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LAND USE PLAN SYNOPSIS  
TOWN OF SWANSBORO  
MAY 24, 1976

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1976

COASTAL ZONE  
INFORMATION CENTER

## INTRODUCTION

This document is a synopsis or summary of the Land Use Plan which the Town of Swansboro has been preparing over the past year. Copies of the complete land use plan from which much of the information presented here was extracted are available for study and review from the Town Clerk at the Swansboro Town Hall on Church Street. The synopsis is being distributed to every household in town and is intended to provide each and every citizen of Swansboro with the basic information necessary for a general understanding of land use planning and the Coastal Area Management Act as it relates to Swansboro.

Please retain your copy of the synopsis and use it for future reference. If you know someone who would like to have a copy of the synopsis but has not yet received one, pass along the word that copies are available from the Town Clerk. Thank you.

## BACKGROUND

This land use plan was mandated by the North Carolina General Assembly under the Coastal Area Management Act in order to enable the citizens of Swansboro to have a voice in land use planning for a twenty county coastal area of North Carolina. Under this Act, state and local governments are working together to plan for the future in order to maintain and improve the quality of life in the coastal region. Local governments have the task of preparing local plans according to local values while state-level planning will focus upon areas of broad significance to the region, state, and nation such as rivers, marshland, historic sites, etc. A fifteen member Coastal Resources Commission composed entirely of coastal residents has been appointed to coordinate and review the land use plans and to provide guidance in implementing them.

The need for land use planning in the coastal area is perhaps best summed up in the following excerpt from the planning guidelines:

US Department of Commerce  
NOAA Coastal Services Center Library  
2011  
Chapel Hill, NC 27515

The 1974 Legislature found that "the coastal area, and in particular the estuaries, are among the most biologically productive regions of this State and of the nation" but in recent years the area "has been subjected to increasing pressures which are the result of the often conflicting needs of a society expanding in industrial development, in population, and in the recreational aspirations of its citizens."

"Unless these pressures are controlled by coordinated management, the very features of the coast which make it economically, aesthetically, and ecologically rich will be destroyed."

#### What is a land use plan?

A land use plan is one method which local governments employ to outline the impacts which growth (or non-growth) of an area may have upon the consumption of vacant land and the reuse of land which is currently occupied. But the realm of land use planning extends far beyond just the physical patterning of land... the way in which land is used can also affect traffic circulation, property values, costs of governmental services and many other facets of community life. The plan may also be used to lay the foundation for the adoption of land use regulations, such as zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, or flood plain restrictions. The land use plan, then, should not be viewed as an end within itself but as a thorough and systematic guide to be followed in the continuing growth and development of an area.

Imagine, for example, that an interstate highway is proposed for construction along the outskirts of a large city at a point ten years into the future. Through well-conceived planning, land uses which would not be compatible with a busy highway (e.g., a quiet family residential district) can be directed away from

the highway and uses which are dependent upon the road (e.g., trucking lines, large industrial plants, etc.) can be encouraged to locate nearer to its access points. In the long run, everyone involved, including the community as a whole, gains greater benefits from the land. The plan has guided action.

#### Why do we plan?

First and foremost, we plan because we wish to create the best living environment possible for all citizens of Swansboro. Unlike some areas which have awoken too late and found themselves plagued by excessive impurities in their water and air, large districts of decaying housing and endless avenues of flashing neon signs, Swansboro has managed to preserve a quiet, pleasant and friendly small-town atmosphere which its citizens value very highly. We need only to look around us, however, to envision the problems which we might encounter should we adopt an uncaring and indifferent attitude, choosing to ignore the forces which are acting upon the Town.

We plan because we are concerned and seek to promote and preserve those features of the community which are desirable and prevent and discourage those which are undesirable. These words (desirable, undesirable, etc.) will undoubtedly mean different things to different people...while one citizen may vigorously encourage industrial development as a form of economic salvation, another might just as strongly oppose it on the grounds of environmental destruction. The plan, therefore, should attempt to strike a balance, carefully weighing each fact and opinion in order to support the general welfare of the entire community. We want to see Swansboro reach its highest possible level.

#### How do we plan?

The completed land use plan is a product of several factors: population and economic trends and forecasts; physical features of the land (such as soil properties); existing land use maps; the capacities of community facilities and so forth. Perhaps the most important factor of all, however, is the feelings

of the people of Swansboro. How does the average man or woman on the street feel about the growth and development of their Town? Although all the factors mentioned above will figure heavily into Swansboro's future land use patterns, the ultimate decision lies with the public. Citizen opinion is the weight in the balance...if ninety-nine percent of Swansboro's citizens desire expanded retail services, chances are that we can expect more land to be devoted to commercial purposes in the future. As a noted author on the subject of planning has pointed out:

The town planner (layman or professional) must of course look at the town as it is. If he is true to his calling, he cannot stop at this. He must look backward to see how it got that way. He must look around him to see what the greater public interest demands of his town. He must look ahead, to see what his town is likely to become and what it should become. After he has done these things, if he is a wise planner, he will be guided in what he proposes by a simple rule: no town is an island, no time is forever.

The job is to guide change to fit need, not to stop change. The change should be staged and ordered to be as painless as possible, but if the general public needs demand change, the planner who blocks change betrays his trust.\*

In this land use plan, the people of Swansboro have become the "citizen planners" and have been coordinated by a professional planner who has provided technical assistance.

What role have we, the citizen planners had in this plan?

In accordance with the requirements of the Coastal Area Management Act, extensive efforts have been undertaken to insure that the people of Swansboro

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\*Bair, Fred H., Jr., Planning Cities, American Society of Planning Officials, 1970, p. 25.

have been given the opportunity to provide input into the land use plan. Leaflets were distributed throughout the Town explaining the intent of the Coastal Area Management Act and inviting citizens to participate in the planning process; a public meeting was held, and although sparsely attended, provided insight into the planning program for those few who were in attendance; news releases were published and broadcast; a Citizens Advisory Committee composed of seven Swansboro citizens was formed and met several times with the expressed purpose of providing advice and guidance into the development of the plan; questionnaires were mailed to every known household in Town. Perhaps you filled out one of these questionnaires during the summer of 1975--about one out of every three households did--if so, your answers and comments are accounted for in this plan.

Based largely upon the questionnaire responses and the very successful work of the Citizens Advisory Committee, land use issues in Swansboro were identified and goals and objectives were formulated. The goals and objectives should be followed in dealing with the land use issues or other related questions which may arise from time to time.

#### What are issues, goals, and objectives?

Land use issues are one means of pinpointing forces affecting land use which have acted in the past, are now in existence, or are likely to be experienced in the future. Once these subject areas have come to our attention, goals which describe how the citizens believe things "should be" can be defined. Then, objectives, or steps to be taken to achieve those stated goals, can be presented. Issues, goals, and objectives are perhaps the key elements of the land use plan for they represent the judgement of the people and should be adhered to when making decisions regarding land use. Issues, goals, and objectives are the "guiding light" of the plan.

Issues: Throughout the public participation process, several dominant themes regarding the general welfare of the Town of Swansboro surfaced. These themes form the backbone of the major land use issues outlined in this section. Public discussion has focused heavily upon the following topics...

- A large segment of the Swansboro citizenry feels that there are not enough retail outlets in the Town to adequately serve the demands of the consuming public. In order to purchase many goods and services, trips to nearby cities such as Jacksonville are often necessary. Increased retail growth in Swansboro could result in savings of energy for the individual and an increased tax base for the Town. On the other hand, there are those who fear that stimulation of commercial or industrial development might cause the Town to lose much of its small town charm and damage the integrity of residential districts if allowed to proceed too rapidly or in a haphazard fashion. The rezoning of land to accommodate the shopping center, proposed for construction at the intersection of NC 24 and Hammocks Road, stirred a significant amount of public debate and controversy on the subject of commercial growth versus preservation of the community in its present state.

- Swansboro has thus far managed to avoid large scale strip development, that is, development which runs in a linear fashion along major traffic arteries as opposed to cluster style building. The costs to the community associated with strip development have been proven to be very high. Water and sewer lines, for example, yield less return per unit of line when strip-developed than if development were grouped together in a cluster pattern. Problems are also encountered when commercial and industrial uses intrude into areas which are actually better suited for residential purposes, resulting in wastage of valuable land due to mixing of uses. The local government is then forced into the position of providing services to areas with a high ratio of land to population. This usually causes

taxes to be driven upward due to the high cost of services relative to the tax base. Too often the strip-developed area becomes an eyesore and a source of general congestion.

The NC 24 corridor near Swansboro is particularly vulnerable to strip development. A section of the highway just beyond the Town Limits has already begun to spawn rapid growth, and many citizens have expressed the fear that if controls (such as one-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction) are not soon enacted, there is a strong possibility that the same type of landscape which lines the shoulders of Marine Boulevard in Jacksonville could very easily spread into the Swansboro area.

- The community facilities identified as the most deserving of attention are: a) the sewer system, b) parking facilities, and c) recreational areas. The sewer system is presently inadequate to handle the load which the Town places upon it, and is incapable of accommodating new hookups. The wastewater treatment plant provides primary treatment but must be upgraded to render secondary treatment in order to meet the minimum water quality standards of the White Oak River Basin. The municipal government of the Town of Swansboro is very anxious and willing to upgrade the plan as soon as possible, but must wait until an areawide ("201") wastewater facilities plan is completed before construction can begin. Until the new plant is installed, very little development can be added to the Town except that which can utilize septic tanks.

The general lack of parking space in the downtown area and the clogging of streets which accompanies it has also evoked citizen discussion. In order for the downtown to remain commercially competitive with suburban shopping facilities, expanded parking areas will be necessary.

Also, an overwhelming number of questionnaire respondents listed recreation as one of the primary needs of the Town. Plans are currently under consideration for the development of a recreational area in the northern section of Swansboro.

- Swansboro is a very old town; it was settled during the mid 1700's and has remained a small fishing village settlement for many years afterwards. Even today Swansboro retains much of the historical and cultural atmosphere of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, evidenced by the many aged structures located in the downtown business district and along the waterfront. Many residents would like to see these features of the environment preserved for future generations. While it is realized that progress cannot forever be held back, it is felt that the old and the new should be able to exist compatibly side by side and should be encouraged to do so.

- With few exceptions, a pleasant, clean, healthful and attractive environment is desired by all citizens. While the steps needed to reach this state are many and varied, Swansboro residents have expressed specific viewpoints regarding land development in the coastal area (see below). The Town's sewer system should be improved so that shellfish waters adjacent to the present treatment plant can be upgraded to allow marketing of shellfish extracted in the area. As both small and large-scale building is brought into being, taste and tact should be employed during design and construction. A well-planned landscaping effort around the new shopping center, for example, would provide the community with an attractive asset in which residents could take pride.

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The following responses were given to the survey question regarding land development in certain coastal areas:

Question: Do you think development should be permitted in the following areas:

Answers:	<u>Never</u>	<u>Seldom</u>	<u>Frequently</u>	<u>Always</u>
Lands Near Inlets	50	25	4	6
Beaches	35	22	12	13
Marshes	61	7	7	5
Dunes	65	7	1	6
Inland Waterway	23	15	24	11

Goals and Objectives:

- Goal - Promote controlled and orderly growth by creating a program capable of planning and managing Swansboro's land
- Objectives - Develop land within Town Limits before expanding outward
- Discourage strip development along traffic arteries
- Enact authority to plan and manage one mile area adjacent to the Town (extraterritorial jurisdiction)
- Enforce development regulations (Building Permit System, Zoning Ordinance, National Flood Insurance Program, etc.)
- Enact subdivision regulations
- Encourage citizen participation in planning program
- Goal - Stimulate economic development in Swansboro while recognizing the undesirable effects which could result from expanding too rapidly and/or beyond the Town's capacities
- Objectives - Encourage wide variety of retail trade
- Regulate location of commercial activities so as not to conflict with residential areas
- Strengthen economic vitality of the downtown area by promoting its historical background
- Increase potential of community facilities to handle commercial/ industrial development
- Make sure commercial/industrial activities are consistent with Swansboro's overall growth policies (e.g., small-scale, low pollution and noise levels)
- Improve transportation and parking network by regulating on-street parking and possibly constructing an off-street parking area adjacent to the downtown district
- Goal - Maintain and improve the attractive features of the cultural, historical, and natural environments
- Objectives - Consider appointment of a Community Appearance Commission
- Enhance and preserve the cultural and historical atmosphere of the downtown area
- Preserve natural contour, vegetation, etc., as new development occurs

Encourage environmental education in schools, civic groups, etc.

CCA

Rehabilitate the waterfront area while preserving its unique atmosphere

Goal - Provide adequate and reliable public services and sound housing for the citizens of Swansboro

Objectives - Enforce the Zoning Ordinance (update if necessary) and expand to one-mile extraterritorial area

Explore alternatives to scattered, low-density housing development (which tends to result in urban sprawl)

Maintain an active Building Inspection System

Discourage residential development within flood prone areas

Discourage excess development until new sewer system begins operation

Pursue funding and construction of a new sewage treatment plant

Provide efficient system for disposal and collection of refuse material

Goal - Conserve the natural resources of the Swansboro area

Objectives - Abide by regulations governing Areas of Environmental Concern issued by the Coastal Resources Commission

Qualify as a permit letting agency under the Coastal Area Management Act

Encourage environmental awareness (keep abreast of monitoring efforts, etc.)

Insure the consideration of the natural environment when drafting plans, policies, etc., by encouraging citizen participation

Limit installation of septic tanks in areas where soils, water table, etc., are unfavorable

Appoint a local official to review, process, and issue permits for development within AEC's

#### How is Swansboro's land presently used?

Within most any town one finds land being used for a multitude of purposes.

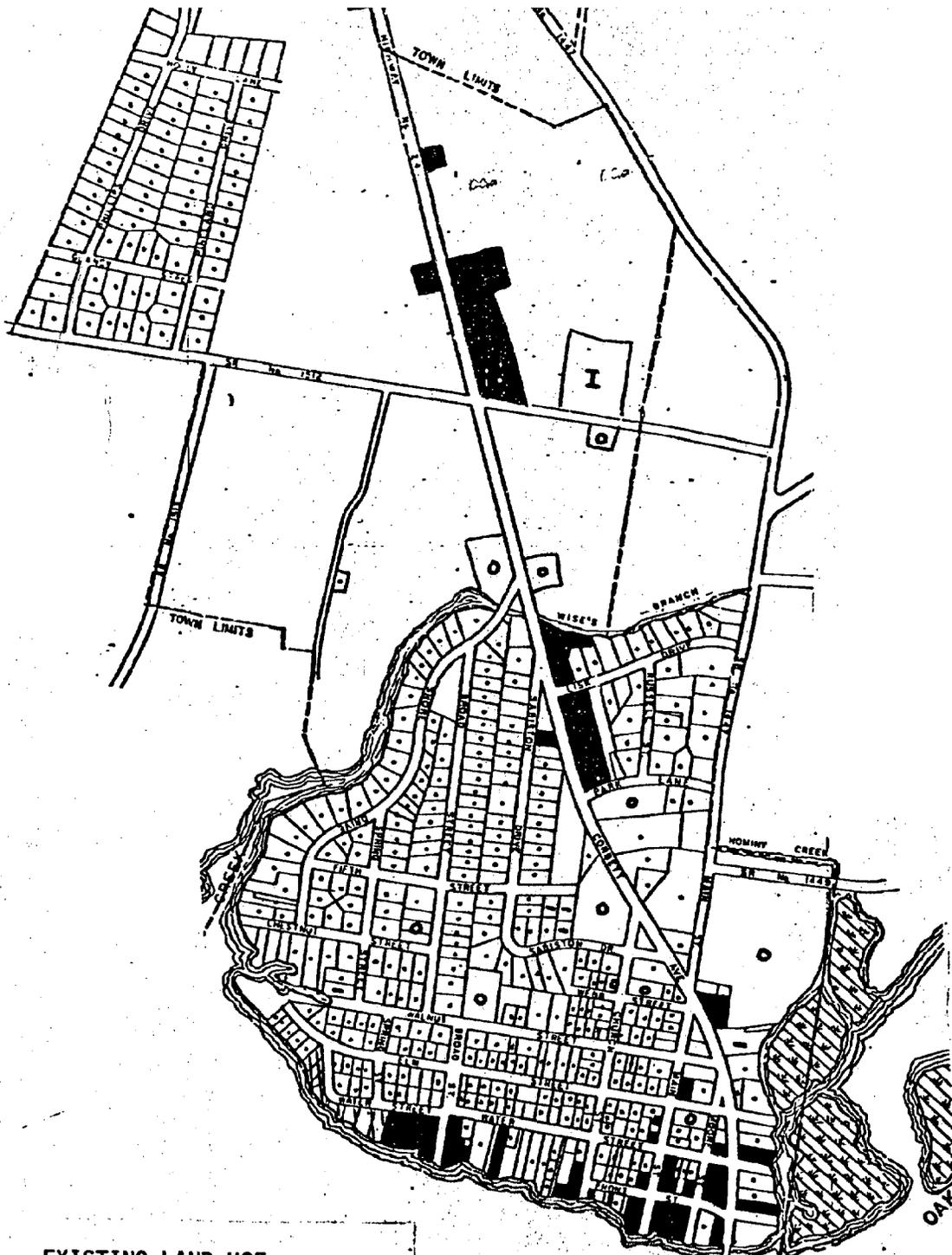
Most towns contain a downtown commercial district, residential neighborhoods which

fan out from the commercial district, governmental/institutional buildings such as churches, schools, and post offices located central to the neighborhoods which they serve, and possibly an industrial district or a shopping center lying on the outskirts of town. The transportation network (roads, streets, railways, etc.) laces the various uses together and often they are separated by tracts of open space or recreational acreage.

A land use survey was conducted in June, 1975 which found land being used in Swansboro in the following manner:

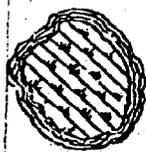
<u>Existing Land Use Acreages</u>		
	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
<b>URBAN AND BUILT-UP</b>		
Residential	103.46 acres	32.3%
Commercial	17.31	5.4
Industrial	1.83	0.6
Transportation, Comm., Util.	30.40	9.5
Government and Institutional	16.99	5.3
Cultural, Entert., Rec.	.68	0.2
Undeveloped Land	16.61	5.2
<b>AGRICULTURE</b>	56.48	17.6
<b>FORESTLAND</b>	68.32	21.3
<b>WATER</b>	NA	NA
<b>WETLAND</b>	8.30	2.6
<b>BARREN</b>	0.00	0.0
	<u>320.38 acres</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

Swansboro initially grew up along the banks of the White Oak River and has subsequently expanded in a northwesterly direction, basically following the route of NC 24 toward Jacksonville. As a rule, the various land uses are well separated and do not conflict with each other. A noisy industry within a quiet residential neighborhood, for example, would be thought of as a conflicting use of land and would undoubtedly arouse the anger of nearby residents...not to mention the ire of the factory owner if his industry were forced to cut production in order to reduce the noise problem...and reduced production would inevitably translate into job lay offs...and so on!



**EXISTING LAND USE**

•	Residential
■	Commercial
I	Industrial
○	Govt.-Institutional
—	Trans., Comm., Util.
▨	Recreational
□	Undeveloped



How does the land itself figure into land use planning?

A careful examination of the natural resources of the Swansboro area was undertaken during 1975 in order to determine which areas of town were best-suited for urban growth and which areas should be avoided. Factors such as soil characteristics, susceptibility to flooding, and proximity to critical areas such as salt marshland were closely studied. On the basis of this study, it was found that the majority of land within the Swansboro Town Limits is favorable for development. The areas least-suited for development are generally those lying adjacent to or partially within water bodies, such as marshland and flood plains. Problems relating to high water tables, drainage, flood hazards, and potential damage to marine life make these areas the most unattractive for development.

What about areas which are sensitive to development?

One of the major reasons land use planning has been initiated in the coastal region of North Carolina is to protect and/or preserve certain critical areas known as Areas of Environmental Concern (AEC's). Generally, these are areas which if developed unwisely or in a haphazard fashion could result in economic loss, destruction of the marine environment, and damage to the natural beauty of the area (just to mention a few adverse effects). In order to prevent this type of damage, local governments, such as the Town of Swansboro have been requested to designate areas which it feels meet AEC standards. The areas which the CRC designates will be known as Interim Areas of Environmental Concern (IAEC's) and will serve in the place of AEC's until they are formally designated. This gives the local community the opportunity to provide guidance and input into the final determination of these most important areas.

Once AEC's are defined by the Coastal Resources Commission, restrictions will be placed upon the types of development which may occur within their bounds.

Building permits within AEC's will be required: a) through the local government if it is a relatively small project, or b) through the Coastal Resources Commission for larger-scale projects. Local governments will establish regulations later stating more specifically what types of development will fall under their jurisdiction.

The accompanying map and text outline the various IAEC's which exist in Swansboro and the land uses which are generally felt to be compatible with them:

1) Low and High Tidal Marshland (Coastal Wetlands) - Approximately ten acres of marshland, consisting primarily of Spartina Alterniflora vegetation exists just north of the Swansboro Elementary School. Scattered parcels of low tidal marshland also exist along the shoreline of the White Oak River.

This area will be considered unsuitable for development which will alter its natural functions. Marshland is perhaps the most fragile of all marine environments, for many marine species are dependent upon it for feeding and breeding purposes. Acceptable land uses will include: fishing piers, docks, utility easements, etc., provided no detrimental excavation or filling takes place.

2) Estuarine Waters/Public Trust Areas - Waters of the White Oak River and its tributaries, such as Hominy Creek, Hawkins Creek, and Wise's Branch are considered estuarine waters (as well as public trust areas). Because the Town Limits presently extend indefinitely into the White Oak River, the exact acreage of estuarine waters within Swansboro's jurisdiction cannot be accurately computed.

These areas should be conserved, but some uses (e.g., bulkheads, piers, wharves) may be allowed if they do not damage physical, biological, or public trust rights.

3) Historic Places - The North Carolina Dept. of Cultural Resources has approved the Ringware House for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, qualifying it as a potential AEC. Uses which would result in substantial irreversible damage to the structure will be deemed inappropriate.

4) Coastal Flood Plains - The flood prone areas of Swansboro described by USGS maps have been used as a basis for delineating the coastal flood plain. There is a good possibility that these maps are not exact and that the flood plain does not extend as far inland as the maps may indicate. Until a detailed flood insurance ratemaking study is undertaken, however, this is the best available information and must be relied upon.

Development may take place provided it meets certain regulations providing safeguards against flooding damage as required by the National Flood Insurance Program.

How much can we expect to grow in the future?

Perhaps the most crucial force affecting growth in a town is the size of its population. The 1970 U.S. Census listed the population of the Town of Swansboro at 1,207 persons (a 10% increase over 1960); it is estimated that the 1975 population was only slightly larger, perhaps 1,250. While Swansboro has nearly tripled its population over the last four decades (1930-394 persons to 1970-1,207) this rate of growth was much slower than Onslow County's whose population increased nearly sevenfold over the same period. This, of course, is a result of the growth of Camp Lejeune, which was established during the 1940's.

The pleasant natural environment of Swansboro has made it a favorite for many retired people, especially retired military personnel, and has caused the median age of the Town to rise eight years above the Onslow County median. The population growth of Swansboro could be termed "healthy growth" for it is neither alarmingly low nor high, and does not suffer from high out-migration.

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Based upon questionnaire responses, most of Swansboro's citizens would like to see the Town continue to grow in the future:

Question: During the next five years, would you like to see the population of Swansboro -

Answers: Increase Greatly	27
Increase Slightly	39
Decrease Greatly	1
Decrease Slightly	7
Stay the Same	27

Population Change 1930 - 1970

	<u>Onslow</u>	<u>Swansboro Township</u>	<u>Swansboro</u>
1930	15,289	2106	394
1940	17,939 (+17.3%)	2455 (+16.6%)	454 (+15.2%)
1950	42,047 (+134.0%)	11662 (+375.0%)	559 (+23.1%)
1960	82,706 (+96.7%)	18176 (+55.9%)	1104 (+97.5%)
1970	103,126 (24.7%)	20800 (+14.4%)	1207 (+9.3%)

Based upon past trends and using the questionnaire responses as a yardstick for evaluation, the future population of Swansboro within the present Town Limits is projected to be roughly 1,550 persons by the year 1985. Geographical expansion of the Town through annexation could, of course, raise this figure considerably. Three mathematical methods were used to project population, the arithmetic, geometric, and least squares techniques. The least squares method was felt to best fit the Town assuming that present trends continue.

	<u>Arithmetic</u>	<u>Geometric</u>	<u>Least Squares</u>
1980 -	1,410 persons	1,645	1,426
1985 -	1,511	1,929	1,551
1990 -	1,613	2,242	1,676

If present trends continue and local values tend to favor growth, Swansboro could conceivably reach a population of 2,500 persons by the turn of the century and perhaps as many as 6,000 persons at the fifty year interval. Projections for small towns covering twenty five years or more are at best an "educated guess" and should not be regarded as being conclusive.

How does population affect land use?

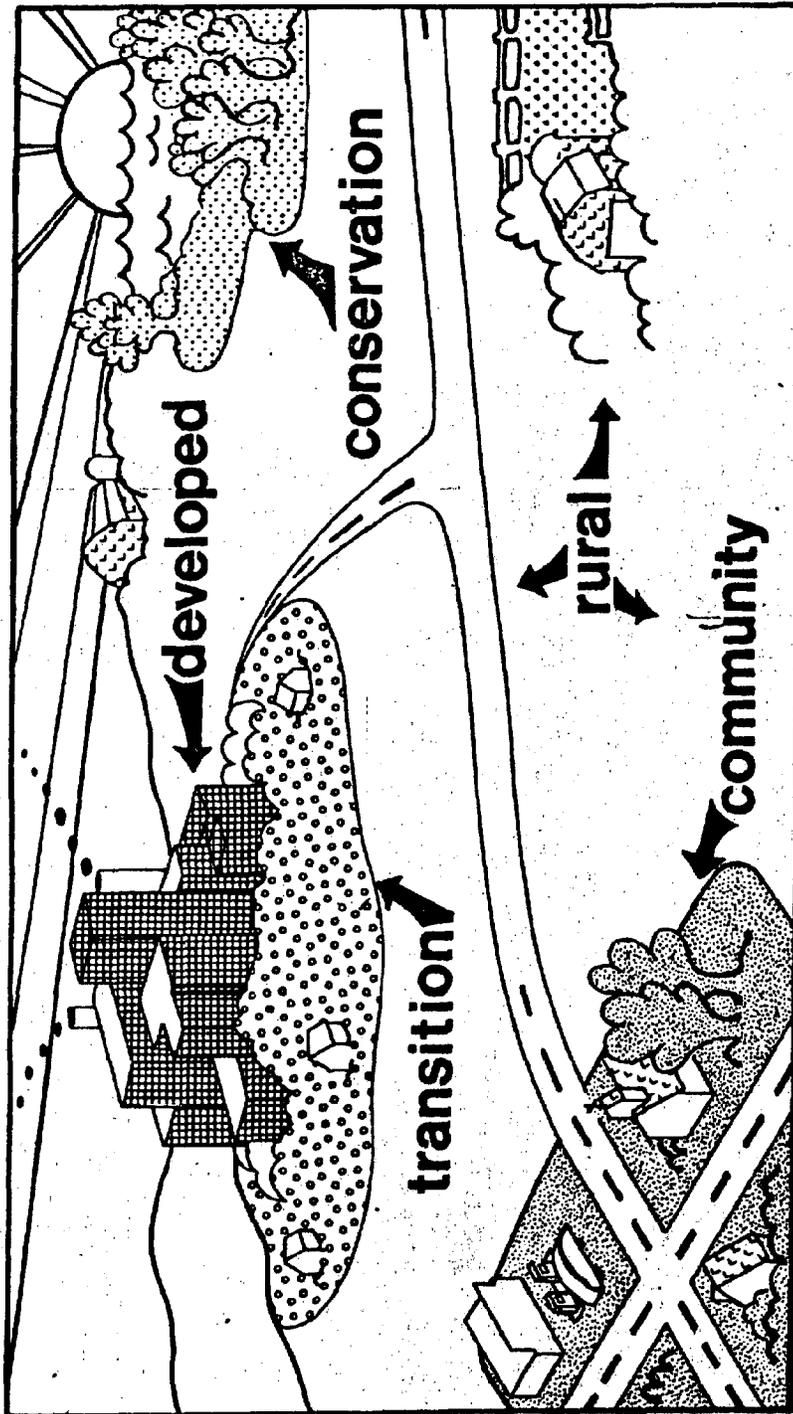
The population projection of 1,550 persons by the year 1985 serves as a foundation for the estimation of land needs over the coming decade. There are currently 320 acres of land within the Town, of which 170 acres are developed. Based upon projected population growth, it is estimated that about 43 additional acres will be consumed by 1985; with a "safety factor" we could expect as many as 96 acres to be needed. Land which is expected to accommodate added growth during the next ten years is called Transition land and is in all probability the area which will first demand community services such as water and sewer lines,

police and fire protection, garbage collection, etc. In order to reduce the costs of governmental services to taxpayers, Swansboro should plan to absorb as much growth as possible during the coming decade into the areas designated Transition on the accompanying land classification map.

"The North Carolina Land Classification System contains five classes of land:

- a. Developed--Lands where existing population density is moderate to high and where there are a variety of land uses which have the necessary public services.
- b. Transition--Lands where local government plans to accommodate moderate to high density development during the following ten year period and where necessary public services will be provided to accommodate that growth.
- c. Community--Lands where low density development is grouped in existing settlements or will occur in such settlements during the following ten year period and which will not require extensive public services now or in the future. (No land of this type is projected for Swansboro)
- d. Rural--Lands whose highest use is for agriculture, forestry, mining, water supply, etc., based on their natural resources potential. Also, lands for future needs not currently recognized.
- e. Conservation--Fragile, hazard and other lands necessary to maintain a healthy natural environment and necessary to provide for the public health, safety, or welfare. (Conservation land in Swansboro is identical to IAEC's)

These five classes provide a framework to be used by local governments to identify the general use of all lands in each county. Such a system presents an opportunity for the local government to provide for its needs as well as consider those of the whole state. Also, they can make a statement of policy on where and to what



Under the land classification system all land will be placed into one of five classes.

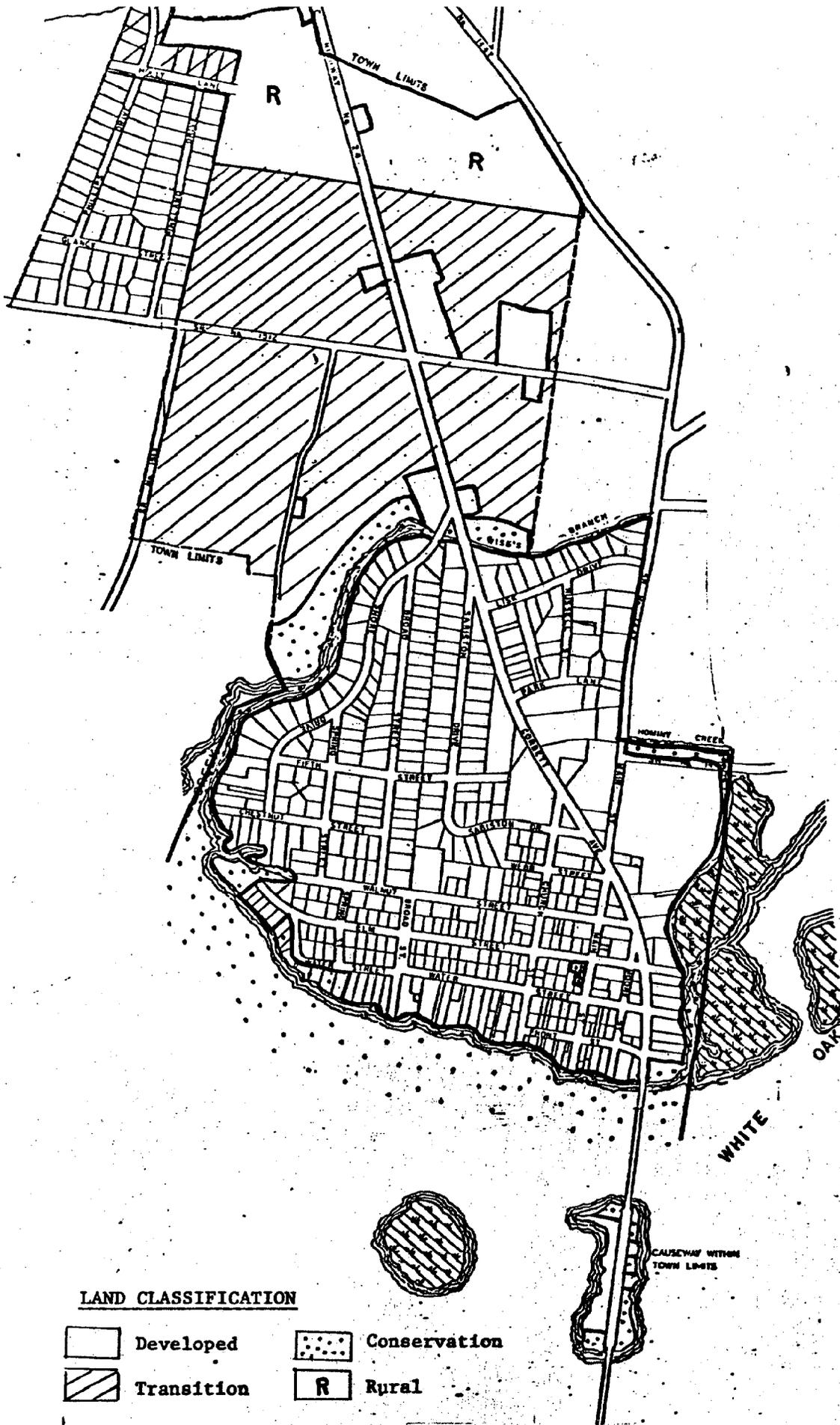
The Developed class will include existing urban areas which are currently supplied with a full range of public services including water and sewer facilities.

The Transition class will identify those areas with land good for urban development which will be supplied with public services to accommodate future population and economic growth.

The Community class will include existing clustered rural residential and commercial areas such as crossroads developments. These areas may require a public water system but public sewers should not be allowed.

The Rural class will identify those lands good for agriculture, forestry, mining, and other land uses such as rural housing depending on private wells and septic tanks.

The Conservation class will identify those areas which due to their significant, limited, or irreplaceable natural, recreational, or scenic resources need to be protected.



**LAND CLASSIFICATION**

- |   |            |   |              |
|---|------------|---|--------------|
|  | Developed  |  | Conservation |
|  | Transition |  | Rural        |

density they want growth to occur, and where they want to conserve the county's natural resources by guiding growth."

What are our alternatives for development?

There are several different development routes which Swansboro may choose from. Low density development usually consists of from one to eight residential units per acre and is characterized by single family detached housing. Medium density development ranges from eight to sixteen units per acre and is most often accompanied by duplex units or two story apartment buildings. Sixteen units or more per acre reaches high density levels and consists primarily of multistory apartments.

Swansboro is presently dominated by single family detached, low density housing, and judging from citizen input would prefer to remain on this course. There are now 410 residential units in Town occupying 103 acres of land, which yields an average of about 4 units per acre (1 unit for every 1/4 acre, or 1 unit per every 10,890 sq. ft.). Current zoning regulations require minimum lot sizes from 6,000 to 8,000 sq. ft., indicating that within lands now used for residential purposes, lots are somewhat larger than required.

In all likelihood, Swansboro will continue to exist primarily as a single family residential community. If at some point in the future, however, development pressure becomes excessively great, the Town should begin to explore alternatives to present patterns of housing densities in order to prevent the unnecessary wastage of space which usually accompanies single family detached housing patterns. Again, "the job is to guide change to fit need, not to stop change."

Where do we go from here?

As was pointed out at the beginning of this synopsis, land use planning is a continuing process; hopefully, we can benefit from the mistakes we have made

in the past in order to mold better plans for the future. For this plan to be truly effective, an effort should be undertaken at least once every five years to review the plan as a whole and to revise those elements which have become outdated. The public participation program should be revived so that new opinions and views can be stated; existing land use should be remapped; population data should be analyzed to include recent findings (such as the 1980 Census); and future land use should be reclassified.

General recommendations for implementation of the Land Use Plan are embodied in the "objectives" section of the plan. Near-term recommendations, or those which should receive top priority for the period 1976-1980, should focus upon: a) extending the Town of Swansboro's municipal jurisdiction to a one-mile extraterritorial area, b) updating the Town's Zoning Ordinance to take into account the findings of the Land Use Plan, c) enacting subdivision regulations to govern the conversion of raw land into lots, and d) qualifying to act as a permit-letting agency for minor development in AEC's by submitting a local implementation and enforcement plan to the Coastal Resources Commission. It is also recommended that commercial development which is in keeping with Swansboro's overall growth goals be encouraged, and that construction of a new wastewater treatment facility in accordance with the Swansboro Area 201 Facilities Plan be actively pursued. The cost of operation, maintenance, and debt service for the proposed treatment plant is estimated by the 201 study to be \$50,529 per year.

Proper implementation will hinge upon the extent to which the goals and objectives outlined in the plan are utilized in the decision-making process. Deviation from the plan's general intent could result in a collapse of a workable planning program and a waste of the time, effort, and money which has gone into its preparation.

The aim of the Coastal Area Management Act is to enable local control to rest within the hands of local people; control will pass on to a higher level only if a path of apathy is chosen. An equitable system of land use planning and management tailored specifically to local needs and with the general welfare of all in mind, should begin to take form if the suggestions outlined in this plan are followed. The choice belongs to the people.