



Town of Huntersville 2030 Community Plan

Adopted by
Town Board of Commissioners on
June 20, 2011

Huntersville 2030 Community Plan

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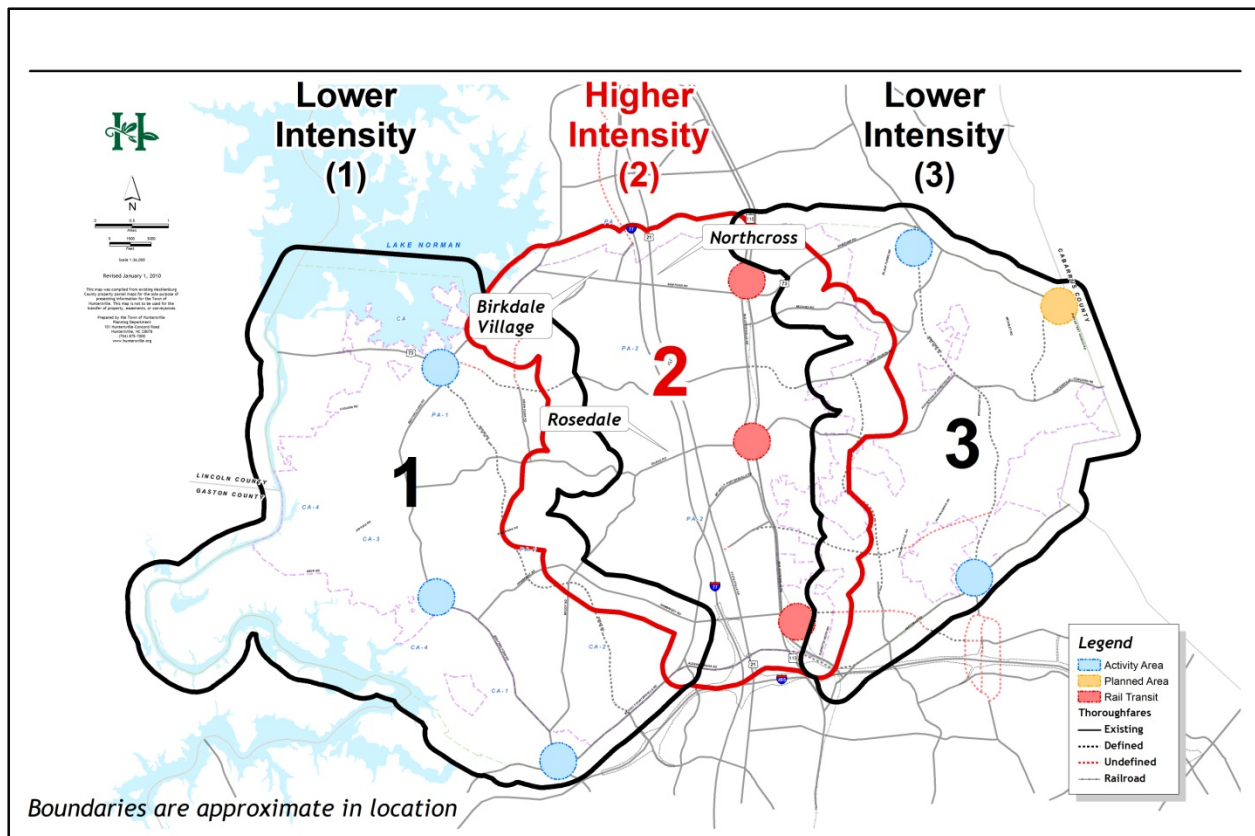
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Town of Huntersville Vision Statement

In 2030, Huntersville will be a vibrant and visually attractive community defined by high quality growth and development that:

- preserves natural, scenic and historical assets;
- offers a variety of housing and employment options;
- creates opportunities for recreation, art and culture; and
- is served by a multi-modal interconnected transportation system.

Land use and transportation planning practices will be responsive to a world that is changing, will be fiscally responsible, and reflect an appropriate balance of economic, environmental and social factors. Higher intensity development and redevelopment will generally be focused within two miles of the I-77/NC-115 corridor (area 2), with lower intensity development located east and west of this corridor (areas 1 and 3) and in mixed-use village centers at important crossroads.



Introduction and Framework

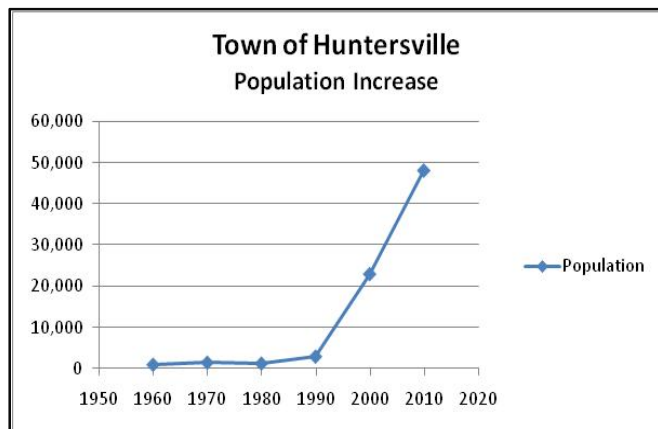
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Located just 12 miles north of Charlotte, North Carolina, the nation's 17th largest city, the Town of Huntersville has experienced phenomenal growth over the past two decades. From a population of just 3,014 in 1990, to a 2010 Census population figure of 46,773 residents, the Town has seen an increase of 1,452% in just 20 years. According to 2010 Census totals, Huntersville is now the 19th largest municipality in North Carolina, following an 87% increase in population between 2000 and 2010 (see **Figure I-1**). Fortunately, most of this population growth occurred after the Town established a new vision for development, outlined in the Huntersville Community Plan adopted in 1995.

Figure I-1

Huntersville Population Growth 1960-2010



In general, the 1995 Community Plan called for:

- Allowing a mixture of land uses and residential building types following Traditional Town Design principles.
- Establishing a transportation network that promotes street connectivity, alternative designs for new thoroughfares and planning for future passenger rail to the area.
- Buildings in the commercial corridors to front public streets, accommodate pedestrians and have parking in the side and rear yards.
- Enhancement of Downtown Huntersville.
- Promote the preservation of rural areas.

In 1996, the Huntersville Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances were modified to promote development as envisioned in the 1995 Huntersville Community Plan. Due to the foresight of community leaders at the time, Huntersville was able to proactively set the tone for the wave of development that has since occurred, rather than simply reacting to it.

As a result, residents of Huntersville enjoy a high quality of life, as evidenced by the strong ratings given by citizens in a recent survey conducted in conjunction with preparation of the Plan. The Town has also been nationally recognized as one of the premier places to live in several recent publications, including a 2009 report by Forbes Magazine which identified Huntersville as the number two most popular destination to move in the U.S.

Citizen Survey: 97% of the respondents rated Huntersville as a good to excellent place to live, and 93% rated Huntersville as a good to excellent place to raise children.

In 2003, the Huntersville Community Plan was updated in response to increasing development pressures associated with the construction of up to two-and-a-half residential units per acre in the Rural zoning district and concern over impacts arising from this development, including mass site grading, clearing of vegetation, growing traffic congestion and degradation of the water quality of streams and lakes. The primary objective of the 2003 Community Plan was to address the rapid pace of residential development that occurred between 1996 and 2002 on the eastern and western edges of Huntersville; development which compromised the preservation of rural areas envisioned by the 1995 Community Plan. The 2003 Huntersville Community Plan update reinforced the need to preserve the existing low intensity development patterns within the eastern and western areas of Huntersville, with an emphasis on protecting specific types of valued open space (i.e. mature woodlands, scenic views, prime farmland, etc.).

The 2003 Community Plan also reiterated the 1995 Community Plan vision for a redeveloped downtown, an integrated multimodal transportation system and commercial development that emphasized architecture and de-emphasized parking.

The Huntersville Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance were subsequently amended to achieve the vision established in the 2003 Huntersville Community Plan update.

It is now eight years since the last community plan update in 2003 and much has changed. Continued rapid population growth paired with strains on the Town's transportation infrastructure have required policy changes to manage this growth. These changes have included steps to ensure the adequate provision of public facilities and road improvements through the adoption of "Traffic Impact Analysis" and "Adequate Public Facilities" ordinances.

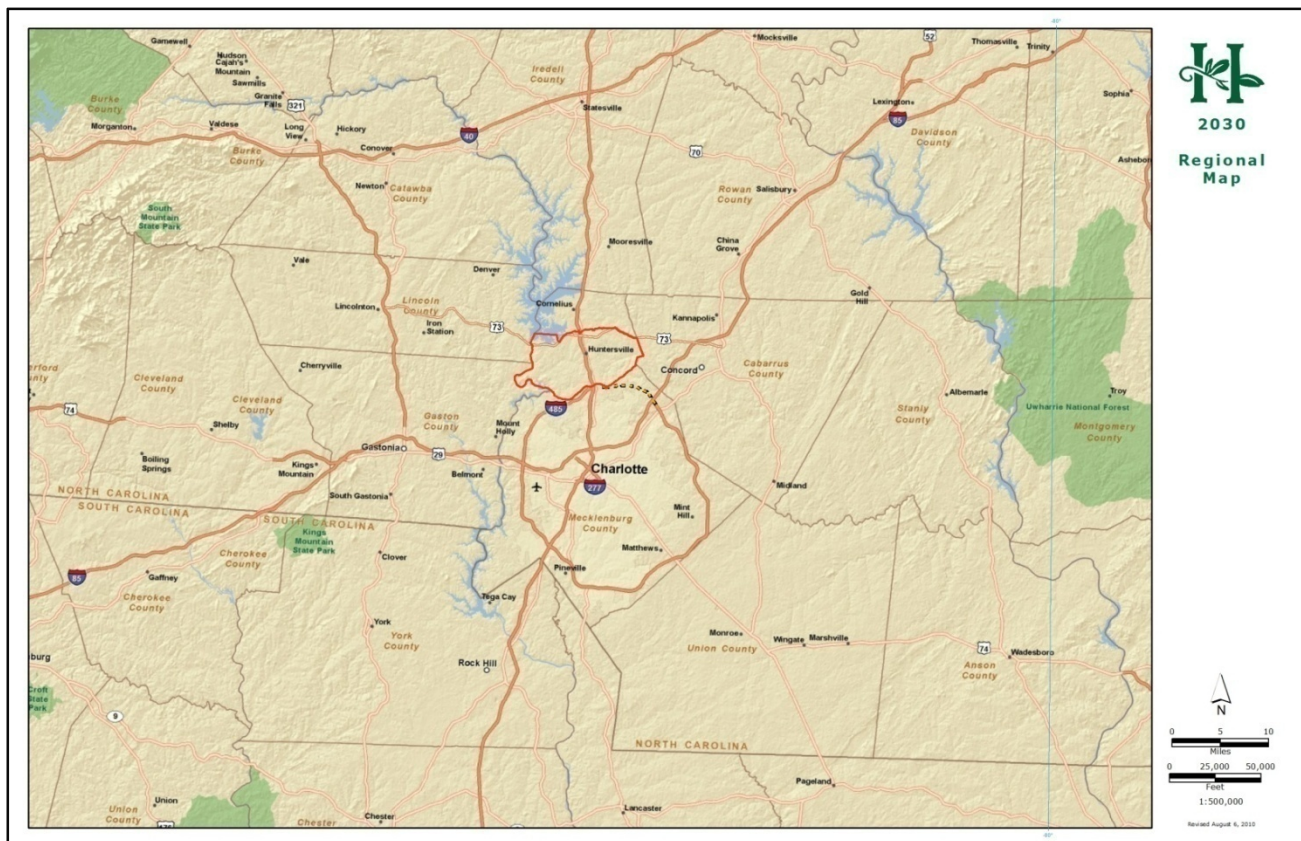
Since 2008, the economy has experienced the greatest recession since the Great Depression in the 1920's, with implications that will affect the development landscape well into the future. The projected change in the Town's demographics (e.g. an increase in the 65 and older population), along with the impacts associated with completion of I-485 and the startup of commuter rail service will also result in profound land use and transportation changes as the Town seeks to balance growth with the desire to maintain a high quality of life.

Because communities tend to develop incrementally over time, often spanning decades, it is difficult to observe the cumulative impacts of this development. Therefore, periodic and comprehensive evaluation of a community's growth pattern is imperative in order to ensure the city develops in a desirable fashion.

Introduction & Framework: Huntersville 2030 Community Plan

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Map I-1



Centrally positioned in the NC Piedmont region, the Town is located along the eastern border of Lake Norman and the Catawba River – the location of one of two (2) primary intake points for the Charlotte region’s water supply. Duke Power’s McGuire Nuclear Facility is located within the Town’s extra-territorial jurisdiction and was built on the shore of Lake Norman. The lake was created by Duke in 1962 to provide a source of cooling water for the power plant. Since its creation, Lake Norman has been a strong draw for residential and commercial development, as well as recreational use, and serves as the namesake for the “Lake Norman Region.”

In terms of the regional transportation network, Interstate 77 bisects Huntersville and provides north-south access both to the region and points beyond. I-485, scheduled for completion in 2014, is located just south of Huntersville’s jurisdiction and will serve to further enhance the regional transportation network. Finally, NC 73 crosses the northern part of Huntersville and, in addition to NC 150 in Mooresville, provides for primary east-west movement between I-40 and I-85.

Besides Charlotte, the closest major cities to Huntersville are:

- Columbia, SC – 74 miles
- Winston-Salem, NC – 77 miles
- Raleigh, NC – 132 miles
- Charleston, SC – 165 miles
- Knoxville, TN – 185 miles
- Atlanta, GA – 224 miles
- Richmond, VA – 253 miles
- Washington, DC – 336 miles

1.3 Purpose of the Community Plan

While there is no State mandate requiring the preparation of a community (or comprehensive) plan for municipalities in North Carolina, the State’s zoning enabling statute establishes that “zoning regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan.” The Huntersville Zoning Ordinance states: *“The purposes of these regulations are to...encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the corporate area and extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction, in accordance with the Huntersville Community Plan (Strategic Update) and other adopted long-range plans for the Town of Huntersville.”*

The 2030 Huntersville Community Plan is a policy document intended to guide the physical development of the Town that:

1. Provides the opportunity for Huntersville to look comprehensively at the focus areas addressed in this plan and how they relate to each other.
2. Establishes a guide for daily decisions facing government such as rezoning requests, development proposals, and infrastructure investments.
3. Gives guidance to land owners and developers in making development and investment decisions.
4. Provides an opportunity for citizens to give input on the future direction of the community.
5. May be used by state and federal agencies in making various grant and investment funding decisions.
6. Establishes short and long-term steps the Town needs to take to achieve long-range goals.

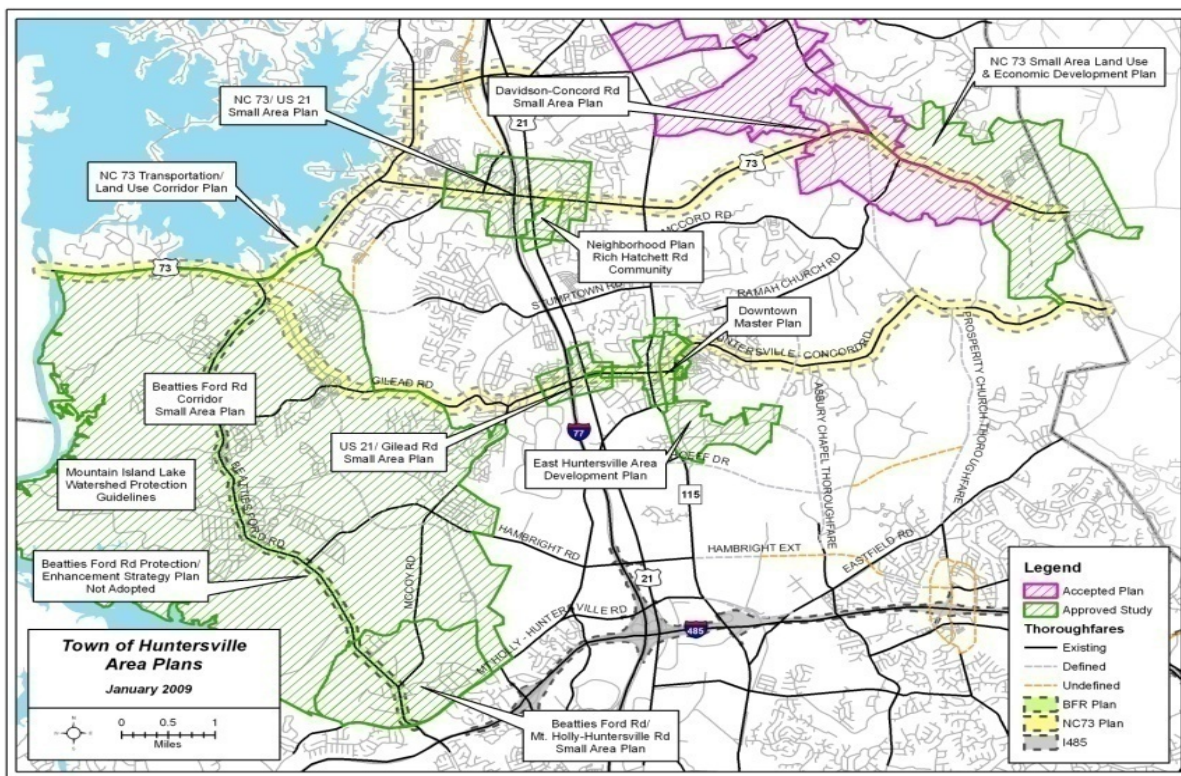
1.4 Relationship to Other Plans

As noted in Section 1.1 above, Huntersville has previously prepared long-range Community Plans for its entire zoning jurisdiction, most recently in 2003. Since the Huntersville 2030 Community Plan addresses such a large land area (now over 63 square miles) it is, by necessity, general in nature. In other words, the Community Plan does not make recommendations on land uses or development patterns for specific geographic locations, but rather is broad in nature and intended to provide overall guidance for land use and development throughout the Town.

It is within this context that the Town, since adoption of its present land development regulations in 1996, has undertaken the completion of a number of “Small Area Plans (SAPs)” to guide growth and development for particular geographic areas within Huntersville. Because SAPs encompass a more compact geographic area than the Community Plan, recommendations are more specific, such as calling for the connection or extension of certain streets, or encouraging certain land development activities.

Map I-2 illustrates the geographic boundaries of the ten area plans previously prepared by the Town. Appendix 2 (page 136) lists each of these plans, along with a plan description, status and date of preparation. All together, these SAPs cover a land mass of approximately 30 square miles, or just under 50% of the total 63

Map I-2
Small Area Plan Boundaries



square miles in Huntersville's zoning jurisdiction. **Map I-3** is an example from the East Huntersville Area Development Plan which illustrates specific land use recommendations for a vacant tract of land in downtown Huntersville, along with strategic road improvements necessary to accommodate this development.

Map I-3
East Huntersville Area Development Plan



It is important to note that for future SAPs, there needs to be careful coordination between these plans and the Huntersville 2030 Community Plan, in order to ensure consistency between the various policies and recommendations for each plan.

In addition to SAPs, there are numerous other plans that have an effect on land use and development in Huntersville. They include, but are not limited to:

Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools Facilities Plan, Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization's Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP), Huntersville Recreation Master Plan, Huntersville Greenway and Bikeway Master Plan and the Charlotte Area Transit 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan. As new plans are prepared (or as older plans are updated) which affect the Town, it is essential that Huntersville be an active participant in the planning process.

Additional information on SAPs and the SAP planning process can be found in Section 5.2 of this chapter.

1.5 Comprehensive Plan Updates and Amendments

The Huntersville 2030 Community Plan is intended to guide growth and development within the Town of Huntersville and its planning jurisdiction through 2030. Periodic review of the Plan, including policies and action items, will be necessary to ensure its continued relevance. Such review should occur by staff, the Town Board and Planning Board on a regular basis (i.e. no later than within seven years of the plan's adoption). Amendments to the plan should be adopted as deemed appropriate by the Town Board.

1.6 Organization of the Plan

The Plan itself reflects a trend among recent long-range plans to be more "policy" and "action" oriented rather than a compilation of static information which can quickly become dated and limited in usefulness.

While the various focus areas comprising the Plan can be viewed as separate “stand-alone” chapters, they are intended to be read in the context of and in relationship to the other focus areas.

The Huntersville 2030 Community Plan is based upon the Town of Huntersville Vision Statement found on Page ii of the Plan. This Vision Statement serves as the foundation of the entire Plan.

The Plan is organized into the following six focus areas:

- Housing
- Environment
- Transportation
- Economic and Commercial Development
- Downtown
- Public Facilities

While each Focus Area is unique, featuring different content and organization, they all generally contain the following: a vision statement, providing general direction for each particular focus area; introduction, historical background, review of previous planning efforts and the identification and analysis of key issues.

Each Focus Area concludes with “Policies and Action Items”. The Policies offer general guidance in a number of areas related to the individual Focus Areas and are followed by Action items to implement these policies. Together the Plan Policies and Action items serve as the Implementation framework for the Plan.

1.7 Public Involvement Process

The planning process for the Huntersville 2030 Community Plan began in March 2010, with a series of joint meetings between the Town Board and Planning Board. The purpose of these meetings was to establish a framework for development of the Plan and to refine the elements of the Plan as they were prepared.

Subsequent joint meetings of the Town Board and Planning Board continued throughout the community plan process. The first step in the planning process was a “visioning” exercise where board members were asked to respond to the question: **“It is 2030 and Huntersville is a success. What made it successful?”** The responses to this question were tallied and voted on, with the top responses serving as the basis for the development of specific visions for each of the Focus Areas contained in this Plan, as well as for related policies and action Items. A similar process was conducted with the public in April of 2010.

Input received from the Town Board, Planning Board and members of the public was then used to create a “Resident Survey”, containing questions that pertained to each of the Focus Areas. The purpose of the Survey was to gain a broader level of public input to assist in preparation of the Plan. The Resident Survey, consisting of 46 questions, was randomly mailed to over 1,500 households to ensure a statistically accurate response. A total of 453 responses were received, or approximately 30% of the total mailed surveys, providing a 95% level of confidence in the results.

The survey was also posted on the Town's web site, which received 366 responses. The results of the random and online surveys can be found in Appendix 1. The information gained from these surveys was invaluable in guiding preparation of the Community Plan. Various drafts of the Plan were posted on the Town's web site throughout the planning process and also presented in several public forums. Feedback from these sessions was used in preparing the final Plan document.

2.0 FRAMEWORK

This Framework section provides the planning context for the Huntersville 2030 Community Plan, including a discussion of data collection and analysis, and the following major planning issues that have informed and guided preparation of the Plan: *population growth, changing demographics, residential/non-residential development; transportation system development; environmental protection/preservation; and sustainability.*

2.1 Data Collection & Analysis

An important component of long-range land use planning is data collection and analysis, as well as research of trends likely to affect the Town between now and 2030.

Historical data is particularly valuable both in providing an explanation for current conditions and illuminating possible future trends and conditions. In preparation for drafting the Huntersville 2030 Community Plan, demographic (including population, household and employment) data was collected and analyzed to provide the necessary background for the Plan and its various components.

While the complete 2010 Census information was not available during the preparation of the Plan, that which was published has been incorporated where possible to reflect the latest available data.

In addition to the use of Census data, input gathered from the public through use of a "Resident Survey", served to highlight the major issues to be addressed by the Plan, as well as providing the basis for many of the individual policy and action items found in the Plan.

2.2 Major Planning Issues

A number of major planning issues have influenced and guided preparation and organization of the Huntersville 2030 Community Plan. These issues are outlined below.

Population Growth

The issue that will have the single largest influence on the Town of Huntersville between now and 2030 is continued population growth. By 2030, the Town's population is projected to grow anywhere from a low figure of 78,000 to as high as 100,000. The Town's ability to accommodate this growth through the provision of public services such as roads, police, fire, parks, recreation and other municipal services will represent the greatest challenge over the next 20 years.

Changing Demographics

In 2010, the Town of Huntersville's demographic makeup is a picture of contrasts. The number of Huntersville residents five and under, represent just over 8% of the total population, or approximately 4,000 residents.

For the U.S. this five and under age group stands at an average of just over 6%. The present and future impacts associated with this large number of residents will continue to be reflected in the demand for school (particularly elementary) facilities, along with parks and recreation services through 2030.

At the other end of the age spectrum, in 2010, the number of Huntersville residents age 65 and older stands at just under 7%, or 3,929 residents. This figure compares with a statewide average of approximately 13%. In 2030, projections for North Carolina show an increase in the population 65 and older to nearly 18%. While the percentage of Huntersville residents 65 and older is not likely to reach this level, it will certainly rise, resulting in an increase in the demand for senior services (e.g. activities, facilities and organizations), as well as for senior-friendly housing options, ranging from smaller, one-level housing units to age-restricted and congregate care facilities.

Residential/Non-residential Development

Based on all current projections, the residential and non-residential development boom of the last 20 years will continue in Huntersville through 2030. In 2030, the Town's medium range population projection figure is 89,597.

In regard to future non-residential development, Huntersville's proximity to Charlotte, location along the planned North Corridor commuter rail line and I-485 outer loop, together with an ample supply of land for office, industrial and retail development, will continue to generate significant non-residential growth and development in the Town.

Transportation System

The projected increase in residential and non-residential growth and development through 2030 will produce associated traffic impacts and require a continued emphasis on long-range transportation planning and system development through 2030. The scarcity of public funding for new system development highlights the need for alternative funding mechanisms, such as public/private partnerships, in order to meet the ever-increasing travel demand needs of the public.

Multi-modal (i.e. roads, mass transit and non-motorized) transportation system development will be vital in responding to the transportation system needs of the next 20 years. The continued linkage of land use and transportation system development will also be vital to maintaining not only the economic vitality within the Town but also the quality of life enjoyed by residents.

Environment Protection/Preservation

Balancing the projected growth in Huntersville with the preservation of natural, cultural and historic environments will continue to be an important priority through the year 2030.

To date, Huntersville has adopted a number of environmental regulations to minimize growth related environmental impacts, including water quality, tree preservation and open space preservation. The Town has also been supportive of the creation of public nature preserves, conserved lands and park land, as well as the designation and protection of historic properties.

Sustainability

Perhaps the most far-reaching trend likely to affect and influence land use and transportation policies through 2030 is the sustainability movement. The most widely accepted definition of sustainability is “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Sustainability involves balancing the competing interests of environmental protection, social needs and economic prosperity. Sustainability has and will continue to influence the building and land development industry through the use of “Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design LEED” principles and practices. “Smart Growth” planning practices have also resulted in a movement away from the “sprawl” land use practices of the last 50 years, toward a mixed-use (i.e. residential, commercial and employment uses) in proximity to one another. Energy issues will also influence economic growth over the next 20 years. As Huntersville continues to grow as a community, so too will the need to address and plan for residents’ desire for cultural, recreational and social interaction and opportunities.

3.0 FUTURE GROWTH

Population growth in the Town of Huntersville is expected to continue to be strong through 2030. This anticipated growth will be reflected in both the formation of new households, as well as in the number of Huntersville residents who are employed.

3.1 Population Projections

Between 1960 and 2010, the Town of Huntersville has grown from a population of 1,004 to 46,773, representing an increase of 4,559%. The vast majority of this increase has occurred since 1990, when the Town’s population was 3,014 (see **Figure I-1**). Illustrative of this rapid growth is **Figure I-2**, which shows an area that developed in the late 1990’s. Given growth trends over the past 20 years, the Town’s proximity to Charlotte and regional projections, the Town anticipates that its population will continue to grow at a robust pace through 2030.

Figure I-2
Area developed since the late 1990’s



Methodology for Population Projections

Population projections for the Town have been prepared based upon three growth scenarios: **low, medium and high**, corresponding to the number of building permits issued since 2000 for single-family homes, and 1990 for multi-family units.

For each scenario, the population projections were generated by adding the projected population totals for single and multi-family units anticipated to be built by 2020 and 2030.

The 2020 and 2030 population projections are based on Census figures of 2.67 persons/household for single-family units and 2.18 persons/household for multi-family units.

The resulting population figures were then adjusted to reflect a 5% vacancy rate, once again based on the most recent U.S. Census data available. The low, medium and high population projections for Huntersville through 2030 are shown in **Table I-1**.

**Table I-1
Population Projections 2020-2030**

Growth Rate	2020	2030
Low	62,678	78,583
Medium	68,185	89,597
High	73,689	100,605

Source: Town of Huntersville

The Charlotte Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) prepares regional growth population projections for its planning jurisdiction, which includes all of Mecklenburg County. The most recent MUMPO figures project Huntersville's population will be 85,400 in 2025 and 109,100 in 2035. Based on the midpoint between these two numbers, the MUMPO projection for Huntersville in 2030 would yield a figure of 97,250. This figure falls between the Town's medium and high range projections.

3.2 Households

The 2010 Census for Huntersville shows a total of 18,477 housing units. By 2020, the Town projects 26,637 total housing units and by 2030, 34,797, based on a medium growth scenario. MUMPO (utilizing a midpoint between 2025 and 2035 figures) projects a total of 35,850 housing units by 2030.

3.3 Employment

According to 2009 U.S. Census figures, the total number of Huntersville residents in the labor force was 23,371.

Based on data generated by MUMPO, projections show a steady increase in employment for Huntersville residents over the next 20 years, with a 2030 total of 42,650.

4.0 FOCUS AREAS

The Huntersville 2030 Community Plan includes six Focus Areas (*Housing, Environment, Transportation, Economic and Commercial Development, Downtown, Public Facilities*) that address areas of critical importance to the Town's development over the next 20 years. A Vision Statement for the entire Plan is complemented by specific vision statements for each of the Focus Areas. These vision statements are outlined below.

4.1 Housing

In 2030, Huntersville will have a variety of housing options with higher intensity residential development and redevelopment generally focused within 2 miles of the I-77/NC-115 corridor (area 2, **Map 1-4**) and lower intensity residential in the east and west areas of Town (area 1 & 3, **Map 1-4**) and in mixed use village nodes at important crossroads.

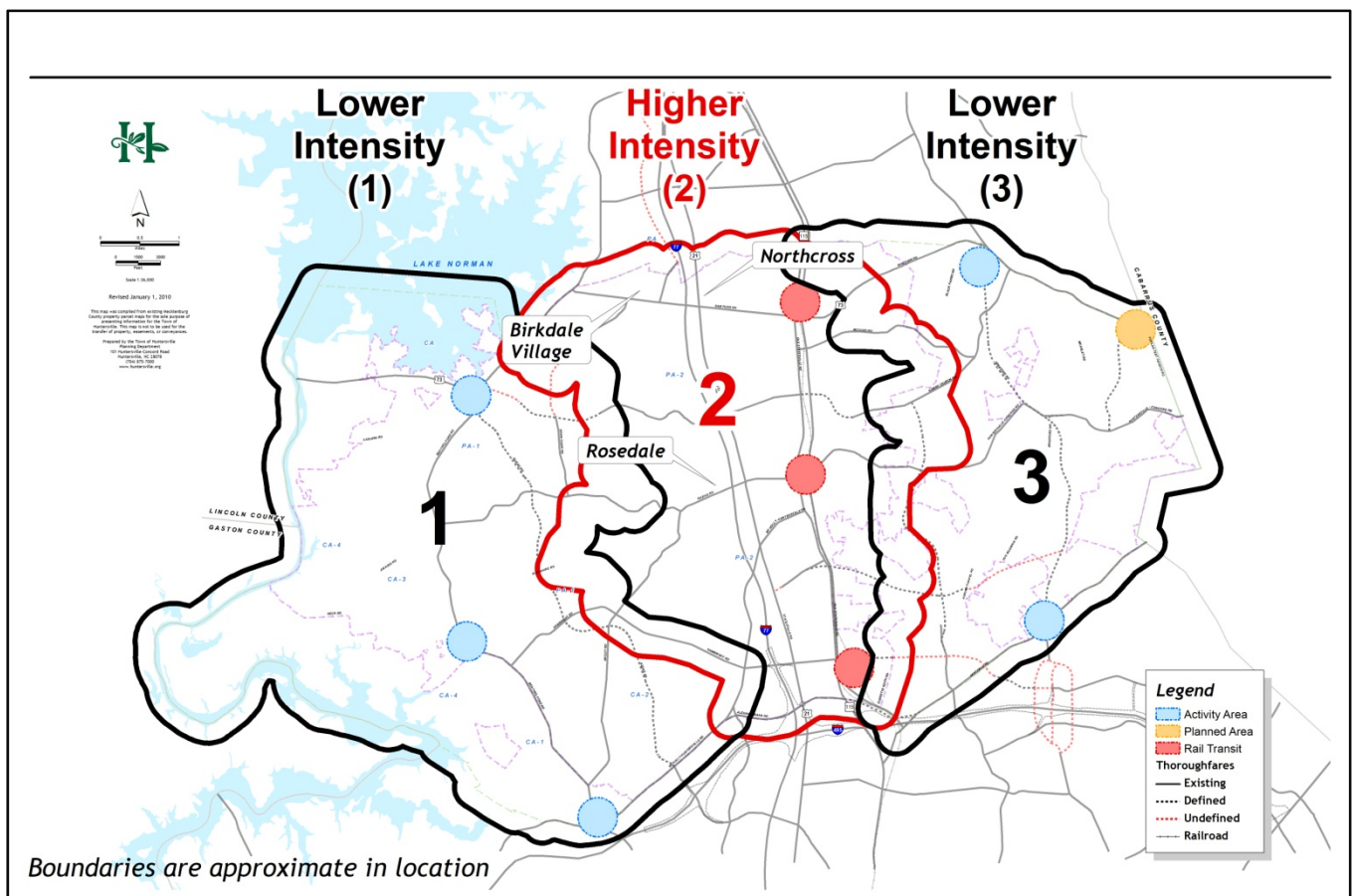
Residential uses should be located in close proximity to commercial services and employment opportunities and be accessible by a connected street network offering auto, pedestrian, bicycle and mass-transit mobility options.

Map 1-4
Future Land Use

4.2 Environment

In 2030, the Town of Huntersville will be a community that continues to place a high value on the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, as well as its scenic and cultural assets, through the adoption and implementation of progressive land use and transportation policies.

The use of renewable and alternative energy sources (e.g. solar and wind) will be encouraged, together with “green building,” “green neighborhood” and Low Energy Environmental Design (L.E.E.D) technologies and practices, to reduce environmental impacts and dependence on non-renewable resources.



New growth and development will be directed away from environmentally sensitive and protected areas and toward those areas which can accommodate development, resulting in an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable land use pattern.

4.3 Transportation

In 2030, the Town of Huntersville envisions a transportation system that supports the multi-modal travel demand of its residents, while reinforcing a sustainable land use pattern that focuses higher intensity development generally within two miles of I-77 and at identified mixed-use village centers. Vehicles (including mass transit), pedestrians and bicyclists will be accommodated within an integrated transportation system that provides connectivity between commercial and residential uses.

Transportation policies will support these goals and include a prioritized capital improvement program for both the maintenance of existing travel routes and the development of new ones. Finally, the transportation system will incorporate appropriate landscaping, lighting and pedestrian safety features to reinforce and complement the Town's desired land use development pattern.

4.4 Economic and Commercial Development

In 2030, Huntersville will have a diverse and sustainable economic base built upon:

1. A commitment to help expand existing business and industry.
2. A proactive search for opportunities and encouragement of investment by new business and industry.
3. A spirit of cooperation between business, government, schools and the community.

In 2030, commercial development in Huntersville will exemplify the highest possible integration of land use and transportation planning. Commercial development will follow a "mixed-use" center land use pattern that, to the greatest extent possible, meets the demand for a variety of commercial services at identifiable nodes and centers.

Commercial development will reflect the highest quality architectural standards, consistent with the surrounding built and natural environment, and be located in areas where adequate public infrastructure exists to support this development. Commercial development will be designed and function in the framework of a multi-modal integrated street network, minimizing traffic impacts and promoting a sustainable land use pattern.

4.5 Downtown

In 2030 Huntersville's Downtown will be a thriving, mixed-use town center with a variety of housing types (single-family, townhomes, live-work, and apartments), retail establishments, restaurants, offices, civic and recreational uses.

The historic character of Downtown Huntersville will be preserved and enhanced through the integration of new with existing development, reflecting the highest quality architecture, resulting in a revitalized downtown that is uniquely Huntersville. The Downtown street grid will be characterized by a well-connected network accommodating all modes of transportation (vehicular, pedestrian and non-motorized), including bus public transit and trains.

The streetscape and public spaces will include attractive lighting, street trees and well-designed signage providing a safe, pleasant experience for visitors and residents alike. Public events, outdoor markets and art displays will activate the Downtown, creating a true “destination” and focal point for the Town of Huntersville.

4.6 Public Facilities

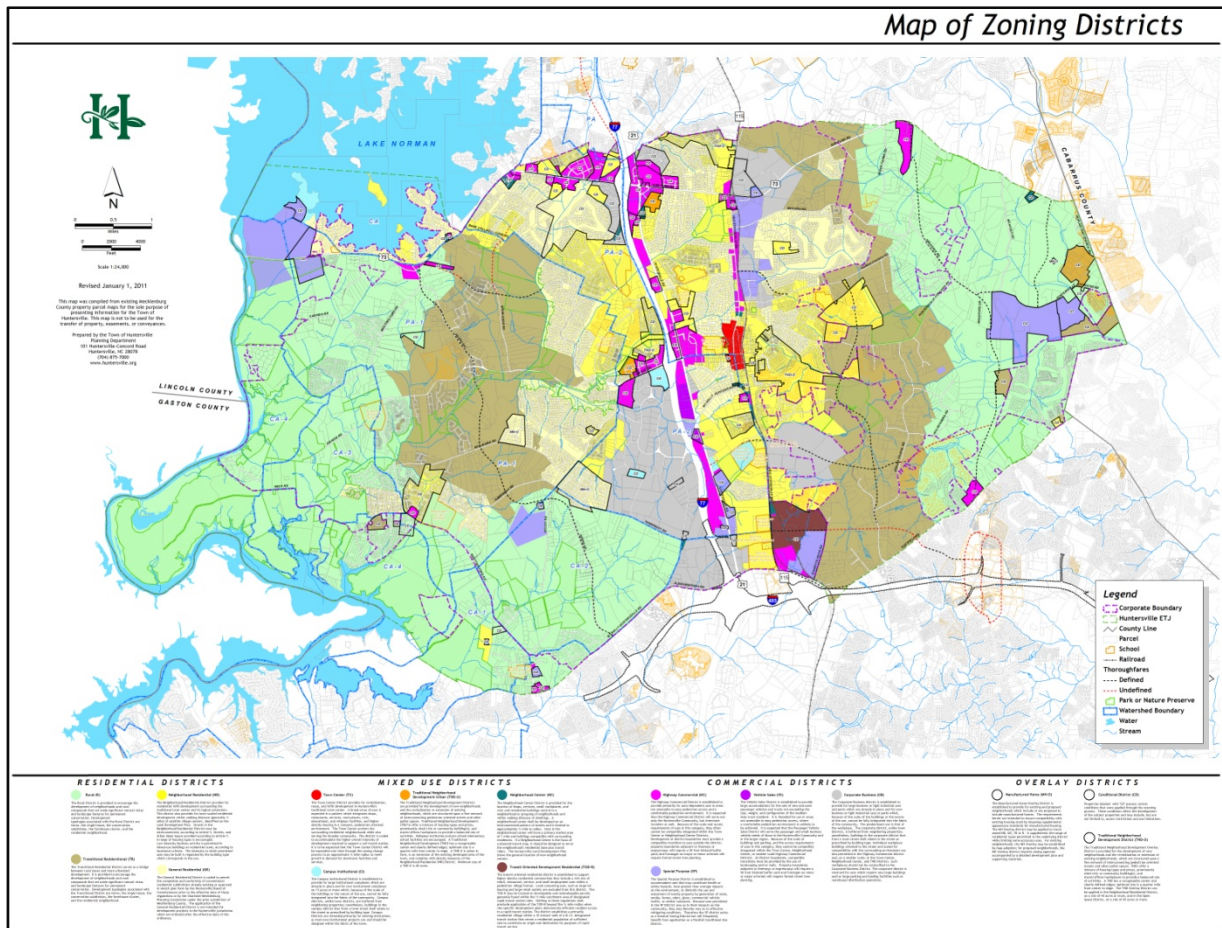
Public facilities are the most visible representation of the municipal “infrastructure/services” offered by the Town. Public facilities include those police, fire, parks & recreation, public works, municipal buildings and properties that are built and maintained through local tax revenue and dedicated to meet the public demand for such facilities. In 2030, the Town will continue to provide and maintain those public facilities required to offer residents and property owners the highest possible level and quality of municipal services, consistent with progressive government practices and sound fiscal policy.

5.0 FUTURE LAND USE

The future land use pattern for the Town of Huntersville is intended to reinforce the historical pattern in place since 1996. A continuation of this historical land use pattern will ensure that the Town’s future growth occurs in a manner consistent with the Town’s land development philosophy and the Huntersville 2030 Community Plan Vision Statement.

5.1 Land Use Pattern

Since 1996, the land use pattern in the Town of Huntersville has been based upon a policy which focuses higher intensity development generally within two miles of the I-77/NC-115 corridor (see **Map I-4**), with lower intensity development east and west of this corridor. This land use pattern has been guided and reinforced by the “Map of Zoning Districts ” (see **Map I-5**), which allows for a mixture of uses within this “core” development area, including no density limits within the “Neighborhood Residential (NR)” zoning district, and the rezoning of approximately 1,000 acres for future non-residential development (see **Map ED-1**). The future land use pattern for the Town will continue to follow the pattern established in 1996, with further refinement through the use of “Small Area Plans (SAPs)” and conditional district rezoning.



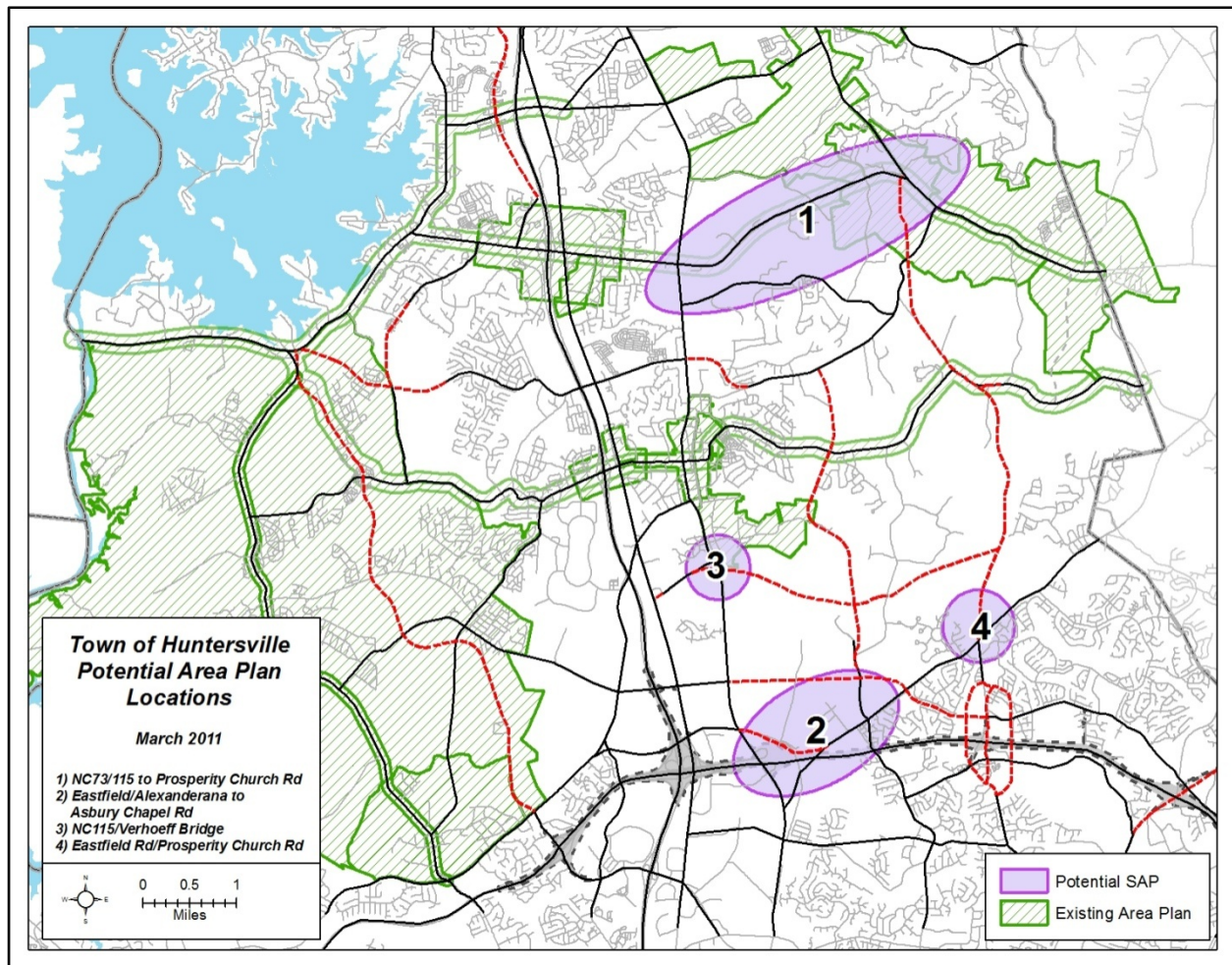
Map I-5
2011 Map of Zoning Districts

5.2 Small Area Plans

Current policy/requirements for Small Area Plans (SAPs)

The basis for preparation of SAPs is clearly reflected in the previously noted excerpts from the Zoning Ordinance and Community Plan. However, other than acknowledging the need for SAPs, there are no specific requirements pertaining to their preparation.

Most recently, the Town has undertaken several major SAPs (see **Map I-2**), in anticipation of significant rezoning applications or to guide either the development (e.g. Downtown) or redevelopment (e.g. Exit 25 interchange) of significant nodes or commercial centers.



Map I-6
Potential Small Area Plan Locations

Types of SAPs

There are essentially four major types of SAPs that may be undertaken:

- **New Development** (i.e. “Greenfield” sites)
- **Redevelopment** (i.e. “Greyfield” or “Brownfield” sites)
- **Corridor Plans** (e.g. Existing commercial areas & scenic roads)
- **Site Specific** (e.g. Transit Station Area)

Potential Small Area Plan Locations

As part of the Community Plan vision process, several potential locations for future SAPs were identified (see **Map I-6**). These locations include:

1. NC 73/115 to Prosperity Church Road
2. Eastfield/Alexanderana/Asbury Chapel Road
3. NC 115 – Verhoeff Bridge
4. Eastfield/Prosperity Church Road

Conditions for Small Area Plans

Small Area Plans are typically prepared either in anticipation of development or to establish long-range land use and transportation policy guidelines for a particular area of Town. It is therefore both necessary and useful to identify the circumstances under which consideration should be given to the preparation of a SAP. These circumstances may include (but not be limited to) the following:

- Proposed Rezoning (conditional or standard)
- Prior to Significant Development or Redevelopment Proposals in an area without a SAP
- Where Development is anticipated and no SAP exists
- At the intersection of two or more thoroughfares
- In response to an identified Community need

Role of SAPs in Land Development & Transportation

SAPs serve a valuable role in guiding land development and transportation system planning. SAPs should therefore provide the basis for public decision-making related to either current or future development or redevelopment proposals, as well as transportation system development.

Adoption & Updates

In order to remain relevant, small area plans adopted by Huntersville should be updated (or replaced) on a regular basis, or as warranted. At a minimum, it is recommended that each adopted small area plan be reviewed by the Planning Board within seven years of the plan's adoption date.

6.0 POLICIES AND ACTION ITEMS

Policy I-1: Long-Range Plan Review

Long-range plans should be reviewed by staff, Planning Board and Board of Commissioners within seven years of adoption to stay relevant.

Policy I-2: Small Area Plans

Prepare small area plans as warranted, particularly for areas that will be undergoing changes in the future, such as road improvements or sewer extensions.

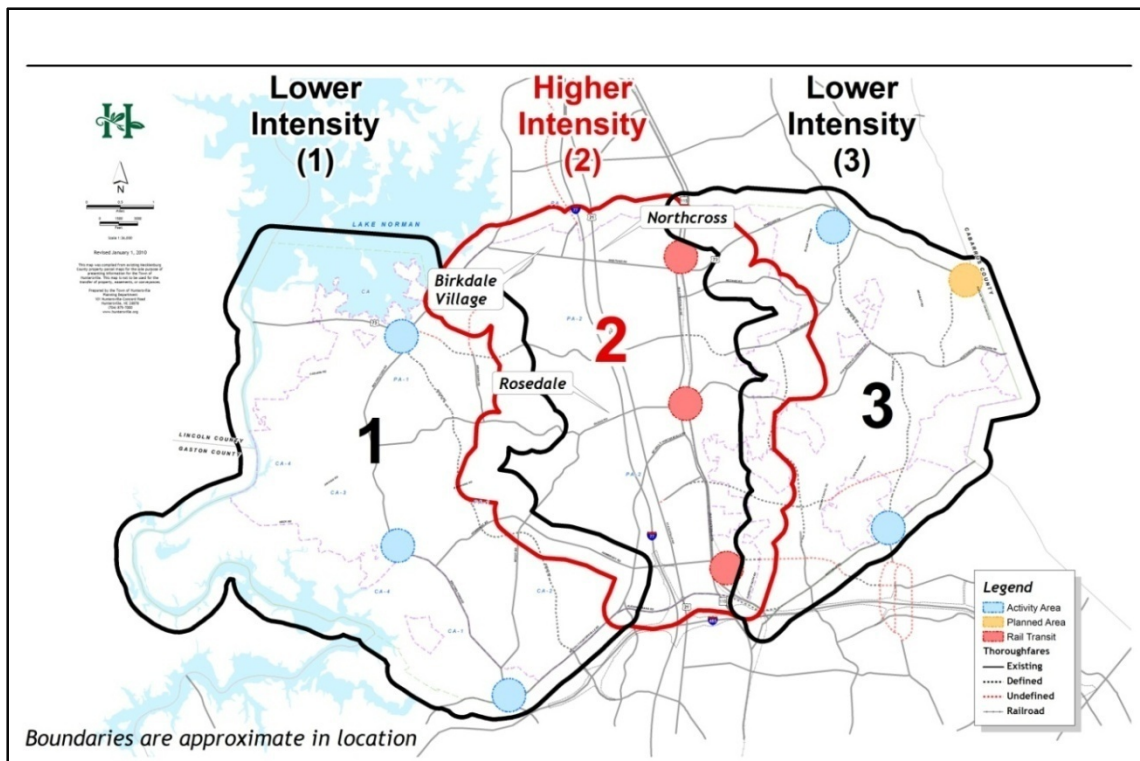
Action I-2.1: Prepare Small Area Plans

Consider preparing small area plans for the following areas:

- NC 73 to Prosperity Church Road
- Eastfield/Alexanderana/Asbury Chapel Road
- NC 115 – Verhoeff Bridge
- Eastfield/Prosperity Church Road

Housing in 2030

In 2030, Huntersville will have a variety of housing options with higher intensity residential development and redevelopment generally focused within two miles of the I-77/NC-115 corridor (area two below) and lower intensity residential in the east and west areas of town (area one & three below) and in mixed-use village nodes at important crossroads. Residential uses should be located in close proximity to commercial services and employment opportunities and be accessible by a connected street network offering auto, pedestrian, bicycle and mass-transit mobility options.



FOCUS AREA: HOUSING

1.0 INTRODUCTION

As previously noted in the Introduction and Framework section, over the past two decades, the Town of Huntersville has experienced rapid growth and development, going from a population of 3,014 in 1990 to a 2010 US Census population of 46,773. Over this same period of time, the number of housing units in Huntersville has increased from 1,330 to 18,477. The tremendous increase in housing units since 1990 has had a number of implications, including increases in traffic congestion, school-age population and the associated demand for commercial, municipal and institutional services.

2.0 HISTORICAL TRENDS

The rapid growth in Huntersville since 1990 has fueled a single-family housing boom that has vaulted the community from a small former mill town to a thriving suburban center. **Table H-1** below illustrates the tremendous residential growth that has occurred in Huntersville during this time.

Table H-1
Residential Growth Since 1990

Year	Population	Housing Units
1990	3,014	1,330
2000	24,960	9,859
2010	46,773	18,477

Source: U.S. Census

Table H-2 shows the breakdown of new building permits for single and multi-family dwellings since 2000. As can be seen from this table, the peak of new residential construction was in 2006 when 1,291 single and multi-family units were permitted. The lowest number of residential permits issued in the past decade was in 2010 when only 232 single-family permits and no multi-family permits were issued.

Table H-2
Single-Family & Multi-Family
New Units (2000 – 2010)

Year	Single-Family	Multi-Family	Totals
2000	860	328	1188
2001	811	320	1131
2002	733	0	733
2003	906	0	906
2004	897	0	897
2005	1027	0	1027
2006	1041	250	1291
2007	704	0	704
2008	369	0	369
2009	236	0	236
2010	232	0	232
TOTALS	7,816	898	8714

Source: Mecklenburg County

3.0 OVERVIEW OF HOUSING TYPES

The predominant housing type in the Town of Huntersville is single-family, comprising 15,705 units or approximately 85% of the 18,477 total housing units within the town limits as of 2010. As used in this section, the term “single-family” includes detached single-family, attached single-family (townhomes) and duplexes. Multi-family refers to three or more units and comprises 2,772 units or approximately 15% of the total number of housing units in Huntersville. The vast majority of the single-family units are located in subdivisions built since 1990. Of the 100 named subdivisions in Town, 63 are built out, 28 are in various stages of build-out and nine have been approved but not yet started.

Existing multi-family units are located primarily in 11 apartment complexes.

Map H-1 shows the location of all residential land uses constructed or approved in Huntersville in yellow.

4.0 HOUSING COST & AFFORDABILITY

4.1 Housing Cost

Housing prices in Huntersville reflect, in part, the Town’s proximity to Charlotte and Lake Norman. In 2000, U.S. Census figures placed the median value of a single-family home in Huntersville at \$182,800. In 2008, the Census estimate was \$247,800, representing a 36% increase from 2000.

Map H-1
Residential Land Use

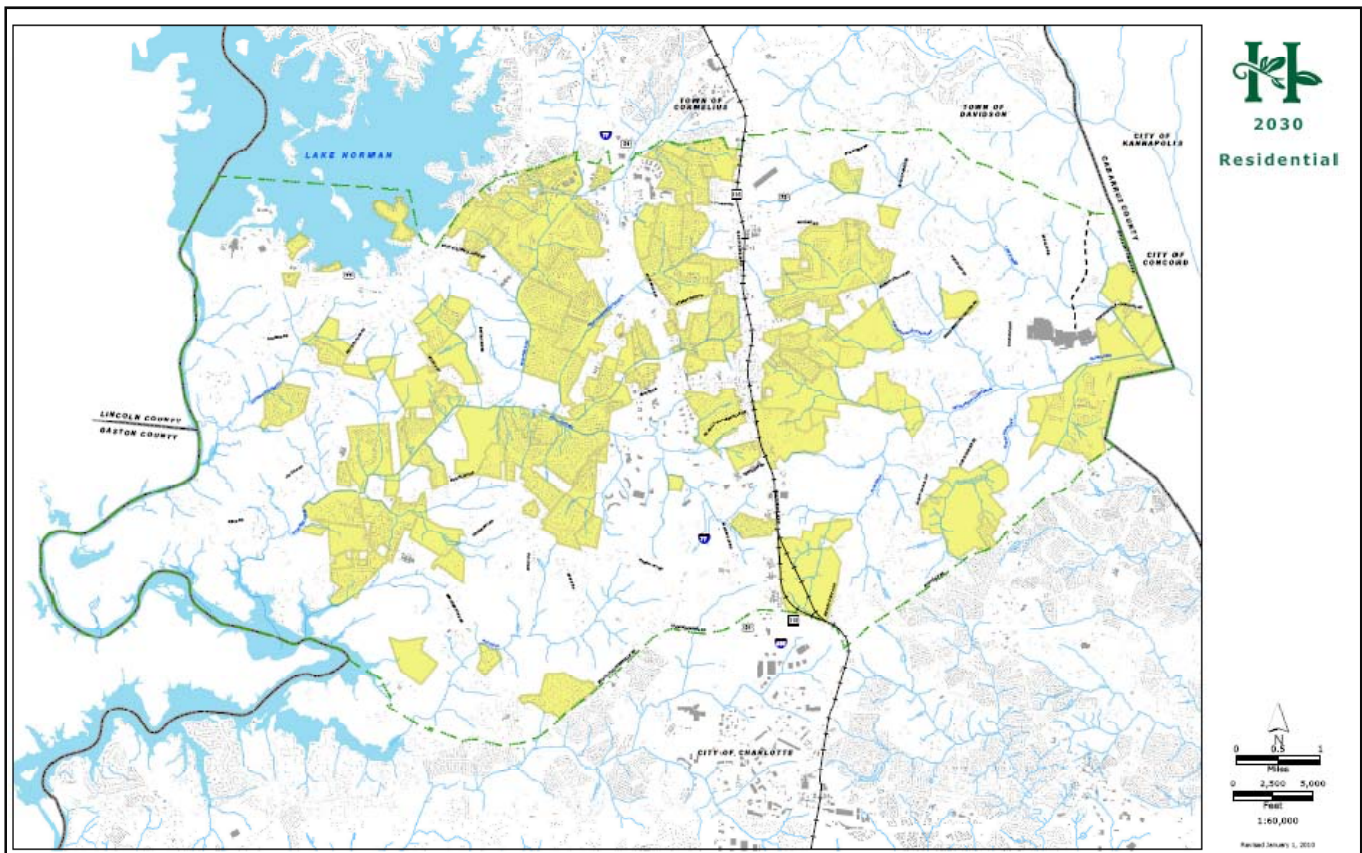


Table H- 3 compares Huntersville home values from 2000 and 2008 with surrounding communities, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina and the U.S.

**Table H-3
Median Single-Family Home Values
(2000 and 2008)**

Location	Year	
	2000 ¹	2008 ²
Huntersville	\$182,800	\$247,800 (+ 36%)
Cornelius	\$236,500	\$298,800 (+ 26%)
Davidson	\$270,000	\$353,671 (+ 31%) ³
Mecklenburg County	\$141,800	\$186,200 (+ 31%)
North Carolina	\$108,300	\$145,600 (+ 34%)
U.S.	\$119,600	\$192,400 (+ 61%)

Sources:

¹ U.S. Census Data

² U.S. Census Estimates

³ Estimate provided by City-Data

Multiple listing figures for 2010 show the average purchase price for a home sold in Huntersville at \$266,450.

4.2 Housing Affordability

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines housing as “affordable” when a household pays no more than 30 percent of its annual income on housing.

According to HUD, families who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing are considered cost burdened and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.

Using 2008 U.S. Census estimates, the median household income for the Town of Huntersville was \$86,210. The estimated median house value was \$247,800 and the median rent was \$875. Using the 30% total housing cost (mortgage or rent, plus insurance, taxes and utilities) figure, approximately 59% of households in Huntersville could afford the median priced home. The income required to afford this median priced home is approximately \$68,000 or higher.

Based on the 30% of income affordability threshold, 85% of Huntersville residents could afford the median rent (equal to an annual household income of approximately \$35,000 or higher).

In a “Housing Opportunity Index” report prepared by Wells Fargo and the National Association of Home Builders in February 2011, 77.6% of the homes for sale in the Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill area were considered affordable for households earning the median household income. Nationally, 72.2% of homes were affordable to a median household income.

4.3 Housing Values

The distribution of housing values is another valuable measure of how affordable the housing stock is for Huntersville residents. **Table H-4** shows the percentage of housing units for a variety of price ranges.

Table H-4
Huntersville Housing Units
by Value, 2008

Value	Percent
< 49,999	4.2%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	7.9%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	11.3%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	17.9%
\$200,000 - \$249,999	24.8%
\$250,000 - \$299,999	13.4%
\$300,000 - \$399,999	14.5%
\$400,000 - \$499,999	4%
\$500,000 - \$749,999	1.2%
\$750,000 - \$999,999	.3%
\$1 million +	.5%

Source: U.S. Census

The largest percentage of homes are within the \$200,000 to \$249,999 range (24.8%), followed by those in the \$150,000 to \$199,999 range.

Census Facts:
At 35.2 years, Huntersville residents are two years younger than the U.S. average of 37.2 years.

5.0 HOUSEHOLD SIZE & HOME SIZE

At 2.67 persons per household, Huntersville exceeds the national average of 2.61 persons per household. This is consistent with the low median age, 35.2 years, of Huntersville's population, compared with the U.S. average of 37.2 years and the high percentage of residents under five years old, 8.4%, versus the national average of 6.5%. **Table H-5** compares the number of persons per household in Huntersville with surrounding communities, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina and the U.S.

Table H-5
Persons per Household - 2009

Location	2009 ¹
Huntersville	2.67
Cornelius	2.31 ²
Davidson	2.30 ³
Mecklenburg County	2.40
North Carolina	2.48
U.S.	2.60

Sources:

¹U.S. Census Data

²2008 U.S. Census Data

³Onboard Informatics

Average home sizes in the U.S. have increased from 953 sq. ft. in 1950 to 2,438 sq. ft. in 2009. In Huntersville, the average size home built in 2009 was 2,672 sq. ft., which was nearly 10% larger than the national average.

Table H-6 shows the average size of homes built in Huntersville since 2001 as compared with the U.S. and the south region.

**Table H-6
Average Square Feet of Single-Family
Homes Built in
Huntersville/U.S./South Region
(2001-2010)**

Year	Avg. Sq. Ft. Huntersville	Avg. Sq. Ft. US	Avg. Sq. Ft. South
2001	2,482	2,324	2,351
2002	2,652	2,320	2,317
2003	2,565	2,330	2,335
2004	2,539	2,349	2,268
2005	2,524	2,434	2,463
2006	2,363	2,469	2,499
2007	2,519	2,521	2,573
2008	2,706	2,519	2,564
2009	2,672	2,438	2,488
2010	2,691	N/A	N/A

These figures indicate that over the last two full years of reporting, the average home size in the US and south region has been decreasing. The table also shows the average home size in Huntersville is approximately 9% larger than that constructed in the US and south region.

6.0 APPROVED / UN-BUILT HOUSING INVENTORY & FUTURE DEMAND PROJECTIONS

As noted in **Table H-2**, the number of residential building permits for new homes has dropped significantly since the peak of the housing market in 2006. One of the results of this drop in building permits has been a slower absorption rate for approved, yet un-built housing units. As of December 31, 2010, there were 4,236 approved (un-built) single-family house lots and 3,634* approved (un-built) multi-family units. Single-family house lots include attached (townhomes), detached units and duplexes, while multi-family is defined as three or more units.

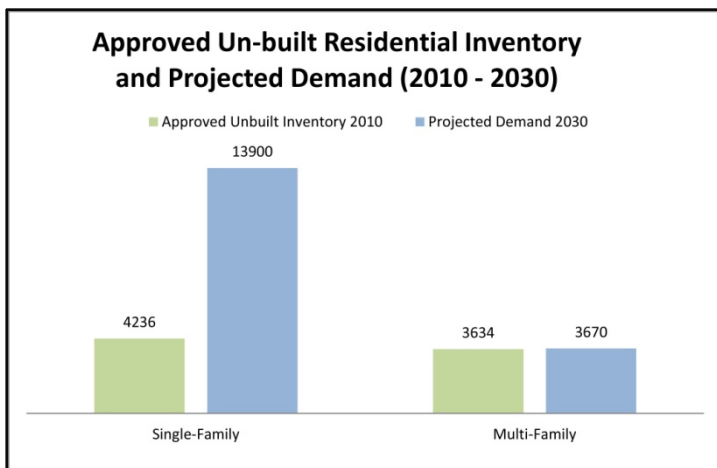
*(*This figure assumes all 2,305 units approved in the Bryton transit oriented development will be multi-family, however, it is possible that some of these units may be converted to townhomes, which would be classified as single-family units.)*

Based upon a 2030 population projection of 89,597 (medium growth scenario) for the Town, a total of 3,670 multi-family units and 13,900 single-family units would be required to meet the demand for housing generated by this growth.

***Citizen Survey: 61% of
survey respondents indicated
that they thought
Huntersville was a good or
excellent place to retire.***

Figure H-1 below depicts the number of approved un-built single-family and multi-family dwelling units as of December 31, 2010 along with the number of units required to accommodate the 2030 medium growth scenario population projection. Based on these figures, by 2030 there will be a need for an additional 9,664 single-family homes to accommodate the projected population growth. For multi-family, there will be a need for an additional 36 units to meet the demand to be generated by projected population growth. It is clear from **Figure H-1** that even if Bryton contains a number of townhome units as opposed to multi-family units, there is a substantial inventory of approved multi-family units to accommodate future growth for many years to come.

Figure H-1
Approved Un-built Residential Inventory and Projected Demand (2010 - 2030)



Early data for 2011 shows a gradual increase in the number of single-family building permits issued for the year, with a projected peak in building permits between 2020 and 2025.

It is also expected that the number of multi-family building permits will increase significantly, based upon existing inventory, market demand and conditions, with a peak time frame between 2015 and 2020.

7.0 CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS & HOUSING TYPES

In addition to the significant projected growth in population between 2010 and 2030, one of the major changes likely to occur in the Town of Huntersville over the next 20 years is an increase in the 65 and over population and the associated demand for housing and other services to accommodate that aging population.

The current composition of Huntersville's population stands in stark contrast to that for the U.S. as a whole. Based on 2010 Census figures, the total percentage of residents in Huntersville under five years old was 8.4%, (3,929 residents), compared to 6.5% for the nation as a whole. At the other end of the spectrum, the Town's 65 years and older population was 6.7% (3,134 residents), while the comparable figure for the U.S. was 13.1%. The figures for Huntersville's neighbors, Cornelius and Davidson, are both lower, at 6.5% and 5%, respectively, for the population group under five years and 10.1% and 12.4%, respectively, for the population over 65. U.S. Bureau of the Census projections shows that the percentage of U.S. population over 60 in 2030 will be equal to 20%.

NC State Demographic Office figures estimate that the state's percentage of 65+ population will be 17.8% by 2030, compared to 12.8% in 2010. Applying the same projected statewide increase in the 65 and over population to Huntersville would result in a 2030 figure of approximately 11.7%, or 10,483 residents age 65 or older, an increase of 7,349 residents between 2010 and 2030.

The projected trends for the aging of U.S. and NC populations have a number of potential housing implications for Huntersville. First, household sizes, and consequently the size of homes, are likely to decrease. Second, the type of housing for an older population will tend toward multi-family (either apartments or condominiums) rather than single-family. This is consistent with the overall trend in Huntersville toward a higher percentage of multi-family relative to single-family dwellings. Third, this multi-family housing is also likely to be located closer to amenities and services and closer to transportation facilities (i.e. road, bus and rail). Finally, whether age restricted retirement communities, seniors who choose to remain in their homes, or some type of congregate living (with or without nursing care), it is likely that the demand for senior housing will increase by 2030. The need for this type of housing will drive the market and may require accommodations by the Town, both in terms of its development regulations as well as its service delivery.

It should also be noted that since the elderly population is living longer and healthier lives, at least a portion of this population may desire to live in smaller single-family homes in mixed-use areas, rather than exclusively in retirement communities or congregate care type facilities. This market dynamic is therefore, likely to increase the demand for smaller, ranch-style homes over the next 20 years

8.0 DESIGN OF HOMES

The "Green Building" movement will also have an impact on future housing built in Huntersville through the year 2030.

Green building (also known as green construction or sustainable building) is the practice of creating structures and using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building's life-cycle: from site location to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation, and deconstruction. This practice expands and complements the classical building design concerns of economy, utility, durability, and comfort.

Although new technologies are constantly being developed to complement current practices in creating greener structures, the common objective is that green buildings are designed to reduce the overall impact of the built environment on human health and the natural environment by:

- Efficiently using energy, water, and other resources
- Protecting occupant health and improving employee productivity
- Reducing waste, pollution and environmental degradation

The Green Building movement has clearly become mainstream and by every indication will continue to gain acceptance and be a driving force within the residential housing and building market through 2030.

Citizen Survey: 91 % of survey respondents support development that promotes economic growth, environmental protection and a high quality of life (i.e. “sustainable” development).

9.0 RESIDENTIAL LAND USE PATTERN & DENSITY

9.1 Rural and Transitional Zoning Districts

With the adoption of the Huntersville Community Plan in 1995, Huntersville intended development on the eastern and western areas of Town to be different from the conventional sprawl pattern where all useable land is developed into houses, lots and streets with only unbuildable land left untouched (see **Figure H-2**).

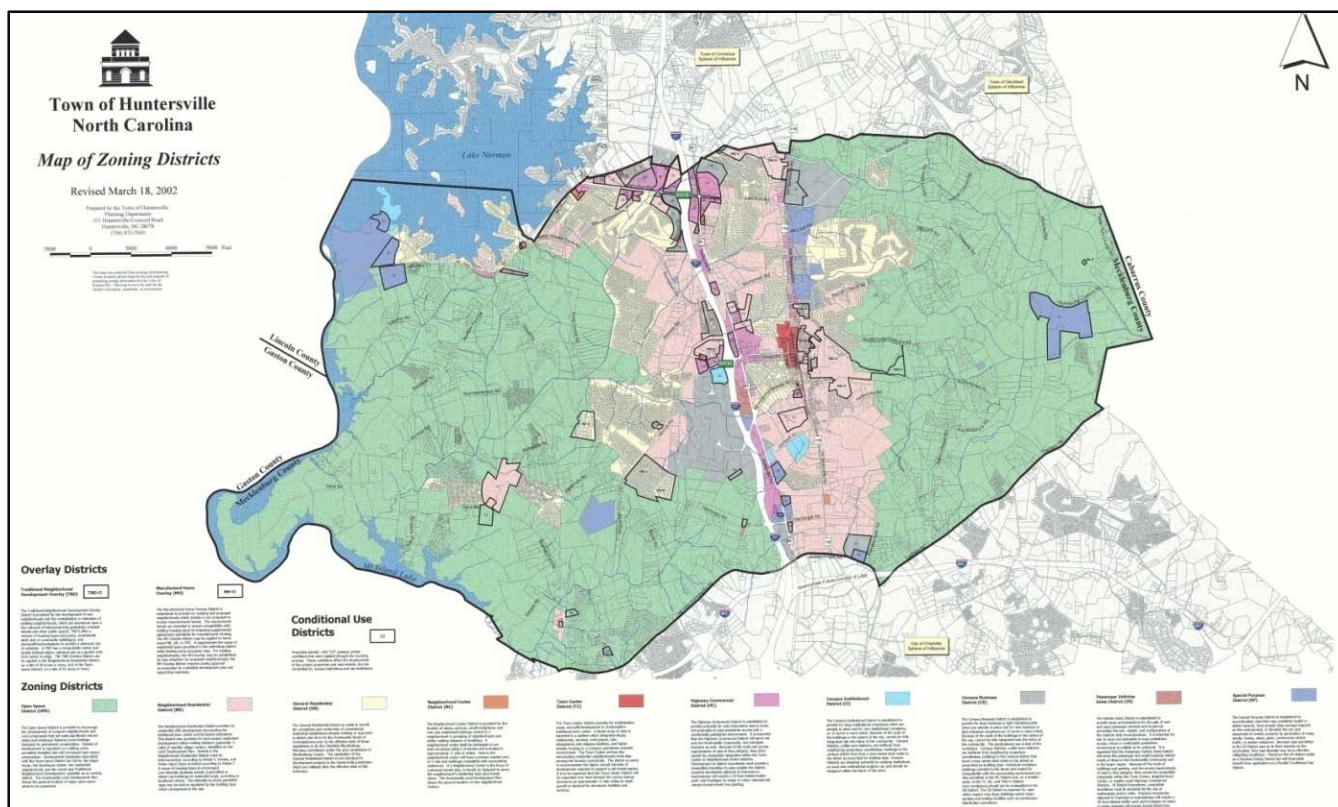
**Figure H-2
Sprawl Density Pattern**



Example of the development pattern not desired in the eastern and western edges of Huntersville.

The 1995 Community Plan called for “then” current densities to remain (two-and-a-half units an acre) but recommended development be clustered “...while preserving usable and scenic open space along historically rural corridors” through the establishment of Village Clusters (50-100+ acres), Hamlet Clusters (10-60 acres) and Farmhouse clusters (less than 12 lots).

The Zoning Ordinance was amended in 1996 to promote “...compact neighborhoods that set aside significant natural vistas and landscape features...” consistent with the vision of the 1995 Community Plan. From 1996 until the first part of 2003, the eastern and western areas of Huntersville’s zoning jurisdiction were zoned Open Space (OPS), allowing up to two-and-a-half units an acre plus density bonuses when more than 15% of the subdivision was devoted to open space (see **Map H-2**, with green area representing the OPS zone in 2002). The OPS zones covered about 58% of Huntersville’s 63 square miles of zoning jurisdiction and allowed single-family homes as well as townhomes as illustrated in **Figure H-3**.



**Map H-2
2002 Huntersville Zoning Map**

Between 1996 and 2003, a total of 3,705 dwelling units were approved in 17 subdivisions within the OPS zone at an average density of two units an acre. The residential subdivisions approved in the OPS zone during that time period raised community concerns about infrastructure impacts (particularly schools and roads) and environmental impacts (clear cutting of trees, mass site grading, increase in paved area and storm-water runoff, etc.). Responding to those community concerns, the Huntersville Town Board placed a moratorium on new residential subdivisions in 2002 that lasted until the zoning and subdivision codes were amended in early 2003.

**Figure H-3
Compact Rural Development**



Example of density allowed in the OPS Zoning District (2.3 units per acre). Contrasted with the subdivision in Figure H-2, the open space in this development is larger and spread throughout the community. Townhomes and single-family homes co-exist and houses do not front or back-up to state roads where a buffer zone exists.

The 2003 amendments changed the OPS zone into the Rural District zone, allowing less than one unit an acre (see green area in **Map H-3**), and Transitional District zone, allowing approximately one-and-a-half units an acre (see brown area in **Map H-3**). Townhomes were not permitted in either the Rural or Transitional zones.

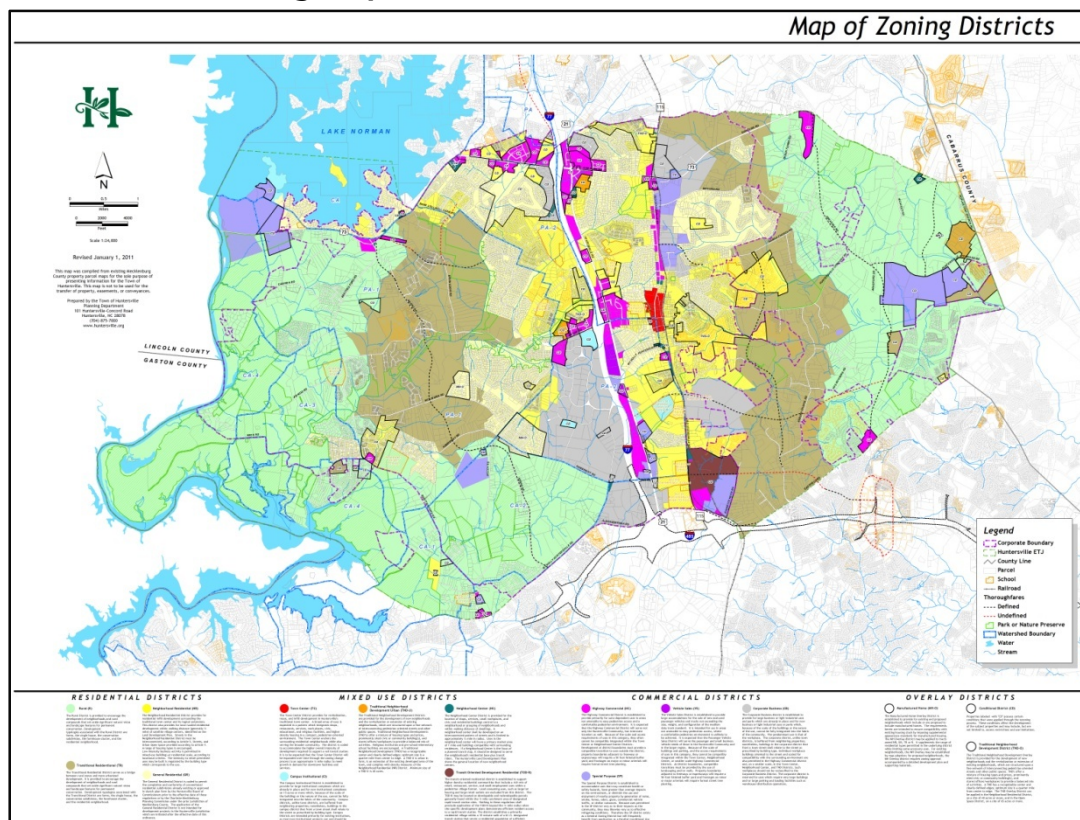
The Town adopted further density modifications in 2007 to the Rural zone, reducing the allowable density to approximately 0.6 units an acre, and Transitional zone, approximately one unit an acre. Between 2003 and 2010, a total of 1,598 residential units were approved in 12 subdivisions within the Rural and Transitional zoning districts at an average density of one unit per acre.

While the Rural and Transitional zones encompass 22,730 acres of Huntersville's zoning jurisdiction, just slightly over 50% of that area (12,076 acres) is vacant and could be developed in the future (see **Table H-7**).

Table H-7
Land Use & Acreage for
Development in Rural and
Transitional Districts

Land Use	Acres	%
Church	339	1%
Conservation	738	3%
County Owned	4,918	22%
Farmhouse Cluster	358	2%
Subdivisions	3,244	14%
Industrial	199	1%
Utility	858	4%
Vacant	12,076	53%

Map H-3
2011 Huntersville Zoning Map



Assuming current density maximums do not change (i.e. 0.6 units/acre in the Rural Zoning District and one unit/acre in the Transitional Zoning District), a total of 9,234 single-family lots could be accommodated at future maximum build-out in these two zoning districts (see **Table H-8**). While it is not likely that all properties will be subdivided to the maximum densities, **Table H-8** illustrates the highest build-out potential given current development standards.

Table H-8
Build-Out Potential of the
Rural and Transitional Zoning Districts

Zone	0 - 10 Acres	10 + Acres	Current Maximum Units per Acre	Max. Units at Build-out
Rural	2,628	4,477	.6	4,263
Trans.	1,785	3,186	1.0	4,971
Total	4413	7,663	NA	9,234

As the Town grows and infrastructure is expanded, some portions of the Transitional District and key sections of the Rural District at important crossroads may be rezoned for higher intensity development where they represent logical extensions to existing development or are within mixed-use development nodes identified in area plans.

At this time, it is not recommended to change current density limits in the Rural and Transitional zoning districts.

However, given this period of great change in the housing market, it is recommended the Town revisit development standards within the next five years to determine if adjustments are warranted.

9.2 Neighborhood Residential Zoning District

Together with the Rural and Transitional Zoning Districts, the other primary district available for future residential development is the Neighborhood Residential (NR) District (see yellow area, **Map H-3**). This zoning district has no minimum lot size or lot width. Any lot less than 60' wide must be served by an alley. Furthermore, no more than 30% of the total housing units within a major subdivision, located outside one quarter mile of a designated transit station, can be attached houses, apartments and mixed-use buildings.

Currently, there are 1,242 acres of land within the Neighborhood Residential zoning district that are not developed. In **Table H-9** is a chart illustrating the range in the number of housing units that could be built within the undeveloped Neighborhood Residential parcels, depending on the average density of development. Since there is no minimum or maximum density limits in the NR zone, the number of dwelling units built per acre will vary greatly.

Table H-9
Build-out Potential Range in the
Neighborhood Residential Zoning District

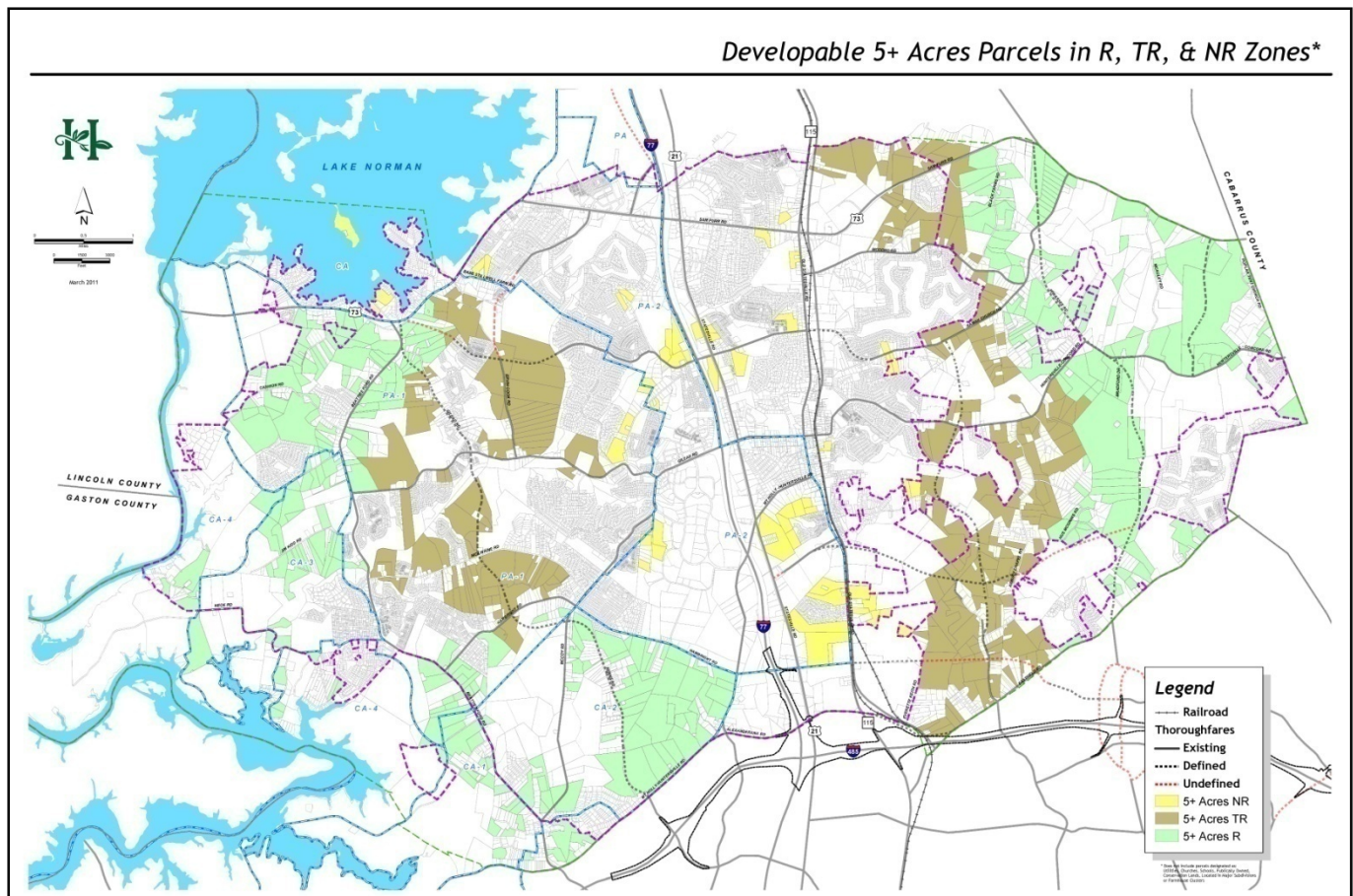
Un-Developed NR Property	Avg. Density of Development	Max. Units at Buildout
1,242 acres	3 units/acre	3,726 units
1,242 acres	5 unit/acre	6,210 units
1,242 acres	8 units/acre	9,936 units

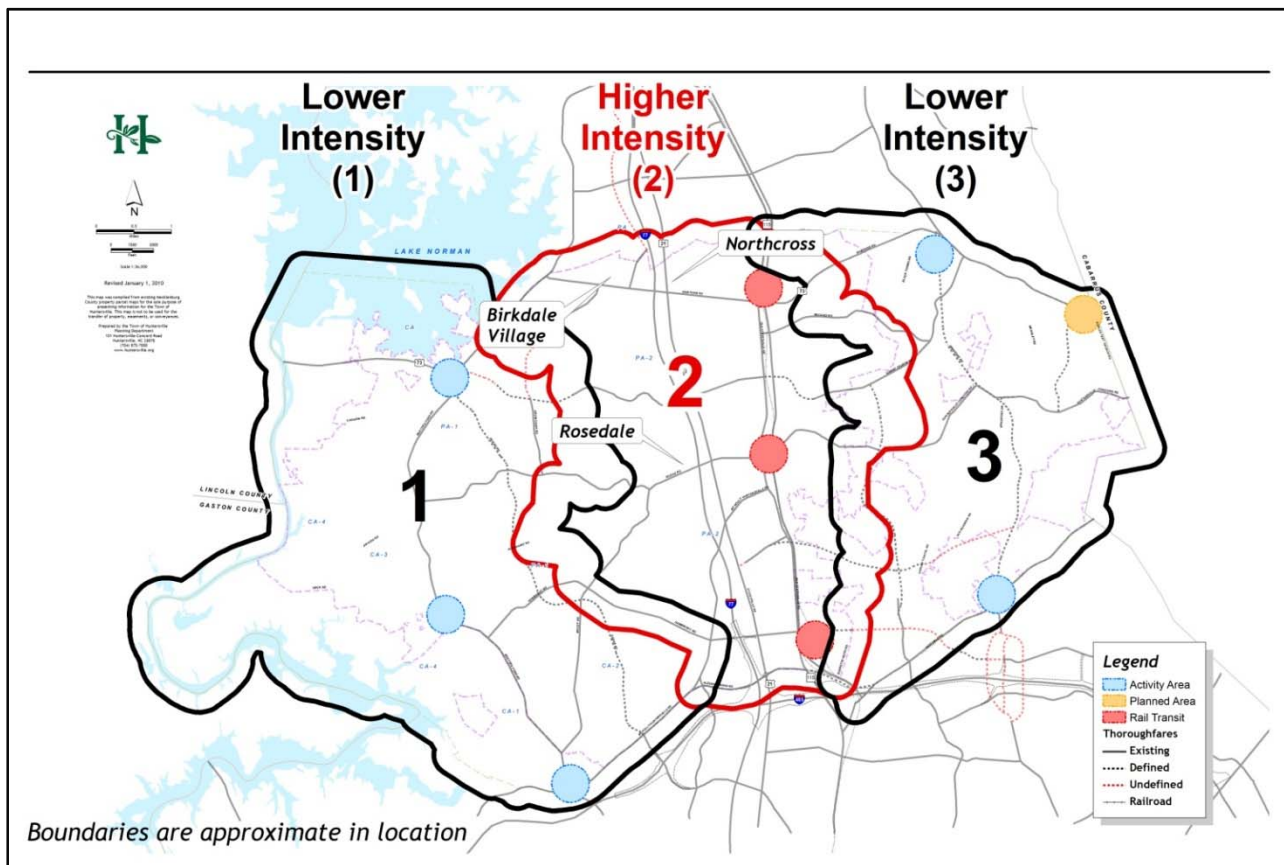
Map H-4 depicts parcels which are five acres or larger and available for development within the R, TR and NR zones.

10.0 FUTURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

In terms of future residential development, a mixed-use village development pattern will compliment the current development pattern which focuses higher density in the core of Town (area 2, following page) and lower density development within the Town's eastern and western areas (areas 1 & 3 , following page). The new village development pattern is focused in small and large mixed-use centers located at the intersection of major thoroughfares (see circles, following page). **Map H-5** illustrates this pattern.

Map H-4
Land Available for Residential Development





**Map H-5
Huntersville Development Pattern**

As stated in the Economic Development and Commercial Focus Area (Section 8.0 and **Map CD-2**), it is important that future mixed-use village nodes in the eastern and western areas of Huntersville should not be rezoned for speculative purposes but instead be established to meet an existing need after significant public input is received following the development of an area plan.

It is anticipated that future mixed-use village nodes in the eastern and western areas of town will be characterized by a small commercial component (under 40,000 sq. ft.), civic uses, a variety of residential types, and significant open space with very low density development surrounding the village (see **Figure H-4**).

The objective of this pattern is to provide a definable edge to the village, thereby avoiding sprawl.

**Figure H-4
Example of Small Mixed-Use
Village Development**



In contrast to the small mixed-use village development shown in **Figure H-4**, is the large mixed-use development known as Bryton, located in the south central area of town, just north of I-485 and along the future North Corridor rail line. Approved as a transit oriented development with commercial and employment areas, Bryton will consist of 198 single-family units, 2,305 multi-family units, 1 million square feet of commercial space and 1.2 million square feet of office/flex light industrial space (see **Figure H-5**).

**Figure H-5
Bryton**



The mixed-use node development pattern has been recommended in a series of Small Area Plans prepared since 2005 (see **Map I-2**) and is consistent with the “centers, corridors and wedges” land use pattern that Charlotte-Mecklenburg adopted in 1995.

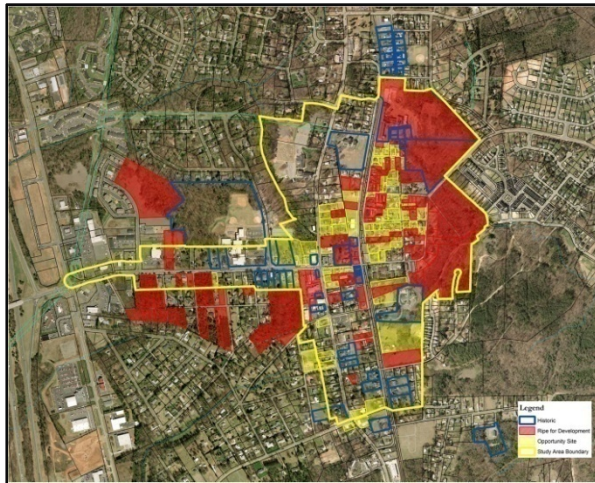
Similar to Huntersville’s approach to the integration of land use and transportation, this plan recommended focusing development in areas that can be served by existing services and are located along major thoroughfares. This land use pattern is intended to avoid “sprawl” development, allowing for the efficient provision of public utilities, roads and services, along with the preservation of open space and recreation areas to serve these nodes.

11.0 REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

While the housing stock for the Town of Huntersville is relatively new, there are older more established areas that have vacant lots, mobile homes and older stick-built homes which may be candidates for redevelopment. The “Huntersville Downtown Master Plan” and the “East Huntersville Area Development Plan” identify several areas appropriate for redevelopment as shown on **Maps H-6** and **H-7** on the next page. Town policies and regulations should be directed toward providing incentives for redevelopment of these areas, including tax incentives, public infrastructure improvements and small area planning.

Citizen Survey: 65% of survey respondents indicated support for self-sustained and contained village type communities.

**Map H-6
Redevelopment Areas Identified in the
Huntersville Downtown Master Plan**



**Map H-7
Redevelopment Areas Identified in the
East Huntersville Area Development Plan**



12.0 HOUSING POLICIES AND ACTION ITEMS

Policy H-1: Development Pattern

Continue to follow existing residential development pattern as reflected in “Map of Zoning Districts,” focusing higher intensity development generally within two miles of the I-77/NC-115 corridor and lower intensity development east and west of this corridor extending to the Town boundaries.

Policy H-2: Node Development

Continue to encourage mixed-use village development pattern at key intersections as identified in Small Area Plans adopted by the Town.

Action H-2.1: Small Area Plans

Prepare small area plans if one does not exist in areas of the community that are or will be experiencing development pressure.

Policy H-3: Mixed-Use Development

Support and encourage self-sustained developments where commercial and employment uses are in close proximity to residential uses (see Commercial Development Policy CD-1 & CD-3).

Policy H-4: Development Principles

For proposed developments, either in the core or within identified nodes, adhere to the principles set forth in the Zoning Ordinance and adopted small area plans to ensure an appropriate mix of residential, commercial and employment uses to maximize land use and transportation efficiencies while minimizing environmental impacts.

Policy H-5: Senior Housing

Encourage housing options which accommodate senior citizens (e.g. age restricted/retirement communities, congregate care/assisted living facilities,) allowing seniors to remain in the community.

Action H-5.1: Review Ordinances to Identify Barriers to Senior Housing

Review Town Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to identify any barriers to the provision of housing for senior citizens.

Policy H-6: Energy Efficient Design

Encourage energy efficient design through the use of “Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design” (LEED) principles and practices for residential construction, including alternative energy usage (solar, wind etc.).

Policy H-7: Housing Affordability

Support appropriate mix of housing for all income levels.

Action H-7.1: Review of Ordinances

Review Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to identify any barriers to energy efficient design in residential construction and encourage builders to employ LEED principles.

Policy H-8: Development in the Transitional and Rural Areas

Maintain the development standards in the Transitional and Rural zones and consider adjustments if warranted by changes in the housing market.

Action H-8.1: Analysis of Rural and Transitional Development Standards

Within five years, analyze the development standards within the Rural and Transitional District zones to determine if adjustments are necessary.

Policy H-9: Future Residential Development

Higher intensity residential development will be focused generally within two miles of the I-77/NC-115 corridor and future mixed use nodes in the eastern and western areas of Huntersville’s zoning jurisdiction (See Commercial Development Policy CD-2).

Policy H-10: Redevelopment Areas

Support redevelopment of older established residential areas, consistent with adopted plans, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision regulations.

Environment in 2030

In 2030, the Town of Huntersville will be a community that continues to place a high value on the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, as well as its scenic and cultural assets, through the adoption and implementation of progressive land use and transportation policies. The use of renewable and alternative energy sources (e.g. solar and wind) will be encouraged, together with Green Building” and “Green Neighborhood Development” Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (L.E.E.D) technologies and practices, to reduce environmental impacts and dependence on non-renewable resources. New growth and development will be directed away from environmentally sensitive and protected areas and toward those areas which can accommodate development, resulting in an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable land development pattern.

FOCUS AREA: ENVIRONMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Huntersville features an abundance of natural resources and environmental features, along with scenic and cultural assets, that serve to define the community's character and therefore, require special attention to ensure their preservation and enhancement (see **Figure E-1, Map E-1**).

**Figure E-1
Latta Plantation**

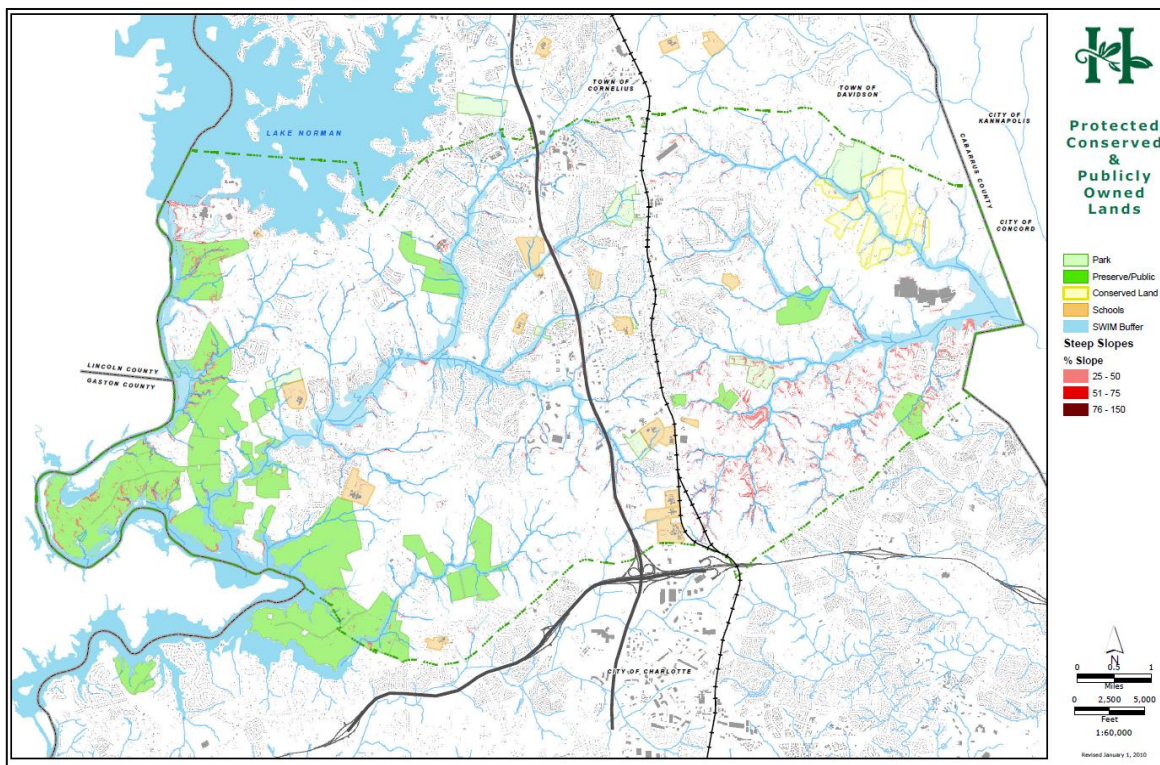


Huntersville has for many years placed a strong emphasis on establishing environmental protection measures, such as “Low Impact Design” (L.I.D) water quality standards, tree preservation, open space standards and other “smart growth” design principles such as mixed-use and cluster development to reduce the effects of growth and development on the natural environment.

In addition to development standards aimed at protecting the environment, a significant portion of the Town's land area is under private conservation easements or is publicly owned open space (park or other).

In particular, Mecklenburg County has acquired large tracts of land in the western area of Huntersville in order to protect Mountain Island Lake and the water intake for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities water plant located just south of Huntersville. The extent of this land can be seen in **Map E-1**.

Results of the “2030 Community Plan - Resident Survey” reflect strong support for preservation of the Town's rural areas, balanced by a development pattern that limits environmental impact, including the use of development incentives and building design that enhances and complements the Town's rural areas. Residents also strongly support the use of alternative energy sources for existing and new development and the redevelopment of older structures in an “environmentally friendly” manner. These sentiments are best captured in the following survey response:



Map E-1
Protected, Preserved and Public Land

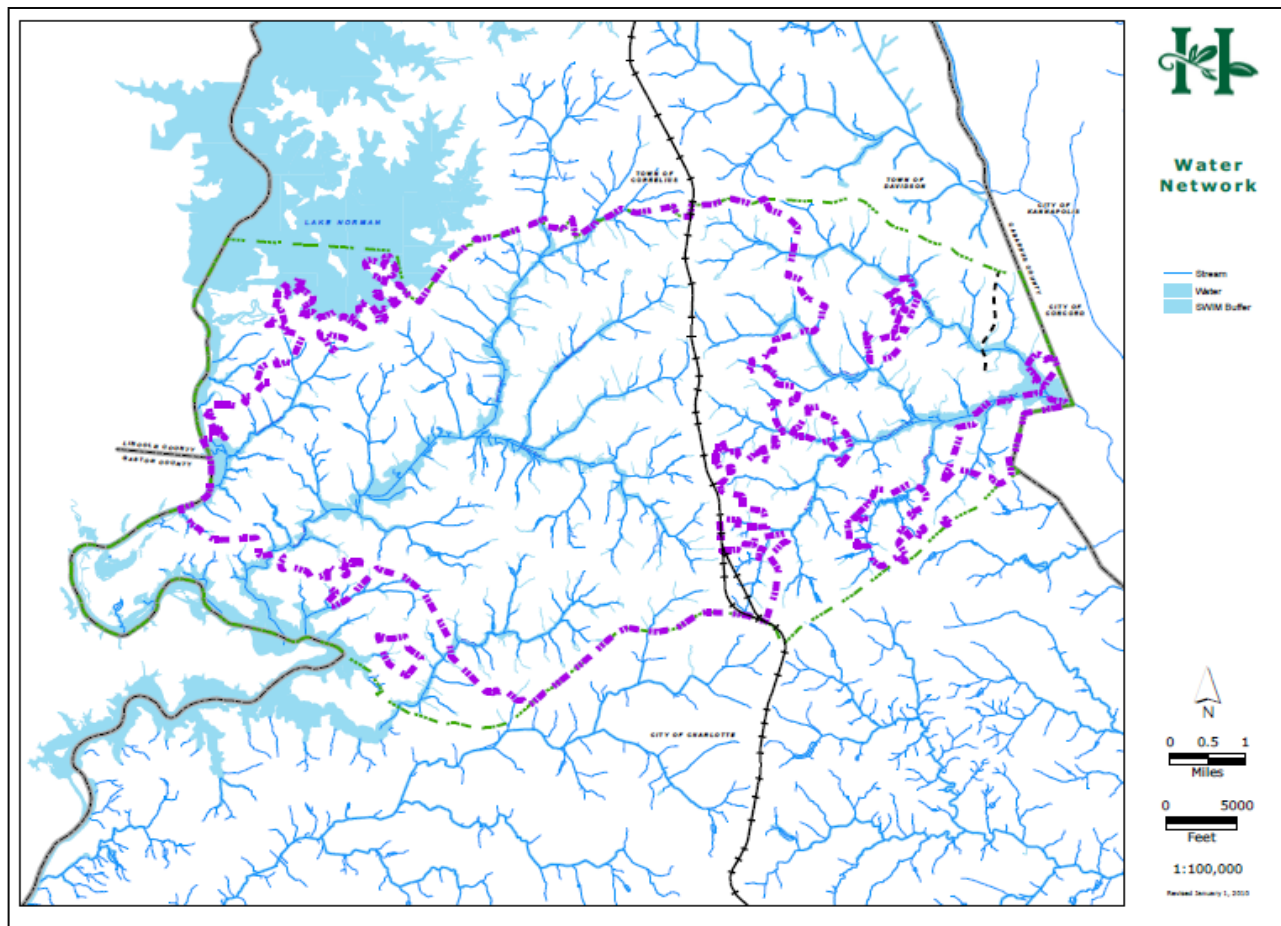
*91% of survey respondents
“Support development that
promotes economic growth,
environmental protection and
high quality of life (i.e.
“sustainable” development).*

As Huntersville continues to grow, the challenge will be to balance the preservation of its natural environment and resources with the growth and development that will occur over the next 20 years. The success of this balancing effort will, in large part, determine the character of Huntersville for the next generation.

1.1. Existing Environmental Features

In 2004, a Natural Resource Inventory Map was prepared for the Town. This map identified sensitive environmental areas such as water features (streams, lakes, etc.), steep slopes, wetlands and floodplains. **Map E-2** displays streams and water bodies in Huntersville.

This inventory map is an important tool both for identifying areas that are candidates for preservation and/or special protection and to guide growth to areas that are suitable and appropriate for development. The data displayed on this map is useful in guiding new development proposed in Huntersville and should continue to be used for this purpose and others as they may arise.



Map E-2
Streams and Water Bodies

Table E-1
Protected/Conserved & Publicly-owned Lands

1.2. Protected Land

A large portion of Huntersville's total land area (approximately 15%) is comprised of either privately conserved or publicly owned protected or park land. **Map E-1** identifies these areas. **Table E-1** shows the type and acreage of protected, conserved and park land.

Land Type	Size (acres)
Protected (Public Nature Preserves and open space)	4,787
Conserved (Private)	648
Parks	510
TOTALS:	5,945

Protected land is property which has some type of designation which would prohibit or constrain the type or extent of development that could occur on that property. Examples would include land located within one of several nature preserves (e.g. Latta Plantation). The largest tracts of protected land are found in the Town's "Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)," primarily within the various nature preserves, located within Huntersville. A total of 4,787 acres of protected land is located in Huntersville. **Map E-1** shows protected land in dark green color.

Conserved land is another category of open space which serves a valuable role in the preservation and conservation of Huntersville's natural resources and scenic views.

Currently, all of the conserved land in Huntersville falls under the jurisdiction of the Catawba Land Conservancy Trust, a private, not-for-profit organization whose mission is to set aside large tracts of land for open space preservation. The mechanism used to accomplish this mission is through the use of "Conservation Easements," which impose long-term development restrictions on property in exchange for a reduction in taxes paid. Several property owners have taken advantage of this program. A total of 648 acres is currently classified as conserved land in Huntersville. **Map E-1** shows conserved land in light yellow color.

Park land is the final category of land and includes county and town owned parks and open space and totals approximately 510 acres. **Map E-1** shows conserved land in light green color.

2.0 CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS

As previously noted, the Town of Huntersville has adopted a series of environmental regulations that serve to minimize environmental impact associated with land development. A summary of these regulations is outlined below.

2.1 Mountain Island Lake Watershed Overlay District (MIL-O)

Adopted in 1993, the MIL-O District is intended to provide for the protection of public water supplies as required by the "N.C. Water Supply Watershed Classification and Protection Act." The District includes two sub-areas, "Critical" and "Protected", with limitations established on uses, maximum impervious coverage, and buffer protection. The MIL-O District serves to limit environmental (i.e. water quality, shoreline and habitat) impacts within the district, including land areas within most of the Town's "Nature Preserves."

2.2 Lake Norman Watershed Overlay District (LN-O)

The LN-O District serves a similar role to that of the MIL-O District. As with the MIL-O District, the LN-O District includes both “Critical” and “Protected” areas, along with restrictions on use, impervious coverage and buffer protection.

Similar to the MIL-O District, the LN-O District provides valuable water quality protection along with preservation and protection of shorelines for Lake Norman, its tributaries and their associated habitats.

2.3 Tree Preservation

According to the “Purpose” section of the Town’s “Tree Preservation, Protection and Removal” Ordinance, *“Wooded sites provide distinct aesthetic, economic and environmental significance and value as a natural resource of the Town. Existing vegetation plays a critical role in maintaining aesthetics, water quality, minimizing erosion and downstream flooding, and increasing quality of life.”*

Approved in 2003, the ordinance requires a site analysis for all development in residential and commercial zoning districts, with specific tree preservation standards for significant forest stands, specimen trees and heritage trees. According to the ordinance, 100% of Heritage Trees shall be preserved, 10% to 50% of Specimen Trees and between 10% and 50% of the existing tree canopy shall be preserved, depending on the specific zoning district. In instances where tree preservation

standards cannot be met, replanting or contribution to a Tree Fund/Bank is required to offset the loss of trees if approved by the Planning Board. (Source: Article 7.4, Huntersville Zoning Ordinance)

2.4 Buffer Yards & Landscaping

In addition to its tree preservation requirements, the Town requires buffer yards to provide visual and distance separation between adjacent properties, except those located within the Town Center (TC) and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) zoning districts. The Town also requires the planting of street trees along public and parking lots to ensure:

“a pedestrian friendly environment along with providing distinct aesthetic, economic and environmental significance, and value as a future natural resource to the Town”.

(Source: Article 7.7, Huntersville Zoning Ordinance)

2.5 Open Space

The Town’s development regulations require the provision of Urban Open Space and Natural Recreational and Agricultural Open Space for most development proposals. Urban Open Space is defined as *“all areas not divided into private or civic building lots, streets, right-of-way, parking or easements for purposes other than open space conservation”.*

Urban Open Space is required in all zoning districts except Rural and can consist of squares, parks, forecourts, plazas, parkways and greenbelts.

(Source: Article 7.10, Huntersville Zoning Ordinance)

The purpose of Natural Recreational and Agricultural Open Space in the Rural and Transitional zones is to preserve agricultural and forestry lands, natural and cultural features, and rural character that would likely be lost through conventional development approaches. Lands to be preserved as open space should include wetlands and the areas immediately adjacent to them; floodways; soils unsuitable for septic systems; mature woodlands; significant wildlife habitat; prime agricultural farmland; historic, archaeological and culture features listed (or eligible to be listed) on national, state or local registers or inventories; significant views into and out from the site; and aquifers and their recharge areas. The subdivision process is discussed in Section 3.0 of this focus area.

2.6 Water Quality

In 2003, the Town adopted “Water Quality” regulations consistent with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Storm Water Permit and other requirements as established by the U.S. Clean Water Act. The purpose of these regulations is to establish storm water management requirements and controls to prevent surface water quality degradation to the extent practicable in the streams and lakes within the Town Limits.

Compliance with the Town’s Water Quality standards requires the use of “Low Impact Development (LID),” which seeks to more closely replicate a site’s predevelopment characteristics (i.e. ecology) as compared to conventional storm water management techniques. *“The goal of LID is to develop site design techniques, strategies, and ‘Best Management Practices’ (BMPs) to store, infiltrate, evaporate, retain, and detain runoff on the site to more closely replicate pre-development runoff characteristics and to better mimic the natural and unique hydrology of the site thereby limiting the increase in pollutant loads caused by development.”*

(Source: Article 8.17.13 – Huntersville Zoning Ordinance)

An excellent example of the application of LID principles to an existing development is depicted in **Figure E-2**. This picture shows the retrofit of an existing shopping center parking lot to reduce the amount of impervious area through the removal of parking spaces and replacement with rain gardens. Rain gardens are vegetated areas which allow for the infiltration of storm water runoff. These rain gardens serve to allow for on-site recharge of the water table, as well as filtration of surface pollutants, such as engine oil and sediments.

Figure E-2
Retrofit of Rain Garden in Parking Lot
at Northcross Shopping Center



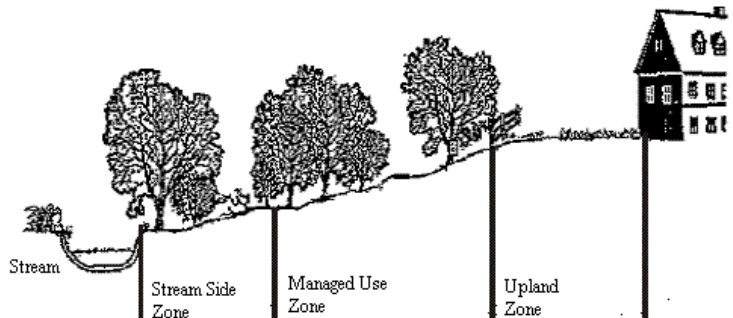
2.7 Surface Water Improvement and Management (S.W.I.M.) Stream Buffers

Adopted in 2001, the purpose of S.W.I.M. Stream Buffers are “to filter pollutants, store floodwaters, provide habitat, and contribute to the ‘green infrastructure.’ Stream systems are comprised of each stream and its respective drainage basin”. (**Source:** Article 8.25, Huntersville Zoning Ordinance) (**Map E-1** shows the S.W.I.M. buffers within the Town of Huntersville shaded in blue.) The S.W.I.M. buffers include all perennial and intermittent streams within the Town’s jurisdiction, and consist of a “minimum” 30 foot buffer extending outward from the top of a stream bank. The width of the S.W.I.M. buffer is based on the total drainage basin size and covers three zones, as noted in **Table E-2**.

Table E-2
S.W.I.M. Stream Buffers:
Minimum Buffer Widths by
Basis Size and Buffer Zone

Basin Area	Stream Side Zone	Managed Use Zone	Upland Zone	Total Buffer (each side of stream)
<50 ac.	N/A	N/A	30 ft.	30 ft.
>50 ac.	20 ft.	None	15 ft.	35 ft.
>300 ac.	20 ft.	20 ft.	10 ft.	50 ft.
>640 ac.	30 ft.	45 ft.	25 ft. or balance of flood plain	100 ft. or entire flood plain

Three Zoned Urban Stream Buffer



Source: Article 8.25, Huntersville Zoning Ordinance

Within each zone there are restrictions on uses allowed, as well as on the disturbance of vegetation and alteration of terrain.

3.0 SUBDIVISION DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

For all major subdivisions, an “Existing Features (Site Analysis) Plan” must be submitted as part of the application, in order to determine significant features to be preserved. The “Existing Features Plan” shall include, at a minimum, the following information:

1. The location and area calculations of constraining features including wetlands, slopes over 25%, watercourses, intermittent streams and floodways, S.W.I.M. buffers (outside of floodways), watershed buffers, and all rights-of-way and easements.
2. The location of significant features such as woodlands, tree lines, specimen and heritage trees, open fields or meadows, scenic views into or out of the property, watershed divides and drainage ways; existing structures, cemeteries, roads, tracks and trails; significant wildlife habitat; prime agricultural farmland; historic, archeological and cultural features listed (or eligible to be listed) on national, state or county registers or inventories; and aquifers and their recharge areas.
3. The location of existing or planned utility easements (above and below ground) to include, but not limited to power/transmission, water, sewer, gas, phone, and cable.

4. A topographical map showing original contours at intervals of not less than four feet and existing tree lines.

Following this analysis, for development located within the Rural and Transitional zoning districts, each subdivision sketch plan shall adhere to a four-step process:

1. **Step 1 - Designation of Open Space.** Areas to be designated should consist of wetlands, floodways, flood fringe and significant trees as well as sensitive and noteworthy natural, scenic and cultural resources on the property.
2. **Step 2 – Location of House Sites.** Based on the designation of open space, potential house sites are tentatively located.
3. **Step 3 – Street and Lot Layout.** Once open space and tentative house sites have been identified, streets can be located, taking care to avoid conservation areas and wetland crossings.
4. **Step 4 – Lot Lines.** Following Steps 1-3, lot lines can be drawn, where applicable.

This process is intended to locate and position new development to minimize environmental impacts and avoid impacts on particularly sensitive and noteworthy natural, scenic and cultural resources on the property.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

4.1 Lighting

As a rapidly developing community that is expected to continue to exhibit a strong growth pattern over the next 20 years, the Town must be cognizant of actual or potential environmental issues that may arise. One such issue relates to lighting. Excessive night-time lighting can have negative environmental (e.g. disruption of habitat) as well as social and economic (e.g. reduction in privacy and loss of property value) impacts. While the Town's current lighting standards are intended to minimize these impacts, it will be important to monitor and adjust requirements over time to ensure that these impacts do not worsen and, in fact, are reduced where possible.

4.2 Air Quality

Air quality will continue to be a major concern for the Town of Huntersville through 2030. Currently, the Town, situated within the Charlotte Metropolitan region, is located in a "non-attainment" area for air quality. According to the most recent data compiled by the "Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO)" – the regional agency responsible for monitoring compliance with Federal and State air quality standards - the primary source of air pollutants continues to be the automobile.

Alternatives to automobile use (i.e. walking, bicycling, mass transit) provide excellent opportunities to reduce auto emissions. Investments in sidewalks, greenway trails, bus and rail transit, as well as improved connectivity of the Town's street network to better integrate residential, commercial and recreational land uses will all help to improve air quality in Huntersville.

4.3 Waste Disposal

The Town of Huntersville has taken an aggressive stance toward the reduction of both residential and non-residential waste that is generated within its jurisdiction. An enhanced recycling program, yard waste composting, and appliance pickup (as well as participation in and support for other efforts to safely dispose of harmful products, along with stream and road cleanup efforts) are all important to maintaining a healthy environment. Several inactive landfills are located in Huntersville, including the Griffin Landfill which includes a "capped" household waste site, as well as an active commercial/construction debris site.

Continued monitoring of groundwater and air quality impacts at active and inactive landfill sites are essential. Where opportunities exist for converting former or current landfills to productive (e.g. recreational) uses, they should be pursued. Harnessing methane gas from landfill sites is another option that may offer beneficial and productive reuse of these sites.

4.4 Alternative Energy

In 2009, Huntersville adopted regulations that would permit Wind and Solar Energy Facilities. Solar panels are now permitted in all residential and non-residential zoning districts, subject to specific requirements. Wind Energy facilities are permitted in both residential and non-residential districts, subject to setback restrictions for facilities adjacent to occupied structures and minimum lot size requirements for minor (10 acres) and major (30 acres) facilities.

5.0 BUILDING & NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN (LEED)

Increasing energy costs, scarcity of building materials and a concern regarding air and water quality associated with development have resulted in a new generation of building and site design standards which address these concerns through the use of energy saving building design, recycled materials and the use of landscape and other techniques to reduce overall energy consumption and environmental impact. Many of these practices come under the broad umbrella of **Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED)**. LEED is a third-party certification program and the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high-performance “green buildings.”

Developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), LEED is intended to provide building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings’ performance, utilizing metrics such as energy savings, water efficiency, CO₂ emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources and sensitivity to their impacts.

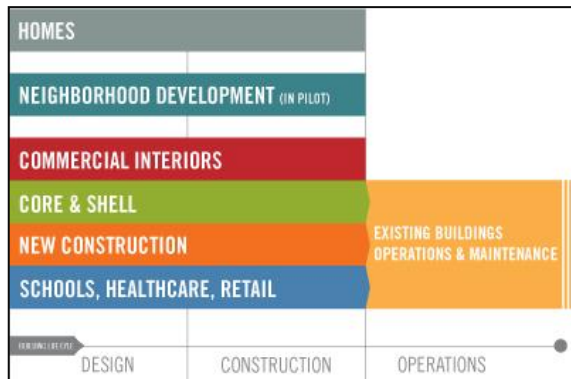
LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health:

1. sustainable site development
2. water savings
3. energy efficiency
4. materials selection
5. indoor environmental quality

Source: (U.S. Green Building Council)

The LEED green building certification program encourages and promotes global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through a suite of rating systems (**Figure E-3**) that recognize projects that implement strategies for better environmental and health performance.

**Figure E-3
LEED Rating System**



Source: U.S. Green Building Council

Since its inception in 1998, the U.S. Green Building Council has grown to encompass more than 14,000 projects in the United States and 30 countries covering 1.062 billion square feet (99 km²) of development area. The hallmark of LEED is that it is an open and transparent process where the technical criteria proposed by USGBC members are publicly reviewed for approval by the almost 20,000 member organizations that currently constitute the USGBC.

In 2009, the USGBC, in partnership with the Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) and Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) developed a rating system for “Green Neighborhood Development,” representing a more “holistic” approach to land development than simply “green buildings.” The LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) system includes three categories: Smart Location and Linkage, Neighborhood Pattern and Design, and Green Infrastructure and Buildings.

According to CNU, this new rating system will help to achieve environmental sustainability by incorporating high-performance “green” buildings in compact, mixed-use neighborhoods that reduce driving by making walking and transit attractive options for commuting and other trips. Huntersville’s land development regulations are consistent with many of the LEED-ND criteria, resulting in developments which reflect LEED principles and are consistent with sustainable land development practices.

6.0 SUSTAINABILITY

Perhaps the most far-reaching trend affecting and influencing land use and transportation policies in the 21st Century is the Sustainability movement.

The most widely accepted definition of sustainability comes from the work of the United Nations’ Bruntland Commission, established in 1983. The commission defined sustainability as: “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Benjamin A. Herman, Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners (FAICP), notes that “Sustainability is a balanced approach that considers people, planet and prosperity.” By “people,” it means community well-being and equity. “Planet” refers to the environment and resource conservation. And “prosperity” means economic vitality.

Herman adds: “In the long run, sustainability means adapting human activities to the constraints and opportunities of the natural systems we need to support life.”

Communities from California to Florida are adopting “Sustainability Plans” and forming commissions to oversee these plans. While these plans vary in scope and content, their primary focus is to guide communities in their attempt to achieve a balance between economic growth, environmental preservation and community building. This balance is the so called “triple bottom line” of sustainable growth (**Figure E-4**).

Figure E-4
Sustainability – The Triple Bottom Line



The Sustainability movement is broad and is reflected in a wide spectrum of plans, programs and policies in small and large towns and cities throughout the U.S. Within the area of “Environmental Sustainability” are initiatives ranging from “zero” emission public transit (Oakland, CA) to enhanced recycling (Cincinnati, OH). Within the “Economic Sustainability” category are “farm fresh food” (Portland OR), “smart energy” (Boulder, CO) and cultivation of existing business (Pittsburgh, PA).

Finally, within the area of “Social Sustainability,” the following can be found: affordable housing ordinance (Davidson, NC), civic engagement process (Seattle, WA), and the preservation of cultural and historic resources (Groton, MA).

The preservation and enhancement of our natural, scenic and cultural assets, in the context of economic prosperity and community well-being, is vital to ensuring a high quality of life for Huntersville residents. The continued efforts of Huntersville to place a high priority and value on these assets will yield both tangible and intangible benefits, well into the future.

7.0 ENVIRONMENT POLICIES & ACTION ITEMS

Policy E-1: Preservation and Environment

Support the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, along with its scenic and cultural assets.

Action E-1.2: Environmental Features Map

Maintain GIS “Environmental Features” map, including significant water features, wetlands, steep slopes, habitats and tree strands.

Action E-1.3: Historic, Scenic and Cultural Resources Map

Maintain GIS “Historic Properties, Scenic and Cultural Resources” map, including historic designations, scenic vistas and significant places.

Policy E-2: Location of New Development

Avoid locating new development in areas of significant environmental, scenic or cultural resources.

Policy E-3: Environmental Regulations

Support and enhance environmental regulations pertaining to tree preservation, buffer yards, open space, water quality, wetland and stream protection.

Action E-3.1: Modify Regulations to Enhance Environmental Protection

Review existing environmental protection regulations to determine what, if any, modifications are required to maintain or enhance current levels of protection.

Policy E-4: Reduce Outdoor Lighting

Support reduction in outdoor lighting to lowest possible levels to maintain public safety, while limiting glare, habitat impacts and loss of privacy.

Action E-4.1: Revise Lighting Ordinance

Review lighting ordinances in effect in other communities to determine if adjustments to current Ordinance are necessary and determine if pre-existing non-conforming lights should be brought-up to current standards when expansions exceed a certain size.

Policy E-5: Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)

Support reduction in vehicle miles travelled (VMT), through capital investments in sidewalks, greenways, enhanced connectivity and mass transit (bus & rail).

Action E-5.1: Reduce VMT through Capital Infrastructure Projects

Support funding capital infrastructure projects which will reduce VMT.

Policy E-6: Alternative Energy

Support for “Alternative Energy”, including wind, solar, and other viable options.

Policy E-7: Sustainability

Support land use and transportation policies which are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.

Policy E-8: LEED Building Design & LEED Neighborhood Development

Support policies that promote LEED Building Design and LEED-Neighborhood Development.

Action E-8.1: LEED Public Buildings

Require minimum L.E.E.D. standards to be met for all public buildings built in Town.

Transportation in 2030

In 2030, the Town of Huntersville envisions a transportation system that supports the multi-modal travel demand of its residents, while reinforcing a sustainable land use pattern that focuses higher intensity development generally within two miles of I-77 and at identified mixed-use village centers. Vehicles (including mass transit), pedestrians and bicyclists will be accommodated within an integrated transportation system that provides connectivity between commercial and residential uses. Transportation policies will support these goals and include a prioritized capital improvement program for both the maintenance of existing travel routes and the development of new ones. Finally, the transportation system will incorporate appropriate landscaping, lighting and pedestrian safety features to reinforce and complement the Town's desired land use development pattern.

FOCUS AREA:

TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The transportation system within the Town of Huntersville has historically played (and will continue to play) a central role in defining the character of the Town. This “system” has provided the framework for how the community has developed over time and will continue to develop in the future. The components of this system, as well as their integration with the existing land use pattern, will play a significant role in defining the town’s built environment through 2030.

The rapid growth of Huntersville over the past 20 years and the likely continuation of this growth pattern highlight the need for a renewed emphasis on long-range transportation planning and system development through 2030.

Finally, recent statewide and regional analyses have served to highlight the large disparity between transportation needs and the resources to meet these needs. Land use patterns and transportation investments must be subjected to a rigorous strategic analysis and prioritization process, in order for the Town to retain its economic vitality.

2.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Huntersville has long recognized both the need for and value of long-range transportation planning and improvements to the local transportation system. Initial transportation investment began prior to the Civil War with the Atlantic, Tennessee, and Ohio rail line from Charlotte to Statesville with reconstruction in 1871.

Subsequent investments occurred through the North Carolina Highway Department in the 1920’s and after County roads were turned over to the State in 1931.

Citizen Survey: 95% of residents surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with the need to “Plan, prioritize and fund needed road improvements”.

While development of the transportation network in Huntersville has occurred over the past 100 years, many of the significant road improvements have occurred since 1970, including construction of Interstate – 77 (and interchanges at Gilead Rd. – Exit 23 and Sam Furr Rd. – Exit 25), I-485 from I-85 South to I-77 North, Sam Furr Rd (NC 73), and numerous local streets.

Along with development of the local transportation network has come the challenge to fund and maintain this network to accommodate the travel demands placed upon it. Over the next 20 years, the ability to pay for needed transportation system improvements that reflect the community vision will continue to dominate the discussion regarding not only how to meet the mobility needs of those who currently use the system, but also for those who will use the system in 2030. The success with which this challenge is met will in large part define the quality of life and economic vitality of the Town of Huntersville.

Prior to 2003, all transportation investments in the Town's sphere were controlled and funded by either NCDOT or the private sector. The Town's citizens began to invest directly in their transportation system with the approval of an \$8.5 million bond package for transportation in 2003. In 2007, a \$20 per vehicle fee was enacted to create a Transportation Reserve Fund for smaller, high impact projects and debt service. Partnerships are being crafted to leverage these funds and deliver projects.

3.0 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Town of Huntersville is located within the Charlotte metropolitan region, one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. Few physical or resource barriers to regional expansion have existed.

Thus, similar to much of the Sun Belt experience, population and job growth over the past 20 years has been accompanied by an even greater increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Sprawl and segregated land use patterns have resulted in the automobile becoming essential to all but a few to achieve a full life and economic opportunity.

4.0 LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PHILOSOPHY

The Town's transportation philosophy includes a number of elements:

- Strategic coordination of land use and transportation
- A multi-modal system, coordinated regionally
- All streets are public and designed with intentional provision for all modes
- Provisions for local and regional travel shall be incorporated
- Connectivity, both internal and external to developments is essential
- Maintain and efficiently operate existing systems
- Strategic prioritization of investments
- Ensure adequacy of transportation infrastructure when approving developments

5.0 TRANSPORTATION POLICY OVERVIEW

Development of new, and the expansion/maintenance of the Town's existing transportation network is guided by a number of local, county, state and federal policies, ordinances and regulations.

Federal:

Federal regulations mandate that any area wishing to receive Federal funds participate in a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) planning process with all jurisdictions in the urbanized area. That process is implemented through Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's). In addition, the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the Clean Air Act of 1970 guide both the planning and implementation of transportation investments.

State:

The North Carolina Department of Transportation maintains and constructs all public streets outside of municipalities and many of the major roadways within incorporated areas.

State laws (the "Equity Formula") govern the geographic distribution of almost all Federal and State roadway funds. There is no ongoing State funding mechanism for transit projects. A major chasm between transportation needs and anticipated revenues is leading to a new strategic approach to selecting projects to move forward.

The NCDOT has traditionally been a highway organization focused on motorized vehicular needs. Beginning in 2009 with the adoption of a "Complete Streets" policy, NCDOT is identifying policies to incorporate multi-modal elements into their roadway projects. Transit and rail freight needs are acknowledged with the creation of the "Congestion Relief and 21st Century Intermodal Fund." The "Mobility Fund" has been created to deal with projects of statewide significance.

Regional:

The Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) serves as the federally mandated 3C implementing body for our region. It is composed of members from each governing board in Mecklenburg County and most of Union County and will almost certainly expand into southern Iredell County in 2012. MUMPO adopts a Long Range Transportation Plan that includes a fiscally constrained project list that will allow the region to maintain conformity with its air quality plan. It approves alignments for future thoroughfares. The use of any Federal transportation funds must be approved by MUMPO.

The Metropolitan Transit Commission is composed of members from each governing board in Mecklenburg County and is tasked with setting policy and funding priorities for the Charlotte Area Transit System. A countywide dedicated half cent sales tax is the primary source of revenue for this effort.

County:

As a result of the Great Depression, in 1931 counties were stripped of their ability to build and maintain roads. In 2007, without any county requesting the legislation, the General Assembly returned this capability to them. Counties also provide significant transportation services to the disadvantaged populations through their social service functions.

Local

The following excerpt from the “Huntersville Zoning Ordinance” provides the principal regulatory framework for development of the Town’s transportation network:

“Streets in Huntersville are to be inviting public space and integral components of community design. A hierarchical street network should have a rich variety of types, including bicycle, pedestrian, and transit routes. All streets should connect to help create a comprehensive network of public areas to allow free movement of automobiles, bicyclists and pedestrians. In order for this street network to be safe for motorists and pedestrians, all design elements must consistently be applied to calm automobile traffic.”(Article 5)

The essential components of the Ordinance relative to the local street system are summarized below:

- Interconnectivity – Street connections (or stubs) are required between new development and adjoining property or developments.
- Pedestrian Scale – Be designed to accommodate the pedestrian.
- Sidewalks – Sidewalks are required on both sides of all new streets, with the exception of rural roads, lanes, alleys and along the undeveloped edge of neighborhood parkways.
- Street Trees – Trees are required on both sides of all new streets, with the exception of rural roads, lanes, alleys and along the undeveloped edge of neighborhood parkways.
- Public – All streets in new developments must be public (any street proposed to be “private” must be built to public street standards).
- Focal Point – Generally, all buildings are required to front on public streets.

In addition to these requirements, the Town is in the process of preparing “Street Design Guidelines” to provide guidance regarding the appropriate street cross-section(s) to be utilized in various development scenarios.

In 2007, the Town adopted policies and funding apportionment parameters to guide its investment in transportation infrastructure. Effective implementation of these policies and parameters will require continuous refinement, supported by the accurate collection and analysis of traffic and other relevant data.

6.0 TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FUNDING

It is important to recognize that the majority of the community's transportation system has been provided through private investment. Almost all of the Town-maintained 164 mile system was built by the private sector. These roads provide a vital distribution web for motorized and non-motorized movement, essential as a supplement to the major roadway network. Thus, it is crucial that these investments are guided by policies that contribute to the community's vision.

Transportation system funding for larger projects is prioritized through the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), under the direction and guidance of MUMPO. The LRTP looks 25 years into the future, is updated every four years and includes an estimate of probable revenues compared to a prioritized list of major transportation projects within the MUMPO jurisdiction.

All regional and statewide plans have identified an extraordinary gap between desired projects and resources to deliver them.

For example, a 2010 statewide analysis identified a list of \$54 billion worth of transportation projects for the period of 2015-20 and for which \$10.5 billion in resources are identified.

Major projects are funded through one of three mechanisms. The North Carolina DOT produces bi-annually a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), where funding has been identified for specific projects within a seven-year time frame. Geographic distribution of projects is tied to a funding formula known as the Equity Formula. The first five years of that document constitute a Work Program for which the DOT has a goal of delivering 95% of the projects within the described time frame.

In recognition of the gap between needs and state resources, many municipalities undertake significant transportation investment programs. The Town of Huntersville voters authorized the issuance of \$8.5 million worth of transportation bonds in 2003. These funds are being used for the widening of Sam Furr Road and the extension of Verhoeff Drive into the Commerce Station development. Since January 2007, the Town has collected \$20 per registered vehicle which is deposited into a Transportation Reserve Fund to be used for debt service on transportation bonds and to fund small transportation capital improvement projects.

7.0 COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

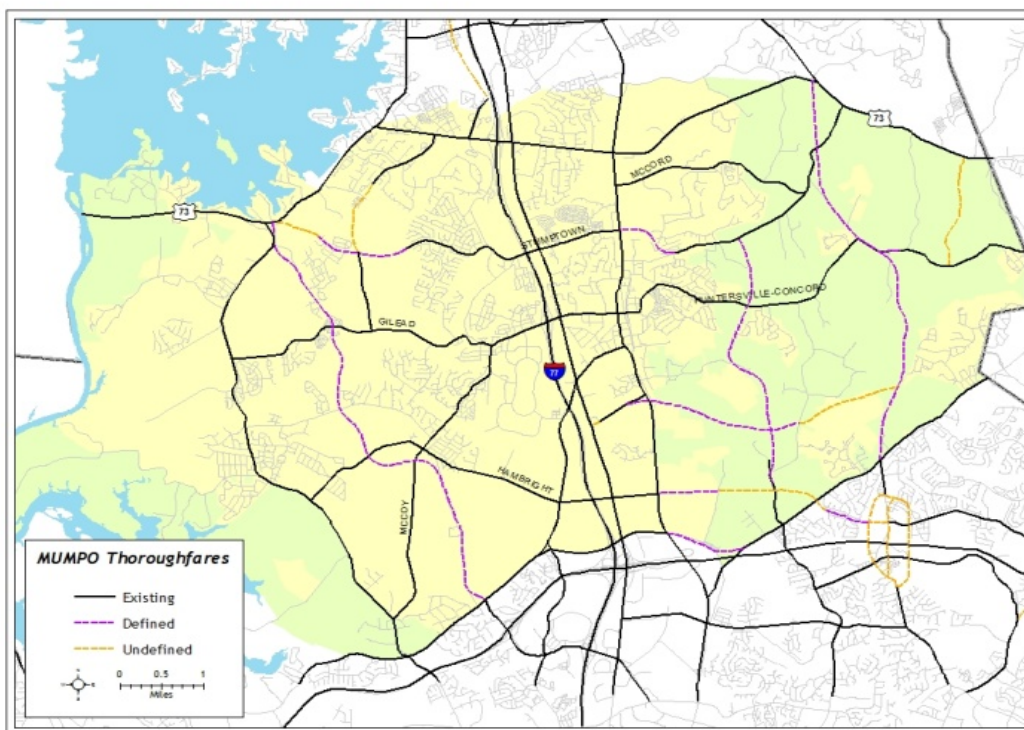
Since the 1970's the primary method for organizing the framework for the region's transportation system has been through the development and updating of "Thoroughfare Plans." **Map T-1** shows the existing MUMPO Thoroughfare Plan as it applies to Huntersville.

In 2009, NC General Assembly made a policy decision to replace the existing process for thoroughfare planning with the “Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP).” The CTP will be prepared under the direction and guidance of the appropriate regional transportation planning organization (RPO) or metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for a jurisdiction.

The CTP is intended to be a multi-modal document that is not constrained by time or funding. It will show the transportation network anticipated to serve the region's major travel needs. The CTP will serve as the initial source document for the selection of projects to be considered for the LRTP as well as the basis for right-of-way protection efforts.

The CTP will include maps for the major roadway system, transit routes, and bicycle provisions. The manner of portraying the pedestrian network is yet to be determined. The final CTP will reflect reconciliation with NCDOT's Complete Streets policy initiative, scheduled for a Fall 2011 completion. Finally, appendices with more detailed description of desired cross-sections for each roadway segment will be developed.

Map T-1
MUMPO Thoroughfare Plan



8.0 RECENT & PLANNED ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Since 2005, a number of road improvements have been undertaken in Huntersville. Projects completed or underway include the following:

- NC 73 Widening (US 21 to NC 115) - 2012 scheduled completion
- Gilead Road/Huntersville-Concord Road intersection improvements
- McCord Road/NC 115 – Signal and turn lanes
- Ramah Church Road/NC 115 – Signal and turn lanes
- Verhoeff/NC 115 – Bridge construction and turn lanes – 2012 scheduled completion
- Stumptown Road Extension/Ramah Church Road Roundabout
- Gilead Road/Ranson Road – Signal and turn lanes

Taken together, these roadway projects offer significant improvements to the existing transportation system. Some of these projects have been funded entirely by the Town, private developers, the State or a combination of one or more groups.

9.0 TRAFFIC GROWTH & MODELING

Among its responsibilities, MUMPO is charged with preparation of a “Regional Travel Demand Model,” which is used for a variety of purposes, including identifying the need for future road projects based upon population and employment projections. This data underlies all elements of the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The City of Charlotte DOT maintains the Travel Demand Model for MUMPO.

The model provides information used in determining that transportation plans and investments within MUMPO conform to the air quality plans for the area. This determines “conformity” with Federal air quality guidelines.

Conformity with these guidelines is necessary in order for the region to qualify for Federal transportation funding, as well as other funding from the State. Detailed information on the model, the Long-Range Transportation Plan, and the air quality conformity analysis can be viewed on MUMPO’s website, www.mumpo.org.

Typical Residential Street in Huntersville



10.0 TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS (TIA)

In January 2008, the Town of Huntersville adopted a “Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) Ordinance.” The purpose of this ordinance was to establish “Levels of Service” (LOS) standards for state and local roads and to require that all development generating 50 or more peak hour trips, or 500 or more daily vehicle trips, meet these LOS standards, including any required mitigation measures to achieve them.

11.0 COMPLETE STREETS

In July of 2009, the NCDOT Board of Transportation adopted a “Complete Streets Policy.” The definition of this policy is as follows:

“Complete Streets is North Carolina’s approach to independent, multi-modal transportation networks that safely accommodates access and travel for all users.” Past NCDOT policies have primarily focused on accommodating motorized vehicles with very limited support or consideration for other modes of travel.

Furthermore: *“This policy sets forth the protocol for the development of transportation networks that encourage non-vehicular travel without compromising the safety, efficiency, or function of the facility. The purpose of this policy is to guide existing decision-making and design processes to ensure that all users are routinely considered during the planning, design, construction, funding and operation of North Carolina’s transportation network.*

This policy requires that NCDOT’s planners and designers will consider and incorporate multi-modal alternatives in the design and improvement of all appropriate transportation projects within a growth area of a town or city unless exceptional circumstances exist.” Finally, “Notwithstanding the exceptions stated... all transportation facilities within a growth area of a town or city funded by or through NCDOT, and planned, designed, or constructed on state maintained facilities, must adhere to this policy”.

The Complete Streets Policy is included in Appendix 3 of this plan.

A working group was formed by the Board of Transportation to oversee the preparation of detailed rules and guidelines to guide existing and future NCDOT design and decision making processes.

***Fast Facts: Road Miles in
Huntersville’s Town Limits***
172 miles - Town-owned streets
134 miles - State-owned streets
See map CD3, page 85

The Town of Huntersville has long embraced the concept of complete streets. The Town’s development regulations promote streets that accommodate all users, especially emphasizing the pedestrian realm. In addition, the Zoning Ordinance tailors the relationships of buildings to the street based on the building type.

Town departments collaborate on the review of developments to ensure that proper street design is chosen and that buildings are situated in a compatible fashion. Additional efforts are underway to refine this decision-making process.

12.0 PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE CIRCULATION

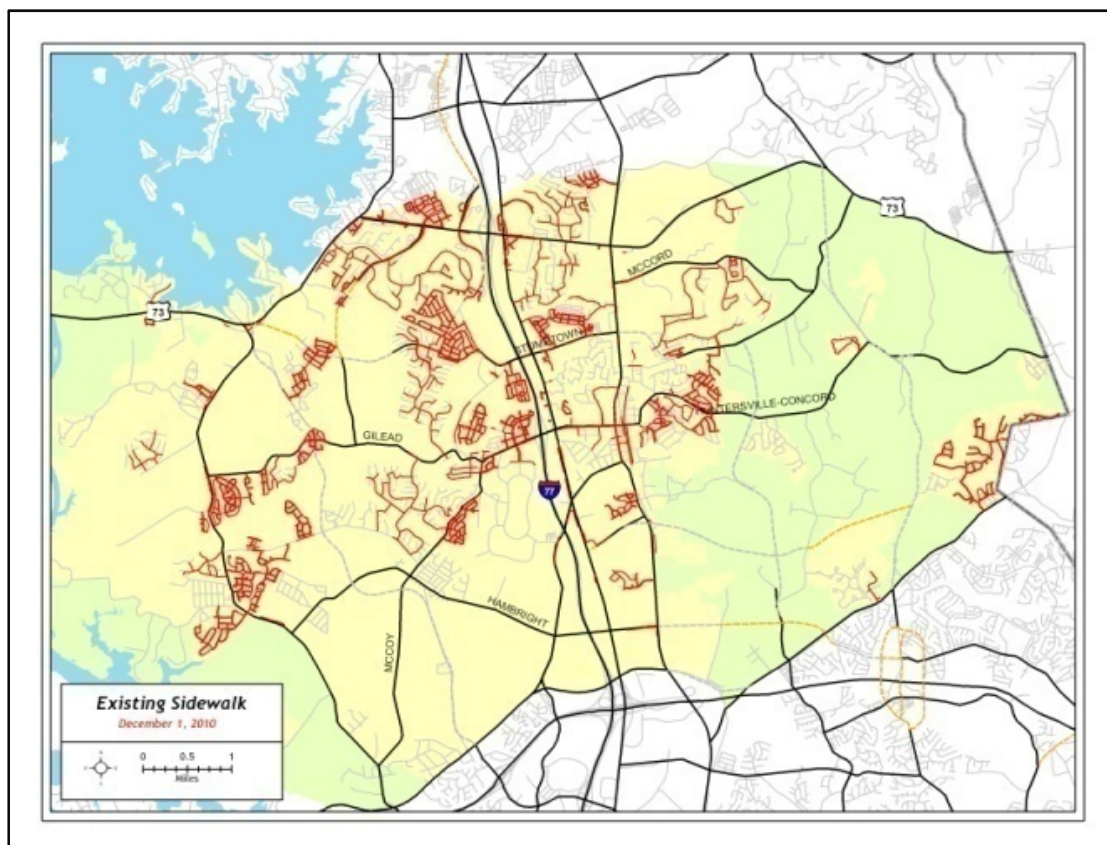
It is the policy of the Town of Huntersville that pedestrians and bicyclists be accommodated in addition to automobiles and other forms of motorized transportation. As previously noted, with certain exceptions, sidewalks are required on all new (public) streets as well as along the frontage of existing streets where redevelopment occurs.

As the community grows, relatively short block lengths and high levels of connectivity afford many pedestrian routes and fairly direct connections to activity centers. **Map T-2** shows an inventory of all existing sidewalks within the town limits.

Intentional bicycle accommodations (wide outside lane, bike lane or bike paths) are required on all thoroughfares. MUMPO's LRTP calls for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on all designated major and minor thoroughfares.

Finally, the connectivity of Town streets allows the bicyclist low volume and low speed routes that do not need additional accommodation.

Map T-2
Existing Sidewalk Locations



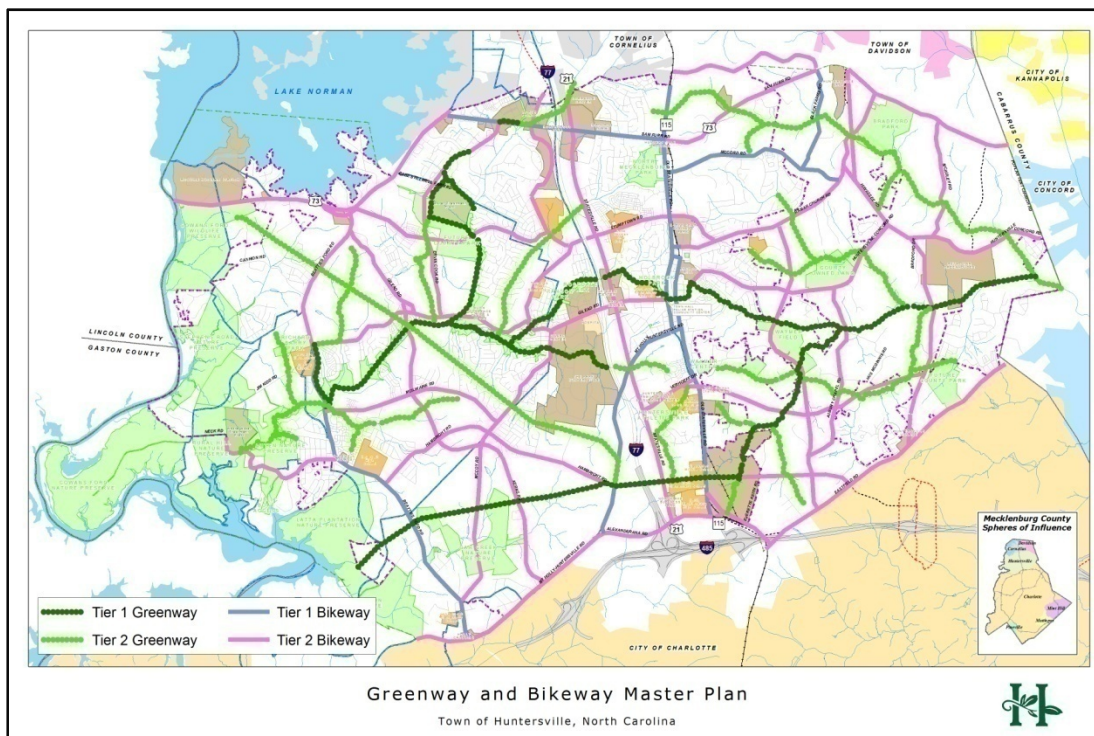
13.0 GREENWAYS AND BIKEWAYS

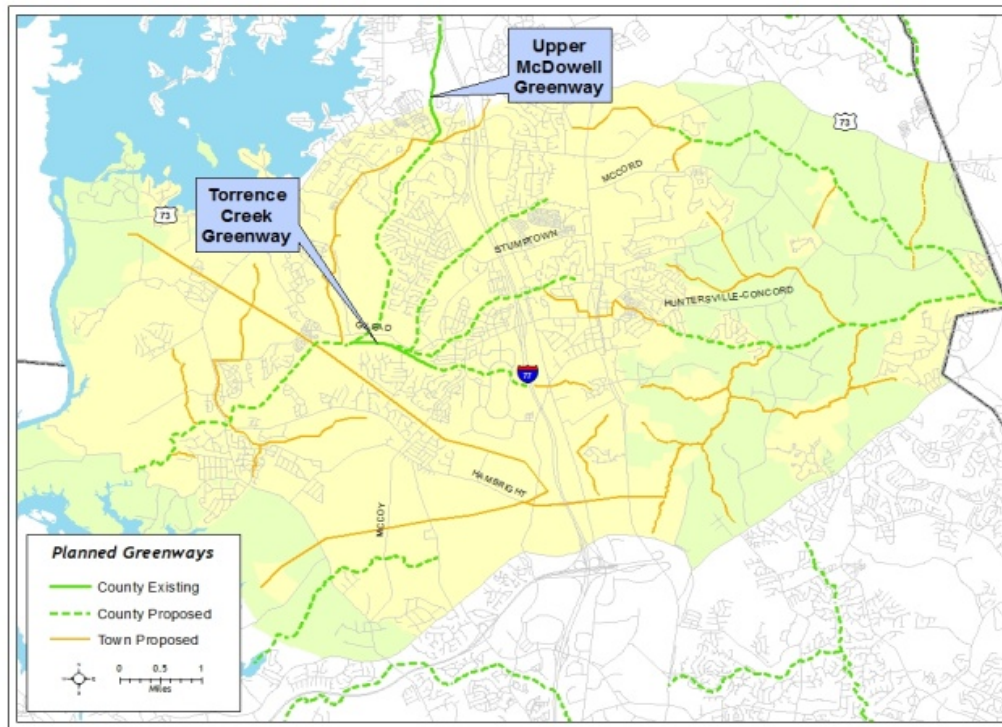
Greenway trails consistently rank high on the list of amenities that the public would like to see to enhance mobility options. In 2007, the Town of Huntersville adopted a “Greenway and Bikeway Master Plan.” This plan included an overview of greenways, trails and bikeways, an inventory and analysis of these facilities, as well as an action plan and implementation strategies. The greenway and bikeway routes are classified by two tiers of importance to help develop a capital improvement plan for the most critical pieces of the network (**Map T-3**).

Currently there are two public greenway trails within the Town. The Torrence Creek Greenway, located in the Cedarfield neighborhood, is a ten-foot wide paved path measuring 1.1 miles in length. The second, Upper McDowell Greenway, is also a ten-foot wide paved path measuring .5 miles in length and extends into the Town of Cornelius intersection with Westmoreland Road. Both trails were built and are maintained by Mecklenburg County Parks & Recreation and are part of a county-wide greenway trail system plan that includes additional trail sections in Huntersville.

A planned extension of the Torrence Creek Greenway, west to Beatties Ford Road and east to Rosedale Village, is planned for completion in the fall of 2011. **Map T-4** shows existing and planned public greenway trails located within the Town.

Map T-3
Greenways and Bikeways
Master Plan





Map T-4
Existing and Planned Greenways

For new development, reservation, dedication or construction of greenway trails is required by the Town's land use regulations. The latter option (i.e. construction) may be needed to meet the "Urban Open Space," or "Open Space" requirements for a particular development proposal.

13.1 Carolina Thread Trail

The Carolina Thread Trail (CTT), also known as The Thread, is a regional trail network that will ultimately reach 15 counties and more than 2.3 million people. More than a hiking trail, more than a bike path,

The Thread preserves our natural areas and is a place for exploration of nature, culture, science and history, for family adventures and celebrations of friendship.

The Thread arose from a discovery process started in 2005 when the Foundation For the Carolinas convened more than 40 regional leaders and organizations to determine the region's most pressing environmental needs and concerns. From that process, open space preservation surfaced as the number one priority. The Carolina Thread Trail was successfully launched in 2007 as a project focused on preserving natural corridors and connecting people to nature through a network of connected trails.

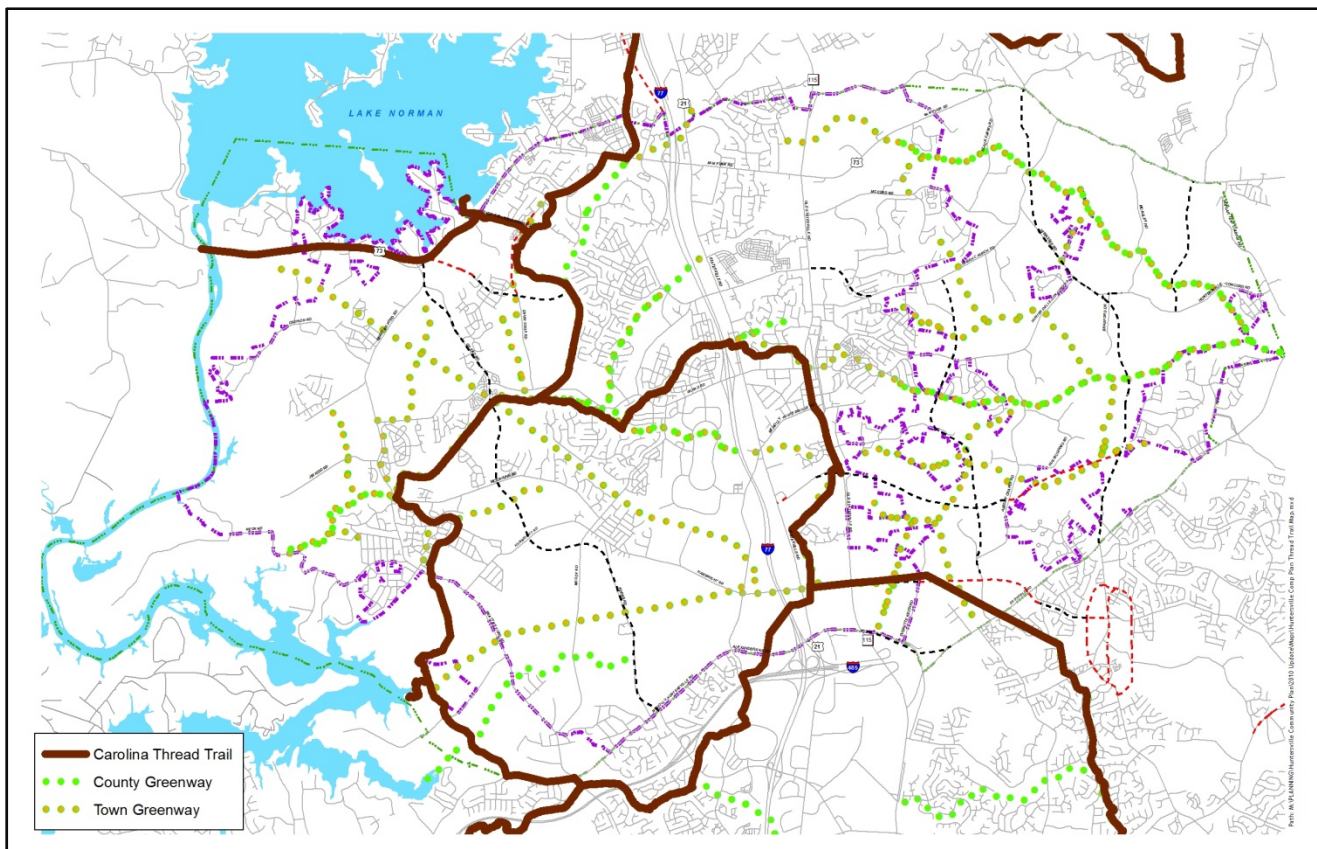
Under the leadership of Catawba Lands Conservancy and many local partners, the Carolina Thread Trail strengthens the region and promotes economic development, education, better health and land conservation by connecting people, businesses and communities of diverse backgrounds and interests.

While not every local trail will be part of the Carolina Thread Trail system, The Thread is linking regionally significant trails and many regional attractions. Think of it as a “green interstate system” of major trails and conservation lands created through local efforts throughout the region. The Thread will emerge over time as communities work together to plan and build trails reflecting community character, aspirations and priorities.

Map T-5 depicts The Thread Trail, including the portion to be located in Huntersville. In several locations, the CTT overlays either designated county or town greenway trails.

Citizen Survey: 91% of survey respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the town should “Combine sidewalks, bike lanes and greenways where appropriate for efficiency.”

**Map T-5
Thread Trail**



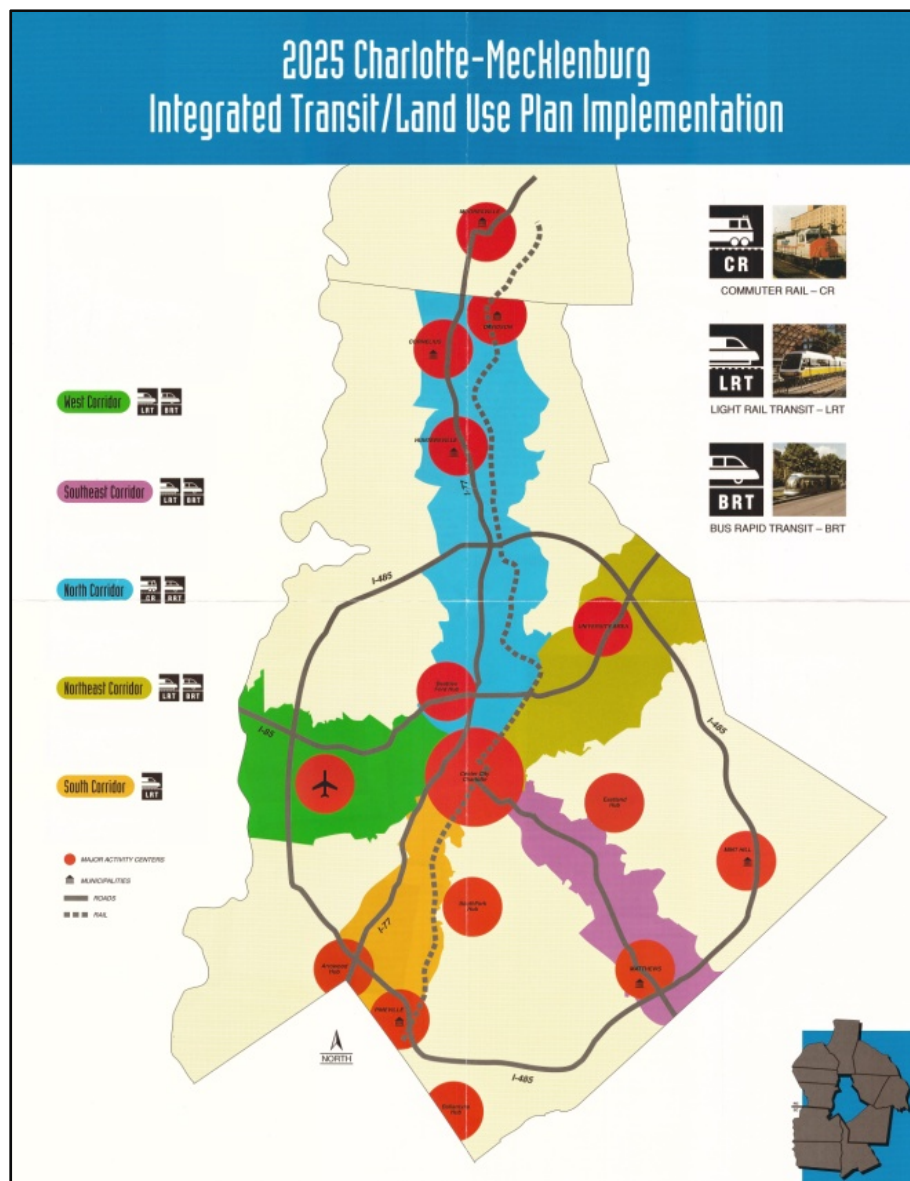
14.0 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION (BUS SYSTEM & NORTH CORRIDOR COMMUTER RAIL) –CATS

Public transportation within the Town of Huntersville and throughout Mecklenburg County is provided by the “Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS).” CATS service is based upon a nationally recognized ground breaking plan completed in 1998, the *2025 Integrated Transit/Land Use Plan*.

This plan identified a desired land use pattern for future anticipated growth and proposed an extensive investment in a rapid and bus transit system to guide that development future. **Map T-6** shows this plan.

Formed in 1998, CATS is funded in part by a half cent sales tax on all non-food retail transactions within Mecklenburg County.

Map T-6, 2025 Integrated Transit/Land Use Plan



Policy and programmatic oversight of CATS is provided by the “Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC),” a board made up of the chief elected officials and chief administrative officials from the City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, and the Towns of Matthews, Mint Hill, Pineville, Huntersville, Cornelius and Davidson. The NC Board of Transportation also has a representative on the MTC.

Adjacent communities may have non-voting representation at the discretion of the MTC.

Bus transit service is provided under a Countywide Transit Service Plan, updated every five years. Express buses and one local, fixed route bus (known as the Village Rider) serves Huntersville along with a neighborhood circulator system.

CATS’ service is provided under the framework of the 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan, adopted by the MTC in 2007(see **Map T-7**). The 2030 Transit System Plan includes five rail corridor rapid transit projects, Center City projects, and additional transit system improvements designed to weave together the five corridors into an integrated system in Center City Charlotte.

As part of the 2030 Transit System Plan, Huntersville is proposed to be served by the North Corridor Commuter Rail Line. The proposed North Corridor Commuter Rail or Red Line as it is referred to, is a new 25-mile commuter rail system operating over existing tracks owned by the Norfolk Southern Corporation (NS)

between downtown Charlotte and Mount Mourne, an area immediately south of downtown Mooresville, North Carolina (see **Map T-8**).

The rail line runs though the centers of downtown Huntersville, Cornelius, and Davidson. Improvements to the rail line would include replacement of ties and rail, signalization, protection of at-grade crossings, and construction of up to 12 stations and a vehicle maintenance facility (VMF). As of 2009, design and engineering of the rail line and crossings is 90% complete, with station designs at 30% completion.

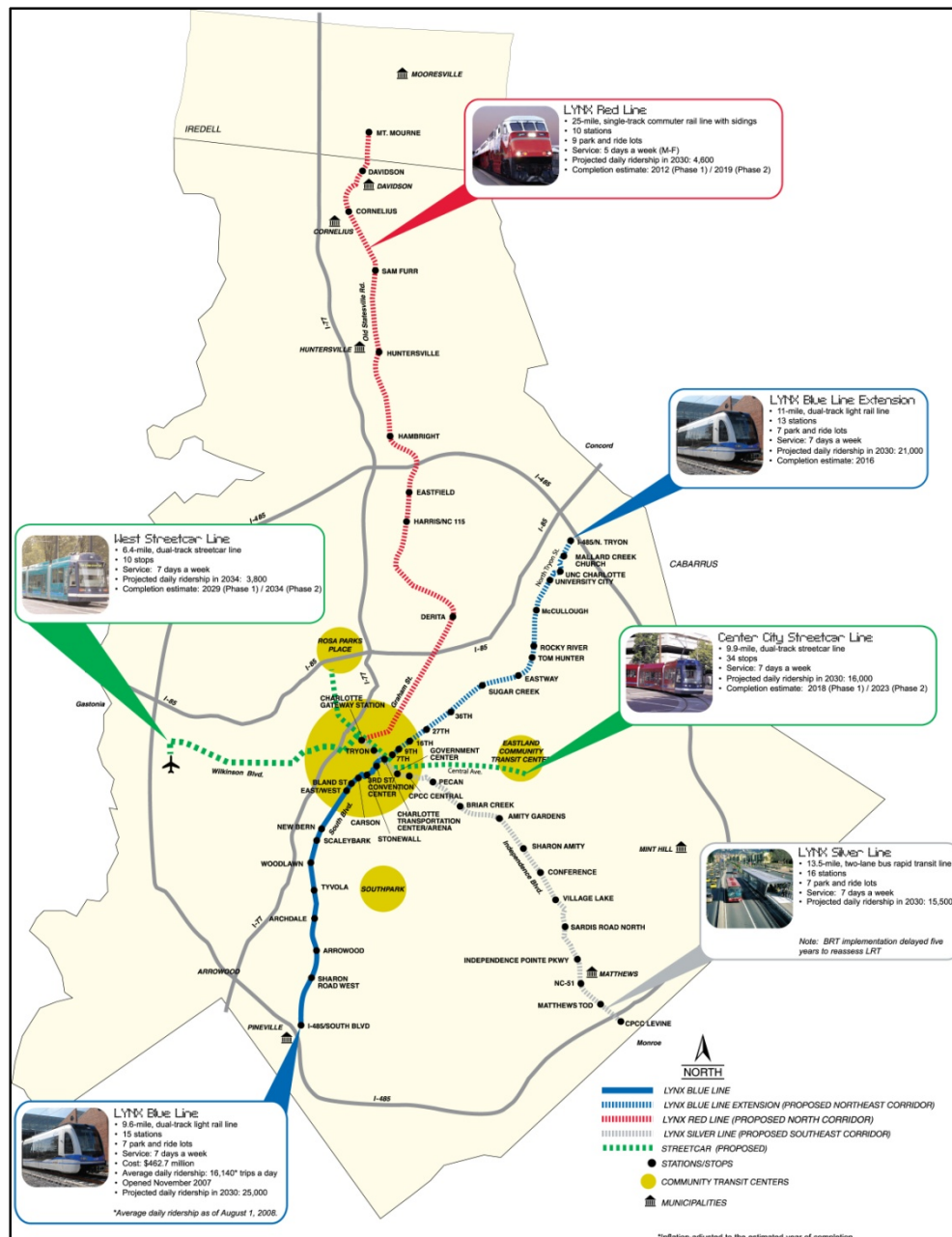
As currently envisioned, trains would run every 20-30 minutes during the morning and afternoon rush hour period and hourly during the remainder of the day. The new service is projected to have some 5,000 commuters ride the trains daily to or from Charlotte by 2030.

The vast majority of these commuters currently travel by single-occupancy vehicle along I-77 and/or NC 115 (Old Statesville Road) or US 21 (Statesville Road). The South Corridor Light Rail Line (Lynx) is the only one of the five corridors that currently features active passenger rail service. Opened in 2007, average weekday ridership for the 9.6 mile Lynx system was initially projected at 8,500 passengers, gradually increasing to 18,100 by 2025. According to the American Public Transit Association, average daily ridership figures for the second quarter of 2010 were 21,600.

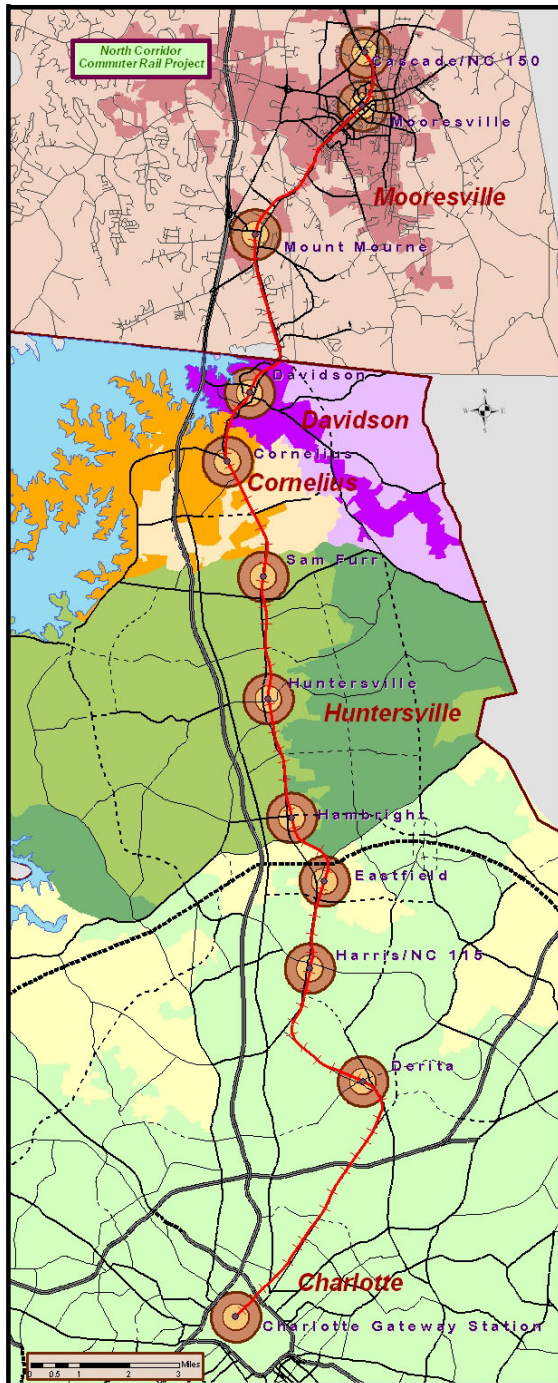
Estimates show that the Blue Line has spurred over \$1 billion in new development in proximity to the line and within the station areas serving the line. An extension of that operation into the University area (the Northeast corridor) is currently in planning and design, and federal funding is anticipated.

Currently, a task force is identifying funding options and is expected to make a final recommendation to the MTC by December 2011. Based on a decision to proceed within implementation of the North Corridor, service could commence by 2017.

Map T-7
2030 Transit Corridor System Plan,
adopted by the MTC in 2007



**Map T-8
North Corridor Commuter Rail Line**



Citizen Survey: 73% of survey respondents support development of the North Corridor Commuter rail line.

15.0 TRANSPORTATION POLICIES AND ACTION ITEMS

Policy T-1: Apportionment of Transportation Funds

Maintain and refine Town Board adopted policy to apportion transportation system funding for local transportation projects (e.g. capital, maintenance and system operation).

Action T-1.1: Analysis Based Decision-making

Implement data gathering and analysis programs necessary to reach data-driven decisions on funding transportation projects.

Action T-1.2: Funding Policy

Review transportation funding policy on regular basis and revise to reflect transportation system priorities.

Policy T-2: Public/Private Partnerships (PPP)

Support innovative and alternative funding efforts (including public/private and public/public partnerships) to increase the number of transportation projects that can be implemented by 2030.

Policy T-3: Local Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Create and maintain local “Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)” for projects to be funded primarily by local revenue and incorporated in the five year Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Policy T-5: Context-sensitive Design of Streets

Continue to support “context-sensitive” design of streets and the selection of appropriate street section designs for residential, commercial and industrial developments applications.

Action T-3.1: Implement Low Cost/High Benefit Projects

Identify and prioritize high benefit, lower cost roadway projects for funding and implementation on an annual basis.

Action T-5.1: Street Design Guidelines

Finalize “Town of Huntersville Street Design Guidelines Plan,” to include recommended street sections accommodating all modes of transportation and a selection process for determining appropriate sections for new and existing streets.

Action T-3.2: Apportionment of Staff Resources

Determine appropriate staff resources and private sector support necessary to plan and implement selected transportation projects.

Action T-5.2: Way Finding Signage Plan

Prepare a uniform “Way Finding” signage plan for the Town of Huntersville with special attention on Downtown.

Policy T-4: Complete Streets Policy

Support NCDOT “Complete Streets Policy,” as adopted by the NC State Board of Transportation.

Action T-4.1: Develop Procedures for Complete Streets

Provide support to NCDOT work group that is developing implementation procedures for “Complete Streets Policy.”

Policy T-6: Pedestrian Connections

Support the installation of sidewalks, bikeways and greenway trails connecting residential, commercial, employment, recreational and institutional uses.

Action T-6.1: Pedestrian Master Plan

Prepare “Pedestrian Master Plan” for Town, including inventory of existing sidewalks and a prioritized implementation schedule for enhancement and expansion of the existing pedestrian transportation network through public and private (in coordination with new development) funding.

Action T-6.2: Greenways and Bikeways

Implement “Greenway and Bikeway Master Plan,” including the prioritization and funding of greenway trails and bikeways through a combination of public and private funding.

Action T-6.3: Comprehensive Transportation Plan

Utilize Complete Streets concepts in creation of “Comprehensive Transportation Plan.”

Policy T-7: Traffic Impact Analysis Ordinance (TIAO)

Continue to apply requirements of “Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA)” Ordinance, including Level of Service (LOS) and mitigation of impacts generated by new development.

Action T-7.1: Traffic Impact Analysis Ordinance – Levels of Service

Review Level of Service requirements in TIA Ordinance on annual basis and adjust as necessary to achieve desired land use pattern reflected in 2030 Community Plan.

Policy T-8: Street Connectivity

Promote and require street connectivity in the Town of Huntersville among residential, commercial, employment, recreational and institutional uses.

Action T-8.1: Connectivity Master Plan

Prepare “Connectivity Master Plan” identifying recommended vehicular, pedestrian and bikeway connections between existing and proposed streets.

Action T-8.2: Connectivity Ordinance

Prepare and adopt Ordinance amendments necessary to implement “Connectivity Master Plan.”

Policy T-9: State Transportation Equity Formula

Support efforts to revise NCDOT “Equity Formula” for funding transportation projects.

Action T-9.1: Revise Equity Formula

Support and actively participate in legislative study committees to revise the Equity Formula.

Policy T-10: Regional Cooperation

Participate in organizations such as the “Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO),” “Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC),” “Lake Norman Transportation Commission (LNTC),” and Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG) to maintain Town’s role in regional transportation efforts.

Action T-10.1: Coordination of Town Participation in Regional Organizations

Coordinate among Town Board representatives to various regional transportation organizations, to ensure that Huntersville receives fair and equitable treatment.

Policy T-11: Commuter Rail

Advocate for implementation of North Corridor Commuter Rail line, consistent with MTC efforts.

Action T-11.1: Transit Oriented Development

Support “Red Line Task Force” efforts to advance North Corridor, including dedication of local share of taxes generated by “Transit-Oriented Development.”

Economic Development in 2030

In 2030, Huntersville will have a diverse and sustainable economic base built upon:

1. A commitment to help expand existing business and industry.
2. A proactive search for opportunities and encouragement of investment by new business and industry.
3. A spirit of cooperation between business, government, schools and the community.

Commercial Development in 2030

In 2030, commercial development in Huntersville will exemplify the highest possible integration of land use and transportation planning. Commercial development will follow a “mixed-use” center land use pattern that, to the greatest extent possible, meets the demand for a variety of commercial services at identifiable nodes and centers. Commercial development will reflect the highest quality architectural standards, consistent with the surrounding built and natural environment, and be located in areas where adequate public infrastructure exists to support this development. Commercial development will be designed and function in the framework of a multi-modal integrated street network, minimizing traffic impacts and promoting a sustainable land use pattern.

FOCUS AREA: ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1.1 Regional Economy & Demographics

Huntersville is a part of the Charlotte metropolitan region – one of the fastest growing areas in the U.S. Since 2000, Mecklenburg County has grown from a population of 695,454 to a total of 919,628 in 2010, representing an increase of approximately 32%. The NC State Demographic projections show that Mecklenburg County will continue its upward growth rate, with a projected 2030 population of 1,458,192.

The regional presence of Fortune 500 companies is a significant indicator of the area's economic strength and stability. Mecklenburg County is home to seven Fortune 500 headquarters, ranking it 8th in the country.

Table ED-1

Charlotte Area Fortune 500 Headquarters		
Rank	Company	Revenue (\$ billions)
5	Bank of America	150.5
42	Lowe's	47.2
181	Duke Energy	12.7
206	Nucor	11.2
305	Family Dollar	7.4
334	Goodrich Corp.	6.7
345	Sonic Automotive	6.3
427	SPX	4.9

Source: Charlotte Chamber of Commerce

The presence of these companies is indicative of the significant employment found within the banking, energy, manufacturing and auto racing-related business sectors.

1.2 Local Economy

Prior to 2003, Huntersville did not take an active role in promoting economic development. Job creation and development of business parks were the result of private sector investments. With Huntersville's prime location just north of Charlotte along the I-77 corridor, that investment was substantial, most notably the Park Huntersville, a 400 plus acre business park owned by the Bank of America's pension fund.

However, after completion of the Leak-Goforth study in 2002, sponsored by the Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce, the Towns of Huntersville, Cornelius and Davidson took a more active role in charting the economic future of North Mecklenburg. The study looked at economic development prospects and opportunities and recommended an action-oriented strategy to position the area as a viable location for business and industry. The most notable outcome of that study was the creation in 2003 of the Lake Norman Regional Economic Development Corporation (LNREDC) in 2003.

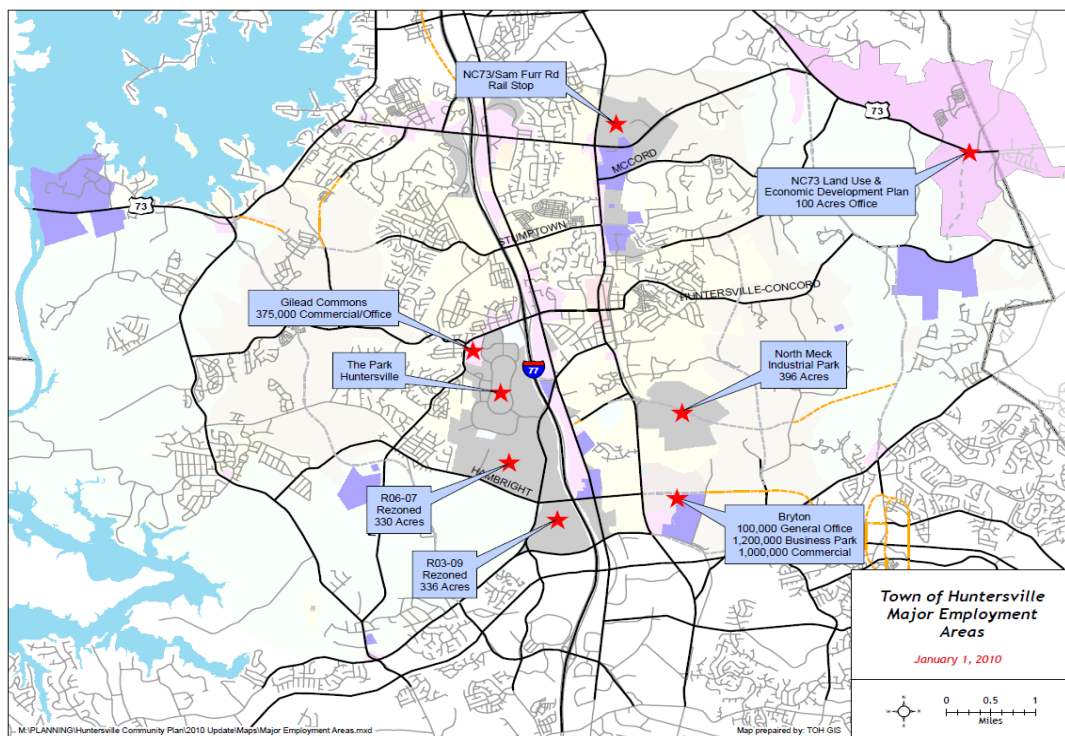
LNREDC is funded by the three towns and private investors, and is tasked with expanding North Mecklenburg's economic base.

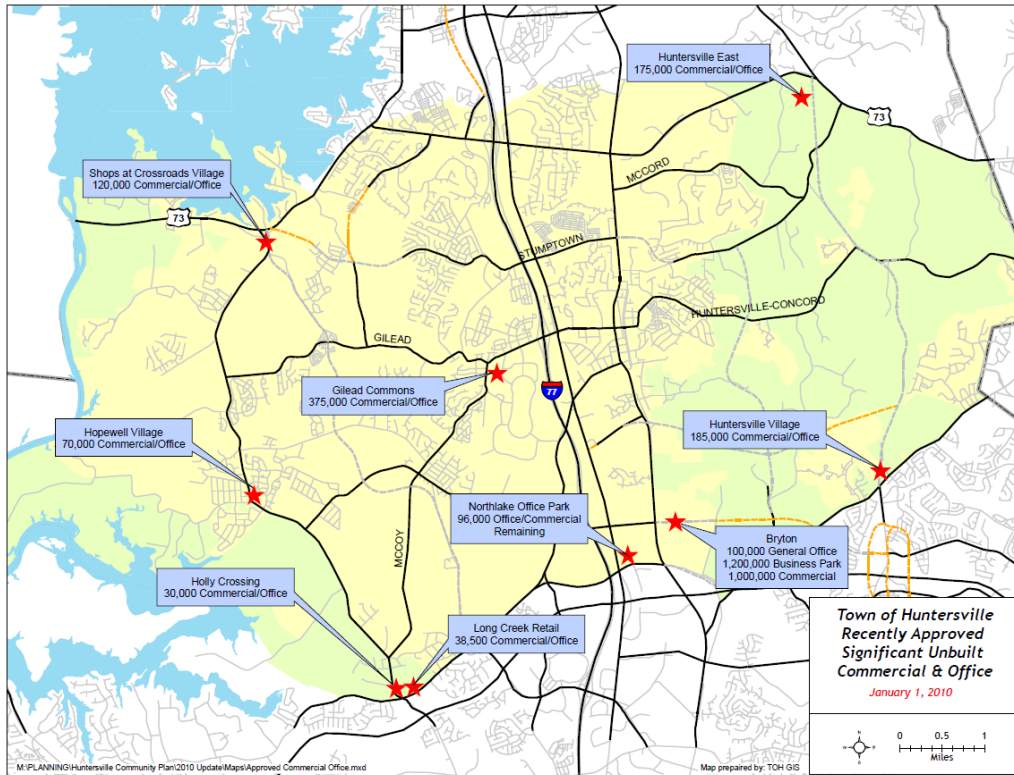
In addition to recommending the establishment of an economic development organization, the Leak-Goforth Study identified several areas that were well suited for job creation but were zoned residential. To reserve these areas for future economic development, the Town of Huntersville rezoned just over 1,000 acres from Residential to Corporate Business in three large-scale rezoning requests. **Map ED-1** shows the location of those three rezoning areas (R03-09; R06-07 and North Meck Industrial Park, now Commerce Station) as well as significant recently approved, yet un-built commercial and office development in Huntersville. **Map ED-2** shows major employment areas in Huntersville.

It is important to note that some utilities are currently not available to all of the major employment areas noted on this map. Therefore, it is important that Huntersville work closely with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities to time planned utility extensions with economic development projects within these areas.

In 2009, Forbes Magazine identified Huntersville as the number two most popular destination to move in the U.S. According to Forbes, this designation was due primarily to the presence of employment opportunities. Huntersville's location immediately north of Charlotte places the town in a very advantageous position for those who wish to live near where they work.

**Map ED-1:
Large-Scale Re-zonings &
Major Employment Areas**





Map ED- 2 - Major Employment Areas

From an economic development standpoint, these factors have helped to draw a number of national and multi-national corporations to Huntersville since the early 1990's. **Table ED-2** lists some of the major employers within the Town as of May 2010.

Economic Development encompasses more than industries located in business parks. It includes the travel and tourism industry as well as large and small commercial and office areas located throughout the community. Since 1996, Huntersville has encouraged mixed-use development allowing people to live, work, shop and recreate in one location. Commercial development is discussed further in Section 6.0.

1.3 Regional Initiatives

The Town of Huntersville is an active participant in a number of regional initiatives that have resulted in a positive impact on the town's local (and regional) economy. In 2005, the Towns of Huntersville, Cornelius and Davidson entered into a unique joint venture to develop an industrial park for light industrial tenants in order to maximize local employment opportunities and allow the sharing of the tax base between all three communities. Commerce Station, a master-planned industrial park, is the result of that joint venture.

In 2005, the three towns purchased 126 acres located on NC 115 in Huntersville and were successful in attracting its first tenant, originally Prairie Packaging but now Pactiv Corporation, which opened for business in 2006. In 2010, ABB, a Swedish based manufacturer of high voltage energy transmission cables, announced plans to locate in Commerce Station. ABB will make an initial investment of \$90 million, and employ over 100 at this facility. Commerce Station Business Park is ultimately planned to encompass 350 acres, with the inclusion of adjoining parcels in private ownership.

As previously noted, Huntersville is a member of the Lake Norman Regional Economic Development Corporation (LNREDC), made up of the Towns of Huntersville, Cornelius and Davidson as well as private sector investors. The Town is also active with the Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce (LNC) and Visit Lake Norman (VLN) in promoting the travel and tourism industry in Huntersville.

Company/Institution	Product/Service	Approximate Number of Employees
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools	Education	1,230
Duke Energy Corporation	Energy	1,200
Presbyterian Hospital Huntersville	Healthcare	655
Metrolina Greenhouse Inc.	Plant Wholesale	600
Newell Rubbermaid	Product Development	535
Joe Gibbs Racing	NASCAR	425
Pactiv Corporation	Company/Institution	315
AmeriCredit Financial Service, Inc.	Financial Services	300
Forbo Siegling, LLC	Manufacturing	280
American Tire Distributors, Inc.	Automotive Distribution	275
SABIC Innovative Plastics	Plastics Manufacturing	150
Town of Huntersville	Government	145
SAERTEX USA, LLC	Manufacturing - Composite Textiles	127
Max Daetwyler	Manufacturing	100

Source: Company Data

Another regional initiative that the Town is involved in is the Lake Norman Transportation Commission (LNTC). Formed in 2009, LNTC's members include the towns of Huntersville, Cornelius, Davidson and Mooresville. LNTC's mission is to promote transportation solutions for the Lake Norman area, a critical component to the success of recruiting new businesses and expanding existing businesses.

In 2010, LNTC sponsored an Urban Land Institute (ULI) Advisory Services Panel to assess and offer advice and recommendations regarding the economic development potential within the area encompassing the I-77 corridor and North Corridor commuter rail line. The report issued by the ULI Panel contained a number of recommendations, including the following:

- Reiterate the validity of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg 2025 Transit/Land Use Plan for the region, which calls for focusing development in five corridors radiating out from Charlotte, including the North Corridor.
- Ensure that transit supports the Transit/Land Use Plan's strategy for mobility.
- Understand and develop the potential for transit oriented development (TOD).

- Engage with Charlotte and Mecklenburg County regarding the positive economic development that is possible in the Lake Norman area with and without the commuter rail.
- Analyze, develop, and promote regional benefits of transportation capacity investments in the North Main Line.

Another example of regional cooperation to promote economic development is the construction of the Verhoeff Drive Bridge over NC 115. This \$6.4 million project is a joint effort of the towns of Huntersville, Cornelius and Davidson and will provide direct access from Commerce Station to the regional road network, thereby enhancing the attractiveness of Commerce Station to prospective tenants. Regional cooperation will continue to be an essential strategy for the Town of Huntersville to follow as it plans for economic growth and development through 2030.

2.0 PREVIOUS PLANS & STUDIES

There have been several recent economic development related plans and studies undertaken which serve to frame the policies for economic growth and development for the Town of Huntersville. These plans are identified on the following page:

- **North Mecklenburg County – Economic Development Strategy (2002):** Prepared by Leak-Goforth Company, LLC and Urbanomics, Inc.
- **Town of Cornelius and Huntersville and the Lake Norman Region Strategic Economic Development Plan (2003):** Prepared by Sanford Holshouser Business Development Group, LLC and sponsored by ElectriCities for Cornelius and Huntersville.
- **NC 73 Land Use and Economic Development Small Area Plan (2005):** Prepared by the Design Collective for Huntersville, Davidson, Concord, Kannapolis and Cabarrus County where the jurisdictions meet at the intersection of NC and Poplar Tent Road in the upper northeast quadrant of Huntersville.

Example of Office-Flex Space in Huntersville



3.0 FUTURE LAND USE

3.1 Strategic Economic Development Plan

The “North Mecklenburg County Economic Development Strategy” and the “Town of Cornelius and Huntersville and the Lake Norman Region Strategic Economic Development Plan” have provided the foundation for economic development activity in Huntersville since 2003. Since these plans focus on regional economic development, they do not address the specific economic development needs of Huntersville (e.g. type of development and uses Huntersville official’s would like to target). Therefore, the creation of a strategic economic development plan for Huntersville would allow the Town to better address its unique economic development needs and would also assist the Lake Norman Regional Economic Development Corporation in focusing on business recruitment and expansion appropriate for Huntersville.

A major component to any successful economic development program is the availability of suitable land. Previous studies have stressed the need to protect sites with characteristics suitable for business recruitment (significant acreage, easy access to major roads, relatively flat, etc.). Accordingly, Huntersville has rezoned several areas (encompassing over 1,000 acres) to Corporate Business (CB) for that purpose (see **Map ED-1**). However, the Town needs to continually assess opportunities for additional land, in response to changes in economic conditions.

3.2 Utilities and Infrastructure

A well developed infrastructure and utility system is foundational to a thriving local economy. The provision of adequate infrastructure is essential to a sound economic development program for Huntersville. It is important to note that some utilities are currently not available to all of the rezoned areas noted on **Map ED-1**. Therefore, it is important that Huntersville work closely with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities Department (CMUD) to time planned utility extensions with economic development projects within these areas.

3.3 Retention and Expansion of Existing Business

Promoting the retention and expansion of businesses currently located in Huntersville is a key to job growth. The LNREDC has a program to meet with existing businesses in order to determine what their needs are and what can be done to assist with their continued success and the expansion of their operations. In turn, the LNREDC informs agencies (i.e. town, county, NCDOT, etc.) about those needs and works proactively to address them where feasible.

To successfully compete against other locations in recruiting businesses, incentives can be an effective tool to assist in attracting new business and in retaining existing ones. Incentives can take many forms including tax rebates, streamlined permitting, job training, and infrastructure installation.

While quality of life is an important consideration for new businesses considering relocation, incentives can certainly play a role in this decision making process and should be carefully weighed in regard to the benefits that may result to the Town.

3.4 Workforce Development

The availability of a well trained work force is one of the most important considerations for businesses looking to relocate or expand. Huntersville is fortunate to have a Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) campus within its jurisdiction. CPCC has a long history of providing training for industry, which will serve the community well in the future. Continued cooperation among the public, private and educational institutions will be essential to ensure that Huntersville maintains its reputation as a prime location for skilled workers.

3.5 Culture, Hospitality and Tourism

The tourism and hospitality industry is an important component of the local economy. Economic activity generated by visitors to Huntersville not only supports local business owners, but also enhances the local tax base. In addition, a vibrant local hospitality and tourism economy serves to improve the Town's reputation regionally, nationally and internationally as a good place to live and do business.

4.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES & ACTION ITEMS

Policy ED-1: Diversify Tax Base

Continue to look for ways to expand and diversify the employment base in Huntersville.

Action ED-1.1: Strategic Economic Development (SED) Plan

Prepare a “Strategic Economic Development (SED) Plan” for the Town of Huntersville using previous studies as a foundation. This plan should address the following elements:

- Demographic & economic/market profile and analysis
- Inventory and analysis of existing businesses and industry
- Analysis of competitive advantage for Huntersville
- Identification of target areas for new development
- Strategies for increasing percentage of employees who live and work in Town
- Downtown redevelopment strategy

Action ED-1.2: Economic Development Committee

Consider creation of local economic development committee to oversee preparation of SED Plan for Huntersville.

Policy ED-2: Preservation of Land Area for Non-Residential Development

Preserve areas suitable for business and industrial development, along with a mixture of support uses, to ensure an adequate inventory of land for future growth and development, with increases to this inventory as required.

Action ED-2.1: Identify Land Area Suitable for Non-Residential Development

Prepare GIS map displaying land area available and required for future office, commercial and industrial growth and development that is consistent with recommendations for targeted industry and business in SED Plan for Huntersville.

Policy ED-3: Economic Development Competitive Advantage

Target recruitment of business and industry for which Huntersville has a “competitive advantage” as identified in a Town SED Plan or other applicable plan.

Policy ED-4: Growth Sector Business and Industry

Support the attraction of business and industry as identified by NC Department of Commerce as emerging growth sectors (e.g. renewable energy, pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturing) for the Charlotte region.

Policy ED-8: Lake Norman Transportation Commission (LNTC)

Continue participation with Lake Norman Transportation Commission (LNTC) to promote regional transportation (roads & rail) improvements to the Lake Norman area.

Policy ED-5: North Corridor Commuter Rail Line

Support development of the North Corridor Commuter Rail line as a tool to promote economic development.

Policy ED-9: Economic Development/Hospitality and Tourism

The Town of Huntersville will promote economic development, hospitality and tourism initiatives and partner with other agencies, such as the Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce (LNC), visit Lake Norman (VLN) and the Huntersville Connection (HC).

Policy ED-6: Lake Norman Regional Economic Development Corporation (LNREDC)

Continue participation with Lake Norman Regional Economic Development Corporation (LNREDC) and on joint economic development efforts with Cornelius and Davidson.

Policy ED-10: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities Department (CMUD)

Continue to work closely with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities (CMUD) in preparation of five and ten year Capital Improvement Programs (CIP) for water and sewer line extensions to serve new development, as well as existing development not currently served.

Policy ED-7: Regional Cooperation

Develop closer working relationship with the City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County and surrounding counties on areas of mutual interest, such as workforce development and training and North Corridor commuter rail line.

Action ED-10.1: Water and Sewer Lines

Prepare map of proposed water and sewer line locations and line capacities to assist in strategic planning for business expansion and recruitment.

Action ED-10.2: Targeted Utility Needs

Provide CMUD with annual list of targeted areas for needed water and sewer line extensions to assist in CIP process.

Policy ED-11: Utility and Transportation Infrastructure

Continue to invest in utility and transportation infrastructure to serve and support targeted growth areas.

Action ED-11.1: I-77 Widening

Work with the Federal Highway Administration (FHA), NCDOT, MUMPO, City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, and LNTC members to widen I-77 to exit 36.

Action ED-11.2: North Corridor Commuter Rail Line

Continue to work with CATS, Charlotte, Cornelius, Davidson, Mooresville, Mecklenburg County, Iredell County, LNTC, LNREDC and other pertinent organizations to advance North Corridor commuter rail line.

Policy ED-12: Business Retention and Expansion (BRE)

Support "Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)" program of LNREDC.

Action ED-12.1: Expand BRE Program

Work with LNREDC to enhance BRE program, targeting business and industry either currently not being served or underserved.

Policy ED-13: Business Incentive Program

Continue Business Incentive Program (BIP) for the creation of new jobs.

Action ED-13.1: Business Expansion

Utilize BIP for existing business expansion.

Policy ED-14: Development Review Process

Support efforts to improve efficiency and responsiveness of development review process for development proposals.

Action ED-14.1: County/Town Cooperation – Development Review Process

Continue to work with Mecklenburg County Land Use and Environmental Services Administration (LUESA) and Department of Building Standards to streamline development review and approval process and to develop strategies to make process more user-friendly.

Policy ED-15: Workforce Training

Support current efforts of Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) and others to train and develop skilled workforce to meet labor demands for local business and industry.

Action ED-15.1: Public/Private Partnerships – Workforce Training

Convene roundtable meetings between LNREDC, NC Department of Commerce, CPCC, area universities, CMS, Mecklenburg County and local business leaders to enhance existing workforce training and identify new training strategies to serve local business and industry.

Action ED-15.2: Job Training/Retraining

Work with State and County officials, LNC and LNREDC to identify resources to provide job training and education for residents who are either unemployed and/or who need to retrain for new jobs.

Policy ED-16: Tourism

The Town will support local tourism efforts and partner with other agencies such as “Visit Lake Norman” and “Huntersville Connection,” as appropriate.

Action ED-16.1: Enhance Tourism Opportunities

Identify new opportunities for tourism.

Policy ED-17: Recreation Tournaments/Events

Support continued efforts of Parks & Recreation Department and Huntersville Family Fitness and Aquatics Center (HFFA) to attract national, state and regional amateur recreational and sports tournament and events.

4.0 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Introduction

The rapid population growth that has occurred within the Town of Huntersville since 1990 has been matched by a similar pattern of commercial development which includes retail, service businesses and offices.

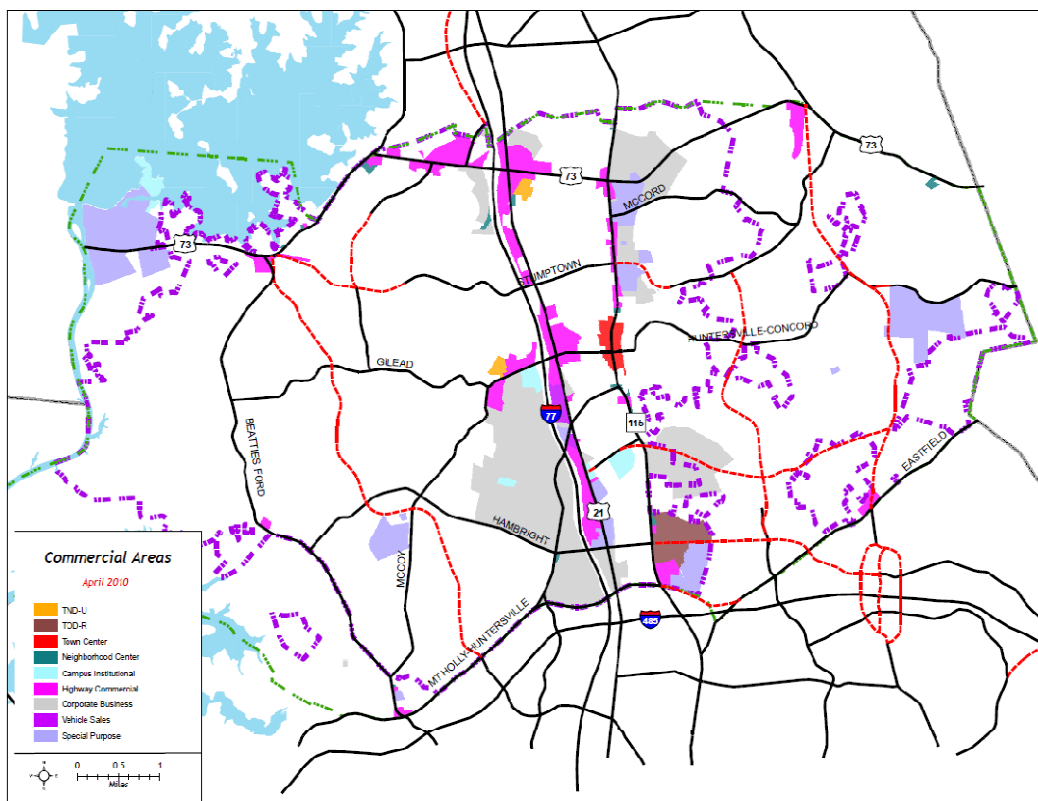
Predictably, this commercial development has been focused at the Town's two Interstate interchanges (Gilead Road/Exit 23 & Sam Furr/Exit 25) and along the Town's major thoroughfares (e.g. US 21, NC 115, Gilead Road and NC 73).

Map CD-1 identifies the location of commercial as well as manufacturing areas (shown in grey and purple color) located within Huntersville.

Major transportation routes have historically been location magnets for non-residential development, generating significant traffic impacts in the process. Since the adoption of revised land development regulations in 1996, commercial development in Huntersville has followed a mixed-use development pattern, focused at the intersection of major thoroughfares.

This development pattern has also been guided by a concerted effort to integrate land use and transportation planning. To this end, for almost 15 years, the Town of Huntersville has deliberately fostered development which encourages multi-modal travel, reducing the need for single occupant vehicles, yet facilitating that use when necessary by integrating land use and transportation.

Map CD-1 Commercial Areas



5.0 Land Use/Transportation Integration

The origin of integrated transportation and land use planning efforts in Huntersville can be traced back to 1994 and the formation of a committee of citizens to lead a strategic update of the 1989 Huntersville Community Plan. The committee completed its work in June 1995 with a plan that included a future vision statement for Huntersville and a series of strategies to implement the goals of the plan. Recommendations from the 1995 Community Plan set the stage for the complete re-writing of the Huntersville Zoning & Subdivision Ordinances, adopted in 1996, that reflect the principles and practices of “Traditional Town Planning.”

Unlike conventional zoning where land uses are separated into distinct districts and dimensional regulations (i.e. height, setbacks) govern the placement of buildings, Traditional Town Planning promotes a mixture of land uses (e.g. residential, commercial, office), the provision of functional open space, interconnected streets, and emphasizes the “form” of structures and how they integrate with one another.

By allowing a mixture of land uses and establishing a network of connected streets, it becomes possible to significantly increase the efficiency of the transportation network.

Acknowledging that streets are the most prevalent public spaces in Huntersville, the Zoning Ordinance requires they be inviting areas and integral components of community design. Key elements of the Ordinance are:

- Streets are to be the focus of buildings and all buildings will generally front a public street.
- Commercial on-site parking is to be located to the side and rear of buildings. On street parking is desirable on public streets.
- Streets will be lined on both sides with trees and sidewalks.
- Streets are to be interconnected within developments and with adjoining development to form a network.
- As the most prevalent public space, streets are scaled to the pedestrian.

6.0 A NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

The revised ordinances dramatically changed the pattern of commercial development in Huntersville. The two most notable examples are Birkdale Village and Rosedale Shopping Center; both mixed-use developments that were designed under the post 1996 ordinance. **Figure CD-1** below illustrates how Rosedale Shopping Center embodies the principles of Traditional Town Planning. Rosedale, along with Birkdale Village, serve as the new standard for commercial development in Huntersville.

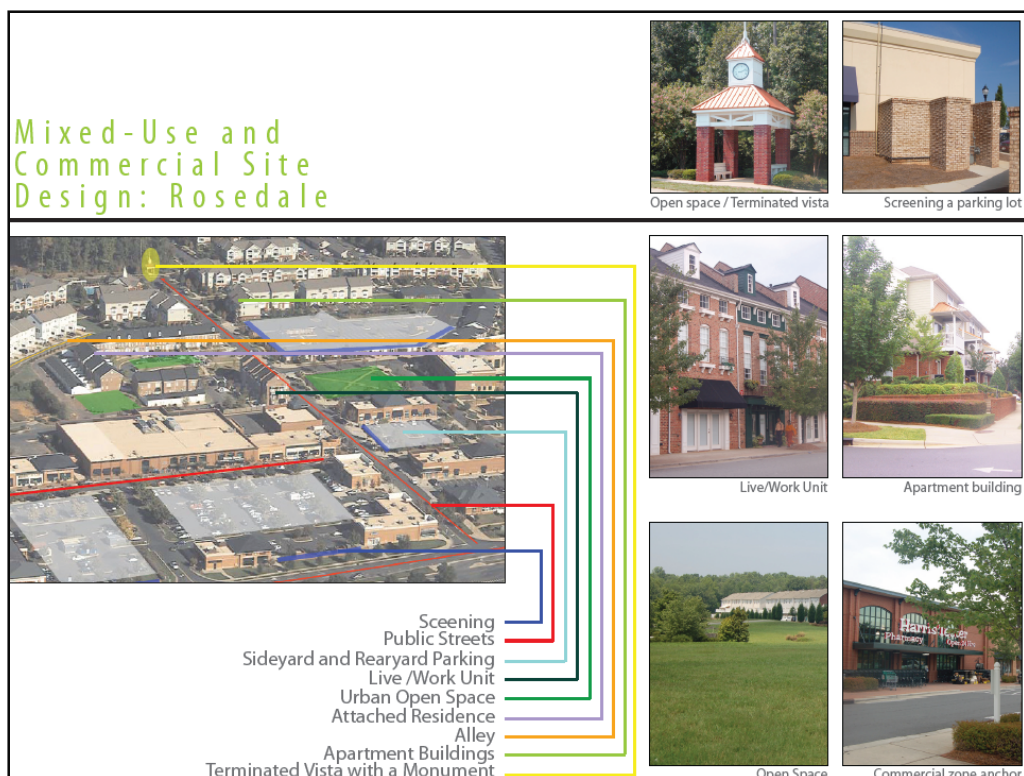
Nothing has had a greater impact on changing the commercial development pattern within Huntersville than the requirement that buildings front a public street. Streets make shopping centers more pedestrian friendly, provide better access for public safety officials and allow redevelopment to occur more easily.

As a result, shopping centers can be modified to respond to challenges such as a changing economy, shifting demographics, changing consumer demands and additional competition. In the absence of an established public street system, shopping centers that become outdated (**Figure CD-2**), typically in a 15-30 year time span, face the prospect of a lengthy decline as one tenant after another leaves the center, creating a cascading effect, until eventually the shopping center is vacant.

Redevelopment of the entire shopping center is then required which is costly, time consuming and creates an abundance of legal complexities, particularly when multiple property owners are involved.

Conversely, where a public street system exists within a shopping center, changes can occur incrementally on a lot-by-lot or building-by-building basis, thereby allowing the shopping center operators to respond to changing market conditions in a timely manner.

Figure CD-1 Rosedale Shopping Center Key Design Features



In 2005, The Town retained a consultant to prepare a long-range land use and transportation plan for the area surrounding the I-77/NC 73 interchange. This plan, known as the “NC 73(Sam Furr Road)/US-21 Transportation and Land Use Vision Small Area Plan,” recommended “retrofitting” the existing Northcross Shopping Center (located in the northeast quadrant of the US 21/NC 73 intersection), developed prior to adoption of the 1996 codes, with a public street grid system. **Figures CD-3 & CD-4** illustrate the recommendations for this street system. The plan recommends transforming the shopping center from one single super block to several smaller urban blocks, with commercial buildings fronting on each of these streets.

Figure CD-2



Conventional declining shopping center.

**Figure CD-3
Northcross Shopping Center
with Streets**



Top - Existing, Bottom - Proposed

**Figure CD-4
Aerial Perspective of Northcross
Shopping Center Retrofit**



Aerial perspective of Northcross illustrating existing driveways and circulation converting to public streets to maintain its competitiveness while diversifying its offerings

To date, the owner/developer of this shopping center, recognizing the value of such an investment, has worked with the Town to prepare revised plans to integrate such a street system into the site. Further improvements to the adjoining state roads (NC 73 & US 21) will complement these planned improvements.

A similar plan was prepared by the same consultant for the area surrounding the I-77/Gilead Road interchange, including the introduction of a public street system that would provide improved access to, from and within the site.

Several signature mixed-use developments have been built since 2000 (Birkdale Village and Rosedale Village). In addition to these mixed-use developments, the Town has also approved a number of commercial and office/employment developments since 2000. **Map ED-2** shows the location of these approved but un-built and partially built commercial and office developments. Once built, these developments will contribute to the economic vitality and well-being of Huntersville.

7.0 PREVIOUS PLANS & STUDIES

In 1992, the greater Charlotte area began an intense examination of the growth of the metropolitan area and how that growth could best be accommodated.

In October 1994, the regional “Committee of 100” produced a visionary work that endorsed a “centers and corridors” strategy to focus development along five radial corridors emanating outward from central Charlotte along existing rail and highway routes. The Committee’s vision hinged on major transit investments in these corridors to help guide a mixed-use development pattern that better integrated land use and transportation. Further, the Committee encouraged local governments to produce their own plans built upon the centers and corridors framework.

In 1998, the seminal “2025 Transit/Land Use Plan” was produced. This plan laid out a detailed vision for each of five radial corridors extending out from Charlotte. The significance of this plan was based on the fact that, for the first time, a transit system was intended to reinforce a desired development pattern and community design for the Charlotte metro area.

Consistent with the 2025 Transit/Land Use Plan, a number of recent long-range studies in Huntersville have served both to define and reinforce the integration of land use and transportation, providing a solid foundation for the Town’s future development, as well as offering guidance for current planning efforts.

NC 73 Transportation and Land Use Corridor Plan

This is perhaps the signature plan for the Huntersville area in terms of setting forth a clear vision for the integration of land use and transportation planning. This plan was a landmark effort, involving three counties, five municipalities, three chambers of commerce, two metropolitan organizations, one rural planning organization and the North Carolina Department of Transportation and covered the entire 32 mile length of NC 73, a strategic NC highway, from Lincolnton in the west to Concord in the east. The plan was the first of its kind in North Carolina and created a vision for how this road should develop in a manner that addressed both land use and transportation issues.

The integration of land use and transportation planning are also reflected in the following long-range plans:

- Beatties Ford Road Corridor Small Area Plan (Adopted September 2007)
- Beatties Ford – Mt. Holly Huntersville Road Small Area Plan (Adopted October 2005)
- Davidson – Concord Road/NC 73 Area Plan (Accepted December 2008)
- Downtown Master Plan (Adopted February 2006)
- East Huntersville Area Development Plan (Adopted April 2007)
- Gilead Road/US 21 Small Area Plan (Approved December 2005)

- NC 73 (Sam Furr Road)/US 21 Small Area Plan (Approved December 2005)
- NC 73 Small Area Land Use & Economic Development Plan (Adopted June 2006)

8.0 KEY ISSUES

A number of key issues define the challenge for Huntersville as the town looks to promote commercial development that reflects the integration of land use and transportation planning. The extent to which the Town is successful in addressing these key issues will define the form and function of commercial development over the next 20 years.

- **Continued promotion of a “mixed-use” land development pattern.** 74% of residents surveyed either agreed, or strongly agreed with the statement that the Town should “Encourage mixed-use centers (i.e. residential, commercial and employment) over ‘strip’ commercial areas.” Since adoption of the Town’s new Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances in 1996, Huntersville has been largely successful in avoiding strip commercial development within its borders. Continued adherence to the principles in these ordinances will enable the Town to continue this practice and build upon the successes already achieved (see **Figure CD-5**).



Figure CD-5

Aerial photo of Birkdale Village illustrating mixed uses, buildings addressing the street, and open space.

- **Focusing future development within mixed-use “nodes.”** In the long-range land use and transportation plans adopted since 2004, the Town has embraced a “node-centric” mixed-use development pattern. Generally, this pattern of development calls for higher-intensity development at the center (or core) of the node, with decreasing intensity at its outer boundaries. A good example of this node pattern of development is found in the Beatties Ford Road Corridor Small Area Plan, where the plan calls for three mixed-use nodes: southern, central and northern (**Map CD-2**).

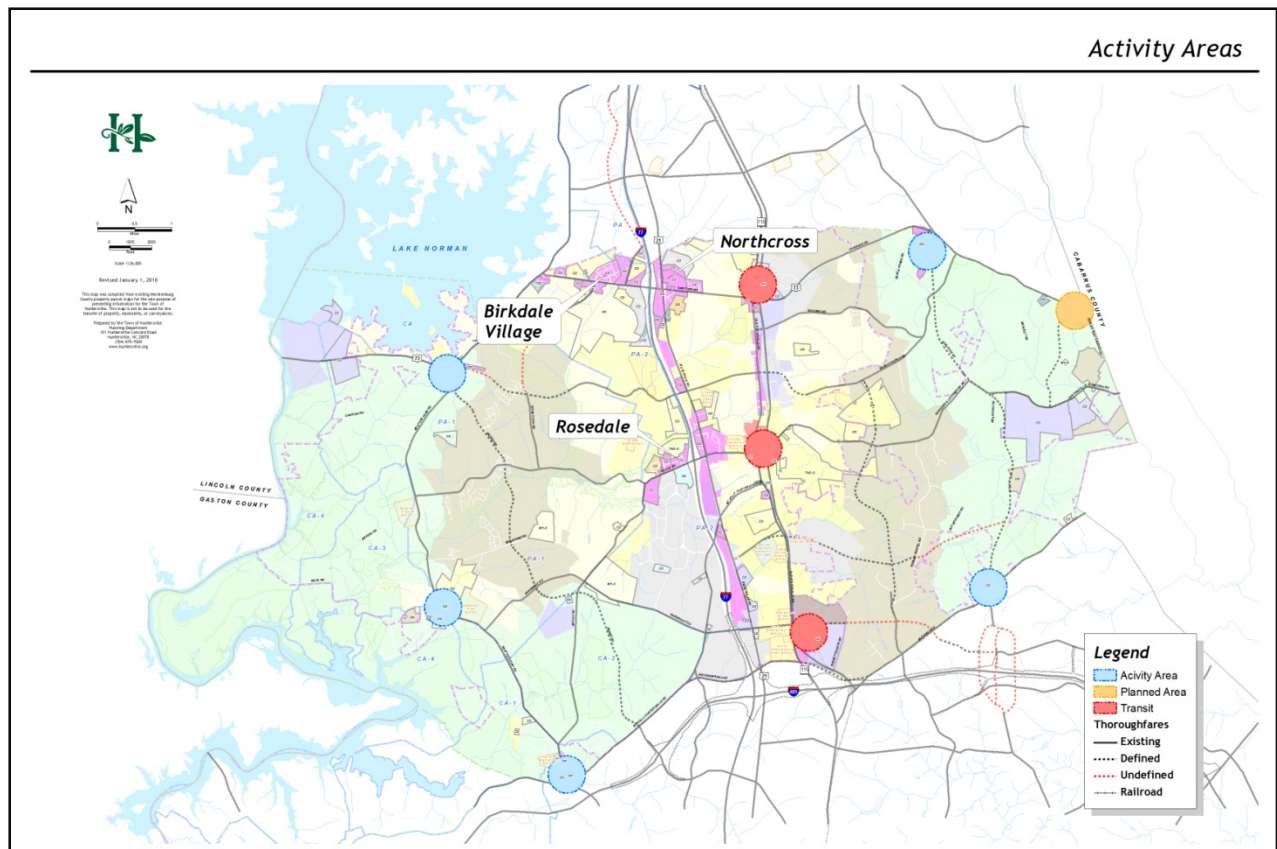
Adherence to this node-centric pattern of development will be essential in reinforcing the mixed-use development pattern desired by Huntersville residents, and called for by the Town’s land development regulations.

- **Rezoning of future nodes.** Consistent with the land development pattern outlined above, it is essential that future nodes should not be rezoned for mixed-use purposes unless:
 1. A small area plan is prepared first allowing ample public input.
 2. Development is truly of a mixed-use nature with commercial, residential, office and perhaps civic uses and not solely for commercial development.
 3. The node is small in size with commercial serving local needs. Commercial floor area should generally not exceed 40,000 sq. ft. as there are numerous areas in close proximity to serve more regional shopping needs (i.e. 70,000 sq. ft. plus shopping areas).
 4. Rezoning should not occur until the infrastructure is available to support the mixed use. It is not intended for rezoning to be speculative, but instead occur to serve an existing need.

- **Reconcile “local” and “regional” functions of road corridors containing commercial development.** Virtually every major road corridor within Huntersville is state maintained (**Map CD-3**). Roads such as NC 73, NC 115, US 21 and Gilead Road serve a regional transportation function and are also the location for much of the Town’s commercial development. The continuing challenge for managing each of these roads is how best to reconcile the regional function of these roads to move traffic, with the role of accommodating local transportation needs, particularly related to commercial activity.

Ongoing cooperation between the Town, State and Federal government will be required to ensure that both of these legitimate roles are addressed. Further, appropriate road design techniques, such as strategically placed vehicular access and interconnecting streets with surrounding properties, are essential in order to maximize the efficiency of existing road systems, where funding for future improvements is limited.

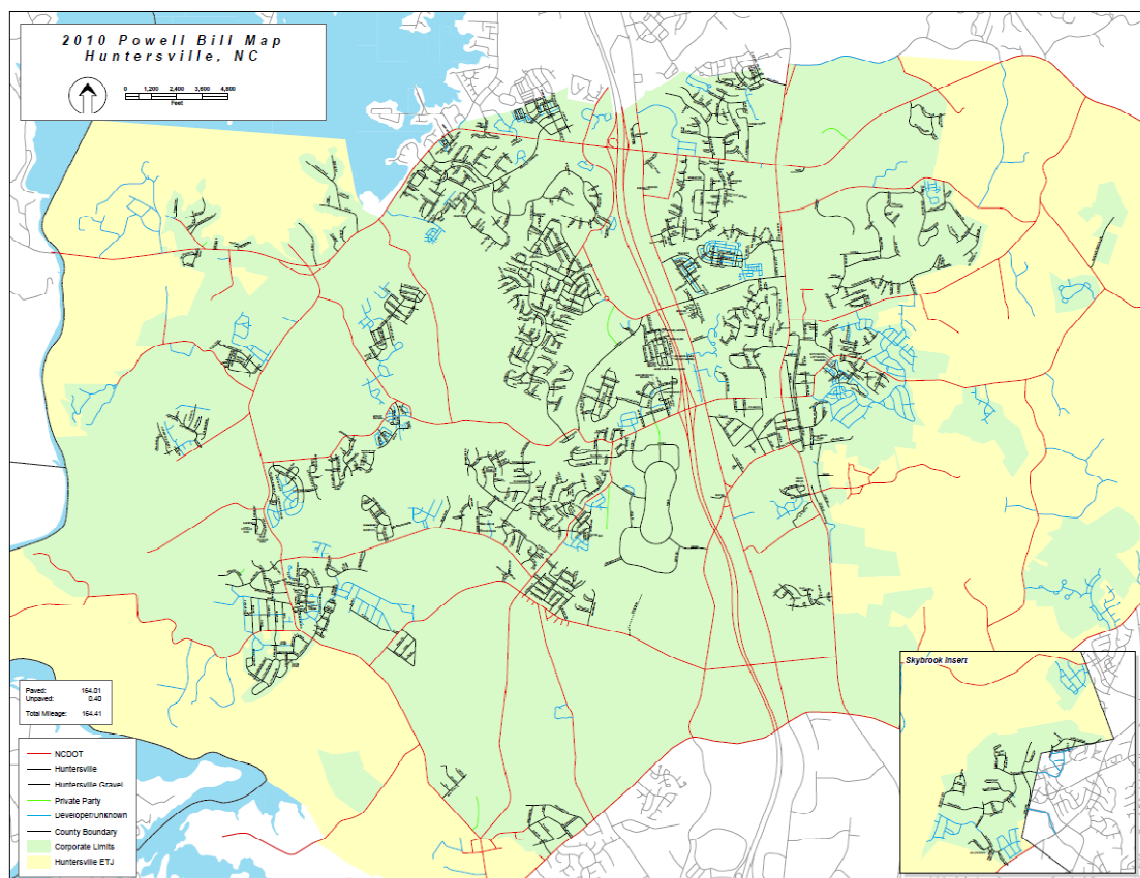
Map CD-2
Mixed-Use Nodes



- Identifying adequate sources for long-term maintenance and capital costs.** The absence of direct control over the vast majority of existing and planned State roads within Huntersville represents a challenge to meet and manage local transportation demands. The projected growth of Huntersville by 32,000 residents between 2010 and 2030 will only exacerbate the need for local transportation improvement funding for both maintenance of existing transportation facilities and the construction of new ones. The absence of adequate funding sources for these improvements will require innovative approaches to ensure that corridors are adequate to meet traffic demand.

The Town's Traffic Impact Analysis Ordinance (TIAO), which requires the mitigation of development related traffic impacts, offers one alternative for funding, but is not likely to fully address the need for funding existing or planned future roads. Other examples of innovative funding strategies are joint public/private partnerships for the widening of NC 73 from US 21 to NC 115 and between Huntersville, Mecklenburg County and private developers for road and rail improvements associated with the Bryton development located at the intersection of NC 115 and Alexanderana Road.

**Map CD-3
Town (Black) and
State (Red) Maintained Roads**



- **Complete Streets.** In June of 2009, the NCDOT Board of Transportation adopted a policy which embraces “Complete Streets” as the model for state roads. Complete streets are streets which adequately address the needs of all modes of transportation including autos, bicycles, pedestrians and mass transit and which reinforce the desired land development pattern along them. While many of the principles represented by the Complete Streets concept are reflected in the Town’s land development codes, continued adherence to this policy will be essential during the next 20 years.
- **Aesthetic Considerations.** At their most basic level, roads serving commercial development must be designed to accommodate multi-modal transportation needs (see **Figure CD-6**). However, this basic function needs to be balanced against the need to build roads designed in a manner which reflects the community’s character and reinforce the desired land use pattern. Landscaping, lighting and signage are all important elements of a successful commercial development. Beyond simply aesthetic benefits, the sum total of these features can have a beneficial effect on traffic safety, as well as “place-making.”

The Town’s efforts in this regard since 1995 are notable and should serve as the model for future commercial development.

Figure CD-6



Office buildings in proximity to restaurants and shopping with pedestrian access provided over a creek/greenway.

9.0 POLICIES & ACTION ITEMS

Policy CD-1: Land Use/Transportation Integration

Continue the integration of land use and transportation elements for development that occurs within commercial corridors, nodes and centers. Consistency with the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances and adopted long-range plans shall be the foundation for this development.

Policy CD-2: Commercial Development Pattern

Promote a mixed-use development pattern that focuses higher intensity development generally within two miles of the I-77/NC-115 core. Outside the core area, this more intense commercial development pattern shall be focused in identified nodes and centers.

Policy CD-3: Commercial Development Principles

Encourage mixed-use development pattern at key nodes as identified in Small Area Plans, ensuring an appropriate mix of residential, commercial and employment uses to maximize land use and transportation efficiencies, while minimizing environmental impacts.

Action CD-3.1: Small Area Plans

Prepare Small Area Plans (if one does not exist) in sections of the community that are or will be experiencing development pressure.

Policy CD-4: Multi-Modal Transportation Network

Continue to pursue development of a multi-modal integrated transportation system in a manner that facilitates the efficient movement of vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians and is less reliant on single-occupant vehicles and single purpose trips, in support of a sustainable land development pattern.

Policy CD-5: Infrastructure

Continue to require that adequate public infrastructure (roads, utilities, etc) either exist or will be made available to support all new development.

Policy CD-6: Architecture and Place Making

Consistent with Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances (as well as "Town of Huntersville Design Manual") maintain high design standards for development.

Policy CD-7: Corridor Landscaping & Lighting

Continue to promote corridor landscaping that enhances commercial development, consistent with Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. Coordinate with NCDOT to ensure that landscaping and lighting is "context sensitive" for the location and adjoining uses.

Downtown Huntersville in 2030

In 2030 Huntersville's Downtown will be a thriving, mixed-use town center with a variety of housing types (single-family, townhomes, live-work, and apartments), retail establishments, restaurants, offices, civic and recreational uses. The historic character of Downtown Huntersville will be preserved and enhanced through the integration of new with existing development, reflecting the highest quality architecture, resulting in a revitalized Downtown that is uniquely Huntersville. The Downtown street grid will be characterized by a well-connected network accommodating all modes of transportation (vehicular, pedestrian and non-motorized), including bus public transit and trains. The streetscape and public spaces will include attractive lighting, street trees and well-designed signage providing a safe, pleasant experience for visitors and residents alike. Public events, outdoor markets and art displays will activate the Downtown area, creating a true "destination" experience and focal point for the Town of Huntersville.

FOCUS AREA: DOWNTOWN

1.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Up until the completion of I-77 through Huntersville in the late 1960's, Downtown Huntersville had been the residential, civic, and commercial center of the community. This status was appropriate for a town that had reached a population of only 1,538 residents by 1970 (see **Table DT-1**). Some of Huntersville's oldest and most historic commercial buildings and residential structures are located in the Downtown, including those which served the community as it evolved from its early history as an agricultural farming community to a mill village in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. During this time, the land use pattern established in the Downtown remained largely unchanged.

However, beginning in the early 1970's the prominence of the Downtown began to wane with the introduction of commercial development at the new Gilead Road/ I-77 interchange. That shift was greatly accelerated with the completion of the Sam Furr/I-77 interchange and subsequent adjacent commercial and residential development in the mid 1990's, along with the population explosion that same decade.

While Downtown Huntersville still remains the main civic hub of the community as home to Town Hall, the Police Station, post office, churches and Huntersville Elementary School, it has long been replaced as the residential and commercial core of the community.

**Figure DT-1
Downtown Huntersville**



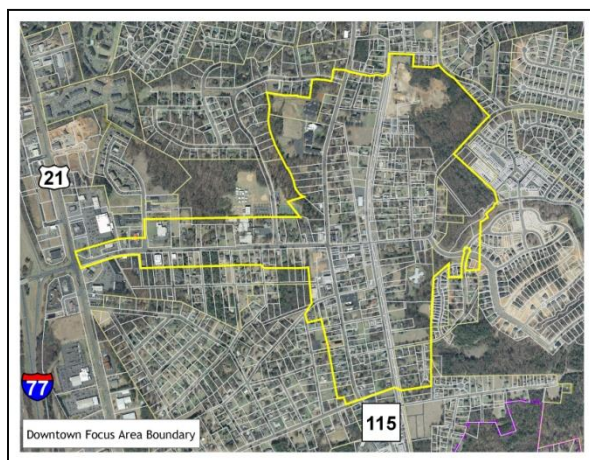
Main Street - 1959

**Table DT-1
Huntersville Population
(1960-2010)**

Year	Population
1960	1,004
1970	1,538
1980	1,294
1990	3,014
2000	24,960
2010	45,000 +/- (est.)

The boundaries of Downtown Huntersville are generally framed by Gilead Road and Commerce Drive to the west, Huntersville-Concord Road at Vermillion subdivision to the east, NC 115 and Main Street to the north, and NC 115 and Mount Holly-Huntersville Road to the south. This area comprises approximately 710 acres (see **Figure DT-2**).

**Figure DT-2
Downtown Boundaries**



Downtown Huntersville

In addition to its location at the geographic center of Huntersville, Downtown is also located at the crossroads of several important thoroughfares, including Gilead Road and NC 115, as well as the Norfolk Southern rail line, which is the planned location of the Charlotte Area Transit System's (CATS) North Corridor commuter rail line. Additionally, given the renewed market interest in mixed-use walkable centers, Downtown Huntersville is well-positioned for redevelopment and restoration to a more central role in the community.

In 1996, Downtown saw its first significant new construction since the beginning of decline in the 1970's. A new Town Hall and Police Station were constructed in the center of Downtown. Both structures were of neo-classical colonial design and represented the beginning of the Downtown's renaissance as the civic hub for Huntersville. 2010 marked the next important milestone in the redevelopment of the Downtown, with completion of the "Huntersville Town Center" project.

Built by the Town of Huntersville, Town Center (see **Figure DT-3**), located at the intersection of NC 115 and Gilead Road, consists of a 48,000 square foot three-story structure, along with an adjoining 297 space parking deck. The first two floors of this building will serve as the first satellite location for Discovery Place – Discovery Place Kids, a children's museum intended to serve ages seven and under. The third floor of this building will provide office space for the Town of Huntersville. Related infrastructure improvements included reconstruction and the addition of lanes to the NC 115, Gilead Road and Huntersville-Concord Road intersection, the burying of overhead utility lines and placement of new pedestrian traffic control signals traffic signal mast arms.

The Town Center project also calls for the construction of a similar multi-story building to be built by the private sector fronting on NC 115. Once completed, Town Center will serve as anchor for the anticipated redevelopment of the historic core of Downtown Huntersville.



**Figure DT-3
Town Center (June 2010)**

2.0 PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

A number of plans completed since 1996 have focused on redevelopment of Huntersville's historic Downtown and serve as the foundation for recommendations contained in the Huntersville 2030 Community Plan.

- **DPZ-Vermillion Master Plan (1996)**

As part of the master planning process for the Vermillion neighborhood, its designer, Duany Plater-Zyberk (DPZ) and Company extended their study area to encompass the Downtown core.

- **North Carolina Downtown Development Association – NCDDA (1997)**

The NCDDA study focused on Implementing the “Main Street Approach” in the Downtown as defined by the National Main Street Center and Main Street North Carolina programs.

- **ColeJenest and Stone Gilead Road Streetscape Plan (1999)**

In 1999, ColeJenest and Stone was hired by the Town to study the Gilead Road corridor and made recommendations for streetscape improvements.

- **DPZ-Anchor Mill Master Plan (1999)**

Following purchase of the Anchor Mill site by the Town, a development team that included DPZ, conducted a design charrette with focus on the Anchor Mill site and its redevelopment as a transit oriented development.

- **NLC/Hyett Palma (2000)**

The National League of Cities (NLC), in conjunction with Hyett Palma performed the “America Downtown: New Thinking, New Life” pilot study program providing recommendations to revitalize Downtown.

- **Narmour Wright (2004)**

Preceding preparation of the “Downtown Master Plan”, the architecture firm of Narmour Wright was commissioned by the Town to complete a space needs analysis of all Town buildings.

- **Downtown Master Plan (2006)**

A master plan was adopted providing detailed recommendations for the physical redevelopment of Downtown including an implementation program (**Map DT-1**).

- **Gilead Road/US-21 Transportation and Land Use Vision Small Area Plan (2006)**

This plan offered street improvement recommendations for a small western portion of the Downtown area.

- **East Huntersville Area Development Plan (2007)**

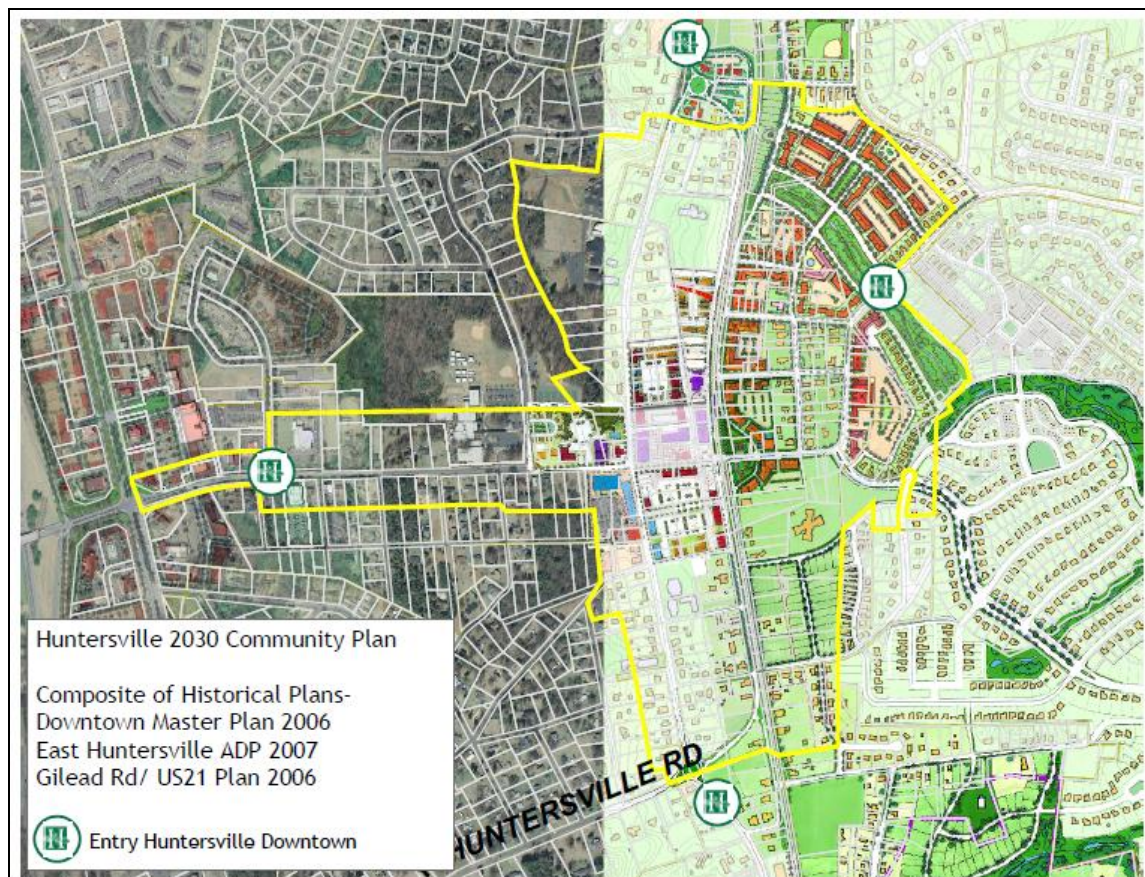
This plan includes recommendations for a series of development initiatives and public improvements for land east of Church Street and the north/south rail corridor, adjacent to the Downtown (**Map DT-2**).

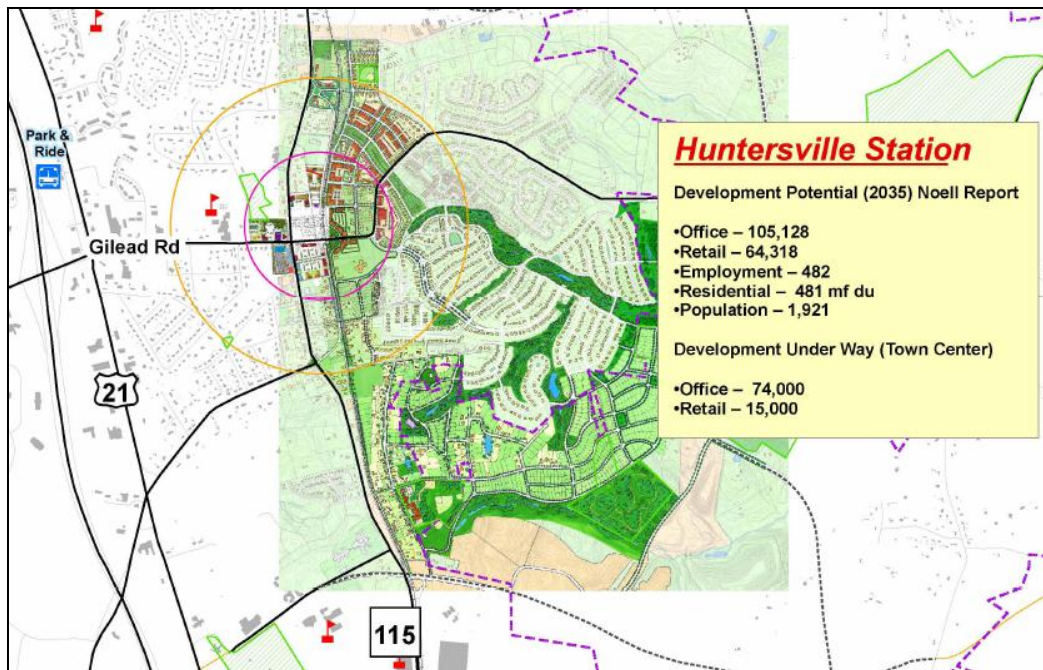
- **Estimated Development Potential for Transit Corridors & Activity Centers 2008-2035 (2009)**

The Noell Consulting Group prepared a market analysis of the development potential within a quarter mile at all the proposed CATS rail transit stations including Downtown Huntersville.

Map DT-1 is a composite map of the Downtown Master Plan (2006), Gilead Road/US-21 Transportation and Land Use Small Area Plan (2006) and East Huntersville Area Development Plan (2007); illustrating land use and street improvement recommendations for the Downtown.

Map DT-1
Long-range plans for Downtown Area





Map DT-2
East Huntersville Small Area Plan

- **North Line Station Area Value Analysis: 2010 – 2035 (2011)**

This analysis was an update of the 2009 study by the Noell Consulting Group of the development potential within half a mile of proposed stations along the North Corridor rail line.

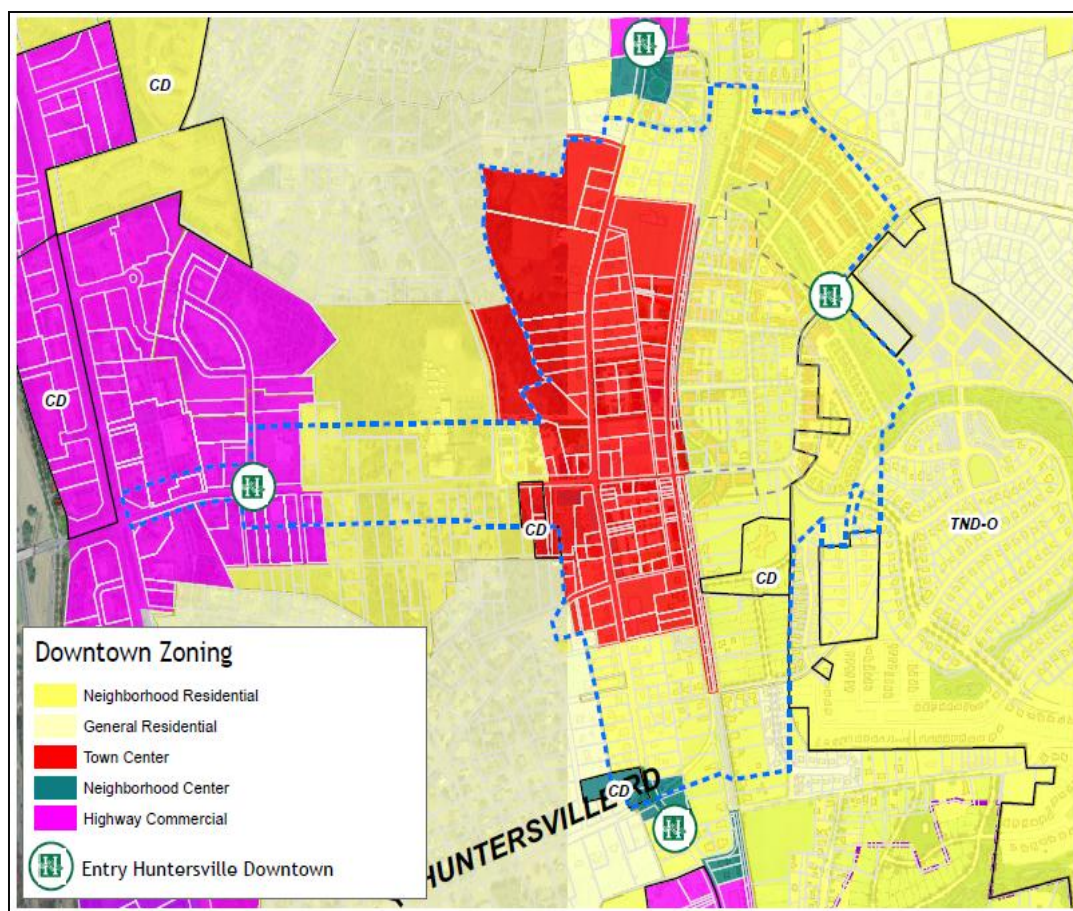
3.0 CURRENT ZONING

Huntersville’s Zoning Ordinance is a “Form-based” or “Design-based” land development code focused on the quality of design and placement of buildings, rather than on the segregation of land uses by zoning district. For example, allowed uses in several zoning districts found within the Downtown range from single-family homes to a variety of commercial uses and hotels.

This provides a mixture of uses in the Downtown which gives land owners greater flexibility in developing and redeveloping their property, consistent with the recommendations outlined in the “Downtown Master Plan” and “East Huntersville Area Development Plan.”

This added flexibility also encourages development/redevelopment by not requiring property owners to complete the rezoning process to accommodate a particular type of land use that is allowed “by right.”

The zoning designations encompassing the Downtown (**see Map DT-3**) are a combination of Town Center (TC), Neighborhood Residential (NR), Neighborhood Center (NC), Highway Commercial (HC), General Residential (GR), and Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND-O).



**Map DT-3
Downtown Zoning**

4.0 DOWNTOWN POLICY/ ACTION ITEMS

4.1 Future Development

The Downtown Master Plan (2006), Gilead Road/US-21 Transportation and Land Use Vision Small Area Plan (2006) and East Huntersville Area Development Plan (2007) provide a detailed framework for the revitalization and redevelopment of Downtown Huntersville.

These plans address such issues as the future transportation network, neighborhood preservation, land use and public investment required to achieve the recommendations contained in these plans

Given the relatively recent adoption of these plans, they continue to be relevant today and provide a solid basis for assessing and guiding future development proposals, zoning ordinance amendments, and infrastructure investments.

However, in light of changing economic and market conditions, and the need to keep plans up-to-date, it will be essential for the Town to revisit the policies and recommendations of those plans in the next several years. Outlined below are “Policy” and “Action” items intended to guide revitalization of Downtown Huntersville through 2030.

Citizen Survey: 73% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed the town should encourage more mixed use development Downtown.

4.2 Revitalization and Redevelopment

Revitalization and development of the Downtown is critical to the continued growth and vitality of Huntersville. A strong Downtown provides unique economic, social and recreational benefits that cannot be replicated elsewhere. As the center of a dynamic community which will continue to experience strong growth trends through 2030, Downtown Huntersville is well positioned for a renaissance that will result in a thriving mixed-use, pedestrian friendly town center.

In order to capitalize on the potential creation of jobs, a future town wide economic development plan should include specific recommendations for Downtown Huntersville (see Economic Development Action ED 1.1).

To promote commercial development Downtown, it is recommended that the private sector join forces to establish a Downtown business association. To that end, the Town can provide informational support to the Downtown business association (DBA) as it would any other business association.

Huntersville’s Zoning Ordinance currently allows a full variety of housing types in the Downtown area including single-family, apartments, townhomes, and live-work units. The number of residential units allowed per acre is not specified. However, generally within half a mile of future transit stations, it is recommended new development meet a minimum residential density of 15 units per area in order to support transit.



**Rosedale Apartments
developed at approximately
15 units/acre**

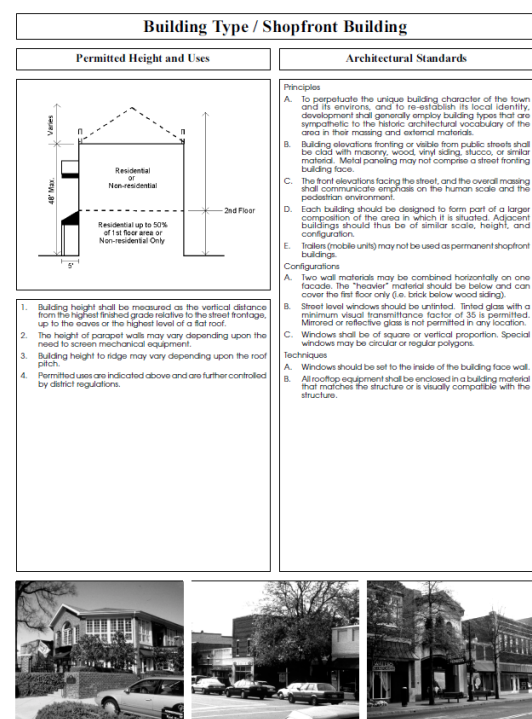
The current zoning ordinance establishes a Transit Oriented Development-Residential (TOD-R) District that requires a minimum residential density of 15 units per acre and a maximum of 40 units per acre within half a mile of a designated train station. Although the TOD-R District designation has not yet been applied in the Downtown area, future rezoning requests will likely follow.

4.3 Urban Design

With the adoption of a “Form-based” Zoning Ordinance in 1996, the Town of Huntersville made “design” the primary organizing principle for new development and land planning. The form-based approach to land development recognizes the value of the form, scale and placement of buildings in relation to each other and seeks to create and reinforce a “sense of place.” This sense of place is achieved through the interaction of the built and natural environments with the people who inhabit them. This concept is illustrated by **Figure DT-4**, taken from Article 4 of the Town’s Zoning Ordinance.

In addition to the design of buildings, attention is given to the relationship of the building to the public realm where the pedestrian experience occurs. All buildings are required to “front” on a public street, with streets designed to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, along with autos and other forms of motorized transportation.

Figure DT-4
Example of a building type
allowed Downtown



Citizen Survey: 88% of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the town should promote high quality architectural design standards in Downtown.

To establish a building mass appropriate for the center of Downtown, the Zoning Ordinance requires a minimum two-story high building fronting on the following roads:

- Gilead Road – From Sherwood Drive to Old Statesville Road (NC 115)
- Huntersville-Concord Road – From Old Statesville Road (NC 115) to Main Street

- Old Statesville Road (NC 115) – From 400 feet north of the intersection of Gilead Road /Huntersville/Huntersville-Concord Road south to Greenway Drive
- Main Street – From Huntersville-Concord Road to Greenway Drive

While the current ordinance allows buildings up to 48 feet high in the Town Center, Neighborhood Center and Highway Commercial zoning districts, consideration should be given to allowing taller buildings as Huntersville plans for its future.

Providing an inviting pedestrian experience requires more than just paying attention to the style of buildings constructed and their relationship to the public realm. It is also essential that the Downtown have inviting public spaces, be well landscaped, have appropriate lighting, and be comfortable for walking and biking. Taken together, these aesthetic considerations will help to ensure the creation of a Downtown that is attractive as well as functional.

4.3 Infrastructure & Capital Facilities

The future growth and vitality of Downtown Huntersville is dependent on many factors, including a thriving economy, a blueprint for growth and the provision of quality government services. However, foundational to this growth is the infrastructure necessary to support it.

A well-connected street grid, utilities adequately sized to accommodate future growth and development and the capital/institutional facilities necessary to serve the Downtown area are all essential to a vibrant Downtown.



Town Center Sidewalk on Gilead Road



Underground utility line construction in progress

Fast Fact: Three transit Stations are proposed in Huntersville: Bryton, Downtown, and Sam Furr. The land area within half a mile of all three proposed transit stops represents less than 3% of Huntersville's total zoning jurisdiction.

As Downtown Huntersville continues to grow and develop into a compact mixed-use, pedestrian and bicycle oriented town center, its transportation system must be able to adapt and expand to accommodate the anticipated multi-modal travel needs of both current and future residents, workers and visitors. Enhancement of the existing street system to serve the anticipated travel demand must be a high priority between now and 2030. The seamless integration of auto, mass transit, pedestrian, bicycle and other alternative modes of travel will enable the Downtown to operate efficiently as a commercial, residential and civic center. Development of a circulation plan for the Downtown, along with a parking master plan, will be necessary to ensure the efficient and functional travel into and out of the Downtown.

The Downtown Master Plan (2006) and the East Huntersville Plan (2007) recommended a number of road improvements (see **Map DT-1**) including enhancing Main Street and connecting it to NC 115 with two roundabouts, the extension of Holbrooks Road, and moving Church Street away from the railroad tracks.

As the Town undertakes preparation of a multi-modal integrated transportation system plan, recommendations from the Downtown Plan and East Huntersville Plan should be reviewed and incorporated as appropriate.

In addition to the need for an efficient transportation system to move vehicles into and through Downtown, the provision of sufficient parking Downtown is vital to its success. In 2006, the Huntersville Planning Department completed a "Downtown Parking Study" which inventoried available parking in the Downtown, assessed the need for future parking and offered strategies to accommodate this need.

Citizen Survey: 88% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that Huntersville should design Downtown for safe and efficient movement of vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles.

4.4 Parks, Recreation & Open Space in Downtown

As Downtown Huntersville continues to develop as a retail, employment and residential center for the community, the demand and need for additional parks, recreation and open space amenities will increase.

A “green” plan for the Downtown should be developed to guide the strategic placement of public spaces which can accommodate passive recreation, along with community and special events (e.g. movies in the park, festivals and outdoor music nights) which serve to activate the Downtown and provide a welcome respite from the urban environment.

5.0 DOWNTOWN POLICY & ACTION ITEMS

Policy DT- 1: Downtown Development

Continue to use the Downtown Master Plan, Gilead Road/US-21 Transportation and Land Use Vision Small Area Plan and East Huntersville Area Development Plan to guide future development in Downtown.

Action DT-1.1: Development Plans

Planning Board will review Downtown Master Plan, Gilead Road/US-21 Transportation and Land Use Vision Small Area Plan and East Huntersville Area Development Plan and recommend updates for consideration by the Town Board.

Action DT-1.2: Downtown Business Association Support

Town to provide informational support should a Downtown business association be formed.

Action DT-1.3: Transit Oriented Development - Residential

As rezoning requests for TOD-R are proposed in Downtown, analyze for compliance with TOD-R standards established in the Zoning Ordinance and ensure the location is appropriate so as not to conflict with historic sections of Downtown.

Policy DT-2: Architectural Design Standards

Promote high quality architectural design standards for new development and redevelopment projects in the Downtown.

Action DT-2.1: Building Height Standards

The Planning Board shall review building height standards and make recommendations to the Town Board as needed.

Action DT-2.2: Integration of New/Old Development

The Planning Department should modify the “Design Guidebook” offering recommendations and guidance on integrating “new” and “old” development in Downtown.

Action DT-2.3: Pedestrian Streetscape and Way-Finding Plan

Planning Department develop uniform pedestrian streetscape and way-finding signage guideline plan for Downtown for Town Board consideration by 2012.

Action DT-2.4: Building Façade Guidelines

Consider preparing guidelines for building facades, including the appropriate mix of solid walls and windows, awnings and other exterior building enhancements, particularly those extending into the public realm (i.e. sidewalk area) while being mindful not to discourage investment.

Policy DT-3: Capital Investments

Install roads, sidewalks, bikeways, greenways and utility infrastructure necessary to support development and redevelopment within the Downtown, consistent with the future land use plan for the Downtown.

Action DT-3.1: Road and Streetscape Plan

Prepare road and streetscape plan for the Downtown area, which complements and is consistent with streetscape in front of Town Center project. Plan should include recommended street sections, lighting, landscaping and street furniture.

Action DT-3.2: Capital Investment/Implementation Plan

Prepare strategic capital investment and implementation plan identifying required infrastructure improvements in the Downtown to accommodate future growth and development. Plan should include phasing of improvements to support development as it occurs.

Action DT-3.3: Underground Utilities

Bury overhead utility lines in the Downtown area as funding becomes available and as utilities are upgraded.

Action DT-3.4: Entrance Features

Create entrance features (e.g. monuments) identifying boundaries of Downtown. Entrance features should be of uniform design and be coordinated with Downtown pedestrian and way-finding signage.

Action DT-3.5: Rail Station Design

Finalize design and associated site improvements for Downtown rail station and parking area(s) in preparation for North Corridor Commuter rail line.

Action DT-3.6: Wi-Fi Service

Encourage creation of Wi-Fi “hot zone” for Downtown area.

Policy DT-4: Multi-Modal Transportation System

Support creation of multi-modal integrated Downtown transportation system addressing automobile, bus, rail, pedestrian and bicycle mobility.

Action DT-4.1: Multi-Modal Transportation Plan

Prepare multi-modal integrated transportation plan for Downtown which accommodates all modes of transit, maximizes public and private resources and is consistent with Federal and State “complete streets” policies in order to enhance funding opportunities. The Plan should include a capital element and be designed for phased implementation by either public or private entities.

Policy DT-5: Parking

Continue to use “Downtown Parking Study” completed in 2006 to address future parking needs attributed to anticipated future development and growth in Downtown.

Action DT-5.1: Parking Master Plan

Utilizing “Downtown Parking Study”, prepare a “Downtown Parking Master Plan.” This Master Plan should employ such innovative techniques and strategies such as shared parking, the use of private spaces and time of day demand pricing to establish a parking system that will ensure a healthy and vital Downtown.

Policy DT-6: Parks and Recreation

Continue to enhance parks and recreation opportunities in the Downtown, consistent with the “Downtown Master Plan,” “East Huntersville Area Development Plan,” “Parks & Recreation Master Plan” and “Greenway and Bikeway Master Plan.”

Action DT-6.1: Parks, Greenways and Open Space

Identify suitable locations for and develop public parks, greenways and open space in the Downtown, consistent with “Downtown Master Plan,” “East Huntersville Area Development Plan,” “Parks & Recreation Master Plan” and “Greenway and Bikeway Master Plan,” in conjunction with new development proposals.

Action DT-6.2: Community Arts and Recreation

Encourage community programming (i.e. festivals, fairs, holiday celebrations) in the Downtown.

Action DT-6.3: Community Gathering Space

Consider creation of a community gathering space in the Downtown.

Action DT-6.4: Greenway Trails

Implement greenway trail system identified in the Town of Huntersville “Greenway & Bikeway Master Plan.”

Public Facilities in 2030

Public facilities are the most visible representation of the municipal “infrastructure/services” offered by the Town. Public facilities include those police, fire, parks & recreation, public works, municipal buildings and properties that are built and maintained through local tax revenue and dedicated to meet the public demand for such facilities. In 2030, the Town will continue to provide and maintain those public facilities required to offer residents and property owners the highest possible level and quality of municipal services, consistent with progressive government practices and sound fiscal policy.

FOCUS AREA: PUBLIC FACILITIES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Huntersville is a full-service municipality offering police, fire, parks, recreation, public works and other municipal public facilities and services to its residents and property owners. These public facilities are funded through local tax revenue and other public and private revenues dedicated for their maintenance and service.

2.0 POLICE

The Huntersville Police Department is currently headquartered in an 8,000 square foot building located on Gilead Road in Downtown. This facility, built in 1996, houses 93 full-time personnel (83 sworn officers and 10 civilians). A facility study completed in 2009 identified the need for an approximately 60,000+ square foot police headquarters building to accommodate the Police Department's space needs through 2030. In 2010 an effort was made to reduce the overall size of the future building with an efficient layout. It was found that most of the programmatic needs could be accomplished in a building of about 50,000 square feet without too much sacrifice to program needs. In 2010, the Police Department acquired a 2,000 square foot office building adjacent to its existing headquarters to provide additional space until such time that the new police headquarters can be constructed.

This new facility is scheduled to begin construction in FY 2012, although a final decision has not yet been made regarding its location.

The Police Department continues to explore opportunities to establish "satellite" locations (small unmanned community based mini-police offices) in the eastern and western areas of town. Currently, the department maintains a satellite office in the new Fire Station #3 on Eastfield Road. Other possible locations for such satellite offices include shopping areas, schools or parks facilities.

3.0 FIRE

The Town of Huntersville is served by a combination of paid and volunteer firefighters. Currently, there are three fire stations located within the Town's jurisdiction, as noted in **Table PF-1** below.

Table PF-1
Huntersville Fire Stations

Facility	Location	GSF*	Built
Station #1	Old Statesville Road	11,524	1995
Station #2	Beatties Ford Road	5,296	1980
Station #3	Eastfield Road	14,363	2010

*Gross square feet.

Based on future growth projections, the Town anticipates that an additional two fire stations will be needed by 2030. The projected locations for these stations are in the southwest and northeast quadrants of town. Where appropriate, the Town should consider working with surrounding communities to share the responsibility of providing a fire station. In addition to the two new stations, the existing fire station on Beatties Ford Road (#2) is reaching the end of its functional life and will need to be replaced by 2030.

Another issue that is currently being studied is the creation of fire districts to establish a dedicated source of funding for fire service in Mecklenburg County. Fire Service districts have been discussed for a number of years, but the recent disbanding of several volunteer fire companies, along with the cost to fund fire protection in the non-incorporated areas of Mecklenburg County have served to revive interest in fire districts. Mecklenburg County is currently leading a study of fire service districts, with the input of local communities that would be affected. A decision on whether to move forward with fire service districts is likely in the next several years.

4.0 PARKS & RECREATION

The Huntersville Parks and Recreation Department provides opportunities for both active and passive recreation in outdoor and indoor facilities. A summary of existing Parks and Recreation Department indoor facilities is detailed in **Table PF-2**.

Table PF-2
Parks & Recreation Indoor Facilities

Facility	Location	GSF	Built
Waymer Center	Holbrook Road	10,000	1955
Arts & Cultural Center	Old Statesville Road	1,943	1956
Dellwood Center	Dellwood Drive	3,400	1928
Huntersville Elem. Gym ¹	Gilead Road	7,800	2000
Barnette Elem. Gym ¹	Beatties Ford Road	8,100	2007
Torrence Elem. Multi-purpose Room ¹	Ranson Road	4,000	2003
Lake Norman Charter M.S. Gym ¹	Old Statesville Road	9,500	2006
Lake Norman Charter H.S. Gym ¹	Old Statesville Road	12,000	2008

¹ Shared use agreement for non-school hours.

In addition to indoor recreation facilities, the Town has a number of parks as well as access to several Mecklenburg County Preserves (Latta Plantation Nature Preserve, Cowens Ford Nature Preserve) within its borders. **Map E-1**, on page 37, shows the location of Protected, Preserved and Public land. The inventory of park land can be found in **Table PF-3**.

**Table PF-3
Huntersville Public Parks**

Park Name	Park Size (Acres)
Abernathy Park ¹	2
Hambright Fields ²	10
Holbrook Park ¹	8
Huntersville Athletic Park ²	42
North Mecklenburg Park ²	98
Waymer Park ²	17
Bradford Park ²	170
Richard Barry Park ²	42
TOTAL	387

¹Town owned & operated

²County owned & town operated

The Town of Huntersville Parks and Recreation Department is now in the process of updating their 2004 Master Plan. Recommendations from this plan need to be coordinated with the Huntersville Community Plan and the Huntersville Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances.

5.0 TOWN HALL, TOWN CENTER, PUBLIC WORKS GARAGE, ELECTRICITIES

The Town's administrative, finance and human resource functions are currently located in the Town Hall building, an 8,500 square foot one-story office building located at the corner of Huntersville-Concord Road and Old Statesville Road. Built in 1996 on an approximately one acre parcel, Town Hall is served by 22 parking spaces. Planning, Transportation, Engineering, Parks & Recreation and Legal Department staff are located in the third floor of the Town Center building, located on approximately two acres at the southwest corner of Old Statesville Road and Gilead Road. This 48,000 square foot, three-story building was completed in 2010. The first two floors of the building are occupied by Discovery Place Kids (DPK), which has a 15 year lease for this space. In addition to the building, the site includes a 297 space, three-level parking garage, along with 25 surface parking spaces. The parking deck and surface parking spaces will be shared with a proposed "sister" building which will front Old Statesville Road.

The Town's public works garage is currently located on Sam Furr Road and provides office and garage space for Public Works highway and maintenance staff. The garage facility will be relocated to a 5.6 acre tract, recently acquired on Seagle Street and containing 6,400 sq. ft. of buildings. This facility will also be shared with Parks and Recreation maintenance.

The Town Board contracts with Electricities, one of three utility companies which supplies electric service to the Town, and oversees its operation and management as an enterprise fund. Electricities is located on a 2.75 acre parcel, on NC 73 (Sam Furr Road) and consists of 9,040 square feet of building space, including 1,690 square feet of office space. The site includes a fenced secured storage area.

6.0 HUNTERSVILLE FAMILY FITNESS & AQUATICS (HFFA) CENTER

Huntersville Family Fitness and Aquatics (HFFA) Center is a town-owned, 88,000 square foot health and fitness facility featuring the following:

- An Olympic size pool with 1, 3, 5, 7.5 and 10 meter diving platforms
- A six lane 25 yard pool
- An outdoor family fun swimming pool, featuring spray equipment and a water slide
- One full size basketball court gym
- Cardio and resistance fitness rooms
- Free weight room
- Two outdoor volleyball courts
- Outdoor children's playground
- Men's and women's locker rooms
- Indoor & outdoor concession facilities
- Administrative offices
- Childcare services, preschool and afterschool program

Located on parcel leased from Mecklenburg County through 2030, HFFA was built in 2001, at a cost of \$9 million. The facility offers fee-only daily passes and monthly memberships.

They host local school swim teams and clubs, national and international swimming, diving and synchronized swimming events.

In addition, HFFA owns and manages one 5K road race, one combined 5K/10K event with family fun walk, one sprint triathlon and a four-event kids triathlon series.

HFFA is managed by a private company under a contract with the Town. Operating revenue is covered by membership fees, rental fees and concessions, as well as funding from the Hotel & Meals tax receipts. Debt service is part of the operating fund and is covered by the revenues above.

7.0 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) identifies major one time projects to be undertaken in a five-year time period outside of the Town's operating expenses. Projects include road improvements and public facilities such as a police station and parks and greenways, to name a few. The CIP identifies each project, establishes a time frame for the project and identifies the project financing. The CIP is reviewed annually by the Huntersville Town Board.

8.0 ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES ORDINANCE (APFO)

In January 2008, Huntersville adopted an “Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO).” An APFO is a regulatory mechanism through which a community determines whether adequate capacity exists for a particular public facility required to serve a proposed development before that development occurs.

A key feature of the Huntersville APFO is the requirement for a “Determination of Adequacy (DOA)” to be issued by the Town for all residential development proposals involving more than 20 lots or dwelling units, and for non-residential proposals that involve 10,000 square feet or more of floor area or will generate 50 or more peak hour trips or 500 or more daily vehicle trips.

A DOA is issued based upon established level of service (LOS) requirements for the following public facilities:

- Fire Vehicles (#)
- Fire Station (sq. ft.)
- Police Vehicles (#)
- Police Station (sq. ft.)
- Parks & Recreation, Gyms (sq. ft.)
- Parks & Recreation, Parks (acres)

The LOS standards for each of these facilities is derived from a combination of industry standards for these facilities, as well as local conditions (e.g. demand and population). These LOS standards are found in **Table PF-4**.

Table PF-4
Levels of Service (LOS) for APFO
Capital Facilities

Facility Category	Facility Type	Adopted LOS (per 1,000 population)
Fire Protection	Fire Vehicles	.23
	Fire Station (sq. ft.)	445
Law Enforcement	Police Vehicles	1.91
	Police Station (sq. ft.)	171
Parks & Recreation	Gyms (sq. ft.)	710
	Parks (acres)	6.41

In the absence of “adequate” capacity, an applicant has the option of either waiting until facility capacity becomes available to serve the proposed development; reducing the size of the development to conform with available capacity; or advancing the facility (or facilities) capacity necessary to meet the demand generated by a particular development.

Use of the APFO provides the Town with a valuable tool to ensure that the demand for public facilities generated by new growth does not exceed the Town’s ability to serve that growth.

9.0 POLICIES & ACTION ITEMS

Policy PF-1: Public Facilities

Continue to assess public facility needs to meet demand generated by existing, as well as future growth and development.

Action PF-1.1: Police Station

Finalize plans for new police facility to meet demand for public safety services through 2030.

Action PF-1.2: Fire Protection

Undertake comprehensive analysis (including size and location of new stations and adequacy of existing stations) to determine fire protection needs through 2030, and explore opportunities to share facilities with adjoining jurisdictions.

Action PF-1.3: Fire Districts

Work with Mecklenburg County and surrounding communities to address the question of establishing fire districts.

Action PF-1.4: Parks and Recreation Facilities

In conjunction with update of Parks & Recreation Master Plan, assess, identify and prioritize need for new active (indoor and outdoor) and passive parks and recreation facilities.

Action PF-1.5: Municipal Space Needs

Assess and analyze space needs for additional municipal functions and facilities as needed.

Policy PF-2: Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO)

Continue use of “Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO)” to ensure that demand generated by existing and future growth and development for police, fire and parks & recreation capital facilities can be met by available supply of facilities.

Action PF-2.1: APFO Level of Service Standards

Conduct regular updates of APFO Level of Service (LOS) figures for police, fire and parks & recreation capital facilities to ensure that these LOS standards continue to reflect the Town’s priorities for balanced growth and development.

Huntersville 2030 Community Plan – Implementation Schedule

The Huntersville 2030 Community Plan Implementation Schedule is a summary of all Policy and Action items included in the 2030 Community Plan. This Implementation Schedule is intended to provide guidance to the Town Board, appointed citizen boards, Town staff, citizens, property owners and other interested persons regarding the department/agency responsible for each policy and action item, along with recommended timeframes (in the case of action items) for their implementation. These general start timeframes serve to prioritize each of the action items, allowing for the assignment of the appropriate resources (personnel, operating and capital) necessary for their implementation. The assignment of resources for these action items should occur in conjunction with the Town's annual budgeting process. These policies and action items should be reviewed on a semi-annual basis by the Planning Board, which shall recommend revisions to the Town Board for their consideration.

INTRODUCTION & FRAMEWORK	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy I/F-1: Long Range Plan Review Long range plans should be reviewed by staff, Planning Board and Board of Commissioners within seven years of adoption to stay relevant.	Planning Planning Board Town Board	Ongoing
Policy I/F-2: Small Area Plans Prepare small area plans as warranted, particularly for high growth or other areas that will be undergoing changes in the future, such as road improvements or sewer extensions.	Planning	As needed
Action I/F-2.1: Prepare Small Area Plans Consider preparation of small area plans for the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC 73 to Prosperity Church Road • Eastfield/Alexanderana/Asbury Chapel Road • NC 115 – Verhoeff Bridge • Eastfield Road/Prosperity Church Road 	Planning	2011-2015

HOUSING	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy H-1: Development Pattern Continue to follow existing residential development pattern as reflected in “Map of Zoning Districts,” focusing higher intensity development generally within two miles of the I-77/NC-115 corridor and lower intensity development from the east and west of this corridor extending to the Town boundaries.	Planning	
Policy H-2: Node Development Continue to encourage mixed-use village development pattern at key nodes as identified in Small Area Plans adopted by the Town.	Planning	
Action H-2.1: Small Area Plans Prepare small area plans if one does not exist in areas of the community that are or will be experiencing development pressure.	Planning	Ongoing
Policy H-3: Mixed-Use Development Support and encourage self-sustained developments, where commercial and employment uses are in close proximity to residential uses (see Commercial Development Policy CD-1 & CD-3).	Planning	
Policy H-4: Development Principles For proposed developments, either in the core or within identified nodes, adhere to the principles set forth in the Zoning Ordinance and adopted small area plans to ensure an approximate mix of residential, commercial and employment uses to maximize land use and transportation efficiencies, while minimizing environmental impacts.	Planning	
Policy H-5: Senior Housing Encourage housing options which accommodate senior citizens (e.g. age restricted/retirement communities, congregate care/assisted living facilities) which are integrated into the community and allow for “aging in place.”	Planning	
Action H-5.1: Review Ordinances to Identify Barriers to Senior Housing Review Town Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to identify any barriers to the provision of housing for senior citizens.	Planning	2014-2015
Policy H-6: Energy Efficient Design Encourage energy efficient design, through the use of “Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) principles and practices for residential construction, including alternative energy usage (solar, wind etc.).	Planning	

HOUSING	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy H-7: Housing Affordability Support appropriate mix of housing for all income levels.	Planning	
Action H-7.1: Review of Ordinances Review Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations to identify any barriers to energy efficient design in residential construction and encourage builders to employ LEED principles.	Planning	2014-2015
Policy H-8: Development in the Transitional and Rural Areas Maintain the development standards in the Transitional and Rural zones and consider adjustments if warranted by changes in the housing market.	Planning	
Action H-8.1: Analysis of Rural and Transitional Development Standards Within five years, analyze the development standards within the Rural and Transitional District zones to determine if adjustments are necessary.	Planning	2014-2015
Policy H-9: Future Residential Development Higher intensity residential development will be focused generally within two miles of the I-77/NC-115 corridor and future mixed use nodes in the eastern and western areas of Huntersville's zoning jurisdiction (See Commercial Development Policy CD-2).	Planning	
Policy H-10: Redevelopment Areas Support redevelopment of older established residential areas, consistent with adopted plans, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision regulations.	Planning	

ENVIRONMENT	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy E-1: Preservation and Enhancement Support the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, along with its scenic and cultural assets.	Planning	
Action E-1.2: Environmental Features Map Maintain GIS “Environmental Features” map, including significant water features, wetlands, steep slopes, habitats and tree stands.	Planning	Ongoing
Action E-1.3: Historic, Scenic and Cultural Resources Map Maintain GIS “Historic Properties, Scenic and Cultural Resources” map, including historic designations, scenic vistas and significant places.	Planning	Ongoing
Policy E-2: Location of New Development Avoid locating new development in areas of significant environmental, scenic or cultural resources.	Planning	
Policy E-3: Environmental Regulations Support and enhance environmental regulations pertaining to tree preservation, buffer yards, open space, water quality, wetland and stream protection.	Planning	
Action E-3.1: Modify Regulations to Enhance Environmental Protection Review existing environmental protection regulations to determine what, if any, modifications are required to maintain or enhance current levels of protection.	Planning	2014-2015
Policy E-4: Reduce Outdoor Lighting Support reduction in outdoor lighting to lowest possible levels to maintain public safety, while limiting glare, habitat impacts and loss of privacy.	Planning	
Action E-4.1: Revise Lighting Ordinance Review lighting ordinances in effect in other communities to determine if adjustments to current Ordinance are necessary and determine if pre-existing non-conforming lights should be brought-up to current standards when expansions exceed a certain size.	Planning	2012-2013
Policy E-5: Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) Support reduction in vehicle miles travelled (VMT), through capital investments in sidewalks, greenways, enhanced connectivity and mass transit (bus & rail).	Planning	

ENVIRONMENT	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Action E-5.1: Reduce VMT through Capital Infrastructure Projects Fund capital infrastructure projects which will reduce VMT.	Administration Engineering & Public Works Transportation	Ongoing
Policy E-6: Alternative Energy Support for “Alternative Energy,” including wind, solar, and other viable options.	Planning	
Policy E-7: Sustainability Support land use and transportation policies that are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.	Planning	
Policy E-8: LEED Building Design & LEED Neighborhood Development Support policies that promote LEED building design and LEED-Neighborhood Development.	Planning	
Action E-8.1: LEED Public Buildings Require minimum LEED standards to be met for all public buildings built in Town.	Administration Planning	Ongoing

TRANSPORTATION	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT/AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy T-1: Apportionment of Transportation Funds Maintain and refine Town Board adopted policy to apportion transportation system funding for local transportation projects (e.g. capital, maintenance and system operation).	Transportation	
Action T-1.1: Analysis Based Decision-making Implement data gathering and analysis programs necessary to reach data-driven decisions on funding transportation projects.	Transportation Engineering & Public Works	2012-2013
Action T-1.2: Funding Policy Review transportation funding policy on regular basis and revise to reflect transportation system priorities.	Transportation Engineering & Public Works	Ongoing
Policy T-2: Public/Private Partnerships (PPP) Support innovative and alternative funding efforts (including public/private and public/public partnerships) to increase the number of transportation projects that can be implemented by 2030.	Transportation Engineering & Public Works	
Policy T-3: Local Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Create and maintain local "Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)" for projects to be funded primarily by local revenue and incorporated in the five year Capital Improvement Program (CIP).	Transportation Engineering & Public Works	
Action T-3.1: Implement Low Cost/High Benefit Projects Identify and prioritize high benefit, lower cost roadway projects for funding and implementation on an annual basis.	Transportation Engineering & Public Works	Ongoing
Action T-3.2: Apportionment of Staff Resources Determine appropriate staff resources and private sector support necessary to plan and implement selected transportation projects.	Administration Engineering & Public Works Transportation	Ongoing
Policy T-4: Complete Streets Policy Support NCDOT "Complete Streets Policy," as adopted by the NC State Board of Transportation.	Engineering & Public Works Transportation	
Action T-4.1: Develop Procedures for Complete Streets Provide support to NCDOT work group that is developing implementation procedures for "Complete Streets Policy."	Transportation Planning	2011

TRANSPORTATION	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT/AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy T-5: Context-sensitive Design of Streets Continue to support “context-sensitive” design of streets and the selection of appropriate street section designs for residential, commercial and industrial developments applications.	Transportation Engineering & Public Works	
Action T-5.1: Street Design Guidelines Finalize “Town of Huntersville Street Design Guidelines Plan,” to include recommended street sections accommodating all modes of transportation and a selection process for determining appropriate sections for new and existing streets.	Planning Transportation Engineering & Public Works	2011
Action T-5.2: Way Finding Signage Plan Prepare a uniform “Way Finding” signage plan for the Town of Huntersville with special attention on Downtown.	Planning Engineering & Public Works Transportation	2012-2013
Policy T-6: Pedestrian Connections Support the installation of sidewalks, bikeways and greenway trails connecting residential, commercial, employment, recreational and institutional uses.	Planning Transportation Engineering & Public Works	
Action T-6.1: Pedestrian Master Plan Prepare “Pedestrian Master Plan” for Town, including inventory of existing sidewalks and a prioritized implementation schedule for enhancement and expansion of the existing pedestrian transportation network through public and private (in coordination with new development) funding.	Transportation Planning	2012-2013
Action T-6.2: Greenways and Bikeways Implement “Greenway and Bikeway Master Plan,” including the prioritization and funding of greenway trails and bikeways through a combination of public and private funding.	Parks & Recreation Planning Engineering & Public Works	Ongoing
Action T-6.3: Comprehensive Transportation Plan Utilize Complete Streets concept in creation of “Comprehensive Transportation Plan.”	Transportation Planning	2012-2013
Policy T-7: Traffic Impact Analysis Ordinance (TIAO) Continue to apply requirements of “Traffic Impact Analysis” Ordinance, including Level of Service and mitigation of impacts generated by new development.	Planning Transportation Engineering & Public Works	

TRANSPORTATION	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT/AGENCIES	YEAR START
Action T-7.1: Traffic Impact Analysis Ordinance – Levels of Service Review Level of Service requirements in Traffic Impact Analysis Ordinance on annual basis and adjust as necessary to achieve desired land use pattern reflected in 2030 Community Plan.	Planning Transportation Engineering & Public Works	Ongoing
Policy T-8: Street Connectivity Promote and require street connectivity in the Town of Huntersville among residential, commercial, employment, recreational and institutional uses.	Planning Transportation Engineering & Public Works	
Action T-8.1: Connectivity Master Plan Prepare “Connectivity Master Plan” identifying recommended vehicular, pedestrian and bikeway connections between existing and proposed streets.	Transportation Planning Engineering & Public Works	2011
Action T-8.2: Connectivity Ordinance Prepare and adopt Ordinance amendments necessary to implement “Connectivity Master Plan.”	Planning Transportation	2011
Policy T-9: State Transportation Equity Formula Support efforts to revise “Equity Formula” for funding transportation projects.	Transportation Administration	
Action T-9.1: Revise Equity Formula Support and actively participate in legislative study committees to revise the Equity Formula.	Transportation Administration	2012-2013
Policy T-10: Regional Cooperation Participate in organizations such as the “Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO),” “Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC),” “Lake Norman Transportation Commission (LNTC),” and Centralina Council of Governments to maintain Town’s role in regional transportation efforts.	Transportation Planning Administration	
Action T-10.1: Coordination of Town Participation in Regional Organizations Coordinate among Board representatives to various regional transportation organizations, to ensure that Huntersville receives fair and equitable treatment.	Administration	Ongoing
Policy T-11: Commuter Rail Advocate for implementation of North Corridor Commuter Rail line by 2014.	Administration Transportation Planning	
Action T-11.1: Transit Oriented Development Support “Red Line Task Force” efforts to advance North Corridor, including dedication of local share of taxes generated by “Transit-Oriented Development.”	Administration Transportation Planning	2011

ECONOMIC & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy ED-1: Diversify Tax Base Continue to look for ways to expand and diversify the employment base in Huntersville.	Administration	
Action ED-1.1: Strategic Economic Development (SED) Plan Prepare a “Strategic Economic Development (SED) Plan” for the Town of Huntersville using previous studies as a foundation. This plan should address the following elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic and economic/market profile and analysis • Inventory and analysis of existing businesses and industry • Analysis of competitive advantage for Huntersville • Identification of target areas for new development • Strategies for increasing percentage of employees who live and work in Town • Downtown redevelopment strategy 	Administration Planning	2012-2013
Action ED-1.2: Economic Development Committee Consider creation of local economic development committee to oversee preparation of SED Plan for Huntersville.	Administration	2012-2013
Policy ED-2: Preservation of Land Area for Non-Residential Development Preserve areas suitable for business and industrial development, along with a mixture of support uses, to ensure an adequate inventory of land for future growth and development, with increases to this inventory as required.	Planning	
Action ED-2.1: Identify Land Area Suitable for Non-Residential Development Prepare GIS map displaying land area available and required for future office, commercial and industrial growth and development that is consistent with recommendations for targeted industry and business in SED Plan for Huntersville.	Planning	2012-2013
Policy ED-3: Economic Development Competitive Advantage Target recruitment of business and industry for which Huntersville has a “competitive advantage” as identified in a Town SED Plan or other application plan.	Administration	
Policy ED-4: Growth Sector Business and Industry Support the attraction of business and industry as identified by NC Department of Commerce as emerging growth sectors (e.g. pharmaceutical and medical device manufacturing) for Charlotte region.	Administration	

ECONOMIC & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy ED-5: North Corridor Commuter Rail Line Support development of the North Corridor Commuter Rail line as a tool to promote economic development.	Administration	
Policy ED-6: Lake Norman Regional Economic Development Corporation (LNREDC) Continue participation with Lake Norman Regional Economic Development Corporation (LNREDC) and on joint economic development efforts with Cornelius and Davidson.	Administration	
Policy ED-7: Regional Cooperation Develop closer working relationship with the City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County and surrounding counties on areas of mutual interest, such as workforce development and training and North Corridor commuter rail line.	Administration	
Policy ED-8: Lake Norman Transportation Commission (LNTC) Continue participation with Lake Norman Transportation Commission (LNTC) to promote regional transportation (roads & rail) improvements to the Lake Norman area.	Administration	
Policy ED-9: Economic Development/Hospitality and Tourism The Town of Huntersville will promote economic development, hospitality and tourism initiatives and partner with other agencies such as the Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce (LNC), visit Lake Norman (VLN) and the Huntersville Connection (HC).	Administration	
Policy ED-10: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities Department (CMUD) Continue to work closely with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities (CMUD) in preparation of five and ten year Capital Improvement Programs (CIP) for water and sewer line extensions to serve new development as well as existing development not currently served.	Administration	
Action ED-10.1: Water and Sewer Lines Prepare map of proposed water and sewer line locations and line capacities to assist in strategic planning for business expansion and recruitment.	Planning	2012-2013
Action ED-10.2: Targeted Utility Needs Provide CMUD with annual list of targeted areas for needed water and sewer line extensions to assist in CIP process.	Planning	Ongoing

ECONOMIC & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy ED-11: Utility and Transportation Infrastructure Continue to invest in utility and transportation infrastructure to serve and support targeted growth areas.	Administration	
Action ED-11.1: I-77 Widening Work with the Federal Highway Administration, NCDOT, MUMPO, Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, and LNTC members to widen I-77 to exit 36.	Transportation Administration Planning	Ongoing
Action ED-11.2: North Corridor Commuter Rail Line Continue to work with CATS, Charlotte, Cornelius, Davidson, Mooresville, Mecklenburg County, LNTC, LNREDC and other pertinent organizations to advance North Corridor commuter rail line.	Administration Transportation Planning	Ongoing
Policy ED-12: Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Support "Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)" program of LNREDC.	Administration	
Action ED-12.1: Expand BRE Program Work with LNREDC to enhance BRE program, targeting business and industry either currently not being served or underserved.	Administration	Ongoing
Policy ED-13: Business Incentive Program Continue Business Incentive Program (BIP) for the creation of new jobs.	Administration	
Action ED-13.1: Business Expansion Utilize BIP for existing business expansion.	Administration	Ongoing
Policy ED-14: Development Review Process Support efforts to improve efficiency and responsiveness of development review process for development proposals.	Planning	
Action ED-14.1: County/Town Cooperation – Development Review Process Continue to work with Mecklenburg County (LUESA) and Department of Building Standards to streamline development review and approval process and to develop strategies to make process more user-friendly.	Planning	As needed

ECONOMIC & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy ED-15: Workforce Training Support current efforts of Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) and others to train and develop skilled workforce to meet labor demands for local business and industry.	Administration	
Action ED-15.1: Public/Private Partnerships – Workforce Training Convene roundtable meetings between LNREDC, NC Department of Commerce, CPCC, area universities, CMS, Mecklenburg County and local business leaders to enhance existing workforce training and identify new training strategies to serve local business and industry.	Administration	2012-2013
Action ED-15.2: Job Training/Retraining Work with State and County officials, LNC and LNREDC to identify resources to provide job training and education for residents who are either unemployed and/or who need to retrain for new jobs.	Administration	Ongoing
Policy ED-16: Tourism The Town will support local tourism efforts and partner with other agencies such as “Visit Lake Norman” and “Destination Roundtable” as appropriate.	Administration	
Action ED-16.1: Enhance Tourism Opportunities Identify new opportunities for tourism.	Administration	Ongoing
Policy ED-17: Recreation Tournaments/Events Support continued efforts of Parks & Recreation Department and HFFA to attract national, state and regional amateur recreational and sports tournament and events.	Parks & Recreation HFFA	

ECONOMIC & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy CD-1: Land Use/Transportation Integration Continue the integration of land use and transportation elements for development that occurs within commercial corridors, nodes and centers. Consistency with the Town's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance and adopted long-range plans shall be the foundation for this development.	Planning Transportation	
Policy CD-2: Commercial Development Pattern Promote a mixed-use development pattern that focuses higher intensity development generally within two miles of the I-77/NC-115 core. Outside the core area, this more intense development pattern shall be focused in identified nodes and centers.	Planning	
Policy CD-3: Commercial Development Principles Encourage mixed-use development pattern at key nodes as identified in Small Area Plans, insuring an appropriate mix of residential, commercial and employment uses to maximize land use and transportation efficiencies, while minimizing environmental impacts.	Planning	
Action CD-3.1: Small Area Plans Prepare small area plans if one does not exist in sections of the community that are or will be experiencing development pressure.	Planning	As needed

ECONOMIC & COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy CD-4: Multi-Modal Transportation Network Continue to pursue development of a multi-modal integrated transportation system in a manner that facilitates the efficient movement of vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians and is less reliant on single-occupant vehicles and single purpose trips, supporting a sustainable land development pattern.	Transportation	
Policy CD-5: Infrastructure Continue to require that adequate public infrastructure (roads, utilities, etc) either exist or will be made available to support all new development.	Planning Engineering & Public Works	
Policy CD-6: Architecture and Place Making Consistent with Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances (as well as “Town of Huntersville Design Manual”) maintain high design standards for development.	Planning	
Policy CD-7: Corridor Landscaping & Lighting Continue to promote landscaping that enhances commercial development consistent with Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances. Coordinate with NCDOT to ensure that landscaping and lighting is “context sensitive” for the location and adjoining uses.	Planning Engineering & Public Works	

DOWNTOWN	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy DT-1: Downtown Development Continue to use the Downtown Master Plan, Gilead Road/US-21 Transportation and Land Use Vision Small Area Plan and East Huntersville Area Development Plan to guide future development in downtown.	Planning	
Action DT-1.1: Development Plans Planning Board will review Downtown Master Plan, Gilead Road/US-21 Transportation and Land Use Vision Small Area Plan and East Huntersville Area Development Plan and recommend updates for consideration by the Town Board.	Planning Department	Ongoing
Action DT-1.2: Downtown Business Association Support Town to provide informational support should a downtown business association be formed.	Administration Planning	As needed
Action DT-1.3: Transit Oriented Development – Residential As rezoning requests for TOD-R are proposed in downtown, analyze for compliance with TOD-R standards established in the Zoning Ordinance and ensure the location so as not to conflict with historic sections of downtown.	Planning	As needed
Policy DT-2: Architectural Design Standards Promote high quality architectural design standards for new development and redevelopment projects in the downtown.	Planning	
Action DT-2.1: Building Height Standards The Planning Board shall review building height standards and make recommendations to the Town Board as needed.	Planning	2012-2013
Action DT-2.2: Integration of New/Old Development The Planning Department modify the “Design Guidebook” offering recommendations and guidance on integrating “new” and “old” development in downtown.	Planning	2012-2013

DOWNTOWN	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Action DT-2.3: Pedestrian Streetscape and Way-Finding Plan Planning Department develop uniform pedestrian streetscape and way-finding signage guideline plan for downtown for Town Board consideration by 2012.	Planning Engineering & Public Works	2012-2013
Action DT-2.4: Building Façade Guidelines Consider preparing guidelines for building facades, including the appropriate mix of solid walls and windows, awnings and other exterior building enhancements, particularly those extending into the public realm (i.e. sidewalk area) while being mindful not to discourage investment.	Planning	2012-2013
Policy DT-3: Capital Investments Install roads, sidewalks, bikeways, greenways and utility infrastructure necessary to support development and redevelopment within the downtown, consistent with the future land use plan for the downtown.	Engineering & Public Works	
Action DT-3.1: Road and Streetscape Plan Prepare road and streetscape plan for the downtown area, which complements and is consistent with streetscape in front of Town Center project. Plan should include recommended street sections, lighting, landscaping and street furniture.	Planning Transportation Engineering & Public Works	2012-2013
Action DT-3.2: Capital Investment/Implementation Plan Prepare strategic capital investment and implementation plan indentifying required infrastructure improvements in the downtown to accommodate future growth and development. Plan should include phasing of improvements to support development as it occurs.	Engineering & Public Works Planning Transportation	2012-2013
Action DT-3.3: Underground Utilities Bury overhead utility lines in the downtown area as funding becomes available and as utilities are upgraded.	Administration Engineering & Public Works	Ongoing

DOWNTOWN	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Action DT-3.4: Entrance Features Create entrance features (e.g. monuments) identifying boundaries of downtown. Entrance features should be of uniform design and be coordinated with downtown pedestrian and way-finding signage.	Engineering & Public Works Administration	2014-2015
Action DT-3.5: Rail Station Design Finalize design and associated site improvements for downtown rail station and parking area(s) in preparation for North Corridor Commuter rail line.	Planning Engineering & Public Works	2012-2013
Action DT-3.6: Wi-Fi Service Encourage creation of Wi-Fi “hot zone” for downtown area.	Administration	2014-2015
Policy DT-4: Multi-Modal Transportation System Create multi-modal integrated downtown transportation system addressing automobile, bus, rail, pedestrian and bicycle mobility.	Transportation Planning	
Action DT-4.1: Multi-Modal Transportation Plan Prepare multi-modal integrated transportation plan for downtown which accommodates all modes of transit, which maximizes public and private resources and is consistent with Federal and State “complete streets” policies in order to enhance funding opportunities. Plan should include a capital element and be designed for phased implementation by either public or private entities.	Transportation Planning	2012-2013
Policy DT-5: Parking Continue to use “Downtown Parking Study” completed in 2006 to address future parking needs attributed to anticipated future development and growth in downtown.	Planning	

DOWNTOWN	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Action DT-5.1: Parking Master Plan Utilizing "Downtown Parking Study" prepare a "Downtown Parking Master Plan." This Master Plan should employ such innovative techniques and strategies such as shared parking, the use of private spaces and time of day demand pricing to establish a parking system that will ensure a healthy and vital downtown.	Planning Transportation	2014-2015
Policy DT-6: Parks and Recreation Continue to enhance parks and recreation opportunities in the downtown, consistent with the "Downtown Master Plan," "East Huntersville Area Development Plan," "Parks & Recreation Master Plan" and "Greenway and Bikeway Master Plan."	Parks & Recreation	
Action DT-6.1: Parks, Greenways and Open Space Identify suitable locations for and develop public parks, greenways and open space in the downtown, consistent with the "Downtown Master Plan," "East Huntersville Area Development Plan," "Parks & Recreation Master Plan" and "Greenway and Bikeway Master Plan," in conjunction with new development proposals.	Parks & Recreation	2012-2013
Action DT-6.2: Community Arts and Recreation Encourage community programming (i.e. festivals, fairs, holiday celebrations) in the downtown.	Parks & Recreation	Ongoing
Action DT-6.3: Community Gathering Space Consider creation of a community gathering space in the downtown.	Parks & Recreation	2012-2013
Action DT-6.4: Greenway Trails Implement greenway trail system identified in the Town of Huntersville "Greenway & Bikeway Master Plan".	Parks & Recreation Planning	2014-2015

PUBLIC FACILITIES	RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT / AGENCIES	YEAR START
Policy PF-1: Public Facilities Continue to assess public facility needs to meet demand generated by existing, as well as future growth and development.	Administration	
Action PF-1.1: Police Station Finalize plans for new police facility to meet demand for public safety services through 2030.	Administration Police	2011
Action PF-1.2: Fire Protection Undertake comprehensive analysis (including size and location of new stations and adequacy of existing stations) to determine fire protection needs through 2030, and explore opportunities to share facilities with adjoining jurisdictions.	Administration	2012-2013
Action PF-1.3: Fire Districts Work with Mecklenburg County and surrounding communities to address the question of establishing fire districts.	Administration	2012-2013
Action PF-1.4: Parks and Recreation Facilities In conjunction with update of Parks & Recreation Master Plan, assess, identify and prioritized need for new active (indoor and outdoor) and passive parks and recreation facilities	Parks & Recreation	2012-2013
Action PF-1.5: Municipal Space Needs Assess and analyze space needs for additional municipal functions and facilities as needed.	Administration	Ongoing
Policy PF-2: Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) Continue use of “Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO)” to ensure that demand generated by existing and future growth and development for police, fire and parks & recreation capital facilities can be met by available supply of facilities.	Planning	
Action PF-2.1: APFO Level of Service Standards Conduct regular updates of APFO Level of Service (LOS) figures for police, fire and parks & recreation capital facilities to ensure that these LOS standards continue to reflect the Town’s priorities for balanced growth and development.	Planning	Ongoing



TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE 2030 COMMUNITY PLAN - RESIDENT SURVEY

FINAL SUMMARY OF RESULTS (January 2011)

Below are the results of a citizen survey for the Huntersville 2030 Community Plan. Surveys were mailed randomly to 1,500 households and as of 8/1/2010, 453 responses had been returned. This provides a 95% Level of Confidence for the survey results. Also noted in % highlight are responses to this survey from 366 surveys completed online. Questions in the survey were based on top recommendations from two joint Town Board/Planning Board meetings (3/8/10 and 4/12/10) and a public meeting (4/22/10). A link to the survey was posted on the Town of Huntersville website and available to the public from 8/8/2010 to 11/19/2010.

General Questions:

Please mark the response that best describes your opinion about the quality of life in Huntersville for each of the following statements.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Not Sure
Huntersville as a place to live	45% 29%	52% 62%	3% 8%	0% 0%	0% 0%	0% 0%
Huntersville as a place to raise children	37% 27%	46% 56%	8% 9%	0% 1%	0% 0%	9% 0%
Huntersville as a place to work	18% 9%	36% 38%	19% 25%	4% 7%	1% 1%	21% 19%
Huntersville as a place to retire	19% 14%	42% 37%	16% 27%	3% 6%	1% 4%	19% 12%

2. How long have you lived in Huntersville?

16% 16% 0-2 years	29% 24% 6-10 years	6% 7% 16-20 years
25% 32% 3-5 years	14% 14% 11-15 years	10% 8% 21 years or more

3. What best describes where you live in Huntersville?

23% 30% Northeast (East of I-77/North of Huntersville-Concord Road)
14% 13% Southeast (East of I-77/South of Huntersville-Concord Road)
43% 35% Northwest (West of I-77/North of Gilead Road/Bud Henderson Road)
20% 22% Southwest (West of I-77/South of Gilead Road/Bud Henderson Road)

Using a scale of "1 to 5" where "1" is "Strongly Agree" and "5" is "Strongly Disagree"; please indicate your response to each of the statements below by marking the appropriate box.

4. Housing	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Encourage more housing options for senior citizens (e.g. retirement communities, nursing homes).	18% 14%	32% 42%	41% 30%	8% 10%	1% 5%
Support higher-density residential communities in walk-able commercial areas like Birkdale Village.	18% 32%	38% 28%	22% 15%	16% 13%	6% 12%
Promote a balanced mix of housing options for all age and income groups (e.g. single family, duplexes, townhomes, multi-family and apartments).	14% 14%	31% 30%	22% 20%	23% 22%	11% 14%
Encourage self-sustained and contained village type communities (e.g. homes, some retail and jobs).	16% 21%	49% 44%	26% 21%	6% 8%	2% 5%
Support affordable housing that is dispersed throughout the community.	9% 9%	31% 22%	24% 24%	19% 25%	17% 19%
Support higher density residential development in the I-77/NC-115 corridor moving to lower density residential development in the eastern and western areas of town.	9% 14%	31% 33%	34% 18%	18% 19%	8% 16%

5. Economic Development	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Stabilize tax base by promoting balance of residential, commercial and industrial development.	31% 30%	55% 51%	9% 11%	3% 5%	1% 2%
Support retention and growth of existing companies and industry.	40% 44%	50% 44%	8% 9%	1% 1%	0% 1%
Provide financial incentives for business retention, development and recruitment.	28% 28%	45% 34%	17% 16%	6% 14%	4% 8%
Support extension of water and sewer lines to promote new economic development.	21% 18%	52% 46%	17% 19%	7% 14%	2% 4%
Support efficient transit system (bus & rail) to promote economic development.	39% 50%	36% 27%	12% 8%	9% 8%	5% 7%

6. Public Facilities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Require annual evaluation of public facilities to promote efficient operations and priority needs.	35% 36%	50% 50%	12% 9%	3% 4%	0% 1%
Continue to require adequate public facilities (e.g. police, fire, parks and roads) as a condition of development approval.	59% 66%	36% 27%	4% 4%	1% 4%	0% 2%
Promote public/private partnerships to fund the capital cost of public facilities.	32% 29%	50% 51%	14% 13%	4% 4%	1% 3%
Pursue regional cooperation for the provision of public facilities (e.g. fire training).	33% 36%	51% 52%	15% 11%	1% 1%	0% 0%
Support Parks & Recreation Department in attracting regional and national sporting events (tournaments).	37% 34%	42% 38%	16% 15%	3% 9%	1% 4%

7. Downtown	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Encourage more mixed-use (e.g. commercial, office, residential) development in the downtown.	30% 36%	43% 40%	20% 13%	5% 7%	2% 4%
Expand Town Center development along NC-115 (Old Statesville Road).	24% 30%	40% 36%	26% 15%	8% 13%	2% 6%
Design downtown for safe and efficient movement of vehicles, pedestrians and bicycles.	50% 65%	38% 28%	9% 4%	1% 2%	1% 2%
Promote quality architectural design standards for buildings in the downtown.	44% 53%	43% 33%	10% 9%	2% 2%	0% 2%
Install necessary infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, utilities) prior to the construction of additional development (including rail station) in the downtown.	54% 54%	34% 30%	9% 6%	2% 6%	1% 3%
Create “entrance” features (e.g. signage, monuments) to identify the boundaries of downtown.	21% 21%	34% 28%	34% 25%	9% 17%	2% 8%
Encourage and/or provide more community/special events (e.g. movies in the park, festivals and outdoor music nights) in the downtown area.	38% 34%	37% 39%	21% 18%	3% 5%	1% 4%

TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE AREA PLANS

- ❖ Beatties Ford Road Corridor Small Area Plan
 - Description: Creates a vision for future land use and transportation system development.
 - Status: Adopted September 19, 2007.
- ❖ Beatties Ford – Mt. Holly Huntersville Road Small Area Plan
 - Description: Offers a number of transportation and land use recommendations for the study area.
 - Status: Adopted by the Town Board of Commissioners on October 17, 2005.
- ❖ Davidson – Concord Road/NC 73 Area Plan
 - Description: The northern area of Mecklenburg County is sought after for its good quality life and small town atmosphere.
 - Status: Accepted by the Town Board of Commissioners on December 15, 2008.
- ❖ Downtown Master Plan
 - Description: Includes a number of recommendations and implementation strategies for development of the downtown over the next 20 years.
 - Status: Adopted by the Town Board of Commissioners on February 6, 2006.
- ❖ East Huntersville Area Development Plan
 - Description: Is intended to provide a vision for redevelopment of those areas east of Church Street between Ramah Church Road and Holbrooks Road.
 - Status: Adopted by the Town Board of Commissioners on April 16, 2007.
- ❖ Gilead Road/US 21 Small Area Plan
 - Description: Presents an integrated, long-term transportation and land use vision for the Gilead Road Study area.
 - Status: Approved by the Town Board of Commissioners on December 5, 2005.
- ❖ Neighborhood Plan – Rich Hatchett Road Community
 - Description: Represents a collaborative effort of the Rich Hatchett community and the Town of Huntersville Planning Department.
 - Status: Approved by the Town Board of Commissioners on August 17, 1998.
- ❖ NC 73 (Sam Furr Road)/US 21 Small Area Plan
 - Description: Presents an integrated, long-term transportation and land use vision for the Sam Furr Road Study area.
 - Status: Approved by the Town Board of Commissioners on December 5, 2005.
- ❖ NC 73 Small Area Land Use & Economic Development Plan
 - Description: Is a joint undertaking of the Town of Huntersville, Davidson, Concord, Kannapolis and Cabarrus County, which addresses land use and economic development issues along NC 73 between Davidson – Concord Road and Poplar Tent Road.
 - Status: Adopted by the Town Board of Commissioners on June 19, 2006.

NCDOT July 2009 Board of Transportation Agenda

Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

Complete Streets Policy

Board approval is requested for adoption of the Complete Streets Policy.

A. Definition

Complete Streets is North Carolina's approach to interdependent, multi-modal transportation networks that safely accommodate access and travel for all users.

B. Policy Statement

Transportation, quality of life, and economic development are all undeniably connected through well-planned, well-designed, and context sensitive transportation solutions. To NCDOT, the designations "well-planned", "well-designed" and "context-sensitive" imply that transportation is an integral part of a comprehensive network that safely supports the needs of the communities and the traveling public that are served.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation, in its role as stewards over the transportation infrastructure, is committed to:

- providing an efficient multi-modal transportation network in North Carolina such that the access, mobility, and safety needs of motorists, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities are safely accommodated;
- caring for the built and natural environments by promoting sustainable development practices that minimize impacts on natural resources, historic, businesses, residents, scenic and other community values, while also recognizing that transportation improvements have significant potential to contribute to local, regional, and statewide quality of life and economic development objectives;
- working in partnership with local government agencies, interest groups, and the public to plan, fund, design, construct, and manage complete street networks that sustain mobility while accommodating walking, biking, and transit opportunities safely.

This policy requires that NCDOT's planners and designers will consider and incorporate multimodal alternatives in the design and improvement of all appropriate transportation projects within a growth area of a town or city unless exceptional circumstances exist. Routine maintenance projects maybe excluded from this requirement; if an appropriate source of funding is not available.

C. Purpose

This policy sets forth the protocol for the development of transportation networks that encourage non-vehicular travel without compromising the safety, efficiency, or function of the facility. The purpose of this policy is to guide existing decision-making and design processes to ensure that all users are routinely considered during the planning, design, construction, funding and operation of North Carolina's transportation network.

D. Scope and Applicability

This policy generally applies to facilities that exist in urban or suburban areas, however it does not necessarily exclude rural setting; and is viewed as a network that functions in an interdependent manner.

There are many factors that must be considered when defining the facility and the degree to which this policy applies, e.g., number of lanes, design speeds, intersection spacing, medians, curb parking, etc. Therefore, the applicability of this policy, as stated, should be construed as neither comprehensive nor conclusive. Each facility must be evaluated for proper applicability.

Notwithstanding the exceptions stated herein, all transportation facilities within a growth area of a town or city funded by or through NCDOT, and planned, designed, or constructed on state maintained facilities, must adhere to this policy.

E. Approach

It is the Department's commitment to collaborate with cities, towns, and communities to ensure pedestrian, bicycle, and transit options are included as an integral part of their total transportation vision. As a partner in the development and realization of their visions, the Department desires to assist localities, through the facilitation of long-range planning, to optimize connectivity, network interdependence, context sensitive options, and multimodal alternatives.

F. Related Policies

This policy builds on current practices and encourages creativity for considering and providing multi-modal options within transportation projects, while achieving safety and efficiency.

Specific procedural guidance includes:

- Bicycle Policy (adopted April 4, 1991)
- Highway Landscape Planting Policy (dated 6/10/88)
- Board of Transportation Resolution: Bicycling & Walking in North Carolina, A Critical Part of the Transportation System (adopted September 8, 2000)
- Guidelines for Planting within Highway Right-of-Way
- Bridge Policy (March 2000)
- Pedestrian Policy Guidelines –Sidewalk Location (Memo from Larry Goode, February 15, 1995)
- Pedestrian Policy Guidelines (effective October 1, 2000 w/Memo from Len Hill, September 28, 2000)
- NCDOT Context Sensitive Solutions Goals and Working Guidelines (created 9-23-02; updated 9-8-03)

G. Exceptions to Policy

It is the Department's expectation that suitable multimodal alternatives will be incorporated in all appropriate new and improved infrastructure projects. However, exceptions to this policy will be considered where exceptional circumstances that prohibit adherence to this policy exist. Such exceptions include, but are not limited to:

- facilities that prohibit specific users by law from using them,
- areas in which the population and employment densities or level of transit service around the facility does not justify the incorporation of multimodal alternatives,

It is the Department's expectation that suitable multimodal alternatives will be incorporated as appropriate in all new and improved infrastructure projects within a growth area of a town or city.

As exceptions to policy requests are unique in nature, each will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Each exception must be approved by the Chief Deputy Secretary.

Routine maintenance projects maybe excluded from this requirement; if an appropriate source of funding is not available.

H. Planning and Design Guidelines

The Department recognizes that a well-planned and designed transportation system that is responsive to its context and meets the needs of its users is the result of thoughtful planning. The Department further recognizes the need to provide planners, designers and decision-makers with a framework for evaluating and incorporating various design elements into the planning, design, and construction phases of its transportation projects. To this end, a multi-disciplined team of stakeholders, including transportation professionals, interest groups, and others, as appropriate, will be assembled and charged with developing comprehensive planning and design guidelines to support this policy.

These guidelines will describe the project development process and incorporate transparency and accountability where it does not currently exist; describe how (from a planning and design perspective) pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and motor vehicles will share roads safely; and provide special design elements and traffic management strategies to address unique circumstances.

An expected delivery date for planning and design guidelines will be set upon adoption of this policy.

I. Policy Distribution

It is the responsibility of all employees to comply with Departmental policies. Therefore, every business unit and appropriate private service provider will be required to maintain a complete set of these policies. The Department shall periodically update departmental guidance to ensure that an accurate and up-to-date information is maintained and housed in a policy management system.