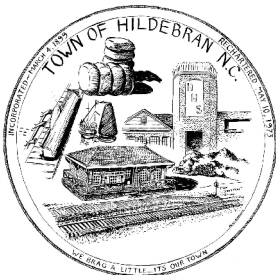


TOWN OF HILDEBRAN: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



May 2010



Plan Participants

Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee

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Introduction

Why Is a Comprehensive Plan Needed?

According to the North Carolina General Statutes, every local government must base its zoning decisions on a long-range plan which describes policies for land-use and growth management issues. These decisions range from rezoning decisions to transportation regulations to policies governing the uses and subdivision of land. The current plan *Envision Hildebran* was adopted in 1997 and many of the recommendations do not reflect current growth trends. The Town has adopted a new *Zoning Ordinance* and *Conceptual Downtown Master Plan*. The rules and recommendations in these documents are not supported by *Envision Hildebran*. Hildebran Town Council recognized the need for a new plan and contracted with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments to assist the Town in developing such a comprehensive plan.

Planning Process

The *Hildebran Comprehensive Plan* was developed by a 10-person steering committee appointed by the Town Council in April 2009. The members of the Hildebran Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, hereafter referred to as steering committee, were drawn from interested citizens and people who commute to Town for work, representing a variety of viewpoints on issues pertaining to the Town's growth and development. The steering committee underwent an intense 12-month process of education, discussion and strategic thinking to develop a draft plan for presentation to the Hildebran Planning Board and the Town Council. The key element of the *Plan* is a series of goals and recommendations in of land use and growth management, transportation, public services and facilities, economic development, natural and environmental resources, and historic and cultural resources. Once the *Plan* is adopted by Town Council, the Town should strive to implement the strategies proposed in the *Hildebran Comprehensive Plan*.

Citizen Involvement

Citizen involvement was an important factor during the process of creating the *Comprehensive Plan*. Early in the process, a community meeting was held at the East Burke Senior Center. At this meeting, 15 participants were asked to list the assets of Hildebran, their concerns about the Town and their vision for Hildebran. In addition to the community meeting, a survey was conducted, asking responders to list five assets, concerns and visions they had for the Town. The results from the community meeting and survey were compiled and are provided in Appendix A. Near the end of the process, citizens were given an opportunity to evaluate whether the draft recommendations and maps, as developed by the steering committee, reflected citizens' concerns and interests. A formal public hearing also provided an opportunity for citizen input at a meeting of the Town Council. All the steering committee meetings were open to the public for interested citizens to attend, although no one from the community attended.

Approval Process

The steering committee reviewed the results of the final community meeting and critiqued the final draft of the *Plan* at its meeting in March 2010. After making all final changes the Western Piedmont Council of Governments staff and members of the steering committee presented the *Plan* to the Hildebran Planning Board at its April 2010 meeting. The Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the *Plan* to the Town Council. The *Hildebran Comprehensive Plan* was then reviewed by the Council at a public hearing during its May 24, 2010 Council meeting. On that date the Town Council voted unanimously to approve the *Hildebran Comprehensive Plan*.

What's Next?

Once approved, the *Plan* needs to be implemented by the Town staff, Planning Board and Town Council acting on recommendations in the *Plan*. One essential component of implementation involves revising the Town's *Subdivision Regulations* and *Zoning Ordinance* to reflect some of the recommendations in the *Comprehensive Plan*. Like most municipalities, Hildebran uses these two growth management mechanisms to regulate where and how new residential, commercial and industrial development will occur. Many of the *Plan's* proposals will be accomplished after revisions to the *Zoning Ordinance* and *Subdivision Regulations* are approved by Council and incorporated into these documents.

Although the *Plan* is intended to serve as a guide for the next 10-15 years, it is meant to be an evolving document, revised by elected officials as policies and economic conditions change. The Planning Board and Town planning staff should review the document periodically to determine its effectiveness and the need for revisions to the *Plan*.

Acknowledgements

The steering committee was assisted in developing the *Comprehensive Plan* by members of the Western Piedmont Council of Governments staff including: Planning Director John Kenny, Planner John Kinley, GIS Technician Allison Suggs, Data Analyst Taylor Dellinger, Transportation Manager John Marshall and Secretary Erin Todd. In addition the Icard Township Water Corporation President Jim Gorsuch and Burke Economic Development Council Director Wayne Harris presented at one meeting to educate the steering committee about water service and economic development.

Demographics

Population

The first decennial Census population count after Hildebran was rechartered in 1973 took place in 1980. In 1980 the Town had 628 residents. Between 1980 and 1990 the Town's population grew to 786. During the 1990s Hildebran's population nearly doubled to 1,472 resulting from several annexations and job growth in Burke and Catawba County. Between 2000 and 2005 the Town's population continued to increase to 1,749. The State estimates that little population growth has occurred in Hildebran since 2005.

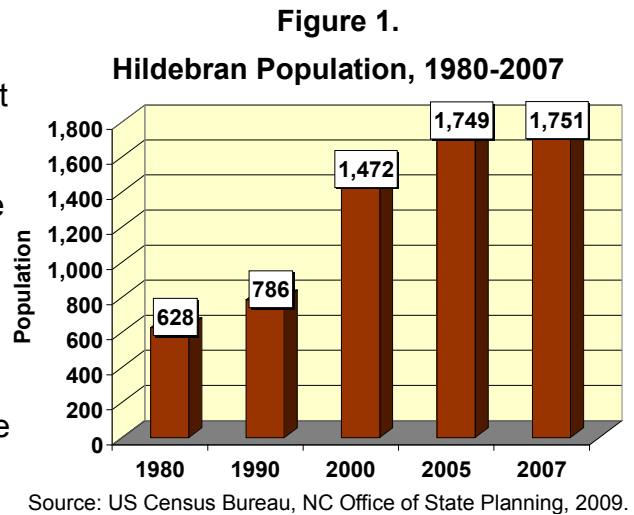
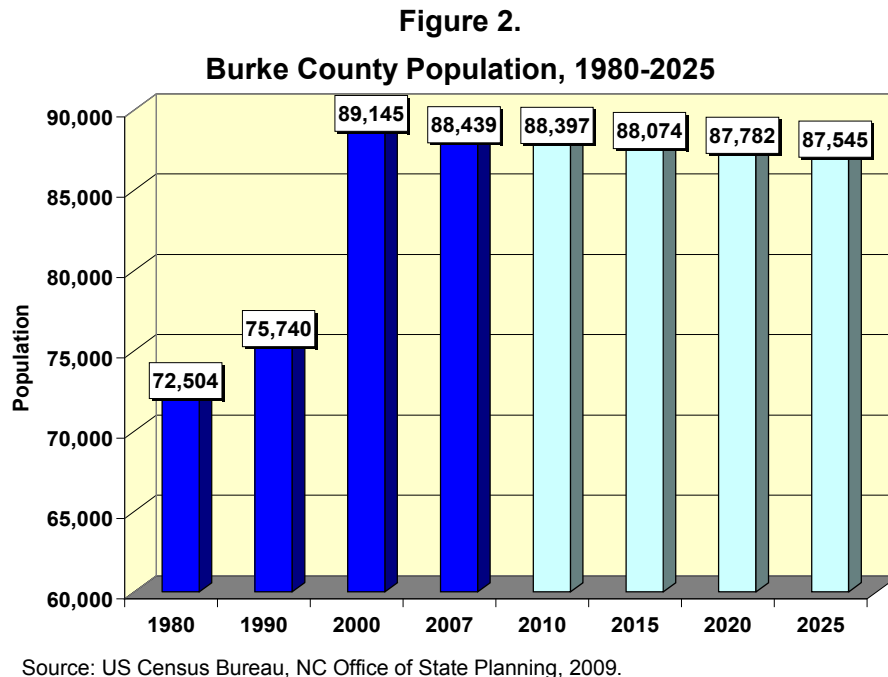


Figure 2 shows population growth in Burke County between 1980 and 2007 and population projections from 2007 to 2025. Hildebran's current population estimate of 1,751 represents approximately 2% of Burke County's population.

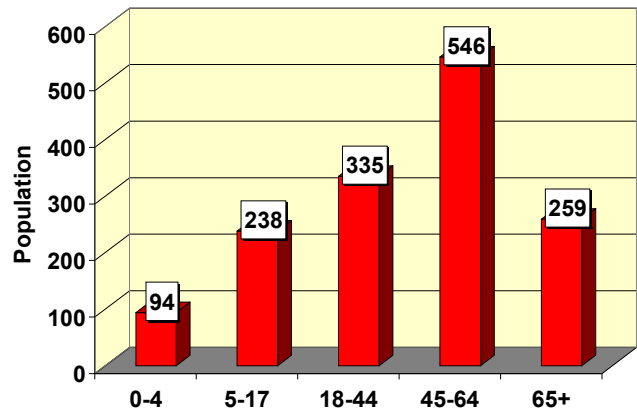


Both Hildebran's and Burke County's population grew during the 1980s and especially during the 1990s. While Burke County population fell slightly between 2000 and 2007 because of economic conditions, Hildebran's population continued to grow due to annexations. Looking ahead, it is important to note that the State estimates little change in Burke County's total population through 2025. The amount that Hildebran's population grows will likely depend on how annexation takes place over the next 20 years.

Age

Figure 3 displays Hildebran's 2000 population by age group. The largest segment of the Town's population (37.0%) is persons between 45 and 64 years old. This group represents the "baby boomer" generation that will be aging into the 65 and older group. In 2000 the 65 and over group equaled 17.6% of the Town's population. Census 2010 results will probably show that the 65 and older group has grown rapidly in Hildebran over the past decade.

Figure 3.
Hildebran Population by Age Group, 2000

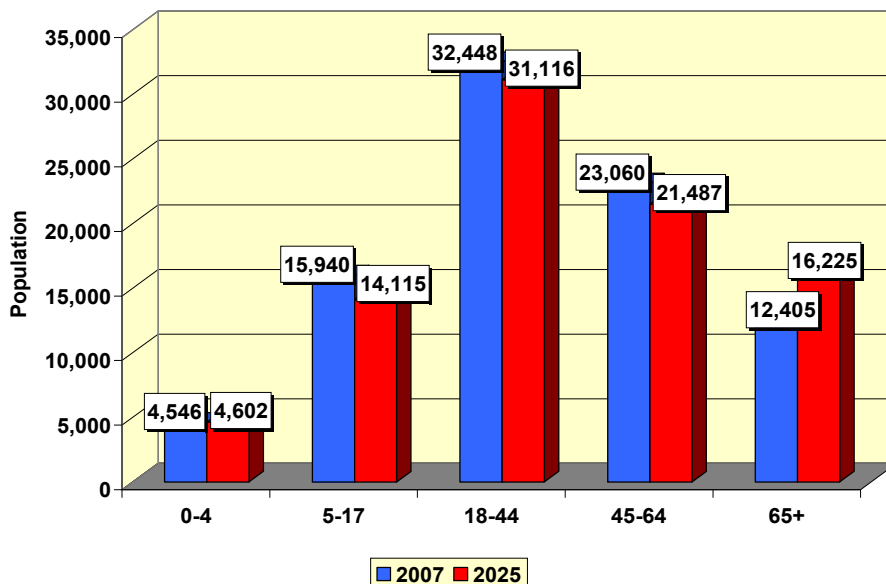


Source: US Census Bureau, 2009.

People aged 18 to 44 equaled 22.8% of Hildebran's population in 2000. This age group is made up of younger workers and families in the community. Whether or not Hildebran will be able to retain its younger generation is yet to be determined, based on the availability of education and employment opportunities in the Greater Hickory Metro region.

Figure 4 shows projections by age for Burke County between 2007 and 2025. Projections from the state indicated that the only age group that will experience significant population growth over the next 20 years is the 65 and older group. This growth will come from baby boomers getting older, as well as some migration of retirees to Burke County.

Figure 4.
Burke County Population Projections by Age Group, 2007-2025



Source: NC Office of State Planning, 2009.

Ethnicity

According to the 2000 Census, Hildebran's population is predominantly white (1,365 of 1,472 residents). With whites making up 93% of the population, Hildebran trails Burke County (88% white) and the state of North Carolina (72% white) in racial diversity. The largest minority group in the Town in 2000 was Asian and Pacific Islanders (mostly Hmong) with 65 persons (4.4% of the Town's population).

Table 1 shows changes in the population of ethnic groups in Burke County. The Hispanic population in Burke has grown 43.1% from 3,180 persons in 2000 to 4,552 in 2007. African-Americans are still the largest minority group in the County as of 2007 (6.7%), the group has lost 1.2% of population since 2000. The Table also estimates a significant loss in the Asian and Pacific Islander population since 2000, perhaps due to economic conditions.

Table 1.
Burke Population Change by Ethnic Group, 2000-2007

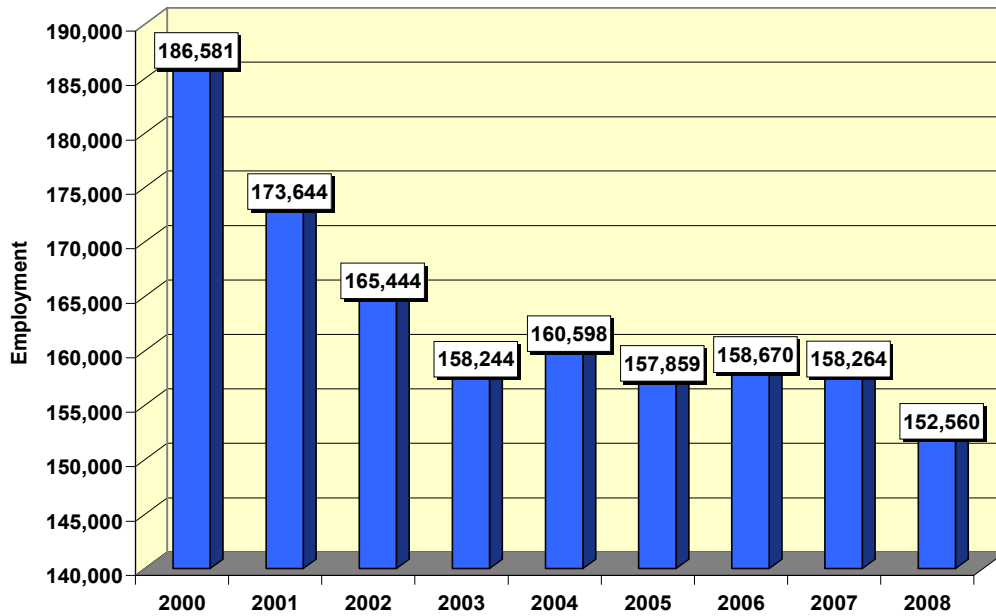
Burke County	July 2000 Pop.	% of 2000 Pop.	July 2007 Pop.	% of 2007 Pop.	Change 2000-2007	% Change 2000-2007
Total Population	89,148	100.0	88,439	100.0	-709	-0.8
Whites	78,661	88.2	78,429	88.7	-222	-0.3
African Americans	6,038	6.8	5,967	6.7	-71	-1.2
American Indians	328	0.4	430	0.5	102	31.1
Asian & Pacific Islander	3,508	3.9	2,894	3.3	-614	-17.5
Mixed Race	613	0.7	719	0.8	106	17.3
Hispanics (Any Race)	3,180	3.6	4,552	5.1	1,372	43.1

Source: US Census Bureau, 2009.

Employment

There is no question that Hildebran and its residents have been hit hard by job losses since 2000. Most of the labor force that lives in Hildebran works in the Hickory Metro area (defined as Alexander, Burke, Caldwell, and Catawba counties). Between 2000 and 2008 the Hickory Metro area as lost over 34,000 jobs (Figure 5 on page 8). Burke County's total employment fell from 38,704 in 2000 to 31,195 in 2008. The 7,509 job loss in Burke County since 2000 is more than four times the total 2007 population of Hildebran (1,751). The unemployment rate in the region as of February 2009 is over 15%.

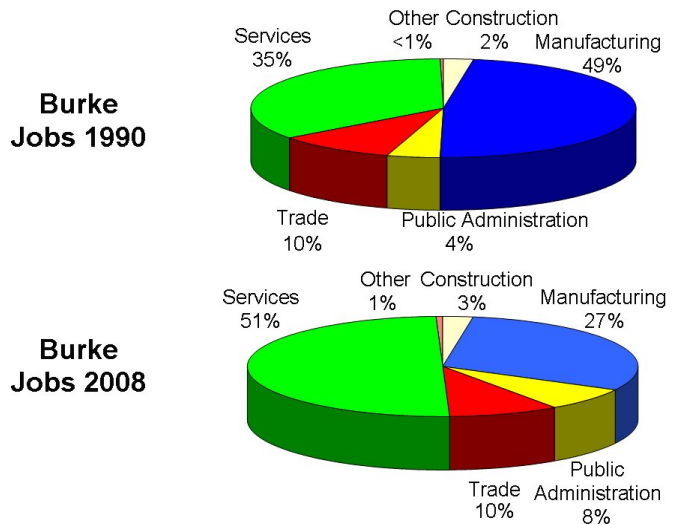
Figure 5.
Hickory Metro Employment, 2000-2008



Source: North Carolina Employment Security Commission, 2009.

The economy in Hildebran and Burke County is changing over time (Figure 6). In 1990 nearly 50% of all jobs in Burke County were in manufacturing. In 2008 only 27% of all Burke County jobs are in manufacturing. The “service” category, which includes banking, education and health care, totaled 35% of all jobs in Burke County in 1990. In 2008 over half of all jobs in the County are in services. Another noticeable increase has been in public administration or general government jobs. Public administration comprised 4% of all jobs in 1990. By 2008 the percentage of public administration jobs in Burke County had doubled to 8%.

Figure 6.
Burke County Employment Distribution, 1990-2008



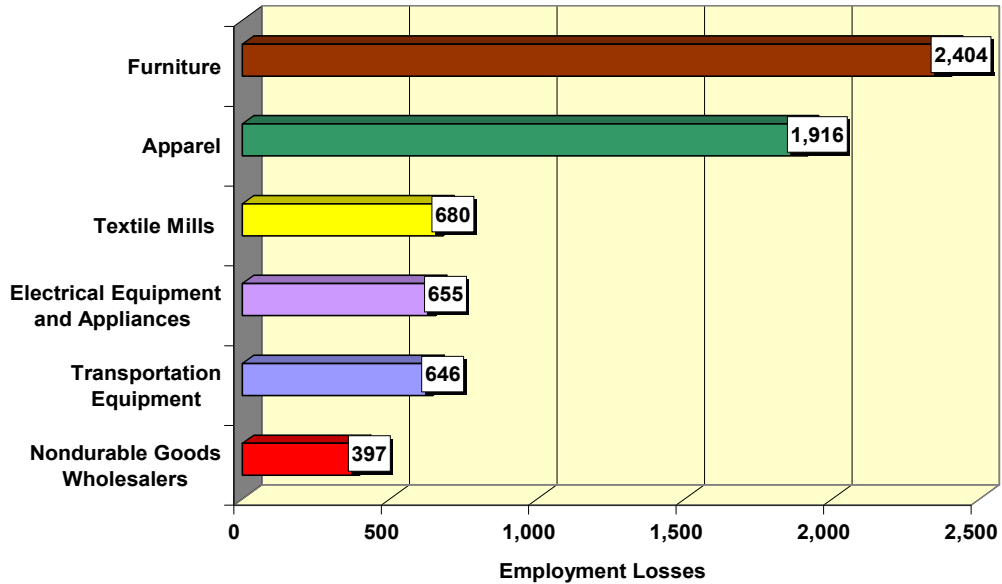
Source: North Carolina Employment Security Commission, 2009.

Hildebran and Burke County have been affected by layoffs and plant closings over the past several years. Figure 7 on page 9 shows the largest employment losses by industry sector in Burke County since 2000. Not surprisingly, many of the sectors that

lost employment between 2000 and 2008 were in the manufacturing sector. A total of 2,404 jobs were lost in the furniture industry, while 1,916 were lost in the apparel sector.

Figure 7.

Burke County Job Losses by Sector. 2nd Quarter 2000-3rd Quarter

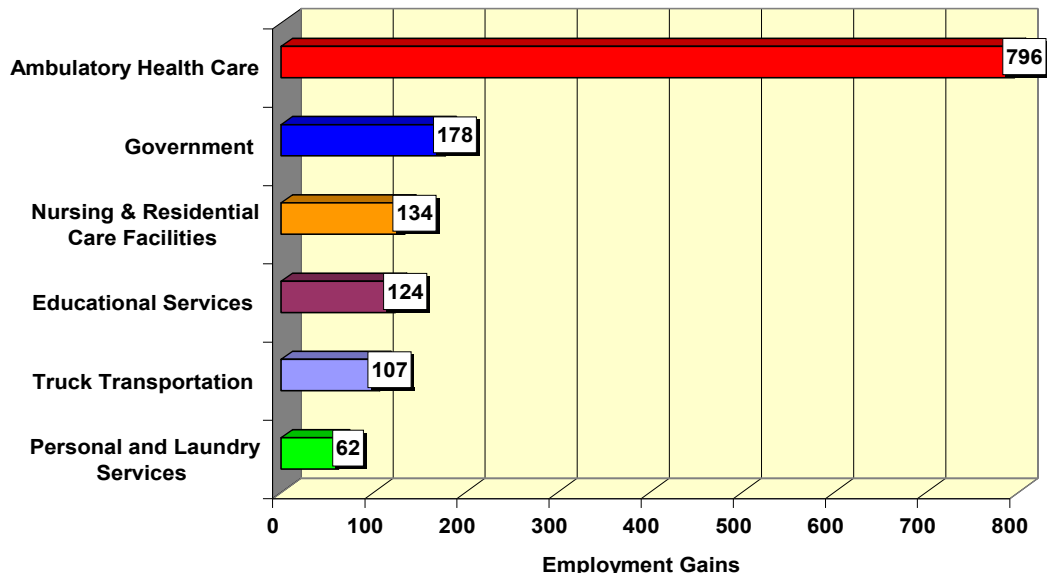


Source: North Carolina Employment Security Commission, 2009.

A few industries' sectors have actually gained employment in Burke County since 2000 (Figure 8). The biggest increase occurred in ambulatory health care which includes doctors' offices, clinics, and out-patient services. General government experienced a net gain of 178 workers, while nursing and residential care facilities grew by 134 employees. Educational services increased by 124 workers.

Figure 8.

Burke County Job Gains by Sector. 2nd Quarter 2000 to 3rd Quarter

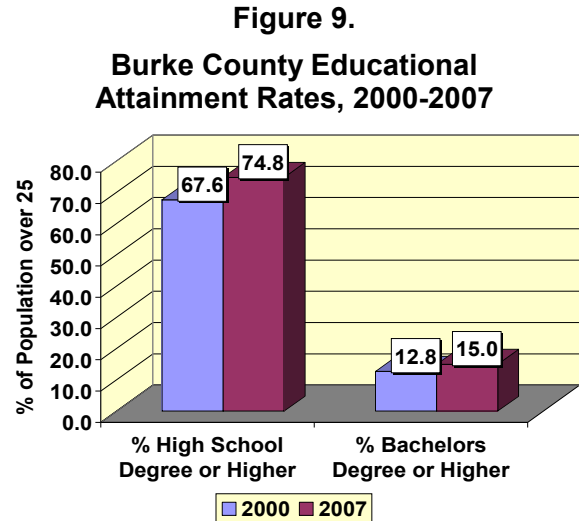


Source: North Carolina Employment Security Commission, 2009.

Income and Earning Potential

Income and educational attainment levels are measurements of the economic health of a community. In 2000 only 67.6% of persons over 25 in Burke County had a high school diploma or equivalent. Only 14 counties in North Carolina had a lower percentage of high school graduates. A mere 12.8% of County residents had a bachelor's degree or higher, considerably lower than the state average of 22.2%.

Burke County has made some improvement with respect to educational attainment levels since 2000 (Figure 9). The percentage of persons over 25 with high school education or higher has risen from 67.6% in 2000 to 74.8% in 2007. The percentage with a bachelor's degree or higher has risen from 12.8% to 15.0%. While these education gains are significant, Burke County and the Greater Hickory Metro's educational attainment levels are still far lower than other Metro areas in North Carolina. Table 2 compares 2007 educational attainment of the Hickory MSA with the other 13 metro areas in North Carolina. Hickory Metro educational attainment for both high school and bachelor's is the lowest of the 14 metro areas in North Carolina.



Source: US Census Bureau, 2009.

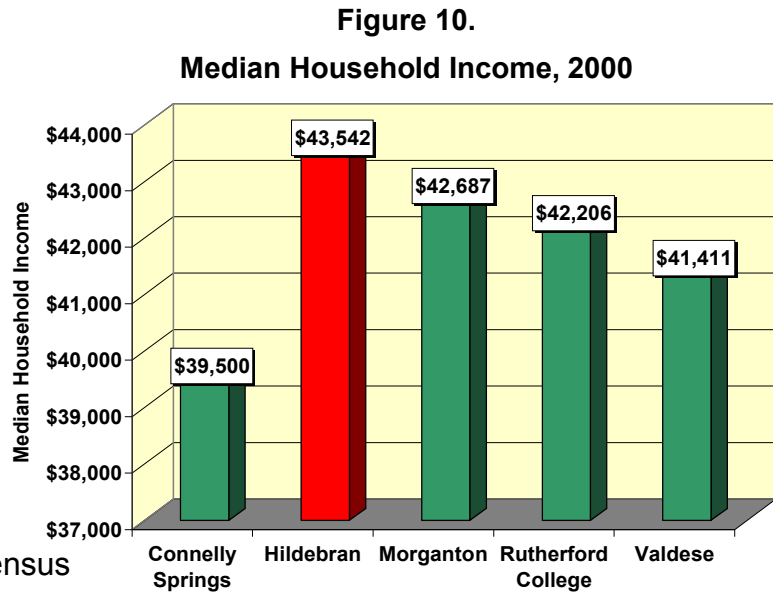
Table 2.

NC Metro Area Educational Attainment Comparison, 2007

MSA	% High School Degree or Higher	Ranking (1=Highest %)	% Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Ranking (1=Highest %)
Asheville	86.5	4	27.7	4
Burlington	81.9	11	20.8	9
Charlotte-Gastonia-Concord	86.0	6	32.6	3
Durham	85.8	7	41.8	1
Fayetteville	87.0	3	18.7	10
Goldsboro	79.5	12	16.4	13
Greensboro-High Point	82.3	10	25.8	6
Greenville	84.0	9	25.8	7
Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir	76.0	14	15.4	14
Jacksonville	88.6	2	17.6	11
Raleigh-Cary	88.8	1	41.4	2
Rocky Mount	79.1	13	16.7	12
Wilmington	86.2	5	27.1	5
Winston-Salem	84.1	8	25.8	8

Source: US Census Bureau, 2009.

Figure 10 shows that the 2000 median household income in Hildebran was \$43,542. Hildebran median household income was greater than the other comparable municipalities in Burke County (Connelly Springs, Morganton, Rutherford College and Valdese). This trend was probably a result of the number of manufacturing jobs that Hildebran residents worked in 2000. It will be interesting to examine at this comparison again once 2010 Census numbers are released.



Source: US Census Bureau, 2009.

Poverty has become an increasingly critical issue in Burke County since the economic downturn in 2000. Poverty rates for the Hickory Metro counties between 2000 and 2007 are displayed in Table 3. Since 2000 the number of persons living in poverty (defined as \$21,834 for a family of four with two children) in Burke County has increased 43.5% to 13,683. Children in Burke County are particularly vulnerable to living in poverty. In 2007 more than 20% of children in Burke County lived in poverty conditions.

Table 3.
Hickory Metro Poverty Rates (All Ages), 2000-2007

All Ages	2000		2007		Change 2000-2007	
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
County						
Alexander	3,197	9.4	4,132	11.8	935	29.2
Burke	9,534	11.0	13,683	16.0	4,149	43.5
Caldwell	8,483	11.0	10,671	13.6	2,188	25.8
Catawba	12,806	8.9	16,996	11.1	4,190	32.7
Hickory MSA	34,020	10.0	45,482	12.9	11,462	33.7

Source: US Census Bureau, 2007.

Land Use

Existing Land Use

The Town has planning and zoning powers within the Town limits which encompass approximately 1,600 acres of land. Most of the Town is zoned and used for single-family residential purposes. There are about 430 acres of vacant land in Town, most of which is zoned for residential and industrial use. Only 0.65% of the land is used for multi-family residential. Commercial, office, institutional and industrial uses occupy about 25% of the land. Institutional uses include government facilities, churches and schools.

Nearly 5.5% of the land in Town is used by utilities, namely Duke Energy property for a large substation and transmission lines (see Map 2: Hildebran Existing Land Use).

Figure 11 makes apparent the large percentages of single family, vacant and industrial uses. Although it is common for a city to have more of one type of use than another, communities should strive for a balance and variety of uses. The steering committee discussed the imbalance of the Town's land use focusing on the large amount of vacant land and the small percentage of multi-family residential. The steering committee concluded the Town should encourage multi-family development.

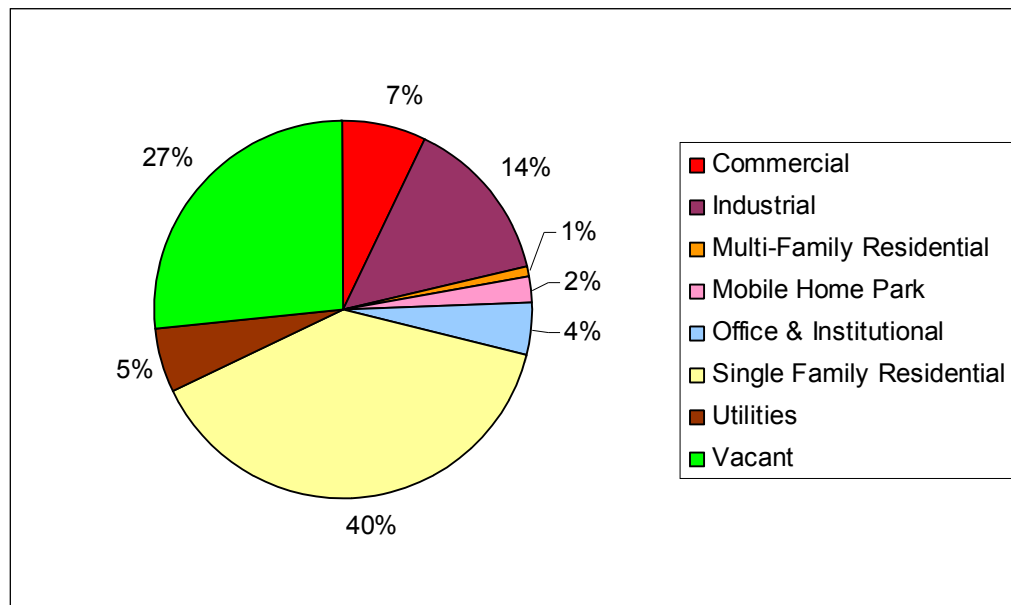
Table 4.
Existing Land Use, 2009

Land Use	Total Acres	Percent of Total
Commercial	114.886	7.14%
Industrial	230.852	14.35%
Multi-Family Residential	10.379	0.65%
Mobile Home Park	38.633	2.40%
Office & Institutional	68.665	4.27%
Single Family Residential	626.768	38.96%
Utilities	87.798	5.46%
Vacant	430.555	26.76%
Total:	1608.718	100%

Source: Existing land use survey, 2009

Figure 11.

Existing Land Use Percentage



Zoning

Hildebran currently has six zoning and two overlay districts allowing different types of uses and development in the Town (see Map 1: Hildebran Official Zoning Map). Each district provides a list of permitted uses, lot sizes, setbacks and other development requirements. The Town allows the issuance of conditional use permits for uses that are appropriate in a zoning district only if specific conditions are attached. Planned unit developments, schools and child care facilities are examples of uses allowed with a conditional use permit.

The Interstate Overlay applies to the southern area of Hildebran near I-40 and along Main Avenue. The purpose of the overlay is to promote safety, traffic efficiency, aesthetics, economic development and compatible residential uses for the properties near interchanges and Interstate 40. The overlay has regulations for access, signage and building design to meet the stated purpose.

The Manufactured Home Overlay's purpose is to provide areas for manufactured homes. The overlay has regulations to ensure manufactured homes are compatible with the existing homes through appearance standards.

Residential

The Town's residential uses and zoning designations are divided into two categories, low density residential (R-20) and high density residential (R-10). Single family homes are allowed in the R-20, R-10, Neighborhood Business and Central Business districts. Duplexes are allowed in the R-10, Neighborhood Business and Central Business districts. Multi-family dwellings (more than 2 units) require a conditional use permit in the R-10 and Central Business district. Manufactured homes are only allowed in the R-10 district where Manufactured Home Overlay exists.

The minimum lot size and density of development depends on location of the property. Lot sizes range from a minimum of 10,000 square feet in the R-10 district to 20,000 square feet in the R-20 district. Minimum lot size in the R-20 district can be reduced to 15,000 square feet if the parcels have water or sewer. Multi-family developments are allowed a maximum of eight dwelling units per acre. Properties located within the Watershed Protected Area are limited to a maximum impervious surface coverage of 36% or 24% if adjacent to a street with curb and gutter. Additional lot area, up to 70%, can be covered if the Watershed Review Board issues a High Density Watershed Permit.

It is important to provide a selection of housing options including affordable housing. Apartments are an option for affordable housing. Apartments located nearby to retail centers, downtowns and other activity centers not only preserve land through increased density but encourage walking and biking.



Apartments

Potential opportunities might be available for residential development in downtown Hildebran through mixed-use development. Properties along South Center Street could be redeveloped with multiple story buildings combining apartments, condos and businesses. Mixed-use development produces a sense of community by combining dwellings with businesses to provide a housing option and create a downtown feeling.

Downtown

Enhancing downtown Hildebran is a priority for the Town Council. Recommendations for improving the downtown area are contained in the *Hildebran Conceptual Downtown Master Plan*, completed in 2007. In order to accomplish some of the recommendations in the *Conceptual Downtown Master Plan*, the Town Council established the Central Business District zoning allowing a variety of land uses including residential, office, institutional and commercial use. The majority of the office and institutional uses are located in and near the downtown area. Hildebran Elementary School, Town Hall and library are all located in the center of Town. The Central Business District zoning contains regulations to encourage a downtown feel that is aesthetically pleasing and pedestrian friendly. Regulations to achieve the downtown atmosphere include parking placed to the rear and side of new buildings, façades constructed of material other than vinyl, unpainted cinder block or metal paneling, and buildings close to the front property line.

Commercial / Industrial



Vacant building

Commercial development is concentrated along US Highway 70, South Center Street, I-40 Access Road and Main Avenue West. The majority of the commercially zoned land in Town is occupied by buildings. This allows the reuse of older commercial buildings and the redevelopment of commercial property. Some vacant commercial properties exist along the I-40 Access Road.

Recently commercial development has occurred near I-40 Exits 118 and 119. These interchanges do not meet Department of Transportation standards and both are recommended for redesign in the future. As development occurs around the interchanges, considerations should be made for design changes. Vehicular access is adequate for the commercial areas. It is important to also encourage walking to commercial areas by providing safe sidewalks.

Industrial development is focused along the I-40 Access Road, US Highway 70, Second Avenue NW and Cline Industrial Park. In early 2010 Freightliner opened a new facility off Curley's Fish Camp Rd. near Exit 118. A significant amount of vacant industrial zoned land is available in Cline Industrial Park, located north of the railroad tracks, off US Highway 70A and Third Street NE and off Neville Avenue. It is important that the

Town continue to work with the Burke Economic Development Commission to attract business to these properties. Vehicular access and the provision of public utilities are key factors to attracting industries to the Town.

Future Land Use

Future land use recommendations reflect the steering committee's best judgments about possibilities for land use and locations of growth and development ten to fifteen years into the future. The steering committee spent

considerable time focusing and discussing future growth. Access, public utilities and economics all impact when and where development will occur. A constraint to development in Hildebran is a shared municipal border with Long View. However, most of the area outside of the Town limits is within Burke County's jurisdiction and could be annexed into the Town as development occurs.



Industrial facility in Cline Industrial Park

The Future Land Use Map (Map 3: Hildebran Future Land Use) depicts suggested appropriate land use patterns in the coming decade. Suggestions include low, impact neighborhood business along Main Avenue West, areas for multi-family residential and open space along streams. The steering committee suggested encouraging the use of existing commercial and industrial buildings or demolishing obsolete buildings for redevelopment. The steering committee desires business development along Main Avenue kept to a minimum and any new business development should occur in focused areas near existing similar uses, thus discouraging nonresidential uses from spreading out. The future land use goals and recommendations below provide further suggestions for development in the future.

Goals and Recommendations – Land Use

Goal Statements: Land Use

- Maintain and improve the Town of Hildebran as a place in which to live, work and invest.
- Encourage quality growth and development in the Town, especially in areas adequately served with roads, water and sewer.

Recommendations: Land Use

Industrial

- New industrial sites should be located in areas already zoned for industrial use.
- Encourage the use of vacant industrial buildings rather than constructing new buildings

Commercial

- Additional commercial development should occur as infill development where commercial uses are already established.
- Limited, low-impact commercial uses, as defined in the Neighborhood Business district, should locate along Main Avenue where similar uses exist.

Office and Institutional

- Office and institutional uses should be located in the downtown area or along Main Avenue where similar uses exist.

Multi-family Residential

- Multi-family uses should be close to downtown and have easy access to major roads.
- Additional areas for multi-family residential use should be established as described on the Future Land Use Map.
- Encourage development of various types of senior housing such as independent and assisted living.

Single Family Residential

- Single family use should be encouraged in areas already zoned for residential development, where single family uses exist.

Building Design Guidelines

- Building design guidelines, similar to those already described in the *Zoning Ordinance*, should be expanded to include properties along Highway 70 and I-40 Access Road.

Other Land Use Recommendations

- Require developers of residential subdivisions, multi-family and commercial or industrial properties to construct sidewalks or provide fees in lieu of construction where the *Hildebran Pedestrian Plan* recommends sidewalks.
- Require the dedication of land as recreational open space in the form of greenway corridors as a condition for conditional use permits and for major subdivisions where the *Hildebran Pedestrian Plan* recommends greenways. Encourage developers of residential subdivisions, multi-family and commercial or industrial properties to construct greenways where the *Hildebran Pedestrian Plan* recommends greenways.
- Developers of residential subdivisions, multi-family, commercial or industrial development should be required to set aside 10% of the total land area as designated open space. A portion of the open space in residential developments should be accessible as playgrounds, grass fields, nature trails or other usable recreation space.
- Consider requiring developers to dedicate floodplain areas as open space. Open space should be preserved for conservation or for publicly accessible passive recreation activities.

Transportation

Overview

Hildebran is included in the planning area of the Greater Hickory Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO). As a member of the GHMPO, Hildebran’s transportation planning is primarily performed by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).

Hildebran has opportunities to participate in the MPO’s transportation planning process and to have its transportation projects coordinated by transportation professionals and recommended for inclusion in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP describes and recommends projects for a seven-year period and is updated every two years. The GHMPO lobbies for the projects in the TIP to be included in the State’s TIP (STIP). Projects in the STIP have priority for receiving State and Federal funding.

The Town of Hildebran maintains 5.14 miles of roads; however, most public roads and major thoroughfares in the Town of Hildebran are maintained by NCDOT. Map 4 illustrates the Town’s transportation network, proposed projects and trouble spots.

Roads and Highways

Table 5 depicts the actual traffic counts along major routes in Hildebran from 1997 to 2007 and traffic projections for the years 2025 and 2035. In most cases, traffic counts rise steadily through 2005 with a drop in 2007. This drop in traffic can be attributed to the loss of manufacturing jobs in the area. A reduction of traffic in the projections for 2025 and 2035 is due to the completion of proposed projects, such as the completion of a proposed widening of I-40 by 2035.

	Old NC 10 @ Hawthorne Dr.	Curley’s Fish Camp Rd. @ US 70	N. Center St. @ 4th Ave. NE	US 70 @ Elementary School	US 70A @ Cline Park Dr.
YR97	6000	1800	4500	7900	5300
YR01	6200	2100	4400	7400	6700
YR05	6000	2500	5200	7700	6100
YR07	5900	2200	4400	7300	4800
2025	8289	NA	3320	5959	7317
2035	8180	NA	3675	6090	6707
	I-40 Access Rd. @ S. Center St.	S. Center St. @ I- 40 Access Rd.	S. Center St. @ Town Hall	US 70 @ 11St. NE	Wilson Rd. @ Pine St.
YR97	8200	7500	8100	11600	1800
YR01	8900	7900	7600	13000	1900
YR05	6500	7900	7700	11000	1900
YR07	6000	7200	6500	11000	1600
2025	7477	8648	10954	13513	NA
2035	8103	8693	10518	12941	NA

Source: NCDOT AADT maps, 1997-2007 and NCDOT LRTP

Proposed regional and local projects in the GHMPO Long Range and Comprehensive Transportation Plans affecting Hildebran are listed in the Goals and Recommendations. Although these projects are recommended in the plans, they have not been included in the regional TIP or the State's TIP for funding. With continued short falls in transportation funding, it is unlikely these projects will occur within the next five to ten years. The Town must encourage the GHMPO and NCDOT to place priority on these projects in order for them to be completed.



I-40 at Exit 119



Bridge at Hwy 70 and N. Center Street

During the steering committee's discussion of transportation issues, a list of trouble spots was created and is included in the Goals and Recommendations and shown on Map 4: Hildebran Transportation. The steering committee agreed these specific locations had traffic-related issues such as limited sight distances, pedestrian safety, excess speed, and lack of signage. The steering committee also recommends improving connectivity by joining the northern part First Street SE to the southern portion of First Street SE and Second Avenue NE to Second Street NE.

Proposed roads can affect properties and land use along a road corridor. Proposed corridors for the realignment of Curley's Fish Camp Road and the extension of 2nd Avenue NW need to be identified to assist with right-of-way acquisition and establishment of proper land use regulations.

Driveways reduce the ability of traffic to flow smoothly. Access management refers to strategies that are used to protect a road's ability to handle traffic volume, such as limiting driveway cuts and requiring shared driveways. Access management is a priority along US 70, US 70A and I-40 Access Road.



Two-way traffic on I-40 on-ramp at Exit 118 provides access to Curley's Fish Camp Rd.

Pedestrian and Bicycle System

Many of Hildebran's stores, offices and restaurants are within walking distance of downtown and residential areas. An effective bike and pedestrian network can reduce traffic, encourage exercise and attract businesses and residents. In 2009 the Town received a grant to develop a pedestrian plan. A steering committee worked with a

private consultant to complete the *Hildebran Pedestrian Plan* and created recommendations for improving existing sidewalks and locations for new sidewalks and greenways (see Map 4).

The *Conceptual Downtown Master Plan* also contains design guidelines for sidewalks, crosswalks and other pedestrian facilities. Several of the intersections identified as trouble spots because of pedestrian safety could benefit from improved crossings and signals.

Transit System

Public transportation in the region is provided by the Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority, also known as Greenway Public Transportation. The Transit Authority currently offers established bus routes in the Hickory, Newton, Conover area and in Taylorsville. In addition it offers a dial-a-ride service which users may call for van service.

The Transit Authority intends to expand bus routes to serve other municipalities. The steering committee agreed that a transit stop in Hildebran is a priority.

Passenger Rail

Surveys have shown that of all places not currently served by Amtrak, Asheville is the top destination in the U.S. requested for the rail service. The NCDOT has determined that the next major expansion of passenger rail service in the State will be in western North Carolina. Plans are underway to initiate service between Raleigh and Asheville, with stops in downtown Hickory, Valdese and Morganton. It is unknown when this service may begin.

Goals and Recommendations – Transportation

Goal Statements: Transportation

Roads and Highways

- Coordinate transportation policies with land use policies.
- Anticipate and plan for road improvements resulting from development.
- Implement congestion mitigation techniques to alleviate traffic safety problems and congestion on major corridors.
- Increase safety on roadways and at intersections through improvements and signage.
- Adopt transportation policies that do not negatively affect air quality.
- Maintain and improve the current road network.
- Improve communication among the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Town of Hildebran and citizens when transportation improvements are required and transportation plans are developed and implemented.

Other Types of Transportation

- Encourage the increased use of alternate types of transportation, such as walking, bicycles, buses and railroads.
- Ensure pedestrian safety by designing sidewalks according to the latest NCDOT standards.
- Improve connectivity between recreation facilities and other points of interest such as schools, churches, the Town Hall complex and shopping areas.

Recommendations: Transportation

Hildebran should continue participating and supporting the projects of the GHMPO. The Town should encourage NCDOT to add these projects to the STIP.

Projects Included in the Greater Hickory Urban Area Transportation Plan

Regional Projects that affect Hildebran

- I-40. Widen to six lanes within the GHMPO Planning Area.

- Exit 118 – Ranked 6 by Priority Need.
Since the two-way traffic on the ramp from Curley’s Fish Camp Road fails to meet State and Federal designs standards, the ramp needs to be redesigned.
- Exit 119 – Ranked 9 by Priority Need.
Fix the sharp curve on the ramp in the northeast quadrant of the interchange.
Increase the length of the west bound exit decel lane to meet AASHTO standards.
- US 70. Widen to three lanes west of SR 1890 (I-40 Access Road) through Hildebran.

Local Projects that affect Hildebran

- Second Avenue NW Extension. Extend Second Avenue NW in Long View westward to Mount Harmony Church Road at SR 1627 (Tex’s Fish Camp Road). A five-lane cross-section is recommended.
- SR 1627 and Extension (Hildebran). Realign the intersections of SR 1627 (Tex’s Fish Camp Road) and SR 1768 (Curley’s Fish Camp Road) at US 70 to form a 4-way intersection. Realign SR 1768 or extend SR 1627 to connect to Old NC 10 and remove two-way traffic on the Exit 118 on-ramp.
- SR 1761 (Icard-Hildebran). Widen Main Avenue West (Old NC 10) to three lanes in sections around I-40 interchanges.
- North Center Street. Widen bridge on North Center Street over CXS Railroad and provide a turn lane from North Center Street onto US 70
- SR 1890. Widen I-40 Access Road to multi-lanes from US 70 to I-40.
- SR 1002 (Hildebran). Widen Henry River Road to three lanes between SR 1890 (I-40 Access Road) and SR 1780 (Costner Road).

Roads

- Implement the recommendations of the Hildebran Road Paving Priority List.
- When roads are resurfaced, add additional pavement to accommodate safety issues on narrow roads.

Trouble spots: NCDOT District Office and Town of Hildebran

- Intersection: South Center Street, I-40 Access Road and I-40 On/Exit Ramp – visibility and sight distances.
- Intersection: South Center Street and Main Avenue – intersection alignment and thru traffic speed, proposed roundabout.
- Intersection: Exit 118 Ramps and Old NC 10 – sight distances.

- Intersection: Tex's Fish Camp Road, Hwy 70 and Curley's Fish Camp Road – realignment of intersection to 4-way intersection.
- Intersection: North Center Street and Hwy 70 – pedestrian safety.
- Intersection: Town Hall driveways and South Center Street – wrong way traffic at Town Hall entrance driveway.
- Sharp curve: Main Avenue East between Third Street SE and Hwy 70 – signage.

Road Connectivity

- Encourage road connectivity to improve traffic circulation.
- Connectivity is a priority along First Street SE and Second Street NE to Second Avenue NE

Corridor Protection

- Determine corridors for proposed new roads and establish regulations for protecting the corridors from development.
- Corridor protection is a priority for the realignment of Curley's Fish Camp Road between Hwy 70 and Old NC 10, as well as the route of the northern connector between Second Avenue NW and Mount Harmony Road.

Access Management

- Promote access management techniques to enhance existing roads, extend their life and promote safe vehicle movement. Techniques included shared driveways, access roads, frontage roads and limiting driveway cuts.
- Access management is a priority along Hwy 70, Hwy 70A and I-40 Access Road.
- Require developers to construct road improvements where a site access study, or a recommendation from NCDOT, indicates that such improvements are necessary.

Pedestrian System

- Support and implement the recommendations of the *Hildebran Pedestrian Plan*.
- Encourage sidewalks, or a comparable pedestrian/bicycle path, in new housing developments.
- Land development patterns that minimize the use of automobiles should be encouraged. Cooperative public/private efforts should be used to create pedestrian and bicycle linkages within and between developments.

Bicycle System

- Encourage the designation of bicycle routes that tie in with existing or planned bicycle routes in the surrounding region.
- When roads and highways are resurfaced, widen the roads to accommodate bicycle traffic.

Transit System

- Continue supporting and publicizing the new regional transit system.
- Encourage Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority (WPRTA) to add a Greenway Transit stop in Hildebran.

Passenger Rail

- Support development of the western North Carolina passenger rail service.

Recommended Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance Amendments for Consideration by Planning Board

- Require developers of residential subdivisions, multi-family and commercial or industrial properties to construct sidewalks or provide fees in lieu of construction where the *Hildebran Pedestrian Plan* recommends sidewalks.
- Require developers to construct road improvements where a site access study indicates, or a recommendation from NCDOT indicates that such improvements are necessary.
- Limit driveway cuts and require shared access drives, connected interior driveways and parking areas along Hwy 70, Hwy 70A and I-40 Access Road these regulations should be similar to those found in Section 8.8 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- Require dedication of right-of-way along the frontage of residential and non-residential development where there is proposed road widening.
- Establish minimum standards requiring additional connectivity of new neighborhoods where practical. Require stub-outs to future developable properties. Require second entrances to subdivisions over 100 lots.
- Limit the length of dead-end streets and cul-de-sacs.
- Require dedicated of rights-of-way along the frontage of residential and non-residential development where there is proposed road widening.

Public Utilities, Services and Facilities

Overview

The Town of Hildebran provides numerous quality services for a town its size. The Town provides sewer, street lights, police, garbage pick-up, recycling and maintained public streets. Hildebran also operates facilities open to the public, including the gymnasium and Town Hall. The Town does not operate a public works department. A full-time maintenance employee handles minor assignments, such as upkeep of Town facilities and grass cutting along Town streets. Major work, for example, extending a sewer line or repaving a street, is contracted out.

Public Utilities



*Icard Township Water Corp.
water towers*

The public utilities in Hildebran are sewer and street lights. Typically, water is a public utility; however, in parts of Burke County water service is provided by private water corporations, and in Hildebran's case water is provided by the Icard Township Water Corporation. In a presentation to the steering committee, Jim Gorsuch of Icard Township Water Corporation stated that most of the Town is served adequately by water. The water lines along the I-40 Access Road will need to be expanded to allow additional commercial or industrial development in that area.

The sewer system in Hildebran is owned by the Town. Maintenance and treatment is handled by Burke County or the City of Hickory, depending on the location in Town. The Town bills for sewer service, and the funds are used to pay for maintenance, treatment and expansions. A recently completed sewer study showed that several areas,

in Town did not have access to sewer service. In order to extend lines to serve these areas a capital improvement plan or some other means of funding should be established.

Street lights are necessary for improving public safety. Hildebran provides street lights through Duke Energy. Duke Energy provides the lights and maintenance, then bills the Town for the energy usage. As the Town expands sidewalks and greenways, street lights or other lighting should be added for pedestrian safety.

Police, Fire and Rescue

The Town does not own or operate a fire or police department. Fire and rescue service in the Hildebran area is provided by the Icard Township Fire / Rescue Department and Burke County EMS. The Icard Township Fire Department is located at the southeast corner of the intersection of North Center Street and First Avenue NE. In 2008 the department responded to a total of 1,206 emergencies in Eastern Burke County, of

those 339 were related to fire and 867 were medical. The Fire Department has an Insurance Service Office (ISO) class 5 rating. Ratings range from 1 to 10 with 1 being the best possible fire protection. Most of North Carolina's fire departments have a class 6 rating or lower. ISO ratings can affect home and fire insurance costs for properties. The Burke County EMS station is located on the south side of US 70 beside Hildebran Elementary School. The Town should support and encourage the fire department and Burke County EMS in their efforts to provide the best possible fire protection and emergency medical service.



Icard Township Fire & Rescue



Town's sheriff vehicle

In 2008 the Town began working with the Burke County Sheriff's Office to provide a deputy to serve Hildebran. The Town pays for the officer's salary and equipment. The Burke County Sheriff's eastern satellite office moved into Town Hall in 2009. Several deputies and detectives work from the office.

Facilities

The Town owns and operates Town Hall and gymnasium. In addition, the Town owns the old school building next to Town Hall, a small house on Third Avenue SE and property for a future town park.

The Town leases the house and space in the Town Hall and school building for businesses and offices. A meeting room in Town Hall is available to rent for meetings and other events. The third floor of Town Hall is currently used for storage. Currently the school building is vacant except for the Hildebran Heritage Museum and Hildebran Heritage Development Association (HHDA) storage. Major renovations are needed to the third floor and the school building before additional use of the buildings can occur.



Old school building



Town Hall



Hildebrand Public Library in the Hildebran-Icard Community Center

Burke County operates the C.B. Hildebrand Public Library in Hildebran, located across from Town Hall in the Hildebran-Icard Community Center next to the swimming pool. The County completed a study which indicated the need for a larger library to serve eastern Burke County. Limited funding has made expanding the library through new construction or buying a larger building difficult. The old school building is one possible option for a new home for the library however; major renovations are required to bring the building to code.

East Burke Senior Center is a popular organization in Hildebran. Located in basement of Town Hall, it offers seniors a place to gather, eat meals, play cards and enjoy other activities. The facility has an exercise room and offers many educational opportunities such as craft lessons. This organization and facility are vital for the support of the aging population in Hildebran and surrounding areas. In 2007 it was recommended East Burke Senior Center function separately from the Morganton-Burke Center in order for East Burke Center to receive a Certification of Excellence. Shelia Weeks, Regional Director of Area Agency on Aging for the Western Piedmont Council of Governments, recommended working toward becoming an independent senior center by allowing the director to make decisions that focus on the Center, request funds directly from the County and hold independent orientation sessions for board members. The steering committee recognized the importance of the Senior Center and recommends supporting their efforts to become a standalone center.

There is one public school in the Town. Hildebran Elementary School is located on the south side of US 70 west of First Street SW. During the 2008-2009 school year, 398 students were enrolled and the average class size ranged from 12 to 19 students. The average enrollment for the State during the same year was 511 with average class sizes ranging from 19 to 21 students. The Hildebran Town Hall and old Hildebran School building were once home to Hildebran High and Hildebran Junior High schools. The current middle and high schools are now outside of the Town.

At one point Hildebran owned the auditorium next to Town Hall. The building is now owned by the Burke County School System. The steering committee discussed the Town working with the Burke County School Board to utilize the auditorium to host plays, concerts, meetings and other special events. Some renovations are needed to improve the auditorium, including making entrances handicap accessible.

Parks and Recreation

In 2009 the Town purchased property with the goal of creating a Town park. A park master plan has been developed, and the Town is submitting an application for a Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF) grant to reimburse the Town for the purchase of the property. A second PARTF grant will be sought to fund the construction of the park

facilities including a walking/nature trail, picnic tables, playground and nine-hole disc golf course. Adjacent properties could be purchased in the future for expansion of the park. The steering committee agreed that, even if the grants are not awarded, the Town should make completion of the park a priority.

The gymnasium at the Town Hall complex is available by rent. East Burke Youth Organization (EBYO) rents the facility during basketball season for practice and games. The building needs renovations and an air conditioning system to make the building more usable to a wider variety of uses throughout the year. The steering committee suggested raising rental rates to help offset the cost of maintenance and renovation of the gym.



Gym at the Town Hall complex

The ball fields and playground at Hildebran Elementary School are open to the public when school is not in session. East Burke Youth owns and operates the Hildebran Swimming Pool, playground, basketball court and tennis courts. The playground and courts are open to the public for free; a small entrance fee is charged for admittance to the pool. The tennis courts are in need of repair; the steering committee suggested the Town encourage EBYO to renovate and maintain the tennis courts.

Goals and Recommendations – Public Utilities, Services and Facilities

Goal Statements: Public Utilities, Services and Facilities

- Provide the citizens of Hildebran with quality and reliable facilities and services.
- Ensure adequate recreational opportunities, both active and passive, are provided for all citizens.

Recommendations: Public Utilities, Services and Facilities

- Develop and implement a capital improvement plan and budget accordingly in order to fund projects.
- Ensure the orderly expansion of Town infrastructure through capital improvement policies and plans to accommodate and direct commercial and residential growth.
- Encourage infill development where water and sewer infrastructure exists rather than extending utility lines.
- Provide sewer service to underserved areas determined by the sewer study.
- Work with Icard Township Corporation in identifying and providing water to underserved areas in Town.
- Adjust sewer rates so sewer service pays for itself rather than using tax dollars to subsidize sewer service.
- Renovate the gym, old school building and the third floor of Town Hall to allow more and a wider variety of uses. Increase rental rates to help offset the cost of maintenance.
- Work with the Burke County School Board to utilize the auditorium next to Town Hall to host plays, concerts, meetings and other special events.
- Work with the Library to find a location to allow the expansion of the library.
- Complete the Town park and work to acquire more land to expand it in the future.
- Encourage East Burke Youth Organization to continue to operate and maintain the pool, playground and basketball court. Encourage the renovation and maintenance of the tennis courts.
- Create greenway trails, bicycle routes and sidewalks that connect with existing facilities through implementation of the *Hildebran Pedestrian Plan*.
- Support efforts to establish East Burke Senior Center as a standalone senior center.

Economic Development

Regional Trends

Like the other counties in the Greater Hickory Metro area, Burke County has experienced substantial unemployment in recent years. With the region's loss of thousands of manufacturing jobs and businesses that provided support services to the furniture industry, Burke County has also been affected significantly by this trend. Economic stagnation and instability make difficult land development and robust growth. Many planners and economists envision an economic vitality for the region that transcends the recent downturn, promising a brighter future, based on a set of realistic goals. A 12-county economic development project called Future Forward developed a series of strategies that articulate these goals:

- Improvement of the education and skills of available workforce.
- A renewed sense of entrepreneurship and innovation among area businesses.
- Development and concurrent protection of both urban and outdoor amenities to promote a high quality of life.
- Advancements in cooperation among local governments and governmental agencies.
- A more diversified economy that places more emphasis on retail, tourism, health care, education, retirement services, and a globally competitive manufacturing sector.

Source: Future Forward Economic Alliance, 2002

In the current economic situation, the key issues across the region include increasing the education and skill level of its workers and expanding the infrastructure for increased economic development. Success in both areas will help towns, cities and counties increase the options for greater economic development activity.

Expanded Educational Opportunities

Signs already exist that this vision is beginning to take shape. New training and educational opportunities are available for people who have lost their jobs and are interested in learning new job skills. Community leaders and County officials are working diligently to attract high-tech industries leading to success in the new economy.

Appalachian State University recently expanded its presence and organizational focus in the region by establishing a partnership with the region's three community colleges. The central idea is to increase ASU's degree offerings in Burke, Catawba and Caldwell counties.

This ASU "Greater Hickory Partnership" will include ASU Centers located at the region's three community colleges and the North Carolina Center for Engineering Technologies. The Engineering Tech Center in Hickory was created to provide education and training opportunities to better prepare workers for a more diverse workforce and economy. Western Piedmont Community College has partnered with Appalachian State University

to create the ASU Center at Burke. Such a venture allows students to enter a four-year institution and earn a bachelor's degree through ASU. An advisory council, composed of regional leaders with a commitment to higher education and workforce development, will advise the director on matters relating to the educational needs of the region.

Burke Economic Development Council

An important role in the economic development of Hildebran and Burke County is the Burke Economic Development Council (BEDC). Formed in 1977, the Burke EDC seeks primarily to promote economic development in the County and its municipalities. BEDC members, from the public and private sectors, are appointed by the Burke County Commissioners, the City of Morganton Council and the Town Councils of Valdese, Drexel, Rutherford College and Hildebran. BEDC meets regularly to discuss economic opportunities for Burke County. Scott Darnell is the Executive Director of the Burke EDC and Hildebran is currently represented by a member of the Town Council.

In a presentation to the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, former BEDC Director Wayne Harris noted that the Hildebran area has experienced "good" economic development activity recently. Adden Furniture, a relatively new industry on the west side of Town, specializes in college dorm furniture for Ivy League colleges and some NC colleges. Because of the economic downturn, orders have been reduced, resulting in layoffs. The former Jeffco manufacturing facility, currently "For Sale," is inadequate for modern industrial uses with its low ceilings and multiple stories, but could have new life as a multi-family residential facility. In response to a question, Mr. Harris noted that if the large tracts of land south of I-40 had sewer service, they would have tremendous development potential.

Burke Economic Development Council (BEDC) also provides free assistance to site consultants interested in identifying qualified sites and buildings for clients. Available properties within Burke County include general manufacturing facilities and sites, service and office spaces, logistics and customer service centers. BEDC services include:

- Confidential building and site searches
- Community information
- Labor information
- Coordination of visits to the area
- Coordination with government agencies
- Utility information.

Infrastructure in Hildebran

Economic development depends to a large extent on the availability of infrastructure. Water service is provided to the Town by the Icard Water Corporation. Jim Gorsuch, President of the Icard Water Corporation, stated that the goal of the Water Corporation is to provide fire protection to the entire Town. He also noted that nearly all streets in Hildebran currently have water service. The water lines along the I-40 Access Road,

Gorsuch said, need to be expanded to support additional commercial and industrial uses.

Sewer service to the Town is provided by Hickory on the eastern side of Hildebran and Burke County for the western portions of the Town. Hildebran provides the billing for sewer service and pays the cost of maintaining these sewer lines. Hickory and Burke County perform the actual maintenance work on their own sewer lines. A recent sewer study by the Town showed that an estimated 90% of Hildebran is served by sewer. The study also affirmed the Council's goal of providing sewer service to the entire Town in the future.

Wayne Harris stated that a large electrical substation is located in Hildebran providing businesses with excellent electric service. Mr. Harris said Hildebran's proximity to U.S. 70 and two interchanges for Interstate 40 provide ideal access for industrial uses.



Electrical substation

Cline Industrial Park

The Cline Industrial Park, located north of the railroad tracks and US Highway 70, consists of over 100 acres of prime industrial-zoned land. It is subdivided into tracts of approximately 15 acres each. Both Gorsuch and Harris agreed that superior water, sewer and power service are available to Cline Industrial Park, making it an excellent location for industries. Recent economic development activity includes an industry which purchased the former Bauer facility and will create 66 jobs once fully operating. Also in Cline Industrial Park, Shook Builders purchased 19 acres which have been graded, seeded and is now offered for sale.



Former Bauer facility now home to a new industry based in Mexico

Goal and Recommendations – Economic Development

Goal Statements: Economic Development

- Facilitate and encourage new, community-focused economic development policies.
- Develop policies to encourage more aesthetically pleasing commercial, industrial and mixed-use developments.
- Inform residents of ways they can increase their educational levels and job skills to obtain higher-paying employment.

Recommendations: Economic Development

- Develop and implement a capital improvement plan and budget accordingly in order to fund projects.
- Ensure the orderly expansion of Town infrastructure through capital improvement policies and plans to accommodate and direct commercial and residential growth.
- Direct new industrial development to areas with appropriate existing infrastructure.
- Work with the Burke EDC to help residents understand the importance of service sector jobs in areas such as tourism, retirement communities and the medical field.
- Assist workforce officials, schools and the community college to focus on ways to improve the skill sets of existing workers for new types of manufacturing or service sector jobs.
- Urge Chamber officials and economic developers to publicize more actively the Town's and County's historic and cultural offerings as important ways to generate visits by tourists to the area's unique assets.
- Consider supporting the organization of a regional water and sewer system.

Environment and Natural Resources

Overview

Hildebran is privileged to be located close to some of the nation’s best publicly accessible open spaces and natural resources. The Blue Ridge Parkway provides beautiful, scenic drives along the Blue Ridge Mountains from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in western North Carolina to the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia. Visitors can reach the Parkway in approximately one hour by traveling either north on US 321 to Blowing Rock or west on I-40 to Asheville.



View of Linville Falls from observation area

Pisgah National Forest preserves over 500,000 acres in western North Carolina and is one of the largest publicly-owned “open spaces” in the state. In Burke County, excellent natural resources include the Linville Gorge Wilderness Area, in the northwest corner of the County; it offers vistas, backcountry hiking and camping. The Linville River flows through the gorge and empties into Lake James. Lake James State Park and Lake James, west of Morganton, provide opportunities for hiking, fishing, boating and water sports. The South Mountains State Park is located south of Hildebran and there visitors can hike to vistas and

a gorgeous waterfall, go horseback riding, fish in the streams and enjoy camping. Just 3.5 miles from Hildebran, the Henry Fork River Regional Recreational Park features a large picnic shelter with a catering kitchen, restrooms, tables and grills, soccer fields, Alpine Tower, playgrounds, concession stand, paved walking trail and a canoe launch.

It is important to protect and preserve these and other natural resources.

Environmental threats and changing federal and state regulations will impact the Town in the future. Hildebran will need to strive to balance promoting economic development and preserving natural resources. Natural and environmental resources are show on Map 5: Hildebran Utilities and Environment & Natural Resources.

Floodplain

A floodplain is a low lying area of land that commonly experiences flooding or where flooding could occur during significant rainfalls. The technical term for a floodplain is “Flood Hazard Area.” In Hildebran there are flood hazard areas on both creeks that flow through the northern parts of Town. In August of 2007 the Town Council adopted a state mandated *Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance* which regulates development within designated flood hazard



Floodplain area along creek off Wilson Rd

areas. The Town permits construction of buildings within the floodplain provided the structures are either flood proofed or raised at least two feet above the established base flood elevation. The protection of floodplains from development is often used as a way to guarantee open space. Some municipalities require all or portions of floodplains in new developments to be set aside as dedicated open space.

Watershed

Watershed regulations protect the water supply and water quality. In 1993 the Town adopted the state mandated *Watershed Protection Ordinance*. The Ordinance has been revised several times since adoption. The Ordinance regulates development in the Watershed Protected Area which is located primarily north of Main Avenue. The rules apply to development activities that disturb more than one acre of land.

Requirements include providing vegetative buffers along streams and limiting density. Single family uses are limited to a maximum of two dwelling units per acre. Other residential and nonresidential development is limited to 36% impervious surface coverage or 24% if located on a street with curb and gutter.

The Board of Adjustment acts as the Watershed Review Board and has the power to grant High Density Development permits. A high density development permit is required for a development to exceed the 36% or 24% threshold. A development that receives a high density permit can cover up to a maximum of 70% of the property with impervious surfaces, but only if engineered stormwater controls (i.e. detention ponds, rain gardens, etc.) are provided.

Stormwater

Rain picks up sediment and pollutants such as fertilizer, oil, grease and pet waste from the ground and carries them into the nearest storm drain or creek without being treated. Development causes more stormwater pollution because the water runs faster over rooftops, parking lots, streets and driveways since it cannot sink into the ground. Stormwater runoff is one of the leading causes of water pollution in North Carolina. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and North Carolina Division of Water Quality (DWQ) created a mandatory program to combat this growing problem.



Pervious pavement helps control stormwater runoff

Hildebran became part of the program in 2005 and adopted the mandated *Stormwater Ordinance* in 2007. In 2009 the Town requested and received a waiver from the State from having to enforce the rules at a local level. The rules still apply in Town to development that disturbs more than one acre of land however; the rules are enforced by NC DWQ. The stormwater rules limit impervious surface coverage to two dwelling

units per acre or 24% of the land area. Development may exceed the threshold if engineered stormwater controls are provided.

A condition of the waiver the Town received requires NC DWQ to be notified of annexations of land outside of the watershed protected area. When annexations occur NC DWQ will reevaluate the waiver. Hildebran staff should stay familiar with stormwater regulations in case the Town is required to enforce the *Stormwater Ordinance* in the future.

Open Space

During the steering committee's discussion of land use, members recommended developers of residential subdivisions and commercial or industrial development should be required to set aside 10% of the total land area as designated open space. The Town should consider requiring the dedication of floodplain areas as open space. Map 3 shows recommended open space located primarily along the creek on the north side of Town. Open spaces protect the natural habitat for plants and animals and provide areas for passive recreation such as hiking, fishing and bird watching.

Air Quality

Burke County participates in the Unifour Air Quality Committee (UAQC), a local group which coordinates activities to reduce air pollution in the four-county area. The goal of the UAQC is to work with the EPA and NC Division of Air Quality (NCDAQ) to reduce air pollution through public education, awareness and planning. Currently Burke County is considered in "attainment" for both ozone and particulate matter. If the EPA changes the federal standards for air quality, it is possible the County could fall into "non-attainment." Such a designation can threaten economic development of the entire region.

Goals and Recommendations – Environment and Natural Resources

Goal Statements: Environment and Natural Resources

- Preserve open space for future generations.
- Help protect the Catawba River, the region’s main source of water.
- Help protect air quality in the region.
- Help reduce and control stormwater in the area.

Recommendations: Environment and Natural Resources

- The Town should help the Unifour Air Quality Committee to educate the public about air quality. Information could be included on the Town’s sewer bills especially during the summer months.
- Promote LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), commonly known as “green building,” in new public and private buildings to reduce energy consumption and improve air quality.
- Continue to work with NC DWQ to enforce stormwater controls outside of the Watershed Protected Area.
- Consider requirements limiting clear-cutting of trees during construction and the replacement of cut trees.
- Developers of residential subdivisions, multi-family, commercial or industrial development should be required to set aside 10% of the total land area as designated open space. A portion of the open space in residential developments should be accessible as playgrounds, grass fields, nature trails or other usable recreation space.
- Consider requiring developers to dedicate floodplain areas as open space. Open space should be preserved for conservation or for publicly accessible passive recreation activities.

Cultural and Historical Resources

Overview

Hildebran is home to several historical sites and cultural events. Historic sites in Town are shown on Map 6: Facilities and Cultural & Historical Resources. The Town is fortunate to own two important sites. Listing sites on the National Register of Historic Places is a way to preserve historically significant structures. Economic Development and Tourism experts have found the preservation of historic places and cultural events attract tourists. Tourists enjoy learning about an area, spending money to dine, staying the night, going to festivals, and perhaps taking something back home to remember their experience. Attracting these visitors represents an opportunity for Hildebran and Burke County.

Cultural Resources



Fall festival

The Hildebran Heritage Development Association Inc. (HHDA), a nonprofit entity separate from the Town of Hildebran, is responsible for the majority of the cultural events held each year in Hildebran. The Town and local business help fund these events. Annual events include cruise-ins, Hildebran Heritage Fall Festival, Hildebran Memorial Day Celebration and the Festival of Lights. The Icard Township Fire Department Ladies' Auxiliary organizes the Hildebran Christmas Parade.

The fall festival features arts, crafts and food vendors, live music and other performances. The Memorial Day celebration begins with a cruise-in and live music and ends with fireworks display. The past two fireworks shows began with a fly-over by classic military airplanes and a 21 gun salute by veterans.

In 2009 the Town of Hildebran started a weekly farmers' market. Local farmers and handmade craft vendors set up in front of Town of Hall to sell their produce. The Town plans on the market becoming an annual event that will begin each spring and last until fall.

Many churches in Hildebran hold special events throughout the year. Church plays, dinners, and festivals encourage community togetherness and provide inexpensive activities throughout the year.



Fresh vegetables at farmers market

The auditorium next to Town Hall is currently owned by the Burke County Board of Education. The building could be used to benefit the community by housing concerts,

plays, and special event speakers. The building needs some renovations, including a new air conditioning system and handicap access.

Historical Resources

The Town of Hildebran was first incorporated in 1899 and reincorporated in 1973. The Town was first known as “The Switch” because of a switch in the railroad to accommodate a saw mill. The Town took its name from Mr. Solomon Hildebrand who settled in the area. More details about the history of Hildebran and the sites in the area can be found in the “History Hildebran-Icard Community” book dated November 20, 1976, and “Historic Burke: An Architectural Sites Inventory of Burke County.”

Early transportation to the Hildebran area was provided by stagecoach throughout the 1800’s and served as a route between Salisbury to Asheville. The Hildebran Stagecoach Inn was located on the north side of Wilson Road west of Doots Paige Road. The stagecoach became obsolete once the railroad was extended to Asheville.

The building became so dilapidated that the present owners demolished it in the late 1990’s. The Hildebran Depot was constructed around 1906 and was located at the railroad tracks next to Cline Hosiery Mill across from the intersection of South Center Street and Highway 70. The railroad station served the area till 1967 when the railroad decided it was no longer needed. The depot was purchased for \$25.00 by Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Vaughn who moved the building to its current location on the south side of Main Avenue East across from Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church. In 2009 the Town of Hildebran bought the property



Hildebran Depot

and the depot in order to build a park and preserve the old depot. Improved roads and the automobile were the main cause for the demise of passenger rail service in the region. Major roads came to Hildebran in the early 1900’s, beginning with the construction of old NC 10 around 1915. In 1924 US Highway 70 was built through Town and I-40 was completed in the 1960s.

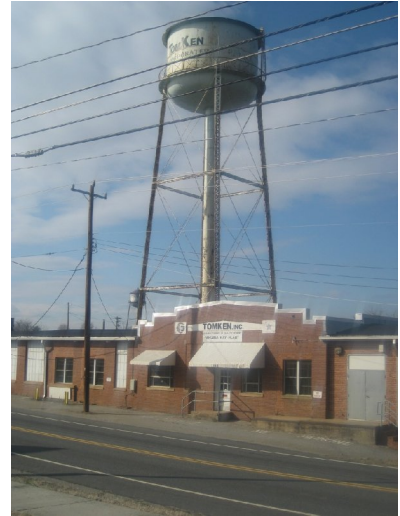


Hildebran School building

The Burke County School System and Board of Education began in 1895. Hildebran School, located on the west side of South Center Street between Main Avenue and Highway 70, was constructed in 1917. The adjacent wing, now home to Town Hall and the East Burke Senior Center, was built in 1935. The Town Hall has seen renovations on the bottom two floors. The third floor is used for storage and could be renovated for more uses. The original Hildebran School building houses the Hildebran Heritage Museum, and the remaining portions of the building are vacant or used for storage. The

Town Council has researched renovating the building on several occasions; however, the building needs major work and a renovation would be costly.

Many hosiery mills are located in the Hickory region. The Cline and Son Hosiery Mill was established in 1912, and the existing brick building located on Highway 70 across from Food Lion was built in 1927. At first the mill employed about 30 workers and the operation later grew to employee 325 in 1964. A separate building was constructed across the railroad tracks in the 1940s. The building, now vacant, would require renovations to use today. The building's current owners are researching listing the structure on the National Register of Historic Places.



Old Cline and Son Hosiery Mill

Two historic church buildings are located in Hildebran. Gloryland Baptist Church, on the south side of Main Avenue West, was originally one of three Seventh Day Adventist churches established in Burke County in the early 1900s. The building has undergone some changes over the years and may not be recognized from historical photos. However, the original structure still stands. Mt. Hebron Lutheran Church, built in the early 1920s, is easily identified because of the tower and Gothic-arched stained glass windows. The church is located on the north side of Main Avenue East near the South Center Street intersection.



Gloryland Baptist



Mt. Hebron Lutheran

Goals and Recommendations – Cultural and Historical Resources

Goal Statements: Cultural and Historical Resources

- Preserve cultural and historic properties of significance.
- Promote the Town's historic features and cultural events for tourism.
- Provide entertaining and educational cultural activities.

Recommendations: Cultural and Historical Resources

- Research listing the Hildebran Depot and old Hildebran School building on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Research the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Program as means to make known important historical sites in Town.
- Restore and preserve the Hildebran Depot.
- Encourage the preservation of historical properties under private ownership.
- Encourage HHDA to expand the Hildebran Heritage Museum and extend its operating hours.
- Continue to provide special events such as the farmer's market. Support and promote the HHDA's special events.
- Urge Chamber officials and economic developers to publicize more actively the Town's and County's historic and cultural offerings as important ways to generate visits by tourists to the area's unique assets.

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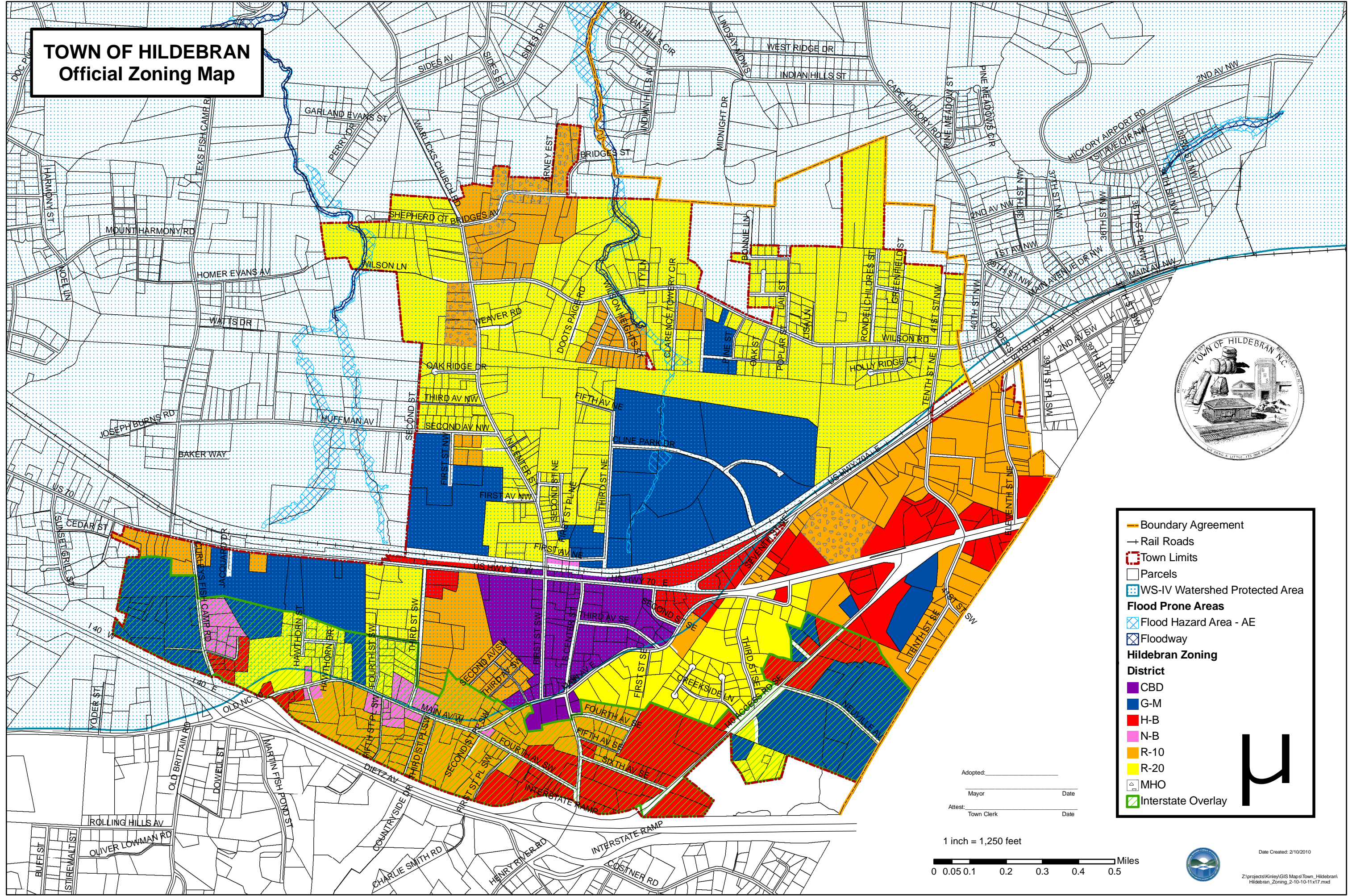
Map 3: Future Land Use - 45

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TOWN OF HILDEBRAN Official Zoning Map



- Boundary Agreement
- Rail Roads
- Town Limits
- Parcels
- WS-IV Watershed Protected Area
- Flood Prone Areas**
- Flood Hazard Area - AE
- Floodway
- Hildebran Zoning**
- District**
- CBD
- G-M
- H-B
- N-B
- R-10
- R-20
- MHO
- Interstate Overlay

Adopted: _____
 Mayor _____ Date _____
 Attest: _____
 Town Clerk _____ Date _____

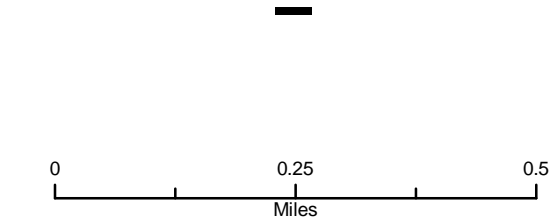
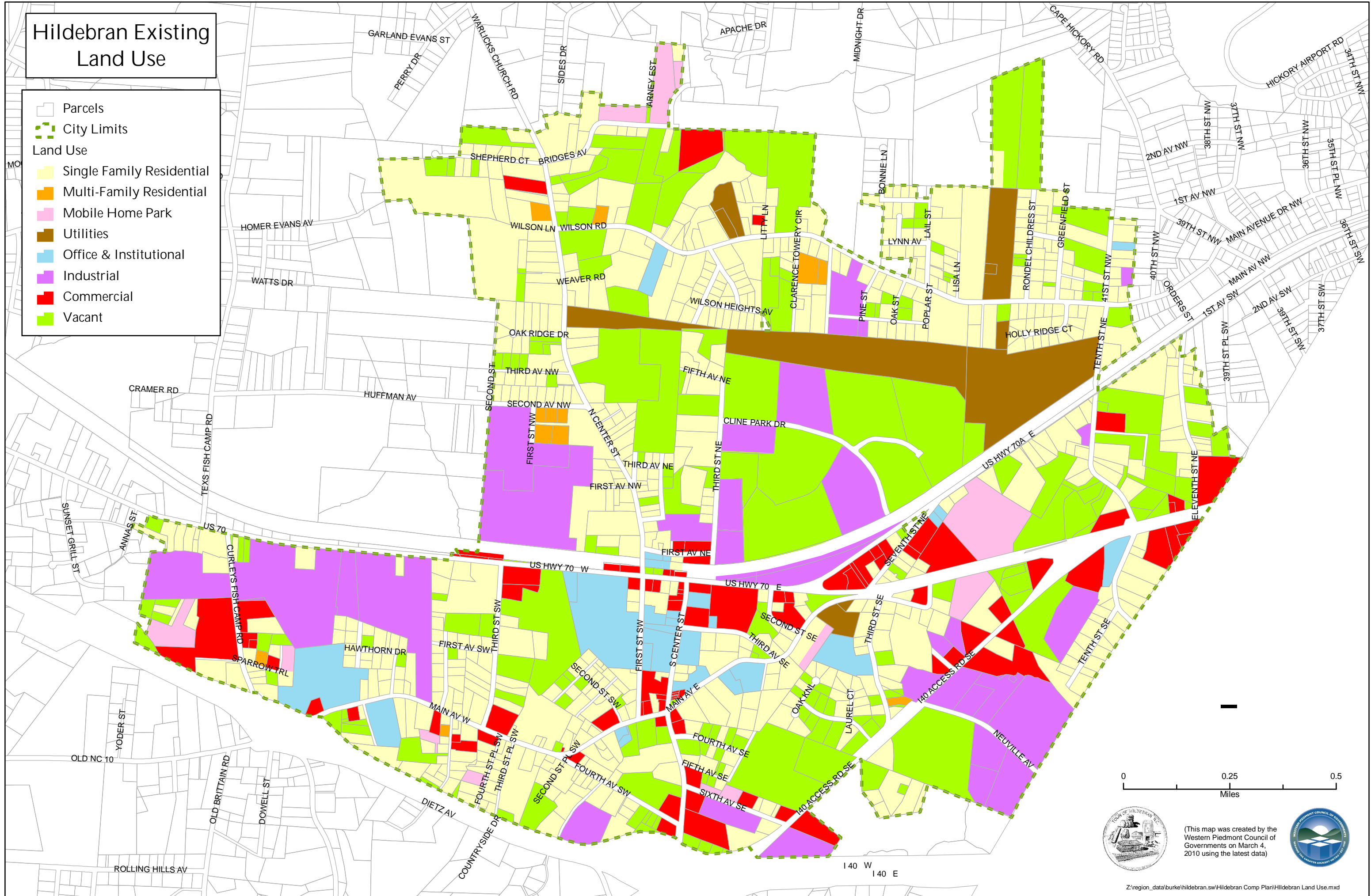
1 inch = 1,250 feet

 0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 Miles



Hildebran Existing Land Use

-  Parcels
-  City Limits
- Land Use**
-  Single Family Residential
-  Multi-Family Residential
-  Mobile Home Park
-  Utilities
-  Office & Institutional
-  Industrial
-  Commercial
-  Vacant

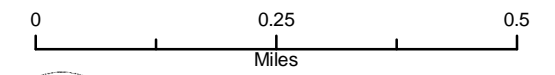
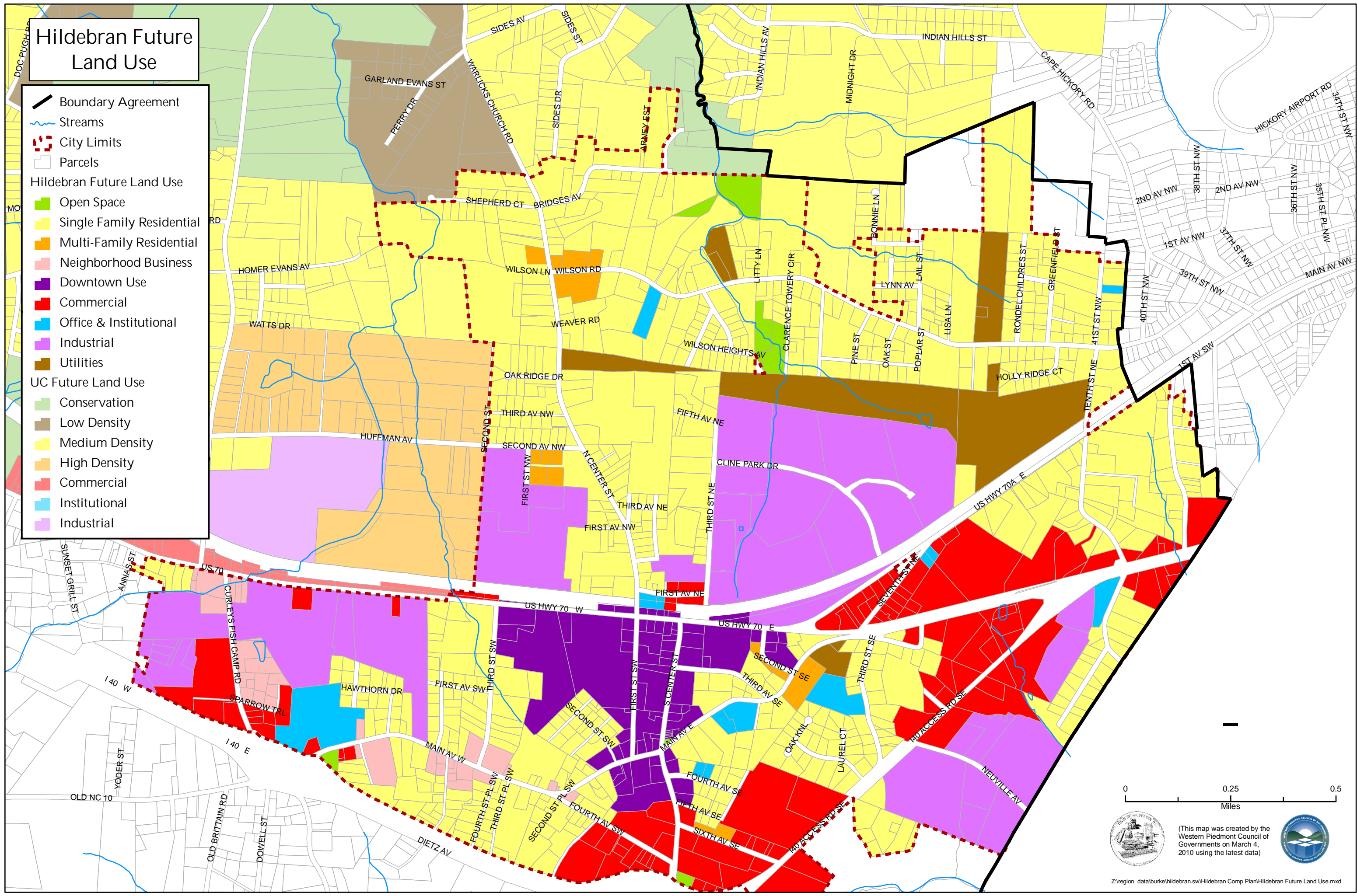


(This map was created by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments on March 4, 2010 using the latest data)



Hildebran Future Land Use


















-  Boundary Agreement
-  Streams
-  City Limits
-  Parcels
- Hildebran Future Land Use**
-  Open Space
-  Single Family Residential
-  Multi-Family Residential
-  Neighborhood Business
-  Downtown Use
-  Commercial
-  Office & Institutional
-  Industrial
-  Utilities
- UC Future Land Use**
-  Conservation
-  Low Density
-  Medium Density
-  High Density
-  Commercial
-  Institutional
-  Industrial

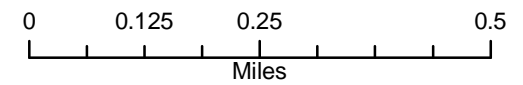
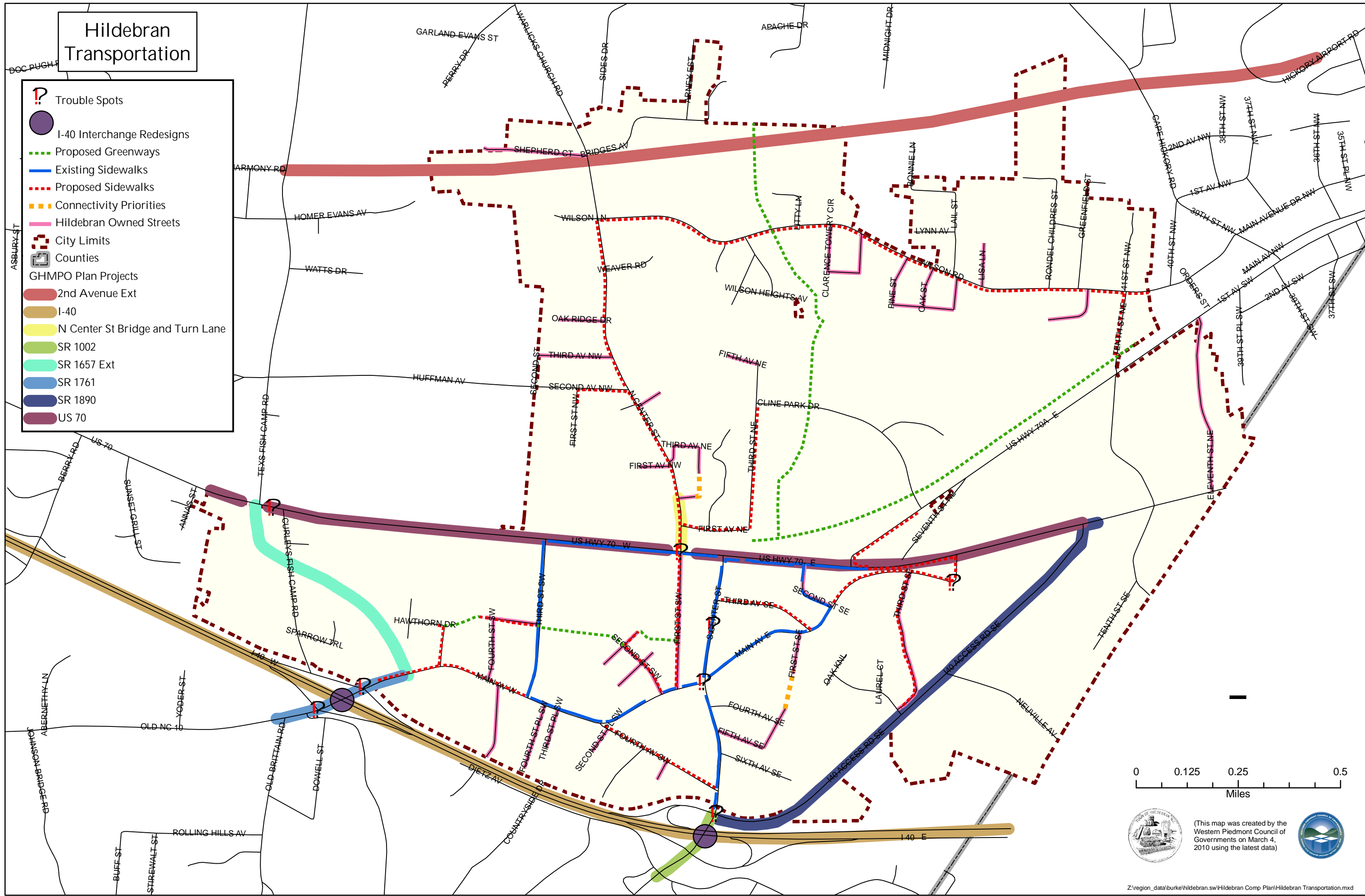


(This map was created by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments on March 4, 2010 using the latest data)



Hildebran Transportation












-  Trouble Spots
-  I-40 Interchange Redesigns
-  Proposed Greenways
-  Existing Sidewalks
-  Proposed Sidewalks
-  Connectivity Priorities
-  Hildebran Owned Streets
-  City Limits
-  Counties
- GHMPO Plan Projects**
-  2nd Avenue Ext
-  I-40
-  N Center St Bridge and Turn Lane
-  SR 1002
-  SR 1657 Ext
-  SR 1761
-  SR 1890
-  US 70

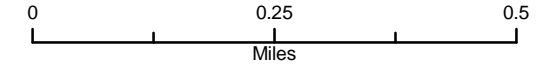
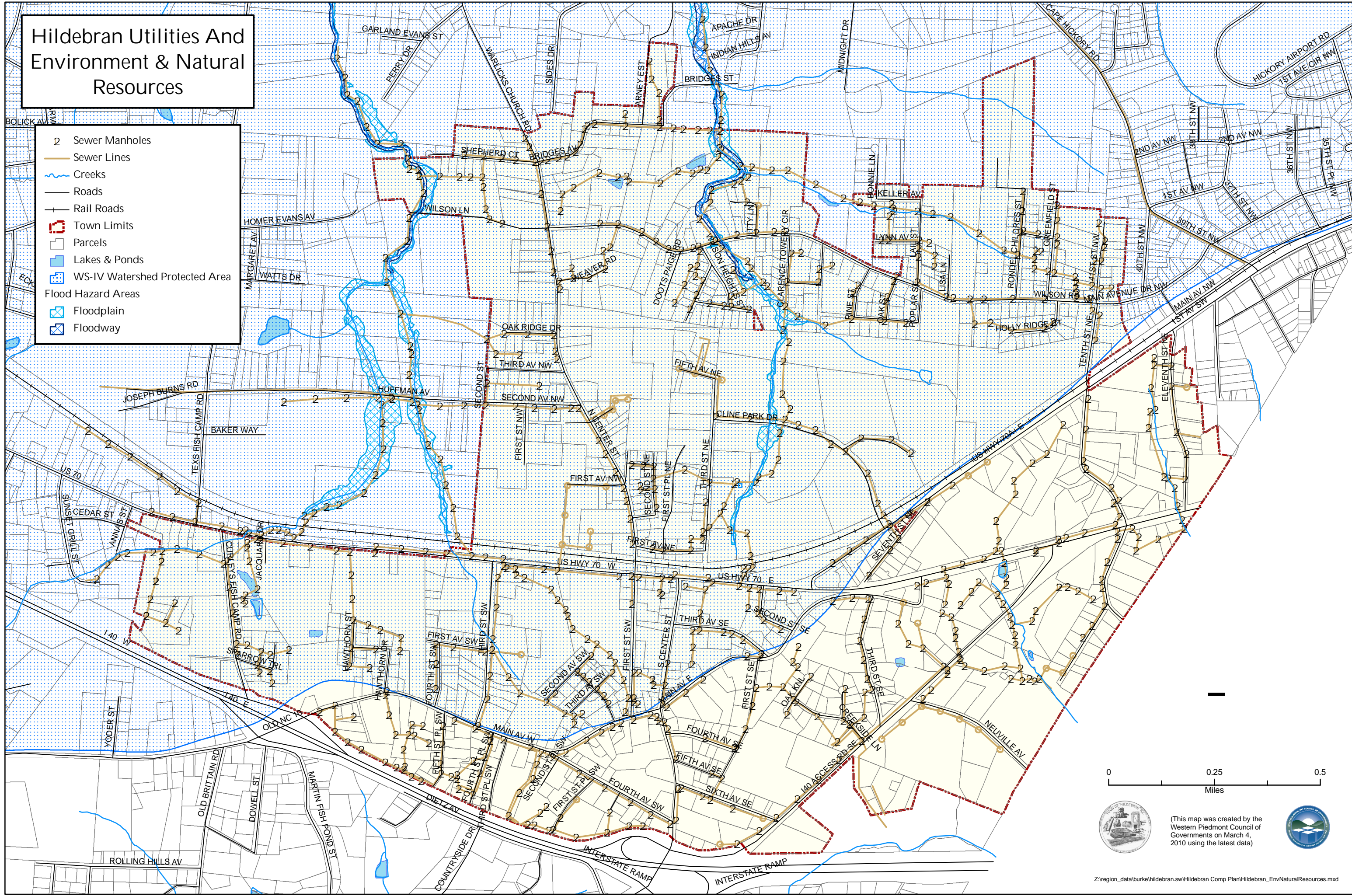


(This map was created by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments on March 4, 2010 using the latest data)



Hildebran Utilities And Environment & Natural Resources







-  Sewer Manholes
-  Sewer Lines
-  Creeks
-  Roads
-  Rail Roads
-  Town Limits
-  Parcels
-  Lakes & Ponds
-  WS-IV Watershed Protected Area
- Flood Hazard Areas**
-  Floodplain
-  Floodway

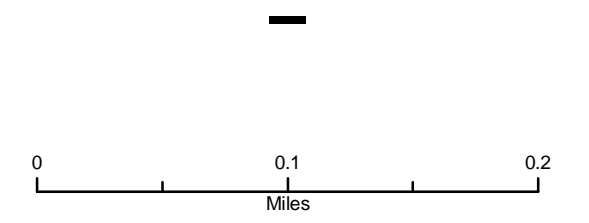
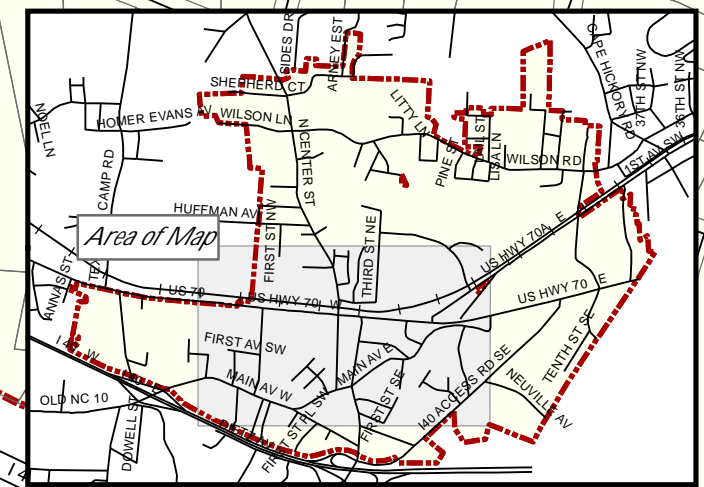
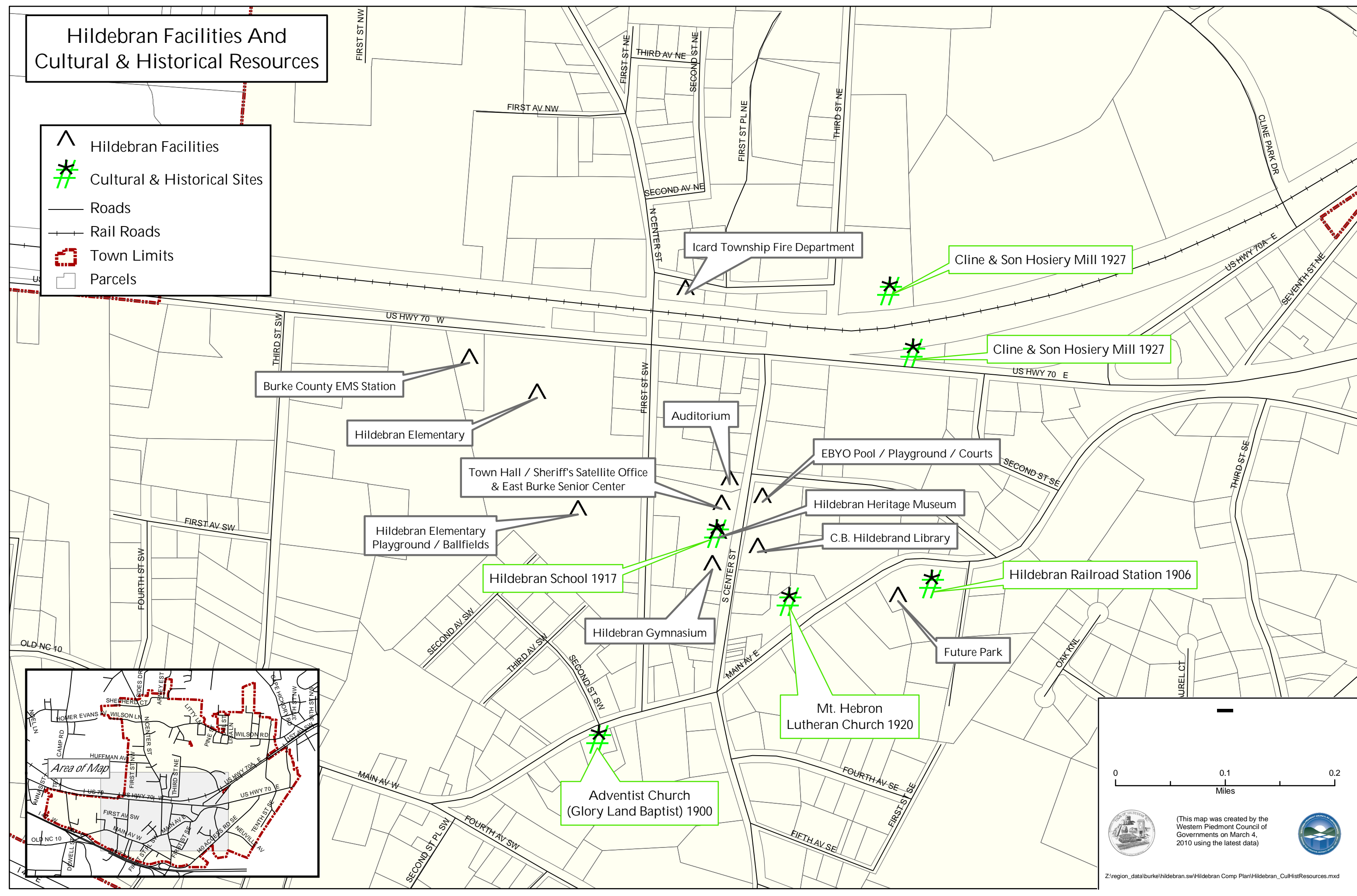


(This map was created by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments on March 4, 2010 using the latest data)



Hildebran Facilities And Cultural & Historical Resources

-  Hildebran Facilities
-  Cultural & Historical Sites
-  Roads
-  Rail Roads
-  Town Limits
-  Parcels



(This map was created by the Western Piedmont Council of Governments on March 4, 2010 using the latest data)