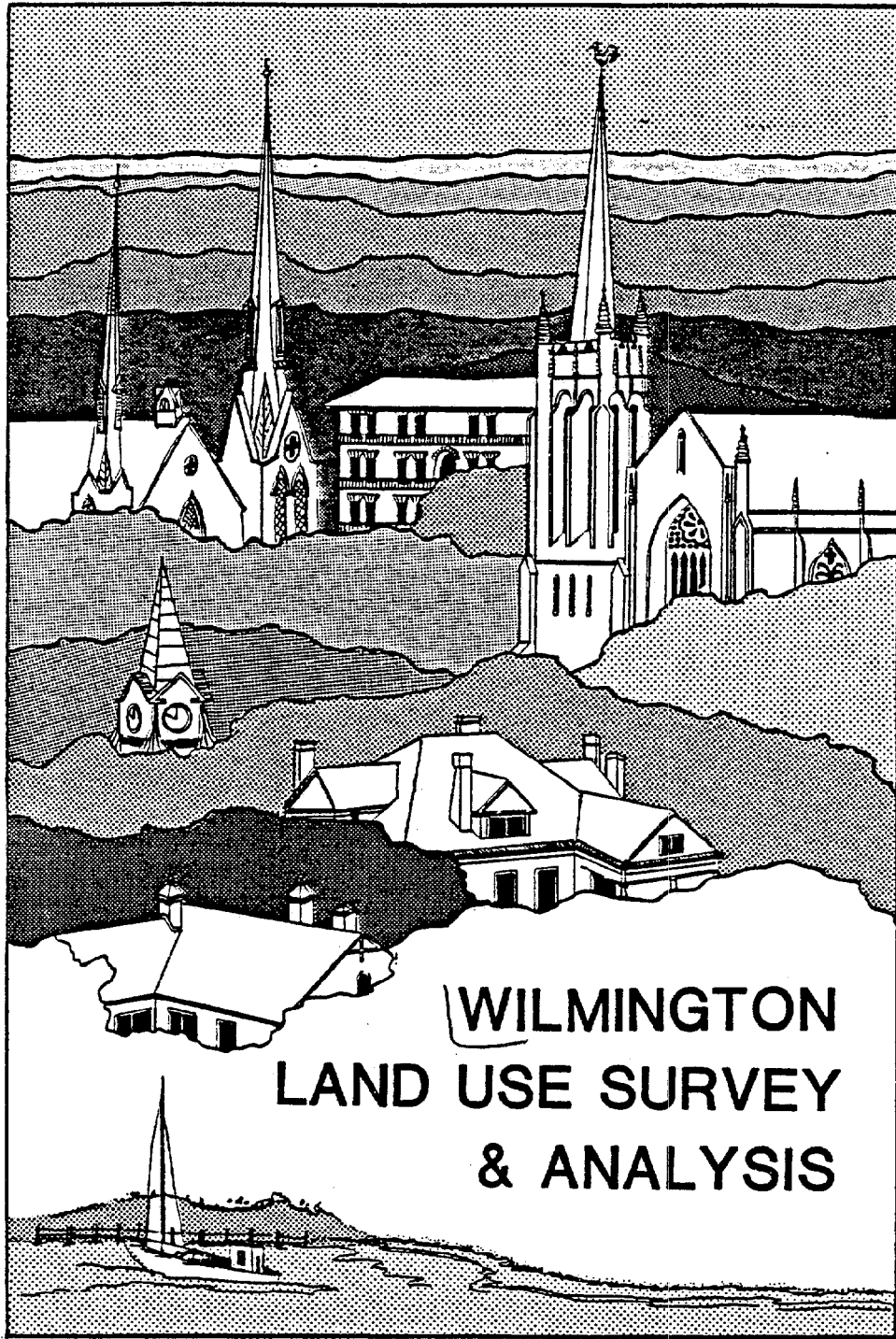


*North Carolina Zone Management Program*



**WILMINGTON  
LAND USE SURVEY  
& ANALYSIS**

HD  
211  
.N8  
N56  
1985

1986

**CAMA LAND USE PLAN UPDATE**

COASTAL ZONE

Report No. 3B

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1985 LAND USE SURVEY AND ANALYSIS  
WILMINGTON, NC

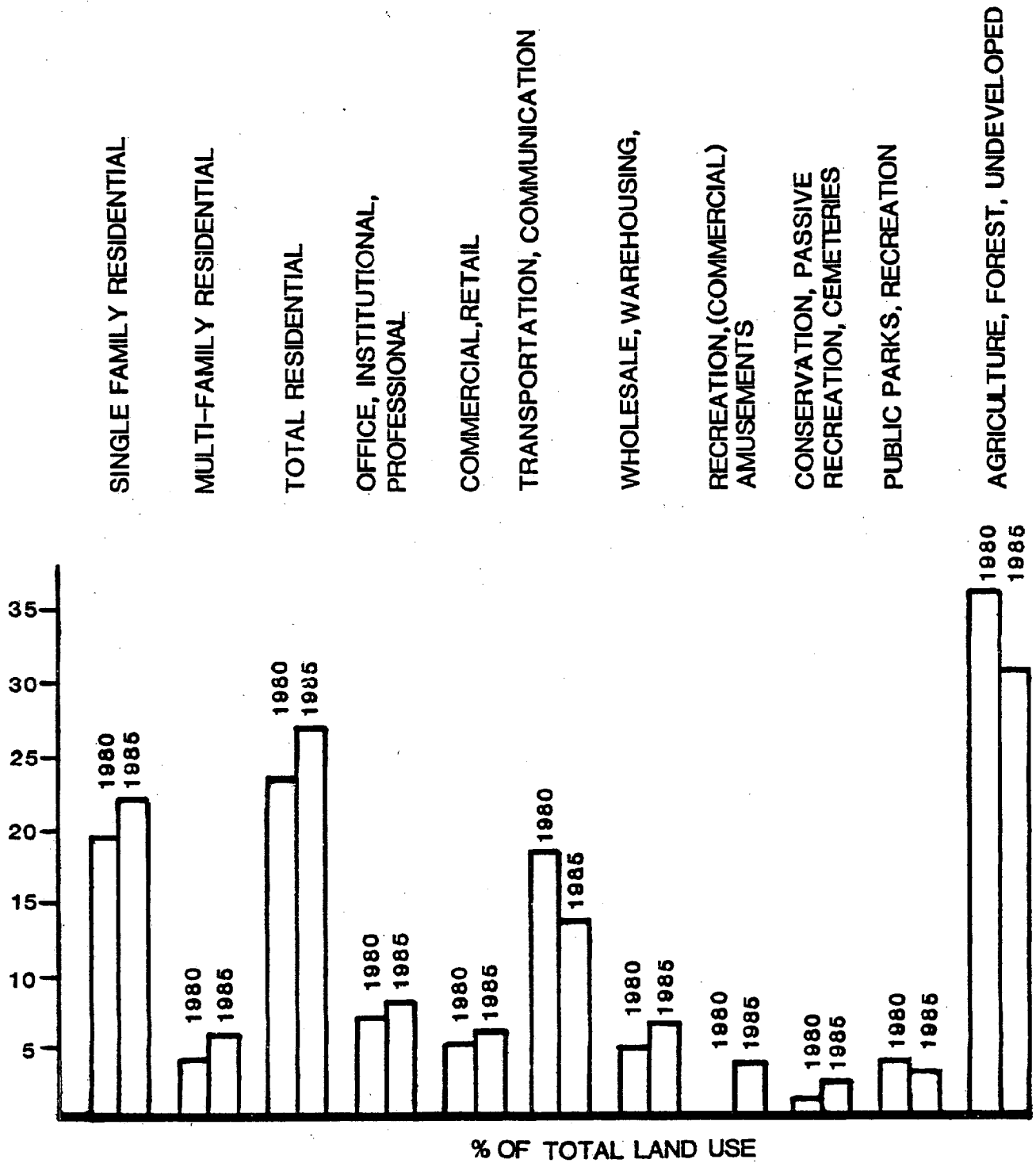
WILMINGTON PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

AUGUST, 1985

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# Wilmington, NC - 1985 Land Use Survey



## WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA

### 1985 LAND USE SURVEY

#### Introduction

This report consists of three subsections:

1. Major Findings
2. Local Land Use Problems
3. Conclusion

These discussions will present a brief overview of the land use survey and a comparison with the conditions and trends disclosed in the 1980 survey. More detailed data and a description of the methodology used will be found in the appendixes.

Between 1980 and 1985, the total area within the Wilmington corporate limits has increased 31% from 14,068 acres to 20,431 acres. This occurred primarily because of two significant annexations of unincorporated, contiguous, urbanized neighborhoods:

- A. Southside and Pine Valley
- B. Winter Park

These neighborhoods contain large areas of single family housing, with some commercial, office/institutional, and recreation development. Southside contains the new N. C. Ports Authority terminal and several large industrial concerns.

#### Major Findings:

1. More than 2,000 acres of single family housing have been added since 1980 due to Annexation A and B, an increase of 66%. It was noticed by researchers that many homes in the Historic District have been returned to single family use from previous use as multi-family dwellings.
2. However, over 400 acres of multi-family housing have been built within Wilmington, an increase of 77% since 1980. The growing popularity of this type of housing indicates the increasing costs of land purchase and construction.
3. Office and institutional acreage has increased by 70% since 1980. This indicates the growing importance of the service sector in the local economy. However, its proportion of the total developed land has decreased slightly, possibly owing to large single family acreage added in Annexation Areas A & B.

4. Commercial and retail uses continue to increase, as well as the proportion of developed land which they occupy. Commercial recreation has grown as a category of land use as golf courses, a water slide, skating rink and other such establishments were included in recently annexed areas. But the growth of this commercial activity again reflects the increasing importance of the local service sector.

5. Wholesale, warehousing and industrial development has doubled since 1980. This increase is due to the addition of industrial areas on the Southside near the shipping terminal as well as the growth of industry and distribution along North 23rd Street, near the airport.

6. Parks and Active Recreation declined in percentage owing to the addition of annexation areas without as large a proportion of public parkland as achieved within the city. Public parkland has increased, but not as much as commercial facilities.

7. Total vacant acreage has risen, but its proportion shows an overall decline. This perhaps indicates the extent of existing development in the annexation areas.

8. The increase of acreage in the category of Passive Recreation and Cemeteries has not been explained, since the two large cemeteries are not new. Areas used for passive recreation have generally not been formally protected by fee simple acquisition or zoning, unless made part of the City's park or drainage systems.

Figure 1

CITY OF WILMINGTON, N. C.  
1985 SUMMARY OF EXISTING LAND USE

<u>Land Use Category</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent of Total Area</u>	<u>Percent of Developed Land</u>
Total Residential	5,471	26.8%	39.8%
Single Family	4,484	21.9%	32.7%
Multi-Family	987	4.8%	7.2%
Professional, Office & Institutional	1,417	6.9%	10.3%
Commercial & Retail	1,195	5.8%	8.7%
Utilities, Transpor- tation & Communication	2,691	13.2%	19.6%
Industry, Distribution Warehousing & Wholesale	1,264	6.2%	9.2%
Recreation (total)	1,691	8.3%	12.3%
Recreation (Commercial)	690	3.4%	5.0%
Passive Rec. & Cemeteries*	432	2.1%	3.1%
Parks & Active Rec.*	569	2.8%	4.1%
Agriculture, Undeveloped & Forest *	6,192	30.3%	
Water *	511	2.5%	
Total Area	20,430	100%	
Total Developed Land	13,728	72.2	100%
*Total Open Space (Land & Water)	8,394	41.1%	

## LOCAL LAND USE PROBLEMS

During the 1980 survey, two types of local problems were identified in the process: incompatible development and unplanned development. These still exist in the City to some degree, but gradual improvements in the enforcement of land use controls, including a new zoning ordinance (in effect as of August 1, 1984), have lessened the creation of new problems. This is despite accelerated growth in the Wilmington Area.

Particular problem areas, however, can be noted:

1. Pressure to build multi-family housing on infill sites in existing residential areas can create conflict within these neighborhoods.

Spirea Drive: This neighborhood, close to the intersection of N.C. Highway 132 and U.S. 74-76, has multi-family development at one end. Pressure for more has resulted in a number of rezoning controversies before the Planning Commission.

Greenway Avenue: The center of a stable residential superblock, undeveloped and located close to major over loaded traffic arteries, was recently denied multi-family zoning.

2. As less good land is available for development, pressure increases for development on marginally suitable sites such as low-lying or flood prone areas. (A Flood-Plain Overlay District is delineated on all City zoning maps.)

Chestnut Street: Flood plain land across from a grade school in a prime residential neighborhood was proposed for multi-family development, but denied.

Kerr and Wilshire Avenues: Near areas of busy commercial activity, a multi-family development is being developed on land that is partly flood-plain. Specific problems on the site are being addressed through the site plan review process.

Covil and Mercer Avenues: At an intersection of these two streets, owners of low wet land zoned residential, but near a railroad and across from land zoned for light manufacturing, are seeking rezoning for commercial development.

3. In pathways for planned thoroughfares, pressure for development has increased, causing traffic and land management problems for the city, and casting uncertainty on completion of portions of the City's thoroughfare plan.

Smith Creek Parkway: The route has not been finalized, but has been generally determined. A development group currently wants the route to be changed to accomodate their residential development proposal.



4. Because traffic problems within the City are reaching critical proportions, increasing attention is being given to the land use implications of transportation improvements.

Smith Creek Parkway: New Hanover County Public Schools found itself building a new school close to this major arterial route between new U.S. I-40 and Downtown Wilmington. Much thought is being directed toward the impact of I-40 traffic on thoroughfares and neighborhoods.

I-40 and College Road: According to local realtors, land speculation along N. C. 132 (College Road), has accelerated, owing to the prospect of I-40 being completed by 1989, with traffic pouring onto this existing thoroughfare.

Glen Meade Neighborhood: Seeking to prevent through traffic from winding through this residential area, this neighborhood has mounted a vigorous campaign to persuade City Council and fellow citizens to find a permanent solution to this situation.

Lincoln Forest: Street stub closings were sought to protect this residential neighborhood from through traffic that might be generated by more intense development of adjacent open land.

5. Commercial and office development still tends to spread along major thoroughfares, locally, and has already grown along segments of arteries which were recently annexed by the City. Strong efforts are being made under the 1984 Zoning Ordinance, to restrict such development. The description of the CB district calls for the clustering of small businesses which only require a small land area. Large commercial facilities which serve the region are now restricted to RB districts which are "designed to locate at the intersections of major thoroughfares and occur in clustered patterns." Similarly, all businesses, offices and institutions should be clustered in planned plazas or parks at major intersections, as opposed to dangerous and unsightly strips of such development along each thoroughfare.

Thoroughfares already suffering major traffic problems due to strip development are:

Carolina Beach Road  
South College Road  
Market Street  
Wrightsville Avenue

Oleander Drive  
Kerr Avenue  
North 23rd Street  
Wilshire Boulevard (partially)

## CONCLUSION

Land use problems do not appear to be accelerating at a rate equal to the population and economic growth of the area. This can be attributed to strong, more consistent enforcement of development regulations in recent years. New zoning regulations for the City, just put into effect last year, resulted from a three-year effort by City officials, staff, and concerned citizenry. New spot zonings have been virtually eliminated. Requests which would result in commercial encroachments into residential areas have been reduced considerably from earlier years.

Current planning conflicts lie primarily in the area of multi-family infill development and its traffic implications on existing neighborhoods. These problems can be minimized by continued improvements in policies and development regulations, which will be considered as part of the 1985 update to the Land Use Plan and Policies.

# APPENDICES

## A. METHODOLOGY

The following is a synopsis of the techniques and materials utilized in obtaining and summarizing the land use data contained in this report:

1. Development of land use categories and sub-categories to address local existing land use patterns.
2. Assignment of land use codes used by New Hanover County Tax Office to appropriate land use category and/or sub-category (SEE LISTING IN B. BELOW).
3. Computer printouts obtained for each land parcel in Planning Area by land use code and location. Information transferred to corresponding 1" = 400' scale planning maps which were then color-coded.
4. Information verified by aerial photography, field checks, and telephone surveys.
5. 1" = 400' color-coded maps hand measured for each land use category by individual, 1/16th sections which correspond to County Tax Office 1" = 100' maps.
6. City of Wilmington totals obtained by summing appropriate map area data.

## B. LISTING OF LAND USES BY CATEGORY

As indicated in the Methodology, the codes assigned by the County Tax Office served as the basis for determining the existing use of each land parcel in the Planning Area. The following list represents the manner in which these codes were aggregated under the land use categories and sub-categories for the survey and analysis. The numbers shown are those used by the Tax Office for each land use.

### Single Family Residential

- 01 - Family Residential
- 04 - Season Residential 1 Family
- 19 - Other Residential

### Mobile Homes

- 10 - Mobile Home
- 14 - Mobile Home Park

Multi-Family Residential

- 02 - Family Residential
- 03 - 3 or more Family Residential
- 05 - Season Residential 2 + Family

Office and Institutional

- 61 - Finance & Real Estate
- 65 - Physicians and Dental Services
- 65A - Hospital Services
- 65B - Sanitoriums, Convalescent and Rest Home Services
- 65D - Other Medical and Health Services
- 65E - Legal Services
- 67 - Governmental
- 68 - Educational
- 69A - Religious Activities
- 69B - Religious Activities and Educational School
- 12 - Group Quarters

Commercial

- 52 - Retail - Building Materials, Hardware, and Farm
- 53 - Retail - General Merchandise
- 54A - Groceries - Retail Convenience Food
- 54B - Fish and Seafoods - Retail
- 54C - Other Retail Trade - Food
- 55 - Retail Auto
- 55A - Tires, Batteries, and Accessories - Retail
- 55B - Gasoline Service Stations
- 55C - Marine Craft and Accessories - Retail
- 55D - Marina - Marine Craft Docking and Services
- 55E - Retail Trade Auto, Marine Craft Aircraft, Accesories
- 56 - Retail Apparel
- 57 - Retail Home Furnishings
- 58A - Eating Place - Consumption on Premises
- 58B - Fast Food Service
- 58C - Drinking Place (Alcoholic Beverages)
- 13 - Residential Hotel
- 6 - Travel Trailer Park
- 73 - Amusements
- 84A - Sport Fishing
- 84B - Commercial Fishing
- 84C - Other Fishing and Related
- 62 - Personal Services
- 63 - Business Services
- 64 - Repair - Auto Services
- 66 - Contract Construction
- 59 - Other Retail
- 15 - Transient Lodging

Transportation, Communications, Utilities

- 41 - Rail Transit
- 42 - Motor Vehicles
- 43 - Aircraft
- 44 - Marine Craft
- 45 - Street Right-of-way
- 46 - Auto Parking
- 47 - Communications
- 48 - Utilities
- 49 - Other Transportation, Communication and Utility

Wholesale, Warehousing and Distribution

- 51 - Wholesale Trade

Industrial (Intensive)

- 21 - Food and Kindred
- 23 - Apparel and Similar
- 27 - Printing and Allied
- 34 - Fabricated Metal
- 35 - Professional, Scientific and Controlling Instruments
- 36 - Boat and Ship Construction
- 39 - Miscellaneous Manufacturing
- 84 - Fishery

Industrial (Extensive)

- 22 - Textile Mill
- 24 - Lumber and Wood
- 25 - Furniture and Fixtures
- 26 - Paper and Allied
- 28 - Chemical and Allied
- 29 - Petroleum, Refining and Related
- 31 - Rubber and Plastic
- 32 - Stone, Clay and Glass
- 33 - Primary Metal
- 85 - Mining and Related

Recreation

- 71 - Cultural or Nature Exhibition
- 72 - Public Assembly
- 74 - Recreational Activities
- 75 - Resorts and Camps
- 76 - Parks

Undeveloped and Agriculture

- 81 - Agriculture
- 82 - Agriculture Related
- 83 - Forestry and Related
- 91 - Unused Land
- 92 - Non-Commercial Forest

Miscellaneous <sup>1/</sup>

89 - Other Resource

69C - Other Services

79 - Other Cultural, Entertainment and Recreation

94 - Vacant Floors

95 - Under Construction

C. RELATED MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Listed below are materials related to this report which are available for inspection and use at the Planning Department Offices:

1. 1" = 400' scale planning maps which encompass the entire City color-coded by land use category.
2. Land use data which correspond to the area within the 1" = 100' scale tax maps and the 1" = 400' scale Planning maps.

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<sup>1/</sup> Parcels in the Miscellaneous category were included in the appropriate land use category according to their individual use.

WILMINGTON, N.C. - 1985 LAND USE SURVEY  
(All figures in acres.)

MAP NO.	WILMINGTON, N.C. - 1985 LAND USE SURVEY (All figures in acres.)				WILMINGTON, N.C. - 1985 LAND USE SURVEY (All figures in acres.)									
	SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	TOTAL RESIDENTIAL	OFFICE, INSTITUTIONAL, PROFESSIONAL	COMMERCIAL & RETAIL	UTILITIES, TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION	WHOLESALE, WAREHOUSING, INDUSTRY	RECREATION (COMMERCIAL) & AMUSEMENTS	CONSERVATION, PSY. RECREATION	PARKS & ACTIVE RECREATION	AGRICULTURE, FOREST, UNDEVELOPED	WATER	ACRES/MAP WITHIN CITY OF WILMINGTON	
40													11	
41	6		6	6	6	58	23						8	
42	8		8	6	3	3	6						37	
47				17	23	69	55						253	
48	622	1	623	152	80	493	117		81	4			10	
49	251	134	385	69	264	219	14	6		92			73	
50			0							6			59	
53	8	7	15	4	8	28	132						11	
54	640	306	947	115	88	436	81	178	1	1			124	
55	662	195	857	373	192	302	6	15		101			8	
56	33		33	366	6	6				33			268	
59	54	1	55	7	47	7	287			4			2,208	
60	559	170	729	99	297	33	33	15	39	12			437	
61	752	32	784	163	119	233	43	43	43	672			2,354	
62	149	1	150	8	25	54	17	10	10	642			2,396	
64			0			40	200			32			327	
65	327	48	375	12	58	193	258	233	258	43			84	
66	332	11	344	29	19	126	8	184		1,194			2,360	
67	62	6	68	1	7	115				633			1,376	
70						11				300			882	
71										77			95	
Total acres/usage	4,484	987	5,470	1,417	1,195	2,691	1,264	690	432	569	6,192	511	30,431	

YEAR	WILMINGTON, N.C. - 1985 LAND USE SURVEY (All figures in acres.)				WILMINGTON, N.C. - 1985 LAND USE SURVEY (All figures in acres.)									
	SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	TOTAL RESIDENTIAL	OFFICE, INSTITUTIONAL, PROFESSIONAL	COMMERCIAL & RETAIL	UTILITIES, TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATION	WHOLESALE, WAREHOUSING, INDUSTRY	RECREATION (COMMERCIAL) & AMUSEMENTS	CONSERVATION, PSY. RECREATION	PARKS & ACTIVE RECREATION	AGRICULTURE, FOREST, UNDEVELOPED	WATER	ACRES WITHIN CITY OF WILMINGTON	
1980	2,693	559	3,252	833	685	2,529	605	0	137	508	5,052	467	14,068	
% OF CITY AREA	19.1%	4.0%	23.1%	5.9%	4.9%	18.0%	4.3%	0.0%	1.0%	3.6%	35.9%	3.3%	100.0%	
% OF DEVELP. LAND	31.5%	6.6%	38.0%	9.7%	8.0%	29.6%	7.5%	0.0%	5.9%					
1985	4,484	987	5,470	1,417	1,195	2,691	1,264	690	432	569	6,192	511	20,431	
% OF CITY AREA	21.9%	4.8%	26.8%	6.9%	5.8%	13.2%	6.2%	3.4%	2.1%	2.8%	30.3%	2.5%	100.0%	
% OF DEVELP. LAND	32.7%	7.2%	39.8%	10.3%	8.7%	19.6%	9.2%	5.0%	3.1%	4.1%				

