

With eight meetings under their belts, members of a Moore County Land-Use Study Group are preparing a draft document with a likely release date sometime in January. Meeting this week in the Senior Enrichment Center, members of the steering committee and interested residents engaged in a mapping exercise where projected residential growth areas and likely industrial development locales were pinpointed. Participants broke up into five groups, each tasked with coming up with a future land-use map uniquely its own. A few of the study groups predicted growth would take place near existing concentrations, while one study group selected areas where growth of one kind or another might naturally evolve. By 2030 Moore County's population is expected to grow from 89,000 to 115,000, according to Jeremy Rust, a long-range planner for the county. That kind of population increase will require 12,000 new homes, 1,500 more industrial jobs and 9,400 more non-industrial jobs. A Mega-Park on 3,000 acres between Moore and Montgomery county drew considerable support from more than one group. The Industrial Park, first proposed a couple of years ago, was conceived as a magnet attracting the interest of environmentally-friendly companies. County Commissioners approved the county's first land-use plan in 1999. The steering committee is working on revising it for the first time. The committee, chaired by Robert Hayter, has 20 voting members and seven Ex-Officio members, including the mayors of Aberdeen, Pinehurst and Southern Pines.