



Town of Garner

900 7th Avenue · Garner, North Carolina 27529
Phone (919) 772-4688 · Fax (919) 662-8874 · www.GarnerNC.gov

May 7, 2024

Honorable Shinica Thomas, Chair
Wake County Board of Commissioners
Post Office Box 550
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

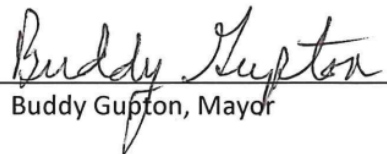
Dear Ms. Thomas:

The Town of Garner requests approval from the Wake County Board of Commissioners for an extension of the Town's extraterritorial planning jurisdiction (ETJ). The Town of Garner last requested an extension in 2016. In the time since then, Garner has undergone a considerable amount of growth. The Town's state certified estimate in mid-2016 was 28,999. As of April 1, 2024, the Town estimates a population of 39,124 – an increase of 10,125 residents or 35% in those nearly eight (8) years from the Town's last request. Today, the Town has seen its publicly managed water and sewer infrastructure gradually expand beyond the core area roughly bounded by Timber Drive and the City of Raleigh corporate limits out towards an arc created by Lake Wheeler Road and the NC 540 corridor. Within the next 4 years, NC 540 will push from Holly Springs around the current edges of Garner to Knightdale. With the opening of NC 540 on the near horizon, The Town believes that these targeted future growth areas need to be within its ETJ so that the Town's land use regulations may be administered, allowing it to more adequately plan infrastructure improvements to accommodate the anticipated urban growth in this area.

Attached for your use are a Resolution, adopted by the Garner Town Council on May 7, 2024, formally requesting an extension of its ETJ; and a report documenting and illustrating compliance with Wake County's criteria for reviewing requests for ETJ extensions and including general location maps identifying the requested ETJ extension areas. This report can and will be updated as feedback is received from County reviewing entities. Should the Board of Commissioners or the county staff have questions concerning the request, please contact Jeff Triezenberg, AICP, GISP; Planning Director for the Town of Garner at 919-773-4445.

We look forward to working with Wake County on this important planning endeavor. Thank you for your consideration and cooperation.

Sincerely,


Buddy Gupton, Mayor

Enclosure

RESOLUTION NO. (2024) 2577

**RESOLUTION OF THE GARNER TOWN COUNCIL REQUESTING
EXTENSION OF THE TOWN'S EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION**

WHEREAS, the area requested for extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) extension is generally designated by Wake County as lying within the Town of Garner's future urban service area; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Garner has annexation agreements with the neighboring municipalities of Fuquay-Varina and Raleigh; and

WHEREAS, the annexation agreement with the City of Raleigh is presently recommended by Raleigh staff to allow for those areas not presently in the Town of Garner's future urban service area to be so designated; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Garner has demonstrated a commitment to comprehensive planning through its past planning efforts and present process to re-write the Garner Comprehensive Growth Plan and update to the 2010/18 Garner Transportation Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Garner, through Raleigh Water, is working with the private development community and the City's Capital Improvement Program to develop plans for serving this area with public water and sewer; and

WHEREAS, future development within this area will be at urban and suburban densities and voluntarily annexed into the Town of Garner's corporate limits; and

WHEREAS, the area designated for ETJ extension is within three (3) miles of Garner's corporate limits; and

WHEREAS, the Town's most recent official certified population estimate from the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management stands at 33,537 for July 1, 2022; and


WHEREAS, the Town of Garner anticipates holding a public hearing on the question of adopting an ordinance extending its ETJ and the setting of zoning districts in the area upon County approval of this request.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Town Council of the Town of Garner, North Carolina:

Section 1. That the Garner Town Council requests that Wake County designate as Garner ETJ the area shown in the attached "Figure 1" from the Town of Garner ETJ Extension proposal dated May 7, 2024; and

Section 2. That the Garner Town Council requests that the Wake County Board of Commissioners consider imposing a moratorium on any new subdivisions utilizing well and septic systems in the proposed ETJ expansion area while the Town of Garner is in the process of receiving ETJ expansion approval from Wake County.

Duly adopted this 7th day of May, 2024.


Buddy Gupton, Mayor

ATTEST: 
Stella Gibson, Town Clerk



PLANNING MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 7, 2024
TO: Honorable Mayor Gupton and Town Council Members
FROM: Jeffrey S. Triezenberg, AICP, GISP; Planning Director
SUBJECT: Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) Request

Request

The Town of Garner requests permission from Wake County to extend its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) primarily, albeit not exclusively, along the new North Carolina Highway 540 Corridor which will open in phases beginning this summer (2024) through 2028.

The requested areas comprise three major areas:

- Northwest Area: 936 acres (1.46 sq. mi.)
 - Southern Area: 5,973 acres (9.33 sq. mi.)
 - Northeast Area: 1,949 acres (3.05 sq. mi.)
- TOTAL AREA: 8,858 acres (13.84 sq. mi.)

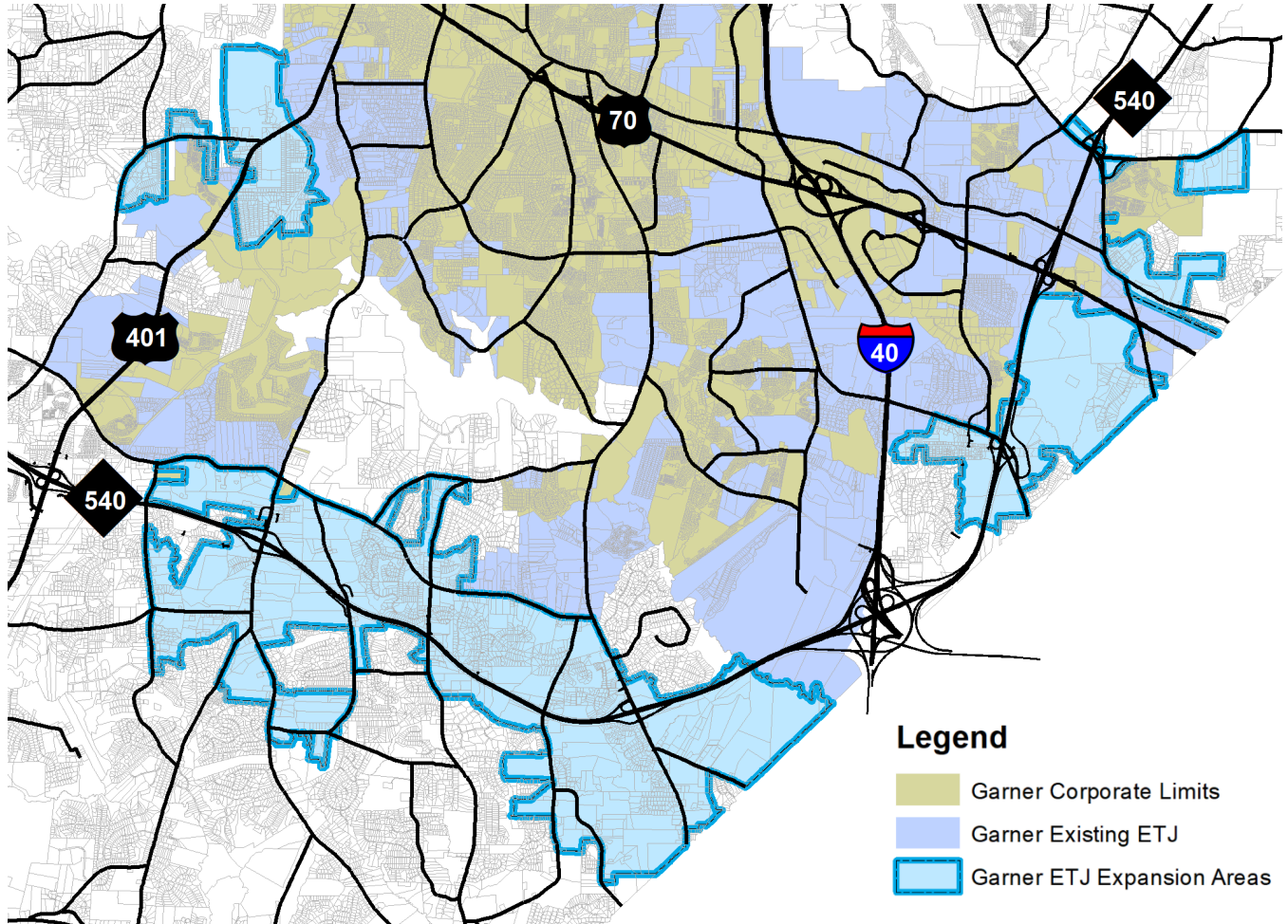
Throughout the Town’s request drafting process, efforts were made to avoid existing county subdivisions which have been constructed largely on private well and septic systems and are generally not in need of municipal services. However, in some cases, including such subdivisions has been necessary to maintain a cohesive jurisdictional boundary. Other barriers to urban growth such as the southern shores of Lake Benson between Old Stage Road and Benson Road have also been left out of this request.

In all cases, the boundaries of the extension areas do not split individual parcels (except where the parcel is already split by an intervening roadway) or subdivisions (as defined by the NCGS). Furthermore, all of the extension areas (save a portion of one parcel) are located within the Town’s former Urban Service Area as defined by Wake County. The parcel in question is PIN# 1731805246, of which a portion is currently located in the City of Raleigh’s former Urban Service Area. However, this tract of land is being presented to both Raleigh and Garner governing boards as part of a small land swap via a renewed annexation agreement that is slated to be up for adoption later this summer (2024).

Note: Throughout this report, the request area may be referred to as either the “extension” area or “expansion” area and are used interchangeably.



Figure 1: Overall Expansion Area

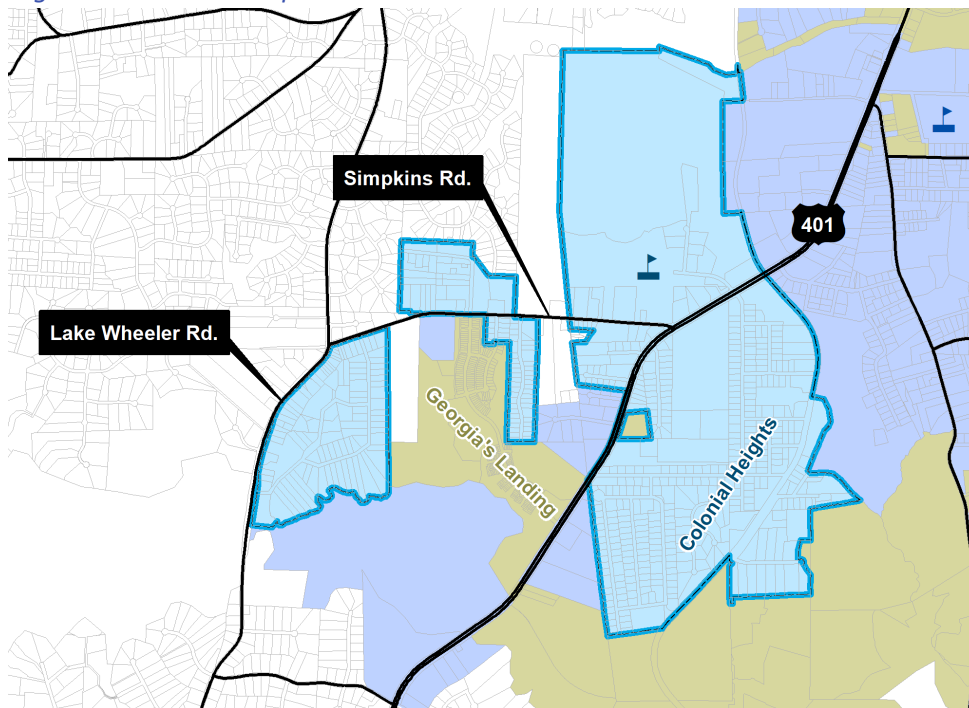


Northwest Area

The Northwest Area of the expansion request lies along Fayetteville (US 401), Simpkins and Lake Wheeler roads encompassing 936 acres (1.46 sq. mi.) spread across three subareas. This area is seeing increased development and redevelopment interest with the arrival of municipal water and sewer service at the nearby Georgia’s Landing subdivision. Already, there have been three official requests for connections onto these utility mains from owners of property (or their representatives) outside of Garner’s 2017 ETJ boundary and covering nearly 150 acres.

The Town recognizes that the Northwest Area would include the existing Colonial Heights and other nearby smaller subdivisions; however, it is also recognized that not doing so would result in small jurisdictional donut holes – in this case less than ½ square mile – which the Town understands that Wake County staff are not in favor of creating.

Figure 2: Northwest Expansion Area



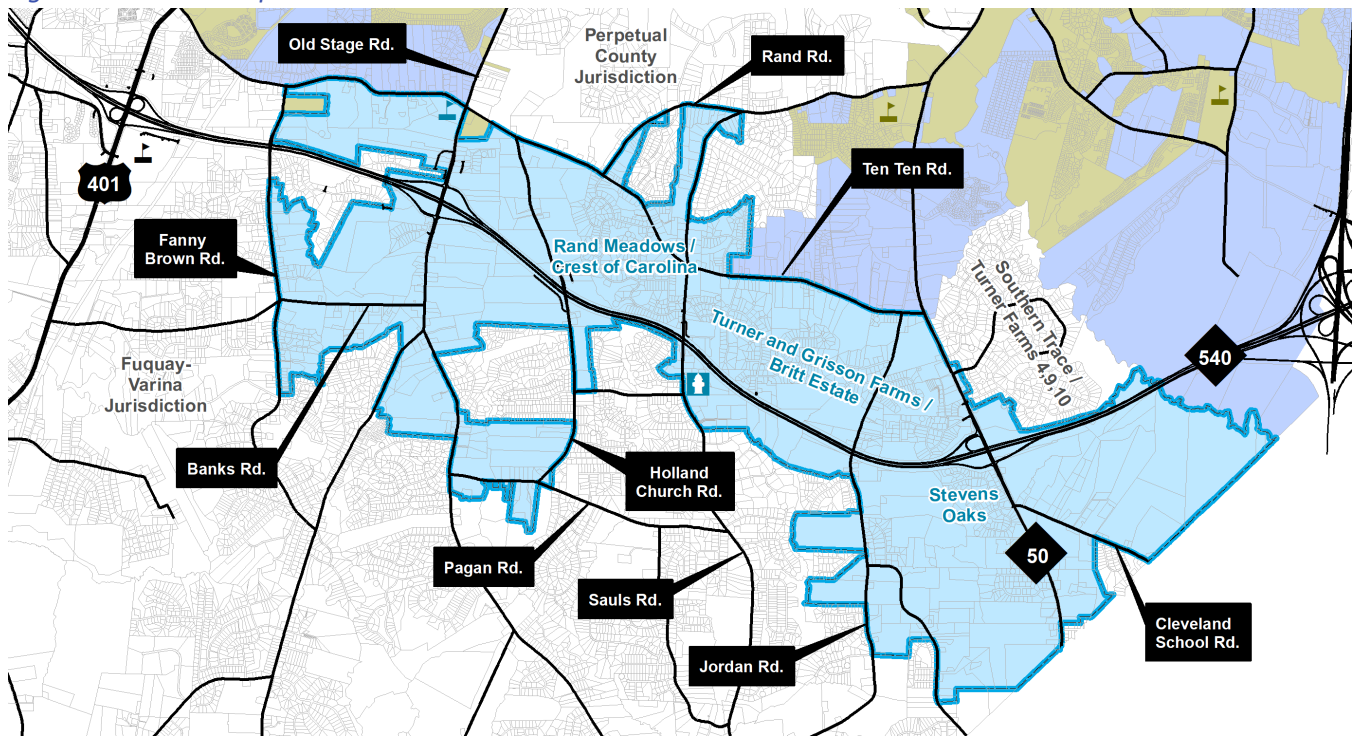


Southern Area

The Southern Area of the expansion request lies along the NC 540 corridor from Fanny Brown Road to Swift Creek encompassing 5,973 acres (9.33 sq. mi.) in one cohesive area. This area is seeing increased development interest due to the arrival of NC 540 along with coordinated efforts between the City of Raleigh and private developers to extend municipal water and sewer to the areas around the future interchanges at Old Stage Road and NC 50 (Benson Road).

The Town recognizes that the Southern Area would include several existing subdivisions surrounded by NC 540, Holland Church Road, Ten Ten Road and NC 50; however, it is also recognized that not doing so would result in jurisdictional holes tucked in off the main roads which the Town understands that Wake County staff are not in favor of creating. If favorable, the Town proposes leaving Southern Trace and Sections 4, 9 and 10 of Turner Farms under the County’s jurisdiction as they comprise an area of just over one square mile. Additionally, the Town proposes that Trebor Meadows, Nottingham Forest and Highland Trails subdivisions remain under the County’s jurisdiction as they are directly adjacent to lands south of Lake Benson that are almost certain to remain in perpetuity with Wake County.

Figure 3: Southern Expansion Area

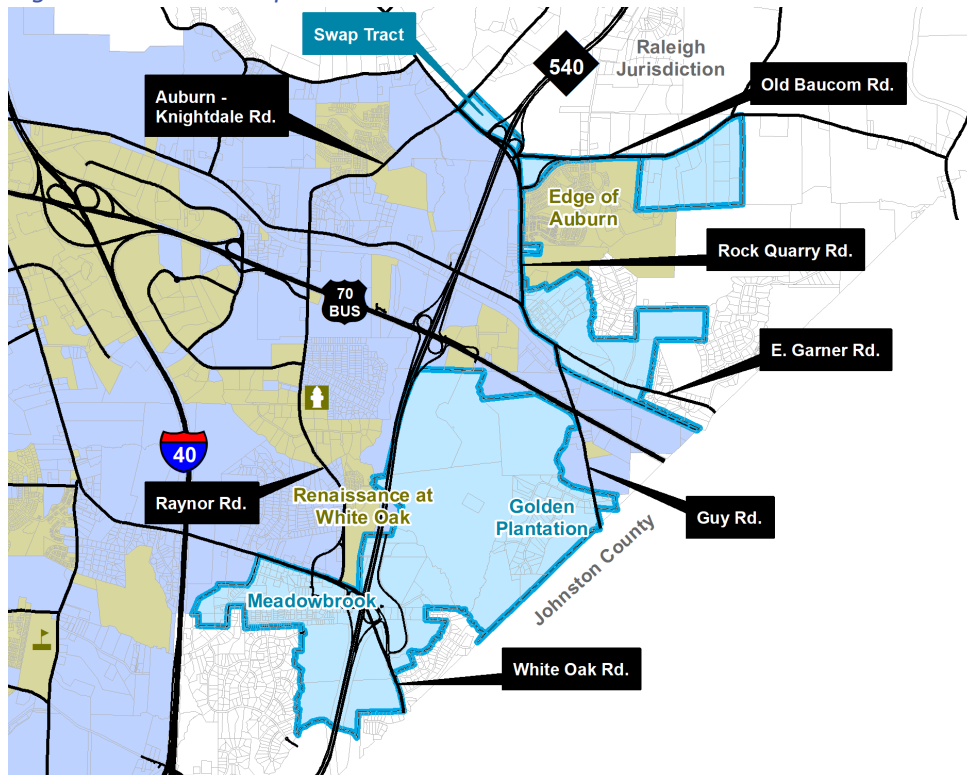


Northeast Area

The Northeast Area of the expansion request lies along the NC 540 corridor from the lands surrounding the future White Oak Road interchange up to the remaining lands in Garner’s Urban Service Area near the US 70 Business and Rock Quarry Road interchanges. This expansion area is comprised of two (2) subareas encompassing 1,949 acres (3.05 sq. mi.). The largest cohesive subarea (southern) is in the vicinity of the future White Oak Road interchange where several nearby roadways will be re-aligned, while the other (northern) is a collection of tracts connected by strips of right-of-way along Rock Quarry and Old Baucom roads. The larger southern subarea includes the underdeveloped Meadowbrook Estates subdivision south of White Oak Road and the Golden Plantation subdivision west of Guy Road. The northern subarea stops well short of the Johnston County line as much of that remaining area is comprised of the Clemmons Education Forest, other State lands and the existing Pine Hollow Golf Course development.

This area is seeing increased development interest due to the arrival of NC 540 along with coordinated efforts between the City of Raleigh and private developers to extend municipal water and sewer to the areas around the future interchanges at White Oak and Rock Quarry roads. US 70 Business continues to emerge as an industrial and logistics corridor between Garner and Clayton, having spawned several hundreds of thousands of industrial square feet over the last 6-8 years. Already, a new regional sewer pump station exists at the Edge of Auburn development and smaller public utility extensions are extending lines and capacity along the US 70 Business corridor and at the Renaissance at White Oak subdivision.

Figure 4: Northeast Expansion Area





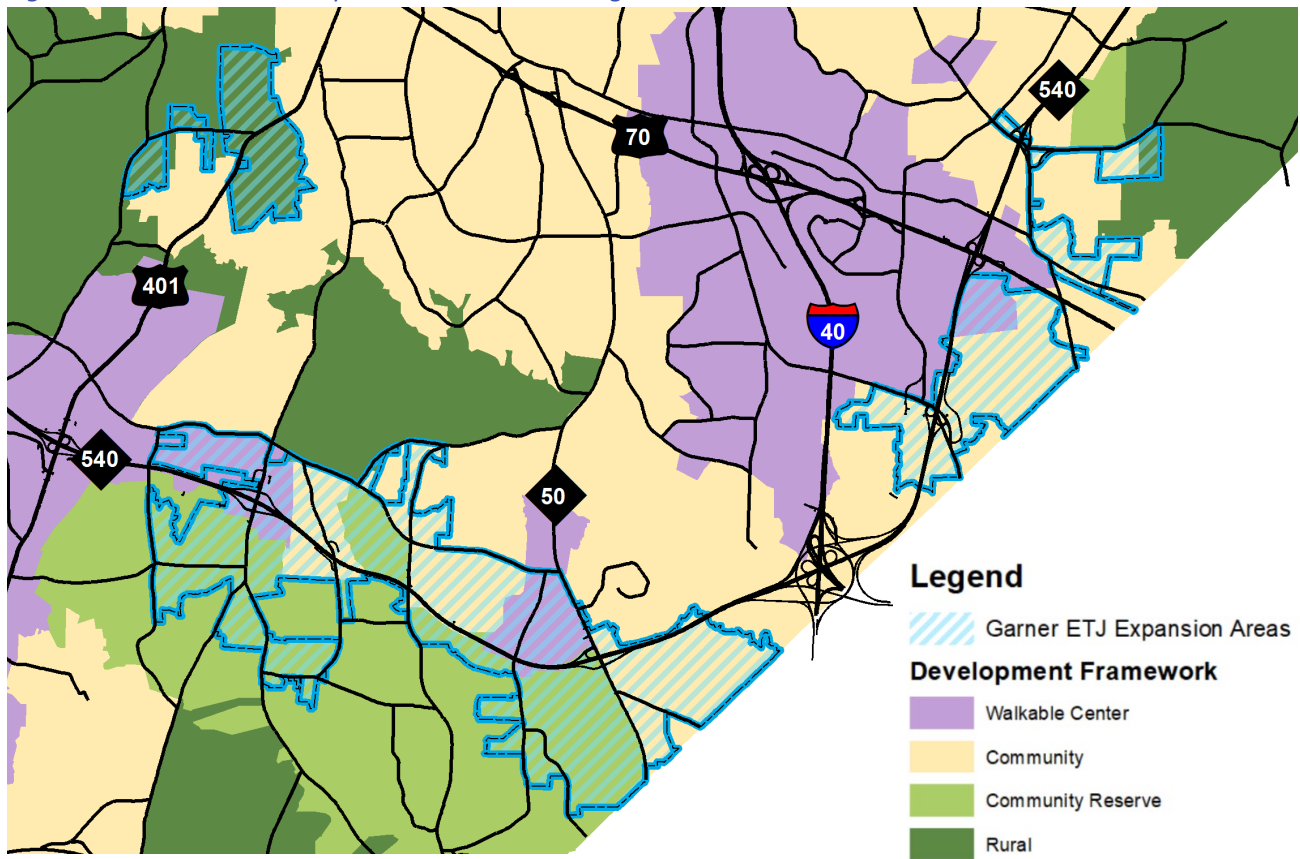
Justification: PLANWake Criteria

Although state law specifies the requirements for municipal extraterritorial jurisdiction, or “ETJ” extension, it does not provide detailed evaluation criteria. The following ETJ criteria have been established by Wake County in order to evaluate Garner’s ability to provide services and its capability and commitment to good planning and managing of development.

Criteria 1 - Wake County Development Framework Map Designation

The requested ETJ must be located within an area designated as Walkable Center or Community on the PLANWake Development Framework Map. ETJ extension in areas not noted as one of these two designations will require an amendment to the Wake County Comprehensive Plan. Any ETJ requests for Community Reserve or Rural areas will require an amendment to the PLANWake Comprehensive Plan to change the designation of the area to a more appropriate category that supports municipal development. Likewise, any applicable Small Area Plan will also need amending to identify this area as a site for municipal development.

Figure 5: PLANWake Development Framework Designation



WALKABLE CENTER OR COMMUNITY DESIGNATION

Of the requested extension area, 57.7% is designated in PLANWake as either Walkable Center or Community area. This covers all but 71 acres (3.6%) of the Northeast Area, and a little over half of the Southern Area (54.4%). None of the Northwest Area is in either of these designations.

COMMUNITY RESERVE OR RURAL DESIGNATION

In the Northeast Area, the remaining 71 acres (3.6%) is designated as Rural. All of this land is either owned by a member of the Baucom family or part of the Camilla P. Baucom subdivision. It is the easternmost land in

the Northeast request area and directly adjacent to the City of Raleigh's Homeland Farms tracts. Intense development is not envisioned.

In the Southern Area, the remaining 45.6% of the acreage is designated as Community Reserve. At the time PLANWake was adopted, there was still some uncertainty to the timing of NC 540 and the City of Raleigh's plans to serve the areas south of Ten Ten Road with water and sewer utilities. Both of those issues have gained more certainty in the intervening time and have largely been reflected in the County's subsequent Area Plans. For more on these subjects, please refer to Criteria 2 and 3. Given this more recent certainty, the Town of Garner offers that the swath of Community Reserve in the Southern Area is ready to be re-classified as Community.

In the Northwest Area, the entire request is designated Rural. This is in large part to the Town's 2017 ETJ extension and the decision to omit these areas at that time. In 2016, the Georgia's Landing subdivision was still in its infancy. Full subdivision plans would not be filed until 2020. The development potential along Simpkins Road and the nearby section of US 401 was largely dependent on the ability to bring sewer service to the area. It has only been after much determined work by the developer of Georgia's Landing and staff at the City of Raleigh that a plan for a series of pump stations and force mains was developed. The implementation of this plan was only fully realized in 2023. This development is a significant change in the existing conditions of the area; therefore, it is not surprising that an amendment to County plans would be needed. Town staff would also note again that a significant portion of the Northwest Area is already subdivided and is only being included so as not to create small jurisdictional donut holes.

Criteria 2 - Growth and Development within the ETJ Expansion Area

Requests for ETJ expansion should be where joint planning has taken place between the county and the Town of Garner in areas that are prime for investment. Garner must demonstrate recent growth and development activity (annexations, development requests, water and sewer expansion, new roadways) within the requested ETJ area. This activity, along with population and job growth, must be compared to areas already with the Garner's corporate limits.

JOINT PLANNING

County and Town staff have been particularly active in joint planning efforts over the past two (2) years. For a more complete description of these efforts, please see Criteria 3.

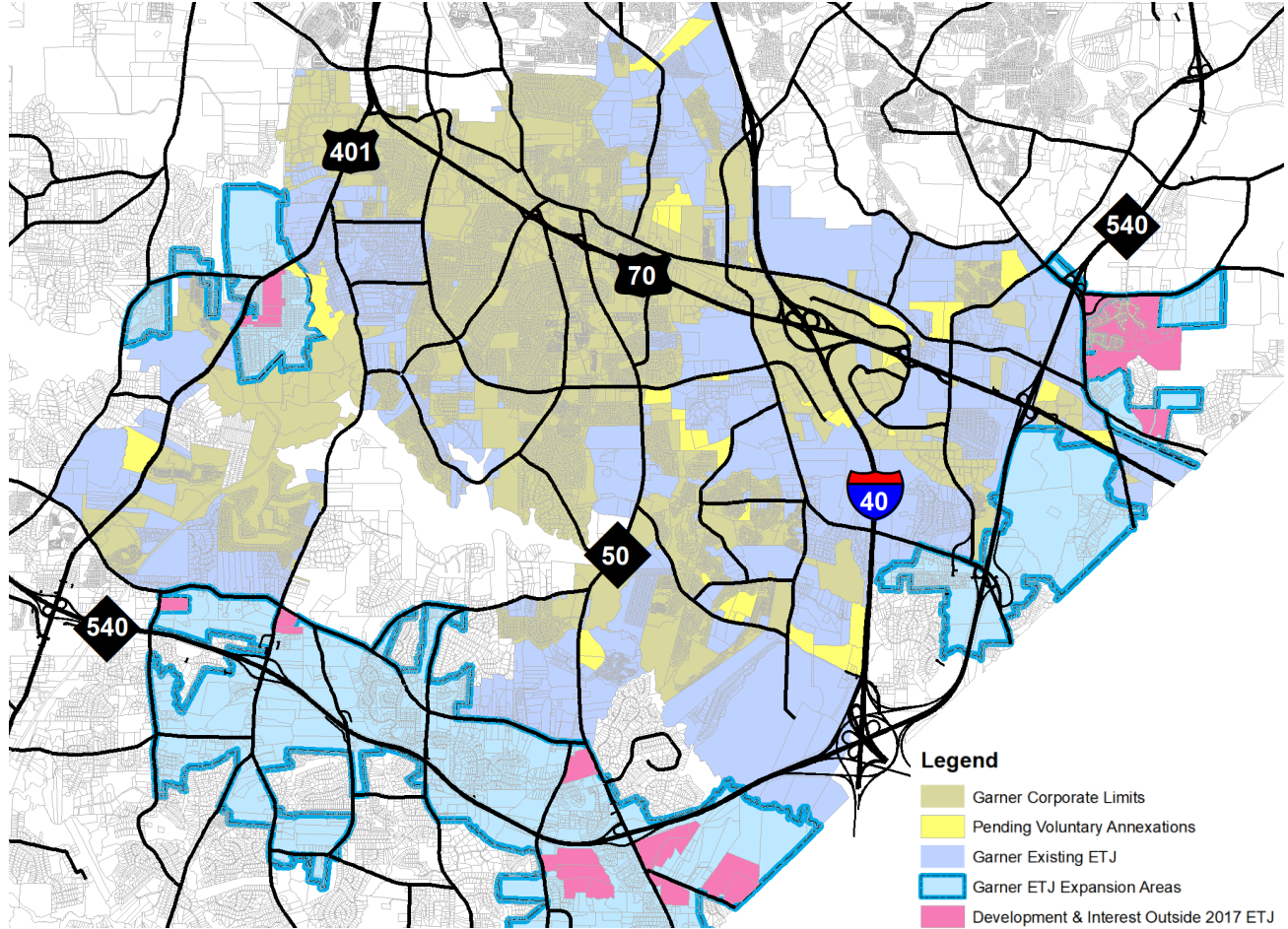
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY IN THE REQUESTED AREA AND ANNEXATION PROGRESS

Outside of the 2017 ETJ limits or within the requested areas, the Town is either already seeing development (as is the case with the Edge of Auburn and Gatsby Station subdivisions off Rock Quarry Road) or has been in discussions with owners and developers of property in excess of 850 acres or 1.32 square miles as shown in Figure 6.

Although the vast majority of pending annexation areas are within the 2017 ETJ limits, there are annexations pending for more than 975 acres or 1.52 square miles. When combined with the 19.87 square miles of corporate limits shown in the attached figures, the Town's corporate limits will soon grow to more than 21.39 square miles.



Figure 6: Development in Expansion Request Area and Growth through Annexation



At the time of the writing of the 2017 ETJ Extension report in mid-2016, the Town of Garner comprised 15.71 square miles. By the end of 2024, it is anticipated that the Town will have added more than 5.68 square miles to its land area within the corporate limits – an increase of 36% over eight (8) years.

When looking at population, the Town’s state certified estimate in mid-2016 was 28,999. As of April 1, 2024, the Town estimates a population of 39,124 – an increase of 10,125 residents or 35% in just a little less than eight (8) years. A recent report from Town staff shows the year over year increase since the 2020 Census:

DATE	ESTIMATE	% GAIN
April 1, 2024	39,124	+ 8.4%
April 1, 2023	36,105	+ 6.5%
April 1, 2022	33,889	+ 5.1%
April 1, 2021	32,249	+ 3.5%
April 1, 2020	31,159	

NEW ROADWAYS

As noted at the outset of this report, perhaps the biggest driver of growth in the majority of the requested areas is the new North Carolina Highway 540 Corridor which will open in phases beginning this summer (2024) through 2028, completing the “Outer Loop” from Holly Springs to Knightdale. Although not new, existing roads that will have interchanges with NC 540 will certainly take on a higher level of importance. These roadways include US 401 (Fayetteville Road), Old Stage Road, NC 50 (Benson Road), White Oak Road,

US 70 Business and Rock Quarry Road. Each of these roadways feature prominently in serving the requested ETJ expansion areas.

WATER AND SEWER EXPANSION

In terms of improvements to facilitate continued expansion of the water and sewer systems, perhaps the most critical effort has been the Town and Raleigh Water working proactively with NCDOT to install “sleeves” that will accommodate these needed expansions across the new NC 540 corridor between US 401 and I-40. Please see the figures below for these plans:

Figure 7: Water/Sewer Accommodations Along NC 540 (Old Stage Road to Holland Church Road)

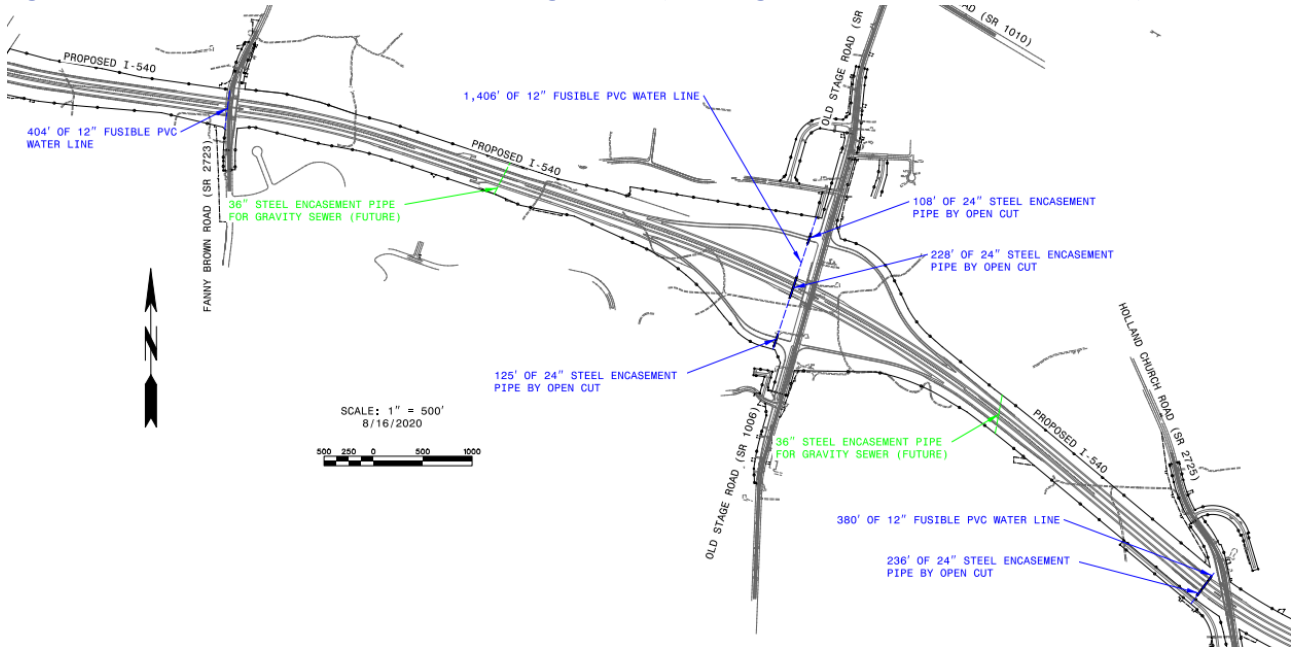
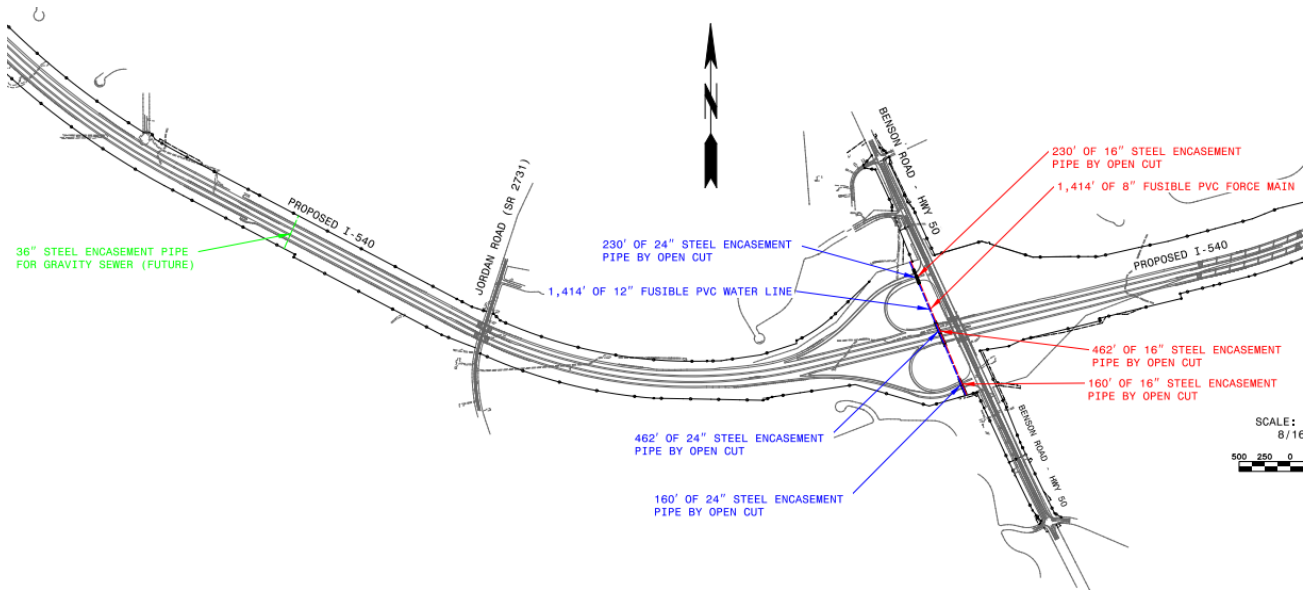


Figure 8: Water/Sewer Accommodations Along NC 540 (Sauls Road to NC 50/Benson Road)





Working closely with the Town’s Economic Development staff, a needed sewer main extension was provided to improve service to the east of the Auburn community along the US 70 corridor near the Northeast Area of the request. Developers have extended water mains all around town per Raleigh Water policy to expand the water network and sewer lift stations and new collection mains in a coordinated effort to maintain the existing major pump stations lifting sewage to the Neuse Wastewater Treatment Plant. Of particular importance, Raleigh Water leadership has reached an internal understanding of the preferred routes for these for force mains in the Southern Area to feed the regional pump station along NC 50 at the Dempsey Benton Water Treatment Plant as opposed to needing to construct a new regional pump station elsewhere. In a similar cooperative effort with developers, a smaller regional pump station location has been identified near the Northwest Area along Old Stage Road at Swift Creek to serve the growth in that portion of town as well.

Figure 9: Water/Sewer Utilities in the Northwest Area

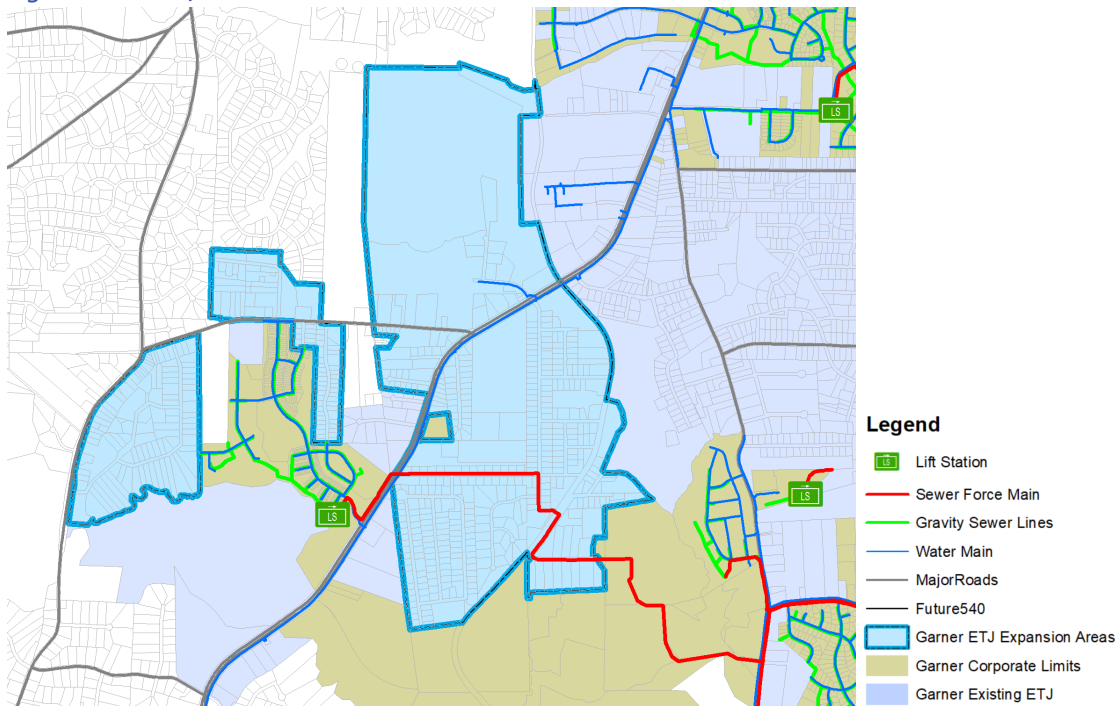
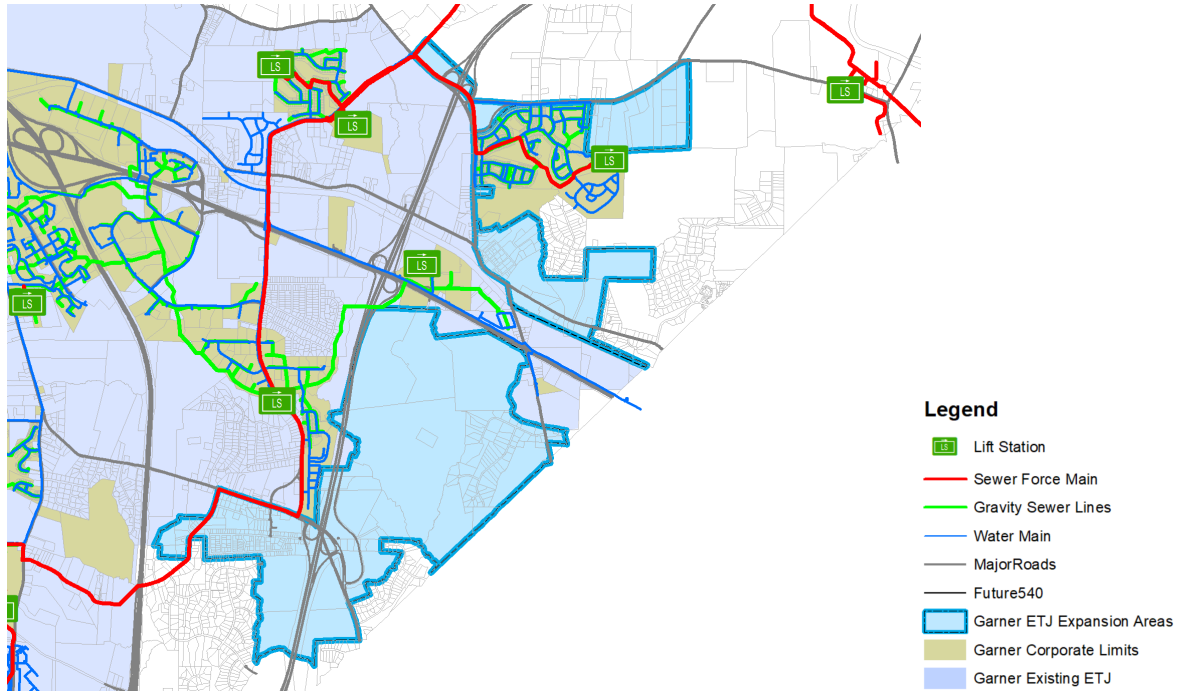


Figure 10: Water/Sewer Utilities in the Northeast Area



Criteria 3 - Municipal Comprehensive Plan Alignment

The Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan must align with the Wake County Comprehensive Plan and Development Framework. The Town of Garner should demonstrate past examples of working with the development market to implement projects consistent with the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan.

PLANWAKE AND COUNTY AREA PLANS

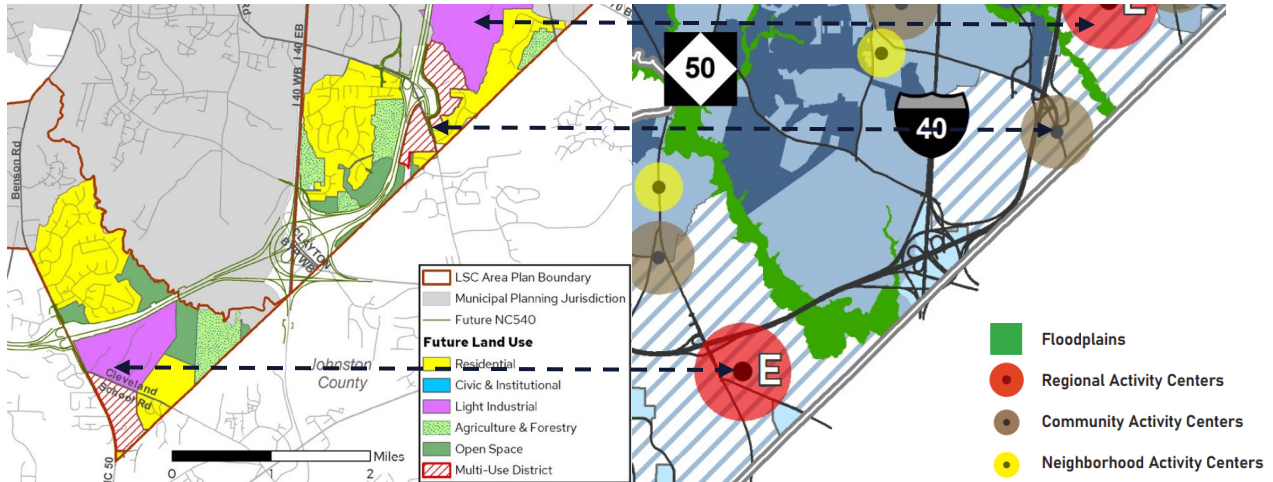
Following the County’s adoption of PLANWake in April of 2021, Garner staff have played an active role in providing input and review of the County’s first three area plans which are considered a major part of implementing PLANWake. These community area plans have included the Lower Swift Creek Area Plan adopted in October 2022, the Middle Creek Area Plan adopted in June 2023, and the Lower Neuse Area Plan adopted in April 2024. Together, these three area plans have covered Garner’s entire urban services area.

GARNER FORWARD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Over much of that same time, the Town of Garner was also re-writing its Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan which was first adopted in 2018. Work on the 2023 version of the plan began in the late summer of 2022. Together, Garner and County staff worked to coordinate the County’s Development Framework in PLANWake with the Town’s new Growth Framework in Garner Forward. This coordination was further emphasized as the Garner Forward re-write placed additional emphasis on the NC 540 corridor – an emphasis that was lacking in the Town’s 2018 plan.



Figure 11: Plan Coordination – County Industrial and Multi-Use Districts with 2023 Garner Activity Centers



COOPERATIVE CONSISTENT DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

Even prior to the adoption of the 2023 Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, Town staff have been working with the development community to bring about projects that are consistent with it. There are numerous Regional Activity Centers identified as “E”mployment centers. Projects approved in consistency with these designations since 2017 have included:

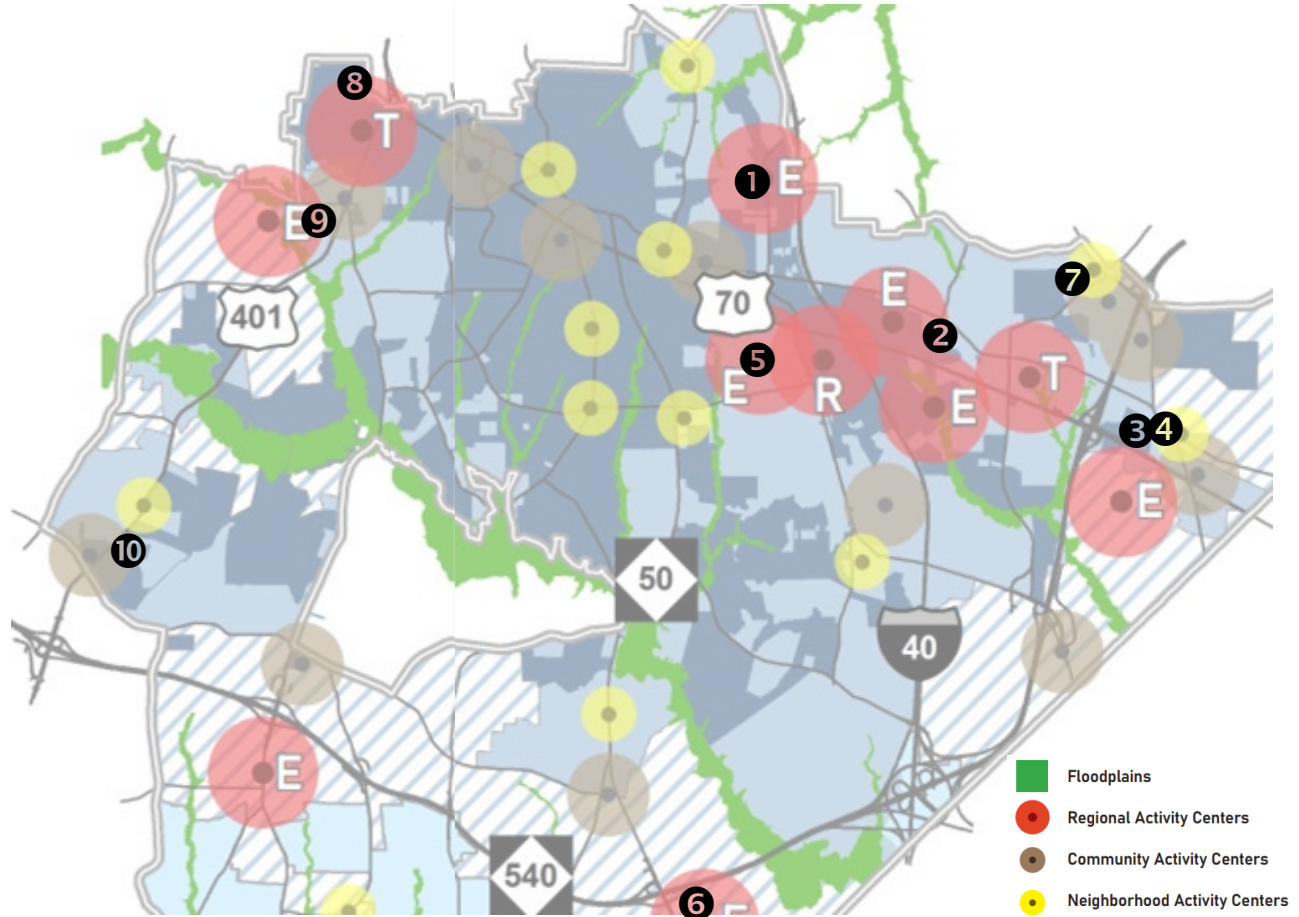
- ❶ Beacon Commerce Park at Jones Sausage Road (across from Amazon Distribution Center)
- ❷ Gregory Poole Parts and Service Center on North Greenfield Parkway
- ❸ Garner Business Park at Garner Business Park Drive and US 70 Business (just west of Guy Road)
- ❹ Guy Road Flex/Warehouse Park on US 70 Business

Other significant employment projects in the early stages of development include the ❺ “E District” anchored by WakeMed Health and Hospitals at the NW corner of Timber Drive East and White Oak Road, and ❻ “Gateway 540” located at the NE corner of NC 50 and Cleveland School Road.

In promoting future mixed-use centers of activity, projects bringing higher densities of residential include ❼ Burnette Farms at Rock Quarry and Auburn-Knightdale roads; ❸ 601 Tryon adjacent to the North/South Station shopping center; ❹ Vintage Garner at Farm Road and US 401; and ❷ Taryn Apartments near McCullers Crossroads.

These are many other smaller developments that the Town has worked alongside developers to ensure consistency with the Growth Framework ranging from the Tryon Station apartments – a smaller affordable complex located at Creech Road and the future Tryon Road extension, to a new Costco-anchored shopping center at McCullers Crossroads. Most projects have been officially reviewed against the 2017 Garner Forward plan as the 2023 plan has only been effective since mid-February 2024. While some approved projects have been inconsistent with the 2017 plan, the Town Council has found them reasonable; often in light of the work that was being done on shaping the 2023 plan.

Figure 12: Cooperative Consistent Development



Criteria 4 - Municipal Capital Improvement Plan/Program and Service Expansion Plan Alignment

The Town of Garner must demonstrate that it is ready to provide appropriate infrastructure to the requested ETJ area. The provision of infrastructure, including water and sewer lines, vehicle capacity, storm water, sidewalks, greenways, parks and other capital projects, shall be documented in a multi-year Capital Improvement Plan/Program. Garner must also demonstrate that it is ready to provide appropriate municipal services to the requested ETJ area. These services shall include police, fire, trash collection, inspections and other municipal services.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

WATER AND SEWER LINES

Raleigh Water, as the regional public water and sewer provider for northern and eastern Wake County municipalities maintains a robust Capital Improvement Plan / Integrated Master Plan for major improvements to the entire regional system. See attached for additional information.

VEHICLE CAPACITY

The Town of Garner maintains a local transportation plan containing recommendations for roadway improvements that feed into the larger regional metropolitan transportation plan maintained by the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO). The most recent version of this local plan is the Town’s 2018 plan. The Town uses this adopted plan and the requirements of the Garner Unified Development Ordinance to require that developers widen, construct and otherwise improve streets within the Town’s



planning jurisdiction to their ultimate cross-sections which provide the necessary capacity to accommodate the Town's growth.

Additionally, the Town seeks federal and state funding through various programs administered by CAMPO to improve roadway capacity and other transportation goals. Recent and current projects include:

- White Oak Roundabout (at Hebron Church/Ackerman roads) – construction expected to start summer 2024 and complete spring 2025. Construction estimate \$2.4 million.
- South Garner Greenway (vicinity of Buffalo Road and Lake Benson Park) – construction expected to start fall 2025 and complete fall 2026. Construction estimate \$5.4 million.
- Jones Sausage Road Widening (includes additional lane between E. Garner Road and Amazon) – currently at 65% design, construction expected to start Spring 2026 and complete Spring 2028. Construction estimate \$15.8 million.
- New Rand Road Sidewalks (included minimal lane widening either side of US 70) – construction completed spring 2022. Construction cost \$2.77 million.
- Timber Drive Sidewalks – construction completed fall 2020. Construction cost \$500k.

STORM WATER, SIDEWALKS, GREENWAYS AND PARKS

A formal CIP is still in its infancy as the Town of Garner has grown over the last 5 years; however, a new dedicated budget staff has worked diligently over the past 3 years to implement a formal CIP that allows the Council to better prioritize, plan and budget for these significant projects.

The FY25-29 CIP includes funding of \$85.3 million to cover capital improvements and asset maintenance and repairs across the Town. This includes \$8 million for Greenway projects, \$28 million for Parks, \$691,000 for Stormwater, and \$24 million for Streets and Sidewalks. These projects are primarily funded through voter approved bonds as well as more than \$12 million dollars in state and federal grants.

The CIP includes several studies to update existing master plans, including the Transportation and Parks master plans, in order to better align capital projects to the new Garner Forward Plan as well as accommodate a changing and growing community. Funding of \$4.1 million is set aside for future sidewalk, greenway, and roadway projects.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES

POLICE

Police protection for Garner's residents and business owners is provided by 83 sworn officers and support personnel. Police Headquarters is located on Seventh Avenue near Town Hall. Officers patrol in the community 24 hours a day. General services for the department include: traffic enforcement, criminal investigation, wellness checks, education, and special events. Popular programs within the department include Achievement Academy, Citizens' Police Academy, Community Watch, and School Resource Officers.

In 2022, the department reported 36,474 calls for service inside town limits, including 6,866 traffic stops. Average travel time to an incident was six minutes and forty-two seconds. GVFR staff logged 4,323 training hours in the year to maintain certifications and be ready for service calls. The police budget is reviewed and adjusted annually to maintain the desired level of personnel necessary for the Department to maintain its hard-earned national accreditation status.

FIRE

The town contracts its fire and rescue services with Garner Volunteer Fire-Rescue, Inc. (GVFR). The company is a combination department serving 64,746 people in Garner and surrounding Wake County which includes

the requested expansion area. It operates four stations that are each staffed twenty-four hours per day with a 5th scheduled to open shortly near US 401 and Caddy Road through cooperative/joint funding efforts of the Town of Garner and Wake County. Services provided include fire suppression, first responder medical services, basic emergency medical technician services, technical rescue, and fire prevention and education.

Firefighters at GVFR are not employees of the town at this point in time, and as an independent organization, the organization is governed by a Board of Directors autonomous from the Town of Garner. The cost of services for the town are formalized in an annual contract. Wake County Government provides additional funds to GVFR for services provided outside town limits. The Town and Fire Board are, however, developing a long-range sustainability plan, which could include a merger, to ensure adequate fire protection for the Town, ETJ and surrounding unincorporated urban services area.

In 2022, the department reported 7,233 calls for service inside town limits, including 3,750 calls for service at resident addresses. Most calls were for medical assistance. Average travel time to an incident was seven minutes and thirty-three seconds. GVFR staff logged 23,622 training hours in the year to maintain certifications and be ready for service calls.

TRASH COLLECTION

The town contracts its trash collection services for single-family homes to a private company. Businesses and multifamily homes contract separately for trash collection services. Residential curbside pickup is provided on a weekly basis. Curbside recycling collection is also provided to customers every two weeks. Yard waste, from November 1 to February 28 each year, and bulk pickup programs are also provided to customers. Solid waste collected in the town is sent to the South Wake Landfill that is operated by the Wake County Solid Waste Management Division

INSPECTIONS

The Town's building inspections are funded through the fees it collects, and state law requires all inspections to be completed within certain time frames. Staff are added as needed through fee revenues to maintain compliance with state law.

Criteria 5 - Community Engagement

The Town of Garner must demonstrate that it conducted meaningful public engagement with impacted residents and landowners and document how the concerns of residents and landowners have been addressed by Garner (such as UDO changes or modification of the request). Garner shall document all outreach activities to all populations.

1. Website – the Town's website will continue to host a page dedicated to both ETJ generally and this specific request. The main page will be located at:
<https://www.garnernc.gov/departments/planning/extraterritorial-jurisdiction-etj>
2. Video - The Town's Communications staff will work with Garner Planning Department staff to produce a short video highlighting the primary points of what ETJ is and is not. This video will be linked from the Town's website as well as being features on the Town's various social media platforms. Draft text for the video is as follows:

It's no secret that Garner is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Wake County. With that growth comes the need to ensure that development standards and building codes—both in current and future parts of Garner—remain consistent with the Town's land-use plan, its unified development code and its building code requirements.



The best way to ensure this consistency as we continue to grow our municipal boundaries is with a cooperative agreement between the Town and Wake County known as Extra-Territorial (Planning) Jurisdiction, or ETJ.

The ETJ is generally a three-mile extension beyond the Town's corporate limits. Inside the ETJ, work on current residential and non-residential property that involves things such as new additions, decks, porches, fences, pools, storage sheds, dumpster placement, parking areas and signage, are required to be constructed according to the Town's zoning regulations.

If a building permit is required under the North Carolina Building Code, that permit would be obtained locally from Garner Inspections Department.

Property owners inside an ETJ do not pay property taxes to the Town—nor is an extension of an ETJ's boundaries an annexation.

To see if your property is within the Town's current ETJ, visit [MAP URL] and check the interactive map.

3. Mailings – Town staff will mail a notice to each impacted property owner with the proposed extension areas. This notice will include a list of frequently asked questions, contact information (phone and email) for one-on-one consultation, as well as information about a series of community meetings that will be held with the cooperation of local community non-profit and faith-based organizations.
4. ETJ "Hotline" – The Garner Planning Department will staff a phone line and email address for citizens who would like to reach out directly and discuss the ETJ proposal in greater detail.
5. Community Meetings – During the latter portions of May and throughout June, the Town will host community drop-in sessions at locations more convenient to residents and property owners. Locations that have confirmed availability include Juniper Level Missionary Baptist Church, Holland's Church and the Panther Branch Community Development Corporation. Garner Planning Department staff are also seeking out at least one location each in closer proximity to the Northwest and Northeast expansion areas.

As in past requests, Garner staff will document all of the above community engagement activities over the course of the next months and convey those materials promptly to County staff as each activity is completed.

Criteria 6 - Achieving Comprehensive Community Goals

The Town of Garner must demonstrate a track record of working with the County to achieve county-wide comprehensive goals. This track record will be assessed on the following factors: support and actions related to affordable housing, walkability, transit use, vulnerable communities, storm water and green infrastructure.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Town of Garner works closely with Wake County Housing Affordability & Community Revitalization to support housing affordability efforts. In FY2024, the Town of Garner provided gap financing of \$750,000 in partnership with Wake County's commitment of \$25M in financing for Tryon Station, a multi-family, low-income, rental housing development consisting of 176 units. The Town worked closely with County staff and the development team to ensure the project met required timelines for financing approval. On an ongoing basis, the Town works with the department to monitor the status of existing affordable housing and properties that may be opportunities for their housing preservation program. Town staff recently served on the 2024 Application Review Committee for Wake County's Affordable Housing Development Program (AHDP). The Town is currently

developing an Affordable Housing Task Force and Wake County staff will be invited to participate as subject-matter resources to support the work of the group.

Additionally, the Town is actively engaged with other builders to support their applications for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits through the state’s Housing Finance Agency. Past project have included:

- Weston Trace Apartments, opened in 1997;
- Timber Spring Senior Apartments, opened in 2014;
- Pennington Grove Senior Apartments, Phase I opened in 2017 and Phase 2 in 2021;
- Pine Ridge Apartments, opened in 2022.

Presently, the Town is working to support another senior apartment project along US 70, tentatively titled White Oak Villas, as well as several tracts of land to be developed under the leadership of Wake County Habitat for Humanity. Within the past 7-8 years, Wake County Habitat has complete a small neighborhood on Johnson Street, is completing plans for another small neighborhood on Weston Road, and has recently titled nearly 150 cohesive acres along Creech Road in what could become their largest project to date and one of the largest in the state.

WALKABILITY

The Town of Garner continues to make considerable strides in promoting walkability within the Town and adjacent developments within other jurisdictions. Since at least 2003, the Garner Unified Development Ordinance has required sidewalks on both sides of every new street except for local streets in residential subdivisions where just sidewalks on one side of the street were required. This changed in 2022 with the adoption of new rules requiring sidewalks on both sides of every new street in the Town. Additionally, the Town applied for and received a pedestrian planning grant from NCDOT in 2021. Work began on this plan in 2022 and was concluded in 2023, with the plan being adopted earlier this year (2024). This plan allowed the Town the time and space needed to evaluate and re-prioritize a pedestrian project list that had existed since the 2010 Garner Transportation Plan. This was a critical step in providing needed guidance and support for the considerable pedestrian bond dollars that have been approved by voters over the past decade.

2013 Bonds: \$4.3 million dedicated exclusively to pedestrian facilities.
Over \$250,000 for sidewalks included in larger transportation projects.

2021 Bonds: \$1.66 million dedicated exclusively to sidewalks.
\$6.3 million dedicated exclusively to greenways; leveraged \$2.7 million federal.
Over \$250,000 for sidewalks included in larger transportation projects.

In the Town’s newly adopted Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, this renewed focus on walkability is intrinsic to more broad concepts such as “livability”, “a great quality of life”, “high-quality design principles”, and “vibrancy”. Two of the 13 guiding principles of the plan speak to walkability directly: *Parks, Recreation, and Open Space* states that the town should “Promote and expand opportunities where people can be more involved in an active community lifestyle represented, in part, by the presence of high-quality parks and recreation facilities located near where residents live and work, and the bicycle and pedestrian connections between them”; and *Transportation* states that the town should “...consider land use and infrastructure investments together, promoting a network of complete, connected and walkable streets that emphasize the quality and character of both the street design and surrounding development pattern...”.



Figure 13: Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan – Spotlight on Complete Streets

Spotlight on: Complete Streets

What are Complete Streets?

Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations.

Creating Complete Streets means Town governments and their partner transportation agencies must change their approach to building community roads. By adopting a Complete Streets policy, communities direct their transportation planners and engineers to routinely design and operate the entire right of way to enable safe access for all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation. This means that every transportation project will make the street network better and safer for drivers, transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists—making your town a better place to live.

What does a Complete Street look like?

What are the benefits of Complete Streets? There is not a singular design solution for Complete Streets; each one is unique and responds to community needs and development context. A complete street may include: sidewalks, bicycle lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, roundabouts, and more. A Complete Street in a rural area may look different from a Complete Street in a highly urban area, but both are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road.

What are the benefits of Complete Streets?

Complete Streets help create livable communities for various types of users, including children, people with disabilities, and older adults. Complete Streets improve equity, safety, and public health, while reducing transportation costs and traffic congestion. Please see the website www.smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition/ for more information on Complete Streets, their design characteristics, and impact on creating more complete, livable communities.

— Source: *Smart Growth America Organization Website, July 17, 2018*



TRANSIT USE

Outside of the City of Raleigh, Garner plays one of the most significant roles in the pursuit of the goals of the Wake Transit Plan. Garner is situated along planned routes to introduce both Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Commuter Rail (CRT) to the region as well as to expand regular transit services. The Town has incorporated these new BRT and CRT services into its local plans with a special focus on promoting transit-oriented development at Garner Station Boulevard, Downtown and Auburn.

Figure 14: Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan – Focus Area Drawing at Garner Station (BRT)



Garner Station (Area 1)

As a western gateway into the town, Garner Station presents an opportunity to redevelop existing commercial spaces and make a statement about the town at this critical point of entry. In addition to maximizing the utilization of the real estate, more intense development that features signature architecture could welcome visitors and help establish a new image for Garner.

- 1** Signature architecture facing the main traffic routes can serve to welcome those arriving from points north.
- 2** Central green is also a gathering space near a possible transit stop location.
- 3** An internal network of streets provides local access while reducing connections to and vehicular trips on the highways (i.e., US-401 and US-70).
- 4** The potential redevelopment of big-box stores opens up opportunities for more intense development needed for a successful transit service in this node.
- 5** Structured parking allows more real estate to be devoted to building space and amenities.

This conceptual illustration is one of several possibilities for development. It conveys the intended scale, mix of uses, organization of buildings and public spaces, locations for parking, and streetscape design. It is not meant to be prescriptive. Instead, it is a guide, expanding on the direction provided by the Character Typology Map.



Figure 15: Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan – Focus Area Drawing at Auburn (CRT)



NC-540 at Rock Quarry Road / Auburn Station (Area 4)

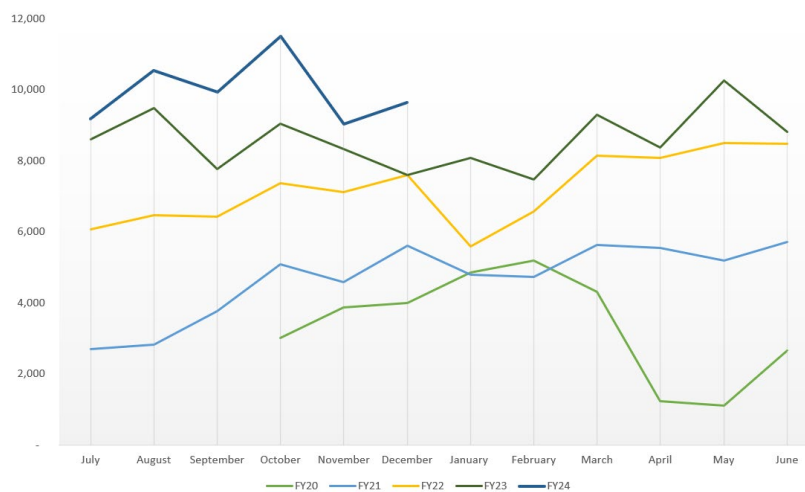
This area presents an opportunity for the town to create an eastern gateway into the town and do so with a level of development that also supports future transit service. This area is envisioned as a stop for regional rail service at "Auburn Station" and a place to accommodate a development activity center with employment, commercial, and institutional uses. The residential neighborhoods in between are an expansion of development already emerging in this area. The mix of housing types would offer options to meet a broad range of demand based on life-stage preferences.

- 1 Access to NC-540 via Rock Quarry Road makes the northern part of this focus area a key location in the region for employment growth, which can be created as a mixed-use environment that includes attached residential and multifamily units.
- 2 The southern portion, with proximity to US-70 and the rail corridor, is ideally suited for transit-supportive development, which should also consist of a mix of uses, including multifamily units in a walkable environment.
- 3 New neighborhoods with a mix of housing products would complement existing residential development while expanding housing choices and increasing population around the area with future transit access.
- 4 Institutional uses, including existing churches, will be components of the mixed-use center and be integrated sensitively.
- 5 Logical connections to existing streets tie compatible neighborhoods together.
- 6 Greenway connections through this area may be accessible from various points, including trailheads that can utilize excess commercial parking on weekends.

This conceptual illustration is one of several possibilities for development. It conveys the intended scale, mix of uses, organization of buildings and public spaces, locations for parking, and streetscape design. It is not meant to be prescriptive. Instead, it is a guide, expanding on the direction provided by the Character Typology Map.

In 2020, GoRaleigh took over the responsibility of providing more direct linkage to the larger transit network in the form of a new Route 20; something that had previously been provided by GoTriangle. Route 20 serving the core of Garner and the White Oak area is one of the few routes in the system that continues to show strong growth in ridership year over year. Originally started as a route with a one-way loop through Garner, this service was expanded in 2022 to include a reverse loop as well. Service is set to expand again to include weekend service later this year.

Figure 16: GoRaleigh Route 20 Ridership Graph Since Inception of Service



GoRaleigh Route 7 has been in service for a much longer time and connects the Garner Station Boulevard area to downtown Raleigh. This route is continuously one of the highest ridership routes in the entire system (currently ranked 3rd in ridership), averaging around 35,000 riders each month with total boardings averaging 27 for each hour of service.

With the assistance of Wake Transit funding, the Town has studied implementation options for a “circulator” service that would connect Routes 7 and 20 through the heart of Garner, providing Garner citizens with improved access to both regular transit routes. The Town hopes to partner with Wake Transit within the next 2-3 fiscal years to have the service up and running, particularly in advance of the “Southern” BRT service from downtown Raleigh to Garner Station Boulevard commencing.

VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

The Town of Garner is always willing to partner with the County on efforts to improve the lives of our vulnerable populations – those who are unemployed, age dependent (under 18 or over 65), have a lower educational attainment, are below the poverty level, and may have trouble staying in their home. Garner is fortunate in that it has a close proximity to Wake Technical Community College and has significant affordable housing opportunities as discussed elsewhere in this report. An example of the Town’s independent cooperative efforts, Town staff have worked with Ford’s Produce Garage on Withers Road in Garner to recently expand their operations in terms of providing fresh produce and food at their existing location. Additionally, child and adult senior care are other services that Town staff continuously encourage developers to provide space for and actively recruit as we know these services are in short supply. Other, perhaps more notable, programs and partnerships are as follows:

REBUILDING TOGETHER OF THE TRIANGLE, INC. (RTT)

The Town of Garner has engaged RTT to operate the Town's new *Housing Preservation Assistance Program*. The purpose of this program is to preserve affordable homeownership and support our Garner neighbors through home repairs, accessibility modifications and home performance upgrades. These improvements are funded by the Town annually and delivered by RTT.

UTILITY CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (UCAP)

UCAP was established by the City of Raleigh to help economically distressed water and sewer utility customers manage their utility bills. UCAP is administered in partnership with the Wake County Human Services Department, which provides eligibility screening services for the program. The Town of Garner provides annual funding to allow its residents to receive support from this program.

GARNER SENIOR CENTER

The Garner Senior Center hosts three (3) agencies within its walls to provide a focal point for the community.

- *The Town of Garner*: Manages the facility and all recreational programming and activities. Currently 3500 members with an average of 15-20 new participants each month. Overall average attendance: 325 per day, 6,500 participants each month. (weekdays only).
- *Resources for Seniors*: Provides information and referral for community resources as well as health and wellness.
- *Meals on Wheels of Wake County*: Provides a daily meal Monday thru Friday for adults 60 and older. Attendance: 80 per day, 1,700 per month (weekdays only). Home delivered meals from site: 50 per day, 1,100 per month (weekdays only).



STORM WATER

Stormwater management has been a priority for the Town of Garner since the late 1970s when floodplain management rules were implemented to prevent development in potential flood hazardous areas. In the 1980s, the Swift Creek Land Management Plan was adopted by the Town of Garner, among several other municipalities within Wake County, with a primary focus on land management of designed impervious surfaces areas in relation to the Swift Creek Watershed and the water supply protection area of Lake Benson. Development located within this area could increase their impervious surface percentages by addition of wet retention pond stormwater devices. By the late 1980s, the Town required stormwater detention for the 1-, 10- and 25-year storm events for most new developments.

In 1993, the water supply watershed protections rules were implemented by NC Department of Environmental Quality, which required stormwater to be treated for total suspended solids (TSS) with the use of stormwater control measures. At this time, the Town planned on building a regional retention pond, which would treat TSS from all developments within the water supply watershed and started to collect a fee-in-lieu for of TSS removal. The Town also started requiring detention of the 100-year storm in certain areas of town by the mid-1990s in areas that had known downstream drainage problems.

By the late 1990s, the Town was one of several municipalities involved in developing the Neuse Rules for Nitrogen Control, which took effect in 2001. Neuse riparian buffer rules were also implemented at the same time as the Neuse Rules for Nitrogen Control. When the Neuse Rules for Nitrogen Control were implemented in 2001, the Town no longer collected a fee-in-lieu of TSS removal for at developments located within the water supply watershed protection area and required developments to treat stormwater on site for both nitrogen and TSS. Retrofit stormwater control measures were built with all monies collected in the 1990s for fee-in-lieu of TSS removal.

In 2005, the Town was designated as a MS4 community with a NPDES Phase II permit. Today, stormwater and flood protection remain an important component of the Engineering Department's function for both development review as well as regulation of stormwater permits.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure is a broad term that continues to evolve over time, gaining considerable steam in the United States as part of the LEED certification program in the building industry. The Town has shown its commitment to green facilities for decades and green stormwater control measures are something that the Town of Garner has recently begun to investigate how it might be incorporated into the Town's stormwater permit with the State of North Carolina. In terms of green facilities, the White Deer Park Nature Center opened in November 2009, having achieved a LEED Gold Rating from the US Building Code Council.

The Town's Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan devotes considerable space to recommendations and tasks related to furthering the Town's efforts in the area of promoting green infrastructure. The Plan defines green infrastructure as including all of the parks, greenways, floodplains, and forested areas now or planned for in the planning area. The first recommendation/task is that the Town create a comprehensive and connected green infrastructure network for the town's planning area. The second is to incorporate natural stormwater management strategies in new developments or stormwater restoration projects. The last is to consider green streets for stormwater management in areas of the community.

Given Garner Forward's definition of green infrastructure, it would also be important to note the Town's strong history in protecting floodplains beyond what state and federal agencies would require. All 100-year floodplains in Garner since March 1, 1987, are further protected by a minimum 50' undisturbed conservation buffer zone that do provide for expanded corridors for wildlife and habitat support as well as greenways. The Plan continues

to emphasize the importance of these efforts by recommending that the Town protect natural areas and environmental assets throughout the community – particularly around Lake Benson and the Swift Creek corridor and Swift Creek’s tributaries.

Concluding Remarks

Based on the extensive information provided in this report, and Garner’s history of working closely with Wake County’s collegial Planning staff, Town staff believe that the Town of Garner not only meets but exceeds the County’s criteria for granting this ETJ request. Garner Planning looks forward to engaging with the citizens of the area to provide clear information regarding what is often mistakenly perceived as a precursor to some kind of forceable annexation of a neighborhood or street and a direct impact on the citizen’s wallet, but rather to explain the minimal impacts to everyday life and perhaps even a benefit or two such as not having to travel to downtown Raleigh for certain permitting and administrative services.

Town staff are open to any further discussions regarding the exact boundaries of the extension but believes a context-sensitive proposal has been put forth in an effort to minimize any concerns as was the case in 2016. Town staff are also once again on stand-by to address any questions or need for additional information should County staff, County Planning Commission members or members of the Wake County Board of Commissioners desire a response.

Special thanks for assistance in preparation of this report:
John Hodges, Garner Assistant Town Manager for Development Services
Leah Harrison, David Talbert and Jaclyn Stannard; Garner Engineering
Sara Warren and Ian Johnson, Garner Budget Office
Rick Mercier and Kyle Kettler, Garner Communications Division
Maria Munoz-Blanco, Garner Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources Director
Forrest Jones, Garner Public Works Director
Nate Groover, Garner Economic Development Director
Rene Hagan, Raleigh Water
Melanie Rausch, GoRaleigh
Erin Joseph, Garner Assistant Planning Director
Alex Bone, Garner GIS Specialist
and to the entire Garner Planning Department team for their support
