

# **TOWN OF TABOR CITY**

## **Town Plan 2040**

### **Land Use Plan**



**June 14, 2022**

Adopted: June 14, 2022

Recommended by Tabor City Planning and Zoning Board: April 28, 2022

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***Town of Tabor City  
Town Plan 2040  
Land Use Plan***

**TOWN OF TABOR CITY**

Tabor City Town Hall  
1108 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Tabor City, NC 28463

**Adopted by the Town Council: June 14, 2022**

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# 1. WHY PLAN OUR TOWN?

The purpose of the **Town of Tabor City Town Plan 2040 - Land Use Plan** (“Town Plan”) is to provide information and perspective used to prioritize actions to support a resilient, self-sustaining community. Information contained in the Town Plan should serve as the basis for both investment and future development decisions.

Tabor City Town Plan has been designed for regular use by citizens, businesses, investors, leadership, and agencies in making decisions affecting the future of Tabor City. This Town Plan is vital to making informed decisions that will both account for current conditions while maintaining perspective about the future when doing so. A Town Plan is the foundation of almost all capital improvement and growth decisions. ***Adoption of Town Plan 2040 is not the end; it is a consensus on where to begin!***

## 1.1 Town Planning and Plan Updates

Long-term planning for the future of a community is vitally important. One tool to guide the future of a community is the planning process and adoption of a land use plan. Part of a land use plan is designed to provide an overview of a community’s existing conditions and physical development. The main function of the plan is to serve as a guide to a community’s future development policy. The goals of a land use plan aim to:

- involve the community in developing a long-term vision,
- address what should be maintained or changed in the future to achieve that vision, and
- identify future land uses in an overall community-wide context.

Part of the on-going planning process is monitoring the plan’s progress as a fluid document. §N.C.G.S. 160D does not set a specific time frame for updating the comprehensive plan, but it does call for plans to be “*reasonably maintained.*” As recommended by the UNC School of Government, “*factors determining reasonableness would include rate of growth and change as well as physical, economic, and social conditions so professional practice calls for comprehensive plans to be updated every 5-10 years. If the community has experienced rapid change, then an update every five years may be more defensible.*” ***Planning is an ongoing process!***

## 1.2 Statutory Reference and Official State Policy

**Town of Tabor City Town Plan 2040 - Land Use Plan** shall serve as the adopted plan pursuant to §N.C.G.S. 160D in the planning and regulation of development.

The State of North Carolina requires local governments in NC General Statute 160D to adopt a plan to be eligible for certain funding, powers and authority by July 1, 2022. The plan is to be used as an assurance to the public that local decisions are made with a perspective on the future implications of pending decisions, and to affirm that public accountability and fiscal responsibility are considered as part of the decision-making process. Decisions made about public spending and growth can often appear centered around individuals involved and how they may benefit. When governing board decisions adhere to an adopted plan, those individual interests are balanced with others affected by the outcome of decisions, which include citizens, property owners, and businesses.

## 2. ABOUT TABOR CITY

### 2.1 Town of Tabor City Background

#### 2.1.1 Location

The Town of Tabor City, North Carolina is located within Columbus County, one of North Carolina's largest counties by land area. The Town, located along the North/South Carolina border, is approximately 39 miles north of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and 69 miles west of Wilmington, North Carolina. Based on the U.S. Census Bureau's Census 2020, the Town's corporate limits encompasses approximately 3.4 square miles. Tabor City's extraterritorial jurisdiction boundary (ETJ) is an additional approximately 13,360 acre area. The ETJ extends around Tabor City's corporate limits northeast along the North Carolina state line for a distance of approximately 3 miles, extends 1.5 miles north, 2 miles east, and 1.5 miles southeast. The vast majority of property within the ETJ is rural.

**Downtown:** The area citizens may refer to as the community's downtown is generally located Main Street bordered roughly as follows:

- North: East 8<sup>th</sup> St.
- West: Lewis St.
- East: Anderson St.
- South: Bell St.

The downtown area includes portions of East 5<sup>th</sup> St., Orange, and Green St.

The Town recently completed work on a second entrepreneurial incubator located in the Old Helig Meyer building on West 5th Street as part of its continuing downtown revitalization efforts.



**Tabor City Visitors Center:** Tabor City hosts one the North Carolina Visitor Centers at the corner of Fifth Street and Pireway Road providing information and brochures about Tabor City, Columbus County, and the state of North Carolina.



**Health Care Facilities:** While there are no hospital facilities within the corporate limits of the Town, medical facilities that operate within the community include Tabor City Medical Clinic, Goshen Medical Center, South Columbus Medical Center, McLeod Health, Coastal Cancer Center, and Columbus Regional Healthcare System – Whiteville.

### 2.1.2 History

**Columbus County:** Columbus County, located on the State's southeastern border with South Carolina, was formed from parts of Brunswick and Bladen Counties in 1808. The area was historically part of the 'Bath' precinct organized by the English Crown in 1696. The County, named after Christopher Columbus:

- Is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest county in North Carolina by land area (954 square miles); and
- Has eleven incorporated municipalities and several unincorporated communities (i.e. Acme, Cherry Grove, Evergreen Ransom Township, Nakina, Olyphic, Pireway, Riverview, and Sellerstown).

The Waccamaw Indian Tribe inhabited present-day Columbus County along the banks of the Waccamaw River before European settlers began settling in the area in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. After the Tuscarora War (1711-1713) and Yamassee War (1715), the nomadic Waccamaw moved into the area around Lake Waccamaw and lived in the swamps around Columbus. Today the Waccamaw Siouan Indians are one of eight state-recognized tribes. Their homeland territory is at the edge of Green Swamp.

In 1832 the City of Whiteville, named after state Senator James B. White, who bestowed the original land for the county courthouse, became the County seat.

A coastal lowland county, Columbus is home to important natural characteristics, mostly tributaries and swamps. There are several large lakes within the county, including Lake

Tabor and Lake Waccamaw. The Waccamaw River branches off from Lake Waccamaw and the Lumber River forms the western border and the Cape Fear River encloses a section of northeastern Columbus County.

The Lake Waccamaw State Park is presently a vital outdoor attraction for Columbus County.

One of the most significant geographic features is the Green Swamp, a 15,907-acre area in the north-eastern portion of the county containing several unique and endangered species, such as the Venus flytrap. The area contains the Brown Marsh Swamp and has a remnant of the giant longleaf pine forest that once stretched across the Southeast from Virginia to Texas.

Historically, the economy of Columbus County centered on two different industries: agriculture and manufacturing. Columbus farmers produce crops such as pecans and peanuts along with soybeans, potatoes, and corn. Cattle, poultry, and catfish are other agricultural products produced in the region. Development of manufacturing operations in the region focus on textiles, tools, and development of plywood/hardwood products. Household products such as doors, furniture, and windows are also major manufactured goods produced within the county.

The majority of the County is located within the Lumber River Basin. Though defined as one basin, there are actually four different watersheds in the Lumber River basin, specifically:

- Lumber River,
- Waccamaw River,
- The headwaters of the Little Pee Dee, and
- The coastal watershed of the Shalotte /Lockwoods Folly rivers.

The basin covers an area of approximately 3,329 square miles. It has approximately 2,222 miles of freshwater streams, 9,865 acres of freshwater lakes, and 4,680 acres of estuarine or saline waterbodies. In addition, there are 26 miles of coastline along the basin.



**Tabor City:** The original community took its name from the first prominent church in the area, the Mount Tabor Baptist Church (now the Tabor City Baptist Church), which itself is named after the biblical Mount Tabor. Founded in 1838, the church was originally located near the intersection of what is now Stake Road and East 5<sup>th</sup> Street. A village coalesced around the area of the church, which was organized as a town shortly after 1840.

Business activity started in the mid-1850s, with the development of a saw mill, turpentine still, grocery store and dry goods store. The Atlantic Coast Line Railroad located a station in the town in 1886 expanding local economic development efforts and making the area more attractive for growth/development. Strawberries became an important crop in the 1880s when the development of the railroad enabled them to be shipped to markets in the big cities. The town was officially incorporated in 1905.

In 1909 the first tobacco warehouse was built, with 2 additional facilities constructed soon thereafter. Currently, none of these businesses are in operation. In approximately 1910, a crate factory was built to handle the increasing distribution of food products and in 1940, Waccamaw Lumber and Tabor City Lumber companies were formed. Tobacco remained a dominant local crop until approximately the 1990's.

Historical information provided by the Town of Tabor City reports:

*Until the mid-1930s the railroad used the name of Mt. Tabor while the Post Office used the name Tabor. Both names have since changed to Tabor City. It was not until the mid-1930s that Tabor City became known as the "Yam Capitol of the World". An annual festival was initiated in 1948 to pay tribute to the sweet potato. Today, this festival is known as the "North Carolina Yam Festival". The festival is always held on the fourth Saturday in the month of October.*



Today the Town is transitioning from tobacco-based agriculture and textiles to one based on light manufacturing, service, retail, and tourism. While agriculture remains an important part of the local economy, it is expected to continue to decline.



### 3. COMMUNITY PROFILE

The development of a Town Plan first requires identification and analysis of certain key growth factors. The intent of the analysis is to ensure policies contained in the Town Plan respond to positive and negative trends, and address challenges facing the community. Key growth factors included for analysis are discussed in several subject areas within the Town Plan. Collectively, these growth factors summarize past and present conditions, while providing the essential yardsticks for estimating future conditions.

The U.S. Census Bureau prepares a detailed statistical portrait for local governments, counties and states of their respective social, economic, housing, and demographic characteristics through the 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) products. The ACS 5-year estimates are constructed as period estimates and reflect the average characteristics over the five year period. In general, unless a user knows how the estimate for each characteristic is trending over time, it is not accurate to consider the 5-year estimate as an estimate at any given point within the 5 year period. However, under certain conditions, the ACS estimates can serve as a proxy.

Figures from the U.S. Census Bureau *2015-2019 American Community Survey*, released on December 10, 2020, were used in several instances in developing this profile for Tabor City. Rather than refer to the 5 year period (2015-2019) throughout the narrative in this section, the last year of 2019, will be used for brevity, but the full five year period will be noted as the source for tables and charts. On November 10, 2021, the U.S. Census issued a press release that the Bureau must delay the 2016-2020 ACS 5-year data release originally targeted for December 2021. Additional time is needed to continue refining their methodology so that they can minimize the impact of nonresponse bias due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In their methodology of defining what is a current residence in the American Community Survey, the U.S. Census Bureau considers everyone who is currently living or staying at an address for more than two months is a current resident of that address. This means that their expected length of stay is more than two months, not that they have been staying in the housing unit for more than two months at the time when the survey is conducted. Persons away from their residence for two months or less, whether in the United States or overseas, on a vacation or on a business trip, are considered to still be a resident at the address, and the unit is classified as occupied and eligible for inclusion in the survey. Persons away from their residence for more than two months are considered not to be a resident. For the ACS, if no one is determined to be a current resident in the sampled housing unit, it is classified as vacant.

In summary, the demographic data contained with this element is derived from two (2) sources:

1. The 2020 Decennial Census; and
2. The 2019 American Community Survey (ACS).

In those instances where actual Decennial Census data is still not yet available, this Document utilizes ACS data.

It is important to understand the differences between these two data sources:

- Decennial Census data represents a ‘physical count’ of ‘all residents’ occurring every ten years;
- American Community Survey (ACS) produces population, demographic and housing unit estimates based on data samples (i.e. does not represent a physical county of all residents). Data is collected on either a monthly or annual (i.e. yearly) basis.

Due to the COVID pandemic, the US Census Bureau experienced challenges in securing full participation in the Decennial Census. There are noticeable discrepancies in some data sets, most notably population, from Census and ACS data. In completing this Town Plan, the best available data was utilized. In those cases where a disparity exists, steps have been taken to try and document those differences and provide an explanation.

### 3.1 Population

#### 3.1.1 Population Growth

The U.S. Census Bureau’s Census 2020 estimated the Town of Tabor City’s population was 3,781 persons. The population of the Town of Tabor City decreased between 2000 and 2010, and then significantly increased between 2010 and 2020 at a growth rate of 5.1% as illustrated in Table 3.1.1A and Figure 3.1.1.A. Tabor City’s significant increase between 2010 and 2020 was due to the addition of the North Carolina prison that was annexed into the Town of Tabor City between those years. The population of prisoners were likely included in the 2020 Census. According to a [2010 blog](#) by the U.S. Census Bureau, the place of residency of prisoners varies based on reporting by prisons and prisoners.

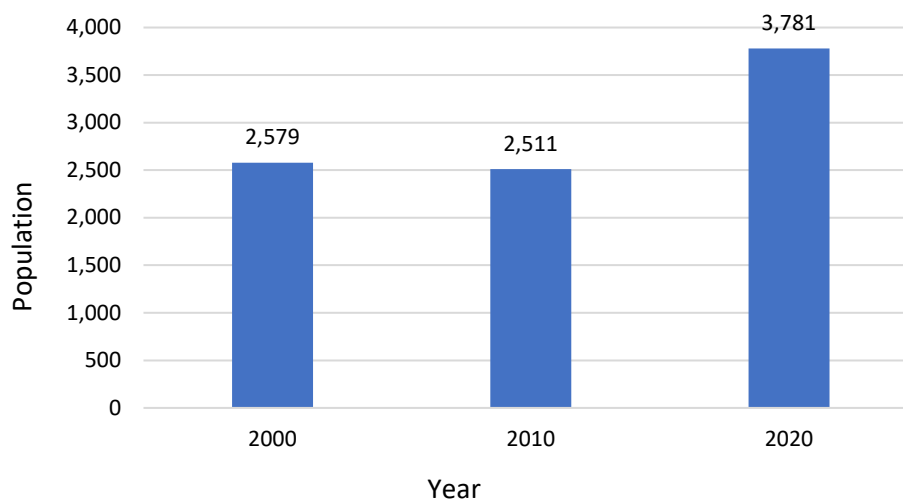
**Table 3.1.1.A: Town of Tabor City Decennial Population Estimates and Growth Rates**

Year	Town of Tabor City Population	Tabor City Population Annual Increases/Decreases	Between Years
2000	2,579		
2010	2,511	-0.3%	2000-2010
2020	3,781	5.1%	2010-2020

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census; 2010 Census; and 2020 Census*



**Figure 3.1.1.A: Town of Tabor City Decennial Population Estimates**



*Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census; 2010 Census; and 2020 Census*

Table 3.1.1.B illustrates the percentage of Tabor City population to the total population of Columbus County throughout the past 20 years. Over the past 20 years, the Town has averaged approximately 5.5% of the County's total population.

**Table 3.1.1.B: Town of Tabor City to Columbus County Population Comparison**

Year	Tabor City	Columbus County	Tabor City's Population to Columbus County's Population
2000	2,579	54,758	4.7%
2010	2,511	58,098	4.3%
2020	3,781	50,623	7.5%

20 Year Average = 5.50%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census; 2010 Census; and 2020 Census*

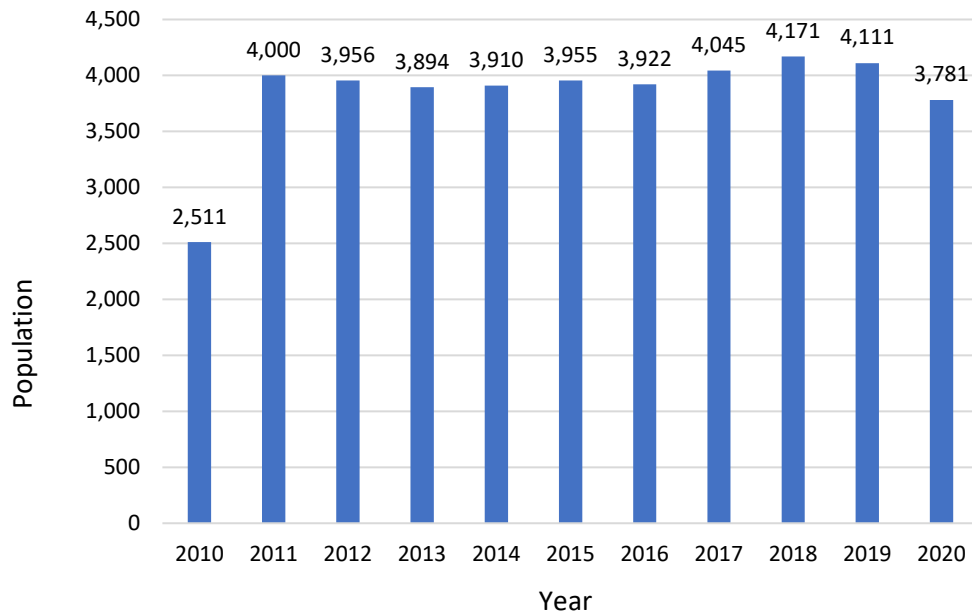
The population estimates for each year between 2010 to 2020 have been estimated by the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management Office's State Demographer which was used below in years 2011 through 2019 while the U.S. Census Bureau's population estimates were used for 2010 and 2020. As mentioned, Tabor City's significant increase in the early 2010's was due to the addition of the North Carolina prison that was annexed into the Town of Tabor City between those years. As illustrated in Table 3.1.1.C and Figure 3.1.1.C, the Demographer's 2019 estimate of 4,111 persons turned out to be 330 persons less than what the U.S. Census Bureau's 2020 Census Bureau's 3,781 estimate. The State Demographer's estimates between 2012 and 2019 also shows numerous fluctuations throughout the decade.

**Table 3.1.1.C: Town of Tabor City Population - Annual Estimates and Growth Rates**

Year	Population	Growth Rates
2010	2,511	
2011	4,000	59.30%
2012	3,956	-1.10%
2013	3,894	-1.57%
2014	3,910	0.41%
2015	3,955	1.15%
2016	3,922	-0.83%
2017	4,045	3.14%
2018	4,171	3.11%
2019	4,111	-1.44%
2020	3,781	-8.03%
	Average Growth Rate	5.41%

Sources: Years 2010 and 2020: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census; 2010 Census; and 2020 Census  
Years 2011-2019: North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management

**Figure 3.1.1.C: Town of Tabor City Population - Annual Estimates**



Sources: Years 2010 and 2020: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census; 2010 Census; and 2020 Census  
Years 2011-2019: North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management

Due to uncertain methods that will be used in the future to estimate and account for the prison population as the U.S. Census Bureau reconsiders how to account for prison population, observing a history of fluctuating population as estimated by the State Demographer, and with

the large size of Tabor City's ETJ which the Town may periodically annex through voluntary annexation requests, population projections for the next two decades for the Town of Tabor City proved too difficult to undertake with any degree of accuracy at the time this Town Plan was prepared.

### 3.1.2 Diversity

Within the Tabor City for residents reporting one race alone (approximately 3,857 residents or 95% of the population), the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 *American Community Survey* and Decennial Census data indicate:

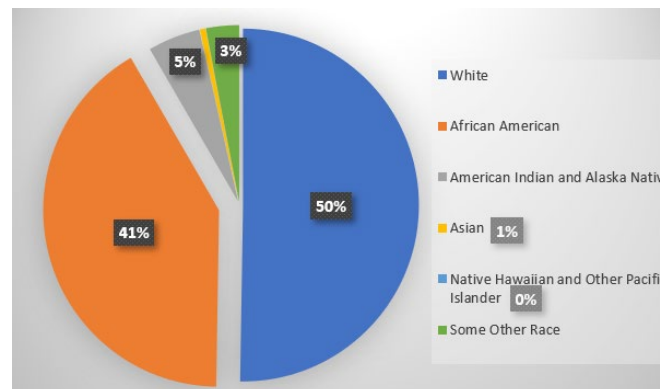
- 48% of residents identified themselves as White;
- 39.5% identified themselves as Black or African American;
- 4.6% were American Indian and Alaska Native;
- 0.5% were Asian; and
- Approximately 2.9% identified as some other race.

Approximately 4.4% residents identified themselves as being two or more races.

**Table 3.1.2.A: Town of Tabor City Population by Race Alone**

Race or Ethnicity	Percent Total Population
White	48%
African American	39.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native	4.6%
Asian	0.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0%
Some Other Race	2.90%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2019 American Community Survey, Margin of error does not always equal 100%



Figures from the *American Community Survey* shown in Table 3.1.2.B indicate an estimated 45.5% of people in Tabor City indicated they were *White non-Hispanic*, while 8.8% identified themselves as *Hispanic or Latino*. People of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

**Table 3.1.2.B: Town of Tabor City Population by Hispanic or Latino Not Hispanic or Latino**

<b>Race or Ethnicity</b>	<b>Percent Total Population</b>
Not Hispanic or Latino	45.5%
Hispanic or Latino (any race)	8.8%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey*

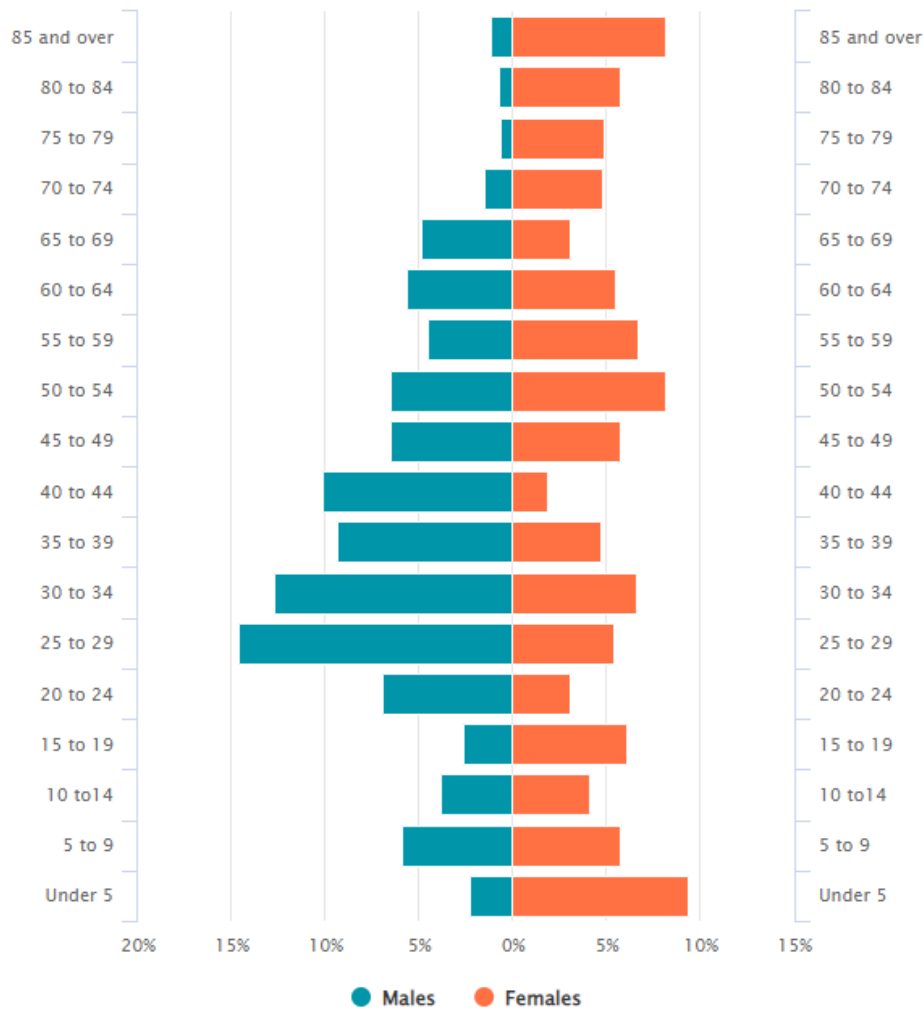
### **3.1.3 Population by Age and Sex**

As previously indicated herein, the *2014-2019 American Community Survey* estimated Tabor City had a total population in 2020 of 32.87% females and 67.13% males.

Median age is defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as the measure that divides the age distribution into two equal parts: one-half of the cases falling below the median value and one-half of the cases falling above the median value. In 2019, the median age in Tabor City was 37.4 years. An estimated 16.5% of the population was under 18 years of age, 44.7% was between the ages of 18 to 44 years, 24.10% of the population were between the ages of 45 to 64 years, and 14.7% of residents were 65 years and older.

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**Town of Tabor City Population by Age and Sex**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2019 American Community Survey

## 3.2 Housing

### 3.2.1 Occupied Housing Characteristics

Tabor City has approximately 1,203 total housing units of which 968 units were occupied (80.4%) or had people living in them while the remaining 235 units (19.5%) were unoccupied/vacant.

Of the occupied housing units, the percentage occupied by owners (also known as the homeownership rate) was 56.1% while renters occupied 43.9%. The average household size of owner-occupied houses was 2.42 and in renter-occupied houses it was 2.57.

In comparing occupancy data, Table 3.2.1.A denotes the Town has a greater percentage of rental units than both Columbus County and the State. Columbus County actually has more percentage of owner occupied housing units (72.5%) than the State.

**Table 3.2.1.A: Homeownership Rates**

Jurisdiction	% of Owner Occupied Units	% of Renter Occupied Units
Town of Tabor City	56.1%	43.9%
Columbus County	72.5%	27.5%
State of North Carolina	65.0%	35.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

From 2015 to 2019, the median property value for owner-occupied houses in Tabor City was \$96,800.000.

Of the owner-occupied households, 44.4% had a mortgage while 55.6% of homeowners owned their houses "free and clear," (i.e. without a mortgage or loan on the house). The median monthly housing costs for owners with a mortgage was \$1,060.00 and for owners without a mortgage it was \$410.00. For renter-occupied houses, the median gross rent for Tabor City town, North Carolina was \$637.00. Gross rent includes the monthly contract rent and any monthly payments made for electricity, gas, water and sewer, and any other fuels to heat the house. Households that pay 30% or more of their income on housing costs are considered cost-burdened. In 2015-2019, cost-burdened households in Tabor City accounted for:

- 38.2% of owners with a mortgage;
- 22.8% of owners without a mortgage, and
- 54.4% of renters.

**Table 3.2.1.B: Tabor City Occupants with a Housing Burden**

House Value	Percent
Owners with mortgage	38.2%
Owners without mortgage	22.8%
Renters	54.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

### 3.2.2 Housing Stock

In 2019, the U.S. Census estimated only 200 (16.6%) occupied residential structures in the Town of Tabor City have been built since 2000. These figures do not account for houses built since 2019.

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**Table 3.2.2: Town of Tabor City Occupied Housing Units by Age in 2019**

<b>Year Built</b>	<b>Number Structures</b>	<b>Percent Structures</b>
Built 2014 or later	16	1.3%
Built 2010 to 2013	18	1.5%
Built 2000 to 2009	166	13.8%
Built 1990 to 1999	135	11.2%
Built 1980 to 1989	52	4.3%
Built 1970 to 1979	241	20.0%
Built 1960 to 1969	133	11.1%
Built 1950 to 1959	250	20.8%
Built 1940 to 1949	124	10.3%
Built 1939 or earlier	68	5.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

### 3.2.3 Housing Types

As of 2019, the U.S. Census Bureau reported Tabor City had a total of 1,203 housing units. Of these units:

- 78.4% were single-family houses (i.e. either not attached to any other structure or attached to one or more structures commonly referred to as "townhouses" or "row houses");
- 16.8% of housing units were located within multi-family structures (buildings that contained two or more units); and
- 4.8% were mobile homes.

**Table 3.2.2: Town of Tabor City Housing Types**

<b>Housing Types</b>	<b>%</b>
Single Family (Site Built)	78.4%
Mobile Homes	16.8%
Multi-family	4.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

Available Census data indicates the average number of bedrooms within the residences within are further broken down as follows:

- No bedroom: 0 units;
- 1 bedroom: 20 units;
- 2 bedrooms: 19 units;
- 3 bedrooms: 75 units;
- 4 bedrooms: 288 units;
- 5 or more bedrooms: 801 units

The median number of bedrooms within the Town, based on available Census data, is actually considerably high, at 5.3.

### 3.3 Economy

#### 3.3.1 Household Income

Household income calculations consist of the income of all individuals aged 16 years and older in the household. When analyzing the distribution of household income in the Town of Tabor City, most households fall into the less than \$10,000 income range (18.2%), followed by the \$15,000 to \$24,999 (17.3%) and \$25,000 to \$34,999 (15.4%) range. Refer to Table 3.3.1.

Median household income divides the household income distribution with one-half of the cases falling below the median and one-half of the cases falling above the median. For households, the median income is based on the distribution of the total number of households, including those with no income. The median household income in the Town of Tabor City was \$28,276.00 per year.

An estimated 18.2 percent of households had income below \$10,000 a year and 1.2 percent had income over \$200,000 or more.

**Table 3.3.1: Town of Tabor City Household Income by Range**

Income Range	% of Total Population
Less than \$10,000	18.2%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	10.6%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	17.3%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	15.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	9.6%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	14.9%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	3.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	6.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2.4%
\$200,000 or more	1.2%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey*

#### 3.3.2 Median Household Income

Median income is defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as the amount obtained by dividing the total income of a particular statistical universe by the number of units in that universe. The median income is the amount that divides the income distribution into two equal groups, half having income above that amount, and half having income below that amount. Mean income is the amount obtained by dividing the total aggregate income of



a group by the number of units in that group. The mean or average income is higher than median income.

The Town of Tabor City's median household income is below that of Columbus County and North Carolina.

**Table 3.3.2: Median Income Comparison**

Jurisdiction	Median Household Income
Town of Tabor City	\$28,276.00
Columbus County	\$37,628.00
State of North Carolina	\$56,595.00

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

### 3.3.3 Poverty Rates

The U.S. Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If the total income for a family, or unrelated individual, falls below the relevant poverty threshold, then the family (and every individual in it) or unrelated individual is considered in poverty. Since poverty is determined by the circumstances of individual families (e.g., family size, income thresholds and income), there is no single poverty rate for an entire jurisdiction or geographic area.

As Table 3.3.3 illustrates, the Town of Tabor City's percentage of people in poverty, as well as the percent of children in poverty, are significantly higher than those figures in Columbus County and North Carolina.

**Table 3.3.3: Poverty Level Comparison**

Jurisdiction	% of People in Poverty	% of Children in Poverty
Town of Tabor City	42.2%	69.1%
Columbus County	22.8%	34.5%
State of North Carolina	13.6%	19.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

In 2015-2019, 38.9% of households received SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program). In contrast, in Columbus County approximately 24.8% of households received SNAP assistance.

Additional SNAP statistics in Tabor City report:

- An estimated 42.4% of households that received SNAP had children under 18, and 37.4% of households that received SNAP had one or more people 60 years and over.
- An estimated 45.1% of all households receiving SNAP were families with a female householder and no husband present.
- An estimated 21.4% of households receiving SNAP had two or more workers in the past 12 months.

## 3.4 Education

### 3.4.1 Educational Attainment

Of Tabor City residents 25 years and older, 72% of residents have a least a high school education or equivalent. An estimated 28% did not complete high school. A total of 7.1% of residents had earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

Tabor City has a higher percentage of people who did not graduate from high school than Columbus County and North Carolina as illustrated in Table 3.4.1.

The total school enrollment in Tabor City was 636 students. Nursery school enrollment was 4 students and kindergarten through 12th grade enrollment was 516. College or graduate school enrollment was 116.

**Table 3.4.1: Educational Attainment Comparison for Population Aged 25 and Over**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Town of Tabor City</b>	<b>Columbus County</b>	<b>State of North Carolina</b>
Less than High school diploma	28%	17%	11.4%
High school diploma or equivalency	37.9%	36.3%	25.6%
Some college, no degree	22.2%	23%	20.6%
Associate's degree	4.7%	9.8%	10.1%
Bachelor's degree	3.3%	9.2%	20.5%
Graduate or Professional degree	3.8%	4.6%	11.8%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey*

### 3.4.2 Public Schools

Residents within the Town of Tabor City and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) boundary are served by the Columbus County School System, a pre-kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade district composed of 14 total schools serving approximately 5,673 students.

The 14 schools are broken down as follows:

#### High schools

- East Columbus High School (Lake Waccamaw)
- South Columbus High School (Tabor City)
- Southeastern Early College - also called Columbus Career and College Academy (Whiteville): Early college entry program managed by the Columbus County School system.
- West Columbus High School (Cerro Gordo)

#### Middle schools

- Nakina Middle School (Nakina)
- Tabor City Middle School (Tabor City)

#### Elementary schools

- Acme Delco Elementary School; grades K-6 (Reigelwood)
- Cerro Gordo Elementary School; grades PK–8 (Cerro Gordo)
- Chadbourn Elementary School (Chadbourn)
- Evergreen Elementary School; grades PK–8 (Evergreen)
- Hallsboro-Artesia Elementary School; grades K-6 (Hallsboro)
- Old Dock Elementary School (Whiteville)
- Tabor City Elementary School (Tabor City)
- Williams Township School; grades PK–8 (Whiteville)

The District also operates the North Whiteville Academy at 310 S M.L.K. Avenue in Whiteville. The school is an alternative school for Central Middle School and Whiteville High School students with the goal of returning students to a regular school setting as soon as behavior and/or credits allow.

In addition to the listed public schools, at the time this Town Plan was prepared, one private school was operating within the region, Carolina Adventist Academy at 3710 James B. White Highway South, in Whiteville.,

Residents of Tabor City typically attend the following schools:

- Tabor City Elementary School;
- Tabor City Middle School;
- South Columbus High School

#### 3.4.3 Colleges and Universities

Tabor City is conveniently located within 100 miles of the following colleges, university, and technical school campuses:

<b>College / University</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Distance From Town of Tabor City</b>
Southeastern Community College	Whiteville, NC	15.9 miles
Columbus Christian Academy – Private College	Whiteville, NC	19 miles
Florence-Darlington Technical College Mullins	Mullins, SC	28 miles
Bladen Community College	Dublin, NC	38 miles
Southeastern Health Medical Education – Medical School	Lumberton, NC	40 miles
UNC-Pembroke	Pembroke, NC	47 miles

- Continued -

- Continued -

College / University	City	Distance From Town of Tabor City
Robertson Community College	Lumberton, NC	50 miles
Francis Marion University	Horry County, SC	52 miles
Cape Fear Community College	Wilmington, NC	66 miles
UNC – Wilmington	Wilmington, NC	70 miles
Fayetteville Technical Community College	Fayetteville, NC	83 miles
University of Mount Olive	Mount Olive, NC	96 miles

### 3.5 Workforce

#### 3.5.1 Employment

In Tabor City, the U.S. Census reported that in 2019, 23.4% of the population 16 and over were employed; 75.5 percent were not currently in the labor force. An estimated 70.2% of the people employed were private wage and salary workers; 21.5% were federal, state, or local government workers; and 8.3% were self-employed in their own (not incorporated) business. As presented in Table 3.5.1.A, the largest number of the Town's citizens in the workforce (aged 16+) are employed in the *Management, business, sciences, and arts* occupations (196 people, or 24.2% of the 848-member workforce). The second highest category were employees within the *Sales and Office* occupations (180 people, or 22.2%).

**Table 3.5.1.A: Occupations for Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over**

Occupation	Number	%
Management, business, sciences, and arts occupations	196	24.2%
Service occupations	177	21.9%
Sales and office occupations	180	22.2%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	78	9.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	178	22.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey



[The Tabor City Industrial Park](#) consists of 63 acres of land located on the north side of the City. Home to the industrial incubator that currently houses RadixBay and Gann Toys, the Park was developed by the [Tabor City Committee of 100](#) in cooperation with the Town of Tabor City and the Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation (BEMC). The Park has approximately 30 acres available for future development. The park has all new infrastructure to include water, sewer, natural gas, and a T-1 Line.

An attractive [video](#) has been produced that illustrates other industrial businesses, available sites, road and rail access and ample infrastructure serving the area's industrial park is available for industrial investors and site locators to view. A screenshot of the video is displayed below.



Source: Town of Tabor City, NC

In 2019, the civilian employed population in Tabor City, aged 16 years and older, worked in the following industries.

**Table 3.5.1.B: Employment by Industry**

Industry	# Employees:	%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing & hunting, & mining	5	0.6%
Construction	70	8.7%
Manufacturing	135	16.7%
Wholesale trade	23	2.8%
Retail trade	119	14.7%
Transportation & warehousing, & utilities	39	4.8%
Information	22	2.7%
Finance & insurance, & real estate & rental & leasing	13	1.6%
Professional, scientific, & management, & admin. & waste management svcs.	81	10.0%
Educational services, & health care & social assistance	171	21.1%
Arts, entertainment, & recreation, & accommodation, & food services	36	4.4%
Other Services, except public administration	51	6.3%
Public administration	44	5.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

### 3.5.2 Commuting Patterns

As reported by the U.S. Census Bureau, an estimated 83.2% of Tabor City workers drove to work alone in 2014-2019 while 11.4% carpooled.

Among those who commuted to work, it took them on average 27.1 minutes to get to work. Table 3.5.2 presents Tabor City workers' modes of travel to work.

**Table 3.5.2: Town of Tabor City Commuters' Methods of Transportation**

Transportation Method	% of All Workers
Drive Alone	83.2%
Carpool	11.4%
Public Transportation	0.0%
Walk	1.2%
Worked at Home	0.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey

## 4. NATURAL, RECREATION, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

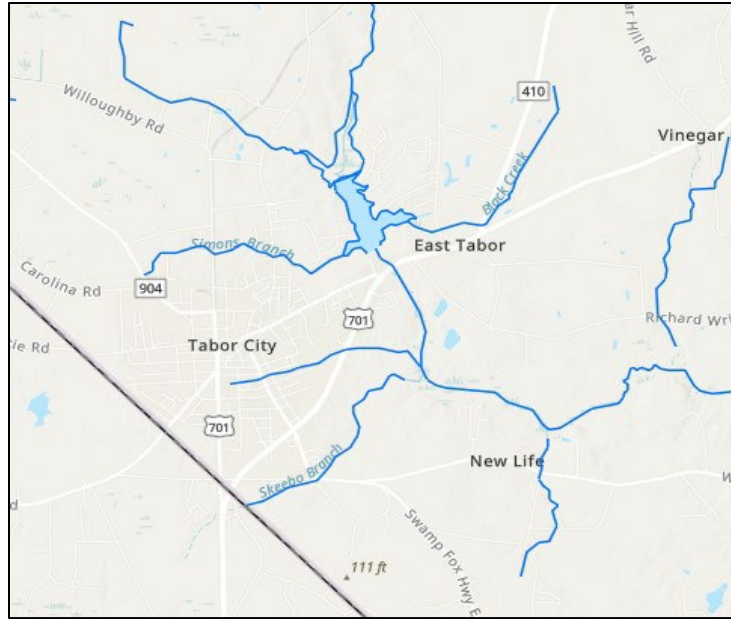
### 4.1 Natural Resources

#### 4.1.1 Water Resources

Water resources provide both recreational and life sustaining resources for the Town of Tabor City and the region.

The Town and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) boundary are encumbered by, and adjacent to, the following waterways:

<b>Waterway Name:</b>	<b>General Location:</b>	<b>State Classification:</b>	<b>State Description:</b>
Grissett Swamp (Lake Tabor)	East of Tabor City	Class B SW	From source to dam at Lake Tabor
Simmons Branch	Running west/east from Fair Bluff Road to Lake Tabor	Class B SW	From source to Lake Tabor, Grissett Swamp
Grissett Swamp	Running south from Lake Tabor towards US Highway 701 Bypass, east of Linwood Norris St.	Class C SW	From dam at Lake Tabor to Seven Creeks
Town Canal	South of Garrell and Worth St. North of Burns St.	Class C SW	From source to Grissett Swamp
Skeebo Branch (Schewbough Branch)	South of Tabor City and US Highway 701 Bypass,	Class C SW	From North Carolina-South Carolina State Line to Grissett Swamp
Black Creek	West of Ten Mile Road ; North of US Highway 701 Bypass	Class B SW	From source to Lake Tabor, Grissett Swamp



Source – State of NC Division of Water Resources (DWR)

Identified waterways fall into the ‘SW’ supplemental classification and are either Class B or C waters, defined by the State of North Carolina Division of Water Resources (DWR) as:

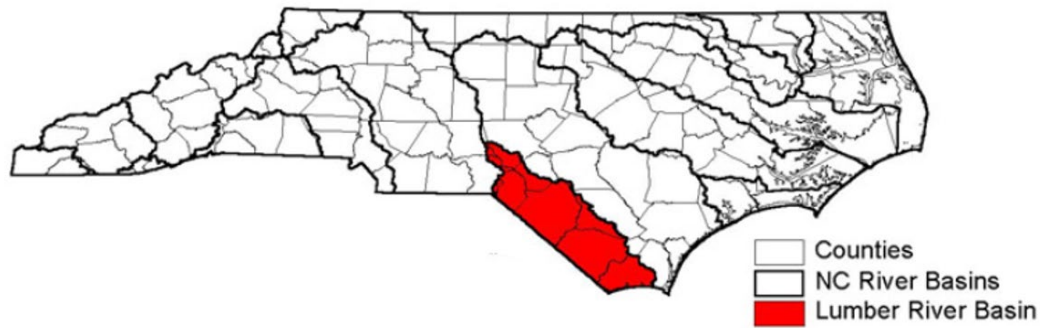
- SW (Swamp Waters): *Supplemental classification intended to recognize those waters which have low velocities and other natural characteristics which are different from adjacent streams;*
- Class B waterways: *Waters protected for all Class C uses in addition to primary recreation. Primary recreational activities include swimming, skin diving, water skiing, and similar uses involving human body contact with water where such activities take place in an organized manner or on a frequent basis;*
- Class C waterways: *Waters protected for uses such as secondary recreation, fishing, wildlife, fish consumption, aquatic life including propagation, survival and maintenance of biological integrity, and agriculture. Secondary recreation includes wading, boating, and other uses involving human body contact with water where such activities take place in an infrequent, unorganized, or incidental manner.*

Fortunately, none of the water features in and around the Town are classified as Nutrient Sensitive Waters (NSW) by the State.

As previously indicated in this Document the Town is within the Lumber River Basin, encompassing approximately 3,343 square miles in all or part of 10 counties (i.e. Brunswick, Columbus, Bladen, Robeson, Cumberland, Hoke, Scotland, Richmond, Moore and Montgomery). There are approximately:

- 2,222 miles of freshwater streams,
- 9,865 acres of freshwater lakes,
- 4,680 acres of estuarine or saline waterbodies; and
- 26 miles of coastline within the Basin





All the rivers in this Basin flow into South Carolina except for the Shallotte River and Lockwoods Folly River, which drain to the Atlantic Ocean. The Lumber River begins at the headwaters known as Drowning Creek, in the counties of Moore and Montgomery, in the Sandhills ecoregion. This area is largely forested with the populations in the upper portion of the Basin primarily concentrated around Southern Pines, Pinehurst and Aberdeen. Naked Creek and Rocky Ford Branch are listed as state-designated Outstanding Resource Waters.

The majority of Tabor City is located within what is defined as the *Waccamaw River Subbasin*, which includes Lake Waccamaw the largest bay lake and the second largest natural lake in the state. Lake Waccamaw has been designated by the State as an Outstanding Resource Water (ORW) and all waters draining to it are part of the ORW management strategy area. The eastern and southern shore of the lake have been protected by the Lake Waccamaw State Park since 1976.

The Lumber River State Park contains 7,937 acres of land along the main stem. A total of 115 miles of the Lumber River is designated a State Natural and Scenic Waters and 81 miles have also been designated as a National Wild and Scenic Water.



#### 4.1.1.1 **Water Sports**

With some limitations, outdoor water sport opportunities are available within Tabor City:

- Lake Tabor (Lynwood Norris Rd): An approximately 100+ acre recreational lake featuring piers, boat launches, and fishing areas. Local bass tournaments are held monthly and boat races are held frequently during the warmer months on Lake Tabor;
- [Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park™ at Daddy Joe's](#) (626 Richard Wright Rd): Located within the Town of Tabor City's Extraterritorial Jurisdictional Boundary (ETJ), the privately operated recreational vehicle park/campground covers over 350 acres with a wide

array of resort amenities including fishing ponds for guests, nine ponds, and miles of trails for hiking and biking.



*Photo credit: Yogi Bear's Jellystone park at Daddy Joe's website.*

Available water sport activities available to local residents on a regional level include:

<b>Facility:</b>	<b>Distance from Town of Tabor City:</b>	<b>Water Sport Services Offered:</b>
Fair Bluff, NC	15 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boat access ramp</li> </ul>
Causey Landing, Horry County, South Carolina	20 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boat access ramp</li> </ul>
Lumber River State Park, Orrum, NC	24.1 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishing piers and one viewing pier;</li> <li>• River access/boating access</li> </ul>
Lake Waccamaw State Park Lake Waccamaw, NC	35.9 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishing piers and one viewing pier;</li> <li>• River access/boating access</li> </ul>
NC Wildlife Boat Ramp – Lake Waccamaw State Park	35.9 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishing Pier</li> <li>• Boat access ramp</li> </ul>
Lumber River State Park, Robertson County, NC	52 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishing piers and one viewing pier;</li> <li>• River access/boating access</li> </ul>
Singletary Lake State Park, Kelly, NC	52 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fishing piers and one viewing pier;</li> <li>• River access/boating access</li> </ul>

#### 4.1.2 Land Resources and Geography

The majority of the Town has a gradual slope with elevations ranging from 89 ft. mean sea level (msl) to 105 ft. msl. There are several high points within the community with no significant/drastring elevation changes.

According to the Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service dataset, dated 1990, indicates the Town is composed on the following groups of soils:

- **Norfolk-Lynchburg-Goldsboro:** Nearly level to gently sloping, well drained to somewhat poorly drained soils that have a sandy or loamy surface layer and a loamy subsoil; on uplands. This soil type is present throughout the majority of the community;
- **Rains-Lynchburg-Goldsboro:** Nearly level, moderately well drained to poorly drained soils that have a loamy surface layer and a loamy subsoil; on uplands. According to Soil Survey Maps, this category of soils is concentrated in the western portion of Tabor City, north and west of East 5<sup>th</sup> Street/ NC Highway 701 Bypass and NC Highway 904 (Fair Bluff Road/Swamp Fox Highway West).

There are areas within the Town encumbered by special flood hazard areas. Soils in these areas have marginal or poor drainage characteristics.

##### 4.1.2.1 Agricultural

The preservation of prime farmland is important to both Tabor City and Columbus County. Agriculture is still a major local economic engine for local communities. Local and regional agriculture products includes corn, sweet potatoes, strawberries, pecans, and tobacco as the main crops.

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of *physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops* and is available for these uses.

It could be cultivated land, pastureland, forest land, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas. Generally, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable levels of acidity and/or alkalinity, and few or no rocks.

According to available data, there is approximately 218,000 acres of prime farm land (35.7% of total land area) within Columbus County.

On both a local and County level, residents are engaging in efforts to protect agricultural lands and preserve a semblance of the area's historical agricultural economy.

The majority of soils in and around the Town are suitable to support agricultural operations. Streams connected to the Pee Dee River water system provide a ready source of water for irrigation as well.

#### **4.1.2.2 Recreation**

The Town of Tabor City's Parks and Recreation Department maintains, along with Columbus County Parks and Recreation staff, 3 park facilities within the corporate limits, summarized as follows:

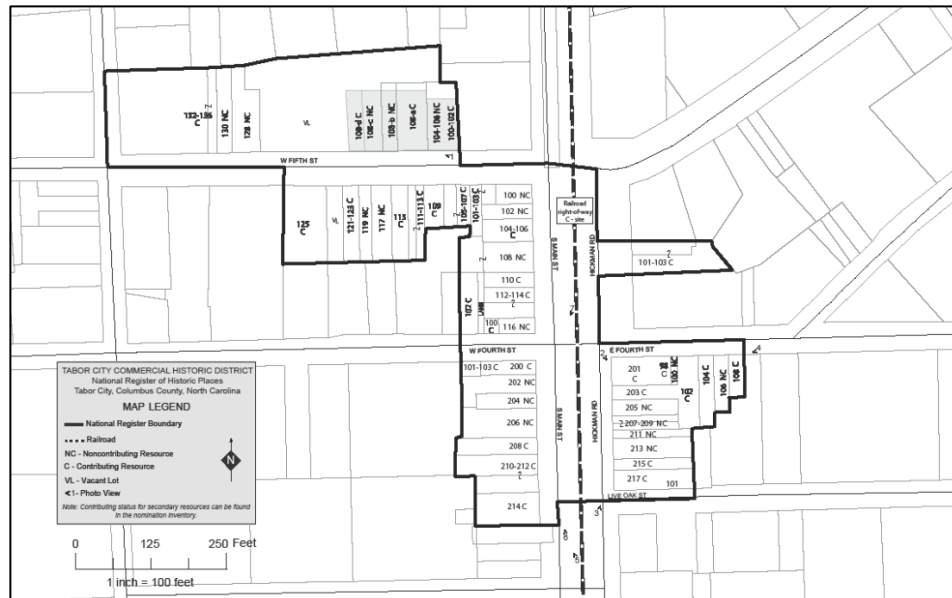
<b>Park</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Amenities</b>
TABOR CITY RECREATIONAL COMPLEX	229 Complex St.	Largest recreational facility in the County (26 acres) consisting of : <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5 lighted baseball/softball fields,</li><li>• football field/multipurpose field,</li><li>• 2 tennis courts,</li><li>• 2 batting cages,</li><li>• 3 picnic shelters,</li><li>• bathroom facilities and</li><li>• A playground.</li></ul>
LAKE TABOR RECREATIONAL PARK	Lynwood Norris St	5 acre park consisting of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A lighted baseball/softball field,</li><li>• 2 basketball courts,</li><li>• Paved walking trail,</li><li>• Picnic shelter,</li><li>• Restroom facility,</li><li>• Batting cages and</li><li>• A playground</li></ul>
CIVITAN PARK	100 Orange St	Playground area and picnic shelter.

## 4.3 Historic Resources

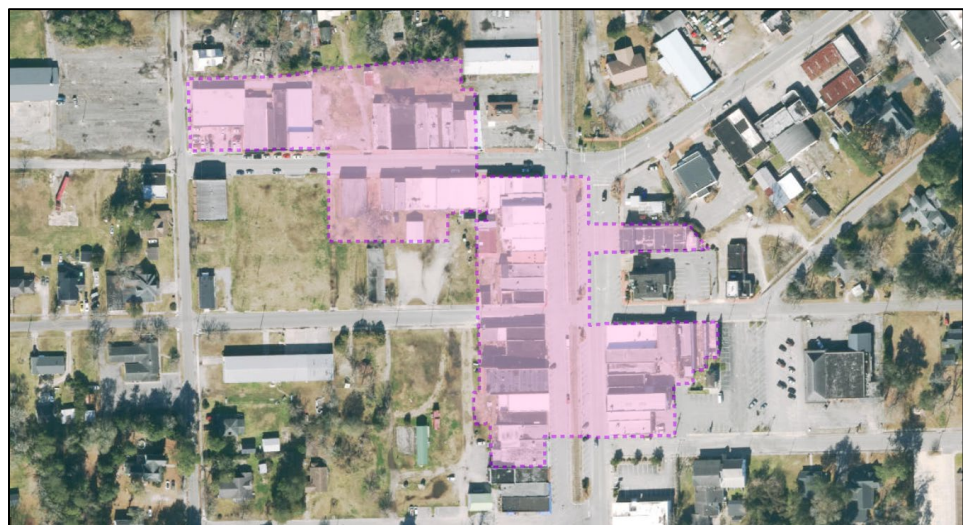
### 4.3.1 Heritage Preservation and Tourism

#### Tabor City:

- The [Tabor City Commercial Historic District](#) is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The district is also locally designated by the Town and the Town of has an appointed Historic Commission that administers review of proposals within the district. Created in 2015, the District includes structures along: Hickman Rd., W. 5th, E. and W. 4th, and S. Main St. According to available information, there are 32 contributing and 20 non-contributing structures.

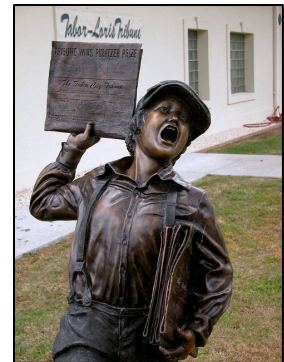


Boundary of the Locally-Designated Tabor City Commercial Historic District



Boundary of the National Register-Listed Tabor City Commercial Historic District

- The [North Carolina Yam Festival](#) takes place annually on the fourth Saturday in October and includes a parade, craft/food vendors, train rides, a classic cars and truck show/display, and art vendors. The festival includes an art show and a "Miss Yam Festival" pageant, which includes prizes for various age groups;
- The Town hosts an annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July festival;
- On NC Business Highway 701 there is the North Carolina Visitors Center aiding tourist and locals with information on various local and regional activities;
- There is an old train depot in the downtown area, specifically 100 W 3rd St, serving as a museum operating primarily during the Yam Festival. The museum includes an old/retired caboose as one of the available displays;
- Lake Tabor is an approximately 100+ acre water body offering various aquatic recreation activities (i.e. boating, fishing, etc.) including boating events;
- As previously detailed herein, the Town boasts several park and athletic field facilities for public use;
- There is a local commercial business operation offering camping and fishing activities as well as a small waterpark;
- [The Ritz Center](#): Located at 213 Hickman Road, the historic Ritz Theater has undergone a thorough renovation and been transformed into a reception venue;



*Photo credit: The Ritz Center website.*

- The Horace Carter Museum: Located at is located at the 102 Avon Street (i.e. the Tabor-Loris Tribune newspaper office) the museum displays the history of the Town through the eyes of the Town's Pulitzer Prize winner, Horace Carter. A bronze newsboy was erected in 2007 to commemorate the Tabor City Tribune's Pulitzer Prize of 1952, for its editorials against the Ku Klux Klan;
- Tabor City Public Library: Located at 101 E. 5<sup>th</sup> St.; and





- Mt. Tabor City School House: Located at 211 E 5th St, the 1 room school house was constructed in about 1870. The facility the was restored by the historical society of Tabor City and Columbus County and now serves as a local museum;

#### **Columbus County:**

- The North Carolina Natural Heritage Program maintains the state's list of significant "Natural Heritage Areas". As detailed on the State's Natural and Cultural Heritage Program webpage (<https://www.ncnhp.org>) a natural heritage area:

*... is land or water important for the conservation of the natural biodiversity of North Carolina.*

*The Natural Heritage Program identifies these natural areas based on biological surveys (G.S. § 143B-135.250. - § 143B-135.272).*

*We (State of NC) receive permission from landowners and land managers before doing any inventories. We base natural area identification on ecological and biological information currently found on the site.*

*The 2,500+ natural areas we have identified in North Carolina contain the best rare species populations, habitats, and communities. Our goal is to include the full range of organisms and ecological processes that comprise North Carolina's Natural Heritage.*

There are 36 natural heritage sites in Columbus County comprising approximately 53,449 acres of land area, and includes the following areas:

1. Big Sandy Ridge;
2. Big Swamp/Old Whiteville Road;
3. Bluff Swamp/Princess Ann Swamp;
4. Bryant Mill (Greenbank) Bluff;
5. Cove Swamp;
6. Cross Bay Savanna;
7. Crusoe Island Savanna;
8. Cypress Creek Bay;

9. Friar Swamp;
  10. Highway 130/Waccamaw River Rare Plant Site;
  11. Highway 905/Seven Creeks Rare Species Site;
  12. Hoy Savanna Remnant;
  13. Juniper Creek Floodplain;
  14. Juniper Creek/Driving Creek Aquatic Habitat;
  15. Lake Waccamaw Aquatic Habitat;
  16. Lake Waccamaw Aquatic Habitat;
  17. Lake Waccamaw/Council Ridge;
  18. Lay's Lake;
  19. Lumber River Swamp/Devil's Elbow;
  20. Mark Pine Bay Cooleys Meadowrue Site;
  21. Meares Millpond;
  22. Neils Eddy Landing;
  23. Net Hole/Buck Landing Swamp;
  24. Old Dock Savanna;
  25. Parkers Landing Sand Ridge;
  26. Schulken's Savanna;
  27. Tabor City Longleaf Stand;
  28. Upper Waccamaw River Swamp;
  29. Waccamaw Island Savanna and Bottomlands;
  30. Waccamaw River Aquatic Habitat;
  31. Waccamaw River Cross Swamp Bottomlands;
  32. Waccamaw River Oxbow Site;
  33. Waccamaw River Reeves and Gore Lake Bottomlands;
  34. Wards Lake;
  35. White Marsh Swamp; and
  36. Winnie Moore Bay Flatwoods.
- Lake Waccamaw has been designated by the State as an Outstanding Resource Water (ORW) and all waters draining to it are part of the ORW management strategy area. The eastern and southern shore of the lake have been protected by the Lake Waccamaw State Park since 1976;



*Photo credit: Lumber River State Park website.*



- The [Lumber River State Park](#) contains 7,937 acres of land along the main stem. A total of 115 miles of the Lumber River is designated a State Natural and Scenic Waters and 81 miles have also been designated as a National Wild and Scenic Water;
- There are local sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places, specifically:
  - Black Rock Plantation House (the unincorporated Riegelwood community),
  - Columbus County Courthouse (Whiteville),
  - Dr. Neil and Nancy Elizabeth Culbreth House (Whiteville),
  - Lake Waccamaw Depot (Lake Waccamaw), and
  - Powell House (Fair Bluff).

There are other properties within the region which have local historic significance as well.

- The Town of Whiteville is the site of the annual North Carolina Pecan Festival held every November;
- The Town of Fair Bluff is the site of the annual North Carolina Watermelon Festival held the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of July;
- The Town of Chadbourn is the site of the annual North Carolina Strawberry Festival held the first week of May.

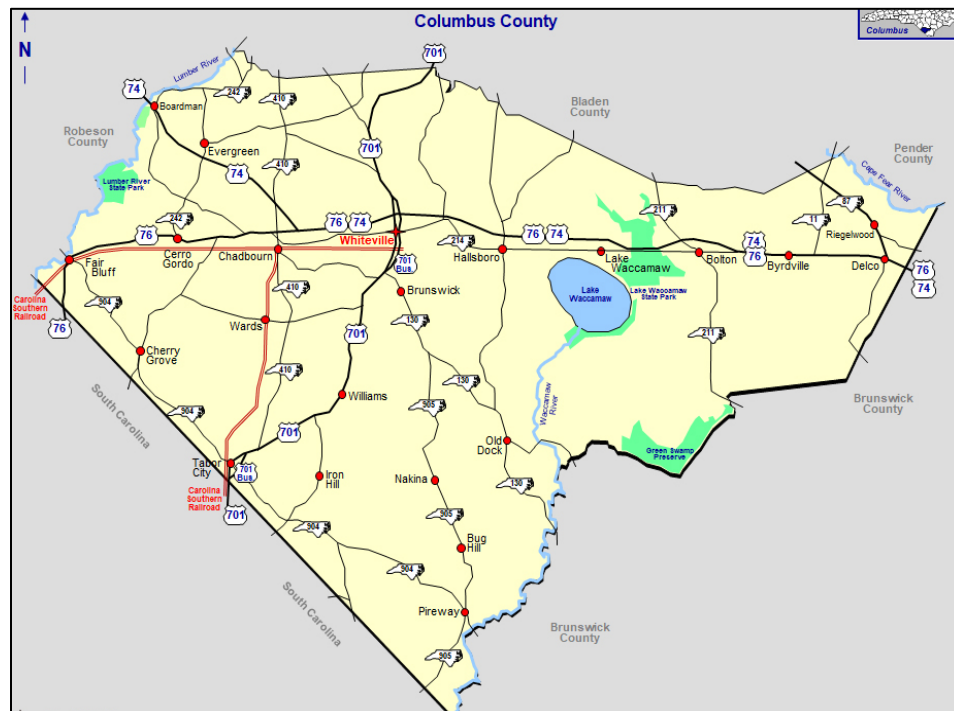
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## 5. INFRASTRUCTURE

### 5.1 Transportation Facilities

Columbus County has several State and Federal roadways within its boundaries, including:

- US Highway: US Highway 74, 76, and 701
- State Routes: NC Highway 11, 87, 130, 131, 211, 214, 242, 10, 904, and 905



Currently, there are no Interstate Highways running through Columbus County.

The Town has access to US Highway 701 and NC Highways 410 and 904.

The Town of Tabor City is not eligible to participate in the NCDOT Logo Signing Program. These blue 'logo boards' that notify travelers of gas, food, and lodging establishments are only permitted along highways with grade-separated, fully-controlled interchanges. An alternative to consider would be a public-private effort between the Town, a local business organization such as the Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, and a private sign company to create a local, Tabor City-specific 'Logo Billboard' program. The content could be designed on an existing billboard to resemble the blue logo panels used by NCDOT, with local businesses participating through a fee structure similar to the state program. This initiative would provide local enterprises with a prime advertising opportunity to display their logos. Priority should be given to locally-owned establishments, but all downtown businesses would benefit from the attracted motorists.

The Town is part of the Cape Fear Area Rural Planning Organization (RPO), one of twenty multicounty rural transportation planning organizations established by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).

The Cape Fear Area RPO covers Brunswick, Columbus, and Pender Counties and serves as the intergovernmental organization for local elected officials, the North Carolina Department of Transportation to work cooperatively to address transportation issues.

As detailed on the RPO's website (<https://capefearcog.org/rpo>) the goals/duties of the organization are to:

- *Develop long-range local and regional transportation plans (highways, railways, aviation and ferries) in cooperation with other area planning organizations and the North Carolina Department of Transportation;*
- *Provide a forum for public participation in the rural transportation planning process;*
- *Develop and prioritize transportation projects which the RPO believes should be included in the State Transportation Improvement Program;*
- *Provide transportation-related information to local governments and other interested organizations and persons; and*
- *Conduct transportation related studies and surveys for local governments and other interested entities/organizations.*

## **5.2 Water Supply**

Although Columbus County's water system is within the Town of Tabor City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), the Town of Tabor City Public Works Department provides the Town's potable water. The Town's water is supplied by the Department's four deep wells that withdraw water from the Black Creek Aquifer.

## **5.3 Sewer Services**

The Town is making substantial repairs to the Tabor City Wastewater Treatment Plant through a nearly \$3 million dollar project for being paid for out of various grants and a zero percent interest loan from the State of North Carolina. Although the wastewater plant is not very visible, it is probably the most expensive piece of capital equipment owned by the Town of Tabor City. Originally constructed back in the early 1970's when a produce cannery was in operation in town, the plant has many assets and liabilities. One issue is that the plant is very large due to its original intended use. The limited number of residential customers the Town has paying sewer bills always made financing repairs at the plant an issue.

The current capital project is at least the third major overhaul of the wastewater treatment plant since its original construction nearly 50 years ago. The Town expects work to continue for most of 2022. Once completed, the Town is hopeful it will be able to meet the stringent testing requirements of the plant as a part of its operating permit.

## 6. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

### 6.1 Community Participation

An online survey was printed and available at Town Hall which also had a link to same survey offered online. The following summary highlights results of the survey and opportunities for action.

The survey questions asked six questions:

1. Do you reside within the Town of Tabor City?
2. What do you like about Tabor City (present)?
3. What do you dislike about Tabor City (present)?
4. What wishes do you have for Tabor City (future)?
5. What fears do you have for Tabor City (future)?
6. What should be the #1 priority for Tabor City moving forward?

The responses were then cataloged for ranking purposes enabling the results to be summarized graphically. The following pages illustrate the responses in order of their respective frequency rankings.

The rankings indicate ***'Maintain Streets, Water, Sewer, and Roads'*** (25%) as the 1<sup>st</sup> priority. This answer was consistently emphasized by related answers to survey questions:

- *'What do you like about Tabor City?'* respondents indicated *'Affordability'* (18%), *'Small Town Feel'* (16%), *'Family Friendly'* (8%), and *'Sense of Community'* (7%).
- *'What do you dislike about Tabor City?'*, respondents indicated: *'Nothing to do, No Events'* (22%), *'Stagnation of Growth'* (8%), *'Property Maintenance'* (6%), and 2% indicated *'Many of the Businesses are not Handicapped Friendly'*.
- *'What wishes do you have for Tabor City?'*, resulted in *'More Parks and Recreation Facilities'* (36%), *'More Sidewalks'* (8%), and *'Disabled Power Wheelchair Accessibility'* (3%).
- In responding to the question *'What fears do you have for Tabor City?'*, 28% indicated *'Loss of Small-Town Appeal'*. 11% of respondents expressed the fear in *'Traffic'* and *'Stagnation of Growth'* within the community.

For the 2<sup>nd</sup> priority, respondents identified ***'Keep Crime Low'*** as a priority, with related responses detailed below.

- As previously indicated when asked the question *'What do you like about Tabor City?'* respondents indicated *'Affordability'* (18%), *'Small Town Feel'* (16%), *'Family Friendly'* (8%), and *'Sense of Community'* (8%). 8% of respondents indicated *'Low Crime'* was something they appreciated.
- *'What do you dislike about Tabor City?'*, respondents indicated: *'Nothing to do, No Events'* (22%), *'Businesses Moving/Empty Buildings'* (13%), *'Stagnation of Growth'* (11%), and *'Poor Property Maintenance'*.

- *'What wishes do you have for Tabor City?'*, resulted in a tie for the top answer between *'More Parks and Recreation Facilities'* and *'More Stores and Restaurants'* (36%). 8% of respondents indicated a need for *'More Sidewalks'*.
- In responding to the question *'What fears do you have for Tabor City?'*, 28% indicated *'Loss of Small-Town Appeal'* followed closely by *'Crime'* (22%).

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> priority, there was a three-way tie between ***'Downtown Revitalization'***, ***'Keep Small Town Feel'***, and ***'More Jobs'*** (13%). These priorities and related responses are detailed below.

- When asked the question *'What do you like about Tabor City?'* respondents indicated *'Small Town Feel'* (16%), *'Family Friendly'* (8%), *'Local Business'* (8%), and *'Downtown'* (5%).

It is important to note 11% of respondents identified *'Leadership'* as something they liked.

- *'What do you dislike about Tabor City?'*, respondents indicated: *'Nothing to do, No Events'* (22%) and *'Businesses Moving/Empty Buildings'* (13%). 11% of respondents indicated *'Stagnation of Growth'* and *'Too Small'*. 2% of respondents indicated there was *'Nothing'* they disliked about Tabor City while the same number identified *'Poor Town Management'* as a concern.
- As previously indicated herein, the top response for *'What wishes do you have for Tabor City?'*, resulted in a tie for the top answer between *'More Parks and Recreation Facilities'* and *'More Stores and Restaurants'* (36%).
- In responding to the question *'What fears do you have for Tabor City?'*, 28% indicated *'Loss of Small-Town Appeal'* followed closely by *'Crime'* (22%). 17% indicated a *'Lack of Employment Options'* while 11% of respondents indicated they were concerned over *'Traffic'* and *'Stagnation of Growth'*.

The 4<sup>th</sup> ranked priority resulted in a tie between ***'Growth'*** and ***'Retain our Character'*** with priorities and related responses detailed below.

- *'What do you like about Tabor City?'* respondents indicated *'Affordability'* (18%), *'Small Town Feel'* (16%), and *'Downtown'* (5%).
- *'What do you dislike about Tabor City?'*, respondents indicated: *'Nothing to do, No Events'* (22%) and *'Businesses Moving/Empty Buildings'* (13%). 11% of respondents indicated *'Stagnation of Growth'*.

As previously indicated herein, 12% of respondents indicated there was *'nothing'* they disliked about the Town of Tabor City.

- As previously indicated herein, the top response for *'What wishes do you have for Tabor City?'*, resulted in a tie for the top answer between *'More Parks and Recreation Facilities'* and *'More Stores and Restaurants'* (36%). 13% of respondents indicated a need to *'Retain Residents'* as well.
- In responding to the question *'What fears do you have for Tabor City?'*, 28% indicated *'Loss of Small-Town Appeal'*. 11% of respondents indicated they were concerned over *'Traffic'* and *'Stagnation of Growth'*. 2% of respondents identified *'Trains at 2 a.m. Don't Help Anyone/Anything'* as a fear moving forward as well.

The 5<sup>th</sup> ranked priority resulted in a tie between ***'Tourism'*** and ***'Community Events'*** with priorities and related responses detailed below.

- *'What do you like about Tabor City?'* respondents indicated *'Small Town Feel'* (16%), *'Slow Pace/Quiet'* (15%), *'Family Friendly'* (8%), *'Local Businesses'* (8%), and *'Sense of Community'* (7%).
- *'What do you dislike about Tabor City?'*, respondents indicated: *'Nothing to do, No Events'* (22%).
  - As previously indicated herein, 12% of respondents indicated there was 'nothing' they disliked about the Town of Tabor City.
- *'What wishes do you have for Tabor City?'*, resulted in a tie for the top answer between *'More Parks and Recreation Facilities'* and *'More Stores and Restaurant'*.
- In responding to the question *'What fears do you have for Tabor City?'*, 28% indicated *'Loss of Small-Town Appeal'*. 11% of respondents indicated they were concerned over *'Traffic'* and *'Stagnation of Growth'*. 8% of respondents identified *'Too Much Commercial'* as a concern.

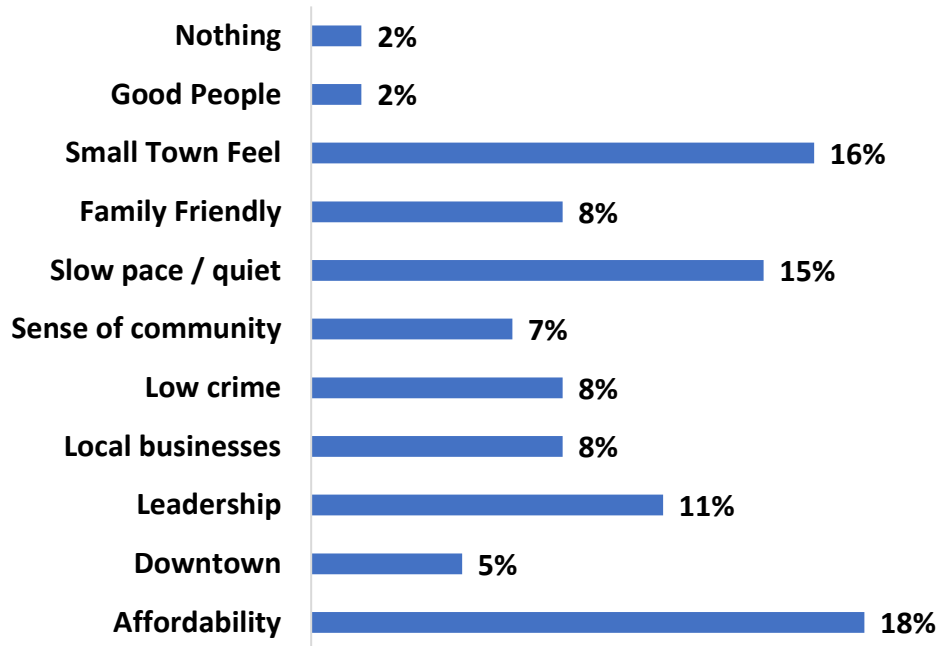
The 6<sup>th</sup> and final ranked priority identified within the survey was ***'More Housing Options'*** with priorities and related responses detailed below.

- *'What do you like about Tabor City?'* respondents indicated *'Small Town Feel'* (16%), *'Family Friendly'* (8%), *'Sense of Community'* (7%), and *'Good People'*.
- *'What do you dislike about Tabor City?'*, respondents indicated: *'Nothing to do, No Events'* (22%), *'Not Enough Parks'* (15%) and *'Poor Property Maintenance'* (6%).
- *'What wishes do you have for Tabor City?'*, resulted in a tie for the top answer between *'More Parks and Recreation Facilities'* and *'More Stores and Restaurant'*. 13% of respondents indicated a need to *'Retain Residents'* while 5% specifically identified a need for *'More Homes'*.
- In responding to the question *'What fears do you have for Tabor City?'*, 28% indicated *'Loss of Small-Town Appeal'*. 8% of respondents identified *'Too Much Commercial'* as a concern.

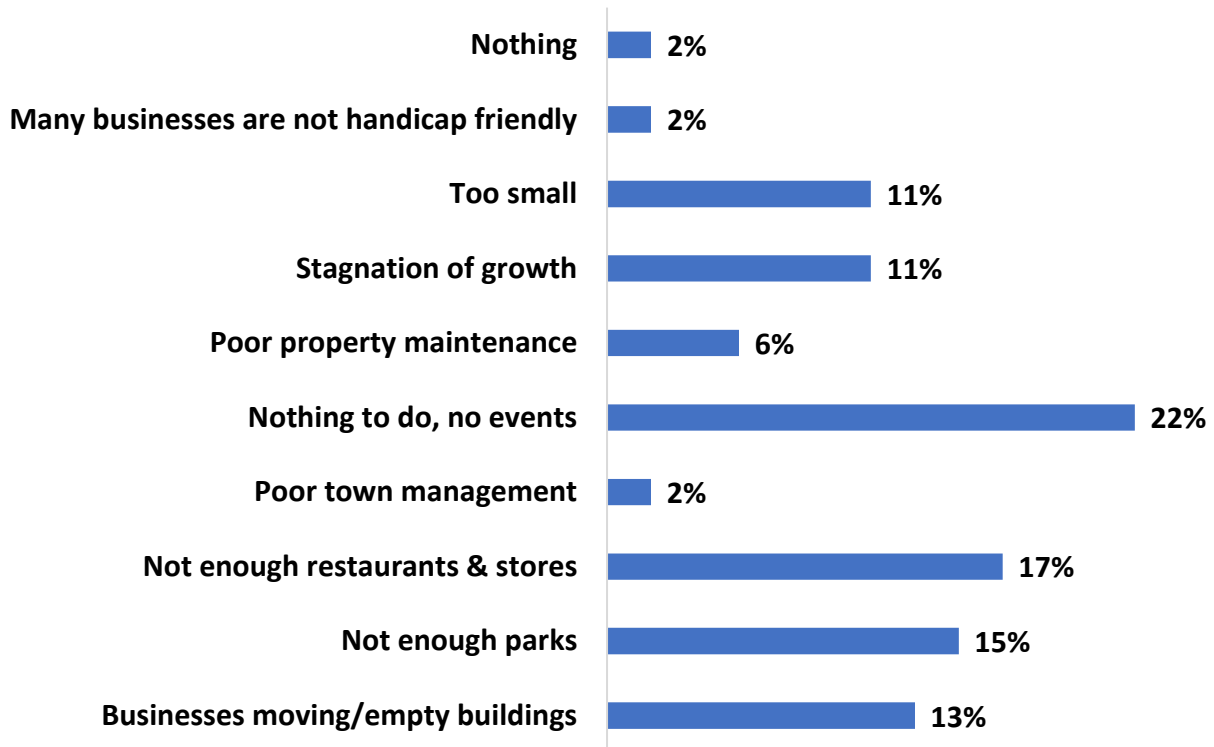
**Final Priorities.** Since responses for several priorities resulted in a tie, with respect to survey answers for *'What should be the #1 priority for Tabor City moving forward'*, it was necessary to add percentages to arrive at prioritizing the final list of goals for Tabor City. Further, as several of the priorities share many of the same goals/objectives, they were combined to avoid an unnecessary duplication of effort.

For example, *'Tourism'* and *'Community Events'* were combined into a central priority as part of this process. The priorities of *'Downtown Revitalization'* and *'Keep Small Town Feel'* were also combined into a single priority and included elements of the *'Retain Our Character'* priority as well.

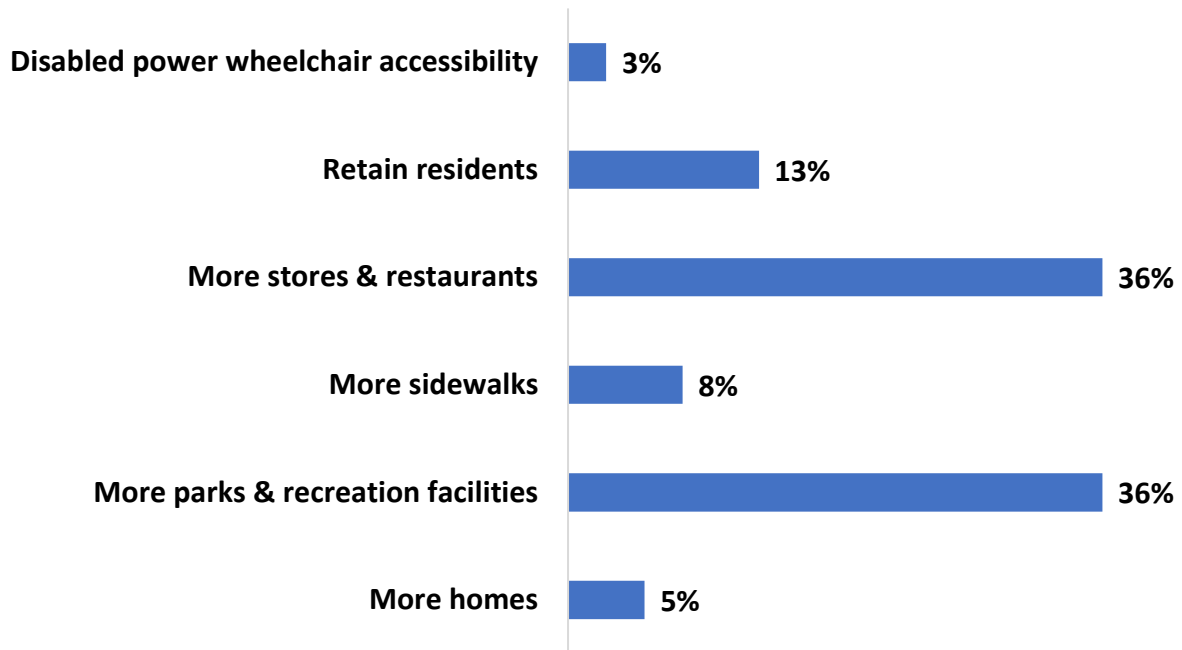
### ***What do you like about Tabor City?***



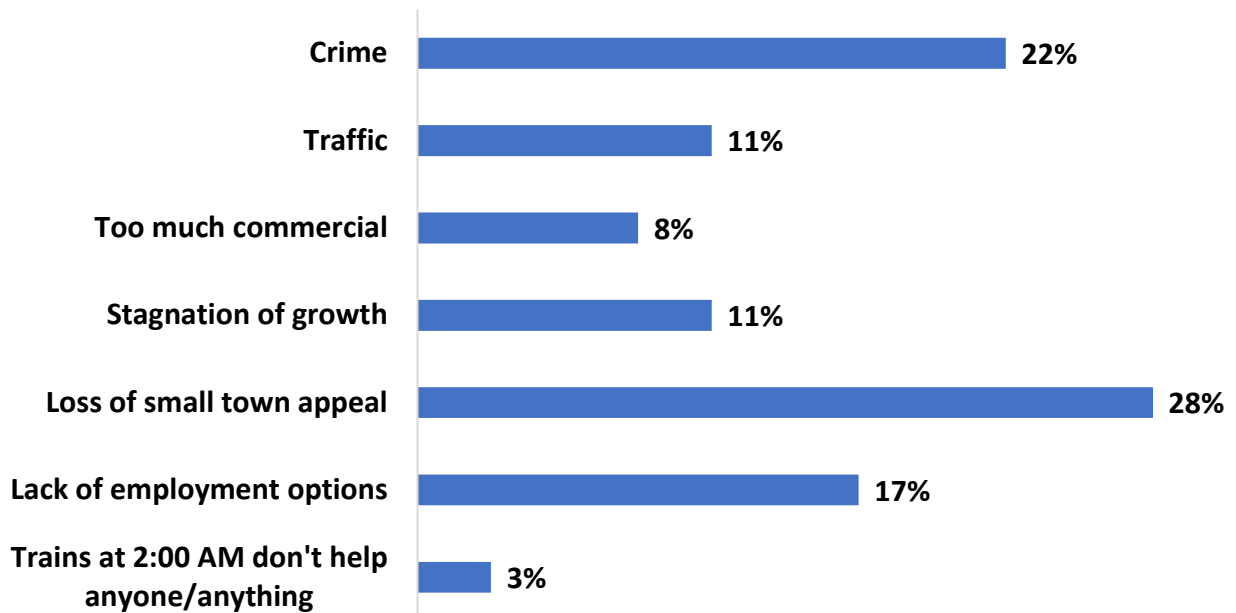
### ***What do you dislike about Tabor City?***



### ***What wishes do you have for Tabor City?***

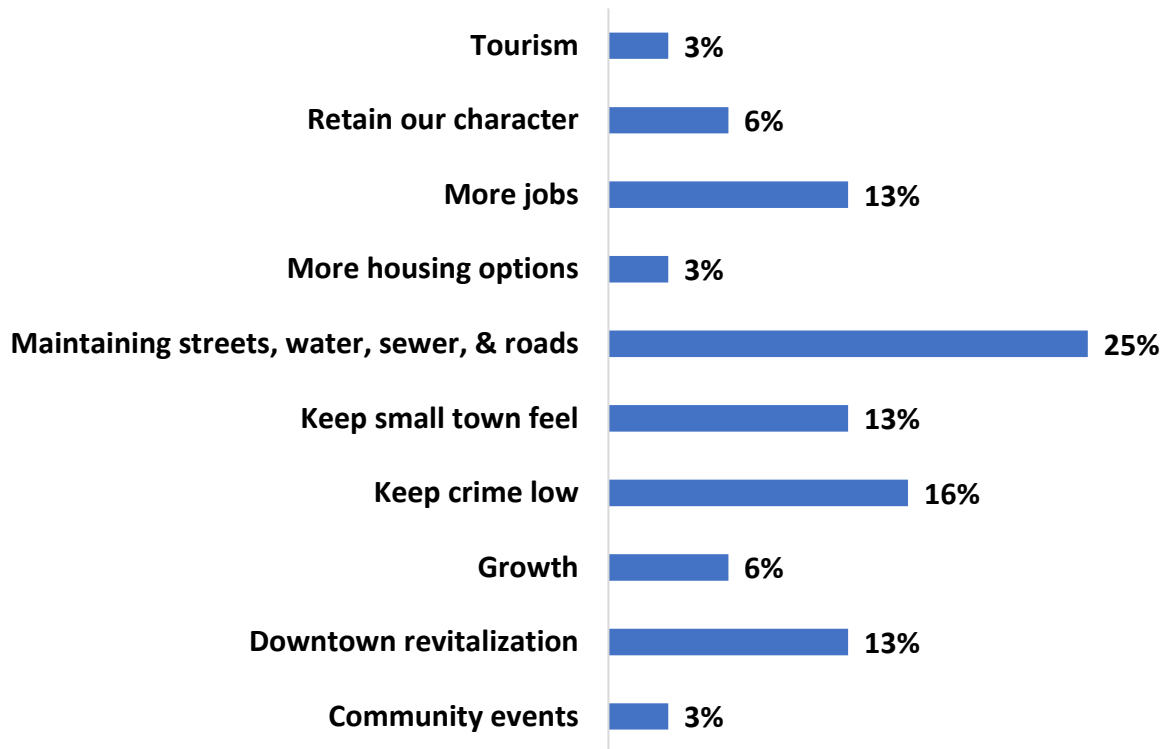


### ***What fears do you have for Tabor City?***





### ***What should be the #1 priority for Tabor City moving forward?***



Three of the answers to the question, ‘*What should be the #1 priority for Tabor City moving forward?*’ produced answers that have a scope and impact exceeding what can be accomplished by implementation of land use planning policies alone. Having said that, there were important concerns expressed by respondents of the Plan’s community input activities so they were shared with the Town’s Administrative Department to identify additional action(s) that can be taken to address same. Those priorities include: ‘*Maintaining Streets, Water, Sewer, and Roads*’, ‘*Community Events.*’, and ‘*Keep Crime Low*’.

After combining tied answers with their related answers and taking the concerns listed above that have broader impact(s)/solutions than can be addressed by town planning activities alone, community concerns fall into the following final priorities.

- ***‘Maintain and Enhance Local Infrastructure’***
- ***‘Keep Crime Low’***
- ***‘Preservation/Reuse of Downtown Buildings’***
- ***‘Retain Our Character’***
- ***‘Growth and More Jobs’***
- ***‘Community Events/Tourism,’ and***
- ***‘More Housing Options***

## 6.2 Goals-Objectives-Strategies

The objectives and strategies appearing under each goal appear in priority rankings based upon the number of public comments. These may be pursued as deemed appropriate by the Town, its citizens, and businesses.

### 6.2.1 **Goal 1: MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE!**

#### **WATER:**

**6.2.1.1 Objective 1: Continue to plan locally and work where necessary with Columbus County and surrounding municipal partners, on the development and implementation of a long-term water allocation plan** The Town will need to secure guarantees for long-term water allocation to plan for anticipated/desired growth. This will be through completion of a water usage/capacity study of existing wells/services and identification of existing options for internal (i.e. Town funded and maintained) and external (i.e. partnerships with adjacent municipalities and/or Columbus County) water resource expansion to meet demand.

**Strategy 1: Complete a Town master utility system capacity study identifying existing water capacity use opportunities and constraints based on the Town's existing wells.** Ideally, this study will be completed and reviewed prior to any meetings with local/regional utility partners.

As part of this plan, the Town shall develop a long-range water service plan for the community including a schedule for regular servicing of lines (i.e. cleaning, flushing, etc.), installation and upgrading of utility lines, provision of water for fire suppression services (i.e. installation of fire hydrants), and addressing of water quality issues.

**Strategy 2: Develop a formal schedule to meet with County officials and, where appropriate, local municipal partners to review water usage to more effectively plan for the Town's and regions water needs.** Meetings should occur, at a minimum, every 2 years to review water usage rates.

#### **SEWER:**

**6.2.1.2 Objective 2: Address the Town's long-term sewer needs.** The Town will need to secure guarantees from Columbus County for long-term sewer allocation to plan for anticipated/desired growth.

**6.2.1.3 Objective 3: Address the Town's long-term road maintenance needs.**

**Strategy 1: Complete an assessment of all locally maintained roadways as part of the annual budget process.**

**Strategy 2: Develop and implement a local roadway maintenance master plan.**

## **STORMWATER:**

**6.2.1.4 Objective 4:** Prepare, fund, and implement a stormwater master plan so the Town may start budgeting towards the design of a community stormwater system. This plan will be designed to cover existing developed areas and identify how new development will be expected to 'tie into' the system and augment the Town's stormwater system.

**Strategy 1:** *A new unified development ordinance (UDO) being prepared at the time of adoption of this Plan will include comprehensive stormwater management standards. This includes thresholds for redevelopment projects (residential and commercial) to install and maintain stormwater management systems.*

## **SIDEWALKS AND BICYCLE LANES:**

**6.2.1.5 Objective 5:** Prepare, fund, and implement a sidewalk/greenway and bicycle lane master plan so the Town may start budgeting toward building a sidewalk and bicycle system connecting existing and future neighborhoods, town amenities, and local businesses.

**Strategy 1:** *Install crosswalks at key intersections to facilitate safe pedestrian access to key areas within the community.*

**Strategy 2:** *Ensure connectivity to parks and natural areas.*

**Strategy 3:** *Ensure access is ADA compatible for universal access.*

**6.2.1.6 Objective 6:** A new unified development ordinance (UDO) being prepared at the time of adoption of this Plan will require developers to construct sidewalks and/or bicycle lanes in new neighborhoods and commercial developments.

## **6.2.2 Goal 2: KEEP CRIME LOW!**

**6.2.2.1 Objective 1:** Safe Neighborhoods.

**Strategy 1:** *Identify and continue practices that consistently achieve low crime rates throughout Tabor City neighborhoods.*

**6.2.2.2 Objective 2:** The Town of Tabor City will explore ways to receive training in Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) and apply CPTED concepts to Town-owned properties.

**Strategy 1:** *The Planning and Zoning and Police Departments will collaborate to seek funding to receive CPTED training.* CPTED is the intentional design of the physical environment in ways that reduce or remove identifiable crime risks. CPTED concepts are composed of: natural surveillance (increases visibility); natural access control (controls access); and territorial reinforcement (promotes a sense of ownership).

**6.2.2.3      Objective 3:** The Planning and Police Departments will apply principles of CPTED, after receiving training, to their areas of authority to help reduce crime.

***Strategy 1:***      *Planning Department staff will promote the use of CPTED concepts while reviewing site plans of new development.*

***Strategy 2:***      *Staff will promote the use of CPTED concepts by performing reviews of town-owned property and generating a prioritized list of retrofit projects, and complete them as funding allows.*

***Strategy 3:***      *Police Department staff will offer property surveys to homeowners and businesses; and provide recommendations for making changes to bring their property into compliance with CPTED concepts.*

**6.2.2.4      Objective 4:** Complete a light audit of the Town to determine if there is a correlation between crime levels and poorly illuminated areas.

***Strategy 1:***      *In poorly lit areas, the Town will coordinate with local residents and businesses to erect additional outdoor lighting to increase security and visibility.*

**6.2.2.5      Objective 5:** Work with local neighborhoods to establish neighborhood watch programs and educational outreach programs for local residents and businesses.

**6.2.2.6      Objective 6:** Work with local residents and civic organizations to establish community outreach events as a means of encouraging more community involvement and decreasing potential for crime.

**6.2.3      Goal 3:**      **PRESERVATION/REUSE OF DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS!**

**6.2.3.1      Objective 1:** Preserve the small-town appeal of Tabor City while encouraging compatible business growth through development of revised development standards and specifications.

***Strategy 1:***      *The new UDO will create a Main Street District (MS) with zoning standards and specifications with architectural design standards and specifications and development incentives designed to allow existing business to grow and encourage compatible new development.* Careful consideration will go into the preparation of design standards and specifications that reinforce the small town feel through an understanding of architectural and urban design principles that direct the placement and massing of structures.

Attention will be also given to what may be considered the public realm, typically composed of streets, sidewalks, and civic spaces to help guide the Town's decision-making of details when investing in light posts, outside furniture, landscaping, and sidewalk surfaces.

**Strategy 2:**     *Give attention during preparation of the new Main Street District (MS) to address development standards of adjacent properties and streets.* As the new Main Street increases in development interest and popularity as a destination for commerce, entertainment, and civic events, it is important to allow adjacent areas to have the option to transition to new uses that may offer supportive roles through the service sector, such as professional offices, while remaining compatible to adjacent residential uses. This transition also helps add to the number of employees and the private-sector clients who may become frequent patrons of restaurants and businesses along Main Street. Dismissive planning of support areas to Main Streets inadvertently restricts the primary destination streets from maximizing their potential in retaining the community-cherished small-town feel.

**Strategy 3:**     *Have the Town consider adaptive reuse of historic structures for public uses before designing new structures.* There may be existing historic structures contributing to the small town feel of Tabor City that need significant reinvestment beyond the current property owner's abilities to provide. As opportunities arise, the Town will explore whether such historic structures may be repurposed into a government use.

**Strategy 4:**     *Have the Town consider context-sensitive designs when it is time for Town-owned buildings to be constructed so that designs reinforce the small-town feel.* The architectural style of publicly owned buildings has historically provided inspiration for privately developed buildings which often mimicked many design elements to create a cohesive sense of place. Large investments by the Town of Tabor City for a new town hall and other civic buildings can positively or negatively have a domino effect on the designs of private-sector investments in land development. To successfully respond to the community's desire to retain a small-town atmosphere, the Town must dedicate resources to design structures which emulate enduring qualities expressed by the community. An example of this principal was the design for the Town of Edenton, North Carolina's new Police Headquarters building. Its design was inspired by the Town's historic cotton mill and although it served a large governmental function, the building blended in well with the surrounding historic neighborhood and instantly created a sense of pride for the Town and area residents.

**Strategy 5:**     *Incorporate a sense of small-town ambiance in public infrastructure.* The details within the public realm of a town can be as important as the privately-owned buildings themselves for maintaining a tangible small-town look. When the Town of Tabor City is tasked with selecting sidewalks, outside furniture, utility posts and even landscaping, the Town should have a pre-selected palette of elements from which to order that are in harmony with the small-town ambiance.

**6.2.3.2     Objective 2: Prepare a small area plan designed to identify opportunities to foster preservation/reuse of downtown buildings.** The town should coordinate a series of meetings to identify professional assistance and grant opportunities in Tabor City's historic downtown to help preserve and reuse downtown buildings. (Refer to Figure 4 – Growth Opportunities Map, Area labeled “Catalyst Area #1”).

**Strategy 1:** *Program resources to coordinate with property owners, stakeholders, the State of North Carolina Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Historic Commission, and Town and County officials to prepare a small-area plan for Downtown Tabor City.*

**6.2.4 Goal 4: RETAIN OUR CHARACTER!**

**6.2.4.1 Objective 1: Ensure development within the Town is consistent with the policies, goals, and objectives of the Plan.** Development shall be consistent with the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and various land use categories goals/objectives adopted as part of this document.

**6.2.4.2 Objective 2: Ensure proposed residential and non-residential development activities are similar in scope and intensity to surrounding land uses, are not out of character for the area in which they are located and are designed to strengthen the Town's identity.**

**6.2.4.3 Objective 3: Encourage development at appropriate densities in areas where existing services/infrastructure (i.e. water, sewer, road, stormwater, etc.) are already provided and are viable to support the project.** Tabor City's growth shall be directed, through application of the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and Zoning Map, to appropriate areas.

**6.2.4.4 Objective 4: Apply standards of the new UDO to assure quality growth.** A new unified development ordinance (UDO) being prepared at the time of adoption of this Plan will address the community's priorities to manage growth to assure safety and quality.

**6.2.4.5 Objective 5: Complete additional Small Area Plans or Master Plans of those focus areas denoted on the Future Land Use Map.**

**6.2.4.6 Objective 6: Adopt, enforce and strengthen property maintenance standards.**

**Strategy 1:** *Enforce Existing Garbage-Related Ordinances.* Enforce existing standards regarding dumpster maintenance, homeowner trash receptacles, and private garbage hauling.

**Strategy 2:** *Strengthen Property Maintenance Standards.* Adopt and enforce stronger property maintenance standards in the future UDO.

**6.2.4.7 Objective 7: Assign staff member(s) to monitor and coordinate roadside litter pickup efforts among participating civic and community organizations.**

**Strategy 1:** *Coordinate litter pickup locations and efforts within the Town of Tabor City between Town staff, Columbus County, NCDOT, and volunteer civic and community organizations.*

**Strategy 2:**     *The Town of Tabor City should explore the creation of an “Adopt-A-Street” volunteer program within the town limits and ETJ to tangibly demonstrate civic pride, contribute to a cleaner environment, help retain and attract economic development, and serve as a reminder to the public not to litter the roadways.*

**Strategy 3:**     *The Town of Tabor City will promote NCDOT’s existing “Adopt-A-Highway” volunteer program to attract participation within the town limits and ETJ.*

**Strategy 4:**     *The Town of Tabor City Public Works Department will ensure garbage trucks use best management practices to reduce accidental release of litter from trucks.*

6.2.5.   **Goal 5:                   GROWTH AND MORE JOBS!**

6.2.5.1       **Objective 1:   Harness the eminent opportunities of regional expansion while managing growth within Tabor City.**

**Strategy 1:**     *Encourage private investment within Tabor City by updating development ordinances to encourage desired development and establish quality standards and specifications to protect the environmentally sensitive and historically relevant assets of the Town.*

**Strategy 2:**     *Adopt required review procedures and standards and specifications for development in an updated Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).*

6.2.5.2       **Objective 2:   Ensure quality development within the Town of Tabor City.**

**Strategy 1:**     *Encourage development first in areas where existing infrastructure and convenient proximity to Town services are already provided.* The first wave of the community’s expanding business market will be directed, through application of the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map, to areas where utilities and services are already provided.

**Strategy 2:**     *A new unified development ordinance (UDO) being prepared at the time of adoption of this Plan will include standards to assure quality growth.* The new unified development ordinance (UDO) will address the community’s priorities to attract business and manage growth to assure safety and quality.

6.2.5.3       **Objective 3:   Have a good plan and ordinances so projects achieve the mission of the plan.**

**Strategy 1:**     *Adopt Town Plan 2040 to establish Tabor City as a successful community and a partner in the future growth and re-development of the area.* Establishing a clear vision and the action steps to achieve the goals established by the Town is the first task toward a bright future.

**Strategy 2:**     *The new unified development ordinance (UDO) being prepared at the time of adoption of this Plan will establish standards and specifications for new development and re-development consistent with Town Plan 2040.* The replacement of

antiquated ordinances with relevant modern development standards will establish Tabor City as a leader in proactively seeking to refresh itself into a 21<sup>st</sup> century community.

**6.2.5.4      Objective 4:    Ensure the types of businesses permitted and their respective development standards starting at key locations (i.e., at Town’s major entrances, along major roadways, and at Tabor City’s main intersections): improves visitors’ first impressions; strengthens the Town’s identity as having a modern and healthy economy; and attracts customers from within and outside of Tabor City.**

***Strategy 1:***      *A new unified development ordinance (UDO), including a new Official Zoning Map, being prepared at the time of adoption of this Plan will ensure Town staff, property owners, interested developers, the Planning Board, and the Town Council have a clear path forward in investment and rezoning decisions consistent with the Future Land Use Map and this and other related goals, objectives and strategies.*

***Strategy 2:***      *As a complement to Strategy 1, ensure the types of businesses that are NOT permitted at key locations (i.e., at Town’s major entrances, along major roadways, and at Tabor City’s main intersections), yet are valued as convenient and necessary to sustain our local economy, have options to locate at strategically planned locations to ensure their ability to locate, relocate, potentially expand, and thrive among compatible land uses.*

**6.2.5.5      Objective 5:    Adopt standards and specifications and take actions that attract new businesses within downtown with higher development and code enforcement standards to assure quality development.**

***Strategy 1:***      *Ensure the new UDO encourages investment in downtown.* The UDO should integrate architectural design standards and enhanced enforcement requirements.

***Strategy 2:***      *Improve way-finding throughout the Town to enhance the visitor experience.* Local directional signage will help guide the visitor to the concentration of shopping, services, accommodations, and food/beverage businesses in Tabor City. The Town should consider incorporating the newly designed branding into way-finding signs

**6.2.5.6      Objective 6:    Support existing businesses and encourage additional businesses outside the downtown area that complement and not compete with downtown.**

***Strategy 1:***      *Ensure Town standards and specifications encourage growth and expansion of businesses.* The new UDO will identify different commercial zoning districts with varying permitted uses and development standards.

**6.2.5.7      Objective 7:    Foster growth in local-craft businesses.**

***Strategy 1:***      *The new unified development ordinance (UDO) being prepared at the time of adoption of this Plan includes standards and specifications that respond to challenges associated with expanding and attracting local-craft businesses in downtown.* Restaurants, artisan specialty shops, and entrepreneurs producing products



high in craftsmanship within proximity to each other will generate interest and establish Tabor City as a destination.

Ensure the new UDO acknowledges the fiscal challenges a start-up business would have if required to develop property under the same conventional standards and specifications as a national retailer regarding minimum lot area, building setbacks, minimum parking and other site development standards. Adopt standards and specifications that allow conversions of existing structures into new uses, encourage shared parking, and provides flexibility in building setbacks to respond to unique lot dimensions.

Adopt administrative review procedures sensitive to challenges faced by local craft businesses to improve their successful start-up in the Town.

**6.2.5.8 Objective 8: At the intersection of the North US 701 Bypass and the James B. White Highway South/East Fifth Street, prepare a small area plan designed to foster an economic development opportunity of mixed highway-oriented uses such as restaurants, gas stations, and convenience stores.** The US 701 Bypass could be used to stimulate economic development investment in Tabor City rather than have pass-through motorists skip stopping in Tabor City on their way back and forth to area beaches and campgrounds. New developments could be master-planned to minimize egress connections onto the highway/roads so through-traffic may continue to circulate smoothly, perhaps around a new roundabout. Rather than the typical corporate architecture of national chains, the small area plan could guide the creation of design standards and specifications to require a high degree of quality, landscaping, lighting, and attractive yet effective signage. This area should also be designed to help inform otherwise, pass-through motorists, of the short route into Tabor City's historic downtown, to help increase awareness of downtown's commerce, civic, restaurant historic buildings, and entertainment offerings. (Refer to Figure 4 – Growth Opportunities Map, Area labeled "Catalyst Area #2").

***Strategy 1: Program resources to coordinate with property owners, stakeholders, NCDOT, and Town and County officials to prepare a small-area plan for the North US 701 Bypass and the James B. White Highway S/East Fifth Street.***

## **6.2.6 Goal 6: COMMUNITY EVENTS AND TOURISM!**

**6.2.6.1 Objective 1: Encourage community events co-hosted by local businesses and the Town.**

***Strategy 1: Provide businesses with periodic Town support staff and resources to attract residents and visitors to Tabor City for additional events to increase pride in the community and raise exposure to local businesses.***

**6.2.6.2 Objective 2: Plan for the development of outdoor civic event spaces.**

***Strategy 1: Explore properties the Town could lease for the construction of public plazas for community events.***

**Strategy 2:** *Explore undeveloped/vacant parcels in the downtown area to identify parcels that might be viable for development of small ‘pocket park’ community spaces in downtown Tabor City.* In the downtown area, there are small undeveloped properties that may be best suited to the creation of community space (i.e. sitting areas, gardens, playground areas, educational venues on local history, etc.).

**6.2.6.3** **Objective 3:** **Explore existing town-owned property and property the Town could acquire or lease for community events.**

**Strategy 1:** *Explore existing town-owned properties the Town could repurpose or new property the town could acquire to construct public plazas for community events.* Through the development process, new park plazas and amenities could be coordinated for operation by the Town and/or community partners. Utilizing new property tax revenues can partially fund civic spaces and a community event planning position as development occurs.

**6.2.6.4** **Objective 4:** **Develop a master park plan for the Town of Tabor City.**

**Strategy 1:** *Explore available sites for future Town parks.*

**Strategy 2:** *Explore properties the Town could acquire to construct public parks. Through the development process, new park sites and amenities could be coordinated for operation by the Town.* Utilizing new property tax revenues can partially fund these positions as development occurs.

**6.2.6.5** **Objective 5:** **Identify opportunities to add parks as the number of neighborhoods grow.**

**Strategy 1:** *Explore properties the Town could acquire to construct public parks.*

**Strategy 2:** *Identify opportunities for new development to provide parks in their plans.*

**6.2.6.6** **Objective 6:** **Pedestrian Pathways.**

**Strategy 1:** *Require developers construct sidewalks in new neighborhoods and commercial developments.*

**Strategy 2:** *Prepare, fund, and implement a sidewalk master plan so the town may start budgeting toward building a sidewalk system connecting existing and future neighborhoods to schools and town amenities.*

## **6.2.7** **GOAL 7:** **MORE HOUSING OPTIONS!**

**6.2.7.1** **Objective 1:** **Identify which barriers currently exist in Tabor City that inhibit it from being a more family friendly community.**

**Strategy 1:** *Identify whether the following barriers exist in Tabor City that inadvertently inhibit it from being family oriented:*

- Lack of affordable housing;
- Exclusionary and single-use zoning;
- Insensitive urban design;
- Property tax too high;
- Lack of services;
- Lack of quality education; and
- Crime.

**6.2.7.2            Objective 2:    Continue to support housing at affordable prices.**

***Strategy 1:    Continue to offer practices within the Town’s ability to foster development of housing at affordable prices.***

**6.2.7.3            Objective 3:    Ensure the new UDO and Official Zoning Map advance interests of families in the approval process of siting child-care facilities.**

***Strategy 1:    Review the zoning map to ascertain if zoning districts where child-care facilities are allowed are convenient to neighborhoods and employers.***

***Strategy 2:    Ensure the new UDO’s approval process for child-care facilities balances convenience to families while ensuring compatibility to surrounding land uses.***

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## 7. FUTURE LAND USE MAP

One of the fundamental planning tools used to achieve the stated goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan in Tabor City is the design, application, and implementation of a Future Land Use Map (FLUM). FLUM implementation is accomplished primarily through the application of zoning, although a variety of land use ordinances are available for various aspects of implementation. A key feature of land use planning in Tabor City is the requirement for consistency between the FLUM and the application of zoning.

The FLUM defines the location of coordinated and appropriate land use classes and is designed to accommodate a particular combination of land uses that would achieve a desired pattern of development. It serves as the primary tool for staff, the Planning Board, and elected officials during review of re-zonings to ascertain the appropriateness of a development proposal and provides the development community with clear guidance to the locations where development activity may and may not be appropriate.

The ***Future Land Use Map***, appearing in Figures 1, 2 and 3, depicts a pattern of development to accommodate a combination of residential, non-residential and mixed-use growth and redevelopment. ***Zoning changes are required by North Carolina statute to be made based upon both reasonableness and consistency with this plan.***

There are eight (8) basic land use categories/classification system(s) meeting the specific development needs of Tabor City:

- **Rural** – Land in rural areas of the community appropriate for low intensity/low density residential development that is not dependent on urban services (i.e. water/sewer). The category further identifies lands used for agricultural production, agriculturally based businesses and related activities needing protection from high intensity development activity. As indicated, development activity is typically low intensity in nature in order to encourage preservation of agricultural lands, environmentally sensitive areas, and open space while discouraging large lot residential subdivision type developments.
- **Neighborhood** – Identifies areas within a community where existing residential development has/is occurring at moderate to medium densities and where urban services (i.e. water/sewer) may be available. Residential development activities typically include single-family and duplex (i.e. two-family) homes and their appropriate accessory land uses. Residential neighborhoods are the dominant land use in this category, but development can include open space preservation, parks and recreation activities, and limited institutional land uses.
- **Transitional Neighborhood** – Land use category typically located in and around the Town Center and Civic Land Use Categories, providing for the completion of residential neighborhoods surrounding the Main Street/downtown districts and contiguous Civic Districts. Land located in this category is anticipated for development at urban densities and/or intensities where urban services (i.e. water/sewer) is available. Non-residential land uses are not appropriate for these areas.

The intent of the category is to recognize the need for in-fill development and the gradual transformation of existing development to high quality mixed density residential development supporting the central core of Tabor City. Higher density residential development allows a greater

number of households to walk or bike, thus supporting businesses while reducing the parking demand and providing environmental and health benefits. A range of housing types (i.e. duplex, multi-family, etc.) is encouraged. Streets within the Transitional Neighborhood land use category shall be interconnected and shall typically include sidewalks and bicycle lanes providing connections to adjacent commercial and civic land uses as well as other mixed-use districts. Typically, pedestrian access shall extend into surrounding Neighborhood land use categories to help foster connectivity where appropriate. A range of housing types is encouraged. Criteria for the mix of building types establishes compatibility.

- **Downtown** – The Downtown land use category provides for the development, revitalization, reuse, and infill development of the Town’s core downtown area. A broad array of non-residential and residential land uses is typically permitted enabling the needs of residents and visitors to be met. Land located in this category is anticipated for development at urban densities and/or intensities where urban services (i.e. water/sewer) is available.

Desired development pattern(s) associated with this category seeks to integrate shops, restaurants, services, workplaces, civic, educational, and higher density housing in a compact, pedestrian-oriented environment. The Downtown land use category is intended serve as defining the ‘hub’ of surrounding neighborhoods and of the broader community.

- **Civic** – Land use category providing location(s) for educational, medical, governmental, religious, and other institutional uses. Urban services (i.e. water/sewer) are typically available and pedestrian access (i.e. sidewalks, bicycle lanes, etc.) are integral parts of development projects.
- **Mixed Use** – The ‘Mixed Use’ land use category is established to provide opportunities for both compatible and sustainable re-development of both residential and non-residential land uses where underutilized commercial properties already exist as well as infill sites where site specific land planning of new development creates opportunities for businesses and various housing designs sharing community amenities and enhancements. Land located in this category is anticipated for development at urban densities and/or intensities where urban services (i.e. water/sewer) is available. Permitted non-residential land uses are designed to augment residential land uses, not detract from them. As a result manufacturing or traffic intensive commercial operation are prohibited.

As with the Transitional Neighborhood land use category, a range of housing types (i.e. duplex, multi-family, etc.) is encouraged. Streets shall be interconnected and shall typically include sidewalks and bicycle lanes providing connections to adjacent commercial and civic land uses as well as other mixed-use and transitional neighborhood districts.

- **Commercial** - Providing opportunities for compatible, resilient, and sustainable non-residential development with a specific focus on retail and other similar commercial land uses. The category is typically located along major road intersections, or near major transportation routes, where urban services (i.e. water/sewer) are available or there is sufficient land area supporting on-site wastewater treatment.
- **Employment/Manufacturing** - Land in areas specifically targeted for economic development activity consisting of employment centers, industrial/manufacturing land uses, distribution centers, office, service/retail uses, and flex space (typically one-story buildings designed,

constructed, and marketed as suitable for use as offices but able to accommodate other uses such as a warehouse, showroom, manufacturing assembly, or similar operations.) Such areas are located adjacent to interstate/major highways where urban services (i.e. water/sewer) are available or there is sufficient land area supporting on-site wastewater treatment.

Typically, this land use category is reserved for uses requiring very large buildings and/or large parking and loading facilities for support. Small scale manufacturing and storage that is compatible with less intensive land uses are typically located within the Commercial or Mixed-Use land use categories.

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Figure 1 *Future Land Use Map – Extraterritorial Jurisdiction*

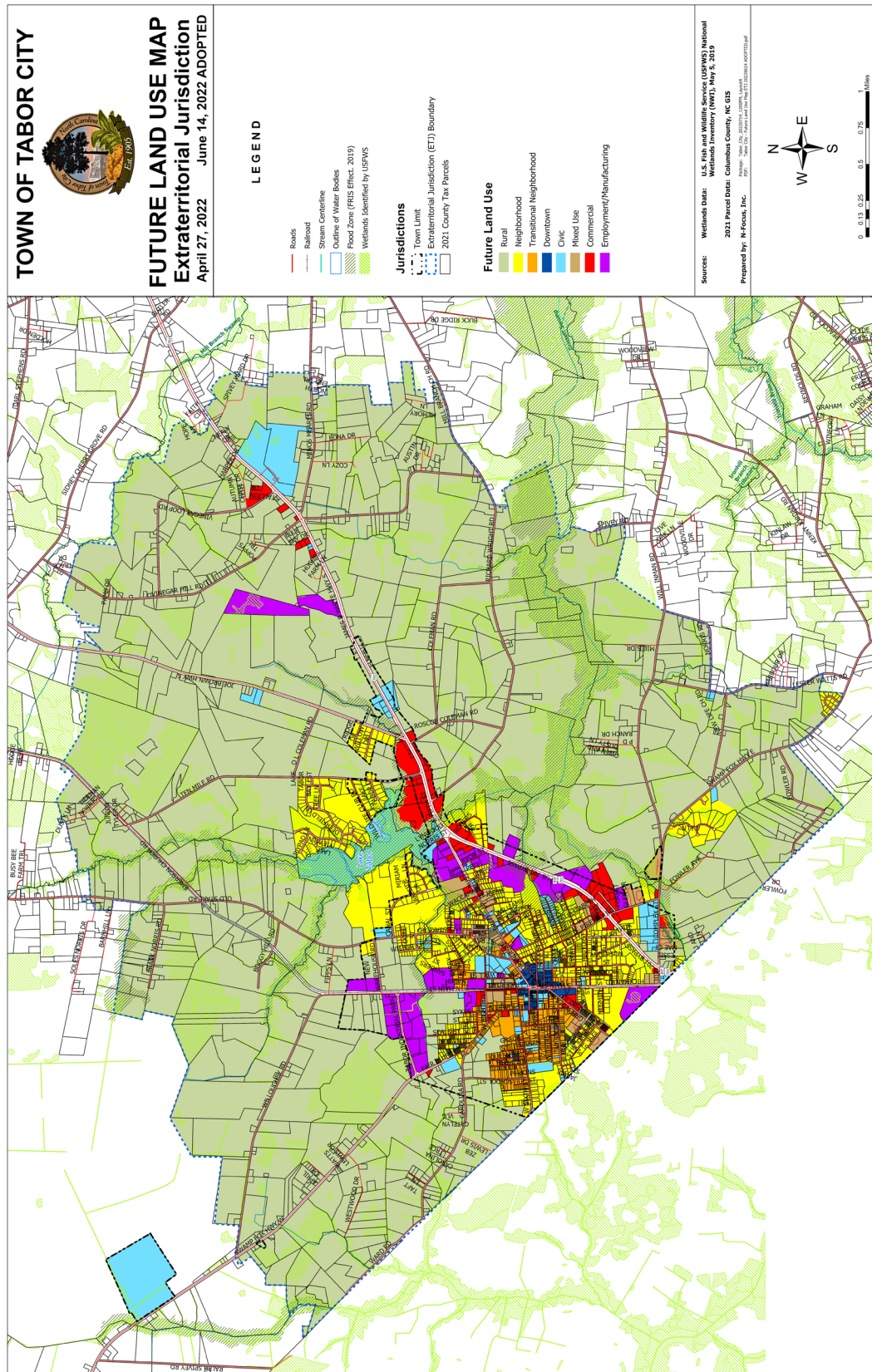
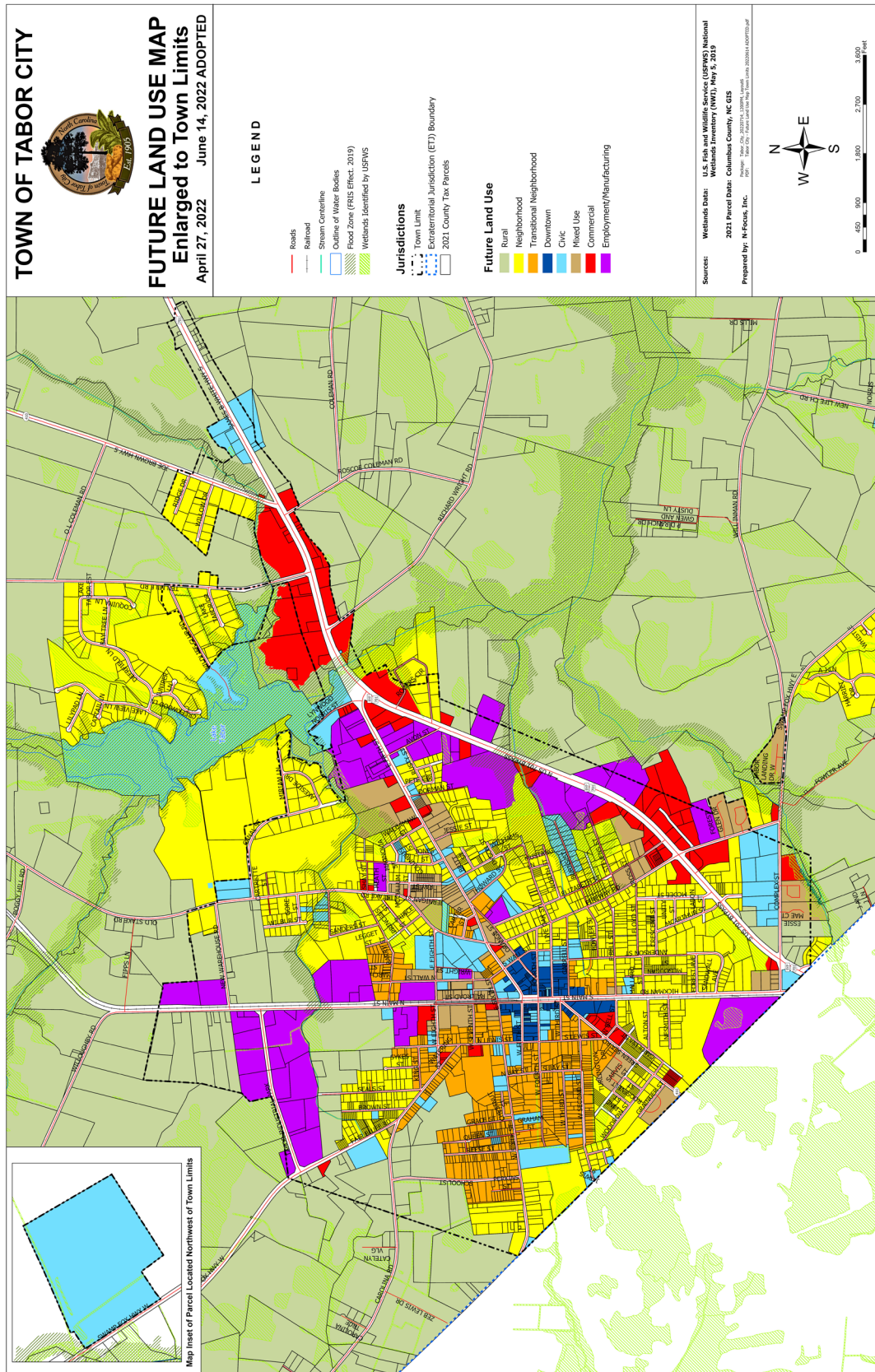




Figure 2 *Future Land Use Map – Enlarged to Town Limits*





[illegible]

Figure 4 *Growth Opportunities Map*

