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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **Purpose**

The concept of conducting small area plans for Catawba County was one of sixteen growth strategies resulting from the County's long-range Strategic Growth Plan (1999). The Growth Plan stated that the Small Area Plans "would explore general development patterns and trends and evaluate public service/facility deficiencies needing attention." The document further stated that the plans should also "include conceptual sketch plans based upon appropriate land use and zoning concepts and be used for consideration for future zoning changes and subdivision standards."

Through the development of the small area plan, a committee would assess their area's current quality of life and sustainability on issues such as traffic congestion, residential development patterns, water quality, library service levels, utility capacities and school facilities. Upon reviewing these issues, the committee then would recommend measures for improvement. Specifically, the Small Area Planning Committee was asked to discuss and develop goals and action statements for the following issues: 1) economic development; 2) natural resources; 3) cultural resources; 4) community facilities and public services; 5) housing; 6) land use and community design; and 7) transportation. The plan would then include implementation strategies for the goals and action statements, whether it is through ordinance or policy amendments, modified capital improvement plans, or coordination with other agencies to complete specific tasks.

#### **Process**

The process for developing the small area plan was a grassroots effort that began with the appointment of the Catawba Small Area Planning Committee in November 2002 by the Board of Commissioners. The 12 Committee members were interested citizens who live or own land in the Small Area Plan boundary and volunteered their time to develop a small area plan for their community. The committee also consisted of a Planning Board member who served as liaison to the Board. The Committee held its first meeting in January 2003. The County Planning staff and the Western Piedmont Council of Governments educated and assisted the committee in the development of their individual plan. During the process of developing the plan, the Committee solicited input from citizens in the planning area through a Community Input Meeting held in May 2003. At this meeting, citizens were asked how they saw their community developing in the future using a 10 to 20 year planning period. Seventeen residents participated in this meeting held at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Claremont. Results from this Community Input Meeting are provided in Appendix A. The committee used this input in the development of the plan's guiding principles and recommendations. Upon completion of a draft plan, the committee sponsored another public meeting in January 2004, which also was held at St. Mark's in Claremont. At this meeting, the Plan's maps and

recommendations were presented to the community. Input from the six residents who participated at this meeting was considered by the committee in amending the draft plan.

When the committee's recommendations were complete, their final document was presented to the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners for review and consideration for adoption. Presentation to these Boards was through a public hearing process, with the public invited to express its comments on the proposed plan. The Committee and the Planning Board held a joint work session on March 8, 2004 to review the plan recommendations in detail. Based on discussions at this meeting, several minor amendments were made. The Committee then presented the final document to the Planning Board at its March 29, 2004 meeting. Upon hearing citizens' comments at the meeting, the Planning Board recommended the plan to the Board of Commissioners as presented.

The Board of Commissioners reviewed the plan during one-on-one meetings with the Chair of the Committee during January 2004. The Board of Commissioners then conducted its public hearing and adopted the plan as presented at its April 19, 2004 meeting.

Over the next five years, issues may arise that have not been addressed in this document. Since the plan is intended to be an active document, it must be capable of adapting to changes and new challenges. The Catawba SAP Committee recommends reviewing the plan every five years, or as conditions change. Amendments to the Plan have a potential impact on all residents and businesses in the Catawba area and therefore should be treated in a manner that would allow for public input, through notice and hearings, during the amendment procedure.

## **STUDY AREA**

In general, the Catawba Small Area Plan study area is located south of Interstate 40 and north of NC Highway 10, bounded by the cities of Newton and Claremont in the west and the Town of Catawba to the east. It is south of the St. Stephens/Oxford SAP study area and north of the Sherrills Ford and the Balls Creek SAP areas. The boundary of the Catawba SAP area follows NC Highway 10 from the Newton Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) west to the ETJ of the Town of Catawba, then north around the Town's ETJ to the Catawba River. It then follows the River north to I-40 and west along the Interstate to the ETJ boundary of Claremont and south back to Newton's ETJ boundary. The Catawba SAP study area encompasses 7,352 acres, excluding land in dedicated rights-of-way.

See *Map 1, "Catawba SAP Boundary."*

## **HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

Within decades after Adam Sherrill crossed the Catawba in the 1740s, white pioneers began settling the land that was to become Catawba County. Mostly these men and women were engaged in farming, drawn to the area by cheap land and abundant opportunities for farming. By the 1770s between 400 and 500 families were estimated to have settled the land west of the Catawba River, according to reports Governor William Tryon sent back to London.

Settlement continued throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and into the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Western Railroad largely determined settlement patterns in eastern Catawba County before the Civil War. The Town of Catawba, originally called Catawba Station, grew in the 1860s around the railroad station, which helped the community prosper as a trading and later distribution center. The Town of Catawba, incorporated in 1893, and the City of Claremont, incorporated in that same year, both grew up around the railroad. Even as these towns grew, farming continued to dominate the area throughout the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as manufacturing began to make its presence felt.

The rural nature of the current Catawba community reflects the largely agricultural heritage of the community. Residents still identify churches as significant contributors to the community, and the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge is a nationally significant landmark that residents are committed to preserving.

## **COMMUNITY PROFILE**

### **ASSETS AND KEY ISSUES**

During the May 2003 community meeting, Catawba area residents participated in small group discussions to identify their likes, dislikes and future visions of the community. As a result of the discussions, the committee identified broad categories of assets and key issues to direct their work. In the following sections of the plan, more specific comments from the community meeting comprise the guiding principles of each topic.

#### **Community Assets**

- Rural setting
  - Un-congested
  - Open space
  - Scenic topography
- Historical sites and heritage
- Close proximity to Interstate 40
- Public services
  - Schools
  - Medical facilities

#### **Key Issues**

- Traffic
- Lack of water and sewer utilities
- Need for community recreation
- Loss of farmland and open space
- Over-development

## **MAJOR POINTS OF REFERENCE**

The Catawba SAP encompasses approximately 7,300 acres of land in eastern Catawba County. A significant natural feature bordering the study area is the Catawba River. Other significant natural features include the Lyle Creek, and a number of streams and scenic vistas.

## **DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

The study area experienced a significant population growth from 1990 to 2000. The number of people residing in the area grew at a rate of 26.4%. The population in 1990 for the area was 2,052 while the 2000 Census indicated a population of 2,593, an increase of 541 persons (see chart below). The growth rate for the entire county was 19.7%, somewhat less than the growth rate of the study area. The study area's net gain of 541 persons represented 2% of the total County population increase of 23,273.

<b>Catawba SAP Small Area Plan, Study Area Growth: 1990 to 2000</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Net Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Persons</b>	2,052	2,593	541	26.4%
<b>Households</b>	750	1,028	278	37.1%
<b>Persons/Household</b>	2.73	2.52	-0.21	-7.7%

Source: US Census, 1990, and 2000; compiled by WPCOG Data Center, September 2002.

The number of households grew significantly faster than the number of persons in the study area, resulting in a lower average of persons per household. This trend is consistent with county, state and national trends, all indicating a lower number of persons per household.

<b>Catawba County Population Growth: 1990 to 2000</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Net Change</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Persons</b>	118,412	141,685	23,273	19.7
<b>Households</b>	45,700	55,533	9,833	21.5
<b>Persons/Household</b>	2.59	2.55	-0.04	-1.5

Source: US Census, 1990, and 2000; Catawba County GIS, 2000; as compiled by WPCOG Data Center, September 2002.

The Catawba study area is comprised of portions of Census Tracts 101.01, 101.02, 113 and 114. See *Map 2, "Catawba SAP Census Tracts."* The remaining demographic information is broken down by the Catawba SAP, Census Tracts 101.01, 101.02, 113, 114 and Catawba County.

As is true across Catawba County, the population in the study area is predominately white with higher proportions of minority populations in Census Tract 113. Most of the minority residents live outside the study area in the Newton and Conover urban areas.

<b>Race and Ethnicity, 2000</b>				
<b>Place</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Hispanic (any race)</b>
<b>Catawba SAP</b>	84.8%	9.7%	5.5%	3.1%
<b>Census Tract 101.01</b>	93.7%	2.5%	3.8%	1.2%
<b>Census Tract 101.02</b>	93.3%	3.2%	3.5%	2.1%
<b>Census Tract 113</b>	73.9%	14.5%	11.6%	8.9%
<b>Census Tract 114</b>	87.2%	7.9%	4.9%	3.1%
<b>Catawba County</b>	85.0%	8.4%	6.6%	5.6%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000; WPCOG Data Center 2002.

Residents ranging in age from 19 to 64 comprise the largest population group of residents in the study area, Census Tracts 101.01, 101.02, 113, 114 and Catawba County.

<b>Age of Population, 2000</b>			
<b>Place</b>	<b>Persons Age 18 and under (% of all persons)</b>	<b>Persons Age 19 to 64 (% of all persons)</b>	<b>Persons Age 65 and older (% of all persons)</b>
<b>Catawba SAP</b>	701 (27.0%)	1,579 (60.9%)	313 (12.1%)
<b>Census Tract 101.01</b>	1,345 (24.8%)	3,624 (66.6%)	465 (8.6%)
<b>Census Tract 101.02</b>	701 (20.2%)	2,206 (63.5%)	568 (16.3%)
<b>Census Tract 113</b>	1,799 (26.1%)	4,270 (61.9%)	826 (12.0%)
<b>Census Tract 114</b>	1,829 (24.5%)	4,413 (61.0%)	1,046 (14.5%)
<b>Catawba County</b>	34,392 (24.3%)	89,868 (63.4%)	17,425 (12.3%)

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000; WPCOG Data Center 2002.

Between 1995 and 2000 60.4% of Catawba area residents remained in the same home compared to 56.2% in Catawba County. However, during that same time period, Catawba experienced 14.2% in-migration, which is somewhat less than the 18.4% experienced by Catawba County.

<b>Change in Housing and Migration</b>		
<b>Place</b>	<b>% of Persons living in the same house between 1995 and 2000</b>	<b>In-migration 1985 and 1990 (% of population)</b>
<b>Catawba SAP</b>	60.4%	14.2%
<b>Census Tract 101.01</b>	66.7%	11.0%
<b>Census Tract 101.02</b>	64.0%	9.0%
<b>Census Tract 113</b>	55.8%	15.1%
<b>Census Tract 114</b>	60.2%	15.1%
<b>Catawba County</b>	56.2%	18.4%

Note: In-migration refers to those persons that moved into the listed place from another MSA between 1985 and 1990. All of the places listed in the table are part of the Hickory MSA.

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000.

In 2000 the average commute time to work for Catawba area residents was 21.0 minutes, which is nearly the same as the County average of 20.7. This indicates that most workers, who reside in the study area, travel to the urban areas for employment.

<b>Commuting Time to Work, 2000</b>		
<b>Place</b>	<b>Average Work Commute Time</b>	<b>% of Workers commuting over 40 minutes to work</b>
<b>Catawba SAP</b>	21.0	7.9%
<b>Census Tract 101.01</b>	20.1	5.6%
<b>Census Tract 101.02</b>	17.2	4.8%
<b>Census Tract 113</b>	20.5	6.9%
<b>Census Tract 114</b>	21.7	9.1%
<b>Catawba County</b>	20.7	8.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000.

The Catawba study area had a lower percentage of workers employed outside of Catawba County than the County as a whole.

<b>Place of Work, 2000</b>	
<b>Place</b>	<b>% of Workers Employed Outside County of Residence</b>
<b>Catawba SAP</b>	11.7%
<b>Census Tract 101.01</b>	8.3%
<b>Census Tract 101.02</b>	12.1%
<b>Census Tract 113</b>	9.1%
<b>Census Tract 114</b>	13.6%
<b>Catawba County</b>	15.6%
<b>Hickory-Morganton MSA</b>	25.6%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000.

In 2000 21.8% of study area residents were employed in professional occupations compared to 23.8% in Catawba County. Employment in service and professional support occupations showed little difference between the Catawba study area (36.3%) and Catawba County (37.4%). Both the study area and Catawba County as a whole had more workers employed in manufacturing occupations. Farming occupations, below 1%, were low for both the study area and Catawba County.

<b>Employment, 2000</b>				
<b>Place</b>	<b>% Employed in Professions</b>	<b>% Employed in Service &amp; Prof. Support</b>	<b>% Employed in Manufacturing</b>	<b>% Employed in Farming</b>
<b>Catawba SAP</b>	21.8%	36.3%	41.8%	0.1%
<b>Census Tract 101.01</b>	21.8%	33.1%	45.1%	0.0%
<b>Census Tract 101.02</b>	14.7%	32.2%	52.9%	0.2%
<b>Census Tract 113</b>	18.4%	35.7%	45.8%	0.1%
<b>Census Tract 114</b>	23.8%	37.4%	38.3%	0.5%
<b>Catawba County</b>	23.8%	37.4%	38.3%	0.5%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000.

Household income data from 1999 indicates a slightly higher median household income in the study area compared to Catawba County.

<b>Household Income, 1999</b>			
<b>Place</b>	<b>1999 Estimated Median Household Income</b>	<b>% of 1999 Households with Incomes Below \$10,000</b>	<b>% of 1999 Household Incomes over \$60,000</b>
<b>Catawba SAP</b>	\$43,331	7.6%	28.6%
<b>Census Tract 101.01</b>	\$47,716	5.5%	29.2%
<b>Census Tract 101.02</b>	\$40,000	6.4%	27.9%
<b>Census Tract 113</b>	\$34,881	10.8%	19.4%
<b>Census Tract 114</b>	\$41,892	7.0%	32.2%
<b>Catawba County</b>	\$41,058	7.8%	27.7%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000.

## **DEMOGRAPHIC PROJECTIONS**

If the long-term trend of increasing job demand continues in Catawba County, the population in the Catawba area is projected to continue increasing at a significant rate. By 2015 the population of the study area could exceed 3,200 persons. The trend of fewer people per household is expected to continue.

<b>Catawba Small Area Plan, Projected Study Area Growth: 2000 to 2015</b>						
<b>Year</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>Growth 2000 to 2015</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Persons</b>	2,593	2,819	3,030	3,240	647	25.0%
<b>Households</b>	1,028	1,146	1,252	1,356	328	31.9%
<b>Persons/Household</b>	2.52	2.46	2.42	2.39	-0.13	-5.4%

Source: WPCOG Data Center, May 2002.

This significant population growth for the Catawba area is predicated on growth rates that are 25% for the area. Future population growth within the study area will be largely affected by the availability of public water and sewer and the County subdivision policy restricting development in school districts at or near 110% of their school capacity. If current subdivision policies remain in place, population growth will be limited in part by pre-existing or potential small lot development. However, if County policies on school capacities change, or if multi-family or new residential subdivision growth is stimulated by the extension of water or sewer services, the potential growth will increase significantly. These population projections would then need to be revised or updated extensively.

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## **LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN**

### **CURRENT CONDITIONS AND TRENDS**

#### **CURRENT LAND USE**

Residential uses and open space occupy the vast majority of land in the Catawba study area. Accordingly, most parcels are zoned for residential uses with the bulk of the area falling into the R-2 district (See *Map 3, "Catawba SAP Current Zoning"*). The R-2 zoning district is intended to accommodate low-density residential development, agriculture, and the necessary governmental and support services in the more rural portions of the County. It permits modular and site-built homes as well as single-wide and double-wide manufactured homes. It also permits bona fide farms. Large undeveloped tracts of land are located throughout the study area with some particularly large and undeveloped tracts along the Catawba River and Interstate 40 (see *Map 4, "Catawba SAP Current Land Uses"*).

Commercial activity is sparse. Scattered businesses exist along Highway 10 at the intersections of Mt. Olive Church Road, Bethany Church Road and Boggs Road. The commercial areas are primarily zoned C-1, which allows community service type businesses. Fewer commercial parcels are zoned C-2, which permits regional type businesses. The two parcels zoned C-3 on Bethany Church Road at Keisler Dairy Road, previously non-conforming businesses, are not allowed to expand the area zoned C-3.

Industrial uses within the study area are limited at this time. A drainage pipe company is located on Highway 10 at Murrays Mill Road.

Land uses in much of the Catawba study area are subject to State-mandated watershed regulations. The Lake Norman watershed covers most of the study area and includes a WS-IV Protected Area and Critical area. The WS-IV Protected Area requires at least one-third acre (15,000 sq ft) for each single-family residential lot in areas without curb and gutter and one-half acre with curb and guttering. Multi-family and non-residential development in the Protected Area is limited to 24% percent lot coverage with curb and gutter and 36% without curb and guttering. The Critical Area requires one-half acre for each single-family residential lot. Multi-family and non-residential development in the Critical Area is limited to 24% percent lot coverage.

## Land Use Distribution

The Catawba SAP encompasses 7,352 acres of land (not including right-of-ways). Of these 7,352 acres, over 31% are entirely vacant and another 56% are in large tracts, which could be subdivided (see *Map 4*).

	Total Zoned Acreage		
	Total Acreage	Total Vacant Acreage	% Vacant
<b>Catawba SAP</b>	7,352	2,294	31%

Land use in the study area consists of industrial, commercial, office-institutional and residential uses. Industrial zoning occupies the most acreage of non-residential zoned land, though commercial zoned land has the greatest percent of vacant land.

	Acreage Zoned Non-Residential		
	Total Acreage	Total Vacant Acreage	% Vacant
<b>Industrial</b>	172	45	26%
<b>Commercial</b>	65	34	52%
<b>Office-Institutional</b>	0	0	NA

Total vacant acreage zoned non-residential reflects only parcels without a structure. Some parcels may have a structure that is unoccupied, which would increase the amount of vacant land.

Residential uses occupy the greatest percentage of land in the study area. Yet over 86% of the residentially zoned land is vacant. Over 2,118 acres are entirely vacant while approximately 4,025 acres are in lots of four acres or more that could be subdivided into two lots. Assuming that 85% of the total vacant land available for residential use were developed, the Catawba area could see an additional 5,221 acres developed for residential purposes.

	Acreage Zoned Residential		
	Total Acreage	Total Entirely Vacant Land + Lots w/Structure > 4 acres	% Vacant
<b>Catawba SAP</b>	7,114	6,143	86%

The land use statistics suggest that a substantial amount of additional development could occur in the Catawba study area.

## **Site Development Patterns and Land Design Trends**

Historically, rural and agricultural uses were the most dominant land use in the Catawba area. Over recent decades the number of farms and farmers has diminished. Gradually, housing developments are taking over the open space that residents value. The greatest residential growth has occurred in the western portion of the study area toward Newton and Conover. Generally, residential activity has consisted of a mixture of manufactured home communities and site-built subdivisions.

Commercial uses have developed primarily along Highway 10 at several intersections in the study area. Large strip centers and big box retailers, however, seem unlikely to emerge in the Catawba study area. Hickory, Newton, Conover, Claremont and Catawba offer larger shopping alternatives for the study area residents.

Industrial activity is very limited in the study area. This trend is likely to continue for most of the area except that some industrial activity could occur near the Interstate 40 corridor.

Both commercial and industrial activity has been limited in the Catawba study area due to the lack of infrastructure.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

### **RESIDENTIAL**

- Balance growth with the community's rural character
- Organize and plan residential development
- Encourage aesthetically pleasing subdivision design
- Promote affordable housing for people in all stages of life
- Reserve open space in new subdivisions

### **COMMERCIAL**

- Target commercial growth to appropriate areas
- Pursue incentives to encourage quality, community-oriented businesses
- Require more aesthetically pleasing designs for commercial uses
- Buffer residential areas from commercial uses
- Encourage quality mixed-use development on appropriate sites

### **OFFICE-INSTITUTIONAL**

- As with commercial uses, require more aesthetically pleasing designs and buffers from residential areas

### **INDUSTRIAL**

- Target industrial growth within the study area to specific, appropriate sites

### **OPEN SPACE**

- Preserve open space, pastures and scenic views
- Support and encourage agricultural uses
- Protect natural resources

## **PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **RESIDENTIAL**

- Designate residential density districts, as shown on *Map 5, "Catawba SAP Residential Density Recommendations."* The densities indicated are average densities and are not minimum lot sizes.
  - The lower density district requires an average of 1 home per 2 acres.
  - The medium density district requires an average of 1 home per acre.
  - The higher density district requires an average density of 1 home per acre if county/municipal water and sewer is not available. If county/municipal water is used then the average density would be 1 home per 3/4 acre. If both water and sewer are used then the average density would be 1 home per 1/2 acre.
- Designate an area within 435 feet from the Catawba River as the Catawba River Corridor, as shown on Map 5.
- Development in the Catawba River Corridor should adhere to the following design concepts:
  - Cluster development option is available; however, no single lot should be less than 0.75 acres;
  - Single-family homes should be developed at a maximum density of 1 unit per acre;
  - Any water front lot should have a minimum width of 100 feet.
- It is recommended that school capacity no longer be a consideration regarding minimum lot sizes for new developments.
- New residential subdivisions should incorporate the following additional design criteria:
  - Landscaping/buffering – perimeter, entry, 30 foot buffer on road frontage; the purpose of this buffer is to help preserve the rural character of the Catawba community.
  - Cluster subdivision design is encouraged. Clustering preserves open space and rural character.
  - All major subdivisions should provide 5-15% open space that is easily accessible and is usable for recreation; some of the required open space should be located outside the 100 year floodplain. The exact percentage of open space should be determined during the development of the Unified Development Ordinance.

- Limit driveway cuts on major roads (see Transportation Recommendations).
- Encourage traditional neighborhood design with rear alley entrances.

## **COMMERCIAL**

- Establish a community or regional gateway entrance with and attractive sign at the Interstate 40 interchange near Oxford School Road.
- Businesses should adhere to the following appearance and design criteria:
  - Require landscaped areas along road frontages and within parking areas located in front or side yards;
  - Encourage that parking areas be located to the rear of buildings;
  - Encourage mixed-use development at commercial nodes - This includes allowing residential and commercial uses in the same building;
  - Commercial development should be aesthetically pleasing, walkable pedestrian scale, and should be a desirable destination point not just another commercial site.
  - Require sidewalks at the community commercial site and the proposed business/light industrial park.
- Neighborhood commercial nodes should be designated at the following intersections:
  - Balls Creek Road and NC Hwy 10
  - Bethany Church Road and NC Hwy 10
  - Mt. Olive Church Road and NC Hwy 10
  - Old Catawba Road and B&B Road

See *Map 6, "Catawba SAP Future Land Use Recommendations."*

- Neighborhood commercial nodes should include a mix of commercial and residential uses with a site area of 10 to 25 acres and maximum gross leasable area of 50,000 square feet per lot.
- A "Community Center" commercial node is recommended for the intersection of Interstate 40 and Oxford School Road/NC Highway 10. This mixed-use center should serve as a "Gateway" to Catawba County and to the Greater Hickory region and might contain unique design concepts and attractions to introduce visitors to the features of the region and the County. It should be designed to encourage mixed uses with open space and landscaped internal access. This development should be walkable, pleasant for area residents and visitors alike and a destination as well as a stop-over for through travelers.

This Community Center commercial node should include regional commercial and mixed uses with a total area of 20 to 40 acres per node and a maximum gross leasable area of 100,000 square feet per lot. Businesses in this area should buffer structures and parking from I-40. Architectural controls and landscaping for parking areas should be required at this Community Center development.

See *Map 6, "Catawba SAP Future Land Use Recommendations."*

## **OFFICE-INSTITUTIONAL**

- Include office and institutional uses in Neighborhood and Community Center nodes.

## **INDUSTRIAL**

- Pursue a regional, high-quality, attractive business and light industrial park along Interstate 40 east of Oxford School Road/NC Highway 10 to the Catawba River and west of this road to Stagecoach Road and continuing west to the City of Conover ETJ (see *Map 6, "Catawba SAP Future Land Use Recommendations"*).
  - In this complex, allow a mixture of commercial, office and institutional and light industrial uses in a campus-like setting.
  - This development should observe the following appearance and design criteria:
    - Landscaped areas along road frontage,
    - Limitations on size of signs,
    - Internal streets in this area would be required as well as interconnectivity among the several businesses and industries,
    - Access management.
  - The County should coordinate with the municipalities of Claremont and Catawba concerning the development of the proposed Regional Business/Light Industrial Park.

## **OPEN SPACE**

- Open space of 5-15% of total acreage should be required in single-family subdivisions, which may be located within the development as community-use, open space along the perimeters of the development as well as a required 30-foot buffer along road frontage. The exact percentage of open space should be determined during the development of the Unified Development Ordinance. (Existing vegetation should be allowed to provide this open-space buffer if deemed adequate).

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **CURRENT CONDITIONS AND TRENDS**

#### **ROADS & HIGHWAYS**

Transportation systems within the Catawba study area are planned by the Unifour Metropolitan Planning Organization (UMPO) -- a larger, more populous version of the Hickory-Newton-Conover MPO created after the 2000 Census. Though various areas of Catawba County have experienced significant growth in retail, commercial and residential development with consequential increases in traffic, growth has been slower in the Catawba area as evidenced by moderate traffic increases.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Secondary Road system serves the Catawba study area, except for federal and state highways Interstate 40, US Highway 70 and NC Highway 10. US Highway 70 is the major thoroughfare serving the Catawba SAP community. NC Highway 10 borders the study area on the south. The following Table illustrates average daily traffic counts (number of vehicles per day or ADT) at various locations in the study area. Data for 1991 through 2001 are actual numbers recorded on site; 2025 data are projections based on NCDOT modeling.

#### **Catawba SAP: Average Daily Traffic Count, 1991-2025**

	<b>I-40 east of Claremont City Limits</b>	<b>I-40 east of Exit 138 (Oxford School Rd)</b>	<b>US 70 west of NC Hwy 10</b>	<b>NC Hwy 10 west of Bethany Church Rd</b>
<b>1991</b>	NA	25,700	NA	N/A
<b>1997</b>	31,700	32,100	1,600	6,600
<b>1999</b>	37,000	36,000	1,800	6,400
<b>2001</b>	37,000	36,000	1,800	6,200
<b>2025</b>	57,300	60,000	11,700	13,000

	<b>NC Hwy 10 at Little Rd</b>	<b>Boggs Rd at Bethany Church Rd</b>	<b>Bethany Church Rd near Keisler Dairy Rd</b>	<b>Oxford School Rd south of I-40</b>
<b>1991</b>	NA	2,100	3,300	NA
<b>1997</b>	4,600	2,800	4,100	4,000
<b>1999</b>	4,500	NA	4,400	5,000
<b>2001</b>	4,200	4,900	4,700	4,300
<b>2025</b>	13,600	6,700	4,600	3,100

Source: NCDOT ADT maps, 1991-2001; and *Hickory-Newton-Conover Urban Area Transportation Plan, Technical Update #1*, 2001 (for 2025 projections).

To reduce traffic congestion and adequately provide for future travel demands, the MPO adopted the Hickory-Newton-Conover Urban Area Transportation Plan in 1986 and updated the plan in 1996 and 2001. The most current update includes two projects that may significantly affect the Catawba study area. A third project will have a lesser effect on the study area. Although these thoroughfare improvements are recommended, it is important to recognize that funding has not been allocated, and the projects are not yet included in the state funding cycle, called the State Transportation Improvement Program or TIP. *Map 7, Catawba SAP Transportation Recommendations*, illustrates the current and planned transportation systems in the Catawba area.

Interstate 40: The MPO Plan recommends that I-40 be widened to six lanes through Catawba County, including the eastern portion of the County east to the Catawba River. The widening is recommended to accommodate future growth and traffic demands. The estimated cost of the project in 1999 was \$73 million.

Claremont Loop: The second project, the Claremont Loop, will affect the Catawba SAP east and south of Claremont. The new portions of the Loop will connect with the existing Centennial Blvd, the northeast part of a new road circling Claremont. The southeast, southwest and northwest sections of the Loop, yet to be built, will be sited partly in Claremont, its ETJ and the County's unincorporated area. The following is a breakdown of the sections of the project:

- The southeast section will extend from US 70 south to B & B Road onto a new extension of Keisler Dairy Road.
- The southwest portion of the Loop will basically follow Keisler Dairy Road to Heart Drive, where a short extension of Heart Drive will connect the Loop to US 70.
- The northwest extension of Centennial Blvd in the City will be built from Oxford Street southwest to US 70 to complete the Loop at Heart Drive.

US Highway 70: A final recommended project proposes widening US 70 to three lanes through Claremont between the two sections of the Claremont Loop.

While Catawba County has an adopted thoroughfare plan and is in the process of updating that Plan, all of the Catawba SAP study area is included in the Hickory Urban Area and is covered by the Hickory-Newton-Conover Thoroughfare Plan.

## **PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM**

Presently, Catawba County does not require sidewalk construction in new developments. In general, the Catawba SAP area lacks a pedestrian system with sidewalk connections between residential areas. However, it is now policy of the MPO and NCDOT to evaluate any new road construction project for potential pedestrian needs (i.e., sidewalks and crossover) and bicycle accommodations.

## **BICYCLE SYSTEM**

The Catawba SAP study area does not currently have an integrated system of bicycle trails. NCDOT has funded a Bicycle Route Map and signing project that has been underway since summer of 2001 with expected completion sometime in 2004. In compliance with NCDOT's policy, future road widening projects should be evaluated for their potential to provide bicycle lanes.

## **TRANSIT SYSTEM**

The Piedmont Wagon Transit System (PWTS) offers limited transit service to Catawba SAP residents. Vans are available, five days per week, through Piedmont Wagon to transport senior citizens and disabled residents in the Catawba area. Nearby, a Rural General Public Route runs two days per week linking Newton and Sherrills Ford with the urban system. Plans are underway to expand this service in terms of frequency and service areas as well as by adding bicycle racks to the minibuses.

## **PASSENGER RAIL**

The NCDOT has determined that the next major expansion of passenger rail service in the State will be in Western North Carolina. Plans are underway to initiate service between Raleigh and Asheville with a stop in downtown Hickory. A portion of the former Hickory Depot, now entirely occupied by a restaurant, will revert to a passenger waiting area. This service is expected to be operational by 2007.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

### **ROADS & HIGHWAYS**

- Encourage better communication between the North Carolina Department of Transportation and citizens when transportation plans are developed and implemented.
- Alleviate traffic safety problems and congestion on major highways.
- Anticipate and plan for growth that will result from road improvements and widening.
- Minimize speeding.
- Preserve good roads, areas of low traffic and scenic drives.
- Maintain adequate stormwater drainage systems.
- Coordinate transportation policies with land use policies.
- Encourage alternate modes of transportation.
- Provide for better connectivity of road systems.

### **PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM**

- Provide safe alternatives for pedestrians.

### **BICYCLE SYSTEM**

- Provide safe options for bicyclists.

### **TRANSIT SYSTEM**

- Increase opportunities to link with existing transit routes.

### **PASSENGER RAIL**

- Study connections, via the Piedmont Wagon Transit System, with the Western North Carolina Passenger Rail Service.

## **PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

Catawba County does not maintain roads and therefore the following recommendations will be forwarded to NCDOT or used in areawide thoroughfare planning. Note: For the following recommendations refer to *Map 7, "Catawba SAP Transportation Recommendations."*

### **ROADS & HIGHWAYS**

- Establish a regional or county gateway, with a welcoming or historical slogan, at the intersection of Interstate 40 and Oxford School Road.
- Complete the Claremont Loop from Centennial Blvd to Old Catawba Road and on to Boggs Road at Cinderella Lane. This will alleviate and prevent additional traffic congestion in downtown Claremont.
- Explore possible local scenic highway designation for the following roads:
  - Oxford School Road (NC 10) from I-40 into the Town of Catawba and on Highway 10 southwest of the Catawba Town limits to Murrays Mill Road.
  - US Highway 70 between the City of Claremont and Town of Catawba

#### **Request from NCDOT District Office:**

- Improve warning signal timing at N.C. Highway 10 and Boggs Road and request a study for possible traffic signalization.
- Install turn lanes with turn signals at the following intersections:
  - N.C. Highway 10 and Bethany Church Road.
  - N.C. Highway 10 and Mt. Olive Church Road.
- Improve the following roads to enhance safety:
  - Bethany Church Road curve near Boggs Road. Reduce radii of curves and improve degree of banking. A caution light for the curve should be installed until the improvement is made.
  - Bethany Church Road curve just south of Melinda Lane. Reduce radii of curves and improve degree of banking. A caution light for the curve should be installed until the improvement is made.
  - Replace bridge on Boggs Road with wider bridge. This project is listed in the State TIP for construction in Fiscal Year 2005-06. This plan supports the bridge replacement project.
  - Replace bridge on Bethany Church Road south of Kelly Blvd with wider bridge.
  - Widen Boggs Road 1-2 feet in each travel lane to enhance vehicle and bicyclist safety.
  - Widen travel lanes on Emmanuel Church Road from Bush Road (Stonehaven MHP) to N.C. Highway 10.

Add to the Unifour MPO Thoroughfare Plan:

- Connect Hewitt Road to B&B Road to provide an additional north/south route. When this road is constructed, request a traffic signal to be installed at the intersection of Hewitt Road and NC Highway 10.
- Create a service road along the south side of Interstate 40 from N.C. Highway 10 (Oxford School Road) to Centennial Blvd, possibly via Stagecoach Road.

Please note that the proposed road locations shown on *Map 7* are conceptual; the actual locations would be determined by NCDOT.

Amend the County Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to:

- Establish that all new residential driveways connecting to arterial and collector streets must be at least 12 feet wide for the first 20 feet of length with a minimum 3-foot turn radii. This includes Bethany Church Road, N.C. Highway 10, U.S. Highway 70, Old Catawba Road, and Emmanuel Church Road.
- Establish that driveway access on major and minor thoroughfares is not automatic. Driveways along thoroughfares should be minimized by requiring service roads for non-residential development. In addition, alleyways should be encouraged for major subdivision lots that abut thoroughfares. By encouraging alleyways, driveway cuts will be reduced and double frontage lots may be avoided. These steps will improve not only the appearance of the streetscape, but will improve traffic efficiency and safety. In cases where NCDOT or a municipality will not maintain the service road or alley, the property owner or a homeowners association should be responsible for continued maintenance.

**PEDESTRIAN SYSTEM**

- Determine feasibility of a greenway from the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge to the rest area on Interstate 40 (see *Map 7*).
- Determine feasibility of a greenway from the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge along Lyle Creek to the Town of Catawba Park, continuing through the Town to the Catawba River (see *Map 7*). This will require coordination with the Town of Catawba as well as their consent.
- Require sidewalks at the community commercial site and the proposed business/light industrial park.

**BICYCLE SYSTEM**

- The Catawba SAP supports the bicycle routes that have been submitted to NCDOT for approval. However, due to safety concerns, the bicycle route along Boggs Road should

not be designated until the travel lanes are widened. The bicycle route for B&B Road/Hewitt Road would not be designated until the connector road is constructed.

- Increase pavement width to the maximum extent feasible along the designated bicycle routes.

## **TRANSIT SYSTEM**

- Enhance Piedmont Wagon routes to provide increased service for the elderly.
- Request Catawba County to initiate a feasibility study for expanding the Piedmont Wagon route into the Catawba SAP community.

## **PASSENGER RAIL**

- Encourage Piedmont Wagon to schedule trips to coordinate with the Western North Carolina passenger rail service.
- Determine feasibility of creating a light rail passenger service along the existing rail corridor from Catawba to Hickory with stops at urban centers.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES**

### **CURRENT CONDITIONS AND TRENDS**

#### **SCHOOLS**

The Catawba study area is located within the Balls Creek, Claremont and Oxford Elementary School districts with a majority of students attending Claremont Elementary. Most of the students in this area attend Catawba Intermediate School that educates 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, then move to River Bend Middle School and Bunker Hill High School for their middle school and secondary education. Other students attend Newton-Conover and Bandys High Schools after receiving middle school education at Newton-Conover and Tuttle Middle Schools respectively.

In 1999, the Catawba County, Hickory, and Newton-Conover Schools systems commissioned the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to develop the *Catawba County Growth Estimation Model*. This model was again updated in July 2003. This model identified and examined various factors and trends that impact student population and helps plan for future school facilities.

#### **Claremont Elementary School**

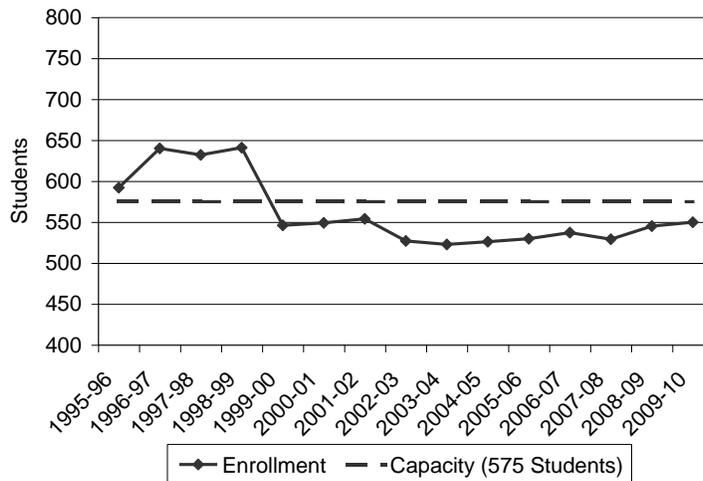
The student population at Claremont Elementary School exceeded building capacity (575 students) until the 1999-2000 school year when sixth grade students were transferred to Catawba Intermediate School. As long as sixth grade students are not sent back to Claremont Elementary, the school should remain below building capacity through 2009.

<b>Claremont Elementary 1st Month Student Enrollment Projections, 2002-03 to 2009-10 (School Capacity Equals 575 Students)</b>								
<b>School Year</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>1st</b>	<b>2nd</b>	<b>3rd</b>	<b>4th</b>	<b>5th</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% of Capacity</b>
2002-03	76	99	83	90	86	93	<b>527</b>	<b>91.7%</b>
2003-04	87	81	91	85	90	89	<b>523</b>	<b>90.9%</b>
2004-05	88	92	74	93	85	94	<b>526</b>	<b>91.5%</b>
2005-06	94	93	85	76	93	88	<b>530</b>	<b>92.1%</b>
2006-07	92	100	86	87	76	97	<b>537</b>	<b>93.4%</b>
2007-08	86	97	92	88	87	79	<b>529</b>	<b>92.0%</b>
2008-09	92	92	90	94	88	90	<b>545</b>	<b>94.8%</b>
2009-10	91	98	84	92	94	91	<b>550</b>	<b>95.6%</b>

Source: *Catawba County Growth Estimation Model: Study of the Catawba County, Hickory and Newton-Conover School Systems*, WPCOG, 2003.

The *Catawba County Growth Estimation Model* predicts that student enrollment will grow by 23 students through the 2009-10 school year. With the addition of 23 students Claremont will be at 95.6% of building capacity.

### Claremont Elementary, 1st Month Student Enrollment



Source: *Catawba County Growth Estimation Model: Study of the Catawba County, Hickory and Newton-Conover School Systems, WPCOG, 2003.*

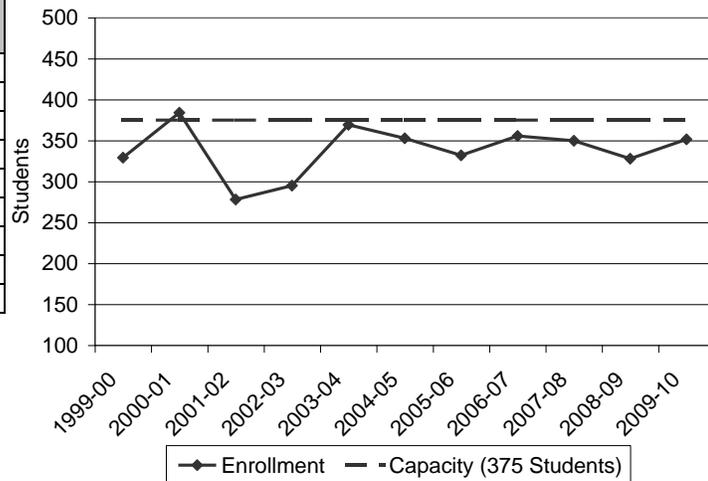
### Catawba Intermediate School

Catawba Intermediate School was converted from a middle school when the new River Bend and Mill Creek Middle Schools opened in 1999. Sixth grade students from Claremont, Oxford, and Sherrills Ford Elementary Schools were sent to Catawba between 1999 and 2002. Beginning in the 2003-04 school year, sixth grade students living in the Oxford School District stayed with that Elementary School. Currently, students moving up from Claremont, Sherrills Ford and a portion of the Balls Creek Elementary district attend Catawba Intermediate School.

In 2003, Catawba Intermediate's population was 295, well under its capacity of 375 students. The boundary change with Balls Creek and Oxford Schools was expected to cause student enrollment to rise to 369 students. A decrease in student enrollment is expected in 2005 due to small class sizes at Balls Creek and Sherrills Ford Elementary Schools. By 2009, Catawba's student population is expected to rise to approximately 351 students or slightly under building capacity (93.7%).

<b>Catawba Intermediate 1st Month Student Enrollment Projections, 2002-03 to 2009-10 (School Capacity Equals 375 Students)</b>		
School Year	6th	% of Capacity
2002-03*	295	78.7%
2003-04	369	98.5%
2004-05	353	94.1%
2005-06	332	88.5%
2006-07	356	94.8%
2007-08	350	93.3%
2008-09	328	87.4%
2009-10	351	93.7%

**Catawba Intermediate, 1st Month Student Enrollment**



Source: *Catawba County Growth Estimation Model: Study of the Catawba County, Hickory and Newton-Conover School Systems*, WPCOG, 2003.

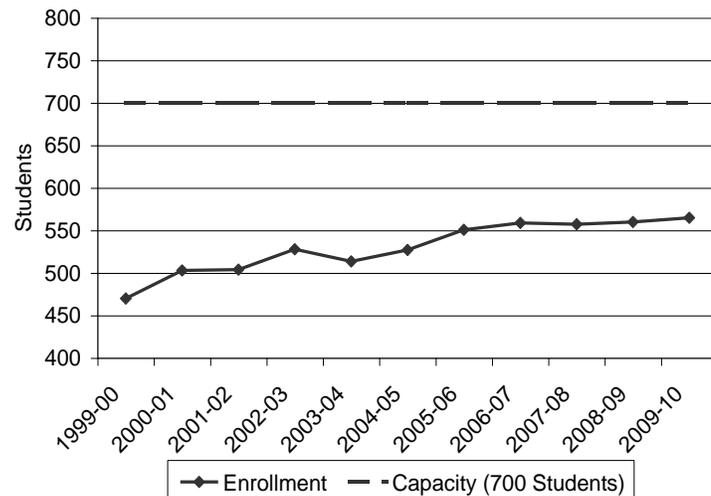
### Riverbend Middle School

Riverbend Middle School opened in 1999 with an enrollment equaling 65% of building capacity. The school was built with a higher student capacity than its current enrollment to accommodate growth in the coming years.

When Riverbend opened in 1999, fewer than 500 students were enrolled. By the 2009-10 school year, Riverbend is projected to enroll 565 students, or 80.7% of building capacity (see table below).

<b>Riverbend Middle 1st Month Student Enrollment Projections, 2002-03 to 2009-10 (School Capacity Equals 700 Students)</b>				
School Year	7th	8th	Total	% of Capacity
2002-03	252	276	528	75.4%
2003-04	263	250	514	73.4%
2004-05	266	262	527	75.3%
2005-06	287	264	551	78.7%
2006-07	274	285	559	79.8%
2007-08	285	272	557	79.6%
2008-09	276	284	560	80.0%
2009-10	290	275	565	80.7%

**Riverbend, 1st Month Student Enrollment**



Source: *Catawba County Growth Estimation Model: Study of the Catawba County, Hickory and Newton-Conover School Systems*, WPCOG, 2003.

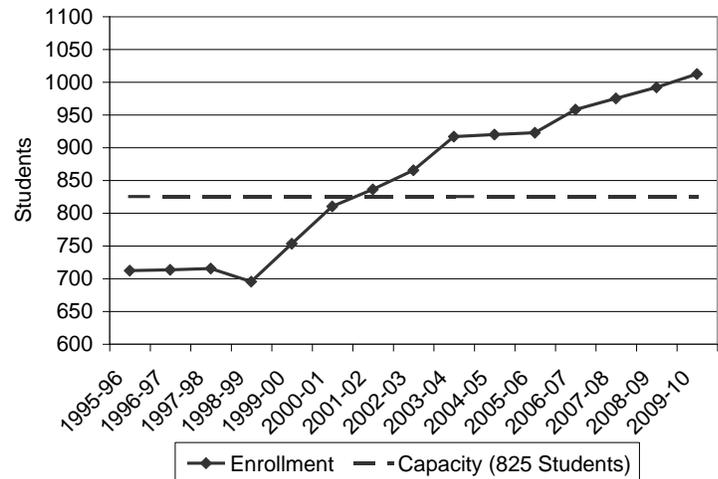
## Bunker Hill High School

Bunker Hill High School has experienced steady growth since 1999 due to residential growth in the district. Beginning with the 2001-2002 school year, Bunker Hill was slightly over building capacity at 101%. During the 2003-04 school year, student enrollment was expected to be 916 or 111.1% of building capacity (825 students).

Steady growth of student enrollment is expected for Bunker Hill. Without an addition to the school, Bunker Hill is expected to reach 122% of building capacity by the 2009-10 school year. A planned addition that includes 12 new classrooms and a new cafeteria, however, it is contingent upon funding for the project.

**Bunker Hill, 1st Month Student Enrollment**

Bunker Hill High 1st Month Student Enrollment Projections, 2002-03 to 2009-10 (School Capacity Equals 825 Students)						
School Year	9th	10th	11th	12th	Total	% of Capacity
2002-03	261	246	203	155	<b>865</b>	<b>104.8%</b>
2003-04	324	202	214	176	<b>916</b>	<b>111.1%</b>
2004-05	302	253	176	188	<b>920</b>	<b>111.5%</b>
2005-06	314	235	221	153	<b>922</b>	<b>111.8%</b>
2006-07	317	244	204	192	<b>958</b>	<b>116.1%</b>
2007-08	338	247	213	178	<b>975</b>	<b>118.2%</b>
2008-09	328	263	215	185	<b>992</b>	<b>120.2%</b>
2009-10	340	255	230	187	<b>1,012</b>	<b>122.7%</b>



Source: *Catawba County Growth Estimation Model: Study of the Catawba County, Hickory and Newton-Conover School Systems*, WPCOG, 2003.

## PARKS AND GREENWAYS

Currently, there are no municipal or county owned parks within the study area. However, the Catawba County Historical Association does own and operate Connor’s Park, located in the study area along Highway 70. This park includes a trail and the last covered bridges in North Carolina. Recently, the County and the association were awarded a transportation grant to pave the parking area and make other improvements to the site. The City of Claremont operates Francis Sigmon Park located on Highway 70 west of the study area. It contains ball fields, a walking trail, tennis courts and picnic shelters. In addition, the Town of Catawba recently was awarded a grant to purchase property from the local Optimists to develop its first municipal park, adjacent to Lyle Creek.

Murray’s Mill, the historic site of a grindstone, mill pond and general store, is located just south of the Catawba planning area in the Balls Creek community.

Riverbend Park, located within the St. Stephens/Oxford Small Area along the Catawba River, offers a variety of passive recreational activities. This was the first County-owned and operated park. Riverbend Park includes over 450 acres of land with hiking, bicycle and equestrian trails, fishing and canoeing. Riverbend Park also provides picnic facilities and an observation deck on the Catawba River. In June 2002, the County opened a second park atop Baker's Mountain in the Mountain View Community. Both parks are within an easy drive of the Catawba community.

Schools, churches and some private organizations operate other passive and active recreational facilities that serve the Catawba study area. Currently, there are no greenways within the Catawba study area.

## **LIBRARIES**

Catawba County operates a well-established library system. The Catawba County Library System operates one central library, a law library and six branch libraries. The Catawba study area is served by three of those branches. Though no library branch is located within the study area, most of the Catawba study area is within the three-mile primary service area of a branch library. The Main Newton library and the Claremont and Conover branch libraries serve the study area. The Conover and Claremont branches are partnerships with those municipalities. Additional hours have recently been added to the Claremont branch through partnership with Catawba County.

The Claremont Branch Library opened in February 2002. It is located inside the Claremont City Hall and is funded through the partnership between the City of Claremont and Catawba County. This facility serves Claremont residents as well as residents of the study area.

The Conover Branch Library is located within the Conover City Hall and is another example of intergovernmental cooperation. The costs of operating this facility are shared by the City of Conover and Catawba County.

The main Catawba County Library is located in downtown Newton west of the study area. This library offers more services than local branch libraries and is operated and funded by the County.

Most of the study area is located within the 3-mile primary service area of a library. All of the study area is within the secondary 6-mile service area. Currently, no additional branches are planned for Catawba County.

## **WATER SERVICE**

The City of Hickory, City of Conover, City of Newton, City of Claremont and Catawba County have extended water service to areas within the Catawba study area. In some cases, the County pays for construction of the water lines while the municipalities maintain the lines. In such cases, revenues are shared between the County and the respective municipality. The

major water lines in the study area extend along Highway 10 from Newton to the Town of Catawba, from Conover along Emmanuel Church Road, along Keisler Dairy Road from Conover and along Boggs Road to Highway 10. The City of Hickory purchased the water and sewer system from the Town of Catawba in July 2003. A water line extension is planned along Highway 10 (Oxford School Road) from the Town of Catawba to the I-40 interchange.

In coordination with the municipalities, utility service providers in Catawba County recently formed the Utilities Advisory Committee to address water and sewer issues on a countywide basis.

## **SEWER SERVICE**

The City of Claremont's sewer plant is located in the study area along McLin Creek, south of B & B Road. This plant has sufficient capacity to serve a large area covering most of the study area. In addition, the Town of Catawba and the City of Hickory plan to extend sewer service from Catawba to the I-40 interchange at Highway 10 (Oxford School Road). As mentioned above, the newly formed Utilities Advisory Committee will address current and future water and sewer needs.

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

The Catawba County Emergency Communications Center is the central receiving point for all 911 calls within Catawba County. The center is regarded as one of the most advanced centers in western North Carolina utilizing the newest software and technology. The center dispatches all fire, medical, rescue and police calls for service within Catawba County, except police for Hickory and Newton. The center also gives medical instructions to callers while they await the arrival of medical personnel.

## **Law Enforcement**

The Catawba County Sheriff's Department serves the study area. The patrol division is made up of twenty-six officers among four shifts. The Sheriff's Department also operates a jail and maintains security for the court system in Catawba County. Crime prevention, investigations and civil enforcement are other functions conducted by the Sheriff's Department.

## **Fire Protection**

The Catawba and Claremont Fire Departments serve most of the study area with Newton Fire Department serving a small area west of Emmanuel Church Road. Claremont Fire Department was created sometime around 1900 soon after Claremont was incorporated. Claremont Fire Department operates 8 vehicles that include 3 engine pumpers, one pumper-tanker, a brush truck, equipment truck, personnel unit, and the Chief's car. Currently the department maintains a fire insurance class rating of 5 for areas within a thousand feet of a fire hydrant and class 9 for other areas. The insurance rating directly affects the cost of fire insurance for property owners. Lower ratings result in lower fire insurance costs. Currently

the department operates from one station located off Catawba Street. The station opened in December 2000. The department employs a full-time Fire Chief and a part-time records clerk. The department also employs part-time engineers to operate the fire apparatus Monday through Friday during the day. Claremont Fire Department plans to purchase a ladder truck within five years depending on the availability of funds. They also plan to construct a new fire station in the Bethany Church Road / Highway 10 area. The new station could be built within five years also depending on available funding and development.

Catawba Fire Department was organized in 1937 and serves the eastern sections of the study area. Catawba Fire Department operates 8 vehicles that include 3 engine pumpers, 2 tankers, a brush truck, a service truck and a personnel car. Catawba Fire Department maintains a fire insurance class rating of 5 for areas within a thousand feet of a fire hydrant and class 9 for other areas. The department consists of a volunteer force of 32 persons. Currently, the department employs 3 part-time drivers for 40 hours per week. The Catawba Fire Department plans to build a second station in the Bolton Road area when sufficient growth occurs. The Catawba Fire Department also plans to construct an addition to the current station to expand office space and firefighter living quarters.

## **Emergency Medical Services**

Although an EMS base is not located within the study area, two bases respond to calls within the Catawba area. The Catawba Base is located just outside the study area in downtown Catawba. This base responds to calls for eastern portion of Catawba County. In addition, the Newton base also serves the study area. The Newton base is located in south Newton off US Highway 321 Business.

Catawba County operates a new program that is reducing medical response times. Rescue Squad personnel supplement the EMS response and allow emergency medical technicians to reach patients quicker. This program began using Claremont and Hickory Rescue Squads and has been expanded using other squads including the Catawba Rescue Squad. Response times have been significantly reduced using this program.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

### **SCHOOLS**

- Plan to accommodate student enrollment growth.
- Plan for community-based schools.

### **PARKS AND GREENWAYS**

- Provide adequate recreational activities for all segments of the population.
- Provide adequate open space and recreational facilities on a neighborhood basis.

### **LIBRARIES**

- Maintain adequate level of library services for the community.
- Encourage continued cooperation with municipalities.

### **WATER/SEWER SERVICES**

- Provide water and sewer services in higher density areas.
- Take a cooperative regional approach to planning of future water and sewer infrastructure.

### **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

- Maintain and expand existing levels of service.

## **PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **SCHOOLS**

- Continue to use school facilities for public recreation activities.
- The County should remove school capacity as a factor in determining residential density for new developments when the Catawba Small Area Plan land use and housing recommendations are adopted.
- School planners should use the future residential density recommendations made by the Catawba Small Area Planning Committee when identifying school expansion needs.
- Explore funding options for construction of school facilities, which may include impact fees.

### **PARKS AND GREENWAYS**

- Determine feasibility of a greenway from the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge to the rest area on Interstate 40 (see Map 7).
- Determine feasibility of a greenway from the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge along Lyle Creek to the Town of Catawba Park, continuing through the Town to the Catawba River (see Map 7). This will require coordination with the Town of Catawba as well as their consent.
- Open space of 5-15% of total acreage should be required in single-family subdivisions, which may be located within the development as community-use, open-space along the perimeters of the development as well as a required 30-foot buffer along road frontage. The exact percentage of open space should be determined during the development of the Unified Development Ordinance. (Existing vegetation should be allowed to provide this open-space buffer if deemed adequate).
- Encourage and possibly create public-private partnerships to develop parks and recreation facilities that meet the needs of all population segments.
- Work with municipalities, YMCA, or churches to develop after school and summer programs with transportation for children.

### **LIBRARIES**

- Continue cooperation with municipalities in providing library service.
- Maintain existing levels of library service and increase as needed.

## **WATER/SEWER SERVICES**

- Major utility expansions in high-density areas, as indicated on Map 5, should have a priority.
- Partner with municipalities to provide utilities that are consistent with adopted land use plans.
- Continue to pursue Community Development Block Grants for the expansion of utilities.
- Extend water and sewer service to the Fox Hollow and Farmwood Subdivisions located on Old Catawba Road.
- Areas with septic failures should be considered for public sewer service.

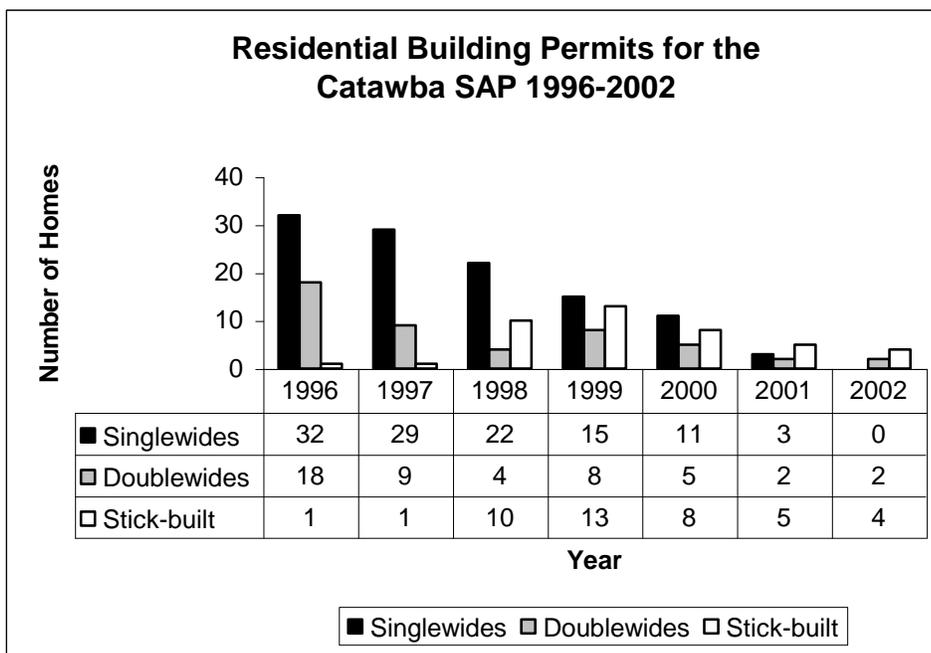
## **EMERGENCY SERVICES**

- Maintain existing levels of service.
- Continue to support and develop measures to reduce medical response times.

## **HOUSING**

### **CURRENT CONDITIONS AND TRENDS**

The number of housing units built in the study area explains the population growth within the study area in the past several years despite a overall decline in housing permits. In the decade between 1990 and 2000, the Catawba area, in fact, grew faster than the County as a whole. Building permits recorded by Catawba County provide the mechanism for recording the number and kind of housing unit contributing to that growth. The following table shows the total number of building permits issued from 1996 through 2002 by type of home (single-family stick-built, multi-family or manufactured home).



Source: Catawba County Building Inspections, 2002.

Building permit data indicates a decline in housing construction from 1996 through 2002. From 1996 to 2002, a total of 202 housing units were added. The current economic downturn may explain why only 16 new homes were located in the study area in 2001 and 2002.

In addition, the number of manufactured homes coming into the area has dropped dramatically. Permits for single-wide manufactured homes dropped from 32, in 1996, to 0 in 2002. Until 2001, the number of permits for manufactured housing totaled more than the number of stick-built home permits. This trend may be explained by rising costs of manufactured housing, closing much of the cost gap with stick-built homes. The rising costs of manufactured homes may be attributed to two factors: the appearance standards adopted by the County in 1996 and the consumer demand for larger homes with more amenities. The trend of fewer manufactured homes in the Catawba area, especially single-wides, is consistent with other areas of the county.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

### **SINGLE-FAMILY**

- Encourage aesthetically-pleasing subdivision design.
- Encourage the preservation of open spaces as development increases.
- Encourage a diverse range of housing densities and types that will meet the needs of all segments of the population, household types and income levels.

### **MULTI-FAMILY**

- Encourage the construction of multi-family housing as an affordable housing option.
- Development of multi-family housing should occur where appropriate infrastructure and services exist.

### **MANUFACTURED HOMES**

- Provide for the equitable location of manufactured housing that meets the housing needs of the population while maintaining the character of the community.

### **RETIREMENT**

- Promote low maintenance, alternative housing opportunities for seniors.

## **PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **ALL RESIDENTIAL USES**

- The Catawba Small Area Plan Committee recommends the Planning Board and staff investigate the possibility of developing a County-wide minimum housing standard. It should apply to single-family, multi-family housing and rental housing, with standards limiting the number of individuals inhabiting a single dwelling unit.

### **SINGLE- FAMILY**

- Designate residential density districts, as shown on *Map 5, "Catawba SAP Residential Density Recommendations."* The densities indicated are average densities and are not minimum lot sizes.
  - The lower density district requires an average of 1 home per 2 acres.
  - The medium density district requires an average of 1 home per acre.
  - The higher density district requires an average density of 1 home per acre if county/municipal water and sewer is not available. If county/municipal water is used then the average density would be 1 home per 3/4 acre. If both water and sewer are used then the average density would be 1 home per 1/2 acre.
- Designate an area within 435 feet from the Catawba River as the Catawba River Corridor, as shown on Map 5.
- Development in the Catawba River Corridor should adhere to the following design concepts:
  - Cluster development option is available; however, no single lot should be less than 0.75 acres;
  - Single-family homes should be developed at a maximum density of 1 unit per acre;
  - Any water front lot should have a minimum width of 100 feet.
- It is recommended that school capacity no longer be a consideration regarding minimum lot sizes for new developments.
- New residential subdivisions should incorporate the following additional design criteria:
  - Landscaping/buffering – perimeter, entry, 30 foot buffer on road frontage; the purpose of this buffer is to help preserve the rural character of the Catawba community.
  - Cluster subdivision design is encouraged. Clustering preserves open space and rural character.

- All major subdivisions should provide 5-15% open space that is easily accessible and is usable for recreation; some of the required open space should be located outside the 100 year floodplain. The exact percentage of open space should be determined during the development of the Unified Development Ordinance.
- Limit driveway cuts on major roads (see Transportation Recommendations).
- Encourage traditional neighborhood design with rear alley entrances.
- Development of higher density single-family housing should occur where appropriate infrastructure and services exist or are planned.

### **MULTI-FAMILY**

- Multi-family housing development should be limited to areas where both county/municipal water and sewer are available or are planned in the immediate future.
- Duplex or two-family homes should continue to be allowed as a permitted use in all residential districts regardless of the availability of water or sewer infrastructure.

### **MANUFACTURED HOMES**

- Rezone the areas shown on *Map 8, "Catawba SAP Proposed Zoning Map Amendments."* About 79.8% of the land in the Catawba SAP is proposed for rezoning to R-1 (which allows stick-built or modular homes). Proposed for rezoning to R-3 (which allows double-wide manufactured homes, modular homes and site-built homes) is another 17.6% of the land in the Catawba SAP area. The basis for this proposed rezoning is to preserve the rural character of the community with its larger tracts, and scenic views such as along Highway 70. This proposal will also reflect the changing pattern of residential housing in the community as manufactured housing decreased from 98% of new homes in 1996 to 33% in 2002 (0% for single-wide homes in 2002).
- The replacement of single-wide and double-wide manufactured homes in manufactured home parks should be permitted even when located in a zoning district that does not permit manufactured homes.
- Single-wide and double-wide manufactured homes should be permitted in existing subdivisions where other manufactured homes already exist even when located in a zoning district that does not permit manufactured homes. This would accommodate subdivisions affected by the proposed rezonings that contain manufactured homes. This should only apply to lots of record and not lots with preliminary approval only.

## **RETIREMENT**

- Options for retirement living are suggested in the Oxford School Road/I-40 area where a mix of uses is proposed. Retirement housing would also be an alternative at the other recommended commercial nodes if the appropriate infrastructure is available.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **CURRENT CONDITIONS AND TRENDS**

In Catawba County as a whole, the economy in the last decade has evolved from one dominated by traditional manufacturing, especially the textile, hosiery and furniture industries. The new job scene in Catawba County is one in which manufacturing no longer dominates but shares the number of available jobs with an increasingly lively service sector. During the decade of the 1990s, jobs in manufacturing grew by 6.2% while service sectors jobs grew by 39.7%. Service sector jobs, it should be noted, often pay less than manufacturing jobs and may provide fewer benefits. But they include workers in the health professions, legal services, auto repair, hotels and motels, and engineering, not just the fast food workers we may think of when we hear the term "service sector" jobs.

During the last two years, however, manufacturing has sustained intense job losses in Catawba and surrounding counties, as well as across North Carolina. Between January 2001 and March 2003, over 12,600 jobs in Catawba County were lost with 9,700 of these jobs in manufacturing alone. While the manufacturing sector is beginning to improve at the national level, such improvements have not yet been experienced locally.

Two significant efforts are currently underway to assist the County in overcoming these job losses. FORESIGHT, the continuing Catawba County strategic planning effort, is evaluating a series of strategies designed by a Task Force focusing exclusively on "Jobs and the Economy." Their recommendations are being evaluated and will be forwarded to the County Commissioners by mid-2004. Another effort, called Future Forward, seeks to develop a comprehensive economic development strategy for a 12-county area stretching from I-77 west to McDowell County and from the mountains to the South Carolina state line. These counties, mainly located in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> US Congressional Districts, worked together to create strategies and are now developing applications to the federal Economic Development Administration for significant funding.

Most residents of the Catawba community work outside the immediate community. In fact, few commercial or industrial facilities are located within the boundaries of the Catawba SAP area. In the community input meeting, residents conveyed their concerns that the rural character of the community be maintained. The Small Area Planning Committee endorses these opinions.

The area's few existing commercial and industrial uses are located along NC Highway 10 at the southern border of the Catawba SAP area, especially at the Mt. Olive Church Road intersection; a single parcel on Old Catawba Road, and parcels off B & B Road, the location of the City of Claremont's Wastewater Plant.

One large parcel at the intersection of I-40 and Oxford School Road/NC Highway 10, recently annexed into the Town of Catawba, has been zoned industrial and sewer is likely to be extended to this interchange in the near future. Other land in this vicinity may also be considered for similar uses in coming years.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- Facilitate and encourage new, community-focused economic development in the Catawba area.
- Create more aesthetically pleasing commercial, industrial and mixed-use developments.
- Industrial areas should be directed to areas with appropriate infrastructure.
- Encourage limited commercial and office-institutional development, which observes established development standards, to provide additional retail opportunities for Catawba area residents closer to home. These areas should be adjacent to similar commercial developments along NC Highway 10 in the Balls Creek community.

## **PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Pursue a high-quality, attractive business and light industrial park along Interstate 40 east of Oxford School Road/NC Highway 10 to the Catawba River and west of this road to Stagecoach Road and continuing west to the City of Conover ETJ (see *Map 6, "Catawba SAP Future Land Use Recommendations"*).
  - In this complex, allow a mixture of commercial, office and institutional and light industrial uses in a campus-like setting.
  - This development should observe the following appearance and design criteria:
    - Landscaped areas along road frontage,
    - Limitations on size of signs,
    - Internal streets in this area would be required as well as interconnectivity among the several businesses and industries,
    - Design standards and other access management methods that will control traffic movement and driveway connections from major roads.
    - Require sidewalks at the proposed business/light industrial park.
  - The County should coordinate with the municipalities of Claremont and Catawba concerning the development of the proposed Regional Business/Light Industrial Park.
  
- A "Community Center" commercial node is recommended for the intersection of Interstate 40 and Oxford School Road/NC Highway 10. This mixed-use center should serve as a "Gateway" to Catawba County and to the Greater Hickory region and might contain unique design concepts and attractions to introduce visitors to the features of the region and the County. It should be designed to encourage mixed uses with open space and landscaped internal access. This development should be walkable, pleasant for area residents and visitors alike and a destination as well as a stop-over for through travelers.

This Community Center commercial node should include regional commercial and mixed uses with a total area of 20 to 40 acres per node and a maximum gross leasable area of 100,000 square feet per lot. Businesses in this area should buffer structures and parking from I-40. Architectural controls and landscaping for parking areas should be required at this Community Center development (see *Map 6, "Catawba SAP Future Land Use Recommendations"*).

- "Neighborhood" commercial nodes are proposed for these intersections:
  - Mt. Olive Church Road and NC Highway 10
  - Bethany Church Road and NC Highway 10
  - Boggs Road/Balls Creek Road and Highway 10
  - Old Catawba Road and B & B Road.

These neighborhood commercial nodes should include a mix of commercial and residential uses with a site area of 10 to 25 acres and maximum gross leasable area of

50,000 square feet per lot (see *Map 6, "Catawba SAP Future Land Use Recommendations"*).

## **NATURAL/ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

### **CURRENT CONDITIONS AND TRENDS**

Two major creeks run through much of the Catawba community and affect not only the quality of the surface water but have important cultural and historic ties to the community. (See Map 9, “*Catawba SAP Natural and Cultural Resources.*”) Lyle Creek flows southeast from Conover and north of I-40 into the Town of Catawba and then into the Catawba River. McLin Creek flows from Newton east to the southern border of Claremont’s ETJ and into Lyle Creek on the west side of the Town of Catawba. Hagan’s Fork also joins McLin Creek near the center of the Catawba Planning area. Considerable land bordering these creeks is floodplain, limiting its development but providing natural habitat for fish, birds, small mammals as well as trees and flowering plants (see *Map 9*).

In 2002, *An Inventory of Significant Natural Areas of Catawba County, North Carolina* was conducted. The inventory identified an area along the Lyle Creek Corridor as containing a federally threatened wildflower as well as breeding grounds for tropical migrant bird species that are rare for this area. The Lyle Creek Corridor contains one of the few intact wetland complexes in Catawba County.

To protect water quality, the State of North Carolina enacted the Water Supply Watershed Protection Program in 1989. The program requires all local governments with land use planning jurisdiction in designated watersheds to administer a Water Supply Watershed Protection Ordinance to protect surface drinking water. The Catawba River has been designated a source for water supply and as a result a portion of the Catawba area falls within the WS-IV Watershed (see *Map 9*).

A small portion of the SAP boundary lies within the WS-IV Critical area just west on the Town of Catawba near US Highway 70 and the railroad tracks. In this Critical area, development is limited to two dwelling units per acre (average 1/2 acre lots) for single-family development. Multi-family and non-residential developments are allowed to cover 24 percent of the lot area with impervious material such as asphalt, gravel and buildings.

The County adopted the high-density option for the WS-IV water supply watershed for planned unit developments. The high-density option for the critical area allows impervious coverage up to 50 percent. When choosing the high-density option, the development is required to install stormwater facilities that control a 1-inch storm rainfall.

Nearly the entire remaining area of the Catawba Planning area, however, is located in a WS-IV Protected area, except for a small portion of the area north of NC Highway 10 near the City of Newton limits. The WS-IV Protected area requires 15,000 square foot lots when curb and gutter is not used, and public water or sewer service are provided. When no public utilities (water and sewer) or curb and gutter are installed, lots cannot be smaller than 20,000 square feet. Multi-family and non-residential uses are limited to 24 percent impervious coverage of the lot with curb and gutter and 36 percent without curb and gutter. A development may use the high-density option in the protected area just as in the critical area.

Within the Protected area, multi-family and non-residential developments are limited to 70 percent impervious coverage, with the high-density option, if stormwater controls are constructed.

Besides protected watersheds and undeveloped land along the area's creeks, another significant natural feature is the rural, undeveloped land that still remains in many portions of the community. Considerable acreage simply remains as undeveloped woodland and open fields. These open spaces and floodplains along its creeks constitute much of what symbolizes for residents the quiet, rural character of the Catawba area.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

### **WATER**

- The quality of water is a vital concern for the public and should be protected.

### **OPEN SPACE**

- Provide adequate recreational opportunities, both active and passive, for all segments of the population.
- Maintain the rural character of the Catawba community.
- Preserve ample open space for future generations.
- Protect scenic views and corridors as well as wildlife corridors.

## **PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Preserve the community's open spaces through density controls and zoning and subdivision regulations which establish three density areas, high density (3/4 acres per dwelling unit with public water), medium density (one acre per housing unit), and low density (2 acres per dwelling) (see *Map 5, "Catawba SAP Proposed Density Districts"*).
- Open space of 5% -15% of total acreage should be required in single-family subdivisions, which may be located within the development as community-use open space, along the perimeters of the development as well as contained in a required 30-foot buffer along road frontage. The exact percentage of open space should be determined during the development of the unified development ordinance. (Existing vegetation is allowed to provide this open-space buffer if deemed adequate.)
- Encourage residential subdivisions to follow design criteria for preserving trees within subdivisions.
- Consider requesting NC legislative authority to allow Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), which would encourage development in areas with adequate infrastructure and preserve open space in more rural parts of the County like the Catawba community.
- Determine feasibility of a greenway from the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge to the rest area on Interstate 40 (see *Map 9*).
- Determine feasibility of a greenway from the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge along Lyle Creek to the Town of Catawba Park, continuing through the Town to the Catawba River (see *Map 9*). This will require coordination with the Town of Catawba as well as their consent.
- Conduct a study to determine the safety of the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge. Specifically, determine if the bridge is susceptible to flood damage. If necessary, steps should be taken to protect the bridge from damage or destruction.
- Implement and encourage the expansion of the Voluntary Agricultural District Program.
- Consider changing the Water Supply Watershed Ordinance to incorporate the 10/70 provision for WS-IV protected areas.

## **CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES**

### **CURRENT CONDITIONS AND TRENDS**

Cultural and historic sites in Catawba County have recently been added to the County's GIS mapping system, providing another way for people to be educated about important cultural assets in the County. Proposed development near these sites will also be alerted to these significant resources if and when development might occur. Two important properties within the Catawba Small Area Planning boundary have been registered on the National Historic Register, the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge and the Perkins House (see *Map 9, "Catawba SAP Natural and Cultural Resources."*)

#### **BUNKER HILL COVERED BRIDGE**

The Bunker Hill Covered Bridge spans Lyle Creek just north of US Highway 70- just east of the City limits of Claremont. The bridge and surrounding 1.34 acres, was deeded to the Catawba County Historical Association in 1985 and is known as Connor Park. The bridge, originally built to help farmers get crops to market, is now the only covered bridge in North Carolina. It has taken on additional historic importance recently when the only other covered bridge in the state was washed away in an August 2003 flood.

Catawba County's bridge, built in 1895 and "covered" five years later at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, was constructed by local workmen using the Haupt truss method, which adds to its importance as a unique engineering accomplishment. Recently honored as a National Civil Engineering Landmark, the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge joins the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse and the Blue Ridge Parkway in representing North Carolina on this prestigious list. Catawba County has recently received federal funding to pave the parking area and the trail to the bridge at Conner's Park, making it handicapped accessible. Those improvements should be completed early in 2004.

#### **HISTORIC RESIDENCE**

One significant historic residence in the area is the Perkins house, located off Oxford School Road/NC Highway 10 north of US Highway 70 on a knoll overlooking the Catawba River. The house, built in 1790, is thought to be the only remaining brick house in Catawba County constructed prior to the Civil War. John Perkins, one of the first settlers in the Catawba Valley, constructed the house. It originally contained several 18<sup>th</sup> century continental features, including a mantle, wainscoting, doors and a stairway, which have been removed to the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts in Winston-Salem. Most likely through his Moravian connections, Perkins was granted several thousand acres in what is now Catawba and Burke Counties which he left to his seven children after his death in 1804.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- Identify, recognize and protect significant cultural and historical sites.
- Encourage further education of the public concerning the history and cultural attributes of the Catawba community.

## **PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Encourage the Catawba County Historical Association to increase public educational efforts for those sites of County, state and national significance in the Catawba area, especially the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge.
- Conduct a study to determine the safety of the Bunker Hill Covered Bridge. Specifically, determine if the bridge is susceptible to flood damage. If necessary, steps should be taken to protect the bridge from damage or destruction.
- Identify additional historical sites in the Catawba community which may qualify for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Promote the preservation and adaptive re-use of the historic Perkins property as a potential economic development opportunity.

## **APPENDIX A**

The following are the results from the first community meeting held May 13, 2003 at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Claremont, North Carolina. Seventeen (17) residents participated in this meeting.

### **Community Meeting Results (May 20, 2003)**

Specific issues that residents voted on are listed below. The number beside each issue indicates the number of votes it received. If an issue does not have a number beside it, the issue was listed for voting but no one voted for it.

### **What do you like about the Catawba Area?**

#### **Transportation**

Low Traffic/Minimal noise  
Proximity to I-40 (easy access)

#### **Community – 7**

Open Space/Close Proximity  
Small Town/Community  
Low Crime Area  
Churches (1)  
Undeveloped Land/Open Spaces  
Sense of pride for our community (1)  
Historical Sites/Heritage (2)  
Children Play Safely  
Cultural opportunities  
Diversity (people, cultures)  
Good feeling when driving thru community  
Country style living (3)  
Good blend of people & church-related communities  
Privacy – lack of population  
Well-maintained properties

#### **Public Services**

Good Medical Facilities  
Good Schools/New School Building  
Development stages of schools

#### **Environment – 2**

Environment is clean  
Wildlife

Rivers & streams

Landmarks (Connors Park/Bunker Hill Covered Bridge, Murray's Mill) (2)

Forests & trees

## **Business**

Industry

Family businesses

New businesses

**What concerns do you have for the Catawba Area?**

**Transportation – 2**

Need new roads for future growth  
Through traffic in neighborhoods (1)  
Mobile home areas w/poorly maintained roads  
Better roads/traffic lights to handle high traffic times  
Traffic lights with arrows (1)  
Bike riders – no place

**Community – 7**

Some towns/cities are stronger than others (2)  
Keeping elderly in community (1)  
More focus on elderly (4)  
Losing farms

**Environment**

Flooding of creeks/streams

**Public Services – 13**

Stronger enforcement junked/abandoned vehicle rules  
More County law enforcement needed for the area  
Lack of utilities (water, sewer) (8)  
Need more information for availability of county services (1)  
Community recreation department – place for children (4)

**Residential – 2**

Over-development (2)  
Need stricter appearance standards for manufactured & site-built homes (1)  
Need larger lots for new development (2+ acres) (1)  
Subsidized housing

**Commercial/Industrial – 3**

Centralizing industry (3)  
More industry  
Empty industry buildings  
Jobs  
Too many signs

**What is your future vision of the Catawba Area?**

**Transportation – 9**

Adequate roads that accommodate growth  
All side/dirt roads are paved  
Emission control for all vehicles (old & new)  
Enforcement of traffic laws on private roads (1)  
Cheap public transportation (1)  
Frontage/service road(s) along I-40 & 321 (1)  
Keep I-40 visually open (undeveloped) (6)

**Public Services - 11**

**Recreation – 4**

Larger/improved parking area at Connor Park (3)  
More/improved parks (1)

**Schools – 2**

Improved track/ball-fields for Bunker Hill High School  
Better school districting (2)  
More schools

**Law Enforcement**

More involvement in community watch program

**County – 5**

Leash laws (2)  
Better media coverage to increase public involvement in planning process  
Cheaper building inspection/zoning fees  
Realistic personal property tax appraisals  
Focus on elderly (housing, transportation) (3)

**Residential – 4**

Planned growth (1)  
Limit urban sprawl  
Well-planned, affordable housing (3)  
More developments with good lighting & sidewalks