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## CONTEXT | SETTING THE SCENE

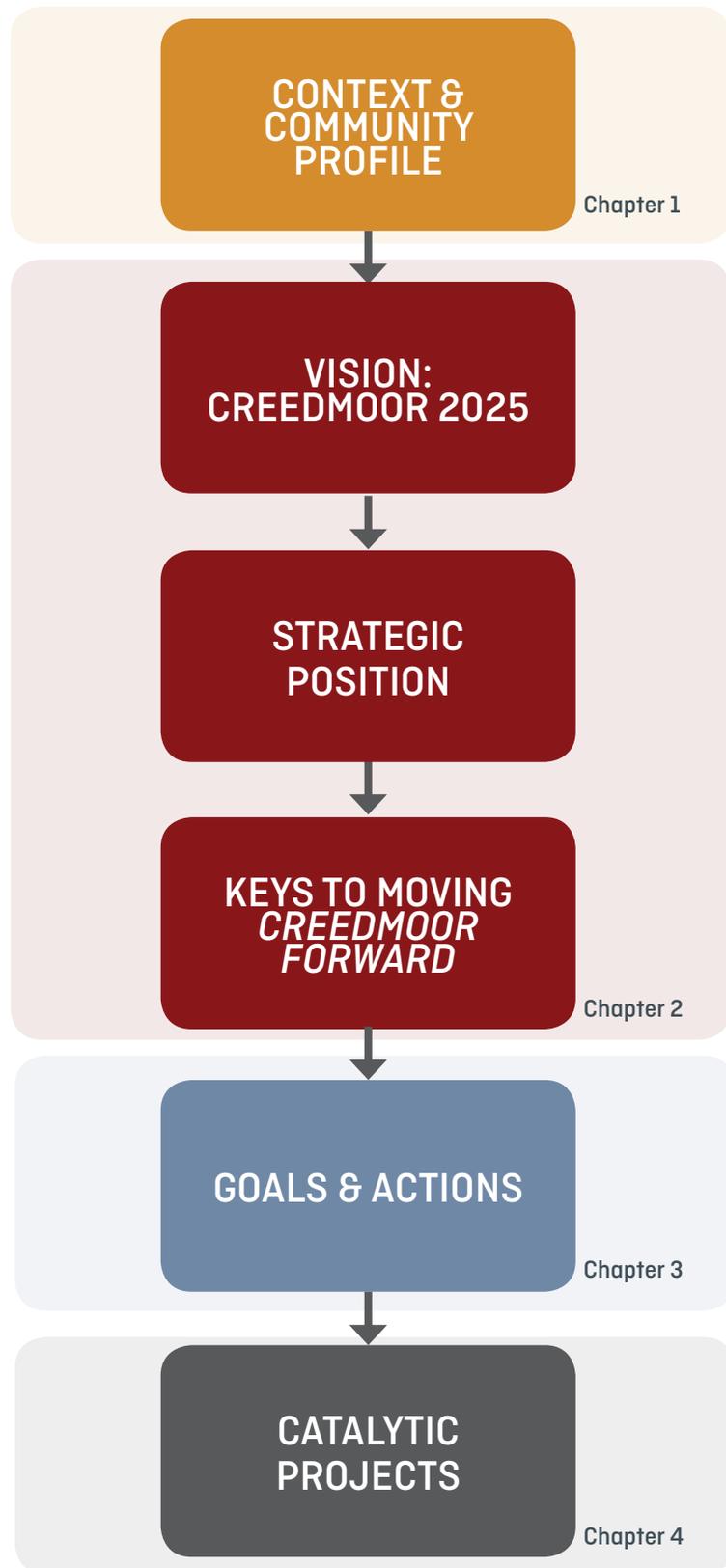
## INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2015, Creedmoor, North Carolina completed the sale of the city's water and wastewater distribution and collection assets to South Granville Water and Sewer Authority (SGWASA). The proceeds of this transaction allow a rare opportunity for the city to make influential capital investments today that will have a long-lasting impact into the future. This overarching concept of "investing today for an exceptional tomorrow," means that Creedmoor will identify resident needs, service and amenity gaps, the city's locational advantages, and other unique community assets in order to best allocate and leverage the funds resulting from the sale.

## A NEW DIRECTION

To successfully invest the proceeds of the sale of the City's water and wastewater assets, it is first necessary to uncover and understand Creedmoor's desired outcomes, and to then plan a path forward to achieve these goals. The *Creedmoor | Forward Strategic Plan* (Strategic Plan) fills this need by serving as a roadmap to a brighter future for Creedmoor. The Strategic Plan examines the demographic and economic profile of Creedmoor, with a specific focus on the locational advantages and challenges generated by the City's proximity to major employment and activity centers in Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill. Current and future regional housing, employment, and activity dynamics inform the recommendations contained within this plan. Also considered are the City's unique environmental conditions, including the Falls Lake Rules and their effect on development, and Creedmoor's existing patterns of development and building stock, such as the City's compact downtown area. Current land use and development

## ROADMAP TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN



## VISION | CREEDMOOR 2025

By leveraging the City's natural assets, and by creatively overcoming constraints to development, Creedmoor has experienced high-quality, beneficial growth, attracting new residents and creating a desirable destination for visitors. Thoughtful and strategic actions, projects, and policies have contributed to:

- A revitalized and vibrant downtown district full of restaurants, businesses, art, and people
- Greater choices and opportunities for residents, visitors, and business owners, including retail services, commercial space, and housing
- Improved public safety facilities
- Upgraded infrastructure and
- A diverse selection of recreation facilities and program offerings for residents of all ages.

By actively promoting the city's locational advantages, and by marketing the investments made in Creedmoor's future, the city has captured new residents, retained existing residents, and created a new "must visit" destination in the Research Triangle.



2015 Creedmoor Music Festival attendees vote on community priorities.

conditions and trends have been analyzed in order to generate recommendations for improvements.

In addition to this contextual research, the Strategic Plan is heavily influenced by the public feedback generated during a two-day community workshop and by capital improvement priorities identified by city staff and elected officials. The strategic vision and goals formulated as part of this plan have been developed directly as a result of resident and city priorities. Creedmoor's strategic vision is provided in the adjacent call-out box.

The strategic vision and associated goals were then used to generate potential capital improvement projects. Potential catalyst projects have been vetted for feasibility and for their ability to influence the trajectory of development within Creedmoor, aligning with the strategic vision and goals. The outcome of this process is a set of catalytic project recommendations for Creedmoor, including project scopes, budgets, schedules, and suggested action steps for implementation.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Residents and stakeholders have been actively involved in the *Creedmoor | Forward* planning process. Community input was first solicited at the Creedmoor Music Festival in September 2015 when residents and visitors were given an opportunity to meet the *Creedmoor | Forward* project team and to vote on community priorities. Participants were given "dollars" to spend on different projects and strategic planning areas (identified through previous community input and survey results). Preferences were recorded using colored stickers representing varying dollar amounts. In total, participants placed just over 1,000 voting dots on the available projects and priority areas. Categories, with their respective percent of total "funding" included:

- Outdoor recreation [16.6%]
- Attracting new business and growth [14.6%]
- Public safety [14.2%]
- Downtown redevelopment/ investment [13.2%]
- Indoor recreation [12.9%]
- Infrastructure [11.5%]

- Beautification/ aesthetic improvements (8.8%)
- Improved transportation options (8.2%).

In October 2015, another opportunity for input was provided when the Creedmoor community was invited to join the project team, elected officials, and City staff for a *Creedmoor | Forward* workshop. The goal of the workshop was to give residents and stakeholders an opportunity to have their voices heard and to participate in further identifying priority projects and strategies that will position Creedmoor for a brighter future.

These community engagement activities helped to craft a community vision (see box, previous page) and six strategic goals for moving *Creedmoor | Forward* (see box, right).

Understanding the City's position, both spatially and culturally, is another critical element of developing effective strategies for moving *Creedmoor | Forward*. The following section provides a snapshot of Creedmoor's geographic location and historical context. Subsequent sections provide more detailed information exploring demographics, housing data, employment and economy, natural resources, land development potential and community assets. This city profile helps to round out the full picture of Creedmoor's current regional position and the City's capacity for growth.

## STRATEGIC GOALS

- Infrastructure in Creedmoor is complete, up-to-date, safe, and enhances the appearance of the community.
- Creedmoor's downtown district is aesthetically appealing and home to a variety of amenities, businesses, and entertainment options.
- High-quality indoor recreation facilities and diverse recreation programming are available to residents and visitors of all ages.
- Ample options and amenities for outdoor recreation, such as athletic fields, walking trails, and parks are available to both residents and visitors.
- Creedmoor cultivates a reputation as a business-friendly community, attracting new businesses and retaining existing ones.
- Creedmoor enjoys mutually beneficial relationships with a variety of local, state, and federal agencies and other public and private partners, leveraging local efforts and initiatives, and driving positive change.

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**T**he goal of the workshop was to give residents and stakeholders an opportunity to have their voices heard and to participate in further identifying priority projects and strategies that will position Creedmoor for a brighter future.

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*Creedmoor | Forward* community workshop attendees.

## LOCATION & HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Creedmoor is located in southern Granville County, near the Wake County border- one of five incorporated municipalities in the County. It spans 10.5 square miles- 5.4 squares miles within the City’s corporate limits and 5.1 square miles within the extraterritorial planning jurisdiction (ETJ) area. Situated 20 miles north of Raleigh and 13 miles northeast of Durham, Creedmoor is close to major regional transportation routes, including Interstate 85, US Route 15, North Carolina State Road 50 (NC 50), and NC 56. The City is located between Ledge and Robertson Creeks, both tributaries to the Neuse River and, eventually, Falls Lake, the latter of which is the source of drinking water for the City of Raleigh. The City’s geography holds implications for both the City’s recreation potential and development potential, due to the existence of environmental regulations governing stormwater runoff and drinking water supplies.

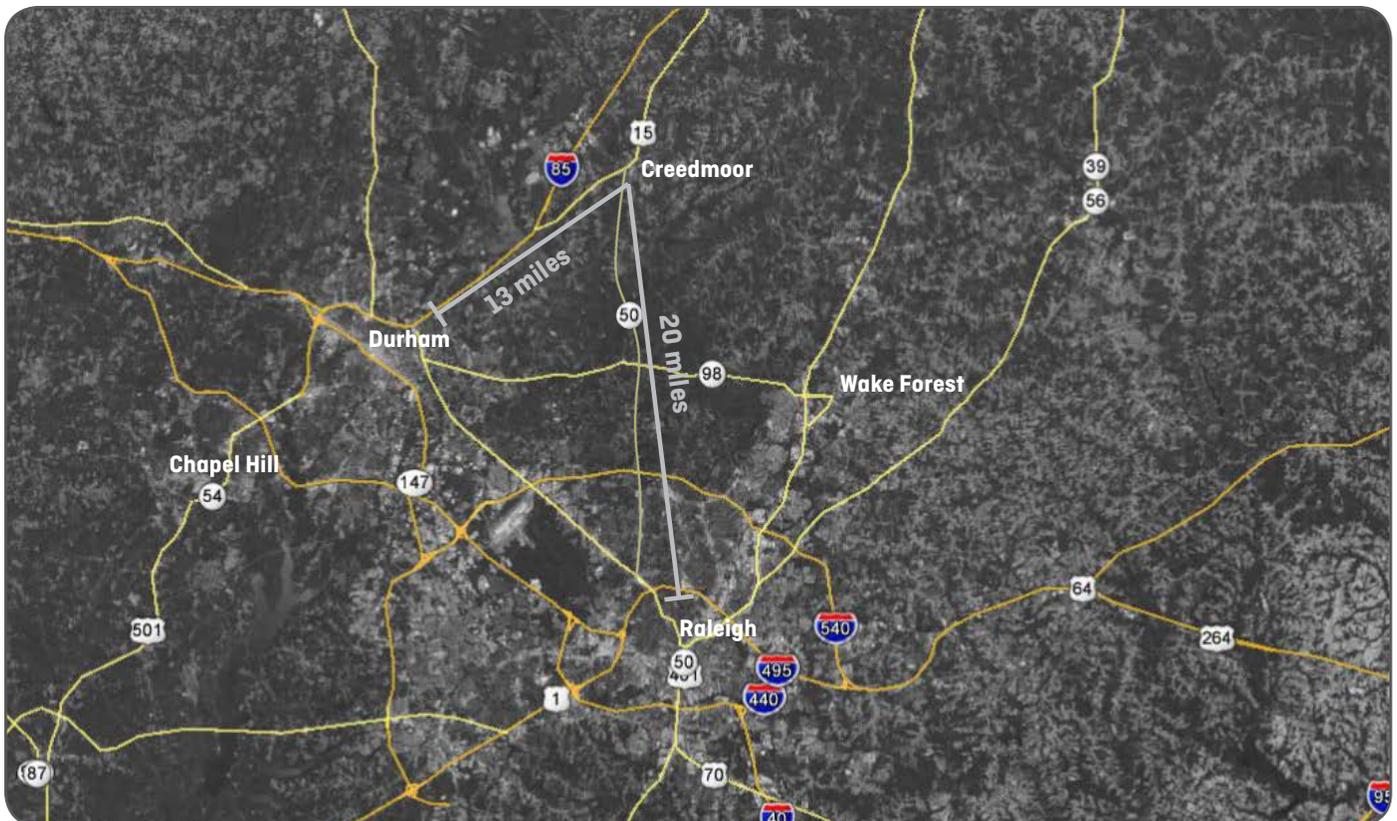
Like many cities in North Carolina, Creedmoor’s history is rooted in the intersection of agriculture and transportation. Creedmoor began as a producer of cotton and tobacco. The growth of railway infrastructure in the late 1800s further contributed to Creedmoor’s development as the City’s depot connected the Clarksville and Oxford Railroads with



the Raleigh and Gaston Railroads. The City was officially incorporated in 1905 and in the early 20th century the City’s cotton and tobacco production and exports peaked. In the 1920s and ‘30s, Creedmoor was known as the “retail mule trading center of the world.” The mule’s importance to the City’s growth and development is reflected in this animal’s prominent position on the official city seal (Figure 1.1).

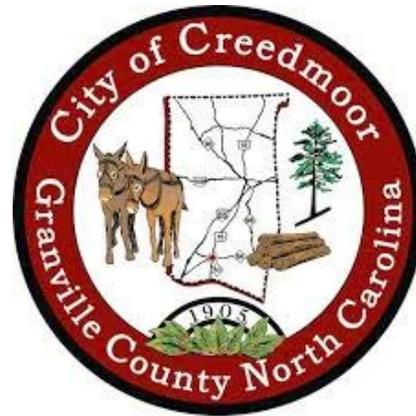
Following World War II, and the construction of the nearby

CREEDMOOR REGIONAL LOCATION



Research Triangle Park, substantial residential increases were experienced in many suburban communities in the larger Triangle region, but Creedmoor's population remains small. As a result, Creedmoor is one of the last semi-rural towns located within close proximity to the major employment and activity centers in the Triangle region. The City's specific strategic advantages will be discussed in greater detail in upcoming sections but, briefly, these trends have resulted in a situation in which Creedmoor enjoys many of the same regional benefits as do the other outer ring Triangle communities while still maintaining a relatively unique identity.

FIGURE 1.1: CITY SEAL OF CREEDMOOR



## CITY PROFILE

### Demographics & Housing

The most recent demographic and housing estimates for Creedmoor come from the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS). Figure 1.2 summarizes a selection of findings. The City's population now stands at 4,228, up from the 2010 Census estimate of 4,124. Creedmoor accounts for approximately 7% of Granville County's population of 57,955. The median age in Creedmoor is 32.8, well below both Granville County and the State of North Carolina, as a whole.

Median household income in the city is just below \$50,000, effectively the same as the county and slightly higher than the statewide average. However, Creedmoor owner-occupancy rates are well below the county's. This may reflect the City's younger population that hasn't yet taken the step to home ownership.

Creedmoor is slightly more diverse than both the county and state, with 59.5% of residents identifying as white, 33.6% identifying as black, and 2.8% of residents identifying as Hispanic (of any race). A "tapestry" analysis of Creedmoor identifies a few dominant residential typologies, including long-established families, young couples, and seniors looking for traditional country living.

A growth profile compiled for Creedmoor indicates

In the 1920s and '30s, Creedmoor became known as the "retail mule trading center of the world." The mule's importance to the City's growth and development is reflected in this animal's prominent position on the official city seal.

that there will be limited population and employment growth through 2020. The City is projected to get slightly older and slightly wealthier. Spending habits of residents remain consistent with peer communities, nationally, with slightly higher spending on entertainment, dining, retail, and home furnishings (Source: ESRI Business Analyst).

### Employment & Economy

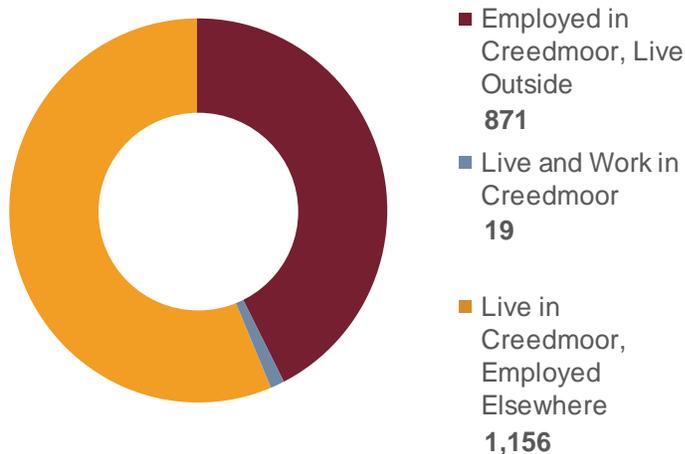
As mentioned, median household income in Creedmoor is on par with Granville County and is slightly above the state average. Poverty rates, however, are lower in Creedmoor (10.6%) than in the county (15.9%) or state (17.6%). One reason for this may be the high

FIGURE 1.2: SELECTED STATISTICS

	CREEDMOOR	GRANVILLE	NORTH CAROLINA
 POPULATION	4,228	57,955	9,750,405
 MEDIAN AGE	32.8	41.0	37.8
 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	\$49,058	\$49,655	\$46,693
 HOUSING TENURE	68.6% owner-occupied	74.6% owner-occupied	65.8% owner-occupied
 UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	not available	5.4%	6.3%
 HIGH SCHOOL -or- BACHELOR'S/ GRADUATE	91.6%	82.0%	85.4%
 POVERTY RATE	10.6%	15.8%	17.6%
 RACE			
White:	59.5%	61.6%	69.6%
Black:	33.6%	31.3%	21.5%
Hispanic:	2.8%	7.3%	8.7%
Asian:	0.0%	0.5%	2.4%

Source: 2014 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

FIGURE 1.3: EMPLOYMENT INFLOWS AND OUTFLOWS



educational attainment rates in the Creedmoor. Unemployment rates for the City are hard to quantify. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides state and county annual averages, but does not do so for cities of Creedmoor’s size. Their estimates (of 5.4% and 6.3% for Granville County and North Carolina, respectively) serve as reasonable estimates for Creedmoor.

**C**reedmoor remains one of the last semi-rural towns located within close proximity to the major employment and activity centers in the Triangle Region.

The most common occupations of Creedmoor residents include: health care and social assistance (17%); public administration (15.2%); education services (12.1%); and manufacturing (11.7%) (2013, LEHD on the Map). Employment opportunities within the City include: health care and social assistance (26.3%); educational services (20.6%); and retail (16.9%) (2013, LEHD on the Map). Employment inflow and outflow data shows that very few individuals both live and work in Creedmoor (Figure 1.3).

A market profile conducted for the City of Creedmoor identifies a major gap in retail providers within the City, including clothing stores, home and garden retailers, restaurants, and general merchandise stores. Only auto-parts and limited-service restaurants bring in more money than City residents spend, highlighting an absence of a vibrant retail economy.



Lake Rogers Park recreation area, located in Creedmoor, provides space for outdoor activities including boat rentals, fishing, and a playground.

## NATURAL & ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Creedmoor’s geographic location supports a number of unique natural resources. Ledge Creek and Robertson Creek bound the City on the west and east sides, respectively. Lake Rogers, a shallow water body owned and managed by the City of Creedmoor, is located adjacent to the City’s now-defunct, World War II-era water treatment plant, currently slated for demolition. Lake Rogers Park serves as a recreation area for the city with boat rentals available, opportunities for fishing, reservable picnic shelters, concessions, and a playground for children.

Creedmoor is also committed to expanding the City’s network of trails and greenways through the City’s many natural, wooded areas. Plans are already in place for connecting Creedmoor’s natural areas via greenways and pedestrian paths. Likewise, residents of Creedmoor appreciate the City’s natural resources and generally desire more opportunities and amenities to participate in outdoor recreation.

Some of the natural assets create unusual development challenges, however. Both Ledge and Robertson Creeks drain to Falls Lake, an impoundment of the Neuse River. This impacts the future growth and development of Creedmoor in both positive and negative ways. Creedmoor’s environmental-related development challenges will be discussed further in upcoming plan sections.

Creedmoor’s geographic location provides a number of unique natural resources including Ledge Creek, Robertson Creek, and Lake Rogers.



Playground equipment at Lake Rogers Park.

## DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL PROFILE

### Land Availability & Attractiveness

Creedmoor’s development potential was assessed through a series of analyses of land capacity and relative development “attractiveness”. This led to the creation of 10-year growth scenarios that serve as a foundation for the strategic positioning analysis.

### SUPPLY | LAND CAPACITY ANALYSIS

A number of factors were considered in order to determine Creedmoor’s capacity to accommodate new growth and development. The first step in this process was identifying current vacant parcels suitable for development. Factors contributing to a determination of “unsuitable” land include land with soils not suited to development, land located in a floodplain, and land within a 50-foot buffer of water bodies.

A minimum and maximum development potential for each suitable vacant parcel was calculated based on the existing zoning designation for each vacant, suitable parcel. Table 1.1 summarizes the results of the development capacity analysis.

### DEMAND | DEVELOPMENT ATTRACTIVENESS ANALYSIS

To predict the ongoing and future development demand in Creedmoor between now and 2025, a development attractiveness assessment was conducted. This assessment helps to allocate Creedmoor’s anticipated share of the growth forecasted for Granville County by independent economic forecasting service Woods & Poole. Similar to the land capacity analysis just described, a number of weighted factors were considered to help arrive at a desirability score for each vacant and potentially redevelopable parcel within Creedmoor.

Seven weighted characteristics determined to influence development attractiveness in Granville County are organized within two categories: environmental factors and development factors (Figure 1.4). Environmental factors include soil conditions and Falls Rules management areas. Development factors include parcel size, job accessibility, past development trends, commercial redevelopment potential, and proximity to existing water and sewer infrastructure. The development attractiveness analysis included all vacant parcels in the City and county, with the addition of all parcels in Creedmoor zoned commercial and industrial, with the assumption that these parcels could potentially be redeveloped.

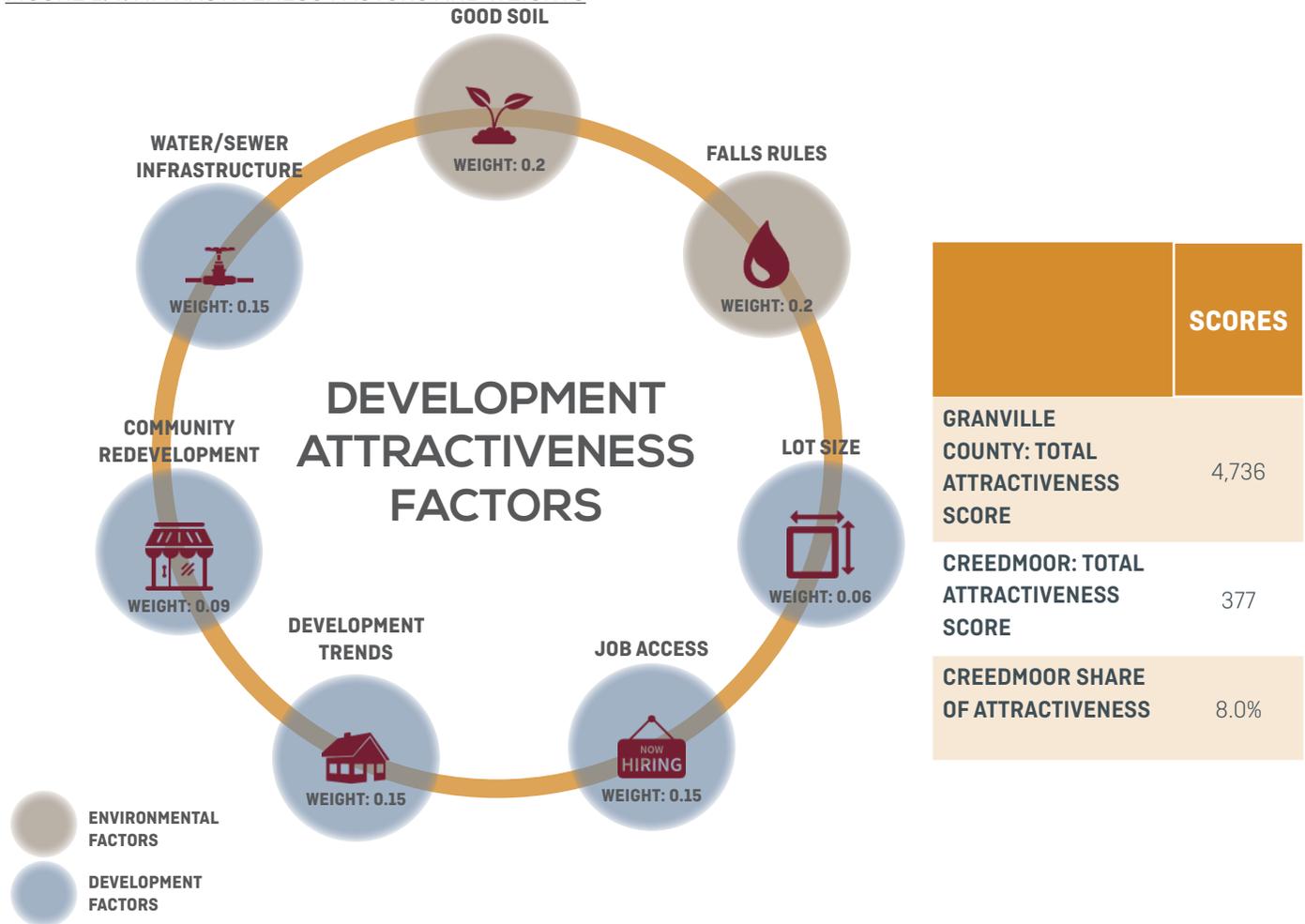
TABLE 1.1: DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY BY ZONING CLASSIFICATION

ZONING CLASSIFICATION	MINIMUM CAPACITY	MAXIMUM CAPACITY
<b>SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (SFR)</b>	178 HOUSING UNITS	2,163 HOUSING UNITS
<b>RESIDENTIAL/ MAIN STREET TRANSITIONAL (RMST)</b>	120 HOUSING UNITS	1,027 HOUSING UNITS (SINGLE FAMILY) 2,115 HOUSING UNITS (MULTIFAMILY)
<b>MAIN STREET (MS) RESIDENTIAL USES</b>	33 HOUSING UNITS	169 HOUSING UNITS (ANY RESIDENTIAL)
<b>MAIN STREET (MS) COMMERCIAL USES</b>	118,048 FT <sup>2</sup>	472,190 FT <sup>2</sup>
<b>INDUSTRIAL (IND): HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL USES OR CIVIC BUILDING USES</b>	372,880 FT <sup>2</sup>	745,761 FT <sup>2</sup>
<b>CIVIC (CIV) URBAN WORKPLACE USES</b>	381,894 FT <sup>2</sup>	1,527,577 FT <sup>2</sup>
<b>CIVIC (CIV) CIVIC BUILDING USES</b>	381,894 FT	763,789 FT <sup>2</sup>
<b>NC 56 COMMERCIAL DISTRICT (C 56) CIVIC BUILDING USES OR HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL USES</b>	818,288 FT <sup>2</sup>	1,636,576 FT <sup>2</sup>
<b>US 15 COMMERCIAL DISTRICT (C 15) URBAN WORK-PLACE USES OR SHOP FRONT COMMERCIAL USES</b>	261,456 FT <sup>2</sup>	1,045,824 FT <sup>2</sup>

**ATTRACTIVENESS, GROWTH, AND CAPACITY**

Parcels were scored on a scale of 0 to 1 for each factor, and a weighted sum was calculated using the seven attractiveness factors (Figure 1.5). The scores for the county and City were calculated, with Creedmoor expected to attract approximately 8% of future county growth. Using the high and low county growth forecasts produced by Woods & Poole, high and low Creedmoor development allocations were created. The findings suggest household growth of roughly 300-550 households and 700-800 jobs. Given the findings of the land availability analysis, there is ample land available to accommodate expected mid-term growth.

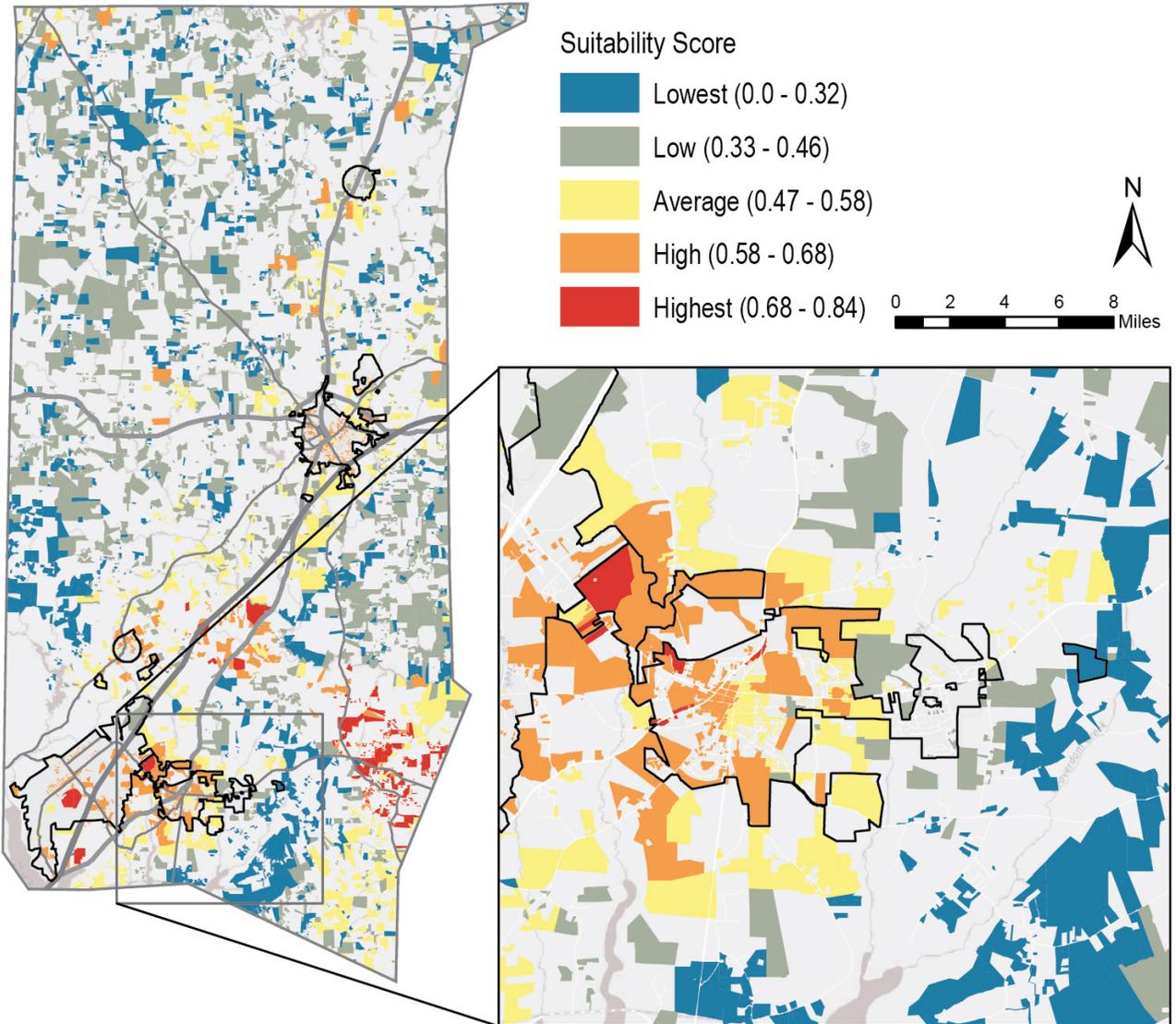
**FIGURE 1.4: ATTRACTIVENESS FACTORS AND WEIGHTS**



**TABLE 1.2: CITY AND COUNTY GROWTH PROJECTIONS**

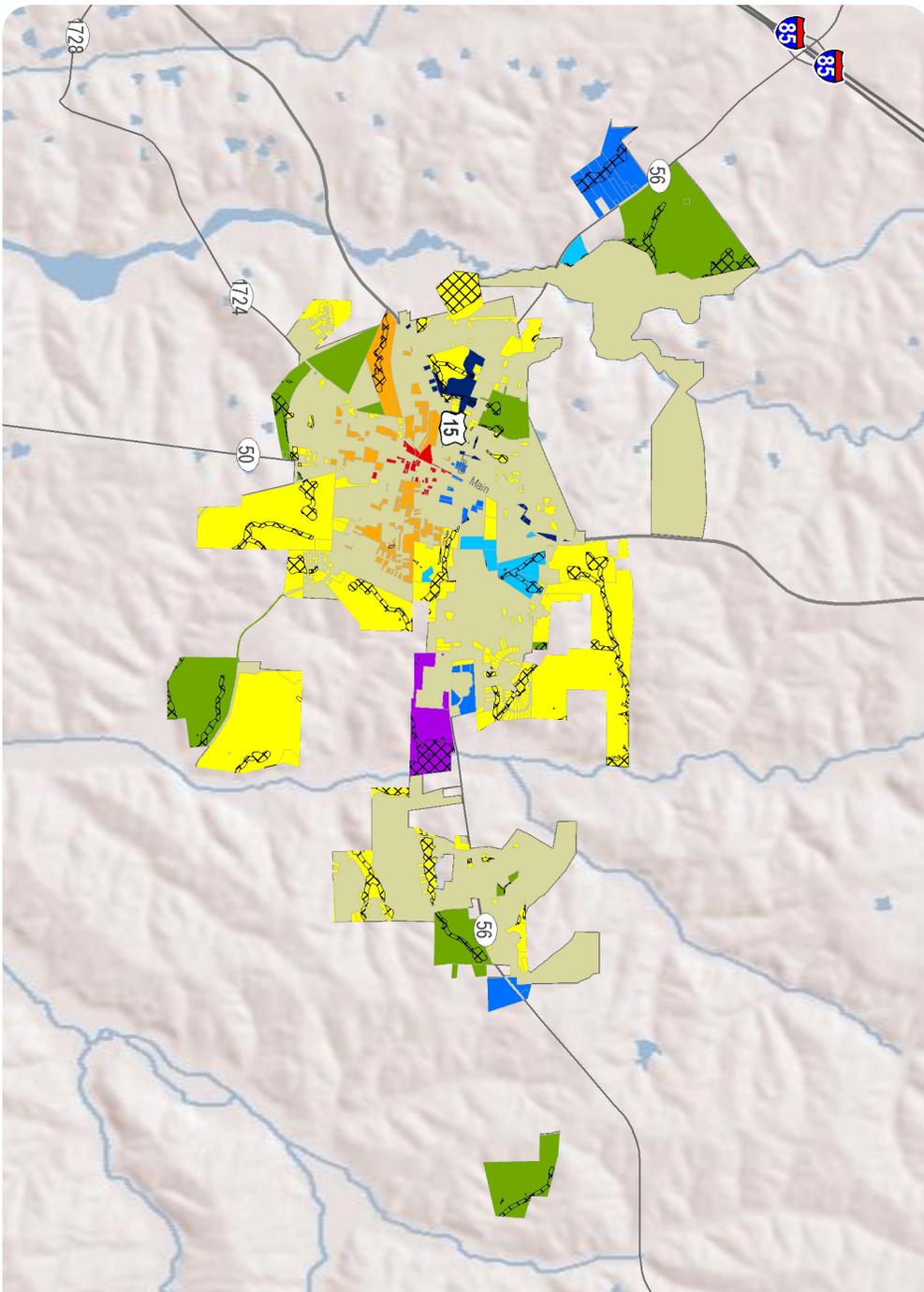
	LOW-GROWTH	HIGH-GROWTH
COUNTY HOUSEHOLD GROWTH	3,500	7,000
COUNTY EMPLOYMENT GROWTH	8,920	10,000
CREEDMOOR HOUSEHOLD GROWTH	279	557
CREEDMOOR EMPLOYMENT GROWTH	710	796

FIGURE 1.5: DEVELOPMENT SUITABILITY OF DEVELOPABLE PARCELS IN GRANVILLE COUNTY

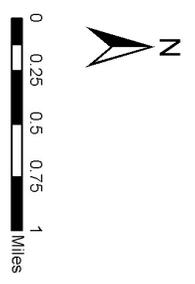
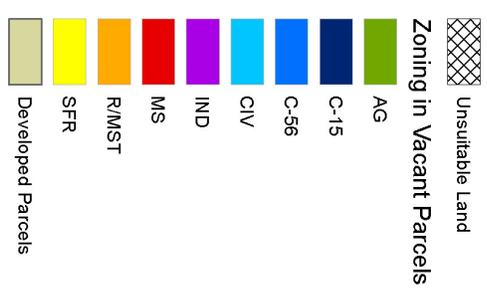


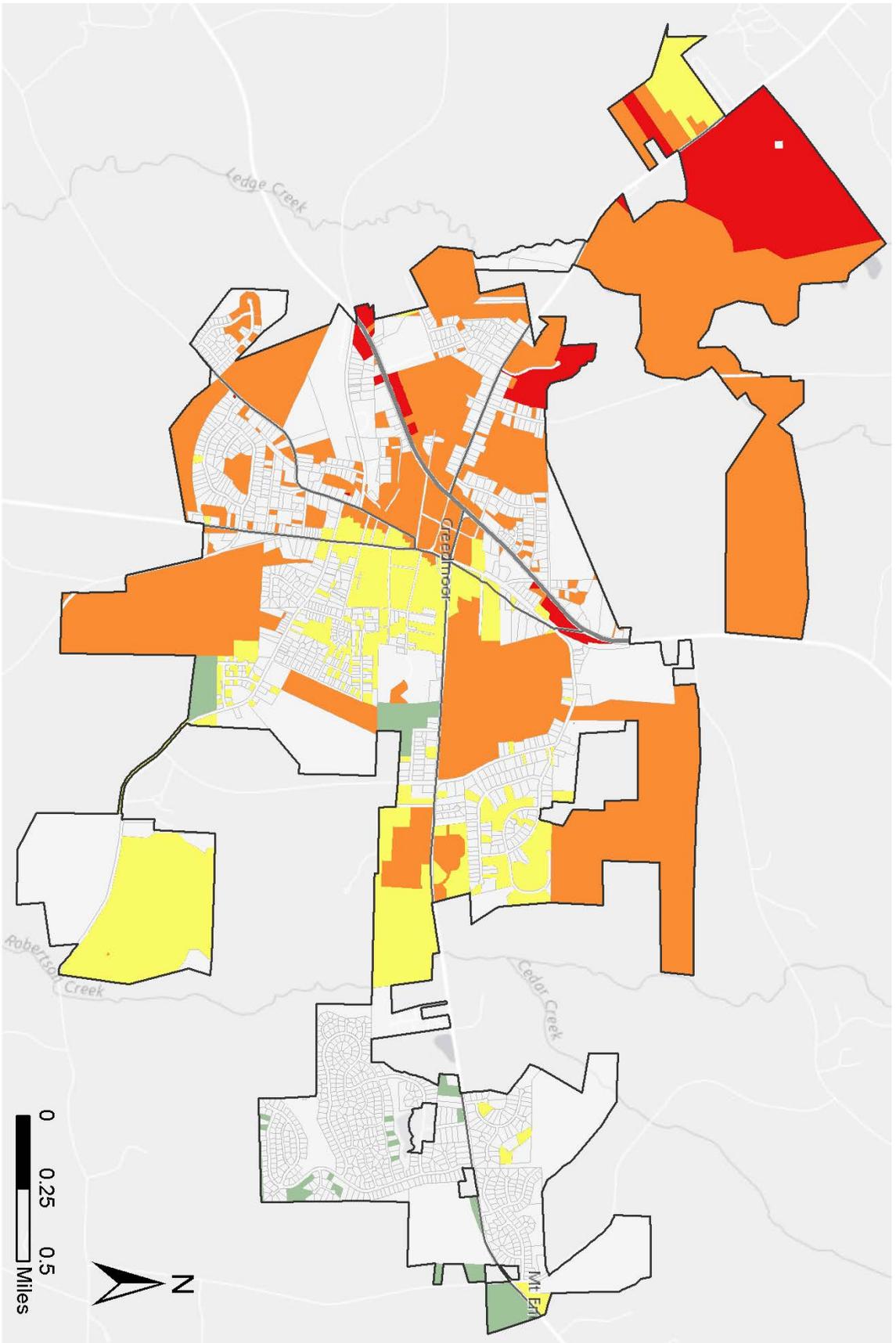
**T**here is ample land available to accommodate expected mid-term growth.

These maps show the relative development suitability of vacant parcels of land in Granville County and Creedmoor (inset). Land that is more suitable for development will likely be more attractive to a developer. A parcel was ranked as more or less suitable based on soil type, whether the land was located in a floodplain, and proximity to riparian buffers.



**Zoning and Unsuitable Land in Creedmoor's Vacant Parcels**





**Development Suitability of Developable Parcels in Creedmoor**

NOTE: Parcels not scored are already developed and outside of downtown Creedmoor

## COMMUNITY ASSETS

### Recreation

The City of Creedmoor Parks and Recreation Department manages and maintains a number of in-city recreational facilities. In 2007, the city was designated as a Playful City USA by the nonprofit organization KaBOOM! and has maintained that designation ever since. Outdoor parks and facilities provided by Creedmoor include the B.C. Roberts Ballfield, Harris Park, Lake Rogers Park, and the city's newest recreational offering- The Gauntlet- a hiking and fitness trail developed for the city as an Eagle Scout project. Indoor recreation facilities include the city's gymnasium and community/ senior center.

A number of additional recreational opportunities are available in nearby cities but residents of Creedmoor consistently report that they desire more recreational facilities or opportunities in their own city. Residents would like to not have to travel to bring their children to events and activities and they would like to have more options for their own fitness, entertainment, and health-related needs. Many of the recreational facilities currently provided or maintained by the City, like the gymnasium located at the community center, are at capacity or nearing the end of their useful life.

### Retail & Services

Creedmoor currently lacks the variety of retailers and service providers needed to attract new residents and visitors. Surveys and community feedback indicate that residents and others who have a vested interest in Creedmoor desire a greater number of retail and service providers, limiting the necessity of leaving the City to fulfill basic needs. Feedback also indicates that residents and visitors would like to see a more vibrant downtown district, which requires a diverse selection of businesses, entertainment options, and dining establishment that Creedmoor currently does not provide.

### Education

Creedmoor is served by the Granville County Public

Many of the city recreational facilities are at capacity or nearing the end of their useful life.



The Creedmoor Gymnasium and Activity Center; this gym was part of the original South Granville High School, constructed in 1919, unfortunately there is only one basketball court and it is not regulation-sized.

Creedmoor currently lacks the variety of retailers and services needed to attract new residents and visitors.



Downtown Creedmoor currently has limited retailers, restaurants, and service providers.



South Granville High School serves Creedmoor residents.

School system. Schools attended by City residents include South Granville High School (which contains both the School of Health and Life Sciences and the School of Integrated Technology and Leadership), Creedmoor Elementary, GC Hawley Middle School, and Mount Energy Elementary School. Great Schools ratings for community schools range from 6/10 (Mount Energy Elementary) to 2/10 (Creedmoor Elementary). State test scores are generally near or lower than the state average for end-of-grade exams.

A number of higher education providers are located within the regional vicinity of Creedmoor including the South Campus of Vance-Granville Community College, Duke University, North Carolina Central University (both in Durham, NC), North Carolina State University, Shaw University (both in Raleigh, NC), and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

### Health Care

Creedmoor's location near a number of major universities provides a number of world-class medical facilities within close proximity, offering opportunities for both jobs and high-quality health care for residents. Nearby are Duke Regional Hospital, Duke University Hospital, UNC Hospitals, Duke VA Hospital, WakeMed Hospitals, UNC REX Healthcare, Central Regional Hospital, John Umstead Hospital, and Granville Health System, located in nearby Oxford.

### Arts & Culture

Creedmoor's close proximity to the major urban centers of Durham and Raleigh, along with the many educational institutions nearby, provide a proliferation of art, music, and cultural venues and offerings for residents. Creedmoor also has its own homegrown arts and cultural assets including the annual Creedmoor Music Festival—a free event celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2016. Creedmoor is also home to the Cedar Creek Gallery— a working artists' cooperative and retailer that is home to “the largest selection of fine crafts on the East Coast.” The Gallery began operations in 1968, growing since then to more than ten buildings in what was once a tobacco field. Cedar



The annual Creedmoor Music Festival is held in September and celebrates its 25th anniversary this year.

Creek is owned and operated by the artists who work there.

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## **CREEDMOOR | FORWARD**

The context provided in this introductory section helps set the stage for the following sections of this strategic plan. In Part 2: *Strategy | Building a Foundation* we will introduce and cultivate a deeper understanding of Creedmoor’s opportunities and challenges, particularly relative to other communities in the Triangle region. We will discuss the hierarchy of city needs (the critical components of high-functioning communities), present evidence to support Creedmoor’s recommended strategic position, and tie together Creedmoor’s vision and goals by discussing a number of “keys to moving Creedmoor forward.”

The third plan section, *Action | Moving Forward*, contains the strategic action plan for moving Creedmoor closer to its desired future based on strategic goals and actions. This plan component will introduce recommended actions and projects, focusing on the importance of building community capacity to advance strategic initiatives. The final plan section *Implement | Catalytic Projects* presents four key project recommendations for igniting the spark that will help move *Creedmoor | Forward*.

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