

# Comprehensive Regional Growth Plan for the Fort Bragg Region Assessment and Recommendations



## Chapter 13 Hoke County

September 2008

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*Submitted to the:*

# **FORT BRAGG AND POPE AFB BRAC REGIONAL TASK FORCE**

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Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates (Water and Wastewater)  
Kathi Beratan, PhD & James Helgeson, PhD (Editors)  
Kenan Institute for Private Enterprise, UNC-Chapel Hill (Air Travel)  
ICF International (Economic Modeling & Transportation)  
Martin/Alexiou/Bryson, PLLC (Transportation)  
Operations Research/Education Lab, N.C. State University (Education k-12)  
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## **DISCLAIMER**

This report is intended as an aid to planners, managers, elected officials, and other decision makers in the Fort Bragg region. Our aim is not to dictate what should be done, but to assist in ongoing efforts to achieve goals and objectives identified and valued by the residents of the region. The recommendations presented in this report are suggestions for how the region could work towards those goals and objectives, based on best available information and current understandings.

The information, projections and estimates in this report are based upon publicly available data and have been prepared using generally accepted methodologies and formulas. The projections and needs presented in this report are based upon best estimates using the available data. It is important to note that currently available information and understandings are incomplete and cannot account for the inevitable, but unpredictable, impacts of unexpected global, national, state, and/or local events. Actual results and needs may differ significantly from the projections of this report due to such unforeseen factors and conditions, as well as inaccuracy of available data, and/or factors and conditions not within the scope of this project. Persons using this information to make business and financial decisions are cautioned to examine the available data for themselves and not to rely solely on this report.

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# Chapter 13: Hoke County

## A. Introduction

This report presents the results of a thorough assessment of the impact of the expansion at Fort Bragg and identifies action items that need to be taken to prepare for this growth. The assessment process included dozens of individual interviews and working group meetings attended by a diverse group of planners and engineers, elected officials, city and county employees, representatives of chambers of commerce, and other stakeholders. Their insights guided teams of experts in their information gathering and analysis. Following the sustainability guidelines described in the introduction to the full report, the information presented here is intended to support proactive, integrated, regional planning through which the region's communities can develop innovative and effective responses to potential as well as already existing problems.

This section, which identifies issues facing Hoke County and presents strategies for accommodating the impact of military-related growth, can be read

either independently or as part of the larger Growth Management Plan. It includes an assessment of the following topics:

- Economic Impact
- Education (K-12)
- Housing
- Information and Communication Technologies
- Water, Sewer, & Solid Waste
- Health Care
- Hospitality and Cultural Resources

Hoke County encompasses approximately 392 square miles. It includes the incorporated municipality of Raeford and several small, unincorporated communities and villages (Figure 1).

### 1. Growth Scenarios Used in This Report

The terms “normal growth” and “expected growth” figure prominently in the following discussion.

Figure 1. Map of Hoke County

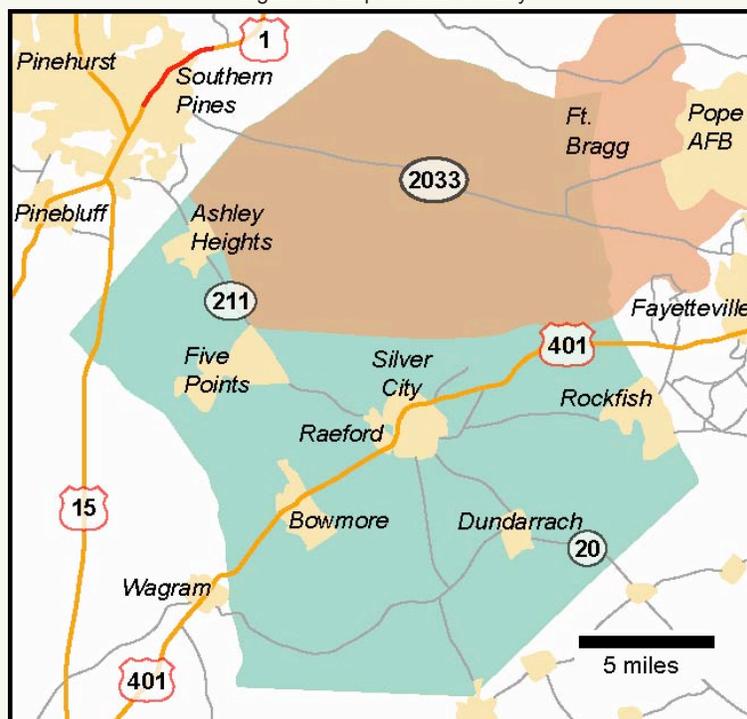


Table 1: Expected Number of Additional Military-Related Personnel

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Totals
Active-Duty Army	2,242	129	1854	1,310	477	-700	153	143	5,608
Active-Duty Air Force	-309	-1088	-786	-579	-460	70	155	50	-3,247
Army Civilians	393	102	149	216	17	1,072	0	0	1,949
Air Force Civilians	23	257	-19	-85	-31	-3	0	0	142
Defense Contractors	1274	632	253	120	120	1,226	504	-27	4,102
Totals	3,623	32	1,451	982	123	1,615	762	116	8,704

“Normal”—that is, natural—growth refers to the changes in local population and other economic factors that would be affecting housing markets and school systems even if there were no military expansion at Fort Bragg. “Expected growth” refers to the additional growth that will occur as a result of the planned expansion at Fort Bragg.

The number of additional military-related personnel expected to relocate to the region from 2006 through 2013 is shown in **Table 1**.

In addition, the expected growth scenario includes expected construction expenditures for military projects managed by the Army Corps of Engineers, as well as privatized military housing projects managed by Picerne Housing. Military construction expenditures total \$1.3 billion<sup>1</sup> between 2006 and 2013, and privatized military housing construction totals \$336 million<sup>2</sup> between 2006 and 2013. For a complete discussion of the economic modeling and associated assumptions developed for this project, refer to the regional economic impact chapter.

## 2. Recommended Actions

The “Recommended Actions” section located at the end of each section lists specific actions suggested as responses to the challenges identified in the chapter. All of the recommended actions are important for the region as a whole; each recommended action is classified as being either “critical” or “important” based on the relevance of the action to the mission of Fort Bragg. Critical actions are urgent actions; failure to implement them could jeopardize the base’s

mission. Important actions represent a less urgent “best practice” of more general value to the region, in that failure to implement an important action could adversely affect community planning but would not jeopardize Fort Bragg’s mission.

## B. Economic Impact of Military Growth

*The infusion of military, civilian, and supporting contractors, together with the concomitant investments needed for construction and related activities, is expected to provide a boost to the Hoke County economy and lead to a more than \$41 million increase in Gross Regional Product in 2013. The Fort Bragg expansion will also account for an additional \$53 million in personal income, \$46 million in disposable income, \$31 million in output (sales), and \$61 million in demand in 2013. The total population for Hoke County in 2013 is expected to be 56,704, including 3,836 that are a result of military expansion.*

In order to understand how a community is going to change, it is necessary to identify where that community currently stands. When considering the growth of an entire county, broad demographics that show population, income, employment, and commuting trends can provide a reliable snapshot of where the county is now and where it is headed.

### 1. Population

The population of Hoke County increased over 25% between 2000 and 2006. According to the North Carolina State Data Center (SDC) estimates, county population increased from 33,646 in April 2000 to 42,202 in July 2006, the most recent date for which

1. Estimates provided by Glenn Prillaman, Fort Bragg Directorate of Public Works

2. Estimates provided by Gary Knight, Picerne Housing

Table 2. Population Growth in Hoke County, 2000-2006

Municipality	April 2000 Population	July 2006 Population	Change (number)	Change (%)
Raeford	3,386	3,823	437	12.91
Unincorporated Area	30,260	38,379	8,119	26.83
Hoke County Total	33,646	42,202	8,556	25.43

data are available. That 25.4% population increase was significantly greater than the 10.1% average statewide increase for the period. As shown in , the City of Raeford also grew in population between April 2000 and July 2006. As of July 2006, Raeford had the 159th largest population of the 541 North Carolina municipalities. The majority of the population growth has occurred in the unincorporated portion of Hoke County (**Table 2**).

At the completion of the expansion at Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base in 2013, the total population in Hoke County is expected to increase to approximately 56,704, corresponding to an increase of 3,742 attributable to military growth. Over 80% of the population growth is expected to consist of civilian households.

**2. Income, Gross Regional Product (GRP), Output, and Demand**

As a result of military growth, personal income<sup>3</sup> in Hoke County will increase in 2013 from roughly \$1.37 billion to \$1.42 billion - or by \$53 million (**Table 3**). At the completion of the Fort Bragg

expansion in 2013, disposable income<sup>4</sup> in Hoke County will have grown by \$46 million to \$1.246 billion. Similar to the trends seen in other variables, income changes in the regional economy spike at the peak of the military expansion in 2011, then settle to a more gradual increase over the long run as the regional economy absorbs the expansion. Gross regional product (GRP), the most commonly used metric for measuring value added to the regional economy, is analogous to the gross domestic product used for benchmarking activities in the national economy. While it was thought that the local economy would grow at a fair pace without the military expansion (that is, normal growth), the infusion of military, civilian, and supporting contractors, together with the investments needed for construction and related activities, is expected to provide a further boost to the Hoke County economy and lead to a GRP increase of \$41 million in 2013. Total sales to local businesses (output) is affected by changes in industry demand, the local region’s share of each market, and international exports from the local region. The increase in 2013 is estimated to be \$31 million. Total demand is defined as the amount of goods and services demanded by the local region;

3. Personal income, defined as the aggregate income received by all persons from all sources, is calculated as the sum of wage and salary disbursements, supplements to wages and salaries, proprietors’ income, rental income, personal dividend income, personal interest income, and personal current transfer receipts, less contributions to government social insurance.. (REMI Model Documentation Version 9.5).

4. Disposable income is defined as the portion of personal income that is available for consumers to spend. Disposable income equals personal income, less taxes and social security contributions, plus dividends, rents, and transfer payments (REMI Model Documentation Version 9.5).

Table 3. Economic Impact of Military Growth (excludes normal growth)

	2013 (millions)
Personal Income	+ \$53
Disposable Income	+ \$46
Gross Regional Product	+ \$41
Total Sales (output)	+ \$31

it includes both imports and local supply. Under the Fort Bragg expansion, total demand for Hoke County is expected to grow by about \$61 million in 2013 (from about \$1.87 billion to \$1.93 billion).

## C. K-12 Education

*Hoke County Schools, which have a 2007-2008 K-12 enrollment of 7,459 students, will experience military-related growth estimated at nearly 500 students between the 2006-2007 and the 2013-2014 school years. The expected impact will be heaviest in the northeastern and eastern parts of the county, primarily south of US 401. Because the staffing of new classrooms in order to maintain current levels of education services will cost \$27.9 million over six years and because \$18.9 million will be needed for new school construction, the securing of funding for capital improvements has become a major priority.*

School systems nationwide are facing difficult planning challenges arising from increasing student populations, aging school infrastructures, and increasing complexity in pupil assignments. These challenges are shared by the county, which must fund building and renovation projects based not only on normal population growth but also on the expected growth that will occur as a result of the military expansion at Fort Bragg.

### 1. Current Conditions

#### a. Background

Hoke County Schools, with an enrollment of 7,459,<sup>5</sup> in 2007-08, is the fifty-third largest school district in North Carolina. Other characteristics of the district include:

- Eight elementary schools, two middle schools, one high school, and two alternative schools
- Nine hundred and twenty two employees, including 50 administrators, 461 teachers, 170 teacher assistants, and 241 support staff<sup>6</sup>

5. North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2007-2008 Average Daily Membership (ADM), Month-Two Report.

6. "EAC Education Site Visit, September 9, 2008, Fort Bragg, North Carolina" presented by Dr. Dan Honeycutt, Superintendent, Harnett County Schools.

- Elementary school students account for 53.5% of the student population, with middle school and high school students making up 22.3% and 24.1%, respectively.
- Approximately 18% of students in 2007 were connected to the military which resulted in an average Federal Impact Aid per student of \$317.21<sup>7</sup>

#### b. Facility Needs

As part of this assessment, a detailed out-of-capacity analysis of each school in the district was completed. Enrollment projections were developed based on historical trends and the expected impact of military expansion. These projections were compared to the existing permanent capacity of each school and capacity gaps or surpluses were determined. Estimates for the 2008-2009 school year suggest that, system-wide, the existing permanent building capacity is approximately 8,916 students, which means there is a current system-wide capacity surplus of about 1,044 students. At the individual school level, there are several schools in the Rockfish, Hoke, Upchurch and Sandy Grove elementary school areas that are expected to experience significant military-related impact. The new 850-student Don D. Steed Elementary, which opens in 2008, will provide temporary relief in the military-impacted areas until 2012. Middle schools in the county have a current capacity surplus of 261 students, while the high school has a current capacity surplus of 35 students.

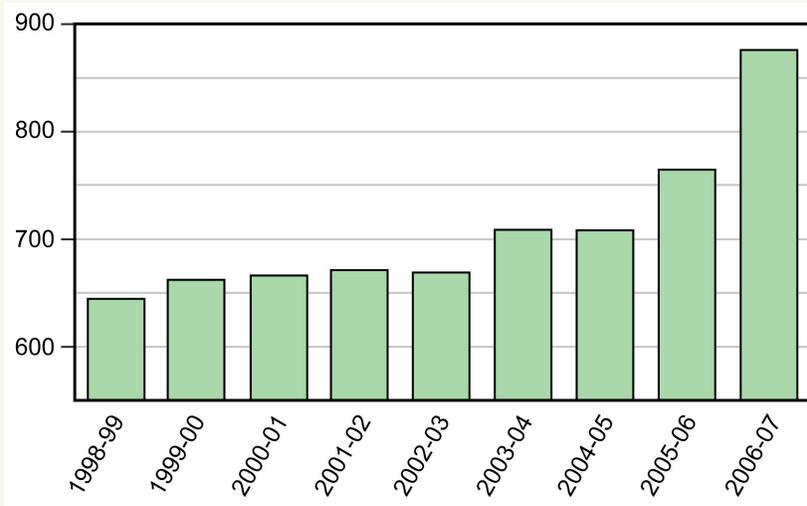
#### c. Historical Growth

Resident Hoke County live births have been increasing since 1998, and recent years have seen an especially significant rise in new births (**Figure 2**).<sup>8</sup> It is not surprising, then, that the six-year trend in Average Daily Membership for Month 2 is increasing by a little more than 110 students per year (**Figure 3**), bringing the average yearly growth rate during this period to 3.3%.

7. "EAC Education Site Visit, September 9, 2008, Fort Bragg, North Carolina" presented by Dr. Dan Honeycutt, Superintendent, Harnett County Schools.

8. North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Figure 2. The number of live births to residents of Hoke County per school year.



## 2. Future Conditions

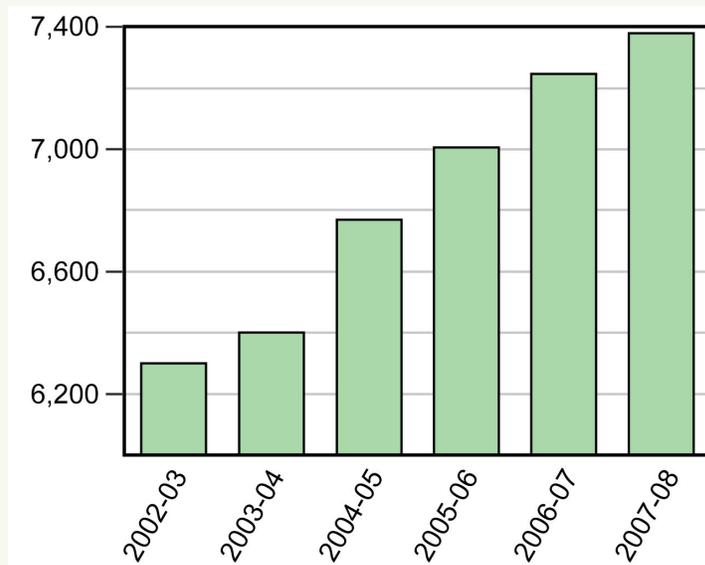
### a. Geographic Distribution of Growth

Hoke County schools experienced a five-year (2002-03 to 2007-08) average annual growth rate of 3.26%, with yearly student population growth rates ranging from 1.62 to 5.80%. The projected normal growth rate for Hoke County schools is expected to average 4.27% per year over this period. Military-related growth is expected to add 500 school-aged children to

Hoke County schools between the 2008-09 and 2013-14 school years, resulting in a system-wide increase of 2,400. In 2011, the current system-wide capacity surplus will yield to a capacity gap of 900 by 2013.

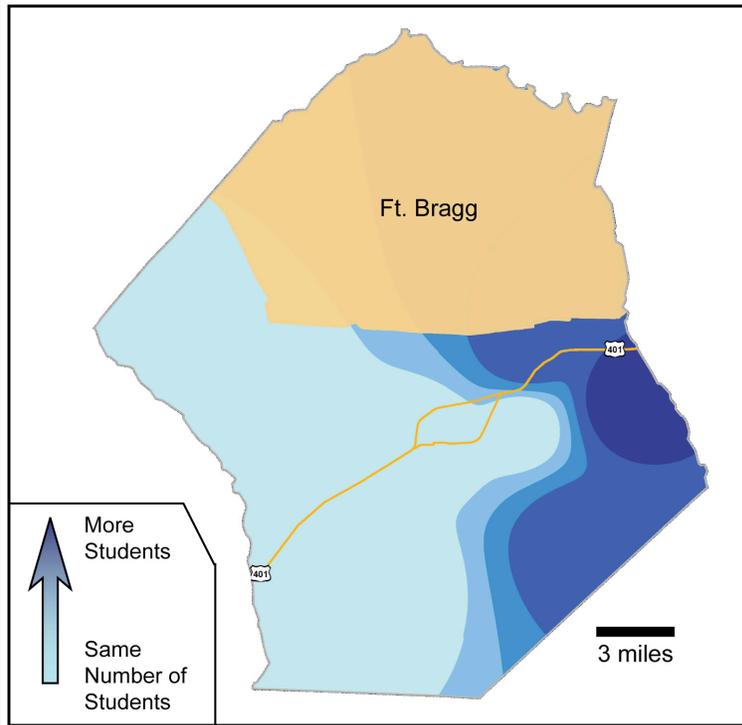
**Figure 4** shows how this expected growth in the K-12 student population will be distributed throughout the county. This map is derived from GIS analyses—of where current students live, where military personnel live, and where land parcels available for

Figure 3. Average Daily Membership (ADM) for Month 2 in Hoke County schools.<sup>1</sup>



1. ADM is the sum for all students of the total number of school days during the second month of the school year that the student's name is on the class roll divided by the number of school days in that month. ADC provides a more accurate count of the number of students in school than does enrollment.

Figure 4. Growth potential for K-12 student population in Hoke County. Darker blue indicates areas where the number of school-aged children is expected to grow the most



development are located—as well as from interviews with a wide range of knowledgeable stakeholders. Both information sources are important; strong residential growth does not necessarily correlate with increasing student populations, and expert local knowledge is required to identify likely patterns. As the map indicates, the strongest potential for military-related student growth seems to be in the northeastern and eastern areas of the county. These areas roughly correspond to the Rockfish Hoke, Upchurch, and Sandy Grove elementary school districts.

**b. Projected Growth and Facilities Capacity**

*System-Wide.* Ten year enrollment projections were developed for all schools in the district<sup>9</sup>. Projections were based on historical school enrollment records as well as available data about the number of newborn babies in each school district. The analysis determined cohort survival ratios, defined as the proportion of students enrolled in one grade in a specific school year relative to the number of students enrolled in the next grade level and school year.

9. At the time of this analysis, actual 20 day ADM numbers were not available for the 2008-09 school year. Estimates were used based on available data.

These ratios, in turn, were used to develop a system-wide, enrollment forecast, which was then compared with estimates of school capacity in order to project capacity shortfalls in 2013. The total anticipated growth<sup>10</sup> in school enrollments between the 2008-09 and 2013-14 school years is approximately 1,946 students (includes 478 students resulting from military-related growth). **Figure 5** details the projected school enrollments.

Projections for the 2013-2014 school year suggest that, system-wide, the permanent facilities capacity gap will be 902 students (**Figure 6**).

It should be noted that 2007-08 Month Two Average Daily Membership data indicate that Rockfish Hoke and Upchurch schools are already over capacity by more than 350 students (combined). These areas will experience the greatest capacity challenges, and thus will have the greatest need for new classroom space and staff. Expected growth suggests that

10. Includes normal growth plus the expected military-related growth.

Figure 5. Projected Growth in Student Enrollment by School Level (2008-09 to 2013-14)

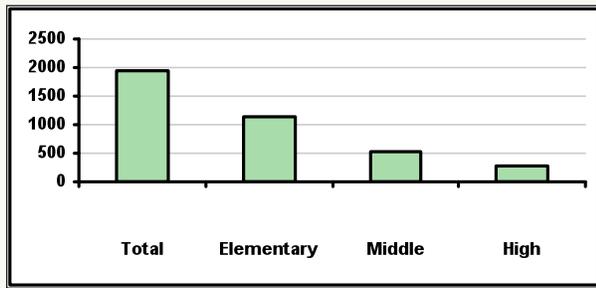
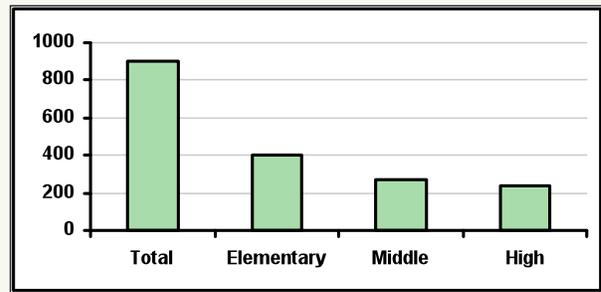


Figure 6. Projected Capacity Gap in Permanent Facilities by School Level (# of students)



almost eighty military-related K-5 students will be added, per year, to Rockfish Hoke Elementary School, contributing to a total increase of nearly 500 such students by 2013-14. This projected increase would push the school over its capacity by almost 600 students. Sandy Grove and Upchurch elementary schools are expected to experience similar growth, although Sandy Grove currently has a larger capacity and can absorb more student growth.

*Military-Impacted School Clusters.* In order to assess the impact of pending school construction projects on capacity gaps and to provide guidance on the siting of future schools, military-impacted school clusters were identified. Clusters include the individual school attendance areas - at the elementary, middle and high school levels - expected to receive the largest military impact. Once specific clusters were identified, the out-of-capacity analysis was redone at the cluster levels to illustrate year-by-year capacity gaps (**Table 4**).

The schools included in the elementary cluster are Rockfish Hoke Elementary, Sandy Grove Elementary, Upchurch Elementary, and Don Steed Elementary (to be completed in 2008). The updated out-of-capacity analysis suggests that all schools are either at or below capacity for the 2008-09 school year. The 2013-14 school year projections however reveal that several schools in the elementary cluster will be operating well above capacity. An additional elementary school will likely be needed as soon as 2012. The schools included in the middle school cluster are East Hoke Middle and West Hoke Middle. An updated out-of-capacity analysis suggests that both schools are below capacity for the 2008-09 school year. Projections for the 2011-12 school year reveal that an additional

middle school will be needed. Hoke County High School is the only high school in the county. The out-of-capacity analysis suggests that Hoke County High School is operating near capacity for the 2008-09 school year; projections reveal that capacity demands will increase and an additional high school will likely be needed in 2011.

### 3. Gaps

As mentioned, approximately 478 additional students will enroll in Hoke County schools as a result of military-related growth.<sup>11</sup> This additional influx of students translates into a need to spend an additional \$18.9 million to construct new schools<sup>12</sup> (**Figure 7**).

Hoke County passed a \$20 million bond in November 2006, with \$13 million allocated to the new Dan D. Steed Elementary school that will have a capacity of 850 and will open in 2008. The remaining \$7 million is targeted toward a new middle school opening in 2010 with a capacity of 650. Even with this funding for a new elementary school, the unfunded portion of new construction costs remains at approximately \$12 million.

11. Compares the 2008-09 enrollment to the projected 2013-14 enrollment.

12. Based on enrollment projections, the ratio of elementary school, middle school, and high school attendance in the county was determined for the 2008-09 school year. Based on this ratio, the total military-connected students moving into the district were allocated to elementary, middle and high school categories. The average cost per student to construct a school was obtained from Smith Sinnett Architects and assumes a 5-year construction inflation cost and a \$20K per acre land cost. The estimate is \$35,784 for an elementary school, \$40,388 for a middle school and \$48,429 for a high school. Thus, the cost of construction is determined by multiplying the number of students at each school level by the applicable cost per student to construct a school.

Table 4. Out-of-Capacity Projections for Military-Impacted Schools

	Capacities		Projected Month 2 ADM					
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
<b>Elementary</b>								
Rockfish Hoke Elem	639	640	680	707	762	814	877	937
Sandy Grove Elem	911	782	835	870	943	1011	1093	1172
Upchurch Elem	720	702	747	776	837	894	963	1029
Don Steed Elem (2008)	850	562	597	621	669	715	770	822
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3120</b>	<b>2685</b>	<b>2859</b>	<b>2974</b>	<b>3211</b>	<b>3435</b>	<b>3702</b>	<b>3959</b>
<b>Middle</b>								
East Hoke Mid	989	925	979	1096	1219	1332	1366	1405
West Hoke Mid	942	745	756	780	804	827	834	842
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1931</b>	<b>1670</b>	<b>1735</b>	<b>1876</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2160</b>	<b>2200</b>	<b>2247</b>
<b>High</b>								
Hoke County High	1775	1740	1790	1791	1826	1874	2009	2141
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1775</b>	<b>1740</b>	<b>1790</b>	<b>1791</b>	<b>1826</b>	<b>1874</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2141</b>

In addition to the cost of constructing new schools, there are additional administrative and operations costs, such as salaries, instructional supplies, utilities, maintenance, transportation, etc. The Hoke County school district operates with money from local, state, and federal sources. Public schools are funded largely through tax dollars. The State provides the overwhelming majority of school funding in Hoke County, with the federal government providing the least. Seventy-three percent of school funding comes from state sources, 14% from federal sources, and 13% from local sources.<sup>13</sup> The total per-pupil expenditure in Hoke County is \$8,247 annually compared to an average of \$7,800 for the Tier I counties. Based on these costs, in order to maintain the same level of educational services for six years<sup>14</sup>, approximately \$27.9 million will be necessary to educate the 478 additional military-related students. The local portion of this cost is about \$3.6 million (Figure 8).

13. North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2006-2007 School Statistical Profile

14. From the 2008-09 through 2013-14 school years

Figure 7. Additional School Construction Cost associated with Military-Related Growth (\$ in millions)

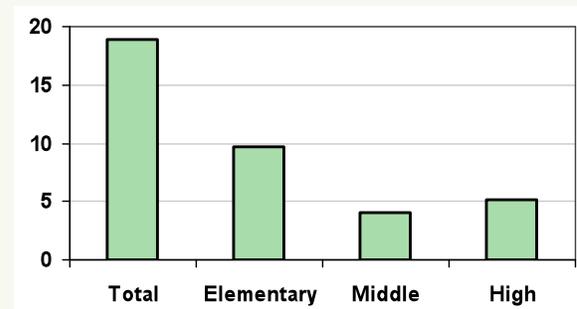
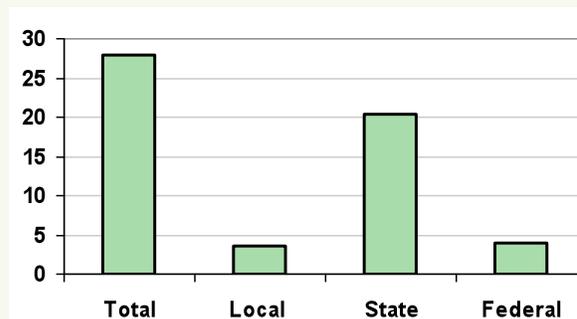


Figure 8. Additional Administrative and Operations Cost associated with Military-Related Growth (\$ in millions)



#### 4. Recommended Actions

##### **Critical Action 1: Identify potential funding sources for the construction and operation of the additional school capacity**

**Description:** Current funding sources will not provide sufficient funding to fill the capital and operating needs of the County. A committee should be formed to identify potential sources for additional funding. Potential funding sources include: (1) a higher level of Federal Impact Aid, which is supposed to compensate local educational agencies for “substantial and continuing financial burden” resulting from federal activities such as the enrollments of children of military parents who live or work on federal land; and (2) traditional funding sources, such as general obligation bonds and raising property or sales taxes, which would need a focused effort to build public support since they require voter approval. In addition, the committee should explore the possibilities for obtaining special funding from the Department of Defense to deal with the special burden imposed on local schools by the BRAC process. Legislation, such as the Military Children’s School Investment Act recently introduced in Congress by Congressman Robin Hayes, should be supported.

**Responsible Parties:** With the support of the BRAC Regional Task Force, Hoke County Schools and Hoke County Government should work collaboratively to pursue all available funding resources.

##### **Critical Action 2: Update out-of-capacity analysis using actual 2008-09 enrollment numbers**

**Description:** The military-impacted school cluster analysis in this assessment was based on estimated enrollments for the 2008-09 school year. The actual enrollment numbers – based on the 20-day ADM - are now available. This update will verify the need for the additional elementary, middle and high schools recommended in this assessment. An update may also impact the optimal location of each of the schools recommended.

**Responsible Parties:** The BRAC Regional Task Force will work with Hoke County Schools to ensure that the most up-to-date information is used in any future assessments.

**Critical Action 3: Collaboratively identify optimal sites for new schools**

**Description:** Because the projected school capacity gap in Hoke County is not evenly distributed across the county, efficient use of limited capital improvement funds will require strategic distribution of new facilities. Hoke County Schools and local governments should consider adopting Smart Growth principles whereby school facility planning and local government planning efforts are integrated so as to reach multiple community goals—educational, economic, social, and fiscal. Collaborative decisions regarding the location of schools, houses, and neighborhoods will promote policies that are consistent across governmental and functional boundaries. The availability and price of land is obviously an important factor in siting schools. GIS-driven technology – such as the technology recently used to determine optimal school sites in Harnett County - is available that will assist in correlating school decision-making with projected land use trends.

**Responsible Parties:** The integration of a collaborative model of decision making is recommended for all counties in the region. The BRAC Regional Task Force is well positioned to provide further assistance in using GIS technology to identify optimal site locations for new schools.

## D. Housing

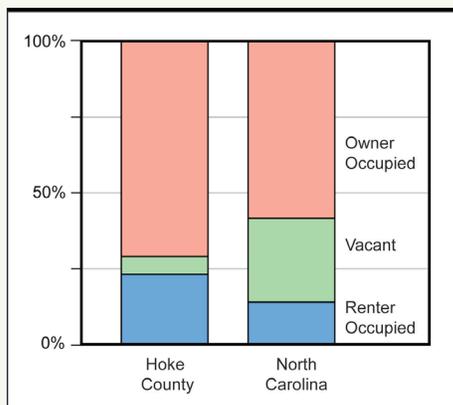
*The Hoke County for-sale housing market continues to outperform the national and regional housing markets. The area's housing, which is substantially more affordable than is the case in most areas of the United States, has a history of housing price appreciation. Although the local market has begun to slow in the last eighteen months, negative impacts to the local economy are being reduced substantially by military spending at Fort Bragg. Hoke County offers its present and future residents a wide variety of housing choices, ranging from smaller homes for less than \$100,000 to larger estate homes for \$275,000 plus.*

### 1. Current Conditions

#### a. Housing Characteristics

The number of housing units in Hoke County in 2007 is estimated to be 15,858,<sup>15</sup> which is up from 12,518 housing units in 2000. The average annual growth rate for this period would thus be an estimated 3.81%. Approximately 951 (6.0%) of these housing units are vacant, compared to a statewide vacancy rate of 14.2%. The remaining 14,907 units in Hoke County are owner-occupied (75.3%) and renter-occupied (24.7%),<sup>16</sup> while the statewide rates for owner-occupied units and renter-occupied units are 59.6% and 27.9% respectively (**Figure 9**).

Figure 9. Housing occupancy by type in Hoke County in 2007, compared with the statewide average



#### b. For-Sale Housing

Because complete information on all of Hoke County's "for-sale" housing is not available, the following analysis combines figures for existing and newly constructed single-family homes. The average sales price of a single-family home grew from \$96,769 in 2002 to \$141,281 in 2006, which indicates an average annual increase of 9.2%. Through October, 2007, the average sales price was \$148,928, an increase of 5.4% over 2006.<sup>17</sup>

Home sale prices have continued to appreciate despite the decline in prices nationally and in the South.

A total of 3,914 single-family units were sold in Hoke County between 2002 and 2006, an average of 783 units annually. A total of 655 units were sold through October of 2007. Three-bedroom units, which comprised 85.2% of all units sold, took an average of 167 days to sell. Overall there is an eleven-month inventory of homes on the market, compared to a national inventory of approximately nine months for existing homes and slightly less than ten months for new homes. As of October 2007, the locally available inventory of all homes (both existing and newly constructed) included 549 three-bedroom units having an average price of \$157,009.

Factors to consider when determining whether the typical homebuyer can qualify for a mortgage on a typical Hoke County home include:<sup>18</sup>

- The median price for a typical three-bedroom, two-bathroom new home that contains approximately 1,400 square feet is \$150,923
- A minimum down payment of 5% of the purchase price is required.
- Mortgage principal and interest cannot exceed 28% of the median monthly income.
- The prevailing mortgage interest rate is assumed to be 6.5%.

17. The Median sales price of a three bedroom unit, including both existing and new construction. Data provided by the Fayetteville Association of REALTORS, Inc., Debbie McFayden, e-Pro MLS Director 2412 Raeford Road Fayetteville, N.C. 28305 (910) 323-1421 dmcfaydn@fayettevillencmls.com

18. According to the Ft Bragg Community Impact Assessment (page 17), 71% of the military families coming into the area will be pay grades E3 through E5 and 10% will be pay grades O1 through O3

Affordability analyses are commonly based on index values. An index value of 100 means that a homebuyer has exactly enough income to qualify for a mortgage on a typical, median-priced new home. An index value above 100 signifies that a homebuyer earning the median income has more than enough income to qualify for a mortgage loan on a median-priced new home. For example, an affordability index of 120.0 means that a homebuyer has 120% of the income necessary to qualify for a loan covering 95% of a median-priced, new single-family home.

Single active-duty military personnel have affordability indices ranging from eighty-one for a junior enlisted (E2) to 271 for a company grade officer (O5). This suggests that the typical three-bedroom, two-bathroom new home would be affordable for junior enlisted personnel, except for E2s.

Issuance of single-family housing permits rose between 2003 and 2006, with 686 permits being issued in 2006. An additional 521 single-family permits were issued in 2007. Permitting activity will likely continue to decline as the existing inventory of new homes is reduced.

**c. Rental Housing**

The price of rental housing typically averages from \$510 a month for a one-bedroom, one-bath unit to \$773 a month for a three-bedroom, two-bath unit. Construction of multi-family properties has halted since 2003 as no multi-family housing permits have been secured since that time.

In general, incoming military families within the E2 pay grade and civilian families earning at or below 84% of the median income may have trouble finding affordable housing in Hoke County, and may have some difficulty obtaining sufficient cash to pay closing costs on a home. However, military families in all other pay grades and civilian families with higher incomes should be able to find homes and pay closing costs.

Rental affordability depends on both affordable monthly rent rates and the availability of units having such rates. Under U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) guidelines, a family should spend no more than 30% of its income on rent and utilities. To assess the affordability of housing for military personnel, military income is defined as base

Table 5. Rental Affordability for Military Families in Hoke County

Two Person Household						
Rank	E2	E6	W2	W4	O3	O5
Annual Income	\$31,377	\$51,322	\$68,454	\$91,588	\$71,553	\$105,225
Monthly Housing Expense @ 30% of Annual Income	\$784	\$1,283	\$1,711	\$2,290	\$1,789	\$2,631
Fair Market Rent (1-bedroom)	\$510	\$510	\$510	\$510	\$510	\$510
Affordability Gap	\$274	\$773	\$1,201	\$1,780	\$1,279	\$2,121
Fair Market Rent (2-bedroom)	\$565	\$565	\$565	\$565	\$565	\$565
Affordability Gap	\$219	\$718	\$1,146	\$1,725	\$1,224	\$2,066
Three- and Four-Person Household						
Rank	E2	E6	W2	W4	O3	O5
Annual Income	\$31,377	\$51,322	\$68,454	\$91,588	\$71,553	\$105,225
Monthly Housing Expense @ 30% of Annual Income	\$784	\$1,283	\$1,711	\$2,290	\$1,789	\$2,631
Fair Market Rent (2-bedroom)	\$565	\$565	\$565	\$565	\$565	\$565
Affordability Gap	\$219	\$718	\$1,146	\$1,725	\$1,224	\$2,066
Fair Market Rent (3-bedroom)	\$773	\$773	\$773	\$773	\$773	\$773
Affordability Gap	\$11	\$510	\$938	\$1,517	\$1,016	\$1,858

pay, subsistence allowance, and housing allowance. Representative pay grades at the lowest number of service years are used when determining the floor necessary to achieve affordability for military families.

HUD defines a Fair Market Rent as the average rent in the county, by unit size. **Table 5** provides an analysis of the ability of military families at various military income levels to pay the fair market rent.

The current Fair Market Rents in Hoke County are affordable to all pay grades.

## 2. Future Conditions

### a. Anticipated For-Sale Housing Need

The future need for for-sale homes to accommodate the normal growth and the expected military growth in the County can be estimated by using population projections and dividing the population growth by the average household size. The percentage of homeowner households is applied to the total households to determine the need for housing.

**Table 6** shows 3,091 for-sale units will be needed to house the total growth expected from 2007 through

2013. The majority of these units (2,395) will be needed for the population associated with normal growth, and thus would have been needed even without the base expansion; the remainder (695) is due to military-related growth. Given the existing inventory of for-sale homes in the County, it is expected that most of this need will be addressed through the sale of homes already on the market. It should be noted that this is an estimate of homebuyer requirements and should be relied upon only as a guideline.

Rapid growth has occurred in Hoke County in recent years. **Appendix A** highlights the development that is planned for the County.

### b. Anticipated Rental Housing Need

Similar to the for-sale homes, the future need for rental homes to accommodate the normal growth and the expected military growth in the County can be estimated by using population projections and dividing the population growth by the average household size. The percentage of renter households is applied to the total households to determine the need for housing.

**Table 7** shows 1,014 for-rent units will be needed to house the total growth expected from 2007 through

Table 6. Needs Analysis of For-Sale Housing Units in Hoke County

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Population								
Normal Growth	43,865	45,545	47,158	48,525	49,970	51,420	52,868	
Expected Growth	1,129	2,016	2,464	2,570	3,010	3,393	3,742	
Total	44,994	47,561	49,622	51,095	52,980	54,813	56,610	
Total Households								
Normal Growth	15,500	16,094	16,664	17,147	17,657	18,170	18,681	
Expected Growth	399	712	871	908	1,064	1,199	1,322	
Total	15,899	16,806	17,534	18,055	18,721	19,369	20,004	
Homeowner Households								
Normal Growth	11,672	12,119	12,548	12,911	13,296	13,682	14,067	
Expected Growth	300	536	656	684	801	903	996	
Total	11,972	12,655	13,203	13,595	14,097	14,585	15,063	
For-Sale Housing Units								
Normal Growth	--	447	429	364	384	386	385	2,395
Expected Growth	--	236	119	28	117	102	93	695
Total	--	683	548	392	502	488	478	3,091

2013. The majority of these units (786) will be needed for the population associated with normal growth, and thus would have been needed even without the base expansion; the remainder (228) is due to military-related growth. It should be noted that this is an estimate of renter requirements and should be relied upon only as a guideline.

### 3. Gaps

There are several housing-related challenges that continue to face the region and the county. The inventory of for-sale properties remains high, credit standards are tightening, availability of future affordable rental housing is unclear, and green building efforts require additional emphasis. These gaps are discussed in this section.

The number of homes listed for sale has recently declined in many markets throughout the country. One factor contributing to reduced inventories is that potential sellers are not listing their homes because they do not want to compete with builders and banks that have been cutting prices in order to reduce their inventories of new or foreclosed homes. Although the supply of for-sale housing is no longer rapidly increasing, the inventories remain abundant. Until the

for-sale inventories return to a six month supply, local marketing efforts should continue and those interested in constructing additional new for-sale housing should be cautious.

Credit standards have been getting tighter all year, reducing the number of people who qualify for loans. However, many potential homebuyers can still qualify for a loan. Qualified borrowers should have little difficulty finding conforming and FHA-insured mortgages. Given the present “buyer’s housing market”, it may be time to accelerate homebuyer financing and counseling efforts. Of course, the continued increase in foreclosures nationally should give caution to any agency considering such an initiative. Many families may not be ready to purchase a home. The number one barrier to buying a home is poor credit. In addition, some families simply cannot afford a down payment. Buyer investment in the home is important for the long-term sustainability of home ownership. For those families that are ready, homebuyer education and counseling that provides both pre-purchase and post-purchase counseling is essential. Such counseling and education will promote awareness of the home-buying process, educate homebuyers on financing alternatives, and provide information necessary to

Table 7. The Anticipated Need for Rental Housing Units in Hoke County

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Population								
Normal Growth	43,865	45,545	47,158	48,525	49,970	51,420	52,868	
Expected Growth	1,129	2,016	2,464	2,570	3,010	3,393	3,742	
Total	44,994	47,561	49,622	51,095	52,980	54,813	56,610	
Total Households								
Normal Growth	15,500	16,094	16,664	17,147	17,657	18,170	18,681	
Expected Growth	399	712	871	908	1,064	1,199	1,322	
Total	15,899	16,806	17,534	18,055	18,721	19,369	20,004	
Renter Households								
Normal Growth	3,829	3,975	4,116	4,235	4,361	4,488	4,614	
Expected Growth	99	176	215	224	263	296	327	
Total	3,927	4,151	4,331	4,460	4,624	4,784	4,941	
For-Rent Housing Units								
Normal Growth	--	147	141	119	126	127	126	786
Expected Growth	--	77	39	9	38	33	30	228
Total	--	224	180	129	165	160	157	1,014

sustain homeownership—information, for example, on home maintenance and budgeting.

Green building is another consideration. Green building is “the practice of creating structures and using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building’s life-cycle from siting to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation and deconstruction”<sup>19</sup>. Green buildings reduce the overall impact of the built environment on human health and the natural environment by more efficiently using energy and other natural resources and reducing waste, pollution, etc. As mentioned, caution should be exercised in the construction of new housing, particularly for-sale housing. However, when new construction or rehabilitation is needed the integration of green building standards is encouraged.

The availability of affordable rental housing for lower income households is essential to the success of local community and economic development efforts. To date, fair market rents have been affordable to the majority of households in the county. Recent trends suggest that the rental housing market is tightening. More families are opting to rent instead of buy a home and more lower-income households are moving to the area. The rental market should continue to be assessed to ensure that new rental developments not only provide market-rate housing, but also provide affordable opportunities for lower-income households.

## **E. Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste**

*The projected population increase to Hoke County as a result of the military-related growth is approximately 3,742 people. This could translate into an additional peak water and sewer demand of approximately 600,000 gallons per day. Likely able to meet the additional demand with respect to water supply, any additional sewer capacity will only aggravate the county’s sewer capacity struggles. Hoke County is largely without municipal sewer, a severely limiting factor in the growth of the county. The county has very recently commissioned a study to construct a sewer plant in the eastern portion*

*of the Hoke County. However, planning for this project has thus far not included new demands from growth at Fort Bragg. Meeting projected demand for normal growth through 2030 will cost the County approximately \$11.3 million for water and \$11.7 million for wastewater; the military-related growth will cost an additional \$2.8 million for water and \$5.6 million for wastewater.*

## **1. Current Conditions**

### **a. Water**

*Hoke County:* Hoke County runs its own public water system. Hoke County obtains its water from groundwater as well as purchases from Fayetteville PWC, N.C. Department of Corrections, and Robeson County. The County obtains its groundwater from deep wells; the system has fourteen wells with a total twelve-hour yield of 2.72 million gallons per day (MGD). Hoke County also has an emergency connection with Raeford. The system has a finished water storage capacity of 2.3 MG. The system has approximately 307 miles of water distribution lines. The County’s water system has a population of 13,680. The average daily demand is was 0.640 MGD. Additional demands on the water system would likely be met by construction of additional wells, although the effort is unfunded at this time.

*City of Raeford:* The City of Raeford, located in the center of Hoke County, runs its own public water system. Raeford is within the Lumber River Basin. Raeford obtains its water from groundwater deep wells; the system has seventeen wells with a total twelve-hour yield of 2.147 MGD and a central ground water treatment plant with a 3.00 MGD capacity. Raeford also has an emergency connection with Hoke County. The system has a finished water storage capacity of 1.8 MG, and approximately 40 miles of water distribution lines. The Raeford water system has a population of 2,300. The average daily demand is 1.57 MGD. Total water use was divided as follows: 85% residential, 14% commercial, 0.5% industrial and 0.5% institutional.

19. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (<http://www.epa.gov/greenbuilding/pubs/about.htm>)

**b. Wastewater**

*Hoke County:* Hoke County currently does not have a wastewater system and relies on limited capacities from the City of Raeford and PWC, a total of about 1.0 MGD. This limitation has severely limited the growth of the County. The County is currently pursuing plans for design and construction of a wastewater treatment plant to serve the existing populations in eastern Hoke County. To this end, the County has submitted a request for speculative effluent limits for a new regional wastewater treatment plant on Rockfish Creek at Puppy Creek at 9.2 MGD. If this request is approved, the first phase of the plant would be designed and constructed with a capacity in the range of 2.0 to 5.0 MGD. The specific capacity would be based on what, if any, amount of flow is sent from the City of Raeford to the new facility. The regional facility could accommodate flows from the City of Raeford during a later phase, but the County is hopeful that Raeford will be a part of the initial phase due to the economics of scale that could be realized. Hoke County is now engaged in a study of the proposed discharges to the creek in order to satisfy NCDENR such that discharge limits can be established. Depending on State approval, funding, and other issues, Hoke County hopes to fast-track this process, aiming for completion of the plant and first phase of outfalls within approximately four years.

*City of Raeford:* The City of Raeford has a wastewater treatment plant with a permitted capacity of 3.00 MGD, with current demands almost at capacity. The City supplies the County with 0.50MGD. The plant discharges into Rockfish Creek. The City is currently in discussion with Hoke County regarding the planning and design of a new County regional wastewater treatment plant, as described above.

**c. Solid Waste**

There are two governments with solid waste management programs in Hoke County including, the County and the Town of Raeford. Hoke County operates five staffed convenience centers for the collection of residential waste and recyclables. The County transfers waste collected at each convenience center to the Hoke County Transfer Station in Raeford. Each of the County convenience centers is

fenced for security and is equipped with a stationary compactor for residential waste to limit the number of trips for transfer vehicles. Raeford offers twice weekly residential rear-yard waste collection using Town staff. The town, which also provides commercial collection services, implemented a pay-as-you-throw (PAYT) program for commercial waste in early 2007. This program, which was partially enable by a grant from the North Carolina Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance (DPPEA) involves:

- Commercial dumpsters with locking lids to prevent abuse by non-commercial customers;
- An electronic scale system on hauling vehicles; and
- The installation of radio-frequency tags on dumpsters to facilitate automatic billing.

Waste collected in Hoke County is primarily taken to the Hoke County Transfer Station in Raeford, which is owned and operated by the County under State Permit No. 47-02T. In FY 2005-06, 28,896 tons of waste were handled at the transfer station.

*Recycling:* Recycling is provided by Hoke County at each of its convenience centers. Raeford also has one staffed convenience center for recyclables. Harnett County does allow residents of Raeford to use its convenience centers for the drop-off of recyclables.

Raeford also provides commercial collection of newsprint and cardboard. As part of the implementation of the Town's pay-as-you-throw program for commercial waste, ten new cardboard recycling bins were deployed, bringing the Town's total to forty-two.

*Special Waste Management:* Hoke County collects used oil, lead acid batteries, tires, and pesticide containers. Raeford does not currently provide collection of special wastes.

*Yard Waste Handling:* Yard wastes in Hoke County are collected and disposed of at the County's land clearing and inert debris (LCID) landfill in Raeford. Raeford provides curbside collection of yard waste. This waste is mulched/composted at the Town's site.

*Solid Waste Disposal:* Municipal solid waste collected at the Hoke County Transfer Station is hauled by contract with Republic Services to the Uwharrie Regional Landfill facility in Mt. Gilead (State Permit No. 62-04). The County's contracts for hauling and disposal will expire in April 2009. Hoke County currently charges a \$48/ton tipping fee at its transfer station.

## **2. Future Needs**

### **a. Water and Sewer**

The County is actively engaged in developing a plan to address current and future sewer needs, which it considers to be a priority. Hoke County already has commitments from various developers that will exceed its current sewer treatment capacity. The County's growth potential could justify a 5.0 MGD plant in the next few years. Should the efforts described above be thwarted by regulatory or other reasons, the County has four options with respect to sewer treatment:

- Re-open negotiations for capacity from PWC. Those negotiations are stalled at this point.
- Negotiate for capacity from Raeford. However, the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources has said that it will place a 5.0 MGD total limit on the discharge; this is not satisfactory to Hoke County because the 2.0 MGD that the County would net from this limit is very likely not enough to make it worthwhile, and other provisions would need to be made.
- A former textile mill in Wagram, located in Scotland County, had a treatment plant. It may be possible to rehab that plant and get the permit current. Hoke County has explored this option to some extent in its current study. This plant had considerable capacity; it is likely that an increase in permitted capacity could be obtained because the plant discharged to the Lumber River and would have more natural stream flow to mix with the treated discharge. The obvious concern if this turned out to be a pursued option, would be the cost of getting the wastewater to this plant location as it's about 16 miles, as the crow flies, from eastern Hoke County to Wagram.
- The final option would be to treat the wastewater

and spray irrigate the effluent. The county would not likely realize the capacity they are hoping for under this option, but they could likely get a few MGD out of this. The land requirements are approximately 150 acres per 1 MGD. The effluent would require minimal treatment (primary and secondary lagoons) before it was sprayed, and could be sprayed on fescue or other hay to be harvested several times a year.

With respect to water, Hoke County is in the process of moving forward with Phase Five of its Regional Water System expansion program. Water supply improvements for the urban service area are needed immediately to meet current demand. The estimated project cost of \$10.5 million dollars is divided between supply, treatment, storage, distribution expansion and upgrades. The design phase for the water projects is nearing completion, with plans to move forward with construction in the 2008/09 fiscal year. Current plans call for long term U.S. Department of Agriculture financing, which will impact the amount of debt the County may be able to incur for the regional waste water treatment and collection project discussed above.

### **b. Solid Waste**

The state measures changes in waste-disposal rates by comparing the current year's per capita waste disposal rate to fiscal year 91-92's per capita rate—which is considered the base rate. (Per capita disposal rates are calculated by dividing the total tonnage of disposed waste by the number of users served.) Negative numbers indicate a decrease in the per capita disposal rate; positive numbers indicate an increase. Waste reduction is a change from the base year, not a change from year to year. The state per capita disposal rate is 1.34 tons per person per year, an increase of 25% from the FY 91-92 base year.

Despite the addition of a few new curbside programs in the state, the overall number of municipal curbside recycling programs has declined in recent years. The recycling industry has evolved dramatically in the past fifteen years and, unless small and mid-sized municipal governments update their programs to reflect the current state of the industry, it is likely that the trend towards fewer curbside recycling programs

will continue. In a properly developed program, each household could potentially generate up to 750 pounds of recyclables per year. North Carolina households are contributing only about 240 pounds of recycling per year to their local recovery programs. It is very clear that improving the breadth of program collection and increasing participation are keys to improving recovery.<sup>20</sup>

### 3. Gaps

Meeting projected demand without considerations for the military-related growth through 2030 will cost the County approximately \$11.3 million for water and \$11.7 million for sewer.<sup>21</sup> The population increase in Hoke County as a result of military growth is projected to be about 3,742 in 2013. This could translate into an additional design water and sewer demand of approximately .56 MGD, resulting in an additional capital requirement of \$2.8 million for water and \$5.6 million for sewer. These estimates are based on an assumed cost of \$5 per gallon for water and \$10 per gallon for sewer. The actual cost of this infrastructure will be dependent on a number of variables, including the specific configuration of each plant; therefore, these estimates should be considered as approximate and should be used only to provide a rough idea of future budget requirements.

Maintaining safe drinking water and environmentally sound sewer services is one of the most important responsibilities of any local government. As it becomes increasingly expensive to provide water and sewer services, local governments will need to balance their obligation to provide these fundamental services at affordable prices against the equally compelling need to manage their programs in a financially sustainable manner. While there are many financial and revenue strategies that are designed with local conditions and objectives in mind, managing water and sewer services inevitably involves asking customers to pay more for the services. Leaders should never forget that the failure to sufficiently

fund these services will inevitably expose their communities to health and environmental hazards.

This section describes major financing alternatives available to local governments including bonds, grant and loans, local rates, tap and impact fees, and special assessments.

*General Obligation Bonds.* Private market lenders, who are the primary source of water and sewer financing, account for 70% of the total financing for such projects. Because of low bond ratings, approximately 60% of the state's local governments cannot qualify for most infrastructure lending programs. Cumberland County and the City of Fayetteville, however, have solid ratings. They also have considerably more conservative general-obligation debt ratios (ratios, that is, that are calculated by comparing the governmental entity's total indebtedness with its appraised property valuation and its population) (**Table 8**).<sup>22</sup>

*Revenue Bonds and Installment Financing.* Revenue bonds can be offered publicly with a typical 25-year term. The debt is secured by the net revenues of the project and no voter approval is required. However, specific financial tests must be met and specific covenants are required. Alternatively, installment financing can be provided without voter approval with a typical 20-year term. The security for installment financing is a pledge to appropriate funding for debt service and a lien on the financed asset. However, there are challenges putting liens on utility assets<sup>23</sup>.

*Grants and Loans.* The federal role in financing water and wastewater projects has declined in recent years. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have significantly reduced the number of grant funds available for water and sewer improvements.<sup>24</sup> Nonetheless, several sources of

20. North Carolina Solid Waste Management Annual Report July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007.

21. Water, Sewer and Stormwater Capital Needs 2030, N.C. Rural Center

22. Analysis of Debt at 6-30-2007. Department of State Treasurer, Division of State and Local Government Finance.

23. Presentation entitled "Utility Financing Alternatives and The Financing Team" by Rebecca B. Joyner, Attorney with Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein, LLP. January 22, 2008.

24. N.C. Rural Economic Development Center, Water 2030 Executive Summary.

Table 8. Analysis of General Obligation Debt\*

	Ratings		Ratio of Total General Obligation Debt	
	Moody's	S&P	Property Valuation (%)	Per Capita (\$)
Hoke County	A2	BBB+	1.337 (avg.)	624 (avg.)
Counties (25,000 – 49,999 pop.)	Na	Na	0.764 (avg.)	794 (avg.)
City of Raeford	A3	A	0.147 (avg.)	113 (avg.)

\*Total Outstanding general obligation debt, authorized and un-issued general obligation debt and Installment purchase (excluding all enterprise debt)

potential financing for water and wastewater projects remain, particularly at the state level. The following agencies have grant and/or loan programs available.

- Appalachian Regional Commission
- Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Division of Water Quality
- N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Public Water Supply Section
- N.C. Department of Commerce, Division of Community Assistance
- N.C. Department of Commerce, Commerce Finance Center
- N.C. Clean Water Management Trust Fund
- N.C. Rural Economic Development Center

*Tap Fees, Impact Fees, and Special Assessments.*

In general, utilities charge three types of fees in North Carolina: tap fees, impact fees, and special assessments. Tap fees are designed to recover all or a portion of the cost (materials and labor) of water or sewer service line installation; impact fees are associated with system-capacity development. Because individual utilities have great flexibility in setting tap and impact fees, these fees can vary widely from one locale to another. Special assessments, on the other hand, are strictly defined in the NC General Statutes and may only be assessed by utilities (municipalities, counties, and authorities) under specific circumstances defined by the authorizing statute (§162A-216, §153A-185 and §162A-6, respectively).<sup>25</sup>

25. One-time Fees for Residential Water and Sewer Connections in North Carolina. A publication of the Environmental Finance Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Report by: Andrew

There is expected to be some impact to the County and Raeford’s solid waste programs from the military-related growth. However, it is likely that these impacts can be handled by existing facilities and practices. Nonetheless, the County’s recent recycling efforts should be applauded and other jurisdictions should consider implementing additional recycling programs. Available funding includes:

- Community Waste Reduction and Recycling Grants are a standard annual grant cycle that the State Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance (DPPEA) offers to local government and non-profit recycling programs to expand and improve community recycling efforts.
- Business Recycling Grants, also offered by DPPEA, are designed to help businesses afford or leverage a critical capital expenditure and thereby expand their material-handling capacity. These expansions, in turn, translate into new market opportunities for local government recycling programs and for waste generators of all kinds.
- The State’s Recycle Guys and RE3 Outreach Campaigns increase public participation in recycling.

In addition to the above opportunities, North Carolina offers a tax exemption on equipment and facilities used exclusively for recycling and resource recovery. The tax program also includes special tax treatment for the corporate state income tax and the franchise tax on domestic and foreign corporations. The N.C. Division of Waste Management administers the Tax Certification Program.

Westbrook, [westbrok@sog.unc.edu](mailto:westbrok@sog.unc.edu). 3/27/06.

## 4. Recommended Actions

### **Critical Action 1: Expand sewer capacity in the County by pursuing development of a new treatment facility**

*Description:* Hoke County currently does not have a wastewater system and relies on limited capacities from the City of Raeford and PWC, a total of about 1.0 MGD. This limitation has severely limited the growth of the County. The County is currently pursuing plans for design and construction of a wastewater treatment plant to serve the existing populations in eastern Hoke County. Depending on State approval, funding, and other issues, Hoke County hopes to fast-track this process, aiming for completion of the plant and first phase of outfalls within approximately four years. The rapid development of the County and the lack of adequate sewage capacity has caused this action to be critical.

*Responsible Parties:* Hoke County and City of Raeford staff, local elected officials, state regulators, and other stakeholders should work collaboratively to share best practices and implement new regional policies as necessary.

### **Important Action 2: Proactively plan water and sewer projects in conjunction with development activities**

*Description:* Because water and sewer services are such crucial components of any community's utility infrastructure, it is important that planning for their construction and maintenance be done with the utmost care and professionalism. The City of Fayetteville/Cumberland County 2030 Vision Plan recommends several principles that planners in general and those in the Fort Bragg region in particular should observe. General principles include:

- The placement of water and sewer lines should determine where development is done, rather than the other way around.
- Development density should be determined by the availability of infrastructure.
- Generally, infrastructure with excess capacity should be utilized first before additional monies are spent to install and maintain new infrastructure elsewhere.
- Adequate utilities infrastructure (water supply, sewage collection and treatment capacity, stormwater management, etc.) must be in place before the new development it serves is occupied.

**Responsible Parties:** Municipal and county public works and planning directors, local elected officials, and planning commissions should work collaboratively to share best practices and implement new policies as necessary. The BRAC Regional Task Force could facilitate such regional collaboration.

**Important Action 3: Coordinate local water and wastewater planning with the Fort Bragg Garrison**

**Description:** New infrastructure should not be placed in areas where it would encourage development incompatible with the mission of the Fort Bragg/Pope military complex. Fort Bragg should be included in all major local infrastructure planning. This will be especially important as Fort Bragg and surrounding local communities seek mutually beneficial opportunities to enhance services.

**Responsible Parties:** Municipal and county public works and planning directors, local elected officials, and planning commissions should work collaboratively to share best practices and implement new policies as necessary. The BRAC Regional Task Force could facilitate such regional collaboration.

**Important Action 4: Seek special funding from the North Carolina Legislature for capital improvements**

**Description:** As part of its effort to meet anticipated water and sewer capital needs, the county should give its support to State of North Carolina legislation that would address the utility needs of all the state's BRAC-impacted communities. This legislation would create a fund, to be administered by the N.C. Rural Economic Development Center, designed to mitigate the critical present and future water and sewer problems facing these communities. Federal and local matching funds should also be pursued.

**Responsible Parties:** Local and state elected officials and the BRAC Regional Task Force could work together to advocate the introduction and passage of new legislation.

**Important Action 4: Update financial plans for capital water and sewer improvements**

*Description:* The county and its municipalities should ensure that their estimates regarding both the quantity and the condition of their physical assets are up to date and accurate. It is important that local governments have reliable estimates as to how many and what kind of new water and wastewater facilities will be needed over the next five years. One set of estimates will target those new water and wastewater facilities that are used to expand capacity or address environmental health concerns. A separate set of estimates will be needed for those assets used for rehabilitation or for the replacement of existing infrastructure.

Careful consideration should be given to the identification of funding sources and to determining what percentage of total funding will come from each source (grants, debt, capital reserves, user rates, tap and impact fees, and special assessments). Local Capital Improvement Plans should be updated as necessary.

*Responsible Parties:* Municipal and county managers and local elected officials should work collaboratively to share best practices and identify funding sources as necessary.

## F. Information and Communication Technology

### 1. Current Conditions

#### a. Current Access Status

Hoke County ranks second among Tier I counties with respect to broadband Internet access. Broadband access is available for purchase at 90.15 % of households in the county. While this figure compares favorably with the statewide average access rate of 83.54%, it needs to be better. The 90.15% figure includes cable and DSL-based access, as self-reported by the provider companies. The ways that providers define service coverage are not wholly reliable, however, which means that the composite figure may not reflect the actual percentage of households that can obtain broadband access. For example, cable companies designate service areas that are identified by zip codes as “covered,” when in fact all locations within a given zip code may not be served by the cable companies.

There are other reasons why the 90.15% coverage estimate should be questioned. The actual extent of Internet availability for Hoke County is shown in **Figure 10**. As this map indicates, access is not nearly as ubiquitous as the high estimate suggests. There is a sizable swath in southern Hoke County—at the border with Robeson County—where broadband access falls between 50 and 69 %.

Another factor that compromises existing access coverage estimates is the significant overlap between the areas served by cable-modem and those having DSL-based services. Removing the cable-served locations from the map shown in Figure 10 would not significantly enlarge the portion of the county that does not have adequate service. This means that in Hoke County there may be significant overlap in areas served by cable-modem and by DSL-based services.

Providers of ICT in Hoke County are listed in **Table 9**.

Figure 10. Average availability of DSL service and location of videoconferencing sites in Hoke County

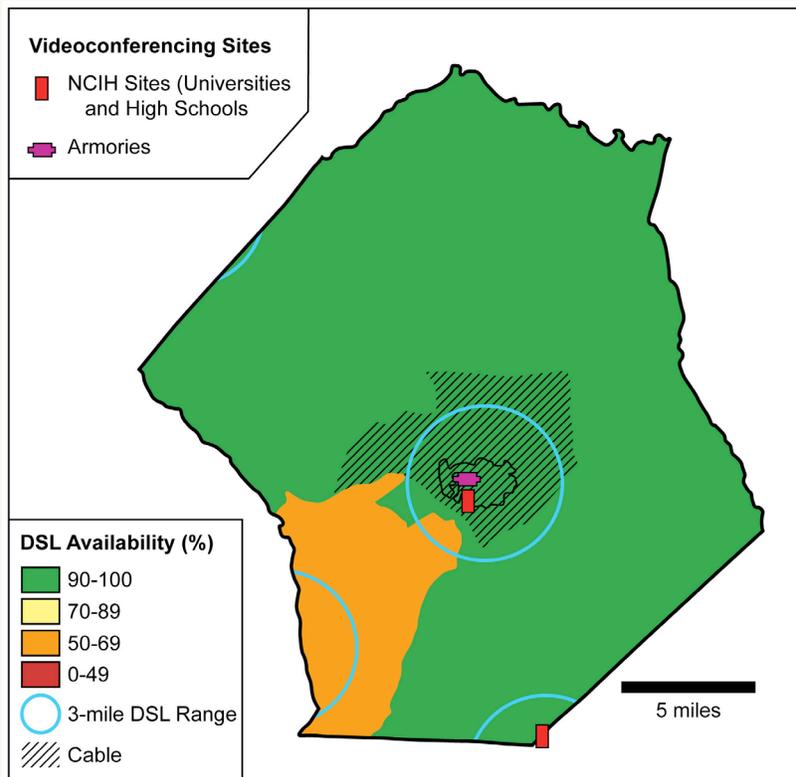


Table 9. Providers of available Internet connections in Hoke County

Telcos	Embarq and Windstream
Satellite	Hoke County customers with a clear view of the southern sky have access to Direcway & Starband high-speed Internet Service.
Wireless	No wireless high-speed Internet access providers in Hoke County have registered with the e-NC Authority.

In addition to localized problems of inadequate access, there is the more generalized issue of inadequate speed and bandwidth. Broadband access in Hoke County is largely accomplished through cable modem and DSL-level access speeds. The speeds and bandwidth supported by these types of technologies will be increasingly inadequate as a growing number of voice, data, and video applications use Internet protocols (IP) for service delivery. Health, education, and government sectors are just beginning to tap the benefits of ICT-driven transformation, even as new ICT technologies—such as Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), wireless broadband, and voice recognition—begin to drive new applications. The result is that, as acceptable transmission speeds ratchet up, broadband standards are rising.<sup>26</sup>

**b. Sector-Specific Connectivity Issues**

Efforts already underway in Hoke County highlight the need to make ICT and universal broadband access a cornerstone of the county’s economic and community development plans. These efforts are described below.

*Public Safety.* Hoke County is working to fully

26. Acceptable transmission speeds are expected to rise from the currently recommended minimum of 384 kbps to an anticipated minimum need at home and at businesses for 1.5 mbps symmetrical (up and down). (FCC Order on Broadband, issued March 19, 2008)

equip all its public safety and emergency response personnel to be part of the Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders (VIPER) first-responder communication network. Partial implementation of this network, which is managed by the State Highway Patrol,<sup>27</sup> has been funded through grants made to North Carolina by the U.S. Homeland Security Agency. A combination of local and federal funds is expected to cover the costs of fully implementing this program. At present, the county’s single VIPER transmission tower, sited at McCain, is on the air and operational. An additional 244 radios costing a total of \$793,000 are needed to complete the Hoke VIPER network. **Table 10** below indicates the number of radios required by specific sectors of Hoke County’s first responders.

*Education.* The Hoke County school system, like school systems nationwide, is facing difficult challenges arising from increased student populations, inadequate school infrastructure, increasing use of technology in the development and delivery of instructional content, and the need to support “anytime, anywhere” instruction through distance-learning programs. Hoke County already has a rapidly growing demand for broadband Internet access to support the educational and training needs

27. More information about the VIPER program is available at <http://www.nccrimecontrol.org/Index2.cfm?a=000001.001148>

Table 10. Hoke County VIPER implementation status-Emergency radio requirement for Hoke County

Agency	Number of Radios
Law Enforcement (1 Per Sworn + 1 Per 1/3 Civilian not VIPER Compatible)	60
Fire Department not currently VIPER Compatible	168
Rescue Squad not currently VIPER Compatible	16
TOTAL Radios for Emergency Responders	244

of students in K-12, professional development, and training programs. Several existing statewide initiatives will significantly improve the network through which web-based resources are delivered to the county's schools.<sup>28</sup> Access to these programs will require the availability of robust, high-speed connectivity and adequate video-conferencing facilities.

*K-12 Schools.* Connectivity to all public schools that are elements of the Hoke County Local Education Agency (LEA) is fully funded by a combination of federal e-Rate dollars and the N.C. School Connectivity Initiative. Time Warner Communications provides fiber-based service to the LEA Central Office. A Wide-Area Network (WAN) connects all schools in the system to the LEA at speeds up to 100 Mbps. Through the LEA, all schools are linked to the North Carolina Research and Education Network (NCREN)-managed statewide education network. This network links schools to all of the state's on-line education resources, to the public Internet, and to the higher level Internet-2 research network. At this point, the County's primary responsibility for ensuring that schools have on-going access to these resources consists of regular and timely filing of its annual e-Rate application.

*Hardware and Software:* Establishing connectivity is only one of the ICT issues facing public schools in Hoke County. There is a continual need for upgrading of the hardware and software that is required by the BETA, Earn and Learn, Learn NC, and Impact projects. Even End-of-the-Year testing requires up-to-date computers and software. Schools cannot just use donated or other outdated equipment and software

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28. Web-based resources available to the county's schools include distance-learning programs that originate with the military and National Guard and are designed for their personnel; implementation of the Business Education Technology Alliance (BETA) study and state investment in regional education networks; implementation of the N.C. School Connectivity Initiative to support K-20 virtual-learning programs and the Initiative's requirements for the state's schools and connectivity to the home; the N.C. School of Science and Mathematics Distance- Learning courses; NC Wise; AMDG; OSU; North Carolina Virtual Public Schools; the Learn and Earn Initiative's requirement for online college courses; Two-plus-Two programs that integrate community college curricula with university degree programs; UNC-Greensboro iSchool courses; the UNC Tomorrow program; and even the pioneering web academies.

but must make ICT equipment a fixture in their annual budgets.

*Impact of Connectivity on School Infrastructure:* The need for enhanced access affects other areas of county school planning. Changes in the construction codes for schools and other public-sector buildings are required to ensure that these codes support the wiring and HVAC needs for additional ICT equipment. During a recent BRAC ICT focus group meeting, for example, representatives of the region's public schools cited the lack of sufficient electrical outlets in classrooms as a serious challenge to delivering web-assisted instruction.

*Impact of Connectivity on School Human-Resource Needs:* A shortage of skilled network-management technicians may emerge as one of the most critical impediments to meeting the demands of growth in Hoke County and the region. Additional ICT personnel at the professional and certificate levels will be needed to support higher requirements for ICT infrastructure in schools and other public settings. Schools in the Fort Bragg region were surveyed regarding the numbers and types of ICT support personnel they employed. Results varied widely and did not allow for a qualitative statement of the actual levels of training or expertise achieved by the ICT technicians in the various counties. The data are none-the-less revealing and raise serious concerns. Each ICT technician in Hoke County serves an average of 2.4 schools, the lowest number among the BRAC Tier I counties. A troubling result is the finding that only one of the twelve technical service personnel employed by Hoke County reported being certified in the LAN/WAN technology that connects each school—through the central office—to the public Internet and state education networks. It is clear that more and better certified technical-support personnel are needed to manage the growing ICT needs of Hoke County schools. This need for more skilled technicians should be factored into plans for expanding ICT-relevant programs and degree offerings at the area's community colleges and universities.

Proximity to the tech-intensive Research Triangle Park creates special challenges for the Fort Bragg

region in terms of attracting and keeping highly trained ICT personnel. Both instructors and graduates of computer and network training programs are frequently drawn to more lucrative employment opportunities in the RTP region.

*Higher Education/Adult Learning.* Sandhills Community College in Moore County has ICT-related education and training programs that can help prepare the skilled technicians and professionals needed to meet the growing demand for ICT services in the county and region. Training and educational opportunities are augmented by strong programs at Fayetteville Technical Community College and at other colleges and universities in the region. The issue is one of throughput—more graduates are needed. Course offerings, degree programs, and the administrative contacts for each of the county’s higher education institutions are listed in the Appendix for this chapter. Similar data for other institutions in the region are available in the Appendix of the Regional chapter of this report.

*Infrastructure Issues:* Videoconferencing facilities efficiently deliver distance-education programs to multiple students. Such facilities are particularly important in regions where they serve to support the increasing training needs of military and National Guard personnel. The National Guard supports two controlled-access networks (Guard Net II and Guard Net 132) with access at National Guard Armories in Raeford. In addition, the National Guard is paying to build computer labs at nearby Fayetteville Technical Community College where Guard members can take continuing education courses. The Guard’s community-college-based facilities are also available for use by civilians. Two additional N.C. Information Highway sites at high schools make central and southern Hoke County relatively well-equipped with videoconference centers, as shown in Figure 10. Northern Hoke is proximate to sites in Cumberland County, but students and the public in the western portion of the county do not have ready access to facilities that support distance learning in a group setting.

*Government.* Movement of government services to an electronic platform (“e-government”) allows for cost-effective delivery, improved responsiveness, and increased transparency. E-government is proving

to be particularly important in that it allows military personnel to access local government services while deployed. Military-related growth is expected to significantly impact the demand for government services.

Hoke County has made significant strides in developing a website that is useful to citizens as well as businesses. It has also developed useful links as well as content relevant to newcomers and relocating military personnel. Further enhancements are recommended.

Hoke County’s e-government website has been evaluated on the basis of content and usability against best practice models in Havelock, NC (<http://www.cityofhavelock.com/>) and Northwest Florida (<http://www.welcometonorthwestflorida.com/index1.html>). Results of the analysis are summarized in **Table 11**. Note that the absence of a newcomer’s guide and links to properties for sale detract significantly from the usefulness of the site to incoming residents and businesses.

While smaller towns and communities would benefit from having an attractive website populated with current content, most of them lack the means to develop and maintain such a site. In this regard, Hoke might consider following the example of Montgomery County. Montgomery provides and maintains a common template that its smaller municipalities can populate with current information. In so doing, Montgomery enhances its ICT services and supports balanced growth across the county.

A shortage of skilled network management technicians may emerge as one of the most critical impediments to meeting growth demands in Hoke County and the region. Additional ICT personnel at the professional and certificate level will be needed to support the growing number of web-based government services.

Info-engineer its website to best-practice status for delivering to private and corporate citizens information and government services, and extend to municipalities in the county the electronic platforms, hosting services and training needed to make Hoke an e-county of e-communities.

Table 11. Hoke County Website Analysis

Website Address	www.hokecounty.org
Preliminary Questions	Observations
Links to Local Government?	YES
Links to BRAC-RTF?	NO
General Items	Observations
Website Appearance	Historical renderings on homepage not necessarily representative of 21st-century thinking
Usability	Not very intuitive or easy to navigate
Site Structure	Always necessary to go back to home page to access additional pages
Audio/Visual Capabilities	NONE
External Web links	Links to local, state, and federal information
Contact Information	Need contact information on every page
Employee Directory	E-mail directory of county employees
Calendar	Scheduled events displayed, but no community calendar
Searchable Databases	Search and retrieve Register of Deeds information
Forms, Applications, & Permits	NONE
Scheduling System	NONE
Transactional Capabilities	Online utility payments
BRAC Information	Links to Fort Bragg and Pope AFB, but no specific mention of BRAC
GIS	GIS/Property Tax information
Newcomer's Guide	Newcomer's Guide
Listing of Property for Sale	NONE
Tax Information	Tax information
Employment Opportunities	Downloadable employment application
Library Link	Link to library website
Website's Capacity to Facilitate Citizen Involvement	NONE
Feedback Form	Feedback Form
Alert Mechanisms	NONE
Translation of Content	NONE
Intranet	NONE
Content Copyright	Copyright protection where applicable
Frequency of Updates	Does not have a last updated date and webmaster contact information is hard to find

## 2. Future Needs

Information and communication technologies (ICT), especially those supporting high-speed broadband Internet use, are increasingly critical to local, state, and national economic and community development—with real and measurable impacts in employment, the number of businesses overall, and the number of businesses in ICT-intensive sectors. ICT is particularly important in Hoke County, as it

adapts to changes caused by military-related growth. Many of the military personnel being transferred to Fort Bragg are technologically adept and will expect to have immediate and sophisticated access to ICT functions such as e-government, e-learning, e-health, and e-commerce. If they are to establish an immediate professional and personal connection with the community, these personnel will need access to a high-speed, broadband Internet connection, both on- and off-base. As bandwidth needs increase for

base operations, new applications will continue to be developed and these will create further connectivity challenges for the region.

As part of its overall effort to support the incoming FORSCOM and US Army Reserve Command (USARC), and to sustain the incumbent military units as a vital economic engine for the region, Hoke County would greatly benefit from upgrading its telecommunications capacity. The county’s ability to attract and support a diverse and growing economy beyond the military will also be inextricably tied to the quality, speed, and ubiquity of high-speed *broadband Internet connectivity*. The level of broadband access that will be needed to accommodate the area’s military-related growth is suggested by the results of a November, 2007, survey conducted among FORSCOM personnel in the Atlanta region. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents have and use broadband access at home. This percentage is higher than the percentage of home Internet connections available in Hoke County. Sixty-one percent of the FORSCOM personnel use DSL to access the Internet, 36% use cable, and less than 4% rely on dial-up modem connections. As shown in **Table 12**, the survey respondents and their families use the Internet at home for a wide range of tasks. It is highly likely, therefore, that the influx of FORSCOM personnel will increase the demand for high-quality broadband availability and web-based services in Hoke County.

Table 12. Routine uses of the Internet at home by FORSCOM personnel and their families

Check mail	98%
Educational (research, course, or Army on-line training)	52%
General Information searches (news, weather, sports)	86%
Work, professional information searches (government, business)	72%
Pay utility bills	74%
Pay taxes	33%
Search for medical information	73%
Do job-related tasks	43%
Search for jobs	47%
Commercial activities (shop, pay bills, etc.)	83%

### 3. Recommended Actions

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#### **Important Action 1: Improve ICT infrastructure throughout the county to have high-speed access available at 95% of households**

*Description:* Updated and new network technology needs to be implemented in underserved areas of the county to make high-speed access (defined as >200 kilobits per second) available to 95% of households.

*Responsible Parties:* A partnership of public (federal, state and local) and private (corporate and foundation) organizations.

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#### **Critical Action 2: Fully equip public safety and emergency personnel to participate in North Carolina's VIPER first-responder network**

*Description:* The Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders (VIPER) System being implemented by the NC Highway Patrol will enable public safety officials at all levels to communicate directly with one another over a secure and reliable network without having to relay messages through a communications center. The importance of this capability in times of emergency is increasing as the influx of military personnel into the region significantly raises the threat profile of the region. Hoke can reach compliance with the new VIPER standard with the purchase of 244 communications radios.

*Responsible Parties:* Local, state, and federal government partnering to fully implement and equip the network. A request for federal support to equip the Fort Bragg region has been developed by the e-NC Authority for the BRAC Regional Task Force; prospects for federal funding are not certain at this time.

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#### **Important Action 3: Participate in formation of Regional K-20 Education Connectivity Task Force and Planning Group**

*Description:* Strong potential exists to achieve greater returns on investment by utilizing regional strategies for developing and supporting the K-20 school connectivity infrastructure, by sponsoring professional development opportunities in instructional technology, and by increasing throughput of certified and trained network and communications specialists from higher-education and technical training programs in the region.

*Responsible Parties:* Leaders from County government, and education leaders from public and private schools K-16 in the Fort Bragg region, in collaboration with state BETA and e-learning commission.

**Important Action 4: Make connectivity a strategic focus for the county and a springboard for regional planning and economic and community development efforts**

*Description:* Hoke County should partner with counties in the region to develop a regional ICT Council comprised of a Chief Information/Technology Officer from each county in the Fort Bragg region to guide development and use of connectivity. Outcomes will include collaborative learning, cost efficiencies realized through joint purchasing agreements and regional software licenses, and more competitive bids for federal and state program support.

*Responsible Parties:* CIO/CTOs for each county and Fort Bragg

**Important Action 5: Champion effort to define and establish a BRAC Regional Health ICT Network**

*Description:* Hoke County should work with the N.C. Telemedicine Network to extend to the Fort Bragg region efforts funded by the Federal Communications Commission to enhance connectivity and should champion their use by appropriate health and medical institutions, including the public health department and public and private health clinics.

*Responsible Parties:* County government and health leaders in collaboration with the N.C. Telemedicine Network, the e-NC Authority, and NCHICA

**Important Action 6: Establish Hoke County as a best-practice e-government model**

*Description:* Hoke County should re-engineer its website to best-practice status for delivering to private and corporate citizens information and government services, and extend to municipalities in the county the electronic platforms, hosting services and training needed to make Hoke an e-county of e-communities.

*Responsible Parties:* Hoke County CIO/CTO, local government IT directors, the e-NC Authority, the N.C. League of Municipalities, and the Center for Public Technology at the UNC School of Government at UNC-CH.

## G. Health Care

*Hoke County has the smallest supply of health services in the region, with less than ten physicians and extenders and no acute-care hospital. Hoke County needs are met primarily by providers in Moore and Cumberland Counties. Theoretically, Hoke County's population could support the development of a small hospital. Whether or not a facility is developed, there is a need for additional physician services in the county.*

### 1. Current Conditions

#### a. Health Care Provider Supply

With approximately 9.9 full-time equivalent physicians and physician extenders, Hoke County has the smallest number of health care providers in the Fort Bragg region. Because there are no acute-care and outpatient services located in Hoke County proper, all of Hoke County's physicians are on medical staffs at hospitals in surrounding counties, such as Cape Fear Valley Medical Center or FirstHealth Moore Regional. With only six resident dentists, Hoke County (according to the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research) has one of the lowest dentist-to-population ratios in the state.

#### b. Acute Care Hospitals

There is no acute care hospital in Hoke County. The majority of patients originating in Hoke County are treated at FirstHealth Moore Regional in Moore County and, to a lesser extent, at the Cape Fear Valley Medical Center in Cumberland County. **Table 13** shows the number of Hoke County acute-care patients (as reported in 2008 Hospital License Renewal Applications) that each of these hospitals discharged in fiscal year 2007.

The University of North Carolina Hospitals also reported having discharged 171 Hoke County patients

in fiscal year 2007. No more than 100 patients from Hoke County were treated at any other facility in the state.

#### c. Outpatient Services

All outpatient services in Hoke County are located in physician offices. There are no operating rooms, diagnostic centers, or urgent-care centers in the county.

#### d. Home Health

Home-health services are provided in the home to individuals who are confined to the home. Such services are offered to those who do not need hospitalization but who do need nursing services or therapy, medical supplies, and/or special outpatient services. Liberty Home Care operates the only home-health agency in Hoke County. There is no need for additional home health agencies in the county, and the military expansion at Fort Bragg is expected to have a minimal impact on the short-term need for such services.

#### e. Behavioral Health

In Hoke County, behavioral health services are managed by the Sandhills Center for MH/DD/SAS.<sup>29</sup> The Sandhills Center manages and in some cases provides the following services:

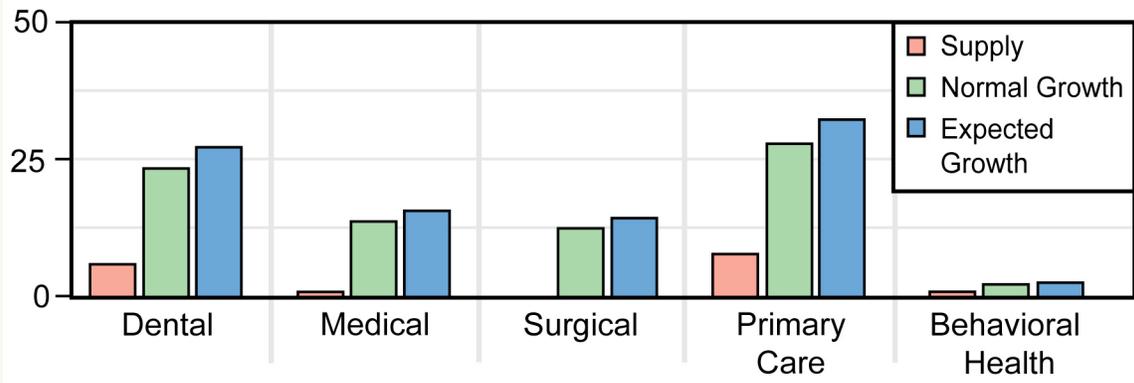
- Outpatient therapy
- Psychiatric services
- Case management
- Residential services
- Day services
- Twenty-four-hour inpatient services
- Periodic services
- Emergency services.

<sup>29</sup> MH/DD/SS is short for Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities/Substance Abuse Services.

Table 13. Acute Care Discharges from Hoke County

Facility Name	Hoke County Discharges
FirstHealth Moore Regional	1,438
Cape Fear Valley Medical Center	1,142

Figure 11. Projected number of health care professionals needed in Hoke County in 2013 compared to the estimated supply



Access to these services is provided through the Hoke County access unit, which is located on East Elwood Avenue in Raeford.

There are no inpatient psychiatric beds in Hoke County.

## 2. Future Needs

### a. Physician Needs

Although Hoke County’s need for additional physicians is lower than that of any other county in the Fort Bragg area, it is still the case that the existing supply of physicians is low enough to warrant proactive planning.

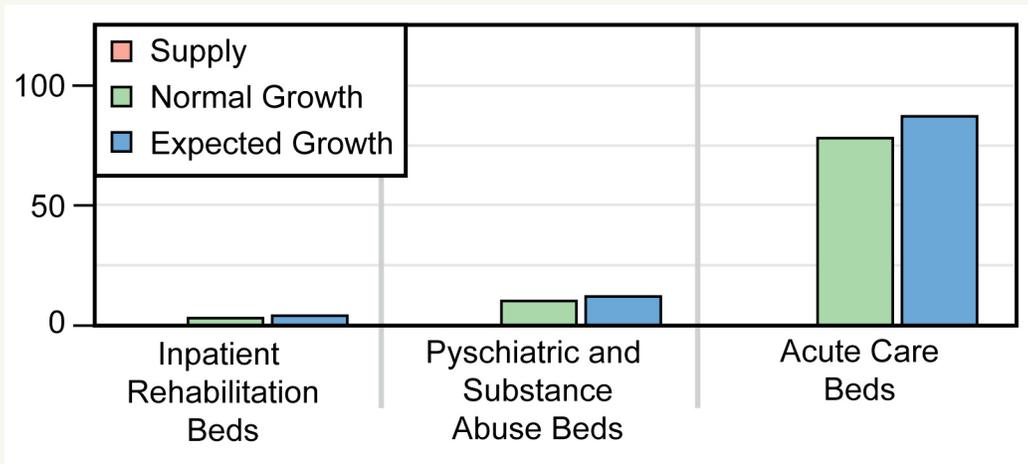
As shown in **Figure 11**, Hoke County has a particular need for twenty to twenty-five additional primary care physicians. Although the county’s population is relatively young (approximately 66% of the population will be under forty-four in 2013), there will be a need for additional medical and surgical specialists as the population ages. Hoke’s population will be needing cardiologists, nephrologists, oncologists, general surgeons, and orthopedic surgeons, as well as other specialties.

At present the county’s needs only two to three behavioral health physicians. This being the case, the addition of four to six physician extenders should be sufficient to meet the needs of Hoke County residents.

Because it has a need for seventeen to twenty-two dentists, Hoke County should be a key participant in discussions regarding the recruitment of dentists to the region.

According to the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center, approximately one-fifth of Hoke County residents are uninsured, another factor that negatively affects the health status of county residents. This being the case, it is imperative that any new physicians in the county be willing to treat such patients.

Figure 12. Projected need for inpatient beds in Hoke County in 2013 compared to the estimated supply



**b. Inpatient Bed Needs**

The projected need for inpatient beds is shown in **Figure 12**. Because the majority of inpatient discharges of Hoke County residents are at FirstHealth Moore Regional, the Medical Facilities Planning Section<sup>30</sup> has treated Hoke County and Moore County as a single region when assessing the need for acute-care beds. Since a nearly equivalent number of patients were treated at Cape Fear Valley

Medical Center, however, the needs of Hoke County residents are not entirely accounted for in the Planning Section’s calculations. The Hoke County population alone could support a small community hospital with a small inpatient psychiatric unit. Inpatient rehabilitation services can be absorbed by a larger referral center in a neighboring county.

30. The Medical Facilities Planning Section provides staff support to the North Carolina State Health Coordinating Council in the development of the annual State Medical Facilities Plan (SMFP) and Semiannual Dialysis Reports (SDR).

### 3. Recommended Actions

#### **Important Action 1: Recruit additional primary care services to the region**

*Description:* Primary care providers are generally an entry point to health services. As such, the recruitment of additional primary care providers to Hoke County will likely have a significant impact on the overall health status of Hoke County residents. It is recommended that a collaborative working group of providers be convened to develop additional physician practices and/or clinics in the county

*Responsible Party:* Representatives from key regional acute-care providers, such as CFVMC, FHMR, and SERMC

#### **Important Action 2: Develop a facility plan to determine the feasibility of establishing an acute-care hospital in Hoke County.**

*Description:* Hoke County’s projected population can support eighty to ninety acute-care beds. As fifty-bed hospitals become more prevalent in North Carolina, Hoke County may represent the next best location for a new facility. The creation of a development plan is suggested for Hoke County.

*Responsible Party:* Key leadership in Hoke County with support from regional providers and the BRAC Regional Task Force

## H. Hospitality and Cultural Resources

*Lodging and food and beverage establishments are extremely limited in Hoke County; nearly all the accommodations that do exist are located in and around the community of Raeford, which provides just one hotel operation and a few quick service-oriented restaurants. Meeting space is practically non-existent throughout the county, with a minimal number of facilities capable of accommodating small groups. Although Hoke residents generally rely on the programs and facilities in neighboring Cumberland County, a modest array of parks, recreation, and cultural programs are offered in the county. Funding for culture and the arts continues to be a challenge.*

### 1. Current Conditions

#### a. Lodging

The Days Inn in downtown Raeford is the county’s only hotel (**Table 14**).<sup>31</sup> Its demand is generated primarily by visiting friends and relatives and a small amount of business-related traffic.

Proximity to hotels in neighboring Cumberland, Moore, and Scotland Counties is a major factor in determining the needs for additional lodging in Hoke County. Cumberland and Scotland Counties appear to fulfill the need for economy, limited-service, full-service, and extended-stay properties, while Moore County accommodates demand for upscale and resort accommodations. As previously mentioned, the primary driver of demand is visiting friends and family; there is limited Fort Bragg-related use of the Days Inn.

The overwhelming majority of food and beverage establishments in Hoke County are located in Raeford. They tend to be fast-food and independent,

casual restaurants. Again, Cumberland and Moore Counties appear to fulfill the demand for a wider variety of eating and drinking establishments.

#### b. Meeting Space

Meeting space is very limited in Hoke County. The Raeford Civic Center - which accommodates, at most, 600 people - is the largest meeting space in the county. Hoke County has very little available inventory of meeting space. **Table 15** indicates the meeting facilities available in the county.

#### c. Parks and Recreation

Hoke County has a small number of parks with playing fields, courts, picnic facilities, and trails. The County Parks and Recreation Department also runs a youth sports program. More substantial facilities are available in neighboring counties. Hoke County’s major parks and recreation facilities include:

- Carolina Horse Park
- Paraclete XP SkyVenture

Carolina Horse Park, located at Five Points in the northwest section of the county, opened in 2001. This 250-acre facility hosts equestrian competitions, shows, and clinics comparable to those at the Virginia Horse Center and Kentucky’s Horse Park. The facility is linked to the affluent communities in Moore County and new developments in northwestern Hoke County.

Paraclete XP SkyVenture is a unique facility located in eastern Raeford. The facility features an indoor vertical wind tunnel that enables users to experience indoor “bodyflight.” Although most of its visitors come from neighboring Cumberland County, the facility does appear to have the potential to attract a wider demand base. Paraclete’s owners are reportedly considering the development of a small hotel at the same location. The attraction’s proximity to

31. Source: Smith Travel Research; PKF Consulting

Table 14. Accommodations in Hoke County

Name of Establishment	City	Rooms
Days Inn Raeford	Raeford	44

Table 15. Meeting Facilities - Hoke County

Name of Establishment	City
Raeford Civic Center	Raeford
Bayonet at Puppy Creek Golf Course	Raeford

Cumberland County may make such a project viable if it begins to draw visitors from beyond the local area.

**d. Culture and Arts**

Compared to its neighbors, Hoke County has relatively few arts and cultural offerings. Each September the county’s major public event, the North Carolina Turkey Festival, features dinners, sporting events, arts, music, and other events. The festival attracts approximately 60,000 visitors annually to McLaughlin Park. The county is home to one museum, the Raeford-Hoke Museum, which is open only on Sunday. Residents and visitors to the county generally frequent the arts and cultural attractions in surrounding counties, especially Cumberland County.

**2. Future Needs**

Hoke County offers ample hospitality and cultural opportunities for its residents; lodging, restaurants, meeting space, parks and recreational facilities, and cultural activities are generally only short drive away. Overall, the expected military expansion is not expected to significantly impact most of these resources.

- A limited supply of lodging and food and beverage establishments are available in Hoke County. Most demand generated by businesses and residences located in Hoke County is accommodated in neighboring Cumberland, Moore, and Scotland counties, each of which has an ample supply of lodging and food and beverage establishments.
- Hoke County has historically been a primarily residential community; few of its businesses required meeting space. Fort Bragg-related meetings will continue to be held primarily in Cumberland and Moore Counties, where

infrastructure, demand, and appropriate spaces exist.

- A modest network of parks and recreational facilities and programs are offered throughout Hoke County. The Carolina Horse Park is a significant local feature that attracts equestrian enthusiasts from around the region.
- Culture and Arts programs and attractions are in limited supply in Hoke County. The county’s major annual event, the North Carolina Turkey Festival, attracts visitors from the surrounding counties and beyond. Most local residents rely on neighboring Cumberland County for cultural and arts programming.

**3. Gaps**

Lodging demand generated by Fort Bragg residents and visitors will probably continue to be accommodated either on the installation or in off-post hotels in Cumberland County. There may be times, however, when turnaway demand exceeds Cumberland’s hotel capacity. Given the relatively easy access to Fort Bragg along U.S. 401 (Raeford Road) and the potential justification for a new hotel created by the success of Paraclete XP SkyVenture, this potential overflow demand could help support a new hotel in Hoke County. While it is not expected that increased military demand would by itself be enough to warrant establishment of a new Hoke County hotel, this demand, together with increased demand from other mainstay sources, such as Paraclete, may well justify such development.

While the analysis of the current status of the county’s parks, recreation, and cultural resources organizations did not reveal any need for additional facilities, it was recognized that funding for existing operations continues to be a pressing problem, one that will be increased, however minimally, by military-related growth. Additional funding sources, available from the entities established to assist BRAC-impacted communities, should be explored.

#### 4. Recommended Actions

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##### **Important Action 1: New Hotel at Paraclete Ventures**

*Description:* While it is not expected that increased military demand would by itself be enough to warrant establishment of a new Hoke County hotel, this demand, together with increased demand from other mainstay sources, such as Paraclete, may well justify such development.

*Responsible Party:* Local hotels and county economic development officials should monitor local lodging demand to determine if a new hotel may be justified in the future.

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##### **Important Action 2: Solicit additional operational funds for county parks, recreation, and cultural-resources organizations**

*Description:* Existing operations continues to be a pressing problem for the County's Parks and Recreation programs. Additional funding sources, available from the entities established to assist BRAC-impacted communities, should be explored.

*Responsible party:* Hoke County Parks and Recreation Department should continue to aggressively solicit funds.

## I. Appendix A - Residential Development Activities

With regard to subdivision developments, Hoke County planning staff suggested that active subdivisions should be considered as those approved from October 2005 to the present, and that subdivisions approved prior to that date could be considered built out. The following data regarding subdivisions approved since October 2005.

- *Bentley Acres*—79 lots located on Camden Road.
- *Birkland*—43 lots located on Koonce Road; preliminary approval in April 2006.
- *Briarcrest*—25 lots located on Rockfish Road.
- *Bridgeport Subdivision*—104 lots located on Johnson Mill Road. The windshield survey showed 25 houses occupied, 17 completed and ready for occupancy, and seven under construction.
- *Brookside, Section II*—33 lots located on Gillis Hill Road. The windshield survey found roads under construction but no houses yet under construction.
- *Brownstone Farms, Sections I and II*—200 total lots located on S. Parker Church Road. The windshield survey revealed one house occupied, five completed and ready for occupancy, and seven under construction.
- *Churchill*—68 lots on Rockfish Road. The windshield survey showed 18 houses occupied, two completed and ready for occupancy, and one under construction.
- *Clover Meadow*—26 lots located on Rockfish Road. The windshield survey found 12 houses occupied, eight completed and ready for occupancy, and six under construction.
- *Club Pond Estates*—67 lots located on Club Pond Road.
- *Copper Creek North*—11 lots located on Rockfish Road. The windshield survey showed no houses occupied or ready for occupancy, and five under construction. Four houses were also noted under construction in the Copper Creek subdivision.
- *Creekview Farms*—12 lots located on Hall Road.
- *Eagles' Ridge*—106 lots located on Mock Road. The windshield survey showed construction had not yet started on this subdivision.
- *Falcon Ridge*—16 lots with houses priced from the \$130,000s, located on N. Parker Church Road. The windshield survey revealed no houses occupied, two completed and ready for occupancy, and 11 under construction.
- *Galatia Farms*—67 lots with houses priced \$170,000-\$200,000, located on Galatia Church Road. The windshield survey found 51 houses occupied, four completed and ready for occupancy, and two under construction.
- *Galatia Hills*—36 lots located on Galatia Church Road. The windshield survey showed roads under construction, but no houses under construction.
- *Hendrix Farms*—207 total lots (Section I=92 lots; Section II=115 lots) located on Phillip Church Road. The windshield survey found two houses occupied, 20 completed and ready for occupancy, and five under construction.
- *Hunter's Creek*—36 lots located on Rockfish Road.
- *Liberty Chase*—located on NC 211 west of Raeford; 110 lots, with houses priced from the \$140,000s to the \$170,000s. The windshield survey showed no houses occupied, three completed and ready for occupancy, and three under construction.
- *Liberty Point, Sections II and III*—110 total lots (Section II=69 lots; Section III=41 lots) located on N. Parker Church Road. The windshield survey revealed one house completed and ready for occupancy in an older section of the subdivision, and three houses under construction in the newer section.
- *Lindsay Farms*—located on Wayside Road. The windshield survey showed two houses occupied, two completed and ready for occupancy, and one under construction.
- *Lockhaven Estates*—26 lots on Rockfish Road.
- *Parker's Grove, Section IV*—33 lots located on US 401. The windshield survey found eight houses completed and ready for occupancy, five under construction, and approximately nine undeveloped lots.
- *Pine Valley*—63 lots located on Posey Farm Road. The windshield survey found that this

subdivision was built out; however, eight existing houses were listed for sale.

- *Potter's Ridge*—111 lots located on Rockfish Road. The windshield survey revealed 21 houses occupied, 37 houses completed and ready for occupancy, and four under construction.
- *Ridgeview, Sections I and II*—121 total lots (Section I=40; Section II=81 lots) located on Rockfish Road. The windshield survey showed 33 houses occupied, five completed and ready for occupancy, and no houses under construction.
- *Riverbrooke*—400 units priced from the \$130,000s, located on US 401 Business. The windshield survey found that roads and other infrastructure were under construction and that housing construction had not yet started.
- *Southampton*—14 lots located on Pittman Grove Church Road. The windshield survey showed this subdivision to be built out, with one existing house listed for sale.
- *Steeplechase, Section II*—located on NC 211 west of Raeford; 50 lots located on Aberdeen Road. The windshield survey revealed 28 houses occupied, five completed and ready for occupancy, five under construction in the original section of this subdivision (47 lots), and roads constructed (but no houses yet constructed) in Section II.
- *Turning Leaf North*—40 lots located on N. Parker Church Road. The windshield survey found no houses occupied or completed and 10 under construction.
- *Turning Leaf South*—19 lots located on N. Parker Church Road.
- *Westgate*—845 total units located on Adcox Road. The windshield survey showed one house occupied, 12 completed and ready for occupancy, and four under construction. In The Oaks at Westgate, 16 houses were completed and ready for occupancy, and four houses were under construction. The Holleys at Westgate section was built out.
- *Unnamed*—approximately 40 lots on Club Pond Road. The windshield survey found road and infrastructure construction in progress but no houses yet under construction.

No multi-family residential units have been constructed in unincorporated Hoke County, nor were there any planned at the time of the interviews.

No mobile-home parks had been approved recently in the unincorporated county area, nor had there been any expansions to existing mobile-home parks at the time of the interviews.

Raeford planning staff stated that the primary area for growth in that city would be the Lemont Street area off NC 211 West. A planner stated that the city was saturated with apartments. Residential development in Raeford includes:

*Raeford Village*—80+ lots located off NC 210 west of downtown, priced from the \$130,000s. The windshield survey found one house occupied, nine completed and ready for occupancy, and nine under construction.

*Raeford Commons*—approximately 220 lots located south of Raeford Village off Thomas Road. This development, consisting of larger houses with four bedrooms, has been approved. Apartment units were deemed likely to be occupied by senior citizens and therefore unlikely to include school-age children.

There is only one large undeveloped parcel of land, located north of the intersection of NC 211 and Turnpike Road, within the Raeford city limits. That parcel is zoned for industrial uses.

A mobile-home park located on Mockingbird Hill Road was said to have had some housing units removed and was seen as a location for potential redevelopment with single-family housing units.