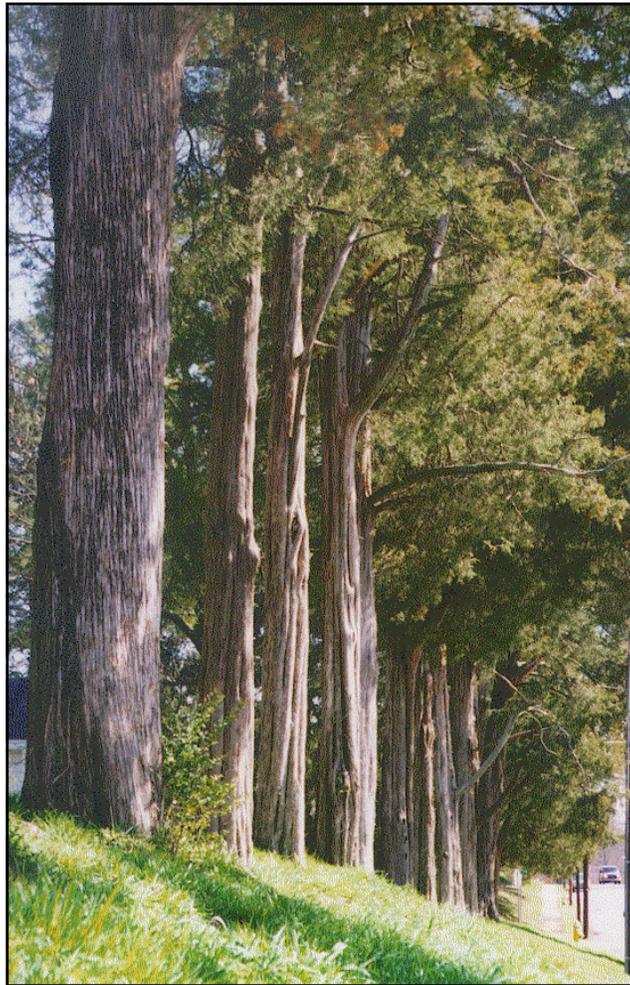


Green Park Neighborhood Plan



“A Neighborhood of Cedars”



Planning & Development

1998

*Members of the Green Park Neighborhood Planning Committee
would like to express their gratitude to Ward V Alderwoman
Sally M. Fox for her tireless effort and attention to the
Green Park Neighborhood.*

*Prepared by
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Green Park Neighborhood Plan

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Green Park Neighborhood Plan

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this plan is the Green Park Neighborhood, a well-established and desirable neighborhood with good access to area schools, work centers and shopping.

Located in the southwest quadrant of the city, Green Park Neighborhood is a quiet neighborhood of primarily single-family residences bordered by commercial properties and offices. Three major thoroughfares bound the neighborhood to the north, south and east, and a minor thoroughfare to the west.

The Green Park Neighborhood has experienced a moderate rate of social and physical change over the past thirty years. This change is evident in the demographics, types of new development, overall appearance and attitude toward the neighborhood.

Green Park residents consider their neighborhood a good place to live and raise a family. Long time residents value the traditional sense of community. The quality and availability of affordable homes is attracting young couples and professionals to the neighborhood.

Dedicated neighbors and concerned commercial interests want to plan for ways to enhance the reputation of the neighborhood through problem solving, as well as through promotion of the many assets of the area.

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

In 1967, there were no duplexes or multi-family units in Green Park. Today, forty percent of the housing units in the neighborhood accommodate two or more families.

While there is no historical data regarding homeownership, the current estimate of thirty percent of single-family homes in Green Park owned by investors and occupied by renters is consequential. The affordability of multi-family units and duplexes, combined with the availability of single-family homes purchased as investment properties, creates the potential for a less stable, more transient neighborhood.

While not severe at this point, residents of Green Park are noticing more properties that are poorly maintained. Six percent of the dwellings identified as needing minor repairs or major maintenance are investment properties owned by landlords. Only one dilapidated property exists in the neighborhood - a commercial greenhouse built in 1935 and long since abandoned.

Homeowners expect others to keep properties well maintained to preserve the appearance and image of the neighborhood. It is widely known that the appearance of properties and the level of homeownership have an impact on the value assessed to all adjacent properties.

Although there has been an increase in commercial occupancy within the Green Park Neighborhood during the past thirty years, the neighborhood continues to be predominately residential. There are a number of vacant lots where new, affordable housing could be constructed. A voiced concern is that parcels could also be assembled to allow for the construction of additional multi-family units.

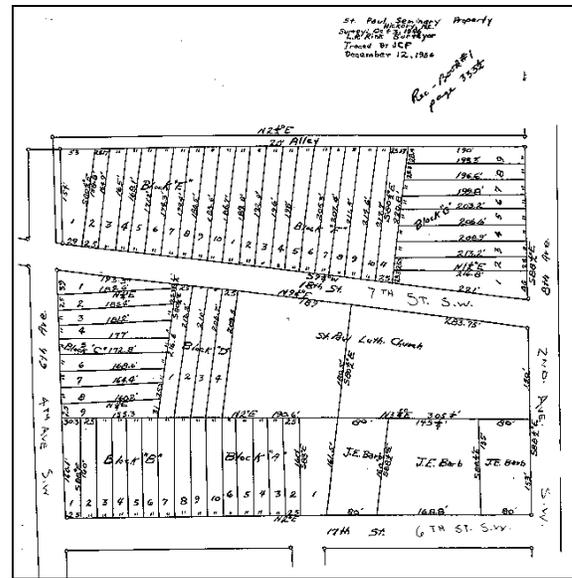
Green Park is bounded by commercial development on three sides. These areas are characterized primarily by commercial service-type development including warehousing and distribution facilities, nightclubs and restaurants, vacant lots and offices. Some of the buildings and grounds are in need of repair.

Several single-family homes are interspersed amidst the businesses along the one-way pairs and Fourth Street SW. It is expected that these homes will convert to commercial uses over time.

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

This planning process works only if residents, business owners and property owners work together. While these groups share common interests, some of the issues are different and must be dealt with accordingly.

By going through the neighborhood planning process, Green Park residents and business interests have had the opportunity to decide how they want their neighborhood to evolve, to put recommendations in the Plan to reach their goal, and then work toward implementation of the Plan.



A plat dated 1956 shows St. Paul's Lutheran Church property and the lots, which were subdivided from the Seminary property.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Green Park Neighborhood Plan is a working document which addresses the concerns of neighborhood residents, property owners and business interests in an attempt to preserve the livability and long-term viability of this older neighborhood.

The foundation of this Plan is based on active citizen participation and informed decision making. With the input of residents, property owners and business owners, this Plan is more effective in meeting the particular needs of this neighborhood and stands a better chance of being implemented.

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

The Green Park Neighborhood Plan provides the most detailed guidance of any City of Hickory planning document on the issues of planning and development of the area. When guidance is needed on an issue for this neighborhood, it is important to refer to the Green Park Neighborhood Plan, Hickory's Land Development Plan, and all other pertinent adopted city plans to review and weigh all public interests in arriving at well thought out and viable decisions.

Organization of the Plan

The Green Park Neighborhood Plan is organized into seven sections.

Section I - Introduction introduces the Green Park Neighborhood and identifies its issues, concerns and assets, and explains the purpose, and format of the Plan.

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

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

Section IV - Existing Conditions describes factors that have physical and social impact on the development and evolution of the neighborhood: demographics; land use; zoning; transportation; public infrastructure; environmental characteristics; building conditions; trends in homeownership; commercial activity and community safety.

This section also summarizes different concerns, trends and issues raised during the Green Park Neighborhood planning process based on the perceptions of the Planning Committee, business and commercial property owners, as well as planning staff.

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

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

Section VII - Appendices contain a spreadsheet of the recommendations and seven maps which illustrate the existing land use, current zoning, existing and proposed sidewalks, existing and proposed street lights, building conditions, and property occupancy status in Green Park Neighborhood. A map of the proposed boundaries of the favorable rate loan pool for businesses and commercial properties is included.

Issues and Concerns

The Green Park Neighborhood Association actively participated in the early stages of the City's *Neighborhood Focus* program. By getting involved in 1995, the neighborhood successfully addressed some immediate concerns and accomplished several short-term goals.

When the opportunity to undertake the long-range planning process presented itself, residents and commercial interests came together to participate. They felt that by planning together with the City they could develop positive approaches to resolve their issues. By participating in the planning process, the group wanted to benefit not only their neighborhood but also the entire city.

The following are issues identified by the neighborhood and their justification for wanting to address these concerns in the Plan.

- Determining the future use of Green Park School - The Neighborhood Association is very concerned about the future use of Green Park School. If the School Board elects to relocate the Administrative Services office, the current zoning of the school would allow for uses the residents feel are incompatible with the single-family character of the neighborhood. Green Park would lose a significant piece of natural green space if the current playground area were ever developed.



The teacherage is one of four buildings that make up the Green Park School campus.

- Improving neighborhood traffic problems - Like many neighborhoods, Green Park is experiencing problems with speeding, cut through traffic, stop sign violations and dangerous intersections. Residents want to work with the City to develop a comprehensive approach to traffic calming and speed enforcement to make the streets safer and less desirable for cut through traffic.
- Making better use of Optimist Park - The neighborhood park is underutilized. Neighbors fear taking their children or walking their dog in the park because of its history as a gathering place for vagrants and drug dealers. The park grounds and equipment are not maintained adequately. While the situation has improved in recent years, the negative image has remained. Neighbors want to reclaim the park and work with the City to restore its attractiveness.



Optimist Park provides open space and recreational opportunities for the neighborhood.

- Enhancing the appearance of the neighborhood and the commercial corridor - The commercial corridor along the one-way pairs suffers from a lack of landscaping and street trees. Green Park is not easily identifiable. Non-residents do not realize they are entering a distinct area, nor do they relate the name to a unique neighborhood. Residents and business owners know that enhancing the appearance of the neighborhood will in turn enhance the image of Green Park and their property values.



Enhancing the appearance of the one-way pairs will improve property values.

- Addressing community safety and law enforcement issues - Residents of Green Park enjoy the quality of life and low crime rate found in the neighborhood. However, speeders and loud music from vehicles cutting through the neighborhood threaten the serenity. A number of residents expressed

concern regarding the number of stray cats and dogs and question the effectiveness of the City's animal control program. The Green Park Neighborhood Association wants to be proactive and preserve the peacefulness by formally participating in the Police Department's Community Watch and continuing to work with Hickory Police Department to address these concerns.

- Installing additional street lights and maintaining sidewalks - Green Park is fortunate to have adequate sidewalk connectivity; however, there are a few notable deficiencies in the maintenance of the existing sidewalks and an obvious lack of sidewalk access along Ninth Street SW. Neighbors and business owners have identified several locations without adequate street light coverage. Illuminating the dark areas of the neighborhood and the commercial corridor is important to creating a better sense of security and safety in Green Park.
- Improving the level of nuisance and minimum housing code enforcement - Green Park is a traditional, older neighborhood of historic homes and tree lined streets, but there is a notable increase in property neglect, aging building stock, trash left on vacant lots and deposited in streams and gullies, littering on the streets, junk vehicles, and absentee landlords who do not maintain their properties. There is a need to develop plans for comprehensive code enforcement to restore the appearance of the neighborhood, attract new homeowners and stimulate economic development.



The old Wilfong Florist & Greenhouse building on the corner of Second Avenue and Sixth Street SW is the only dilapidated property in the neighborhood.

In mid-1997, a group of concerned business and commercial property owners along the First and Second Avenue SW corridor met with City staff to express several items of concern. The short-term issues were dealt with by taking minimum housing code enforcement action. The group's long term issues are addressed in this plan.

Business and commercial property owners share the residents' concern for the safety and appearance of the area and desire for additional street lights and sidewalk maintenance.

Two issues are unique to the businesses along the one-way pair corridor. First, these businesses need access to low interest capital for rehabilitation and renovations to remain competitive. Second, the fact that First and Second Avenues SW are owned and maintained by the North Carolina State Department of Transportation makes it difficult to influence the resurfacing priority of these streets.

- Pursuing proposed loan pool program to serve the First and Second Avenue SW corridor - Businesses in this area are typically small, locally owned and operated retail and service providers. A majority of the buildings are older and in need of upgrading in order to remain competitive and prosperous.

- Influencing resurfacing priority of First and Second Avenues SW - Broken and uneven pavement makes for dangerous and undesirable vehicle travel conditions. The business and commercial property owners are dependent on accessibility for their customers and clients.

Neighborhood Assets

The Green Park Neighborhood has many strengths and assets, which will contribute to the success in implementing their long-range neighborhood plan.

- History of success in addressing concerns. Green Park Neighborhood Association successfully addressed concerns about the appearance and maintenance of Green Park School, safety of Optimist Park, overgrown vacant lots and excess junk in yards.
- Proximity to downtown and commercial areas. The location of Green Park provides ideal access to shopping, dining, entertainment and workplace opportunities.
- Neighbors know each other. Residents of Green Park are friendly to their neighbors and welcome new families when they move into the neighborhood. Because of this sense of community, the needs of the neighborhood are known. This knowledge fosters interest in what is going on in the neighborhood and is a contribution to planning success.



Neighbors got to know each other better as a result of the neighborhood planning process.

- Green Park is a safe and stable community. Potential homebuyers seek these qualities. Green Park neighbors are willing to work at maintaining these qualities
- The beautiful streetscape of an older neighborhood. Nothing can replace the splendor of mature trees lining the streets of Green Park. Street trees enhance and capture the essence of this traditional and historical neighborhood.
- Green Park is the type of neighborhood where people want to live, work and raise a family. Such sentiment is apparent in the number of long term residents, children and young couples who reside in the neighborhood. The group is willing to work hard to strengthen pride in the neighborhood and preserve their sense of community.
- Excellent rapport with community police. The residents and business and commercial property owners consider their PACT officers an integral part of the neighborhood and another resource to achieve neighborhood improvement success.

PLANNING PROCESS

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

The long-range neighborhood planning process is a proactive and responsive systematic evaluation of trends and conditions in the neighborhood. It is a process that identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the area to help maintain and stabilize the neighborhood. The process serves as a means to increase citizen participation and effectively allocate resources.

The Green Park Neighborhood Plan is the result of a consensus building process. Through open, honest and thoughtful discussion, the Planning Committee reached points of agreement and developed strategies to address concerns and implementation actions to achieve their goals.

Steps in the Planning Process

ORGANIZATION AND MEETING PROCESS

The residents of Green Park formed a Planning Committee and agreed to meet twice a month to hear from resource people and to discuss their issues of concern and develop strategies to address these concerns.

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

Members of the Planning Committee received a notebook to help keep the agendas, minutes and other materials organized throughout the planning process. The notebook contained a narrative describing the Neighborhood Planning Process, a tentative project schedule, and a set of groundrules for the Planning Committee to follow as the process progressed.

On three occasions, postcards were mailed to every household, owner occupied and rental, and every commercial property owner and identified business operator inviting them to become involved in, or at the very least more aware of, the development of the Green Park Neighborhood Plan.



A social was held mid-way through the planning process to share the progress of the Planning Committee with the neighborhood.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

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

On average, seventeen to twenty residents attended semi-monthly planning committee meetings, and actively participated in the development of the Green Park Neighborhood Plan. Many more were kept abreast of the planning process progress and discussions via mailings.

Such an intensive undertaking would not have been possible without the dedication

and determination of a group of neighbors who have a desire to enhance the quality of life in Green Park.

The Planning Committee met a total of twelve times to hear from the resource people, discuss strategies and recommendations to include in the plan and review drafts of the plan. The Committee was generally representative of the geographic boundaries of the neighborhood.

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

Neighborhood Planning Committee

Tim Allen
Buzz Atwood Co-Chairs
Paula Atwood Co-Chairs
Rayford Baker
Helen Beach
Rex Beach
Freda Bolick
Bill Bond
Kay Bond
Joyce Brown
Ted Brown
David Cohen
Beulah Mae Detter
Ginny Donohue
Brenda Fox
Becky Fullbright
Bonnie Grigg
Margie Harmon
Ann Hinson
John Hinson
Maxine Hovis
Mark Huggins Co-Chairs
Shawn Huggins Co-Chairs
Thom Hutchens
Olive Kaylor
Frances Keeter
Lena Lail
Pastor Stanley Leas

Bob Lynch
Karen Miller
Mickey Price
Juanita Reid
Vera Shuford
Charles Sigmon
Christine Sigmon
Charlotte Swanson
Bobby Talbert
Dr. Stuart Thompson
Kevin White
Shelly White

Business and Commercial Property Owners

The business and commercial property owners in Green Park have a substantial influence in the area and represent a very important segment of the neighborhood. A special meeting was held in March to gather their input in formulating strategies for the Plan.

Mete Adan - UnityWeb
John Cansler - Putt-Putt
Tom Digh - Western Carolina Supply Co.
Jacqueline Fox - Wallace Fox Tile & Construction
Dan Green, Sr. - Green's Market
Milt Hawes - Roto-Rooter
Jerry Jewel - BEC
Scott Matthews - Attorney
Louanna Strom - HairUSA
Curt Vaught - Attorney
Jack Wilson - Wilson Florist



Jack Wilson has operated his florist business in Green Park for 32 years.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Holding the Planning Committee meetings in the neighborhood at a location accessible to the group is an essential element of the process. Pastor Stanley Leas and the congregation of St. Paul's Lutheran Church graciously allowed the Planning Committee to meet at the Church. Special recognition is given to Mrs. Maxine Hovis for always being there to open the Church and help with organizing the room for the meetings.



St. Paul's Lutheran Church is an integral part of the Green Park neighborhood.

Media

The local media was very supportive throughout the Green Park Neighborhood Planning process. Numerous articles appeared in the headlines of the local papers and the process was featured in a cable television network news story. Continued media attention will be necessary to aid in the implementation of the Plan.

Shannon Leigh - *Charter Communications*

Allison Pennell - Hickory Daily Record

Pete Prunkl - Charlotte Observer

Linda Setzer - The Hickory News

Hickory Police Department

In 1993, the Hickory Police Department committed to community-based problem solving citywide. The initiative is known as Police and Community Together, PACT for short.

PACT has developed into an integral part of the community. Officers work under decentralized supervision, which allows them to identify and solve problems effectively. Each PACT has a Commander, a Supervisor, a Criminal Investigator and several officers assigned to provide police services with emphasis on problem solving and responsiveness to customer needs. These officers have evolved from the traditional law enforcement role.

Along with targeted enforcement, officers are involved in all aspects of the community. They often serve as a link between the residents of the community and other city and county public service providers.

Green Park residents and business and commercial property owners are triply blessed with opportunities to interact with the Hickory Police Department. Not only is Police Chief Floyd Lucas assigned as the Green Park Neighborhood Liaison, the new

police headquarters borders the neighborhood and the Edward PACT maintains an office in the Green Park School building.

Residents and commercial interests are grateful for their strong relationship with the Police Department.

Chief Floyd Lucas, Neighborhood Liaison
Major Wayne Sumpter
Capt. Merl Hamilton
Sgt. Tom Adkins, Traffic Safety Unit

Edward PACT

Lt. Walt Young, Commander
Sgt. Bobby Grace
Sgt. Tom Adkins
Master Officer Larry Wiles
Master Officer Bain Weinrich & Spike
Master Officer Mike Rollins
Master Officer David Leeper
Master Officer Tina Ricard
Officer David Kilby
Officer Aaron Miller
Officer Powell Hilderbran
Officer in Training David Seery



City of Hickory Resources

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

Tom Carr, Planning & Development
Todd Hefner, Community Development
Mack McLeod, Parks & Recreation
Tricia Reynolds, Neighborhood Planner
J. R. Steigerwald, Economic Development
Gerald Sherwood, Building Inspections
Sheila Winstead, Building Inspections
Nathan Vannoy, Traffic Division



Planning Director Tom Carr explains the land use map to members of the Planning Committee.

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

Recreation Commission

Dr. Carl Starnes, Chairman

Hickory City Schools Resources

Dr. Stuart Thompson, Superintendent
Lavada Porter
Jean Yoder

GIS Mapping

Graphic display of information is critical to the understanding of current and proposed conditions in the neighborhood. The final maps contained in Appendix 2 were produced by Western Piedmont Council of Governments (WPCOG) staff under the direction of planning staff. Many thanks go to Dale Sharpe and Scott Miller for their patience and expertise.

DATA COLLECTION

As part of the planning process, a neighborhood profile was created based on demographics, public safety statistics, infrastructure inventory, and housing data collected by the Planning staff.

Data sources for this information included

the 1990 Census of Population and Housing, the 1967 Analysis of Hickory's Neighborhoods, Catawba County Real Property Master Index Listings, the First and Second Avenue SE/SW Business Development Plan, field surveys conducted by staff, as well as information provided by City departments and other resource people who either spoke to the Planning Committee during the course of the planning process or otherwise provided pertinent data.

Most of the information contained in the Plan is up-to-date through March 1998.

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

The historical development of Green Park was researched and compiled by Planning Staff and Green Park residents Paula Atwood, Rex and Helen Beach, Bill and Kay Bond, and Pastor Stanley Leas.

Sources included: *A History of St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Gladys Barger, Editor; *The Catawbans, Crafters of a North Carolina County* by Gary R. Freeze; *The Heritage of Catawba County, North Carolina, Volume I*, Lucille M. Fulbright, Editor; *From Tavern to Town* by Kirk F. Mohny and Laura A.W. Phillips. Some of the information was gathered from interviews with the following persons: Eva Moss, Vera Shuford, Virginia Weber, Helen Barb Bolick and James C. Barker. A variety of newspaper articles from the Hickory Daily Record contributed to the compilation of the history of Green Park.

view and adoption. Planning Department staff prepared a draft for the Planning Committee to review at its March 30 meeting. After receiving the residents' comments plus comments from City staff and other agencies in April, the draft Plan will be taken before the Hickory Regional Planning Commission on April 22 for their review and recommendation. A final draft of the Plan will be presented to City Council for their consideration on May 5, 1998. This Plan, when adopted, will supplement the Hickory Land Development Plan adopted in 1986.

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

PLAN PREPARATION AND REVIEW/ADOPTION

The final stage of the planning process is re-

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Historical Development of Green Park

The Green Park Community has been an integral part of the development of the city of Hickory. From the time when it was depicted "as a wide place in the woods" on the road from Lincolnton to Morganton through the arrival of the railroad (circa 1860) which "made the town", Green Park has played an important role in the cultural and economic development of Hickory.

The completion of the railroad and the establishment of its depot heralded an influx of people into the area such that, in 1876, the population of the city had grown to 1,500.

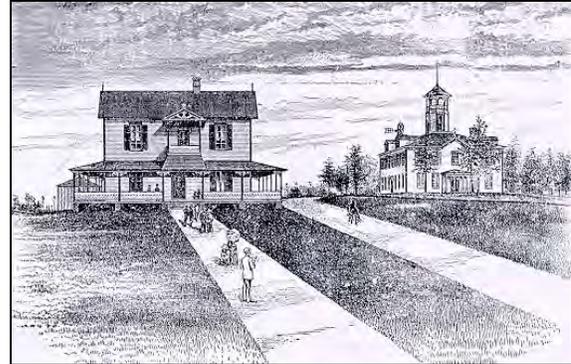
HISTORY OF ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

The beginnings of St. Paul's Lutheran Church are not of a congregation at all, but rather of a school. The Practical English Seminary was established by the Concordia District through a Joint Synod which met in Saginaw, Michigan in 1886. Classes opened in Hickory in October 1887 at the sight of a former convent.

The convent was operated by the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, an order of the Roman Catholic Church, as Mount St. Joseph's Academy. The property consisted of the convent proper, two small dwellings, stables and thirteen acres of land. The academy was primarily a finishing school for young ladies and a saddle and riding habit were required for admission.

This property is part of the block between Second and Fourth Avenues SW and Sixth and Seventh Streets SW.

In 1888, the board of trustees of the seminary school purchased property from the Sisters for \$6,000 to open and operate a Practical Seminary. The managing board of the Seminary paid \$500 in cash and gave a promissory note for the remaining \$5,500. The note was secured for one year at which time the money was deposited in the Bank of Hickory to the credit of the grantors.



An artist's rendering of the Practical English Seminary that once stood in Green Park.

The seminary began to prosper. The following is a quote from the seminary catalog of 1895-96:

St. Paul's Seminary is located in Hickory, North Carolina, an enterprising town of about 2,500 inhabitants. The town is easily accessible by two railroads--the W.N.C., and the C. & L. RR. Hickory is beautifully located, in full view of the Blue Ridge Mountains, in the far-famed Piedmont section of the State, noted for its healthful and delightful climate in winter and summer. The town has seven churches, one public school, and five other educational institutions.... Subjects include Homiletics, Catechetics, Exegesis, German, Pastoral Theology, Church History, Symbolics, Dogmatics, Ethics, Isagogics, Hermeneutics.

In 1895, a 25 year-old man from Morristown, Tennessee named James E. Barb entered the seminary for study. In 1898 he graduated with honors and was ordained as pastor of Miller's, St. Luke's and Pisgah Lutheran Churches in the Hickory area.

However, in 1898, the Joint Ohio Synod of the Lutheran Church closed the institution. The Concordia District immediately took up ownership and reopened the seminary as St. Paul's Academy in 1898. Reverend J. H. Wannemacher assumed professorship, assisted by Rev. J. E. Barb and Professor S. M. Hamrick.

In 1900, the school was reorganized as a preparatory school for the seminary in Columbus, Ohio. Rev. L. M. Hunt who had been associated with the school since 1887 headed it. A Sunday worship service had been offered to the local community prior to 1900, but became a regular activity of the academy. As of 1900, the Rev. J. E. Barb held worship at St. Paul's Chapel on a weekly basis.

On March 16, 1901, the worshipers at St. Paul's Chapel organized under the leadership of Rev. Barb as a congregation -- the Congregation of St. Paul's Chapel, Hickory. He served until August 1, 1902 when Rev. L. M. Hunt was installed. He served until January 1, 1905.

At Rev. Hunt's resignation, Rev. Barb again supplied, followed by Rev. C. H. Pence, and then succeeding him again in supply. On March 1, 1906, Rev. D. E. Snapp was installed as pastor. He served until his resignation to accept a call in Ohio in 1908. Rev. A. A. Phillipp succeeded him, but resigned due to illness in the family, then died himself in 1910. Again, Rev. J. E. Barb took over the pastoral duties of the congregation.

During the period from 1889 until 1914 the Seminary expanded in size and scope and provided educational opportunities at different levels. The different levels and their cost to Students per month are illustrated below.

Good board could be had at the institution for \$6.00 every four weeks. For students "clubbing" together and providing their own sup-

Tuition in Pre-Seminary - \$2.50
Tuition in Preparatory Course - \$1.00 to \$1.50
Tuition in Academic Course - \$2.00 to \$2.50
Tuition in Teachers Course - \$2.50

plies and employing a cook, the cost would be less. Good food, room, lights, and fires could be obtained from private homes for \$2.50 per week.

The different levels offered by the school were indicative of the educational reality of the time. The objectives of the Seminary department were to prepare young men for the ministry with the Lutheran Church. Pre-Seminary was to prepare them for entering the Seminary.

In addition to the Seminary courses, St. Paul's Seminary offered a preparatory course, a teachers course and a business course. The preparatory course was designed for students unable to pursue the other courses intelligently; the teachers' course, to train students in the most up to date method of teaching; the business course included bookkeeping, commercial law, commercial arithmetic, business correspondence, business forms, and penmanship.



One of the many distinguished graduating classes of the Seminary.

The object of the instruction in the Academy was to provide a thorough English education, good business training and to prepare students for a regular Collegiate Course.

Maintaining a school offering different levels of study was no easy task. Under the leadership of the Rev. L. M. Hunt the school flourished during its early years so that by 1885-86 it had a student body of fifty-nine: twelve Seminary students, twelve Pro-Seminary students and thirty-five academic students. From that high point the enrollment gradually declined until the school was closed in 1914 and the property put up for sale.

J. F. Abernethy, whose home is now the Bed and Breakfast on Seventh Street SW, bought the Seminary for \$12,500. The chapel was rented by the congregation for worship and meetings.



The J. Fred Abernethy House was built in 1906 and is now the Hickory Bed & Breakfast.

In 1916, the congregation purchased the lot where the seminary stood, at the peak of the hill of what is now the block bordered by Second and Fourth Avenues SW and Sixth and Seventh Streets SW. Rev. Barb purchased contingent properties within this block, which would later be significant for the building of the church's own buildings.

Although it would be several years before plans were adopted and a contract for the construction of the church was awarded to Mr. Joe Bolch, the congregation was finally able to build the existing structure housing St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church. The cornerstone was laid on October 23, 1927, and the congre-

gation made its official transfer from the old chapel on April 1, 1928, Palm Sunday that year.

The congregation labored under the burden of a large debt at the building of this structure and, with the onset of the depression, things worsened. To add to this, on December 23, 1931, Rev. James E. Barb died of a heart attack.

From 1901 until his death in 1931, Rev. Barb served as pastor of St. Paul's Chapel except for the specified intervals mentioned earlier. Because of years of financial distress within the congregation, Rev. Barb also taught in the Hickory Schools and surveyed. In fact, he was the prominent surveyor of what is now downtown Hickory and much of the contiguous properties.

An interim with Rev. L. M. Hunt and Rev. L. W. Miller as supply pastors ended on July 10, 1932, when Rev. Royal E. Walther was installed as pastor of St. Paul's, Pisgah and St. Luke's Lutheran Churches in the Hickory/Taylorsville area.

On January 22, 1937, the old seminary property changed hands being sold to Mrs. J. E. Barb who resided there until her death.

Pastor Walther served St. Paul's from 1932 until 1943, when he took a call in Ohio. He led the congregation from debt-ridden in 1932 to debt-free in 1943.

He was succeeded by Rev. Sylvanus L. Schillinger, being called to St. Paul's and Old St. Paul's in Newton. In 1946, the Parish Hall was erected. The parsonage next to the church was constructed in 1950 and the expansion of the Parish Hall to include educational facilities was completed in 1960.

Pastor "Pat," as Pastor Schillinger was called, died after a Sunday service in 1983. In 1984, Rev. Thomas Sall was called, but he left the following year.

In 1986, Rev. Lawrence Meyer was called to the parish. He served until 1991. From 1991 until 1995, Rev. Stanley L. Stiver served as a part-time pastor for the congregation.

In November 1995, Rev. Stanley J. Leas accepted a call to St. Paul's and is presently its pastor.

St. Paul's has played an important part in the development of the community and continues today as a symbol of the early and continuing interest in the spiritual well being of the community.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Green Park School

The closure of St. Paul's Seminary, which had provided training, not only for future ministers, but also for future teachers and businessmen as well, created an awareness of the need to fill the vacuum which had been left.

The Green Park area offered the land necessary for that purpose. In 1917, a public school building was erected in sight of Old St. Paul's Seminary on five acres of land. The school was one of the three built in Hickory at the time. A teacherage for the housing of out-of-town, unmarried female teachers was added.

The high school was on the second floor of the school building. The first floor was for the elementary school. In 1925, the high school was transferred to the newly completed Hickory High School built where the old Claremont Female College once stood. The West School became known as Green Park School.

First, second, third, seventh and eighth graders were taught at the school in 1949 in an extremely inadequate building. The rest-rooms were all located in the basement, necessitating pupils to travel two flights of stairs to reach them. There were so many students that classes had to be held in the auditorium. However, the school had one modern feature - new fluorescent lighting.



Green Park School had become overcrowded and antiquated by the 1950's.

In 1953, Green Park Elementary School expanded to 40,000 square feet with the construction of a gymnasium, lunchroom, kitchen and additional classrooms alleviating overcrowded conditions.

A 1955 newspaper article proclaimed that Green Park School was in a unique position because the school was able to provide office space for the school system's speech therapist and library supervisor and have space left over for use as a museum and visual education room. The article goes on to reiterate the many antiquities and deficiencies of the building.



A 1955 Hickory Daily Record article described the inadequate the conditions at Green Park School.

Enrollment at Green Park School was 373 pupils in 1949, slightly less than 200 pupils in 1955, 266 pupils in 1962, 203 pupils in 1968 and 199 pupils in 1970.

Green Park Elementary School finally closed in the early 1970's. In 1977, the school was known as Hickory Alternate High School for a short period. The Hickory City Schools Administration Services has occupied the buildings since the mid-1950's

In 1978, the Hickory Parks & Recreation Department operated a staffed recreation center at the school, but only for one year until the school system reclaimed the building for a maintenance facility.

Many Hickory residents have special memories of attending school at Green Park. There is a feeling that this area should be recognized as playing a vital part in the history of Hickory.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

The growing interest in public schools and their impact also created an interest by civic clubs to participate more fully in the activities of the boys and girls of the community.

The Optimist Club of Hickory purchased the land, which now constitutes Optimist Park for \$18,000. The Club built a clubhouse and paved a play area, which is now the basketball court, and operated it for a number of years for the boys in the community.

The Club then turned the park over to the Salvation Army for a while but took it back and continued operating it until offering to the City of Hickory Recreation Commission in 1968. The Optimists suggested that the name of the park be "Optimist's Green Park Recreation Center" or some such name as may be determined by the Recreation Commission that incorporates the word "Optimist".

The purchase by the City was contingent on the outcome of a ten cents per \$100 property valuation recreation tax increase vote scheduled for April of that year. The tax increase even gained official endorsement from the Hickory Ministerial Association. Taxpayers, however, voted down the proposed tax increase, leaving the Recreation Department badly in need of funds to meet the recreational needs of the community.

The City had to sell property and solicit support from the many civic groups in the Hickory area in 1970. The efforts of this fundraising campaign, paid off in the amount of \$78,000.

The Recreation Department estimated that \$42,000 was needed to develop the park. The City pledged \$10,000 toward the purchase of the property; the remainder would have to be raised through donations. Hickory Optimist Club pledged \$2,000 and challenged other organizations and individuals to assist in the cooperative development of the park. It was not until 1972 after securing \$20,000 in matching funds from the state Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, that the Parks and Recreation Department opened the new park.

On opening night in the summer of 1972, Bill Barkley, then chairman of the Recreation Commission is quoted as saying, "This park is proof that when men of good will work together, any good, worthwhile project can become a reality."

Many long time Green Park residents recall that a branch of Geitner Creek used to run through the middle of the park causing flooding in times of heavy rains. The creek was piped in early 1989 to control erosion and overflow problems.

ECONOMIC GROWTH INFLUENCES

While the educational and religious opportunities afforded in the Green Park community were expanded, so too were the economic opportunities available with the arrival of the railroad around 1860 and the growth of the area.



Many of the businesses along the one-way pairs have been in business for years, which adds to the stability and vitality of the neighborhood.

Small businesses sprang up along the railroad and rapidly began expanding around the perimeter of the area. From the early business and commercial enterprises along the railroad, south along present Fourth Street, west along present Highway 70, and north along present Ninth Street the differing types of business enterprises defies description in so short an account. Nonetheless, the Green Park business and commercial property owners are a part of the Association and dedicated to the revitalization and enhancement of the community.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS - 1967

According to the 1967 study entitled “An Analysis of Hickory’s Neighborhoods”, prepared for the Hickory Planning Commission by Eric Hill Associates, Inc. of Winston-Salem, Green Park Neighborhood was a part of Study Area 14 and Study Area 13. The boundaries of Study Area 14 stretched from Fourth Street SW west to the city limits taking in US 321, encompassing much more than Green Park’s present day boundaries. Study Area 13 contained

the Central Business District and the First and Second Avenue SW commercial corridor.

In 1967, the entire area was served with sewer and water facilities and most of the streets were paved.

Vacant land comprised the single largest category of land use in Area 14 the consultant notes; however, much of that land was reserved for Interstate 40-interchange right-of-way.

The consultant determined that blight was not a serious problem in this area. Only one house within the heart of the residential section was considered dilapidated and twenty-nine houses were rated as deteriorating.

The consultant asserted that the streets in the area were poorly designed in relation to the land served. In almost all cases, the blocks were extremely deep, ranging in upwards of 800 feet, which resulted in wasted land or land-locked parcels. This phenomenon is still evident today.

The consultant concluded, at the time, there was very little mixed use in this neighborhood and the zoning appeared quite adequate to protect this neighborhood. Protect it from what, one might ask? The zoning classification applied to Green Park in 1967, is the same as it is today, and neighborhood has experienced proliferation of multi-family dwellings since that time.



This five-unit apartment building is one example of the five multi-family structures built in the neighborhood between 1967 and 1983.

In the analysis of the area, the consultant noted the lack of park facilities to serve this growing area as well as several large parcels of undeveloped land in the neighborhood that would be well suited for park and recreation purposes.

Study Area 13 was not in as good a shape as Study Area 14 in 1967. The consultant noted that the blight in this area was far more significant in the residential areas and structures than in the commercial area.

Twelve residential structures and seven commercial structures were considered dilapidated. Thirty-four residential structures and four commercial structures were rated deteriorating. The study attributes the blight to mixed land use.

The consultant concluded that unless the City undertook a massive redevelopment project and made changes to the overall street pattern and land use in the area, Hickory's downtown would suffer. The City did undertake a massive redevelopment project between 1968 and 1970.

The one way pairs were created to facilitate the flow of traffic, and several buildings were demolished.



This immaculate bungalow on First Avenue SW is an example of the mixed land uses that exist today.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS - 1983

The next comprehensive housing conditions survey was conducted by college interns in 1983. The students noted that the Green Park area was in better shape than most neighborhoods. The residential structures in Green Park at the time were rated as well maintained. In the report, the students suggested that the existing open space be preserved to maintain the character of the neighborhood.

In the 1983 study, the students recognized the tremendous progress toward revitalizing the downtown area including the First and Second Avenue SW business corridor. By 1983, six residential structures in the corridor had been demolished or converted to commercial use.

Between 1967 and 1983, twelve duplexes and five apartment complexes totaling 104 units were constructed within the residential heart of Green Park

Due to coding irregularities and inconsistencies, the housing conditions data compiled by these students is not comparable to data from the 1967 and 1997 studies.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The initial step of this neighborhood planning process involved a comprehensive inventory and analysis of the area’s existing conditions. The inventory provided a sound basis from which the Planning Committee could formulate strategies to address the neighborhood’s needs.

The data collected included demographics, land use characteristics, current zoning, environmental characteristics, public infrastructure and facilities, structural conditions, trends in homeownership, public safety, and traffic patterns and behavior.

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

Demographic Characteristics

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

The 1990 Census indicated a total population of 722 residents. Today’s population, however, exceeds 1,005 residents if the accepted formula of 2.5 persons per family in the Census tract is multiplied by the number of residential dwelling units in Green Park. There are a total of 402 single-family and multi-family dwelling units in the neighborhood.

Table 1 compares Green Park and the City of Hickory by race. The most unique characteristic of the Census data is that Green Park is remarkably reflective of the demographics of the entire City.

According to 1990 Census data, 82.6 percent of the residents in Green Park are white, which is very close to the City’s 81.4 percent. Only 2.55 percent of the City’s population reside in Green Park.

Three percent of the City’s white population and 2.4 percent of the City’s black population reside in Green Park according to the 1990 data. Hispanic and Asian residents represent 3.1 percent and 2.1 percent of the population respectively.

Table 1. 1990 CENSUS DATA BY RACE

Green Park					
White	Black	Amer. Indian	Asian	Hispanic	Total
594	113	2	6	7	722
82.6%	15.7%	0.3%	0.8%	1.0%	2.5%

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

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

Table 2 shows the number of residents in Green Park and the City of Hickory who in 1990 were either under age 18 or age 65 and older. The neighborhood closely compares to the City’s percentage, with 17.7 percent of the City’s youth and 15.6 percent of the City’s population of people aged 65 and older living in Green Park.

Again, the neighborhood closely compares to the City’s percentage in terms of household size. Green Park has a slightly lower percentage of single parent households and a slightly higher percentage of single person households, which suggests Green Park has a greater number of elderly people living alone.

Table 2. 1990 CENSUS DATA BY AGE & ONE PERSON/SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS

Green Park			
Under 18	65 or Older	One-Person Household	Single Parent Household
127	112	120	30
17.7%	15.6%	33.0%	8.2%

Hickory

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

The neighborhood has evolved as perhaps one of the more ethnically diverse neighborhoods in Hickory. Review of Hickory City Schools enrollment records categorized by race and address supports that fact.

Enrollment records for 1997 indicate that only 2.4 percent of all students in Hickory reside in Green Park. The average age of children residing in the neighborhood is ten years old. Students in Green Park attend five different elementary schools, two different middle schools and the City’s two high schools.

Table 3 represents the number and percentage of all students in Hickory public schools and those who reside in the Green Park neighborhood by race and compares those numbers with the city as a whole.

Table 3. PERCENT OF ALL HICKORY STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS RESIDING IN GREEN PARK BY RACE

Hickory Students

Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Multi-Racial	Amer. Indian	Total
382	1199	154	2665	58	2	4460
9%	27%	3%	60%	1%	0.04%	100%

Green Park Students

Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Multi-Racial	Amer. Indian	Total
25	27	4	48	1	0	105
24%	26%	4%	46%	1%	0%	100%

Percent of Hickory Students Residing in Green Park

Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Multi-Racial	Amer. Indian	Total
6.5%	2.3%	2.6%	1.8%	1.7%	0%	2.4%

HOUSING VALUES AND INCOME

The mean value of a home in Green Park in 1990 was \$42,199, \$24,701 less than the City’s average of \$66,900. According to the Census data, the mean contract rent in Green Park was \$211 compared to \$400, the citywide average. This figure suggests that housing is very affordable in this neighborhood.

Income information is not available at the Census block level; therefore an analysis of mean family income for Green Park could not be considered.

Land Use Characteristics

The Green Park Neighborhood boundaries encompass approximately 229 acres or slightly more than one-third of a square mile.

Green Park is a predominately single family residential neighborhood with a mix of multi-family and duplex units. The existence of older trees adds value to the homes in the neighborhood in a way new developments cannot offer.



Built in 1925, this home on Third Avenue SW is typical of most of residential area in Green Park.

There has been slight growth in the new single-family housing market over the past thirty years. No new single family homes have been built in Green Park since 1988 with the exception of a home that burned and was re-built several years ago.

All of the new construction has been duplex units, which do not share the same characteristics as the existing buildings. The duplexes lack porches and do not relate to the street like the existing housing. Proliferation of these buildings tends to diminish the character of the neighborhood.



Duplexes like this one on Fifth Street SW exemplifies how out of character the new construction is with the existing homes.

The commercial development is concentrated along the major thoroughfares which create the northern, southern and eastern boundaries of the neighborhood. With the exception of the Bed & Breakfast on Seventh Street SW, the commercial development is located along First and Second Avenues, Fourth Street SW and Highway 70 SW. Being close to the City's Central Business District is an asset to the neighborhood.

The public and semi-public land in the neighborhood is a neighborhood park owned and maintained by the City of Hickory as Optimist Park.

The two institutional land uses in Green Park are St. Paul's Lutheran Church and a former elementary school now used as the administration building for Hickory Public School System. St. Paul's Lutheran Church also owns five vacant lots across the street from the church, three of which are used for parking. Green Park Elementary School was built in 1916, expanded in 1953 and totals approximately five acres.

There are forty-seven vacant lots in the Green Park neighborhood. A number of the vacant lots in the residential portion of the neighborhood are located on steep slopes and flood plains along Geitner Branch, making some of them difficult to develop due to topography. Other vacant lots are either being used as parking lots or located adjacent to undeveloped street rights-of-way making lack of accessibility the most likely reason they are not developed.

Planning staff noted that the existing open green space in the neighborhood is likely to develop into multi-family housing over time because the current zoning would allow for dense multi-family development.

There are several lots large enough to accommodate apartment buildings or could be assembled to meet the square footage requirements.

The *Existing Land Use* map illustrates the current land uses in Green Park and can be referenced in Appendix 2 - Map I.

Current Zoning

Zoning regulations and classifications are adopted to implement the City's long range development plan. In essence, the zoning is an indication of how the city thinks development will evolve over time. Green Park Neighborhood's current zoning was put into place after adoption of the 1986 Land Development Plan.

The majority of the neighborhood is residentially zoned R-5, which allows a variety of moderate intensity residential uses including single-family, two-family and multiple family dwelling types under conventional or planned development controls. The minimum lot size is 8,000 square feet, which is small in comparison to other residential areas.

Located in the neighborhood are Georgetown and Valley Creek Apartments - two high-density, multi-family housing planned developments zoned PD-H-R-5. Planned development categories are usually tracts of two acres or larger which are not subdivided and which front major streets. Planned developments are subject to special review by City Council and are applied for by request of the property owner.



The forty-unit Georgetown Apartments is one of two planned developments in Green Park.

Office and Institutional, O & I - 1, serves as a transition zone between residential and business or industrial districts. Moderate to high-density residential and office and institutional uses are allowed in this district. Retail, heavy commercial or industrial uses are not allowed. The O & I - 1 zone currently takes in from Fourth Street SW, west to the eastside of Fifth Street SW, south to Sixth Avenue SW, north to Green Park School including four houses along Third Avenue SW. The Planning Committee questions the appropriateness of this zoning category. The area is entirely single family homes and duplexes, with the exception of some buildings which front Fourth Street SW and the school itself.

The block from Fourth Street, west to Fifth Street SW from the railroad tracks to Second Avenue SW is zoned C-2. This zone is considered Central Business District (CBD) fringe and allows for a mix of retail, service, transportation storage and related activities necessary to support the CBD.

Along the one-way pairs, the zoning is commercial, C-5, which accommodates general businesses such as retail, service, manufacturing and warehousing activities in areas where past land development practices have produced a mixed pattern of land uses and irregular lotting.

The area fronting Highway 70 SW is zoned commercial, C-4. This district is for highway business development which includes restaurants, retail, hotels, and other service oriented businesses. The recent revitalization and beautification of Highway 70 SW reflects well on the neighborhood.

Future transportation plans call for connecting Fourth Street SW to the new US 321 interchange through Brookford which will bring more traffic to the area. The homes on Fourth Street SW are likely to convert to commercial uses over time because of the increase in traffic.



Development pressures and thoroughfare improvements will affect these rental houses on Second Avenue and Fourth Street SW.

Changing zoning requires a change in the ordinance, and can be a complicated process. To re-zone an area, seventy percent of the property owners have to agree and sign a petition that is presented to the Regional Planning Commission before it goes to the City Council for their consideration. Rezoning requests can take two to three months if there is no opposition. It is up to the neighbors to gather the necessary signatures since the property owners typically initiate rezoning requests.

The *Current Zoning* map found in Appendix 2 - Map II illustrates the current zoning in Green Park.

Environmental Characteristics

Green Park is affected by two creek beds, which traverse the neighborhood. One creek bed runs parallel to Eighth Street Drive SW through Optimist Park, and the other cuts across Sixth Avenue and Seventh Avenue SW toward Highway 70 SW on the eastside.

These features can be scenic and provide wooded green space in the neighborhood. Yet they can also collect litter, become overgrown, and are prone to flooding during heavy rainstorms.

Public Infrastructure and Facilities

SIDEWALKS

Green Park has good sidewalk coverage with approximately 21,447 linear feet. There is good connectivity of the sidewalks most likely due to the presence of Green Park Elementary School and Grandview Middle School. The middle school is located outside the neighborhood boundaries.

The *Sidewalks* map found in Appendix 2 - Map III illustrates the locations of existing sidewalks and proposed locations for new sidewalks in Green Park.

The existing sidewalks are in need of some maintenance particularly along the one-way pair corridor and at street intersections. Sidewalk maintenance along Main Avenue SW began during the planning process as part of the Street Department's regular schedule.

A Sidewalk/Bikeway Master Plan was adopted by City Council in 1996, and the task force recently prioritized the recommendations. Sidewalk along Ninth Street SW from the railroad tracks to Seventh

Avenue SW was ranked fourteenth out of twenty-three projects by the task force. Proximity to a school was a priority factor the task force took into consideration when ranking the projects. Ninth Street SW is within one mile of Grandview Middle School. The lack of sidewalks in this area creates a dangerous situation for all pedestrians.



Students are forced to walk in the street because of a lack of sidewalks on Ninth Street SW.

However, installing sidewalk on Ninth Street SW is going to be difficult because of the steep topography, narrowness of the road, lack of right-of-way, no existing curb and gutter, and the potential for the school board changing the use of Grandview in the future.

Hickory City Council has an established sidewalk priority list and has appropriated between \$46,500 and \$120,000 each year since 1993 to fund construction of the priorities. Two miles of sidewalk costs approximately \$100,000 to install.

STREET LIGHTING

There are approximately 114 existing streetlights in the Green Park Neighborhood. Several property owners elected to have security lights installed for extra lighting and security at their own cost.

The City bears the cost of streetlights under a lease agreement with Duke Power and spends over \$380,000 a year on roadway illumination.

The City follows accepted professional standards for the placement and illumination quality of streetlights. While irregular placement of streetlights has occurred in the past, the preferred policy is that the lights should be on one side. This avoids a checkerboard effect on the roadway causing adverse effects on the driver's eyes.

In the past, lights were placed at intersections and midpoints only. The current policy calls for streetlights to be placed approximately every 200 feet. The future goal is to have uniform coverage to meet the accepted professional standards.

There are specific locations throughout the neighborhood where streetlights do not exist, creating dark portions of the roadway. Neighbors do not feel safe in those areas at night because of the lack of illumination.

The *Streetlights* map found in Appendix 2 - Map IV illustrates the locations of existing streetlights, security lights and proposed locations for new streetlights in Green Park.

GREEN PARK SCHOOL

Hickory Public School Administrative Services has occupied the teacherage building since the mid-1950's, while the other buildings serve as warehouses for supplies and school property. Some of the space is used to train state maintenance workers and custodians. The remainder of the building is vacant. Hickory Police Department's Edward PACT also has an office in the school building.

In its current state, the building has limited uses according to school officials. Most of the building is not handicap accessible; there are no restrooms on the second floor; the plumbing has not been updated. The building has interior gutters which have caused moisture problems resulting in structural damage. School officials believe it would be very expensive to rehabilitate the school to bring it up to State Building Code and ADA standards.



Incompatible future use of Green Park School is the neighborhood's primary concern.

In 1995, the school system was required by the state to conduct a study and formulate a ten-year plan. Within the first five years, the plan calls for construction of a new middle school in the northeast quadrant and converting College Park Middle to an elementary school after the new middle school is operational. The first four years of the plan are funded through state and local bonds which are expected to cost \$14.7 million.

The Planning Committee was told that the School Board's ten year plan calls for moving the Administrative Services and Catawba Valley High School to Grandview Middle after the new northeast middle school is finished, and the conversion of College Park Middle completed. The last five years of the plan are not funded.

If Administrative Services moves out, the school board can sell the Green Park School property. Realistically, the School Board would

want the highest revenue from the sale of the property if that comes to pass.

Given that the zoning allows for intense multi-family or office and institutional uses, the property will be highly marketable. It is unusual to have one entire block of land so close to the downtown area controlled by a single property owner.

The school campus encompasses an entire city block totaling approximately five acres. The current zoning is split between O & I - 1 and R-5, which would allow for offices up to five stories or 40 or 50 apartment units.

The site could not be used for a new school under the State's standards. According to school officials, ten to fourteen acres are needed for an elementary school, and twenty-three to twenty-five acres are needed for a middle school. This amount of acreage is necessary to accommodate a playground and parking spaces.



Dr. Stuart Thompson, Superintendent of Hickory Public Schools spoke to the Planning Committee.

According to the Superintendent of Hickory Schools, the School Board has not considered any future uses of Green Park School. If they did dispose of the property, an alternative location for the warehouse facility would have to be found or built. Since the relocation of Administrative Services and the other plans for the last five

years of the ten-year plan are not funded, nothing is eminent at this point.

Plans often take longer than expected. No one can predict what might happen to the old school at this point which only adds to the neighbors anxiety level.

RECREATION - OPTIMIST PARK

Hickory Optimist Park is a six acre active park with a lighted youth ball field, one tennis court, a basketball court, a covered picnic shelter with tables and grills, a playground, a 1,767 square-foot storage facility, and concession stand with a restroom.

Since two new ball fields opened in Kiwanis Park, organized baseball or softball games are no longer played at Optimist Park. The result has been that the park is underutilized. The field in Optimist Park is used for team practice from March through June, or the field can be reserved by groups for activities.

In the Parks & Recreation Master Plan completed in 1996, several maintenance issues were recommended for completion within the next five years. Specifically these items are: repair eroded areas; remove one tree and stumps in lawn area; paint tennis court fence and existing play equipment; paint and re-roof the snack bar and restrooms; and, add four pieces of new play equipment.

Other maintenance items that were not in the plan but were completed in March 1998 were the placement of a new sign at the entrance to the park and installation of four security lights around the picnic shelter and parking areas. A new bench was installed near the playground equipment during the course of the planning process.

The Parks & Recreation Master Plan recommended converting the tennis court to a sand volleyball court. No action has been taken yet, as funding for the conversion has not been allocated.



The neighborhood is pleased with recent efforts to improve and maintain Optimist Park.

The neighborhood has some concerns regarding the maintenance and upkeep of the park. When it rains, the floor of the picnic shelter is muddy. Park maintenance crews must hose away the mud when this occurs.

Overgrowth in and around the park concerns some residents with lots adjacent to the park. The City recently surveyed the property to confirm the property boundary and determine whose responsibility it is to clear fallen debris and underbrush. The area in question is private property; therefore the property owners are responsible for keeping the area cleaned up.

Structural Conditions

The structural conditions in Green Park are good. According to a field survey, 96.5 percent of the properties are well maintained, 3.23 percent of the properties are in need of minor maintenance, and only 0.27 percent are dilapidated.

The former commercial greenhouse on Second Avenue SW is the only dilapidated

structure in Green Park. Efforts are underway to have the building removed.

Based on the field survey conducted by staff in December 1997, the physical condition of the neighborhood's buildings were placed in one of four categories: well-maintained, minor maintenance, major maintenance or dilapidated. The results of the study are illustrated in the *Structural Conditions* map in Appendix 2 - Map V.

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

The condition of each structure was evaluated from the street by looking at exterior features such as the roof, chimney, exterior walls, doors, windows, gutters, soffits, barge boards, foundation, porch, stairs, and paint.

The data presented in Table 4 and Table 5, which compare 1967 and 1997 housing conditions, indicates that there has been great improvement in terms of the number of seriously deteriorated structures. The improvement came primarily because all of the dilapidated and most of the deteriorating single-family homes in the First and Second Avenue SW commercial corridor were demolished and replaced by commercial buildings.



One of the more visible commercial properties along the one-way pairs that is poorly maintained.

In 1967, approximately twenty-six percent of the total residential dwelling units were identified as substandard compared to 1997 in which only five percent of the total residential dwelling units have been identified as substandard. This indicates that during the past thirty years, efforts to reduce the physical decline of housing within Green Park has retarded further decline and impacted positively by reducing the number of substandard dwellings.

Within the residential area, the only dilapidated residential structure identified in the 1967 study was located where Georgetown Apartments were built.

Since the housing conditions in Green Park are in good shape, it is difficult to compare the percentage of rental single-family homes in need of repair to owner occupied homes in need of repair. Table 6 shows the 1997 housing conditions data by residential type.

In terms of numbers, seven rental single-family homes need some repair compared to only two single-family, owner occupied homes. Three of the homes rated as substandard are vacant.

Table 4. 1967 - GREEN PARK STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS

	Number of Buildings					% of Total
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Public & Semi-Pub.	Com. & Indust.	Total	
Standard	214	--	3	35	252	73 %
Deteriorating	62	--	--	6	68	20 %
Dilapidated	15	--	--	10	25	7 %
Totals	291	0	3	51	345	100 %
% of Total Substandard	26 %	0 %	0 %	31 %		

Table 5. 1997 - GREEN PARK STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS

	Number of Buildings					% of Total
	Single Family	Multi-Family	Public & Semi-Pub.	Com. & Indust.	Total	
Standard	226	27	3	98	354	96.5 %
Deteriorating	12	0	--	0	12	3.23 %
Dilapidated	0	0	--	1	1	0.27 %
Totals	238	27	3	99	367	100%
% of Total Substandard	5 %	0 %	0 %	1 %		

Table 6. 1997 - GREEN PARK NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING CONDITIONS BY TYPE

	Minor	Major	Dilapidated	Percent in Need of Repair
Single-Family - Owner Occupied	2	0	0	0.82 %
Single-Family - Rental	7	0	0	2.88 %
Single-Family - Vacant	3	0	0	1.23 %
Apartment	0	0	0	0 %
Duplex	0	0	0	0 %
Commercial	0	0	1	0.10 %
TOTAL	12	0	1	5.03 % of Properties Need Repair 4.93 % are Single-Family

Structures such as these create a negative visual image for the neighborhood to visitors. However, just because a property looks bad from the outside does not mean it is below standards. If the property is not maintained, there usually is a reason. The owner could be physically or financially unable to take care of the property.

This is an issue aesthetically critical homeowners easily overlook.

Code enforcement officials must walk a fine line between causing a property owner to correct deficiencies and requiring corrections so costly as to effectively take the building out of service completely. Often the cost of purchasing and restoring an existing deteriorated or dilapidated structure exceeds the appraised value of the structure following rehabilitation.

While structural conditions in Green Park are good at the moment, the housing stock is aging. The need to develop plans for comprehensive code enforcement is imperative before more of the deteriorating structures slip into further disrepair.

Neighbor to neighbor communication is often the best way to deal with problems in the neighborhood. It may take several contacts to motivate the owner to improve the property, but this approach advances everyone's understanding of the situation.

The City's Minimum Housing Code does not regulate appearance much to the dismay of many neighbors who live next door to a poorly maintained structure. The City adopted a new procedure for boarding up vacant buildings in 1997. The procedure makes vacant buildings more secure, but once the property owner boards up the building, it could stay that way forever.



This boarded up house at Second Avenue and Eighth Street SW creates a negative image of Green Park.

The City employs one full-time person as a Minimum Housing Code Inspector and Enforcement officer. Inspections are scheduled based on complaints received from citizens or tenants.

Minimum housing code enforcement is complex with legalities and the process can take up

to two years or more, particularly if the property owner refuses to cooperate.

Nuisance code enforcement is closely related to minimum housing code enforcement. The City's Nuisance Code covers abandoned, junked and nuisance motor vehicles, overgrown lots, wooded lots, and trashy yards. One person is employed full time to deal with these types of code enforcement issues.

Even though the City is able to issue a \$50 a day civil penalty for not fixing Minimum Housing or Nuisance Code problems in a timely manner, the threat of a fine does not seem to be an adequate motivator for many landlords or obstinate homeowners.

Trends in Homeownership

The Green Park Neighborhood has evolved over the years from a predominately owner occupied, single-family neighborhood to an area where more than half of all the residential dwelling units are rental.

The *Property Status* map in Appendix 2 - Map VI illustrates the number and location of all the rental properties in Green Park Neighborhood according to Catawba County Real Property Tax Index as of November 1997.

Of the 238 single-family homes in Green Park, 70, or 30 percent are used as rental homes. There are a total of 402 residential units in Green Park, and of those, 58 percent, or 234 units are rental.

By comparison, 1990 Census Data shows the city's percentage of owner occupied

stood at about 52 percent; the remaining 48 percent were rental homes.

No one section of the neighborhood has a higher concentration of rental housing than another. Rental units are distributed almost equally throughout Green Park.

In 1967, approximately 84 percent of the residential dwelling units in Green Park were single-family dwellings compared to 1997 in which only about 66 percent are single-family dwelling units.

During the past thirty years, there has been a net loss in the number of single-family homes in the neighborhood. Only eight single-family dwelling units were constructed between 1967 and 1997.

In contrast, multi-family units have proliferated in Green Park. Seven apartment complexes containing three or more units were constructed in the past thirty years. Five homes were converted to multi-family use. Add the five duplexes constructed in this same time frame, and approximately 119 multi-family dwelling units have been added to the neighborhood since 1967.



The design and orientation of apartment buildings like this one on Eighth Street SW interrupt the single-family character of the neighborhood.

Green Park has twelve apartment buildings, containing 134 units and fifteen duplexes containing thirty units.

The 1997 study indicates that only 42 percent of the neighborhood residents are homeowners. Although data is not available for the percentage of homeownership in 1967, it is suspected that they were the majority during that period.

Table 7. 1997 - PROPERTY OCCUPANCY STATUS

Single-Family - Owner Occupied	168
Single-Family - Rental	70
Multi-Family Rental Units	164

402	Total residential dwelling units
30 %	Single-Family units are rental
234	Total rental units
58 %	Housing units in Green Park are rental

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

Residential appraisals have remained good despite the change in land uses and levels of homeownership. There has been no evidence of decreasing market values in the neighborhood and no evidence of sales concessions or special financing being used to facilitate sales. The average marketing time is three to six months with competitive pricing. Supply and demand of housing appears to be in balance and property values are stable.



Restoration efforts are underway on this home built on Fifth Street SW in 1909.



Edward PACT Commander, Lt. Walt Young describes the different types of police calls for service in Green Park.

Community Safety

The City of Hickory is divided into five sections for police resource allocation purposes. Each section is known as a PACT. The officers of Edward PACT serve the Green Park neighborhood.

The boundaries of Edward PACT include Green Park and west Hickory, which are primarily residential areas, as well as the commercially developed region along Highway 70 SW business corridor.

Over the City, the calls for police service have increased due to growth and annexation. City-wide police officers respond to over 45,000 calls for service a year. In a ten-month period (January to November 1997) officers responded to 2,169 calls for service in Green Park. This is considered normal for a mixed commercial and residential area.

Neighbors perceived problems with speeding, cut through traffic, a high number of accidents at key intersections, vandalism to businesses and vehicles, cats and dogs running loose, and noise.

Noise complaints and fights are predominately reported at or near the bars and clubs along the one-way pairs and Highway 70 SW. This is one example of residential and commercial uses not being compatible and unable to co-exist without infringing on each other.

Contrary to what some neighbors believe, Optimist Park is not plagued by crime. There were only twenty-one police calls for service to the park recorded in the same ten-month time frame, and most of those were officer-initiated property checks. The park is a much safer place because neighbors, the PACT officers and the Parks and Recreation Department are working together.

SPEEDING

Speeding is a problem particularly on First Avenue, Second Avenue, Seventh Avenue and Seventh Street SW. Neighbors contend that there are some very dangerous inter-

sections in the neighborhood, a problem which needs to be addressed.

The role of the Traffic Safety Unit, accident rates at particular intersections, and speeding are discussed further in the *Transportation Influences* section.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Animal control calls that were reported are concentrated in the southern portion of the neighborhood, mostly around Sixth and Seventh Avenues SW and Eighth and Seventh Streets SW. Problems with excessive numbers of stray cats were noted around Fifth Street SW.

Animal Control Officers are dispatched by the Hickory Police Department in response to complaints and animal bite calls. When laws are violated, Animal Control officers can issue written warnings and citations. Officers also capture animals running at large in violation of the law.

The City of Hickory adopted ordinances to help promote responsible pet ownership and prevent the mistreatment of animals. Under the city ordinances, it is unlawful to: allow a dog or cat to run at large; keep a vicious animal in the city; tease or molest an animal; and have an animal that repeatedly barks or cries. Owners and keepers of animals are supposed to be responsible for the acts of their animals.

SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAM

This is a program funded by the Hickory City Council to assist with the costs of spaying and neutering dogs and cats. The program requirements include: the pet owner must be a City of Hickory resident; have an individual income of \$20,000.00 or less or a household income of \$25,000.00 or less. There is still a small cost to the participant. Applications for the program

are available at the Hickory Police Department or from an Animal Control Officer.

HICKORY MOTOR LODGE

The Hickory Motor Lodge, located at the corner of Fourth Street SW and Highway 70 SW, is included in the boundaries of Green Park due to location and proximity to the neighborhood.

When the incidences of crime in the neighborhood were mapped, almost all of the drug violations, prostitution, and calls to remove subject in Green Park were concentrated in the vicinity of the Hickory Motor Lodge. The number of crimes of this type has increased in this area since the Inn-Towner Motel on South Center Street was torn down in December 1996.

In 1997, police responded to the motel 650 times. The numbers of calls are in part due to the willingness of Motor Lodge staff to call the police. The property owner has been working with the police department to identify the problems and reduce the need for police response. Renovations are underway to upgrade the appearance of the motel.

Because the Motor Lodge is located at one of the neighborhood's heavily traveled entranceways, residents are concerned about the image of the area this motel projects. Residents are also concerned about the possibility of some of the ills and undesirables spilling over into the heart of the residential area.

Overall, Green Park is a nice and quiet neighborhood. Law enforcement officers know that no place in the city is without problems. PACT officers are expecting the calls for service to increase over time as more development occurs along Highway

70 SW and the US 321 connection is completed in the fall of 1998.

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

Transportation Influences

STREETS

The neighborhood is bounded by three major thoroughfares and one minor thoroughfare, Ninth Street SW, Fourth Street SW, Highway 70, and the one-way pairs of First and Second Avenues SW are owned and maintained by North Carolina State Department of Transportation.

Within the neighborhood, Seventh Street and Seventh Avenue SW carry a higher than normal vehicle count for residential streets. Seventh Avenue SW is classified as a minor thoroughfare which means the road is designed to collect traffic from local access streets and carry it to the major thoroughfare system. In actuality, Seventh Avenue SW serves as an east-west alternative to Highway 70 SW.

Table 8. AVERAGE VEHICLES PER DAY ON MAJOR STREETS IMPACTING GREEN PARK

	VPD 1997	Projected 2010
4 th Street SW	10,600	11,600
9 th Street SW	1,300	NP
1 st Avenue SW	8,500	9,100
2 nd Avenue SW	6,600	9,300
US Hwy. 70	21,600	19,000
7 th Avenue SW	2,000	NP

NP = No traffic projection in 1986

The projections for 2010 were forecast in the Hickory-Newton-Conover Urban Area Thoroughfare Plan adopted in 1986. The decrease in projected vehicles per day on Highway 70 SW is explainable because the number of vehicles traveling on Highway 70 SW has exceeded the 1986 projections.

FUTURE THOROUGHFARE PLANS

The Hickory-Newton-Conover Urban Area Thoroughfare Plan adopted in 1996 calls for the extension of Second Street SW to NC 127 South through Brookford to link with a new US 321 interchange. This project is funded and right-of-way acquisition is expected to begin in 1999, construction is not likely until 2001. Future plans are in place to extend Fourth Street SW to connect with the new NC 127 South. This part of the project is not funded at this point.

While this future road project lies outside the boundaries of the Green Park Neighborhood, the number of vehicles per day traveling on Fourth Street SW is expected to increase dramatically. The impact on the neighborhood, particularly the homes that front Fourth Street SW, will be significant.

According to the adopted thoroughfare priority list, First and Second Avenues SW are not scheduled to be widened any time soon.

FUTURE PASSENGER RAIL

According to recommendations from Governor Jim Hunt's Transit 2001 Commission report issued in January 1997, Hickory will be a passenger stop on the new service connecting Asheville and Raleigh, via Salisbury and Hickory. Transportation planners are hopeful to have passenger rail service in Hickory by 2000. The goal is to build a multi-modal transportation system and lessen the dependency on automobiles

by connecting to nation-wide passenger train service operated by Amtrak.

The long term impact of passenger rail is significant for all of western North Carolina in terms of reduction in automotive trips, tourism and visibility of the region.

For the Green Park area, particularly the business corridor, the impact is less obvious at this stage. The location of the train depot has not been determined, but a downtown site is preferred. Passenger rail will certainly bring more potential customers to the downtown area which could lead to the conversion of existing business and commercial uses to retail and service oriented businesses that cater to travelers and tourists, such as rental car agencies or taxi services.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

There are three Piedmont Wagon bus stops in Green Park along Seventh Avenue SW from Fourth Street to Ninth Street SW. Piedmont Wagon staff estimate on average ten passengers per day are picked up or dropped off within the neighborhood boundaries.

The future of the bus stops is uncertain at this time. Due to the recent closing of the two grocery stores closest to the neighborhood, the bus stops might have to be relocated to accommodate the public transportation needs of Green Park and adjacent neighborhoods.

SPEEDING AND CUT THROUGH TRAFFIC

At the request of the Planning Committee, a spot speed study was conducted in the 700 block of Seventh Avenue and the 400 block of Seventh Street SW. The counters recorded the speed and number of vehicles in a twenty-four hour period over four days, providing data on vehicle speeds not related to other factors such as road conditions.

The data showed that Seventh Street SW is carrying approximately 850 to 900 vehicles per day. Seventh Avenue SW is carrying about 2,100 vehicles per day. Seventh Avenue SW is considered a minor thoroughfare, so the present volume is expected. Roads carrying 500 vehicles or less per day are considered low volume.

The spot speed data indicated that fifteen percent of the drivers on Seventh Street SW were traveling over 50 mph.

Edward PACT officers set up a checkpoint and maintained a prominent presence in the neighborhood for one week after the speed study. The average speed recorded on Seventh Street SW decreased to 41 mph.

It is no surprise that active enforcement and police presence deters speeders, but officers cannot be in every neighborhood all the time. One of the best means of slowing speeders is for an area to have the reputation of enforced speed limits. Green Park can gain this kind of reputation through the continued efforts of the Edward PACT officers and the Traffic Safety Unit.

Design features such as road widths, on-street parking and other conditions that affect the environment of the roadway are also effective means of slowing traffic. This approach is known as traffic calming, which is discussed further in the *Traffic Calming* section.

CURRENT SPEED LIMITS

Throughout the city, residential speed limits are typically 35 miles per hour. Only in specific areas, such as the downtown area and high pedestrian areas such as school

zones, are speed limits reduced to 20 or 25 miles per hour.

Speed limits are determined by what is known as the 85th percentile rule: the speed at which 85 percent of the traffic travels or less. Other factors such as the geometry of the road and the density of driveway cuts are taken into consideration when considering operating speeds.

Green Park residents and other Hickory neighborhoods are questioning the appropriateness of the posted speed limits in residential areas. The safety of pedestrians and peacefulness of the neighborhood are more important than accommodating cut-through drivers who are in a hurry. To lower the speed limit in the residential area would require an amendment to the City's Traffic ordinance that can only be executed by City Council.

TRAFFIC SAFETY UNIT

In 1997, Hickory Police Department received funding from the State Governor's Highway Safety Program to create a Traffic Safety Unit. Four police officers are dedicated to the unit, and are specially trained in the use of speed detection equipment and field sobriety testing techniques among other things.

The goal of the unit is to reduce the growth of vehicle crashes and raise public awareness through educational efforts and increased enforcement. A speed detection and display trailer the size of a phone booth was acquired as part of the grant. The trailer is equipped with radar and a display that shows the vehicle's speed as it passes, providing immediate feedback to the driver. After the trailer has been in place for a few days, officers follow-up by running radar in the area and issuing citations.

The radar trailer was stationed at different locations on Second Avenue, and Seventh Street SW for several days in November 1997. The trailer is only designed to make motorists aware that they are exceeding the speed limit not record the speed or count the vehicles. Neighbors believe traffic slowed down while the trailer was present.



Signs like these are posted in the neighborhood by the Traffic Safety Unit to slow down traffic.

When the Traffic Safety Unit steps up enforcement in a particular area, temporary signs similar to speed limit signs are posted warning drivers of possible police presence. The signs, which read "Target Enforcement Area", seem to be an effective deterrent to most of the speeders. The signs remain posted only for a short time while the Unit is targeting the area. Leaving the signs posted permanently would lessen their effectiveness.

DANGEROUS INTERSECTIONS

Neighbors had long been concerned about the safety of the intersection of Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW. There have been a couple of serious accidents at that intersection in the past few years, but no fatalities have resulted.

The Traffic Safety Unit recorded fourteen vehicle accidents at the intersection of Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW in a two-year time frame. While that is considered high by traffic engineering standards, typically a minimum of three years of traffic accident history data is needed to affirm that the data for an intersection is statistically representative.

After data over a three-year period is compiled, a comparative analysis of similar intersections and rate of traffic accident experiences would need to be conducted. Factors such as the type of accidents, traffic volumes, and conditions such as street lighting and presence of traffic control devices are taken into consideration in the analysis.

Members of the Planning Committee noted the dangerous right turn from Second Avenue to Seventh Street SW. Drivers on Second Avenue SW have to slow considerably to make the turn increasing the possibility of rear end accidents. The turning radius could be corrected by lengthening the arc according to the Traffic Engineer. An existing utility pole, a sidewalk and a house that is close to the street make this a complex situation with an undoubtedly expensive solution.



The tight turning radius at this intersection creates a dangerous situation.

The intersection of Fourth Street and Second Avenue SW has one of the highest accident incident rates in the city. The Traffic Safety

Unit has targeted this intersection for increased police visibility. Traffic Safety Unit officers regularly monitor this intersection, and the nine other “most dangerous” intersections in Hickory, for accident causing violations such as excessive speed and drivers running red lights.

The intersection of Seventh Avenue and Seventh Street SW is also of concern to the neighborhood. While only three vehicles accidents were reported in two years, the grade and sight distance cause problems for some drivers.

TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

Residents of Green Park have long thought that a traffic signal at the intersection of Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW would improve driver safety. Some members of the Planning Committee believe that a traffic signal at the intersection of Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW would improve the safety and decrease the speed of the traffic. Five of the fourteen accidents at this intersection over two years were caused by drivers running the stop sign or failing to yield right of way.

Second Avenue SW is owned and maintained by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. NCDOT would have to determine if the intersection warranted a signal then secure funding if a traffic signal was approved.

Certain criteria must be met to warrant a traffic signal. Factors such as traffic volume and delay, relationship to side streets, proximity to specific sites such as school and accident experiences are taken into consideration. For City intersections, the same criteria must be met and the City Council would have to authorize an amendment to the Traffic ordinance.

Neighbors and PACT officers differ in opinion regarding the installation of a traffic signal at the intersection. Police feel that the sight distance is good and that a signal might cause an increase in traffic accidents since drivers might run the light.

Residents want an explanation and conclusive evidence supporting the reasons why a traffic signal is not appropriate at the intersection of Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW.

The Planning Committee discussed the possibility of installing a three-way stop sign at the intersection of Fourth Avenue and Seventh Street SW to deter cut through traffic and speeding. Such a proposal would have to be studied by the Traffic Division.

The criteria to warrant installation of a stop sign include accident experience; traffic volume entering the intersection from all approaches must average 500 vehicle per hour over eight hours; and combined pedestrian and vehicle volumes average 200 units for the same eight hours, otherwise known as vehicle and pedestrian conflict.

TRAFFIC CALMING

The City of Hickory recently began investigating solutions to traffic problems through traffic calming techniques. In 1998, the City initiated three pilot traffic calming projects - one at Kiwanis Park, one at Frye Hospital, and one at the Hickory Foundation Center YMCA.

Traffic calming options such as speed humps, installation of planted medians and intersection redesign were considered by City Council for the pilot projects. The application of traffic calming techniques in the city is limited at this point, but further study is necessary if residential streets are to remain safe and peaceful.

On-street parking is another way to slow traffic because it reduces the lane width. Typically, the road must be twenty-three feet or wider to accommodate on street parking on one side. Any changes to existing on street parking areas would require an amendment to the City's current parking ordinance and City Council action.

Business and Commercial Concerns

TRANSPORTATION

The Green Park commercial area has outstanding access which will only improve over time. North-South access is provided by Fourth and Ninth Street, both of which link Highway 70 SW to northwest Hickory.

The Thoroughfare Plan includes the extension of Fourth Street SW to NC 127 South to link with a US 321 interchange through Brookford. Good east west access is provided by the First and Second Avenue SW one-way pair.

One concern of the business and commercial property owners is the relative lack of traffic on Main Avenue SW. As the former Appalachian Door building and former Medipack building are occupied, more traffic will be generated. Because there are two significant warehouses along Main Avenue SW which need easy tractor-trailer access to their properties, it is not productive to encourage more traffic on this street.

As a rule, office uses that do not rely on storefront exposure do not benefit from high traffic. The businesses in this area are easy to find and appear to have adequate parking for their needs. The planned resurfacing of First Avenue SW addresses the primary transportation concern of the business owners.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The City is embarking on a major study of the central city area that will be completed by the end of 1998. Many of the recommendations from that study will directly impact the continued development in the commercial corridors of this neighborhood.

Given the excellent access of the area and the central location to serve Hickory businesses, there is no reason to expect development along these commercial corridors to cease. Many of the existing residential buildings along First and Second Avenue SW will likely be converted to commercial uses similar to those currently in business.

Three new commercial buildings have been built in the last eighteen months. Roto-Rooter of Hickory, KKS Builders and an automobile race team have all built new buildings. This represents over \$400,000 of new capital investment and over a dozen new employees working in the area every day. There are at least two existing firms that plan major expansions so this is not a blighted area where new investment does not occur.



Roto-Rooter on Second Avenue SW is one of three new commercial buildings in Green Park.

It is likely that the existing buildings and some residential structures located along the commercial areas will need capital for renovations. The eligible area for the proposed loan pro-

gram to serve the First and Second Avenue SE and SW businesses includes the commercial areas of the Green Park neighborhood with the exception of the lower end of Fourth Street SW.

The funds are from participating banks and are available with more flexible criteria than normal loans and at rates that are slightly below market rates. Acquisition, renovation of structures and equipment are eligible uses of the funds. Only working capital is not eligible. The competitive nature of the Hickory banking market and the high participation in Small Business Administration Loan Guarantee programs assures that qualified borrowers with good business concepts can obtain necessary capital to open or expand their businesses.

The evolution of this area would suggest that more service businesses will locate here as US 321 develops as a stronger magnet when the final stretch from Gastonia is opened in the fall of 1998.

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

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

The set of strategies, action steps and recommendations in this plan were developed to preserve or improve the Green Park Neighborhood.

While the plan does not attempt to address all the issues and concerns in the neighborhood, the plan does provide the frame work to begin the process of making living in Green Park more desirable by: addressing concerns of public safety; managing traffic; strengthening code enforcement efforts; proposing zoning changes; enhancing entranceways into the neighborhood; improving the appearance of the business corridor; pursuing commercial loan pool opportunities; and, building the neighborhood's organizational capacity to sustain the neighborhood's cooperative spirit while progressing toward their implementation goals.

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

Green Park School

The Green Park neighborhood is clearly concerned with the future use of Green Park School should the School Board decide to relocate the Administrative Services and maintenance facility. Neighbors want to be proactive and participate in the decision making process.

It was agreed that the neighborhood should address the Hickory Public School Board with their concerns. The uncertain plans and lack of funds to implement the second phase of the Board's ten-year plan exacerbate the residents' anxiety level.

The neighborhood could address Board members individually or ask to appear before them as part of their regular meeting. The School Board meets on the second Monday at Green Park School for an informal work session at 5:30 PM and on the fourth Monday at 7:00 PM at City Hall for a regular business meeting.

The Planning Committee brainstormed some possible uses if the building and grounds were to be made available for sale. Some ideas the group had were: a community center, like the one in Morganton, with meeting space for community groups; federal services such as a postal facility or social services; a seminary; artist live/work space; a park; charter school; senior housing; and business offices for banks or real estate. The pros and cons of each were discussed but the group did not reach consensus on the best option.

The neighborhood would like to see the playground area preserved as open space and the specimen trees protected.

The teacherage would most likely be eligible for historic designation which would make tax credits and low interest rehabilitation loans available to the owners of the property. Being placed on the National Register of Historic Places is strictly honorary. No local government regulations accompany this honor. The availability of historic rehabilitation resources might entice a developer to propose a project the residents would see as compatible with the character of the neighborhood.

ADDRESS THE SCHOOL BOARD

Recommendations

- Address Hickory Public School Board regarding future use of Green Park School.
 - ⇐ Justification: The future use of this property is of great concern to the neighborhood. Incompatible use would harm the existing character of Green Park.
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood
- Continue to take the initiative by discussing ideas for development projects which the neighborhood would find acceptable and monitoring School Board deliberations.
 - ⇐ Justification: By being proactive and involved, the residents are better able to influence the decision making process.
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: On-going
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, working with the School Board and other interested parties

Traffic Safety

Traffic safety issues are of great concern to the Green Park neighborhood. Members of the Planning Committee shared a number of personal near miss traffic accident experiences at unsafe intersections in the neighborhood and problems with speeding cut-through traffic.

IMPROVE DANGEROUS INTERSECTIONS

The Traffic Division and the Traffic Safety Unit are in the process of gathering accident experience data for the intersection of Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW. With only two years of data, the accident rate is considered

high. Another year of data is necessary for the Traffic Division to determine the need for traffic safety control devices at this intersection.

Three years of data is needed to determine if the accident experience at the intersection is high and what are the factors causing the high rate.

Recommendations

- Request that the Traffic Division and the Traffic Safety Unit continue to compile information regarding the warrants for a traffic signal and potential intersection improvements at Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW.
 - ⇐ Justification: Existing data indicates an accident rate higher than normal and worth further study
 - ⇐ Cost: Staff time
 - ⇐ Time table: Within two years
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Traffic Division, Traffic Safety Unit, NCDOT
- Request that a caution light and warning signs be installed at Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW if the warrants are met while the study for a permanent signal is being conducted.
 - ⇐ Justification: Preliminary measures should be taken to ensure the motorist safety
 - ⇐ Cost: \$6,000 to \$8,000
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Traffic Division, NCDOT
- Request that pavement markings be installed to at the intersections of Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW, Sev-

enth Avenue and Seventh Street SW, Fourth Avenue and Seventh Street SW, Sixth Avenue and Seventh Street SW, Sixth Avenue and Eighth Street SW, and Seventh Avenue and Eighth Street SW.

- ⇐ Justification: To improve the safety of these intersection through increased visibility
- ⇐ Cost: Estimated at \$40 per intersection
- ⇐ Time table: Within six months
- ⇐ Responsible party: Traffic Division

REQUEST TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

The Neighborhood recognizes that the City has a goal of having the least restrictive traffic control devices throughout the city. However, they believe if stop signs were placed at the intersection of Seventh Street and Fourth Avenue SW, cut through traffic would be less inclined to use the neighborhood as a short cut to Highway 70 SW

The Planning Committee understands that to place a stop sign on Seventh Avenue at Seventh Street might fail to meet accepted traffic engineering standards since Seventh Avenue SW is classified as a minor thoroughfare. Nonetheless, the Planning Committee believes the conditions should be studied and the appropriate measures taken to address the issue.

Recommendations

- Request that the Traffic Division conduct a comprehensive study of Seventh Street and Fourth Avenue SW, and Seventh Street and Seventh Avenue SW to determine if the warrants for installation of multi-way stop signs are met.
 - ⇐ Justification: Residents see a need to determine if the warrants are met, installing stop signs would deter cut through traffic and slow down traffic.

- ⇐ Cost: Staff time
- ⇐ Time table: Within one year
- ⇐ Responsible party: Traffic Division

- Authorize the installation of a three-way stop sign at the intersections of Seventh Street and Fourth Avenue SW and Seventh Street and Seventh Avenue SW if the study shows that the warrants are met.
 - ⇐ Justification: Requiring motorists to stop at these intersection would slow speeders and deter cut-through traffic
 - ⇐ Cost: Materials and labor
 - ⇐ Time table: Within two years
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Traffic Division

STUDY LOWERING SPEED LIMITS

Lowering the residential speed limit from 35 mph to 25 mph has been debated and discussed for some time. The issue needs to be explored and a policy agreed upon.

Recommendation

- Request that the Traffic Division study and formulate a uniform residential speed limit policy for consideration by City Council.
 - ⇐ Justification: The current 35 mph speed limit is not appropriate in a residential area
 - ⇐ Cost: Staff time
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Traffic Division

EXPLORE TRAFFIC CALMING

The traffic situation in neighborhoods seems to be getting worse citywide. Speeding and cut through traffic degrades the

peacefulness and jeopardizes pedestrian safety in the neighborhood.

Recommendation

- Request that the City continue to explore traffic calming solutions for all of Hickory’s neighborhoods.
 - ⇐ Justification: There is a need to continue examining all the options and seek solutions to the specific problems
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: On-going
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Traffic Division, Traffic Safety Unit, Planning & Development, Engineering

- ⇐ Cost: Covered under the grant
- ⇐ Time table: On-going
- ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department’s Traffic Safety Unit



Periodic placement of the Target Enforcement Area signs coupled with enforcement will help to slow traffic in Green Park.

PARTNER WITH TRAFFIC SAFETY UNIT

The Planning Committee is interested in exploring innovative ways to get drivers to slow down when they travel through the neighborhood. The Traffic Safety Unit’s radar trailer is highly effective at prompting drivers to slow down.

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

Recommendation

- Endorse a partnership between Hickory Police Department’s Traffic Safety Unit and Green Park Neighborhood to promote traffic safety and public education efforts. The Planning Committee requests that the radar trailer and Target Enforcement Area signs be periodically stationed in high traffic areas throughout the neighborhood.
 - ⇐ Justification: Raising awareness of traffic safety through public education and use of the radar trailer will compel drivers to reduce their vehicle speed, thus creating a safer environment

Public Infrastructure

ADDITIONAL SIDEWALK NEEDS

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

Proposed locations for new sidewalks are indicated on the accompanying map in Appendix 2. Based the Planning Committee’s suggestions, staff estimated that 3,624 linear feet of new sidewalks are needed in Green Park.

The request for a sidewalk along Ninth Street SW accounts for 2,194 linear feet of the request. This location was ranked four-

teenth on the priority projects list the Sidewalk/Bikeway Task Force presented to City Council in March, 1998.

Recommendation

- Request that the identified sidewalk needs in Green Park as recommended in the Sidewalk/Bikeway Master Plan is considered a high priority.
 - ⇐ Justification: A safe, serviceable pedestrian circulation system needs to be established to serve the needs of the neighborhood and provide pedestrian access to Grandview Middle School
 - ⇐ Cost: \$39,864 (3,624 X \$11.00 per foot)
 - ⇐ Time table: Dependent on appropriation of funds and construction
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Engineering Department, Street Department

ASSESS SIDEWALK MAINTENANCE NEEDS

In parts of Green Park, sidewalks are in need of repair and general maintenance. The appearance and image of the neighborhood is jeopardized when public infrastructure is allowed to deteriorate.

Recommendation

- Request that the Street Department conduct a comprehensive assessment of the sidewalk conditions in Green Park, and perform necessary maintenance.
 - ⇐ Justification: A serviceable and attractive sidewalk system is important for pedestrian safety
 - ⇐ Cost: Staff time materials and labor
 - ⇐ Time table: Within six months
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Street Department

ADDITIONAL STREET LIGHTING NEEDS

As part of the data collection process, the location of streetlights and security lighting was mapped. It is well known that ample street lighting can be a major deterrent to crime as well as creating a greater sense of security in the area. Staff conducted an inventory of current street lighting within the neighborhood. The Planning Committee assessed the existing conditions and indicated on a map their suggestions for approximate locations for more streetlights.

The Planning Committee recommends adding 35 new streetlights in Green Park. The map will be submitted to the Traffic Division for their review and determination of need.

Recommendation

- Request the recommendations of the Neighborhood and Traffic Department street lighting study be implemented.
 - ⇐ Justification: Street lights should be added to enhance motorist and pedestrian safety and deter crime
 - ⇐ Cost: Monthly charge to the City per light. (Approximately \$8.00 per light - 35 X \$8.00 = \$280 per month)
 - ⇐ Time table: Within three years
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Traffic Department, Duke Power

Community Safety

The Planning Committee learned that Green Park is a safe and secure neighborhood. Yet there is always room for improvement and opportunities to work with PACT officers to ensure the health and safety of the neighborhood.

PROMOTE CRIME PREVENTION

The group agreed that re-establishing a Neighborhood Watch program and learning more about crime prevention were important to maintaining the low crime rate in the neighborhood.

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

Recommendations

- Continue to encourage neighbors to report incidents of illegal activity in the neighborhood to the PACT Commander and Hickory Police.
 - ⊖ Justification: PACT officers rely on neighbors to report suspicious activity
 - ⊖ Cost: None
 - ⊖ Time table: On-going
 - ⊖ Responsible party: Neighborhood
- Invigorate the Community Watch and Block Captains system for communication and crime prevention.
 - ⊖ Justification: Community Watch promotes neighbor to neighbor communication and fosters a sense of security.
 - ⊖ Cost: None
 - ⊖ Time table: Within six months
 - ⊖ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department

ENFORCE NOISE ORDINANCE

Loud music from vehicles cruising through the neighborhood is disruptive and frustrating to residents. In response to complaints concerning “boom boxes” and loud music from vehicles, Hickory Police developed and is using a specific civil citation form to address violations of the noise ordinance. The civil citation carries a fine of \$50.00 which must be paid within 72 hours. If this penalty is not paid, the City may

proceed in civil court and the fine continues at \$50.00 per day. All police officers can issue the citation without prior warning or supervisory approval. An incident report is not necessary. An officer may determine a violation has occurred without a citizen complaint.

The Planning Committee understands that at times when a complaint is reported that the offender is gone before an officer arrives at the scene. The Committee maintains that most of the offenders may not necessarily live in the neighborhood, but are usually the same people. The PACT Commander encouraged the neighbors to record the license tags, time and date each time someone drives through the neighborhood creating a disturbance, so that an officer can be made aware of the frequency of the problem.

The neighbors believe that people with a propensity to cut through Green Park blasting their stereos will continue to do so unless they are issued a citation or two. While the problem with loud music from vehicles passing through the neighborhood may never be completely eliminated, residents are urged to continue to report persistent problems.

Recommendation

- Encourage officers to be more diligent about issuing civil citations for violations of the noise ordinance.
 - ⊖ Justification: Loud music emanating from vehicles disrupts the peace and quiet of the neighborhood and is against the law
 - ⊖ Cost: None
 - ⊖ Time table: On-going
 - ⊖ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department

ANIMAL CONTROL PROGRAM INFORMATION DISSEMINATION **IN-**

The group discussed what to do about persistent animal control problems. Stray cats and dogs running loose can create problems and are a nuisance to some residents. The key element of pet ownership is responsibility. Animal Control officers have loaned some cages to Green Park residents who trap stray animals then call to have the cages reset.

The City of Hickory maintains an Animal Control Advisory Board and local veterinarians participate in a spay/neuter program. Apparently information about what services are available through the City is not being publicized. The group was willing to help distribute published material in the neighborhood.

Recommendation

- Support the City’s Animal Control Services and Spay/Neuter Program through the distribution of literature at meetings and other events.
 - ⇐ Justification: Providing information and encouraging applications could stimulate interest in responsible pet ownership, and lead to a decrease in the number of stray animals in the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: Reproduction of handouts
 - ⇐ Time table: Immediately
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department

Land Development and Zoning

The Planning Committee agreed that promoting and preserving the single-family character of Green Park is a priority. Residents are concerned about the possibility of more multi-family units and encroachment of commercial uses in their neighborhood.

REZONE PORTIONS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The 1986 Land Development Plan projected that the Fourth Street Place and Fifth Street SW area would transition from single-family homes to office and institutional uses. In the eleven years since the adoption of the current zoning, the predominate land use is still single-family homes. The residents wish to prevent the conversion of single-family homes to commercial uses in specific areas.

Recommendation

- Initiate the process of garnering neighborhood support and the necessary signatures for the rezoning petition to rezone the residential area between Fifth Street and Fourth Street Place SW from Third Avenue to Sixth Avenue SW, including the four houses that front Third Avenue SW from O & I - 1 to R-5.
 - ⇐ Justification: The current zoning classifications are incompatible with the neighborhood’s goal of preserving the single-family character of the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: Materials to contact property owners
 - ⇐ Time table: Within two years
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

REVIEW PLANS & FUTURE REZONING REQUESTS

The Planning Committee understands that the Planning and Development Department has the opportunity to review proposed plans for commercial development and make recommendations to assure the development is compatible with the City’s development policies and long-range plans. The Planning and Development Department also encourages any rezoning requests

for properties of two acres or greater be in the PD (Planned Development) category. This allows for better control over the type of development and requires any amendments be approved by the City Council.

To preserve the residential character of Green Park and prevent further commercial encroachment into the neighborhood while minimizing traffic impacts, the Planning Committee believes that any new commercial development should be restricted to major streets.

Recommendations

- Recommend that only areas fronting major streets that do not tie into the neighborhood be developed commercially.
 - ◀ Justification: The volume and type of traffic associated with commercial businesses is incompatible with the residential nature of Green Park
 - ◀ Cost: None
 - ◀ Time table: On-going
 - ◀ Responsible parties: Regional Planning Commission, Planning Department

- Encourage any proposed rezoning in Green Park be in the PD (Planned Development) category.
 - ◀ Justification: Allows for better control over the type of development
 - ◀ Cost: None
 - ◀ Time table: On-going
 - ◀ Responsible Parties: Neighborhood, Planning & Development, Regional Planning Commission

DRAFT A NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION OVERLAY DISTRICT

The Planning Committee learned of an innovative approach adopted by the City of Raleigh to

have some control over new development in Green Park.

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

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

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

A conservation district makes no existing structure or lot non-conforming; the emphasis is rather on making new construction be similar in character with the existing neighborhood.



The NCOD would help prevent irregular setbacks, as new construction would have to be similar in character with the existing neighborhood.

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

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

Recommendations

- Request that Planning staff develop the criteria for a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District for the Green Park Neighborhood.
 - ⊖ Justification: Protect the single-family character of the neighborhood, and promote compatible new development
 - ⊖ Cost: Staff time
 - ⊖ Time table: Within one year
 - ⊖ Responsible parties: Planning Department, Regional Planning Commission, Neighborhood
- Initiate the process of garnering neighborhood support and the necessary signatures for the rezoning petition to adopt the

Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District when it is developed.

- ⊖ Justification: The neighborhood must support the proposed rezoning and file the petition
- ⊖ Cost: Materials to contact property owners
- ⊖ Time table: Within one year
- ⊖ Responsible party: Neighborhood

EXPLORE ELIGIBILITY FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION

Green Park is a traditional neighborhood with several architecturally significant homes. Parts of the neighborhood could be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, and eventually the creation of a historic district.

The Hickory Historic Preservation Commission plans to retain the services of a historic resources consultant in June 1998 to update the city's inventory of historic properties. Historic property designation would be pursued only if eligible property owners in Green Park were in favor of the proposal.

Recommendations

- Request that the Historic Preservation Commission include a survey of Green Park in the city's historic resource inventory update.
 - ⊖ Justification: Determine eligibility of properties in the neighborhood for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places
 - ⊖ Cost: None for the inventory as it will be included in Historic Preservation Commission budget
 - ⊖ Time table: Within one year

- ⇐ Responsible parties: Historic Preservation Commission, Planning and Development
- Based on the results of the survey and property owners' desire, pursue the creation of a historic district in Green Park.
 - ⇐ Justification: To preserve the historic homes in the neighborhood, and enhance property values
 - ⇐ Cost: Dependent on the number of properties
 - ⇐ Time table: Within four years
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood, Historic Preservation Commission
- Target tenants and investment property owners with a mailing of information regarding the City's First Time Homebuyers program.
 - ⇐ Justification: Providing information and encouraging the conversion of rental properties back to owner occupied homes will help stabilize the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: Estimated \$38.50 in postage (.55 x 70 property owners)
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Community Development

PROMOTE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Planning Committee inquired about the existing community development homeownership and rehabilitation programs. Residents are particularly interested in ways to get landlords involved in rehabilitating their rental properties.

Recommendations

- Support the City's First Time Homebuyers, Housing and Rental Rehabilitation programs to promote homeownership and housing rehabilitation in the neighborhood through the distribution of literature at meetings and other events.
 - ⇐ Justification: Providing information and encouraging applications could stimulate interest in homeownership and could lead to a decrease in the number of structures in the neighborhood in need of minor or major repairs thus enhancing the overall appearance of the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: Reproduction of handouts
 - ⇐ Time table: Immediately
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Community Development

Parks & Recreation

Residents of Green Park consider Optimist Park an asset to the neighborhood even though it is underutilized. Keeping up with on-going maintenance needs and creating a new attraction through the conversion of the tennis court will greatly enhance the use of the park

The Planning Committee hopes to enhance Optimist Park and increase its usefulness and attractiveness.

DISCUSS REUSE OF TENNIS COURT

According to the Parks and Recreation Department, the tennis court needs to be resurfaced, which costs around \$2,000. The current level of use does not justify the cost. The Planning Committee spent some time discussing alternate uses for the tennis court as was suggested in the Recreation Master Plan.



The Recreation Master Plan calls for converting the underutilized tennis court in Optimist Park.

The factors that need to be considered when deciding which conversion option is best are cost, logistics of use, maintenance, and demand for a facility. Some ideas the Planning Committee had were shuffleboard (logistics of how the equipment would be made available and seating would have to be resolved), another basketball court, sand volleyball, and a putting green.

It was suggested that a neighborhood survey is conducted to determine what neighbors think about the park and what uses might be appropriate. Another suggestion is that the neighborhood residents become more physically active by playing tennis at Optimist Park. One neighbor offered to teach tennis lessons in order to increase the level of use of the courts.

Recommendation

- Form a committee to gather information from the residents and work with the Parks and Recreation Department to determine the best use of the tennis courts at Optimist Park.
 - ⇐ Justification: Optimist is a neighborhood park. The residents should be part of the decision making process in determining the best use of the park
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: Within two years

- ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood, Parks & Recreation Department, Recreation Commission

EXPLORE OPTIONS FOR CREATING A WALKING TRAIL

The Planning Committee was made aware of a neighborhood desire for a walking trail in Optimist Park. Walking for fitness is an activity many residents take part in, and feel could be made available at the park.

Details such as type of construction material, width and length were not explored in depth. The topography of the area and tree cover will dictate the type of walking trail that could be installed.

Recommendation

- Request that the Parks & Recreation Department study the feasibility of creating a walking trail in Optimist Park.
 - ⇐ Justification: Walking for fitness is an activity many residents enjoy and feel would enhance the park.
 - ⇐ Cost: Staff time
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Parks & Recreation Department



The appearance of Optimist Park was improved with the installation of a new sign, but needs landscaping.

ENHANCEMENTS FOR OPTIMIST PARK

The Planning Committee believes that with a little attention and a few enhancements Optimist Park will attract more Green Park residents and others.

Recommendations

- Request that landscaping be installed around the new sign at Optimist Park. The Neighborhood Association is willing to assist with labor and maintenance.
 - ⇐ Justification: Landscaping around the sign will enhance the attractiveness of the park
 - ⇐ Cost: Plant materials and ongoing maintenance needs
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Parks & Recreation Department, Neighborhood
- Request that the Traffic Division install pavement markings at the entrance of Optimist Park to better facilitate the flow of traffic in and out of the park.
 - ⇐ Justification: Lack of pavement markings makes it difficult for drivers to negotiate the entrance safely
 - ⇐ Cost: Estimated at \$50.00 materials, plus labor
 - ⇐ Time table: Within six months
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Traffic Division
- Continue to monitor feedback from the residents regarding the use, problems, and other concerns of adjacent property owners and work to resolve the concerns in a timely manner.
 - ⇐ Justification: Residents closest to the park are more aware of the activity at the park
 - ⇐ Cost: None

- ⇐ Time table: On-going
- ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood, Parks & Recreation Department

- Request that the basketball court be relined.
 - ⇐ Justification: Relining the court would make it more functional, and show that the park is properly maintained
 - ⇐ Cost: Materials and labor
 - ⇐ Time table: Within six months
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Parks & Recreation Department



While the goals are in good shape, the basketball court needs to be relined.

ADDITIONAL PARK LIGHTING NEEDS

The group agreed that having more lighting installed at the park is important for security and crime prevention and providing the opportunity to use the park after dark. Potential locations for the lights would be at the picnic shelter, around the playground, at the basketball court and at the concession stand area.

Recommendation

- Recommend that additional lighting be installed at key locations in Optimist Park.

- ⇐ Justification: Adequate lighting is important for security, crime prevention and providing the opportunity to use the park after dark
- ⇐ Cost: Dependent on number of lights
- ⇐ Time table: Installation underway in March 1998
- ⇐ Responsible parties: Parks & Recreation Department, Duke Power

ADOPT "OPTIMIST" PARK

The Planning Committee learned about the Parks and Recreation Department's Adopt-A-Park program. To Adopt-A-Park the Neighborhood Association signs an actual contract with the Parks & Recreation Department stating that the group agrees to clean-up and do minor landscaping and maintenance at the park four times a year.

Recommendation

- Stimulate interest within the neighborhood to participate in the Adopt-A-Park and Park Watch program.
 - ⇐ Justification: To help keep the area clean, invite more people to visit the park and to become familiar with the maintenance and safety of Optimist Park
 - ⇐ Cost: Undetermined
 - ⇐ Time table: Within six months
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood



By participating in the Adopt-A-Park program, residents will help maintain and improve the park.

Code Enforcement

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

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

The Planning Committee feels strongly that the deficiency in enforcement of the minimum housing code is due to a shortage of inspectors and the extended time allowed for property owners to make repairs.

HIRE ADDITIONAL INSPECTORS

Green Park residents have a strong desire to restore neighborhood appearances and attract new homeowners. To have poorly maintained vacant buildings, junk vehicles in

yards and homes in substandard condition only hinders Green Park's ability to recognize higher levels of homeownership, property maintenance and stabilized property values.

Recommendation

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

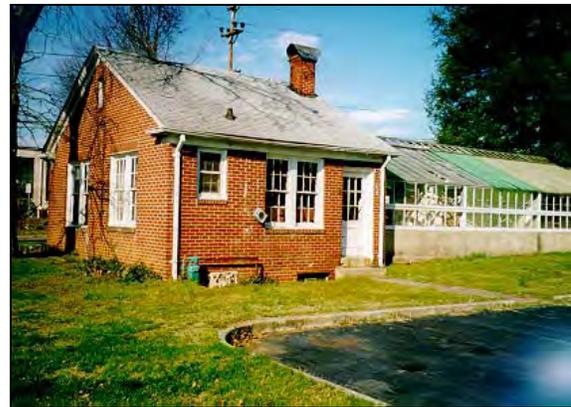
EXPEDITE THE PROCESS

The Planning Committee learned more about the complexities of the condemnation process and the legal procedure that must be followed to assure that all the relevant parties have been contacted regarding a dilapidated structure. Diligent property owner notification, adequate time given for a property owner to make repairs, a hearing and a title search must be completed before the city can take any action to demolish a structure. Such an involved and paperwork-laden process can take nine months to a year to complete if the property owner does not contest the action; three to five years if it is contested.

Dilapidated and boarded-up, vacant structures in the neighborhood harms the image of Green Park and frustrates neighborhood improvement efforts. More staff would help speed up the enforcement process, but the Planning Committee feels more can be done to rid the neighborhood of these dangerous eyesores.

Recommendation

- Expedite the demolition of the commercial greenhouse on Second Avenue SW.
 - ⇐ Justification: Dilapidated structures are a threat to the health of the neighborhood and hinder the promotion of new in-fill housing
 - ⇐ Cost: Undetermined
 - ⇐ Time table: Within six months
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Legal, Planning & Development - Building Inspections



The Wilfong Florist building has sat in this dilapidated state for more than three years.

CONTACT OWNERS OF NEGLECTED PROPERTIES

The Planning Committee discussed the benefits of personal contact with landlords and property management companies regarding problematic and unkept properties. The Green Park Neighborhood is willing to put pressure on property owners and provide information to them in an attempt to get them to maintain their properties.

Recommendation

- Develop a dialogue with the owners of neglected properties to encourage housing rehabilitation and to inform owners of the existing programs and funding sources for housing rehabilitation.

- ⇐ Justification: Personal contact allows for open communications of neighborhood desires and property owners positions
- ⇐ Cost: Dependent on method of contact, postage and materials
- ⇐ Time table: Within six months
- ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

Business & Commercial Interests

The business and commercial property owners are an important part of the Green Park neighborhood. Their concerns are similar to those held by the residents. Increased code enforcement and additional streetlights will help the area in terms of safety, appearance and improved property values.

In November 1996 and January 1997, the City sponsored two workshops regarding the revitalization and redevelopment of First and Second Avenues SE/SW. Over 100 business and property owners in the corridor attended the meetings.

The purpose of the community planning workshop was to bring together the many different interests in the area to discuss common concerns, identify potential corrective actions, and establish a preliminary strategy for moving the revitalization effort forward.

The Hickory City Council accepted the results of the First and Second Avenues SE/SW Business Development Plan in March 1997. Two of the recommendations from the Plan are relevant to Green Park business and commercial property owners.

PARTICIPATE IN THE LOAN POOL

In the Business Development Plan, only a portion of the Green Park neighborhood was included in the original study area boundaries to keep the size of the group manageable.

One of the recommendations was to establish a low interest or favorable rate loan pool. Experience indicates that building rehabilitation without some form of low interest loans is unlikely to occur. The cost of purchasing and restoring an existing, deteriorated or dilapidated structure often times exceeds the appraised value of the structure following rehabilitation. The difference between the total cost of restoration and the post-rehab appraised value may be referred to as the financing “gap”.

To help close the gap, the Business Development Plan recommended creating a loan pool for the purpose of offering less than market rate financing for eligible projects.

Since the acceptance of the Business Development Plan, the City has worked with financial institutions in the community to work out the logistics of the loan pool. The business terms have been agreed to, but a contract has not been conveyed.

Recommendation

- Request that the boundaries of the loan pool be expanded to include the Green Park First and Second Avenue SW business corridor.
 - ⇐ Justification: Inclusion in the loan pool will provide financing for rehabilitation projects
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood business and commercial property owners, Economic Development, financial institutions

ESTABLISH PROGRAM FOR STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS

The Business Development Plan recognized a potential opportunity for a public-private partnership in the area of landscape improvements. Under such a program, the City could offer to install landscape improvements in the public right-of-way, in exchange for commensurate landscape improvements on adjoining private properties. The availability of right-of-way needs to be determined.

Another option might entail the City closing unwanted or surplus driveway aprons and curb cuts in exchange for landscape improvements.

Recommendation

- As recommended in the First and Second Avenue SE/SW Business Development Plan, establish a public-private program for streetscape and landscape improvements.
 - ⇐ Justification: Improve the appearance of the area and create an attractive entranceway
 - ⇐ Cost: Undetermined
 - ⇐ Time table: Within two years
 - ⇐ Responsible parties: Neighborhood business and commercial property owners, Economic Development, Appearance Commission

Neighborhood Enhancement

Green Park is and has been a good place to live and raise a family. Enhancing livability factors will increase levels of homeownership by potential homebuyers.

BEAUTIFY ENTRANCEWAYS

The Planning Committee recognizes that there are no clearly defined entranceways into the neighborhood. There are eight streets and avenues that lead into Green Park; eight opportunities to let anyone who enters into the neighbor-

hood know that they are in Green Park via a distinctive feature. These entranceways can be used to create a sense of neighborhood identity and upgrade the image of the neighborhood.



Attractive landscaping enhances the intersection of First Avenue and Fourth Street SW.

The Planning Committee discussed the idea of creating landscaped entrances or some type of signage attached to the existing street name signs to demarcate the neighborhood.

Also the owners of property at the entrances could be contacted to see if they are interested in allowing such a project to occur on their property. A project such as this would be eligible for funding under the city's proposed Neighborhood Matching Grant Fund program.

Recommendations

- Present the accepted design for a neighborhood identifying sign to the Appearance Commission and City Council for approval.
 - ⇐ Justification: Since this is a new approach, approvals from the appropriate entities is necessary
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: Within six months

⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood



One of the proposed designs for a neighborhood identification sign to be attached to the top of street name signs.

- Explore ways to beautify, identify and enhance the eight main entranceways into Green Park.
 - ⇐ Justification: Distinctly identify the entrances to the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: Dependent on type of project
 - ⇐ Time table: Within two years
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

APPLY FOR SUSTAINING MATCHING GRANT

Green Park Neighborhood Association maintains a bank account, and has the necessary funds to apply for a Sustaining Matching Grant from the City.

Everyone seemed to agree that demarcating the neighborhood boundaries with signs that attach to the top of the existing street name signs would be a good use of the money while promoting neighborhood identity.

Recommendation

- Apply for Sustaining Matching Grant Funds from the City to fund the neighborhood street name signs.
 - ⇐ Justification: The grant will help offset the costs of the neighborhood identifying signs

⇐ Cost: None

⇐ Time table: Within six months

⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

Neighborhood Organization and Capacity Building

The organization and continued involvement of the Neighborhood Association is important to the success of the neighborhood planning process. A formal structure is necessary to provide leadership and accountability to the group. Participation from the different groups that live and work in the neighborhood is very important to building a sense of community and shared vision for the future of the neighborhood.

The Neighborhood Association should look for opportunities to publicize the success of the neighborhood through events and press releases. One of the keys to building the capacity of the neighborhood is being informed of decisions made by the City of Hickory that might impact Green Park.

FORMALIZE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Strong leadership is needed to follow through and implement the plan once it is approved. Green Park Neighborhood Association has been without a formal organizational structure for over a year.

Recommendation

- Take necessary steps to elect and install officers to the Green Park Neighborhood Association.
 - ⇐ Justification: An effective and operating Neighborhood Association is critical to ongoing success of the organization and implementation of the plan.

- ⇐ Cost: None
- ⇐ Time Table: Within six months
- ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

ENCOURAGE DIVERSE PARTICIPATION

Although the existing Neighborhood Association is active, only a small percentage of residents attend neighborhood meetings and/or actively participate in community activities.

Most of the members of the Neighborhood Association are homeowners. A large proportion of Green Park residents are renters. The Neighborhood Association needs representation from all residents. Emphasis should be placed on one-on-one communication, neighbors talking to neighbors, encouraging renters to get involved.

Recommendation

- Reach out to residents who traditionally are not involved in Neighborhood Association activities through face to face contact, fliers and other means.
 - ⇐ Justification: Community-wide involvement is necessary to the sustained viability of the Green Park Neighborhood Association
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time Table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

COMMUNICATION & PUBLICITY

While an effort such as the neighborhood identification signs is a good start, the Neighborhood Association needs to be diligent about generating positive publicity for and about Green Park. Continued promotion of Green Park's community spirit, and most importantly, celebrating the successes as they occur will aid in the effort to promote the image of a quality neighborhood.

Recommendation

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

EXPAND INVOLVEMENT COMMUNITY-WIDE

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

There are a variety of citywide initiatives in progress which affect Green Park. In order for the Neighborhood Association to stay informed on issues impacting the neighborhood, it is important for a member of the Association to attend city meetings and actively participate in decision-making processes.

Recommendation

- Appoint one or two people from the Neighborhood Association to serve as a Government Liaison. These people would attend City Council meetings and relevant Board and Commission meetings and report back to the group.

- ⇐ Justification: Positions the neighborhood to be proactive and respond to activities or proposals that may affect the neighborhood
- ⇐ Cost: None
- ⇐ Time table: Within one year
- ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

PLAN MORE NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS

Scheduling neighborhood clean-up days is a great way to raise awareness and get others involved in improving the neighborhood. Such events say to the whole community “We care about our neighborhood!”

Recommendations

- Sponsor two neighborhood clean up days yearly.
 - ⇐ Justification: To beautify Green Park, raise awareness and show support for the neighborhood
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: Within one year
 - ⇐ Responsible Party: Neighborhood
- Plan Neighborhood Association social events at the Park.
 - ⇐ Justification: More residents need to see that the park is safe and conditions have improved
 - ⇐ Cost: None
 - ⇐ Time table: On-going
 - ⇐ Responsible party: Neighborhood

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN

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

Plan Adoption

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

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

Plan Implementation

The true measure of a Plan's acceptance may best be described in terms of the degree to which it is used and supported during relevant decision-making processes. The residents of Green Park, the Hickory City Council, service provider agencies, and the City Administration each have important roles in the implementation processes.

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

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

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

Several of the City Council appointed Boards and Commissions are affected by some of the recommendations in the Green Park Neighborhood Plan. Support and advice from these boards and commissions is

critical to the successful implementation of the Plan. The Appearance Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Historic Preservation Commission and the Animal Control Advisory Board should be informed and involved as necessary.

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

Conclusion

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

The reality is that the neighborhood has less of an influence on some issues, such as the future use of the school, than others do. Yet, the recommendations are included in the Plan so that others know the group discussed the issue during the planning process and actions which can be pursued in the future.

Above all, by participating in the planning process, members of the Committee got to know their neighbors better and collectively participate in a process that will generate positive change in the neighborhood over time. Many of the group discussions revealed many pleasant surprises, such as evidence of a low crime rate and number of well maintained properties which indicate that the quality of life is good in Green Park.

In short, this long-range neighborhood planning process offered, and will continue to offer the residents, business owners and commercial property owners of Green Park the opportunity to plan proactively for the future of their neighborhood.

Carved on the face of the National Archives building in Washington, D.C. is the inscription "The Past is Prologue". May the rich past of the Green Park neighborhood be the prologue to its future revitalization and enhancement.

Recommendation		Justification	Cost	Time Table	Responsible Party
GREEN PARK SCHOOL					
Address the School Board					
1	Address Hickory Public School Board regarding future use of Green Park School	The future use of this property is of great concern to the neighborhood Incompatible use would harm the existing character of Green Park	None	Within one year	Neighborhood
2	Continue to take the initiative by discussing ideas for development projects which the neighborhood would find acceptable and monitoring School Board deliberations	By being proactive and involved, the residents are better able to influence the decision making process	None	On-going	Neighborhood, working with the School Board and other interested parties
TRAFFIC SAFETY					
Improve Dangerous Intersections					
3	Request that the Traffic Division and the Traffic Safety Unit continue to compile information regarding the warrants for a traffic signal and potential intersection improvements at Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW	Existing data indicates an accident rate higher than normal and worth further study	Staff time	Within two years	Traffic Division, Traffic Safety Unit, NCDOT
4	Request that a caution light and warning signs be installed at Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW if the warrants are met while the study for a permanent signal is being conducted	Preliminary measures should be taken to ensure the motorist safety	\$6,000 to \$8,000	Within one year	Traffic Division, NCDOT
5	Request that pavement markings be installed to at the intersections of Second Avenue and Seventh Street SW, Seventh Avenue and Seventh Street SW, Fourth Avenue and Seventh Street SW, Sixth Avenue and Seventh Street SW, Sixth Avenue and Eighth Street SW, and Seventh Avenue and Eighth Street SW	To improve the safety of these intersection through increased visibility	Estimated at \$40 per intersection	Within six months	Traffic Division
Request Traffic Control Devices					
6	Request that the Traffic Division conduct a comprehensive study of Seventh Street and Fourth Avenue SW, and Seventh Street and Seventh Avenue SW to determine if the warrants for installation of multi-way stop signs are met	Residents see a need to determine if the warrants are met, installing stop signs would deter cut through traffic and slow down traffic	Staff time	Within one year	Traffic Division
7	Authorize the installation of a three-way stop sign at the intersections of Seventh Street and Fourth Avenue SW and Seventh Street and Seventh Avenue SW if the study shows that the warrants are met	Requiring motorists to stop at these intersection would slow speeders and deter cut-through traffic	Materials and labor	Within two years	Traffic Division

Recommendation		Justification	Cost	Time Table	Responsible Party
TRAFFIC SAFETY					
Study Lowering Speed Limits					
8	Request that the Traffic Division study and formulate a uniform residential speed limit policy for consideration by City Council	The current 35 mph speed limit is not appropriate in a residential area	Staff time	Within one year	Traffic Division
Explore Traffic Calming					
9	Request that the City continue to explore traffic calming solutions for all of Hickory's neighborhoods	There is a need to continue examining all the options and seek solutions to the specific problems	None	On-going	Neighborhood, Traffic Division, Traffic Safety Unit, Planning & Development, Engineering
Partner With Traffic Safety Unit					
10	Endorse a partnership between Hickory Police Department's Traffic Safety Unit and Green Park Neighborhood to promote traffic safety and public education efforts. The Planning Committee requests that the radar trailer and Target Enforcement Area signs be periodically stationed in high traffic areas throughout the neighborhood	Raising awareness of traffic safety through public education and use of the radar trailer will compel drivers to reduce their vehicle speed, thus creating a safer environment	Covered under the grant	On-going	Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department's Traffic Safety Unit
PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE					
Additional Sidewalk Needs					
11	Request that the identified sidewalk needs in Green Park as recommended in the Sidewalk/Bikeway Master Plan is considered a high priority	A safe, serviceable pedestrian circulation system needs to be established to serve the needs of the neighborhood and provide pedestrian access to Grandview Middle School	\$39,864 (3,624 X \$11.00 per foot)	Dependent on appropriation of funds and construction	Engineering Department, Street Department
Assess Sidewalk Maintenance Needs					
12	Request that the Street Department conduct a comprehensive assessment of the sidewalk conditions in Green Park, and perform necessary maintenance	A serviceable and attractive sidewalk system is important for pedestrian safety	Staff time materials and labor	Within six months	Street Department
Additional Street Lighting Needs					
13	Request the recommendations of the Neighborhood and Traffic Department street lighting study be implemented	Street lights should be added to enhance motorist and pedestrian safety and deter crime	Monthly charge to the City per light (Approx-imately \$8.00 per light - 35 X \$8.00 = \$280 per month)	Within three years	Neighborhood, Traffic Department, Duke Power

Recommendation		Justification	Cost	Time Table	Responsible Party
COMMUNITY SAFETY					
Promote Crime Prevention					
14	Continue to encourage neighbors to report incidents of illegal activity in the neighborhood to the PACT Commander and Hickory Police	PACT officers rely on neighbors to report suspicious activity	None	On-going	Neighborhood
15	Invgorate the Community Watch and Block Captains system for communication and crime prevention	Community Watch promotes neighbor to neighbor communication and fosters a sense of security	None	Within six months	Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department
Enforce Noise Ordinance					
16	Encourage officers to be more diligent about issuing civil citations for violations of the noise ordinance	Loud music emanating from vehicles disrupts the peace and quiet of the neighborhood and is against the law	None	On-going	Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department
Animal Control Information Dissemination					
17	Support the City's Animal Control Services and Spay/Neuter Program through the distribution of literature at meetings and other events	Providing information and encouraging applications could stimulate interest in responsible pet ownership, and lead to a decrease in the number of stray animals in the neighborhood	Reproduction of handouts	Within six months	Neighborhood, Hickory Police Department
LAND DEVELOPMENT & ZONING					
Rezone Portions of the Neighborhood					
18	Initiate the process of garnering neighborhood support and the necessary signatures for the rezoning petition to rezone the residential area between Fifth Street and Fourth Street Place SW from Third Avenue to Sixth Avenue SW, including the four houses that front Third Avenue SW from O & I - 1 to R-5	The current zoning classifications are incompatible with the neighborhood's goal of preserving the single-family character of the neighborhood	Materials to contact property owners	Within two years	Neighborhood
Plan Review & Future Rezoning Requests					
19	Recommend that only areas fronting major streets that do not tie into the neighborhood be developed commercially	The volume and type of traffic associated with commercial businesses is incompatible with the residential nature of Green Park	None	On-going	Regional Planning Commission, Planning Department
20	Encourage any proposed rezoning in Green Park be in the PD (Planned Development) category	Allows for better control over the type of development	None	On-going	Neighborhood, Planning Department
Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District					
21	Request that Planning staff develop the criteria for a Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District for the Green Park Neighborhood	Protect the single-family character of the neighborhood, and promote compatible new development	Staff time	Within a year	Planning Department, Regional Planning Commission, Neighborhood
22	Initiate the process of garnering neighborhood support and the necessary signatures for the rezoning petition to adopt the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District when it is developed	Neighborhood must support the proposed rezoning and file the petition	Materials to contact property owners	Within a year	Neighborhood

Recommendation	Justification	Cost	Time Table	Responsible Party	
LAND DEVELOPMENT & ZONING					
Explore Eligibility for Historic Designation					
23	Request that the Historic Preservation Commission include a survey of Green Park in the city's historic resource inventory update	Determine eligibility of properties in the neighborhood for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places	None	Within one year	Historic Preservation Commission, Planning and Development
24	Based on the results of the survey and property owners' desire, pursue the creation of a historic district in Green Park	To preserve the historic homes in the neighborhood, and enhance property values	Dependent on the number of properties	Within four years	Neighborhood, Historic Preservation Commission
Promote Community Development					
25	Support the City's First Time Homebuyers, Housing and Rental Rehabilitation programs to promote homeownership and housing rehabilitation in the neighborhood through the distribution of literature at meetings and other events	Providing information and encouraging applications could stimulate interest in homeownership and could lead to a decrease in the number of structures in the neighborhood in need of minor or major repairs thus enhancing the overall appearance of the neighborhood	Reproduction of handouts	Within six months	Neighborhood, Community Development Division
26	Target tenants and investment property owners with a mailing of information regarding the City's First Time Homebuyers program	Providing information and encouraging the conversion of rental properties back to owner occupied homes will help stabilize the neighborhood	Estimated \$38.50 in postage (.55 x 70 property owners)	Within one year	Neighborhood, Community Development Division
PARKS & RECREATION					
Discuss Reuse of Tennis Court					
27	Form a committee to gather information from the residents and work with the Parks and Recreation Department to determine the best use of the tennis courts at Optimist Park	Optimist is a neighborhood park. The residents should be part of the decision making process in determining the best use of the park	None	Within two years	Neighborhood, Parks & Recreation Department, Recreation Commission
Explore Options for Creating Walking Trail					
28	Request that the Parks & Recreation Department study the feasibility of creating a walking trail in Optimist Park	Walking for fitness is an activity many residents enjoy and feel would enhance the park	Staff time	Within one year	Parks & Recreation Department
Enhancements for Optimist Park					
29	Request that landscaping be installed around the new sign at Optimist Park. The Neighborhood Association is willing to assist with labor and maintenance	Landscaping around the sign will enhance the attractiveness of the park	Plant materials and ongoing maintenance needs	Within one year - COMPLETED 4/98	Parks & Recreation Department, Neighborhood
30	Request that the Traffic Division install pavement markings at the entrance of Optimist Park to better facilitate the flow of traffic in and out of the park	Lack of pavement markings makes it difficult for drivers to negotiate the entrance safely	Estimated at \$50.00 materials, plus labor	Within six months	Traffic Division
31	Continue to monitor feedback from the residents regarding the use, problems, and other concerns of adjacent property owners and work to resolve the concerns in a timely manner	Residents closest to the park are more aware of the activity at the park	None	On-going	Neighborhood, Parks & Recreation Department

Recommendation		Justification	Cost	Time Table	Responsible Party
PARKS & RECREATION					
Enhancements for Optimist Park					
32	Request that the basketball court be relined	Relining the court would make it more functional, and show that the park is properly maintained	Materials and labor	Within six months - COMPLETED 4/98	Parks & Recreation Department
Additional Park Lighting Needs					
33	Recommend that additional lighting be installed at key locations in Optimist Park	Adequate lighting is important for security, crime prevention and providing the opportunity to use the park after dark	Dependent on number of lights	Installation underway in March 1998	Parks & Recreation Department, Duke Power
Adopt "Optimist" Park					
34	Stimulate interest within the neighborhood to participate in the Adopt-A-Park and Park Watch program	To help keep the area clean, invite more people to visit the park and to become familiar with the maintenance and safety of Optimist Park	Undetermined	Within six months	Neighborhood
CODE ENFORCEMENT					
Hire More Inspectors					
35	Request that the City hire at least one more minimum housing code and junk vehicle enforcement officer	The need for comprehensive and timely code enforcement inspections and follow-up is needed, not only in Green Park, but for the whole city	Undetermined at this time	Within one year	Planning & Development - Building Inspections
Expedite the Process					
36	Expedite the demolition of the commercial greenhouse on Second Avenue SW	Dilapidated structures are a threat to the health of the neighborhood and hinder the promotion of new in-fill housing	Undetermined	Within six months	Legal, Planning & Development - Building Inspections
Contact Owners of Neglected Properties					
37	Develop a dialogue with the owners of neglected properties to encourage housing rehabilitation and to inform owners of the existing programs and funding sources for housing rehabilitation	Personal contact allows for open communications of neighborhood desires and property owners positions	Postage and materials	Within six months	Neighborhood
BUSINESS & COMMERCIAL INTERESTS					
Participate in the Loan Pool					
38	Request that the boundaries of the loan pool be expanded to include the Green Park First and Second Avenue SW business corridor	Inclusion in the loan pool will provide financing for rehabilitation projects	None	Within one year	Neighborhood business and commercial property owners, Economic Development, financial institutions
Streetscape Improvement Program					
39	As recommended in the First and Second Avenue SE/SW Business Development Plan, establish a public-private program for streetscape and landscape improvements	Improve the appearance of the area and create an attractive entranceway	Undetermined	Within two years	Neighborhood business and commercial property owners, Economic Development, Appearance Commission

Recommendation		Justification	Cost	Time Table	Responsible Party
NEIGHBORHOOD ENHANCEMENT					
Entranceway Beautification					
40	Present the accepted design for a neighborhood identifying sign to the Appearance Commission and City Council for approval	Since this is a new approach, approvals from the appropriate entities is necessary	None	Within six months	Neighborhood
41	Explore ways to beautify, identify and enhance the eight main entranceways into Green Park	Distinctly identify the entrances to the neighborhood	Dependent on type of project	Within two years	Neighborhood
Apply for Sustaining Matching Grant					
42	Apply for Sustaining Matching Grant Funds from the City to fund the neighborhood street name signs	The grant will help offset the costs of the neighborhood identifying signs	None	Within six months	Neighborhood
NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING					
Formalize Neighborhood Organization					
43	Take necessary steps to elect and install officers to the Green Park Neighborhood Association	An effective and operating Neighborhood Association is critical to ongoing success of the organization and implementation of the plan	None	Within six months	Neighborhood
Encourage Diverse Participation					
44	Reach out to residents who traditionally are not involved in Neighborhood Association activities through face to face contact, fliers and other means	Community-wide involvement is necessary to the sustained viability of the Kenworth Neighborhood Association	None	Within one year	Neighborhood
Communication & Publicity					
45	Appoint one person in the Neighborhood Association to serve as the Community Liaison This person would work at communicating the mission and activities of the Neighborhood Association through pre-meeting and post-meeting press releases, event publicity, and personal contact with the media and others such as Realtors	Good publicity will stimulate interest in the neighborhood and help to promote a quality image	Budget for supplies necessary to create articles	Within one year	Neighborhood
Expand Community-Wide Involvement					
46	Appoint one or two people from the Neighborhood Association to serve as a Government Liaison These people would attend City Council meetings and relevant Board and Commission meetings and report back to the group	Positions the neighborhood to be proactive and respond to activities or proposals that may affect the neighborhood	None	Within one year	Neighborhood
Plan More Neighborhood Events					
47	Sponsor two neighborhood clean up days yearly	To beautify Green Park, raise awareness and show support for the neighborhood	None	Within one year	Neighborhood
48	Plan Neighborhood Association social events at the Park	More residents need to see that the park is safe and conditions have improved	None	On-going	Neighborhood

Green Park Neighborhood

Existing Land Use

Legend

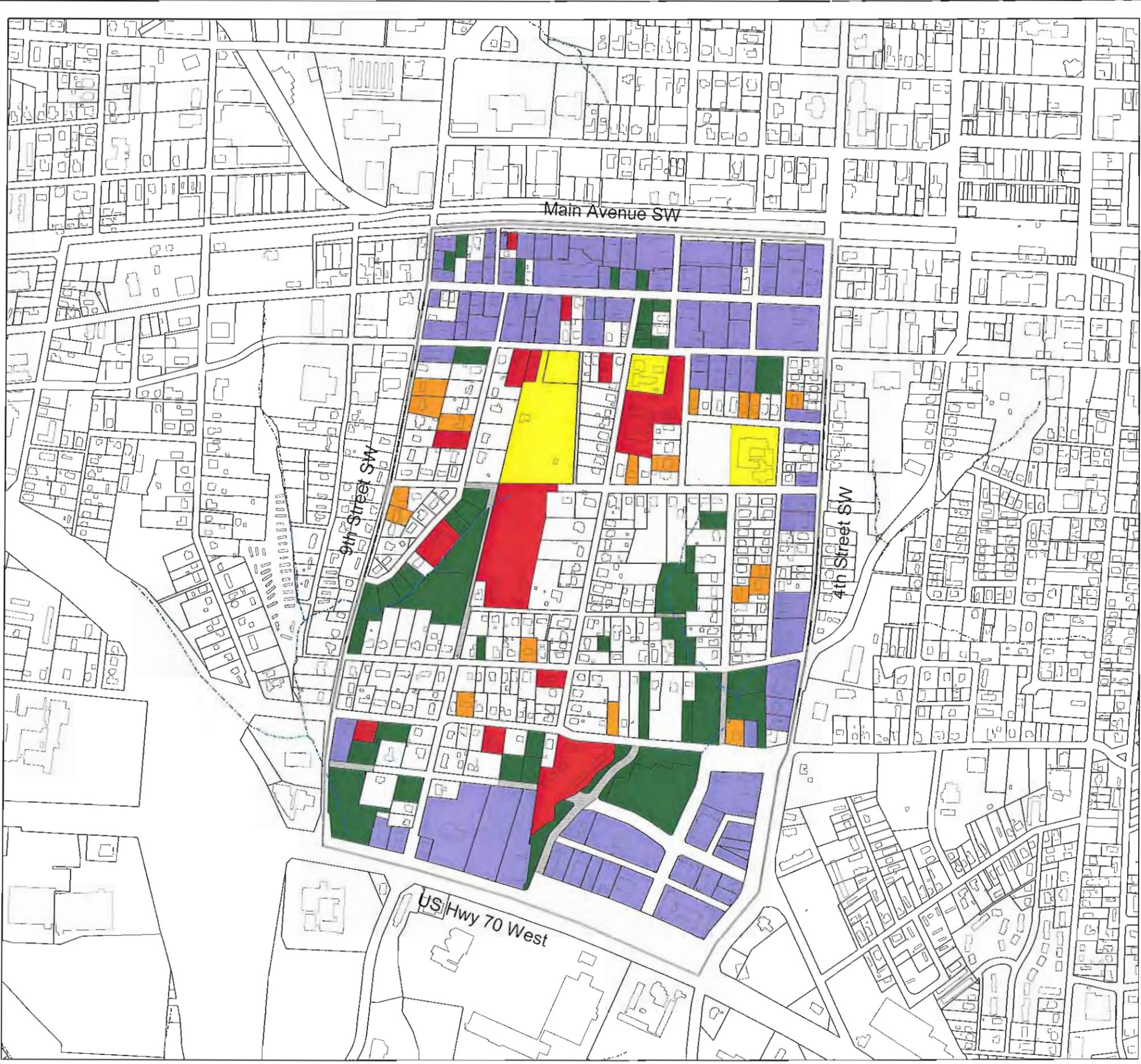
Existing Land Use

- Commercial
- Duplex
- Multi-Family
- Public / Institutional
- Single Family
- Vacant

- Neighborhood Boundary
- Water Features
- Parcels
- Undeveloped ROW



Scale: 1" : 300'



Green Park Neighborhood

Current Zoning

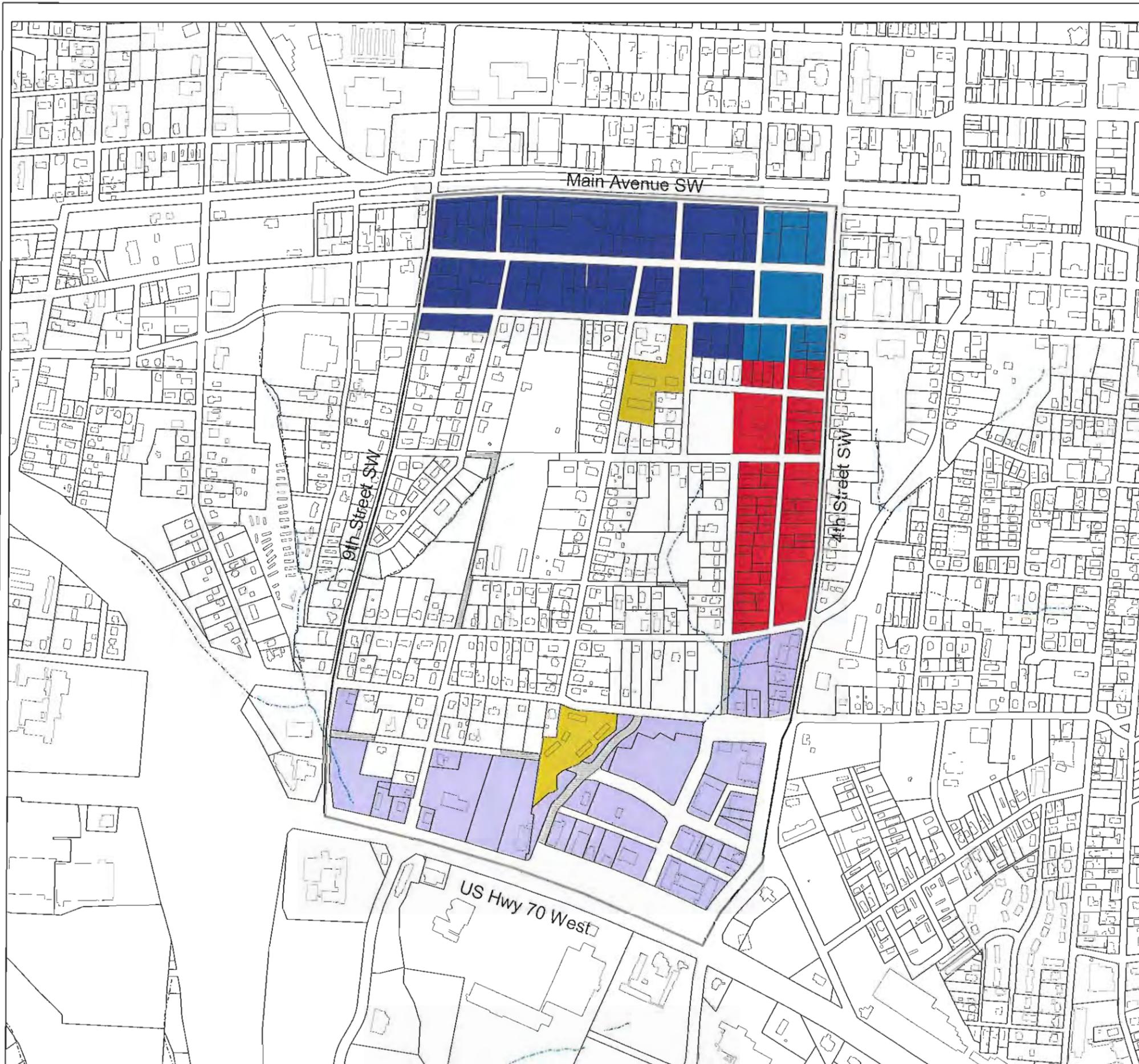
Legend

Current Zoning

-  C-2 Commercial
-  C-4 Commercial
-  C-5 Commercial
-  O&I-1 Office/Institutional
-  PD-H-R-5
-  R-5 Residential
-  Neighborhood Boundary
-  Water Features
-  Parcels
-  Structures
-  Undeveloped ROW



Scale: 1" : 300'



Green Park Neighborhood

Sidewalks

Legend

Sidewalks

 Existing

 Proposed

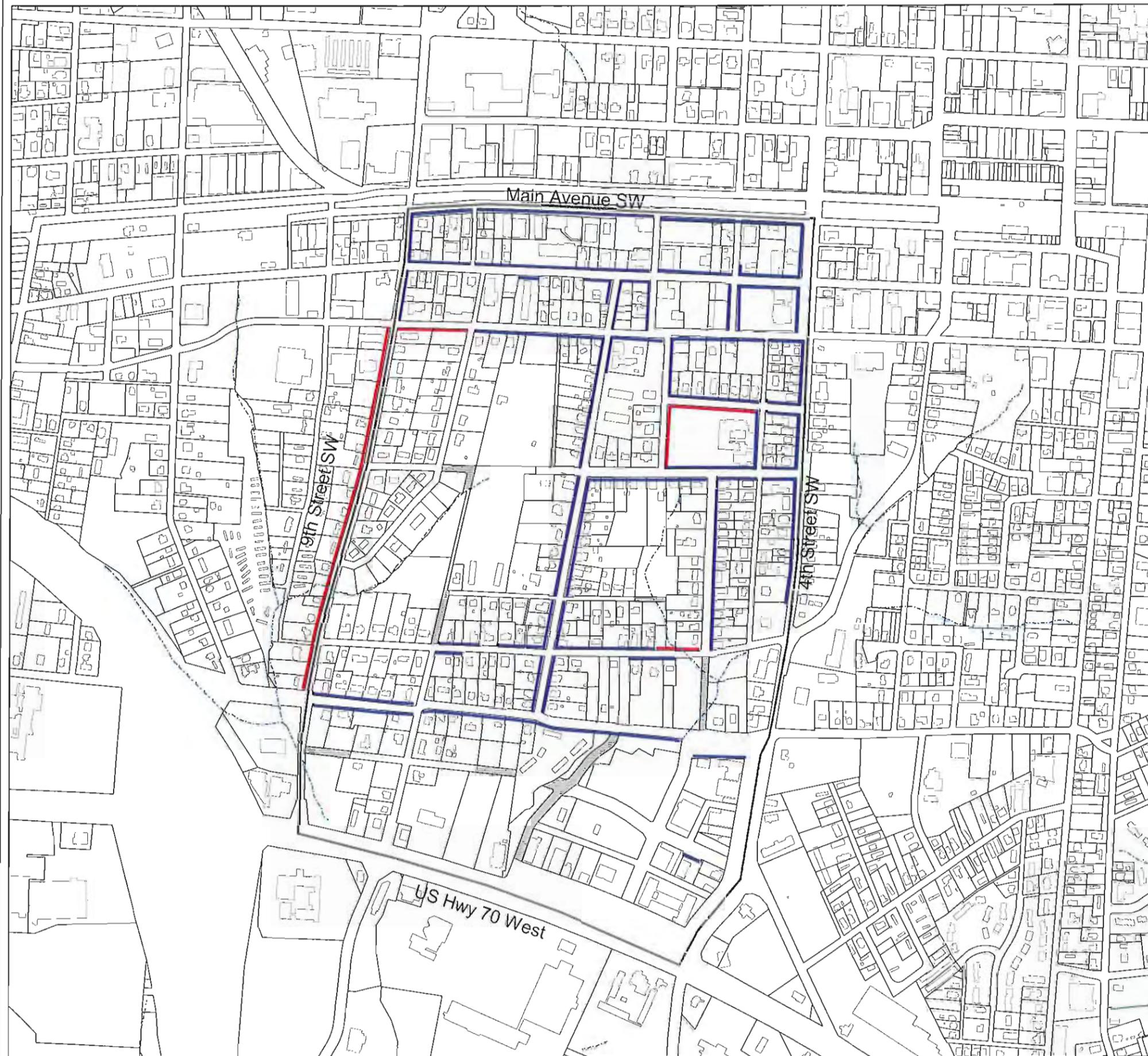
 Neighborhood Boundary

 Water Features

 Parcels

 Structures

 Undeveloped ROW



Scale: 1" : 300'

Green Park Neighborhood

Street Lights

Legend

Lights

- Existing Street Light
- Proposed Street Light
- ▲ Security Light

- ▭ Structures
- ~ Neighborhood Boundary
- ~ Water Features
- ~ Parcels
- ▬ Undeveloped ROW



Scale: 1" : 300'



Green Park Neighborhood

Housing Conditions

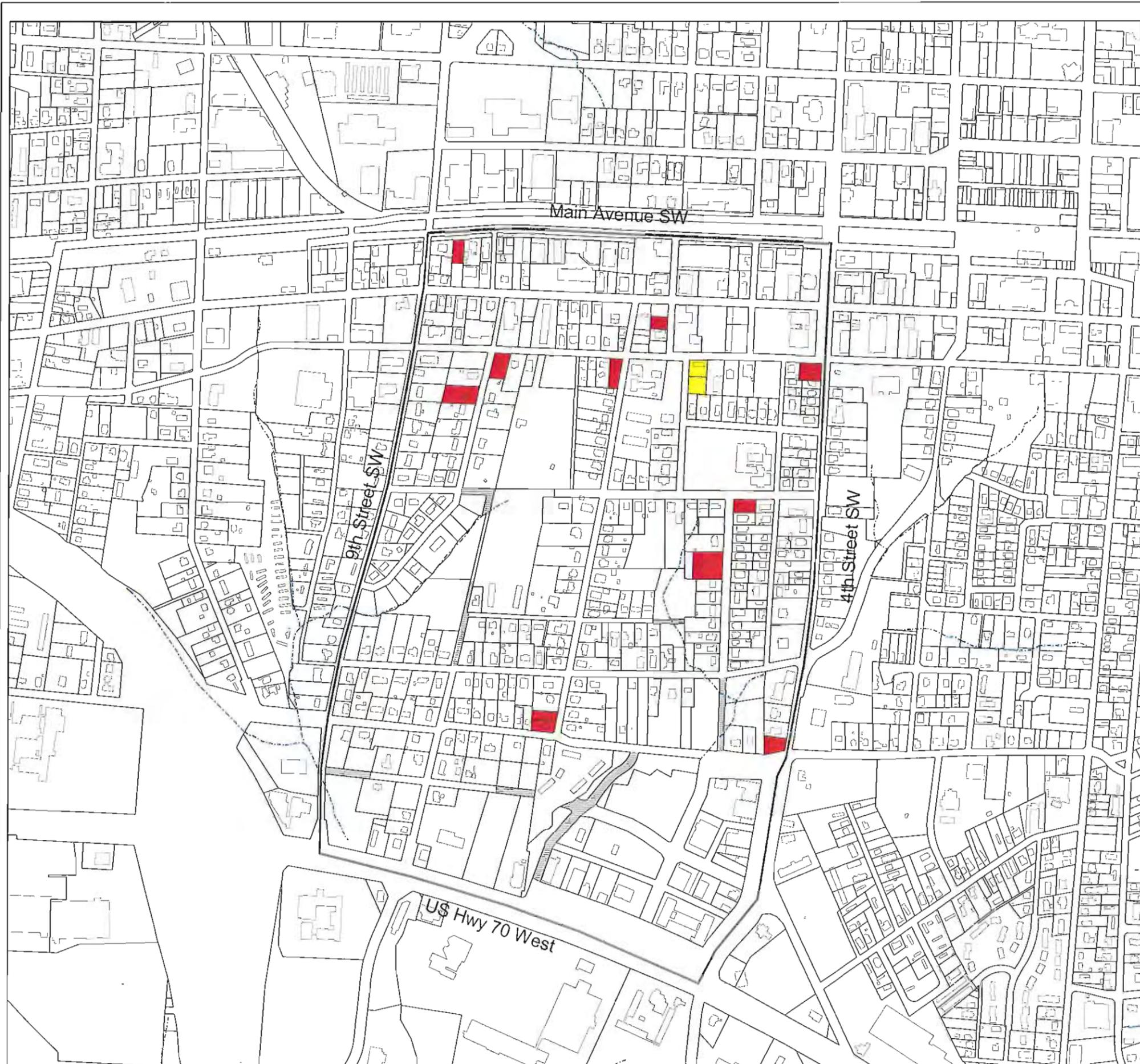
Legend

Housing Conditions

-  Well Maintained Structures
-  Minor Maintenance
-  Major Maintenance
-  Dilapidated
-  Neighborhood Boundary
-  Water Features
-  Parcels
-  Undeveloped ROW



Scale: 1" : 300'



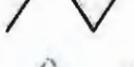
Green Park Neighborhood

Property Status

Source: Catawba County Real Property Master Index Listings, November 1997.

Legend

Occupancy

-  Owner Occupied
-  Renter Occupied
-  Structures
-  Neighborhood Boundary
-  Water Features
-  Parcels
-  Undeveloped ROW



Scale: 1" : 300'



