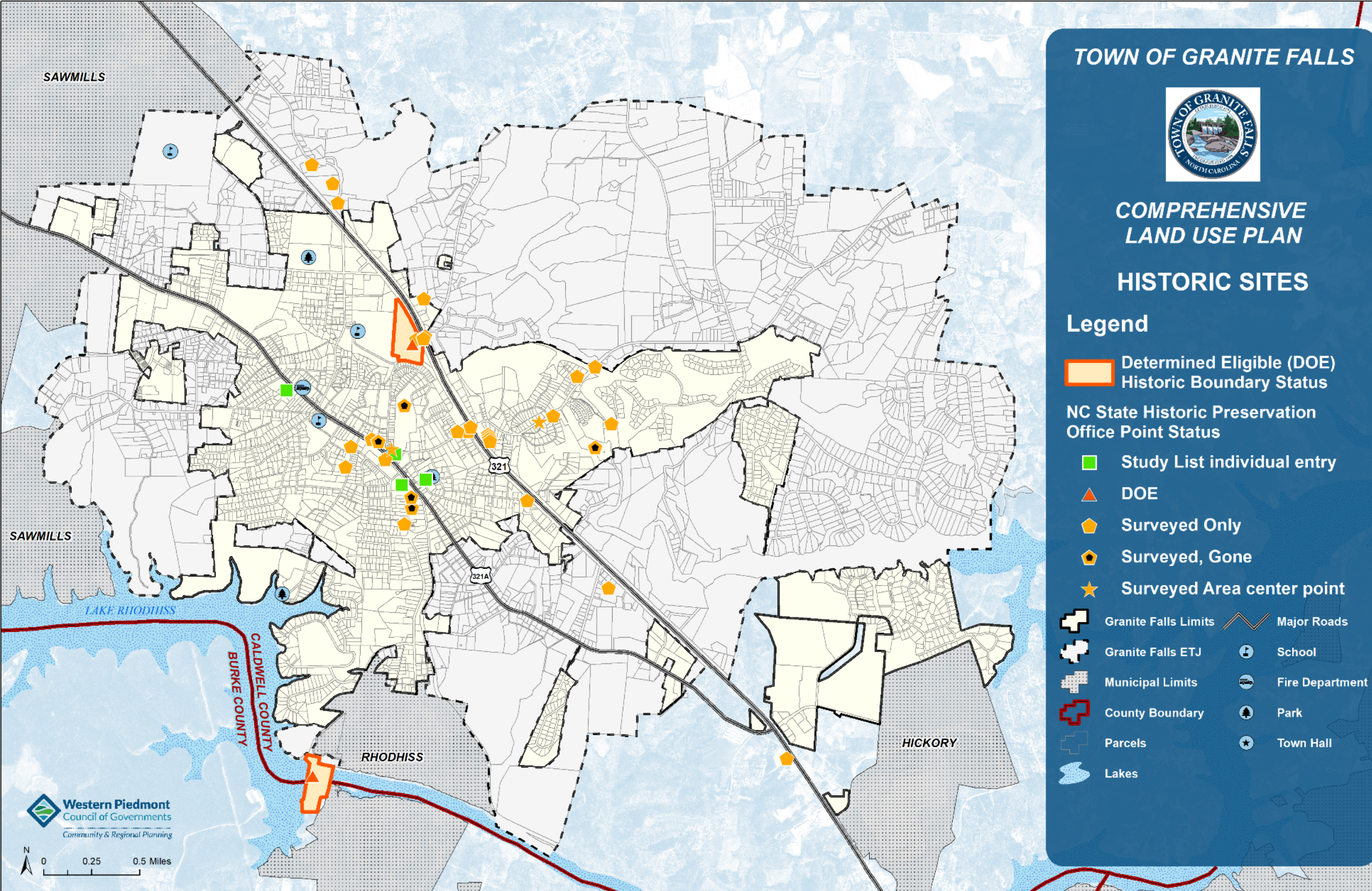
TABLE 6-1: HISTORIC SITES

For more detailed information regarding historic sites in Granite Falls visit www.ncdcr.org Division of Historic Resources.

Historic Structures			
Site Name	Status	Site Name	Status
Julius V. Stirewalt Farm	Determined Eligible (DOE)	Bruce A. Wallace House	Surveyed Only
Rhodhiss Dam & Powerplant	Determined Eligible (DOE)	Annie Church House	Surveyed Only
Central Business District	Surveyed Area Center Point	Eva Teague Bean House	Surveyed Only
Shuford Mill Village Historic District	Surveyed Area Center Point	Thomas Johnson House #4	Surveyed Only
Mackie House (Gone)	Surveyed, Gone	Robert Jefferson Hiatt House	Surveyed Only
Estes House (Gone)	Surveyed, Gone	Howard M. Miller Hosue	Surveyed Only
Lula Hickman House (Gone)	Surveyed, Gone	James A. Ledford House	Surveyed Only
Old Shuford Mill Building (Gone)	Surveyed, Gone	Bridge 130013	Surveyed Only
Shuford Mills Site	Surveyed, Gone	Bridge 130014	Surveyed Only
Hoke-Babb House	Study List Individual Entry	Bridge 130367	Surveyed Only
D.H. Warlick House	Study List Individual Entry	Railroad Depot	Surveyed Only
James Houck House	Study List Individual Entry	Andrew Baird House	Surveyed Only
Granite Falls Municipal Building	Study List Individual Entry	D. A. Whisnant House	Surveyed Only
Charlie M. Richie House	Surveyed Only	First United Methodist Church	Surveyed Only
Furniture Factory	Surveyed Only	Robert Payne House	Surveyed Only
Thomas Johnson House #1	Surveyed Only	Hickman-Corpening House	Surveyed Only
Thomas Johnson House #2	Surveyed Only	Bridge No. 262	Surveyed Only
Thomas Johnson House #3	Surveyed Only	Gunpowder Creek Dam	Surveyed Only
James Bumgarner House	Surveyed Only	Mill House	Surveyed Only
J. B. BrownHouse	Surveyed Only		
Historic Districts			
Site Name	Status	Site Name	Status
Rhodhiss Dam & Powerplant	Determined Eligible (DOE)	Julius V. Stirewalt Farm	Determined Eligible (DOE)



This map is a graphic representation and should only be used for illustrative purpose. Map created with data provided by Town of Granite Falls, Caldwell County GIS and ESRI.



NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Protect the natural environment through orderly growth management techniques that preserve open space for communities and safeguards its natural resources.**
 - a. Encourage developers to use innovative stormwater treatment techniques such as pervious pavement and sidewalks, bio swales, or bio-retention cells in the Water Supply Watershed to reduce flooding and improve water quality.
 - b. Work with the Foothills Conservancy and WPCOG to evaluate land acquisition proposals that may be eligible for Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) or North Carolina Land and Water Fund (NCLWF) grant funding.

- 2. Protect the historic fabric of the Town through preservation and by assigning importance to structures and/or districts of known historical values.**
 - a. Maintain structures of value that are listed as determined eligible or are on the study list for the National Register of Historic Places.
 - b. Evaluated districts that are determined eligible and proceed with historic district establishment so that property owners may apply for state and federal historic preservation grants and other funding opportunities.

Economic Development & Tourism

A decorative graphic element consisting of a large white circle with a dark blue number '7' inside. The circle is surrounded by ornate, symmetrical white scrollwork that extends upwards and outwards.

7

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development is the process by which the local economy and the socio-economic well-being of the citizens are improved. Local governments can work with the private sector to create the kind of conditions that lead to economic growth. For example, local governments can recruit major employers to locate in suitable areas, work with existing businesses to encourage growth, or create opportunities for entrepreneurial development.

A primary goal of this Plan is to evaluate the Town's overall economic climate by examining local economic trends within Caldwell County and the surrounding area. Note that the other sections of this Plan also address additional key aspects that contribute to economic success (infrastructure, commercial/industrial building stock, land use, zoning, transportation, and environment). A full analysis of this Plan can help address the community's overall economic goal of strengthening and diversifying its industrial, manufacturing, commercial, and retail sectors.

From 2000 to 2010 Caldwell County and its municipalities were reacting to fundamental structural changes in the global and local economy. In the furniture industry, there was an eighty (80) to ninety (90) percent loss of employment, and the Great Recession nearly resulted in the sector's complete demise. However, there have been many improvements in the local economy since that time, and the forecast of Granite Falls's future economic development should not be based on events that occurred prior to 2010.

Granite Falls is within the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) that is the #1 furniture manufacturer in the U.S. Even during the recession, the MSA remained #1, but employment levels were significantly reduced. Since 2010, the furniture industry has recovered and is back to pre-recession hiring levels. Along with the recovering furniture industry, there has been a growth in industry diversity within the County. As the result, the County's economy has changed more since the Great Recession than it has in its 178 year history. New industries established in Caldwell County since 2008 are listed in Table 7-1. New retail is not included in the table, but it stands to reason that when new industry is added, new retail follows.

TABLE 7-1: CALDWELL COUNTY NEW INDUSTRIES SINCE 2008

Lubrimetal	Carolina Prime Pet	Childforms
Randall Miller Trucking	JBS, USA	Exela Pharma Sciences
CCF Sofa	Blue Ridge Tissue	Google
CCON Metals	Bakers Waste Equipment	Sattler Corp
XPO Logistics	STAT Industrial Recycling	CentriLogic
80 Acres Urban Agriculture	Woodgrain Millwork	Spann Enterprises
Automated Solutions	Carolina Locust	Superior Furnishings Direct
Roblon	Summit Install	Harlee Packaging
Ryan-Al Door	Carolina Leg Supply	Hoffman Materials
Kendall Supply	Southern Wood Products	AikenControls
ICON Publishing	Camp Coffee Roasters	BioNutra, Inc.

Different portions of the County have different challenges related to economic development. Along the southern portion of U.S. Highway 321 (including Granite Falls) is where most commercial development exists outside of Lenoir. There are a few large parcels in this area that remain open to development which are in close proximity to water and sewer services. This area is home to MDI, is close to Interstate 40, and is within 1 hour of a major international airport.



The N.C. Highway 321 widening project, which was originally scheduled to begin in 2021 but was rescheduled to begin in 2025 due to COVID, may make Granite Falls more attractive to retail and restaurant establishments looking to establish in the area. The flow of goods to Charlotte, Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and Asheville will become even easier as the road is expanded from two lanes to four. As the Town becomes more accessible, it is reasonable to conclude that Granite Falls will experience growth in other sectors, including housing and services. The proximity map above shows the Town's main connecting routes to many major economic centers. Transportation corridors that are within proximity or within the Town include:

- Interstate 40 – 10 minutes
- Interstate 77 – 35 minutes
- US Highway 64
- NC Highway 18
- NC Highway 321

There are three airports within 15 miles of Granite Falls, Hickory Regional Airport (2.5 miles), the Lower Creek Airport (13 miles), and the Foothills Regional Airport (15 miles). The Town also has two additional regional airports within 40 miles including Statesville Airport (29 miles) and Wilkes County Airport (37 miles). The Charlotte-Douglas International Airport is 43 miles away.

HOUSING STUDY

In order to encourage developers to bring in more housing development into Caldwell County, the County commissioned a study to examine unmet housing demand. New businesses and industries have expressed concern that their new hires have struggled to find housing that suits their needs. Caldwell County's economy has added about 1,000 new jobs a year for the past few years, but with no new housing being built, an increasing number of workers are living in neighboring counties and commuting to Caldwell County. Current housing and income statistics for Granite Falls and Caldwell County have not been enough to convince developers to build new market rate, multi-family apartments.

The Caldwell County Board of Commissioners approved hiring the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Government's Development Finance Initiative (DFI) to study the current housing market, point out what it lacks and identify solutions to encourage new development in the area.

Previous studies showed that almost 85 percent of existing housing in Caldwell County was already occupied, and that an increasing number of new hires lived outside of Caldwell County. The DFI study found that 81 percent of business and industry found the lack of suitable housing to be a recruitment problem as they try to expand. The study also found that 15,400 employees of Caldwell County businesses commute here from outside the county.

In addition, the DFI study determined that when compared with rental patterns in the rest of the state, there is potential in Caldwell County to fill more than 1,000 new apartments by 2023. Granite Falls, due to its ideal location along US HWY 321 and proximity to both Lenoir and Hickory, should keep a close eye on the housing situation in its immediate area and look for ways to encourage expansion of the available housing within the town.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Promote economic development strategies that will aid in recruitment of viable businesses and service industry activities.**
 - a. Create commercial, industrial, and residential marketing materials to promote available sites in the Town's planning jurisdiction.
 - b. Support and partner with Caldwell County Economic Development Commission in bringing additional employment opportunities into the Town.
 - c. Identify methods and strengths to identify Granite Falls as a destination.
- 2. Work to attract young adults and families, new residents, and tourism.**
 - a. Increase the walkability of the Town by adding greenways, sidewalks, and trails.
 - b. Enhance Downtown by adding streetscaping, promoting façade grant programs to property owners, and encouraging development that enhances Downtown as a designation.
 - c. Encourage innovative infill development projects with a focus on diversity of housing options and pedestrian connectivity, particularly to commercial districts such as the downtown.
- 3. Create and maintain social media platforms to promote the Town of Granite Falls.**
 - a. Utilize social media to promote Town events, destinations, development projects, etc

Land Use & Growth Management

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8

LAND USE

LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The core component of the Granite Falls Comprehensive Plan is land use. Land use planning impacts every member of the Town and the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), and helps build the kind of community that residents want to have. Good land use planning leads to orderly growth and the efficient provision of town services to residents, businesses, and visitors. Land use planning helps create neighborhoods where daily needs are located within walking distance. It also helps support or create closer knit neighborhoods and contributes to a sense of community by ensuring that residents have access to a range of activities and amenities that encourage interaction and physical activity (sidewalks, walking trails, and parks). Finally, land use planning helps create the conditions that will encourage economic growth without sacrificing the town's scenic beauty, farmland, or other natural assets.

The desire of Granite Falls is that growth and development are well planned, dictated by a community vision, and defined by a clean environment and the preservation of community character. Effective land use planning determines where certain land uses, such as residential, commercial, and industrial development are appropriate, and provides specific directives for land development design that ensures water quality, environmental health, and the preservation of community character.

The manner in which the land is currently being used, the availability of land suitable for future development or redevelopment, and Granite Falls land use regulations all coalesce to determine land uses per zoning designation. The Town's responsibility is to ensure that the land is developed in the most effective and appropriate way in order to promote the health, welfare and public interest of Town residents and stakeholders.

ZONING DISTRICTS

The Town of Granite Falls has planning jurisdiction both within Town limits, which consists of approximately 2,766 acres, and within its Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), which consists of 5,022 acres. The total acreage for the planning jurisdiction is 7,788 acres, with 64.5% percent is located within the ETJ of Granite Falls and 35.5% percent located within the actual town limits.

Zoning in Granite Falls and the ETJ is predominately zoned one of their residential districts, accounting for approximately 86.3% percent of the area's planning jurisdiction. The remaining 13.7% percent of the Town's planning jurisdiction is zoned either one of their industrial or commercial districts.

As the Granite Falls Zoning map shows, the current Town's zoning area and reflect zoning districts that closely parallel existing land use patterns. General Manufacturing District (M-1) allows for industrial land uses. The Central Business District (C-B), and Highway Business District (H-B) are the main commercial districts that provide suitable locations for those commercial activities which serve primarily the traveling public. Most of the parcels zoned one of the designations are located along US HWY 321 and Main Street.

From the eight residential zoning districts established by the Granite Falls Zoning Ordinance, the vast majority of land in the Town's planning jurisdiction is zoned either R-15 Residential Single-Family District, R-20A Residential Medium Density District, or R-20 Residential Low-Density District.

Within the Town Limits the R-15 Residential Single-Family District and the R-8 Residential Medium-High Density District and R-8A Residential High Density District. The R-8 and R-8A districts are intended to provide relatively medium to high density living areas and make up 12.3% percent of the parcels within the Town Limits. Housing types in these districts include both immobile and mobile dwellings (R-8A only), subject to the applicable housing provisions of this ordinance. With the intent of medium to high density these districts allow for two-family and multi-family dwellings as well. The regulations are intended to prohibit any use which, because of its character, would interfere with the residential nature of this district. It is expected that municipal water and sewerage facilities will be available to these properties designated R-8 and R-8A, or a reasonable expectation of such service in the near future.

R-15 Residential Single-Family District is mainly found within the town limits (61.7% of parcels within town limits). This district is established as a district in which the principal use of the land is for low density, single-family residential purposes, and to provide and protect low density residential areas for those desiring that type of living environment.

The largest two residential zoning districts overall are the R-20 Residential Low Density District and the R-20A Residential Medium Density District. More specifically, these two districts total 90.7 % percent of the parcels located within the ETJ of Granite Falls. The R-20 Residential District is similar to the R-15 district as the principal use of the land is for low density residential and agricultural purposes. The R-20A Residential Medium Density District is composed of medium density residential development and of open areas which are used as farmland and woodland. The regulations of these districts are to insure that residential development not having access to public water supplies and dependent upon septic tanks for sewage disposal will occur at sufficiently medium densities to insure a healthful environment. These two districts also were established to protect agricultural and residential areas from an influx of incompatible uses which would render such areas undesirable for farms and future development.

GRANITE FALLS PLANNING JURISDICTION ZONING

Zoning	Number of Parcels	Total Area (in Acres)	% Total Area (in Acres)	Minimum (in Acres)	Maximum (in Acres)	Average (in Acres)
CBD	51	9.52	0.1%	< 0.1	1.2	0.2
H-B	294	497.73	6.4%	< 0.1	24.3	1.7
M-1	94	482.70	6.2%	< 0.1	53.7	5.1
M-1 CZ	1	63.81	0.8%	63.8	63.8	63.8
N-B	7	9.28	0.1%	0.1	3.5	1.3
O-I	1	0.56	0.0%	0.6	0.6	0.6
R-15	1926	1,759.98	22.6%	< 0.1	146.6	0.9
R-15A	24	13.16	0.2%	0.1	3.9	0.5
R-20	756	1,849.41	23.7%	< 0.1	151.1	2.5
R-20A	757	2,709.82	34.8%	< 0.1	129.9	3.6
R-8	76	103.70	1.3%	< 0.1	46.6	1.4
R-8A	249	242.53	3.1%	< 0.1	53.8	1.0
R-MH	13	30.18	0.4%	0.1	6.1	2.3
TND	32	15.44	0.2%	0.1	8.2	0.5
Total	4,281	7,788	100.0%			

ZONING OF PARCELS WITHIN TOWN LIMITS

Zoning	Number of Parcels	Total Area (in Acres)	% Total Area (in Acres)	Minimum (in Acres)	Maximum (in Acres)	Average (in Acres)
CBD	51	9.5	0.3%	< 0.1	1.2	0.2
H-B	216	349.0	12.6%	< 0.1	24.3	1.6
M-1	60	257.3	9.3%	< 0.1	34.9	4.3
M-1 CZ	1	63.8	2.3%	63.8	63.8	63.8
N-B	5	4.9	0.2%	0.1	2.2	1.0
O-I	1	0.6	0.0%	0.6	0.6	0.6
R-15	1917	1,707.0	61.7%	< 0.1	146.6	0.890473
R-15A	24	13.2	0.5%	0.1	3.9	0.5
R-20	1	0.7	0.0%	0.7	0.7	0.7
R-20A	2	2.4	0.1%	0.9	1.5	1.2
R-8	76	103.7	3.7%	< 0.1	46.6	1.4
R-8A	242	238.4	8.6%	< 0.1	53.8	1.0
TND	32	15.4	0.6%	< 0.1	8.2	0.5
Total	2,628	2,766	100.0%			

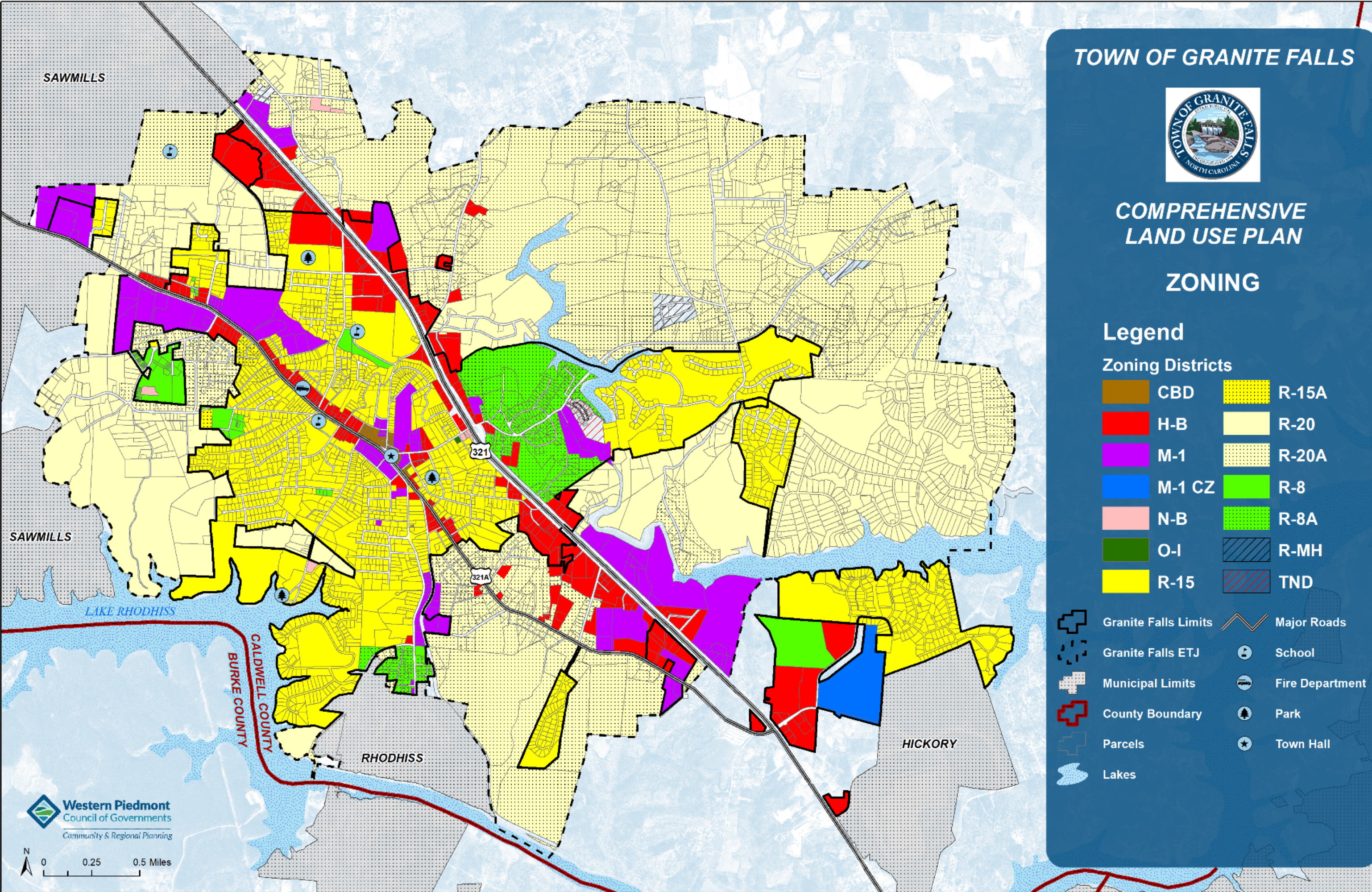
There are not any properties zoned Residential Mobile Home Park District (R-MH) within the Granite Falls city limits.

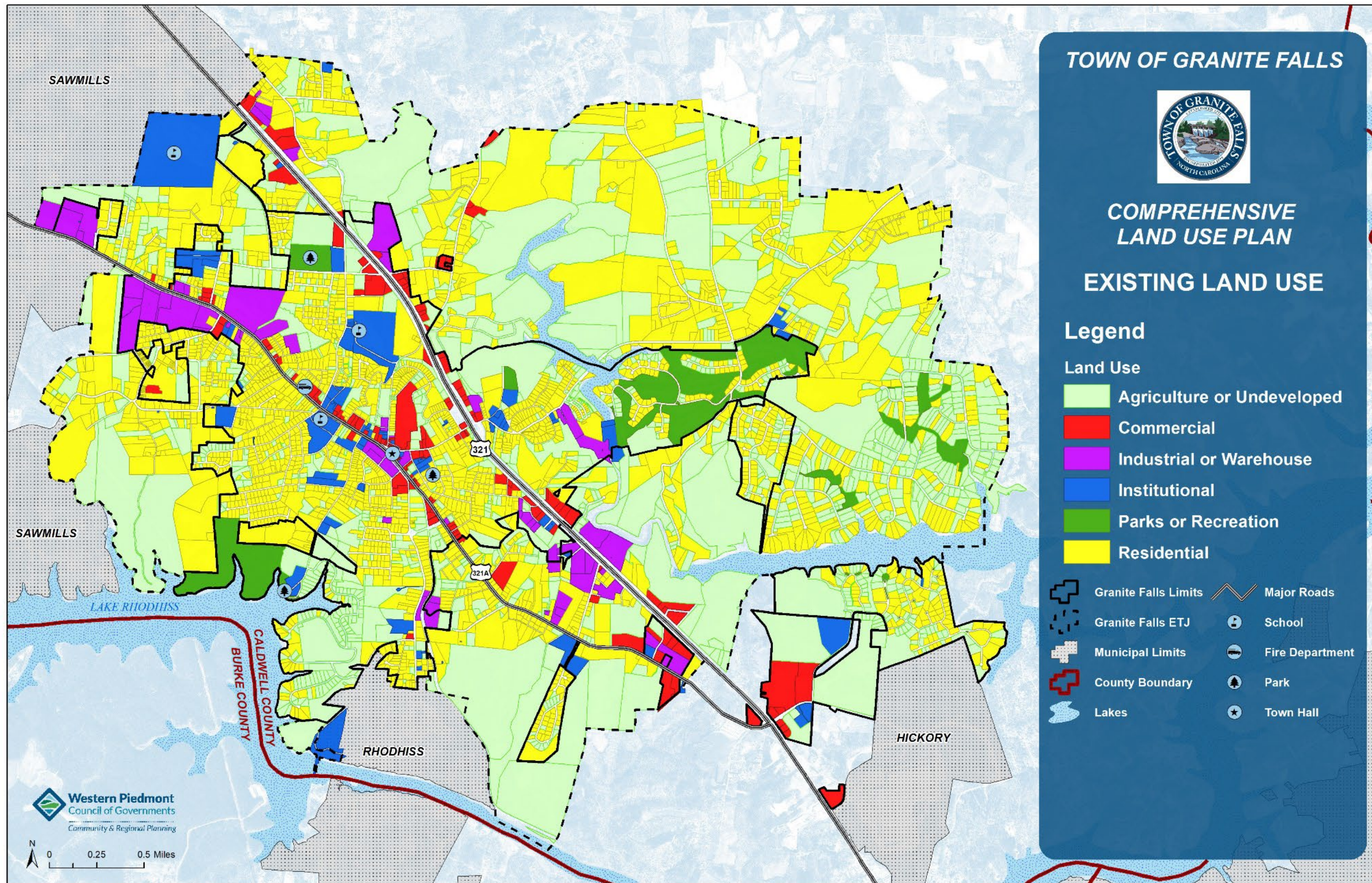
ZONING OF PARCELS WITHIN EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION (ETJ)

Zoning	Number of Parcels	Total Area (in Acres)	% Total Area (in Acres)	Minimum (in Acres)	Maximum (in Acres)	Average (in Acres)
H-B	78	148.8	3.0%	0.2	9.3	1.9
M-1	34	225.4	4.5%	0.2	53.7	6.6
N-B	2	4.4	0.1%	0.9	3.5	2.2
R-15	9	52.9	1.1%	0.3	23.9	5.882658
R-20	755	1,848.7	36.8%	< 0.1	151.1	2.4
R-20A	755	2,707.4	53.9%	< 0.1	129.9	3.6
R-8A	7	4.1	0.1%	0.2	1.0	0.6
R-MH	13	30.2	0.6%	< 0.1	6.1	2.3
Total	1,653	5,022	100.0%			

There are not any properties zoned Central Business District (CBD), Industrial Planned Development District (M-1 CZ), Office and Institutional District (O-I), Residential Single-Family District (R-15A), Residential Medium-High Density District (R-8), or Traditional Neighborhood Design District (TND) in Granite Falls's ETJ.

The average parcel zoned for residential is approximately 1 acre within the Town Limits and 3 acres in the ETJ, indicating low to medium development density.





EXISTING LAND USE

Granite Falls has a mixture of land uses ranging from agricultural to residential to industrial. A land use survey of all properties in the Town of Granite Falls Planning Area was completed in 2020. Land uses were categorized according to the following primary uses:

- **Residential:** Any parcel containing a residential.
- **Institutional and School:** Any parcel containing any type of medical uses concerned with the diagnosis, treatment, and care of human beings. This category also includes public services, and may be operated by a federal, state, or local governments, public or private utilities, public or private schools or colleges, churches, public agencies, or tax-exempt organizations.
- **Commercial:** Any parcel containing any type of activity involving the sale of goods or services for financial gain (commercial activity), but does not include parcels containing home occupations or medical offices.
- **Industrial:** Any parcel containing any type of business use or activity at a scale greater than home industry involving manufacturing, fabrication, assembly, warehousing, and/or storage.
- **Park/Recreation:** Any parcel designated for recreation or deemed open space.
- **Agriculture or Undeveloped:** Any parcel not in use or containing agriculture and/or abandoned buildings.

Land in Granite Falls is mainly “Residential” or “Agriculture or Undeveloped” in its land use categories. Given the Caldwell County’s and more specifically Granite Falls, rural and agricultural history, these land use patterns are not surprising. The Granite Falls Current Land Use Map displays types of land use across the Granite Falls planning area; a quick glance reveals the overwhelming amount of land either developed as residential or agricultural or allowed to remain vacant. Of the nearly 7,788 acres in the total Granite Falls planning area, 43.9% is occupied by agriculture uses or is vacant and could be used for agriculture purposes. These uses include woodlands, farms and family homesteads, among other uses. Residential uses occupy another significant percentage of the land at 41.2%. The two combined make up 85.1% percent of the current land use. A majority (51.3%) of the properties located in the ETJ are occupied by agriculture uses or are undeveloped. Residential uses occupy another significant percentage (42.4%) of the land in the ETJ.

Within the Town Limits the trend is the same but has a good mixture of commercial, industrial and institutional. Of the 2,766 acres located within the municipal boundaries of Granite Falls 31.9% is occupied by residential uses and 30.6% is agriculture uses or undeveloped.

The table below summarizes these land uses by acreage and number of parcels. These land use patterns are readily apparent on the Existing Land Use Map.

EXISTING LAND USE OVERALL

Land Use	Number of Parcels	Total Area (in Acres)	% Total Area (in Acres)	Minimum (in Acres)	Maximum (in Acres)	Average (in Acres)
Agriculture or Undeveloped	1,1442	3,402.53	43.9%	< 0.1	151.1	3.0
Commercial	179	239.9	3.1%	< 0.1	24.3	1.3
Industrial or Warehouse	69	293.0	3.8%	< 0.1	34.9	4.2
Institutional	111	352.57	4.3%	< 0.1	98.5	3.1
Parks or Recreation	21	290.6	3.7%	< 0.1	146.6	13.8
Residential	2,759	3,209.1	41.2%	< 0.1	66.4	1.2
Total	4,281	7,788	100.00%			

EXISTING LAND USE WITHIN TOWN LIMITS

Land Use	Number of Parcels	Total Area (in Acres)	% Total Area (in Acres)	Minimum (in Acres)	Maximum (in Acres)	Average (in Acres)
Agriculture or Undeveloped	579	847.8	30.6%	< 0.1	63.8	1.5
Commercial	156	188.6	6.8%	< 0.1	24.3	1.2
Industrial or Warehouse	45	207.2	7.5%	< 0.1	34.9	4.6
Institutional	9725	193.5	7.0%	< 0.1	35.9	2.0
Parks or Recreation	17	248.4	9.0%	< 0.1	146.6	14.6
Residential	1,734	1,080.5	39.1%	< 0.1	21.6	0.6
Total	2,628	2,766	100.00%			

EXISTING LAND USE WITHIN EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISTCTION (ETJ)

Land Use	Number of Parcels	Total Area (in Acres)	% Total Area (in Acres)	Minimum (in Acres)	Maximum (in Acres)	Average (in Acres)
Agriculture or Undeveloped	563	2,554.8	51.3%	< 0.1	151.1	4.6
Commercial	23	51.3	1.0%	0.2	8.0	2.2
Industrial or Warehouse	24	85.8	1.7%	0.2	12.7	3.6
Institutional	14	159.1	2.8%	< 0.1	98.5	10.0
Parks or Recreation	4	42.2	0.8%	0.4	21.8	10.6
Residential	1,025	2,128.6	42.4%	< 0.1	66.4	2.1
Total	1,653	5,022	100.00%			

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT 2010-2019

Permit Type	Permit Status	Within Granite Falls Town Limits	Within Granite Falls ETJ
Residential	New Single Family	51	39

Since 2010 there have been 90 new single family dwellings constructed. 57% have been within the Town Limits and 43% have been within the ETJ.

NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT 2010-2019

Permit Type	Permit Status	Within Granite Falls Town Limits	Within Granite Falls ETJ
Commercial	Addition	7	0
Commercial	New	10	0
Industrial	Addition	2	0
Institutional	New	4	1
Total Nonresidential Permits		23	1

From 2010 to 2019, 96% of all Nonresidential Development in Granite Falls was inside town limits. There have also been 10 new commercial projects and 4 institutional projects since 2010.

FUTURE LAND USE & GROWTH

An analysis of land availability, current land use activities, forecasted population changes, and residential development patterns reveals areas within the Town's planning jurisdiction that are potentially poised for future growth. Members of Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee were asked to help determine what types of future development would be appropriate for Granite Falls, where that development should take place, and what it should look like.

The Granite Falls Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, took a look at defining future land use within the Town of Granite Falls planning jurisdiction, which includes the corporate town limits and the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Commercial and mixed use development were recurring themes. One change that the Committee recommended included transitioning areas that had been designated for industrial use along Highway 321 and the eastern side of Highway 321 Business in the downtown area to a commercial district that allows for mixed uses. Additionally, the Committee also wanted the area along Pinewood Rd between Hwy 321 and Dudley Shoals Road changed from residential to commercial to accommodate intersection and roadway reconfigurations. Finally, the Committee was in favor of adding an overlay to Hwy 321, Hwy 321 Bus., and Downtown.

The possibility of a Downtown Overlay district was discussed by the Committee. This overlay district would be intended to serve the immediate downtown area. The Downtown Overlay would look into establishing building design standards, setbacks, parking, landscaping, and land uses that are appropriate for a downtown setting. The benefits of an overlay include that they can cross over multiple zoning districts and the uses in the zoning district are still allowed as long as they can meet the additional standards of the overlay. Additional design standards can be applied along

Highway 321 and the gateway into Granite Falls which could include architectural features such as sidewalks, structural aesthetics, parking standards, and façade details for new development.

The Committee also discussed new options for residential land uses. One of these options included allowing multi-family and accessory dwelling units in select residential districts by a Mixed Use Overlay which would permit both residential and commercial uses within the district. The purpose of the Mixed Use Overlay District would be to specifically look at those areas with NCDOT projects that will or have already created residual parcels, such as the new roundabout, and made those parcels usable under the existing zoning district requirements. Though this overlay could be placed in other transitional areas of the Town as well. Another option included allowing for more dense single-family residential development, predominantly around downtown and toward the lake.

Since there is a need for more housing options in the Town and Caldwell County as a whole, other options the Committee discussed to encourage a diversity of housing options include reviewing current residential zoning districts and amending and promoting appropriate districts to allow multi-family development.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

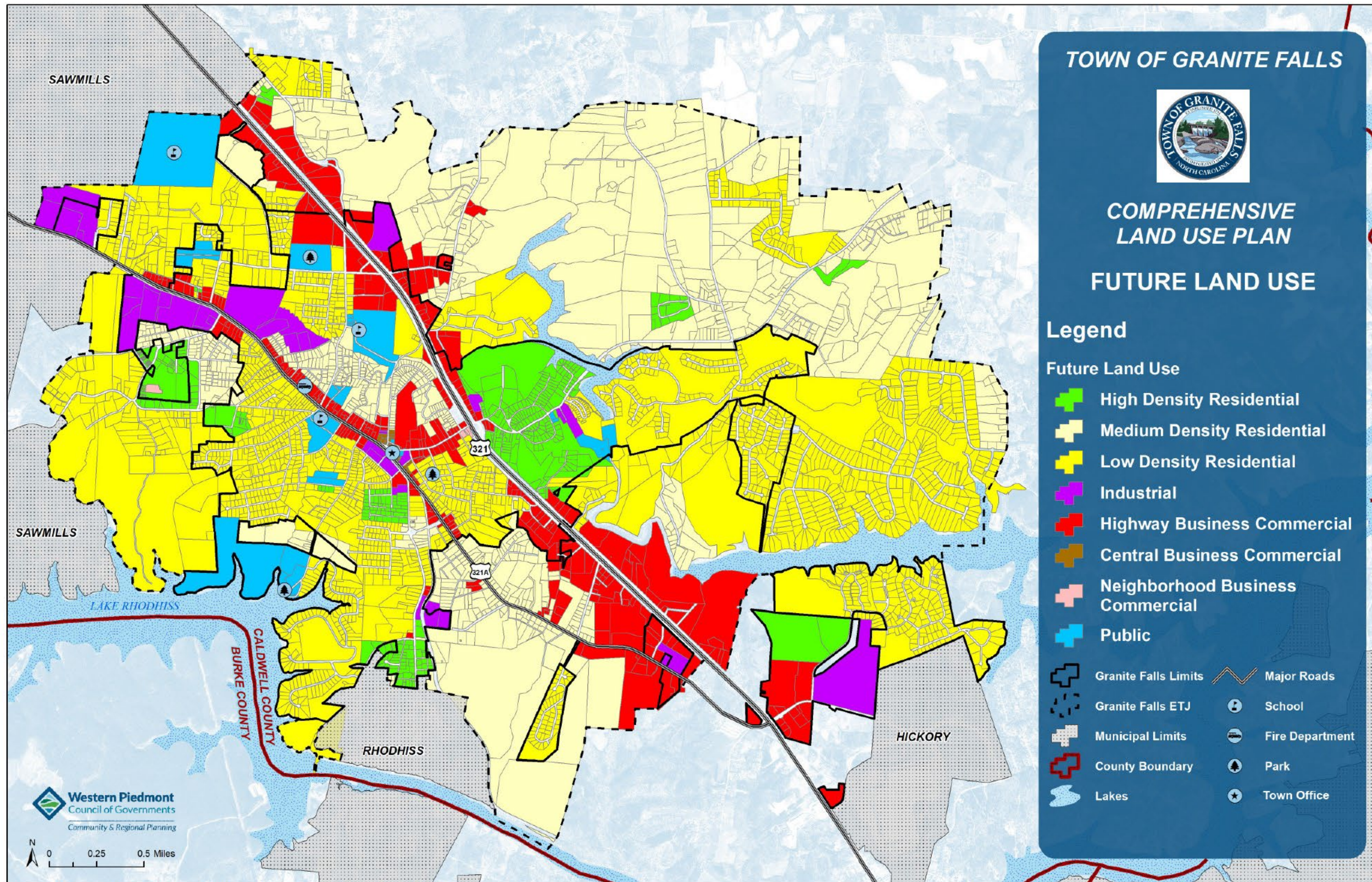
The Future Land Use Map was developed to show the Town's vision. The Granite Falls Planning Staff, Planning Board and Town Council rely on the Future Land Use Map to guide policy making related to zoning, watershed regulations, and infrastructure needs. Land use will change over time. Encouraging a more centralized development pattern will allow the Town to avoid the high costs associated with extending water and sewer infrastructure to areas lacking service.

Future Land Use Designations: The following future land use designations defined below are shown on the Future Land Use Map on the following page.

- **High Density Residential:** Multi-Family, Single-Family on smaller lots (<8,000 ft²) and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as by-right permitted use.
- **Medium Density Residential:** Single-Family and limited Multi-Family (duplex, triplex, ADUs) as by-right permitted use. Other Multi-Family permitted by approved Special Use Permit.
- **Low Density Residential:** Single-Family only as by-right permitted use. Potentially limited duplex and/or ADUs by approved Special Use Permit.
- **Industrial:** Industrial land uses permitted by-right. Same uses allowed as listed in the current zoning ordinance for the M-I District. Examples include all uses listed under Highway Business plus: Manufacture, Process or Fabrication of animal feeds, textiles, electrical products, glass, appliances, machine tools, plastics, rubber products, wood products, etc.
- **Highway Business Commercial:** Same uses allowed as listed in the current zoning ordinance. Examples include all uses listed under Neighborhood and Central Business plus: Animal Hospitals, Assembly Halls, Breweries, Distilleries, Wineries, Building Supplies, Clubs, Trucking Terminals, Funeral Services, Large Child Care Centers, Adult Care Facilities, Wholesale and Warehouse Establishments. Examples of permitted uses with conditions: Cellular Towers, Electronic Gaming/Sweepstakes, Live Music Venues, Mixed Use Buildings.
- **Central Business Commercial:** Same uses allowed as listed in the current zoning ordinance. Examples include all uses listed under Neighborhood Business plus: Alcoholic Beverage Stores, Automobile Parks and Supply

Stores, Automobile Parking Lots/Structures, Car Wash/Detail Shop, Restaurants (by-right), Feed and Seed Stores, Outdoor Displays, Retail Establishments (department, clothing, sporting goods, etc.), Theaters. Examples of permitted uses with conditions: Mixed Use Buildings, Recreation and Amusement Facility, Wine Shop/Bar, Craft Beer Shop/Taproom.

- **Neighborhood Business Commercial:** Same uses allowed as listed in the current zoning ordinance. Examples include: Antique Shops, Banks/Financial Institutions, Drug Stores, Hardware Stores, Grocery Stores, Greenhouses, Medical Facility/Clinics, Small Day Cares, Offices, Religious Institutions. Examples of permitted uses with conditions: Restaurants, Mixed Use Buildings, Service Stations.
- **Public:** Government/Public facilities including municipal buildings, parks and recreational facilities, public works facilities, police and fire, public library, etc.
- **Overlay District Designations:** These overlay districts are “layered” on top of the zoning district. The zoning district will still regulate the land use, but the use will also need to meet the regulation of the overlay district.
- **Downtown Overlay:** This district would be intended to serve the immediate downtown area. The Downtown Overlay would look into establishing building design standards, setbacks, parking, landscaping, and land uses that are appropriate for a downtown setting.
- **Mixed Use Overlay:** This district would be intended to serve transitional areas between residential and commercial districts. The Mixed Use Overlay would permit both residential and commercial use within the district.



CONCEPTUAL RENDERINGS

DOWNTOWN ENTRYWAY CONCEPT

This image shows a downtown entry gateway at the intersection of Falls Avenue and Crestview Street. The Falls Avenue exit off of U.S. 321 provides a direct entry into downtown. Shrubs and trees have been planted along the left and right sides of Falls Avenue (in the existing no parking areas).



This image of Falls Avenue and Crestview Street shows the downtown gateway, pedestrian crosswalks, trees and shrubs, and directional signage. Studies have shown that trees and plantings help to reduce vehicle speeds.



This close up image of Falls Avenue shows a pedestrian crosswalk on Falls Avenue, trees and shrubs, and directional signage for visitors arriving in downtown. Studies have shown that trees and plantings help to reduce vehicle speeds.



NEW DUDLEY AVENUE | PARK SQUARE CONCEPT

The future re-routing of Dudley Avenue gives the Town an opportunity to create a unique and authentic community gathering spot in the heart of downtown – which would appeal to shoppers, pedestrians, and visitors.



Trees, benches, lighting and sculptures would make the alley a pleasant place to meet, take a break from shopping, or enjoy the outdoors.



Chairs, tables and flowering plants would provide residents and visitors with a comfortable space to grab a bite to eat, gather for an event, or take a break during their downtown walks.

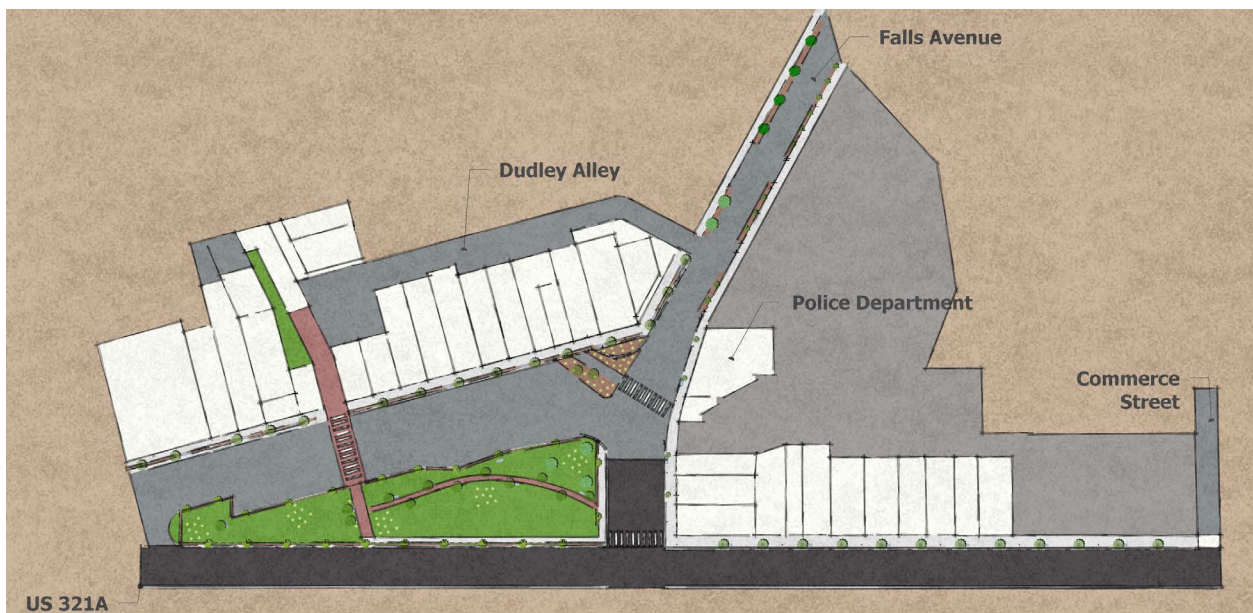


This aerial view shows how the walking path through the alley would connect to existing sidewalks on Dudley Avenue, Dudley Alley (left) and Park Square (right).

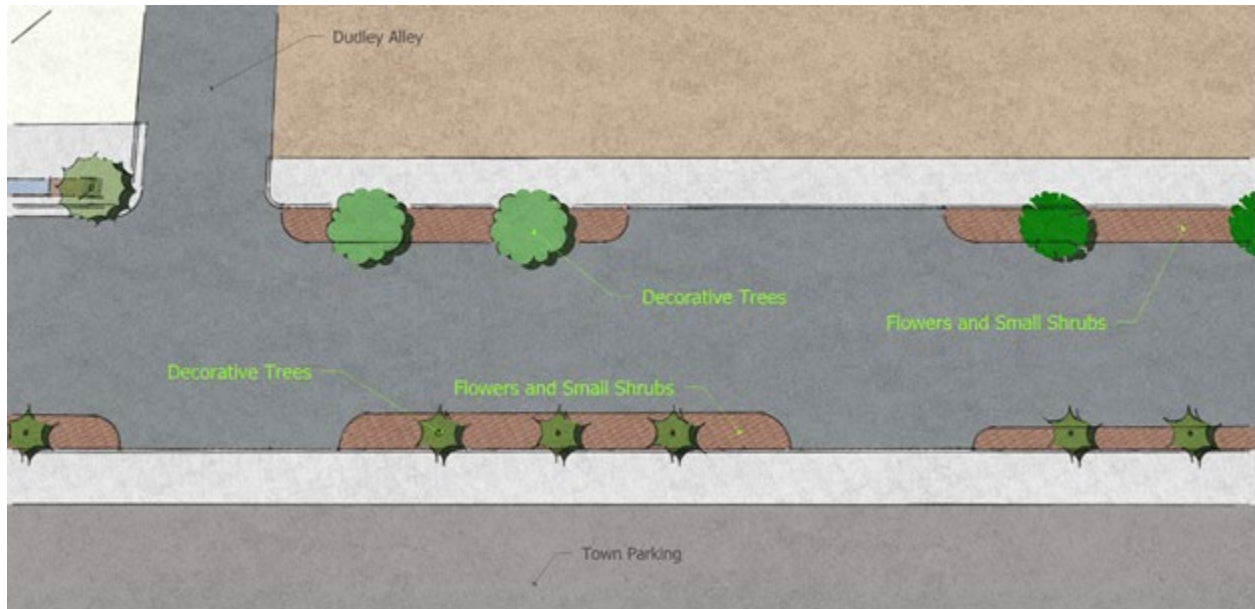


DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE CONCEPT

This aerial image shows potential locations for streetscape improvements along Pack Square, Falls Avenue and U.S. 321A. The park has been expanded to reflect the (future) re-routed Dudley Avenue.



This image shows trees, shrubs and flowers planted along the north and south sides of Falls Avenue (in the existing no parking areas). Studies have shown that trees and plantings help to reduce vehicle speeds.



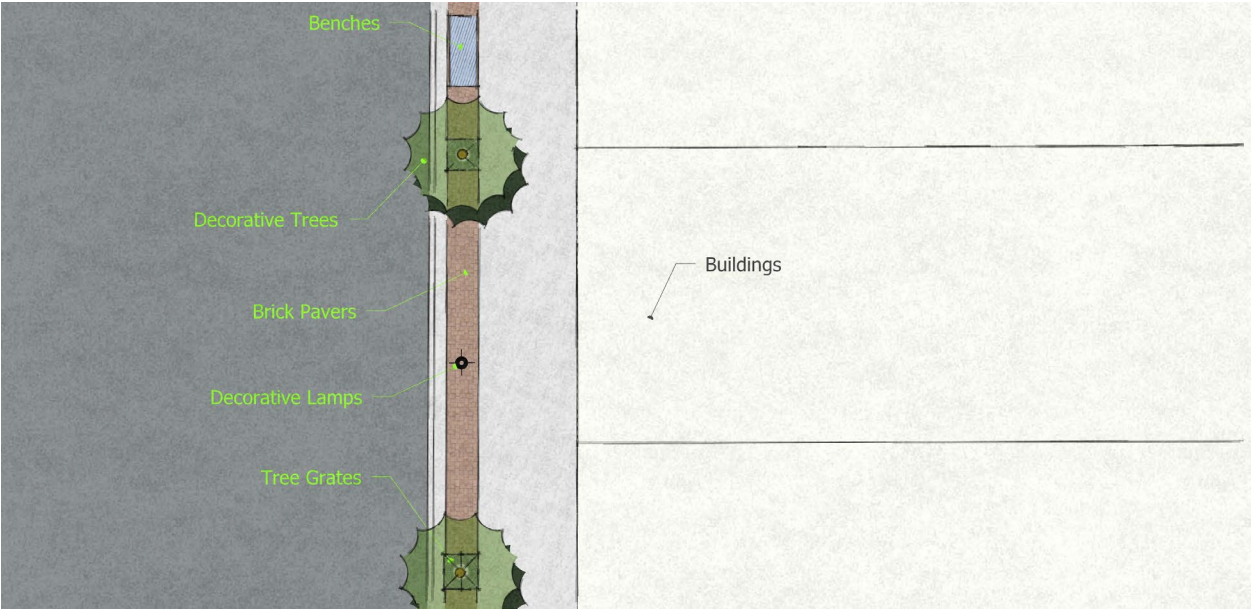
This image shows a highly-visible pedestrian crosswalk linking the (future) closed section of Dudley Avenue with the expanded park at Pack Square. In addition, trees have been planted on the sidewalk in front of downtown's shops. Benches have been added to the expanded park as have trees, flowers, and a walking path.



In this image, decorative trees, flowers and small shrubs have been planted in the existing no parking areas near the pedestrian crosswalk on Falls Avenue. Benches have been added to the sidewalk along Falls Avenue, and trees have been planted in front of the shops on U.S. 321A.

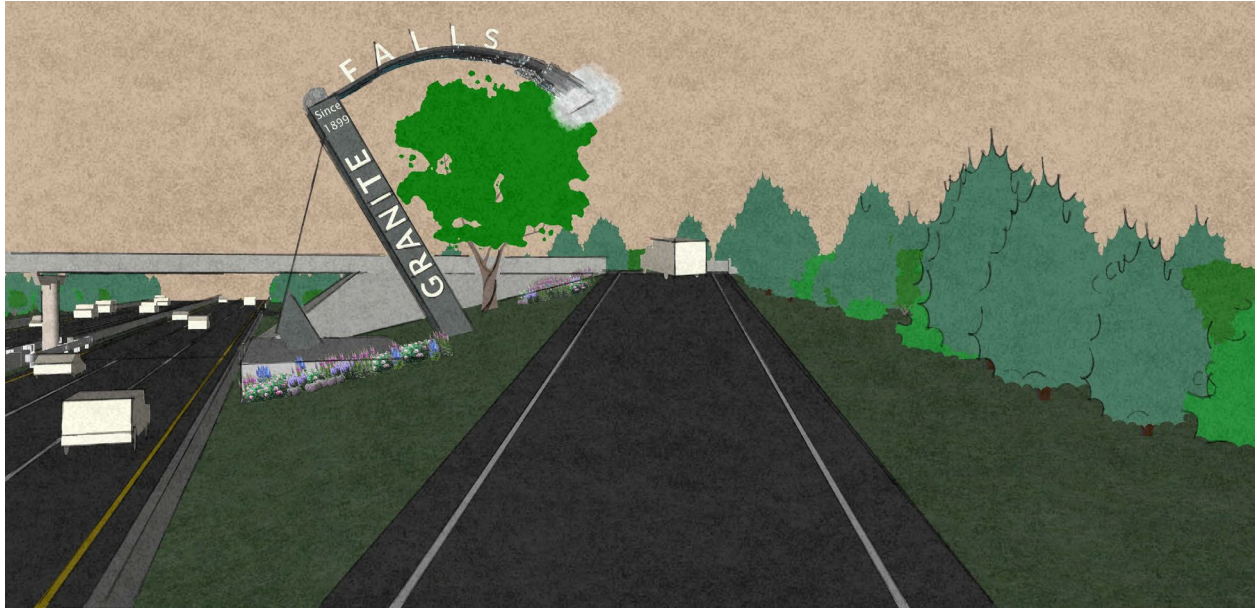


This close up image shows benches, trees, brick pavers, tree grates and decorative lamps on the sidewalk in front of downtown shops. Benches help to create a welcoming feeling, and trees create shade – encouraging people to window-shop.



U.S. 321 AT FALLS AVENUE EXIT CONCEPT

The grassy area adjacent to U.S. 321 at the Falls Avenue exit could be used as a space to promote Granite Falls. A unique, large sculpture that highlights downtown Granite Falls or the falls/lake could be placed at this location (sculpture shown is only a concept).



DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE CONCEPT

This drawing shows an example of signage that could be used to provide visitors with directions to key destinations throughout Granite Falls.




This drawing shows a close up view of the directional signage concept. The signpost has a granite-look finish, and rocks have been included on the sign post's top to symbolize the falls.



LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Review and update land use regulations to ensure that they are compatible for permitting the designated land uses outlined in this plan.**
 - a. Determine zoning regulation for a Downtown Zoning Overlay district that would be intended to serve the immediate downtown area by establishing design standards, setbacks, parking, landscaping, and land uses that are appropriate for a downtown setting.
 - b. Determine zoning regulation for a Mixed Use Zoning Overlay that would be intended to serve transitional areas between residential and commercial districts by permitting both residential and commercial use within the overlay.
- 2. Incorporate land use design standards that enhance the aesthetics along US HWY 321 and the gateways into Granite Falls.**
 - a. Develop design regulations for properties along the US HWY 321 corridor to include architectural features such as sidewalks, structural aesthetics, parking standards, and façade details for new development.
 - b. Consider installing art/signage/landscaping and other streetscaping along downtown streets and gateways to the Town.
- 3. Update zoning regulations to encourage a diversity of housing options.**
 - a. Review current residential zoning districts and amend appropriate districts to permit accessory dwelling units and multi-family development.
 - b. Allow for a range of permitted single-family lot sizes as allowed by watershed restrictions.
 - c. Identify and promote areas for multi-family development.
 - d. Identify areas that could allow for mixed-use residential and commercial development.
- 4. Establish Downtown as a destination that encourages a diversity of commercial and retail options as well as residential.**
 - a. Work with downtown land owners to apply for improvement grants to enhance the appearance of downtown.
 - b. Research options to discourage vacant buildings in downtown and discourage use of downtown buildings for storage.
 - c. Encourage residential infill within the downtown area.
 - d. Increase walkability and enhance park space in downtown.
 - e. Attract boutique businesses by encouraging development that enhances its role as a destination.

Appendix

The background of the page is a photograph of a waterfall cascading over a concrete dam structure, surrounded by dense green trees and foliage. The water flows into a rocky riverbed below. In the bottom right corner, there is a large, white, stylized letter 'A' centered within a white circle. The circle is framed by decorative, white, swirling lines that resemble clouds or smoke.

A

APPENDIX A – PUBLIC SURVEY

An online public survey was available from May 12th to June 14th, 2020. Approximately 87 participants took part in the survey. A link to the survey was posted on the Western Piedmont Council of Governments' (WPCOG) website of social media platform. The survey focused on public responses to the following: community identification, economic development, land use and development, downtown, housing, Highway 321, and recreation. The results of this survey were taken into consideration while drafting the Granite Falls Comprehensive Land Use Plan.

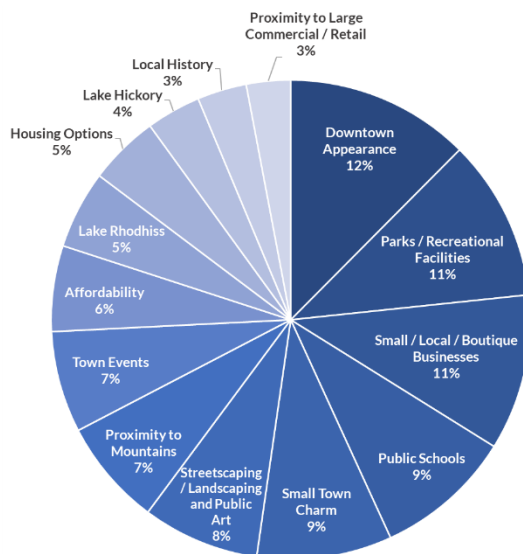


* Flyer that was posted to advertise the survey.

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

COMMUNITY STRENGTHS

Question 1 – What aspects do you believe will strengthen or maintain community identity and character in Granite Falls? (check all that apply)



Downtown Appearance	12.5%
Parks / Recreational Facilities	10.9%
Small / Local / Boutique Businesses	10.5%
Public Schools	9.3%
Small Town Charm	9.1%
Streetscaping / Landscaping and Public Art	7.9%
Proximity to Mountains	7.2%
Town Events	6.8%
Affordability	5.8%
Lake Rhodhiss	5.3%
Housing Options	4.7%
Lake Hickory	3.7%
Local History	3.3%
Proximity to Large Commercial / Retail	3.0%

* Out of 570 responses

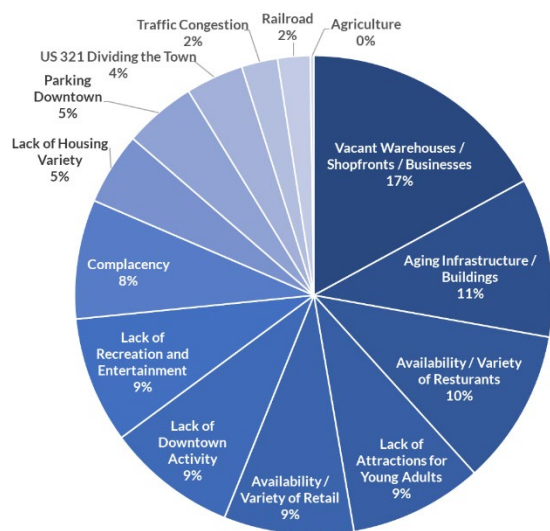
Question 2 – If not listed above (Question 1), what other aspects would strengthen or maintain community identity and character?

RECREATION	• Walking track
	• Greenway
	• Expansion of recreation center fields and parking
	• Mill Pond Dam Park
UTILITIES	• More downtown parking
	• Sidewalks
	• Underground utilities
	• Community funded independent renewable energy
	• Internet and cable access to every home in town limits

DEVELOPMENT	• Tasteful Development (Dimensional and architectural requirements)
	• Gentrification of unsightly properties
	• Streetscaping Falls Ave from HWY 321 to downtown
RETAIL & RESTAURANTS	• Local Farmers Market
	• Local Retail
	• Local Restaurants
	• Variety of restaurants
OTHER	• Modernization

COMMUNITY WEAKNESS

Question 3 – What aspects do you believe will threaten or weaken community identity and character? (check all that apply)



Vacant Warehouses / Shopfronts / Businesses	17.1%
Aging Infrastructure / Buildings	10.7%
Availability / Variety of Restaurants	10.5%
Lack of Attractions for Young Adults	9.0%
Availability / Variety of Retail	8.8%
Lack of Downtown Activity	8.8%
Lack of Recreation and Entertainment	8.5%
Complacency	8.0%
Lack of Housing Variety	4.9%
Parking Downtown	4.9%
US 321 Dividing the Town	3.9%
Traffic Congestion	2.4%
Railroad	2.2%
Agriculture	0.2%

* Out of 410 responses

Question 4 – If not listed above (Question 3), what other aspects would weaken community identity and character?

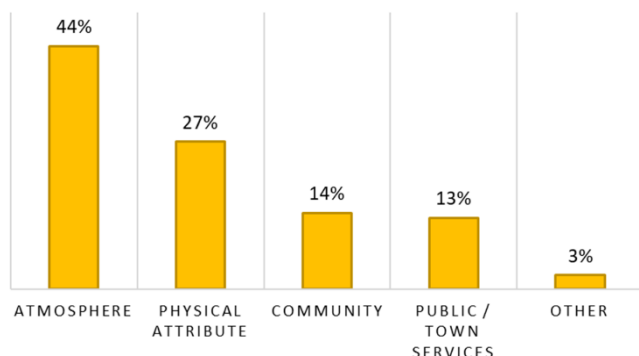
DOWNTOWN	• Limited business hours downtown.
	• Lack of downtown business variety.
	• Lack of foot traffic in downtown.
	• Conflict between downtown business owners.
	• The railroad is underutilized as a positive town characteristic and should have a greenway along it.

COMMERCIAL / RETAIL	• Empty store fronts.
	• Characterless businesses.
	• Lack of attractions / businesses targeted toward young adults.
OTHER	• Nuisance properties.
	• Underutilized History Museum.
	• Lack of activities for children.

COMMUNITY VISION

Question 5 – What do you like most about the Town of Granite Falls? (open ended)

WHAT IS LIKED ABOUT GRANITE FALLS



The tables below are a detailed breakdown of responses to each topic listed in the graph (left). The responses in blue represent the top 10 recurring responses as a whole.

1. ATMOSPHERE	44%
Small town charm / Quaint / Small	31.0%
Quietness	3.4%
Hometown / Hometown feel	2.6%
Safe / Low crime	2.6%
Family oriented	0.9%
Small town charm...but needs more opportunities and services	0.9%
Old town feel	0.9%
Established community	0.9%
Town is always trying to improve	0.9%

2. PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTE	27%
Location / Proximity to mountains / Proximity to urban areas	15.5%
Traditional Downtown	2.6%
Local businesses / Family businesses	1.7%
Lake Rhodhiss / Lake Hickory	1.7%
Variety of church denominations	0.9%
Location to hospitals / doctors	0.9%
Clean	0.9%
New restaurants	0.9%
Low traffic	0.9%
Sidewalks	0.9%

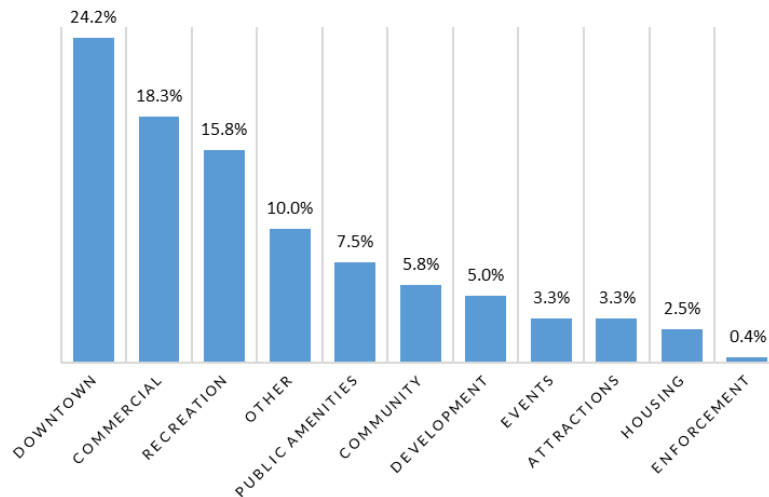
3. COMMUNITY	14%
Friendly / Community / People	11.2%
Town history / Local history pride	2.6%

4. PUBLIC / TOWN SERVICES	13%
Police Department	2.6%
Town Services / Cooperation / Response time	2.6%
Town owned utilities	1.7%
Library	1.7%
Schools	0.9%
Post Office	0.9%
Lower taxes	0.9%
Downtown events	0.9%
Recreation Department Improvements	0.9%

5. OTHER	3%
Huffys	0.9%
Affordability	0.9%
Not much to like	0.9%

Question 6 – Describe a vision that you feel embodies the future of the Town of Granite Falls or list physical attributes that you want to see.

VISION FOR GRANITE FALLS



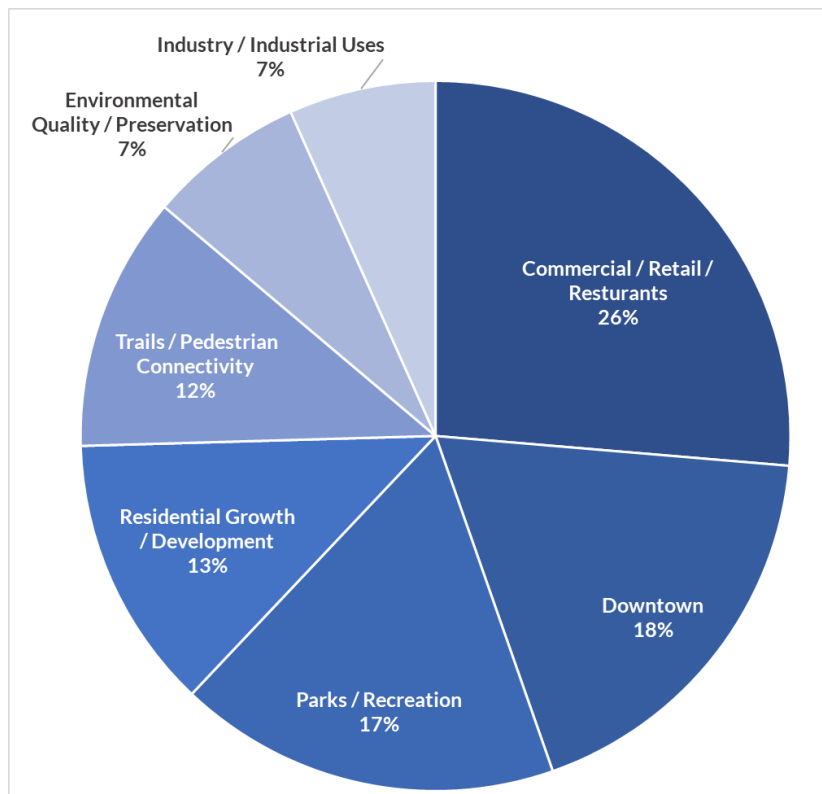
1. DOWNTOWN	24.2%	3. RECREATION	15.8%	2. COMMERCIAL	18.3%
Downtown Revitalization (façade repair, more local retail, art, clean, beautification, landscaping, outside eating, etc.)	16.7%	More outdoor activities (Hiking, etc.)	1.7%	More Restaurants / Restaurant Diversity	6.7%
Parking downtown	1.7%	Replace railroad with a greenway connecting Hickory to Lenoir.	1.7%	More Retail Options / Diverse Retail Options	5.0%
Increase park amenities in the downtown park	1.7%	Public access to Lake Rhodhiss other than Lakeside Park (water treatment plant)	1.7%	Encourage local retail / business	5.0%
Convert the large industrial lighting and textile plant downtown into factory outlets or antique mall for multiple vendors	0.8%	Greenway from Downtown to Lake Rhodhiss public access	1.7%	Restore old land / buildings for small business growth	1.7%
Stop trimming trees in downtown	0.8%	Remodeling of Chestnut Park	1.7%	4. OTHER	10.0%
Deny proposed right turn lane in downtown	0.8%	Greenway for biking and walking	1.7%	Tourism	2.5%
Provide housing in downtown that markets toward young adults	0.8%	Upgrade Lakeside Park	0.8%	Local artist program	1.7%
More downtown activities	0.8%	New large park across from Granite Drug Center	0.8%	Keep connected to our history / roots, but always be growing toward the future.	1.7%
		New park at old mill site	0.8%	Affordability	0.8%
		invest more in existing / create more park space	0.8%	More property for sale/rent	0.8%
		Larger park located near downtown	0.8%	Using tax money for community approved projects	0.8%
		Dog Park	0.8%	Remove orange barricade at Cola Event Center (not pleasing to look at)	0.8%
		Walking / Running track	0.8%	Expand town limits to increase tax base	0.8%

*Percentages are taken from the total number of responses (120).
 ** Gold represents the top 10 recurring responses.

5. PUBLIC AMENITIES	7.5%	7. DEVELOPMENT	5.0%	10. HOUSING	2.5%
Repair/More sidewalks	2.5%	Encourage growth around Lake Rhodhiss (residential growth, retail, recreation)	3.3%	Provide affordable modern low income housing	0.8%
Offer additional amenities	1.7%	Repurposing of underutilized / vacant buildings / properties	0.8%	Provide a diversity of housing options	0.8%
Expand water/sewer utilities	1.7%	Encourage Gentrification (increase physical appeal and updates the town)	0.8%	Housing affordability	0.8%
New Police/Fire Departments	0.8%	8. EVENTS	3.3%	11. ENFORCEMENT	0.4%
Completion of new middle school	0.8%	More Community Events / Festivals	2.5%	Maintained Properties / Property Maintenance Enforcement / Abatement of Minimal Structures	3.3%
6. COMMUNITY	5.8%	Community events at Shurford Rec. Center and Lakeside Park	0.8%	Noise ordinance (Loud Vehicles, DMV)	0.8%
Small Town feel/atmosphere	4.2%	9. ATTRactions	3.3%		
Business Owner and Homeowner Pride	0.8%	Granite Falls needs a "BANG"	0.8%		
Grow and keep it's character and charm	0.8%	Gateway to the mountains	0.8%		
		More activities for all generations	0.8%		
		Attractions for families	0.8%		

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Question 7 – What factors are important to the economic vitality of the town? (choose 3)



Question 8 - If not listed above (question 7), what other factors are important to the economic vitality of the Town?

Appearance

- Appearance
- Maintaining properties
- Façade renovations of downtown buildings

Attraction

- Providing amenities (greenway, nightlife, outdoor theater) to keep residences from going elsewhere for entertainment
- Make Granite Falls an attraction, rather than going elsewhere for entertainment/retail/activities
- Places for social interaction

Commercial

- More variety of retail in downtown
- Variety of restaurants

Engagement

- Keeping residents connected and engaged with the town
- More action less complacency from elected officials

Other

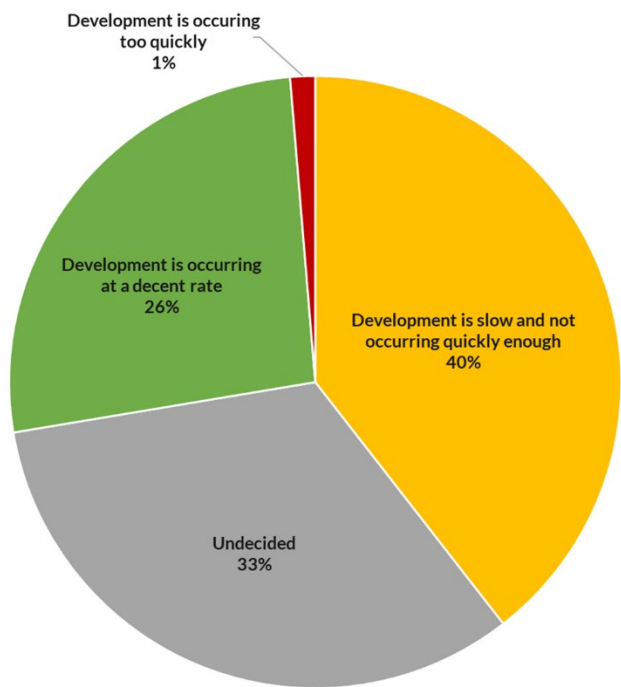
- More parking in downtown
- Affordable retail space in downtown
- Abatement of minimal structures
- No current identity (mill town but no longer a mill)

Public Utilities

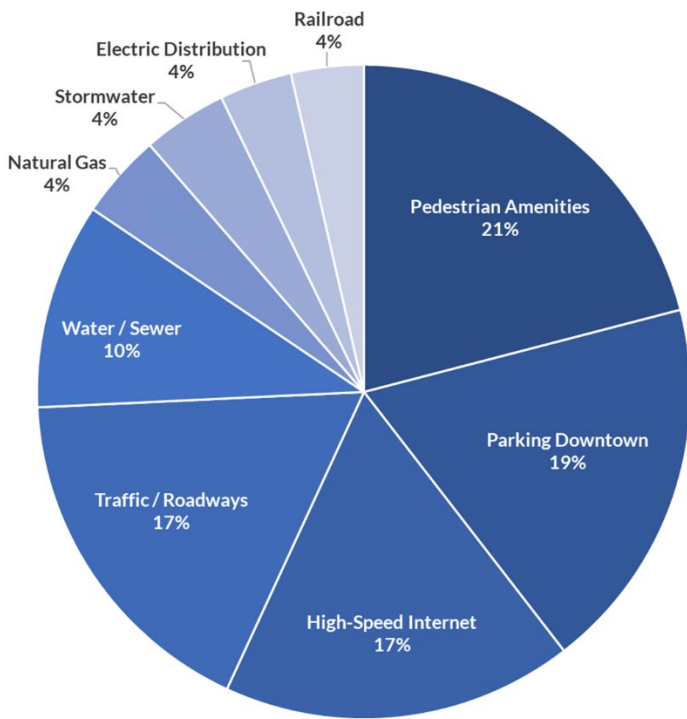
- Community funded renewable utilities (solar, wind)
- Town run information utilities (broadband and cable)

LAND DEVELOPMENT

Question 9 - How do you feel about the pace of growth and development in the Granite Falls planning area over the past 10 years? (choose 1)

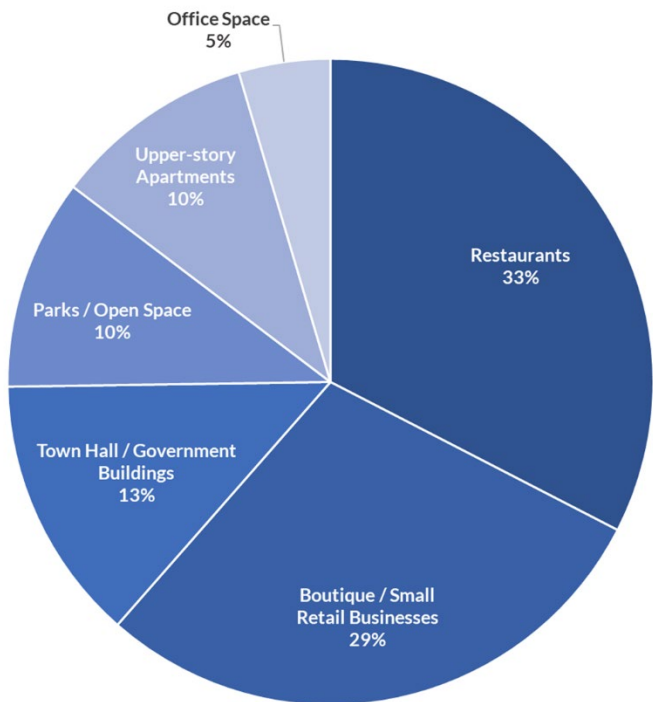


Question 10 - What are the biggest infrastructure issues that affect future development in the Town? (check all the apply)

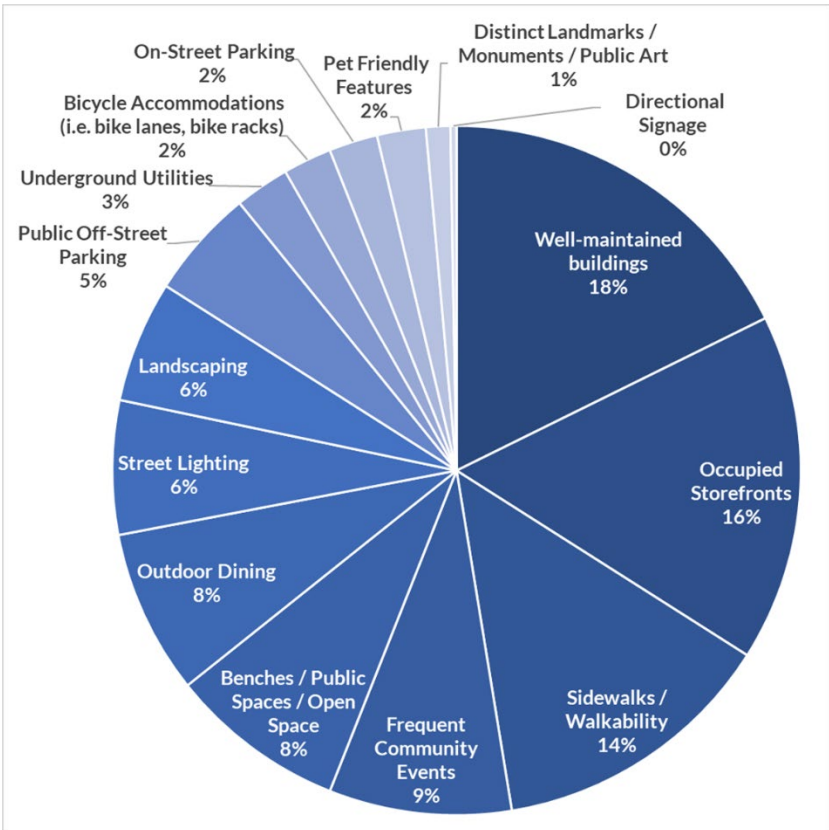


DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Question 11 - Identify the types of uses that should be in Downtown. (choose 3)

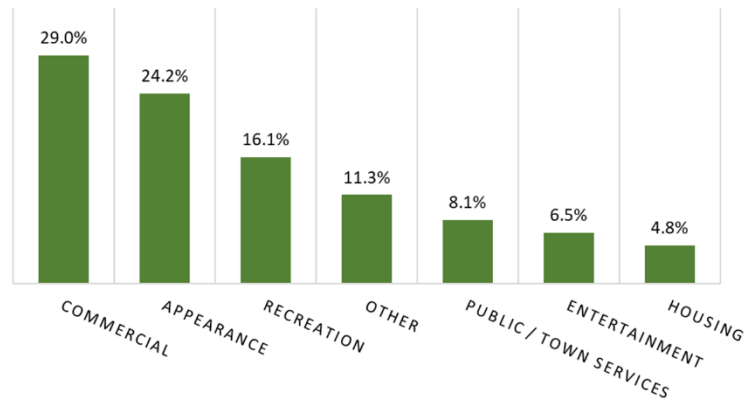


Question 12 - What physical features do you think are crucial for a successful Downtown? (choose 3)



Question 14 – What is your vision for Downtown Granite Falls?

VISION FOR DOWNTOWN GRANITE FALLS

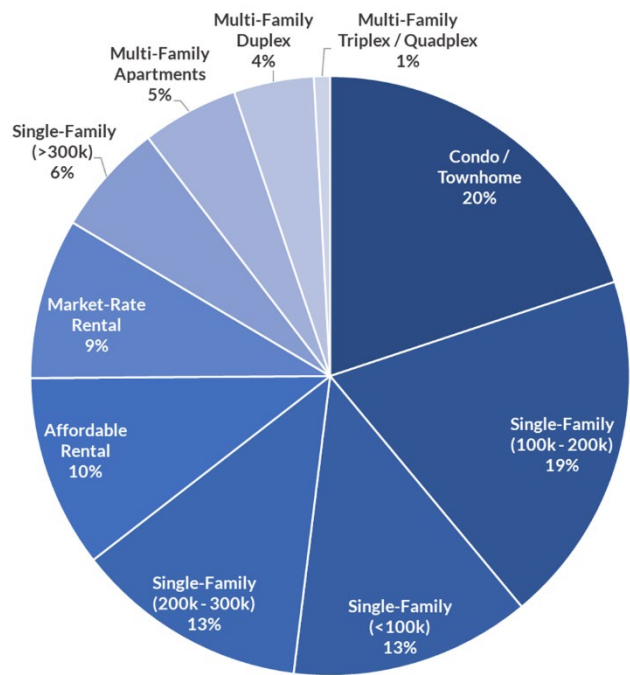


1. COMMERCIAL	29.0%	2. APPEARANCE	24.2%	4. OTHER	11.3%
Unique/Variety of Restaurants	9.7%	Facade Improvements / Investment in improving appearance of commercial buildings	8.1%	Provide a reason to stop at the town instead of passing through.	4.8%
Specialty/Local Retail shops	4.8%	Downtown be the community hub again. A place for gathering, shopping, dining, entertainment and leisure.	6.5%	Encourage more visitors / tourism	4.8%
Keeping business in Granite Falls rather than Hickory.	4.8%	Landscaping	3.2%	Community groups	1.6%
Shopping	3.2%	"Look like Blowing Rock"	1.6%	5. PUBLIC / TOWN SERVICES	8.1%
Restaurants with outside dining.	1.6%	Town aesthetic improvement projects	1.6%	Community/Town events such as the Christmas Event.	3.2%
Bars	1.6%	Inviting/Friendly Downtown atmosphere	1.6%	Give the police department the ability to grow with the town.	1.6%
Expand retail around other retail	1.6%	Night Lighting	1.6%	Better infrastructure and accessible parking in downtown.	1.6%
Decent grocery store	1.6%	3. RECREATION	16.1%	More parking	1.6%
		Pedestrian friendly	4.8%	6. ENTERTAINMENT	6.5%
		Downtown Park	3.2%	Local music / Concerts	3.2%
		Parks and sidewalks	3.2%	Local Artist	1.6%
		Greenway	3.2%	Entertainment	1.6%
		More lake activities	1.6%	7. HOUSING	4.8%
				Variety of affordable housing	3.2%
				Retail/Apartments replace warehouse on the south side of 321A	1.6%

*Percentages are taken from the total number of responses (62).
** Gold represents the top 8 recurring responses.

HOUSING STOCK

Question 15 – What housing types do you think Granite Falls needs? (choose 4)



Question 16 - Of those housing options listed above (Question 15), which one do you believe is needed the most?
Percentages are taken from the total number of responses (35). Gold represents new category that was not part of Question 15.

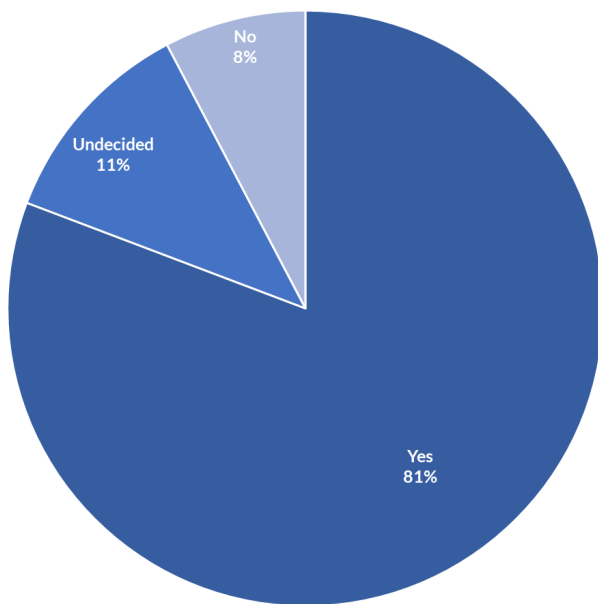
Housing Type	Percent
Single-Family	22.9%
Affordable Rental	14.3%
Condo / Townhome	11.4%
Single-Family (100k - 200k)	8.6%
Townhome	8.6%
General Housing 200k - 300k	5.7%
Condo	5.7%
Single-Family (<100k)	2.9%
Single-Family (>300k)	2.9%
Multi-Family Apartments	2.9%
Any	2.9%
Single-Family <200k	2.9%
Single-Family >100k	2.9%
Market Rate Apartments	2.9%
Shoot High	2.9%
Single-Family (200k - 300k)	0.0%
Market-Rate Rental	0.0%
Multi-Family Duplex	0.0%
Multi-Family Triplex / <u>Quadplex</u>	0.0%

Notes:

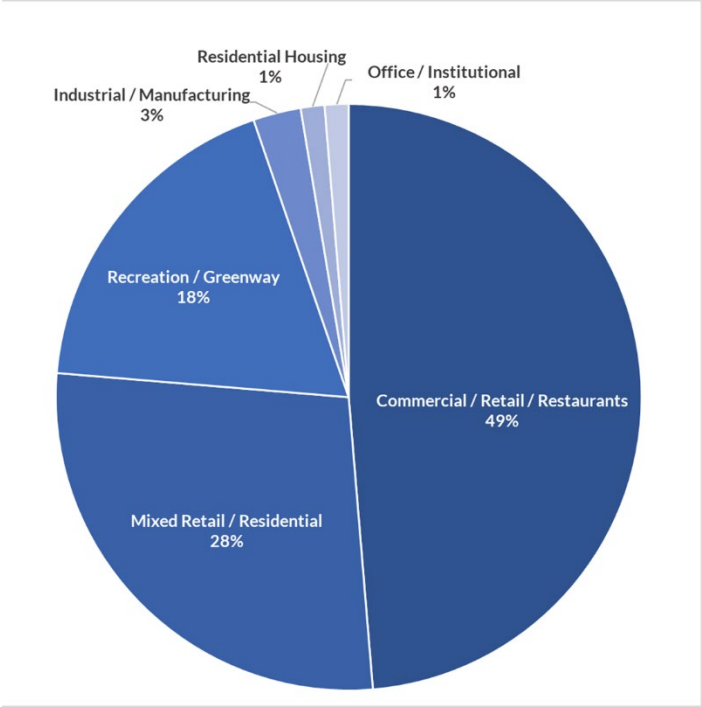
- Townhomes as starter homes.
- Up-Scale townhomes from young adults.
- Affordable modern rentals.
- Affordable housing need across the U.S.

TRANSPORTATION

Question 17 - Would you be in favor of requiring new businesses along HWY 321 to meet reasonable design standards such as landscaping, building materials, signage, setbacks, etc.?

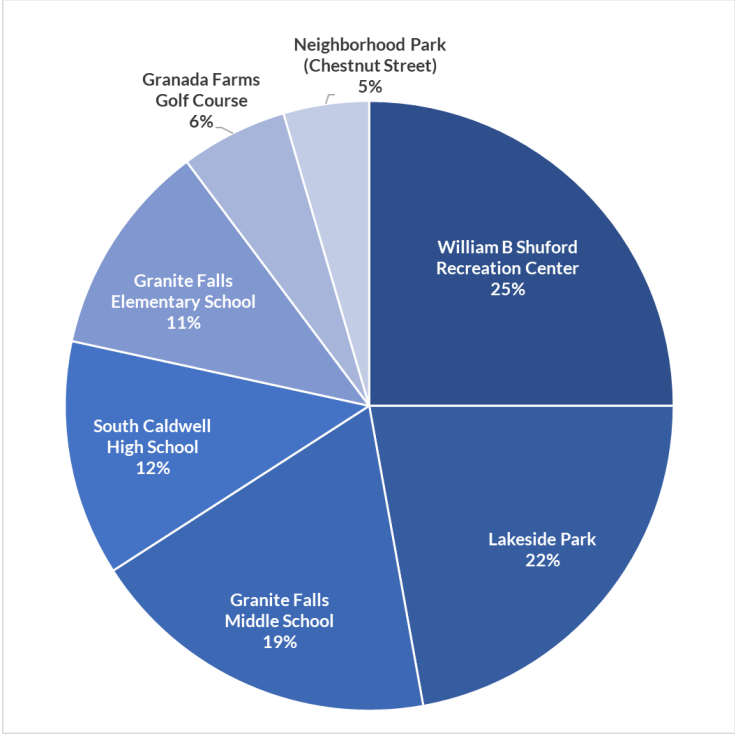


Question 18 - What type of development would you most prefer to see along the HWY 321 corridor? (choose 1)



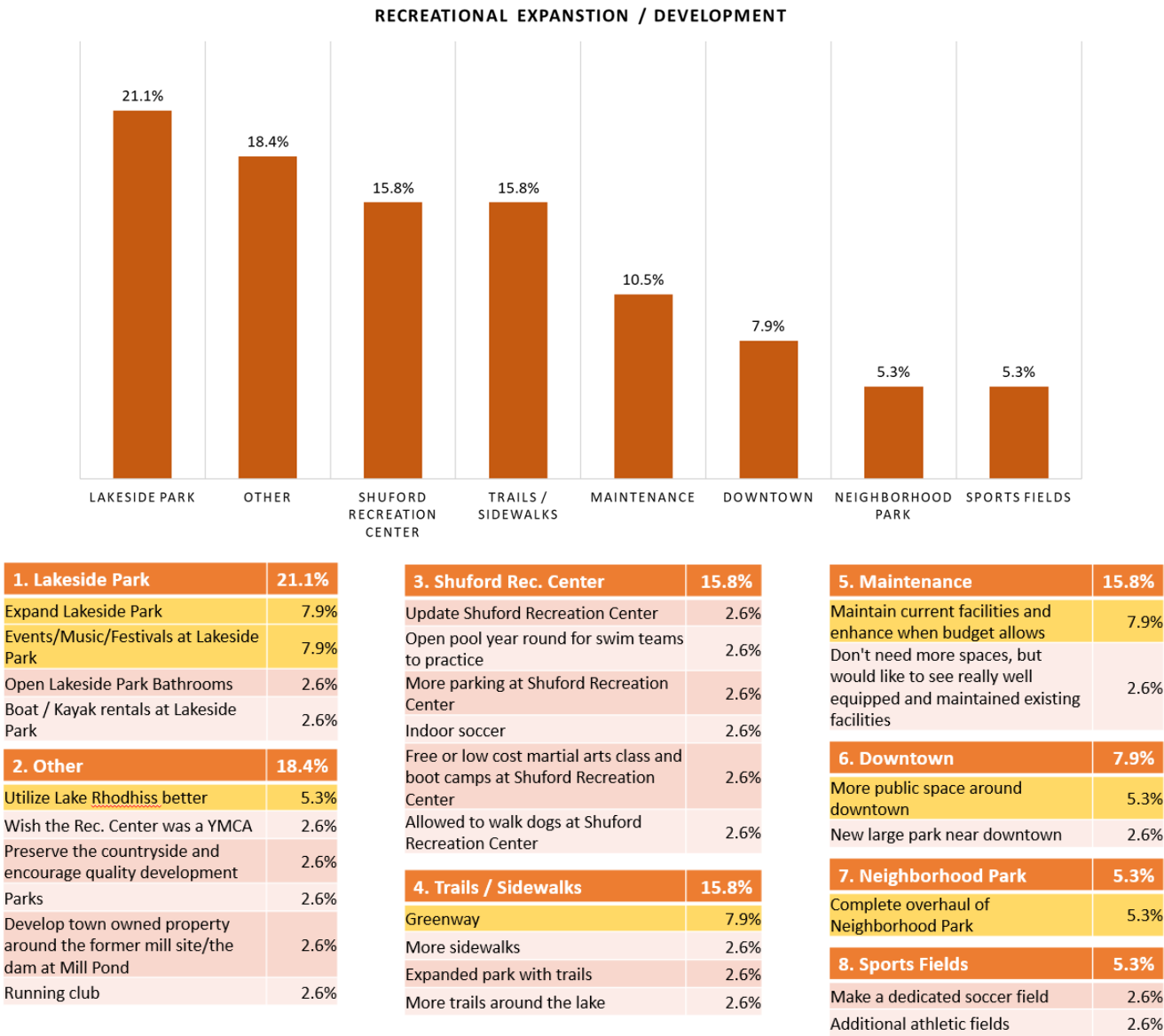
RECREATION

Question 19 - Which recreational facilities in the Granite Falls Planning Area do you utilize? (check all that apply)



Question 20 - What opportunities would you like to see expanded or developed?

*Percentages are taken from the total number of responses (38). ** Gold represents the top 7 recurring responses.

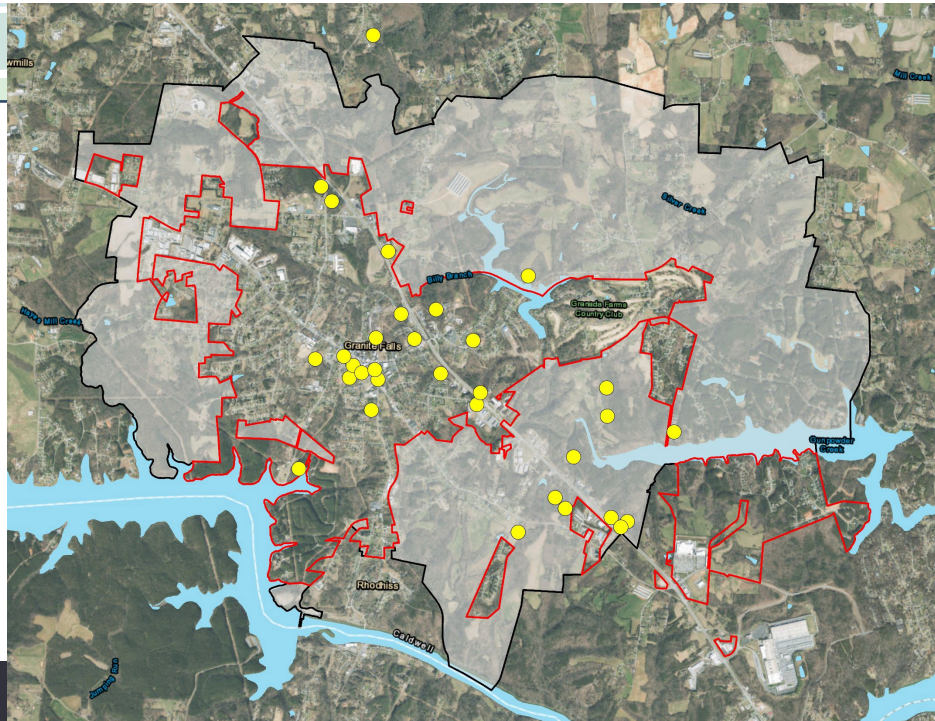


MAP MARKER EXERCISE

Map Marker

Where would you like to see development occur?

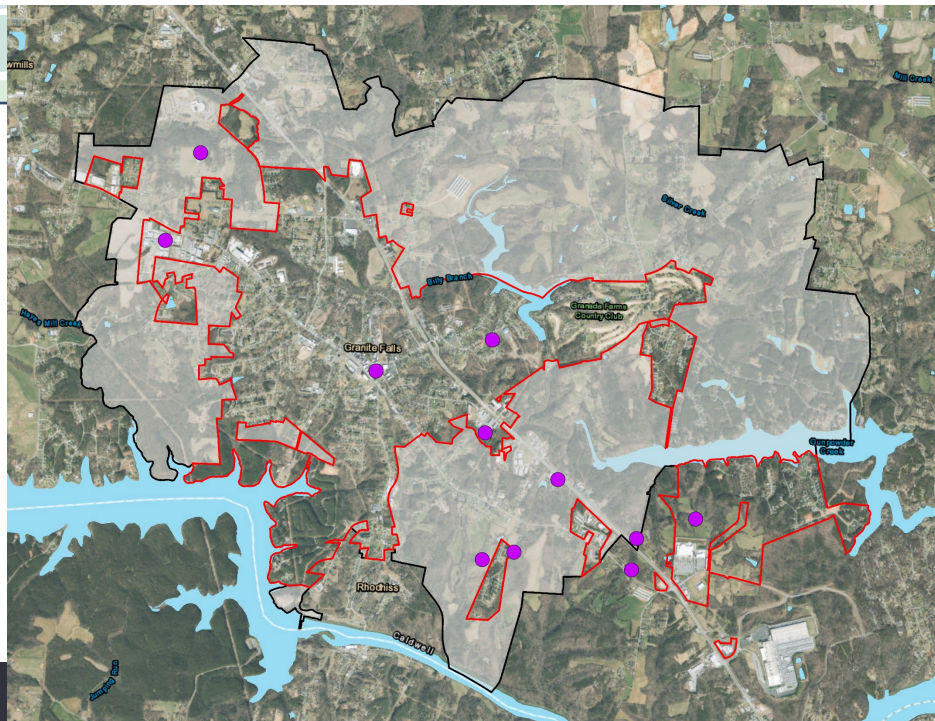
Mixed-Use



Map Marker

Where would you like to see development occur?

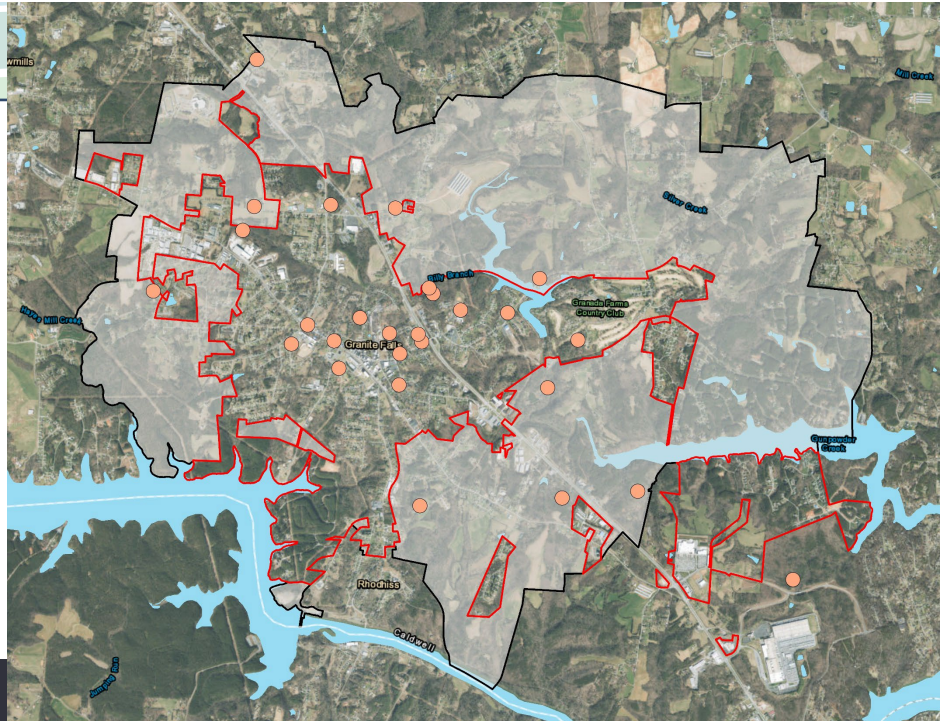
Industrial



Map Marker

Where would
you like to see
development
occur?

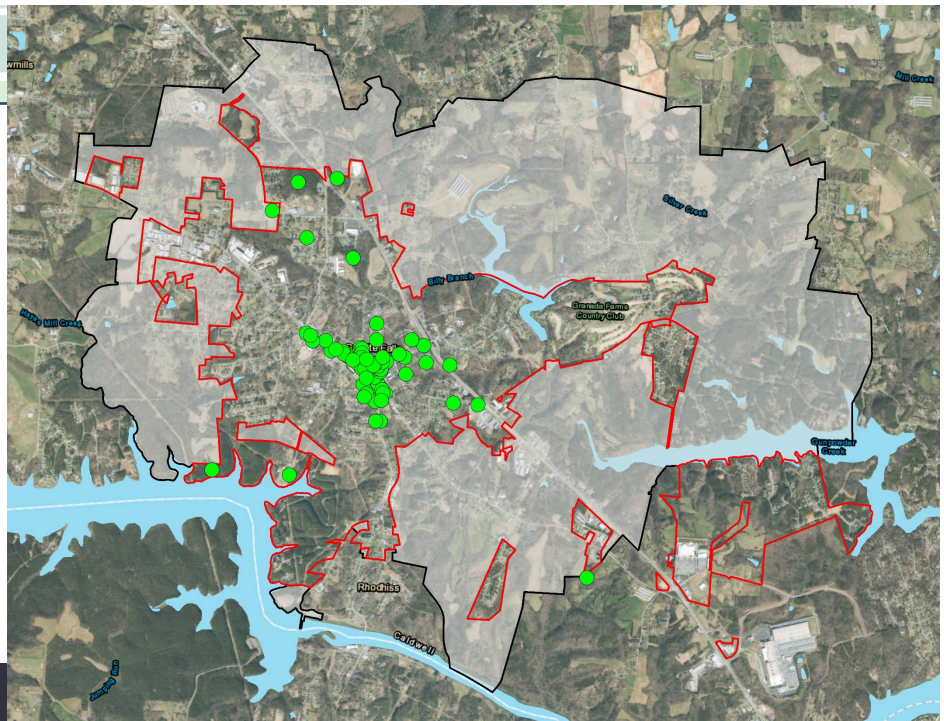
Multi-Family



Map Marker

Where would
you like to see
development
occur?

Streetscaping

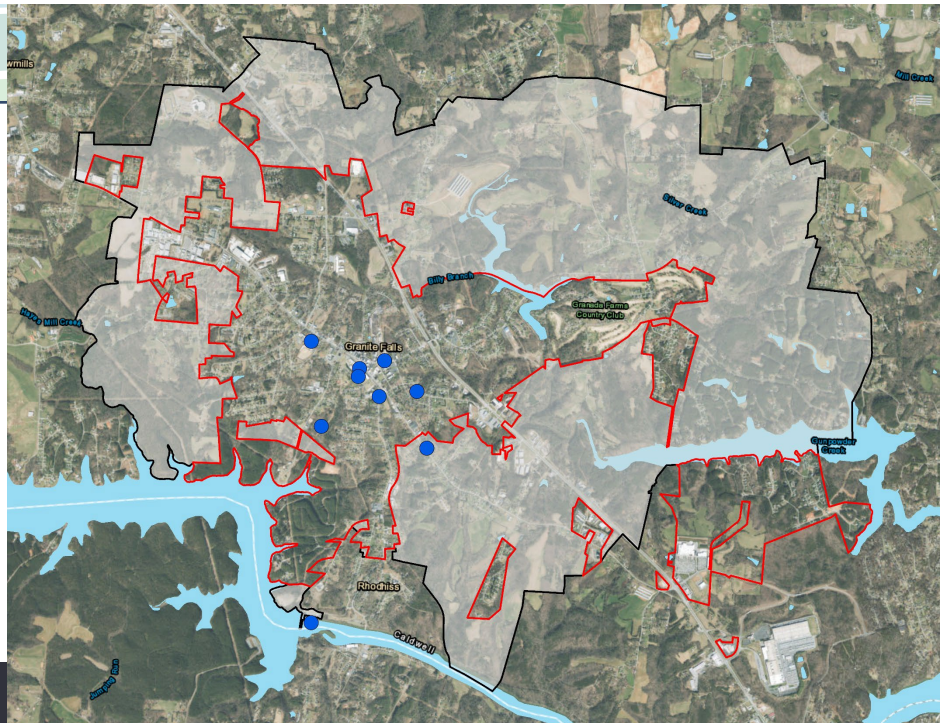


Map Marker

Where would you like to see development occur?

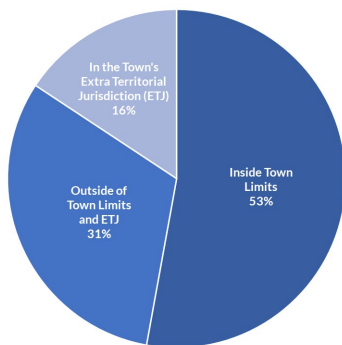
Other

- Park / Recreational
- Affordable housing within walking distance of downtown.
- Bike racks at school.
- Remove industrial from downtown.
- Nuisance Properties

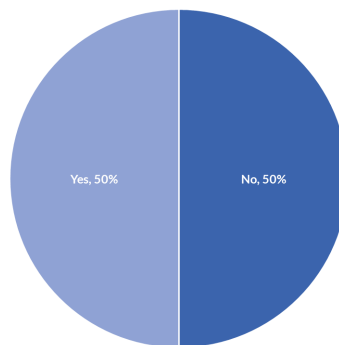


DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

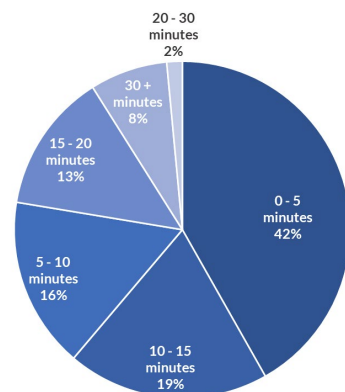
Demographics of Survey Participants



Where do you live?



Do you work/own a business in Granite Falls?



How far do you commute for work? (minutes)