

PREMISES AND FORMAT

INTRODUCTION

Andres M. Duany and Thomas E. Low

It is possible that most American towns and city centers suffer from—or perhaps thrive on—an absence of a strong common vision. This is manifested in certain contradictions that have been the planning team's difficult task to resolve where possible, and to adjudicate where not.

Among the typical contradictions are the following:

Dedicating downtown thoroughfares to the expediencies of traffic, while desiring the comfort of the pedestrian;

Granting primacy to the utilitarian, the economic, and the efficient in decisions regarding public infrastructure, while wishing to determine all such matters aesthetically;

Requiring planning policy to be determined on the basis of statistical and legalistic data, while evaluating issues on the basis of anecdotal and empirical observation;

Accordingly, the Master Plans produced by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company are often eclectic, with proposals buttressed by data and precedent where available, and by observation and professional judgment where not. Those who believe that the evolution of towns is an exact science or a subcategory of case law will feel a measure of discomfort, as some of the recommendations are less than proven. Those who have confidence in the human ability to evolve and resolve situations contingently may be disappointed by any limits set on the vision.

Nevertheless, despite such contradictions, when the Hickory City Center Master Plan recommends a course of action, it does so with confidence. It is a confidence born of the combined experience of a team of consultants who individually and collectively have seen, felt, walked, driven—in a word lived—what is proposed for Hickory.

The planning team's resources are not always technical manuals, legal texts, or academic training, for such, it is sad to say, have created some of the most dysfunctional places that humanity has experienced. Sources are sometimes real places, renowned for the quality of life they provide their citizens. These are places that can be visited and verified by all concerned with this Master Plan.¹

PREMISES

Although a singular vision statement is elusive under such contradictory circumstances, it is possible to list some of the premises that have guided the planning team in making recommendations, and that may continue to guide City boards and committees through the wide swaths of discretion democracy grants to its leaders.

This Master Plan is a strategic document for the next 8 years. It is meant to be broad and visionary. Indeed, the depth of detail of this particular Master Plan may blur the fact that it must be followed by a series of tactical studies, designs, events, tests, and partnerships.²

It is often difficult for a Master Plan to transcend its enabling political circumstances. History shows that a Master Plan tends to be successful when an individual leader or civic group takes ownership. This leadership is already evident on all fronts in Hickory. However, as time passes and civic leaders change,

this text attempts to compensate for any lapses with a hortatory tone and frank discussion of difficult issues.

The City Center of Hickory, being of sound economic health and well known for the quality of life it offers, will attract investments—both residential and commercial.

Under such circumstances, growth can be held back only with difficulty and, in a free market, only temporarily. The only option for the long-range planning of a place such as Hickory is to assume that growth will come and to channel it in a healthy pattern.

In this Master Plan, that pattern is that of Traditional Town Planning and emphatically not that of Conventional Suburban Design.

Downtown Hickory is to be a regional traffic destination, but not a traffic conduit.

Hickory, which at this moment straddles the attributes of a village, town, and city, intends to evolve gracefully into a small city, and should not be held to the standards of a village or a suburb.

Every decision should lead to the creation of sophisticated mixed-use public spaces uncontaminated by suburban standards for parking and traffic.

The surrounding neighborhoods wish to retain their small-town character. Hickory is able to respect this only at its boundaries, so additional plans are necessary to safeguard the neighborhoods from the forces of degradation both external and internal in origin.

If Hickory is to remain a preeminent arts center of the region, then every aspect of its design must be decided in this spirit, and not diminished by legalisms, technocratic standards, or economic determinism.

Empirical observation and anecdotal evidence are considered to be a valid justification where data is inappropriate or inaccurate. The recommendations of this plan and their subsequent discussion should take observable reality as well as theoretical constructs into account.

Note: The submitted text may be adopted as a Master Plan; however, it contains little ordinance-ready language. The text must be reviewed and supplemented by the City's Staff Attorney for compliance with State Zoning Act procedures.

¹ Indeed, the planning team recommends that the Mayor, City Council, and the Downtown Development Association; concerned citizens, and the City's department heads undertake a guided tour that includes Alexandria, Virginia; Georgetown, D.C.; Savannah, Georgia; and Charleston, South Carolina. Such a tour was standard municipal planning practice from 1900 to 1930, and continues to be so in the private sector whenever a large plan is being prepared. Such a fact finding trip may well be the catalyst around which a strong common vision for Hickory coalesces.

² For example, traffic studies must follow modifications to verify their effect. Parks and walkways must be designed. Street furniture must be tested. Public-private partnerships must be formed to implement the Special Projects.

THE PLANNING TEAM

The individual members of this particular consulting team, whatever their specialties, are distinguished from their peers in being generalists. Because all members are capable of making contributions beyond their specialties, this Master Plan shows a degree of overlap. For instance, the pedestrian performance of the sidewalk is discussed from the point of view of architects and planners (DPZ), retail consultants (GPG), traffic engineers (HPE and KTC), and landscape architects (CJS). The various perspectives and the general concurrence of the conclusions give weight to the recommendations, as well as depth to the discussions, which are to guide the implementation of this plan through the next decade.

The members of the planning team are also known for two things. First, they are physical planners in the sense that they spend a great deal of time studying the natural and built environments and their relationship to how people live. Second, they have been successful at writing ordinances and regulations for ensuring the physical form that reinforces the quality of life a community desires. As part of the Master Plan, the planning team is proposing revised ordinances to make development more predictable and to ensure that Hickory grows in a healthy way.

Once adopted, the new code will let people be optimistic about the direction the city is heading, making it a more predictable place for investment.

The planning team urges all who review the City Center Master Plan not to dismiss the entire vision and report if one proposal is found wanting. The planning team is submitting for review many different ideas for Hickory. Some proposals the City and its citizens may not want to do. But there may be a project that ignites the public's interest to move forward with it. Each idea needs someone or some group to champion it. Fresh, new ideas are very fragile; pessimism can easily kill them. The planning team recommends that the concerned citizens of Hickory maintain their natural optimism and nurture as many ideas as possible. Some of the plan's proposals will be controversial, but give each idea a chance.

NOTE ON THE FORMAT

The Hickory City Center Master Plan has four parts: Vision, Plates, Report, and Appendices.

The purpose of first part, the Vision, is to provide a vision for the future of Hickory. It includes the planning team's observations, analyses, and recommendations. As an edited, expanded version of the final presentations given by the planning team at the end of the charrette, it is intended to be as accessible to as wide an audience as possible. Though it contains some technical information, its discursive style, conversational tone, and many images are meant to make it a user-friendly document.

The second part, the Plates, includes renderings and plans that depict the Vision.

Part three of the Master Plan, the Report, outlines the planning team's observations, analyses, and recommendations, but includes strategies and actions for implementing the recommendations. It follows a format suggested by the contract with the City, which has proven to be very useful in organizing and clarifying the issues. It consists of the following four levels of presentation:

The Finding identifies an existing condition, specific problem, or insufficiency that needs to be addressed. The findings are derived from direct observation by the planning team, from anecdotal information offered during the charrette, and from specific suggestions by City staff.

The Discussion is a discursive analysis or extended argument and opinion on the condition, problem, or insufficiency identified by the planning team. Most of the discussions are reviewed in Part One of the Master Plan, which Part Two refers to and expands upon when necessary. The discussions are meant to be the foundation for further discussions in the public process.

The Recommendation is the proposal or recommended goal by the planning team to the decision makers of what should be done to correct or affect the condition, ameliorate the problem, or meet the need identified in the Finding.

The Implementation outlines the procedure, strategy, and time frame for achieving the recommendation.

Most of the Findings concern small problems that can be specifically called out. There is also a category of more complex opportunities, which are Specific Projects and General Areas.

The last part of the Master Plan includes the Appendices, which are diagrams and documents referenced in the Report.

Note: Within the categories, the issues are not presented in order of priority.

STUDY AREA

The Hickory City Center Master Plan uses six terms to identify areas within Hickory: Study Area refers to the entire area for which the Master Plan applies, including the City Center; Union Square, Downtown, or Central Business District; Oakwood, Claremont; Green Park; Ridgeview; and Kenworth.

City Center is synonymous with the Study Area, which is based on the one-mile radius of the original city limits, which is circumscribed Ninth Street SW/NW, Ninth Avenue NW, Sixth Street Drive NW, Seventh Avenue NW, Oakwood Cemetery, Eighth Avenue NW/NE, Lenoir-Rhyne College, Highland Avenue NE, Sixth Street SE, Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard SE, Sixth Avenue Drive SE, Kiwanis Park, Second Street SE, and US Highway 70 SW.

Union Square, Downtown, or Central Business District refer to the area circumscribed by First Avenue NW, North and South Center Street, First Avenue SW, and Third Street NW/SW.

Oakwood refers to the northwest neighborhood circumscribed by Ninth Street NW, Main Avenue NW, Third Street NW, First Avenue NW, North Center Street, Oakwood Cemetery, Seventh Avenue NW, Sixth Street Drive NW, and Ninth Avenue NW.

Claremont refers to the northeast neighborhood circumscribed by North Center Street, Eighth Avenue NE, Highland Avenue, and Main Avenue NE.

Green Park refers to the southwest neighborhood circumscribed by Fourth Street SW, US Highway 70 West, Ninth Street SW, and Main Avenue SW.

Ridgeview refers to the south-central neighborhood circumscribed by Government Avenue SW, Fourth Street SW, US 70, and NC 127.

Kenworth refers to the southeast neighborhood circumscribed by NC 127, Second Avenue SE, Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard SE, Seventh Avenue SE, and Kiwanis Park.

Note: Generally, streets referenced as study-area boundaries include lots on both sides.

Vision

OVERVIEW OF THE MASTER PLAN

Thomas E. Low, AIA, CNU

The planning team was very fortunate to have a giant, highly detailed aerial photograph of Hickory to work from during the charrette (Fig. [1](#)). When Hickory's residents came in for meetings, they would review the aerial photograph looking for their homes, businesses, and shops, which they could easily find. Nearly every resident we met said that he or she got around Hickory by using its visual landmarks. Even though Hickory has an eccentric pattern of one-way streets that makes it hard to get around, residents can easily visualize the places they know. Whenever we asked for directions, they were provided in the form of visual landmarks, such as "go down to the concrete plant and take a right at Piedmont Wagon" and so forth. This map was an important design tool for creating much of the work we did. The planning team always referred to it, because it provided very telling insights into what is really going on in Hickory.

The Study Area and Hickory's Original City Limits

The study area is within a one-mile radius circle centered on the train depot (Fig. [2](#)). Hickory's original city limits can be circumscribed by this circle. Kirk Mohny and Laura Phillips' book, *From Tavern to Town*, has some wonderful early maps and photographs of Hickory (Figs. [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#)). However, the planning team spent four or five days trying to figure out how the incremental growth of the city occurred. Finally, near the end of the charrette, the local nonprofit historic preservation organization brought us Sanborn maps dated from the turn of the century to the 1930s. Each map is incredibly detailed, showing houses, buildings, streets, and all sorts of landmarks, which enabled the planning team to see how the city grew (Figs. [8](#), [9](#), [10](#), [11](#), [12](#)).

For example, we figured out where West Hickory and Highland were originally located, which suggested that the city planning process should eventually include a review of them.

The planning team started with a very good framework, which was the original city limits. At the turn of the century, Hickory had a rapid burst of growth, so that by the 1920s the city was pretty much planned-out as the downtown and five neighborhoods—Claremont, Oakwood, Green Park, Ridgeview and Kenworth—existing today. The neighborhoods are circumscribed by smaller circles, each with a quarter mile radius, which is equivalent to two to four city blocks, depending on their size. From any neighborhood center to its circumference is a five-minute walk, which is a comfortable walk for most people. In today's world, where the overuse of cars leads to congested streets, walking two to four blocks is often easier than having to retrieve and maneuver a car that distance.

The Advantage of Pedestrian-Oriented Neighborhoods

When a city is pedestrian friendly, people are willing and wanting to walk more often and longer distances. This is very important both for seniors who at a certain point in time may not feel confident driving, for children who are allowed to get around on foot or bikes as they grow up (rather than always being chauffeured by their parents), and for people who either do not want or cannot afford to own a car. The quarter-mile radius of a neighborhood circle indicates that the neighborhood center is within a five-minute walk for most residents of that neighborhood (Fig. [2](#)). In other words, all of Hickory's neighborhoods are very walkable. When the design team arrived, we were pleased here that the City of Hickory had initiated a program for installing more sidewalks. The city was also concerned about fast-moving cars; slowing them down was an initial directive given the planning team. The high-speed and volume of traffic on the one-way pairs are stressing the neighborhoods and their residents' quality of life,

both economically and socially. These pedestrian-hostile streets are adversely affecting property values as well as the safety of those living and working along them.

The Benefits of Restoring Traffic to Main Avenue

During one of the planning team's walk-around visits to the five neighborhoods, an important fact was revealed. A local businessman remarked, "I have a business on Main Avenue SW and I would love to get some of this neighborhood traffic on Main Avenue because my businesses would really benefit from it." There is a real disparity in vehicular traffic levels between Main Avenue and the one-way pairs. Traffic analyses indicate that only 500 cars a day are traversing the Main Avenue corridor. In contrast, on the two east–west one-way pairs—one pair north of the Main Avenue, one pair south of the Main Avenue—there are a total of 33,000 cars per day, or between 6,000 and 9,000 cars per day on each one-way.

According to our retail analyses, shifting this traffic to the Main Avenue corridor would help revitalize downtown. Properties along Main Avenue are undervalued. Though it has quality buildings, they have been neglected. Some of the buildings have had marginal uses and some of the warehouses are actually empty. Furthermore, the streetscape has not been improved to the standards of other streets.

The planning team decided that a very important design initiative would be to take the traffic out of the neighborhoods and return it back onto the Main Avenue corridor. In a typical southern town, such as Statesville, North Carolina, there is a grand avenue leading into town, lined with shady trees, wide sidewalks, grand houses, and prominent commercial buildings.

Historically, that is the way one enters a classic southern town—down a main avenue along a rail line that leads into the heart of town. This Master Plan proposes to restore Hickory's grand entry to the downtown along Main Avenue.

The Historic Ways of Entering Hickory

The following proposal is technical, but it has important social repercussions for Hickory's downtown. In reviewing the 1970s master plan, we realized that its transportation engineers had been very successful at diverting almost all crosstown traffic to the east–west one-way pairs. Our Master Plan proposes to divert some of this traffic down Main Avenue, which turns out to be a very simple and quick thing to do in each of the four sections of the city. From the northeast, coming down Eighth Street NE towards downtown, there is a traffic island that diverts traffic off Main Avenue NE and down one of the one-way pairs (Figs. [13](#) & [14](#)). In effect, Main Avenue NE becomes a one-way road heading out of town. To restore the historic way of entering downtown, the city could simply remove the island and signage and re-stripe the pavement. Motorists would then be able to enter downtown the old way, directed by a new sign that says "Historic Downtown Shopping." This proposal does not require the immediate restoration of the major one-way streets to two-ways; the one-way pairs are still there. The revisions to Eighth Street NE are intended to direct some of the traffic to the downtown.

Before the railroad, the historic southeast entrance to Hickory was along the old wagon route called Highland Avenue, which connected to Lincoln Street. Now called First Avenue SE/Government Avenue SW, this original southeast entrance is still visible on the aerial map (Fig. [15](#)). It extends the entire way into town, except for one block where it is occupied by a large parking lot for a former grocery store and vacant building. The grocery was a great amenity for the area, but its parking lot continues to divert traffic onto the southern one-way pairs (Figs. [16](#) & [17](#)). The Master Plan proposes to restore the historic route into downtown, which can leave the major one-ways untouched. First Avenue SE/Government Avenue SW is the only diagonal street that leads to Union Square, which produces an interesting axial view that terminates on the train depot (Fig. [18](#)). With this landmark building greeting the motorist, this street could be a very distinct and pleasant way of entering the downtown.

In the northwest quadrant of the study area, there is the Oakwood crossover, or what the planning team calls the Oakwood X (ex), which is the means by which Old Lenoir Road's two-way traffic is split into the northern one-way pairs (Figs. [19](#) & [20](#)). The planning team heard over and over again about how dangerous this intersection is and about the tragic accidents that have occurred there. The planning team spent some time with the operator of a gas station located at the corner of the X, who had some solid ideas about how to alleviate this problem (Figs. [21](#) & [22](#)). One way of solving this problem is to direct more incoming traffic down Ninth Street NW, which leads to Main Avenue NW and into town (Fig. [23](#)). This would be a very easy and quick solution. Placing a sign on the corner that says "Historic Downtown Shopping" would be enough to encourage some motorists to make that turn.

The interchange on US 321 at Thirteenth Street SW is the southwest entrance into downtown (Fig. [24](#)). Basically, as the motorist exits US 321 and turns toward town, he or she is automatically dropped onto Second Avenue SW, a one-way street that runs through neighborhoods south of Main Avenue. The planning team went out and walked around the area for quite awhile trying to figure out a way in which these motorists could easily drive onto Main Avenue SW, which we eventually found. Near the solid waste transfer station at the end of Main Avenue SW there is a curve in Second Avenue SW that looks like it was intended to lead onto Main Avenue SW (Fig. [25](#)). If this street is extended, it could be connected to Main Avenue SW. One of the nicest things about this proposal is that the historic Piedmont Wagon Building would greet motorists as they enter town (Fig. [26](#)). With some redevelopment and remodeling, this entrance could become extremely interesting.

Successful gateways have significant landmarks and a processional way of entering town. Right now, because of the one-way pairs, motorists are greeted by the backs of buildings as they enter Hickory. The Piedmont Wagon Building is a very elegant building, with well-pointed brick and attractive details (Fig. [27](#)). It sits upon the hill, and could welcome visitors as they come up the road into Hickory. Directional signage would be unnecessary because it is a landmark building.

SPECIFIC PROJECTS PROPOSALS

Main Avenue Corridor

The Master Plan proposes that the streetscape and buildings along the Main Avenue corridor be upgraded and made more in keeping with a traditional gateway into town. Straddling the railroad tracks, each side of the avenue should remain two-way, so that both the north and south sides of Hickory can enter downtown without having to cross the tracks. Norfolk Southern and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NC DOT) Rail Division are concerned about having a conflict with cars crossing the tracks, so remaining two-way mitigates this problem.

In the proposed plan, the existing buildings are rendered in yellow (or light gray) and the new or potential building sites and building footprints are in orange (or dark gray) (Fig. [29](#)).

Some of the existing buildings along the Main Avenue corridor are big, beautiful houses, a few of which people have rediscovered and begun to renovate. Some of these majestic houses simply need their shrubbery trimmed and new paint (Fig. [28](#)). Also, the avenue's old, elegant brick commercial buildings have great character. Inserting new houses and commercial buildings of the same character in vacant lots—the gaps in the street—would create a powerful entrance into Hickory.

Even though the terminus of Main Avenue SW at US 321 is beyond the City Center study area, the City should meet with the Department of Transportation to discuss the state's plans for widening US 321. When the state widens this highway to six lanes, the City should suggest that they install an urban interchange leading onto Main Avenue SW. Savannah, Georgia provides an analogy. On the highway to Savannah there is an off-ramp simply marked "Downtown," which leads directly into the Historic District. Historic Savannah is a major tourist destination and this ramp lands them right in it. City Center Hickory could have the same type of simple and clear entry.

However, the Main Avenue corridor needs to be improved with street trees, on-street parking, wider sidewalks for strolling, and streetscape furnishings, such as benches and pedestrian-scaled street lights. Expensive materials are unnecessary, just plain concrete and well-designed municipal furnishings. Raising the streetscape standard will give Main Avenue renewed development potential.

A photograph taken from a bucket truck shows Hickory's existing street conditions (Fig. 30). A rendering, from the same perspective, shows what the street could be like (Fig. 32). It includes all streetscape improvements and demonstrates how infill houses and mixed-use buildings could complement historic houses and the old Piedmont Wagon Building. Built out in this way, the Main Avenue corridor could be an incredible gateway into Hickory.

A street-level rendering of the Main Avenue corridor shows new infill buildings and the streetscape they could produce (Fig. 31). The historic houses have front yards or forecourts, which have fences, hedges, or garden walls to define them and provide some security. The infill buildings are shopfront buildings, which are real estate opportunities for small investors or home owners. Only 25 feet wide, this building type allows someone to live on the second floor and to have a workshop, office, or store on the ground floor. It has the advantage of allowing one to combine mortgages for the home and the work space. The planning team feels that this is the wave of the future. With corporate downsizing, more and more people are becoming entrepreneurs or private consultants working out of the third bedrooms of their suburban homes, which can be a lonely situation. With the shopfront building, where people live upstairs and work on the ground floor, one can be connected to the social life of the street just outside the door—to shops, offices, and restaurants within walking distance.

A Vehicular Mid-Block Lane From Union Square to Second Avenue

The pedestrian loop around the Union Square and First Avenue NW blocks is twice as long as it should be. Its perimeter is almost a half-mile, when a quarter mile is considered a comfortable walk (Fig. 33) The quarter-mile walk, which we use to calculate the size of neighborhoods, is a figure retail developers use to determine the size of malls. The existing mid-block pedestrian passage shortens the half-mile distance, but it is not lined with shops. Retail research shows that people do not like to walk along blank walls. The plan recommends that the passage be renovated to include a driving lane with sidewalks and shop entrances on both sides (Fig. 34). We are also proposing that this lane extend to Second Avenue NW by using the vacant lot next to and owned by the Hickory Springs Corporation. (Fig. 35). Hickory Springs has been a pioneer in Hickory, a very good corporate resident. To accommodate their growth needs and to contribute to this urban development pattern, Hickory Springs should be encouraged to expand to Second Avenue NW.

Between Second and Third Avenues NW there are two contiguous parking lots many neighborhood residents use as a vehicular cut-through. The Master Plan recommends designing this passage as a proper lane that connects to the mid-block lane leading to Union Square. (Fig. 33). This mid-block lane, a narrow street not intended for heavy traffic, would be great for bicyclists and pedestrians. For both motorists and pedestrians it would be a pleasant way of entering the square. The plan also recommends that infill housing and mixed-use buildings be developed along this lane. It would be an ideal location for affordable housing, especially for seniors who could walk to Union Square.

The Harper Ford Building and an Arts and Crafts Gallery Row

The proposal for the Harper Ford Building, designed by TBA2 Architects, shows what it could look like restored (Fig. 36). The proposed design creates a building edge along First Avenue SW and wraps the frontage of the entire block with mixed-use buildings (Fig. 37). In the block's interior there would be ample parking, which could be either surface parking or parking under a courtyard. Small, two-story buildings would be incrementally developed in a manner that complements adjacent buildings and maintains a pedestrian scale (Fig. 38). Rather than one large building with long, horizontal windows, the design proposes a series of small contiguous buildings about 25-feet wide, or in multiples of 25 feet, with square

or vertically proportioned windows. That way, incremental development is possible, and a storefront rhythm and pedestrian scale is created, which is what Hickory has historically been about. These buildings could include shopfront units with arts and crafts galleries or small antique shops, as the team's retail consultant, Robert Gibbs, recommends in Section II.

Kenworth Four Points

During our walking tour of the Kenworth neighborhood, the planning team visited the bargain store near the Four Points intersection and talked to a woman who has operated a business there for forty years. She showed us an old photograph of the general store that was once there (Fig. 39). It was right on Highland Avenue SE, the southeast route into town, so the area is an historic place. It was the kind of place the community used a lot. Some of the old buildings have been renovated, while others have been replaced by surface parking lots. Many of the buildings are the classic store-fronts Robert Gibbs discusses in Section II. Solidly built in brick, they are buildings just waiting for someone to breathe life into them (Fig. 40). They are also Shopfront Buildings, which the new plan designates for new and infill construction in Four Points.

An aerial view of the area shows the historic way of entering Hickory on the diagonal of Highland Avenue SE (Fig. 41). It also shows the new NC 127 highway which crosses Highland Avenue SE and First Avenue SE. The reason why the planning team believes retail can thrive in Four Points is because of the high volume of traffic on the highway and the rush-hour traffic that traverses the east-west avenues.

The new Master Plan calls for Kenworth Four Points to be intensively developed, as reflected by the large number of infill building sites (Fig. 42). For example, on the southwest corner of First Avenue SE and NC127 the plan proposes a grocery store with parking behind it. The proposal also recommends that new buildings match the size of existing houses the further they extend into the residential neighborhood.

The New Lenoir-Rhyne X Designed as a Civic and Commercial Center

When the planning team first saw the new Lenoir-Rhyne X or crossover, we were shocked by its large size (Fig. 43). We were also saddened about the loss of beautiful homes destroyed to make it. Because of Hickory's system of one-way pairs, this X is here to stay and the homes are gone forever.

All through the week of the charrette, the planning team continued to study the crossover, trying to figure out what to do. Then we started to get excited about the possibilities. We began to see it as a clean slate, a clean site for something incredible. Our traffic consultant Richard Hall says, "Design the land use first and the transportation second." Here, however, we were given the road and had to see it as an opportunity.

A picture of the planning team forming a circle in the X shows that there is enough room for an actual traffic circle the same size (Fig. 44). Robert Gibbs recognizes that the area has great potential for retail development. The new X will have a high volume of traffic, which means that the crossover has retail and commercial potential, so we started thinking about it in those terms.

Hickory's five neighborhoods were built from the turn of the century through the 1920s. In other cities, older traditional neighborhoods like these often have their own small town center or neighborhood service center. For example, Shaker Heights in Cleveland, Ohio has an octagon-shaped shopping area. The most elegant neighborhood in Birmingham, Alabama, is Mountain Brook, which has at its central crossroads a wagon-wheel shaped town center with shops and parking.

Since this neighborhood is comparable to Hickory's neighborhoods, the planning team saw the X as a potentially new neighborhood center. An aerial photograph shows the block as it looked before its houses were leveled (Fig. 45). The design proposal we are recommending shows the big X, the existing buildings

on its edge, the Lenoir-Rhyne College Campus, and the large factory buildings along the railroad tracks (Figs. 46).

Most Lenoir-Rhyne students have to travel out of the neighborhood for basic goods and services. Creating a town center at the crossover would be a real convenience for them. When we started to draw the site filled with buildings, some people responded, "Oh my gosh, that's ridiculous, you can't do that!" as if it were required to remain an open space. However, the size of the central open space is almost the same size as the large quadrangle at Lenoir-Rhyne. Furthermore, this proposal creates a site for a new gateway to the college.

Its current gateway, a brick-columned entrance to the quadrangle, sits on a side street. Unless directed down that street, most motorists miss it. To capitalize on the opportunities for shopping, there needs to be adequate parking. Fortunately, there already exists diagonal parking on some of the side streets. The proposal merely extends the streets with parking through the block, which makes the X an incredibly humane place. Rather than being an edge, a line dividing communities, it becomes a seam uniting the Claremont neighborhood and the Lenoir-Rhyne campus.

This proposal may not happen immediately, but it is something Hickory should think hard about. The traffic lights are now going in, so pedestrians can cross the X, which this proposal capitalizes on. In its current state it is a huge field, and the planning team recommends that all of Hickory's residents go there and try to imagine two-story buildings defining and enclosing its space, which is an exciting idea.

The SALT Block with Neighborhood Service

The planning team also studied the area surrounding the SALT block. An aerial photograph, taken before the new library was built, shows how the school block relates to neighboring houses (Fig. 47). In studying this area, we started to infill the spaces in the manner of a classic American campus, which is as a whole series of buildings and quadrangles. The Lenoir-Rhyne campus is a great example of this, so it was used as a model for the SALT block. The proposed design rebuilds the irregular-shaped buildings with an internal parking structure and an entrance drive off NC 127. If the community wants neighborhood-service retail, such as a coffee or bagel shop, then the museum or art council could have a shop that opens onto a small, corner plaza, which would also be an ideal place for civic art.

Expanding Frye Regional Medical Center with the Urban House Type

During the charrette, the planning team spent time with people who had definite opinions about the Frye Regional Medical Center. Claremont residents say they love having it in the neighborhood, but it presents a drastic change in scale from the neighborhood homes.

In addition, when an existing house becomes available, the hospital quickly buys it, backed by coffers other potential buyers cannot compete with. In reviewing this situation, the planning team agrees with the Claremont residents that the medical center is a plus for the neighborhood. We realize it will continue to grow, but we feel it should do so in a healthy way, such that it continues to be an asset to the neighborhood.

A major concern among the residents is simply not knowing what the hospital is going to do next. Apparently, the hospital does not have big plans for growth. Rather, it plans to grow incrementally. So the planning team's job became one of finding a way of providing the hospital a release valve as opposed to letting it boil over in all directions.

The recommended proposal may be the most controversial one in the Master Plan, and it may upset some people. As Andres Duany says, "sometimes you have to break a couple of eggs to make an omelet." This may not apply here. However, we recommend that when the hospital grows, it should grow at the scale of a domestic building—the scale of the large houses in the surrounding neighborhood.

The existing disparity of sizes and scale can be seen in a photograph of a quality, one-story house across the street from a large hospital building, which is an imposing situation for the homeowner (Fig. 48). Recent additions to the hospital do step down to the scale of nearby houses, an indication that the hospital is interested in being a good neighbor.

A block away from the hospital, on the other side of a block of small houses, sits the SALT block. It includes a very large civic building, which houses the new library, that is compatible with the hospital's scale (Fig. 49). When new buildings are needed for the hospital or between the hospital and SALT, they should be built as the Urban House Type proposed in the Overlay Zoning Code (see Appendix A: Urban Regulations).

The Urban House Type is the same size and scale as the neighborhoods' large houses or mansions. It is a type that can accommodate different uses. For a large family, it may have six or seven bedrooms. If affordable housing is needed, it can be divided into two, three, or four apartments. In Hickory's neighborhoods, this type of building is being used for apartments, offices, and restaurants. It can also be used as a storefront building, with people living upstairs and working downstairs. The Urban House is a great building type because it allows for and adapts to demographic and building-use changes in the community. An example of the Urban House Type is the original nurses' residence between the hospital and the SALT Block (Fig. 50). If the hospital is going to expand into the neighborhood, this is the scale and form of buildings it should use. Basically, the planning team is proposing a relief valve for the hospital. With the Urban House Type, the area between hospital and the SALT Block could develop in a healthy way. Although the neighborhood has nice homes, there is a chance it could be redeveloped. With the Urban House Type, development could be done incrementally and at the same scale as neighboring houses, which would benefit homeowners, the hospital, and the community both financially and socially by making future development more predictable.

A Front Entrance Drive for Frye Regional Medical Center and the SALT Block

Neighborhood residents expressed concern about the amount of traffic going through the neighborhood to get to the hospital and the SALT Block. Rumors are spreading that motorists are having such a hard time finding the back parking lot that even the houses along NC 127 are going to be replaced with parking lots.

Buildings of civic importance, such as SALT, usually have a front-entrance off a major street. This proposal accomplishes this by providing a mid-block street or entrance to SALT between the library and the school. This would allow motorists to go down NC 127 and turn directly into the SALT complex (Fig. 51). Parking would be hidden in a parking structure behind SALT's buildings. Moreover, installing a mid-block street that leads from SALT to Frye Regional Medical Center parking lot would allow motorists from both institutions to exit at the same place. This would create a busy enough intersection to warrant a traffic light.

However, the control signal would only be necessary during peak periods. Because Fourth Avenue NE is not a through street but an access road for a few houses, it should not be the main entrance drive to SALT. Placing a drive halfway down the block would allow for a median. Traffic would come over the hill and motorists would no longer be confused about which way to turn. This proposal would not only make it easy for motorists to navigate, it would also make it easier for pedestrians to cross the highway by installing a signal, a median, and wide sidewalks.

The New Ridgeview Neighborhood Center

Robert Gibbs observed that the Ridgeview neighborhood once had a classic neighborhood center, with such amenities as a café, dance hall, dentist office, and barber shop. Almost all of the old neighborhood center's buildings are gone, but the planning team believes it could be rebuilt based on the amount of

retail the neighborhood could support. An aerial photograph of the plaza shows it as it now exists as a parking lot and a few buildings, one of which houses a barbershop (Fig. 52).

The new plan shows the existing buildings, proposed infill buildings on vacant lots, and a small plaza (Fig. 53). The plaza would be anchored by the old library, which has already been planned to move to this block (Fig. 54). Kitty-corner to it and also anchoring and fronting the plaza is a church. At the end of Fourth Avenue SW at South Center Street, a civic institution such as the corporate office for FACED (Family And Community Enrichment Center), a local nonprofit community development corporation, could terminate the view (Fig. 55). The other vacant lots are great opportunities for new commercial buildings. Street-level retail buildings and a public building terminating the short street should be enough to pull the plan together (Fig. 55). Proposed for the Ridgeview Neighborhood Center are Shopfront Buildings, whose size and scale allow for incremental growth. This plan is something for the neighborhood to decide on, but the planning team believes that it fulfills a need for local retail and offers an opportunity for redeveloping the neighborhood center.

The Ridgeview Civic Center

The Ridgeview Civic Center includes the Brown-Penn Recreation Center and a new 4,000-square-foot library. Since the center's 1993 Master Plan addressed various needs, the planning team studied how the center relates to its neighborhood. An aerial photograph of the center shows the old library (which will be moved to the Neighborhood Center), the new library, Taft Broom Park, a parking lot, tennis courts, the Brown Penn Center, a day care building, and a baseball field (Figs. 56& 57). The new library building, which is beside the old one, has been completed since the photograph was taken.

The site also includes a building that people have been anxious about. It is a shallow-roofed, U-shaped garden apartment building that is not of the same caliber and quality as most houses in Hickory (Fig. 56). This building could either be replaced by a street or by a couple of homes similar to those in the neighborhood. There may be a need to better link the neighborhood together by installing a pedestrian-scaled street that connects to the center. In either case, there does not seem to be any objection to removing the apartments based on what we heard from residents.

Residents expressed concern about the safety of pedestrians on Third Street SW, the street between the baseball fields and Brown Penn (Fig. 56). The planning team suggested closing the street, which the residents rejected because they like using it. Consequently, the plan proposes to slow or calm traffic down by installing sidewalks with curbs and gutters, and to gate the street when civic events include children (see Section V: Transportation and Traffic Calming).

Proposed plans for the center show how it and nearby lots could be developed (Figs. 58 & 59). In the site plan, the lots, the library, and Brown Penn buildings are in yellow (light gray), while proposed buildings are in brown (dark gray). There is enough room for another large building. If a large house and its three-acre property down the hill could be acquired, then there would be ample land for expanding the center and its community activities.

The Area South of Ridgeview Civic Center

The planning team also studied the area south of Ridgeview Civic Center, circumscribed by Third Street Place SW, Third Street Court SW, and Eighth Avenue Drive SW. It currently includes a U-shaped road with modest pre-manufactured housing or trailers. We recommend replacing the trailers with houses of wood-frame or modular construction (Fig. 59). U-shaped courts are difficult for residents to monitor for safety. People can walk in and more or less disappear. The U-shaped court could be replaced with a community square flanked by modest houses (Fig. 59). In a square, every activity is visible from front porches or windows. The square creates a safe place because at least one set of resident's eyes are watching it. Moreover, a well-defined square of a dozen houses would create an identifiable place, which would be an asset to the entire Ridgeview community.

Improving Optimist Park with Adjacent Infill Houses

In the Green Park neighborhood, the planning team studied Optimist Park and Green Park School. As a plat map and aerial view of Optimist Park show, the Optimist Club had a great idea in conceiving the park (Figs. 60 & 61). They saw the need for the park, found a low area of unused land, then created a very pleasant park. Unfortunately, because the park is located on residual space that is partly unbuildable for houses, the park has always had some problems. One of the problems is that the back of houses face the park rather than their fronts, as houses do around Green Park School. Another problem is that a large parking lot was placed in the center of the park, on its most level land. During the charrette, people who drove to the park complained that it was difficult to make the sharp right turn out of the park because of the high-speed, one-way traffic on Second Avenue SW.

To solve these problems and to make the park more pleasant, Brian Jenest and Tedd Duncan of ColeJenest and Stone redesigned the park in two ways (Figs. 62 & 63). Both proposals move the parking lot from the park's center to a large, open track of land near the street, leaving the area below as a large green. To make the entrance more visible and easier to negotiate, the proposals move the entry road to the other side of the cedar trees, allowing motorists to view park before turning into it—a signature landscape.

The planning team also realized that there is a potential development opportunity for infill housing. Right now, because the backs of surrounding houses front on this park, it is not well monitored. Inserting a drive along its east edge and building houses with front porches facing the park would help correct this problem. In the proposed plan, there is enough room for seven houses (Fig. 63). The city owns this land, so adding houses increases value in terms of both tax revenue and security. Behind the Williamsburg apartments there is a large tract of land that, if developed following either proposal, could bring more residents into the neighborhood and make the park a safer place.

Redeveloping Green Park School

The planning team studied the vacant Green Park School for different redevelopment options (Fig. 64). During the team's Green Park neighborhood walk-around, it became evident that the play fields associated with the school are used by residents as a neighborhood park. A major concern of these residents is the possibility of losing this open space to development. In response, the planning team prepared proposals with different development scenarios. The first reuses the existing buildings and maintains all of the open space as a park (Fig. 65). The second and third retain some of the open space as a park but develop the rest with one-unit or two-unit dwellings using the House Building Type (see "The Master Plan Overlay Map and Four Building Types" (Figs. 66 & 67). Also discussed during the charrette neighborhood meeting was the possibility of the Hickory City School Board, which owns the Green Park School buildings, exchanging some of the park's open space for the newly created marketable lots proposed for Optimist Park. That way, the neighborhood would be assured of having open-park space in two different areas.

A New Entrance to Kenworth and Infill Sites

The planning team studied an area in southern Kenworth that is difficult to develop because of its creeks and hills. Called Terrace Hills, it was originally platted for detached houses, which were never built because the site was so challenging (Fig. 68). Eventually, a district park with several baseball fields was built there. Because of this district park, a lot of cars traverse the Kenworth neighborhood, upsetting its residents. The planning team sought another outlet for moving traffic from NC 127 to the park. The proposed plan improves the Terrace Hills area by creating an entrance onto NC 127 and by providing space for new housing (Fig. 69). The internal street would be extended to the tail of Fifth Street SE to its west. The new road would have to cross a creek, which would be rather expensive, but the plan offers the opportunity of building infill housing. Kenworth now has a kind of loose tail because of the park, and this

proposal would hem the neighborhood back into Hickory. There could be a stone gateway to match the historic one, which could reinforce the neighborhood's physical identity.

PLANNING CODES

Problems with the Existing Zoning Ordinance

Hickory's existing zoning map for the study area graphically identifies its numerous zoning categories (Figs. 70 & 71). A symptom of the current zoning ordinance not working as well as it should is the abundance of blue and green areas (or gray and dark gray) on the zoning map, which are new areas built as planned unit developments (PUDs). This indicates that the codes are not responding well to the needs of the community. The city asked the planning team to review the zoning ordinances for problems and suggest how they could be fixed.

The following situation typifies the problems the current ordinances create. The planning team met with a woman who owns one of the large houses adjacent to the commercial area downtown, about two blocks from Union Square. Around her house are single-family houses, apartments, and businesses. A number of years ago, she converted her house to commercial use. However, she now no longer wishes to have commercial uses and applied to the city for the building's return to single-family use. It is a beautiful house in a great location, perfect for a family. But the current zoning ordinance precludes converting commercial uses back to residential.

These ordinances were written when planners thought the Central Business District was going to expand and would need more commercial buildings.

The Master Plan Overlay Zoning Ordinance

Rather than categorize land and buildings only by use, as current zoning practice does, the Master Plan's Overlay Zoning Ordinance categorizes buildings by type and scale. In our view, if more of these large houses are built, if more of the older houses are restored, and if they all have a variety of uses, then that would make this area a much more lively and more human-scaled place. So, if a developer wants to erect an office building, then he or she should either convert an existing house or build a large house-type building for office use. And this should be done for apartments, limited-lodging, limited-retail, and mixed uses. In most areas of Hickory the single-family house and the life-style it represents should be preserved and protected. However, in areas near commercial uses, such as two blocks from Union Square, these urban mansions or Urban House Types are practical for all uses.

The Master Plan Overlay Zoning Map and Four Building Types

The Master Plan's proposed Overlay Zoning Map—The Regulating Plan—for the study area is very simple (Fig. 72). It has four categories, which represent four different building types. The first type is the Urban Building, which has a street-level storefront and office or residential uses above. It is located downtown and is at least two stories high and at most three stories, though a fourth story is permitted if exclusively residential use. The second building type is for storefront locations adjacent to downtown and in neighborhood centers. Called the Shopfront Building, it has mixed uses and can be one-to-two stories high, with a third story permitted for residential use. The third building type is designated for areas within a few blocks of Union Square and in neighborhood centers where there are one-to-three story, detached houses that have a variety of uses. These are the urban mansions or Urban House Type previously discussed. The fourth building type is the House Building Type, a one-to-three story single-family or two-family house, which is designated for most of the study area.

What has just been described needs to be visualized in terms of building types rather than building uses. The building type for neighborhood centers, the live-work town house or Shopfront, is built to the sidewalk edge, has retail or offices on the ground floor, and if it has a second floor, either a residence or an office

above. It is perfect for neighborhood centers because it is mixed use and scaled to the pedestrian. Then there is the Urban House Type based on Hickory's existing large houses. Because most of Hickory has already been built with high-quality houses, this type's compatibility with existing houses makes it perfect for infill building near commercial areas. Because it is at the scale of the neighborhood yet allows for mixed uses, its construction enhances the quality of life both socially and economically.

The intent of the new ordinance is to preserve and protect the high quality of houses and buildings that exist in most of Hickory. Limiting new construction to four building types defined in terms of form is intended to provide a degree of predictability to the City Center's growth. Residents will know the scale and size of future buildings on currently vacant lots. Such predictability not only has a social value in enhancing the quality of life, it also has an economic benefit. In other places where the planning team has written overlay ordinances, property values have risen. More importantly, these four types are compatible with the existing building fabric of City Center and its neighborhoods. Ultimately, the new Overlay Zoning Ordinance is intended to allow Hickory to preserve the benefits and appeal of being a traditional town.

An example of what will be in the new ordinance is an Urban Regulation or code for the Urban House Type (Figs. [73](#) & [74](#)). This code includes diagrams or schematic drawings that show the house's placement on the lot; its building measured in stories, not feet; its minimum roof pitch; and its driveway leading to a parking in the rear. These diagrams and specifications are the kinds of information that will be provided for each building type in the new code. The Urban Regulations are intended to be user-friendly, with everything one needs to know about a building type written on a single page. They are written in plain English for the average citizen, making it entirely unnecessary for an attorney or architect to interpret it.

Designs for Two of the Building Types

A model plan and elevation for an apartment building in the Urban House Type shows that in scale and appearance it is similar to a large, single-family house (Figs. [75](#) & [76](#)). As discussed earlier, it would work well as an infill building.

During the charrette, the planning team was invited by the publisher of The Hickory News to look at the upstairs of his building as a potential type (Fig. [77](#)). As it turned out, it is the Urban Building Type. Plans for two apartments above the first-floor store are shown in Fig. [78](#). The building has large front windows that allow light to flood the residential quarters. There is even the possibility of creating a third floor to enable a penthouse to have views of the mountains. The Urban Building is a great building type because of its flexibility in uses, and the planning team believe there is a market for them. If some developer builds only a few, then the market might be revealed. All that is needed is one good model.

Detail images from two renderings looking down Main Avenue NW toward Union Square show the existing homes, remodeled warehouses, and proposed infill buildings—the Urban House and the Shopfront Building (Figs. [79](#) & [80](#)). Along Main Avenue, Urban Houses are shown where densities are lower—away from the center, while Shopfront Buildings are appropriately sited near downtown, where there may be good market for it. The Urban House is a domestic-scale building; the Shopfront, with its contiguous walls and façade set on the sidewalk, is for mixed uses near Union Square.

Ultimately, the purpose of the Master Plan and the building types prescribed in the Overlay Zoning Code is to ensure the humane, small-town scale of architecture, variety of uses, and range of income levels that can fortify Hickory's existing quality of civic life.

Two Final Proposals: Street Names and a Municipal Color

There are two final proposals that have to do with reinforcing Hickory's history and identity. One night during the charrette someone borrowed a city street map and returned it the following morning all marked up. Rather than the somewhat confusing system of numbered avenues and streets Hickory now has, this

individual had gone through the map and given a name to each numbered street, which is a great idea. By naming these streets, the uniqueness of each street address and identity of each neighborhood is reinforced. The old Sanborn maps for Hickory have the city's original street names (Figs. [8](#), [9](#), [10](#), [11](#), [12](#)). The planning team recommends that the entire community review these maps and either adopt the old names, propose new ones, or create a combination of the two.

The final recommendation is for the City of Hickory to adopt a municipal color. Most people are familiar with the famous red telephone booths and double-decker buses in London. The reason why these elements are painted red is because they are the Queen's property. Similarly, all of Hickory's municipal furnishings—lampposts, trash receptacles, signage, metal benches, bike racks, etc.—should be painted a color identified with the city. That way, when people arrive in Hickory, they know they are in a special place. The Appearance Commission has not given an opinion of this, but the city's merchants thought it was great idea. The next time you are in a well-managed mall, notice that these elements are the same color—it provides identity and reinforces the fact that it is well run. During the charrette, we started a list of potential municipal colors. We urge all of Hickory's citizens to participate in its selection by either commenting upon these or recommending others.

Final Comments

In 1886, Hickory had a four-year growth spurt called the Shuller Era. According to the history books, the Shuller Era was marked by a little dash of wildcatting to get things done. Perhaps, there are some Shullers today, who are willing to take the risk to propel Hickory forward. Another growth spurt began in 1921, instigated by a campaign called "Now is the time to start building." Organized by civic leaders, business owners, and concerned citizens, it was a media campaign calling for the city to come together and start building as a means to attract new commerce and people.

The planning team feels it is time for Hickory's citizens to do this again. In eight years it will be the twentieth anniversary of the second time Hickory was bestowed the appellation, "All-American City." Hickory tends to receive this award every twenty years, so we propose that the Hickory have the goal of becoming an All-American City for the third time in 2007. With the new Master Plan, we believe this is possible. Hickory has eight years to put all the elements of the plan in place. The planning team has created Master Plans for other cities that have been implemented faster, so there is no need to hesitate.

RETAIL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Robert Gibbs, ASLA, CNU

As a member of the planning team I have two roles: first, to advise the city and its planners on what kinds of retail and commercial business are viable downtown and in the neighborhoods; and second, to find ways to help downtown and neighborhood businesses become more profitable by increasing sales and better serving their customers.

During the charrette, I had the pleasure of meeting many downtown business owners and shopkeepers. I spent 45 minutes to three hours in each of their stores talking with them about how the City of Hickory functions economically. For a city of 33,000 people, Hickory is overconsuming in some ways and underconsuming in others. It is a very unusual case. Hickory and its outlining areas have enough retail to meet the needs of a half million people. But while people are willing to drive many miles to shop stores near the highway interchanges surrounding Hickory, they are not going into its City Center.

I have worked with communities smaller than Hickory that have ten times its downtown retail because people shop their downtown regularly. There are a number of ways Hickory can increase its City Center retail sales and improve the quality of life in its neighborhoods.

In our study, we discovered that over 40 million dollars of consumer spending a year is leaving City Center—the Central Business District—and being spent elsewhere. In other words, over 40 million dollars a year of extra spending is possible in the Central Business District and neighborhood centers. I will outline the potential; the Hickory community will have to decide whether they want that much retail in City Center. They will have to decide how much retail they want downtown and how much they want in their neighborhoods. It's a matter of which of the scenarios align with their values.

The Original Pattern of Hickory's Retail

Hickory's Central Business District is located where it is because of the rail station. In the 1800s, before the advent of the automobile, the railroad brought people and products to Hickory. Businesses that located near the station were able to take advantage of both incoming and outgoing rail service. Also, all roads into Hickory converged in its Central Business District. Businesses prospered by having their storefronts line the road so that people who drove by in horse-drawn carriages, and later cars, could view the merchandise inside. The passersby were only ten feet away from the storefronts, which was close enough to recognize products they may have wanted to buy ([Fig. 81](#)).

Hickory's early business owners were very clever in how they designed storefronts to maximize sales. They often made a building look as big as possible because it would suggest that it is a big store in the shopper's mind ([Fig. 81](#)). The big-box store hadn't been invented, but bigger was also better in the 1800s. Each storefront window was made as big as possible and fitted with clear glass so that merchandise was clearly visible. Tinted glass hadn't been invented, but store-owners knew that clear glass allowed potential consumers to see what items were for sale—what could, in retail parlance, "trigger a sale" ([Fig. 82](#)). Large buildings close to traffic and large storefront windows with clear glass are fundamental retailing principles that worked very well in Hickory's early Central Business District.

A high volume of vehicular traffic was routed through downtown on the eve of its demise. Probably 15,000 cars drove through or along First Avenue each day. Whether people wanted to or not, they had to drive past its many downtown storefront windows. And up to the late 1960s, one could drive within ten feet of those storefronts.

The 1970s Master Plan for Union Square and the End of the Retail Loop

In the early 1970s, Hickory hired out-of-town consultants to create a new master plan. Their traffic engineers narrowed the wonderful Union Square down to about 25 or 30 feet wide (Fig. 83). Before that, Union Square must have been very grand. The square also served as a "retail loop," or what is now known in outlet malls as a "retail raceway." The shopper would come downtown, park in front of one store, and then shop the area as a district. That is, he or she would go into the department store, then the apparel store, then the sporting goods store, and before the shopper knew it he or she had returned to the car with more goods than intended. One walked the area as a retail loop. Up until the urban renewal plan of the seventies, the down-town functioned as a shopping district. All retailers benefited from being located in one area, allowing a lot of "cross-shopping" to occur.

The seventies master plan called for removing the green from Union Square and, more significantly, closing the vehicular throughway. The plan eliminated all through traffic by creating two separate parking lots in the center of the square. In 1981, the parking lots were connected, but at distance from the stores. Vehicular traffic is now about 100 feet away from storefront windows, which makes it nearly impossible for motorists to see merchandise on sale. The plan also placed parking at a distance from shops and called for the removal of buildings at both ends. Contrary to its intent, this plan effectively dismantled the existing shopping district, and created a series of individual shops.

The City of Hickory was very good at implementing plans. The city was told what to do and it did it. The city was told to remove buildings and replace them with others, and it did so very efficiently (Fig. 84). Unfortunately, Hickory was left with neither a shopping district nor a Central Business District, but a modified shopping center with parking in front (Fig. 85). The two proposed department stores or office buildings in the center of Union Square were never built. We would have advised the seventies planners that department stores will only locate in a place where there is 40,000 to 50,000 cars passing by per day. Most retailers will not locate where there are less than 10,000 cars per day, which is currently the case in Union Square.

The seventies planners made every effort to stop cars from driving through downtown. That was the thinking of its day: Hickory would be a better shopping district if all cars were pulled out of the Central Business District and all traffic straddled downtown by using newly designated one-way streets. Rather than 10,000 to 20,000 cars per day passing within twenty feet of the Union Square storefronts, the new plan knocked it down to about 500 cars per day passing at about 75 feet and parallel to the railroad tracks. The primary reason why malls were built out of town was that the planners created the busiest roads at the town's out-skirts. The lack of traffic forced many downtown businesses to leave, signaling the beginning of central Hickory's decline.

In spite of this, Hickory City Center has some very tenacious business owners who have managed to stay in business, which is a real credit to them. They have found ways to be strong destinations for shoppers so that even if it is hard to find their store, and even if it is not very easy to park, there are people willing to come in and shop.

Neighborhood Retail: Ridgeview and Kenworth Four Points Commercial Centers

In addition to studying the City Center and figuring out ways to revitalize its commerce, the planning team has been assigned the task of proposing ways to improve neighborhood retail without adversely affecting the quality of life in each of Hickory's five neighborhoods.* (* Though this section only discusses retail proposals for Ridgeview and Kenworth, Part Three: Report: Section II includes analyses and recommendations for Claremont, Oakwood, and Green Park neighborhoods.)

We believe that successful retail in each neighborhood is very important to its economic viability and community vitality. The Ridgeview neighborhood currently has a barber shop and hair salon within walking distance of neighborhood homes (Fig. 86). Such businesses that service the neighborhood are called "neighborhood retail." Ridgeview had other neighborhood retail businesses, but they have relocated, closed, or been torn down, which we feel has adversely affected its quality of life (Fig. 87). The planning team believes that the Ridgeview community could support an additional 6,500 square feet of

neighborhood businesses. We are proposing that these business be developed around a small square in mixed-use buildings such as this (Fig. 88). The new neighborhood businesses could include an additional hair care or beauty salon, an additional carry-out restaurant, and a convenience market. The neighborhood economy is strong enough to support these new services. If such services locate here, we project that there will be about 800,000 dollars worth of yearly sales per those 6,500 square feet of businesses.

We think the neighborhood would benefit from these services. It is up to the Ridgeview community to decide whether it wants them. However, such services are affordable at this location.

The planning team also studied the Kenworth neighborhood, and concluded it could support an additional 59,500 square feet of retail. At the northwest corner of the neighborhood is Four Points, strategically located along NC 127 South (Fig. 89). Kenworth Four Points has both interesting and not so interesting buildings, but there are remnants of the old commercial shopping district (Figs. 90 & 91). The team's planners have proposed re-creating a village-like neighborhood shopping district, an exciting idea from a retail perspective (Fig. 92). There would be on-street parking and all buildings would be built to the edge of the sidewalk, creating uniquely shaped buildings at the odd angles of the Four Points intersection (Fig. 93). Located and designed this way, the village center could service three neighborhoods: Kenworth, Ridgeview, and Claremont. These neighborhoods could support an old-fashioned grocery store of 25,000 to 30,000 square feet, about the size of an old A&P Market. Safeway, for example, is presently building such smaller grocery stores. The area could also support a coffee shop, bakery, and a 10,000 square foot plant store or garden shop. In terms of office use, it is an area that would attract architects, designers, and artists.

Rather than drive to one of the shopping centers outside of town, a resident of Kenworth, Ridgeview, or Claremont could do his or her basic shopping by foot, bicycle, or a short car ride. Many residents of three neighborhoods are within walking distance of Four Points. This is an unusual civic amenity because it brings together people of different income levels and life-styles to shop in one location. It is also the latest trend in retail planning. Instead of segmenting people by income and life-style, this trend is creating more interesting and vibrant shopping districts. Furthermore, retailers at Four Points can capitalize on the flow of both work-bound and home-bound traffic on NC 127.

Section II of Part Three: Report will include the specific types of business each neighborhood can support, how much money those businesses can expect to make, and how many square feet of retail is supportable. The community can then decide whether or not it wants a bakery, dress shop, convenience store, or other suggested types of shops in its neighborhood.

Now, how does the neighborhood attract such businesses? Though the planning team says they are supportable, new businesses rarely appear overnight. When they appear quickly, it's usually because a savvy entrepreneur recognizes the growth potential of a site and moves in immediately. Rather than wait for such entrepreneurs, the neighborhood associations may have to roll up their sleeves and seek out businesses on their own or work with the Downtown Development Association.

In other master plans we have done, community groups have used our studies to successfully attract businesses to their neighborhoods. Usually businesses go to the easy sites first, taking the more difficult sites later as commerce grows. But once they move into a neighborhood they rarely regret it because sales and profits are often much higher than normal.

Hickory's Regional Retail Draw

The planning team also examined retail at a regional level and found that Hickory City Center has primary and secondary trade areas. The large circle on this image shows that the Study Area has roughly a five-mile radius (Fig. 94). It is slightly skewed to the north and east, but the businesses here are getting 50 to 70 percent of their trade from people residing within a five-mile radius. This data was confirmed by nearly

every merchant I met. The merchants also said they had customers who drove one, two, or three hours to shop their stores three, four, or five times a year, which is outstanding.

Even though it's not on a weekly basis, it's unusual for businesses to attract customers from such long distances. The planning team estimates that the number of people moving into the district increases about 400 families a year, which is roughly a one percent growth rate. This means that nearly everyday the Hickory area is getting new residents who have never been downtown or to Union Square. They have no idea what Union Square once was or what kinds of businesses are there now.

The other day, a downtown retailer told me that if one more person came through the door and said she never knew his store was here—even though it's been there six years—he is going to pull his hair out. Apparently, people are visiting and moving to Hickory everyday, but when they think of where the downtown is they think of the malls along interstate highways rather than City Center. The businesses that are downtown, such as the Shade Parlor, are glad to be there (Fig. 95). They are working very hard and are successfully attracting customers from afar. The problem is that people are driving downtown, parking as close as they can to these businesses, going in and making purchases, then immediately leaving downtown. Each store is functioning as a shopping-destination store and, as a result, the downtown loses its competitive edge as a shopping district. During the charrette, we coached businesses on how to promote cross-shopping, which is to encourage customers to shop other stores once they are downtown.

Proprietors can do little things, like display small placards or signs in each other's stores. For example, The Tap Room attracts waves of people to downtown until two o'clock in the morning. Its first wave of diners are finished at seven o'clock, but they cannot shop Union Square because all of its stores are closed. So there are opportunities for shopping downtown later at night, which shop owners could take advantage of.

Union Square could be updated. The sixties street lights should be replaced, though a lot of merchants are quite fond of them (Fig. 95). There are also little things that hinder commerce. Shrubs along the sidewalk, as nice as they are, can block motorists' view of storefront merchandise (Fig. 95). There are other subtle things that could be changed, but I don't think I have seen a downtown maintained as well as Hickory's.

Two Scenarios for the Central Business District

There are two scenarios for Hickory's City Center: leave it the way it is without major modifications or change the one-way streets to two-way streets. The planning team strongly recommends changing the one-way streets to two-ways in order to increase retail sales down-town.

There are times when motorists have to go nine blocks out of their way to get from one end of City Center to the other. If the current street pattern is changed, we are forecasting that an additional 17,000 square feet of retail and restaurant businesses can be supported in Union Square.

In the first scenario, where the street pattern is not changed, we forecast that Union Square will probably lose about 25 percent of its current businesses because they are too difficult to get to. Moreover, most of the retail businesses that leave will be replaced by restaurants, bars, and offices. Union Square as a food-court district would work very well with offices. In such a scenario, much of Union Square's retail energy would move to First Avenue NW, near the old movie theatres.

Because it is easy to drive to and has easy on-street parking and a deck, First Avenue NW could support 24,000 square feet of additional retail. The market can easily support an old-fashioned hardware store, which Hickory hasn't had in this area for quite some time. However, the planning team believes that the community would be better served if Union Square retained its retail businesses and attracted new ones. In the second scenario, Union Square is modified by adding a street in front of the storefronts, by

increasing the number of parking spaces, and by making other minor changes ([Fig. 97](#)). In effect, this proposal calls for the return of a shopping district to City Center.

We forecast that approximately 120,000 square feet of additional retail can be supported downtown, which would include men's and women's apparel stores, a hardware store, restaurants, coffee shops, toy stores, sporting goods stores, and specialty retail stores. In terms of retail, it could be one of the best and strongest small-town shopping districts in this part of the country. The potential is there. We forecast that there could be as much as 14 million dollars of additional sales per year in the Union Square area. In this plan, the Bank of Granite and Duke Power parking lot should be made available for a downtown hotel. It would be supported by business travelers, who, after checking in, could walk to downtown restaurants and shops.

Union Square could support additional restaurants on all four of its sides. There's now a restaurant in the old train station, but the area could support another restaurant on the square's east, west, and north sides. With additional retail on both sides of the train station and at the ends of the square, Union Square would have its old retail shopping loop back ([Fig. 97](#)). People could not only shop between businesses, but also window shop as they stroll the sidewalks. The mid-block pedestrian walkway to the north could be enhanced with additional shops to create a very strong shopping district because it is linked to First Avenue NW.

The Harper Ford Building and a New Arts and Crafts Gallery Row

The old Harper Ford Building and the buildings on its street form a wonderful collection of brick buildings ([Fig. 98](#)). These buildings would make a wonderful center for arts and crafts, which would be within easy walking distance of the Union Square ([Fig. 96](#)). Hickory can support almost 20,000 square feet of art and craft galleries, which is extremely high for a market of its size. These galleries would work very well at this location. It could be a "must-see" area for the thousands of people who go to the furniture stores every year.

Hickory City Center could become the place that people want to visit because those furniture stores close at six o'clock. Now, at six o'clock those people are eating at restaurants along the highway and then returning to their hotel rooms to watch television. If available, they would much rather visit Hickory's new, modified Union Square.

A major problem for City Center retail, however, is the area's lack of parking ([Fig. 99](#)). Combining the current number of parking lots on Union Square with those in the parking deck and on the streets, downtown retail has less than a third of the of the parking it needs. Downtown merchants told me there is only a parking problem around Christmas, something I don't think I have ever heard merchants say before in any town. This indicates that the people of Hickory are under-shopping this area. The planning team found they could double the number of existing parking stalls on Union Square at the same time they designed it with a green ([Fig. 97](#)). Furthermore, First Avenue NW has great potential for revitalization ([Fig. 100](#)). Modified or unmodified with new parking, the street is a strong retail area. The designers increased available parking to 78 parking spaces on First Avenue NW by re-stripping the street; that many spaces can be added for the price of the paint ([Fig. 101](#)).

An aerial perspective of the proposed plan, the second scenario, shows that team's designers and traffic engineers have planned a way of reopening the square with a street ([Fig. 102](#)). Rather than 500 cars per day passing through Union Square, the new plan increases traffic to between 6,000 to 8,000 cars per day. While this not a lot in terms of retailing, it is ten times the number of cars now. The one thing I heard over and over again from Hickory's shop owners was that they were trying as hard as they could to draw customers in. And the stores do look great. They have great merchandise and great prices, but they don't have enough people walking through the door. There are simply not enough people driving through Union Square. With a little help we think these businesses can increase their sales and with it their quality and

selection of merchandise and service. With the new Master Plan, Hickory has the opportunity of returning to the pre-consultant days—to the days of having a really wonderful Union Square ([Fig. 103](#)).

TRAIN DEPOT AND MULTI-MODAL USES

William Lennertz, AIA, CNU

In the near future, people will have the option of arriving in Hickory by rail passenger service. The planning team analyzed the old Union Square Train Station and made design proposals for updating it into a transit station. These stations are now called "multi-modal centers" because they integrate the services of a train depot, bus terminal, and taxi stand into one.

Hickory will be served by Amtrak within the next two years, primarily as a tourist train between Raleigh, Salisbury, and Asheville. As planned, it could be a Flexliner making stops in Hickory at least twice a day and a maximum of six. This service provides residents in Hickory and other towns access to Amtrak's eastern north-south trains running through Raleigh. Furthermore, tourists coming from New York or Florida to visit Asheville and other eastern North Carolina towns will transfer to the Flexliner in Raleigh and go through Hickory, which Hickory could capitalize on.

The actual arrival of the train could become a catalyst, make the station a nexus for coordinated services in other modes of transport—the Greyhound Bus, the Piedmont Wagon, taxi cabs, hotel vans, and airport-service vans. In a sense, this reinstating of the rail station's original function is symbolic—it would link Hickory's past to its future. As the city's inter-modal transit center, it would serve Hickory for years to come, the historic building becoming a "must see" destination (Figs. [104](#) & [105](#)).

Reopening Main Avenue east and west of the station provides the opportunity of creating dramatic rail and vehicular entrances to Hickory. The diagonal approach along Government Avenue SE/First Avenue SE could be a picture-postcard view of the station with the post office in the foreground and Union Square in the background.

However, the historic station is now hidden from this view by evergreen trees and by the rear of the restaurant addition to the station. Removing the restaurant addition would return the station to its original condition of a simple, elegant bar building. It would have a single, large waiting room with windows on both sides so travelers and commuters can see the train, bus, or taxi as it arrives. It would be a porous building with a great public space, allowing people to have coffee while they wait for transport. Removing the addition also makes it possible to insert an access drive along the station's south side ([Fig. 106](#)). This drive would serve as a Piedmont Wagon Bus stop, a taxi stand, and a passenger drop-off, which makes great sense.

Merchants on Union Square told the planning team that when the Piedmont Wagon Bus sits idle in the parking lot, it blocks the view of the station. People cannot see one of Hickory's most historic buildings and future transit center. The plan calls for a new parking garage immediately west of the station, which can also be the location of a rental-car agency whose service counter is in the station. There is also a new building site with underground parking. Because the site sits on a hill that drops down considerably to the west, there is enough of a grade change to place an underground parking entrance near the overpass (Figs. [106](#) & [107](#)).

Although the station will have Amtrak service, Amtrak was unable to provide us a program for it, so both the Wilson and Rocky Mount stations in North Carolina were used as models. Hickory's transit station's space requirement will be quite modest, about 150 square feet. The extra space in the historic station could be used for other programs, such as a coffee bar or museum. It would be great to have fresh coffee and snacks available to commuters awaiting transport. The depot would also be a great location for a history museum, one that could become a destination.

The plan proposes that the Greyhound Bus Terminal be located east of Union Square on First Avenue SE ([Fig. 106](#)). Its program is best suited for a modest building that could be renovated. The proposed location is within easy walking distance of the station and Union Square.

For the train and all transport services to work well and be successful, the station, terminal, and drop-offs must be easy to find and simple to use. Portland, Oregon accomplishes this by using a bus mall and city square system ([Fig. 108](#)). Commuters know that to catch the light rail, they go to the city square, Pioneer Square, and to catch a bus, they go to the mall, which are two downtown streets dedicated to bus service. Because they are in proximity, transfer between the two transit modes is easy and simple. Similarly, locating all of Hickory's transit services along the Main Avenue corridor accomplishes the same thing. If one wants to ride the train, catch a bus, take a taxi, or rent a car, all he or she needs to do is go Union Square on Main Avenue—the center of Hickory.

Portland has begun to build housing near light rail stations ([Fig. 109](#)). It also has older neighborhood centers that have been converted into safe, comfortable places to wait for the bus ([Fig. 110](#)).

The arrival sequence into Hickory by passenger train can be shown with images ([Figs. 104 & 107](#)). As the train enters town, passengers see the houses and storefront buildings along Main Avenue and then the incredible town center—Union Square, a must-see destination. Along Government Avenue, vehicular traffic would arrive at the drop-off across from the post office. By diverting some of the vehicular traffic from the one-way pairs to Main Avenue north and south, the plan hopes to increase traffic in City Center ten-fold. These cars will not be going fast, but slow—at five, ten, fifteen miles an hours—so motorists can see the shops and restaurants.

For Union Square, we propose to move the public bathrooms, which are now in the middle of the square, to one of the new building sites at either of its the ends ([Figs. 106 & 107](#)). From the station, the existing building that houses these rest rooms blocks views of the shops and the square from the station, and likewise blocks views of the historic station from the square and storefronts. The building housing the new rest rooms could also have a coffee shop, whose proprietor could keep an eye on things for added security.

TRANSPORTATION IN THE HISTORY OF HICKORY

Richard Hall, P.E.

Since its settlement by Palatine Germans in the 1740s, the City of Hickory has enjoyed a rich history. Transportation routes played a key role in this history and in the evolution of the Hickory area.

The first records of government road construction indicate that in 1769 the Forks of the Silver Creek Road was established as an east–west thoroughfare. Also established in 1769 was the Horse Ford Road northwest of Hickory, which served as a major crossing of the Catawba River. Ten years later the southwest road to Charleston was completed. As a major port and trade center, the City of Charleston was vital to Hickory's growth.

In the 1780s, John Bradburn established the Hickory Tavern, the first known building in the area. It initiated Hickory's role as a trading center for the region, while farming in the area continued to grow. In 1860, the establishment of the Western North Carolina Railroad was the catalyst that made Hickory the dominant retail and trading center for the region. By traversing Hickory, the railroad allowed farmers, especially to the north and west, to market their produce and obtain supplies. Moreover, manufacturing grew to be an important economic component as the production of shoes, harnesses, saddles, and tobacco as well as various types of mills flourished in the late 1800s.

As Hickory's economy grew, so did its government. From the 1870s to 1889, Hickory evolved from a trading post to an incorporated city. The city continued to be the region's dominant trading and manufacturing center as industry grew and businesses reinvested ([Fig. 111](#)). It laid the foundation for Hickory to become a bustling and vibrant city.

In Hickory's early days, the downtown area was dominated by the presence of several mainline tracks and the old train depot, later replaced by the current structure in 1912 ([Fig. 112](#)). The heart of commercial district was around Union Square, a tree-lined square with a drive on the north edge serving as the main access to the commercial activity ([Figs. 113, 114 & 115](#)). Subsequent growth in the twentieth century saw the addition of US 70 and eventually I-40. More recently, the concept-master plan of the early 1970s, the era of urban renewal, was never completely built-out, however, it continues to have a significant impact on downtown Hickory ([Fig. 116](#)).

Thoroughfare Plans and the Metropolitan Planning Organization

The type of thoroughfare planning process that currently guides Hickory's transportation planning and implementation is the product of thoroughfare studies, the first completed in 1966. This study produced a 1985 projection of transportation needs. A second version of this study was finished in 1982. The North Carolina DOT, Statewide Planning Branch, Urban Planning Unit recently completed an impressive 1997 update of the plan resulting in traffic projections for the year 2020. This plan greatly assists the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and state and local planners to decide future needs and project solutions.

The 1966 long-range forecast for land use in 1985 was quite accurate. It correctly predicted that the area east of Hickory designated for industrial and light industrial use would be used as such ([Figs. 117 & 118](#)). The growth of this industrial area on the city's outskirts has created high volumes of crosstown commuting traffic.

In older reports, origin–destination survey information was indicated on graphs by the width of bands—the thicker the band the higher the traffic volume from city's center to its periphery ([Figs. 119](#)). The projected 1985 traffic levels were not dramatically higher than the existing 1962 traffic levels ([Fig. 120](#)). This indicates that during the 1960s downtown Hickory was largely built out and the number of commuters into

downtown had leveled off. Another type of diagram shows 1962 traffic volumes on specific roads, the heavier the volume the thicker the road (Fig. 121). Since I-40 was built, east–west volumes have increased on the interstate and on US 70, but the traffic downtown has stayed relatively the same (Fig. 122). In other words, suburban traffic is where most of Hickory's growth has occurred, with the I-40 and US 70 carrying a large portion of it.

Current planning recommendations from the MPO Thoroughfare Plan that relate to downtown Hickory are the following: US 321 in the Hickory area, widen to 6 lanes from US 70 to Planning Boundary; Fourth Street SW in Hickory (SR1358), widen to 4 lanes from Second Avenue SW to US 70; and Second Avenue NW, widen to 5 lanes from US 321 to the Second Avenue and Third Avenue NW pair in Hickory.

Considerable discussion is also included on the Northern Crosstown proposal to replace the "incongruous combination of Twelfth Avenue NW, Sixth Street NW and Sixteenth Avenue NW." The report states that this remains "the prime problem for Hickory." The obvious spill over "problem" for downtown is the predicted increase in traffic on east–west roadways in downtown Hickory.

From these MPO data sources we have the following 1997 yearly traffic summary for the study area. On a north–south cut line (the line where car counts are taken) southwest of downtown Hickory and running through Third Avenue North, Second Avenue North, Main Avenue, First Avenue South and Second Avenue South, the east–west traffic totaled about 38,000 vehicles per day in both directions averaged over a 24-hour period.

The 1982 study projected that US 70 and other cross-town routes south of the railroad tracks would carry 31,000 cars per day or about the same traffic count, which is unusual. In such a long-range forecast, many assumptions are made, which need to be questioned.

Peak-hour traffic is a very important part of what we study. If the daily car counts are spread-out over the 24-hour period, meaning drivers are using the road throughout the day, then the peak-hour capacity needs—the design hour—are not very high. Rather than two rush hours, Hickory has five peak periods. There is an early morning surge of traffic caused by employees going to work in the industrial areas north of I-40 and US 70. Then there is a surge between 8 and 9 in the morning, followed by a peak at noon, and then peaks in the opposite direction in the early and late afternoons. Unlike Washington, D.C., or Charlotte, North Carolina, where commuting rush-hours are twice a day, Hickory's commuting traffic is spread-out through the day. This means that there is lower design-hour volume, that the same road can handle more daily traffic than it would with only two peak periods.

Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Speed

Traffic speed is the primary safety issue, especially when pedestrians are present. There are different speeds between the travel modes, but the key is the relative difference between the modes' speeds. Examples of different modes of travel are walking versus biking or biking versus driving. A person walking will travel about 3 miles an hour. Someone riding a bike usually goes about 12 miles per hour, 20 miles per hour at the most. The speed difference between walking versus biking is small enough that there is a reasonable amount of reaction time. Similarly, the difference between a bike at 12 miles per hour and a car at 35 miles per hour is still within a range of safety in terms of reaction time. But when a pedestrian at 3 miles per hour and a motorist at 35 miles per hour are close, the pedestrian's safety becomes an issue because of the car's stopping distance. At 20 miles per hour a car requires 125 feet to stop. At 35 miles per hour the stopping distance doubles to 250 feet. It increases geometrically, which is why these speed differentials are so important.

Understanding this, the streetscape should be designed according to the specific speed and lane-distance points. If pedestrian traffic is desired, cars must be slowed down to 35 miles per hour. When an automobile traveling above 35 miles per hour collides with a pedestrian it is almost always fatal to the pedestrian.

Land Use Must Precede Transportation

One of the principles held by the planning team is "land use first, transportation second," the idea that land use plans must come before transportation plans. The City of Hickory must decide how its City Center, residential areas, commercial districts, and industrial areas should grow—the form they should take—and then the road designers and traffic engineers can figure ways to serve the desired land use with proper transportation and traffic networks. Most of America's suburban sprawl, which Hickory shares, has been the result of the reverse: considering transportation first, then plugging in land use based on newly created accessibility (Fig. [123](#)). The planning team strongly believes that coherently formed communities can be created only by designing the land use first and the transportation second.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC CALMING

Richard Hall, P.E., and Margaret Kubilins, P.E.

Charrette Issues

During the charrette, transportation analysis and design issues centered on three main topics: the one-way pair traffic patterns; solutions to potential traffic growth through 2020; and traffic calming/management downtown and in surrounding neighborhoods

The One-Way Pair Streets

In general, pairs of one-way streets are implemented to save money. Often, when traffic demand begins to exceed existing capacity, traffic engineers think first of widening roads. However, one-way operation is frequently considered in areas where buildings or homes exist adjacent to the roadway and widening the road would require the appropriation of houses and land.

Other benefits to one-way operation include ease of signal timing for areas with low side-street volumes. Often the negative side effects of one-way pairs are overlooked. Increased speed, while pleasing to many drivers, harms the livability of residential areas. Other detrimental impacts include inconvenient circulation, reduced safety, and increased noise levels. Commercial property is clearly devalued by the presence of one-way streets. For these reasons, one-way operation should be reserved for roadways where the high volume has already appeared, not where it may appear. One-way operation should only be considered for higher speed environments where walkability is not a desired condition.

The one-way systems to the north and south of downtown and to the east and west of downtown are not high-volume roadways (Figs. [124](#), [125](#) & [126](#)). Volumes measured spring 1998 show that existing traffic on Second and Third Avenues North and on First and Second Avenues South are generally only half of their one-way road capacity. Because measured and observed traffic speeds are consistently above the posted speed limit, these one-way streets are incongruous with the desired ease of circulation and walkability within a one-mile radius of downtown.

Moreover, the crossover or X (ex) pattern of converting two-way streets into one-ways is a real safety issue (Fig. [127](#)). The manager of the gas station at the foot of the Oakwood X explained to the planning team how dangerous the X is at the bottom of the grade (Fig. [128](#)). If there is the least bit of moisture on the road, and a car comes into the intersection from a side street at the wrong time, high-speed traffic coming off the one-way will have a difficult time stopping within two or three hundred feet. The manager has a wrecker for just such a situation. In a sense, he's prepared to help when needed, but he'd rather not be doing it on a regular basis. And, tragically, there have been fatalities at this intersection.

The volume and speed of traffic on these roads are monitored by loop detectors in the pavement, such as this one on Third Avenue NW (Fig. [129](#)). There are wires running across the street connected to a asphalt plate cut out of the roadway. Traffic volumes collected at these loop detectors indicate to the planning team that there is considerable excess capacity in the one-way pairs. The peak use at the Oakwood crossover is 550 cars per hour, which drops off considerably the rest of the day. On Second Avenue NW, the designed road capacity for eastbound traffic is about 1,000 vehicles per hour. Measured over a three-month period in spring 1998, the actual peak-hour road use averages 400 vehicles per hour or less. In other words, the street carries less than half of its traffic capacity.

In the future, higher traffic demand on these downtown streets will only come from increased suburban travel or dramatic increases in downtown retail and office activity. There is only a moderate amount of vacant land downtown. Redevelopment of downtown land at greater than existing levels of development

may cause traffic volumes to increase. If and when this suburban or redevelopment traffic increases, it is best accommodated by the Main Avenue corridor improvements discussed below.

Potential Future Traffic Growth and Main Avenue

The Main Avenue corridor running along the railroad tracks to US 321 offers a rich source of potential traffic capacity. The Main Avenue corridor comprises two east/west roadways. In the 1970s, the one-way pairs were created to boost east/west capacity. If the one-way pairs were converted back to two-way streets, the capacity of each street would decrease from approximately 1,000 vehicles an hour to 800 vehicles, or about a 15 or 20 percent reduction. This lost capacity could be picked up by the underused capacity of the Main Avenue corridor. Rather than two one-way pairs, this would give motorists the option of using six different two-way streets. This two-way pattern provides a healthy amount of traffic in the center of town, where retail and commerce needs it. It would also decrease the traffic volume near the light industry on the edge of town, where there is the most truck traffic, because commuters would have two more options on each side of the railroad tracks. This is a "win-win" situation. It would be a win for commuters and a win for City Center. It would be a win for the Main Avenue corridor by boosting adjacent real estate values. Robert Gibbs and other retail experts maintain that retail sales improve when streets are switched from one-way to two-ways because proprietors can capture both incoming and outgoing traffic.

Main Avenue north and south of the Norfolk Southern rail line should be upgraded to provide another set of two-way roadways serving east/west travel in town. Existing warehouse-related truck activity could still be accommodated because of the lower speeds of both two-way avenues. When and if extra capacity is needed (caused by either dramatic downtown redevelopment or potential traffic diversion southward if Twelfth Avenue NW is not widened), then both sides of the Main Avenue corridor can be improved as continuous roadways from downtown to US 321. The interchange of Main Avenue SW and US 321 should definitely be part of the upcoming US 321 corridor study.

The key design strategy for downtown access must be more urban in quality. Suburban and rural roadway design requires higher design speeds because of the greater distances separating land uses. The rural and suburban roadway character must yield to the lower speed, multiple roadway environment typical of many well-functioning downtown areas. Only then will the downtown feel comfortable for pedestrians and those drivers seeking parking opportunities for their downtown business and social activities. Better circulation, lower speeds in the 25 to 30 miles per hour range, and detailed care for pedestrian features design will allow this to occur. Downtown traffic should not be focused on a single major facility as has occurred in the suburbs.

The suburbs are a poor model for future downtown design. The rich urban infrastructure afforded by six different two-lane avenues in the east-west direction and many north-south streets will handle both access and capacity needs while preserving the downtown livability and vitality that many enjoy.

Downtown circulation requires a blend of "to" and "through" traffic. People should be encouraged to drive into downtown yet there will always be others who want to go through it. These two forms of traffic can harmoniously coexist. If a motorist goes 30 miles an hour, then it will take four minutes to go through the two-mile-wide study area. The city can decrease the current speed limit a little without unduly discomforting commuters. Crosstown travel time will increase only 30 seconds, or at most a minute. All the benefits from the proposals made by the design team are of far greater value than the half-minute of commuting time saved by the existing one-way streets. Making these streets two-way will slow traffic down and enhance the walkability of Hickory.

Hickory Rail Crossings Issues

The June 1998 Draft report entitled Western Piedmont Traffic Separation Studies, Volume IV, which the NCDOT Rail Division prepared for Hickory, is thorough in its evaluation of contemporary safety and

mobility issues. Within the limited context of auto-only mobility and suburban design assumptions, the recommendations could be deemed acceptable. However, when viewed from a multi-modal and urban design perspective, the recommended closing of railroad crossings is detrimental to the overall mobility of Hickory.

Multi-modal issues for Hickory include pedestrian and bicycle trips and the influence that increased walkability will have on downtown redevelopment and other modes such as transit and rail. Urban design issues cover the full context of how land use and transportation inter-relationships depend on each other for success. Greater network density (i.e., more streets per mile) help immensely when downtown areas are planned for redevelopment in a pattern that encourages walking. For cyclists and pedestrians, more streets facilitate efficient paths, and pedestrian mobility is vital to efficient, human scale, mixed land use patterns.

When viewed in this broader, town plan context, most of the proposed closures of railroad crossings should not be undertaken. These crossings should remain open to preserve mobility for both motorists and pedestrians. West of downtown, closings at Tenth and Twelfth Streets SW will inhibit the proposed use of Main Avenue as an additional access corridor to downtown from US 321. The Second Street SE crossing will be vital to redevelopment plans for the Four Points area near NC 127 and First Avenue SE. The crossings at Eighth and Twelfth Streets NE and Seventh Avenue NE are less important to downtown, however neighborhood circulation must be reevaluated prior to closures in this area.

Technically, closing Hickory's rail crossings to vehicular and pedestrian traffic lacks adequate justification. The report repeatedly notes the lack of fatalities and low accident levels. Even the few accidents that have occurred could perhaps have been limited with modern crossing gates. Reduced freight service is noted, which further minimizes the need for closings. Potential increases in rail passenger service at potentially higher speeds (although a 35 miles per hour train speed limit ordinance is in force) is the only justification provided for the closings. Low traffic volumes seem to be another reason for some of the recommended closings. These volumes are simply factored forward from old counts and may change dramatically when the down-town plan is implemented. Several of these crossings could have significantly higher future volumes.

In summary, the recommended closures of railroad crossings in downtown Hickory, when viewed in a broader, town planning context, do not appear warranted. They should remain open until future elements of the City Center Master Plan, especially those near the rail line, are implemented. In fact, further study of the Main Avenue corridor to provide additional downtown access may even require additional crossings at key locations.

Civilizing Downtown Traffic

Cities nationwide are adopting "traffic calming" measures pioneered in other countries. In most cases, specific roadways require lower speed traffic where safety becomes an issue. The safety problem may involve either pedestrians and vehicles or several vehicle movements that conflict. Diversion of traffic to an alternative route is another potential reason for traffic calming devices.

Traffic calming is achieved in two ways: vertical deflection or horizontal deflection. Drivers experience either a rise and fall of their vehicles or a turn to the right or left. These changes in a driver's path can be designed to be comfortable at a specific design speed and uncomfortable at higher than desired speeds. This is the same objective as speed enforcement by law officers.

Traffic calming devices simplify the job of enforcement by making it less comfortable to violate the law. Other roadway design features, such as one-way streets, make enforcement difficult because drivers feel that they should be driving at higher speeds.

Sample Traffic Calming Measures

Charrette field studies in the surrounding neighborhoods yielded numerous locations in need of traffic calming. The following are examples of some of the existing problems and possible solutions. A complete inventory of existing conditions and their recommended actions and strategies are in Part Three: Report: Section VII.

The first traffic calming proposal is for the intersection of NC 127 South and Eighth Street Drive SE (Fig. [130](#)). Neighborhood residents expressed a great deal of concern about the high-speed traffic on NC 127 South, the related sight-distance problems, and the ability of pedestrians to cross the intersection safely. Sidewalks and crosswalks are proposed, but more information is needed to determine whether the intersection warrants a traffic signal. The planning team figures that the traffic will increase through this section of NC 127 South because of its connection to US 321 and because it will continue to have motorists trying to exit onto NC 127 South. With on-street parking, it is unnecessary to add other traffic calming techniques, which we have proposed for other parts of the study area (Fig. [131](#)). Traffic calming techniques have to be judiciously applied because vehicles must be able to get around town and through it without uncalled for hindrances.

At the corner of Seventh Street SW and Second Avenue SW there is a utility pole in the southwest corner that is causing some problems (Fig. [132](#)). Relocating the utility pole and increasing the corner's curb radius comprise the simplest solution (Fig. [133](#)). The feasibility of placing the utilities underground should also be investigated.

Oakwood neighborhood residents expressed concern about speeding traffic on Fourth Street NW where it crosses the intersection adjacent the elementary school (Figs. [134](#) & [135](#)). To slow traffic down, the planning team is proposing that a speed table be installed at the intersection (Fig. [136](#)). A speed table is a where a section of street is raised four to six inches to create a pedestrian plaza flush with the sidewalks. The up and down movement of their cars forces drivers to slow down. For further pedestrian safety, the pavement could be textured at the crosswalks.

Another way of slowing traffic down, which is a building type and land-use issue, is to place buildings close to the street (Fig. [137](#)). This works because motorists have to be more alert and conscious of the street activity around them. A rendering of the entire block shows street trees, sidewalks, lampposts, and other streetside elements that have the same effect (Fig. [138](#)). This is the intersection of First Avenue NE, Third Street NE, and Main Avenue (Figs. [139](#) & [140](#)). The plan proposes to reconfigure the existing medium so that a two-way Main Avenue would be created (Fig. [141](#)). These images show the proposed buildings and land-scaping for this intersection (Fig. [142](#)).

At the intersection of Third Street NE and Fifth Avenue NE there is also a speed problem, so traffic techniques are required (Fig. [143](#)). As before, we propose to install a speed table, which has the advantage of accommodating both the pedestrian and the motorist (Fig. [144](#)).

LANDSCAPE AND STREETSCAPE

Brian Jenest, ASLA

Landscaping and streetscaping are important and integral parts of the Hickory City Center Master Plan. Landscaping, such as trees, shrubs, flowers and grass, and streetscaping, such as sidewalks, lamps and benches, are all key ingredients to making a city livable, enjoyable, and economically successful.

In studying prosperous sections of cities, it becomes apparent that landscaping and streetscaping are fundamental to making them great places. For example, in Charlotte, North Carolina, the beautiful tree-lined streets of Myers Park and Dilworth are essential to the livability of these neighborhoods ([Fig. 145](#)). Moreover, successful neighborhoods must have, in addition to well landscaped streets, excellent public spaces in the form of squares and parks, such as Hickory's Union Square and the numerous smaller parks and squares in all five neighborhoods ([Fig. 146](#)). These squares and parks are important public spaces to protect and enhance because they give a sense of openness where it is most needed and provide proper sites for civic uses and retail shopping.

Hickory has abundant natural green space that provides habitats for wild, which is unusual for a built-out city. There also exists a potential to connect the natural green spaces as Greenways (see Appendix D, [Diagram 2](#)).

Proposed Street and Streetscape Improvements

Although all of Hickory's neighborhoods have beautiful houses, many are not on great streets. We define great streets as streets with curbs and gutters on both sides, planting strips at least six feet wide, sidewalks at least five feet wide on both sides, and street trees in the planting strips. There are pieces of great streets throughout Hickory, but no single great street. The planning team will make proposals for improving Hickory's streets, making some, if not all of them, great streets.

The planning team also recommends improving the landscaping on the major streets that traverse neighborhoods ([Fig. 147](#)). Hickory's neighborhoods have wonderful attributes that make them great places to live, including excellent housing stock and some streets with sidewalks. These details create beautiful streets. However, the major one-way streets need aesthetic enhancements and, for pedestrian safety, traffic-calming measures to slow traffic down.

Throughout the City Center, there are wonderful street trees. Unfortunately, many of these trees are in planting strips that are too narrow ([Fig. 148](#)). In other places, there are majestic trees along the street but no sidewalks ([Fig. 149](#)). Other streets have neither street trees nor sidewalks ([Fig. 150](#)). Then there are sidewalks that stop midway on the block or sidewalks that are too narrow for two pedestrians to pass by each other ([Fig. 151](#)). Many streets are lined with utility poles ([Fig. 152](#)). Some streets are very wide with multiple turning lanes ([Fig. 153](#)). Although lined with street trees, these streets are too wide for pedestrians to cross with any degree of comfort. There are wide streets with utility poles on both sides with no street trees. There are sidewalks, but they are right at the curb edge. These are all examples of environments hostile to the pedestrian.

The City Center Master Plan intends to encourage more pedestrian activity in all of Hickory's neighborhoods, so correcting these problems is of paramount concern.

The first recommendation is for Hickory to create more on-street parking by narrowing the traffic lanes. On many of the two-lane streets, such as First Avenue, Fourth Avenue, and Center Street, the lanes could be narrowed to 11 feet, which would slow traffic down. Installing on-street parking would also calm traffic, which would improve pedestrian safety and benefit retail businesses. If parking on both sides of the street is not possible, then installation on one side should be encouraged.

The second proposed improvement is for Hickory's streets to include planting strips with trees and sidewalks on both sides. The planting strip should be at least six-feet wide, the sidewalks at least five-feet wide. Plantings and sidewalks are not always possible in all locations, but that should be the goal. Most streets have overhead utilities in place. Moving them to accommodate trees is a worthwhile improvement in the long run.

In downtown Hickory there are Japanese Maples, which are beautiful trees, but they are not the best street trees because of their small size (Fig. 154). At maturity, they are just the right height to block the view of storefront merchandise and signage. On streets where utilities cannot be moved, small, maturing trees, such as crepe myrtle or cherry, should be planted. In such a situation, the planting strip could be as narrow as two feet. If the utilities must remain, then there should be minimum-width planting strips, narrow sidewalks, and small trees under the power lines.

Most of NC 127 is not pedestrian friendly. Modifying parts of this highway with a boulevard street section, including a median, would make it more pedestrian friendly. It should have two travel lanes in both directions with, in general, no on-street parking. There should be sidewalks on both sides of the street. Between the street and the sidewalks there should be plantings, which should also be in the median.

Design ideas for improving the City Center streetscape include installing narrower street lanes, on-street parking on at least one side of the street, and street trees. Most downtown street utilities are underground, which is an advantage, but there are either very few trees or the trees that exist are small maturing trees. Most merchants do not like tall trees because they block the motorist's view of storefront merchandise and store signage. However, an example of tall trees that do not harm retail businesses can be found on Tryon Street in Charlotte. Tryon Street has very large trees which have been limbed up to provide a very nice canopy but still allow a view of building signage and storefront merchandise.

A good street has sidewalks on both sides and an adequate amount of pavement to allow cars to move in both directions. Not every street has to have pavement 40 feet wide. If there is little traffic, a pavement width of about 18 feet wide is desirable because of its pedestrian scale.

Easily Implemented Streetscape Improvements

There are some improvements that can be readily implemented. Within the Study Area there seems to be an abundance of garbage dumpsters. The area is clean, which is good, but the dumpsters create an unappealing environment for pedestrians and motorists. Screening the existing dumpsters or providing smaller trash receptacles would be a quick fix.

Several of Hickory's neighborhoods have great street-tree programs. Ridgeview has planted maple trees along its streets while Kenworth has planted dogwoods (Fig. 155). By giving character to these streets, these species are great examples of what trees can do for the street in the right locations.

Hickory's "Adopt-A-Spot Program," in which the community provides landscaping and flowers for small areas, is a great program. We encourage the continued implementation of this program.

A pedestrian link from Union Square to the SALT Block could run along the railroad Right-of-Way (Fig. 156). With appropriate landscape improvements, this could be a wonderful pedestrian link between the commercial center and the cultural institution.

At Shuford Memorial Gardens, a pedestrian link would connect the gardens to residents in the Oakwood neighborhood to the east. Also, this park has very mature trees and would be a great location for a "tot lot" (Plate N).

Hickory has a wonderful history of great public spaces and landscaping. By adopting these proposals, Hickory can augment its existing park and green spaces and enhance its appeal and small-town charm.

PART THREE: REPORT: SECTION I OVERVIEW

CIRCULATION 1

Finding: Residents travel around Hickory by using its visual landmarks.

Discussion: See Vision: Section I: Overview of the Master Plan: The Historic Ways of Entering Hickory, Kenworth Four Points, The New Lenoir-Rhyne X designed as a Civic and Commercial Center, A Front Entrance Drive for the SALT Block, The New Ridgeview Neighborhood Center, and A New Entrance to Kenworth and Infill Sites. Historic and new buildings, historic avenues and trails, railroad tracks, tree alleés and specie type, gardens, squares, the gateway triangular greens and stone piers are the foundation of gateway elements and identification of neighborhoods. The identifying gateway landmarks make signage less necessary.

Recommendation: Implement the Recommendations and Specific Projects of the Master Plan.

Implementation: This is a general recommendation which will be affected by many recommendations listed in this report. The report proposes completing all of the recommendations within eight years or less. Since there are many recommendations which can be implemented very quickly, the report provides a phasing matrix in increments of eight hours, eight days, eight months, eight quarters (two years), and eight years.

References: Appendix D: Diagram 2: Gateways, Open Space, and Parks

CIRCULATION 2

Finding: Triangular greens are evident at many City Center entrance gateways.

Discussion: See Vision: Section I: Overview of the Master Plan. The shape of these greens is a product of the unique rolling topography; the many creeks radiating from Hickory City Center's ridgeline; the historic street and development pattern, which overlays and combines a rectilinear grid with radial village roads. Many of the greens now contain mature trees.

Recommendation: City Center gateways should build on the unique character of the triangular greens as gateway elements. Examples are located at Fourth Street and Fourth Street Drive SW, First Avenue NW and Third Street NW, Old Lenoir Road and Twelfth Avenue NW, Arrowhead park at Third Avenue NE and Third Street NE, McCombs Park at Fifth Avenue NE and Fifth Avenue Place NE, Second Avenue SE and Tate Boulevard, and First Avenue NE and Main Avenue NE. Additional locations are proposed for Highland Avenue and Third Street SE, First Avenue SE and South Center Street, and Ninth Street NE and Highland Avenue NE at the Lenoir-Rhyne Crossover (or X).

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken as the Gateway Greens Improvement Project by the Planning and Development Department and Public Services Department in conjunction with the Appearance Commission. A consultant may be retained for design services. For the gateway at Old Lenoir Road and Twelfth Avenue NW the road improvement design currently underway shall incorporate and restore the existing triangular green into the concept plan. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to the City Council within eight months with necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule. Funds for landscaping shall be requested from the City of Hickory Public Services budget, the Parks and Recreation Department, private donations from civic clubs and individuals, and an assessment from the Downtown Development Association. Street improvements shall be requested from the North Carolina Department of Transportation, including federal Inter-Modal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) Funds.

GENERAL AREA 1

WEST HICKORY & HIGHLAND

Finding: The neighborhoods of West Hickory and Highland were separate historic towns adjacent to Hickory's original city limits until the middle of the twentieth century.

Discussion: See Vision: Section I: The Study Area and Hickory's Original City Limits.

Recommendation: Because of West Hickory and Highland's proximity to Hickory's original city limits and major transportation corridors the planning process could include a review of them.

Implementation: The above project shall be undertaken by the Planning and Development Department, possibly retaining a design consultant. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

References: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps available through the local nonprofit historic preservation organization.

CIRCULATION 3

Finding: All of the neighborhoods within the study area are of a walkable scale.

Discussion: See Vision: Section I: The Advantages of Pedestrian-Oriented Neighborhoods; Section IV: Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Speed; Section V: Civilizing Downtown Traffic; Section VI: Proposed Street and Streetscape Improvements.

Recommendation: Implement the Master Plan, especially the transportation and traffic calming recommendations. Implement the Kenworth and Green Park Neighborhood Plans. Complete the Neighborhood Plans for Ridgeview, Oakwood, and Claremont.

Implementation: For completion of the neighborhood plans for Ridgeview, Oakwood, and Claremont, the Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

References: Appendix D, Diagram 1: The Neighborhood Structure. Katz, Peter. The New Urbanism, Toward an Architecture of Community. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991.

CIRCULATION 4

Finding: The 1970s Master Plan was very successful at diverting almost all of the traffic along the historic ways of entering downtown away from Main Avenue and Union Square to the east-west one-way pairs of streets.

Discussion: NE: From Eighth Street NE traffic entering the down-town is diverted away from Main Avenue NE to Third Avenue NE or First Avenue NE.

SE: The original wagon trail entrance along Highland Avenue is still intact except for one section, where a parking lot currently exists, which is one block east of Union Square between First Street SW and South Center Street.

NW: Old Lenoir Road's traffic entering from the NW is directed to the one-way pairs of Second and Third Avenues NW rather than traveling down Ninth Street NW to Main Avenue NW.

SW: US 321 traffic entering the downtown from the Thirteenth Street SW intersection is directed along the one-way pairs of First and Second Avenues SW rather than directed towards Main Avenue SW.

See Vision, Section I: The Benefits of Restoring Traffic to Main Avenue; Vision: Section II: The 1970s Master Plan for Union Square and the End of the Retail Loop; Two Scenarios for the Central Business District; Vision: Section V: Potential Future Traffic Growth and Main Avenue.

Because of the one-way pairs diverting traffic away from Union Square and Main Avenue, motorists are greeted by the backs of buildings as they enter the downtown.

Recommendations:

1. Restore two-way traffic to Main Avenue NE all the way to Union Square.
2. Restore the one block section of street, currently a parking lot, reconnecting Government Avenue and First Avenue SE. This is located between First Street SW and South Center Street, one block southeast of Union Square.
3. Direct traffic, by lane demarcation and signage, from Old Lenoir Road down Ninth Street NW to Main Avenue as an interim step. Subsequent redesigning of the crossover (X) should be undertaken in conjunction with reverting to the two-way street pattern.
4. Extend a section of street between Second Avenue SW and First Avenue SW to Tenth Street Place SW. The view down Tenth Street Place SW terminates on the Piedmont Wagon Building and connects to Main Avenue SW.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the City Engineering Department. For recommendations 1 and 3, the project shall be coordinated through the City Engineering Department and Public Services Department and shall proceed within eight days. For recommendations 2 and 4, the Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight days with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule. Funding shall be provided from the Public Services budget. Funding shall be requested from the North Carolina Department of Transportation as part of federal ISTEA funds through the Hickory-Newton-Conover Metropolitan Planning organization (MPO).

References: Appendix D, Diagram 1: The Neighborhood Structure. Katz, Peter. *The New Urbanism: Toward an Architecture of Community*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 1

MAIN AVENUE

Finding: The Main Avenue corridors and fronting property are currently undervalued.

Discussion: Hickory City Center must have a simple, clear, and elegant gateway entrance from US 321 along Main Avenue. The existing historic homes and commercial buildings along Main Avenue are of excellent character. Main Avenue has abundant gaps between existing buildings and lots. The Shopfront or Live/Work building type is excellent for infill opportunities in this area. Affordable housing, especially for seniors, is not available within a short walking distance of Union Square. The streetscape of Main Avenue has not, for the most part, been improved to the standards of other streets.

Recommendation: A thorough planning study of Main Avenue shall be conducted addressing the following issues: the potential of Main Avenue as the renewed gateway into downtown; street improvements reflecting the renewed image of Hickory—a potential site for a streetscape "test" block; and infill sites for their development potential.

Implementation: The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 2

A VEHICULAR MIDBLOCK DRIVE FROM UNION SQUARE TO SECOND AVENUE NW

Finding: The mid-block area running north–south between Union Square and Second Avenue NW has development potential.

Discussion: Several factors have recently contributed to the need for a coordinated development opportunity for the corridor: the pedestrian loop around the block of Union Square, Third Street NW, First Avenue NW, and Second Street NW is twice as long as it should be for good cross shopping (see Report: Section II: Retail); the Hickory Springs Corporation would like to expand their operation to the rear of their property fronting on First Avenue NW; there are two contiguous parking lots between Second and Third Avenues NW that many neighborhood residents use as a vehicular cut-through. Affordable and urban housing, especially for younger couples, singles, and older "empty-nester" households, is not available within a short walking distance of Union Square. There is a need for alternative and more attractive ways to bring pedestrians, bicyclist, and pleasure drivers into Union Square.

See Vision: Section I: A Vehicular Mid-Block Drive From Union Square to Second Avenue; Vision: Section II: The 1970s Master Plan for Union Square and the End of the Retail Loop;

Recommendations: The mid-block passageway between Union Square and First Avenue NW could be renovated to include a landscaped drive with sidewalks, shop windows, and entrances into the adjacent buildings. This landscaped drive could also be extended to Third Avenue NW, connecting to the historic Oakwood Cemetery. The plan could also reconfigure the alley on the north side of First Avenue NW to accommodate the expansion of Hickory Springs and permit other development to front on the landscaped drive in existing parking lots.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the Planning and Development Department, Engineering Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Public Services Department, and Economic Development Coordinator in conjunction with the NC Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, Downtown Development Association, Hickory Springs Corporation, First Presbyterian Church, and Oakwood Cemetery. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule. Available funds shall be requested from the City of Hickory Public Services, the Parks and Recreation Department, the Economic Development Coordinator, and an assessment from the Downtown Development Association. Street improvements funding shall be requested from the North Carolina Department of Transportation as part of federal ISTEA funds through the Hickory-Newton-Conover Metropolitan Planning organization (MPO).

References: Artist Housing/Studio Report (1996), Sidewalk and Bikeway Master Plan (1997).

SPECIFIC PROJECT 3

THE HARPER FORD BUILDING AND AN ARTS AND CRAFTS ROW

Finding: The Harper Ford Property, bounded by First and Second Avenue SW and Second and Third Street SW, is an ideal redevelopment infill site.

Discussion: Several factors are contributing to the feasibility of this redevelopment site: the existing building's architecture is of landmark quality; the entry of this building frames the vista terminating Second Street Place SW; Hickory can support more arts and crafts galleries in the downtown; affordable and urban housing, especially for younger couples, singles, and older empty-nester households, is not available within a short walking distance of Union Square; First Avenue and Second Avenues SW are deficient in urban and pedestrian quality because of their open parking lots, vacant land, high-speed traffic, and lack of on-street parking; and there is a need for alternative and more attractive ways to bring pedestrians, bicyclist, and pleasure drivers into Union Square.

See Vision: Section I: The Harper Ford Building and an Arts and Crafts Row; Section II: The Harper Ford Building; and Section IV: Proposed Street and Streetscape Improvements.

Recommendations: The Harper Ford Site could be redeveloped as a mixed-use infill project. The proposed design by TBA2 Architects is described in Vision: Section I. The Harper Ford Building and the Arts and Crafts Row. As part of this development, a segment of the greenway system linking Union Square from the southern axis is accommodated through this development (see Appendix D: [Diagram 2: Gateways, Corridors, and Open Space, D-2](#)). A successful infill development project on this site will require streetscape improvements. The city should work with the development group to upgrade the streetscape at the same time as the site construction.

Implementation: The above project shall be undertaken by a private developer with coordination through the Planning and Development Department, Engineering Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Public Services Department, Economic Development Coordinator, NC Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, and Downtown Development Association. The city, through the Economic Development Coordinator, shall assist the property owner with soliciting potential development groups interested in undertaking this project. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule. Available funds shall be requested from the City of Hickory Public Services, the Parks and Recreation Department, the Economic Development Coordinator, and an assessment from the Downtown Development Association. Funding shall be requested from the North Carolina Department of

Transportation as part of federal ISTEA funds through the Hickory-Newton-Conover Metropolitan Planning organization (MPO).

References: Artist Housing/Studio Report (1996), Sidewalk and Bikeway Master Plan (1997), First and Second Avenues SE/SW Business Development Plan (1997).

GENERAL AREA 2

KENWORTH FOUR POINTS

Finding: One of the main entrances to the City Center is through Kenworth Four Points.

Discussion: Kenworth Four Points has always been a viable commercial center. However in the past several years, like many older commercial areas, it has evolved from a pedestrian-friendly neighborhood shopping district to an auto-oriented commercial strip. First Avenue SE and Second Avenue SE are currently motley thoroughfares but have strong potential of restoration to a respectable neighborhood center. The variety of the existing frontages differ to the point of urban incoherence. They range from buildings built to the sidewalk, to landscaped front yards, to strip-style parking lots. This random, unpredictable mixture fails to create an aesthetic approach to the City Center. Redevelopment is further complicated by the fact that the lots vary in depth and thus in parking capacity.

See Vision: Section I: Kenworth Four Points; Section II: Neighborhood Retail: Ridgeview and Kenworth Four Points Commercial Centers.

Recommendation: In the context of an eight-year Master Plan substantial change can be safely envisioned, particularly given the low quality of most of the buildings and the anticipated traffic projections. Fortunately, redevelopment is not hampered by lack of parking areas since there are large, old industrial parcels providing parking opportunities, even for parking garages. The best urban choice is to build to the sidewalks as shown in the proposed designs. Initially, this could be challenging on a street with high-speed traffic unbuffered by parking. Off-peak curbside parking is a way of encouraging rebuilding along the frontage, but because of multiple peak-hour traffic surges this may not be possible. Phasing should first be directed to redevelopment along the secondary streets. A gateway triangular green could be introduced at the Four Points intersection of Highland Avenue and First Avenue SE. Once the one way pairs have been restored to two ways the primary avenues could rebuild. Ultimately NC127, because of its high profile frontage, could become a respectable boulevard of mixed-use shopfront buildings.

Implementation: The Economic Development Coordinator should work with developers to pursue a small grocery store as the anchor to new redevelopment for Kenworth Four Points. The street right-of-way improvements shall be undertaken by the Planning and Development Department, Engineering Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Public Services Department, and Economic Development Coordinator in conjunction with the NC Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule. Funding shall be requested from the North Carolina Department of Transportation as part of federal ISTEA funds through the Hickory-Newton-Conover Metropolitan Planning organization (MPO). Available funds shall be requested from the City of Hickory Public Services, the Parks and Recreation Department, Economic Development Coordinator, and assessment from the Downtown Development Association.

GENERAL AREA 3

THE NEW LENOIR-RHYNE X DESIGNED AS A CIVIC AND COMMERCIAL CENTER

Finding: An entire block of older homes in Claremont, bounded by Seventh and Eighth Avenues NE, Eighth Street NE, and Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard adjacent to Lenoir-Rhyne College, has been removed to create a vehicular crossover for the one-way pairs. The resulting large void provides a clean slate for significant, high profile development land fronting a busy road corridor.

Discussion: See Vision: Section I: The New Lenoir-Rhyne X Designed as a Civic and Commercial Center.

Recommendations: A pedestrian scale neighborhood center could be developed at the X. As part of this center, Lenoir-Rhyne College could develop a new gateway building for the campus on the northwest quadrant. Existing commercial uses could expand toward the center, framing out the southeast quadrants. New shopfront buildings could fill in the remaining two quadrants to the northeast and southwest. Parking could be provided behind these buildings and on Seventh and Eighth Avenues NE as an extension of the diagonal parking that already exists. A roundabout or, at a minimum, a vertical monument on a small island could be placed at the center of the X with a civic art feature. The proposed design also includes a small plaza at the corner of Eighth Street NE and Seventh Avenue NE as part of commercial uses. The streetscape could be an extension of typical avenues with a planting median that includes street trees and a sidewalk. Where the street is fronted with shopfront buildings, trees could be placed in wells with grates to provide wider sidewalks. The open quadrangle at the center could be designed with a coordinated streetscape design, unifying the four quadrants as a public space. Traffic signals could be upgraded from wood poles and wires to painted metal (in the Municipal Color) with signal arms, including pedestrian crosswalk signals and striping (diamond pattern).

Implementation: This project shall be undertaken by the Planning and Development Department with possible assistance from a design consultant. Coordination shall be made with Lenoir-Rhyne College, the Claremont Neighborhood, adjacent private property owners, and NCDOT. Support shall be provided by the Engineering Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Public Services Department, Economic Development Coordinator, and the NC Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. The city, through the Economic Development Coordinator, shall assist in soliciting development groups interested in undertaking the projects on the northeast and southwest quadrants. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule. Available funds shall be requested from the City of Hickory Public Services budget, the Parks and Recreation Department, Economic Development Coordinator, and assessment from the Downtown Development Association. Funding shall be requested from the North Carolina Department of Transportation as part of federal ISTEA funds through the Hickory-Newton-Conover Metropolitan Planning organization (MPO).

References: Sidewalk and Bikeway Master Plan (1997); Ray Oldenburg's *The Great Good Place* (New York: Paragon House, 1989) describes the importance of social centers in everyday life; P. V. Turner's *Campus: An American Planning Tradition* (1984) is the one of best resources for campus planning.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 4

THE SALT BLOCK

Finding: The SALT Block master plan and building program continues to expand its scope of citywide and regional cultural needs as well as its functional compatibility with the Claremont neighborhood.

Discussion: See Vision: Section I: The SALT Block with Neighborhood Service; Expanding Frye Regional Medical Center with the Urban House Type: and A Front Entrance Drive for the SALT Block.

Recommendations: Continue to develop the SALT Block along the lines of a classic American campus of domestic-scale buildings framing landscaped quadrangles. The additional buildings could be designed to include enclosed parking structures. The master plan could include a small urban plaza at the corner of Second Street NE and Third Avenue NE. This plaza could serve as a pedestrian entrance, providing access to a museum café and gift shop. These retail uses could also benefit from neighborhood foot traffic and function as neighborhood service shops. Civic art opportunities exist on locations throughout the SALT campus including the urban plaza, the landscaped quadrangles, and the art walk streetscape. The entrance drive from Second Street NE is the key to resolving traffic conflicts with the Claremont Neighborhood—see specific project 6.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the SALT Committee in coordination with the City Planning and Development Department. The SALT Committee shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule. Funds shall be provided through the private donations, grants, and the SALT operating budget.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 5

FRYE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER WITH NEIGHBORHOOD SCALE

Finding: Frye Regional Medical Center is perceived to be an asset to and a seam between both the Claremont and Oakwood neighborhoods. However, the residents are concerned about the hospital's expansion plans and the scale of buildings.

Discussion: See Vision: Section I: Expanding Frye Regional Center with the Urban House Type; A Front Entrance Drive for the SALT Block; The Master Plan Overlay Zoning Ordinance and Four Building Types; and Urban Regulations: Appendix A: Hickory Type III: Urban House.

Recommendations: The Frye Regional Medical Center could expand in the direction of the SALT Block campus with similar scale buildings. When new building space is needed it should be developed according to the Urban House Type proposed in the Overlay Zoning Code. Ground floor uses, i.e., conference rooms, a cafeteria, a florist, pharmacy, or day-care center, could also be used by the general public for neighborhood service needs. The entrance drive from Second Street NE is a key to resolving traffic conflicts with the Claremont and Oakwood Neighborhoods—see specific project 6.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by Frye Regional Medical Center in coordination with the City Planning and Development Department, Claremont Neighborhood, Oakwood Neighborhood, and the SALT Block. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule. Funds shall be provided through the private donations, grants, and the SALT Block operating budget.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 6

A FRONT ENTRANCE DRIVE FOR THE SALT BLOCK AND FRYE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Finding: Both the SALT Block and Frye Regional Medical Center do not have frontage access to NC 127/Second Street NE. Claremont and Oakwood neighborhood residents have expressed concern about the traffic going through the neighborhood streets to get to the hospital and SALT Block.

Discussion: See Vision: Section I: A Front Entrance Drive for the SALT Block and Frye Regional Medical Center.

Recommendations: A front entrance drive for the SALT Block and Frye Regional Medical Center onto Second Street NE is necessary to resolve the growing circulation issues. Cross-lane turning traffic from Second Street NE onto Fourth Avenue NE could be eliminated and replaced with a landscaped median on Second Street NE. The median will provide an island of refuge for pedestrians crossing the wide street. Traffic signals could be relocated for the Fourth Avenue NE intersection with painted metal (municipal color) signal arms including pedestrian crosswalks signals and striping (diamond pattern).

Implementation: The above project shall be undertaken by the Planning and Development Department and the Engineering Department in coordination with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Hickory-Newton-Conover Metropolitan Planning organization (MPO), Parks and Recreation Department, Public Services Department, Economic Development Coordinator, NC Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, and Downtown Development Association. The city, through the Economic Development Coordinator, shall assist the property owner with soliciting potential development groups interested in undertaking this project. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule. Available funds shall be requested from the City of Hickory Public Services budget, the Parks and Recreation Department budget, Frye Regional Medical Center and SALT Block. Funding shall be requested from the North Carolina Department of Transportation as part of federal ISTEA funds through the Hickory-Newton-Conover Metropolitan Planning organization (MPO).

References: Sidewalk and Bikeway Master Plan (1997)

SPECIFIC PROJECT 6

RIDGEVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Finding: The Ridgeview Neighborhood once had a positive identity for the existing Ridgeview community.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the Ridgeview Neighborhood retaining a community planning consultant in coordination with the City Planning and Development Department, Engineering Department, North Carolina Department of Transportation, Hickory-Newton-Conover Metropolitan Planning organization (MPO), Parks and Recreation Department, Public Services Department, Economic Development Coordinator, and NC Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. The city, through the Economic Development Coordinator, shall assist the property owner with soliciting potential development groups interested in undertaking this project. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule. Funds shall be provided through the city's general budget and Empowerment Zone provisions.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 7

RIDGEVIEW CIVIC CENTER

Finding: The Ridgeview Civic Center is defined by the area within Seventh Avenue SW, Third Street SW, Eighth Avenue Drive SW, and First Street SW. It currently includes the Brown Penn Center, Taft Broome Park, the new library, a day-care center, tennis courts, a baseball field, parking spaces, and some vacant land.

Discussion: See Vision: Section I: The Ridgeview Civic Center.

Because of program changes, the Gantt-Huberman Pease Master Plan for the Civic Center requires updating. Residents have expressed concern about the safety of children crossing Third Street SW from Brown Penn Center to the baseball field. The existing U-shaped garden apartment building type is incompatible with the caliber and quality of most houses in Hickory.

Recommendation: Once the existing old library is moved the vacant site could be turned into a reading garden for the new library. The three civic buildings could be connected by a walkway. The parking lot by the tennis courts could be expanded to accommodate necessary parking requirements. Bleacherlike viewing pavilions could be located next to the tennis courts for the new tennis program. Building expansion connected to the existing auditorium could accommodate administration offices and/or a cafeteria for the elementary school. Across from this administrative building there could be built (with respect to the topography change) an additional school building with classroom space. A new green could be added for the school between the tennis courts and the administration building. Third Street SW could be closed for everyday use and opened for special occasions, such as PTA meetings and school plays. For adequate pick-up and drop-off space for the school, there could be a horseshoe-shaped drive off of Seventh Avenue SW. There could be a public indoor and outdoor basketball facility fronting both the new green and Eighth Avenue Drive SW. Further down Seventh Avenue SW to the west behind the proposed classroom building there could be a smaller green for recess and school bus pick-up and drop-off with a "school bus only" drive-through. The senior center would remain at the bend of Third Street SW and a new building to house the day-care center could be built facing the senior center. To ensure easy access to the residential areas on Eighth Avenue Drive SW, a connecting street could be made from Third Street Place SW to Third Street SW. The old horseshoe-shaped apartment building could be removed and school parking could be placed on the site. A traffic square at the entrance to the Civic Center from Eighth Avenue Drive SW could help calm the speed of traffic near the school.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the Ridgeview Neighborhood retaining a community planning consultant in coordination with the City Planning and Development Department, Engineering Department, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Hickory-Newton-Conover Metropolitan Planning organization (MPO), Parks and Recreation Department, Public Services Department, Economic Development Coordinator, and NC office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. The city, through the Economic Development Coordinator, shall assist the property owner with soliciting potential development groups interested in undertaking this project.

The Office of the City Manager shall report back to the City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

Funds shall be provided through the city general budget and Empowerment Zone provisions.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 8

THE AREA SOUTH OF RIDGEVIEW CIVIC CENTER

Finding: This area is defined by Third Street Place SW, Third Street Court SW, and Eighth Avenue Drive SW, and includes a U-shaped street with modest pre-manufactured housing and vacant parcels.

Discussion: See Vision, Section I: The Area South of Ridgeview Civic Center.

Because of its site design and building types, the area is difficult to monitor and is thus, unsafe. The U-shaped street permits people to walk into them and virtually disappear.

Recommendation: The trailers could be replaced with wood-frame or modular houses. The U-shaped street could be replaced with a community square flanked by modest homes. With an open square, every activity is visible from adjacent windows or porches. The square creates a safe place because the residents' eyes are always watching it. A well-defined square of about a dozen homes could create a place with an additional positive identity for the existing Ridgeview community.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the Ridgeview Neighborhood retaining a community planning consultant in coordination with the City Planning and Development Department, Engineering Department, North Carolina Department of Transportation, Hickory-Newton-Conover Metropolitan planning organization (MPO), Parks and Recreation department, Public Services, Department, Economic Development Coordinator, and NC Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. The city, through the Economic Development Coordinator, shall assist the property owner with soliciting potential development groups interested in undertaking this project.

The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

Funds shall be provided through the city's general budget and Empowerment Zone provisions.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 9

IMPROVING OPTIMIST PARK WITH ADJACENT INFILL HOUSING

Finding: Optimist Park is underused and considered unsafe by some residents.

Discussion: See Vision: Section I: Improving Optimist Park with Adjacent Infill Housing

. The park was originally developed from residual, mainly low-lying land. House back yards, rather than their fronts, face the park and there is a large, paved parking lot in the middle of the park. The owners of the Williamsburg Apartments on Fifth Avenue SW own a large parcel of land, behind the apartments, that abuts Optimist Park. It is difficult to make the sharp turn out of the park because of the high speed of cars coming over the hill on the one-way thoroughfare of Second Avenue SW.

Recommendation: According to the housing study in this report, new, market-rate infill housing would be successful in the Green Park neighborhood. Cole Jenest & Stone's proposal for redesigning the park addresses the issues above and provides sites for infill housing. See Vision: Section I: A New Entrance to Kenworth and Infill Sites.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the City Planning and Development Department and the Parks and Recreation Department in conjunction with the owners of the land associated with the Williamsburg Apartments. Support shall be provided by the Public Services Department, Engineering Department, Economic Development Coordinator, and NC Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. The city, through the Economic Development Coordinator, shall assist with soliciting potential development groups interested in undertaking this project. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary

details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule. Funds shall be provided through the city's general budget and Empowerment Zone provisions.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 10

A NEW ENTRANCE TO KENWORTH AND INFILL SITES

Finding: The Kiwanis District Park needs better access and the Kenworth residents are concerned about traffic accessing the park through the neighborhood. According to the housing study in this report, new, market-rate infill housing would be successful in the Kenworth neighborhood.

Discussion: See Vision: Section I: A New Entrance to Kenworth and Infill Sites. The southern boundaries of the recorded plat for Kenworth have never been built-out. This is, in part, because of the challenging terrain of surrounding creeks and hills. Eventually, a district park, including four baseball fields, was developed on a portion of this area. Residents of Kenworth are concerned that the district park can only be accessed through the Kenworth neighborhood's residential streets. The stone gateway elements at the historic entrance to Kenworth at Second Avenue SE and Fifth Street SE reinforce the neighborhood's boundaries and physical identity. The Terrace Hills public housing site could benefit from a redevelopment plan similar to the program and goals of HUD's HOPE VI mission of redeveloping public housing as mixed-income and mixed-use New Urbanism communities.*

**The four public housing sites in City Center include Site 'A', Sunny Valley off Third Avenue SE; Site 'B', Hillside Gardens bounded by South Center Street, Eighth Avenue Drive, NC 127, and Tenth Avenue SE; Site 'C', Blue Ridge Heights in the area of Second Street SW, First Street SW, Second Street Place SW, and Ninth Avenue Place SW; and Site 'D', Terrace Hills off of NC 127 South at Second Street SE, Eleventh Avenue Drive SE, and Second Street Place SE.*

Recommendations: Redevelop Terrace Hills Public Housing and install an access road to Kiwanis Park. The proposed plan improves the Terrace Hills area by creating an entrance onto NC 127 and by providing space for new and redeveloped housing. The new road would have to cross a creek, which would be rather expensive, but the plan offers the opportunity to build infill housing. Kenworth has kind of a loose tail because of the site conditions and the park, and this proposal would hem the neighborhood back into the city. There could be a stone gateway to match the existing historic gateway on the north side of Kenworth, which could reinforce the neighborhood's positive physical identity.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the City Planning and Development Department, Parks and Recreation Department, and Housing Authority in coordination with adjacent property owners. Support shall be provided by the Public Services Department, Engineering Department, Economic Development Coordinator, and NC Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. The city, through the Economic Development Coordinator, shall assist with soliciting potential development groups interested in undertaking this project. A delegation of individuals representing the above organizations shall make a field trip to First Ward, Charlotte, North Carolina, to tour the HOPE VI redevelopment underway.

The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

Funds shall be provided through the city general budget and Empowerment Zone provisions.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 11

REDEVELOPING GREEN PARK SCHOOL

Finding: The residents of Green Park Neighborhood are very concerned about the future use of the Green Park School site.

Discussion: The School Board owns the site and buildings. The play fields associated with the school are used by Green Park residents as a neighborhood park. The school buildings, especially the original school and teacherage, are in good condition. New, market-rate infill housing would be successful in the Green Park neighborhood. Green Park has the ability to support an additional small convenience center.

Recommendation: Three different development scenarios were prepared by the charrette team (fig. [65](#), [66](#), [67](#)). The first reuses the existing buildings and maintains all of the existing open space as a park. The second and third retain some of the open space as a park, but develop the rest with one-unit or two-unit dwellings using the House Building type in the proposed Overlay Zoning Ordinance (Appendix A, p. A-5). The School Board could exchange some of the school playground for some of the newly created marketable lots proposed for Optimist Park or as part of the infill housing in Kenworth next to Kiwanis Park. In this scenario the neighborhood would be assured of having open-park space in two different areas of Green Park.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the City Planning and Development Department, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the School Board in coordination with the Green Park Neighborhood Association. Support shall be provided by the Public Services Department, Engineering Department, Economic Development Coordinator, and NC Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation. The city, through the Economic Development Coordinator, shall assist with soliciting potential development groups interested in undertaking this project.

The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

Funds shall be provided through the city's general budget and Empowerment Zone provisions.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 12

A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD GREEN FOR KENWORTH

Finding: Kiwanis Park has been reprogrammed from a neighborhood park into a district park.

Discussion: The neighborhood structure diagram (see Appendix D, Diagram 1) illustrates that a social gathering place would be beneficial to Kenworth if located in the physical center of the southern half Kenworth. The churches and the edge uses of Kenworth Four Points and Kiwanis Park have historically provided for this. Even though the churches remain strong social centers, both edge uses have evolved to serve the greater City Center. Generally, there has been discussion about providing more "pocket parks" or "tot lots" in each neighborhood.

Recommendation: A new small neighborhood green or pocket park/tot lot could be located in the proximity of Eighth Avenue SE and Fourth Street SE on vacant land.

Implementation: The city shall work with the neighborhood and local property owners to determine the availability and ideal location for the neighborhood green. The above projects shall be undertaken by the City Planning and Development Department and the Parks and Recreation Department in coordination with the Kenworth Neighborhood Association. A design consultant shall be retained to assist with this project.

The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

Funds shall be provided through the Parks and Recreation budget and private donations.

GENERAL DISCUSSION 1

EVALUATION OF THE CITY ORDINANCES

Hickory City Center has a mixture of land uses typical of most traditional southern towns. The current zoning ordinance allows for a wide range of uses, including residential, that are desired within the City Center.

Finding: The existing zoning ordinance is not functioning as well as it should and is not responding to the current needs of the community. The team began evaluating the existing zoning ordinance during neighborhood tours and through conversations with residents and property owners. A variety of issues emerged. The current zoning ordinance precludes converting commercial uses back to residential. The city needed to grant a special easement

in order to provide affordable housing compatible with the adjacent homes on lots which are considered substandard by the current zoning ordinance. In City Center neighborhoods the single-family house and the lifestyle it represents should be preserved and protected. The current zoning ordinance allows garage doors to be the dominate architectural element of a house facade and front yards to be used as parking lots. Commercial trash dumpsters are randomly placed without regard for their effect on streetscape appearances.

Further observation by the team determined additional findings: The City Center neighborhoods of predominately single-family houses are generally intact and functioning well. In transition areas between single-family houses and commercial buildings—the two- to four-block ring around Union Square—large houses are being used for a mix of uses. Historically, neighborhood service centers in and adjacent to City Center neighborhoods, such as Kenworth Four Points and South Center Street, were built as pedestrian scale, one-to two-story shopfront buildings. However, most of these shopfronts have been abandoned, demolished, or replaced by auto-oriented strip development, with its large parking lots in front and street improvements disregarding pedestrian needs. In the downtown, core buildings rarely exceed four stories and most range from two to three stories. Some new buildings and some facade renovations are incompatible with the architectural character of Hickory City Center. In and around the Central Business District, parking appears to be sufficient and noticeably excessive in some areas. Many of the more remote parking lots—a half block to two blocks from Union Square—were mostly vacant during peak business hours. On-street parking is underused and in many cases not permitted.

Discussion:

Predictable Growth to Encourage Investors

All city centers have had high and low cycles in their histories. Often, unforeseen events that have led to adverse environmental and economic effects, resulting in changes in traffic circulation and parking that have impacted the vitality of central business districts and the physical definition and structure of neighborhoods.

Although the viability of a city may be obvious even in the face of deterioration, constructive change and a positive future may be difficult to imagine under today's circumstances. To assure objectivity in setting revitalization goals, one must look at the City Center from an outside investor's point of view, as either a place to live and/or develop a business. Like many cities, all the advantages and incentives for investing in Hickory point to building in the suburbs and highway corridors outside the City Center. Rather than face the potential of a complicated development process implied by redevelopment variables, a developer can go to a planned unit development on the outskirts of the city and build pods of houses, office parks, or shopping centers according to a simple set of rules.

In the city, as in the suburbs, it is crucial to the developer, as well as the resident, to know what will be built next door. If there is no way of predicting what will be built on adjacent properties, then investing in real estate is an uncertain proposition. Without some guarantee of physical predictability, and thus insurance of investment value, the financial risks of real estate and business development are magnified.

The Hickory City Center Master Plan intends to make the playing field of investment in downtown real estate level with that of the suburbs. The goal is to establish an environment with a high degree of physical predictability, not only for aesthetic reasons, but also to encourage renewed building in the city. The means for making Hickory City Center physically predictable and thus worth investing in, or moving to, is the new Overlay Zoning Code and its Regulating Plan and Urban Regulations.

The Regulation Plan and Urban Regulations

The Regulating Plan is a graphic document that maps the buildable sites and designates open space in Hickory City Center (see Appendix A: Regulating Plan, p. A-6). It shows private lots with their corresponding building types, as defined by the Urban Regulations. The Urban Regulations are written and graphic codes that define the Building Types and regulates their use, placement on lots, parking, and heights (see Urban Regulations). Its purpose is to control those elements of a private building that pertain to the formation of public spaces.

These two documents form the new code, which is only concerned with governing the public aspect of buildings—their public facades and how they relate to the street and square. The geometric definition of public space is the

method of making place, of providing the public realm with specific character. For too long Hickory has been trying to be suburban, with individual, idiosyncratic buildings unconcerned with defining public space.

The new code will ensure that all new buildings will contribute to the urban and traditional neighborhood life of the City Center. This can be shown in the images of what Hickory City Center might be like if built according to these regulations (see Plates [A](#), [B](#), [C](#), [D](#) & [L](#)). With the new code, the future build-out of the City Center can be predictable and straightforward, diminishing the financial risk to developers and homeowners.

Hickory will be made even more attractive to investors by this Code's expeditious permitting process, which will be comparable to the almost automatic permitting in the suburbs.

The Urban Regulations: A Simply and Succinct Option

The Urban Regulations are simple. They are depictive and written in plain English so that everyone can understand and use them. It is unnecessary to hire an architect or lawyer to act as a translator. The control of building capacity is not by an abstract floor-area-ratio, but by the actual physical description of the building volume. The height and physical configuration of a building is described in advance and the investor is free to build within its envelope. With the Regulating Plan, the Urban Regulations ensure that similar buildings line the street with uniform setbacks, resulting in a physically predictable environment.

The Urban Regulations also accommodate and promote small-scale, incremental growth. Banks are not required to loan large amounts of money for development. Smaller loans mean many small-scale developers can be active in rebuilding the city. A more inclusive property ownership of the City Center benefits the democratic process. The new Code allows small lot development, as small as one townhouse at a time, a form of growth nearly impossible in the suburbs.

The Four Building Types in the Urban Regulations

The Master Plan's proposed Overlay Zoning Ordinance

Map for the study area is very simple (see Appendix A). It has four categories, which represent four different building types. The first type is the Urban Building, which has a street-level storefront and office or residential uses above. It is located downtown and is at least two stories high and at most three stories, though a fourth story is permitted if exclusively residential use. The second building type is for storefront locations adjacent to downtown and in neighborhood centers. Called the Shopfront Building, it has mixed uses and can be one- to two-stories high, with a third story permitted for residential use. The third building type is designated for areas within a few blocks of Union Square and in neighborhood centers where there are one- to three-story, detached houses that have a variety of uses. These are the urban mansions or Urban House type previously discussed. The fourth building type is the House Building type, a one- to three-story single-family or two-family house, which is designated for most of the study area.

Recommendation: The Hickory City Center Master Plan recommends an Overlay Zone be created. This Overlay Zone contains design standards that would be an optional alternative to the underlying zoning regulations.

This Overlay Zone, through the Regulating Plan, designates building heights by location and also designates locations where first-floor retail is required to strengthen the cohesiveness and continuity of the downtown business district and shopping streets. The Overlay Zone also contains site and building design standards that must be adhered to by any site plan being proposed under the Overlay Zone. Detailed specifications and draft language for this Overlay Zone are contained in this plan. The current use regulations within each of the existing zoning districts will continue to be compiled with. The Overlay Zone's building height and design standards will supersede the existing zoning ordinance's Schedule of Area, Height, Bulk, and Placement Regulations.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the City Planning and Development Department, Legal and, Zoning Departments.

The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

CIRCULATION 5

STREET NAMING

Finding: The current street naming system of numbers and quadrants is perceived, especially by newcomers, as confusing, impersonal, and lacking in local character. The current street naming system of numbers and quadrants is perceived, especially by long-time residents and local delivery services, as simple and easy to use.

Discussion: There are valid reasons for both names and numbers. The planning team's research uncovered another numbering system that existed before the current number and quadrant system. Also discovered were the original names for many of the oldest streets (see Appendix D: Diagram 6, p. D-6). In some cases there were even two names. It could be concluded that Hickory has a history of changing its street identification system. These changes may coincide with the evolution of the Hickory area from a tavern to a village to a town. As Hickory evolves into a small city, this City Center Master Plan could signal the time to reassign street identifications.

Recommendation: Assign new street names while retaining the numbers and quadrant system. The original names could form the basis for discussion for the new names.

Implementation: The above project shall be undertaken by a special committee for each neighborhood and one for the downtown. The duties of the committee shall be the following: (1) to create a street name map, and (2) to vote on whether to adopt or not adopt the parallel system. The proposed signage system shall also include identification for each neighborhood and the downtown.

Each committee shall report back to Office of the City Manager within eight weeks. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with a progress report, and within eight months with a preliminary budget and an implementation schedule.

STREETSCAPE 1

Finding: Municipal furnishings and equipment—signage, street furniture, vehicles—have no coherent unifying theme.

Discussion: A municipal color is an elemental first step in community consciousness. This is evident in the school color, the club tie, and the corporate image of a Big Blue. A sophisticated municipality should have a municipal color for ease of maintenance, if for no other reason. Of the half dozen colors suggested during the charrette the most popular is a "jade green," which may receive the appellation "Hickory Green".

Recommendation: Adopt Hickory Green as the municipal color and enact a policy of applying it to city equipment, either repainted or newly ordered, including vehicles (excluding fire and rescue equipment), metal street furniture, street lamps, trash cans, bike racks, newspaper boxes, and fences as well as stationary, seals, and signage.

Implementation: A "test" block for streetscape furniture in the municipal color shall be constructed before a final decision is made. Once the block is in place, residents of the city should be invited down for a preview. The test block shall be in place for eight months before finalizing the municipal color. Fronting merchants sales increases or decreases (not during construction) shall be checked as part of the determination.

The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight days with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

References: Precedents: England, where Queen's Red is used on phone booths, mailboxes, mail trucks etc.; the DPZ/GPG Main Street Redevelopment Plan for Naples, Florida, where municipal equipment is "Naples Yellow."

Color: Sherwin-Williams Preservation Palette Rookwood Jade SW 2812 or equivalent.

GENERAL AREA 2

RIDGEVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD

Finding: Ridgeview refers to the neighborhood circumscribed by Government Avenue, Fourth Street SW, US 70, and NC 127.

Neighborhood Walkaround June 29, 1998

City council representative Anne Hoyle led an opening presentation describing the Ridgeview Civic Center to the charrette team. A recent history overview explained that in 1991 Ridgeview conducted a planning workshop study "from the inside out," where sketches were produced. As a result of this and other initiatives, Ridgeview has completed a remodeling of the Brown Penn Center. The gym has been remodeled into a gymnasium: an office was removed from the stage and new bathrooms and an air-conditioning system were installed. The city owns property all around the civic center block. In 1993, a Master Plan was commissioned by Gantt Huberman Pease, which included lighted walkways and a proposal to face the entrance towards the parking lot. Additional needs envisioned included an upgraded, covered pool, a game room, a family center, and an enlarged day-care center.

In addition to the civic center, general neighborhood issues were discussed. A problem that has brought the community together is drug dealers on street corners. The community has been addressing this problem and is actively campaigning that Ridgeview no longer tolerate drug dealers and prostitution.

Vacant lots were identified as an issue and the need for single-family housing. Also expressed was a desire to have businesses in the neighborhood so that residents would no longer have to drive or be driven to get daily needs. Needed businesses include a grocery stores, restaurants, and offices that would employ residents of the neighborhood. A satellite office for the Resource Center already exists in Ridgeview.

The driving and walking tour expanded on the discussion: the overhead utilities on South Center Street were considered unsightly and it was suggested that they be placed underground. Most sidewalks do not have planting buffers while some sidewalks have poles in the middle that hinder pedestrians—especially the disabled—from their use. Sidewalks are missing on some streets but it was noted that installing new sidewalks had already been scheduled. Residents responded positively to recent streetscape planting, including maple trees. The tour included a stop at Fourth Avenue SW between South Center Street and First Street SW. There was a lot of discussion about how this area was once the social and business hub of Ridgeview, but that 15 to 20 years have past since it had a variety of good businesses.

Originally, the center included a hotel, pharmacy, second-floor dance hall, dentist office, barber shop, beauty shop, and soda-pop shop. Horton's Cafe on Ninth Avenue SW was mentioned as a good neighborhood restaurant. The old library building will be physically relocated here and there was a discussion on which way it should face. The FACED Center project is a new business center needing 5,000 to 6,000 square feet of space. Other potential business locations include a business plaza, like South Center Place at R&M Auto Service and along NC 127. The Resource Center currently has sufficient space.

During the tour, the team was asked to study the area around Third Street Place SW and Eighth Avenue Drive SW. Current problems include too many rental units, vacant lots, and trailers. It was noted that because of housing problems, the city has been clearing land. Housing providers, such as Habitat for Humanity, are active. At Third Street SW, where children are crossing from the Civic Center over to the baseball field, a traffic problem was noted. Currently, there is no sidewalk and a very narrow shoulder along the street before the ground drops off. Suggestions included a pedestrian crosswalk, widening the street for on-street parking, and adding a sidewalk.

At the debriefing meeting following the tour, discussion centered on how the old commercial center could be reborn. Mr. Mitchell pointed to the FACED Center project as a catalyst to jump start the commercial center. Discussions on traffic included the possibility of NC 127 needing an overwalk or crosswalks. The new interchange planned for US 321 and NC 127 may add more traffic through South Center Street, which can be a problem and/or opportunity. Residents said they "want some of the goodies" planned for all the neighborhoods and that they were tired of waiting and that this bottleneck must be fixed. A team member advised the community that they be careful about what it tears down. Many of the buildings are well built and if a current tenant or use is an issue, it can be addressed in other ways without demolishing a structure with potential future value. The Community Police Officer commented that many people use the street, that crime rate is stable, that there is a positive feeling, and that many residents are trying to preserve the neighborhood's good image and sell the "sunny spots."

Residents said they liked the character of the neighborhood-style frame houses. Jebrille Walls, a local architectural engineer, recommended looking at the buildable lots for housing and that new development should fit in, not be too tall, and not have garages in front.

Recommendations: The Hickory City Center Master Plan recommends implementing the Specific Project Plans for the Neighborhood Center; the Neighborhood Civic Center and area immediately to its south; institute traffic calming and circulation measures; renew the gateways, streetscape, and corridors; and adopt the Zoning Overlay Ordinance. It is also important to complete a Neighborhood Plan to the same extent as those completed for Kenworth and Green Park.

References: Gantt-Huberman Pease Report.

GENERAL AREA 3

KENWORTH NEIGHBORHOOD

Finding: Kenworth refers to the neighborhood circumscribed by NC 127 South, First Avenue SE, Kiwanis Park, and Seventh Avenue SE.

Neighborhood Walkaround June 30, 1998

In 1997, the city completed a Kenworth Neighborhood Plan. The plan is thorough and well written. The neighborhood association is very well organized. At the beginning of the walkaround meeting Tom Low was greeted by association president Joy Mease. The team was presented with a December 1997 draft of the Kenworth Neighborhood Overlay District Draft Out-line.

This document is well written and addresses many of the problems facing the neighborhood. The issues described in the report and evident on our tour included in the neighborhood plan and are in the process of implementation. Generally, the social and physical issues concern traffic speed, maintenance, quality neighborhood services, and creating pedestrian-friendly development.

Residents are concerned with public maintenance and the appearance of some properties and pointed to household furniture on porches, cars parked across front yards, dumpsters sitting on the sidewalk, gaps in the street lights, and a trailer on a lot adjacent to the "Welcome to Hickory" sign at Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard and Second Avenue SE. Residents expressed concern about the number of absentee landlords, a result of a 1980s program to convert houses into rental units. They would like to increase home ownership levels. Modular houses were proposed for infill development.

The residences commented on the lack of convenient neighborhood services, especially the need for a local grocery store in or near Kenworth. The future development potential of the old "Four Points," the area focused around NC 127 South, First Avenue SE, and Highland Avenue SE, was discussed. Residents pointed to Highland Avenue SE as the original wagon trail entrance road into Hickory. We were also told that in 1952 all the neighborhood streets names were removed and assigned the current numbering system. Residents are, through their own initiative, planting street trees—dogwoods and Crepe Myrtles—as part of the gateway sequence at the stone gate entrance at Fifth Street SE and Second Avenue SE.

Currently, there is a small neighborhood park at NC 127 South, Third Avenue SE, and Second Street Place SE that is perceived to be too close to the highway and the edge of Kenworth. There is also concern about the neighborhood park being too big, caused by its transformation into a city district park. Neighborhood streets provide limited access to the park. Traffic calming in the form of narrowing travel lanes is underway.

The consensus was that there are too many one-way streets, that Seventh Avenue SE is too busy, and that a traffic light is needed at Eighth Avenue Drive SE and NC 127 South or that visibility should be improved by trimming trees.

Recommendations: The Hickory City Center Master Plan recommends implementing the Specific Project Plans for Kenworth Four Points; the new neighborhood green; a new entrance and infill development for the area

immediately to the south; institute traffic calming and circulation measures; renew the gateways, streetscape, and corridors; and adopt the Zoning Overlay Ordinance. It is also important to continue to implement the Neighborhood Plan.

GENERAL AREA 4

GREEN PARK NEIGHBORHOOD

Finding: Green Park refers to the neighborhood circumscribed by Fourth Street SW, US Highway 70 West, Ninth Street SW, and Main Avenue SW.

Neighborhood Walkaround July 1, 1998

This year the city completed a Neighborhood Plan for Green Park, "A Neighborhood of Cedars." Like the Kenworth Neighborhood Plan, the Green Park report is well written and thorough. At the start of the neighborhood walkaround meeting, residents unanimously agreed that they liked Green Park the way it is, that they want to retain its quality of life, and that they need to implement the neighborhood plan. Beyond this, much of the focus of the meeting and tour was on the Green Park School, Optimist Park, traffic, and neighborhood businesses.

The residents expressed concern about the future of Green Park School. Of special concern is the possible loss of the playground which serves as open space and as a neighborhood activity green. The "Adopt-a-Spot" program was evident in one corner. The residents are interested in keeping the existing building for adaptive re-use rather than replacing it with new development.

Optimist Park was also discussed. The residents commented that the park needed more activities and programs to increase and attract users, and that parts of it were secluded to the point of being perceived as unsafe. They also pointed to the unsightly appearance of empty houses at the entrance along Second Avenue SW and neglected cars parked along the side yard to the east. Also mentioned was the difficulty of exiting the park because of fast moving one-way traffic on Second Avenue SW as well as the difficulty of making the sharp turn into the park just after coming over a hump that limited distance visibility.

The one-way pairs are a problem. Fast-moving traffic and truck noise have threatened the residents' quality of life. The highway standards utilized for the one-way pairs have affected the type of business development along these corridors. The auto-oriented nature of Second Avenue SW, with its fast traffic and lack of on-street parking, has created a pedestrian unfriendly environment that forms a boundary between the neighborhood and the City Center. This is contrary to the residents' goal of creating a better connection to the City Center. There is the perception of danger from outsiders in reference to the neighborhood businesses along Main Avenue and the one-way pairs of First and Second Avenues SW, especially where the office uses transition to industrial uses. The home owners along the one-way pairs have been dealing with the fast traffic and associated traffic noise for a long time. In the evening, loud music from a local bar has added to this anxiety. The city granted a special easement to provide affordable housing compatible with the adjacent homes on lots that are considered substandard by the current zoning ordinance.

Recommendations: The Hickory City Center Master Plan recommends implementing the Specific Project Plans for the improvements to Optimist Park and the redevelopment of Green Park School; institute traffic calming and circulation measures; renew the gateways, streetscape and corridors; and adopt the Zoning Overlay Ordinance. It is also important to continue to implement the Neighborhood Plan.

GENERAL AREA 5

OAKWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD

Finding: Oakwood refers to the neighborhood located in the northwest area of the City Center circumscribed by Ninth Street NW, Main Avenue NW, Third Street NW, First Avenue NW, North Center Street, Oakwood Cemetery, Seventh Avenue NW, Sixth Street Drive NW, and Ninth Avenue NW.

Neighborhood Walkaround July 2, 1998

Oakwood is a classic American neighborhood, with many highly desirable qualities, including an excellent housing stock, shady streets with mature landscaping, houses within walking distance to Oakwood Elementary School, civic amenities such as Shuford Memorial Gardens, and religious and social hubs such as Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. All of these contribute to a high-quality lifestyle. The residents are multi-generational—love seeing the baby carriages—with the resale of homes usually accomplished without advertising.

The residents like walking, and want to preserve Hickory's character and not let it become a "little Charlotte." Residents quickly conveyed that the primary perceived threat to this quality of life was traffic. Comments included the fear that "cars always win," the annoyance of truck traffic—especially cement trucks with both noise and vibration—on Second Avenue NW, Third Avenue NW, and Fifth Street NW, the danger of speeding cars and thus potential accidents near school children at Fourth Avenue NW and Fourth Street NW, and the observation that Third Avenue NW is a race-track in the afternoons, that "our neighborhood streets have been turned into thoroughfares," that cars are speeding along the stretch of Second Street NW in front of the Frye Regional Medical Center parking lot, and that Second Street Place NW is a short cut. The Police Chief indicated that a study was immediately underway to address these issues. The Church pastor indicated the church parking lot activity was currently being monitored. Residents had several suggestions including lowering the speed limit from 35 mph to 25 mph, installing speed bumps, placing traffic circles along Second and Third Avenue NW, and inserting a three-way stop at Sixth Street NW and Ninth Street NW.

Oakwood residents would also like additional sidewalks installed and timely maintenance of existing sidewalks. Residents along Sixth Street NW inquired about burying the overhead wires and adding pedestrian scale lighting, possibly gas lights. There were concerns about maintenance of weeds and pruning, creek flooding, a mosquito problem, break-ins, the ozone index, and air and noise pollution associated with nearby industrial and research uses. It was mentioned that a small grocery had closed and was missed.

Residents use Shuford Memorial Gardens as a play area for toddlers and asked to extend a mid-block sidewalk through from Seventh Street NW to Sixth Street NW. Generally, residents agreed that there is a need for pocket parks and/or tot lots—especially for seniors and parents with stroller age children.

Housing was discussed. One person mentioned that some houses were converted into apartments during unique economic periods, such as WWII. Comments were made about new infill housing being not to scale and have garage doors fronting the street, but residents realize it could be worse because of current zoning. Residents desired an expanded historic district and minimal restrictions on businesses. Concerns were voiced about big neighbors, such as the Frye Regional Medical Center and churches, expanding with development that is not compatible in scale with the surrounding neighborhood. Also expressed was a concern for the loss of mature trees.

Even though the name Oakwood has been designated for this neighborhood study area, the original area was smaller. Other place names associated with, in, or around this area include Test Hill, Camel Town, Morningside, Aikenwood, and 12 1/2 Street. It was suggested that Hickory continue to acknowledge these references as part of its heritage.

Recommendations: The Hickory City Center Master Plan recommends implementing the Specific Area Plans for Shuford Memorial Gardens, the Oakwood X, and the vehicular mid-block drive from Third Avenue NW to Union Square; institute traffic calming and circulation measures; renew the gateways, streetscapes, and corridors; and adopt the Zoning Overlay Ordinance.

It is also important to complete a Neighborhood Plan similar in depth to those completed for Kenworth and Green Park.

GENERAL AREA 6

CLAREMONT NEIGHBORHOOD

Finding: Claremont refers to the neighborhood located in the northeast area of the City Center circumscribed by North Center Street, Eighth Avenue NE, Highland Avenue, Main Avenue NE, and Lenoir-Rhyne College.

Neighborhood Walkaround July 2, 1998

Claremont's elegance, cultural, and historic character make it one of the most desirable neighborhoods in the region. Amenities located in and adjacent to the neighborhood include the SALT (Science, Arts, Literature, Together) Block, Ivey Arboretum, Carolina Park, Frye Regional Medical Center, and Lenoir-Rhyne College, which makes Claremont a regional destination.

Residents are optimistic that these regional amenities will continue to be an asset to the neighborhood's quality of life, but have concerns as well. Residents enjoy the diverse character of the neighborhood, which includes students, seniors, and families and housing ranging from affordable to very affluent.

The physical character of the neighborhood is dominated by large houses that provide a full range of uses, including apartments, single-family housing, civic, businesses, and retail establishments. Residents desire to maintain this character by encouraging housing renovation and compatible infill development. Residents wish to expand the historic district. Other concerns include providing more playground areas for children in the neighborhood. The minister of First United Methodist Church voiced concern about the deterioration of industrial housing and suggested building community support for the established program "Building Community Out of Diversity." The minister referred to the neighborhood area southeast of Claremont as a primary focus of the program.

The new library—part of SALT Block—is popular with the neighborhood, but access from NC 127/Second Street NE requires the use of neighborhood streets. Ensuing problems include overflow parking that blocks residential driveways, the use of the parking lot for city bus storage, and the fear that houses may be torn down to provide parking directly from this main thoroughfare. Residents also expressed a desire to improve signage and add sidewalks.

Some residents voiced concern about the scale of new development, that the large size of recently built public buildings give the feeling of being walled in. Accordingly, these residents asked about Frye Regional Medical Center's future plans and the possibility of meeting with hospital representatives. Ongoing construction by the hospital and the city was noted with a reference to the mini-storage trucks located at North Center and Third Avenue NE, a high visibility intersection.

Residents felt that the entrances to the neighborhood and civic uses did not give an accurate picture of their quality. Residents expressed much concern about traffic, especially related to the one-way streets of Second and Third Avenues NE, pedestrians crossing NC 127, the out-of-scale character of NC 127, and children crossing Fifth Avenue NE at Third Street NE on their way to College Park Middle School. Also, they requested for a truck traffic study.

The road project for the one-way pairs cross-over adjacent to Lenoir-Rhyne College along Eighth and Ninth Streets NE and Highland Avenue NE was a major topic of discussion on the tour. In general, everyone is unclear about its long term impact on the neighborhood. Questions included why it was needed, is its use already obsolete, was the demolition of the houses necessary, will pedestrians—especially students—be able to cross this area, how will the resulting open land be used, is there a need for traffic calming, how will the industrial uses be screened? It was suggested that the charrette team study this as a special project.

Recommendations: The Hickory City Center Master Plan recommends implementing the Specific Project Plans for the Neighborhood Center at the Lenoir-Rhyne X; Main Avenue NE; SALT Block; institute traffic calming and circulation measures; renew the gate-ways, streetscape and corridors; and adopt the Zoning Overlay Ordinance. It is also important to complete a Neighborhood Plan similar in depth to those completed for Kenworth and Green Park.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 13

GREEN PARK SCHOOL SITE

Findings: The old play area of the school provides a playing field for the neighborhood. The grass is regularly maintained. Mature cedars line the street sides.

Discussions: The field is important to the neighborhood, visually and functionally.

Recommendations: Any redevelopment of the school site should preserve a great portion of the play area as a community green for Green Park.

Implementation: Development of the site should contain restraints regarding preservation of the existing open space.

Include the site in the "tot lot" study.

CULTURAL RESOURCES 1

ARTS WALK

Findings: The development of the SALT Block in the Claremont neighborhood has created a highly visible headquarters for science, art, and literature adjacent to downtown.

Discussions: The SALT Block is close to downtown, but visitors do not know how to get there. Physical access to the SALT Block is difficult, even by car.

Recommendations: Develop an "Arts Walk" pedestrian connection between downtown (Union Square, Hickory Community Theater) and the SALT Block. Locate public art along the route in highly visible locations. A route by Carolina Park and along the rail lines up Main Avenue NE would be safe, efficient, and highly visible. The "Arts Walk" would provide sites for public art between the SALT Block and the downtown business district.

Implementation: Undertake a feasibility study in co-ordination with the Public Arts Committee.

CULTURAL RESOURCES 2

Finding: The City of Hickory lacks a coordinated Public Art Program.

Discussion: Through volunteer leadership of individuals, including Pat Moss and organizations such as the Appearance Commission, an informal Public Art Program has adequately functioned to date. Although this program has been effective, all work is by volunteers and no ongoing formal mechanism is in place for artist and site selection.

Recommendations: The city should set up an official Public Art Program. As part of this recommendation the City of Hickory should create a 1 percent or higher public art ordinance that will be tied to the Capital Improvement Projects. It is also recommended that the city engage a consultant to set up a Public Art Program.

Implementation: The Public Art Program shall administer the following:

Review all appropriate existing documents, plans, studies and reports. These documents will be supplied by the city.

Consult with staff at the outset of the project to finalize the project scope, methodology, and schedule.

Provide initial orientation sessions covering the public art master planning process to the steering committee appointed to oversee this planning effort.

Review the existing public art program, including the ordinance and accompanying Redevelopment Agency resolution, policies, guidelines and procedures.

Review the programs or the potential public art program within other governmental agencies with jurisdiction over public infrastructure.

Examine current urban design trends and neighborhood development activities and make recommendations for integrating public art into those efforts.

Conduct a citywide assessment and data collection phase, which may include the following activities, depending upon the consultant's specific proposal: key person interviews, focus groups, surveys, data analysis, Capital Improvement Project, and facility reviews, public hearings/community meetings.

It is envisioned that funding for setting up the Public Art Program shall be provided by City Council from the general budget, the Downtown Development Authority, the Appearance Commission, and through contributions by individuals.

The Office of the City Manager shall report back within eight weeks to the City Council with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

CULTURAL RESOURCES 3

Finding: City Center needs examples of public art to create interest for support of a Public Art Program.

Discussion: It is recommended that while the groundwork is being done to create and approve the Public Art Master Plan and ordinance, the City of Hickory undertake one or two pilot public art projects.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the City of Hickory engage a consultant to aid in the selection and administration of three potential pilot projects.

The first is a Public Art Walk that would essentially connect the downtown district to SALT (Science, Art, Literature, Together) Block. It is anticipated that this Art Walk would include a series of works that would begin and culminate with works of larger scale of more "impact." The Art Walk would act as a journey experience unique to Hickory. It might tell the story of Hickory's heritage and it might also make references to Hickory's growth and future.

The purpose of the Art Walk would be threefold. It would serve as a connecting pathway between two diverse, yet related urban experiences. It would tell a southern, narrative story about the place and people that are Hickory. And it would become a destination point, a place of journey that would attract community members and visitors alike.

The second opportunity that surfaced is the creation of an artist-designed water feature in front of and part of an urban plaza for the SALT Block. The design of the feature would enhance and "mark" the site prominently defining it as a unique and special "place."

The third opportunity is the creation of a site-specific art work for the new Ridgeview Library.

Funding: It is envisioned that these pilot projects would be funded through private contributions.

STREETSCAPE 2 or LANDSCAPE & STREETSCAPE 1

Finding: Although environmental planners found no habitat for rare species, high quality natural communities, or important wildlife habitats for rare species in the study area, many sites along streams and within existing city parks provide habitat for wildlife, song birds, and native plants that Hickory should protect and enhance.

Discussion: A Natural Heritage Program survey of "significant" ecological resources within the one-mile radius area of the City Center was discussed by state and local officials in the Spring and Summer of 1998. The goal of the Natural Heritage program is to determine if portions of an area contain significant ecological resources, such as habitat for rare species, high quality natural communities, and important wildlife habitats. If significant ecological resources are found, then those areas containing the resources may be designated worthy of conservation status and further study. For Hickory, a review of maps, aerial photographs, and the local knowledge of environmental planners and other experts determined that, other than existing park areas, there were no additional sites identified matching the above stated ecological criteria within the one-mile radius study area. The lack of significant sites is because of the built-out scenario and level of development and disturbance within the study area.

Recommendation: The suitable green areas highlighted on the Natural Resources Inventory Map could be connected into the center of Hickory by a series of "green" or significantly landscaped streets and corridors. For example, a greenway along Third Street SW continuing northeasterly along the creek towards the Harper Ford Building area could connect the Ridgeview neighborhood to the downtown area. See Appendix D: Diagram 2: Gateways, Corridors, and Open Space; Appendix D: Diagram 7: Natural Resources Inventory Map.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the Planning and Development Department in conjunction with Parks and Recreation Department and Public Services Department

The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

Available funds shall be requested from the City of Hickory Public Services budget and the Parks and Recreation Department,

References: Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Hickory Horizons, Sidewalk and Bikeway Master Plan (1997), and the Natural Resources Inventory by the Natural Heritage Trust Fund.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES 1: CONNECTED COMMUNITY

Finding: The objective of a connected community has been positively received by a cross section of business and community leaders.

Discussion: The infrastructure to allow high-speed data access throughout Hickory will be in place in the coming months. Application of this fiber network could include the following:

Telemedicine: use the network to allow health-care providers to consult from their offices patients in their homes or other locations, such as nursing homes.

Senior Net: empower senior citizens to communicate with each other and their community using Internet technology.

Arts Education: work with organizations, such as Western Piedmont Youth Symphony and the Hickory Museum of Art, to provide master classes in music and art to talented Hickory residents using existing North Carolina Information Highway connections.

Education: develop Internet-enabled homework web sites to allow students to study, practice, and explore topics on-line.

Education: establish Networking Academies, in co-operation with Hickory Public Schools, Cisco, local fiber manufacturers, and community development organizations. These academies would produce trained students who could work as network technicians at high salaries after only a semester of classes.

Local Government: implement work flow and process improvements, such as Smart Permits, which would enhance the ability of citizens to do business with the City of Hickory;

Economic Development: encourage developers to incorporate "plug and go" designs into their commercial and residential developments. This would ensure that only a minimum effort need be expended by new or relocating businesses to get connected.

Electronic Commerce: extend the SmartCard system implemented in the Hickory Public Library system to other venues, such as L.P. Frans Stadium, Recreation, and Transit Facilities.

Recommendation: Further develop the ideas discussed and identify possible partners and needed resources. Outline timeline for implementation.

Implementation: The city's Information Services Department should undertake this project and represent the city as a leader in developing this concept. The Office of the City Manager shall report back to City Council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES 2

Finding: The community facilities within the study area are adequate to serve all citizens.

Discussion: All of the areas have public water and sewer and fire protection. Most of the areas have curb and gutter with stormwater collection pipes discharging the stormwater to natural creeks or low points. Sidewalks are sporadic in some areas, while other areas have sidewalk on both sides. A sidewalk study has been performed and is currently being implemented. Emergency medical services are within easy access for the study area. Overhead wiring is prevalent in the area. Public area and buildings such as parks, libraries, services, and open areas are centrally located for the majority of the citizens in the study area.

Recommendation: A complete study of the existing infrastructure in the project area should be implemented. This study should use GPS technology to locate all waterlines, sewer lines, drainage lines, power poles, and appurtenances associated with these utilities. The study should be performed over a 3- to 5-year period. This study will help analyze any areas that need updating or repairing. Also, overhead line location will be shown to enable additional studies for relocation to underground. With the anticipated downtown revitalization, this information will be invaluable for planning and construction of new buildings and other projects.

SPECIFIC PROJECT 14

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Findings: In Ridgeview, there is inadequate drainage at Third Street SW across from the Brown Penn Center.

Discussion: Stormwater flows across the street, which creates a safety hazard for both pedestrians and motorists.

Recommendation: Install additional catch basins and curbs and gutters on both sides of the street so that stormwater is safely collected and discharged into the existing creek.

Implementation: Hickory's Public Services Department can install all the required materials. A plan should be developed by the city's Engineering Department. Work could be completed within six months.

RETAIL

PART THREE: REPORT: SECTION II

INTRODUCTION

Background

The City of Hickory requested the Gibbs Planning Group (GPG) of the planning team to conduct a qualitative evaluation of the existing retail in the Central Business District (CBD) and to assess its viability in the future.

The study area was split into both primary and secondary trade areas. The primary trade area is defined by Lake Hickory to the north, I-40 to the south, Section House Road to the east, and the Catawba County Line to the west. The secondary trade area extends further to the west, east and south. This secondary trade area extends west to Rhodhiss Road, east to NC 16 and south to I-40 and Bethel Church Road.

Issues

The City of Hickory is concerned about the regional retail growth to the southeast along US 321. As such, the City of Hickory would like the following issues addressed:

1. What is the trade area currently served by retailers in downtown Hickory?
2. To whom do the existing retailers appeal?
3. What retailers are at risk because of competitive, demographic, and lifestyle changes into the next decade?
4. Additionally, what retailers, restaurants or other entertainment venues not currently found in downtown Hickory, can be supported? What are the possible uses for current and expected vacant retail space in downtown Hickory?
5. What retailers, if any, should be added in the adjoining neighborhoods?
6. In short, what should, qualitatively, be the master retail plan for downtown Hickory?

Methodology

To address the above issues, a detailed field evaluation of the retail in the City of Hickory, including all major existing and planned shopping centers in and surrounding the defined trade area, conducted the week beginning August 10, 1998. During this field evaluation, the GPG team thoroughly drove and walked the market area, met with city officials where appropriate, and visited and evaluated the major existing and planned retail concentrations in the area.

The area was visited throughout the day and evening to gain a qualitative understanding of the retail gravitational and traffic patterns throughout the study area. GPG then defined a trade area for downtown Hickory based upon this field evaluation.

Population and demographic characteristics of trade area residents were collected by census tract from national sources, and updated based on information gathered from various local sources.

Finally, based on the population and demographic characteristics of the trade area, existing and known planned retail competition, and traffic and retail gravitational patterns, we developed our qualitative assessment of the study area.

Residential Trade Area

The primary trade area consists of those residents living in the City of Hickory, as well as in the surrounding area, who are the major users of downtown Hickory. The trade area extends:

1. North to Lake Hickory
2. East to Section House Road
3. South to I-40
4. West to the Catawba County Line

The trade area is delimited by distance, the strong regional retail located along US 321, declining population densities, and the flow of retail traffic in all directions. The trade area residents, both within and just outside the City of Hickory, account for most of the sales of the convenience- and neighborhood-oriented retailers, such as supermarkets, drugstores and services, located in the study area and just beyond the study area to the west. However, more destination-oriented tenants, such as furniture, art gallery, and antique stores, draw from not only the trade area, but also from beyond the defined trade area.

Demographic Characteristics

Using data from National Decision Systems, we obtained the population and demographic characteristics of the primary trade area residents. Population and household data were then updated, based on conversations with local authorities, to accurately reflect projected growth in the trade area.

Currently, the primary trade area for the City of Hickory has an estimated 38,247 people living within the defined area. This population is expected to increase by 5.9 percent or 2,248 people by the year 2002. Households in the City Center are currently estimated at 15,839, with an expected 6.4 percent increase to 16,839 households by the year 2002. The average persons per household is 2.34. Additionally, Lenoir-Rhyne College has approximately 1,600 college students attending each year.

The trade area has a median household income of \$34,158. Only 12.5 percent of the households earn \$75,000 or more, with slightly over 19 percent of the households earning less than \$15,000.

The median age for trade area residents is 38 years and a majority in the trade area (82.6 percent) are white.

Most households are owner occupied (57 percent), however, a large portion of households are renter occupied (43 percent).

Most of those employed are employed in white collar occupations (59.4 percent), with most employed in either sales (12.9 percent) or administrative support (13.8 percent). Of those employed in blue collar occupations (40.6 percent), most are employed in machine operator positions (20.8 percent). Additionally, 64 percent of the households have 2 or more people employed.

Business/Daytime Employment

In addition to the primary trade area, the study area supports a total of 532 businesses and 6,546 employees. The business/daytime employment includes all those employed within one-half mile of the intersection of First Avenue NW and Second Street NW in downtown Hickory. The following table highlights the primary business employment, by type, for the downtown Hickory area.

| Type of Business | No. of Business | No. of Employees | No. of Employees/Business |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Retail Trade | 73 | 744 | 10.2 |
| Finance, Insurance, Real Estate | 88 | 740 | 8.4 |
| Services | 249 | 3,478 | 14.0 |
| Agriculture | 1 | 7 | 7.0 |
| Construction | 23 | 218 | 9.5 |
| Manufacturing | 21 | 173 | 8.2 |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|-------|------|
| Communications, Public Utilities | 15 | 589 | 39.3 |
| Wholesale Trade | 31 | 249 | 8 |
| Government | 31 | 348 | 11.2 |
| Total | 532 | 6,546 | 12.3 |

Secondary Trade Area

The secondary trade area consists of those residents who live in the area surrounding the primary trade area, who shop in downtown Hickory, but not as their primary source of shopping. The secondary trade area extends:

1. North to Lake Hickory and Hubbard Road
2. East to NC 16
3. South to I-40 and Bethel Church Road
4. West to Rhodhiss Road

The secondary trade area is delimited by distance and competing retail in Lenoir, Morganton and Conover/Newton.

The secondary trade area has a current population estimate of 149,080 people, which is expected to grow 11,346, or 7.6 percent, to 160,426 people by the year 2002. The 1998 households of 57,221 is projected to grow 8.4 percent to 62,036 households by the year 2002. As such, the number of persons per households is currently 2.6.

More households in the secondary trade area are owner occupied (78.2 percent) than in the primary trade area, with the remaining renter occupied (21.8 percent). The median household income level for the secondary trade area is \$38,480, 13 percent higher than in the primary trade area. The median age is 37.3 and 94.6 percent of the population is white. In the secondary trade area, 49 percent are employed in white collar occupations, with 12.5 percent employed in administrative support positions. Of those employed in blue-collar occupations (51 percent), most are employed as machine operators (24.5 percent).

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Location

The primary study area is defined as the area bounded by Third Avenue NW to the north, Third Avenue NE and Seventh Avenue SE to the east, Second Avenue SW to the south, and Ninth Street SW to the west. Regional access to the City of Hickory is excellent from the east and west as provided by I-40. There are four exits off I-40 that feed into Hickory. Additionally, US 321 provides easy access from the north (Lenoir area) and from the south. Access to the Central Business District from the north and south is provided primarily by Center Street and NC 127, which offers four lanes of traffic. Access to the Central Business District from the east and west is provided by Second Avenue SW from the west and First Avenue SW from the east. Both are one-way traffic arteries. As such, access to the Central Business District, while not direct for regional traffic, is easy.

The Central Business District currently offers a mixture of local apparel, furniture, and accessory stores, as well as a small number of food establishments. In total, the Central Business District (primary study area) offers approximately 116,000 square feet of retail space. The core of retail is centered along a brick-paved pedestrian mall, called Union Square. This area is anchored by Bumbarger's, an office supply and card store, and Spainhours', an apparel store. Also, several furniture stores (Lindy's and Better Homes Furnishings) are located to the north on First Avenue NW.

The area can be easily walked from one end to the other, and parking is provided by on-street parking, parking lots, and deck parking. The parking is free, but limited to two hours in most places.

Other Shopping Areas

As part of this field evaluation, GPG visited all major shopping areas in and just beyond the defined trade area. Currently, only Morganton offers a viable Central Business District with a good selection of specialty and apparel shops. While Lenoir offers some shopping alternatives in its Central Business District, the options are very limited.

The closest regional mall to downtown Hickory is the Catawba Furniture Mart. This mall offers a variety of furniture and home accessory stores, and has recently reopened with mostly new tenants. The Valley Hills Mall, a 605,000 square foot, traditional regional center is located on US 70, approximately one mile from downtown Hickory. This mall is anchored by Belk's, JC Penney and Sears. Currently, the mall is undergoing a renovation with the Sears unit being expanded. Located further east on US 70 is the Hickory Furniture Mart, which specializes in furniture factory outlets and is now undergoing an expansion.

All the big-box tenants, as well as community centers, are located along US 70 (in proximity to Valley Hills Mall), primarily from Robinson Road to 30th Street SE, making this the primary shopping locations for the greater Hickory area. North of the Central Business District, most retail is located along NC 127 (North Center Street). However, the retail located along this strip is primarily neighborhood-oriented, anchored by several supermarkets, drugstores, and restaurants. A new 385,000 gross square-foot shopping center, to be anchored by Kohl's and Target, is currently under construction behind the Valley Hills Mall. Adjacent to this is a new twelve-screen theater, also under construction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Supportable Downtown Retail

Downtown Hickory has the advantage of a central location, good local access, several unique, locally-owned businesses, and a stable local economy to support existing and future retail. In addition, the location of all the regional shopping malls and big-box discounters located south of the district enables the downtown to capitalize on its shopping convenience to those residing in or near City Center. However, downtown Hickory needs to increase its appeal not only to nearby residents, but also to nearby office workers and students at Lenoir-Rhyne College. Foremost, it needs to improve its shopping variety. To draw in more regional shoppers, the downtown area needs to create a traffic generator, such as a museum or "workshop" of local artisans, which will heighten the appeal of the area. The GPG team suggests that the museum or workshop feature the furniture industry, to help position Hickory as the furniture "capital" of the America.

It is our professional opinion that an additional 40,700 square feet of retail space can be supported in the Central Business District. The following are the suggested retail-by-retail tenant types for the business district of Hickory, North Carolina:

1. 4,500 square feet of mid-range unisex and family apparel to help increase the appeal of the downtown area to the Lenoir-Rhyne College students.
2. 3,000 square feet of additional shoe stores with a mid-range appeal.
3. 10,000 square feet of additional sit-down casual family-style restaurants, bagel shops, ethnic restaurants, coffee houses and/or deli shops to cater to the Central Business District employee base, college students, and workers at the Frye Regional Medical Center.
4. 2,200 square feet of used record store.
5. 2,000 square feet of specialty toys featuring hand-made wooden toys and crafts, as well as specialty toys.
6. 2,500 square feet of additional card and gift stores.
7. 5,000 square feet of specialty hardware that feature garden specialties, such as garden tools, pots, and flags.
8. 7,500 square feet of additional art galleries.
9. 2,000 square feet of optical/vision care.
10. 4,000 square feet of additional sporting goods featuring fishery, archery, and gun supplies.

Supportable Neighborhood Retail

There are five neighborhoods within walking distance of the downtown. The success of neighborhood retail has an impact on downtown commerce. These include Ridgeview, Kenworth, Green Park, Oakwood, and Claremont.

Each of these neighborhoods has some existing demand for retail services. Listed below are the recommended uses for each neighborhood.

Ridgeview

Food Market w/liquor 2,500 sf (1 unit)
Personal Care 2,500 sf (1-2 units)
Neighborhood Service 1,500 sf (1-2 units)
Total 6,500 sf

Kenworth

Food Market 25,000 sf (1 unit)
Sit-down Family Restrnt. 3,000 sf (1 unit)
Carry-out Food 5,000 sf (2-3 units)
Food (Bagels/Coffee) 1,500 sf (1 unit)
Personal Care 5,000 sf (3-4 units)
Office/Design Studios 10,000 sf (5-8 units)
Retail (garden/furniture) 10,000 sf (2-3 units)
Total 59,500 sf

Green Park

Personal Services 2,000 sf (1-2 units)
Food Market w/liquor 3,000 sf (1 unit)
Carry-out Food 1,500 sf (1 unit)
Total 6,500 sf

Claremont

Food (bagels/coffee) 8,000 sf (2-3 units)
Carry-out foods 5,000 sf (2-3 units)
Neighborhood Office 10,000 sf (3-6 units)
Total 23,000 sf

Oakwood

Neighborhood Service 2000 sf (2-3 units)
Carry-out Foods 1500 sf (1 unit)
Total 3,500 sf

Ridgeview can support small ancillary services found in neighborhood convenience. It cannot support retail that will draw customers from a distance. Rather, its retail will be supported by residents in the immediate vicinity.

GPG found that the Kenworth Four Points neighborhood had the most potential for developing as a neighborhood retail area. There are the remnants of a commercial area in Kenworth Four Points, but it has lost most of its retail. GPG believes there is the potential for an additional 59,500 square feet of retail services. An old fashioned type grocer, such as the old A&P, could be supported by Kenworth, Ridgeview and Claremont neighborhoods. These older grocers were about 25,000 square feet in size. In addition to this, Kenworth Four Points can support restaurants, personal services, and neighborhood services. It can also support a small garden and furniture store. Kenworth Four Points has the most development potential to become a village retail setting that could be supported by Kenworth and surrounding neighborhoods.

Green Park is only able to support a very minimum of services. GPG believes one small convenience food market, one fast-food establishment, and personal services, such as a laundry or video store, are supportable.

Claremont is also able to support a fair amount of retail and service establishments, including a coffee shop, carry-out food, and a variety of neighborhood services.

Oakwood can support food establishments and neighborhood services.

The retail recommendations for the neighborhoods are primarily neighborhood support services. The City Center has a different set of supportable retail. Downtown Hickory needs to focus on acting as a destination, not as a convenience center. The neighborhoods can serve as quick, convenience retailers, but the Central Business District should concentrate on the indicated recommendations.

RATIONALE

The rationale for the recommended tenanting of Hickory's downtown business district is presented below:

1. Development of a destination retail hub. Combined, the selected tenants and museum would help create a unique shopping hub for Catawba County. The proposed retailers will encourage the primary trade area residents, Lenoir-Rhyne College students, and those employed nearby to use the area for their community and convenience shopping needs.

Additionally, the added art galleries, specialty sporting goods, toy store, and garden store, combined with the proposed museum, would increase the regional appeal of the district. Furthermore, the selection of tenants will enable downtown Hickory to complement, rather than compete, with the recently opened Catawba Furniture Mart located on the southern periphery of the study area.

2. Stable population base. The existing primary trade area population base of over 38,000, combined with the Lenoir-Rhyne College students and daytime work force, creates a stable base for the existing and proposed retail. The primary trade area's median income of approximately \$34,000 encourages a mid-range appeal for the proposed retail.

3. Limited regional access. While the Central Business District has good local access, regional access to the area is limited because of the lack of direct routes. Most of the regional traffic flows south of downtown along I-40, US 321 and NC 70.

4. Strong retail competition on the southern periphery of the trade area. The regional shopping malls, discount stores, and big-box retailers are all located on the southern periphery of the trade area. While this hampers the ability of the downtown to draw from areas south of I-40, it increases the convenience appeal of the downtown area to those living north of the district, enabling the district to intercept and capture this potential.

Office Market

The planning team estimates that the Hickory Central Business District has the opportunity to support up to 175,000 square feet of additional "class A and B" professional office space through the year 2003. To remain competitive with newer, suburban office parks, the planning team believes that this new office space should be constructed within walking distance of Union Square, with appropriate parking and modern amenities.

In the planning team's opinion, many of Hickory's historic warehouse buildings have the potential to become unique and exciting office settings. Renovated historic buildings could be appealing locations for small- to medium-sized professional firms and services based in Hickory, for branch offices of Charlotte-based corporations, and for national business seeking to locate in southeastern United States.

If developed, the 175,000 square feet of new office space could support up to 875 additional workers, assuming 200 square feet per worker, which is the industry standard for white-collar businesses. Possible employers could include medical, legal, financial, and other professional services as well as sales. Given Hickory's furniture trade, the city may be able to attract a significant number of industrial, interior, and architectural design firms into Union Square or the historic warehouse area.

RETAIL 1

Finding: The greater Hickory region has over 2 million total square feet of regional retail, including furniture marts, that attract over 500,000 annual visitors.

Discussion: Many of these regional visitors limit their stay to chain hotels and restaurants along the I-70 and I-40 corridor area, missing an opportunity to visit the unique and historic Hickory downtown area. GPG believes that a significant number of the regional visitors would prefer to visit or stay in the historic Union Square area, but don't because of a lack of information and restaurant and lodging opportunities.

Recommendation: Complete a comprehensive marketing campaign to attract the regional visitors into the Union Square area and encourage the businesses to stay open longer hours and to cross merchandise with the furniture marts. Attract a hotel to open along the town square.

RETAIL 2

Finding: Many of the retailers located in the Hickory Central Business District (CBD) have little or no pedestrian and vehicular traffic passing along their businesses and therefore have to rely on advertising to attract shoppers.

Discussion: Although thousands of residents and visitors commute daily through the CBD, most traffic is directed several blocks away from the core CBD businesses. This lack of vehicular traffic represents a significant missed opportunity for exposure and potential sales for many of the CBD's businesses.

Recommendation: Implement a new regional traffic plan to direct more traffic into the CBD.

RETAIL 3

Finding: Downtown Hickory residents do not have a supermarket conveniently located in or near their neighborhoods.

Discussion: For many of their basic daily shopping needs, City Center residents must now drive outside of their neighborhoods to the congested I-40/I-70 area or north along the NC 127. In the long run, this lack of local, basic goods and services hurts all the neighborhood residents' quality of life and sense of community.

A new neighborhood center located at the intersection of several neighborhoods would help to make its business more viable and would service a mix of age, income, and demographic groups.

Recommendation: The city should take a leadership role in assembling and/or finding a developer to build a small neighborhood supermarket and shopping district offering goods and services in the Kenworth Four Points area.

RETAIL 4

Finding: Many of Hickory's historic buildings (including the train station) have been renovated with modern details. These modernizations are inappropriate and lessen the unique characteristics of these buildings, thus helping to erode Union Square's attraction as a special destination.

Discussion: One of downtown's primary attractions to both local and out of town visitors is its many historical buildings. Presently, a number of these historic buildings have had their windows furnished with aluminum-tinted glass, modern storefronts, and modern copper awnings. Combined, these modern architectural features make the CBD appear more like a strip shopping center rather than a historic district offering unique goods and services.

Recommendation: Encourage historically accurate renovations of Hickory's buildings through a historic commission, codes, grants, and design service assistance.

RETAIL 5

Finding: Union Square's streetscape and furniture has inappropriate 1970s characteristics.

Discussion: A visitor's experience and perceived value and uniqueness of downtown businesses would be reinforced and enhanced if the street lights, trash containers, benches, landscaping, paving, etc. complemented the historic character of the square. Benches should be provided in appropriate locations and lighting levels should be increased for the convenience of Union Square visitors.

Recommendation: Complete a renovation of the CBD's streetscape with a unique design and municipal furnishings that are appropriate for its history.

RETAIL 6

Finding: Union Square's wide pedestrian plaza offers a nice pedestrian amenity, but significantly limits the potential sales of many of the its retailers.

Discussion: Prior to the 1970s urban renewal of the Union Square, its retailers directly fronted street lined with parking. This storefront-to-street relationship offers pedestrian and vehicular shoppers the ability to see directly into the shops and motorists to park much closer to retailers than present parking lots allow. The 1970s urban renewal plan has made Union Square businesses more difficult to shop, hurting potential sales.

RETAIL 7

Finding: First Avenue NW and Union Square shops have limited cross-shopping potential because of the block's long length.

Discussion: GPG has observed that few shoppers walk between Union Square and First Avenue NW shops. This lack of cross-shopping limits sales and creates an overall image of a small CBD. The existing midblock pedestrian walk helps to compensate for the block's half-mile length, however a midblock street with limited vehicular traffic would make the square even more lively.

Recommendation: Install a narrow street approximately half way between Union Square and First Avenue NW.

RETAIL 8

Finding: The Lenoir-Rhyne College and Claremont neighborhood have little convenient shopping.

Discussion: Residents and students of the northeastern neighborhoods can not walk to cafes and neighborhood services. The opening of the new adjacent road alignment and intersection would attract enough additional vehicular traffic to support a small neighborhood center along Seventh Avenue NE.

Recommendation: The City should work with the Claremont Neighborhood and Lenoir-Rhyne College to develop the proposed retail center at the Lenoir-Rhyne X.

RETAIL 9

Finding: Many downtown merchants could improve the quality of their visual merchandising and store planning to offer their customers a more exciting shopping experience.

Discussion: Today's shoppers associate the quality of the store's interior and exterior with the business's overall level of service and value. Many of the businesses in the CBD need to adopt modern visual merchandising and store planning practices, including design, color, lighting, signage, and updated window displays. The overall upgrade of Union Square retailers' stores would help to reinforce it as a collection of unique shops and restaurants offering quality, value, and service.

Recommendations: The Downtown Merchant's Association and the city should work together to hire store planning and visual merchandising professionals to assist downtown businesses in making appropriate improvements.

RETAIL 10

Finding: The Union Square shopping district is centrally located in the region.

Discussion: Over 35,000 persons live within three miles of the CBD. Many of the region's primary employment centers including the Frye Regional Medical Center, Bank of Granite and Alcatel are located in the CBD.

Recommendation: The DDA and the City should work to encourage businesses to locate and expand in the City Center.

RETAIL 11

Finding: Presently, the CBD has a great number of retailers and businesses offering a unique selection of goods and services.

Discussion: This study found that the Hickory CBD has a very good toy store, bicycle shop, sporting goods, department store, men's apparel, jewelry stores, specialty stores, and restaurants. However, many of these businesses are too spread out to create an overall image of a large shopping district.

Recommendations: The city should attempt to encourage many of the businesses to expand or relocate in the Union Square and First Avenue NW area. A restaurant on each block of the square and a hotel in the Bank of Granite's parking lot would be beneficial.

TRANSIT

PART THREE: REPORT: SECTION III

TRANSIT 1

Finding: Amtrak service is expected to arrive in Hickory within the next two years. The service will be primarily a tourist train between Asheville and Salisbury, North Carolina, stopping in Hickory at least two times a day. It will also provide access to the larger Amtrak system via transfer in Salisbury.

Discussion: The eminent arrival of Amtrak can serve as the catalyst for the co-location of the various transit systems in Hickory, these being Amtrak train, Greyhound bus, the Piedmont Wagon, taxicabs, and other services such as hotel vans.

Recommendation: Plan for and accommodate the location of various transit systems to capitalize on Amtrak service as a catalyst. See Plate D. Planning and Design for Transit Handbook: Guidelines for Implementing Transit Supportive Development. Available from The Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District of Oregon, 4012 SE 17 Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97201

TRANSIT 2

Finding: In the City of Hickory, there is currently little coordination between the various available transit modes, those being the local Piedmont Wagon bus line, the national Greyhound or Trailways bus line, taxicab and van service, and cycling. These services operate independent of one another and, as a result, there is very little convenient or inviting pedestrian connection between them. The Piedmont Wagon now stops on Union Square, Greyhound uses a parking lot on the edge of the downtown (apparently, no one really knows where), and there is no consistent taxi-stand location. Other than the occasional bike rack, there are no amenities to support bike commuters.

Discussion: Using the model of successful transit centers, such as downtown Portland, Oregon, the various transit systems can serve as anchors to catalyze downtown Hickory. Rather than placing all the systems in a single location or building, Portland locates them on two streets in the downtown core, apart from one another, but within easy walking distance of each other. This approach makes the system easy to use. Portland residents know that all modes of transit can be found along these two streets in downtown Portland. Metropolitan buses traverse these streets, which are connected to both light-rail stops and the Amtrak station. Taxis and vans stand at the station and nearby hotels. Within the area, ample bike racks and lockers are provided, supported by a system of bike paths and lanes. Rental-car agencies are close by. This approach provides the maximum benefit to the entire downtown.

Applying this model to Hickory, the appropriate home for Amtrak would be at its historic location, the Hickory Station. The station building and area represent the spiritual center of Hickory. Reinstating the original function of the station would be an historic event for Hickory, linking it to its past and future. It would serve as a center for activity and interest for years to come—a must see destination in Hickory. With the Post Office in the foreground and Union Square in the background, the view of the renewed Union Station would be a picture postcard. The new station is also the appropriate location for the Piedmont Wagon stop, rather than its present location on the square. This would provide easy and safe access between train and bus services. To accommodate these buses and taxis, there needs to be a convenient and visible location for loading and unloading. There is now no adequate area for this to occur. Removing the kitchen addition to the station and the buffer of trees would allow for the location of a drop-off lane or loop next to the station off Government Avenue. The benefits of this arrangement are the following:

It would return the station to its original configuration as a simple and elegant building, with windows on all sides providing views through the platform and beyond to Union Square.

The restoration would contribute to a major public space on Government Avenue between the historic Post Office and Union Station.

The removal of the station's kitchen addition would make it possible to create an access drive along the south side of the station. This drive would be the new stop for the Piedmont Wagon, a taxi stand, and a passenger drop-off area. The future Greyhound station will have substantial bus-access and standing-space needs, which could heavily impact the Hickory Station site. Although it is not necessary for them to be in the same building, locating the Greyhound and Amtrak stations within walking distance of each other is important. Ideally, they should be within a couple of blocks and on the same street.

Recommendation: The co-location of transit services along Government Avenue SW would create a transit system that is easy to find and use, which would make it a successful system. One would be able to catch a train, a bus, a cab, or rent a car, all on Government Avenue SW. Locate the Amtrak operations in the Hickory Station. Amtrak is unable to provide a program at this time, but with the Salisbury Station as a model, the space requirements would be quite modest, perhaps as little as 150 square feet. There would therefore be space available in the station for other programs, such as a coffee shop or a small museum. Adequate bicycle racks and lockers should be provided.

Locate the Greyhound station east of the square on the south side of First Avenue SE. This program is best suited for a modest building, such as the old grocery store or the city-owned building east of the grocery. This location is in the immediate downtown area and within easy walking distance of the station. See Plate F.

TRANSIT 3

Finding: There are no designated parking areas for transit-related uses. The few instances of "park-and-ride" that do occur use spaces around Union Square that also serve the surrounding businesses. There is little parking associated with Greyhound, other than during the waiting period for arrivals.

Discussion: Additional parking is needed to accommodate the increase in transportation-related activity in the new transit hub. Coordination with rental-car fleets in parking areas would be appropriate.

Recommendation: When the new parking garage to the west of the station is built, a portion can be used as the staging area for rental cars. The rental-car counter would be located in the renovated station.

TRANSIT 4

Finding: The Hickory Station presents a strong image to Union Square and surrounding approaches, but is essentially hidden from view by a thick buffer of evergreen trees on the south. This has not always been the case. Historically, the station was open to view and access on all sides, serving as an easily recognizable landmark for the entire City Center. The construction of the kitchen created a back to the building on its south side where equipment and dumpsters necessitated the installation of the tree buffer.

Discussion: The opening of First Avenue SE, east of the station, as recommended by the plan, would provide the opportunity for a dramatic entrance into the downtown core. The diagonal approach is focused on the Hickory Station, however, the view is now blocked by the kitchen addition and the planting buffer.

Recommendation: Restore the Hickory Station to its original configuration by removing the kitchen addition and the trees to the south. Add a drop-off drive along the south side of the station with access off Government Avenue. This drive can also serve as a taxi stand and a stop for Piedmont Wagon. See Plate C.

Implementation: The above projects shall be undertaken by the Planning Department, Engineering Department, Parks and Recreation Department, Public Works Department, and Economic Development Office in conjunction with the NC Office of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation and the Downtown Development Association.

The City Manager's Office shall report back to City council within eight weeks with the necessary details, a preliminary budget, and an implementation schedule.

Funding shall be requested from the North Carolina Department of Transportation as part of Federal ISTEA funds through the Hickory-Newton-Conover Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Available funds shall be requested from the City of Hickory Public Works budget, the Parks and Recreation Department, Economic Development Department, and an assessment from the Downtown Development Association.

TRAFFIC CALMING

PART THREE: REPORT: SECTION IV

TRAFFIC CALMING: RIDGEVIEW: R-1

Finding: Evaluated Third Street SW between Seventh Avenue SW and Eighth Avenue Drive SW.

Discussion: The main points of concern were the speed of traffic and pedestrian safety. Items also addressed were the access to the ball field and the gym/park.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to create a streetscape that allows pedestrians to cross the road safely and on-street parking and to install sidewalks on the west side of the street. These activities within the street should encourage slower vehicle speeds.

Implementation: The street will need to be designed for minor widening and sidewalks on the west side, and should include an analysis of the drainage conditions. Priority should be based on activity in the area and at the ball field.

TRAFFIC CALMING: RIDGEVIEW: R-2

Finding: Traffic safety and speed of through traffic on NC 127 South.

Discussion: It was noted that the main points of concern were the speed of traffic, pedestrian safety, and sight distance.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to evaluate a parkway section, but maintain the existing asphalt width. Add sidewalks approximately 10 feet from the back of curbs.

Implementation: Have a speed study conducted. See R3 and K3.

TRAFFIC CALMING: RIDGEVIEW: R-3

Finding: The intersection of NC 127 South and Tenth Avenue SE.

Discussion: It was noted that the main points of concern were access from Tenth Avenue SE, limited sight distance, vehicular speed, and accidents at the intersection

Recommendation: The recommendation is to prepare a Signal Warrant Analysis that includes speed and traffic volume counts and accident history.

Implementation: An analysis of the corridor should be prepared to include the intersection of NC 127 South and Eighth Avenue Drive SE, and signalization to the south. Field observations result in the conclusion that the sight distance may not be increased without significant cost. A signal located here may cause more of a safety hazard than allowing the current condition to remain. Operations at this location may be improved with signalization of Eighth Avenue Drive SE, if it is warranted.

TRAFFIC CALMING: RIDGEVIEW: R-4

Finding: The analyzed area was throughout the entire neighborhood.

Discussion: It was noted that the main point of concern was on-street parking and sidewalks.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to use vertical curb to control on-street parking and keep parking out of front yards.

Implementation: Use the current laws to enforce abandoned cars from remaining in the street. Review the land use codes for parking in front yards. Replace curb and gutter with redevelopment projects or road improvement projects

TRAFFIC CALMING: KENWORTH: K-1

Finding: The intersection of Tate Boulevard and Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard was evaluated.

Discussion: It was noted that the main point of concern was the tight turning radius on the southwest corner. The radius is too tight for a truck to make a right turn without maneuvering in the adjacent lanes.

Recommendation: Modify the radius to create a safer condition and to encourage trucks to use this route instead of Second Avenue SE.

Implementation: This project is funded through a NCDOT road improvement project.

TRAFFIC CALMING: KENWORTH: K-2

Finding: The intersection of Second Avenue SE at Fifth Street SE was analyzed.

Discussion: It was noted that the main points of concern were the constant flow of traffic and the lack of access to go in the western direction.

Recommendation: It is recommended to extend Sixth Street SE up to Tate Boulevard. Additionally, the one-way access onto Second Avenue SE should be closed. These changes will create a potential park site. Access to the west would be accommodated by making a right onto Tate Boulevard and then a U-turn at the Lenoir-Rhyne Blvd. intersection. Additionally, it is recommended to investigate signalization of the intersection of Second Avenue SE and Fifth Street SE/Fifth Street Court SE.

Implementation: A capital improvements project will need to be established for this to be implemented. It should not be put in place prior to the radius improvement at the Tate Boulevard/Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard intersection.

TRAFFIC CALMING: KENWORTH: K-3

Finding: The intersection of NC 127 South at Eighth Avenue Drive SE was evaluated (see Appendix C).

Discussion: It was noted that the main points of concern were access from Eighth Avenue Drive SE, limited sight distance, speed and accidents at the intersection.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to prepare a Signal Warrant Analysis, which includes accident history, speed, and traffic volume counts, and to add pedestrian-crossing markings.

Implementation: An analysis of the corridor should be prepared to include the intersection of NC 127 South and Tenth Avenue SE, and signalization to the north. Signalization of this intersection will create a situation for slower speeds with a heightened sense of awareness. Additionally, pedestrian treatments at the intersection will create a safe point to cross NC 127 south of Second Avenue SE.

TRAFFIC CALMING: GREEN PARK: G-1

Finding: The analyzed intersection was Seventh Avenue SW and Ninth Street SW.

Discussion: It was noted that the main point of concern was the walking path to US 321. There are school children within one mile of the school who use this path.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to evaluate the sidewalk master plan.

Implementation: The sidewalk master plan includes Ninth Street SW with implementation to follow.

TRAFFIC CALMING: GREEN PARK: G-2

Finding: The analyzed intersection was Seventh Avenue SW at Seventh Street SW.

Discussion: It was noted that the main points of concern were the sight distance and offset of this intersection.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to take traffic calming measures at this intersection and possibly make it a three-way stop.

Implementation: A three-way stop method of traffic control will create a situation where the sight distance and offset conditions are less hazardous. Traffic volume counts should be taken. An engineering analysis to determine whether a three-way stop is an acceptable traffic control measure at this site, and if so, signing and pavement markings are required for implementation.

TRAFFIC CALMING: GREEN PARK: G-3

Finding: The analyzed area was Second Avenue SW.

Discussion: It was noted that the main point of concern was the driveway to Optimist Park.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to shift the driveway to the east.

Implementation: Corrective measures can be implemented through redevelopment of the park.

TRAFFIC CALMING: GREEN PARK: G-4

Finding: The analyzed intersection was Second Avenue SW at Seventh Street SW (see Appendix C).

Discussion: It was noted that the main point of concern was the southwest corner radius.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to relocate the utilities, rebuild the radius, and add an apron curb.

Implementation: The utility relocation cost is likely to be high for this site. This improvement should be incorporated into another project within the area that includes utility relocation.

TRAFFIC CALMING: OAKWOOD: O-1

Finding: The analyzed intersection was Fourth Avenue NW and Fourth Street NW (see Appendix C).

Discussion: The main point of concern noted at this intersection is the speed of traffic and the number of accidents that compromise the safety of pedestrians, which are mostly elementary school children.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to implement traffic calming techniques, create raised cross-walks, and install a speed table.

Implementation: Current research indicates that the speed table would cost approximately \$60,000. The table would be capable of handling heavy trucks. Capital improvement funding would need to be secured for this project.

TRAFFIC CALMING: OAKWOOD: O-2

Finding: The analyzed areas were Second and Third Avenues NW .

Discussion: The main point of concern was the traffic noise.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to propose alternative truck routes.

Implementation: The City Engineering Department can prepare a letter with a map that proposes alternative truck routes for area business. The alternative route should consider adjacent street land uses, i.e., encourage use of commercial streets rather than residential streets.

TRAFFIC CALMING: OAKWOOD: O-3

Finding: The analyzed intersection was Sixth Street NW at Ninth Avenue NW.

Discussion: The main points of concern were the speed of traffic and the alternating sidewalk patterns.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to implement traffic calming to accommodate pedestrian activity. Narrowing lanes by extending curbs into the street and bumping curb radii out at intersections would be effective in creating a more pedestrian friendly street and in slowing traffic down.

Implementation: The sidewalk master plan should include this area to connect the sidewalks and put them on both sides of the streets. Projects that include a layer of textured pavement may be effective in defining critical intersections.

TRAFFIC CALMING: OAKWOOD: O-4

Finding: The analyzed street section was Second Street Place NW.

Discussion: The main point of concern was the cut-through traffic.

Recommendation: Discussions for a pedestrian plaza incorporate this section of street. The ultimate link would extend down to Union Square. See Plate E.

Implementation: See Overview, Report: Section I, Specific Project : A Vehicular Mid-Block Drive From Union Square to Second Avenue NW.

TRAFFIC CALMING: OAKWOOD: O-5

Finding: The analyzed sections were Second and Third Avenues NW.

Discussion: The main point of concern was the amount of speeding traffic.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to evaluate the signal system timing and the design speed.

Implementation: The City Traffic Engineering Department should reevaluate the progression speed that the signal system is designed for. Adjustments may be needed to encourage a slower speed than currently attained.

TRAFFIC CALMING: CLAREMONT: C-1

Finding: The analyzed intersection was Fifth Avenue NE and Third Street NE (see Appendix C).

Discussion: The main points of concern were the high speed of traffic at this location and the disjointed sidewalks.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to build a speed table and a center median, rework the sidewalks, and add pedestrian-crossing markings.

Implementation: Capital improvement funding is needed for this to be implemented.

TRAFFIC CALMING: CLAREMONT: C-2

Finding: The analyzed area was North NC 127 and Second Street NE between Fifth Avenue NE and Fourth Avenue NE.

Discussion: The main point of concern was the short block and the safety of a left turn by the southbound traffic at this block. Sight distance at this intersection was also a concern.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to place a sign for southbound traffic going to the SALT Block to make a left at Fifth Avenue NE. Also, a midblock driveway on NC 127 North should be considered, however, this may be dangerous.

Implementation: A guide sign should be installed at the Fifth Avenue NE intersection. Additional access to the SALT Block is part of the land development plan and should include the traffic safety of NC 127.

TRAFFIC CALMING: CLAREMONT: C-3

Finding: The analyzed intersection was First Avenue NE at Main Avenue NE (see Appendix C).

Discussion: The main point of concern was traffic flow and one-way streets.

Recommendation: The recommendation is to modify the traffic island.

Implementation: Capital improvement funding is required for this project.

LANDSCAPE AND STREETSCAPE

PART THREE: REPORT: SECTION V

COMMERCIAL AREAS

LANDSCAPE AND STREETSCAPE 1

Finding: Downtown Hickory is well planted with small and medium maturing street trees. The level of care of street trees is good. Many areas have been heavily planted with shrubs and annuals. Lighting is generally limited to the overhead cobra fixtures.

Discussion: Although the underground placement of utilities in commercial areas creates space for canopy development, large maturing trees are conspicuously absent in many commercial areas, especially on Union Square area streets. The use of small maturing street trees (Japanese Maple, dogwood, crepe myrtle, etc.) with low canopies has resulted in blocked views of shopfronts, building entrances, and signage.

The streets of downtown are an untapped resource for improving the image and identity of the City Center of Hickory.

Recommendation: Plant large maturing canopy trees to give definition and identity to commercial streets and avenues, creating shade for parked vehicles and pedestrians. Select long-lived species appropriate to the climate and history of the city. Plant trees in commercial areas in wells with cast iron tree grates. The tree grates may have a custom design pattern, such as the city seal, or other distinctive pattern. Ideally, shopping streets should have minimum twelve-foot-wide sidewalks, but may be narrower where prohibited by the existing right-of-way. Some existing sidewalks may need to be widened to include street trees on shopping streets, but should not be widened by eliminating on-street parking. To balance the need for an excellent pedestrian and retail experience against the speed of motor vehicles, create a "Street Right-of-Way Decision Tree" that takes into account typical traffic modes, driving lane widths, parking lane widths, planting area, sidewalk width, and building types.

Install pedestrian-scale light fixtures of a consistent style and finish. This lighting would help define the commercial areas and supplement existing overhead lighting.

Each different commercial area may have a unique or slightly varied lighting style to help define each neighborhood.

Install new lighting in Union Square.

Implementation: Within eight months develop a master tree planting program for the commercial area. Include specifications to develop tree planting areas of sufficient dimension for the successful growth of large canopy trees.

Reference: Appendix B: Landscape Standards, pp. [1-2](#); Appendix D: Streetscape Specifications: Diagrams [8.1](#) & [8.2](#).

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

LANDSCAPE AND STREETSCAPE 2

Finding: Street tree planting in the residential areas and thoroughfares of the city is handicapped by the consistent presence of overhead utilities and difficult topography. As a result, street tree plantings are often inconsistent in species and spacing.

Where the typical planting strip is narrow (approximately two feet between the back of the curb and the sidewalk) it restricts the planting of large trees. Where large trees have been planted, there is often damage to sidewalks and

curbs. Small planting strips are most common on the southside of the city, but also found in the Claremont and Oakwood neighborhoods.

Discussion: Many residential areas are identified with a particular tree (i.e., cedars in Green Park, dogwoods in Kenworth, and maples in Ridgeview). Long avenues of willow oaks or crepe myrtles in bloom creates a memorable image, whether walking or driving. It is important to use consistent tree types along streets and avenues to develop a linear pattern that gives identity through repetition.

The burying of utilities underground on one side of a street allows large maturing trees to be planted only on that side. Such asymmetrical streetscapes with large trees on one side and small trees on the other are not visually pleasing.

Recommendations: Where locating utilities underground is cost prohibitive, we recommend overhead utilities remain in their present configuration. Funding should be used to plant small maturing trees beneath utility lines in a balanced manner. Sidewalks should ideally be a minimum of four feet from the back of curb to provide a planting strip for large maturing street trees. Street tree planting should be consistent in species and spacing on each street. Existing tree planting programs in neighborhoods should be encouraged and supported.

Implementation: Within eight months develop a master tree planting program for the residential areas of Hickory. This plan should be coordinated with the existing Landscape Master Plan.

Develop specifications in the existing Sidewalk Master Plan to ideally create a four-foot-wide planting strip along streets for tree planting.

Develop incentives for tree planting on private property where utilities and topography restrict planting in the right-of-way or the development of a four-foot-wide planting strip.

Reference: Appendix B: Landscape Standards, pp. [1-2](#); Appendix D: Streetscape Specifications: Diagrams [8.1](#) & [8.2](#). "Sidewalk and Bikeway Master Plan," City of Hickory, 1997. "Hickory Landscape Master Plan: Creative Horizons," The FWA Group, 1997

NATURAL RESOURCES AND GREENWAYS

LANDSCAPE AND STREETScape 3

Finding: Numerous streams and creeks run through the wooded glens and ravines that radiate out from the high ground of downtown Hickory through the surrounding neighborhoods. These areas have been undeveloped because of the difficult terrain and are generally overgrown and often littered.

Discussions: The wooded ravines can serve as buffers within neighborhoods and between neighborhoods and busy streets. These wooded areas provide valuable habitat for wildlife, while shading and screening the interior of neighborhoods. The overgrown character of some ravines make them appear unsafe.

Recommendations: The wooded glens, ravines, and streams should be preserved and enhanced. Where appropriate, Greenway paths should be planned and constructed. Along pathways heavy underbrush should be cleared and tree canopy should be carefully raised to improve visibility. Where appropriate, pedestrian pathways should be constructed (especially where road right-of-ways exist) connecting natural areas within the neighborhoods.

Implementation: A study should be conducted to identify the existing primary pedestrian paths through the glens and potential places for new paths.

The existing Sidewalk Master Plan should be expanded to address the study findings.

Clearing and limbing-up of trees along paths in the glens and ravines should be included in the existing city maintenance program.

SQUARES AND PARKS

LANDSCAPE AND STREETSCAPE 4

Finding: Squares and parks are noticeably underdeveloped in Hickory City Center.

Discussion: Over the years the best public space in the city—Union Square—has been reduced in size and stature. Also few civic buildings in the City Center are enhanced by an adjacent green or common.

Many neighborhoods have no common space developed as passive parks. A public green would be the center of activity at each neighborhood commercial center. Small greens can create memorable landmarks for pedestrian and motorists when properly sited.

Recommendation: Incorporate the restoration of Union Square into development of the Central Business District. It should be a "visual icon" of Hickory, steeped in the history and image of the city. Efforts should be made as streets are reconfigured, civic buildings are designed, and neighborhood commercial centers are developed to create identifiable spaces in the landscape as part of the construction program.

Public space should be a requirement of future new development.

Implementation: The Regulating Plan locates new and existing public squares and parks. The redevelopment of any section of the city should trigger the upgrading of existing adjacent squares and parks.

LANDSCAPE AND STREETSCAPE 5

IVEY ARBORETUM AND CAROLINA PARK

Findings : Ivey Arboretum functions as a passive park, while providing tree cover and animal habitat. The tree inventory is impressive, but the current labeling functions poorly.

Discussions: It is very unusual to have an arboretum location in a City Center. This proximity to Downtown provides a great asset to the Hickory.

Recommendations: Field labeling in the Arboretum should be upgraded to allow visitors to be more completely informed. We recommend Carolina Park be considered for the addition of a "tot lot" play area (ages 2 to 5) and associated seating.

Implementation: The city department responsible for the park should research field labeling system and prepare a proposal of alternative systems and their cost for review by City Council.

The additional of "tot lots" in parks/open spaces citywide should be studied and plans developed through cooperation with surrounding neighborhood groups.

LANDSCAPE AND STREETSCAPE 6

SHUFORD MEMORIAL GARDENS

Findings: Shuford Memorial Gardens in Oakwood provides a formal garden setting for weddings and social gatherings. It also serves as an ad-hoc passive park for the neighborhood. The garden plantings are maturing and some areas are in decline. Some pavement is in need of repair.

Discussions: Shuford Gardens is an asset to the city and a landmark in the neighborhood.

Recommendations: The size of the garden could accommodate a "tot lot" and a linking walkway through the park without imposing on the formal nature of the main garden area. Planting within the garden should be upgraded.

Implementation: Develop a master plan for the garden to address short and long term maintenance and development needs.

Include Shuford Memorial Gardens in the "tot lot" study.

LANDSCAPE AND STREETScape 7

OPTIMIST PARK

Findings : Located in Green Park, the park is an active park with baseball, basketball, tennis and recently installed play equipment. The park seems underused. An adjacent property owner parks vehicles in the area.

Discussions: The park is poorly organized with a disproportionate amount of space dedicated to the automobile. The park is considered unsafe at times. There is little visibility into the rear area of the park.

Recommendations: Redesign the park, creating a safe asset for the neighborhood. Develop a strong pedestrian connection through the park and into the neighborhood at Fourth Avenue SW.

The relationship between the park and adjacent undeveloped residential property should be explored to create the opportunity for housing facing the park (the "eyes on the street" concept for safer residential areas).

Implementation: Develop a master plan for the park. Improve the internal lighting in the park. To improve visibility, limb-up the existing tree canopy to 20 to 25 feet. Study the opportunity to guide adjacent development through incentives for developers/owners.

HOUSING

PART THREE: REPORT: SECTION VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The dual goals of supporting and sustaining Hickory's downtown as a multi-use core and strengthening the city's five central residential neighborhoods will have positive ramifications for the entire city.

The neighborhoods surrounding Hickory's downtown have very nearly equal importance, since every entrance into downtown passes through or adjacent to one of these neighborhoods.

Several characteristics of these close-in neighborhoods, however, tend to preclude the introduction of residential into the downtown core:

The relatively short commute to downtown employment from most residential neighborhoods within the city limits negates the locational advantage of downtown living;

The relatively low cost of both new and resale housing makes development and redevelopment finance difficult to structure; and

Only a few "risk tolerant" young singles and couples are among those households that represent the potential market for housing within historic Hickory (the one-mile radius from Hickory Station). (See SUPPORTING RESEARCH AND DOCUMENTATION.)

Successful establishment of new market-rate housing options in a previously non-residential area is initially dependent upon risk-tolerant households. Initial efforts to establish the residential market within the downtown core should therefore concentrate on rental units.

From the perspective of the potential resident, the commitment assumed with a lease is several magnitudes lower than that assumed with a mortgage. From the perspective of the building owner's capital risk and return, rentals, rather than for-sale units, also make more sense. The increment of value added with for-sale units (the potential profit) should be many times higher when downtown living is well established than during the initial pioneering period.

Conversely, in the five central neighborhoods, efforts must concentrate on maintaining and increasing homeownership. Strategies for the neighborhoods north of downtown—Oakwood and Claremont—should focus on maintaining and enhancing their residential character. Strategies for the neighborhoods south of downtown—Green Park, Ridgeview and Kenworth— should focus on achieving aggressive increases in homeownership. (Recommended actions for the neighborhoods are discussed below.)

The City of Hickory may be unique among its peer cities in the breadth and scope of its pro-active housing programs. The city has an uncommon understanding of its problems and is already using many, if not most of the appropriate tools to meet its housing objectives. The one lacking element is funding at appropriate levels. For that reason, additional funding sources and programs are summarized in the Appendix.

The depth and breadth of the potential market for new housing units within the City of Hickory has been determined through analysis of households currently living within conservatively-defined draw areas. Analysis of Catawba County migration patterns over the past six years— based on data provided by the Internal Revenue Service— shows that, on average, approximately 3,500 households a year moved into the county in the 1990s, compared to about 3,100 households a year that moved out.

The target market methodology identifies those households with an affinity for downtown living likely to move from within the primary draw areas. The current market for rental housing units located in downtown Hickory is not deep; approximately 300 households have the propensity to move to market-rate rentals within the city in 1998. In the context of the target market methodology, a capture rate of 10 percent of the potential market—or 30 households in

1998—is achievable. Although the estimated size of the initial market for rental apartments in downtown may seem small, this number is quite likely to be sufficient to "seed" the concept of downtown living in a city the size of Hickory (with a 1998 estimated population of less than 35,000).

The potential market for these rental units includes a majority of younger singles and couples (Twentysomethings) and older move-down households (Mainstream Retirees and Middle-Class Move-Downs), although appropriately-designed downtown apartments could attract a small number of compact families or corporate transferees (Pillars of the Community, Traditionalists, and Unibox Transferees).

New housing units could be created in a variety of downtown locations, ranging from the upper floors of buildings south of the tracks, such as the Bonded Warehouse, to infill parcels or the upper floors of buildings located on Union Square, Trade Alley, and First Avenue NW. Initial redevelopment sites should be selected to create synergy among residential development, non-residential development, and infrastructure improvements.

Assistance with development and/or operating costs from city, county, state and federal governments is likely to be required, at least initially, to encourage or support most potential residential programs. For example, state and federal Historic Tax Credits could be utilized to augment equity. In some cases, publicly-funded infrastructure will help lower development costs. The establishment of specific preferential programs that apply only to a defined district may be required to encourage downtown development. Residential re-use of existing non-residential structures is one of the most beneficial redevelopment types because it creates and enhances a pedestrian-oriented street environment at a familiar scale. However, adaptive re-use is also the most challenging since the existing structure complicates the design effort while costing nearly as much as, or, under some circumstances, more than new construction.

The proven mechanism for encouraging the adaptive re-use of existing structures is a highly specific and predictable program, usually one that combines tax abatement with tax exemption—a mechanism specifically precluded by North Carolina statute. It has been established by case law, however, that incentives that can be recaptured in full within 10 years are legal. This approach can be applied with relative ease to economic development, which includes job creation; application to housing would be much more complex, perhaps involving an expanded form of credit enhancement for debt financing of the development. From the city's perspective, development activity stimulated by the program and through non-property tax revenues generated by economic activity in the revitalized core should more than offset the loss of the immediate tax revenues.

Although financial incentives for market-rate housing may be difficult to structure, the reduction of regulatory soft costs is of nearly equal importance. Stream-lining the approval process for redevelopment can help "level the playing field" between downtown and peripheral development.

1. Union Square area infill

The addition of residential uses will support the revitalization of Hickory's downtown, as well as increase property tax revenues from both new construction and adaptive re-use of existing non-residential structures.

The residential use of currently vacant space above retail establishments will create a new income source for building owners.

However, a strong retail strategy must be in place first. Buildings must have a viable retail occupancy, since it is not likely that a building's economics could be supported solely by upper-floor residential. As noted above, risk-tolerant, usually younger households are likely to comprise the majority of initial occupants of new downtown housing units, paving the way for risk-averse, usually older households. Therefore, initial emphasis should be on the creation of a small number of rental units through the adaptive re-use of appropriate buildings.

Recommendation: Initially, approximately 30 residential units per year could be created as rental apartments over retail establishments in structures located on the blocks surrounding Union Square as far south as Second Avenue SW and as far north as First Avenue NW.

Potential residential opportunities range from the adaptive re-use of the second floor of the Bonded Warehouse, to new construction on the thrift shop block, to the upper floors of the buildings facing Union Square, Trade Alley and First Avenue NW.

Monthly rents in the \$0.70- to \$0.80-per-square-foot range would most likely be required for the development to be feasible and still meet with market acceptance. Apartments ranging from 650 to 1,100 square feet could command market rents of \$500 to \$800 a month. A number of these could be structured as Section 42, special-use low-income housing tax credit units with occupancy limited to artisans and artists.

Potential funding sources: Section 42 Low-Income Housing Tax Credits for artist/artisan housing; FHA Section 203(k) mortgage insurance (under which one loan covers acquisition, rehabilitation, and permanent finance); North Carolina and federal historic tax credits.

Two critical implementation problems that can hinder the development of downtown housing are code compliance and gap financing.

Problem: Code compliance/building inspection difficulties. Many existing life and safety building codes are designed for large, newly-constructed non-residential buildings. Fire code issues in particular, if applied without variance, will usually render adaptive re-use of small existing buildings impossible.

Proposed strategies: Rationalization of codes

An analysis of existing codes that will lead to recommendations for changes, trade-offs and variances to facilitate the adaptive re-use of existing non-residential structures will be of vital importance. Although these changes should be standardized, discretion in the application of codes by the appropriate agencies should be encouraged.

Adaptive re-use handbook

Once the code analysis is complete and the recommendations have been adopted, a simple handbook for developers and building professionals should be produced that summarizes the trade-offs and variances available. Qualification for trade-offs and variances should be presented clearly and unambiguously to assist in the evaluation of building suitability.

Single source code officer

Given the wide variety of conditions represented by existing buildings, it should be anticipated that an equally wide variety of solutions to code compliance of adaptive re-use will be required. In order to assure an informed and even-handed treatment of all cases, a single code officer—the adaptive re-use "ombuds-man"— should be assigned to handle all code compliance issues relating to adaptive re-use.

Problem: Cost/value imbalance.

The near-term imbalance between the cost to produce new housing units and the current value of existing housing units is at the core of housing feasibility in downtown Hickory. As is often the case with cities that lack downtown housing, construction and acquisition costs are relatively high, while rents and median values are relatively low.

Therefore, it is essential to adopt public policy initiatives that will assist in the creation of downtown housing stock through improvement of financial feasibility.

Proposed strategy:

Gap funding

With a few exceptions, infill development opportunities near Union Square are limited to residential properties that are small scale—in most cases, fewer than 25 units and usually fewer than 10. These small properties lack development efficiency. Fixed costs are spread over fewer units than in larger projects, and the higher cost per unit

typically does not carry any corresponding increase in market value. Small properties have historically had difficulties attracting public capital assistance; because of their size, they are generally not considered to have the potential for catalytic impact.

A revolving loan pool for subordinated, low-interest gap funding should be established to put the financial feasibility of smaller downtown properties on an equal footing with larger properties on the city's periphery.

Gap funding should be available to both adaptive re-use and to new construction, and should be flexible enough to respond to the individual requirements of each property. Gap funding is typically structured as low-interest debt in a second or third position, but can incorporate interest accrual or other features designed to address the short-term financing impediments to residential developments that are essentially sound when viewed over the long term.

2. Oakwood and Claremont neighborhoods

Unlike neighborhoods undergoing classic "gentrification" which must rely solely on in-migrating households to broaden income ranges and household types, the Oakwood and Claremont neighborhoods—which still have solid middle- and upper-middle class resident households—can be supported and sustained by drawing on two complementary strategies:

Stabilizing the area by retaining a significantly higher percentage of existing households as they move through tenure and lifestage transitions, i.e.—from renter to owner, from single to married, from full-nest to empty-nest; and

Revitalizing the area by capturing a fair share of the full spectrum of households moving within and into the City of Hickory.

The very positive assets of the Oakwood and Claremont neighborhoods include: extremely attractive neighborhood fabric, which, although fragile in some areas and threatened in others, remains largely intact; the tree canopy that shades many streets; and the cultural and educational opportunities available at nearby institutions.

These stable, healthy neighborhoods require no housing strategy, other than the regulation of new residential construction on infill sites. A prototype "mansion" building that is strictly regulated in form, but relatively loosely-regulated in use, should be developed to accommodate single-family and multi-family housing units as well as non-residential uses.

The mansion building prototype is typically comprised of two or three stories, with a street façade resembling a large detached house (hence, "mansion"). The building has a variety of uses—from rental or for-sale apartments, professional offices, any of these uses over ground-floor retail, a bed and breakfast inn, or a large single-family detached house—and its physical structure complements other buildings within a neighborhood.

Parking should be behind the mansion buildings: in garage space integral to the main building; in detached garage structures, potentially with units above; or in open lots. Access can be either from an alley or from shared drives.

The correction of the one-way street pattern should make the affected streets of these neighborhoods more hospitable to pedestrians and safer for children. However, speed reductions and easier access within the neighborhoods could also make retail and other non-residential uses more attractive. Those areas appropriate for retail or non-residential uses should be defined and development or redevelopment within those areas should be regulated. The mansion prototype is an appropriate building form for most of the non-institutional uses that could arise in these areas.

3. Green Park, Ridgeview, and Kenworth neighborhoods

These neighborhoods are currently in transition, with a number of stable residential streets that contrast with concentrations of disadvantaged households living in sub-standard housing. The most critical objectives in these neighborhoods should be to increase the homeownership rate and to encourage the restoration of single-family occupancies in houses that are currently subdivided into apartments.

Although much of the revitalization and restoration efforts within these neighborhoods must be undertaken by individuals from the private sector, the City of Hickory can undertake two major code and enforcement strategies to help support market forces:

Establish and enforce strict limits on parking throughout single-family neighborhoods.

Establish and enforce strict repair requirements for renter-occupied housing.

These code and enforcement strategies should not be limited to the Green Park, Ridgeview and Kenworth neighborhoods; however, those are the neighborhoods where their implementation will have the greatest impact.

Parking

The presence of parked cars on the front lawns of houses originally designed for single-family occupancy is a common indicator of a fragile or threatened neighborhood. Cars parked in this fashion signal multiple-family renter occupancy and have a negative impact on the stability of the neighborhood by undermining the re-sale values of single-family houses. Regulations should limit the number of cars parked on site and visible from the street; permanent screening of cars in excess of the permitted number should be required. Screening can include trellises and hedges or, if the parking is located behind the buildings, walls or fences to screen the cars from adjacent yards. Screening should maintain the single-family residential characteristics of the street.

Code for Rental Properties

The presence of poorly-maintained rental properties— whether apartment buildings, houses subdivided into apartments, or renter-occupied houses—is a much more serious threat to the stability of neighborhoods. These properties are often owned by absentee landlords who, either by design or through inattention, have deferred maintenance or neglected repairs.

The city should undertake an aggressive program of code enforcement, including correction of outstanding violations with a property tax lien equaling the cost of correction plus accrued interest. Whether the violations are corrected voluntarily by the owner or by the city, the impact to the neighborhood is positive. If the tax lien is not satisfied, the city can take the building which could then be restored and sold for single-family owner occupancy.

To be most effective, code violations should include not only structural and life and safety items, but also as many cosmetic items as are politically feasible and legally defensible.

Public Housing

An important strategy to support the revitalization of the Ridgeview neighborhood would be to disperse the concentrations of public housing. Although these properties may not rank high in eligibility for HOPE VI funding - HUD's primary vehicle for the revitalization of severely distressed public housing - the first two stated goals of the HOPE VI program should be embraced in any neighborhood strategy for Ridgeview:

1. Change the physical shape of public housing: Demolish the worst of America's public housing and replace it with apartments and homes that complement the surrounding neighborhood. Create public housing communities which become part of the larger community.
2. Reduce concentrations of poverty: Reduce housing densities and encourage a more balanced income mix among public housing residents. End the social and economic isolation of public housing residents by architectural design and by encouraging working families to live in public housing.

The Ridgeview public housing properties should be reviewed to determine if one or more might be eligible for HOPE VI funding. These properties have no obvious physical conditions or locational characteristics that would qualify them as "severely distressed;" however, these properties may have operational characteristics that would help in HOPE VI qualification, such as significant numbers of families living in poverty, significant incidence of serious crime, high turnover rate, or low rent collections.

Another program that could be applied toward revitalization of the areas with the highest concentrations of public housing units is the Homeownership Zone program. This program's objectives meet those of the Ridgeview neighborhood:

Homeownership Zones offer localities the opportunity to create innovative approaches to redevelopment of unused or under-used property. A majority of the newly constructed units will be reserved for low- and moderate-income families, but also are designed to attract middle-income families to help increase the long-term stability of the neighborhood. Through the program, cities can reclaim tracts of vacant or blighted land and renovate entire neighborhoods, bring back to the heart of urban America the hard-working, middle-income families who help make our cities so vital, and help communities stimulate business development and new private investment.

The Homeownership Zone program is currently quite limited because of low funding. Grants have thus far been awarded only to large cities; however, when the program becomes a free-standing activity - rather than operating with recaptured funds - the Ridgeview neighborhood may qualify.

| Summary Data | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| Housing, within historic city (one-mile radius) City of Hickory <i>(due to rounding and other statistical anomalies, estimates and projections within the one-mile radius are approximate.)</i> | | |
| Housing Values | | |
| Median for owner-occupied units, 1998, estimated | \$72,475 | |
| Median for owner-occupied units, 2003, estimated | \$82,090 | |
| Median gross rent, 1990, actual | \$341 | |
| Rent under \$300, 1990, actual | 594 | 33.6% |
| Rent between \$300 and \$499, 1990, actual | 919 | 52.1% |
| Rent over \$500, 1990, actual | 199 | 11.3% |
| Rent over \$1,000, 1990, actual | 52 | 1.6% |
| Demographics, within historic city (one-mile radius) City of Hickory <i>(due to rounding and other statistical anomalies, estimates and projections within the one-mile radius are approximate.)</i> | | |
| Population, 1998, estimated | 8,295 | |
| Population, 2003, projected | 8,635 | |
| Households, 1998, estimated | 3,425 | |
| Households, 2003, projected | 3,590 | |
| Household Income, 1998, estimated income over \$40,000 | 1,145 | 33.4% |
| Income over \$75,000 | 350 | 10.2% |
| Median income, 1998, estimated | \$26,995 | |
| Housing potential, for City of Hickory | | |
| Hickory Draw Area households <i>(draw area includes Catawba, Burke, Lincoln, Caldwell, Alexander and Mecklenburg Counties.)</i> | | |
| With potential to move to the city, in a given year | 1,430 | |
| Empty-nesters and retirees | 300 | 21.0% |
| Families | 960 | 67.1% |
| Younger singles and couples | 170 | 11.9% |
| Housing propensities | | |
| Rental apartments | 21.0% | |
| For-sale apartments | 5.6% | |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| Townhouses/duplexes | 9.1% |
| Low-range single-family detached | 36.4% |
| Mid-range single-family detached | 20.3% |
| High-range single-family detached | 7.6% |

Supporting Research and Documentation

Housing

The historic city of Hickory (within a one-mile radius from Hickory Station) contains a majority of single-family detached housing units (55 percent in 1990); multi-family units are largely present in two- to nine-unit buildings. (29 percent). The total number of housing units in the historic city has risen by two percent since the 1990 Census, from 3,669 in 1990 to an estimated 3,750 in 1998, an increase of 81 units. However, the number of vacant units has risen by more than 20 percent, or 56 units, over the same period.

Occupancy rates at most of the apartment communities located within the city limits are generally high, with several properties at functional full occupancy, between 95 and 100 percent.

However, overall rent levels are comparatively low; a majority of apartments have monthly rents of less than seventy cents a square foot, and a large number are renting for under fifty cents a foot. The lowest rents for one-bedroom apartments start at \$365 per month for a 500-square-foot unit at Catawba Place to \$545 per month for nearly 700 square feet at Waterford Place. Two-bedroom rents ranging from just under \$500 per month for approximately 1,000 square feet are available at a number of surveyed properties; the highest two-bedroom rents exceed \$700 per month for similar-sized units.

Waterford Place is the most recent market-rate rental property in Hickory. Its rents, and rents per square foot, are among the highest in the city, starting at \$545 for a 695-square-foot, one-bedroom unit and ranging up to \$875 for a 1,200-square-foot, three-bedroom unit; rents range from \$0.64 to \$0.82 per square foot. Approximately half the residents of Waterford Place are younger singles and couples; the remainder are predominantly compact families with one or two younger children, and a few empty nesters. In comparison, more than a third of the renter households living in the historic city in 1990 paid gross monthly rents of less than \$300. Just over 11 percent paid \$500 or more. The median percentage of income spent on rent in 1990 in the historic city was 25 percent. However, more than 90 percent of the renter households with 1990 incomes of \$35,000 or higher spent less than 20 percent of their income on rent.

Ownership housing values for houses located in the historic city of Hickory are also relatively low. In 1998, more than a quarter of the specified owner-occupied housing units in the historic city had estimated values below \$50,000. An additional 42 percent of the specified owner-occupied housing units were valued between \$50,000 and \$100,000, which means that approximately 68 percent of the ownership housing units in the historic city are valued less than the lowest-priced new market-rate single-family detached house in the city.

At the time of the field investigation, a number of properties were marketing new attached units, ranging from entry-level townhouses targeted to first-time buyers and priced below \$100,000, to units targeted to affluent move-down households and priced from \$165,000 to over \$229,000 (see Appendix E: Table 6). Sales paces range from five units sold in May at the latest phase of Huntsmoor Manor, where a 1,000 square-foot townhouse is priced at \$67,500, to three units at Northpointe, where prices range from just under \$90,000 to nearly \$100,000 for approximately 1,300-to 1,400-square foot units.

Average sales paces at The Cedars and Magnolia Grove exceed one unit per month since opening for models with base prices ranging between \$95 and \$107 per square foot. Most of the subdivisions marketing new single-family detached houses are located near the perimeters of the city or outside the city limits—where developable land is still available.

New single-family houses with base prices below \$200,000 are being sold at Double Oaks (approximately \$108,000 and up); Indian Springs (approximately \$122,000 and up); Grayfield (approximately \$135,000 and up); and Catawba Springs (approximately \$180,000 and up).

The price per foot for most houses falls within \$70 to \$90, with the majority of houses containing between 1,200 and 2,000 square feet. Hickory Hollow, 21 units developed by the City of Hickory, is the only property with base prices starting at below \$100,000. The total sales price is capped at \$100,200 and units are currently selling for approximately \$87,000. These prices are achievable because the project uses city funds to support homeownership through layered mortgage finance for houses located on land donated by the city. Different levels of assistance are available for households with incomes below 100 percent and 80 percent of median.

Demographics

According to Claritas, Inc., a reliable national vendor of demographic data, including estimates and projections, the population of Hickory's historic core (one-mile radius of Hickory Station) is projected to exceed 8,600 persons by 2003, an increase of nearly 400 persons, or almost five percent, since 1990 (see Appendix E: Table 8). This reverses the three percent decline in population that occurred between 1980 and 1990. Most of the gain in population is attributable to significant increases in the number of people under age 17 and those aged 45 to 64, similar to the national trend that is characterized by the aging of the very large "Baby Boom" generation. Accordingly, the median age in the historic city is projected to increase from 35.6 to 36.6 over the next five years.

NOTE: Separate calculations were required to estimate and project population, race, households and income for Hickory's historic core (one-mile radius from Hickory Station). Because of rounding errors and other statistical anomalies, totals do not always exactly coincide.

Projections of population by race show a modest change in the racial composition of Hickory's historic core over the next five years; the white population in 2003 will comprise approximately 60 percent of the population, from nearly 64 percent in 1990. The black population is projected to increase from 34 percent of the population in 1990 to nearly 36 percent in 2003, and American Indians, Asians and Hispanics from a combined two percent of the population in 1990 to nearly four percent in 2003.

The age disparity between the white and minority populations is also projected to increase. The median age of whites will rise significantly, from just over 37 years in 1990 to 41.6 years in 2003; the increase in median ages of minorities will vary considerably — from 27.4 to 28.5 years for blacks; from 21.7 to 25.4 for American Indians; from 26.4 to 31.1 for Asians; and from 25.5 to 30.2 for Hispanics.

The median household income within Hickory's historic core is projected to increase by more than 36 percent between 1990 and 2003, rising from \$21,980 in 1990, to an estimated \$26,995 in 1998, to a projected \$30,045 by 2003. Although more than 70 percent of the households living in the historic core in 2003 are projected to earn annual incomes of \$50,000 or less, the largest numeric and percentage increase is projected to be in the number of households with annual incomes between \$75,000 and \$99,999. By 2003, a projected 240 households will have incomes in that range, an 118 percent increase over the estimated 110 households with those incomes in 1998.

Although the projected change in the number of households living in the historic core is expected to be modest over the next five years, more of these households are likely to be middle-aged and increasingly affluent. The number of households headed by persons aged 45 to 54, the peak "Baby Boom" group, is projected to increase by nearly 18 percent between 1998 and 2003 in Hickory's historic core; more than 27 percent of these households will have annual incomes of \$75,000 or more.

The 1998 median household income of \$26,995 in Hickory's historic core is more than \$12,000 below the 1998 median household income of Catawba County. However, the median income for the core is projected to rise by more than 11 percent between 1998 and 2003 and will exceed \$30,000. Large percentile gains in median income are projected to be achieved by the very youngest households—those headed by persons under 25; the middle-aged—those headed by persons aged between 45 and 54; and the very oldest—those headed by persons 75 and older.

Housing Potential

The potential market for new housing units located within the City of Hickory was defined using Zimmerman/Volk Associates' proprietary target market methodology. In contrast to classical supply/demand analysis—which is based on supply-side dynamics and baseline demographic projections—target market analysis establishes the optimum market position derived from the housing preferences and lifestyle characteristics of households in the draw area and within the framework of the local housing market context, even in locations where no close

comparables exist. Because it considers not only basic demographic characteristics, such as income qualification and age, but also less-frequently analyzed attributes such as mobility rates, lifestyle patterns and compatibility issues, the target market methodology is particularly effective in defining a realistic housing potential for urban revitalization.

In geo-demographic segmentation, clusters of households (usually between 10 and 15) are grouped according to a variety of significant factors, ranging from basic demographic characteristics, such as income qualification and age, to less-frequently considered attributes such as mobility rates, lifestyle patterns and compatibility issues. Zimmerman/Volk Associates has refined the analysis of these household clusters through the correlation of more than 500 data points related to housing preferences and consumer and lifestyle characteristics.

As a result of this process, Zimmerman/Volk Associates has identified 41 target market groups with median incomes that enable most of the households within each group to qualify for market-rate housing, and an additional eight groups with median incomes in which a more limited number of households is able to qualify for market-rate housing. The most affluent of the 49 groups can afford the most expensive new ownership units; the least prosperous are candidates for subsidized rental apartments.

Once the draw area(s) have been defined, then—through field investigation, analysis of historic migration and development trends, and employment and commutation patterns—the households within those areas are quantified using the target market methodology.

The potential market for new market-rate rental and for-sale units is then determined by the correlation of a number of factors—including, but not limited to, household mobility rates, median incomes, lifestyle characteristics and housing preferences, the location of new development, and the competitive environment. The result of this correlation is the annual housing potential from the market perspective, expressed as an optimum housing mix—by tenure, building configuration and household type, including specific recommendations for unit sizes, rents and/or prices—and projections of absorption within the local housing context.

The draw area for Hickory's historic core has been determined through analysis of historic migration patterns combined with anecdotal information. Historic migration trends for Catawba County show significant in-migration from the other three "Unifour" counties—Burke, Lincoln and Caldwell—as well as Alexander and Mecklenburg Counties. These five counties accounted for more than 38 percent of the households moving into Catawba County in 1995, the most recent year for which data is available.

The draw area for new residential development in the city is likely to reflect these historic migration patterns. Therefore, households currently living within the City of Hickory and the surrounding region (specifically, Catawba, Burke, Lincoln, Caldwell, Alexander and Mecklenburg Counties) will likely comprise the largest and most significant segment of demand for new housing within Hickory's historic core. As determined by the target market methodology, which accounts for household mobility within the city as well as migration patterns for households currently living in the region, approximately 1,430 of the qualified draw area households represent the potential market for new housing units within the City of Hickory in 1998.

These 1,430 households have been categorized by tenure (renter/owner profile) and propensity to lease or purchase various housing types in order to determine the depth and breadth of the market for new housing units (both new construction and adaptive re-use) in Hickory's historic core.

The market for new housing units in the City of Hickory in 1998 is comprised of 300 households with the potential to lease an above-median rental apartment, 80 households with the potential to purchase a condominium flat, 130 households with the potential to purchase a townhouse or duplex, 520 households with the potential to purchase a low-range single-family detached house, 290 households with the potential to purchase a mid-range single-family detached house, and 110 households with the potential to purchase a high-range single-family detached house.

The target market distribution of households with the potential to move to or within the City of Hickory underscores the city's family orientation. More than two-thirds of the households that comprise the potential market for new housing units in the city in 1998 are family households. Fewer than 12 percent are younger singles and couples, and the remaining 21 percent are empty-nesters and retirees.

Appendix—Selected Funding Sources and Programs

The National Homeownership Strategy

The various members of the National Homeownership Strategy partnership propose to generate up to 8 million additional homeowners by the end of the year 2000, which translates into a national homeownership rate of up to 67.5 percent.

The National Homeownership Strategy position paper states:

Despite its many benefits, homeownership has increasingly slipped out of reach for many Americans. From 1940 to 1980, the national homeownership rate rose from 43.6 percent of all households to 65.6 percent. Since 1980, the overall ownership rate has declined to a current rate of about 64 percent. While this rate has been increasing in the past two years, the nation's homeownership rate is still well below its historic peak. Although higher income households headed by persons over 45 years of age have held steady, the homeownership rates for younger households and those with lower incomes have faced a much more difficult situation. Between 1980 and 1991, homeownership rates for households headed by persons under the age of 35, both married and single, fell by nearly one-fifth, from 44.5 percent to 37.8 percent. In the same decade, homeownership rates for moderate-income households fell by 10 percent, with a 17-percent drop for low-income households. And the homeownership rate for very low-income families with children declined from 37 percent to 29 percent.

In addition, homeownership rates remain substantially lower among minorities than among whites. In 1993, 43 percent of African-American households and 40 percent of Hispanic households were homeowners, compared with 70 percent of non-Hispanic white households. This gap exists regardless of income levels: both higher income and lower income minorities are less likely to own their homes than white households of comparable incomes.

The National Homeownership Strategy will attempt to help all American households become homeowners, including middle-income families. However, the statistics presented above point to a special responsibility and an important opportunity to target underserved populations and communities, including low- and moderate-income households, minorities, young adults, families with children, legal immigrants, people with disabilities, Native Americans, and residents of inner-city neighborhoods and rural areas.

Partnership agreements have already been signed by more than 50 national organizations. Over time, it is expected that the number of national, state, and local organizations becoming partners in this process will continue to grow, further enhancing opportunities for collaboration.

National Homeownership Strategy Partners in North Carolina

Greensboro

Mortgage Insurance Companies of America
United Guaranty Corporation
230 N. Elm Street, Suite 700
Greensboro, NC 27401
800/334-8966

U.S. Dept. of HUD
Koger Building
2306 West Meadowview Road
Greensboro, NC 27407-3707
910/547-4053 ext. 4121

Raleigh

Mortgage Insurance Companies of America
GE Capital Mortgage Insurance Corporation
6601 Six Forks Road

Raleigh, NC 27615
800/334-9270

Winston-Salem

Mortgage Insurance Companies of America
Republic Mortgage Insurance Company
4964 University Parkway
Winston-Salem, NC 27106
800/999-7642

Mortgage Insurance Companies of America
Triad Guaranty Insurance Corporation
101 S. Stratford Rd., Suite 500
Winston-Salem, NC 27104
800/451-4872

Fannie Mae Community Lending

Fannie Mae's Community Lending products are designed to meet the needs of under-served groups within the housing market by expanding the availability of low-down-payment mortgages and by addressing two primary barriers to homeownership: lack of down payment funds and qualifying income. These mortgage products help low- and moderate-income families, minorities, new immigrants, residents of central cities and distressed communities, and people with special housing needs buy homes.

Community Lending products share many key benefits and flexible mortgage and underwriting features that increase affordability. Each also has features that address the unique needs of the targeted home buyers.

Key Benefits that Increase Affordability

Down payment requirements are lower, from 5 percent to as low as 3 percent. Qualifying income is lower than conventional mortgages. Sources of closing costs are expanded; closing cost assistance can be obtained through gifts, grants, or secured or unsecured loans depending on who provides the assistance. Cash reserve requirements are lower or, in some cases, not required. Nontraditional credit reports are accepted. Community Lending products can be combined, increasing affordability even further.

Flexible Mortgage and Underwriting Features

Fifteen- to 30-year fixed-rate mortgages (FRMs) are available for most Community Lending products. Loan-to-value (LTV) ratios are 95 to 97 percent, depending on the product. Home buyer education and post-purchase early delinquency counseling are required or recommended, depending on the product. Fannie Mae believes that home buyer education ensures that borrowers are knowledgeable about the process of buying a home and obtaining a mortgage, and thus are better prepared to meet the ongoing responsibilities of homeownership.

Because they were created to enhance affordability for low- and moderate-income borrowers, Community Lending products generally limit a borrower's income to 100 percent of the area median income (AMI) where the home is located. Specially designated high-cost areas and communities targeted for neighborhood revitalization are among the exceptions to this income limit. Income limits may also exceed 100 percent of the area median income when a housing finance agency provides the mortgage financing by using tax-exempt mortgage revenue bond funds or when a government agency uses federal, state, or local subsidy funds that have legislatively imposed income limits; in these cases, the income limits designated by such agencies shall control.

Single-family detached homes, townhouses, or condominiums are eligible. The borrower must occupy the property as a principal residence. The property may be new, previously occupied, or rehabilitated.

Fannie Mae American Communities Fund

The Fannie Mae American Communities Fund was established in 1996 to make pivotal equity investments in emerging communities. The Fund is dedicated to investing in neighborhoods that lack adequate access to equity capital for the development of affordable housing and related facilities.

The first priority of the American Communities Fund is to invest in areas in which Fannie Mae is already working with the community to implement a local housing strategy. These areas include cities where Fannie Mae has a Regional or Partnership Office, or has formed a Community Partnership.

The Fund's investments will have a substantial impact on the vitality of the neighborhood. Eligible transactions include rental housing and homeownership opportunities. Mixed-use projects, commercial, retail, and other facilities that directly support residential communities will also be considered.

Investments will be structured to meet the transaction's capital needs. For example, financial support can be provided as equity, participating second mortgages, mezzanine debt, or bridge financing. Funding can be used for initial working capital, land acquisition, or other project needs. The Fund may participate as a general or limited partner, a member of a limited liability company, or a stockholder in a corporation, depending on the ownership entity.

The structure of each investment will be negotiated to support the needs of the transaction and the Fund's required return on investment. It is expected that investments made by the Fund will range in size from \$1 million to \$3 million, although some investments may be smaller or larger. The timing and anticipated amount of return will be flexible. Exit strategies will also be tailored to be mutually beneficial. Day to day management of the Fund's investments will be provided by the sponsors. Reporting and asset protection provisions will be similar to those required by other venture capital funds.

Submitting proposals

Sponsors who wish to submit a proposal should discuss their investment with either the local Fannie Mae Partnership Office or one of the Fund's Managing Directors. The following information is requested:

The location of the proposed investment, including both city and neighborhood, or the general location within a rural county. A description of the neighborhood, and marketing information that evidences the viability of the transaction. The type of transaction— multifamily, single-family, commercial, retail, or other; new construction, rehabilitation, or mixed-use. The impact the investment will have on the neighborhood and the city or county. Sponsors and their experience and background. Other support provided to the community and the investment by private and government sources. Financial projections related to the project. The amount and form of investment requested from the American Communities Fund.

Proposals should be submitted to either the local Fannie Mae Partnership Office or to one of the Fund Managing Directors. Fannie Mae's Charlotte Partnership office covers all of North Carolina:

Jon Gauthier, director
Fannie Mae Partnership Office
122 Tryon Plaza
South Tryon Street, Suite 750
Charlotte, NC 28284

Freddie Mac Community Gold Low-Downpayment

Mortgage

Community Gold is Freddie Mac's latest tool designed to open the doors of homeownership for more people. Under Community Gold, borrowers who have completed a comprehensive homeownership education program can move into a home with as little as three percent of the home price as the downpayment. Just two percent of the purchase price must be from the borrower's own funds, while the remaining one percent downpayment can come from a variety of sources. Acceptable sources include grants from non-profits, unsecured loans from a governmental agency, non-profit or the borrower's employer, and gifts from family.

Community Gold also offers flexible underwriting guidelines. Community Gold also can be used to finance the rehabilitation of a home being purchased. In one Community Gold example in Jacksonville, Florida, mortgages of up to 120 percent of the post-rehabilitation value of the home were provided through a combination of Freddie Mac and City of Jacksonville financing; down payments were as low as \$1,000, and flexible underwriting and credit criteria were allowed. Freddie Mac is providing its low downpayment Community Gold mortgage product through the Jacksonville office of SunTrust Bank, and the city of Jacksonville is providing a special soft second mortgage product to assist with downpayment and rehabilitation costs. In addition to financial support from the city, which makes home purchase and improvements affordable, the city will assist families throughout the rehabilitation process. Families also will receive pre- and post-purchase counseling and assistance with the selection of qualified contractors to rehabilitate the homes purchased.

HUD Rehabilitation Mortgage Insurance (Section 203(k))

Summary:

Section 203(k) insurance enables homebuyers and homeowners to finance both the purchase (or refinancing) of a house and the cost of its rehabilitation through a single mortgage, or to finance the rehabilitation of their existing home.

Purpose:

Section 203(k) is one of many FHA programs that insure mortgage loans—and thus encourage lenders to make mortgage credit available to borrowers who would not otherwise qualify for conventional loans on affordable terms (such as first-time homebuyers) and to residents of disadvantaged neighborhoods (where mortgages may be hard to get).

Section 203(k) fills a unique and important need for homebuyers in another way as well. When buying a house that is in need of repair or modernization, homebuyers usually have to follow a complicated and costly process, first obtaining financing to purchase the property, then getting additional financing for the rehabilitation work, and finally finding a permanent mortgage after rehabilitation is completed to pay off the interim loans. The interim acquisition and improvement loans often have relatively high interest rates and short repayment terms. However, Section 203(k) offers a solution that helps both borrowers and lenders, insuring a single, long-term, fixed- or adjustable-rate loan that covers both the acquisition and rehabilitation of a property. Section 203(k) insured loans save borrowers time and money, and also protect lenders by allowing them to have the loan insured even before the condition and value of the property may offer adequate security. Insurance commitments for 17,000 homes were made in FY 1996; the estimated number of homes to be insured under Section 203(k) for FY 1997 is 19,000, and 15,000 for FY 1998. For housing rehabilitation activities that do not also require buying or refinancing the property, borrowers may also consider HUD's Title I Home Improvement Loan program.

Type of Assistance:

Section 203(k) insures mortgages covering the purchase or refinancing and rehabilitation of a home that is at least a year old. A portion of the loan proceeds is used to pay the seller, or, if a refinance, to pay off the existing mortgage, and the remaining funds are placed in an escrow account and released as rehabilitation is completed. The cost of the rehabilitation must be at least \$5,000, but the total value of the property must still fall within the FHA mortgage limit for the area. The value of the property is determined by either (1) the value of the property before rehabilitation plus the cost of rehabilitation, or (2) 110 percent of the appraised value of the property after rehabilitation, whichever is less.

Many of the rules and restrictions that make FHA's basic single-family mortgage insurance product (Section 203(b)) relatively convenient for lower income borrowers apply here. But lenders may charge some additional fees, such as a supplemental origination fee, fees to cover the preparation of architectural documents and review of the rehabilitation plan, and a higher appraisal fee. However, unlike other FHA single-family mortgages, Section 203(k) borrowers do not pay an upfront mortgage premium.

Eligible Grantees:

FHA-approved lending institutions—which include many banks, savings and loan associations, and mortgage companies—can make loans covered by Section 203(k) insurance.

Eligible Customers:

All persons who can make the monthly mortgage payments are eligible to apply. Cooperative units are not eligible; individual condominium units may be insured if they are in projects that have been approved by FHA or the Department of Veterans Affairs, or meet certain Fannie Mae guidelines.

Eligible Activities:

The extent of the rehabilitation covered by Section 203(k) insurance may range from relatively minor (though exceeding \$5000 in cost) to virtual reconstruction: a home that has been demolished or will be razed as part of rehabilitation is eligible, for example, provided that the existing foundation system remains in place. Section 203(k)-insured loans can finance the rehabilitation of the residential portion of a property that also has non-residential uses; they can also cover the conversion of a property of any size to a one- to four-unit structure. The types of improvements that borrowers may make using Section 203(k) financing include:

Structural alterations and reconstruction.

Modernization and improvements to the home's function.

Elimination of health and safety hazards.

Changes that improve appearance and eliminate obsolescence.

Reconditioned or replacement plumbing; installation of a well and/or septic system.

Additional or replacement roofing, gutters, and downspouts.

Additional or replacement floors and/or floor treatments.

Major landscape work and site improvements.

Enhanced accessibility for a disabled person.

Energy conservation improvements.

HUD requires that properties financed under this program meet certain basic energy efficiency and structural standards. However, luxury items and improvements that do not become a permanent part of the property are not eligible uses of a 203(k) loan.

Application:

Applications must be submitted to the local HUD Field Office through an FHA-approved lending institution. HUD's website offers an interactive directory of approved lenders.

Technical Guidance:

Insurance for rehabilitation is authorized under Section 203(k) of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1709(4k)). Program regulations are at 24 CFR 203.50. This and other FHA programs are administered by the Office of Single-Family Housing in HUD's Office of Housing-Federal Housing Administration. Contact the Director of Single-Family Housing at the nearest HUD field office.

For More Information:

A handbook, Rehab a Home with HUD's 203(k), is available at HUD's website or by mail from HUD. A set of questions and answers about 203(k) loans is also available at HUD's website.

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

PART THREE : REPORT: SECTION VII

Finding: Hickory has an eccentric pattern of one-way streets that makes it hard to get around City Center.

Discussion: Although one-way pairs are generally implemented to save construction and right-of-way money in areas where buildings or houses exist adjacent to the roadway, the negative side affects of one-way pairs are often overlooked. Increased speed, while pleasing to many drivers, harms the livability of residential and downtown areas. Other detrimental impacts include inconvenient circulation, reduced safety (because of higher speeds) and increased noise levels. Commercial property is clearly devalued by one-way streets. In city centers the size and scale of Hickory, one-way streets should be kept to a minimum. The one-way streets north and south of downtown and to the east and west of downtown are not high volume road-ways. (Figs. [124](#), [125](#) & [126](#)) In fact, the one-way streets are incongruous with the desired ease of circulation and walkability within a one-mile radius of downtown. Volumes measured in the Spring of 1998 are discussed in Part One: Vision: Section V of this report. Generally, existing traffic volumes are only half of the one-way road capacity. Measured and observed speeds are consistently above the posted speed limit.

Recommendation: For these reasons, one-way operations should be eliminated from Ninth Street on the west to the current termination of one-way operation east of downtown. For small to medium-sized down-towns, one-way operation should only be considered for higher speed environments where walkability is not a desired condition. The rural and suburban roadway character must yield to the reasonable speed, fine-grained roadway environment typical of many well-functioning downtown areas. Only then will the downtown feel comfortable for pedestrians, bicyclists, residents, and those drivers seeking parking opportunities for their downtown business and social activities. Better circulation, speeds in the 25 to 30 mph range, and detailed care for pedestrian design features will allow this to occur. The following staging concepts are recommended subject to detailed operational studies:

Phase 1: Convert all City Center one-way streets between First Avenue and Second Avenue to two-way operation, including:

Main Avenue NW from Fourth Street NW to Third Avenue NE (Provide left-turn storage on all approaches to the intersection with North Center Street.)

First Avenue NW from Third Street NW to North Center Street

Third Street NW from Main Avenue NW to Third Avenue NW

Second Street NW from Main Avenue NW to Second Avenue NW

Only one intersection in Phase 1 requires left-turn storage (as noted above).

Phase 2: Convert the one-way pairs north and south of the City Center to two-way operation from Ninth Street on the west to their current end points on the east. Based on a conceptual review of needed turn lanes and endpoint transitions for the City of Hickory to remove one-way street operation, a limited number of road-ways will need full left-turn lanes at all intersection approaches. Roadways with higher traffic volumes and intersections have a potential demand for left turns. Left-turn lanes should be studied for certain intersections based on these (often conflicting) criteria:

Left turns are generally needed where high left turn demand exists against strong opposing through movements.

Minimize the number of intersections with left-turn lanes to maximize the number of additional on-street parking spaces, and to enhance walkability through reduced crossing distances.

Encourage a balance of traffic on all thoroughfares.

Minimize left turn lane cost by identifying intersections with sufficient existing rights-of-way to accommodate turn lane installation.

Based on these criteria, the following thirteen intersections should be studied for potential installation of left-turn lanes during the Phase 2 conversion to two-way operation:

Third Avenue NW at its intersections with Ninth Street NW, Fourth Street NW, Center Street North, and Second Street NE

Second Avenue NW at its intersections with Ninth Street NW and Fourth Street NW

Main Street NW at its intersections with Ninth Street NW, Fourth Street NW, and North Center Street

First Avenue SW at its intersections with Ninth Street SW, South Center Street, and NC 127 South

Second Avenue SW at Fourth Street SW

These intersections are the most logical locations for refined study to maintain adequate traffic flow while allowing as much on-street parking as possible. Additional turn lanes can be added at a future date if warranted by traffic volume and observed turning movements.

Tate Boulevard Transition at First Avenue SE and Second Avenue SE

A study was done of alternative ways to connect two-way First and Second Avenues SE with Tate Boulevard. The recommended solution involves maintaining the short section between First and Second Avenues west of Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard, as one-way eastbound (as it is currently used). The new two-way operation of First Avenue SE will adequately handle the more diffused pattern of east/west commuting in this entire area.

Added improvements to the intersection at Lenoir-Rhyne Boulevard should result in the most effective connection with Tate Boulevard. These recommendations will yield a smooth transition to the city's two-way street operation.

Further study of the one-way streets beyond these limits should be addressed in other studies like the US 321 corridor study and the next MPO update.

Implementation: Within eight days after adoption of the City Center Plan, the City of Hickory should request an MPO agenda item to discuss the city plan and specifically the one-way pair conversion to two way operation. This will generate an evaluation period that should take less than eight months. This MPO review should be closely coordinated with the up coming US 321 corridor study to assure coordinated design. Full conversion to two-way operation should be staged over a period of eight years. Phase 1 of the City Center conversion should take place within eight quarters (two years), followed by Phase 2.

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION 2

Finding: Over time, traffic has been diverted from the historical entrances along Main Avenue and Union Square to the east-west one-way pairs.

Discussion: The Main Avenue corridor from downtown to US 321 offers a rich source of traffic capacity that is currently underused. The Main Avenue corridor consists of two east-west roadways for most of its length. In the 1970s, the one-way pairs were created to boost east-west capacity. Although conversion back to two-way streets would slightly lower the per lane capacity, this loss in capacity could be offset by the added capacity of the enhanced Main Avenue corridor. Rather than two one-way pairs, this would give motorists the option six different two-way streets. This enhanced corridor furnishes a healthy amount of traffic to the center of town, where retail and commerce needs it. It would also decrease the traffic volume near the light industry on the edge of town, where there is the most truck traffic, because commuters would have two more options near the railroad tracks.

Recommendation: Main Avenue north and south of the Norfolk Southern rail line should be upgraded to provide another set of two-lane, two-way roadways serving east-west travel in town. Existing warehouse-related truck activity should still be accommodated because of the lower speeds of both two-way avenues. When and if extra capacity is needed (dramatic downtown redevelopment or potential traffic diversion southward if Twelfth Avenue NW is not widened), then both sides of the Main Avenue corridor can be improved as continuous roadways from downtown to US 321. The interchange of Main Avenue SW and US 321 should definitely be part of the upcoming US 321 corridor study.

Implementation: Within eight days of City Center Master Plan approval, NCDOT and the MPO should be requested to add the Main Avenue corridor element to the US 321 corridor study. Refinements to other plan elements should be ready within eight weeks to support the Main Avenue Corridor study with data and analysis. Construction of minor improvements to Main Avenue should be scheduled for eight months after plan adoption. Major construction should be scheduled for completion within eight years.

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION 3

Finding: Roadway rail crossings are a significant issue for Hickory because of the Norfolk Southern Railway presence through downtown. The active rail line immediately impacts all other modes of travel in proportion to the number of crossings available. The June 1998 draft report, Western Piedmont Traffic Separation Studies, Volume IV, Hickory prepared for NCDOT Rail Division is thorough in its evaluation of safety and mobility issues, but from a limited, contemporary point of view. The report was done in the context of auto-only mobility and suburban design assumptions and without adequate consideration of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit modes. The report recommended closings within Hickory's downtown include the following:

- Second Street SE near downtown
- Tenth Street SW along Main Avenue
- Twelfth Street SW along Main Avenue
- Eighth Street NE to the east of town
- Seventh Avenue NE to the east of town
- Twelfth Street NE to the east of town

Discussion: When viewed from a multi-modal and urban design perspective, the recommended closings are detrimental to the overall mobility of the City of Hickory. Multi-modal issues for Hickory include pedestrian and bicycle trips and the influence that increased walkability will have on downtown redevelopment and other modes, such as transit and rail. Proper urban design incorporates land use and transportation interrelationships. Greater network density, i.e., more streets per mile, help greatly when downtown areas are planned for redevelopment in a pattern that encourages walking. For cyclists and pedestrians, more streets facilitate efficient paths, and pedestrian mobility is vital to efficient, human scale, mixed land use patterns. When viewed in this broader, town planning context, most of the proposed closings should remain open to preserve total mobility, not just mobility acceptable to auto users.

West of downtown, closings at Tenth and Twelfth Streets SW will inhibit the proposed use of Main Avenue as an additional access corridor to downtown from US 321. The Second Street SE crossing will be vital to redevelopment plans for the Four Points area near NC 127 South and First Avenue SE. The crossings at Eighth and Twelfth Streets NE and Seventh Avenue NE are less important to downtown, however neighborhood circulation must be reevaluated prior to closings in this area. Although Second Street NW currently operates as a one way southbound, two-way operation is recommended to improve future circulation. This will require modifications to the signing and marking concept plans.

Technically, the Hickory crossing closings lack adequate justification. The report repeatedly notes the lack of fatalities and the low accident levels. Even the few accidents that have occurred could perhaps have been limited with modern crossing gates. Future reductions in freight service are noted, which further minimizes the need for closings. Potential increases in rail passenger service at potentially higher speeds (although a 35 mph train speed limit ordinance is in force) is the only justification provided for the closings. Low traffic volumes seem to be another reason for some of the recommended closings. These volumes are simply factored forward from old counts and may change dramatically when the downtown plan is implemented. Several of these crossings could well have significantly higher future volumes. In fact, further study of the Main Avenue corridor to provide additional downtown access may even require additional crossings at key locations.

Recommendation: The recommended closings in downtown Hickory, when viewed in a broader, town planning context, do not appear warranted. They should remain open to enhance future elements of the downtown plan, especially those near the rail line. The crossing at Second Street NW is recommended for two-way operation north and south of the rail line. Pavement markings and signs should be modified to reflect this future condition.

Implementation: NCDOT must be contacted within eight days to formally notify the rail division that the closings noted above are in conflict with Hickory's City Center Master Plan. Because of the future two-way operation of Second Street NW, pavement markings and signs should be modified. At minimum, the closings should be delayed for eight quarters until further study of the plan and Main Avenue corridor concepts are completed.

TRAFFIC CIRCULATION 4

Finding: Specific locations in the study area experience higher than desired vehicular speeds, endangering either pedestrians and bicyclists or other drivers.

Discussion: Traffic calming features are being implemented throughout the nation in response to roadway designs that encourage speed limit violations. Safety is the key issue, between speeding vehicles and other modes and may involve either pedestrians and vehicles or several vehicle movements that conflict. Traffic calming is achieved in two ways; drivers experience either a rise and fall of their vehicles or a turn to the right or left. These changes in path can be designed to maintain driver comfort at a specific design speed and, conversely, can be uncomfortable at higher than desired speeds. The surrounding neighborhoods yielded numerous locations in need of traffic calming. A complete inventory of existing conditions and their recommended actions and strategies follows in this report.

Recommendations: See specific recommendations in Report: Section IV. Traffic Calming. p. 81.

Implementation: Initiate Traffic Calming Program within eight weeks after plan adoption. Adequate budget allocations should be provided to implement four or more projects per year. Neighborhood trust levels and traffic safety are directly linked to these studies.

Plate A



Plate B

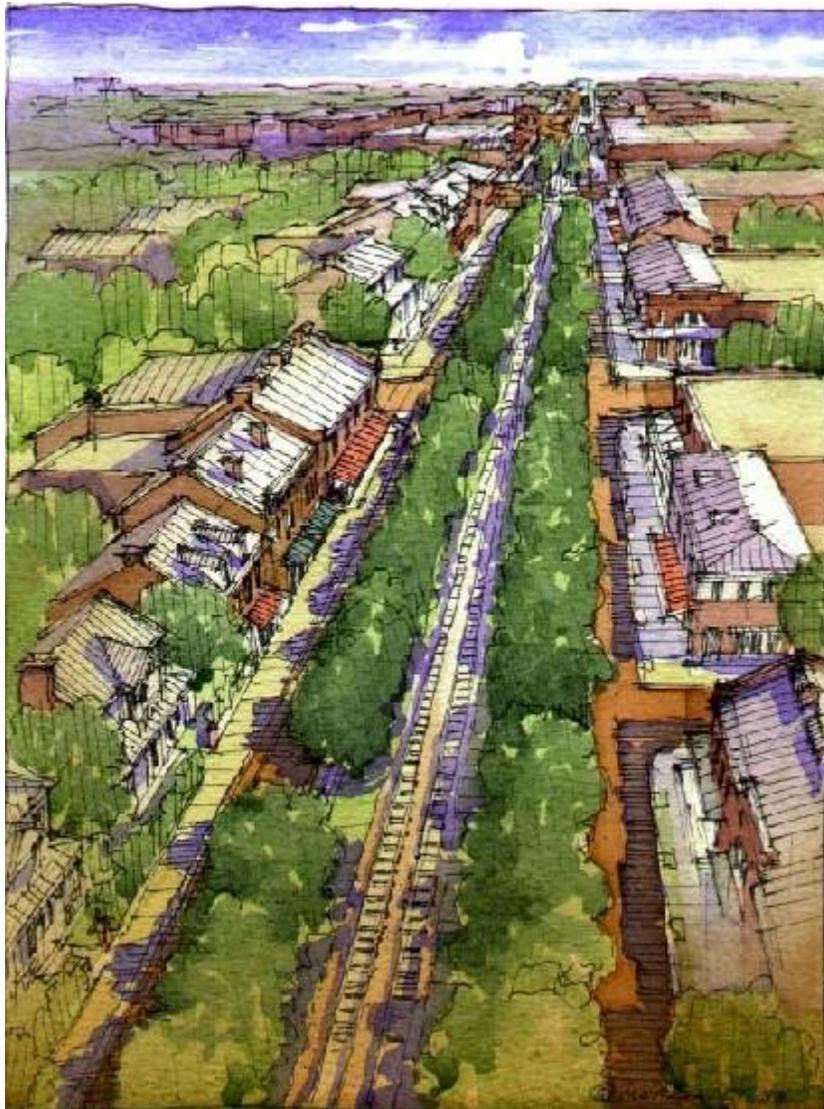


Plate C

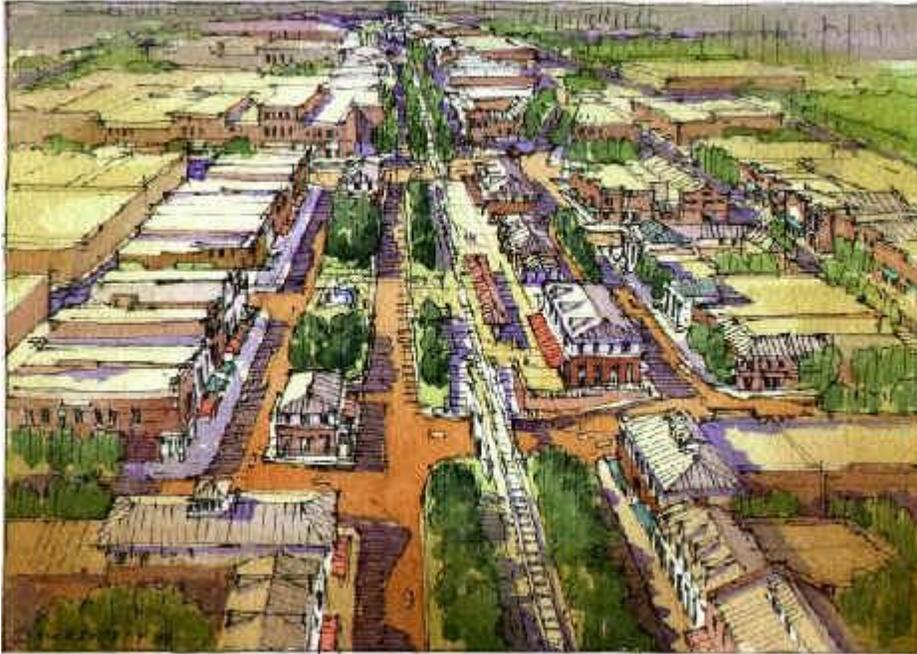


Plate D



Plate E

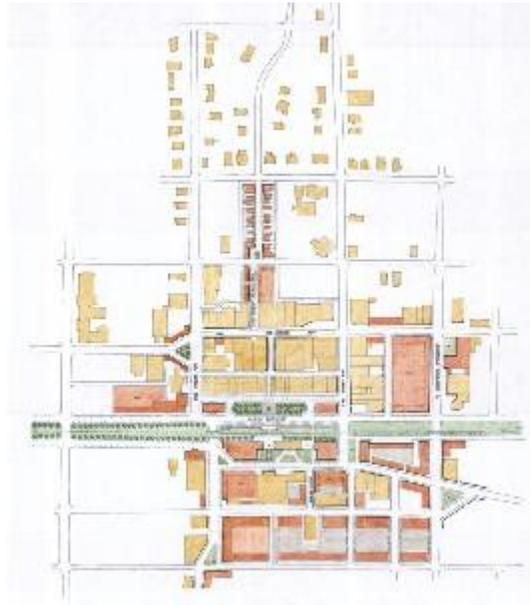


Plate F



Plate G



Plate H



Plate I



Plate J



Plate K

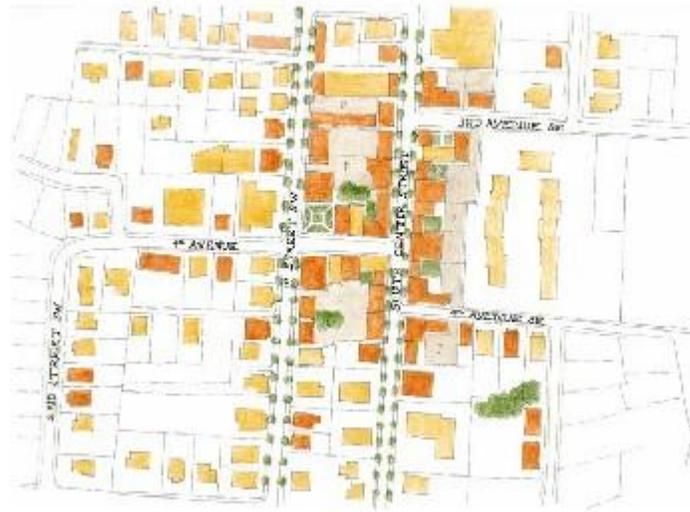


Plate L



Plate M



Plate N



Plate O



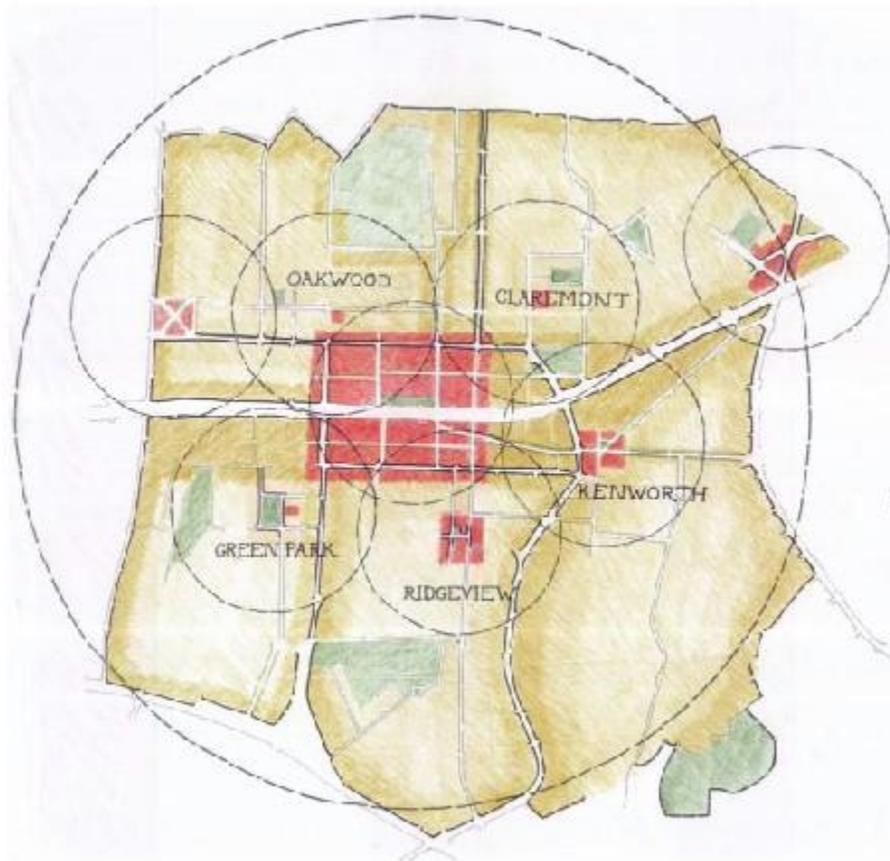
Plate P



Plate Q



Plate R



APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICT

CITY OF HICKORY ORDINANCE NO. _____

THE HICKORY CITY CENTER OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICT

An Ordinance to Amend Chapter _____, Zoning, of the Code of the City of Hickory, North Carolina, that establishes the Hickory City Center Overlay Zoning District.

The Zoning Ordinance of the City of Hickory is hereby amended by:

Establishing the boundaries of The Hickory City Center Overlay Zoning District on the Official City Zoning Map.

Adding a special map entitled the "Regulating Plan of the Hickory City Center Overlay Zoning District" to the Comprehensive Development Code.

Adding to the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter ____ of the City Code, the following text entitled "The Hickory City Center Overlay Zoning District."

The City of Hickory Ordains:

ARTICLE ____ . SCHEDULE OF REGULATIONS DIVISION 2. CITY CENTER OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICT

Article ____ Purpose.

The purposes of this section are to:

Encourage and direct development within the boundaries of the Hickory City Center Overlay Zoning District and implement the Hickory City Center Master Plan.

Encourage a form of development that will achieve the physical qualities necessary to maintain and enhance the economic vitality of Hickory City Center and maintain the desired character of the City of Hickory as stated in the Hickory City Center Master Plan.

Encourage the renovation of buildings; ensure new buildings are compatible with their context and the desired character of the City; that all uses relate to the pedestrian; that retail be safeguarded along specific street frontages; that renovation be equitable for all scales of ownership; and that the permitting process be simplified and facilitated.

Promote the renovation of historic buildings; and ensure that new buildings are compatible with and enhance the historic districts which reflect the City's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural heritage.

For applicants that elect to develop under the standards of the Hickory City Center Overlay Zoning District, the design of buildings and sites shall be regulated under the provisions of this section.

Article 2.2 Definitions

Note: Terms used throughout this subsection shall take their commonly accepted meaning unless herein defined or defined in Article 2, Definitions. When there are conflicts between the definitions herein and definitions as provided in Article 2.2, Defined Words, the definitions of this section shall take precedence.

Artisan Use: Premises used principally for the repair, manufacture and sale of domestic furniture, arts and crafts. The work must take place entirely within an enclosed structure using only hand-held and/or table-mounted manual and electrical tools.

Building Heights: A limit to the vertical height of a building that is measured in number of stories. The vertical distance from the mean elevation at the finished grade at the frontage line to the highest point of the roof surface in a flat roof, to the deck line for mansard roofs, and to the eaves for gable, hip and gambrel roofs. Height limits do not apply to parapet walls, belfries, steeples, flagpoles, skylights, chimneys or roof structures for the housing of elevators, stairways, tanks, ventilating fans, or similar equipment required to operate and maintain the building.

Community Building: Building used principally for education, worship, cultural performances and gatherings administered by non-profit cultural, educational, and religious organizations. Building used principally for local, state, and Federal government, administration, provision of public services, education, cultural performances, and gatherings.

Commercial Use: Premises used generally in connection with the purchase, sale, barter, display, or exchange of goods, wares, merchandise or personal service.

Facade: The vertical exterior surface of a building which is set parallel to a frontage line.

Frontage Line: All lot lines that abut a public street. A corner lot or a through lot has two frontage lines.

Office: A building or portion of a building wherein services are performed, including professional; financial, including banks; clerical; sales; administrative; or medical services.

Outbuilding: A separate ancillary building in addition to, and in the rear yard of the principal building. Outbuildings may have a maximum net interior area of 900 sq. ft. and maximum habitable area of 450 sq. ft.

Retail Frontage Line: All lot lines abutting a public street which are required to be retail, as designated on the regulating plan.

Retail Use: Any of the following uses: artisan, civic, commercial, cultural, entertainment or restaurant uses.

Storefront: The portion of the building at the first story of a retail frontage line.

Screenwall: An opaque freestanding wall aligned with the facade of an adjacent building with the purpose of masking off-street parking from view from the street. Screenwalls shall be between two and one-half (2 ½) and three and one-half (3 ½) feet in height and made of brick, stone or other masonry material matching the building.

Terminated Vistas: A building or a portion thereof which terminates a view as designated on the Regulating Plan, with architectural features of enhanced character and visibility.

Transition Line: A horizontal line the full width of a facade expressed by (1) a material change, by (2) a trim line, or by (3) a continuous balcony a maximum of 2.5 feet deep.

Article 15.4-15.15.7 Permit Approval Process

All construction activity within the Hickory City Center Overlay Zoning District, including the construction, reconstruction, alteration, demolition, and rehabilitation of new and existing buildings and appurtenances, shall be required to follow the review and approval standards contained in Division 2, Site Plan Review and Division 3, Design Review, as applicable, of Article XX, General Provisions.

Article ___ General Standards.

This subsection shall govern the design of all publicly and privately owned land within the Hickory City Center Overlay Zoning District where the applicant elects to apply under the standards of this overlay zone.

Where an applicant elects to comply with the standards of this overlay zone, the provisions of this overlay zone, when in conflict with other sections of the Zoning Ordinance, shall take precedence. Where application is made following the standards of the overlay zone, the provisions of this section shall specifically supersede the floor area ratio, maximum height and minimum setback regulations contained in Article 5, Schedule of District Regulations and Article 6 Application of Area, Height, and Placement Regulations; and the signage regulations specified in Article 8, Signs.

The provisions of the Building and Building Regulations Chapter (6) of the City Code and the Historic Preservation Chapter (62) of the City Code, when in conflict with this overlay zone, shall take precedence.

The design of civic buildings and improvements shall not be subject to the specific standards of this subsection, but shall be subject to negotiated design by the Planning Commission.

All site, building and sign improvement standards contained in the Hickory City Center Master Plan shall be complied with on all site approval applications.

Where an applicant elects to comply with the standards of this overlay zone, the applicant will qualify for Appearance Improvement Incentive Grants as appropriated in the city's budget.

Locations designated on the Regulating Plan for new parking garages and civic buildings shall be reserved for such development.

Designated Landmark buildings shall be renovated and may not be demolished.



APPENDIX A

HICKORY TYPE I: URBAN BUILDING

1. Building Height. The height of the building shall be measured in stories as follows:

1.1 Buildings shall be a maximum of 4 stories above grade and a minimum of 2 stories.

1.2 A transition line shall be provided at the top of the first story.

2. Building Placement. Buildings, outbuildings and their elements shall be placed on their lots as follows:

2.1 Facades, no less than 2 stories high, shall be built on the frontage lines along a minimum of 90 percent of their length with no setback permitted.

2.2 In the absence of buildings, a screenwall shall be built along their frontage.

2.3 Side setbacks are not required.

2.4 Rear setbacks for principal buildings shall be a minimum of 35 feet from the centerline of the alley. In the absence of alleys, the rear setback shall be 20 feet for principal buildings and 5 feet for outbuildings.

2.5 Loading docks and service areas shall not be permitted on frontages.

2.6 Surface parking lots shall not be permitted on Frontage Lines.

2.7 All buildings shall have their principal pedestrian entrance on a frontage line.

3. Building Use. Buildings shall accommodate the following range of uses:

3.1 Stories one, two, and three may be for Commercial, Office, or residential uses. The fourth story may be residential use.

3.2 Commercial or residential uses are required for a minimum of 20 feet of depth from the Frontage Line. The remaining depth may also be used for parking.

3.3 On retail frontages, 70 percent of the facade at the sidewalk level shall be permanently assigned to retail use to a minimum depth of 30 feet.

3.4 Parking exposure on a frontage shall be an opening not wider than 22 feet.

4. Parking. The disposition of parking spaces shall be as follows:

4.1 All parking areas shall be behind the building. Enclosed garages shall be no less than 20 feet from the building facade of the principal frontage.

4.2 Lots under 45 feet in width shall have their parking areas accessed from a rear alley.

4.3 Parking may be provided but is not required.

4.4 On-street parking along the corresponding frontage lines shall be counted toward the parking needs.

5. Architectural Standards. Buildings shall be subject to the following physical requirements:

5.1 The exterior finish material on all facades shall be limited to brick, stone, cast stone, or stucco (no Exterior Insulation Finish Systems – EIFS).

5.2 Balconies and porches may be wood, metal, brick, stone, concrete, or stucco (no EIFS).

5.3 Flat roofs shall be enclosed by parapets no less than 42 inches high or as required to enclose equipment.

5.4 Window glazing shall be 100 percent transparent.

5.5 The glazed area and all other openings of a facade shall not exceed 40 percent of the total area of such facade with each facade being calculated independently.

5.6 The facades on retail frontages at sidewalk level shall not be less than 70 percent glazed.

6. Signage Standard. Signage, when provided, shall be as follows:

6.1 A single external sign band may be applied on the facade of each building providing that it shall not exceed 3 feet in height by any length.

6.2 Additional pedestrian signs may be attached perpendicular to the facade extending up to 4 feet from the frontage line and not exceeding 2 feet in height, 7 feet clear.

6.3 External signs shall not be translucent except signs on the inside of glazed openings which may be neon.



APPENDIX A

HICKORY TYPE II: SHOPFRONT

1. Building Height. The height of the building shall be measured in stories as follows:

1.1 Principal buildings shall be a maximum of 3 stories above grade. A fourth story may be added for residential use only. Outbuildings shall be a maximum of 2 stories.

1.2 A Transition line shall be provided at the top of the second story.

2. Building Placement. Buildings, outbuildings, and their elements shall be placed on their lots as follows:

2.1 Facades, no less than 2 stories high, shall be built on the frontage lines along a minimum of 90 percent of their length with no setback permitted.

2.2 In the absence of buildings, a screenwall shall be built along their frontage.

2.3 Side setbacks are not required.

2.4 Rear setbacks for principal buildings shall be a minimum of 35 feet from the centerline of the alley. In the absence of alleys, the rear setback shall be 20 feet for principal buildings and 5 feet for outbuildings.

2.5 Loading docks and service areas shall not be permitted on frontages.

2.6 Surface parking lots shall not be permitted on Frontage Lines.

2.7 All buildings shall have their principal pedestrian entrance on a frontage line. Handicapped entrances may be at a different place.

3. Building Use. Buildings shall accommodate the following range of uses:

3.1 Stories one, two, and three may be for Commercial, Office, Hotel or residential uses. The fourth story may be residential use.

3.2 Commercial or residential uses are required for a minimum of 20 feet of depth from the Frontage Line. The remaining depth may also be used for parking.

3.3 On retail frontages, 70 percent of the facade at the sidewalk level shall be permanently assigned to retail use to a minimum depth of 30 feet.

3.4 Parking exposure on a frontage shall be an opening not wider than 22 feet.

4. Parking. The disposition of parking spaces shall be as follows:

4.1 Parking may be provided as needed but is not required. There may be a recommended minimum of 2 off-street parking spaces for each 1000 square feet of commercial or retail use and 1 parking space for each residential unit. These parking requirements shall be calculated from the net interior area. There shall be no parking requirement for outdoor dining use.

4.2 On-street parking along the corresponding block frontage shall be made available to the property owners at the time of approval of new construction at no cost at a first come basis. The spaces on each block frontage may be used towards the fulfillment of any building parking needs on that block frontage. Once the reserve is exhausted, the City may create and provide additional parking spaces at a fee sufficient to cover the construction of parking garages at the sites designated on the regulating plan.

4.3 The needed parking may be provided on sites within 1320 feet (1/4 mile).

4.4 Pedestrian entrances to all parking lots and parking structures shall be directly from an adjacent frontage line. Only underground parking structures may be entered directly from a building.

5. Architectural Standards. Buildings shall be subject to the following physical requirements:

5.1 The exterior finish material on all facades shall be limited to wood clapboard, hardyplank, brick, stone, cast stone, or stucco (no Exterior Insulation Finish Systems – EIFS).

5.2 Balconies and porches may be wood, metal, brick, stone, concrete, or stucco (no EIFS).

5.3 Flat roofs shall be enclosed by parapets no less than 42 inches high or as required to enclose equipment.

5.4 Window glazing shall be 100 percent transparent.

5.5 The glazed area and all other openings of a facade shall not exceed 40 percent of the total area of such facade with each facade being calculated independently.

5.6 The facades on retail frontages at sidewalk level shall not be less than 70 percent glazed.

6. Signage Standards. Signage, when provided, shall be as follows:

6.1 A single external sign band may be applied on the facade of each building providing that it shall not exceed 2 feet in height by any length.

6.2 Additional pedestrian signs may be attached perpendicular to the facade extending up to 4 feet from the frontage line and not exceeding 2 feet in height, 7 feet clear.

6.3 External signs shall not be translucent except signs on the inside of glazed openings which may be neon.



APPENDIX A

HICKORY TYPE III: URBAN HOUSE

1. Building Height. The height of building shall be measured in stories as follows:

1.1 Principal buildings shall be a maximum of 3 stories above grade. Outbuildings shall be a maximum of 2 stories.

2. Building Placement. Buildings and their elements shall be placed on their lots as follows:

2.1 Facades shall be built parallel to the frontage line along a minimum of 50% of its length with a set back of 25 feet from the frontage line. In the case of an infill lot, the front setback shall match one or the other of the existing adjacent setbacks. In the absence of building there shall be a screenwall built along the frontage line.

2.2 Side setbacks shall be a total of 20% of the lot width with a minimum of 5 feet to each side.

2.3 Rear setbacks for principal buildings shall be a minimum of 35 feet and outbuildings shall be setback a minimum of 15 feet from the centerline of the alley. In the absence of alleys the rear setback shall be 20 feet.

2.4 In the event of adjacent pre-existing setbacks, adjustments may be allowed or required.

2.5 Open porches may encroach up to 50% of the depth of the setbacks.

3. Building Use. Buildings shall accommodate the following range of uses:

3.1 All stories shall be for Commercial, Office, Bed and Breakfast or Residential uses.

4. Parking. The disposition of parking spaces shall be as follows:

4.1 All parking areas shall be behind the building. Enclosed garages shall be no less than 20 feet behind the building facade of the principal facade.

4.2 Lots under 45 feet in width shall have their parking areas accessed from a rear alley.

4.3 Buildings shall provide a minimum of 2 parking spaces for each 1,000 square feet of commercial or retail use and 1 parking space for each residential unit. These parking requirements shall be calculated from the Net Floor Area.

4.4 On-street parking along the corresponding frontage lines shall be counted towards the parking requirements.

5. Architectural Standards. Buildings shall be subject to the following physical requirements:

5.1 The exterior finish material on all facades shall be limited to wood clapboard, wood shingle, hardyplank, brick, stone, or stucco (no Exterior Insulation Finish Systems – EIFS).

5.2 Balconies and porches may be wood, metal, brick, stone, concrete, or stucco (no EIFS).

5.3 Two or more wall materials may be combined on one facade only horizontally with the stucco below the wood.

5.4 Sliding doors and windows are permitted at back yard locations only.

5.5 Buildings shall have flat roofs with parapets, symmetrical pitched roofs with slopes no less than Except that porches may be shed with pitches no less than 2:12.

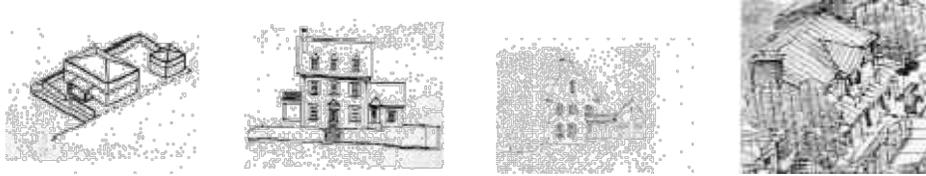
5.6 Openings, including porches, windows, and arches shall be square or vertical in proportion.

6. Signage Standards. Signage, when provided, shall be as follows:

6.1 Address numbers are permitted.

6.2 Additionally, external signage may be applied on the facade of each building, providing that it shall not exceed 2 feet in height and a total area of 20 square feet.

6.3 External signs shall be front-lit only (not translucent).



APPENDIX A

HICKORY TYPE IV: HOUSE

1. Building Height. The height of building shall be measured in stories as follows:

1.1 Principal buildings shall be a maximum of 2 ½ stories above grade. Outbuildings shall be a maximum of 2 stories.

2. Building Placement. Buildings and their elements shall be placed on their lots as follows:

2.1 Facades shall be built on the frontage line along a minimum of 50% of its length with a set back of 25 feet from the frontage line. In the case of an infill lot, the front setback shall match one or the other of the existing adjacent setbacks. Side setbacks shall be a total of 20% of the lot width with a minimum of 5 feet to each side (or evenly divided to each side.)

2.2 Rear setbacks shall be a minimum of 35 feet except outbuildings which shall be setback a minimum of 14 feet from the centerline of the alley. In the absence of alleys the rear setback shall be 20 feet for principal buildings and 5 feet for outbuildings.

2.3 In the event of adjacent pre-existing setbacks, adjustments may be allowed or required.

2.4 Open porches, stairs, and ramps may encroach up to 50% of the depth of the front or side setbacks.

3. Building Use. Buildings shall accommodate the following range of uses:

3.1 All buildings shall be for single dwelling and two dwelling residential uses.

4. Parking. The disposition of parking spaces shall be as follows:

4.1 All parking areas, including garages, shall be no less than 20 feet behind the building facade of the principal facade.

4.2 Lots under 45 feet in width shall have their parking areas accessed from a rear alley, if such exists.

4.3 There shall be off-street parking provided at a minimum of 2 spaces per dwelling unit with an additional 4 spaces required in case of limited lodging or limited office use.

5. Architectural Standards. Buildings shall be subject to the following physical requirements:

5.1 The exterior finish material on all facades shall be limited to wood clapboard, wood shingle, hardyplank, brick, stone, or stucco (no Exterior Insulation Finish Systems – EIFS).

5.2 Balconies and porches may be wood, metal, brick, stone, concrete, or stucco (no EIFS).

5.3 Two or more wall materials may be combined on one facade only horizontally with the heaviest below.

5.4 Sliding doors and windows are permitted at back yard locations only.

5.5 Buildings shall have symmetrical pitched roofs with slopes no less than 5:12. Openings, including porches, windows, and arches shall be square or vertical in proportion.

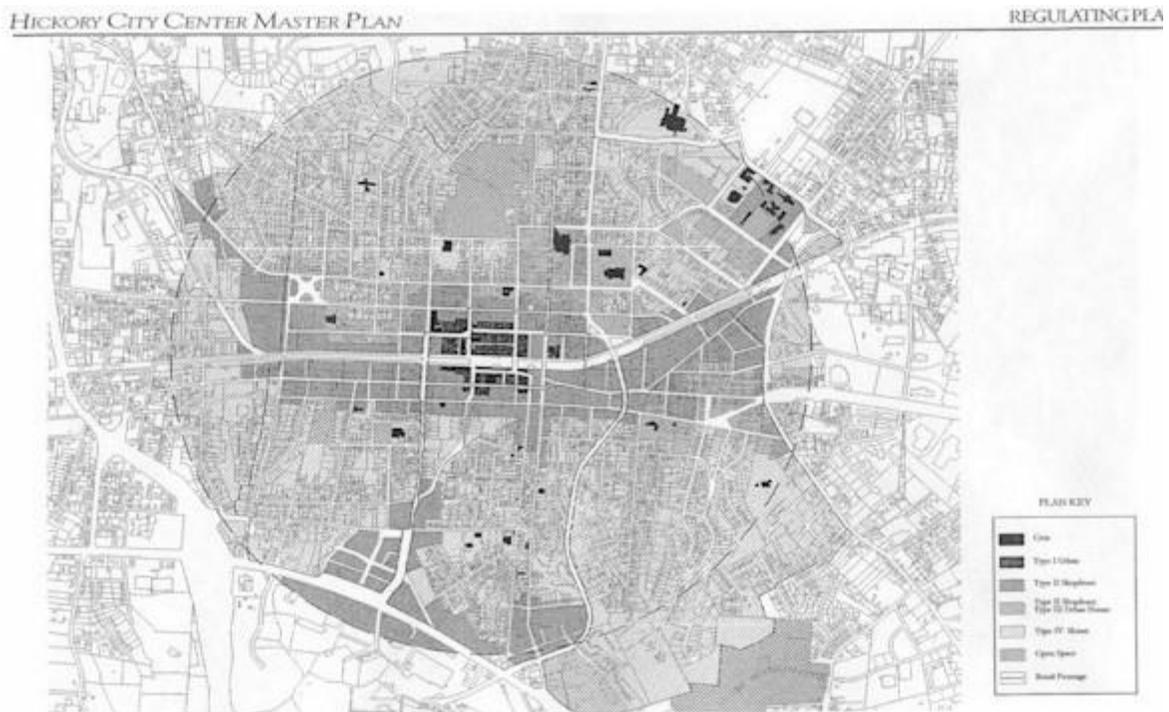
6. Signage Standards. Signage, when provided, shall be as follows:

6.1 Address numbers are permitted.

6.2 In the event of an accessory use, a sign may be permanent installed in the front yard. Such a sign shall not exceed 4 feet square, nor be higher than 5 feet, nor internally or externally lit.

APPENDIX A

REGULATING PLAN



APPENDIX B

LANDSCAPE STANDARDS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PUBLIC LANDSCAPE

Soil preservation: Grades for thoroughfares and open spaces that follow existing topography and drainage patterns. Open places shall remain fenced and undisturbed during construction. The deep soil structure of wide planting strips shall be protected from compaction with stakes and standards of access; soil movement shall be established for deep utilities and manholes. The topsoil of construction areas shall be moved, stored, and amended with organic matter and coarse sand for later use.

Compaction: All planting strips shall be rototilled with 3 inches of recycled fine organic matter. Deeply compacted strips shall be trenched to a depth of 3 feet and backfilled with an addition of loose topsoil, coarse sand, and compost. Expanded slate and young peat shall be added to compensate for compaction and root displacement under the cobbled planting strips of Commercial Streets. Playing fields shall be underlain with a mix of coarse sand and sintered fly ash.

Hydrology: All planting strips shall find lower drainage outlets in preference to high placement of the root ball. Playing fields shall be carefully graded to a 1 percent slope. Hydrological permeability shall be assumed by grass or by placing cobble over coarse sand incised into the trenched strip without further compaction.

Cover: Squares shall be carefully graded, leveled, and planted with a dwarf bluegrass species mix. Playing fields and high-use areas shall include appropriate fescue varieties in the mix. Greens and Rural Greens shall be planted or managed with appropriate low care and drought tolerant turf grasses cut high. Fertilization shall be yearly, in spring, with a full spectrum balanced tree fertilizer with 100 percent water soluble organic nitrogen. The cover in park shall be meadow types, which shall remain unfertilized except for the initial seeding stage.

Nursery: Stated cultivars shall be searched by a plant broker before consideration of alternative cultivars. Public trees of in the Neighborhood Center and Edge shall range from 10 to 16 feet high, with lower branches pruned one month before planting. Scarce cultivars and native trees are exempted from the height requirement. Extra trees shall be planted at an on site field nursery for replacement.

Planting procedures: All transplanted trees shall be sprayed with anti-transpirant before movement in late winter. No planting hole amendment other than the area amendment of de-compaction procedures shall be permitted. Otherwise, follow the highest industry standards.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PRIVATE LANDSCAPE

Soil Preservation: Existing topsoil from the building footprint shall be reserved. The remaining soil profile shall be protected from deep compaction during building construction by mandating and staking alley or lane access during construction. Compact soil areas shall be de-compacted and hydrological permeability assured by mechanically breaking up remnant basement soil and rototilling 2 to 3 inches of recycled organic matter, before the addition of a mix of organically amended topsoil.

Planting Code: One species or cultivar of tree from the following lists shall be planted for every 24 feet of frontage or fraction. Planting other tree species is permitted, but shall not count toward the fulfillment of

the code requirements or the objectives of establishing a visually coherent long term spatial structure for the microclimate and wildlife supportive of the public landscape.

Size: Acceptable tree heights on planting shall vary according to species and availability and shall be determined by the town architect.

Placement: Frontage trees shall be placed within 10 feet of the lot frontage lines and its extension. Alley trees shall be placed 4 feet on either side of the back lot line. Yard trees in the Neighborhood Edge can be placed anywhere in the property, except one species must be placed within 8 feet of the back lot line, on either side, to constitute the lane.

Substitution: One required tree may be substituted by a hedge along the side of the property lines.

Availability: The landscape supervisor shall provide lists of approved and available trees for homeowners and manage a yearly buying system of 20 gallon material from wholesale nurseries or ball and burlap from the site field nursery.

Prohibited Species: American Plum, Currants, Gooseberries, Junipers, Lilacs, Red Cedars are alternative tree disease vectors and are prohibited.

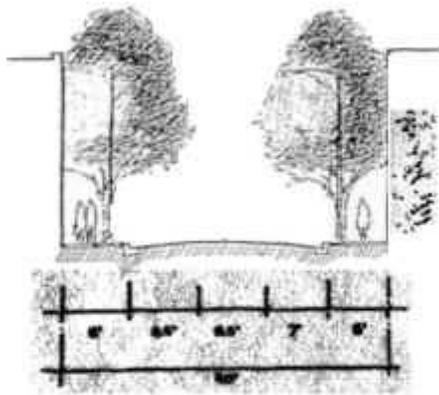
Fertilization and Stewardship: Fertilization shall be yearly with a balance of full-spectrum tree fertilizer with 100 percent water soluble organic nitrogen, spread on turf. Stewardship areas shall be covered with a meadow mix similar to abutting park and shall remain unfertilized.

| CITY CENTER LANDSCAPE STANDARDS | |
|---|---|
| <i>Without Utility Obstructions</i> | <i>With Utility Obstructions</i> |
| Commercial Avenue | |
| Sugar Maple Red Maple American Linden Tulip Tree Sycamore | Trident Maple American Hornbeam Crepe Myrtle Pyramidal English Oak |
| Commercial Street | |
| Lacebark Elm Green Ash Purple Ash Little Leaf Linden | American Hornbeam Kwansan Cherry Amur Maple Golden Rain Tree |
| Large Greens | |
| Southern Magnolia Sugar Hackberry Mockernut Hickory Chestnut Tulip Tree American Beech Willow Oak | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Small Greens | |
| Lacebark Elm European Hornbeam English Oak Little Leaf Linden Crepe Myrtle | |
| Streets | |
| Willow Oak Sycamore Fraser Balsalm Fir Hawthorne Sugar Maple Virginia Pine Pignut Hickory Shummard Oak Canadian Hemlock Southern Magnolia American Linden | Service Berry Crepe Myrtle Washington Sancer Magnolia Sweet Bay Magnolia Crab Apple Kousa Dogwood |

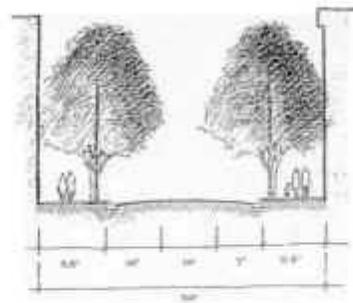
APPENDIX B

LANDSCAPE STANDARDS



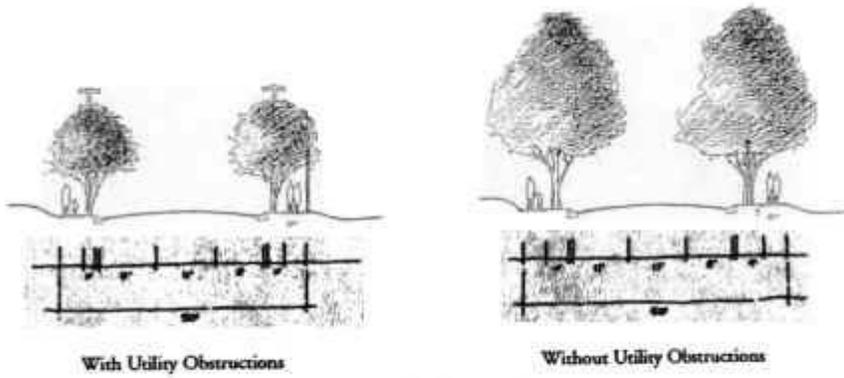
COMMERCIAL STREET

40-24

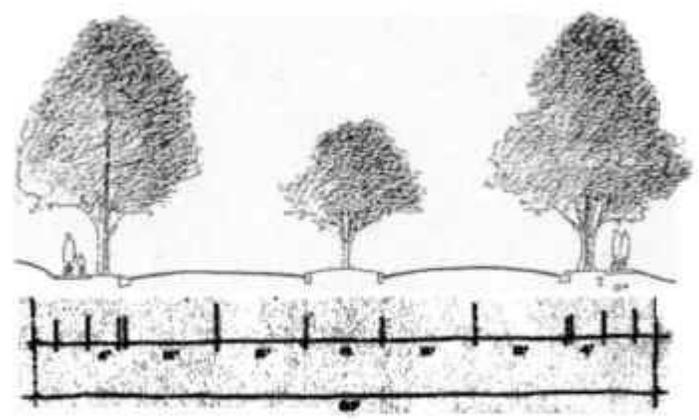


COMMERCIAL STREET

50-27

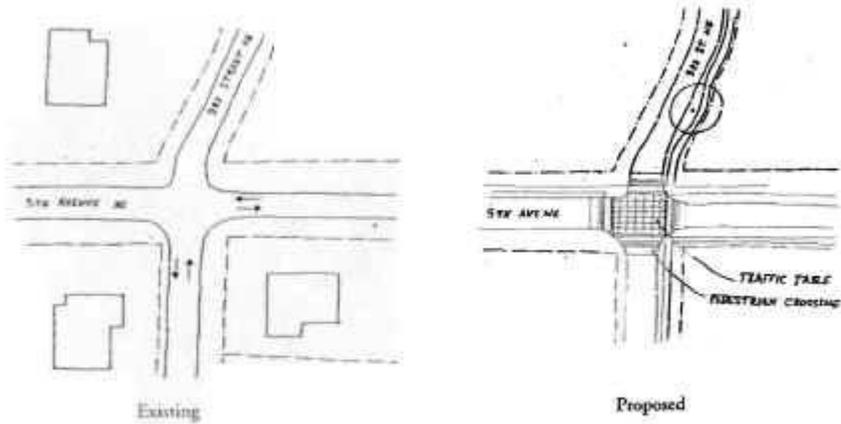


RESIDENTIAL STREET
50-28

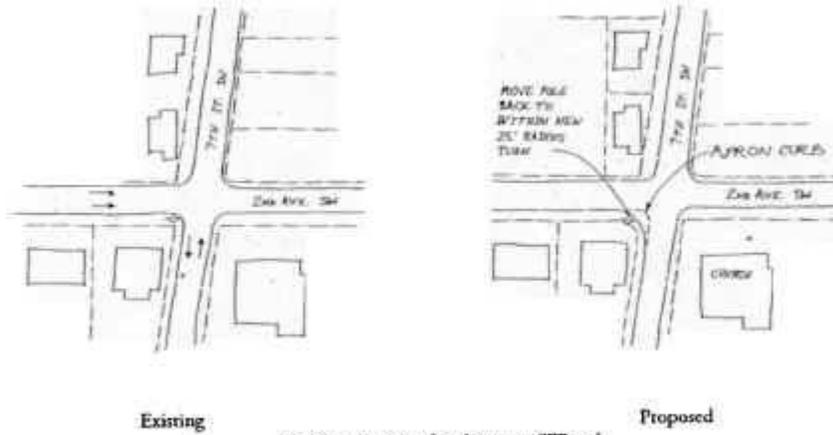


APPENDIX C

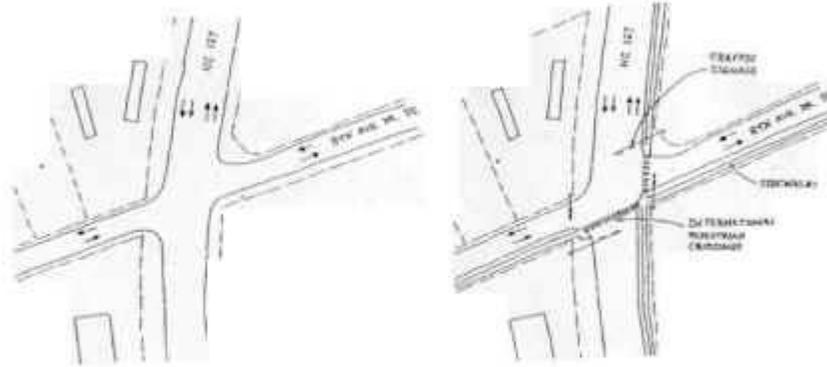
TRAFFIC CALMING



C-1 Intersection of 5th Avenue NE and 3rd Street NE



G-4 Intersection of 2nd Avenue SW and 7th Street SW



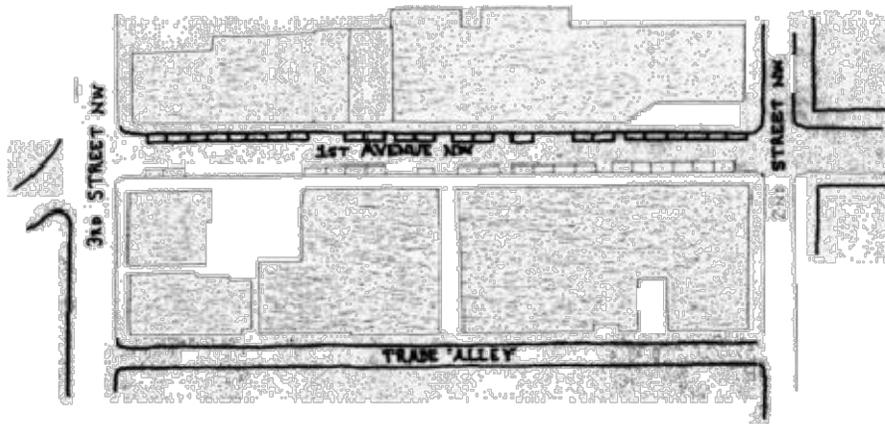
Existing

Proposed

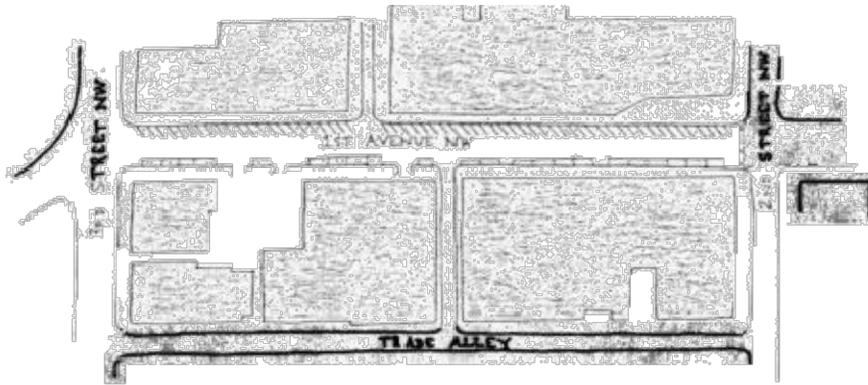
K-3 Intersection of NC 127 and
8th Avenue Drive SE

APPENDIX C

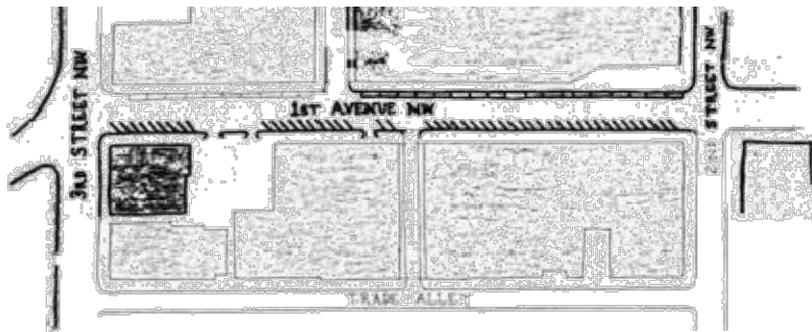
PARKING AND CIRCULATION



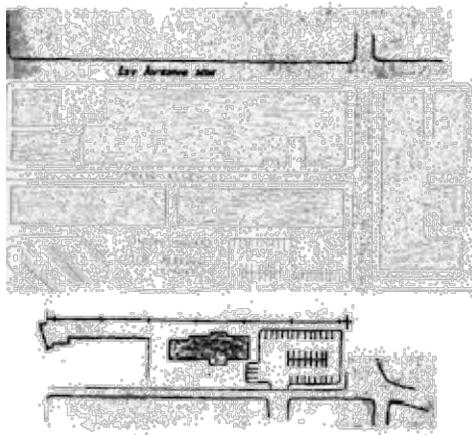
Existing Parking Layout - 1st Avenue NW 42 Spaces



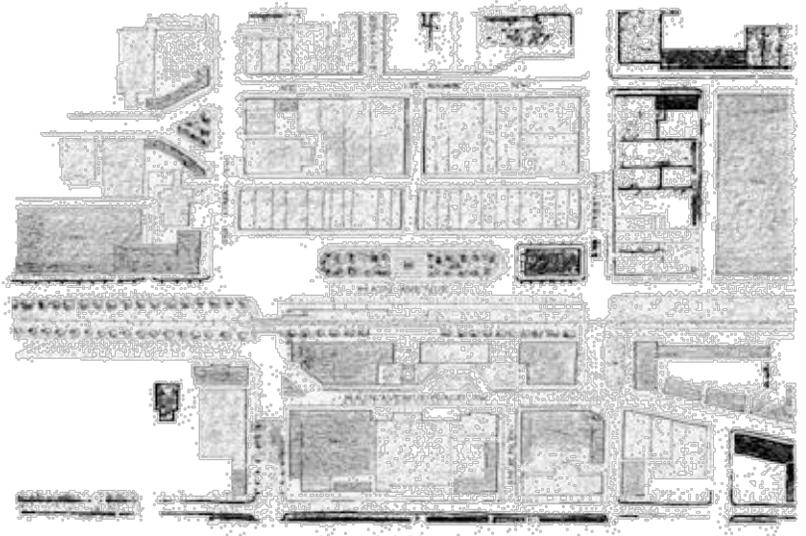
Proposed Parking Layout 1st Avenue NW 78 Spaces



Proposed Parking Layout 1st Avenue NW 72 Space



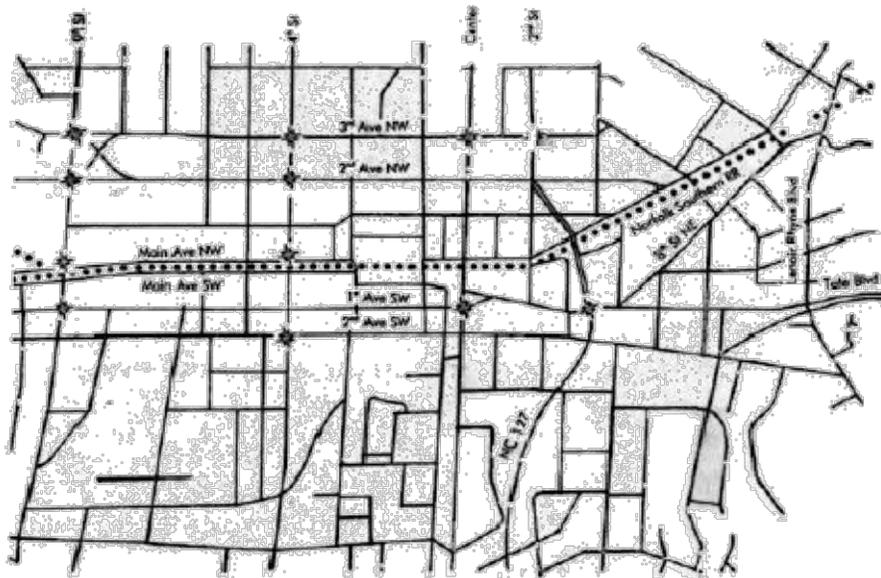
Existing Parking Layout
Union Square
108 Spaces



Proposed Parking Layout
Union Square
132 Spaces

APPENDIX C

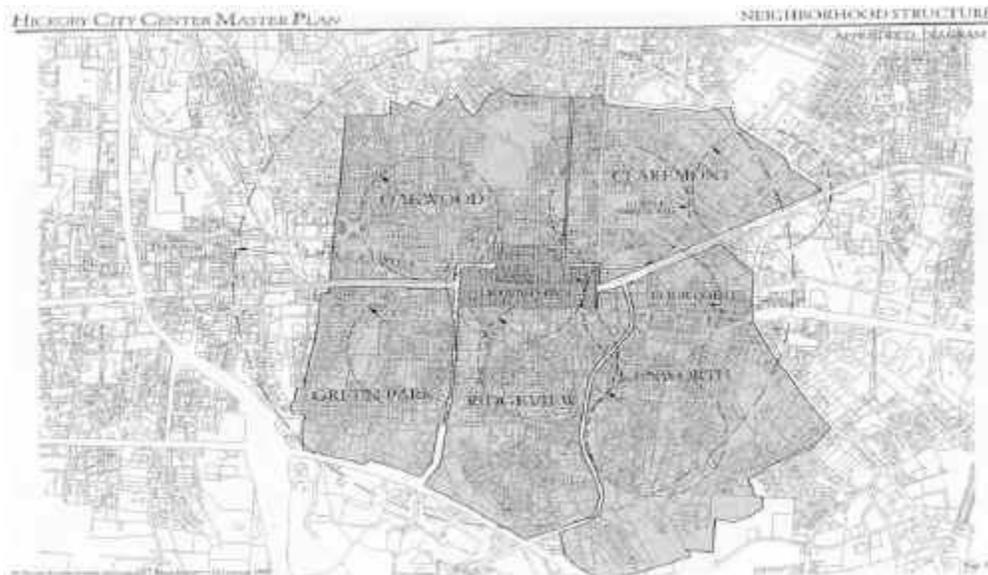
LEFT TURN LANE ANALYSIS



LEFT TURN LANE ANALYSIS: TWO-WAY STREETS
Hickory, North Carolina



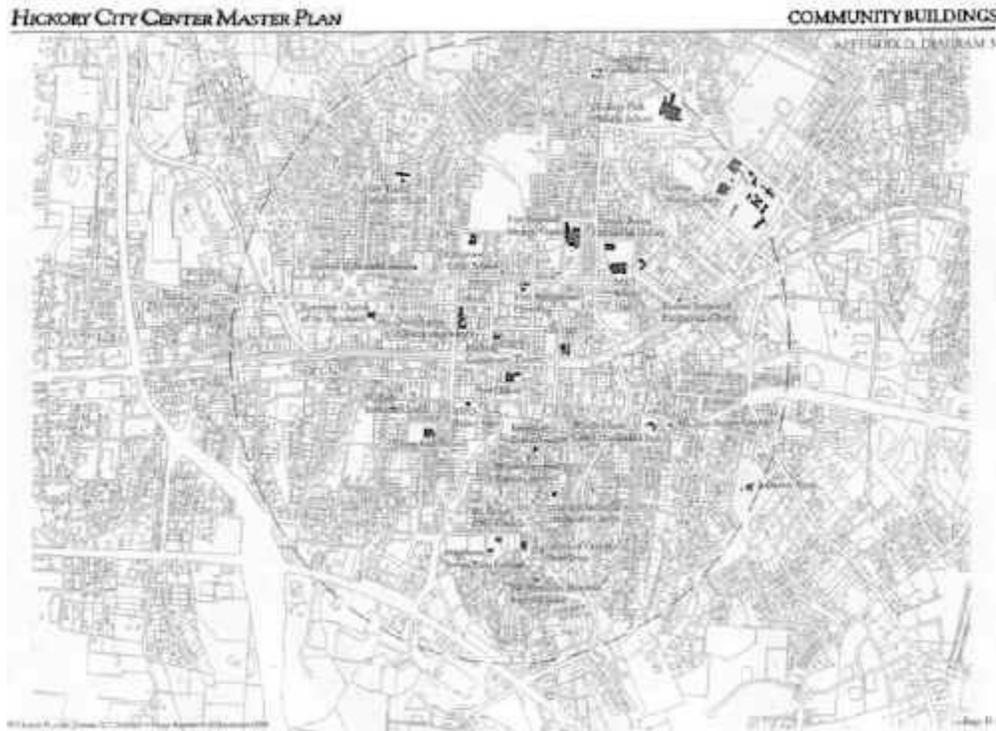
APPENDIX D: DIAGRAM 1
NEIGHBORHOOD STRUCTURE



APPENDIX D: DIAGRAM 2
GATEWAYS, CORRIDORS, OPEN SPACE



**APPENDIX D: DIAGRAM 3
COMMUNITY BUILDINGS**

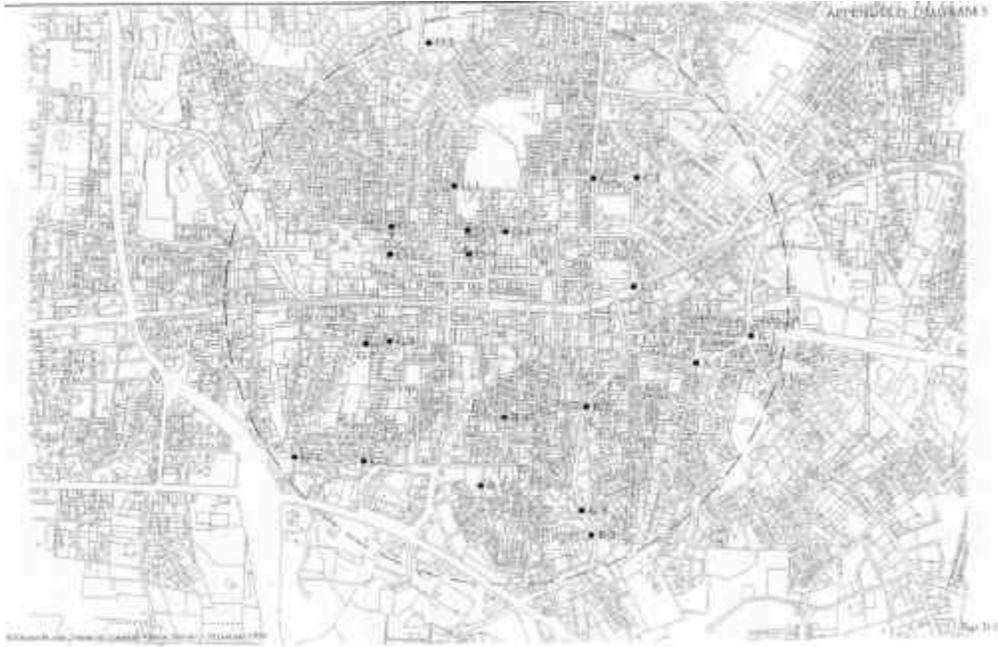


**APPENDIX D: DIAGRAM 4
SPECIFIC PROJECTS**



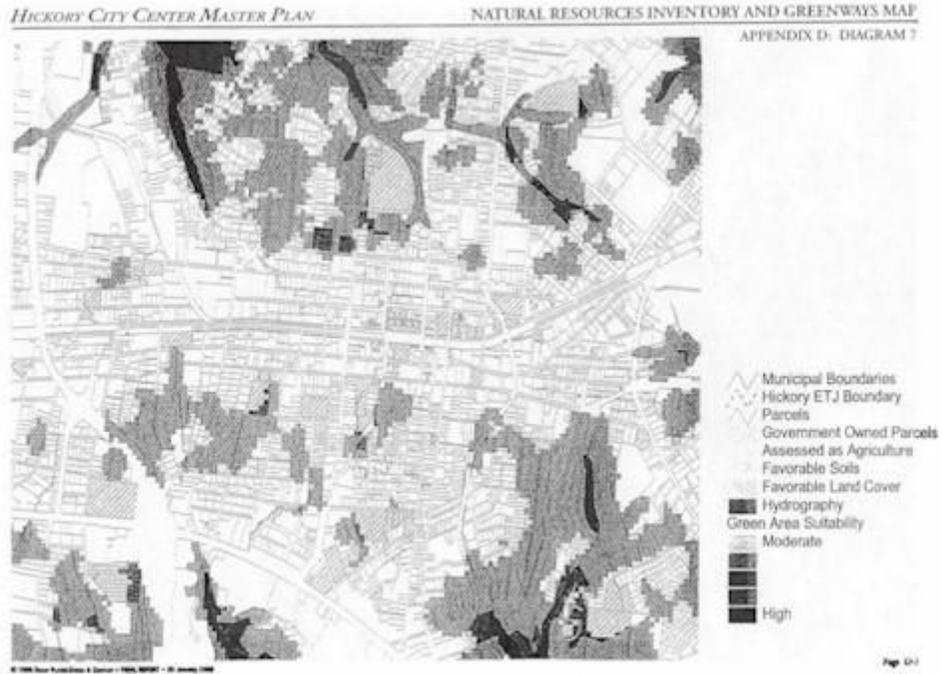
APPENDIX D: DIAGRAM 5

TRAFFIC CALMING



APPENDIX D: DIAGRAM 7

NATURAL RESOURCES AND GREENWAYS





APPENDIX D: DIAGRAM 8

SHOPFRONT DETAILS

PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

LIGHTING

Exterior lighting.
Wash signage in light.

SIGNAGE

Signboard or painted sign on building wall
Blade or hanging sign shall be perpendicular to building wall.

CANVAS AWNING

Extending over sidewalk.
Signage permitted on valance.

SIDEWALK, CURB, AND STREET UPGRADE

STREET FURNITURE UPGRADE

Benches shall be set with backs to the storefront where possible.

LANDSCAPE UPGRADE



APPENDIX D

DIAGRAM 8.1

| | | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| 1. Streetlights | | |
| 1.1 | Manufacture: | Staff Sales, Inc. PO Box 1020 Highland, NY 12528 (800) 932-0633 |
| 1.2 | Types | For Union Square and Hickory Station – HS210-SP-2 (Double Fixture)/11 ft. pole For Urban Buildings – SA1-SP-2 (Double Fixture)/11 ft. pole For Urban House and Shops – SA2-SP (Single Fixture)/10 ft. pole For House – SA2-SP-W (Single Fixture)/9 ft. pole. For Alleys – SA2-SP-W (Single Fixture)/9 ft. pole @ wall mount Lamp type: 175W – Mercury Vapor |
| 1.3 | Finish | Color: "Hickory Green" |
| 1.4 | Dimensions: | 4-inch diameter pole (untapped) |
| 2. Street Name Signs | | |
| 2.1 | Manufacture | (to be determined) |
| 2.2 | Type: | Painted aluminum, double faced sign |
| 2.3 | Finish: | Green background; white reflective letters |
| 2.4 | Lettering: | (to be determined) |
| 2.5 | Dimensions: | (to be determined) |
| 2.6 | Hardware: | Painted aluminum to match street light pole |
| 2.7 | <i>These specifications are intended for sign installation on the street light pole above.</i> | |
| 3. Trash Receptacles | | |
| 3.1 | Manufacturer: | White Mop Wringer Company 10701 N. 46 th Street Tampa, FL 33617 (813) 971-2223 |
| 3.2 | Type: | "Smartbasket" |
| 3.3 | Dimensions: | 23 inches high – 15.75 inches diameter; capacity – 17 gallons |
| 3.4 | Material: | Basket – type 304 stainless steel Bracket – heavy gauge welded steel plate |
| 3.5 | Finish: | Zinc electroplate undercoat; polyester powdercoat Color – "Hickory Green" |
| 3.6 | <i>These specifications are intended for receptable installation on the street light pole above.</i> | |
| 4. Benches | | |
| 4A Stone | | |
| 4A.1 | Manufacturer: | Dura Art Stone 100 Lees Mill Rd. Forest Park, GA 30050 (800) 232-0332 |
| 4A.2 | Type: | Campobella Bench 6Q |

| | | |
|-----------------|---|---|
| 4A.3 | Dimensions: | Overall height: 42 inches Seat height: 17 inches Overall depth: 27.5 inches Overall length: 73 inches |
| 4A.4 | Material: | Cast stone |
| 4A.5 | Finish: | Limestone |
| 4B Wood | | |
| 4B.1 | Manufacturer: | Landscape Forms, Inc. 431 Lawndale Ave. Kalamazoo, MI 49001 (800) 290-6236 |
| 4B.2 | Type: | TS 3005-BS-72 |
| 4B.3 | Dimensions: | Overall height: 35 inches Seat height: 17 inches Overall depth: 23 inches |
| 4B.4 | Material: | Jarrah |
| 4B.5 | Finish: | LF-20 (exterior) |
| 4C Metal | | |
| 4C.1 | Manufacturer: | DuMor, Inc. Dept. 4, PO Box 142 Mifflintown, PA 17059-0142 (800) 598-4018 (717) 436-9839 |
| 4C.2 | Type: | Bench model #59 |
| 4C.3 | Dimensions: | Overall height: 33 inches Seat height: 14 inches Overall depth: 26 inches Arm height: 26 inches Lengths are in 1-foot intervals |
| 4C.4 | Material: | Punched and painted aluminum to match trash receptacles |
| 4C.5 | Finish: | Powdercoat; Color: "Hickory Green" |
| 4C.6 | <i>An alternative metal bench would be similar to the suggested one with a metal basket weave material instead of the punched aluminum.</i> | |

APPENDIX D

DIAGRAM 8.2

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|--|
| 5. Bicycle Racks | | |
| 5.1 | Manufacturer: | Landscape Forms, Inc. 431 Lawndale Ave. Kalamazoo, MI 49001 (800) 290-6236 |
| 5.2 | Type: | PI Rack |
| 5.3 | Dimensions: | Height: 43 inches Depth: 21.5 inches |
| 5.4 | Materials | Heavy-duty, high-quality steels |
| 5.5 | Finish | Powdercoat: Color: "Hickory Green" |
| 6 Tree Grates | | |
| 6.1 | Manufacturer: | Urban Accessories, Inc. PO Box 310 Woodinville, WA 98072 (206) 487-0488 |
| 6.2 | Type: | OT Title 24 |
| 6.3 | Dimensions: | 4 feet square |
| 6.4 | Material: | Cast Ductile Iron |
| 6.5 | Finish: | Powdercoat |
| 7 Trench Drains | | |
| 7.1 | Manufacturer: | Urban Accessories, Inc. PO Box 310 Woodinville, WA 98072 (206) 487-0488 |
| 7.2 | Type: | OT Title 24 |
| 7.3 | Dimensions: | 6 inches x 18 inches as necessary |
| 7.4 | Material: | Cast Ductile Iron |
| 7.5 | Finish: | Powdercoat |
| 8. Cafe Chairs | | |
| 8.1 | Manufacturer: | Hauser Contract Seating PO Box 186 Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2J 3Z9 |
| 8.2 | Type: | SCC Series, custom design |
| 8.3 | Dimensions: | Seat height: 15 inches |
| 8.4 | Material: | Steel |
| 8.5 | Finish: | Powdercoat: Color "Hickory Green" |
| 9. Newspaper Vending Boxes | | |
| | | <i>DPZ does not recommend the use of on-street vending. Ideally, all vending would occur within cafes.</i> |
| 10. Public Telephones | | |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | <i>DPZ does not recommend the use of on-street public telephones. Ideally, all public telephones would be located within cafes or public buildings.</i> | |
| 11. Drinking Fountains | | |
| | <i>DPZ does not recommend the use of on-street public drinking fountains. Ideally, all drinking fountains would be located within cafes or public buildings.</i> | |
| 12. Clocks | | |
| 12.1 | Manufacturer: | Columbia Cascade Company 1975 SW Fifth Avenue Portland, OR 97201-5293 |
| 12.2 | Type: | determined by location |
| 12.3 | Dimensions: | determined by location |
| 12.4 | Material: | determined by location |
| 12.5 | Finish: | Color: "Hickory Green" |
| 13. Transit Shelters | | |
| 14. Applicable Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines | | |

APPENDIX E

RETAIL

The Retail Background Data Report is Available in the City of Hickory Planning Department.

APPENDIX F

HOUSING

The Housing Background Data Report is Available in the City of Hickory Planning Department.

APPENDIX G

HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Historic Districts and Property Values

Historic preservation encourages reinvestment in existing neighborhoods, enhancing property values and local tax bases. Sometimes opponents of historic designation voice a concern that creating local historic districts to protect those neighborhoods will have an adverse effect on property values. Let's set the record straight: 1. Studies show absolutely no evidence of decline in property values from historic district designation. 2. Indeed, designation consistently encourages reinvestment.

For the vast majority of Americans, their homes are their biggest financial assets. When we allow older neighborhoods to deteriorate, not only do local governments lose tax revenues, we are literally stealing the savings of our citizens. And in too many communities, city governments are allowing that to happen. And then, in addition to the neglect of older neighborhoods, the city may at the same time be encouraging sprawl at the edges, usually subsidized with taxpayers' dollars.

Any competent industrial developer understands that the top priority is retaining the industries you already have, followed by encouraging the expansion of existing firms, and only then focusing on trying to attract new companies. Absolutely the same priorities ought to apply to neighborhoods. The Urban Land Institute (hardly the foe of development) has reported that the life-time public costs of servicing dispersed development is between 30% and 300% more than meeting the needs of more compact development. **Any public official who allows the continued deterioration of older neighborhoods while at the same time providing the public infrastructure for suburban sprawl simply cannot claim to be fiscally responsible.** There is no more flagrant waste of local taxpayers dollars than this combination of neglected neighborhoods and subsidized sprawl!



Whenever the creation of a historic district is proposed, the question is asked, "Will the creation of a local historic district hurt my property values?" A number of analyses have been conducted in North Carolina to examine that question. Here are the highlights of some of those studies:

"It is clear from the data presented that property values in the historic Oakwood District are increasing at faster rates than the city overall."

The Effects of Districting on Property Values in the Historic Oakwood District – Raleigh, North Carolina,
James David Tassos, 1991



"The Findings indicate that there is a tendency for property value increases to become more pronounced in the core areas of the historic districts than in their fringe areas. This tendency suggests that the district aesthetic regulations promoted investor confidence to a greater extent in the core areas of Greensboro's historic districts"

Local Historic District Designation and The Spatial Distribution of Assessed Property Value Increases,
Kaye Graybeal, 1995

"I looked at fifty-seven homes in the historic district which had been restored since 1970...the total appraised value of the fifty-seven homes was \$790,276 in 1970, and the total value in 1986 was \$6,115,968, an appreciation of almost eight hundred percent."

The Impact of Historic Preservation on New Bern, North Carolina, Colin W. Barnett, 1993

"The property values after local historic district designation ('80-'88) increased more in the local districts than in the paired (non-designated older) neighborhoods."

Summary of Greensboro Historic District Property Values Study, Jo Ramsay Leimenstoll, 1994



"In 1978 the property values in downtown New Bern were \$8,700,000. In 1994, the values were \$42,300,000, which represents a 486% increase. That's \$196,560 in increased yearly revenue to the county. During this same period, the entire county experienced a 260% increase in property values."

Swiss Bear Newsletter, 1995

"Today, New Bern is a thriving city with a population of approximately 21,000. When all factors are examined together, one compelling conclusion will clearly stand out: historic preservation has played a significant part in the city's economic growth."

The Impact of Historic Preservation on New Bern, North Carolina, Colin W. Barnett, 1993

APPENDIX H

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

[Note: Names listed in this draft may not have corrected spelling.]

The City of Hickory hired the town planning firm of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company and a team of consultants to bring their expertise to Hickory's City Center, a one mile radius from the corner of Main and Center Streets. This team includes TBA2 Architects; Cole Jenest & Stone; Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc.; Gibbs Planning Group; Hall Planning and Engineers; Kubilins Traffic Consulting; Lennertz Coyle & Associates; and Warren Design & Engineering. They have been charged to develop a master plan, special projects within the five identified neighborhoods, business development, transportation corridor studies, and an overlay code and accompanying regulating plan. Recognizing that community involvement and input is necessary, Civic Communications was engaged to implement and coordinate a community relations plan. The following is a record of the community relations efforts completed before and during the City Center Design Charrette, held July 13 through July 20, 1998 at the Duke Power Building, 127 First Avenue NW, Hickory, North Carolina

Notifying the Community

Advertisements

Hickory Daily Record; June 24th

Announcements

Robert Gibbs' Presentation: How Modern Retail Trends Affect Main Street
Invitations sent

Staff Transportation Meeting

Phone Calls

Housing Meeting

Phone calls to City Employees
Neighborhood Walkabouts
Postcard Announcements Sent

PRESENTATIONS

Thomas Low Presentation to Downtown Development Association - June
Robert Gibbs Presentation - June 17 at the Community Theater; 71 people

Opening Presentation - July 13, 6:30-8:00 pm at City Hall; 45 people
Closing Presentation - July 20, 6:30-8:00 pm at City Hall; 52 people

GETTING NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT

Walkabouts

Ridgeview Walkabout - June 29, 5:30-8:30 pm; 25 people
Kenworth Walkabout - June 30, 6:30-9:30 pm; 20 people
Green Park Walkabout - July 1, 6:30-9:30 pm; 37 people
Oakwood Walkabout - July 2, 11:00am-12:30pm; 37 people
Claremont Walkabout - July 2, 6:30-9:30 pm; 23 people

Design Reviews

City Center Design Review - Friday, July 17, 1:00 - 3:00 pm
Claremont Design Review - Saturday, July 18, 9:00 - 10:30 am; 14 people
Oakwood Design Review - Saturday, July 18, 11:00 - 12:30 pm; 16 people
Green Park Design Review - Saturday, July 18, 1:30 - 3:00 pm; 19 people
Kenworth Design Review - Saturday, July 18, 3:30 - 5:00 pm; 16 people
Ridgeview Design Review - Saturday, July 18, 6:00 - 7:30 pm; 18 people

ISSUE MEETINGS

Staff Housing Meeting with Lori Volk
Staff Traffic Meeting with Richard Hall, Margaret Kublins, and Bill Lennerz
Tuesday, June 30; 9 people
Transit Meeting with Bill Lennerz and Richard Hall
Wednesday, July 15, 9:00 - 10:30 am; 16 people
Traffic/Transportation Meeting with Richard Hall
Wednesday, July 15, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm; 20 people
Retail/Commercial Meeting with Robert Gibbs and Richard Hall
Thursday, July 16, 9:00 - 10:30 am; 20 people
Housing with Todd Zimmerman and Thomas Low
Thursday, July 16, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm; 20 people
Historic Preservation with Historic Preservation Commission with Thomas Low and Zach Rice
Thursday, July 16, 7:30 - 9:00 pm
Parks and Recreation with Thomas Low and Tedd Duncan
Friday, July 17, 9:00 - 10:30 am; 8 people
Utilities and Sidewalks with Thomas Low and Tedd Duncan
Friday, July 17, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm; 7 people
Civic Art with Thomas Low (Jennifer Murphy was unable to attend due to illness)
Friday, July 17, 7:30 - 9:00 pm; 10 people

INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Austin M. Allran - State Senator (Low)
Dennis Phillips - Frye Regional (Low)
Paul Fogelman, Jr. - Inform (Low)
Jay Adams - Adams Wells (Purnell)
Charles Dixon - Hickory by Choices (Low/Zimmerman)
Dr. LaHurd and Skip Dubstone (CFO) - Lenoir Rhyne (Duncan)
Steve Ikerd (Low)
Charles Deal - The Hickory News (Low)

Charles Snipes - Bank of Granite (Low/Zimmerman)
Judy Shepler - SHEPLER/CODA (Low)
Carroll Holland - Carolinas Insur. & Realty (Low)
Dale Hall - NationsBank (Low)
Don Coleman - Hickory Springs (Low, TBA2)
Buzz - Dad's Place (Rackley)
Richard Greathouse (Rice)
Wilfred Wells (Low)
Meg Jenkins Locke (Low)
Boyd George - MDI (Purnell)
Al Spainhour - Spainhour's (Gibbs)
Allen Hemphill - West Deal (Gibbs)
Marvin Zerden - Zerden's (Gibbs)
Tim Cline - Bisanar Company Jewelers (Gibbs)
Beemer Harrell - DDA (Purnell, Gibbs)
Julia Rush - Julia Rush (Gibbs)
Phillip Razor - Gem Masters Jewelers (Gibbs)
John Clark - Clark's Tire (Gibbs)
Bob Warmuth - The Shade Parlor (Gibbs)
Ron Berndt - Berndt's Inc. (Gibbs)
Phillip Greene - Cook's (Gibbs)
Angelo Emanuel - Angelo's (Gibbs)
Lindy Hudson - Lindy's Furniture (Gibbs)

PHONE CALLS

Barbara Cole - BB&T
Eddie Edwards - Alcatel - talked to his assistant - Mr. Edwards was out of town
Hunt Shuford - Shuford Mills - out of town first of the week and busy second half
David Zagaroli - Zagaroli & Co. - Im
Bonnie Mitchell - The Prudential
Julian Whitener - former Mayor
Murray Tate - Im

MEDIA COVERAGE

Sent Press Releases -

ARTICLES

Hickory News

"What City Study Needs is Participation" - Editorial - Thursday, June 11, 1998
"Plans for community's future" - Letter to the editor from Julia Rush
"Change key to downtown vitality?" - Editorial - Thursday, June 25, 1998
"Better Times Ahead for Heart of Hickory" - Thursday, June 4, 1998
"Improving neighborhoods, business" - Schedule Thursday, July 16, 1998
"City Study is underway" - Thursday, July 16, 1998

The Hickory Daily Record

"Experts Discuss Hickory Revitalization Efforts" - Tuesday, July 18, 1998
"What 'Experts' Did to Hickory" - Editorial - Sunday, June 21, 1998
"Ideas Sought for Downtown's Future" - Sunday, June 28, 1998

"Area Residents Offering Ideas for Community" - Tuesday, June 30, 1998
 "Kenworth Citizens, Officials Discuss Concerns" - Wednesday, July 1, 1998
 "Residents Speak Out" - Thursday, July 2, 1998
 "Traffic Key Concern for Oakwood Neighbors" - Friday, July 3, 1998
 "Hickory's Future at Stake" - Saturday, July 18, 1998

The Charlotte Observer

"Making Changes could sell council on new Wal-Mart", Sunday, June 21, 1998
 "Join planners in ideas walks through downtown Hickory" - Sunday, June 28, 1998
 "On a stroll for solutions, neighbors point out needs" - Sunday, July 5, 1998
 "Street savvy may boost retail" - Sunday, July 19, 1998
 "What Neighborhoods Can Do - Accompanying box to above article" - Sunday July 19, 1998

OVERALL CHARRETTE ATTENDANCE

| | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Brian Adams | 80. Guy Joseph Guarino Jr. | 159. Candice S. Peterson |
| 2. Jay Adams | 81. Hank L. Guess | 160. Graham Phelps |
| 3. Donna T. Adams | 82. Mearl Hamilton | 161. Dennis Phillips |
| 4. Ruth Adams, Jr. | 83. Chuck Hanson | 162. Jerry Phillips |
| 5. Sharon Thomas, Lillie Ray Alexander | 84. David Hardaway | 163. June Phillips |
| 6. Donna Andrews | 85. Lena Hardaway | 164. Larry Pope |
| 7. Buzz Atwood | 86. Beemer Harrell | 165. Bill Post |
| 8. Paula Atwood | 87. Joe Hart | 166. Brendan Pritchard |
| 9. L.D. Austin | 88. Clarence Hartsoe | 167. Dean Proctor |
| 10. Reed Baer | 89. Drusilla Hartsoe | 168. Jim Rand |
| 11. Rebecca Bartlowe | 90. Gene Haynes | 169. Philip Razor |
| 12. Helen Beach | 91. Phillip Heffner | 170. Juanita Reid |
| 13. Rex Beach | 92. Jennifer Helton | 171. Sean Reid |
| 14. Eric Ben-Davies | 93. Lyndon Helson | 172. Michael Robbins |
| 15. HBD Blackwell | 94. Brian Hiatt | 173. Larry Robinson |
| 16. Freda Bolick | 95. Deanie Hilton | 174. Alex Rooker |
| 17. Bill & Kay Bond | 96. Ann & John Hinson | 175. Jennifer Rothacker |
| 18. Ed Bowman | 97. Jerry Hodge | 176. Linda Rowe |
| 19. Michael Bradshaw | 98. Fred Hollar | 177. Julia Rush |
| 20. Lynn Braswell | 99. Johnny Hollar | 178. Deborah D. Rush |
| 21. Kent Brendle | 100. Doug & Diane Holman | 179. Deloris Sanders |
| 22. Linda Burch | 101. Rob Hord | 180. Joey Schaoople |
| 23. Beth Busemeyer | 102. Roberta E. Horton | 181. Yvonne Setzer |
| 24. George Byers | 103. Harriette A. Houser | 182. Pastor Bob Shoffner |
| 25. Gwendolyn Mahoney Candler | 104. James L. Houser | 183. David Shuford |
| 26. Deb Caywood | 105. Ray Houston | 184. Vera S. Shuford |
| 27. John D. Clark | 106. Maxine Carpenter Hovis | 185. Alie Sigmon |
| 28. Renie Claine | 107. David Hoyle | 186. Leslie Sigmon |
| 29. Tim Claine | 108. Mary Hoyle | 187. Ernie Sills |
| 30. Robert E. Claine | 109. Z. Ann Hoyle | 188. Bob Sinclair |
| 31. Nora Coffey | 110. Lanny Huffman | 189. Carolyn Sinclair |
| 32. Arnold Cogswell | 111. Mark Richard & Shawn B. Huggins | 190. Jennifer Smith |
| 33. David Cohen | 112. Tim Inch | 191. Linda YJ Smith |
| 34. John Connet | 113. Michael Isenhour | 192. Jan Smithson |
| 35. Albert Cooke | 114. David Jarrett | 193. Al Spainhour |
| 36. Pat Couch | 115. Tina Jeffers | 194. Mandi Spainhour |
| 37. Cheryl Crawford | 116. Charles E. & Suzanne E. Jeffers | 195. Amelia Stafford |
| 38. Roy Crawford | 117. Tamara Jenkins | 196. Darrell Stafford |
| 39. David Crosby | 118. Caldwell Jerch | 197. J. R. Steigerwald |
| 40. Sharon Crosby | 119. Janet Jerch | 198. Anne Starnes |
| 41. Herbert Crutchfield | 120. Jerry Jewell | 199. Eric Starnes |
| 42. Karen Dahlstrum | 121. Al Kale | 200. Pastor Paul Starnes |
| 43. Patrick Daily | 122. Olive Kaylor | 201. Lana Stephens |
| 44. Charles Deal | 123. Virginia Kenney | 202. Ginger Stevens |
| 45. William Deitz | 124. Albert Keiser, Jr. | 203. Dorothy R. Suddereth |
| 46. Beulah Mae Detter | 125. Jeanette Killian | 204. Wayne Sumpter |
| 47. Charles D. Dixon | 126. Linda Kimbal | 205. Rachel Swink |
| 48. Art Drumheller | 127. Jennifer Kiziah | 206. Michael S. Talbert |
| 49. Barbara Dugan | 128. Janice Knotts | 207. Sarah M. W. Talbert |
| 50. Michael Dugan | 129. Robert & Patricia Kraay | 208. Pat Tallent |
| 51. Michelle Dula | 130. Brad Lail | 209. Bebe Taylor |
| 52. Lisa C. Dyer | 131. Ernest Lippard | 210. Albert H. & Vivian Z. Templeton |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 53. Gerri M. Edwards | 132. Muriel Lippard | 211. Robert Thomas |
| 54. Dr. John Eldridge | 133. Meg Jenkins Locke | 212. Mercal Lee & Janet B. Thompson |
| 55. Doug Eller | 134. Guy Long, III | 213. John Tippet |
| 56. David Ellis | 135. F. W. Lucas | 214. Forrest Toms |
| 57. Da Jr. Espey | 136. Neta Luckey | 215. Bill Treadwell |
| 58. Martha K. Espey | 137. Claudia Main-Pless | 216. June Treadwell |
| 59. Gloria Farr | 138. Kerri B. McCullough | 217. Amy Trexler |
| 60. Ed Farthing | 139. Ray McCurdy | 218. Corky Upchurch |
| 61. Becky Ferrell | 140. Bill McDonald | 219. Susan Vanderbloemen |
| 62. Fidelity Professional Partnership | 141. Gary McGee | 220. Nathan Vannoy |
| 63. Jean V. & Ann B. Fitzsimmons | 142. Mack McLeod | 221. Bob Walker |
| 64. John P. Fogarty | 143. Lanny Lee & Evelyn L. McNeely | 222. Bobby W. Walker |
| 65. Paul F. Fogleman III | 144. Joy Mease | 223. Beth Warmuth |
| 66. M. Y. Folger Jr. | 145. Bob Meek | 224. Bob Warmuth |
| 67. Ross & Patricia Fox | 146. Nancy Meek | 225. Andy Wells |
| 68. Sally Fox | 147. Carolyn Miller | 226. Ruby McDown Wendt |
| 69. Paul Frye | 148. Steve Miller | 227. Kevin & Shelly White |
| 70. Bob & Wanda Fullbright | 149. Bernice Mitchell | 228. Betty Jean White |
| 71. Avis Ann Oehlbeck Gachet | 150. Edward A. Mitchell | 229. Anna Wise |
| 72. Frank Garriga | 151. Allen Mitchell, Sr. | 230. Warren M. & Amy B. Wood |
| 73. Mary Elizabeth Geitner | 152. Pat Moss | 231. Rusty Woy |
| 74. Mary George | 153. Gary Mullis | 232. Jim Wright |
| 75. Graham Gilley | 154. Tam Nguyen | 233. Agnes T. Wright |
| 76. Mark Girone | 155. Max and Mary B. Padgett | 234. Rev. Alfred Wright |
| 77. Jon Goldberg | 156. Joan Patterson | 235. Julia & Arthur Young Sr. |
| 78. Esther Greene | 157. Walter E. Patterson | 236. Howard Zerden |
| 79. Bonnie Grigg | 158. Willie Dean Patterson | 237. Judy Zetner |

MEETING ATTENDANCE

| Retail - June 17 | | |
|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Jay Adams | Frank Garriga | Den Mare |
| Lillie Ray Alexander | Jon Goldberg | Bill McDonald |
| Buzz Atwood | Esther Greene | Gary McGee |
| Paula Atwood | Beemer Harrell | Edward A. Mitchell |
| L. O. Austin | Brian Hiatt | Allen Mitchell, Sr. |
| Rebecca Barlowe | Jerry Hodge | Jim Rand |
| Gene Beach | Fred Hollar | Alex Rooker |
| HDB Blackwell | Ray Houston | Jennifer Rothacker |
| Kent Brendle | David Hoyle | Julia Rush |
| Tim Cline | Michael Isenhour | Alie Sigmon |
| Nora Coffey | David Jarrett | Al Spainhour |
| John Connet | Tina Jeffers | Mandi Spainhour |
| Albert Cooke | Charles Edward Jeffers | JR Steigerwald |
| Pat Couch | Suzanne Jeffers | Anne Starnes |
| Cheryl Crawford | Tamara Jenkins | Lana Stephens |
| Karen Dahlstrum | Jerry Jewell | Rachel Swink |
| Charles Deal | Al Kale | Bebe Taylor |
| William Dietz | Virginia Kenney | Sharon Alexander Thomas |
| Charles D. Dixon | Albert Keiser, Jr. | Corky Upchurch |
| Dr. John Eldridge | Jennifer Kiziah | Bobby W. Walker |
| David Ellis | Janie Knotts | Beth Warmuth |
| Paul F. Fogleman III | Brad Lail | Bob Warmuth |
| M. Y. Folger Jr. | Meg Jenkins Locke | Andy Wells |
| Sally Fox | Guy Long, III | Anna Wise |
| Paul Frye | F. W. Lucas | Howard Zerden |

| Housing - June 17 |
|--|
| JR Steigerwald Jay Adams Tom Carr Todd Hefner Tricia Reynolds Greg Schauble Andy Wells |

Transportation - June 30

Mike Bradshaw
Eric Ben-Davies
Tom Carr
Chuck Hansen
Brian Hiatt
James Rand
Tricia Reynolds
John Tippett
Nathan Vannoy

Opening - July 13

Jay Adams
Paula Atwood
Beth Busemeyer
Gwendolyn Mahoney Candler
Robert Cline
Charles Deal
William Deitz
Charles D. Dixon
Barbara Dugan
Michael Dugan
Gloria Farr
Sally Fox
Chuck Hansen
Beemer Harrell
Drucella Hartsoe
Jennifer Helton

Lyndon Helton
Brian Hiatt
James L. Houser
Ray Houston
Lanny Huffman
Caldwell Jerch
Janet Jerch
Meg Jenkins Locks
Kerri B. McCullough
Bill McDonald
Joy Mease
Carolyn Miller
Edward A. Mitchell
Gary Mullis
Tam Nguyen
Max & Mary B. Padgett
Jerry Phillips

June Phillips
Larry Robinson
Jennifer Rothacker
Robert Rowe
Julia Rush
Bob Sinclair
Al Spainhour
Darrell Stafford
Dorothy R. Suddreth
Wayne Sumpter
Michael S. Talbert
Sarah Talbert
June Treadwell
Susan Vanderbloemen
Betty Jean White
Jedy Zetner

Transportation - July 15

Eric Ben-Davies
Michael Bradshaw
Lisa C. Dyer
Sally Fox
Avis Ann Eohlbeck Gachet
Chuck Hansen
Beemer Harrell
Brian Hiatt
Claudia Main-Pless
Pat Moss
Joan Patterson
Jim Rand
Jennifer Rothacker
Julia Rush
John Tippett
Susan Vanderbloemen

Traffic & Transportation - July 15

Jay Adams
Eric Ben-Davies
Lynn Braswell
George Byers

Pat Moss
Brendon Pritchard
Jim Rand
Jennifer Rothacker

| | |
|---|---|
| Roy Crawford Gloria Farr Becky Farrell Forrest Farrell Mary George Chuck Hansen Brian Hiatt Harriette A. Houser James L. Houser | Linda Rowe Robert Rowe Julia Rush Joey Schaople Jennifer Smith Michael S. Talbert Sarah M. W. Talbert Susan Vanderbloemen Nathan Vannoy |
|---|---|

Retail - July 16

| | |
|--|---|
| Rebecca Barlowe Lynn Braswell John D. Clark Sally Fox Avis Ann Eohlbeck Gachet Beemer Harrell Deanie Hilton Johnny Hollar Mary Hoyle Tina Jeffers | Charles Edward & Suzanne E. Jeffers Lanny Lee & Evelyn L. McNeely Philip Razor Jennifer Rothacker Julia Rush Al Spainhour Mandi Spainhour Beth Warmuth Bob Warmuth Rusty Woy |
|--|---|

Housing - July 16

| |
|---|
| Buzz Atwood Paula Atwood Avis All Oehlbeck Gachet Mitzi Gellman Hank L. Guess Howard Eugene and Ollie Mae Heard Larry Pope Brendon Pritchard Yvonne Setzer Wayne Sumpter Bill Treadwell Joe Tripp Susan Vanderbloemen Agnes Wright Rev. Alfred Wright |
|---|

Historic Preservation - July 16

| |
|--|
| Donna T. Adams Kent Brendle Patrick Daily Gloria Farr John P. Fogarty Sally Fox Avis Ann Oehlbeck Gachet David Hardaway Lena Hardaway Phillip Hefner Brian Hiatt Albert Keiser, Jr. Meg Jenkins Locke Joy Mease Pat Tallent Amy Trexler Betty Jean White |
|--|

Parks and Recreation - July 17

Donna Andrews
Roy Crawford
Michelle Dula
Mary George
Linda Kimbrel
Mack McLeod
Eric Starnes
Susan Vanderbloemen

Utilities - July 17

Jay Adams
Ed Bowman
John Connet
Graham Gilley
Gene Haynes
Lyndon Helton
Harriette A. Houser
James L. Houser
Tim Inch
Meg Jenkins Locke
Carolyn Miller
Steve Miller
Amelia Stafford
Darrell Stafford

Civic Art - July 17

Buzz Atwood
Paula Atwood
Arnold Cogswell
Brian Hiatt
Albert Keiser, Jr.
Janice Knotts
Meg Jenkins Locke
Joy Mease
Pat Moss
Alie Sigmon
Ernie Sills
Jan Smithson

NEIGHBORHOODS

Claremont Walkabout - July 3

Deb Caywood
Charles D. Dixon
Ross & Patricia Fox
Hank L. Guess
Mearl Hamilton
Joe Hart
Brian Hiatt
Caldwell Jerch
Janet Jerch
Virginia Keeney
Nancy Meek
Pat Moss
Graham Phelps

Claremont Design Review - July 18

David Crosby
Sally Fox
James L. Houser
Charles Edward & Suzanne E. Jeffers
Caldwell Jerch
Janet Jerch
Janice Knotts
Meg Jenkins Locke
Pat Moss
Leslie Sigmon
Michael S. Talbert
Sarah M. W. Talbert
Bill Treadwell

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Leslie Sigmon Amelia Stafford Darrell Stafford Pastor Paul Stames Bill Treadwell June Treadwell</p> | <p>June Treadwell Susan Vanderbloemen</p> |
| <p>Green Park Walkabout - July 1 Buzz Atwood Paula Atwood Helen Beach Rex Beach Freda Bolick Bill & Kay Bond David Cohen Beulah Mae Detter Charles D. Dixon Ed Farthing Ross & Patricia Fox Bob & Wanda Fullbright Bonnie Grigg Brian Hiatt Ann & John Hinson Maxine Carpenter Hovis Jerry Jewell Oliver Kaylor Ernest Lippard Muriel Lippard F.W. Lucas Gary McGee Bob Meek Nancy Meek Pat Moss Graham Phelps Juanita Reid Jennifer Rothacker Wayne Sumpter Kevin & Shelly White</p> | <p>Green Park Design Review - July 18 Bryan Adams Buzz Atwood Paula Atwood Helen Beach Rex Beach Gloria Farr Sally Fox Bonnie Grigg Joe Hart Brian Hiatt Mark Richard & Shaun B. Hudgins Jerry Jewell Olive Kaylor Muriel Lippard Meg Jenkins Locke Nancy Meek Vera Shuford Kevin & Shelly White</p> |
| <p>Kenworth Walkabout - June 30 Lynn Braswell Charles D. Dixon Dan Espey Jr. Mearl Hamilton Brian Hiatt Jeanette Killian F. W. Lucas Ray McCurdy Gary McGee Joy Mease Michael Robbins Jennifer Rothacker Yvonne Setzer David Shuford Bob Sinclair Carolyn Sinclair Albert H. & Vivian Z. Templeton Jim Wright Julia & Arthur Young Sr.</p> | <p>Kenworth Design Review - July 18 Kent Brendle Linda Burch Art Drumheller Barbara Dugan Michael Dugan Dan Espey, Jr. Martha K. Espey Sally Fox Brian Hiatt Meg Jenkins Locke Joy Mease Yvonne Setzer Carolyn Sinclair Betty Jean White Jim Wright</p> |
| <p>Oakwood Walkabout - July 2 Red Baer Lynn Braswell Gwendolyn Mahoney Candler Renie Cline John Connet Sharon Crosby Geri M. Edward Doug Eller Gloria Farr Becky Ferrell Jean V. & Ann B. Fitzsimmons Sally Fox Mary Elizabeth Geitner Guy Joseph Guarino, Jr. Hank L. Guess</p> | <p>Oakwood Design Review - July 18 Gwendolyn Mahoney Candler Gloria Farr Sally Fox Meg Jenkins Locke Nancy Meek Candice S. Peterson Dennis Phillips June Phillips Michael S. Talbert Ruby McDow Wendt</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Lena Hardaway Brian Hiatt Doug & Diane Holman Rob Hord Linda Kimbrel Robert & Patricia Kraay Meg Jenkins Locke F.W. Lucas Gary McGee Nancy Meek Pat Moss Bill Post Dean Proctor Sean Reid Larry Robinson Robert Rowe Deborah D. Rush Pastor Bob Shoffner Linda YJ Smith Ginger Stevens Susan Vanderbloemen Ruby McDow Wendt Warren M & Amy B. Wood</p> | |
| <p>Ridgeview Walkabout - June 29 Lynn Braswell Charles D. Dixon Mark Girone Mearl Hamilton Brian Hiatt F.W. Lucas Bernice Mitchell Allen Mitchell, Sr. Walter E. Patterson Larry Pope Jennifer Rothacker Wayne Sumpter Robert Thomas Bob Walker</p> | <p>Ridgeview Design Review - July 18 Ruth Adams, Jr. Herbert Crutchfield Clarence Hartsoe Drucella Hartsoe Roberta Horton Willie Dean Patterson Deloris Sanders Dorothy R. Suddreth Mercial Lee & Janet B. Thompson Forrest Toms Agnes T. Wright Rev. Alfred Wright</p> |

| Final Presentation - July 21 | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Doug Adams Buzz Atwood Paula Atwood Frieda Caldwell Tom Carr Florence Carter Robert E. Cline Tim Cline Barbara Deagan Michael Deagan Charles Dixon Richard Faires Gloria S. Farr Becky Hart P. Hefner</p> | <p>Jennifer Helton Lyndon Helton Suzanne Jeffers Karen Johnson Grover Linebargh Warren McAlpine Joy Mease Nancy Meek Kathy Merrill Carolyn Miller Dorothy Patterson Willie Dean Patterson Mark Riddle Larry Robinson Robert Rowe Deloris Sanders</p> | <p>Bob Shoffner Leslie Sigmon Bob Sinclair Al Spainhour Wayne Sumpter Sarah Talbert Meaghan Texer Janet Thompson Bill Treadwell June Treadwell Susan Vanderbloemen Elaine Witherspoon Agnes Wright Jim Wright Pearl Young</p> |