

CHAPTER 5

IMPLEMENTATION



The true value of planning lies in the implementation of the Plan. Developing the Plan was the first step to realizing Pender County's **Vision**; now, setting out a strategy for action is critical to achieving the Plan's **Goals**. A structured approach to implementation with specific **Actions** will ensure that the Goals set out in the previous chapter are achieved. These actions are designed to guide the community's growth in a way that reflects shared values, addresses current challenges, and prepares for future needs.

Implementation involves several key steps. These steps include prioritizing actions based on community needs and available resources, assigning responsible parties, and setting timelines for initiation. An additional aspect of the implementation process is creating mechanisms for monitoring progress and updating the plan as needed. This structured approach helps communities remain adaptive to changing conditions while staying committed to the community's Goals. Finally, continued public engagement and interdepartmental coordination will be essential to achieving successful implementation.

This chapter details the implementation cycle of the Plan, its legal context for implementation, the updating and amending process for the Plan, monitoring and reporting steps, and specific implementation actions the County will take. Each **Action** is tied to a specific **Goal** to guide decision-making based on the community's **Vision** for Pender County. By implementing these Actions, the Plan becomes a working framework that shapes the community's evolution — thoughtfully, responsibly, and in alignment with its Vision.





THE PLANNING CYCLE

Comprehensive land use planning is a continuous cycle. It begins with identifying a long-range vision and developing policy guidance through the land use plan. The County then identifies shorter-term priorities (5-10 years) that support the long-range policy direction through departmental work plans or strategic plans. Using these short-term plans, the County identifies funding priorities through the County’s annual budget and capital improvement plan. The County then implements the funded capital projects and operational initiatives to enact the community’s vision and achieve its goals.

Finally, the County assesses implementation efforts to measure and evaluate progress over time to ensure goals are being achieved. Every 5-10 years, the process begins anew for the next 25 years.

LEGAL CONTEXT

The Imagine Pender 2050 Comprehensive Land Use Plan supports Pender County’s compliance with two important legal requirements in North Carolina: the requirement to adopt a comprehensive plan to enable zoning regulations and the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA).

Compliance with North Carolina Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning Regulations

The comprehensive plan is not a regulatory document – it is a policy document containing non-binding guidance and recommendations. The municipal and county planning and zoning enabling statute (NCGS 160D) requires that local governments adopt a comprehensive plan or land use plan if they have an adopted zoning ordinance. Per the statute, these plans “set goals, policies, and programs intended to guide the present and future physical, social, and economic development of the jurisdiction” and these plans are to be “reasonably maintained” with occasional updates.

This statute also requires that zoning be “in accordance with a comprehensive plan” and that local government boards include statements of consistency when making decisions on a zoning text or map amendment. If a local government approves a rezoning request that is not consistent with the comprehensive plan, the zoning amendment shall have the effect of also amending the Future Land Use Map in the approved plan, and no additional request or application for a plan amendment shall be required per the statute.

Compliance with Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) Regulations

The North Carolina Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA) of 1974 mandates all 20 coastal counties to have a land use plan and requires permits for any development in specially designated areas called Areas of Environmental Concern (AEC). After local adoption and certification from the Coastal Resources Commission, this Plan will serve as the County’s official CAMA land use plan. However, as provided in Policy POLICY 1.4, no policies in this Plan are more restrictive than those contained in the North Carolina Administrative Code (NCAC) for the Coastal Area Management Act (CAMA). Accordingly, permits should continue to be issued based solely on the requirements of the North Carolina Division of Coastal Management (NCDQM) and NCAC Title 15A, Chapter 07: Coastal Management, without specific review of the policies or future land use map and its descriptions.

What Qualifies as a CAMA Regulated Development Project?

A CAMA permit must be acquired if a development project meets all the following conditions:

- The project is located within one of the 20 coastal counties of North Carolina;
- The project is defined as "development" by CAMA;

- The project is within, or affects, an Area of Environmental Concern established by the Coastal Resources Commission; and
- The project does not qualify for an exemption.

Besides construction of residential and commercial buildings in an Area of Environmental Concern, "development" also generally includes activities such as dredging or filling coastal wetlands or waters, and construction of marinas, piers, docks, bulkheads, oceanfront structures and roads.

The Coastal Area Management Act (NCGS § 113A-103(5)(a)) defines a development project as: "any activity in a duly designated area of environmental concern involving, requiring or consisting of the construction or enlargement of a structure; excavation; dredging; filling; dumping; removal of clay, silt, sand, gravel or minerals; bulkheading; driving of pilings; clearing or alteration of land as an adjunct of construction; alteration or removal of sand dunes; alteration of the shore, bank or bottom of the Atlantic Ocean or any sound, bay, river, creek, stream, lake or canal."

What is an Area of Environmental Concern (AEC)?

According to the Division of Coastal Management's (DCM) CAMA Handbook for Development, protecting and managing Areas of Environmental

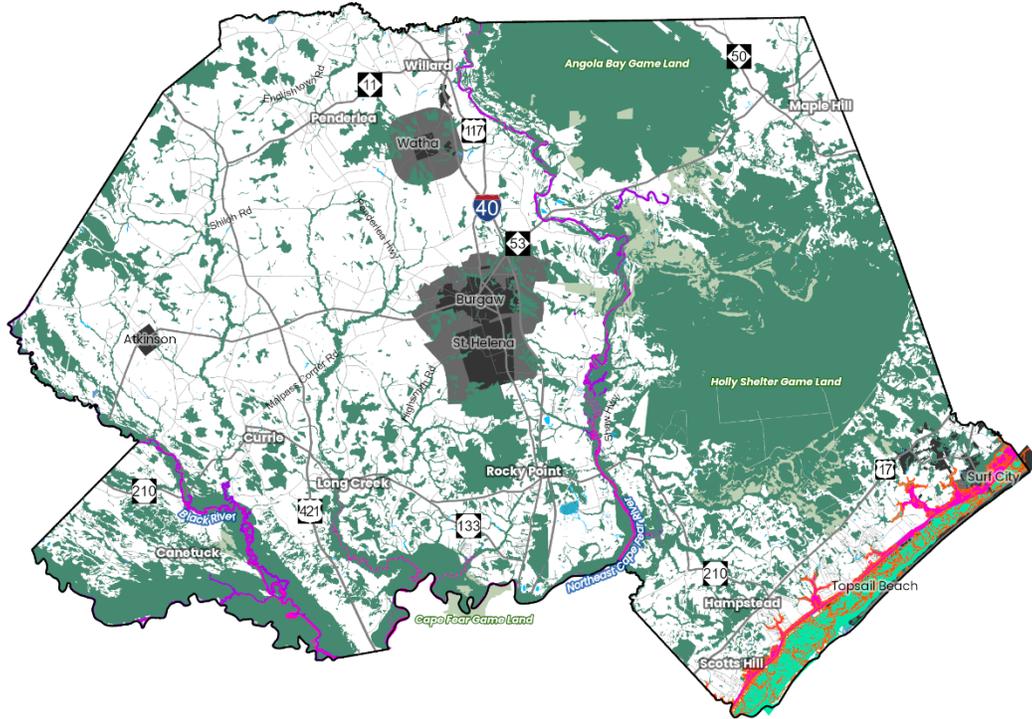
Concern is the basis for the CAMA permitting program. AECs, shown on the map on the next page, are generally areas that are in close proximity to bodies of water, such as the ocean, the Intracoastal Waterway, streams, creeks, marshes, or wetlands.

A development project is likely in an AEC if it is:

- In, or on the shore of, navigable waters within the 20 coastal CAMA counties
- On a marsh or wetland
- Within 75 feet of the normal high-water line along an estuarine shoreline
- Near the ocean beach (e.g., within 60'-120')
- Near an inlet
- Within 30 feet of the normal high-water level of areas designated as inland fishing waters by the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission and the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission
- Near a public water supply
- Within 575 feet of Outstanding Resource Waters defined by the Environmental Management Commission

For more information on the CAMA Handbook for Development in Coastal North Carolina, and for mitigating steps required during development, please visit the Division of Coastal Management website or contact the Pender County Planning and Community Development Department.

WETLANDS AND AREAS OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN



Boundaries

- Municipality
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- County

Areas of Environmental Concern

- Coastal Wetlands - Areas of Environmental Concern
- 575' Shoreline Area of Environmental Concern for Outstanding Resource Waters

Wetlands

- Freshwater Forested/Shrub and Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Pond or Lake
- Estuarine and Marine Wetland
- Riverine Wetland



UPDATING & AMENDING THE PLAN

Imagine Pender 2050 presents a vision for the future, intended to guide policy decisions over the next 25 years. A land use plan should remain a relevant living document that continues to represent the priorities of the community and respond to changing conditions over time. To accomplish this, the Plan should be regularly updated and amended.

The Future Land Use Map should also be monitored to identify trends that may justify changes to the Plan's policy direction and map guidance. Regular reviews can include monitoring changes to the Future Land Use Map and prioritization of the recommended Actions from the Imagine Pender 2050 Comprehensive Plan with other processes, such as development of the capital improvement plan, departmental work plans, or other planning efforts as applicable.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

Actions for implementation should be reviewed and prioritized annually. Identification of annual priorities shall be

determined as funding permits or as allocated by the Pender County Commissioners. Monitoring and reporting on the Imagine Pender 2050 Plan should be an ongoing process that includes status reports on plan implementation to the public at regular intervals. It is good planning practice to report on implementation every two years and it is the intent that an implementation report will be delivered on a regular schedule to the Pender County Commissioners.

ACTION INVENTORY

Achieving the aspirations of the Plan requires a deliberate focus on implementation. Organized by the Plan's Goals, the following Actions identify the specific steps for advancing the County to achieve its vision. These Actions are both a collection of new implementation items identified through the Imagine Pender 2050 planning process and implementation actions included in other County plans, such as the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Each action includes a recommendation for the responsible party or parties to support implementation efforts, which focus on Pender County departments or leadership, but may also include regional or state agencies.

SUSTAINABLE AND MANAGED GROWTH ACTIONS

1. Annually Review the Future Land Use Map

Annually review the Future Land Use Map in concert with new or proposed infrastructure to ensure the desired growth pattern reflects the expansion of new roads, water, sewer, broadband, or schools. Identify geographic areas that may be suitable for an increase or decrease in the relative density associated with coordinated infrastructure plans. This review should include an inventory and analysis of completed or planned collector streets.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

2. Update the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to Align with the Plan

Update the UDO to reflect new policy guidance from the Imagine Pender 2050 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, including:

- a. Ensure that the UDO reflects the County's new Future Land Use Map. In particular, ensure that mixed-use zoning districts support the intent of the County's Future Land Use Map, allowing for multifamily, commercial, office, and mixed-use development.
- b. Require that new storage facilities not be located along the road frontage. Such facilities should be located behind other development and generally not visible from primary roadways, such as US Highway 17.
- c. Include a new cluster subdivision (also called "conservation subdivision") option allowing an alternative to residential subdivisions that allows for smaller lot sizes in exchange for a permanently protected open space set-aside as part of the project.
- d. Evaluate changes to the UDO to encourage pervious surface options.
- e. Encourage preservation and enhancement of tree canopies and tree preservation.
- f. Review the UDO to reflect Imagine Pender 2050 policies regarding wastewater utilities and treatment plants.
- g. Consider a revision to the UDO to include historic overlays as a means of preserving the character of places of historic significance.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

3. Consider Density Bonuses for Conserving Land

Consider incentives such as a density bonus where it can be demonstrated that a development will perpetually preserve coastal natural resources, prime agricultural

lands, or wildlife habitat areas. Consistency with the NCWRC “Conservation Recommendations for Priority Terrestrial Wildlife Species and Habitats in North Carolina” is recommended. Consider this option in relation to cluster subdivisions. Bonus density provisions should consider the suitability for development across the site.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

4. Prepare Small Area Plans

Consider preparing Small Area Plans for identified growth areas, particularly the areas around the new bypass interchanges, Hampstead, Scotts Hill, and Rocky Point.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

5. Consider Procedural Changes to Development Review

Consider procedural changes to the development review process, including:

- a. Consider providing courtesy notification or review of development near neighboring counties or municipalities. The County can consider providing courtesy notification or review of development applications within a certain limit of neighboring county or municipal limits, especially where it may impact service provision.
- b. Consider rezoning all vacant Planned Development tracts to a base zoning district that is consistent with the Future Land Use Map. Establish an inventory of vacant land zoned Planned Development and monitor the status of these parcels.
- c. Consider revising the County’s Master Development Plan review procedure to only apply to phased development plans. Where unphased development is proposed, the Master Development Plan procedure should be modified to reflect a staff and Technical Review Committee review of a conceptual or schematic plan. Consider revising or removing the Master Development Plan procedure for vacant land within the Planned Development zoning district.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

6. Explore Urban Design Guidelines

Consider establishing urban design guidelines for developments within identified growth areas. Development should have guidelines focused on characteristics such as the location of parking, building height, roadway width, setbacks, open space requirements, pedestrian facilities, public spaces, etc. This effort should be undertaken as part of a publicly-driven planning process, such as a design charette.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

7. Allow Multifamily Developments in Certain Zoning Districts By-Right

Consider updating the UDO to allow multifamily developments as a by-right use in certain zoning districts in accordance with the Future Land Use Map.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

8. Establish A Committee of County Departments Involved in Growth and Development

Create a County-led committee focusing on coordinating growth management and service provision across the County. This committee should include members from the Planning and Community Development Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Pender County Utilities, Pender County Schools, and the County Manager's Office.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office / Multiple Department Collaboration

9. Evaluate Water Quality

In coordination with Pender County Utilities, evaluate programs and studies related to drinking water quality and identify any land use related solutions for implementation. Consider establishing more stringent drinking water quality testing procedures than those mandated by state and federal guidelines to inform users of potential water quality issues. Explore adding a water quality specialist on staff to assist with water quality efforts.

Responsible Party: Pender County Utilities, Planning & Community Development

10. Study Additional Sources for Potable Drinking Water

Consider ways to increase drinking water sources, including conducting a study to explore new alternatives, exploring treatment methods or alternative surface water sources, or the installation of wells and related facilities.

Responsible Party: Pender County Utilities, Planning & Community Development

11. Establish a Wellhead Protection Plan

Establish a wellhead protection plan once all well installations are completed.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Pender County Utilities

12. Test Private Drinking Water Wells

Continue the voluntary program through the Environmental Health Department for testing private drinking water wells for those in need. If testing determines water quality

issues exist, consider prioritizing expansion of centralized service to areas impacted by degraded water quality and educating the public on ways to improve water quality.

Responsible Party: Environmental Health, Pender County Utilities, Planning & Community Development

13. Prepare a Cost of Land Use Fiscal Impact Analysis

Establish a regularly updated Cost of Land Use Fiscal Impact Analysis, in coordination with the Planning & Community Development Department, Pender County Utilities, Pender County Finance Department, and the North Carolina Cooperative Extension. This Analysis should include current information about the cost of government services, such as schools and emergency services personnel, compared to revenues generated by each land use type.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Pender County Utilities, Finance, and the North Carolina Cooperative Extension

14. Implement Water and Wastewater Management Actions

Take action to implement long-range planning efforts for water and wastewater management, including:

- a. Update the 2006 Water and Wastewater Master Plans to address current conditions of private wastewater providers, interbasin transfer requirements, emergency water infrastructure, and provisions for alternative drinking water sources.
- b. Establish estimated future demand for water and wastewater service.
- c. Consider identifying and establishing generalized service area boundaries for the location of public and private water and sewer providers.
- d. Evaluate ways to recruit customers and users to increase demand for the Commerce Park Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in a manner that does not encourage sprawl.
- e. Continue to support the wastewater service area of the Rocky Point collection system for commercial customers. Conduct an evaluation to allow for the support of residential development that does not encourage sprawl.
- f. Identify policies, thresholds, and procedures for the consolidation and acquisition of private water or wastewater systems should the issue arise in the future.

- g. Collaborate with Environmental Health to evaluate programs or opportunities to provide grant funding to private residences to remediate or replace failing septic systems.
- h. In coordination with utility providers, establish an allocation of wastewater capacity to be dedicated to future residential versus non-residential use.

Responsible Party: Pender County Utilities, Environmental Health, Planning & Community Development, Private Utility Providers

PLANNED PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES ACTIONS

1. Update Active, Passive, and Recreational Open Space Regulations

Evaluate and implement updated open space regulations in the Unified Development Ordinance. Clearly define open space requirements (differentiating between open space used for passive and active recreation) and recreation standards, which include reasonable and quantifiable areas of facilities or fees to be provided. Consider requiring at least 50% of open space for passive recreation in order to support resilience and preservation of habitat and environmentally sensitive areas. Reconsider minimum passive open space requirement where environmental features provide for low-impact recreational activities.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation

2. Pursue Funding for Beach and Waterfront Access

Pursue funding to improve beach and waterfront access for eligible projects, such as matching grants for pedestrian access projects from the Division of Coastal Management.

Responsible Party: Parks & Recreation, Planning & Community Development, County Manager's Office, Finance, and Division of Coastal Management

3. Update the 1993 Waterfront Access Plan

Consider updating the 1993 Waterfront Access Plan and procure funding for updating the plan from another source, such as the Division of Coastal Management.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation, County Manager's Office, Division of Coastal Management

4. Create Incentives for Public Trust Waters Access

Consider incentives such as a density bonus where a development provides access to public trust waters for County residents. This could be in the form of a permanent access easement or similar agreement. Such a provision may require the dedication of public access easements through extension of right-of-way to high water marks as a means of recreation or a fee-in-lieu for waterfront acquisition. Additional incentives should also be explored.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation

5. Create a Fund for Waterfront Capital Investments

Consider establishing a separate capital improvement fund for the construction of waterfront amenities or acquisition of suitable waterfront access locations.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation, County Manager's Office, Finance

6. Implement Waterfront Access and Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Capital Planning

Implement capital improvement planning for waterfront access and bicycle and pedestrian amenities, in coordination with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation, County Manager's Office, Finance

7. Develop Plan for Public Boat Ramps

In coordination with the Pender County Parks & Recreation Department, develop a plan for public boat ramps. The plan should include the identification of locations suitable for applying for funds for public boat ramps, particularly along coastal waters. Such locations may include Long Creek, Moores Creek, Rockfish Creek, and a Scotts Hill Intracoastal Waterway access. Consider co-location of other appropriate recreational amenities at future boat ramp sites that may create eligibility for multiple grant funding sources.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

8. Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Planning

Prepare a new, updated Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan approximately every five years. Ensure that the updated plan adequately reflects current and future recreation needs. Adopt implementation measures to acquire and develop parks, recreation areas, and open spaces.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation

9. Evaluate Parks and Recreation Capital Projects to Balance Revenue Generation

Evaluate future capital improvement projects to include a balance between revenue generating facilities and non-revenue generating facilities.

Responsible Party: Parks & Recreation, County Manager's Office, Finance

10. Plan for Expanding Athletic Fields and Programming

Establish and implement expansion plans for athletic fields and programming at Pender County Parks facilities.

Responsible Party: Parks & Recreation

11. Create a Schedule and Process for Updating Required Recreational Units

Establish a schedule and process to update the recreational unit requirement value so that investment in required recreational amenities keeps up with inflation. Conduct research to evaluate additional programs or methods to support recreational amenities.

- a. Establish an updated monetary value for recreational amenities per dwelling unit to more appropriately allocate fees captured as part of the development approval process.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation

12. Create a Parks and Recreation Maintenance Policy

Establish a formal Maintenance Operations Plan and policy.

Responsible Party: Parks & Recreation

13. Evaluate Opportunities to Increase Parks and Recreation Funding and Revenue Generation

Consider increasing spending to bring per capita figures closer to those of the counties in the region and communities of similar populations. Consider increasing revenue generation within the department to bring the cost recovery closer to the state average.

Responsible Party: Parks & Recreation, County Manager's Office, Finance

14. Coordinate with the School System to Plan for School Capital Needs

Establish and continually update a twenty-year plan for Pender County Schools which provides enrollment figures, capital improvement needs, and funding constraints. Ensure that capital improvements to schools adequately address the needs of different areas of the County, including improvements to existing schools to update the facilities to modern standards.

Responsible Party: Pender County Schools

15. Create a Formal Process for Assessing Impacts of New Developments on School Capacity

Consider improved methods for assessing school capacity impacts by new development proposals. This could include establishing a benchmark for an estimated number of students generated per development type (single-family, multifamily, etc.) to identify the impacts of a development on the school system.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Pender County Schools

16. Establish School Capacity Thresholds

Consider establishing school capacity thresholds (80-90%) whereby active capital improvement measures will be initiated to alleviate future overcrowding.

Responsible Party: Pender County Schools, County Manager's Office, Planning & Community Development

17. Establish School Site Reservation Policy

In coordination with the Pender County Board of Education, establish and adopt a policy that sets out guidelines for identifying subdivisions above a certain land area or density that should include a school site to be reserved for future use, including the location and size of each school site that can be used as part of a Conditional Zoning or Development Agreement process. When siting new school locations, especially in the eastern portion of the County, it will be important to ensure Smoke Awareness Areas are evaluated to optimize the use of controlled burning for wildfire reduction and habitat management.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, County Manager's Office, Pender County Schools

18. Address Gaps in Broadband Access

Establish a telecommunications committee to assess the potential for broadband internet access in underserved areas and to act as a point of contact for developers, residents, businesses, and providers. Consider including internet service providers in the Technical Review Committee to support the provision of broadband service in underserved areas where a new development is being proposed.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, County Manager's Office

19. Green Infrastructure Practices

Consider amending the UDO to encourage **green infrastructure** practices as part of development proposals.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

EXPANDED ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES ACTIONS

1. Identify Sites for North Carolina Department of Commerce Site Certification

Identify land suitable for the North Carolina Department of Commerce or utility company's Site Certification program.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Wilmington Business Development, Planning & Community Development, Local Chambers of Commerce, Utility Providers, Business and Land Owners

2. Support Economic Development Recruitment and Expansion

Consider committing additional County resources to improve and expand efforts to retain and recruit industries in the Industry and Commerce areas. Conduct a survey of potential industrial sites to coordinate with economic recruitment efforts in collaboration with Wilmington Business Development.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Wilmington Business Development, Planning & Community Development, Utility Providers, Business and Land Owners

3. Collaborate with Wallace to Support Economic Expansion Near Airport

Continue to collaborate with the Town of Wallace to identify opportunities for commercial and industrial expansion in the proximity of the Wallace-Pender Airport.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Wilmington Business Development, Planning & Community Development, Town of Wallace

4. Identify Marine Biotech and Related Economic Development Opportunities

Consider options to partner with the UNCW Center for Marine Science and MARBIONIC to identify opportunities for marine biotech, aquaculture, or uses that would be compatible with coastal tourism.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Marine Biotech and Related Businesses for Coastal Tourism

5. Protect Historic Properties

Seek to designate historically, culturally, or architecturally significant properties through the National Register of Historic Places or local historic programs. Consider prioritizing historically, culturally, or architecturally significant properties for public acquisition or protection.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation, Land Owners

6. Implement Historic and Cultural Preservation Efforts

Identify ways to coordinate tourism efforts with historic and cultural preservation efforts, including connections with the Gullah Geechee Corridor.

Responsible Party: Parks & Recreation, Planning & Community Development, National Park Service, Poplar Grove Plantation, Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor and Commission

7. Support Small Business Entrepreneurship

Coordinate with the Small Business Development Technology Center (SBDTC) to support small business and entrepreneurship goals and strategies.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Small Business Development Technology Center

8. Support Tourism Development Organizations

Coordinate with tourism development organizations to support historic preservation, environmental conservation, and identify land use regulation barriers that hinder these efforts.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Wilmington Business Development, Tourism Development Organizations

ATTAINABLE HOUSING CHOICES ACTIONS

1. Develop an Updated Housing Needs Assessment and Recommendations

Develop an updated Housing Needs Assessment for Pender County and identify recommendations for financial tools to provide more attainable housing within the assessment.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Pender County Housing Authority

2. Establish a New Coastal Residential Zoning District

Establish a new Coastal Residential zoning district or overlay district for single-family residential development within close proximity of estuarine or coastal waters. Such a district should incentivize low-impact development (LID), limit impervious surface coverage, require tree preservation and mitigation, and incentivize the allocation of public access to coastal waters.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

3. Remove Barriers to Housing Choices

Evaluate the UDO for barriers to middle income housing, such as single-family houses on small lots, patio homes, cottage courts, townhomes, small multifamily (2-4 units), and accessory dwelling units.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

4. Encourage Use of Housing Choice Voucher Program

Develop a public education program to encourage residents who are looking to rent out their home to utilize the Housing Choice Voucher program through the Pender County Housing Authority.

Responsible Party: Pender County Housing Authority

5. Consider Zoning Changes to Support Housing Options Near Employment Centers

Consider establishing zoning regulations which support a variety of housing options in close proximity to primary employment centers, such as the US Highway 421 corridor and in Rocky Point.

Responsible Party: Pender County Planning & Community Development

6. Explore Incentives for Attainable Housing

Consider incentives, such as a density bonus or dimensional standard flexibility, for development that provides housing for low to moderate income households.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Pender County Housing Authority

7. Coordinate with Non-governmental Partners on Housing Security

Consider partnering with faith-based or non-profit organizations, such as the Pender Long Term Recovery Group, to offer support elements for housing security, including home repair, rental assistance, and homeowner education programs.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Planning & Community Development, Pender County Housing Authority, Local Organizations (such as Pender Long Term Recovery Group)

8. Annually Evaluate Development Regulations to Ensure Alignment with Housing Goals

Conduct an annual review of County housing policy and regulations to determine if modifications to regulations are needed to achieve the County's housing goals.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Pender County Housing Authority

SUPPORTED AGRICULTURAL AND WORKING LANDS ACTIONS

1. Develop a Farmland Preservation Plan

In coordination with the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Office, develop a Farmland Preservation Plan. Pursue grant funds available through the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund to complete a Farmland Preservation Plan. During the development of the Farmland Preservation Plan, explore options for the creation of a Prime Agricultural Land overlay district or financial tools designed to protect and preserve agricultural land.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Planning & Community Development, North Carolina Cooperative Extension Office, North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund

2. Explore Agritourism Opportunities

Explore ways to encourage agritourism. Ideas may include short-term rental campgrounds and rural event venues.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, North Carolina Cooperative Extension Office

3. Support Alternative Farming Methods

Consider providing resources to help develop, promote, and support alternative farming methods in identified prime agricultural areas.

Responsible Party: North Carolina Cooperative Extension Office, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Pender County Soil & Water

4. Expand and Support the Local Food System

Identify ways for the County to expand the local food system in coordination with the Enhanced Quality of Life and Community Health Goal, including:

- a. Establish partnerships to facilitate a program for farmers markets on County property.
- b. Collaborate with partners (such as North Carolina Cooperative Extension, local Chambers of Commerce, or Tourism Development Authority) to invest in a consumer education campaign that highlights the benefits of buying local produce, beef, poultry, pork, and fish. The County should also inform consumers of the locations where they can purchase these products in Pender County.

Responsible Party: North Carolina Cooperative Extension Office, Planning & Community Development

5. Invest in Beaver Management Programs

Continue investing in programs related to beaver management, including:

- a. Consider developing a public outreach program to educate residents about the potential benefits of the Beaver Management Program.
- b. Develop a map to identify known beaver conflict areas to assist with targeted outreach for the program.

Responsible Party: Pender County Planning & Community Development

6. Appropriately Regulate Solar Farms

Evaluate ways to better regulate solar farms in Pender County, including:

- a. Research planning best practices related to solar farms.
- b. Establish a guidance manual for the siting or installation of solar farms that will address such topics as incentives, prime farmland soils, land clearing, stormwater management and decommissioning. This can be done in coordination with the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services.

Responsible Party: Pender County Planning & Community Development, Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services

SAFE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION ACTIONS

1. Develop a Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Develop a county-wide comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plan, including coverage of the WMPO and RPO areas. Continue to implement the network recommendations from the current Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation, NCDOT, Cape Fear Council of Governments, Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Cape Fear Rural Transportation Planning Organization

2. Require Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure in New Development

Require the installation of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in new development as outlined in the current Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and a future Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation, NCDOT, Cape Fear Council of Governments, Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Cape Fear Rural Transportation Planning Organization

3. Research Bicycle and Pedestrian Funding Opportunities

Explore opportunities to secure funding for bicycle and pedestrian trails. This includes establishing a funding mechanism for maintenance of these trails.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation, NCDOT, Cape Fear Council of Governments, Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Cape Fear Rural Transportation Planning Organization

4. Consider Increasing Development Intensity at Primary Rural Roadway Intersections

Consider increasing development intensity and uses at primary rural roadway intersections in accordance with the Future Land Use Map.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

5. Provide Updates on the Implementation of the Pender County Streets Plan

Provide updates to the Planning Board regarding the implementation status of the Streets Plan. Such a report should identify issues and opportunities for improving the existing requirements contained in the UDO, if any.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

6. Address Impacts of New Development on Transportation Systems

Identify ways to address the impacts of new developments on transportation systems with regional partners, including NCDOT, WMPO, RPO, municipalities within the County, and neighboring counties.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation, NCDOT, Cape Fear Council of Governments, Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, Cape Fear Rural Transportation Planning Organization, Neighboring Counties, Local Municipalities

7. Coordinate Updates to the Streets Plan with the Future Land Use Map

Update the Streets Plan to be consistent with the desired development pattern as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

8. Clarify Connectivity Requirements

Update the UDO to include provisions clarifying the intent of connectivity requirements to ensure that there is interconnectivity between adjacent developments and future development. This may include requiring roads connecting to existing or future adjacent development to be platted as public right-of-way and prohibiting physical obstructions to connections.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

9. Consider Stub Street Requirements

Consider requiring a stub-out connection where development is adjacent to single-family lots fronting upon thoroughfares or arterial roadways to allow for future connections.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

10. Update and Maintain the Right-of-Way and “Paper Street” Database

Update and continually maintain a database of future right-of-way dedications, “paper streets,” and stub-outs. Research recorded documents to expand the database to include existing paper streets to ensure maximum coordination and connectivity.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

11. Update Private Street Requirements

Update the private street design standards as outlined in the UDO to allow for greater flexibility in design and improved interconnectivity.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

12. Consider Requiring Public Access for Private Streets

Consider requiring all private roads and streets to include an easement to allow for travel on the roadway by the general public to improve interconnectivity between developments. If future development includes access to public facilities or public trust areas, such an easement should be required.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

13. Examine Opportunities to Improve Rural Community Transportation

Explore opportunities to increase the number of transportation services and options in rural communities to link rural residents to jobs, health care, and other local services.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

14. Explore Expansion of Paratransit Infrastructure

Explore the possibility of partnering with Pender Adult Services to coordinate transportation stops and services between PAS-TRAN and WAVE Transit.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Pender Adult Services

15. Establish Funding and Maintenance Responsibility for Non-Motorized Transportation Maintenance

Establish a funding strategy and continuing maintenance policy and program for construction of County sidewalks, greenways, and multi-use paths. Funding and maintenance responsibility shall be under the purview of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation

16. Consider Establishing a Greenway Facilities Plan

Consider options to establish a Countywide Greenway Plan. Such a plan will outline priority locations for greenway facilities, funding mechanisms tied to future development, and procedures for maintenance and continued upkeep.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation

17. Establish a Bicycle and Pedestrian Service Area Map

Establish a bicycle and pedestrian transportation infrastructure service area map. This map can be used as a resource when allocating funding collected as part of a fee-in-lieu program to install bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation

18. Expand WAVE Micro On-Demand Service

Expand WAVE micro on-demand service in Hampstead and Rocky Point.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Planning & Community Development, WAVE Transit, Pender Adult Services

19. Implement the Principles of Vision Zero and Complete Streets

In coordination with the Enhanced Quality of Life and Community Health Actions, identify ways to implement the principles of **Complete Streets** or a **Vision Zero** program to improve health and safety.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, NCDOT, Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AND RESILIENCE ACTIONS

1. Consider Establishing a Conservation Easement Program

Consider establishing a formal program to support conservation easements facilitated by Pender County. Research examples of other successful programs in North Carolina, such as Wake County or Buncombe County.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation

2. Develop a Tree Preservation Plan

Develop a Tree Preservation Plan and update the UDO with clear guidance to protect and retain trees.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation

3. Establish a Formalized Procedure to Evaluate Potential Public Land Acquisition

Establish a formalized procedure for evaluating potential public land acquisition projects, which considers wildlife habitat conservation and wildlife corridors.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation,

4. Establish an Overlay for Outstanding Resource Waters

Establish an overlay district for the CAMA 575-foot Outstanding Resource Waters AEC buffer to encourage enhanced mitigation of stormwater runoff, impervious surface limitations, and preservation of tree canopy.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

5. Enhance Riparian Buffers

Consider identifying incentives for new conservation subdivisions whereby riparian buffers are increased in size from the standard 30-foot buffer. Identify strategies to limit land disturbance and tree removal near creeks and other environmentally sensitive areas.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

6. Consider Establishing an Engineering Department

Consider establishing an engineering department within the County government to oversee stormwater management.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Planning & Community Development

7. Enhance Stormwater Management

Explore opportunities to increase the requirements for stormwater management for all types of development. In doing so, the County should adopt stormwater regulations to account for fill (including standalone lots), impervious surface coverage limits, and the designation of a design storm year. Such requirements should identify regulations for the construction phase (i.e., erosion and sedimentation control) and post-construction phase (i.e., stormwater control).

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

8. Consider Stormwater Control Requirements Beyond State Minimums

Consider modifying applicability requirements for stormwater management that are more stringent than those outlined by 15A NCAC 02H .1019, whereby 10,000 square feet of impervious surface or greater than an acre of disturbance triggers stormwater mitigation.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

9. Establish a Stormwater and Ditch Maintenance Program

Consider establishing a stormwater and ditch maintenance program coordinated through an existing or new Pender County department and with the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Pender County Planning & Community Development, NCDOT

10. Develop Stormwater Master Plans

Develop Stormwater Master Plans in specific areas with a principal focus on reduction of stormwater runoff volumes. These areas should be primarily located in older neighborhoods that were constructed prior to established state stormwater rules. Partnerships with regional local governments or agencies may be required.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

11. Reduce Stormwater Discharge

Expand efforts to identify and eliminate stormwater discharges resulting from County building, facilities, convenience centers, new developments, and activities. For example, downspout disconnection to impervious surfaces and the installation of rain gardens can substantially reduce stormwater runoff discharges.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Facilities, Planning & Community Development

12. Develop a Watershed Restoration Plan

Pursue grant funds to assist in developing a Watershed Restoration Plan. An option may be grant funds distributed by the Division of Water Resources to Regional Commissions and Councils of Government to carry out water quality management and planning projects. When developed, ensure that the Watershed Restoration Plan contains the nine minimum elements required to receive EPA Section 319 funds for implementation of capital improvements projects.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, North Carolina Division of Water Resources, Cape Fear Council of Governments

13. Explore Water Conservation Programs and Education Efforts

Research and identify viable water conservation programs and associated public education efforts to implement in Pender County, such as the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services Soil & Water Conservation program, Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP).

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Pender Soil & Water

14. Expand Incentives for Low-Impact Development

Expand options for implementing incentives for developments that utilize low-impact development (LID) techniques, including reducing impervious surfaces, retaining and infiltrating runoff on-site, and managing the potential impacts of stormwater runoff.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

15. Consider Wildlife Habitat Conservation in Legislative Decisions

Consider requiring all rezoning and conditional zoning applications to be reviewed by staff in relation to the Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission Habitat Conservation Recommendations.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

16. Consider Expanding the Definition of Environmental Features in the UDO

Consider expanding the definition of “environmental features” in the UDO to include Areas of Environmental Concern (AECs), Significant Natural Heritage Areas (SNHAs), Natural Heritage Element Occurrences (NHEOs), Smoke Awareness Areas, and Prime Farmland soils.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

17. Consider Revising Density Calculations in the UDO

Consider using a density calculation in the UDO that equals the total acreage of the site minus wetlands (as defined under the Clean Water Act Section 404) to ensure consistency in the way density is calculated in the development review process.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

18. Explore Standards to Provide Wildlife Corridors

Consider providing specific standards for the provision of open space to include features such as habitat connectivity and tree preservation. Habitat connectivity should encourage the dedication of large contiguous tracts of land, typically 10 acres at a minimum, with a minimum average width of 500 feet and separation from building activity of at least 350 feet and conservation of natural open space that is at least 300 feet wide between environmental features. This will be encouraged to better ensure that wildlife can travel between core habitats. Where such cannot be reasonably provided, payment of a fee-in-lieu should be provided to the County for the future dedication of park or conservation land that will protect wildlife habitat, while also providing an amenity for the general public and residents of the subject development.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

19. Consider Establishing a Resource Conservation Incentive District

Consider establishing a Resource Conservation Incentive District located in and adjacent to floodplain forests along streams and rivers, and adjacent to and between Game Lands.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

20. Expand Tree Preservation and Mitigation Requirements

Consider expanding the applicable development types – rather than zoning districts – that require tree preservation or mitigation.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

21. Remove Tree Survey Exemptions

Remove the exemption for tree surveys and mitigation in Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs), Areas of Environmental Concern (AECs), wetland buffers, and stream buffers.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

22. Provide Bulkhead Education

Consider providing outreach and education to homeowners regarding the impacts failing bulkheads can have on surface waters and a property's exposure to damage.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

23. Establish a Drainage Improvement Plan

Establish a plan that sets forth observation and maintenance of creeks and streams within the County to reduce the impact of future flood events, particularly near culverts under roadways.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

24. Strengthen Floodplain Development Regulations

Annually review the County's Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance and consider options for increasing standards for development in flood zones as a means of being proactive in reducing the impact of future flood events.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

25. Designate Vulnerable Lands as Environmental Conservation

Ensure applicable Intracoastal Waterway islands, spoil areas, conservation lands, flood buyout properties, and Game Lands are designated as Environmental Conservation on the County's official zoning map.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

26. Gather and Share Resilience Data

Identify areas of inundation from recent events, such as Hurricane Florence and Hurricane Matthew. Identify data available to support UDO changes in the 100-year, 500-year, or 1000-year floodplains. Investigate opportunities to provide signage for areas that were underwater for those events to promote public education about resilience. Consider collaborations with regional and state partners to identify projected future hazard impacts (at a regional scale) for future preparedness.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Cape Fear Council of Governments, DOT

COMMUNITY UNITY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIONS

1. Consider Web-Based Tools to Notify the Public of Development Projects

Consider web-based tools to provide public notification of upcoming development projects.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Information Technology Services, Communications Manager

2. Establish a Public Education Program for Natural Hazards

Consider establishing a public education program designed to help inform the public about their exposure to natural hazards and actions they can take to mitigate potential damage to public health, safety, and property from natural disasters. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Ensure the local library and the Pender County website maintains documents about flood insurance, flood protection, floodplain management, and natural and beneficial functions of floodplains. Many documents are available free of charge from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
- b. Encourage builders, developers, and architects to become familiar with the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP's) land use and building standards.
- c. Provide local real estate agents with handouts advising potential buyers to investigate flood hazards for the property they are considering purchasing.
- d. Advertise the availability of flood insurance on an annual basis.
- e. Post hazard related information on the County's website and distribute appropriate educational materials using the County's social media outlets.

Responsible Party: Emergency Management, Planning & Community Development

3. Consider Programs such as a Community Planning Academy

Consider innovative programs to engage the public, such as a community planning academy or a civic leadership academy.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Planning & Community Development,

ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMMUNITY HEALTH ACTIONS

1. Build Community Capacity

Research ways to build capacity for community health. This could include applying to the federal AmeriCorps VISTA program, which organizes volunteers that commit to a year of service in their chosen community working on community issues.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Community Organizations

2. Identify Grant Funding for Program Support

Identify grant funding to support the development of programs and initiatives identified in the Enhanced Quality of Life and Community Health Policies and Actions.

Responsible Party: County Manager's Office, Planning & Community Development, Finance

3. Establish a Farmers Market

Establish a farmers market program in Pender County to serve both the eastern and western portions of the County.

Responsible Party: North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Pender County Health and Human Services, Non-profit organizations

4. Create a Local Food Directory

Create a directory of local food producers and promote it through the Communications Manager.

Responsible Party: Communications Manager, County Manager's Office, North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Health and Human Services

5. Create a Local Food Council

Create a local food council to bring together community stakeholders to assess the local food system, align efforts in the community, monitor progress, and share recommendations with elected officials.

Responsible Party: Communications Manager, County Manager's Office, North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Health and Human Services

6. Develop Regional Partnerships

Create connections or develop conversations with other planning departments in North Carolina that prioritize community health in their work, such as the City of Wilson’s Local Food Initiative.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development

7. Develop an Aging Plan

Consider the development of an Aging Plan in coordination with Pender County Health & Human Services or with funding from resources like the AARP Foundation or the Cape Fear Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging. A Master Aging Plan provides comprehensive and coordinated delivery of services to meet the needs, expectations, and contributions of a growing aging population.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Health and Human Services, AARP, Cape Fear Council of Governments Area Agency on Aging

8. Achieve Recreation Goals Within Conservation Easements

Develop a plan to proactively work with landowners and stakeholders to implement County recreational goals and expand public-private partnerships. After the establishment of a conservation easement program, leverage easements to achieve recreation goals.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation

9. Promote Large County Parks as Community Hubs

Promote large County parks as **community hubs** – multi-purpose areas that build social connectedness and community opportunities – especially in rural areas of the County that are lacking community gathering spaces.

Responsible Party: County Manager’s Office, Planning & Community Development, Parks & Recreation, Health and Human Services

10. Increase Accessibility of Food Resources

Partner with local non-profits and other organizations to increase accessibility of healthy food sources to communities in need.

Responsible Party: Local Non-profits, Health and Human Services, Planning & Community Development,

11. Review and Update the UDO to Strengthen Local Food Systems

Review the UDO for any land use regulation barriers to the local food systems.

Responsible Party: Planning & Community Development, North Carolina Cooperative Extension