

# **RIVER BEND PLANNING BOARD**

**October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025 at 6:00pm**

**River Bend Municipal Building  
51 Shoreline Drive, River Bend, NC**

**I. CALL TO ORDER – *Egon Lippert/Bob Kohn***

**II. ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS**

**III. APPROVAL OF LAST MEETING MINUTES – *Allison McCollum***

**IV. REPORTS**

**a. Summary of permits issued – *Allison McCollum***

**b. Town Council Update – *Buddy Sheffield***

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT - *All***

Anyone who wishes to address the Board during this period must sign the sign-up sheet posted by the door. The Public Comment Policy will be followed. A copy of the policy is also by the door and available on the Town's website. Each speaker will be limited to three (3) minutes.

**VI. OLD BUSINESS – *All***

**a. Discussion of Fence Ordinance**

**VII. NEW BUSINESS – *All***

**a. Discussion of Comprehensive Plan**

**b. Discussion of Lot Coverage in Schedule of District Requirements**

**VIII. OTHER – *All***

**a. Next regular meeting on 6 November 2025**

**IX. CALL FOR ADJOURNMENT - *All***

# Town of River Bend Planning Board

## Minutes for Regular Meeting – 5 June 2025 – River Bend Municipal Building

**Board Members present:** Chair Egon Lippert, Vice Chair Bob Kohn, Bernard Bush, Keith Boulware, Linda Cummings, Kathleen Fleming

**Board Members absent:** Jon Hall

**Others present:** Councilman Buddy Sheffield, Councilwoman Kathy Noonan, Assistant Zoning Administrator Allison McCollum, 7 members of the public

### 1. Call to Order

The regularly scheduled Planning Board meeting was called to Order at 6:00 PM on Thursday, 5 June 2025, in the River Bend Municipal Building meeting room with a quorum present.

### 2. Approval of 1 May 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

The Board reviewed the Minutes of the 1 May 2025 Regular Meeting. **Motion** was made by Vice Chair Bob Kohn to accept the Minutes as presented. Motion was **seconded** by Board Member Kathleen Fleming. **Motion carried unanimously.**

### 3. Reports

#### a. Zoning Report

AZA Allison McCollum presented the Board with a typed report summarizing the number of permits issued, the type of permit issued, and the total of all permit fees for the month of May 2025. The members of the Board reviewed the report and asked questions as needed.

#### b. Council Report

Councilman Buddy Sheffield summarized recent actions by the Town Council. The Board asked questions as needed.

### 4. Public Comment

Resident Nan Polgardi of 101 Knotline Road addressed the Board. She spoke on her position on the current fence ordinance as it applies to corner lots. She would like the ordinance changed to allow for fences in what is currently defined in the ordinance as the 'front yard.'

### 5. Old Business

- a. Town Manager Delane Jackson notified the Planning Board via a memo included in the meeting's agenda packet that he has reviewed the preliminary plat submitted by Ellis Development Group for the proposed Aare Creek Subdivision and has found the submission to be incomplete. He recommended that the Planning Board take action to disapprove the preliminary plat.

Board Member Keith Boulware made a **motion** to disapprove the preliminary plat, as the submission does not include all of the required contents specified in Section 15.01.082(F) of the Town's Subdivision Ordinance. Motion was **seconded** by Vice Chair Bob Kohn. **Motion carried unanimously.**

- b. The Board discussed the existing fence ordinance, and reasons for and against changing the language as relates to fences in the front yards of corner lots. There was a discussion of options to rewrite the fence ordinance and/or to amend the definition of 'front yard' as it is defined within the Town's Zoning Ordinance.

After some discussion, Board Member Keith Boulware made a **motion** to table the discussion until the next scheduled meeting and to request that Town staff gather examples of how other municipalities handle the issue of fencing in the front yard and/or fencing on corner lots. Motion was **seconded** by Vice Chair Bob Kohn. **Motion carried unanimously.**

#### 6. New Business

None.

#### 7. Other

As the next regular meeting would be Thursday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, the Board opted to cancel that meeting. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 6pm.

#### 8. Adjournment

**Motion** was made by Board Member Keith Boulware to adjourn the meeting. Motion was **seconded** by Board Member Bernie Bush. **Motion carried unanimously** and the meeting adjourned at 6:39 PM.

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Allison McCollum, Secretary



## TOWN OF RIVER BEND

45 Shoreline Drive  
River Bend, NC 28562

T 252.638.3870

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[www.riverbendnc.org](http://www.riverbendnc.org)

### June 2025

Permit Type	Total Issued	Total Project Cost
Flood	4	\$48,505.28
Residential Zoning	7	\$60,609.20

The total amount of permit fees collected for June 2025 is **\$460.00**

### July 2025

Permit Type	Total Issued	Total Project Cost
Flood	1	\$3,000.00
Residential Zoning	2	\$13,000.00

The total amount of permit fees collected for July 2025 is **\$95.60**

### August 2025

Permit Type	Total Issued	Total Project Cost
Flood	5	\$170,119.05
Residential Zoning	9	\$185,587.05
CAMA Minor	1	\$71,446.99

The total amount of permit fees collected for August 2025 is **\$1,033.38**

### September 2025

Permit Type	Total Issued	Total Project Cost
Flood	3	\$47,250.00
Residential Zoning	6	\$388,282.10

The total amount of permit fees collected for September 2025 is **\$852.00**



## **§ 15.02.062 FENCES AND WALLS.**

The purpose and intent of this section is to recognize that fences and/or walls serve legitimate private and public uses including but not limited to security and creating visual buffers between properties. These regulations are intended to establish standards that maximize the effectiveness of the fencing while preserving the views and safety of motorists, adjacent property owners and the public in general.

- A. A fence or wall, unless otherwise stated, hereinafter referred to as fence, is defined as a freestanding, vertical structure, constructed of man-made or natural materials, or a combination thereof. While it may accomplish the same objective as a man-made fence, living vegetative materials such as trees and shrubs are not considered a fence that requires a permit.
- B. A fence may provide any or all of the following: indicate a boundary; provide a barrier (either physical or visual); protect property; provide privacy; serve as an enclosure; control erosion or provide stability (such as is accomplished with a retaining wall); create a landscaping or ornamental effect.
- C. Fences are a permitted use in all zoning districts, provided that:
  - 1. No fences shall be allowed in any front yard, except where specifically authorized herein.
  - 2. Fences shall be limited to seven (7) feet in height within any side or rear yard.
  - 3. Fences shall be constructed of wood, brick, vinyl, ornamental iron or metal railing, chain link or stone. The exposed framing of each section of fence shall face the interior yard or property, e.g. the finished side shall face out.
  - 4. The owner of the property on which the fence is located is required to maintain the fence in a safe condition and plumb (vertical) to the ground. For fences erected close to a property line, fence owners are advised to consider future access to the exterior side of the fence for maintenance.
  - 5. Retaining walls over five (5) feet in height shall be designed and constructed under the responsible charge of a NC registered professional engineer.
  - 6. Fences built in conjunction with electric or gas substations, public works facilities, public recreation facilities or other similar uses shall not exceed ten (10) feet in height without specific approval of the Zoning Administrator. Fences of this type may be located within front yards with approval of the Zoning Administrator.
  - 7. No fence shall be constructed within or upon any street right-of-way. In addition, no fence shall be constructed within ten (10) feet of any street pavement.
  - 8. No fence or wall shall alter or impede the natural flow of water in any stream, creek, drainage swale, ditch or similar drainage feature.
  - 9. Fences made of mesh-type material, which may be easily trimmed/cut with scissors and used as a means to protect vegetation from animals may be located within front yards, provided it does not exceed six (6) feet in height or encompass more than 225 square feet (cumulatively) of the front yard.
  - 10. In residential zoning districts, fences shall not be constructed of material which may be dangerous or hazardous to the public, such as barbed or razor wire or other similar materials except in association with those uses permitted as a special use.

11. Fences constructed on or over utility easements are subject to be removed at the owner's expense subject to the terms of the easement.
12. Nothing in this section shall prevent the installation of temporary fences related to construction sites or sediment and erosion control. Temporary fences shall be removed within ten (10) days of the issuance of a certificate of zoning compliance for the project. Temporary fences must be removed within (90) days of their installation. A temporary permit may be extended for thirty (30) days.
13. It is the responsibility of the fence owner to insure that the fence is installed on their property.
14. Non-opaque fences may be located in the front yard of a lot zoned Business (BD), provided that the lot has a minimum of 100 feet of uninterrupted road frontage with a road maintained by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.
15. A zoning permit is required for the installation of any fence, except for the mesh-type fences described in Item 9, above.

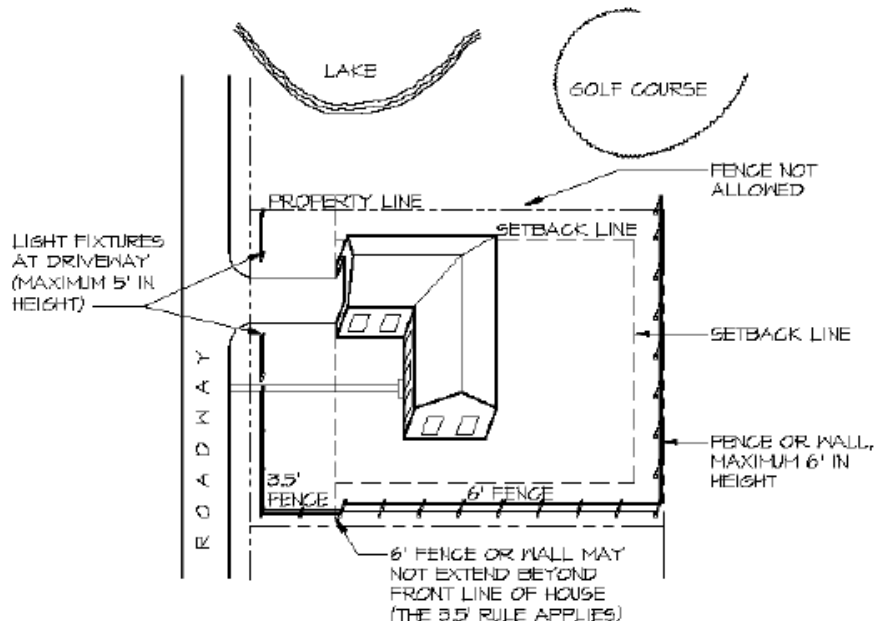
*Amended 11/18/2021*

## FENCE ORDINANCE EXAMPLES

### PINEHURST

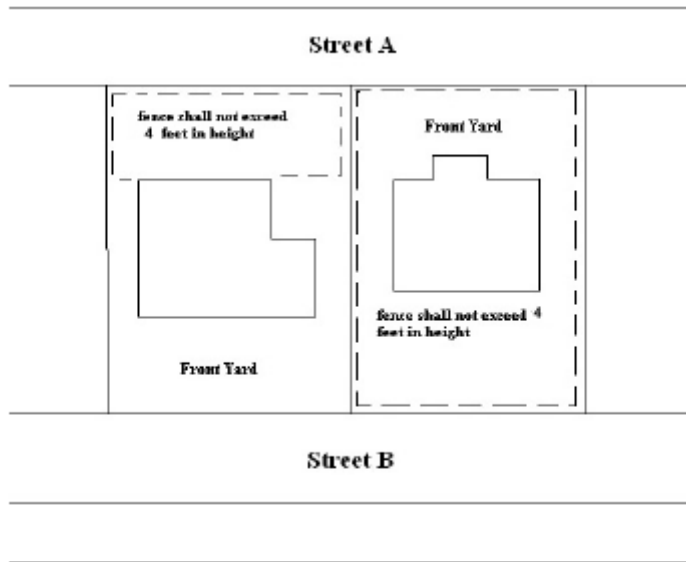
- 1) Fences, walls, and similar structures not over six (6) feet in height may project into the rear or side setback provided the lot does not abut a golf course or a lake.  
Fences, walls, and similar structures are prohibited in the rear setback if the lot abuts a golf course or a lake. If the side yard does not abut a golf course or a lake, fences, walls, and similar structures may be erected to a maximum height of six (6) feet. Such fence or wall shall not be built in or through a required buffer unless the fence or wall has been designed as an integral part of the buffer and approved as such;
- 2) Swimming pool fences shall be constructed in accordance with the North Carolina State Building Code and also conform to the fence type, style and location requirements of the PDO. Pools built prior to 2002 that have not been enclosed with fencing shall be allowed to be fenced and the fencing may encroach up to twenty percent (20%) into the required golf course and lake setback. When using this encroachment only picket or wrought iron fence types may be used;
- 3) If a property owner's rear lot line borders on the side lot line of another property owner, the side yard height limitation of six (6) feet applies to any fence erected on such property line for the length contiguous to said side yard;
- 4) Fences, walls, and similar structures not over three and one-half (3.5) feet in height may project into or enclose any front setback. The three and one-half (3.5) foot limitation shall apply to driveway entrance columns, but the total height of columns with light fixtures shall be a maximum of five (5) feet in height.

- 5) The existing ground elevation shall not be modified or elevated in any manner so as to construct a fence on



an elevated berm, so as to increase the maximum allowable height of the fence unless the berm is proposed as part of a required buffer.

- 6) Fences, walls, and similar structures shall not exceed four (4) feet in height when abutting a defined front yard of an adjacent property.



- 7) Fences located within the R-210 zoning district may construct a split rail type fence not to exceed five (5) feet in height in the front yard. If an adjacent property is zoned as a more dense residential zoning district (R-30, R-20, R-15, R-10, R-8, R-5 or R-MF), a thirty (30) foot setback shall be required for the fence in the front yard if the fence exceeds three and a

half (3 1/2) feet in height unless separated by a public or private street right-of-way.

- 8) On corner lots a ten foot setback from the side street property line is required for fences located in the side and rear yard when those fences are greater than four (4) feet in height.

#### HAVELOCK

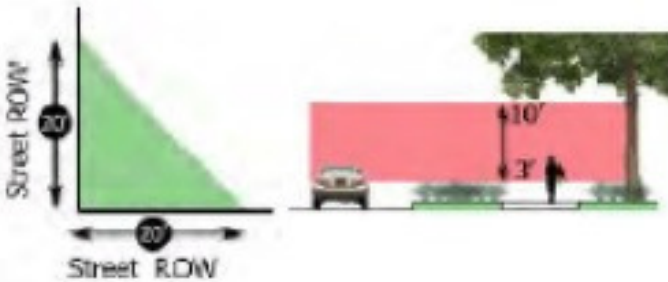
- (a) *Residential uses.* Fences in yards shall not exceed four feet in height in the front yard and six feet in height in the side and rear yards. A fence shall not exceed four feet in height within 15 feet of any public or private street right-of-way. In any case a fence shall not exceed eight feet in height;
- (b) *Obstruction of view.* A fence shall not be placed or retained in a manner so as to obstruct vision at any intersection adjacent to public or private streets.

#### WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH

- 1) Maximum fence height shall be measured from grade at any given point along the span of a fence. Maximum permitted height of fences shall be as follows:
  - a) Fences constructed adjacent to any street right-of-way from which there is vehicular access to a lot shall not exceed four feet in height.
  - b) Fences located within the front yard setback of a lot shall not exceed four feet in height.

- c) Fences not restricted as set forth in sections (a) or (b) above shall not exceed six feet in height, except in the C-1, C-2, C-3, and C-4 zoning districts, where fences shall not exceed eight feet in height or in the R-1 and R-2 zoning districts along a property line that abuts the C-1, C-2, or C-3 zoning district.
- d) Fences located within the triangular area as stated in subsection (C) of a corner lot shall not exceed three feet in height.

A) *Corner Lot Intersections.* On a corner lot, nothing shall be erected, placed, or allowed to grow in a manner so as materially to impede vision between a height of three feet and ten feet in a triangular area formed by a diagonal line between two points on the right-of-way lines, 20 feet from where they intersect. A clear view shall be maintained on corner lots from three to ten feet in vertical distance.



# Town of River Bend

## COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

2025



## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank the following members of the Town of River Bend community for their input and participation on the Comprehensive Plan. Your insights and expertise helped guide this plan.

### **Planning Board**

Egon Lippert, Chair

Robert Kohn, Vice-Chair

Keith Boulware

Bernard Bush, Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction Representative

Linda Cummings

Kathleen Fleming

Jon Hall

Buddy Sheffield, Town Council Liaison

### **Staff**

Delane Jackson, Town Manager

Allison McCollum, Assistant Zoning Administrator



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# Introduction

## Why Plan Our Town?

The purpose of the *Town of River Bend – Comprehensive Land Use Plan* (hereinafter referred to as “Town Plan”) is to provide information and perspective used to plan and prioritize actions to support a resilient, self-sustaining community. The Town Plan must outline goals and strategies to perpetuate and improve upon the livability and desirability of the Town of River Bend. The Town Plan should encourage growth opportunities, while maintaining the character and resources essential to River Bend. Information within the Town Plan should serve as the basis for future development decisions.

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*River Bend – On the river, around the bend.*

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## About Town Planning

Long term planning for the future of a community is vitally important. The Comprehensive Plan is one of two key documents that the Town develops and uses to plan, finance, and implement projects and programs. Our Capital Improvement Plan estimates the costs for specific projects and finances them over a 5-year period. The Comprehensive Plan is structured to provide an overview of a community's existing conditions and features. The main function of the plan is to serve as a guide to a community's future development policy. The goals of a comprehensive land use plan are to:

- » develop a long-term vision,
- » address what should be maintained or changed to achieve that vision,
- » identify future land uses in an overall community-wide context,
- » identify and prioritize needed future infrastructure improvement aimed at supporting the vision, and
- » provide implementation guidance as to the private and public investment strategies to realize the vision.

Planning is an ongoing process! Part of the process is monitoring the plan's progress as a fluid document that should be regularly updated to reflect changing conditions.

## Official State Policy

The State of North Carolina requires local governments in NC General Statute 160D, effective January 1, 2021, to adopt a plan to be eligible for certain funding, powers, and authority. 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.

## Statutory Reference

*Town of River Bend – Comprehensive Land Use Plan* shall serve as the adopted plan pursuant to §N.C.G.S. 160D in the planning and regulation of development.

# About River Bend

## Vision Statement

The Town of River Bend strives to be a strong community that values its history and neighborhood feel while embracing growth to become a vibrant place that offers a variety of quality opportunities for residents of all ages to live and actively participate in our community.

## Town History

The area now known as the Town of River Bend began as a robust tobacco plantation of 1,200 acres owned by the Odd Fellows – a fraternal group of black tenant farmers collectively working and farming together. During the recession of 1914, this group sold the land to the W.S. Clark Company – a leading supplier of farm supplies and general merchandise at the time. In 1964, Frank Efird moved to New Bern, established the Efird Company, and began looking for large tracts of land to develop with single-family homes. As small tenant farming was declining, the Clark family sold the Odd Fellow farm to the Efird Company in October 1967 for \$486,000.

The first family moved to what was then known as River Bend Plantation in July 1969. As demand for more housing, and new housing options increased, new sections of River Bend Plantation were developed. As the population grew, the need for community services also grew. The still active Rhems Volunteer Fire Department was established entirely by residents, completing all the necessary paperwork, raising money for the original construction, and performing manual labor during the construction.

In 1977, after much discussion, several community members met to discuss the possibility of incorporating River Bend Plantation into a town. The initial vote resulted in the residents deciding against incorporation. The idea was revived in 1980, and this time, with a vote of 298 residents in favor versus 224 opposed, the project to incorporate moved forward. In 1981, the Town of River Bend was officially incorporated and held a festival celebrating the event on July 25, 1981.

Since incorporating, the Town has continued to evolve. In 1986 the Town acquired the land that currently houses the Town Hall and adjacent park. Over the years, additional parks and municipal buildings have been added – most recently a new building that houses meeting spaces for community events and our police department, and a new building for our Public Works department. The Town manages and operates its own water and sewer system. Community volunteers operate and manage the Red Caboose Library and an active Community Watch organization.

In 2001, the Town transitioned to a Council-Manager form of government. A Town Manager was hired to oversee the day-to-day operations of the Town, including supervising the staff, developing and administering the annual budget, and performing a variety of other tasks to carry out the vision of the elected Council.

Through tireless efforts of the residents of the Town, the Town Council, the Advisory Boards, and the Town staff, the Town of River Bend has evolved from a small, residential neighborhood to a dynamic community which offers unique business opportunities while still maintaining a neighborhood feeling.

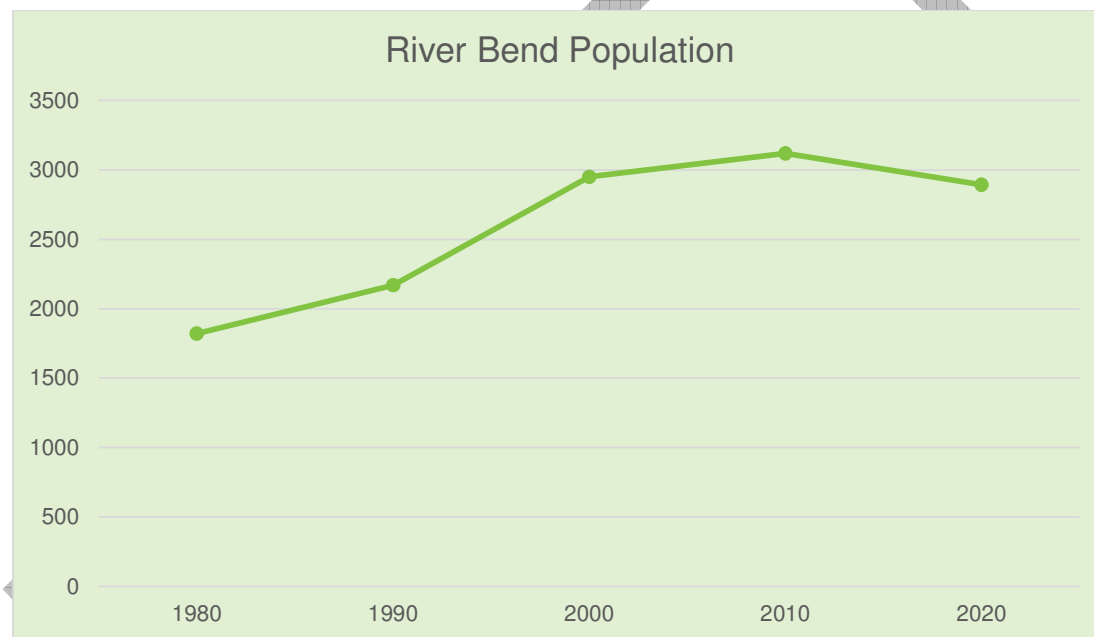
# Community Profile

## Population

### Historic Population Growth

Geographic Area	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
River Bend	1,821	2,170	2,949	3,119	2,894
Craven County	71,285	82,131	91,954	104,180	100,646
North Carolina	5,896,178	6,664,016	8,081,614	9,574,586	10,449,445

### Historic Population Growth Rates (US Census Bureau)



### Population Projections

Geographic Area	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
Craven County	100,646	103,334	103,336	103,335	103,335
North Carolina	10,449,445	11,743,841	12,966,080	14,170,486	15,369,596

### Population Projections (NC Office of State Budget & Management)

## Age/Sex/Race/Education

Median age is the age that divides the total age frequency into two equal parts (e.g., half of individuals are older than the median age and half are younger). It is a good indicator to gauge whether a population is getting older. In 2023, the median age of all people in the Town of River Bend was 52.5, about 35% higher than the median age in both Craven County and North Carolina.

Median Age by Sex	Town of River Bend	Craven County	North Carolina
Total Population	52.5	39.0	39.4
Male	53.3	35.5	37.8
Female	51.9	42.7	41.0

### S0101 – Age & Sex (US Census Bureau)

The Town of River Bend skews older – particularly compared with Craven County and North Carolina – with most citizens falling into the 40+ age category.

Population by Age Range	Town of River Bend		Craven County		North Carolina	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Population	2,896		102,391		10,835,491	
0 to 9 years	111	3.8%	11,488	11.2%	1,235,975	11.4%
10 to 19 years	253	8.7%	13,393	13.1%	1,388,048	12.8%
20 to 29 years	242	8.4%	13,538	13.2%	1,424,474	13.1%
30 to 39 years	287	9.9%	13,938	13.6%	1,445,930	13.3%
40 to 49 years	470	16.2%	10,041	9.8%	1,355,073	12.5%
50 to 59 years	420	14.5%	10,587	10.3%	1,375,569	12.7%
60 to 69 years	499	17.2%	14,881	14.5%	1,319,960	12.2%
70 to 79 years	434	15.0%	10,050	9.8%	891,828	8.2%
80 years and over	180	6.2%	4,475	4.4%	398,634	3.7%

### S0101 – Age & Sex (US Census Bureau)

In 2023, 55.8% of River Bend residents were women, which was markedly higher than both Craven County and North Carolina.

Population by Sex	Town of River Bend		Craven County		North Carolina	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Population	2,896		102,391		10,835,491	
Male	1,280	44.2%	51,272	50.1%	5,312,054	49.0%
Female	1,616	55.8%	51,119	49.9%	5,523,437	51.0%

### S0101 – Age & Sex (US Census Bureau)

In the Town of River Bend, for people reporting one race alone, 83.7% were White; 12.6% were Black or African American; and 0.5% were some other race. An estimated 3.1% of people in River Bend reported two or more races.

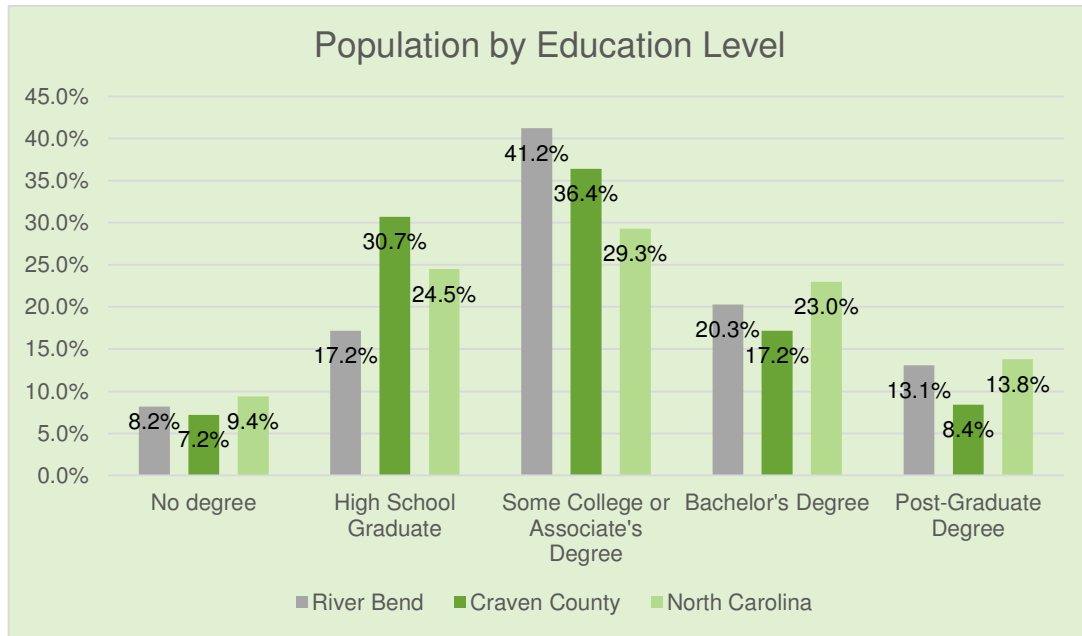
<b>Race &amp; Hispanic or Latino Origin</b>	<b>Town of River Bend</b>	<b>Craven County</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>
Total Population	2896	102,391	10,835,491
White	83.7%	65.2%	61.4%
Black or African American	12.6%	17.6%	20.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.4%	0.0%	1.0%
Asian	0.0%	3.1%	3.3%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Some other race	0.0%	3.9%	5.7%
Two or more races	3.1%	10.0%	8.3%
Hispanic or Latino origin (of any race)	3.3%	7.8%	11.4%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	80.4%	63.8%	59.8%

#### S0601 – Selected Characteristics (US Census Bureau)

Almost 92% of River Bend residents have a high school degree or higher. Over 33% have a Bachelor's degree or higher.

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Town of River Bend</b>		<b>Craven County</b>		<b>North Carolina</b>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Population 25 years and over	2,348		70,552		7,487,552	
Less than high school graduate	192	8.2%	5,054	7.2%	705,856	9.4%
High school graduate	405	17.2%	21,685	30.7%	1,831,714	24.5%
Some college or associate's degree	967	41.2%	25,709	36.4%	2,195,061	29.3%
Bachelor's degree	477	20.3%	12,168	17.2%	1,718,641	23.0%
Graduate or professional degree	307	13.1%	5,936	8.4%	1,036,280	13.8%

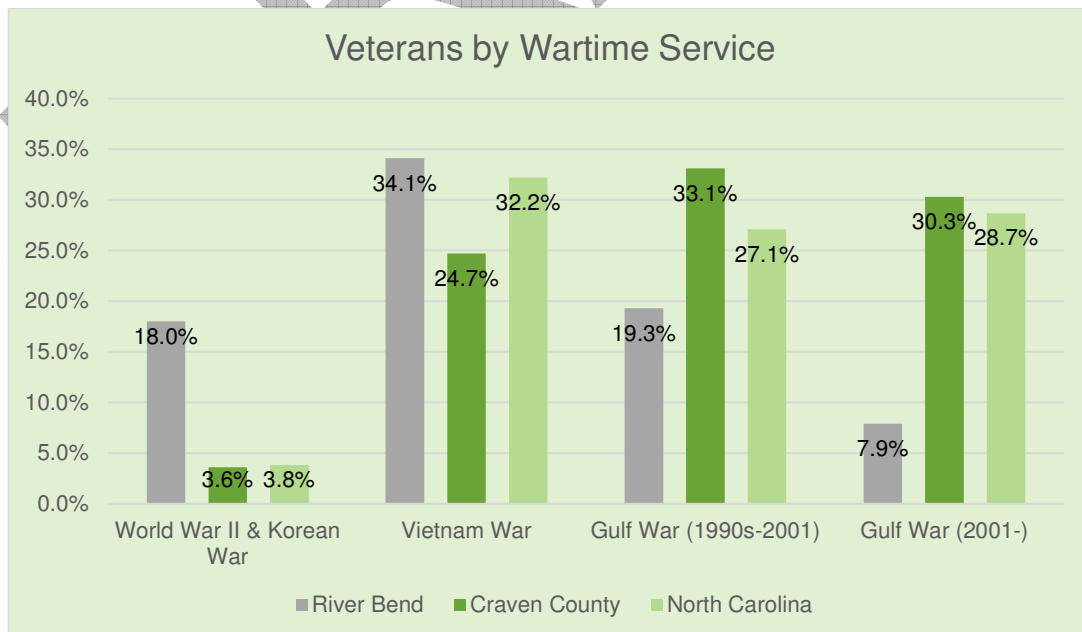
#### S1501 – Educational Attainment (US Census Bureau)



S1501 – Educational Attainment (US Census Bureau)

## Veterans & Military

In 2022, 14.3% of River Bend's population had veteran status; River Bend had 378 total veterans – 294 males and 84 females. A higher share of Craven County's population had veteran status (15.7%); Craven County had 11,506 total veterans – 9,752 males and 1,754 females. River Bend had a significantly higher share of veterans who served in World War II and/or the Korean War (18.0%) than both Craven County (3.6%) and North Carolina (3.8%), and a much lower share of veterans who served in the most recent Gulf War (7.9%) compared to Craven County (30.3%) and North Carolina (28.7%).



S2101 – Veteran Status (US Census Bureau)

## Household Characteristics

In 2023, the Town of River Bend had 1,345 total households and 875 family households (65.1%). River Bend had an average household size of 2.05 persons, slightly lower than Craven County's average household size of 2.39 persons and North Carolina's average household size of 2.40 persons.

Household Size	Town of River Bend	Craven County	North Carolina
Total Households	1,345	41,100	4,392,669
1-Person Household	28.1%	29.7%	29.1%
2-Person Household	50.2%	36.1%	36.2%
3-Person Household	15.6%	16.8%	15.4%
4-or-More-Person Household	6.1%	17.3%	19.3%

### S2501 – Occupancy Characteristics (US Census Bureau)

Among persons 15 years of age and older, 63.5% of males and 54.0% of females are currently married, which is higher than the percentages in both Craven County and North Carolina. Consequently, the population of persons who have never married in River Bend is lower when compared to Craven County and North Carolina.

Marital Status	Town of River Bend		Craven County		North Carolina	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Population 15 years and over	1,215	1,481	41,461	43,187	4,329,463	4,611,456
Now Married	63.5%	54.0%	47.9%	45.6%	51.6%	47.0%
Widowed	1.2%	14.6%	4.0%	9.1%	2.8%	8.6%
Divorced	15.1%	9.7%	8.4%	12.6%	8.8%	11.9%
Separated	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	2.7%	1.6%	2.2%
Never Married	20.2%	19.9%	37.7%	28.7%	35.2%	30.2%

### S1201 – Marital Status (US Census Bureau)

## Occupancy & Housing Costs

Vacancy Status	Town of River Bend	Craven County	North Carolina
Total Housing Units	1,627	48,300	4,979,177
Vacant Housing Units	282	7,200	586,508
For Rent	30.1%	12.2%	17.4%
Rented, Unoccupied	0.0%	3.6%	4.0%
For Sale	0.0%	4.5%	6.0%
Sold, Unoccupied	0.0%	4.7%	3.2%
Seasonal/Occasional Use	25.5%	19.7%	32.5%
Other Vacant	44.3%	37.7%	36.6%

### B25004 – Vacancy Status (US Census Bureau)

In 2023, the median value of owner-occupied housing units in the Town of River Bend was \$233,700, which is slightly higher than that of Craven County (\$229,500). Most homes in River Bend fall within the \$200,000-\$299,999 value range.

Value	Town of River Bend	Craven County	North Carolina
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	1,188	28,487	2,913,467
Under \$100,000	3.4%	20.3%	12.2%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	11.7%	8.0%	7.0%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	23.7%	12.4%	9.5%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	37.1%	26.6%	19.9%
\$300,000 - \$499,999	19.2%	21.6%	29.5%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	5.0%	10.1%	18.4%
\$1,000,000 or More	0.0%	1.1%	3.6%

### DP04 – Selected Housing Characteristics (US Census Bureau)

Homeowners with and without mortgages have ongoing monthly costs. The selected costs used for these estimates include payments for mortgages or other debts on the property, real estate taxes, insurance, utilities, and other related costs. The median Selected Monthly Owner Costs (SMOC) in the Town of River Bend were slightly below the median costs in both Craven County and North Carolina.

Selected Monthly Owner Costs (SMOC)	Town of River Bend	Craven County	North Carolina
Housing Units with a Mortgage	680	14,291	1,785,195
Less than \$500	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
\$500 - \$999	7.9%	16.9%	16.1%
\$1,000 - \$1,499	68.1%	39.0%	28.7%



\$1,500 - \$1,999	14.7%	23.6%	22.7%
\$2,000 - \$2,499	4.0%	8.5%	14.0%
\$2,500 - \$2,999	2.9%	8.1%	7.1%
\$3,000 or More	2.4%	3.8%	10.1%
Median SMOC	\$1,332	\$1,424	\$1,578

#### DP04 – Selected Housing Characteristics (US Census Bureau)

### Economic Characteristics

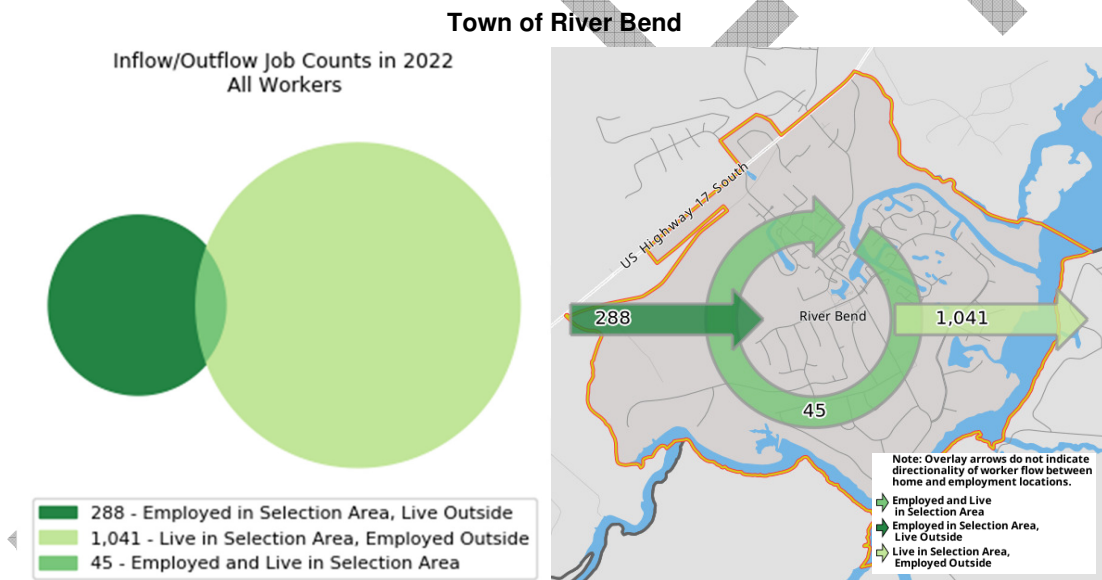
In 2023, the per capita income in the Town of River Bend was \$38,496 and the median household income was \$68,314. In Craven County both the per capita income (\$36,111) and median household income (\$59,399) were lower than the Town of River Bend. However, Craven County had a higher percentage of households in the \$150,000+ range (11.9%) compared to the Town of River Bend (9.8%).

Household Income	Town of River Bend	Craven County	North Carolina
Total Households	1,345	41,100	4,392,669
Less than \$10,000	3.4%	6.5%	5.2%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	0.0%	4.4%	3.6%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	5.7%	9.7%	7.0%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	11.7%	7.8%	7.5%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	13.2%	13.8%	11.9%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	21.9%	17.2%	17.5%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	7.9%	11.8%	13.0%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	26.3%	17.0%	16.5%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	5.0%	5.3%	7.9%
\$200,000 or More	4.8%	6.6%	9.7%
Median Income	\$68,314	\$59,399	\$70,804
Mean Income	\$82,947	\$86,508	\$98,139

#### S1901 & B19301 – Income in the Past 12 Months (US Census Bureau)

Only 4.1% of River Bend residents are also employed within the Town of River Bend. 95.9% of residents are employed outside of the Town of River Bend. In Craven County, a significantly higher share of its residents are also employed in Craven County (48.9%); 51.1% of residents live within the county, but are employed elsewhere.

Inflow/Outflow Job Counts (All Jobs)	Town of River Bend		Craven County	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
Net Job Inflow (+) or Outflow (-)	-753		-4,394	
Living in the Area	1,086	100.0%	38,453	100.0%
Living & Employed in the Area	45	4.1%	18,786	48.9%
Living in the Area, Employed Outside	1,041	95.9%	19,667	51.1%
Employed in the Area	333	100%	34,059	100.0%
Employed & Living in the Area	45	13.5%	18,786	55.2%
Employed in the Area, Living Outside	288	86.5%	15,273	44.8%



LEHD, OnTheMap (US Census Bureau)

# Town Vision

River Bend is a dynamic and uniquely located waterfront and golfing community well prepared to benefit from the area's historical and natural resources. By protecting its assets and actively fostering a diverse multi-aged population, the River Bend community will continue to be a safe, attractive place to live and will be competitively positioned to participate in the broader area's economic and population growth.



## A Vision for the Future Looking Ahead

- » **Dynamic waterfront location** – The Town wants to take advantage of its unique location to encourage growth that fully utilizes the waterfront. A public kayak launch is available; considerations for a public boat launch should be made.
- » **A diverse multi-aged population** – The demographics of the Town have changed over the years. While it still trends to an older population, efforts should be made to encourage younger people and families to move to River Bend.
- » **Safe place to live** – The River Bend Police Department provides 24-hour coverage, seven days a week to provide timely response to emergency calls and practice proactive community policing. Our police force is continually looking for ways to improve to keep our citizens safe.
- » **Economic and population growth** – Our business district is relatively small but has seen some growth within recent years. The Town looks to encourage further business development and also new residential developments in the undeveloped areas of Town.

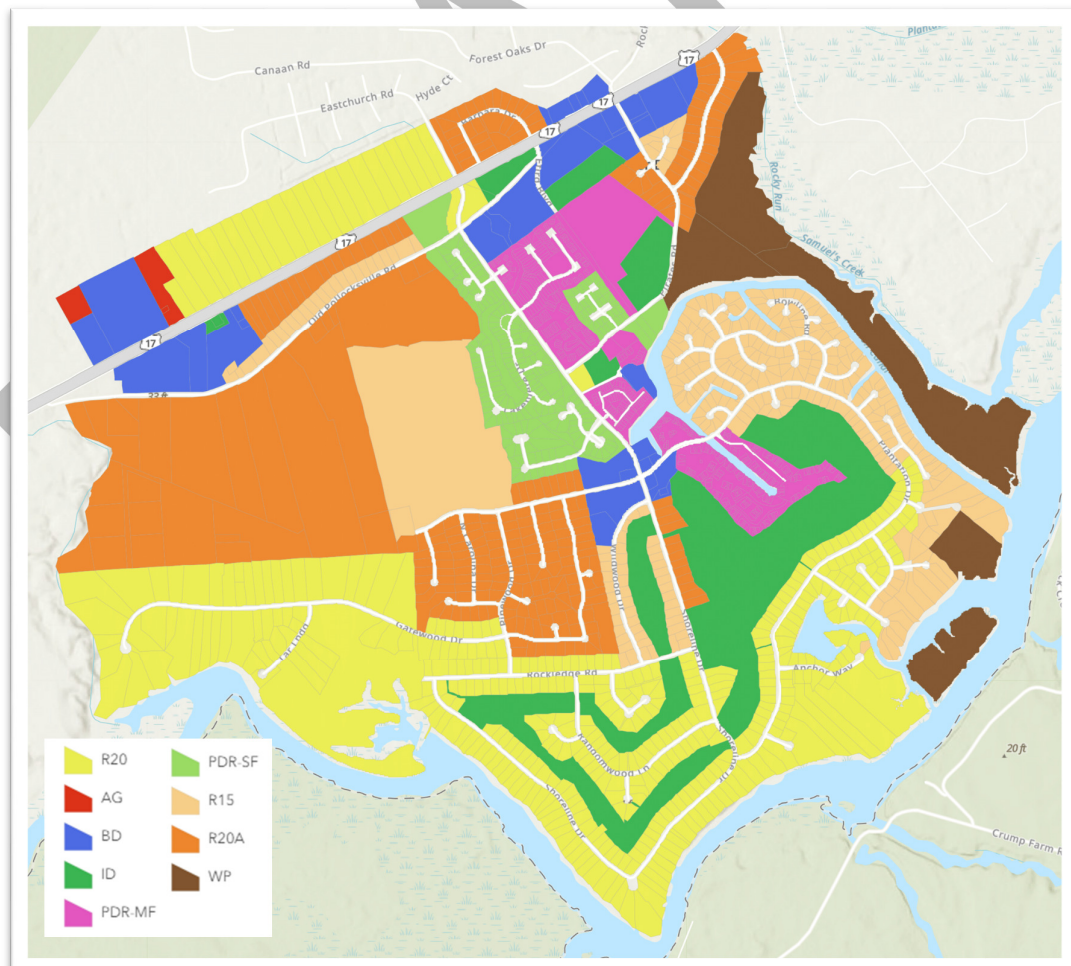
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# Land Use Patterns & Community Resources

To better plan for the future of the River Bend community, it is important to understand the existing features of the area, including the existing land use and environmental constraints.

## Existing Land Use & Development

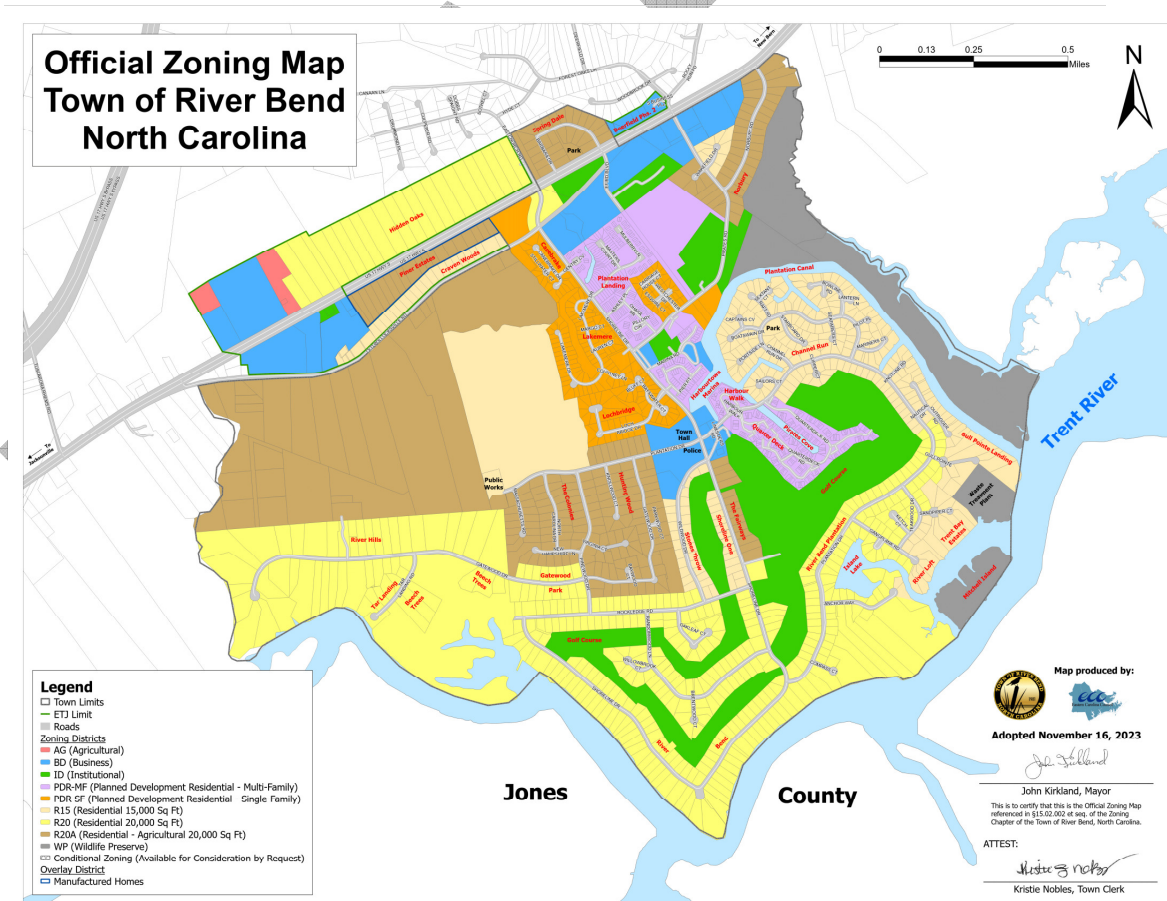
The Town of River Bend began as a residential development centered around an 18-hole golf course, 36-stall riding academy, and a marina. The first family moved into the new development in July 1969. Since then, there have been many residential subdivisions developed with a variety of housing options and a slow, but significant, increase in commercial and institutional development. The Town of River Bend remains primarily a residential community, and the majority of the undeveloped parcels are currently zoned for residential uses.



## Current Zoning (Map)

The following zoning classifications are contained within the Town of River Bend (both within the town limits and the ETJ):

- » AG (Agricultural) – designated as prime farmland
- » BD (Business) – commercial development for retail, office space, etc.
- » ID (Institutional) – established for churches, private clubs, academic facilities, health-related facilities, etc.
- » PDR-MF (Planned Development Residential – Multi-Family) – residential district with 1 and 2 story attached condominiums, apartments, and townhouses with no more than 4 dwelling units in a single building; no more than 6.5 dwellings per acre of land
- » PDR-SF (Planned Development Residential – Single-Family) – residential district for single-family detached dwellings; no more than 4 dwellings per acre of land
- » R15 (Residential) – residential district for single-family detached dwellings; minimum lot size of 15,000 square feet
- » R20 (Residential) – residential district for single-family detached dwellings; minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet
- » R20A (Residential/Agricultural) – designated for both agricultural and residential uses; minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet
- » WP (Wildlife Preserve) – established to protect the wetland habitat



### Current Land Use

These estimates include both property within the town limits and within the extra-territorial jurisdiction.

Land Use Category	Acres	Percentage
Agricultural	110.36	5.2%
Civic	25.29	1.2%
Commercial	103.60	4.9%
Golf Course	141.23	6.6%
Institutional	166.39	5.5%
Residential	1133.33	53.1%
Undeveloped and/or Forested	367.70	17.2%
Wildlife Preserve	84.6	4.0%

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## Community Facilities & Public Infrastructure

### Transportation & Traffic

The roadway network in the Town of River Bend primarily consists of secondary and local roads that connect with the main highway at the entrance of town. US Highway 17.

The Town of River Bend Police Department maintains a Traffic Unit to provide motor vehicle law enforcement combined with educational initiatives and accurate crash scene investigations to enhance the Town's quality of transportation. The team maintains close working relationships with other Town departments, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, and the Governor's Highway Safety Program.

### Parks & Recreation

The Town of River Bend has several recreational amenities for the enjoyment of residents of all ages.

- » Two playgrounds, one near Town Hall, and the other in the Springdale subdivision.
- » A skateboard park near Town Hall
- » A basketball court on Wildwood Drive near Public Works
- » A volleyball court on Town Commons
- » Two large "recreation" fields – Town Commons and Ritter Field - include a walking trail and fitness trail
- » A smaller "recreation" field at the corner of Starboard Drive/Channel Run Drive
- » Kayak / Canoe Launch to the Trent River
- » A dog park adjacent to the skateboard park

We also have a small picnic shelter (with restrooms), a gazebo in Town Hall Park, and two docks overlooking Town Hall pond.

## Natural Resources & Environmental Protection

### Water

Our water system withdraws from the Castle Hayne Aquifer through three wells with a combined capacity of 925,000 gallons per day. Two elevated storage tanks with a total capacity of 400,000 gallons ensure a consistent supply and adequate pressure throughout the system.

The water in the Castle Hayne Aquifer, while plentiful, requires treatment to remove iron and manganese. Using pH adjustment, pressure filters and adding chlorine, our operators ensure that clean water is ready for our customers to use.

Water is transmitted to nearly 1500 households through 19 miles of pipe ranging in size from 2 to 8 inches in diameter. In addition to providing water for consumption, our system also stands ready in the event of fire. There are 108 hydrants located throughout the system to give the fire department ample access to water for their work.

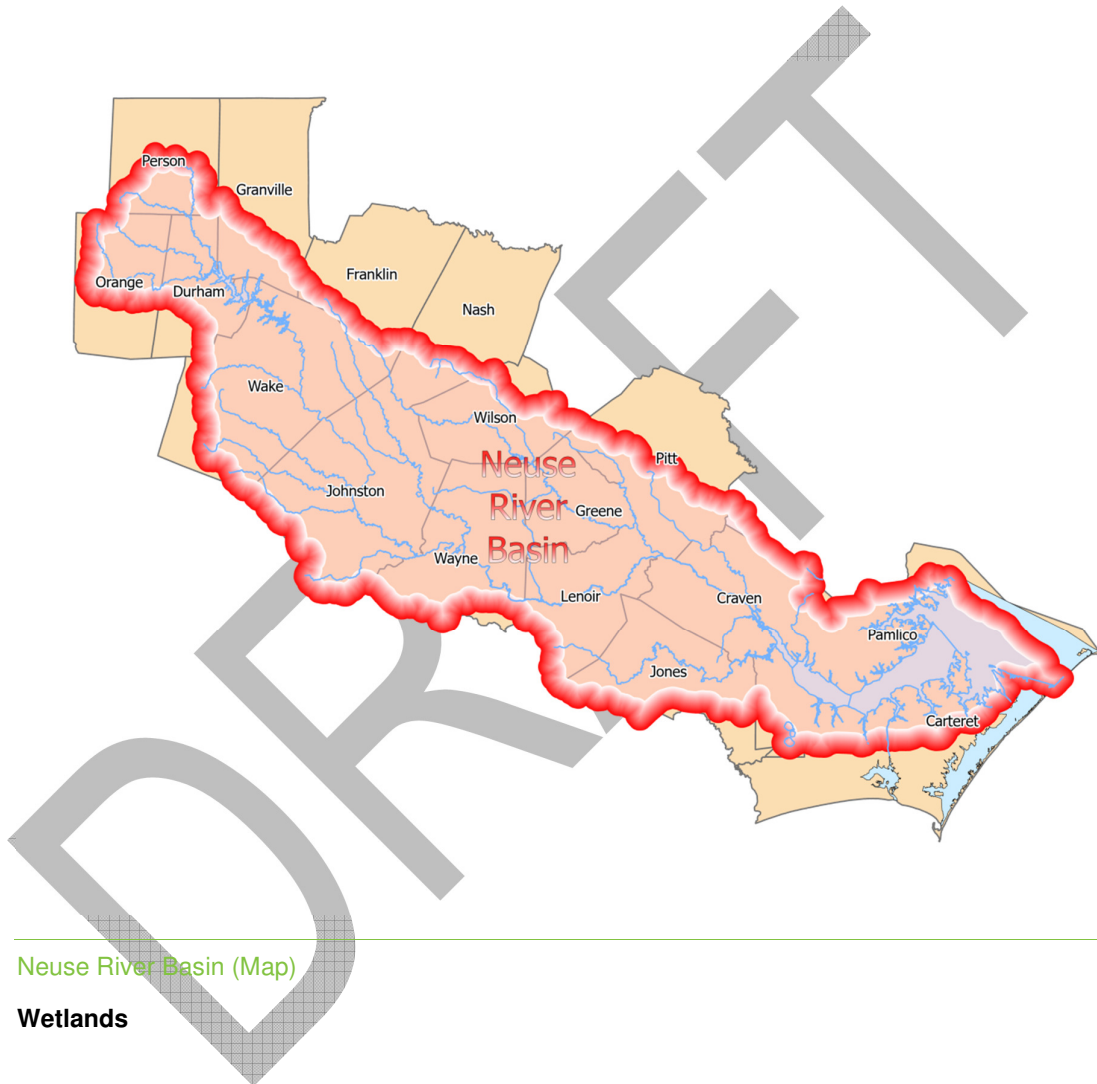
The Town of River Bend owns and operates a Wastewater Treatment and Collection system serving approximately 950 households and businesses. Wastewater is collected from our customers and transmitted via approximately 11 miles of gravity and force main pipes. Eight lift stations pressurize portions of the system, so the waste is efficiently moved to our treatment facility on Gull Pointe Drive.

For a three-bedroom home, the state standard for waste treatment usage is 330 gallons per day (110 gallons per bedroom). In theory, that would translate to 313,500 gallons per day of usage for

us. By that standard, we should be using 95% of our permitted capacity. In reality, on average, we only use about 36% of our permitted capacity.

The North Carolina Department of Water Quality (DWQ) administers federal and state regulations designed to protect the quality of the receiving waters. Part of this administration is the issuance of permits for treatment facilities like the one we have here in River Bend. Our treatment plant has a permitted capacity of 330,000 gallons per day and discharges treated effluent to the Trent River. We take weekly samples of our effluent to test chemical and nutrient content to ensure our plant is operating effectively and we are within the limits established by DWQ.

The Town holds three discharge permits, one for the main wastewater plant, and the other two to discharge backwash for our water treatment filters.



Neuse River Basin (Map)

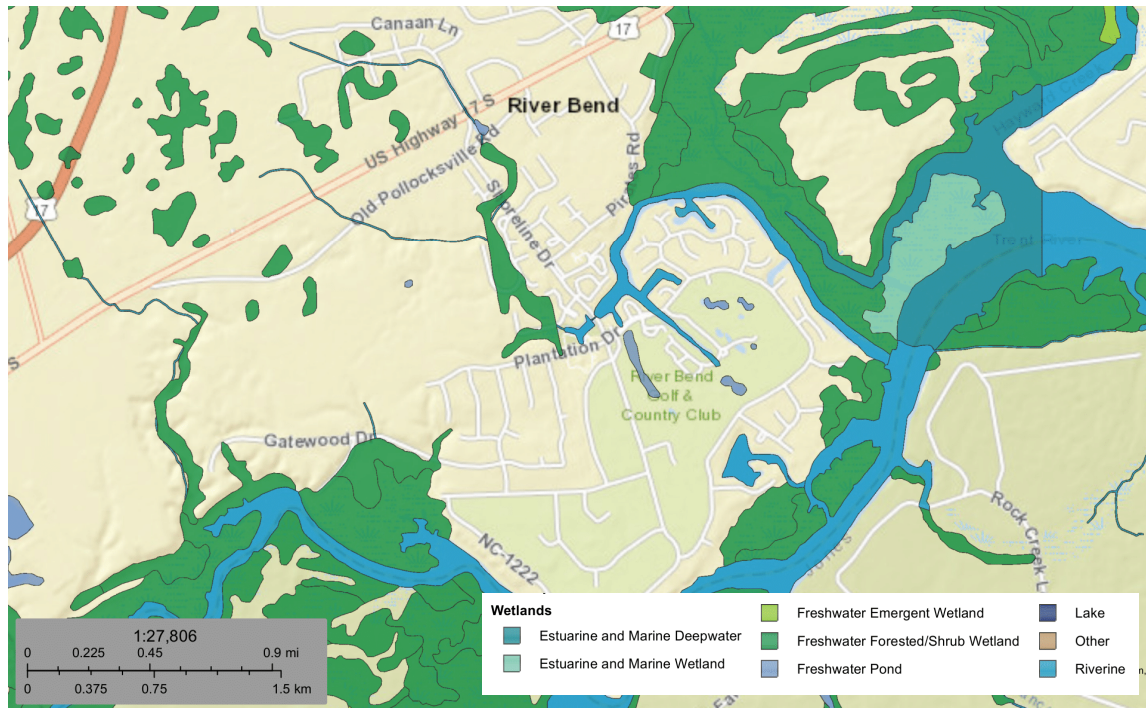
## Wetlands

The wetlands within the Town of River Bend primarily fall into one of two categories:

- » Riverine – The Riverine System includes all wetlands and deepwater habitats contained within a channel, with two exceptions: (1) wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, emergent mosses, or lichens, and (2) habitats with water containing ocean-derived salts of 0.5 ppt or greater. The riverine areas within the Town of River Bend are also contained within the tidal subsystem – the gradient is low and water velocity fluctuates under tidal influence.
- » Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland – The Palustrine System includes all nontidal wetlands dominated by trees, shrubs, persistent emergents, emergent mosses or lichens, and all such wetlands that occur in tidal areas where salinity due to ocean-derived salts is below 0.5 ppt. It also includes wetlands lacking such vegetation, but with all of the following four characteristics: (1) area less than 8 ha (20 acres); (2) active wave-formed or bedrock shoreline features lacking;



(3) water depth in the deepest part of basin less than 2.5 m (8.2 ft) at low water; and (4) salinity due to ocean-derived salts less than 0.5 ppt. It is also characterized by woody vegetation that is 6 meters tall or taller, majority deciduous, and semi permanently flooded.

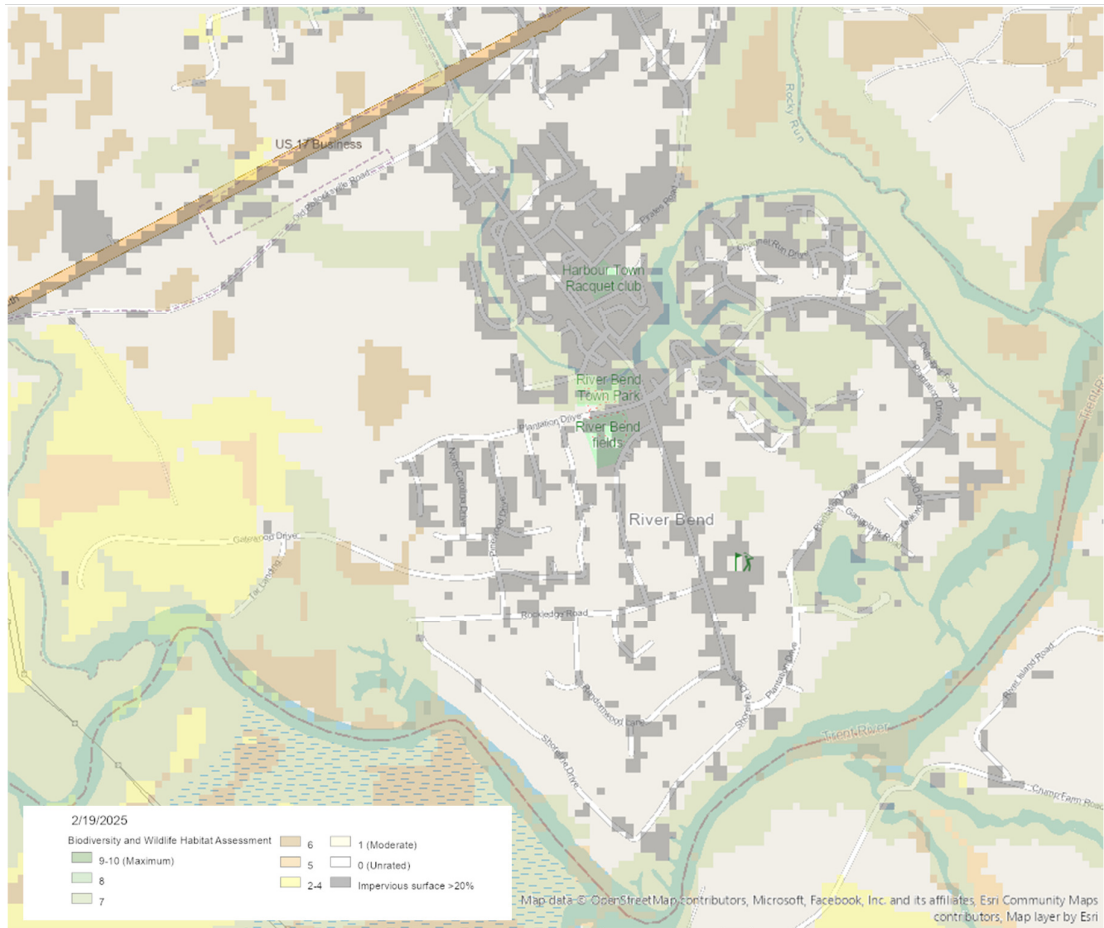


Wetlands (Map)

## Biodiversity & Wildlife Habitats

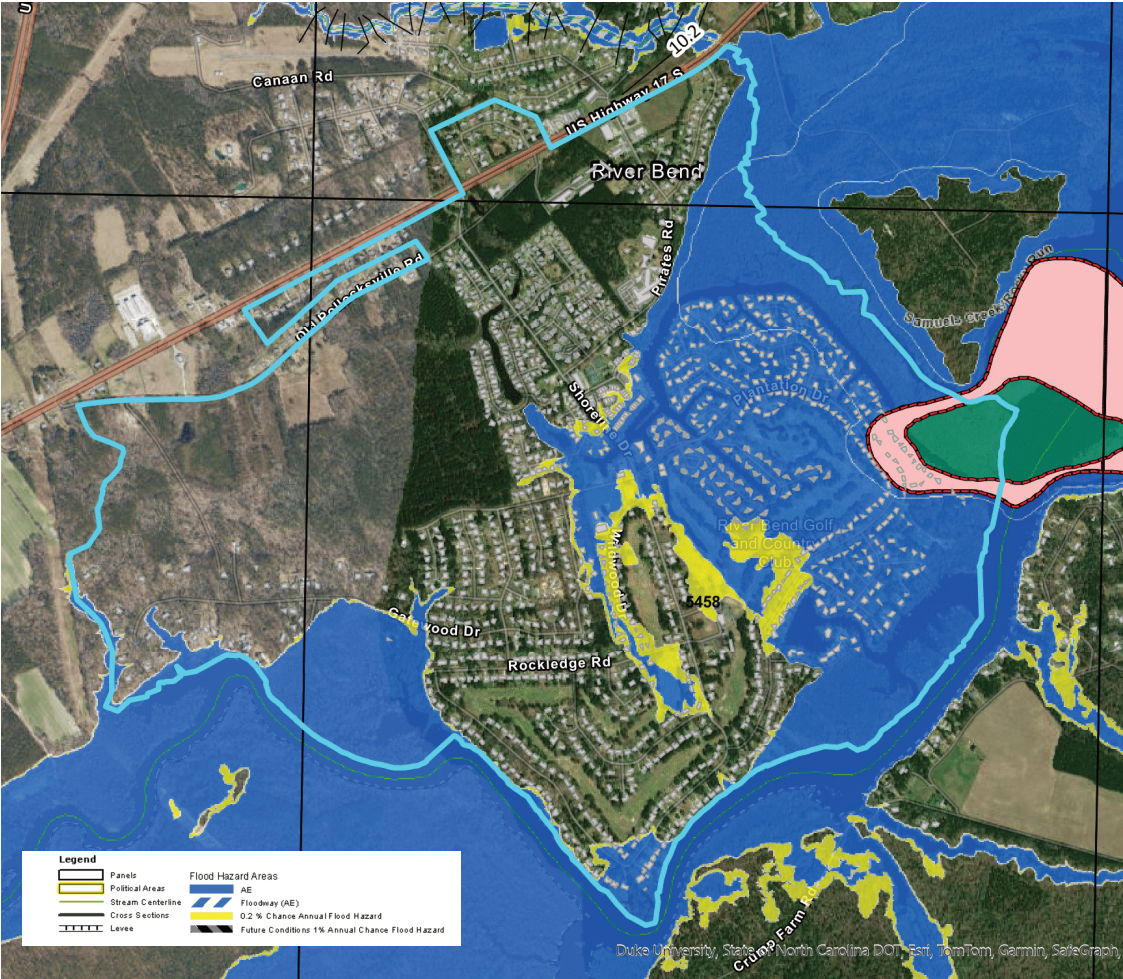
Riverine habitats are important for several wildlife species, especially to herpetofauna that utilize aquatic habitats during part of all of their life cycle, and to a variety of common mammals that are semi-aquatic and/or that have an aquatic food base (e.g., beavers, river otters, certain bats).

The Neuse River Basin, in which the Town of River Bend lies, is home to a variety of species – some rare – including the Neuse River waterdog, an aquatic salamander that is found nowhere else in the world outside the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico river basins.



## Biodiversity Map

Floodplain



Floodplain Area Map



# Community Vision & Future Planning

## Land Use Goals

In order to provide more detailed guidance to Town leaders as they consider future land use decisions, this Plan identifies a series of goals and objectives for specific topic areas. Goals are statements that identify what should happen, and objectives are statements that identify actions or methods to achieve the goals. Each goal will typically have several objectives related to it.

### Preserve and celebrate small-town charm, scale, and community roots

Proactively use regulatory mechanisms such as nuisance, minimum housing, zoning, and junk vehicle ordinances to ensure continued maintenance and upkeep of properties, including the use of condemnation when appropriate.

Maintain the Town Hall and Municipal Building as the center of the community's civic life through the continued siting of public buildings, parks, and other civic institutions.

### Coordinated, intentional, and well-planned growth and development

Discourage development that would disrupt the integrity and cohesiveness of existing neighborhoods.

Promote development patterns that allow safe and convenient access between residential areas and shopping, services, community amenities, recreation, and public facilities.

Encourage future development to occur within the existing town limits, or in designated growth areas with access to existing water and sewer services, and other community facilities; encourage infill development.

Plan for continued growth and development that improves the quality of life within the Town of River Bend—growth that improves the community rather than growth for growth's sake.

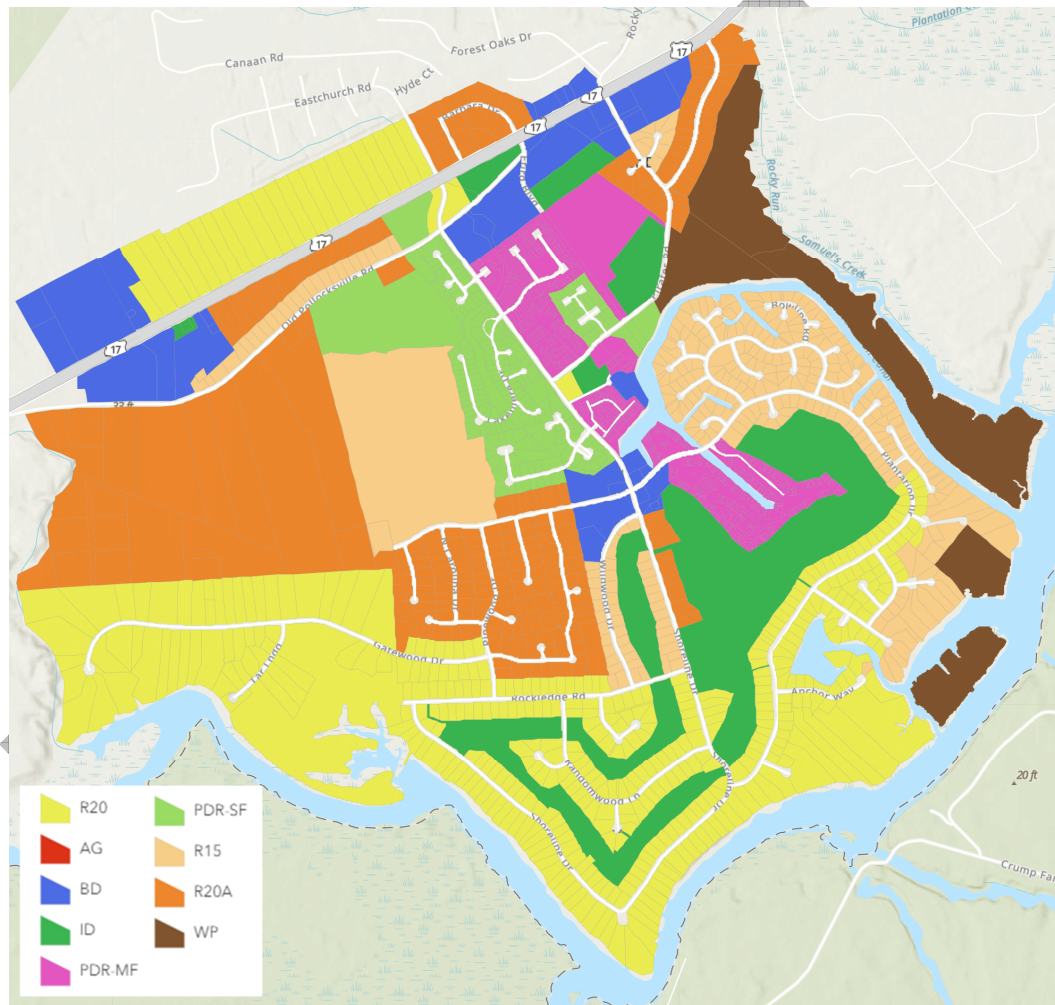
Protection of open space and critical natural features	Encourage and promote the preservation of significant open spaces, wetlands, floodplains, and stream corridors in their natural condition.
	Limit and/or mitigate the negative impacts of development on the environment.
	Balance the need to conserve land while allowing purposeful, quality development in strategic locations to meet the needs of River Bend residents, visitors, and businesses.
Support for business development	Ensure that industrial development is appropriately buffered from neighboring land uses through buffer and screening requirements.
	Encourage non-residential development that is aesthetically pleasing and meets the market and economic development needs of the community; promote emerging green industries when possible.
High-quality parks and recreational facilities that are accessible to all	Ensure parks, greenways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and community centers/facilities are located conveniently throughout the Town and connected to each other and the surrounding neighborhoods in a way that ensures broad access.
	Provide both passive and active recreational opportunities for Carthage residents by protecting natural resources that have recreational, environmental, or aesthetic value.
Regulations that are consistent with the Town's vision	Amend ordinances as needed to address changes in physical, social, or environmental circumstances that make existing regulations unnecessary, outdated, or obsolete; or to accommodate new uses or situations that arise and are not clearly covered by existing ordinances.
	Modify ordinances to be more understandable and user-friendly when possible.

## Future Land Use

In crafting a vision for the future development patterns of the Town of River Bend, this plan aims to provide a framework this is both descriptive and flexible – descriptive enough to provide the Town's decision makers with clear information on the intended vision, but flexible enough to allow decision makers latitude in the interpretation of the vision.

The Future Land Use Map found in this chapter should not be interpreted as a regulatory document, such as a zoning map. Instead, it should be viewed as general guidance to help the Town's decision makers make clear, informed decisions in support of an agreed-upon vision.

As a general guide, most growth is anticipated to occur in and around the existing northwest quadrant of town, as well as limited development in the US Highway 17 corridor.



## Conclusion

Achievement of these goals and objectives will require major effort on the part of the Town Council, the Planning Board, the Board of Adjustment and citizens in the planning area. Existing ordinances and land use control tools and enforcement of these controls are the most efficient method of implementing the Land Use Plan. The zoning ordinance is the most effective tool for implementation as it is concerned with land use, intensity, and placement of buildings. Other tools currently in force in the planning area are building codes and subdivision regulations. These tools, when properly enforced, will ensure implementation of the Land Use Plan.

As the population of Craven County grows, the Town of River Bend needs to be prepared to meet the growth demands. As this growth continues to impact the community, it will be incredibly important for the Town's decision makers to intentionally implement the vision outlined in this plan—a vibrant, active community with a charming hometown character that complements its natural environment, reflects its cultural heritage, and is connected to the larger region.

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**§ 15.02.047 DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS.**

For convenience in the administration of this chapter, there is hereby established and made a part of this chapter the following schedule for the several districts setting forth minimum limitations and requirements. The requirements listed for each district as designated are subject to all provisions of this chapter and, unless otherwise indicated, shall be deemed to be the minimum requirements in every instance of their application.

Schedule of District Requirements										
	R-20	R-20A	R-15	PDR-MF	PDR-SF	ID	BD	WP	AGR	PD-BD
Min. Lot Area (SF)	20,000	20,000	15,000	-	6,500	20,000	20,000	-	-	20,000
District Size	-	-	-	5 acres	10 acres	-	-	-	-	4 acres
Density	-	-	-	*	†	-	‡	-	-	‡
Min. Front Lot Line (FT)	90**	90**	85**	50††	50††	-	100	-	-	100
Min. Bldg. Set Back (FT)	30	30	30	25	25	40	40	-	-	40
Min. Side Yard (FT)										
Main Building	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	-	-	10
Accessory Building	5	5	5	5	5	-	-	-	-	-
Swimming Pool	10	10	10	-	-	10	-	-	-	-
Tennis Court	15	15	15	-	-	10	-	-	-	-
Min. Rear Yard (FT)										
Main Building	15	15	15	15	15	10	20	-	-	20
Accessory Building	10	10	10	10	10	-	-	-	-	-
Swimming Pool	10	10	10	-	-	10	-	-	-	-
Tennis Court	15	15	15	-	-	10	-	-	-	-
Accessory Building	PLEASE REFERENCE CHART IN §15.02.061									
Max. Lot Coverage by Bldg. (%)	24	24	24	24	30	24	24	-	-	24
Max. Height (FT)										
Main Building	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	-	-	34

Schedule of District Requirements										
	R-20	R-20A	R-15	PDR-MF	PDR-SF	ID	BD	WP	AGR	PD-BD
Accessory Building	The lesser of 18 FT or one (1) story									
CAMA and FEMA setbacks, if applicable, take priority to Town designated setbacks.										
*Density – PDR-MF – No more than 6.5 dwelling units per acre. †Density – PDR-SF – No more than 4 dwelling units per acre. ‡Density – BD, PD-BD – Nor more than 4 business units per acre. **Min. Front Lot Line – R-20, R-20A, R-15 – 40 FT on cul-de-sac. ††Min. Front Lot Line – PDR-MF, PDR-SF – 25 FT on cul-de-sac.										

Penalty, see § 1.01.999

*Amended 11/18/2021*

**IMPERVIOUS SURFACE.** Any surface which because of its material or composition or compacted nature impedes or prevents natural infiltration of storm water into the soil. Impervious surfaces include, but are not limited to, roofs, roof extensions, patios, balconies, decks (except wood slotted decks), athletic courts, swimming pools (excluding the water area of swimming pool), streets, parking areas, driveways, sidewalks, and any concrete, stone, brick, asphalt, or compacted gravel surface.

*Added 03/18/10*

**INCIDENTAL HOME OCCUPATION.** Any use conducted entirely within a dwelling and carried on by the occupants thereof, which use is clearly incidental and secondary to the use of the dwelling for dwelling purposes. See § 15.02.067.

**INSTITUTIONAL USE.** Any use permitted by this chapter in an institutional district.

**JUNKYARD.** Any land or area used, in whole or in part, for commercial storage and/or sale of waste paper, rags or scrap metal, and including commercial storage of inoperative motor vehicles and boats, and dismantling of vehicles or machinery.

**LOT.**

- (1) A portion of a subdivision, or any other parcel of land, intended as a unit for transfer of ownership, or occupied or intended for occupancy by a principal building, together with its accessory buildings, including the open space required under this chapter.
- (2) For the purpose of this chapter, **LOT** shall mean any number of contiguous lots of record for location of 1 principal building and its accessory buildings.

**LOT, CORNER.**

- (1) A lot which occupies the interior angle of the intersection of 2 street rights-of-way which make an angle of more than 45 degrees and less than 135 degrees with each other.
- (2) A **CORNER LOT** shall be deemed to have 2 front yards (1 contiguous with each street right-of-way), 1 side yard and 1 rear yard; provided, however, that for a **CORNER LOT** of record prior to 12-19-1990, the minimum side yard requirements for the main building shall be applicable to the front yard which is opposite the side yard.
- (3) The owner shall be required to specify which is the side yard and which is the rear yard in his application for an initial zoning permit.

**LOT DEPTH.** The depth of a lot is the distance measured in the mean direction of the side lines of the lot from the midpoint of the front lot line to the midpoint of the rear lot line.

**LOT OF RECORD.** A lot which is part of a subdivision, a plat of which has been recorded in the office of the Register of Deeds of Craven County prior to the adoption or applicable amendment of this chapter, or a lot described by metes and bounds, the description of which has been recorded prior to the adoption or applicable amendment of this chapter.

**LOT WIDTH.** The distance between the side lot lines as measured at the building line.