



# Town of Matthews

## Land Use Plan

# 2012 - 2022



Recommended by Matthews Planning Board on November 28, 2012

Adopted by Matthews Board of Commissioners on December 10, 2012



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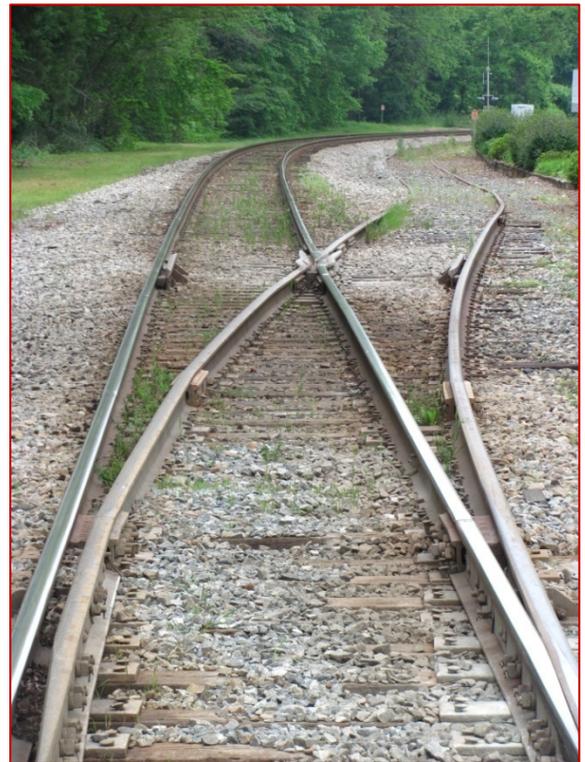
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# SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

SEABOARD



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MATTHEWS, N.C.

## BACKGROUND

In 1986, the Town of Matthews devised a Land Use Plan draft to preserve its historic, small-town character and protect its single-family residential base. Considerable growth and economic stability in the 1980s led the Town to reassess its development policies. In 1992, a new development policy document was created to include greater focus on strategic commercial land use, which would be aesthetically compatible with the Town's residential core. The Plan continues to be updated as needed.

## ABOUT THIS UPDATE

This Plan serves as an update of the 2002 Land Use Plan. The Plan is restructured to address a variety of topics the Town will face in coming years. Particularly, the Plan acknowledges changing trends occurring in demographics, housing and transportation. The Plan addresses long term sustainability, transit supportive developments, mixed use developments and multi-modal transit.

This Plan coincides with the Downtown Master Plan update and the incorporation of a Unified Development Ordinance. This Plan will guide land use, zoning, transportation projects and strategic development of sensitive and transitional areas.

A comprehensive review and update of this Plan should occur once a decade, or when updates in policies and development goals warrant it. Minor changes to this Plan should be made as needed. Such changes must not conflict with or have profound effects on the existing language of this Plan.

Additionally, Small Area Plans that provide more detailed policy guidance will be completed for sensitive and transitional areas. These plans will be completed on an as-needed basis and, once adopted, will be added to the Land Use Plan by reference.

The Town of Matthews adheres to information contained in a number of plans, documents, and studies. The following literature is adopted by reference as part of this Plan. These documents may be updated in the future. The Land Use Plan will be amended accordingly so as to maintain harmony among the various plans.

- *Comprehensive Bicycle Plan*  
Adopted October 23, 2006
- *Connectivity Study*  
Spring, 2000
- *Downtown Master Plan*  
Adopted April 14, 1997
- *Gateway Delineation Plan for the Town of Matthews*  
Spring, 1994
- *Mecklenburg County Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan*  
Adopted June 9, 2008
- *Monroe Road/John Street Streetscape Plan*  
1998
- *NC-51 Corridor Study*  
Adopted December 6, 1991
- *Planning, Aging and Matthews*  
2008
- *Recreation Master Plan*  
Adopted December 11, 2006
- *Town of Matthews Preliminary Open Space Plan*  
January 19, 2004
- *Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan*  
Adopted March 10, 2008
- *Town of Matthews Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles and Policy Guidelines*  
Adopted May 8, 2006
- *Wayfinding Signage Project*  
Adopted March 12, 2012

Matthews continues to be one of North Carolina's more affluent and desirable communities in which to live. The Town has successfully retained its quaint, small-town atmosphere in light of recent growth. As growth brings change, the Town is experiencing shifts in land use, demographics, tax base and culture.

The Town Board struggles to make land development decisions that will satisfy changing attitudes regarding future land development in Matthews. The desire to preserve current standards versus the need to reassess existing policy and code has been a prevalent issue. Multi and mixed use development, transit oriented development, alternative housing options, new industries and long-term sustainability are major issues the Board will regularly consider in the coming years. It is important to recognize that Matthews no longer has an abundance of undeveloped land; successful future development requires implementation of smart growth principles and policies.

The desire for privacy has guided development for the past 50 years. Large, single-family lots built on meandering streets and secluded cul-de-sacs have dominated the market since the post-war era. While this approach was successful for a time, it is this mentality that has created many development problems in Matthews. Such development is incapable of sustaining a healthy fiscal growth pattern.

The citizen-developed Vision Statements were created in 2005 to set long-term direction for Matthews. This process revealed a focal shift from the typical, suburban nuclear family to a new generation of households. Changing demographics suggest that new development should address the growing populations of empty nesters, singles and non-traditional families desiring less "private" family space and wanting more community connection.

Citizens also expressed the need for transportation options. As an increasing amount of people choose to live closer to community centers, the demand for alternate modes of transit is rising. A successful transportation system in Matthews will include a connected network of roadways, sidewalks, bike paths and greenways. Roadways in Matthews must plan for public transit, bike and pedestrian uses.

As a paradigm shift occurs in land development, the Town acknowledges and embraces these new attitudes.

As mentioned previously, this Plan update must acknowledge the changing trends occurring in demographics, housing, and transportation. With few remaining large tracts of undisturbed land in the Town limits, traditional single-family residential subdivisions on large lots are becoming less viable. Due attention, therefore, must be given to infill development. The following policies will provide the foundation of the Land Use Plan, establishing a basis for developing the individual objectives and action plans set forth in this Plan.

**#1** *Provide a range and variety of housing styles in Matthews.*

While Matthews has developed as a full-service community with an economically healthy mix of land uses, the predominant housing style in Town has been the detached home on a 1/3 acre or larger lot. This has been the desired housing style and has held its value, although the lack of alternative styles of housing may have prevented certain segments of the general population from moving to Matthews. Matthews should continue to provide housing styles acceptable to, and desired by, current and future residents.

**#2** *Encourage a mix of land uses in appropriate and well-planned locations throughout the community.*

Matthews has clear separation of commercial and residential areas today, which has been a beneficial feature to existing residents and has protected real estate values. As market forces are now accepting of, and calling for, better integration of daily commercial services and goods with residential areas, Matthews can remain a desirable home location for younger and older residents by making adjustments to the physical separation of residential and nonresidential goods and services.

**#3** *Ensure a range of transportation options and encourage alternative modes where appropriate.*

Historically, development in Matthews, and throughout the country, has centered on a viable road network. This singular focus has resulted in excessive noise, congestion, and an inequity of services. An expansive array of transportation alternatives such as sidewalk and pedestrian routes, bike paths and lanes, public transit, and even an enhanced, well-connected road network can help to alleviate these conditions. Linking transportation alternatives with development and land use is essential.

## #4

*Encourage compact building design and **urban style development** to achieve more efficient use of space where appropriate.*

Efficient use of land ensures economic vitality while minimizing negative impacts. Tailoring development to allow for ease of access, appropriate visibility or screening, and shared infrastructure results in greater efficiency, quality, and synergy and thereby reduces economic waste. Additionally, the elimination of “dead,” or unusable, spaces promotes public safety.

## #5

*Preserve open space, natural beauty, and environmentally sensitive areas.*

As development continues throughout the community, preserving natural spaces has become an increasingly important objective. Natural spaces are integral parts of a community as they provide for stormwater filtration, buffering of disparate adjacent uses, recreation, and aesthetic enjoyment. Matthews can remain a healthy and attractive community by ensuring the preservation of adequate and appropriate open space on both public and private property.

## #6

*Establish Matthews as a distinct, attractive, **high-quality community**.*

Development that is convenient, effective, interesting, and attractive is more likely to retain, and even enhance, its economic value. Similarly, communities that are vibrant and pleasantly unique are more likely to attract and retain residents and visitors. Matthews can point to its vibrant downtown as an example of this dynamic. Applying similar, appropriate standards of excellence throughout the community will help to establish Matthews as a desirable, sustainable place.

In order to establish a path to achieving these policy objectives, a group of strategies has been developed for each policy. Every action item listed in this Plan will be modeled around one or more strategies set forth on the following pages. Collectively, they provide the building blocks of the Land Use Plan.

## **Policy #1: Housing Style Variety**

Strategy 1A: Revise land development code provisions to allow alternative styles of housing in many locations and at varied economic levels.

Strategy 1B: Provide expanded zoning options that will encourage developers to design attractive niche neighborhoods that will positively impact existing residential neighborhoods.

Strategy 1C: Consider revising regulations to allow greater flexibility for home businesses that will not negatively impact adjacent residential quality.

Strategy 1D: Consider adding new regulatory provisions for mixed residential development where a variety of housing styles may coexist in a planned development.

Strategy 1E: Encourage higher density multi-family development in appropriate locations and review regulations to increase maximum density.

Strategy 1F: Actively endorse a variety of housing values and residency types (owner and renter) to be built within the Town to the local development community.

## **Policy #2: Mix of Land Uses**

Strategy 2A: Revise current nonresidential / commercial zoning classifications so that new development can more easily include a mix of uses, either side-by-side or vertically.

Strategy 2B: Create new zoning classification(s) that encourages and / or requires that a mix of uses is designed in every project.

Strategy 2C: Identify specific sites where a mix of uses is acceptable and desirable.

## **Policy #3: Transportation Options**

Strategy 3A: Development should be encouraged and accommodated where public transit infrastructure exists and is planned.

Strategy 3B: Road and infrastructure improvement plans should include sidewalk, bike lanes, or multi-modal paths where appropriate.

Strategy 3C: Require new development to provide appropriate connections to adjacent properties and transportation infrastructure.

Strategy 3D: Ensure that development is accessible and convenient to all users.

## **Policy #4: Urban Style Development**

Strategy 4A: Reduce front setbacks and other yard requirements where placing buildings closer to the street and other buildings will encourage residents and visitors to utilize the shared and public outdoor spaces.

Strategy 4B: Reduce required number of parking spaces where appropriate, and actively encourage or require comfortable pedestrian connections between parking lots and buildings / land uses.

Strategy 4C: Provide for occasional overflow parking situations, which can utilize pervious surfaces.

Strategy 4D: Consider revising required rear yard dimensions and accessory structure size limits in existing single-family zoning categories to allow existing residential homes to increase their private outdoor amenities (decks, pools, outdoor kitchens, gazebos, etc.)

## **Policy #5: Preserve Open Space**

Strategy 5A: Engage adopted plans, such as the Recreation Master Plan and the Open Space Plan, in the development review process.

Strategy 5B: Ensure that the zoning and subdivision regulations support and encourage the preservation of open space, common space, and recreational space.

Strategy 5C: Establish open space requirements for mixed use and planned developments. Ensure that these open spaces are appropriately functional.

Strategy 5D: Identify appropriate locations for public park and public pocket park expansion with the objective of achieving geographic equity throughout the town.

## **Policy #6: High-Quality Community**

Strategy 6A: Encourage re-use and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure and buildings

Strategy 6B: Require master planning of undeveloped space to eliminate piecemeal approach and ensure harmonious future development.

Strategy 6C: Adopt appropriate design standards to multiple land use and zoning categories.

Strategy 6D: Identify and protect historically significant buildings and resources.

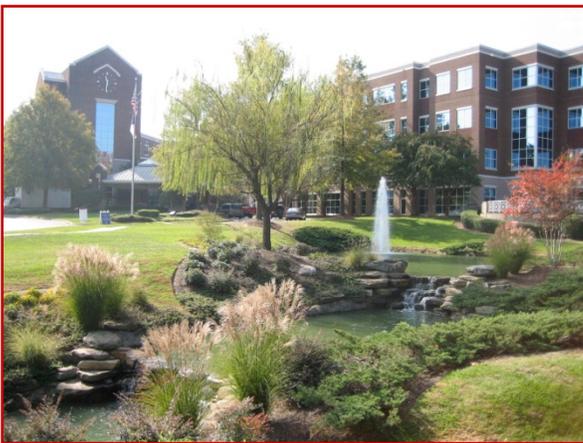
Matthews began as a small farming community in the 1800's. Cotton farmers clear-cut the land, leaving tree stumps in every direction. Thus, the community's first informal name was Stumptown. After 1825, the town became known as Fullwood, named for John Fullwood, who operated a stagecoach inn and store from his house. Nearby residents received mail at the inn, making Mr. Fullwood the first postmaster of the community.

In 1874, the Carolina Central Railway Company constructed a railroad through the Town as part of a line from Wilmington, North Carolina to Tennessee. As a result, trade increased and the Town of Matthews was officially incorporated in 1879. The 1880 census lists the Town's first population count at 191. When originally surveyed, the Town of Matthews spread in a one-mile radius from the intersection of John and Trade Streets. This intersection is often referred to as the Town Square.



*Vintage photograph of Matthews Train Depot*

Around the turn of the century, cotton farming covered the South and small towns flourished as supply points for farming needs. The railroad became the lifeline of Matthews. Five passenger trains and eight freight trains came through Town each day and the Train Depot thrived. By 1901, Matthews' Downtown boasted two cotton gins, three general stores, a bank, two doctors, a pharmacy, a grist mill, a blacksmith shop, a livery stable and a hotel.



*Presbyterian Hospital campus in Matthews*

After World War II, the small farming community changed. The completion of US-74 (Independence Boulevard) in 1955 brought an influx of new businesses and housing developments. Large corporations founded their headquarters in Matthews. In 1994, a 240,000 square foot hospital facility was built in Downtown Matthews.

Construction of the Interstate-485 outer beltway connected Matthews with major interstate highways I-77 and I-85 and Charlotte-Douglas International Airport. This increased the Town's accessibility to regional and national commerce. In 2002, local legislation was adopted that allowed Matthews to annex its entire extraterritorial jurisdiction, spreading Town limits to the maximum extent.

As the Town moves forward with a capped geographical area, it continues to focus more intensely on residential, commercial, civic, and cultural growth.

## DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS

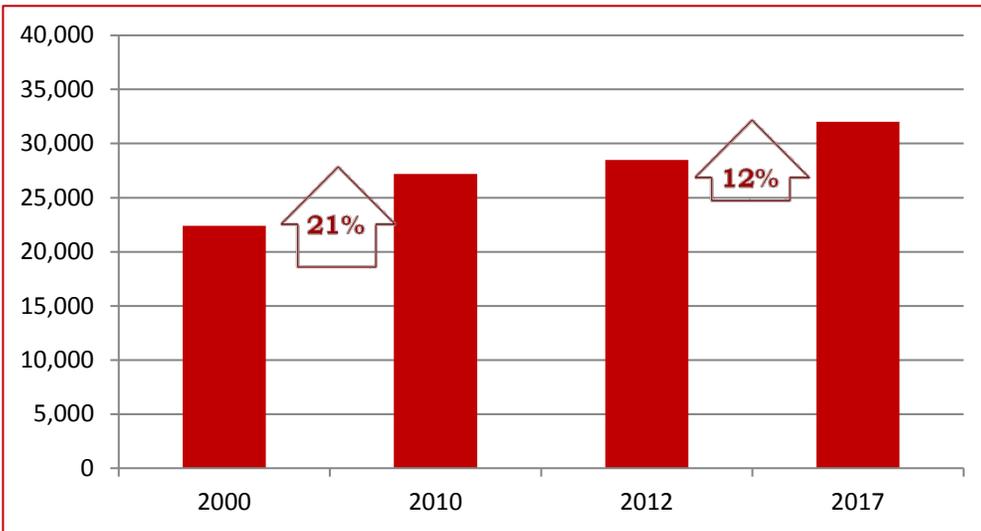
All data in the following three statistical sections were gathered from the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census, and the U.S. Census American Communities Survey (2008 – 2010).

Population:

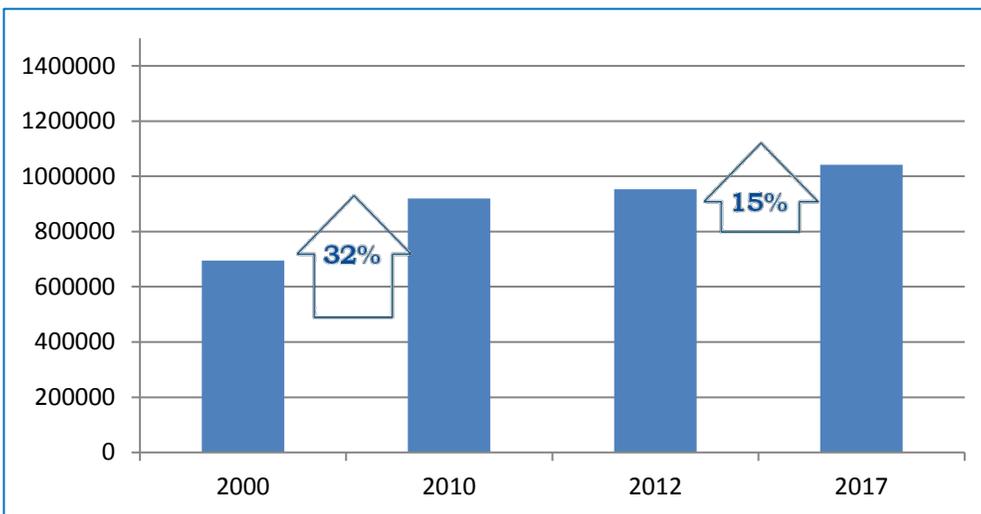
	2000 Pop	2010 Pop	2012 Pop	2017 Pop
Matthews*	22,127	27,198	28,496	32,022
Mecklenburg County**	695,454	919,628	953,032	1,041,949

\* 2012 – 2017 Annual Rate: 2.36%

\*\* 2012 – 2017 Annual Rate: 1.8%



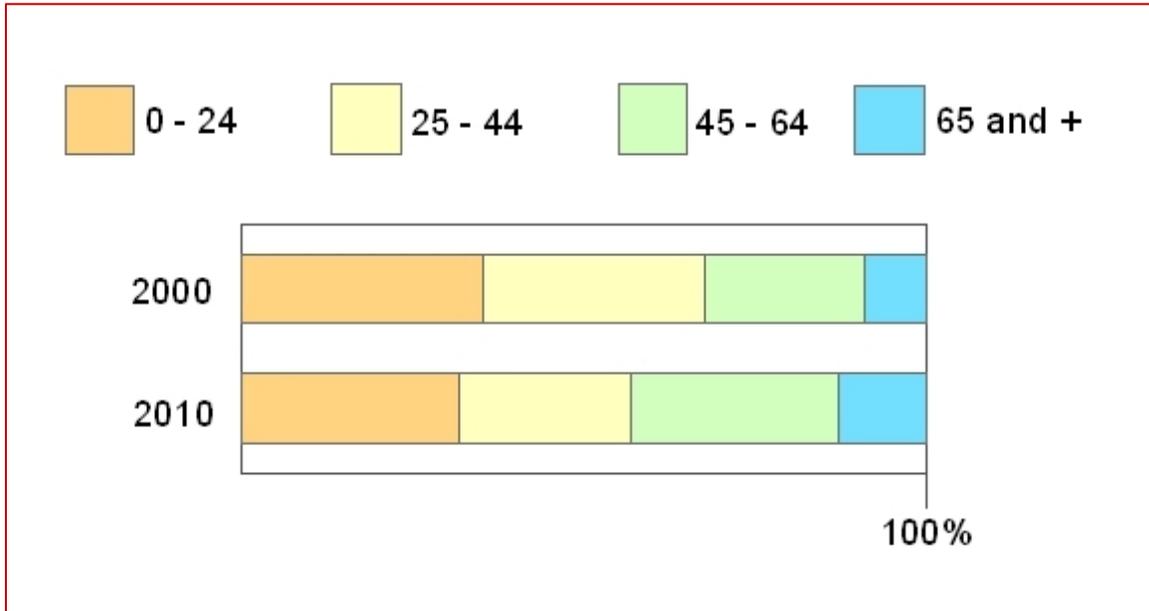
*Town of Matthews population growth*



*Mecklenburg County population growth*

Age Distribution:

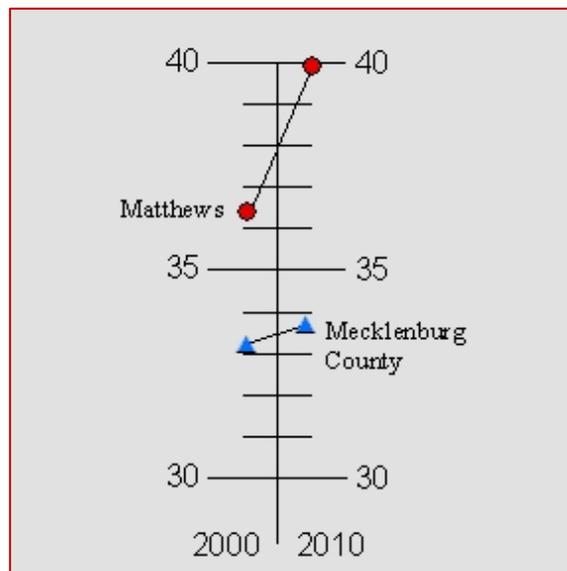
	0 – 24	25 – 44	45 – 64	65 and +
Matthews 2000	36%	32%	23%	9%
Matthews 2010	32%	25%	30%	13%



*The populace of Matthews has aged over the past decade.*

Median Age:

	2000 M-A	2010 M-A
Matthews	36.4	39.9
Mecklenburg County	33.1	33.9



*Matthews is aging faster than Mecklenburg County overall.*

## HOUSING STATISTICS

Mecklenburg County	43%	57%
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### Household Type:

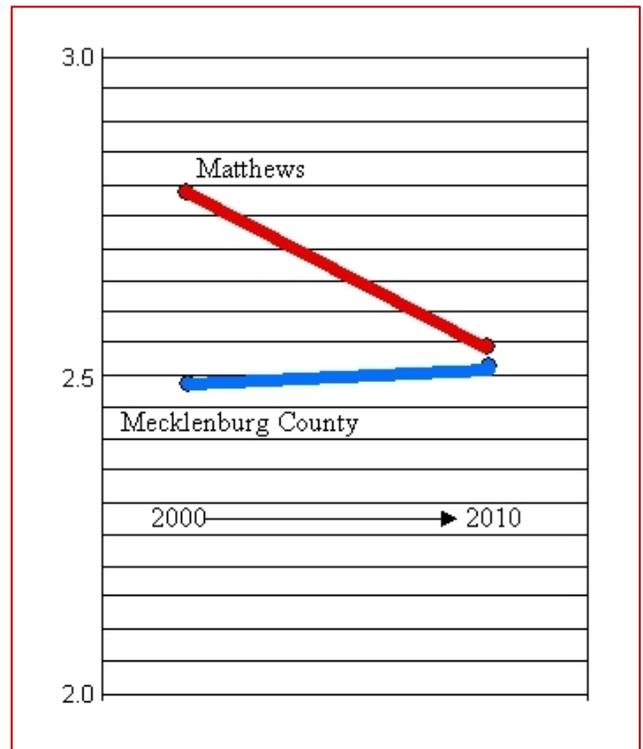
	Married	Not Married
Matthews	59%	41%

*Matthews and Mecklenburg County show two distinct trends among household type*



### Household Size:

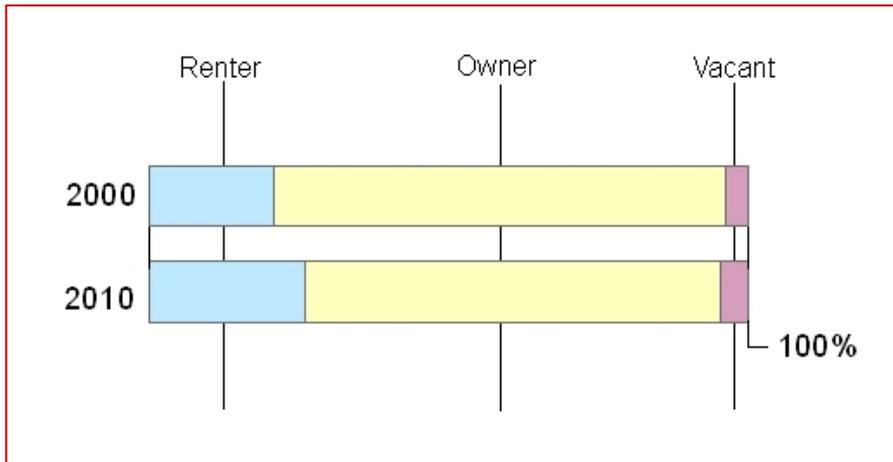
	2000	2010
Matthews	2.79	2.58
Mecklenburg County	2.49	2.54



*The average household size has shrunk in Matthews while remaining fairly constant in Mecklenburg County overall.*

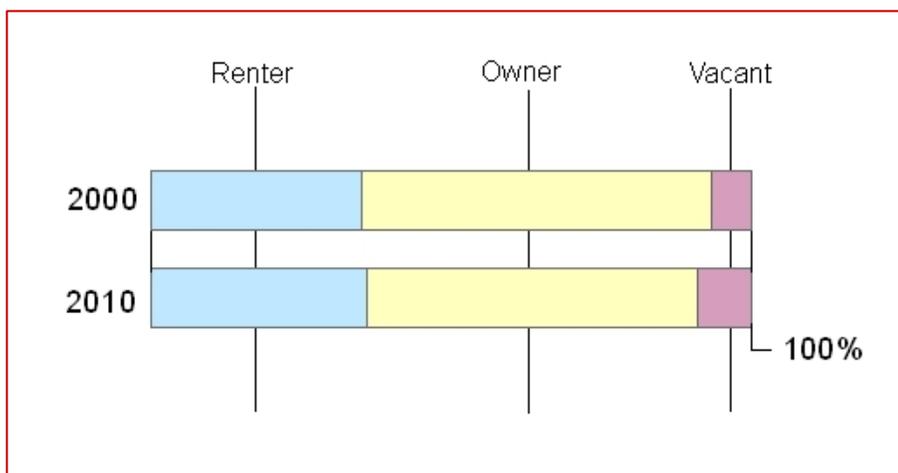
Housing Occupancy:

	Renter	Owner	Vacant
Matthews 2000	21.0	75.3	3.7
Matthews 2010	26.2	69.3	4.5



*Matthews has experienced a shift toward more renter-occupied units ...*

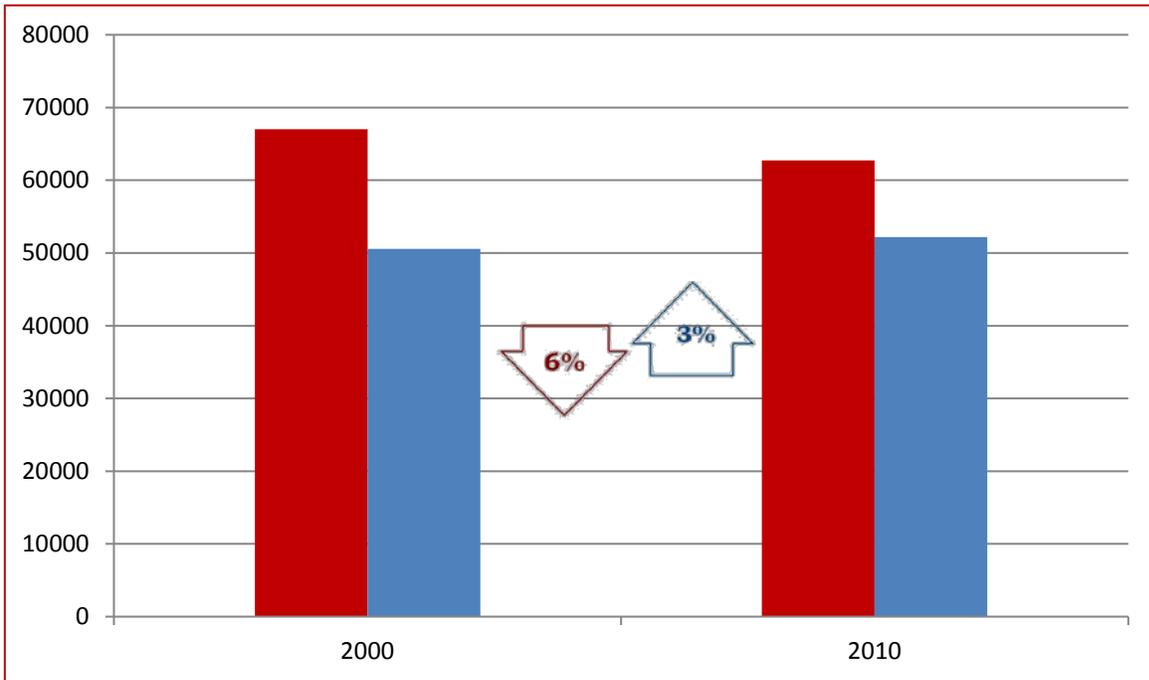
	Renter	Owner	Vacant
Meck. County 2000	35.2	58.2	6.6
Meck. County 2010	35.8	55.1	9.1



*...whereas Mecklenburg County, overall, has maintained its renter/owner split.*

Median Household Income:

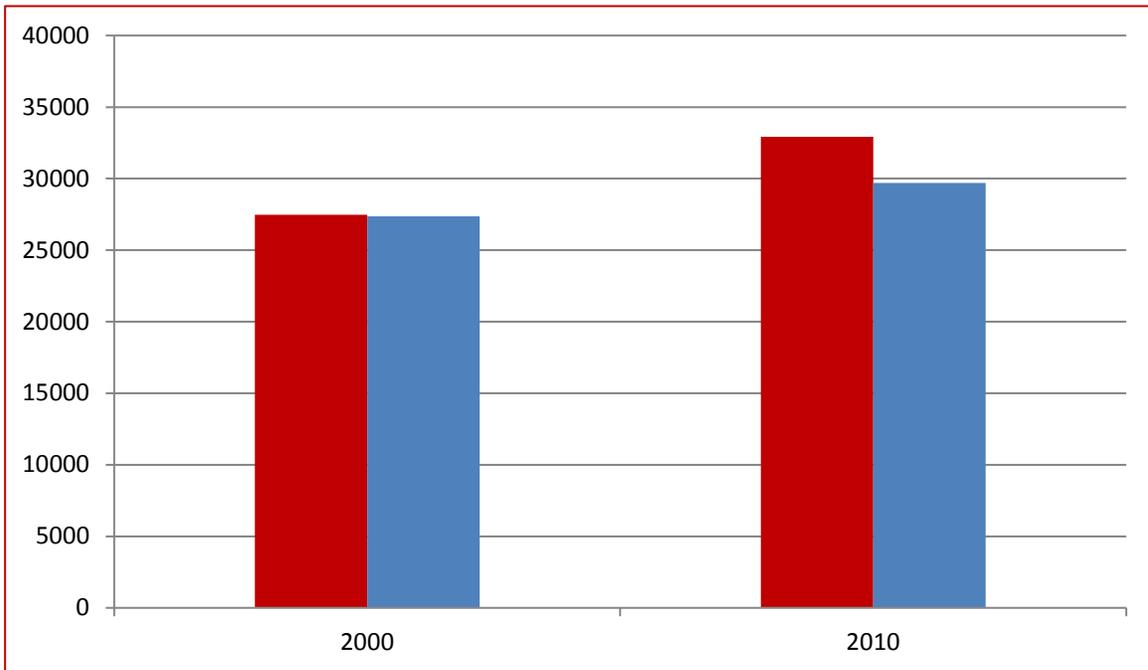
	2000	2010
Matthews	\$67,034	\$62,750
Mecklenburg County	\$50,579	\$52,188



*Matthews has proved vulnerable to the Great Recession, posting its first decennial decline in median household income since the 1940 Census.*

Per Capita Income:

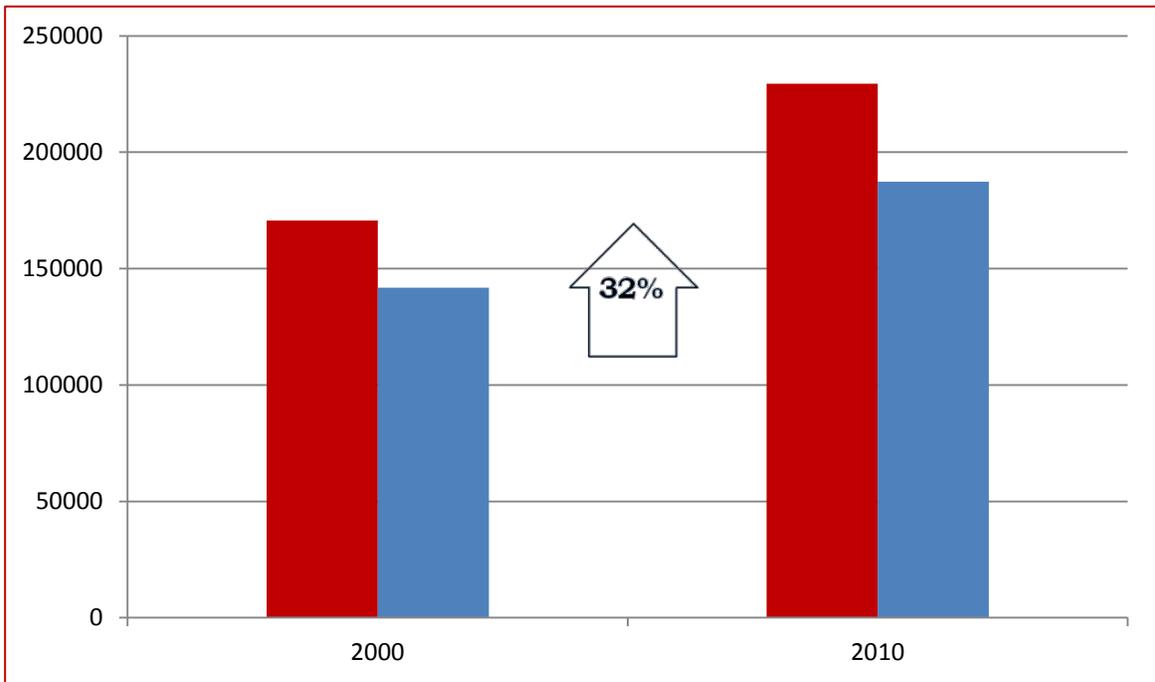
	2000	2010
Matthews	\$27,471	\$32,924
Mecklenburg County	\$27,352	\$29,693



*Per capita income in Matthews, however, has outpaced Mecklenburg County overall since 2000.*

Median Home Value:

	2000	2010
Matthews	\$170,700	\$229,500
Mecklenburg County	\$141,800	\$187,400



*Home values have increased proportionally in Matthews and Mecklenburg County overall.*

**Public Schools in Matthews operated by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools:**

Name	Student enrollment as of 2010-2011 School Year
Butler High School	2,171
Crestdale Middle School	993
Crown Point Elementary School	769
Elizabeth Lane Elementary School	1,022
Matthews Elementary School	993

**Private Schools in Matthews:**

Name	Grades taught	Student enrollment as of 2009
Carmel Christian School	K-12 <sup>th</sup>	365
Covenant Day School	K-12 <sup>th</sup>	819
Grace Academy	K-12 <sup>th</sup>	350
Greyfriars Classical Academy	9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup>	12

**Higher Education Institutions:**

Matthews has two higher education institutions. Central Piedmont Community College Levine (CPCC) is a local community college satellite campus offering an array of educational opportunities. Wingate University in Matthews offers post-graduate programs in business, education and sports administration.

Name	Student enrollment as of 2009
CPCC-Levine	6,593
Wingate University	489



*CPCC Levine Cam Entrance to Wingate University*

## OVERVIEW OF BUSINESS DEMOGRAPHICS

There are approximately 1,300 businesses in Matthews. Retail, consumer and food services, medical offices, small businesses, educational and professional services and manufacturing / industrial centers comprise much of the commercial base in the Town.

Most businesses in Matthews are concentrated along US-74, Matthews Township Parkway and Monroe Road / West John Street / East John Street. About 100 small or medium-sized businesses are located Downtown, most of which are retail or consumer services-focused. There are two publicly owned corporations headquartered in Matthews: a full-service hospital and a retirement home.



*Family Dollar headquarters on Monroe Road*

### Principal Commercial Property Tax Payers:

Organization Name	Type of Organization
SC Windsor Associates, LP	Retail / Shopping Center
Family Dollar, Inc.	Corporate Headquarters
Adult Communities Total Services, Inc.	Retirement Village
IA Sycamore Commons, LLC	Retail / Shopping Center
Windstream	Communications Headquarters
1450 Matthews Township Parkway LP	Medical Office Complex
Matthews Center Associates	Commercial Land Developers
Verizon Wireless	Telecommunications
Lowe's Home Centers	Retail / Home Improvement
Novant Health, Inc.	Health Care

### Largest Principal Employers:

Organization Name	Number of Employees
Family Dollar	1,700
Presbyterian Hospital	950
Harris Teeter	667
Town of Matthews	133
Plantation Estates	119
Sam's Club	115
Stronghaven Container, Inc	89
Costco Wholesale Inc.	75
Home Depot	70
Lowe's	60



*Harris Teeter celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010*

Matthews transitioned from a small rural town of its own entity to a thriving suburb of Charlotte. Decades ago, the Town's economic base was composed of small retail shops, light industries and privately-owned farms. As the Town grew, much of the land developed as residential use.

Residential neighborhoods attracted strip developments and big box retail centers along the Town's major roadways such as Matthews Township Parkway and Independence Boulevard. Presbyterian Hospital opened a medical center and emergency facility on Matthews Township Parkway; this attracted medical office use, thus expanding this sector in Matthews.

Based on the steady decline of retail establishments on the east side of Mecklenburg County, Matthews is concerned about long-term viability of a large retail tax base. Though retail uses contribute a large portion of the Town's commercial tax base, the Town must strive to keep a balanced tax base with a variety of business sectors.

The *Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan* identified five target business sectors for Matthews:

- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- Professional, Scientific and Technological Services
- Finance and Insurance
- Information Technology
- Educational Services

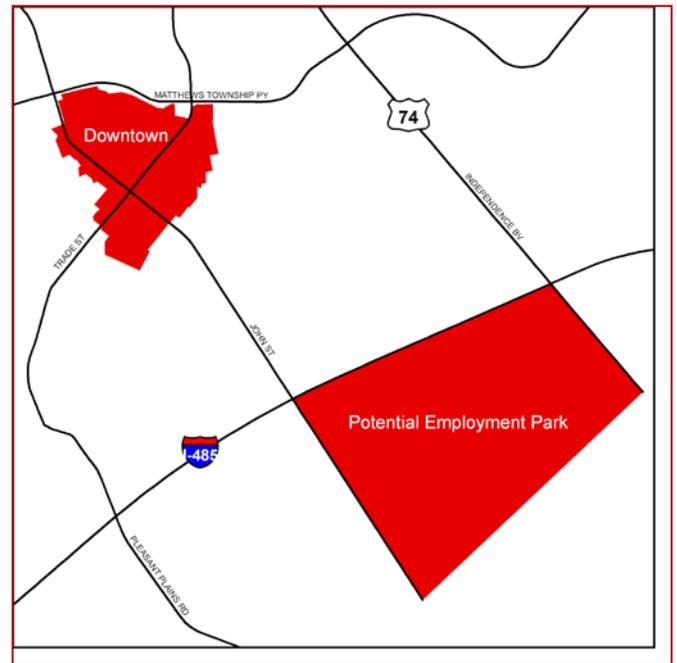
The concentration of higher-income professionals in Matthews is conducive for marketing to these sectors. The *Plan* recommended targeting small and medium-sized businesses over larger firms. Small businesses are ideal because they complement the small-town character of Matthews. The Town's relative distance from the Charlotte-Douglas International airport makes closer locations more attractive to large corporations, so Matthews remains a prime location for smaller firms.

The *Plan* suggested developing office parks in strategic locations for target sectors. Small businesses typically occupy multi-tenant business parks. This tendency makes this type of investment less risky than single-use buildings.

The land area southeast of I-485, between East John Street and US-74, was identified as a prime location for the development of an employment park. This area has direct access to I-485 and major thoroughfares, making it both visible and easy to access. The proximity to CPCC, the future Sportsplex and future Southeast Transit Corridor makes this area valuable for commercial development.

An Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) composed of business and civic leaders, citizens and Town staff was formed in 2009 to advance economic development in Matthews. One aspect of this initiative is branding, including a logo, slogan and new website design. This brand will define the Town's image in the marketplace.

The Town will work with property owners, developers, Matthews and Charlotte Chambers of Commerce, Charlotte Regional Partnership and the NC Department of Commerce to strategically market the Town of Matthews as an ideal location for business opportunities.



*Strategic Commercial Locations*

Economic Development goals:

1. Maintain a balanced tax base by retaining a variety of industries.
2. Abide by the recommendations set forth in the Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan.
3. Target small to medium-sized businesses for commercial growth in Matthews.
4. Develop office clusters in strategic locations as specified in the Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan.
5. Promote the development of an employment park at East John Street and I-485 as specified in the Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan.
6. Create a Town department that will become an economic development resource to provide marketing support to Downtown property owners and developers.
7. Identify a business niche for Downtown and recruit those prospective businesses.
8. Coordinate economic development with applicable entities to strategically market the Town of Matthews as an ideal location for business opportunities.

Charlotte Mecklenburg Utilities (CMU) provides water and wastewater services for the Town. Prior to the establishment of CMU in 1972, the Town owned and operated its wastewater facilities. Water was purchased from Charlotte and supplied by the Town; most developments were served by wells located on private well lots or community well systems operated by private utility companies. CMU has bought out many of these privately run community systems.

Per CMU policy, water mains may only be located along public rights of way; this excludes property owners on privately owned streets from obtaining public water utilities. Wastewater facilities can be located on private rights of way.

For existing residential properties not adjacent to water and wastewater mains, CMU created the countywide 1000 Feet Free Extension Program to serve property owners at their request. This program converts certain well water and septic users to public utilities. This program applies to individual residential property owners and excludes developers. Lots that were used solely for wells can be used for other purposes such as park land or parcel assemblage.

Matthews owns its storm water system and began enforcing the County's storm water program in the early 1990s. The Town partners with Mecklenburg County's Land Use and Environmental Services Agency (LUESA) on regional-scale storm water matters. Small-scale storm water matters (less than one square mile of total discharge) are handled by the Town.

The Town's Storm Water Division can obtain rights of entry for maintenance issues. Since maintenance on private properties requires written permission, the Town's Storm Water Division is intrinsically reactive.

The Town's Storm Water Division installs pipes and maintains storm drains. Efforts to collect an inventory of storm water facilities are ongoing; the Town has collected approximately half of this data using GPS units. County-wide, accurate GIS utilities data is lacking. The Town should continue efforts to complete data collection.

The Town adopted a Post-Construction Storm Water Ordinance in Spring 2007. This code seeks to improve the quality of storm water leaving newly developed sites prior to it reaching creeks.

Public Utility goals:

1. Continue to enforce the County Storm Water Program.
2. Continue to pursue the completion of the Town's GIS storm water inventory.
3. Continue to abide by regulations set forth in the Post-Construction Storm Water Ordinance.

In 1972, Matthews adopted a contemporary zoning ordinance to address changing land uses due to accelerated growth. In 1988, this ordinance was revamped using Mecklenburg County's ordinance as a base. Since this time, language in the ordinance was amended and new district regulations were added. The current zoning ordinance is becoming dated and inadequate as trends in land development evolve.

The Town of Matthews Land Development Ordinances:

- Housing Code
- Building Regulations
- Flood Damage Prevention
- Subdivision Regulations
- Zoning Code
- Tree Ordinance
- Post-Construction Storm Water Ordinance

In 2009, the Town Board of Commissioners authorized Staff to create a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and modernize the Town's land development regulations. When completed, the UDO will include new review and approval procedures to make land development regulations more proactive. The UDO will eliminate outdated portions such as the *Rural* zoning designation.

The Town Board of Commissioners appointed a stakeholder committee, which is actively involved in the UDO process. The UDO consultant held meetings with staff and moderated public workshops to understand community needs and Town visions. Through this process, the consultant gained insight to the limitations of the existing ordinance.

The UDO will update the Zoning Code and Subdivisions Regulations to be more current with national trends and local needs and desires. Though most zoning designations will remain without change, the *Conditional* and *Rural* classifications are no longer applicable and will likely have zoning actions taken. New zoning designations will be created as need arises.

The process of conditional zoning was established in the mid-1980s when the NC General Assembly gave Matthews the authority to approve a rezoning and establish zoning conditions in a single process. This differs from the typical two-step process used by other North Carolina communities, which must meet quasi-judicial standards. The state authorized the conditional zoning process to give elected officials the authority to impose distinctive conditions on individual sites. The conditional zoning process provides flexibility for zoning in instances where other classifications are too broad for development opportunities.

The UDO will better coordinate the separate land development regulations currently in the Town's Code of Ordinances. The document will have five attributes:

- Certainty - the outcome of the application process will be predictable.
- Clarity - regulations will not require excessive staff time explaining the requirements or the process for the ordinary land use or improvement questions. Cross references and extensive use of illustrations and tables will be used throughout the document.
- Comprehensiveness - the code will be comprehensive in scope and breadth.
- Consistency - the UDO will be aligned with the Town Land Use Plan.
- Flexibility - the UDO will be reasonably flexible to provide property owners fair latitude regarding property development and improvement.

Additionally, goals related to Land Development Codes are as follows:

1. Ensure zoning ordinance is consistent with Town Land Use Plan.
2. Amend zoning ordinance as needed or as benefit is demonstrated.
3. Provide a clear and predictable review processes.
4. Eliminate the outdated Conditional and Rural zoning designations.

# SECTION 2: LAND USES

PARK CENTER DR  
700

NORTH AMES ST  
300

The Town’s commercial composition consists of large planned commercial centers, small independent outfits and several large corporate offices. The Presbyterian Hospital campus brought numerous growth opportunities to Matthews, including medical office use. CPCC Levine continues to grow its student enrollment; Wingate University will construct a satellite campus in Matthews. The Town acknowledges a desire for senior-oriented activity centers and will pursue development of facilities that will complement the Levine Senior Center.

In 2007, the *Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan* was prepared to outline the maintenance of a long-term tax base by identifying key industries and locations. The Town seeks to attract a variety of employment and business opportunities by focusing on the *Plan*’s identified top five growth sectors:

- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
- Finance and Insurance
- Information Technology
- Educational Services

The *Plan* identified the I-485 interchange land areas and Downtown as key focal points for economic development. Land adjacent to I-485 is largely undeveloped, though highly visible. Downtown is the vibrant community core with many infill development opportunities for a variety of land uses. Such uses are detailed in the *Downtown Master Plan*.

The southeast side of I-485 between East John Street and US-74 was identified as an ideal location for a planned employment center in a mixed use setting. This employment center would be appropriate for office and supportive uses. Small businesses are ideal, sustainable occupants for such parks because they are less economically risky than single use centers.

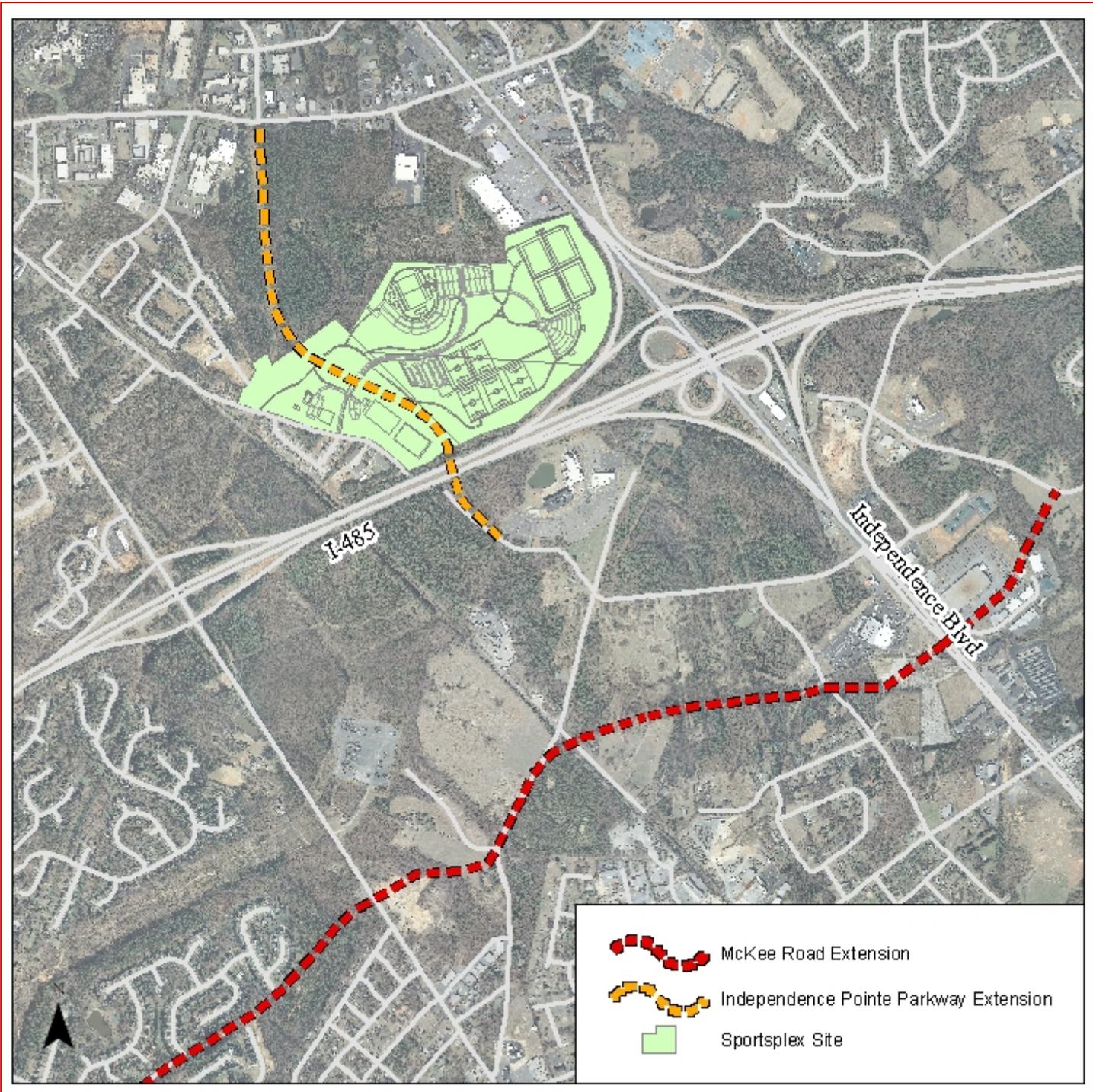
The Downtown district is the village center of Matthews. Comprised mostly of small businesses, Downtown is an ideal location for small-scale infill development. Small businesses define the “small town” character of Matthews.

The I-485 interchanges will experience increased development pressure and greater visibility with upcoming road projects such as the McKee Road extension and the Southeast Transit Corridor. Future development projects including a potential auto mall and a mixed-use project make these interchanges competitive locations for



*Commercial infill development on N Trade Street*

business. A family entertainment area is planned for the I-485/US-74 interchange north of the future Sportsplex site. This mixed-use district will be transit-oriented and will include office, commercial, and retail uses in addition to medium and high-density housing and recreational facilities.



*Sportsplex and new road construction will cause development pressures on undeveloped land near I-485 and Independence Blvd*

## Big Box Reuse

The Economic Development department will maintain an inventory of vacant commercial big box locations. The Town encourages the reuse of these sites. New construction of big boxes should be prohibited unless significant benefits to public welfare can be demonstrated and/or the developer can guarantee successful reuse of the building.



*Vacant big boxes along Independence Blvd*

## Transit Supportive Development

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) will construct four Rapid Transit stations in Matthews. The Town will work with CATS to design transit station small area plans according to the *Town of Matthews Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles and Policy Guidelines* document.



*Example of quality transit-oriented development in Charlotte's Midtown neighborhood*

The Town should provide transit oriented development (TOD) standards for these stations to include a variety of commercial land uses which fully encompass the basic daily commercial needs of the average citizen. Commercial needs, thus development, will be proportionate to the projected demand for each station.

Transit areas will be highly visible and densely populated. Commercial transit oriented development plans must demonstrate high-quality design, landscaping and aesthetic appeal to be considered for development.

## Mixed-Use Concepts

The Town promotes coordinated planned parks and mixed use concepts in favor of single-use lots and linear strip center proposals. Multi-use projects complement the growing trend for pedestrian-friendly communities and reduced auto dependence.

Planned parks are encouraged business uses in Matthews because they are more sustainable to the Town's tax base than independent, single use sites. Planned park development proposals must demonstrate how the developer will incorporate a variety of business and/or land uses at a site.

Non-residential mixed use concepts are appropriate along major and minor thoroughfares except where listed in this Plan.



*A mixed-use office building on North Ames Street*

### COMMERCIAL LAND USE ACTION ITEMS:

1. *Support growth of medical office uses near such existing uses along NC-51.*
2. *Support growth of senior-related facilities near senior-focused residential areas.*
3. *Pursue a variety of employment and business opportunities by focusing on the following growth sectors as identified in the Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan :Arts, Entertainment and Recreation, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Finance and Insurance, Information Technology, Educational Services.*
4. *Continue to build a healthy commercial base in Matthews by abiding by recommendations set forth in the-Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan: Target key growth sectors, Encourage commercial development in target areas, Encourage planned business parks over new, single-use developments.*
5. *Prohibit development or expansion of linear strip centers and promote mixed uses, flex offices and planned business parks.*
6. *Encourage infill development of small businesses in Downtown.*
7. *Pursue creative reuse and interior subdivision of big box buildings.*
8. *Prohibit construction of new big boxes unless beneficial public welfare of such developments and successful reuse of the building can be proven.*
9. *Incorporate a variety of common commercial uses in Transit Oriented Developments as stated in the Town of Matthews Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles and Policy Guidelines document.*
10. *Require commercial TODs to have high-quality design and aesthetic appeal.*
11. *Specify commercial need for each transit station based on expected through-traffic and existing or planned use in close proximity to the station.*
12. *Locate non-residential mixed uses along major and minor thoroughfares .*

A mix of regional and local industrial centers contributes a significant portion to the Town's strong tax base. The majority of these facilities are light industrial land uses congregated along the CSX railroad line, the Monroe Road corridor and Matthews-Mint Hill Road, between Downtown and US-74. A few heavy industrial facilities are located in Matthews.

When the Town claimed its ETJ areas in 1991, two heavy industrial facilities were brought into the Town's zoning jurisdiction as nonconforming uses. A steel drum recycling facility and a medical waste treatment/incinerator facility are located along the CSX railroad line. As nonconforming uses, any future land use occurring at these sites must be brought into conformity once current operations cease. Matthews has no provisions which allow incinerators, drum recycling or medical waste handling; the Town will continue to prohibit land uses which are potentially and/or significantly damaging to the environment.

Limited soil contamination resulting from the steel drum recycling facility will impact future land use at this location, as state remediation efforts dictate that no 24-hour residential or child care uses can be located on contaminated soil sites. Such areas must be entirely rid of contaminated soil or covered with a permanent, impervious surface. When operations at these facilities cease, the Town should evaluate and encourage viable land uses.

The Town has one active quarry with no near-term closure anticipated. Prior to termination of this operation, the Town should work with the property owner to develop a mutually acceptable master reuse plan.

Light industry is considered less intensive and more environmentally friendly than heavy industry. Products produced from light industrial uses are usually delivered directly to the consumer or retailer, whereas products produced from heavy industrial uses are generally sold to an intermediate. Historically, heavy industrial uses have been considered to adversely impact neighboring land uses and the environment.

The Town acknowledges and supports a shift toward growth of light industrial uses in its jurisdiction. Light industrial uses tend to be less employee intensive, commonly using automated packaging, warehousing and distribution facilities. Benefits of light industrial land uses include employment opportunities and expansion of new technologies. Such uses are appropriate along the CSX railroad line and on land between Monroe Road, Sam Newell Road and NC-51.

As the transit corridor develops, vacant properties along the railroad line should be evaluated for viable development opportunities. Distribution uses could be appropriate due to close proximity of the railroad line. Any development along the CSX line is contingent on the ability of adjacent roads to accommodate truck traffic increases.

The Town supports the reuse of industrial facilities as flex office spaces. Such use provides the occupant with the flexibility to perform a variety of uses within a single building. Some flex offices are used to manufacture, assemble, ship and sell products. The growth of light industry flex offices is a viable land use and redevelopment opportunity for Matthews.

Industrial land uses are more intensive than other land uses. Additional buffering is encouraged on industrial land use properties that border other land uses.



*Located in an industrially zoned section of Crews Road, this building is ideal for flex office space.*

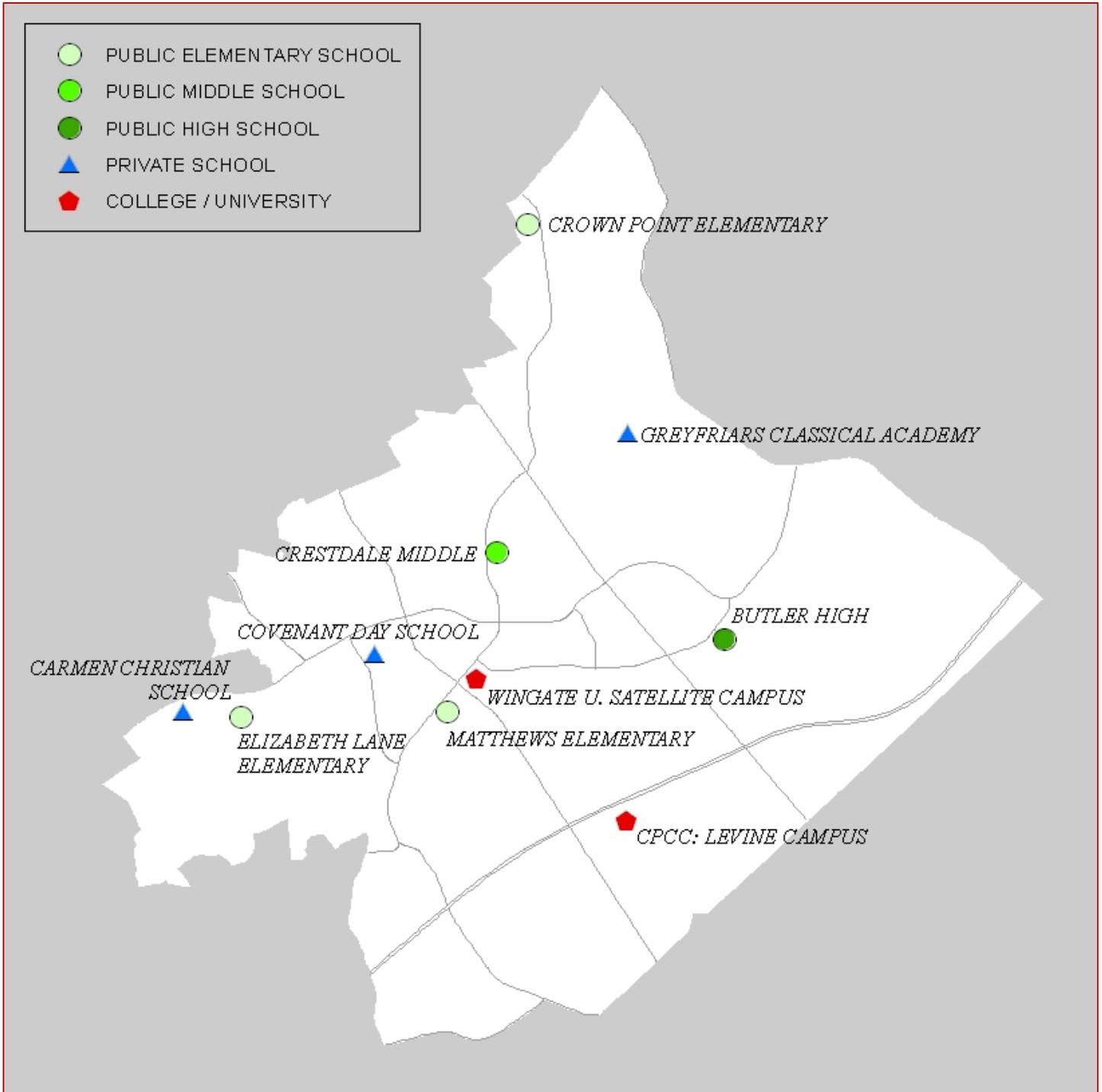


*Generous landscape buffers separate this industrial use from adjacent residential uses.*

#### **INDUSTRIAL LAND USE ACTION ITEMS:**

- 1. Continue to prohibit introduction and/or expansion of land uses which are potentially and/or significantly damaging to the environment.*
- 2. Encourage the elimination of industrial land use processes which produce excessive pollution and/or harmful environmental impacts.*
- 3. Work with heavy industrial facilities property owners to discuss alternate future land use options.*
- 4. Evaluate vacant properties along the railroad line for best development opportunities.*
- 5. Guide development that would compound traffic flows away from the CSX railroad line.*
- 6. Encourage the growth of light industrial land uses and flex office spaces.*
- 7. Encourage additional buffering measures at industrial sites that border other land uses.*

The Town has a variety of institutional uses including government offices, civic facilities, places of worship, and care centers. The largest institutional category, however, is schools. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools operates three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school in Matthews. Four private schools are located in Matthews.



*A variety of educational opportunities are available in the Town of Matthews.*

CPCC Levine and Wingate University are the two higher education institutions within Town limits. The CPCC campus will likely expand to land areas behind its existing campus, and Wingate University is constructing a new facility that will be the primary use of a mixed use development.



The Town recognizes a demand for the development of more senior care and activities centers. A rezoning petition was recently approved to allow for construction of an additional senior care facility, and zoning text was amended to permit Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRCs), communities that house independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing homes in institutionally-zoned areas. The Town encourages an appropriate amount of this type of development.



*The Levine Center is a popular activity destination for seniors.*

Quality, institutional developments are encouraged within appropriate mixed use projects and areas south of I-485, between East John Street and US-74. Generous buffering must be provided with institutional uses abutting planned and existing residential areas.

The Town will continue to provide quality institutional services and facilities as indicated by monitoring Town demographics and social needs.

**INSTITUTIONAL LAND USE ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Continue to provide quality institutional facilities for all citizens and all needs.*
2. *Encourage the growth of quality institutional uses.*
3. *Promote development projects that provide services, housing and recreation for seniors.*
4. *Locate institutional facilities within mixed use projects when appropriate.*
5. *Buffer institutional uses from neighboring land uses.*
6. *Assess institutional needs of the community by evaluating demographic and social data.*
7. *Proactively explore opportunities and land use issues associated with “special needs” facilities.*

The Town adopted the *Recreation Master Plan* in 2006. The purpose of this *Plan* is to provide a framework for identifying park, recreational and cultural facilities needs. The *Plan* details park land needs by 2015 and discusses the preservation of open space.

In 2008, the Town recognized the *Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation 10 Year Master Plan*. Adherence to the policies and guidelines set forth in these *Plans* ensures successful recreational land use partnership between the Town and County. These *Plans* promote joint use opportunities as well as collaboration with the private sector. The Town will continue to pursue such joint opportunities.

The Town Board adopted revised subdivision amendments in 1998 that require developers of single-family communities to dedicate a percentage of land for open space within developments. This action guarantees the growth of the Town's open space and undisturbed natural areas. The Town should revise the subdivision ordinance to extend open space land dedication from single-family residential developments to all residential developments.

Town recreation facilities:

- Matthews Community Center: this center is geared toward cultural resources
- Crews Center: this center is geared toward active recreational resources
- Town Green at Town Hall: this area is used for events and concerts

Town-owned parks:

- Baucom Park
- KP Park
- Matthews/Sardis Park
- Squirrel Lake Park
- Stumptown Park
- Windsor Park

County park facilities in Matthews:

- Idlewild Road Park
- Four Mile Creek Greenway

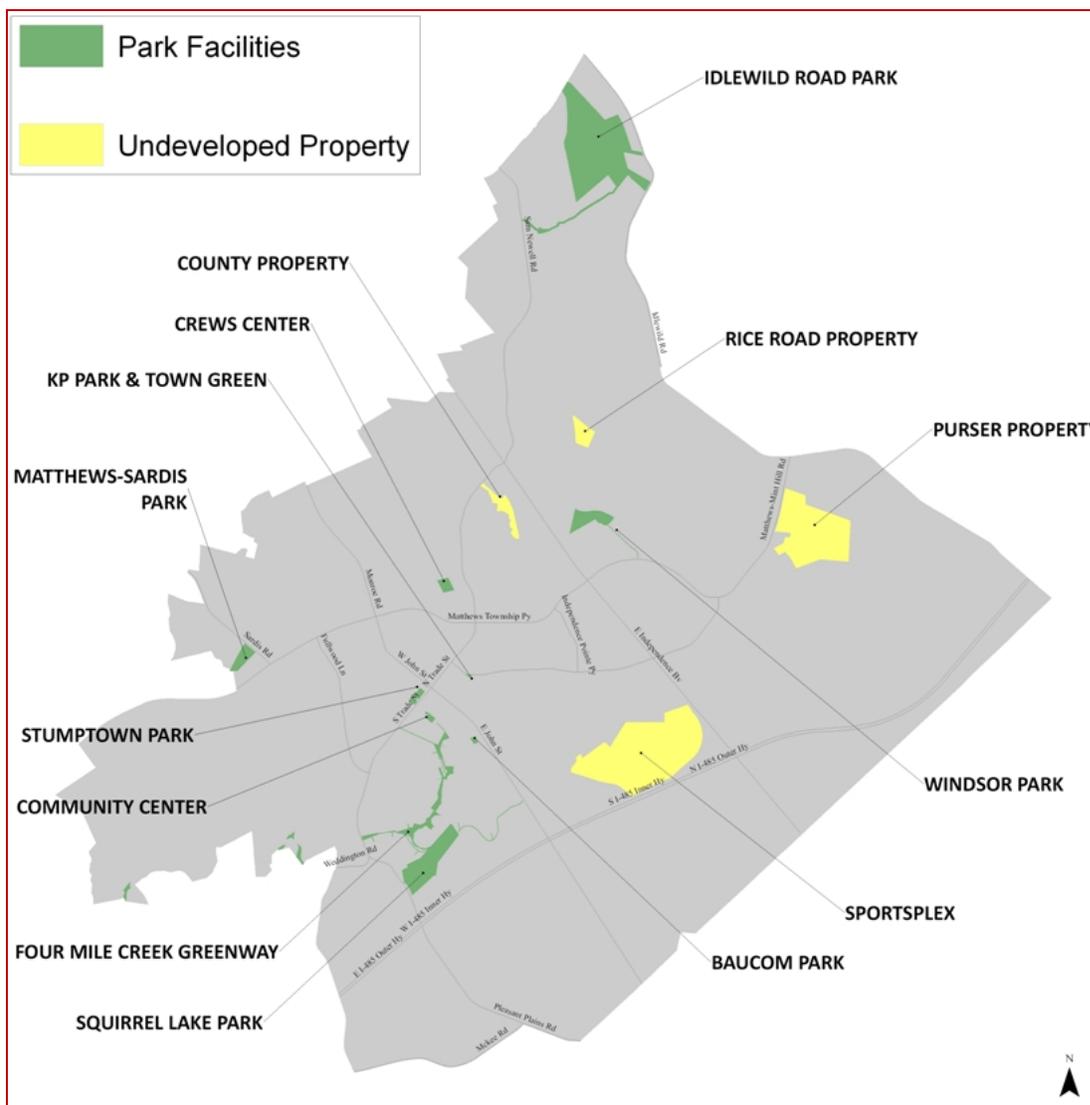


*Town Green during Independence Day celebration*

The Town's Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Department works to expand the Town's active and passive recreation facilities. Numerous current examples highlight this endeavor:

Through a joint effort, the Town and County have recently completed the initial, 2-mile segment of Four Mile Creek Greenway. In addition to the Four Mile Creek Greenway, the County will construct Irvins Creek Greenway, which will extend west from Idlewild Park past US-74.

Construction for the first phase of a regional sports complex in Matthews will soon commence. This facility will feature 12 soccer fields, miles of hiking trails, and will connect with Four Mile Creek Greenway. The Town has also acquired land for additional park facilities. Properties adjacent to Stumptown Park provide an expansion area for park events. A 100-acre tract of land on Matthews-Mint Hill Road has been land-banked and identified as a future park facility. The Town has also agreed to purchase ten acres of wooded land off of Rice Road to be developed into a neighborhood park in the future.



All park and recreation designated land in the Town of Matthews. Yellow depicts undeveloped facilities.

In addition to publicly-owned facilities, the Town has several private recreation facilities:

- Arthur Goodman Memorial Park, operated by Matthews Athletic and Recreation Association (MARA)
- Siskey YMCA
- Anne Warner Park, operated by Christ Covenant Church
- Matthews Tennis, Swim and Golf Club
- Levine Senior Center



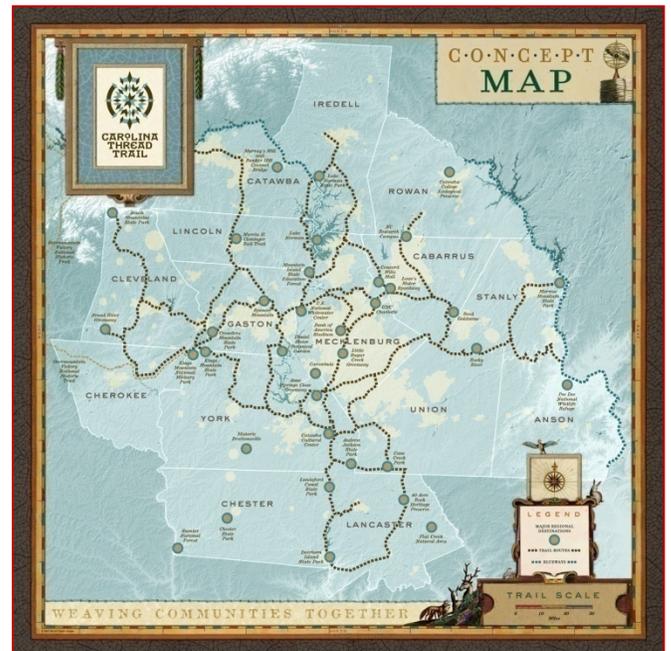
*KP Park at Town Hall*



*Recreation facilities at Siskey YMCA*

The Carolina Thread Trail is a campaign led by two land conservation groups to construct a regional trail network ultimately spanning 15 counties in two states, linking over two million people to over 40 destination points. Mecklenburg County adopted the *Carolina Thread Trail Master Plan* in the spring of 2010. The proposed routes for the Town's portion are currently under review.

Once Four Mile Creek Greenway is completed, the Town and County must focus on connectivity and extensions. Where possible, the greenway should connect to bike and pedestrian paths.



*Carolina Thread Trail Concept Map in its entirety.*

**RECREATIONAL LAND USE ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Continue to abide by guidelines and policies set forth in the Town's Recreation Master Plan and the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation 10 Year Master Plan.*
2. *Pursue joint use development opportunities for recreational land uses.*
3. *Revise subdivision ordinance for open space dedication to be extended from single-family residential to all new residential.*
4. *Continue to support the Carolina Thread Trails' construction efforts inside Town limits.*
5. *Support the development of surplus acreage at Idlewild Road Park into recreational land uses.*
6. *Pursue the development of bike and pedestrian connectivity to Four Mile Creek greenway and all future greenways.*
7. *Pursue park development funding sources that allow fund leveraging, such as the state matching grant program.*
8. *Identify and preserve land which could be developed as public recreational land uses.*
9. *Identify and pursue funding sources for land acquisition.*
10. *Explore opportunities to provide density bonuses when development includes common recreational and/or open space.*

Nationwide trends indicate that the typical household is no longer a traditional nuclear family. An increasing amount of singles, young adults and empty-nesters are purchasing homes. People are opting for more urban areas with low-maintenance, smaller housing options in lieu of traditional, single-family detached houses. Higher-density communities located in quality, urban neighborhoods are appealing because they provide walkable access to a variety of other land uses.

Developed residential land use comprises approximately 60% of the total lot acreage in Matthews. Most of the town's residential land is zoned for traditional, single family housing. The Town acknowledges the need for more diverse housing options.

The Town should provide an array of housing types, densities and locations. The Town will continue to protect and maintain existing single-family neighborhoods, yet also consider residential redevelopment options when they are demonstrated as viable options.

Higher-density and transit-supportive housing are two residential concepts the Town will aggressively promote. Land fronting thoroughfares and land adjacent to transit stations are prime sites for such housing options. The Town will consider such development proposals in conjunction with guidelines set forth in the *Transitional and Sensitive Areas* section and the *Town of Matthews Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles and Policy Guidelines* document.

### **Single Family**

The predominant housing type in Matthews is the single-family detached house. Single-family housing characteristics vary among typical detached houses, townhomes, condos and scattered, rural sites.

While most established single-family neighborhoods will remain, some may redevelop with added subdivisions and lots. Other areas may assemble multiple properties to redevelop to alternative style residential developments or complete changes in use.

The new cottage neighborhood infill option allows for a slightly higher-density among detached, single-family homes with the provision that ten percent of gross area will be designated as open space. Such provisions are intended to give flexibility on land which is difficult to develop while also preserving an undeveloped portion for open space. The Town should closely monitor such proposals to maximize the practical uses of open space. Proposals that delegate mostly unusable land for open space use should not be considered. The Town is in the process of revising the cluster provision to form this new cottage neighborhood infill option. This will allow for greater design flexibility in exchange for a higher required minimum of protected open space. This would alter the cluster options to better address environmentally sensitive areas.

### **R-VS**

Matthews created the Residential Varied Style district (R-VS) to accommodate demand for higher-density, single-family housing options. The R-VS district is an ideal development opportunity for land that presents environmental challenges for development, such

as difficult terrain, unusual parcel shape and close proximity to heavily used roadways.

Matthews allows a variety of alternative style housing options: zero-lot line houses, single-family attached houses including townhomes, patio homes, duplexes and pinwheel developments. The Town encourages R-VS development as an alternative to traditional single-family residential housing.

R-VS infill and redevelopment opportunities are encouraged on established, residentially zoned land, so long as the development complements the existing character of its surroundings. Such areas include, but are not limited to, parts of existing and future Northeast Parkway, Sam Newell Road, Weddington Road, East John Street, NC-51, Downtown and Idlewild Road (see the *Transitional and Sensitive Areas* section for details). Other possible locations should be carefully evaluated by the Town.



*Single family attached homes at Bellhaven*



*Townhomes at Avington*



*Townhomes at Matthews Township Gateway*

Zoning text changes allow accessory apartments on single-family lots. This change is beneficial to provide a variety of housing options. Such accessory apartments may be used by extended family members, older children and care givers. Some homeowners rent accessory apartments as a means of paying a mortgage.

### **Multi Family**

Much of the multi-family housing in Matthews consists of low-density, “suburban” developments which use large expanses of land. The Town should shift toward higher-density, urban multi-family developments as they are more environmentally sensitive because they maximize space. Smaller buildings with higher densities are ideal; single structures per development are encouraged.

Land near Downtown, transit stations and higher-educational institutions is appropriate for higher-density, multi-family residential uses. Such uses will be constructed at the Wingate Commons site, future CPCC expansion site and near all future transit station sites.

The Town promotes design flexibility regarding multi-family housing. Stacked duplexes, pinwheels, and infill uses are examples of alternative multi-family housing options.

### **Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC) & Senior Housing**

Continuing Care Retirement Communities provide independent living, assisted living and skilled nursing housing options for seniors. The Town has one such community as well as a nursing home (which is not age-restricted). An additional CCRC is in the development process in Matthews. Potential locations for other CRCCs have been discussed. CCRCs were approved as a housing option in the residential/institutional zoning designation.

The Town acknowledges a trend toward communal housing and/or neighborhoods oriented toward seniors. Matthews has several housing developments that are not age-restricted but marketed toward seniors.

The Town encourages a variety of senior living communities: senior-marketed independent living communities, assisted living communities and skilled-care nursing homes. Senior housing options should be practically located. Neighborhoods which incorporate varieties of residential, commercial, institutional and service uses geared toward seniors are ideal for such senior-oriented housing.

### **Residential Mixed Use**

There is a rise in the demand for more urban housing options which are within walking distance to a variety of other land uses. One such development option which embraces this concept is the mixed use residential housing development. Typically these developments have



*Residential uses are located above commercial uses at this mixed use building on East John Street*

commercial uses on the first story and residential uses on the second story. Matthews has one such development in Downtown. The Town encourages this type of residential development proposal for the Downtown location, as well as in selected new mixed use developments.

The Wingate Commons site, CPCC expansion site, McKee Road Segment B site fronting East John Street and various locations within Downtown are all appropriate areas for higher-density residential uses within mixed use concepts. Further location options are discussed in the *Transitional and Sensitive Areas* section.

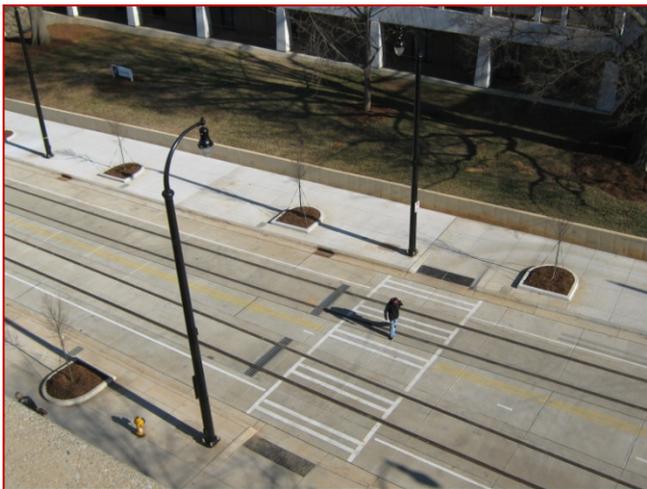
**RESIDENTIAL LAND USE ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Provide a variety of housing styles, densities and locations.*
2. *Encourage the protection and rehabilitation of viable neighborhoods to ensure their continued existence as a major housing resource.*
3. *Promote higher-density, multi-family and transit-supportive housing developments along thoroughfares and within ¼ mile of transit stations.*
4. *Require cluster developments to delegate substantial usable land for green space.*
5. *Revise cluster provisions to require a set amount of protected open space.*
6. *Encourage design and construction of alternative style housing and infill development.*
7. *Promote cottage neighborhood infill development or R-VS development in areas where substantial protection to the environment can be achieved.*
8. *Encourage a variety of senior housing options, from senior-oriented neighborhoods to nursing homes.*
9. *Promote mixed use residential housing, particularly in Downtown; but also in other appropriate mixed use environments.*

The CATS Southeast Corridor Rapid Transit and Highway Project provides growth opportunities by incorporating plans for four transit stations in Matthews. The Town will partner with CATS to design and implement each transit station according to policies set forth in the *Town of Matthews Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles and Policy Guidelines* document. Four stations will be located inside Town limits; a fifth will be constructed near Town limits on US-74 at Sardis Road North. Discussion is ongoing regarding the modes of transit in the Southeast Corridor. Also, additional alignments such as Monroe Road may be considered for additional, local-destination transit.

The need for rapid transit along Independence Pointe Parkway will be justified and sustained by appropriate levels of density. The Town will incorporate Transit Oriented Developments (TODs) to provide livable, walkable and sustainable communities centered at each transit station. Each TOD will extend one quarter-mile ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ) to one half-mile ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) radius from its respective transit station. TODs should include high-density and high quality developments within a ten minute walk of the station. TODs will maximize and encourage public transit by incorporating key design elements:

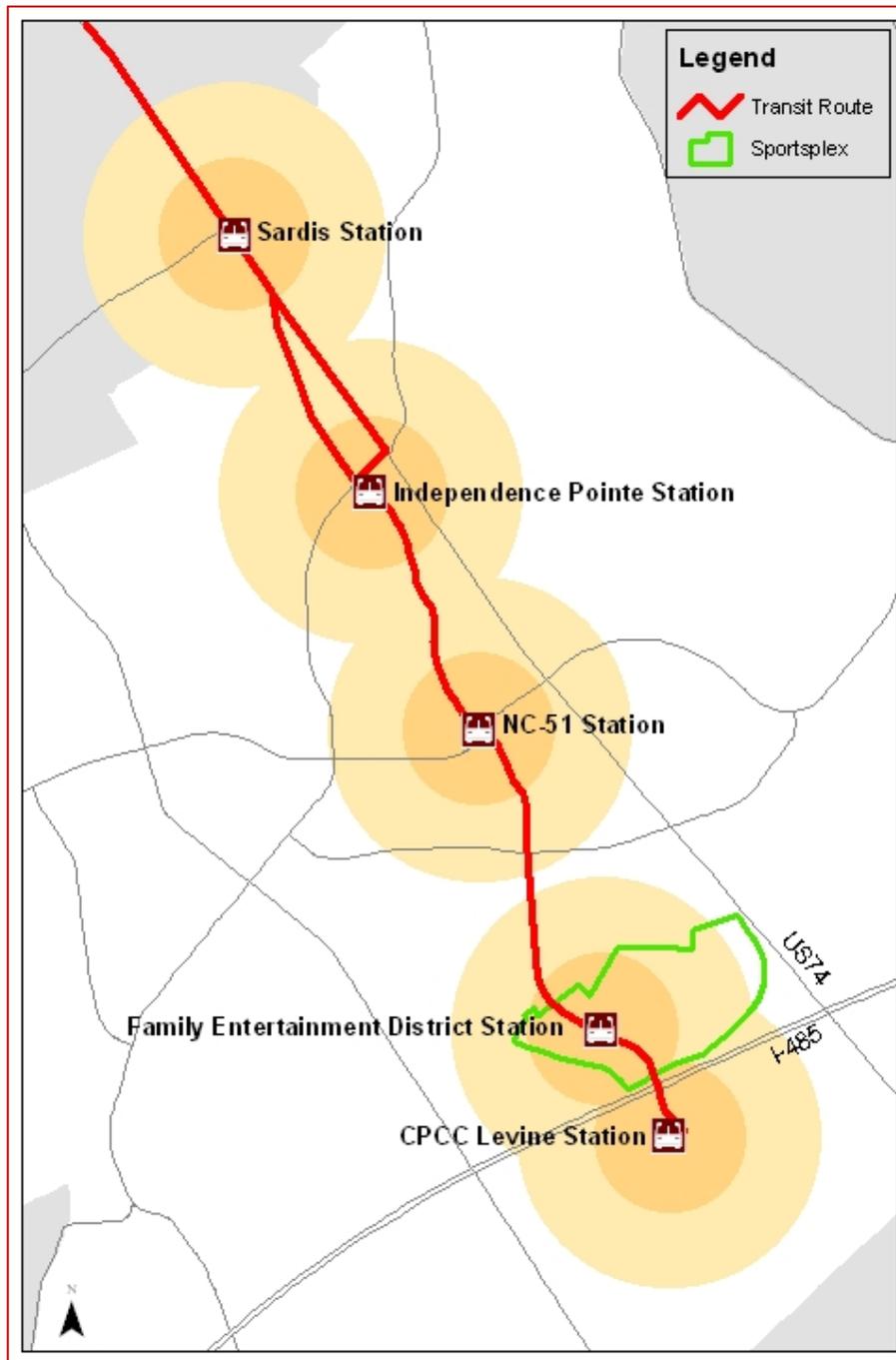
- Mixed uses: commercial, retail, civic, recreation, service
- High densities: highest densities located at core, transitioning to lower densities beyond
- Fully connected streets: connectivity promotes multi-modal transit including automobiles, public transit, bikes and walking
- Affordable housing: housing options attract residential and economic diversity



*Examples of multi-modal street elements in Charlotte's Midtown neighborhood*

The Town will work with CATS to identify transit station locations to determine transit station neighborhood boundaries. Each TOD will be unique in character due to varying needs at each station. The Town should promote green development at each TOD location. Limitations on parking lots, parking spaces, and single-use buildings should be imposed to encourage the growth and sustainability of each development.

Build out and increased density may be phased due to construction schedule. Any development or redevelopment in these transit areas should not negatively affect existing developments.

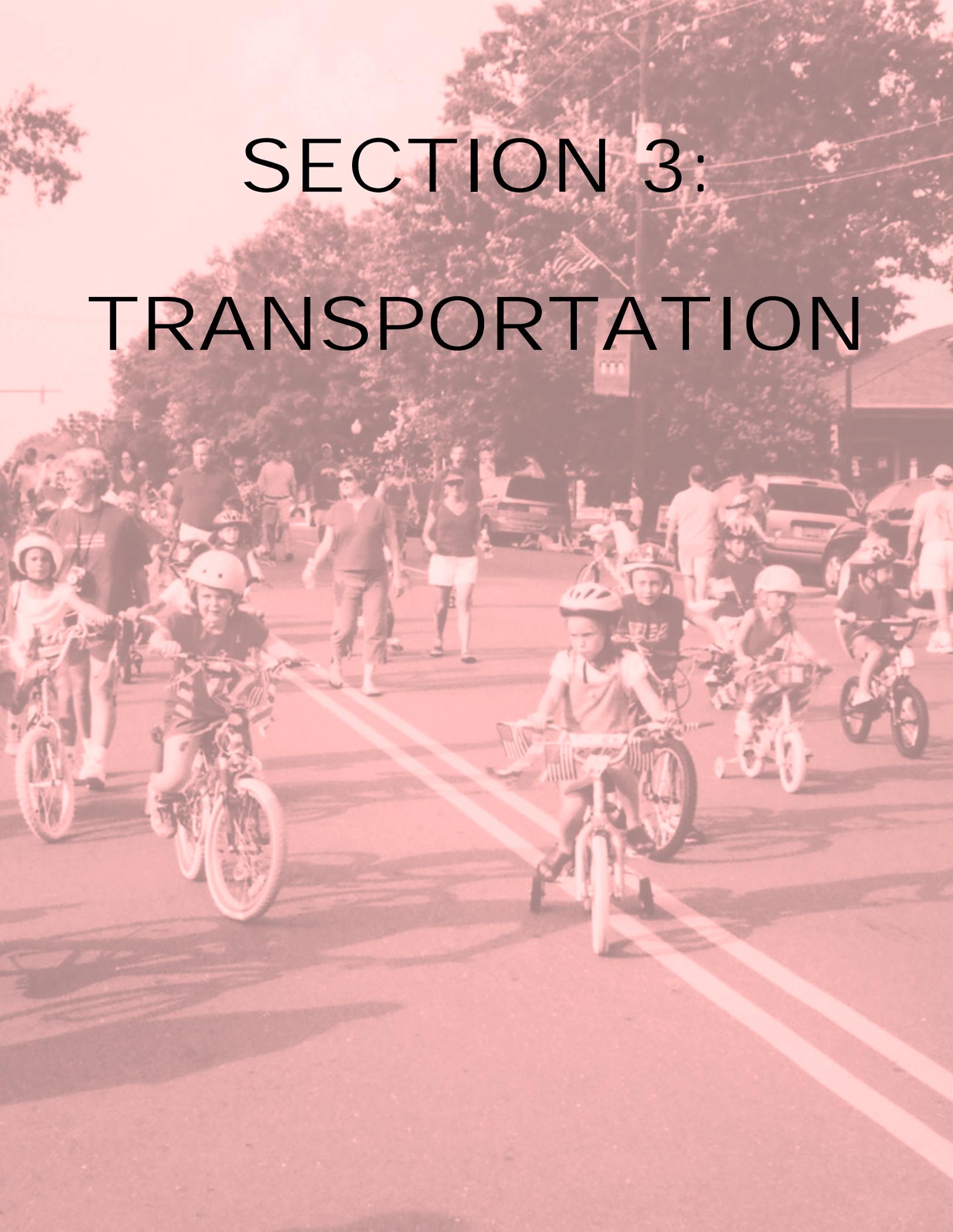


*Approximate locations of planned transit corridor and stations*

**TRANSIT STATION NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Partner with CATS to identify and design transit stations according to the policies set forth in the Town of Matthews Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles and Policy Guidelines document.*
2. *Incorporate TODs extending ¼ to ½ mile from each rapid transit station.*
3. *Ensure mixed uses comprise each TOD.*
4. *Locate highest densities closest to each transit station, including high-density residential uses.*
5. *Require connected networks of roadways that promote multi-modal transit.*
6. *Incorporate affordable housing options.*
7. *Promote green development of each TOD.*
8. *Promote sustainability and encourage alternate transportation by prohibiting single use buildings and limiting parking where appropriate.*
9. *Phase build-out and increased density as needed with regard to transit line construction timeline.*
10. *Ensure all new development and redevelopment will not negatively affect existing developments.*

# SECTION 3: TRANSPORTATION



Transportation options in Matthews include roadways, bikeways, sidewalks and greenways. A railroad cargo line bisects the Town and is used primarily for general freight transport. Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) operates several bus routes within Town limits.

Lack of connectivity is a growing setback. Cul de sac neighborhoods typically have only one entrance/exit point, creating unnecessary demands on roadways as well as increases in response times for emergency service vehicles. Land areas adjacent to the I-485 / East John Street and US-74 interchanges are difficult to access, thus develop. Similar land uses tend to be grouped together and separated from neighboring uses, creating enclaves of isolated land uses which results in increased auto use.

Cross access along I-485 is sparse, creating added demand on high-capacity roadways such as East John Street and US-74. No adequate pedestrian or bike paths cross I-485. Safe cross access points with pedestrian and bike amenities are needed along this interstate.

The initial segment of the Four-Mile Creek Greenway provides recreational modes of travel as well as connectivity among Downtown, Matthews Elementary School and several neighborhoods. The Town should work to provide connectivity for all residential neighborhoods via greenways and pedestrian and bike paths.

While progress has been made, the Town must be more proactive in promoting connectivity and alternate modes of transit. The Town must strive to expedite the extension and completion of McKee Road, Independence Pointe Parkway and Northeast Parkway; these roadways will provide traffic relief along existing thoroughfares and better access to certain land areas. The I-485/Weddington Road interchange will provide relief to the heavily-used East John Street exit, thus reducing dependence on East John Street for access to adjacent land areas.

## ROADWAYS

The Town of Matthews has 165 miles of roadways, including major corridors such as Interstate 485, US-74, NC-51 and Monroe Road / West John Street / East John Street. The Town will continue to support the development and improvement of roadways such as McKee Road extension, Independence Pointe Parkway, Northeast Parkway and US-74.

The majority of local streets in Matthews are public and Town-owned. The Town maintains several state-owned roads. In return, the state pays the Town a portion of maintenance costs based on population. The Town must get authorization from NCDOT to maintain state roads.



*Numerous roadway projects are planned to provide better connectivity across Town and the larger region.*

Traditionally, private streets were mostly located in apartment complexes and business parks. With the addition of R-VS and MUD zoning districts, which permit private streets, the number of private roadways has increased.

The Town has concerns regarding long term maintenance of private streets. Private street owners are responsible for maintenance; if owners are not financially capable of maintaining local roads, they will likely request for streets to become Town-owned. Such roads

may not meet Town standards and could need improvements. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities policy guidelines dictate that public water facilities can only be located on public street rights of way. This requires private street owners to acquire utilities independently of the County, install a master meter at the site frontage along a public right-of-way, or pay for County extensions into the properties.

Certain larger vehicles are likely to be denied access on private streets. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) does not allow their buses to travel on private streets. This creates longer walks to access public bus stops for children living on private streets. Public trash hauling vehicles are not allowed on private streets due to liability issues.

Street classifications standards for new street construction in Matthews:

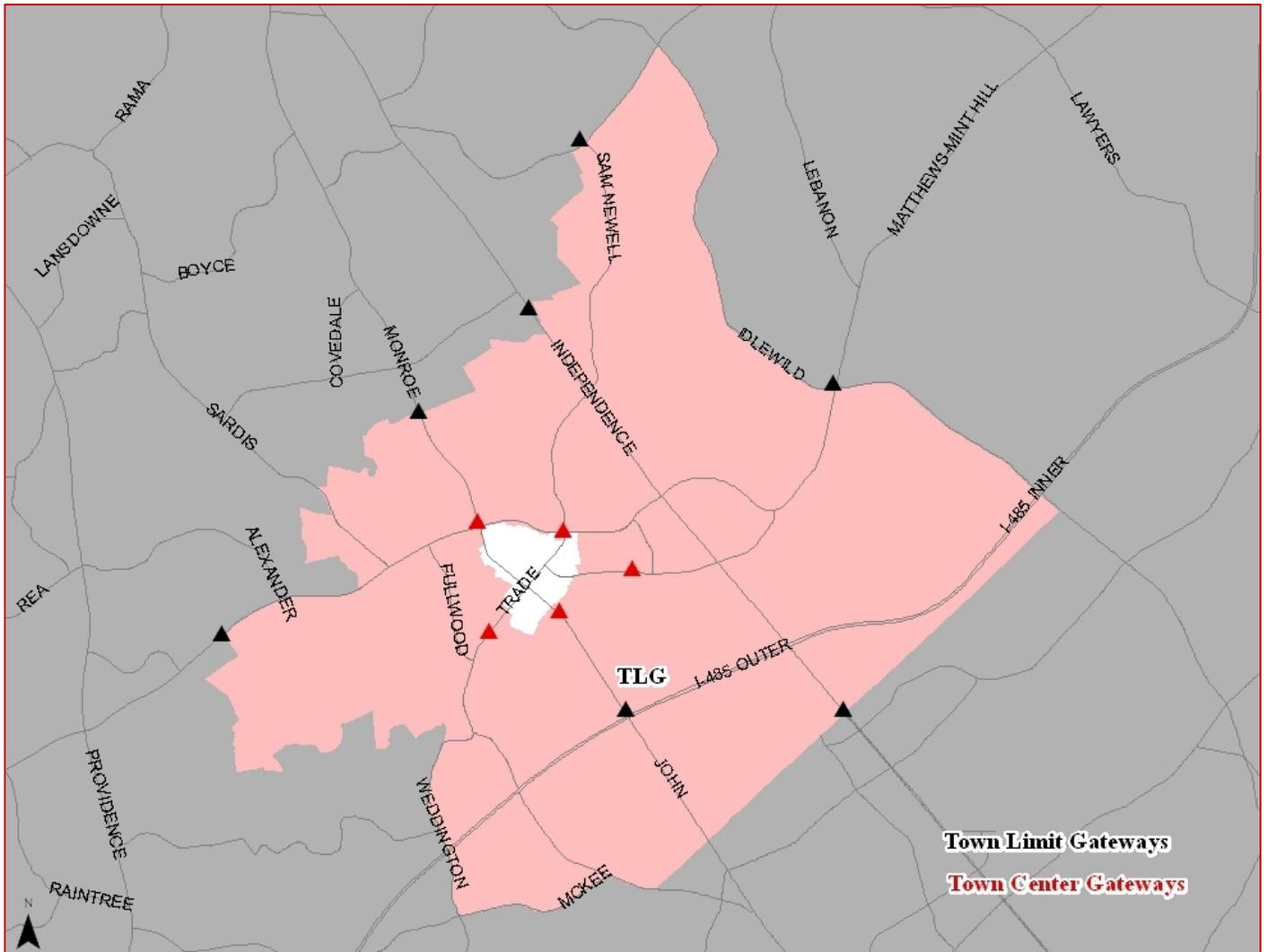
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Minimum Right of Way</b>
Class I – freeway or expressway	min ROW 350'
Class II – limited access arterial	min ROW 200'
Class III-C – commercial arterial	min ROW 150'
Class III – major arterial (major thoroughfare)	min ROW 100'
Class IV – minor arterial (minor thoroughfare)	min ROW 70'
Class V – collector	min ROW 60'
Class VI – local	min ROW 50'
Class VI-L – local limited	min ROW 44'

**ROADWAYS ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Continue to support the development and improvement of roadways to ensure an efficient, connected roadway network.*
2. *Discourage construction of private roadways to mitigate future maintenance, transport and utilities issues.*

Gateways identify transitions between landscapes, land uses and populations. They introduce well-defined activity, cultural, or historical centers and districts. Gateways define community identity and engender community pride. The *Gateway Delineation Plan for the Town of Matthews* was completed by UNCC in 1994. This plan identified two types of gateways:

- Town Limit Gateways
- Town Center Gateways



*Gateways along major thoroughfares, as identified in the Gateway Delineation Plan (1994).*

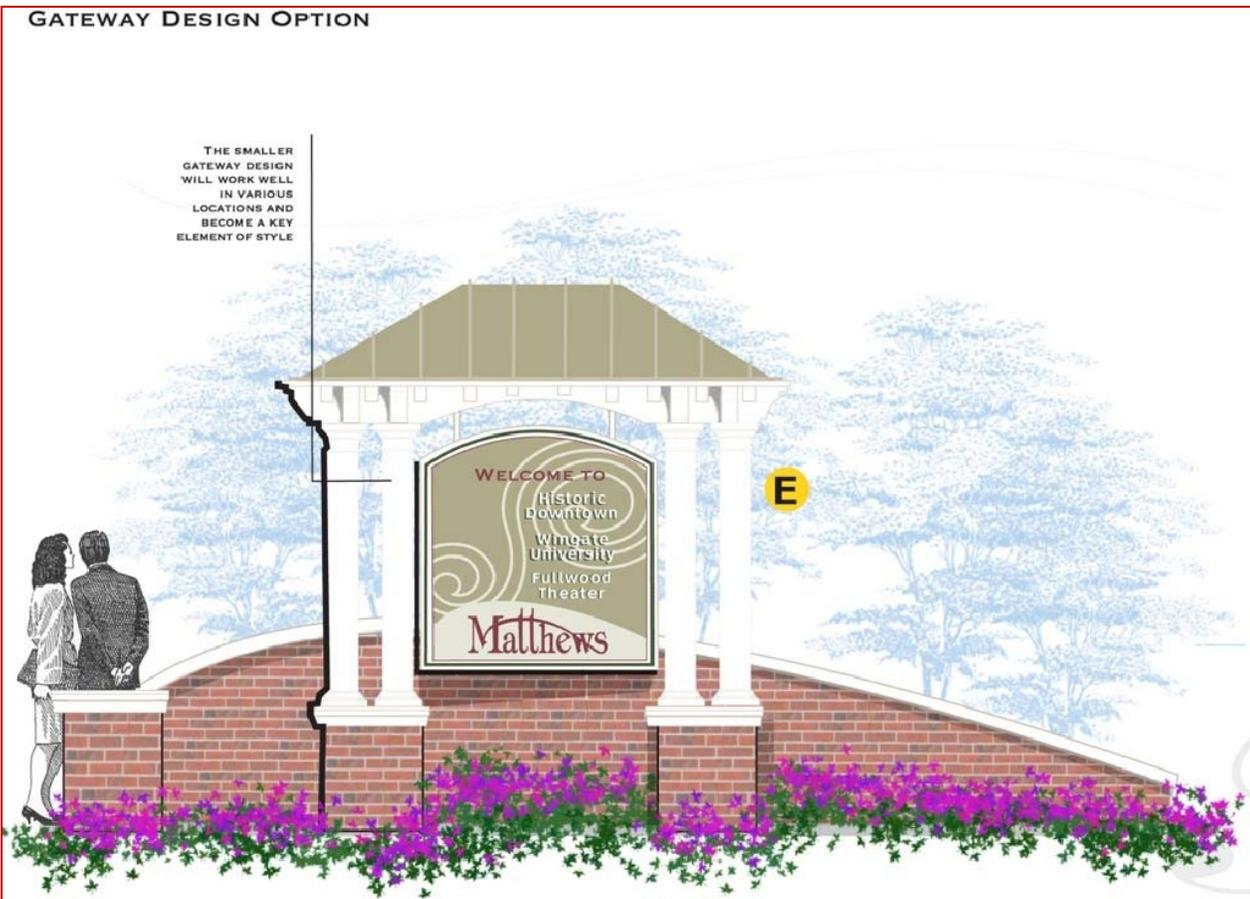
Town Limit Gateways:

- NC 51 (west boundary and east boundary)
- US 74 / Independence Boulevard (northwest boundary and southeast boundary)
- Monroe Road
- East John Street at I-485
- Sam Newell Road

Gateways corridors for Downtown:

- Sam Newell Road at NC 51
- South Trade Street
- West John Street at NC 51
- East John Street
- Matthews-Mint Hill Road near Presbyterian Hospital

*The Wayfinding Signage Project* was initiated in early 2012. This document identifies key locations for signage identifying and directing people toward destination areas within the Town. The implementation of this plan will also help in defining a community character and aesthetic.



*An example of gateway signage with appropriate landscaping and aesthetic definition per the Wayfinding Signage Project (2012)*

The Town should ensure all gateway roadways are properly streetscaped. NC-51 and Monroe Road/West John Street (from Trade Street to NC-51) are gateway roadways with existing streetscaping plans. The Town should create streetscaping plans for each gateway roadway to include landscaping, sidewalk and bike amenities, signage, and lighting.

**GATEWAYS AND CORRIDORS ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Maintain gateway points with proper streetscaping elements as noted in the Gateway Delineation Plan for the Town of Matthews.*
2. *Consider the Gateway Delineation Plan for the Town of Matthews to be the Town's primary resource for building gateway points.*

The Town adopted the *Comprehensive Bicycle Plan* in October 2006 to create a bicycle friendly community. Bike facilities provide transportation options and connectivity to the community. Benefits of biking include accessibility to all ages, decreased oil dependency, fewer auto accidents, improved health and improved quality of life.

The Town’s goal is to provide a connected, comprehensive bike transportation network. Common origin/destination points include neighborhoods, schools, parks, transit stations, Downtown and shopping centers. The Town promotes the institution of bike facilities, bikeways and off-road trails to meet this goal. The Town encourages NCDOT to institutionalize bike transit in all future construction and improvement projects.

While the Town has adopted parking requirements for bikes, no laws exist to require bike lanes, wide shoulders/outside lanes or off-road connectors in conjunction with development. The Bike Plan will address this and call for bike transit to be incorporated into various roadway and land development projects.

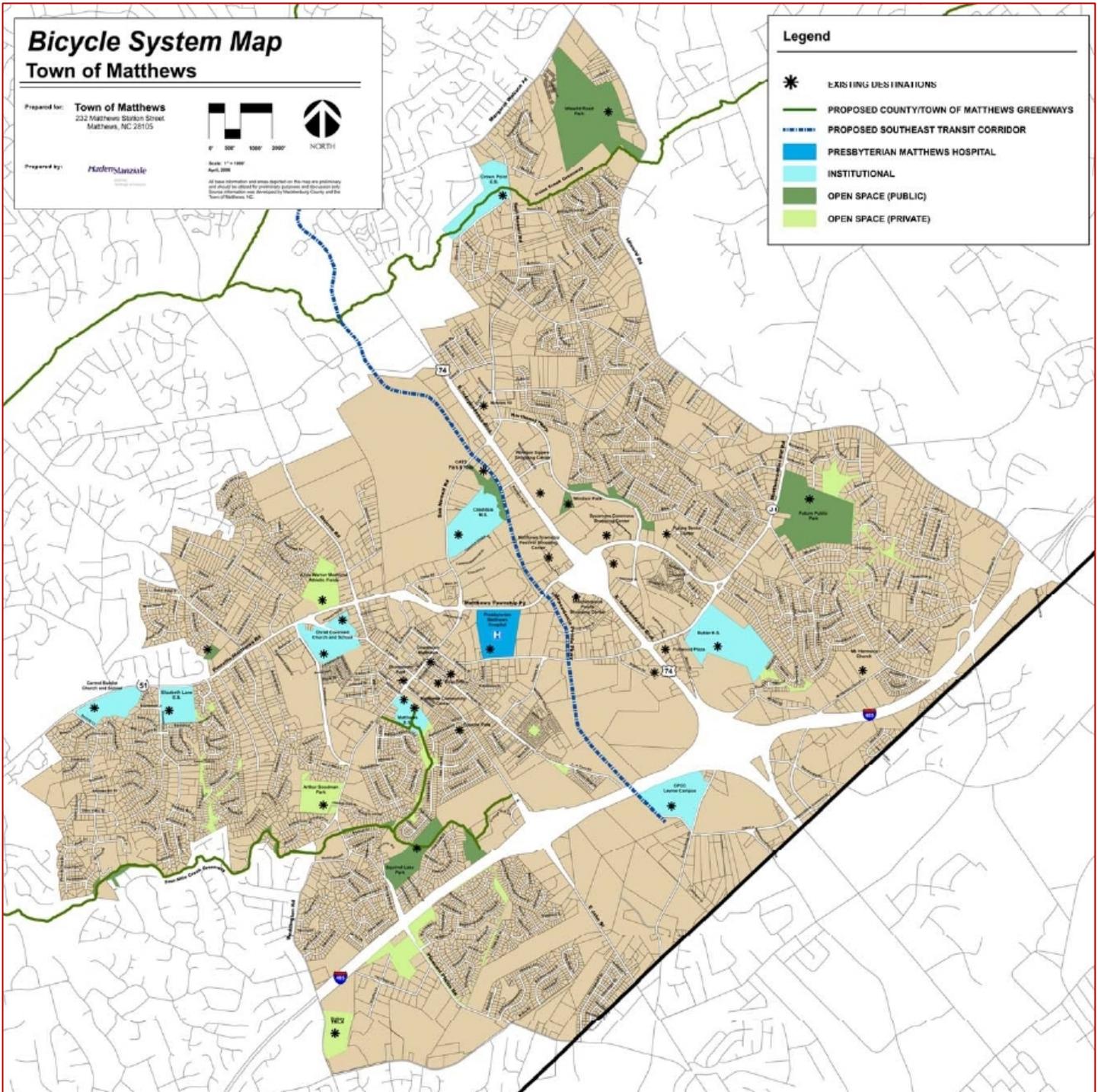
Bike facilities include:

- Bike Lane – usually 4-6 feet in width, delineated
- Greenways – linear open space in a natural corridor that has been converted for recreational use and public access
- Neighborhood Signed Route – through neighborhoods directing bicyclists along the paved bike route
- Off-Road Connectors – paved trails that link neighborhoods
- Wide outside lane – typically 14 feet in width, closest to curb & gutter, shared with auto lane
- Wide paved shoulders – typically 4 feet in width, delineated



*Delineated bike lane*

The Four-Mile Creek Greenway will provide alternate connection to Matthews Elementary School from surrounding residential neighborhoods. Greenway connectors are under construction in adjacent subdivisions.



# Bicycle System Map

## Town of Matthews

Prepared for: **Town of Matthews**  
 232 Matthews Station Street  
 Matthews, NC 28105



Scale: 1" = 1000'  
 April 2006

Prepared by: **MatthewsLandscape**

All data information and areas depicted on this map are preliminary and should be verified by preliminary processes and construction of the Town of Matthews, NC. Administrative boundaries shown are the Town of Matthews, NC.

**Legend**

- EXISTING DESTINATIONS
- PROPOSED COUNTY/TOWN OF MATTHEWS GREENWAYS
- PROPOSED SOUTHEAST TRANSIT CORRIDOR
- PRESBYTERIAN MATTHEWS HOSPITAL
- INSTITUTIONAL
- OPEN SPACE (PUBLIC)
- OPEN SPACE (PRIVATE)

*The 2006 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan identified destinations throughout the Town of Matthews*

**BIKE FACILITIES ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Abide by the policies and guidelines set forth in the Comprehensive Bicycle Plan.*
2. *Amend the Comprehensive Bicycle Plan as needed.*
3. *Build bike facilities in accordance with the policies and guidelines set forth in the Comprehensive Bicycle Plan.*
4. *Promote the connectivity of common place points through construction of various bike facilities.*
5. *Encourage NCDOT to incorporate bike facilities in all new construction and improvement projects.*
6. *Include construction of bike facilities with roadway and land developments by amending zoning and subdivision ordinances.*

Sidewalks are a crucial amenity for providing connectivity in Matthews. Unfortunately, much of the sidewalk system in Matthews is sporadic and disconnected. Approximately 42% of the 164 miles of road in Matthews are equipped with sidewalk.

Since the mid-1990s, the Town's Subdivision Ordinance has required all subdivisions to have sidewalks on both sides of each street. While this provides intra-neighborhood connectivity, the Town should encourage the extension of these sidewalks along thoroughfares to provide pedestrian connectivity to areas currently isolated from destination points such as schools, parks, and commercial areas.

The Town plans to add sidewalks on at least one side of all major thoroughfares. Near-future plans include sidewalk additions along Sam Newell Road and Idlewild Road. The Town should ensure construction of pedestrian-friendly sidewalks along all future roadways. The Town should provide pedestrian connectivity in existing and future developments to the greatest extent possible.



*Sidewalks along East John Street encourages pedestrian travel*

The Town strongly supports enhanced sidewalk design to make pedestrian travel a pleasant, inviting experience. Amenities such as adequate lighting, planting strips, or other buffers between roadways and sidewalks are encouraged.

### **SIDEWALK ACTION ITEMS:**

- 1. Provide connectivity between subdivisions and neighboring land uses by extending and connecting the existing sidewalk network.*
- 2. Continue efforts to install sidewalks on all major thoroughfares.*
- 3. Require new developers to install sidewalks connecting to neighboring land uses.*
- 4. Require the construction of sidewalks on all future roadways.*
- 5. Support the construction of sidewalks that make pedestrian travel a pleasant experience.*
- 6. Encourage the separation of the sidewalk from the road via planting strips.*

Mecklenburg County's *Master Greenway Plan* was adopted by the county in 1999 and updated in 2008 as part of the *Mecklenburg County Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan* to implement a County-wide, multi-purpose network of greenways. The Town adopted the County's Comprehensive Plan in 2008.

The County's five year *Plan* focuses on identifying and prioritizing greenway corridors, while the ten year *Plan* focuses on trail connectivity. The County and its jurisdictions will work with other agencies and the private sector to implement this *Plan*. The Town is collaborating with the Carolina Thread Trail on a concept plan that would implement seven miles of greenways in Matthews; this concept plan is part of the County's five year *Plan* to designate the official Carolina Thread Trail route.

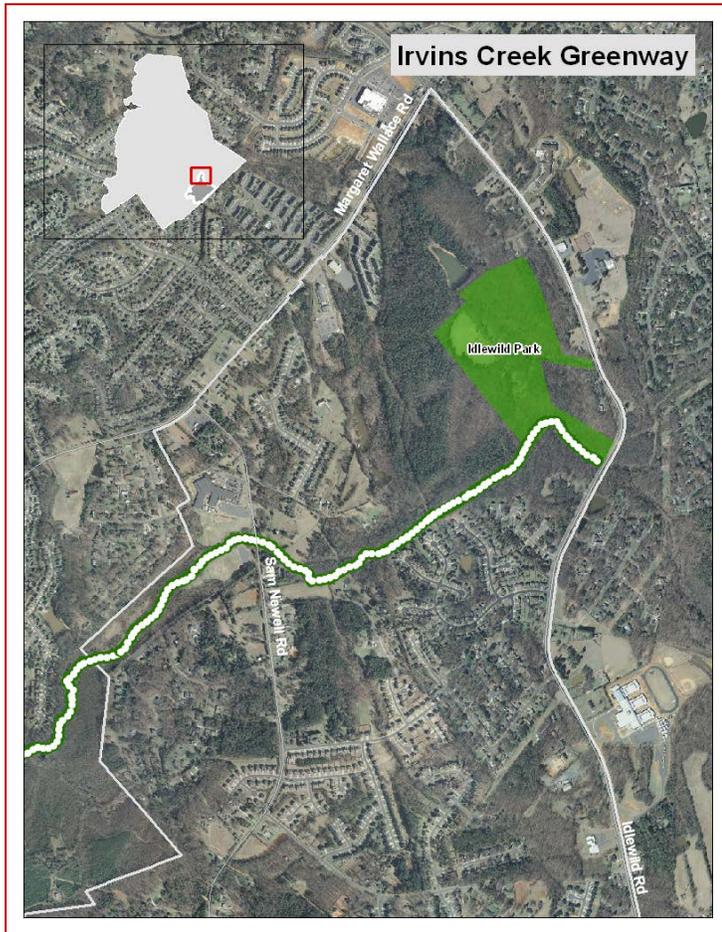
The greenway network will allow various modes of recreational travel, linking popular destinations and outdoor activity facilities.

Benefits of greenways:

- Provide inexpensive transportation options
- Are healthy alternative to vehicles
- Provide flood control
- Improve water and air quality
- Protect plant & animal habitats
- Increase property values

The *Plan* stresses the need for more public/private partnerships, with the private sector taking a more active role in greenway development. The Town should pursue this option in all future greenway developments.

The *Plan* identified two possible pilot project corridors in Matthews: Four-Mile Creek and Irvins Creek. The initial segment of the Four-Mile Creek Greenway has been completed. The Irvins Creek Greenway is in planning stages.



Irvins Creek Greenway is planned in northern Matthews to Idlewild Park; A 2.5 mile section of Four Mile Creek Greenway is already on the ground.

**GREENWAY ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Continue to abide by policies set forth in Mecklenburg County's Comprehensive Park and Recreation Master Plan*
2. *Continue efforts to implement greenway development by collaborating with other agencies and the private sector.*
3. *Support and promote the construction of the Carolina Thread Trail through Matthews as documented in the Carolina Thread Trail's Concept Plan in Matthews.*
4. *Continue to abide by ideas set forth in the Town of Matthews Preliminary Open Space Plan.*

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) is a local and regional transit system offering:

- Local bus service
- Regional bus service
- Light rail service
- Trolley service
- Vanpool programs
- Services for the disabled
- Bike racks for buses and light rail

CATS operates five bus routes in Matthews: three local routes and two express routes. The express routes provide access to Uptown Charlotte for working professionals living in Matthews and the outskirts of Mecklenburg and Union Counties.

The 17/Commonwealth Avenue local route serves the Independence Boulevard corridor from Uptown Charlotte, terminating at Matthews-Independence Pointe Park and Ride.

The 27/Monroe Road local route serves the East 7<sup>th</sup> Street/Monroe Road corridor from Uptown Charlotte, terminating at the Target retail center on NC-51 in Matthews.

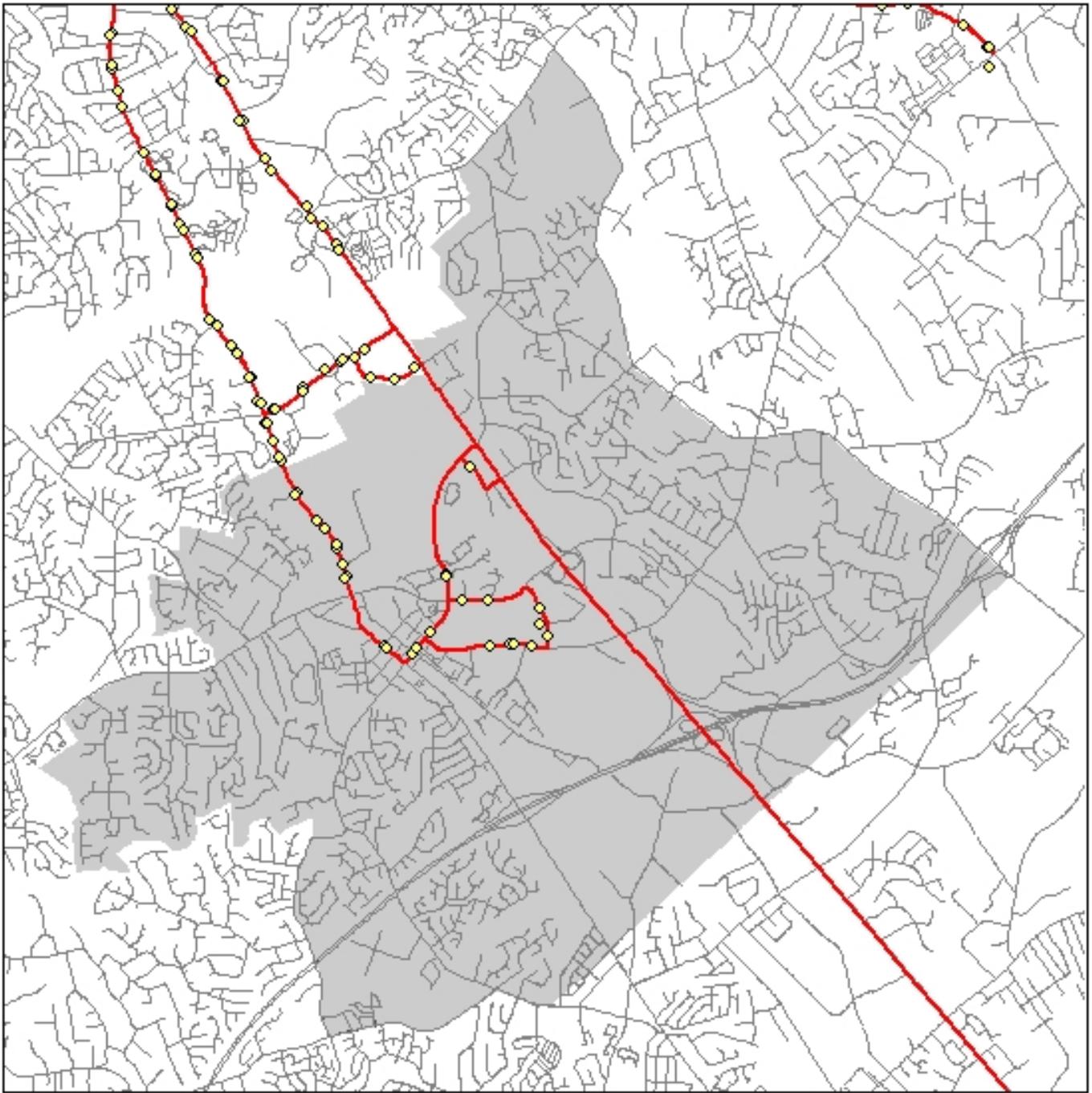
The 64X/Independence Boulevard Express route serves Matthews from the Independence Pointe Park and Ride to Downtown Charlotte via Independence Boulevard.

The 65X/Matthews Express route serves Matthews from the Matthews Presbyterian Church Park and Ride on East John Street to Downtown Charlotte via Monroe Road and Independence Boulevard.

The 74X/Union County Express route serves Union County and Matthews from the Christ Bible Teaching Center Park and Ride in Marshville to Downtown Charlotte via US-74/Independence Boulevard.



*An express bus at the Independence Pointe Park and Ride facility*



*Numerous stops in and near Matthews are currently located along the bus routes.*

Express routes operate on weekdays only, with inbound service offered in the mornings only and outbound service offered in the evenings only. Uninterrupted, express service begins at Sharon Amity Road and continues into Downtown Charlotte.

Adopted plans called for CATS to construct the Southeast Rapid Transit Corridor, one of five Rapid Transit lines in Mecklenburg County. This was to be accomplished through funding raised by a ½ cent sales tax dedication to transit. The economic recession that began in 2008, however, has effectively delayed the funding plan and eliminated the expectation of all five corridors being completed over the next 20 years.

As part of this plan, transit stations were to be constructed along Independence Boulevard and Independence Pointe Parkway in Matthews, creating a link from the Charlotte Transportation Center to the CPCC-Levine Campus. The Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) adopted Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) as the Locally Preferred Alternative in 2006, though light rail transit could still be considered.

The Town and CATS partnered to create the *Town of Matthews Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles and Policy Guidelines* plan (March 2006). This document provides the framework for transit supportive development as the Southeast Rapid Transit Corridor expands into Matthews. To successfully implement a rapid transit endeavor, density must exist or be allowed to develop to justify the need for mass transit. This plan details how to build density near transit stations and promote the use of mass transit.

As each transit station in Matthews comes into planning and design stages, the Town must coordinate with CATS and abide by the plan policies to ensure the success of transit stations and transit supportive developments. As stated in the plan, the Town must implement transit supportive principles within a quarter to half-mile radius of each station. Each station will have its own character, and should incorporate a variety of public and private facilities to attract and serve residents, workers and visitors. The Town should create small area plans for each future transit station.

**PUBLIC TRANSIT ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Support timely construction of the Southeast Rapid Transit Corridor.*
2. *Abide by guidelines set forth in the Town of Matthews Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles and Policy Guidelines document to ensure successful transit station developments.*
3. *Implement transit supportive development principles within a one quarter to one half mile radius of each transit station.*
4. *Create a transit plan for each future transit station, as stated in the Town of Matthews Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles and Policy Guidelines.*

The CSX railroad transects Matthews and is used for general freight transport. Though use of this railroad regularly impedes Downtown traffic, it is positively viewed by locals as a culturally significant part of the Town’s history.

The installation of grade-separated crossings would improve the flow of traffic in Matthews. The Town has discussed redesigning the crossing at Campus Ridge Road to become grade-separated. There are also opportunities to add a crossing in the Downtown area.

The rail company recently received approval to increase speeds through Matthews. Additionally, CSX has expressed an interest in installing quiet railroad crossings.



*Railroad crossing at Campus Ridge Road*

The *Industrial Land Use* section details development opportunities that exist along the railroad. The rail corridor provides a place for industrial land uses that would not be compatible if located adjacent to less-intense uses.

**RAILROAD ACTION ITEMS:**

- 1. Continue to acknowledge the cultural significance of the railroad in future planning efforts.*
- 2. Monitor future plans for rail use.*
- 3. Consider construction of a grade-separated railroad crossing in the Downtown area.*
- 4. Consider industrial uses as appropriate land uses at select locations adjacent to the rail corridor (see Industrial Land Use section).*

FUTURE CONNECTION  
TO BRIGMAN ROAD

# SECTION 4:

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

# TRANSITIONING &

# SENSITIVE AREAS

MURKIN COUNTY &  
FINANCE DEPT.  
REAL ESTATE PG 215  
DB 1995 PG 210

(5) SOCCER FIELDS  
225'x360' (TYP)

FUTURE WALK

50' R/W RESIDENTIAL ST.

- PARKING LOT (280 CARS)
- BICYCLE PARKING (7 SPACES)
- RESTROOM/STORAGE BUILDING
- 24'x36' SHELTER
- PLAYGROUND AREA

DETENTION BASIN

30' SWIM BUFFER

DETENTION-BASIN

35' SWIM BUFFER

POTENTIAL INDEPENDENCE POINTE PARKWAY (N.I.C.)

FORMER PROPERTY LINE (TYP)

7'-8"  
TRIP

N/F COUNTY &  
FINANCE DEPT.

Roadway projects are a stimulus for land development and have substantial impacts on land use patterns. In the coming years, the Town will experience significant changes in its road network. This provides many opportunities and challenges.

Lack of connectivity is a hindrance in Matthews. This issue is prevalent in a handful of places in the Town, but the problem affects the entire flow of traffic. The addition of several new roadways will streamline traffic patterns and alleviate roadways running at capacity.

The conversion of US-74 to a limited access freeway will alter traffic patterns in Matthews. Most access points along US-74 will close. Alternate collector roads will be constructed to accommodate local traffic. These alternate roadways will present land development opportunities in areas currently inaccessible and/or vacant. One project, the Family Entertainment District, will be constructed at the US-74/I-485 interchange. This development will necessitate more roadways and better connectivity, thus improving commercial viability in this area.

The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) Southeast Rapid Transit Corridor will operate on the Independence Pointe Parkway thoroughfare. Four transit stations will be constructed in Matthews to serve the transit corridor. Land near each station should be designed to support and encourage mass transit. These transit supportive developments will create the density required to sustain a rapid transit route; these densities will create commercial and residential development demand.

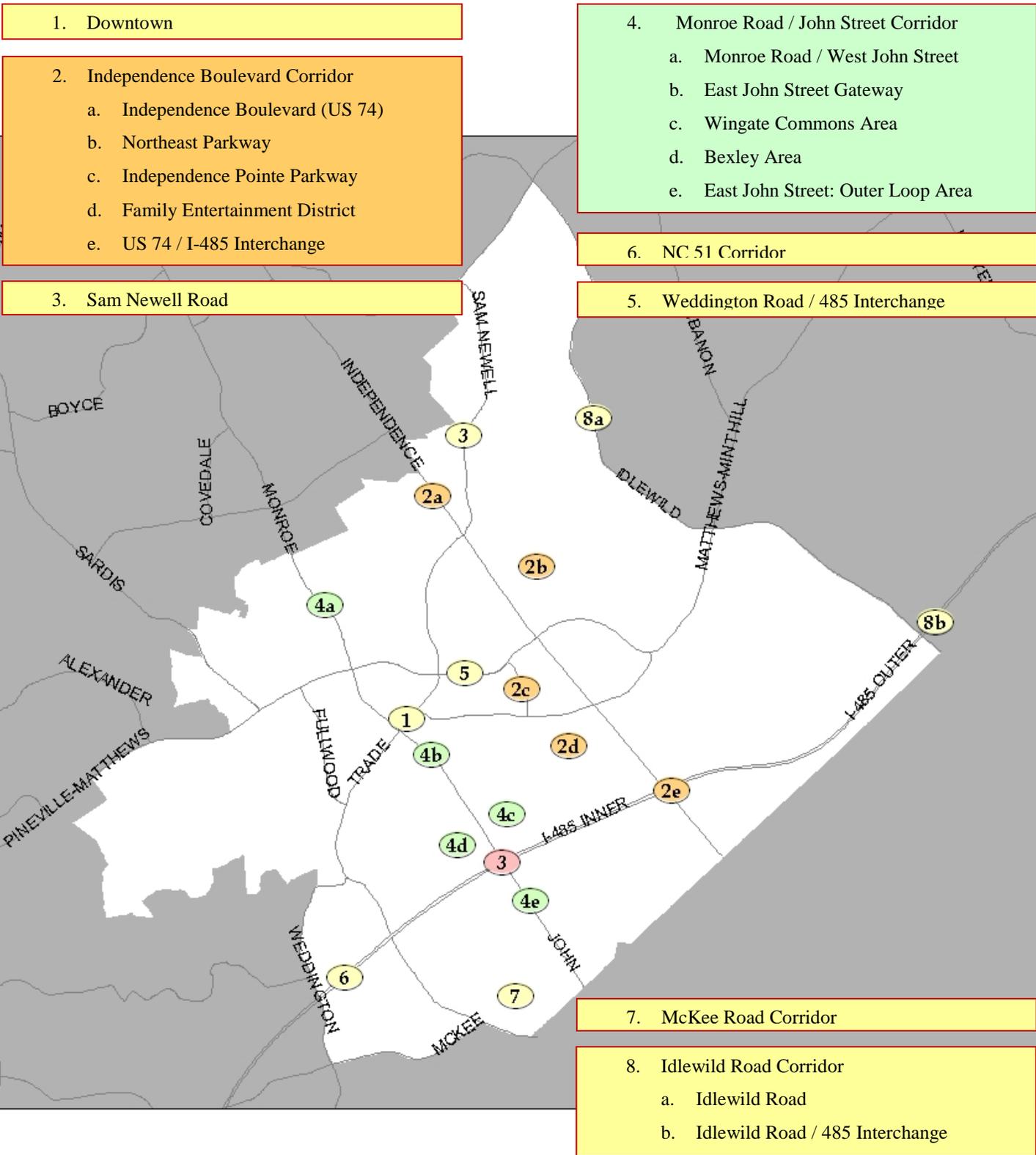
Construction of the Weddington Road interchange on I-485 will alter traffic patterns by providing direct interstate access to more vehicles. Similarly, the extension of McKee Road to the southeast of I-485 will increase traffic in parallel directions to the interstate. These projects will create development opportunities on land that is largely inaccessible.

The construction and promotion of alternate modes of transportation will improve transportation problems by giving people transit choices. The Town will actively pursue the development of sidewalks, bike lanes and nature paths. Alternate connectivity among neighborhoods and common destination points is encouraged via greenways and sidewalks.

Upcoming Transportation Development Projects:

- US 74 corridor upgrade
- Monroe Connector/Bypass
- Independence Pointe Parkway / Southeast Transit Corridor
- Northeast Parkway
- Interstate 485/Weddington Road Interchange
- McKee Road Extension

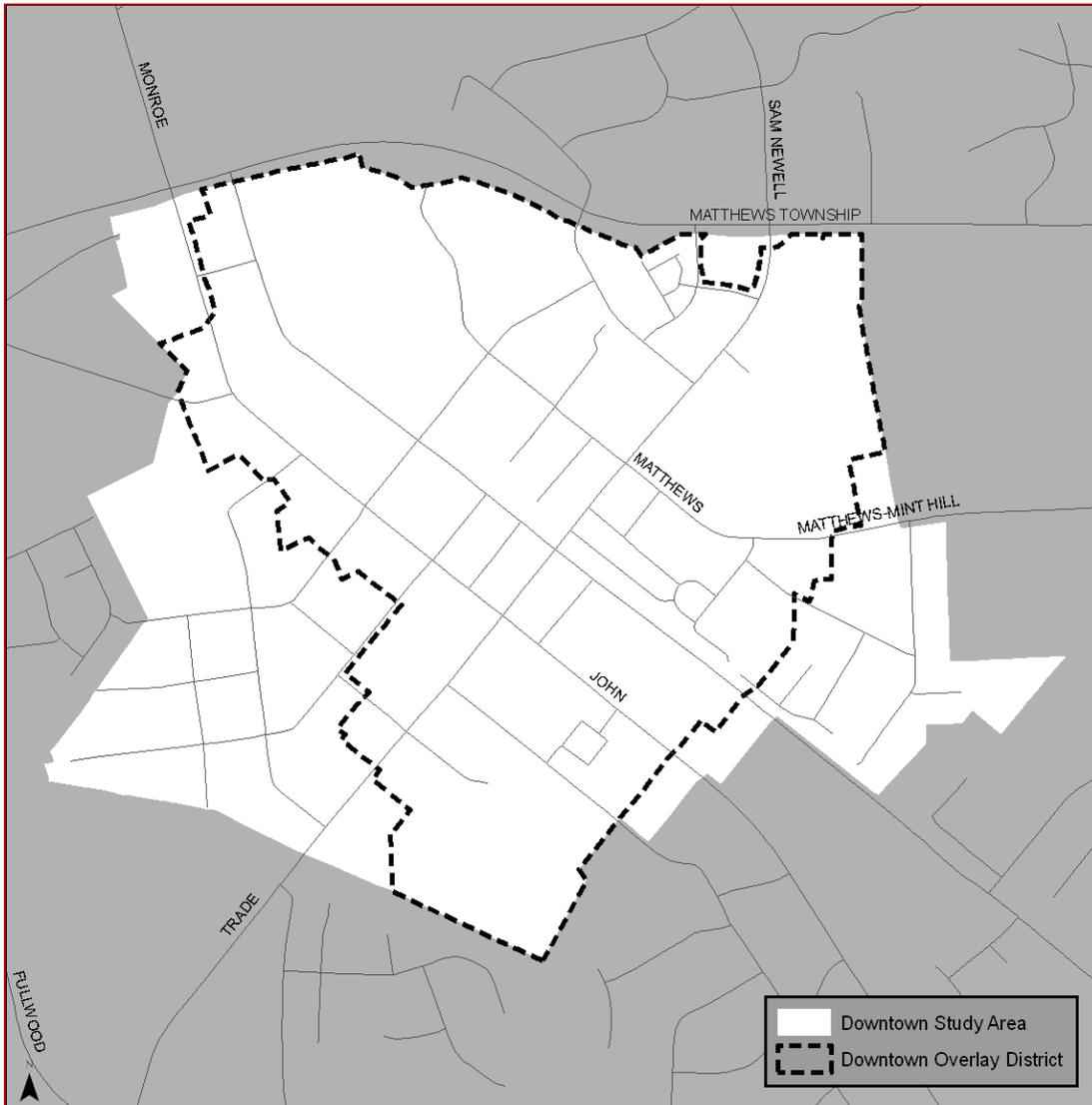
These planned development projects, along with observed demographic, housing, and economic trends in Matthews present the potential for substantial impacts. The following Transitioning and Sensitive Areas will be explored in greater detail in this section:



## 1. DOWNTOWN

The Downtown area is a cultural, civic, and economic asset to the Town. Recognized for its quaint, small-town feel, Downtown Matthews is rich with history and tradition. A freight railroad line bisects the center of Downtown and, despite the impediment to traffic, the line is viewed as an important historical element in the community. Paralleling the railroad line through Downtown, the John Street corridor is part of a regional road that connects uptown Charlotte to Union County.

The vibrant mix of shops, restaurants, homes, offices and civic facilities gives Downtown its distinct character. The Town works with local businesses and citizens to preserve and enhance this historic part of Matthews.



*The Matthews Downtown study area as it relates to the Downtown Overlay Zoning District*



*A historic mercantile building now houses Weaver, Bennett, and Bland Attorneys on North Trade Street.*

The Town recognizes the importance of maintaining and enhancing the Downtown area. The initial *Downtown Master Plan* was adopted in 1988, rewritten in 1997, and is currently in the final stages of a comprehensive update. The Plan seeks to preserve the historic area by providing a guideline for future growth. Revitalization, intensification, and expansion of the commercial core are focal points of the *Downtown Master Plan*. The Plan has established the Downtown Overlay District, a zoning category that specifies design and land use criteria appropriate for the town center. The update of the Plan will include recommendations to expand this district.

The Town encourages a variety of alternative residential housing and mixed use developments in Downtown. Such uses support the economy of Downtown and create demand for a wider array of land uses. The Town should continue to identify specific uses desired here. New construction that adds a diversity of land uses is essential to the vitality of Downtown.



*A Matthews cultural icon: The Seaboard cabooses at Town Hall*



*A train crosses North Trade Street in the heart of Downtown*

The town center identity is dependent on the appearance and appeal of Downtown. The Town should ensure the following elements are met with all development and redevelopment proposals:

- Quality architectural design and materials
- Minimal street setbacks
- Rear parking



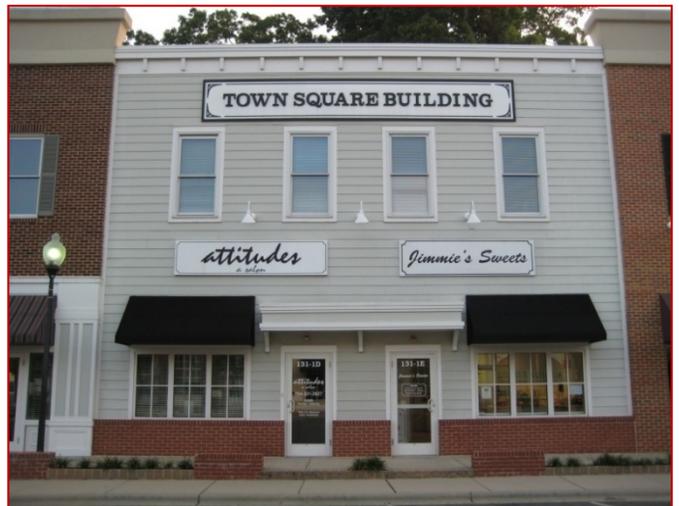
*Mixed use building on East John Street*



*Park Square townhomes*



*Example of quality architecture on Matthews Station Street*



*This building displays modern architecture that is reminiscent of turn-of-the-century styles.*

Additionally, in order to encourage safe travel options, the Town should institute the following amenities in Downtown:

- Generous lighting along all sidewalks, pedestrian and bike paths
- Wide sidewalks and pedestrian facilities
- Bike facilities on Town-owned land
- Crosswalks in areas with high pedestrian traffic (signaled where appropriate)
- Standardized traffic and parking signage



*The historic Malone building on North Trade Street*



*Minimal street setbacks encourage pedestrian activity in the Downtown core*

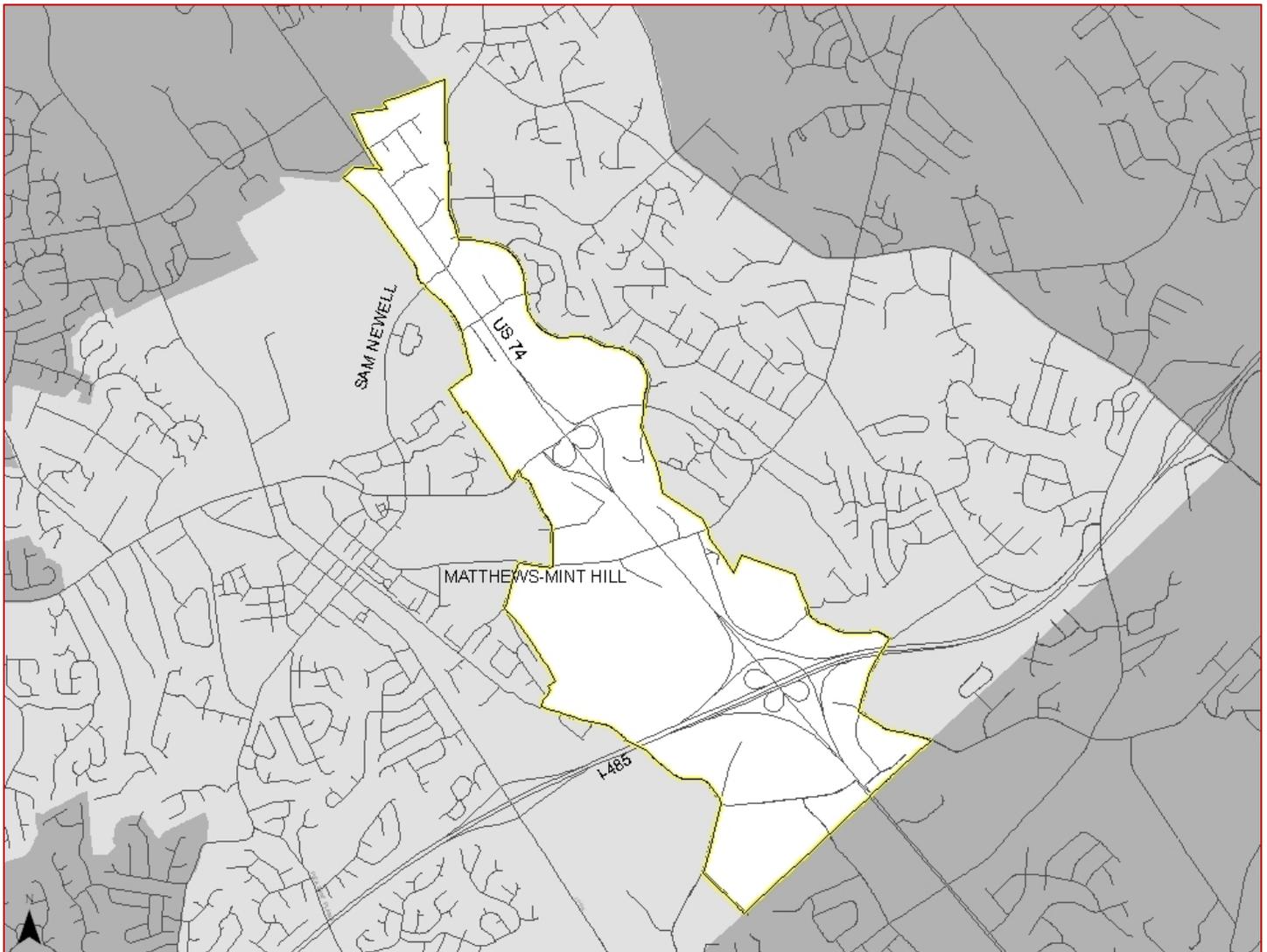
**See also: Monroe / W. John Area; East John Area; Sam Newell Area; NC 51 Area.**

**DOWNTOWN ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Maintaining an open dialogue with citizens and local businesses about community needs and desires.*
2. *Abide by the guidelines set forth in the Downtown Master Plan.*
3. *Update and amend the Downtown Master Plan as needed.*
4. *Encourage a variety of land uses.*
5. *Expand alternative style housing and mixed use developments.*
6. *Create a unique, aesthetic appeal through site plan approvals that include quality architectural design and building materials, minimal setbacks, and rear parking.*
7. *Encourage safe travel options by adopting standard signage and lighting for Downtown travel and parking areas.*

Since its inception in the 1950s, Independence Boulevard (the eastern Mecklenburg County segment of US-74) has constantly evolved in an attempt to keep pace with urban and suburban development across the region. The next planned manifestation contains two elements of significant impact:

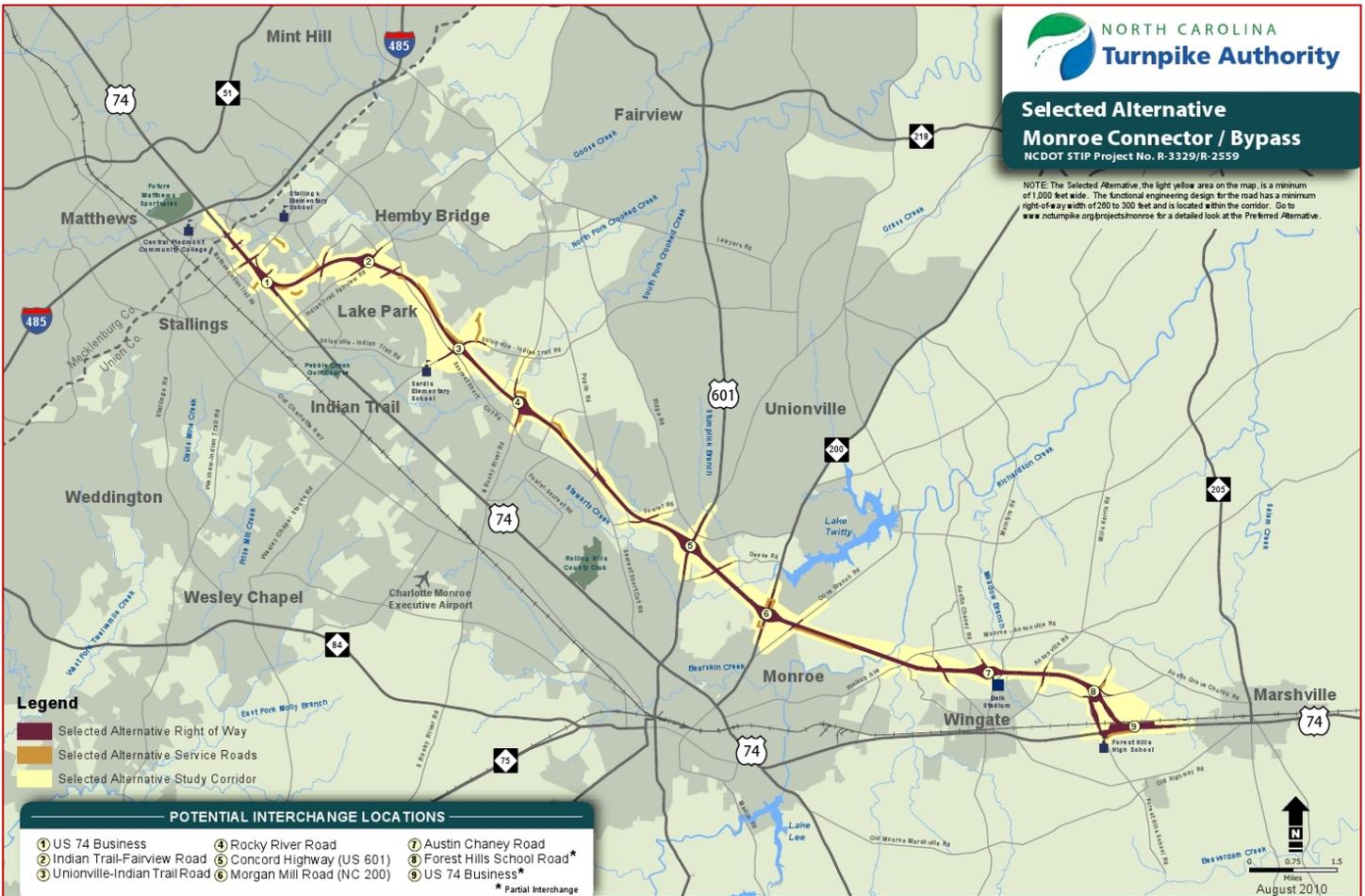
- Monroe Connector / Bypass
- US 74 Improvements



*Independence Boulevard bisects the Town of Matthews.*

## Monroe Connector / Bypass

The North Carolina Turnpike Authority will construct a US-74 bypass in Union County. The recommended alignment would begin in Marshville and terminate in Stallings. Aside from minor widening for access ramps, no deviation from the existing roadway would be inside Town limits. Under the planned alignment, US-74 would be widened to a 260' right of way from I-485 in Matthews to Stallings Road in Stallings. In the face of numerous regulatory setbacks, a timeline for construction of the bypass is currently unknown.



*The planned alignment for the Monroe Connector / Bypass*

## US-74 Improvements

The US-74 roadway improvements have been in the planning stages since the mid-1980s. In February 2007, the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization (MUMPO) approved a project to upgrade the US-74 corridor from Idlewild Road in Charlotte to I-485 in Matthews. These improvements will involve closing most access points along the roadway, thus transitioning US-74 into a limited access freeway. Part of the CATS Southeast Transit Corridor Rapid Transit route will operate on a dedicated lane along this roadway (in Charlotte). This project is unfunded with no scheduled completion date.

To account for closing access points, two alternate collector roadways, Northeast Parkway and Independence Pointe Parkway, are being constructed on either side of US-74. Both roadway projects are developer-driven and, therefore, only partially completed. These roadways function independently of US-74, providing access to adjacent land uses. As US-74 transitions to a limited access freeway, these roadways will replace US-74 as collector roadways for local traffic. Both roadways are minor thoroughfares in the MUMPO Thoroughfare Plan.

Due to zoning requirements, new developments must plan for and construct driveways on these alternate roadways and allow driveway closure along US-74 when road construction begins. The Town encourages primary access points to be located along the alternate roadways.

Land uses adjacent to US-74 intersections must deter significant increases in traffic and traffic patterns. Further development of impulse retail/commercial uses is discouraged at these locations. Non-residential, destination-oriented uses are most appropriate uses. Existing retail centers are ideal for redevelopment into mixed use centers.

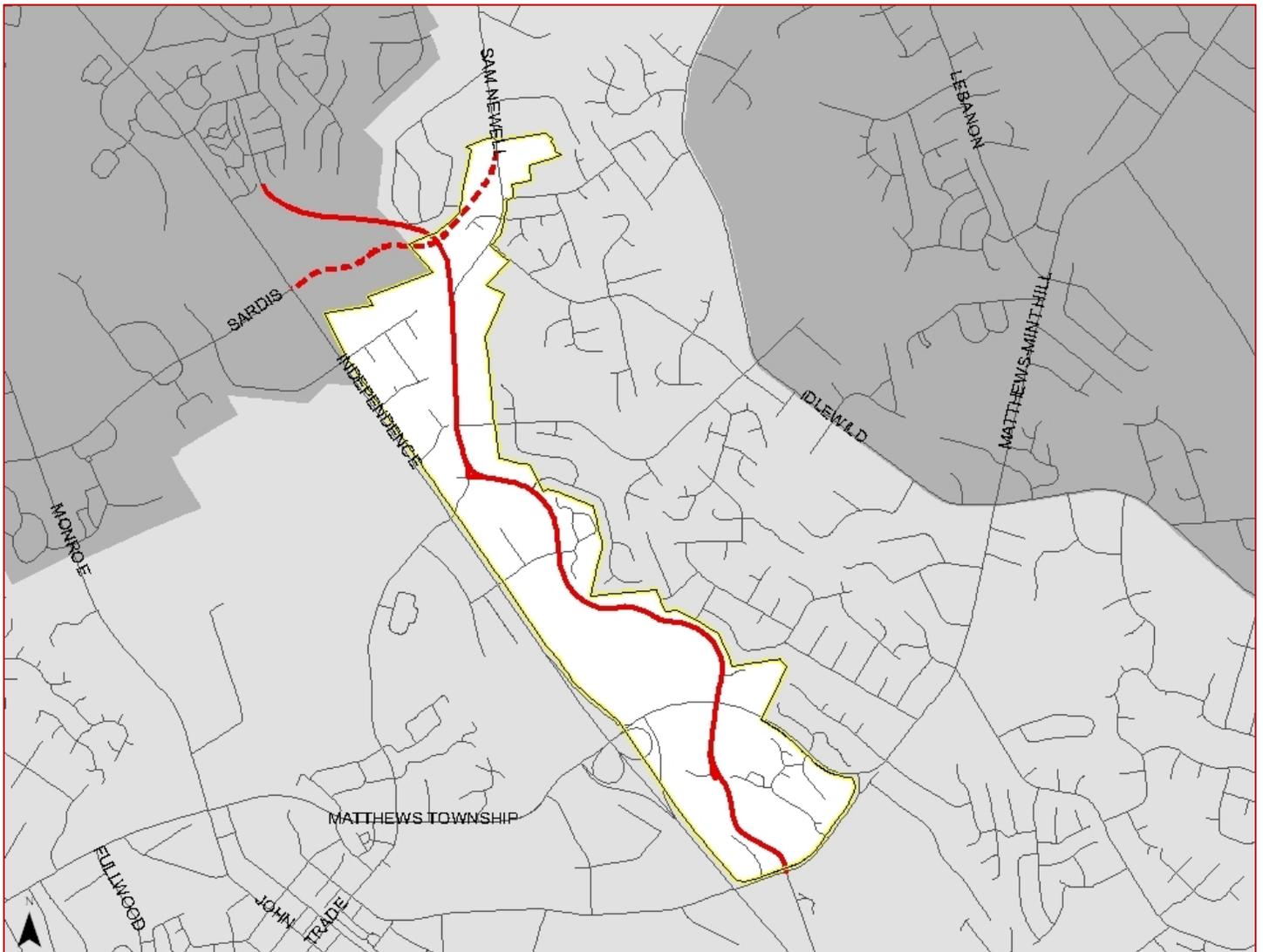
**See also: Independence Pointe Parkway Area; Northeast Parkway Area; US 74 / I-485 Interchange Area.**

### **INDEPENDENCE BOULEVARD ACTION ITEMS:**

- 1. Encourage the completion of alternate collector roadways.*
- 2. Prohibit development which is solely dependent on access along US-74.*
- 3. Require developers to locate primary access driveways along alternate roadways.*
- 4. Prohibit expansion of impulse/commercial land uses along US-74.*
- 5. Promote non-residential, destination-based land uses along US-74.*
- 6. Encourage redevelopment of existing retail centers into mixed use concepts.*

## 2b. NORTHEAST PARKWAY

Once completed, Northeast Parkway will become a local alternate for US-74, providing needed roadway access points when US-74 transitions to a limited access freeway. This roadway is a minor thoroughfare on the MUMPO Thoroughfare Plan. The roadway is largely unconstructed and disconnected. No funding exists for roadway extension; construction will be development-driven.



*A completed Northeast Parkway will maintain connectivity after US 74 transitions to a limited access highway.*

Land near the planned Northeast Parkway will be affected by additional upcoming roadway projects in Charlotte. The Sardis Road North extension will intersect future Northeast Parkway near the Town limits and connect with the Sam Newell Road alignment to the north. This area, between the future Sardis Road North and existing unopened Claire Drive, is primarily zoned for single-family

residential housing. The Town should coordinate with Charlotte to evaluate possible changes in land use. A mixed use development could be appropriate here.

Northeast Parkway will not be located in the vicinity of incoming transit stations, with the possible exception of Sardis Road North near US-74. Therefore, transit-supportive developments are not appropriate for this area. Higher-density developments must be concentrated around a neighborhood center to be sustainable. Mixed use developments are encouraged for all higher-density projects. In general, the Town encourages consolidation of driveways to establish Northeast Parkway as a traffic-mover.

The incomplete portion of Northeast Parkway is adjacent to largely undeveloped land. A mixed use project would be ideal; however, density is needed to justify this option. Multi-family housing and offices are also appropriate here. Such uses would provide a transitional buffer to the adjacent existing residential uses.

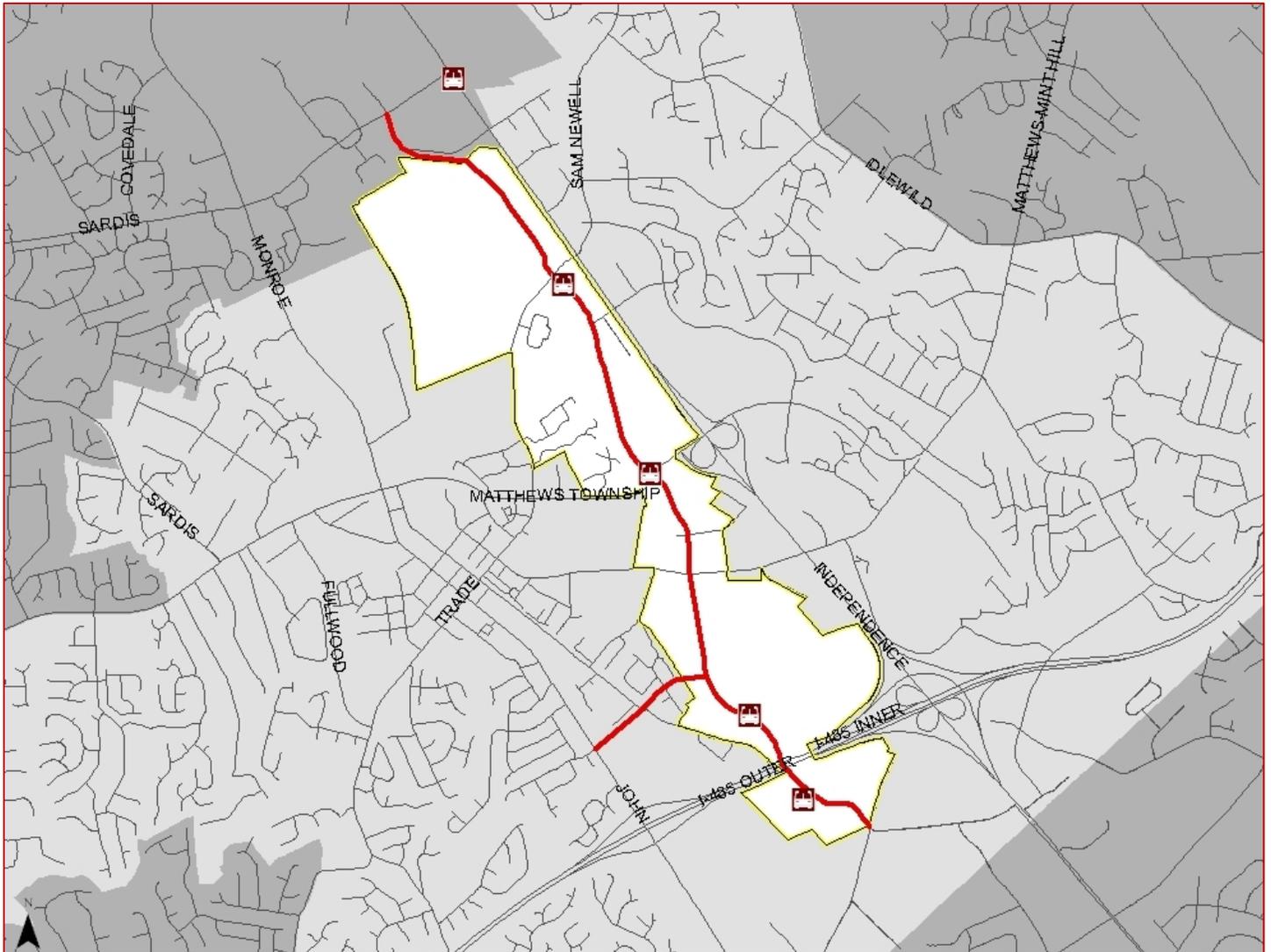
**See also: US 74 Area; Sam Newell Area.**

**NORTHEAST PARKWAY ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Require developers to build portions of Northeast Parkway in conjunction with adjacent land development.*
2. *Preserve established single-family residential uses and prevent encroachment at land to the east of the parkway.*
3. *Consider well-designed infill development, such as R-VS and other higher-density mixed and multi-family uses where appropriate and compatible with existing development.*
4. *Consider office developments where appropriate.*
5. *Develop desired streetscape renderings of Northeast Parkway including landscape, sidewalks, bike lanes, signage and lighting.*
6. *Consolidate driveways and limit curb cuts and median breaks along Northeast Parkway.*
7. *Locate utilities underground.*
8. *Locate parking at the side or rear of properties.*
9. *Prohibit parking at the front of properties.*
10. *Locate loading zones and service entrances at the rear of properties.*

## 2c. INDEPENDENCE POINTE PARKWAY

Independence Pointe Parkway will become a local alternate for US-74, providing needed access points when US-74 transitions to a limited access freeway. The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) Southeast Rapid Transit Corridor has been planned to operate on the thoroughfare. Four transit stations could be constructed in Matthews. A possible fifth station on Sardis Road North in Charlotte would impact the Town due to its proximity to the Town limits.



*A completed Independence Pointe Parkway will double as the Southeast Transit Corridor.*

Land near each station should be designed to support and encourage mass transit. These transit supportive developments should create the density required to sustain a rapid transit route. In turn, these densities will increase demand for more commercial and residential development demand.

To prepare for this development, the Town partnered with CATS to create the *Town of Matthews Transit Station Area Joint Development Principles and Policy Guidelines* document. Though much uncertainty remains regarding specifics of implementation, such as CATS's final determination as to the mode of transit, the station locations identified therein by Matthews are logical for either bus or rail. This plan guides successful implementation of transit supportive developments. One upcoming development is the Family Entertainment District, which exemplifies the principles stated in the joint plan. Therefore, it is in the Town's best interest to allow mixed-use and higher-density uses in these areas to solidify the eventual implementation of this plan. Such transit supportive developments should emphasize the use of multi-modal transportation and encourage mass transit connections in the future.

Martin Marietta, a heavy industrial rock quarry, operates on a portion of the proposed alignment. The quarry has dedicated future right-of-way for the construction of part of Independence Pointe Parkway. The centerline may shift due to results of further engineering studies, updates to the quarry reclamation plan, and / or the determination that additional right of way is needed to accommodate traffic.

This roadway is a minor thoroughfare on the MUMPO Thoroughfare Plan. The roadway is largely unconstructed and disconnected. No funding exists for roadway extension; construction will be development-driven.

**See also: US 74 Area; Family Entertainment District; Sam Newell Area; US 74 / 485 Interchange Area.**

**INDEPENDENCE POINTE PARKWAY ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Require developers to build portions of Independence Pointe Parkway in conjunction with adjacent land development.*
2. *Create provisions for a transit-supportive zoning district.*
3. *Rezone applicable land to allow for transit-supportive development.*
4. *Require vacant land abutting the Park and Ride facility to develop as transit-supportive uses.*
5. *Require land at the Martin Marietta quarry to be redeveloped for office, specialty-retail, civic/public or service uses when reclaimed.*
6. *Develop desired streetscape renderings of Independence Pointe Parkway including landscape, sidewalks, bike lanes, signage, and lighting.*
7. *Consolidate driveways and limit curb cuts and median breaks along Independence Pointe Parkway.*
8. *Require the location of utilities underground.*
9. *Encourage parking at the side or rear of properties.*
10. *Prohibit parking at the front of properties.*
11. *Relocate loading zones and service entrances at the rear of properties.*

## 2d. FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

The Town and county partnered to plan a multi-use, family-oriented development. This site will have recreation facilities and a mixed use district.

A regional sportsplex will house 11 multi-purpose fields, a 2700+ person capacity stadium, walking trails, and an indoor meeting facility and anchor this Family Entertainment District. This project will generate demand for an urban neighborhood immediately adjacent. The first phase of the sportsplex, consisting of five artificial turf soccer fields, is currently underway.



*A concept plan depicting the Family Entertainment District and the Mathews Sportsplex*

The adjacent neighborhood will be a mixed-use, transit-supportive development which will include medium and high-density residential housing, commercial/retail uses, supportive uses, and a hotel. This district may also serve as a center piece for the southeast transit corridor and a transit station. The timing of this development will be market-driven. This plan is conceptual and is not intended to accurately depict actual development.

Land uses should be interconnected by a series of greenways and other pedestrian connections within the development. Greenways may also act to define land use boundaries.

The concept plan demonstrates how transit supportive principles and a complete road network were implemented in the site design process. The Town should oversee development to ensure adherence to the principles of this concept plan. To this end, the Town should require developers to provide for alternative modes of transportation by installing bike lanes, bike facilities, adequate lighting, and sidewalks on both sides of all roadways,

Quality design and construction is vital for this development to be successful. Since the area will front Independence Pointe Parkway, it is important to consider the aesthetic impact of the project. The Town should encourage development proposals which demonstrate careful consideration of Town image. Specific design standards may be appropriate for this district. The Town should shape these objectives in a new zoning category, exclusively for this district. Prior to development of this district, the Town should rezone this area accordingly.

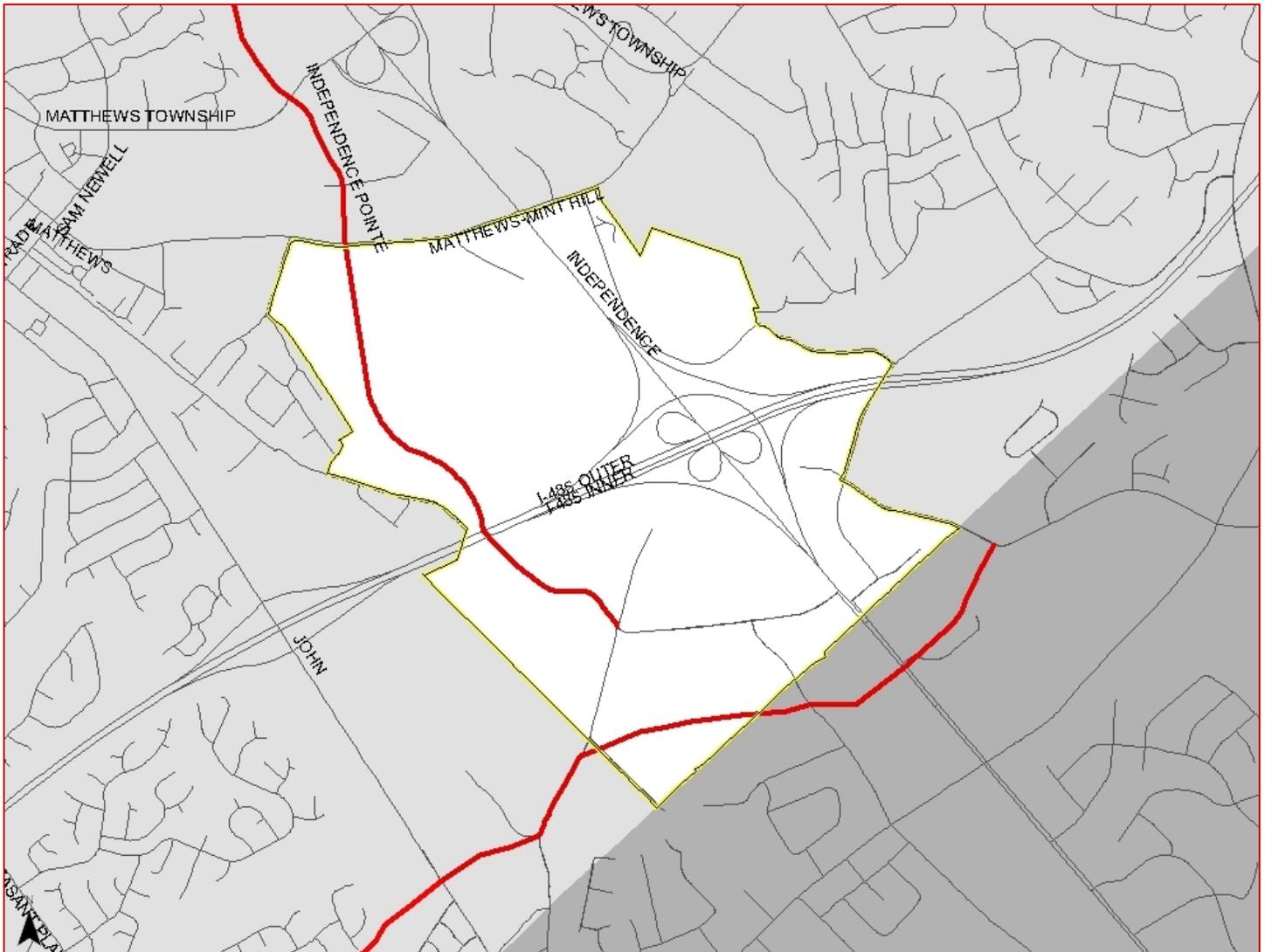
**See also: Independence Pointe Parkway Area; US 74 / 485 Interchange Area; Wingate Commons.**

**FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Encourage the timely development of the Family Entertainment District.*
2. *Encourage developers to assist in the completion of Independence Pointe Parkway and the Greylock Ridge Road connector.*
3. *Encourage development proposals which fulfill standards of conceptual build out plan*
4. *Locate utilities underground.*
5. *Create a zoning category to accommodate the Family Entertainment District site plans.*
6. *Rezone the area to more definitively accommodate the development of a Sportsplex and mixed use concept.*

The US-74 interchange is a primary access point for eastern Mecklenburg County. While land here is highly visible, it lacks access and needs alternate roadways built in order to sustain commercial development. The interchange is located on top of a ridge line, rendering utilities sparse in this area, further limiting development. Much of the land is residentially zoned for holding purposes to prevent commercial development at this time.

This area will be adversely affected by the construction of the Monroe Bypass: when access is closed at CPCC Lane and Independence Commerce Parkway, this area will become more visible yet have no direct access.



*The completion of Independence Pointe Parkway and McKee Road Extension will provide access to a largely undeveloped area.*

Upcoming roadway (Northeast Parkway, Independence Pointe Parkway, Greylock Ridge Road), land development projects (Matthews Sportsplex, Royal Park Assisted Living Center), and the extension of the CATS southeast corridor will bring much visibility and many people to the area. The Sportsplex and Family Entertainment District will be the impetus for development in the western quadrant of the interchange. Light industrial uses are appropriate for the eastern quadrant because of its proximity to other non-residential uses.

As discussed in the 2007 *Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan*, the southern quadrant of the interchange is ideal for economic development opportunities. CPCC-Levine is the primary development at this location; much of the remaining land is undeveloped. The Town Board of Commissioners approved the revised Hendrick rezoning Petition 521 in 2007 to allow a commercial mixed use concept here, yet no proposals have been submitted as of this date.

The extensions of Independence Pointe Parkway and McKee Road, both minor and major thoroughfares, respectively, and construction of the mass transit line will improve connectivity in the southern quadrant. CATS will build a transit station at the CPCC campus which will mark the terminus of the southeast transit corridor. These projects are necessary to sustain coordinated economic development projects. When completed, Campus Ridge Road and the McKee Road extension will be the only access point across the CSX tracks in this location. To effectively manage traffic when this area develops, destination uses which generate lesser traffic are preferred.

Alternatively, the highest concentrations of employment should be located closest to roads with additional carrying capacity, and likely transit station locations. Business and office uses in mixed use concepts or planned business parks are ideal development opportunities; strip malls should be prohibited. Mixed use concepts should support a primary use within the site. Low-density residential use is not a viable option for this area. The Town should manage traffic patterns in this location by reducing the number of allowed access points and promoting shared driveways.

CPCC has identified an expansion opportunity on a large portion of Town-owned land behind its facilities. Vacant land adjacent to the campus is suitable for a mixed use project serving the campus. Medium-density, multi-family housing is encouraged with any mixed use development here. This area is ideal for transit supportive development projects.

The Town must prevent improper development in all quadrants of the US-74/I-485 interchange. Destination-oriented uses are ideal for development at these locations. Impulse-oriented commercial development should be avoided.

**See also: Independence Pointe Parkway Area; US 74 Area; McKee Road Extension Area; Family Entertainment District.**

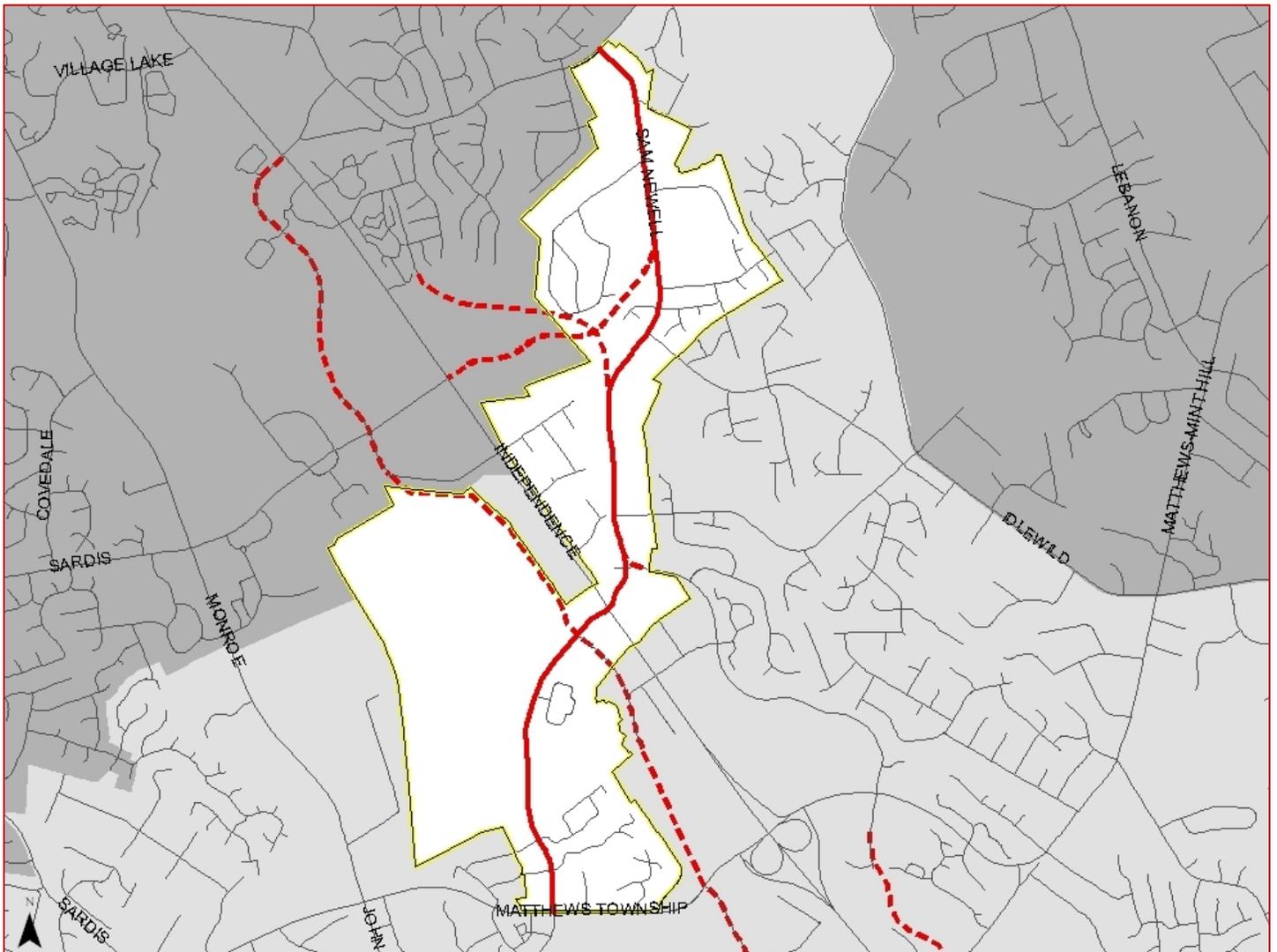
**US 74 / 485 INTERCHANGE ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Encourage the development of alternate roadways, such as Independence Pointe Parkway and McKee Road Extension in order to provide access to destinations in this area.*
2. *Prohibit impulse commercial/retail uses and residential uses at the US-74/I-485 interchange.*
3. *Locate traffic-generating uses at transit stations.*
4. *Rezone applicable land to allow for transit-supportive development and mixed use concepts.*
5. *Support the construction of the CATS Southeast Corridor Rapid Transit Line.*
6. *Prevent improper development or rezoning which would significantly increase traffic unless additional roadway improvements exist to accommodate such increases.*
7. *Require development proposals to include utilities plans that serve the entire area.*
8. *Emphasize that development must be supportive to primary uses: CPCC and transit station.*
9. *Promote multi-family residential development as a supporting use to mixed use proposals.*
10. *Prohibit low-density residential development and other non-destination uses in this area*
11. *Require developers to locate primary access driveways along roadways excluding US-74.*
12. *Discourage construction of additional access points along US-74.*
13. *Use a tiered development strategy with land development..*
14. *Promote mid-rise (minimum two stories) developments at first tier locations and low-rise developments at second tier locations.*
15. *Promote office and institutional uses.*
16. *Promote light industrial uses at the outer loop area*

### 3. SAM NEWELL ROAD

Sam Newell Road is a Gateway roadway into historic Downtown. When US-74 transitions to a limited access highway, the Sam Newell intersection will close and become a flyover. Sam Newell will then access alternate roadways: Independence Pointe Parkway and Northeast Parkway.

Sam Newell is a well-traveled, two-lane roadway. A widening project between Matthews Township Parkway and US-74 should be considered due to slow-moving, heavy truck traffic. Roadway improvements should include amenities for alternate transportation modes, including bike lanes, pedestrian sidewalks, and adequate lighting.



*Both planned local alternatives to US 74 will intersect with Sam Newell Road, as will the Sardis Road Extension.*

Sam Newell Road will be greatly impacted by numerous other roadway projects. The extension of Sardis Road North will align with Sam Newell Road in the northern section of the Town. This realignment will become the primary flow of traffic, thereby effectively terminating Sam Newell Road as a T-intersection at this point of merger. Additionally, the completion of Northeast Parkway, extending from Cross Point Circle in Charlotte eastward will facilitate the realignment of Sam Newell Road to the existing segment of Northeast Parkway. The fragmentation of Sam Newell Road will effectively result in two disconnected segments of the roadway, precluding through movement as currently operating.

Improvements along and near Sam Newell Road have recognized this eventuality. Access with Claire Drive was purposely prohibited; a landscaping berm was established between Sam Newell Road and Windsor Square. These conditions delineated a clear transition boundary to prevent the encroachment of non-residential uses and maintain traffic volumes.

In order to deter reliance on Sam Newell Road as an access to NC-51 and US-74, the Town should expand the existing roadway network in and near Downtown. The Town should implement additional means of access from Sam Newell to both roadways.

The Martin Marietta rock quarry operates to the west of this roadway segment between Crews Road and US-74. When quarrying activity ceases and reclamation begins, the Town should engage the property owners to discuss future land uses. The owner currently has a 300' strip of land zoned for light industrial use along the road frontage of this property, though no development has occurred. Light industrial, office, and commercial uses may be appropriate for this location. Any development should complement neighboring uses and transit stations along Independence Pointe Parkway.

CATS will construct a Rapid Transit Station near the Sam Newell / Independence Pointe Parkway intersection, where the Park & Ride facility is currently located. Transit supportive development could be implemented here including high-density housing. The Town encourages mixed uses in this area.

Multi-family housing, industrial uses and small business uses are located between the Windsor Square shopping center and Downtown. Higher-density housing developments, business and office uses and light industrial uses are all encouraged along this corridor.

Low-density residential areas are located northeast of the Windsor Square shopping center. This commercial boundary should be maintained to preserve the existing residential neighborhoods in this area. Non-residential developments should not be allowed north of Windsor Square. R-VS infill developments are encouraged for development opportunities in existing residential areas. The exception is land west of the roadway, between the future Northeast Parkway location and Claire Drive, as discussed in the Northeast Parkway Section.

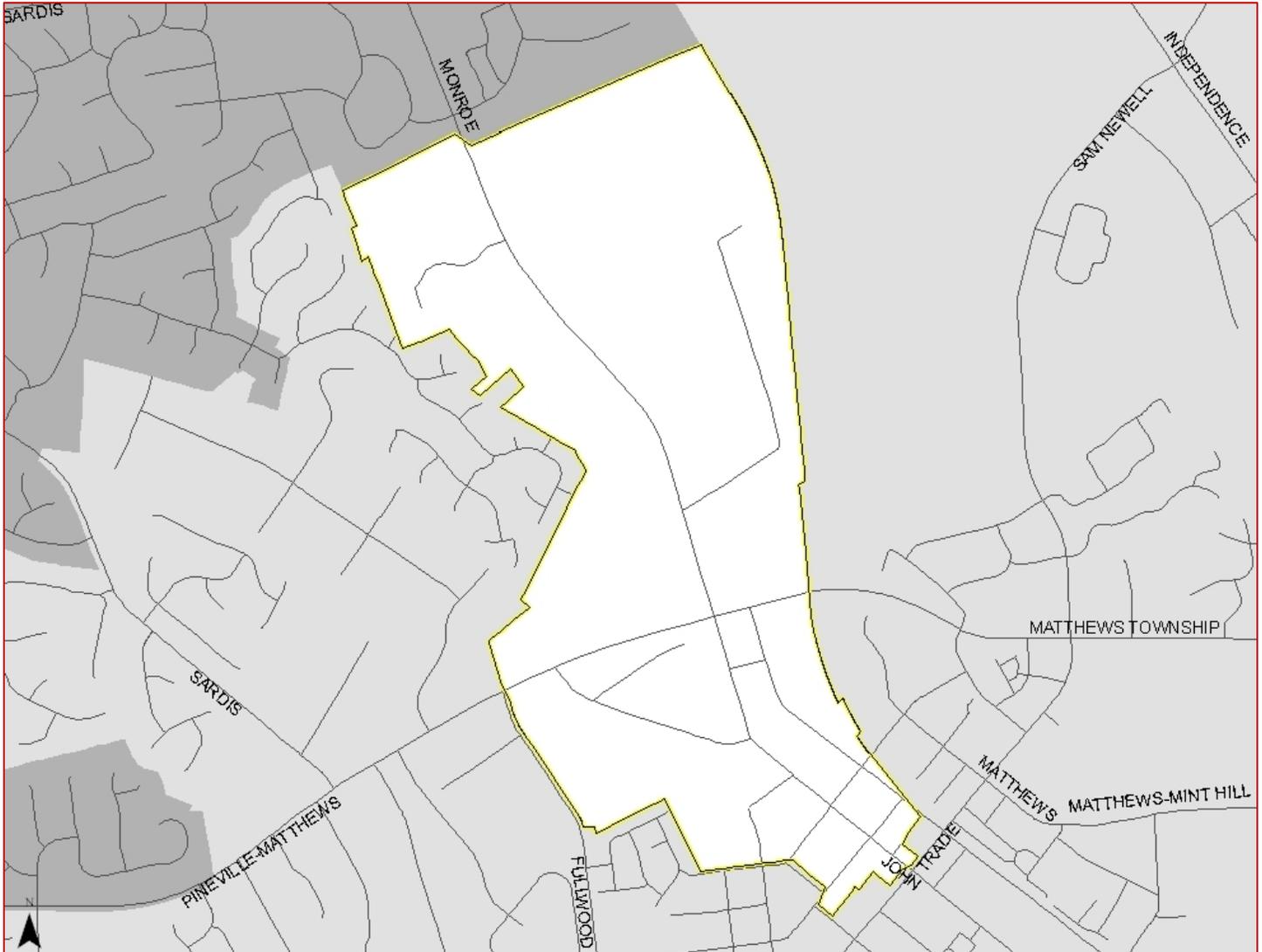
**See also: Independence Pointe Parkway Area; Northeast Parkway Area; US 74 Area.**

**SAM NEWELL ROAD ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Consider roadway widening from US-74 to Matthews Township Parkway.*
2. *Develop desired streetscape renderings of Sam Newell Road, from Matthews Township Parkway to Northeast Parkway including landscape, sidewalks, bike lanes, signage and lighting.*
3. *Prohibit rezonings which will not complement adjacent land uses.*
4. *Maintain the commercial boundary at Windsor Square.*
5. *Promote high-density housing, business, office and light industrial uses for land along Independence Pointe Parkway.*
6. *Consider alternative-style housing as infill development near Rice Road intersection.*
7. *Prohibit non-residential uses beyond established transition line except where discussed above and in the Northeast Parkway section.*
8. *Consider R-VS infill development north of Windsor Square.*

## 4a. MONROE / WEST JOHN STREET

Monroe Road and West John Street comprise one of the Town's most traveled, vibrant and economically viable roadways. Beginning in uptown Charlotte and extending into Union County, this roadway is vital for commuting purposes and access to I-485. This roadway also runs through the heart of Downtown, making it a Gateway into Historic Matthews.



*The Monroe / West John Corridor is an important gateway into not only the Town, but historic Downtown as well.*

This roadway consists of an array of land uses, from small retail outfits to large industrial operations. Several strip malls are interspersed along the roadway. The Town encourages complementary non-residential uses along this roadway. The remaining

residentially-zoned, vacant lots should be rezoned for uses that generate minimal traffic. Limiting curb cuts and sharing driveways is encouraged.

The frequency of single-use lots and vacant lots detract from the desired aesthetic appeal of Monroe Road. Assemblage of smaller lots is required for any sizable development proposal. Proposed buildings should be located close to the roadway with parking in the rear. Planned parks and mixed uses are preferred over single-use development proposals.

Land on the west side of the corridor abuts established, single-family residential neighborhoods. While the Town encourages the pursuit of economic development along Monroe Road, steps must be taken to protect adjacent residential land uses from commercial impacts. Development along the west side of this roadway must substantially buffer rear property lines to minimize noise and light pollution at adjacent residential lands. Uses which involve excessive noise, light and/or traffic are prohibited here. Convenience stores, vehicular service outfits and 24-hour uses are not appropriate for this area.

The Town should also create a more cohesive landscape among land uses fronting Monroe Road. A sidewalk should be constructed on the east side of the roadway to complement the existing sidewalk on the west side. Quality pedestrian lighting should be installed. The *Monroe Road/John Street Streetscape Plan* was created to enhance the Gateway image of the roadway. The document details landscaping guidelines for these roadways. West and East John Streets have entryway signage, lighting and landscaping to Downtown Matthews. Similar entryway presentations should be added near the Town limits on Monroe Road, as identified in the *Wayfinding Master Plan*.

To the southeast of NC 51, the roadway becomes West John Street. The aesthetic appeal of this section is essential to conveying the historical significance of this area. Comprised of mostly residential-style houses built generations ago, this stretch of John Street signifies the “small-town feel” of Matthews. Residences, churches, offices, small service businesses, and retail stores comprise land uses. This mix defines the variety and character of downtown.

Traffic is a prominent concern on West John Street. The four-lane roadway is currently running over capacity and traffic continues to increase. No median exists here, slowing the flow of vehicles. The intersection at Trade Street is considered the heart of downtown. This intersection has dedicated left-turn lanes on both streets, reducing eastbound traffic in all directions to one lane. During high-drive times, the congestion at this intersection delays traffic in all directions. CATS operates two bus lines which serve this roadway as well as a Park and Ride facility located near the intersection of South Trade Street. Development proposals must demonstrate traffic mitigation efforts as possible.

Land uses along this roadway must consider impacts to traffic as well as neighboring uses in Downtown. Office uses are encouraged as they mitigate traffic due to the low-intensity of use. Low-intensity uses better retain the lifespan and character of the structure. Although retail uses exist on West John Street, such additional uses are discouraged because they pose competition to existing businesses on Trade Street.

Parts of these roadways fall within the Downtown Overlay District boundaries. This overlay was created to maintain and preserve the heritage of Historic Downtown. In response, the *Downtown Master Plan* was created to establish design guidelines for this area. Development within this district must continue to adhere to the guidelines set forth in the document.

**See also: NC 51 Corridor; Downtown.**

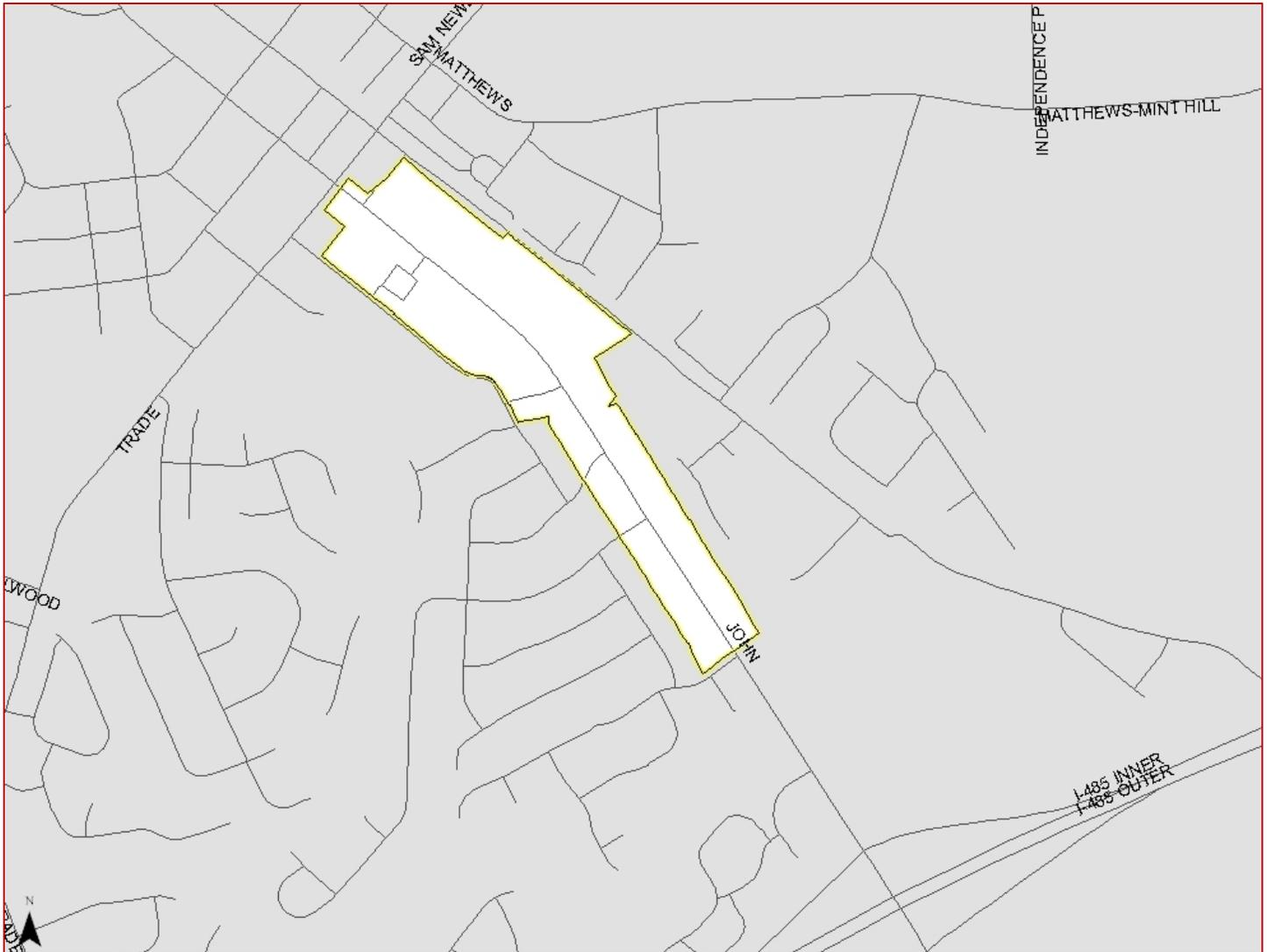
**MONROE ROAD / WEST JOHN STREET CORRIDOR ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Install and maintain Gateway signage, landscaping and lighting at Gateway points.*
2. *Create a cohesive landscaping plan among all developments fronting the roadway.*
3. *Promote non-residential, multi-use, and light industrial developments along Monroe Road.*
4. *Prohibit the expansion of strip center-style commercialization along Monroe Road.*
5. *Encourage unified development plans between neighboring businesses to consolidate parcels, parking, driveways, and curb cuts.*
6. *Maintain and preserve the desired small-town, town center image along West John Street.*
7. *Maintain and preserve residential-style structures which embody the essence of Historic Downtown.*
8. *Protect the visual and spatial compatibility of existing single-family structures regarding rezoning petitions for non-residential uses.*
9. *Locate parking at the side or rear of properties.*
10. *Prohibit parking at the front of properties.*
11. *Consolidate driveways and limit curb cuts along West John Street.*
12. *Promote low-intensity office and service uses along West John Street.*
13. *Prohibit the expansion of retail uses along West John Street*

## 4b. EAST JOHN STREET GATEWAY

Extending from the Union County line into downtown, East John Street serves multiple functions including an access roadway to I-485, a gateway point to Historic Downtown Matthews, and a major thoroughfare in Mecklenburg County.

The portion of East John Street in downtown has a variety of retail, service, office, the Post Office, and residential uses including town houses at Park Square.



*East John Street is a gateway into Downtown Matthews.*

East John Street is a two lane roadway currently running over capacity. While no funding or schedule exists for roadway improvements, East John Street is on the long-range MUMPO thoroughfare plan as a major thoroughfare and needs to be widened. Development along and adjacent to East John Street must consider potential impacts to traffic congestion.

Development must consider impacts to neighboring land uses. This roadway is adjacent to residential neighborhoods and Historic Downtown. Land development must preserve the integrity of existing residential neighborhoods and downtown commercial uses. Retail uses should be discouraged along this roadway because they pose competition to existing retail outfits downtown.

Between the I-485 interchange area and downtown , adjacent land should remain its current, mostly residential use. If redeveloped, this land would be appropriate for higher-density alternative housing styles. Recombination of parcels and sharing of driveway access points would be ideal in this scenario.

**See also: East John / 485 Interchange; Downtown.**

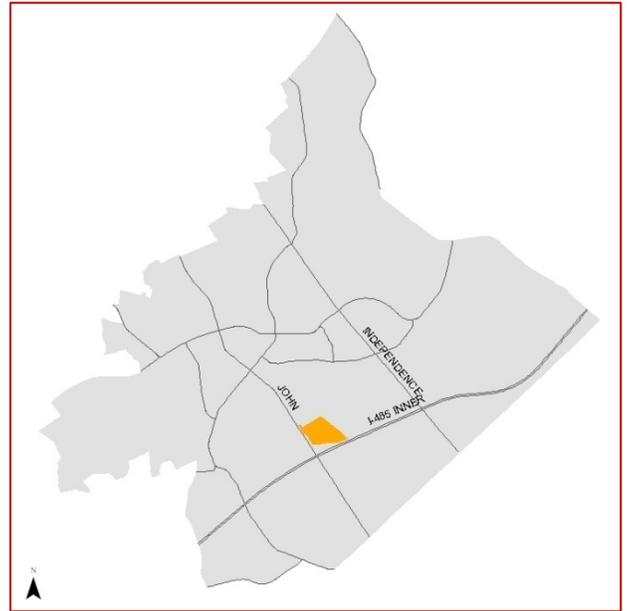
**EAST JOHN STREET AREA ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Install and Maintain Gateway signage, landscaping and lighting at Gateway points.*
2. *Maintain and preserve residential uses along East John Street, except as discussed in the East John Street/I-485 Interchange section.*
3. *Prevent improper development or rezoning which would significantly increase traffic along East John Street unless additional roadway improvements exist to accommodate such increases.*
4. *Promote destination-oriented land uses along East John Street.*
5. *Require uses and structures at the nonconforming commercial sites to complement existing adjacent uses when such operations cease.*
6. *Require developers to install buffers to eliminate added noise, light and air pollution and separate residential uses from non-residential uses.*
7. *Construct sidewalks on both sides of the roadway.*
8. *Consolidate driveways, limit curb cuts, and promote assembly of parcels along East John Street*

## 4c. WINGATE COMMONS AREA

Located within the East John Area, the Town Board of Commissioners approved a rezoning petition for a mixed use development at this site. Wingate University plans to build a satellite campus here. Multi-family housing, offices, a hotel and supportive commercial/retail uses were included in the site plan. Land development will be phased and market-driven.

The developer will construct a portion of a connector roadway extension: Greylock Ridge Road. When completed, the roadway will provide additional access to the Sportsplex and Family Entertainment District, and the transit corridor.



*Wingate Commons site near East John / 485 Interchange Area*



*Wingate Commons conceptual plan*

A mix of land uses, such as services, restaurants, and offices should complement the primary use. These land uses should be complementary and inclusive to the development, drawing patrons from the primary use. The Town should discourage commercial or retail uses which would attract significant, additional traffic to East John Street.

The Town understands that this portion of East John Street cannot accommodate significant traffic increases. The developer will add a west-bound, right turn lane which spans the length of the property along East John Street. This addition will be phased accordingly as shown on site plans. To encourage alternate transit, the developer should incorporate sidewalks, bike lanes, bike facilities and adequate lighting within the development. The Town should develop a cross section of East John Street that includes future plans for dual-sided sidewalks and bike lanes.

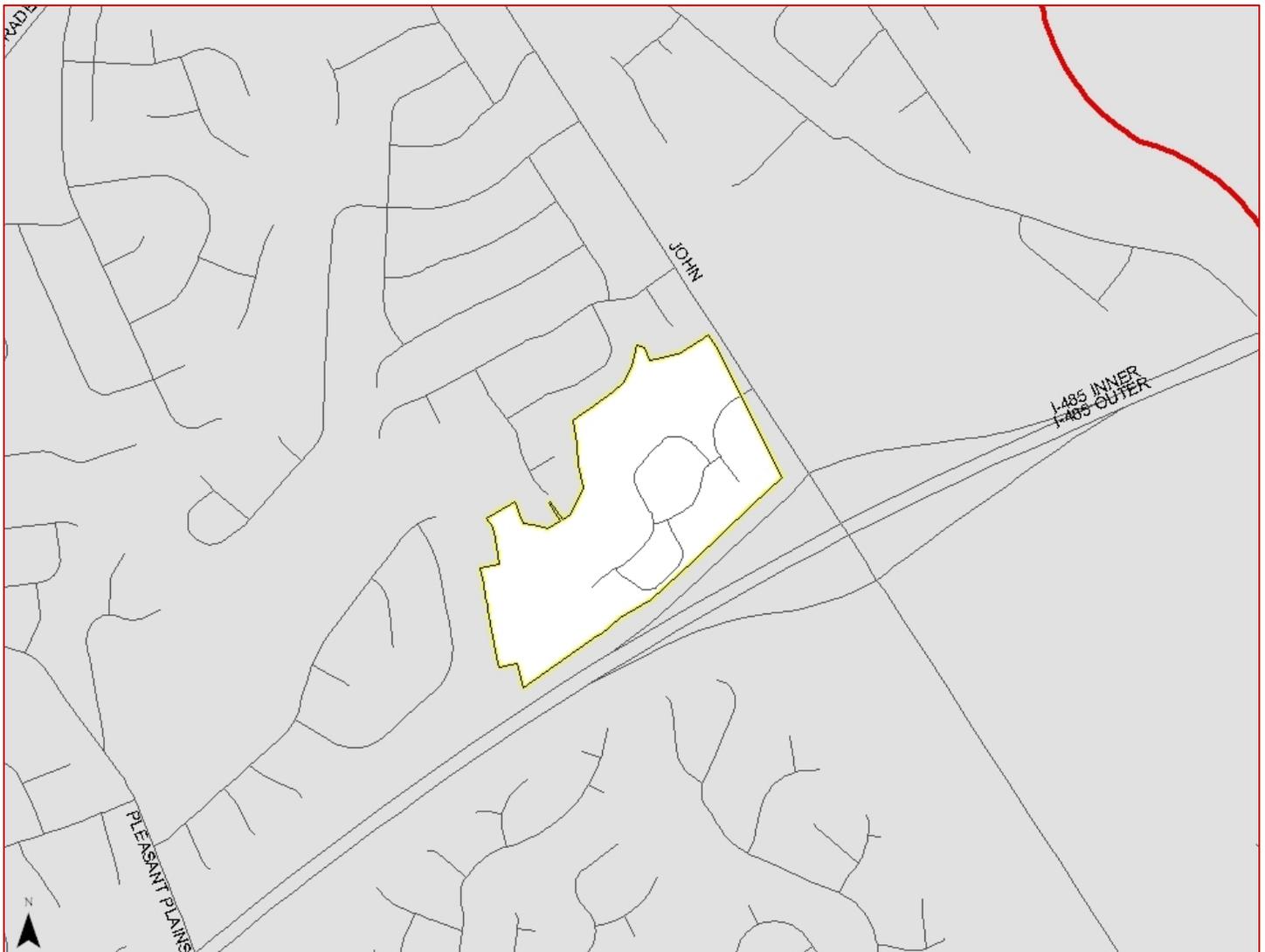
**See also: East John / 485 Interchange Area; Independence Pointe Parkway Area; Family Entertainment District; US 74 / 485 Interchange Area.**

**WINGATE COMMONS AREA ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Promote complementary, destination-oriented mixed use development at this location.*
2. *Encourage the timely development of the Greylock Ridge Road connector.*
3. *Prohibit impulse-oriented commercial uses at this location.*
4. *Require development proposals to include plans for sidewalks, bike lanes, bike facilities and adequate lighting.*
5. *Develop a cross section for East John Street that includes sidewalks and bike lanes along both sides of the roadway*

#### 4d. BEXLEY AREA

The Bexley area houses a small mixed use concept which is only partially built out. The development includes an apartment complex as well as some office and service uses. All uses here share Council Place as a common, singular access point to East John Street. Four Mile Creek Greenway currently terminates at East John Street in the northwest corner of this area.



*The Bexley development is precariously located within the East John / 485 Interchange Area.*

The greenway land provides a smooth transition to single-family neighborhoods to the rear. Ingress and egress from East John Street is minimal and does not significantly impede the flow of traffic. The Town supports maintaining current land use here. It is not likely that land here will redevelop. If redevelopment occurs, it should not increase the intensity of land use or the volume of traffic on East John Street. No additional access points to this area should be constructed on East John Street.

**See also: East John Street / 485 Interchange.**

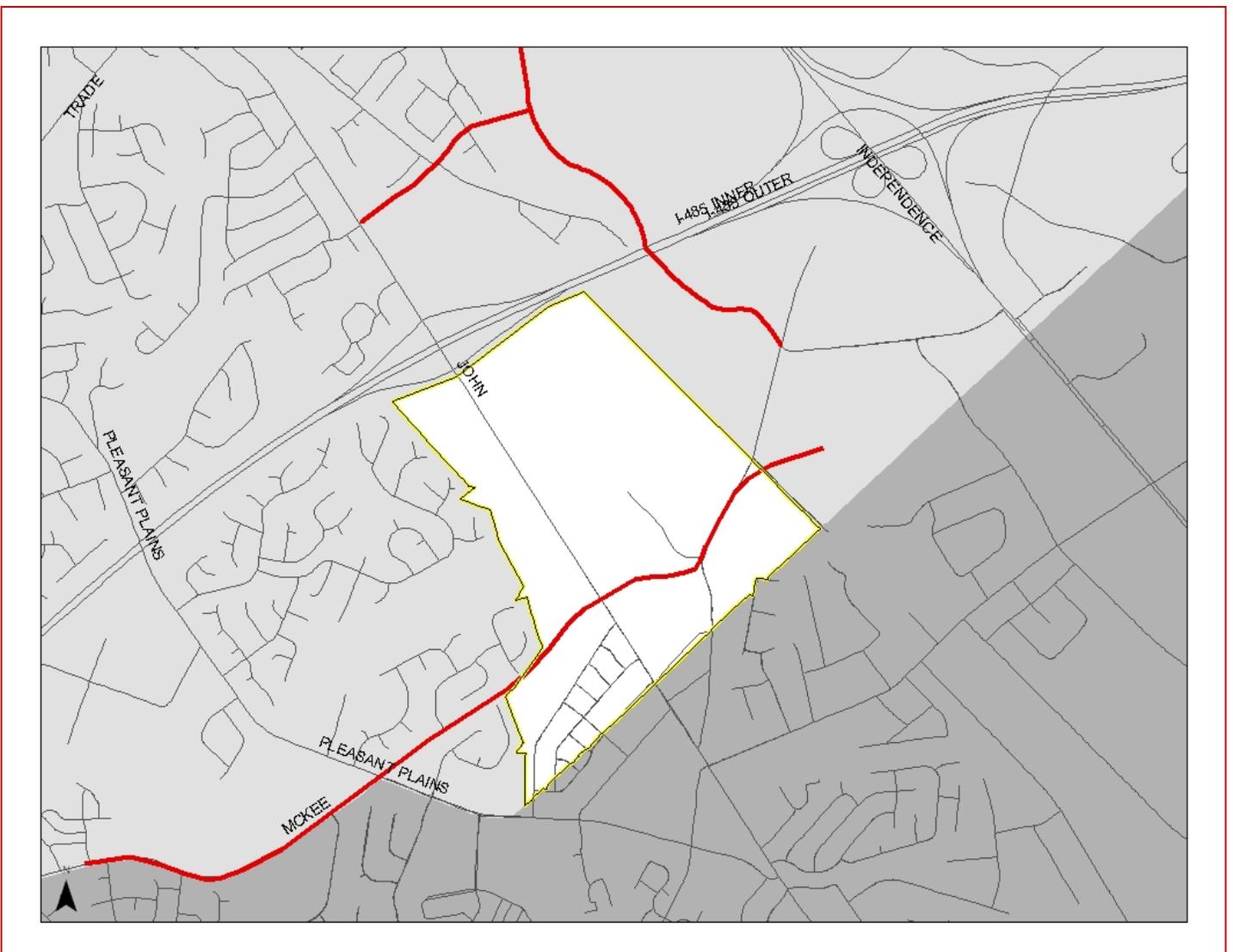
**BEXLEY AREA ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Maintain and preserve multi-family residential uses in this area.*
2. *Encourage build out of mixed use development that will not significantly impact traffic on East John Street.*
3. *Prevent improper development which would significantly increase traffic along East John Street.*
4. *Prohibit construction of additional access points along East John Street.*
5. *Require developers to install buffers to eliminate added noise, light and air pollution and separate residential uses from non-residential uses.*

#### 4e. EAST JOHN STREET: OUTER LOOP AREA

East John Street is a major thoroughfare on the MUMPO Thoroughfare Plan and, as such, this roadway should be capable of moving larger volumes of traffic than its current capacity. The construction of the 485 Interchange at East John Street has compounded traffic issues, as well as placing an increased demand on development in the immediate vicinity.

In order to minimize traffic impacts, development here must be destination-oriented. The northern quadrant of the interchange has been identified as the future location of Wingate Commons (see corresponding study area in this section). The eastern quadrant was highlighted in the 2007 *Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan* as an ideal setting for a planned office park. Light industrial and/or light warehousing would also be appropriate land uses. Retail and quick-service uses should be limited because they would likely attract additional traffic from outside of the park. Adjacent to the interstate and a major thoroughfare, this area has plentiful economic development opportunities.



*The East John 485 Outer Loop Area presents substantial planning challenges: development opportunity and traffic concerns.*

The build-out of this area should complement adjacent land uses. Residential land uses across East John Street and potential residential uses along the McKee Road Corridor Area must be considered. A connector roadway to the future McKee Road extension or existing Campus Ridge Road will be needed as these land areas develop. Alternate transportation should be encouraged. The developer should install sidewalks, bike lanes, bike facilities and adequate lighting with any development proposal.

When constructed, these developments should limit access along East John Street. Access points on East John Street should align with existing access points whenever possible. Access points on other roads are encouraged.

The southwest side of East John Street is composed of single-family residential neighborhoods and is well-suited for residential infill development. There are density limitations in this location due to sparse availability of public utilities.

Though no plans exist to widen East John Street, municipalities in Union County are pressuring NCDOT to widen Old Monroe Road. This, in turn, will compound the bottleneck on East John Street upon entering the Town of Matthews. Therefore, coordination among the numerous agencies is necessary to plan this corridor widening in a logical progression. A cross section of the roadway would therefore be prudent for future purposes. This cross section should include dual-sided pedestrian sidewalks, bike lanes and adequate lighting for alternative transit. The Town should also design streetscaping plans specific to this interchange.

Several factors present challenges to this area. Since East John Street currently operates at capacity, there are concerns regarding an influx of traffic due to land development. Developers must be sensitive to the adjacent residential areas. Each development proposal must demonstrate effective traffic mitigation and minimize effects to neighboring residential areas. Proposals which substantially increase negative impacts to traffic and / or nearby neighborhoods should not be considered.

Overall, East John Street interchange is a prime location for land development opportunities. The 2007 *Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan* highlighted the northeastern side of East John Street as a focal point of economic development. Upcoming roadway projects and the extension of the CATS southeast corridor will bring increased visibility and additional people to the area. Wingate University will soon build a satellite campus here; Central Piedmont Community College has plans to expand services into this area. These developments will attract supportive uses to this area.

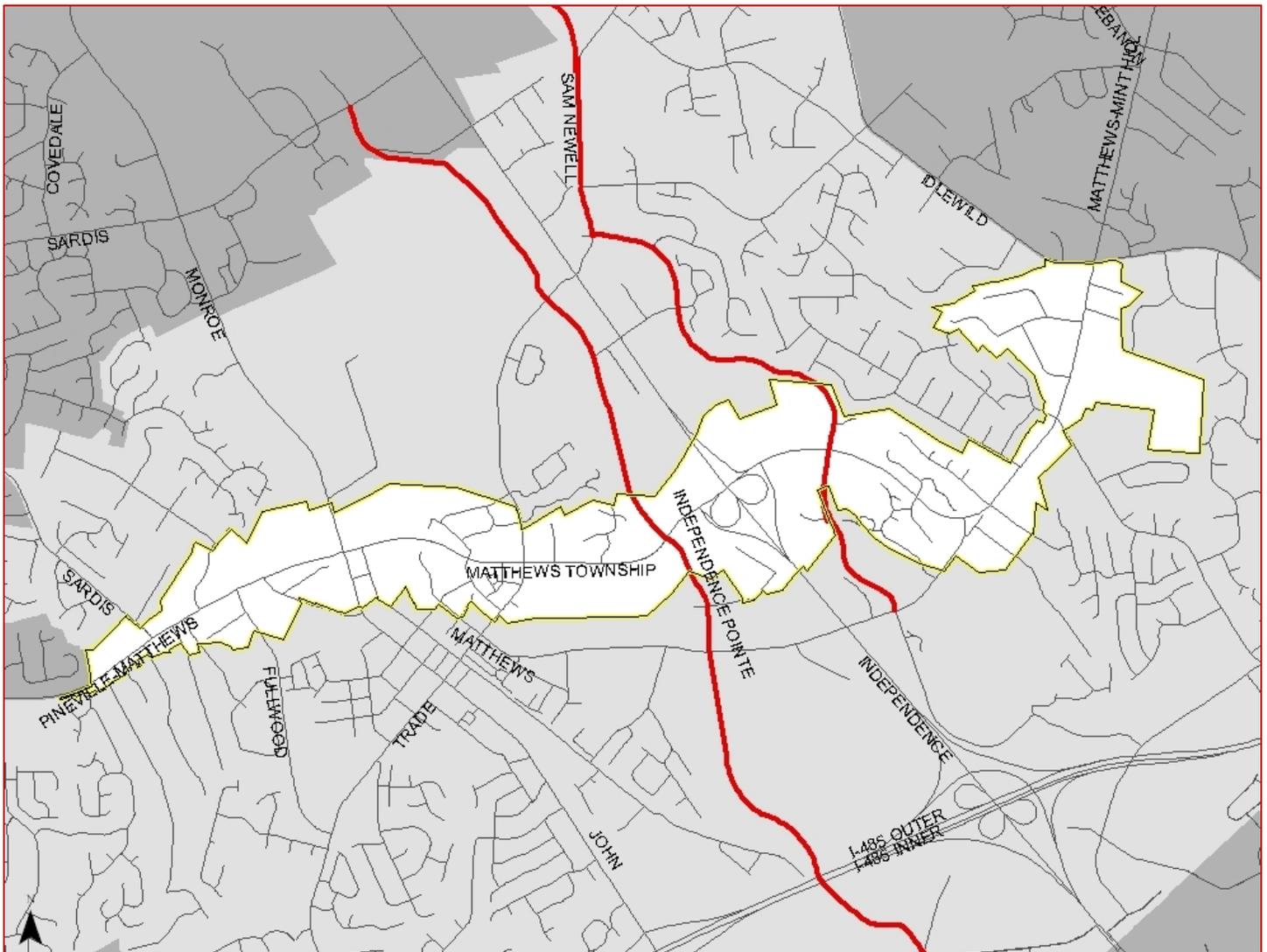
**See also: East John Street Area; Wingate Commons; McKee Road Extension Area; Brightmoor; Bexley.**

**EAST JOHN STREET: OUTER LOOP AREA ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Create a harmonious balance between residential and commercial land uses in this area.*
2. *Design a cross section for East John Street which includes elements for alternative transportation modes.*
3. *Develop desired streetscape renderings of the East John Street at I-485 interchange including landscape, sidewalks, bike lanes, signage and lighting.*
4. *Promote development of a planned office / employment park, light warehousing, or light industrial uses in the northeastern quadrant of the interchange.*
5. *Limit retail or service uses in the northeastern quadrant.*
6. *Limit driveway access on East John Street.*
7. *Coordinate access point(s) on East John Street to align with any future driveway constructed in the Brightmoor Area.*
8. *Encourage the development of a connector roadway to the future McKee Road extension or existing Campus Ridge Road.*
9. *Discourage development that is dependent on East John Street for primary access.*
10. *Require developers to install buffers to eliminate added noise, light and air pollution and separate residential uses from non-residential uses.*
11. *Require all development along East John Street to have adequate buffers that effectively minimize adverse impacts of development.*
12. *Encourage light industrial uses along the CSX railroad tracks and prohibit the construction and/or expansion of heavy industrial uses.*

NC-51 is a high volume roadway across Matthews. This major thoroughfare offers town and downtown gateway points at various intersections. Most of the roadway falls within the Special Highway Overlay District boundaries, a zoning category created to maintain and preserve the scenic beauty and character of the landscape along this roadway while allowing orderly and functional development. The overlay standards enable this roadway to function as an efficient thoroughfare and a gateway corridor.

NC-51 / Matthews Township Parkway is the commercial core of the roadway, housing major shopping centers, a hospital, light industrial use and new R-VS developments. Presbyterian Hospital on Matthews Township Parkway has attracted increased medical office use to the Town.



*The NC 51 Corridor stretches across the Town of Matthews, intersecting numerous major roads.*

Independence Pointe Parkway will house a transit station near the intersection of Matthews Township Parkway. This location is ideal for transit supportive development, including higher-density housing. One such multi-family development, Paces Commons, is located here.

Matthews Township Parkway should maintain its Gateway image along the commercial corridor. The Town encourages mixed use and planned park development proposals. Strip commercialization is prohibited along this roadway. Rezoning must complement adjacent land uses.

NC-51 / Pineville-Matthews Road and NC-51 / Matthews Mint Hill Road are comprised mostly of established, single-family residential uses. Existing residential uses must be maintained. The Town encourages R-VS infill development in these locations.

Neighborhoods along NC-51 / Pineville Matthews Road lack cross connections. As a result, each neighborhood is almost entirely dependent on a designated main roadway for ingress and egress to NC-51/Pineville Matthews Road. Cross connections should be considered to improve traffic flow.

The NC-51 corridor should be bike and pedestrian-friendly. The Town should incorporate dual-sided sidewalks and bike lanes. Pedestrian and bike access should be designed at the railroad overpass.

**See also: Independence Pointe Parkway Area; Idlewild Road Area; Monroe / West John Street Area; Sam Newell Road Area.**

**NC 51 CORRIDOR ACTION ITEMS:**

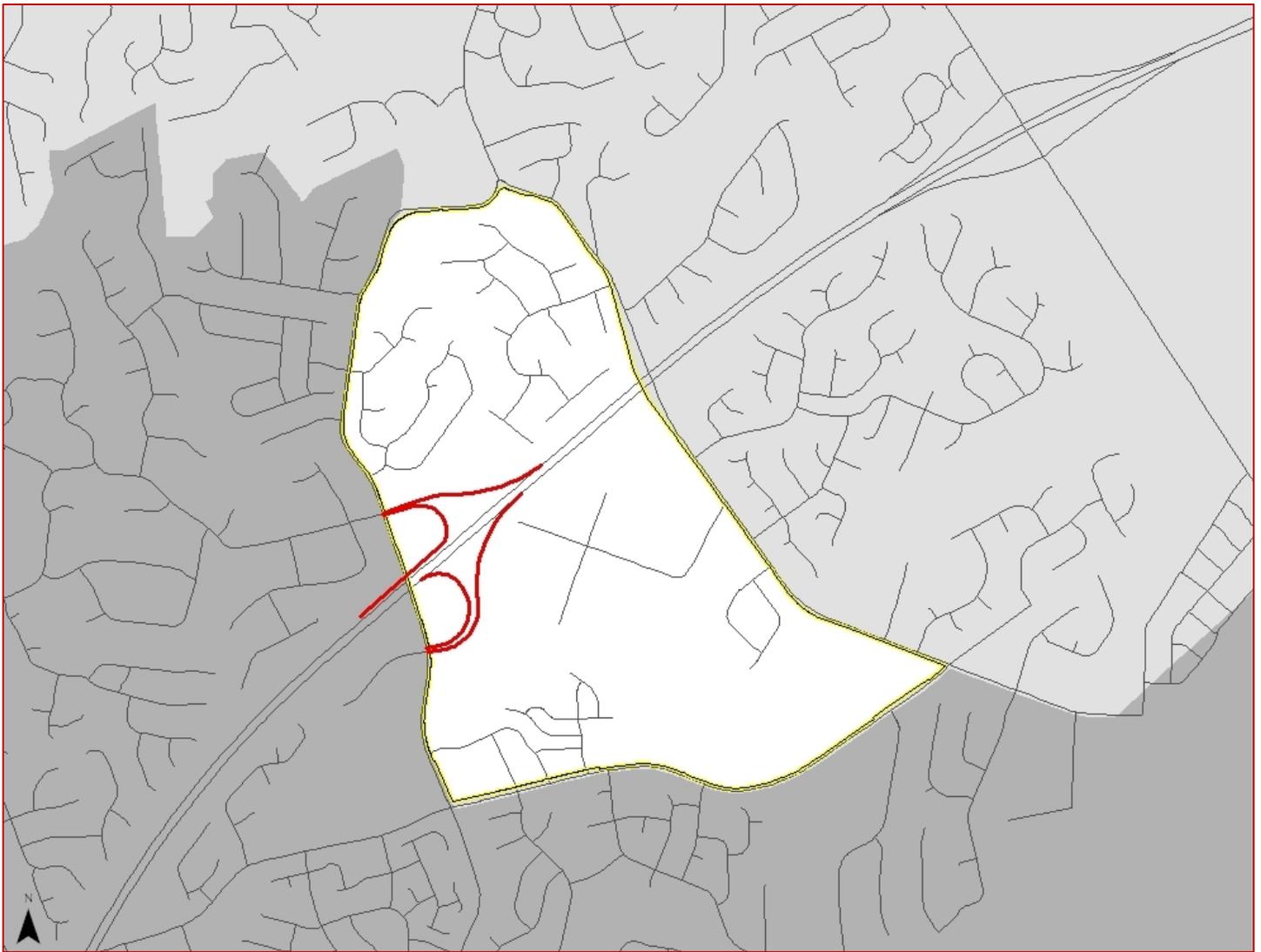
1. *Develop streetscaping plans for rights of way along NC-51.*
2. *Continue to consolidate driveways and limit curb cuts and median breaks along the NC-51 corridor to efficiently move traffic.*
3. *Preserve mature trees along NC-51.*
4. *Encourage high-density, transit-supportive housing near the transit station.*
5. *Promote mixed use developments and planned business parks along the Matthews Township Parkway portion of NC-51 (i.e. between Monroe Road and Northeast Parkway).*
6. *Prohibit strip-commercialization along NC-51.*
7. *Maintain and preserve residential uses along Pineville-Matthews Road and Matthews-Mint Hill Road and promote alternate styles of housing infill development.*
8. *Consider roadway cross connections among Reverdy Lane, Elizabeth Lane, Sardis Plantation Drive, Courtney Lane, Lakenheath Lane and Bubbling Well Road to provide additional access to Pineville Matthews Road.*
9. *Incorporate dual-sided sidewalks and bike lanes.*
10. *Install pedestrian and bike access on Matthews Township Parkway at the railroad overpass*

## 6. WEDDINGTON ROAD / 485 INTERCHANGE

The Weddington Road interchange at I-485 will alter traffic patterns by providing direct vehicular access to the interstate. Though adjacent to the Town limits, this interchange will be constructed entirely within Matthews. Rights of way acquisition negotiations started in earnest in August 2009. The project has since been delayed and is tentatively scheduled for completion sometime after 2020.

The ramp providing inner loop access will align with Plantation Road in Charlotte; outer loop access will align with Plantation Center Drive in Charlotte.

Residential neighborhoods and related institutional uses comprise much of the land use along this portion of Weddington Road. A commercial / retail center in Charlotte limits is opposite of the YMCA, however, this center is surrounded by developed residential land uses.



*The Weddington Road / 485 Interchange will create a new access point southwest of the John Street / 485 Interchange.*

In anticipation of increased traffic, land use should remain single-family, residential use. This area is established, and redevelopment is unlikely. R-VS infill is an appropriate development opportunity for the limited, unimproved land near the interchange site. Rezoning for non-residential or non-institutional use should be prohibited.

In order to keep traffic moving efficiently at the interchange, NCDOT will permanently close access points along Weddington Road between Plantation Road and Plantation Center Drive. One driveway at the Siskey YMCA will be closed. Access at Winterbrooke Drive will become a right in/right out intersection.

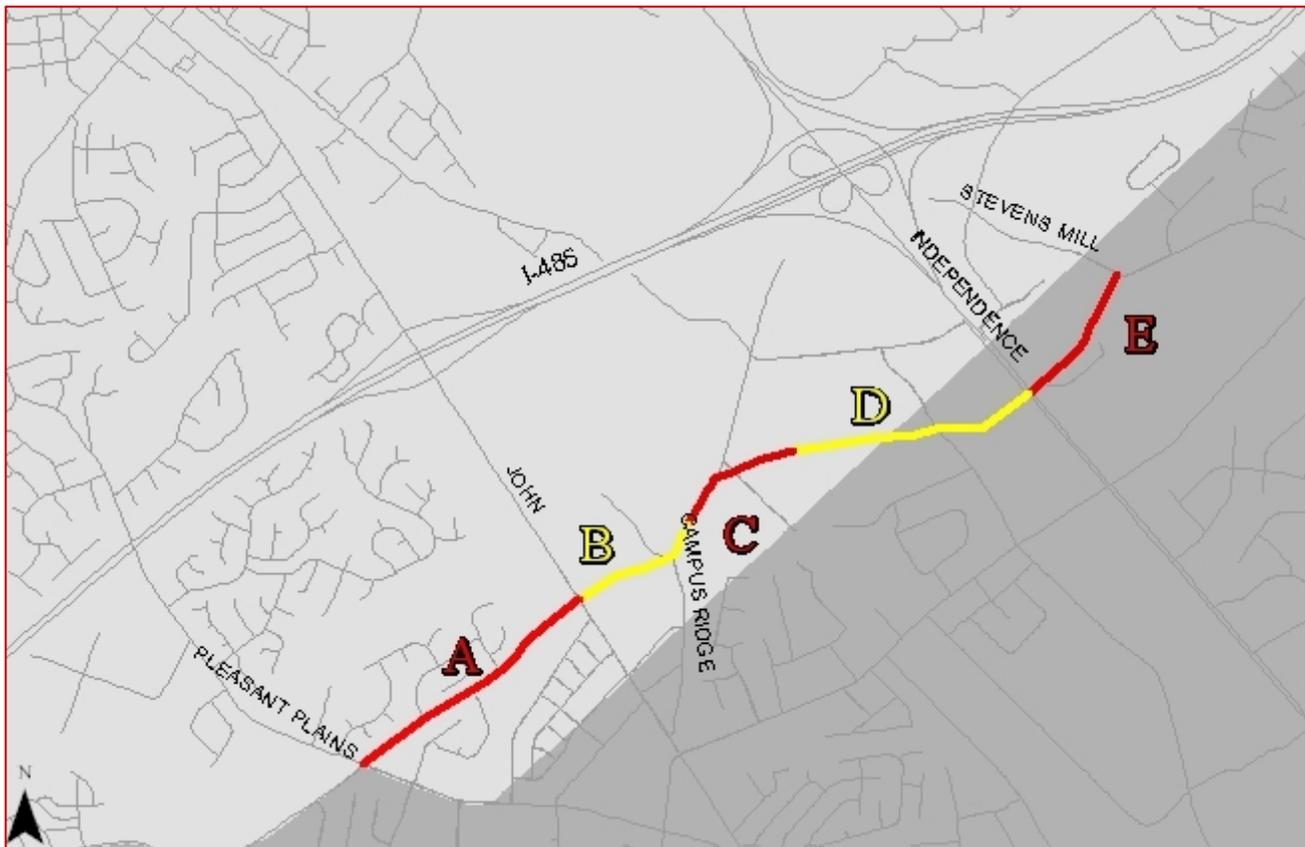
**WEDDINGTON ROAD / 485 INTERCHANGE ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Maintain and preserve residential and institutional uses along Weddington Road.*
2. *Promote R-VS infill development adjacent to the interchange site.*
3. *Prohibit commercial development along Weddington Road.*
4. *Require developers to install buffers to eliminate added noise, light and air pollution near adjacent residential uses.*
5. *Encourage NCDOT to install buffers at time of construction.*
6. *Provide safe and convenient pedestrian connections across the expanded overpass and nearby neighborhoods.*

## 7. McKEE ROAD CORRIDOR

The McKee Road Corridor is a phased project that will connect McKee Road at Pleasant Plains Road to US-74 in Union County. This roadway is part of the MUMPO Thoroughfare Plan. This extension will improve connectivity to I-485, Union County and future nearby developments by creating a cross-regional connection that currently does not exist. This roadway will intersect East John Street and is expected to alter traffic patterns in this part of Matthews. It is unclear how and when the roadway will reconnect and extend beyond US-74, though this decision will impact long term traffic patterns.

In conjunction with the Independence Pointe Parkway construction, the completed McKee Road extension will provide substantial relief to traffic congestion Downtown and on East John Street. Segment A will connect to East John Street through an established single-family residential area; much of the land adjacent to Segments B, C, and D is undeveloped. As land develops in these areas, it is necessary to mitigate significant changes in traffic patterns along East John Street.



*The planned McKee Road Extension is divided into five segments, likely reflecting the phasing of construction.*

Construction of a major thoroughfare in this area will create numerous economic development opportunities. Once completed, there will be considerable pressure to develop land adjacent to the extension. The Hendrick Auto Mall, the expansion of CPCC and an employment park are three future concepts likely to develop as the roadway extension progresses. However, no adequate public utilities currently exist to support land development.

The McKee Road extension may be publically funded by the local, state and federal levels as well as private entities. Planning continues to progress though secure funding is not available.

Engineering plans for Segments A, B and C were submitted to NCDOT for comment and approval in 2009. The state is moving forward with right of way acquisition negotiations for this segment.

### **Segment A**

Developed land adjacent to this Segment consists of low-density, single-family housing. When McKee Road is extended, there will be pressure for commercial development adjacent to these residential areas at East John Street. The Town should limit land use along Segment A to residential to protect the current quality of life of existing neighborhoods. Higher-density alternative housing would be appropriate for undeveloped land northwest of Segment A. All development must provide adequate buffers fronting East John Street to mitigate adverse impacts of future developments on the opposite side of East John Street.

The Eastwood Forest neighborhood southeast of Segment A is split between jurisdictions and likely to remain a residential neighborhood. This neighborhood is commonly used as a “short cut” from parts of Union County to I-485 at East John Street. The Town should work with this other jurisdictions to provide better traffic relief for this area. Segment A is expected to reduce the amount of through traffic in this neighborhood.

### **Segments B and C**

Segment B is on the state’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) schedule for construction in the 2012 - 2013 fiscal year. Though costs are divided among local, state and federal government, the Town will be responsible for project management. Alternatively, Hendrick Automotive has agreed to fund Segment B in the event they develop their second phase prior to 2013.

Segment C is on the TIP for construction in 2014, though partial funding is still needed. The Town requested funding for this segment and is awaiting approval from the NC State Board of Transportation. If this request is approved, most of the entire extension project will have funding sources. Right of way negotiations have not begun for this segment.

The CSX tracks bisect the land area between East John Street and US-74. McKee Road will be the only access point to cross these tracks, likely not at grade. Development occurring in this area must acknowledge this barrier and plan development accordingly to mitigate traffic along East John Street and effectively manage traffic along the future McKee Road extension. The CSX tracks create a buffer between these bisected areas. Light industrial use is encouraged as a viable land use option adjacent to the tracks. Union County

has heavy industrial uses along the tracks. The Town should prohibit the expansion of heavy industrial use inside Town limits.

The location of the transit station here remains undecided. Depending on whether it is located closer to CPCC or McKee Road will impact transit-supportive designs regarding development densities. Highest concentrations of employment uses should be closest to the transit station and adjacent to McKee Road to effectively manage traffic. Any development occurring here must have primary access on McKee Road.

Once Segment B is built, there will be pressure for office and high-density residential development. Utilities here are sparse and only accommodate the CPCC campus. Any development occurring must provide utilities to service this entire location. Development proposals which include only site-specific utility construction should not be considered.

Land adjacent to Segment B is ideal for residential and employment use in a coordinated setting. Service uses are appropriate only if they support primary uses. General commercial use is discouraged at this location. The *Town of Matthews Strategic Economic Development Plan* highlighted land west of Segment B as a possible location for a contained office park. Land east of this Segment is ideal for a mixed use concept, preferably vertical in design and in a coordinated setting. Development proposals east of Segment B must be more sizeable than each parcel which currently exists in order to be economically viable. Development here will require an assemblage of parcels. Projects should be ten acres or larger in size to be considered for development. All construction occurring along East John Street must provide adequate buffering for the residential uses across the roadway. Buffers must effectively minimize adverse impacts of land development.

#### **Segment D**

No timeline or funding exists for the construction of the undeveloped portion of Segment D which will extend the road from the CSX rail line to Matthews-Indian Trail Road. Current plans include depict Segment D continuing McKee Road beyond Campus Ridge Road, across the county boundary, and continuing east to US 74. Such connectivity will be needed when development in this area commences. The Town should encourage MUMPO to design and adopt an alignment of future Independence Pointe Parkway that would connect with McKee Road

This land area will adjoin the Hendrick Auto Mall property. Development must complement existing development. Highest intensity uses should be located along the railroad track and future transit station if located here. The developer will be responsible for supplying utilities for the entire area in lieu of site-specific utility construction. Residential uses in a mixed use setting are encouraged at this location. The Hendrick Automotive Group has committed funds for the portion of road extension from Matthews-Indian Trail Road to US 74.

#### **Segment E**

Segment E completes McKee as an alternate connector road paralleling Interstate 485 in Union County. This segment will connect local roads with Stevens Mill Road north of the Monroe Bypass in Stallings, just beyond the county boundary. The Town Board has

supported this alignment and has recommended that it be added to NCDOT plans. This segment is critical to provide safety services (EMT, police, fire) in a timely manner to eastern corner of the town that will otherwise be isolated by the Monroe Bypass.

**See also: East John / 485 Interchange Area; US 74 / 485 Interchange Area; Brightmoor.**

**McKEE ROAD CORRIDOR ACTION ITEMS:**

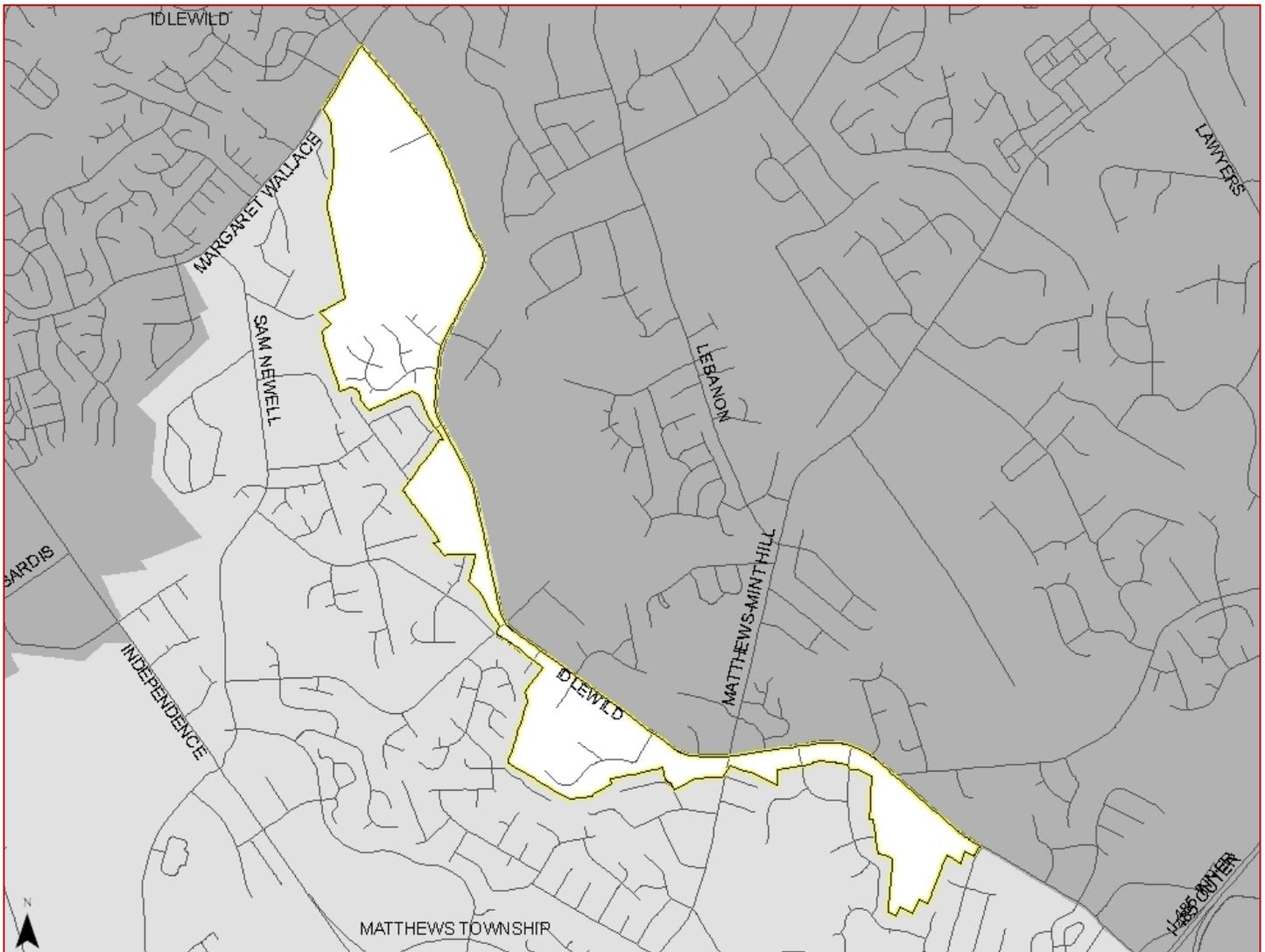
1. *Encourage the completion of the McKee Road extension.*
2. *Pursue funding sources to expedite the McKee Road construction.*
3. *Require developers to provide utilities that service the entire McKee Road corridor.*
4. *Discourage proposals that include only site-specific utilities construction.*
5. *Require primary access points to be located on McKee Road as opposed to existing roadways.*
6. *Encourage MUMPO to consider alternate connector roadway options including alignment with future Independence Pointe Parkway.*
7. *Limit and maintain land use at Segment A to residential use. Encourage higher-density housing development at undeveloped land north of Segment A.*
8. *Encourage coordinated residential and employment uses along Segment B.*
9. *Encourage mixed use concepts that are a minimum of ten acres south of Segment B.*
10. *Locate highest concentrations of employment uses along McKee Road and near transit station.*
11. *Encourage land development adjacent to Segments C & D to complement existing and/or future development plans at CPCC's expansion site and Hendrick Auto Mall site.*
12. *Encourage residential uses in a mixed use setting at Segment D*

## 8a. IDLEWILD ROAD

Idlewild Road is the dividing boundary between Matthews and Mint Hill. The road also offers access to I-485 with an interchange at the eastern edge of the town limits. These two distinct portions of the road have been split into two study areas.

Areas along this segment of the roadway are comprised of mostly residential uses. Matthews, Charlotte, and Mint Hill have introduced small commercial developments at more prominent intersections on Idlewild Road; residential uses along the corridor are maintained. Non-commercial uses at these intersections are proportional in scale to neighboring residential uses. The Town must consider impacts on established residential uses with development proposals.

Adjacent land development in Charlotte and Mint Hill will impact Matthews. The Town must coordinate land use with both jurisdictions. Land use at I-485 is discussed in the Idlewild Road Interchange section of the Interstate 485 section.



*Idlewild Road represents the northeastern boundary of Matthews.*

Land at Idlewild Road at Margaret Wallace Road is surrounded by commercial use in adjacent jurisdictions. Time Warner Cable has an office located in Mint Hill which may affect development options in this location. Redevelopment to higher density residential uses is appropriate. Institutional infill development is encouraged. These uses may be feasible here if they complement uses in Charlotte and Mint Hill. Redevelopment must not encroach on neighboring uses.

A small cluster of retail and service uses exists at the Matthews-Mint Hill Road intersection. Such uses are appropriate because they primarily serve the neighboring residential areas on both roadways. In the past, the Town set limits on the extent of non-residential development. Expansion of non-commercial uses is prohibited in order to preserve the quality of life in nearby residential areas.

Land toward the I-485 interchange was approved for a senior-marketed R-VS development. Such residential uses are appropriate for this area and the remainder of the Idlewild Road corridor. Though most land uses along the corridor are established and unlikely to redevelop, R-VS infill is encouraged along this corridor. While alternative style housing is encouraged for development and redevelopment along this corridor, this location is too distant from the transit corridor to support higher density uses. Availability of public utilities between NC-51 and the County line remains sparse and cannot support high density uses.

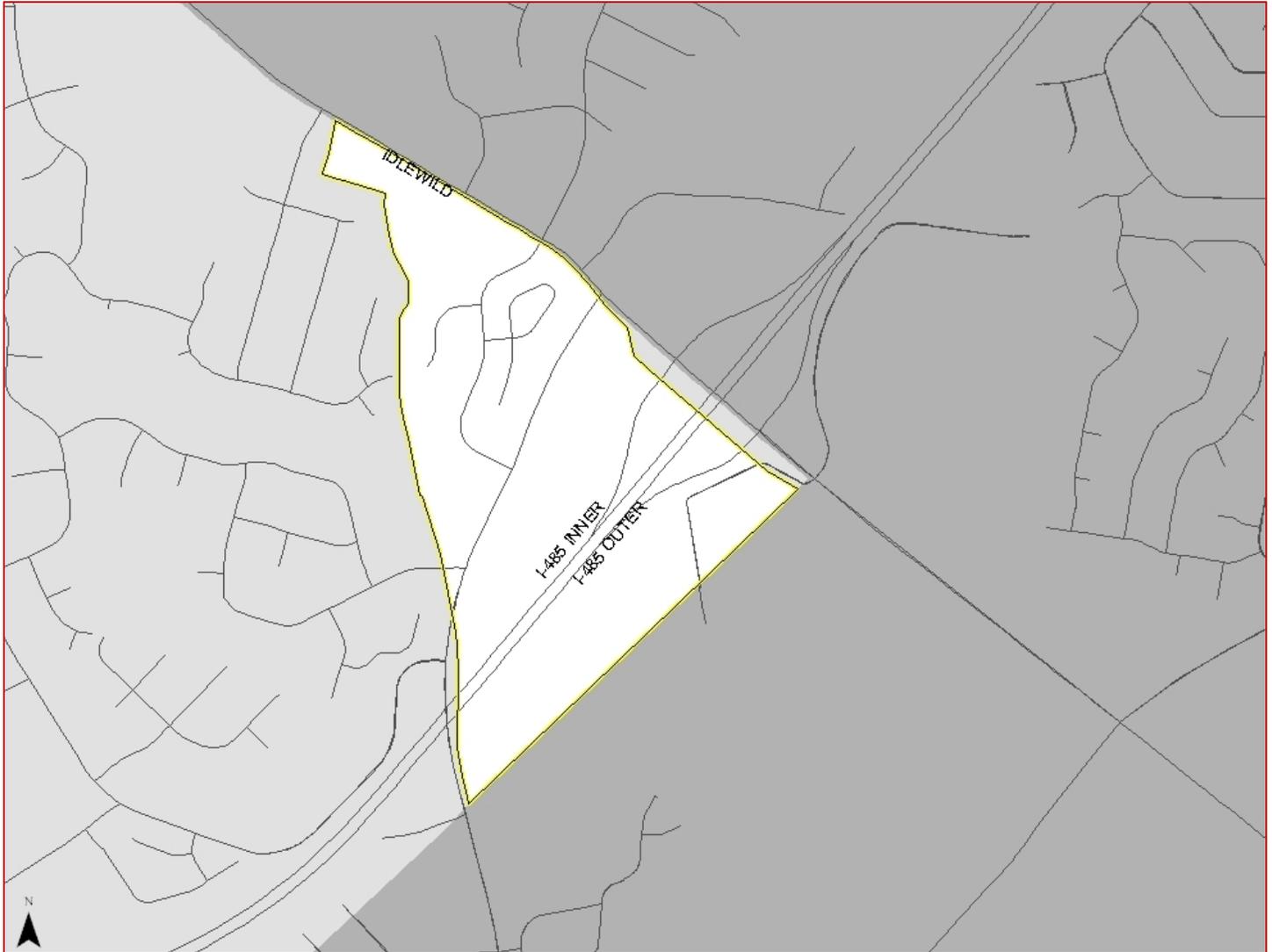
The Town acknowledges a trend toward housing developments marketed toward seniors. In Mint Hill, a retirement community was recently developed on Idlewild Road. This development will impact the market in Matthews. In response, the Town encourages such communities as development opportunities along and adjacent to this corridor.

**See also: Idlewild / 485 Area; NC 51 Corridor.**

**IDLEWILD ROAD AREA ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Consider impacts on established residential uses with all development proposals.*
2. *Coordinate land development with Charlotte and Mint Hill.*
3. *Promote R-VS and other alternative housing styles, planned housing infill, and redevelopment along the corridor.*
4. *Allow complementary, non-residential redevelopments at Margaret Wallace Road.*
5. *Prohibit the expansion of commercial uses at the Matthews Mint Hill Road intersection.*
6. *Maintain and preserve established residential uses*

The Idlewild Road / 485 Interchange serves the northeastern corner of the Town and nearby areas in Mint Hill and Union County.



*The Idlewild Road / 485 Interchange Area has both Mint Hill and Stallings as neighbors.*

Land adjacent to this interchange is established, low-density, single-family residential use in Matthews. Due to such land use, the amount of traffic generated is low compared to other I-485 interchanges in the Town. Stallings has a sizeable amount of commercially-zoned land to the east of the interchange; unincorporated Union County has a small strip of land between Matthews and Stallings.

Pressure for non-residential rezonings may occur due to close proximity of the interchange. It is important to protect existing land use

from potential impacts of the nearby I-485 interstate and carefully evaluate expansion of commercial uses near this location.

The west side of the interchange is adjacent to established, single-family neighborhoods. This land should remain residential and prohibit commercial development. Infill opportunities such as townhomes, multi-family communities and coordinated R-VS developments are encouraged.

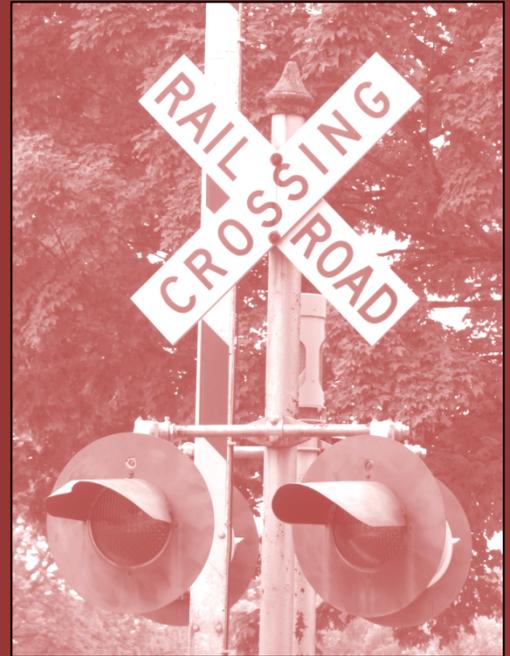
Development east of the interchange must coordinate alternate access points with Stallings. Primary access at Boyd Funderburk Drive should be prohibited due to close proximity to I-485; such access would create more congestion at the interchange.

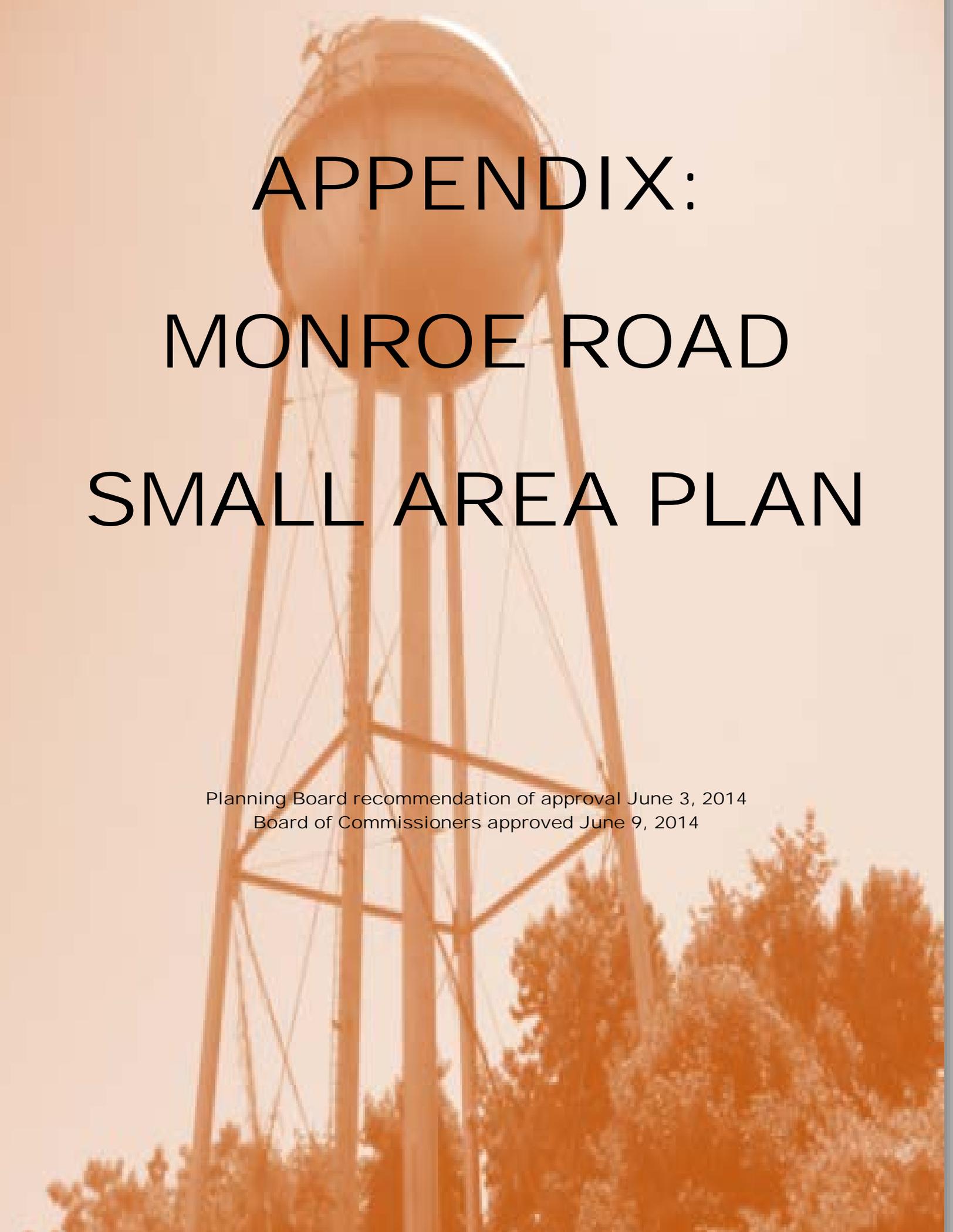
Commercial development to the east of interchange has been debated. While R-VS infill development would optimally mitigate traffic volume and complement existing development in Union County, an office park or small mixed use project could be considered if properly coordinated with neighboring communities. Further consideration should be given regarding development options for this area. Any non-residential uses should effectively minimize negative impacts to nearby residential land uses.

**See also: Idlewild Road Area; Interstate 485.**

**IDLEWILD ROAD / 485 INTERCHANGE ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Maintain and preserve established residential areas west of the Idlewild/I-485 interchange.*
2. *Encourage coordinated residential development projects west of the Idlewild/I-485 interchange.*
3. *Coordinate future access at land east of the interchange with Stallings.*
4. *Prohibit development that is dependent on access at Boyd Funderburk Drive.*
5. *Encourage alternative housing styles development on land east of the interchange.*
6. *Encourage the Economic Development Advisory Committee to explore development opportunities east of the interchange, including a low-intensity office park or mixed use development.*
7. *Discourage construction of additional access points along Idlewild Road.*



A tall, lattice-structured water tower with a large spherical tank at the top, set against a clear sky with some trees visible at the bottom. The entire image has a warm, orange-tinted overlay.

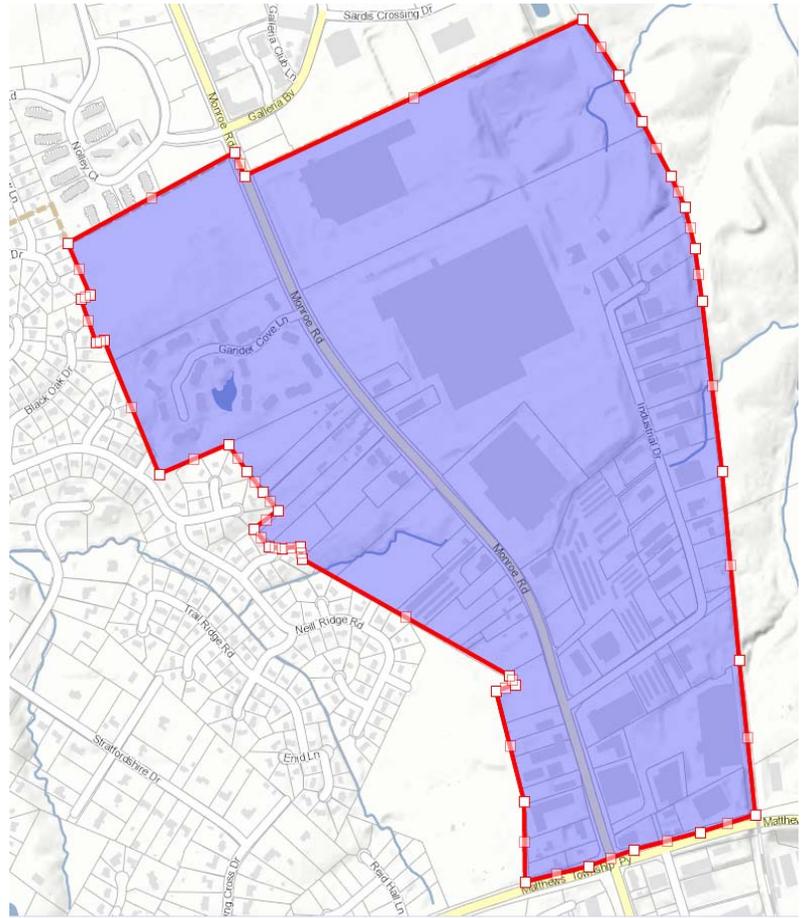
# APPENDIX: MONROE ROAD SMALL AREA PLAN

Planning Board recommendation of approval June 3, 2014  
Board of Commissioners approved June 9, 2014

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the existing infrastructure, service capacity, age and condition of structures, and the demographics and environmental constraints of the area. The plan builds on the recommendations and strategies set forth in Chapter 4 of the Land Use Plan. This plan will create a vision for build-out and redevelopment of the area and provide recommendations for implementing the vision. The plan identifies opportunities to make the corridor safer and more aesthetically pleasing to travelers, residents, and businesses alike, and to improve the pedestrian experience.

The study area consists of approximately 300 acres or 1/2 square mile and follows the Monroe Road corridor from the Charlotte city limits to the intersection of Matthews Township Parkway (NC 51). The area is predominately zoned light industrial with a mix of industrial / warehouse uses along with other commercial and residential uses blended in.



## 2. BACKGROUND



The Monroe Road Small Area Plan was prepared following the study of the existing issues, opportunities and constraints of the corridor. The vision for the plan started to unfold during the stakeholders meeting on September 26, 2013 with further refinement and dialog at the public workshop on October 24, 2013. The plan was further refined in subsequent weeks based on input received by the stakeholder group and community at large.



In addition to issues, opportunities and constraints, a set of guiding principles were established early in the planning process with input from the community and stakeholders. These guiding principles set the direction for the planning process to proceed and help provide a framework for the plan preparation and recommendations. At the workshop on October 24, 2013 the community was given the opportunity to prioritize planning and transportation elements prior to preparing the final draft of the Monroe Road Small Area Plan. This allowed the plan process to better reflect the importance the citizens placed on achieving the plan's recommendations.

The Monroe Road Small Area Plan provides a physical plan with recommended improvements. A complementary mix of land uses is shown on the plan that is consistent with the community vision for the corridor. Urban design principles played a significant role in the development of the plan and are important in achieving the vision. Current and new land uses can take advantage of the existing infrastructure in the study area and the plan identifies potential sites for future redevelopment.

### 3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Below are the guiding principles, set early in the planning process, which describe in more detail the purpose of the Monroe Road Small Area Plan.

#### General Guiding Principles

- Create a vision for the Monroe Road corridor.
- Provide specific guidance in a manner that is consistent with the adopted plans and policies to ensure coordination with current planning activities.
- Involve affected stakeholders and citizens.
- Provide specific guidance and continue to build upon the recommendations of the Land Use Plan and other adopted plans and policies.
- Incorporate transit-supportive design and development.
- Ensure that non-residential uses within the study area include office and employment uses along with associated support services or retail uses to the surrounding businesses and neighborhoods.
- Ensure development is urban in both form and scale and supports future multimodal transit that is pedestrian friendly.

## Specific Guiding Principles

- Identify a mix of land uses along the corridor that are consistent with the vision.
- Protect and preserve the industrial zoning within the study area while enhancing the streetscape and built form along the street edge.
- Emphasize design and urban form of future development.
- Consider strategies for potential redevelopment opportunities.
- Promote an interconnected transportation system and promote safety at identified areas of concern.
- Create land development strategies that promote the use of alternate travel modes including foot traffic, bicycles and public transportation via development design standards and public infrastructure.
- Identify a system of shared open space and recreational opportunities.
- Buildings should be oriented directly to streets and should be multi-story. Although such building relationships are critical to the built environment, new construction should be close to the street edge to maximize use of the property.
- Surface parking should be to the side or rear of buildings or structures.



*Concept plan for a pedestrian friendly development with bulk and mass fronting the corridor and smaller scale buildings to the interior*

4. MAP OF STUDY AREA



## 5. ECONOMIC STATISTICS

The study area covers approximately 300 contiguous acres along a one mile segment of Monroe Road that extends south from the Charlotte city limits to the intersection of Monroe Road and Matthews Township Pkwy. The study area is bordered to the west by the Sardis Forest neighborhood and the CSX rail road line to the east. CSX currently services several sites along Industrial Drive. The study area is predominately zoned light industrial while the land uses range from vacated single family detached houses to a corporate employment center.

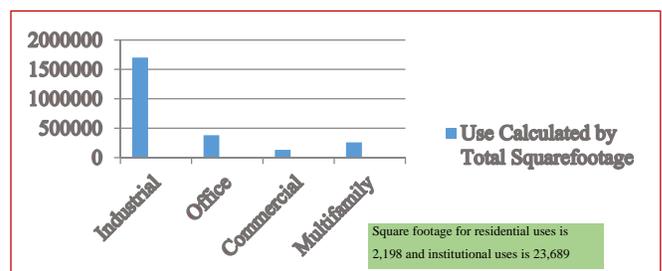
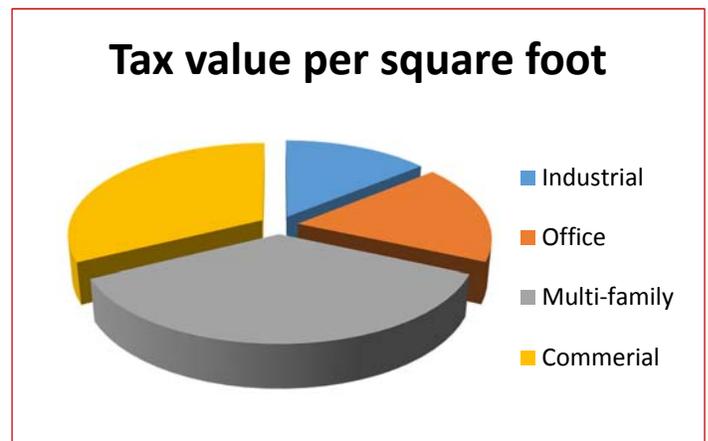
The study area currently consists of nearly 2.5 million square feet of building space which is broken up by land use. The pie chart below indicates the square footage tax value by land use.

The aggregate tax value for all the properties in the study are computed to just over \$84 million generating approximately \$269,000 in property tax revenues for the Town of Matthews.

The study area is predominately zoned for light industrial uses along with limited single family, multi-family, and neighborhood business zoning designations. Family Dollar's headquarters is located within the study area along with a multitude of smaller light industrial uses, a few abandoned single family houses, a 288 unit apartment complex, and several mini storage facilities along with strip commercial retail. The majority of the retail is located in the southwestern quadrant of the study area close to the intersection of Matthews Township Parkway.

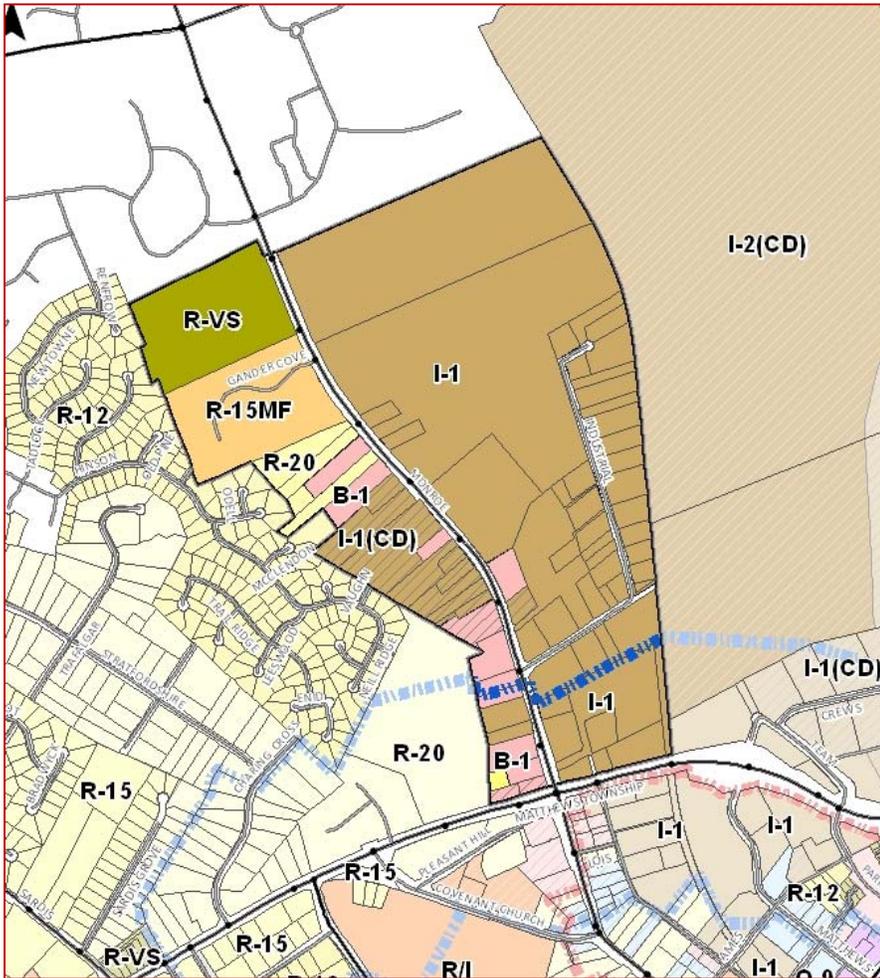


Though an abundance of the Town's light industrial zoning designations lies within the study area, it is important to note there are limited areas zoned light industrial within the Town limits compared to areas zoned for residential and other nonresidential uses. Therefore it is important that the Town place an emphasis on protecting properties zoned for light industrial uses.



## 6. LAND USE

The small area plan approached land use by identifying existing uses, vacant land, and market potential for redevelopment. The majority of the buildings and associated improvements within the study area occurred between the 1960s and 1990s. Most of the buildings are set back off the road with surface parking located between the street edge and the front building facade. The built environment consists of mainly single and two story buildings that are not consistent with today's urban design standards.



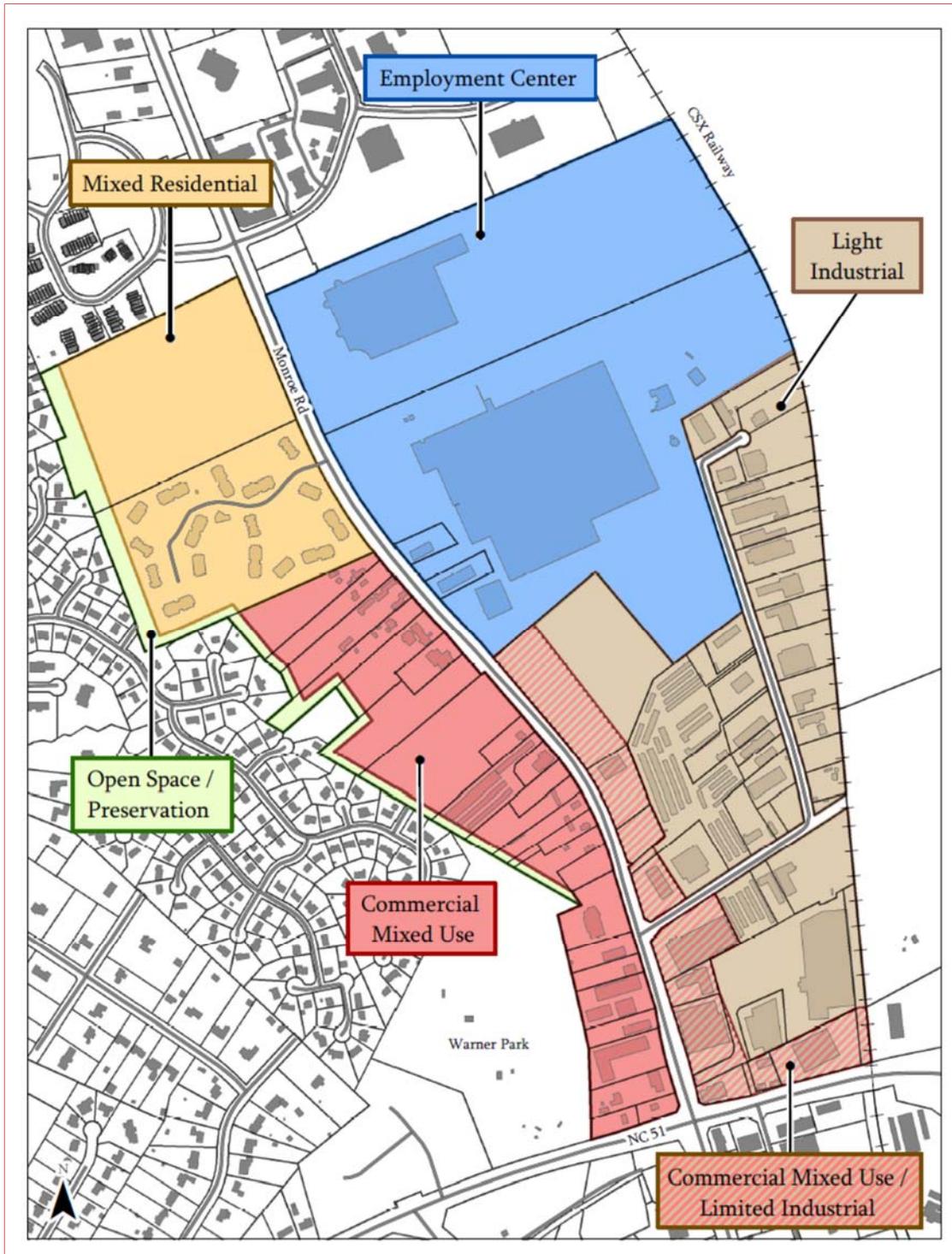
*Current Zoning Map*

The guiding principles in Section 3 suggest that new development should be oriented directly to the street and encourages multi-story to create a commercial corridor. Such building relationships are critical to the implementation of the corridor vision. Large employment centers may have a greater setback consistent with the bulk of their building while smaller multi-story mixed used buildings can complement the street edge creating a safe pedestrian friendly environment. This will create strong visual cues for focal points and destinations. It is recommended that surface parking lots be oriented to the side and rear of buildings.



*Example of light industrial design*

# Land Use Plan



## **Land Use Terminology**

*Mixed Residential* – This category is intended to support a mix of housing types from detached single family to attached condo and town homes. Densities for an entire development project should not exceed 16 units per acre.

*Employment Center*- This type of use is intended to support large corporate offices and headquarters within a single structure or campus setting. Buildings may be set back off the road with parking to the side and rear creating a park like setting to the campus which is warm and inviting. In order to get maximum use of the property vertical construction and structured parking is preferred. Employment centers should be located on tracts of 20 acres or greater.

*Commercial Mixed Use* – This type of use should consist of two and three story buildings located in close proximity to Monroe Road. with parking to the side and rear of the building. The principle commercial establishments may consist of restaurants, cafes, print/copy shops, dry cleaners, live-work units, office, and other services targeted to support local employers/employees and the surrounding neighborhoods. While retail may be allowed as a first floor use within the study area, it should not be the dominate use on a property, and big box uses should not be allowed within the study area. Where allowed, drive through service windows and gas station canopies should to be located behind the principal structure and out of view from the public street.

*Commercial Mixed Use / Light Industrial* – This type of use is similar to commercial mixed use and is located on the frontage conditions along the east side of Monroe Road. Buildings should be two and three stories and located in close proximity to Monroe Road. All the uses in the commercial mixed use category are allowed along with light industrial uses.

*Light Industrial* – This land use is intended to support employment uses. The principle uses supported by this category include office, employment center, research and development, and light manufacturing with indoor storage of products and materials. Limited on-site retail, wholesale, and outdoor storage uses are permitted.

*Open Space Preservation / Buffer* – When located next to Sardis Forest neighborhood, the open space, much of which is existing tree canopy, will serve as a buffer between existing residential and new development or redevelopment. This land use category supports passive recreational uses.

<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>UDO Districts</b>
Mixed Residential	R-15MF, R-VS, SRN
Employment Center	O, B-1, B-3, I-1, MUD
Commercial Mixed Use	B-1, B-3, MUD
Commercial Mixed Use/Light Indust.	B-1, B-3, B-D, I-1, MUD
Light Industrial	B-D, I-1
Open Space Preservation/Buffer	Any

• Note – Each land use category could be a mix of zoning designations.

**MONROE ROAD SMALL AREA PLAN LAND USE ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Construct a “Welcome to Matthews” sign at the town limits, build gateway to downtown.*
2. *Redevelop strip retail and replace with multi-story mixed use buildings*
3. *Create a more pedestrian friendly environment.*
  - A. *Bring buildings closer to the street.*
  - B. *Parking should be to the side and rear of buildings.*
  - C. *Complete the sidewalk network.*
  - D. *Strengthen landscape requirements*
  - E. *Consider minimum building heights of two stories*
  - F. *Incorporate green and open space into design*
  - G. *Protect and promote industrial uses with no direct relationship to Monroe Road and along Industrial Drive.*
4. *Consider design and architectural guidelines for the all new development and redevelopment that occurs*
5. *Create a cohesive landscape plan and built form among all developments fronting Monroe Road.*
6. *Consider preserving as much light industrial zoning as possible and take into consideration the impacts of rezoning properties from light industrial to other zoning classifications*
7. *Promote economic development through employment centers.*
8. *Consider working with utility companies and require new development to bury overhead lines.*
9. *Encourage the preservation of large canopy trees along the corridor.*
10. *Consider installing decorative street lighting*
11. *Consolidate driveways, and ingress/egress points*
12. *Limit uses that generate significant new traffic*

**MONROE ROAD SMALL AREA PLAN LAND USE ACTION ITEMS (Cont.):**

13. *Allow increased setbacks for employment centers or corporate campuses.*
14. *Employment centers should provide structured parking where feasible*
15. *Protect residential properties from commercial development by requiring a 50 foot vegetative buffer*
16. *Prohibit strip development and big box development*
17. *Drive through service windows and gas station canopies should to be located behind the principal structure and out of view from the public street.*

**7. URBAN DESIGN**

In keeping with the Matthews Land Use Plan and the Unified Development Ordinance, this plan places an emphasis on design and urban form.

With regard to the built form, the plan and supplemental street cross section support future development and redevelopment that better orients the public street network, which includes additional recommendations for street network linkages.

The plan also identifies that there are a number of abandoned residential and commercial structures along Monroe Road within the study area. The plan recommends that these parcels transition to multi-story office and vertical mixed uses when redeveloped.



*Example of mixed-use, urban design*



*Conceptual drawing of urban form and scale*

The public realm consists of areas that are not privatized, but accessible to all. This includes the streetscape in the study area and nearby parks and open space. The quality of this environment is important because it represents the fabric of the overall community and should be taken in strong consideration. Enhancing this environment through streetscape improvements is intended as a key objective to the plan.

**MONROE ROAD SMALL AREA PLAN URBAN DESIGN ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *When different façade materials are used, the heavier material shall be applied at grade level.*
2. *Encourage building articulation with windows every 16 feet.*
3. *Avoid single story structures that are horizontally integrated*
4. *Uses should be vertically integrated with most intense uses on ground level and less intense uses on upper levels.*
5. *Building Height and scale should be proportional with the façade facing Monroe Road creating the greatest linear dimension.*
6. *Buildings should occupy 60 percent of the lot width fronting Monroe Road.*
7. *Massing and scale should be complimentary to other buildings facing Monroe Road.*
8. *Drive through service windows and gas station canopies should to be located behind the principal structure and out of view from the public street.*
9. *No side or rear elevation shall face Monroe Road and all mechanical equipment shall be out of View from Monroe Rd.*

The following illustrations demonstrate key urban design elements by creating the public realm along the road side:



*Conceptual two story gas station with gas canopy to rear*



*Conceptual two story urban design creating a public realm*

## 8. TRANSPORTATION

There are only two public streets within the study area, Monroe Road and Industrial Drive. Monroe Road is a five lane cross section that parallels with US 74 and consist of a mix of uses including industrial, institutional, and commercial land uses.

The cross section includes curb and gutter with a partial sidewalk network that terminates just before Family Dollar

Corporate Headquarters. The center lane functions as a dual directional turn lane and each parcel is served by individual curb cuts.

The posted speed is 45 mph from the Charlotte city limits to Industrial Drive where the speed limit transitions to 35 mph. There are no

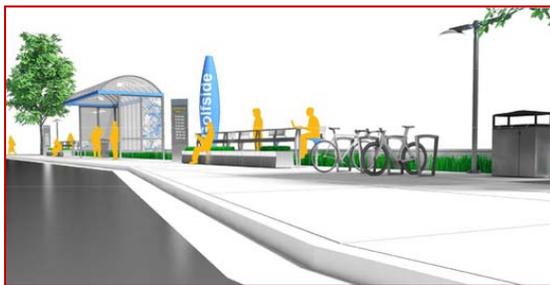


bike lanes present in the study area nor safe passage for pedestrians to cross the road. Monroe Road is served by CATS (Charlotte Area Transit Service) with bus stops in both the east and west bound directions. The bus stops are curbside with buses occupying a travel lane for loading and unloading. Industrial Drive is a two lane local street that accesses a number of smaller light industrial uses off of Monroe Road. There are no sidewalks or curb and gutter and run-off is sheet flow into drainage ditches that parallel the blacktop. Travel lanes are narrow and street lighting is inadequate.



*Example of a 4 lane landscaped median divided cross section*

Traffic studies indicate that there are upwards of 32,000 vehicular trips a day on Monroe Road.<sup>1</sup> As growth continues in the Charlotte metro region, this number can be expected to increase. Crash data indicates that between 2000 and 2010 there were 580 automobile accidents reported, most occurring at signalized intersections.



*Concept of bus stop with shelter and dedicated lane*



*Conceptual pedestrian safety zone*

<sup>1</sup> Traffic Study Group – 2012 Charlotte AADT Map 8



**MONROE ROAD SMALL AREA PLAN TRANSPORTATION ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Consider a feasibility study for replacing the center turn lane with a landscaped median with strategically located left overs and pedestrian safety zones at designated crosswalks,*
2. *Work with Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) to locate and construct bus stops that utilize bulb outs or dedicated turn out lanes and decorative shelters.*
3. *Reduce speed limit and synchronize traffic signals.*
4. *Consider a feasibility study for putting a traffic signal at the intersection of Monroe Road and Industrial Drive.*
5. *Consider researching an alternate entrance/access to the Sardis Forest neighborhood via Monroe Road and identify possible pedestrian connection to the commercial development from the neighborhood*
6. *Work with Family Dollar and City of Charlotte to extend Industrial Drive to Galleria Boulevard*
7. *Encourage internal connectivity between and within developments. Consider working with Covenant Day School to create an alley adjacent to commercial properties in order to allow for internal connectivity for developments along the west side of Monroe Road between NC 51 and Industrial Drive.*
8. *Complete sidewalk network within corridor and add sidewalks and curb and gutter along Industrial Drive*
9. *Consider a multi-use path at the rear of properties adjacent to Sardis Forest*
10. *Consider studying traffic warrants to see if there could be a possibility of reducing signalized intersections within the study area to increase traffic flow.*
11. *Consider adding bike lanes or other bike facilities*
12. *Consider an alternate entrance/access to the Sardis Forest neighborhood via Monroe Road.*

## 9. UTILITIES

Charlotte – Mecklenburg Utilities Department (CMUD) provides both water and sewer to the study area. The study area is currently served with a 20 inch cast iron water line that runs along Monroe Road with a current pipe capacity of 16.6 million gallons per day (mgd). The current pipe flow is 1.39 million gallons per day with an average daily demand of .11 mgd and a maximum daily demand of .212 mgd in the study area. Maximum build out conditions estimate that pipe flow will only be at 20% to 25% capacity.

The study area is also served by four sewer basins, each operating at less than 20% of available flow capacity. Currently all sewer lines within the study area are gravity fed with no lift stations. Water and sewer capacity is very good within the study area and should be more than capable of sustaining maximum build-out conditions.

In addition to the underground utilities, the study area is also served by overhead transmission wires primarily consisting of power, cable, and phone. These utilities are supported by above ground poles that run along the eastbound side of Monroe Road with jumpers to service the properties fronting the west bound side of Monroe.

### **MONROE ROAD SMALL AREA PLAN UTILITIES ACTION ITEMS**

1. *Utilities should be buried for all new development and redevelopment*
2. *Any sidewalk or street construction activity should be reviewed to include taking existing overhead line underground*

## 10. CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCES

Once part of Potters Road, Monroe Road was the primary route for commercial potters to transport their wares from western Lincoln County to markets in Charleston, South Carolina. Following the collapse of the pottery industry in western Lincoln County, Monroe Road transitioned into a farm to market rural route. Today, Monroe Road serves as a gateway to Matthews' historic downtown core and is a major thoroughfare that feeds into uptown Charlotte. Although this section of Monroe Road no longer visually demonstrates its historical significance, the study area contains cultural/historic resources.



Dating back to the 1860s is Roseland Cemetery. Originally known by local African Americans as “Renfrow Quarters”, this cemetery is located in the woods, surrounded by neighborhoods and vacant land. Overgrown and virtually forgotten by many, this property serves as an important piece of history for African Americans in Matthews. On September 24, 2012 the Matthews Board of Commissioners designated the Roseland Cemetery as a local historic landmark. The Roseland Cemetery is one of the few reminders of the quickly disappearing rural African American experience in Mecklenburg County in the years following Emancipation through the last decade of Jim Crow Segregation.

Located at 10701 Monroe Road is the old water tower which is all that remains of an old textile plant once located there. The water tower dates back to the early to mid 1960s when the textile industry was prosperous in North Carolina. The tower was originally constructed for onsite fire suppression.

### **MONROE ROAD SMALL AREA PLAN CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL ACTION ITEMS**

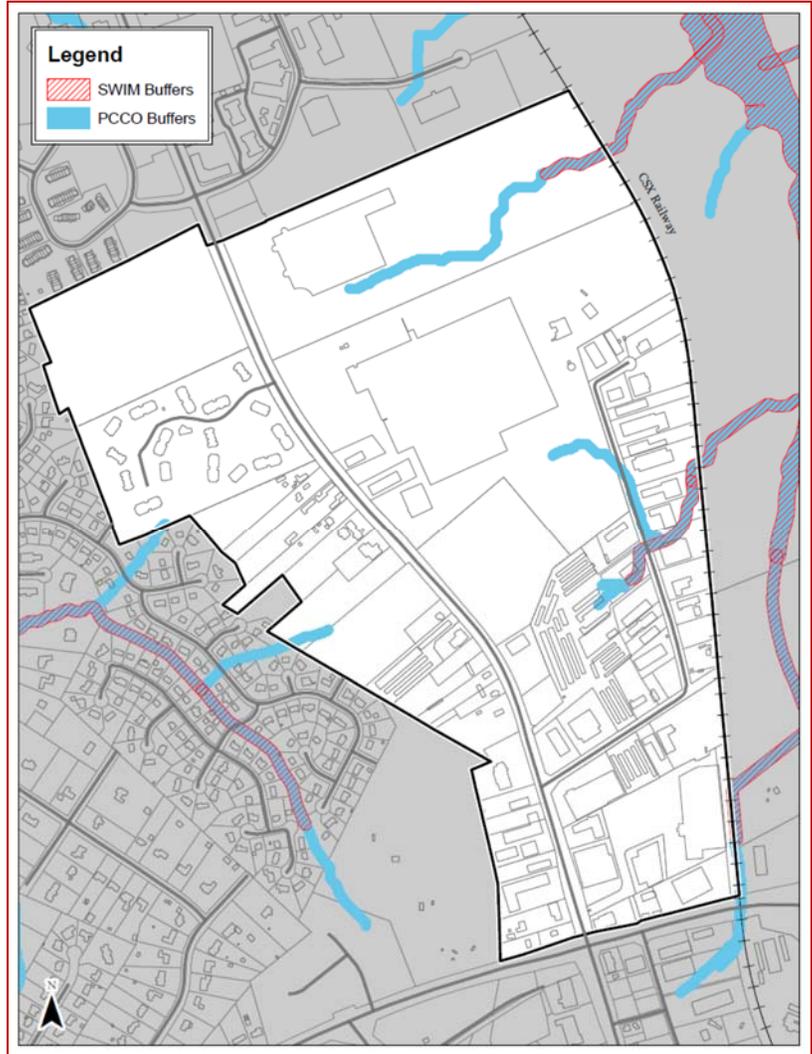
- 1. Continue working with the Mecklenburg County Landmarks Commission and Matthews Historical Foundation to restore and preserve Roseland Cemetery. Prohibit any disturbance of the Historic Roseland Cemetery.*
- 2. Evaluate the structural integrity of the water tower and investigate ways of preserving it.*

## 11. NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE

There are a few undeveloped tracts of land within the study area which are heavily wooded with large mature trees and the study area overall has gentle slopes posing little to no development challenges. Some parcels have been timbered in recent years.

The Post Construction and storm water provisions in the UDO regulate erosion and sediment control requirements for the Town. These provisions were adopted by the Town Board and are administered by the Town and/or Mecklenburg County Department Land Use and Environmental Services (LUESA). Any land disturbing activities of 20,000 square feet triggers soil erosion review by LEUSAS, and any disturbance of one acre or greater will trigger compliance with the post construction chapter of the UDO.

Though there is no publicly owned open space or parks located in the study area, such amenities exist in the larger community. Warner Park adjacent to the study area is owned and operated by Covenant Day School. The Town encourages the use of multi-use pathways as a means to connect both existing and new development. Parks and open space can provide other benefits, such as protecting stream buffers, mature tree stands, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas. New development is encouraged to incorporate pocket parks as part of the public realm in their design.



## MONROE ROAD SMALL AREA PLAN NATURAL RESOURCES & OPEN SPACE ACTION ITEMS

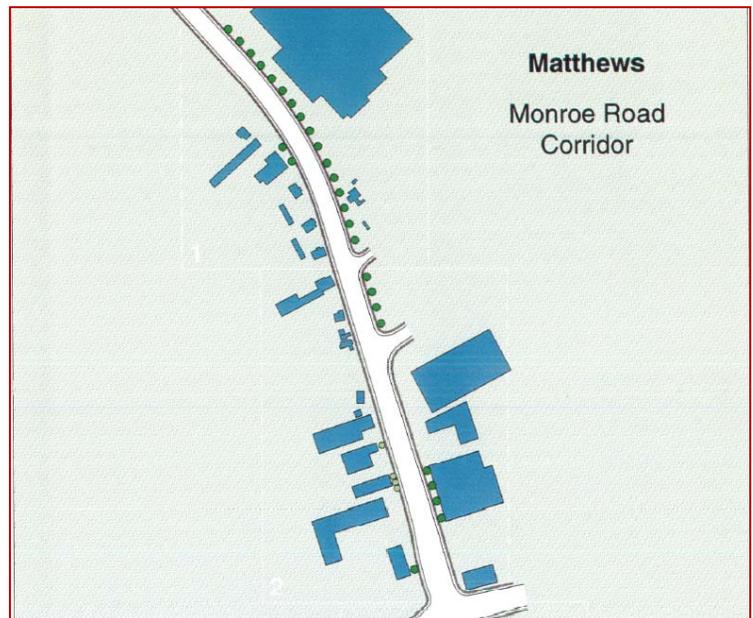
1. *Encourage open space through the design of new development and redeveloped parcels*
2. *Encourage underground storage where storm water detention is required*
3. *Consider a multi-use pathway along the rear property boundaries in or adjacent to Sardis Forest neighborhood.*
4. *Explore opportunities to incorporate pocket parks into development design.*

## 12. ADOPTED POLICIES AND PLANS

### **Monroe Road/John St Streetscape Plan**

A Streetscape Plan was developed in 1998 after the Monroe Road corridor was widened from two to five lanes. This was the Town's first Urban Forestry Grant and it served as a guide for the development of future street tree plans for Matthews. The 1998 street tree plan specifically addressed the corridor and gateway that is the focus of the Small Area Plan.

- Current DOT policy requires small trees be planted 8 feet from the street, large trees 15 feet, and does not allow trees in sight triangles. The purpose is to eliminate obstructions should vehicles leave the roadway.
- Duke Energy requires new trees be planted a specific minimum distance from overhead power lines.
- With the 1998 streetscape plan, all trees for this area were planted behind the sidewalk in the narrow public right-of-way.
- Roughly 30 trees were planted within the Small Area Plan's scope; mostly on the east side of Monroe Road. Several have been severely compromised.



- An updated inventory of these street trees and locations of overhead utility lines should be taken.

As NCDOT continues its conversion in philosophy regarding streets becoming “Complete Streets”, their requirements on street trees may be amended.

### **Town of Matthews/Stallings Comprehensive Transportation Plan**

In 2012 the Towns of Matthews and Stallings jointly developed a Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). The plan was created to address the following fundamental principles:

- Provide safe, dedicated facilities for multi-modal transportation including automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians and transit.
- Bridge transportation gaps between neighborhoods, communities, towns, and counties.
- Balance the diverse needs of local trips and commuting traffic, and create transportation facilities for users of all ages, abilities, and skill levels.
- Provide multi-modal transportation connections between mixed, diverse land uses.
- Encourage non-vehicular local trips by providing multi-modal transportation facilities that make useful connections.
- Support current and future land uses with proactive transportation facility development and improvement.
- Assign funding for the improvement and development of a multi-modal transportation facilities.

As drafted, the CTP does not make any specific recommendations for Monroe Road, but does call for the widening of East John Street from two to four lanes to the east of the study area through downtown to Interstate 485 by 2025. This will improve access to 485. The MTP (Metropolitan Transportation Plan) calls for Highway 51 to be widened to six lanes between Monroe Road and Sardis Road by 2025. Any recommendations that result from this plan should be incorporated into the CTP upon adoption.

#### **MONROE ROAD SMALL AREA PLAN ADOPTED PLANS ACTION ITEMS**

1. *Adopt the Comprehensive Transportation Plan*
2. *Continue to build on existing plans and verify implementation is consistent with adopted plans*
3. *Update adopted plans as needed*

The Monroe Road Small Area Plan functions as a policy guide to direct future growth and redevelopment along the corridor. In order to successfully implement the recommendations of the plan the Town should employ specific strategies. These may include the creation of partnerships, encouraging and enhancing new and existing land use regulations, identification of short, medium, and long term action items, and identifying funding mechanisms. In many cases, strategies may be coupled to achieve the recommended action items.

### 1. Create a phased approach

Staff along with the Town Board should evaluate each recommendation and rank it on its need, time it will take to complete, and total cost then determine if such actions can feasibly be implemented in 1-5 years, 5-10 years, or greater than 10 years.

- A. *Short Term Action Items*- Action items that can be feasibly accomplished within 1-5 years at minimal to moderate cost.
- B. *Medium Term Action Items* – Action items that can be feasibly accomplished within 5-10 years. Typically these action items are associated with higher cost and/or approval by additional agencies.
- C. *Long Term Action Plans* – Action items that typically will take over 10 years to implement.

### 2. Build Partnerships

The Town Board needs to look at the Action Items for each category and identify what partnerships should be created. This could include partnerships between town departments, between the Town and other government agencies, or partnerships between the Town and private individuals, developers, or companies. In creating a partnership the Town needs to identify the applicable party, the reason for their involvement, and what their role is in implementing the action item. At times partnership agreements may be formalized, detailing the scope of work, each partner's responsibility, and commencement and completion dates.

### 3. Evaluate and Design Regulations

The small area plan creates a vision to model future development for the Monroe Road corridor. The Town Board should periodically evaluate the land use regulations to verify that these regulations provide enough direction to effectively shape the future of the corridor. The Town Board may also consider adding regulations such as design guidelines to ensure that new development and redevelopment conform to the vision.

### 4. Find Potential Funding

Identifying funding sources is always a challenge for local governments but some sources to consider are state and federal grants for redevelopment, transportation, air quality and environmental, aesthetics, healthy communities, and/or infill and

brownfields. Other source could include Powell Bill, allocations from the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO), adding action items to the Town's CIP (Capital Improvement Program) and state TIP (Transportation Improvement Project), and Bonds.

**5. Updating**

This plan should be reviewed and updated as needed.

# ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT SMALL AREA PLAN

**Recommended by Planning Board  
November 25, 2014  
Approved by Board of Commissioners  
December 8, 2014**

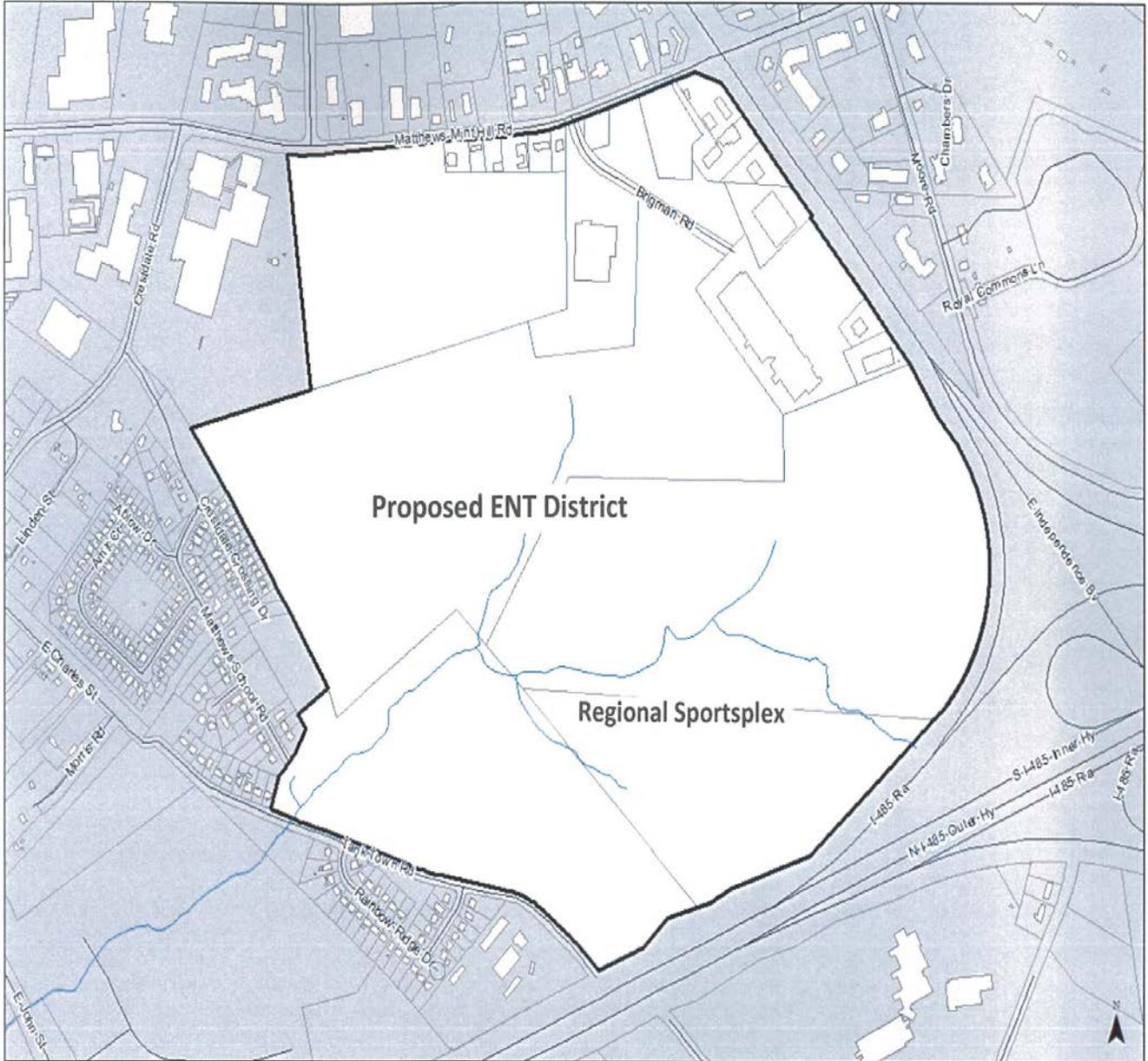
In contrast to other geographical locations within Matthews which may merit further study as a small area plan, the specific boundaries of the Entertainment district have been informally but distinctly delineated for a number of years, and multiple studies to envision build-out have been conducted. Most of the boundaries of the study area are roads encircling an area of approximately 300 acres. The general boundaries are: Matthews-Mint Hill Road, US74/Independence Boulevard, I-485, Tank Town Road, and the Crestdale neighborhood/adjacent industrial complex.

As far back as 1999, when Mecklenburg County released the property they own in Matthews at US74 and I-485 for future landfill needs, the County parcels and adjacent privately-owned property have been the subject of land use study for a possible unified new development. Various build-out scenarios studied in the intervening years included a corporate business park, an industrial complex, a mixed use neighborhood, a major retail complex, and an entertainment-focused complex. In 2007, Mecklenburg County and the Town of Matthews both hired the same consultant group to prepare conceptual build-out plans for the County park property and adjoining vacant land respectively as a single coordinated urban, transit-friendly new mixed use development.

A formal adopted study and land use/policy/design standards plan is necessary at this location, as called for in the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The UDO refers to this document as the “general concept plan” for the overall geographic location. The zoning district designation ENT, or Entertainment District, can be applied to any parcel of land within the defined boundaries as soon as the general concept plan is adopted by the Matthews Board of Commissioners as an appendix into the Matthews Land Use Plan.

This Entertainment District Small Area Plan fulfills the requirements of the UDO as the “general concept plan” for the designated geographic location.

The map on the following page shows the overall study area included in this general concept or small area plan. Approximately half of the land area is owned by Mecklenburg County and is being developed as the Sportsplex facility, while the majority of the privately-owned land which is vacant is controlled by two property owner groups. There are also a number of smaller parcels generally fronting either Matthews-Mint Hill Road or Independence Boulevard under separate individual ownership.



While drafting the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), the Town felt it was appropriate to design a unique zoning category for this geographic location. This is seen in the purpose statement for the ENT district, at 155.503.8.A.:

*“The Entertainment (ENT) District is established to provide a unique set of land uses and design criteria for a defined geographic portion of the community, with a specific emphasis on providing multiple entertainment opportunities for people of all ages, both permanent residents and visitors. The Entertainment District shall incorporate spaces for permanent residences, transitory housing, employment opportunities, indoor and outdoor recreation, shopping, dining, and daily living services in a compact pedestrian-friendly neighborhood. Provision shall be made for various modes of transportation. All construction and uses of land within the Entertainment district shall comply with an approved general concept plan for the District, and no land disturbing activity may take place until compliance with the approved concept plan is documented. . . .”*

The UDO speaks here of a required “general concept plan” for the area within and adjacent to the Mecklenburg County Regional Sportsplex. The intent of the general concept plan, which is this small area plan, is to expand on the regulations provided for the ENT Entertainment zoning category in the UDO, which will be unique only to this geographic locale.

The ENT district description, at 155.503.8, lists a number of specific criteria to be covered by the general concept plan:

- Build-out to be conducted in phases over time
- Initial street and pedestrian primary, or main, networks to be identified to assure interconnectivity through the overall area
- Minimum different types of land uses required to be built in initial phase
- Design/construction of communal storm water detention facilities, when applicable/feasible
- Minimum and/or maximum amount of certain types of land uses to guarantee a full range mix of uses
- Identify at what point(s) initial phase surface parking lots will be converted to shared or structured parking
- Minimum required building heights
- Maximum footprint size of “big box” buildings
- Overall maximum development build-out (optional)
- A neighborhood-wide architectural theme to “brand” the location  
(See 155.503.8.A. and G.)

The Town initially undertook a study of three options for build-out in 1999. The consultant team was requested to provide scenarios for: a) an office/employment park; b) an industrial complex; and c) a mixed use neighborhood adjacent to a significantly-sized sports facility. One of the major private property owners in the area then had a fourth scenario studied as a regional retail facility. The Town continued to consider options for the overall build-out over several years as the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County pursued options for mass transit and a regional park, respectively. When Mecklenburg County allowed applications for park funding, the Town of Matthews and a private development partner

submitted plans for a series of soccer-sized fields that could become a significant economic draw for the larger region. Mecklenburg County pursued the idea of a sports field complex at this location, recognizing the prime location at US74 and I-485, linking this site to other existing and planned parks with multiple soccer fields near other I-485 interchanges, creating coordinated tournament venues not available elsewhere in the Charlotte metro area. The alignment of future Independence Pointe Parkway, the US74 parallel collector road for local traffic use, was in flux while it was proposed to also be the parallel guideway for the Southeast Transit Corridor, and a major transit station was proposed within this future neighborhood.

In 2007, the Town of Matthews contracted with Woolpert, a local design firm, to prepare a small area plan for the desired urban neighborhood, and Mecklenburg County contracted with the same firm to prepare site plans for the Sportsplex. The intent was to be sure that the two development pods interconnected and had an obvious flow between the two distinct elements.



Over the years that this geographic vicinity has been studied, a series of inter-related principles have emerged:

- Urban scale neighborhood: Because this location is physically separated from almost all other residential neighborhoods in Matthews, and because it is a large area of mostly undeveloped land within close proximity to both the downtown and to major highway corridors, this is a unique opportunity to create a cohesive development site that can be substantially different from existing development elsewhere in Matthews. The prospect of including a major transit station here as well as a regional draw for sports and entertainment events also support development here at a substantially denser scale than has been attempted elsewhere in Matthews.
- Mixed use: Matthews has been careful to incorporate a diverse mix of land uses within its municipal boundaries, although each primary type of land use – residential, office/service, retail and commercial, medical, institutional – are generally sequestered in their own zones. In order to maximize the opportunity to encourage economic spin-off growth beside the Sportsplex – to provide the assortment of activities, amenities, and services necessary for visitors to the area – multiple types of land uses must be coordinated in close proximity. Likewise, to encourage new residents to live, shop, eat, work, and play all within this contained geographic space, then the needed activities must all be located in close association to each other.
- Transit-supportive/Future Transit station/hub: Although the Southeast Transit Corridor is currently being reassessed as to location and mode, the previously-designated alignment on Independence Pointe Parkway remains a strong and logical placement all through Matthews' jurisdiction. While Independence Pointe Parkway is not yet a continuous roadway through town, and while the ability to get it across I-485 is still under review, a mixed use neighborhood here can draw pressure for CATS to provide local bus access into the neighborhood. As more development builds out, more bus connections may be justified, and a bus stop may progress to a station location, which in future can become a mass transit station similar to what has been envisioned all along.
- Walkable, pedestrian-friendly: The Sportsplex has sidewalk, multi-modal trails, and/or greenways paralleling the main street through the park property. This same pedestrian system extends into the privately-owned portion of the development site. As more streets are added to reinforce the urban block character, and public plazas and small green spaces are added around higher density buildings, residents and visitors alike can enjoy the ease of access to various businesses and activity sites. The goal is to have this area develop as a "park-once" environment, so that using a personal vehicle internally becomes a choice rather than a necessity.
- Economic engine for surrounding region: The Sportsplex and the adjacent urban mixed use neighborhood can take advantage of each other's appeal to people. Households searching for a location where they can walk to most daily needs may find this area an idea new "home". Occasional visitors and regular field sports enthusiasts from the surrounding area may find that while at the Sportsplex for recreational activities, the adjacent mixed use neighborhood is a convenient and pleasant experience for dining, daily needs, and other options for recreation.
- Unique identity to be created: Because this geographic location is so ideally situated at the interchange of two highways, and because it is visually and physically separated from all other existing residential neighborhoods, and because the area can be branded as "active living", "high energy", "24-hour lifestyle", and similar concepts, this neighborhood should take on a separate ambiance and appearance than elsewhere in Matthews. The architecture of buildings, the streetlights, benches, street trees, signs and related public infrastructure, and the physical layout of streets and public spaces can all interact in creating a one-of-a-kind atmosphere.
- Energy efficient design: Ideally, the new development location should encourage and extoll the virtues of energy efficiency and sustainability -- in buildings, site plan layout, public amenities, overall cohesion of development, and long-term conversion of parking. Construction materials can be procured locally to the greatest extent possible. These materials should be reviewed for their low carbon footprints during manufacture and once installed on-site. Building designs may take advantage of solar orientation. New buildings may utilize rooftops for solar collector installations, gardens, or outdoor gathering spaces. Alternative energy-conserving or energy generating methods are encouraged to be employed here.

When the Town of Matthews and a private developer collaborated on a grant application to Mecklenburg County for park bond funding in 2006, some economic expectations were developed. At that time, approximately 120 acres of the County-owned property was proposed to be developed into 12 regulation-sized fields and a stadium, leaving the remainder of the County land to be developed for complementary supporting uses by private developers. While outdated, the statistics reported then and listed below today give us a general understanding of the economic draw the Sportsplex can create once it is built out:

*“The following are examples of the economic rewards of holding regional soccer tournaments:*

*CASL Shootout and Showcase Tournaments (Cary, NC)*

- *Overall economic impact of \$9 million*
- *900 teams from 43 states compete in three tournaments*
- *Events brought over 20,000 visitors to Wake County*
- *Generated 15,000 total hotel room nights*

*US Youth Soccer Region 1 Championships (Virginia Beach, VA)*

- *\$6 million in economic impact to the Hampton Roads area*
- *10,000 players, coaches, teams and tournament officials attended*
- *Generated over 40,000 hotel room nights*

*Warrior Soccer Classic Tournament (Dayton, OH)*

- *Generated over \$7.4 million in economic impact*
- *Billed as the third largest soccer tournament in the US*
- *Includes 7,500 players (550 teams) from 11 states*

*Red Diamond Vulcan Cup (Birmingham, AL)*

- *Economic impact of over \$3.7 million*
- *One of Birmingham’s Top 5 tourism events*
- *Over 6,000 people (226 teams) from 14 states*

*“In addition to tournaments, residents and youth athletes in Mecklenburg County alike will experience and enjoy this amenity. The continual use of the complex and the adjacent family entertainment district will not only benefit the restaurants, shops, and other local businesses but also increase sales tax revenue to Mecklenburg County. For example, in 2005 over 250,000 people attended the SAS Soccer Park in Cary, NC. If each person only spent \$20 that equals \$5,000,000 spent during the year just from people visiting a soccer park. The advantage that this proposed*

*complex has that no other facility in the Southeast [US] offers is an adjacent Family Entertainment District. The combination of one of the best soccer facilities in the United States and adjacent destination development will drive people to the district and ultimately increase direct revenue and tax impact for Mecklenburg County.”*

Field Sportsplex and Family Entertainment District Proposal, Keith Corp and Town of Matthews, 2006

This 2006 proposal suggested a variety of potential funding sources that together could provide the necessary amounts to complete the overall combined project. It assumed implementing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funding to assist in developing the public infrastructure. The proposed private partner was anticipating to spend over \$30 million for design and construction of the adjacent Family Entertainment District. Corporate sponsorships and/or naming rights of the stadium and each field were offered as ways to raise several million dollars.

The Strategic Economic Development Plan for Matthews, completed by Warren Associates in late 2007, indicated that the Town's tax base is relatively broad and stable, because there are substantial different markets in town, although to reduce the Town's reliance on retail property taxes, the Strategic Plan encourages expanding market share of nonretail commercial uses. Two of the targeted growth sectors listed are “Arts, Entertainment and Recreation”, and “Accommodation and Food Services”.

From the Strategic Plan, Matthews' tax base has maintained a ratio of around 65% residential, 25% commercial, and 10% exempt. The study indicated shopping centers may initially be favorably valued higher than other business uses but they tend to fluctuate and depreciate more easily, especially compared to multi-story office buildings. This was re-emphasized in Joe Minicozzi's research of the Matthews tax base in 2013, which showed how smaller multi-story buildings in the downtown area held higher per acre valuations than big box retail along Independence Boulevard. That study concluded the Town should require minimum 2 story construction in the downtown – and by assumption in other geographic locations, such as the ENT district, where higher density and mixed use development are proposed to be concentrated. This study also recommends focusing higher density growth along the future rapid transit alignment, which has been proposed to parallel Independence Pointe Parkway in past transit plans.

Throughout the years the Town of Matthews has considered what could be the best general plan for development in this area it has been understood that this is one of the Town's largest concentration of yet-undeveloped or under-developed land adjacent to a regional economic driver, the Sportsplex, which is ripe for a unified approach. Whatever is first built here will likely flavor the next development site, and that may alter plans for the next site, etc. Therefore, it is imperative that the Town clearly identify its intent for development here and then construct the parameters to guarantee that intent is understood and followed by property owners and their development partners.

Done properly, the synergy of the County park facility and the abutting privately-owned acreage, with a primary street and pedestrian network that establish cross connections within the area and to other roads and activity centers like the downtown, can create a sustainable new community within Matthews.

Past small area plans identified specific locations for specific types of uses. While this general concept plan does not state what uses must be located where, it calls for logical pairings, where appropriate. Multi-family residential develop, for example, should be within an easy walking distance of daily services like delis, coffee shops, salons, dry cleaners, and child day care facilities. These nonresidential uses may become repeat stops for local residents but they likely also need visibility for more occasional visitors as customers as well.

Residential development at a higher density than found elsewhere in Matthews and located within a new mixed use neighborhood may allow those residents to navigate many of their daily routines via bicycle or walking, but these residents will still likely choose to have access to a personal vehicle. That vehicle will need a place to be stored until needed, so parking for multi-family residential will still be essential for a successful neighborhood. The daily services and shops these residents may frequent will still want convenient and easily found parking spaces for more occasional customers. An appropriate amount of parking, therefore, will be assumed, although the location and dispersal of spaces both on-street and behind buildings will look different than elsewhere in commercial areas of Matthews. As called for in the ENT district standards in the UDO, parking will not be allowed between public streets and buildings. Instead, buildings will face the public streets and be placed close to them, to encourage a pedestrian-friendly ambiance.

This general concept plan establishes a primary street network, which shows approximate location of connecting "main" streets. These "main" streets are expected to have some of the most intensively used buildings, whether containing vertically mixed uses (commercial on first floor, office above and/or residential on top floors) or a horizontal mix of uses (one building may contain a major business and the next entry door opens to a different type of use). Additional secondary streets are anticipated to be added as development occurs. These secondary streets will create urban scale

blocks, and shared parking and loading/service areas may be centered behind buildings that front the various public streets. A map illustrating the primary or “main” street network is located in the Urban Design section of this plan.

Similar to the main street network, this general concept plan identifies a primary pedestrian network, both through the use of sidewalks or multi-modal pathways running within the public right-of-way adjacent to the vehicular travel lanes, or a separate pathway or greenway creating mid-block connections or paralleling small creeks. Because the secondary street network and the locations that may benefit from a mid-block pedestrian path are not known at this time, they are not shown at any specific required placement within the area.

The UDO assigns a wide variety of land uses to the ENT zoning category, consistent with the intent to have a mixed use urban neighborhood built out over time. Land uses allowed here, as identified by the UDO when it was initially enacted in 2014, are:

	<b>Use Allowed By-Right</b>	<b>Allowed Under Prescribed Conditions</b>	<b>Accessory Use Only</b>
<b>RESIDENTIAL USES</b>			
	Single-family dwelling, attached		
	Multi-family dwellings, single building on a lot or multiple building complex		
	Dormitory for sr high and post secondary schools on same site as institution		
		Ecological housing development	
		Home-based business	
		Food & beverage sales in neighborhood common facilities (with MF housing)	
		Subdivision sales office	
			Accessory residential use/structure clearly incidental to principal residential use

	<b>Use Allowed By-Right</b>	<b>Allowed Under Prescribed Conditions</b>	<b>Accessory Use Only</b>
			Propane/home fuel storage
<b>INSTITUTIONAL &amp; GOVERNMENTAL USES</b>			
	Adult day care facility		
	Church/place of worship of any size		
	College/University w/ or w/out stadium		
	Cultural community center		
	Fire/EMS station, police station		
	Heliport (medically related)		
	Hospital		
	Public library		
	School, K-12, public & private		
<b>OFFICE &amp; SERVICE USES</b>			
	Bank, credit union, financial service		
	Barber, beauty salon, nail salon, & similar personal service		
	Civic, fraternal, social club		
	Contractor's office w/out accessory storage		
	General & professional office		
	Laboratory, research facility		
	Medical, dental, optical office/clinic		
	Office with interior display only of sample merchandise		

	<b>Use Allowed By-Right</b>	<b>Allowed Under Prescribed Conditions</b>	<b>Accessory Use Only</b>
	Spa, massage service		
		Child day care facility	
<b>GENERAL COMMERCIAL USES</b>			
	Bakery w/ on-site manufacture & retail		
	Ballroom, banquet or catering hall		
	Boat/watercraft sales		
	Call center		
	Car wash		
	Coin operated laundry		
	Commercial/trade school		
	Copy, printing, photo processing		
	Exterminator		
	Florist		
	Heliport		
	Laundry/dry cleaning establishment		
	Live-work unit		
	Mini storage facility		
	Motel and hotel		
	Motor vehicle quick service (oil change, tires)		
	Museum, art gallery		
	Nursery w/ or w/out greenhouse		
	Parking lot, parking garage		
	Post Office		
	Professional, financial, personal recreational service		
	Radio, TV station		

	<b>Use Allowed By-Right</b>	<b>Allowed Under Prescribed Conditions</b>	<b>Accessory Use Only</b>
	Repair & servicing of items permitted to be sold		
	Restaurant, lounge, nightclub w/out drive-in or drive-thru service		
	Retail sales, general merchandise		
	Second-hand goods retail sales		
	Sign printing		
	Studio for gymnast, artist, musician, etc.		
	Upholstering under 1500 sq ft workroom		
		Solar collector installation	Solar collector installation
		Specialty retail (butcher, confectionery, etc.) w/ limited processing	
		Specialty Sales w/ substantial assembly/processing	
		Alcoholic beverage, wine, beer production & sales	
		Animal grooming	
		Brewpub	
		Communications tower & antenna	
		Farmers market	
		Gas station	
		Animal day care kennel	
		Microbrewery	
		Mobile vendor	
		Outdoor sales w/ permanent business	
		Pushcart vending	
		Veterinary clinic or hospital	

	<b>Use Allowed By-Right</b>	<b>Allowed Under Prescribed Conditions</b>	<b>Accessory Use Only</b>
			Drive-up service window (for pharmacy, bank, etc.)
<b>RECREATION &amp; ENTERTAINMENT USES</b>			
	Arcade, game room		
	Athletic or sports fields, ballfields, 3 or more		
	Bowling alley		
	Community rec center		
	Ice or roller rink		
	Indoor commercial recreation		
	Parks & playgrounds		
	Stadium, outdoor assembly facility		
	Swimming pool		
	Tennis or racket club or sports court, commercial		
	Theater, drive-in		
	Theater, indoor		
	Theater, outdoor stage		
		Amusement, commercial outdoor (mini golf, rides, paintball, etc.)	
		Archery or firearms range, indoor	
		Riding stable, commercial	
		Skateboard facility	
<b>INDUSTRIAL &amp; MANUFACTURING USES</b>			
	Blacksmith shop		

	<b>Use Allowed By-Right</b>	<b>Allowed Under Prescribed Conditions</b>	<b>Accessory Use Only</b>
	Manufacturing, processing, assembling of components into craft or custom made items, under 3000 sq ft		
	Recycled material, collection, processing, & packaging indoors		
	Wholesale sales		
<b>MISCELLANEOUS USES</b>			
	Transit station		
	Vending machine outside front setback / under building overhang		
		Electric, gas substation and similar	
		Farm, urban	
		Short-term temporary use or festival, of civic or nonprofit nature	
		Temporary business use	
		Transit stop shelter	
			Auction sale, liquidating on-site assets
			Accessory use clearly incidental to principal use
			Donation drop-off facility
			Garage, yard sales
			Propane or fuel storage for principal use
			Temporary self-contained storage unit
			Utility equipment & parking for principal use

Other land uses may in the future be determined to be appropriate and be added to the allowed uses in the ENT district. Similarly, some uses now listed may later be determined to be removed from placement, or may be restricted by applying new prescribed conditions.

The ENT provisions within the UDO require certain elements to be included in this small area plan, such as the “minimum different types of land uses required to be built in the first phase”. This is called for in order to assure a balance of uses within the study area as it develops. If the first phase development here is not in keeping with the overall guiding principles and vision for the new neighborhood, it may become extremely difficult to realize the vision as further development matches the initial growth instead.

To protect against unintended deviation from the overall goals for this area, Town Board should adopt a policy on maximum limits of any one category of land use until complementary uses are also in place. For example, Town Board may wish to state no more than 600 dwelling units should be permitted and built here until at least 40,000 square feet of commercial is under construction or completed. This “commercial” allocation should include an assortment of small shops, restaurants, services, and employment sites, rather than a single business, so that the loss of one establishment will not create a total loss of commercial activity. Similarly, Town Board may adopt a policy that no more than 120,000 square feet of commercial should be permitted until at least 240 dwelling units are under construction. To prevent big box retail (merchandise sales as sole or primary activity) from locating here, Town Board may choose to adopt a policy that no single retail establishment should be greater than 70,000 square feet. By adopting these types of policies separate from this small area plan, Town Board can review their policies and revise them whenever they see a need to do so, without amending this small area plan. Any initial policies should be discussed and adopted around the time this small area plan is adopted, so that property owners and potential developers will know what is expected.

This geographical area is the Town of Matthews' first opportunity to see a mixed use area grow up and out over time, with purpose, to become a full-service neighborhood. To increase the ability of this area to embody the ambiance of an urban scale community, it is critical that the area as a whole gives off a feeling of cohesiveness and uniqueness. Each phase of development should carefully assess that it balances a comfortable repetition of certain features with one of a kind custom elements.

The ENT zoning district already includes some minimum and maximum dimensional standards, such as block lengths, building setbacks, and building heights, which will create a basic level of consistency within the area as it builds out. These are intended to create that sense of rhythm that someone walking, biking, or driving by can automatically appreciate without consciously thinking about it. Street design standards are discussed in more detail later in this section. The ENT district also gives requirements for public infrastructure and public realm spaces, again to reinforce the consistent ebb and flow of an urban district.

Urban design, however, is more than meeting dimensional standards. The twin key here is to create a unique built environment – placemaking. This may employ the repetitive use of a specific style of light pole or street bench not used elsewhere in Matthews, or the use of architectural features that allow pedestrians to be comfortable strolling beside them. While this area encourages the use of a wider variety of architectural styles, design, and materials than have been found elsewhere in Matthews, buildings and structures need to include some features that create symmetry too. For example, a building with an angled corner entranceway may have a custom canopy or turret feature, but the street level floor can still utilize windows and doors in orderly sequence and dimensions that are repeated in other buildings in the vicinity.

Landscaping should be included from earliest planning stages of any development. This applies primarily within the public street rights-of-way and in the semi-public areas in front or to the side of buildings, generally called the public use realm in the ENT district provisions of the UDO. This public use realm may take many different forms, including but not limited to a public plaza at the entrance to a building, a pocket park that creates a small green space oasis surrounded by buildings and hard-surfaced pavements, an outdoor display of merchandise in front of a retail merchant, or a group of dining tables and chairs alongside a restaurant. A water feature would be a favorite element within the public realm for those choosing to slow down and take in the sound of moving water, or to watch children playing there. The public realm is a space where people are expected to “people-watch”.

Great public spaces are the living room of the city - the place where people come together to enjoy the city and each other. . . . The combination of beautiful architecture with great public space creates the most beautiful places to live - places that express a life of richness and tradition, and act as a setting for life to happen.

Center for Design Excellence at [urbandesign.org](http://urbandesign.org)

Street trees are a desired element within the district. In order to encourage a canopy effect over the streets, the following varieties are primarily to be used throughout the ENT district: Slippery Elm (similar to the traditional American elm), London Plane Tree, Ginkgo, and Hackberry. They may be supplemented by other species when there is a clear purpose for alternatives.

Creating and enhancing the public use realm through the use of elements pleasing to the senses is essential to “placemaking”. This may occur within linear pedestrian spaces between shop fronts and building entrances and the street curb, or areas out of active walking pathways and beside buildings forming plazas or pocket parks. Interspersing living greenery wherever possible, from small doses such as flower boxes in windows or baskets hanging from posts, to spreading shade trees and lawns, are especially important as the density of pavement and multi-story buildings increase.

Civic art or public art also should be incorporated from the beginning stages of planning any site within the area. Not every individual building site may have an appropriate place to showcase a piece of public art. Public art may be a sculpture composed of durable media capable of withstanding the ravages of extreme weather conditions. It may also be designed to be temporary, and may be intended to be interactive – to invite people to do something to change how it looks, sounds, or moves. More recently, the concept of public art has been expanded to include buskers or performance artists using their own bodies, or voices, to create the specific art form. Any form of public art is intended to draw people close to it and to respond mentally or emotionally to it. While public art may be controversial at times as to how “artistic” it is, any public art incorporated into the Entertainment district should meet local community standards of decency. This is especially important given the expectation that families with children will populate the public realm as they visit the area while enjoying recreational activities or participating in sporting events at the County Sportsplex.

This new neighborhood will need to determine exact placement of new streets as development proceeds. The primary street system has been identified and additional streets will be necessary to create the desired urban character and to conform to the standards of the ENT zoning district. New streets will be expected to adhere to the cross sections provided here based on the expected use level of each street segment.

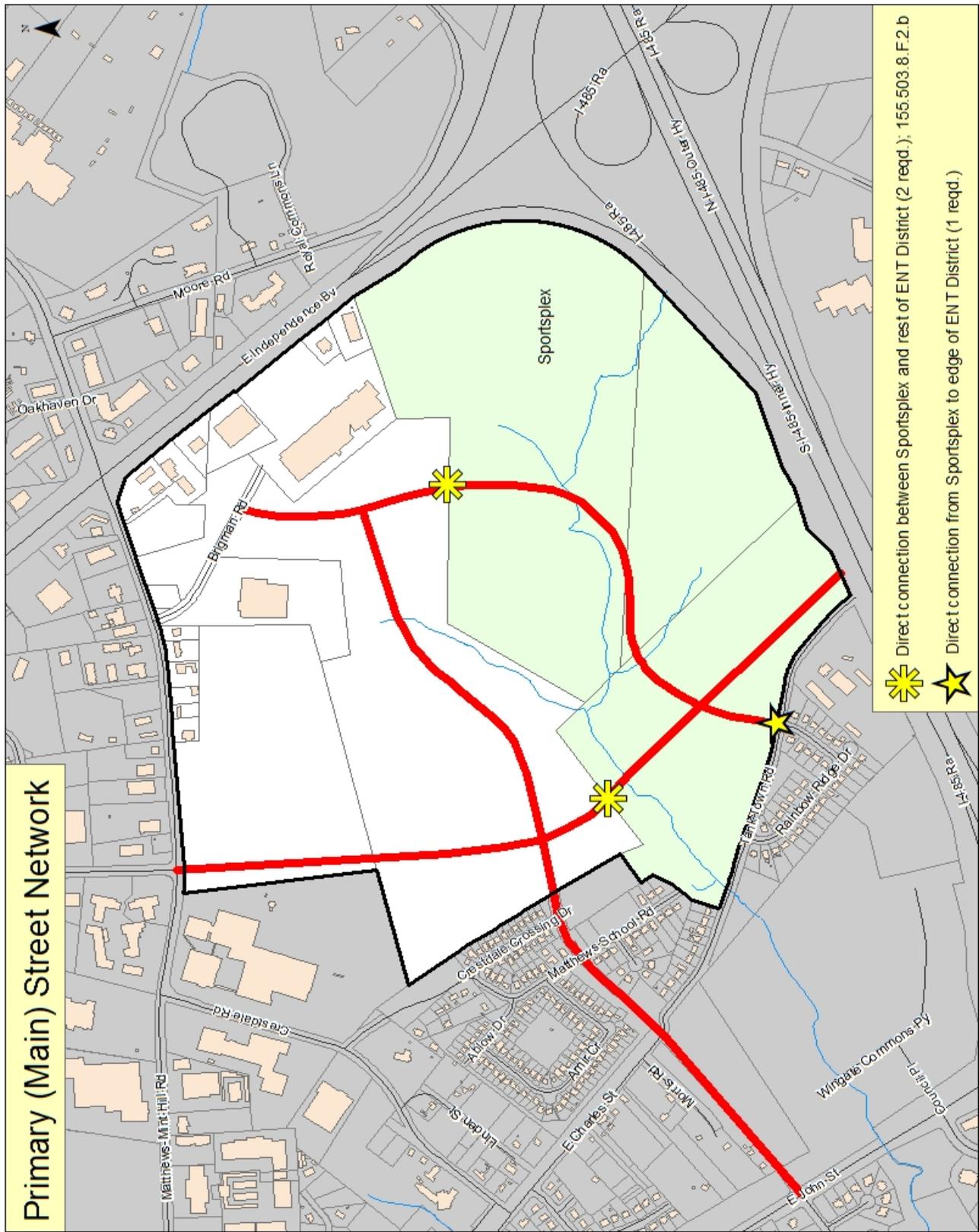
The collector road through the Sportsplex and connecting to Brigman Road has its own adopted cross sections, which change from a more rural feel within the park site to an urban design once entering yet-to-be developed privately-owned land.

Independence Pointe Parkway should be designed to allow for a future transit guideway separate from general vehicular traffic. To accomplish this, sufficient right-of-way should be retained, and the street may be shifted to one side rather than utilizing a typical center line for general purpose traffic.

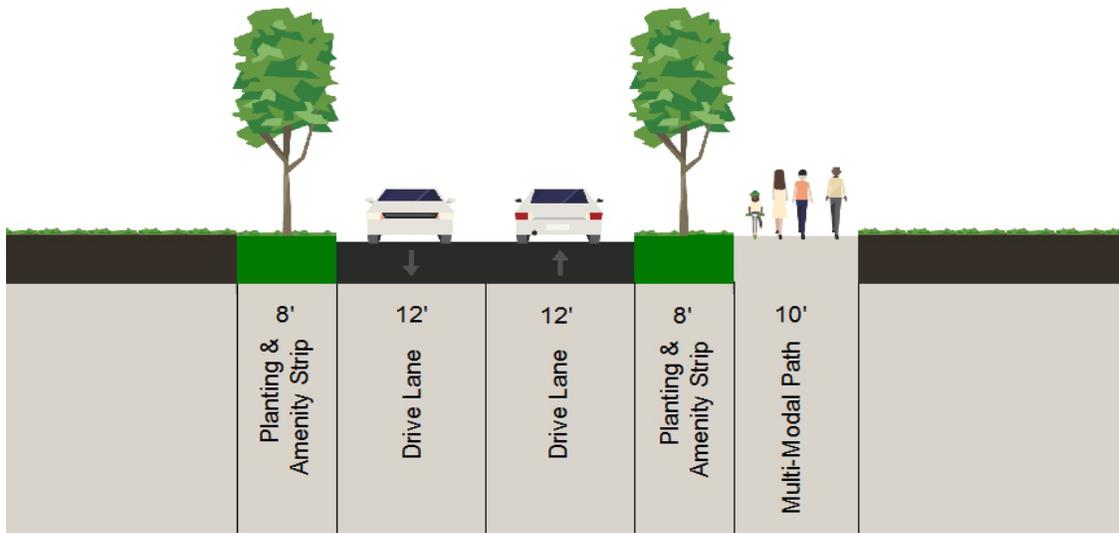
The “main” or primary street to be built generally parallel to Matthew-Mint Hill Road within the privately-owned portion of

the study area is expected to carry higher levels of general traffic than shorter streets that may become part of an urban grid. This “main” street should follow the cross section provided for it here.

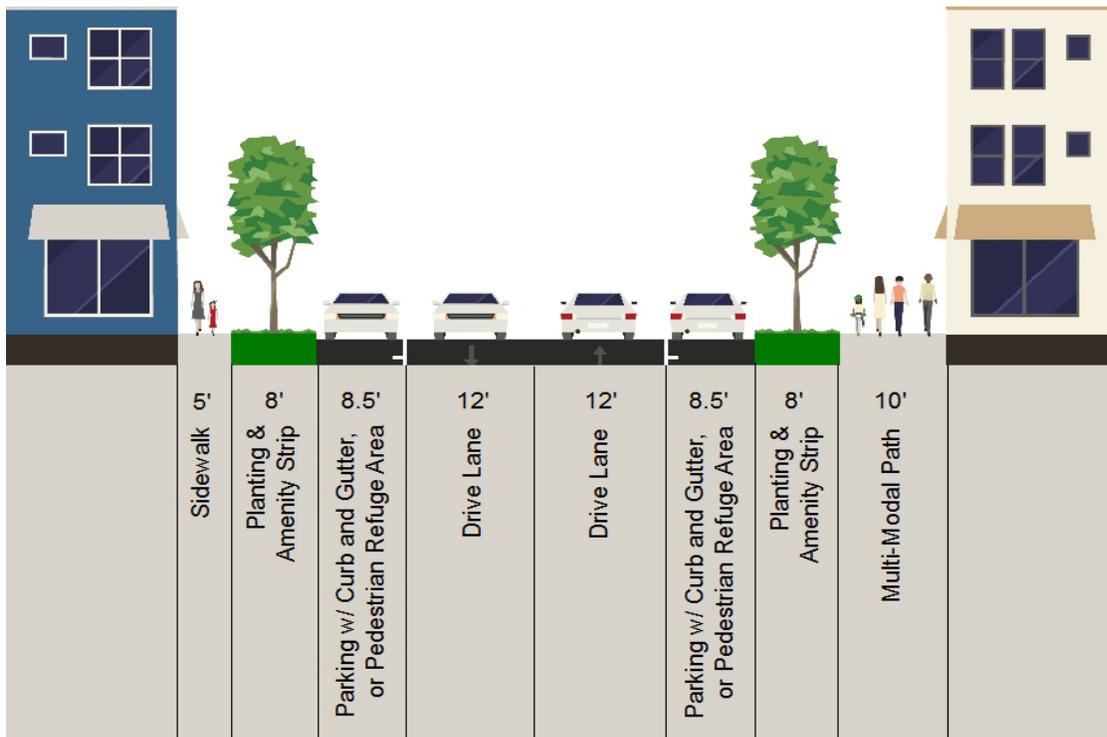
New street segments other than those shown on the “main” or primary street network that may be built over time will generally carry lower speed and lower number of vehicles. These streets can follow the street cross section for commercial urban streets as provided here.



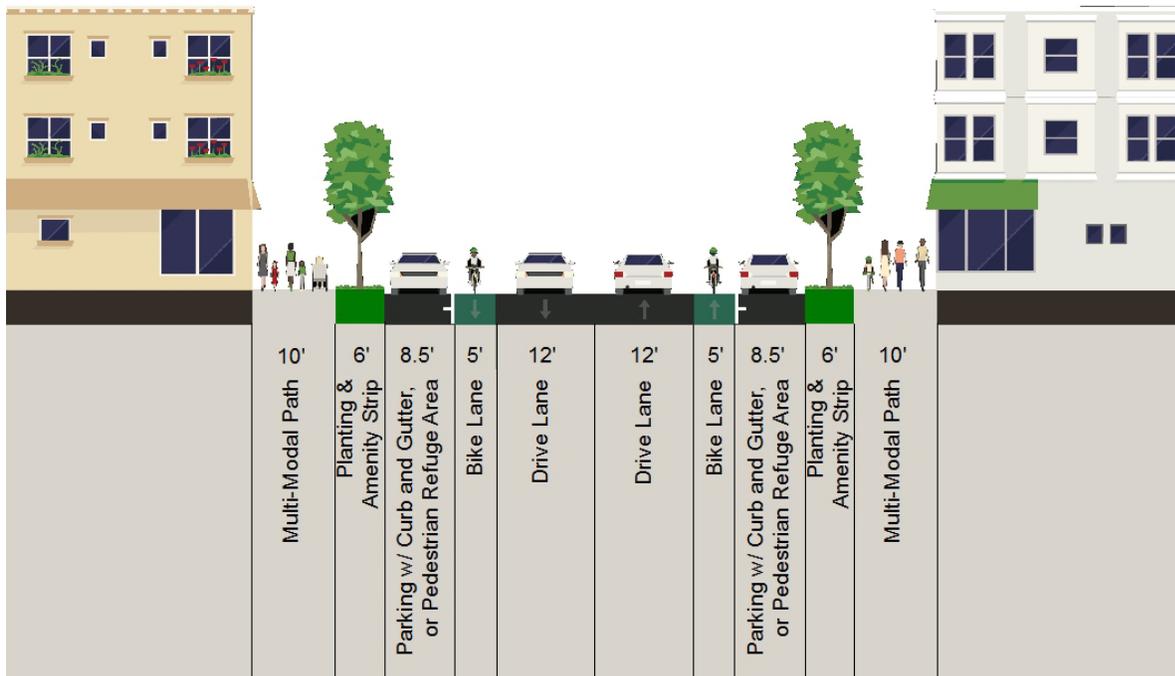
Sports Park Drive in Sportsplex



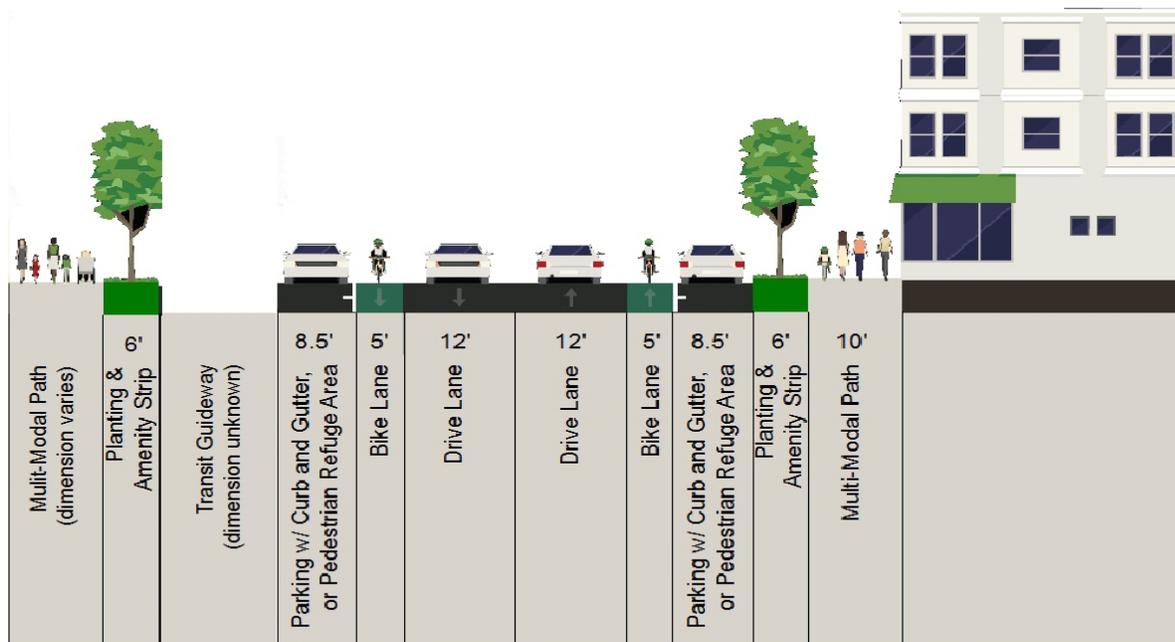
Sports Park Drive outside of Sportsplex



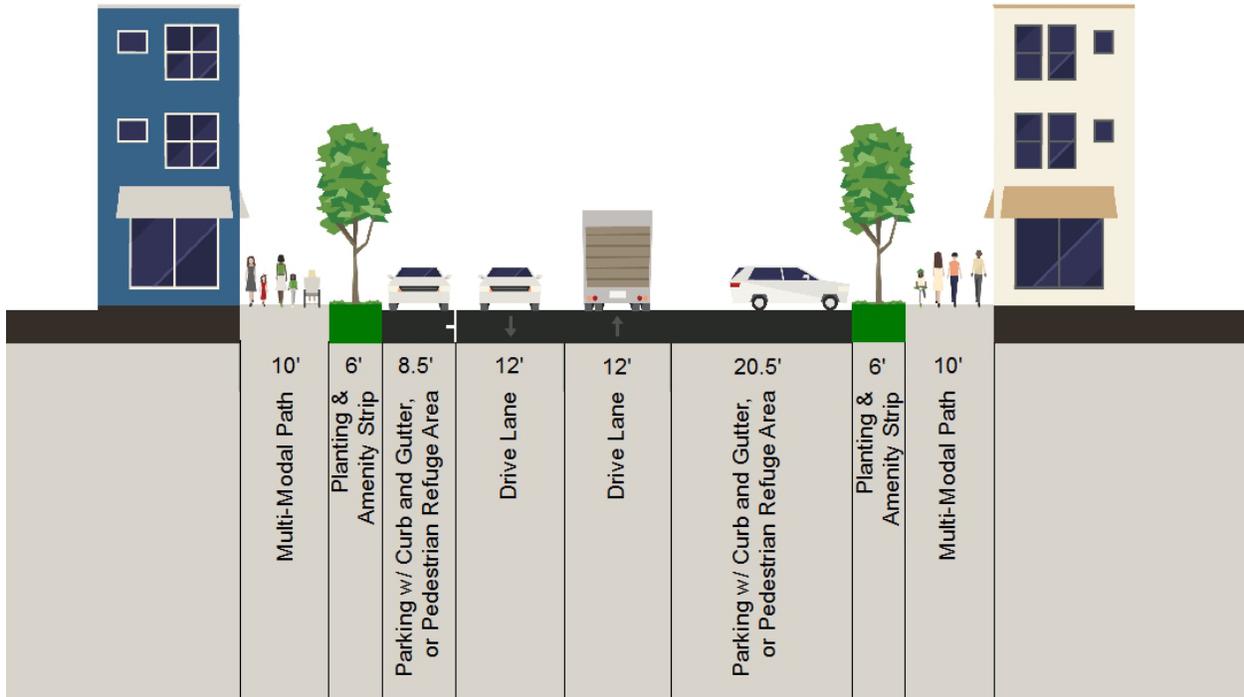
## Primary North-South Street



## Independence Pointe Parkway



Non "Main" Streets



An urban, mixed use environment will encourage and allow residents and visitors alike to explore site around them on foot or by bicycle, Segway, scooter, skates, or other options than getting in a car. The intent of this development is to offer everyone within the district improved options for getting around. The Center for Design Excellence says that the “best cities are the ones that elevate the experience of the pedestrian while minimizing the dominance of the private automobile”. Since this district is in the midst of a suburban location, cars will still be a major influence here, but there can be a new balance between modes of movement.

The ENT district requires a well-designed and integrated system of pedestrian paths, including typical streetside sidewalks, wider multi-modal pathways that may or may not parallel a street, mid-block walkways on longer block faces, and greenways to the side of small creeks. These may allow shared use with bicyclists, family members with baby strollers and pets on a leash, area employees on a work break, joggers and exercise-seekers, window-shoppers enjoying a slowed-down pace, and more. Long-term expectations are for a transit station for some mode of rapid transit to be located along Independence Pointe Parkway within this neighborhood, but even before that becomes a reality it is likely that CATS may run one or more local bus routes into this neighborhood, offering another transportation choice other than a private passenger vehicle.

The ENT district concept plan has a base network of pedestrian and multi-modal pathways that meshes with the “main street” required network. These pathways must continue outside of the district as well, in order to connect this area to other existing development sites in Matthews. This neighborhood is less than a mile from downtown Matthews along Matthews-Mint Hill Road, and a continuous and safe connection must be built as early as possible. The Crestdale Heritage Trail is planned, and pieces will be built in the coming year, that will connect the Sportsplex and downtown through the historic Crestdale community, and will offer a glimpse into the past along the way.

Although at the edge of the ENT district, the CSX rail line will make itself felt and heard by visitors and residents within the ENT district. This railroad carries freight past the area multiple times a day. Today Charles Street/Tank Town Road makes an “S” curve as it crosses the tracks, and the future Greylock Ridge Road will cross the rail line in essentially the same location. The Crestdale Heritage Trail between Crestdale Road and downtown will parallel the rail line.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities Department is the primary provider of public potable water and sanitary sewer. The study area is located within the section of Mecklenburg County designated as the “960 pressure zone”. Treated drinking water comes from the Franklin and Vest plants, and is distributed throughout this pressure zone from booster pump stations at Sardis Road and Idlewild sites, as well as from the Wilgrove elevated tank. Because so much of the acreage within the overall area is not yet developed, or was developed before CMUD utilities were extended to this edge of the county, there is little public water infrastructure in place today. One 12 inch water main is located along Matthews-Mint Hill Road, and a main extends from there down Brigman Road. Water systems must be looped in order to maintain proper pressure and to keep water flowing so it does not stagnate in dead end pipes. Any new development is anticipated to extend water lines as necessary to provide that development’s needs, and all extensions should anticipate further extensions. New mains and supply lines should be sized from the first development to assume urban build-out of the overall area. This may mean that a 10 inch line may be necessary from current main to a new development site even if it only would require an 8 inch line if no additional development activity were anticipated beyond it.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities also provides sanitary sewer service here, but little infrastructure exist today. An existing sewer main built to service Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) Levine Campus on the far side of I-485 crosses the Sportsplex property, exiting the study area to cross under Tank Town Road and the CSX rail line and heading toward East John Street, all while paralleling a tributary of Four Mile Creek. Because sanitary sewer primarily depends on gravity flow to its treatment plant, sewer mains are usually located along creeks and low-lying depressions. This new neighborhood location forms a portion of the headwaters for Four Mile Creek, which means it should be at a relatively high ground elevation in relation to the eventual treatment facility – McAlpine Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant in Pineville. Sewer mains can be anticipated to be constructed within this new neighborhood to follow the small “fingers” of creeks. Similar to water main extensions, each development site will need to extend sewer lines not only sized for that individual facility but to allow for it to become part of a new overall sewer system.

Some existing developed sites along Independence Boulevard and Matthews-Mint Hill Road may have individual access to existing CMUD water and/or sewer mains. The Matthews Plaza shopping center has a privately-owned sewer lift facility at the northwestern edge of their site where Brigman Road dead ends into a private drive for the retail center.

Charlotte Mecklenburg Utilities Department has a Donated Projects program for the extension of both water and sewer mains, which is available to new developments. This program would be the vehicle for infrastructure extensions throughout this new neighborhood.

Storm sewer also would need to be designed and built as individual parcels within the overall study area begin to develop, and it too must be sized from the start for full urban build-out. In an area expected to have substantial impervious surfaces – streets, sidewalks, public plazas, rooftops, etc. – capturing, cleaning, and slowing the flow of released storm water is a critical design consideration. Federal, state, and local regulations today call for designing new development to not allow release of storm water from typical rainfalls at a rate greater than the pre-development rate. The ENT zoning district encourages the use of “green roofs”, which can mean an alternative method of utilizing the surface area of a rooftop to collect storm water for growing plants. Public plazas and other small pockets of living plant materials can be designed to receive initial storm water from a rainstorm, filter it for impurities as the plant roots take up nutrients, and then release the excess water to the downward drainage system. Storm water collection facilities can be designed to only have water in them for a brief period after a rainfall, or can be intended to maintain a certain level of water, and can often become a positive visual and recreation amenity for the immediate surrounding residents and visitors. Fountains may be installed in a “wet” pond situation, or a low seating wall can be built along the edge, or a pier may be built out over the water surface, or other methods to utilize the water surface for more activity than just storm water collection and storage.

Following the small area plan completed by Woolpert Inc in 2007, the consultants provided the Town with infrastructure cost estimates in April 2008. These assumed build-out of streets, utilities and pedestrian facilities matching the street network which was associated with their proposed site layout, but allowed for extrapolation of unit costs as alternative build-out scenarios were considered.

Costs were provided for Independence Pointe Parkway as either a 2 lane or a 6 lane divided median cross section. Other internal streets were priced in the following cross sections: two travel lanes with one on-street parking lane; two travel lanes with one on-street parking lane and center median; and four travel lanes with on-street parking and median. Cost estimates were also provided for utility main extensions, manholes, hydrants, and related items typically placed within the public right-of-way. For comparison to this concept plan layout's "main street" required network, the 2008 cost estimates for "Situation #1" public infrastructure totaled \$1,228,950. This assumed a 2-lane configuration for Independence Pointe Parkway from Matthews-Mint Hill Road to Greylock Ridge Road, Greylock Ridge Road within the ENT district boundaries only, Sports Street from the County's park site to existing Brigman Road, and one street connecting Independence Pointe Parkway to Sports Street.

Two years later, in 2010, while effects of the recession were still limiting access to financing, the Town received estimated values for build-out here. Seven Oaks Company used the 2007 Woolpert build-out concept, which suggested just over 4 million square feet of mixed use buildings and 7,800 parking spaces to arrive at construction costs of \$494,790,000, not including land acquisition, financing or related "soft" development costs. This involved \$272,857 in land costs per acre, and had the potential to create an average of \$353,421 in increased value per acre.

The Town requires dedication of all public street rights-of-way as, or before, improvements are made to the private parcels adjacent to them. The Town does not anticipate or intend to acquire right-of-way for streets internal to the family entertainment mixed use development portion of the ENT district. The Town has considered participating financially in the acquisition of right-of-way for portions of Greylock Ridge Road extension from East John Street to the ENT district, and has received CDBG funding for the Crestdale Heritage Trail which overlaps the alignment of the future connector roadway. The CDBG funds may assist in achieving some remaining portions of the right-of-way not yet obtained.

## Natural Resources and Open Space

The Sportsplex is a County community-wide park that includes greenways, cross country paths, undisturbed wooded natural area, picnic shelters, and playgrounds. While the largest groups of participants at the Sportsplex will be there for organized team field sports, it is clearly intended to be used by the public for many different recreational and leisure activities.

This geographic location forms part of the headwaters for Four Mile Creek. Small streams wander through the site like individual fingers, making their way toward each other to form a single larger flowing stream, the palm of the “hand”, as it exits the area to the southwest. Each of these “fingers” and “palm” may be suitable for a greenway trail that can extend a line of nature into the predominately urban built environment.

### Funding:

Since the first concept plans were drawn up for this geographical area, its overall size and need for internal consistency and coordination has automatically compelled the Town to understand the need for a master build-out plan and preferably one, or a small number, of master developers. The Town has also understood the potential for a public-private shared effort to fund some portion of improvements. Mecklenburg County, of course, is a major public player as it develops the regional Sportsplex. The County has provided park bond funding of \$5 million in Phase 1, and \$25 million for Phase 2 of the park. The Town of Matthews has committed to \$2 million toward the County park project, which may be used within the County property or for improvements leading to the park site (i.e., Greylock Ridge Road).

In July 2010 the NC General Assembly approved local legislation authorizing the Town of Matthews to participate financially in a public-private development partnership outside of the downtown area which can be expected to result in significant economic benefit to the overall community. This act only applies to one project within the corporate limits “that includes a sports facility and a family entertainment complex and the extension of Greylock Ridge Road”. Town funds cannot exceed one half of the total project costs. This is similar to the process used by the Town and its private developer partner in building Matthews Station Street and its adjacent parcels.

The Town has explored the possibility of implementing a version of a tax increment financing (TIF) process similar to how the City of Charlotte has applied it to certain projects, but recognizes that the Town alone will not be sufficient to make it worthwhile. In order for a synthetic TIF or similar program to be economically feasible, the County would need to simultaneously participate. This, however, may be an option for some district-wide infrastructure improvements, such as major street gateways, greenway/multi-modal pathways not adjacent to streets, or a district-wide water quality feature.

### Urban Design and Placemaking:

By using a specific set of street trees, architectural elements, street lights/posts, street sign brackets, gateway signage, benches, and related outdoor furniture and amenities, the area can achieve a sense of cohesiveness, or “branding”.

While not all the items that may be repeated throughout the district, it should include the following. Where no specific is provided below, it was not determined prior to adoption of this small area plan, which means that category will need Town Board approval before installation anywhere within the district.

- Street trees: slippery elm, London plane, ginkgo, and hackberry
- Street lights: simple, clean lines; may combine street lighting and pedestrian scale lighting on same posts when appropriate
- Street pedestrian-scale light posts: low-level bollards, simple in design
- Sign name sign brackets: simple, clean lines, but OK to create a logo or topper unique to the new neighborhood
- Benches: must have backrest, prefer slatted or contoured for comfort
- Trash containers and tree grates: color and style consistent with other street furnishings
- Gateway entrance sign structures: opportunity to display unique neighborhood logo and name (if/when selected)
- Internal wayfinding (directory and directional) signage: must be consistent and must use selected name and/or logo, should match/complement color and character of light posts
- Public parking signage: must be consistent and must use selected name and/or logo, should match/complement color and character of light posts
- Cross walk pavement marking: preference to have pedestrian use crossings clearly delineated by contrasting color or pavement marking/stamping, as long as stamping process does not cause potential tripping
- Architectural thematic elements: simple, clean lines, but sufficient use of color, different exterior materials, changes of plane, door and window openings, and other decorative features to create visual interest and to make walking beside a wall a comfortable and appealing activity; upper floor balcony or rooftop space desirable to increase the sense of life and activity on the street; traditional architectural design not necessary, allowing more contemporary themes OK if they do not become too severe or devoid of visual and textural interest
- Pavement within public realm area other than street-side walkways: preference to use an assortment of pavement colors, textures, stamping, etc. in order to create visual contrast to adjacent building walls; greenery essential in as many places as possible to break up the appearance of impervious surfaces; use of outdoor furnishings to encourage people to come and stay, whether to sit and people-watch, or to play an oversized game of checkers, or to relax with a book by a water feature
- Public art: art features should have visual and textural interest, and as often as possible be pieces that people can touch or climb or otherwise experience; preference for understandable and identifiable pieces – may have pleasing curves and smooth surfaces, encouraging people to sit and climb, or may create a recognizable shape of a human, vehicle, flower, etc.
- Outdoor plazas and open spaces: surrounding development should use building walls, trees, or other features to surround the open area in order to create a sense of an outdoor “room”; some sense of enclosure, being protected or separated from adjacent streets even if the street is close by

Matthews Town Board may wish to take a lead in selecting a specific name and logo to “brand” this new neighborhood. This would ideally be created with input from all property owners and may also request the involvement of existing businesses and employers within the area today. This name and this logo, if designated, can then be used when selecting specific design criteria for street furnishings, light poles, etc. As the area begins to have new development of both public infrastructure and new buildings for residential and business use, new gateway entrance signs may also be approved using this neighborhood name and logo.

As stated at the end of the Land Use section above, Town Board is encouraged to establish some policies on maximum amounts of specific land use categories as the neighborhood is being built out, in order to maintain a balance of uses. Town Board has requested similar balancing provisions through conditional zoning of other mixed use proposals, to assure that the area actually develops into the blended activity location it is envisioned to become. Initial policies might include:

\* no more than 600 dwelling units should be permitted and built here until at least 40,000 square feet of commercial is under construction or completed.

\* no more than 120,000 square feet of commercial should be permitted until at least 240 dwelling units are under construction.

\* no single retail establishment should be greater than 70,000 square feet.

These policies can be revisited at any time at Council's discretion or on request of a proposed new development. They can be revised on a motion by Town Board and will not require amendment to this small area plan.

The ENT zoning district provisions talk about creating both short-term and long-range parking plans as each site within the overall neighborhood develops. As any portion of the neighborhood meets a density level sufficient to warrant structured shared parking and therefore opens land area where surface parking has been located to further urban-scale development, designated sites can convert to the new structured parking facility. There are many ways a threshold could be defined, but one possibility is to base it on the maximum build-out suggested by the 2007 conceptual plan. Since these amounts may be considered more intense than expected to be developed in today's market, they would be conservative levels for conversion. The 2007 concept plan projected up to 1,875,000 square feet of mixed commercial and nonresidential buildings, 1,450 dwelling units, and 475 hotel rooms. The 2007 design layout proposed ultimately converting surface parking into two structured parking facilities of 600 parking spaces each. These structured facilities would be able to accommodate 2 to 3 times as many parking spaces as the underlying ground surface. One parking deck was designed to be shared by a mix of uses within the new neighborhood and the Sportsplex stadium, so it would be located on privately owned land close to the stadium. The other was envisioned to be utilized by businesses and residents in the immediate vicinity of the future transit station so that it could also function as a park and ride lot during the day. Other locations may also be identified throughout the neighborhood as future structured parking.

Surface to structured parking conversion could be triggered within a segment of the overall new neighborhood when the land within a 350 foot radius of an identified future structured parking site meets one of the following:

- 1) When CATS approves extension of a mass transit mode other than local or express bus to the proposed transit station location within the new neighborhood;
- 2) When Mecklenburg County approves an ongoing joint-use agreement for at least 200 parking spaces within a structured parking facility for stadium use on adjacent privately-owned land; or
- 3) When at least 400,000 square feet of nonresidential development, at least 500 dwelling units, or a mix of residential, overnight lodging, and/or nonresidential uses totaling at least 500,000 square feet have permits issued for construction.

This can be accomplished either by separate Town Board policy or included within this small area plan.

# E JOHN STREET/ OUTER LOOP AREA SMALL AREA PLAN

Planning Board recommendation of approval 1/03/2017

Board of Commissioners approved 1/09/2017

## INTRODUCTION

The land area around E John Street, south of I-485 and extending up to the CSX rail line, is one of the last large mostly-vacant sectors within the Town of Matthews. In the near future, this property is expected to become prime for development as E John Street/Old Monroe Rd is improved and widened. Planning the future conceptual build-out of this area therefore must be strategic and intentional. This study builds on the recommendations and strategies for this sector set forth in Chapter 4 of the Land Use Plan. This plan will create a vision for appropriate density of development for the study area and will provide recommendations for implementing the vision. This plan also identifies unique opportunities for development here due to the proximity to established neighborhoods, Central Piedmont Community College, the Mecklenburg County Sportsplex, and the future Entertainment District.



## BACKGROUND

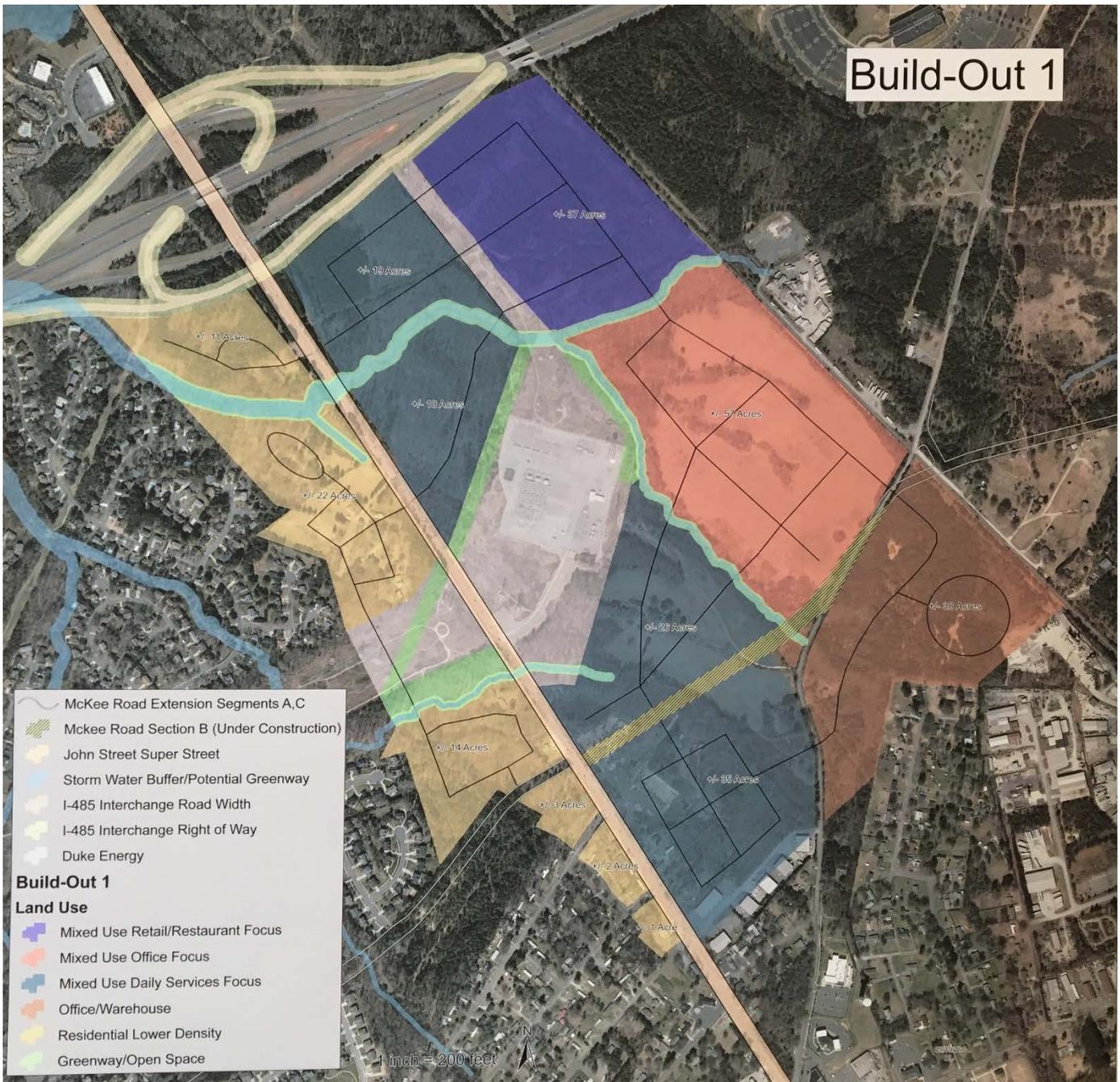
The E John Street/Outer Loop Small Area Plan was determined by the Matthews Town Board of Commissioners in 2015 to be the top priority section of our jurisdiction to have an in-depth study prepared in advance of the expected E John St/Old Monroe Rd widening project. NCDOT intends to widen E John Street from Downtown Matthews to the Mecklenburg-Union County line where the street name changes to Old Monroe Rd as the widening continues to Wesley Chapel-Stouts Road in Indian Trail between the years 2022 and 2024. The Town recognized the need for a more detailed vision of this corridor and its adjacent land area with the impending road project and sought out input from the public and community stakeholders to establish this vision.

Town Staff reached out to students at Winthrop University to conduct some initial research and background inventory collection. On December 1, 2015, a public input session was held at Town Hall with support from Winthrop students, where community members provided their feedback. The vision for the area began unfolding as citizens viewed options of different forms of residential, commercial, and industrial development, as well as various modes of transportation, and possible build-outs of the area. Participants and area residents were also asked to complete an online survey during the month of December which gauged individual preferences on potential styles and densities of development in the area. Below pictured are community members giving analyzing material provided by staff at the December public input session.

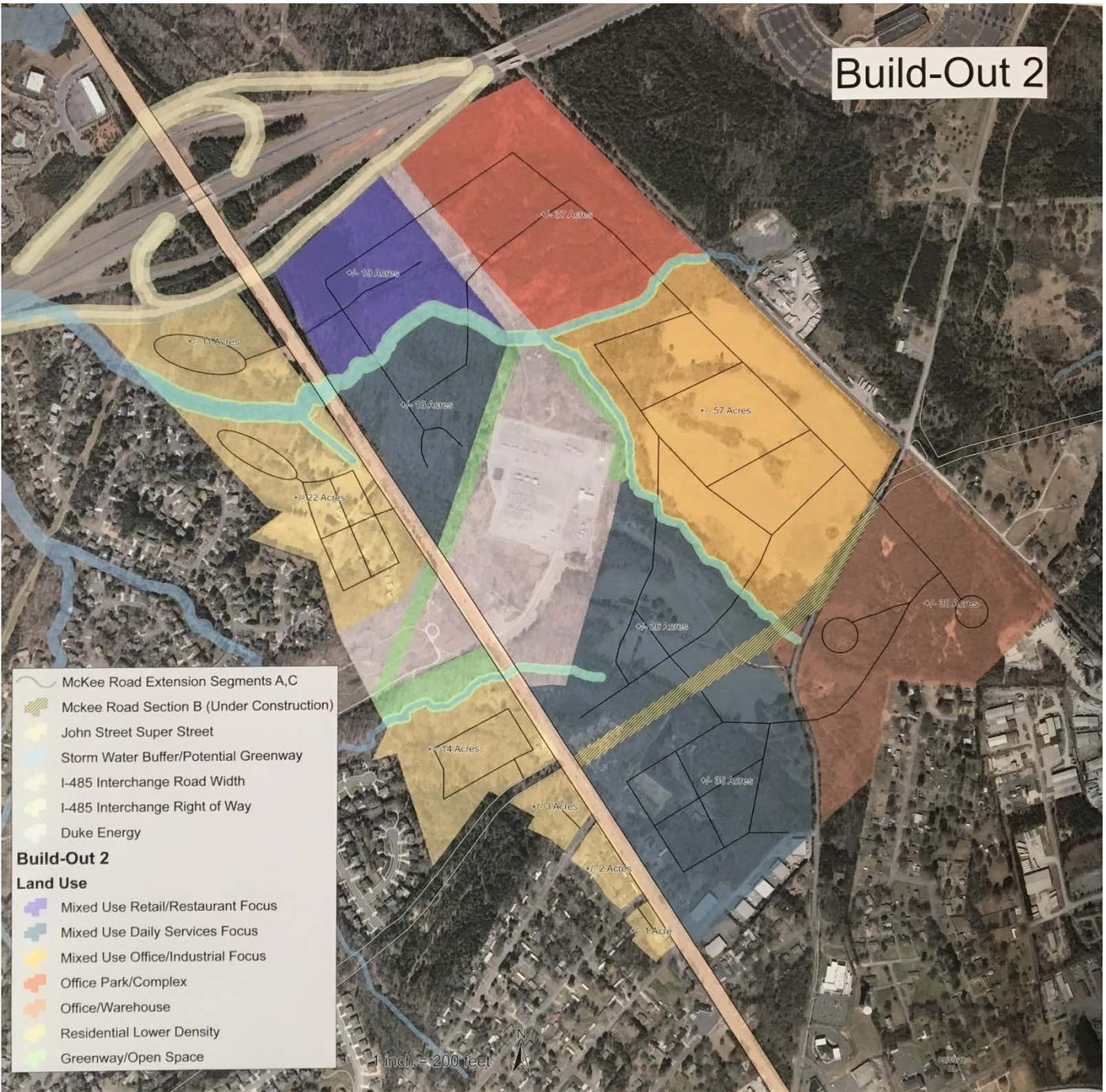


Following out of the December 1<sup>st</sup> session, a community stakeholders committee was formed. The stakeholders met on January 28, 2016 to review the comments and concerns expressed during the public input session and the survey, and discussed the styles of development different groups of people – millennials, baby boomers, families with children – may want here in the future. The stakeholders group met again on March 3 to create a list of guiding principles that set the direction for the planning process and provided a framework for this plan preparation and recommendations. When the stakeholders met on May 5, they reviewed three “build-out scenarios”, each one showing how a different mix of uses could generally fill up the entire study area.

The following maps are of the three proposed build-outs that were presented to the stakeholders group.

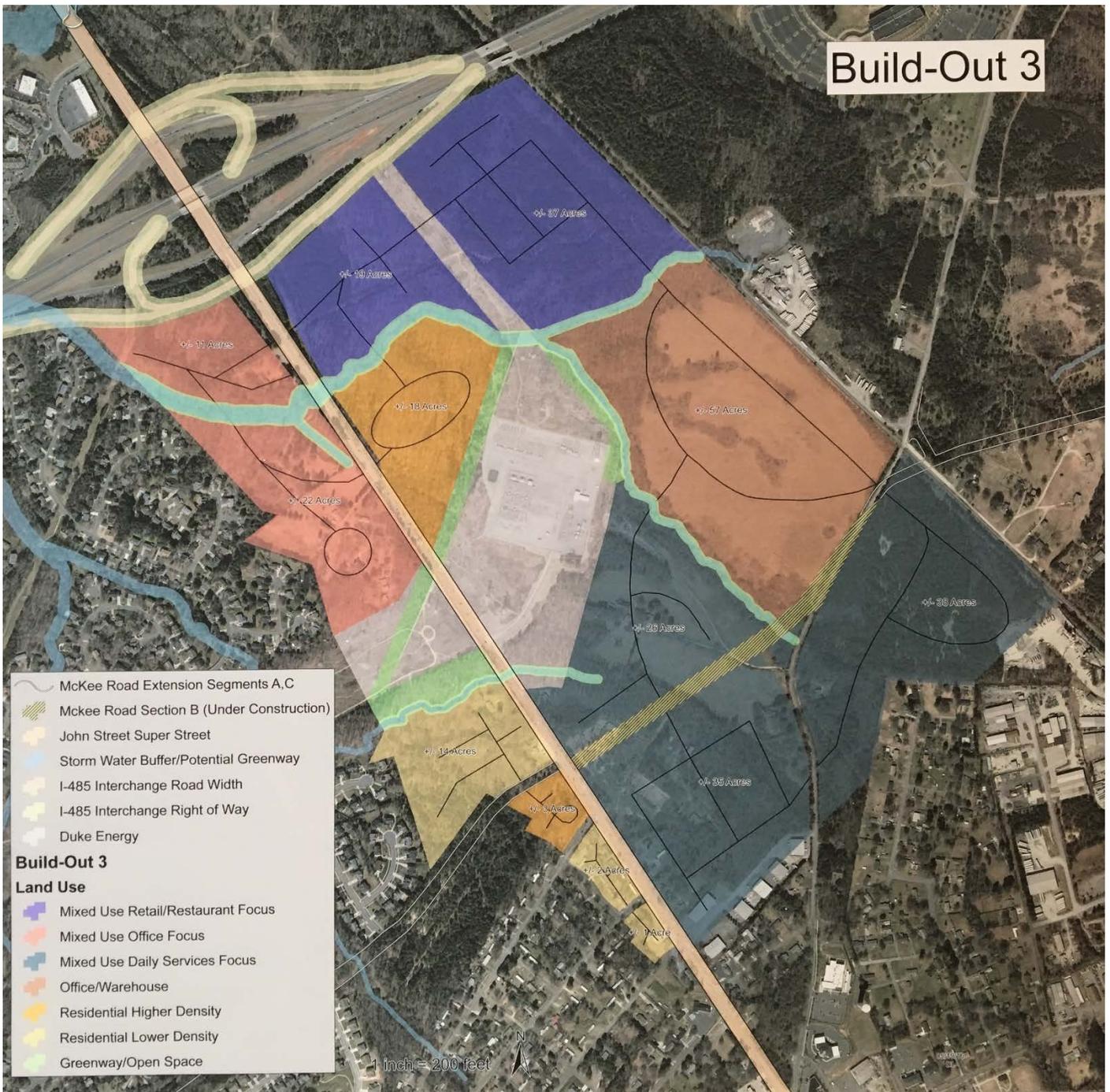


# Build-Out 2



- McKee Road Extension Segments A,C
  - McKee Road Section B (Under Construction)
  - John Street Super Street
  - Storm Water Buffer/Potential Greenway
  - I-485 Interchange Road Width
  - I-485 Interchange Right of Way
  - Duke Energy
- Build-Out 2**
- Land Use**
- Mixed Use Retail/Restaurant Focus
  - Mixed Use Daily Services Focus
  - Mixed Use Office/Industrial Focus
  - Office Park/Complex
  - Office/Warehouse
  - Residential Lower Density
  - Greenway/Open Space

# Build-Out 3



A second public input session was held on May 19 to solicit comments from all interested participants about the three build-out scenarios. Each scenario was at a separate station, with statistics showing how the land values could rise as a result. Visitors were asked to answer specific questions at each station. This included giving opinions on how and where public open space should be provided, and who they would expect to live and work in the study area. The general consensus was to build a robust greenway and walking pathway network throughout the entire study area, with small parks connected to this network. The citizens also supported finding ways to connect existing adjacent neighborhoods, including Brightmoor and Matthews Plantation, so those residents could also take advantage of the new development to work, shop, dine, exercise, and enjoy active or passive outdoor spaces. Below pictured is a community member placing a to-scale sample park on one of the proposed build-outs. The activity allowed staff to gain insight on where parks would best fit within the study area.



The stakeholders group met on September 22 to review the rough draft of the full study and to discuss the revised consensus build-out scenario, which used the input from the stakeholders and public.

The E John/Outer Loop Small Area Plan has taken the comments and concerns expressed by all participants over the past twelve months to define a long-range vision for how this study area should develop. It is expected that small sections or individual parcels will develop at various times, incrementally building out the overall boundaries. By providing this plan as a “road map”, all current and future property owners will see how their piece of the area fits within the larger design, and how each parcel will be dependent on other parcels around them to adhere to the general concept for build-out.

Below are the guiding principles, as defined by the stakeholders committee in May 2016, which describe the primary intentions of the E John Street/Outer Loop Small Area Plan.

### General Principles

- Create a cohesive vision for all land parcels throughout the study area boundaries.
- Recognize the properties adjacent to E John Street backing up to existing single family neighborhoods need to take extra care to adequately protect and buffer those existing developed sites.
- Involve affected stakeholders and citizens.
- Recognize new development within this study area will require significant expansion and improvement of public utilities and the public street network.
- Continue to build upon the recommendations of the Land Use Plan and other adopted plans and policies.
- Ensure any new development proposals are consistent with adopted policies and zoning actions.
- Incorporate walkability and transit-supportive design.

### Specific Principles

- Identify a mix of land uses within the study area that are consistent with the vision.
- Emphasize pedestrian-friendly design and urban scale form of development as the vision calls for them.
- Create land development strategies that promote the use of alternate travel modes including pedestrians, bicycles and public transportation via development design standards and public infrastructure.
- Recognize the impact new driveway access points may cause as new development occurs on a parcel-by-parcel basis, so that long-term viability of the street network remains safe and allows traffic to flow at an appropriate pace.
- Consider unique uses and development layouts to create desirable new destinations and points of interest within the study area.
- Provide strategies that will promote sustainable development and not reduce the integrity of existing surrounding development.
- Protect and preserve large, healthy tree specimen during the initial site design process, both individually located and groves of trees where they can serve as buffers and screens between uses or against vehicular use areas.

The E John Street Study area encompasses over 335 acres of underdeveloped land. It is bordered by Brightmoor and Matthews Plantation subdivisions to the southwest and the CSX railroad line to the northeast. This area is predominately zoned R-12 single-family residential. This low-density, limited-use zoning classification has remained here in large part because the lack of adequate transportation network and public utilities has made it difficult to develop this sector in more intense ways. Long-time residents in this area have been able to enjoy the rural character while still being in close proximity to shops, services, restaurants, and employment opportunities.

The average land value per acre of land in this area is approximately \$56,000 when factoring in building, land, and feature (other on-site improvements) value. The median home value in this area is \$59,000 and median value for land is \$251,800. There are four properties in this area whose value surpasses \$1,000,000: two properties owned by Duke Energy Company to transport and process electricity and zoned as R-12, one property owned by Lester and Mary Yandle LLC designated as a woodland area and zoned as R-12, and one property owned by Mulvaney Group Ltd and zoned as R-12 Single Family Residential.

In terms of zoning, most of the study area is zoned as R-12 with only a handful of properties being zoned as R-20 or I-1 (C-D). Total property value per acre varies significantly due to structures on the property and many other factors.

Below is a table evaluating properties within the study area and their real property assessed values for tax purposes. These properties are not uniform in size, shape, land use, or development. Based on the information in the table, there are many lower priced properties within the study area. However, there are several properties that are valued at \$500,000+. Many of the properties valued greater than \$500,000 are large tracts of land or are being used by Duke Energy and are unlikely to be altered with any development plan.

Land Value	Number of Properties
\$0-\$100,000	45
\$100,001-\$200,000	12
\$200,001-\$300,000	8
\$300,001-\$400,000	1
\$400,001-\$500,000	1
\$500,000+	8
Total	75

The table below summarizes the tax values of buildings on those properties within the study area that have some permanent structures on them. Less than half of the properties have structures on them. Buildings seem to be fairly uniform in value with only a handful being valued less than \$40,000 or more than \$120,000.

Building Value	Number of Properties
N/A-No Building	46
\$0-\$40,000	7
\$40,001-\$80,000	11
\$80,001-\$120,000	9
\$120,000+	2
Total	75

The Town of Matthews has seen a robust amount of development in recent years and has crossed the population threshold of 30,000 citizens. With growth on the rise, the Town has acted progressively in drafting plans to ensure that quality land uses are designated in areas that are soon to be ripe for development. The land area adjacent to E John Street is over 335 acres of largely undeveloped or underdeveloped property. Lack of utility connection in this area has hindered development. At the center of the study area is the Duke Energy substation, with its transmission lines extending in two directions. While these utility improvements guarantee easy access to electrical power source, they also tend to restrict the types of uses that desire to locate immediately adjacent to them. In a similar way, the CSX freight railroad may hinder certain types of land use from locating nearby.

Due to the amount of acreage covered in this small area plan, it is beneficial to consider a diverse mix of land uses here. The Town has now embraced the concept of a more urban character of mixed use development at a higher density than previous commercial development that occurred in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but only in select locations. This study area is an ideal opportunity to encourage newer arrangements and concentrations of nonresidential uses, along with residential styles other than traditional single-family detached subdivisions with cul-de-sac internal streets.

Since different portions of the study area may allow a good fit with certain nonresidential uses more than others, the study area has been broken into multiple geographic “blocks”, which will focus on certain types of uses. The consensus build-out scenario in this plan illustrates these “blocks” by anticipated land use categories. These “focus” mixed use categories do not automatically exclude other uses, but rather show the intent to have a significant portion of development in their respective blocks be that type of nonresidential use. The mix of uses by focus type, and examples of land uses that would reflect the focus intent, include:

### **Office focus**

Examples of uses that encourage an **Office** focus are: professional service offices and studios, such as for architects, accountants, engineers, real estate agents, doctors, dentists, investment agencies, lawyers, and similar, located within individual small office cottages, stand-alone office buildings, to office parks comprised of several large multi-tenant buildings (an office park or complex which may include supportive non-office uses for the employees there).

### **Retail/Restaurant focus**

Examples of uses that encourage a **Retail/Restaurant** focus are: grocery stores; clothing and shoe stores; department stores; similar places selling merchandise generally incorporating more than 12,000 sq ft of sale floor area; cafeterias; sit-down restaurants; lounges; sports bars; fine dining; all food establishments generally incorporating more than 5,000 sq ft of floor area.

### **Daily Services** focus

Examples of uses that encourage a **Daily Services** focus are: cafes; coffee shops; lunch counters/sandwich shops; fast food providers; ice cream shops; pizza carry-out storefronts; convenience stores; dry cleaners; child day care centers; pet boarding facilities; barber shops; hair or nail salons; spas; live-work units; and similar establishments providing daily or regularly-used items or services to those who live or work nearby; such daily service providers generally being smaller business establishments with between 1 and 5 employees on the largest shift, and often covering no more than 4,000 sq ft in floor area.

### **Production/Distribution** focus

Examples of uses that encourage a **Production/Distribution** focus are: assembly of finished products prior to sale; flex use spaces; equipment/home goods repair activities; light manufacturing that does not emit any unpleasant noise, fumes, or light; storage and distribution of manufactured products, supplies and equipment.

### **Residential** focus

Examples of uses that encourage a **Residential** focus are: cottage clusters of small houses; live-work units; townhomes or rowhouses; multi-family apartment buildings; residential uses on upper stories over nonresidential uses.

### **Greenway/Landscape buffer**

Types of open space styles within this category are: greenway trails alongside creeks; multi use paths for pedestrians and bicyclists located beside streets or between other properties; pocket parks or plazas that may have gardens, benches, public art, and other hardscaping features; and small parks with open lawns or playgrounds.

In addition to the above types of land uses, there are a number of other land use categories that would be appropriate to locate within the study area. Civic uses, such as libraries, community centers, assembly halls, and police or fire substations, and institutional uses such as churches and schools may fit within several of the proposed mixed use focus areas.

Where a “block” on the build-out scenario shows a certain focus, it means that those types of uses should comprise at least thirty percent of the total building floor area once the entire section is developed. That allows a significant amount of other uses to also fit within that block.

The designated focus land use should be the first type of new development to be built within that block. This is because the initial development that occurs within each block of the study area will likely define the development pattern and subsequent development around it, and will influence further development to have a similar or complementary flavor. Therefore, by designating specific focus land use categories, the build-out scenario clearly identifies the vision for the subareas. No specific zoning categories are designated to be established within each “block”. Instead, the land use focus identification assumes any appropriate zoning category may be applied within each subarea. For example, office

uses may be allowed in the O Office district, the B-1, and B-3 Business categories, and the MUD Mixed Use District.

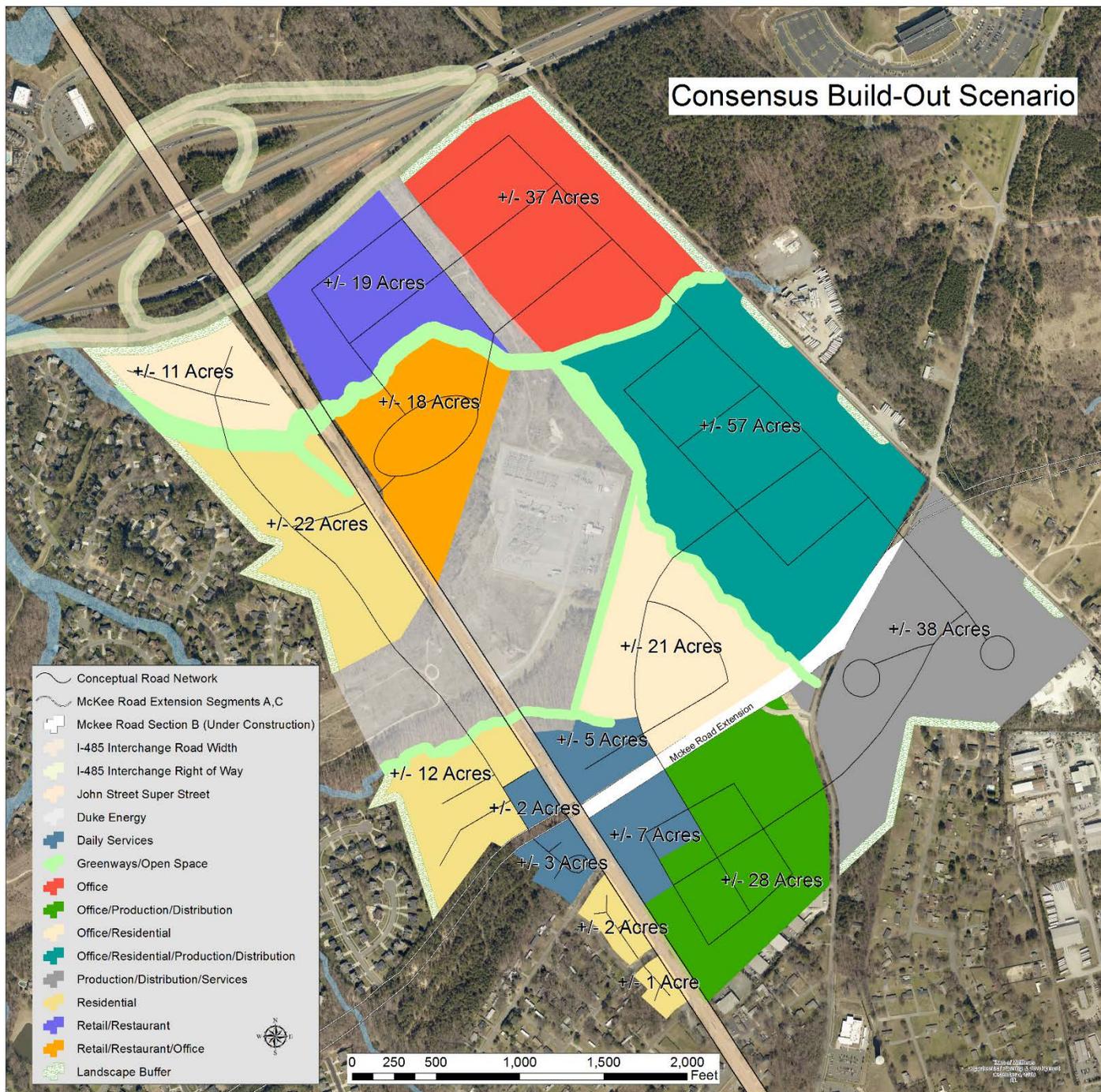
The land use designations shown in the consensus build-out scenario on page 184 encourages different types of land use intensities to transition smoothly over the study area. Greenways can naturally divide separate focus use areas. Where a primarily nonresidential focus area will be placed near established low density residential uses, a landscape buffer area is indicated. Less intensive focus uses such as residential and office are therefore placed along the south side of E John Street. Frontage along the north side of E John Street is to be reserved for more intensive restaurant, retail, and daily service usage.

The future four-legged intersection of McKee Road and E John Street will function as a central point of the newly-developing area, and will have the most access to residents within and adjacent to the study area, as well as being an easy access location for visitors to the area. The four quadrants immediately adjacent to this intersection of two major thoroughfares are shown to be a Daily Use focus area.

The land use areas bordering the CSX rail line are designated for the greatest variety of uses. Along I-485 and the railroad, land is designated as an office focus location. Office use is preferred here because this use is generally tolerant of the constant hum of highway traffic and passing trains. The largest tract of land located centrally along the railroad track was designated to allow the largest mix of focus types due to its location in the study area. It is sandwiched between office, residential, and production uses, so its designation is a hybrid of the three. Along the railroad at the Mecklenburg/Union County line production and distribution services are designated. This property borders industrial uses in Union county along with the CSX rail line which makes it optimal for production and warehouse facilities. This area also has potential to utilize the rail line to transport goods to and from the property.

On the following page is the preferred build-out for the study area. Not only does the map land use focus areas for development, it illustrates a conceptual road network. The interior road network is an important design element that is included in response to the E John superstreet project. With limited access areas off of John Street and the unlikely scenario of permitted crossover intersections, there is a need for a skeletal perimeter road network that allows people to navigate from one focus area to another. The following build-out shows a network that has limited access points off of John Street, but multiple curb cuts off of the future Mckee Road extensions. The conceptual road network also reflects stipulations for the newly designed interchange at John Street and I-485. The new on and off ramp designs limit the amount of access points approaching the ramps from John Street and the conceptual street network reflects that. Notice in the build-out on the following page the limited access points, the perimeter skeletal network that allows traffic to flow across focus areas, and the intentional access points off of the future Mckee Road extensions.

# Consensus Build-Out Scenario



**E JOHN STREET SMALL AREA PLAN LAND USE ACTION ITEMS:**

1. *Proposed new development should correspond to the designated focus land use categories within the applicable block on the consensus build-out scenario.*
2. *Initial development within each block of the conceptual build-out scenario shall conform to the assigned focus land use category(ies), since it will set the tone for further adjacent development.*
3. *In each land use focus designation, the “focus” type of land use should comprise at least 30% of the overall build-out at each phase of completion.*
4. *Residential units should be incorporated into buildings in upper floors, such as two stories of office use and one or two stories of residential, when the mix of uses are compatible.*
5. *New internal street networks and pedestrian pathways should be designed for the larger segment of the study area as individual sites are proposed for development. This is necessary to assure that cross connectivity can be achieved, and is especially important given the limited new curb cut accesses from E John Street.*
6. *Greenways and other open space locations should be established for the overall study area before any development begins, and any parcel considered for development should then include their segment of the greenway and open space network. This is critical to guarantee the connectivity of the open space system.*
7. *Landscape buffers identified in the consensus build-out scenario that will be against established single-family neighborhoods, I-485, along the future right-of-way for E John Street, and the CSX rail line should be identified and protected from damage before any development begins. These locations should be protected during all development phases, and guarantees put into effect to preserve them perpetually.*
8. *A variety of residential styles should be used throughout the study area, to provide good options for new households to find the style they desire.*

It was determined early on in the planning process that creating a unique destination in the study area was a priority. A destination can be defined as a place where people will make a special trip to visit, or a place that is known for a particular purpose. Due to the proximity to two major roadways, E John Street and I-485, with a third one anticipated to be built in the coming decade, Mc Kee Road, this study area is a prime location for unique development. Destinations are achieved by bringing in development that is one of a kind and registers as an asset and a defining place within the greater Matthews community.

### *Destinations:*

Multiple suggestions about potential unique destination uses were provided during stakeholder meetings and public input sessions. These destinations are highly encouraged if an opportunity arises for their development to take place within the study area. Desired destinations include but are not limited to: medical/scientific research park; business incubator or entrepreneur startup facility; arts village; vineyard and/or winery; mixed-use retail facility; botanical garden; or nature preserve. Raffaldini Winery, pictured below, is a destination located in the piedmont of North Carolina. A similar destination may be appropriate within the study area.



### *Placemaking:*

Place-making is an important part of the urban environment as well and is a priority for development that occurs in the study area. The importance of placemaking is fundamental because it creates a memorable identity and atmosphere in the community that people value. Placemaking must include a number of critical elements to be successful, such as public art, quality architectural building design, public open space, and landscaping.

## Public Art

Public art should be considered in the early stages of planning any development. Not every site may be appropriate to showcase a piece of art, but it certainly needs to be integrated into the overall design of a development. Art should be comprised of durable materials that can withstand extreme weather conditions. People especially like public art pieces they can touch or interact with. Children (and many adults too) like to climb, and art pieces can provide that outlet. Public art may be a low wall with places for people to sit between flower boxes, pavement that incorporates designs and colors, wind-blown structures, or common items recreated in oversized ways. The photo below is an example of public art in Downtown Matthews at Stumptown Park.



## Architectural Building Design

The Town of Matthews has often stressed the community's desire for new buildings to emphasize a consistent look and feel, and have quality design elements. This traditionally has been accomplished by incorporating brick or stone into building facades, and emulating architectural styles commonly found in the region and in historic small farming communities. Creating new buildings that are in harmony with the character of Matthews does not have to limit architectural design to older or traditional building styles. Materials and architectural elements similar to those found throughout Matthews may be organized in contemporary ways. Inviting doors and windows along building facades where people will walk or drive by enhance passers-by perceptions of their quality. Buildings should not have blank walls in excess of 10 feet wide facing any public access or public view location. Below pictured are examples of craftsman style homes that give character to the community they are in.



### Public Open Space

Land that is not built upon is equally as important in placemaking as the developed portions. Open space should be scattered throughout development and well integrated into the design. Open spaces should be utilized between buildings for parklets, interesting gathering spaces, or otherwise be preserved for natural habitat. Below is an example of a cottage cluster development which includes common open space in the design along with craftsman style architected homes.



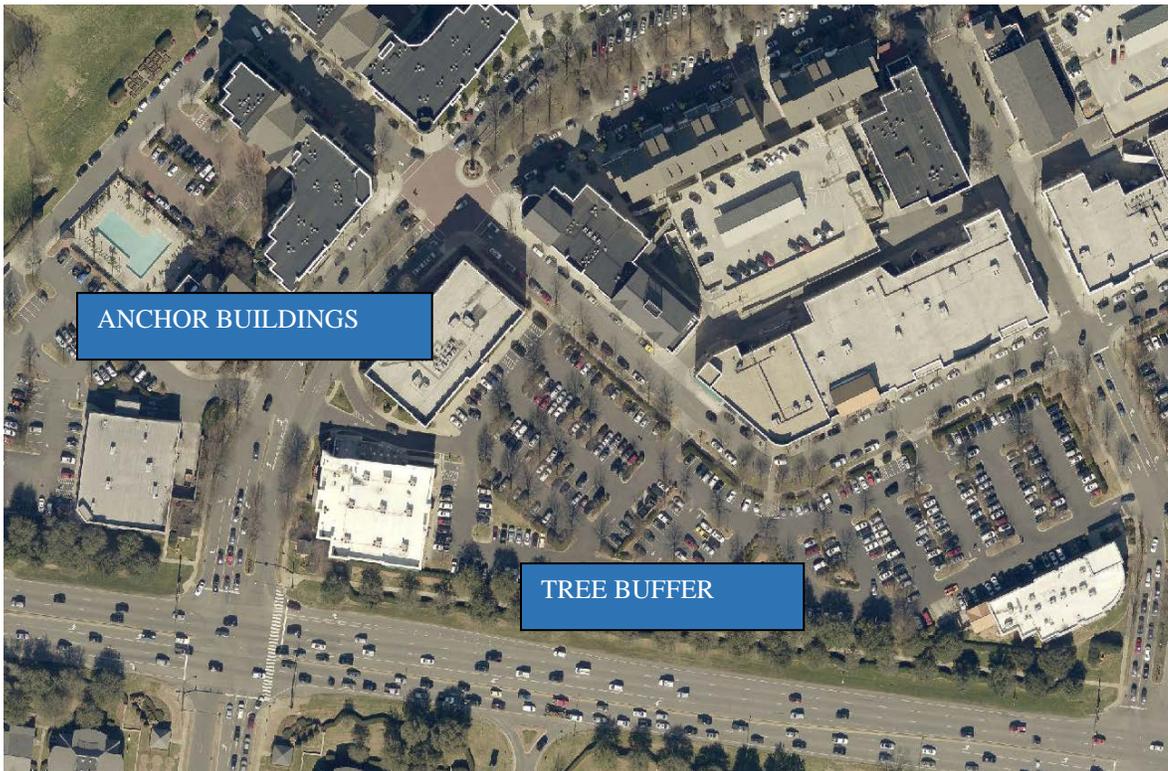
**E JOHN STREET SMALL AREA PLAN DESTINATIONS AND PLACEMAKING ACTION ITEMS:**

- 1) *As development begins throughout the study area, continue to pursue opportunities to incorporate uses that will create unique destinations here. Desired destinations include but are not limited to: medical/scientific research park; business incubator or entrepreneur startup facility; arts village; vineyard and/or winery; mixed-use retail facility; botanical garden; or nature preserve.*
- 2) *Multiple and coordinated elements within the study area should be used to develop and enhance a sense of “place”, including public art, quality architectural building design, public open space, and landscaping.*
- 3) *The architectural elements of each building should incorporate qualities typically found within Matthews for consistency, but can also combine elements in a fresh new way to give individual buildings a contemporary twist.*
- 4) *Buildings should not have blank walls in excess of 10 feet wide facing any public access or public view location.*

The East John Street/Outer Loop area serves as one of the key gateway corridors into the Town and should be developed in a pattern that creates a quality first impression. The future design character of the built environment along both existing thoroughfares and proposed new streets is critical as most of the area is undeveloped today, creating a blank slate for much of the area. While a complementary overall architectural character is desired for the area, individual buildings, especially at intersections, should be multi-story to create a strong presence.

**East John Street Design Concept**

East John Street should be developed in a pattern similar to Matthews Township Parkway with an emphasis on tree preservation and enhancement along the road frontage. On mid-block parcels and those without a shared drive or side street immediately adjacent, buildings should generally be located behind the tree save area with parking to the side and rear. Deviation from this layout may be appropriate at intersections or driveways into developments, instead placing buildings close to their direct vehicular and pedestrian travelways. This will allow development along these internal routes to create a “main street” style corridor into the interior of the study area, utilizing anchor buildings up against the internal streets. Parking can then be allowed on E John Street corner lots adjacent to the tree buffer.



### Focus Use Areas Away from E John Street

The mixed use focus areas adjacent to I-485 and the CSX railroad may not desire to incorporate as much architectural detail on buildings which are not easily seen by passers-by. These buildings should still exhibit good quality design elements and should still incorporate exterior materials that are consistent with the Matthews community character.

Loading and service areas, warehouse docks, service bays, and similar activity areas necessary for certain uses should be located so as not to be visible from any public street or internal drive used as vehicular or pedestrian access to and between properties. A tree buffer should be created along the edge of I-485 right-of-way where it can, over time, create a visual and noise buffer. Landscaping should also be included in the site plan layout for properties adjacent to the CSX railroad where possible, recognizing the railroad exerts right-of-way control some distance from the tracks. In such cases, large maturing trees may be particularly important within parking lots to create visual relief for workers within the nearby buildings.

### Architecture and Design

Image preference surveys were conducted to assess community interest in differing styles and forms of both residential and nonresidential building types. For nonresidential development, mixed use styles of development that incorporated sidewalk dining and quality public spaces rated very highly. Standard suburban style development with parking in the front setback did not score very well. Building heights of no more than three to four stories are preferred. Brick or masonry buildings were preferred to other building materials in many cases.

Residential development characteristics that fared best in the survey were those without street side facing garages and those of more traditional development style. No preference was clear in terms of what housing type was most preferred but images with the appearance of higher quality design scored very well.



## McKee Road Focal Point

The intersection of East John Street and McKee Road presents an opportunity to create a central design theme for the four corners. The goal of this approach is to create a cohesive, master planned intersection that is both attractive and inviting. Design elements at the intersection may include a central architectural theme, enhanced sidewalks with brick inlay, sculptures, public art, monumentation and landscaping that defines the area.

### E JOHN STREET SMALL AREA PLAN URBAN DESIGN ACTION ITEMS

- 1) *Properties along E John Street should maintain or create a tree buffer along the road frontage, and parking or vehicular use areas should not be located between new buildings and the tree buffer here. Exceptions may be made for corner lots.*
- 2) *New buildings on parcels not fronting on E John Street should be brought close to the interior public or private streets, with parking to the side or rear.*
- 3) *Buildings at focal points such as intersections and driveway entrances should be multi-story.*
- 4) *Parking should be located to the side and rear of buildings to the greatest extent possible.*
- 5) *Sculpture, public art or other monumentation should be developed at the E John Street/McKee Road intersection on all four corners.*
- 6) *All buildings should have an operable front door with connection to a public street*
- 7) *Utilities should be moved underground as development occurs*
- 8) *Drive thru canopies and gas station canopies should be located behind the principal structure*
- 9) *Mechanical equipment either at ground level or on building rooftops should be screened from view*

There are a relatively small number of public streets within the study area, and they are maintained by the state rather than by the Town of Matthews. They include:

- E John Street – bisects the area from I-485 to the Mecklenburg/Union County line
- McKee Road – a new segment, referred to as McKee Rd Segment B, was built and opened during the time this study was being conducted
- Campus Ridge Road – this roadway angles through the study area, coming from Stallings at the Mecklenburg-Union County line and exiting at the CSX railroad headed toward CPCC Levine campus
- Morningwood Drive – within Eastwood Forest, a small residential neighborhood straddling the County line, now being used as a primary cut-through street from Pleasant Plains Road to E John Street
- Forestmont Drive – within Eastwood Forest, intersecting E John Street
- Friendship Drive – within Eastwood Forest, intersecting E John St at the County line

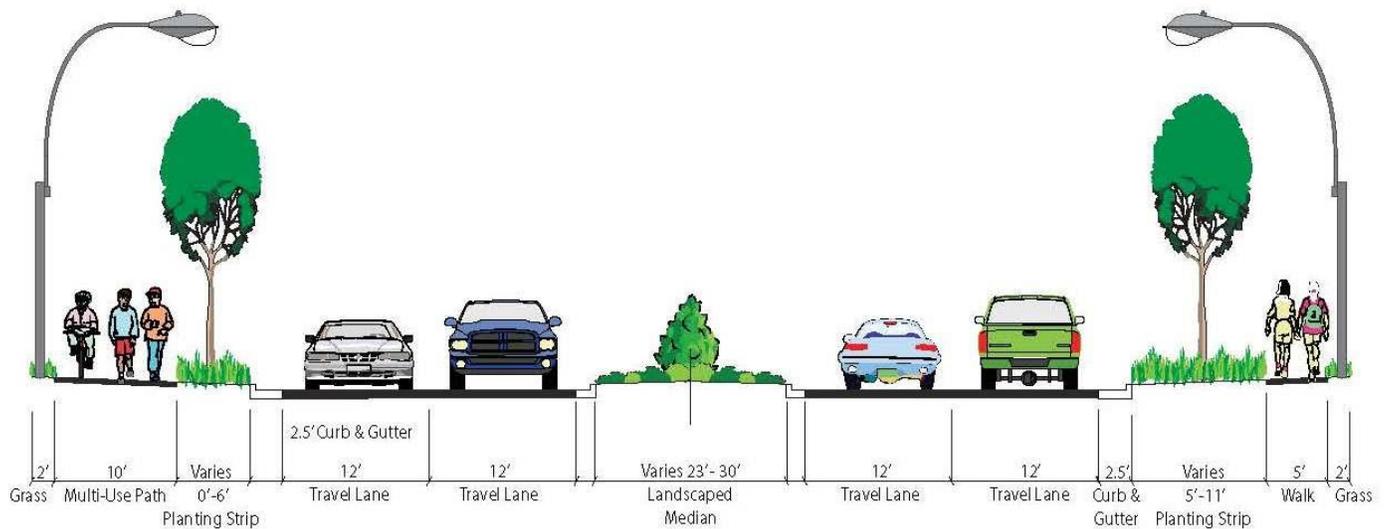
Although I-485 is not included in the study area, planned reconstruction of the interchange at E John Street will intrude into the study area limits on both sides of E John Street. The ramp locations will be spread further from the freeway in order to create new partial loop ramps so all traffic turning from E John onto I-485 will be able to turn right only, and no left turning traffic will back up on E John while waiting for sufficient space to turn across oncoming traffic to enter the ramps.

One property has a private driveway that connects between E John Street and Campus Ridge Road, which customers may use. It is not a public access road, and should not be used as such by the general public.

At this time, there is a short piece of no-longer-needed right-of-way that was part of the former curve in Campus Ridge Road before the new segment of McKee Rd was built. NCDOT may in the future decide to abandon this portion, and turn it over to adjacent property owners. This is not an automatic action, and no timing has been announced for this.

East John Street is the dominant thoroughfare within the study area. Average daily traffic on East John Street within the study area was 27,000 in 2013. It is part of U-4714, an NCDOT road widening project scheduled for additional right-of-way acquisition in 2020 and start of construction in 2022. The expected design is two through lanes in both directions separated by a center planted median. A 5' sidewalk will be located for the full length on the northeast side, while a 10' multi use path will be constructed on the southwest.

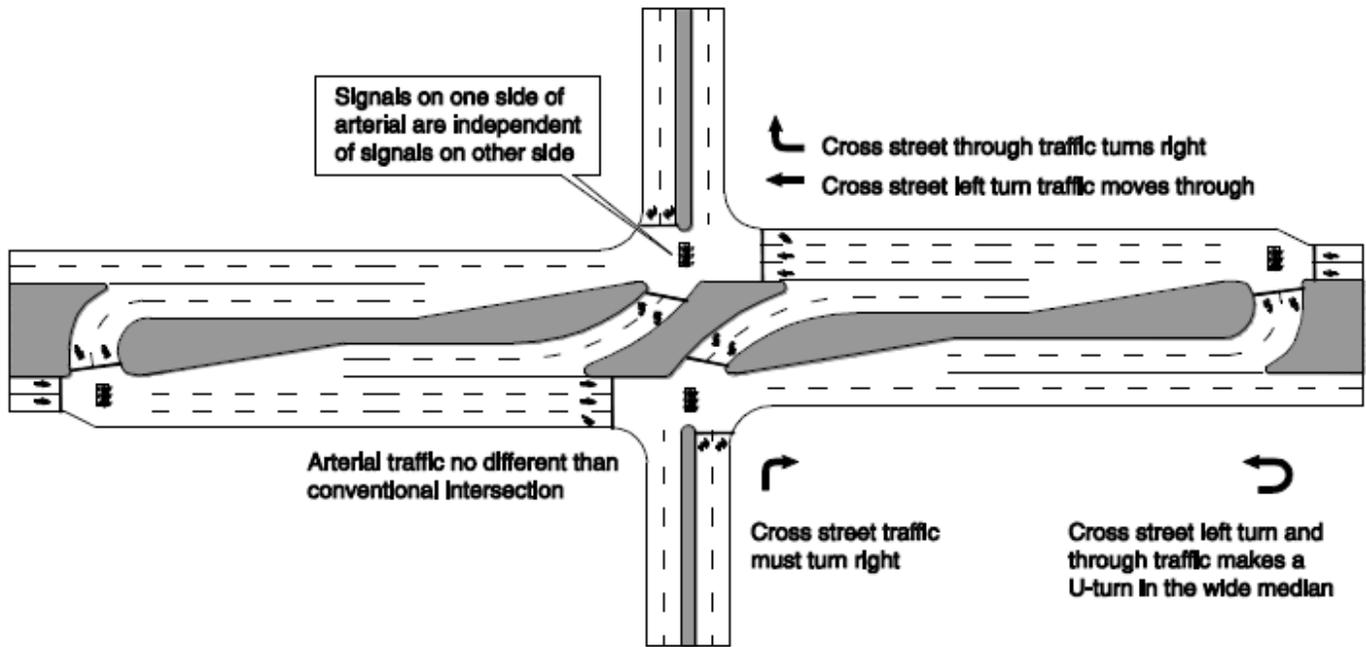
## Preliminary Alternative 1: Four-Lane Median Divided



Source: Atkins Global, NCDOT

NCDOT is proposing this be designed as a “superstreet”, which precludes most left-turning movements at intersections, and replaces them with U-turn pavements across the grass median beyond the cross streets to reduce the number of vehicle stopping points for through traffic. The Town is continuing to explore alternatives, and to discuss options with NCDOT. The current NCDOT plans would mean that any new streets or driveways created to connect to E John St will primarily have only right-in/right-out traffic movements. Some locations may become eligible, on a case-by-case basis, to have a left-turn lane created across the center median into the new side street or driveway, and these U-turn movements may become signalized if there is sufficient turning traffic activity.

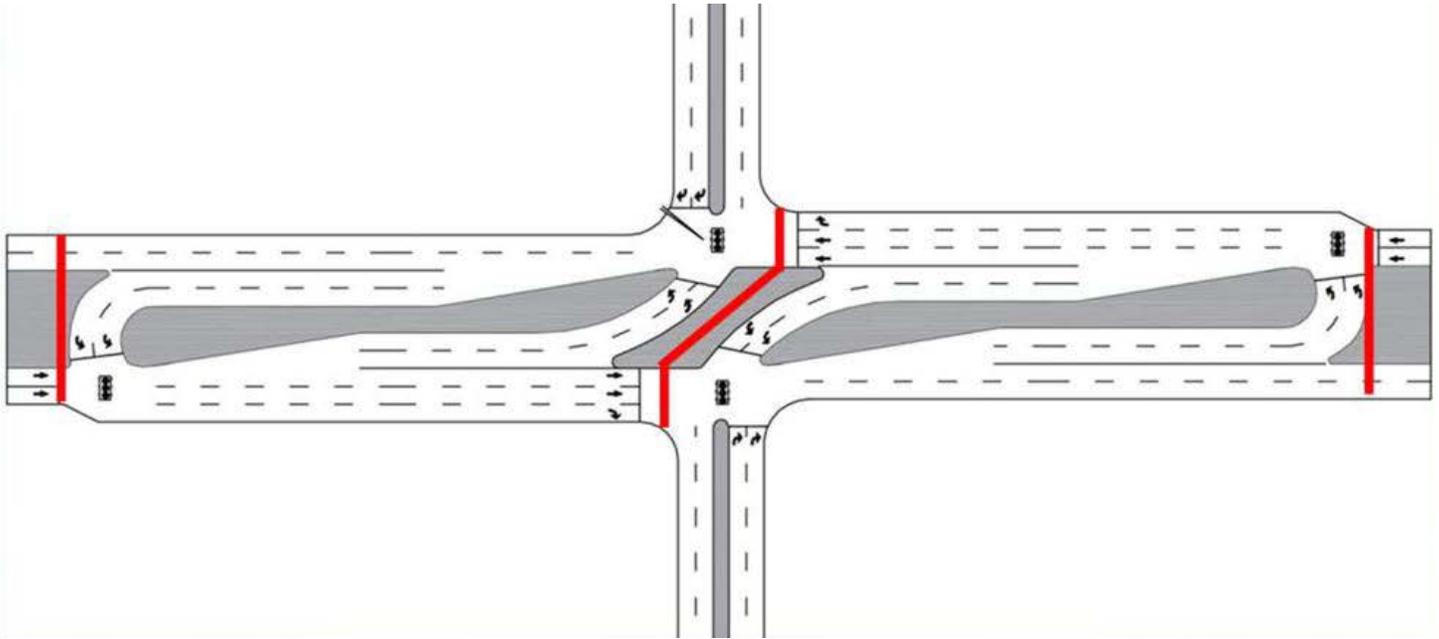
This illustration shows the typical traffic flow on a superstreet.



Source: Atkins Global, NCDOT

The superstreet concept reduces or eliminates most traffic signals, and therefore if this street widening project is constructed as NCDOT envisions, it will allow motorized traffic on E John Street to flow without expecting to stop. Pedestrians and bicyclists will therefore need safe opportunities to cross E John Street. Designated crossing locations have not at this time been determined, since there is little development in place today on either side. Pedestrian cross walks may be located near vehicular left-turn/U-turn breaks in the center median, which would allow those not in a motorized vehicle to only cross traffic coming from one direction at a time. Pedestrians and bicyclists would have a center median protected refuge area where they can wait for traffic to clear before continuing on the second half of their street crossing travel pathway. Pedestrian signals may also be added at one or more crossing locations. Pedestrian and bicycle crossing options are part of a consultant study underway at the time of this writing.

This illustration shows how a pedestrian/bicycle crossing location can be incorporated into a super street design.



Source: Atkins Global, NCDOT

It is anticipated that McKee Rd Segment A may be built within the next decade, if it receives sufficient points from local and state transportation sectors. Like Segment B just completed, it will initially be constructed with a single through travel lane in each direction, although it can be expanded to multiple lanes in future years. Once built, it will create a four-legged intersection of two major thoroughfares. The superstreet design for E John St does not include improvements for straight-through and left-turning movements for this fourth leg at this time, since funding has not yet been secured. NCDOT staff have agreed to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town that would guarantee a careful study of greater traffic movement at this intersection when it becomes a four-sided intersection. Preliminary design work has been done to assure future revisions at this new traffic generation point, but it is not known at this time exactly how or where further right-of-way or pavement will be needed to accommodate full directional movement for the new intersection.

Longer-term future planning indicates McKee Road Segment C will deviate from the existing Campus Ridge Road pavement to cross over the CSX railroad slightly to the southeast, and then continue beyond the study area as it heads

toward US74 and into Union County. It is anticipated but not confirmed at this time that the new crossing will be required to be raised to separate car, bus, and truck traffic from trains.

This illustration shows Segments A, B, and C for McKee Road.



If East John Street is widened before McKee Road Segment A (Pleasant Plains Road to E John Street) is built, it will disrupt existing travel patterns for many drivers in the area that now use Morningwood Drive between Pleasant Plains Road and E John Street. Since most vehicles use this as a cut-through to I-485 or toward Charlotte, they must attempt to find a slot where they can turn left onto E John Street today. When a center median is built, there will no longer be the opportunity for left turns here. Traffic continuing to use this through street would turn right to travel toward Union County to make a U-turn at the next available median break, likely near Forestmont Drive. Alternatively, those vehicles could utilize Potter Road to the southeast, or they could stay on Pleasant Plains Road toward downtown Matthews. Once

McKee Road Segment A is built and open for use, it should take the bulk of current cut-through traffic off of Morningwood Drive.

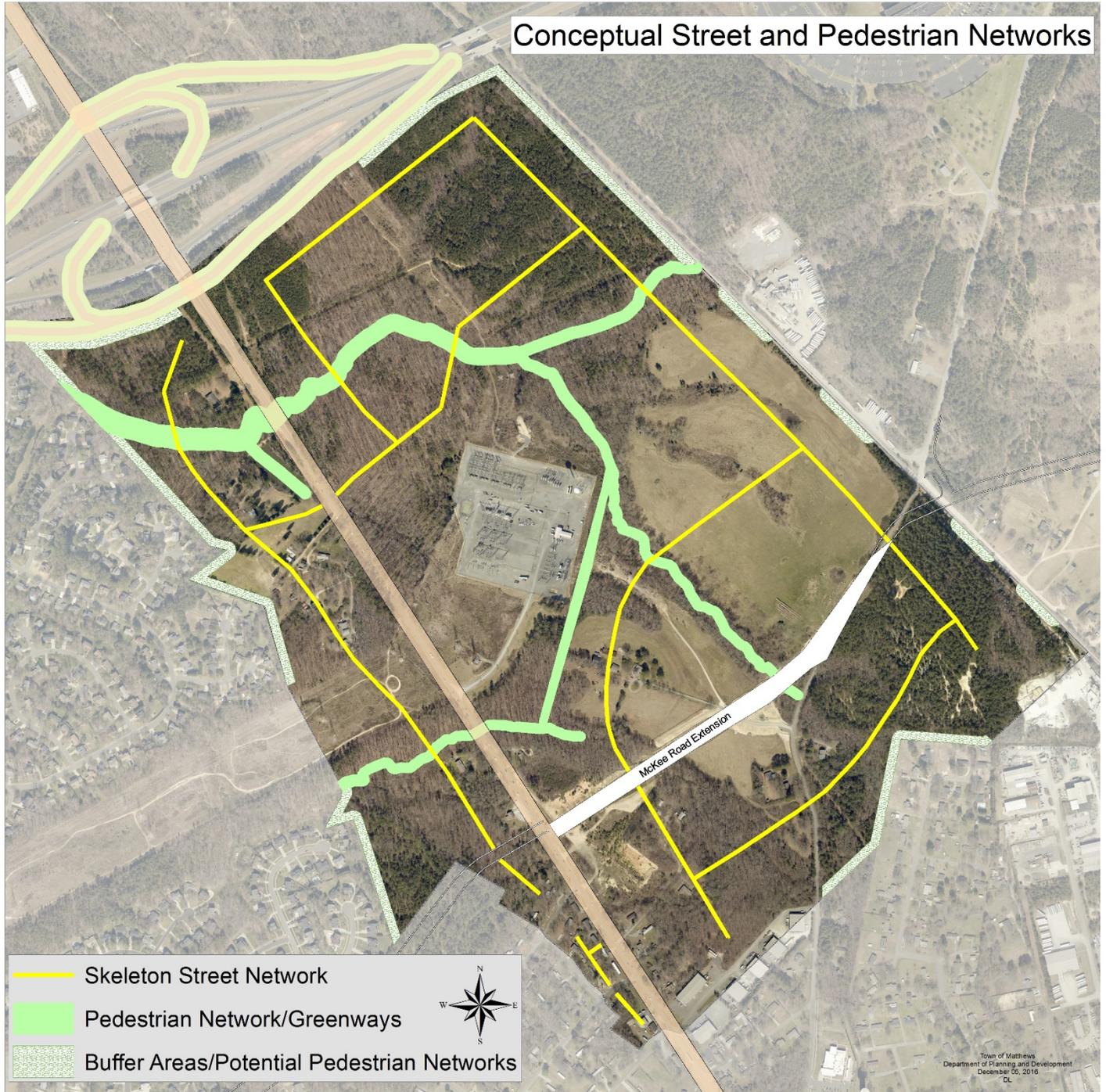
As new development takes place on both sides of E John Street, there will be increased demand to provide safe pedestrian and bicycle access along this spine roadway. In addition to the sidewalk and multi use path that will parallel and run beside traffic on E John St, there is a need and expectation that internal multi use paths should be constructed to allow easy non-vehicular movement through all new development sites. Ideally, new individual buildings will be constructed within overall “mini-master” concepts of build-out such that sidewalk and multi use path connections will be well-coordinated.

Vehicles will also need new travel lanes to access new development sites. When three build out scenarios were shown to stakeholders and the public during this study process (see pages 174-176), each one showed a somewhat different general street network layout. The intent was to illustrate there are many possibilities in designing internal street access. New street connections or driveways to E John Street should be limited since only right-in/right-out movements will be possible.

Driveway and street connections to E John Street therefore should be carefully planned to best coordinate their locations for new development sites that will make use of them. For those development sites closest to the future McKee Road/E John Street intersection, primary street connections should be directed to McKee Road, as it will not be as restrictive on turning movements. For the portion of E John Street closest to I-485, NCDOT will maintain a certain distance where new connections are prohibited. This is necessary because there will be traffic signals at the ramps on and off I-485, which may result in some stacking of traffic when the signal is red, and will create more weaving movements on E John Street for traffic entering or exiting the ramps. NCDOT does not allow extra turning, slowing, or accelerating traffic at such points for safety purposes.

Discussions should begin with Duke Energy to determine that company’s preferences on any vehicular and non-vehicular connections across their property edges at the substation, and across their easements for transmission towers on the southwest side of E John Street. Creating these internal pathways will reduce the need for street connections out to E John between the clusters of new development on each side of the spine road. The initial build-out scenarios showed examples of how and where new green spaces and trails could be accommodated to allow good connectivity within and adjacent to Duke Energy parcels, and within the overall study area.

Below is a map visualizing the conceptual pedestrian and skeleton street networks that are discussed in this section. Concept to show all portions of study area will become accessible in the future. (updated map below 12-23-16)



## E JOHN STREET SMALL AREA PLAN TRANSPORTATION ACTION ITEMS

- 1) *Any development proposed within the study should determine where vehicular access points can appropriately be created that can be shared with surrounding further development.*
- 2) *Because driveways and new street intersections into E John Street will be constrained by the E John Street/Old Monroe Road widening project to be constructed in a few years, any desired connections to E John Street must be reviewed by NCDOT and the Town of Matthews to verify proper placement for area development as a whole.*
- 3) *New internal street networks will be necessary to open up interior tracts to development. A skeleton street network shall be designed and must be followed as individual parcels are ready for development. This skeleton street network includes:*
  - a. *new streets parallel to E John Street on both sides;*
  - b. *a new street parallel to the CSX railroad tracks, from I-485 to McKee Rd;*
  - c. *a new street parallel to I-485 connecting the interior blocks along the CSX rail line to E John St between I-485 and the Duke Energy substation; and*
  - d. *new street connections parallel to McKee Rd between McKee and the County line to provide internal connectivity between parcels against the rail line and E John St.*
- 4) *Development at the future four-approach intersection of McKee Road and E John Street should not occur until McKee Road Segment A is under construction, so that new ingress and egress points onto McKee will be operable when new development (businesses and/or residential) is open..*
- 5) *Locations for safe and direct pedestrian and bicycle crossing of E John Street should be identified as early as possible, once new construction along the road is underway. Pedestrian signals should be considered at each marked crosswalk area.*
- 6) *A skeleton greenway and multi-use path network for the full study area should be determined prior to individual property development. This network should include:*
  - a. *A minimum 5' sidewalk on one side and a 10' multi use path on the other side of E John Street, as intended to be constructed at the time of the widening project;*
  - b. *A greenway along the creeks in the study area as illustrated in the build-out scenario;*
  - c. *Connecting trails along edges of the Duke Energy properties to complete connections within the network, as illustrated in the build-out scenario;*
  - d. *Multi use pathways or similar paved trails generally corresponding with the new internal street skeleton network.*
  - e. *A pedestrian connection – bridge if necessary – for residents within the established neighborhoods southwest of the study area to access the mixed use development via the internal trail system.*

## UTILITIES

Charlotte Water (formerly Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utility Department) is the primary provider of public potable water and sanitary sewer. The larger residential lots currently have private well and septic systems. The smaller properties are serviced by public sewer and either private wells or Union County Public Water. A large portion of the northeast side of E John Street is not yet developed and therefore there is no public water or sewer system in place.

Charlotte Water provides sewer to the Eastwood Forest Subdivision via an 8" main. The sewer line increases in size to 12" as it moves north (downstream in Brightmoor subdivision) towards I-485 where it discharges into a 16" main that crosses under the interstate.

Charlotte Water has a program for the extension of both water and sewer mains, which are available to new developments. There is a sewer main servicing Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) Levine Campus outside the study area. It was not designed to accommodate significant additional development, and it likely cannot cross under the CSX railroad rail line at the northeast border of the study area.

Duke Energy has a substation in the center of the study area, and large transmission towers that move power out into the surrounding community. The study area is served by overhead lines consisting of electric, cable and phone. Above ground poles run along both sides of E John Street. Any new development and redevelopment should bury these overhead wires in order to allow for street trees and a more scenic view.

Any new development within the area would be required to meet storm water detention regulations. There are many options available to developers to incorporate the storm water features as an amenity within their overall development sites.

### **E JOHN STREET SMALL AREA PLAN UTILITIES ACTION ITEMS:**

- 1) *Utilities should be buried for all new development and redevelopment.*
- 2) *Any sidewalk or street construction activity should be reviewed to include taking existing overhead lines underground.*
- 3) *Developers need to coordinate their site plan layouts to install sufficient infrastructure in order to service potential growth for their facility as well as future developments.*

The study area includes large tracts of land that are in their natural undisturbed state. This creates opportunities for coordinated placement of open space. The open space could be small spaces suitable for neighborhood flower or vegetable gardens, or large enough to include picnic groves. The consensus build-out scenario illustrates where green corridors should be placed, and park amenities should be stitched to these pedestrian travel corridors.

New development is encouraged to incorporate pocket parks within their plans or to dedicate land to public use. Pocket parks can be used as community gathering spaces to hold pop-up markets, outdoor movies and other passive activities.

The study area is part of the Four Mile Creek Watershed. Tributaries of the creek extend under I-485 along the southwest side of the area and traversing E John Street. The area along the streams are indicated in the build-out scenario as

suitable for greenway trails throughout the study area. The map below shows the Surface Water Improvement and Management (S.W.I.M) buffers, which are protected land for creeks, watersheds, and storm water runoff that potential greenways could follow. One particular tributary flows into a pond on a parcel of land that fronts along E John Street. This could serve as a community park and/or entrance to the greenway system. A pedestrian bridge along this tributary (on the southwest side of E John St) should be installed allowing residents in the neighboring subdivisions walkable access to daily services.



Any new development and redevelopment along the southwest side of E John Street should include a natural buffer adjacent to the Brightmoor subdivision. Additionally, a buffer along I-485 should be left intact for any residential development that will be contiguous to the interstate in order to reduce noise impact to the residents. These buffers will provide additional opportunities to extend greenways and access from residential neighborhoods. Greenways help protect environmentally sensitive areas such as stream buffers, trees and wetlands.

The street network in the study area should incorporate sidewalks and/or multi-use paths on both sides of the streets whenever possible. Providing pedestrian connectivity to neighborhood amenities and daily services will allow residents to be less dependent on vehicular use.

Connecting greenway paths to sidewalk or multi-use path along McKee Road will permit students a safe route to CCCC campus in the future.

NCDOT will be widening E John Street through the study area in several years. The proposed widening plan includes a sidewalk on one side and multi-use path on the other side of the street. These sidewalks and multi-use paths should be connected to other greenways and open spaces within the study area.

**E JOHN STREET SMALL AREA PLAN NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE ACTION ITEMS:**

- 1) *Establish natural buffers along Brightmoor and Matthews Plantation subdivisions.*
- 2) *Maintain natural buffer adjacent to Hwy I-485 and residential neighborhoods adjacent to the study area.*
- 3) *Create greenways along existing stream buffers.*
- 4) *Provide a pedestrian bridge over stream tributaries to connect neighborhoods to daily services and other amenities.*
- 5) *Developers need install pocket parks and natural areas within their developments.*
- 6) *Explore private – public partnerships to ensure natural resources in the area are used to enhance new development.*

The E John Street/ Outer Loop Area Small Area Plan is a document to guide development and provide a vision for a largely undeveloped corridor. In order for the vision of this plan to become a reality, there are necessary strategies that should be employed. Strategies for achieving the overall desired development can be obtained from the Action Items laid out in previous sections of this plan. The Action Items should be implemented in tandem with other strategies such as building partnerships and evaluating and designing regulations. Below listed are explanations of strategies to be implemented.

### **Focus on Action Items**

Action Items are laid out at the end of appropriate sections of the small area plan. The items laid out are specific approaches that can be taken to achieve the desired build-out of the study area. They should be prioritized by the Town Board and by Staff. The action items focus on key tasks that are essential for creating a cohesive and well-designed segment of the Matthews community. Action Items include provisions for land use, urban design standards, place-making, transportation, utilities, and open space.

### **Building Partnerships and Communication**

Partnerships should be maintained within Town departments, and made between the Town and private developers/land owners. These partnerships should be made early on in the development design process and may be defined by the Town Board. For example, if a new greenway within the study area is being proposed by a developer, all property owners affected along with Town Staff and Mecklenburg County should meet and be in constant communication. Public-private partnerships may be made in initial meetings ensures the timeliness and success of the greenway project and may result in a better end product. Effective communication in these partnerships is essential. With the creation of the partnerships, the Town should identify the parties involved, their reason for involvement, and what their role is in completing the action item. When necessary the partnership agreements may be formalized, detailing the magnitude of the project, each partner's responsibility, deadlines, and completion dates.

### **Evaluate and Design Regulations**

The study area is by-in-large undeveloped therefore; it acts as a blank slate. It may be appropriate to develop a new overlay district or new zoning provisions to apply to the property in this area depending on what unique development is proposed. Along with new potential districts, the Town Board should periodically review the land use regulations to verify that these regulations provide enough direction to effectively guide development in the study area.

## Unique Destination Concepts That May Be Located Within the Study Area

The section in this study on creating one or more unique destinations within the area listed several ideas:

- medical/scientific research park
- business incubator or entrepreneur startup facility
- arts village
- vineyard and/or winery
- mixed-use retail facility
- botanical garden or nature preserve

A research park or a business incubator would fit particularly well into any of the blocks that include an Office focus. A medical or scientific research concentration close to Central Piedmont Community College Levine campus would provide mutual benefit for the college's student body and faculty as employees and initiators of research projects and for the facility to have easy access to cutting-edge technology and specialized training for employees.

Similarly, a business incubator or entrepreneur startup facility would likely be well situated near the CPCC campus where students and faculty would easily be able to flesh out their business plans and increase their expectations for a strong opening and initial operations.

An arts village could include a concentration of individual artists living in close proximity, creating their pieces, and displaying/selling finished works in a coordinated fashion. Gatlinburg Tennessee and downtown Eureka Springs Arkansas have developed strong identities as artist concentrations which generate significant tourist attention all year long. These cities can provide an understanding of the scale of artist residency and activity that will be effective in branding the immediate vicinity as an arts village.

A vineyard or winery often creates a sense of respite from an urban area, even when located close to larger metro areas. This type of use could be designed to include a boutique hotel to encourage overnight guests, and could incorporate some cottage cluster housing for those wanting to be involved in some aspect of the agrarian business. An on-site winery operation could include tours of the facility and a tasting room, and might offer wine and related products for sale. Similar unique destinations could be a cottage cluster housing area within an active farming operation such as growing herbs or vegetables, or raising goats. The farm products could be sold directly from the location or on-line, or could be processed on-site to make other products for sale – dried herbal sachets, goats' milk soaps, etc. A vineyard or

farm could be a tour and teaching facility as well. This concept might be acceptable for a segment of the study area that may currently be open field, whether adjacent to existing single-family neighborhoods or land that has been farmed in the past.

A mixed use retail facility does not have to appear as a traditional suburban-style strip center. Instead it could have a couple “anchor” retailers surrounded by a group of small retail outlets in a concentrated area, surrounded beyond the retail by complementary office and residential uses. Phillips Place in Charlotte is an example of a newly created retail hub intended to blend with the immediate surrounding activities.

A botanical garden or nature preserve would require more space than the scattered pocket parks envisioned by this small area plan, but would not significantly reduce the buildable opportunities in the area as a whole. A property within the study area that may be currently wooded can be creatively improved to allow public access for the purpose of enjoying natural beauty. Formal garden areas can be designed to showcase flowering and fruiting plants, for example, between groves of existing trees. A decorative greenhouse or gazebo could be included to give places for visitors to stop and enjoy the scenery or to learn about specific plant life.