



# DRAFT HUNTERSVILLE 2040 COMMUNITY PLAN



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## Special Thanks

Ashley Ownbey, UNC DCRP Master's Candidate



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# 1 INTRODUCTION



This 2040 Plan will function as the Town of Huntersville's Comprehensive Plan. This plan provides policy guidance for land use, transportation, housing, open space preservation, and other aspects of quality of life for residents. It builds on, updates, and replaces the 2030 *Community Plan* as the planning

document for the Town.

Although this plan will replace the 2030 *Community Plan* in practice, in reality it is an update of that plan which will more accurately prepare Huntersville for the issues facing it. It is with this reverence for the past and anticipation for the future that the reader will see throughout this document, a strategy that is looking forward, and thinking back.

# INTRODUCTION

## BACKGROUND, PURPOSE & PROCESS

### Background

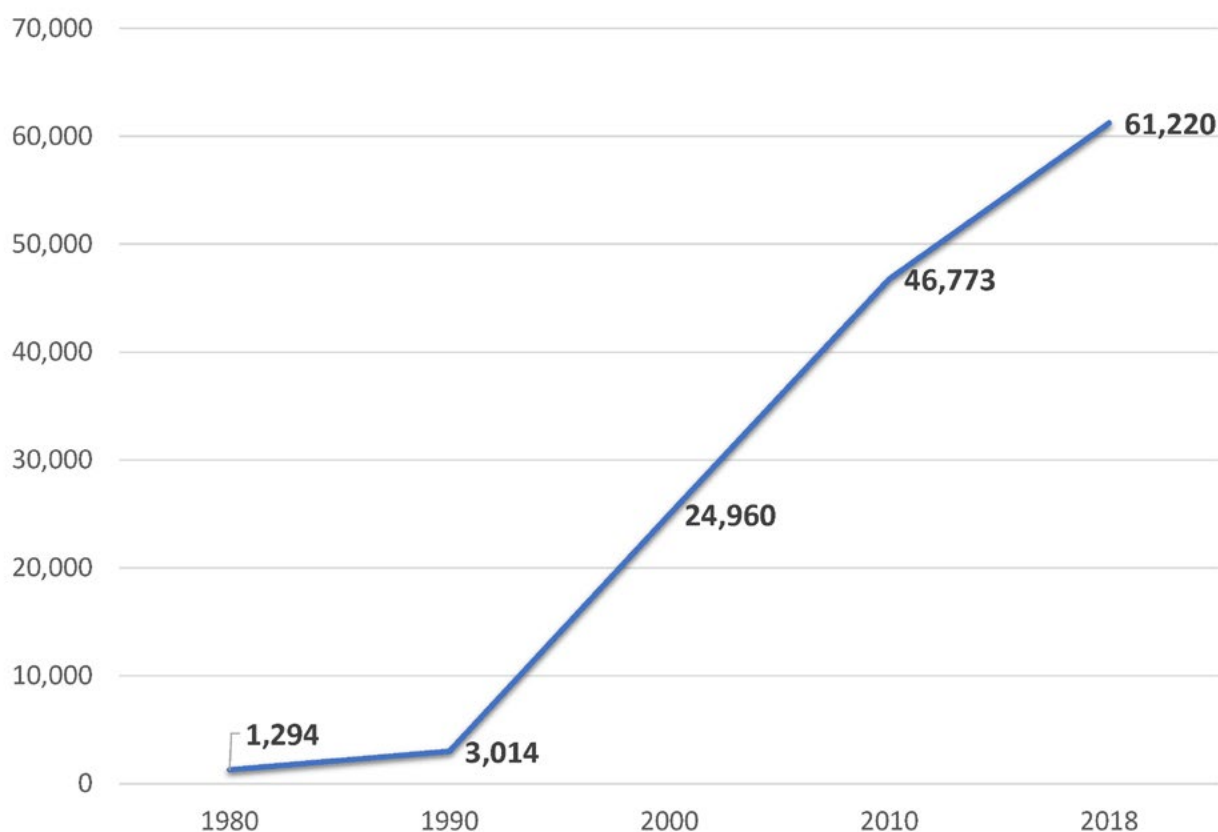
The Huntersville Community Plan has undergone regular updates approximately every six to nine years. Since 2010, Huntersville’s municipal population has grown by 31% (14,447 people) up from a population of 46,773 to 61,220. It is no secret that Huntersville is an increasingly popular place to live, and that growth and its associated issues continue to be at the forefront of issues that confront the Town today.

This document builds on a history of town plans that have had success shaping the direction and form of growth. It will serve as the Town’s comprehensive plan and will replace the 2030 Community Plan, which was adopted in 2011.

### Purpose

The 2040 Community Plan is meant to establish a framework for growth and development while maintaining the character and the livability of the town that Huntersville residents hold so dear. The Plan is a policy document that will guide zoning and development permitting decisions and potentially future updates to the zoning and subdivision ordinances as well as development design, infrastructure investments and staff work plans. In addition, State law now requires that a comprehensive plan is necessary for a town to retain authority enforce zoning and development regulations and must be reasonably maintained over time.

### Population Growth



THERE HAS BEEN A 31% INCREASE IN POPULATION SINCE 2010 AND THE TOWN HAS GROWN BY OVER 36,000 PEOPLE SINCE 2000.

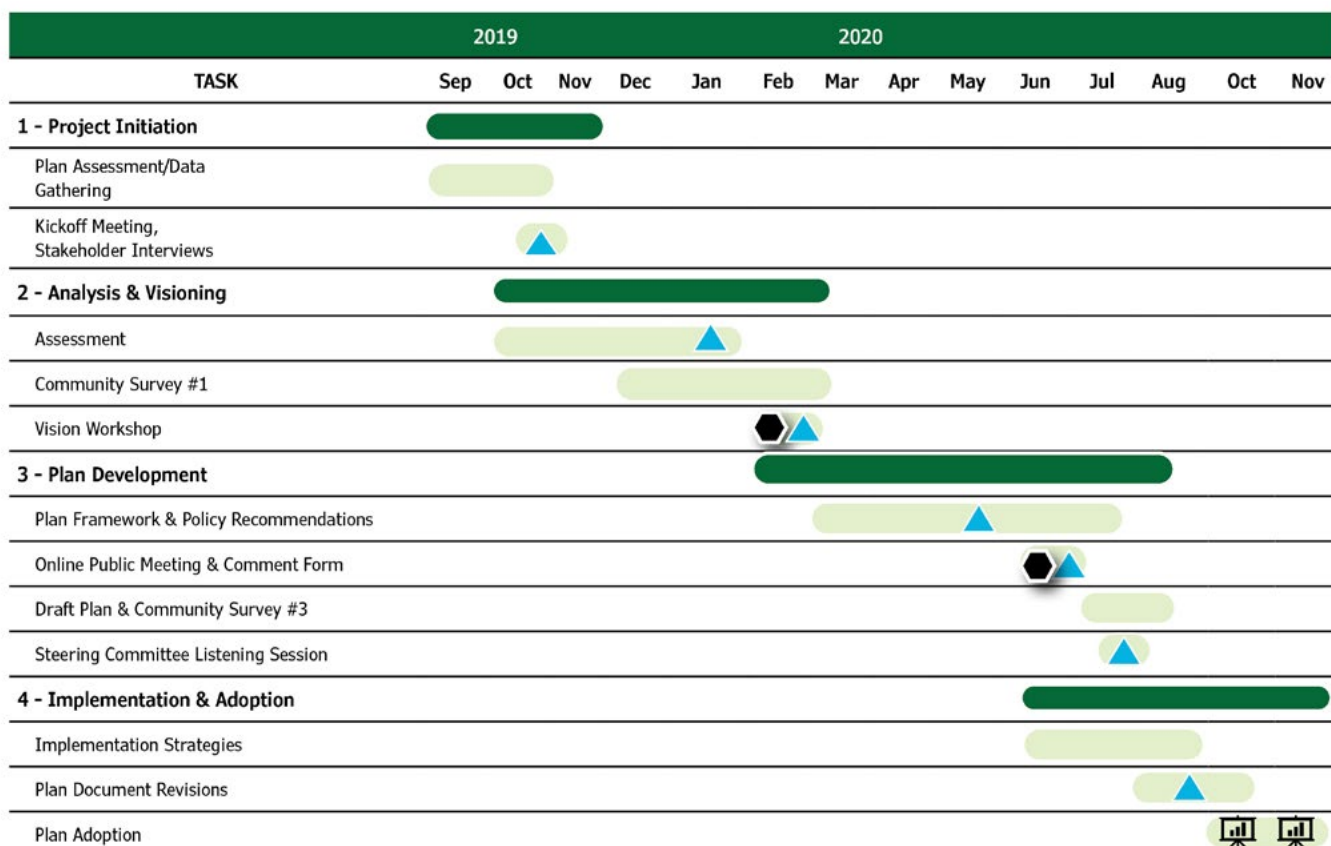
Source: US Census (1980-2010), NC Office of State Budget Management (2018)

## Process

Beginning in September of 2019, the Town of Huntersville undertook a year-long update of its existing Community Plan to review and refine the vision for the community. The process took the form of a community conversation, with project staff soliciting public input frequently to evaluate what they would like to see, protect, and grow in Huntersville. Feedback from stakeholders, members of the public, the Steering Committee, and Town leadership was essential to the creation of this plan. A full description of the public involvement process is available on page 36 of this document.



## Project Schedule





# INTRODUCTION

## STUDY AREA OVERVIEW

### Town of Huntersville

The Town of Huntersville is located just 14 miles north of Uptown Charlotte. The Town was incorporated in 1873 and has grown from a railroad stop and mill town to be the 16th largest municipality (by most recent population rankings) in North Carolina (Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management, 2018). Today Huntersville has a population of over 61,000 people and a planning jurisdiction or Sphere of Influence (SOI) that covers 63 square miles.

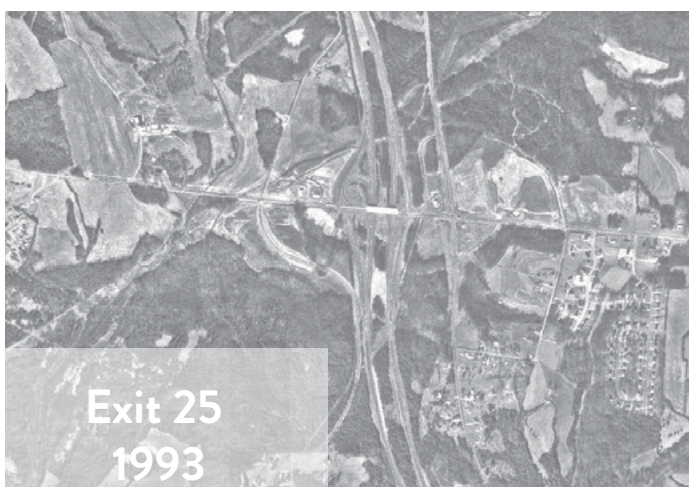
The Town has grown significantly in the past two decades and has added 28,000 residents between 2000 and 2017 (a growth of 113.5%). Despite this rapid pace of growth residents enjoy a high quality of life. During the planning process for the 2040 Community Plan, 88% of respondents to the first survey indicated that Huntersville was a good or excellent place to live. Proximity to Charlotte, shopping, parks and a low crime rate are cited as being contributors to the attractiveness of the Town.

**The Huntersville Sphere of Influence, or SOI, is the area over which the Town exerts land use regulations, like zoning and subdivision regulations.**

### Planning Area and Region

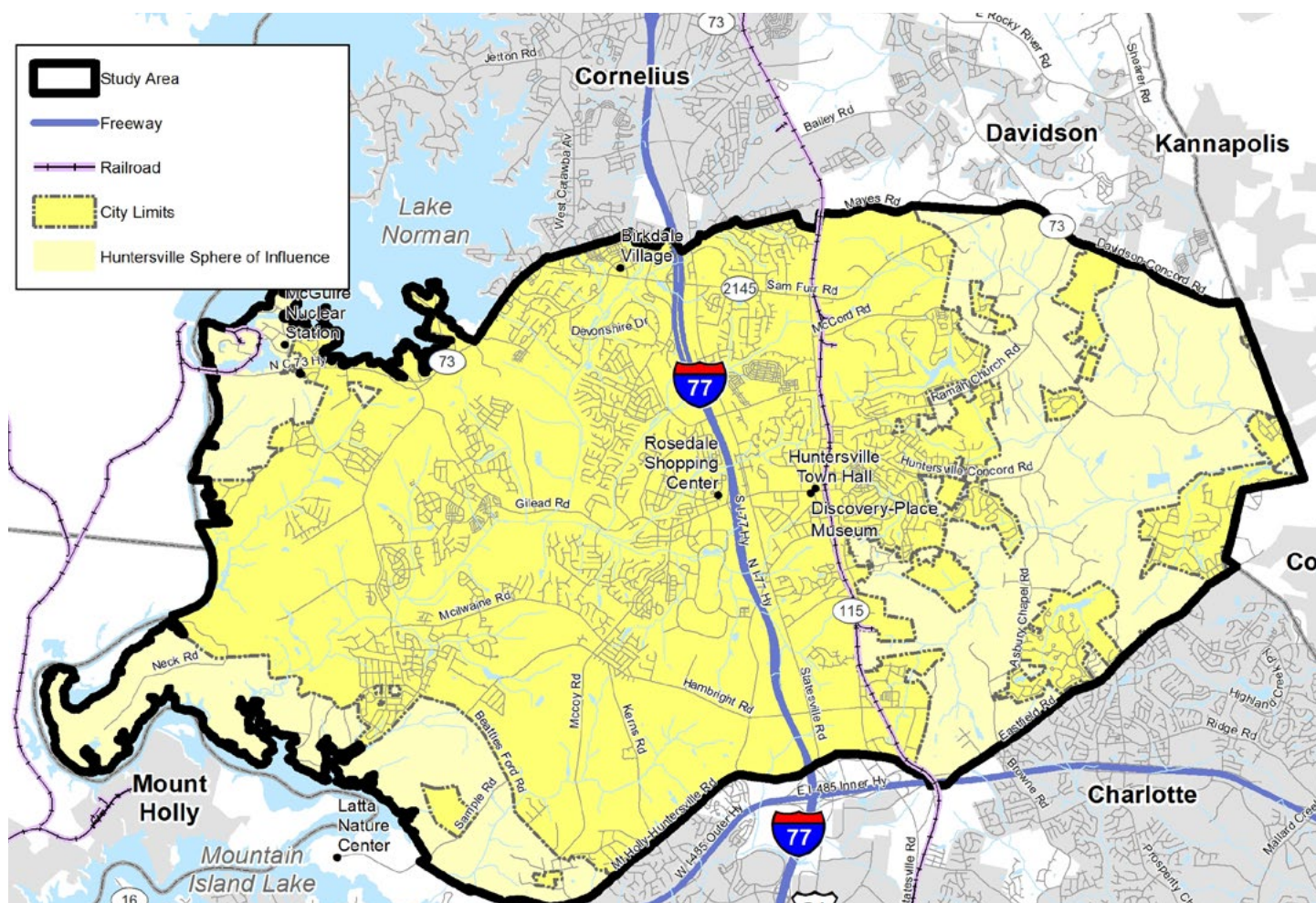
Huntersville is located in the northern part of Mecklenburg County and its planning jurisdiction or “Sphere of Influence” (SOI) stretches from Lincoln County in the west to Cabarrus County in the east. This SOI is the area which the Town exerts land use regulations, like zoning and subdivision regulations. The town is divided roughly in half by I-77 and is proximal to I-485. Other major highways include US 21, NC 73 and NC 115. The Town’s southern border is adjacent to north Charlotte. Charlotte is the nation’s 15th largest city and grew by 154,000 people between 2010 and 2019.

### Historical Aerial Imagery



THE TWO AERIAL IMAGES ABOVE SHOW I-77 AT NC 73 IN 1993 AND 2015. NOTE THE CHANGE IN DEVELOPMENT WHICH INCLUDES NORTHCROSS SHOPPING CENTER, BIRKDALE VILLAGE AND A NUMBER OF NEW NEIGHBORHOODS.

## Study Area Map



THE MAP ABOVE SHOWS THE STUDY AREA FOR THE 2040 COMMUNITY PLAN, WHICH IS ALSO THE SPHERE OF INFLUENCE FOR THE TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE

Huntersville is one of three municipalities in northern Mecklenburg County. The towns of Cornelius and Davidson are located north of Huntersville and have bordering planning jurisdiction boundaries.

Major geographic features that have influenced the development of Huntersville include the railroad that connects the town to Cornelius and Charlotte, Lake Norman, the Catawba River and Mountain Island Lake. Lake Norman is the largest man-made body of fresh water in North Carolina and was created in 1963. Residential growth surrounding the lake has intensified in the last 30 years and has had a major impact on the region. McDowell Creek drains the west side of Town, eventually flowing into Mountain Island Lake.

Mountain Island Lake is a major water source for the region and provides drinking water to over half a million people. The east side of Town drains to Clark Creek and eventually the Rocky River. Gar Creek drains the southwestern part of the town and empties into Mountain Island Lake as well. The Gar Creek watershed is somewhat protected from development due to watershed protection regulations and conserved land.



# INTRODUCTION

## PREVIOUS PLANS

Since 1995, the Town has adopted plans and enforced ordinances that focus on the principles of traditional town planning. Great effort has been placed into crafting policies and ordinances that create well-designed places and unique neighborhoods and avoid patterns of suburban sprawl that are typical in other growing areas in the Charlotte Region and throughout the southeastern United States. This Plan continues the tradition of proactively managing growth and responds to emerging issues and trends.

### 1995 Community Plan Highlights

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

### 1995 Community Plan

The 1995 Community Plan called for focusing development between I-77 and NC 115 and better design throughout the town. Subsequently, in 1996 the Town implemented a Form Based Code to help ensure better design outcomes for development in the town. This form-based code is foundational to the development patterns in the town.

### 2003 Community Plan

This plan primarily addressed growth management and conservation, themes the Town still debates today. It recommended lower intensity development in rural and transition areas in the east and west in order to promote water quality and tree preservation. After this plan was adopted the zoning ordinance was changed to reduce density in rural and transition area and increase incentives for more open space preservation in new subdivisions.

### 2030 Community Plan

The 2030 Community Plan does not have a specific future land use plan map, but did include a “framework map” that delineates zones of development intensity. The plan underscores the community’s intent to “reinforce the historical pattern in place since 1996.” Per the 2030 Plan, “the land use pattern in the Town of Huntersville has been based upon a policy which focuses higher intensity development generally within two

## Huntersville Planning Timeline

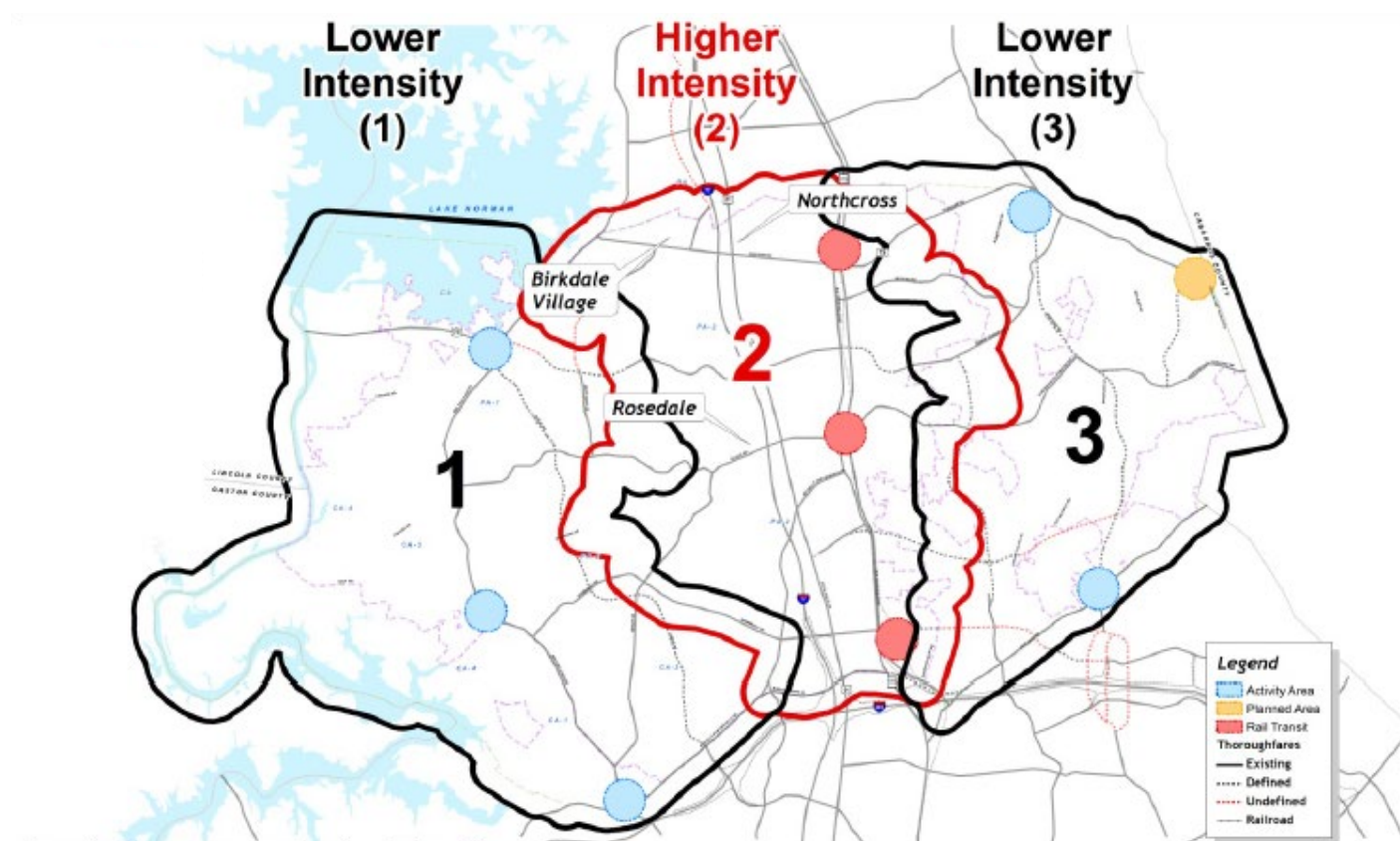


miles of the I-77/NC-115 corridor, with lower intensity development east and west of this corridor.”

This resulted in higher and lower intensity areas, with three different types of activity nodes around the Town. The 2030 Plan’s recommendations addressed housing, environment, transportation, economic and commercial development, downtown, and public facilities.

## Small Area Plans

Since 1996 the Town has worked with citizens to create a number of Small Area Plans (SAPs) to guide growth and development for particular geographic areas within Huntersville. Because SAPs focus on a small portion of the town planning area than the Community Plan, their recommendations are more site specific.



THE GROWTH FRAMEWORK MAP FROM THE 2030 COMMUNITY PLAN

**2011**  
**2030**  
**Community**  
**Plan**

**2020 Update**  
**2040**  
**Huntersville**  
**Community**  
**Plan**

# INTRODUCTION

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## PLAN ORGANIZATION

The Huntersville 2040 plan is divided into 5 chapters. The chapters tell the story of the current character of Huntersville, the public feedback that town staff and consultants received, the intended development pattern and character of development in the future, and recommendations for how to achieve that vision.

**1 INTRODUCTION**  
This chapter provides an introduction to the plan and includes a description of the plan's purpose, background information, and an overview of the planning process and previous Town planning.

**2 EXISTING CONDITIONS**  
This chapter provides data on demographic trends, economic trends, land use conditions, transportation issues, and natural resources that will inform this plan.

**3 INPUT & VISION**  
The community engagement process is described in detail, and the chapter demonstrates how the public feedback directly influenced the Vision and Goals for the plan.

**4 FUTURE LAND USE**  
The new Future Land Use map and strategies are described in detail.

**5 IMPLEMENTATION**  
This chapter details strategies that Huntersville can use to achieve the vision and goals for 2040.

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# 2 EXISTING CONDITIONS



This chapter provides an analysis of the current conditions in Huntersville, for late 2019 and early 2020. Demographic data including population estimates, housing information, economic data, and land use data provide an objective understanding of the trends and issues in Huntersville at this time. Analysis of the data will inform the policy and land use recommendations along with community feedback.

While there is a lot of data in this chapter, even more can be found in the Community Profile that is part of the digital appendix to this document at [www.huntersville2040.com/plan-documents](http://www.huntersville2040.com/plan-documents).

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

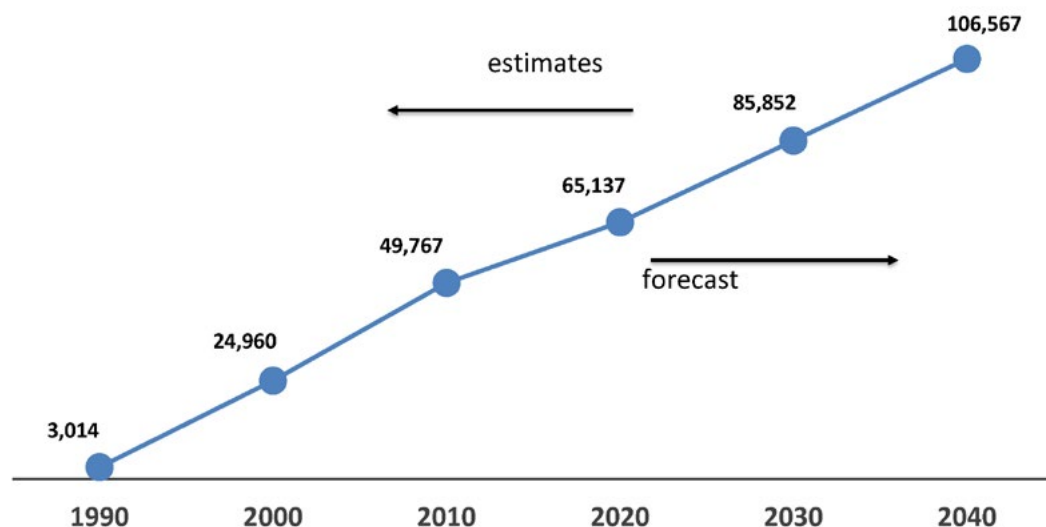
## POPULATION

### Growth

One of the main factors affecting Huntersville's future is the rapid growth the town has experienced over the past 30 years since 1990. Thanks to proximity to Charlotte, employment opportunities, and high quality of life, the Town's population has more than doubled from 2000 to 2018, with an average annual growth rate of 2.7% from 2010 to 2017, which is projected to hold steady for the next 25 years (US Census, Town of Huntersville Estimates).

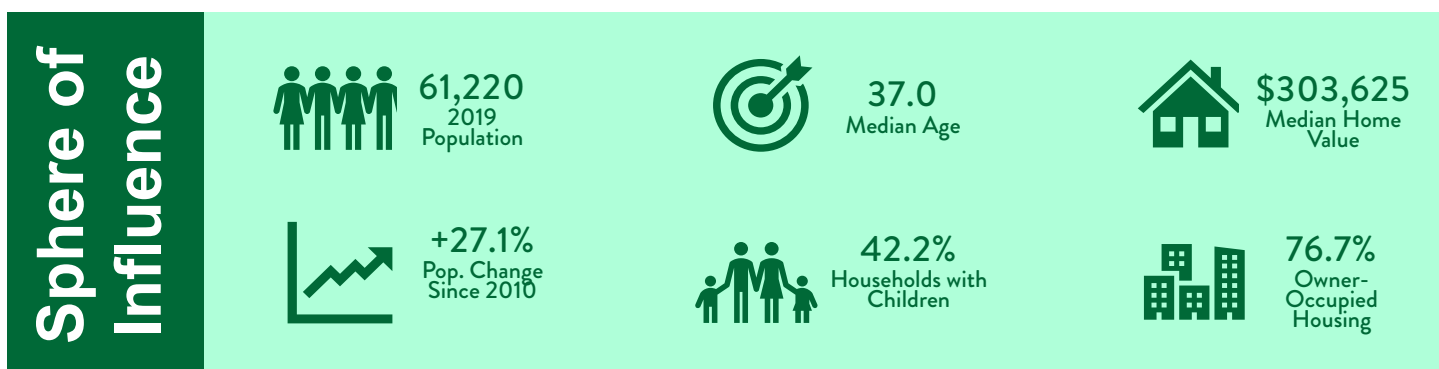
Given the amount of growth projected for Huntersville and the greater Charlotte area, it is essential that planning efforts be proactive to reduce impacts on resources and infrastructure.

**Huntersville's population is expected to increase by 74% between 2018 and 2040 to 106,567 people, impacting demand for housing and services.**



PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH WITHIN THE MUNICIPALITY. SOURCE: US CENSUS (1990-2010), NC STATE DEMOGRAPHER (2011-2018), TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE (2019-2030 AND LINEAR GROWTH EXTRAPOLATED TO 2040)

### Huntersville at a Glance

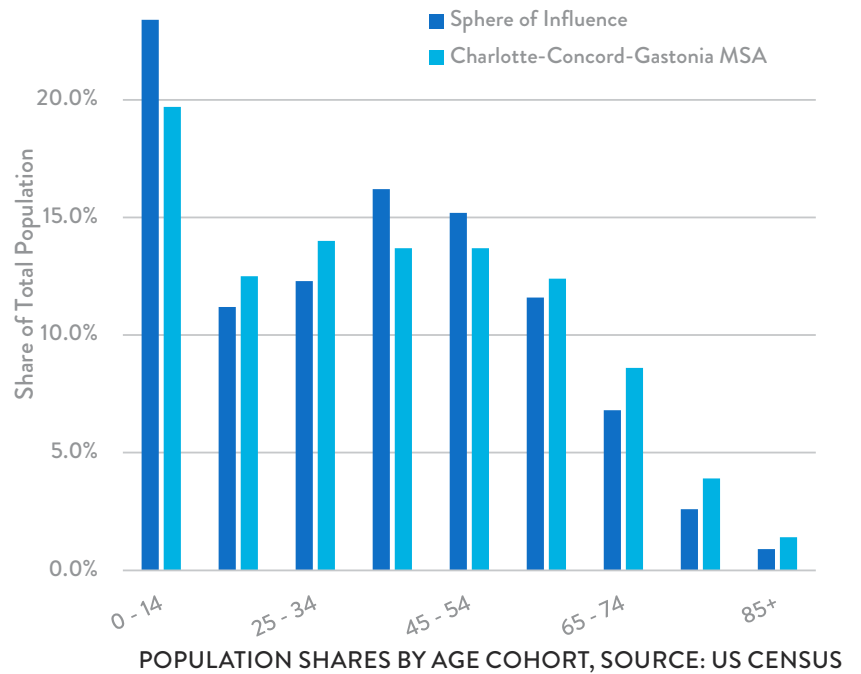


SOURCE: ESRI

## Demographics

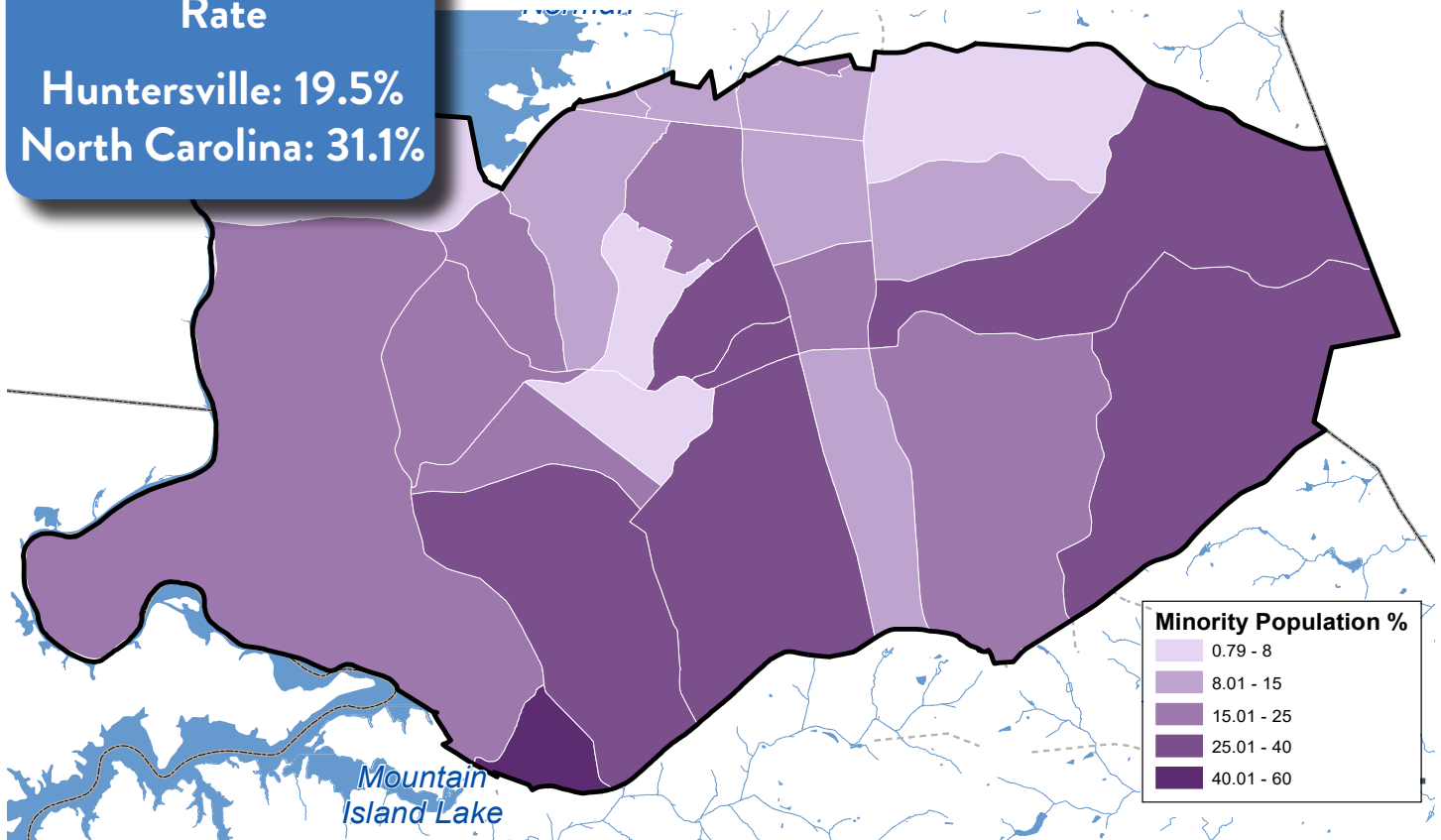
Compared to the Charlotte Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), Huntersville has a higher share of children and middle aged people and a lower share of young adults and elderly residents. These statistics reflect the area's attractiveness for families. It also demonstrates a growing 55+ age group, whose unique needs will need to be addressed as the population gets older.

The town also has a lower minority population percentage than North Carolina. However, a historic African American neighborhood south and east of downtown, known as Pottstown, is home to a number of historic buildings and churches including the Torrence-Lytle school.



### Minority Population Rate

**Huntersville: 19.5%**  
**North Carolina: 31.1%**



# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## HOUSING

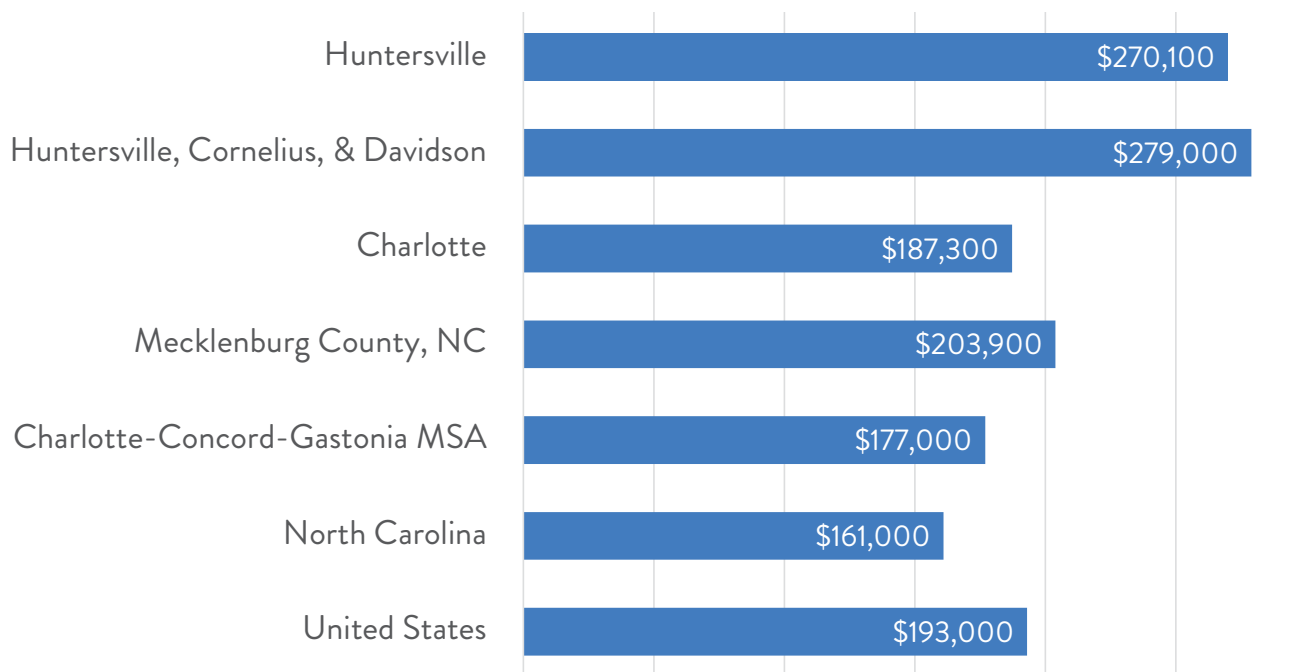
Huntersville has a vibrant housing market with recent new construction reaching pre-recession levels. 4,285 new homes have been constructed between 2010 and 2017 in the Study Area. The housing market is dominated by single family residential homes (78% of total), most often in new subdivisions.

Median home prices have been rising steadily since the recession of 2008. While this is good news for homeowners, it can make housing unattainable for others. Currently median rents and monthly mortgages exceed 30% of income for households making less than \$50,000 per year, which includes vital roles such as police officers, teachers, nurses, fire fighters, public servants, etc.

### Unique Neighborhoods

Huntersville has a number of unique developments and neighborhoods that have become sought after destinations and models for the Charlotte region. Birkdale Village was among the first New Urbanist mixed use projects in the region. Vermillion and other

Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs) are markedly different than many conventional subdivisions elsewhere in Mecklenburg County in that they include a mix of housing types, tree-lined streets, sidewalks framed with front porches and integrated green spaces.



MEDIAN HOME VALUE 2017. SOURCE: 2017 ACS



## NEIGHBORHOOD TYPES: TOWN-SCALE SUBDIVISIONS, TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS, CONSERVATION DESIGN AND MIXED USE DEVELOPMENTS

### Town-scale Subdivisions

Town-scale Subdivisions are the predominant type built in Huntersville before 1995. These developments have larger lots and a minimal amount of open space. If small versions of these subdivisions are designed appropriately they can fit reasonably well in suburban areas. However, when applied across a large area this type of land use pattern can consume a large amount of farmland and forest very quickly. These types of subdivisions allowed in parts of Huntersville only if they provide significant connectivity to adjoining developments and include parks and open space into their design.



### Traditional Neighborhoods

Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs) are built to mimic pre-WWII suburbs and have street trees, sidewalks, on-street parking, alley-loaded homes, front porches, and shared green spaces and other amenities. They typically provide a mix of two or more housing products and offer an alternative to low density, sprawling conventional subdivisions. They feature connected streets and smaller block sizes that calm traffic, furthering the neighborhood feel.



### Conservation Design

Conservation Subdivisions are a design strategy that places development on the most suitable areas while conserving large portions of properties (typically 40%+) as common open space. This design strategy preserves property rights, allows flexibility in design while also encouraging the preservation of unique natural features as amenities.



### Mixed Use Developments

Mixed use developments, such as Birkdale Village and Rosedale in Huntersville provide a mix of uses including retail, restaurants, offices and residential options. Shopfronts face public streets with on-street parking and street trees and may have offices or residential units on the second or third floor.



IMAGES SOURCES: GOOGLE STREETVIEW, PLAN CHATHAM, STEWART

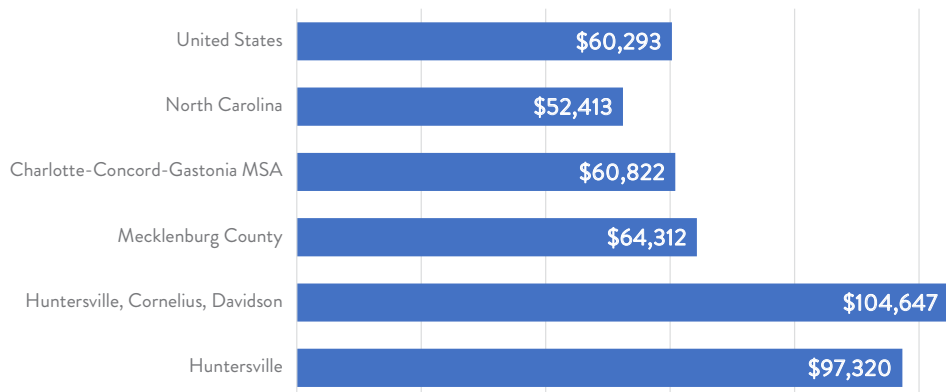


# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## ECONOMY

### Income

Huntersville has a relatively high median household income (HHI) when compared to the surrounding area and to the state as a whole. Median household income was \$97,320 as of 2018, with a per capita average of \$42,820. An estimated 50% of households earn more than \$100,000. For reference, North Carolina's median household income was \$52,413 in the same period.

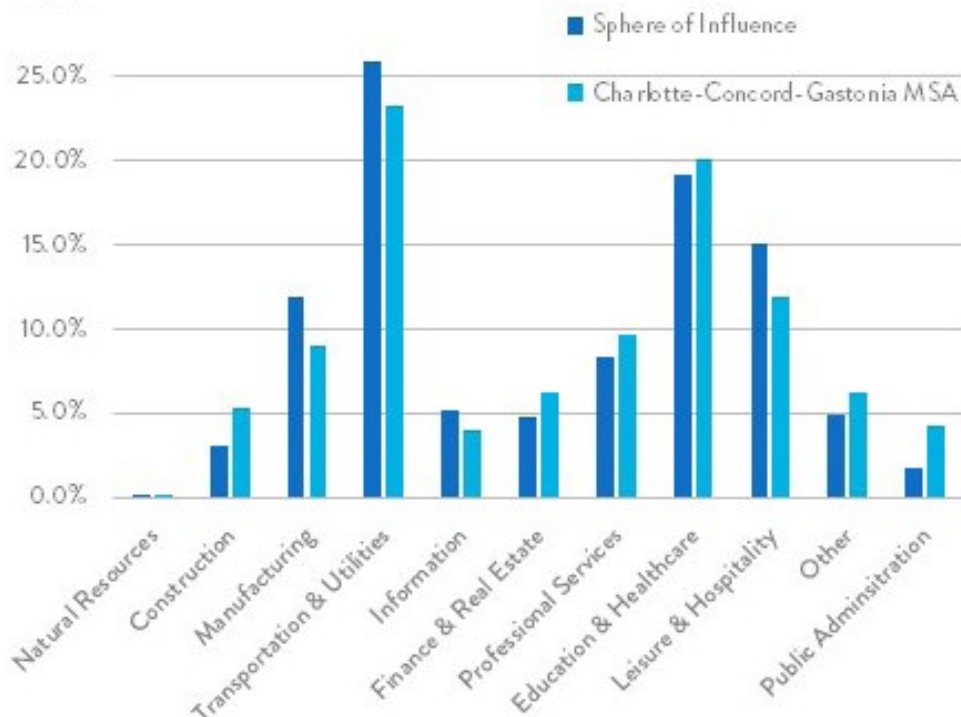


MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME 2018. SOURCE: 2018 ACS

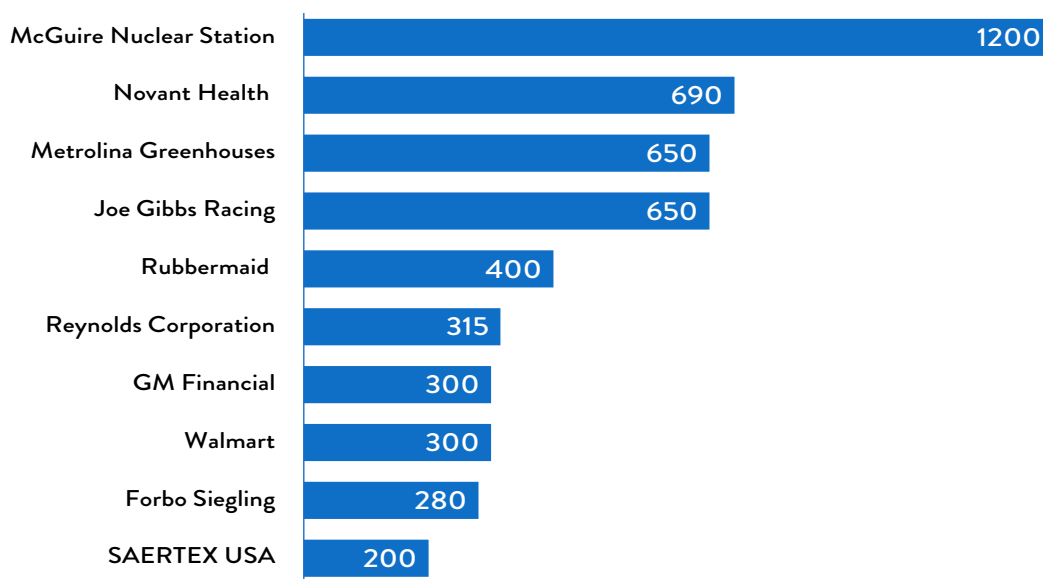
### Employment

As the town has grown in the past 20 years, so has its employment base, which is a popular reason for relocating to Huntersville in the first place. Huntersville's job base has grown 45% from 2012 to 2017 alone, thanks to the regional presence of Fortune 500 companies and the expansion of the Huntersville Business Park. Residents also benefit from employment in Charlotte. According to census data 23.1% of residents work in Charlotte, indicating that future plans need to support travel for these commuters.

**Top three employment sectors:**  
1. Trade, transportation, utilities  
2. Education and healthcare  
3. Leisure and hospitality



JOBS BY SECTOR. SOURCE: ESRI BAO

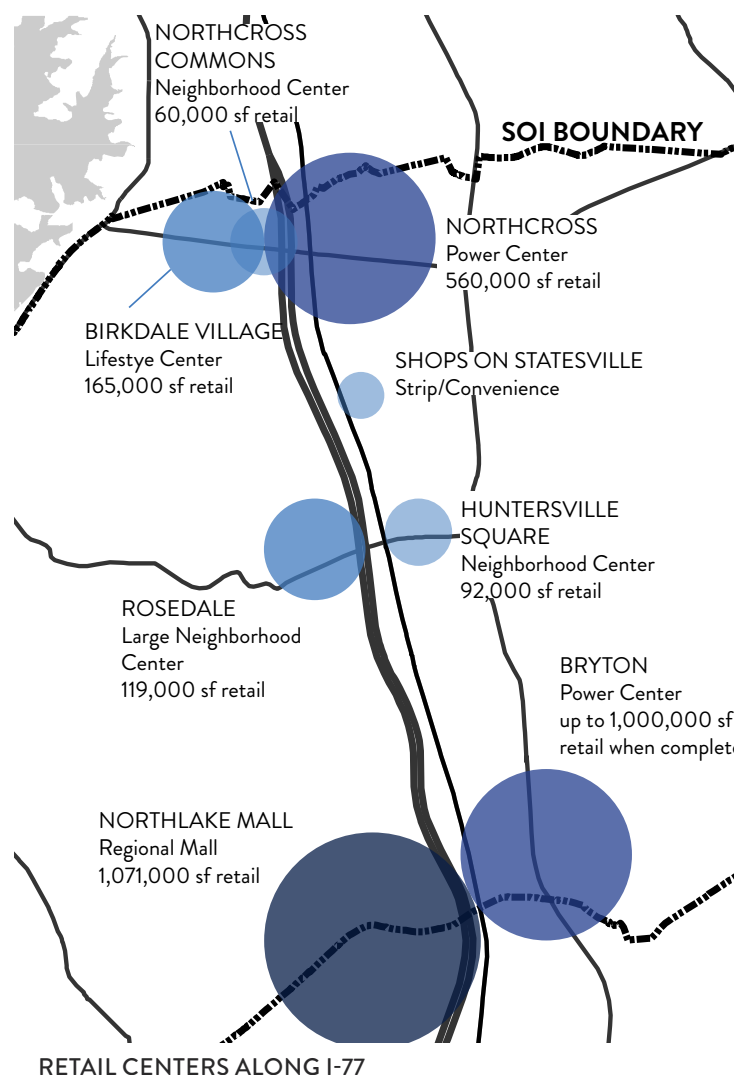


TOP EMPLOYERS. SOURCE: LAKE NORMAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (2020)

## Retail Centers

The graphic to the right shows the concentration of retail centers along I-77, which is consistent with previous planning and the 2030 Community Plan's Growth Framework map. Huntersville is home to several large commercial centers with diverse tenants that offer a range of services and cater to many different market sectors. These commercial centers provide both daily needs for nearby residents and less-frequent needs, such as apparel, for residents of Huntersville and the larger region. As seen on the map, a concentration of retail centers in the Northern part of Huntersville, is complimented by an expanding Bryton and Northlake Mall (Charlotte) to serve the Southern end and residents from Charlotte.

There are also other small commercial areas in the Eastern and Western sides of town which serve daily needs for nearby residents such as grocery shopping and gas. This map does not account for all commercial activity in the town, but does give insight as to the amount and spatial character of retail offerings around town.



RETAIL CENTERS ALONG I-77

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## LAND USE

### Existing Land Use

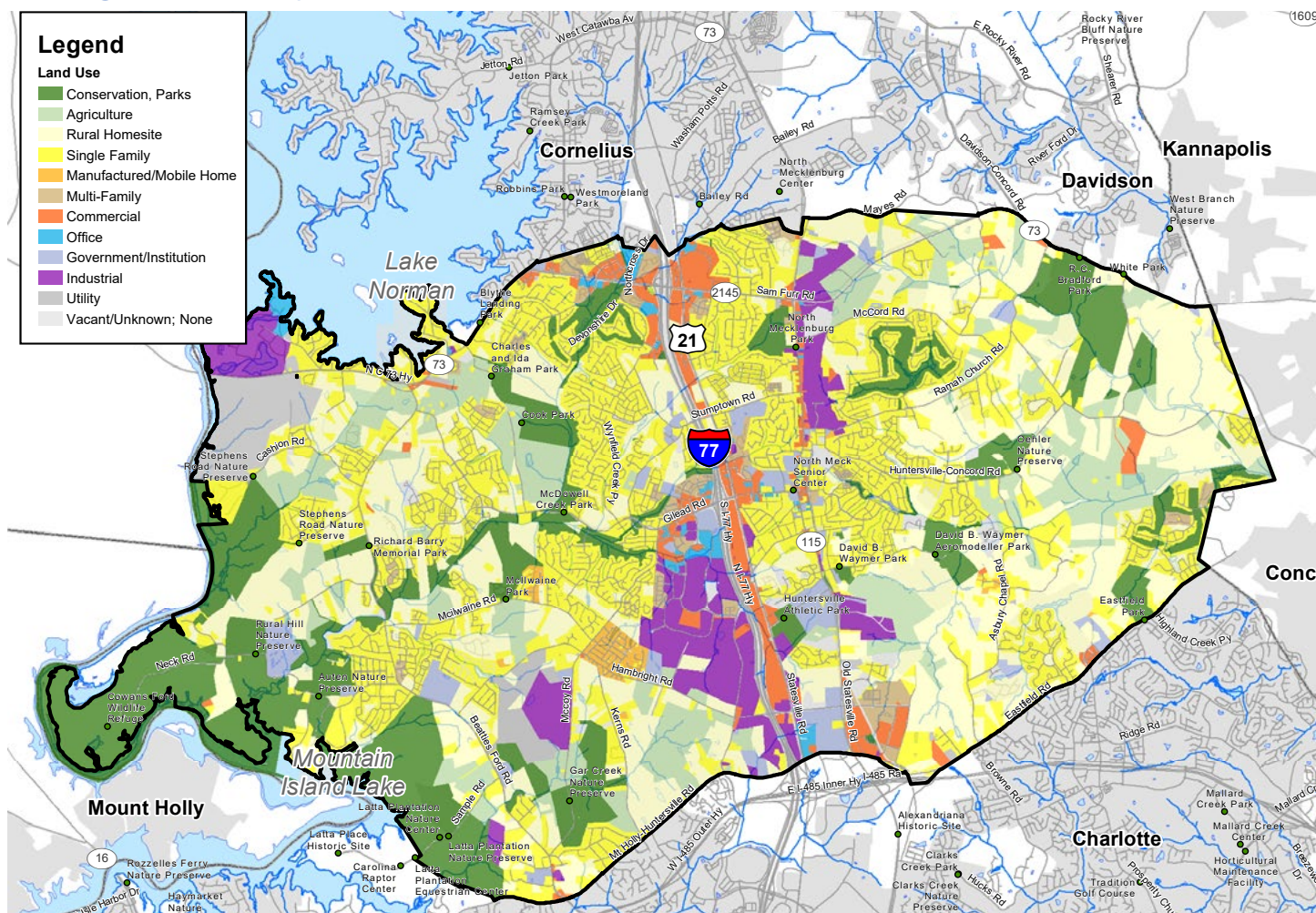
As part of the Community Plan Update, an inventory of existing land uses was compiled based on Mecklenburg County property appraiser data. Major findings included:

- Industrial and commercial uses are currently concentrated around I-77 and Old Statesville Rd
- Significant amount of conserved land and rural, agricultural lands in the west and east
- 6,000 acres in the study area are in conservation or parks

- Single-family housing is the largest percentage of land use at 29%, but represents of 52% of property value in Huntersville
- Commercial, industrial and office make up 10% of the land area and 17% of property value

The graphs to the right show land use by area and property value. As more land is developed it will be important for the Town to balance new residential growth with new commercial, office and industrial growth. Non-residential growth can help balance the tax base and typically costs the town less in service provision than low or moderate value residential properties.

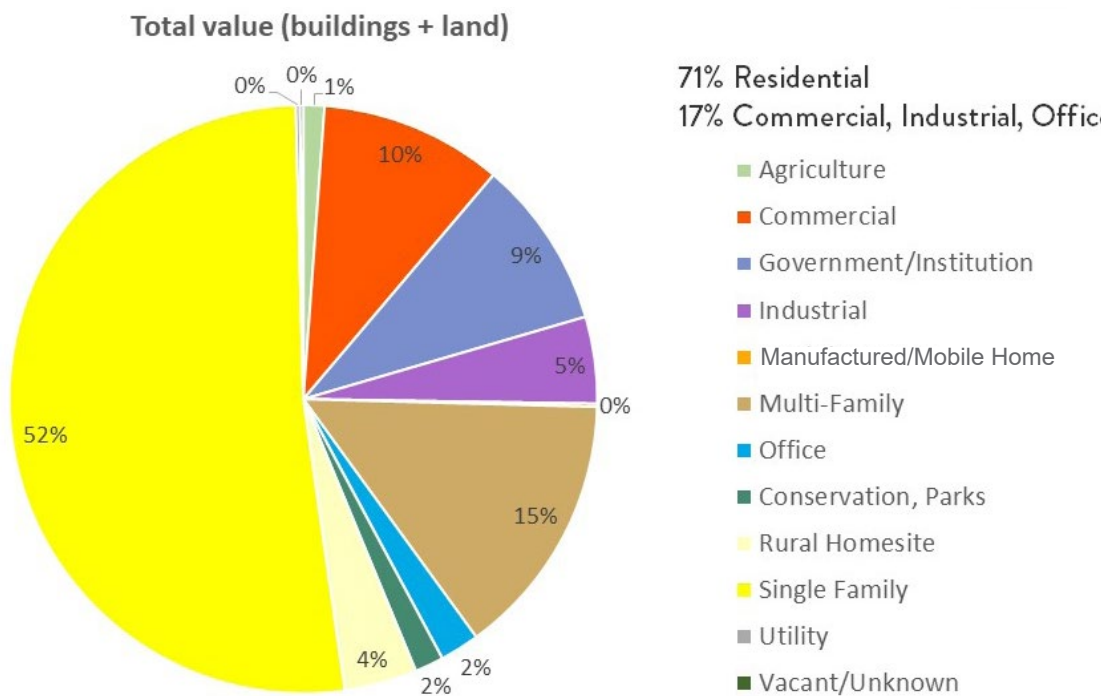
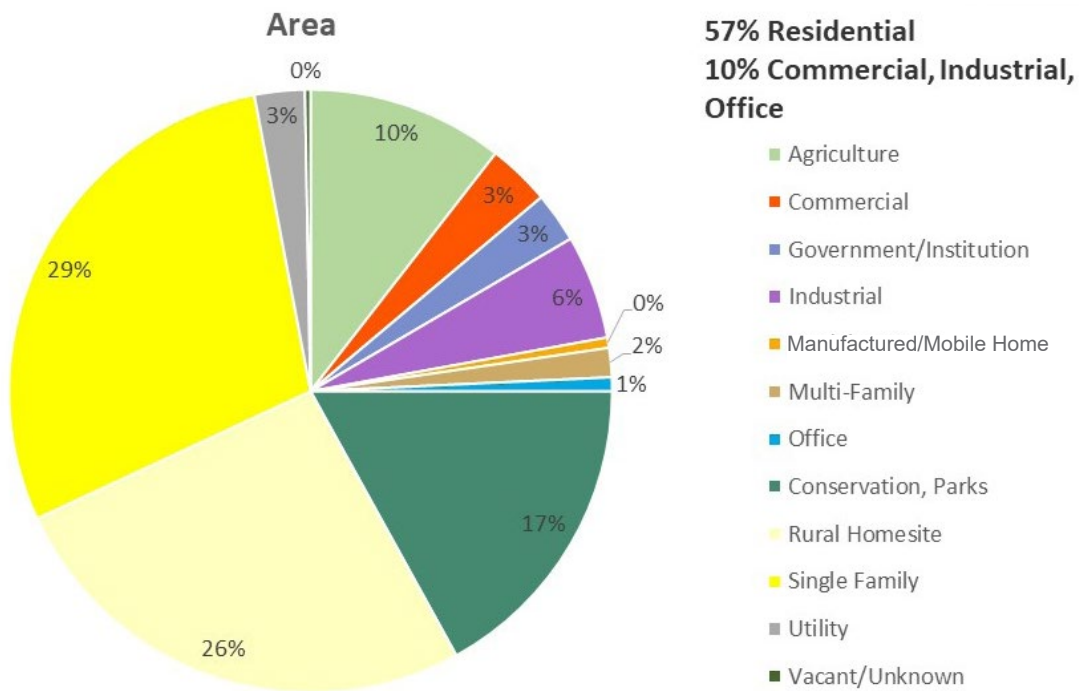
### Existing Land Use Map



SOURCE: MECKLENBURG COUNTY, 2019



## Existing Land Use by Area and Value



SOURCE: MECKLENBURG COUNTY, 2019

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

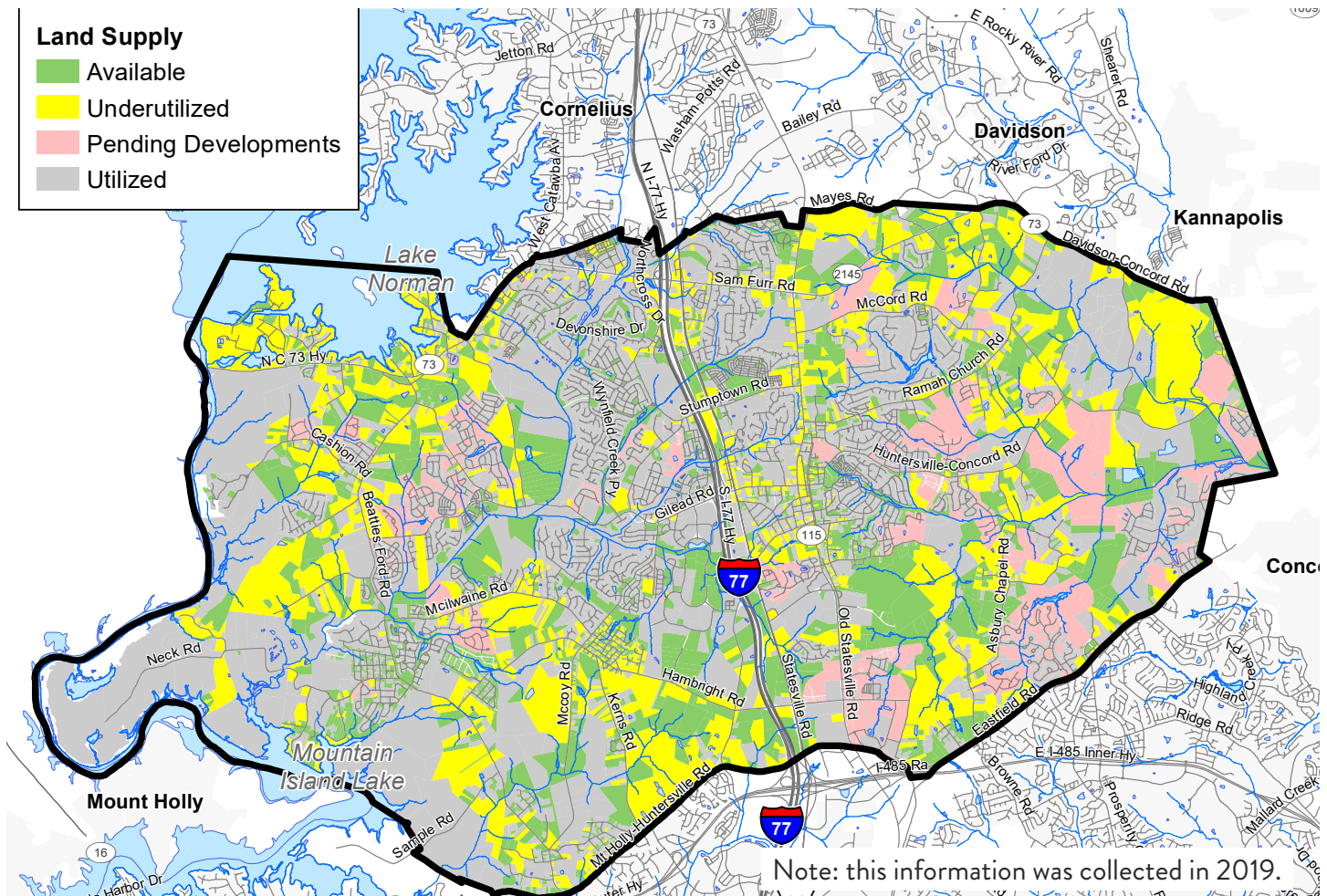
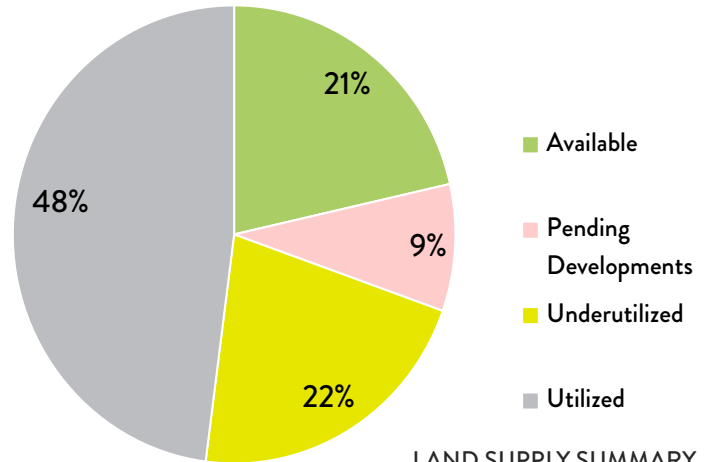
## Land Supply

This land supply analysis investigates how much land is available for future development. The analysis also includes land that has been approved for development.

Available/underutilized land and approved development was compared by location in High and Low Intensity areas in the 2030 Community Plan. Thirty-seven percent of Available and Underutilized lands and 10,000 housing units in approved subdivisions (66% of total) since 2000 are located in the High Intensity Area. Sixty-three percent of Available and Underutilized lands and 5,200 housing units in approved subdivisions (34% of total) since 2000 are located in the Low Intensity Area.

This analysis shows the town has been successful in

steering more growth to the High Intensity area, but it also shows that remaining land in the core of the town is dwindling. This means that policies that encourage infill and redevelopment and seek to minimize negative impacts will be increasingly important.





## INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC SERVICES

The Town of Huntersville provides police, fire, parks and recreation programming, public works and other municipal public facilities and services to residents and property owners in the town limits and Sphere of Influence (SOI). These public facilities and services are funded through local tax revenue and other public and private revenues. The Town partners with other entities to provide water and sewer, electric, schools and parks.

### Police and Fire

The Huntersville Police Department is currently headquartered on the west side of the Huntersville Business Park. This facility, operational since 2012 is 27,000 square feet and replaced an 8,000 square foot building located on Gilead Road in Downtown. There is another police office in the Fire Station located downtown. The department currently has 102 sworn officers and 10 civilian employees. Major concerns voiced by the police department include:

- Call volume at big box stores
- Traffic and lack connectivity of roadways which can hinder response times
- Keeping up with growing population (Staffing is currently at 1.54 per 1,000 residents, which is below the national average of 2.5. A target of 1.75 or better would be appropriate for the Town)

The Fire Department is served by a combination of paid, part-time and volunteer firefighters. There are typically 20 daytime employees and 15 nighttime employees. A total of 110 people are employed to meet demand which is increasing. Call volume has expanded from 2,000 to 6,700 calls per year over the last 10 years. The fire district has the second highest call volume in the region and the lowest Fire Service District tax rate. Currently there are 4 fire stations. A new fire station is planned in the northeast part of the planning area near Hiawasse Road. Major service generators are high density medical buildings (ex. – rehab facilities), retirement centers, high density apartments, and other uses that have high frequency of medical emergencies.

Service	Provider
Parks	Town/county partnership
Schools	Charlotte-Mecklenberg Schools
Fire & Rescue	Town/volunteer combo
Police	Town
Electric	Electricities, Duke, Energy United
Water/Sewer	City of Charlotte

### PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROVIDERS

### Utilities

Water and wastewater services for the Town of Huntersville are provided by Charlotte Water. The Town Board contracts with Electricities, one of three utility companies which supplies electric service to the Town.

### Schools

Considering the rapid population growth experienced in Huntersville, coupled with the significant population percentage of children, it comes as no surprise that school enrollment in Huntersville is high. Huntersville has the highest proportion of school-aged youth and the highest projected increase in the school-aged population in all municipalities in Mecklenburg County. Predictions estimate over 8,000 new students by 2035, which is the highest projected increase by population share in Mecklenburg County.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Road Network

The Town of Huntersville's transportation system continues to play a significant role in achieving its stated vision to be a livable Town. The increased growth in recent years has stressed the Town's existing road network and created some congestion. Accordingly, the Town places a premium on proactive planning, multimodal solutions, innovative funding, and transportation decisions that align with growth and development expectations. The Town continues to emphasize connectivity that disperses local traffic over a broad network of smaller sized streets that are designed based on the surrounding land use context rather than relying on a few traffic-centric major roadways. However, the handful of arterial roads in the SOI, including I-77, continue to handle significant loads of commuters, and local and through-traffic.

As part of the Huntersville 2040 Community Plan development process, the Town cataloged funded and planned projects from local, regional, and state plans. In total, 818 projects were identified. Given the overlap in studies, some roads in the study area had multiple projects. For example, a corridor may be funded in the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) as a widening project while also appearing in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) as needing pedestrian improvements.

Numerous transportation projects are scheduled to be completed over the next few years. The map and table on the following pages show roadway improvements in Huntersville that are funded and included in Huntersville's updated Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) or the STIP. These roadway projects will provide notable travel benefits in Huntersville. However, the construction period likely will create challenges, and project design needs to be modified to incorporate better bicycle and pedestrian accommodations where possible. A map and inventory of funded transportation projects is included on the following pages.



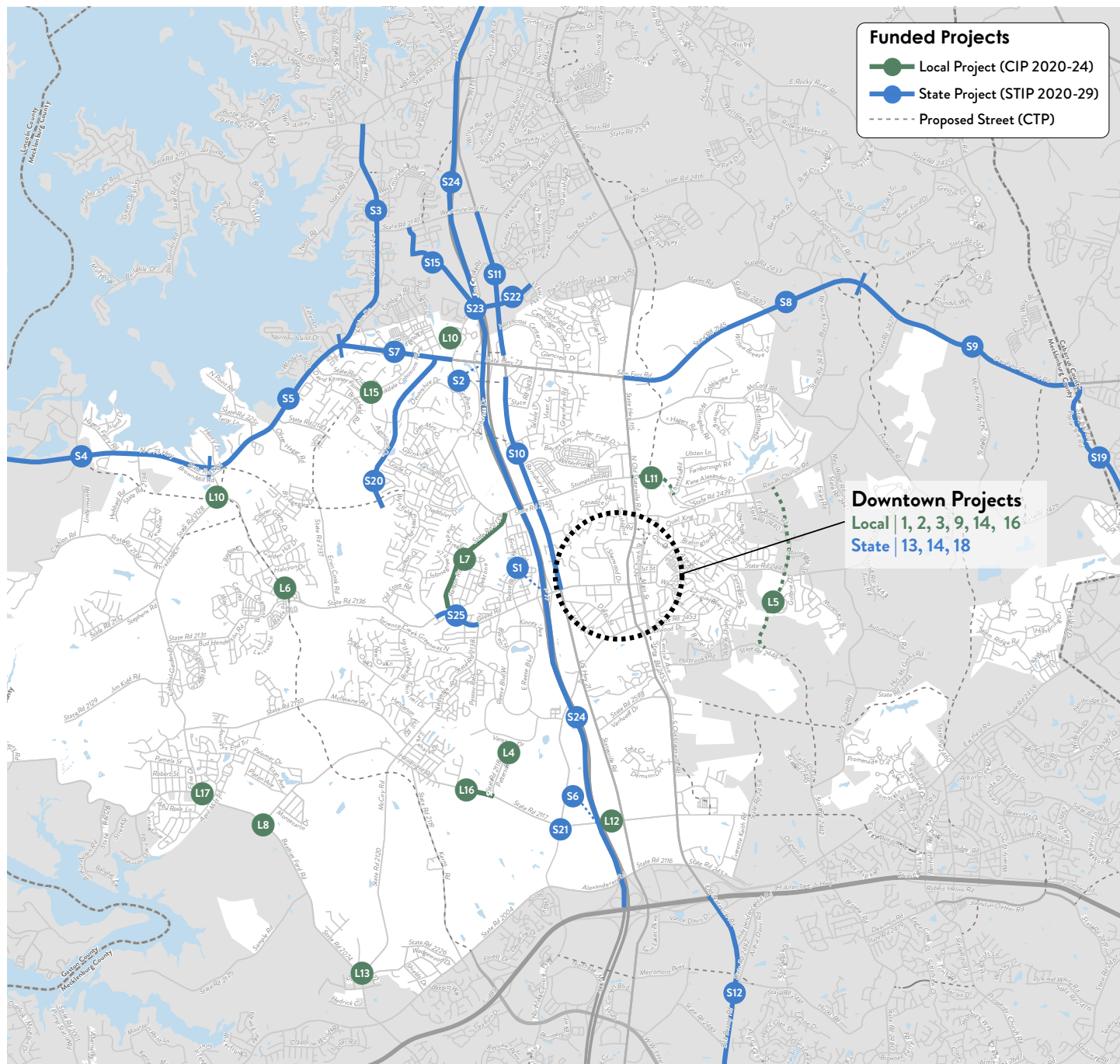
TRAFFIC ON I-77. SOURCE: CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

### WHOSE STREETS ARE THESE?

Not all roads in Huntersville are owned by the Town. The Town (or neighborhood associations) own most of the roads within neighborhoods, but the state (NCDOT) owns many of the major roads you drive on every day. The Powell Bill Map shows who owns the roads in Huntersville. Powell Bill funds are distributed to cities and towns to help the Town fund maintenance, repairs construction, and other improvements. But, these funds are limited. As a result, we depend on other state funding sources to improve major roads such as NC 73 and US 21 (Statesville Road).



## Funded Transportation Projects Map



FUNDED TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## Funded Projects Table

Local Projects (CIP 2020-24)	
L1	Downtown greenway
L2	Holbrook Street extension
L3	Gibson Park Drive improvements
L4	Patterson Road extension
L5	Ferrelltown Parkway partnership
L6	Vance Road/Gilead Road (connection)
L7	Ranson Road widening
L8	Beatties Ford Rd/Hambright Rd intersection
L9	Seagle Street improvements
L10	Beatties Ford Rd/Gilead Rd intersection
L11	Stumptown Rd extension
L12	Hambright Road widening
L13	Beatties Ford Road/McCoy Road
L14	Walters Street improvements
L15	David Kenney Farm Rd connection
L16	4th Street improvements
L17	Beatties Ford Rd/Neck Rd intersection
State Projects (STIP 2020-29)	
S1	I-77/Gilead Road interchange (upgrade interchange to double diverging diamond)
S2	I-77/Sam Furr Road interchange (upgrade to split diamond)
S3	West Catawba Avenue from NC 73 to Jetton Rd (widen to 4 lane divided)
S4	NC 73 from NC 16 Business in Lincoln Co. to Beatties Ford Rd (widen to multi-lanes)
S5	NC 73 from Beatties Ford Rd to Catawba Ave (widen to multi-lanes)
S6	I-77/Hambright Road interchange (provide direct connections to managed lanes)
S7	NC 73 from W Catawba Ave to Northcross Dr (widen existing roadway)
S8	NC 73 from NC 115 to Davidson-Concord Rd (widen to multi-lanes)
S9	NC 73 from Davidson-Concord Rd to Poplar Tent Rd (widen to multi-lanes)
S10	US 21 (Statesville Road) from Gilead Rd to Holly Point Dr (widen to multi-lanes)
S11	US 21 (Statesville Road) from Northcross Center Ct to Westmoreland Rd (widen to multi-lanes)
S12	NC 115 (Old Statesville Road) from Harris Blvd to I-485 (widen to multi-lanes)
S13	Gilead Road from Statesville Rd to Old Statesville Rd (widen to multi-lanes)
S14	US 21/Gilead Road intersection improvements
S15	Northcross Drive Extension from current end to Westmoreland Rd (road on new location)
S18	Main Street from Mt. Holly-Huntersville Rd to south of Ramah Church Rd (widen Main St and connect to NC 115)
S19	Poplar Tent Road from Derita Rd to NC 73 (widen to four lanes)
S20	McDowell Creek Greenway from NC 73 to Chilgrove Ln (construct multi-use trail)
S21	Hambright Road Park & Ride southwest corner I-77 & Hambright Rd (construct regional park and ride lot & transfer
S22	Bailey Road Extension from Poole Place Dr to US 21 (road on new location)
S23	Bailey Road Extension from US 21 to Northcross Dr including I-77 bridge (road on new location)
S24	I-77 North from I-485 to NC 150 (construct peak period shoulder lanes)
S25	Gilead Road West from McCoy Rd to Wynfield Creek Pkwy (widen to multi-lanes)



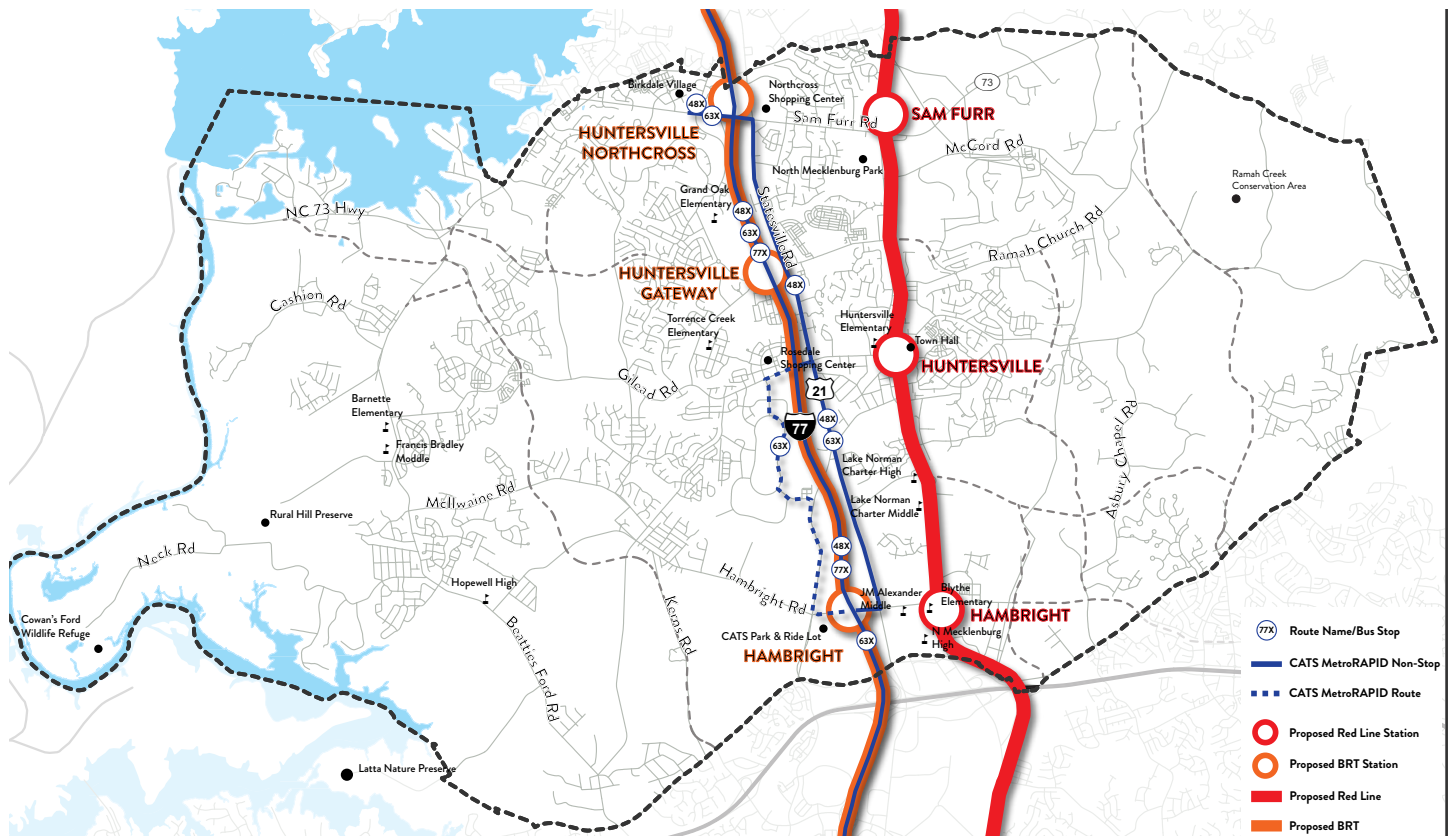
## Transit

Public transportation in Huntersville and throughout Mecklenburg County is provided by the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS). Service currently focuses on regional connections that link the Town with Uptown Charlotte and the larger CATS system. The Town continues to be an active participant in a regional dialogue surrounding premium transit service along the I-77/US 21 corridor. Transit planning at this scale is very complex with the diverse interests of multiple jurisdictions; numerous regional, state, and federal agencies; private land holders; and citizenry with varied opinions on the value of transit investments. The map below highlights three considerations for existing and potential future transit service. These include existing express bus routes (MetroRAPID) and the potential introduction of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and commuter rail along the Red Line.



EXPRESS BUS.

Source: Charlotte Stories



TRANSIT EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PROPOSED ROUTES



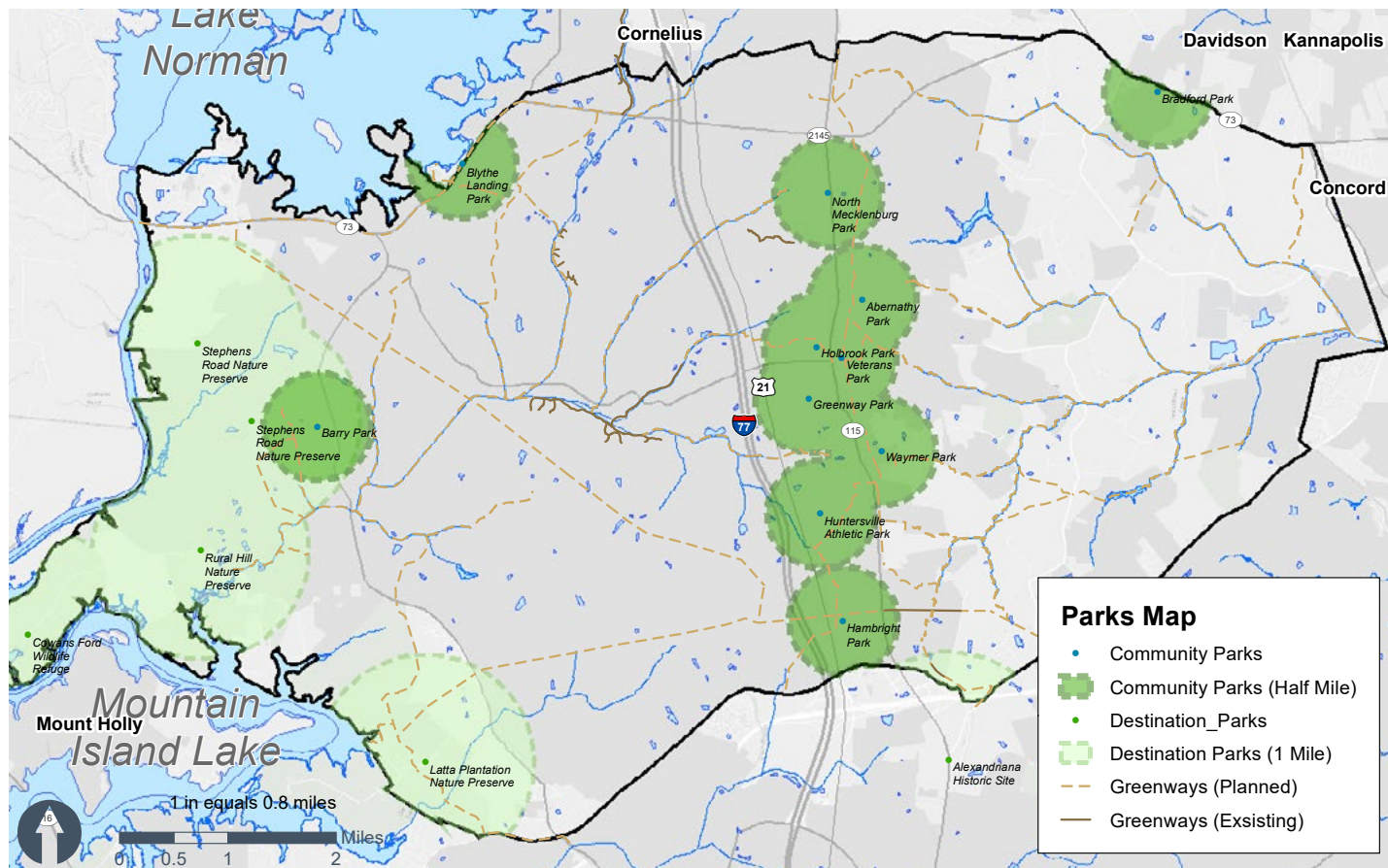
## EXISTING CONDITIONS

### PARKS AND HISTORICAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES

#### Parks

The Huntersville Parks and Recreation Department provides opportunities for both active and passive recreation in outdoor and indoor facilities. The Town partners with Mecklenburg County to acquire land for new parks and the Town maintains facilities and provides programming. Many of the Town's public parks are concentrated in the NC 115 corridor along with a number of passive parks near the Western limits along the Catawba River and Mountain Island Lake. Fourteen percent of the total population lives within a half-mile radius of one of these public parks, which is approximately representative of the distance people would walk to a park. The shares of vulnerable populations that live within a half mile of parks, seniors and households in poverty, have equal access to public parks. Note that new open space and park land is also

	SOI	Within 1/2 Mile of Park	% Within 1/2 Mile of Park
Total Population	62,545	8,678	14%
Housing Units	24,144	3,493	14%
Seniors	6,431	1,133	19%
Households in Poverty	1,151	222	19%
Minority Population	17,410	2,492	14%



PARKS LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

required in new developments, which if factored in would increase park access significantly.

Recent park accomplishments include:

- Bradford Park: Upgraded turf fields.
- Ranson Park Master Plan: Master Plan underway.
- Veterans Park: Multi-purpose green and plaza completed last year. 40-50 Events programmed yearly.
- Dog Park: Design complete, construction funded.
- Downtown Greenway - Design complete, construction begins in Fall of 2020.

Additionally, to efforts by the Parks and Recreation Department, Mecklenburg County and the Catawba Lands Conservancy (CLC) have been actively acquiring land for watershed and habitat protection within the planning area.

## History and Agriculture

Huntersville was incorporated in 1873 and has always been attractive due to its rail access, fertile farmland, and proximity to Charlotte. In the early days, the Town was centered in the 1-square mile area around Downtown and workers built their home on the outskirts. It grew quickly even then, thanks for the rail access and fertile land. Major employers in the early 1900s were Duke Power, Bell South, and the hosiery and cotton mills. Huntersville grew steadily during the latter half of the Twentieth century thanks to employers in Town and housing being available. There was also a period of rapid growth in size and population thanks to annexation in the 1980s and 1990s that was spurred by the completion of I-77 and Lake Norman.

The Charlotte/Mecklenburg Landmarks Commission serves as a resource for the Town of Huntersville for historic preservation. The McCoy Barber Shop building and the Bank Building – both historic buildings on Main Street, in old Huntersville have been preserved recently. Other notable buildings include the Torrence-Lytle School, Ranson House and Caldwell Station School.

Huntersville's agricultural roots can still be seen in the eastern and western edges of town where there are many working farms and scenic rural landscapes.



VETERANS PARK (SOURCE: HUNTERSVILLE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT)



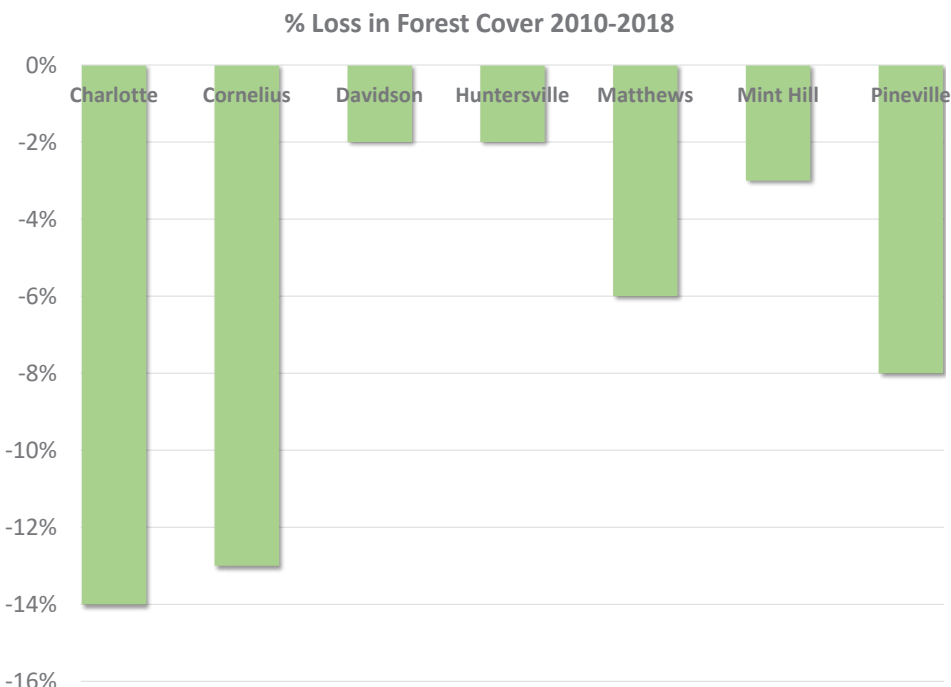
EARLY DOWNTOWN



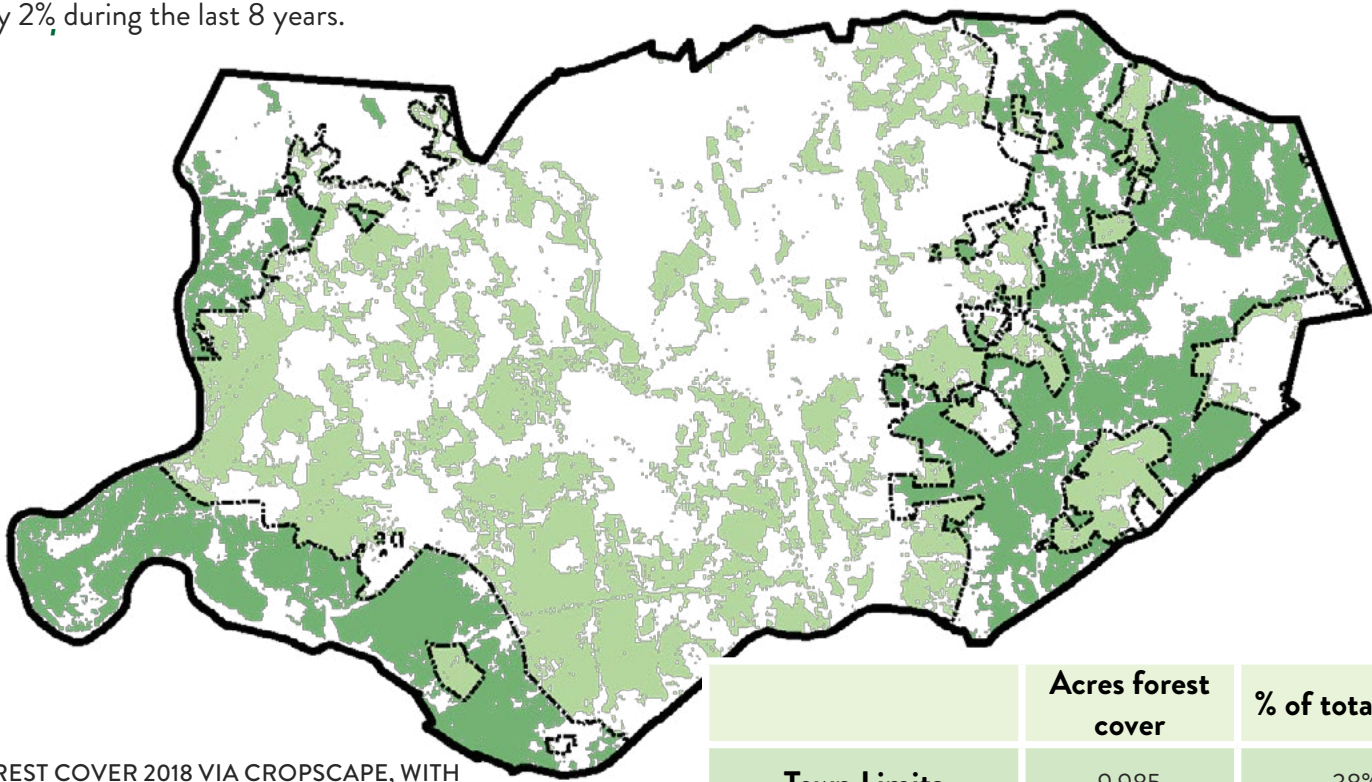
# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## Natural Resources

Huntersville’s attraction is due in part to its reputation as a bustling town set in a bucolic landscape, which includes two nearby lakes and a lush tree canopy. Fortunately, there are policies in place to protect these assets in the face of growth. About 3,784 acres, or 9.3% of land in Huntersville is preserved or conserved in some way. About half the town is in a critical or protected watershed area, a state designation that carries with it development restrictions. Other policies discourage growth in the areas deemed “low intensity”, which have slowed development and resulted in more open space. This is evidenced in Huntersville’s relative small loss of forest cover compared to neighboring towns from 2010 - 2018, tied with Davidson for a total loss of only 2% during the last 8 years.



FOREST COVER 2018 VIA CROPSCAPE, WITH ANALYSIS BY ASHLEY OWNBEY.



FOREST COVER 2018 VIA CROPSCAPE, WITH ANALYSIS BY ASHLEY OWNBEY.

	Acres forest cover	% of total acres
Town Limits	9,985	38%
Sphere of Influence	8,243	58%

## Watershed Protection

Huntersville lies on the divide between the Catawba and Yadkin River Basins. The western half of Huntersville drains to Lake Norman and Mountain Island lakes which provide drinking water for the greater Charlotte region and are within the Catawba River Basin. Within this area, critical and protected watershed protection areas are regulated by the state per NCGS §143-214.5 and by the Town. In the effort to improve and protect the water quality of these water bodies, the Town has instituted regulations that:

- Prohibit certain high risk or detrimental uses (e.g. – landfills, petroleum storage)
- Restrict impervious surface area
- High v. low density option; high requires stormwater control and treatment measures
- Require undisturbed vegetative buffers within a certain distance of the shoreline and contributing waterways, with very

critical areas of the Mountain Island Lake watershed restricting any development in the 100-yr flood-plain or within 100' of the shoreline.

- Allow the transfer of development density in certain instances that promote water quality.
- Encourage Low Impact Development.

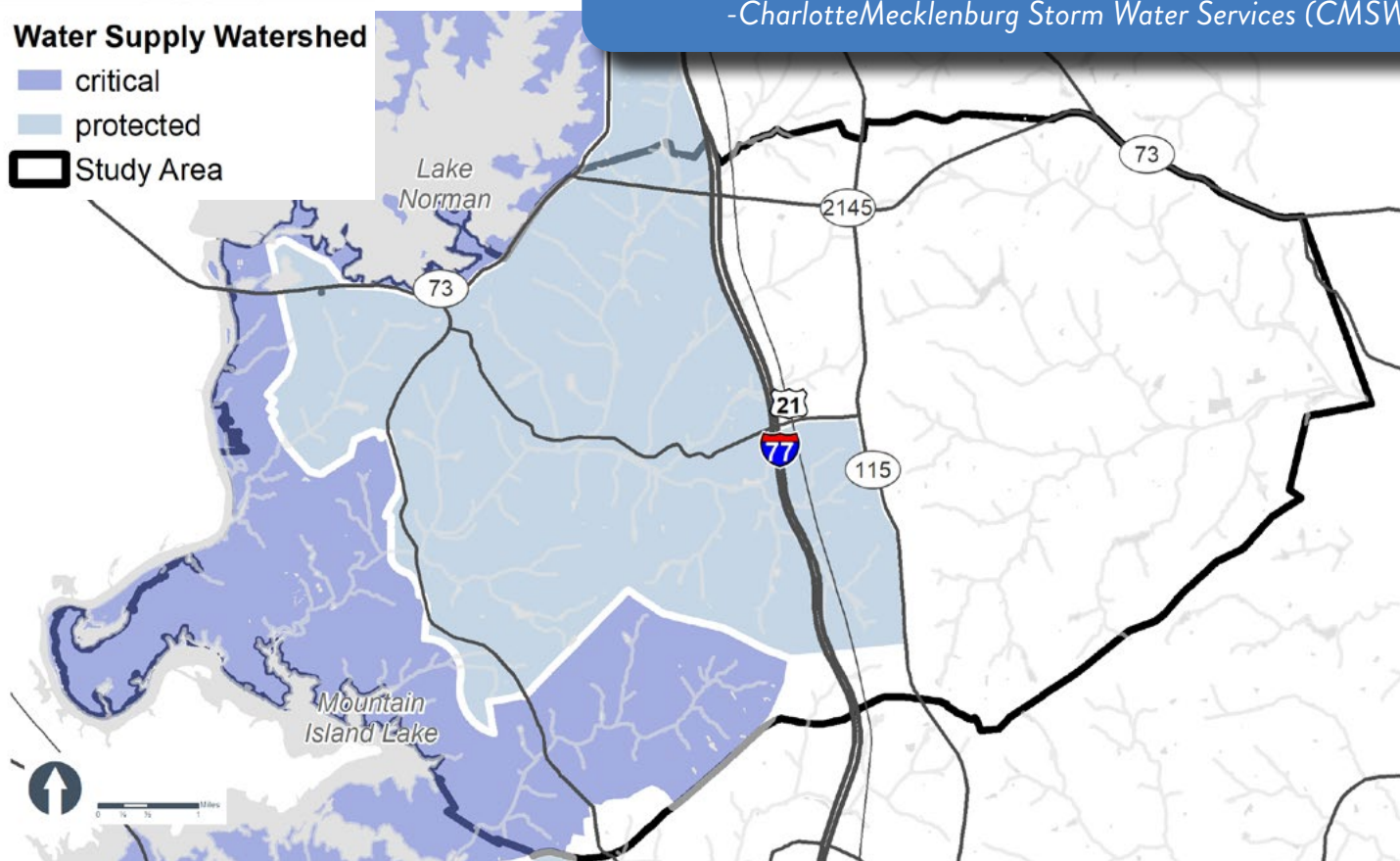
Huntersville further designates several locally-significant critical areas, including Lower and Upper Gar Creek and McDowell Creek. Significant restoration work has occurred on McDowell Creek, to improve water quality and reduce the transport of sediment to Mountain Island Lake. McDowell Creek is an example of how local and regional agencies can collaborate to enhance environmental quality.

**Since adoption of the Water Quality Ordinance and Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in 2003 there has been a 50% reduction in suspended solids and a 25% reduction in nutrients in McDowell Creek.**

*-CharlotteMecklenburg Storm Water Services (CMSWS)*

### Water Supply Watershed

- critical
- protected
- Study Area







# 3 INPUT & VISION



DOWNTOWN TOUR DURING THE CHARRETTE IN FEBRUARY

How do the Vision and Goals for a community for the next 20 years come together? By having an extended community conversation over the course of the year-long planning process. This chapter documents the public engagement process and demonstrates how public feedback has led to the recommendations later in the document.

# INPUT & VISION

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

A plan of this magnitude would not be possible or credible without significant public engagement. Throughout the year-long planning process residents and stakeholders were engaged at every step. Efforts were made to reach vulnerable populations and the team made it a priority that the demographics of those engaged matched the demographics of the Town.

### Steering Committee

A 15-person Steering Committee was formed of residents, business owners, leaders from the education and healthcare industries, and elected officials. The Steering Committee met 6 times throughout the project to provide their valuable perspective on the strengths and needs of the community and steer the direction and content of the plan.

### Stakeholder Interviews

A series of hour-long interviews were conducted with stakeholder groups in the Phase One of the project. These stakeholder groups consisted of 5-10 people and were drawn from a broad slice of the Huntersville community. Property and business owners, real estate professionals, nonprofit and community group members, education and transportation members, as well as Town staff were represented. The lively conversations focused on what people valued about Huntersville, what their goals for the Town are and what priority issues should be addressed with this Plan. The meetings provided valuable insight into the unique challenges and opportunities facing the community.

### Surveys

The project team undertook three surveys to gather data about residents' vision, goals, and feedback on the draft plan. The first survey was a 21-question survey that asked respondents about their vision and goals for the Town. The second was a short comment form on the draft framework of the plan. The third survey was a chance for the public to give their feedback on the draft plan. The survey data was used to inform

The planning process reached its goal of 5,600 engagements, or 10% of the town's population, through:

- **1,700** Project Website Visits
- **3** In-person Public Meetings
- **4,000** Views of an Online Public Meeting
- **3** Surveys with **1900+** Responses
- **6** Steering Committee Meetings
- **20,000** hard copies of the draft plan distributed to residents and businesses



RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES GOT INVOLVED DURING THE THREE-DAY WORKSHOP IN FEBRUARY 2020.

subsequent parts of the plan so that it was an accurate representation of a community conversation.

## Visioning Workshop

In February, town staff and consultants conducted a three-day planning workshop to gather community input on Town issues and community vision for the plan. The multi-day charrette offered the opportunity to employ several different meeting and engagement styles in order to effectively engage the most residents possible. Events were held at the Dukes Water Treatment plant and the Arts & Cultural Center downtown. It included the following events:

- Traditional public meeting
- Downtown tour
- Door-to-door downtown business engagement
- Open studio hours
- Planning Board update
- Steering Committee meeting

The events were well received by the public, particularly the Downtown Tour, during which longtime residents said they learned more about their town than the entire time they lived there. Feedback materials were consistent for the duration of the charrette, so residents

were able to respond to each other in their feedback, which was a unique outcome of such an endeavor. Overall, several hundred people contributed to the planning process throughout the event.

## A note about Covid-19

The project's schedule meant that it was directly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Fortunately, the project's largest engagement piece, the three-day charrette, was completed just before the Covid-19 pandemic. In order to stick to the project schedule and continue learning from the public while maintaining social distance, staff had to find creative solutions for the remaining engagement. Accommodations included extending survey closing dates, virtual Steering Committee Meetings, and virtual Public Meetings that were posted online. Engagement numbers were either similar to or above the number of attendees of a typical in-person meeting.

## Themes from Three-Day Workshop

**PARKS AND OPEN SPACE:** Preserve and protect existing trees and natural areas through development design and parks planning.

**DOWNTOWN:** Create a vibrant, pedestrian-accessible downtown with restaurants, small businesses, and housing options.

**COMMUNITY APPEARANCE:** Enhance the town's appearance to promote safety and community pride.

**TRANSPORTATION:** Improve streets and sidewalks and accommodate all modes of transportation.

**HOUSING:** Manage growth, especially in low intensity areas. Encourage walkable housing options and address affordability.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Balance the tax base and encourage diverse economic growth.



PLANNING DIRECTOR JACK SIMONEAU LED A DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR DURING THE VISIONING WORKSHOP.

# INPUT & VISION

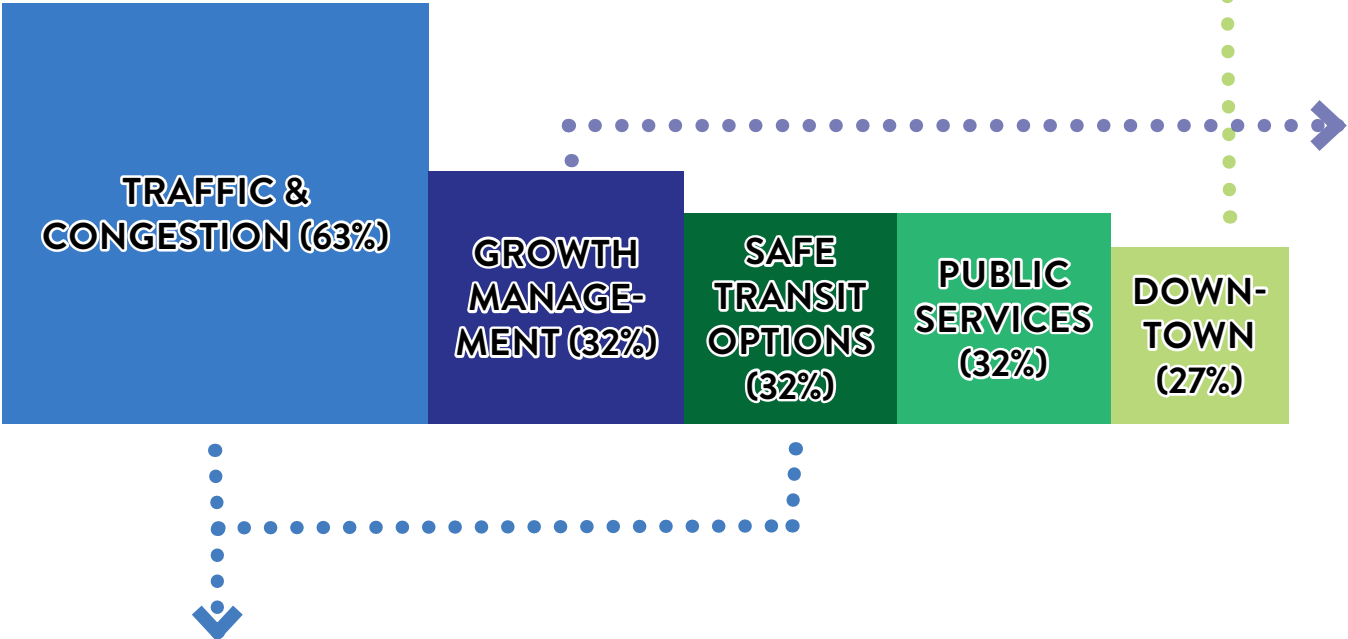
## SURVEYS

### Phase 1: Community Survey One

The first community survey ran from late February to June (extended due to Covid-19) and garnered over 1,700 respondents. The questions covered a variety of topics to ascertain what residents consider to be the current issues in the town and what they would like to see in the future.

The survey results were enlightening, and were used to create the draft vision and goals. Trends included concerns over traffic issues, growth management, and a desire for housing and transit options. Below is a sampling of influential answers. A full report is available in the appendix.

### “WHAT ARE YOUR TOP PRIORITIES FOR HUNTERSVILLE MOVING FORWARD?”



### “HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRAVEL?”

The survey asked respondents how they **currently travel** to various types of destinations. The results were predominantly **by car**. However, when asked how they **would like to travel**, results were more distributed between **driving, walking, cycling, and transit**.

	WALK	BIKE	DRIVE	TRANSIT
WORK	19%	14%	46%	19%
SHOPPING	32%	16%	42%	9%
SERVICES	27%	16%	48	9%
PARKS	47%	26%	21%	5%



## “WHAT ARE YOUR TOP GOALS FOR DOWNTOWN?”

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

MIXED USE CENTER DEVELOPMENT

REUSE OF BUILDINGS

CREATING DESIGN  
STANDARDS

PUBLIC SPACES

## “WHAT LAND USE POLICIES DO YOU SUPPORT?” (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

86%

Maintain high quality architectural and site design standards for commercial development.

80%

Stabilize tax base by promoting mix of residential, commercial, and industrial development

83%

Discouraging intense development in the sensitive watershed

67%

Grow in a less intense manner in rural areas (i.e. Eastern and Western edges)

## “IF YOU WERE ABLE, WILLING, AND MOTIVATED TO RELOCATE IN HUNTERSVILLE, WHAT HOUSING OPTIONS WOULD INTEREST YOU?” (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)



61%

A house with a large yard, even if not near shopping and services



37%

A house with a smaller yard within walking distance of a park or school



22%

A low maintenance patio home or townhome near shopping and services



4%

An apartment or condo complex

# INPUT & VISION

## Phase 2: Draft Framework

After the first community survey, the project team put together a draft framework that included a vision statement, goals and major recommendations for the plan. These were then brought to the Steering Committee for discussion before being presented in the project's second public meeting, which was held virtually on June 16th, 2020. The public was invited to give their feedback on the draft framework in the form of an online comment form.

### Steering Committee Worksheet

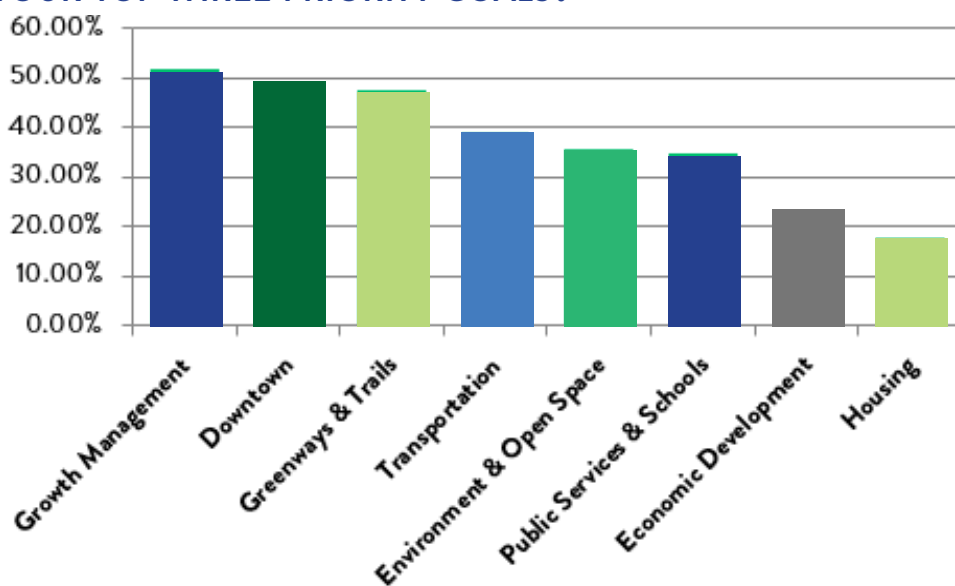
When presented with the draft framework, the Steering Committee provided helpful insight and edits. From their feedback, the project team was able to capture the key work for the Vision Statement: livable. The goal was to create a highly livable town. A full exploration

of the definition of livability can be found on page 43. During this conversation, the Steering Committee also expressed the importance of housing affordability, tradeoffs associated with emphasizing certain goals, and a need to create measurable goals for the plan.

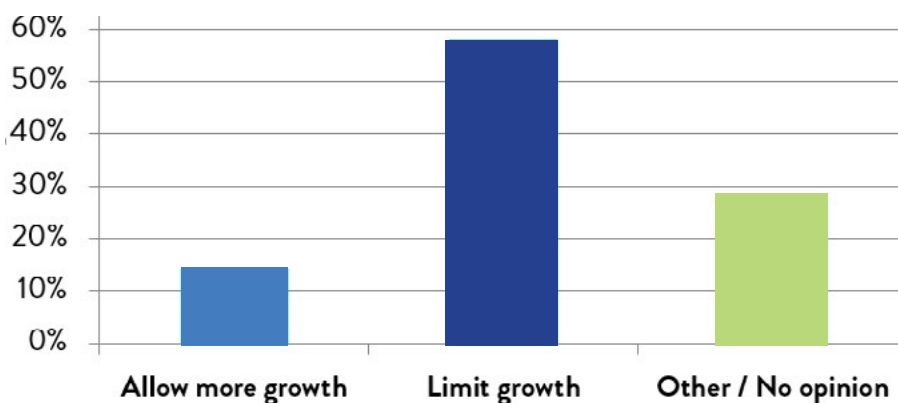
### Survey Two: Draft Plan Framework Comment Form

Following the release of the draft plan framework at the virtual community meeting in June, the public was invited to give their feedback on the draft vision and goals. The results reinforced the preference for limiting growth in the town, and the open ended answers indicated that residents want to see inclusivity incorporated more prominently in the plan. Selected responses can be found below:

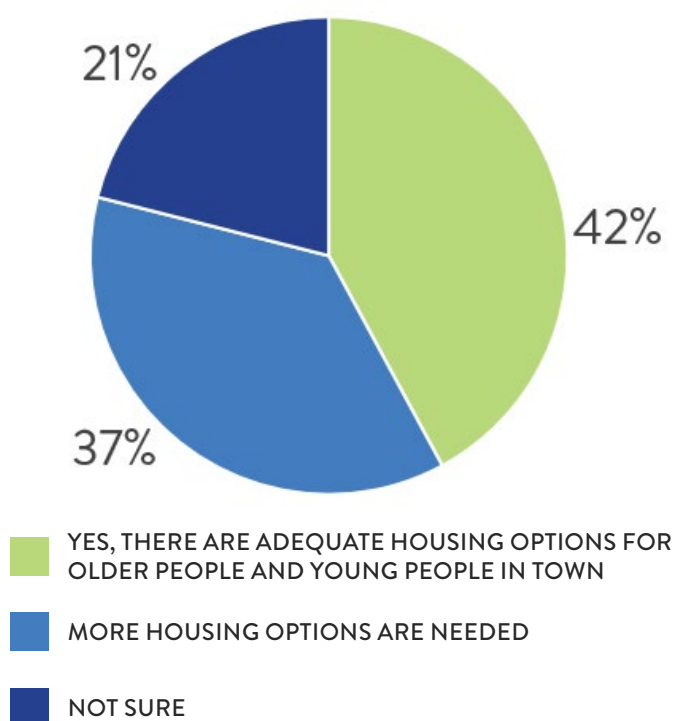
#### “WHAT ARE YOUR TOP THREE PRIORITY GOALS?”



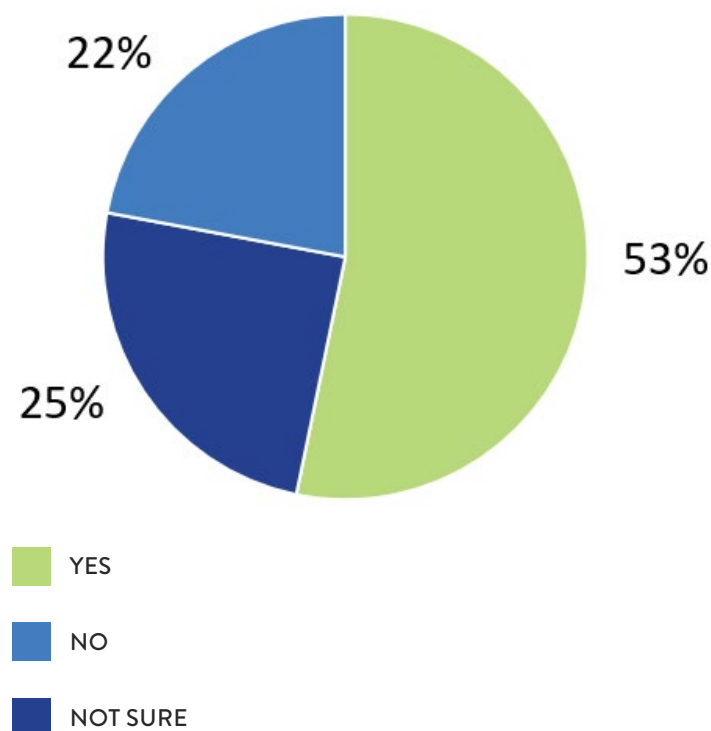
#### “HOW SHOULD THE CURRENT ADOPTED LAND USE PLAN BE CHANGED?”



**“HOW MUCH DO YOU AGREE WITH THIS STATEMENT: ‘HUNTERSVILLE HAS HOUSING OPTIONS THAT WILL SERVE MY NEEDS AND/OR MY CHILDREN AS WE GROW OLDER?’”**



**“SHOULD THE TOWN STILL PLAN FOR FUTURE COMMUTER RAIL EVEN THOUGH THE RAILROAD WOULD HAVE TO CHANGE ITS POLICIES, AND IT MAY ONLY BE A LONG TERM OPTION?”**



### Phase 3: Community Survey Three

The Community Survey Three is meant to gather feedback on the draft plan and will be accessible at [www.huntersville2040.com](http://www.huntersville2040.com) between August 26th and September 18.

## INPUT & VISION

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### VISION STATEMENT

The Vision Statement takes two forms: a short tagline and a longer paragraph. Both were taken directly from community input and encapsulate the needs and concerns of Huntersville as it grows in the future. The Vision Statement reflects the two main characteristics of Huntersville: a green, agricultural town and a growing, bustling suburb. It makes quality of life for all residents a priority through its emphasis on livability.

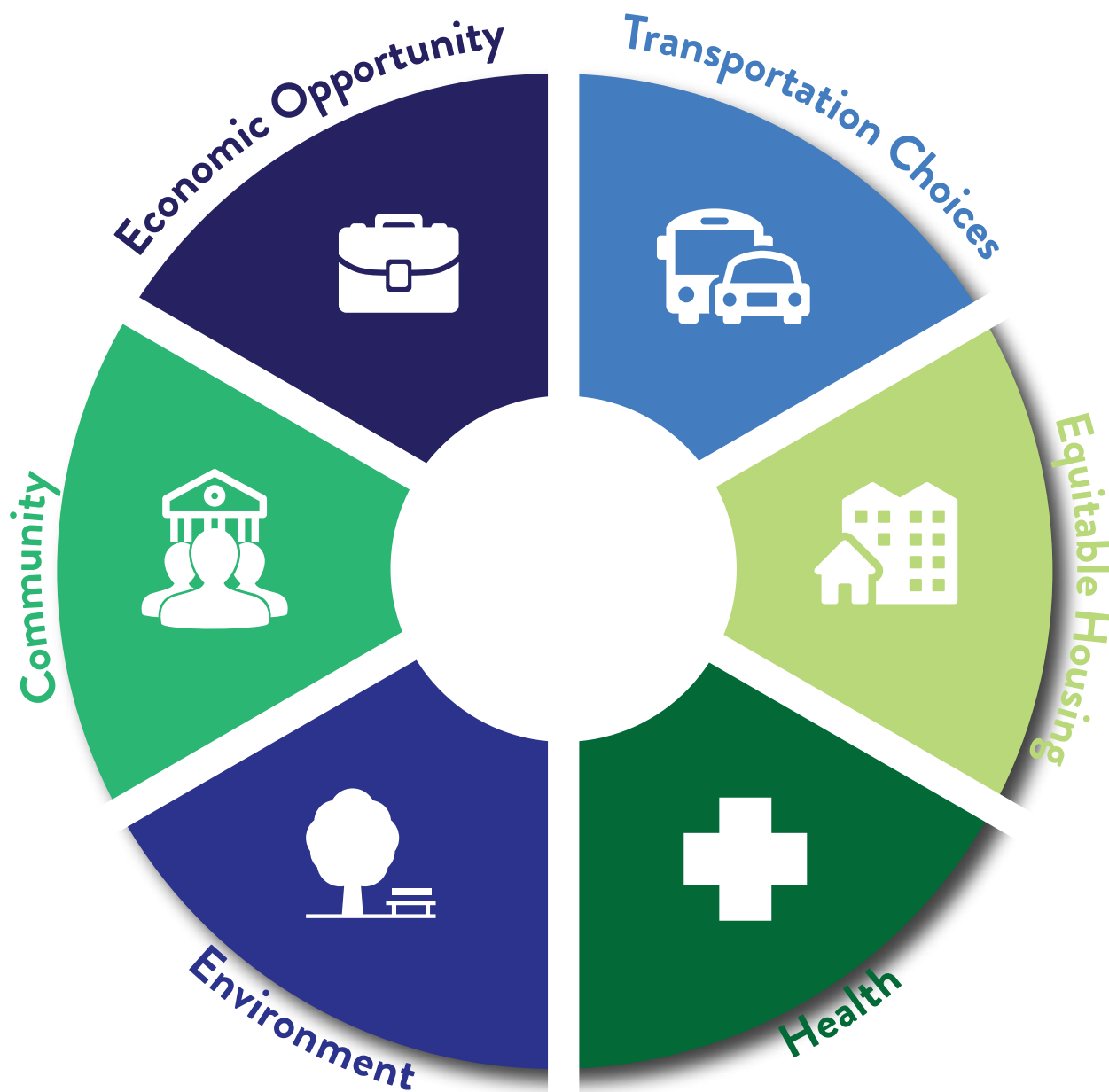
“BY 2040, HUNTERSVILLE WILL BE  
**THE MOST LIVABLE**  
**COMMUNITY IN**  
**NORTH CAROLINA”**

By 2040, Huntersville will be a **vibrant community** that provides attractive options for its residents to **live, work, play, and grow**. Pursuing the highest level of excellence, the town will **guide growth and development** in a way that prioritizes **quality of life, green spaces and environmental safety, meaningful economic development, and multimodal transportation**.



## DEFINING LIVABILITY

Livability is the key word for the vision of Huntersville's future. Many factors contribute to a community's livability, but it is essentially "the sum of the factors that add up to a community's quality of life." (SCI, 2017) These six indicators are common amongst conversations and research that seeks to define livability, but are by no means exhaustive. Livability is complex and made up of many interconnected factors.



# INPUT & VISION

## GOALS

From public input, nine over-arching goals were developed. Objectives help to clarify the goals and provide a framework for policy recommendations in the next chapter. They address all aspects that affect quality of life and thus, how the Town intends to achieve the highest level of livability. It should be noted that the goals are not ranked and the order in which they are displayed does not indicate priority.

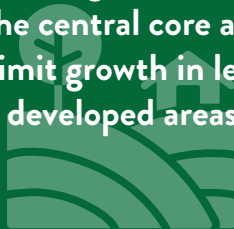
### Activated Downtowns

Create vibrant, pedestrian-accessible mixed-use areas with restaurants, small businesses, and housing options.



### Growth Management

Focus growth near the central core and limit growth in less developed areas.



### Transportation

Improve streets and sidewalks and expand transportation options.



### Public Services and Schools

Ensure excellent public services and community schools.



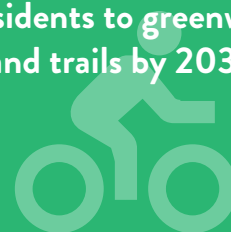
### Economic Development

Balance the tax base, encourage entrepreneurship and attract target industries.



### Greenways & Trails

Connect 30,000 residents to greenways and trails by 2030.



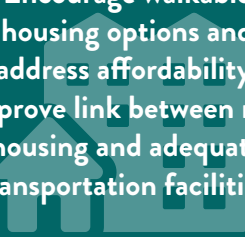
### Inclusive Government

Encourage participation of all citizens. Actively strive for diversity on town boards, departments, and committees.



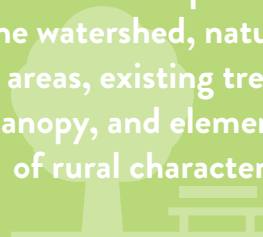
### Housing Choice

Encourage walkable housing options and address affordability. Improve link between new housing and adequate transportation facilities.



### Environment & Open Space

Preserve and protect the watershed, natural areas, existing tree canopy, and elements of rural character.



## GOALS & LIVABILITY INDICATORS

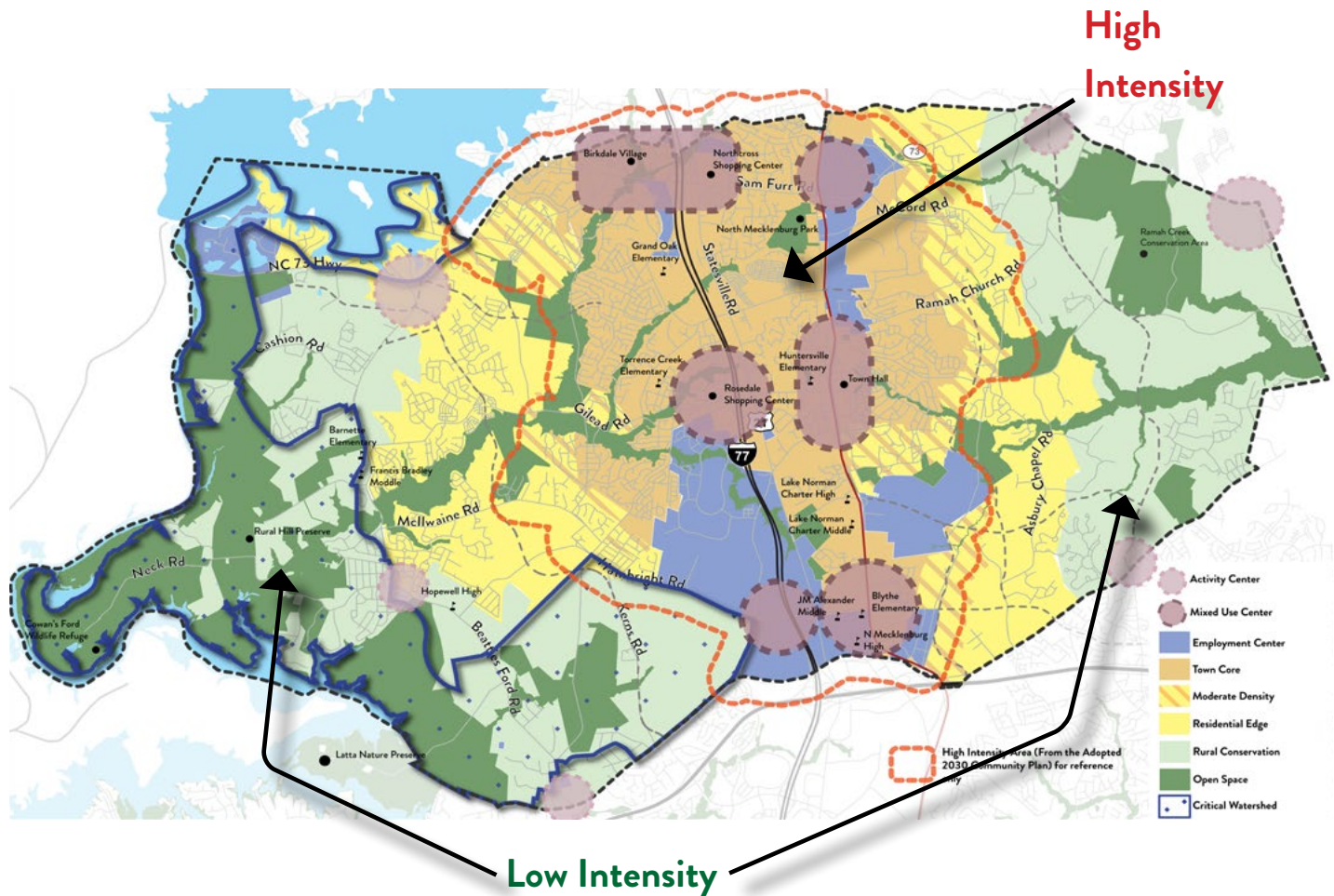
The nine goals, which were generated from public input, incorporate the six livability components discussed previously. This overlap of goals a livability indicators demonstrates that the project goals are valid steps toward achieving the vision of livability for Huntersville.

GOAL		LIVABILITY COMPONENTS					
		Economic Opportunity	Transportation Choice	Health	Equitable Housing	Environment	Community
	DOWNTOWN						
	GROWTH MANAGEMENT						
	TRANSPORTATION						
	PUBLIC SERVICES & SCHOOLS						
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			<b>To .4: no</b>			
	GREENWAYS & TRAILS						
	INCLUSIVE GOVERNMENT						
	HOUSING CHOICES						
	ENVIRONMENT & OPEN SPACE						





# 4 FUTURE LAND USE



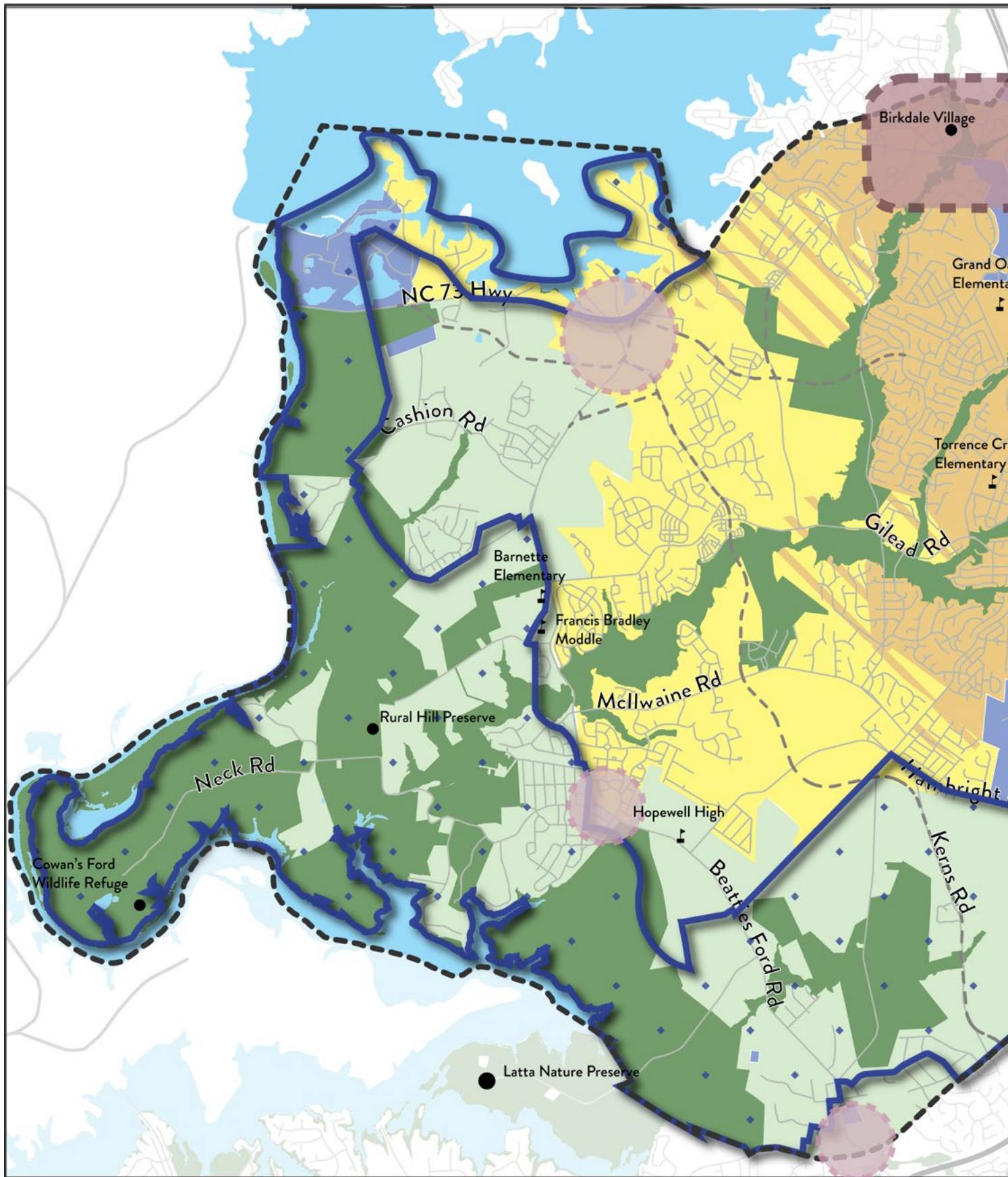
The Huntersville 2030 land use plan outlined two intensity areas for the town: a high intensity area within 2 miles of I-77 and a low intensity on the eastern and western edges. This has served the town well and analysis shows that more development has occurred in the high intensity area than the low intensity area. The 2040 plan builds on the previous framework while adding new character areas that clarify land use and development design expectations.

The Future Land Use Plan includes revisions to the adopted land use plan from the 2030 Community Plan based on input received during the Huntersville 2040 planning process. Highlights from the updated Plan include:

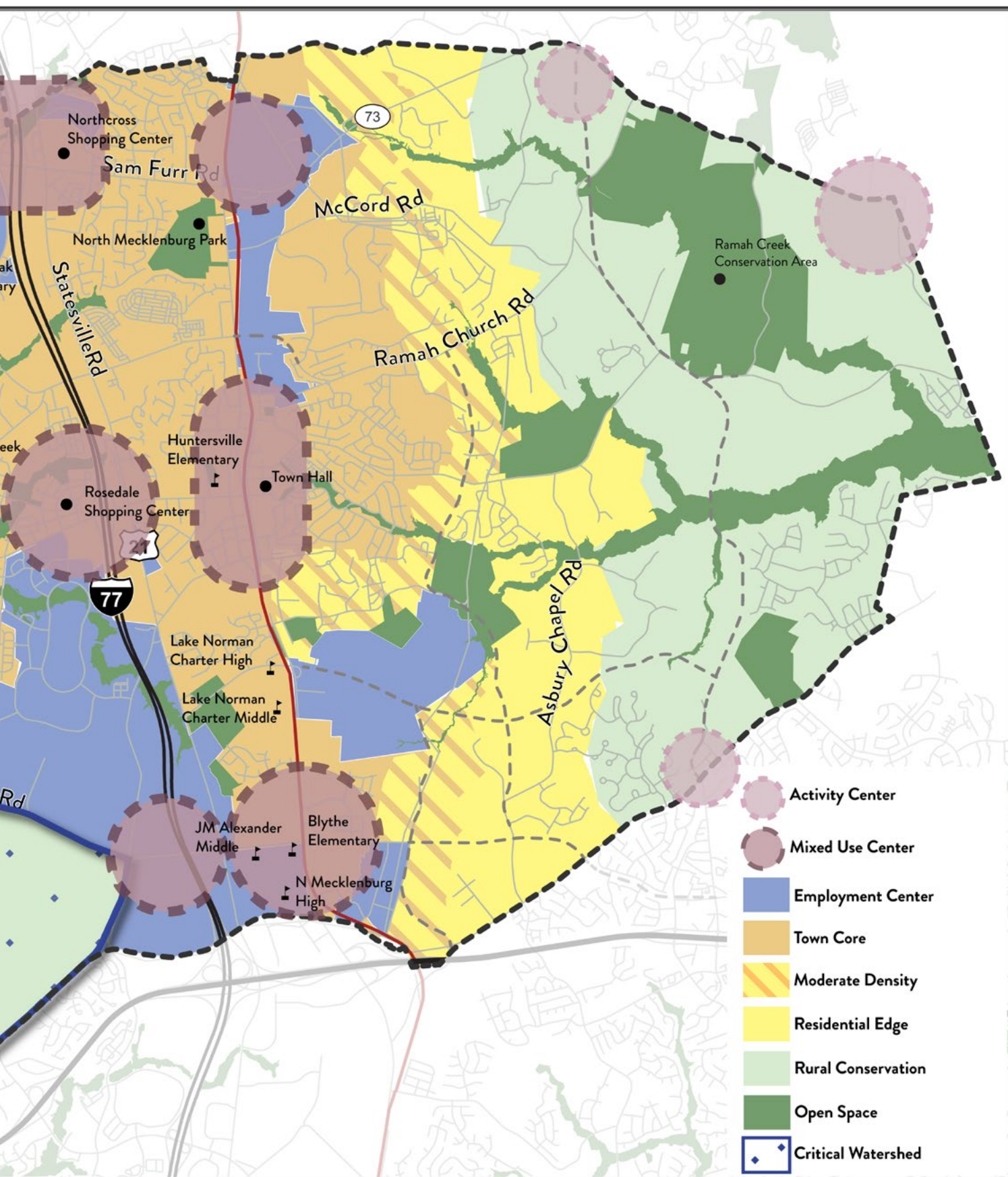
- Concentrated activity in Mixed-Use Centers and the Town Core
- Reservation of land for future employment
- Managed growth and improved design on the edges to protect natural resources and rural character
- Limiting development in the Critical Watershed.
- Activity centers to accommodate daily needs of residents

## FUTURE LAND USE

### TOWN OF HUNTERSVILLE FUTURE LAND USE MAP







# FUTURE LAND USE

## FUTURE LAND USE CHARACTER AREAS

The Future Land Use Map provides a generalized guide for land use decisions in the Huntersville Area. The character areas on the map are defined below and describe intended uses, density and scale and design features of new development. These descriptions and the associated map should be utilized to guide private investment, infrastructure decisions and rezoning decisions.

### CHARACTER AREAS



#### Employment Center

Employment centers contain a mix of uses including office, industrial, and institutional. Modern employment campuses and cutting edge employers are now incorporating some retail and residential to create a live, work, play environment. These areas better meet employee lifestyle needs and create a vibrant space where innovation can occur organically.



#### Mixed-Use Centers

Mixed-Use Centers contain vertical mixed use along key frontages. New development includes wide sidewalks, buildings are close to street with high levels of transparency, and parking is located in rear. A mix of housing is allowed, including urban options throughout (apartments, townhomes, cottage homes, etc.). Downtown has specific requirements for streetscape and development intensity, including a maximum first floor footprint.



#### Activity Centers

Planned Activity Centers include a mix of non-residential and residential uses and are usually located at key intersections of major or minor thoroughfares. New non-residential uses are limited in scale and overall footprint (generally less than 40,000 square feet of non-residential). Residential uses include mix of housing types centered around shopping, service or civic uses. Residential uses transition to lower gross density with more open space away from Activity Centers.



#### Town Core

The Town Core designation includes a variety of neighborhoods containing a mix of residential housing types, including single family homes, townhomes and apartments. Their design is focused on traditional neighborhood planning principles, including short blocks, connected streets, streetscape standards, and other features that improve walkability. These areas are denser than the “Moderate Density” and “Residential Edge” character areas and may include non-residential development as specified in small area plans and at other sites that meet locational criteria.





## Moderate Density

This area is meant to accommodate a mix of conventional residential subdivisions with larger lots and traditional neighborhood development with a mix of lot sizes, including smaller unit types and occasional attached housing. Average gross density is generally 1-3 units per acre. It may have some, smaller-scale commercial or nonresidential activity at key intersections.



## Residential Edge

The Residential Edge character areas provide transition from higher density areas to lower density areas. New development has mostly single family homes with some attached residential possible. Average densities are 1.5 unit/acre. Policies are included in the Plan that clarify open space requirements and priorities. Flexibility in lot sizes and housing types are possible with higher amounts of quality open space.



## Rural Conservation

These areas preserve elements of rural character. They balance open space conservation and some residential development. Development form is farms and associated structures, Farmhouse Clusters and low density Conservation Subdivisions (if access to utilities). New development has a 0.9 unit/acre maximum, and typically 45%+ open space is required.



## Critical Watershed

This includes very low density areas in Critical Watershed Areas of Mountain Island Lake and the Catawba River. Conservation areas, farms, homesteads and Farmhouse Clusters are the predominant land uses. New development has approximately 1 dwelling unit per 2 acre maximum and is constrained due to significant built-upon area restrictions due to the location within the Critical Watershed defined by the Town and Mecklenburg County.

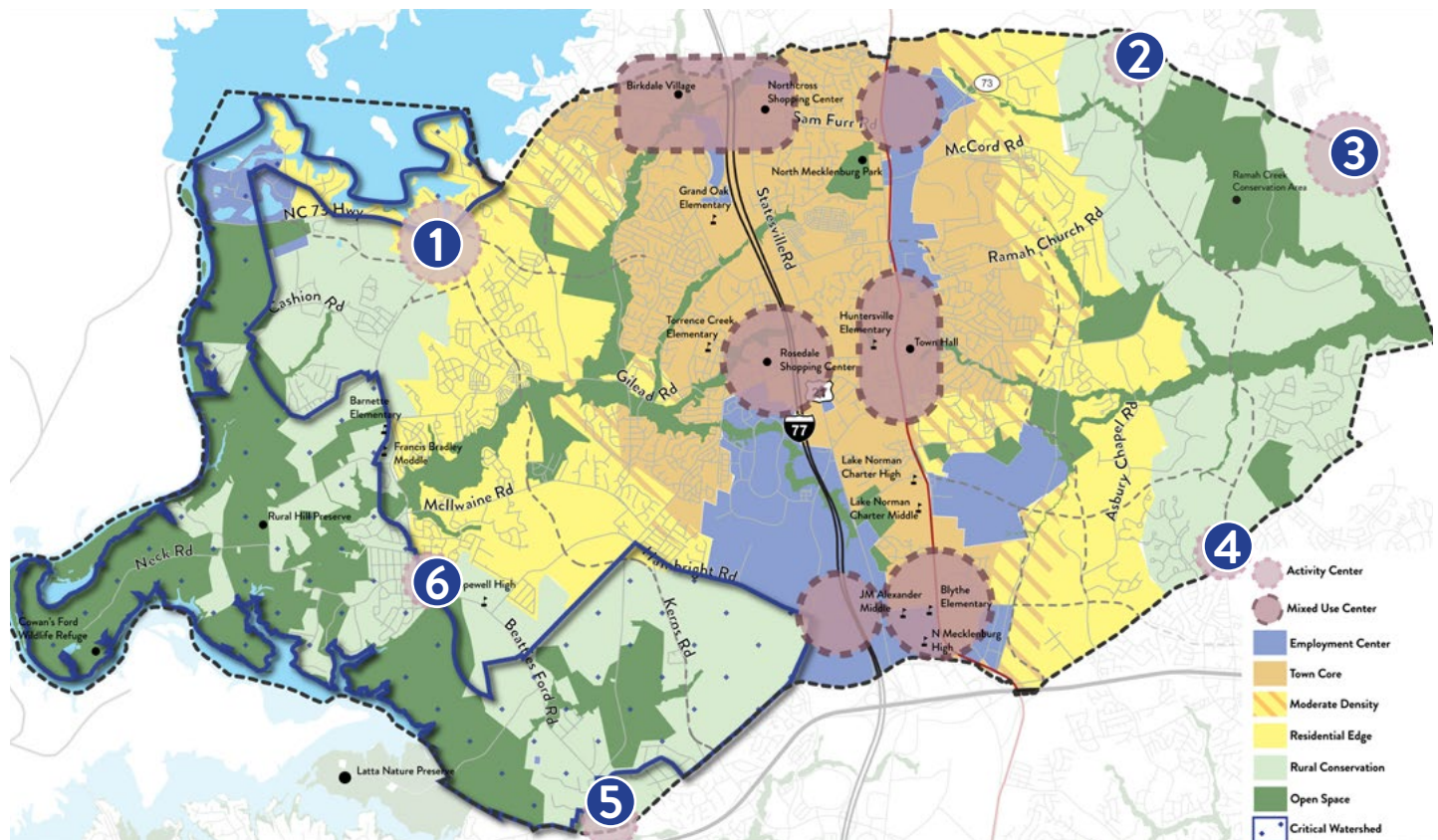


## Environmental / Open Space

These sensitive environmental areas consist primarily of development-impaired lands such as floodways and floodplains as well as parks and previously-protected areas.

# FUTURE LAND USE

## ACTIVITY CENTERS



1

### Beatties Ford Road / NC 73 Mixed-Use Center

Mixed-use center planned around the intersection of Highway 73 and Beatties Ford Road. The Beatties Ford Road Corridor Small Area Plan (2007) recommended a mixed use commercial center containing retail, multi-family residential, and civic uses. At present, there are approximately 23 vacant acres zoned commercial and residential and another 20 acres developed with commercial uses (i.e. convenience store, country store, auto repair, offices, mini-storage, and pet care facility).

2

### Huntersville East

The NC 73 Transportation/Land Use Corridor Plan recommended a Neighborhood Center in this area with additional study needed. A conditional mixed use commercial rezoning was approved with 22 acres for commercial, 15 acres for attached housing and 15 acres for detached housing.

3

### Poplar Center

The NC 73/Poplar Tent Road Small area plan recommended a mixed-use (i.e. office, commercial, residential and “flex” type) development pattern. No specific minimum or maximum levels are proposed to allow for adaptation to market conditions at the time of development. However, development intensities would be greatest traveling west from the NC 73/Poplar Tent intersection to a proposed NE Thoroughfare with lower intensities from the NE Thoroughfare to the Bradford Store property located at the western perimeter of the study area.



## 4 Huntersville Village

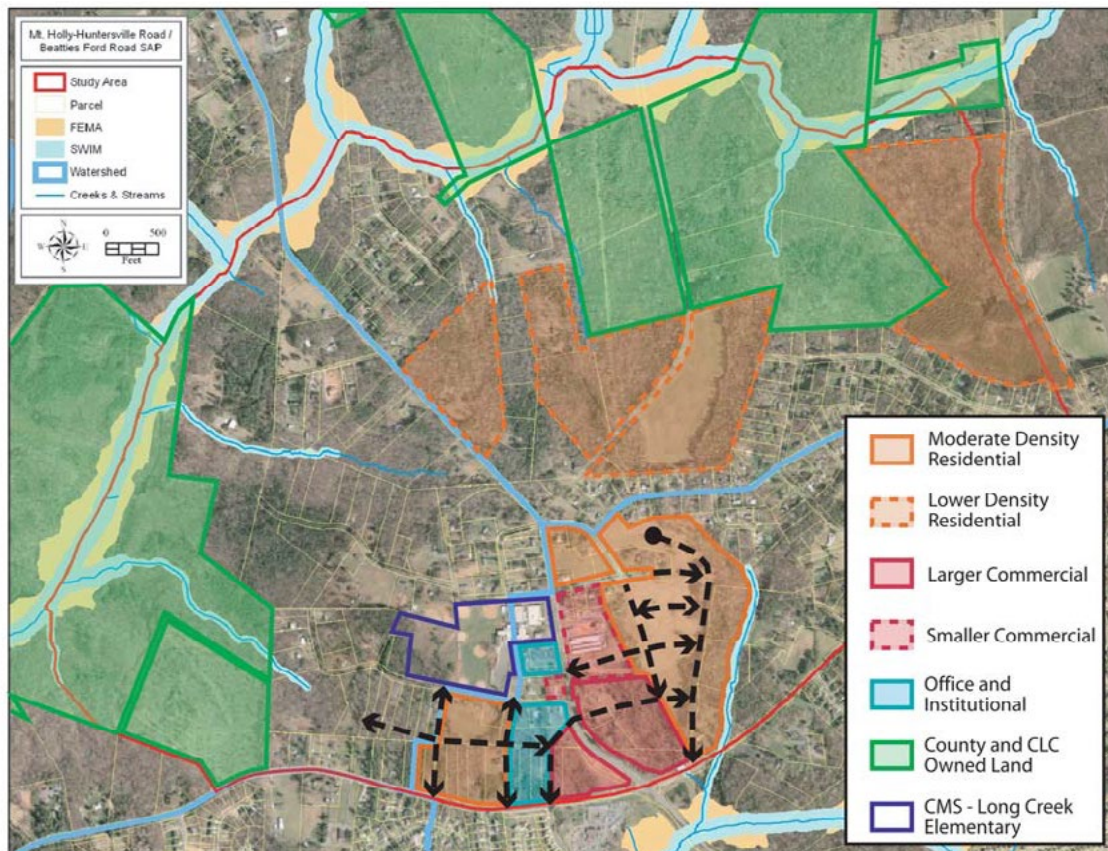
Mixed-used area planned for in the Eastfield Road Small Area Plan (2014) at Huntersville Village (near the intersection of Eastfield Road and Prosperity Church Road). Conditional Highway Commercial zoning is in place, which allows over 100,000 sq. ft. of commercial buildings and up to 190 senior apartments.

## 5 Long Creek Village

Low intensity “urban village” planned in the Beatties Ford Road / Mt. Holly - Huntersville Road Road SAP (2005). Since the small area plan was adopted, there have been 3 conditional district rezonings approved allowing up to 45,000 sq. ft. of commercial building and 119 single-family dwellings.

## 6 Hopewell Village

Hopewell Village was originally rezoned originally in 1991 by Mecklenburg County and updated by the Town of Huntersville in 2002 allowing approximately 62,000 sq. ft. of commercial buildings.



CONCEPT FROM BEATTIES FORD ROAD-MT. HOLLY-HUNTERSVILLE ROAD SMALL AREA PLAN

## FUTURE LAND USE

### FUTURE LAND USE CHARACTER AREA TABLE

The following table outlines the types of residential subdivisions and residential buildings types encouraged and discouraged in different Future Land Use Character Areas. The table also shows where different classes of non-residential building footprints and civic uses are allowed or discouraged.

Future Land Use Character Area	Residential Subdivision Design				Residential Type			
	Town-scale Subdivision	Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND)	Conservation (Cluster) Subdivision	Farm-house Cluster	Live-work Unit	Apart-ments & Condos	Attached (Townhomes, Duplex, Tri-plex)	De-tached
Walkable, Mixed-Use Center (WMU)	-	☑	-	-	☑	☑	☑	☑
Activity Center (AC)	-	☑	☑	*	☑	*	☑	☑
Employment Center (EC)	*	*	-	-	*	*	*	-
Town Core (TC)	*	☑	*	-	☑	☑	☑	☑
Moderate Density (MD)	☑	☑	☑	*	*	*	*	☑
Residential Edge (RE)	*	*	☑	☑	-	-	*	☑
Rural Conservation (RC)	-	-	☑	☑	-	-	*	☑
Critical Watershed (CW)	-	-	*	☑	-	-	-	☑
Environmental / Open Space (EOS)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Legend:</b> ☑ = Allowed / Encouraged * = If Contextually Appropriate, Potential Limitations, Design Criteria or Utility Availability - = Discouraged								



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# 5 IMPLEMENTATION



BUSINESS PARK

Our communities do not change overnight. Implementing a long-range community plan takes time. Although some recommendations may be immediately actionable, such as updating zoning codes, programming greenway construction, or establishing new monitoring programs, some actions are discouraged until the time is right. For instance, properties should not be preemptively upzoned based on the Future Land Use Map until other areas have filled in or the proper infrastructure (roads, parks, schools, utilities, emergency services, etc.) is in place. Some decisions are complex and it will be up to the town leadership to take a balanced look at both the intent of this plan as well as the specifics of any site and/or proposal before them.

It helps to remember that nothing worth achieving comes without a price, and so we must weigh the costs and the gains of future decisions.

It is also true that in order for this plan to be a success, the recommendations within it must be diligently pursued. That means that Town leadership must assign tasks to staff and hold them accountable for achieving progress. A plan must also be updated and revised to respond to changing conditions and to stay in touch with the values and goals of the community.

What follows are the recommendations and action items for achieving this plan. Every attempt was made to be comprehensive, but some new opportunities may present themselves and new actions may be needed to achieve the goals of the community-which is the ultimate priority.

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## LAND USE & HOUSING

### Policy LU-1: Encourage a development pattern that follows the Future Land Use Map

**LU 1.1:** Utilize the Future Land Use Map during development approvals to ensure compatibility with long-range plans

**LU 1.2:** Continue to conduct education and outreach activities to familiarize elected officials, appointed boards, citizens and developers about the contents of the plan and associated ordinances

**LU 1.3:** Regularly update the Future Land Use Map

- Update based on rezonings that change the Future Land Use Map
- Periodically, to take into account small area

plans, major infrastructure investments and/or every 3-5 years

**LU 1.4:** Prepare new and/or update existing Small Area Plans as needed—

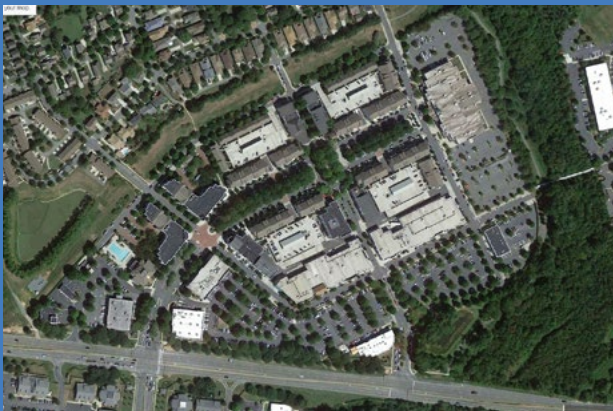
- Updates or new plans may be needed for areas that have experienced changes since their adoption and/or in areas impacted by new policies in the 2040 Community Plan.

### Policy LU-2: Encourage residential development that follows the pattern outlined in the future land use map

**LU 2.1:** Higher intensity residential uses will be focused generally within two miles of the I-77/NC-115 corridor and future activity centers in the

## The Huntersville Transect

A transect is a description of relative development intensity and expected built and natural forms. The Future Land Use Map combined with the policies in this chapter create a transect that focuses growth in walkable Mixed Use Centers and Activity Centers and decreases in intensity farther away. Traditional neighborhoods give way to conservation subdivisions and eventually farmhouse clusters that sensitively integrate with the rural environment.



BIRKDALE VILLAGE IS A MIXED USE CENTER THAT FEATURES RETAIL, RESTAURANTS, OPEN SPACE, AND DIFFERENT TYPES OF RESIDENTIAL.



FARMHOUSE CLUSTERS ARE AN INNOVATIVE SUBDIVISION DESIGN OPTION IN THE RURAL AREA OF HUNTERSVILLE THAT ALLOW FOR 6 HOMES ON 10 ACRES, BUT REQUIRE 50% OF THE LAND AREA TO REMAIN OPEN SPACE.



eastern and western areas of Huntersville's zoning jurisdiction.

**LU 2.2:** Lower intensity residential uses are expected within the Residential Edge and Rural Conservation areas identified on the Future Land Use Map.

## **Policy LU-3: Manage residential growth in the eastern and western parts of Huntersville's planning jurisdiction**

**LU 3.1:** Discourage rezonings to higher intensity residential districts in the Residential Edge and Rural Conservation future land use character areas.

- There is constant pressure to rezone to higher density districts on edges of town. Growth management was the #1 priority for survey responses. There needs to be a concerted effort to uphold previous policy decisions to limit density and increase open space preservation in the more undeveloped areas outside of the Town Core.

## **Policy LU-4: Limit the scale of new development in Critical Watersheds**

**LU 4.1:** Allow only Farmhouse Clusters and very low density development in Critical Watersheds defined by the Town and Mecklenburg County

- Limit the scale of non-residential development in Critical Watersheds
- Limit new residential development in these areas to Farmhouse Clusters or new residential subdivisions with a dwelling unit density less than 0.6 units per acre

## **Growth Management**

Growth Management was voted as the #1 Priority Goal in the Plan Framework Survey, conducted in the summer of 2020. Additionally 58% of respondents were in favor of limiting growth more than the adopted land use plan.



MOST OF THE LAND WEST OF I-77 DRAINS TO THE CATAWBA RIVER AND MOUNTAIN ISLAND LAKE WHICH IS A PRIMARY WATER SOURCE FOR THE REGION.

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## Policy LU-5: Focus more intense development in locations that can support growth

**LU 5.1:** Allow more intense development only where adequate transportation infrastructure and utilities exist

**LU 5.2:** Continue to require a Traffic Impact Analysis for developments that exceed a traffic generation threshold to promote development concurrent with transportation improvements

- Consider revisions as needed to promote new development in areas with a high potential for walking, biking or transit trips

**LU 5.3:** Support infill housing options near services, shopping, employment and transit stations

- Encourage infill development opportunities to increase housing options with proximity to near services, shopping, employment opportunities and transit stations

## Policy LU-6: Support a mix of land uses in key locations

**LU 6.1:** A mix of land uses is encouraged in Mixed-Use Centers, Activity Centers, Employment Centers identified on the Future Land Use Map.

**LU 6.2:** Commercial uses are encouraged in the Town Core as specified in adopted Small Area Plans.

**LU 6.3:** Small scale, neighborhood serving commercial and office uses may be allowed in Town Core and Moderate Density areas specified on the Future Land Use map at key locations if designed in a context sensitive manner.

## Policy LU-7: Require new development to follow design principles that reinforce the vision for the Town as expressed in this plan and other adopted plans

- The town has committed to traditional town planning and urban design principles that are meant to preserve the character of the town. This commitment is noted in adopted plans and



BIRKDALE VILLAGE PROVIDES AN EXAMPLE OF A MIXED USE CENTER THAT WAS DESIGNED ACCORDING TO FORM BASED DESIGN PRINCIPLES. SHOPFRONTS LINE THE STREET WITH RESIDENTIAL ABOVE. PARKING DECKS ARE LOCATED ON THE INTERIOR OF BLOCKS AND VISITORS UTILIZE ON-STREET PARKING FOR MOST TRIPS.

in the zoning ordinance and has been expressed in new development over the last 25 years.

**LU 7.1: Require all new development to adhere to the following design principles:**

- In Mixed Use Centers, Activity Centers, Town Core, and Moderate Density areas streets and sidewalks are meant to be attractive and inviting. New development in these areas should follow these principles:
  - All buildings should front a public street or open space
  - Streets should be connected, have short blocks and sidewalks both sides of streets
  - Improve connectivity, particularly for pedestrians and vehicles
  - Parking lots, if required, should be predominately located behind buildings screened from view and larger lots should be broken by buildings and or landscape features
  - Accommodate a mix of uses and/or housing types
- In defined Employment Centers some flexibility in the form-based design principles is allowed, including:
  - Expanded options for frontages including buildings fronting the street or buffered from major or minor thoroughfares
  - Exceptions to building frontage requirements and public street requirements may be allowable for internal streets in an industrial park or near interstates
- In lower intensity areas (including RE, RC, CW) preservation of rural character and natural resources are prioritized
  - In these areas structures can be set back further from the road and should blend into the landscape and the scenic nature of roadways should be preserved

## Urban Design Principles

The Town of Huntersville uses a form-based approach to mixed use and non-residential development that discourages large-scale commercial strips and disconnected uses. Commercial design was very important to survey respondents and policies in this plan include specific strategies to maintain and improve quality. Existing standards include a requirement that new buildings must front a public street or open space, streets must be connected and have sidewalks and street trees on both sides, and parking should be primarily located behind buildings. This plan also includes specific recommendations on how to elevate design standards in the downtown, provide flexibility for some employment uses and how to customize regulations to address emerging trends.





## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### **LU 7.2: Consider updates to the Huntersville Design Guidebook and/or Zoning Ordinance as needed to improve commercial and multi-family design**

- Evaluate and update the Design Guidebook.
  - Revisit—and revise—the purpose of Design Guidebook
  - Examine the standards based zoning code revisions and adopted plan(s) to determine consistency
- Consider amending the Town's Zoning Ordinance to:
  - Incorporate the updated standards set forth in the Design Guidebook into the zoning ordinance where appropriate
  - Address issues including setbacks, architectural requirements, streetscape standards and landscaping requirements (including foundation plantings)
  - Consider adjustment to setback and streetscape requirements and/or options along thoroughfares, such as “super streets”
  - Update design standards based on the public space toward which certain uses are oriented (e.g. delineation of public/private space for residential fronting public active open space or a plaza)
  - Organize design standards in a user-friendly format

### **Policy LU-8: Emphasize form and flexibility in Mixed-Use Centers, Employment Centers, the Town Core and Activity Centers**

#### **LU 8.1: Continue to emphasize form and flexibility in development regulations for these areas**

- The current zoning ordinance has basic form-based standards with flexibility built-in. Key elements include allowing multiple types of land uses, a mix of uses and minimal setbacks and parking requirements.

#### **LU 8.2: Evaluate and strengthen incentives to encourage achievement of higher design standards.**

- Consider incentives that allow applicants to demonstrate excellence in design and exceptional public benefit for projects in key areas.
  - Offer flexibility using performance standards, guided by the design principles
  - Specify intended outcomes and how site- or building-specific design solutions can better achieve desired outcomes
  - Evaluate incentives periodically to determine their value given shifting market and neighborhood conditions.
- Incentives that could include:
  - Modification of height limit
  - Increase in percent of allowable attached residential

## **Excellence in Design**

**Incentives for exceeding standards could promote excellence in design of new projects in key areas. For example, in Mixed Use Centers (including Downtown) or Activity Centers, additional flexibility in height or percent attached residential could be allowed on the site and/or building design meets and exceeds standards and provides an exceptional public benefit such as a new or improved public space, significant transportation investment in the form of public streetscape improvements, parking facilities, greenway construction, transit facilities.**



- Reduced parking requirements
- Reduced buffer yard requirements

### **LU 8.3: Encourage transit supportive development**

- Maintain incentives for future TOD locations including allowing 100% attached homes near transit stations
- Consider ways to encourage transit-supportive development proximal to future CATS Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations

## **Policy LU-9: Housing design principles**

### **LU 9.1: In higher intensity areas including Mixed Use Centers, Activity Centers, the Town Core and Moderate Density areas neighborhoods should adhere to the following design principles:**

- All homes must front a public street or open space
- Front porches and recessed garages are encouraged
- On-street parking is required in new developments that have lot widths below 60'. Alley-loading is also encouraged in these cases.

### **LU 9.2: Within lower intensity areas including Residential Edge, Rural Conservation and Critical Watershed areas conservation design & farmhouse clusters are encouraged**

- Scenic nature of roadways should be preserved
- Development should be clustered away from key natural features
- Site design should minimize grading and maximize preservation of existing stands of mature, native trees

## **Policy LU-10: Encourage a diversity of housing options**

### **Strategies**

#### **H 10.1: Align housing options with resident needs and promote attainable housing options**

- Accommodate a mix of housing by type, tenure, and location to serve a growing and increasingly diverse population. Housing offerings should align with workforce opportunities, including management, professional positions, and service positions.

#### **H 10.2: Continue to encourage a mix of lot sizes in new developments**

#### **H 10.3: Consider allowances for “house” scale missing middle housing**

- Form-based regulation for structures with 3+ units, may increase acceptance at the community level. Requirements could include:
  - Balconies, porches
  - Shared outdoor greenspace/courtyard garden areas (if multiple structures)
  - Separate entrances for all units
  - Loading and/or access requirements

#### **H 10.4: Consider allowing additional flexibility in site design in exchange for more quality open space preservation to allow for conservation of natural resources in the Transitional and Rural zoning districts**

- See EOS Policies on page 76

## **Policy LU-11: Protect Existing Housing Stock**

### **LU 11.1: Protect and enhance the unique character of Huntersville’s neighborhoods by using planning tools to safeguard from potentially negative impacts of development and redevelopment.**

- Promote quality design, and neighborhood improvements including increasing access to parks and recreation, and enhanced mobility options.
- Encourage coordination with neighborhoods to address infrastructure needs such as sidewalks and drainage.

### **LU 11.2: Along existing streets, new buildings shall respect the general spacing of structures, building mass and scale, and street frontage relationships of existing buildings.**

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## ECONOMIC VITALITY

**Policy EV-1: Support a balanced economy through job growth in target industry sectors.**

### Strategies

#### **EV 1.1: Update Strategic Economic Development Plan**

- Update Huntersville's Strategic Economic Development Plan regularly (at least every five years).
- Target recruitment of business and industry for which Huntersville has a "competitive advantage" as identified in the plan.

#### **EV 1.2: Focus Economic Development in Areas that Support Growth.**

- Preserve areas suitable for business and industrial development, along with a mixture of support uses, to ensure an adequate inventory of land for future growth and development, with increases to this inventory as required. These areas should have proximity to existing or future activity centers, have access to transportation options and utility service, and offer amenities for employees.

#### **EV 1.3: Inventory Strategic Development Sites.**

- Maintain inventories of privately- and publicly-owned strategic development sites in Huntersville. Pro-actively ensure that these sites are appropriately zoned for targeted development.

#### **EV 1.4: Review Development Standards to Support Business Growth.**

- Support efforts to improve efficiency and responsiveness of development review process for development proposals. The market should be regularly reviewed to ensure that standards are in line with current demand.

#### **EV 1.5: Communicate Approval Processes.**

- Through the Town's website, brochures and other methods, continue to communicate expectations and options for development design and the approval and input process to residents, builders, and developers.

### **Policy EV-2: EV Goal #2. Encourage existing economic assets and entrepreneurial business development.**

#### **EV 2.1: Promote and Encourage Local Businesses.**

- Foster a dynamic, diversified, and inclusive business climate that highlights why the Town of Huntersville can support private investment and locally expanding businesses.

#### **EV 2.2: Leverage Downtown as a Unique Destination.**

- By focusing on events, future business mix, and easy parking, the Town should promote Downtown as the heart of the community that offers a unique amenity to residents, employees, and visitors.

#### **EV 2.3: Attract Businesses to Downtown.**

- Coordinate advocacy and align resources to support and attract economic development opportunities to Downtown Huntersville.
  - New resources could include a downtown business guide that covers zoning, parking, signage, building codes and provides resources for prospective businesses and landowners
- Identify and consider offering community resources that could be leveraged to support growth, including grants and other incentives.

#### **EV 2.4: Identify a Downtown Development Staff Liaison.**

- Identify a staff liaison be a resource for downtown programs, residents, and businesses.

## EV 2.5: Provide Mentorship Opportunities.

- Offer businesses a coordinated network of service providers focused on technical assistance, training, and mentorship opportunities. While the Town doesn't need to provide these services, creation of a central hub of information and referrals could be sponsored locally.

## EV 2.6: Create Virtual Incubator.

- Work with local partners to develop a dynamic entrepreneurial program that expands upon existing County resources such as the Small Business Development Center at Central Piedmont Community College to support and grow startup businesses in the community.

## Policy EV-3: Leverage partnerships to encourage economic development expansion.

### EV 3.1: Leverage Local Partnerships.

- Continue participation with Lake Norman Regional Economic Development Corporation (LNREDC) and on joint economic development efforts with Charlotte, Cornelius, and Davidson.
  - Work with LNREDC to enhance Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program, targeting business and industry either currently not being served or underserved.
  - Continue Business Incentive Program (BIP) for the creation of new jobs.

### EV 3.2: Enhance Regional Successes.

- Build on partnerships with the Charlotte Business Alliance, as well as other non-profit partners like Charlotte Water and the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization, to support a regional approach to recruiting and retaining economic development opportunities.

## Policy EV-4: Support education and workforce training opportunities to align local jobs with residents.

### EV 4.1: Promote Hiring Locally.

- Partner with employers, educators, and economic development agencies to encourage the practice of hiring locally. Local hiring helps to further establish Huntersville's unique economic competitiveness while encouraging retention of skilled residents.

### EV 4.2: Encourage Workforce Training Options.

- Support current efforts of Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC), Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) and others to train and develop skilled workforce to meet labor demands for local business and industry. Convene round table meetings between existing partners to enhance workforce training and identify new training strategies to serve local business and industry.



MAIN STREET COFFEE AND COWORKING IS LOCATED IN A HISTORIC STRUCTURE ADJACENT TO MAIN STREET AND THE RAILROAD AND IS ONE OF MANY LOCALLY OWNED SMALL BUSINESSES LOCATED IN DOWNTOWN HUNTERSVILLE.

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## DOWNTOWN

### Policy DT-1: Future development in the Downtown area should adhere to the Regulating Plan on page 67

#### DT 1.1: Encourage vertical mixed-use development with active visual engagement between the street and the ground and upper floors along Active Frontages

- Shopfronts are encouraged along key frontages
- Active uses are required on the ground floor and include retail, restaurants, and other uses that generate many visits over an extended period of the day
- Upper story residential units should have balconies when feasible
- Active frontages should use design features such as a high level of building transparency, frequent pedestrian access points, and facade articulation

#### DT 1.2: In Tier 1 areas, encourage multistory buildings and allow for a mix of uses including commercial, office, residential

- Building types allowed include urban workplaces, multifamily, attached and detached residential

#### DT 1.3: In Tier 2 areas, create a transitional area from Downtown Core to surrounding residential neighborhoods

- This area contains more residential uses with some office and commercial space at lower intensities than Tier 1
- Residential can include small-scale apartments, townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and urban single family home types including alley-loaded bungalows and other house scale unit types such as cottage courts

#### DT 1.4: Consider revisions to ordinances, the Design Guidebook and/or review and approval processes to achieve elevated design in the downtown area

### Policy DT-2: Step down in intensity and density near established residential neighborhoods

- Housing types that provide good transitions include townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and other small-scale products
- Design features such as setbacks, stepbacks, tree preservation, and open space placement can help provide transitions

### Policy DT-3: Encourage redevelopment of key properties

#### DT 3.1: Consider participation in public-private partnerships in order to facilitate the redevelopment of key properties

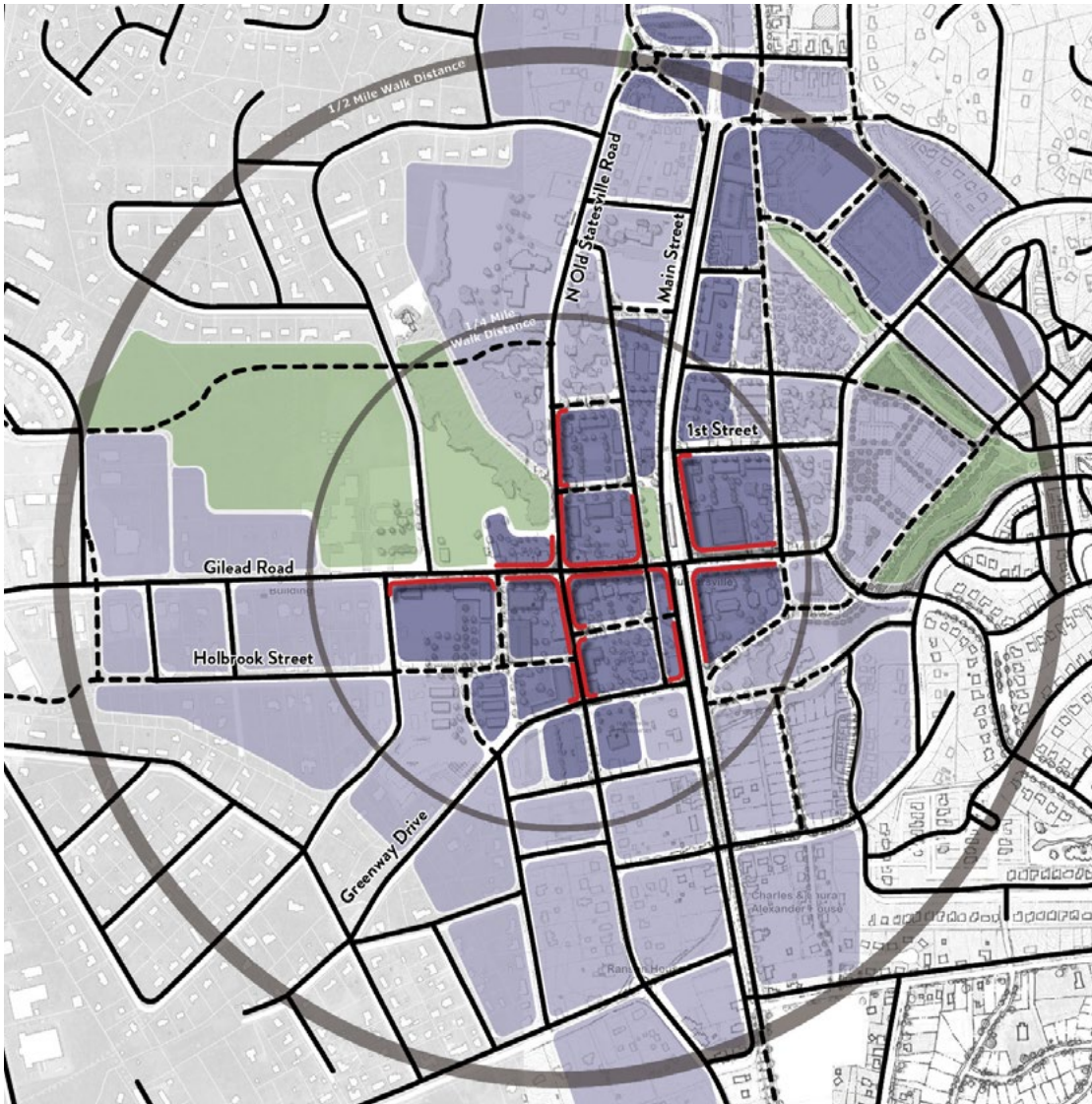
- Types of public-private partnerships may include new buildings with governmental uses in portions of buildings, streetscape upgrades, stormwater facilities, and parking provision

## Public-Private Partnership Opportunities

Public/private partnerships (PPPs) are partnerships between a government entity and private developers to achieve a common purpose. PPPs can help redevelop an area that is underutilized in a community that has significant potential. They can be proactively initiated by a municipality to achieve key public objectives, such as downtown revitalization, affordable housing, and/or industrial and commercial development.



## Downtown Regulating Plan / Character and Connections Map



### **Downtown - Active Frontages**

Require vertical mix of active frontages. Shop-front building types are required. Ground floor commercial, preferably retail and restaurants or other active use is required. Generally 2-4 stories. Floors 2+ can be commercial, office, civic or residential.



### **Downtown - Tier 1**

Encourage commercial, office and/or residential. Shopfronts, urban workplaces and apartment buildings are allowed. Generally 2-4 stories.



### **Downtown - Tier 2**

Generally 2-3 stories. Predominately residential with some small-scale commercial and/or office. Reuse of structures on main roads. Residential can include small-scale apartments, townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and urban single family home types including alley-loaded bungalows and cottage courts.

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## Policy DT-4: Expand or relocate Town Hall in the Downtown area

**DT 4.1:** Conduct a study of future government office space needs Downtown and evaluate Town-owned properties for accommodating needs

## Policy DT-5: Study future uses of Town-owned properties

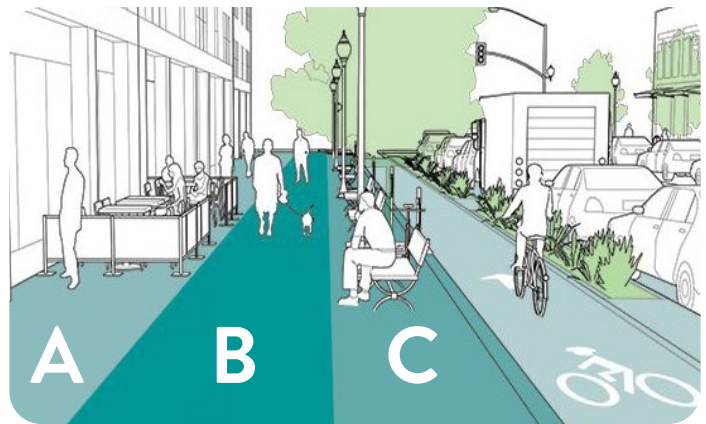
**DT 5.1:** Assess Town-owned properties to determine possible upgrades to existing structures and sites.

- The Town should lead by example, adhering to established/adopted standards as new Town buildings and other facilities are constructed or improved. Private investor confidence is built in part through the Town's demonstrated commitment to quality.

**DT 5.2:** Study future uses of the fire station property and the potential relocation of the fire station to improve responses times

**DT 5.3:** Study potential uses of and goals for other Town-owned properties

- Uses could include parks, housing, and/or redevelopment
- Consider entering into developer agreements that could accomplish Town goals by leveraging the private sector



Source: NACTO

**A | FRONTAGE ZONE:** FUNCTIONS AS AN EXTENSION OF THE BUILDING. CAN BE USED FOR DINING, SIDEWALK SIGNS, POTTED PLANTS, BENCHES, ETC.

**B | PEDESTRIAN TRAVEL ZONE:** AT LEAST 5 FEET BUT WIDER IN MORE TRAFFICKED AREAS.

**C | STREET FURNITURE ZONE:** BETWEEN THE CURB AND THE CLEAR PATH, WHERE AMENITIES SUCH AS LIGHTING, BENCHES, AND STREET TREES ARE FOUND

## Policy DT-6: Create connected, safe, and engaging streetscapes that serve multiple users

**DT 6.1:** Establish street and sidewalk requirements for new development that are in line with urban street design principles

- For active frontages in Tier 1, require a dimension that allows for creation of multiple sidewalk zones.
- For other frontages in Tier 2, continue to require adequate sidewalk width that allows for pedestrian movement and street trees.

## DT 6.2: Pursue street connections and upgrades

### Downtown to facilitate Town goals

- Priority connections and upgrades include:
  - Old Statesville Road
    - Crosswalk improvements
    - Sidewalk rehab and extensions
  - Gilead Road parallels
    - North of Gilead (Commerce Center Dr to Sherwood Dr)
    - Holbrook Street Extension
- Maxwell Avenue Upgrade
  - Potential woonerf or “shared street”
  - Addition of on street parking, curb and gutter, sidewalk, planting strip
  - Study stormwater retention opportunities / potential “green street”
- Old Statesville Rd to Maxwell Road Connections
  - North of Gilead, cross connection to break up 1600ft block
  - South of Gilead, connection between Old Statesville/115 and Maxwell Road. This alley or drive could include angled parking, flexible event space, and underground stormwater retention features
- Church Street/Walters Street realignment
- Church Street and Walters Street upgrades
  - Study potential upgrades to Church Street and Walters Street. Enhancements could include bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities to accommodate Mooresville to Charlotte Trail, on-street parking, street trees, lighting, safety improvements, and other improvements.

## What is a Woonerf?

Woonerfs are a type of street that prioritize pedestrians while still allowing cars. They have very low speed limits and design features that encourage cars to pass slowly, and pedestrians are not restricted to the sidewalk. They can be incorporated into new Downtown development to create lively, walkable, human-centered streets.





# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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## Policy DT-7: Encourage new parks and programming Downtown

### DT 7.1: Connect Torrence Creek Greenway to Holbrook Park and into and through Downtown

- Construct a trailhead and plaza for the Torrence Creek Greenway near NC 115
- Study a potential mid-block crossing North of Gilead that could route users to a wide sidewalk connected to Veterans Park
- Accommodate bicycles and pedestrians Southeast to Gilead / Huntersville-Concord Road railroad crossing and East to Vermillion greenway

### DT 7.2: Expand Holbrook Park

- Include additional active and passive recreation opportunities

### DT 7.3: Expand events and programming Downtown

### DT 7.4: Support the Public Art Committee in their mission to introduce art around Downtown

### DT 7.5: Expand Downtown Open Space when possible

### DT 7.6: Study potential pocket parks and/or beautification near roundabouts created as part of the Main Street realignment

## Policy DT-8: Prioritize maintenance of public and private structures and enhancement of the public realm

### DT 8.1: Prioritize maintenance of streets and sidewalks and town-owned properties in the downtown area

### DT 8.2: Enhance street lighting through development and retrofitting of existing streets

- Define lighting standards for new development
- Establish priority areas for lighting

### DT 8.3: Investigate a facade grant program

- Property owners within an eligible area of the Town could be eligible to apply for facade improvement grants to improve the exteriors of their properties and businesses.
- These matching grants could be awarded on a reimbursement basis with a maximum amount of \$5,000 per facade (or side of a building).

## Policy DT-9: Prepare a public realm master plan.

### DT 9.1: The Town should consider the range of public spaces types, including streets, in terms of the following:

- Intended functions. At a minimum, spaces—and the elements within them—should be scaled and organized to accommodate the activities they are intended to support. Streets for example, are comprised of the facilities required to move vehicular, bicycle, pedestrian traffic while formal greens (i.e. Veterans Park) offer programmable space for community gatherings of various, sizes including festivals and other events.
- Enhancements based on public space design principles. Successful public spaces are designed for the comfort and safety of the users. Depending on the type of space and the uses fronting on the space, the physical characteristics may emphasize each principle to a greater or lesser degree.
- Potential impact. Does the space offer an experience that contributes to the quality of the experience? Or reinforce community image or brand? Is it memorable? Authentic?



## Case Study: Hickory Inspiring Spaces

Hickory is best known for its thriving furniture industry. However, the loss of manufacturing in previous decades contributed to the City's economic decline. 'Inspiring Spaces' is a public realm master plan. The primary objective was to spur economic development by defining a specific set of public realm improvements projects intended to enhance the visitor and resident experience, effectively reshape the City's image, create vibrant centers of activity within the City, attract the private investment it desires, and place Hickory in a more economically competitive position. The resulting plan identifies more than 50 projects. Reinforcing the City's "well crafted" brand, the story of Hickory's craft heritage is told through the integration of local art and regionally-sourced materials into public spaces. Parks, greens, and plazas are the focal points of cultural destinations, neighborhoods, and commercial hubs, which are being linked by recreational greenways and upgraded streetscapes. The plan was the basis for a successful bond campaign. In 2014, over 60% voted in favor of the \$40M bond referendum to fund key projects identified in the plan, including Hickory Trail, a 5.2-mile greenway comprised of CityWalk downtown and RiverWalk on Lake Hickory, and the renovation of Union Square in downtown. The trail system will connect downtown to Lenoir-Rhyne University, restaurants and shops in renovated mills, Lake Hickory, the Crawdad's baseball stadium, libraries, museums, and several parks. The plan and the \$40M have been leveraged for another \$50M in grants, including a \$17M BUILD grant. The private sector has responded with over \$100M in investments and over 500 new jobs.



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## Policy DT-10: Promote Residential Development in Downtown Huntersville.

- DT 10.1: Allow and encourage residential development in Downtown Huntersville, including for-sale and rental housing integrated with commercial uses.
- DT 10.2: Work with developers to ensure a mix of housing typologies and price points in future developments
- DT 10.3: Consider requirements in developer agreements that specify a percentage of affordable housing in future redevelopment

## Policy DT-11: Preserve and celebrate the history of Downtown Huntersville

- DT 11.1: New developments should respect the scale and character of historical structures and established neighborhoods
- DT 11.2: Integrate key historical structures into programming and redevelopment plans Downtown
  - Key historical structures to incorporate into this programming include the old jail, the water tower, and historic homes, among others.

## Transitions, Infill and the Missing Middle

Encouraging small-scale “missing middle” housing types such as townhomes, triplexes and quadplexes can be a way to transition from areas of potential redevelopment to existing neighborhoods. These housing types are typically two stories and have a similar mass, scale and facade design as single family homes and may be an appropriate way to encourage infill and redevelopment while preserving the character of existing neighborhoods.



THIS DUPLEX UNIT IN MONTEITH PARK IS LOCATED ON A CORNER LOT AND FITS THE SCALE OF THE MOSTLY SINGLE-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD WHILE ALSO PROVIDING A MIX OF HOUSING

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# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## Big Moves for Downtown Huntersville

The path to creating the vibrant downtown that is a destination with many uses should focus on these five strategic moves. All of the strategies address the ultimate goal of creating a place that is attractive to residents with reasons for them not only to visit Downtown, but be a place they want to spend time.

### TOWN SERVICES AND EVENTS

A common reason to currently visit Downtown is when residents have business at the Town offices. Through this civic presence and established events, the Town has created reasons for people to come Downtown that it can build on in the future.

### RETAIL AND RESTAURANT ACTIVITY

During the keep/toss/create activity at the charrette, a lot of the 'create' tags downtown called for more retail and restaurants downtown. Expanding these options, particularly restaurants, can help promote Downtown as a place to relax and not just a place to work, use town services, or visit an occasional event.

### PARKS AND RECREATION

A lot of public feedback called for more recreation opportunities, and downtown is already set up to accommodate this. An expansion of Holbrook Park and greenways could be leveraged to bring more people to the area. Places such as Veterans' Park can continue to be programmed to attract visitors as well.

### PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

Improvements to the public realm that enhance aesthetics, safety, and access will foster an environment that invites people to stay. Improvements include but are not limited to lighting, beautification, sidewalks, and streetscape improvements.

### DOWNTOWN LIVING

Increasing the amount of housing downtown helps achieve the vision for Downtown in multiple ways. It creates a critical density of people that supports more businesses and transit options, it creates attainable housing choices, and it helps add activity that goes beyond business hours. Housing types should be emphasized as follows:

- Tier 1: In upper stories of mixed use buildings and in standalone multifamily housing like apartments or townhomes
- Tier 2: Smaller-scale housing including townhomes, quadplexes and single family homes

## Concept Legend



Retail



Civic



Multifamily Housing



Mixed-use



Park



House-scale Attached Residential



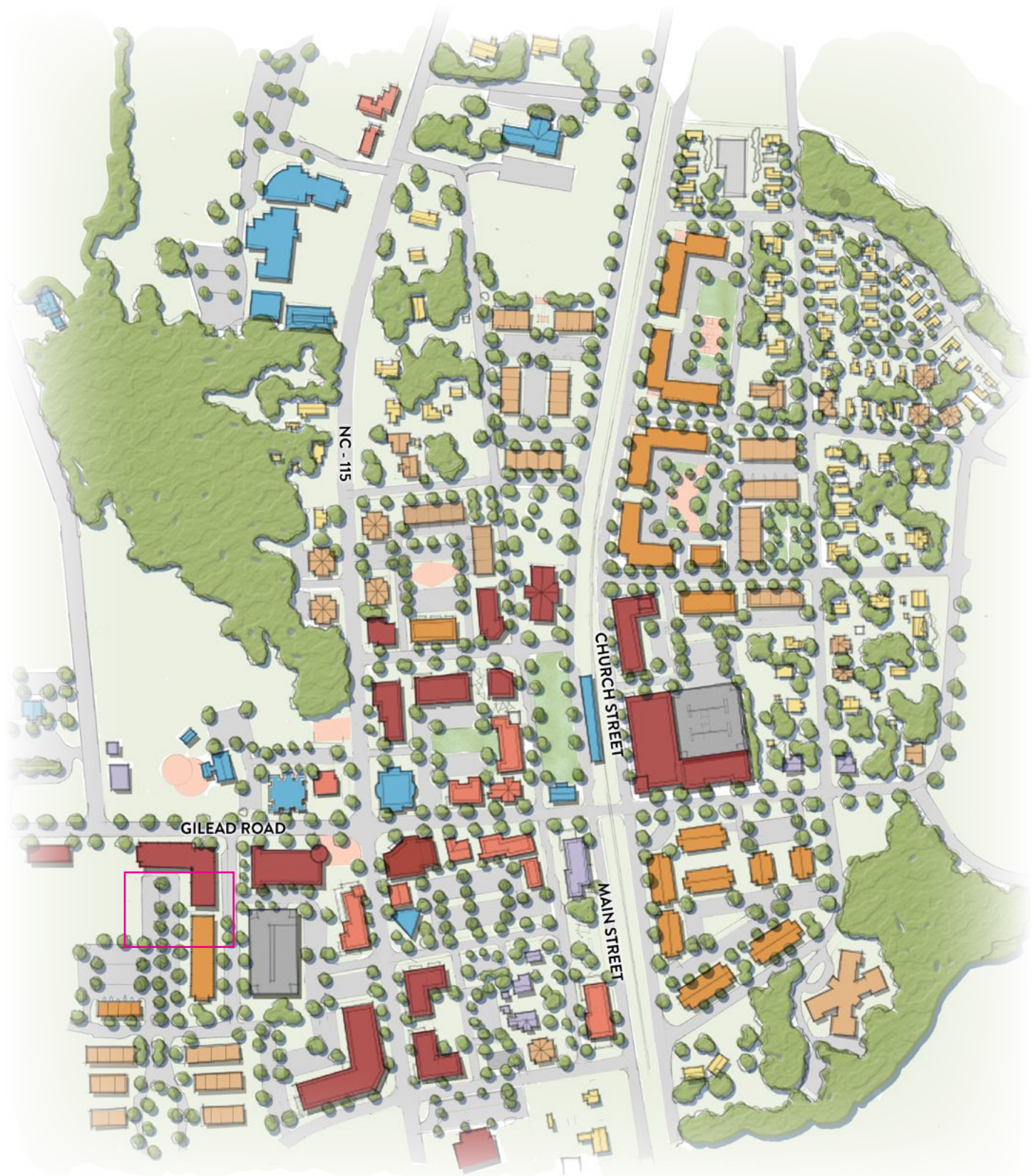
Plaza



Single family Residential



## Downtown Concept Plan



THIS GRAPHIC REPRESENTS A CONCEPT FOR THE DOWNTOWN AREA. THAT ILLUSTRATES A MIX OF USES, STREET CONNECTIONS, BUILDING MASSING AND SCALE. THE CONCEPT PLAN IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON PROPOSALS AND STUDIES OF SMALLER AREAS AND FURTHER COORDINATION WITH THE COMMUNITY.

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## ENVIRONMENT & OPEN SPACE

**Policy EOS-1: Support the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment, along with its scenic and cultural assets.**

### Strategies

**EOS 1.1: Support and enhance environmental regulations pertaining to open space design and protection.**

- Continue to encourage the preservation of floodplains, wetlands, scenic views, wildlife habitat and prominent natural and historical features
- Continue to encourage contiguous and interconnected open space in new developments
- Enhance open space design criteria by prioritizing the following:
  - Water quality protection (land within 100-300 ft of streams, and uplands adjacent to floodplains or sensitive watersheds)
  - Mature forest, especially large tracts of contiguous, native forest cover
  - Future greenway corridors

- Areas contiguous with surrounding existing or planned open space

**Policy EOS-2: Encourage conservation subdivision design in Residential Edge and Rural Conservation areas**

### Strategies

**EOS 2.1: Continue to require and incentivize open space reservation in Residential Edge, Rural Conservation, and Critical Watershed areas**

Encourage new development to have at least 40% open space in new development in these areas

- The Residential Edge and Rural Conservation areas on the Future Land Use map are associated with the Transitional and Rural zoning districts. These zoning districts offer a sliding scale in allowable density depending on the amount of open space preserved.

**EOS 2.2: Consider allowing additional flexibility in site design in exchange for more quality open space preservation to allow for conservation of natural resources in the Transitional and Rural zoning districts**

- Residential Edge: (TR Zoning area) Consider revising average & minimum lot size requirement and providing a mechanism for attached units (i.e. 10-20%)
- Rural Conservation: (R Zoning), revisit average and minimum lot size requirements and consider up to 10% attached allowance (could be incentive based on open space design)



SERENBE FARMS IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW SMALL SCALE TOWNHOMES AND SINGLE FAMILY HOMES ON NARROW LOTS CAN BE SENSITIVELY INTEGRATED INTO A RURAL LANDSCAPE

IMAGE SOURCE: SERENBEFARMS.COM

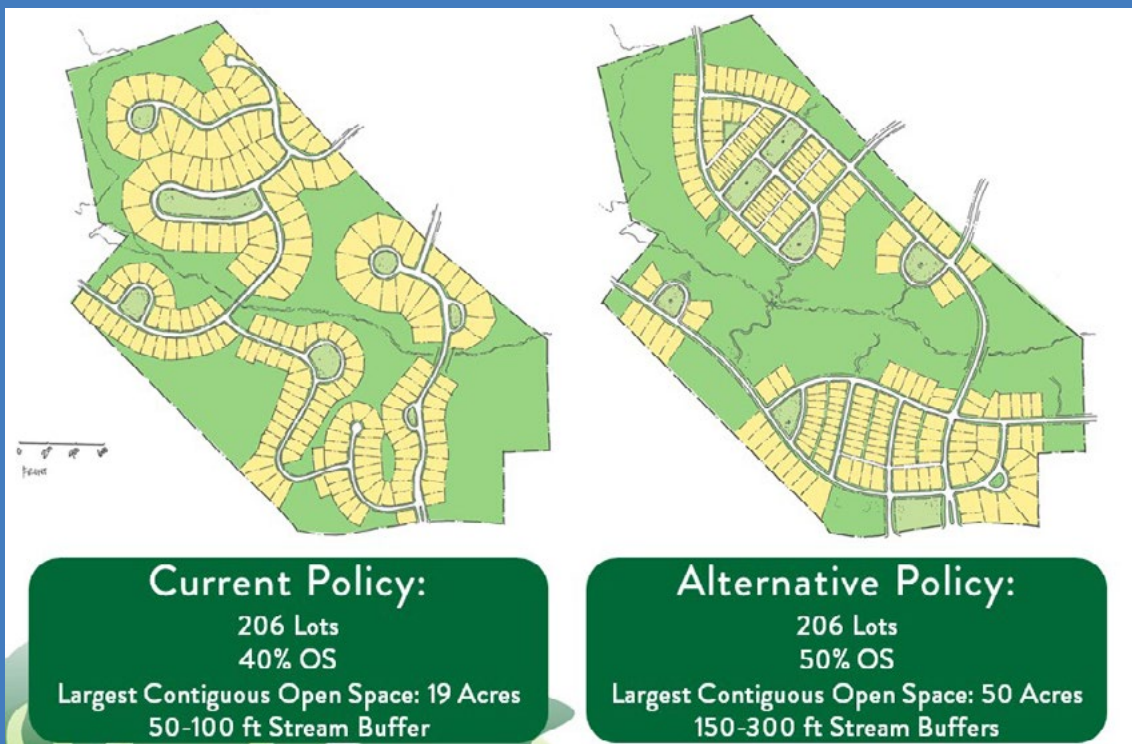


## Benefits of Flexible Site Design

Conservation design is encouraged in the more undeveloped areas of the Huntersville Planning Area. These areas generally fall in the Residential Edge, Rural Conservation and Critical Watershed future land use classes shown on the Future Land Use Map on page 52-53. The goal in these areas is to cluster development away from sensitive natural resources. The design of subdivision in these areas can be improved by providing flexibility in a few key dimensional requirements in exchange for more quality open space preservation. Current regulations specify a minimum and average lot size and prohibit attached residential units in these areas. The graphic on the left below illustrates a development design to fit current regulations. If additional flexibility is allowed in exchange for more quality open space it would be possible to design a subdivision with the same number of units and more open space, greater tree preservation and a larger stream buffer. Open space design and location is important, as larger blocks of contiguous open space can support a greater variety of species and preserved riparian corridors up to 300 feet can help protect water quality and serve as wildlife corridors.

59%

of survey participants support providing flexibility in site design to protect natural resources



COMPARISON OF CURRENT REGULATIONS WITH A MORE FLEXIBLE APPROACH TO CONSERVATION DESIGN THAT ALLOWS THE PRESERVATION OF MORE, HIGH QUALITY OPEN SPACE.

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

**Policy EOS-3: Prioritize tree canopy preservation in the lower intensity areas (Residential Edge, Rural Conservation, and Critical Watershed areas).**

## Strategies

**EOS 3.1: Make mature, native forest an open space priority, especially near streams**

- Review and update tree preservation and open space requirements to prioritize natural open space and specifically stands of native, mature forest, especially those forests located proximal to streams

**Policy EOS-4: In more urban environments encourage preservation of heritage trees and tree canopy enhancement**

## Strategies

**EOS 4.1: Require street trees and encourage preservation of heritage trees**

**EOS 4.2: Regularly evaluate and revise tree mitigation options to further town goals**

**EOS 4.3: Plant more trees and continue to require street trees in new developments**

- Identify public lands where trees can be planted
- Partner with non-profit and private property owners for plantings on non-public lands

**EOS 4.4: Inventory and manage urban forest canopy (i.e. downtown, in rights-of-way, etc.)**

- In 2019, Davidson completed an i-Tree urban forest canopy ecological services assessment and inventory. Other communities have inventoried urban trees using different methods to quantify and track diversity, tree health and ecosystem services.

**EOS 4.5: Hire the personnel necessary to establish, monitor, and maintain a healthy urban forest.**

- An urban forester could assist in monitoring and improving tree canopy, especially in the Town Core.

## Big Ideas:

**Increase tree canopy in areas of new development to 50%**

- Although Huntersville currently requires 45% tree canopy preservation, this next 5% would be a significant step forward.
- Exact levels of tree canopy would vary by Future Land Use character area, with less in the urban core and more in the rural outskirts.

**Conserve an additional 5 square miles of land by 2045**

- Focus on priority conservation watersheds, gaps in conservation or open space areas, wetlands, intact forested uplands, and other significant habitat areas.
- Include greenway and trail corridors to maximize public benefit.
- Inclusive of all public and private conservation efforts.

**Policy EOS-5: Protect water quality**

## Strategies

**EOS 5.1: Restrict development in sensitive watersheds.**

- Discourage intense development in Critical Watersheds
- Continue impervious surface transfer option that allows the transfer of built upon area between lots that are not in the same subdivision

**EOS 5.2: Continue stream restoration**

- Partner with Mecklenburg County Water Quality and other institutions



## Local Conservation Successes: McDowell Creek

“Our [restoration] focus has been entirely in the McDowell Creek watershed in the Town of Huntersville. Gar Creek has excellent water quality and is well protected by nonstructural controls. Gar Creek has not been (and there are not plans to make it) a focus for stream restoration efforts. Similarly, Clark Creek does not have a lot of water quality challenges and currently there are no [restoration] projects targeted for that watershed.

In McDowell Creek the story is completely different. Over the past 15 years, the County has invested over \$18.64 million in the completion of 8 stream restoration projects covering over 10.54 miles and the construction of 23 structural stormwater controls. The County has done more work and invested more money into the restoration of McDowell Creek than any other creek in the County. In addition, there is a 1.7 mile stretch of McDowell Creek where a future stream restoration project is planned at an estimated cost of \$1.9 million. The designs have been completed and the project has currently been sent out to bid. Beyond that, there are an additional 4 miles of stream in the watershed that may be restored in the future.”

*-Rusty Rozzelle, Program Manager, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services, by email: 06/05/2020.*



TORRENCE CREEK POST-RESTORATION

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Pursue restoration targets for key tributaries:
  - Restore 4 miles on McDowell Creek by 2040.
  - Determine targets for restoration on Clark Creek and other key tributaries

## EOS 5.3: Encourage Low Impact Development (LID)

- Continued to promote usage of sand filters, bio-retention, rain gardens, green roofs, pervious pavements, stormwater planters and other LID features
- Fine tune design of stormwater features and relationship to open space

## Policy EOS-6: Preserve elements of rural character

### Strategies

#### EOS 6.1: Enforce existing standards and evaluate new design standards to preserve the character of scenic country roads

- McCauley Road, Black Farms Road, Beatties Farm Road, and Ramah Church Road have been identified as scenic resources and should

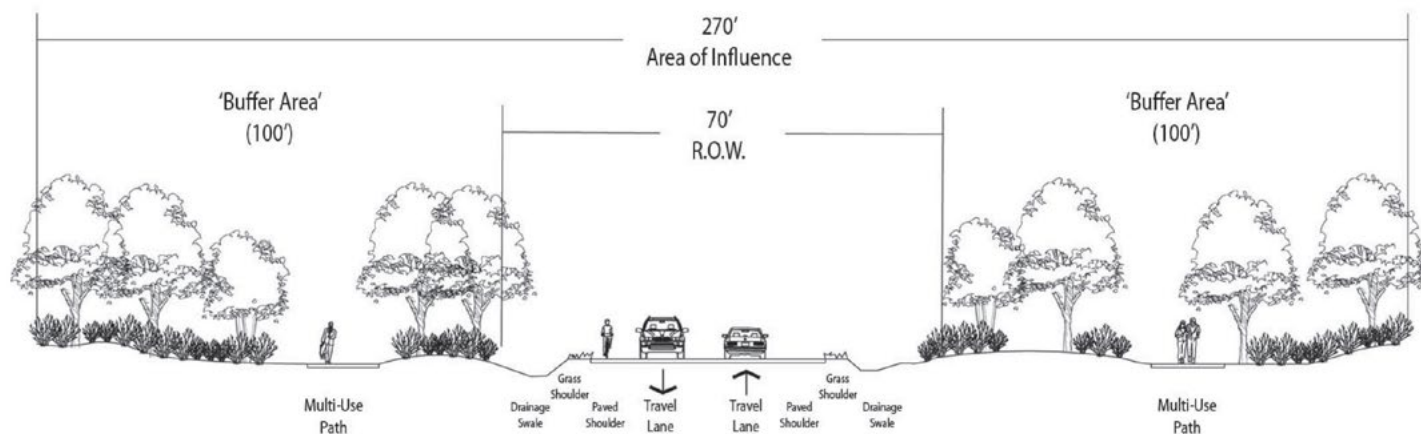
have corridor-specific design controls that preserve scenic beauty.

- Current regulations require a preserved buffer of trees in some areas and open space requirements encourage the protection of key features, such as views, fields and historical structures
- Additional controls might include viewshed protections, additional landscaping buffers or open space or screening requirements, use restrictions, density restrictions, or higher setbacks along the roadway.
- Planned roadway improvements should be evaluated for adherence to previous planning efforts
  - For instance the planned cross-section for Beatties Ford Road includes a 100ft buffer and multi-use trail

#### EOS 6.2: Reduce light pollution

- Improve outdoor lighting standards to maintain public safety, while limiting glare, habitat impacts and loss of privacy.
  - Review lighting ordinances in effect in other communities to determine if adjustments to current ordinance are necessary

### Planned Beatties Ford Road Cross-section



Source: Beatties Ford Road Corridor Small Area Plan (2007)

## Policy EOS-7: Partner with the county, private development, land conservancies and land trusts to conserve sensitive or environmentally important lands.

- Concentrate public and private efforts to conserve an additional 5 square miles of land by 2045
  - Approximately 9.4 Square Miles of lands are conserved in the Huntersville Planning Area currently
  - Next steps could include creating an inventory of preserved open spaces that are part of existing and approved subdivisions, then determining connection opportunities

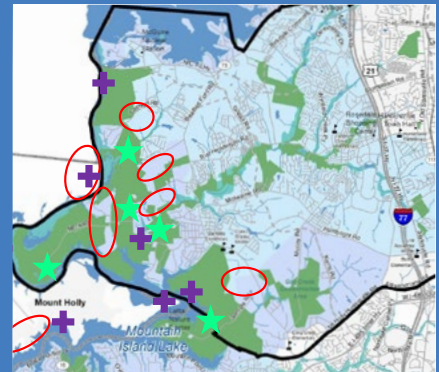
**EOS 7.1: Partner with NC State Parks to study the establishment of a state recreation area along the Mountain Island Lake shoreline.**

**EOS 7.2: Prioritize permanent protection of lands west of Beatties Ford Road near Mountain Island Lake**

- Coordinate with partners and prioritize purchase and conservation of undeveloped land west of Beatties Ford Road and in the eastern part of the Sphere of Influence along major waterways with easements, fee simple acquisition, or other conservation strategies.

## Big Idea: Pursue establishment of a new State Recreation Area near Mountain Island Lake

- Precedents include Lake Norman State Rec Area and Falls Lake State Rec Area.
- Multiple landowners, programs, activities, and agencies, and missions, with one management goal: *Preserve, protect, and celebrate the natural spaces that contribute to the high quality of life in the greater Charlotte region.*



### Connect the gaps

- Increase watershed protection
- Both sides of lake
- Partner for acquisition/protection

### Partner with and support existing operations

- Nature learning and conservation
- Events

### Expand offerings

- Walking, biking and bridle trails
- Paddle and boat launches
- Fishing access

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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- Partner with Rural Hill, Catawba Lands Conservancy, Mecklenburg County Parks and Visit Lake Norman to market the conserved lands along Mountain Island Lake as tourism destination.
- Connect trails & facilities, build identity, etc.

## Policy EOS-8: Improve access to parks

### EOS 8.1: Implement Parks & Recreation Master Plan (under development)

### EOS 8.2: Work toward the goal of 100% of residents within a 10-minute walking distance of a park, formalized or curated natural area, publicly-accessible passive open space area, or greenway access point

- Continue to require locational standards for open space in new developments
  - Urban open space should be located within walking distance of homes in new subdivisions that are not located in rural areas.
  - Open space should be located in undivided preserves where possible and should be accessible to the largest practical number of lots within the development.
- Consider a larger Town role in passive open space acquisition (greenway network + unique natural areas)

## Policy EOS-9: Promote sustainable sites and buildings

### EOS 9.1: Promote the use of energy efficient building design and neighborhood design

- Support policies that promote LEED Building and Neighborhood Design and/or the Sustainable SITES Initiative

### EOS 9.2: Promote the use of native landscaping on publicly owned properties and in new development

## Policy EOS-10: Improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout Town.

### Strategies

### EOS 10.1: Implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee's 30-by-30 plan

- Connect all parks, schools, neighborhoods, major shopping into the Greenway System by 2030 incrementally over the next 10 years
  - Include Greenways, sidewalks, multi-use paths, trails, and dirtways
  - Define projects needed for each stage

### EOS 10.2: Prioritize neighborhood improvements recommended in small area plans

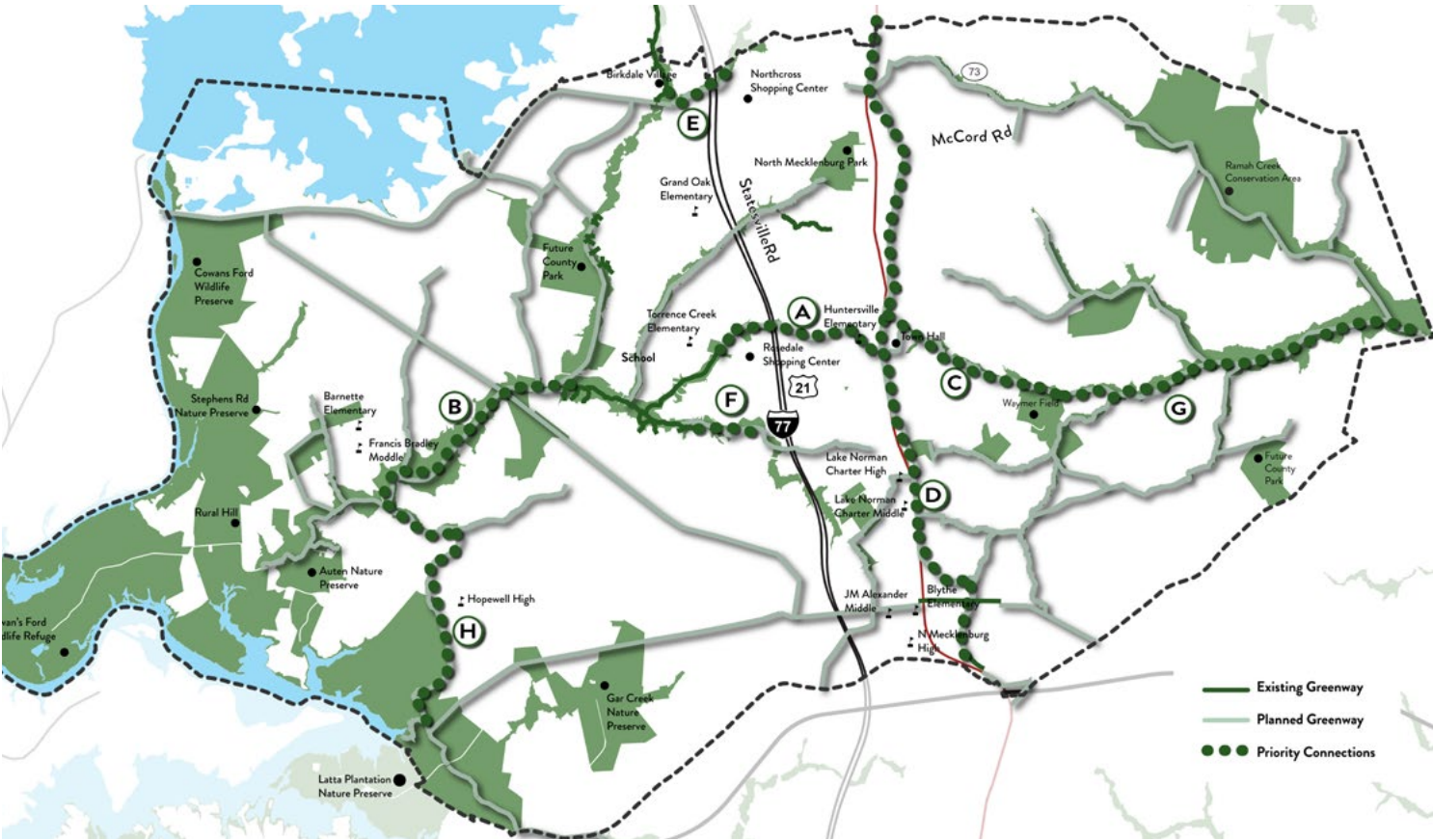
- Working with community members to revisit/confirm street and sidewalk improvement recommendations from small area plans, including those in the East Huntersville / Pottstown

### EOS 10.3: Implement policies, regulations, and programs to improve safe routes to schools

- Study and improve connections within 1/2-mile walking distance of schools and ensure safe, separated walking facilities - a sidewalk, greenway, or trail - with safe, marked road crossings where necessary



Planned Greenways



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## INFRASTRUCTURE & PUBLIC SERVICES

**Policy PS-1: Work with partners to provide and maintain public facilities required to offer residents and property owners with quality municipal services, consistent with progressive government practices and sound fiscal policy**

**PS1.1: Continue and enhance interdepartmental coordination**

- Track development related data and provide to appropriate departments
- Enable public service departments (Police, Fire Rescue, Parks and Recreation) to evaluate the potential impacts of new development proposals on town services

**Policy PS-2: Focus improvements to public services in the Town Core, Moderate Density area and Residential Edge areas shown on the Future Land Use Map**

**Policy PS-3: Coordinate with police and fire departments to ensure adequate resources to provide public safety services to desired development**

**PS3.1: Consider updates to ordinances and/or processes to ensure adequate coverage**

**PS3.2: Create a new fire station in northeast Huntersville**

**PS3.3: Maintain excellent police coverage**

- Work toward goal of maintaining the appropriate ratio of police officers to population to maintain a high level of public safety coverage
- Study future space needs for the Police Department
  - Consider expansion of the police headquarters or satellite locations for the police department. Possible locations

### Adequate public facilities

Setting benchmarks and monitoring performance can help maintain and communicate the achievements and service levels of public infrastructure access and service provision. Respondents to surveys for this plan indicated that excellent public services were valued. Interdepartmental coordination, including with outside public service providers (water, sewer, electric, etc.), is important so that new development does not stretch existing budgets and resources beyond levels acceptable to the public. A coordinated approach can identify metrics to monitor that serve as indicators for maintaining high quality facilities and services.

for such satellite offices include shopping areas, schools or parks facilities.

**Policy PS-4: Plan for long-term personnel, facility, and equipments needs of the Fire Department**

**PS4.1: Establish one or more full-time leadership positions in the Fire Department.**

- These positions could include a Chief, deputy chief and/or battalion chiefs

**Policy PS-5: Coordinate with the police and fire department to address public safety issues related to the design of the built environment**

**PS5.1: Work with the fire department on the design of new streets and neighborhoods**

- Ensure adequate clearance for fire engines
- Require connectivity in new subdivisions

**PS5.2: Work to address priority pedestrian safety concerns**

- Hwy 21/Gilead Road - Tunnel is existing and greenway is planned but not coming soon enough to address pedestrian fatalities at missing crossing
- North Meck High School - dangerous area, where pedestrians/school kids cross the highway

**PS5.3: Maintain safety of parks and greenways**

- Ensure adequate access to police, fire and EMS vehicles from greenways
- Address and map greenways and access points
- Consider funding mobile police units to cover greenway expansion (i.e. bicycle and/or motorcycle units)

**Policy PS-6: Work with CMS and other partners to address existing capacity issues and project growth in school age students**

**PS6.1: Coordinate with CMS and local charter schools on expansion of school capacity**

**Policy PS-7: Support expansions and new schools in strategic locations**

**PS7.1: Strategic locations include Mixed Use Centers and Activity Centers as well as the Town Core and Moderate Density areas on the Future Land Use Map**

**PS7.2: Allow for smaller scale institutional or civic uses in the Residential Edge and Rural Conservation area if contextually appropriate and performance standards are met, including: Low intensity over a site, minimal impact on adjacent properties, and adequate access to infrastructure**

**Policy PS-8: Provide public services to new developments in a fiscally responsible manner**

**PS8.1: Continue to require new development to provide extensions and infrastructure to serve new development.**

**PS8.2: Seek to minimize pump stations in new development.**

**Policy PS-9: Coordinate with Charlotte Water on water and sewer provision in the planning area**

**PS9.1: Prioritize in infrastructure upgrades for future commercial, industrial and mixed-use development.**

- Replace waterlines and upgrade sewer infrastructure as needed to serve future development in Downtown other Mixed Use Centers and Employment Center areas identified on the Future Land Use Map.
- Study transportation, water, sewer, electric and telecommunications infrastructure needs in the Hambright Road area.

**PS9.2: Coordinate with Charlotte Water to up-size and/or replace lines concurrent with large NCDOT road improvement projects.**

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## TRANSPORTATION

As a guiding document for land use and transportation, the Huntersville 2040 Community Plan lays the groundwork for more detailed policies and programs related to Huntersville’s multimodal transportation network. The Future Land Use Map expresses the Town’s intent for how it will use its land resources in the future. The consolidated land use character categories shown here are based on the Future Land Use Map. The seven character areas have been consolidated into four categories to recognize similarities of form and function and to more simply reflect the linkage between land use and street design.

The following pages provide an overview of each category for Huntersville’s mobility framework, including mobility principles and design elements for each. The Town’s emphasis on a more balanced and multimodal transportation network begins with a design typology based on the Character Areas from the Huntersville 2040 Future Land Use Map. This typology establishes priorities when considering tradeoffs often associated with limited right-of-way. It reveals ideal priorities for different travel modes based on two inputs: Land Use Context (Character Areas from the Future Land Use Map) and Street Classification (street types from NCDOT’s Comprehensive Transportation Plan process). The design typology is presented as a priority design element table supplemented with a cross section that features key features for one of the street types. The result is a guide to be referenced at the local, regional, and state levels when considering design improvements to existing roadways or the construction of new roadways.

These concepts use street classifications traditionally used by state and federal departments of transportation. Some local examples of these types of streets are:

- Freeway/Expressway - I-77
- Boulevard - NC 73; US 21
- Major Thoroughfare - NC115
- Minor Thoroughfare - Main Street; Beatties Ford Road
- Local - Lindholm Drive; McIlwain Road; Reese Boulevard

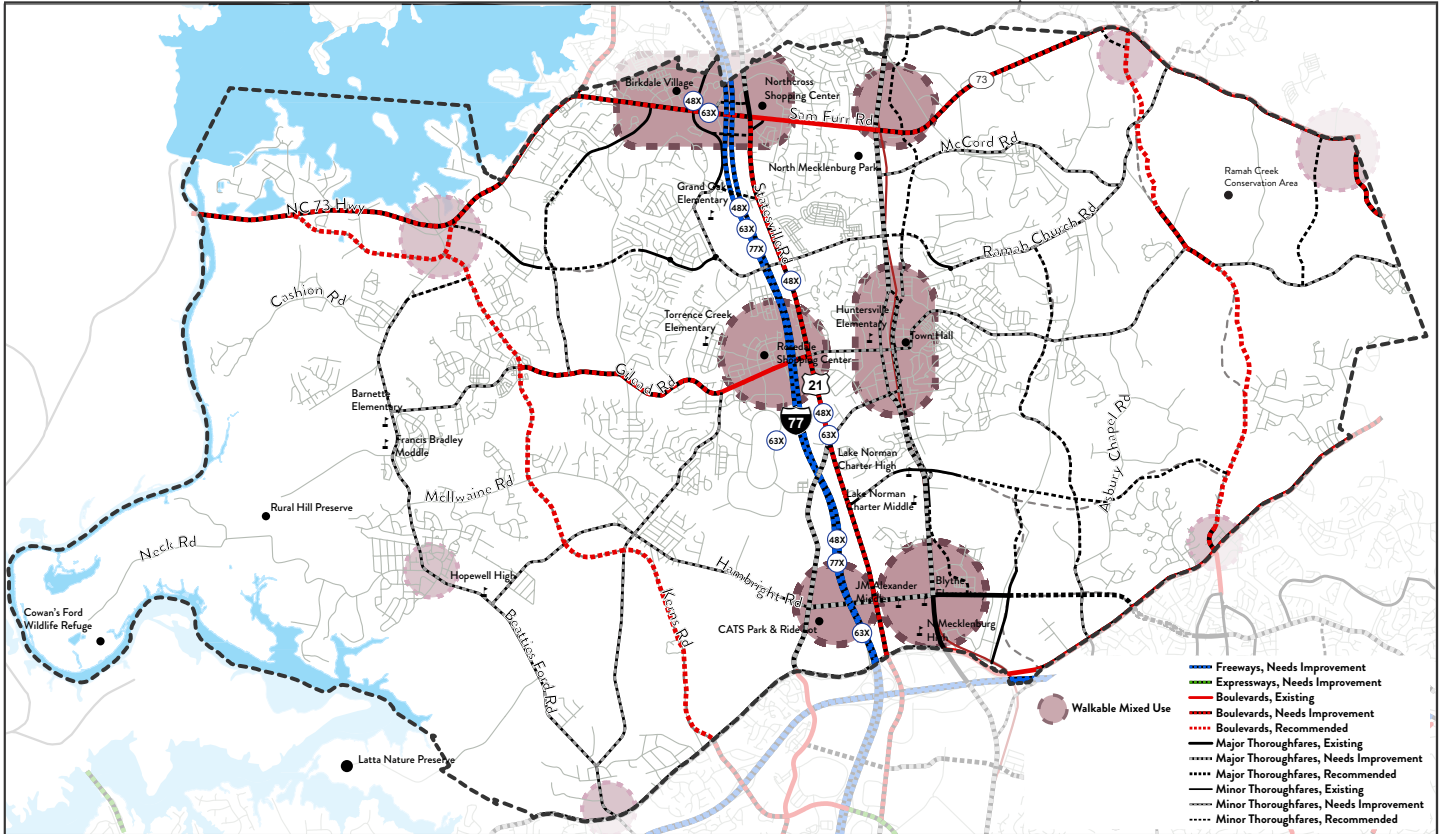
A full map of street typologies can be seen on the opposing page.

### Policy T-1: Link land use with transportation using the mobility framework

T 1.1: Use the following table to associate land use areas with street design.

CONSOLIDATED CATEGORY	LAND USE CHARACTER AREAS (FLUM)
Mixed-Use Center	Mixed-Use Center
Community Core	Town Core   Employment Center
Transitional	Residential Edge   Activity Center
Rural Edge	Rural Conservation   Open Space





## Roadway Class

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## Mixed Use Overview

The Mixed-Use Centers are the Town's best opportunity to provide a balanced and multimodal transportation network. In the future, they will continue to promote walkability by encouraging a diversity of uses, a higher density of development, a design that encourages active transportation, and shorter distances between destinations. The experience of the pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit user should be a factor in the design of all street types, as evidenced by priority design element table.

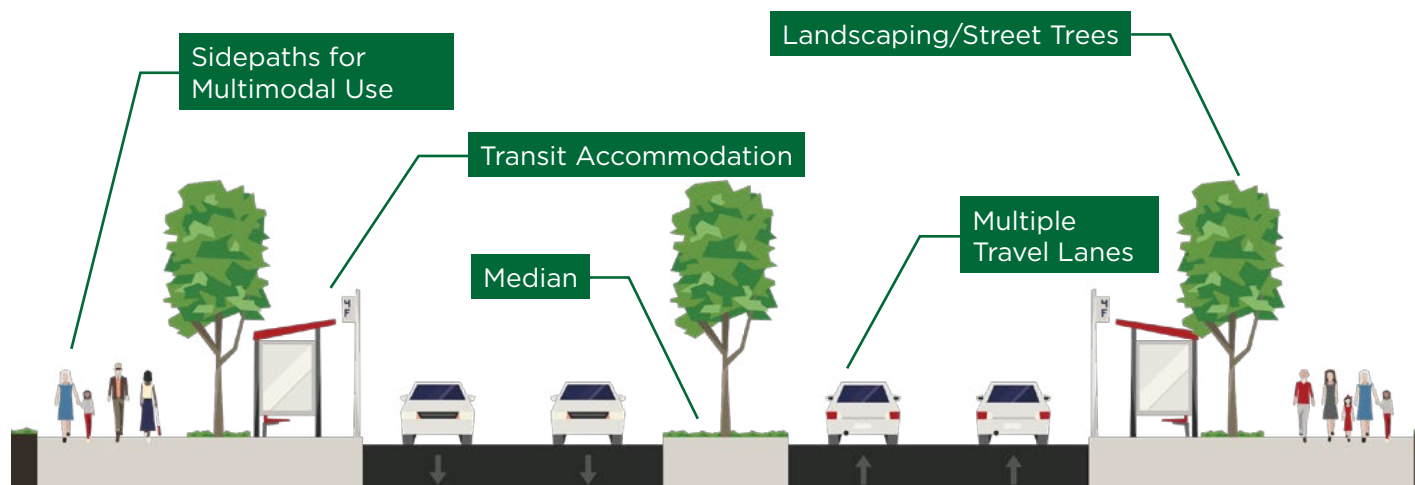
## Mobility Principles

- 1. The safety of bicyclists and pedestrians in Mixed Use Centers is a priority.** Streets in the Mixed Use Centers should be designed for bicyclists and pedestrians to safely travel along and across corridors. This design emphasis should promote reduced observed travel speeds, create narrower travel lanes, and avoid free flow right turn lanes. The distance between marked pedestrian crossings should be minimized, and multi-lane streets should include landscape medians that serve as a pedestrian refuge at intersections and marked mid-block crossings.
- 2. More urban street design patterns are needed to encourage walkability.** Streets in the Mixed Use Centers also should support more urban land use and design. Street patterns should maximize connectivity, minimize block lengths, and tighten block radii to slow cars at intersections. The pedestrian realm should include wide sidewalks and street trees that provide shade and a buffer from travel lanes. On-street parking should be encouraged.

PRIORITY DESIGN ELEMENTS	Key:			
	<i>Boulevard</i>	<i>Major Thoroughfare</i>	<i>Minor Thoroughfare</i>	<i>Local</i>
Multimodal Roadway/Intersection Design	High	High	High	High
Vehicle Throughput At Intersections	High	Medium	Medium	Low
On-Street Parking	Low	Medium	High	High
Landscaping/Street Trees	High	High	Medium	Medium
Sidewalk Width	High	High	High	High
Medians	High	Medium	Low	Low
Transit Accommodation	High	Medium	Medium	Low

## Ideal Cross Section (Boulevard)

### Key Elements



## Community Core Overview

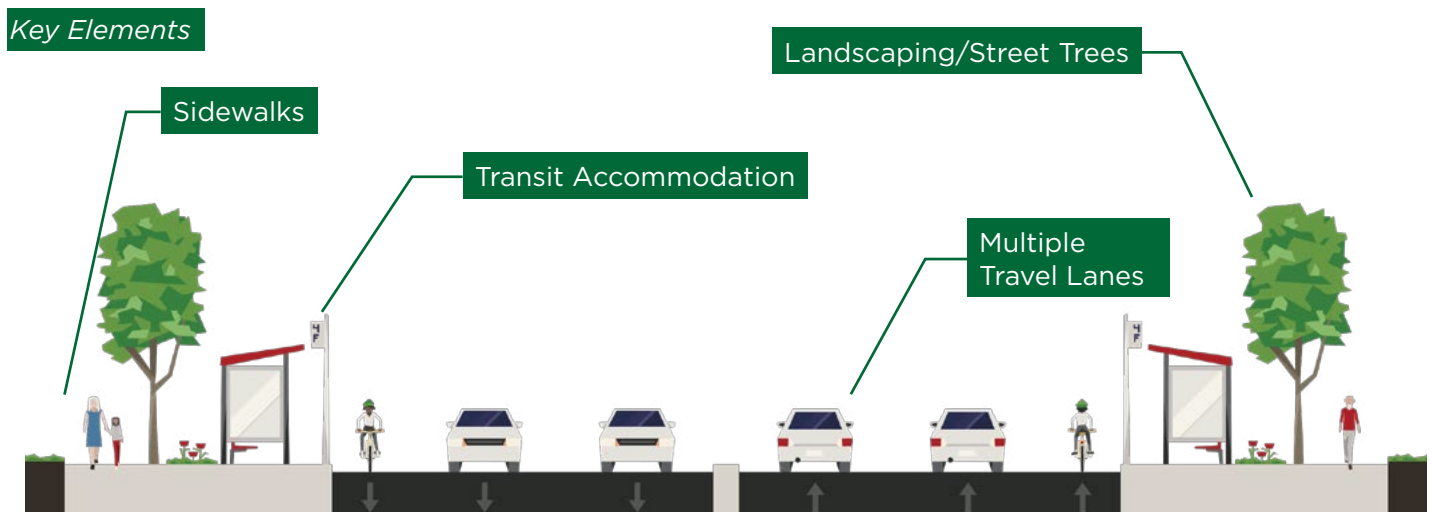
The Community Core includes the Town Core and Employment Center character areas. Together, these areas have the greatest mix of residential types (single family homes, townhomes, and apartments) and job sites (office parks, corporate campuses, and industrial sites). The design intent for these areas is to maintain a focus on traditional neighborhood planning principles where possible while encouraging targeted locations of retail stores and restaurants. With a vision for people to live, work, and play in the Community Core, a multimodal transportation network that provides choice in how people can travel is needed.

## Mobility Principles

- 1. Multimodal connectivity is needed to link the Community Core with Mixed Use areas.** The Community Core's proximity to and relationship with the Mixed Use area requires a more deliberate approach to how people move on foot, by bike, and with transit. The Huntersville Bicycle Master Plan focuses attention on key gaps and Phase 1 projects to address east-west connectivity challenges within the Community Core and Mixed Use areas.
- 2. People need convenient choices in how they choose to travel to destinations such as schools, shopping areas, and employment centers from their neighborhood.** The Community Core represents the heart of the Huntersville area. Given the area's collection of schools, diverse shopping opportunities, and host to the Town's largest employment centers, particularly attention is needed for how people in nearby neighborhoods safely and conveniently access these destinations without having to take personal automobiles. This is particularly true for the shortest trips. For more information, see the Mixed Use Centers map.

PRIORITY DESIGN ELEMENTS	Key:			
	<i>Boulevard</i>	<i>Major Thoroughfare</i>	<i>Minor Thoroughfare</i>	<i>Local</i>
Multimodal Roadway/Intersection Design	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Vehicle Throughput At Intersections	High	High	High	Low
On-Street Parking	Low	Medium	High	High
Landscaping/Street Trees	High	High	Medium	Low
Sidewalk Width	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Medians	High	Medium	Low	Low
Transit Accommodation	High	Medium	Medium	Low

## Ideal Cross Section (Major Thoroughfare)



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

## Transitional Overview

Much of the Transitional area includes residential neighborhoods that transition from the higher densities marked by the Community Core to lower densities found in the rural and conservation areas. The Transitional consolidated land use area also includes several Activity Centers at key intersections. These centers are slated for smaller scale non-residential places. The intent of the Transitional area is to maintain a consistency of multimodal travel options with particular to connections to destinations, activity centers, and the Community Core.

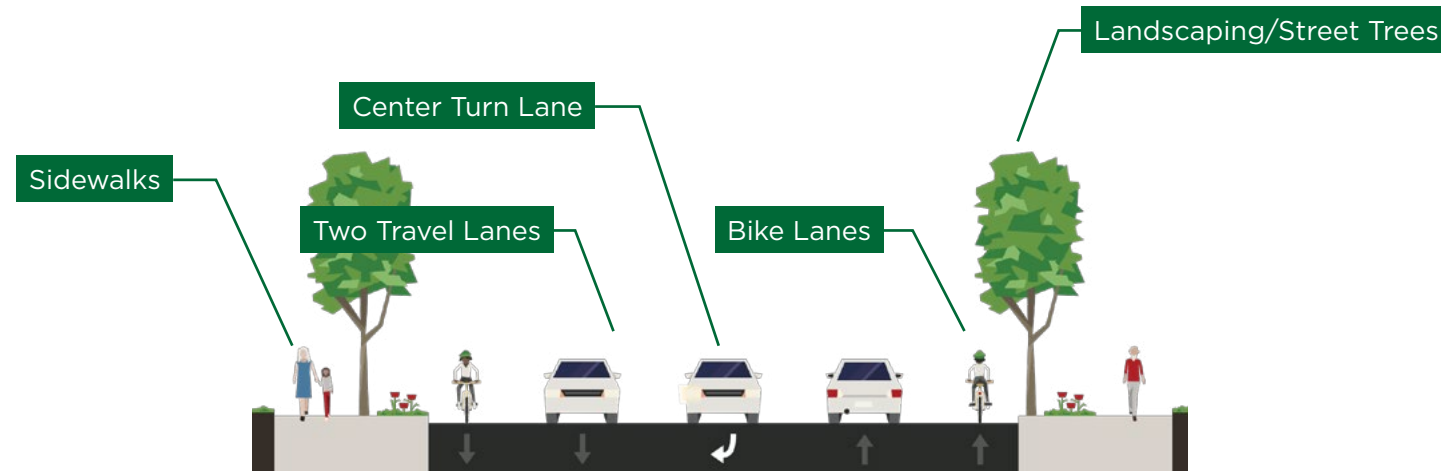
## Mobility Principles

- 1. Intersections in Transitional areas need to safely accommodate multimodal travel patterns.** Many of the Town’s newly built roadways over the next several decades likely will be constructed in the Transitional area. Regardless of the timing of those improvements, the Town should continue to improve the existing roadway network with added focus on key intersections in the Transitional area.
- 2. Multimodal connectivity supports the vision for Activity Centers in the Transitional area.** The Transitional area includes many of the Town’s edge neighborhoods. These residential areas are coupled with Activity Centers at key intersections that include focused areas of non-residential activity. The Town should promote multimodal connectivity to the Activity Centers through on-street improvements, strategic sidewalk projects, and the continued construction of its greenway network.

PRIORITY DESIGN ELEMENTS	Key:			
	Boulevard	Major Thoroughfare	Minor Thoroughfare	Local
Multimodal Roadway/Intersection Design	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Vehicle Throughput At Intersections	High	High	High	Medium
On-Street Parking	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Landscaping/Street Trees	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Sidewalk Width	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Medians	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low
Transit Accommodation	Medium	Medium	Medium	Low

## Ideal Cross Section (Minor Thoroughfare)

### Key Elements





## Rural Overview

The land use intent of the Rural Conservation consolidated land use area is to preserve elements of rural character, conserve open spaces, protect critical watersheds, and maintain limited opportunities for residential development (in a conservation design where utilities exist). The transportation system should focus on the safe movement of people while promoting active use of natural spaces where appropriate.

## Mobility Principles

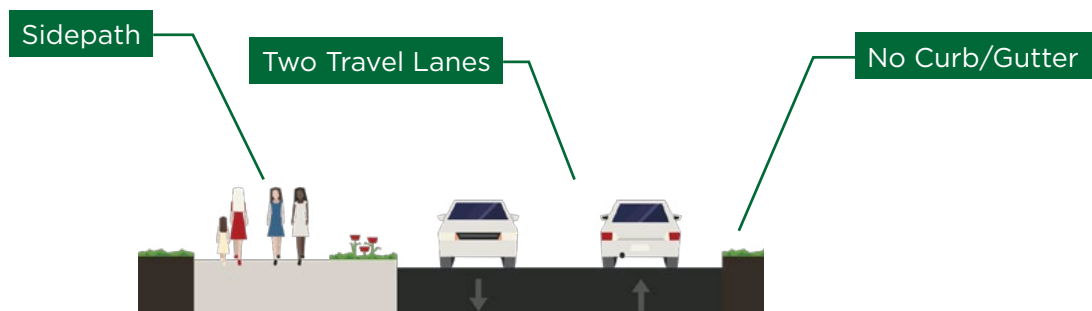
**1. The Town's natural places are ideal for trails and greenways.** Most of the Town's treasured natural spaces are in the Rural area. These spaces include critical watersheds, open spaces, and nature preserves, and wildlife preserves. Based on the recommendations from Huntersville Bicycle Master Plan and other planning efforts, the Town should continue to advocate for appropriate greenways and trails to provide recreational opportunities and critical multimodal connectivity.

**2. A continued focus on the safety design and operation of roads in the Town's rural areas is needed.** The roads in the Town's rural areas carry less traffic on average than streets and highways in the heart of Huntersville. However, the design of these roads often is marked by unsafe curves, limited shoulders, and other unsafe conditions typical of farm-to-market roads. The Town continues to improve safety through targeted widening projects, modernization, and intersection improvements. Safety through design and enforcement needs to be a priority as traffic continues to increase on these roads.

PRIORITY DESIGN ELEMENTS	Key:			
	<i>Boulevard</i>	<i>Major Thoroughfare</i>	<i>Minor Thoroughfare</i>	<i>Local</i>
Multimodal Roadway/Intersection Design				
Vehicle Throughput At Intersections				
On-Street Parking				
Landscaping/Street Trees				
Sidewalk Width				
Medians				
Transit Accommodation				

## Ideal Cross Section (Local)

### Key Elements



# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

**T 1.2:** Prioritize connecting Mixed Use Centers to Activity Centers and other destinations throughout Town with transit

**T 1.3:** Encourage transit-supportive development within Mixed Use Centers and the Community Core areas to expand existing Express Bus Routes.

**T 1.4:** In coordination with regional partners, the Town should explore local transit options with an initial focus on Tier 1 priority corridors for the highest levels of transit service.

**T 1.5:** Potential Premium Transit Options. The Town should continue to support premium transit options to promote regional travel choice and advance community initiatives related to growth and economic development.

## Policy T-2: Develop a mobility plan that builds upon the recommendations presented in the 2040 Plan

**T 2.1:** Include the following elements in the mobility plan

- Connectivity Master Plan
- Local Transit Assessment
- Vision Zero Action Plan
- Street Design Guidelines
- Code Diagnostic

## Policy T-3: Improve connectivity throughout the study area

**T 3.1:** Continue to enhance street connectivity by requiring connections among different uses

- Connect-sensitive street design should be applied

**T 3.2:** Improve multimodal connectivity by implementing the Huntersville Bicycle Master Plan, expanding the greenway network, and supporting enhanced pedestrian connections

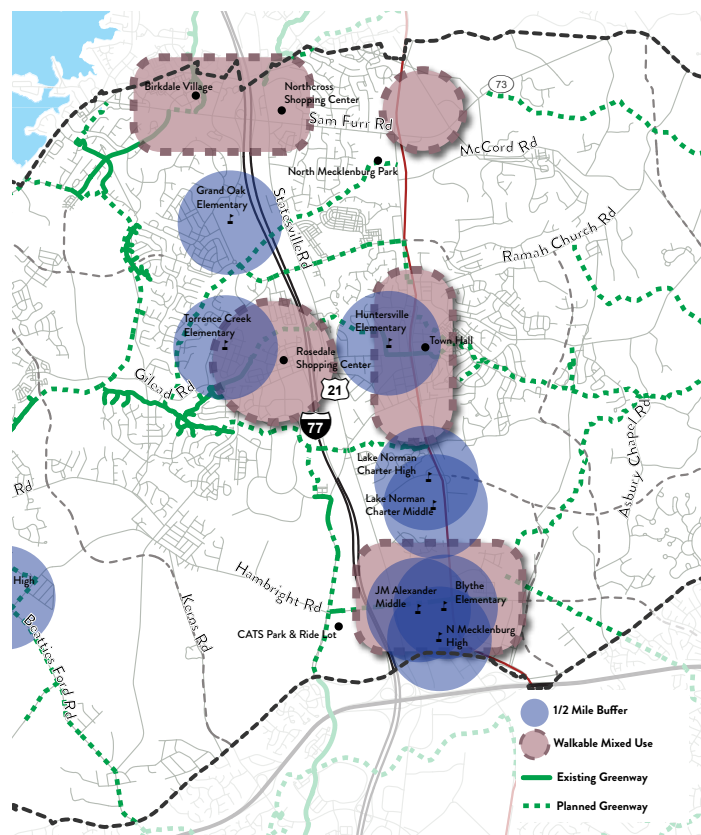
## Policy T-4: Improve safety for bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists

**T 4.1:** Become a Vision Zero Community

- Vision Zero is an international road safety initiative that aims to achieve a road system with zero fatalities or serious injuries

**T 4.2:** Develop a Crossing Safety Improvement Study

**T 4.3:** Emphasize access management strategies as part of public and private sector improvements to improve safety and operations



Mixed Use Centers and School Walk Zones

## Policy T-5: Facilitate multimodal transportation

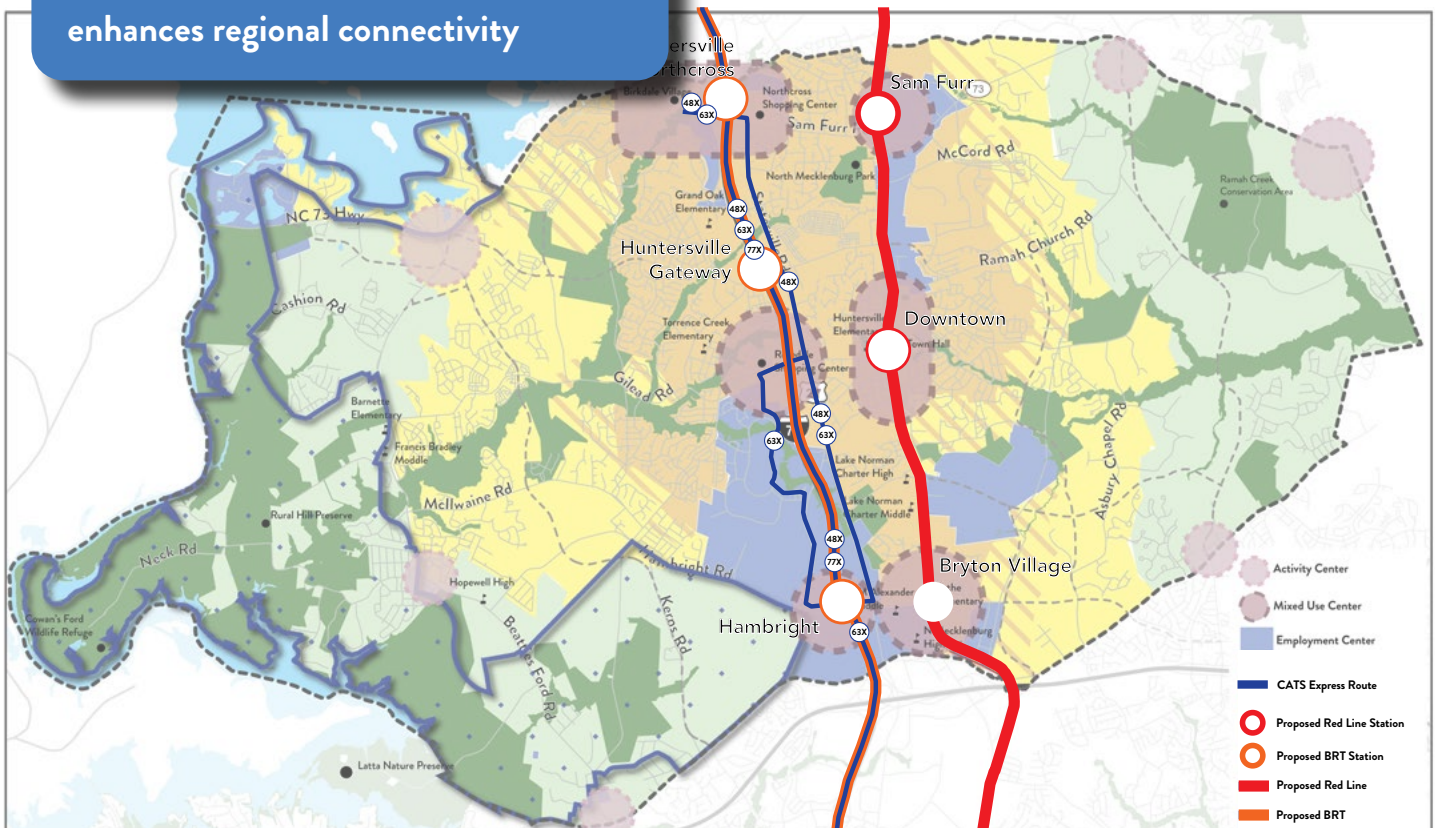
- T 5.1: Implement the programs identified in the Huntersville Bicycle Master Plan
- T 5.2: Design street improvements with considerations for the surrounding context and various users
- T 5.3: Support NCDOT's Complete Streets Policy
- T 5.4: Remain engaged with the identification and prioritization of regional transit improvements that reach Huntersville
- T 5.5: Evaluate potential routing, stop locations, ridership, and costs for local transit service

### Premium Transit

Premium transit service typically means a high quality transit, either rail or bus, that reduces transit travel times and enhances regional connectivity

## Policy T-6: Ensure the transportation network keeps up with growth and development

- T 6.1: Review the list of committed and priority projects on an annual basis to re-classify projects as necessary
- T 6.2: Continue to conduct annual reviews and revisions of the Town's Capital Investment Program (CIP) to ensure transportation projects are consistent with stated needs
- T 6.3: Support transportation funding efforts that fully leverage the participation of NCDOT and the private sector
- T 6.4: Conduct a diagnostic of the Town's Zoning Ordinance to advance transportation vision established in Huntersville 2040
- T 6.5: Re-evaluate the Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) Ordinance



Planned Premium Transit Routes

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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### IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Under Development. Awaiting responses from Survey #3.



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# HUNTERSVILLE COMMUNITY PLAN



LOOKING FORWARD  
THINKING BACK

