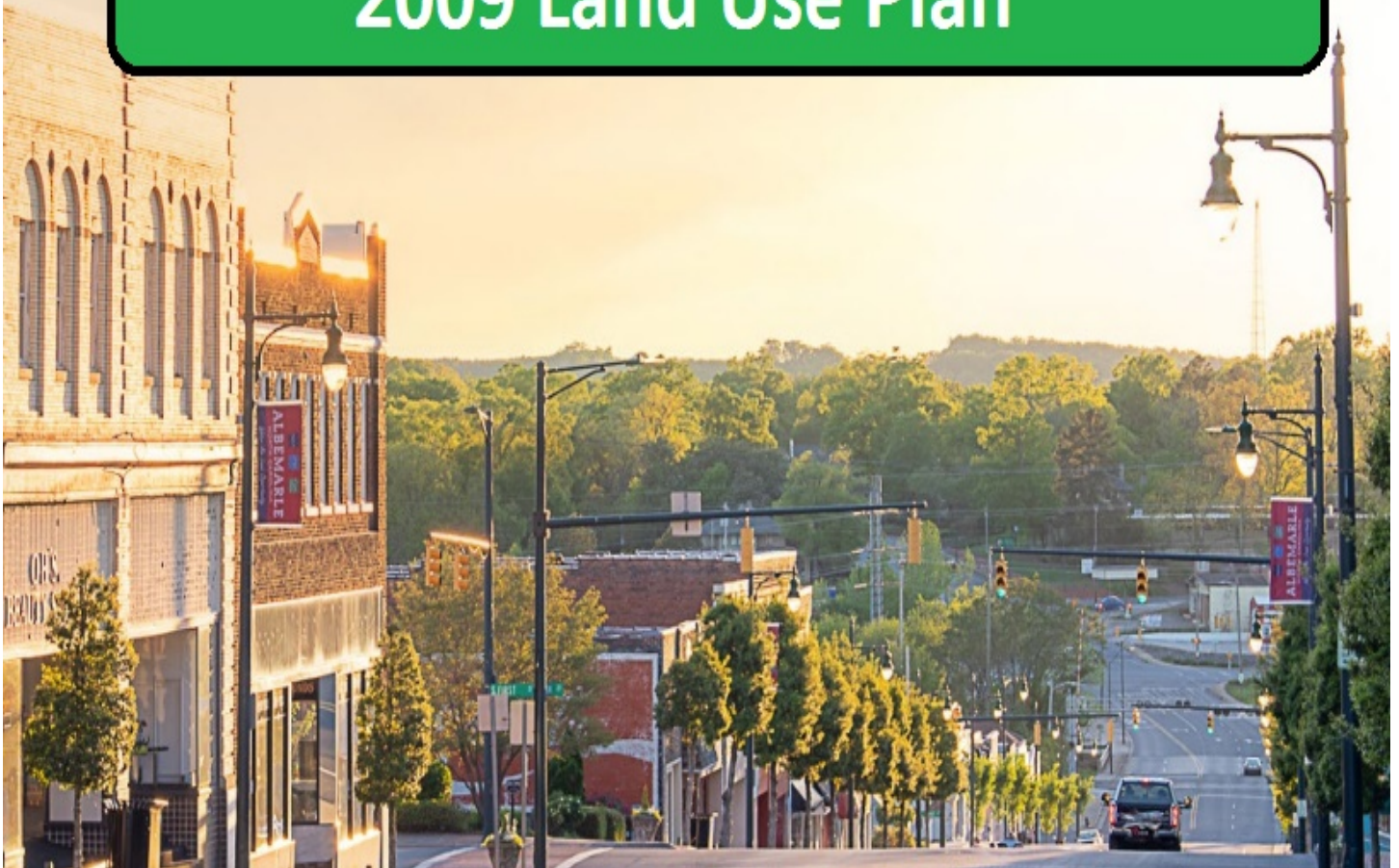


Albemarle, North Carolina

2009 Land Use Plan



City of Albemarle

Land Use Plan

2028

Adopted by the Albemarle City Council February 2, 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The City of Albemarle, established as the seat of Stanly County in 1841, is the largest municipality in the County, covering an area of approximately 16 square miles and housing over 16,000 people. Albemarle is geographically situated for growth with its proximity to the Charlotte metropolitan region and access to major highways, including impending completion of a four-lane highway linking Albemarle to the interstate system. In addition, Albemarle has adequate utility capacity to accommodate new growth. Recreational opportunities within the City, at nearby lakes, and at Morrow Mountain State Park are attractive amenities for potential new residents.

Albemarle has experienced a moderate level of population growth over the last fifty years, except during periods in the 1940s and 1970s when large annexations occurred; since 1980, the population growth rate has remained fairly static. Population projections, based on Stanly County figures, forecast moderate rates of growth in the future, excluding any annexations. Albemarle experienced a negative growth rate from 2000 to 2005. Population loss was most prevalent in the 25-34 age range, indicating that young professionals are leaving Albemarle for job opportunities elsewhere. In addition, the low percentage of residents with a bachelors degree or higher illustrates that many young people attend universities outside of the City and do not return upon graduation. Demographic information indicates that Albemarle is most attractive to retirees and families with small children. Demographics also show increasing diversity in the City's population; Albemarle is more diverse than Stanly County and comparable to in population makeup to state averages. With increasing rates of population diversity, Albemarle's neighborhoods are also becoming more diverse and inclusive.

Albemarle has fairly high occupancy and homeownership rates but an average median home value of \$82,000, lower than that of Stanly County and the State of North Carolina. A large portion of the City's housing stock (46%) is over 50 years old. In addition, over 77% of the housing stock is comprised of single family homes. There is currently a lack of multi-family housing choices. With median household and family income figures below averages for Stanly County and the State of North Carolina and poverty rates above such averages, Albemarle may want to look into diversifying its housing base to include more affordable housing.

Albemarle is currently experiencing an economic transition. Recent losses in the manufacturing industry have impacted the local economy, necessitating the emergence of new business sectors. Today, Albemarle's economy is still dependent upon the manufacturing sector but has diversified to include high employment rates in the health and social services, retail trade, and wholesale trade sectors. Albemarle has successfully met the challenges of a changing economic environment and demonstrated resiliency in the midst of industrial closings. Even with such fluctuations in the local economic base, Albemarle remains the retail and service center of Stanly County, additionally serving portions of several adjacent counties.

Development in Albemarle has followed a common pattern similar to many other U.S. cities, with low to mid density residential development scattered throughout the City and non-residential development concentrated along transportation corridors. Land outside of the City limits is mainly agricultural in use. Multi-family and mixed-use developments are represented to a much smaller degree. Development in Albemarle has largely been centered around the automobile as a primary means of transportation. Over 82% of the City’s workers drive to work alone; only 11% of the total population chooses to carpool. A small percentage (0.6%) utilized public transportation as a method of commuting. Thus, development has tended to cater to personal automobiles, locating in the vicinity of major thoroughfares and providing amenities such as large parking lots and multiple entry ways. With new greenway and pedestrian planning efforts, this trend is slowly starting to shift towards more pedestrian-oriented development. Similarly, downtown revitalization efforts support the creation of a vibrant center city conducive to alternative means of transportation.

There are a few environmental factors present in Albemarle that could pose a challenge to future development. Many of the soil series within the City have a high potential for flooding and erosion. The 100-year floodplain runs through the center of the City and along the western edge of the City limits. One stream, Little Long Creek, which also runs through the center of Albemarle, is listed on the State’s 303(d) list of impaired waters, specifically for urban runoff and storm sewer drainage, indicating pressure from existing development. Any new development must contend with the barriers posed by Albemarle’s natural resources and conform to environmental sustainability standards.

ALBEMARLE LAND USE PLAN 2028

The Albemarle Land Use Plan 2028 reflects a shared vision for the future of Albemarle and articulates goals, objectives, and strategies to achieve this vision. The Land Use Planning Committee, appointed by the Albemarle City Council, drafted an objective for the Land Use Plan and identified ten major areas of concern.

“To improve the quality of life of the citizens of Albemarle by encouraging responsible growth management decisions, protecting the City’s unique character, developing an attractive community, promoting good stewardship of natural resources, restoring and revitalizing the historic downtown, and ensuring a healthy local economy”.

1. Transportation
2. Public Water and Sewer
3. Residential Development
4. Commercial Development
5. Industrial Development
6. Open Space/Recreation
7. Downtown Development
8. Community Appearance
9. Economic Development
10. Governmental Planning Coordination

The Albemarle Land Use Plan 2028 seeks to advance the specified goals for each of the ten key areas.

- Ensure that transportation networks are safe, convenient, and contribute to sustainable land use practices.
- Continue to ensure that water and sewer services are delivered in a safe, efficient, and effective manner that benefits the residents of Albemarle and promotes good land use planning.
- Improve the quality of Albemarle’s neighborhoods.
- Provide for sustainable commercial development that meets the City’s land use goals.
- Continue to supply a strong environment for a broad range of industry that is well suited to the area economy and contributes to sustainable land use practices.
- Protect and enhance Albemarle’s Natural Resources and Recreation Areas.
- Improve the economic, social, and cultural vitality of downtown Albemarle.
- Promote community appearance as a primary indicator of Albemarle’s unique character and rich quality of life.
- Continue to provide a healthy environment for a diverse mix of industry, business uses, and other employers that build on the area economy and strengthens the community.
- Collaboration between governmental agencies is encouraged as a means of ensuring good overall policy that meets the needs and desires of the entire community.

Specific strategies include implementation of pedestrian planning outcomes, revision of development ordinances and policies, creation of landscaping standards supportive of aesthetic and environmental concerns, encouragement of diversity in residential development, integration of commercial and office uses in residential areas, encouragement of adaptive re-use of existing buildings, and provision of incentives to attract desired land uses.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

Following adoption of the Albemarle Land Use Plan 2028, it is recommended that select strategies be prioritized for immediate implementation.

1. All regulations for development in the City of Albemarle (building regulations, zoning, subdivision, flood damage prevention, and watershed) should be revised and combined into a clearly written and illustrated document that will allow for the type of development desired by the community and that is more user-friendly to developers and the general public. The following new concepts should be incorporated into this document:
 - Adopt design standards for new commercial development.
 - The Planning Board and City Council should study the Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan and integrate key issues into the new development ordinance.
 - Redesign transportation corridors to accommodate a mix of land uses and alternate transportation choices (pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit).
 - Undertake joint planning efforts between the city, other municipalities, and Stanly County to determine specific land use objectives for areas identified in the *Stanly County Land Use Plan* as primary and secondary growth zones for the City of

Albemarle including a request to Stanly County for a new extraterritorial jurisdiction for the City of Albemarle.

2. Aggressively maintain and expand improvements Downtown including, but not limited to, sidewalks, street trees, street lights, street furniture, and landscaping.
3. Explore and implement effective incentives to promote the adaptive reuse of older buildings and the redevelopment of Downtown, existing commercial areas, and compact neighborhoods.
4. Develop and expand open space areas throughout Albemarle including required open space in new residential development and a system of greenways and pedestrian paths including rest stops with benches and other amenities that connect residential areas with parks, schools, churches, and commercial areas. New easements, utility and transportation easements, floodplains, and sidewalks could be considered as routes for this system. These improvements will add value to individual properties and to the whole community.
5. Recognizing that the airport and adjacent commercial development is a primary asset for the City of Albemarle, support efforts:
 - To create easy access to and from the airport
 - To apply appropriate county zoning in the adjacent area
 - To encourage further infrastructure and site development at the airport
6. Explore options to improve the effectiveness of code enforcement of nuisance, landscaping, and sign regulations in order to improve the appearance of existing residential and commercial zones.
7. Ensure that water and sewer systems, including plants and lines, are maintained and updated to meet all state requirements and to ensure that capacity is adequate for future growth.
8. Encourage traffic calming measures on streets where traffic speeds are a problem.

INTRODUCTION

I. PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

The purpose of the Albemarle Land Use Plan 2028 is to plan for orderly growth in a manner that encourages economic development, while at the same time maintaining Albemarle's friendly and inviting atmosphere. Albemarle is particularly poised for growth due to the widening of Highway 24/27 and increasing growth pressure from the Charlotte metropolitan region to the southwest. The City Council recognized these issues when they sanctioned a land use planning process in the fall of 2006. The process began with the formation of a land use planning committee which was charged with the responsibility of guiding the preparation of a long-range plan for the future development of the City of Albemarle.

The policy statements contained in the Albemarle Land Use Plan 2028 serve as the basis for future development decisions and have been designed for regular use in making public and private decisions. The plan also serves several important additional functions.

- *Source of Information* – The plan provides information on a number of topics including the local economy, population trends, land suitability, land use trends, and transportation issues.
- *Guidance for Government Decisions* – The plan serves as a blueprint for guiding future decisions on budgets, ordinances, capital improvements, and zoning and subdivision matters.
- *Preview of Governmental Actions* – Business decisions made by the public and developers in particular, can be more effective when the probable outcome of governmental decisions is understood. Adoption of the plan increases the predictability of government actions.

II. LOCATION

Albemarle is located in the Uwharrie Lakes region of Piedmont North Carolina near both the Charlotte and Piedmont Triad urban areas. Albemarle is located just west of Morrow Mountain State Park, near Tuckertown Lake, Badin Lake, and Lake Tillery.

Albemarle is both the county seat of Stanly County and the largest municipality within the County, covering an area of 16 square miles and housing over 16,000 people.

Source: City of Albemarle web site

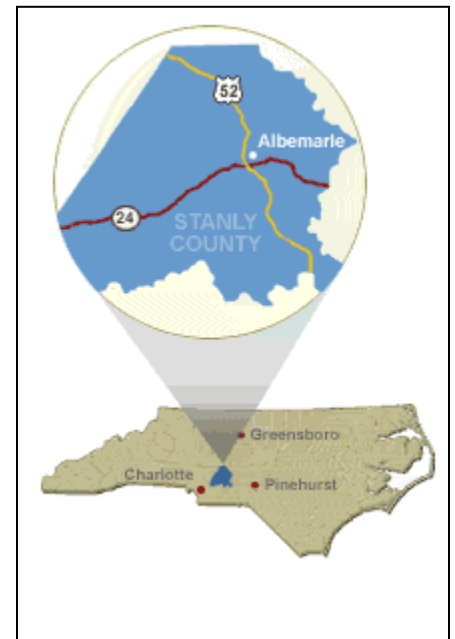


Figure 1: Location Map

III. HISTORY

The Albemarle region was originally a part of Montgomery County, from its inception in 1779 to 1841, when prominent residents of the increasingly populous areas west of the Yadkin/Pee Dee River successfully petitioned the North Carolina General Assembly for the establishment of Stanly county as an independent entity. Soon after the new County was formed, its Board of Commissioners was tasked with establishing a permanent county seat within eight miles of the home of Eben Hearne (the County's first sheriff), and with laying out a new town, in which a courthouse would be erected. Nancy Allen Hearne (Nehemiah Hearne's widow) donated 51 acres from their plantation near the intersection of the Old Turnpike and Old Stage Roads for the construction of the new County Seat. Thus, the City of Albemarle was established. The City is named for George Monck, the Duke of Albemarle, who was one of the eight Lords Proprietors, granted the province of Carolina in 1663 by King Charles II. The City of Albemarle was formally incorporated in 1857.

The Albemarle region's early economic growth was fueled by agriculture (with cotton as the primary crop), regional mercantile trade, and a short-lived gold rush in the nearby Uwharrie Mountains, all later supplanted by textile manufacturing. The Efird Manufacturing Company opened its first mill in Albemarle in 1896 and was followed soon thereafter by the Wiscassett Mill Company, the Cannon Mill Company, the Lillian Knitting Mill, and others. The Wiscassett Mill Company was a driving force for the development of Albemarle. The Wiscassett mill village was comprised of mill worker housing, a community church, and a school, most of which are still standing to this day. In 1899, the Wiscassett Mills Company established Cabarrus Bank and Trust, the first bank in Albemarle.

By the early 20th century, Albemarle had become a center of commerce and industry. An electrical distribution plan for the City was underway by 1910. In 1911, the Winston-Salem Southbound Railway (WSSB) constructed a rail line through Albemarle, posing stiff competition for the Yadkin Railroad, in business in the City since 1891. The railroad was instrumental in spurring further industrial development in Albemarle, including cotton gins, feed and flour mills, and saw mills. By the 1920s, Albemarle had built its first water treatment plant, paved the city's roads and sidewalks, and established a fire department, public library, and public hospital. A city-wide sewage system was completed by 1930.

Albemarle was also a center of entertainment and culture. Built in 1890, the Albemarle Opera House was a popular attraction. In operation as a theater until 1913, the building hosted a variety of entertainment, including operas, Broadway productions, vaudeville acts, troubadours, and traveling minstrel acts. Local audiences gathered in Cannon Park to listen to the brass bands made up of textile workers. The Wiscassett Mill Band was a favorite among the crowds. Civic and cultural groups such as the Albemarle Women's Club, Garden Club, Daughters of the American Revolution, and United Daughters of the Confederacy formed for the purposes of providing companionship and undertaking civic and cultural activities.

In the post-World War II era, Albemarle and Stanly County experienced many changes that greatly increased the quality of life for citizens, including the proliferation of households with indoor plumbing and electricity, increasing ownership of personal automobiles, and expansion of recreational and cultural opportunities. Although textile manufacturing continued to be the City's major industry, the local economy diversified to include such new industries as metalworking, rubber tire manufacturing, and manufacturing of ready-to-wear apparel. These new industries became more important during the 1970s and 1980s when many textile manufacturers began to close down and sell off their land holdings.

Today, the City of Albemarle continues to be a manufacturing center, but the local economy has grown to include retail and wholesale trade and educational and medical services as major business sectors. Albemarle retains much of its architectural heritage, with many old buildings undergoing successful retrofits for reuse. Albemarle continues to build upon its rich history as it experiences new growth.

Sources: Albemarle Downtown Development Corporation website, [Stanly County. The Architectural Legacy of a Rural North Carolina County](#), [a Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont, North Carolina](#).

SECTION ONE: COMMUNITY COMPARISONS

For the purpose of the population and economic analysis, Albemarle is compared with the municipalities of Asheboro (Randolph County), Laurinburg (Scotland County), Reidsville (Rockingham County), Salisbury (Rowan County), and Smithfield (Johnston County), as well as Stanly County and the State of North Carolina. These comparison jurisdictions provide a regional context in which to better analyze Albemarle's economic and demographic situation.

I. POPULATION

A. POPULATION

Albemarle's population has risen throughout its history, with small decreases between the periods of 1960 to 1970 and 1980 to 1990. The majority of population growth after 1940 occurred due to annexation. Annexations between 1940 and 1950 and again between 1970 and 1980 increased the population greatly. However, since 1980, the population has not significantly increased or decreased.

CITY OF ALBEMARLE POPULATION 1910 - 2000

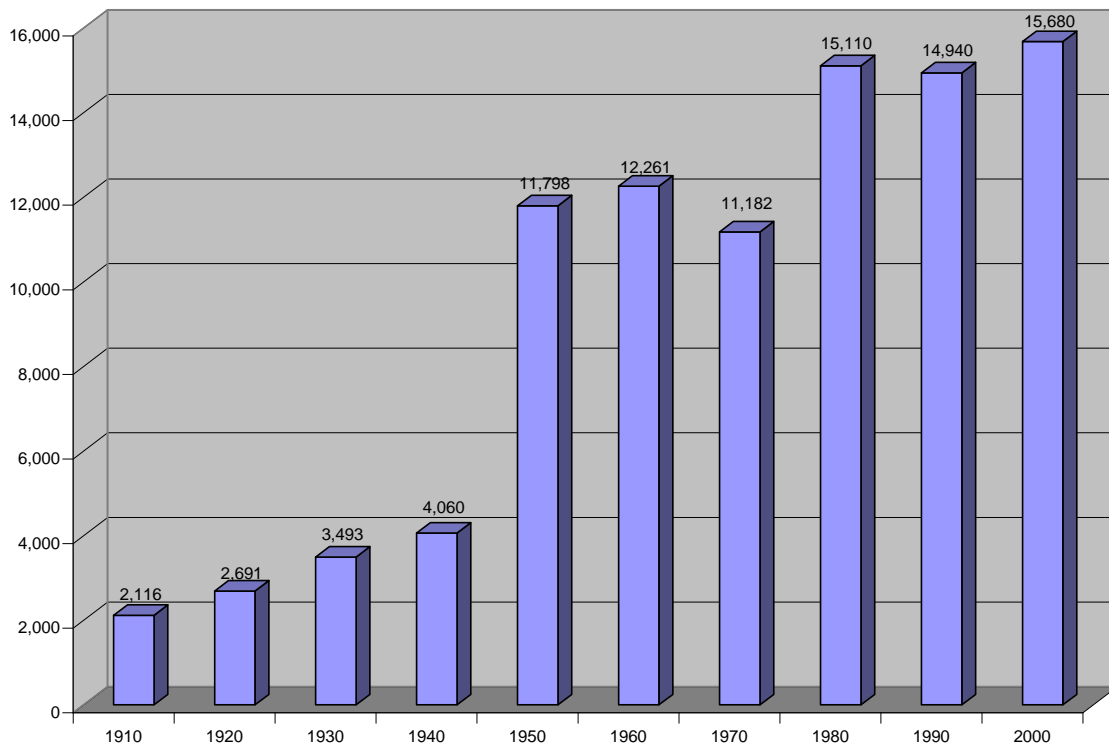


Figure 2: City of Albemarle Population
Source: US Census Bureau

As of the 2000 U.S. Census, Albemarle has a population of 15,680, spread over a land area of 15.7 square miles. Albemarle has the third smallest population when compared to the five other municipalities, being slightly larger than Reidsville and Smithfield. As of 2000, Salisbury had the largest population with 26,462 and the largest land area with 17.78 square miles. Asheboro is the second largest in population, followed by Laurinburg. Albemarle has the second greatest land area, 15.7 square miles, followed by Asheboro, with 15.35 square miles of territory. However, Salisbury has the highest population density per square mile with close to 1,488 people per square mile. Albemarle is the second least dense among the comparable towns, following Reidsville.

POPULATION, LAND AREA, AND DENSITY

	Population, 2000	Land Area, 2000 (square miles)	Population Density, 2000 (square miles)
Albemarle	15,680	15.70	999.0
Asheboro	21,672	15.35	1,412.3
Laurinburg	15,874	12.40	1,280.2
Reidsville	14,485	14.90	972.1
Salisbury	26,462	17.78	1,488.3
Smithfield	11,510	11.40	1009.6
Stanly County	58,100	395.06	147.1
State of NC	8,049,313	48,798.88	165.2

*Table 1: Population, Land Area, and Density
Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management*

B. POPULATION GROWTH

Salisbury has historically been the largest of the six municipalities and continues to outpace the comparable cities. However, in the last 10 years, Asheboro, Laurinburg, Reidsville, and Smithfield all experienced growth. In contrast, Albemarle’s population growth has remained static.

Asheboro experienced the largest growth rate over the past 50 years at 64.5%, with Laurinburg (55.1%) and Smithfield (51.6%) closely following that pattern. Reidsville experienced the least growth over the past 50 years with a 19.2% population change, with Salisbury (24.0%) and Albemarle (24.8%) experiencing similar changes in their population during 1950-2000.

Between 1990 and 2000, Albemarle’s population grew by 740 people. This represents a 4.7% growth rate, which is lower than all the comparable municipalities and Stanly County. Smithfield, benefiting from its proximity to the Raleigh metropolitan area, gained 34.5% during the 1990s. Salisbury had the lowest growth rate of the comparison cities with a growth rate of 12.8%, however, that is still more than twice that of Albemarle.

POPULATION GROWTH, COMPARISON CITIES

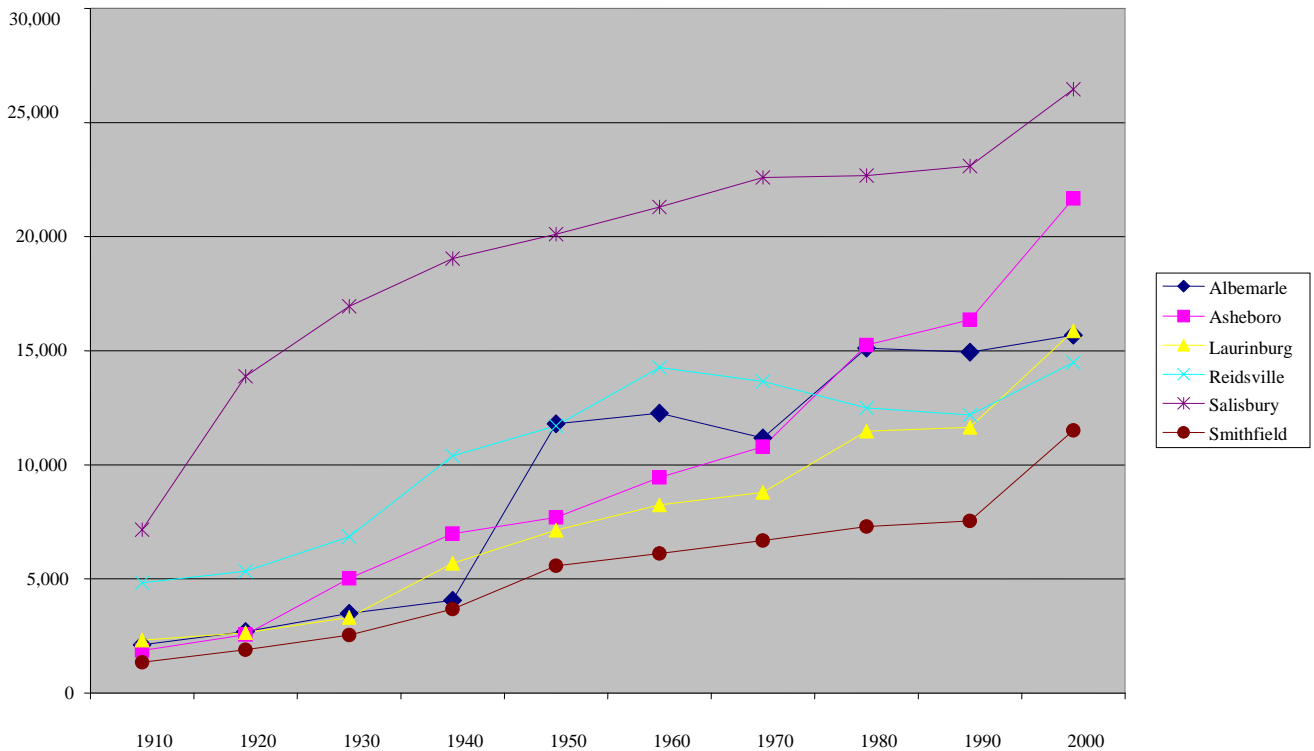


Figure 3: Population Growth, Comparison Cities
 Source: US Census Bureau and the NC Office of State Budget and Management

COMPARISON OF POPULATION GROWTH: Long Term & Short Term Growth

	Growth Rate, 1950-2000	Population added, 1950-2000	Growth Rate 1990-2000	Population added, 1990-2000
Albemarle	24.8%	3,882	4.7%	740
Asheboro	64.5%	13,971	24.5%	5,310
Laurinburg	55.1%	8,740	26.7%	4,231
Reidsville	19.2%	2,777	15.9%	2,302
Salisbury	24.0%	6,360	12.8%	3,375
Smithfield	51.6%	5,936	34.5%	3,970
Stanly County	36.1%	20,970	10.9%	6,335

Table 2: Comparison of Population Growth
 Source: US Census Bureau and the NC Office of State Budget and Management

Between 2000 and 2005, Albemarle had a net loss of 35 residents. 87 residents were added through annexation; however, 122 residents were lost to migration and natural

decrease. This results in an Urban Growth Rate of -0.22%, which is the smallest of all comparison jurisdictions. Salisbury annexed the largest land area (2.33 square miles) and also the most people (2,611) between 1990 and 1999. Smithfield had the largest urban growth rate at 11.34%.

COMPONENTS OF POPULATION GROWTH, 2000-2005

	Total Population Growth 2000-2005	Growth Through Annexation	Total Area Annexed (sq. miles)	Urban Growth (migration & natural decrease)	Urban Growth Rate
Albemarle	-35	87	1.20	-122	-.22%
Asheboro	1,541	182	.92	1,359	7.11%
Laurinburg	103	113	.13	-10	.65%
Reidsville	136	52	1.13	84	.94%
Salisbury	2,596	2,611	2.33	-15	9.81%
Smithfield	1,305	0	0	1,305	11.34%

*Table 3: Components of Population Growth, 2000-2005
Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management*

C. POPULATION PROJECTIONS

In order to provide an estimate of the City’s future population, three (3) projection methods were utilized.

The first projection, utilizing the **constant share method**, resulted in the lowest of the three estimates. The constant share projection method assumes that the City’s population will remain a constant percentage of the County’s overall population. The base percentage for this estimate was established by dividing the 2000 population of Albemarle by the 2000 population of Stanly County.

The second projection was made utilizing the **geometric projection method**. This projection method is based on previous percentage increases in population from prior censuses. The base percentage increase for this projection was derived by adding the percentage increases or decreases together for each census between 1950 and 2000 and dividing the resulting number by 5 (the number of data points). The resulting number was then used to estimate the 2010, 2020, and 2030 populations.

The third projection was made utilizing the **arithmetic projection method**. This projection method utilizes the average total number increase in population over a given time period to estimate future population. The base number used in this projection was derived by adding the total increase or decrease in population from each census between 1950 and 2000 and dividing the resulting number by 5 (the number of data points). The resulting number was then used to estimate the 2010, 2020, and 2030 populations.

It is difficult to project the population of any municipality due to the unpredictability of potential annexations and the state of the local, regional, and national economy. In reality, the actual population of Albemarle may vary from these projections based on annexation, population growth and losses, job creation or loss, and the extent of growth outward from the Charlotte metropolitan area.

ALBEMARLE POPULATION PROJECTIONS, 2010-2030

Year	Constant Share Projection	Geometric Projection	Arithmetic Projection	Projected County Population
2000 (Actual)	15,680	15,680	15,680	58,100
2010	16,258	16,433	16,456	60,126
2020	17,138	17,222	17,232	63,477
2030	17,761	18,049	18,008	65,781
Growth Total (percentage)	2,081 (12%)	2,369 (14%)	2,328 (13%)	7,681 (12%)

Table 4: Albemarle Population Projections, 2010-2030

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census and North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management

D. POPULATION DIVERSITY

Albemarle has a slightly smaller percentage of black residents as compared to the State average. However, Albemarle has a higher percentage of ‘Other’ races than all of the comparable cities, excluding Asheboro. Compared to Stanly County, Albemarle is more diverse. Albemarle is very similar to State averages.

POPULATION COMPARISON BY RACIAL BREAKDOWN

	White	Black	Other	Two or More Races
Albemarle	72.9%	20.5%	5.5%	1.1%
Asheboro	76.5%	12.1%	9.6%	1.8%
Laurinburg	50.5%	43.1%	5.3%	1.0%
Reidsville	57.0%	39.5%	2.2%	1.2%
Salisbury	57.3%	37.6%	3.7%	1.5%
Smithfield	62.7%	31.0%	4.7%	1.1%
Stanly County	84.7%	11.5%	3.0%	1.8%
North Carolina	72.1%	21.6%	4.9%	1.3%

Table 5: Population Comparison by Racial Breakdown

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

E. AGE GROUPS

Albemarle and Laurinburg are tied for the highest percentage of population between the ages of 0-14 at 22%. This is above both the North Carolina and Stanly County percentages. Albemarle has the third lowest percentage of residents between the ages of

25 and 44, trailing the state average by nearly four percentage points. Albemarle has the fourth highest percentage of population 65 and older. All the municipalities compared exceed the state average of 12% population over 65.

COMPARISON OF AGE BY RANGE

	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Albemarle	22.0%	12.4%	26.9%	21.3%	17.5%
Asheboro	20.7%	13.8%	30.7%	19.5%	15.1%
Laurinburg	22.0%	15.1%	25.9%	22.7%	14.1%
Reidsville	19.5%	10.7%	28.0%	23.0%	18.9%
Salisbury	18.6%	16.3%	25.1%	20.1%	19.9%
Smithfield	17.6%	12.0%	29.2%	23.0%	18.2%
Stanly County	20.9%	12.5%	29.0%	23.4%	14.2%
North Carolina	20.5%	13.9%	31.1%	22.5%	12.0%

Table 6: Comparison of Age by Range
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Albemarle's age segment that gained the most population between 1990 and 2000 was the 45-54 age group. The second highest growth was seen in the 10-14 age segment, followed by the 5-9 range. Four age groups lost population in the 1990's. The biggest loss was seen in the 65-74 age range, followed by those between ages 60-64.

AGE RANGES OF ALBEMARLE'S POPULATION

	1990	2000	Numerical Change	Percentage Change
Under 5	1033	1093	60	5%
5 – 9	914	1169	255	22%
10 – 14	919	1177	258	22%
15 – 19	911	1003	92	9%
20 – 24	999	946	-53	-6%
25 – 34	2154	2018	-136	-7%
35 – 44	2011	2194	183	8%
45 – 54	1482	1962	480	24%
55 – 59	753	752	-1	-0.001%
60 – 64	814	632	-182	-28%
65 – 74	1650	1365	-285	-21%
75 – 84	1012	1045	33	3%
85+	287	324	37	11%
TOTAL	14,939	15,680	741	5%

Table 7: Age Ranges of Albemarle's Population
Source: US Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census

Median age is defined by the Census Bureau as the measure that divides the age distribution into two equal parts: one-half of the cases falling below the median value and one-half above. As of the 2000 Census, the median age in the City and within the County was 36.9 years of age. This is significantly higher than Asheboro at 34.0 years of age. Reidsville, with a median age of 39.5, had the highest median age among the six comparable cities, significantly higher than the state median age of 35.3. Projections issued by the NC Office of State Planning show that the median age in the state is expected to continue to increase, although at a slower rate than in the past. Although there are no projections made for cities, it can be expected that the City of Albemarle will follow a similar trend to that of the state.

MEDIAN AGE – 2000
Albemarle and Comparison Jurisdictions

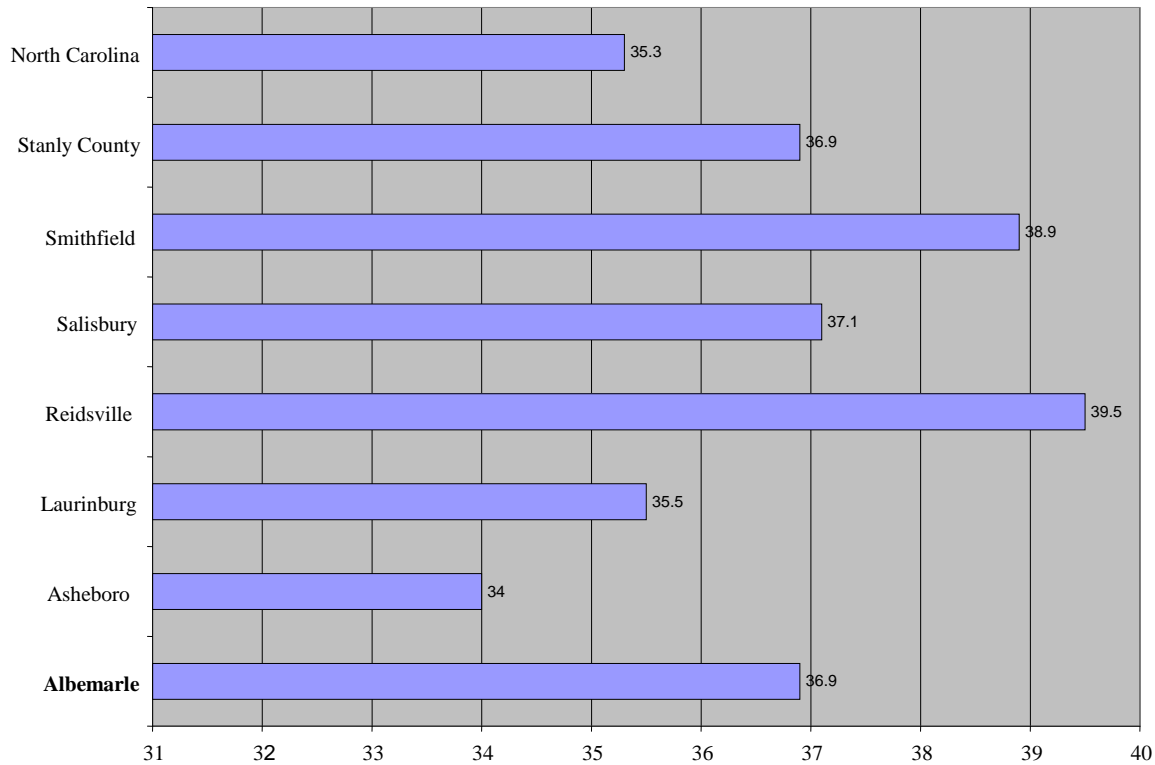


Figure 4: Median Age, Albemarle and Comparison Jurisdictions, 2000
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

II. HOUSING

A. OCCUPANCY

Smithfield has the highest occupancy rates with just less than 95% of all housing occupied. Albemarle had over 90% of all housing occupied and an average household size of 2.42 people. Albemarle had the lowest occupancy rates out of the six

municipalities, but it is comparable to Stanly County (90.5%) and is more than the State average of 88.9%.

HOUSEHOLD OCCUPANCY RATES

	Houses	Occupied	% Occupied	Average Household Size
Albemarle	6,954	6,291	90.5%	2.42
Asheboro	9,515	8,756	92.0%	2.40
Laurinburg	6,603	6,136	92.9%	2.46
Reidsville	6,477	6,013	92.8%	2.34
Salisbury	11,288	10,276	91.0%	2.29
Smithfield	4,674	4,417	94.5%	2.30
Stanly County	24,582	22,223	90.4%	2.53
North Carolina	3,523,944	3,132,013	88.9%	2.49

Table 8: Household Occupancy Rates
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

B. HOMEOWNERSHIP & VALUE

Albemarle has the highest homeownership rate (63.6%) among the comparable cities, but is lower than Stanly County’s rate of 76.2%. The state of North Carolina has a 69.4% homeownership rate, less than that of Stanly County. The comparable city with the lowest homeownership rate is Smithfield (53.2%), with Salisbury closely following with 53.9%.

Smithfield had the highest median value (\$100,500) for homes found within the City, which is near the North Carolina median value of \$108,300. The lowest median home value can be found in Laurinburg (\$77,000), with Albemarle at \$82,000 the third lowest median home value. However, it is comparable with Stanly County’s median home value of \$87,700 and Asheboro’s home median value of \$87,900.

HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES & HOUSING VALUES

	% of Owner Occupied Units	Median Home Value
Albemarle	63.6%	\$82,000
Asheboro	54.9%	\$87,900
Laurinburg	57.3%	\$77,000
Reidsville	58.0%	\$78,400
Salisbury	53.9%	\$93,800
Smithfield	53.2%	\$100,500
Stanly County	76.2%	\$87,700
North Carolina	69.4%	\$108,300

Table 9: Homeownership Rates and Housing Values
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

C. HOUSING STOCK

According to the 2000 US Census over 16% of all structures in Albemarle were built before 1939. Nearly 46% of the City's houses are over 50 years old. The prevalence of older structures indicates that efforts and assistance to renovate, reuse, and restore these structures is likely to be needed in the future.

STRUCTURE AGE-ALBEMARLE

Year Structure	Number of Structures	% of Total Structures Built
1999 to March 2000	123	1.8%
1990-1998	748	10.8%
1980-1989	746	10.8%
1970-1979	955	13.8%
1960-1969	1,178	17.1%
1950-1959	1,256	18.2%
1940-1949	792	11.5%
1939 or earlier	1,105	16.0%

Table 10: Structure Age, Albemarle
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

When compared with the five other municipalities, Albemarle has a lower percentage of multi-family units than all but one city, Reidsville at 17.9%. In the mobile home/other category, Albemarle is near the lower end of the range among the five comparable cities, and significantly less than that of Stanly County and the State. Overall, Stanly County has the largest percentage of structures that are Mobile Homes/Other with 17.1%. Reidsville has the highest percentage of Single-Family structures with 78.9%.

HOUSING UNIT TYPE

	Single Family	Multi-Family	Mobile Home/Other
Albemarle	77.4%	19.0%	3.5%
Asheboro	60.5%	30.1%	9.4%
Laurinburg	73.4%	23.1%	3.5%
Reidsville	78.9%	17.9%	3.3%
Salisbury	67.8%	34.1%	2.2%
Smithfield	72.4%	22.6%	4.9%
Stanly County	76.4%	6.5%	17.1%
North Carolina	67.4%	16.1%	16.6%

Table 11: Housing Unit Type
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

III. ECONOMY

A. *INCOME*

Median household income includes the income of the householder and all other individuals aged 15 years old or older in the household. Because many households consist of only one person, average household income is usually less than average family income. The median divides the income distribution into two equal parts: one-half of the cases falling below the median income and one-half above the median. For households, the median income is based on the distribution of the total number of households including those with no income.

Salisbury has the highest median household income of \$32,923, with Asheboro and Albemarle closely following. Out of the comparable municipalities, Smithfield has the lowest median household income at \$27,813. All the cities' median household incomes are below the Stanly County and State median household income figures.

In compiling statistics on family income, the incomes of all members aged 15 years old or older are summed and treated as a single amount. The median divides the income distribution into two equal parts: one-half of the cases falling below the median income and one-half above the median. For families, the median income is based on the distribution of the total number of families including those with no income.

Albemarle has the highest median family income (\$41,829) of the comparable cities. However, Stanly County and the State of North Carolina are both above that level. Salisbury and Asheboro are the next highest with regards to median family income. Laurinburg has the lowest median family income at \$37,485, but is followed closely by Reidsville and Smithfield.

Per capita income is the mean income computed for every man, woman, and child in a particular group. It is derived by dividing the total income of a particular group by the total population in that group. Per capita income is highest in the City of Salisbury (\$18,864), followed closely by Smithfield at \$18,012. Albemarle is in the middle range in this comparison at \$17,511, slightly more than Reidsville at \$17,414 and Asheboro at \$17,382. Albemarle's per capita income is similar to that of Stanly County (\$17,825). The lowest per capita income is in the City of Laurinburg (\$16,165). All of the municipalities and Stanly County trail the state per capita income of \$20,307.

INCOME COMPARISON

	Median Household Income	Median Family Income	Per Capita Income
Albemarle	\$31,442	\$41,729	\$17,511
Asheboro	\$31,676	\$39,397	\$17,382
Laurinburg	\$29,064	\$37,485	\$16,165
Reidsville	\$31,040	\$37,553	\$17,414
Salisbury	\$32,923	\$41,108	\$18,864
Smithfield	\$27,813	\$37,929	\$18,012
Stanly County	\$36,898	\$43,956	\$17,825
North Carolina	\$39,184	\$46,335	\$20,307

Table 12: Income Comparison

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

B. POVERTY

The poverty rate for all people in Albemarle is above the state and county averages. In Albemarle, the county, and the state, the highest poverty rates are seen among children. The percentage of the elderly population in Albemarle living in poverty is below the State of North Carolina's average, but just above that of Stanly County.

POVERTY COMPARISON

	All Persons	Children (0-18)	Elderly (65+)
Albemarle	15.7%	21.6%	10.8%
Asheboro	15.8%	23.8%	12.5%
Laurinburg	23.6%	35.5%	18.6%
Reidsville	15.1%	23.9%	14.7%
Salisbury	16.0%	22.3%	11.0%
Smithfield	20.6%	27.1%	19.2%
Stanly County	10.7%	14.1%	10.3%
North Carolina	12.3%	15.7%	13.2%

Table 13: Poverty Comparison

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

C. EDUCATION

Albemarle and Stanly County both have a relatively high percentage of residents without a high school diploma and a low percentage of residents with a four-year degree or more. Salisbury has the highest percentage of residents with a four-year degree or more and the lowest percentage of residents without a high school diploma. Smithfield has the highest percentage of residents without a high school diploma at 30.7%.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
(Persons 25 and older in Albemarle & Comparison Areas)

	% without High School Diploma	% with a 4 year degree or more
Albemarle	26.7%	17.3%
Asheboro	31.3%	16.8%
Laurinburg	27.0%	21.8%
Reidsville	31.2%	15.6%
Salisbury	24.2%	24.1%
Smithfield	30.7%	18.3%
Stanly County	26.5%	12.7%
North Carolina	21.8%	22.5%

Table 14: Educational Attainment
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

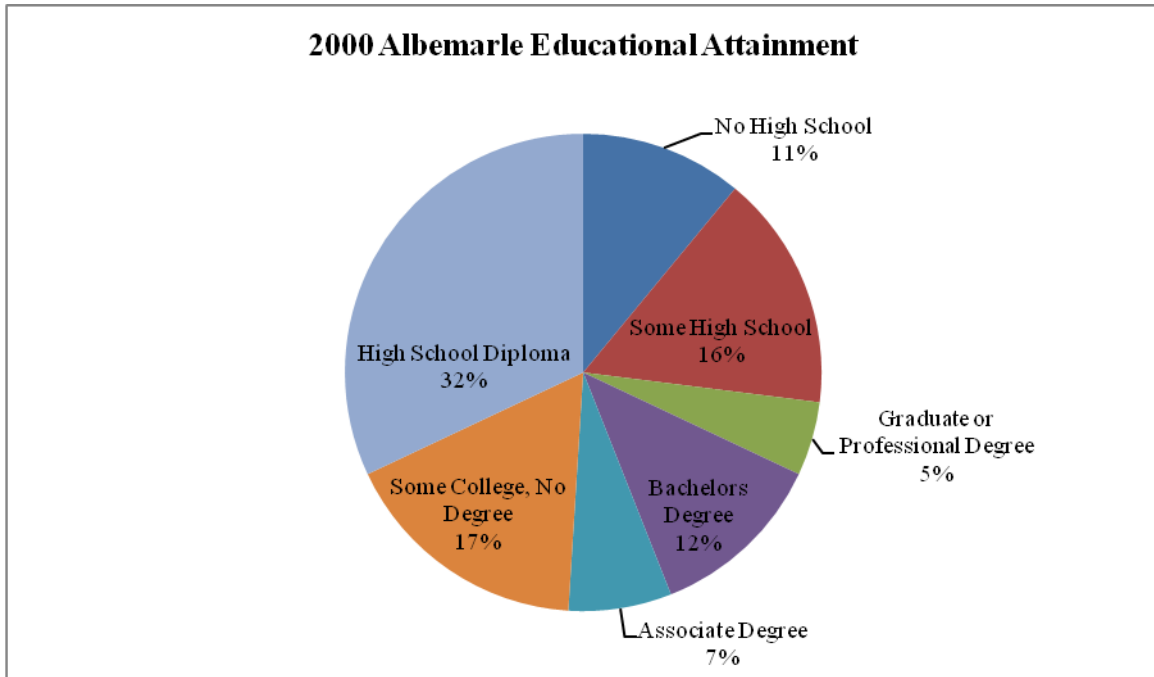


Figure 5: Albemarle Educational Attainment, 2000
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

SECTION TWO: COMMUNITY PROFILE

I. WORK FORCE

A. EMPLOYMENT

Close to 29% of all of Albemarle's residents are employed in the manufacturing industry. The second largest employment sector is educational, health, and social services (22.7%) followed by retail trade (11%).

ALBEMARLE'S EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Industry	# of Employees	% of Total Employed
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting, Mining	28	0.4%
Construction	495	7.2%
Manufacturing	1,985	28.7%
Wholesale Trade	236	3.4%
Retail Trade	761	11.0%
Transportation & Warehousing, and Utilities	181	2.6%
Information	61	0.9%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	233	3.4%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services	255	3.7%
Educational, Health, and Social Sciences	1,570	22.7%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, & Food Services	522	7.5
Other Services (except Public Administration)	323	4.7%
Public Administration	273	3.9%

Table 15: Albemarle's Employment by Industry
Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

B. UNEMPLOYMENT

Over the past ten years (1997-2007), the unemployment rate in Albemarle has experienced significant change. The unemployment rate dropped to a low of 3.5% in 1998. Three years later, there was a sizeable jump in the unemployment rate, nearly doubling from 2000 (3.9%) to 2001 (7.2%). This increase was due to the downsizing of

textile businesses in the Albemarle area and statewide. As this influence has subsided, the unemployment rate has returned to a level of 4.7% for 2007, which is slightly less than that of 1997 (5%). These rates are averaged over the entire year's worth of data.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN ALBEMARLE

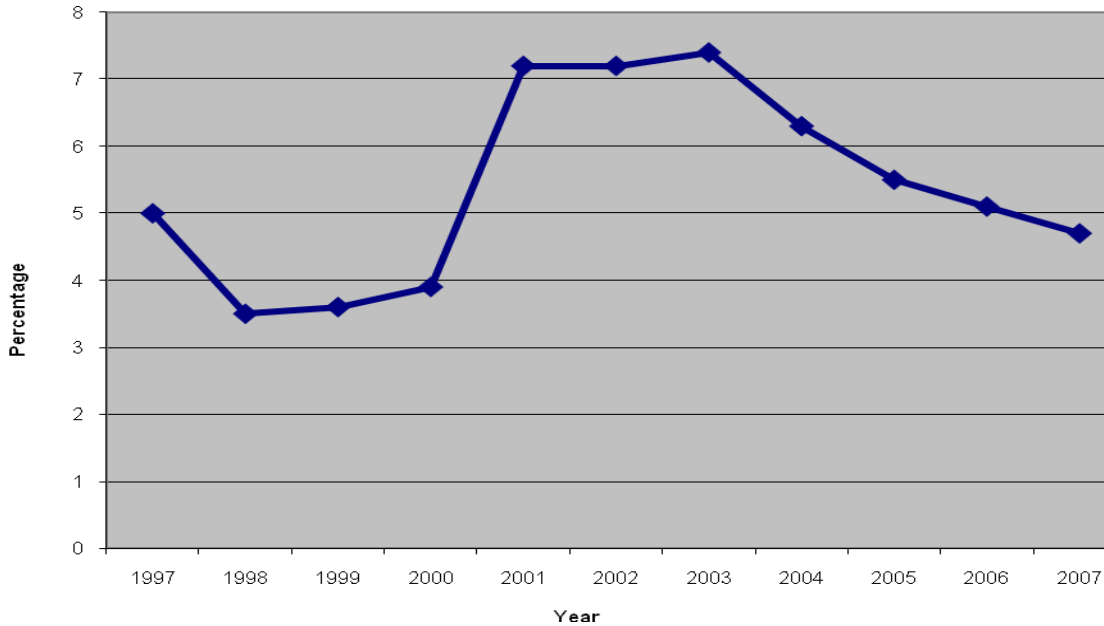


Figure 6: Unemployment in Albemarle
Source: NC Employment Security Commission

C. BUSINESS SECTORS

According to the 2002 Economic Census, the largest sector of Albemarle's businesses is in the category of manufacturing. This category is comprised of textile mills, fabric coating mills, and fabric finishing mills. Manufacturing companies located within the City contributed over \$453 million dollars in sales, shipments, receipts, or revenue during 2002. This sector also employed the most people, with a total of 2,331 employees.

Another significant sector of Albemarle's economy is retail trade, which contributed more than \$195 million in sales, shipments, receipts, or revenue in 2002. Retail, with 121 establishments in the City, is the second largest employment sector with 1,112 employees.

The third largest sector present in Albemarle is wholesale trade. Although this sector has a small amount of businesses (29), the sales, shipments, receipts, or revenue for wholesale trade establishments are greater than \$108 million dollars. The number of employees is significantly smaller than that of manufacturing or retail establishments. However, this sector contributes greatly to the economy of the City.

Other business sectors are also present in Albemarle, including real estate rental and leasing, administrative support, and waste management and remediation services. The information sector, the professional, scientific, and technical services sector, and the educational services sector are also represented.

ALBEMARLE TOP BUSINESS SECTORS

NAICS Code	Description	Number of establishments	Sales, shipments receipts, or revenue	Annual payroll	Number of employees
31-33	Manufacturing	48	\$453,365,000	\$62,777,000	2,331
42	Wholesale Trade	29	\$108,616,000	\$7,316,000	181
44-45	Retail Trade	121	\$195,073,000	\$21,754,000	1,112
51	Information	5	*	\$3,334,000	109
53	Real estate, rental & leasing	25	\$11,518,000	\$1,613,000	
54	Professional, scientific, & technical services	47	*	*	*
56	Administrative, support, waste management, and remediation service	15	\$7,576,000	\$5,074,000	317
61	Educational Services	3	*	*	*

Table 16: Albemarle Top Business Sectors

Source: US Census Bureau, 2002 Economic Census

* indicates publishing that figure could potentially identify a certain business or small group

D. COMMUTING METHODS

94% of Albemarle's workers drive to their place of employment and over 82% of those workers drive alone. Less than 1% of Albemarle's workers use public transportation to get to work and 4.7% of all employees walk or work at home.

METHOD OF COMMUTING TO WORK

Transportation to Work	% of all Workers
Drove Alone	82.3%
Carpool	11.7%
Public Transportation	0.6%
Other Means	0.8%
Walked or Worked at Home	4.74%

Table 17: Method of Commuting to Work

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

II. FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

A. BUDGET

The City has an annual budget of approximately \$45 million, carrying substantial reserves in both its General Fund as well as its Proprietary Funds to ensure financial stability and to handle any emergencies that might arise. These reserves buffer local businesses and property owners from any significant one-year increases in property taxes or utility charges. The City carries an A3 bond rating from Moody's and an A rating from Standard and Poor's. The general obligation bonded indebtedness is substantially below the state limit. The City is responsible for 7.6% of the electric revenue bonds issued for North Carolina Municipal Power Agency One for the purchase of 75% ownership in Unit 2 of the Catawba Nuclear Station. The payments for these bonds are made out of the City's annual electric revenues.

Source: City of Albemarle website

B. REVENUE

According to the North Carolina State Treasurer, Albemarle accumulated over \$50 million dollars in revenue during 2007. 64% of this total can be attributed to utilities, with 52% of this figure from electric alone. The second largest category of revenue comes from intergovernmental transfers (12%) with property taxes (11%) comprising the third largest category. Other significant income was derived from sales tax, sales and services, and other miscellaneous revenue. There was no debt proceeds reported.

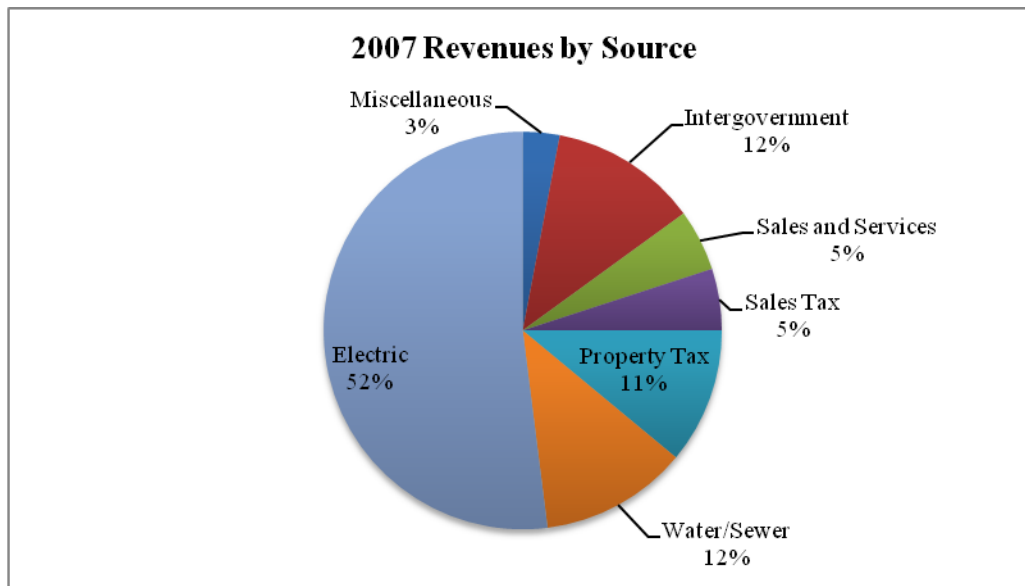


Figure 7: Albemarle Revenues by Source, 2007
Source: NC State Treasurer's Office

C. EXPENDITURES

On the expenditures side, Albemarle spent nearly \$49 million of the \$50 million received in revenue. The largest category of expenses is utilities, at 63 %. Another significant category of expenses is public safety, at 12 % of the total funds outlaid in 2007. The category of other expenditures makes up the same proportion of expenses as public safety at 12 %. Other categories that Albemarle expended funds on are transportation, general government, and debt service, which together comprise 13 % of the expenditures for 2007.

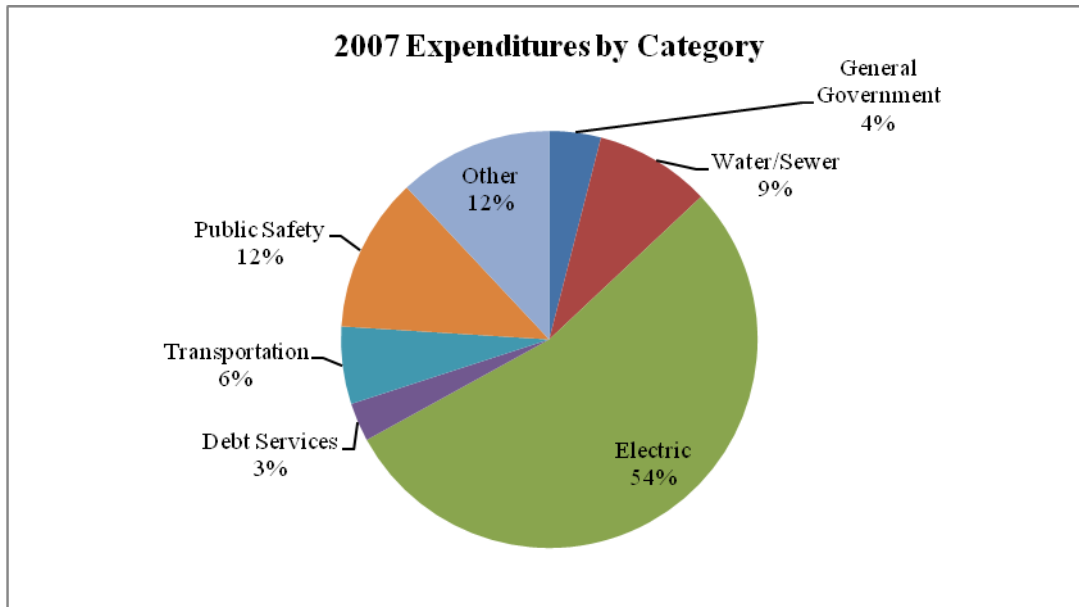


Figure 8: Albemarle Expenditures by Category, 2007
Source: NC State Treasurer's Office

III. LAND USE

A. CURRENT LAND USE

The existing land use map shows generalized land use in Albemarle and the surrounding area. Land use, incorporating both developed and vacant land has been classified into the following categories:

- Light Residential-Low density residential development characterized by single family housing on large lots
- Medium Residential-Medium density residential development characterized by a mixture of singly family and multi-family housing on mid-sized lots
- Heavy Residential-High density residential development characterized by single family and multi-family housing on small lots
- Light Commercial-Low density retail and service oriented development
- Medium Commercial-Medium density retail and service oriented development

- Heavy Commercial-High density retail and service oriented development
- Light Industrial-Low density industrial oriented development
- Heavy Industrial-High density industrial oriented development
- Office and Institutional-Encompasses office space and institutional uses, including government buildings
- Agricultural-Lands actively engaged in farming uses
- Suburban Agricultural-Large lots that could be utilized for farming or single family residential use
- Recreation Space-Lands actively engaged in recreational uses, including parklands
- Traditional Neighborhood Development-Residential areas allowing mixed-use development, characterized by pedestrian oriented streetscapes and smaller lot sizes, most prevalent in City’s historic neighborhoods

ALBEMARLE LAND USE DISTRIBUTION

Land Use	Acreage	Percentage
Light Residential	7687.26	18.9
Medium Residential	178.9	0.4
Heavy Residential	218.39	0.5
Light Commercial	81.91	0.2
Medium Commercial	1178.3	2.9
Heavy Commercial	154.73	0.4
Light Industrial	1734.88	4.3
Heavy Industrial	487.9	1.2
Office and Institutional	251.3	0.6
Agricultural	14487.21	35.6
Suburban Agricultural	13957.28	34.3
Recreation Space	24.54	0 (0.06)
Traditional Neighborhood Development	269.86	0.7

Table 18: Albemarle Land Use Distribution
Source: City of Albemarle Engineering Department

B. LAND USE PATTERNS

According to the Albemarle Land Use Plan 2028 Land Use Map, a majority of the land within the City limits is in low or medium density residential development. Most of the non-residential development is along or near US Highway 52 and along or near the NC Highway 24 by-pass. Much of the land outside the city limits is in suburban agricultural or agricultural use. Agricultural and forested land is shown under the agricultural classification. A large percentage of land outside the city of Albemarle lies within this classification. According to the Stanly County Land Use Plan, much of the land in the county to the north and west of Albemarle consists of prime farmland soils.

Albemarle Existing Land Use

Insert map here

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE

A. PUBLIC UTILITIES

1. Water Supply System



Albemarle's public water system was started in 1894, and consists of 154 miles of water lines. These lines range from two (2) inch to thirty (30) inch water mains, made of asbestos/cement, cast iron, and ductile iron pipe. Water sources include the Tuckertown Lake reservoir and the Yadkin River. There are two water treatment plants, the Tuckertown Water Treatment Plant and the US 52 Water Treatment Plant that are operated by the City of Albemarle. The treatment method is chemical treatment with chlorine and fluoridation, including the process of air stripping, aeration, coagulation, and filtration. An average amount of water treated each day is seven (7) million gallons. However, the maximum amount of water that can be treated each day is 16.5 million gallons. Currently, the City of Albemarle is only using 42% of water treatment capacity. The storage capacity for Albemarle's elevated storage tanks is 6 million gallons and the clear well capacity is 4 million gallons. Albemarle currently has a capital improvement plan to improve the water distribution system. All residents are currently able to connect to the water system.

Source: City of Albemarle Website

2. Wastewater System

Albemarle's sewer system was first instituted in 1901, and currently consists of 180 miles of sewer line. Lines range in size from six (6) inches through thirty-six (36) inches, including two (2), four (4), and six (6) inch force mains. These lines are made of cast iron, polyvinyl chloride (PVC), and ductile iron pipe. The wastewater is treated at the Long Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant by the City of Albemarle. The procedure for treating this wastewater goes through unit operations and processes of preliminary, primary, advanced primary, secondary, and advanced treatment. The average amount of wastewater that is treated each day is 6.5 million gallons; however, the capacity to treat 12 million gallons per day exists within the system. Currently, only 54% of the total treatment capacity is being utilized by the City of Albemarle. The City currently has a capital improvement plan to improve the wastewater collection system and has a sewer line extension policy. Currently, there are sanitary sewer line rehabilitation projects in progress that will curb inflow and infiltration. All residents are currently able to access the wastewater system.

Source: City of Albemarle Website

3. Electrical System

The City of Albemarle owns and operates the municipal electric distribution system, providing electric service to almost 14,000 customers. The City’s electrical distribution division installs electrical services, performs electrical repairs, responds to power outages, and maintains electric lines. Albemarle is a member of ElectriCities, a non-profit government service organization representing cities, towns, and universities that own electric distribution systems in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia. ElectriCities provides customer service and safety training, emergency and technical assistance, and communications and legal services. As a result, members save on expenses associated with administering these services locally.

Source: City of Albemarle website, ElectriCities website

B. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Albemarle has easy access to Interstates 85 and 77 and is also served by U.S. Highway 52 and North Carolina Highways 24/27, 73 and 740. Other highways crossing Stanly County are NC Highways 8, 49, 138, 200, 205, and 742. There are over 50 trucking companies providing inbound and outbound freight service throughout Albemarle on a daily schedule. The North Carolina State Ports Authority in Wilmington is just a few hours away as are the rapidly expanding ports in Morehead City, Charleston and Savannah. Major rail lines including CSX and Norfolk Southern also crisscross Stanly County.

Over 20 major thoroughfares make travel throughout the City more efficient and timely. The NC Department of Transportation has identified improvements and updates to several thoroughfares to ease traffic congestion, including construction of a western bypass, extension of the northwest connector, construction of a southeast/southwest connector, and upgrades to US 52 and US 52 Business. The Transportation Map shows both existing and proposed Major and Minor Thoroughfares.

Albemarle is only 42 miles north of the financial hub of Charlotte, home of the Charlotte-Douglas International Airport—an international airport with more than 500 daily departures. Albemarle is also only 65 miles to Greensboro, which hosts the Piedmont Triad International Airport. The local Albemarle/Stanly County Airport accommodates military cargo jets and private corporate jets. The airport features a 5,500 foot runway and a full service certified repair station for aircraft maintenance.

Source: City of Albemarle website

Albemarle Transportation Systems

Insert map here

C. SOLID WASTE FACILITIES

The City owns and operates a Subtitle D lined landfill on a 426 acre site with capacity for more than 20 years of future disposal. As part of this operation, the City provides a recycling program for tires, appliances, and yard waste; as well as a construction and demolition landfill for items not requiring disposal in a lined landfill.

Source: City of Albemarle website

D. SCHOOL SYSTEM

Albemarle is served by the Stanly County Public School System. Public schools within the City include three (3) elementary schools, one (1) middle school, and one (1) high school. There are two (2) institutions of higher education in the area. The main campus of Stanly Community College is located in Albemarle. Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer is located 12 miles north of Albemarle on US Highway 52. In addition, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte is approximately 38 miles from Albemarle.



Albemarle Central Elementary School



Albemarle Middle School



Pfeiffer University-Misenheimer, NC

E. PUBLIC SAFETY

1. Police Department



The Albemarle Police Department is comprised of fifty (50) sworn police officers and six (6) civilian personnel. The Department serves an area of approximately 16 square miles and is divided into three (3) patrol zones, with a Community Police Office located in each zone.

Source: City of Albemarle website

2. Fire Department



The Albemarle Fire Department has 42 full-time and 16 part-time employees and provides a full range of fire and life safety services including effective fire suppression, emergency medical care, fire prevention, hazardous materials response, fire safety inspections, fire cause investigations, and customer service to the community. The department uses a three-shift system to provide 24-hour service. Each shift has 13 personnel assigned. The Department staffs three (3) fire stations.

Fire Station 1 and East Community Police Station

Source: City of Albemarle website

F. HEALTH CARE

1. Hospitals

Stanly Regional Medical Center is located in Albemarle. The center has 119 beds and is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations (JCAHO). Specialty services include imaging, rehabilitation, cardiology, orthopedics, occupational health, and behavioral health. The Stanly Regional Medical Center also offers additional services in specialized centers, such as the Child Advocacy Center, Cancer Center, Women's Center, and Sleep Center.

Two nearby hospitals are also available to serve the medical needs of Albemarle citizens. The FirstHealth Montgomery Memorial Hospital is 19 miles away and located in Troy, North Carolina. The Northwest Medical Center is 25 miles away and located in Concord, North Carolina.

2. EMS Services

Emergency Medical Services for Albemarle are provided by Stanly County. The County has four (4) bases of operation, located in Albemarle, New London, Red Cross, and north of Norwood. There are four manned units in service 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

Source: Stanly County website

V. NATURAL RESOURCES

A. WATER FEATURES

1. Public Water Supply Watersheds

A small portion of Albemarle's city limits lies within the Lake Tillery watershed, which the State of North Carolina has classified as a Water Supply IV watershed (WS-IV). This portion, in the southeastern tip of Albemarle, is classified as a Protected Area (PA) which requires minimum lot sizes of 2 dwelling units per acre or a maximum of 24% built-upon area for low density development or a maximum of 24-70% built-upon area for high density development. In addition, stream buffers are required.

2. Water Quality Classifications

The water quality classifications for the streams and lakes in and near Albemarle are as follows:

Stream Name	Description	Class	Basin	Stream Index #
Long Creek	From source to Rocky River	C	Yadkin	13-17-31
Little Long Creek	From source to Long Creek	C	Yadkin	13-17-31-1
Melchor Branch	From source to Little Long Creek	C	Yadkin	13-17-31-1-0.5
Town Creek	From source to Little Long Creek	C	Yadkin	13-17-31-1-1
Coley Branch	From source to Little Long Creek	C	Yadkin	13-17-31-1-2
Poplin Branch	From source to Little Long Creek	C	Yadkin	13-17-31-1-3
Mountain Creek	From Stanly County SR 1542 to a point 0.5 mile upstream of mouth	WS-IV	Yadkin	13-5-(0.7)
Mountain Creek	From a point 0.5 mile upstream of mouth to Lake Tillery, Pee Dee River	WS-IV; CA	Yadkin	13-5(2)

Table 19: Water Quality Classifications

Source: NC DENR Division of Water Quality website

As can be seen from the table, most of the streams in the Albemarle area are Class C waters. According to the N.C. Division of Water Quality Primary Surface Water Classifications, these are: “*Waters protected for secondary recreation, fishing, wildlife, fish and aquatic life propagation and survival, agriculture and other uses suitable for Class C*”. Secondary recreation includes wading, boating, and other uses involving human contact with water where such activities take place in an infrequent, unorganized, or incidental manner. There are no restrictions on watershed development or types of discharges.

The portion of Mountain Creek near Albemarle has a WS-IV and in some parts a WS-IV; CA (Critical Area) classification. These are: “*Waters used as sources of potable water where a WS-I, II, or III classification is not feasible. These watersheds are also protected for Class C uses*”. WS-IV waters are generally in *moderately to highly developed* watersheds or Protected Areas and involve no categorical restrictions on discharges.

Source: NC DENR Division of Water Quality website

3. Impaired Waters

Waters listed on the North Carolina Water Quality Assessment and Impaired Waters List (305b and 303d Report) have not met water quality standards or have impaired uses. 7.3 miles of Little Long Creek, which flows through Albemarle, is classified as a 303(d) listed impaired stream. This segment was first listed in 1998. Potential sources of pollutants are identified as urban runoff and storm sewer drainage.

Source: NC DENR Division of Water Quality website

4. Wetlands



There are small areas of wetlands in Albemarle, all of which are located along the creek beds of the major creeks and streams: Town Creek, Little Long Creek, and Long Creek. These areas are classified as Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Wetlands are lands in which the soil or substrate is periodically saturated with or covered by water. This general definition includes such features as marshes, swamps, and bogs. Freshwater wetlands are part of the Palustrine system, which are non-

tidal wetlands which are usually vegetated to some degree. Wetland classes are determined by the predominant vegetation type; that which comprises the uppermost vegetation and an aerial cover of 30% or greater. Many of the City’s wetland areas are being preserved and utilized in the City’s greenway system.

Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Wetland Inventory website

5. Floodplains

The City of Albemarle has a significant portion of the center of the City that is within the 100-year floodplain, which currently contains several industrial uses and a railroad corridor. This 100-year floodplain also extends to the northeast and southwest parts of the City. The 100-year floodplain at the western edge of the city has a recreational use. City Lake Park is located on this site.

The Watershed and Floodplains Map shows locations of the City's watershed and floodplain areas.

Albemarle Watershed and Floodplains

Insert map here

B. AIR QUALITY

1. Monitoring Stations

There is no North Carolina Division of Air Quality ambient air quality monitoring stations in Stanly County. The nearest station to Albemarle is a station in Rockwell in Rowan County. No recent exceptional event data was noted for this station.

2. Air Quality Permits

The following establishments in Albemarle have air quality permits from the North Carolina Division of Air Quality:

- American Fiber and Finishing, 225 North Depot Street
- C.K Earnhardt & Son, Inc., 1906 Badin Road
- International Automotive Components, 313 Bethany Road
- Concrete Supply Company, Albemarle Plant, 116 Aquadale Road
- Dean's Ready Mixed, Inc., 517 Old Charlotte Road
- Genry Mills, Inc., 2035 Kingsley Drive
- Insulation Technology, Inc., 20743 Austin Road
- J.T. Russell & Sons, Inc., Riley Street
- N.C. Municipal Power Agency No. 1 – Albemarle Hospital Unit, 301 Yadkin Street
- Preformed Line Products Company, 1700 Woodhurst Lane
- Smith Novelty Company, 2120 West Main Street
- Stanly Regional Medical Center, 301 Yadkin Street
- The Huck Group, 930 Old Charlotte Road

Source: NC DENR Division of Air Quality website

C. SOILS

According to the General Soil Map for Stanly County, the area in and near Albemarle is primarily in the Badin-Goldston soil unit. Soils in this unit are undulating to steep, well drained soils that have a loamy surface layer and a loamy to clayey subsoil; formed in residuum from Carolina slates; on uplands. This soil unit makes up 52.2 percent of Stanly County. There are also some areas in the Enon soil unit, which are undulating to hilly, well drained soils that have a very stony loam or cobbly loam surface layer and plastic clayey subsoil; formed in residuum from mixed acid and basic rocks; on uplands. In addition there are some Misenhimer-Kirsey-Badin soils, which are nearly level to gently sloping, somewhat poorly drained to well-drained soils that have a loamy surface layer and a loamy to clayey subsoil; in depressional areas, at the head of and along drainage ways, and on knolls and ridges.

The soils in Stanly County, according to the Stanly County Soil Survey, which have higher erosion potential, and therefore less suitability for development, are those in the Chewcla, Enon, Georgeville, Hiwassee and Kirksey Series. Soils in the BaF, and some in the BbD, EnE, GoF, and UwF units generally have slopes over 15 percent. Soils in the

GeB, HeB, KkB, and TbB are generally favorable for agricultural use and often classified as prime farmland.

SOIL CHARACTERISTICS

Soil Series	Soils Represented	Characteristics
Badin	BaB, BaD, BaF, BbB, BbD	Steep slopes (BaF, BbD)
Chewacla	Ck	High erosion potential Occasional to frequent flooding
Congaree	Co	Occasional to frequent flooding
Enon	EcB, EcD, EnC, EnE	High erosion potential Steep slopes (EnE)
Georgeville	GeB, GFB2	High erosion potential Prime farmland (GeB)
Goldston	GoC, GoF	Steep slopes (GoF)
Hiawasee	HeB, HeD	High erosion potential Prime farmland (HeB)
Kirksey	KkB	High erosion potential Prime farmland (KkB)
Misenheimer	MhB	No limitations
Oakboro	Oa	Frequent flooding
Tatum	TbB, TbD, TcB2, TcD2, TdB	Prime farmland (TbB)
Uwharrie	UwC, UwF	Steep slopes (UwF)
Other	Ud, Ur, w	Urban and disturbed lands, water features

*Table 20: Albemarle Soil Characteristics
Source: Soil Survey of Stanly County, NC*

D. HAZARDOUS WASTE

1. Brownfield Sites

A Brownfield is property that has a high potential for contamination from hazardous chemicals. Most of these properties were once the site of a heavy industrial use.

Contamination or perceived contamination makes marketing of the property and subsequent redevelopment a challenge. The federal Brownfields program, administered by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), encourages developers and local governments to utilize these sites through a variety of funding mechanisms and a competitive grant system. The State of North Carolina's Brownfields program offers much needed liability relief to developers who meet specific requirements.

According to the August 1, 2007 list and map on the North Carolina Brownfields website, there is one active Brownfield project site in Albemarle. This is the Allison Manufacturing project located at 930 Old Charlotte Road. The prospective developer for this site is listed as NCSC Properties, Ltd.

Source: NC Brownfields Program website

2. Regulated Federal Sites

There is no federally regulated (under CERCLA authority) hazardous waste sites located in Albemarle. Federal sites regulated under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) are known as 'Superfund sites', uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites and sites of accidents, spills, and emergency releases of hazardous contaminants. The Act authorizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to seek out the parties responsible for any release and assure their cooperation in the cleanup and to clean up sites when potentially responsible parties cannot be identified or located.

There are no Superfund sites or other sites under CERCLA jurisdiction located in Albemarle.

Source: EPA website

VI. CULTURAL RESOURCES

A. PARKS

1. State Parks

The 4,742 acre Morrow Mountain State Park is located about six (6) miles east of Albemarle. The park was opened to the public in 1939. Facilities include a boat house, community building, exhibit hall and historical site, as well as camping facilities, picnic areas, hiking and bridle trails, and a swimming pool. The Uwharrie National Forest also lies within a short drive from Albemarle. The Forest comprises over 40,000 acres and is the largest outdoor recreation venue in the North Carolina Piedmont. Several lakes lie in the vicinity of the City, including Badin Lake, Lake Tillery, and Tuckertown Lake. All offer fishing, boating, swimming, and water skiing.

Sources: NC Division of Parks and Recreation website, City of Albemarle website

2. Local Parks

The City of Albemarle Parks and Recreation Department operates five (5) parks and one (1) soccer complex, as well as a ceramics shop and a community center.

Name of Facility	Location	Facilities
City Lake Park	Near US 73 in Western portion of Albemarle	Picnic shelters, two boating docks, walking trails, amphitheater. Year round fishing.
Roosevelt Ingram Memorial Park	400 Highway 24-27 Bypass East	Playground, softball field, picnic area.
Don Montgomery Memorial Park	500 US 52 North	Picnic shelters, baseball field, playground, basketball court.
Chuck Morehead Memorial Park	211 Northeast Connector	Athletic field, playground, swimming pool, tennis courts, basketball court, picnic shelter, disc golf course.
Rock Creek Park	Highway 52 South	Picnic area, tennis courts, athletic field, walking trails, rappelling tower, obstacle course, bocce courts.
E.E. Waddell Community Center	621 Wall Street	Library, conference rooms, gymnasium, playground, athletic field, walking trails.
The Ceramics Shoppe		Full service ceramics shop with three kilns.

Table 21: Albemarle Parks and Recreation Facilities
Source: City of Albemarle website



City Lake Park

B. LIBRARIES



The Albemarle Library is part of the Stanly County Public Library system, which also includes four branch libraries located in Locust, Badin, Oakboro, and Norwood.

The current Main library in Albemarle was completed in 1972 and is located at 133 East Main Street. The library has been a department of county government since 1975 and is governed by the Board of Commissioners. The Library Board of Trustees is an advisory board appointed by the Commissioners to

represent various geographical areas of the county.

Source: Stanly County Library System website

C. HISTORIC RESOURCES

There are two (2) National Register sites and four (4) National Register historic districts located in Albemarle.

- Isaiah Wilson Snuggs House and Freeman-Marks House (2 buildings on 1 site)
- Opera House/Starnes Jewelers Building
- Downtown Albemarle Historic District
- Five Points Historic District
- Pee Dee Avenue Historic District
- Second Street Historic District

In addition, the Albemarle Historic Resources Commission designated the Downtown Albemarle Historic District a local historic district and has established design standards governing the restoration and rehabilitation of properties within the district limits.



Freeman-Marks House



Isaiah Wilson Snuggs House



Five Points Historic District



Pee Dee Avenue Historic District

The Stanly County Historic Preservation Commission has inventoried several sites of local historical interest in the city. The Commission operates the Stanly County Museum, located at 245 East Main Street in Albemarle in a complex that includes the 1847 Freeman-Marks House and the 1852 Isaiah Wilson Snuggs House.

Albemarle was recognized by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a National Main Street City in 2005 and was selected to be a NC Main Street Community in 1993. The City is currently engaged in many downtown revitalization efforts.

Sources: Stanly County, The Architectural Legacy of a Rural North Carolina County, A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont, North Carolina, Albemarle Downtown Development Corporation website

SECTION THREE: EXISTING POLICIES, PLANS, AND PROGRAMS

I. DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

The City of Albemarle has four (4) major ordinances that regulate development of land (zoning, subdivision, floodplain, and watershed) and Historic District Design Standards for the Downtown area.

A. ZONING ORDINANCE

1. Function

From the attention given to the subject by legal writers and in court decisions, it is clear that confusion exists as to the distinction between "planning" and "zoning." In reality, zoning is one of many legal and administrative devices by which plans may be implemented. Most of the confusion has arisen out of the fact that many jurisdictions have adopted zoning ordinances before embarking on full-scale planning.

Zoning is essentially a means of insuring that the land uses of a community are properly situated in relation to one another, providing adequate space for each type of development. It allows the control of development density in each area so that property can be adequately serviced by governmental facilities. This directs new growth into appropriate areas and protects existing property by requiring that development afford adequate light, air and privacy for persons living and working within the community.

Zoning is probably the single most commonly used legal device available for implementing the land-development plan of a community. Zoning may be defined as the division of a city (or other governmental unit) into districts, and the regulation within those districts of:

1. The height and bulk of buildings and other structures;
2. The area of a lot which may be occupied and the size of required open spaces;
3. The density of population;
4. The use of buildings and land for trade, industry, residences, or other purposes.

Of major importance for the individual citizen is the part zoning plays in stabilizing and preserving property values. It affects the taxation of property as an element of value to be considered in assessment. Ordinarily zoning is only indirectly concerned with achieving aesthetic ends. Although there has been an increasing tendency to include aesthetic provisions within zoning ordinances, zoning ordinances are most solidly based on "general welfare" concepts.

Zoning has nothing to do with the materials and manner of construction of a building; these are covered by the building code. Also, the zoning ordinance may not be properly

used to set minimum costs of permitted structures, and it commonly does not control their appearance. These matters are ordinarily controlled by private restrictive covenants contained in the deeds to property. However, there are some examples, particularly in relation to historic buildings and areas, where zoning has been and is being used effectively. There appears to be a trend toward a greater acceptance of aesthetic control as a proper function of the zoning ordinance.

The zoning ordinance does not regulate the design of streets, the installation of utilities, the reservation or dedication of parks, street rights-of-way, school sites and related matters. An official map preserving the location of proposed streets against encroachment can be useful for protecting right of way. The zoning ordinance should, however, be carefully coordinated with these and other control devices. It is becoming more common for the provisions of many of these separate ordinances to be combined into a single comprehensive ordinance, usually called a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

A request to change the zoning ordinance, whether by application for a general district or a special district, is a request to change the basic plan for the area where the property is located. For example, if someone applies for a rezoning, the basic issue is whether a use should be located on that property and whether it meets the general purposes of the ordinance. Such decisions or changes to the plan may not individually have a large impact, but taken collectively may indicate the need to revise or modify the plan to meet continuing demands for growth and development.

2. Provisions

Albemarle established zoning in 1958. Over the years the zoning ordinance has changed to incorporate new principles of land use regulations. Currently, the City is divided into 15 zoning districts. Each district identifies permitted and prohibited uses and specific design standards for new structures and modifications of existing structures. Additionally, each of these districts has a corresponding conditional use district.

- **R-10**, Single-Family Residential: Low density neighborhood consisting of single family residences along with limited home occupations and private and public community uses.
- **R-8**, Two-Family Residential – Medium Density: Medium density district in which the principal use of land is for single-family and two-family residences.
- **R-8A** , Multi-Family Residential – High Density: High density district in which the principal use of land is for single-family, two-family, and multi-family residences.
- **R-4**, High Density Residential: High density district in which the principal use of land is for single-family residences with zero lot lines and townhouse cluster developments.

-
- **R-O**, Residential-Office District: Allows for new structures or conversion of older homes into office or apartment structures.
 - **NBD**, Neighborhood Business District: Provides for retailing of goods and services for convenience to nearby residential neighborhoods.
 - **NS**, Neighborhood Shopping District: Provides an aesthetically attractive environment in which a limited number of businesses can provide goods and services for nearby neighborhoods.
 - **GHBD**, General Highway Business District: Designed to serve commercial activities which function relatively independent of intense pedestrian traffic and which should not be located in the Central Business District (CBD) or Neighborhood Business District (NBD).
 - **SCD**, Shopping Center District: Provides an orderly arrangement of convenience and comparison shopping outlets along with adequate off-street parking and other amenities.
 - **MUSCD**, Mixed-Use Shopping Center District: Provides for adaptive reuse of existing shopping centers in single ownership.
 - **HMD**, Hospital-Medical Center District: Provides for restricted medical district.
 - **CBD**, Central Business District: Permit convenient performance of functions requiring a location near the transportation and population center of a large trade area and provide the City with a compact and efficient retail shopping, consumer services, financial, and governmental center.
 - **LID**, Light Industrial District: Accommodates industries and warehousing operations which can be operated in a relatively clean and quiet manner and which will not be obnoxious to adjacent residential and business districts.
 - **HID**, Heavy Industrial District: Accommodates all but the most obnoxious industries.
 - **NEC**, Northeast Corridor Overlay District: Provides additional requirements along the Northeast Corridor which are designed to promote, preserve, and protect the health, safety, and welfare of residents and property owners, enhance the aesthetics of subsequent development, and move vehicular traffic around the City.

Most of the historic part of the City is zoned CBD, R-8, and R-8A. The majority of the industrial zoned area is in the middle of the City, along with smaller areas in the southwest and southeast part of the City. There are considerable areas of Albemarle zoned R-10, which is the predominant zoning outside of the City core. Additionally,

there are areas along the major thoroughfares of US 52 and NC 24/27 zoned as general highway business.

Under the zoning ordinance, if a property is zoned properly for its intended use, necessary permits can simply be obtained through application and the payment of any required fees. If a rezoning is required, the approval of the City Council must be obtained. This process can take anywhere from a few weeks to a few months, depending on the magnitude, complexity and any controversy generated by the proposal. Appeals of zoning decisions are heard by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

ALBEMARLE ZONING

Insert map here

B. SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

1. Function

Subdivision regulations are locally adopted laws governing the process of converting raw land into building sites. They normally accomplish this through plat (map) approval procedures, under which a developer is not permitted to make improvements or to divide and sell his land until the governing body or planning board has approved a plat of the proposed design of the subdivision. The approval or disapproval of the local government is based upon compliance or noncompliance of the proposal with development standards set forth in the subdivision regulations. In the event that the developer attempts to record an unapproved plat with the local register of deeds or to sell lots by reference to such a plat, he may be subject to various civil and criminal penalties.

Subdivision regulations may serve a wide range of purposes. To the health officer, for example, they are a means of insuring that a new residential development has a safe water supply and sewage disposal system and that the lots are properly drained. To the tax official they are a step toward securing adequate records of land titles. To the school or parks official they are a way to preserve or secure the school sites and recreation areas needed to serve the people coming into the neighborhood. To the lot purchaser they are an assurance that he will receive a buildable, properly oriented, well-drained lot, provided with adequate facilities to meet his day-to-day needs, in a subdivision whose value will hold up over the years.

Subdivision regulations enable the city to coordinate the otherwise unrelated plans of a great many individual developers, and in the process to assure that provision is made for major elements of the Land Use Plan such as rights-of-way for major thoroughfares, parks, school sites, major water lines, sewer outfalls and so forth. They also enable the city to control the internal design of each new subdivision so that its pattern of streets, lots and other facilities will be safe, pleasant and economical to maintain.

From the standpoint of the local governing board, subdivision regulations may be thought of as having two major objectives. First, these officials are interested in the design aspects of new subdivisions, as are the other officials mentioned. But secondly, they are also interested in allocating the costs of certain improvements most equitably between the residents of the immediate area and the taxpayers of the city as a whole. When subdivision regulations require a developer to dedicate land to the public or to install utilities or to build streets, they represent a judgment that the particular improvements involved are (1) necessary in a contemporary environment and (2) predominantly of special benefit to the people who will buy lots (presumably at a price sufficient to cover the cost of these improvements) rather than of general benefit to the taxpayers of the city as a whole.

2. Provisions

In Albemarle, subdivision regulations were established in 1958 and have been updated over the years, as the need arises. The ordinance addresses procedures for submitting plats for approval and provides minimum design standards for development.

Final subdivision plats must be approved by both the Planning Board and City Council. Without an approval, no street may be accepted by the City, no utility services can be extended or connected to a subdivision, nor can any permits for construction or improvements be issued to the developer. The City does not allow any lands subject to flooding or deemed unsuitable for home construction to be platted for residential development. Private streets are not allowed to be platted in any subdivision.

The City's minimum design standards are comparable to other municipalities within North Carolina. The minimum lot size for lots connected to public water and sewer service is 8,000 square feet. In cases in which public water is provided but public sewer is not, the minimum lot size increases to 10,000 square feet. In cases in which no public water or sewer is available, minimum lot sizes go up to 20,000 square feet. Building setbacks are set at 35 feet for front property lines, a combined 20 feet with a minimum of eight feet on one side property line, 12 feet for rear property lines, and 20 feet for a side property line which abuts a street. Subdivisions require a minimum of 10% of open space in the approximate geographic center of the development, of which no portion may be less than 100 feet in width.

Residential cluster developments are allowed and encouraged to improve residents' quality of life, promote more economic subdivision layout, encourage a variety of dwelling types, and preserve open space for recreational and aesthetic purposes. In a cluster development, variation in lot sizes is permitted, provided that they meet the requirements of Albemarle's R-10 Single Family zoning classification. A cluster development must consist of at least a five (5) acre tract, with policies and procedures set up to assure maintenance and restricted use of open space areas. Townhouse cluster developments are also allowable, with similar restrictions.

C. FLOODPLAIN ORDINANCE

1. Function

Local governments generally elect to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) administered by FEMA to ensure that their residents are protected against flooding dangers. The local government must adopt and enforce minimum floodplain management standards to prevent new development from increasing the flood threat and to protect new and existing buildings from anticipated flood events. Local regulations must conform to NFIP requirements. However, any more stringent requirements adopted by the State or local government will take precedence over the minimum federal regulatory requirements established for flood insurance eligibility.

2. Provisions

In 1981, the Albemarle City Council passed an ordinance for flood hazard reduction. The purpose of these regulations is to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions in specific areas. This set of regulations is designed to:

- Restrict or prohibit uses which are dangerous to health, safety, and property due to water or erosion hazards or which result in damaging increases in erosion, flood heights, or velocities.
- Require that uses vulnerable to floods, including facilities which serve such uses, be protected against flood damage at the time of initial construction.
- Control the alteration of natural floodplains, stream channels, and natural protective barriers which are involved in the accommodation of flood waters.
- Control filling, grading, dredging, and other development which may increase erosion or flood damage.
- Prevent or regulate the construction of flood barriers which will unnaturally divert flood waters or may increase flood hazards to other lands.

The ordinance requires issuance of a development permit prior to the commencement of any development activities within a floodplain area. In order to obtain a development permit, an applicant must supply the following information:

- Plot plan showing the 100-year floodplain, as prepared and certified by registered land surveyor or professional engineer.
- Plot plan showing location of floodway, as identified by FEMA.
- Base Flood Elevation (BFE) data, including elevation of all new structures and elevation to which the structure was flood proofed (if no BFE's are available, applicant must show construction of lowest floor at least 2 feet above highest adjacent grade).
- Location of any alteration or relocation of watercourse, including full description and map and engineering report on effects of proposed project on flood-carrying capacity of the watercourse and effects on properties located upstream and downstream.
- Certificate of flood proofing from registered professional engineer or architect.

The ordinance requires all subdivision proposals to be consistent with the need to minimize flood damage. Specifically, all subdivision proposals must have public utilities and facilities located and constructed to minimize flood damage and adequate drainage provided to reduce exposure to flood hazards. Base Flood Elevation (BFE) data must be provided for proposals which are greater than the lesser of 50 lots or 5 acres.

D. WATERSHED PROTECTION ORDINANCE

1. Function

Under the Water Supply Protection Act of 1989 (NCGS 143-214.5), local governments in North Carolina were required to develop water supply watershed protection programs, to include an implementing ordinance and measures for enforcement. The statute mandated the NC Environmental Management Commission to adopt minimum statewide water supply protection standards by January 1, 1991 and to reclassify all existing surface water supply watersheds to the appropriate classification by January 1, 1992. Local governments were required to submit their programs by January 1, 1993. The statewide program was developed in response to the increasing need to protect water supply watersheds from point source and nonpoint source pollution, including wastewater discharges and stormwater runoff.

2. Provisions

The Albemarle City Council passed a watershed protection ordinance in 1993. Only new development activities that take place in the Lake Tillery WS-IV watershed and require an erosion/sedimentation control plan under State regulations are affected by these regulations. In single family residential development projects, two dwelling units per acre are allowed with curb and gutter street systems or three dwelling units per acre in areas without curb and gutter. All other residential and non-residential development must not exceed 24% built-upon area. However, new development and expansions to existing development may occupy up to 10% of the protected area with up to 70% built-upon area when the project is approved as a Special Intensity Allocation (SIA). Cluster developments are allowed in the WS-IV watershed areas but must meet the above spacing standards. Stream buffers are required, with a minimum of 100 feet for high density development activities and a minimum of 30 feet for low density development.

E. HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGN STANDARDS

In 2006, Albemarle established a Historic Resources Commission and a local downtown historic district, identified on the City's official zoning map as a Historic District Overlay (HDO). A need for historic district design guidelines precipitated the commissioning of formal design standards for downtown structures. The standards cover five important areas: the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, changes to existing buildings, site design, new construction, and demolition. Any property within the downtown historic district is subject to these regulations. Owners must obtain a certificate of appropriateness prior to making changes to their property. These requirements are codified in the City's zoning ordinance.

Map of Downtown Albemarle Historic District

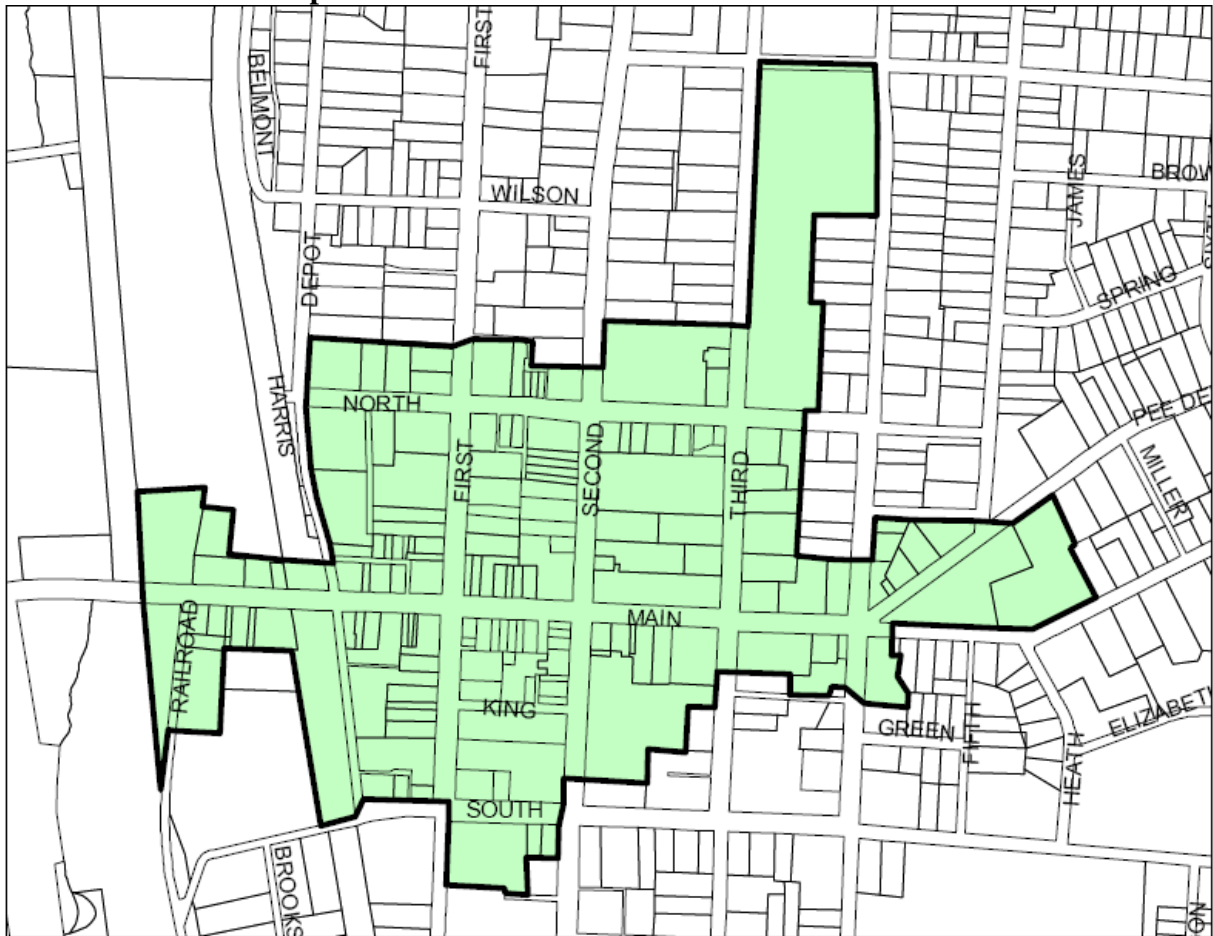


Figure 10: Map of Downtown Albemarle Historic District

II. GROWTH PLANS

A. LAND USE PLAN

1. Land Development Plan (1965)

The Land Development Plan prepared by the NC Department of Commerce, Division of Community Assistance in 1965 covered four (4) main areas. The first was urban development and history, describing the history of the founding of Albemarle, the establishment of boundaries, and expansion via annexation. Second, the plan covered physical characteristics, describing the physical location of Albemarle, soils, and climate. The third category presented the current land use trends, with information on vacant and developed land, residential land, commercial land, industrial land, public land, streets and railroads, traffic volumes, zoning analysis, land use comparisons, utilities, and land use problems. The final component of the plan was a section on future land use, including industrial, commercial, and residential development, and a community facilities plan, utility plan, and circulation plan. An implementation schedule was also included.

2. Land Development Plan Revision (1971)

Albemarle was losing population in the late 1960s and preparing to expand utilities into an annexation area. As a result, the following objectives of the original land use plan were modified: social factors, economic objectives, and physical pattern. The City's population had decreased between 1960 and 1970, leading the City to attempt to improve its efforts in two problem areas: affordable housing and water and sewer utilities. Growth in the population was forecast due to expansion in the northeast area of the City near the new outer loop road and recent annexation activities.

B. DOWNTOWN ALBEMARLE PLAN

A Downtown Master Plan was prepared for the Albemarle Downtown Development Corporation (ADDC) in 2001 to aid in the planning for Albemarle's Main Street program. The projects that were identified in this report were largely complete by 2007. The ADDC is currently in the process of preparing an update to the 2001 plan.

The Albemarle Downtown Development Promotion Committee, as part of the Downtown Master Plan, prepared the following Mission Statement and Vision for Downtown Albemarle in 2012:

Mission Statement

To create a charming and socially friendly environment for the private investment.

Vision 2012

In 2012, the historically restored business center of Albemarle is alive with people enjoying the relaxed, small-town charm afforded by its wide array of shops and restaurants that define this vibrant, family-oriented town center. Above the shops, residents live the good life in their town houses and apartments while taking to the streets to be entertained by a multitude of cultural presentations at Courthouse Square, Market Station and the amphitheater for children and adults alike. There are walking visits to Market Station for its locally-grown, fresh vegetables and fruits and trips to the diverse downtown shops to satisfy every need and want. On Sunday mornings, residents fill the pews of the beautiful downtown churches as the community comes together for worship before sharing a wonderful family afternoon of hiking on downtown's greenways or picnicking in one of its many parks. The Visitor Center stands as a beacon, welcoming all to the southern charm of the downtown that is over 150 years old. The newly renovated city hall continues to be the hub of activity for the city's government. With its blend of immaculately restored historic buildings and progressive businesses that utilize state-of-the art technology, downtown Albemarle provides all its citizens an unequalled quality of life.

Source: The Albemarle Downtowner, Spring 2007

C. THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The North Carolina Department of Transportation completed a revision of the 1988 Albemarle Thoroughfare plan in 2002. This document listed the planned transportation improvements for the Albemarle-Badin planning area, including the widening of NC Highway 24/27 and improvements to US Highway 52. Major components of this report include: thoroughfare plan implementation; travel deficiency analysis of existing system; demographic, economic, and environmental concerns; and development of a traffic model.

D. STRATEGIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Sanford Holshouser Business Development Group, LLC, under contract with ElectriCities of North Carolina, Inc., conducted a target market study and strategic plan for Albemarle and the Stanly County Economic Development Commission. The *Albemarle/Stanly County Strategic Economic Development Plan* was published in December 2005. The strategic planning process was composed of four (4) steps: economic and demographic profile, economic development preparedness assessment, target industry analysis, and development of a marketing plan.

The Economic Development Preparedness Assessment analyzed Albemarle's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to retain business and recruit new business, addressing Albemarle's trend towards slow growth patterns. Based upon these characteristics, major recommendations include:

- Collaborate with regional partners.
- Practice effective marketing.
- Support existing businesses through economic development program.
- Revitalize downtown district.
- Maximize retail development potential.
- Control and develop business park sites.
- Locate corporate retreat and conference center in City.
- Revise Economic Development Incentive Policy.
- Encourage and support small businesses and entrepreneurs.

The Target Industry Analysis identified five (5) target industries to stimulate growth: plastics, retirement and health care services, fabricated metals and machinery, transportation equipment, and tourism-hospitality. These new growth industries would replace those sectors that are in decline: apparel and textiles, tobacco, metal ore mining, miscellaneous chemical products, iron and steel mills, computer and peripheral equipment, pulp and paper mills, and synthetic rubber and fibers.

The marketing of potential development sites is a major mission of economic development organizations. The plan recommended the development of a marketing plan, aimed at prospective and existing businesses, to attract new industry and retain

current businesses. The plan emphasized that marketing will require a collaborative approach with the Stanly County Economic Development Commission, the lead economic development organization in the County.

Source: Albemarle/Stanly County Strategic Economic Development Plan

E. PEDESTRIAN PLAN

During 2006 and 2007, Albemarle engaged in planning for pedestrian traffic. The plan identifies opportunities for pedestrian oriented districts and policy goals for strengthening pedestrian mobility. There are six (6) areas noted as opportunity zones: Downtown, Leonard Avenue, Mill Hill, Chuck Morehead Park, Stanly Commons, and Stanly Community College. These recommendations can help the City of Albemarle revise its development ordinances to enable greater access for pedestrians. Other tools such as adjusting speed limits to accommodate pedestrians, instituting a garbage truck ordinance to keep bins shut when not collecting trash, or acquiring easements for pedestrian purposes are included in the excerpts.

Providing an outlet for bicyclists is also an important component of the City's pedestrian planning efforts. According to the *2002 Stanly County Land Use Plan*, the NC Department of Transportation has identified a 187 mile bikeway system in Stanly County consisting of bike routes along existing roads. Several of these bikeways run through Albemarle. Bike routes run along portions of Old Salisbury Road, Park Ridge Road, Ridge Street, and Main Street. These existing trails can be utilized during greenway planning.

Sources: Stanly County Land Use Plan, June 2002 and NCDOT Bikeway Map

III. DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

A. CITY INCENTIVES

The City of Albemarle can offer incentives to industries considering relocation to the City or to existing industries considering expansion. These incentives include economic development rates for electric, water, and sewer customers who meet the eligibility requirements. The City also offers other incentives based on the amount of investment being made in the community. Additional incentives may be available from Stanly County and the State of North Carolina.

Source: City of Albemarle website

B. STATE DEVELOPMENT ZONE INCENTIVES

The North Carolina Department of Commerce has designated a State Development Zone within the City of Albemarle. Certain businesses located in the zone are eligible to receive tax credits for investment in new facilities or expansion of existing facilities.

These businesses include Manufacturing/Processing, Warehousing, Air Courier Service, Distribution, Data Processing, and Central Administrative Office.

Source: City of Albemarle website

IV. CURRENT PROJECTS

A. MUNICIPAL GREENWAY



Albemarle Parks and Recreation has begun work to develop a municipal greenway that will take an otherwise unusable flood plain adjacent to U.S. Highway 52 and create an appealing usable space for everyone to enjoy. In addition, plans are being made to convert a recently abandoned rail corridor running from Snuggs Street in North Albemarle to Rock Creek Park in South Albemarle to a greenway as well. The proposed greenway system has been named the ‘Roger F. Snyder Greenway System’ in honor of Albemarle’s former mayor. The City received grants from the North Carolina Department of Transportation to construct the first two segments of the greenway, which will connect to the City’s existing bike path at Montgomery Park and will follow Little Long Creek to NC Highway 24/27. The City plans to extend the system in the future with a goal of eventually connecting the downtown, neighborhoods, schools, and parks via a network of greenways, bike paths, and sidewalks.

Source: City of Albemarle website

B. LILLIAN MILL RESTORATION



A group of investors is currently working to restore the vacant 42,000 square foot Lillian Mill building in the Five Points National Register Historic District for use as residential dwelling units and office space. The City has utilized a number of funding mechanisms to spur redevelopment in the Downtown Albemarle and Five Points historic districts, many of which were used in this particular project. The City has received a total of \$2.8 million in grants and tax credits for restoration of the Lillian Mill. A total of \$800,000 from an urban revitalization grant was loaned to the investors of the project, Lillian Mill Group, Inc., to be paid back over 25 years with 2% interest. The Arc of Stanly County, a local non-profit organization which assists citizens with disabilities, will occupy a floor of the new mixed-use development, which will enable the City to receive New Market Tax Credits. This project serves as an excellent example of inner city revitalization and public-private partnerships.

Sources: City of Albemarle website, Independent Tribune

V. EXISTING POLICIES, PLANS, AND PROGRAMS SUMMARY

The City of Albemarle has been proactive in planning for future growth and development, beginning long range land use planning in 1965. Recent planning efforts have focused on downtown revitalization, economic development, and pedestrian opportunities, in keeping with the Smart Growth movement spreading throughout the nation. Revisions to local ordinances have introduced new innovative development practices, including cluster developments, open space requirements, overlay zoning districts, and historic district design standards. Ambitious projects, such as the municipal greenway system and Lillian Mill restoration are underway. However, new development in Albemarle has continued to follow a generalized pattern that has been in existence since the 1950's, with non-residential development locating along major transportation routes and single-family residential development spreading out from the City Center towards the City limits. This type of development relies upon personal automobile use as the primary means of transportation and is not conducive to pedestrians or bikers. Different development patterns, such as mixed use developments and alternative transportation routes, will have to emerge to reverse this trend of separation of uses.

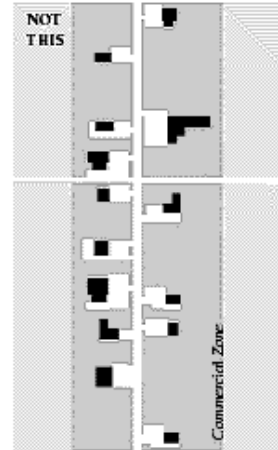
There is a growing trend for municipal government to actively seek methods to encourage more efficient development patterns. This approach seeks to manage growth in a manner in which development is attractive, pedestrian oriented, utilizes existing services and is sustainable. This vision includes several types of development patterns. A general explanation and illustration of the differences between the undesired approaches to development and the desired development patterns follows. This section provides a point of reference and confirmation of Albemarle's efforts to continue to discourage inefficient strip development, ensure greater connectivity in its road networks, encourage a mix of appropriate land uses, and provide for open space development.

In making future land use decisions, the following illustrations of development patterns (commercial center, road network, mixed use and open space development) should be referenced and applied where appropriate to ensure desired development pattern.

STRIP DEVELOPMENT vs. COMMERCIAL CENTERS

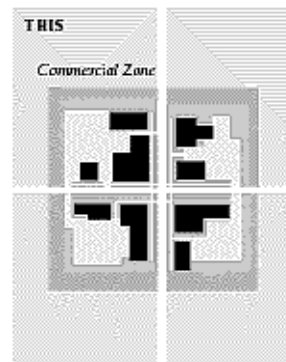
Strip Development: The characteristics of strip development include:

- Automobile oriented
- Large parking lots
- Large front yard setbacks
- Single use (i.e. only commercial)
- Numerous curb cuts
- No interconnectivity between uses
- Poor design characteristics



Commercial Center: The Commercial Center is based on applying the attributes of a traditional downtown to a new site that is smaller in scale. The characteristics of a Commercial Center include:

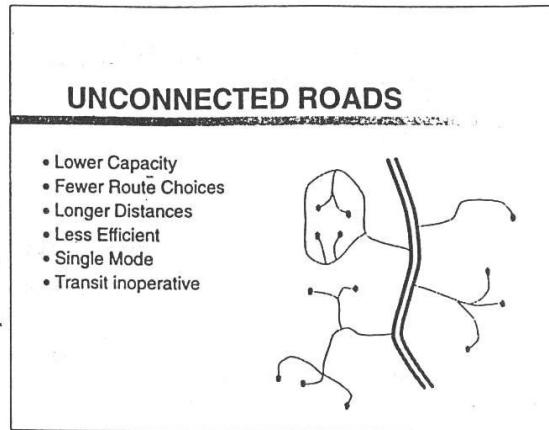
- Pedestrian and automobile friendly
- Few curb cuts or limited access
- Buildings built to a pedestrian scale
- Building closer to the road
- Interconnectivity between uses and shared parking
- Mixed use (i.e. commercial, office, multi-family residential)
- High quality design characteristic



UNCONNECTED ROADS vs. ROAD NETWORK

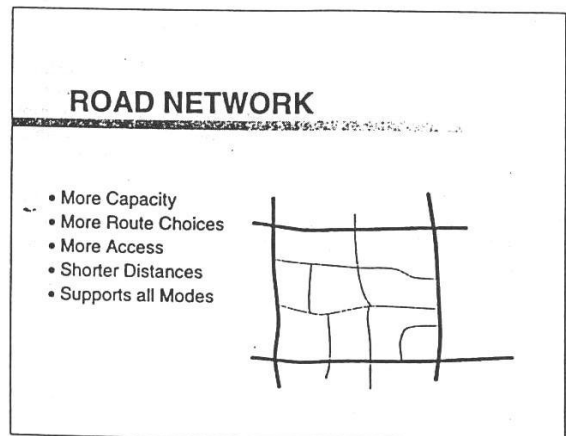
Unconnected Roads: The current proliferation of cul-de-sac subdivisions can result in a transportation network that limits the number of ways through town. In addition to the residential subdivision, commercial development has also been guilty of providing no connectivity between uses. The characteristics of Unconnected Roads include:

- Lower capacity
- Fewer route choices
- Longer driving distances
- Less efficient
- Single mode of transportation



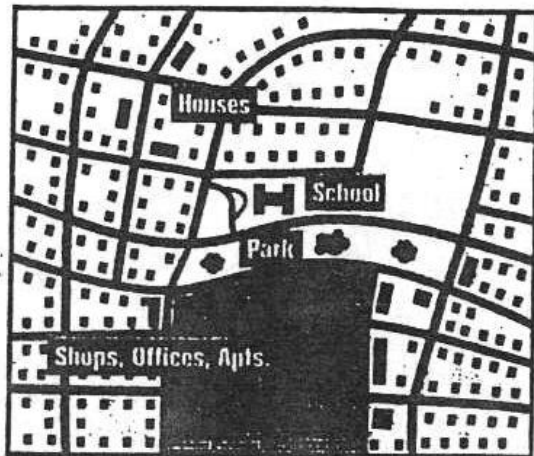
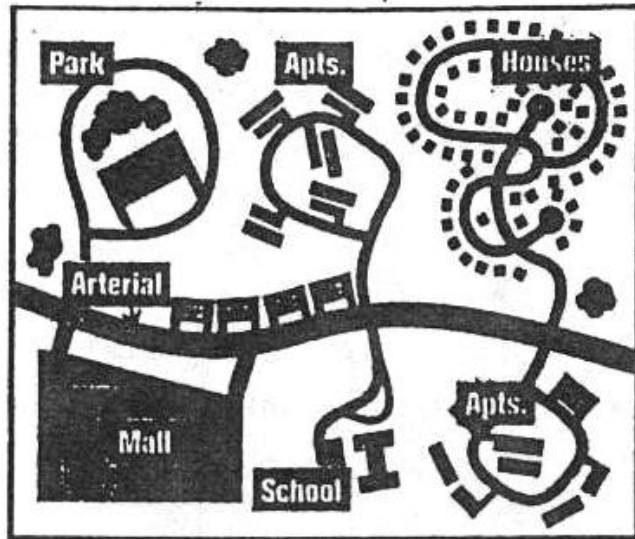
Road Network: A transportation system based on a Road Network will help aid in the decreasing traffic congestion. Increasing the number of choices will help to disperse traffic throughout the Town. The utilization of a Road Network will result in:

- More capacity
- More route choices
- More access
- Shorter distances
- Support for all modes of transportation



SEPARATION OF USES vs. MIXED USE

Separation of Uses: Traditionally zoning ordinances have created a situation in which mixed uses have been discouraged in new development, leading to a segregation of uses, as illustrated in the picture to the right. The Albemarle Land Use Planning Committee indicated an interest in moving towards Mixed Use development. This type of development provides an opportunity to provide conveniences like retail services and similar businesses to new and existing neighborhoods. While some uses need to be separated from one another, many others work well together if designed properly. For example, the construction of five three-story, multi-family apartment buildings in the middle of a single-family residential district may not be appropriate. However, a multi-family townhouse development designed to complement the surrounding neighborhood, could fit in. Separation of Uses has the potential to result in the creation of “pods” of development. The diagram highlights the problems associated with separation of uses: all traffic must travel out onto the main road to go anywhere.

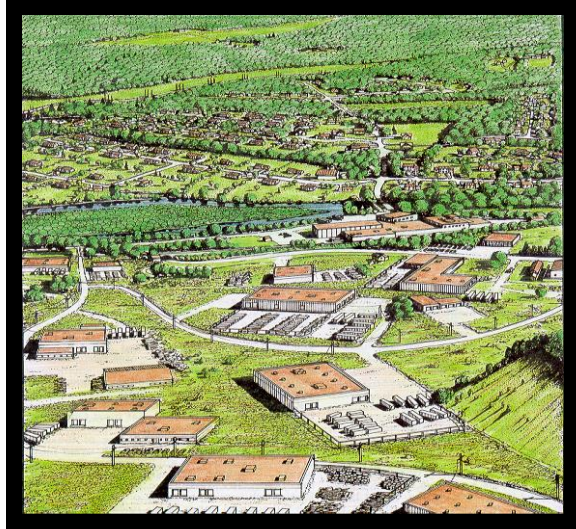


Mixed Use: The concept of Mixed Use goes back to the time before zoning when many uses were found in a neighborhood. The historic part of Albemarle has many examples of commercial, multi-family and single-family uses working together within the same development. Also, new mixed-use development in Albemarle illustrates the efficiency of this concept. By encouraging a mix of uses, the City can decrease traffic, allow people opportunities to walk to work or the store, and promote commercial development with a built-in residential market.

The Central Business District is an excellent example of mixed-use development that intertwines offices, retail establishments, and residences to serve multiple needs.

CONVENTIONAL DEVELOPMENT vs. OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT

Conventional Development: Conventional Development maximizes the number of lots or retail space that can be created out of any piece of land. This method of development pays little attention to environmental factors, neighborhood design or open space. The goal of the development is to place as many houses or businesses on the site as allowed under the current zoning ordinance. As a result land that should be preserved due to environmental conditions or topography gets turned into a backyard or graded for parking.



Illustrations from *Rural By Design*, Randall Arendt

In addition, this type of development places a greater burden upon the City because it does not provide recreational space for the residents and results in overcrowding at parks and other recreational facilities. Conventional business development is often aesthetically unpleasing, results in increased runoff to other properties, and increases traffic.



Open Space Development: An Open Space Development looks to provide a designated area as open space within the development. This land is permanently protected from development and can be used by the neighborhood as a recreation amenity. The developer that chooses to develop in this manner can still build the same number of units, but on smaller lots and with less infrastructure to construct as a result of clustering the development. By encouraging Open Space Development the City can increase the passive and active recreational opportunities for its residents, decrease the amount of infrastructure that needs to be maintained, and increase the attractiveness of the overall community.

SECTION FOUR: KEY ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Throughout a series of meetings, the Land Use Planning Committee discussed the key issues and concerns affecting development in Albemarle. Utilizing a series of surveys and facilitated discussions, the Committee identified several areas of strengths and weaknesses for their community which represent the opportunities and challenges to growth.

Strengths

- Abundance of public utilities and future infrastructure capacity to accommodate growth.
- Desirable location-proximity to Charlotte and access to major highways and regional airport.
- Recreational opportunities with proximity to Morrow Mountain State Park and Lake Tillery and development of City greenway system for recreational use.
- Small town atmosphere with revitalized downtown.
- Abundance of rural, undisturbed land-contributes to aesthetic quality of City.

Weaknesses

- Sprawling development and unregulated growth.
- Aging infrastructure and housing.
- Loss of young professionals, leading to aging of population.
- Loss of industry, affecting employment and the tax base.
- Lack of affordable housing and diversity in housing types.
- Lack of educational opportunities and need for school improvements.
- Public perceptions towards growth.

These results were used to formulate the main areas of concern in Albemarle. The Land Use Planning Committee identified 10 key issue areas and prioritized the key elements of each category in terms of importance. Each of the eleven (11) members was able to vote for five elements and assign a value from 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important and 1 being the least important. Those elements that received the most votes in each category have been reported here, with tying scores illustrated.

I. Transportation

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Airport is an asset that should be utilized to full advantage. | 50 |
| 2. Long-term planning, Right-of-way planning is necessary. | 47 |
| 3. Need to promote greenway system. | 46 |
| 4. Need safe routes for biking and walking. | 45 |
| 5. Need to plan for corridors to encourage development in strategic areas. | 44 |

II. Public Water/Sewer

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Utilities determine location of business and industry. | 50 |
| New industry requires water and sewer service. | 50 |
| 2. City has abundance of utilities available for new users. | 47 |

3. Need a Water/Sewer Master Plan.	46
4. Can provide water to other areas.	29
III. Residential Development	
1. Need walkable communities with connectivity.	52
2. Explore ways to encourage infill development.	46
3. Develop design standards to support active communities.	41
Encourage mixed use developments.	41
4. Make appropriate use of high density zonings.	37
IV. Commercial Development	
1. Design standards are needed.	50
2. Traditional Neighborhood Development type preferred.	45
Desire more commercial development near airport.	45
3. Desire more responsible environmental development with green space.	43
4. Desire more infill development.	42
Desire sustainable, energy-efficient development.	42
5. Need to manage traffic issues within development.	40
Locate appropriate commercial development in neighborhoods.	40
Desire good landscaping and signage	40
V. Industrial Development	
1. Need to determine where industrial development is appropriate.	55
2. Requires collaboration with County and neighboring municipalities.	51
3. Need to develop land/building product for industrial development.	47
4. Industrial development most feasible on edges of city.	43
5. Commercial and Industrial parks can locate adjacently.	41
VI. Open Space/Recreation	
1. Define open space as undisturbed areas, parks, and walking trails.	49
2. Open space is an important amenity to residents and visitors.	47
Differentiate between passive and active recreational uses.	47
3. Continue development of greenway system.	46
4. Develop a payment-in-lieu system for open space and recreation facilities.	43
5. Need connectivity between parks.	39
VII. Downtown Development	
1. Need incentives to draw people downtown.	47
2. Need amenities for downtown living.	46
3. Parking issues must be resolved (more vs. less).	45
4. Significant lack of residential development downtown.	44
Downtown businesses close at 5:00 p.m.	44
5. Need transportation alternatives to reach downtown.	40

VIII. Community Appearance	
1. Bring properties in disrepair up to reasonable standard.	52
2. Beautify downtown.	50
3. Keep streets clean.	48
Encourage attractive new development.	48
4. Create active community with people walking and biking to destinations.	45
5. Provide upkeep of neighborhoods to enforce standards.	44
Create more parks and green space.	44
IX. Economic Development	
1. Need to recruit industries likely to bring other support industries.	55
2. Balance economic development growth by location and buffering.	52
3. Requires collaborative efforts by City and County.	45
4. Encourage industries to hire local youth.	43
5. Coordinate with educational institutions to develop workforce.	42
X. Historic Preservation	
1. Explore incentives for redevelopment in downtown and historic areas.	53
2. New development should fit in with existing historic development.	48
3. Maximize economic benefit of historic preservation and redevelopment.	41
Ensure historic preservation efforts remain positive.	41
4. Explore expanding local historic district.	34

SECTION FIVE: GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

I. PLAN OBJECTIVE

Following identification of the key issues, the Land Use Planning Committee began discussions on the overall objective of the Albemarle Land Use Plan, which has been articulated as:

“To improve the quality of life of the citizens of Albemarle by encouraging responsible growth management decisions, protecting the City’s unique character, developing an attractive community, promoting good stewardship of natural resources, restoring and revitalizing the historic downtown, and ensuring a healthy local economy”.

The key issues were then reexamined and analyzed in terms of policy directives. Two categories (Downtown Development and Historic Preservation) were merged together to form a new category retaining the name of the former. A new category (Governmental Planning Coordination) was also added. Specific goals, objectives, and strategies were formulated for each key issue area.

II. POLICY DIRECTIVES

1. TRANSPORTATION

Goal: Ensure that transportation networks are safe, convenient, and contribute to sustainable land use practices.

Objectives:

- O-1.a Develop bikeways and pedestrian ways to provide more recreational opportunities and alternatives to automotive travel.
- O-1.b Continue to recognize the airport as a primary asset for the City and region in transportation and development planning.
- O-1.c Encourage pedestrian and bikeway planning and incorporate as a consideration where appropriate in development decisions.
- O-1.d Ensure that expansion of NC Highway transportation corridors contribute to orderly, well managed development.
- O-1.e Encourage redesign of transportation corridors to accommodate a mix of land uses and pedestrian oriented travel.
- O-1.f Plan for traffic management in and out of commercial areas.
- O-1.g Ensure safety and usefulness of area thoroughfares by encouraging common access points and discouraging frequent driveway cuts.

Strategies:

1. High priority projects from the City's *Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan* should be further developed for implementation and funding.
2. Integrate key recommendations from the City's *Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan* into City development policies.



Pedestrian and Bike Path, Carrboro

3. In order to ensure that development and transportation is orderly and well managed along the NC Highway corridors, overlay zoning should be explored by the City.
4. Utilize, and amend as necessary, development ordinances to manage access and reduce traffic congestion.

-
5. In order to reduce traffic congestion and promote traffic calming, central medians should be strongly encouraged in the design of new or improved major streets or thoroughfares.
 6. Landscaping and, where feasible, street trees should be planted in central medians of major streets or thoroughfares.



Street Trees and Median

7. Connect transportation corridors to business centers and Downtown.

2. PUBLIC WATER AND SEWER

Goal: Continue to ensure that water and sewer services are delivered in a safe, efficient and effective manner that benefits the residents of Albemarle and promotes good land use planning.

Objectives:

- O-2.a Explore the feasibility of supplying water to customers outside of the City limits.
- O-2.b Identify specific industries that could be attracted to the City's water and sewer capacity.
- O-2.c Evaluate policies for water and sewer extension with a focus on economic development as well as other opportunities to more effectively utilize excess capacity.
- O-2.d Assess extension of water and sewer services as a critical growth management tool and catalyst for new and expanding business and industry.

Strategies:

1. Complete needs assessment of water and sewer services to determine upgrades and develop policy for extension of water and sewer services to customers outside of the city limits. Update needs assessment every five years.
2. Study the most effective means to use water/sewer capacity to attract and retain business and industry.
3. Engage County and other providers to explore regional water and sewer distribution options.
4. Ensure that water and sewer systems are maintained and updated to meet all state requirements.

3. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Improve the quality of Albemarle’s neighborhoods.

Objectives:

- O-3.a Encourage well-planned residential development that will promote the best interests of the residents and the community as a whole.
- O-3.b Protect the integrity of established residential neighborhoods.
- O-3.c Discourage sprawl.
- O-3.d Expand the variety and improve the quality of housing types (single-family detached, single-family attached, condominiums, town homes, apartments) available to all citizens.
- O-3.e Promote compatible development within Albemarle’s historic neighborhoods.
- O-3.f Protect natural features, such as steep slopes and stands of significant trees as part of Albemarle’s future residential development.

Strategies:

1. Revise zoning and subdivision ordinances to require new residential development to be connected to other residential, shopping, and work areas with streets, sidewalks, and bikeways.



Pedestrian Walkway

2. Develop guidelines and criteria to identify areas most appropriate for higher density housing types, such as condominiums, townhouses and apartment developments.



Multi-Family Apartment Housing



Multi-Family Townhome Housing

-
3. Revise the City’s street standards and subdivision ordinance to give equal priority to the pedestrian and the automobile.
 4. Explore options and strategies available to encourage the redevelopment and maintenance of properties located in the City’s established neighborhoods including support of a more aggressive minimum housing and code enforcement program.
 5. Strengthen existing nuisance and appearance standards for residential properties.



Residential Landscaping

6. Explore amending the zoning and subdivision ordinances to allow and encourage a mix of housing types, housing prices, and a mix of compatible uses.
7. Revise zoning and subdivision ordinances to require (or strongly encourage) new residential development to preserve significant natural features, such as steep slopes and stands of significant trees.

8. Continue to support the activities of the Historic District Commission and efforts to expand the existing local historic district and creation of new local historic districts as a viable strategy to stabilize older neighborhoods.



Residential Tree Preservation

9. Add development standards and location criteria for new low to moderate income housing.

-
10. Explore development of design standards for the Residential Office (R-O) zoning district to ensure that non-residential uses are not detrimental to residential uses.



Residential Office Units-Albemarle

11. Maintain the inherent value of existing neighborhoods through continued infrastructure improvements and enforcement of neighborhood maintenance standards.
12. Promote residential development where infrastructure already exists or can be easily extended.
13. Encourage the development and redevelopment of vacant parcels and underutilized parcels in established areas with appropriate infill development.

4. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Provide for sustainable commercial development that meets the City’s land use goals.

Objectives:

- O-4.a Improve the appearance of commercial areas.
- O-4.b Present a high-quality image to visitors and residents alike.
- O-4.c Encourage new commercial development to take place in existing commercial areas.
- O-4.d Minimize the potential negative impacts of commercial development through high-quality building and site design, and increased landscaping and buffering.
- O-4.e Accommodate new commercial development through utilization of commercial center concepts instead of through strip development.
- O-4.f Promote interconnected commercial development sites and individual buildings that utilize shared access points and parking.
- O-4.g Encourage mixed-use developments (i.e. commercial, office, institutional, single-family, multi-family).
- O-4.h Encourage new pedestrian-friendly commercial developments.

Strategies:

1. Review landscaping, access, and overall design provisions in development ordinances and revise as needed to ensure commercial development is attractive and presents a high quality image to visitors and residents alike.

2. Integrate pedestrian-friendly design elements into new commercial development.



Commercial Pedestrian Pathway

3. Revise development ordinances to encourage clustering or deepening of commercial development rather than additional strip development.

-
4. Encourage the preservation, rehabilitation and appropriate adaptive reuse of older commercial properties. Such rehabilitation shall respect the original architecture and fabric of the building when feasible.



Industrial Reuse, Albemarle

5. Explore ways to encourage appropriate landscaping and reconfiguration of large, un-landscaped parking areas.



Parking Lot Landscaping

6. Revise development ordinances to permit infill development across the front street face of existing parking lots.

7. Explore revising the existing building setback requirements along new and existing thoroughfares to allow buildings to be constructed closer to road rights-of-way.



Building Setbacks

8. Encourage new mixed-use developments, which allow for a mixture of uses with a pedestrian scale and design.

-
9. Add mixed-use development standards to the City's development ordinances.



Mixed-Use Development, Cornelius, NC

10. Add development requirements for large-scale uses to be buffered from adjacent residential areas by smaller scale buildings or by buffer strips.



Landscape Buffer

11. Encourage large-scale commercial developments, where appropriate, to contain a diverse mixture of retail, office, restaurant and service uses.
12. Encourage small-scale, pedestrian-oriented shopping and work places in the design of new neighborhoods.
13. Explore allowing neighborhood scale shopping centers in additional zoning districts.
14. Study adding additional pedestrian-friendly uses to the neighborhood business zoning district.
15. Revise development ordinances to require neighborhood scale businesses to be designed at a residential scale and character, including signage and lighting.



Neighborhood Business, Asheville, NC

5. INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Continue to supply a strong environment for a broad range of industry that is well suited to the area economy and contributes to sustainable land use practices.

Objectives:

- O-5.a Encourage location of industrial development in designated areas.
- O-5.b Protect designated industrial areas and existing industrial sites from incompatible land uses.
- O-5.c Seek a balance between the benefits of economic development and the possible negative impacts that certain types of industry might have on the environment and overall quality of life of the residents.
- O-5.d Encourage adaptive re-use of former manufacturing and /or warehousing buildings and sites.
- O-5.e Redevelop outdated or obsolete industrial sites to more suitable land uses.
- O-5.f Locate industrial development on land which is physically suitable and has unique locational advantages for industry.
- O-5.g Encourage cooperation between the City and County to identify areas suitable for industrial development.

Strategies:

1. Develop policy and/or programs to encourage industrial development to locate in areas that are served by adequate infrastructure.
2. The City should be an active participant, facilitator and partner in the adaptive re-use of former manufacturing and/or warehousing buildings and sites.
3. The City should use its industrial zoning districts to protect the community from the establishment or expansion of industries that are incompatible with public health, safety, and welfare, and that may be detrimental to the economic prosperity of existing businesses.
4. Industries adjoining existing residential uses shall provide and maintain for adequate screening and buffering. New residential development moving into an area adjoining an existing industrial use shall have the burden of providing its own screening and buffering.
5. Industries locating along the City's major corridors shall provide for landscaping that enhances the City's overall image.
6. The City should examine its zoning ordinance and other development regulations as to the appropriate distribution of manufacturing, warehouse and material distribution opportunities within the City's planning jurisdiction.

-
7. Identify areas that may need to be rezoned from industrial to more appropriate categories.
 8. Guidelines for mixed use development in the industrial zoning district should be explored.

6. OPEN SPACE/RECREATION

Goal: Protect and enhance Albemarle’s Natural Resources and Recreation Areas.

Objectives:

- O-6.a Protect the City’s drinking water supply and environmentally sensitive areas.
- O-6.b Establish a variety of both passive and active recreational facilities that serve the recreational needs of all Albemarle residents.
- O-6.c Ensure new residential development provides adequate open space and recreation areas in proportion to the demand created by the development.
- O-6.d Maintain and expand open space areas throughout Albemarle.
- O-6.e Connect recreational facilities to one another and also to neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- O-6.f Develop a network of open space greenways throughout Albemarle that connect residential areas with parks, schools and churches.
- O-6.g Develop a centrally located facility for community gatherings and cultural events.
- O-6.h Develop a multi-use athletic facility/complex.
- O-6.i Create an active community with abundant walking and biking opportunities.

Strategies:

1. Continue development of a system of open space greenways and pedestrian paths throughout Albemarle that connect residential areas with parks, schools, and churches utilizing natural corridors such as streams and floodplains and man-made corridors such as utility and transportation rights-of-way and easements.



Greenway

2. Assess the recreational wishes and desires of its citizens to determine recreational facility and programming needs including the feasibility of developing a large athletic complex and centrally located community gathering space to hold community and cultural events.
3. Continue to invest in the implementation of the *Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan* and sidewalk construction and maintenance as one method to increase the walking and recreational opportunities for citizens.

-
4. Evaluate how City ordinances can most effectively promote the provisions of open space.



Residential Open Space

7. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Improve the economic, social and cultural vitality of downtown Albemarle.

Objectives:

- O-7.a Encourage a diverse mixture of retail, office, institutional, residential, dining services, entertainment, public spaces and basic public services that are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.
- O-7.b Encourage renovation or restoration of existing buildings and structures in the downtown.
- O-7.c Promote downtown as a prime location for residential uses.
- O-7.d Create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere in downtown.
- O-7.e Ensure that new development and redevelopment is supportive of the architectural and historic context of downtown Albemarle.
- O-7.f Ensure that public spaces in downtown are adequately maintained.

Strategies:

1. Explore barriers to the creation of residential uses in the downtown area and remove those barriers if feasible.
2. Continue to support downtown planning efforts such as the updating of the Downtown Albemarle Master Plan.
3. Continue to encourage investments in pedestrian-oriented streetscape improvements, including, but not limited to sidewalks, street trees, street lights, street furniture and landscaping that are consistent with the historic, pedestrian character of the downtown and to stimulate continued economic development.
4. Continue to look for new ways to support new and existing downtown businesses and property owners with incentives to redevelop and make improvements to downtown properties, especially properties that would lead to increased housing options.



Albemarle Downtown Gateway Park



Downtown Albemarle Multi-Family Housing

5. Encourage new and expanding businesses requiring office space to locate to available space downtown.

6. Explore design standards to ensure that new development and redevelopment will be supportive of the architectural and historic context that is vital to the economic success of downtown.



Downtown Albemarle Building Facades

7. Explore development of a strategy or program to address parking for downtown residents.

8. Support the implementation of recommendations in the *Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan* that relate to the downtown area.

8. COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

Goal: Promote community appearance as a primary indicator of Albemarle’s unique character and rich quality of life.

Objectives:

- O-8.a Display a positive image to residents and visitors through the attractiveness of the City’s downtown, commercial and residential development as well as the City’s entrances.
- O-8.b Encourage attractive landscaping, signage, building design and other visual improvements as part of all new development.
- O-8.c Protect property values by encouraging the continued attractiveness of neighborhoods and eliminate public nuisance issues, such as junked vehicles, high grass, and accumulations of junk and debris.
- O-8.d Improve the appearance of public areas, parks, sidewalks, street right-of-ways, etc.
- O-8.e Continue to emphasize the connection between attractive residential areas and property value.

Strategies:

1. Consider adoption of architectural standards for new and expanding commercial development that are consistent with Albemarle’s architectural character to avoid standard prototype designs otherwise employed in “Anywhere USA”.
2. Explore options to increase the effectiveness of code enforcement activities.
3. Study the effectiveness of existing signage and landscaping requirements in meeting the City’s desired vision and amend the requirements if necessary.
4. Continue to support the Community Appearance Commission and their activities.
5. Explore opportunities to improve signage and landscaping at entrances and other key locations into the City, including the development of a coordinated wayfinding program.
6. Develop gateways study as a means to ensure attractive entryways in the City.
7. Explore ways to address nuisance issues related to outside storage associated with industrial uses.



Welcome Gateway Sign, Albemarle

9. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Continue to provide a healthy environment for a diverse mix of industry, business uses, and other employers that build on the area economy and strengthen the community.

Objectives:

- O-9.a Encourage new and expanding industries and businesses which diversify the local economy, provide greater opportunities for the area's workforce and increase area residents' incomes.
- O-9.b Attract and retain a balance of economic growth and development.
- O-9.c Support the area's tourism industry as a significant part of the City's economic development program.
- O-9.d City and County work cooperatively on planning for economic development as well as recruiting new employers and supporting existing business.
- O-9.e Recognize downtown vitality as a significant indicator of the area's economy.
- O-9.f Place a priority on recruiting industries that are likely to bring other support businesses.
- O-9.g Encourage small business development in Albemarle.
- O-9.h Continue to recognize that good land use planning results in successful economic development.

Strategies:

1. Analyze the most effective means to use water/sewer capacity to attract and retain business and industry throughout the region.
2. Explore best practices to successfully recruit and retain sustainable business and industry.
3. Identify ways to encourage the growth of the tourism industry.
4. Initiate partnerships with organizations that support tourism efforts.
5. Explore incentive policies for the redevelopment of Downtown, existing commercial areas, compact neighborhoods, and adaptive re-use.
6. Develop criteria in City zoning ordinance to encourage land uses that support a tourism based economy, such as Bed and Breakfast establishments.

10. GOVERNMENTAL PLANNING COORDINATION

Goal: Collaboration between governmental agencies is encouraged as a means of ensuring good overall policy that meets the needs and desires of the entire community.

Objectives:

- O-10.a Encourage governmental entities to collaborate on planning in the areas of land use, economic development, water and sewer, tourism promotion, historic preservation and economic development.
- O-10.b Ensure that planning initiatives from various departments within the City as well as organizations supported by the City are reviewed and when feasible, incorporated into City development decisions.
- O-10.c Encourage public involvement in the land use decision making process.
- O-10.d Ensure that City planning and community development staff has adequate capacity to meet the needs of the community.

Strategies:

1. Undertake joint planning efforts between the City, Stanly County and other municipalities to determine specific land use objectives for areas adjacent to the City limits that are identified in the *Stanly County Land Use Plan* as primary and secondary growth areas.
2. Explore ways to partner with the County and other municipalities to implement key recommendations from the *Stanly County Land Use Plan* that call for future growth and development in Stanly County to be directed to existing municipalities and population centers.
3. Coordinate regular meetings between the various other units of government to discuss common challenges, opportunities for collaboration, etc.
4. Study staffing needs for implementation and maintenance of planning needs and priorities.
5. Hold public hearings on important land use issues that may affect the community.



SECTION SIX: FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use Map for the City of Albemarle depicts generalized land use patterns for the City and the surrounding areas for the next 10-20 years. Like all future land use maps, it is general in nature and should be used only as a guide by decision-makers in making future land use decisions. No attempt has been made to identify land use patterns on a lot-by-lot basis. Rather, land use decisions should be made using the map as a guide together with the goals, objectives, and strategies contained in this plan.

The Future Land Use Map is broken up into ten (10) land use classifications.

General Residential – These areas are located within the City’s corporate limits and public utilities are provided. Areas classified as general residential typically consist of lots ranging from one-quarter to one-half acre in size and have an established network of roads that are well-connected, but often lack sidewalks. The General residential classification also features areas of low density development with roads that are not well connected and frequently terminate in cul-de-sacs. Compact residential neighborhoods that set aside significant natural vistas, parkland, landscape features and other rural heritage features for permanent conservation are encouraged. Development considerations include environmental impacts, urban sprawl, road connectivity, impact on adjoining neighborhoods, protection of natural features and vistas, and the availability of adequate infrastructure.

Neighborhood Residential – These areas are located within the City’s corporate limits and include many mature neighborhoods. Public utilities are available and an extensive road and sidewalk network already exists. These areas are intended to provide for residential infill development with a wide range of housing types surrounding the Town Center area. Low intensity business uses located in mixed-use buildings or buildings designed and constructed at a residential scale and appearance are also appropriate. Development considerations include the compatibility of infill development with existing building patterns.

City Center – The traditional and historic center of the City that encompasses Albemarle’s downtown and contains a variety of office, retail, service and residential uses. Central to the success of the City Center area are its unique architectural features, historic integrity, attached buildings, pedestrian atmosphere, and symbiotic uses. Development considerations include design and use compatibility with the historic, urban framework.

Neighborhood Commercial Centers – These are commercial and/or mixed use areas developed at a neighborhood scale that offer a limited amount of commercial development convenient to surrounding neighborhoods. Developments are small in scale and accessible to pedestrians and include uses that provide customers with everyday retail-type goods and services. Development considerations include compatibility with surrounding residential areas and the impact on the level of service of existing roadways.

Commercial – These areas are generally located along major thoroughfares that contain a wide array of commercial uses. Typical retail uses include shopping centers, restaurants, and convenience stores. Other heavier uses may include mini-warehouses and automobile sales lots.

Development considerations include traffic, compatibility with abutting residential areas, and the appearance of new and existing development as well as the availability of adequate infrastructure.

Industrial and Heavy Commercial – These areas are intended to accommodate traditional industrial uses and commercial uses such as warehousing and distribution centers on individual tracts of land or on land located within coordinated industrial parks. Such uses may have health or safety hazards, have greater than average impacts on the environment, or diminish the use and enjoyment of nearby property by generation of noise, smoke, fumes, odors, glare, vibration, industrial vehicle traffic, or similar nuisances. Development considerations include access to adequate highways, water and sewer capacity and minimizing impacts to adjoining uses.

Office and Institutional – These areas are intended to accommodate office and institutional uses, public and private medical facilities and associated services, independent and assisted living facilities, schools, colleges, and limited commercial uses. Development considerations include traffic, compatibility with abutting residential areas, the appearance of new and existing development as well as the availability of adequate infrastructure.

Parks, Recreation, & Conservation Areas – These are areas where parks, recreation areas, greenways, or conservation areas either exist or have been identified as possibilities in the future. Development considerations include the desirability of the land for recreation or conservation use, how the property fits into the future recreation plans of the City and the environmental impacts of developing the land.

Future Industrial/Business Park – These are areas appropriate for future industrial uses or commercial business parks. These areas are in close proximity to the City’s corporate limits and are often located along existing road networks. Development considerations include proximity to adequate highways, water and sewer capacity, impact on existing road network, and minimizing potential negative impacts to adjoining land uses.

County Primary and Secondary Growth Area – These are areas identified in the *Stanly County Land Use Plan 2002* for each of the eight cities and towns located within Stanly County where growth and development is encouraged over the next 10 years.

Albemarle Future Land Use

Insert map here

SECTION SEVEN: IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

1. Hold workshops for the City Council and Planning Board on how the plan can be used upon adoption. These meetings can look at different aspects of the plan at different meetings.
2. Refine the staff recommendation process for all land development proposals, rezoning requests, conditional use permits, and special use permits. The staff recommendation will include a short analysis of how the proposed development will meet or not meet the Land Use Plan policy directives as well as the Future Land Use Map.
3. Make necessary changes to the City's Zoning Ordinance to allow for the type of development desired by the community. (For example, changing the City's sign regulations or requiring shared driveways and connected parking lots between adjoining lots).
4. Encourage the City Council and Planning Board to use the Land Use Plan on a regular basis to serve as a helpful guideline for making decisions on rezoning requests, conditional use permits, special use permits, and subdivision proposals.

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

Use of the Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map should be used as the first step in evaluating development proposals. The Future Land Use Map and the supporting information in Section 6 outline appropriate locations, types, and patterns of land development. When reviewing a proposed development, the developer, staff, citizens, Planning Board, and City Council should determine first if that type of development is desired in the proposed location.

Use of the Policy Directive Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives outlined in section 5 of the Plan should be used as the second check in evaluation of how well proposed developments are supported by the Albemarle Land Use Plan 2028. The goals and objectives represent general principles that affect all development within the City. If a proposed development does not appear to be supported by these goals and objectives, it should be returned to the developer for revisions.

How Can the Land Use Plan be Used by Various Users?

To aid in the effective use of the Albemarle Land Use Plan 2028, the following examples illustrate how different users can employ the goals, objectives, and strategies, as well as the Future Land Use Plan Map in evaluating a rezoning request.

As Used by the Developer

The developer or property owner can petition for a rezoning request that is consistent with City policy, thereby increasing the chances for rezoning approval and minimizing guess work and time wasted.

As Used by the City Staff

The City of Albemarle staff reviews zoning petitions, recommends that the petition be approved or denied, and prepares a written zoning report for the Planning Board. In making their decision and writing the report, the staff reviews relevant planning documents, including plans adopted by the City. Using the adopted policies in this plan will facilitate the City staff's review of the rezoning request. The staff will be able to point out those policies that support the rezoning, and those that are in conflict with the rezoning, thereby shaping the overall staff recommendation.

As Used by the City Planning Board

Prior to the regular meeting, each Planning Board member can make his or her own determination as to the consistency of the proposed rezoning with the City's adopted growth strategies and future development policies. As always, the Planning Board should take into account the recommendations of the Plan, but may choose to give different weight to different policies.

As Used by the City Council

In its legislative authority to rezone property, the City Council has the final word as to whether the rezoning request is consistent with the various plans and ordinances that affect the property in question. As customary, the Council should take into account and weigh the interpretation of policy as employed by the property owner, the Albemarle Planning Board, staff, and the general public. Over time, a track record of policy interpretation forms a consistent foundation for decision-making.

As Used by the General Public

Residents of the City can and should reference specific policy statements when speaking in favor of or in opposition to a rezoning request.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MONITORING AND REVISING THE PLAN

As the Albemarle Land Use Plan 2028 is used and development occurs in Albemarle, it will be necessary to make revisions to the plan in order to keep it updated. A major development, new road or water and sewer extensions can drastically change an area of the planning jurisdiction. It is recommended that the City convene a meeting of the Land Use Planning Committee every other year to look at changes that need to be addressed and to provide an opportunity to monitor the City's progress in implementing the Plan. It should be noted that City Staff, the Planning Board, and City Council play a vital role in monitoring and revising the plan as well. The Albemarle Land Use Plan 2028 will only be a document worth using if it is kept up to date and used on a regular basis by the City Council, Planning Board, City Staff and citizens of Albemarle.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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City of Albemarle

Website, <http://www.ci.albemarle.nc.us/>

Albemarle Downtown Development Corporation
Website, <http://www.albemarledowntown.com/>

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Website, <http://www.stanlylib.org/>

North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management, Technology and Data Services Section
Website, <http://data.osbm.state.nc.us/>

North Carolina Employment Security Commission
Website, <http://www.ncesc.com/>

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Website, <http://www.nctreasurer.com/dsthome>

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Website, <http://h2o.enr.state.nc.us/>

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Website, <http://daq.state.nc.us/>

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Website, <http://www.ncbrownfields.org/>

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Website, <http://www.ncparks.gov/Visit/main.php>

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Website, <http://www.fws.gov/nwi/>

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