



# PITT COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT



# ANNUAL REPORT 2000



March, 2001

To All Interested Individuals:

The Pitt County Planning Board and Planning staff proudly present the Pitt County Planning Department's Annual Report for 2000. This report outlines and describes the department's numerous activities and projects, and highlights the department's major accomplishments over the past year. As described in the report, the Year 2000 proved to be busy for staff and brought many new challenges to the Planning Department. Staff is extremely proud of progress made on several on-going projects and activities, including development review, flood plain management, E-911 addressing, and soil erosion control. Staff is especially pleased with the flood recovery and land use planning efforts headed by the department during the year.

To learn more about Pitt County Planning Department's numerous activities and accomplishments, please read the Annual Report for 2000 or contact the Pitt County Planning Department at (252) 830-6319. Thank you for your interest in planning-related functions in Pitt County.

Sincerely,

James Rhodes, AICP  
Planning Director

# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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**Matthew Walters, Planner I**  
**Traci Belch, Planning Technician**  
**Dwane Jones, Planning Technician**  
**Jeremy Smith, Student Intern**  
**Dervin Spell, Student Intern**

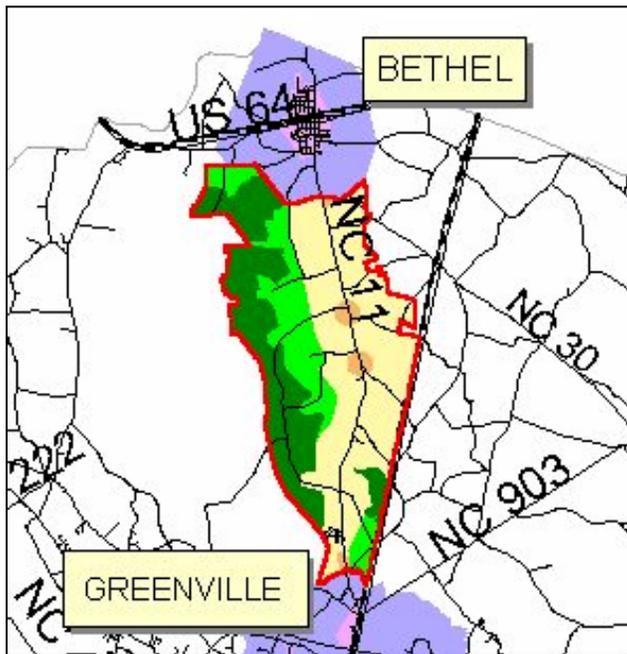
## **BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

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# MAJOR DEPARTMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

## Land Use Planning



**NC 11 North Corridor Planning Area** - After meeting nine times and holding three public forums over the past two years, the NC 11 North Corridor Planning Committee's work culminated with a recommended Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance on November 30, 2000. The NC 11 North planning effort was initiated in response to the proposed Greenville Utilities Commission sewer line extension from Greenville to

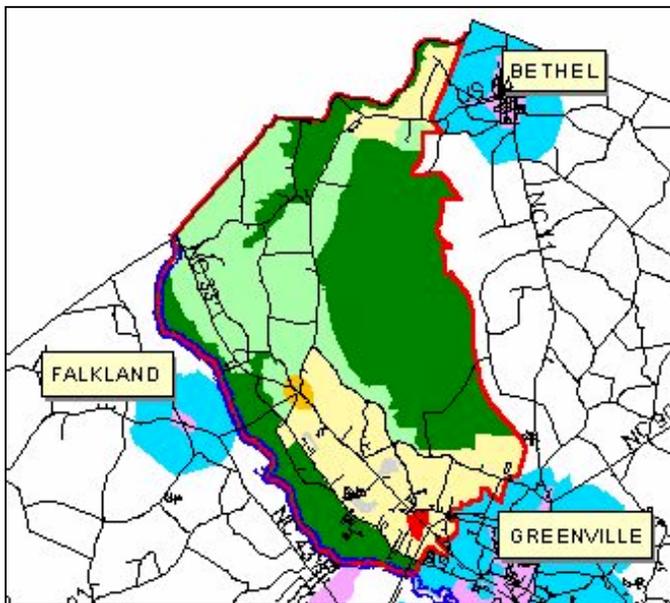
Bethel along NC 11. In an agreement with other affected parties, Pitt County is to develop and implement a land use plan and zoning regulations to allow sewer service access within the planning area.

The NC 11 North Corridor Planning Area encompasses 12,122 acres and has a population of approximately 650 people. The area has experienced very little development and is predominantly rural in nature. However, due to the 4-laning of NC 11 and the availability of rail and sewer service, the area has great potential for growth.

The draft NC 11 North Corridor Land Use Plan seeks to guide anticipated growth over the next 20 years. Four land use categories, which include Agricultural/Open/Natural Resources, Rural Residential/Agricultural, Suburban Residential, and Rural Commercial/Crossroads Community, were utilized. Future development is focused along NC 11. Very rural and sensitive areas, such as flood-prone properties, were recommended for protection from intense development. The accompanying zoning ordinance serves to carry out the goals and objectives of the land use plan. Two

zoning districts, Rural Agricultural and Rural Residential, blanket the planning area except for one small commercial zone along NC 11. Several special and conditional uses (e.g., swine farms and mining operations) are identified land uses which, because of their adverse effect on adjacent properties, warrant additional review and consideration.

Planning staff will present the recommended plan and zoning regulations to the governing boards for Bethel, Greenville, and Greenville Utilities Commission before consideration by the Pitt County Planning Board and Board of County Commissioners in 2001.



### **Northwest Planning Area**

Although the NC 11 North Corridor Planning Area was the first area targeted for the development of a land use plan and zoning regulations, the Northwest Planning Area plan and ordinance was the first to gain favorable Committee and Planning Board recommendations. Ultimately, the Board of County Commissioners

adopted the plan on January 8, 2001, and the Zoning Ordinance on January 22, 2001, with an effective date of July 1, 2001.

In comparison to the NC 11 North Corridor Planning Area, the Northwest Planning Area is over three times larger (38,726 acres), containing more existing development, and has more residents (5,532). The area lies between the NC 11 North Corridor Planning Area and the Tar River, and extends from the planning jurisdiction of Greenville to the Edgecombe County boundary. The project was initiated due to the proliferation of mobile homes and the strain on resources (e.g., schools) as the area continues to grow rapidly.

The Northwest Planning Area Committee, comprised of nine landowners and two local government officials, was appointed by the Board of County Commissioners in late 1999 and met seven times before recommending its version of the land use plan and zoning

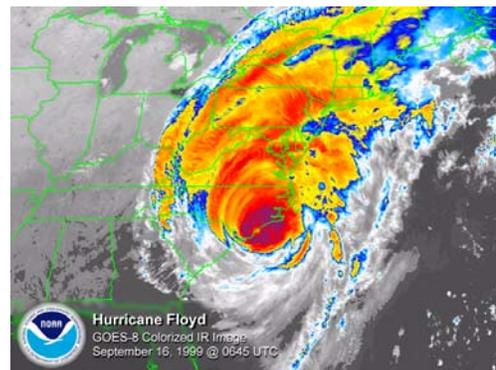
ordinance on September 20, 2000. The Pitt County Planning Board reviewed the documents and held a public hearing on November 15, 2000, before forwarding its favorable recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners held a public hearing on December 14<sup>th</sup> before plan approval and ordinance adoption.

Similar to the NC 11 North Corridor Land Use Plan, the Northwest Planning Area Land Use Plan provides a blueprint for the area's development over the next 20 years. Of particular importance, the plan sought to protect flood-prone areas from development since flooding associated with Hurricane Floyd heavily impacted this part of the County in 1999. The area is predominantly zoned as Rural Agricultural (76.1%) and Rural Residential (23.2%). Other zoning designations include General Industrial (0.6%) and General Commercial (0.1%).

## **Flood Recovery Efforts**

### **Hazard Mitigation Plan -**

Preparation of the Hazard Mitigation Plan began in January 2000 when the Wooten Company, a local consulting firm, was hired to provide assistance with plan development. Pitt County developed the Hazard Mitigation Plan for two primary reasons. First, the devastating impact of Hurricane Floyd on Pitt County in September 1999 brought the issue of hazard mitigation planning to the forefront as a prudent course of action to reduce the impact of future disasters. Second, the County's participation in the Federal Emergency Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Grant Program required preparation of a local hazard mitigation plan. In January the first report to the Planning Board concerning the plan was made. Work continued on the Hazard Mitigation Plan throughout the year with the final draft presented to the Planning Board in September. After a public comment period, the Board of County Commissioners unanimously adopted the Hazard Mitigation Plan on December 18, 2000. The primary activities recommended in this plan include the update of the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, involvement with the Floodplain map update, participation in Community Rating System, and continuation of Land Use Planning efforts.



Planning staff applied for and received nearly \$25,000 from a Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant from the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management to assist with plan development. Flood Mitigation Assistance Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to communities undertaking hazard mitigation planning activities. Awarded in September, the grant represented a 75% share of the total cost with the county contributing the remaining 25% with in-kind services.

### **Housing Recovery Strategy -**

Several staff members were involved with compiling information for the Pitt Community Task Force in developing and recommending a Housing Recovery Strategy following the flooding associated with Hurricane Floyd. Planning staff assisted with drafting and presenting major sections of the strategy.



The strategy was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on June 19<sup>th</sup> and outlined steps to assist county flood victims with housing needs.

**Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (Buyout)** - On July 31, 2000, Pitt County was awarded \$16.2 million to acquire and demolish 180 flood damaged residential structures as part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). Participation in the program is voluntary. Properties included in the program are purchased in fee simple and placed in public ownership, thereby reducing or eliminating the future



potential for inappropriate floodplain development. Property owners are paid pre-disaster fair market value for their properties.

On August 1<sup>st</sup>, the Planning Department hosted an informational meeting to explain

the buyout process to all the participants. In October, the County acquired the first property and by year's end had acquired 25 properties.

In November, the County was also awarded \$1.0 million for a second HMGP project for the acquisition of 10 residences. Two additional projects were submitted to NC Division of Emergency Management in 2000 but were not approved by the end of the year. It is anticipated that all HMGP projects will be completed in 2002.



### **Crisis Housing Assistance Programs**

- Planning staff members, along with the assistance of The Wooten Company, submitted a State Housing Crisis Assistance Fund application for repair and replacement housing needs throughout unincorporated Pitt County. The funding was requested to assist citizens who did not qualify

for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. The application consisted of two parts - Homeowner Rehabilitation Assistance and Homeowner Replacement Assistance. The Rehabilitation Assistance portion was approved for the repair of 82 homes for a total of \$1,307,900 in funding. The Replacement Assistance part was approved for the purchase of 72 new homes to replace flooded residences for a total \$5,148,000 in funding.

As of December 31, 2000, 59 applicants had been approved for assistance. Of those, 11 have been finalized, while seven others were nearing completion.

**Debris Removal** - Upon receiving funding through the Emergency Watershed Protection program in April 2000, Planning staff and the Natural Resources Conservation Service provided administrative assistance for the removal of storm-related debris from streams and waterways. This project encompassed major



sections of Contentnea Creek, Little Contentnea Creek, Bells Branch, Hardee Creek and other areas as needed. By the end of 2000, five contracts had been completed or awarded to remove debris from over 35 miles of drainageways.

## **Environmental Planning**



**Perpetual Drainage Maintenance** - On December 18, 2000, the Pitt County Board of Commissioners approved the formation of a perpetual drainage maintenance study committee to identify methods for initiating a perpetual drainage maintenance program. The committee will first focus on a beaver control program

and investigate alternatives for continuous drainage maintenance in new planned subdivisions. The group will also present recommendations for maintenance of drainage improvements within older subdivisions. The committee is expected to meet over a six to nine month period in 2001.

**Update to Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance** - The SESC ordinance, last amended in 1996, was updated and amended at the December 18, 2000 Board of Commissioners meeting. It became effective on January 1, 2001. The amended ordinance reflects recent changes in the Sedimentation Control and Pollution Act, such as limiting the time of exposure of disturbed areas, new requirements for civil penalty assessments, compliant activities for disturbances of less than one acre and a fee increase to offset staff expenses.

## **Administrative/Technical Assistance**

**Technical Assistance for Municipalities** - Planning staff continues to assist smaller municipalities within the county with administration of development ordinances. In 2000, Pitt County entered into Interlocal Agreements with the Town of Grimesland to

administer the County's Subdivision Ordinance, Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance, and Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. The Town of Grimesland approached the Pitt County Board of County Commissioners to request that Pitt County administer and enforce several County Ordinances within the town limits and newly-established extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). The Town held several public hearings to discuss the agreements in which Pitt County Planning Staff explained the County's Ordinances. After holding the required public hearings, the Town of Grimesland Town Board and Pitt County Board of Commissioners voted to approve the interlocal agreements for the administration of the Subdivision Ordinance and Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance, effective September 5, 2000, and the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, effective October 2, 2000. Planning staff also assists with code administration and enforcement in Simpson and Grifton.

**E-911 Addressing Program** - Staff continues to update and maintain the E-911 addressing database for the County. This includes maintaining the County's street centerline coverage and assigning addresses for all new building sites. As of the end of 2000, over 29,000 structures had been assigned E-911 addresses by Planning staff.

Staff continues to provide addressing services inside many of the municipal limits within Pitt County. This includes Falkland and Grimesland, which were converted to the County's addressing system in 1997, and Fountain and Winterville, which were converted to our system in 1999. Staff also provided addressing services to Simpson and Ayden. During 2000, over 200 structures were assigned addresses in the Village of Simpson and over 2,300 were assigned addresses in the Town of Ayden. At the end of 2000, Planning staff presented informational material on E-911 addressing to the Grifton Town Board for its consideration in converting to the County's addressing system.

Planning's Road Sign Coordinator maintained nearly 3,350 County street signs, and assembled and installed 125 new signs in 2000 as part



of the E-911 Addressing Program.

**Coordinated Permitting** - Since September 2000, Planning staff members have served on the Coordinated Permitting Committee. This group is comprised of representatives from various County departments, including Management Information Systems, Tax Collector's, Inspections, Environmental Health, Emergency Services, and Planning. The committee is to perform research and provide a recommendation on a coordinated permitting process that provides better and faster public service, and facilitates data sharing among permitting agencies. This system will be developed based on the needs of the individual departments. The Planning Department has participated in the numerous workflow studies and meetings to ensure current Planning Department responsibilities such as E-911 Addressing, Development Review, and Floodplain Verification, and in the near future, Zoning Administration, are adequately integrated into the permitting system.

**CENSUS 2000** - Staff played an integral role in the 2000 Census. Prior to Census Day on April 1<sup>st</sup>, planning staff updated and corrected maps provided by the Bureau of the Census. Corrections and adjustments were made to road names, place names, and geographic boundaries. The maps were subsequently used by Census field workers to conduct the Census.

Staff also participated in the Census 2000 Complete Count Committee. This committee included various county, municipal and private agencies with an interest in assuring every person in Pitt County was counted. The committee worked to publicize the importance of a complete and accurate count, and targeted segments of the population, which are typically undercounted. Information was provided to the media, schools, churches and any other organization willing to help in distributing the information. Final census counts will be available in the spring of 2001.

## **Transportation/Recreation Planning**

**Transportation Planning** - Over the past year, planning staff members have been involved with various transportation planning



efforts. First, staff has continued to serve on the Technical Coordinating Committee for the Greenville Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization. In 2000, the Technical Coordinating Committee continued development of the Thoroughfare Plan for the Greenville Urban Area, which encompasses Greenville, Winterville and portions of unincorporated Pitt County. Another major initiative was the development of a Bike Plan for Greenville and the surrounding area. Further, the Technical Coordinating Committee continued to support and monitor the Metropolitan Planning Organization's transportation priorities. Specifically, members reviewed the draft 2002-2008 Transportation Improvement Program, published in July 2000, and advised the Transportation Advisory Committee to lobby Department of Transportation officials for the top priorities, especially the Southwest Bypass. This effort culminated on December 14<sup>th</sup> when representatives from Greenville, Winterville and Pitt County reiterated the need for the Southwest Bypass at the North Carolina Department of Transportation public hearing on the proposed Transportation Improvement Program.

**Coastal Carolina Trail (Rail-Trails)** - The Planning Department continued its participation in the Coastal Carolina Trail Committee during 2000. With the development of a Master Plan and Feasibility Study in 1999, the Committee began the year 2000 by pinpointing the first section of the proposed trail for development. The initial portion of the trail starts at the community of Stokes and extends southward for 2.5 miles along the abandoned rail corridor to Carl Morris Road. After the selection of the first section, the Committee spent much of the year finalizing the easement agreement and developing a plan to approach property owners about the easements. During the year the Planning Department provided its services to the Committee by assisting in deed research, easement agreement development and landowner contact.

## **Housing Programs**



**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** – In October, 1998, Pitt County submitted its scattered site Community Development Block Grant application for the rehabilitation or replacement of ten

homes owned by low-moderate income households and located in the County's planning jurisdiction. The County's application was not approved during the first round, however, the County was notified by the State of its \$379,000 grant award in November, 1999. The award was made available in February 2000.

The CDBG project includes the acquisition and demolition of one home and the rehabilitation of nine homes. The Wooten Company was contracted by the County to assist in administration of this project. Completion of the project is expected by the end of 2001.

**HOME Consortium** – The Home Investment Partnerships (HOME) Program was created by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 to assist counties and towns in the rehabilitation and creation of affordable housing for low-income residents. The Pitt County Consortium was formed in late 1997 in order to become an eligible recipient of HOME funds. Participants of the Consortium include Pitt County, City of Greenville, Town of Ayden, Town of Farmville and Town of Grifton.

The funding for the Consortium for 2000 was \$738,000. Fifteen percent of the funding was allocated for Community Housing Development Organizations, such as Metropolitan Housing and CDC, Inc., Farmville Housing Development Corporation, and the South Lee Street Neighborhood Improvement, Inc. The City of Greenville served as the lead agency and received approximately half of last year's funding. The remaining funds were evenly distributed among the other member jurisdictions. The total funding received by Pitt County was \$55,600. The funds are to be used to supplement the County's ongoing Community Development Block Grant in the rehabilitation of two additional homes.

## **DEVELOPMENT REVIEW ADMINISTRATION**

Approved Preliminary Subdivision Plats 64 plats, 559 lots

Approved Construction Plans for Subdivisions 15 plans, 310 lots

Approved Final Subdivision Plats 54 plats, 385 lots

Approved Preliminary Manufactured Home Park Plans 3 plans, 100 spaces

Approved As-Built Manufactured Home Park Plans 6 plans, 85 spaces

Approved Multi-family Development Plans 1 plan, 4 units

## **SOIL EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL ADMINISTRATION**

Plans Reviewed 23

Site Inspections Conducted 522

Total Acreage Disturbed 398

Total Penalties Assessed \$840

## **FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION ADMINISTRATION**

Total number of permits reviewed 1583

Total within 100 year floodplain 234

## **STAFF ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPMENT**

Throughout 2000, Planning staff members made presentations on various planning-related activities, received training to better advise and serve the public, and represented the County on numerous committees. Listed below are examples of these activities.

### **Presentations**

Lyons Club- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program  
Golden Kiwanis Club- Flood Recovery and Land Use Planning  
Town of Grimesland- Pitt County Subdivision Ordinance, Soil Erosion & Sedimentation Control Ordinance, and Flood Damage Administration  
Hurricane Flood Legislative Committee- Flood Recovery Efforts  
Town of Grifton- E-911 Addressing  
Town of Ayden- E-911 Addressing

### **Training/Conference Attendance**

Annual Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Conference  
Bicycle/Sidewalk Assessment Workshop  
Governor's Hurricane Conference  
Environmental Conference  
NCDOT Transportation Enhancement Program Workshop  
Floodplain Manager's Conference  
NC American Planning Association(APA) Conference  
Building Back Better: Successful Strategies for Community Redevelopment Workshop  
Floodproofing and Retrofitting Workshop  
NC Urban and Regional Information Systems Association Conference  
Diversity Training  
2001-2005 Consolidated Plan Public Participation Workshop  
Flood Recovery Forum  
NC APA Summer Planning Institute  
Hazard Mitigation Planning Workshop  
Open Space Design Workshop  
Grant Writing Workshop  
Water Supply Watershed Workshop

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Workshop  
Contracting Seminar  
Land Use Regulation and Planning Workshop  
Redistricting Seminar  
Floodplain Conference  
Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Workshop  
Tar-Neuse Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Workshop  
Institute of Government New Planner Course

**Committee Representation/Staff Support**

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)  
Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)  
Greenville Urban Area Bicycle Task Force Committee  
Census 2000 Complete Count Committee  
Unmet Needs Committee  
GIS Steering Committee  
Coordinated Permitting Committee

