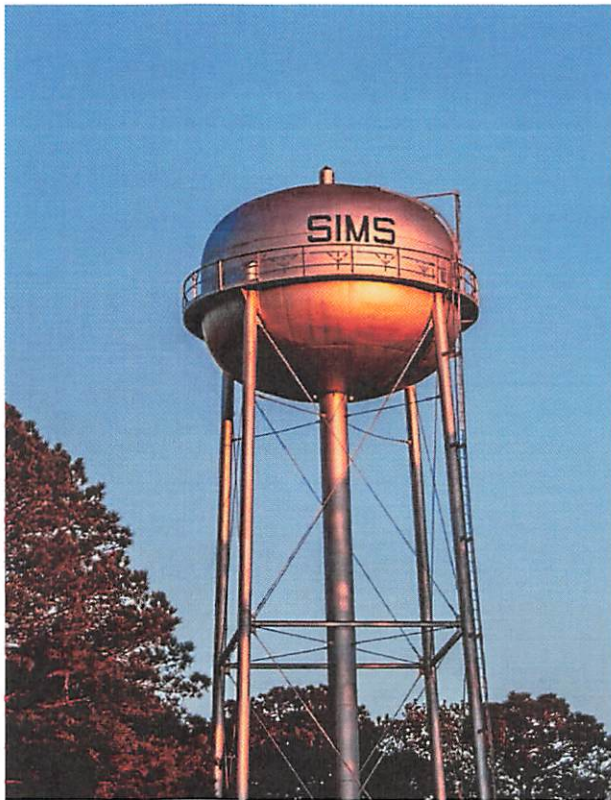

LAND USE PLAN – 2032

Town of Sims, North Carolina



I wouldn't trade one day, here, in small town USA.

Quote Master

Adopted June 27, 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction

Why do a Community Plan?	1
Plan Authority	2
Town of Sims Planning Board is Created	3
Planning Area and Jurisdiction	3
Town of Sims Takes Action – 2019	3
Land Use Plan Advisory Committee	4
How to Use the Land Use Plan.....	8
Key Words Used in This Plan	9

CHAPTER 2: Town of Sims' History

The Beginning.....	11
Growth from Agriculture.....	12
Simms/Sims Chartered and Incorporated.....	12
Town Growth	12
Public Sewer and More Growth	14
Planning for the Future	14

CHAPTER 3: Current Conditions

Part 1: Population Characteristics.....	15
Part 2: Household Economic Characteristics.....	20
Part 3: Businesses and Retail Trade Area Analysis.....	23
Part 4: Public Facilities and Services.....	32
Part 5: Transportation	42
Part 6: Environmental and Natural Resources.....	48
Part 7: Appearance.....	56
Part 8: Existing Land Use	58

CHAPTER 4: Vision, Goals, Strategies, and Policies

Part 1: Vision Statement.....	62
Part 2: Goals, Implementation Strategies, and Policies	63

CHAPTER 5: Land Use Plan Community Survey

Introduction.....	84
Procedure	84
Results and Discussion	85

CHAPTER 6: Future Land Use Strategies

Introduction	89
Part 1: Scan of Neighbors' Views on Sims Area Future and Potential Growth ..	89
Part 2: Neighborhoods/Planning Areas.....	91
Part 3: Future Land Use and Strategies Map	92

CHAPTER 7: IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES (Action Plan)

Introduction	96
Table 23: Implementation Strategies	97

APPENDIX A: Land Use Plan Community Survey

APPENDIX B: Public Workshop Results & Factors by Neighborhoods

APPENDIX C: Toolbox of Strategies

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Town Leadership

Miranda Boykin, Mayor
Rhonda Payne, Commissioner
Helen Boykin, Commissioner
Kaleb Woodard, Commissioner
Nichole Weeks, Commissioner
Serenity Hargrove, Commissioner

Danny Howell, former Commissioner
Ray Wells, former Commissioner
Bobby Ruffin, former Commissioner
Christopher Kopka, former Commissioner

Planning Board

Donald Payne, Chair
Donnie Sherrod

Don Evans
Tyler Lamm

Danny Howell
Nichole Weeks

Land Use Plan Advisory Committee

Donald Payne, Chair
Kaleb Woodard
Michael Sealey
Susan Evans
Earl Campbell
Lauren Cates

Danny Howell
Daisy Cervantes
Matt Creech
Nichole Weeks
Heather Nance

Don Evans
Miranda Boykin
Ned Coleman
Serenity Hargrove
Robert Wilson

Organizational Contributions

Upper Coastal Plains Rural Planning Org. – James Salmons
NCDOT Division 4, District 2 – Bobby Liverman, P.E.
Wilson County Soil & Water Conservation District, Josh Pate
Wilson County Agricultural Extension Office, Norman Harrell
Wilson County GIS Services, Will Corbett
City of Wilson, Chief Planning & Development Officer – Rodger Lentz
Green Engineering, PLLC
UNC School of Government, Public Law & Government, Ben Hitchings
NC REDD, Economic Development Planner, Bruce Naegelen
NC Office of State Budget and Management, Dr. Michael Cline

Staff

Miranda Boykin, Town Administrator
Sandra Boykin, Town Clerk
Lisa Harrell, Office Assistant

Consultants

Dennis Patton, Land Use Planner
Sheldon LeMay, GIS Mapping

TABLES

- Table 1: Sims' Population 1930 to 2010 compared to Wilson County
- Table 2: Percent Change in Sims' Population 1930 to 2010
- Table 3: Comparison of Percent Change in Population 2000 to 2010
in Incorporated Towns in Wilson County and nearby Bailey
- Table 4: Subdivisions Platted in Town Limits and/or Annexed Since 2002
- Table 5: Sims' Projected Population from 2010 to 2017 and 2018
- Table 6: Population by Gender from 2000 to 2010
- Table 7: Population by Age from 2000 to 2010
- Table 8: Racial Composition of Sims, 2000 to 2010
- Table 9: Educational Attainment for Persons 25 Years and Over, 2000 and
2013-17 5-Yr. Estimates
- Table 10: Comparison of Family & Nonfamily Incomes from 2010 to
2020 5-Year Estimates
- Table 11: Households by Income Grouping, 2000 Census, 2006-10 and
2013-17 5-Year Estimates
- Table 12: Occupation Distributions and Comparison from 2010 to 2020
5-Year Estimates
- Table 13: Work Force Industry Distributions and Comparison from 2010 to
2020 – 5-Year Estimates
- Table 14: List of Businesses within the Town of Sims Planning Area
- Table 15: Sims Residents Commute Locations
- Table 16 Regional Demographic Comparison 2021
- Table 17: 2017 Industry Summary for 5-minute/10-minute/20-minute Drive Time
- Table 18: 2017 Retail Sales Leakage – Sims Trade Areas Comparison
- Table 19: 2019 and 2021 Metered Monthly Gallons of Wastewater Consumption
- Table 20: Categories and Number of Water Connections
- Table 21: 2021 Monthly Water Consumption by Groups of Customers
- Table 22: Threatened Fish and Wildlife
- Table 23: Implementation Strategies (Action Plan) Matrix

FIGURES

- Figure 1: Town Limits & Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Planning Area
- Figure 2: Regional Context
- Figure 3: Town of Sims' Commuting Patterns
- Figure 4: Trade Areas/Drive Times within 5, 10, 20-Minutes from Center of Sims
- Figure 5: Town of Sims' Water and Sewer System Map
- Figure 6: Town of Sims 2021 Powell Bill Certified Map
- Figure 7: NCDOT Highway Maintenance Improvement Program Map
- Figure 8: NCDOT Annual Average Daily Traffic and Capacity Map
- Figure 9: US Geological Survey Topo Map
- Figure 10: Sims and ETJ Soils Map
- Figure 11: Sims Area USGS Streams and Hydrology Map
- Figure 12: Sims Areas Floodplain Map
- Figure 13: Sims Area Wetlands Map
- Figure 14: Existing Land Use Map
- Figure 15: Current Zoning
- Figure 16: Neighborhoods & Planning Areas Map
- Figure 17: Future Land Use and Strategies Map

APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Community Survey
- Appendix B: Workshop Results and Observations
- Appendix C: Toolbox of Strategies

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Why Create a Community Plan?

Why should Sims develop a 10-year Land Use Plan? A community plan creates a shared sense of direction and a framework for future community decisions. The planning process is an opportunity to bring community members together in a uniquely different context to consider their common future, and encourage the community to explore new ideas, possibilities, and make connections on various development elements and issues. Communities seldom stand still. They continually grow and evolve as an entity that strives to make decisions on both public and private land use and development aspects. Community planning is a continuum, and the Town needs to understand the forces of change and to how to achieve a better future. Sims should consider the following reasons and advantages as the new 10-year Land Usage Plan is developed:

- **To involve the community in building consensus on needs and policies.** Thus, inclusion of the Town's citizens throughout the development of the Land Usage Plan, will promotes unity and pride in the implementation of the final plan.
- **To anticipate change in order to shape it and to take action to solve problems before they become worse.**
- **To manage the construction and maintenance of public infrastructure and facilities** to influence the location of new development.
- **To plan for and set the stage for commercial and industrial development,** which makes it the development process easier and at same time ensures a good match for desired businesses as a good match for the community.
- **To capture the community's sense of place** by preserving neighborhoods and unique features that shape its character. The Plan allows the community to shape its appearance and beautification.
- **To remind and help the community think of regional cooperation,** and of its partners in order to plan for, obtain services, and/or programs the community cannot provide for itself.

- To **foster a caring attitude, pride, and sense of collective accomplishment** in maintaining its physical and social character.

Plan Authority

State enabling legislation for local planning and for related development regulation authorities is contained in Chapter 160D, Local Planning and Development Regulation, of the North Carolina General Statutes. Within Article 5, Planning, is Section 160D-501 regarding Plans, which states: “a comprehensive plan sets forth goals, policies, and programs intended to guide the present and future physical, social, and economic development of the jurisdiction.” In addition, “a comprehensive or land use plan is intended to guide coordinated, efficient, and orderly development within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction based on an analysis of present and future needs.” Section 160D-501(c) requires the local governing body adopt the plan with the advice and consultation of the planning board. This board is established through Section 160D-301, which specifies that among its duties, a planning board may be assigned “to prepare, review, maintain, monitor, and periodically update and recommend to the governing board a comprehensive plan, and such other plans as deemed appropriate, and conduct ongoing related research, data collection, mapping, and analysis.” As in most states, the North Carolina General Statutes require, in Section 160D-701, that “Zoning regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan.” Also, while adopted plans “shall be advisory in nature without independent regulatory effect” per Section 160D-501(c), the plan must be considered by the planning board and governing board when considering proposed amendments to zoning regulations. Section 160D-501(a) further specifies that a local government applying zoning regulations must “reasonably maintain a comprehensive plan or land-use plan.” Finally, with the adoption of this plan, Sims will be in compliance with the planning requirements of the new Chapter 160D as adopted by the General Assembly in 2019 and amended in 2020. As part of those actions, the General Assembly also directed that local governments that have zoning ordinances must have an up-to-date comprehensive plan or land use plan by July 1, 2022.

Source: Chapter 160D, A New Land Use Law North Carolina

Town of Sims Planning Board Is Created

The Town of Sims **established a Planning Board** (under NC General Statutes authority of 160A-321) several years prior to 2000 in order to administer a Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, which was normal for most small towns. The Town's administration saw what other towns were doing to regulate development and land uses and sought assistance in developing the Planning Board and regulations. The ordinance adopted by the Board of Commissioners' creating the Planning Board also provides for it to perform other powers and duties as assigned to it, which includes performing not only its regulatory review functions, but also other powers and duties such as **"To prepare or cause to be prepared, a comprehensive plan or parts thereof, for the development of the town or parts thereof, which shall be subject to the approval of the Sims' Town Board of Commissioners."**

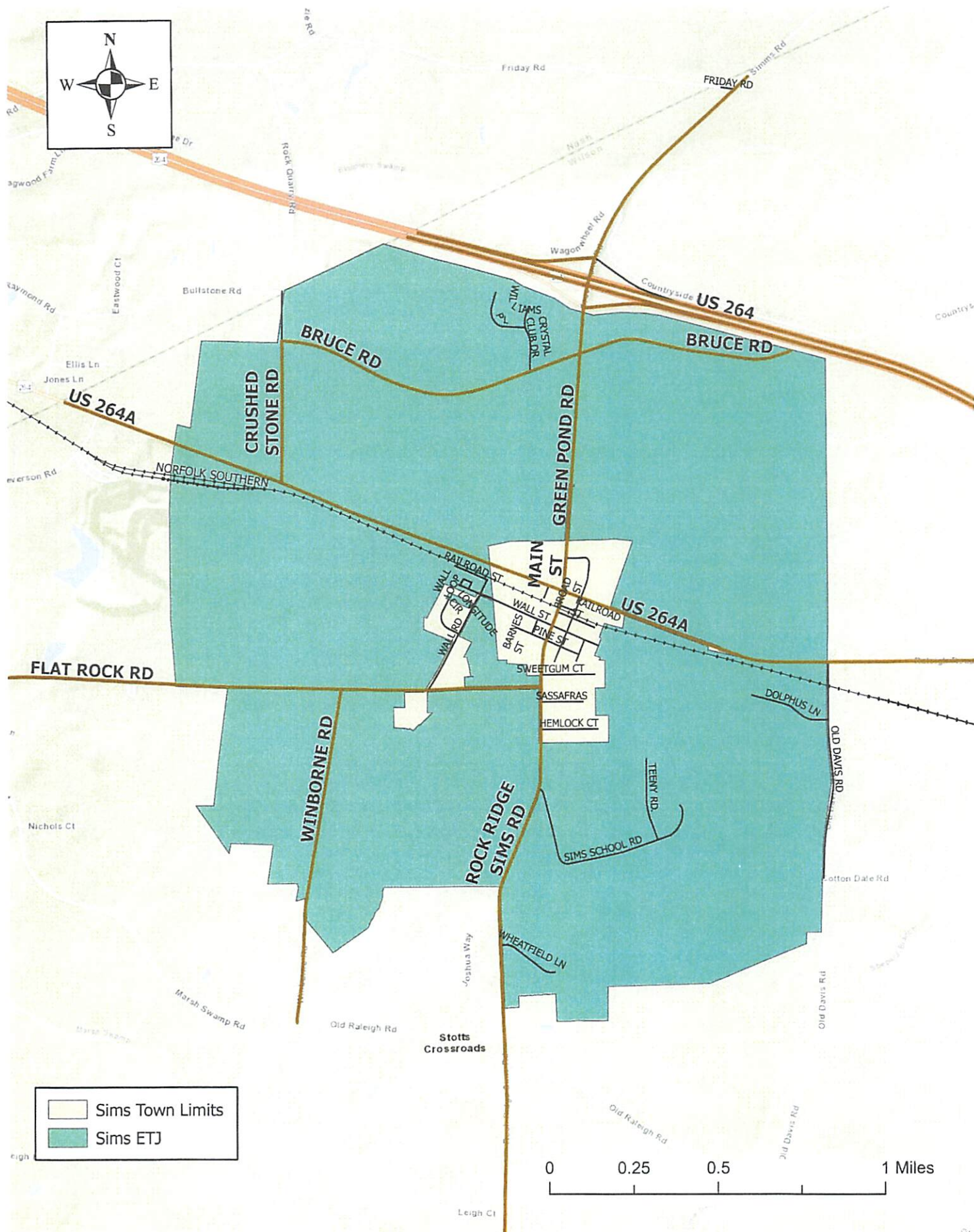
Source: *Town of Sims Ordinance Combining the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment*

Planning Area and Jurisdiction

Not long after creating Sims' Planning Board and adopting its Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, the Town requested, from Wilson County, the right to administer the land use regulations for a proposed area surrounding the Town for up to a mile beyond the Town's limits. The County's Board of Commissioners agreed to relinquish the planning, zoning, and subdivision regulations authority relating to the **Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)** to the Town. This area has been a part of the Town's planning and land use regulation area since then. **Figure 1, Town Limits & Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Planning Area** (on next page), displays its current town limits (as of May 2022) and its Extraterritorial Jurisdiction boundaries, which depict the full extent of the Town's planning area and jurisdiction.

Town of Sims Takes Action – 2019

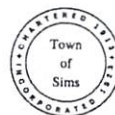
In early 2019, after the Planning Board's review of several development proposals, the Planning Board began discussions concerning the need to plan land use policies due to the increases in development proposals, growing population, demand for water and sewer services, and the need for a collective review and



Town of Sims

Figure 1

Town Limits & Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Planning Area



consensus on land use and development policies and strategies. The Planning Board reported to the Board of Commissioners its view on the land use issues and recommended consideration of developing a land use plan. The Board of Commissioners agreed with the issues and recommendations of the Planning Board. Both the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners determined the needs for a Land Use Plan's as follows:

- Due to recent numerous development proposals and voluntary annexations, there was a need for coordinated development-related policies and a land use related vision for the community prior to reviewing future development proposals.
- To plan the types and location of growth as well as areas to preserve.
- To plan for changes occurring in types of land uses and technology.
- To update and upgrade its land use regulations and Zoning Map.
- To use the planning process as an opportunity to obtain citizen input and build consensus on a vision statement as well as growth and preservation strategies; and, lastly,
- To plan for the growth impact on and coordination with water and sewer systems and other public facilities.

The Board of Commissioners asked the Zoning Administrator/Land Use Planner for an outline of the Land Use Plan process and an estimated cost. The Board discussed the financing the cost of the Plan during budget workshops and agreed to move forward with the project. The Planning Board and Board of Commissioners also wanted to simultaneously work on updating the land use regulations. The Board of Commissioners budgeted for both the updates of the land use regulations, and development of a 10-year Land Use Plan in the fiscal year 2019-2020 budget, as well as, subsequent fiscal years' budgets.

Land Use Plan Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee application was developed and distributed with a strategy of seeking a cross-section of representation of various demographics, tenure of residency, and other interests within the entire Planning Area. Eventually, enough applications were received to form two advisory committees, one for the Development of the Land Use Plan and the other for the Updating of the Land Use

Regulations. Representation on both committees also included members of the Board of Commissioners and the Planning Board. Listed below are the steps taken to develop Sims Land Use Plan including:

- **The Beginning** – The Advisory Committee started working on the proposed Land Use Plan at its January 16, 2020, work session with the intention of monthly meetings. After the second work session, in February 2020, the Committee had to pause several times due to the rise in Covid-19 and State’s safety restrictions on gatherings, but the Committee worked through the rest of the Pandemic with masks and distancing. There were virtual presentations by governmental officials during 2020 and 2021, and ample information to examine in several parts of the Plan. Initially, much of the information assessed pertained to Sims’ current facilities, population, history, businesses and economy, and natural resources. In latter half of 2021, the Committee began discussing and developing goals, policies, and strategies for each of the seven land use elements as described in Chapter 4.
- **Public Involvement (Community Survey)** – The intent from the beginning was to involve the public in providing input in order to develop key parts of the Plan, but the pandemic and State’s restrictions on the size of public gatherings prevented any public gathering or workshop. During the winter of 2021-22, with the latest pandemic surge and spike present, the Committee decided to produce a written Community Survey to be sent out to households throughout the surrounding area as well as the Town’s residents. Approximately 400 surveys were mailed (minus those that were not returned as “undeliverable”), and 41 responses were received. The survey also asked for volunteers for various types of projects. A summary of the results and details of the Community Survey as shared in Chapter 5.
- **Public Workshops** – With the downturn of Covid-19 and its variants occurring in the spring of 2022 and the impending State’s North Carolina General Statutes Chapter 160D deadline for completion looming near on July 1, 2022, the Advisory Committee began planning and conducting two public workshops with a flyer type notice sent to the 400 addresses of property owners throughout the entire Planning Area. The Advisory Committee’s desire was to bring the area residents and public to the Community Center to

view what had been developed so far, especially, the recent draft of the Vision Statement, in order to get them updated with the Plan's status and involve them in the second workshop.

- **Public Workshop (May 3, 2022)**

As a means of introducing the most important work of the Committee, to date, poster size prints of the Goals/Implementation Strategies/Policies of each of the 7 land use elements as well as a draft of the Vision Statement were posted around the room at 8 stations. Each station provided post-it pads and pens to allow for written comments and/or suggestions to be posted for each poster. Additionally, an Advisory Committee member was available at each station to respond to any questions attendees might ask. There were 19 public attendees along with 10 Advisory Committee members in attendance. The introductory remarks and talking points described the planning process including the impact of the pandemic on the process, the importance of the Vision Statement, Goals, Implementation Strategies, Policies, and intent to involve the residents and public in developing what remains of the Plan development. This dialogue developed into a Q & A session, which helped the attendees to speak and ask what was on their minds. The facilitator's responses helped update the attendees with the Plan's need, the planning process, the size and involvement of the Advisory Committee. The participants were invited to work alongside the Advisory Committee at the second workshop scheduled for June 7, 2022, to develop the Future Land Use Map and Strategies. The attendees used the rest of the workshop to read the posters and to speak with Advisory Committee members. Those participants who provided addresses were sent a complete copy of the Vision Statement and Goals, Implementation Strategies, and Policies that were posted on the wall for their review and they were asked to comment.

- **Public Workshop on June 7, 2022:** This workshop was designed to give the public an opportunity to work with the Advisory Committee to help shape a key part of the 10-year Plan, the Future Land Use Map and Strategies. Twenty-two members of the public and Advisory Committee attended and

worked together in five small group discussions reviewing 15 of the 16 neighborhoods (the Quarry neighborhood was not included) to identify a preferred development concept for the next 10 years for each neighborhood. Every participant rotated to each of the five tables in order to discuss their preferred development concept and indicators of positive images for each of the 15 neighborhoods, which were divided in clusters of adjoining neighborhoods among the five tables.

A summary of the results of these small group discussions at this workshop were presented to the Land Use Plan Advisory Committee at its June 16, 2022 work session in order to further interpret, using background information, the approved Vision Statement, and land use elements' Goals, and to refine the results into shaping the details necessary for the Future Land Use Map & Strategies (narrative) for each neighborhood as shown in **Chapter 6: Future Land Use Plan Map & Strategies**.



TEAMWORK:

coming together is a Beginning.

keeping together is Progress.

working together is Success.

Henry Ford

How to Use the Land Use Plan

The Goals, Implementation Strategies (and Action Plan), and Policies along with the background Information and Future Land Use Map and Strategies were developed and designed for the regular use in guiding the Town's decisions (managing growth and coordinating facilities and services). The Strategies and Policies also guide the Town's thinking related to land uses and development to guide other collaborating governmental agencies and the private sector's decisions. The following describes a sample of what instances and what parties would use the guidance of the Land Use Plan once it is adopted:

Recommended changes in Town facilities and services – the Town

Administrator/Director of Public Utilities will use the Plan's guidance and policy positions in making recommendations along with capital improvement planning (annually) and the recommendations from appointed study committees to the Board of Commissioners for improvements in facilities and/or services.

- **Call to action for the community to become involved in key projects –** given the size of the Town's staff, volunteers are needed for studies/planning, recommendations, and to carry out various types of projects to help fulfill the some of the elements of the community's vision and activities outlined in the Action Plan.
- **Reviewing development proposals –** the policies of the various land use elements will guide the Town's staff, Zoning/Subdivision Administrator, and Technical Review Committee in their review of development proposals and shaping of the recommendations that are consistent with the Plan to the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners.
- **Guidance for appointed boards or committees –** the policies and activities required to fulfill the Plan's vision, goals, strategies and policies are there to guide appointed committees and boards, especially the Planning Board in reviewing development proposals and shaping its recommendation(s) including the consistency with the Plan's statement.
- **Guidance for the Board of Commissioners –** The Board of Commissioners will use the combination of the Plan's policies, information, and guidance in its decisions regarding the planning for and managing community facilities

and services. They will also be used to approve development proposals and/or to legislate land use regulations and amendments to the Town's Official Zoning Map. The Board is required by Statutes (160D-605) to issue consistency with the Plan's statement for approval of development proposals.

- **Consideration by area governments or organizations in making plans or projects** – that will impact the Town's planning area. Decisions by area governments regarding transportation, hazard mitigation, planning, agricultural preservation and planning, water and sewer, and land regulations should be taken in consideration of the Town's Land Use Plan. The Town will need to distribute copies of the Plan and encourage its use.
- **Review and consideration by developers and their agents** – would help shape their plans for development proposals to be consistent with the Town's Vision Statement, goals, strategies, and policies. When the development interests make their plans consistent with the Town's long-range view of its vision and policies, the chances of proposal(s) approval increase and makes the approval process much easier for all parties when views and plans are in harmony.

Key Words Used in This Plan:

- **Land Use Plan** – According to the NCGS 160D-501: "A comprehensive or land-use plan is intended to guide coordinated, efficient, and orderly development within the planning and development regulation jurisdiction based on an analysis of present and future needs." "A land-use plan uses text and maps to designate the future use or reuse of land."
- **Vision Statement** – is a narrative that paints a picture and shared vision of what the Town can achieve following the adoption of the Land Use Plan 2032. The narrative is intended to be ambitious and inspirational, depicting the community's collective desires and providing an overlay for other community plans, policies, and decisions, as well as a guide to actions in the wider community.
- **Goals** – describe desired results toward which planning efforts should be directed. They are broad and long-range. They represent an ideal ambition to be sought and require the culmination of many smaller actions in order to

be fully achieved.

- **Implementation Strategies** – are the means or methods known and/or available to the Town that seem promising in helping the community implement the new plan the Vision and goals. For the Plan, these were actionable activities to assist the Town in carrying out respective parts of the Vision or goals.
- **Policies** – are positions taken on certain land use elements and their primary purpose is to provide guidance to decisions and actions on a day-to-day basis. Because of the complexities of each land use element, there are several policies that lend support to achieving its goal.
- **Action Plan or Implementation Strategies Matrix** – is a table of actions or work program to be taken to implement parts of the Plan over fiscal years, and with an outline of responsible persons, partners, estimated cost, and next steps.
- **Future Land Use Map and Strategies** – is a map designed to show proposed land use patterns to map out the goals and policies for the duration of the Plan across the planning jurisdiction, which will help implement the community's shared vision. The map can visually depict critical features and elements of land use. This map is accompanied by a narrative description of a number of the preferred land development strategies in order to define the development strategy or concept for each of the "neighborhoods" or planning districts and clarify some of the acceptable development options for the neighborhood.

CHAPTER 2: TOWN OF SIMS' HISTORY



Source: *Dolly Stallings, from the archives of William Bexley Boykin. Taken in the 1920's on Main Street with railroad car in the background.*

The Beginning

The original inhabitants of the area of what is now Wilson County and surrounding counties were the Native American people of the Tuscarora tribe, who had mostly left the area by the early 18th century. Europeans, many of whom were wealthy planters and farmers, began their farming trades making products from the forests of pine trees and, with the slaves they brought, began their mass agricultural production.

The Town of Wilson was chartered in 1849, and in 1855, Wilson County was established due to Wilson's surrounding farming population growth from cotton and flue-cured tobacco production, and the coming of the railroad. Additionally, citizens were ceded from surrounding counties of Edgecombe, Johnston, Nash, and Wayne.

Growth from Agriculture

With the County being located at the edge of both the Piedmont and Coastal Plain, the County's topography, geology, and soils tended to run from rolling terrain in the western end of the County, including Old Fields Township, to gradually transitioning to flatter lands as it begins to become part of the Coastal Plain geographic region of eastern North Carolina. This geography influenced the location of the agricultural production in the County for years to come.

Organized mass agriculture (tobacco, cotton, timber, etc.) continued to be a major factor in improving the economy and increasing the population in Wilson County through the latter portions of the 19th Century well into the 20th Century. During this economic and population growth, the towns of Black Creek was chartered in 1869, Elm City and Saratoga were incorporated in 1873, Sharpsburg was incorporated in 1883, and Lucama was incorporated in 1889.

Simms/Sims Chartered and Incorporated

The Town of Simms, chartered in 1913, was named for the owner of W. W. Simms Co., which was a large lumber company located beside the Norfolk-Southern Railroad. This business provided growth for this small rural community, and ultimately, birth to a new town in the Old Fields Township. The Town's growth and prosperity was due, in large part, to the surrounding agriculture production and the railroad stop for the freight exchange. The only structural evidence of the railroad freight business is an old warehouse structure on Railroad Street.

A post office was already established in 1908 as "Old Fields" near the railroad depot. The Sims School opened in 1922 and educated the community's children until 1978. The Town was incorporated in 1923 and was re-named to Sims in the NC legislative act to change and consolidate the Town's charter. The Town's first Mayor was W. Henry Jones, who served until 1931. The first commissioners named were J.M. Burnette, Eddie Nichols, and J.S. Bailey.

Town Growth

As the Town began to grow, some of its early businesses, in the 1930's, were Dave Peele Barber Shop, J.T. Boykin Store, L.O. Wilson Store, and Aaron Nichols

Drug Store mostly along East Main Street. A few businesses could also be found along US 264 (now US 264-Alternate). There was even a blacksmith shop on West Main Street near the US 264 intersection. Eventually, a variety of businesses began to set up and operate, from mainly the 1950's through the 1970's, along US 264, which is now US 264-Alternate when the US 264 Bypass was completed. Among them was Howard Williamson Service Station, Nichol's Store, a cotton gin operation, Stott's Coal Yard, Williamson Truck Lines (which later became B & Y Machining), J.F. Nichols Store, and Selby "Billy" Lamm's Service Station, which is still in operation today.

In 1953, the Town's charter was amended to provide for Town elections. In 1964, due to water quality issues, the Town constructed its first public water distribution system to replace individual wells and was built to serve only those living within the Town's limits. It received its water supply from two wells. A 75,000-gallon elevated storage tank (same as the current storage tank) was part of this original system. In June of 2002, the Town received a grant from the NC Rural Economic Development Center to replace the original 1964 water distribution lines with new pipelines with upgraded pipe material, and diameter size, fittings, and hydrants.

A small branch bank, Lucama-Kenly Bank (later renamed Heritage Bank), was established in 1972 at the intersection of Main Street and US 264 which is now the location of the current Town Hall. The previous Town Hall was located at 6402 US 264 (now 264-Alternate), and now this building serves as the Sims Community Center. Businesses continued to set up along US 264 in the 1970's and 1980's, such as: S.T. Wooten Asphalt Plant, D&A Appliance, ABC Store, grill and drugstore, dry cleaner, pool hall, barber shop, Glover's Grocery Store, and Helen's Fabrics. A few business locations witnessed changes of businesses through later years up to the present. During this period, the Sims Volunteer Fire Dept. was established on US 264 (now US 264-Alternate).

Currently, there are approximately 15 businesses located within the Town's limits. Seven additional proprietors opened their businesses Town's surrounding Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. This Jurisdiction was requested and adopted prior to the year 2000 with Wilson County ceding the zoning and subdivision jurisdiction to the Town.

Public Sewer and More Growth

The Town received a grant in the amount of \$2,337,700 to construct the Town's first public sewer collection system, along with an outfall line, to connect to the City of Wilson. Construction on the new sewer collection system was completed in 2002 with the collection system operating soon after. The Town's collection system served and serves residences, businesses, and other structures within the Town's limits. The Town's Board of Commissioners have maintained a policy of sewer hookup and service to only properties within the Town's limit. Due to this policy, five subdivisions have been annexed into the Town's limits since the initial sewer system construction in order for developers to gain the density level they seek by having public sewer service. This has added not only additional sewer lines, but also residents to the Town.

The Town of Sims had grown to and maintained a population of approximately 200 from 1950 to 1980. After 1980, the population began to decline to around the 120's through the early years of the 2000 decade. With the addition of the public sewer system in 2002, and the availability of land around the periphery of the Town's limits within the nearby surrounding Extraterritorial Jurisdiction, subdivisions along with their new residential lots began to be developed and annexed into the Town's limits. Some of the subdivision's developers, requested the Town's sewer connection in order to develop smaller lots, thereby, increasing the number of lots per acre. This trend has increased the Town's population to an estimated 321 according to the recently released 2021 US Census population estimates. This trend will continue due to new development proposals and will likely increase the Town's population well beyond the current 321-population estimate.

Planning for the Future

As subdivisions and residential lots continue to be added to the Town, the Board of Commissioners decided to plan for its future in 2019 by commissioning the development of its 10-year Land Use Plan and Vision Statement using a cross-section of Town residents and others as an Advisory Committee. The Board also decided to update and revise its land use regulations as well.