

Pasquotank County

Land Use Plan

Adopted: 08/21/2023



Acknowledgments

Board of Commissioners

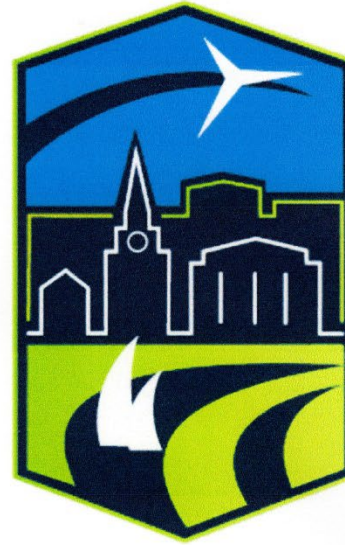
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- ◆ Cecil Perry
- ◆ Barry Overman
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- ◆ Sparty Hammett, County Manager
- ◆ John Shannon, Assistant County Manager
- ◆ R. Michael Cox, County Attorney
- ◆ Shelley Cox, Planning & Inspections Director
- ◆ Adrienne Cole, Zoning Enforcement Officer
- ◆ Julie Stamper, GIS Administrator



Plan facilitated by:



STEWART

Plan adopted by the County:

August 21, 2023

Plan certified by NC Coastal
Resources Commission:

<Date to be inserted>



Community Goals

- 1 Enhance and restore natural areas that protect against natural and coastal hazards.
- 2 Maintain and enhance the water quality of coastal and inland waters and associated natural areas.
- 3 Direct development away from sensitive environmental areas and future flood prone areas, and toward areas with sustainable infrastructure.
- 4 Preserve the quiet, rural, agricultural character and respect farming and other rural land uses.
- 5 Focus urban and suburban growth toward Elizabeth City and key locations at future I-87 interchanges.
- 6 Remove barriers to affordability, choice, and rehabilitation for workforce housing and attainable housing for residents.
- 7 Begin planning for and adapting to climate change, including avoiding and becoming more resilient to disruptions from natural hazards.
- 8 Promote affordable health care and housing development that assures that senior residents can remain in Pasquotank County for their entire life.
- 9 Provide adequate recreational opportunities for residents and visitors, including access to coastal waters with facilities that encourage ecotourism.
- 10 Promote economic development that creates broad local wealth and bolsters existing businesses or expands opportunities for living wage jobs.
- 11 Respect, embrace, and encourage a diversity of community participation.
- 12 Pursue policies and investments that maintain adequate transportation networks for agriculture and industry, and that support the County's economy.
- 13 Pursue infrastructure improvements to meet the needs of the future population.
- 14 Create opportunities for youth.
- 15 Advocate for preservation of significant, study-listed, historic properties.
- 16 Promote safe connections and opportunities for non-motorized transportation.
- 17 Promote cultural and secondary and higher educational facilities and opportunities that encourage young people to remain in Pasquotank County.

GOALS FOR: LAND USE COMPATIBILITY (LUC)

Management Goal:

Ensure that development and use of resources or preservation of land balance protection of natural resources and fragile areas with economic development, and avoids risks to public health, safety, and welfare.

Planning Objectives:

The plan shall include policies that characterize future land use development patterns and establish mitigation concepts to minimize conflicts.

GOALS FOR: INFRASTRUCTURE CARRYING CAPACITY (ICC)

Management Goal:

Ensure that public infrastructure systems are sized, located, and managed so the quality and productivity of areas of environmental concern (AECs) and other fragile areas are protected or restored.

Planning Objectives:

The plan shall include policies that establish service criteria and ensure improvements minimize impacts to AECs and other fragile areas.

GOALS FOR: PUBLIC ACCESS (PA)

Management Goal:

Maximize access to the beaches and the public trust waters of the coastal region.

Planning Objectives:

The plan shall include policies that address access needs and opportunities, with strategies to develop public access and provisions for all segments of the community, including persons with disabilities. Oceanfront communities shall establish access policies for beach areas targeted for nourishment.

GOALS FOR: WATER QUALITY (WQ)

Management Goal:

Maintain, protect, and where possible enhance water quality in coastal wetlands, oceans, and estuaries.

Planning Objectives:

The plan shall include policies that establish strategies and practices to prevent or control non-point source pollution and maintain or improve water quality.

47 Specific Plan Recommendations

Plan Recommendation	Applicable CAMA Land Use Management Topic					CAMA Policy (P), CAMA Implementation (I), or strictly of Local concern (L)	Time Frame (Fiscal Year)
	LUC	PA	ICC	NHA	WQ		
1: Protect and improve water quality in the creeks, wetlands, and waterways in and adjacent to the County.					X	P	Ongoing
2: Monitor and reduce non-point source pollution, especially stormwater runoff and septic tank effluent.			X		X	I	Ongoing
3: Expand ditch and stormwater drainage maintenance efforts. This may involve formalization a flood control and/or dike maintenance program for the northern part of the County and for any areas where public infrastructure is managed for flood protection.				X		I	Ongoing
4: Work with local researchers to monitor water quality in the creeks, the Pasquotank River, and the Little River.				X		I	Ongoing
5: Consider expanding impervious surface restrictions, monitoring, and regulation to reduce stormwater runoff and mitigate flash flooding.				X		I	2025/26
6: Identify areas for wetland or natural habitat restoration, partnering with other agencies, like NC Coastal Federation.						L	
7: Update relevant ordinances to include standards on shoreline stabilization. Where shoreline armoring is permitted, encourage landowners to utilize living shorelines where appropriate.	X			X		I	2024/25
8: Educate the public about the ecological and storm protection benefits of coastal wetlands, marshes, and shoreline buffers.				X		P	Ongoing
9: Consider the creation and adoption of an Estuarine Shoreline Management Plan.						L	
10: No new development or filling should be allowed within coastal wetlands or non-coastal wetlands. If this policy presents a threat to health, safety, or welfare of the community, the County may make an exception. The following activities should be allowed in non-coastal wetlands: hiking, walking, bird watching, stormwater interventions and educational/research activities. Impacts from the construction and maintenance of public boardwalks and pathways are allowable.	X				X	P	Ongoing
11: Continue to work with the state, neighboring counties, regional organizations, and Elizabeth City in addressing abandoned and derelict vessels.					X	P	Ongoing
12: Track shoreline and habitat change in GIS to minimize loss and inform potential habitat protection, community education, and possible restoration interventions. Digitizing previous aerial imagery would also provide a better understanding of long term trends. If possible, consider partnering with a college or university to establish a more robust monitoring program.				X		I	2024/25
13: Implement recommendations and steps from the North Carolina Marine Debris Action Plan. Continue addressing and removing abandoned and derelict vessels in a timely fashion.						I	2023/24

Plan Recommendation	Applicable CAMA Land Use Management Topic					CAMA Policy (P), CAMA Implementation (I), or strictly of Local concern (L)	Time Frame (Fiscal Year)
	LUC	PA	ICC	NHA	WQ		
14: Implement enhanced construction standards for docks and bulkheads so that they have less chance of becoming marine debris after major storms.					X	I	2024/25
15: Reduce vulnerability by utilizing guidance from the Future Land Use Map to focus growth and public infrastructure investments away from flood-prone areas and toward higher ground. This may involve explicit consideration of areas likely to become higher flood risk or inundated by rising seas. Keep zoning densities lower in vulnerable or high risk areas, such as current and future regulatory floodplains, and using best available sea level rise projections as guidance. Naturally, some water-dependent uses may require special exception, especially uses of high public value or community significance.			X	X		P, I	Ongoing
16: Consider removing zoning districts that are incompatible with existing agricultural character.			X			I	2024/25
17: Direct vulnerable land uses, including hospitals, age-restricted housing, group homes, and schools away from vulnerable or high risk areas and/or provide support to ensure they can sustain and recover more quickly from storms.	X					P	Ongoing
18: Relocate and place sensitive community infrastructure (critical public services and facilities, etc.) outside of vulnerable areas.	X		X	X		P	Ongoing
19: Manage retreat and contraction of public infrastructure and services away from high vulnerability areas.	X			X		P	Ongoing
20: Use current, best available sea level rise projections and environmental vulnerability knowledge when making public infrastructure investment decisions. Direct public and private investment and capital improvement projects away from vulnerable areas and ensure any public investment in these areas is capable of surviving anticipated future conditions.				X		P	Ongoing
21: Mitigate wind-driven, rainfall, and storm surge flooding through structural improvements that prepare infrastructure for long-term resistance to environmental threats. This may involve more stringent structure elevation requirements, active stormwater management, or ground floor floodproofing.				X		I	2025/26
22: Identify vulnerable public infrastructure and elevate/armor against rising seas if it cannot be relocated to a safer area.	X					P	
23: Increase storm-safe construction standards, utilizing the most up-to-date code language by industry leaders, such as the Florida Building Code or the IBHS FORTIFIED Home criteria.				X		I	2025/26

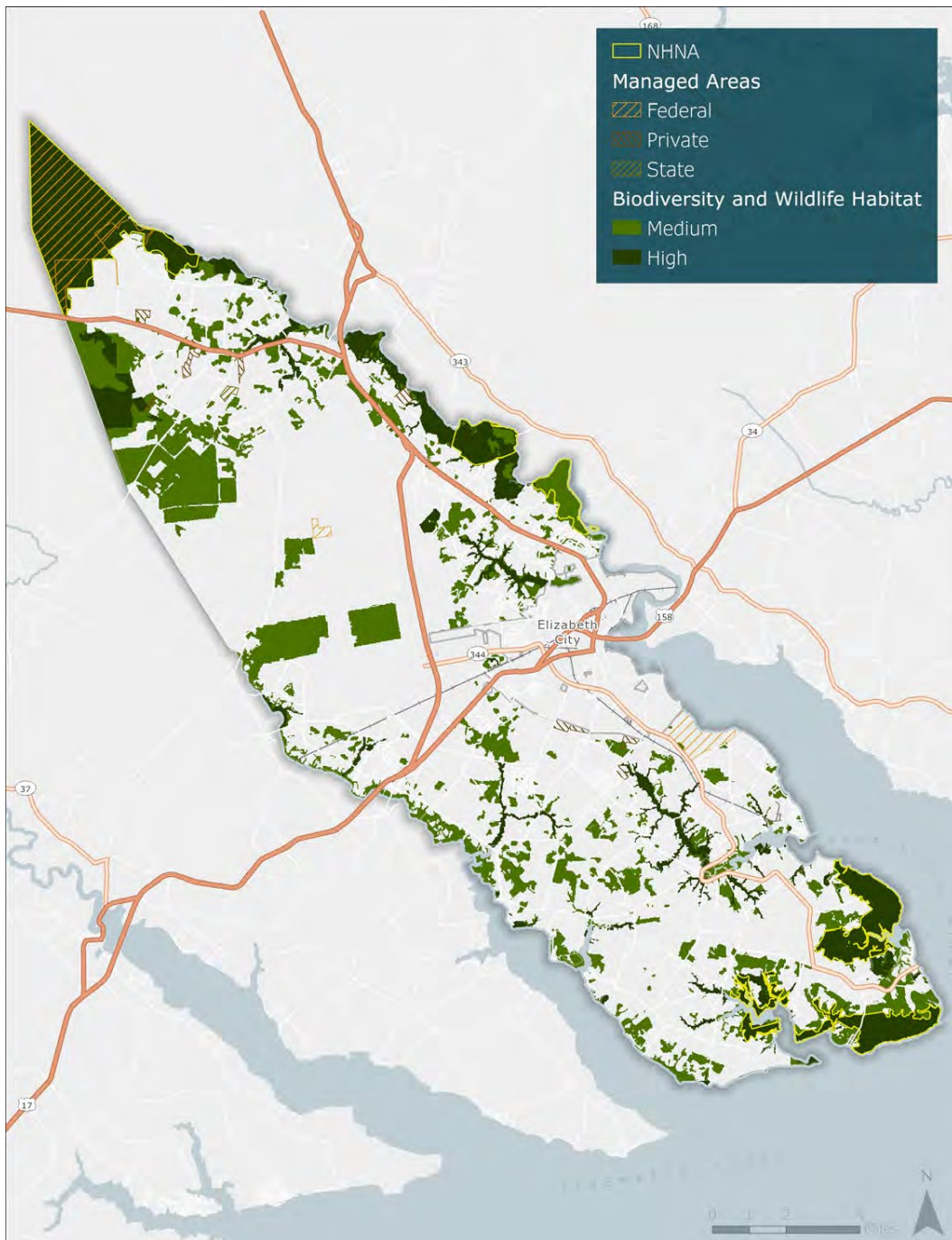
Plan Recommendations (Cont'd.)

Plan Recommendation	Applicable CAMA Land Use Management Topic				CAMA Policy (P), CAMA Implementation (I), or strictly of Local concern (L)	Time Frame (Fiscal Year)
	LUC	PA	ICC	NHA		
24: Review and potentially increase the flood-proofing and freeboard requirement in 100- and 500-year floodplain (aka 1% annual chance and 0.2% annual chance, respectively). Consideration should be given to the expected lifespan of the structure and the sea level rise and flood risk expected to occur during that time period.				X	I	2024/25
25: Continue to seek funding from outside sources for structure elevations.				X	I	Ongoing
26: Assess stormwater facilities' resiliency to coastal and climate hazards and identify needed upgrades. If other partners are not meeting the County's desired level of service, explore potential ways to address that discrepancy, possibly through existing or new stormwater utility operations.			X		P	Ongoing
27: Increase public trust water and natural resources access, including ADA access, and amenities while balancing the need for natural resource preservation. This might include riparian or shoreline buffers, non-motorized craft launch areas, boat ramps, public parks with shoreline, boardwalks, piers, public slips, docking facilities, or additional public marina facilities, or any number of facilities. A waterfront access plan could also be a part of this.		X			P	Ongoing
28: Continue to coordinate with North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the Albemarle Planning Organization on planning for long range transportation projects and contribute funding as it becomes available.					L	
29: Pursue grant funding for transportation projects to reduce flooding on roadways.			X		P	Ongoing
30: Support and extend the East Coast greenway and other non-motorized state trail networks by partnering with other agencies.					L	
31: Promote and protect Pasquotank County's historic resources by considering partnering with Elizabeth City, the state, and/or other agencies to provide educational programs.					L	
32: Continue to work towards providing parks, recreation, trails, and open spaces at the adopted level of service in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.					L	
33: Continue to implement the recommendations and actions in other adopted plans, to the extent that they are still relevant.					L	
34: Pursue land acquisition in high hazard areas and use those areas for buffers or hazard mitigation.				X	P	Ongoing
35: Consider providing options for homeowners in the unincorporated county to have streetlights, particularly at intersections.					L	

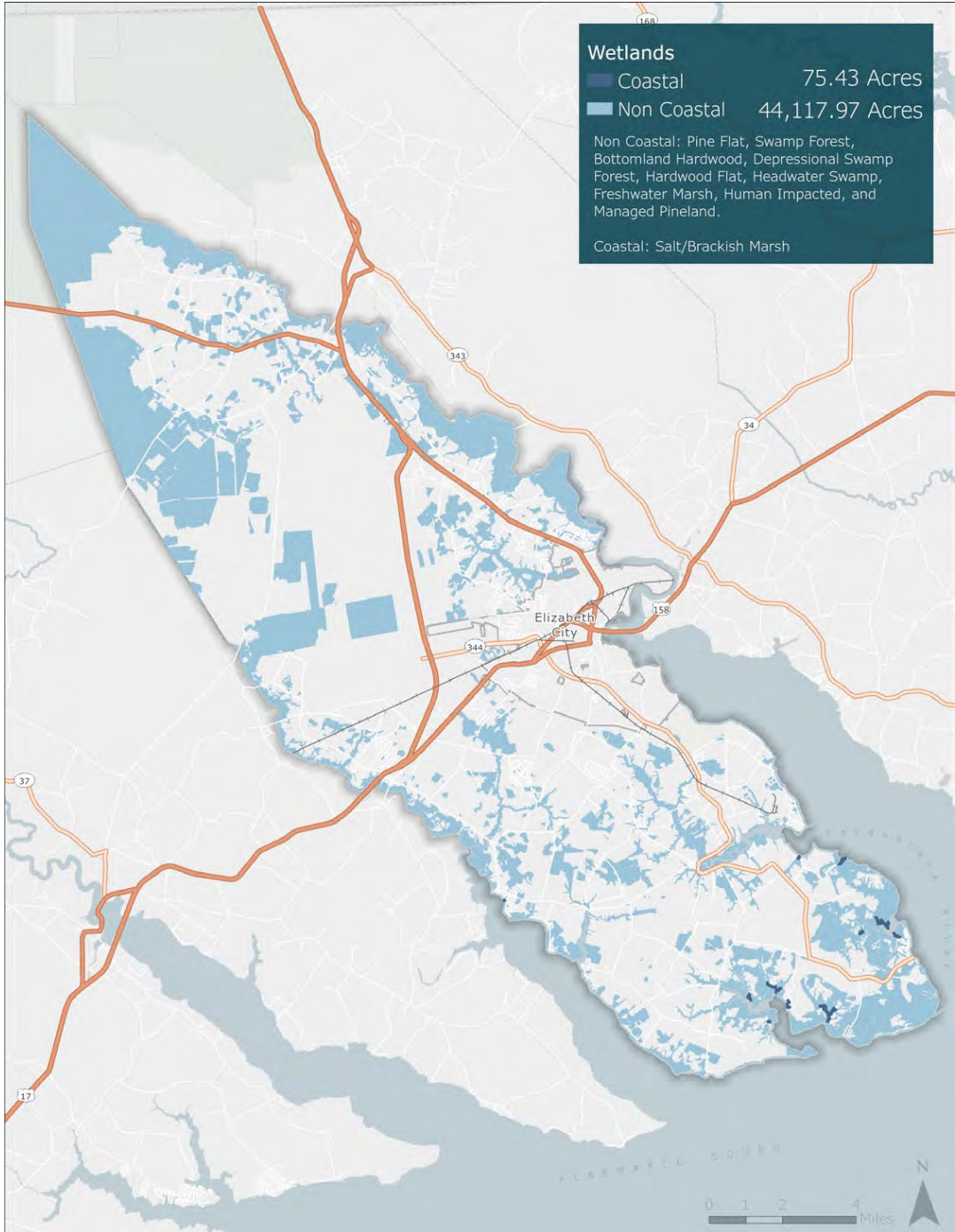
Plan Recommendation	Applicable CAMA Land Use Management Topic				CAMA Policy (P), CAMA Implementation (I), or strictly of Local concern (L)	Time Frame (Fiscal Year)
	LUC	PA	ICC	NHA		
36: Establish safe cycling connections or multi-use trails between destinations. These facilities should be separated from traffic if vehicular speeds pose a hazard to safety or users.					L	
37: Evaluate the feasibility and necessity of and (if warranted) plan for the Northern Connector roadway to connect old Hwy 17 / Hwy 158 and Hwy 17 Bypass / future I-87.					L	
38: Conduct additional coastal resiliency planning to identify areas particularly vulnerable to the changing climate and more frequent, intense storm events and then generate a list of projects to mitigate those vulnerabilities.				X	I	2024/25
39: Review the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, and other County land use and development regulations to ensure that residential densities and building intensities are consistent with this plan's goals and policies. Prepare revisions and updates as determined appropriate.	X				I	2023/24
40: Update flood modeling in under-examined parts of the county or in areas where flood risk is generally known to be more severe than new flood maps indicate. This may result in more stringent local flood damage prevention regulations, similar to those undertaken by communities in Dare County.				X	P	2026/7
41: Use the Future Land Use Map when making land use and development permitting decisions.	X				I	Ongoing
42: Achieve full participation in the FEMA FIRM Community Rating System. This will help residents receive the lowest possible rates for flood insurance. See https://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/community-rating-system .					L	
43: Pursue funding opportunities to develop a County-wide Master Drainage Plan.					L	2024/25
44: Update the County's stormwater model for the Knobbs Creek Watershed.				X	I	2023/24
45: Continue to fund stormwater projects through the Pasquotank County Drainage Committee.					L	Ongoing
46: Update the Pasquotank County Stormwater Design Manual.					L	2023/24
47: Protect the current operational ability and future expansion potential of the airport and associated support areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses, especially residential uses.					L	

Population Projections to 2055

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	2055
Projected Permanent Population	40,611	41,256	41,556	41,675	41,720	41,740	41,746	41,752
Estimated Peak Seasonal Visitors	8,517	8,664	8,727	8,752	8,761	8,765	8,767	8,767
Estimated Total Seasonal Population	49,128	49,920	50,283	50,427	50,481	50,505	50,513	50,520



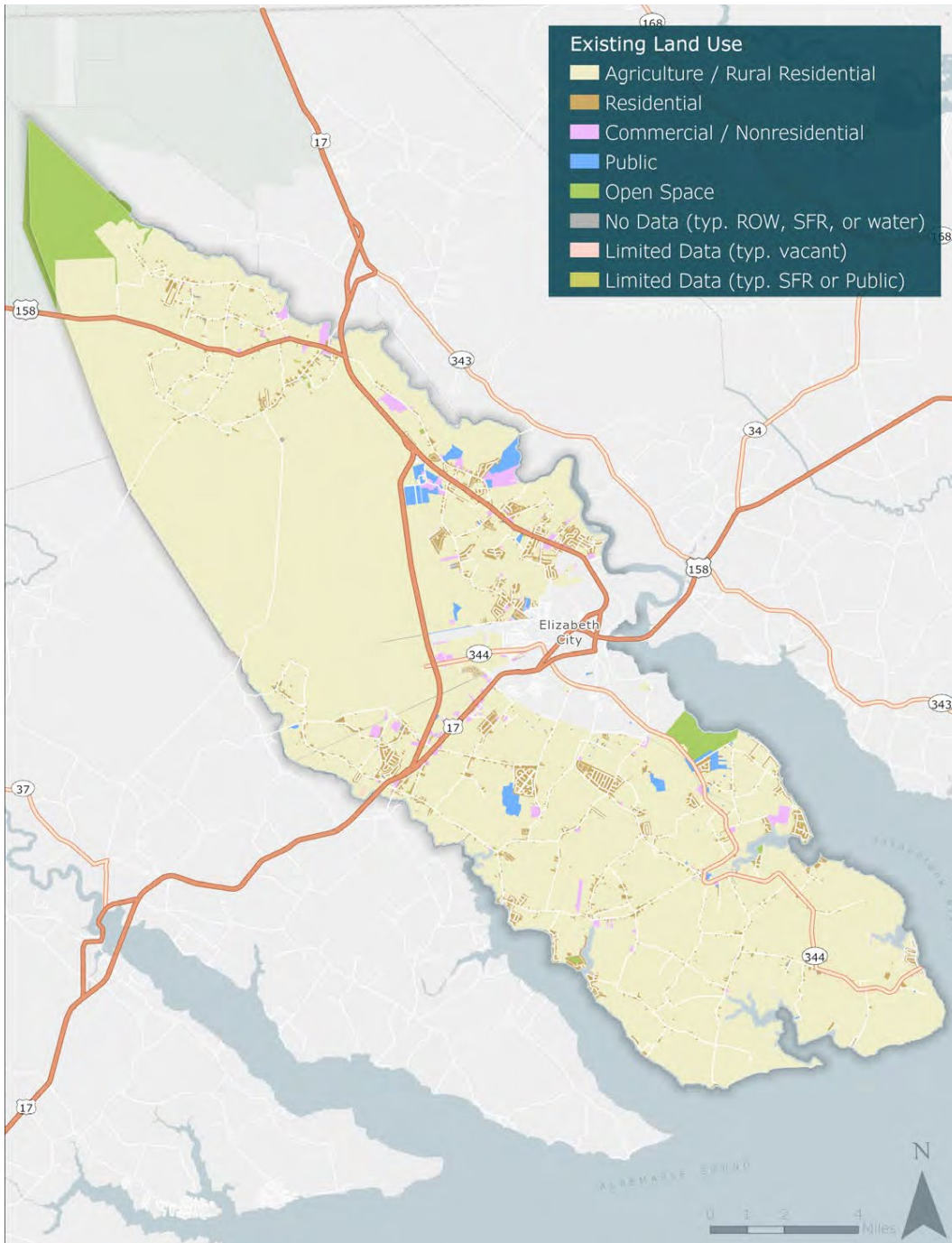
Pasquotank County
Land Use Plan |
Page 51
County-wide Map
of Environmentally
Fragile Areas



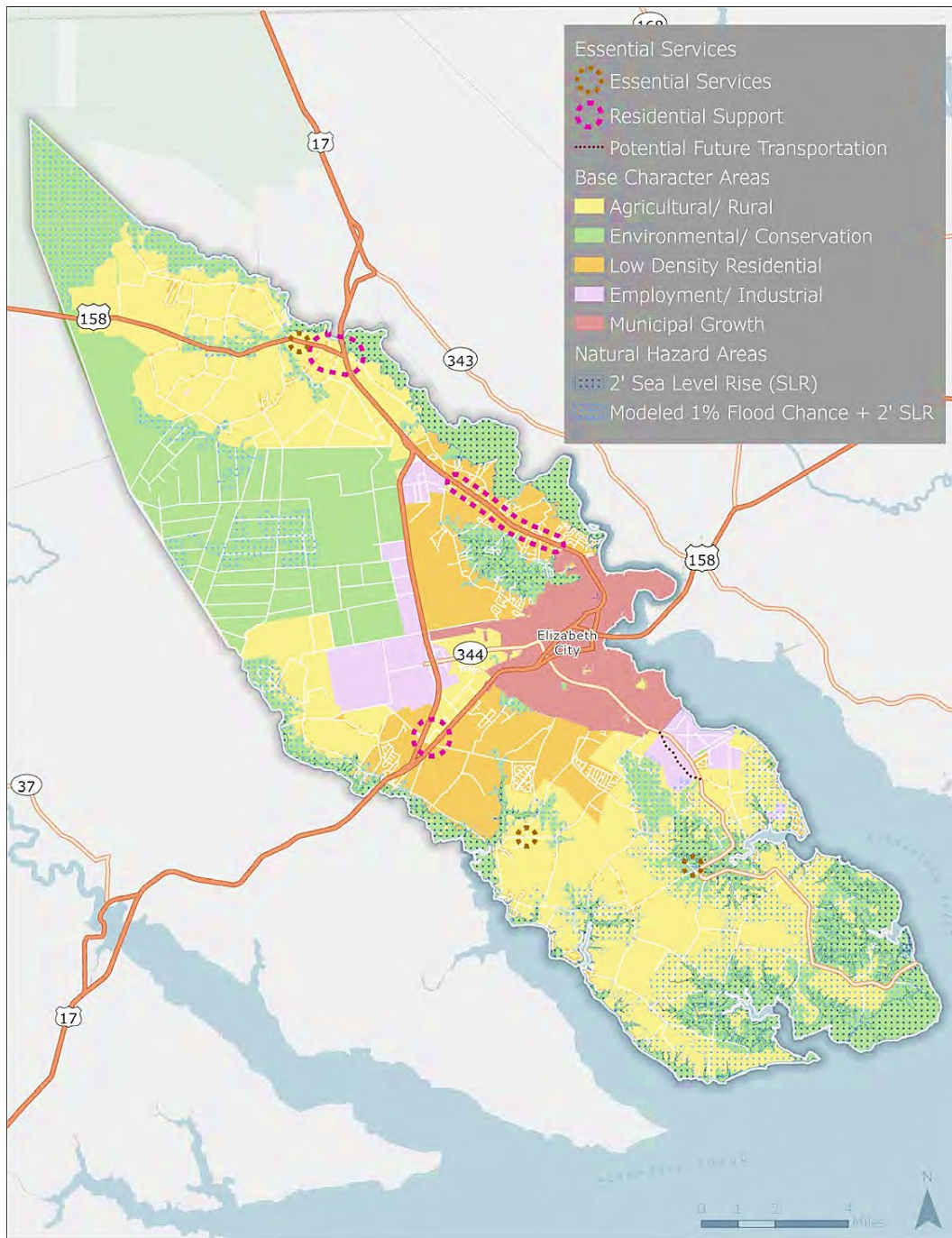
69 sq. mi. of the County is wetlands.

Pasquotank County Land Use Plan | Page 53 Wetlands Map

Total County Area= 289.33 sq.mi. (62.45 sq. mi. (21.58%) is water) (Source:US Census Bureau)



Existing Land Use Pasquotank County Land Use Plan Page 69



Future Land
 Use Map
Pasquotank
County Land
Use Plan
 Page 88

Environmentally Fragile Areas

Detail of

Symonds Creek Area from County-wide map.



Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat

- Medium
- High

North Carolina Water Quality Classifications

Saltwater Primary Classification

Best usage for water classification

SC All tidal salt waters protected for aquatic life propagation, survival, and maintenance of biological integrity (including fishing, fish (not to include shellfish for market purposes), and Primary Nursery Areas); wildlife; and secondary contact recreation. Secondary contact recreation means wading, boating, other uses not involving human body contact with water, and activities involving human body contact with water where such activities take place on an infrequent, unorganized, or incidental basis.

Sw Supplemental classification intended to recognize those waters that have natural characteristics due to topography, such as low velocity, dissolved oxygen, or pH, that are different from streams draining steeper topography.

C Waters protected for uses such as aquatic life propagation, survival and maintenance of biological integrity (including fishing and fish), wildlife, secondary contact recreation, and agriculture. Secondary contact recreation means wading, boating, other uses not involving human body contact with water, and activities involving human body contact with water where such activities take place on an infrequent, unorganized, or incidental basis. (Pasquotank County Land Use Plan, Page 61)





Area of 1% Flood
Chance for Symonds
Creek Watershed
From Natural Hazard
Areas Map
Land Use Plan | Page 97

Symonds Creek Watershed



Upstream Aerial View of Symonds Creek

(Nov. 2021 AAAR Photo)



Downstream Aerial View of Symonds Creek

(Aug. 2021 AAAR Photo)



Symonds Creek at the Waters at Sunset Pointe Boat Ramp

(Aug. 2021 AAAR Photo)



Symonds Creek at Waters at Sunset Pointe Boat Ramp after storm of 9/30/2010



Flooding of roads and fields from storm of 9/30/2010



Symonds Creek Algal Bloom 7/9/2023



Symonds Creek Algal Bloom 7/9/2023



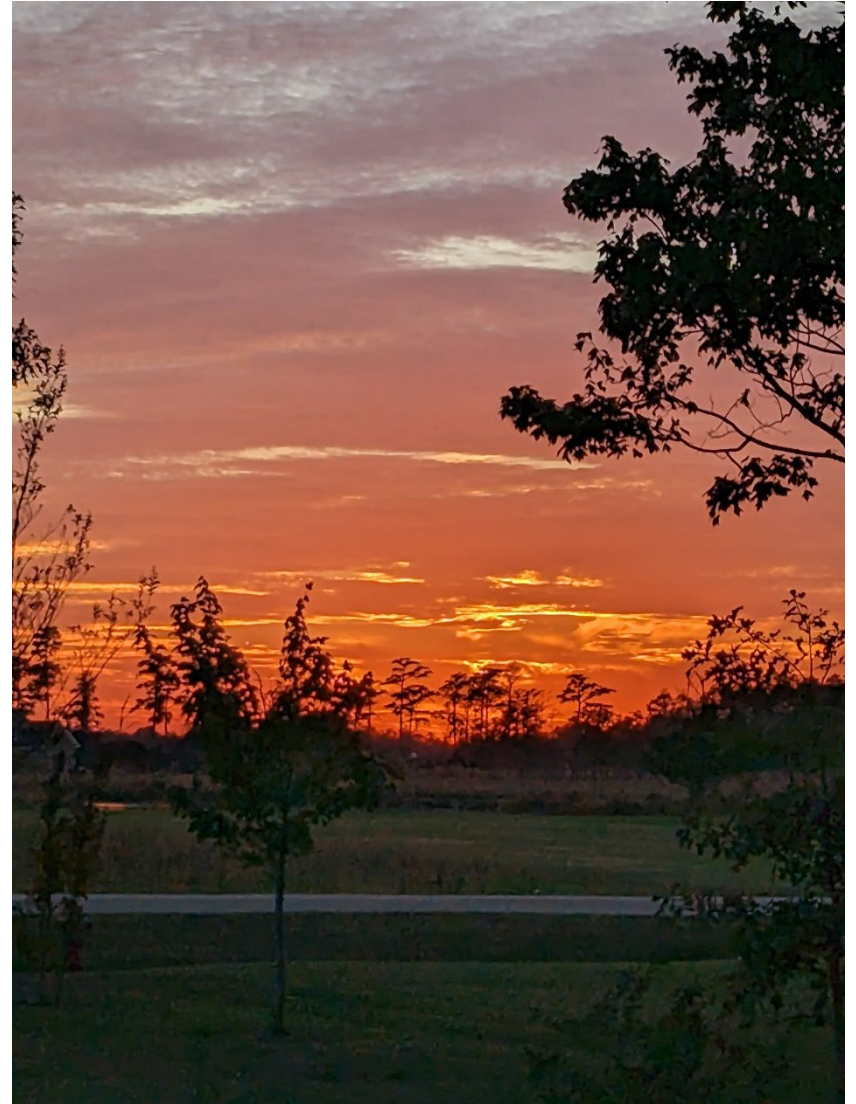
Algae on the Rocks 7/28/2023



Examples of Stormwater Management or Lack Thereof (2023)



Why we love where we live.



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November 3, 2023

Symonds Creek Watershed Interpreted from 1:24000 USGS Quadrangle Sheets Nixonton 2022 & Weeksville 2022

