



DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

THE LAWRENCE GROUP
TOWN PLANNERS & ARCHITECTS

Acknowledgements

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We would like to thank the Town of Huntersville and the numerous citizens who participated in this exciting downtown planning process. This effort is a reflection of the community's vision and serves as the foundation for a revitalized downtown. It is intended to guide the leaders of today and the visionaries of tomorrow.

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Executive Summary

The Town of Huntersville, North Carolina is located in northern Mecklenburg County. Incorporated in 1873, the Town's early history was distinguished by its agricultural base and its rail corridor connecting Statesville to Charlotte. Huntersville's first 80 years were marked by very slow growth and development, with a 1990 US Census population of approximately 3,000. Fueled by improved accessibility to Charlotte (via new Interstate interchanges) and the draw of Lake Norman, development in the 1990's rapidly increased its population to 29,387 in 2003 (Source: NC State Data Center, 2003 Certified Municipal Population Estimates).

From September 27th-October 1st, 2004, planners and designers with The Lawrence Group, Rose & Associates, Southeast, Inc., Henson-Harrington, Inc., Arnett Muldrow, Inc. and Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc. collaborated with the Town of Huntersville to develop a vision for the Downtown area and its surroundings. The Huntersville Downtown Master Plan is the culmination of this intensive community input process. It is designed to provide a foundation for revitalization/redevelopment efforts for the historic downtown core, as well as the future development of surrounding areas.

The Downtown Huntersville Planning Area encompasses approximately 710 acres within and surrounding the downtown. The area is generally bound by Statesville Road (US 21) to the west, Mount Holly-Huntersville Road and Delwood Street to the south, the Anchor Mill site to the north and the Vermillion Neighborhood to the east. The downtown includes a mixture of retail, service, office, governmental, and residential uses. A variety of undeveloped properties and vacant lots are also scattered throughout the planning area.

The purpose of the Downtown Plan is threefold. First, the plan seeks to provide policy, programmatic, and capital investment recommendations for public buildings and infrastructure in the historic downtown. Second, it proposes a number of realistic private development opportunities specifically targeted throughout the heart of the Huntersville community which are aimed at creating a more vibrant community to engage all who visit, work, and live in this special place. Third, the Plan recommends a series of marketing and branding strategies for the promotion of the Town of Huntersville and the Downtown area.

Specific development strategies for this area include:

Transportation, Circulation & Parking

- Implement a two-way pair street system using Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Main Street for north-south traffic movement.
- In cooperation with CATS, construct the commuter transit platform on the north side of Huntersville-Concord Road.
- Adopt an Access Management Policy for the Downtown area thoroughfares.
- Construct a greenway with a trail head and park entrance to Holbrook Park from Old Statesville Road (NC 115).
- Provide on-street parallel parking where feasible.
- Strategically manage the parking lots in the southeast quadrant.
- Construct a shared-use parking deck with a minimum of 400 spaces between Maxwell Street and NC 115.

Civic Infrastructure

- Construct a Civic Plaza adjacent to Town Hall.
- Investigate expansion options for the Town Hall and the Police Station.
- Develop Arts and Cultural Center building as an integral part of the Civic Plaza.
- Redevelop the existing Farmer's Market into the Grower's Market at Garden Hall.
- Encourage the improvement of the American Legion building and construct a Veteran's Memorial between it and the Garden Hall.
- Install new streetscape elements along Gilead Road including decorative lighting (with banner arms), street trees, bike lanes, and wider sidewalks

Private Development/Redevelopment

- Encourage the expansion of the Garden Gate Bed and Breakfast Inn.
- Encourage the exterior renovation of Cashion's Convenience Store.
- Encourage sensitive redevelopment/infill through design guidelines that maintain the urbanism of the Downtown while permitting new/modern architectural styles.
- Encourage the construction of Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) on the Anchor mill site
- Rezone the old mill village to encourage high quality urban infill
- Permit and encourage infill development consistent with this Master Plan

Marketing & Branding Strategies

- Adopt a "popular" logo for marketing and branding.
- Form a Huntersville Downtown Business Association.
- Implement a Comprehensive Wayfinding System.

Executive Summary

PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENT

Single Family	72 Units
Duplex	94 Units
Townhome	173 Units
Quadruplex/Apartment/Condo	465 Units
Senior Housing/Assisted Living	100 Units
Office	285,425 sf
Retail	212,800 sf
Civic	59,000 sf
Other	13,000 sf

The Downtown Master Plan is intended to establish a clear framework for the revitalization of Downtown Huntersville through a series of incremental private and public development decisions. Future development decisions must be carefully guided by the Town of Huntersville's staff, Planning Board, and Town Board to ensure that this vision is implemented.

Most importantly, it must be stressed that the Downtown Master Plan represents the *conceptual* build-out of the planning area. The recommendations set forth in this document are suggestions intended to guide the Town of Huntersville in realizing the potential for development throughout this area. Patience will be necessary as components of this plan may exceed fifteen to twenty (15-20) years before their realization.



Conceptual Downtown Master Plan

Previous Planning Efforts

In an attempt to lead development efforts in the historic downtown area, the Town of Huntersville has been the key developer over the past decade. The Town Hall (1997), Police Station (1997) and the Farmer's Market (1999) demonstrate the Town's resolve in maintaining downtown's important role in the area. In addition to those public improvements, a number of studies have been completed by the Town, private developers, and related public agencies in attempts to guide future growth and redevelopment. The following is a summary of those planning efforts.

DPZ-Vermillion Master Plan (1996)

As part of the master planning process for the Vermillion neighborhood, its designers, Duany Plater-Zyberk and Company extended their study area to encompass the core. The purpose of the study was to demonstrate the potential replatting of the mill neighborhood in relation to the new neighborhood; the creation of a public square where Cashion's convenience store resides, and to reconcile the inefficient parking arrangement.

This design exercise was the first to suggest significant redevelopment potential in the Downtown area along with a significant public space.

NCDDA (1997)

The North Carolina Downtown Development Association (NCDDA) study focused on implementing the “Main Street Approach” as defined by the National Main Street Center and Main Street North Carolina programs. The four point approach for downtown revitalization includes Organization, Promotion, Design and Economic Restructuring.

The study identified Town Hall, Police Station, Huntersville Elementary School and Holbrook Park as obvious major assets to the Downtown. Another recommendation included keeping the new

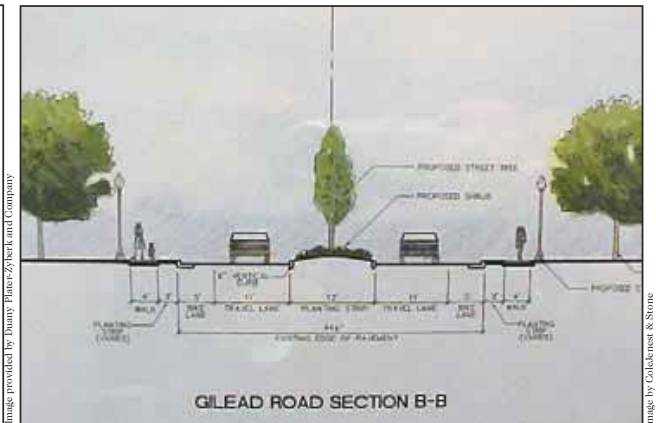


1996 DPZ Plan showing downtown redevelopment opportunities

car dealer and the library in downtown, both of which have since moved out to the interstate area.

Additional major recommendations include:

- Building consensus;
- Determine some immediate project for positive impact;
- Define the image of downtown for marketing; create a sense of place;
- Increase parking;
- Improve building appearance;
- Retain and diversify the business mix;
- The redevelopment of the Anchor Mill site;
- Expand supply of affordable housing;
- Expand the supply of commercial space.



1999 Gilead Road Corridor Streetscape Improvements

ColeJenest and Stone-Gilead Road Streetscape Plan (1999)

In 1999, Cole Jensen and Stone was hired by the Town to study the Gilead Road corridor and made recommendations for streetscape improvements. The study recognized that Gilead Road plays a significant role in the impression of the town as its “entranceway.” The key recommendations focused on softening the visual impact of the overhead power lines with enhanced landscaping and a coordinated streetscape.

The streetscape improvements included:

- An entry feature at Gilead Road and Statesville Road (US 21);
- Adding a landscaped median on Gilead Road from the Post Office to Huntersville Elementary School;

Previous Planning Efforts

- Enhanced streetscape from the Police Station to Main Street.

Roadway improvement recommendations included:

- Left turn signals at Old Statesville Road(NC 115) and Statesville Road (US 21);
- Reduction of the speed limit to 25 miles per hour;
- Improved access to the shopping center on US 21.

In addition, the study also recommended bringing oversized signs in compliance with the current sign ordinance. The scope of this particular study was for the Gilead Road corridor only and did not expand to the entire Downtown area.

DPZ-Anchor Mill Master Plan (1999)

Following the purchase of the Anchor Mill site by the Town, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued for development proposals. They chose to proceed with a development plan with the development team consisting of Nate Bowman, David Rodgers and Duany Plater-Zyberk and Company.

DPZ held a charrette in late 1999 and focused completely on the Anchor Mill site and its redevelopment as a transit oriented development. This plan proposed a fully integrated mixed-use development with a combination of recreational amenities, multi-family housing types, civic spaces, office and retail services.

The plan called for the preservation and renovation of the mill building as offices and loft apartments. The remainder of the site would then be developed using an urban block pattern with courtyards, interior parking and buildings fronting the street.



1999 DPZ Plan for Anchor Mill site

Ultimately, the development proposal was rejected by the Town Board. (Note: Since that time, the original Mill burned beyond salvage and is scheduled for demolition. The Town has proceeded with environmental remediation and site clearing with the anticipation of releasing another development proposal RFP)

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 in 2000. Huntersville was one of eleven communities nationwide participating in this study. Within the context of this study came four major recommendations:

- Enhance the office, retail and housing market opportunities;

- Convert homes along Old Statesville Road to office use;
- Anchor Mill site redevelopment;
- Establish a course of action to include business retention and recruitment, real estate development, public improvements, traffic & parking improvements and marketing.

Narmour Wright (2004)

Narmour-Wright was commissioned by the Town to complete a space needs analysis of all Town buildings. The study identified the need for the significant expansion of both the Town Hall and the Police Station. As of the date of the charrette for the Downtown Master Plan, this study was being finalized by the Town staff.

Existing Conditions

The Downtown Huntersville Study Area encompasses approximately 710 acres within 1/2 mile of the intersection of Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Huntersville-Concord Road. The area is generally bound by Statesville Road (US 21) to the west, Mount Holly- Huntersville Road and Delwood Street to the south, the Anchor Mill site to the north and the Vermillion Neighborhood to the east.

The Town of Huntersville is bisected by Interstate 77 and has two interchanges - one at Gilead Road (Exit 23) and one at Sam Furr Road/NC 73 (Exit 25). The study area lies in the southeastern quadrant of the Town of Huntersville with Gilead Road serving as its east-west spine.

While the area to the north, south, and west of the study area has become urbanized, the area to the east has remained largely rural. This was historically due to the absence of public sewer. However, a new sewer outfall line along the Rocky River basin has extended sewer into this area from the Rocky River water treatment plant in Concord.

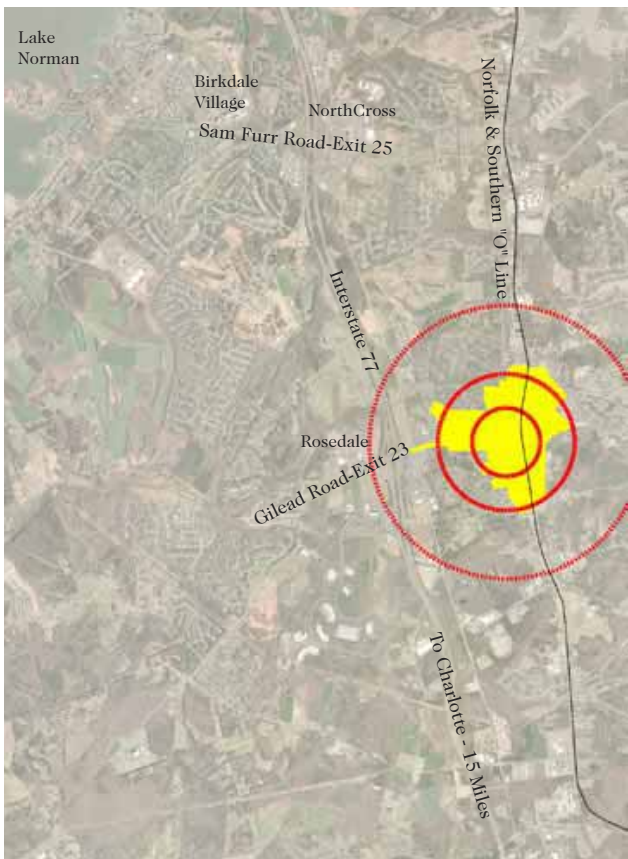
Zoning

The majority of the Downtown Huntersville Planning Area is within the Town Center (TC) and Neighborhood Residential (NR) zoning districts. Additional zoning classifications include Highway Commercial (HC) in the area of the Post Office / US 21 and Neighborhood Commercial (NC) at the intersection of Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road and Old Statesville Road (NC 115).

The Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) Overlay is on the eastern edge of the study area incorporating the Vermillion neighborhood. The Manufactured Home (MHO) Overlay is placed over the former mill village area. Lastly, a group home facility off Church Street is subject to an approved Conditional District (CD) Overlay.

Rail Corridor

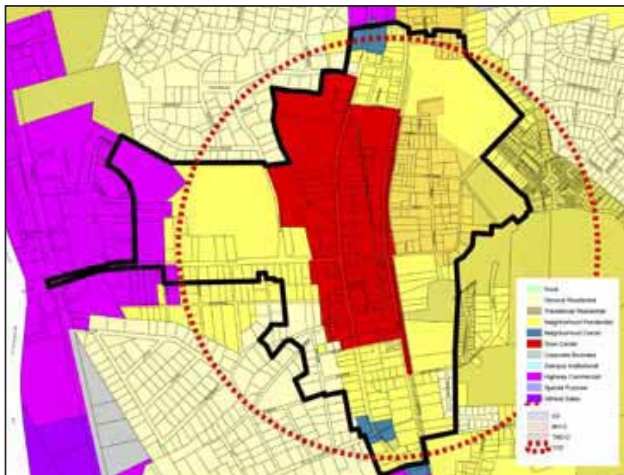
The study area includes the Norfolk & Southern "O" line rail corridor which parallels Old Statesville Road (NC 115) along its route through the Town. Current operations along this single-track corridor are limited to one freight train per day. This underutilized corridor is being



Regional Map of Huntersville
(Note: The rings represent 1/4, 1/2, and 1 mile from the center of the study area)



View from the Norfolk & Southern "O" line track down Main Street



Existing Zoning Map



Existing Conditions

considered for commuter rail operations by the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS).

A Major Investment Study (MIS) was completed in 2003 identifying this corridor for commuter rail service along with Enhanced Bus or Bus Rapid Transit in the I-77 corridor. The MIS identified one station location for the Downtown area, but did not specify an exact location. Preliminary Engineering (PE) for the corridor commenced in Fall, 2004 and is expected to take approximately 2 years to complete. Once this phase is complete, CATS can then begin to negotiate with the Federal Transit Administration for full-funding agreements. Revenue service for the commuter rail service is expected to begin no earlier than 2008.

Environmental Features

Two stream corridors enter the study area. To the northwest is the Torrence Creek Tributary #2. This creek heads southwest into Torrence Creek, eventually merging with the Catawba River at Mountain Island Lake. Portions of this stream corridor have constructed or planned stream greenway paths. The South Prong of Clark Creek meanders through the Vermillion neighborhood and eventually ties into the Rocky River further east.

Though neither of the creeks in the study area is located within a 100 year floodplain they are both subject to the stream buffer requirements of the Town of Huntersville. These requirements, at a minimum, preclude most land disturbing activities within 50 feet of their stream banks.

Historic Resources

While there are no historic landmarks located within the study area, there are a number of properties with potentially eligible structures. The map to the far right on this page shows those properties that contain structures that are at least 50 years old. These range from historic homes such as the Holbrook House to the old "College" building located on the Elementary School property.

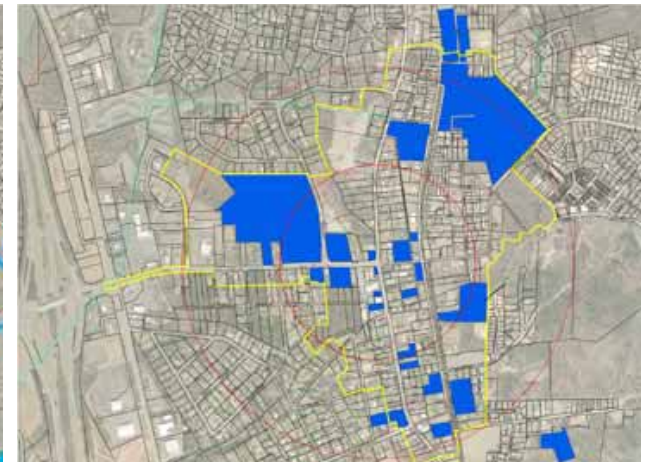


Map of Stream Corridors
(Source: Mecklenburg County GIS)

Recreational Areas

There is no central gathering space for residents and visitors to enjoy within the study area. The Farmer's Market area, with the pavilion and caboose has loosely served this purpose, though it is visually and physically removed from the traffic and retail area.

Across Old Statesville Road (NC 115) from Town Hall and behind the Police Station lies Holbrook Park, a seven (7) acre park complete with picnic tables, gazebo, playground, six (6) tennis courts and benches. A small creek traverses the park, which is proposed to connect to the Town's greenway system in the future.



Map of Potential Historic Resources
(Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Landmarks Commission)

Civic Buildings

The following municipal buildings are located in the Downtown area:

- Town Hall (~8,000 sf)
- Police Station (~8,000 sf)
- Fire Department (~10,000 sf)
- Arts and Cultural Center (~2,200 sf)

The Parks and Recreation Department have two storage buildings located between the caboose and the American Legion building, in addition to their present use of the "Old Jail" on Huntersville-Concord Road, just east of Church Street.

Existing Conditions

Parking

Throughout the Downtown and adjacent areas, public parking is available, although scattered and difficult to find. The Town Hall parking lot is undersized and fills quickly. The Arts and Cultural Center (former Library) lot is somewhat hidden and the public is not encouraged to park there. On-street parallel parking currently exists along Main Street adjacent to the Farmer's Market, with diagonal parking along Main Street at the block of buildings between Huntersville-Concord Road and Greenway Street. Individual businesses maintain private parking lots.

The current private lots in the southeast corner of the Old Statesville Road (NC 115)/Gilead Road intersection are fragmented. The current owners are burdened with public activities such as Town Board meetings that overflow parking directly across the street. Few of the parking lots are connected or lit.

Built Environment

The study area is very typical of small, rail stop communities. Corridors of large single-family homes form gateways into a small historic core of shopfront buildings.

The approach into the Downtown from the Interstate along Gilead Road presents historic housing with generous setbacks. On the north side is the recently expanded Huntersville Elementary School. Many of the current residential structures have already been converted to non-residential uses including office, retail, and civic functions.

As you approach the core the Police Station and the Town Hall emerge as significant architectural features in this area. Between the two buildings is a Cashion's gas station and convenience store. This metal building serves an essential community need and remains quite busy throughout the day. The downtown core includes a mixture of retail, service, office, governmental, and residential uses.

Across from Town Hall are a number of single-story buildings, one of which houses Lupie's, a favorite family restaurant. To the east of Town Hall is the historic Holbrook House, home to Mama Mia's Too, a well-regarded Italian restaurant.

Proceeding east on Gilead Road at the railroad tracks there is one block of historic buildings along Main Street to the south which has several businesses including Grayson's Tavern and a hispanic store. To the north is the location of the Farmer's Market shelter and caboose.

Across the tracks is the former mill village. East of Church Street is a seven block area that currently has single family homes, manufactured homes, a small church and an electric substation. Based on the tax records, there is a high percentage of rental housing in this area.

The former Anchor Mill site is just north of the mill village. This 30.5 acre site has several dilapidated buildings due largely to a recent fire. They are scheduled for demolition in Winter, 2004.



Huntersville Fire Station #1



Garden Gate Bed & Breakfast



Looking north along Maxwell Street



Anchor Mill property



Looking south along Old Statesville Road (NC 115)



Historic Holbrook House (Mama Mia's Too Restaurant)

Development Evaluation

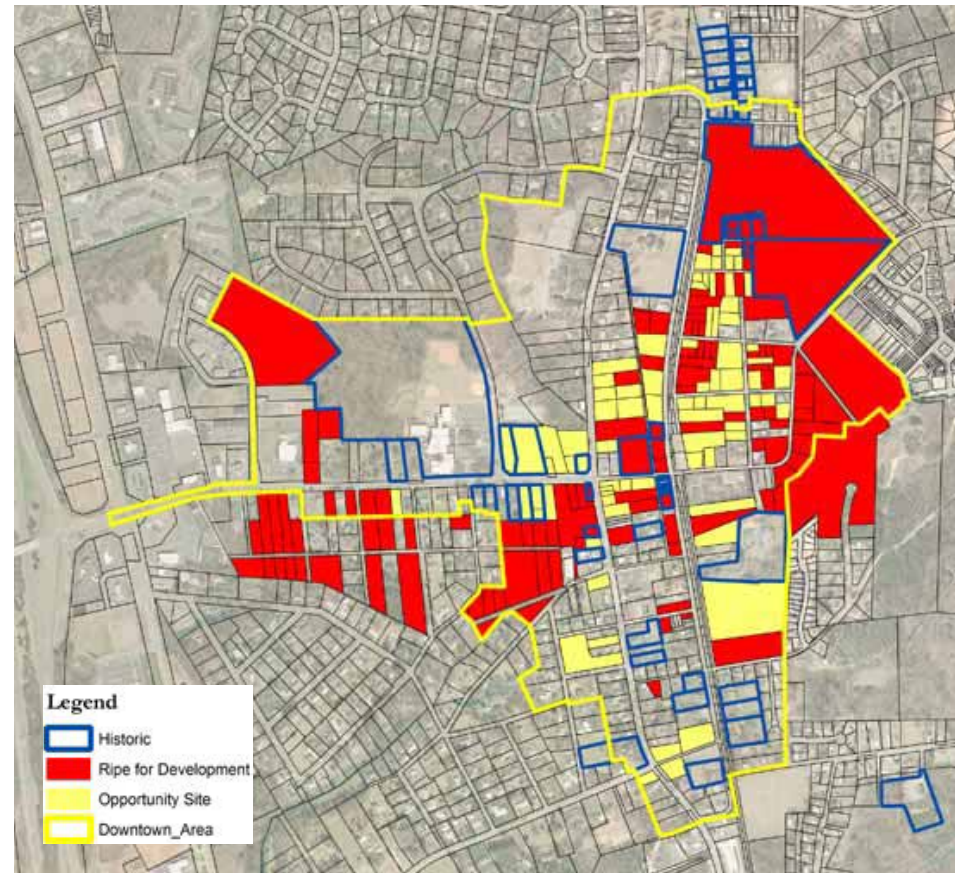
Prior to the completion of any design work, a “ripe and firm” analysis was completed for all of the properties in the Downtown Planning Area. “Firm” properties are those that are generally in their final building / use pattern, and are also reflected as the “highest and best use” by the real estate and appraisal community. Once determined, little change is recommended to them.

Properties that are determined to be “ripe” for development / redevelopment include those that are currently undeveloped, under-developed (additional development opportunities exist on the property including expansion of existing buildings and new construction), or can be redeveloped (such as an old, vacant shopping center).

This type of analysis is necessary to identify both “sacred cows,” those properties that should be left alone, and development opportunities. While most development possibilities were identified through a combination of a windshield survey and a walking survey, some properties were classified after interviews with the property owner.

The adjacent map (along with an example) shown on this page indicates a significant number of properties that are ripe for development/redevelopment within the downtown.

Additionally, charrette participation by those who owned or leased property within the planning area is important and was tracked as part of the planning and design process.



"Ripe" property



"Firm" property

Ripe and Firm analysis map

Public Design Charrette

A 5 day planning and design charrette was used to guide the Downtown Planning Process. This effort began with a kickoff meeting on August 31st consisting of an opening presentation and an interactive workshop.

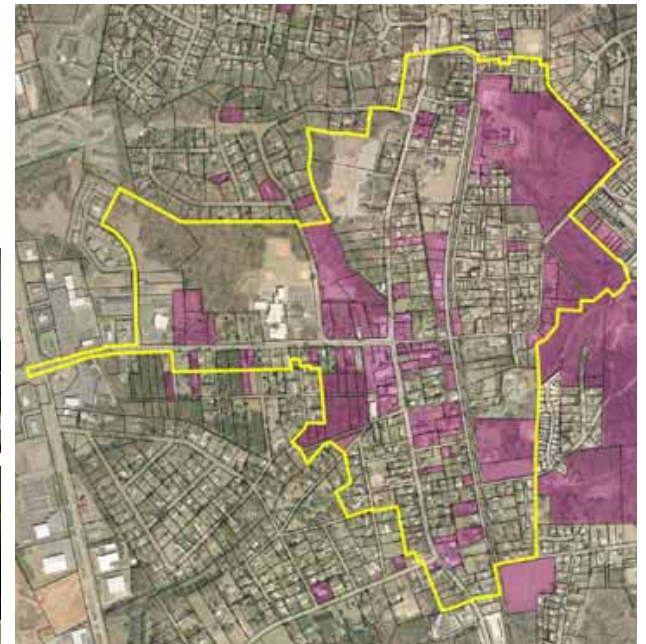
Following the kickoff meeting, a publicly driven design charrette was held from September 27-October 1, 2004 at the Huntersville Town Hall. A temporary design studio was set up in Town Hall complete with design tables, meeting areas, computer equipment, and a presentation area. Numerous citizens and public officials attended this comprehensive workshop during the five day period. Throughout the week, meet-

ings were held to discuss various topics related to the area's future including downtown retailing, signage, transportation, and parking.

The charrette concluded on Tuesday evening, October 5th with a full digital presentation of the plan's recommendations. This vision, intended to guide the area's future growth, is based on the consensus gained by the area's interested citizens, the Town of Huntersville, and The Lawrence Group.

Monday 9/27/2004	Tuesday 9/28/2004	Wednesday 9/29/2004	Thursday 9/30/2004	Friday 10/1/2004	Tuesday 10/5/2004
8:00 Breakfast	8:00 Breakfast	8:00 Breakfast	8:00 Breakfast	8:00 Breakfast	
9:00 Design Studio Setup and Tour of Study Area	9:00 Business Owners	9:00 Area Developers	9:00 PLANNING & DESIGN	9:00 PLANNING & DESIGN	
11:00 Utilities	10:00 Major Property Owners	11:00 Streetscaping & Signage			
12:00 DDA/Econ. Dev. Lunch and Market Study Overview	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
1:00 Transportation & Parking	1:00 Arts & Recreation	1:00 Design Standards & Codes	1:00 PLANNING & DESIGN	1:00 Close-Up Studio and Prepare Final Presentation	
	3:00 Public Safety	Hold for Additional Meetings			
5:00 Dinner with Committee & Elected/App't'd Officials	5:30 Pin-Up Session and Project Update	5:30 Pin-Up Session and Project Update	5:30 Pin-Up Session and Project Update	5:30 Pin-Up Session and Project Update	
6:00	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner		
7:00 Opening Presentation and Facilitated Design Session	7:00 Interested Residents and Citizens	7:00 Interested Residents & Citizens	7:00 Interested Residents & Citizens		7:00 Closing Presentation

Charrette Schedule



Charrette participation map



Citizen Input

Public input was an integral part of the planning process in developing a realistic revitalization plan for Downtown Huntersville. Throughout the 5 day charrette, residents, business owners, property owners, developers, economic development officials, government agencies, and community groups shared their thoughts and visions about the revitalization of this area. Numerous opportunities for public participation were available through small group meetings, individual conferences, and a questionnaire prepared by The Lawrence Group.

Charrette participants identified a number of very important issues relevant to the planning process. These topics were carefully reviewed by the planning team, as they served as a foundation for the Huntersville Downtown Master Plan. The following is a summary of the issues and concerns identified throughout the charrette by the area's citizens, government agencies, and stakeholder groups (not listed in any particular order):

- No activity / lack of synergy
- Lack of image / aesthetics
- Overhead power lines
- Greater variety of tenants throughout downtown
- Parking and traffic
- Lack of central gathering space
- Competition of Interstate area retail
- Not pedestrian friendly

The following is a summary of the positive aspects identified throughout the charrette by the area's citizens, government agencies, and stakeholder groups (not listed in any particular order):

- Good proximity and access to thoroughfares
- Public / Civic buildings and parks
- Local restaurants

Participants were encouraged to respond to a design charrette questionnaire. The information below summarizes the charrette participants' responses to what was needed or added to Downtown.

- Numerous participants lived, worked, or owned property throughout the study area.
- Respondents described the business district needing a direct connection to open space / parks and a cultural facility or gathering place, such as an amphitheatre or green. Many commented that the business district lacks basic services such as a grocery store and entertainment / restaurants, as well as a night life. Downtown Huntersville was also described as being void of both an identity and a significant attraction.
- Downtown business patrons commented that they are attracted by the "local" stores and restaurants. Participants mentioned specific uses that Downtown needs, such as coffee shops or a book store. A variety of respondents noted they do not patronize the downtown as much as they would like due to the limited parking and traffic circulation.
- Participants commented they would like to see more mixed-use development integrated into Downtown. Many envisioned Downtown becoming the center of many centers and becoming a destination. Additionally, participants desired to see a variety of housing choices for a range

The following are key images of Huntersville identified by the area's citizens



Token Hall



Birkdale Village



Latta Plantation

of income levels.

- Charrette participants identified the North Carolina communities of Cornelius, SouthEnd Charlotte, Davidson, as well as Alexandria, Virginia as existing developments which should be examined as models for development.

Table Questions

1. Where do you live? Do you own property or a business in the study area? (Note: Don't forget to color in your property at the front table)
2. Please try to describe the **negative** aspects of the downtown area in short phrase (2-3 words).
3. Please try to describe the **positive** aspects of the downtown area in short phrase (2-3 words).
4. What is missing that could be added to the downtown area?
5. If you could send a postcard of Huntersville to a friend who hasn't been here, what would it say? What pictures would be on it?
5. What other place(s) might serve as a good model for the Town the Town?

Questionnaire distributed during the charrette

Market Analysis

A detailed market analysis was performed by Rose & Associates, Southeast, Inc. to evaluate the physical, legal, and economic feasibility for future development activities throughout downtown Huntersville. Over the past few years, the Town has enjoyed sustained prosperity and growth. Located in Mecklenburg County, Huntersville benefits from its proximity to the Charlotte Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which has also experienced both population and income growth.

Throughout Huntersville and the surrounding area, population and job growth in the non-manufacturing sectors has increased substantially, demonstrating its position as a diverse non-manufacturing (service) oriented economy. As a result, white collar job growth, population growth, and increased household income have occurred. These factors, coupled with a quality of life that has attracted young families and professionals, directly relates to real estate demand which includes residential housing (a variety of types/styles) and commercial (office, service, and retail).

Like many small towns and cities, the Huntersville central business district has evolved over time and is somewhat concentrated, but still scattered along the primary corridor of Old Statesville Road. Local neighborhood shopping is available, while regional shopping centers remains at the interstate interchanges and/or the major arteries.

Market Competition

In examining the market opportunities for the Town of Huntersville, an economic scan of the region was performed. The primary economic sectors providing employment in the Charlotte / Mecklenburg region include financial institutions, healthcare, energy, and retail. The market opportunities for Huntersville should be viewed from a macro to micro view. Of the largest employers in the region, most are located in the City of Charlotte and include, Wachovia, Bank of America, Carolinas Health Care, Duke Energy, Delhaize America/Food Lion, Ruddick Corp/Harris Teeter, Wal-Mart stores and USAirways Group.

According to the *Annual Market Forecast* compiled by the North Carolina CCIM Chapter and Carolinas Real Data, the various market segments performed as follows in 2004:

Office

The Charlotte North office submarket experienced a 18.6% vacancy rate in the second quarter of 2004, which is trending higher over prior years. Office rents averaged \$18.00 per square foot, which is on par with market averages.

Warehouse

The warehouse market experienced an 12% vacancy rate in 2004 with rents averaging \$3.50 per square foot. This rate is a reflection of the submarket, with an overall market vacancy rate of over 20%.

Retail

There was below 5% retail vacancy rate in 2004. This is consistent with the overall market, with rents averaging \$21.00 per square foot.

Clearly, the healthiest sector is in retail, which is a result of the low interest rates and mounting consumer debt. However, rising unemployment rates account for the climbing vacancies in the office and industrial sectors, largely attributable to the economic cycle. Lastly, the apartment submarket enjoys fairly stable vacancy and rental rates compared to the remainder of the market.

The largest segment of the market is in retail, with a number of shopping venues along the primary the Interstate 77 interchanges exits 23 and 25, which hosts an array of local, regional, and national retailers and restaurants. Combined, these centers total approximately 1,284,000 square feet.

DOWNTOWN HUNTERSVILLE 2003 DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

	1 Mile	3 Miles	5 Miles
Population			
Total Population	4,920	21,459	48,087
Median Age	34.3	34.4	34.3
Income			
Median HH Income	\$49,373	\$72,657	\$76,885
Per Capita Income	\$22,831	\$29,464	\$32,397
Average HH Income	\$57,619	\$80,121	\$86,852
Households (HH)			
Total HH	1,887	7,668	17,975
Average HH Size	2.46	2.69	2.66
Owner Occupied	52.3%	71.2%	77.0%
Renter Occupied	40.2%	22.1%	16.0%
Vacant	7.5%	6.7%	7.0%
Race			
White	80.1%	87.4%	84.8%
Black	13.5%	8.3%	10.9%
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%
Asian/Pacific Isle.	1.4%	1.4%	1.9%
Other	2.7%	1.3%	1.0%
Ethnicity			
Hispanic	9.3%	5.3%	4.4%
Non-Hispanic	90.7%	94.7%	95.6%
Employment			
Employees	1,655	8,401	22,499
Employed*	97.7%	97.6%	97.3%
Unemployed*	2.3%	2.3%	2.6%
Not in Labor Force*	1,188	3,804	7,852
Armed Forces*	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, Experian/Applied Geographic Solutions, STDB online, and CCIM based on current year estimates. Race figures may not total 100% based on race and ethnicity reporting.
* Numbers based on 2000 Census.

Market Analysis

Area retail centers include:

Name	Location	Size
Huntersville Shopping Center	Statesville Road (US21) at I-77 Exit 23	98,000 sf
Rosedale Commons	Gilead Road at I-77 Exit 23	150,000 sf
North Cross Shopping Center	Sam Furr Road at I-77 Exit 25	750,000 sf
Birkdale Village	Highway 73 at I-77 Exit 25	286,000 sf

Socio-Economic Considerations

Feedback from civic leaders, government representatives, and residents suggest that the community embraces its historical roots, quality of life, and small town/rural character, typically found in suburban towns. The challenge is to establish the town's identity as the community grows and to create a "sense of place" within the downtown of the Town that has developed in a sprawling fashion along its commercial corridors over time.

Market Use Analysis

Based upon preliminary findings, we determined that the Huntersville market will continue to evolve from a suburban "bedroom" community, with the primary job base residing in the greater Mecklenburg County (Charlotte) area, to establishing its own economic base in the Professional Service Sector. This will be largely due to the Huntersville Business Park and Hospital on the west side of Gilead Road (Exit 23) across Interstate 77 from the Downtown study area.

Employment within the community will continue to be primarily "non-basic" or service related jobs such as retail, professional, etc. However, job growth in basic employment, together with transportation planning issues will provide future opportunities for economic development and job growth in basic categories that will create demand for office space. As a result of the multiplier effect of this growth, additional residential housing, retail and other support uses would follow. As such, the following are uses that should be considered during the charrette process:

Office/Retail

A mix of office & retail, with massing to include larger buildings and density near I-77, transitioning to smaller, residential/pedestrian scale buildings along the corridor, then again transitioning into a core (higher density) downtown historic district. This space should be between 3,000 – 15,000 square feet, in buildings from 1-4 stories.

Multifamily Residential

Consider two areas with a density in a range between 10-16 units per acre. The first area could be around the I-77 interchange at exit 23, and the other in the Downtown Core (near transportation centers). A mix of residential, in all market segments (affordable to luxury, in both rental and for-sale housing) should be considered. Attractive apartments and/or townhomes would provide harmony with the adjacent single family neighborhoods and an appropriate transition from the commercial uses and interstate. Careful attention should be given to creating pedestrian and vehicular connections to the adjacent commercial uses, and downtown.

Public Space

There is an opportunity to create an attractive public space in the downtown core for social gatherings which residents, and the adjacent neighborhoods, might also enjoy. This would include an outdoor venue to accommodate larger events and the Farmers Market.

Careful attention should be given to creating an attractive streetscape leading from the Interstate to the downtown area, including sidewalks, street trees and lighting as a critical design element, as well as landscaping and signage guidelines, so as to create an identity for the Historic Downtown area. Integration with the transportation corridor along the railroad stops (if any) should be considered.

The goal would be to provide a destination for a more unique, intimate experience – an inviting and interesting place for patients, families, workers, and others who might be drawn to the regional "centers of influence" that exist west of the I-77 interchange at Exit 23.

Potential Development Constraints

During the charrette, two underlying areas became part of the discussion – Structural and Nonstructural.

Structural deficiencies include those areas requiring attention such as signage, streetscapes and parking – all tangible items which are addressed in the final reports from the planning and transportation team members (The Lawrence Group & Kimley Horn). Nonstructural deficiencies include marketing, and non-tangible areas that make up the "culture" of a community, in other words, how the community leaders, business owners and residents perceive and communicate who/what Huntersville is about.

As part of this process, two areas may require additional effort – things to come downtown to "buy" or goods/retail missing; and things to come downtown to "do" or public gatherings/events. With Structural changes, and the continued renovation and/or new construction, additional space can provide opportunities for added business operations.

The underlying zoning and regulatory structure must also support these concepts, along with a mix of uses. While the community leaders perceive there to be a pro-business environment to encourage downtown growth and development, the supporting processes (ie; planning, zoning, inspection) should be streamlined to support that goal.

Non-structural changes include recruitment and retention efforts to bring both retailers and people (via events) together. This would include cooperative marketing plans with downtown businesses and civic leaders, with the assistance of an advertising/marketing professional.

This will allow the downtown to "brand" itself with an identity and purpose, which then can be communicated effectively to Huntersville residents, nonresidents and visitors. When structure is created/improved with streetscapes, signage and parking, combined with a mix of public and/or cultural events, the result brings people to the community to enjoy both. This "destination" for such places to "go buy" and "go do" has evolved into what industry analysts call Lifestyle Communities. In creating new mixed-use communities and the redevelopment of older



Market Analysis

downtowns and cities, this combination creates a sense of place where people will be drawn to visit.

Huntersville is included in the service area for the Lake Norman Chamber of Commerce, an organization with approximately 500 members; the Visitors Bureau, and the recently formed Economic Development initiative. A unique opportunity presents itself to bring these stakeholders together in a cooperative effort for marketing and promoting the downtown.

Previous Economic Study Review

Review of the “Huntersville Downtown Action Agenda 2000” prepared by Hyett Palma offers some insight as to the wishes of the community to support small business uses. However, with any community, its responsibility lies not in business counseling, but providing the infrastructure for small business to succeed. A fair amount of data was provided in the report, in which the town might engage the assistance of a consultant in interpreting that data. Data without understanding or a plan will not result in action. There were a number of ideas for both goods and services – largely in the food & beverage categories (restaurants, specialty goods/services).

Market Niches / Development Opportunities

Public and Civic

Limited gathering places currently exist in downtown for large groups involving live music, arts, and other events. The community should commit to the creation of a central downtown park/public space to accommodate 200+ people. The Downtown Plan considers the addition of such civic spaces such as Grower's Market and new Town Plaza between Town Hall and the Holbrook House. Streetscape improvements, sidewalks, and public benches are recommended to encourage visitors to stroll and linger throughout the downtown.

The commuter rail line between Charlotte and Mooresville is being planned, which includes a proposed station in Downtown Huntersville. This excellent opportunity will provide an important

catalyst for development in the Downtown area close to the proposed platform on Main Street and Huntersville Concord Road. The combination of these civic improvements within a close proximity to each other transforms Downtown Huntersville into an active town center.

Residential

All vibrant downtown locations include a resident population to patronize local shopping and events. An increase in residential population is recommended together with an opportunity for affordable/moderate income housing to bring additional people and diversity to the downtown area. The Downtown Plan considers an additional 638 attached housing units (apartments, lofts, condominiums, and townhomes) for lease and/or for sale and 166 detached housing (duplex and single family) units. Higher density residential development near the proposed commuter rail platform is preferred and indeed supportive of such a use.

Entertainment and Recreation

Incorporation of additional retail into the heart of the community includes restaurants and other civic/public venues for events/cultural activities. Consider the design of new Town Plaza doubling as public parking areas and alternative uses such as fairs, seasonal concerts, or other events.

Holbrook Park, which lies between Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Sherwood Drive includes six (6) tennis courts, playground, swings, restrooms, covered picnic shelter and a stream. However there is no access or visible sign from Old Statesville Road that a park even exists. The town should open access to the park from Old Statesville Road with a marked entrance and path, potentially using an historic stone wall on the adjacent property as a feature and incorporate the stream basin as part of an overall greenway system.

Retail

The Town of Huntersville should encourage retail and service oriented development to support the ridership of the commuter transit and the residents. The continued improvement and expansion of small, locally owned boutique shops and restaurants along the Main Street and Gilead Road / Huntersville Concord Road corridors. A key site is the corner of Gilead Road and Old Statesville Road (NC 115). This site is ideal for a small specialty grocer or full service drug store in an identifiable building across from Town Hall (a landmark building). This combined with a new roof and canopy at Cashion's Store and the existing Lupie's Restaurant anchors the corner as one of importance in the community.

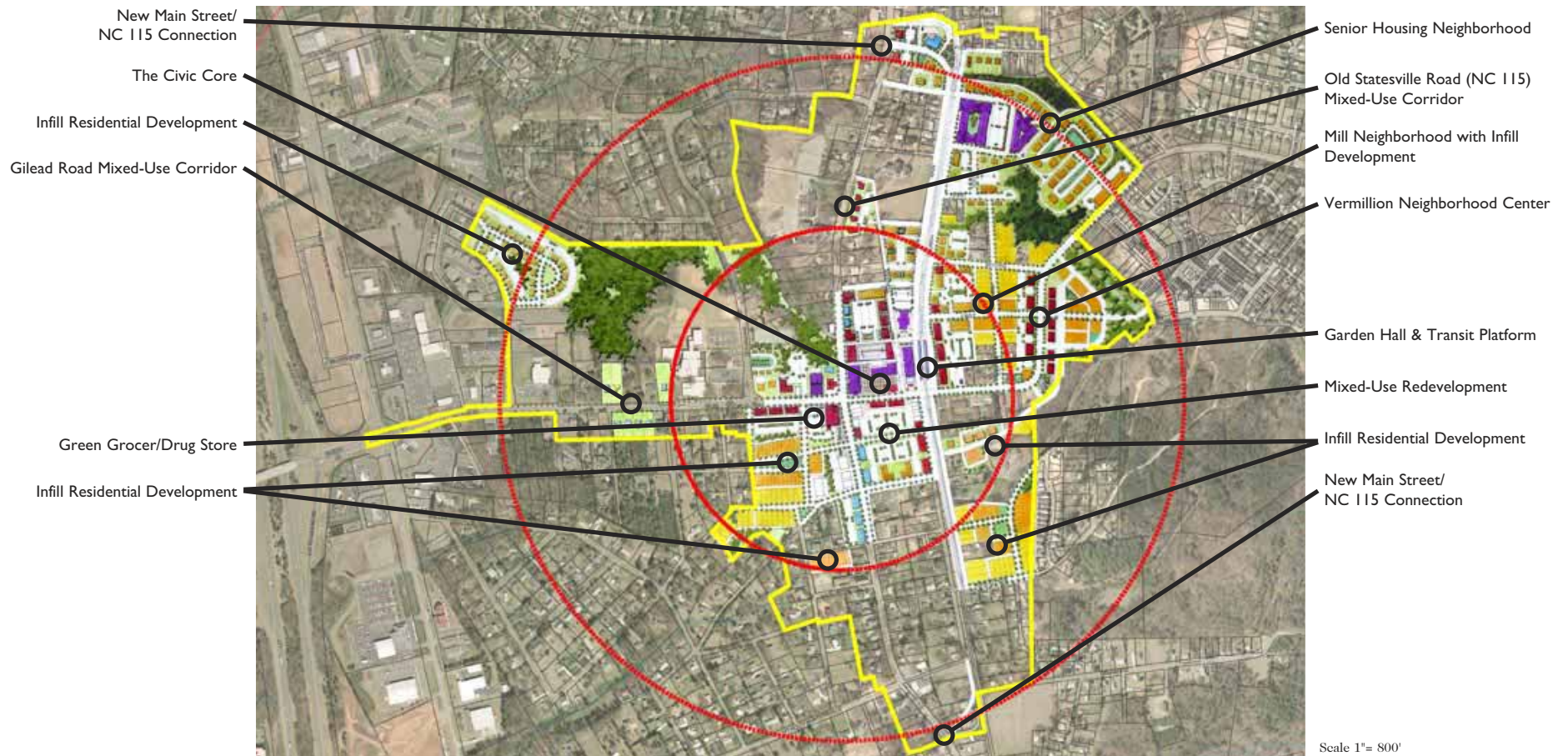
At build-out, the Downtown Plan envisions approximately 180,950 square feet of new retail opportunities within downtown. While retailers look at a variety of factors, including demographics, when siting a new location, the density of development and the volume of the number of existing and/or proposed retail tenants are considered to be most significant.

Office/Industrial

No industrial space is recommended; however, a flexible mix of office space is suggested for small, locally owned service businesses throughout Downtown. This would include Class A professional office space in a two-story building and the conversion of homes primarily along Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Gilead Road into offices, with new buildings maintaining a similar scale, setback and massing for a more cohesive mixture. The demand for this use will grow with economic expansion. Therefore, upon build-out of The Downtown Plan, approximately 208,400 square feet of office space is recommended.

The Conceptual Plan

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Transportation & Circulation

Note: This Section was adapted from a report by Kimley-Horn and Associates as a supplement to this Plan.

A key component of the Huntersville Downtown Master Plan included an analysis of existing transportation conditions, as well as a series of circulation and parking recommendations specifically targeted for Downtown Huntersville. The following is an overview and recommendations for improvements:

Existing Conditions

Gilead Road is the primary entrance to Downtown Huntersville from the west. This major east-west corridor has a direction connection to Interstate 77 interchange via Exit 23. Present traffic volume is 6,500 vehicles per day (vpd) per the North Carolina Department of Transportation, for the portion within the study area.

Old Statesville Road (NC 115) is the major north-south corridor through the study area and is a major route for commuters working in Charlotte. Today's traffic volumes are 13,000 vpd within the study area for this route.

Recognizing the central prominence of the NC 115 and Gilead Road intersection within the study area, the design team focused the transportation analysis at that location as well as the Ramah Church Road at NC 115 intersection to the north, the Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road at NC 115 intersection to the south, and the Gilead Road at US 21 intersection to the west.

With regard to the Norfolk-Southern railroad, one (1) freight train travels through the Town of Huntersville daily. As noted earlier, commuter transit rail service is being studied for implementation between Charlotte and Mooresville, with a stop to be located in Huntersville. The likelihood of commuter transit rail along this corridor is recognized of becoming a reality within the next 7 to 10 years.

Based on capacity analysis, the intersections of Gilead Road / NC 115 and Gilead Road / US 21 are currently operating at an unacceptable level of service during peak periods in the morning and evening.

Although the westbound approach at Ramah Church Road / NC 115 exhibits a high delay during both peak periods, it is typical for the minor street at unsignalized intersections to operate with long delays due to the left-turning movements. The eastbound approach at Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road / NC 115 also experiences delay. The design team looked at the existing conditions and how any changes in roadway design, growth and development would perform in the year 2015.

Roadway Improvements Studied

Gilead Road / NC 115

In an effort to improve operations at this intersection while minimizing the impact to existing infrastructure, left turn lanes were analyzed on all approaches. An interim solution would add dedicated left turn lane on the westbound and north bound approaches. Currently, only the southbound and eastbound approaches have dedicated left-turn lanes. Study shows that the addition of these dedicated turn lanes, the intersections operates at an acceptable level, albeit barely.

While the installation of the left-turn lanes can be achieved, an operational hazard will be created with this recommendation. The installation of a left-turn lane on the northbound approach, in combination with a shallow radius in the southeast corner prohibits trucks from having an acceptable turn radius to make a northbound turn. Similar deficiencies are experienced for the westbound left-turn. Other conflicts, such as signal and utility poles, impact the turn radius as well. The close proximity of buildings to the curb prohibits widening the street.

One Way Pair Alternative

With the limited right-of-way on NC 115 through downtown, in combination with the desire to preserve the downtown atmosphere and increase walkability throughout the study area, the widening to a four lane street is not feasible. Therefore, while needing to move traffic through downtown, an idea of implementing a one-way pair system using NC 115 for southbound traffic and Main Street for



Morning traffic on Gilead Road

northbound traffic was analyzed, which also included revised turning movements.

In this scenario, NC 115 does not need to be widened, but Main Street is widened to twenty-four feet (24 ft) and the level of service becomes acceptable. Peak hour traffic within downtown can be improved with the one-way pair system, however other non-operational impacts will be realized. One-way pairs will effectively move *through* traffic, but it leads to a decrease in people stopping in downtown to shop or other business. This alternative solves one problem; traffic. It then creates many negative impacts to walkability, success of retail and driveway safety, it is hostile to pedestrians and encourages speeding.

Main Street for Major Traffic

Another alternative was changing the designations, or traffic roles, of NC 115 and Main Street. Essentially, NC 115 becomes a local street and Main Street becomes the major through traffic movement roadway. All turning movements at the intersection of Gilead

Transportation & Circulation



Schematic Design of Main Street/NC 115 Paired Connections

Road and NC 115 would have more time since the competition with through traffic movements would be reduced.

Traffic analysis indicates this alternative improves the level of service to acceptable levels. It separates turning movements and disperses them to two intersections, thereby creating additional capacity. Implementation of this scenario will require extensive infrastructure improvements to Main Street, as well as the intersections at the north and south ends of Main Street at NC 115.

Enhanced Main Street

A variation of the last scenario, traffic is encouraged to use Main Street through signage, but it does not become the priority movement. Improvements consist of dedicated left-turn lanes and synchronized traffic signals with increased timing. As with the previous two alternatives, Main Street is widened to twenty-four feet (24 ft). Implementation brings the level of service to acceptable levels.

Two Way Directional Pair

This alternative actually combines the previous two. It recognizes the operational and performance gains provided by using Main Street as the major traffic carrier, but not wanting the extensive roadway improvements necessary to adequately move traffic. This directional pair shifts the northbound traffic from NC 115 to Main Street at the southern intersection of Main Street and NC 115. At the northern intersection of these two streets, through movements would make a right turn onto NC 115. The inverse would occur for the southbound through movements.

Intersection	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
	V/C	Control Delay	LOS	V/C	Control Delay	LOS
Gilead Road and NC 115 - <i>Signalized</i>	0.96	29.8	C	1.50	134.4	F
Huntersville-Concord Road and Main Street - <i>Signalized</i>	0.52	8.4	A	0.70	14.0	B
Mt. Holly-Huntersville and NC 115 - <i>Unsignalized</i>	0.47	7.9	A	0.75	13.4	B
NC 115 and Main Street (South) - <i>Signalized</i>	0.49	5.3	A	0.57	5.0	A
NC 115 and Main Street (North) - <i>Signalized</i>	0.56	6.6	A	0.96	28.6	C

Level of Service Analysis for Two-Way Directional Pair (2015)

The operational gain results from a directional dispersion of the through traffic movements and allows existing capacity to be used in an efficient manner and improves the distribution of turning traffic. At implementation, the level of service is equal to the previous alternatives. Main Street is required to be widened to twenty-four feet (24 ft) and intersection improvements would also need to be made.

Recommendation

With the implementation of any of the alternatives, there will be impacts to the existing streets. If the NC 115 and Gilead Road intersection is modified to install dedicated left-turn lanes, on-street parking along northbound and westbound would not be allowed. Existing streets widths of thirty-two feet (32 ft) to thirty-six feet (36 ft) are adequate for travel and turn lanes. Downtown businesses are better served with on-street parking and excess land for individual off-street parking is not required.

The other alternatives will require extensive infrastructure improvements to the existing streets. Main Street is presently eighteen feet (18') wide with open ditch drainage. Adjacent to Main Street is the railroad track which will be used for the commuter transit service. In any case, upgrades to Main Street will be necessary.

Improvements to the roadway will include signalization of the intersections of Main Street and Huntersville Concord Road, upgrading Main Street to appropriate width and roadway cross-section, as well as intersecting street improvements. The largest expense will be the realign-



Northern Connection of Main Street at NC 115



Southern Connection of Main Street at NC 115

Transportation & Circulation

ment of Main Street to intersect with NC 115 at both the north and south connections.

Upon complete review of the alternatives, it is recommended that the two-way pair be implemented. As discussed, this provides the best traffic movement during peak hours and does not impact the Downtown businesses by emphasizing only through traffic. Motorists are given an option for unimpeded movement or local access. The impacts to the pedestrian improvements are minimized by keeping vehicle speeds low and minimum pavement widths. The improvements to Main Street are also compatible with the designs of the commuter transit platform and Grower's Market at Garden Hall.

The existing level of service is unacceptable based on the current conditions of capacity and movement. Impacts in the near future will result in a reduced level of service resulting in longer delays. The present conditions warrant improvements to the existing infrastructure.

Downtown Huntersville has a good street grid; and, excellent possibilities exist to further enhance this pedestrian-friendly street network within the Downtown Study Area. Strategically placed new street connections are designed to improve vehicular traffic options and pedestrian connections.

One such opportunity lies with the additional streets between Maxwell Street and NC 115. These additional east-west connections breaks up large blocks and provides better connections for both vehicular and pedestrian movement. Other connections are provided within the study area as well.

Commuter Transit Rail

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) has plans to extend commuter rail service to Mooresville from Charlotte within the next 7 to 10 years. While specific commuter transit stops have not been identified general locations have, with a stop in or near Downtown Huntersville. As a component of the Downtown Huntersville Plan, three locations were evaluated for a potential commuter transit station within Downtown.

The first location was identified on the north side of the intersection of Huntersville-Concord Road and Main Street. This is an excellent opportunity two blocks from the Town Hall and the core of Downtown. Slight realignment of Church Street will be necessary and limited on-street parking would be available adjacent to the station and a shared structured parking facility (a minimum of 250 spaces is required for the transit platform) would be constructed within a block, an easy walking distance at the Civic Plaza.

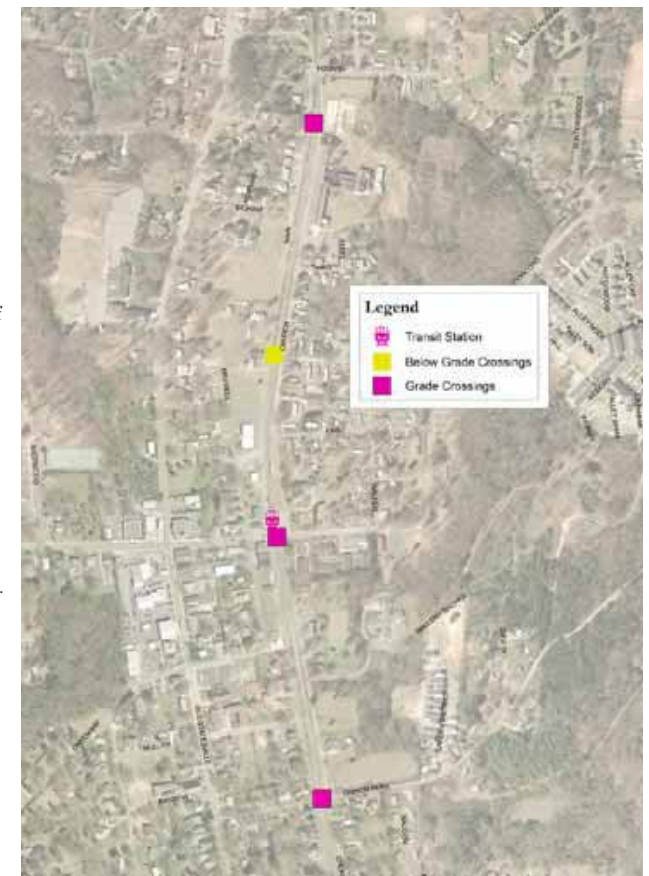
The second location was identified on the south side of the intersection of Huntersville-Concord Road and Main Street. Like the first location it has good proximity to the Downtown core. Parking and circulation is less available than the first location, however a deck location could be accommodated within the block behind the Main Street buildings (off of Maxwell Street).

The third location evaluated was at the Anchor Mill site on Church Street. This location would have good proximity to the Vermillion neighborhood, Mill Village redevelopment area and existing homes to the north of Downtown. Though it would have good access, there is minimal opportunity for any significant connection to the Downtown core and the proposed destinations of the Grower's Market, Civic Plaza and the Arts and Cultural facility due to the half mile distance between them.

All locations are acceptable and would add value to the Downtown Area. However, it is acknowledged that the proposed site at the Grower's Market at Garden Hall offers the most benefit and additional catalyst to the overall redevelopment of Downtown Huntersville.

Rail Crossings

As part of this planning process, the current rail corridor grade crossings were evaluated. The Plan recommends three at-grade rail crossings at Gibson Park, Huntersville-Concord Road, and the Anchor Mill site and one below-grade crossing at Second Street.



Proposed Grade Crossings and Station Location

Transportation & Circulation

The below-grade crossing at Second Street is a residual recommendation from previous studies on the Anchor Mill. In order to provide a higher degree of pedestrian connectivity throughout the area after commuter rail service begins, it would be desirable to have an additional connection. This location is the best location for a below-grade crossing based on the existing topography. However, its trajectory once it crosses Main Street is highly contingent on additional right-of-way acquisition. In addition, the downward slope necessary to provide clearance under the track bed may have a negative impact on Church Street. Further study of this crossing is warranted in the future.

The proposed at-grade crossings are existing and should remain open and enhanced. They provide the minimum level of circulation and connectivity, while protecting the integrity of the corridor.

Access Management

The Town of Huntersville, like most small communities in North Carolina, has historically relied on North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to manage access point (driveway) location and spacing throughout major urban corridors. The result of this practice is a deferment of decision-making to standards outlined in the 2003 NCDOT Driveway Ordinance. This ordinance entitled, Policy on Street and Driveway Access to North Carolina Highways, is not designed to preserve capacity but rather to balance the access rights of private property owners against accepted safety measures. Also, in the absence of strong local government preference, cross-sections for road improvements have typically been selected based on the expected (rather than planned) land use.

The result has been an abundance of thoroughfares constructed without center medians, similar to the Gilead Road corridor. This practice has contributed to a continued strip development pattern that occurs in response to the ease of access afforded by the lack of a median. Interestingly, this pattern of development is counter productive to the goal of providing a seamless, integrated transportation system, as it tends to preclude viable pedestrian and transit elements. Safety, aesthetics, streetscape, and capacity have often been compromised as well.

The development occurring along the Gilead Road and Old Statesville Road corridors is anticipated to continue, with properties expanding and redeveloping. Both of these corridors facilitate a significant amount of commuter traffic: they are likewise burdened with the task of providing access to adjoining property. Therefore, it is recommended that a policy of both general and specific access management guidelines be developed for both of these corridors.

Consideration should be given to a variety of resources during the development of these criteria, including the Town of Huntersville Development Code, NCDOT Driveway Manual, as well as Transportation Research Board and Center for Urban Transportation Research (University of South Florida), Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) publications that describe and compare policies across the nation. The following represent preliminary recommendations that also should be considered during the development of a corridor access management policy.

General Recommendations:

- New non-residential developments located adjacent to each other should be encouraged to provide cross-access or utilize a shared rear alley so that parking lots and driveways are connected and shared. *Encouraged cross-access between adjacent developments reduces the number of vehicles that are required to re-enter the major roadway. Keeping additional turning traffic off the major roadway enhances efficient and safe operation.*
- Minimum lot frontages should be considered for non-residential developments. *Typical access management standards for similar corridors would ideally recommend a minimum of 300 foot spacing between non-residential driveways. In order to feasibly enforce this spacing, adjacent commercial properties would need to have well over 200 feet of frontage. Encouraging minimum frontage prevents driveways from being too closely spaced.*
- Right-in/right-out only driveways should be encouraged as secondary access on major roadways for non-residential develop-

ments. *If appropriate, when a new development requests more than one driveway, the feasibility of a right-in/right-out driveway as a secondary access should be evaluated and encouraged. RI/RO driveways should be designed and located appropriately based on the size and type of development and should be responsive to existing street conditions.*

- For new developments that front both a major and a side street, primary access via the side street should be required. *Restricting major road access to service entrances or right-in/right-out driveways (where side street access is available) reduces the impact of turning movements on the major road. It also may reduce or eliminate the cost to a developer when associated with constructing a deceleration lane on the major road.*

Specific Recommendations:

The application of the aforementioned access management strategies in Downtown Huntersville can play an important role in balancing mobility and the need for land access. The opportunity to reinforce a regular block structure along both Gilead and Old Statesville Road should provide ample access and circulation opportunities as investments in these areas occur. An important part of this process will be to insure that the following happens in conjunction with new development:

Transportation & Circulation

Gilead Road Corridor

- Primary access to Gilead Road for properties on the south side should be taken from the existing side streets (Marguerite, Pinewood, and Hillcrest) using a public alley as shown on the Plan. (See page 42 for drawing)
- The unimproved right-of-way between Pinewood and Hillcrest should be constructed as a public street connection to Holbrook (with ultimate connection to Hillcrest) when adjacent development occurs. (See page 42 for drawing)
- Development on the north side of Gilead Road should take access at locations in alignment with opposing street access south of Gilead Road.
- Selective use of right-in/right-out access to Gilead Road may be appropriate.

Old Statesville Road (NC 115)

- Primary access to Old Statesville Road should be taken from the existing side streets where reasonably feasible (Dellwood, Gibson Park, First, Second, Third, and Fourth).
- Street connections represented in the master plan (between Old Statesville Road and Main Street) should be implemented as development occurs with the intent of providing primary access.
- Development on the west side of Old Statesville Road should take access at locations in alignment with opposing street access south of Gilead Road.
- Selective use of right-in/right-out access to Statesville Road may be appropriate.
- Consider installation of left-turn lanes as deemed necessary through the TIA process.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION

- Implement a two-way pair street system using Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Main Street for north-south traffic movement.
- In cooperation with CATS, construct the commuter transit platform on the north side of Huntersville-Concord Road between Main Street and Church Street.
- Construct the commuter transit station as a part of the Garden Hall.
- Realign Church Street to accommodate the commuter transit platform.
- Maintain rail crossings at the Anchor Mill site, Huntersville-Concord Road, and Gibson Park.
- Adopt an Access Management Policy for Gilead Road and Old Statesville Road (NC 115) to limit driveways.

Parking

Parking throughout Downtown Huntersville was analyzed as a part of the planning and design process. Regarding parking, there are three guiding philosophies that are applied to this Plan:

1. Parking in downtowns should be viewed as a public utility, like streets, water, sewer, and parks.
2. On-street parking not only provides convenient parking areas, but it also serves to buffer the pedestrian realm from the travel lanes.
3. Parking areas should be convenient, easy to find, and safe but need not dominate the visual landscape.
4. The most successful parking arrangements are ones which encourage patrons to "park once and walk".

On-Street Parking

Presently, on-street parking is only offered along Main Street between Greenway Drive and the American Legion Building. To have this limited amount of on-street parking in a downtown area is a detriment to encouraging residents to come and shop in Downtown Huntersville. Although this parking serves the existing Farmer's Market and the retail shops on Main Street, it is too distant and lacking proper pedestrian connections to the downtown core to be viewed as viable for any other part of the downtown.

This Plan recommends the expansion of on-street parking on the following street segments (as shown on the map on this page):

- Main Street from Huntersville-Concord Road to Church Street
- Old Statesville Road (NC 115) along most of its length within the study area. (Note: There is currently sufficient right-of-way and pavement width to accommodate on-street parking except within 400 feet of the Gilead Road intersection that is needed to accommodate turn lanes)
- Gilead Road / Huntersville-Concord Road from Sherwood Drive to Main Street (Note: Post-redevelopment)

- Church Street (both sides)
- First, Second, Third, and Walker Streets (one side only)

Off-Street Parking

Surface Lots

The Town currently owns parking lots next to Town Hall, behind the Police Station, behind the Arts and Cultural Center (former library) and at Holbrook Park. All of these lots, except Holbrook Park are perceived as restricted for those individual uses and given the growth in programming and employment at those respective facilities, are undersized.

There are a number of private parking areas scattered throughout town. These lots are designated for use by the patrons of the adjacent buildings only. However, given their proximity, the collective parking behind Lupie's Restaurant and Smilin' Jim's are often used for overflow parking for other nearby businesses and Town functions. Mama Mia's Too (in the historic Holbrook House) also has a parking lot close to Town Hall, but does not appear to have the same overflow issues as those directly across the street from Town Hall. The current uncoordinated approach is likely causing a net loss in 10-20 potential spaces.



Existing on-street parking along Main Street



Proposed on-street parking in Downtown

Parking



As mentioned in Parking Principle #1 above, the Plan proposes to make parking a public utility for common use in the Downtown. Therefore, the Town is encouraged to negotiate with the owners of the private lots and enter into a management agreement. This management agreement should focus on providing areas of both 2 hour and all day parking. In addition, the Town should actively work to improve the organization of the lots through improved wayfinding and signage, restriping, coordinated lighting, and cross access easements between lots.

As a precursor to any significant redevelopment, the Town should develop a coordinated strategy to remove all existing barriers and scattered vegetation between lots to open up their visibility as well as improve the efficiency of the parking spaces.

In addition, the Town should actively negotiate with the owner of Mama Mia's Too and jointly develop a parking facility around the Holbrook House. This parking area should be designed as hardscaped plaza to provide for dual use as a parking lot during business hours and a usable public space on evenings and weekends. More on this is discussed in the "Civic Core" section.

Rail Station Parking Deck

Lastly, the Town should investigate the purchase of the land behind the Town Hall for a future parking deck structure. As the commuter transit rail platform and the proposed arts and cultural facility come closer to reality, the need to provide a structured parking deck is feasible.

The structure should have a minimum of five levels and can be co-developed with with 3 story liner buildings along the road frontages. As planned, the deck could accommodate a minimum of 400 cars. This type of parking structure will appear less obtrusive and integrated into the Downtown area.

Understandably, market conditions, the commuter rail construction schedule, and future anchor buildings (arts and cultural facility) will dictate the financing, timing and the creation of such a structure. The Town of Huntersville is encouraged to begin discussions with existing property owners to purchase the property in this excellent location within the core of downtown. In the interim, if the Town purchased the property, a unrestricted surface lot could be installed.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PARKING

- Re-stripe Gilead Road to place on-street parallel parking between Sherwood Drive and NC 115 where pavement width is available.
- Provide on-street parallel parking along Old Statesville Road (NC 115) where feasible within the study area.
- Extend on-street parking along Main Street and establish on-street parallel parking on Church Street to serve the commuter transit platform and commercial and civic buildings on Main Street.
- Strategically manage the lots in the southeast quadrant for common use.
- Construct a shared use parking deck a minimum of 400 spaces between Maxwell Street and Old Statesville Road (NC 115).
- As an interim measure, work with the property owners to promote Town Hall employee parking in the Mama Mia's Too lot.

Green Infrastructure

This plan identifies targeted areas of open space and greenway preservation enabling the Town of Huntersville to supplement the existing parks system. This green infrastructure is an important element in the quality of life for the Downtown area. Because much of this trail network is more urban than in other parts of the community with a combination of off-road paths and “greened” street sidewalks, the Plan denotes this system as the “Green Trail”.

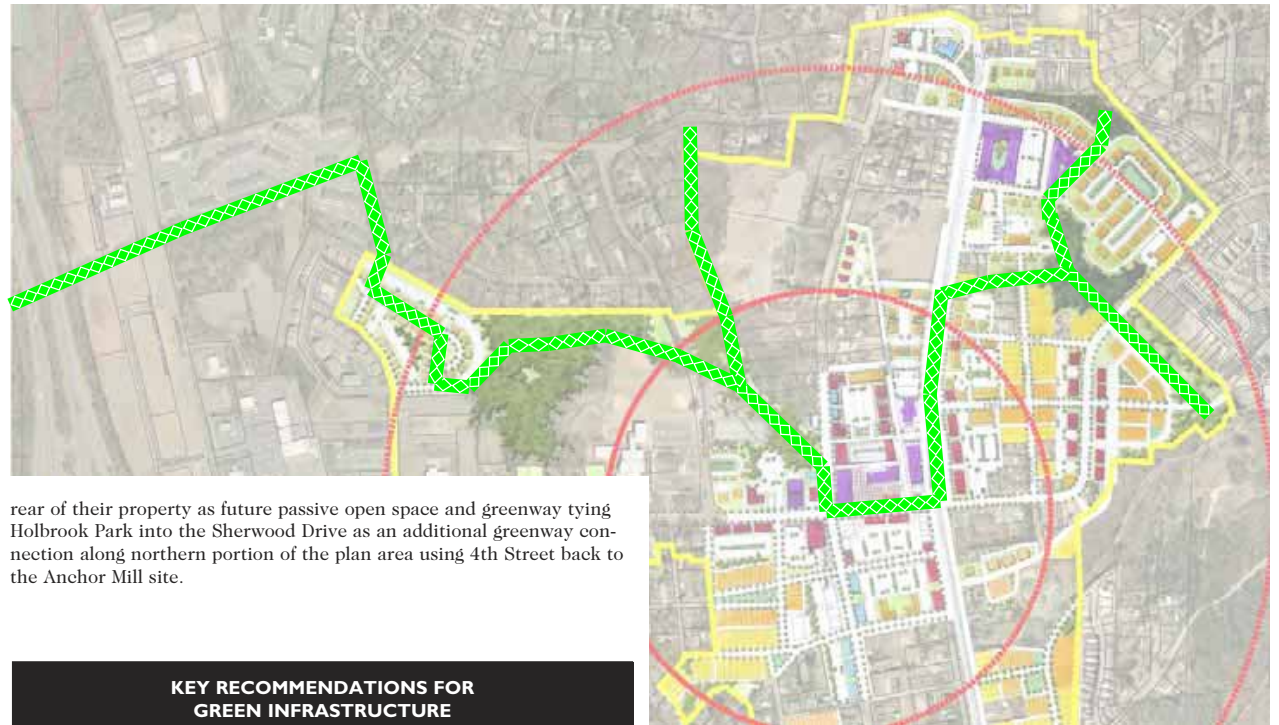
Within the Mill Neighborhood, a stream between 3rd Street and 2nd Street flows in an easterly direction and becomes the greenway within Vermillion along the South Prong of Clark Creek. The extension of that greenway along the stream is recommended to Church Street. The Trail then connects along Church Street and crosses the rail and follows Huntersville-Concord Road in front of Garden Hall, the Civic Plaza, and Town Hall.

From that point, the Green Trail then crosses Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and enters Holbrook Park with a new entrance and connects with the existing trail in the park. The Trail should then run through the Huntersville Elementary School property, through the Parkview Apartments expansion, then to the stream near Nottingham Drive and then ties into the Torrence Creek Tributary #2 that crosses under I-77. When I-77 is widened, a pedestrian tunnel should be installed to permit the extension of this trail to Rosedale and the other greenways on the west side of the Interstate.

In addition, the Town is encouraged to work with the First Baptist Church to promote the dedication of the undevelopable portions at the



A typical greenway trail



rear of their property as future passive open space and greenway tying Holbrook Park into the Sherwood Drive as an additional greenway connection along northern portion of the plan area using 4th Street back to the Anchor Mill site.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- Establish final path and secure right-of-way for trail system from Vermillion to Rosedale.
- Begin to construct portions of the Green Trail focusing on those areas between Vermillion and the Holbrook Park as the highest priority

Site diagram of the proposed greenway trail within the Downtown Area

Environmental Protection

By their nature, Downtowns are inherently urban. That is, the coverage of building footprints, parking areas, and hardscape approach 100%. The diagram to the right illustrates how the level of urbanism grows as it approaches village centers or downtowns. It is important that a distinction be made about the nature of urbanism as it relates to downtowns because of the impact on impervious surfaces.

Downtown Huntersville, if it is to thrive as a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use center, must have wide sidewalks, small lots, and buildings built close to the street and to each other. This present little, if any, opportunity to manage stormwater on a site-by-site basis. If it is provided, stormwater retention will likely be handled underground.

Unfortunately, because most of Downtown is located on the west side of the railroad tracks (the ridgeline), it is located in a protected watershed of Mountain Island Lake. With this location comes a set of rules that limits the amount of impervious surface to 70% of a site.

In order to permit the full build-out of the Conceptual Plan, this Plan recommends relieving the Downtown Area from the requirements of the Watershed Protection Standards. This action should be taken by balancing the urbanism of the Downtown with a more rural area in the same watershed, specifically the North Mecklenburg Park. Through deed restrictions or other similar legal mechanisms, the pervious area required for the Downtown can be offset by permanently protected land in the park. Thus, development in the Downtown Area would simply need to manage the quantity and rate of water runoff and would be exempt from water quality standards.

The Town should also encourage the use of “green” roofs for all new construction. In particular, the Town should install “green” roofs such as a planted roof system or a white roof on all new civic

buildings. Such roofing systems not only reduced energy costs on the buildings, but they can also be designed to capture and filter all stormwater during a rain event. This type of technology reduces the environmental footprint of a building and promotes sustainable development practices that epitomize the Town of Huntersville.

Developed by the USGBC membership, the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System is a national consensus-based, market-driven building rating system designed to accelerate the development and implementation of green building practices. In short, it is a leading-edge system for designing, constructing and certifying the world’s greenest and best buildings. This plan encourages the use of the LEED guidelines for certifying all new public buildings.

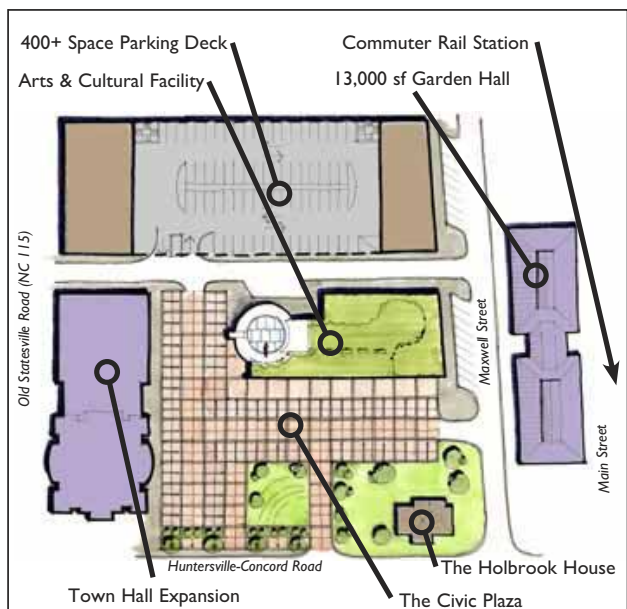
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

- Establish an impervious surface “bank” from area within the North Mecklenburg Park to be used to offset requirements in the Downtown Area.
- Encourage the application of LEED building standards for all new civic buildings.
- Install “green” roof systems on all new civic buildings.

The Civic Core

There are 7 essential elements to the Civic Core. They are:

- The Civic Plaza
- Town Hall Expansion
- The Holbrook House
- New Arts and Cultural Facility
- Garden Hall (13,000 sf)
- Commuter Transit Platform
- 400+ Space Parking Deck



The Civic Plaza

Throughout the planning and design process, charrette participants repeatedly noted that the Town of Huntersville lacks a central gathering space. One of the most exciting components of The Downtown Plan involves the proposed creation of a Civic Plaza anchored by the construction or expansion of other civic buildings.

This Civic Plaza is proposed to be located adjacent to Town Hall, including the existing Town Hall parking lot and vacant land behind the Holbrook House. Like many great European plazas, this location permits the space to be co-utilized for parking during business hours and then cleared for special activities on during the evenings and on weekends.

In order to differentiate this space as a public space rather than a parking lot, a decorative hard surface such as unit pavers or Bomanite™ would need to be installed. When parking is restricted from this area it becomes a large gathering place for festivals, concerts, and other public gatherings. The plan also recommends a small green space for seating and play space during these events.

A final note about the design of the plaza. It is imperative that it not be oversized. That it, the space must be as flexible and open as possible to permit the widest variety of uses. Trees within the space should be strategically placed so as not to be a visual impediment to the use of the space for small concerts, for example.



Tours Old Town Square, Tours, France



European plaza where pedestrians have an equal footing with the car



Farmer's Market Plaza, Roanoke, VA

The Civic Core

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Birdseye view of the proposed Civic Core highlighting the Civic Plaza and a conceptual Arts and Cultural Center

“The placement of an active public gathering space as the Civic Plaza, the Grower’s Market at Garden Hall, and the CATS Transit Platform affords the Town of Huntersville the possibility of spotlighting a magnificent civic place in the heart of the community.”

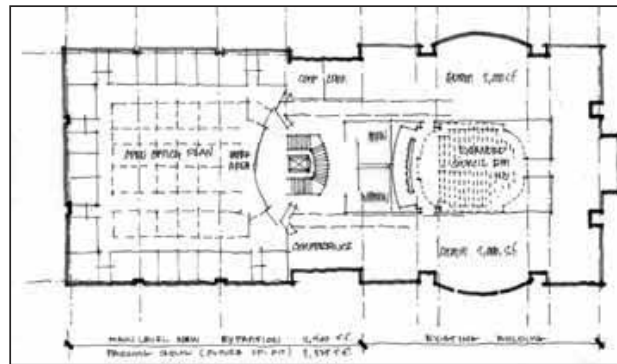
The Civic Core

Town Hall Expansion

Town Hall was identified in previous studies as in need of immediate expansion. Presently 8,000 square feet, the building is no longer sufficient to accommodate all of the administrative and planning staff that the Town now employs to manage this growing community. In addition, there is a clear need for meeting space, both small and large, including an expansion to the main Town Board room. During the charrette, planners and designers with The Lawrence Group met with Town officials and reviewed the Space Needs Analysis compiled by Narmour Wright regarding an expansion to Town Hall.

The most feasible solution is to expand the existing building up to 20,000 square feet with a two-story addition to the north. Using the topography of the adjacent site, the addition would extend to the rear with a main floor and a basement level. This expansion maintains Town Hall's prominence as a true civic building and landmark.

This expansion will require the purchase of the lot that is presently occupied by the CarQuest Auto Parts store.



Conceptual expansion plan for Town Hall



Conceptual elevation showing the proposed Town Hall expansion along Old Statesville Road (NC 115)

The Holbrook House

The Holbrook House is recommended to remain in place thereby preserving an icon of local history in the heart of Downtown. The Plan encourages its continued use as a restaurant. Should that use discontinue, the building would also make an excellent history museum.



Historic Holbrook House

New Arts and Cultural Center

The Plan recommends the construction of building facing the Huntersville-Concord Road side of the Plaza. This building should visually engage the Plaza and help to activate it with uses that are pedestrian-friendly. The conceptual rendering in this Plan suggests that this building be both dignified as a civic building as well as contemporary. For example, if

The Plan suggests a 20,000 square foot, two-story building that includes civic uses as well as some retail opportunities. The civic portion of the

The Civic Core

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building could be used for a variety of community events including exhibitions and performances, easily coordinated with regional theatres and museums, and contain interactive classrooms. In addition, the Plan recommends the insertion of one or two storefronts for retail operations such as an ice cream store or a sandwich shop. The combination of these civic and retail uses will help to keep the Plaza active and energized.

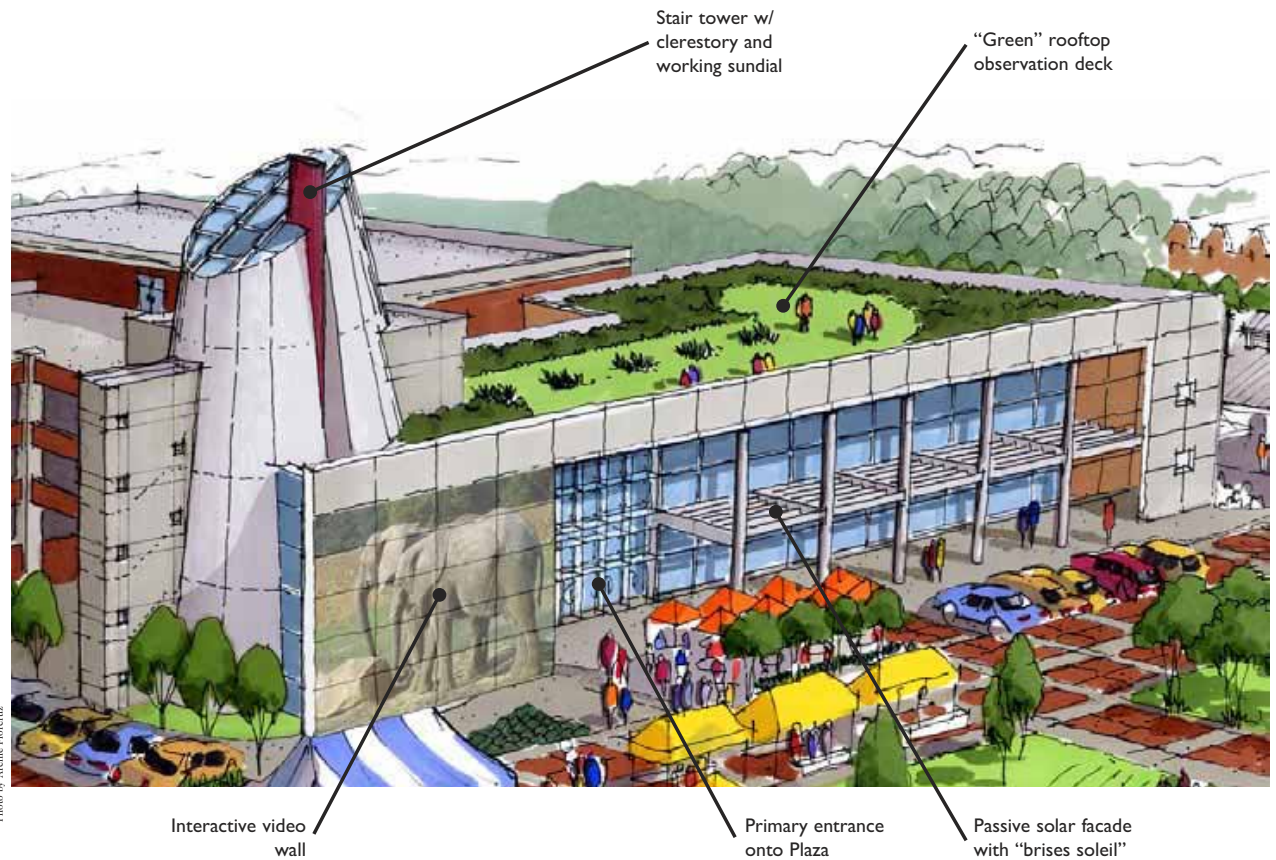
The design of this building should set a precedent for environmental sustainability. This is a consistent theme throughout this Plan and is the 21st century aspect to the “green” theme for the Downtown area. This building specifically, given its prominence and potential as a learning laboratory for arts and culture, should set the standard. Designers should incorporate sustainable design elements that are visible such as a planted roof system and passive solar shading on the facade.



Planted roofs minimise stormwater runoff and reduce heat gain like this one on the Chicago City Hall



Interactive video wall using state of the art LED technology in Chicago's Millenium Park Crozen Fountain



The Civic Core

Garden Hall

The current Farmer's Market structure is an underutilized area in a potentially key location. Its proximity to the proposed commuter rail platform makes it a key connection between it and the Civic Plaza. In addition to its twice weekly use as a Farmer's Market, it is used by the neighborhood as a community facility for events such as the Hispanic Halloween Party and various neighborhood parties. Such use underscores its value as a gathering place.

However, the building does not sit in a prominent location, lacks signage, and is not supplemented by landscaping that would otherwise dignify the space. The caboose that shares its location is also not well sited and does not have a visible use other than as a piece of artwork. Additionally, the area is obscured from view from Huntersville-Concord Road by a small building.

Therefore, the Plan recommends a number of key changes that aim to fully utilize the site potential in the Downtown. First, the Plan recommends that the existing buildings be razed and the caboose relocated



Current view of Farmer's Market shelter



*Rendering of proposed Garden Hall facility with Grower's Market in progress
(Note the Transit Platform in background)*

The Civic Core



Existing Farmer's Market

to the front of the site along Huntersville-Concord Road. This will be a much more appropriate location for the caboose and make it an identifying landmark.

Replacing the existing and cramped Farmer's Market is the Grower's Market at Garden Hall, a new 13,000 square foot open air pavilion approximately twice the size of the current structure. Included within this structure is a 1,000 square foot space that could house the required services for the proposed commuter transit rail including a ticket kiosk, security area, driver's office, and associated needs, including public restrooms to serve the all of the surrounding public uses. During the peak morning and evening times, the new Garden Hall would serve as a covered structure sheltering "kiss and ride" commuters (transit riders who are dropped off by a friend or family member) during inclement weather.

A children's "sprayground" could be located behind the caboose, protecting this active play area from the street. This would help to serve the surrounding neighborhoods with an interactive water feature that is safe, clean, and low maintenance. Spraygrounds, like other water features, also help to provide background noise, which make public environments more inviting to private or semi-private conversations.

The conceptual design of the Garden Hall facility suggests the use of a true farm vernacular with exposed rafters and eaves and a standing seam metal roof. Additionally, to disperse heat as well as add height to the structure, the design recommends the use of a clerestory along its entire length. The post and beam construction should be painted white to make the structure feel light and airy.

It is important to note that the Plan advocates the purchase and removal of the buildings in front of the current Farmer's Market structure in order to improve visibility and provide a more cohesive streetscape.



The sprayground in Birkdale Village is popular spot for playgroups



The Farmer's Market in Roanoke, VA is a wonderful example of a highly successful urban marketplace

The Civic Core

Commuter Transit Rail Station

As part of the north corridor rapid transit corridor, the Charlotte Area Transit Study has identified one station location in Downtown Huntersville. (See the Transportation and Circulation Section for further discussion) As was mentioned relative to the Garden Hall, the Plan recommends the joint construction of a rail platform (estimated to be approximately 300 feet long) and Garden Hall with the related facilities.

There is sufficient area along Main Street for buses and cars to drop off at the platform location and provide enough circulation to adequately disperse the traffic.

Regarding the design of the station platform, the Plan recommends that all vertical elements including lighting, benches, and trash receptacles be consistent with the standard set forth around the Garden Hall facility to visually tie the two together.



Proposed CATS Commuter Transit using Diesel Multiple Units

Parking Deck (400+ Spaces)

To accommodate the public parking needs identified by the Plan around the Civic Core, the proposed Arts and Cultural facility, the Grower's Market at Garden Hall, and the commuter transit platform, a 400+ space, 5 story parking deck is proposed behind the expansion of Town Hall and the new Arts and Cultural facility.

Multi-story, mixed-use buildings should be located on Maxwell Street and on Old Statesville Road (NC 115) as bookends on the deck structure. This will provide a sufficient visual screen of the deck permitting it to be constructed more efficiently using utilitarian design. Access to the parking deck is from a new east-west street behind the Town Hall expansion.

Because it is assumed that approximately 250 spaces in the deck would be reserved for Transit System park and ride spaces, a portion of the funding for the structure could come from CATS. The remainder of the amount could be financed using any combination of Town General Fund disbursements, Parking Revenue, Self-Financing Bonds, or payments in lieu of parking fees.

It is important to note that other redevelopment in the Downtown area may, by virtue of its planned density, necessitate the construction of other decks. This may be most likely to occur on the south side of Gilead Road/Huntersville-Concord Road.

Regardless, the highest priority for public investment for a parking deck should be the location identified in the Civic Core. This location serves the highest public needs of those use located in the Civic Core and is the most proximate location to the transit station. In addition, with the addition of "bookend" buildings on either side of the deck, there is the opportunity to spur some private development to help offset these costs.

Of course, other decks in the Downtown area may also merit some level of public investment to help leverage private development, however they should be considered secondary in priority.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE THE CIVIC CORE

- Consider acquisition of parcel behind Town Hall.
- Expand Town Hall.
- Explore acquisition by fee simple or through lease, the area around the Holbrook House.
- Plan, Design, and Construct a Civic Plaza adjacent to Town Hall.
- Develop an Arts and Cultural Center building as an integral part of the Civic Plaza.
- Explore acquisition of the parcel between the Farmer's Market and Huntersville-Concord Road.
- Redevelop the existing Farmer's Market into the Grower's Market at Garden Hall.
- Relocate the Town's caboose to the front of the Garden Hall site along with a children's "sprayground."
- Construct the commuter transit station.
- Construct a shared use structured parking deck for at least 400 spaces between Maxwell Street and Old Statesville Road (NC 115).
- Inventory and evaluate available properties in the Downtown for public buildings facilities.

The Town Center

The Town Center is envisioned to be the dense, mixed-use center of the Downtown area surrounding the Civic Core. This area includes primarily commercial uses such as retail and restaurants on the ground floors with upper story office or residential. Internal blocks are shown as transition development types such as multi-story residential or small scale commercial buildings.

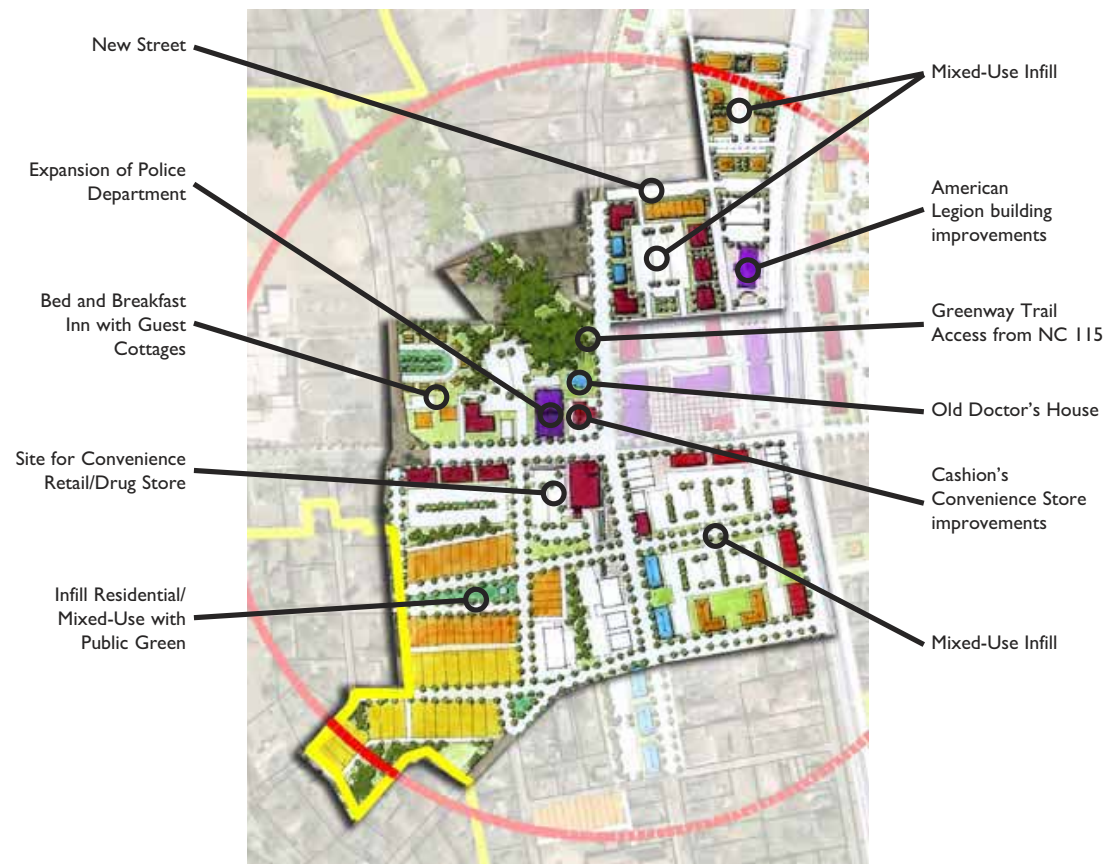
This area is defined as the four quadrants surrounding the intersection of Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Gilead Road/Huntersville-Concord Road as well as the area just north of the Civic Core. These areas are noted in this Section as follows:

- North Area
- American Legion Building
- Garden Gate Bed and Breakfast Inn
- Old Doctor's House
- Police Station
- Southwest Quadrant
- Southeast Quadrant
- Main Street

North Area

The area due north of the proposed Parking Deck in the Civic Core has development potential along Old Statesville Road (NC 115), Maxwell Street, and Main Street. Because of their physical proximity to the transit station and the commercial core, they should be encouraged to be redeveloped in a more intense manner.

Though Maxwell Street is planned to continue its function as an alley, there are parcels with sufficient depth to suggest some level of development frontage. This will require that Maxwell Street be upgraded to accommodate two travel lanes and on-street parking, requiring a minimum pavement width of 28 feet and a right-of-way of 60 feet.



Map of the Town Center area

The Town Center

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The conceptual plans show a variety of development opportunities for this area including multi-story (up to 3 story), mixed-use buildings closest to the Core transitioning to 2 story buildings.

Approximately 400 feet north of the proposed parking deck, the Plan recommends the introduction of a new east-west street between Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Main Street. This will help with the lack of connectivity in this area and provide a common driveway for access to mid-block parking areas.

American Legion Building

Also in this area is the American Legion building. As a meeting facility it serves a necessary function for the community. However, its utilitarian design leaves much to be desired in improving the overall aesthetic for the area adjacent to the transit station. To address this element, the plan suggests some strategic upgrades to the building entrances and some landscaping that could help to soften its appearance. In addition the plan suggests the opportunity for the erection of a War Memorial between the American Legion building and the expanded Garden Hall

Garden Gate Bed and Breakfast Inn

The Plan recommends the expansion of the Bed and Breakfast Inn. Inns like the Garden Gate are valuable assets to a growing community and can provide an alternative to the Interstate hotel for visitors to the Huntersville area.

This historic structure is the blending of two old houses, one of which had been moved from the present day Presbyterian Cemetery site at the corner of Church Street and Dellwood Drive.

The buildings then served as a dormitory for the local college on the site of Huntersville Elementary School. After the college closed, the house was moved again next door and has since served as a single family home. The current Garden Gate Bed & Breakfast Inn could expand by the acquisition of the adjacent home, now vacant, and connecting the two with a formal courtyard.

In addition, it is recommended that in the rear of the property, eight bungalow cottages surrounding a garden be built, further expanding the inn facilities.



Existing American Legion building



Proposed new entry for the American Legion building with a proposed War Memorial and the Garden Hall in the background

The Town Center

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Cashion's Convenience Store

The Cashion's Convenience Store at the corner of Gilead Road and Old Statesville Road (NC 115) poses a unique and complex problem.

- The store is old and presents a visual detriment to the Downtown's visual aesthetic
- The current traffic congestion has actually had negative impacts on the store's business because of customer's inability to safely access the site
- The removal and relocation of the store would be very costly
- The store's property is very constrained offering little opportunity for expansion
- The store is a very successful business and serves the community with essential goods and services

To address these issues, the Plan recommends the following changes:

- Upgrade the store's appearance by adding new siding and a pitched roof and canopy structure similar to that of a historic gas station
- Improve safety to the Store by adding curbs and driveways around the site limiting the access to two points as far from the intersection as possible
- Update the Store's signage and graphics



Current Cashion's Convenience Store



Cashions Store "Makeover"

The Town Center



Huntersville Police Station

The Doctor's House

The old Doctor's house to the north of Cashion's has some historic significance and is worthy of preservation. Though the house is presently in use as a residence, it could be considered for adaptive re-use as an office or low-intensity commercial use.

Police Station

Like the Town Hall, the Police Station is also in need of new facilities to handle its fast growing department. The recent facility needs analysis suggested that the Police Station should triple in area to 24,000 square feet to accommodate present-day needs and future growth.

Unfortunately, like Cashion's, the Police Station is located on a constrained site. While the building could easily be expanded to the north or west as a two story annex, the parking required of an expanded facility would be insufficient. If the building were to expand to the west it would necessitate the purchase of the adjacent orthodontist's office.

Therefore, given these constraints, the Police Station expansion should consider at least two alternatives. First, it could expand to the rear and reorganize parking to make more efficient use of the mid-block. Because of the topography, this expansion can easily be two or three stories as needed with one floor below the present level (for sally port access). Additional parking could be added to the existing lot with a second driveway and another entrance to Holbrook Park from Old Statesville Road (NC 115).

As an alternative, it could find another location in the Downtown area. Given the technical requirements of modern law enforcement facilities in this post 9-11 security-conscious world, this building need not be located in a prominent location. It should simply be sited to provide for the best access for call response to the community.



Alternate Police Station Expansion scheme extending to the west

Southwest Quadrant

The southwest quadrant is one of the ripest opportunities for redevelopment in the Downtown. In that block is a used-car lot, a consignment shop, and a small office building. In other words, there appears to be a good combination of under-utilized parcels and willing property owners that would permit redevelopment in the near-term.

The Plan considered a number of alternatives for this area, including a grocery store, a mid-sized box like a specialty grocer or a drug store, and various urban storefronts. The market study discouraged the placement of a full-service grocery store in this location, given the number of grocery stores clustered around the Interstate within 1.5 miles of the Downtown. In addition, the basic site requirements for a standard full-service grocery store necessitate the usage of at least 4 acres of land for building, service, and parking. Given the fine-grain at which the remainder of the Downtown is envisioned to develop, this would be a radical, and decidedly suburban approach.

Therefore, the Plan recommends that the maximum size for any single use generally not exceed 20,000 square feet. This size threshold could accommodate a store providing limited groceries, pharmaceuticals and/or dry goods such as a specialty grocer (Fresh Market, Green Grocer or EarthFare) or a typical drug store (Eckerd's, CVS, or Walgreens). Either format can be adapted to create a street-fronting, pedestrian-friendly building that holds the urban edge of the intersection.

As an alternate at this corner, a similar sized cultural arts facility could be placed, with a small green at the corner serving as a public focal point. Regardless, the conceptual images in this Plan suggest that the architecture at this corner be interesting and differentiated from the municipal buildings.

The Town Center

Designers should consider the use of modern building styles (like that shown in the conceptual drawing on this page) that fit well into the urban context. More importantly, buildings at the intersection of Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Gilead Road should be a minimum of 2 stories in height to establish the visual prominence of this location. This massing should extend at least two blocks (approximately 800 feet) from the intersection.

To the rear of this block, the Plan recommends the tapering of development towards Greenway Drive and Hillcrest Drive. This area is presently vacant with two undeveloped right-of-ways (a portion of Holbrook Street and an extension off Greenway Drive) and twelve individual lots. The Plan shows the opportunity for the development of a urban residential inill neighborhood with a variety of housing types and a public open space.

The Plan shows the connection of the two north / south streets with the developed extension of Holbrook Street and the new east / west street crafting a green square surrounded by townhomes. One building of the new townhomes terminates the vista at the end of the Holbrook Street extension.

On the north and south sides of the square, townhome buildings enclose the space and create a comfortable outdoor room. In the southern half, the realigned right-of-way off Greenwood Street provides the opportunity for single family homes and a small open space. This open space includes the preservation of trees behind the existing homes fronting Greenway, behind the proposed single family homes.

These units could also be adapted for use as live-work units or office condominiums as well, while preserving the basic urban environment. Of course, given the desire to densify the Downtown, residential development would likely impact the pedestrian activity more than small office.

To help foster this pedestrian environment, it is necessary to improve the block structure in the area to give both pedestrians and automobiles more choice for circulation.

To this end, the Plan recommends the following street improvements:

- Extend Sherwood Drive across Gilead Road to south of Holbrook Street
- Open and improve the existing undeveloped right-of-way off Greenwood Street in front of the BellSouth building and connect to Hillcrest Drive
- Create a new east-west street from this block across Old Statesville Road (NC 115) to Main Street



View looking south down Old Statesville Road (NC 115)



Proposed Mixed-Use Building with Drug Store Anchor at southwest quadrant (Note the modern design elements incorporating passive solar shading on the facade)

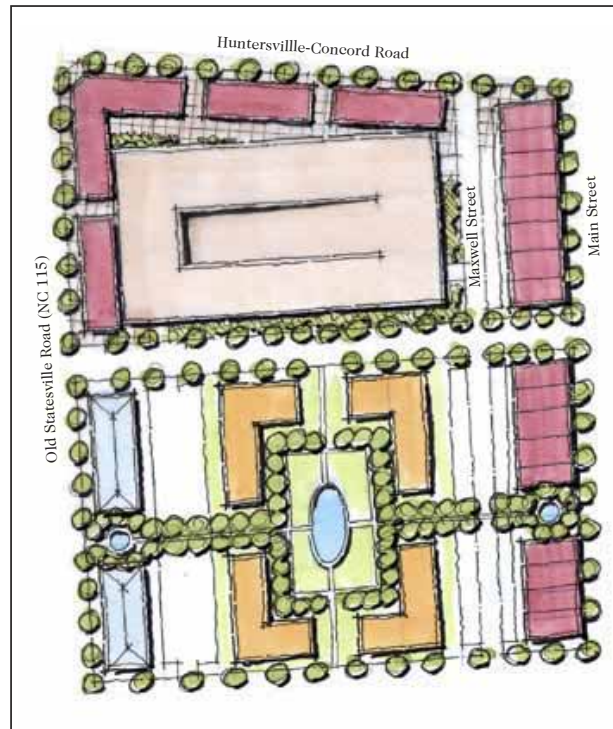
The Town Center

Southeast Quadrant

Across the intersection, the block bounded by Old Statesville Road (NC 115), Huntersville-Concord Road, Main Street and Greenway Drive also presents some development opportunities. The Plan recommends the retention of the buildings housing Lupie's Restaurant, the cleaners, and the Professional Building.

The Plan recommends the redevelopment of the remaining buildings along the south side of Huntersville-Concord Road into multi-story, mixed-use buildings. Taller buildings will help to frame the proposed Civic Plaza across the street. As an alternative to this design, the entire block can be redeveloped with new multi-story mixed use buildings supported by a mid-block parking deck. With the high costs of redevelopment coupled with the lost income of existing tenants, such an endeavour is not potentially feasible in the near future. However the preferred option, which is shown in the Conceptual Plan, could urbanize over time to the alternate plan.

Along Old Statesville Road (NC 115), the Fire Station and adjacent offices could remain with the redevelopment and infill of mixed-use buildings along the street. Along Greenway Drive in the middle of the block, a new multi-family complex is proposed to add residents and affordable housing opportunities to Downtown. Maxwell Street is proposed to remain, but used more as alley access to a consolidated parking area serving the businesses and available public parking. A new street next to the Fire Station is also proposed running east-west, further connecting Main Street and the infill residential development within the southwest section of this area.



Alternate Plan for southeast quadrant with 3 story mixed-use buildings and a parking deck

Main Street

As the few surviving buildings with historic significance in the Downtown area, the current fabric should be preserved and expanded. There are a number of gaps in the current streetscape of Main Street that could easily be filled in with two to four story buildings. In order to avoid overshadowing the current one-two story building, upper stories above two stories should be recessed.



Current Main Street streetscape

The Town Center

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Alternate Plan for the southern quadrants with Single Family, Offices, and Mixed-Use Buildings and a grand public green space running east to west

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE TOWN CENTER

- Construct a new street connection between Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Main Street approximately 400 feet north of the proposed parking deck.
- Encourage the improvement of the American Legion building.
- Construct a Veteran's Memorial between the American Legion building and the Garden Hall.
- Encourage the expansion of the Garden Gate Bed and Breakfast Inn.
- Encourage the exterior renovation of Cashion's Convenience Store.
- Encourage the preservation of the Old Doctor's House adjacent to Cashion's Convenience Store on Old Statesville Road (NC 115)
- Evaluate the location of Police Department for future expansion.
- Extend existing streets into new development.
- Encourage sensitive redevelopment/infill that maintains the urbanism of the Downtown while permitting new/modern architectural styles.
- Require buildings within 800 feet of the intersection of Gilead Road and Old Statesville Road (NC 115) to be a minimum of 2 stories.

The Mill Neighborhood

The Mill Neighborhood is comprised of the eastern portion of the Downtown Planning Area and includes the seven block mill house area, the Anchor Mill site, a portion of Vermillion fronting Huntersville-Concord Road and the proposed connection of Main Street to Old Statesville Road (NC 115). Presently, this is an area of transition with some well-maintained, site-built, owner-occupied homes adjacent to mobile homes and abandoned houses. The former Anchor Mill is in ruins and is a blight to the area. However, the Town purchased the Mill site in 1998 with the intentions for redevelopment and are in the process of site/environmental cleanup.

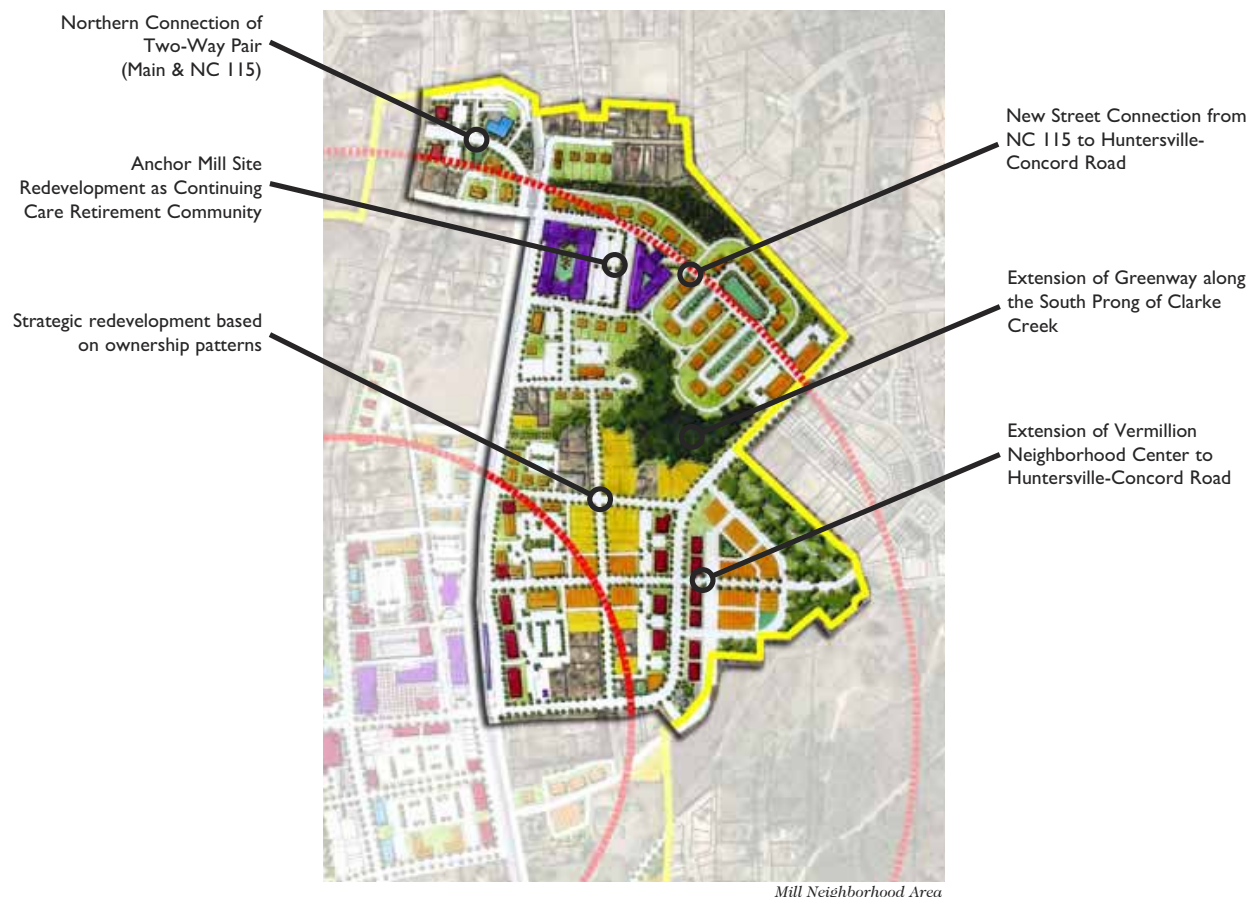
Northern Connection of Two-Way Pair

In order to facilitate the smooth connection of Main Street to Old Statesville Road (NC 115) it is necessary to secure right-of-way through existing properties. As a result of this acquisition, some properties will need to be reconfigured. This replatting will provide opportunities for redevelopment of the various impacted parcels. Redevelopment in this area recommends two mixed-use buildings and office buildings at the intersection with infill duplex homes behind on Main and Fourth streets.

Anchor Mill Property

Previous planning proposal for the 30+ acre Anchor Mill site assumed that the commuter rail line would have a station at the site. As was mentioned previously, this Plan proposes that the station platform be located close to Huntersville-Concord Road. However, given the site acquisition and cleanup costs, higher-density, mixed-use development remains appropriate for this site, though the highest density development is more appropriately sited closer to the station platform.

The Market Study identified a potential gap in housing opportunities for active adults and the elderly in the Huntersville area. As this community continues to grow and mature, there will be a much higher demand for these types of neighborhoods. The opening of Presbyterian Hospital-Huntersville on November 8, 2004 within a mile of the Downtown, serves a priority amenity for attraction of this demographic (55+).



Mill Neighborhood Area

The Mill Neighborhood



Existing condition of the Anchor Mill property

As a result of this recommendation, the Master Plan reflects the incorporation of a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC). A CCRC provides a variety of housing opportunities including independent living cottages and apartments, assisted living apartments, and skilled nursing care.

So often these facilities are located far from the communities that they serve in an attempt to find inexpensive land or private surroundings often because sites like this one are not available in Town. The location of a CCRC in the Downtown area yields many benefits. The proximity (less than a 10 minute walk) to the Civic Core and Town Center provides residents with a comfortable destination with amenities such as shopping and civic activities for daily walks. Families of the residents can also be closer to their loved ones by having this type of facility nearby. A facility such as this also becomes an employment center to the area and requires fewer municipal services relative to the economic benefit.

The Plan illustrates a CCRC with the apartments and critical care components of the neighborhood closest to Church Street to the west. The independent living cottages, often requiring more privacy or sense of seclusion, are located closer to the Vermillion neighborhood to the east.

Assisted Living and Skilled Nursing Building
Independent Living Apartments



The conceptual design of a Continuing Care Retirement Community on the Anchor Mill site

Independent Living Cottages
Mixed Use Buildings (Possible Non Age-Restricted)



A courtyard in The Fountains Elderly Care Facility in West County, MO

The entire community is encouraged to be developed using a traditional street network with a primary connection between Huntersville-Concord Road to Church bisecting the site. This road should be carefully designed to provide an alternative while being naturally traffic-calming using such devices as selective medians and horizontal traffic diverters.

Finally, the current greenway that is being extended along the South Prong of Clarke Creek should be extended along the creek that runs along the southern boundary of the Mill site. This greenway would eventually become part of the "Green Trail" that combines both on-street and off-street trails running from east to west throughout the Downtown area.

The Mill Neighborhood



Existing mill homes interspersed with mobile homes in the old mill village

Old Mill Village Area

Adjacent to the former mill itself is a seven block mill village area. The properties in this part of the neighborhood are predominately owned by investors who own several parcels as rental property. There are only a few owner-occupied properties in the entire neighborhood. Mixed in throughout the area are several manufactured homes in varying condition.

On the southern edge of the area along Huntersville-Concord Road is Huntersville's "Old Jail," a two room building with a two cell holding area. There are no distinguishing features of the building that would render it historic or worthy of preservation.

Along Church Street, fronting the rail, development should occur as mixed-use, multi-story buildings close the transit platform, then transitioning to apartments and townhouses to the north. Redevelopment within the old mill village is recommended with various lot consolidations and replatting. Such redevelopment could include small lot single family homes, townhomes, quadruplexes, and apartments.

The Plan shows the retention of the existing homes which are stable, well maintained and owner-occupied at least until the current owners are ready to sell for redevelopment. There is a cluster of six intact mill houses, three at each corner of the intersection of Church and Third streets. These could easily be rehabilitated used as homes or offices. The Plan also reflects the retention of the existing church and electric substation in the neighborhood.

Given the desire of this Plan to densify near the transit station, the continued zoning in this area to permit Manufactured Homes is no longer justified. Manufactured housing is typically low density and tends to deflate surrounding property values, thereby discouraging high quality urban infill.



Existing condition of the "Old Jail"

Vermillion Neighborhood Center

The frontage along Huntersville-Concord Road is proposed for mixed-use buildings, townhomes, and live-work units along a new entrance street to Vermillion lining up with First Street. Buildings should create a suitable street presence with significant architecture. In addition, the uses should encourage pedestrian activity by providing some local services such as dry cleaners, coffee shops, hair salons, and doctor's offices.

While larger retail uses such as a full-service grocery store were evaluated as part of this planning process, ultimately they were discouraged in this location given the availability of land west of Old Statesville Road (NC 115). Buildings should generally not exceed the footprint of a large house to maintain a neighborhood scale for this area.



Townhomes, Vermillion

The Mill Neighborhood



Map showing the proposed Downtown Master Plan combined with the planned build-out of the Vermillion neighborhood

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MILL NEIGHBORHOOD

- Acquire right-of-way and construct northern two-way pair connection for Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Main Street.
- Complete site preparation for the Anchor Mill site.
- Issue Request for Development Proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment of the Anchor Mill site.
- Encourage the construction of a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) on the Anchor Mill site.
- Require a new street connection between Church Street and Huntersville-Concord Road as part of the redevelopment process.
- Remove the Manufactured Home Overlay (MH-O) District zoning from the old mill village and consider zoning the area as Transit Oriented Development-Residential (TOD-R) to encourage high-quality urban infill.
- Permit neighborhood-scaled, mixed-use development along Huntersville-Concord Road as NC Zoning.

Gateway Corridors

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Gilead Road Gateway

Connecting to Interstate 77 (at Exit 23), Presbyterian Hospital-Huntersville, the Huntersville Business Park, the Rosedale shopping center and large neighborhoods on Huntersville's west side, Gilead Road is the primary entrance to Downtown Huntersville.

At the US 21 intersection, shopping center and outparcel development dominate the landscape with buildings set back from the street and large parking lots in front. There is no visual cue that the Downtown area is less than a mile away. The Plan therefore recommends the installation of gateway signage and landscaping at the US 21 intersection with Gilead Road.

Gilead Road Corridor Design Standards

From the Post Office to Huntersville Elementary School, at Sherwood Drive, single family homes line the street. Some of these homes have converted to non-residential uses such as professional offices, consignment shops, and a bed and breakfast inn.

The present zoning (Neighborhood Residential) permits the conversion of these homes to mixed-use structures provided the conversion includes a residential use as a component. This permits non-residential development to take place, while leaving the fabric - the building's scale and massing - of the street while minimizing potential negative impacts to the existing residences. However, this mixed-use requirement is quite onerous in renovation work because it requires expensive tenant separation construction and is difficult to market for the small business owner.

In addition, as new development and redevelopment occurs, buildings are now required by Town Code to be brought to the street with parking to the side or rear. This has led to some odd arrangements in recent development where the new buildings are much closer to the street than the older residential structures.

The Plan attempts to rectify both of these issues. First, the Plan encourages the setback of buildings along the entrance corridors consistent with the historic front yards. This build-to line should include a toler-

ance of up to 10 feet to permit some variation in facade. This dimension does not include front porches and stoops which are always encouraged to encroach towards the street as valuable, semi-public space.

This setback serves to ensure compatibility with the existing structures as well as create a sense of arrival into the Downtown. The setback also serves to visually decompress travelers who have just left the US 21 intersection and are looking to "calm down". Parking should still be relegated to the side or rear yards.

Second, the Plan recommends that the mixed-use requirement be removed to permit single-use occupancy of the buildings. The purpose behind the regulation is first and foremost to ensure a smooth transition to the neighborhoods flanking the corridor. To that end, the neighborhood's interests are protected while ensuring economical adaptive re-use of the structures.

Third and final, the Plan recommends stricter design standards on new construction to ensure high quality redevelopment or infill.



Images of mixed-use buildings designed with residential scale and character



Infill development along the Gilead Road Corridor (Note how the infill respects the historic setbacks of the existing homes)



Possible locations for relocated aerial utilities

Gateway Corridors



Old Statesville Road Corridor

There are a number of notable infill and redevelopment opportunities. On the north side, the Plan recommends that redevelopment of any existing homes north of the planned new street should be set back consistent with the historic front yards with the parking to the rear.

This development should follow the same design guidelines as the Gilead Road corridor utilizing building forms that are residential in scale and character.

Gilead Road Streetscape

Given the current level of investment in the three-lane section of Gilead Road with curb, gutter, and some sidewalk, any improvements should attempt to utilize this infrastructure to the extent possible. The only major impediment to a new streetscape program is the presence of the overhead utility lines.

On the section of Gilead Road from Old Statesville Road west to Sherwood Drive, on-street parking can easily be added on one side of the street (preferably the south side) to support the businesses and office conversions taking place. This will bolster the commercial opportunities by providing easily accessible and visible parking. From Sherwood Drive west to US 21, a paved shoulder for use by bicycles should be striped along both sides of Gilead Road. This offers a visible and safer alternative for cyclists. In addition, it may help to lower the actual travel speeds in the area with slightly narrower lane widths.

The 1999 ColeJenest and Stone plan for the Gilead Road Streetscape relied heavily on the relocation or burial of the existing aerial utility lines. As utility burial is quite expensive, relocation may be a more economical solution. This Plan recommends the relocation of the primary transmission lines to either a new alley running behind the first tier of lots along the south side of Gilead Road or in the partially opened Holbrook Street right-of-way. In the meantime, where an opportunity becomes available to remove any lines (power, cable, telephone, etc.) during upgrades or repairs, all efforts to do so should take place.



Corridor development along Old Statesville Road (NC 115)

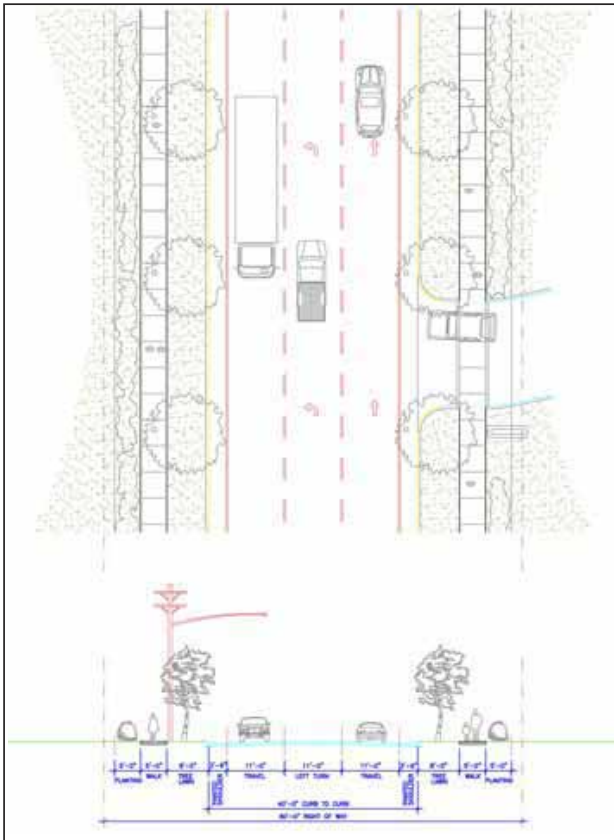


Gilead Road looking east towards Dorentoren

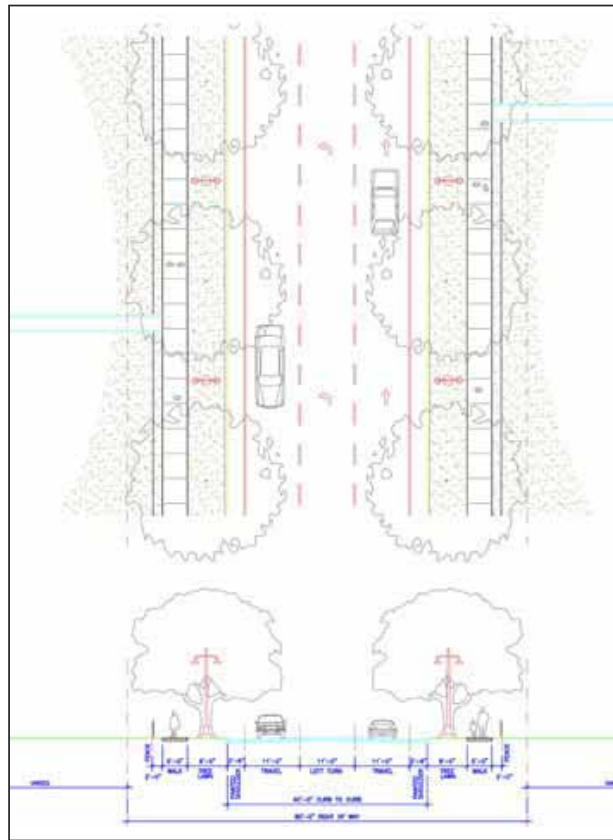
Another recommendation in the previous study is to construct a planted median. This median, while providing an opportunity for additional street trees would likely be problematic with the local Fire Marshall and NC DOT. The travel lanes would be too narrow, by their standards, and could significantly delay emergency vehicles in case of a blockage in one lane.

In truth, if the utility lines are removed and large trees are permitted to be planted, the resulting canopy will help, over time, to minimize the street's overall width. Also, dedicated bike lanes can be installed using the current pavement section.

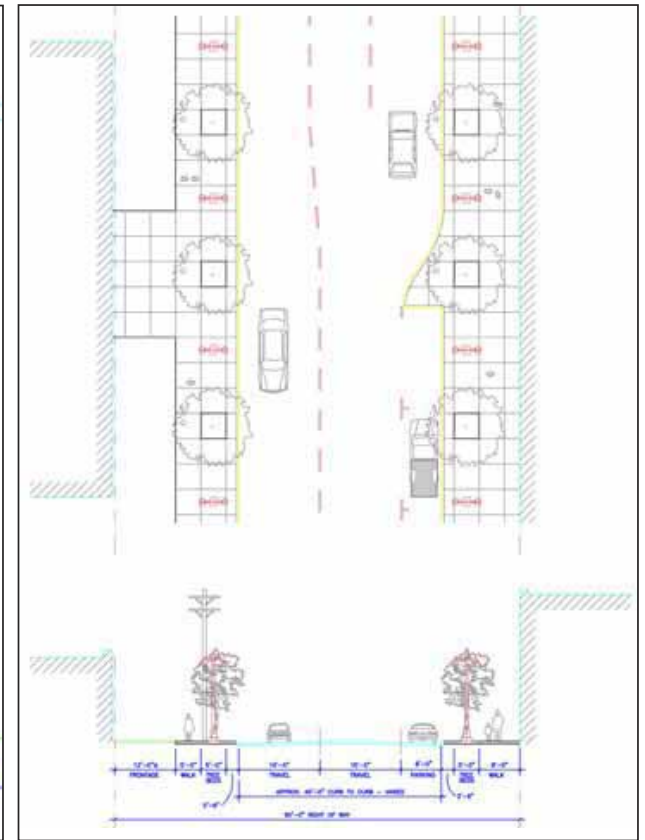
Gateway Corridors



Proposed Streetscape treatment for Gilead Road with overhead utilities, small maturing trees between the sidewalk and the street, and bike lanes



Alternate Streetscape treatment for Gilead Road with relocated utilities, canopy trees between the sidewalk and the street, and bike lanes



Proposed on-street parking on one side of Gilead Road east of Sherwood Road

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GATEWAY CORRIDORS

- Install gateway signage at the US 21/Gilead Road intersection.
- Revise zoning standards to require conformance with the setbacks, scale and residential character of the existing houses along gateways to the Town Center.
- Investigate relocating the aerial utility lines to a new alley to the south side of Gilead Road or in a fully opened Holbrook Street right-of-way.
- Install new streetscape elements along Gilead Road including decorative lighting (with banner arms), street trees, and wider sidewalks.
- Restripe the existing pavement for bike lanes on both sides.
- Install on-street parking spaces on the south side of Gilead Road east of Sherwood Drive.

Neighborhood Infill

In addition to the exciting development opportunities noted in previous sections of this report, the following development possibilities also exist

Parkview Apartments

The tract of land between the Parkview Apartments and the Elementary School property could be developed with 208 new apartments. The development should focus on providing usable open space as well as a greenway connection along the proposed trail. The proposed design uses the established street connections and building types of the Parkview Apartments as the model.

Southeast Infill

Southeast of the Town Center District, fronting Church Street are two areas where future housing development opportunities exist. The first area comprises a vacant lot, the rear portions of three very deep single family lots, and two land-locked vacant parcels. In this area the Plan shows a new street connecting Church Street to Huntersville-Concord Road. Along this street the Plan suggests opportunities for infill residential development with a minimum of ten single family parcels.

Huntersville United Methodist Church property

Because the church has decided to move to a larger campus on Stumptown Road, their current downtown property presents a development opportunity. The rear of the property has sufficient land to construct infill residential or mixed-use building along its northwestern boundary.

C. E. Holbrook Property

The C.E. Holbrook property is bordered by Gibson Park to the south, Church Street to the west, Hunter Village group home to the north, and the Garden District of Vermillion to the east. The Plan recommends that any new development provide a new street from Church Street and a second one from Gibson Park connecting into the Garden District. The neighborhood square shown in the plan is surrounded with townhomes and single family homes similar to the Garden District.



Proposed new development between the Parkview Apartments and the Elementary School property



Proposed development on the rear of the current Huntersville United Methodist Church property

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL OPPORTUNITIES

- Permit and encourage infill development consistent with this Master Plan.



Development opportunity on the C.E. Holbrook property and others along Church Street

Marketing & Branding Strategy

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Marketing and Branding Issues

As was evidenced by a professed lack of identity by the many charrette participants, it became clear to the team that the Town of Huntersville has very little "brand equity". In the region, many still this area as an old farming community that has rapidly suburbanized. In fact, one trip to the Lake Norman Visitor's Center yielded brochures and information about Huntersville's neighbors (Cornelius, Davidson, and Mooresville) but nothing about Huntersville.

In addition, there is a more serious concern that the identity of the Town is being precluded by area shopping center at Interstate 77 interchanges. Birkdale Village and NorthCross at Exit 25 and Rosedale at Exit 23 have become places identified more by their exit than the Town.

Therefore, any marketing and branding strategy for the Downtown area must first start with a community-wide strategy then extend into its various shopping districts and neighborhoods. This strategy should be rooted in the heritage of the community, which has been deeply tied to the land. Once a strong farm-to-market town, Huntersville remains the horticultural center of the region. This land-based heritage, coupled with the town's planning efforts that are sensitive to land preservation, make the marketing strategy even stronger.

The result is a "green" approach to the logo that uses horticultural themes, a relatively contemporary font to appeal to new residents, and a positioning that is unique both within Huntersville and in the greater region.

The Logo Design

It was determined that the best approach was to go with a two logo system. A town seal and a marketing logo.

The town seal is a slight alteration of the current identity using the icon of the Town Hall. The marketing logo is focused on the Horticultural past of the area by incorporating green colors and leaves into the logo and icon.

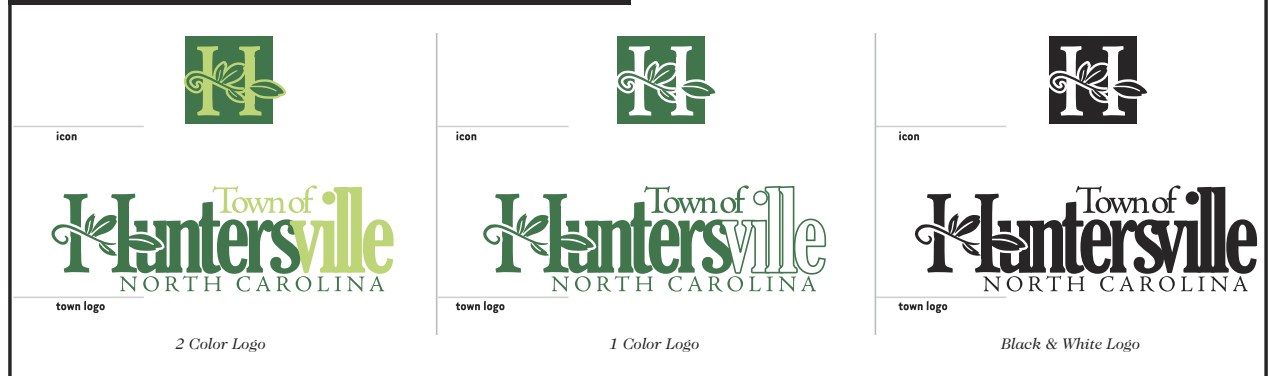
The design works well in 2 color, 1 color, and black and white. The style has also been incorporated into department and event logos to begin to develop a branding identity the Town of Huntersville.



Updated Town Seal



Town Seal cast in bronze



Huntersville
DOWNTOWN

Marketing & Branding Strategy

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Additional applications using the proposed logo and seal system created for the Town of Huntersville



Incorporation of logo into Town events schedule



Application on Town Vehicles



New Town Parks and Recreation Guide



Town Staff and Elected Official business cards



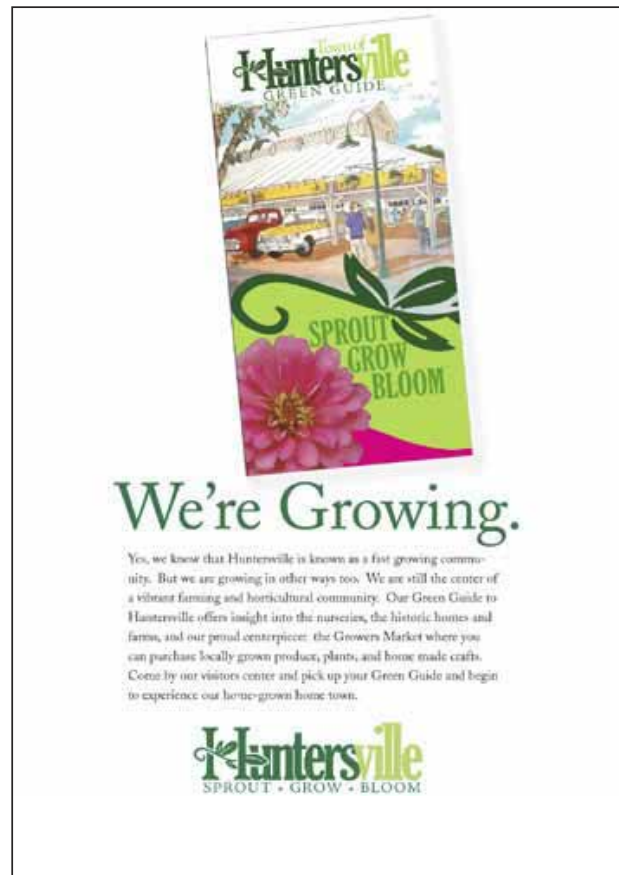
Town Flag



Marketing & Branding Strategy

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETING & BRANDING: YEAR 1

- **Adopt a “popular” logo for marketing and branding.** This does not necessarily need to replace the formal Town Seal etc. (but could). The true purpose is to have an image that is used on signage, marketing, and branding. We illustrated a logo that is contemporary without being too modern, related to horticulture, and is unique within the community and the region. To further highlight the Downtown area, we recommend simultaneously launching the Downtown Huntersville logo.
- **Implement Gateway Signs.** The Rotary Club is already planning on doing signs for the community. We suggest signs that use the new logo, perhaps a “casual” stone wall and split rail as a homage to the town’s heritage. The contemporary logo juxtaposed against these traditional materials will create great interest.
- **Form a Huntersville Downtown Business Association.** This is perhaps the most important single step that needs to be considered in the first year. We recommend that Parks and Recreation be the Town’s Staff Support for this organization with assistance from the Planning Department. We recommend that annual dues be between \$50 and \$100 per business and that the Town provides at least a 50% match to the dues raised with a budget goal of \$10,000. The group should be responsible for co-op marketing, launching the branding, creating a brochure, and event series coordination.
- **Create the Green Guide to Huntersville.** This is Huntersville’s shopping, dining, and activity brochure. The brochure should focus first on the horticultural, historical, and garden aspects of the community and then profile the shopping and dining opportunities in the Huntersville Downtown District. We have provided a conceptual design for this brochure.
- **Adopt a Visitor Friendly Website.** This should be launched in concert with the Green Guide Brochure and could be integrated into the town’s existing website.



Town of Huntersville "Green Guide"



Conceptual Gateway Signage



Conceptual New Web Page for Town Government

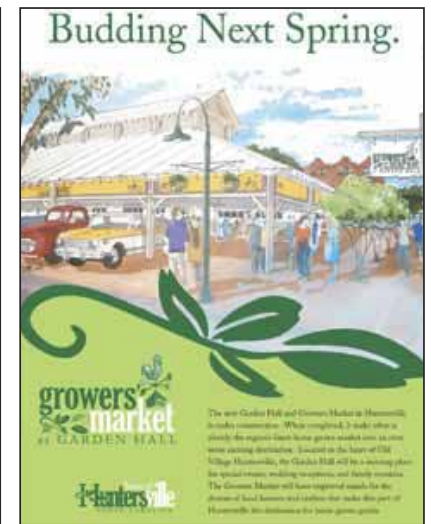
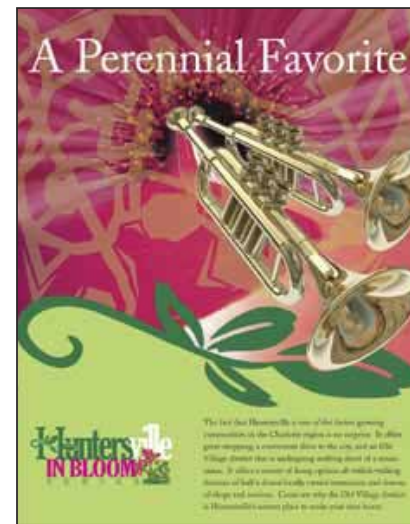


Marketing & Branding Strategy

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KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETING & BRANDING: YEAR 2

- **Begin Selective Co-Op Ad Placement.** In year two the Huntersville Downtown Business Association should begin working on co-op ads that are strategically placed in both resident- and visitor-oriented publications. Local real estate publications are good ways to gain access to the population moving into the community while local newspapers and neighborhood newsletters are excellent options to reach existing residents.
- **Implement Banner Program.** The branding can be carried out very effectively in a festive banner program. We have provided conceptual banner designs.
- **Implement Spring and Fall Event Series.** These should be SMALL, regularly scheduled events centered on music, art and food. We are proposing the "Huntersville in Bloom" Series for the Spring and the "Huntersville Harvest" Series for the Fall. These should be volunteer staffed by the Downtown Huntersville Business Association with strong professional staffing support from the Town's Parks and Recreation department.
- **Coordinate Programming with Parks and Recreation.** Events, seminars, and activities related to the horticultural heritage of Huntersville and activities will be increasingly important in continuing the branding and marketing of the community. The Parks and Recreation Department would create these events.
- **Sign the Green Trail.** The logo for the pedestrian network as the Green Trail should begin to be signed.
- **Host a Familiarization Tour of Huntersville for Regional Press.** By year two the "green" focus of the community will be well underway. At this point, the regional press should be offered a chance to learn about Huntersville's Green Guide, the community's horticultural focus, and the re-invention of the Downtown Area. The goal here is "free marketing" for the community's new brand.



Mock Advertisements



Grower's Market Tote for shopping use throughout the Huntersville area



Sample Banner to hang across Gilead Road



Marketing & Branding Strategy

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KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARKETING & BRANDING: YEARS 3 - 5

- **Convert the Downtown Business Association into a Business Improvement District.** Up to this point, the Downtown Business Association has been a voluntary organization based on dues. In year three or four, we recommend converting this organization into a Business Improvement District that utilizes a special tax assessment to fund a more comprehensive program. The staffing should still come from the Town of Huntersville and the Town itself should contribute to the staffing costs. Ideally, an organization of this nature should have an initial budget of about approximately \$150,000.
- **Implement a Comprehensive Wayfinding System.** Using the branding, a community wayfinding system should be implemented that will direct visitors to key amenities.



Urban Detailing

Urban Art

What differentiates a true urban environment from a shopping center is the level of detail that adorns the public realm. Many communities have incorporated fun and educational artwork into their sidewalks and public spaces.

In Greenville, SC, a high school student created “Mice on Main”, a series of well-placed (and often hidden) sculptures of mice based on the popular children’s book “Goodnight Moon.” A brozen sculpture of the book and one mouse are located on the fountain in front of the Hyatt Regency hotel. The other eight mice are installed throughout the downtown and finding them has become a game that entertains children and adults alike.

The could consider initiating an “Adopt-A-Square” Program with the local arts community and high schools for the creative placement of civic art within the sidewalks



One of the “Mice on Main” from Greenville, SC



Famous quote embedded in sidewalk in Greenville, SC



Artwork embedded in the sidewalk in Cornelius, NC



Statue in Englewood, CO Transit-Oriented Development



Public art with a seat in Asheville, NC



Public art as part of a wall in Asheville, NC

Urban Detailing

Storefront Signage

In an eclectic district like a Downtown where pedestrian activity is expected to be heavy, it is inappropriate to encourage suburban-style signage standards for storefronts. While the Town's regulations do permit a wide variety of signage in the downtown, no merchant has taken advantage of the changes in sign fabrication technology. Specifically, merchants should consider the use of projecting signs and three-dimensional signs as a way to not only advertise the store but also to add ornamentation and detail to what are otherwise rather plain storefronts.



Encourage new signage on storefronts

Once they arrive at a particular store, the storefront signage must be clean and concise. Signage on the glass should maintain the opacity of the window so as not to obscure viewing into the store. Store hours should be clear and regular. All signs in the windows should be professionally prepared. Avoid hand made signs that look cheap and unattractive as they will give the potential buyer the impression that the contents inside the store are as equally unappealing.

In addition to wall signs and under-canopy signs which should be provided for nearly every storefront, there are a number of buildings that should consider using wall murals for their end walls as they turn down the block. Wall murals were historically used by individual manufacturers such as Coca-Cola to advertise their products. These, of course, were replaced by billboards when the age of the automobile overtook the downtowns. In many communities, these murals have become part of the nostalgia of the area and in fact, are being replicated in new suburban locations such as at the SouthPoint Mall in Durham as a way to break up large blank walls.

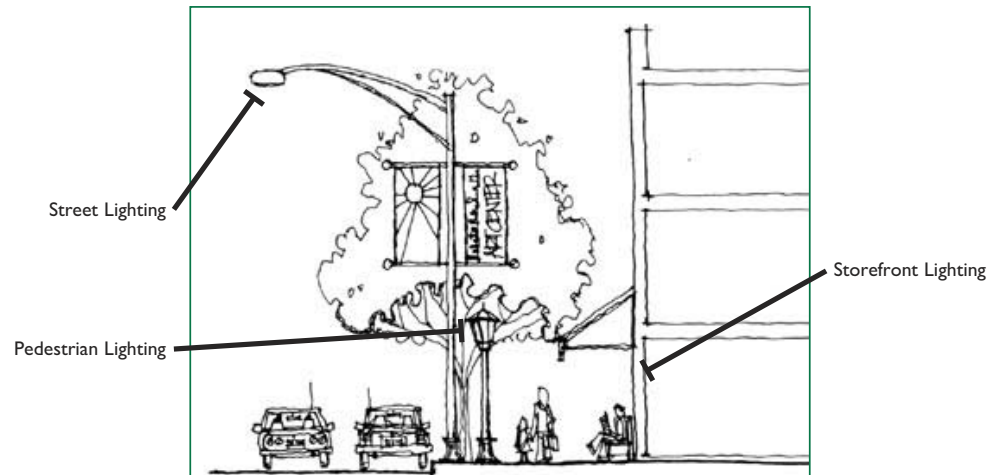
A facade improvement grant program could be examined with incentives that may be distributed. The program should also include signage and should specifically encourage new and interesting signage types.

Nighttime Lighting

There are three basic zones of lighting a Downtown - Street Lighting, Pedestrian Lighting, and Storefront Lighting. The first two are generally effective but due to spacing and obstructions such as street trees and signage can have long shadows and dark areas. The most effective way to supplement these areas is with indirect lighting cast from shopfront windows. Simple lighting of display windows can provide a measure of security to pedestrians by ensuring an even allocation of light on the sidewalk area.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR URBAN DETAILING

- Encourage the placement of various forms of public art throughout the downtown.
- Encourage the use of new and interesting signage for shops and restaurants.
- Encourage shops to leave window display lights and/or interior lights on during evening hours to provide better night lighting throughout the Downtown area.

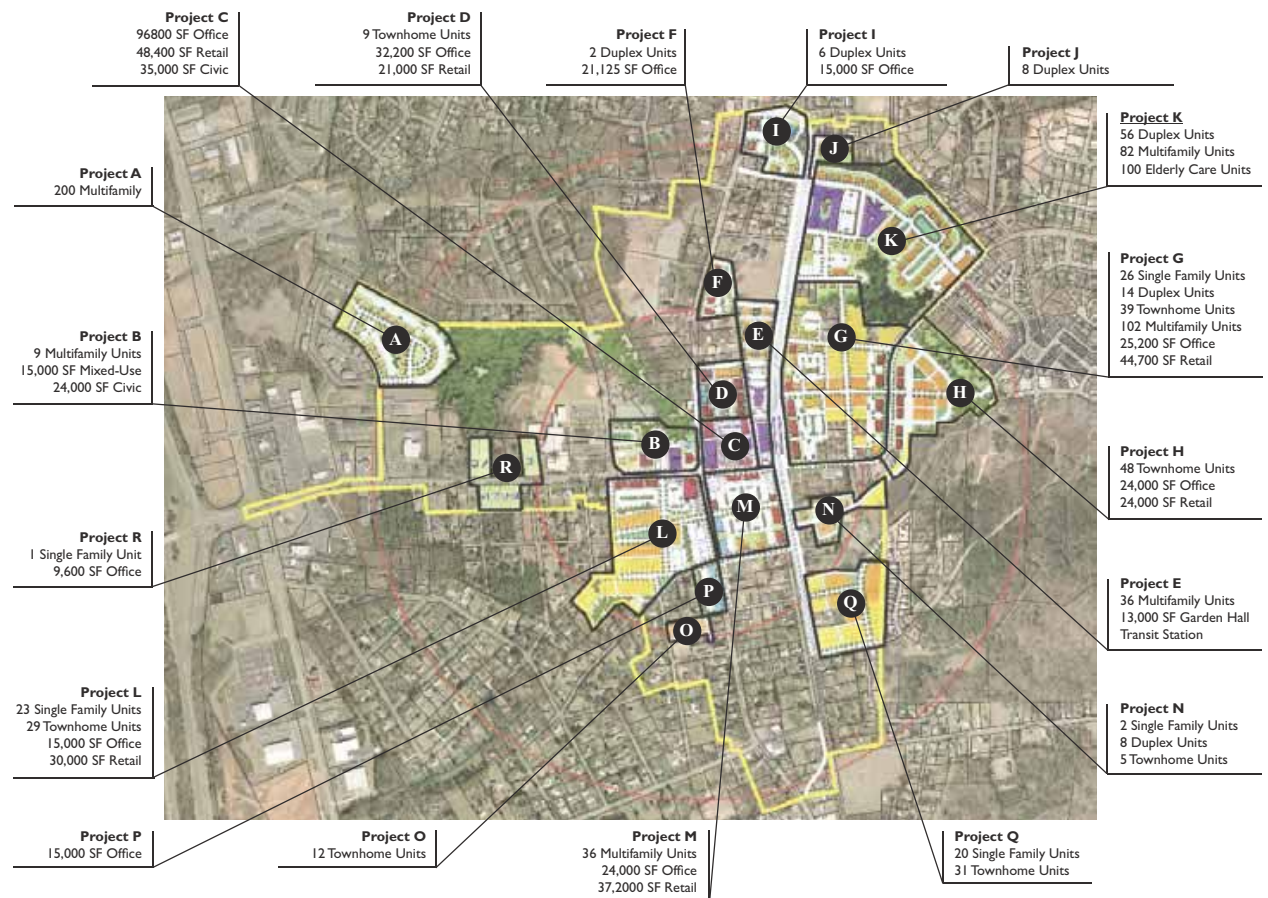


Development Analysis

Downtown Plan New Development Totals

At build-out, the Downtown Huntersville Plan proposes the following new development opportunities for the study area:

- 180,950 square feet of Retail
- 208,400 square feet of Office
- 82,000 square feet of Civic / Institutional
- 100 Elderly Care Units
- 79 Single Family Residential Units
- 178 Attached Single Family Residential Units
- 459 Multi-family Residential Units
- Bed & Breakfast Inn Expansion
- 27,600 square foot Civic Plaza



Development Analysis

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Project	Single Family	Duplex Units	Townhomes	Multi-Family	Elderly Care	Office	Retail	Civic	Other	Parking	Lot Type	Units Removed	Notes
A				200						400	Surface	0	Expansion of Parkview Apartments
B				9		7500	7500	24000		32	Surface	0	9 MF units are for the B&B Expansion; 24000 sf Police Station Expansion
C						96800	48400	35000		270	Deck	1	20000 sf Town Hall Expansion; 15000 sf Arts / Cultural Facility
D			9			32200	21000			123	Surface	5	New development with connecting street
E				36					13000	182	Surface	4	13000 sf Farmers Market / Transit Station
F		2				21125					Surface	3	Office or Mixed-Use Infill
G	26	14	39	102		25200	44,700			408	Surface	53	Redevelopment using existing block structure; 15 townhome above retail near transit
H			48			24000	24000			146	Surface	1	Development of vacant tract
I		6				15000				50	Surface	7	New development along new northern alignment
J		8								16	Surface	0	Infill and redevelopment
K		56		82	100					277	Surface	0	Anchor Mill Elderly Care Facility
L	23		29			15000	30000			202	Surface	5	SW Quadrant with new road
M				36		24000	37200			273	Surface	6	SE Quadrant
N	2	8	5							30	Surface	0	Infill along new street
O			12							24	Surface	0	Infill by Church
P						15000				58	Surface	2	Office Infill across from Church
Q	20		31							102	Surface	0	Mixed Residential Infill
R	1					9600				48	Surface	2	Office and Residential Infill along Main Street
Totals	72	94	173	465	100	285425	212800	59000	13000	2641		89	
Construction Value	\$100,000	\$160,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$50,000	\$110	\$90	\$175	\$25				
Total Value	\$7,200,000	\$15,040,000	\$12,110,000	\$32,550,000	\$5,000,000	\$31,396,750	\$19,152,000	\$10,325,000	\$325,000				

Development Analysis

The Development Capacity Analysis table on this page shows a potential investment value of more than \$122,000,000 which added to the present day land values of almost \$11,500,000 brings the **Net Incremental Development Taxable Value** over **\$133,000,000** for projects identified throughout the Huntersville Downtown Plan. Added to the existing development value left in place within this plan (valued almost \$100,000,000), the total Downtown area taxable value is approximately \$233,000,000.

Public investment for the expansion of Town Hall and the Police Station, new Civic Plaza, redeveloped Grower's Market, Arts & Cultural Center, and parking deck are estimated to cost approximately \$16,000,000. Based on the annual tax return for the total Downtown area taxable value over a 20 year period, the Town could receive over \$14,600,000, therefore paying for a substantial portion of the improvement the civic improvements with the incremental tax growth in the Downtown.

TAXABLE VALUE ANALYSIS				
Predevelopment Land Value	\$11,492,000	Town Hall Expansion	20000	\$3,500,000
<u>Total Post-Development Bldg Valuation</u>	<u>\$122,448,750</u>	Police Expansion	24000	\$4,200,000
<i>Net Post Development Taxable Value</i>	<i>\$133,940,750</i>	Arts/Cultural Facility	<u>20000</u>	<u>\$3,000,000</u>
			64000	\$10,700,000
Other Existing Development Value	\$99,356,000			
		Civic Plaza		\$750,000
Total Downtown Area Taxable Value	\$233,296,750	Parking Deck		\$3,480,000
		Civic Buildings		\$10,700,000
Net Annual Tax Value	\$653,231	Garden Hall		\$325,000
10 Year Return	\$6,532,309	Land for Public Bldgs		<u>\$912,700</u>
20 Year Return	\$14,697,695 *	Total Public Investment		\$16,167,700
<i>*(with 2.5% annual growth after 10 years)</i>				

Implementation Strategies

In order for the vision and recommendations expressed by The Downtown Master Plan to be realized, specific implementation steps will need to be taken by the Town of Huntersville. Many of the implementation steps seek to provide the conditions under which the vision can be achieved, by way of providing sensible land use regulation, necessary public investments, the development of appropriate programs and policies, and other actions.

The implementation of this Plan will depend on action being taken to:

- Revise existing development regulations;
- Undertake more detailed studies to resolve and explore the opportunities and constraints identified by this Plan;
- Promote and assist specific objectives; and,
- Make infrastructure investments.

The execution of the implementation steps will likely be phased and is subject to a variety of factors, which determine their timing. These include:

- The availability of personnel and financial resources necessary to implement specific proposals;
- Whether an implementation step is a necessary precursor to or component of the rational evaluation of a new development project;
- The interdependence of the various implementation tasks, in particular, the degree to which implementing one item is dependent upon the successful completion of another item; and,
- The relative severity of the challenge which a particular implementation task is designed to remedy.

In view of these factors, it is not possible to put forward a precise timetable for the various implementation items. The priority for implementation will be listed by the period in which items should be completed. Year 1 items are the highest priority while Year 10+ project could be completed as resources allow. It is expected that Year 1 items would be completed during the 2005-2006 Fiscal Year.

Key:

Town - Town of Huntersville
CATS - Charlotte Area Transit System
NC DOT - North Carolina Department of Transportation

Implementation Strategies

Page Number	Project/Task	Implemented By	Coordination With	Year 1	Year 2-5	Year 5-10	Year 10+
STUDIES, PLANS AND COORDINATION							
37	Evaluate the location of the Police Station for future expansion.	Town		X			
19	Implement a two-way pair street system using Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Main Street for north-south traffic movement. (Feasibility Study and Preliminary Engineering)	Town, NC DOT		X			
30	Inventory and evaluate available properties in the Downtown for public buildings facilities.	Town		X			
21	Strategically manage the lots in the southeast quadrant for common use.	Town, Property Owners	Business Owners		X		
22	Establish final path and secure right-of-way for trail system from Vermillion to Rosedale.	Town	Property Owners		X		
23	Establish an impervious surface "bank" from area within the North Mecklenburg Park to be used to offset requirements in the Downtown Area.	Town	Private Developers, Mecklenburg County		X		
41	Require a new street connection between Church Street and Huntersville-Concord Road as part of the redevelopment process.	Private Developers	Town		X		
19	In cooperation with CATS, construct the commuter transit platform on the north side of Huntersville-Concord Road between Main Street and Church Street.	CATS	Town			X	
19	Maintain rail crossings at the Anchor Mill site, Huntersville-Concord Road, and Gibson Park.	CATS	Town			X	
37	Construct a new street connection between Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Main Street approximately 400 feet north of the proposed parking deck.	Private Developers	Town			X	
37	Extend existing streets into new development.	Private Developers	Town			X	
45	Investigate relocating the aerial utility lines to a new alley to the south side of Gilead Road or in a fully opened Holbrook Street right-of-way.	Town, Utility Companies	NC DOT			X	
POLICY AND ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS							
37	Encourage sensitive redevelopment/infill that maintains the urbanism of the Downtown while permitting new/modern architectural styles.	Town		X			
37	Require buildings within 800 feet of the intersection of Gilead Road and Old Statesville Road (NC 115) to be a minimum of 2 stories.	Town		X			
41	Remove the Manufactured Home Overlay (MH-O) District zoning from the old mill village and consider zoning the area as Transit Oriented Development-Residential (TOD-R) to encourage high-quality urban infill.	Town	Property Owners	X	X		
41	Permit neighborhood-scaled, mixed-use development along Huntersville-Concord Road as NC Zoning.	Town	Property Owners, Private Developers	X			

Implementation Strategies

Page Number	Project/Task	Implemented By	Coordination With	Year 1	Year 2-5	Year 5-10	Year 10+
45	Revise zoning standards to require conformance with the setbacks, scale and residential character of the existing houses along gateways to the Town Center.	Town	Property Owners	X			
19	Adopt an Access Management Policy for Gilead Road and Old Statesville Road (NC 115) to limit driveways.	Town	NC DOT		X		

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS							
21	As an interim measure, work with the property owners to promote Town Hall employee parking in the Mama Mia's Too lot.	Town	Property Owner	X			
30	Consider acquisition of parcel behind Town Hall.	Town		X			
30	Explore acquisition by fee simple or through lease, the area around the Holbrook House.	Town		X			
30	Plan, Design and Construct a Civic Plaza adjacent to Town Hall.	Town		X	X		
23	Install "green" roof systems on all new civic buildings	Town			X		
21	Re-stripe Gilead Road to place on-street parallel parking between Sherwood Drive and NC 115 where pavement width is available.	Town	CATS		X		
21	Provide on-street parallel parking along Old Statesville Road (NC 115) where feasible within the study area.	Town	NC DOT		X		
21	Extend on-street parking along Main Street and establish on-street parallel parking on Church Street to serve the commuter transit platform and commercial and civic buildings on Main Street.	Town	CATS, NC DOT		X		
22	Begin to construct portions of the Green Trail focusing on those areas between Vermillion and the Holbrook Park as the highest priority.	Town		X	X		
30	Develop an Arts and Cultural Center building as an integral part of the Civic Plaza.	Town, Non-Profit Arts and Cultural Groups	Arts and Science Council	X	X		
30	Explore acquisition of the parcel between the Farmer's Market and Huntersville-Concord Road.	Town		X	X		
30	Redevelop the existing Farmer's Market into the Grower's Market at Garden Hall.	Town		X	X		
30	Relocate the Town's caboose to the front of the Garden Hall site along with a children's "sprayground."	Town		X	X		
19, 41	Acquire right-of-way and construct two-way pair connection for Old Statesville Road (NC 115) and Main Street.	Town, NC DOT	Property Owners		X		

Implementation Strategies

Page Number	Project/Task	Implemented By	Coordination With	Year 1	Year 2-5	Year 5-10	Year 10+
30	Expand Town Hall.	Town			✕		
45	Install on-street parking spaces on the south side of Gilead Road east of Sherwood Drive.	Private Development	Town		✕		
19, 30	Construct the commuter transit station as a part of the Garden Hall.	CATS, Town				✕	
19	Realign Church Street to accommodate the commuter transit platform.	CATS	Town			✕	
21, 30	Construct a shared use structured parking deck for at least 400 spaces between Maxwell Street and Old Statesville Road (NC 115).	Town, CATS, Private Development				✕	
45	Install new streetscape elements along Gilead Road including decorative lighting (with banner arms), street trees, and wider sidewalks.	Town	NC DOT, Property Owners			✕	
45	Restripe the existing pavement for bike lanes on both sides.	Town	NC DOT			✕	

SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE							
23	Encourage the application of LEED building standards for all new civic buildings.	Town		✕	✕	✕	✕
37	Encourage the exterior renovation of Cashion's Convenience Store.	Cashion's Owners		✕	✕		
41	Complete site preparation for the Anchor Mill site.	Town		✕			
41	Issue Request for Development Proposals (RFP) for the redevelopment of the Anchor Mill site.	Town		✕			
37	Encourage the improvement of the American Legion building.	American Legion		✕	✕		
53	Encourage the placement of various forms of public art throughout the downtown.	Town, Local Arts Community	NC DOT (Enhancement Grant Funding)	✕	✕	✕	✕
53	Encourage the use of new and interesting signage for shops and restaurants.	Business Owners, Town	Downtown Business Association	✕	✕	✕	✕
37	Encourage the expansion of the Garden Gate Bed and Breakfast Inn.	Garden Gate Owners			✕		
37	Encourage the preservation of the Old Doctor's House adjacent to Cashion's Convenience Store on Old Statesville Road (NC 115).	Town, Landmarks Commission	Property Owners		✕		
41	Encourage the construction of a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) on the Anchor Mill site.	Private Developers	Town		✕		

Implementation Strategies

Page Number	Project/Task	Implemented By	Coordination With	Year 1	Year 2-5	Year 5-10	Year 10+
46	Permit and encourage infill development consistent with this Master Plan.	Private Developers	Town	✗	✗	✗	✗
53	Encourage shops to leave window display lights and/or interior lights on during evening hours to provide better night lighting throughout the Town Center District.	Business Owners	Downtown Business Association	✗	✗	✗	✗
MARKETING, BUSINESS, AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT							
49	Adopt a “popular” logo for marketing and branding.	Town		✗			✗
45, 49	Implement Gateway Signs.	Town	NC DOT	✗			✗
49	Form a Huntersville Downtown Business Association.	Business Owners, Property Owners	Town	✗			
49	Create the Green Guide to Huntersville.	Town		✗			
49	Adopt a Visitor Friendly Website.	Town		✗			
50	Begin Selective Co-Op Ad Placement.	Downtown Business Association			✗		
50	Implement Banner Program.	Town, Downtown Business Association			✗	✗	✗
50	Implement Spring and Fall Event Series.	Town, Downtown Business Association			✗	✗	✗
50	Coordinate Programming with Parks and Recreation.	Town	Downtown Business Association		✗		
50	Sign the Green Trail.	Town			✗		
50	Host a Familiarization Tour of Huntersville for Regional Press.	Town, Downtown Business Association			✗		
51	Convert the Downtown Business Association into a Business Improvement District.	Town	Downtown Business Association		✗		
51	Implement a Comprehensive Wayfinding System.	Town, Downtown Business Association			✗		



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Appendix A: Public Investments by the Town

In order to fully implement this Downtown Plan, a number of strategic public investments will need to be made, accompanied by infrastructure improvements associated with any development. First, the civic investments include the Town Hall and Police expansions, the redevelopment of the existing Farmer's Market site, parking deck with liner buildings and the Arts & Cultural facility. In many of these cases, land acquisition will be required. For the purposes of this Plan, all land costs are based on the 2004 assessed valuation by the Mecklenburg County Tax Office.

The Civic Plaza

The most prominent and highest priority public investment called for in this Plan is the construction of the Civic Plaza. The Civic Plaza and the associated improvements are prominent as the centerpiece in Downtown Huntersville and makes a highly visible aesthetic improvement for the entire town. Being able to fund a civic project such as the plan proposes requires a certain amount of creativity and leadership. The Project includes a hardscaped surface suitable for parking, some landscaping, and a small performance area.

The Plan requires the acquisition or control of approximately 1 acre surrounding the Holbrook House in combination with the existing Town Hall parking lot. In addition to a fee simple purchase of a portion of that property, the Town may also consider a long-term lease or a full purchase of the site with a lease-back option on the House.

Area of Construction/Expansion: ~1.25 acres
Source of Funds: General Fund
Land Acquisition Required: ~1 acre

Estimated Construction Cost:	\$750,000
Land Costs:	\$567,910
Total Estimated Project Costs:	\$1,317,910

The Arts and Cultural Facility

Adjacent to the Civic Plaza is a proposed Arts and Cultural facility. While the building is recommended to incorporate sustainable design technologies, adding costs, the interior upfit would be simple and flexible to accommodate a wide variety of users and formats. This facility would sit at the rear of the Civic Plaza on a portion of the Holbrook House property. This facility can be funded with a partnership through area museums and/or arts councils and revenues for admissions, leasing for private events, and parking revenues.

Area of Construction/Expansion: 20,000 square feet
Source of Funds: General Fund/Tourism Fund/PARTF Grant/Arts & Sciences Council/Other
Land Acquisition Required: .25 acre

Estimated Construction Cost:	\$3,000,000
Land Costs:	\$141,977
Total Estimated Project Costs:	\$3,141,977

Parking Deck

A 400 space parking deck, with liner buildings along the road frontages is proposed to satisfy the parking requirements for these facilities and the proposed Commuter Transit platform a block away. Given the opportunity to construct two new mixed-use buildings up to 50,000 square feet each, there is a significant opportunity for private sector involvement in the deck construction and financing. Also, CATS estimates a need for 250 spaces to serve the commuter rail station prompting their potential participation in the costs. Additional revenue for the deck could also come from payments in lieu of parking fees and nominal parking charges.

Area of Construction/Expansion: 400 space - 5 story
Source of Funds: General Fund/Parking Fees/Private Sector/CATS
Land Acquisition Required: 1.35 acres

Estimated Construction Cost:	\$3,480,000
Land Costs:	\$219,000
Total Estimated Project Costs:	\$3,699,000

Town Hall

As mentioned previously in this Plan, the expansion of the Town Hall will require the purchase of the Auto Parts Store and property to the north of the existing Town Hall.

Area of Construction/Expansion: 20,000 square feet
Source of Funds: General Fund
Land Acquisition Required: .36 acres

Estimated Construction Cost:	\$3,500,000
Land Costs:	\$232,700
Total Estimated Project Costs:	\$3,732,700

Police Station

The programmed expansion the Police Station is approximately 20,000 square feet. If the facility expands in place, rather than moving, it will require land acquisition to the rear or to the side. Neither option provides an optimal site. Therefore, the Plan recommends the relocation of the facility to another location.

Area of Construction/Expansion: 32,000 square feet
Source of Funds: General Fund
Land Acquisition Required: 1.5 acres

Estimated Construction Cost:	\$5,600,000
Land Costs:	\$ unknown
Total Estimated Project Costs:	\$5,600,000

Appendix A: Public Investments by the Town

Grower's Market at Garden Hall

The proposed facility includes 12,000 of open-air space and 1,000 square feet of commuter transit station offices, ticket kiosks, and restrooms.

Area of Construction/Expansion: 13,000 square feet
Source of Funds: General Fund/CATS
Land Acquisition Required: .25 acre

Estimated Construction Cost:	\$325,000
Land Costs:	\$80,500
Total Estimated Project Costs:	\$405,500

Property for Sale

The liner buildings on the street frontages of the parking deck are to be built by private investment. The Town would be able to sell the property for each building, as well as approve design of the buildings themselves as a part of the sale. Funding could also be acquired by the sale of the existing Arts and Cultural building (the former library) or offered in negotiations with one of the property owners whose land is necessary for the mentioned expansions or the proposed liner buildings sales.

In this scenario, it is possible to achieve a "like-kind property exchange" between that land owner and the Town of Huntersville. According to the Internal Revenue Service's 1031 Exchange Code, no gain or loss is recognized for business or investment property exchanged for a property of like kind. However, if non-like kind property is received, gain is acknowledged to the extent of the other property, but a loss is not recognized. For more information regarding 1031 Like-Kind Property Exchanges, please consult a real estate attorney (source: IRS).

Another possibility is the property owners themselves offering the land as a donation or purchase for a reduced value to the Town, then taking the value for that donation as a deduction for income taxes. For more information regarding 1031 Like-Kind Property Exchanges and/or the property donation deductions, please consult a real estate attorney (source: IRS).

Although these recommendations only offer partial funding opportunities, the significant public investment required is reduced. This therefore brings the potential for an active public gathering space such as the Town Hall Plaza, the Grower's Market at Garden Hall, Arts and Cultural Center and the CATS Commuter Transit Platform to the Town of Huntersville, spotlighting a magnificent civic place in the heart of the community, closer to reality.

Appendix B: Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendments

This Plan provides a foundation for future development within the Downtown Huntersville. As with all planning efforts, development activity may occur overnight. In some cases, project build-out may reach fifteen (15) to twenty (20) years based largely on market forces.

Patience and continued commitment toward improving this area will be warranted as a number of factors must be in place in order for the development types recommended in this report to be realized. Yet, as evidenced through this plan, the Town of Huntersville is committed to advocating responsible growth and development throughout the area; therefore, this master planning effort is recognized as the first step in the process.

This Master Plan is thus primarily implemented using two tools, strategic public investments (noted in the next Section) and the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance authorizes development on a by-right basis. In other words, if an applicant submits an application that shows compliance with all the required standards of the Ordinance, it should be approved.

The Zoning Ordinance applied to this area should be intended to maintain a high level of quality for all new development for this area thereby ensuring a predictable product for residents and neighbors. In addition, by clearly stating design expectations in a comprehensive and concise format, the Zoning Ordinance is further intended to ensure predictability for developers. As a component of this, it is highly recommended that the development process be streamlined to the most extent practical as an incentive for development consistent with the Master Plan.

The following map and text changes are recommended for implementation of this plan.

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments

Amend 3.2.4 (a) Uses Permitted with Conditions

Commercial Use, including office, in a Detached House building when located on a thoroughfare, or at the intersection of a neighborhood street and a larger capacity street.

Strike 3.2.13 (b) Note 16

Amend 3.2.6 (b)

Amend "up to ~~15,000~~ 50,000 SF first floor area" from mixed-use, storefront, and workplace building types. Larger buildings may be permitted subject to the issuance of a Special Use Permit.

Add to 3.2.6 (d)

7) Minimum Height:

Mixed Use, Storefront, and Workplace Buildings shall be a minimum of 2 stories at the following locations:

*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-Concord Road to Greenway Drive
Main Street - from Huntersville-Concord Road to Greenway Drive*

Amend 3.2.13 (a)

Under Uses Permitted with a Special Use Permit increase the threshold for non-residential use first floor area to 30,000 square feet.

Delete Article 4/Shopfront Building/Permitted Heights and Uses

5. Where an existing residential building converts to a mixed-use building, at least 40% of the habitable floor area shall be residential.

Amend Article 4/Detached House by adding the following:

Mixed-Use Standards:

- 1. Parking shall be located in the side or rear yards only. If provided in the side yards, the parking area shall not exceed 25 of the frontage line and shall not be in the yards adjacent to a street.*
- 2. Parking areas on adjacent mixed-use lots shall be connected whenever practical.*
- 3. Trash containers shall be located in the rear yard. If adjacent to existing single family residential uses, trash containers shall be limited to residential rollout containers only (no dumpsters).*
- 4. Mechanical equipment at ground level shall be placed on the parking lot side of the building away from buildings on adjacent sites and shall be screened from view by an opaque screen.*

Add to 8.14 General Standards for Driveway Permitting

.5 In accordance with the Downtown Master Plan the following standards for access management shall be adhered to:

- a. Access to Gilead Road for properties on the south side shall be taken from the existing side streets (Marguerite, Pinewood, and Hillcrest) using a public alley to be constructed as a part of the development process on a lot by lot basis. For lots without access to the existing side streets by an alley, a temporary driveway permit may be granted along Gilead Road provided that driveway shall be removed when access is possible from an alley connecting to a side street. As part of the permitting process, the alley shall be built and an access easement for properties along that block fronting Gilead Road shall be provided and recorded in the Register of Deeds. The recorded instrument will also acknowledge the temporary nature of the initial access.*
- b. The unimproved right-of-way between Pinewood and Hillcrest should be constructed as a public street connection to Holbrook (with ultimate connection to Hillcrest) when adjacent development occurs.*
- c. Development on the north side of Gilead Road should take access at locations in alignment with opposing street access south of Gilead Road.*

Appendix B: Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendments

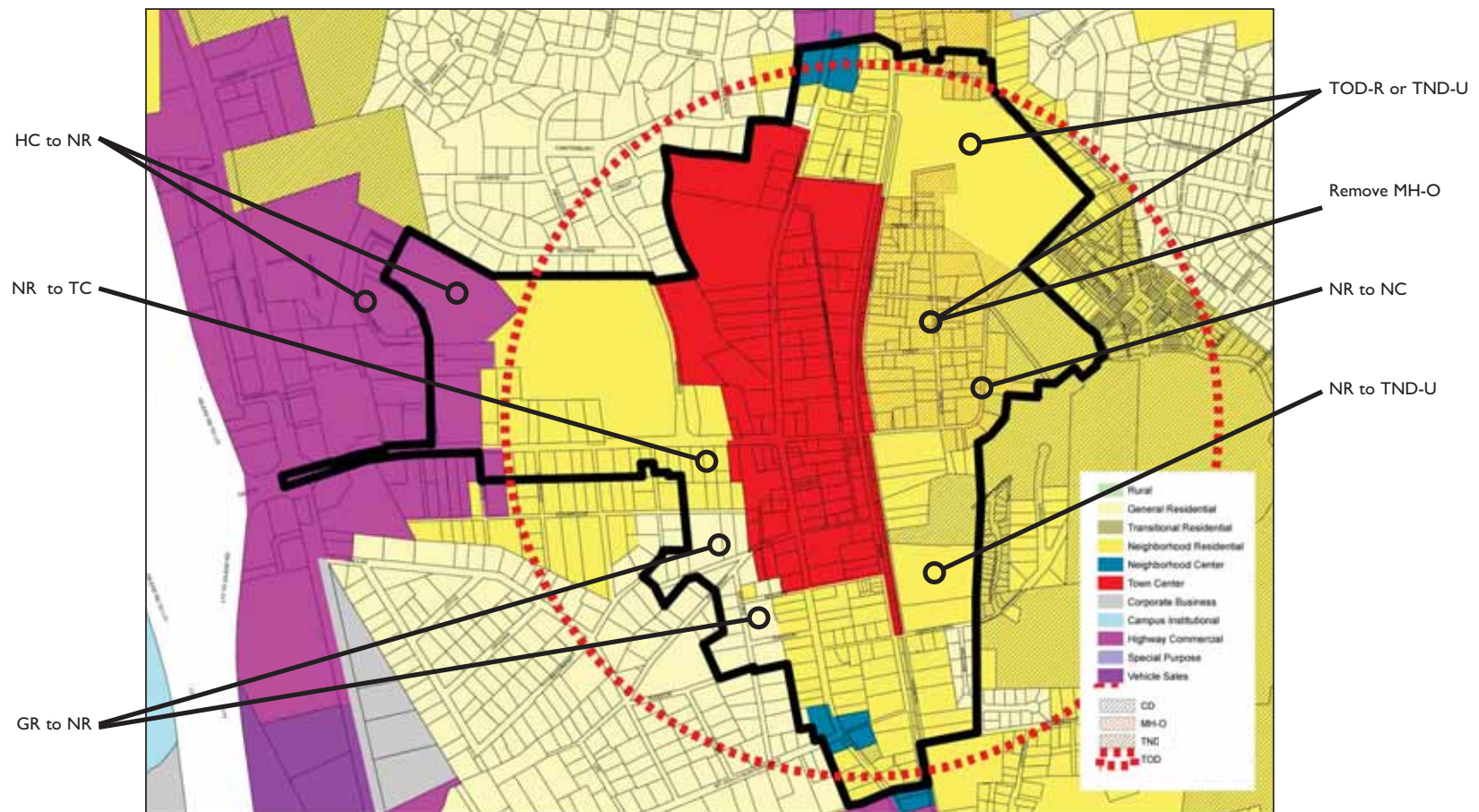
- d. *Primary access to Old Statesville Road should be taken from the existing side streets where reasonably feasible (Dellwood, Gibson Park, and any newly constructed side street constructed in accordance with the Downtown Huntersville Master Plan).*
- e. *Street connections represented in the Downtown Huntersville Master Plan (between Old Statesville Road and Main Street) should be implemented as development occurs with the intent of providing primary access. For lots without access to the existing side streets by an alley, a temporary driveway permit may be granted along Old Statesville Road (NC 115) provided that driveway shall be removed when access is possible from an alley or the side street. As part of the permitting process, the connecting street or alley shall be built and an access easement for properties along that block fronting Old Statesville shall be provided and recorded in the Register of Deeds. The recorded instrument will also acknowledge the temporary nature of the initial access.*
- f. *Development on the west side of Old Statesville Road should take access at locations in alignment with opposing street access south of Gilead Road.*

Zoning Map Amendments

A number of Map Amendments are recommended to encourage redevelopment and development consistent with this Plan. Because this Plan recommends a specific transit station area to be incorporated into the Major Infrastructure Study (MIS) being completed by the Charlotte Area Transit System, the triggering mechanism for the application of the TOD-R requirements will have been met.

The proposed Map Amendments are identified on the map on the following page.

Appendix B: Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendments



Huntersville Downtown Master Plan

Transportation Supplement

Prepared for:

Town of Huntersville, NC

In Cooperation with The Lawrence Group

November, 2004



Image courtesy The Lawrence Group

Prepared By:

Kimley-Horn and Associates
4601 Charlotte Park Drive, Suite 300
Charlotte, NC 28217

NOTICE

The following report was prepared for The Lawrence Group and its designated agents, using information collected by Kimley-Horn and Associates and/or provided by The Lawrence Group, the Town of Huntersville, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

The methodology used to complete the evaluation is believed to be consistent with current traffic engineering practice. The recommendations presented herein are based on a preliminary review and analysis of the available data, direct observations, and the application of engineering judgment.

As stated within, this preliminary evaluation is intended as a supplement to the Huntersville Downtown Master Plan; therefore review of the Master Plan is recommended and considered an integral component of this evaluation. Upon completion, a copy of the Master Plan can be obtained from the Town of Huntersville Planning Department.

Comments and questions about this study should be addressed to:

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INTRODUCTION

Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. was retained by *The Lawrence Group, Inc.* to evaluate travel patterns and traffic operations as an element of the Huntersville Downtown Master Plan Design Workshop. This summary report presents the findings regarding specific transportation issues. Recognizing the central prominence of the NC 115 and Gilead Road intersection within the study area, the design team requested transportation analysis at this location as well as the Ramah Church Road at NC 115 (Old Statesville Road) intersection located to the north, the Mt. Holly-Huntersville at NC 115 intersection to the south, and the Gilead Road at US 21 (Statesville Road) intersection to the west. The intent of this preliminary evaluation is to determine if evidence exists to support modifications to the intersections in a way that will balance traffic operations with design elements intended to promote walkability within the vicinity. It is important to note that this preliminary evaluation is not a substitute for a comprehensive traffic operations study for the study area; however, it does provide evidence that such a study is warranted in order to fulfill the goals and objectives of the downtown master plan.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Town of Huntersville is located at the northern edge of Mecklenburg County, 12 miles north of Charlotte on Interstate 77. Other major roadways in the vicinity include US 21 (Statesville Road) and NC 115 (Old Statesville Road).

NC 115 (Old Statesville Road) is a major arterial. Within the study area the roadway exists as an undivided two-lane roadway with intermittent turn lanes at key intersections. Lane widths vary from 9 feet to 16 feet. The posted speed limit is 20 miles per hour (mph). Sidewalks are located on all sides of NC 115 at the intersection with Gilead Road. NC 115 serves as a parallel corridor to both US 21 and I-77. Because of Huntersville's proximity to Charlotte, NC 115 facilitates heavy commuter traffic during the AM and PM peak hours.

Gilead Road/Huntersville-Concord Road is also a major arterial with varying cross-sections throughout the study area. West of NC 115 the corridor is known as Gilead Road while east of NC 115 it is Huntersville-Concord Road. Within the study area the roadway exists as a two-lane road east of NC 115. West of NC 115 a three-lane section exist to the intersection at Commerce Centre where a four-lane section begins. The four-lane section is present to the intersection of US 21. West of US 21 a five-lane section is present. Lane widths vary from 11 feet to 13 feet. The posted speed limit in the immediate downtown is 20 mph. Between US 21 and Maxwell Street, sidewalks are present on both sides of the street. East of Maxwell, sidewalks are sporadic and on varying sides of the street. Currently sidewalks do not cross I-77.

US 21 (Statesville Road) intersects Gilead Road west of downtown. This major intersection is located approximately 500 feet from the intersection of Gilead Road and the northbound ramp for I-77. US 21, as with NC 115, acts as a parallel facility to I-77 to facilitate commuter through trips as well as trips north and south of town. The intersection at Gilead Road is signalized with dedicated left and right-turn lanes are present at the intersection. The predominate lane width is 12 feet and the posted speed limit is 55 mph.

Ramah Church Road is classified as a minor thoroughfare and is located to the north of the downtown. Ramah Church Road intersects at a “T” intersection with NC 115. To the east of NC 115, Ramah Church Road intersects with NC 73 (Davidson-Concord Road) and helps to facilitate east west movements around the congested intersection of NC 73 and NC 115. The 2002 Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) Thoroughfare Plan calls for the realignment of Ramah Church Road north to the intersection of Stumptown Road. This realignment will aid in increasing east-west movements.

Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road is a stop controlled intersection with NC 115. The intersection is located south of Gilead Road. Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road is classified as a minor thoroughfare within the vicinity of the intersection of NC 115. West of NC 115 Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road becomes a major thoroughfare providing connections to NC 16, Beatties Ford Road and NC 27.

Existing Intersection Configuration

For the purpose of this project, operational analyses were performed for the following intersections:

- NC 115 @ Gilead Road/Huntersville-Concord Road (Signalized)
- NC 115 @ Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road (Unsignalized)
- NC 115 @ Ramah Church Road (Unsignalized)
- US 21 @ Gilead Road (Signalized)

These intersections are referred to as the “study area” throughout this report.

NC 115 and Gilead Road is a confluence point of traffic traveling north-south and east-west through the downtown Huntersville area. The predominate traffic flow follows NC115, or north-south through the downtown. The east-west movement during the peak hours is approximately $\frac{2}{3}_{\text{rds}}$ of the north-south movement. The existing laneage at the intersection is as follows:

- NB – shared left-through-right lane

- SB – dedicated left-turn lane, shared through-right lane
- EB – dedicated left-turn lane, shared through-right lane
- WB – shared left-through-right lane

The traffic signal operates in an isolated, fully-actuated mode. Pedestrian accommodations including crosswalks are on all approaches. The intersection is currently operating with split-phase timing for Gilead Road. This type of phase timing allows one leg or approach to operate unimpeded by the opposing movement. This type of signal phasing was implemented because of the lack of a dedicated left-turn lane on the westbound approach of Huntersville-Concord Road. Longer delays and inefficiencies in traffic progression are experienced because of this type of signal timing.

The Ramah Church Road intersection is north of the intersection of Gilead Road and NC 115. This unsignalized, 3-legged, “T” intersection provides an alternative east-west connection to Davidson-Concord Road.

The existing laneage at the intersection is as follows:

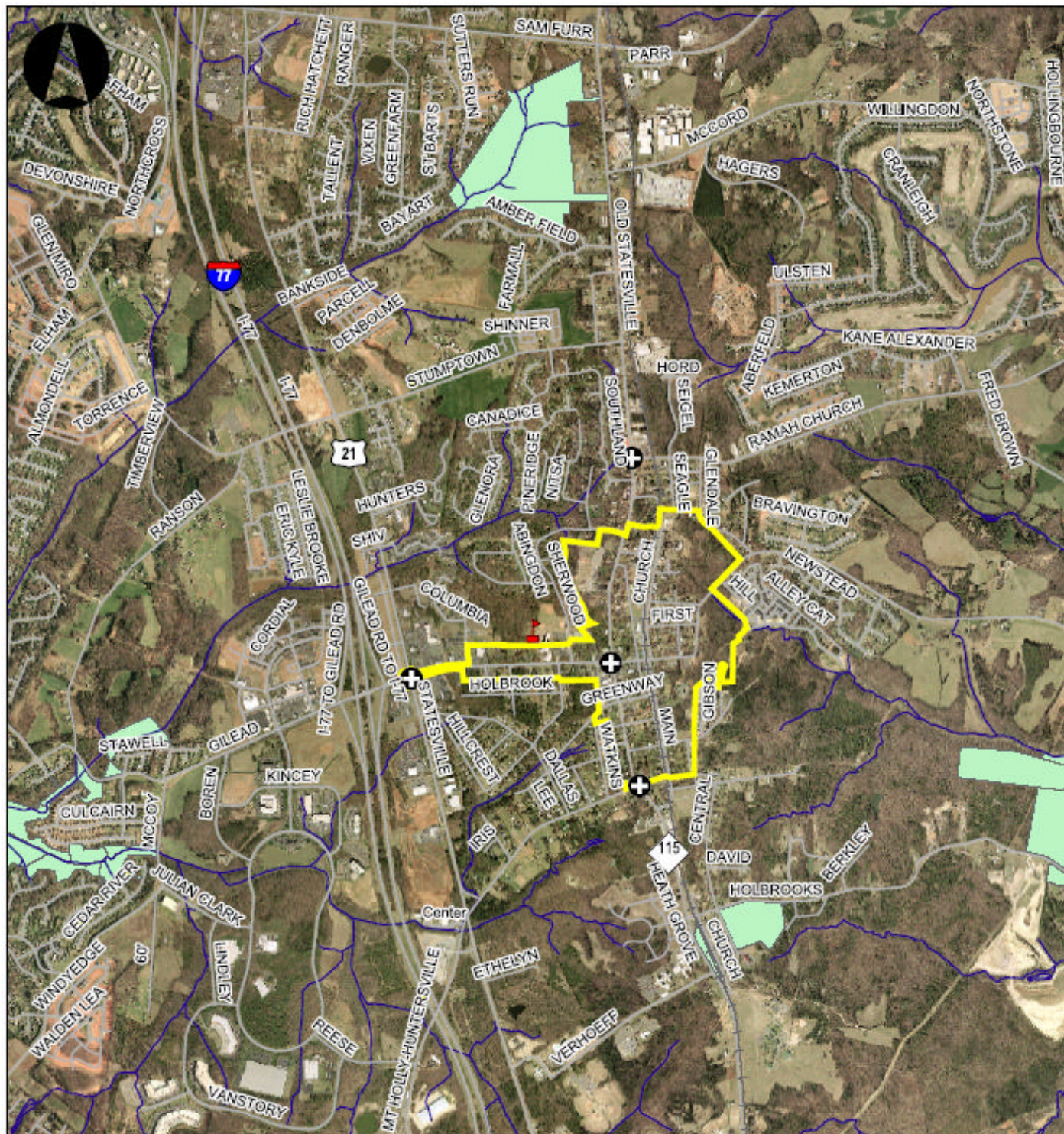
- NB – shared through-right lane
- SB – shared through-left lane
- EB – shared left-right lane

The Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road intersection is located south of the intersection of NC 115 and Gilead Road. This unsignalized, 4-legged intersection provides mobility and connections to southwest and provides another connection to US 21. Other major intersections include: Vance Road, Brookshire Freeway, and Beatties Ford Road.

The existing laneage at the intersection is as follows:

- NB – shared left, through, right lane
- SB – shared through-left turn lane, dedicated right-turn lane
- EB – shared left, through, right lane
- WB – shared left, through, right lane

The intersection of US 21 (Statesville Road) and Gilead Road is located at the western edge of the study area. The intersection is approximately 500 feet from the signalized I-77 northbound ramp intersection. The intersection operates as a coordinated and fully-actuated intersection. Coordination of the signal is with the signals located at the north and southbound ramps for I-77. Pedestrian accommodations are not present at the intersection (i.e. crosswalks, pedestrian signal heads, pedestrian phase).



Legend

- Streets
- Railroads
- Creeks & Streams
- ▬ Parks
- ⊕ Study Intersections
- ▭ Study Area
- 🏫 Schools

**Study Area
Figure 1**



Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

COLLECTED DATA

Traffic Counts

The North Carolina Department of Transportation regularly collects Average Daily Traffic (ADT) information for state routes throughout North Carolina. This information reflects the traffic volume for an average 24-hour period. According to the data collected by NCDOT in 2002, the following were observed within the study area:

- Gilead Road west of US 21 = 18,000 vpd*
- US 21 north of Gilead Road = 15,000 vpd
- Gilead Road west of NC 115 = 6,500 vpd
- Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road = 3,200 vpd
- Ramah Church Road at NC 115 = 4,400 vpd
- Huntersville-Concord Road = 3,600 vpd
- NC 115 south of Mt-Holly-Huntersville Rd = 9,000 vpd
- NC 115 south of NC 73 = 13,000 vpd

**vpd (vehicles per day)*

In addition to NCDOT ADT information, three 24-hour ADT counts were conducted within the study area. The data collected was 9/14/2004 by Carolina Traffic Services. According to the data collected, the following ADT's were observed:

- NC 115 south of Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road = 11,874 vpd
- NC 115 south of Ramah Church Road = 15,808 vpd
- Huntersville-Concord Road between Hill St and Second St = 5,715 vpd

A copy of the recorded ADT data is included in the Technical Appendix.

In order to conduct a thorough evaluation of the travel patterns along the study corridor, morning and afternoon peak-hour turning movement counts were performed at the signalized and unsignalized intersections identified for evaluation. Traffic count data was collected on September 9, 2004 by Carolina Traffic Services. Traffic count data has been included in the Technical Appendix of this report. Figure 2 depicts turning movement volumes for the AM and PM peak hours. This data will be used in the analysis of intersection operations.

Geometric Inventory

Inventories of existing conditions were also performed during the field investigation and site review. Collected data includes existing intersection configurations, lane widths, speed limits, and current traffic control measures (signing, marking, signals, etc.). Traffic signal plans were also secured from NCDOT. These plans provide current information relative to signal operations.

General observations of intersection operations were also made during this time.

Copies of this data are included in the Technical Appendix.

FIGURE 2: 2004 PEAK HOUR VOLUMES

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

METHODOLOGY

The two signalized intersections and two unsignalized intersections identified within the area of influence were analyzed to identify existing conditions and to evaluate potential laneage and geometric changes intended to improve the mobility of vehicles throughout Huntersville. In order to determine the potential impact, the intersections were analyzed under existing and future year 2015 conditions. In addition to the current geometrics, five alternative intersection configurations were evaluated.

These analyses are based on the Level of Service (LOS) at the identified intersections. Level of Service is a qualitative indicator of traffic operations. For signalized and unsignalized intersections, the LOS is a measurement of delay time. The Transportation Research Board's *Highway Capacity Manual*¹ (HCM2000) defines six levels of service for intersections with LOS "A" representing the best operating condition and LOS "F" the worst. Tables 16-2 and 17-2 from the HCM2000 list the Level of Service criteria for signalized and unsignalized intersections, respectively.

Table 16-2		Signalized	Table 17-2		Unsignalized
LEVEL OF SERVICE	CONTROL DELAY PER VEHICLE (s/veh)		LEVEL OF SERVICE	AVERAGE CONTROL DELAY (s/veh)	
A	≤ 10		A	0 - 10	
B	> 10 – 20		B	> 10 - 15	
C	> 20 – 35		C	> 15 - 25	
D	> 35 – 55		D	> 25 - 35	
E	> 55 – 80		E	> 35 - 50	
F	> 80		F	> 50	

Synchro (Version 5), a traffic operations evaluation software package, was used to evaluate and determine the average delay and corresponding level-of-service at each intersection. The results of scenario analyses for each intersection are

¹ *Highway Capacity Manual*, Chapters 16 and 17. National Research Council, Transportation Research Board, Washington, DC, 2000.

presented in tables throughout this document, and summary reports are provided in the Appendix.

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Analysis of existing conditions is based on the collected peak-hour volume, posted speed, and current signal timing and phasing as provided by NCDOT. Table 3 below depicts the operational characteristics of the intersections under 2004 existing conditions.

**TABLE 1: UNSIGNALIZED CAPACITY ANALYSIS RESULTS –
2004 EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Intersection	AM Peak Hour							
	EB		WB		NB		SB	
	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS
Ramah Church Road and NC 115	-	-	59.1	F	0.0	A	2.9	A
Mount Holly-Huntersville Rd and NC 115	33.4	D	32.5	D	2.4	A	0.1	A
	PM Peak Hour							
	EB		WB		NB		SB	
	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS
Ramah Church Road and NC 115	-	-	255.4	F	0.0	A	6.3	A
Mount Holly-Huntersville Rd and NC 115	296.6	F	32.7	D	0.9	A	0.1	A

**TABLE 2: SIGNALIZED CAPACITY ANALYSIS RESULTS –
2004 EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Intersection	AM Peak			PM Peak		
	V/C	Control Delay	LOS	V/C	Control Delay	LOS
Gilead Road and NC 115	0.82	36.1	D	0.99	61.3	E
Gilead Road and US 21	1.02	69.2	E	0.97	59.3	E

Based on capacity analysis, the intersections of Gilead Road/NC 115 and Gilead Road/US 21 are currently operating at an unacceptable level of service during both peak periods. Although the westbound approach at Ramah Church Road/NC 115 exhibits a high delay during both peak periods, it is typical for the minor streets at unsignalized intersections to operate with long delays due to the left-turning movements. The eastbound approach at Mount Holly-Huntersville Road/NC 115 also experiences a long delay.

Horizon Year (2015) Operations

In addition to the existing conditions analysis, a series of model runs were performed for the future year 2015. The analysis of this planning horizon allows comparison of intersection performance over time and accounts for the natural growth in traffic volumes. The regional travel demand model was not available at the time that this study was performed; therefore, future year traffic volumes were derived using a trend line projection. The projected background traffic volumes used in this and subsequent analyses were achieved by applying a 4.5% annual growth rate to the 2004 peak hour values for a period of eleven years. The annual growth rate was approved by Town of Huntersville for use in this evaluation..

**TABLE 3: UNSIGNALIZED CAPACITY ANALYSIS RESULTS –
2015 HORIZON YEAR**

Intersection	AM Peak Hour							
	EB		WB		NB		SB	
	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS
Rama Church Road and NC 115	-	-	Err	F	0.0	A	10.8	B
Mount Holly-Huntersville Rd and NC 115	Err	F	379.7	F	4.9	A	0.2	A
Intersection	PM Peak Hour							
	EB		WB		NB		SB	
	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS	Control Delay	LOS
Rama Church Road and NC 115	-	-	Err	F	0.0	A	45.1	E
Mount Holly-Huntersville Rd and NC 115	Err	F	Err	F	2.3	A	0.2	A

Err – Un-calculable delay

**TABLE 4: SIGNALIZED CAPACITY ANALYSIS RESULTS –
2015 HORIZON YEAR**

Intersection	AM Peak			PM Peak		
	V/C	Control Delay	LOS	V/C	Control Delay	LOS
Gilead Road and NC 115	2.05	319.9	F	2.57	483.4	F
Gilead Road and US 21	1.09	92.7	F	1.16	80.4	F

This analysis demonstrates that the signalized intersections fail to operate at an acceptable level of service without intersection improvements. Unsignalized intersections show increased side street delay beyond what is considered normal.

FIGURE 3: 2015 PEAK HOUR VOLUMES

ALTERNATIVE ANALYSES

The purpose and intent of this evaluation is to determine if evidence exists to support modifications to the intersections in a way that will balance traffic operations within the study area. In anticipation to the projected growth of traffic in the area in combination with the build-out of the downtown and the implementation of commuter rail service in this corridor, continued degradation of traffic operations will likely continue.

Alternative A –Intersection Improvements

In an effort to improve operations at the intersection of NC 115 and Gilead Road/Huntersville-Concord Road while minimizing the impact to existing infrastructure left turn lanes were analyzed on all approaches. Alternative A consists of the implementation of a dedicated left turn lane on the westbound and northbound approaches. Currently, only the southbound and eastbound approaches have dedicated left-turn lanes. As shown in the table below, the level-of-service (LOS) improves during both peak hours to an acceptable level of operation with these improvements.

**TABLE 5: SIGNALIZED CAPACITY ANALYSIS RESULTS –
YEAR 2015 ALTERNATIVE “A”**

Intersection	AM Peak			PM Peak		
	V/C	Control Delay	LOS	V/C	Control Delay	LOS
Gilead Road and NC 115	0.79	35.2	D	0.94	46.9	D

The analysis shows that with the addition of the turn lanes and considering background growth in traffic, the intersection operates at an acceptable level of service.

While physically the installation of the left-turn lanes can be achieved, an operational hazard will be created with installation. The installation of a left turn lane on the northbound approach in combination with a shallow radius in the southeast corner prohibits trucks from having an acceptable turn radius to make a northbound right turn. Similar deficiency are experienced for the westbound left-turn. Other conflicts such as signal and utility poles impact the turn radius as well. The close proximity of buildings to the back of curb prohibits widening of the roadway.

Alternative B - One-way Pairs

With the limited right-of-way on NC 115 through the downtown in combination with the desire to preserve the downtown atmosphere as well as increasing the walkability throughout the study area: widening of NC 115 to a multilane facility is not feasible. A need still exists to effectively move traffic north and south through the center of Huntersville.

The combination of a need for additional capacity while preserving the character of downtown lead to the development of Alternative B. Alternative B considers the conversion of NC 115 and Main Street to one-way pairs between the intersections of NC 115 and Main Street at the north and south. Under this scenario, NC 115 would be one-way southbound and Main Street would be one-way northbound. In order to model this scenario, the existing volumes at Gilead Road / Huntersville-Concord and NC 115 were adjusted as follows:

- Eastbound left-turns at Gilead Road/NC 115 were converted to eastbound through movements at Gilead Road/NC 115 and eastbound left-turns at Huntersville-Concord Road/Main Street.
- Westbound right-turns at Gilead Road/NC 115 were converted to westbound right-turns at Huntersville-Concord Road/Main Street.
- All northbound movements at Gilead Road/NC 115 were converted to northbound movements at Huntersville-Concord Road/Main Street and the northbound left-turn was added to the westbound through movement at Gilead Road/NC 115.

The affect of this one-way pair conversion was analyzed at the intersections of Gilead Road/NC 115 and Huntersville-Concord Road/Main Street, the results are shown below.



**TABLE 6: SIGNALIZED CAPACITY ANALYSIS RESULTS –
YEAR 2015 ALTERNATIVE “B”**

Intersection	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
	V/C	Control Delay	LOS	V/C	Control Delay	LOS
Gilead Road and NC 115	0.83	20.5	C	0.99	36.6	D
Huntersville-Concord Road and Main Street	0.76	23.0	C	1.03	61.8	E

The analysis shows that in 2015 intersection operations will be at acceptable limits at the intersections with the exception of Huntersville-Concord Road and Main Street in the PM peak hour. Improvement of this intersections operation can be achieved with the addition of turn lanes and optimized signal timings.

If NC 115 is widened north and south of Huntersville, the one-way pair allows for two lanes of travel in the north and southbound direction without widening of NC 115. Main Street would need to be widened to a minimum twenty-four feet (24').

While the operations of traffic in Huntersville can be improved with the implementation of a one-way pair system, other non-operational impacts will be realized. With the installation of a one-way pair, normal circulation patterns are not available. A system of perpendicular two-way streets are necessary for the successful operation of a one-way pair. To the south of Gilead Road, cross-streets are at regular block lengths providing the necessary circulation pattern. To the north cross-streets are not existent.

One-way pairs will effectively process through traffic, difficulty can be experienced in making in-town destination trips. Motorists can find the one-way restrictions frustrating and difficult to navigate in the downtown. Further analysis of this Alternative is recommended to evaluate the global ramifications of its impacts.

Alternative C-Main Street as NC 115

Given the negative impacts on circulation associated with implementing a one-way pair, Alternative C was developed. Realizing the potential buildout of the intersection of Gilead Road / Huntersville-Concord Road and NC 115 with commercial development and the need to facilitate through movements, Alternative C was developed to facilitate this. Alternative C considers the improvement of the polar intersections of NC 115 and Main Street to allow Main Street to facilitate all of the through movements on NC 115. Main Street would be designated NC 115. All turning movements at the intersection of Gilead Road and NC 115 would have more time since competition with through movements would be reduced. Table 7 below depicts the operational characteristics of the study intersections.

**TABLE 7: CAPACITY ANALYSIS RESULTS –
YEAR 2015 ALTERNATIVE “C”**

Intersection	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
	V/C	Control Delay	LOS	V/C	Control Delay	LOS
Gilead Road and NC 115 – <i>Signalized</i>	0.53	8.4	A	0.72	13.9	B
Huntersville-Concord Road and Main Street – <i>Signalized</i>	0.63	12.1	B	0.89	27.6	C
Mt. Holly-Huntersville and NC 115 – <i>Unsignalized</i>	0.47	28.5	D	0.75	32.4	D
NC 115 and Main Street (South) - <i>Signalized</i>	0.48	6.6	A	0.56	6.9	A
NC 115 and Main Street (North) - <i>Signalized</i>	0.74	13.0	B	0.86	22.7	C

The results of the analysis indicate that the intersections in 2015 will operate at an acceptable level of service in both peak hour periods. Operationally this alternative

is the best. Alternative C separates through and turning movements and disperses them to two intersections, thereby creating additional capacity to facilitate the movements for the north-south and east-west traffic. Implementation of this scenario will require extensive infrastructure improvements to Main Street as well as the intersections at north and south Main Street and NC 115. The operational benefits of this alternative compared to the infrastructure improvement cost should be evaluated.

Alternative D - Enhanced Main Street

Alternative D is a variation of Alternative C, in that traffic is encouraged to use Main Street but Main Street does not become the priority movement. This scenario requires improvement of the polar intersections of Main Street and NC 115 to improve visibility and promote the viability of Main Street as an alternative to NC 115.

**TABLE 8: CAPACITY ANALYSIS RESULTS –
YEAR 2015 ALTERNATIVE “D”**

Intersection	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
	V/C	Control Delay	LOS	V/C	Control Delay	LOS
Gilead Road and NC 115 - <i>Signalized</i>	0.96	29.8	C	1.50	134.4	F
Huntersville-Concord Road and Main Street – <i>Signalized</i>	0.52	8.4	A	0.70	14.0	B
Mt. Holly-Huntersville and NC 115 – <i>Unsignalized</i>	0.47	7.9	A	0.75	13.4	B
NC 115 and Main Street (South) - <i>Signalized</i>	0.49	5.3	A	0.57	5.0	A
NC 115 and Main Street (North) - <i>Signalized</i>	0.56	6.6	A	0.96	28.6	C

Traffic operations in 2015 are above acceptable limits except for the intersection of Gilead Road and NC 115. Improvements to the intersection including turn lanes and improved signal timing would increase the overall LOS to an acceptable limit. This alternative will require the improvement of Main Street to an acceptable street width of twenty four feet (24') as with Alternative B and C. Other improvements including signalization and additional dedicated right and left-turn lanes will also be required at key intersections.

Alternative E – Two-Way Directional Pair

Alternative E is a combination of both Alternatives C and D. Realizing the operational performance gains that C provided by shifting the through movements to Main Street, but not wanting the extensive roadway improvements required, the two scenarios were combined. Alternative E shifts the northbound through movements from NC 115 to Main Street at the southern intersection of Main and NC 115. At the northern intersection of Main Street and NC 115, through movements would make a

right-turn onto NC 115. The inverse would occur for the southbound through movements. The operational gains result from a directional dispersion of the through movements onto both Main Street and NC 115. This directional dispersion allows existing capacity to be maximized in an efficient manner and improves the distribution of turning traffic. As with both Alternatives prior, improvements to both polar intersections will be required.

**TABLE 8: CAPACITY ANALYSIS RESULTS –
YEAR 2015 ALTERNATIVE “E”**

Intersection	AM Peak Hour			PM Peak Hour		
	V/C	Control Delay	LOS	V/C	Control Delay	LOS
Gilead Road and NC 115 - <i>Signalized</i>	0.65	14.0	B	1.09	43.2	D
Huntersville-Concord Road and Main Street - <i>Signalized</i>	0.57	10.1	B	0.92	29.6	C
Mt. Holly-Huntersville and NC 115 – <i>Unsignalized</i>	0.46	8.0	A	0.56	9.8	A
NC 115 and Main Street (South) - <i>Unsignalized</i>	0.07	28.5	D	0.19	84.3	F
NC 115 and Main Street (North) - <i>Signalized</i>	0.63	13.5	B	1.07	61.5	E

Operationally, Alternative E provides the same LOS operations as Alternatives C and D. As with both previous alternatives, infrastructure improvements to Main Street and the polar intersections of Main and NC 115 will be needed.

While Alternative E is the preferred alternative, it is recommended that further evaluation of the alternatives be explored. Said evaluation should include a network wide modeling effort accounting for future travel demands, build out of future developments, the travel impacts of the opening of the western and northern portions of I-485 between I-77 and I-85, and the impacts of CATS rail service in the area. Other roadway improvements such as the Prosperity Church Road and the Asbury Chapel Road realignments will have effects on travel patterns in the surrounding area. The combination of these factors will influence the alternative that is chosen as well as the level of improvements required.

FIGURE 4: 2015 PEAK HOUR VOLUMES – ALTERNATIVE B

FIGURE 5: 2015 PEAK HOUR VOLUMES – ALTERNATIVE C

FIGURE 6: 2015 PEAK HOUR VOLUMES – ALTERNATIVE D

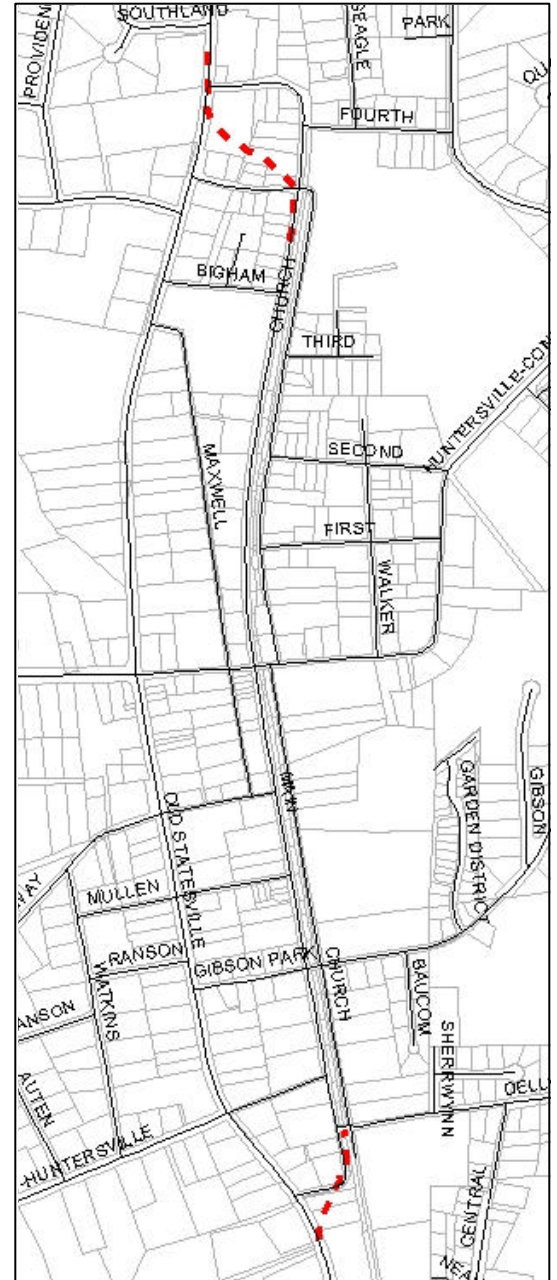
FIGURE 7: 2015 PEAK HOUR VOLUMES – ALTERNATIVE E

ALTERNATIVE ANALYSES IMPACTS

With the implementation of the alternatives there will be impacts to the existing streets. If Alternative A is implemented, on-street parking along northbound NC 115 and westbound Gilead Road/Huntersville-Concord Road would not be allowed. Existing street widths of 32 feet on NC 115 and 35 feet on Huntersville-Concord Road are currently marked as two-lane roadways. A 10 foot left-turn lane on NC 115 and a 11 foot left-turn lane on Huntersville-Concord Road can be developed. The measurements on NC 115 do not include the 2 foot gutter pan that is present on both sides of the street. This effectively provides 13 foot travel lanes on NC 115.

Alternatives B, C, D, and E will require extensive infrastructure improvements to the existing roadway network. Main Street is 18 feet in width with open ditch drainage. Adjacent to the roadway is the railroad track that will be utilized by the CATS passenger rail service. Improvements to the roadway will include signalization of the intersection at Main Street and Huntersville-Concord Road, upgrading Main Street to appropriate width and roadway cross-section/structure, as well as intersecting street improvements. The largest expense will be the realignment of Main Street to intersect with NC 115 at both the north and south.

The adjacent image depicts the conceptual alignments of Main Street at the polar ends.



CONCLUSIONS

This transportation supplement for the Huntersville Downtown Master Plan has evaluated the existing conditions, future year 2015 conditions and provided alternatives for mitigation of the 2015 future year traffic.

The findings of the capacity and level of service analyses conducted in the study area indicate that current conditions are generally at or above acceptable limits. Future year impacts will result in an unacceptable level-of-service dictating the need for improvements to the existing infrastructure.

The alternatives proposed herein, demonstrate conceptually that the solutions to the 2015 capacity constraints can be alleviated. Further evaluation of the alternatives is recommended.

TECHNICAL APPENDIX