



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Town of Wake Forest  
Jennifer Currin, AICP, CZO, Assistant Planning Director  
Advisory Panel

**From:** Houseal Lavigne Associates  
Nik Davis, AICP, Principal  
Sean Tapia AICP, Planner II

**Date:** February 10, 2021

**Re:** Wake Forest Community Plan Update and Future Land Use Map:  
Existing Conditions Memo

This memorandum serves as a basis for discussion of existing conditions and their influence on the Wake Forest Community Plan Update and Future Land Use Map process with Town staff and the Advisory Panel. The memo is a preliminary step in the planning process and does not contain plan recommendations. Existing conditions, issues, and opportunities identified will serve as a foundation to guide the development of the Community Plan Update and Future Land Use Map.

### What is an Existing Conditions Memo?

The Existing Conditions Memo answers the question “Where is Wake Forest today?” It is a summary of key data points prior to development of the new Community Plan Update and Future Land Use Map. It is an interim deliverable rather than an adopted document. The Memo is directed toward Town staff and the Advisory Panel but should also be made available to elected and appointed officials, residents, and stakeholders of the Town. It is the result of professional research and analysis, field reconnaissance, community outreach, past experiences working in the surrounding region, and a review of data provided by the Town and its partners.

The Existing Conditions Memo includes a summary of major themes of community outreach, which was conducted as part of the initial phase of the planning process. The Memo also presents a demographic snapshot, providing a picture of influencing factors and trends that will inform the Plan. It examines the Town’s recent plans, acknowledging that these contain relevant recommendations and policies that may be carried forward. Lastly, it summarizes existing land use conditions using a map book that is easy to read and reference.

As an overview, the Existing Conditions Memo is focused on relevant information vital to development of the Wake Forest Community Plan Update and Future Land Use Map. It presents a baseline of existing conditions to be built upon and addressed in the Plan and will inform the development of goals, key policies, and preliminary land use recommendations in upcoming stages of the planning process.

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# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

As part of the initial phase of the planning process, community outreach was conducted to gain input from residents, the local businesses, the development community, Town staff, and key stakeholders on issues, challenges, and opportunities facing the Town. Public engagement was conducted in a variety of methods, including an online questionnaire; map.social (an online mapping tool); a meeting with the Community Plan Advisory Panel; and a series of interviews with key stakeholders, Town department heads, and Board of Commissioners. The following is a summary of the major themes developed from the outreach process.

## Housing

Wake Forest is considered a bedroom community by many due to a significant portion of its land area allocated to residential uses. There is a need for increased housing diversity and affordable options, which community members believe can be addressed in higher density residential development. While townhome and multifamily development is occurring within the Town, they were identified to be unaffordable, in part due to the high cost of land, and the lack of housing under \$300,000 was emphasized. To support higher-density development, it was noted the Town's zoning districts would require updating. High demand for higher-density residential within walkable distance to Downtown was also identified. At the same time, numerous community members expressed concern over overbuilding and losing the original charm of the Town, including the loss of its tree canopy. There was popular sentiment to slow development and reduce the number of new apartments.

Community members expressed the need for increased housing options with ground floor bedroom configurations for people with disabilities and the aging population. In disinvested residential neighborhoods, there was discussion of providing incentives to help bring buildings up to code for them to be leased out. While property improvements are desired, the importance of maintaining affordability and allowing existing lower-income residents to remain in their neighborhoods was underscored.

## Economic Development

Public feedback presented the need for Wake Forest to proactively create an economic development plan to define infrastructure needs, future land use, and the direction of Downtown. Participants discussed that the Town needs to define what kind of community it wants to be economically (e.g. a medical or IT community), then focus on attracting those types of businesses. Considered a 'bedroom community,' the Town was noted as lacking local employment opportunities, and as a result, many residents commute to other communities for work. Identifying future growth areas for new industrial, office, and business park development was a key discussion point to create local jobs opportunities. It was noted that the availability of land for such development is increasingly becoming limited due to rapid residential growth.

Community members shared there is a desire to support local businesses and avoid big box stores as much as possible. There was also a desire for less chain establishments and auto shops, more restaurants, and additional businesses that would bring more vibrancy and traffic to Downtown. Capital Boulevard was frequently mentioned as a potential growth corridor; however, as North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has yet to release its plans for access road reconfigurations as it changes to a limited access freeway, developers are reluctant to move forward with developing properties. Once Capital Boulevard opens for development, it was noted that Wake Forest will become more accessible, resulting in rapid growth. The need for the Town be prepared for this and know where to divert growth to was stressed.

## Transportation & Infrastructure

Enhancing Wake Forest's transportation system was highlighted as key in terms of providing high connectivity and getting people from place to place safely and efficiently. Community members discussed how traffic is inundating the Town, though it has worked to slow recent growth in a way that has prompted more high-quality development. Several major roadways were identified as congested, which is projected to only worsen with further growth. Walkability near Downtown was mentioned as critical to connect nearby residents, especially with higher-density residential development. It was

North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has announced it will be pursuing acquisitions of portions of the S-Line that runs along Downtown and has been granted Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) grant funding to help Triangle area communities create plans for development along the corridor. Community members discussed that this will have an effect on how entry and connectivity into Downtown can be improved. It was also mentioned that the railroad may become a commuter line, which would dramatically change growth and development patterns within the area.

## Parks & Open Space

Wake Forest's parks and open space are considered a major strength of the community by most. There is a strong desire to increase the number of parks and expand the greenway system. Numerous community members accentuated the need to preserve the Town's open space and forested areas, with concern that rapid growth is destroying its natural character. The need to increase walkability from residential neighborhoods to parks and grow the tree canopy was also highlighted. The area west of Capital Boulevard and the southern portion of Town was identified to be underserved by existing parks system.

## Community Facilities

Overall, community facilities were ranked as strengths by the majority of community members and many gave praise toward the Town's efforts in providing quality services. While healthcare options were described to be improving, the desire for a full service hospital in the Town was frequently mentioned. Schools were highlighted as being at overcapacity by some and the need to increase educational and municipal services accordingly with growth was emphasized. It was noted that schools are currently only permitted as of right in Highway Business zoning districts which limits the number of feasible properties for new educational facilities.

## Growth Area

The northern and eastern areas of Wake Forest were identified as the direction for future growth for the Town. This is due to restrictions on other ends of the planning area from jurisdictional boundaries, water features, and watershed protection areas. Some community members expressed the need to preserve existing natural areas from being built upon and to ensure new growth is respectful in scale to existing lower density residential areas.

# DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

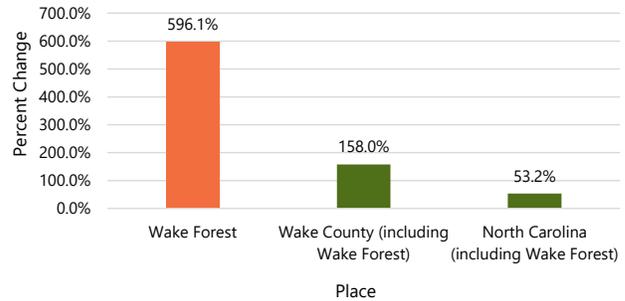
The Demographic Snapshot summarizes existing characteristics within the Town of Wake Forest’s current population. Understanding Wake Forest’s demographics enables the Town to more adequately respond to the community’s needs, predict future demands, and support appropriate future land uses and development. The following snapshot will guide the planning process to ensure the Community Plan Update and Future Land Use Map is founded on accurate demographic data, uncovering existing trends, issues, and opportunities. Where appropriate, the Town of Wake Forest has been compared to Wake County and the State of North Carolina as a whole.

## Population

**Wake Forest has experienced significant growth since the 1990s, its population increasing by almost six times its size.**

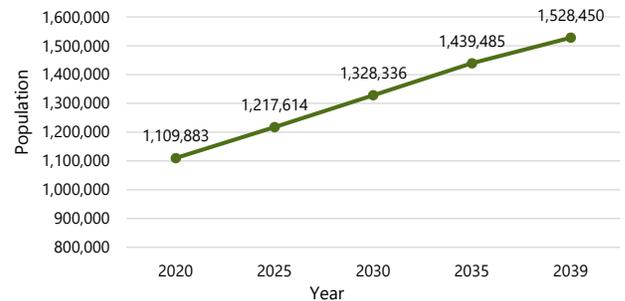
The Town of Wake Forest has a current population of 40,159. Between 1990 and 2018, the Town experienced tremendous growth with a 591.6 percent population increase or 34,390 new residents. This is about four times greater than Wake County’s population growth (151.9 percent) and ten times greater than North Carolina’s growth (58.2 percent) within the same period. The Town’s significant population increase is reflective of the major growth occurring in municipalities across the Triangle Region. The Town’s growth is most likely associated to the availability and lower cost of land and housing compared to that of the City of Raleigh. Over the next two decades, Wake County’s population is projected to increase by 37.7 percent, reaching 1,528,450 in 2039. The Town is poised to capture some of the County’s projected growth to continue its recent trend.

Population Change  
1990-2018



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce

Population Projection  
Wake County, 2020-2039

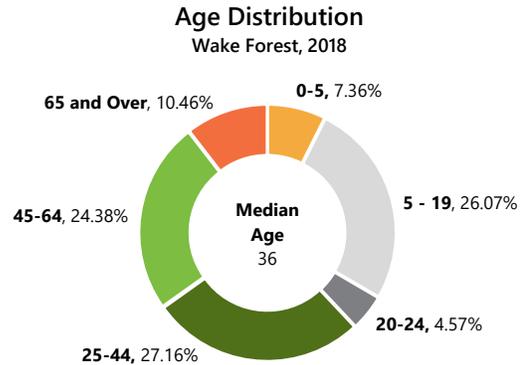


Source: North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management

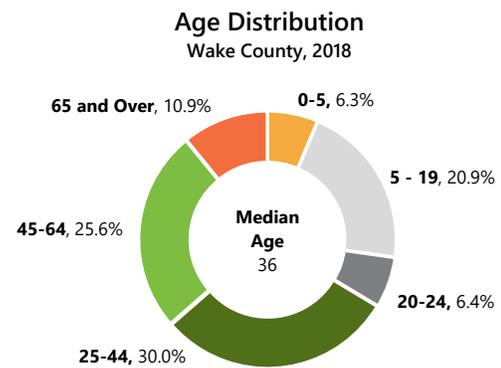
## Age

**Wake Forest's senior population is becoming larger, which is in line with county, state, and national trends.**

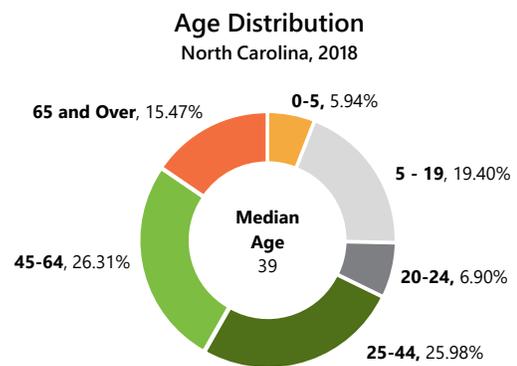
Wake Forest's largest age groups are residents aged 5 to 19, 25 to 44, and 45 to 64 years old, which make up 26.1 percent, 27.2 percent, and 24.4 percent of the population, respectively. Based on the U.S. Census Bureau, the Town experienced a significant increase in seniors over the past decade, which include people aged 65 years and older at 71.4 percent. The second largest increase occurred in the 45 to 65 age group at 52.0 percent, signifying the community is growing older. Wake County and North Carolina both show a similar pattern, though less significant, with the highest growth in people aged 65 and older at 47.8 percent and 27.3 percent, respectively. All three geographies are in line with national trends driven by the large, aging baby boomer generation.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Source: U.S. Census Bureau



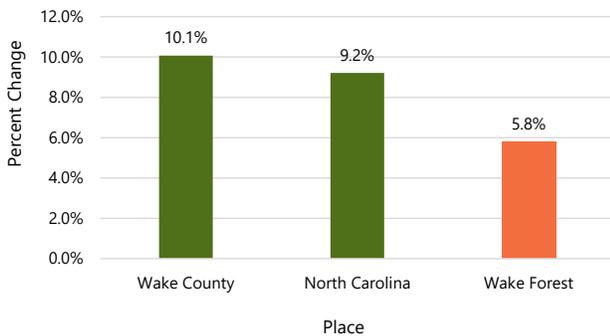
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Race & Ethnicity

### **Wake Forest is less diverse than Wake County and North Carolina.**

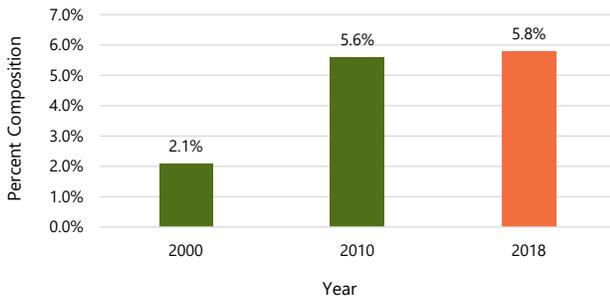
According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the majority of Wake Forest identifies as White at 77.1 percent. Black or African American is the second largest racial group at 14.7 percent. The Town is less diverse than Wake County, which is comparatively composed of 65.8 percent White and 20.3 percent of Black or African American. This coincides with North Carolina as a whole, which shows a similar racial composition to the County at 68.9 percent White and 21.5 percent Black or African American. Wake Forest also has a lower proportion of people who identify as Hispanic (an ethnicity which can be made up of any race) at 5.8 percent, compared to 10.1 percent (Wake County) and 9.2 percent (North Carolina). However, the Hispanic and racial minority population is increasing as a percentage of the total in Wake Forest, albeit at minimal rate.

**Hispanic Population  
2018**



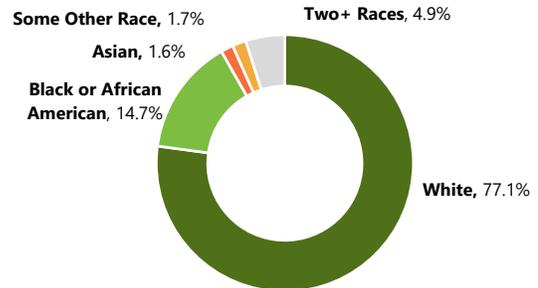
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Change in Hispanic Population  
Wake Forest, 2000-2018**



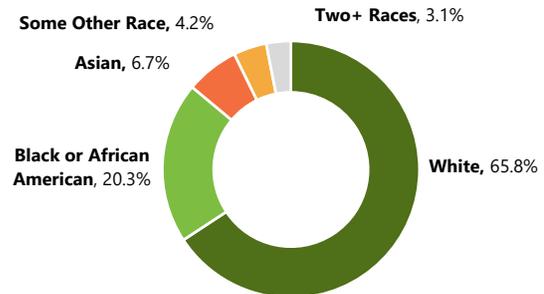
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Race Distribution  
Wake Forest, 2018**



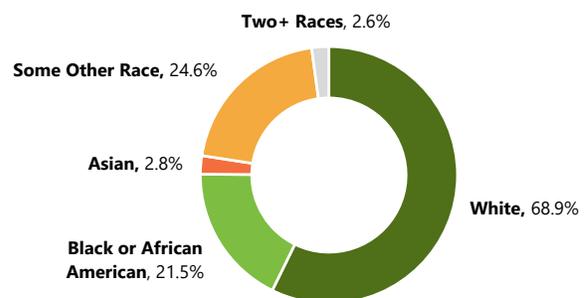
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Race Distribution  
Wake County, 2018**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Race Distribution  
North Carolina, 2018**

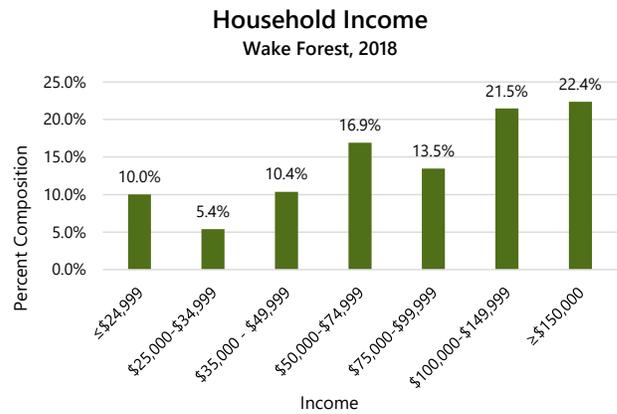


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

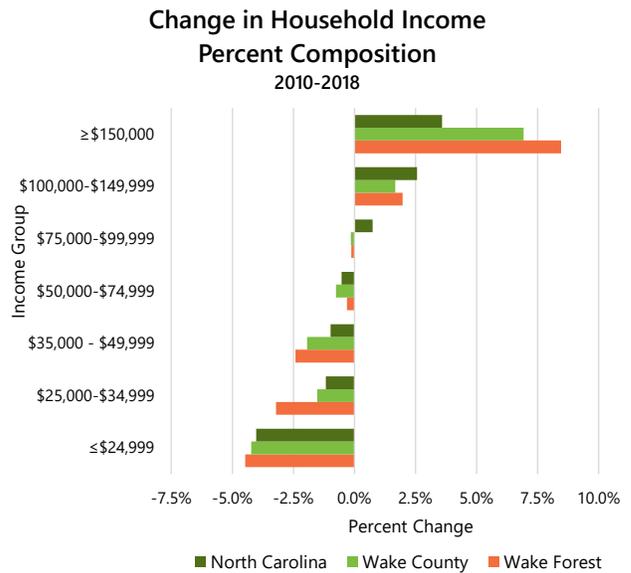
## Income

**Like Wake County and North Carolina, Wake Forest’s higher income households have grown over the last eight years while lower income households have decreased.**

Currently, Wake Forest’s largest household income group is the \$150,000 and over group at 22.4 percent, followed by the \$100,000 to \$149,000 group at 21.5 percent. Wake Forest, Wake County, and North Carolina all experienced the largest increase in the \$150,000 and over household income group and the second largest increase in the \$100,000 to \$149,000 group between 2010 and 2018. Household income groups earning \$74,999 and under experienced a decrease in percent composition for all locations, with the percent decrease growing the lower the income group is for Wake Forest and North Carolina. Overall, all three geographies show similar trends showcasing a growing higher income population and a simultaneously shrinking lower income population. This could indicate an increase in higher paying jobs in the area for existing workers and/or new residents moving in with higher incomes.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Primary Employment Sectors

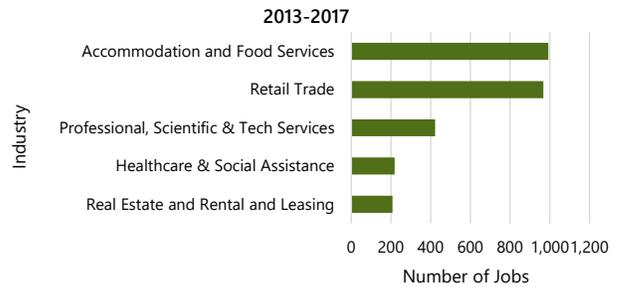
**Wake Forest's largest industry is Retail Trade, which has also experienced the second largest increase in jobs over the last five years.**

Wake Forest's corporate community and expanding business environment has created a variety of local job opportunities over the past 10 years. It has experienced a 65.8 percent increase in total primary jobs between 2007 and 2017, reflective of the fast-paced economic development occurring throughout the Triangle Region. Presently, the Town's largest industry is Retail Trade, which makes up 23.3 percent of its employment base with 2,546 employees. Accommodation and Food Services (18.1 percent or 1,978 employees) and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (10.9 percent or 1,195 employees) are the Town's second and third largest industries by employment. While Retail Trade currently provides the most jobs within the Town, Accommodation and Food Services experienced the largest growth between 2013 and 2017 (993 new jobs), followed again by Retail Trade (968 new jobs) and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (422 new jobs).

In comparison, Wake County's current largest industry is Public Administration (12.6 percent or 72,885 employees), followed by Healthcare and Social Assistance (11.2 percent or 64,472 employees) and Retail Trade (10.3 percent or 59,280 employees), with Public Administration experiencing the highest growth over the past five years (12,814 new jobs). North Carolina's largest industry is Healthcare and Social Assistance (14.0 percent or 562,259 employees), followed by Retail Trade (11.5 percent or 465,105 employees) and Construction (11.5 percent or 463,706 employees). Like Wake Forest, the State's fastest growing industry is Accommodation and Food Services with 47,852 new jobs between 2013 and 2017.

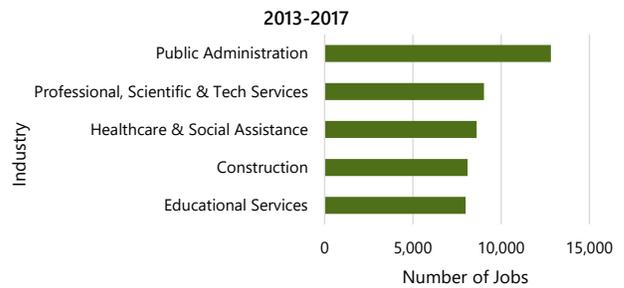
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services as well as Healthcare and Social Assistance fall within all three geographies' top five growing industries, which corresponds with the significant growth in the research, technology, and medical-related businesses in the larger region, including in Research Triangle Park (RTP). As Healthcare and Social Assistance currently makes up 10.3 percent of Wake Forest's total employment (1,121 employees) as its fourth largest industry, the Town can be considered a substantial contributor to establishing the industry as Wake County's second largest, together with the communities of Raleigh, Cary, and Fuquay-Varina.

### Wake Forest Job Growth



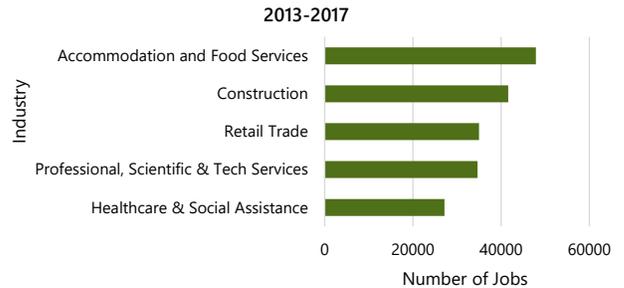
Source: OnTheMap

### Wake County Job Growth



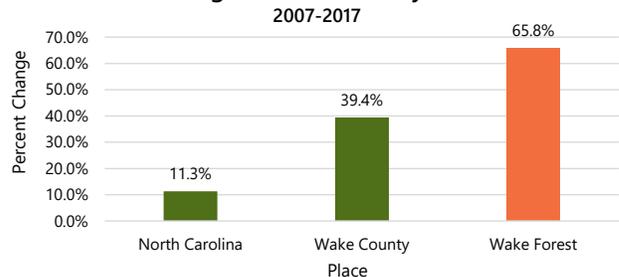
Source: OnTheMap

### North Carolina Job Growth



Source: OnTheMap

### Change in Total Primary Jobs



Source: OnTheMap

## Major Employers

***A wide range of technology, research, medical, and manufacturing companies provide numerous jobs within Wake Forest and in the larger region.***

The top five employers within Wake Forest include Wake County Public School System (1,251 employees), Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Inc. (450 employees), Walmart (400 employees), the Town of Wake Forest (394 employees), and CenturyLink (380 employees). The headquarters of PowerSecure and BTC Electronics located within the Town also add significantly to local employment opportunities, in addition to other major employers like RxMedic, The Wireless Research Center of North Carolina, Synthonix, and Superior Tooling.

In comparison, Duke University and Duke Health Systems, State of North Carolina, Wake County Public School System, and Walmart are among the top employers in Wake County. Duke University and Walmart are also among North Carolina's top employers, along with Food Lion, Wells Fargo Bank, and Lowes Home Center Inc. Further, top technology employers of the Triangle Region include IBM, SAS, Cisco, and Lenovo, which can contribute to job opportunities for residents living within Wake Forest. The Town has a strong small business community which undoubtedly adds to its character and desirability. Due to their nature as small businesses they are not able to employ a significant part of the population, which is why the top five employers are a combination of regional organizations and national companies. Maintaining a combination of local and regional/national businesses will be important to strengthening the Town's overall economic viability.

## PAST PLANS & STUDIES

This section contains an overview of some of the Town's local past plans and studies. It is important that the Wake Forest Community Plan Update and Future Land Use Map is respectful toward past planning efforts that have shaped the Town into what it is today. A review of the Town's past plans and studies was conducted to ensure existing community policies and goals are carried forward within the Plan and built on where relevant.

### Open Space & Greenways Plan (2009)

The 2009 Open Space and Greenways Plan is an update to the 2002 Plan, building on its key recommendations and establishing new strategies and tools to grow and maintain a comprehensive open space and greenway network in Wake Forest. The 2009 Plan takes into consideration new factors affecting the Town since its predecessor, such as new residential and commercial development, population growth, development pressures, and connectivity and conservation issues.

The primary goals of the Plan are to 1) provide specific recommendations for developing new priority greenway segments and facilities; 2) explore potential connections that can be derived from linking the old greenway plan to the adopted pedestrian, bicycle, and parks and recreation plans; and 3) expand on recent planning efforts for the Smith, Richland, and Sanford Creek corridors by identifying trail locations within their more broadly defined greenway corridors.

### Community Plan (2009)

The 2009 Community Plan establishes direction for community planning and growth management in Wake Forest for the following 10 to 15 years, addressing topics like residential, commercial, and industrial development; parks, open space, and greenways; transportation; quality of life; and Town appearance. Key goals of the Plan include maintaining the community's small-town character, revitalizing the Downtown, improving its multimodal transportation system, and enhancing access to parks and recreation. The Plan also addresses strategies for supporting affordable and quality residential neighborhoods, balanced and compatible commercial development, and local businesses and employment opportunities.

Further, sustainable growth is an important component of the Town's vision, with an emphasis on discouraging leapfrog development patterns, single purpose subdivisions, and neighborhoods isolated from services and jobs. A Growth Strategy Map is included, which identifies future growth areas to better plan for the provision of municipal services, preservation of open space, and the density and character of new development. The Wake Forest Community Plan Update and Land Use Map will serve as an update to this plan.

## Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Master Plan (2015)

The 2015 Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Master Plan is intended to guide the Town in meeting the needs of current and future residents by enhancing and expanding on the community's unique parks, recreation, and cultural assets. The Plan includes a facility inventory, GRASP Level of Service Analysis, needs assessment, and operational and marketing analysis, which informs recommendations on how to enhance existing facilities while pursuing opportunities for new facilities and improvements. Key issues identified include the need for better circulation systems within parks, increased connectivity to the trail system, enhanced open space integration into parks, and better provision of park facilities west of Capital Boulevard and south of Dr. Calvin Jones Highway.

## Renaissance Plan (2017)

The 2017 Renaissance Plan, an update to the 2004 Renaissance Plan, establishes recommendations for the revitalization of Wake Forest's historic downtown. The Plan aims to create a vibrant core for the community that provides a place to live, work, and play for both locals and visitors. It also identifies key new development and redevelopment opportunities for mixed use, housing, retail, office, and dining. Mobility is a major theme carried throughout the plan, with recommendations for enhancing the pedestrian environment, bikeability, and access to transit from within the Downtown. Further, the Plan sets the framework for urban design enhancements that promote high quality of life, such as appropriate building height standards, continuous frontages, spatial enclosure, and gateway improvements.

## Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2019)

The 2019 Comprehensive Transportation Plan is a long-range plan that provides recommendations to address the Town's multimodal transportation needs for the next 25 to 30 years. This includes improvements to highways and streets, pedestrian and bike infrastructure, and transit that will steer the Town towards providing a safe, efficient, flexible, innovative, and inclusive transportation system with a multitude of options for residents and visitors. Viewable online as a Story Map, recommendations within the Plan include specific locations for new sidewalks, multiuse paths, bike lanes and sharrows, and a "reverse route" of the existing Wake Forest Loop bus service.

## EXISTING LAND USE

Wake Forest's land use makeup establish it as a unique place to live and work in the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill metro area. Existing land uses provide insight into how the Town has grown and developed over time and help inform what type of development will be appropriate in the future. Land use has been inventoried based on field reconnaissance and research conducted in October 2020. All parcels within Town limits and the planning area have been categorized into one of the following 20 land use classifications:

### Single-Family Detached

This category consists of single-family homes occupying individual lots. This is the predominant residential development in the Town. The single-family detached land use includes newer planned subdivisions as well as older established neighborhoods located near the Town's historic core and within the periphery of its planning area.

### Single-Family Attached

This category includes structures where dwelling units share an exterior wall with at least one adjacent unit and each dwelling unit has a dedicated entrance. This land use includes townhomes and duplexes. There are a substantial number of single-family attached subdivisions dispersed throughout the Town.

### Manufactured Home/Low Density Single-Family Detached

This category includes manufactured, detached single-family homes that are constructed on a permanent chassis, allowing for transportability, as well as low density single-family detached homes. This land use is prevalent within the Town's less developed outer planning area, as well as in some established neighborhoods within Town limits. This category also includes mobile home parks, which are single properties containing a community of manufactured homes. Three mobile home parks exist in the Town's planning area.

### Multifamily

This category includes structures containing multiple dwelling units stacked vertically with shared entrances, stairways, hallways, and amenities. This land use includes apartments, condominiums, and assisted living facilities. Multifamily development primarily exists surrounding the Downtown area and along major roadways.

### Mixed Use

This category includes buildings with two or more distinct uses vertically stacked. Developments usually contain commercial on the ground floor and residential or office uses above. All mixed-use buildings are located within the Downtown area.

### Mixed Commercial

This category consists of properties with a mix of commercial retail, commercial service, or office uses. This use can contain individual free-standing structures with different uses on a single property, or a large commercial strip building containing multiple tenants with varying uses. Mixed commercial developed is primarily located along major commercial corridors surrounded by other commercial retail, commercial service, and office uses.

### Commercial Retail

This category includes commercial establishments that sell a product, such as grocery stores, gas stations, clothing stores, pharmacies, and home goods stores. Commercial retail uses are dispersed throughout the community primarily along major commercial corridors.

### Commercial Service

This category includes commercial establishments that sell a service, such as hair salons, auto repair shops, restaurants, drive-thru dining options, and cafes. Commercial service uses are dispersed throughout the community primarily along major commercial corridors.

## Heavy Industrial

This category includes uses that are larger in scale, such as facilities involved in the processing of chemicals and plastics, refineries, and industrial machinery. These uses typically have environmental, noise, and visual impacts on adjacent areas. Several heavy industrial uses are located at the southeasternmost area of the planning area in addition to one property at Forestville Road and the railroad and along N. White Street in the northern planning area.

## Light Industrial

This category includes facilities involved in the manufacturing, processing, storage, and distribution of goods and materials. Light industrial uses typically have a minimal impact on surrounding areas and are generally clustered together within established industrial parks. The majority of the Town's light industrial uses are located along Unicon Drive. Notably a cluster of industrial uses are located just south of Downtown along S. White Street.

## Office

This category includes offices used for professional services as well as medical office uses. Individual small offices, legal firms, and family physicians are included. Offices are primarily located within Downtown or along major roadways, such as S. Main Street, Dr. Calvin Jones Highway, Capital Boulevard, and Rogers Road.

## Public/Semi-Public

This category includes local government uses, municipal facilities, community service providers, schools, nonprofit organizations, and religious institutions. Examples include Town Hall, fire stations, libraries, places of worship, and Wake County public schools. Public/semi-public uses are dispersed throughout the Town, with a concentration in the Downtown area.

## Parks & Open Space

This category includes designated public park spaces managed by the Wake Forest Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department, as well as private parks and recreational facilities located within traditional subdivision developments. Park uses are distributed throughout the community, with the largest public facilities located north of Wait Avenue. This category also includes preserved natural areas, greenways, golf courses, detention and retention ponds, and designated open spaces areas within private developments. Preserved natural areas are not suitable for development and may often serve passive and active recreational purposes.

## Agriculture

This category comprises land that is actively being used for the production of crops, livestock, and other farming-related activities. Almost all agricultural uses are located in the eastern planning area outside of Town limits where significant has yet to occur.

## Utility

The Utility land use designation includes utility infrastructure, such as electrical substations, power line rights-of-way, and water treatment facilities.

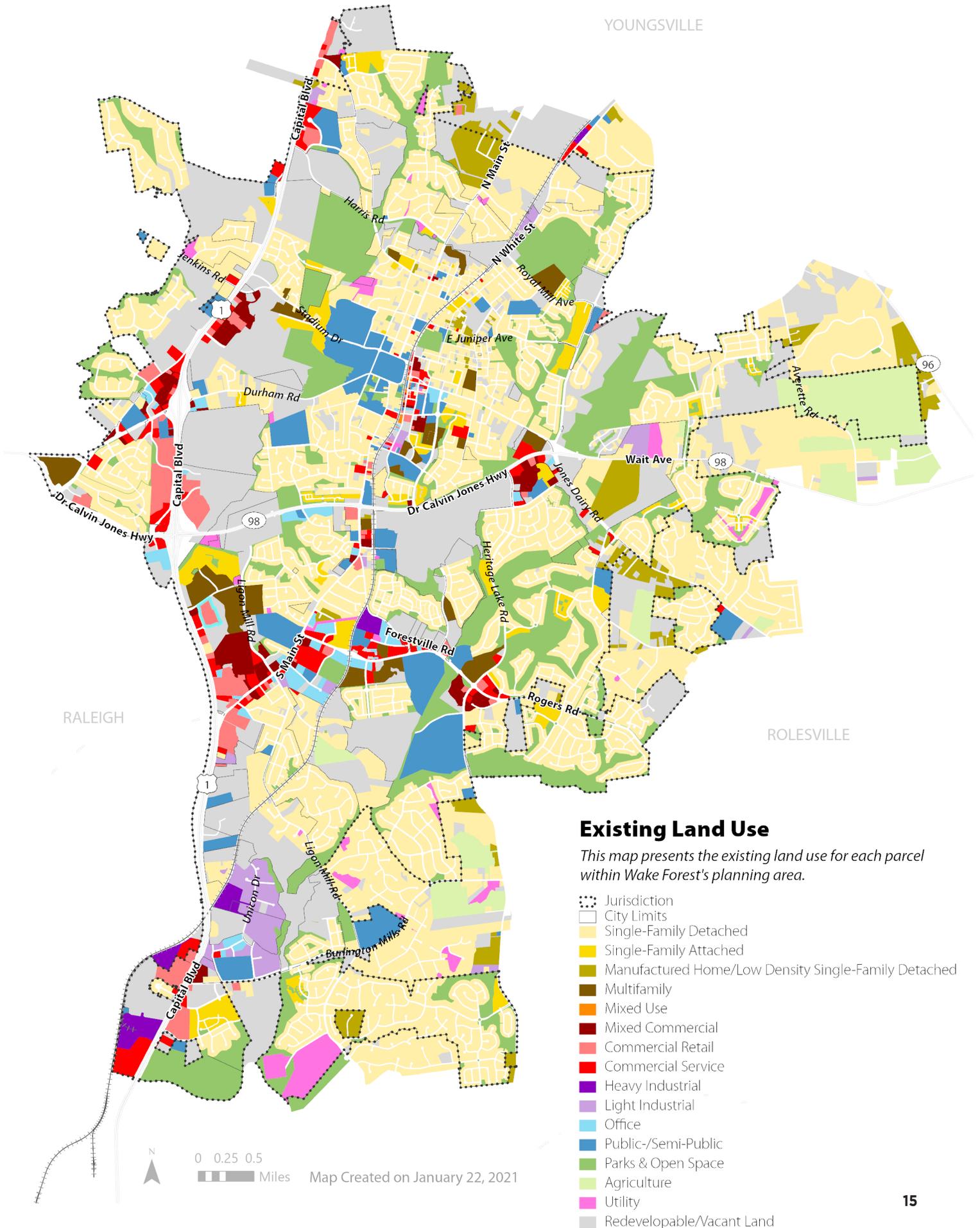
## Redevelopable/Vacant Land

This category includes areas that have not been developed for any use and is not designated open space. This includes land that has yet to be cleared for development, as well as land that has been cleared and primed for development, potentially with connections to one or multiple utilities, including water, sewer, electric, gas, and telecommunications. This category also includes land that contains a vacated existing structure that can be reasonably considered available for redevelopment. This category does not include vacant areas that are part of a larger parcel. There is a significant amount of undeveloped/vacant land located throughout the Town, including along major roadways like Capital Boulevard and Dr. Calvin Jones Highway.

## LAND USE ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

The following list of preliminary land use issues and opportunities have been developed based on field reconnaissance observations, community outreach input, and knowledge of land use planning best practices:

- A significant number of undeveloped properties are located along Capital Boulevard that present the opportunity to increase the Town's commercial and office base. The uncertainty of NCDOT's plans for access management improvements along the corridor, however, has discouraged development for the time being.
- Commercial development has overall occurred in appropriate locations within Town along major roadways with high visibility and easy access. Most commercial developments have quality architecture with properly landscaped parking lots and sufficient access management.
- There is a lack of neighborhood-level commercial development in the northeastern portion of Wake Forest that would serve the on-going residential growth occurring in the area.
- The Town's industrial uses are primarily located along Unicon Drive, which serves as the community's main business park. As the Town seeks to grow as a place to both live and work, and increase local employment opportunities, new areas for light industrial and office uses must be identified that do not conflict with existing residential neighborhoods.
- The area south of Downtown along S. White Street contains aging light industrial uses and vacant buildings that create the opportunity to expand the Downtown area and expand mixed-use or higher-density residential development.
- Several key intersections and gateway corridors exhibit undesirable commercial development with unattractive façade designs or site configurations, such as Capital Boulevard and S. Main Street. There are opportunities to enhance the image of these areas through redevelopment, improved screening and landscaping, and right-of-way improvements.
- The significant residential growth occurring within the Town over the past two decades have created a diverse range of attractive single-family detached, single-family attached, and multifamily options. These new developments, such as Heritage and Traditions, exhibit high-quality architecture, well-connected sidewalks, and ample landscaping. The affordability of these new residential uses has been highlighted as an issue during outreach, however, as they are often too expensive for middle- and lower-income households.
- Within Wake Forest's older established neighborhoods, properties experiencing disinvestment and showing signs of aging exist. This is particularly apparent in the Northeast Neighborhood. There is opportunity to support property owners in property improvements and encourage residential infill development, while ensuring existing residents do not become priced out.
- There are several instances of nuisance properties in residential neighborhoods displaying outdoor storage or junk. There is opportunity to enhance these properties and the overall character of the neighborhood through stricter code enforcement.
- While private recreational facilities and club houses are located throughout the Town in residential subdivisions, there is an absence of public parks on the western side of Capital Boulevard as well as south of Song Sparrow Drive. As the Town continues to grow, it will be important to identify new public park locations to ensure all residents are equitably served and have access to recreational opportunities.
- The eastern side of the Town's planning area currently contains the largest amount of low-density residential and agricultural uses, presenting the opportunity to direct future growth to these areas.
- Educational facilities in different areas of Town differ in quality and the type of recreational facilities provided. It will be important moving forward to continue to work with regional educational entities to ensure increased equity in educational facilities and provide support as they look for new facility locations or expansions with growth.



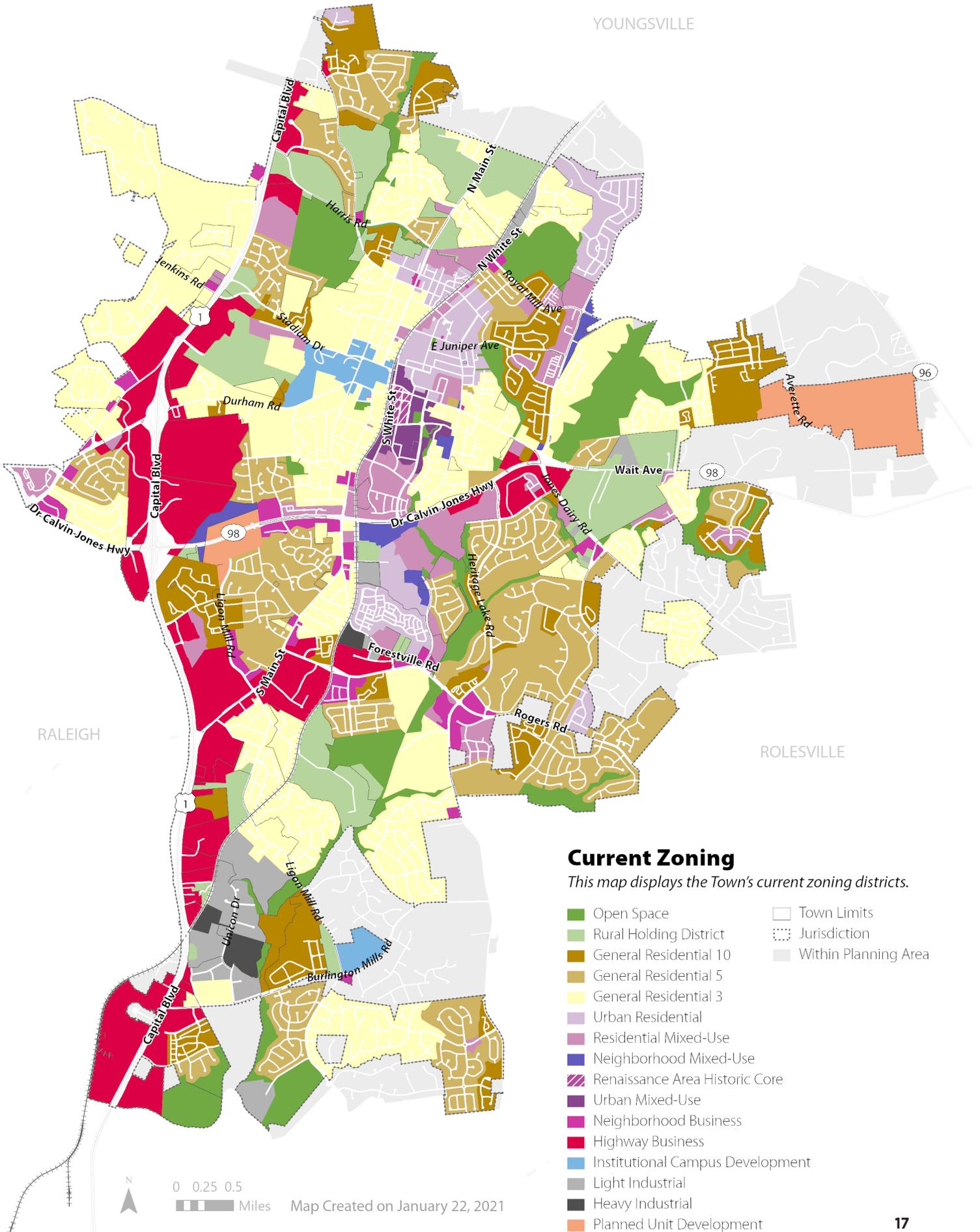
# 2019 STATE LEGISLATION COMPLIANCE

In 2019, the North Carolina General Assembly passed a number of bills affecting planning and development in the State. In addition to the reorganization of the statutes related to planning and development regulation into a consolidated Chapter 160-D, the bills enacted also revised the law on:

- A. Third-party requests to downzone property,
- B. Permit choice,
- C. Vested rights,
- D. Judicial review of zoning decisions,
- E. Short term rentals,
- F. Performance guarantees for subdivision improvement, and
- G. Amendments to zoning regulations and map to better align with the future land use map.

All municipalities in North Carolina must update their land development regulations to comply with the new legislation by July 1, 2021. In order to bring the Wake Forest Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) into compliance with the new legislation it is recommended that the Town:

- A. Update all references to state legislation to reflect reorganization of Chapter 160-D.
- B. Align ordinance terminology and definitions with Chapter 160-D terminology and definitions.
- C. Adopt broadened conflict-of-interest standards for governing, advisory boards, and staff.
- D. Update Notice of Violation issue requirements.
- E. Update development approval revocation procedures.
- F. Revise subdivision performance guarantee requirements.
- G. Establish expedited review procedures for certain minor subdivisions.
- H. Allow concurrent review of development agreements with rezoning, subdivision, or conditional zoning review.
- I. Revise public notification requirements to require notice to properties separated from the subject property by street, railroad, or other transportation corridors.
- J. Revise Conditional District and Special Use Permit approval procedures to clarify that written consent to conditions related to approval must be received from the applicant / landowner.
- K. Update quasi-judicial decision-making procedures.
- L. Remove all building design element standards for all housing types that are built to the single-family building code from the UDO and establish a stand-alone 'residential pattern book.'
- M. Develop a comprehensive plan that establishes goals, policies, and programs intended to guide the present and future physical, social, and economic development of the jurisdiction.



### Current Zoning

This map displays the Town's current zoning districts.

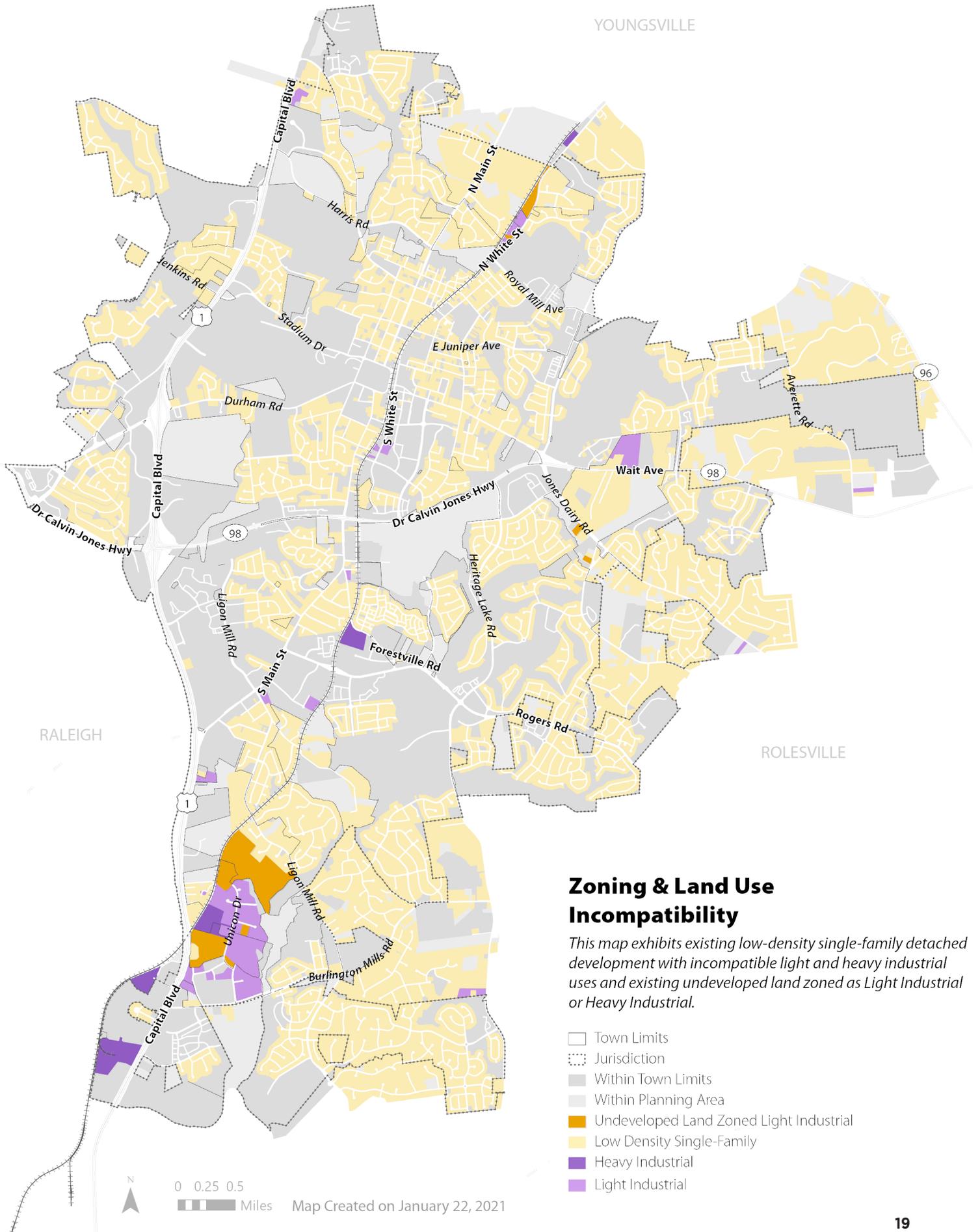
- Open Space
- Rural Holding District
- General Residential 10
- General Residential 5
- General Residential 3
- Urban Residential
- Residential Mixed-Use
- Neighborhood Mixed-Use
- Renaissance Area Historic Core
- Urban Mixed-Use
- Neighborhood Business
- Highway Business
- Institutional Campus Development
- Light Industrial
- Heavy Industrial
- Planned Unit Development
- Town Limits
- Jurisdiction
- Within Planning Area

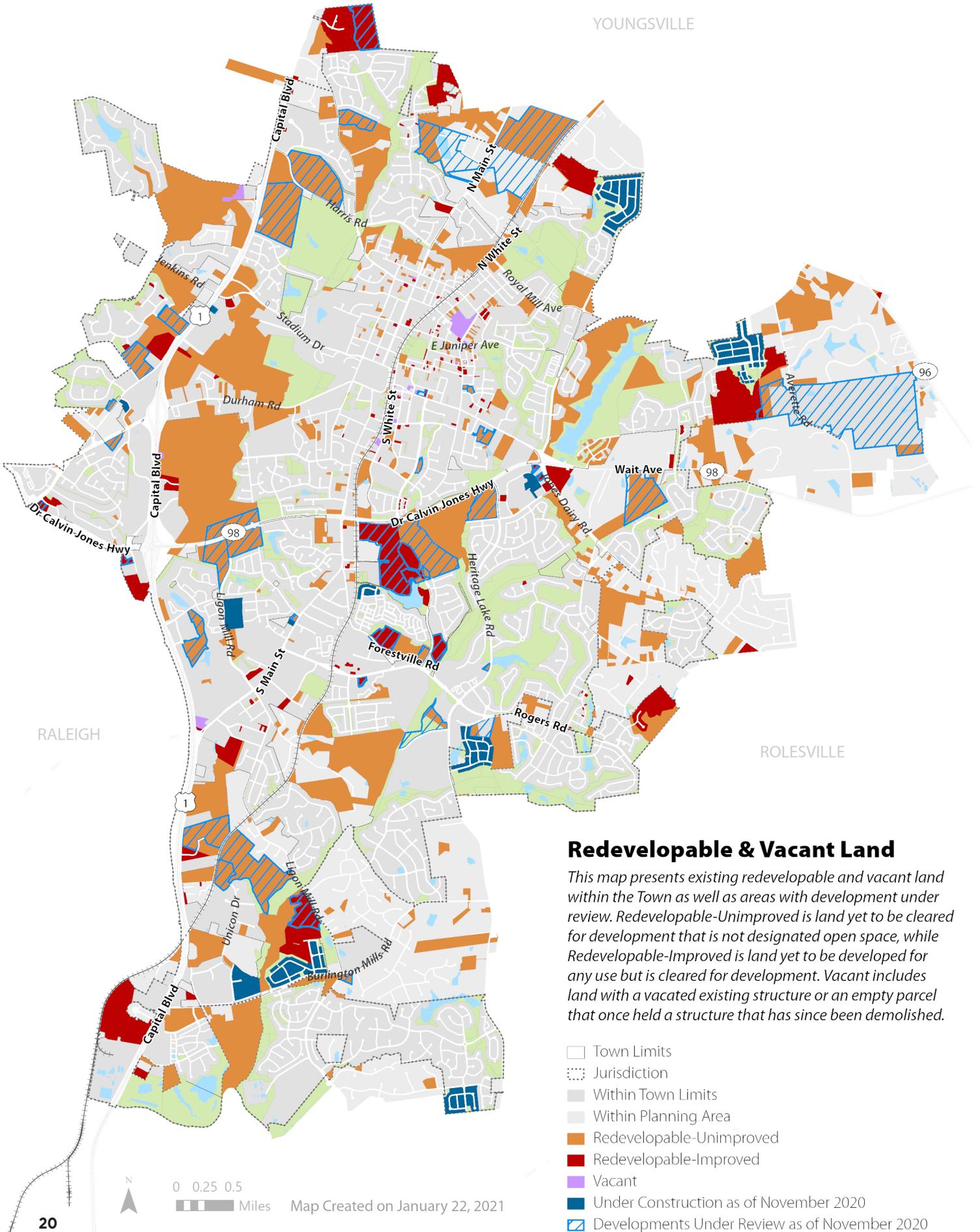
## ZONING & LAND USE INCOMPATIBILITY

A land use and zoning capability analysis was conducted to compare the location of existing low-density single-family detached development with incompatible light and heavy industrial uses as well as existing undeveloped land zoned as Light Industrial or Heavy Industrial. The Light Industrial district permits by right externally benign industrial and office uses, such as storage facilities, light manufacturing workshops, warehouses, and wholesaling and distribution facilities. The Heavy Industrial district allows for industrial, manufacturing, or large-scale utility operations that are known to pose levels of noise, vibration, odor, or truck traffic.

As Wake Forest grows, it is important to ensure land use incompatibilities are avoided to prevent adverse effects on residential areas. Based on the analysis, the following key takeaways should be taken into consideration:

- Currently there is minimal light and heavy industrial development within Wake Forest. Where they do exist, they are often adjacent to residential development, such as along Forestville Road, Wait Avenue, and N White Street. Overall, these properties are well screened with open space buffers and landscaping to mitigate adverse effects and unattractive views.
- An opportunity exists to improve views from the right-of-way for the light industrial property along Wait Avenue. The Forestville Road heavy industrial property and the light industrial development near N. White Street and Secret Pond Road are examples of quality screening that should be replicated.
- The largest cluster of industrial uses are located along Unicon Drive. This industrial park area is sufficiently screened from adjacent residential uses. There are a few large parcels of undeveloped land in this area that are zoned for Light Industrial. As these areas become developed, it is important that the Town continues to enforce its screening standards to ensure it can successfully coexist with adjacent residential uses.
- Undeveloped land near N. White Street and Secret Pond Road are zoned for Light Industrial should incorporate quality screening once developed like the existing properties in that area.
- A few small undeveloped parcels exist along Jones Diary Road that are zoned for Light Industrial. These should be considered for rezoning to match surrounding uses, such as residential.
- There is opportunity to redevelop the existing light industrial uses south of Downtown into more appropriate uses that build of the Town's center, such as mixed use or higher density residential.
- Existing standalone light industrial uses scattered within the Town may be considered for long term redevelopment into more appropriate uses that coincide with surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- No undeveloped land is currently zoned for Heavy Industrial.





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### Redevelopable & Vacant Land

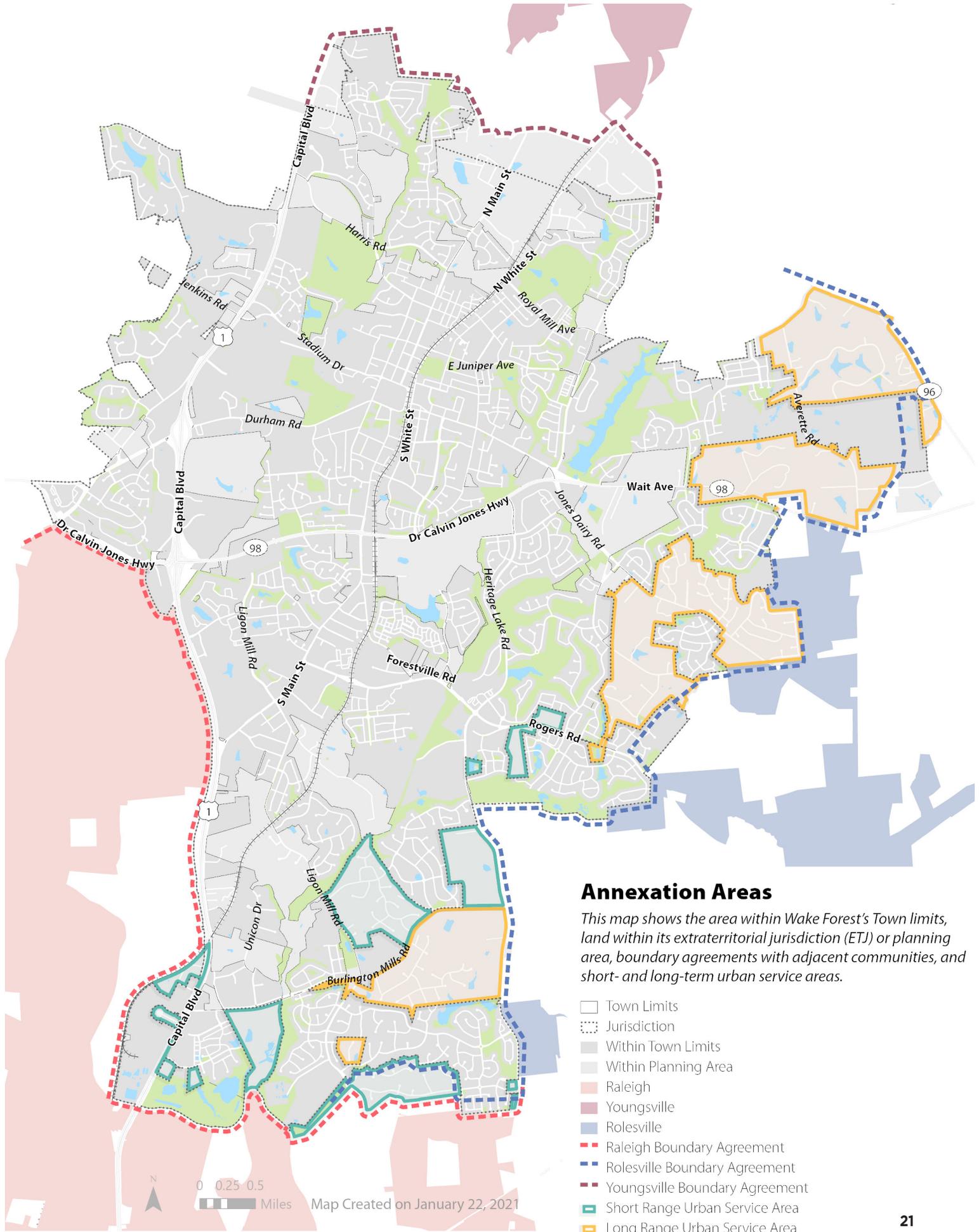
*This map presents existing redevelopable and vacant land within the Town as well as areas with development under review. Redevelopable-Unimproved is land yet to be cleared for development that is not designated open space, while Redevelopable-Improved is land yet to be developed for any use but is cleared for development. Vacant includes land with a vacated existing structure or an empty parcel that once held a structure that has since been demolished.*

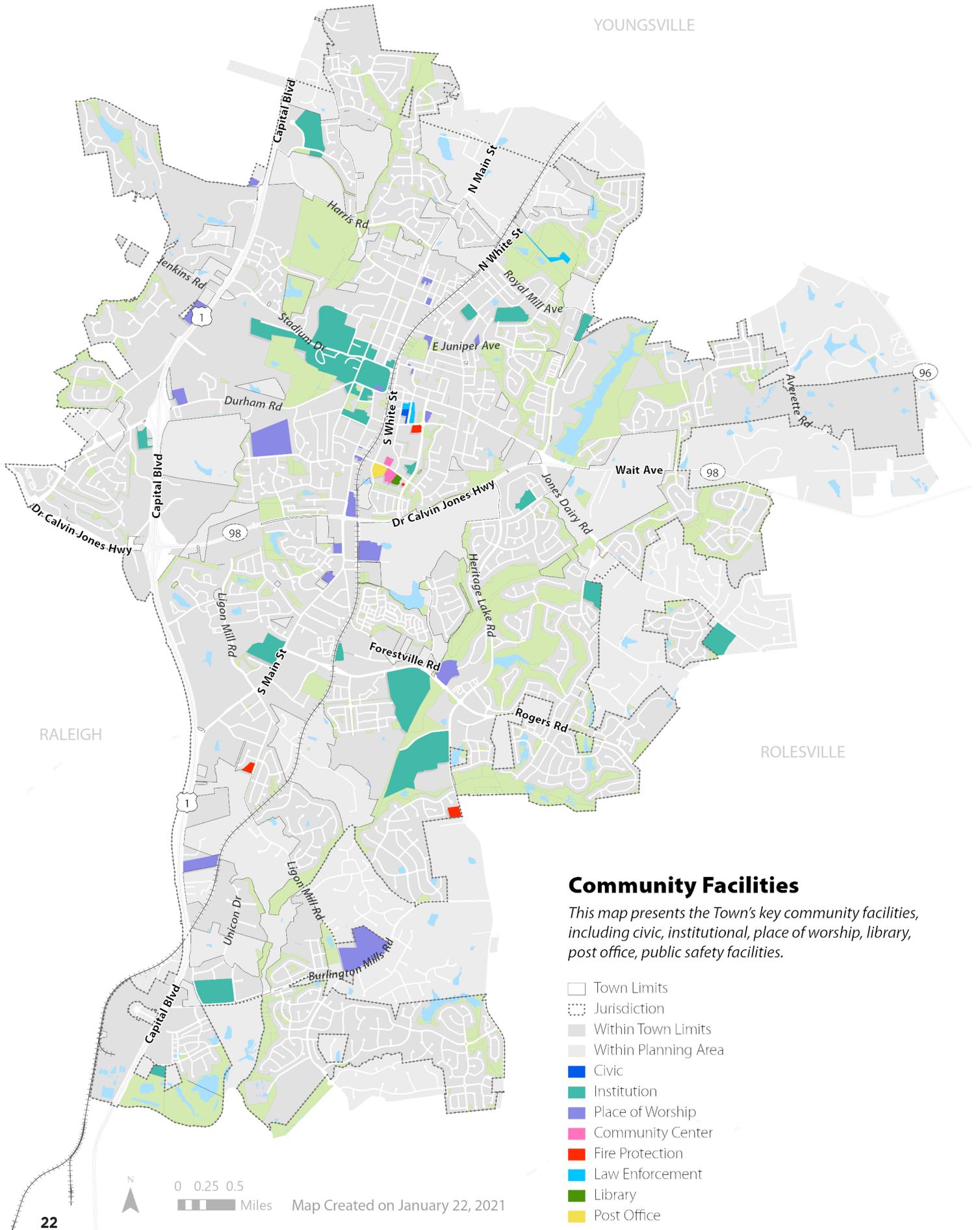
- Town Limits
- Jurisdiction
- Within Town Limits
- Within Planning Area
- Redevelopable-Unimproved
- Redevelopable-Improved
- Vacant
- Under Construction as of November 2020
- Developments Under Review as of November 2020

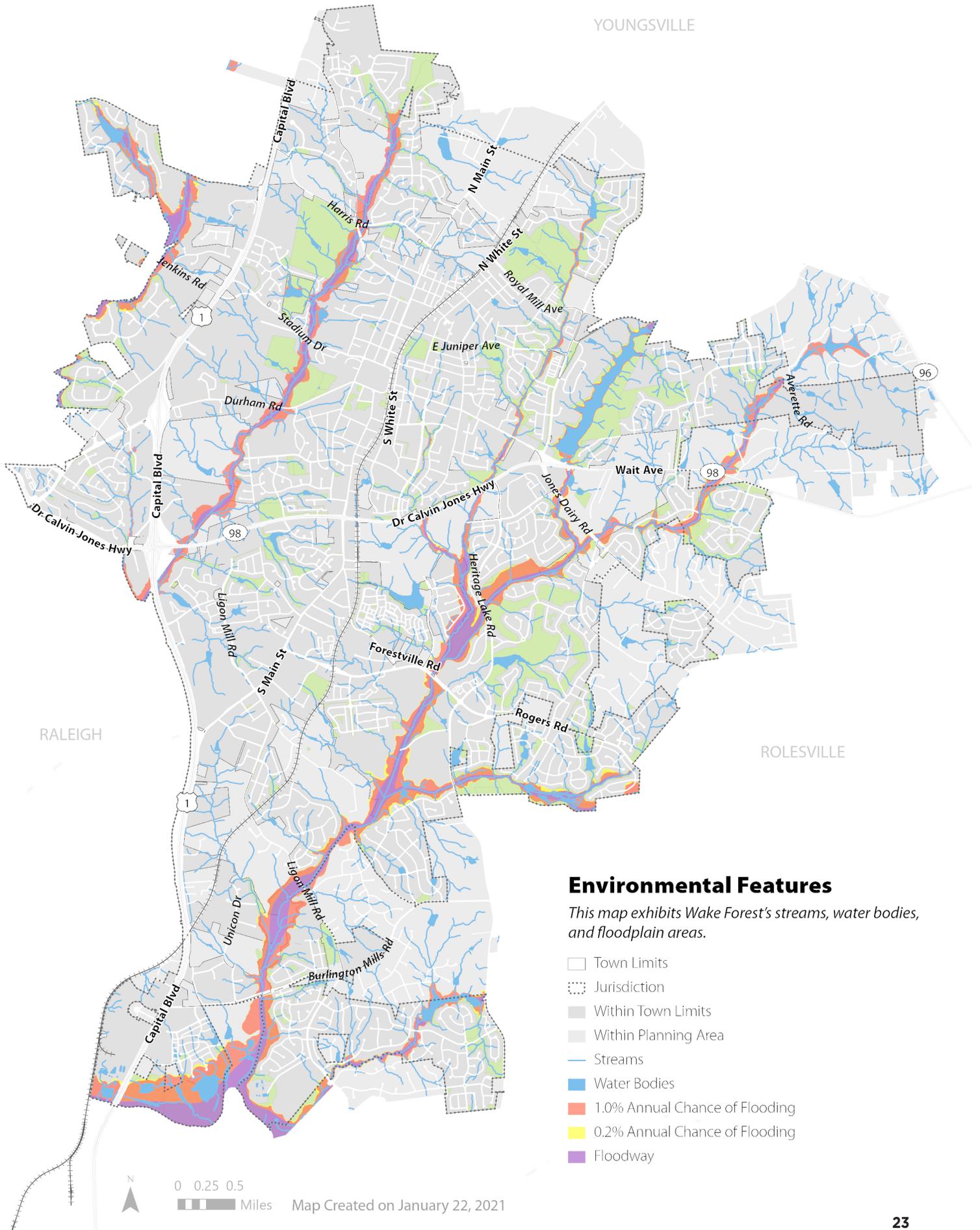


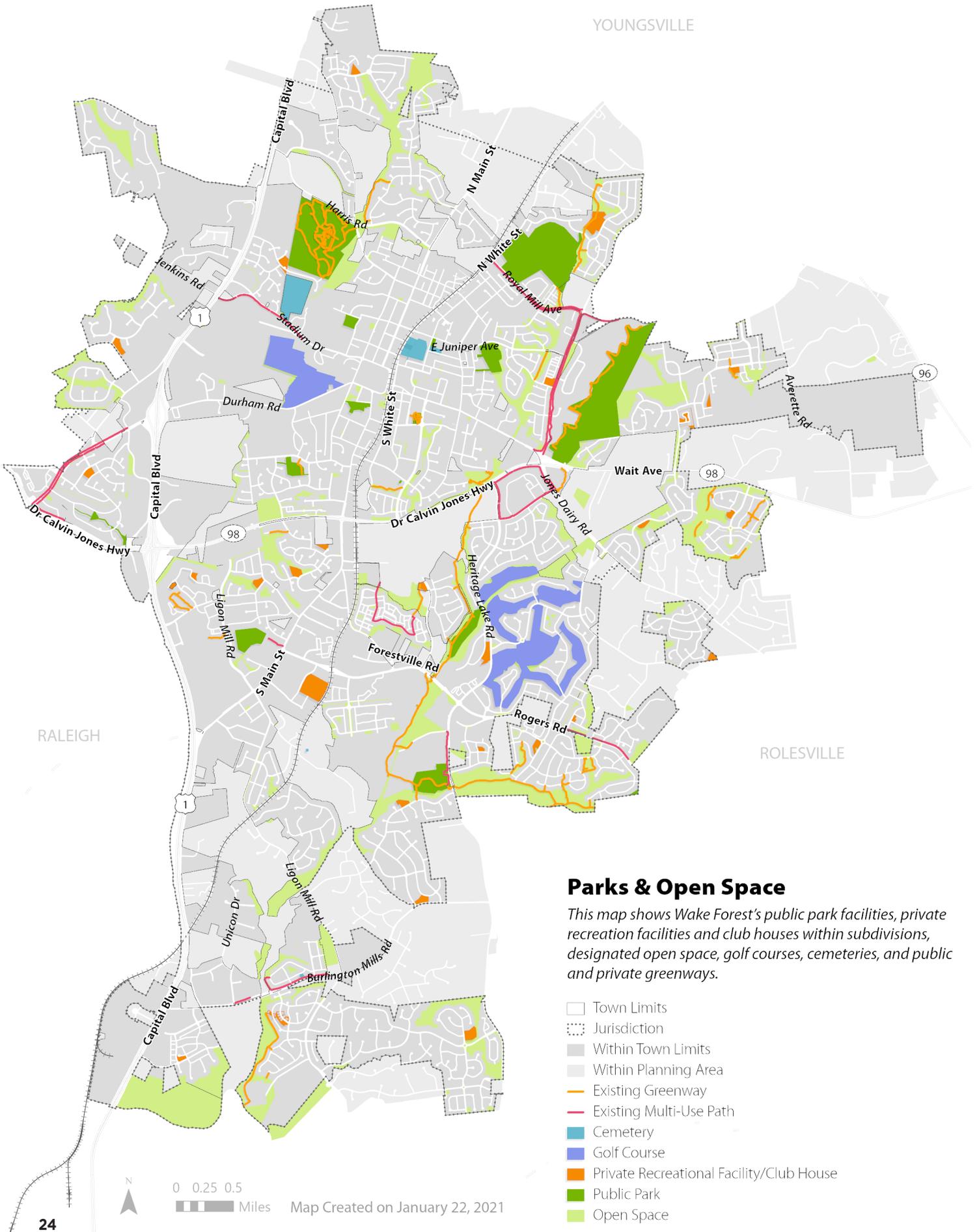
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 Miles

Map Created on January 22, 2021









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0 0.25 0.5 Miles Map Created on January 22, 2021