



Section 2:

GROWTH & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Town of Stallings Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Section 2: GROWTH & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Introduction

Historic Population Growth

Characteristics of the Current Population

- *Age*
- *Race and Ethnicity*
- *Educational Attainment*
- *Income*
- *Household*

Population Projections

- *How Are They Created*
- *What Determines Population Projections*

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the growth and demographic trends impacting the Town of Stallings. The existing condition information and trend analysis serve as the foundational data source for the plan; shaping the vision and goals of the plan and providing critical information about the expected population growth for Stallings and Union County over the next 25 years. In future years, when the plan is updated, these existing conditions and trends will serve as a point of comparison for determining whether or not plan implementation has been achieved. Additional maps supporting this section of the plan can be found in the Appendix.

Historic Population Growth

Stallings, like Union County, has grown tremendously since its incorporation in 1975. What began as a farming community in 1912 quickly became a key connection between Union and Mecklenburg Counties with the completion of U.S. Route 74 in the 1950s. With the Charlotte Area steadily increasing, Stallings has also grown from a population of 2,200 in 1995 to its current population of 15,213. From 2005 to 2010, Stallings experienced rapid growth due in part to a large number of annex-

ations. However, between 2000 and 2010, Union County as a whole experienced an extremely rapid growth rate of over 63%, ranking it as the 16th fastest growing county by percentage in the U.S. during that period. Since 2010, the population growth has slowed to under 2%, but Union County remains among the top ten fastest growing counties in North Carolina (2015 Community Profile, Union County, NC). The Total Population Trend chart highlights the Town's change in population.

Characteristics of the Current Population

Much can be derived about a municipality from an examination of its demographic data and the characteristics of its current population. It will be critical to take into consideration the needs of current and future residents as they enter various stages of life and as the population as a whole becomes more diversified. Different age cohorts, races, and ethnicities have varying needs, preferences, and cultures. Providing housing, transportation, recreational, and employment opportunities for a wide variety of targeted population groups will be key to successful growth in Stallings.

Age

The official 2015 U.S. Census popula-



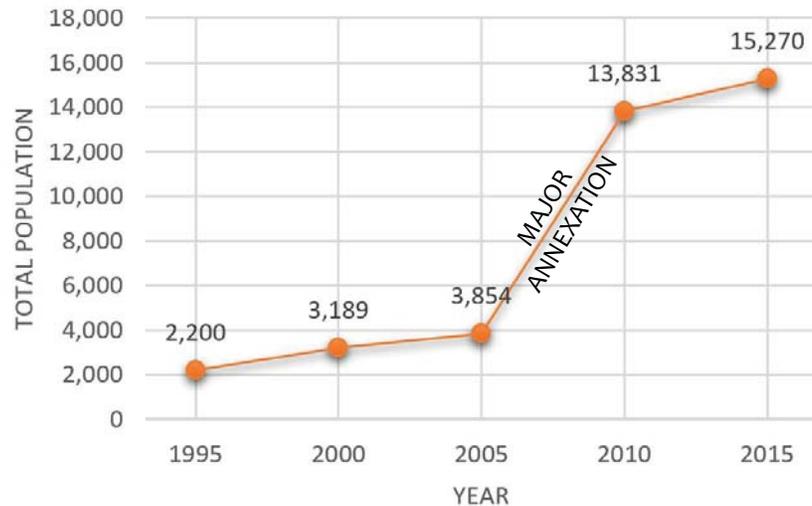
Town of Stallings Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Section 2: GROWTH & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Americans are living longer and staying active longer, but as they get older they may not be able to safely drive and could become dependent on other means of transportation to get around.



Stallings Historic Population Trend



Total Population Trend (US Census)

tion estimate for the Town of Stallings was 15,270. The median age for Stallings is 40 years of age and similar to national trends, Stallings' population is getting older. In 2010, those between the ages of 35 to 44 made up the largest portion. By 2015, the percentage of those between 45 and 54 had grown to

18.6%, making them the largest cohort. In terms of total numbers, the portion of the population between 45 and 54 years of age jumped from 378 residents to 2,700 within that 15-year timespan: a 614% increase. The percentage of all residents 45 and over has also been steadily rising.

While the total number of retiring-age and elderly residents currently make up a relatively small portion of the Town's population (about 12% as of 2015), the rate of growth for this age group has also been on the rise. While Stallings gained nearly 300 individuals between the ages of 75 and 84 during the 2000 - 2010 decade, another 200 arrived in half that time by 2015, making this age group the second fastest growing in percentage since 2010.

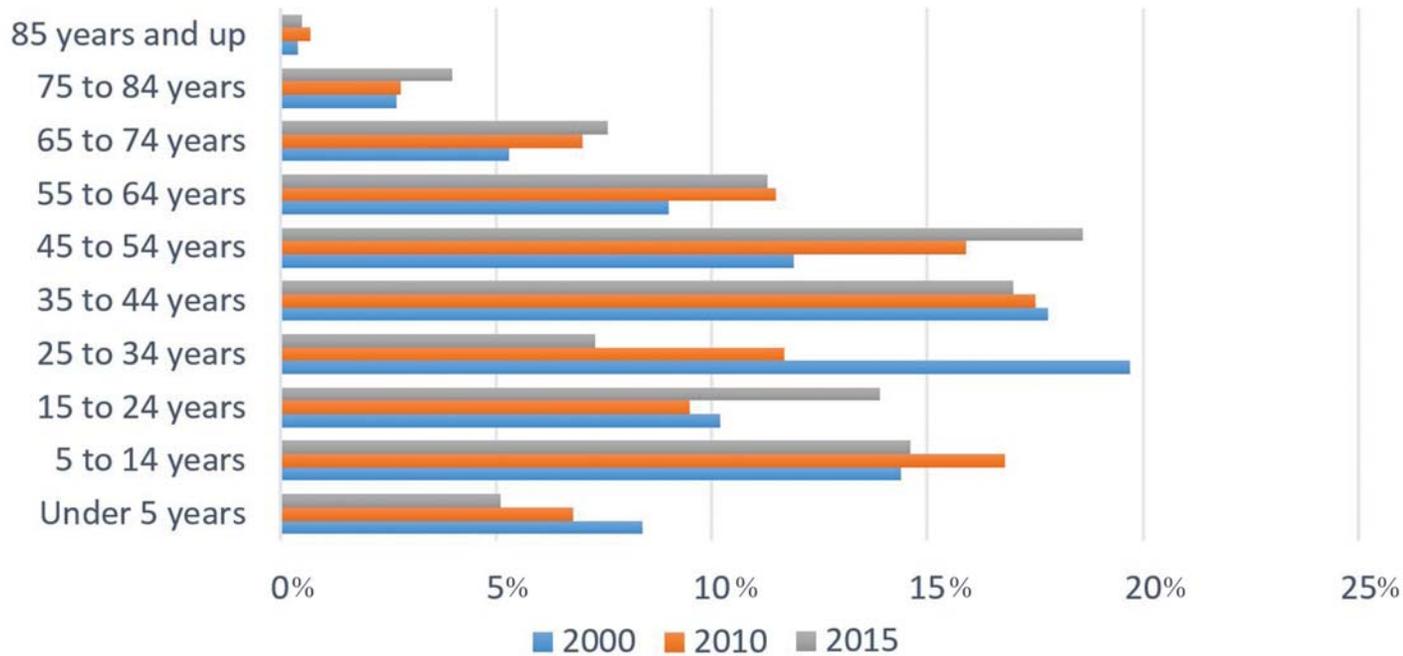
This is important because unlike the previous generation, this growing population of retirees does not necessarily want to live in a traditional retirement community. Some seniors seek to down-size from their large suburban homes to more convenient, easy to care for townhouses, apartments, or condos, while others need quality, affordable housing that will not break their fixed budget. Many retirees would like to move close to, but not live with, their children and grandchildren, creating a demand for mixed-income, mixed-housing type neighborhoods.

| 2016 Estimates (ESRI) | Stallings, NC | Union County, NC | Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC Metropolitan Statistical Area | North Carolina* | United States* |
|-------------------------------|---------------|------------------|---|-----------------|----------------|
| 2016 Total Population | 15,213 | 224,868 | 2,443,403 | 10,042,802 | 321,418,820 |
| 2010-2016 Population Growth | 8% | 12% | 10% | 5.05% | 3.94% |
| 2016 Median Household Income | \$77,032 | \$67,264 | \$53,665 | \$46,868 | \$53,889 |
| 2016 Average Household Income | \$94,096 | \$90,480 | \$76,302 | \$77,040 | \$75,558 |
| 2016 Median Age | 40 | 36.8 | 37.1 | 38.0 | 37.6 |
| 2016 Average Household Size | 2.73 | 2.97 | 2.6 | 2.66 | 2.75 |

*2015 US Census data

Town of Stallings Comprehensive Land Use Plan
Section 2: GROWTH & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Comparison of Age Brackets by Percentage of Total Population 2000, 2010 & 2015



Stallings Residents Total Population Age Bracket Comparison for 2000, 2010, 2015

Americans are living longer and staying active longer, but as they get older they may not be able to safely drive and could become dependent on other means of transportation to get around. Having multiple transportation options and opportunities within convenient distances of senior housing will be key to their independence, health, and well-being.

In conjunction with the trend of an aging population, Stallings families are also maturing. While the overall number of children under the age of 5 increased over 250% from 2000 to 2010, that growth slowed considerably by 2015 to 176%, and their relative proportion of the population decreased. Within that same period, the number

of teens and young adults, 15 to 24 years old, grew by a staggering 522%, increasing their share of the population in Town from about 1 in 10 to almost 1 in 7. This increase could indicate that many who relocated to Stallings, during its period of dramatic growth between 2000 and 2010, were young families who came to Stallings and then stayed

In Stallings, the population of residents age

65

and over increased by

433%

between 2000 and 2010, according to the U.S. Census.

Rising from 8.5% to 10.4% of the Town's total population.



Town of Stallings Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Section 2: GROWTH & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS



More and more, consumers are choosing smaller homes within walking distance of entertainment, services and work.

A growing demand for a walkable lifestyle has the potential to transform sprawling suburbs into walkable communities.

Source: National Association of Realtors, National Community Preference Survey, October 2013



to raise their children. Now these families are becoming empty nesters as their children leave to pursue higher education or their own careers.

One of the most striking trends is the loss of population between the ages of 25 and 45, the cohorts representing younger professionals and younger families (Millennials and Generation X). These demographics are attracted to the greater Charlotte region, in search of jobs, education, entertainment, recreation, and culture; however, they are not choosing to reside in Stallings. The Town's desired identity and growth depend on these younger cohorts to provide a customer base for businesses, activity in park and recreation facilities, and vibrancy in Town activity centers. The Town will need an influx of younger generations for long-term commu-

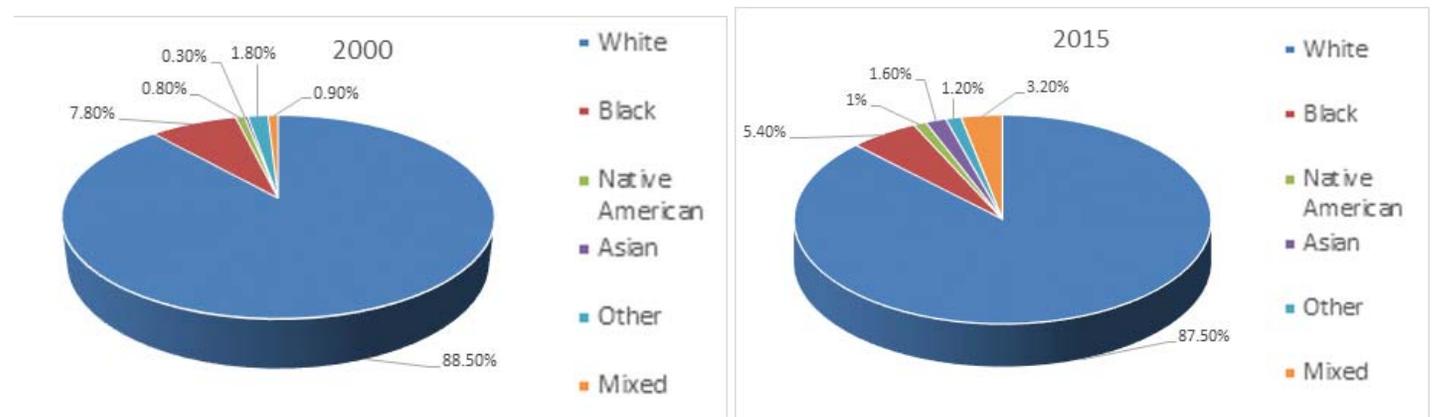
nity survival and could capture some in-migration of this younger adult cohort from Mecklenburg County. Expanding opportunities for this cohort will become crucial in the next 25 years.

Race and Ethnicity

The Town's population remains predominantly white with its minority population accounting for approximately 11.5% of the total population in 2000, and growing an additional 1% by 2015. However, in that time, the make-up of that minority population shifted with the percentage of African Americans decreasing from 7.8% to 5.4%, while the percentage of Asians rose from 0.3% in 2000 to 1.6% by 2015. The percentage of people of mixed race has also grown from 0.9% in 2000 to 3.2% in 2015.

To address the nation's growing diversity, the 2000 U.S. Census allowed respondents to identify themselves as belonging to more than one race and to indicate their ethnicity as: 1) Hispanic or Latino or 2) Not Hispanic or Latino. Since the year 2000, the Hispanic population in both Union County and Stallings has seen substantial growth. The 2000 U.S. Census reported the Hispanic percentage of the County's total population at 6.2%, and Stallings at 3.7%. That percentage grew to 10.4% by 2010 in the County overall, and to 5.8% in Stallings. The percentage grew by roughly 0.4% in both jurisdictions by 2015.

This trend is very important in determining resources that will be required to meet the needs and issues facing the growing Hispanic population within Stallings, Union County, and the Char-



Population Percentages by Race for 2000 & 2015 (US Census)

Town of Stallings Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Section 2: GROWTH & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

lotte region, including housing and housing related services, bilingual services, school curriculum and programs, and cultural, social, and employment services.

Educational Attainment

A population's level of educational attainment can be used as an indicator of employment readiness, likely income ranges, values, and requested amenities (quality schools, libraries, cultural events). Stallings has a highly-educated population with over 93% of the population having a high school diploma/equivalency or higher and 42% having a bachelor's degree or higher. Median annual earnings for those with a bachelor's degree is significantly higher than those with less than a high school diploma (\$56,250 compared to \$23,472). The imbalance of educational attainment and employment opportunities within Stallings is explored further in Section 5: Economy, Business, and Workforce.

Income

The median household income for Stallings in 2015 inflation-adjusted dollars is \$78,891 and the per capita income is \$33,431. There are 4,115 families in the Town and their median family income is \$89,890 compared to the nonfamily household (1,126 households) which has a median income of \$41,429. The

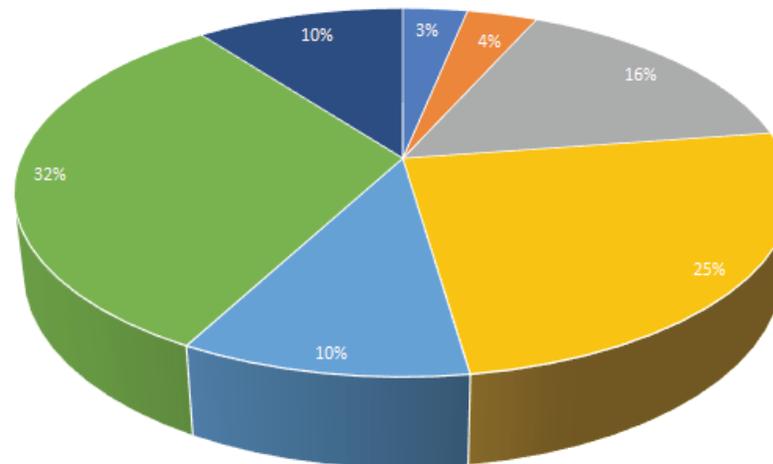
majority of families have both parents in the workforce with 62% of families with young children (under 6 years old) and 75% of families with older children (ages 6 to 17) having all parents in the labor force. There are 7,942 individuals within the labor force and 95% of them are currently employed. The mean social security income is \$20,441 with 1,332 recipients and the mean retirement income is \$22,335 with 985 recipients.

The distribution of income among all nonfamily and family households is shown in the **Distribution of Household Income** chart.

Household

According to 2015 American Community Survey housing estimates, there are 5,461 housing units in Stallings. In 2010, the average household size was 2.71 and

Educational Attainment for Populations 25 Years and Over



- Less than 9th grade
- 9th to 12th grade, no diploma
- High school graduate (includes equivalency)
- Some college, no degree
- Associate's degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate or professional degree

Educational Attainment, Town of Stallings



Stallings has a highly-educated population.

Over **93%** have a high school diploma/equivalency or higher while **42%** have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Median annual earnings for those with a bachelor's degree is significantly higher than those with less than a high school diploma,
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 compared to **\$23,472.**



Town of Stallings Comprehensive Land Use Plan Section 2: GROWTH & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

One striking demographic trend in Stallings is the **loss of population between the ages of**

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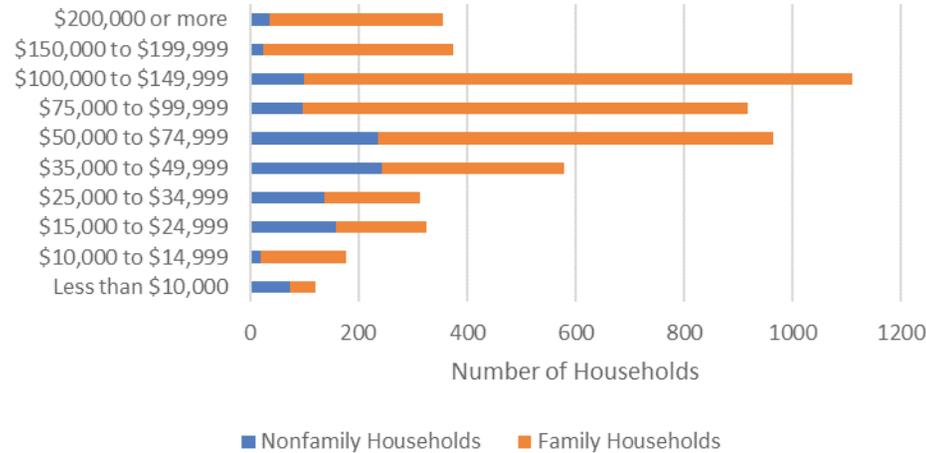
not choosing to reside in

Stallings.



Stallings
for the next **25** years

Distribution of Household Income



Distribution of Household Income, Town of Stallings

the average family size was 3.09. Of family households, 52% have children with 10% of these families only having children under the age of 6, 9% having children under 6 and between the ages of 6 and 17, and 30% having only children over the age of 6. The distribution of household size is shown in the chart below.

Population Projections

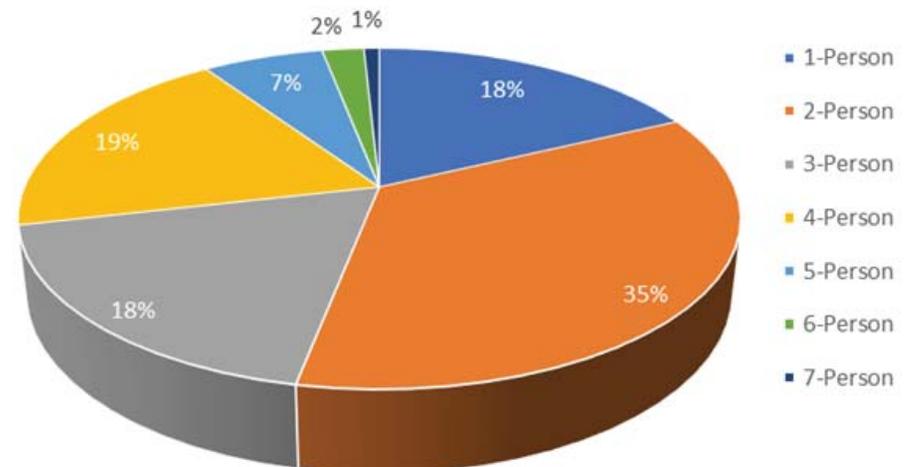
How Are They Created?

Population projections for Stallings and the 2040 planning area were obtained using a “step-down/step up” method. This process uses population projec-

tions available for the larger region and allocates that population to smaller geographic areas within it. These results are then used to take known population data at the smallest geographic levels and work upward to derive more refined projections.

The population projections used in this plan were created as a first step in developing the Regional Travel Demand Model (RTDM), created as a tool to help confront regional air quality issues. These projections are based on the geography known as traffic analysis zones (TAZ). TAZs are primarily used to project future traffic levels and

2010 Household Size for Stallings, NC



Household Size, Town of Stallings

Town of Stallings Comprehensive Land Use Plan Section 2: GROWTH & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

flows (vehicle miles traveled) to determine both future transportation needs (roads, transit, etc.) and future air pollution from motor vehicles. Because these projections will be subject to scrutiny by governmental agencies, environmental groups, the development community, and the public, considerable effort went into making sure the projections are as accurate as possible.

What Determines Population Projections?

Any population projection is a prediction of the future based upon what we know now. Projections are subject to a number of variables.

Population growth can be enhanced through concentrated effort and investment, such as through the extension of water and sewer lines, road improvements, the location of major employers, and community marketing. Conversely, a major downturn in the economy or local decisions that create missed opportunities, can depress the rate of growth. The key to population projections is to make an educated prediction, based on trends in the municipality, county, region, and nation, while taking into account the possibility of a departure from those trends.

For example, in 2013, the Union Coun-

ty Growth Factors Technical Report was undertaken by the North Carolina Turnpike Authority (NCTA) to evaluate growth conditions around the Monroe Connector/Bypass. The study drew from a detailed analysis and regional forecasting process completed by Dr. Thomas Hammer for the Charlotte Department of Transportation in 2003. According to Dr. Hammer's findings, factors that caused Union County to experience higher growth than any other county in the Greater Charlotte Region since 1990 are still in place and are likely to continue to result in higher than average growth. These factors include land availability, income, housing affordability, school quality, and commute time.

Two key questions arose during the Monroe Expressway study:

1. Why has Union County grown so quickly in the past even without major transportation improvements like the Monroe Expressway?
2. Why, if the socioeconomic forecasts are to be accepted, is Union County likely to continue to grow at an above average rate for the next 30 years with or without major transportation improvements like the Monroe Expressway?

According to the NCTA report, Union County witnessed a 46.9% population increase (39,466) from 1990 to 2000 and a 62.8% increase (77,615) from 2000 to 2010. This high rate of growth does not mean, however, that Union County captured most of the growth in the Greater Charlotte Region covered in the Report. From 1990 to 2010, Mecklenburg County captured 45.3% of the regional population growth. However, its growth rate was lower because it was growing from a much larger population base. Union County captured the second largest share of regional population growth, with 13% while York captured 10.5% and Cabarrus 7.4%. According to the NCTA Report, this historic trend suggests that Mecklenburg, Union, York, Cabarrus and Iredell Counties would capture most of the regional growth over the succeeding 20 to 30 years.

While the particular dynamics that encouraged this high growth rate in Union County, may or may not continue to exist, the Hammer Report indicates that the major factor driving higher than trend line growth is land availability. Other significant factors include: income, housing affordability, school quality, and commute time.

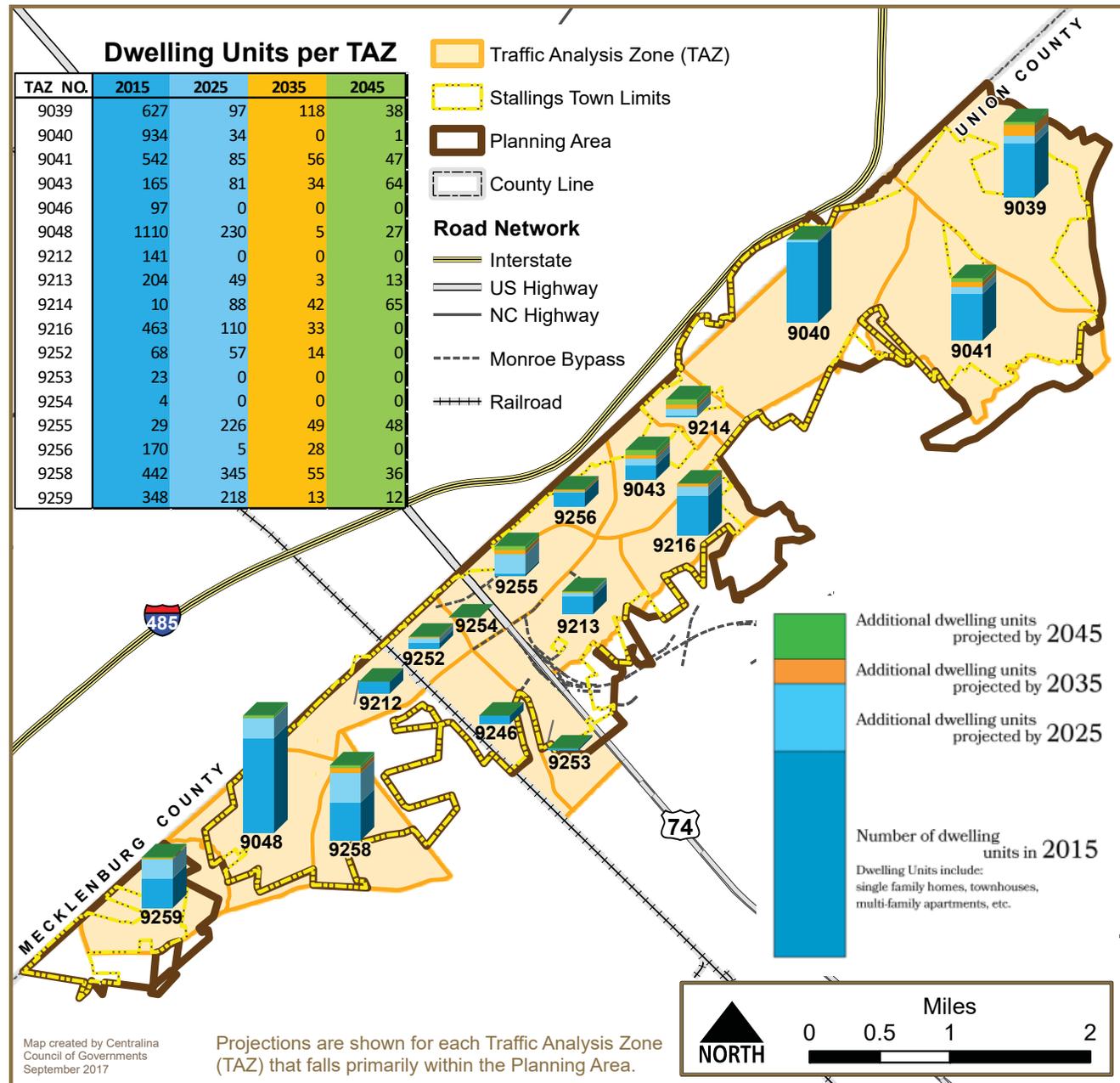
Population Projections



Town of Stallings Comprehensive Land Use Plan

Section 2: GROWTH & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

In Stallings, additional residential growth is expected to occur, not surprisingly, where vacant land exists.



Town of Stallings Comprehensive Land Use Plan
Section 2: GROWTH & DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

