

Kenworth Neighborhood Plan



Hickory

Planning & Development

1997

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this plan is the Kenworth Neighborhood, the City of Hickory's first planned subdivision. Kenworth is perhaps the most ethnically and socio-economically diverse neighborhood in all of Hickory.

Located in the southeast quadrant of the city, Kenworth Neighborhood is an island of primarily single-family residences. The neighborhood is bounded by three heavily traveled roads: NC Highway 127 on the west, Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard to the east, First and Second Avenues SE, as one way pairs to the north, and about 88 acres of undeveloped land zoned for light industrial uses to the south.

Kenworth Neighborhood has experienced a tremendous social and physical change over the past thirty years. This change is evident in the demographics, types of new development, overall appearance and attitude toward the neighborhood. "Kenworth used to be a nice neighborhood," is the sentiment one often hears when speaking to those who grew up in Kenworth and have since moved away.

The Kenworth Neighborhood has managed to maintain a balance, and residents consider the neighborhood a good place to live and raise a family. Dedicated neighbors want to plan for ways to enhance the reputation of the neighborhood not just through problem solving, but also through promotion of the many assets of the area.

In examining the data collected during the planning process, it becomes apparent that a significant degree of change has occurred within the Kenworth Neighborhood. This change is reflected in general land use, housing conditions, types of residential dwellings occupied and in trends in homeownership.

The number of duplexes and multi-family units from 1967 to 1996 increased ten-fold. While there is no historical data regarding homeownership, the current estimate of 56.6 percent of single-family homes in Kenworth that are owned by investors and occupied by renters is cause for concern. The affordability of multi-family units and duplexes, combined with the availability of single-family homes purchased as investment properties, makes for a less stable, more transient neighborhood.

Residents of Kenworth are noticing an increase in poorly maintained properties. Thirty-three percent of the dwellings identified as needing minor repairs or major maintenance are investment properties owned by landlords. There are four dilapidated properties and unsafe vacant houses. It is well known that the appearance of adjacent properties and level of homeownership has an impact on the value assessed to one's property.

Although there has been an increase in commercial occupancy within the Kenworth Neighborhood during the past thirty years, the neighborhood continues to be predominately residential. The neighborhood also contains a number of vacant lots where new, affordable housing could be constructed.

Kenworth by no means can be considered a blighted area. However, if current trends toward fewer owner occupied homes, more rental properties and number of structures in need of repair increases, the desirability of living in this unique neighborhood will decline, as will property values.

Platted in 1913 but not developed until the early 1920's, the Kenworth subdivision repre-

sents Hickory's post World War I growth period. As a result, the character of the heart of the neighborhood recalls not only the overall growth in the period, but also the then-current theories about the design of suburban areas. Winding, tree lined streets which follow the topography are laid out in a heavily landscaped hierarchy of wide boulevards and smaller feeder streets.

More modern development surrounds the core of the neighborhood. To the west, smaller sized lots with modest homes predominate. Development on the eastern side of the neighborhood reflects the typical 1970's brick ranch-style homes uniformly oriented to the streets.

The strategies, recommended actions and programs set forth on the Plan are designed to meet the social and physical development needs of the Kenworth Neighborhood over the next five to ten years.

to Kenworth since the neighborhood was platted in 1913.



The rock columns have proudly stood at the entrance

THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Kenworth Neighborhood Plan is a working document that addresses the concerns of neighborhood residents and property owners in an attempt to preserve the livability and long-term viability of Hickory's first planned subdivision. The foundation of this plan is based on active citizen participation and informed decision making. With the input of residents, this plan is more effective in meeting the particular needs of this neighborhood, and stands a better chance of being implemented.

This plan provides an analysis of a wide-range of factors that collectively foster Kenworth's physical, social and economic environment, while affecting its capacity to continue to function as an integral and unique part of Hickory's neighborhood composition.



Planning Director, Tom Carr interprets the homeownership map for Planning Committee chairman, Kent Brendle.

The Kenworth Neighborhood Plan provides the most detailed guidance of any City of Hickory planning document on the issues of planning and development of the area. When guidance is needed on an issue for this neighborhood, it is important to refer to the Kenworth Neighborhood Plan, Hickory's Land Development Plan, and all other pertinent

adopted city plans to review and weigh all

public interests in arriving at well thought out and viable decisions.

Organization Of The Plan

The Kenworth Neighborhood Plan is organized into six sections. Section I - Introduction, introduces the Kenworth Neighborhood and identifies its issues, concerns and assets, and explains the purpose, and format of the plan.

Section II - The Planning Process outlines the process through which all of this plan is derived. The members of the Planning Committee are recognized, as is all of the resource people who helped the Committee formulate the recommendations and strategies included in this plan by providing information.

Section III - Neighborhood Character of Kenworth, presents a review and analysis of Kenworth's historical development.

Section IV - Existing Conditions, describes factors that have physical and social impact on the development and evolution of the neighborhood. Factors such as demographics, land use, zoning, transportation, infrastructure, environmental characteristics, housing conditions, trends in homeownership and public safety. This section also summarizes different concerns, trends and issues raised during the Kenworth Neighborhood planning process, based on the perceptions of the Planning Committee and other concerned residents, as well as planning staff.

Section V - The Plan, contains a full set of strategies and recommended actions and programs designed to provide guidance for Kenworth's development over the next five to ten years.

Section VI - Implementation, identifies the framework within which these strategies, recommended actions and programs should be

implemented. Five maps which illustrate the current land use, current zoning, existing and proposed sidewalks and street lights, housing conditions, and property occupancy status in Kenworth Neighborhood, and the results and analysis of the mail and telephone survey, which was conducted, compiled and analyzed by the sociology students at Lenoir-Rhyne College under the direction of Dr. Bennett Judkins.

Issues and Concerns

“The mission of the Kenworth Neighborhood Association is to serve the community. Working with our neighbors, local government, and other neighborhood associations to identify, prioritize, and develop viable solutions for areas of concern.”

These words are taken from the Bylaws of the Kenworth Neighborhood Association and reflect the proactive and cooperative approach to community improvement that they have adopted.

They developed and prioritized their concerns at well-attended community meetings. Active members of the Neighborhood Association felt that by planning together with the City they could develop positive approaches to resolve the below stated issues. By participating in the long-range planning process, neighbors wanted to greatly benefit not only their neighborhood but the entire city.

The following issues were identified by the neighborhood in their request for planning assistance, and their justification for wanting the address these concerns in the plan.

- Elimination of drug and prostitution houses.
For the safety of our children and neighborhood we must develop methods to

eliminate and prevent this cancer. The extent of this problem is limited now, but it is highly visible, damages the reputation of our community and city, and can only be eradicated through the combined efforts of the neighborhood, law enforcement, city officials and other agencies. We must have a good plan to solve this problem and prevent its recurrence.

- Improving neighborhood traffic problems.
Like many neighborhoods, Kenworth is experiencing problems with speeding, cut through traffic, stop sign violations and lack of sidewalks. In addition, our neighborhood is interested in exploring the feasibility of alternative access to Kiwanis Park, which is growing in importance and size and is attracting larger organized sporting events, and with them, more traffic.
- Increasing levels of homeownership.
Less than half the residents of Kenworth, which was Hickory’s first suburban housing development, own their homes. Kenworth is rich in home ownership opportunities, and our neighborhood and the City would benefit greatly if we can develop plans and programs that lead to the recycling of older residences for owner occupancy rather than continued conversion to rental units maintained by absentee landlords.
- Improving the level of code enforcement.
Kenworth is a beautiful neighborhood of historic homes and tree lined streets, but we are seeing an increase in property neglect, substandard housing, trash left on vacant lots and deposited in streams and gullies, littering on the streets, junk vehicles, absentee landlords who won’t maintain their properties, unsafe vacant houses, autos being repaired in yards or on the

streets and unsightly non-conforming businesses. We feel that we need to develop plans for comprehensive code enforcement and perhaps special zoning or appearance codes to restore neighborhood appearances and attract new homeowners.

- Improving neighborhood youth activities. Kenworth has many school aged children. To enhance their chances of success, we feel that we need to work with the City's Parks & Recreation Department, the Boy and Girl Scouts, the area churches, Salvation Army and other interested organizations to establish a strong program of activities for our young people.
- Enhancing Kenworth's reputation. Kenworth is and has been a good place to live and raise a family. We want to plan for ways to enhance that reputation not just through problem solving, but also through promotion of our historic district, improving home ownership and publicizing our community spirit and revitalization successes.

Neighborhood Assets

Kenworth has many strengths and assets that will contribute to success in developing and implementing a long range neighborhood plan. The Neighborhood Association submitted the following summary of assets as part of their application for a neighborhood plan.

- Kenworth has regular meetings that are well attended. The Association has met almost monthly for three years. Community Watch block captains get the word out about our meetings, and all sections of our neighborhood are invited. We are a diverse neighborhood, and we strive to include everyone in our meetings, not just a few homeowners. If we notice that a particular area is not attending, as when we learned that residents on 7th Street SE and at Kenworth Hall were not getting our meeting notices, we make extra efforts to communicate and involve.
- Neighbors know each other. Because of our meetings and our emphasis on getting to know each other, people in our neighborhood are more familiar with their neighbors and our needs than in many other areas. This knowledge fosters interest in what is going on in the neighborhood which will contribute to planning success.
- Excellent rapport with community police. The neighborhood has an active Community Watch program and always includes a discussion and presentation with our PACT officers at our monthly meetings. We consider our PACT officers to be part of our neighborhood and feel that they give us another resource to achieve neighborhood improvement success.
- Kenworth is organized. On July 22, 1996, the Kenworth Neighborhood Association formally adopted bylaws which, among other things, includes the "development, monitoring and implementation of a long range Neighborhood Plan" as its mission. Kenworth is both organized and committed to planning as the primary tool to achieve success.
- A record of successful neighborhood activities. The Kenworth Neighborhood Association has held three well-attended neighborhood block parties and a successful spring Trash Bash. Through these activities our members have gained experience in planning,

working with various city departments and forming work groups to accomplish tasks.



Neighbors gather together for food, fun and fellowship at the Third Annual Block Social held on September 12, 1996.

- Support from other organizations.

The Kenworth Neighborhood Association has established an excellent relationship with Christ Lutheran Church, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, and the Hickory Landmarks Society. These organizations have assisted Kenworth in many ways including providing meeting space, helping to organize social events and featuring Kenworth on the Historic Homes Tour. We have the experience to build on these relationships and establish relationships with other community institutions and agencies.



Christ Lutheran Church provided meeting space for the Planning Committee meetings.

- Positive working relationships with City departments.

Kenworth has enjoyed the advice and assistance of many city departments. For example, Sanitation and Buildings and Grounds assisted with planning and landscape design improvements for the Spring Trash Bash. The Traffic Department studied stop signs and street lights and made improvements. The Community Appearance Commission has recognized Kenworth with beautification awards. Hickory's Police and Fire Departments have attended meetings, made presentations at meetings and participated in our block parties. We feel that we have an excellent working relationship with the City to build on to create successful long range plans.



Neighbors were recognized in a ceremony after the Trash Bash for their dedication and service to the Kenworth Neighborhood.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Steps in the Planning Process

In May of 1996, the Hickory City Council endorsed the concept of a ten-step neighborhood planning process as developed and presented by planning staff. This planning process is based on the philosophy of “What they plan, they own.” No one knows better than the people who live and work in the neighborhood what their concerns and needs are, and how those issues can be addressed.

The Kenworth Neighborhood Association submitted an application for planning assistance to the City Council on August 20, 1996. Residents of the neighborhood formed a Planning Committee and agreed to meet twice a month to hear from resource people, and to discuss their issues of concern and develop strategies to address these concerns.

The simple process of opening lines of communication between the Planning Committee and the City caused two of the neighborhood’s concerns to be addressed prior to the adoption of the plan.



Traffic Division co-workers paint pavement markings at a dangerous intersection in February 1997, three months before the plan was adopted.

The Kenworth Neighborhood Plan represents an intensive long-range planning effort that took eight months to complete. The plan includes written recommendations of strategies, actions and programs that should be taken or developed to protect and/or improve the neighborhood. Where possible, the costs associated with the recommendation are estimated. Responsibility for implementation of the recommendation or strategies is assigned, and a time frame for completing the task is set.

Data Collection

As part of the planning process, a neighborhood profile was created based on demographics, public safety statistics, infrastructure inventory, and housing data collected by Planning staff. Data sources for this information included the 1990 Census of Population and Housing, the 1967 Analysis of Hickory’s Neighborhoods, Catawba County Real Property Master Index Listings (July 1996), field surveys conducted by staff and Lenoir-Rhyne College sociology students, as well as information provided by City departments and other resource people who spoke to the Planning Committee during the course of the planning process. Most of the information contained in the Plan is up-to-date through March 1997.



Neighbors examine maps of police calls for service in the neighborhood.

To augment demographic and attitudinal in-

formation, in February and March of 1997, Lenoir-Rhyne College sociology students, under the direction of Dr. Bennett M. Judkins, administered mail and telephone surveys to approximately 525 households in Kenworth. The results were compiled and analyzed by the students, and are presented in Appendix 1.

The Kenworth Planning Committee evaluated all the data presented throughout the process, assessed the implications for their neighborhood and set forth a set of strategies designed to involve, educate, motivate and most importantly, improve the neighborhood.

Citizen Participation

The Kenworth Neighborhood Plan represents a consensus of the residents and business owners and others who have participated in preparing the plan.

Several people actively participated in the development of the Kenworth Neighborhood Plan. Many more were kept abreast of the planning process progress and discussions via mailings.

Such an intensive undertaking would not have been possible without the dedication and determination of a group of neighbors who have a desire to restore and enhance the quality of life in Kenworth. The Planning Committee met a total of sixteen times to hear from the resource people and discuss strategies and recommendations to include in the plan, and review drafts of the plan. The Committee was generally representative of the geographic boundaries and racial make-up of the neighborhood.

Since these people live in or have a vested interest in the neighborhood, they are the most knowledgeable of their needs. They also will play a critical role in monitoring the progress

of and implementation of the plan.

Neighborhood Planning Committee

Kent Brendle, Co-Chair
Jan Robbins, Co-Chair
Michael Robbins
Joy Mease
Yvonne Setzer
Martha Espey
Betty J. White
Carol Spruill
Ola Mae Williams
Ollie Heard
Howard Heard
Lorene Mull
Calvin Mull
Nick Crawford
Sarah M. Johnson
Ruth Hunter
Don Hudson
Grover Linebarger
Carolyn Ramseur
Bill Ramseur
Elaine Seaver
Bill Hemphill
Rev. Richard Schwandt

One of the key tenets of this type of neighborhood-driven, citizen participation based planning process is the involvement of resource people. Individuals who based on their professional expertise and talents contributed to the knowledge and informational needs of the Planning Committee to produce this plan.

City of Hickory Resources

Janet Derr-Cline, Parks & Recreation
Mack McLeod, Parks & Recreation
Nathan Vannoy, Traffic
Chuck Hansen, Engineering
Todd Hefner, Community Development
Trudy Huffman, Community Development
Derrell Bentley, Building Inspections
Beth Watts, SOS, Parks & Recreation
Major Wayne Sumpter, Police

Marci Sigmon, GIS
Greg Schauble, Housing Consultant
Jeff Greenhill, Mapping Assistance
Lt. Ronny Lamberth, PACT Commander
Tom Carr, Neighborhood Liaison
Tricia Reynolds, Neighborhood Planner



Neighborhood Planner, Tricia Reynolds keeps the Neighborhood Association updated on the progress of the plan.

Other service providers and agencies also contributed to this planning process. The people listed below assisted the Planning Committee by either speaking to the group or providing necessary information.

Hickory City Schools Resources

Dr. Stuart Thompson
Lavada Gates

Catawba Valley Board of Realtors

Melissa Hager

Girl Scouts - Catawba Valley Area Council

Susan Dickens

Catawba County Agricultural Extension 4-H

Donna Mull

The Planning Committee was fortunate to have access to resources available at Lenoir-Rhyne College. The existing housing conditions survey was conducted by students enrolled in an Urban Sociology course in the Fall of 1996.

The mailed and telephone demographic and attitudinal survey was conducted by students enrolled in a Community Studies course in the Winter of 1997. Under the direction of Dr. Bennett M. Judkins, the students provided valuable data collection assistance and timely information for the Planning Committee, while gaining valuable practical experience in working with and in a neighborhood.

Lenoir-Rhyne College

Dr. Bennett M. Judkins

Students:

David Barton
Jason Hollifield
Katherine Cooper
Jennifer Gauble
Melissa Jenks
Kelly McKeon
Angela Paravis
Linda Coffey
Lisa Montalvo
Amanda Peck
Kimberly Schronce
Julie Shapley
Mark Taylor
Michelle Yount



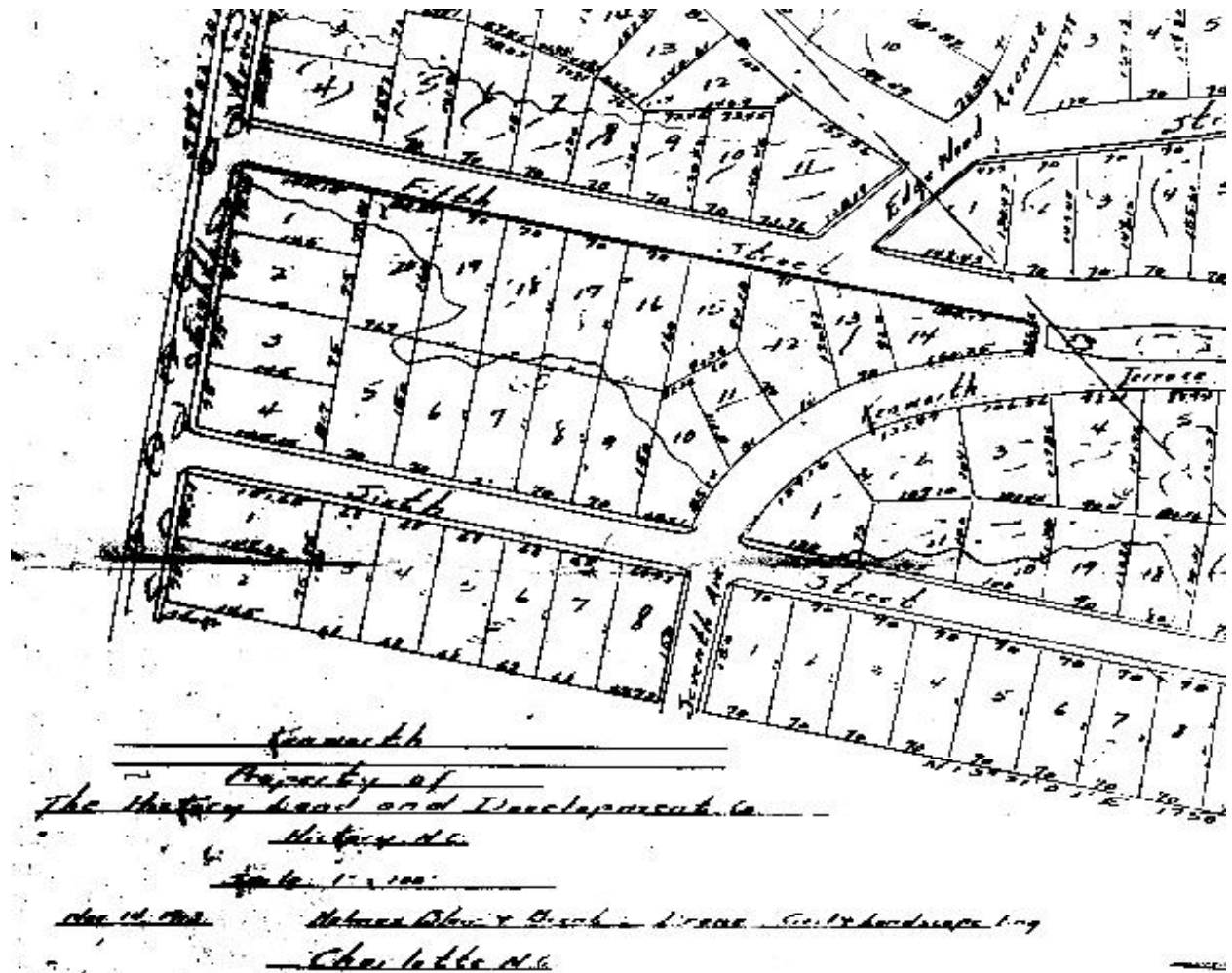
Lenoir-Rhyne College students and Prof. Bennett M. Judkins early one Saturday morning in September 1996, prepared to conduct housing conditions survey.

Plan Preparation and Review/Adoption

The final stage of the planning process is re-

view and adoption. Planning Department staff prepared a draft for the Planning Committee to review at its March 31 meeting. After receiving resident's comments at two Neighborhood Association meetings and comments from City staff and other agencies in March and April, the draft plan was taken before the

Hickory Regional Planning Commission on April 23 for their review and approval. A final draft of the Plan was presented to City Council for adoption on May 6, 1997. This plan when adopted will supplement the Hickory Land Development Plan adopted in 1986.



The original plat of the Kenworth subdivision reads "Kenworth - Property of the Hickory Land and Development Co. - Hickory, NC - Scale 1" = 100' - November 14, 1913 - Holmes Blair & Brent Drane, Civil & Landscape Eng. - Charlotte, NC"

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

The history and existing character of Kenworth can illuminate strengths and weakness of the area. As Hickory's first planned subdivision, the neighborhood has a long history. Kenworth today is the results of physical and social forces affecting the area. A better understanding of existing opportunities and challenges can be gained by examining the neighborhood's history and current conditions. The Planning Committee used this knowledge to develop strategies and recommendations to enhance opportunities and address issues of concern.

Historical Development of Kenworth

According to the City's 1988 historical publication, "From Tavern to Town," prior to the development of Kenworth, the area had been farmland and woods owned by a number of people. The initial development of the neighborhood commenced at a time when Hickory was experiencing rapid growth in the number and type of its manufacturers and in its population. In 1910, the city had a population of 3,716 people, which rose to 5,076 in 1920. The majority of them were employed by a growing number of furniture, hosiery, and textile mills, as well as by the various support and service enterprises which accompanied them. The steady growth in population created an urgent need for housing. In response, no doubt, to what was perceived as a bright future for the real estate business in Hickory, a group of local businessmen formed the Hickory Land and Development Company in 1913.

The Hickory Land and Development Company founded by Kenneth C. Menzies, William B. Menzies, J. L. Riddle, J. D. Elliott, and H. E. Elliott, all prominent business and

industrial leaders in Hickory the early twentieth century.

Soon after its incorporation, the company began to acquire property. By the end of 1913 a parcel containing approximately fifty acres had been pieced together in what was to become Kenworth, and on it Hickory's first subdivision was planned. The name of the neighborhood was derived by combining the names of two of the developers, Kenneth Menzies, long-time head of the First National Bank of Hickory, and Worth Elliott, president of Elliott Building Company.

It is significant that when the Hickory Land and Development Company had assembled the fifty acres of land, it turned to the Charlotte firm of Blair and Drane to design the subdivision. Holmes Blair and Brent Drane were listed in the Charlotte city directories as civil and landscape engineers. A third member of the firm was Wilbur W. Smith. All three of these names appear on the plat of the Kenworth subdivision with Smith the acting surveyor. A key to the firm's design of Kenworth was its involvement in the expansion of the Dilworth subdivision in Charlotte.

The extension of Dilworth had been designed by the Olmstead Brothers, sons of nationally prominent landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead, Sr. In its design, Dilworth embodied the latest approach to the planning of residential neighborhoods. The rigid grid patterns of earlier periods were discarded for a more picturesque, park-like atmosphere. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the well to-do had begun to see the suburban home as a retreat from the pace of city life, and the extension of railroads and trolleys as well as the ever-increasing number of automobiles made commuting to them possible.

Dilworth was the first example in Charlotte of the new approach to city planning, but it was surpassed by the Myers Park subdivision by John Nolan in 1911 and extended in 1927-1930 by planner Earl Draper. These designs, drawn up by nationally prominent firms, had an impact on the local engineering companies hired to transform them to reality. Thus, when retained to lay out subdivisions such as Kenworth, Blair and Drane were influenced by their direct contact with the big-name designers and their designs.

Blair and Drane were confronted in the planning of Kenworth by topography which was composed of three distinct parts: (1) an irregular and sloped plateau at the western edge; (2) a bisecting ravine which became increasingly steeper at the southern end; and (3) an eastern edge which fell rapidly in elevation.

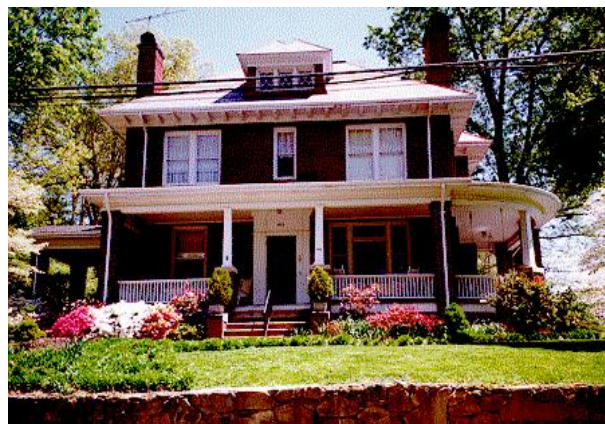
Their solution called for a straight road (Fifth Street SE) to extend southward along a ridge from Second Avenue SE until it curved at the south end to again follow the topography. Third Avenue Drive SE branched off from Fifth Street SE approximately one-third of the way from its north terminus and gently curved along the edge of the ravine, providing house sites on its west side overlooking the wooded ravine. A third road (Sixth Street SE), which was never built, extended along the west side of the ravine from Third Avenue Drive SE northward to Second Avenue SE. A fourth street (Seventh Street SE) intersected Second Avenue SE, curved downward toward the center of the tract, and then turned to the southeast to follow the floor of the depression. Finally, one street (also never built) proceeded eastward in a winding fashion from Sixth Street SE, across Seventh Street SE and up the side of the east hill. Bordering these streets, which had been undifferentiated from each other in width, were 150 budding lots of nearly equal size. The picturesque street pat-

tern, therefore, was not supported by different-sized lots which would have better reflected the special character of the landscape.

The developers installed paired stone columns at the entrance to Fifth Street SE - an obvious reference to the stone gates which marked entrances into Charlotte's Myers Park. Longtime residents recall that a second pair of columns were located at the intersection of Fifth Street SE and Eighth Avenue SE, but were dismantled sometime in the 1940's. An apartment building now stands in place of the columns.

Clearly the developers had not intended to create a Myers Park or a Dilworth. The price of lots in the Kenworth subdivision and their relatively small size defined the type of neighborhood which the developers envisioned: one targeted primarily at the middle or lower middle class.

Kenworth was boldly different from any other part of Hickory when it was laid out. As a 1915 map of the city shows, Kenworth's winding roads and location at the southeastern fringe of the corporate city limits were in sharp contrast to the older grid pattern of streets with development concentrated close to the downtown area.



The J. J. Willard House, built in 1915, is just one example of Kenworth Neighborhood's unique and rich architectural history.

Although platted by 1914, only six houses had been erected in the Kenworth subdivision prior to World War I. Of these six, five were clustered together near the southwestern corner of the subdivision (outside the present historic district boundaries), and the sixth was built within the boundary of the present historic district. Later construction dating from the 1940's through the 1960's placed an incongruous barrier between the bungalow structures in the historic district and those built in the other portions of the subdivision which are similar and in many cases older.

The United States entry into World War I put a temporary halt to further development in the Kenworth District. With its resources given over to the war effort, Hickory and the nation as a whole virtually stopped building. After the war, the city was posed on the edge of a phenomenal period of growth. In 1920, the population stood at 5,076, but it soared by forty-five percent in the next decade to 7,363 persons in 1930.

On February 4, 1921, the Hickory Land Development company had taken a half-page ad in *The Hickory Daily Record* which read:

Opportunity for Builders
The most attractive residential section of
Hickory is KENWORTH

A community of pretty houses on good streets, with water, lights and other modern improvements and in easy reach of the South Graded School.

If you want a home in this section, the Hickory Land and Development Company will assist you in any way possible to attain your desire. ...Arrangements will be made to assist you in carrying the cost of home ownership through the building and loan association. All you need is a small sum of money and the determination to become a home-owner. Let us

nation to become a home-owner. Let us explain any one of several good propositions for you to you.

An accompanying article proclaimed Kenworth's growth as probably the finest of any residential section in Hickory. The paper described it as "Situated in a beautiful part of Hickory...it has lights, water and sewerage, beautiful trees and wholesome surroundings."



Excerpt of the article that appeared in the Hickory Daily Record, February 4, 1921.

Consumer demand, the location, and what was probably a relatively low cost for lots combined to transform the district virtually overnight from vacant lots to single-family dwellings. Many of the people who moved into Kenworth appear to have been young businessmen and professionals. A number of them had recently moved to Hickory and were in the early stages of their careers. This accounts, in part, for the high turnover rate in ownership in this district compared to some of the older, more established residential areas in the city.

It is significant that these young middle class families chose to build in Kenworth rather than in other areas of the city. Their conscious selection of home sites here suggests that they identified themselves with the relatively new concepts of suburban planning and neighborhood design embodied in the subdivision. Removed from the business district but close to the South Graded School, Kenworth offered

the advantages of location and a number of amenities which combined to create an attractive new residential atmosphere. The fact that stone columns had been used to mark the principal entrance to Kenworth contributed to this sense of neighborhood identity.

Sales of both vacant lots and company-built houses were brisk, beginning about 1920. Houses in the subdivision sold for \$5,000 to \$6,500, lots sold for \$1,000. A number of people had purchased building lots by mid or late 1921, and they had probably completed houses on them by 1922. Of the remaining twenty-four lots in the district which were owned by the Hickory Land and Development Company, all but eight had been purchased by 1922. Of those eight, only one had not been sold by 1923. All of the lots carried deed restrictions which prescribed a setback of twenty or twenty-five feet, and the value of improvements to equal or exceed \$3,000.

Building activity in the Kenworth subdivision during the postwar years was concentrated in the northwest corner which constitutes the bulk of the present Kenworth Historic District. The Hickory Land and Development Company built four houses along Fifth Street in 1919 and 1920, and by the end of the second year they had sold all but one.

Between 1922 and 1925, six more houses were erected along Fifth Street SE, and three of them were built on adjoining lots along the north side of Second Avenue SE. Development in Kenworth after the late 1920's was limited by the availability of lots. Two homes were built on Fifth Street SE about 1940 and 1948. The Hickory Land and Development Company was dissolved in 1945.

In addition to new schools and houses, Hickory's citizens were erecting new church buildings for their growing congregations. Having

met since 1908 in the old First Presbyterian Church (located in the vicinity of present South Center Street and First Avenue, SW), the congregation of Christ Lutheran Church built a new edifice in Kenworth in 1926. Christ Lutheran built a larger facility on adjacent property in 1971, and sold the historic church to the congregation of Mt. Zion Baptist in 1978.

The congregation of Mt. Zion Baptist formed in 1924 in the basement of Reverend O'Kelley's home on "F" Avenue SE. The black congregation had met in two different buildings before they obtained the former Lutheran church building.



Mt. Zion Baptist Church, formerly Christ Lutheran, is a landmark in the neighborhood and is a pivotal structure within the Kenworth Historic District.

The City annexed the area known as the Sigmon property, which included part of Seventh Avenue SE, Eighth Avenue SE, Seventh Avenue Place and a portion of the land where Ki-

wanis Park is located, in 1956. Single lot annexations took place in 1957 and 1962. The southern end of Fifth Street SE was added to the city limits in 1977. The next large scale annexation that affected Kenworth occurred in 1980 and incorporated the remainder of Seventh Avenue SE to Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard.

According to the 1967 study entitled “An Analysis of Hickory’s Neighborhoods”, prepared for the Hickory Planning Commission by Eric Hill Associates, Inc., of Winston-Salem, all of Study Area 11 and portions of Study Areas 10 and 13 encompass the current boundaries of Kenworth. Single-family residential use dominated this area.

The consultants noted that construction of NC Highway 127 created irregular block with small, odd-shaped remnant parcels of land, and that there were no structures fronting directly onto the highway. This holds true today with one exception.

In 1967, the neighborhood consisted of approximately 357 acres, containing 433 structures. Nine of the structures were devoted to commercial use. There were no industrial uses in the area, as there are none today.

The study assessed that blight was not a problem in this area as only nineteen percent of the total structures were in need of minor repairs and five percent, twenty-two structures, were considered to be dilapidated. Most of the dilapidated structures were located along First and Second Avenues SE, the one-way pairs, only two were within the main body of the neighborhood along the edge closest to NC 127.

When comparing the map from the 1967 study to the map from the 1996 study, it is revealed that the twenty-two dilapidated structures have

been replaced over time by multi-family units, mobile homes or commercial buildings.

The 1967 neighborhood study rated the overall street structure in Kenworth as very poor. There were many long narrow streets that dead-end with no provisions for adequate turn-around. The street pattern was further complicated by NC 127 cutting across the western boundary resulting in several streets simply dead-ending at the right-of-way. There were only a few streets near the western boundary that were unpaved, and the remaining streets were paved and appeared to be in fairly good condition. The entire area was served with sewer and water facilities.

The study concluded, at the time, mixed use did not exist in this neighborhood, and the zoning appeared quite adequate to protect this neighborhood. Protect it from what, one might ask? The zoning classification applied to Kenworth in 1967, is the same as it is today, and neighborhood has experienced proliferation of multi-family dwellings since that time.



The number of multi-family dwellings in Kenworth has increased significantly over the past thirty years.

The next comprehensive housing conditions survey was conducted by college interns in 1983. They assessed at the time that street connections in Kenworth had been made and streets were widened to alleviate street inade-

quacy described in the 1967 study. The students observed that very little development had taken place in the area over the past fifteen years. They noted in the report that the Sycamore Apartments located at the end of Third Street SE, had been built, but expressed their opinion that they did not feel the neighborhood street system could handle the traffic flow associated with high density multi-family development.

Due to coding irregularities and inconsistencies, the housing conditions data compiled by these students is not comparable to data from the 1967 and 1996 studies.

Community Facilities

Elementary School

In response to the growing school-aged population and the overburdened facilities at the North (later Oakwood) school, the City of Hickory made plans in 1913 to build a new school simply called the Graded School No. 2, but commonly referred to as the South School. Built in 1913, it was designed by Winston-Salem architect J. S. Zimmerman. The school's location in the city's southern half was apparently deemed necessary by the size of the population there - some 2,250 of a total population of 4,800.

Population growth in Hickory had forced the school board to enlarge the South Graded School in 1919, and by the middle of the decade other facilities had to be built throughout the city. In 1933, the South school was renamed Kenworth Elementary School because of its location near the Kenworth residential area.

The 1967 study stated that Kenworth Elementary School had already exceeded its capacity by over fifty pupils. The study concluded that

any expansion of this school would require acquiring standard residences or a church.

Kenworth School was closed after the 1987-88 school year for several reasons. First, the lower grades were becoming majority black, which violated the Federal Court order imposed in the 1960's requiring desegregated public schools. Other reasons were that the classrooms were inadequate, the site was too small to expand, parking was inadequate, security was becoming a concern, the wooden floors presented a fire hazard, traffic noise from the one-way street disrupted classes, the only bus access is on Second Avenue SE, to upgrade the facility to meet ADA requirements would be difficult, and there was not enough playground space.

In 1990, the old elementary school was purchased by a group of investors and converted into a fifty-seven unit affordable housing complex for the elderly and disabled.



The old Kenworth Elementary School photographed in 1979.

Recreational Facilities

In 1966, six acres were acquired from the Woodmen of the World distinctly for the purpose of creating a neighborhood park in Kenworth. The local Kiwanis Club was instrumental in providing funds for the development of the park, hence the name Kiwanis Park. Addi-

tional acreage adjacent to the Park has been acquired three times over the past thirty years to compose its present sixteen acres.

Kiwanis Park used to be a neighborhood park with one baseball field, playground equipment and a picnic shelter. A second ball field was opened in 1988, and two more will be opened for the 1997 season. Kiwanis Park is now a district park serving the entire city as a Little League baseball complex.



Kiwanis Park is considered an asset to the neighborhood, yet it causes some concerns with neighbors, such as security and heavy traffic.

Historic District

Within the boundaries of the Kenworth Neighborhood lies a National Register Historic District. Although it comprises only about one-fifth of the total Kenworth subdivision, much of which was never developed due to the rugged topography, the Kenworth Historic District is an important reflection of Hickory's early twentieth-century history.

According to "From Tavern to Town," the Kenworth Historic District represents the largest and most intact group of bungalows in Hickory, most of which were constructed within the boundaries of the original Kenworth subdivision. Closely related in form, type, and use of materials, as well as in siting, these

houses collectively establish the unique visual quality that characterizes Kenworth.

An 1886 map of Catawba County shows neither a road nor any farmstead situated in the area, although the Hawn Family House, probably erected in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, still stands just south of the subdivision. Building activity in the Kenworth Historic District was, with only four exceptions, confined to the period from about 1920 to 1926.

The unique identity of the Kenworth District stems in fact, from the close interrelationship among its fifteen bungalows. Kenworth's buildings are visually cohesive their style, type, quality of construction, scale and siting. One of the strongest visual aspects of Kenworth's bungalows lies in their form and relationship to each other. Either one or one and one-half stories they were built with similar setbacks and were generally placed in the center of the equally sized lots.

Architectural historians have noted the harmony in the rhythm and texture of the houses in Kenworth. This is due in part to the repetition and juxtaposition of specific elements of design, as well as to the uniformity of scale and siting.

Kenworth's bungalows share a considerable number of design details, such as gables, purlin brackets, and exposed rafter ends. Alternating sheathing patterns of brick and wood shingles or of weatherboards and wood shingles are common, as are long sidewalls with shallow, projecting bays. Conspicuous use of brick and, especially, stone in the foundations was required by the sloping terrain.

Porches, both engaged and attached, play an important role in defining the interrelationship among the bungalows. Visually dominant by

virtue of their size and position across two or three front bays, the porches involve large areas in the front of each house. The effect is to increase the apparent spaciousness of the house while pulling the building into a closer relationship with its natural surroundings.

Several non-bungalow buildings also contribute to the physical character of the Kenworth Historic District. The Colonial Revival style is fully evident in two houses, while a third house is a German-sided cottage built in 1923.

The oldest building in the district is the 1913 Kenworth Elementary School. Two stories in height and capped by a low hipped roof, the brick school features a wide, recessed central entrance and two wings added in 1919 and 1952. Beside the school is the district's only religious edifice, the late Gothic Revival-style Christ Lutheran Church of 1926, now known as Mt. Zion Baptist Church. This small, but well designed, brick-veneered structure has a dominant flat-roofed bell tower and a transept. Raking parapet walls, buttresses, and lancet-arched, stained-glass windows detail the composition.

According to "From Tavern to Town," the Kenworth District comprises, by and of itself, the finest and the most varied collection of bungalows in Hickory. Erected within a short span of time, these houses exhibit the wide diversity of the style like no other grouping the city.



The presence of the historic district in Kenworth has helped to stabilize the neighborhood by attracting homebuyers and promoting pride in the neighborhood.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section describes and summarizes different concerns, trends and issues raised during the Kenworth Neighborhood planning process, based on the perceptions of the Planning Committee and other concerned residents, as well as planning staff.

The Kenworth Neighborhood has three different characters. The eastern half of the neighborhood from Fifth Street SE to Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard, is strikingly different from the western portion from Fourth Street SE over to NC Highway 127, and the mixed residential and commercial area along the one-way pairs, which makes up the northern boundary of the neighborhood.

The eastern portion of the neighborhood has a higher concentration of owner occupied homes and fewer multi-family units than the other sections of Kenworth. The condition of the housing stock in this area is predominately well maintained, with few exceptions. One notable exception is a residence close to Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard where a grading company has been located since before the city limits were extended in 1980, grandfathering in the commercial use.

The overall appearance of the eastern half of Kenworth is more pleasant as lawns are well manicured and landscaped, and home owners pay attention to maintaining the property. Since most of the homes this part of the neighborhood are newer, built in the 1960's and 70's, this is to be expected.

In contrast, the western half of Kenworth has a higher concentration of single-family homes that are occupied by renters, a significant number of homes in need of minor repairs, such as painting, and a few in need of major maintenance.

There are a few overgrown vacant lots which inherently attract litter and hard to dispose of items, such as used tires.

The northern edge of the Kenworth Neighborhood has characteristics all its own. The area between First and Second Avenues SE is zoned for office and institutional uses, however, the predominate use is a mix of single and multi-family residential. The dwellings are for the most part well maintained, and owner occupied.

Unfortunately, two of the four dilapidated structures in Kenworth are side-by-side right at one of the main entrances to the neighborhood on the one-way pair. Vacant and deteriorating structures are eyesores in the neighborhood and present an image of instability.



These two dilapidated rental houses on First Avenue SE were condemned in 1995 and have remained vacant since.

Transportation Influences

Streets

The major streets, which makeup the boundaries of this neighborhood, effectively discourage pedestrian crossing from Kenworth to surrounding neighborhoods and the downtown.

The average vehicles per day as recorded in 1994, and the projected traffic volume for 2010 is shown in Table 1. While not technically a part of the neighborhood, Tate Boulevard is included in the analysis because it impacts Kenworth as it is a major employment growth area. The intersection of Tate and Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard is considered one of the most under-developed major intersections in the city, which is surprising given its high traffic levels and available land.

Table 1. AVERAGE VEHICLES PER DAY ON MAJOR STREETS IMPACTING KENWORTH

	1994	Projected 2010
Lenoir-Rhyne Blvd.	23,600	23,900
One-Way Pairs	14,300	14,900
NC Hwy. 127	13,000	17,100
Tate Blvd.	17,600	17,800

Public Transit Service

The regional public transit authority, *Piedmont Wagon*, serves the Kenworth Neighborhood by one route with two stops. The bus stops along Second Avenue SE in the 200 block and in front of Kenworth Hall once every hour, Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m., to 6:00 p.m., and Saturday once every hour, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The ridership level in Kenworth is estimated to be fifteen patrons a day on average.

Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of Kenworth have changed significantly over the years according to long-time residents. The US Census of Population and Housing information for 1990 was used to examine and describe the population in Kenworth.

The Census indicated a total population of 1,452 residents. Today’s population, however,

exceeds 1,713 residents if the formula of 2.5 persons per family in the Census tract to the number of residential dwelling units in Kenworth.

Table 2 compares Kenworth and the City of Hickory by race. The most unique characteristic, according to 1990 Census data, indicates that Kenworth was almost evenly mixed in terms of white and black residents, which is quite different when compared to the City as a whole. Only five percent of the City’s population resides in Kenworth. Three percent of the City’s white population and sixteen percent of the City’s black population reside in Kenworth.

Table 2. 1990 CENSUS DATA BY RACE

Kenworth						
White	Black	Amer. Indian	Asian	Hispanic		Total
693	752	8	6	13		1452
47.7%	51.8%	0.6%	0.4%	0.9%		5%

Hickory						
White	Black	Amer. Indian	Asian	Hispanic		Total
23037	4811	849	283	226		28301
81.4%	17.0%	3.0%	1.0%	0.8%		100%

The 1990 Census does not seem to reflect the recent influx of people of Asian and Hispanic origin. The strong economy and low unemployment rate in the Hickory Metro area has attracted more immigrants to the area, and many of these families have chosen to live in Kenworth presumably because of the affordability and availability of housing.

Table 3 shows the number of residents in Kenworth and the City of Hickory who in 1990 were either under 18, or 65 or older. The neighborhood closely compares to the City’s percentage, with six percent of the City’s youth and five percent of the City’s population

of people aged 65 and older living in Kenworth.

Again, the neighborhood closely compares to the City's percentage in terms of household size, although Kenworth has a slightly higher percentage of single parent households.

Table 3. 1990 CENSUS DATA BY AGE & ONE PERSON/SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS

Kenworth				
Under 18	65 or Older	One-Person Household	Single Parent Household	
351	220	146	97	
24.2%	15.2%	24.3%	16.1%	

Hickory				
Under 18	65 or Older	One-Person Household	Single Parent Household	
5858	4132	3717	1558	
20.7%	14.6%	31.5%	13.2%	

Housing Values and Income

The mean value of a home in Kenworth in 1990 was \$45,256, below the City's average of \$66,900. According to the Census Data, the mean contract rent in Kenworth was \$248, compared to \$384, the City-wide average.

Income information is not available at the Census block level, so analysis of mean family income for Kenworth could not be considered in this analysis.

Number of Youth

The neighborhood has evolved as perhaps the most ethnically diverse neighborhood in all of Hickory. Review of Hickory City Schools enrollment records categorized by race and address supports that sentiment.

Enrollment records for 1996 indicate that 9.6 percent of all students in Hickory reside in

Kenworth. The average age is ten-years old. Table 4 represents the number and percentage of all students in Hickory and those who reside in the neighborhood by race and compares those numbers with the city as a whole.

Table 4. PERCENT OF ALL HICKORY STUDENTS RESIDING IN KENWORTH BY RACE

Hickory Students						
Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Multi-Racial	Amer. Indian	Total
180	717	82	1818	14	1	2812
6.4%	25.5%	2.9%	64.7%	0.5%	0.0%	100%

Kenworth Students						
Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Multi-Racial	Amer. Indian	Total
10	207	20	30	2	0	269
3.7%	77.0%	7.4%	11.2%	0.7%	0.0%	100%

Percent of Hickory Students Residing in Kenworth						
Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Multi-Racial	Amer. Indian	Total
5.6%	28.9%	24.4%	1.7%	14.3%	0.0%	9.6%

Land Use Characteristics

The Kenworth Neighborhood boundaries encompass approximately 352 acres or .55 square miles. The existing land use is illustrated by the *Existing Land Use* map in Appendix 3.

Kenworth is not a high density development area; only about three units per acre. There are approximately 633 total lots in the neighborhood, and of those, 155 lots are vacant, about twenty-four percent of the total land area in the neighborhood. The vacant land means there are opportunities for in-fill development. However, a majority of the vacant lots in the neighborhood are located on steep slopes and flood plains along Barger Branch and its tribu-

taries thereby making them difficult to develop due to topography.

The commercial development is concentrated along the major thoroughfares which create the boundaries of the neighborhood. Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard and the western end of First and Second Avenues SE is where the commercial development is located.

The three institutional land uses in Kenworth are two churches, and approximately a 15.5-acre tract of land in a residentially zoned area owned and occupied by the Salvation Army.



The Salvation Army owns a 15.5 acre tract in the Kenworth Neighborhood where they administer emergency services and operate shelters for homeless and battered women.

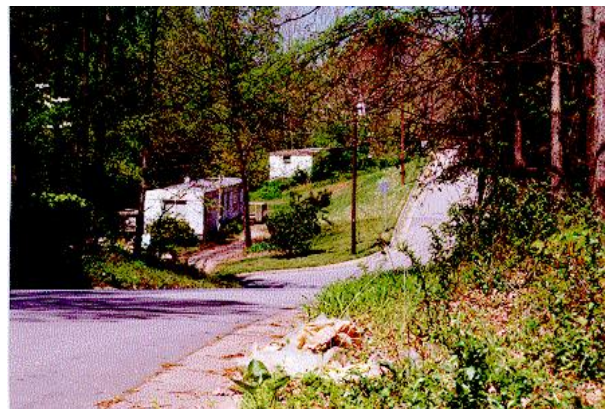
The public and semi-public land in the neighborhood is either owned by the City of Hickory, Catawba County, or the State Department of Transportation. Kiwanis Park, which is owned by the City, is a sixteen acre active park with four regulation sized Little League ball fields, one tennis court, a basketball court with two goals, two covered picnic shelters, two playgrounds, and a paved walking trail. Catawba County Emergency Medical Service (EMS) occupies a station on the corner of Second Avenue SE and Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard. The Community Housing Corporation of Catawba County operates a group home for six adults with mental illnesses.

There are three larger tracts of undeveloped land located in Kenworth; these are potential locations for in-fill development. Two of the locations do not have road access which explains why there has not been any development. Any new roads to access the development would have to be built and paid for by the developer to the City's specifications.

Current Zoning

The zoning for Kenworth Neighborhood is illustrated by the *Current Zoning* map in Appendix 3. The neighborhood is zoned primarily residential (R-5) which allows a variety of moderate intensity residential uses including single family, two-family and multiple family dwelling types under conventional or planned development controls. The minimum lot size is 8,000 square feet, which is small in comparison to other residential areas.

The far west side of Kenworth is zoned residential (R-6) which is a district intended to accommodate a variety of moderate to high intensity residential uses including single- and double-wide manufactured homes, under conventional or planned development controls. The minimum lot size is 6,000 square feet.



The current R-6 zoning classification allows mobile homes in a portion of the western half of Kenworth.

There are fifteen mobile homes in Kenworth. Three of the existing mobile homes are newer,

double-wide models. Any existing single-wide manufactured home can be replaced, however any new siting of this type of housing would have to be a double-wide manufactured home with proper under pinning to make the home appear permanent. The zoning ordinance requires that any new location of a mobile home on a lot would have to be a double-wide model.

Around the edges of the neighborhood the zoning allows for commercial and office uses. The northern boundary is the one-way pairs, which is zoned office and institutional (O&I-1). This zoning category serves as a transition zone between residential and business or industrial districts. Moderate to high intensity residential and office and institutional uses are allowed in this district. Retail, heavy commercial or industrial uses are not allowed.

Besides serving as one of the primary entrance ways to the city, this corridor is also the link between downtown and the industries located off Tate Boulevard. The City's long-range plans are to guide commercial development toward the downtown area instead of on the one-way pairs. Any rezoning in this area would have to be a planned development, and consolidating parcels would be difficult because of the multitude of individual owners

The eastern boundary is Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard, and is zoned commercial (C-5) which accommodates general businesses such as retail, service, manufacturing and warehousing activities in areas where past land development practices have produced a mixed pattern of land uses and irregular lotting. Only the west side of Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard is considered part of the Kenworth Neighborhood. Two parcels within the neighborhood boundaries are zoned commercial (C-4). This district is for highway business development which includes

restaurants, retail, hotels, and other service oriented businesses.

Another zoning district that affects Kenworth is the Planned Development (PD). This district can be mixed use (MU) or office and institutional (O&I). Specific site plans must be approved by City Council. Kenworth Hall and the 336 L-R Business Park are the only instances of planned development in Kenworth. One special use permit was issued in 1994 for a residential institutional facility on Fourth Avenue Place SE, but it has yet to be developed.

The region to the south of the neighborhood is approximately eighty-eight acres of undeveloped. The zoning allows commercial and light industrial development, similar to the offices and warehouses in Westover on Tate Boulevard. The area on Tate Boulevard is zoned for industrial uses. While it is not within the neighborhood boundaries, it still impacts Kenworth as major employment growth area.

Historic District Overlay Zone

A significant feature in the Kenworth Neighborhood is the presence of a Historic District overlay zone. Portions of Second Avenue SE and Fifth Street SE make up the locally designated Historic District, which consists of twenty-three structures. This designation protects the unique architectural character of the neighborhood by regulating through review of any exterior changes a homeowner proposes. The Kenworth Historic District is listed as a National Register Historic District which is an honorary designation and has no regulations attached.

The Historic Preservation Commission reviews significant changes and decides whether to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness. Minor changes are reviewed by staff. Two vacant lots

are included in the historic district. Any new construction would be reviewed to make sure it fits in to the character of the district in terms of height, setback, proportion and materials.

There are three bungalows located on Second Avenue SE that are in the office and institutional zone. These structures could be used for that purpose, however parking and signage would have to comply with the Historic Preservation Design Review Guidelines.

Environmental Characteristics

Two creek beds control the drainage pattern in the neighborhood. One that runs parallel to Third Avenue Drive SE on the eastside, and one that parallels Fourth Street SE on the eastside. These features can be scenic and provide wooded green space in the neighborhood, yet they can collect litter, become overgrown, and are prone to flooding during heavy rain storms.

The majority of the undeveloped land in the neighborhood is related to the difficult terrain associated with the creeks.

Public Infrastructure and Facilities

Sidewalks

Few streets within Kenworth have sidewalks, and there is little connectivity between those that do exist. Staff estimated that 18,401 linear feet of sidewalk exists in the neighborhood.

The majority of sidewalks in Kenworth are along Second Avenue SE, First Avenue SE, and Lenoir-Rhyne Blvd. Within the heart of the neighborhood, sidewalks run along both sides of Fifth Street SE through the Historic District (200 block), then picks up both sides of the street starting in the 400 block to the 600 block where it terminates midway toward Eighth Avenue SE. The sidewalk in the 400

block of Third Avenue Drive SE, Fifth Avenue SE, and Fifth Street SE creates a loop which is a favorite route for walkers in the neighborhood.

Other sidewalks run along both sides of Third Street SE and terminate at Eighth Avenue SE. A small section of sidewalk runs along NC 127 from Tenth Avenue SE, and there is a segment in front of Kiwanis Park. There is no sidewalk connection from the core of the neighborhood to the Park.

As part of the planning process, the location of the existing sidewalks and street lights were mapped. By locating these, the neighbors and city staff are able to see where deficiencies in the system exist. The *Sidewalks and Street Lights* map can be found in Appendix 3.



Along Second Avenue SE is one of the few examples of continuous sidewalk in Kenworth.

Street Lighting

There are approximately 122 existing street-lights in the Kenworth Neighborhood, and several property owners elected to have security lights installed for extra lighting and security at their own cost. There are specific locations where street lights do not exist, creating dark portions of the roadway. Neighbors do not feel safe in those areas at night because of the lack of illumination.

Recreation - Kiwanis Park

The Parks & Recreation Department in recent years, has gravitated toward the nation-wide trend of more district serving parks, where recreational activities of a particular type are concentrated in one park instead of dispersed throughout the city.

Once a neighborhood park, Kiwanis Park now has four, regulation size, Little League baseball fields within its boundaries of sixteen acres. The Parks & Recreation Department has hosted State Little League baseball tournaments in 1984, 1988, and 1996. A District tournament was played at the Park in 1995. Each tournament attracts close to 1000 parents and ballplayers over a four day period. This level of attendance translates into extra traffic in Kenworth Neighborhood.

During the baseball season, the Parks & Recreation Department encourages parents to access Kiwanis Park via Seventh Avenue SE. For tournaments, the department provides out-of-town teams with directions from Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard to Seventh Avenue SE.

A new parking lot was paved to serve the two new ball fields. To provide a fluid exit from the parking lot, an access road was proposed from the new ball fields onto Third Avenue Drive SE. Some members of the Neighborhood Association expressed their dissatisfaction with the decision to pave a road instead of examining an alternative entrance and exit they proposed.

The City Engineer provided an outline of an estimated cost of \$410,000 for the neighborhood's proposal of a new access road to the park. The location of the neighborhood's proposal would open access to the undeveloped land south of the neighborhood boundaries. This land is currently zoned ED, which allows

for light industrial uses. Staff explained that to open this access might encourage cut through traffic and commercial vehicles.

The new exit road from the park was paved in April 1997. Some neighbors noted that the new exit still directs traffic through the heart of the neighborhood.



Exit road from the ball fields to Third Avenue Drive SE under construction.

In the future, the Parks & Recreation Department has agreed to make a greater attempt to include the neighborhood in relative decision making processes. Information will be disseminated via fliers, newspapers, contacting the Block Captains, and through other City Departments.

The neighbors are concerned with the amount of lighting and security at Kiwanis Park. The Park is often used as a hangout for teenagers and younger kids are afraid to go there. Lights for the new fields and flood lights for the picnic shelters and playground area were installed in late December 1996.

An officer from Charles PACT is responsible for locking the main entrance gates to Kiwanis Park. The Parks & Recreation Department has said that the gate to the new parking lot will remain locked when fields are not in use. The Planning Committee discussed the possibility of a park ranger being responsible for locking

the gates instead of a police officer. Creation of a park ranger position would have to be included in the Parks & Recreation Department's annual budget, and at this time there are no plans to do that.

Plans to expand the walking trail were included in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. The new addition allows for walking trails to be graded around to the new ball fields, but there is no design or time frame as of yet.

Playground equipment and landscaping needs for Kiwanis Park were also addressed in the master plan which was accepted by City Council in February 1997. The requests have been incorporated in the City's five-year Capital Improvements Plan.

There are no plans to expand Kiwanis Park currently, and no plans to create a passive park, that is a park without play equipment or active recreation facilities, in the neighborhood.

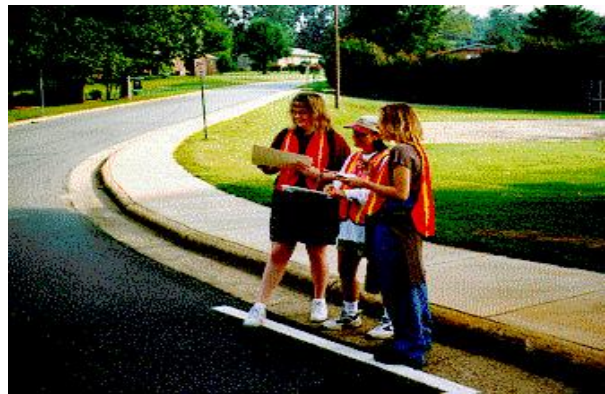
Housing Conditions

Based on a field survey conducted by Lenoir-Rhyne College students, the physical condition of the neighborhood's buildings were placed in one of four categories: well-maintained, minor maintenance, major maintenance or dilapidated. Buildings placed in the minor and major maintenance categories were verified by staff. The results of the study are illustrated by the *Housing Conditions* map in Appendix 3.

Dwellings classified as "well-maintained" were considered free of any obvious building deficiencies. Dwellings classified as in need of "minor maintenance" were those appearing to need one repair, such as painting, to improve the appearance of the structure. If two or more of the exterior features appeared in need of repair, then a "major maintenance" rating was

attributed to the structure. Finally, structures classified as "dilapidated" were those having severe structural damage.

The City's Minimum Housing Code Inspector conducted a training session for the students so that they would know what to look for and how to rate the condition of the structure from the street. The students only looked at exterior features such as the roof, chimney, exterior walls, doors, windows, gutters, soffits, barge boards, foundation, porch, stairs, and paint.



Lenoir-Rhyne College students collected data for the housing conditions survey of the neighborhood.

The data presented in Table 5 and Table 6 comparing 1967 and 1996, housing conditions indicates that there has been some improvement in terms of the number of seriously deteriorated structures.

In 1967, approximately 23.7 percent of the total residential dwelling units were identified as substandard compared to 1996 in which 21.5 percent of the total residential dwelling units have been identified as substandard. This indicates that during the past thirty years, efforts to reduce the physical decline of housing within Kenworth has retarded further decline and impacted positively by reducing the number of substandard dwellings.

It is important to note that all of the dilapidated dwellings identified in the 1967 study

have been demolished and replaced with either a commercial building, a multi-family complex, a mobile home, or left vacant.

Table 7 shows the 1996 housing conditions data by residential type. While the overall number of owner occupied, single-family dwellings in need of minor or major maintenance is higher, forty-eight structures compared to thirty-three structures, the percentage of rental single-family homes in need of repair is higher. Thirty-two percent of rental, single-family homes need some kind of repair compared to only 16.2 percent of the single-family, owner occupied homes need repair.

The four dilapidated properties are all owned by absentee landlords and have remained vacant for more than two years. Structures such as these create a negative visual image for the neighborhood to visitors. Often the cost of purchasing and restoring an existing, deteriorated or dilapidated structure exceeds the appraised value of the structure following rehabilitation.



The house at 438 Third Avenue SE was abandoned for more than two years and was the subject of many complaints until Kenworth residents Jan & Mike Robbins purchased the property and are now restoring it.

Code enforcement officials must walk a fine line between causing a property owner to correct deficiencies, and requiring corrections so costly as to effectively take the building out of service completely.

It may be necessary for the neighborhood working with a non-profit organization to participate in the acquisition of properties for resale to others more willing to invest in the property to stem the current rate of decline.

Kenworth faces an urgent need to develop plans for comprehensive code enforcement before more of the deteriorating structures slip into further disrepair.

Table 5. 1967 - HOUSING CONDITIONS

	Number of Buildings				Total	Percent of Total
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Public & Semi-Pub.	Com. & Indust.		
Standard	312	6	7	2	327	76%
Deteriorating	82	--	--	2	84	19%
Dilapidated	17	--	--	5	22	5%
Totals	411	6	7	9	433	100%

Table 6. 1996 - HOUSING CONDITIONS

	Number of Buildings				Total	Percent of Total
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Public & Semi-Pub. & Inst.	Com. & Indust.		
Well Maintained	315	52	6	17	390	78%
Minor/Major Maintenance	81	16	--	1	106	21%
Dilapidated	4	--	--	--	4	1%
	400	68	6	18	500	100%

Table 7. 1996 - HOUSING CONDITIONS BY RESIDENTIAL TYPE

	Minor	Major	Percent in Need of Repair
Single-Family- Owner Occupied	33	15	16.2%
Single-Family- Rental	26	7	32.0%
Apartment	5	5	33.3%
Duplex	5	1	15.8%
TOTAL	69	28	28.7% of Rental Properties Need Repair

Table 8. 1996 - PROPERTY STATUS

Single-Family - Owner Occupied	297	685 Total Residential Dwelling Units
Single-Family - Rental	103	56.6% Residential Dwelling Units Rental
Multi-Family Rental Units	285	388 Total Rental Units
		36.5% of Buildings are Rental

Trends in Homeownership

The Kenworth Neighborhood has evolved over the years from a predominately owner occupied, single-family neighborhood, to an area where more than half of all the residential dwelling units are rental. The *Property Status* map in Appendix 3, illustrates the number and location of all the rental property in Kenworth Neighborhood according to Catawba County tax listings as of July 1996.

Of the 400 single-family homes in Kenworth, 103 are rental homes. There are a total of 685 residential units in Kenworth, and of those, 56.6 percent or 388 units are rental.

By comparison, 1990 Census Data shows the city's percentage of owner occupied stood at about fifty-two percent, the remaining forty-

eight percent were rental homes. The concentration of rental housing is in the western section of the neighborhood.

In 1967, approximately 98.5 percent of the residential dwelling units in Kenworth were single-family dwellings compared to 1996 in which only about 84.5 percent are single-family dwelling units. During the past thirty years, there has not been an increase in the production of single-family homes in the neighborhood, in fact there has been a net loss of eleven single-family dwelling units.

The only increase in residential dwellings has been through the construction of multi-family units. Approximately sixty-two multi-family dwelling units have been added to the neighborhood since 1967. Kenworth has thirty apartment buildings, containing 209 units and

thirty-eight duplexes containing seventy-six units.



This duplex on Seventh Avenue Place SE was built in 1996.

The 1996 study indicates that only 43.4 percent of the neighborhood residents are homeowners. Although data is not available for the percentage of homeownership in 1967, it is suspected that they were the majority during that period.

As the comparison of the data on residential types from 1967 and 1996 clearly illustrates, the character of the Kenworth Neighborhood has changed, over time, due in part to a proliferation of multi-family development.

Public Safety

The City of Hickory is divided into five sections for police resource allocation purposes. Each section is known as a PACT, which stands for Police And Community Together. PACT's are the embodiment of Hickory's commitment to community policing.

Kenworth Neighborhood makes up a substantial portion of Charles PACT reporting area #140. The total number of police calls for service in Kenworth in 1996 was 3,073. These calls ranged from drugs and prostitution to property checks and noise complaints.

According to the PACT Commander, Kenworth Neighborhood experiences crime at the same rate of comparable neighborhoods.

Residents of the neighborhood identified drug activity and prostitution as the number one problem and concern in the neighborhood. The extent of this problem seemed to be concentrated in the western portion of Kenworth at three specific rental properties. That is not to say that it is not occurring elsewhere in the neighborhood, but where it appeared to be happening is a heavily traveled, highly visible entrance to Kenworth.

When the incidences of crime in the neighborhood were mapped, more than 325 of the total police calls for service in Kenworth were centered around these three rental properties. Police consider that a disproportionate number of calls for service. Drug violations and prostitution were the most serious.

The Neighborhood Association responded to this problem by inviting the owner of the properties to their monthly meeting in October to hear their concerns. The property owner explained the situation with one problem tenant and his attempts to improve the property by working with the police to be a better neighbor. Since the property owner met with the Neighborhood Association, the police calls for service dropped from 149 in July through September to forty-eight police calls for service in October through December 1996.

Illegal activity of any kind damages the reputation of the community and city. The neighborhood recognizes that it can only be eradicated through the combined efforts of the neighborhood, law enforcement, city officials and open dialogue with property owners.

THE PLAN

The Kenworth Plan is the result of a planning process that proactively involved the residents and other interested individuals who worked together to identify their priorities and devise action steps which meet the current and future needs of this neighborhood.

The set of strategies, action steps and recommendations in this plan were developed to preserve or improve the Kenworth Neighborhood. While the plan does not attempt to address all the issues and concerns in the neighborhood, the plan does provide the frame work to begin the process of making living in Kenworth more desirable by: addressing concerns of public safety; managing traffic; promoting homeownership and housing rehabilitation; strengthening code enforcement efforts; proposing zoning changes and adoption of innovative land development policies; creating opportunities for the Kenworth youth, and building the neighborhood's organizational capacity to sustain the neighborhood's cooperative spirit and make progress toward their implementation goals.

The recommendations are the result of thoughtful consideration of information provided to the Planning Committee by the various resource people during the planning meetings. Thorough analysis of the data presented and examination of feasible options aided in the group's justification for making the recommendations.

Recommendations

COMMUNITY SAFETY

To continue to reduce crime in the neighborhood to the extent that there is little or no evidence of drug trafficking, street dealing, loitering, prostitution, vandalism or other types of crime being committed in Kenworth is the top priority for this neighborhood.

Neighbors continue to voice their concern for safety, security and peace in Kenworth. So long as people feel insecure in their homes, businesses or on the street, their willingness to reinvest in the area is limited.

Crime Prevention

Persistent community action and continued involvement from Community Watch Block Captain network is necessary to restore a sense of safety and well-being in Kenworth.

- Continue to encourage neighbors to report incidents of illegal activity in the neighborhood to the PACT Commander and Hickory Police.
 - ⌄ Justification: PACT officers rely on neighbors to report suspicious activity
 - ⌄ Cost: None
 - ⌄ Time table: On-going
 - ⌄ Responsible party: Neighborhood

- Hold a refresher course and invigorate Community Watch and Block Captains
 - ⌄ Justification: Need more active participants for this program to be successful.
 - ⌄ Cost: None
 - ⌄ Time table: **COMPLETED - JANUARY 27, 1997**
 - ⌄ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department



Sgt. Steve Hunt conducts Block Captain refresher course at Neighborhood Association meeting in January 1997.

- Neighborhood to promote the crime prevention programs sponsored by Hickory Police by dedicating at least two Neighborhood Association meetings a year to this topic.
 - ⇐ Justification: Crime prevention programs are more successful if residents are informed and actively participation in the program
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: On-going
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

Bicycle Patrol

The Planning Committee learned that Charles PACT may expand the number of officers assigned to that area, and that there is interest within the PACT to initiate the use of a bicycle patrol. The group wholeheartedly supports this idea, and all of Hickory Police Department's Community Policing efforts.

- Request Hickory Police Department explores expanding the bicycle patrol program to include Charles PACT specifically for Kenworth Neighborhood.
 - ⇐ Justification: Visibility of officers is a known crime deterrent, and supports the Police Departments' commitment to Community Policing concept

- ⇐ Cost: Dependent on number of bicycles and necessary equipment to purchase - Estimate \$1,000 per officer outfitted.
- ⇐ Time table: Within one year
- ⇐ Responsible party: HPD

Noise Ordinance Enforcement

Loud music from vehicles cruising through the neighborhood is disruptive and frustrating to residents. In response to complaints concerning "boom boxes", and loud music from vehicles, Hickory Police developed and is using a specific civil citation form to address violations of the noise ordinance. The civil citation carries a fine of \$50.00, which must be paid within 72 hours. If this penalty is not paid, the City may proceed in civil court, and the fine continues at \$50.00 per day. All police officers can issue the citation without prior warning or supervisory approval, and an incident report is not necessary. An officer may determine a violation has occurred without a citizen complaint.

The Planning Committee understands that often times when they call in a complaint, the offender is gone before an officer arrives at the scene. The Committee maintains that most of the offenders are people not from the neighborhood, and are usually the same people. The PACT Commander encouraged the neighbors to record the license tags, time and date each time someone drives through the neighborhood blasting their stereo, so that an officer can be made aware of the frequency of the problem.

The neighbors believe that people with a propensity to cruise Kenworth blasting their stereos will continue to do so unless they are issued a citation or two.

- Encourage officers to be more diligent about issuing civil citations for violations of the noise ordinance.

- ⇐ Justification: Loud music emanating from vehicles disrupts the peace and quiet of the neighborhood - And is against the law
- ⇐ Cost: None
- ⇐ Time table: On-going
- ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Improving neighborhood traffic problems is the second highest priority for Kenworth. Like many neighborhoods, Kenworth is experiencing problems with speeding, cut through traffic, stop sign violations and lack of sidewalks.

Enforcement of Speed Limits

The Kenworth Neighborhood is concerned with speeding vehicles throughout the neighborhood and lack of enforcement of the speed limits.

A week-long traffic engineering study conducted in May 1995 on Third Avenue Drive SE north of Eighth Avenue SE calculated an average vehicle speed of 23.64 mph with eighty-five percent of the traffic traveling at 34.57 mph.

Another week-long traffic engineering study conducted in April 1995 on Eighth Avenue SE at Kiwanis Park calculated an average vehicle speed of 21.73 mph with eighty-five percent of the traffic traveling at 32.35 mph. Only twelve traffic citations were issued from January to October 1996, according to police records. These most likely were issued along Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard and NC Highway 127, not on the residential streets within the neighborhood according to the Charles PACT commander.

While these numbers alone are not indicative of a persistent problem, neighbors do not feel safe crossing the street or allowing their children to walk to Kiwanis Park, and are frustrated with a lack of enforcement.



Eighth Avenue SE at Kiwanis Park facing west. The width of this road encourages drivers to speed through this corridor.

- Encourage more active enforcement of existing speed limits in the neighborhood.
 - ⇐ Justification: Safety for pedestrians and vehicles traveling at or below the posted speed limit
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: On-going
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Hickory Police Department

The Planning Committee is interested in exploring innovative ways to get drivers to slow down when they travel through the neighborhood. It is the group's understanding that the \$259,423 grant Hickory Police Department received from the Governor's Highway Safety Program includes plans to purchase a radar trailer. A radar trailer provides immediate feedback to drivers who may be exceeding the speed limit thus prompting the driver to slow down.

The Kenworth Neighborhood would be interested in taking part in any public information efforts the Traffic Safety Unit sponsors.

- Endorse a partnership between Hickory Police Department’s Traffic Safety Unit and Kenworth Neighborhood to promote traffic safety and public education efforts. The Planning Committee requests that the radar trailer, if acquired with grant funds, be periodically stationed in high traffic areas throughout the neighborhood.
 - ⇐ Justification: Raising awareness of traffic safety through public education and use of the radar trailer will compel drivers to reduce their vehicle speed, thus creating a safer environment
 - ⇐ Cost: Covered under the grant
 - ⇐ Time table: On-going
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department’s Traffic Safety Unit



The bank at the corner of Fifth Street Court SE and Second Avenue SE creates a sight distance problem.

- Request edge of pavement markings at Fifth Street Court SE and Second Avenue SE for the purpose of narrowing the left most lane of Second Avenue, and extend the intersection to develop adequate sight distance.
 - ⇐ Justification: Safety of drivers crossing Second Avenue SE from Fifth Street Court SE on to Fifth Street SE
 - ⇐ Cost: Materials and labor
 - ⇐ Time table: **COMPLETED - FEBRUARY 11,1997**
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Traffic Department

Sight Obstruction

The Planning Committee has identified the sight obstruction at Fifth Street Court SE and Second Avenue SE as a major concern. One option would be to take the bank down, which offer a more permanent solution. This option would require negotiation with the property owner. Another more permanent solution would be to extend the curb and gutter out and create a landscape feature to direct traffic away from Fifth Street Court SE.

The Planning Committee agreed to assess the effectiveness of pavement markings, which proved to be a quickly achievable, low-cost solution, before pursuing the more complex and costly options.

BEFORE

AFTER



Pavement markings made the intersection safer for motorists crossing Second Avenue SE.

Truck Traffic on Second Avenue SE

Residents along Second Avenue SE between Fifth Street SE and Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard, are subjected to heavy truck traffic using the road as a cut through. The result is broken pavement, noise, vibration and dangerous conditions for children who must cross Second Avenue SE to reach a school bus stop. This segment of Second Avenue SE is a city maintained road.

The Planning Committee has discussed the possibility of requesting that the segment be designated as off limits to thru truck traffic. The first step toward justifying this request is to conduct a vehicle classification study to determine how many trucks actually use this section of Second Avenue SE. The Traffic Department performs such studies as a matter of routine.

- Request the Traffic Department conduct a vehicle classification study on Second Avenue SE between Fifth Street SE and Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard.
 - ⇐ Justification: Data on what percentage of the volume of traffic on that segment is heavy truck traffic will provide information necessary to make a decision on whether or not designating the road off limits to thru truck traffic is warranted
 - ⇐ Cost: Equipment, labor, staff hours
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Traffic Department

If the study results indicate that designating that section of Second Avenue SE is warranted, then improvements would have to be made to the southwest corner of the Tate and Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevards intersection to allow for trucks to make a right turn on to Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard easily and safely. There is an embankment and two utility poles on a lot with

a single-wide mobile home that would have to be considered.

- Depending on the results of the traffic classification study, examine the feasibility of acquiring property and making improvements to the intersection to facilitate easier turning movement for heavy trucks.
 - ⇐ Justification: Alternative route for heavy truck traffic
 - ⇐ Cost: Right-of-way acquisition, construction, signs and markings
 - ⇐ Time table: Dependent on results of traffic classification study
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Traffic Department, Street Department, NCDOT

Change Traffic Control Device

The Neighborhood recognizes that the City has a goal of having the least restrictive traffic control devices throughout the city. However, they believe that the yield sign at Third Avenue Drive SE and Eighth Avenue SE should be a stop sign. A stop sign was in place, but it was changed to a yield when the Traffic Department conducted a citywide survey of all intersections to determine if the current traffic control device was indeed appropriate for each intersection.

The Neighborhood feels that the width and slope of Eighth Avenue SE encourages drivers to exceed the speed limit. The Planning Committee heard from the City Traffic Department that the uphill grade on the approach discourages speeding, and that the Traffic Engineer objects to the placement of a stop sign at that intersection.

Third Avenue Drive SE and Eighth Avenue SE serve as primary access routes to and from Kiwanis Park. The park naturally attracts pedestrians and bicyclists, and in the absence of sidewalks along Eighth Avenue SE, pedestri-

ans are forced to walk in the road. Furthermore, the yield sign does not discourage the motorist from proceeding on to Third Avenue Drive SE in an unsafe manner.

- Request authorization for the Traffic Department to change the yield sign at Third Avenue Drive SE and Eighth Avenue SE to a stop sign.
 - ⇐ Justification: Requiring vehicles to come to a complete stop will create a safer environment for all users of the roadway and adjacent residences
 - ⇐ Cost: Materials and labor
 - ⇐ Time table: As soon as possible
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Traffic Department



Eighth Avenue SE facing east. Neighbors want the yield sign replaced with a stop sign to discourage speeding and unsafe entry on to Third Avenue Drive SE.

Enforcement of No Parking Zones

The Planning Committee discussed the issue of on-street parking and the lack of enforcement of no parking zones in depth. The presence of on-street parking does discourage speeding through the neighborhood. However, the residents have experienced reoccurring problems with vehicles parked in no parking zones, and are concerned that emergency or city service vehicles might be obstructed.

- Encourage increased enforcement of Chapter 18 of the Hickory City Code of Ordinances, Section 117 -Parking in a no parking zone or safety zone by issuing citations to offenders.
 - ⇐ Justification: Roadways and sight distances obstructed by vehicles illegally parked can create a dangerous situation for drivers, pedestrians and emergency vehicles trying to maneuver through the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: On-going
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department

There is some question as to whether the existing no parking zones are appropriate, particularly on Ninth Avenue SE at Third Street SE, and whether more no parking zones need to be designated, specifically in the 200 to 300 block of Seventh Street SE.

- Request that the Traffic Department conduct a study of the appropriateness of existing no parking zones in the neighborhood.
 - ⇐ Justification: Current zones are inconvenient (specifically Ninth Avenue SE at Third Street SE) or allowed parking in the road creates a sight distance hazard (specifically the 200 to 300 block of Seventh Street SE)
 - ⇐ Cost: Time and labor, staff hours
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Traffic Department

Additional Street Lighting Needs

As part of the data collection process, the location of street lights and security lighting was mapped. It is well known that ample street lighting can be a major deterrent to crime, as well as creating a greater sense of security in

the area. An inventory of current street lighting within the neighborhood was conducted by staff. The Planning Committee assessed the existing conditions and indicated on a map their suggestions for approximate locations for more street lights.

The Planning Committee recommends adding eighteen new streetlights in Kenworth. The map will be submitted to the Traffic Department for their review and determination of need.

- Request the recommendations of the Neighborhood and Traffic Department street lighting study be implemented.
 - ⇐ Justification: Street lights should be added to enhance motorist and pedestrian safety and deter crime
 - ⇐ Cost: Monthly charge to the City per light. (Approximately \$8.00 per light - 18 X \$8.00 = \$144 per month)
 - ⇐ Time table: Within three years
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Traffic Department, Duke Power

Additional Sidewalk Needs

The Planning Committee is aware of the Sidewalk/Bikeway Task Force and their charge. The Committee had the opportunity to look at a map of all the sidewalks in the neighborhood and identify locations where they believe sidewalks would be beneficial.

Proposed locations for new sidewalks are indicated on the accompanying map in Appendix 3. Based on where the neighborhood sees a need for sidewalks, staff estimated that 12,139 linear feet of sidewalks are needed in Kenworth. The locations of these proposed sidewalks were included as first priority projects in the Sidewalk/Bikeway Master Plan which was presented to City Council in April 1997.

- Request that the identified sidewalk needs in Kenworth as recommended in the Sidewalk/Bikeway Master Plan be considered as a high priority.
 - ⇐ Justification: A safe, serviceable pedestrian circulation system needs to be established to serve the needs of the neighborhood, and provide access to Kiwanis Park
 - ⇐ Cost: \$103,181.50 not including curb and gutter
 - ⇐ Time table: Dependent on appropriation of funds and construction
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Engineering Department, Street Department

Street Resurfacing Needs

The Planning Committee has identified the section of Second Avenue SE from Fifth Street SE to Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard as in desperate need of resurfacing. This section of road represents approximately 2,806 square yards of road surface. The group is aware that the section of Second Avenue SE is city maintained, and is on the city street resurfacing list for fiscal year 1996-97. Other priorities the Planning Committee has identified are: Third Avenue SE and Third Street SE.

- Request that the resurfacing of Second Avenue SE from Fifth Street SE to Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard be considered a top priority.
 - ⇐ Justification: Prevention of damage to vehicles, safety of travel, appearance, and noise reduction
 - ⇐ Cost: Estimated at \$14,033
 - ⇐ Time table: Dependent on appropriation of funds and resurfacing schedule
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Street Department

Covered Bus Shelter

The Planning Committee has discussed the added convenience and comfort a covered bus shelter would provide to Piedmont Wagon patrons. The Public Transit Director has stated that a shelter is available for placement if a sight was designated. The Planning Committee is aware that in some instances, shelters attract people other than bus patrons and the shelter is used for purposes other than intended, in addition to occasionally being the object of vandalism. With actively involved residents who call police to report suspicious activity, concerns of vandalism or vagrants can be mitigated.

The proposed location of the bus shelter is on the old Kenworth School property. Now privately owned, Kenworth Hall houses elderly and disabled people. The investors are in the process of constructing a new assisted living facility to house an additional fifty-six people. Thus, the need for a covered bus shelter is considered important.

Since Kenworth Hall is a designated historic property, any proposal for installation of a bus shelter would have to be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission.

- Request that an appropriately styled covered bus shelter be placed at the stop in front of Kenworth Hall.
 - ⇐ Justification: Convenience and comfort for Piedmont Wagon patrons
 - ⇐ Cost: Appropriate shelter estimated cost \$6,000, installation labor, concrete pad, property compensation (if necessary), maintenance
 - ⇐ Time table: Contingent on acquisition of shelter, agreement with property owner and installation
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Piedmont Wagon, Property Owner, Public Services

HOUSING

Providing quality, affordable, owner occupied housing is a strongly desired goal for Kenworth Neighborhood. Less than half the residents of Kenworth own their homes. This reality gives the neighbors great cause for concern. With approximately 400 single-family homes, this neighborhood is rich in homeownership opportunities.

It is widely known that homeownership is strongly associated with neighborhood stability and long-term maintenance of property values. The neighborhood wants to encourage new single-family housing and preserve the existing housing stock through rehabilitation of occupied houses.

The Community Development division administers a First Time Homebuyers program for residents and non-residents or those with limited residency in Hickory. Funded by a combination of federal funds and recycled program income, zero-interest loans are provided to assist with down payments, loan application fees, discount points, and closing costs. Loans are re-paid upon sale, refinance or pay-off of the first mortgage.

The Community Development division also administers two loan programs designed to promote rehabilitation of older residences. Both owner occupied and rental properties are eligible, if other criteria are met.

All programs are guided by income and family size. Income and family size criteria could be exceeded in the Housing Rehabilitation Loan program if the house was designated a historic property, and if the repairs are directed to preservation of the structure as opposed to upgrading. Under the Rental Rehabilitation program, the City matches dollar for dollar

what the owner contributes, and loan limits are based on the number of bedrooms.

The Community Development division assisted twenty-one families in 1996-97 and projects that twenty-five families will receive assistance in 1997-98.

Homeownership

In Kenworth, 56.6 percent of the residential units are rental. In 1990, 53.5 percent of the neighborhood residents were homeowners. In 1996, only 43.4 percent of the neighborhood residents are homeowners. The dramatic decrease in homeownership could be attributed to either conversion of owner occupied, single-family homes to investment properties, or addition of rental units through the conversion of existing structures to apartments. For example, the conversion of Kenworth Elementary School to apartments for elderly and disabled in 1990, added fifty-seven rental units that would not have been reflected in Census data. Regardless of the cause, this trend is hazardous to the health of Kenworth Neighborhood.

The City of Hickory reaffirmed its commitment to reaching a higher level of homeownership by adopting HUD's National Homeownership Partnership Resolution in June 1996. This National Homeownership Strategy recognizes that only through the joint and cooperative efforts of the public and private sectors at the national, state and local levels can homeownership be increased.

The goal of the partnership is to achieve a local homeownership rate of up to 67.5 percent by the end of the century. As part of the initiative, the resolution states that the City of Hickory will make concerted efforts to assist all households including moderate- and low-income families, racial and ethnic minorities, families with children, young adults, and other underserved populations.

To reach this goal by the year 2000, the resolution states the City of Hickory will implement actions which cut the costs of homeownership, opens markets for homeownership and expands opportunities for homeownership.

The Kenworth Neighborhood and the City of Hickory have the same goal - raise the levels of homeownership to help stabilize the neighborhood. Such a tremendous goal is not achieved through words alone. Purposeful action, direct funding and implementation of programs designed to meet that goal is necessary.

Acquisition-Rehabilitation-Purchase Process

The City of Hickory has shown it is willing to invest in Kenworth. In early 1996, the City foreclosed on a Community Development loan and obtained a single-family home located at 712 Third Street SE. This house was rehabilitated with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and put on the market for \$67,000.



The house at 712 Third Street SE was rehabilitated by the City and put on the market for homeownership.

As a pilot project, the City could recycle the proceeds when the property is sold into other single-family houses under a similar acquisition-rehabilitation-purchase process.

The Community Development division has identified other properties in the Kenworth Neighborhood that could potentially be rehabilitated and put on the market for a homebuyer. The project's initial goal would be to acquire two, owner occupied, single-family homes that are for sale a year in order to preserve the owner occupied status, or acquire two, single-family homes that are currently rental units, and convert them to owner occupied units. If the pilot project is successful, the program would be expanded city-wide.

- Establish an acquisition-rehabilitation-purchase venture by reinvesting funds generated by sale of foreclosed properties into other eligible properties in need of rehabilitation that are either for sale or presently vacant rental units available for purchase.
 - ⇐ Justification: Promotes homeownership and addresses the need to improve housing conditions
 - ⇐ Cost: Recycle proceeds from sale of property
 - ⇐ Time table: Within two years
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Community Development

Police Officer Home Purchase Incentive Program

The Planning Committee learned of a program that could provide low-interest loans to police officers to encourage officers to move into Kenworth. Such programs have been successful in other cities, most notably Columbia, South Carolina, and one has just been instituted in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Charlotte's program offers interest-free loans of \$10,000 to \$15,000 toward the purchase of homes by police officers in specific neighborhoods. To qualify, officers must agree to live in the home at least three years. If the officer leaves before that time, the loan becomes re-

payable in full. Charlotte's program is paid for with \$250,000 in city innovative housing funds.

The City of Hickory Community Development division reserved a lot in the new Hickory Hollow affordable housing subdivision for a Hickory police officer, so the city knows having police officers in the neighborhood is a big incentive. Furthermore, the institution of such a program for low- to moderate income neighborhoods in Hickory advances the overall mission of the Police Department's community policing program.

- Request that Community Development division develop a pilot Police Officer Home Purchase Incentive Program to provide zero interest loans for down payment assistance to police officers to encourage them to become homeowners in Kenworth.
 - ⇐ Justification: Encourage middle-income, home-owning presence of police officers to aid in the stabilization and security of the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: Estimated \$14,000 = 20 percent of cost of a \$70,000 home
 - ⇐ Time table: Develop within one year and funded within two years
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Community Development, Lending Institutions

Program Information Dissemination

Often times potential homebuyers are unaware of the programs available to them and the intricate process of purchasing a home. Three strategies could be developed to provide information and stimulate the interest of tenants in Kenworth in becoming homeowners. First, a seminar on homeownership co-sponsored by the Neighborhood Association, the City and lending institutions could be held in a two session workshop format where bank loan officers, the Community Development division

and others provide information about becoming a homeowner. Special efforts would be made to publicize the seminar and invite tenants from the neighborhood.

Second, continued support and dissemination of information regarding the City's existing housing programs funded by CDBG could be advanced if handouts were made available at Neighborhood Association meetings and events.

Third, a concerted notification effort could be made to make rental property owners aware of the City's First Time Homebuyers program so that they in turn could pass the information along to qualified tenants and perhaps initiate the conversion of the rental property to homeownership. Such notification could be in the form of a targeted mailing to approximately 103 property owners of rental single-family homes in Kenworth.

- Support the City's First Time Homebuyers program to promote single-family, owner occupied housing in the neighborhood by co-sponsoring a Homebuyer's Seminar.
 - ⇐ Justification: Providing information and encouraging applications could lead to an increase the level of homeownership that would help to stabilize the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: \$100
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood, Community Development, Lending Institutions

- Support the City's First Time Homebuyers, Housing and Rental Rehabilitation programs to promote homeownership and housing rehabilitation in the neighborhood through the distribution of literature at meetings and other events.

⇐ Justification: Providing information and encouraging applications could stimulate interest in homeownership and could lead to a decrease in the number of structures in the neighborhood in need of minor or major repairs thus enhancing the overall appearance of Kenworth Neighborhood

⇐ Cost: Reproduction of handouts

⇐ Time table: Immediately

⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Community Development

- Target investment property owners with a mailing of information regarding the City's First Time Homebuyers program.

⇐ Justification: Providing information and encouraging the conversion of rental properties back to owner occupied homes will help stabilize the neighborhood

⇐ Cost: Estimated \$56.65 in postage (.55 x 103 property owners)

⇐ Time table: Within one year

⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Community Development

Explore Establishing a Non-Profit Organization

Neighborhood based non-profit groups have been established in other cities to serve as the entity whose purpose it is to stimulate and administer homeownership programs. Inter-Faith Housing Development Corporation and FACED are two examples of such organizations in Hickory. The Kenworth Neighborhood could decide that increasing the level of homeownership in the neighborhood is a top priority and explore the possibility of incorporating and filing for tax exempt status as a non-profit (501 - C3) to the purpose of acquiring property in Kenworth to recycle for homeownership.

- Explore the possibility of the neighborhood working with a non-profit or filing for 501-C3 status for the purpose of acquiring property to recycle for homeownership by establishing a revolving loan program with no income limits.
 - ⇐ Justification: Such a program is a very proactive means of increasing the level of homeownership in the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: Attorney fees necessary to obtain 501 - C3 status
 - ⇐ Time table: Four years
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Community Development, Non-profit organizations

Housing Rehabilitation

The neighborhood's goal to improve the condition of the existing housing stock in Kenworth is also a strongly held desire. It is estimated that 16.2 percent of the single-family, owner occupied homes in Kenworth are in need of some kind of repair. Of the rental properties in the neighborhood including apartments and duplexes, 28.7 percent of them are in need of repair. There is no way of knowing whether these properties would be income eligible under the existing housing and rental rehabilitation program guidelines, but the percentages are indicative of a need to develop strategies to address the housing conditions in Kenworth.

The housing conditions survey conducted as part of the planning process indicated that there are twenty-eight residential structures in Kenworth in need of major exterior repairs. The Community Development division estimates that it would cost approximately \$15,000 per structure to bring it up to minimum housing code standards.

Therefore, at least \$420,000 of housing rehabilitation funds are estimated to be needed in Kenworth alone. Over time, more funds will be needed to address unidentified rehabilitation needs, and to serve properties owned or occupied by families that exceed the City's income guidelines.

Loan Program for Moderate Income Homeowners

It is unrealistic to expect the City's CDBG program to meet the current housing rehabilitation needs exclusively. A partnership between the City and local lending institutions needs to be forged to leverage financial resources and to create a low-interest loan program for homeowners between 80 and 110 percent of the median income.

The City's Community Development division has in place the framework to model such a program with distinct differences from the existing housing rehabilitation program. By leveraging non-CDBG City and private funds, such a program could have less restrictive income limits and guidelines that offer more flexibility to the homeowner in terms of establishing favorable financing to make homeownership more affordable, and contractor selection.

A loan pool of \$500,000 could be established if twenty percent (\$84,000) of the funds were provided by the City. Lending institutions have expressed support for such a program. The Community Development division would be responsible for developing and administering the program.

- Request that Community Development division develop a housing rehabilitation program to establish favorable financing for moderate income homeowners.

- ⇐ Justification: Simultaneously address the need to improve housing conditions and assist moderate income homeowners
- ⇐ Cost: Estimated funding in future cycle - \$84,000
- ⇐ Time table: Within one year
- ⇐ Responsible parties: Community Development, Lending Institutions

MINIMUM HOUSING CODE ENFORCEMENT

The City of Hickory employs one person whose responsibilities include inspections and enforcement of the minimum housing code and junk vehicle ordinance and completion of all the associated paperwork. After hearing from city staff, the Planning Committee concluded that the most apparent deficiency in the current housing code enforcement process is the lack of staff.

Expecting one person to perform this duty in an expeditious manner is unrealistic and unfair to any neighborhood in Hickory that must deal with property owners whose property is not in compliance with the city's minimum housing code standards.

The Planning Committee was aware that the city will soon receive the results of a staffing level analysis study conducted by an objective consulting firm. The Study examined every city departmental function and the services provided to the public, and will set forth recommendations regarding the allocation of staff. The Planning Committee feels strongly that the deficiency in enforcement of the minimum housing code is due to a shortage of inspectors.

Additional Inspectors Needed

Kenworth residents have a strong desire to restore neighborhood appearances and attract new homeowners. To have dilapidated, vacant build-

ings, junk vehicles in yards and homes that are in substandard condition in the neighborhood only hinders Kenworth's ability to recognize higher levels of homeownership, property maintenance and stabilized property values.



Vacant and deteriorating structures are eyesores in the neighborhood and present an image of instability.

- Request that the City hire at least one more minimum housing code and junk vehicle enforcement officer.
 - ⇐ Justification: The need for comprehensive and timely code enforcement inspections and follow-up is needed not only in Kenworth, but for the whole city
 - ⇐ Cost: Undetermined at this time
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Planning & Development - Building Inspections

The Planning Committee learned more about the complexities of the condemnation process and the legal procedure that must be followed to assure that all the relevant parties have been contacted regarding a dilapidated structure. Diligent property owner notification, adequate time given for a property owner to make repairs, a hearing and a title search must be completed before the city can take any action to demolish a structure. Such an involved and paperwork-laden process can take nine months to a year to complete if the property owner

does not contest the action; three to five years if it is contested.

Expedite the Process

To have dilapidated, boarded up vacant structures in the neighborhood harms the image of Kenworth and frustrates neighborhood improvement efforts. More staff would help speed up the process, but the Planning Committee feels more can be done to rid the neighborhood of these dangerous eyesores.

- Expedite demolition of vacant, dilapidated houses not feasible for rehabilitation when not contested by the property owner.
 - ⇐ Justification: Dilapidated structures are a threat to the health of the neighborhood, and hinder the promotion of new in-fill housing
 - ⇐ Cost: Undetermined
 - ⇐ Time table: Within six months
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Legal, Planning & Development - Building Inspections

The Planning Committee discussed ways to make code enforcement more effective and efficient. In 1996, the Hickory City Council set forth a goal to pursue proactive code enforcement focused on areas of frequent neighborhood concern through the establishment of a nuisance clearinghouse.

Create a Neighborhood Improvement Division

The Planning Committee feels the city should create a nuisance clearinghouse dedicated to handling complaints of dilapidated houses, junk vehicles and overgrown and littered lots. This division could be known as the Neighborhood Improvement division. The purpose of the creation of a new division would be to consolidate the function of nuisance code en-

forcement and co-locate the necessary personnel.

- Recommend the creation of a Neighborhood Improvement Division by the City to deal strictly with nuisance complaints and enforcement of nuisance codes.
 - ⇐ Justification: Consolidation of such a function simplifies and expedites the process of complaint resolution and compliance with the code
 - ⇐ Cost: Three staff & operating capital
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Planning & Development

In the past, the city conducted systematic tax block inspections to maintain the condition of the existing housing stock and to detect minimum housing code violations before structural problems became severe. Contingent on the creation of a Neighborhood Improvement Division and hiring more personnel, the Planning Committee feels that the city should return to a systematic inspection routine.

- Recommend that the City return to a systematic and periodic minimum housing inspection routine.
 - ⇐ Justification: Operating on a complaint only basis is ineffective in preventing existing housing stock slipping into deterioration
 - ⇐ Cost: Undetermined
 - ⇐ Time table: Within two years
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Planning & Development - Building Inspections

Contact Owners of Neglected Properties

The Planning Committee discussed the benefits of personal contact with landlords and property management companies regarding prob-

lematic and unkept properties. The Kenworth Neighborhood is willing to put pressure on property owners and provide information to them in an attempt to get them to maintain their properties.

- Develop a dialogue with the owners of neglected properties to encourage housing rehabilitation and to inform owners of the existing programs and funding sources for housing rehabilitation.
 - ⇐ Justification: Personal contact allows for open communications of neighborhood desires and property owners positions
 - ⇐ Cost: Dependent on method of contact - postage and materials
 - ⇐ Time table: Within six months
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

LAND DEVELOPMENT

The Planning Committee members agreed that single-family housing should be promoted over multi-family development. Such a promotion would require either a downzoning of the residential areas or adoption of an overlay district.

Rezone Portions of the Neighborhood

The Planning Committee believes that the presence of the R- 5 and R-6 residential zoning classifications are incompatible with the neighborhood's goal of preserving the single-family character of the neighborhood. An analysis of the existing uses and the potential for portions of the neighborhood qualifying for a higher zoning classification, namely R-2, would have to be completed to support a rezoning request. The neighborhood would have to file the rezoning request, and the rezoning petition must be signed by a majority of the property owners.

- Initiate the process of garnering neighborhood support and the necessary signatures for the rezoning petition to rezone the R-6 to R-5 classification, and eligible parts of the neighborhood from R-5 to R-2.
 - ⇐ Justification: The current zoning classifications are incompatible with the neighborhood's goal of preserving the single-family character of the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: Materials to contact property owners
 - ⇐ Time table: Within a year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

The members of the Planning Committee expressed concern that the O & I-1 zoning classification for the south side of Second Avenue SE from the columns at Fifth Street SE to Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard is inappropriate, and would allow encroachment of non-residential uses into the residential area.

- Initiate the process of garnering neighborhood support and the necessary signatures for the rezoning petition to rezone the O&I - 1 zone on the south side of Second Avenue SE from the columns at Fifth Street SE to Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard to be the same as the adjacent residential classification.
 - ⇐ Justification: To discourage encroachment of non-residential uses into an all residential section of the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: Materials to contact property owners
 - ⇐ Time table: Within a year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District

The Planning Committee learned of an innovative approach adopted by Raleigh to have some control over new development in Ken-

worth. A Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District, (NCOD) if adopted, would apply to whatever zoning classifications regulate development in Kenworth. A major purpose of this zoning category is to maintain the general quality of these neighborhoods. Development that is sensitive to neighborhood character can be encouraged through overlay zoning regulations that are “customized” to neighborhood needs as defined by the neighborhood plan.

The overlay district would apply to new development only in terms of setbacks, building height, lot frontage and size, lot width at the right-of-way, building entrances, building placement on the lot, including building setbacks and distances between buildings. Nothing else can be regulated through the NCOD. Permitted land use, density, landscaping and other appearance, architectural style (unless the new development is in the Historic District), maintenance, and outbuildings typically cannot be regulated through the NCOD.

When an overlay zoning regulation is applied to an area, the existing zoning remains intact but is modified by the overlay regulation. The neighborhood will be outlined and highlighted on the official City zoning map as a “Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District.” Particular regulations of the NCOD are "laid over" those of the existing zoning.

No existing structure or lot is made non-conforming by a conservation district; the emphasis is rather on making new construction be similar in character with the existing neighborhood.

The NCOD zoning category would have to be approved by the Hickory Regional Planning Commission, and adopted by the Hickory City Council with the intent of providing some flexibility in regulations governing development in older neighborhoods.

The Kenworth Neighborhood would have to circulate the rezoning petition and get a majority of the property owners signatures who agree to the overlay district. The neighborhood plan would have to be approved first, before the neighborhood could request a hearing for a rezoning.

- Request that Planning staff develop the criteria for a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District for the Kenworth Neighborhood.
 - ⇐ Justification: Protect the single-family character of the neighborhood, and promote compatible new development
 - ⇐ Cost: Staff time
 - ⇐ Time table: Within a year
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Planning Department, Regional Planning Commission, Neighborhood

- Initiate the process of garnering neighborhood support and the necessary signatures for the rezoning petition to adopt the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District when it is developed.
 - ⇐ Justification: The neighborhood must support the proposed rezoning and file the petition
 - ⇐ Cost: Materials to contact property owners
 - ⇐ Time table: Within a year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

Plan Review & Future Rezoning Requests

The Planning Committee understands that the Planning & Development Department has the opportunity to review proposed plans for commercial development and make recommendations to assure the development is compatible with the City’s development policies

and long-range plans. The Planning & Development Department also encourages any rezoning requests for properties of two acres or greater be in the PD (Planned Development) category. This allows for better control over the type of development, and requires any amendments be approved by City Council.

To preserve the residential character of Kenworth, prevent further commercial encroachment into the neighborhood and minimize traffic impacts, the Planning Committee believes that any new commercial development should be restricted to major streets that do not tie into the neighborhood.

- Recommend that only areas fronting major streets which do not tie into the neighborhood be developed commercially.
 - ⇐ Justification: The volume and type of traffic associated with commercial businesses is incompatible with the residential nature of Kenworth
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: On-going
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Regional Planning Commission, Planning Department
- Encourage any proposed rezoning in Kenworth be in the PD (Planned Development) category.
 - ⇐ Justification: Allows for better control over the type of development
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: On-going
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Planning & Development

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Kenworth has many school-aged children. The number of agencies and service providers in the Hickory Metro area are just as numerous. The City's Parks & Recreation Department, Hickory

City Schools, the Boy and Girl Scouts, Catawba County Extension 4-H program, the area churches, Salvation Army are just a small number of organizations sponsoring programs geared toward youth enrichment and education.

Information Dissemination

The Planning Committee was surprised to learn of the variety of current programs available to young people and the opportunities for parents as volunteer leaders. They realized that if they did not know what programs are available in this community, it was highly probable that the majority of residents in Kenworth did not know either.

- Make information about youth programs and activities available at all neighborhood functions.
 - ⇐ Justification: Dissemination of information regarding such programs is necessary so the families in Kenworth are aware of the opportunities
 - ⇐ Cost: Reproduction of materials provided by organizations
 - ⇐ Time table: On-going
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Service providers
- Hold a Neighborhood Association meeting dedicated to the topic of youth activities and programs by inviting service providers to speak and demonstrate the benefits of their program not only for youth, but to adult volunteers too.
 - ⇐ Justification: Raise awareness of programs for youth
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Service providers



These youngsters helped with the Kenworth Neighborhood Trash Bash held on April 27, 1996.

Sponsor a Family Fun Event

Kenworth Neighborhood is a good place to raise a family maintained all the members of the Planning Committee. So, they discussed ways to get families and youth involved in the neighborhood improvement effort.

- Sponsor a “Kids Day” at Kiwanis Park and invite families to join in a day of games and goodwill. Enlist the support of donors and service providers.
 - ⇐ Justification: Build community cohesiveness in celebration of the future - our children
 - ⇐ Cost: Estimated at \$200 - food and prizes
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood

PARKS & RECREATION

Continue to Minimize Park Traffic

Kiwanis Park is an asset to the Kenworth Neighborhood, yet as a district serving park the neighborhood feels that additional traffic and associated other impacts, such as illegal activities need to be minimized.

- Encourage the Parks & Recreation Department to continue to examine the issue of traffic generated from Kiwanis Park.
 - ⇐ Justification: Minimization of park traffic impacts
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: On-going
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Parks & Recreation Department, Traffic Department

The Planning Committee discussed the benefits of having a park ranger to monitor Kiwanis Park. The Parks & Recreation Department explored the creation of a ranger position in April 1994. To create the position, Parks & Recreation and the Hickory Police Department proposed reassigning a law enforcement officer who would be responsible for patrolling all the city’s parks and recreation centers. In 1994, staff estimated it would cost \$48,200 for salary, benefits, capital equipment, such as a vehicle and radios, uniforms, training and supplies.

While this issue was not addressed in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan, the group believes there is a need for more security in Kiwanis Park, and that the park system in Hickory is extensive enough to warrant the creation of a park ranger position.

- Recommend that the Parks & Recreation Department continue to explore and seek funding for a park ranger position whose responsibility it would be to monitor all the parks in Hickory.
 - ⇐ Justification: Presence of a park ranger would discourage illegal activities, vandalism, and restore a sense of security for all park users
 - ⇐ Cost: Estimated at \$ 48,200 in 1994
 - ⇐ Time table: Within three years

- ⇐ Responsible party: Parks & Recreation Department

NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT

Kenworth is and has been a good place to live and raise a family. Enhancing livability factors will go a long way toward making Kenworth an attractive neighborhood to potential home buyers.

Entranceway Beautification

Besides the rock columns on Fifth Street SE, there are no other clearly defined entranceways into the neighborhood. There are eight streets and avenues that lead into Kenworth; eight opportunities to let anyone who enters into the neighborhood know that they are in Kenworth via a distinctive feature, such as the rock columns.

Entranceway beautification would be one means of upgrading the image of the neighborhood. The group discussed landscaping and signage as other means of creating neighborhood identifying gateways and delineating the boundaries of the neighborhood. A project such as this would be eligible for funding under the city's proposed Neighborhood Matching Grant Fund program.

- Investigate entranceway beautification options, decide on an approach and pursue all available funding options.
 - ⇐ Justification: Distinctly identify the entrances to the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: Dependent on type of project
 - ⇐ Time table: Within two years
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Although the existing Neighborhood Association is active, only a small number of residents attend neighborhood meetings and/or actively participate in community activities. Most of the members of the Neighborhood Association are homeowners. There are few tenants that participate in community activities, and since renters make up such a large proportion of Kenworth, the Neighborhood Association needs representation from these residents. Emphasis should be placed on one-on-one communication, neighbors talking to neighbors, encouraging them to get involved.

Diverse Participation

Due to the increasing ethnic diversity of Kenworth, the Neighborhood Association must be creative in finding ways to involve all the residents in their activities. The need to print meeting announcements and event notices in a language other than English is an obvious first step toward the goal of breaking down cultural barriers and building a harmonious community.

- Appoint one or two people from the Neighborhood Association to serve as a Neighborhood Ombudsmen. These people would work at communicating the mission of the Neighborhood Association to all residents, particularly those of Hispanic and Asian descent.
 - ⇐ Justification: Community-wide involvement is necessary to the sustained viability of the Kenworth Neighborhood Association
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time Table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

The Neighborhood Association recently acquired a real estate-styled sign to place in front of whichever church was sponsoring the monthly Neighborhood Association meeting that night as a reminder to residents. The at-

tendance level at neighborhood meetings has increased slightly because of the sign.

Communication & Publicity

While an effort such as the sign is a good start, the Neighborhood Association needs to be diligent about generating positive publicity for and about Kenworth. Continued promotion of the Historic District, publicizing Kenworth's community spirit, and most importantly, celebrating the revitalization successes as they occur will aid in the effort to restore the image of a quality neighborhood.

- Appoint one person in the Neighborhood Association to serve as the Community Liaison. This person would work at communicating the mission and activities of the Neighborhood Association through pre-meeting and post-meeting press releases, event publicity, and personal contact with the media and others such as Realtors.
 - ⌄ Justification: Good publicity will stimulate interest in the Kenworth Neighborhood, and help to restore the image of a good neighborhood to live in and raise a family
 - ⌄ Cost: Budget for supplies necessary to create articles (e.g., paper, photographs, etc.)
 - ⌄ Time table: Within one year
 - ⌄ Responsible party: Neighborhood

There is an overall need to disseminate information to the residents of the neighborhood. Many residents are not aware of certain ordinances, laws and items of general interest, such as the other master plans adopted by the City.

Community-Wide Involvement

There are a variety of city-wide initiatives that are taking place which affect Kenworth. A recent downtown redevelopment study was con-

ducted to hear the concerns of property owners, residents, and neighborhood business owners along the First and Second Avenues SW/SE. The goal is to develop strategies to address the issues and recommend action items to revitalize the area.

A transportation task force is working with a consultant to examine alternatives for moving traffic across northern Hickory. One of the alternatives that has emerged is improving US 321 and Second Avenue SW/SE to encourage crosstown traffic to use the southern one-way pairs instead of cutting through neighborhoods around Twelfth Avenue NW (Geitner Road). No priority has been given to any of the alternatives at this point. The task force is expected to conclude the study, and make recommendations to City Council in August.

- Appoint one or two people from the Neighborhood Association to serve as a Government Liaison. These people would attend City Council meetings and relevant Boards & Commissions meetings and report back to the group.
 - ⌄ Justification: Positions the neighborhood to be proactive and respond to activities or proposals that may affect Kenworth Neighborhood
 - ⌄ Cost: None
 - ⌄ Time table: Within one year
 - ⌄ Responsible party: Neighborhood

More Neighborhood Events & Recognition

The Spring Neighborhood Clean-up day has been very successful in raising awareness and getting others involved in improving the neighborhood. Such events say to the whole community "We care about our neighborhood!"

- Sponsor two neighborhood clean-up days a year.

- ⇐ Justification: Beautification of Kenworth and opportunity to raise awareness and show support for the neighborhood
- ⇐ Cost: None
- ⇐ Time table: Within one year
- ⇐ Responsible Party: Neighborhood
- Institute a program to recognize homeowners who maintain or enhance their properties - “Yard of the Month”.
 - ⇐ Justification: Encourages homeowners to maintain their properties and enhances the appearance of Kenworth
 - ⇐ Cost: Sign and/or prize
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood
- Identify homes in the neighborhood that might be eligible for community service projects for organizations.
 - ⇐ Justification: Creation of a partnership to benefits someone in need and enhances the appearance of Kenworth
 - ⇐ Cost: Undetermined
 - ⇐ Time table: Within two years
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Service organizations

maintenance projects. Undoubtedly, there are homes in Kenworth Neighborhood which would meet the eligibility criteria of the service organization.



Long-time Kenworth resident Madeline Rinehardt took advantage of the opportunity clean out her garage during the Trash Bash in 1996.

Participate in Service Projects

When the Planning Committee heard from the youth program service providers they learned that organizations such as church youth groups, 4-H, and Boy and Girl Scouts sometimes seek community service projects such as neighborhood clean-ups and home and yard

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

Guidance offered in the Kenworth Neighborhood Plan should be referred to during relevant decision-making processes about the area. To the extent that this Plan charts a course for Kenworth's future, the strategies and recommended actions should be followed and carried out by the Neighborhood Association, the City and other agencies as referenced in the Plan. The residents of Kenworth themselves, regardless of whether they participated in the planning process or not, are viewed as playing a key role in all implementation efforts. This section discusses the mechanisms that may be used toward that end.

Plan Adoption

The residents of Kenworth play an important role in moving a draft plan that they can support through the public review process, to adoption, with a minimum of delays and serious changes. After the Kenworth Plan is adopted by the Hickory City Council, it will become the official detailed guide for managing Kenworth's future development. It will provide the most detailed guidance of any City document on planning and development issues within this neighborhood. This Plan is generally compatible and supportive of other City adopted plans.

Active citizen input was involved in the Plan's formulation, review and adoption and has resulted in a plan that reflects a community consensus on how Kenworth should develop and address issues of concern.

Plan Implementation

The true measure of a Plan's acceptance may best be described in terms of the degree to which it is used and supported during relevant

decision-making processes. The residents of Kenworth, the Hickory City Council, service provider agencies, and the City Administration each have important roles in the implementation processes.

The residents of Kenworth, particularly the members of the Planning Committee have a very critical role in participating in and monitoring the use of the Plan's provisions. Kenworth Neighborhood confirms its support for the Plan by including the recommendations in their Neighborhood Association activities and structure, and initiating the petition processes necessary to accomplish the recommended policy changes.

The City Council demonstrates its support for the Plan by adopting the Plan's strategies and encouraging timely implementation.

The Plan sets forth several strategies which require the active involvement of service providing agencies, including the City. These organizations are important to the implementation of the Kenworth Neighborhood Plan. The neighbors can participate in support of the programs provided by these organizations, and likewise the programs can be used by the neighbors to address concerns, stabilize unhealthy trends and enhance the quality of life for all Kenworth residents.

Finally, the City Administration plays an important role by overseeing the implementation responsibilities assigned to the various departments. The specific city departments must commit to implementing the plan by incorporating the recommendations in the Plan into their workplans within the recommended time table. Revising strategies and even seeking more resources at a later date may be necessary to follow through on implementation of the Plan.

Conclusion

The Kenworth Neighborhood Plan identifies the issues and concerns of the neighborhood, the tasks involved in addressing them, a time frame in which the strategy or action should be implemented, and the various parties involved in resolving them. Implementation is by far the most difficult phase of any planning process.

In short, this long-range neighborhood planning process offered, and will continue to enable the residents of Kenworth the opportunity to plan proactively for their futures.