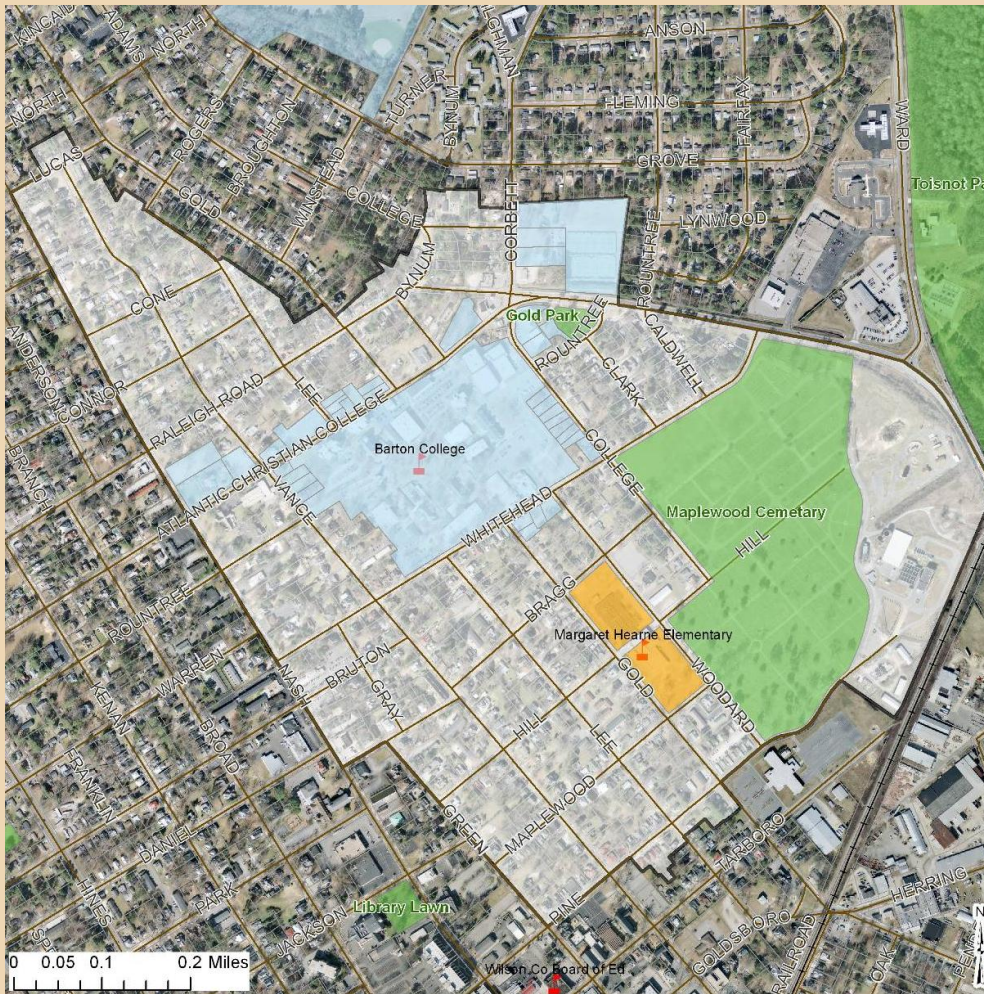




BARTON AREA-NORTHWEST-OLD WILSON NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



Wilson, North Carolina

March 2012

BARTON AREA-NORTHWEST-OLD WILSON NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

March 2012

Prepared by:

City of Wilson, North Carolina



Planning & Development Services
112 Goldsboro Street E
Wilson, NC 27894

Acknowledgements:

Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Advisory Group

Kathy Bethune
Johnson Bissette
Veronica Creech
Robert Farris
Jenny Hayes
Nadia Minniti
Rachel Moore

George Solan
Ray Tinsley
Evon Wiley
Penny Womble
Kendra Howell
Tad Shelton
Mark Sullivan

City of Wilson City Council

C. Bruce Rose, Mayor
Bill Blackman
Gwen C. Burton
A.P. Coleman

Donald I. Evans
James M. Johnson
Logan T. Liles
Willie J. "Bill" Pitt

City Manager

Grant Goings

Planning & Development Services City Staff for this plan were:

Rodger Lentz, Director of Planning & Development Services
Emily Beddingfield, Planner
Lu-Ann Monson, Historic Preservation Planner

City Neighborhood Collaborative Team:

Joe Ausby, GIS Coordinator
Emily Beddingfield, Planner
Bryant Bunn, City Engineer
Daniel Gillen, Wilson Energy Engineering &
System Planning Manager
Jake Green, Civil Engineer
Kendra Howell, Police Captain Central
District/PORT

Rodger Lentz, Director of Planning &
Development Services
Lanette Pridgen, Community Development
Specialist
Renee Smith, Human Relations Director
Bryan Spell, Stormwater Program Manager
Mark Sullivan, Police Captain – Investigations
Jeff Webb, GIS Technician

Other contributing City Staff:

Pat Borelli, Chief Planner
Denise Boswell, Senior Planner
Michelle Brown, Planner
Elisa Cruz, Human Relations Specialist
Ellen Hoj, Senior Planner

Janet Holland, Assistant Director of Planning &
Development Services
Kevin Medeiros, Neighborhood Improvement
Enforcement Coordinator
Charles Taylor, Senior Code Enforcement
Officer

The following people and groups also contributed to the success of the plan:

All participants in the neighborhood planning process
Barton College
Anne Pression
St. Therese Catholic Church
City of Wilson Police
Margaret Hearne Elementary School

This page intentionally left blank.

CONTENTS

- Part 1: About the Plan 1**
 - Purpose of this Plan 1
 - Neighborhood History 2
 - Planning Area Overview and Demographic Profile 5
 - Neighborhood Assets:..... 6
 - Neighborhood Challenges..... 6
 - Relationship to Downtown 6
 - Demographics and Growth Trends: 7
 - Relationship to Existing Plans 10
 - Planning Process..... 12
 - Public Involvement 12
 - Prioritization 14
 - City of Wilson Neighborhood Collaborative Team 14
- Part 2: Goals 15**
 - Goal 1 – Accessibility..... 17
 - Goal 2 - Design 26
 - Goal 3 - Economy 35
 - Goal 4 - Education..... 38
 - Goal 5 – Environment/Going Green 41
 - Goal 6 – Housing Quality..... 43
 - Goal 7 – Leadership 46
 - Goal 8 – Recreation..... 48
 - Goal 9 – Safety..... 51
 - Goal 10 – Social..... 54
- Part 3: Implementation 57**

Maps:

Map 1: BNO Neighborhood Boundaries	5
Map 1-A: Pedestrian Crashes.....	23
Map 1-B: Pedestrian Access	24
Map 1-C: On-Street Parking.....	25
Map 2-A: Existing Land Use.....	29
Map 2-B: Historic Districts and Landmarks	30
Map 2-C: Parcels with Vacant Structures	31
Map 2-D: Demolition and New Construction 2000-2011.....	32
Map 2-E: Vacant Lots with No Structures.....	33
Map 2-F: Nuisances and Junk Vehicles Addressed by the City 2009-2010.....	34
Map 3-A: Zoning.....	37

Tables and Figures:

Table 1: 2010 Race by Percentage of the Total Population of Study Area.....	7
Table 2: 2000 and 2010 Estimated Unemployment, Median Household Income, and Poverty Rates	8
Table 3: BNO Population Change 1990 to 2000, 2000 to 2010, and 1990 to 2010 Based on Race	8
Figure 1: Percentage of occupied and vacant housing units in the BNO neighborhood for 2000 and 2010.....	9
Table 1-A: Percentage of occupied and vacant housing units for 2000 and 2010	28
Table 4-A: Percentage of Students' Scores At or Above Grade Level.....	39
Figure 2: Number of Crimes in the C-46 District from 2009-2011	51
Implementation Table: Goals, Objectives, and Action Items	59

Appendices:

Appendix A: Surveys

PART 1: ABOUT THE PLAN

“Part 1” describes the purpose of the *Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan (BNO Plan)*, neighborhood history, planning area background, the relationship to existing City plans, and the planning process.

Purpose of this Plan



The purpose of the *BNO Plan* is to provide recommendations on how to improve quality of life, strengthen the neighborhood, support community health, and reverse negative trends in the BNO neighborhood. The *BNO Plan* provides direction and guidance to the City of Wilson and to the community on future development, community programs, and improvements that are tailored to the specific needs of the community. Citizens, City staff, and representatives of neighborhood schools and associations worked collaboratively to identify needs and concerns, develop specific action items to address them, and outline steps for implementation. The output is a proactive approach to improve the quality of life and create a broad base of support and involvement for neighborhood initiatives.

This plan provides recommendations for physical changes, programs, policies, and education to implement the plan’s vision. By adopting the plan, City Council demonstrates the City’s commitment to implementation of the plan. However, adoption of the plan does not begin implementation or legally obligate the City to complete any particular action item. Implementation will require specific actions by the neighborhood, the City, and by other agencies. The *BNO Plan* will be supported and put into action by:

- City boards, commissions and staff
- City departmental budgets
- Capital improvement projects
- Other agencies and organizations
- Direct neighborhood action.

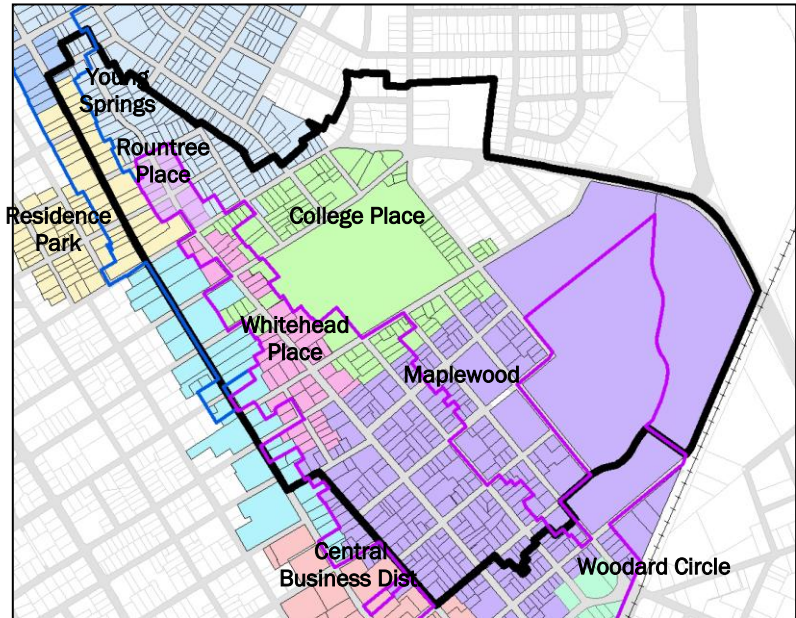
The *BNO Plan* was approved by the Wilson City Council as an addendum to the *City of Wilson 2030 Comprehensive Plan* on March 15, 2012.

Neighborhood History



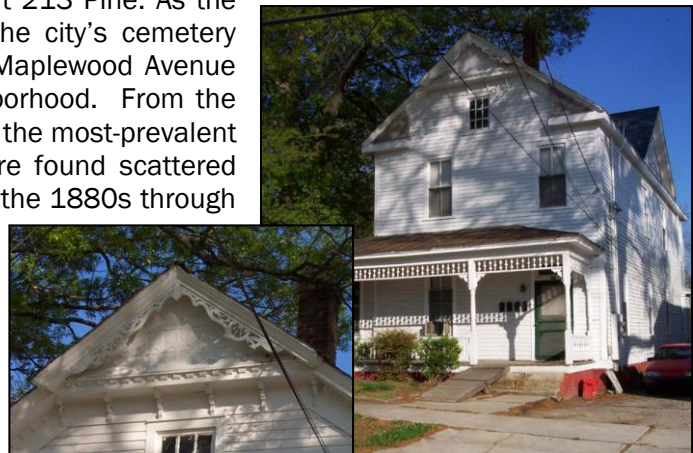
From the early settlement that became Wilson, houses were initially scattered among shops, and the upper levels of businesses were often home to the shop owners and their families. With the growth of the cotton industry and later the introduction and expansion of tobacco, Wilson's economy flourished. As a result, the downtown grew and new neighborhoods were constructed, creating many of the streetscapes we see today.

The earliest neighborhood to develop was known as Maplewood. It was home to some of Wilson's oldest houses, dating from the 1840s and 1850s; only a few traces of which remain. Maplewood as we know it, developed primarily between 1870



Map of historic neighborhoods in the BNO neighborhood

and 1925. Two of the earliest structures, initially built as school facilities, are the circa 1853 Lucas-Barnes House at 200 Green, and the circa 1853 James Gorham House at 200 Vance. Their Greek Revival proportions were updated with Victorian and Colonial Revival details. Other early homes include the circa 1872 Italianate Wiggins-Hadley House, 1875 Peter Royall House, and builder Oswald Lipscomb's 1871 Italianate house at 213 Pine. As the downtown continued to expand, in 1876 the city's cemetery was relocated to a new site at the end of Maplewood Avenue forming the eastern boundary of the neighborhood. From the 1880s, the "Victorian Cottage" style became the most-prevalent home style found in Maplewood. These are found scattered throughout the neighborhood and date from the 1880s through the turn of the century. Two of the most ornate are the 1880 A.P. Simpson House at 310 Green and the circa 1882 John Y. Moore House at 314 W Green, whose bracket designs on the porch feature a bird in the center. The bird design is used as the logo for the Old Wilson Neighborhood Association. Another style almost completely found in Maplewood is the two-story side hall plan. Dating from the 1890s to 1900, these frame homes feature wood shingled gables and full front porches. Two of the most intact are located at 203 Pine and 306 Hill Street.



203 Pine Street and detail of gable



205 Gray Street

Expansion continued into Whitehead Place, initially from 1906 to 1910, but lingered until 1920. Anchored by the 1858 Davis-Whitehead-Harris House at 600 Nash Street (shown outside of the city limits in the 1882 Grays Map of Wilson), Whitehead Avenue and the surrounding streets was the “city” home of several successful planter families and professionals. These large homes merged Victorian and Colonial Revival styles, providing a classical appearance worthy of the prosperous residents. Several homes in the neighborhood were constructed by James E. Wilkins, including his own 1907 home at 205 Gray Street. During the late teens through the 1930s, the Bungalow found its favor. Large and small varieties of every type

were built throughout Wilson. Notable are the brick Robert S. Wilkins House at 106 Gray Street (built for the children of James Wilkins) which became a prototype of several frame bungalows throughout the surrounding area, and the entirely stuccoed 1915 Dr. Hooks House at 115 Whitehead Avenue.

Wilson had been known as a center of education from the mid-19th century. As success/privilege grew, educational facilities expanded in Wilson. The 1897 Kinsey Institute evolved into Atlantic Christian College in 1902, the center of which was Kinsey Hall. As residential neighborhoods approached the school, larger homes of the teens and twenties were built on nearby Vance Street. These College Place homes featured a mixture of styles, including Bungalows, Shingle Style, and Dutch Colonial Revivals as well as a variety of textures and details. The Kinsey Building was demolished in 1955 and some of the surrounding properties were lost due to expansion of the college. In 1990 Atlantic Christian was renamed Barton College, and in honor of the school’s centennial, a bell tower, reminiscent of that portion of Kinsey Hall, was constructed.



Home in the College Place neighborhood



Home in the Rountree Place neighborhood

As the City continued growing to the north, Rountree Place evolved. Primarily Bungalows, the variety again reflects the diversity of this style. Noteworthy examples are the Picturesque Style 1919 Allie Fleming House at 112 Rountree, the 1916 oriental influenced Lawshe-Barkley House at 114 Rountree, and the two-story 1916 Yelverton Home at 111 Rountree. The 1869 Gothic Revival home of leading merchant Moses Rountree House at 107 Rountree (on its third site) predated this development.

Young Springs developed in the teens and twenties and was named for the medicinal springs found on the Young property northwest of town. The houses became more modest and reflect primarily the Bungalow, with some Colonial Revival homes. The area continued to densify, however, from the 1930s through the 1960s, explaining a scattering of Tudor Revival, Post-War Cottages, and early Ramblers or Ranch Style homes.



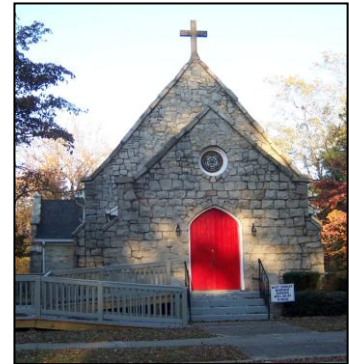
Young Springs neighborhood bungalows



Barton Graves Home on Nash Street

The periphery of the BNO neighborhood also includes homes in a number of other neighborhoods, including Residence Park, Nash Street, and Woodard Circle. Homes varied in size, style, materials and details, by the affluence of the original owner and the location.

A small number of commercial buildings, primarily neighborhood stores, were located throughout the area. Only a few of these remain standing. In addition, three churches are located within the boundaries of the BNO neighborhood. The first of which is the fourth building once associated with the Primitive Baptist Church, Wilson's oldest congregation, located at 301 Green Street. The second, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, features stonework by Oliver Nestus Freeman, and is found at 610 Vance Street. The last is the more recent building of St. Therese Catholic Church.



Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

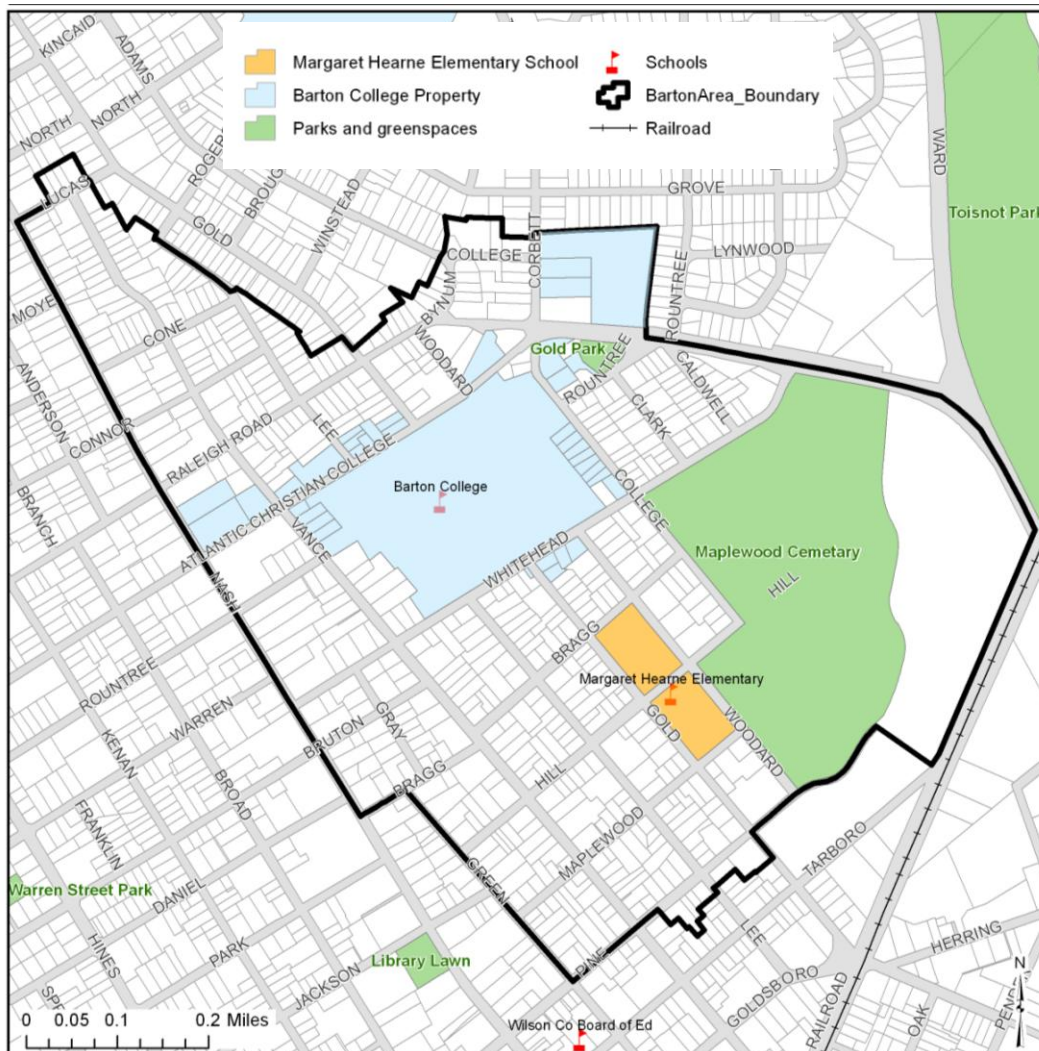
Representing the oldest residential areas in Wilson, the BNO neighborhood is an important piece of Wilson's past. Residents are proud of the preservation of this history and the unique identity it brings to the neighborhood. Continued investment, dedication, and community involvement will ensure the ongoing preservation of this neighborhood.

Planning Area Overview and Demographic Profile



The BNO neighborhood is one of Wilson's oldest neighborhoods. Situated just north of Wilson's downtown and east of Nash Street, the area includes 330 acres, 587 parcels, and approximately 1,900 residents. Largely residential, homes are mostly single-family lots, with some 3-4 unit multi-family development, and two neighborhood associations representing most of the homes. The area has two schools: Barton College, a private college of about 1,130 enrolled students, and Margaret Hearne Elementary. With much of the neighborhood recognized at the local and federal level as a historically significant area, the neighborhood is lined with unique homes from the late 1800's and early 1900s and has distinctive features including Maplewood Cemetery, Barton College, and St. Therese Church. A business corridor is located within the study area along Nash Street, and a small commercial cluster is found at the intersection of Raleigh Road Parkway (Raleigh Road) and Atlantic Christian College (ACC) Drive.

Study area boundaries were selected by members of the BNO Wilson Advisory Group, a group of eleven citizens representing various facets of the neighborhood. The boundaries represent two neighborhood associations, as well as adjacent residential and commercial areas that identify with the study area.



Map 1: BNO Neighborhood Boundaries

Neighborhood Assets:

Residents describe the BNO neighborhood as quiet and peaceful with a strong sense of community. The neighborhood has a strong sidewalk network and its proximity to commercial areas means many destinations are within walking or biking distance. Residents are strongly connected through organizations such as the neighborhood associations, and the neighborhood offers a diversity of age, culture, and race. The neighborhood is adjacent to downtown, which offers shopping, dining, culture and arts, and events such as a farmer’s market and weekly concerts in the summer. Commercial areas are also found within and adjacent to the BNO neighborhood along Nash Street and to the east on Raleigh Road Parkway, and include grocery stores, the Wilson County Library, banking, restaurants, shopping, and a pharmacy. Barton College is a nationally recognized institution and provides a number of cultural offerings to residents, including theater, arts, and music. Residents are excited to live so close to so many attractions.

Residents are also proud of the unique historic character of the neighborhood, and of the well-preserved historic homes and churches that sit along tree-lined streets. The neighborhood has a rich history, and two locally and federally-recognized historic districts make up a large portion of the BNO area, including the Old Wilson Historic District and the West Nash Historic District.

Neighborhood Challenges:

The BNO neighborhood has experienced population decline and disinvestment in recent years, and unemployment and poverty have increased. Residents are concerned about the number of resulting vacant and boarded-up homes, and declining neighborhood appearance. Residents would like to encourage improvements to private properties, increase homeownership, provide more and improved services and programming, and generally improve the appearance of the community. Public infrastructure improvements are needed in some areas, such as sidewalks placement around Barton College and Margaret Hearne Elementary. Though records indicate that crime levels have decreased significantly in recent years, safety and perception of safety are concerns for residents, and they would like to see increased neighborhood involvement in neighborhood watches. Overcoming the stigma and perception of declining safety is a goal of the neighborhood. Residents are also concerned about physical safety of walkers and bicyclists, and would like to implement strategies to reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety for pedestrians, particularly students walking to school. There is also a concern for the educational attainment and safety of neighborhood youth, and residents wish to see higher school performance, safer areas to play, and local youth programs.

Relationship to Downtown:

It is important to note the direct link between the success of downtown neighborhoods and Wilson’s



Downtown Wilson

commercial downtown. The downtown area is historically Wilson’s community core, offering a wide variety of amenities, shopping, arts, dining, and other services that make the downtown the “heartbeat” of the city. Over the years, downtown has seen decline from its original status as businesses moved outward toward Interstate 95 and new subdivisions were built on the outskirts of town. To address this problem and ensure downtown continues to serve as the community’s main activity center, the City has taken a number of steps to support revitalization, including partnering with Wilson Downtown Development Corporation. Together they provide a variety of programs and

incentives, such as the “Rent Incentive Program” and the “Façade Grant Program”, and events such as the farmers market and outdoor concert series. A nationally recognized new 2-acre park, the Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park, is slated to open in 2013. New businesses open every year, bringing in new investment. Many community events are held throughout the year, creating a public meeting and gathering space downtown. The *City of Wilson 2030 Comprehensive Plan* outlines this commitment and the need for revitalization to ensure sustainability and quality of life for Wilson citizens.

A vibrant downtown, however, requires vibrant neighborhoods to support it. The success of downtown and the BNO neighborhood are dependent upon one another; and investment and dedication to the revitalization, resilience, and strengthening of one directly affects the other.

Demographics and Growth Trends:

Demographic information was retrieved from the U.S. Census Bureau. Census block and tract calculations are approximate, as their boundaries did not align directly with those of the BNO neighborhood.

Race:

Estimated percentages of population by race are listed in Table 1 below. The neighborhood is quite diverse, with 63.8 percent Black or African American, 35.2 percent White, and 15.2 percent identifying as Hispanic or Latino. Residents indicated they enjoyed and appreciated this diversity, listing it as a strong asset of the neighborhood.

Table 1: 2010 Race by Percentage of the Total Population of Study Area

Race Category	BNO Neighborhood	City
White:	35.2%	44.2%
Black or African American:	63.8%	48.9%
American Indian and Alaska Native:	0.4%	0.7%
Asian:	0.5%	1.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander:	0.0%	0.1%
Some other race:	0.2%	6.5%
Identify as Hispanic or Latino:	15.3%	9.4%

Source: 2010 U.S. Census block data

Income:

Table 2 below shows the unemployment rate, median household income, and poverty rates for 2000 and 2010 for census tract 1 (which includes most of the BNO neighborhood) and for the City. The median income per household in 2010 was \$23,477, and 42.7 percent of all people were under the poverty line. Ten years prior just 29.5 percent of all people were below the poverty line, indicating a significant increase in poverty levels within this census tract. Unemployment and poverty are higher, and income lower, in Census Tract 1 than the City as a whole. The City has seen an increase in unemployment and poverty as well, with changes that somewhat mirror those of Census Tract 1. It is important to continue to provide affordable housing options while providing for a high quality of life for all residents.

Table 2: 2000 and 2010 Estimated Unemployment, Median Household Income, and Poverty Rates

	2000		2010	
	Census Tract 1*	City*	Census Tract 1**	City***
% Unemployed	7.7%	5.5%	15.1%	12.5%
Median Household Income	\$22,737	\$29,925	\$23,477	\$35,935
% of all people in poverty	29.5%	17.3%	42.7%	25.4%

*2000 U.S. Census Data

**2010 U.S. Census Data

*** 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Population:

The neighborhood has approximately 1,900 residents, with an average household size of 3.17 people. Table 2 demonstrates an analysis of Census block data from 1990 to 2010, showing an overall decline in population by approximately 500 people, or 19 percent of the population. A spatial analysis does not show this population decline to be concentrated in any particular location of the neighborhood. The neighborhood has seen an increase in minority groups, with the black population increasing by six percent and the Hispanic population growing over 600 percent.

Table 3: BNO Population Change 1990 to 2000, 2000 to 2010, and 1990 to 2010 Based on Race

Category	1990-2000	2000-2010	1990-2010
	%Change	%Change	%Change
Total	-9%	-11%	-19%
White	-45%	-24%	-58%
Black	+21%	-12%	+6%
Hispanic/Latino	+432%	+38%	+636%
Other	+171%	+26%	+243%

Source: 1990, 2000, and 2010 U.S. Census block data.

As the BNO neighborhood population dropped, population growth in the City of Wilson grew from 1990 to 2010 by 10.7 percent, from 44,405 residents to 49,167 residents. This shows that even as Wilson’s population is growing, people are moving out of, rather into, the BNO neighborhood.

Housing Vacancy:

Figure 1 shows the percentage of vacant housing found in the neighborhood, and clearly shows a 14.2 percent increase in vacant homes between 2000 and 2010, reflecting the decrease in population.

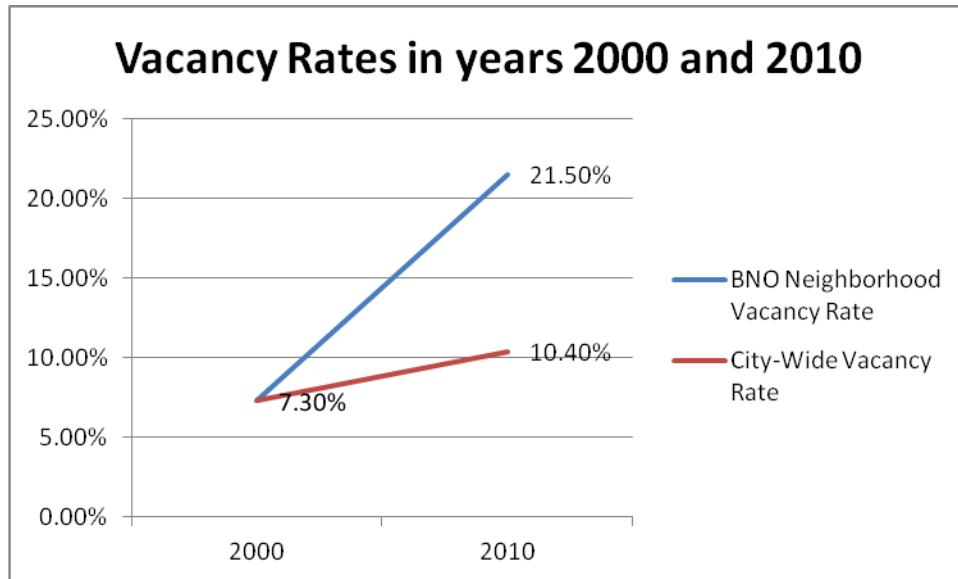
According to U.S. Census data, there was a 2.5 percent increase in total housing units (about 20 units) between 2000 and 2010 in the BNO neighborhood. However, as shown above, neighborhood population decreased by about 11 percent during that time. Average household size was a bit larger in 2000 than 2010 (2.9 people per household in 2000 and 2.5 people in 2010), at least in part explaining the phenomenon of more housing units but fewer residents.

Vacancy rates in the BNO neighborhood were about 11 percent higher than the City average in 2010. Interestingly, BNO neighborhood vacancy rates in the year 2000 exactly reflected that of the

City average. This indicates a faster than average increase in vacancy rates for the BNO area compared to the City at large.

The population decrease combined with the increase in vacant housing is a large concern for the neighborhood and shows that efforts need to center in part around strengthening the marketability of the neighborhood and bringing in new residents.

Figure 1: Percentage of occupied and vacant housing units in the BNO neighborhood for 2000 and 2010



Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census block data

Relationship to Existing Plans



Policy decisions and capital improvement projects within the City of Wilson are guided by adopted plans. Several of these are relevant to the *BNO Plan* and are discussed briefly below. Each plan was taken into consideration during the creation of this neighborhood plan to ensure consistency and identify areas where inconsistencies may need to be addressed. All plans are located on the City's website at www.wilsonnc.org.

2030 Comprehensive Plan: The City's 2030 *Comprehensive Plan* was adopted in 2010. The Plan identifies "Establish a Neighborhood Planning and Implementation Process" as one of the 12 top priority actions, and neighborhood planning is identified as one of eight major categories of implementation efforts that need attention in Wilson. This neighborhood plan reflects implementation of Action 20.2 of the *Comprehensive Plan* which states,

"establish a neighborhood planning process that develops strategic plans for individual neighborhoods." The same chapter offers a number of recommended policies and actions to support neighborhoods. This plan does not replace any of those recommendations, but rather adds to them, creating a specific set of recommendations appropriate for the needs of the BNO neighborhood.



Elements of a great neighborhood were discussed in 2009 during a Neighborhood Leadership Summit and at a Hispanic/Latino focus group meeting, both conducted as part of the 2030 *Comprehensive Plan* process. As a result, the "Top 10 Characteristics of a Great Neighborhood" were formed and are included as part of the plan. These ten characteristics were the basis of the ten goals of the BNO neighborhood, adjusted to address neighborhood-specific issues.

Comprehensive Bicycle Plan: Adopted in 2008, the *Comprehensive Bicycle Plan* identifies projects, programs, and policies to improve the bicycle-friendliness of the City. Within the neighborhood plan boundaries, signed routes are recommended along Vance Street and Whitehead Avenue, and bike lanes are recommended along Raleigh Road Parkway and Atlantic Christian College Drive.

Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan: The City's *Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan* was adopted in 2006 and makes recommendations to create a safe walking environment for all ages and abilities that is interconnected and provides an alternative means of transportation as well as recreational opportunities. The plan identified all existing sidewalks, and within the neighborhood plan boundaries, Raleigh Road Parkway is identified as a priority corridor.

Safe Routes to School Action Plan: The *Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Action Plan* was adopted by City Council in February 2012. The goal of the SRTS program is to "address the many factors that may hinder or prevent children from walking or biking to school daily." Factors include automobile congestion, urban sprawl, inadequate/deficient infrastructure, or a lack of education and awareness about bicycling and walking. The *SRTS Action Plan* provides recommendations to address these concerns. The City of Wilson's SRTS program includes six schools. One of these schools, Margaret Hearne Elementary, is within the BNO planning area. Major school concerns identified in the *SRTS Action Plan* include lack of sidewalk connectivity on portions of Gold Street, Bragg Street, Woodard Street, and Hill Street, vehicles traveling at unsafe speeds in the school zone, particularly along Gold Street and Woodard Street (and a corresponding lack of traffic control devices),



crime/safety issues, and low parent response levels. The *SRTS Action Plan* recommends steps to slow traffic, including traffic calming or traffic control measures, or temporary variable message signs showing driver speeds. The Plan also recommends improving pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure and programs to address crime/personal safety, low walking/biking activity, and low parent response level.

Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (Walk On Wilson): The *Pedestrian Safety Action Plan* is a continually updated document developed by the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center that supports a larger pedestrian safety program. The program, called “Walk On Wilson,” aims to reduce pedestrian crashes and their negative impacts on the community through a sustained and comprehensive program involving roadway improvements, law enforcement efforts, and broad outreach regarding pedestrian safety issues. The plan states that about 30 percent of Wilson pedestrians involved in collisions identified as White, 54 percent as Black, and 8 percent as Hispanic. Children up to age 15 accounted for 24 percent of those struck by motor vehicles, higher than the state average. Roughly 15 percent of Wilson households do not have access to a motor vehicle. The plan recommends that the City’s neighborhood planning process include pedestrian safety considerations, which the *BNO Plan* has done. A study of past pedestrian crashes does not show the BNO neighborhood or the Margaret Hearne school zone to be a high crash area, but with the City’s high rate of child crashes and black residents overrepresented in the crash studies, it should be a focus area to prevent future crashes from occurring. The plan highlights eight goals to improve pedestrian safety, mostly focusing on city-wide programs, along with the objective of identifying specific locations for intervention.



Planning Process



The planning process for the *BNO Plan* began in February 2011, and lasted approximately one year. The process included analysis of existing conditions, issues and concerns, solutions, and strategies for implementation. Concurrent with fieldwork, City staff researched area demographics and collected background information on land use and existing conditions. Citizen input was integral to creation of the Plan, and much of the plan's content relied on public participation, particularly the identification of assets, issues and solutions. The final plan was presented to and approved by the Planning Board in February 2012, and presented to and adopted by City Council as an addendum to the *City of Wilson 2030 Comprehensive Plan* in March 2012. The planning process was managed by City staff, supported by guidance from the Advisory Group (described below).

Public Involvement:

The intent of this plan is to reflect the needs of the neighborhood and sentiment of the people. Therefore, creation of the *BNO Plan* relied heavily on public engagement. Multiple opportunities allowed residents to voice their opinion, stay updated of the plan's progress, and be an active part of the planning process. An Advisory Group, surveys, community meetings, and a website were all part of the public participation process.

Advisory Group: An Advisory Group was formed at the beginning of the planning process, made up of volunteer citizens representing the neighborhood. Members included representatives for Barton College, the North-West and Old Wilson Neighborhood Associations, Preservation of Wilson, the Police Department, and property managers of the many rental properties within the boundaries. The Advisory Group was an integral part of the planning process, and met six times. They were responsible for identifying issues, solutions, implementation strategies, assigning priority, guiding the public input process, and reviewing of draft versions of the final plan document. The Advisory Group will continue to meet to discuss progress in implementation of the Plan's recommendations.

Advisory Group Members:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>
Kathy Bethune	Preservation of Wilson
Johnson Bissette	Bissette Realty
Veronica Creech	Old Wilson Neighborhood Association
Robert Farris	St. Therese Catholic Church
Jenny Hayes	Principal, Margaret Hearne Elementary
Nadia Minniti	President, NorthWest Neighborhood Association
Rachel Moore	Student, Barton College
George Solan	Vice President for Student Affairs, Barton College
Ray Tinsley	President, Old Wilson Neighborhood Association
Evon Wiley	NorthWest Neighborhood Association
Penny Womble	Womble Real Estate
Captain Kendra Howell	Wilson Police Department
Captain Mark Sullivan	Wilson Police Department
Captain Tad Shelton	Wilson Police Department

Community Meetings: Three public meetings were held at key points throughout the process to gather input and feedback from citizens. The meetings took place the evenings of February 24, 2011 and September 8, 2011 at Barton College, and February 18, 2012 at the Wilson Public Library. The first meeting introduced the planning process and asked citizens in a group exercise what they considered to be issues and assets of the neighborhood. The second meeting presented the results of citizen input and the Advisory Group's work identifying issues and solutions and asked citizens for additional ideas and for prioritization of the recommended solutions. The third public meeting provided a final overview of the BNO Plan, allowing a final chance for citizen comments and discussing implementation. Meetings were advertised using a variety of methods, including emails, press releases, public service announcements, flyers, postcards, the City's website, and advertising in neighborhood association newsletters to reach as many people as possible. A community meeting was also offered to Spanish-speaking residents, advertised via flyers left at residents' homes. Due to a lack of response, however, that meeting was cancelled.



Community meetings provided opportunities for all citizens to give input and learn about the Plan

Public Comments on the Plan: After the Advisory Group approved the draft version of the *BNO Plan*, it was made available to the public for review. A link to the draft plan was placed on the City's website and announcements of this digital copy were made to the Neighborhood Associations, announced on the City's website, emailed to citizens that had provided contact information in the surveys, and a link was placed on a postcard that was mailed out to every household in the BNO planning area. Plans were also available for review at City Hall and at the public library.

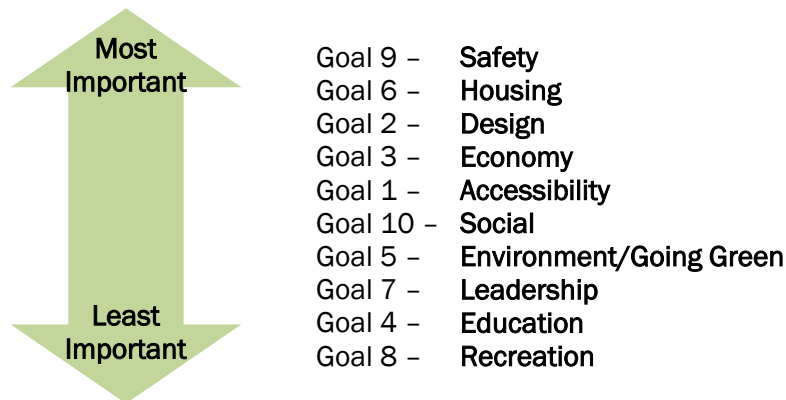
Surveys: Three different surveys were conducted, offering all residents; business owners; teachers and staff at Margaret Hearne Elementary; and students, faculty, and staff at Barton College a chance to provide input. All surveys were administered in March and April 2011. One survey was directed at residents and businesses, and was conducted by City staff and volunteers who went door-to-door to administer the survey. The survey was made available in digital format for those who were not home or wished to complete it online, and was available at the first community meeting. 126 completed surveys were received. A second survey was created for Barton College students, faculty, and staff, and was administered using an online survey tool, receiving 104 responses. A final survey was given to faculty and staff at Margaret Hearne Elementary school, and resulted in 23 responses. Surveys translated to Spanish were also made available to non-English speaking residents, but none were completed. Survey responses were analyzed to determine priorities, concerns, and solutions, and were used to guide the content of this plan. Surveys used are provided in Appendix A.

Website: A website with information and updates about the plan was made available on the City’s website at www.wilsonnc.org. Meeting announcements and draft versions of the plan were made available on the website for public review.

Prioritization:

City staff asked the community and Advisory Group to prioritize the goals, objectives, and action items described in the plan, based on which items would make the biggest impacts to the neighborhood. Based on their rankings, each was then categorized as “high,” “medium,” or “low” priority. A “low” priority does not necessarily reflect low importance; rather, it reflects a relatively lower projected need or impact than other items. Priorities may be found in “Part 3: Implementation” in the “Table of Goals, Objectives, and Action Items.” The intent is to provide guidance on how to prioritize the implementation of the recommendations of this plan.

The ten goals were ranked in this order:



These priorities show that goals to improve safety, housing quality, and neighborhood appearance are important to citizens to support neighborhood improvement.

City of Wilson Neighborhood Collaborative Team:

The City of Wilson has an ongoing committee dedicated to addressing neighborhood issues. With representatives from Planning & Development Services, Police, Public Services, Human Relations, and Wilson Electric, the team represents all departments that have an impact on neighborhoods and is able to collectively discuss and identify solutions for neighborhood concerns. The Collaborative Team is an integral part of the creation and implementation of neighborhood plans. Each member provides expertise and the format provides valuable opportunities to collaborate on neighborhood improvement initiatives, as well as identify future budget priorities or opportunities. The Team met throughout the planning process and participated in community meetings.

PART 2: GOALS

“Part 2: Goals” is organized by the ten neighborhood goals, each of which describes “existing conditions” and “objectives.” These reflect the combined input from the public meetings, community surveys, Advisory Group, and City staff. Specific action items to address neighborhood issues are presented in “Part 3: Implementation,” which also shows responsible entities, cost (low, medium, or high), and priority (low, medium, or high).

Definitions:

Goal: The *BNO Plan* is made up of ten overarching goals. Goals are broad statements that together describe what will lead to a great neighborhood. They are based on the “Top Ten Characteristics of a Great Neighborhood” as outlined in the *City of Wilson 2030 Comprehensive Plan*. The ten goals were created based on public input to represent the specific needs and desires of the BNO neighborhood.

Objective: Objectives are the strategies to achieve the goals. Objectives break goals down into specific, measurable targets.

These goals and objectives should be used by neighborhood leaders, community groups, City Departments, and other relevant organizations to guide actions to improve the neighborhood. These action items, which recommend specific steps to achieve goals and objectives, are found in “Part 3: Implementation.” The plan envisions a collaborative approach where the combined efforts of various groups will leverage one another and create real change in the community.

The following sections describe each of the ten BNO Neighborhood goals.



NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS

Goal 1 – Accessibility: Provide safe access for people of all abilities to all areas and resources through multiple modes of transportation.

Goal 2 – Design: Maintain and enhance the visual amenities of the community, improve the appearance of the neighborhood, and preserve the historic, cultural, and residential character of the neighborhood.

Goal 3 – Economy: Increase private investment, improve existing commercial areas, and encourage new commercial and employment opportunities that are walkable and serve the needs of the neighborhood.

Goal 4 – Education: Support high-quality educational opportunities.

Goal 5 - Environment/Going Green: Protect and enhance environmental resources and greenspace, and create a sustainable community.

Goal 6 - Housing Quality: Improve housing quality, increase pride in and maintenance of homes and yards, and encourage restoration of dilapidated and vacant housing.

Goal 7- Leadership: Increase capacity of community groups and organizations, and empower citizens to become involved and take leadership roles to better the community and implement the goals of this plan.

Goal 8 – Recreation: Provide ongoing recreational opportunities for all ages, and ensure all areas have access to a park or greenspace.

Goal 9 – Safety: Provide safe streets and public areas with neighborhood watch involvement, responsive public safety services, and drug-free zones.

Goal 10 – Social: Provide community activities that create a sense of community and mutual trust throughout the neighborhoods.

Goal 1 – Accessibility: Provide safe access for people of all abilities to all areas and resources through multiple modes of transportation.

Existing Conditions:

Overview: The BNO neighborhoods are older neighborhoods, well-served by a traditional grid street pattern. Larger arterials of Nash Street, Raleigh Road Parkway (Raleigh Road), Atlantic Christian College (ACC) Drive, and Whitehead Avenue provide the majority of access through and around the neighborhood, with the other streets being lower volume residential streets. The speed limit throughout is 35 miles per hour. Margaret Hearne Elementary’s school zone speed limit is 25 miles per hour.

Key destinations in the neighborhood vicinity include Margaret Hearne Elementary, Barton College, the Toisnot Village shopping center, Gold and Toisnot Parks, and commercial areas along Nash Street and at the intersection of Raleigh Road and ACC Drive. Additionally, the neighborhood is within close proximity to the City’s downtown district, which has additional shopping, dining, and other commercial destinations.

Providing access via alternative modes of transportation contributes to the overall health of the community by encouraging more active lifestyles.

Roadway Conditions: There are 9.8 miles of roadway within the study area (including Nash Street and Raleigh Road). Residents were concerned about roadway conditions throughout the neighborhood, primarily related to potholes. Nash Street was considered by citizens as a priority area in need of repairs; recent work to replace infrastructure on Nash Street has resolved many of these issues.

Pedestrian Crashes: The 2006 *Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan* states that in Wilson County, the great majority of pedestrian crashes occur on local city streets. The Walk on Wilson

Pedestrian Safety Initiative has analyzed pedestrian crashes as recorded in police reports from 2003 to September 2011. Studies show ten pedestrian crashes for this period, with seven of them reporting an injury (see Map 1-A). Four were off-roadway in parking lots or driveways. There was no obvious correlation between the crashes and location around Barton College or Margaret Hearne, or of school-aged children or college students.

These numbers are fairly typical; throughout the City the study found more pedestrian crashes in densely populated downtown neighborhoods where people are more likely to be walking. Further contributing to crash rates, 15 percent of homes in Wilson do not have access to a vehicle,¹ and so rely on other means of transportation. These facts indicate a need to examine pedestrian/bicyclist safety and access in Wilson and the BNO neighborhood.

Sidewalks and Pedestrian Access: Residents overwhelmingly responded that the sidewalks were one of the things they liked about the neighborhood. Sidewalks can provide safe access to nearby destinations, safe places for exercise, and safe routes to school.

Over half of the roads have sidewalks, with approximately 5.3 miles of roadway having sidewalks on one or both sides of the street. Where there are sidewalks, most of the time (80 percent) they are located on both sides of the street (see Map 1-B).

Sidewalks are needed along the remaining 4.5 miles of neighborhood roadway. Approximately 50 percent of Margaret Hearne Elementary

¹ Per 2000 U.S. Census data as shown in the City’s 2008 *Comprehensive Bicycle Plan*.

students walk to school², yet sidewalks surrounding the school are not consistent (see Map 1-B).



5.3 miles of the neighborhood streets have sidewalks

“Goat paths,” where dirt paths have been created by walkers in areas with no sidewalks, are found along Raleigh Road and ACC Drive between residential areas and commercial areas. Installing sidewalks in these areas is a priority to improve connectivity. The City’s 2006 *Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan* designated Raleigh Road Parkway as a “priority pedestrian corridor.”



“Goat Path” along Raleigh Road Pkwy

There are 8 marked crosswalks in the planning area. Several of these crosswalks are located at intersections with no stop signs for oncoming traffic, though signage indicates that drivers should watch for pedestrians.

² Information received from Principal Jenny Hayes, 2011.



Corbett Avenue – Pedestrian Crossing sign with no sidewalk

Some crosswalks have only one marked crosswalk, while others mark multiple legs of the intersection. All are marked with parallel lines, except the crossing at ACC Drive and Lee Street, which is a “continental” design and more visible from a distance. “Continental” or “ladder” crosswalk designs are more visible to motorists than “parallel markings” and can be oriented so tires drive between the lines, reducing wear and maintenance needs.³ See Map 1-B for crosswalk locations.



“Ladder” style crosswalk design
Photo:
[www.pedbikeimages.org/Tiffany Robinson](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/TiffanyRobinson)



“Continental” style crosswalk
Photo:
[www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/DanBurden)

³ Federal Highway Administration, retrieved from <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sidewalk2/sidewalks208.htm>



The "parallel" style crosswalk at Margaret Hearne is worn and not very visible from a distance.

There are no signalized pedestrian crossings or marked crosswalks at the intersection of Raleigh Road and ACC Drive, a busy intersection with significant pedestrian traffic (evidenced by "goat paths" along these roadways). However, this intersection is planned to become a roundabout, which will be designed to include pedestrian crosswalks (see discussion under the "one-way streets" section below for details).

Other pedestrian obstacles include cars parking on sidewalks, broken sidewalks, tree roots that narrow and/or create broken sidewalks, and tree limbs that have grown low and prevent access. Further, there are areas where facilities are inadequate for disabled travelers due to broken sidewalks, steep slopes, and crosswalk ramps that do not provide smooth transition to the street.

Overall, the neighborhood is considered fairly walkable. The website www.walkscore.com, which rates addresses based on their proximity to services such as restaurants, stores, and other destinations, provides an idea of the walkability of a location. The site gives Barton College a "walk score" of 60 out of 100, categorizing it as "somewhat walkable." The closer one gets to downtown, the higher the score. For example, the address of 400 Vance Street receives a score of 77, or "very walkable." Those homes furthest away from downtown are considered "car-dependent."

The City has a pedestrian safety program, called "Walk on Wilson." Part of a larger study by the Highway Safety Research Center of Chapel Hill, the program identifies barriers to safe pedestrian access in the City. The *Pedestrian Safety Action Plan* documents their findings and recommends steps to improve safety, such as enforcement, additional studies, and education.

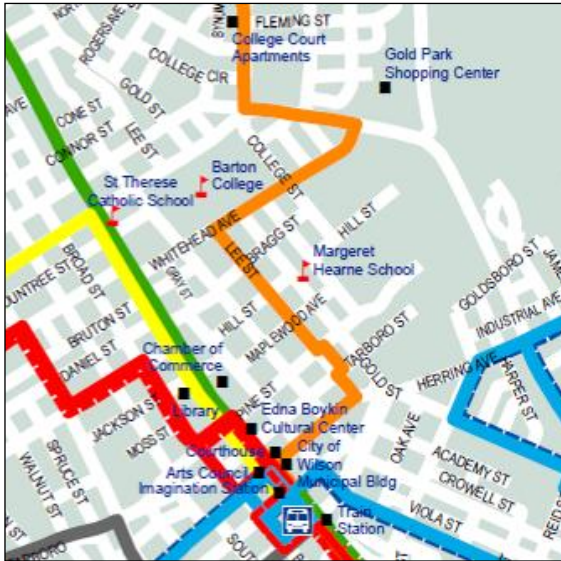
Bicycle Lanes: There are no bicycle lanes located in the neighborhood. The 2008 *City of Wilson Bicycle Plan* identifies proposed bicycle routes, including shared lane painting and signage along Nash Street and a signed parallel route along Vance Street (East Nash Street Parallel Route). To address concerns of unsafe traffic volumes on Nash Street, shared lane painting, or "sharrows," will be painted on Vance Street as a parallel route to Nash Street, (expected in 2012). Sharrows are road markings that enhance bicyclist safety by warning drivers that bicyclists may be sharing the road, and can help indicate to bicyclists which side of the road to ride on. Sharrows are generally used where the roadway is not wide enough to install bicycle lanes.



Sharrows provide safer biking routes by telling drivers that bicyclists may be sharing the road.

Bicycle lanes are also proposed by the *Bicycle Plan* for Raleigh Road and ACC Drive, with a signed parallel route along Whitehead Avenue (Westwood-Toisnot East-West Route). Parallel routes provide low traffic options to the busier streets, as well as connections to destinations like Barton College.

Transit: The City’s bus system provides service to the neighborhood with two bus lines along Nash Street and one line that travels along Lee Street, Whitehead Avenue, and Raleigh Road. Some residents feel that the bus system is not timed appropriately to accommodate people who would utilize it for transportation to work.

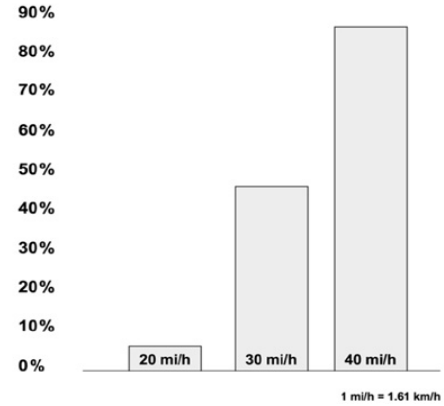


One-Way Streets: Three one-way streets run through the neighborhood: Raleigh Road, ACC Drive, and Pine Street. A return to two-way traffic for Raleigh Road and ACC Drive are considered priorities by both residents and Barton College to improve traffic flow and accessibility. The City’s 2030 *Comprehensive Plan* also calls for such a conversion on these streets. NCDOT is moving forward with this conversion, including installation of a traffic circle at the intersection of Raleigh Road and ACC Drive. The project is projected to be completed within 2-3 years.

Speeding: Speeding motor vehicle traffic is a concern of residents, particularly around Margaret Hearne Elementary and Barton College. Residents say speeding is a deterrent to walking or biking in the neighborhood. Police state they have witnessed speeding cars along Gold Street. They have targeted speed enforcement in this area, but the speeds soon increase once the police have left the area. Car speeds are directly related to a pedestrian’s chance of death (see graph).

No traffic calming devices to reduce speeds (such as speed bumps, chicanes, or flashing signals) are found in this neighborhood.

A pedestrian's chance of death if hit by a motor vehicle:



Source: U.K. Department of Transport

Margaret Hearne Elementary Access and Safety: Approximately 50 percent of students at Margaret Hearne Elementary walk to school. Speeding during school zone hours is an observed issue. There are no traffic calming devices, and road widths are relatively wide, which may contribute to higher vehicle speeds. There is a crossing guard and a marked crosswalk at the intersection of Hill Street and Gold Street. As discussed above, the crosswalk needs to be updated to be more visible. There are “school zone” signs located on surrounding streets, but there are no other warning systems to encourage drivers to slow down in these areas. School zone speed limits are 25 miles per hour. The *Safe Routes to School Action Plan* identifies the need for improved safety and sidewalk access around Margaret Hearne Elementary.



The crosswalk in front of Margaret Hearne Elementary is difficult for oncoming cars to see.

Margaret Hearne Elementary is a participating school in the City’s “Safe Routes to School” (SRTS) program, which identifies strategies to address safety when traveling to school. A number of recommendations related to engineering, enforcement, encouragement, and education are presented in the document to improve safety at the school. Margaret Hearne Elementary participated in International Walk to School Day in 2011 as part of the SRTS program. 87 students participated in this event, where students walk to school together with parents, police, and other volunteers, while learning safe walking tips.

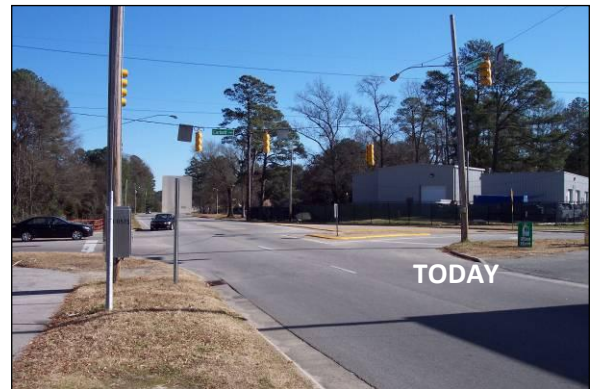


On-Street Parking: A study of available on-street parking was conducted for the neighborhood (see Map 1-C). On-street parking provides additional benefits of traffic calming. Cars parked on the street effectively narrow the road width, which encourages slower speeds, and can be a buffer between traffic and pedestrians on the sidewalks. However, on-street parking can create a visual barrier between pedestrians and traffic, particularly children and those in wheelchairs, so parking should not be allowed where pedestrians cross.

On-street parking is an issue at Margaret Hearne Elementary, where cars park in the “no-parking” zones on Gold Street in front of the school when dropping off and picking up their children. This disrupts the flow of traffic necessary to provide efficient access for cars dropping off/picking up children in the designated flow pattern.

On-street parking is prohibited in certain areas, including within 25 feet of intersections, within 30 feet of stop signs, flashing beacons, or traffic signals, on

crosswalks, and in front of driveways. On-street parking is generally prohibited in the BNO area in areas where the street width cannot safely accommodate two lanes of travel and on-street parking. Some residents felt that more on-street parking would help stop people from parking their cars on the front lawn. However, additional studies would be required to determine if existing on-street parking is sufficient to satisfy the parking needs of the neighborhood.



The existing intersection at ACC Drive and Raleigh Road (above) and illustration of how it might look when the road is converted to a two-way street and redesigned to function as a traffic circle (below). Photo Source: City of Wilson 2030 Comprehensive Plan



Objectives:

Objectives to achieve Goal 1 are listed below.
Recommended action items are provided in “Part 3: Implementation.”

Objective 1.1: Improve connectivity and condition of facilities for pedestrians and other non-motorized travelers of all abilities.

Objective 1.2: Improve road conditions.

Objective 1.3: Improve bus system accessibility and timing.

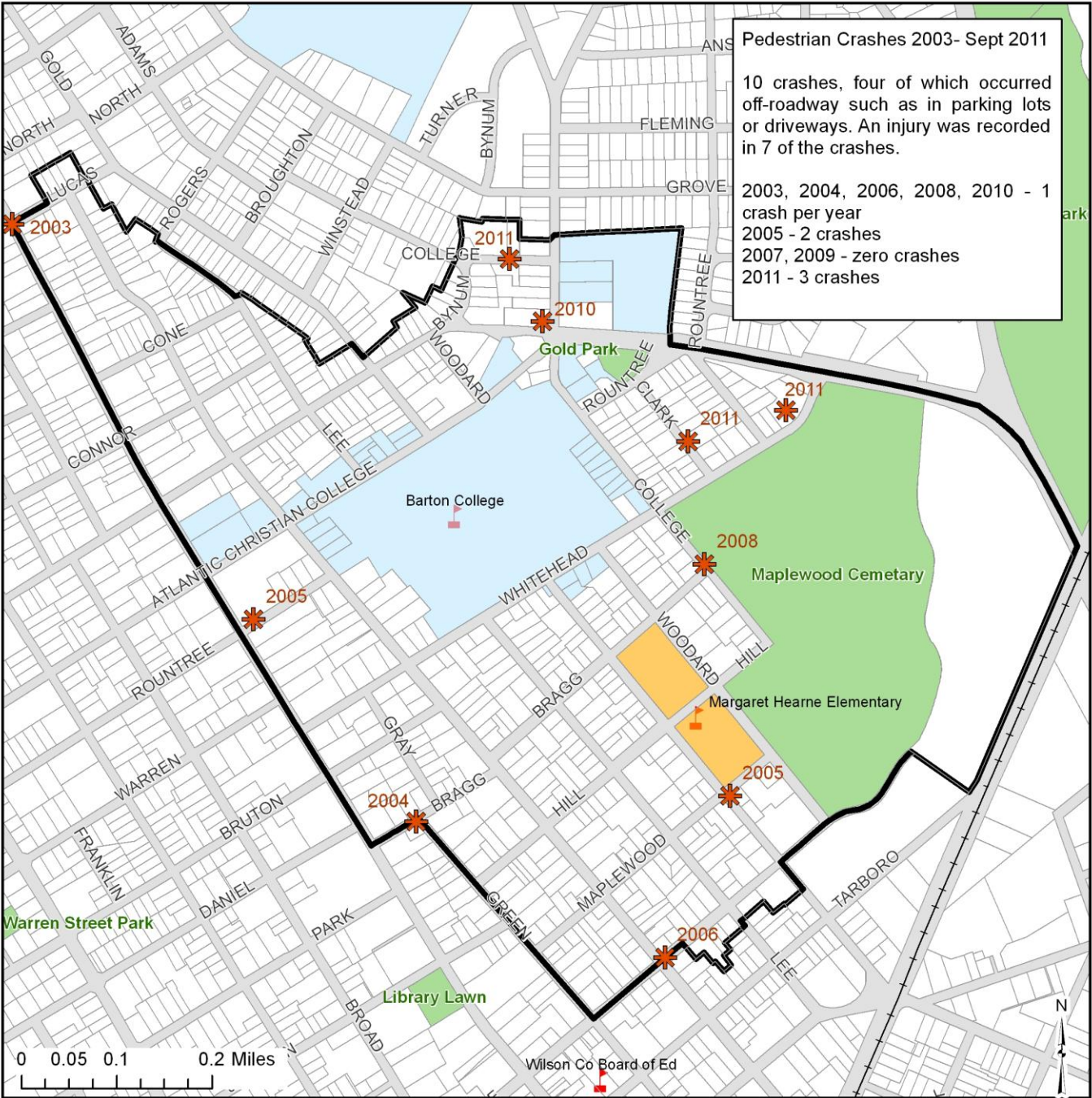
Objective 1.4: Convert Raleigh Road and ACC Drive from one-way streets to two-way streets.

Objective 1.5: Reduce speeding and improve pedestrian safety in areas of high pedestrian activity, particularly Margaret Hearne Elementary School.



*Curb Extensions at intersections (left) or midblock (right) are an example of a possible solution for speeding in the BNO neighborhood. These provide traffic calming that can slow traffic, provide additional landscaping, and help mitigate stormwater flooding.
Photo source: www.pedbikeimages.org/DanBurden*

Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan



Pedestrian Crashes 2003- Sept 2011
 10 crashes, four of which occurred off-roadway such as in parking lots or driveways. An injury was recorded in 7 of the crashes.
 2003, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010 - 1 crash per year
 2005 - 2 crashes
 2007, 2009 - zero crashes
 2011 - 3 crashes

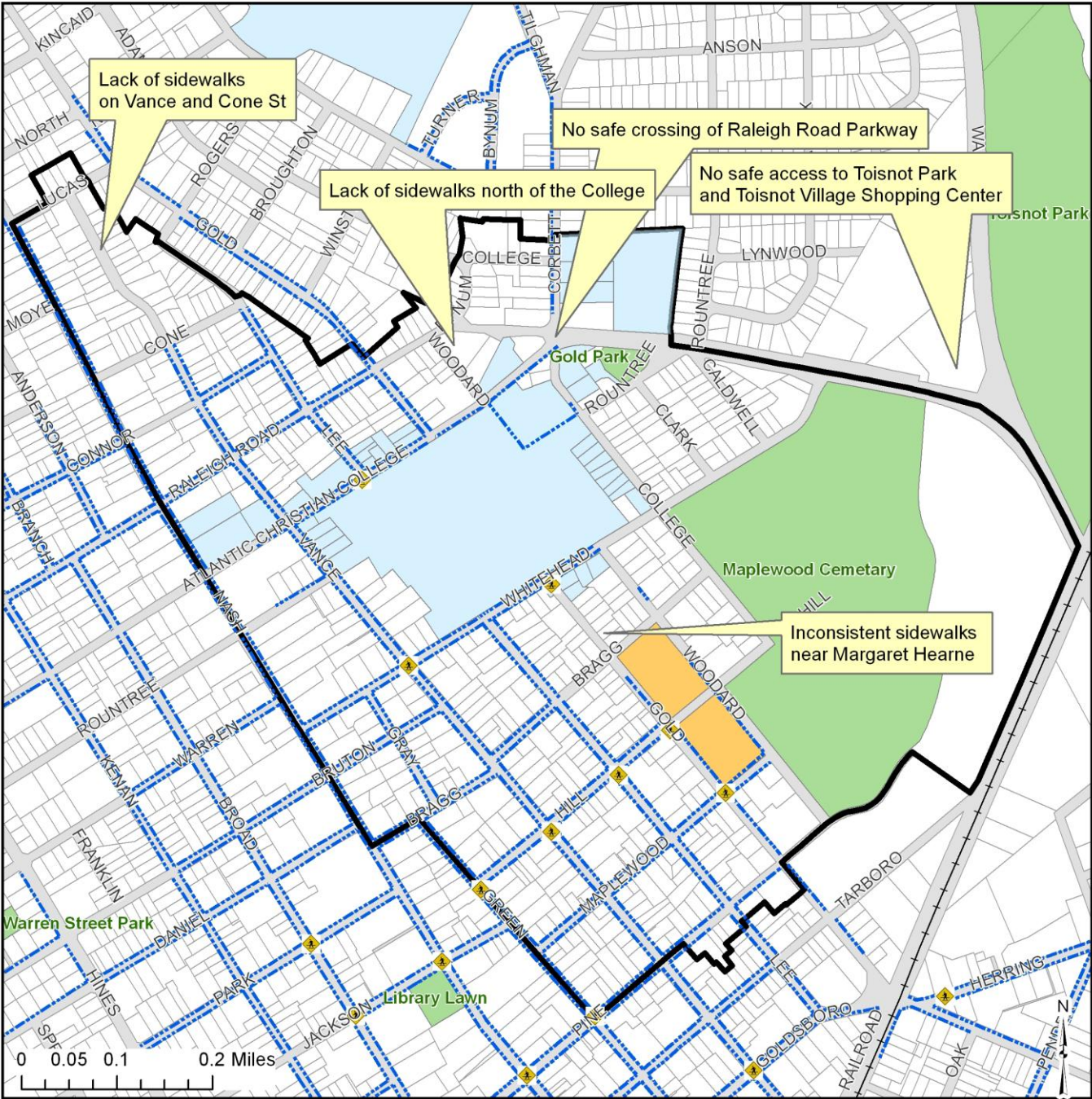
Map 1-A: Pedestrian Crashes

- Pedestrian Crashes and Year
- BartonArea_Boundary
- Margaret Hearne Elementary School
- Barton College Property
- Parks and greenspaces
- Railroad

Data Source: University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center




Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan

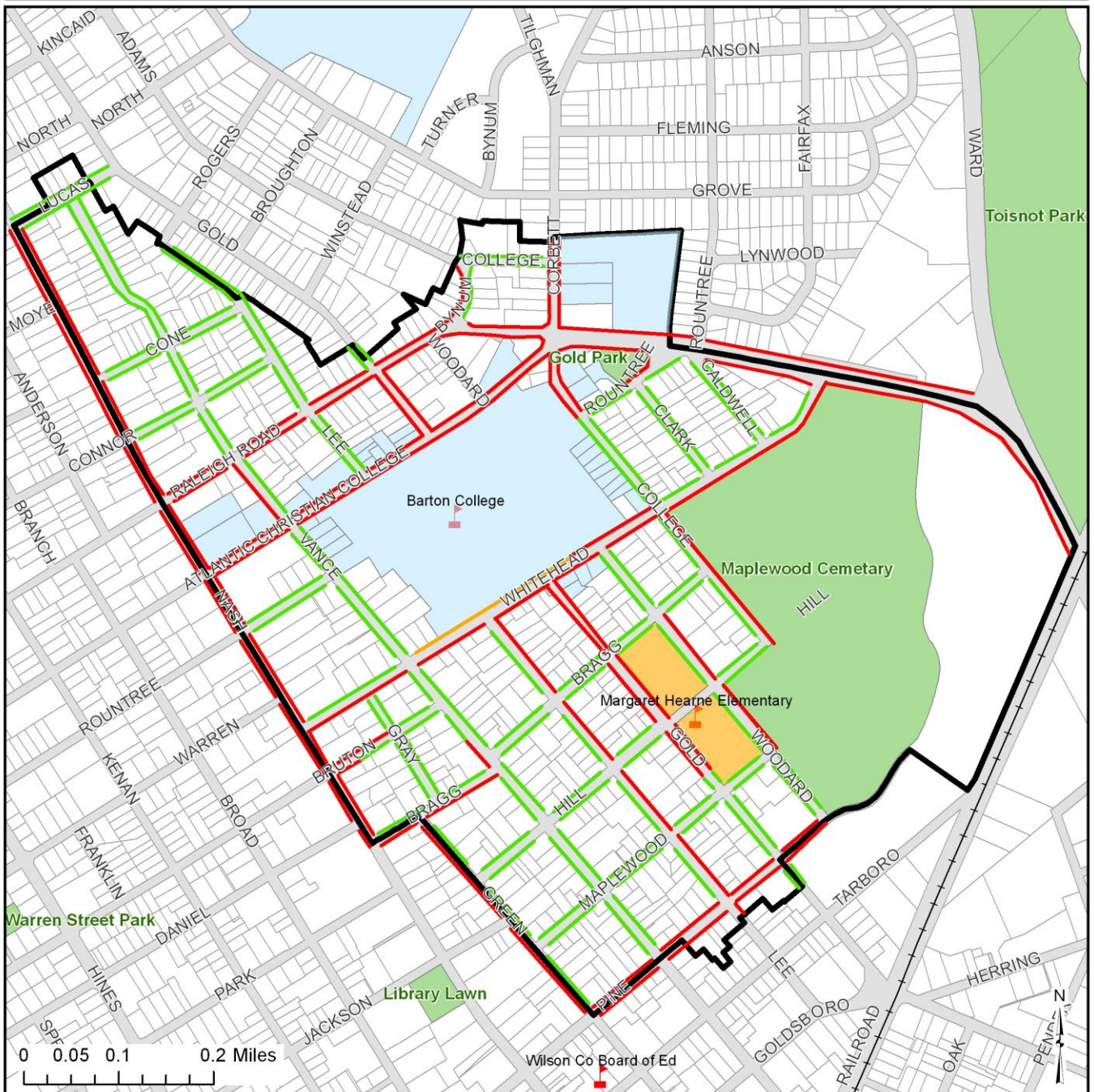


Map 1-B: Pedestrian Access

- Sidewalks
- Crosswalks
- Margaret Hearne Elementary School
- Parks and greenspaces
- Barton College Property
- BartonArea_Boundary
- Railroad



Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan



Map 1-C: On-Street Parking

Street Parking

- Parking Allowed
- No Parking Allowed
- On-Street Parking Marked

- Margaret Hearne Elementary School
- Barton College Property
- Parks and greenspaces

- Schools
- BartonArea_Boundary
- +— Railroad



Goal 2 - Design: *Maintain and enhance the visual amenities of the community, improve the appearance of the neighborhood, and preserve the historic, cultural, and residential character of the neighborhood.*

Existing Conditions:

Overview: The BNO neighborhood has a distinct historic character with homes dating from the early 1900's prevalent throughout much of the neighborhood. Tree-lined, shaded streets define the residential streets, and non-residential centerpieces, such as St. Therese Catholic Church, Barton College, and Maplewood Cemetery, provide distinct character. In recent years, portions of the neighborhood have seen sporadic investments in historic properties, a decline in private property investment and housing quality. However, much of the housing stock is intact and new residents do continue to invest in redevelopment.

Residential uses make up about 45% of the total land area. Maplewood Cemetery accounts for almost 15% of the study area, and Barton College property takes up another 14%. See Map 2-A for land use.

Architecture: Residents are proud of the historic character of the neighborhood, and see great potential for continued renovation efforts. They are also proud of and optimistic about the improvement to the neighborhood that has already occurred through the renovation of the historic homes.

As described in the “Neighborhood History” section of “Part 1: About the Plan”, the neighborhoods in the BNO neighborhood represent some of the oldest residential areas in Wilson. Much of the study area is located within the nationally and locally recognized Old Wilson and West Nash Historic Districts, and a number of nationally and locally recognized “historic landmark” properties. Local districts carry special rules to protect the historic character of the neighborhoods, which are enforced by the City’s Historic Preservation program. This effort has successfully preserved many of the landmark homes in this area. See Map 2-B for historic district boundaries and location of landmark properties, and the “Neighborhood History” section of “Part 1” for details about the history of the area.

Annual events are held to celebrate the historic homes of the neighborhood, including the Christmas Tour of Old & Historic Homes, the Old Wilson Porch Tour & Art Stroll, and the Trolley Tour at the Whirligig Festival.



One of the churches in the neighborhood, featuring bellcote form Gothic Revival style architecture.



Example of a well-preserved and recently renovated historic home in the neighborhood.

Overall Appearance and Nuisances: As noted above, residents are proud of the appearance of renovated historic homes. Residents also often noted the tree-lined streets as a positive defining characteristic of the neighborhood, as well as the churches and schools.

However, residents felt that high grass, cars parking in the front yards, junk cars, litter in yards, and other nuisances are a neighborhood issue and are detracting from the overall appearance of the area. Over 30% of survey respondents in the general survey listed “cleanliness” as a concern. The City’s Planning & Land Development department handles reports of nuisances and junk cars. The City often relies on residents to report concerns, so it is dependent in part on citizens to take action and call to report (252-399-2219 or 252-399-2220). See Map 2-F for nuisances addressed in 2009 and 2010.

Contributing to the issue of cleanliness and nuisances, housing condition itself was chosen by residents as the second most important issue in the neighborhood, after crime/safety concerns. Residents noted the general lack of upkeep and poor appearance of a number of homes that reduces value of nearby properties, increases perception of crime, and detracts from community pride. Please see “Goal 6 – Housing Quality” for more discussion on housing conditions and efforts to improve homes.

Not just private property is an appearance concern. There are several areas where there are gaps in the spacing of trees along the streets in the public right-of-way. These are generally areas where trees were lost due to storms, or removal due to interference with power lines, and never replaced. The City has received a state grant to implement a street tree inventory and enhance its urban forestry program. This project will begin in 2012 and will aim to set baselines and goals for tree canopy. Some residents are also concerned about litter and overgrown grass and vegetation in the right-of-way.



Litter and overgrown vegetation along ACC Drive

Excess signage was another common concern. Residents noted there are sometimes multiple signs (such as “no parking” signs) within close proximity to one another, creating a cluttered appearance.

Boarded Up or Vacant Homes and Structures:

The neighborhood has a total of 68 parcels with abandoned or vacant structures. 65 of these are residential, and three are commercial properties (see Map 2-C). Residents have observed graffiti on some of these lots and a general lack of upkeep. The poor housing conditions and nuisances described above are often associated with abandoned homes. Unkempt abandoned homes detract from overall neighborhood appearance, reduce nearby home values, undermine confidence in neighborhood stability, and create safety concerns. Please see “Goal 6 – Housing Quality” for discussion on efforts to improve these homes and market them to new homeowners.



Boarded up structure in the neighborhood.

The neighborhood has seen a significant increase in the number of vacant homes. Table 1-A describes the percentages of vacant and occupied housing for 2000 and 2010 within the neighborhood, based on census block data. According to census counts, there are over 100 more vacant houses in 2010 than there were in 2000, jumping from a 7.3% vacancy rate to 21.5%. Recent city staff field work (mid-2011) identified just 65 vacant homes – this discrepancy could be due to changes in vacancy rates since the 2010 census was conducted, or because of inexact census estimating procedures.

Table 1-A: Percentage of occupied and vacant housing units for 2000 and 2010

Year	Occupied	Vacant
2000	92.7%	7.3%
2010	78.5%	21.5%

Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census block data

New and Demolished Structures: According to City records, six new single family residential homes were built between 2000 and 2011 (with the most recent built in 2008). Eleven new commercial structures were built (the most recent built in 2007) and one multi-family structure of 3-4 units was built in 2004.

18 structures were demolished within 2000-2011, most of them located on property acquired by Barton College. See Map 2-D for locations of new and demolished buildings.

Vacant Lots: Similar to abandoned homes, vacant lots can be prone to nuisances, litter, and safety concerns. There are 19 vacant lots within the neighborhood (see Map 2-E). These lots are generally created when a dilapidated house or structure is demolished. Property owners are responsible for upkeep of these properties but may have little incentive to do so regularly. These sites are available for infill development or other uses, such as parks, greenspace, or a yard for an adjacent home.

Objectives:

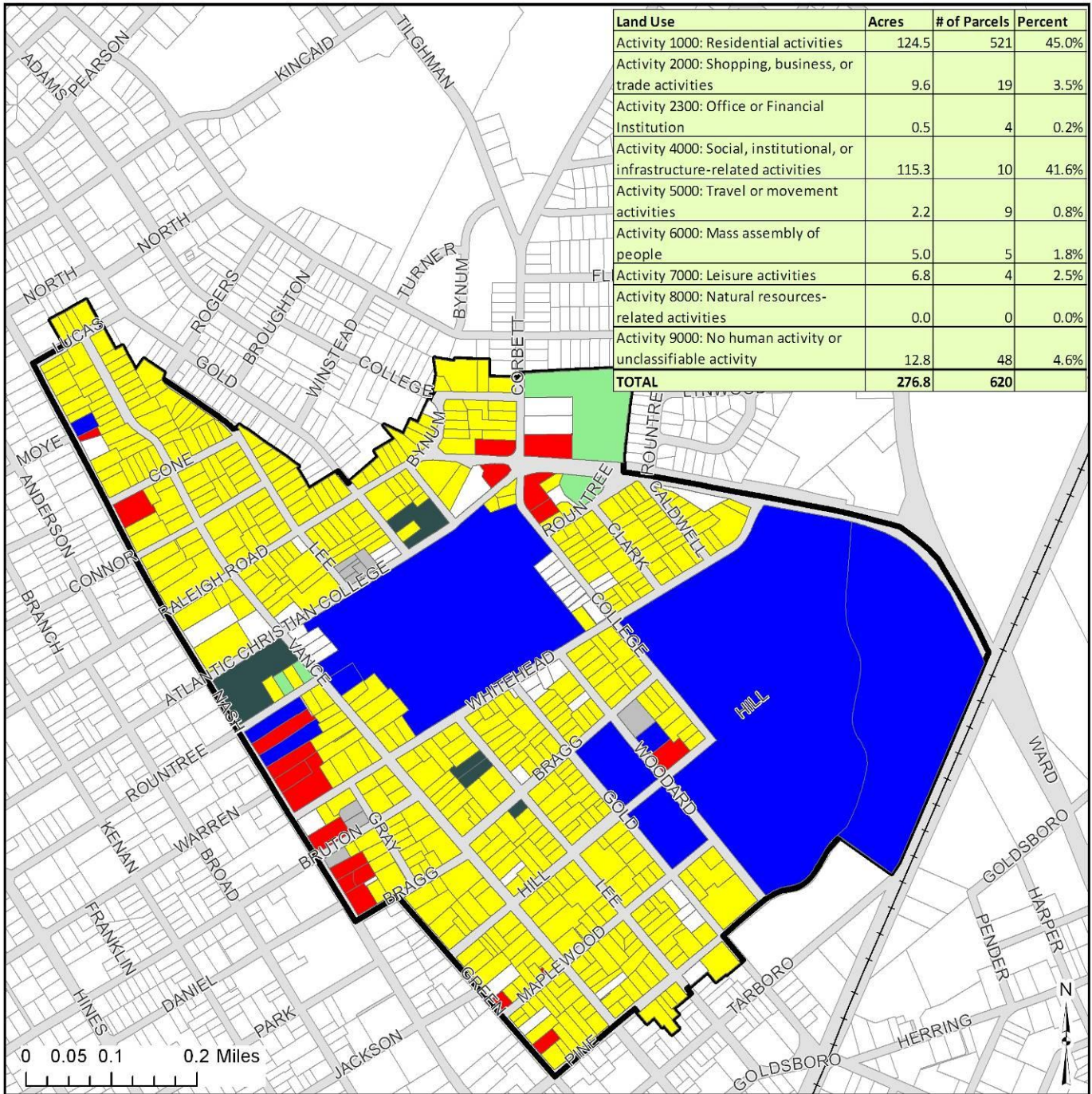
Objectives to achieve Goal 2 are listed below. Recommended action items are provided in “Part 3: Implementation.”

Objective 2.1: Improve private property appearance, including program to address boarded up/abandoned housing and vacant lots.

Objective 2.2: Improve appearance of streets by removing excess signage, increasing landscaping/tree plantings, and cleaning up right-of-ways.

Objective 2.3: Preserve the unique identity and historic character of the neighborhood.

Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan



Map 2-A: Existing Land Use

Note: land use reflects general uses of property and may include vacant, unused structures.

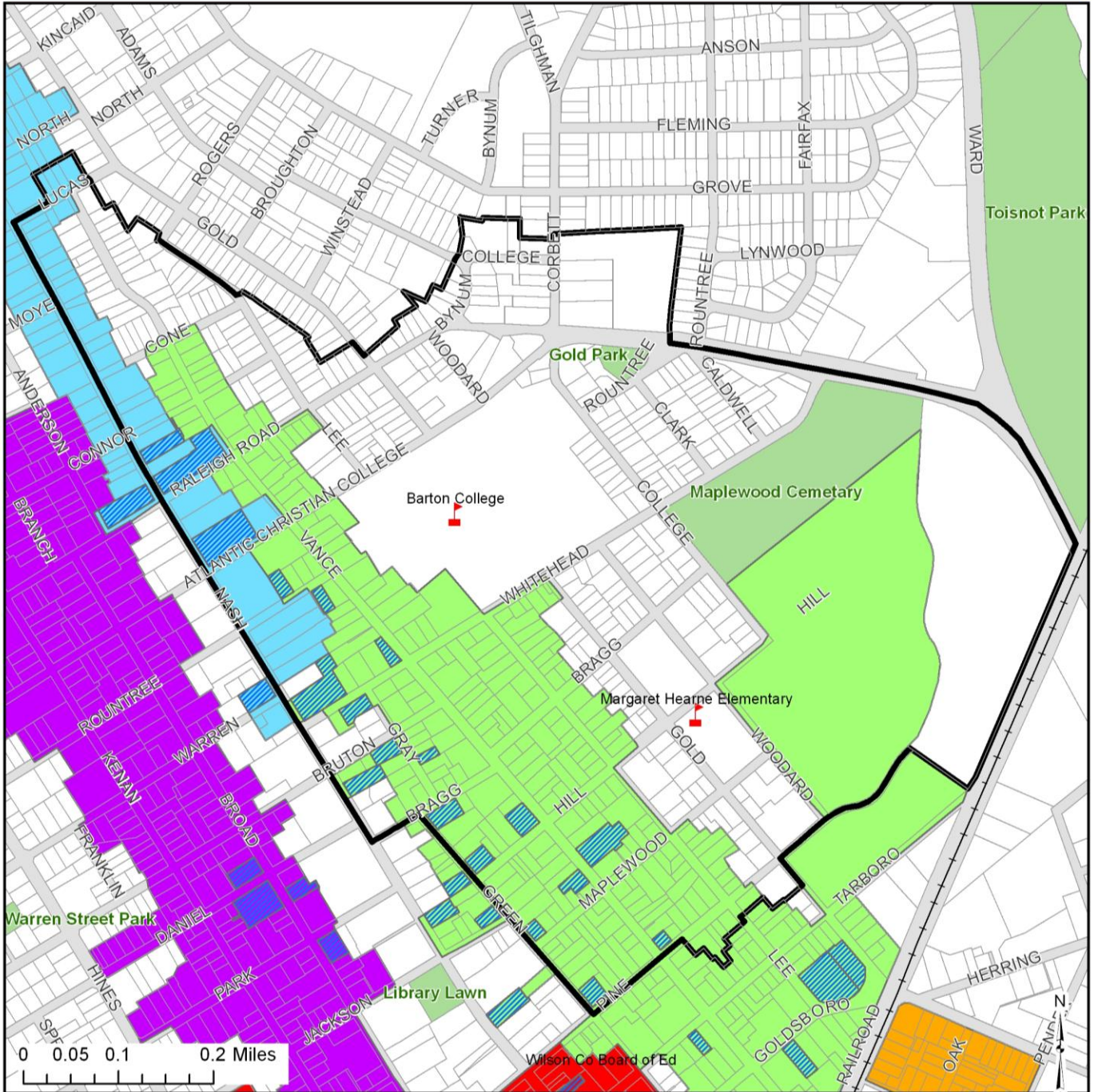
Land Use Category

- Activity 1000: Residential activities
- Activity 2000: Shopping, business, or trade activities
- Activity 3000: Industrial, manufacturing, and waste-related activities
- Activity 4000: Social, institutional, or infrastructure-related activities
- Activity 5000: Travel or movement activities
- Activity 6000: Mass assembly of people
- Activity 7000: Leisure activities
- Activity 8000: Natural resources-related activities
- Activity 9000: No human activity or unclassifiable activity

Source: City of Wilson GIS, layer: Planning Standard Symbology; LandUsePolygon



Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan



Map 2-B: Historic Districts

Historic Districts

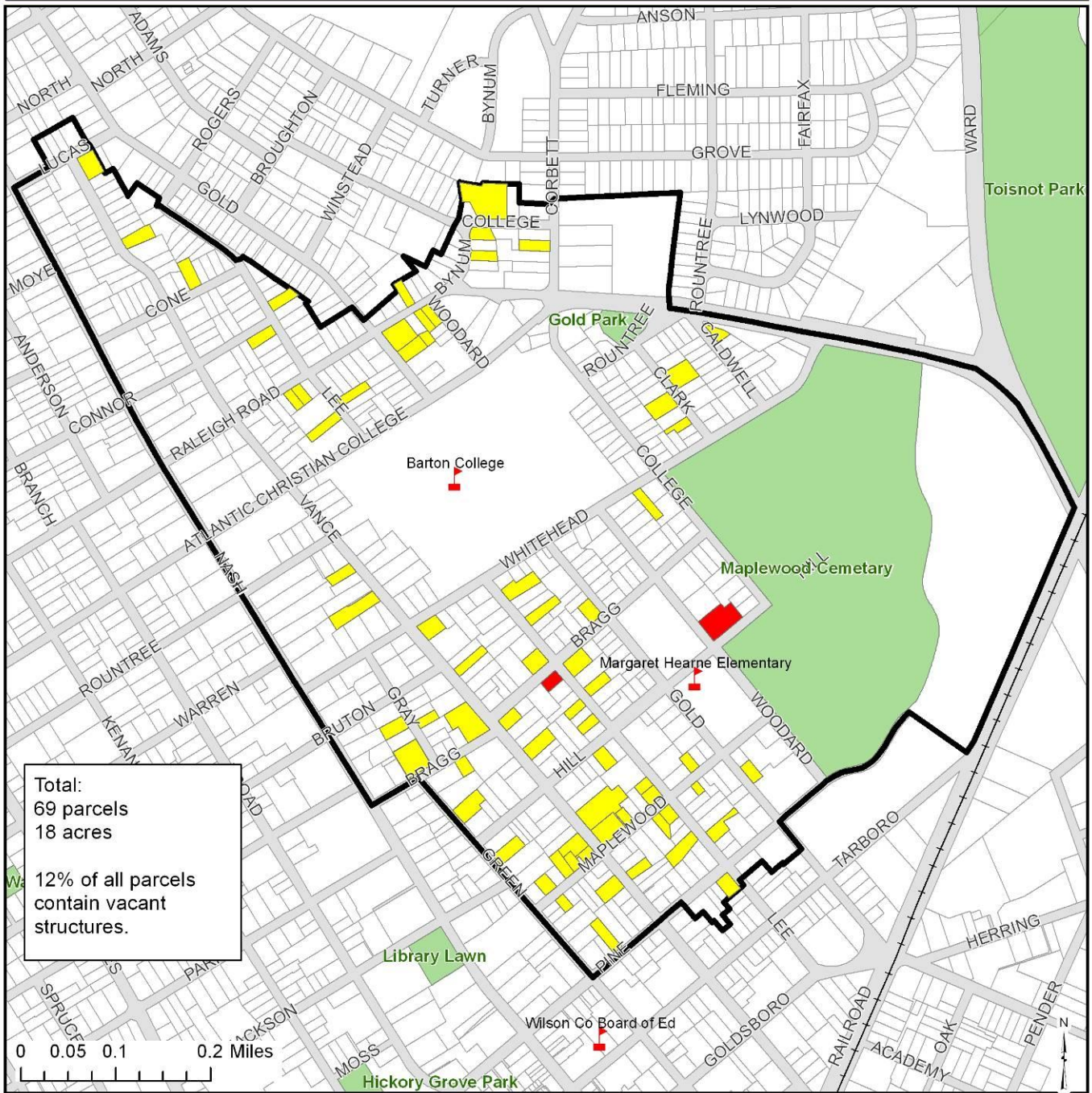
Name

- Broad-Kenan
- Downtown/Tobacco Warehouse
- East Wilson
- Old Wilson
- West Nash

- HistoricLandmarks
- BartonArea_Boundary
- Parks and greenspaces
- Schools
- Railroad



Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan



Map 2-C: Parcels with vacant structures

Vacant Structures

- Vacant residential structure
- Vacant commercial structure

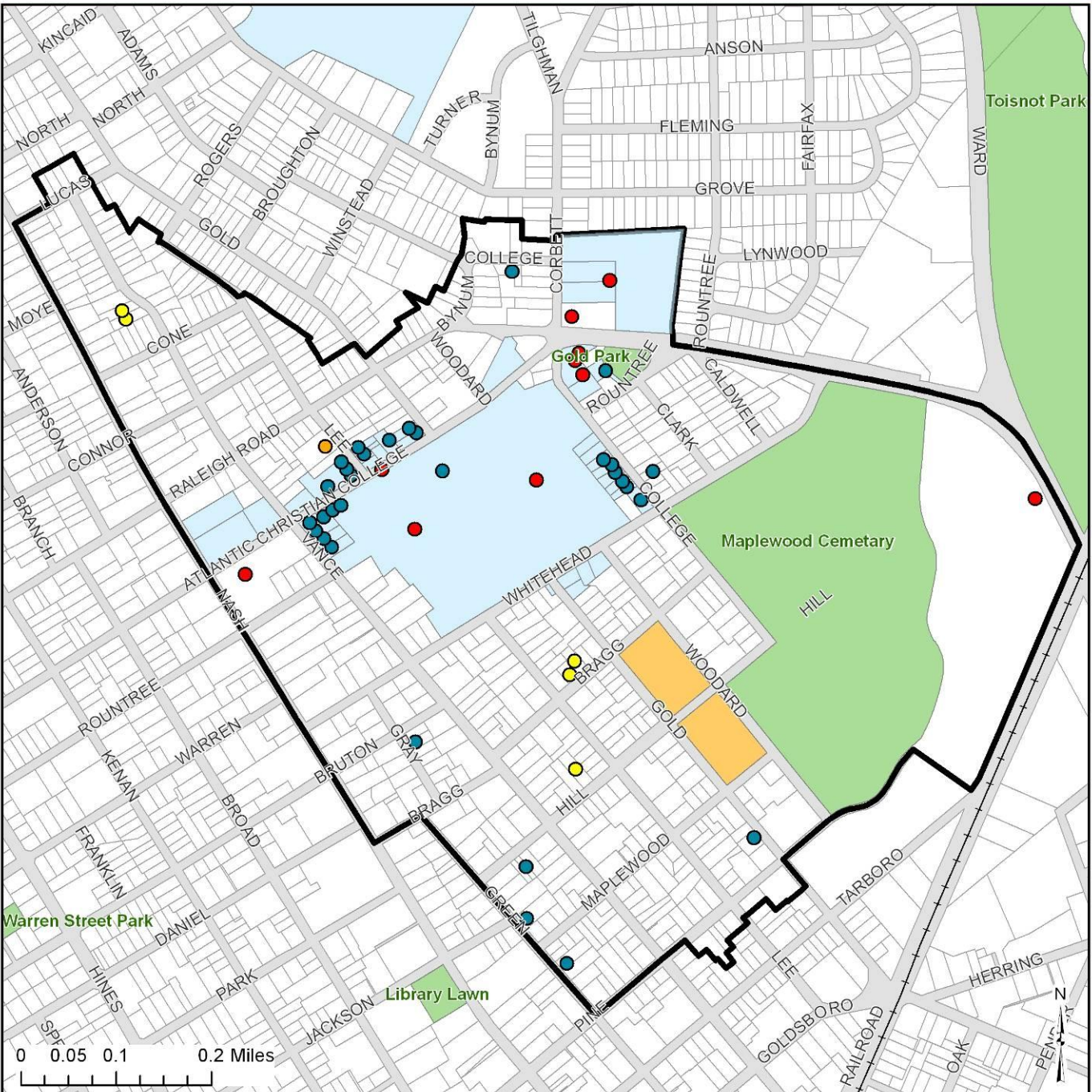
- Parks and greenspaces
- Schools
- BartonArea_Boundary
- Railroad

Note: Does not include vacant parcels with no structures or partially vacant properties.



Source: Field verification May 2011 by City of Wilson Land Development; Wilson County GIS Parcels data

Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan



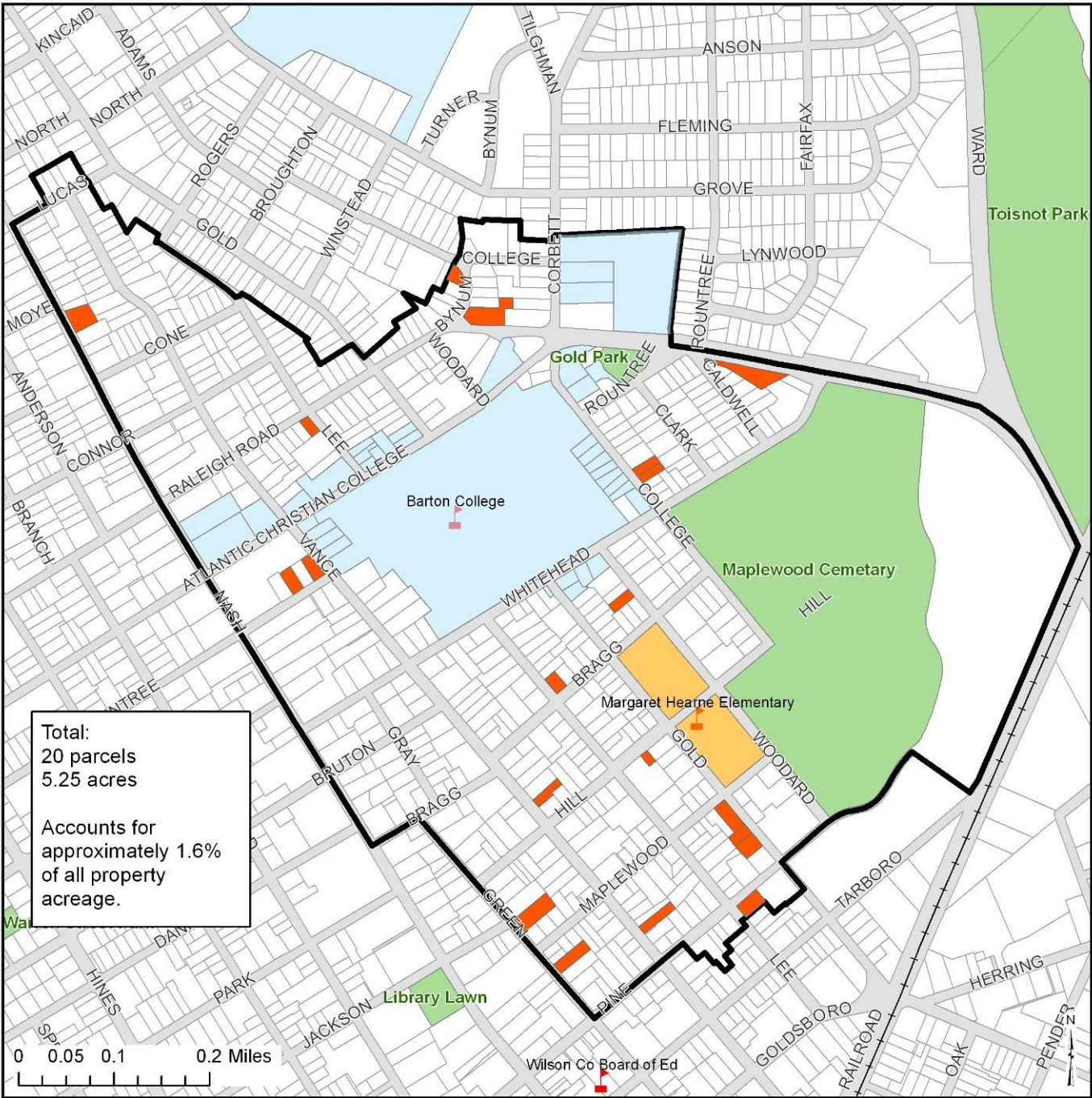
Map 2-D: Demolition and New Construction 2000-2011

- | | |
|--|--|
| ● DEMOLITION | Margaret Hearne Elementary School |
| ● NEW COMMERCIAL | Barton College Property |
| ● NEW MULTI-FAMILY (3 - 4 UNITS) | Parks and Greenspaces |
| ● NEW SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING | |







Source: City of Wilson GIS




Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan



Map 2-E: Vacant Lots with No Structures

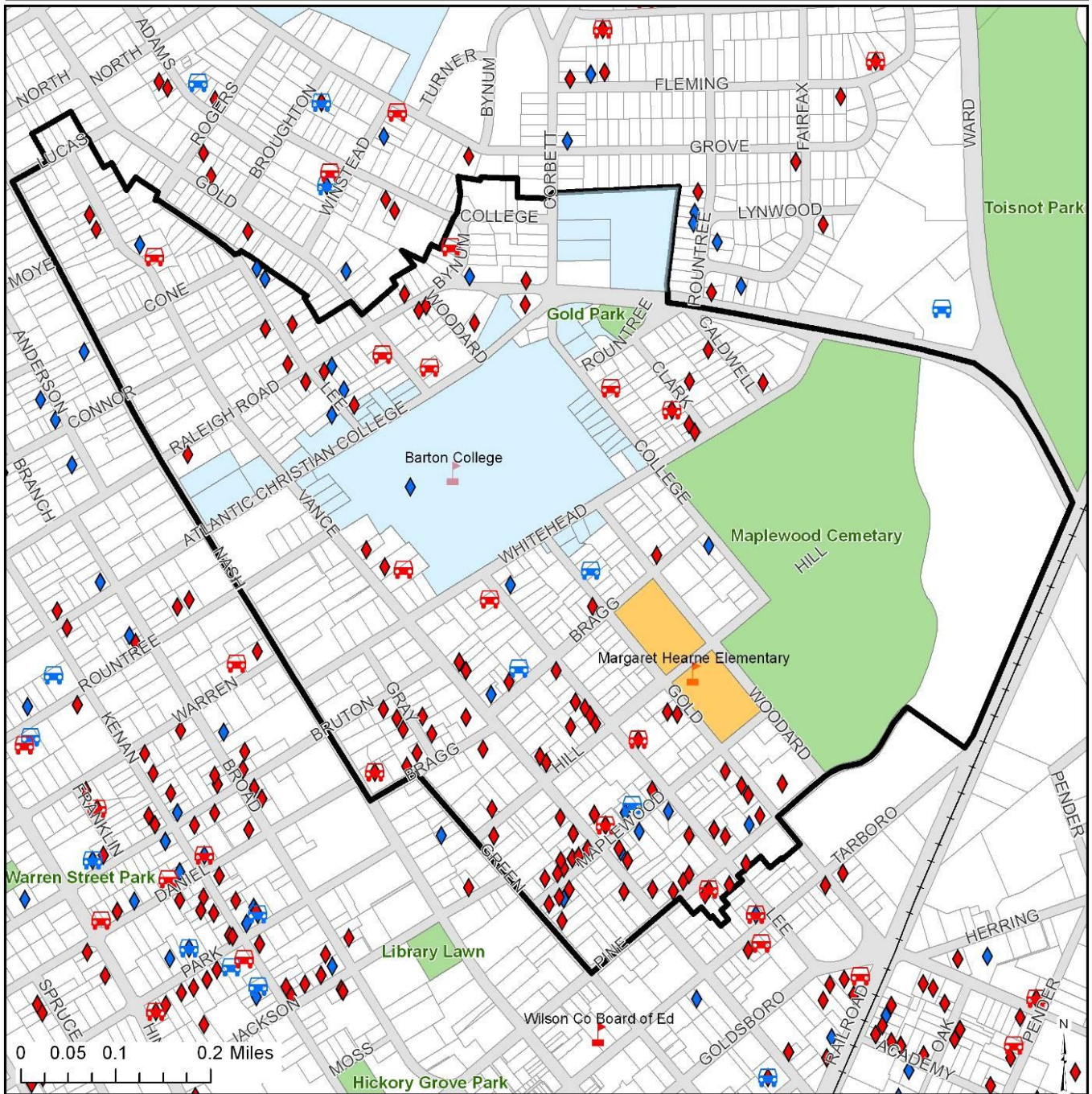
 Vacant Lots	 Parks and greenspaces
 Margaret Hearne Elementary School	 BartonArea_Boundary
 Barton College Property	 Railroad

Note: Does not include vacant lots owned by Barton College. Lots that are owned by the adjacent lot owner and used as a yard, as well as parking lots, were omitted.



Source: Lu-Ann Monson, Historic Preservation Planner

Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan



Map 2-F: Nuisances and Junk Vehicles Addressed by the City in 2009-2010

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Junk/Abandoned Vehicles | Nuisances | Margaret Hearne Elementary School |
| 2009 | 2009 | Barton College Property |
| 2010 | 2010 | Parks and greenspaces |
| | | BartonArea_Boundary |
| | | Railroad |

Source: City of Wilson GIS



Goal 3 - Economy: *Increase private investment, improve existing commercial areas, and encourage new commercial and employment opportunities that are walkable and serve the needs of the neighborhood.*

Existing Conditions:

Overview: Located near downtown and along the Nash Street corridor, residents have access to a number of businesses, shopping, and dining opportunities. Commercial areas within the planning area fall along Nash Street and the intersection of Raleigh Road and ACC Drive.

Existing Business/Commercial: A total of 19 parcels are considered business, shopping, or trade activities within the study area, with commercial districts located along Nash Street and at the intersection of Raleigh Road and ACC Drive (see Map 2-A).

Businesses within the neighborhood include office uses, used car sales, gas stations, two restaurants, several retail stores, and one bed & breakfast (currently not in operation). All provide employment opportunities, and Barton College provides an additional 200 faculty and staff jobs.

Zoning classifications within the planning area (as of October 2011) show non-residential areas as a mix of O&R1 (Office and Residential – Urban District), B-2 (Peripheral Central Business District), O-3 (Office District), and I-1 (Industrial I). See Map 3-A. Industrial properties are located on the far eastern side of the neighborhood boundary and are predominantly owned by the City for a wastewater treatment plant. The residential zoning that dominates most of the neighborhood (RA-6I) allows limited commercial possibilities. However, a “residential conversion zone” that covers a good portion of the neighborhood allows conversion of a residential home to another use, as long as it is compatible with the surrounding properties.

The convenience stores at the intersection of Raleigh Road and ACC Drive were listed by citizens as businesses that detract from the

community, and are considered “unsafe” by many due to the perception of crime and presence of people purchasing alcohol and goods late at night. Wilson Police Department is currently working to improve this area by working with property owners and the State Division of Alcohol Law Enforcement.

Many students at Barton College do not have cars, and almost 85 percent of students responded that more destinations, such as restaurants and shopping, were needed within walking distance. A number of students responded that the convenience stores near to the school were unsafe and avoided by students. When asked what new businesses they most needed or would like to see near campus, a coffee shop was the most common response. Other ideas included a bookstore, restaurant, pub, locally-owned shops, music venues, and other places that would serve students’ needs.

A portion of the commercial area on Nash Street closest to the college is zoned O&R1, a zone that does not permit most of these identified needs, including eating establishments (except under special permit), coffee shops, music stores, or bookstores.



Convenience Store near Barton College

Other businesses, shopping, and employment in close proximity: As noted, the study area is considered a downtown neighborhood. Nearby shopping districts (within a mile and often much less than that) include several businesses serving daily needs, such as a grocery store on Nash Street (located within a quarter mile of Barton College), restaurants on Nash Street and downtown, shopping on Nash Street and Downtown, and government offices located downtown. The Toisnot Village shopping center, located on Ward Boulevard just north of the neighborhood boundary, includes a bank, Dollar Store, Save-A-Lot food store, and several other businesses in a strip shopping center. However, these are not easily accessed via walking: no connectivity is provided to the neighborhood except off of Raleigh Road and Corbett Avenue, and it can only be accessed by crossing Raleigh Road, a 5-lane road with no crossing signals.

Residents often listed proximity to these commercial areas just outside of the neighborhood boundary as a great amenity. However, residents also felt there were not enough restaurants, businesses, shopping, or employment available without being required to get in the car and drive, and felt that downtown needed more businesses.

Opportunities: Overall, there is a need for more development that addresses daily needs (such as banking, restaurants, and employment) within a safe walking and/or biking distance. This would provide access to students and residents without cars and allow all residents to walk or bike to more destinations, saving on transportation costs.

There are several vacant businesses, such as within the commercial buildings at the intersection of Raleigh Road and ACC Drive. Other opportunities may exist for redevelopment or infill within the existing commercial zones. The majority of the area, however, is zoned RA-6I, a residential zone that allows very little commercial activity. To allow commercial infill within this residential area, zoning regulations would need to be altered to allow such businesses. A neighborhood conservation overlay district provides an opportunity to allow a zone with more allowed uses while setting strict requirements on their appearance to assure they are consistent with the character of the neighborhood and desires of the residents.

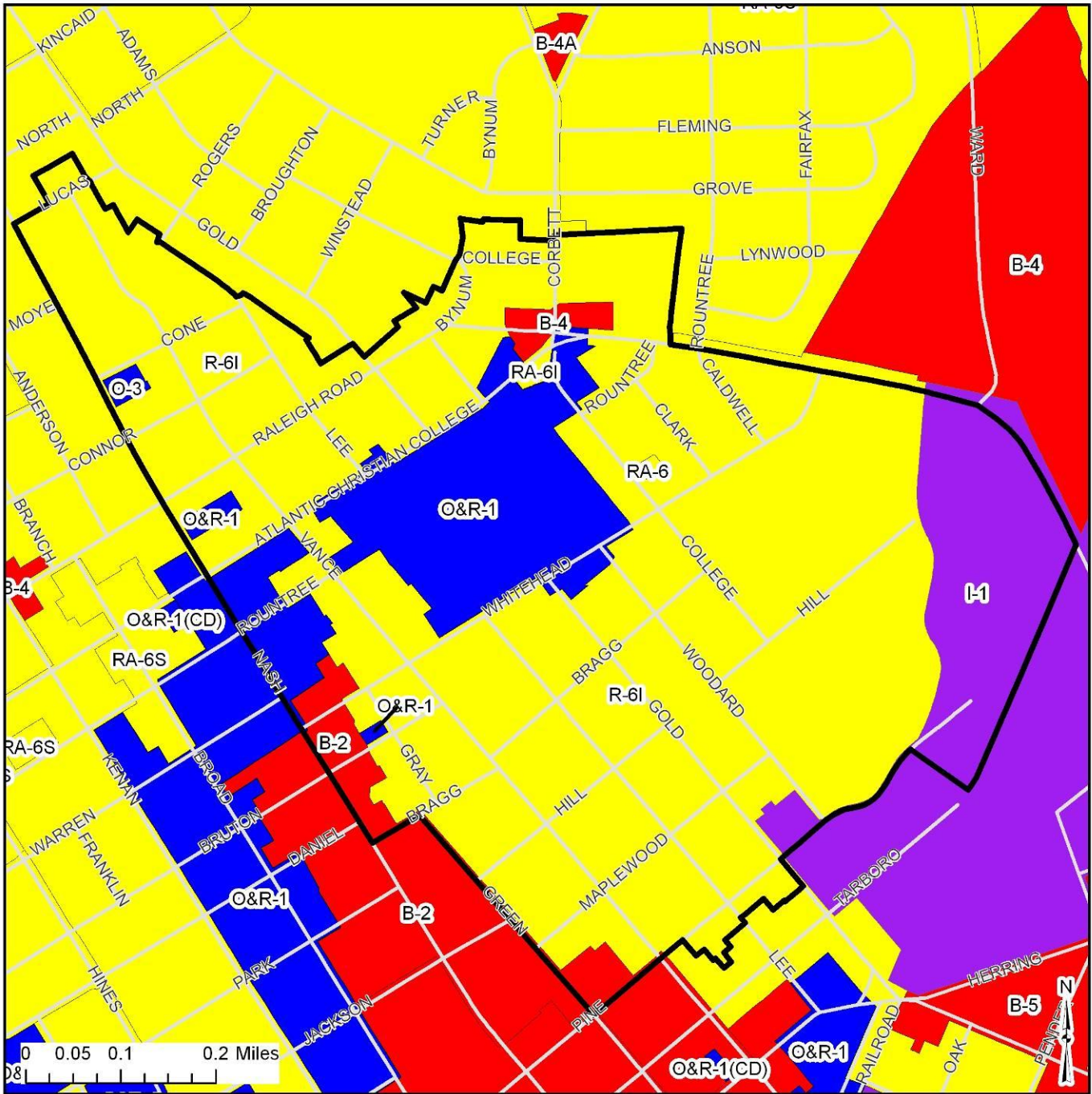
Objectives:

Objectives to achieve Goal 3 are listed below. Recommended action items are provided in “Part 3: Implementation.”

Objective 3.1: Encourage neighborhood-scale businesses in the community for residents and Barton College students, and support development of downtown commercial, shopping, and dining opportunities.

Objective 3.2: Improve or redevelop businesses that have negative impacts, specifically the convenience marts at Raleigh Road and ACC Drive.

Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan



Map 3-A: Zoning

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| County Zone | Mixed use | Planning Area Boundary |
| Agriculture | Office and Office/Residential Zones | |
| Business Zones | Planned Residential Development | |
| Industrial Zones | Residential Zones | |

Source: City of Wilson GIS; map created October 31, 2011



Goal 4 - Education: Support high quality educational opportunities.

Existing Conditions:

Overview: The BNO neighborhood contains two of the most historic educational facilities in the City: Barton College and Margaret Hearne Elementary. The two schools have formed a partnership, utilizing the Education Program at Barton College as a catalyst. Descriptions of each school are below:

Barton College: Barton College, founded in 1902 at Atlantic Christian College, is a small, private, liberal arts college with an enrollment of approximately 1,130 students and 200 faculty and staff. The school is nationally recognized for its programs in education, deaf education, nursing, and social work. The College receives top tier recognitions as a “Best College in the Southeast” by Princeton Review and as a “Best Regional College in the South” by U.S. News and World Report.

Barton College accounts for 14% of the neighborhood boundary area, and has a total of almost 77 acres (47 of which are in the boundary – the other 30 acres are comprised of baseball fields).

Barton College is considered an asset by residents, as it provides a visual amenity to the neighborhood, offers community programs, and has an active sports program. Many students live on-campus and few venture into the neighborhood due primarily to safety concerns and lack of destinations. Safety concerns include vacant/abandoned housing, graffiti, speeding, lack of sidewalks, and “cat-calls.” Students generally drive to their destinations, often outside of the immediate vicinity of the college.

Barton College is currently creating a Master Plan for the campus. Phase I details plans for the west entrance with a promenade highlighting the Centennial Alumni Bell Tower and Campus Quad. Conversion of Raleigh

Road and ACC Drive from one-way to two-way streets will be completed as part of this initiative with the intent of creating a safer environment for all types of transportation. Work on Phase I is expected to begin in summer 2012. Future projects include expansions and updates to existing buildings on campus.



Barton College Centennial Alumni Bell Tower



Artist's rendering of Phase I of the Barton College Master Plan. Source: Barton College

Margaret Hearne Elementary: Built around 1900, Margaret Hearne Elementary is the oldest school in the City of Wilson. It is a public elementary school teaching Kindergarten through fifth grade and has an enrollment of over 500 students. The school property is approximately six acres in size and is nestled into the grid pattern of the neighborhood, making it easily accessible to surrounding residents. Because of its location in a densely populated neighborhood, an estimated 50% or more of the students walk to school (see Goal 1 for a discussion on pedestrian safety).



Margaret Hearne Elementary is currently considered a “School of Progress” by the 2010-11 school year report cards produced by the North Carolina State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction. This designation shows at least 60%, but less than 80%, of students are performing at grade level. The school’s performance based on testing scores given to third, fourth, and fifth graders at the end of 2010-11 school year is provided in the table below:

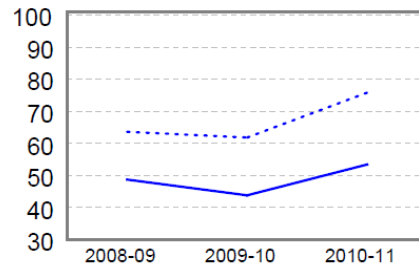
Table 4-A: Percentage of Students’ Scores At or Above Grade Level

	Combined 3 rd , 4 th and 5 th grades	
	Reading	Math
M. Hearne	53.4%	75.8%
District	73.6%	86.2%
State	70.7%	82.4%

While this chart shows students performing below District and State averages, a review of

⁴ www.ncreportcards.org

the three year trend shows that percentages have actually increased significantly from the 2009-10 school year in both categories.



Three-Year Trend of Student Performance on the ABCs End-of-Grade Reading and Math Tests: Percentage of students at or above grade level for the past three years.⁵

Community members generally consider the school as a low-performing school in need of improvement to attract more families.

The school’s students are predominantly low-income and 98% of students are on the free or reduced-fee lunch program.

Various community groups, including local churches and Barton College, contribute to and work directly with Margaret Hearne Elementary. To help the school manage these contributors, an organization known as Communities in Schools handles all donations and volunteers for the school.

Led by the School of Education at Barton College, a mutually beneficial partnership has been formed between Margaret Hearne Elementary and the College. The goal is “to create a Learning Centered Community with a common vision that supports the integrated learning and development of all partners.”⁶ The program includes a number of activities for students at Margaret Hearne Elementary. For example, a “Bulldog Summer Academy” was held in 2011, where approximately 50 Margaret Hearne students received a week of half-day educational sessions at no cost. Barton College has provided a scholarship to two Margaret Hearne teachers pursuing their

⁵ www.ncreportcards.org

⁶ Dr. Jackie Ennis, professor at Barton College

Masters of Education degree through the College. Other activities offered in the 2011-2012 school year include a math carnival, a science program in which all fifth grade students visit Barton College for science instruction, a literacy night, and a basketball clinic. Additionally, a co-teaching model offers professional development opportunities for Margaret Hearne teachers and Barton Education faculty and students. This model is shown by research to increase achievement of students.



Margaret Hearne Elementary students participated in International Walk to School day in October 2011

Survey respondents also indicated there was a need for recreational facilities for the students in the neighborhood, as there are few safe places to play. After-school and weekend activities are needed to provide activities to children, provide a place for them to complete homework, and to keep children safe. When activities are provided, students are eager to participate. The Principal of Margaret Hearne Elementary noted they are willing to provide the facilities if an organization wishes to provide these services.

Research indicates that perception of neighborhood safety can decrease academic achievement in elementary schoolchildren,⁷ so ensuring students' safety is vital to their

⁷ Milam, A.J., Furr-Holden, A.J.M., and Leaf, P.J. *Perceived School and Neighborhood Safety, Neighborhood Violence and Academic Achievement in Urban School Children*. Urban Rev, November 3 2010. Retrieved from <http://www.springerlink.com/content/b02h6771157766g5/>

academic well-being. Survey respondents from Margaret Hearne Elementary (including teachers, faculty, and staff) indicated a concern for students' safety when walking to and from school due to vacant and dilapidated housing, gang activity, drugs, and a lack of sidewalks (see Goals 1 and 9 for more discussion on accessibility and safety). Multiple respondents noted that some children are proud of and feel safe in their neighborhood, but suggested this is because it is "all they know" and were they to have a safer place to live, would think differently. On the other hand, respondents also said the neighborhood has a good sense of community where neighbors look out for the students.



Students at Margaret Hearne Elementary pose with AJ Rightway. Photo Source: Amber Whitley

Objectives:

Objectives to achieve Goal 4 are listed below. Recommended action items are provided in "Part 3: Implementation."

Objective 4.1: Improve school performance at Margaret Hearne Elementary

Objective 4.2: Encourage Barton College to have a continued and increasingly visible presence in the neighborhood

Goal 5 – Environment/Going Green: *Protect and enhance environmental resources and greenspace, and create a sustainable community.*

Existing Conditions:

The City's 2030 *Comprehensive Plan* lists "sustainable planning" as a community priority, defined as "the ability of a community and society to plan for the needs of the present population while ensuring that future generations have the same or better opportunities." This principle is infused throughout the *Comprehensive Plan's* goals, policies, and implementation actions.

Revitalization of existing neighborhoods and homes is an important step towards sustainability for many reasons. Vacancy rates (21.5% in the BNO neighborhood and 10.4% city-wide in 2010) show there is no shortage of available homes within existing neighborhoods. New development on the outskirts of town requires additional infrastructure (i.e. roads and sewer and water lines) and city services (i.e. more police and fire stations to ensure timely response times to distant homes). More roads create more impervious surfaces, increasing the total amount of stormwater runoff. Suburban sprawl can increase the driving time of residents to work or services or the distance a school bus travels to pick up children; vehicle exhaust can adversely affect air quality.

One can also consider the additional resources and energy of building a new home versus living in or restoring an existing one. Studies show renovating creates less carbon dioxide than building a new house.⁸ There is a perception that historic homes tend to be less energy efficient than new homes. However, with proper steps they can be as efficient. Steps to educate residents on the energy efficiency of historic homes and ways to further increase their energy efficiency, as well as ways to reduce their use of other resources could make the neighborhood more

sustainable. An "energy audit" is offered as a service by Wilson Energy, and can help residents determine sources of energy loss in their home.

Large, old oak trees are a defining characteristic of the BNO neighborhood and line most streets. Wilson has been designated a "Tree-City USA" for 26 years by the Arbor Day Foundation, and is known as the "City of Trees." Trees provide many benefits, including:

- shade to cool houses, reducing air conditioning bills;
- flood protection by catching rain in its leaves and roots, keeping rain from filling the storm drains too quickly;
- natural filtration of water pollutants;
- prevention of soil erosion;
- improvement of air quality; and
- habitat for birds and other animals.

Residents were concerned about the loss of these trees and other landscaping, and some observed that when trees were lost due to a storm or other event, they were not replaced. Residents also expressed a desire to see more landscaping and greening in the neighborhood.



Tree-lined streets are found throughout the neighborhood.

⁸ The Building and Social Housing Organization. *New Trick with Old Bricks*. 2008. Available at www.bshf.org.

Along with a large tree canopy, the neighborhood has several greenspaces (i.e. Maplewood Cemetery, Gold Park, and the green lawns at Barton College) that work to capture stormwater runoff and reduce the overall amount of impervious surface, and can help regulate temperatures (non-pervious areas like roofs, driveways, and roads create stormwater runoff and increase heat as they reflect the sun’s rays). These greenspaces are most effective when combined with landscaping and trees, which capture more water.



Example of what a rain garden in the right-of-way could look like. Rain gardens capture stormwater, filter out pollutants, and help prevent flooding.
Source: lowimpactdevelopmentcenter.org



Trees provide shade to residents, among many other environmental benefits

Flooding was a large and common concern with residents throughout the neighborhood, particularly in the blocks surrounding the intersection of Vance and Cone Streets. The City has a stormwater management plan to improve flooding conditions in this area. Implementation is expected to begin in 2012. Other flooding problems arise from clogged storm drains and excess stormwater runoff.

Objectives:

Objectives to achieve Goal 5 are listed below. Recommended action items are provided in “Part 3: Implementation.”

- Objective 5.1:** Maintain and enhance trees and landscaping to protect their environmental benefits.
- Objective 5.2:** Provide resources, incentives, and education on “green” housing design.
- Objective 5.3:** Improve energy efficiency of homes.
- Objective 5.4:** Improve stormwater management and reduce flooding.

Goal 6 – Housing Quality: Improve housing quality, increase pride in and maintenance of homes and yards, and restore dilapidated and vacant housing.

Existing Conditions:

Overview: The BNO neighborhood is primarily residential in nature, with the oldest homes built in the late 1800s. Goal 2 – Design discussed the historic architecture, the work that has been done to renovate homes, and the impacts that property appearance can have on the neighborhood. This chapter serves to address the quality of the housing in more detail. While there is a notable and successful movement of housing renovation occurring at some of the historic properties, there are many homes and properties that are dilapidated, unsightly, and unsafe.

Housing quality is a top concern for residents of the neighborhood, based on the issues of safety, property values, and loss of neighborhood pride. Based on the citizen survey, housing conditions and general neighborhood appearance was the second most cited neighborhood concern after safety.

Renovation and Marketing Efforts: Residents are proud of preserved and renovated historic homes. As discussed in Goal 2 - Design, much of the planning area is designated as a historic district and is bound by preservation rules that ensure that the original historic features are maintained. Organizations such as Preservation of Wilson and annual events such as the Christmas Tour of Old & Historic Homes celebrate their history and highlight renovations. Many homes have been renovated to reflect their original beauty, are well-kept, and are assets to the neighborhood. Both long-term and new homeowners are showing a strong commitment to the preservation and upkeep of their homes and neighborhood.



Example of a renovated home

Alongside renovated homes lie homes in disrepair. A number of houses are vacant or boarded up, deteriorating due to lack of care. In some cases, yards are overgrown and not maintained. See Map 2-C in Goal 2- Design for location of vacant and abandoned homes.

Several reasons can explain at least some of the deterioration. Some homes are simply vacant, with no one willing to renovate the home (out-of-town landowners, foreclosed on homes, etc.). The neighborhood also has many low-income residents who cannot afford to invest in expensive home repairs. In some cases, the owner may be elderly or otherwise disabled and not able to take care of their home. A high number of renters are another

explanation. Renters generally rely on the property owner for property upkeep, and if the property owner does provide regular maintenance, it can fall into disrepair. Many renters do an excellent job keeping their residence in good condition, but residents see a correlation between rental properties and declining home quality and lack of maintenance.

Some residents also stated a correlation between poor housing quality and safety concerns. For example, one resident expressed a concern of drug activity occurring in a vacant apartment. “Goal 9 – Safety” further addresses safety concerns. It is important to improve the quality of housing in the neighborhood to improve neighborhood pride, improve living conditions, safeguard investments, inspire future investment, and increase the perception of safety. Potential homeowners are more likely to purchase a home in a neighborhood where residents show a long-term commitment to home and yard appearance.

Preservation of Wilson is a local organization that works to increase homeownership, create strong residential districts, and restore dilapidated housing. They do this through a real estate facilitation and support role, marketing and selling historic homes threatened by demolition to new owners that will renovate the housing. The organization also provides some yard maintenance to its properties. They maintain a website that markets the neighborhood, explains incentives, and provides property listings. The “Old Wilson Mile” is an area within the BNO neighborhood targeted by Preservation of Wilson for marketing and restoration activities, including a walking tour. Properties and more information may be found on their website at www.preservationofwilson.com.

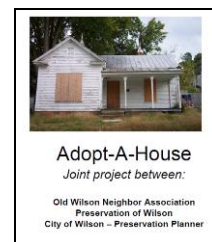


The Old Wilson Mile is a targeted restoration area for Preservation of Wilson.

The City’s Historic Preservation office provides support to homeowners by periodically offering workshops and small sessions to provide information on tax incentives and hands-on learning about home renovation and repair.

“Adopt-A-House” is a program that has recently started as a result of the planning process for the BNO neighborhood. The first of its kind in Wilson, the program is a joint effort amongst the Old Wilson Neighborhood Association, Preservation of Wilson, and the City’s Historic Preservation office. It aims to identify people or groups who will commit to improve the conditions of a home or yard (with the property owner’s consent). It “allows the community to be vested in the conditions and quality of homes in their neighborhood,” and will serve as a model for other neighborhoods.

As discussed in “Goal 2 – Design,” the City’s Planning & Land Development department handles reports of neighborhood nuisances, including junk cars, high grass, and excess trash (see Map 2-F).



Objectives:

Objectives to achieve Goal 6 are listed below.
Recommended action items are provided in “Part 3: Implementation.”

Objective 6.1: Improve overall housing conditions, including yards.

Objective 6.2: Redevelop vacant and abandoned homes.

Objective 6.3: Increase home ownership rates.



Home at 112 N Rountree Street

Goal 7 – Leadership: Increase capacity of community groups and organizations, and empower citizens to become involved and take leadership roles to better the community and implement the goals of this plan.

Existing Conditions:

Overview: The BNO planning area has a number of active groups and organizations that can help implement the recommendations of this plan, including two neighborhood associations, St. Therese Catholic Church, Barton College, and the parent-teacher organization at Margaret Hearne Elementary. Additionally, several large churches are located just outside the boundaries, including First Christian Church and First United Methodist Church.

Neighborhood Associations: Two neighborhood associations are located within the BNO planning area: the NorthWest Neighborhood Association (NWN) and Old Wilson Neighborhood Association (OWNA). These groups are formally recognized by the City of Wilson and have representatives elected by the association.

The OWNA boundaries are the same as the boundaries of the Old Wilson, West Nash, and Broad-Kenan Historic Districts (see Map 2-B). They meet regularly, have a newsletter, and organize subcommittees and events. The NWN boundaries generally run from ACC Drive north to Lucas Street. The NWN communicates primarily via email and does not have regular meetings, though members of the group are actively involved in community initiatives.

The Old Wilson Neighborhood Association has taken on some recent initiatives, such as a new Neighborhood Watch program and an Adopt-A-House program. This shows there are neighborhood leaders willing to work to



improve the neighborhood, but it will take continued community participation for them to truly succeed.

Some residents felt that the neighborhood associations are not living up to their full potential and expressed an interest in seeing more programs and initiatives from the associations. On the other hand, representatives from the neighborhood associations expressed a concern that their residents showed a lack of involvement and leadership. Clearly there is a need for both more citizen involvement and neighborhood association capacity.

An annual Neighborhood Summit is provided by the City of Wilson's Human Relations Department. This is an event held for neighborhood association leaders to provide tools and information, as well as an opportunity to meet with other association leaders within the City.

Barton College: Barton College has demonstrated community leadership in several ways, including its partnership with Margaret Hearne Elementary (see Goal 4, Education), events at the College geared toward neighborhood children and families, and an annual Day of Service where students volunteer in the community. While Barton College holds many events and programs in partnership with Margaret Hearne Elementary, their efforts such as the Day of Service are not usually focused on other aspects of the neighborhood. However, their continual symphony concerts, literary speakers, art shows, and other offerings provide a great service to the residents of the neighborhood.

Other Community Groups: The community groups within the neighborhood, such as churches, do some projects to improve the neighborhood (such as volunteering with Margaret Hearne Elementary) but also target other areas of the City. There may be ways in which the community groups can concentrate efforts within this area, increase collaboration, and leverage one another's efforts to create positive and visible change in the neighborhood.

Citizen Involvement: Both residents and community groups indicated a need for increased citizen involvement within the community. They felt there was a general lack of participation and that increased contribution to neighborhood events or programs could strengthen the sense of community. Many opportunities exist for such involvement. This involvement can be in the form of leadership, participation in local events, or active membership in community organizations.

Objectives:

Objectives to achieve Goal 7 are listed below. Recommended action items are provided in "Part 3: Implementation."

Objective 7.1: Increase participation in, and capacity of, neighborhood associations.

Objective 7.2: Empower citizens to become actively involved in the community.

Objective 7.3: Encourage neighborhood groups, businesses, and institutions to invest in the community and focus efforts on the surrounding neighborhoods.

Goal 8 – Recreation: Provide ongoing recreational opportunities for all ages, and ensure all areas have access to a park or greenspace.

Existing Conditions:

Park Facilities: There is one park located within the neighborhood, Gold Park. This 0.9 acre park was often referred to by residents as unsafe and having inadequate facilities. There are no sidewalks leading from the residential areas to the park, and parents felt their children were unsafe due to the park's location directly on the high volume Raleigh Road. See Map 1 on page 5 for locations.



Gold Park

Residents enjoy their close proximity to nearby large parks. Toisnot Park (84.2 acres) has athletic fields, a lake, walking paths, playgrounds, and picnic shelters. While located just northeast of the neighborhood, the 4-lane Raleigh Road is a barrier. With its high traffic volume, high speeds, and lack of pedestrian crossing facilities, residents do not feel safe walking or biking to Toisnot. Gillette Park (113.5 acres) is located adjacent to Toisnot Park, and thus is also inaccessible to BNO residents via walking or bicycling. This park has trails, soccer fields, playgrounds, and picnic facilities. These large parks are classified as “Community Parks” by the 2030 *Comprehensive Plan* based on size and facilities, and the fact they serve multiple neighborhoods. Visitors typically arrive by car.

Margaret Hearne Elementary has a playground area on school property, but this is not open to the community after school hours. However, many students utilize the school playground as their main play area.



Toisnot Park

Overall, BNO residents and students feel there is a lack of safe or desirable places to recreate due to unsafe conditions, small park size, few amenities, and lack of access to nearby parks that would fill these needs. Students at Barton College stated they would like a park nearby within walking distance where they could study, play Frisbee, and socialize off-campus during breaks.

Recreational Programming: Residents expressed a strong need for recreational programming. “Neighborhood activities” was the fourth-most-chosen solution when residents were asked to choose solutions that would best improve the neighborhoods. Many felt programs geared towards neighborhood youth would have a positive impact. Some residents noted there are many children “wandering” the streets when not in school.

Events are held at Barton College for all ages. They hold many events for students and the wider community, including the Barton College/Wilson Orchestra, programs at the Hackney Library, art gallery exhibits, and theater productions. Many residents expressed appreciation of the cultural offerings frequently available at Barton College. Additionally, Barton occasionally holds programming for children within the community, and has expressed an interest in providing more of these opportunities.

Many events are held downtown (at least one a month), including the Downtown Alive and First Fridays concert series, winter holiday Festive Fridays, Whirligig Festival, and a Farmer's Market.



The annual Whirligig Festival downtown draws tens of thousands of visitors.

Other Recreational Opportunities: The library is located quite close to the neighborhood, and Imagination Station, a children's science museum, is located downtown.

Residents expressed a broad desire for more recreational opportunities to bring them together as a community.

Walking, Jogging, and Biking: Residents feel that the tree-lined streets and good network of sidewalks makes the neighborhood a good place to walk, bike, and jog. However, many residents and students expressed a concern for safety as a barrier to these activities, due to traffic and crime (see "Goal 10: Safety" for discussions about crime). As discussed in Goal 1, "sharrows" (shared lane markings) will be painted along Vance Street in 2012 to provide a designated bike route and alert drivers that cyclists will be on the road, increasing safety for this use.



Sidewalks provide opportunities for recreational jogging and walking opportunities

Objectives:

Objectives to achieve Goal 8 are listed below.
Recommended action items are provided in “Part 3: Implementation.”

Objective 8.1 Increase the number of community activities available for all ages.

Objective 8.2: Increase and improve opportunities for walking, jogging, bicycling, and other non-motorized recreational travel.

Objective 8.3: Create, improve, or provide access to a neighborhood park that is safe and accessible.

Objective 8.4: Establish a community garden.



*A greenway trail system could connect neighborhoods to parks and other destinations.
Photo Source: [www.pedbikeimages.org/Lyubov Zuyeva](http://www.pedbikeimages.org/Lyubov_Zuyeva)*



Community Gardens act as community-building tools

Goal 9 – Safety: Provide safe streets and public areas with neighborhood watch involvement, responsive public safety services, and drug-free zones.

Existing Conditions:

Overview: Safety is a concern for the residents of the BNO neighborhood. 62% of survey respondents from Barton College cited crime or safety concerns as a primary deterrent to spending time in surrounding neighborhoods, and 68% of respondents to the citizen survey mentioned crime or safety when asked for their specific issues or concerns.

Concerns include crime-related issues such as dilapidated housing, “foot traffic,” and poor street lighting; and physical safety issues, such as lack of sidewalks and speeding vehicles. Safety concerns related to walking and bicycling are discussed in “Goal 1 – Accessibility.”

Crime: An analysis of crime within the “Central-46” district (an area encompassing most of the BNO neighborhood) from 2009 through 2011 shows a significant decrease in crime: 33.7% fewer crimes in 2011 than 2009. Larceny was the most common crime, followed by burglary, both of which have decreased over the three years. During the

same time frame, the number of crimes in the City as a whole generally remained constant, indicating that crime reduction in the BNO neighborhood was particularly successful.

While most residents simply noted general concerns about crime, some listed specific issues, including drug activity (sales and use), home and car break-ins, petty theft (i.e. lawn ornaments), and gangs and gang-related graffiti. Respondents to the Margaret Hearne Elementary survey stated that many students don’t feel safe and are targeted by these gangs.

Some residents noted that at least some of this is a *perception* of crime, based on observations such as boarded up housing and foot traffic that may or may not be associated with crime or lack of safety.

A neighborhood crime watch was the most-chosen option (48%) by residents when asked to choose what activities would most benefit the neighborhood. As part of this neighborhood planning initiative, the Police

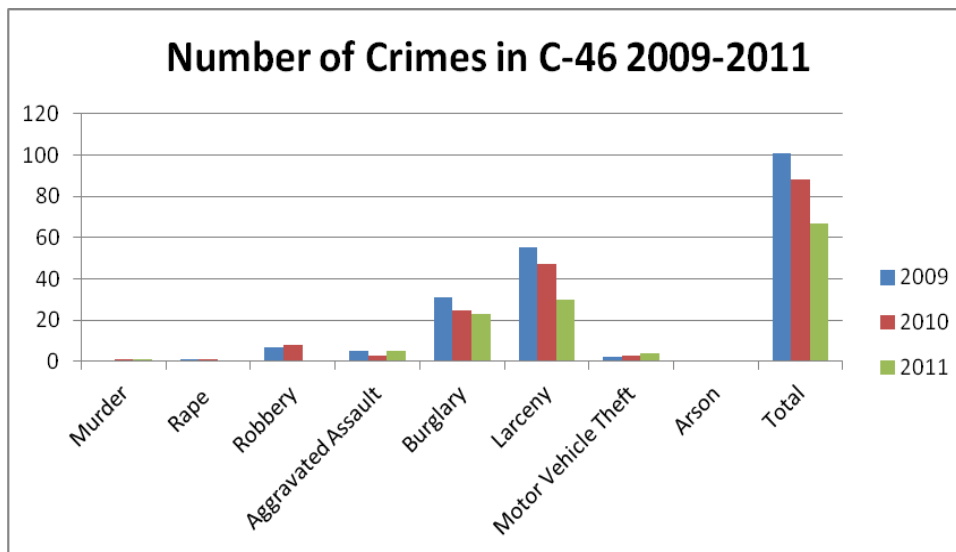


Figure 2: Crime data for the Central 46 district (includes most of the BNO neighborhood) shows crime rates significantly decreasing from 2009-2011

Department is working with neighborhood leaders to establish a neighborhood crime watch. Efforts began in late 2011, with monthly meetings held to educate citizens and establish a plan of action. All residents are welcomed to participate in this effort. For more information, please contact Anne Pression at

apression@bbandt.com or contact the Police Department at 252-399-2323.

Foot Traffic: Perceived safety decreases in evening hours, and residents noted there are often people walking around at night, wandering aimlessly, loitering, or walking to and from the convenience stores at Raleigh Road and Corbett Avenue. Barton College students, faculty, and staff noted the concern of late-night foot traffic through campus, sometimes harassing students.

Dilapidated Buildings: Residents feel the appearance of dilapidated, run-down buildings creates an unsafe environment. Empty buildings reduce the number of “eyes on the street” and can be a public safety hazard. As stated in “Goal 2 – Design,” there are 68 abandoned or vacant structures in the BNO neighborhood, and an approximate 14% increase in vacant housing between 2000 and 2010. Dilapidated buildings detract from neighborhood appearance and reduce the perception of safety.



Boarded up housing creates areas of isolation by reducing the “eyes on the street”

Street Lighting: 38% of residents in the survey indicated they were concerned about inadequate street lighting. Inadequate street

lighting is associated with decreased perception of safety at night, including crime and pedestrian or bicycle safety.

The *Pedestrian Safety Action Plan* lists “Improve Pedestrian Level Lighting” as one of eight goals to improve pedestrian safety in the City, and suggests site-specific studies are needed to determine lighting needs.

Street lights are often blocked by tree foliage in the summer, so further research is needed to determine where and how street lighting could be improved, and whether pedestrian-scale lighting is appropriate in some areas.

Walking and Biking: Respondents generally felt unsafe, or noted a lack of safety for children, when walking or biking in the neighborhood. This is due to the already-discussed issues of crime, vacant housing, and street lighting. Speeding is another concern

Often-mentioned safety concerns for walkers and bikers were also related to lack of sidewalks and speeding vehicles. Please see “Goal 1 – Accessibility” for a discussion on these topics.

Objectives:

Objectives to achieve Goal 9 are listed below.
Recommended action items are provided in “Part 3: Implementation.”

Objective 9.1 Reduce crime levels and empower citizens to prevent crime.

Objective 9.2: Reduce gang activity.

Objective 9.3: Assess street lighting for needed improvements and additional fixtures.

Objective 9.4: Improve safety for non-motorized traffic, especially children walking to school.



Pedestrian-scale street lighting can provide better lighting for pedestrians and remove the problem of tree foliage covering the lights in the summer.

Photo source: www.pedbikeimages.org/Eric Lowry

Goal 10 – Social: Provide community activities that create a sense of community and mutual trust throughout the neighborhoods.

Existing Conditions:

Overview: Sense of community has been defined as a sense of belonging, a sense of mattering and ability to make a difference, a feeling that one's needs will be met by the community, and a shared emotional connection, such as shared history, time spent together, or similar experiences.⁹

Residents describe the BNO neighborhood as a place with a strong sense of community. People love the large number of families and call the neighborhood “peaceful” and “quiet.” Neighbors know and look out for each other. The neighborhood is diverse with people of many ages, colors, and cultures. Children are often seen playing with each other, with neighbors watching over them. Community events provide social opportunities. There are many long-term homeowners in the neighborhood, and residents share a pride in the community's history. Additionally, there are several large churches in the neighborhood vicinity.

Despite these strengths, residents expressed there are ways the neighborhood can improve its social cohesion.

Programming: There are a number of community events held by the neighborhood associations, downtown, and churches that provide opportunities for neighbors to spend time with each other and their families. At least one event is offered per month downtown or in the neighborhood, such as the weekly farmer's market, National Night Out, and First Fridays music concerts. However, residents would like more programming for all residents. These programs may include

neighborhood improvement activities, recreational events, or a community garden. Some residents felt that locally offered educational programs that focus on daily living needs such as finances, child care, health and wellness, and meal planning could strengthen the health of the neighborhood. After-school and weekend programs available to children could provide safe places to play and learn.

Participation: There is a desire to increase participation in the neighborhood associations and events. Some neighborhood leaders and residents feel there is a lack of participation. Though they understand the pressures of family, work, and school, they feel that the programs necessary to truly create change and build community will require more community involvement.

Perception of Safety: There is a concern about gang activity in the neighborhood, which can negatively impact the social structure. If people fear they will encounter gang members or crime, they are less likely to spend time out and about in the neighborhood. Some survey responses from Margaret Hearne Elementary noted that gangs sometimes approach young children. Some respondents felt there was more of a perception of crime than actual high levels of crime, but this is enough to affect the social strength of the community. See “Goal 9 – Safety” for further discussion about safety.

Places to Socialize: Barton College students responded that they need places to socialize with one another, and even interact with other residents of the neighborhood. Safe places are important for students to have a place to study and spend time with each other. These safe spaces are just as important for other neighborhood residents. Examples are parks, restaurants, or coffee shops. One response from Barton College suggested that without places to interact in this manner, students and others on campus have no way to interact

⁹ McMillan, D.W., & Chavis, D.M. (1986). Sense of Community: A Definition and Theory. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 14. Retrieved from <http://gagaparkhs.enschool.org/ourpages/auto/2011/5/7/37616703/Sense%20of%20Community-McMillan%20and%20Chavis.pdf>

with neighborhood residents other than negative experiences of foot traffic late at night through campus, or “cat-calls” while jogging. This increases the perceived divide between neighborhood residents and Barton College students.

Transience: Residents noted that there are a large amount of transient residents. Residents have observed that tenants who move often are less likely to be attached to the

neighborhood, get to know their neighbors, or be aware of neighborhood issues. Homeowners are often more likely to be involved in community-led efforts to improve the neighborhood, as they have a financial incentive. Renters are welcome additions to the neighborhood, but having a significant amount of renters who move often can reduce neighborhood cohesion.

Objectives:

Objectives to achieve Goal 10 are listed below. Recommended action items are provided in “Part 3: Implementation.”

Objective 10.1: Increase resident involvement and number of community events.

Objective 10.2: Provide educational programs to support citizens (health, child care, finances, health and wellness).



*Space to gather, hold events, and exercise is important to give neighbors a chance to socialize.
Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/Laura Sandt*

This page intentionally left blank.

PART 3: IMPLEMENTATION

This section lists goals and objectives, and provides recommended actions for each objective.

Action items were identified by neighborhood residents, the BNO Advisory Group, and City staff. Each action item is assigned a lead agency or entity, estimated cost, and estimated priority (high, medium, or low).

Action Item: Action items are detailed recommendations for actions citizens, community groups, and the City of Wilson can take to achieve the listed objectives. Some action items are applicable city-wide (such as policy changes or city-wide programs) and others are neighborhood-specific.

It is important to note that just because an action item is recommended in this document does not mean it will be funded or implemented. The implementation of action items is contingent on engineering studies, funding, community partnerships, and other factors.

Using this Table

Action items should be used by neighborhood leaders, community groups, City Departments, and other relevant organizations to guide neighborhood improvements. Some of the listed action items are already being implemented, while others may take years to complete.

Costs

Costs are meant to help provide an idea of cost feasibility of a project. Listed costs are *estimates only*, and are meant to provide a rough idea of implementation costs. Many factors can affect the cost and actual pricing could differ significantly.

Where the recommendation was too broad to assign a cost, “varies” is written. Studies and other items that primarily require staff time and resources are indicated by “staff time.” Most education recommendations provide estimated printing costs, as education may include printing flyers. Folding, binding, and mailing are all extra costs. Public Service Announcements on the City’s television station, Channel 8, are no cost.

Priorities

Priorities are meant to help guide implementation priority based on community input. Priorities were assigned with input from the community and the Advisory Group. A “low” priority does not reflect a lack of importance; rather, it reflects a relatively lower impact or need than other goals, objectives, or action items.

Project Lead

The “project lead” column provides guidance on probable project leaders, though this list is not meant to be exhaustive. The *BNO Neighborhood Plan* envisions a collaborative approach where the

combined efforts of various groups will leverage one another and create real change in the community.

A note on “education” action item recommendations:

When implementing these recommendations, it should be noted that action items related to citizen education can be combined. For example, most education-related action items could be addressed by creating a Neighborhood Resource Guide available to all residents that provides general information about whom to call for various issues, as well as other valuable information. Those items included in the Neighborhood Resource Guide could be expanded to Public Service Announcements (PSAs) on the City’s local television channel, taught at workshops, placed as inserts in electric bills, or taught at neighborhood association meetings.

Goals, Objectives, and Action Items for the Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Goal 1 - Accessibility: Provide safe access for people of all abilities to all areas and resources through multiple modes of transportation.			Medium
Objective 1.1: Improve safety, connectivity, and condition of facilities for pedestrians and other non-motorized travelers of all abilities			High
<p>Designate Priority Pedestrian Streets and prioritize these streets for sidewalk, crossing and design improvements. Priority areas already identified include Margaret Hearne Elementary.</p> <p>Priority Sidewalk Installation Needs already identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Gold Street (as needed between Tarboro St and Whitehead Ave – see the <i>Safe Routes to School Action Plan</i> for detailed recommendation) ➤ Bragg Street (between Lee St and College St – see the <i>Safe Routes to School Action Plan</i> for detailed recommendation) ➤ Raleigh Road Pkwy (between Gold St and Corbett Ave) - Coordinate with NCDOT conversion to two-way street. Raleigh Road Parkway is a Priority Corridor in the <i>City of Wilson Pedestrian Plan</i> ➤ Atlantic Christian College (between Gold St and Corbett Ave) – Coordinate with NCDOT conversion to two-way street ➤ Identify feasibility, cost, etc. of sidewalk design and construction or repairs at these high priority areas. ➤ Pursue grant funding for sidewalk repair/installation. 	Public Services, Planning & Development Services	\$25,000 / 1,000' (5' sidewalk on one side of the road)	High
Conduct sidewalk condition survey and update in GIS.	Planning & Development Services, Public Services	Staff Time	Medium
Establish safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to parks from schools and neighborhoods.	Public Services, Planning & Development Services	Varies	High

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Identify specific areas where safe access for disabled travelers is not provided. Improve facilities to meet ADA guidelines as appropriate.	Wilson Committee for Persons with Disabilities, Public Services	Handicap ramp: \$1,500 each (for one side of quadrant)	High
Install bicycle facilities along routes as identified in the <i>City of Wilson Bicycle Plan</i> . Assess for additional needed facilities to reach identified neighborhood destinations.	Public Services, NCDOT, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board	Bicycle Lanes: \$3,500 / 1,000' (striping, symbols and signs) Sharrows: \$75 each for temporary paint and \$250 each for permanent thermoplastic markings, plus signage Other costs vary	High
Educate citizens on who to call to report poor sidewalk conditions (Streets Department 399-2481), when they see cars parking on sidewalks (Neighborhood Improvement: 399-2220 or 399-2219), and report street tree limbs blocking the sidewalk (399-2462).	Public Services, Planning & Development Services, Human Relations	Cost to print resource guide: \$03 (B&W) - \$07 (color) / sheet	Medium
Conduct traffic calming study to determine appropriate traffic calming and pedestrian access solutions such as curb extensions, raised crosswalks, or crossing islands to reduce speeding and improve pedestrian access and safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Along Gold Street within the Margaret Hearne Elementary school zone. ➤ Along Atlantic Christian College Drive between Woodard and Vance to provide safe passage for students crossing from campus to parking lots (note – coordinate with conversion to two-way street). ➤ At areas with observed high pedestrian counts and fast-moving cars, providing access to key destinations such as Barton College or commercial areas. 	Public Services, NCDOT	Staff time or cost of consultant services. Examples of traffic calming costs: Speed Hump: \$2,000 each Small Roundabout: \$5,000/ intersection Chicane: \$15,000/unit Curb Extensions: \$15,000/unit	Medium

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Upgrade existing crosswalks to “ladder,” “continental,” or similar style patterns at the intersections of: Hill Street and Gold Street (priority), Hill Street and Lee Street, Hill Street and Vance Street, Hill Street and Green Street, and Gold Street and Maplewood Avenue to increase visibility of the crossing to oncoming cars. Install new marked crosswalks as appropriate.	Public Services	\$10/foot for a 5-ft wide crosswalk, plus \$400 for associated signage	Medium
Install benches to promote walking (could be done as a memorial program or bench sponsorship program).	Planning & Development Services, Public Services	Varies based on donations, program extent, and bench style; \$100-\$500 / bench	Low
Continue to implement pedestrian and bicycle safety programs through Safe Routes to School, Walk On Wilson, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board focusing on education, enforcement, and advocacy.	Planning & Development Services, Wilson Police Department, Public Services, Wilson County Schools	Varies	High
Implement recommendations of the <i>Pedestrian Plan</i> , <i>Bicycle Plan</i> , <i>Safe Routes to School Action Plan</i> , and <i>Pedestrian Safety Action Plan</i> .	Planning & Development Services, Wilson Police Department, Public Services	Varies	High
Conduct a Walking Audit in the neighborhood to identify safety barriers and solutions to resolve identified issues.	Planning & Development Services, Neighborhood Association, Public Services	\$100 for printing, maps, etc.; Staff time, Community Time	High
Continue efforts to include safe walking curriculum at Margaret Hearne and Barton College. For example, the Walk On Wilson initiative provides access for schools to participate in a Safe Walking curriculum. Barton College students received a Safe Walking tip sheet in their welcome packets (also part of Walk On Wilson) in 2011, and Pedestrian Safety was the focus message of City Staff at their welcome table.	Wilson County Schools, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board, Planning & Development Services	Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	High

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Objective 1.2: Improve road conditions			High
Educate citizens on who to call with road condition complaints (Streets Dept, 399-2481).	Public Services, Human Relations	Cost to print resource guide: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	Medium
Repair roads as needed, prioritizing based on most heavily travelled routes.	Public Services	Varies	High
Objective 1.3: Improve bus system accessibility and timing			Low
Conduct study to identify potential transit users, frequency and timing needs, etc. Evaluate feasibility of increasing or adjusting services and timing.	Public Services	Staff time or cost of consultant services	Low
Objective 1.4: Convert Raleigh Road Parkway and Atlantic Christian College Drive from one-way streets to two-way streets			Medium
Continue efforts of NCDOT and the City of Wilson to convert Raleigh Road Parkway and Atlantic Christian College Drive to two-way streets and transfer ownership to City of Wilson	NCDOT, Public Services	\$350,000 per 1,000'	High
Objective 1.5: Reduce speeding at Margaret Hearne Elementary School and other areas of concern			High
Reduce speed limits on residential streets to 25 miles per hour. ➤ Conduct a study to determine appropriate roads for speed reduction.	Public Services, North Carolina Department of Transportation, Wilson Police Department	\$500 per block	High
Continue to target speeding enforcement in areas where speeding is an observed safety issue.	Wilson Police Department	Staff Time	High

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
<p>Install additional signage at the school zone on Gold Street at Margaret Hearne to provide emphasis on the school zone and slow drivers' speeds, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Install a Speed Limit Sign Beacon (flashing light) with the text "SPEED LIMIT 25MPH WHEN FLASHING" at the school zone signage along Gold Street at Margaret Hearne Elementary to indicate when school zone speeds are in effect. ➤ Install a changeable sign that displays the speed of approaching drivers at the school zone on Gold Street at Margaret Hearne Elementary School. 	Wilson County Schools, Public Services	\$3,000-\$5,000	Low
<p>Topics listed in Objective 1.1 above including traffic calming and crossing improvements will assist in implementation of Objective 1.5.</p>	See Goal 1, Obj. 1.1		
<p><i>Goal 2 - Design: Maintain and enhance the visual amenities of the community, improve the appearance of the neighborhood, and preserve the historic, cultural, and residential character of the neighborhood.</i></p>			High
<p><i>Objective 2.1: Improve private property appearance, including vacant lots and abandoned homes</i></p>			High
<p>As this objective closely relates to Housing Conditions, please see Goal 6, objective 6.1 for details on how to address housing and yard condition, quality, and appearance.</p>	See Goal 6, Obj. 6.1		
<p>Educate citizens on whom to call to report graffiti on private property (YOUTH of Wilson will remove graffiti once the Police complete documentation) Gang Hotline: 399-3559. Educate on whom to call to report nuisances (399-2220 or 399-2219).</p>	Wilson Police Department, Neighborhood Association, Planning & Development Services, Human Relations	Varies: Cost of printing Resource Guide, mailing costs, and other misc. expenses	Medium

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
<p>Convert vacant lots, side lots, or other open spaces (city-owned, if available, or seek agreements on privately owned lots) to greenspace in the form of community gardens, rain gardens, or other landscaped areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a program that allows neighbors to use the lots, i.e. a leasing program where they lease the lots for a small amount of \$\$ in exchange for maintaining it. 2. Establish a community garden. 3. Install public art or basic low-cost, attractive fencing. 	<p>Planning & Development Services, Neighborhood Associations, other community groups</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Little to no cost 2. \$3,000+ for basic needs 3. Varies. Fencing est. \$200-\$1000 	<p>High</p>
<p>Pursue creative programs for abandoned lot ownership, i.e. land banking or “mow to own” programs.</p>	<p>Planning & Development Services</p>	<p>Varies</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Initiate programs to reduce negative impacts of abandoned homes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take creative steps to show the property is being “watched,” such as allowing art classes to paint the boards that go on the windows, continual yard maintenance, involvement by neighborhood watch, etc. These acts show neighborhood pride and ownership. 2. Involve community in maintenance of boarded up homes by creating an “adopt a home” program, where adopters will keep the property clean, do basic yard maintenance, put the property on a neighborhood watch list, etc. 3. Consider designing a new “no trespassing” sign design to improve appearance. 	<p>Preservation of Wilson, Neighborhood Associations, Planning & Development Services, Arts Council of Wilson, Churches, Wilson Housing Authority, community groups</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Varies. Cost of paint, yard maintenance costs. 2. est. \$500 (advertisement, promotion of program) 3. Varies 	<p>High</p>
<p>Objective 2.2: Improve appearance of streets by removing excess signage, increasing landscaping/tree plantings, and cleaning up right-of-ways</p>			<p>Medium</p>
<p>Establish an urban forestry program that documents existing trees and identifies gaps in the streetscape, establishes a goal for urban tree canopy coverage, and has a system to replace trees when they are removed or fall naturally.</p>	<p>Planning & Development Services</p>	<p>Basic program already funded Oak tree:\$100 + labor + materials</p>	<p>High</p>
<p>Initiate neighborhood beautification efforts by planting flowers, shrubs, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ This could be a neighborhood-led program, supported by the City and Appearance commission. Seek donations from local nurseries. ➤ Potential locations include neighborhood or college gateways and traffic calming areas. 	<p>Neighborhood Association, Wilson Appearance Commission, Parks & Recreation</p>	<p>Varies: Oak trees: \$100, Bushes: \$15 +labor & materials.</p>	<p>Medium</p>

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Determine neighborhood “gateways” and install beautification and signage to delineate and celebrate the neighborhood.	Neighborhood Association, Wilson Appearance Commission	Varies: Oak trees: \$100, Bushes: \$15 +labor & materials. Signage varies based on selection.	Medium
Identify leaning poles and poles that may need replacement and replace as appropriate. Assess for excess wiring and remove as appropriate.	Wilson Energy	\$1,400 to replace 1 pole	Medium
Remove excess street signage as appropriate. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify intersections where signage may be consolidated to be placed on a single post, identify signs that are no longer needed, and where utility poles may be used. 2. Replace directional signage with new, attractive signs that consolidate signs as appropriate. 3. Establish a program to assess new signs after a certain amount of time to see if they are still needed, i.e. “Deaf child” signs, and remove signs as appropriate. 4. Where appropriate, allow on-street parking and remove “no parking” signs 	Public Services Planning & Development Services, Public Services Public Services Public Services	1. \$200 / sign 2. Large signs - \$3000 - \$5000 3. Staff time; \$200/sign 4. Staff time	Low
Educate residents on who to call for overgrown rights-of-way (Neighborhood Improvement at 399-2220 or 399-2219).	Planning & Development Services, Human Relations	Cost to print resource guide: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	Medium
Encourage residents to maintain the right-of-way when mowing their lawns via education at neighborhood association meetings, PSAs, etc.	Planning & Development Services, Neighborhood Association, Human Relations	Printing costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet; PSAs – no cost	Medium
Promote Adopt-a-Highway program on NCDOT streets and Adopt-a-Street program for city-maintained streets.	NCDOT, Public Services, Neighborhood Association, community groups	Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet; other costs minimal	Low

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Educate citizens on what steps to take when they see someone littering, where to call, and exact information needed by the police.	Wilson Police Department, Human Relations	Cost to print resource guide: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	Medium
Objective 2.3: Preserve the unique identity and historic character of the neighborhood			Medium
Continue to enforce regulations that ensure new infill development will be designed to be consistent with the character of the neighborhood within historic districts.	Planning & Development Services	Minimal – continue existing efforts	Medium
Determine need for a neighborhood conservation overlay district to apply additional tools to preserve and improve neighborhood appearance.	Planning & Development Services	Staff time	High
Goal 3 – Economy: Increase private investment, improve existing commercial areas, and encourage new commercial and employment opportunities that are walkable and serve the needs of the neighborhood.			Medium
Objective 3.1: Encourage neighborhood-scale businesses in the community for residents and Barton College students, and support development of downtown commercial, shopping, and dining opportunities			High
Market the B-2 commercial districts located on Nash Street (north of Bragg Street) to businesses that will cater to the needs of Barton College students and residents (i.e. a coffee shop, restaurant), creating destinations within walking distance where they can socialize, shop, or eat. Use promotional brochures, websites, etc.	Planning & Development Services, Real Estate Community	Printing costs for promotional materials and education: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	High
Consider changing the O&R-1 zone between Whitehead Ave. and ACC Drive to a zoning district that allows businesses desired by students, faculty, and staff at Barton College (i.e. coffee shop, restaurant, bookstore, music shop, etc).	Planning & Development Services	Staff time	Medium
Market local businesses to Barton College students: Work with local businesses to provide College discounts; provide a walking map from the College to local businesses, showing estimated walk time and routes.	Downtown Development, Business Community, Barton College	Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	High
Conduct a study to identify needed commercial uses within the vicinity of the neighborhood. Determine what is needed based on identified daily needs (grocery, dining, shopping, etc.) and desired locations for new businesses (redevelopment, infill, mixed use, etc.).	Planning & Development Services, Downtown Development	Staff time or consultant cost	High

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
At desired commercial locations (as identified in the above action item), change zoning district requirements to allow neighborhood-scale businesses and uses that are compatible with the appearance and character of surrounding development. Coordinate with the creation of the City's Unified Development Ordinance.	Planning & Development Services	Staff time	High
Educate real estate community about "neighborhood scale" development and commercial opportunities. Continue marketing efforts of Downtown Development.	Planning & Development Services, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Development	Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	Medium
Objective 3.2: Improve or redevelop businesses that have a negative impact, specifically the convenience marts at Raleigh Road Parkway and Atlantic Christian College Drive			High
Continue work by Wilson Police on nuisance abatement process at these properties.	Wilson Police Department	Staff Time	High
Replace undesirable business uses with attractive, appropriate uses that benefit the neighborhood. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Explore creative ways to work with property owners or market these properties for specific uses. Consider creative options that allow stores to continue providing neighborhood needs: Examples: Handy Pantry in Orlando, FL – a well-kept small convenience store within residential that has a small deli and closes earlier in the evening. In Durham, NC a non-profit established a neighborhood grocery store with no beer or wine. 	Planning & Development Services, Real Estate & Development Community	1. Varies 2. Varies	High
Create incentives for specific, desired types of neighborhood businesses to come into the neighborhood.	Planning & Development Services	Varies based on program	Medium
Educate residents on importance of reporting problems and who to call to report problems (Wilson Police non-emergency: 399-2323).	Wilson Police Department, Neighborhood Association, Human Relations	Cost to print resource guide: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	Medium

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Goal 4 – Education: Support high quality educational opportunities.			Low
Objective 4.1: Improve school performance of Margaret Hearne Elementary			High
Increase support of mentoring programs at Margaret Hearne by local groups and identify additional neighborhood groups to participate.	Wilson County Schools, Neighborhood Association, community groups, Barton College	Minimal	High
Increase the partnership between Barton College and Margaret Hearne, focusing more of its “Day of Service” events at the elementary school.	Barton College, Margaret Hearne	Varies based on programming	Medium
Compile a list of after-school educational programs and tutoring/mentoring resources, and provide this information to parents/guardians at Margaret Hearne Elementary.	Wilson County Schools	Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet x 500 students = \$15-\$35	High
Establish an after-school tutoring/mentoring program within the neighborhood. ➤ Margaret Hearne Elementary has offered use of their school and resources for an after-school program aimed at children and their parents.	Wilson County Schools, Churches, Neighborhood Groups	Varies	High
Improve perception of neighborhood safety for schoolchildren. See Goal 9: Safety for recommendations on how to improve neighborhood safety.	See Goal 9		
Objective 4.2: Encourage Barton College to have a continued and increasingly visible presence in the neighborhood			Medium
Hold Barton College Day of Service activities in the surrounding neighborhoods.	Barton College	Cost based on service activity	High
Offer discounts at downtown and neighborhood businesses to Barton College students.	Barton College, Downtown Development, Business Community	Cost depends on discount	High

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Goal 5 – Environment/Going Green: Protect and enhance environmental resources and greenspace, and create a sustainable community.			Low
Objective 5.1: Maintain and enhance trees and landscaping to protect their benefits, which include providing shade to cool the area, protecting against erosion, and improving air quality			High
Establish an urban forestry program and maintain and increase tree canopy - see Goal 2 - Design, Objective 2.2.	See Goal 2, Obj. 2.2		
Objective 5.2: Provide resource, incentives, and education on “green” housing design			High
Establish permitting or tax incentives for greening homes or businesses.	City, Wilson Energy	Cost depends on incentive	High
Educate citizens on what incentives currently exist for greening their home or business.	Wilson Energy, Planning & Development Services, Human Relations	Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	Medium
Educate residents on rain gardens, rain barrels, and other strategies to prevent excess stormwater runoff and flooding. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize Channel 8 to demonstrate examples and details on how to get more information. Hands-on workshops where residents can create their own rain barrel or help build a rain garden Work with the agricultural extension office (or other programs such as 4-H) to provide programs and utilize expertise of Master Gardeners. Establish a rain barrel purchasing program where residents can buy them at a reasonable cost (Cary has a similar program). Promote at festivals and events. 	Public Services, County Cooperative Extension, Wilson Community College	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> No Cost – staff time Minimal if residents purchase materials; cost of gardening materials n/a Staff time, initial purchasing costs 	Medium
Objective 5.3: Improve energy efficiency of homes			Medium
Educate residents on what they can do to cut back on energy usage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Make it a “how to” in a “hands on” format. One idea is to do a case study televised workshop on Channel 8 on how the average resident can reduce their costs. ➤ Promote weatherization programs taught at Wilson Community College. Consider programs that allow these classes to provide weatherization to low-income homes. 	Wilson Energy	Minimal; Staff Time	Medium

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Objective 5.4: Reduce flooding issues			Low
Educate residents on how to clear their storm drain, and on importance of not blowing yard debris into the drains.	Public Services, Neighborhood Association	Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	Medium
Educate on whom to call with when they observe problems with storm drains, retention ponds, or swales (Stormwater: 399-2435).	Public Services, Neighborhood Association, Human Relations	Cost to print resource guide: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	Medium
Educate residents on rain gardens, rain barrels, and other strategies to prevent excess stormwater runoff and flooding, and establish a rain barrel purchasing program (see above in Objective 5.2).	See Goal 5, Objective 5.2		
Educate citizens on how to prevent groundwater and surface water pollution by teaching how and where to dispose of hazardous materials such as paint and oil.	Public Services, other community groups	Cost to print resource guide: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	Medium
Address repeat “problem” areas. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Solve flooding issues in the vicinity of Vance & Cone Streets ➤ Conduct study to identify problem areas within the neighborhood and prioritize areas to address/fix. As part of this, identify water retention areas that may be causing issues, such as full of weeds and trash, causing overflow. 	Public Services	Study: staff time. Solution costs vary based on issue	High
Install low-maintenance rain gardens in vacant lots or other under-utilized landscapes to capture rain water and prevent flooding.	Public Services	Cost depends on size of rain gardens and materials used.	Medium
Install solutions that create more greenspace and prevent flooding, such as stormwater curb extensions with landscaping to collect stormwater. This also helps achieve objectives 9.4 and 9.5 by narrowing the street and providing traffic calming benefits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prioritize where additional benefits are received, such as reducing speeding on Gold Street. 	Public Services	Curb Extensions: \$15,000/unit	Medium

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Goal 6 – Housing Quality: Improve housing quality, increase pride in and maintenance of homes and yards, and encourage restoration of dilapidated and vacant housing.			High
Objective 6.1: Improve overall housing conditions, including yards			Medium
Educate the public on who to call to report nuisances or if they have problems with their rental property not being repaired (399-2220 or 399-2219).	Planning & Development Services, Human Relations	Cost of printing neighborhood resource guide: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	Medium
Identify target properties in need of nuisance abatement and send out a general notice letter to these property owners, with the intention of providing initiative to do work. Follow up and enforce as necessary.	Planning & Development Services	Staff time; printing costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color) / sheet	High
Determine feasibility of establishing a low-interest revolving loan fund for housing repairs to be managed by a non-profit organization or the City.	Community Development, Preservation of Wilson, other Organization	Varies; cost of initial loans	Low
Continue the work of the City’s Community Development division, which can provide loans to low-income residents to repair their homes (399-2211).	Community Development	Staff Time	Medium
Create and fund a program that recognizes homes or businesses with exceptional property appearance or that have made significant changes in maintenance/upkeep.	Planning & Development Services, Neighborhood Association	Est. \$2,000 for signage, promotion, awards	Low
Identify which residents are unable to maintain their property due to age, disability, etc. Work with volunteer groups or Barton College service days to help fix up yards, fix/paint homes, etc. of those who are unable to do so themselves.	Neighborhood Association, Barton College, Community Groups (i.e. BB&T’s Lighthouse Project and churches)	Varies from minimal to high cost based on cost of renovation materials.	High
Research existing standards followed by landscape crews conducting work on private properties. If insufficient or nonexistent, establish/improve the standards and educate landscapers.	Public Services	Minimal	Medium
Educate citizens on how to choose a contractor and ensure homes are being fixed properly.	Planning & Development Services	Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	Medium

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Fine the owner or landlord if trash cans are left out; encourage landlords to fine the renter for leaving trash cans out.	Public Services	Staff Time	Medium
Objective 6.2: Redevelop vacant and abandoned homes			High
Support redevelopment and sale of dilapidated historic homes in lieu of demolition. Identify programs and funding to put homeowners into these homes (i.e. HUD's Urban Homesteading program)	Planning & Development Services, Preservation of Wilson, Community Development	Staff time to research and apply for funding opportunities	High
Identify vacant houses and establish a system for Police or a neighborhood watch to patrol for unsafe conditions and nuisances.	Wilson Police Department, Planning & Development Services, Neighborhood Association	Minimal: staff and community time	High
Provide incentives to move into targeted homes. Macon, GA model; forgivable loan after 5-10 years for faculty/employees who take on substantial rehab in periphery neighborhood, and turn into owner-occupied, single-family dwellings.	Barton College, City, other interested organizations	Varies based on incentive program	Medium
Actively market homes; continue the work of Preservation of Wilson in rehabilitating and marketing historic homes. Utilize sites such as www.oldhouses.com and www.historicproperties.com	Preservation of Wilson, Planning & Development Services	Varies: Website costs, signage in front of homes (est. \$30 / sign), printing costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color), etc.	High
Continue efforts by the City to support state legislation to establish a land banking tool. This would allow the City to gain control of abandoned houses so they can be sold to new owners.	Planning & Development Services	Staff time	High
Provide education to realtors, developers, and other groups on incentives, tips, etc. for rehabilitating homes.	Planning & Development Services, Preservation of Wilson	Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	Medium
Establish a program through Habitat for Humanity or similar organization to assist and provide a vested interest for people to purchase and rehabilitate homes.	Preservation of Wilson, Wilson Housing Authority	Varies	Medium

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Purchase homes, rehabilitate, and utilize as student housing or housing for visiting professors, etc. at Barton College.	Barton College	Varies based on cost of home and renovation	Medium
Convert to rentals IF high standards for improvement and maintenance are in place, along with an investor with the capacity to attract good tenants and properly manage properties.	Development Community, Preservation of Wilson	Varies, cost of ownership and upkeep	Medium
Creatively and widely market the success of converted vacant homes to increase confidence in the neighborhood and signify the neighborhood is improving, and encourage others to make similar investments.	Neighborhood Association, Preservation of Wilson, Planning & Development Services	Minimal, incorporate into neighborhood marketing programs	High
See Goal 2-Design, objective 2.1 for creative approaches to improving appearance of boarded up homes such as adding artwork to show community ownership and pride.	See Goal 2, Obj. 2.1		
Objective 6.3: Increase home ownership rates			High
All solutions listed above in objective 6.2 could contribute to increased home ownership.	See Goal 6, Obj. 6.2		
Identify target properties, and provide incentives for people to buy and live in the neighborhood, with a requirement to live in the home for a specified amount of time.	Preservation of Wilson, other organizations	Varies based on incentive	Medium
Provide incentives for teachers, police officers, government workers, etc. to purchase homes in the neighborhood. Partner with local non-profits or local banks to target these people, and encourage them to live close to where they work.	Wilson County Schools, City /Government	Varies based on incentive	High
Create a marketing program to establish a positive image of the neighborhood as a “place of choice.” Remember that homebuyers are not just investing in a home; they are investing in the neighborhood. Create a brochure about the neighborhood that highlights a family and why they chose to live there. Create a neighborhood website (for examples of websites in Greenville, NC see www.elmhurstenglewood.com and http://myccna.com). Highlight neighborhood activities, and other positive aspects (downtown activities, parks, crime rates if positive, and examples of redeveloped homes). The intent is to draw in new homeowners and reassure existing residents. Distribute widely, especially to realtors.	Neighborhood Association, Preservation of Wilson, Barton College	Cost of website design; printing costs: \$.03 (B&W) -\$.07 (color)	High

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Goal 7 - Leadership: Increase capacity of community groups and organizations, and empower citizens to become involved and take leadership roles to better the community and implement the goals of this plan.			Low
Objective 7.1: Increase participation in, and capacity of, neighborhood organizations			Low
Provide training and targeted mentoring to the neighborhood associations. Provide opportunities for Association to Association mentoring at the annual Neighborhood Association Summit.	Human Relations	Varies based on type of training	Medium
Conduct a survey to identify exactly what services and programs citizens feel it is most important for the neighborhood associations to provide, and what would receive the most citizen participation, and focus efforts on these.	Neighborhood Association	Minimal	Medium
Conduct a strong marketing campaign to identify new association members and leaders, and encourage existing members. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create websites for the neighborhood association to keep members up to date and draw in new members. 	Neighborhood Association	Cost to design website (varies); Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	High
Establish a neighborhood improvement grant program available to neighborhood associations to fund items like entrance signs, websites, tree-planting, etc. An example is the City of Greenville's program. See: http://www.greenvillenc.gov/departments/community_development/information/	Human Relations, Planning & Development Services, OR Community Development	Varies based on grant amounts	High
Objective 7.2: Empower citizens to become actively involved in the community			High
Provide training and targeted mentoring to potential neighborhood leaders. Encourage attendance at the Citizen's Academy.	Human Relations	Varies based on type of training	Medium
Organize events to bring people out, encourage neighborhood interaction, and talk to them about potential programs within the neighborhood. Build on existing programs like National Night Out. Hold "get to know your neighbor" events.	Neighborhood Association, Police Department, Human Relations	Varies based on event, whether food is provided, etc.	Medium
Work with churches to focus their service efforts on the surrounding communities.	Local Churches, Neighborhood Association	Varies based on effort	Medium

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Create a Neighborhood Resource Guide that educates citizens on many of the points made in this plan, such as who to call for various neighborhood concerns. Provide additional education via Channel 8 “who to call” PSAs, etc. Establish a consistent follow-up system to ensure citizens feel they are being heard.	Human Relations	Cost of printing neighborhood resource guide: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	High
Find creative ways to involve youth and give them a voice, such as giving high school students a leadership role in the neighborhood associations, or finding a group of school-aged youth to “own” a project, such as sidewalk cleanups, drug prevention programs, community events, tutoring, or other community initiatives.	Human Relations, Neighborhood Association	Varies	Medium
Objective 7.3: Encourage neighborhood groups, businesses, and institutions to invest in the community and focus efforts on the surrounding neighborhoods			Medium
Continue to support Barton College’s efforts to reach out to the community, such as holding more service days within the immediate neighborhood and family movie nights on the campus.	Barton College	Cost varies based on event	Medium
Identify potential community organizations and market projects to them to support.	Neighborhood Association	Minimal	Medium
Encourage neighborhood associations, local businesses, schools, churches, etc. to create partnerships in order to leverage capacity of community groups, such as combining the Barton Day of Service and the BB&T Lighthouse Project. For example, Barton College students are working with Preservation of Wilson on the Old Wilson Mile.	All Community Groups	Minimal	High
Goal 8 - Recreation: Provide ongoing recreational opportunities for all ages, and ensure all areas have access to a park or greenspace.			Low
Objective 8.1: Increase the number of community activities available for all ages			Low
Continue to support activities held downtown and on Barton College’s campus.	Downtown Development, Barton College	Continue existing support	High
Conduct community survey to identify future activities and identify leaders and partnerships of community organizations to hold events. Ideas include walking programs, additional family movie nights, etc.	Neighborhood Association, Community Groups	Survey costs: minimal	Low

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Educate residents on what recreational opportunities are available, such as a map showing distances to walk/bike to the activities/locations, listings of parks & recreation opportunities, phone numbers, websites, etc.	Parks & Recreation, Planning & Development Services	Printing costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	Medium
Continue to hold community events that encourage family participation and activities for all ages, such as National Night Out, movies on the lawn, and programs at Barton College.	Neighborhood Association, Police Department, Community Groups	Cost varies based on event	High
See Goal 4: Education, Objective 4.1 for solutions related to providing after-school programming activities for youth.	See Goal 4, Obj. 4.1		
Objective 8.2: Increase and improve opportunities for walking, jogging, bicycling, and other non-motorized recreational travel.			High
Install sidewalks and bicycle lanes – see Goal 1: Accessibility, Objective 1.1 for more details.	See Goal 1, Obj. 1.1		
Implement greenway trail system, as identified in the <i>City of Wilson Bicycle Plan</i> and <i>2030 Comprehensive Plan</i> , and connect to neighborhoods. Create a Greenway Plan as recommended in the <i>City of Wilson Bicycle Plan</i> to prioritize installation.	Parks & Recreation	Base price of \$250,000 per mile, (\$40/linear foot for 14' wide path) not including property acquisition, stream crossings, or excessive grading.	Medium
Establish walking or jogging groups. An example is the existing Broad Street dog walkers group.	Neighborhood Association, Barton College, community groups	Minimal	High

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Objective 8.3: Create, improve, or provide access to a neighborhood park that is safe and accessible.			High
<p>Conduct a study to determine opportunities for park creation to replace Gold Park:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider a joint agreement with the school system to make the playground facilities open to the public after school hours. A toolkit for such agreements may be found at: http://www.phlpnet.org/healthy-planning/products/joint_use_toolkit - Assess properties to determine where it may be appropriate to consolidate vacant lots or otherwise find land to create a community park. 	Planning & Development Services, Parks & Recreation	Staff Time	High
<p>Improve safety and accessibility to nearby City parks such as Toisnot Park through increased connectivity, such as implementation of pedestrian crossing infrastructure or a greenway system that connects to the neighborhoods.</p>	See Goal 1, Obj. 1.1		
Objective 8.4: Establish a community garden			Low
<p>Identify community groups willing to maintain a garden, such as Barton College, neighborhood associations, churches, etc.; available land for garden uses; and a management strategy (lead organization, payment for water use, plot rentals, etc)</p>	Planning & Development Services, Parks & Recreation, Community Groups	Minimal; staff time	Medium
<p>Establish a community garden</p>	Community Groups, Planning & Development Services, Parks & Recreation	\$3,000 for initial basic materials	Medium
Goal 9 - Safety: Provide safe streets and public areas with neighborhood watch involvement, responsive public safety services, and drug-free zones.			High
Objective 9.1: Reduce crime levels and empower citizens to prevent crime			High
<p>Conduct a study to identify trends and/or areas of high crime, and strategically increase patrol enforcement in these areas. Track crime trends and report to citizen groups.</p>	Wilson Police Department, GIS	Staff Time	High

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Work with the neighborhood associations to implement a community watch program. This is currently underway (project led by Wilson Police) with the Old Wilson Association. They are implementing a “citizens on patrol” program. As part of this, they identify block captains who are responsible for a phone tree. Citizens on Patrol will have distinguished teams with predetermined times they are out walking the neighborhood. Increased foot traffic will act as a deterrent to crime. Members will be trained by police. Additional communications should be established for this program, such as a neighborhood e-mail contact list for improved communication, emailing with updates and when trends are occurring.	Police Department, Neighborhood Association	Staff Time, \$200/sign (4-5 per neighborhood)	High
Increase education to empower citizens to solve neighborhood issues, including efforts on “who to call” for various city efforts (booklet, magnet, education at meetings, etc.).	Human Relations, Police Department, Neighborhood Association	Cost of printing neighborhood resource guide: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	Medium
Establish a reward or recognition program for areas that have seen success from community watch programs.	Wilson Police Department	Varies based on reward	High
Continue to promote use of background checks by property management companies to prevent “problem” tenants.	Wilson Police Department	Minimal	High
Establish more after-school programs to keep young persons from seeking “trouble.” See Education objective 4.1 for recommendations for after-school programs for students of Margaret Hearne.	See Goal 4, Obj. 4.1		
Educate property owners on the benefits of attractive fencing and other strategies as deterrents to crime.	Wilson Police Department	Minimal. Fencing costs vary based on design.	Medium
See solutions offered for boarded up and vacant houses in Goal 2: Design, objective 2.1, suggesting using the boards as public art or placing low-cost attractive fencing on vacant lots. The objective is to show the property is being “watched” and show neighborhood pride and ownership, deterring crime.	See Goal 2, Obj. 2.1		
Provide education to neighborhood residents and city staff on who the neighborhood contacts are when contacting the neighborhood association, City, etc.	Various City Departments, Neighborhood Association	Minimal	Medium

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Objective 9.2: Reduce gang activity			Low
Provide education on existing after-school and youth programs. Identify at-risk youth in the neighborhood and encourage attendance at existing programs. Also see solutions offered in Goal 4 - Education, objective 4.1.	Wilson Police Department, See Objective 4.1	Varies based on extent of youth program	Medium
Remove gang graffiti. See Goal 2 - Design, objective 2.1 for solutions.	See Goal 2, Obj. 2.1		
Promote safety in numbers while walking to school, such as through a Walking School Bus program that provides adult supervision to young children as they travel to school.	Wilson County Schools, Parent-Teacher Organization	Minimal; printing costs for signage and education: \$.03 (B&W) -\$.07 (color)	Medium
Objective 9.3: Assess street lighting for needed improvements and additional fixtures			High
Conduct a lighting study. This study should examine the brightness of the lights, spacing, and proper functioning, and determine if there is a need for pedestrian-scale lighting.	Wilson Energy	\$20,000	High
Ensure that trees are properly trimmed in summer months to remove limbs obstructing street lighting, and educate residents on whom to call to cut tree limbs (399-2462).	Wilson Energy	\$200 per light unit; Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) -\$.07 (color)	Medium
Educate citizens on who to call for broken streetlights or to report dark areas (399-2444).	Wilson Energy, Human Relations	Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	Medium
Objective 9.4: Improve safety for non-motorized traffic, especially children walking to school			Medium
Action items to address safety for non-motorized traffic are addressed in Goal 1 – Accessibility, as many safety concerns are related to accessibility and facilities.	See Goal 1		
Abandoned houses were cited by residents as a deterrent to walking or cycling in the neighborhood. See solutions offered for boarded up and vacant houses in objective 2.1.	See Goal 2, Obj. 2.1		

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
Goal 10 - Social: Provide community activities that create a sense of community and mutual trust throughout the neighborhoods.			Medium
Objective 10.1: Increase resident involvement and number of community events			High
Provide information to residents to increase awareness of existing events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Create a public outreach action plan that outlines strategies to reach out to citizens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As part of this, create an email contact list so residents can be alerted to upcoming activities and events, and opportunities to become involved in local initiatives, neighborhood associations, etc. Allow residents to sign up for automated calls that alert them of upcoming opportunities. 	Neighborhood Association, Human Relations, Planning & Development Services, other groups as appropriate	Email and action plan: minimal. Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	High
The community watch program described in objective 9.1 will provide opportunities for residents to work together towards positive change.	See Goal 9, Obj. 9.1		
Establish a community garden. See Recreation objective 8.4 for detailed action items.	See Goal 8, Obj. 8.4		
Create a welcome wagon for new residents with “neighborhood resource” guide, maps, etc. and invitations to upcoming events.	Neighborhood Association, Human Relations	Printing Costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	Low
Hold more community events. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Determine what new programs and events would receive the most participation through surveys, speaking to residents at organized events, etc., identify partners, and implement. ➤ Create partnerships with other groups both within and outside the neighborhood area, combining resources to hold neighborhood events. ➤ Create an annual calendar of planned events; use it for marketing. Have an overseeing group that promotes these events (neighborhood associations, etc.) to the neighborhood and helps ensure their implementation. 	Event organizers	Costs depend on events. Printing Costs for calendars and advertising: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	High

*Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.

Action Items	Project Lead	Cost*	Priority
<p>Increase the number of community events at Barton College, and expand advertising for existing events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ For example, Barton College sponsors a Halloween and Christmas party geared toward children, but generally advertises through local churches. Advertising could be expanded to Margaret Hearne 	Barton College	Varies based on event	Low
Objective 10.2: Provide educational programs to support citizens (health, child care, finances, health and wellness)			Low
Determine what programs are currently available, assess their accessibility to neighborhood residents and determine need for additional programs.	Wilson County Health	Minimal. Costs of programs will vary	Medium
Educate neighborhood residents by making a list of available educational programs. Distribute through neighborhood associations, churches, etc.	Human Relations	Printing costs: \$.03 (B&W) - \$.07 (color)	Medium

**Costs are estimated. Actual costs may vary significantly.*

APPENDIX A: SURVEYS

- Citizen Survey
- Barton College Survey
- Margaret Hearne Survey
- Doorhanger left with survey for residents who were not home during the citizen door-to-door survey
- Meeting invitation to Spanish-Speaking residents

Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan – Citizen Survey



Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

Do you rent or own where you live? Rent Own

If you rent, who do you rent from? _____

How long have you lived here? _____

Do you have any crime or safety concerns? Yes No

If so, where? (please provide specific locations or street addresses)

Would you be interested in becoming a member of your neighborhood association? Yes No

What are ideas you have on how we as a city and you as a citizen can improve the area?

Do you have any flooding or storm drain concerns? Yes No

If so, where, and what are the concerns (location/address)?

Do you have any traffic concerns (ie: speeding, safety, etc.)? Yes No

If so, where, and what are the concerns (location/address)?

Are there any areas that need paving, sidewalk or curb repair? Yes No

If so, where, and what are the concerns (location/address)?

Do you have any street lighting concerns (ie: light is out, additional light needed)? Yes No

If so, where, and what are the concerns (location/address)?

Would you be interested in an energy audit to help determine possible energy saving changes? Yes No

Do you currently participate in our "Beat the Peak" (energy savings) program? Yes No

If not, would you like to participate? Yes No

Do you have any concerns with housing conditions in your neighborhood? Yes No

If so, where, and what are the concerns (location/address)?

Do you have any concern with the cleanliness of your neighborhood? (ie: trash, junk cars, etc.) Yes No

If so, where, and what are the concerns (location/address)?

What do you like best about your neighborhood? (ie: a park, a school, a beautiful street, the community, people who live here, location in Wilson, architecture)

What are some activities, projects, or initiatives that would improve your neighborhood the most? Please circle up to five items below that you feel would make the most positive impact in your neighborhood.

Better Access to Buses/Transit	Crime Watch	Improving Downtown	Sidewalks
Better School Performance	Housing Improvements	Neighborhood Events	Slowing Down Traffic
Better Street Lighting	Improved Storm Drainage	No Car Parking on Front Lawns	Tree Planting
Bike Lanes	Improvements at Barton College	Preserving/Restoring Historic Buildings	Youth Activities

Other: _____

Is there anything else you would like to share with the Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group that wasn't covered in this survey?

**Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson
Neighborhood Plan
Barton College Students, Faculty, and Staff Survey**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Living Situation:

Do you commute or live off campus? Commute Live on Campus

If you commute, where do you commute from? _____

Do you walk, bike, or otherwise spend time in the neighborhoods surrounding Barton College? Yes No

If so, what is your primary use of the neighborhoods (check as many as apply)?

Recreation Exercise Travel route to other destinations It's where I live Other

If you do not spend time in the surrounding neighborhoods, why not (i.e. safety, lack of destinations, etc)?

What do you like best about the neighborhoods surrounding Barton College (i.e. a park, the community, architecture)?

What, if any, issues or concerns do you have or have you observed about the surrounding neighborhoods? Please be specific and provide locations if appropriate. (i.e. housing conditions, crime/safety, sidewalk/road conditions, speeding cars)

What, in your opinion, would improve the neighborhoods and make them more accessible to students? Please select up to five items that you feel would make the biggest impact and would encourage you to spend time in the neighborhoods.

Better access to bus/transit Improving downtown Wilson Sidewalks Bike lanes
 Neighborhood events Slowing down traffic More destinations within walking or biking stance, such as coffee shops, restaurants, and shopping

Any other specific ideas that would improve the neighborhoods? You may use this space to describe specific destinations you think the school needs, such as a coffee shop or park.

Barton College plays an important role in the community by offering arts and cultural events on campus. What other roles do you think Barton College could play in improving and becoming involved in its surrounding neighborhoods (i.e. sponsor cleanup events, programs at Margaret Hearne)? Please be specific with your ideas!

Is there anything else you would like to share with the City of Wilson that wasn't covered in this survey?

Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhood Plan – Margaret Hearne Survey



Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail: _____

Please think about the neighborhoods that surround Margaret Hearne Elementary and answer the following questions thoughtfully and with specific examples.

1. What is your overall impression of the neighborhoods around Margaret Hearne Elementary?

2. What do you like about the neighborhoods?

3. What concerns or issues do you have about the neighborhoods?

4. What suggestions do you have for improvement of the issues listed above, and/or what programs do you think would benefit the community? (i.e. crime watch, sidewalks, tree planting, youth activities, bike lanes)

5. Based on interactions with your students, how do you feel your students perceive the neighborhoods? (i.e. benefits or obstacles such as safety, sidewalks, trees, parks, youth programs, opportunities for recreation, community)

6. Is there anything else you'd like to tell the City of Wilson?



**Interested in the Quality of Life in Your Neighborhood?
If so, Your Input is Needed!**

The City of Wilson is surveying residents in the Barton Area-NorthWest-Old Wilson Neighborhoods to determine what issues/concerns you have for the future of the area.

We would really like to get your responses to the attached survey.

Please complete and either drop it by first floor City Hall (112 Goldsboro Street) or call 399-2214 and someone will come and pick it up.

**Also, it is available online at
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DLG56R8>.**

Thank you for your participation!



**¿Le Interesa la Calidad de Vida en su Vecindario?
¡Si es así, Necesitamos Su Opinión !**

La Ciudad de Wilson esta encuestando a los residentes en el área de Barton y los vecindarios Noroeste (NorthWest)-Antiguo Wilson (Old Wilson) para determinar que asuntos/ preocupaciones tiene usted sobre el futuro del área.

Habrà una reuni3n en la Iglesia Cat3lica de Santa Teresa el mi3rcoles 13 de abril de 7-8 p.m. Aqu3 tendrà la oportunidad de expresar sus ideas, pensamientos y preocupaciones acerca de su comunidad.

La iglesia està ubicada en el 700 W. Nash St. Favor de entrar por la entrada de la escuela sobre la calle ACC Drive. Usted se puede estacionar sobre la calle Roundtree (mapa atràs).

Favor de confirmar su asistencia llamando a Elisa Suàrez (252) 399-2229 al màs tardar el martes 12 de Abril

¡Agradecemos su participaci3n! ¡Por favor traiga un amigo y vecino!