Chapter IV.
The Vision for the Future

INTRODUCTION

DEFINING THE VISION FOR THE FUTURE

THE VISION

FOCUS AREAS

Introduction

With many changes anticipated in the next 20 years, Hendersonville will have many challenges to overcome and opportunities to build upon to realize a future for the city that benefits current and future generations. The ideas and aspirations of current residents and other stakeholders are expressed as a "Vision," which is described in more detail in this section. It is a vital and necessary component of the plan as it represents the best path forward as determined by the community. The Vision for the Future is comprised of the following:

Defining the Vision for the Future

This section holds the four defining questions that were posed early in the planning process:

- How much growth?
- Where should new development occur?
- What kind of development should be supported?
- What level of intensity is appropriate for future development and redevelopment?

The Vision

The "Vision" for the future of Hendersonville is expressed in terms of an aspirational statement about the future ("Vision Statement"), Goals, and Objectives, Guiding Principles, the Future Land Use and Conservation Plan (or Vision Map), and Character Areas. This section defines the direction for future planning, informing decisions of the City and its partners as changes are managed over the next two decades.

Focus Areas

Within this section are conceptual ideas of how parts of the City could evolve when Guiding Principles and Character Areas are applied. Not prescriptive in nature, each is one of many possible ways in which the Vision can be realized in that location.

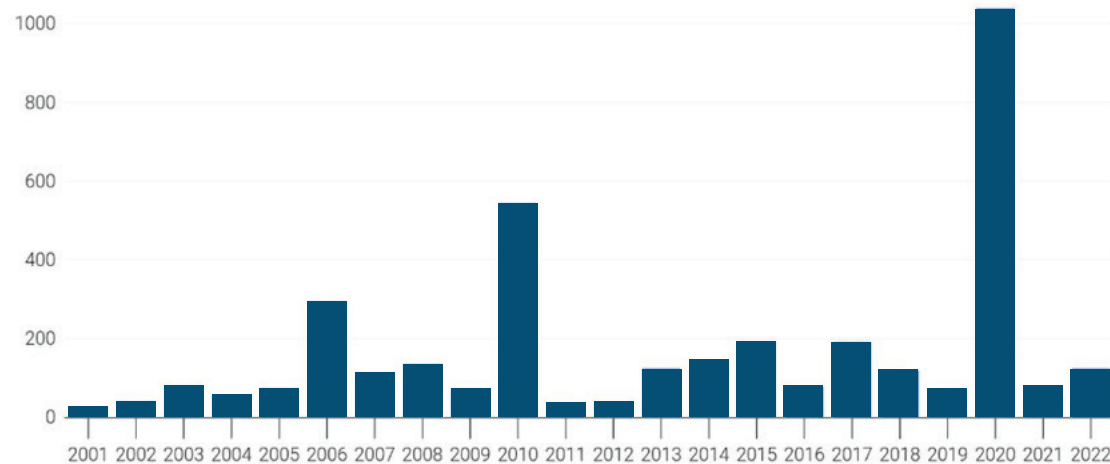Family on Main Street (left) | City of Hendersonville, NC

Defining the Vision for the Future

In defining the future vision, the community considered answers to four important questions, which were posed in the early stages of the planning process. Below, information pertaining to those questions is presented. This information helped residents and other stakeholders formulate opinions about potential changes to the development pattern and gives context to the components of the "The Vision" that follows.

HOW MUCH GROWTH?

Recent trends indicate Hendersonville is poised to grow in population over the next several decades. As Figure 4.1 reveals, the City experienced a substantial increase in 2020. According to the US Census Bureau Population Estimates, the population increased almost 15% between 2012 and 2022.

With growth comes change. On one hand, growth can be positive, as the resulting investments can bolster the economic stability of the community. On the other hand, it can increase competition for land and housing, driving prices higher, and it can place additional demands on the City infrastructure and services. An understanding of just how much growth Hendersonville can expect will help the community anticipate potential changes, maximize the benefits, and minimize or mitigate the negative impacts.

Projected Residential Growth

The North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management (NC OSMB) provides projections for all 100 counties. Assuming Hendersonville maintains its proportion of Henderson County's population (13%), the city might expect a population increase of 4,264 people by 2045. Applying Hendersonville's current household size of 1.91, the number of housing units needed to accommodate new residents would be a little more than 2,200, or approximately 110 units annually over a 20-year period.

Recent residential development request suggest a higher rate of growth is expected. Residential building permits and development approvals issued in Hendersonville indicates a substantially higher population increase by 2045 may be realized. In 2022, for example, 708 new residential units were approved for sites in the city or the ETJ, and are still considered active projects. At this rate, the city could be facing an increase in housing units of roughly 16,000 over 22 years (2023-2045). This equates to more than 31,000 new residents, assuming the household size remains at 1.91. Other sources of projections were consulted to establish the range. Figure 4.3 includes the projections from each source.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Population Estimates Program)

Neilsberg

Figure 4.1 Historic population growth for the city over the last few decade | US Census

	Pop 2022	Pop 2045	Pop Change by 2045
City	15321*	19585	4264
County	118106**	150652**	32546
*Source: US Census. Note: The city's population is 13% of the County's population.			
**Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management, Henderson County, 2023			

Figure 4.2 Estimated population of Hendersonville by 2045 | NC Office of State Budget and Management

The high end of the range is the NC OSMB's projected population increase for the entirety of Henderson County, reflecting one assumption that all future growth in the county will occur inside Hendersonville's city limits. Each projection is then translated into housing demand based on the current household size of 1.91 persons per unit.

Projected Nonresidential Growth

Nonresidential growth refers to potential increases in both commercial and industrial development. National trends, which are consistent with current development activity in NC and the Asheville region, point to a decrease in demand for land to accommodate nonresidential uses. The following are a few of those trends resulting in lower space demand:

- Advances in technology and investments in logistics have enabled online shopping, improving consumers' access to goods. Today, online shopping represents 12-15% of all retail sales in the US, and that number is expected to increase to 41% by 2027.
- Technology has also afforded employers and their workers opportunities to work remotely, thereby reducing the demand for office space.
- Technology has changed the way people conduct other business. Financial institutions and healthcare professionals are among those offering services through online mechanisms.
- It is projected that there will be 13% less demand for office space than pre-pandemic levels; however, the demand for Class A space will be much higher.

Such trends, particularly the shifts in consumer behaviors and the transformation of the workplace, indicate the following for Hendersonville:

- Retailers and service providers will require fewer brick-and-mortar locations.
- Mixed-use development with a high percentage of space devoted to residential units will attract retail and restaurant tenants. As the daytime population associated with concentrations of workplaces decline, retail and restaurant tenants will become increasingly reliant on proximity to a residential population, including people working from home, for long-term viability.
- Office space will be maintained or created within existing buildings, and upfits to such buildings will respond to the specific needs of tenants, including employees requiring less square footage as shared workspaces become increasingly commonplace and remote working opportunities continue to rise.
- Industrial development will include a higher percentage of space for warehousing and distribution activities.
  - Manufacturing
  - Data Centers (cloud storage/call centers)
  - Supply Chain

The demand for "greenfield" development to accommodate nonresidential growth, therefore, is expected to be lower than previous decades. With rising vacancy rates and decreasing lease rates, reinvestment in developed sites to meet future demand should be a priority to ensure areas of blight are avoided. Refer to Appendix E for more information about Hendersonville's market conditions and economic development opportunities.

Sources	Pop. Projection, 2045	Potential Pop. Increase by 2045	Number of Potential Housing Units to be added by 2045 (@ 1.91 HH size)
NC OSMB (City, assumes 13% of County)	19,585	4,264	2,232
Henderson County Bldg. Dept.*	24,718	10,337	5,412
City Planning Dept.**	42,367	31,102	16,284
NC OSMB (Henderson County)	47,867	32,546	17,040

Figure 4.3 Potential housing units added by 2045 based on projected population

*Based on residential building permits issued for new residential units in 2023 and applying the household size of 1.91. [246 units x household size of 1.91 x 22 years]

**Based on new housing development projects approved in 2022 that are still active as of 2024. [708 units x household size of 1.91 x 23 years]

WHERE SHOULD NEW DEVELOPMENT OCCUR?

The second question is, "Where can the growth (i.e., new homes, new businesses, and additional support services) be located?" Therefore, an early step in the process is mapping the development status to determine which parcels make up the "land supply," or the places where growth may go, and then determining which types uses (residential, commercial, or industrial) will be attracted to available land based on the attributes of the parcels that make land more or less suitable for such uses.

Land Supply

The land within the city and its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) totals 9,630 acres. Over half of that land (60%) is already developed, within right-of-way (ROW), and not likely to redevelop. Less than 1% is protected through conservation easements and other land protection mechanisms. The remaining land is either undeveloped (vacant) or underdeveloped (and ripe for redevelopment). The "land supply" is comprised of these two areas, which

in combination encompass 3,832 acres, and it is the area of land to be considered for future development or conservation.

The Land Supply Map (Figure 4.4) depicts the distribution of the four categories of development status. The status of parcels in the city and the ETJ can be described as follows:

- **Developed** - The level of investment is high and such parcels are not likely to redevelop over the next 20 years.
- **Protected** - Parcels of land are protected as public parks, state-maintained parkland, or privately-owned conservation easements.
- **Underutilized / Underdeveloped** - The level of investment is low relative to the parcel value and the property is therefore ripe for redevelopment.
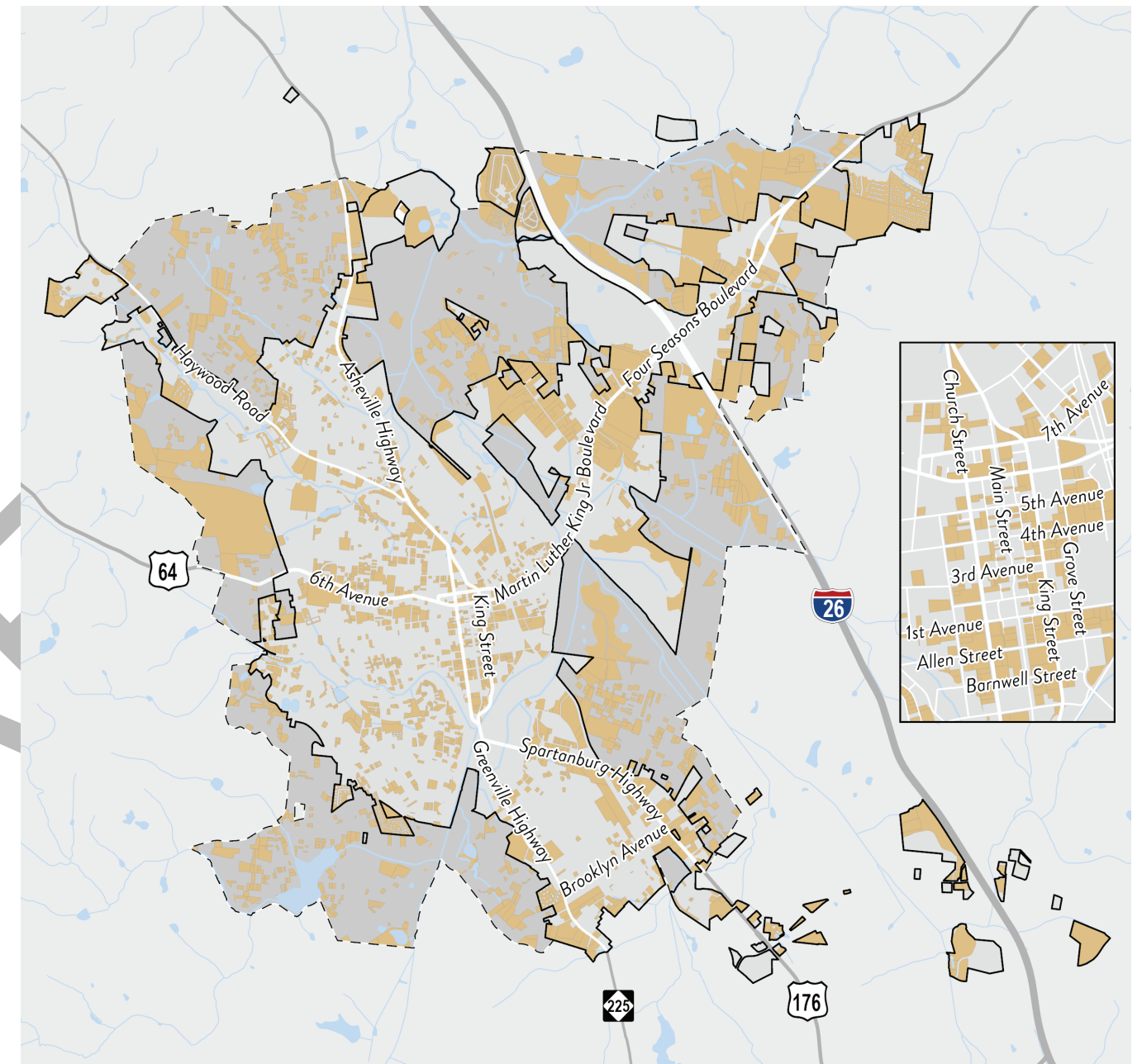- **Undeveloped** - With few or no structures, parcels of land remain vacant or relatively undeveloped.

Figure 4.4 Land Supply Map

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

LAND SUITABILITY

The suitability of land is the capacity of land to support a type of land use. This is based on various attributes that site selectors consider, such as availability of infrastructure, access, parcel size, etc. Through a suitability analysis, a realistic delineation of areas that can support future residential, commercial, and industrial development was determined. Interestingly, some of the land that is ideally suited for commercial and industrial development is also suitable for residential uses. So, the analysis helps identify areas where the competition for land may be stronger than in other areas of the city. Some areas include features that have a high conservation value. Floodplain, wetlands, and specific types of vegetation are important components of natural systems that support wildlife and protect water quality. The presence of these features result in a lower suitability score, and the three maps show such areas as less suitable for development.

Residential Suitability Factors

- A closer proximity to schools indicates a higher suitability.
- Roads with lower signed speeds and traffic volumes indicate a higher suitability.
- A closer proximity to water and sewer utilities indicates a higher suitability.
- Within city boundaries indicates a higher suitability.
- Less environmental constraints (includes floodplains, floodways, lakes, and slopes over 20%) indicate a higher suitability.
- Parcels already zoned for residential use and mixed use indicate a higher suitability.
- Parcels with the current land use of residential or mixed use indicate a higher suitability.
- A closer proximity to industrial land use indicates a lower suitability.
- A closer proximity to agricultural districts indicates a lower suitability.

Commercial Suitability Factors

- Proximity to minor arterial, principal arterial or major collector roads indicate the highest suitability.
- A closer proximity to water and sewer utilities indicates a higher suitability.
- Within city boundaries indicates a higher suitability.
- Less environmental constraints (includes floodplains, floodways, lakes, and slopes over 20%) indicate a higher suitability.
- Parcels already zoned for commercial uses indicate a higher suitability.
- Parcels with the current land use of commercial indicate a higher suitability.
- A closer proximity to agricultural districts indicates a lower suitability.
- Proximity to parcels zoned for residential use indicates a higher suitability.
- Proximity to major intersections indicates a higher suitability.

Industrial Suitability

- Parcels with 50 acres or more are indicate a higher suitability.
- Parcels within proximity to interstates, interchanges, and active freight rail lines indicate a higher suitability.
- Within city boundaries indicates a higher suitability.
- Less environmental constraints (includes floodplains, floodways, lakes, and slopes over 20%) indicate a higher suitability.
- Parcels already zoned for industrial uses indicate a higher suitability.
- Parcels with the current land use of industrial indicate a higher suitability.
- Proximity to parcels zoned for residential use indicates a lower suitability.
- A closer proximity to agricultural districts indicates a lower suitability.
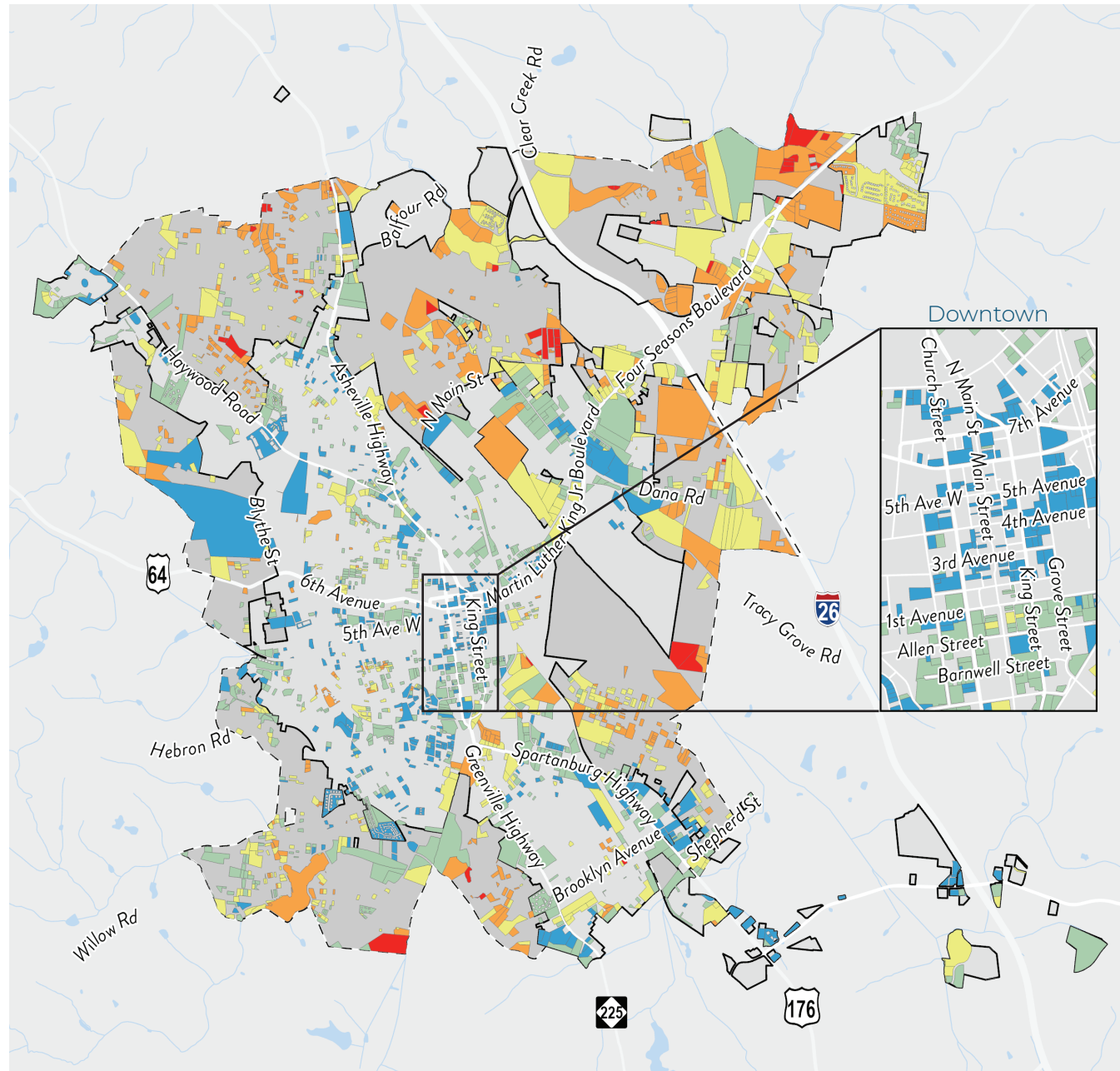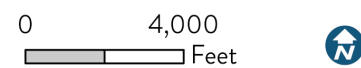- Parcels with flat terrain indicate a higher suitability.

Figure 4.5 Residential Suitability Map

0   4,000
         Feet

Residential Land Use Suitability

- Least Suitable (Red)
- (Orange)
- Moderately Suitable (Yellow)
- (Green)
- Most Suitable (Blue)

Hendersonville City Limits

Hendersonville ETJ

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

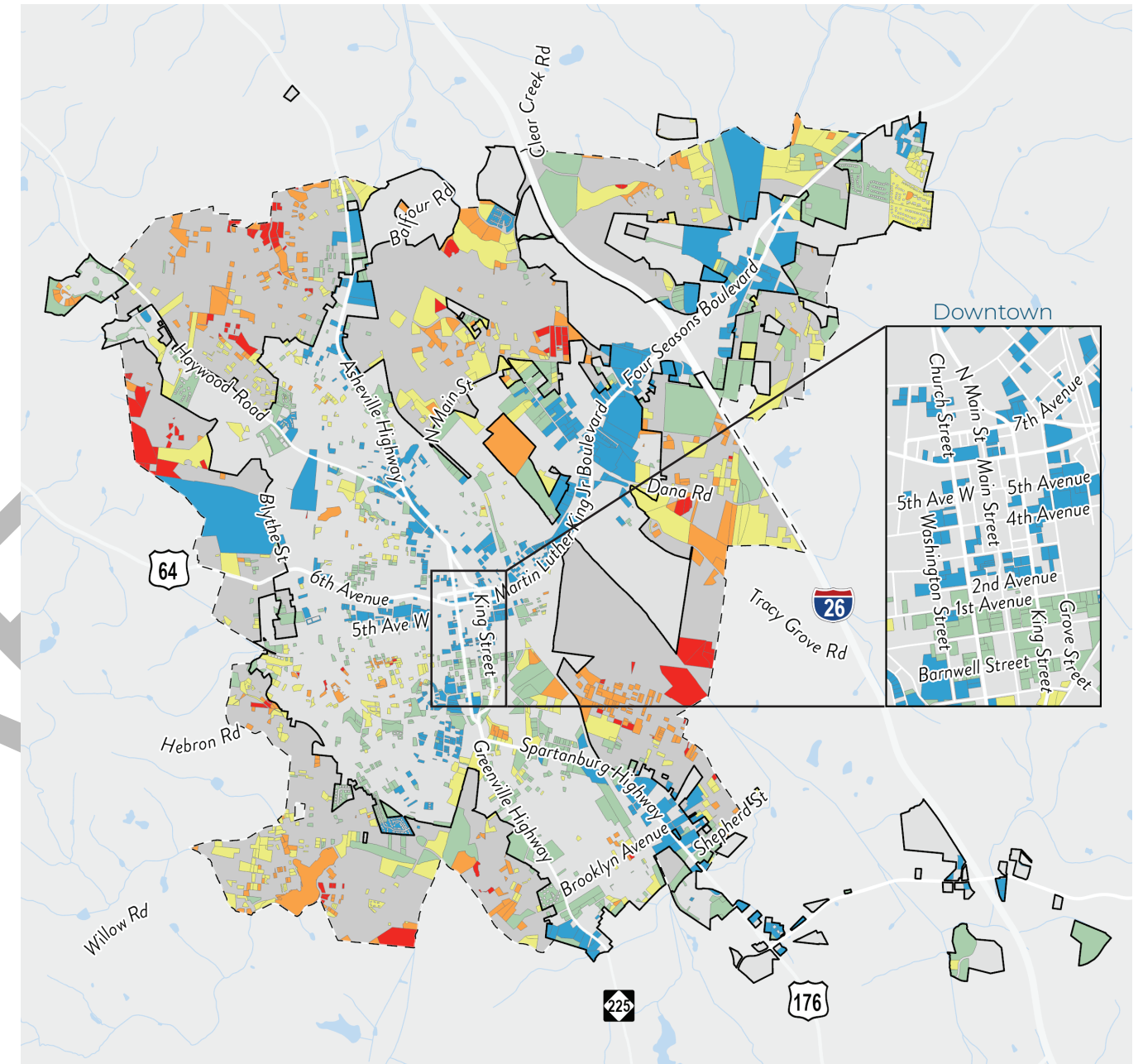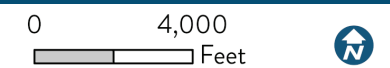Figure 4.6 Commercial Suitability Map

0   4,000
         Feet

Commercial Land Use Suitability

- Least Suitable (Red)
- (Orange)
- Moderately Suitable (Yellow)
- (Green)
- Most Suitable (Blue)

Hendersonville City Limits

Hendersonville ETJ

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

Figure 4.7 Industrial Suitability Map

0   4,000
Feet

Industrial Land Use Suitability

- Least Suitable
- [orange]
- Moderately Suitable
- [green]
- Most Suitable

Hendersonville City Limits
Hendersonville ETJ
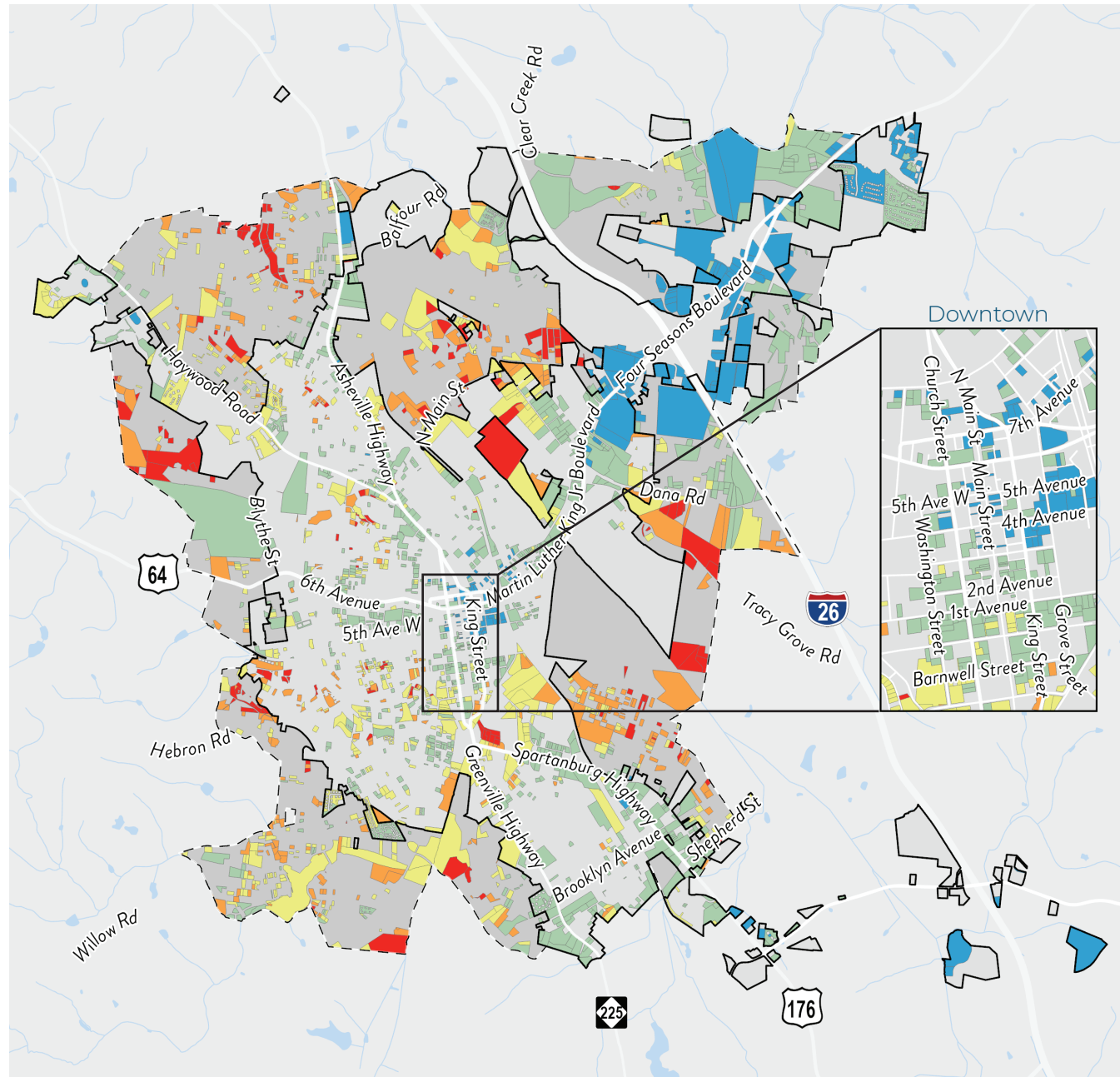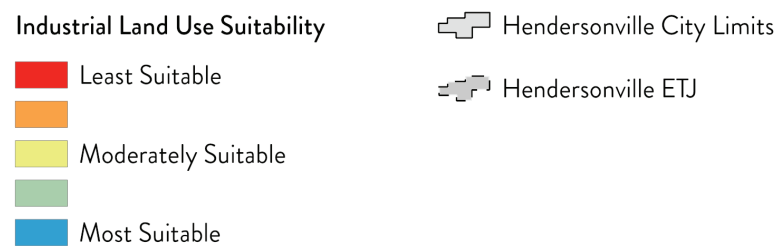
Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

WHAT KIND OF DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE SUPPORTED?

Like the current development pattern, the future pattern of the planning area will be comprised of residential and nonresidential uses. The mix of land uses, however, may evolve over time, particularly as growth continues, market conditions change, real estate values rise, and regulations imposed by State and Federal agencies further define development design. The planning process presents an opportunity for the community to articulate its expectations and aspirations regarding land use and help establish a local land development framework. So, asking the community about preferences pertaining to specific types of uses helps clarify the range of activities the community will support going forward. The diagram of inputs shows three key factors used to determine reasonable options for future land use and conservation, and preferences expressed by the community constitute one set of those inputs.

The following is a list of specific uses for which survey respondents expressed support:

- Housing (in various forms)
- Department Stores
- Restaurants (sit-down)
- Entertainment / Event Venues
- Performing Arts
- Community Spaces, Parks, Playgrounds, Coffee Shops
- Senior Center(s)

What the community's expectations and aspirations are

What the market will support

What the data is telling us about existing conditions

In determining what kind of development is appropriate in the future, three factors are taken into consideration: the data about available land, the market conditions, and the community's expectations and aspirations

WHAT LEVEL OF INTENSITY IS APPROPRIATE FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT?

As noted earlier, the available land to accommodate future development (or "land supply") includes both vacant parcels and parcels that could be redeveloped for a broader range of uses at higher intensities. The lower the intensity of development, the more land will be required to accommodate growth. With this in mind, the community has a couple of choices:

1. **Trend** - Continue to grow organically at the same level of intensity and expand the development footprint (Figure 4.8), or

2. **Alternative** - Be intentional about the reuse of developed parcels thereby minimizing the expansion of the existing development footprint (Figure 4.9).

Option 2 would likely reduce pressure to develop areas on the periphery of Hendersonville that are currently in agricultural use or have the potential to become protected open space in the future. It would also utilize existing infrastructure capacity, reducing capital costs required to extend services to new development.

As shown in Figure 4.9, Option 2 is accomplished through deliberate efforts to direct growth inward and support higher intensity development in nodes. The "Guiding Principles" section that follows describes additional benefits of higher intensity development in a few key locations, such as achieving a compact form that makes walking and biking between destinations more feasible.
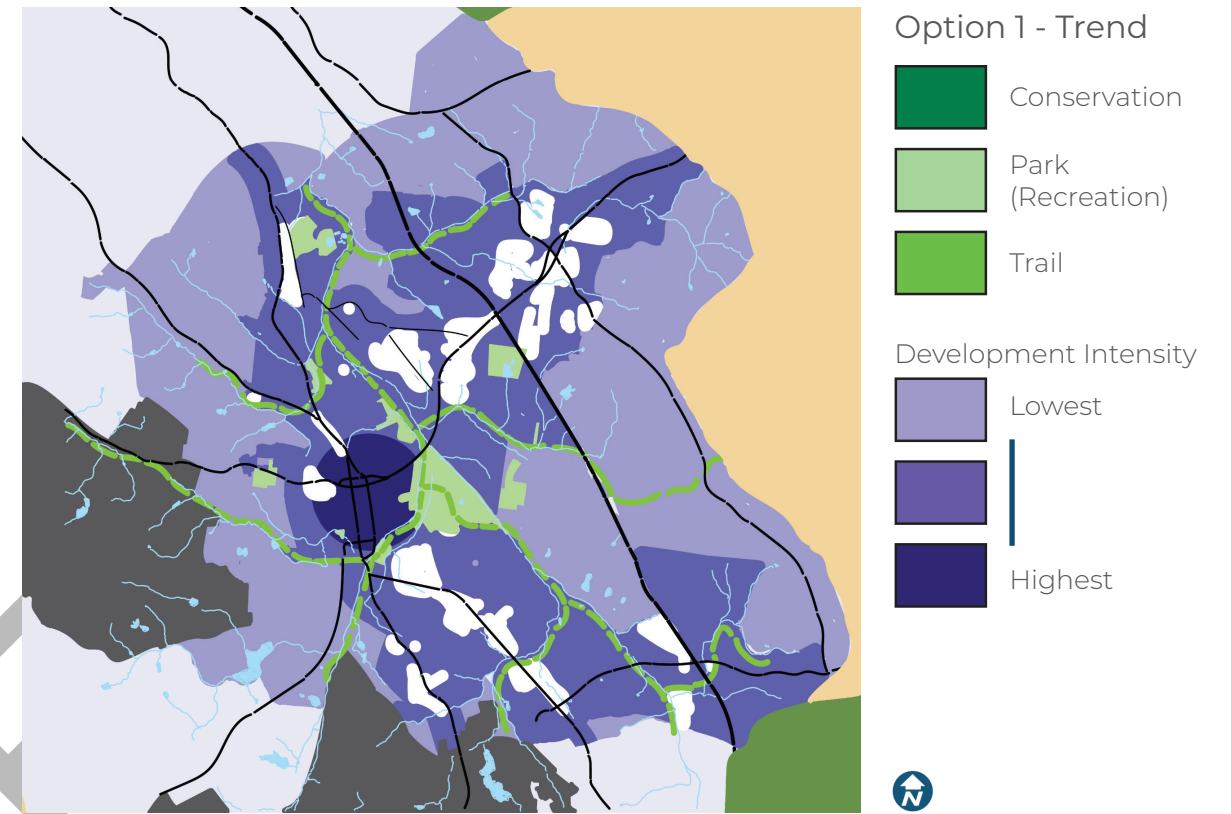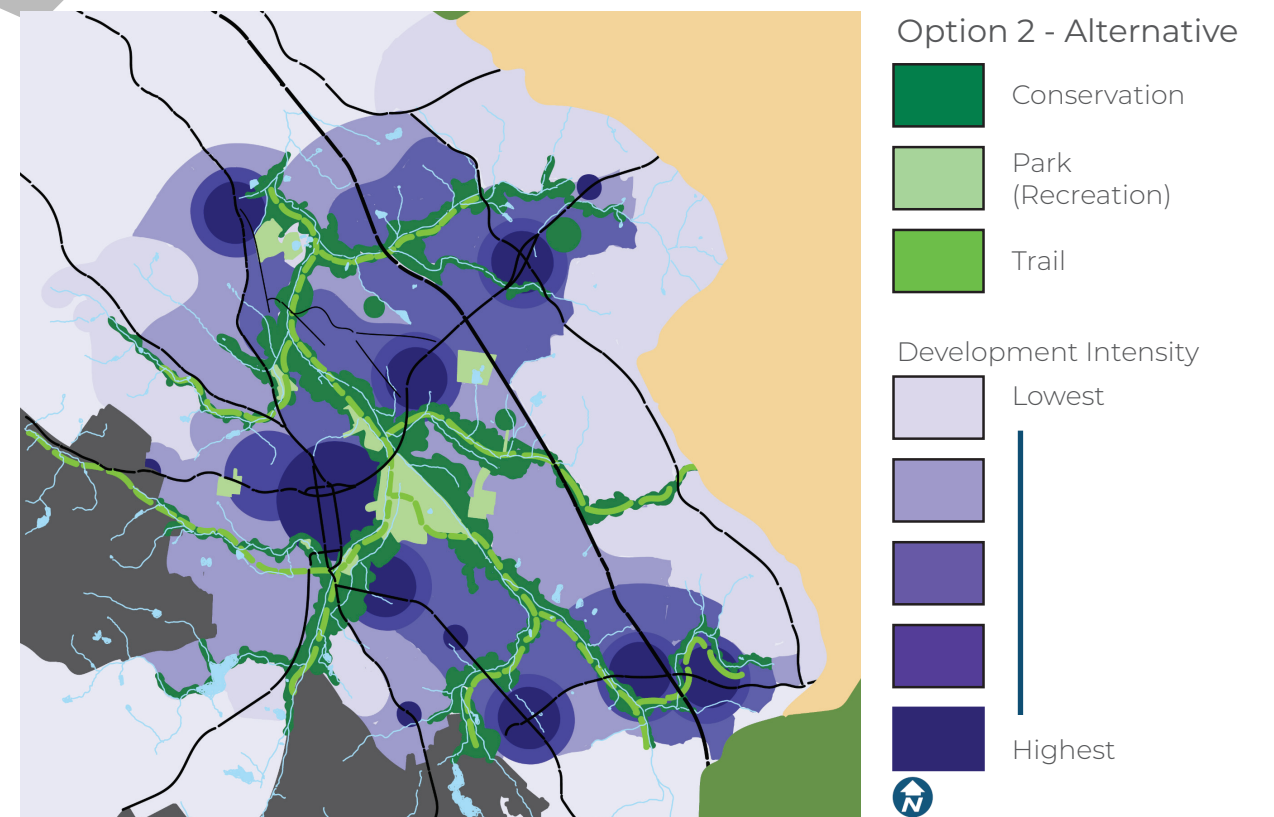

Figure 4.8 - Trend Growth Map

Option 1 - Trend

- Conservation
- Park (Recreation)
- Trail

Development Intensity
- Lowest
- Highest

Figure 4.9 - Alternative Growth Map

Option 2 - Alternative

- Conservation
- Park (Recreation)
- Trail

Development Intensity
- Lowest
- Highest

Trend - Old Field Succession

The current trend is expansive urban development across all areas of the Urban Service Area. Like old field succession in a former apple orchard, this approach is often characterized by uncontrolled growth, declining vigor, lower productivity, diminished value, and eventual decline. The result could produce outcomes that do not align with the community's vision and values for Hendersonville.

Alternative - Selective Pruning

An alternative approach involves focusing growth and development within the existing development footprint, with an emphasis on redevelopment, infill, and adaptive reuse of structures. This proactive strategy, akin to selective pruning in an orchard, involves the removal of blight and the reduction of competition, particularly in greenfield areas, fostering a healthier and more sustainable urban environment.

Taking into account the projected housing growth, it is possible that new housing development will be created through the conversion of agricultural lands and open space if new housing is developed at the same or lower densities than previous decades. Today, the average density of residential development is 3.5 dwelling units per acre (DUA). Support for a higher average density will bolster revitalization efforts, minimize expansions of the

development footprint, and reduce pressure to develop open space and agricultural land.

Figure 4.10 shows conceptually how much housing might be accommodated within the "land supply" in the city or its ETJ before land outside of that area (the expanded planning area) would be targeted.
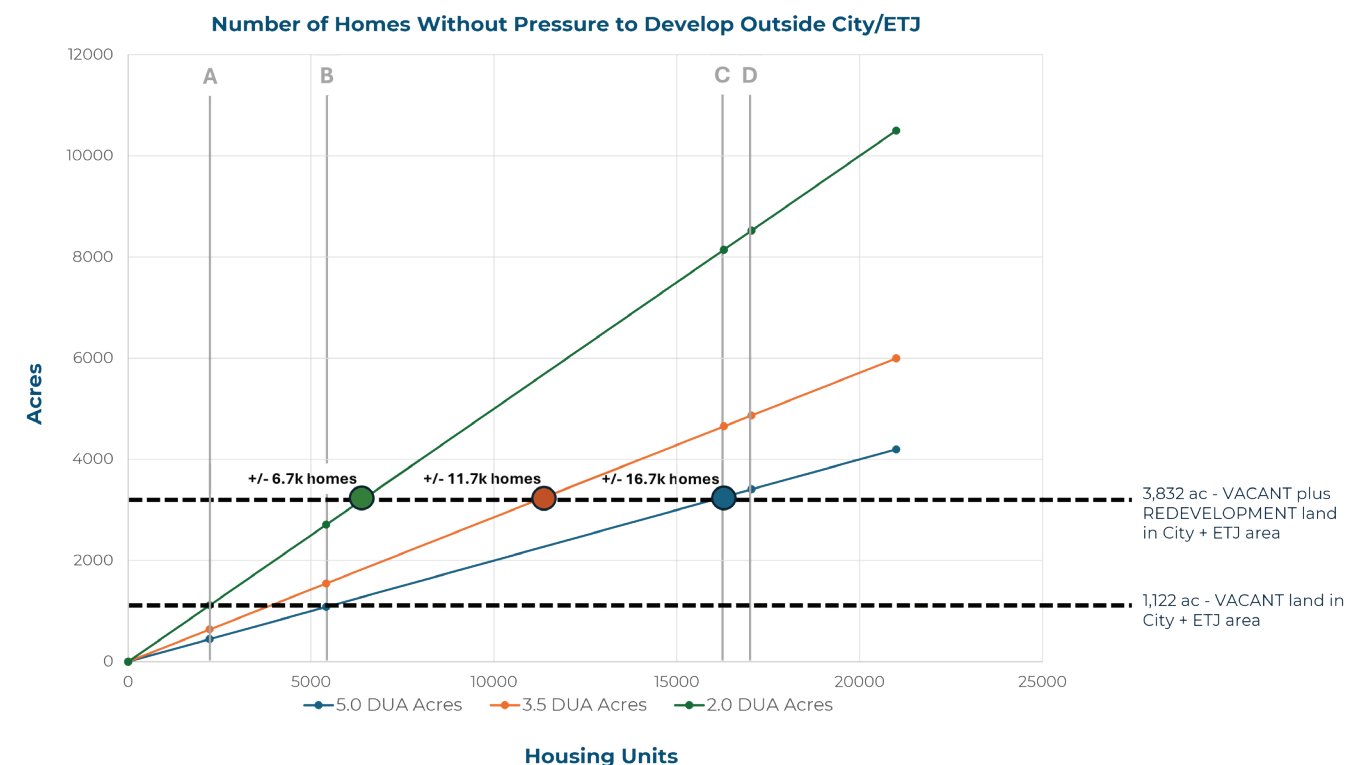

Old growth field (top left), aging retail (bottom left), actively maintained orchard (top right), Shopping center with reinvestment (bottom right) | Green Heron Planning

Figure 4.10 - Number of homes without pressure to develop outside of city/ETJ

The Vision

The "Vision" for the future of Hendersonville is expressed in terms of an aspirational statement about the future ("Vision Statement"), Goals, Objectives, and Guiding Principles, all of which are reflected in the Future Land Use and Conservation Plan (or Vision Map). The map is described through definitions of the Characters Areas depicted on the map.

Vision Statement

"Hendersonville is known as a livable city with a strong sense of community created through commitments to— and investments in—quality neighborhoods, a strong local economy, sustainable infrastructure, accessible public facilities, context-appropriate amenities, and the conservation of historic, cultural, and environmental assets that define its character and identity."

2023 Drone Aerial of Main Street | City of Hendersonville

Goals & Objectives

Developed from the guidance of community stakeholders, City leadership, and staff, the Goals and Objectives are to be used as guideposts for the plan, to provide direction for future planning, and to inform decisions of the City and its partners as changes are managed over the next two decades.

VIBRANT NEIGHBORHOODS

- Lively neighborhoods increase local safety.
- Homes, streets, and public spaces are well-maintained.
- The diversity of ages (stage of life), income levels, and range of interests builds the long-term vitality of the community.
- Through design, the places where people live are connected to nearby destinations, amenities, and services.

ABUNDANT HOUSING CHOICES

- The availability of housing types (options) meets the needs of current and future residents.
- The range of housing types helps maintain the affordability of Hendersonville.
- Housing condition/quality exceeds minimum standards citywide.

HEALTHY & ACCESSIBLE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Recreational (active and passive) open spaces are common elements in all forms of development.
- Water quality is improved with the conservation of natural areas that serve as filters and soil stabilizers.
- Natural system capacity (floodplains for stormwater; habitats to support flora/fauna; tree canopy for air quality, stormwater management, and microclimate) is maintained.
- Compact development form (infill/redevelopment) minimizes the ecological footprint.
- New development respects working landscapes (e.g., orchards, managed forests), minimizing encroachment.

AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY CHARACTER

- Downtown remains the heart of the community and the focal point of civic activity.
- Gateways set the tone, presenting the image/brand of the community to all who enter.
- Historic preservation is key to maintaining the city's identity.
- Arts and cultural activities enhance the community while conveying its history and heritage.
- City Centers and neighborhoods are preserved through quality development.
- Local businesses and entrepreneurs are supported by the community.

SAFE STREETS & TRAILS

- Increased interconnectivity between existing neighborhoods by building out the street network, including retrofits and interconnectivity of new developments.. Promotion of this connectivity, even in retrofit cases.
- Access is increased for all residents through the provision of facilities that promote safe walking, biking, transit, automobile, ride share, and bike/ scooter share.
- Design embraces the principles of walkable development.
- An extensive network of pedestrian facilities connects places where people live, work, learn, shop, play, and worship, making active living possible.

RELIABLE & ACCESSIBLE UTILITY SERVICES

- Safe drinking water is a priority of the City.
- Wastewater treatment (service and capacity) adequately serves existing and future development.
- Broadband is expanded to all parts of the city, helping residents and business owners keep pace with an ever-changing world.
- Renewable energy is made possible through public and private investments that work in concert with new development opportunities.
- A compact service area (infill, redevelopment) maximizes the utilization of existing infrastructure and feasible service delivery.

SATISFYING WORK OPPORTUNITIES

- Quality job options increase with the attraction and retention of employers.
- Vocation-/career-building activities serve to educate/train the workforce while bolstering business recruitment efforts.
- The lives of residents are enriched with opportunities to learn, build skills, and grow professionally.
- Community volunteer opportunities help residents to engage, learn, and contribute in a meaningful way to the quality of life in the city.

WELCOMING & INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

- Respectful community dialogue is encouraged and modeled through leaders' behaviors.
- An inviting public realm (i.e., parks, public buildings) reflects the attitudes of city residents and leaders, and helps residents develop a sense of place and attachment to Hendersonville.
- Accessibility exceeds minimum standards of ADA, fostering residents' and visitors' sense of belonging.

ACCESSIBLE & AVAILABLE COMMUNITY USES AND SERVICES

- Private development is plentiful, meeting the demands of current and future populations.
- Hendersonville ranks highly among peer communities by exceeding community expectations for public facilities and services pertaining to sound/efficient government and civic engagement; education; active recreation; health and well-being; and public safety.

RESILIENT COMMUNITY

- Adaptation to a changing world (e.g., economic, technological, social, environmental, etc.) is a priority of City leaders.
- Readiness through adequate preparation to manage external impacts is routinely integrated into City initiatives.
- Recovery from adverse events (e.g., extreme weather event, natural hazards, etc.) form the City's commitment to providing sufficient resources.
- A fiscally sound government ensures the City's ability to function efficiently and remain competitive, particularly in the face of unexpected challenges.

Guiding Principles

The Gen H Plan recognizes the importance of Guiding Principles, or concepts for future development that support the Goals & Objectives, that bring tie best practices to opportunities that should be considered in key location or throughout the city. These concepts aim to safeguard the natural and cultural features that define the community character, promote high-quality design, deliver unique experiences, and create special, memorable places. The Vision Map presented in this section reflects a development and conservation pattern that adheres to these principles. The chapters that follow include specific policies, recommendations, and design considerations that implement these concepts.

MIX OF USES

Mixed-use development creates places where people can live, work, shop, and play within a centralized location. Successful mixed-use developments around the country generally include residential uses and one or more of the following: commercial, office, light industrial, service, civic, and lodging uses as well as public parks or plazas. The range of offerings helps create a "complete community" in which the residents' needs are met; jobs are within the community so work commutes are shorter reducing congestion; and consumer spending is local so retail leakage into—and benefiting— adjacent jurisdictions is minimized. As vibrant centers of activity, mixed-use development can successfully attract businesses seeking viable locations and employers in search of competitive work environments to lure talent more easily.

Mixed-use developments can be either vertical mixed-use buildings or horizontal mixed-use sites (or blocks). Vertical mixed-use buildings combine different uses in the same building, with the lower floors generally having more public uses and private uses on the upper levels. Horizontal mixed-use development combines single-use buildings on distinct parcels or blocks in one planned development project with a range of uses. Both vertical and horizontal mixed-use developments contribute positively to the creation of vibrant centers.

OPPORTUNITY: Revitalization of Outdated, Deteriorating Commercial Areas

Several of the commercial centers along Four Seasons Boulevard and Spartanburg Highway are ideally suited for redevelopment with mixed-use activity centers at key nodes. Reinvestment in these areas can promote higher quality and more walkable compact environments with a mix of uses that support successful retail such as residential, office, and open space.

OPPORTUNITY: Creative Hubs

A "creative hub" is defined as a workplace that is a center of collaboration, inspiration, and innovation. Physical places designed to be creative hubs are typically occupied by people working in the creative and technology sectors. Many of the older industrial and highway business locations lend themselves to a reinvention into such hubs where existing space is adapted and new buildings are constructed to house new tenants and activities, including small-scale manufacturing, makerspaces, and related offices. Complementary retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses can be part of the mix, invigorated by a residential component that ensures each hub remains vibrant in evenings and on weekends. Publicly accessible amenities complete these creative environments where the line between work and play is blurred.

COMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Along with the mix of land uses, the intensity of development in a community can have a significant impact on its ability to provide affordable housing options, reduce traffic congestion, make efficient use of infrastructure, deliver services, and generally create livable communities. Building up with taller buildings in the appropriate places is one way to accommodate more uses in fewer locations. In doing so, developers can maximize the use of the available land, particularly where infrastructure capacity already exists and rising real estate values warrant higher levels of investment for reasonable returns. By locating a mix of uses in close proximity, walking and biking are more feasible means of travel between destinations, and reliance on the automobile is reduced. Services become more accessible as centralized points of delivery are physically close to population concentrations.
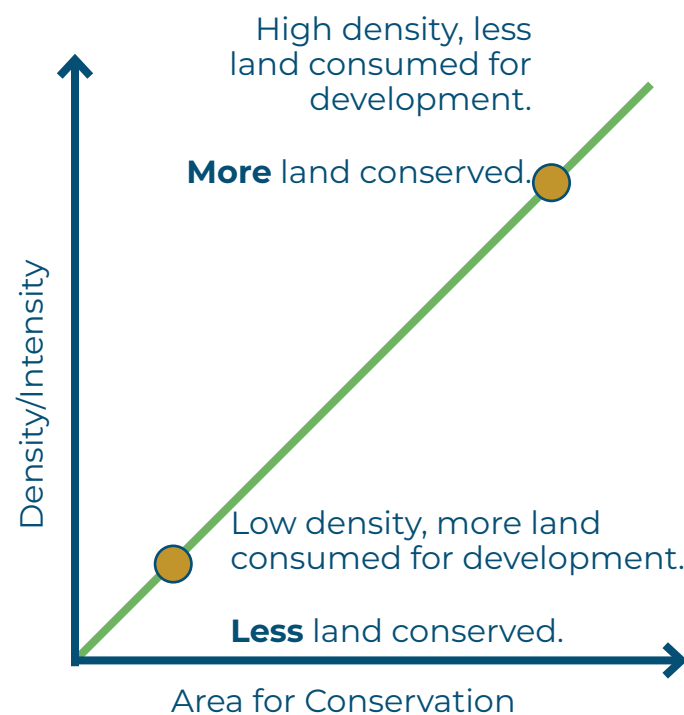

Figure 4.11 Density Intensity vs. Conservation Diagram

DID YOU KNOW?

A more compact form of development concentrates uses in a smaller geography. The result is less pressure to convert farmland and open space into new development. Allowing more density in key locations within the community can delay the expansion of the development footprint and allow time for open space conservation initiatives to effectively establish protections.

Based on the Community Survey, 65% of respondents prioritize preservation of agricultural land and open space.

OPPORTUNITY: The 15-minute Neighborhood

A "15-minute neighborhood" has many uses within a 15-minute walk or 15-minute bike ride from homes. Activity centers designed to accommodate a range of compatible uses, including residential, can offer the option to live within a short walk or bike ride to shopping, dining, entertainment, services, and work. In Hendersonville, several existing and future neighborhood centers with local-serving retail, restaurant, civic, or service uses can form the core of a 15-minute neighborhood that also features schools, parks, a range of housing in flanking neighborhoods, and other compatible uses.

OPPORTUNITY: Context-Sensitive Infill Development

Future infill development and redevelopment can accommodate future growth while respecting the character of both the built and natural environments in existing communities. New development should consider existing development adjacent to the site. Context-sensitive design incorporates:

- **Transitions in a scale** (building height and mass and/or lot size), from smaller structures that are compatible with the surrounding context (e.g., the edges of a neighborhood) to taller buildings.
- **Architectural features** that help new development blend in with nearby buildings through similarly sized and patterned elements, such as windows, doors, awnings, arcades, cornices, facade materials, roof types, and other details.

Design guidelines and updates to the City's zoning ordinance should ensure that new development constructed with higher intensity reflects the unique character of the surrounding areas.

Small Infill Sites

Where existing development patterns are established, building form and placement should be consistent to avoid incompatible adjacencies. New buildings should respect the established structure setback. Locating parking to the rear of the lot, accessed from an alley or driveway, may be necessary to ensure site features appear comparable to adjacent properties.

New development in Raleigh steps down to transition to mid-century office building | Google Streetview

Architectural details can be employed to maintain character and, in neighborhoods, give the appearance of a single-family dwelling while incorporating two or more housing units in a single structure. This approach provides an opportunity to include a variety of housing types and price points to address housing needs in existing neighborhoods.

Large Infill and Redevelopment Sites

New developments on larger infill sites should complement existing surroundings by gradually transitioning in terms of lot size and building mass. For compatibility with adjacent development, the design of new buildings can be informed by the design of existing structures where the transitions occur.

SENSE OF PLACE

One of the most important factors that affects a resident's sense of pride in—or sense of belonging to—the community is the quality of the public realm. It also shapes a visitor's impression of the place.

Based on the Community Survey, 60% of respondents prioritize maintaining Hendersonville's character and sense of place.

The combination of the architecture and the landscape that is visually and physically accessible to the public can contribute to the creation of a "sense of place." Through the details, which may include building scale, materials, streetscape elements, and art, a community can distinguish itself from other communities, reinforce its identity, share stories about the history and heritage of the place, and convey a bit about the values it holds dear. It is these details that resonate, helping people connect with the place and each other. Investments in the public realm, which includes the spaces surrounding, between, and within buildings that are accessible to the public, should take into consideration opportunities for "placekeeping" and "placemaking."

"Placekeeping" refers to maintaining the features, especially those that are unique to the city, that play a crucial role in defining the character and, in some ways, offer memorable, authentic experiences. Conservation of natural, cultural, and historic features preserves the history and celebrates the heritage, allowing the stories of the city's evolution to be shared with future generations.

- Natural resources, including creeks, floodplains, and forested areas, are part of a connected green infrastructure network, mitigate the impacts of the built environment while supporting water quality, air quality, recreation, important ecological systems, such as wildlife habitats.

- Cultural and historic resources, such as important buildings and sites, significant events and people that have influenced the city's history, and related events, bring residents together and bolster economic development through tourism.

"**Placemaking**" involves the investment in enhancements to the public realm to create a vibrant community. It requires intentionality. Attention to high-quality design results in visual interest that invites people in, features that encourage exploration and promote education, space allocation that supports intended uses and programming (e.g., formal and informal gatherings or events), and elements that add to the comfort and safety of the space, such as seating, lighting, and landscaping. As desirable destinations for visitors, improved public realm spaces attract people to the area, supporting a sustainable local economy.

Examples from various places in the United States demonstrate the benefits of creating "great places." These examples include places where higher development intensity is accomplished with a focus on high-quality design and place-making strategies.

Recommendations for these topics can improve a community's economic vitality, perceived security, and character. Additional standards enacted by a community for land use mix and development intensity can ensure that places are compatible with adjacent properties and contribute positively to the character of surrounding streets and neighborhoods.

The Gen H Plan focuses on general recommendations for land use mix and development intensity, including a preferred proportion of land uses, the physical relationship between uses, and the compatibility of land uses with each other. The plan includes stated preferences for maximizing opportunities in Hendersonville. Additional considerations to influence preferred land use mix and development intensity topics are largely addressed in the City's zoning ordinance including setbacks, parking standards, open space requirements, privacy, compatibility between land uses, and buffers.

OPPORTUNITY: Third Places

The City can participate in expanding the range of places in the community that are highly conducive to social gatherings. Referred to as "third places," a term used in sociology to refer to social environments that are distinct from the two typical social settings of home (first place) and the workplace or school (second place), they provide opportunities for people to come together, socialize with their friends, meet their neighbors, and comfortably interact with strangers. These places promote a sense of belonging and attachment to the community. Examples of third places include cafes, bars, churches, community centers, public libraries, gyms, parks, and entertainment venues, among others. These areas should be safe, clean, vibrant, accessible, and spacious enough to accommodate intended formal or informal gatherings.

Third places are important to the success of vibrant cities.
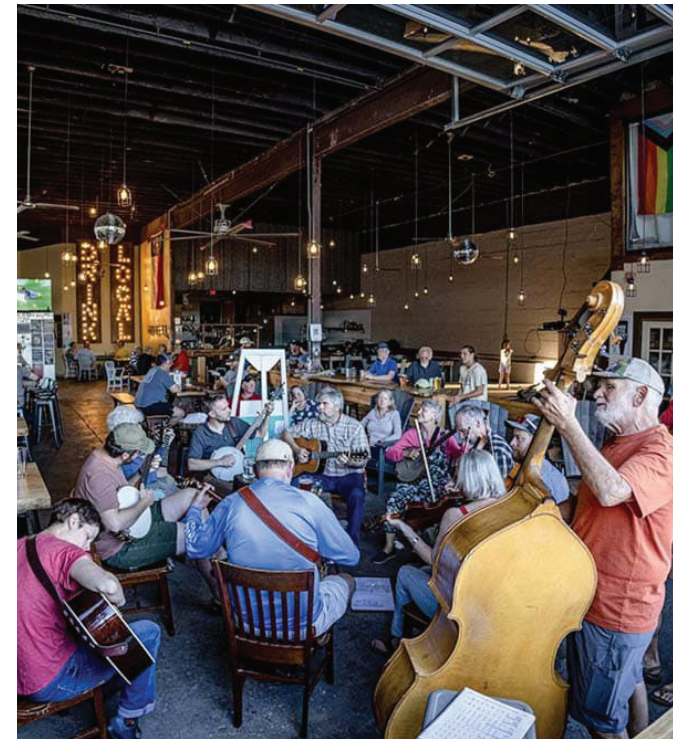
Breweries such as Oklawaha Brewery foster inviting environments for community to come together | About Asheville

Live Under the Oaks programing on the Green at Birkdale Village in Huntersville, NC | Birkdale Village

CONSERVED AND INTEGRATED OPEN SPACE

Open space is a term used to describe undeveloped land as well as various public areas maintained or improved as community amenities, including parks, plazas, squares, greenways, and nature preserves. Open space in its many forms should be thoughtfully integrated into the development pattern. This network can offer a range of benefits, including managing stormwater runoff, limiting property damage resulting from challenging natural events (flooding), facilitating the creation of new places for outdoor recreation, and creating attractive gathering places for residents, employees, and visitors in different parts of the community.

Concerned with both quantity and quality of open space, the City's goal for improved open space is to create an equitable comprehensive, connected, and continuous network that is easily accessible to all city residents.

While suburban areas may prioritize parks, greenways, sports fields, or natural open space, urban areas may emphasize plazas, squares, pocket parks, greenways, playgrounds, and active sidewalks that extend retail and restaurant space outdoors and merge with pedestrian amenities.

Together, existing and planned open space areas form a general framework that can inform City officials' decisions about environmental initiatives, open space requirements in new development and redevelopment, land acquisitions, and acceptance of land or facility dedications made through the private development process.

Based on the Community Survey, 65% of respondents prioritize Hendersonville's open space.

OPPORTUNITY: Higher Open Space Standards

In suburban and urban areas, development and redevelopment should incorporate a diverse range of open space elements (refer to the types recommended for the different Character Areas). City officials should consider new rules, standards, and definitions in a new UDO that integrates open space as a meaningful component of new development. New definitions for qualifying certain amenities as open space in more urban settings may be needed to support important (re)development efforts. In limited cases, City officials may also want to consider open space elements above ground level (i.e., rooftop parks, gardens, or community gathering spaces) to meet the needs of residents living in more urban areas of the community.

Rooftop garden | Adobe
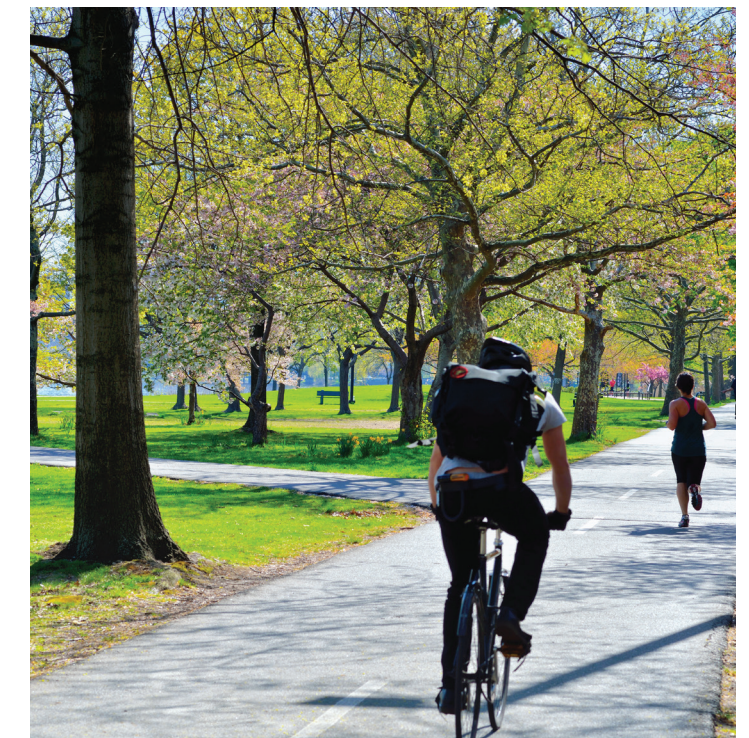
Urban multimodal trail | Adobe

DESIRABLE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The preferences for different types of housing vary depending on the locality within the community, and are influenced by factors such as income, age, household size, and available financing. Single-family homes on large lots are simply one of many products demanded in today's market. Housing diversity can address housing prices and differences in lifestyles. It is accomplished first by recognizing the varying needs and preferences of the existing and future population, and finding ways to facilitate the expansion of the housing supply (types and quantity) to satisfy current and anticipated demand.

- Many young adults are drawn to smaller, higher density housing products in more urban, walkable areas (downtowns and new mixed-uses centers). They seek neighborhoods that prioritize safety, convenience, amenities, and walkability.

- Some older members of the population seek housing options that help them age in community, including types that require less maintenance than conventional single-family dwellings. Many may opt for multifamily housing, such as condominiums or apartments, located in walkable areas that offer greater independence in their later years. Others may downsize to patio homes or townhouses, particularly as they acquire second homes in other locations.

- Healthcare providers, service industry professionals, and government employees are among the residents that are seeking affordable housing close to work, allowing them to live in the communities they serve and reduce the costs of commuting (time and money).

Hendersonville has attracted new residents of all age groups throughout the decades, and more recently has become a destination for retirees and the aging "Boomer" population. As the city continues to expand, there is a growing need for a variety of housing types and price points to meet the demand of its residents.

Over the last decade, the city has witnessed a significant amount of infill development, with residential growth following national trends towards higher-density housing. This trend is emerging as a mix of for-sale and for-rent products integrated within mixed-use, walkable environments.

It is important to ensure complementary relationships between different housing types in a single neighborhood to lead to multi-generational and age-in-place living. In an effort allow neighbors to stay in their neighborhood as they age, it is important to respect adjacent development patterns with comparable lot sizes and building scales at the edges to ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods.

DID YOU KNOW?

Housing quality and diversity is an important economic development tool. Employers find that diverse housing options (types and price points) help define the community's quality of life they are "selling" to prospective employees and therefore ease their efforts to recruit talent. So, housing plays a crucial role in attracting and retaining employers as they evaluate the many options available in competing communities.

Based on the Community Survey, 37% of respondents identify housing (affordability, availability, variety, etc.) as a top priority of the Gen H Plan.

OPPORTUNITY: Missing Middle Housing

Dynamic neighborhoods are those that offer a high quality of life, diverse and affordable housing options, and easy access to amenities such as parks, schools, shopping, entertainment, and employment opportunities. In many communities throughout the country, local initiatives are focused on creating or supporting "missing middle" housing options for residents.

"Missing middle" housing refers to small- to medium-sized homes that are available at various price points and are compatible in scale and character with the surrounding neighborhood. These homes can be built as part of infill development projects or used to transition between land uses and densities in a new activity center. Examples of missing middle housing include duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, courtyard apartments, live-work units, cottage courtyards, townhomes, and small-scale apartments.

Having more missing middle housing in Hendersonville would provide more diverse housing options for both renters and owners and help to foster socioeconomic diversity in the community. It would be a welcome change compared to the large-scale, standalone garden apartment complexes that have been built in Hendersonville over the last decade.

In order to accommodate unique conditions or circumstances in different neighborhoods, exceptions or alternative design treatments and standards for infill development opportunities in existing neighborhoods may be necessary in the future.

To promote missing middle housing in existing neighborhoods, some general considerations include ensuring that new home building architecture is compatible with existing adjacent homes, addressing potential flooding issues, and providing adequate parking provisions.

Townhomes examples with varying architecture styles | AARP

Kirkland Danielson Grove cottage court in Kirkland, WA | Cottage Company and Missing Middle Housing

Live/work units in South Carolina | Missing Middle Housing

CONNECTIVITY

The Gen H Plan is focused on creating a safe, equitable, and efficient transportation system that can move people and goods using various modes of transportation such as vehicles, buses, bicycles, and walking. It emphasizes the need for prioritizing land use, transportation, and urban design to improve the overall efficiency of the transportation system while also promoting livability principles for new and existing neighborhoods and activity centers.

Prioritizing connectivity as a means to create redundancy within the street network improves efficiency, providing more route options, and in turn lowering congestion. Connectivity is equally important in providing multimodal options through investments in sidewalks, bike facilities, trails, and greenways. Ensuring equitable access from neighborhoods to places of employment, schools, and activity centers will make the option to walk or bike more feasible.

Similarly, investments in transportation safety will ensure that Hendersonville is on track to be a city where all ages and abilities can utilize a connected multimodal transportation network seamlessly.

DID YOU KNOW?

"A network of small interconnected streets has more traffic capacity than the same street area arranged in a sparse hierarchy of large streets."

"The radical difference between the two plans is in the number of intersections in each system — the [grid] has six times as many as the [thoroughfare]. This large number of intersections reduces the turning movement load at any given intersection to a fraction (one-sixth in this example) of the turning movement load that exists in the [thoroughfare] pattern. Consequently, the entire system can carry greater traffic volumes at the same level of traffic service."

Source: Congress for New Urbanism (CNU)

Based on the Community Survey, 51% of respondents identify housing say walking would be their ideal mode of traveling.
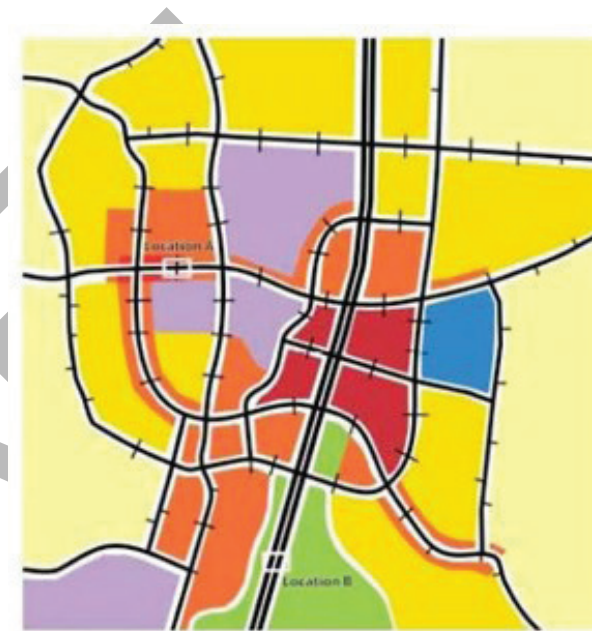
Building redundancy into the street network provides more routes and reduces congestion | CNU

OPPORTUNITY: Integration of Land Use and Transportation

Improving the transportation system requires both supply-side and demand-side solutions. The supply-side solutions should be designed to be context-sensitive, leveraging the development pattern to introduce feasible alternatives to automobile travel. The type, pattern, and intensity of development coupled with a multimodal design solutions can enhance mobility. As demonstrated in many urbanized areas around the world, compact, mixed-use development can effectively lower vehicle trip generation by internal capture, shorten travel distances between origin and destination in mixed-use activity areas, and promote non-vehicular travel modes through the provision of a comprehensive and complete sidewalk, greenway, and trail network. Employing a complete streets initiative, complete and integrated grid network of major and minor streets can allow space for pedestrian, bike, and transit facilities.

EFFICIENT, ACCESSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is essential for the development of a city. It includes the development and management of resources, facilities, and services that are planned and financed by different entities. The infrastructure's type, location, and capacity play a crucial role in the city's growth and development. Effective service delivery is also essential to manage the cost and timing of necessary improvements. Unplanned expenditures could lead to increased taxes for property owners. Fiscally responsible expansion of services is done in anticipation of the changing needs of the community, economic development opportunities, advances in technology, and awareness of existing, underutilized capacity.

DID YOU KNOW?

The City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, Henderson County Public Schools, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation are primarily responsible for providing community infrastructure in Hendersonville. However, it is important to note that residents, business owners, and visitors may not fully understand who is responsible for which services or facilities. Therefore, there is a need for a well-coordinated and streamlined system to manage future growth and development in the community.

OPPORTUNITY: Utilization of Existing Infrastructure Capacity through Policy

As the city grows, certain areas identified in the Future Land Use and Conservation Map may become more densely populated and acquire distinct urban characteristics.

This could include mixed-use development, taller buildings, diverse living options, alternative mobility solutions, and formal public spaces. This transition from a suburban context to a more urban one can affect the existing infrastructure.

Coordinated plans for the expansion of water and sewer service will ensure that there is capacity for areas poised to receive future growth versus areas that are intended to be conserved. A phased approach that aligns system expansion and retrofits with land use policies will ensure built in capacity in areas positioned for change. A tiered rate structure Implementing a tiered rate structure that ties reimbursement to location will encourage and reward development in desired locations. Budgeting for capital investments prioritizes areas and projects where growth is being directed. Costs for expansion outside of priority areas are borne primarily by private investors.

Hendersonville firefighters sign the final structural beam during a ceremony for the Hendersonville Fire Station 1 | Blue Ridge Now, Dean Hensley/Times-News

The Vision Map

Arriving at a shared "Vision" for the future requires an examination of options so the community can evaluate trade-offs and determine the best path forward. The Future Land Use and Conservation Map (Figure 4.10) was derived from an evaluation of three scenarios (Appendix C. Scenario Planning). The resulting "Vision," developed with input received from the community, combines aspects of all three. It represents the culmination of ideas and input received throughout the planning process tempered with market realities, the constraints of the environmental conditions and infrastructure availability, and other factors affecting the suitability of land for various uses. It is aspirational. It suggests an arrangement of development types that align with the stated Goals and Objectives.

Displaying "Character Areas," which are the land use classifications described in the subsection that follows, the Vision Map indicates the preferred locations for future development as well as the type and intensity of such development.

USING THE VISION MAP

The Vision Map is meant to provide a framework for future land use decisions and, as such, supports written policies and offers additional guidance with respect to the application of land development regulations (e.g., zoning and subdivision), the provision of services, and the prioritization of capital investments in support of the future development pattern.
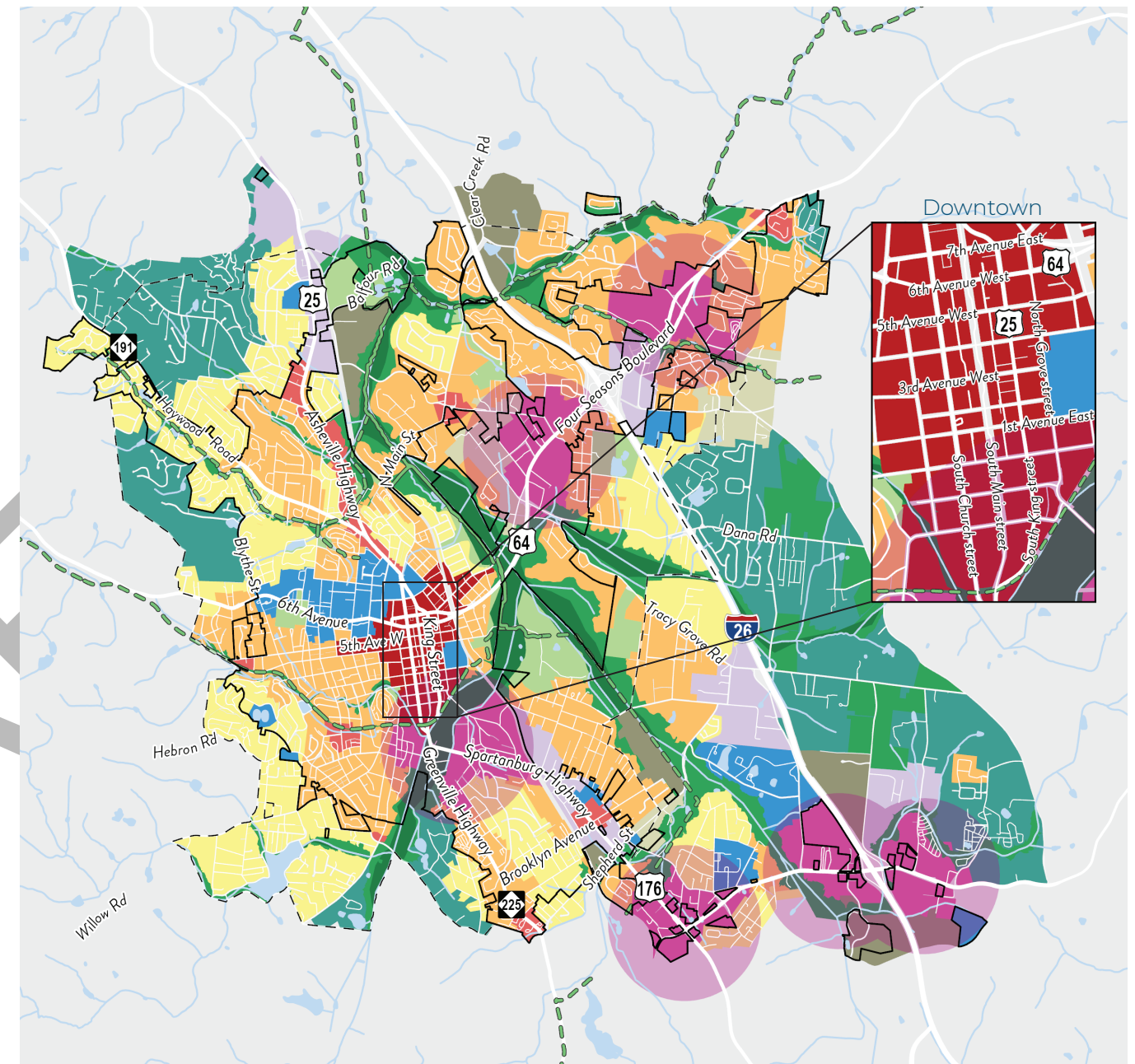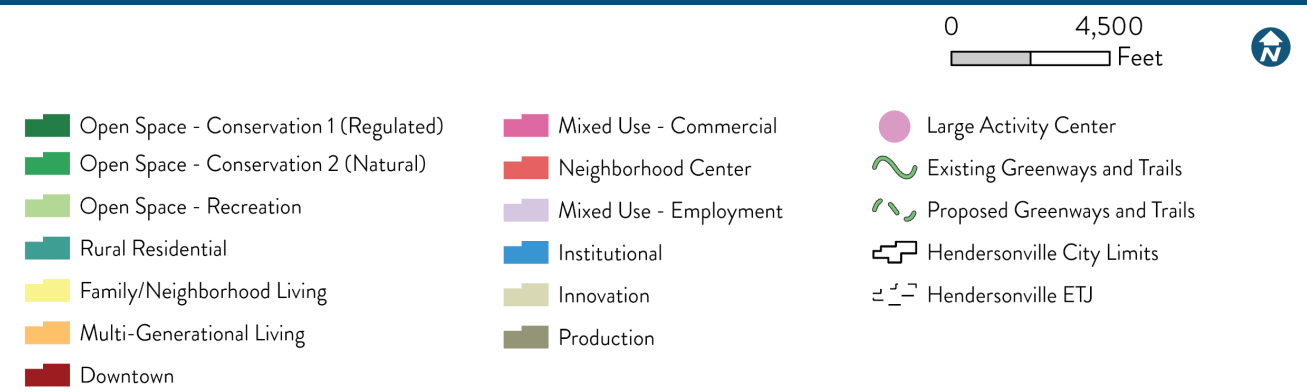

Figure 4.12 The Future Land Use and Conservation Map (Vision Map)

0   4,500 Feet

Open Space - Conservation 1 (Regulated)
Open Space - Conservation 2 (Natural)
Open Space - Recreation
Rural Residential
Family/Neighborhood Living
Multi-Generational Living
Downtown

Mixed Use - Commercial
Neighborhood Center
Mixed Use - Employment
Institutional
Innovation
Production

Large Activity Center
Existing Greenways and Trails
Proposed Greenways and Trails
Hendersonville City Limits
Hendersonville ETJ

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

Defining Features

The Vision Map depicts a direction that is the basis for policy decisions. The defining features include:

- Conserves the broad green "spine" and enhances it to be utilized it for multiple purposes: natural resource protection, recreation, transportation, etc.
- Avoids areas with development constraints to minimize damage to public and private investments.
- Strengthens the viability of commercial uses by concentrating them and integrating—or locating near—housing units.
- Promotes connectivity via safe bike and pedestrian facilities, particularly in mixed-use nodes.
- Emphasizes a compact development form for the efficient/feasible delivery of infrastructure and services.
- Respects the scale and character of existing neighborhoods.

- Protects the historic and cultural assets, and elevates them in their contexts.
- Maximizes existing sites through redevelopment, which in turn can limit the future development footprint while preserving the relatively undeveloped areas.
- Facilitates the integration of a wide range of housing types in areas where infrastructure can support it.
- Includes potential for more development rights per acre to deliver more value and reduce the impacts on affordability of rising land costs.
- Creates opportunities to re-imagine aging employment into "creative hubs" while expanding viable industrial locations.

Copper Crest at Osceola Lake (right) | LoopNet
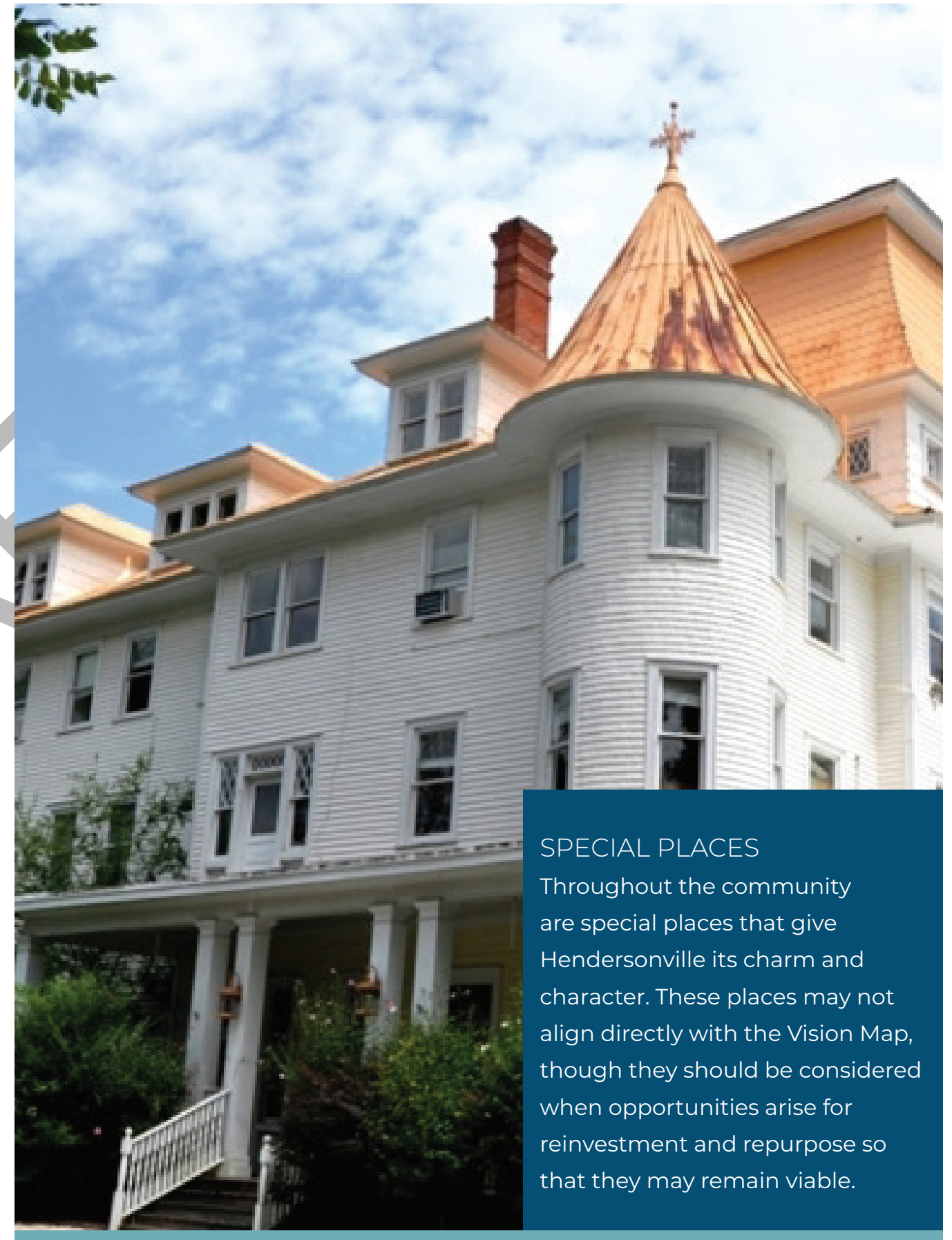
SPECIAL PLACES
Throughout the community are special places that give Hendersonville its charm and character. These places may not align directly with the Vision Map, though they should be considered when opportunities arise for reinvestment and repurpose so that they may remain viable.

Character Areas

Character Areas are classifications of development and conservation. The use of such classifications instead of land use categories is a modernized approach to describing existing and future development and distinguishing each area from others.
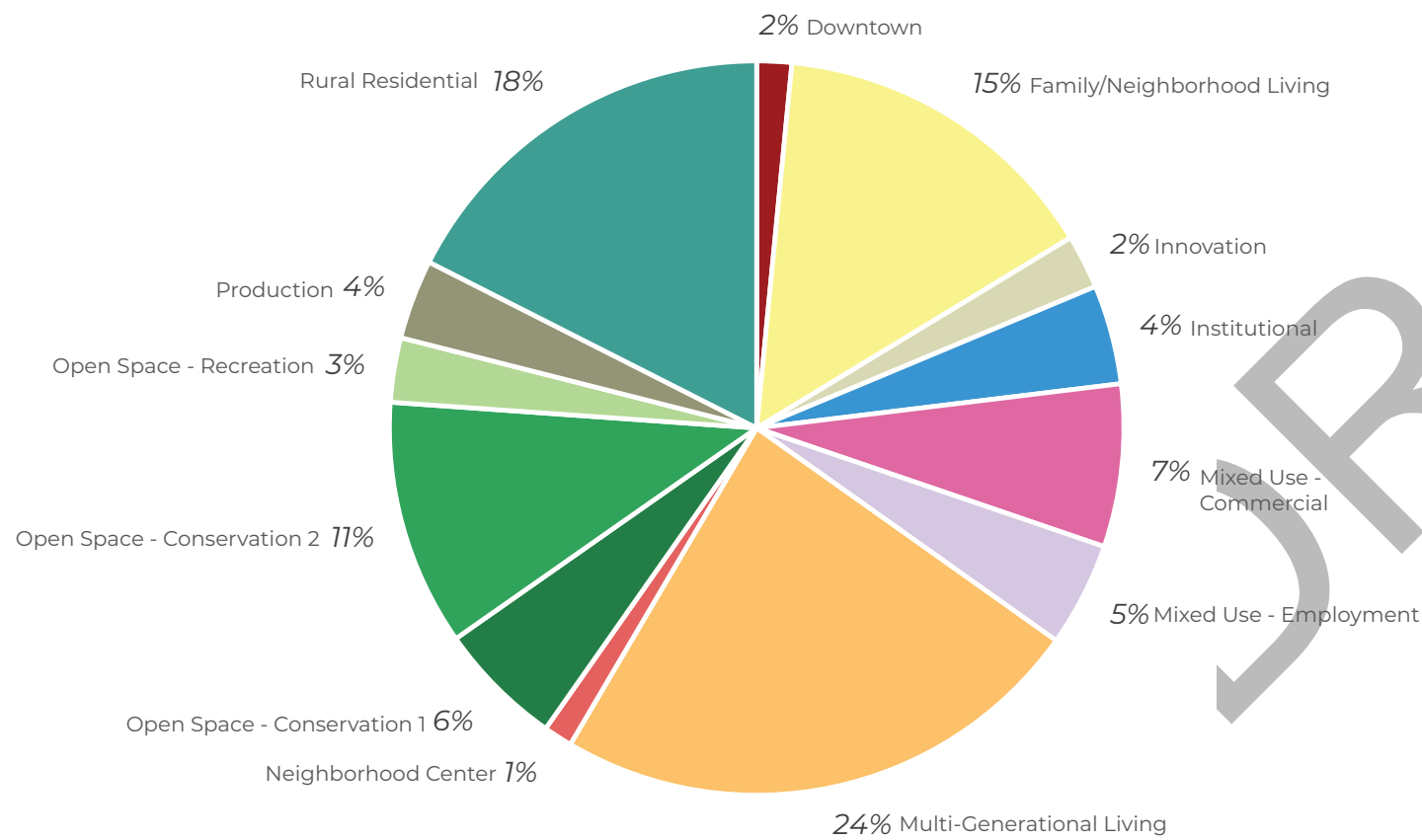

Figure 4.13.1 - Character Area percentages (rounded to whole percent) for study area. ROW is not included acreage percentages.

Jurisdiction	Character Area	Acres	Percent
Hendersonville City Limits	Downtown	202.53	4.76%
	Family/Neighborhood Living	616.02	14.48%
	Innovation	103.05	2.42%
	Institutional	243.18	5.72%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	545.13	12.82%
	Mixed Use - Employment	134.31	3.16%
	Multi-Generational Living	1516.64	35.66%
	Neighborhood Center	150.05	3.53%
	Open Space - Conservation 2 (Natural)	301.98	7.10%
	Open Space - Conservation 1 (Regulated)	243.11	5.72%
	Open Space - Recreation	122.04	2.87%
	Production	37.30	0.88%
	Rural Residential	37.53	0.88%
Total		4252.88	100.00%
Hendersonville ETJ	Family/Neighborhood Living	922.83	23.12%
	Innovation	69.99	1.75%
	Institutional	41.43	1.04%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	46.96	1.18%
	Mixed Use - Employment	93.20	2.34%
	Multi-Generational Living	1015.99	25.46%
	Neighborhood Center	22.10	0.55%
	Open Space - Conservation 2 (Natural)	345.92	8.67%
	Open Space - Conservation 1 (Regulated)	383.44	9.61%
	Open Space - Recreation	220.25	5.52%
	Production	137.91	3.46%
	Rural Residential	691.19	17.32%
Total		3991.22	100.00%
City / County Joint Planning Area	Family/Neighborhood Living	259.70	6.79%
	Innovation	113.96	2.98%
	Institutional	193.51	5.06%
	Mixed Use - Commercial	272.48	7.13%
	Mixed Use - Employment	326.58	8.54%
	Multi-Generational Living	318.71	8.34%
	Neighborhood Center	0.19	0.01%
	Open Space - Conservation 2 (Natural)	661.21	17.30%
	Open Space - Conservation 1 (Regulated)	41.34	1.08%
	Open Space - Recreation	0.00	0.00%
	Production	247.46	6.47%
	Rural Residential	1387.45	36.30%
Total		3822.59	100.00%

Figure 4.13.2 - Character Area percentages and acreage by city limits, ETJ, and City / County Joint Planning Area. ROW is not included in acreage percentages.

OPEN SPACE

Open Space 2 - Conservation (Regulated)

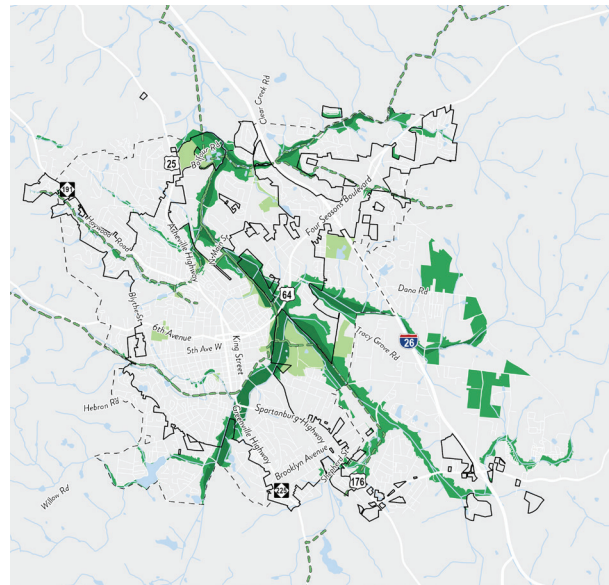Open Space 1 - Conservation(Natural)

Open Space- Recreation

Figure 4.14 - Open Space Map
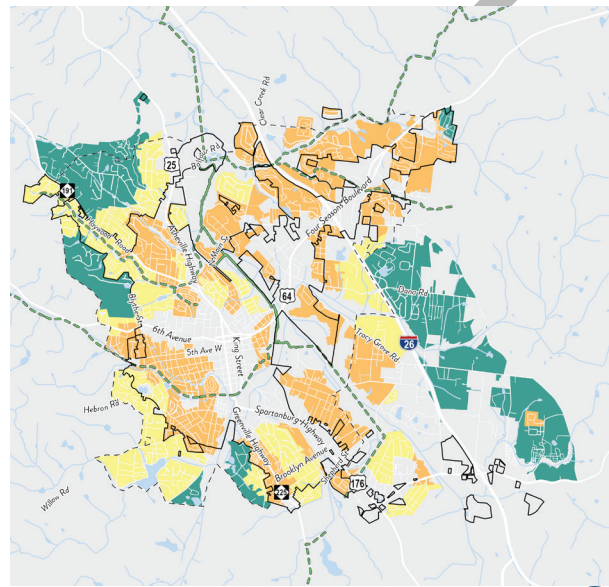
EMPLOYMENT

Mixed-Use Employment

Institutional

Innovation

Production

Figure 4.16 - Employment Map

LIVING

Rural Residential

Family/Neighborhood Living

Multi-Generational Living
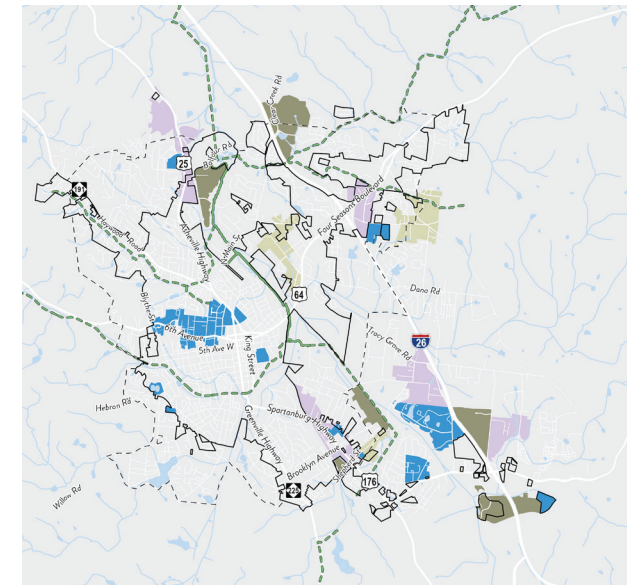

Figure 4.15 - Living Map

ACTIVITIES

Downtown

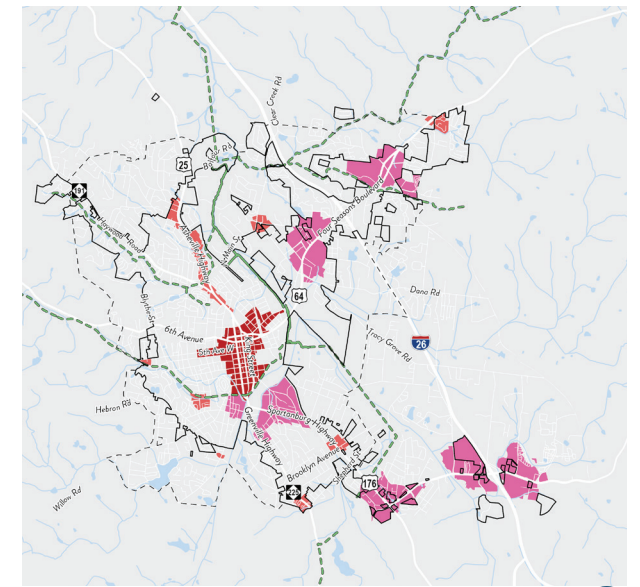Mixed-Use Commercial

Neighborhood Center

Figure 4.17 - Activities Map

Open Space

OPEN SPACE - CONSERVATION 1, REGULATED (OS-C1)

These areas consist primarily of protected, undisturbed open space. Regulated floodways are the predominant component. However, publicly protected lands (e.g., State- and Federally-maintained parkland) may also comprise this character area. Maintaining environmental integrity is a major consideration in land-disturbing activities, such as greenways or vehicular access.

OPEN SPACE - CONSERVATION 2, NATURAL (OS-C2)

These areas are natural and are either protected through public or private ownership or through State or Federal regulations. They consist primarily of floodplains as well as passive parks, accessible nature preserves, privately-managed open space, working lands managed for agricultural activities, and private conservation easements.

Though some development can be supported in these areas, most uses are associated with access to protected open space (e.g., nature preserves, agriculture, and natural resource management).

OPEN SPACE - RECREATION (OS-R)

These areas are typically publicly-maintained facilities, improved for a variety of uses including ballfields, golf courses, gardens, arboretums, and parks. Though various types of active recreation spaces are also suitable uses in other character areas, this character area delineates the locations of large open space areas with public access.

Restored wetland at Mud Creek | Conserving Carolina, Gordon Tutor
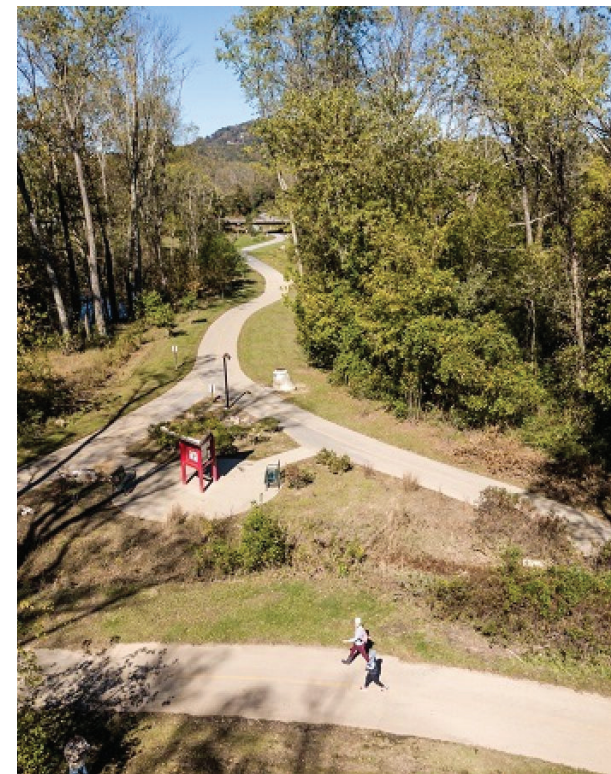
Oklawaha Greenway | Suncoast Post

Public playgrounds would be found in OS-R | Adobe

Living

RURAL RESIDENTIAL LIVING (RR)

Characterized by low-density residential development, this area is comprised of single-family detached homes on a lot size of one acre or greater. Conservation design, which includes more open space in exchange for smaller minimum lot sizes, may be a preferred approach to residential development, especially if higher gross densities can be achieved. Golf course communities can also be found in these areas.

FAMILY/NEIGHBORHOOD LIVING (FNL)

This area is characterized by moderate-density residential development. It is comprised of single-family detached homes on lots typically ranging from 1/3 acre to 1/8 acre. Improved open spaces in the form of pocket and neighborhood parks are interspersed, and greenway trails within are located to connect such parks as well as provide links to trails and walkways in neighboring

development. Conservation design, which includes more open space in exchange for smaller minimum lot sizes, may be a preferred approach to residential development, especially if higher gross densities can be achieved.

MULTI-GENERATIONAL LIVING (MGL)

This area is characterized by mixed residential development and a limited amount of small scaled neighborhood-serving commercial. It is comprised of a variety of homes, mixing detached and attached (e.g., townhomes and duplexes) units with a lesser amount of multi-family units. The combination of housing types are intended to create intergenerational neighborhoods. Improved open spaces in the form of greens, pocket parks, and neighborhood parks are interspersed. In our bustling urban landscapes, the need for improved interconnectivity of streets has become paramount. Creating an interconnected street network isn't

just about convenience; it's about relieving congestion, reducing travel times, and enhancing the provision of essential services. By weaving together a seamless web of roads and pathways, we can unlock smoother traffic flows, shorten commute durations, and ensure quicker access to vital amenities. It's not just about connecting streets; it's about connecting communities and fostering a more efficient, accessible, and vibrant urban environment for all. Greenway trails connect parks as well as provide links to trails and walkways in neighboring development.

Rural Residential Living is comprised of single-family detached homes on a lot size of 1 acre or greater| Adobe

Multi-generational Living may include multi-family units so long as they have improved open spaces | Canopy.

Family/Neighborhood Living includes smaller lot single-family detached homes | New Horizon

Activity Centers

DOWNTOWN (DT)

This is the heart of the community and center of civic activities. In addition to governmental uses, it includes a mix of retail, restaurant, service, office, and civic uses. A variety of residential housing types complement the nonresidential uses and ensure a vibrant center with a 24/7 population. The mix of uses can be horizontal as well as vertical where a change in use can occur between floors of the same building. Buildings of two or more stories are common, and connected streets include short block lengths and pedestrian facilities. Open space is integrated in the form of plazas and formal greens.

"Suburban Commercial" has been omitted as a Character Area in favor of transforming existing commercial corridors and shopping centers into mixed-use activity centers.

MIXED-USE COMMERCIAL(MX-C)

These areas are centers of activity that include a mix of retail, restaurant, service, office, and civic uses as well as a variety of residential housing types. The mix of uses can be horizontal as well as vertical where a change in use can occur between floors of the same building. Buildings of two or more stories are common, and connected streets include short block lengths and pedestrian facilities. Open space is integrated in the form of plazas, formal greens, and pocket parks

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER (NC)

Neighborhood Center encompasses small centers (typically up to 100,000 sf of nonresidential space) with local-serving uses may be located within walking distance of and complement surrounding residential uses. Typical uses include grocery and drug stores, coffee shops, dry cleaners, branch banks, and restaurants.

Mixed-Use Commercial is envisioned to incorporate residential buildings with ground floor retail - multimodal transportation is encouraged here | Pappas Properties

A small brewery/taproom might be found in the Neighborhood Center character area, becoming a walkable destination | Bring Fido

Trail-oriented development is envisioned within the Neighborhood Center where people may walk, bike, scooter, or take other non-vehicular modes of transit | The Commons

Employment

MIXED-USE EMPLOYMENT (MX-E)

Employment centers contain a mix of uses including office, light industrial, and institutional. These areas offer traditional workspace and can be supplemented by unconventional, collaborative workspace where innovation and education can be fostered. Highly walkable areas with clustered parking and minimized vehicular circulation, incorporation of some retail, recreational, and residential uses to create a live, work, and play environment is supported. Open space is in the form of formal and informal parks and green spaces connected by trails. Flexible open space that can be programmed for gatherings of various sizes and purposes are also integrated.

PRODUCTION (PRO)

This area is mainly for manufacturing and production, including heavy manufacturing, assembly operations, water and sewer treatment plants, major power plants, landfills, and supporting activities like light manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, and office uses. These areas are close to major transportation routes and separated from surrounding areas by transitional spaces or landscaping that shield view of structures, loading docks, or outdoor storage. Typically, both parcels and buildings are large. On-site open spaces are privately managed for intended to be used by building occupants. Streets are often private, designed for trucks, and may have controlled access through security mechanisms like gates.

Kingsley Mill | Kingsley Fort Mill, SC

INSTITUTIONAL (INST)

Institutional areas are a type of mixed-use center with buildings serving related purposes like education, healthcare, or public facilities such as courthouses and local government offices. They may also include restaurants, retail, offices, and multi-family residential units. Institutional areas feature green spaces connected by pedestrian paths, clustered parking, and minimized vehicular access.

INNOVATION (INV)

This area supports light manufacturing, maker spaces, creative offices, and warehouses. Commercial services cater to both daytime workers and local residents. It's conveniently located near major transportation routes. The design follows compatibility standards, using transitional spaces and landscaping to hide loading docks. The area features diverse parcel and building sizes, with a central open space and connected greenway system. Streets vary between pedestrian-friendly and those accommodating trucks.

Institutional (INST) areas are typically a mixed-use center with education or healthcare purposes | CPCC

Innovation (INV) areas support light manufacturing as well as maker spaces and creative offices | LoopNet

Production (PRO) is for manufacturing and production and includes large parcels and building | Deposit Photos

Character Area Crosswalk

The Character Areas define places in Hendersonville now and in the future. While they are not zoning districts, they provide guidance on the application of appropriate zoning districts. This "crosswalk" assigns current and proposed districts to demonstrate there are differences in Character Areas. This tool is not prescriptive. Rather, it aligns Character Areas with districts that are closely associated and therefore appropriate. The development envisioned for each Character Area can be accomplished with one or more of the zoning districts specified. Application of zoning to any Character Area is not limited to the districts indicated.

Character Area
Downtown
Family/Neighborhood Living
Innovation
Institutional
Mixed Use - Commercial
Mixed Use - Employment
Multi-Generational Living
Neighborhood Center
Open Space - Conservation 2 (Natural)
Open Space - Conservation 1 (Regulated)
Open Space - Recreation
Production
Rural Residential

Figure 4.18 - Character Area Crosswalk

Current Zoning Districts**

R-40	R-20	R-15	R-10	R-6	UV	UR	RCT	C-1	C-2	C-3	C-4	CMU	CHMU	HMU	GHMU	I-1	MIC	PCD	PID	PRD	PMH	PMD
								X				X										
	X	X	X	X																X		
									X													
																	X		X			
													X	X	X			X				
													X	X								
			X	X	X	X					X									X		
							X			X	X		X	X	X							
Any zoning district is possible provided the land is protected/utilized as intended.																						
Any zoning district is possible provided the land is protected/utilized as intended.																						
Any zoning district is possible provided the land is protected/utilized as intended.																						
X																						
X																X						X

*Refer to Chapter 6 for recommended code updates.

X ** This district is appropriate with modifications.

X *** Under special circumstances (established in code).

Focus Area Concepts

The evolution of the planning area will occur over a period of years. Some areas will be subject to development pressures in the near future. Others present opportunities for redevelopment that, through thoughtful design, could achieve many of the community's goals and should be encouraged. Five focus areas have been studied as part of the planning process to better understand development potential consistent with the Future Land Use & Conservation Plan map. Each set of conceptual illustrations on the pages that follow conveys one of several possibilities for the delineated area. Considering the potential use of parcels collectively, decisions about future development on individual parcels can be made in a manner that optimizes the utilization of land while adhering to the community's objectives. The supporting notes are intended to highlight the design principles represented in the illustrations and inform the creation of site design standards to be met as changes occur.

The focus areas include:

1. Western Ecusta Trail - Positioning for trail oriented development at a neighborhood scale, improved connections, and mixed use along Kanuga

2. Blue Ridge Mall - Following national trends and reinvisioning a mixed use activity center

3. Spartanburg Highway - Transitioning from suburban, car-oriented to a walkable destination

4. Downtown Edge* - Emphasis on retaining character, growing south and east, and infill residential opportunities

5. 7th Avenue* - Focus on improving connections, infill development, and neighborhood stabilization
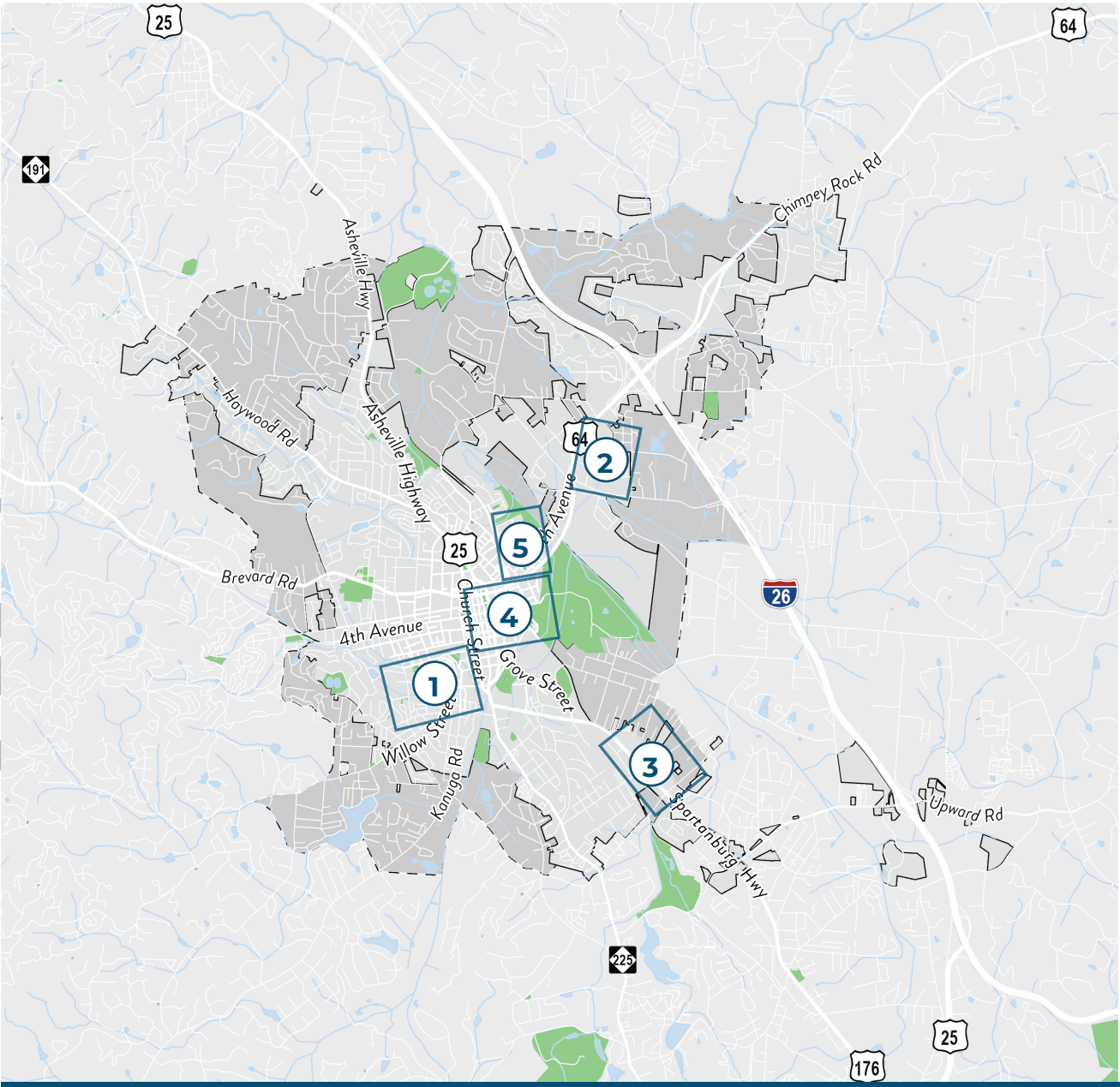
*Presented in Chapter 5

Figure 4.19 Focus Area Map

Streams
Lakes/Ponds
Parks
Hendersonville ETJ
Hendersonville City Limits
Focus Areas

0   6,000
         Feet

Source: City of Hendersonville, Henderson County, NCDOT

Blue Ridge Mall Focus Area

Concept

In this location, well situated along Four Seasons Boulevard, the Blue Ridge Mall and flanking commercial sites are good candidates for redevelopment. The age of the buildings coupled with shifts in consumer behaviors point to near-term opportunities to better utilize the properties for a mix of uses and amenities. While the concept suggests the inclusion of retail and restaurants, the reimagining of this area could introduce entertainment, lodging, and residential uses to create a vibrant destination. Enhanced by streetscape and open space in the form of community greens, plazas, and pocket parks, the place is both attractive and competitive in the market. It helps transform the area into a new front door to the city as well as to the established neighborhoods nearby.

Figure 4.20 - Blue Ridge Mall Concept

1 Mixed Use Infill Development
3 Spray Fountain Amenity
6 New Street Network
7 Linear, Multi-use Streets
9 Tree Canopy
10 Structured Parking

Street View of Blue Ridge Mall Area Concept

Elements

1. A mix of complementary uses concentrated in this location help create a vibrant destination. Retail shops, restaurants, and entertainment are viable as they are situated close to office uses as well as lodging and homes.

2. Buildings are located close to the roads (including Four Seasons Blvd.) to create a strong presence for this activity center at this city gateway, introduce a better scale to the corridors, and reduce the visual impacts of surface parking.

3. Infill development on the north side balances the scale of the redevelopment on the south side while creating new opportunities for a variety of new businesses.

4. Amenities include small plazas and pocket parks that allow for an expansion of usable space in the retail, restaurant, and residential areas.

5. A larger park is a community gathering space that also separates new development from existing neighborhoods and mitigates potential impacts.

6. A connected network of streets and private drives move local traffic, keeping it off Four Seasons Blvd.

7. Streets are designed as linear, multi-use spaces suitable for safe pedestrian and bike travel.

8. Driveways along Four Seasons Blvd. are consolidated to increase safety and improve traffic flow on this major arterial.

9. Streets and parks provide ample space to reclaim land for tree planting to establish some tree canopy, which has many benefits (i.e., aesthetics, stormwater management, air quality improvement, wildlife support, shade for comfort and energy efficiency).

10. Parking structures help maximize the utilization of the sites that comprise this area.

A mix of complementary uses concentrated in this location help create a vibrant destination in the West Ave District – a vibrant social hub in the heart of historic downtown Kannapolis, NC | Charlotte Business Journal

Buildings create a strong presence for this activity center at this city gateway like at ParkTowne Village in Charlotte, NC | RAD Architecture

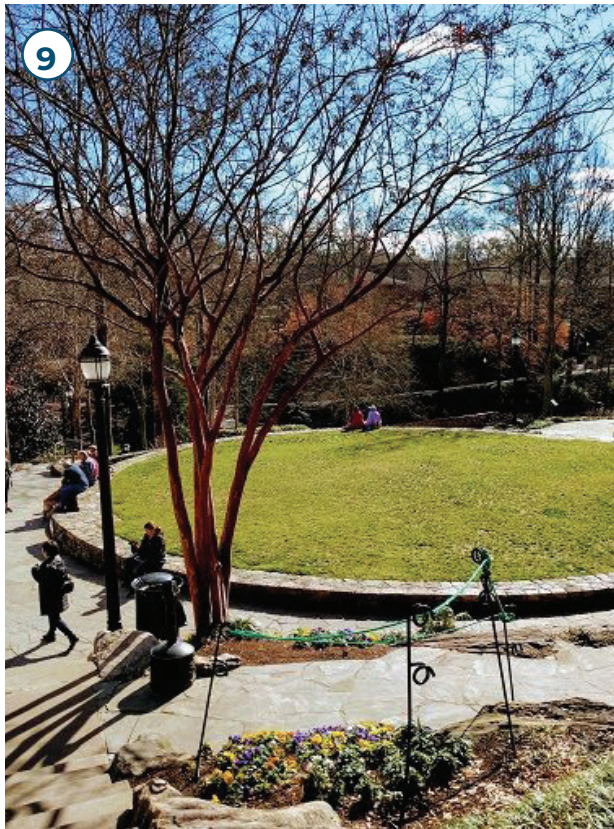Amenities include small plazas and pocket parks. | Adobe

A larger park is a community gathering space such as Riddles Close in Antiquity, Cornelius, NC

Streets are designed as linear, multi-use spaces such as Parrish Street in Durham, NC | Discover Durham

Streets and parks provide ample space to reclaim land for tree planting to establish some tree canopy. Falls Park on the Reedy in Greenville, SC | No Home Just Roam

Parking structures help maximize the utilization of the sites Camden NoDa parking deck adorned with a mural | Camden NoDa

Case Study
Leesburg, VA

VIRGINIA VILLAGE

Currently the site of four retail and two office buildings, Virginia Village is being reimagined into a bustling mixed-use development with retail, residential and commercial offerings, as well as neighborhood parks and an amphitheater. Urban connectivity is the vision behind the transformation of this site, within walking distance of Leesburg's historic downtown. The 18.4-acre site will be a mixed-use space that will include:

- 490 apartments
- Approximately 160 townhomes and condominiums
- 104,000 SF of office
- 70,000 SF of retail and restaurants
- Three parks and green spaces
- An outdoor amphitheater
- Connectivity to bike trails and a pedestrian bridge to Leesburg's historic downtown

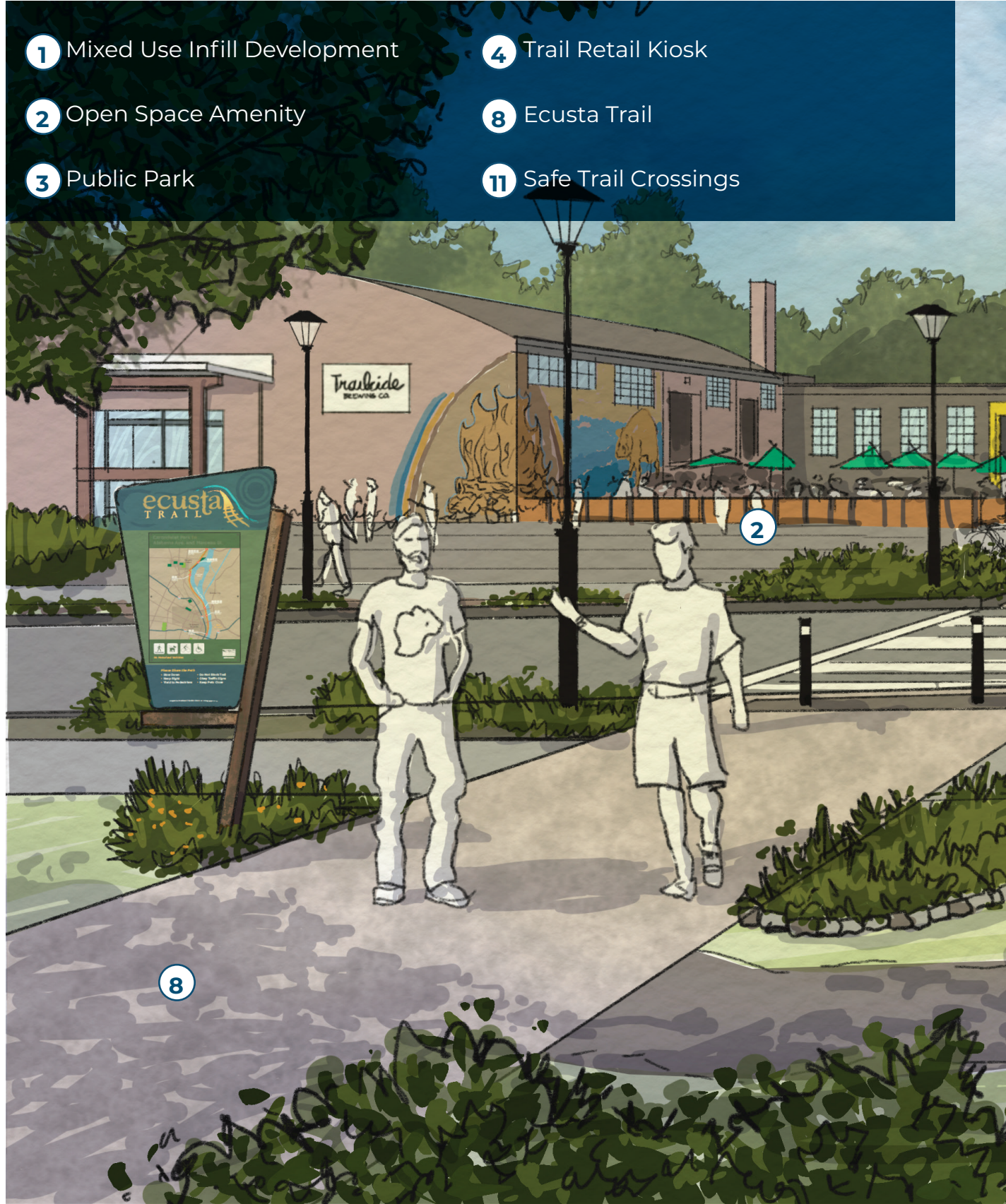
Virginia Village | Keane Enterprises

Western Ecusta Trail

CONCEPT

With an orientation toward the future Ecusta Trail, this neighborhood center offers a destination along the path as well as a gathering place for the residents of the flanking neighborhoods. Existing businesses can be complemented by additional, local-serving restaurants and shops. Organized around a park, much of the infill commercial and residential uses put eyes on the public space, increasing safety while ensuring a level of activity that the local businesses require to be viable. Redevelopment along Kanuga Street offers another yet different stop along the trail route, and the streetscape improvements are designed to form an urban greenway functioning as a connector to the Ecusta Trail. Other perpendicular routes tie into the trail, increasing access to it and improving connectivity to the broader greenway network.

Figure 4.21 - Western Ecusta Trail Concept

1 Mixed Use Infill Development
2 Open Space Amenity
3 Public Park
4 Trail Retail Kiosk
8 Ecusta Trail
11 Safe Trail Crossings

Street View of Western Ecusta Trail Concept

ELEMENTS

1. Infill development complements the existing commercial uses, helping to create a more vibrant neighborhood center.

2. Surface parking is converted to plaza space to expand the usable area of the existing brewery and future restaurants and shops.

3. The park is an extension of the publicly accessible open space. Its design is suitable for informal gatherings as well as programmed events. Its position helps create a destination along the Ecusta Trail, varying the experience for the users, and an accessible space to be utilized as a neighborhood amenity.

4. Pop-up shops and restaurants can be accommodated in the open space to further activate the central area.

5. Redevelopment includes apartments and condos along the trail where separation from existing neighborhoods is possible.

6. Infill development incorporates both commercial and residential uses (such as townhomes) around and facing the park.

7. Vacant lots are utilized for attached and detached single-family homes.

8. Neighborhood trails are located in "front yard" open space areas and provide safe access to the Ecusta Trail and the broader greenway network.

9. Redevelopment along Kanuga Street creates opportunities for streetscape improvements to include an urban pedestrian path. It also raises development out of the floodplain to the east, facilitating natural stormwater management and additional greenway connections.

10. The public street network and private drives are linked to improve circulation.

11. Vehicular crossings of the trail are minimized to ensure the safety of trail users.

Redevelopment includes apartments and condos along the trail like along the Charlotte Rail Trail in South End | Charlotte Rail Trail
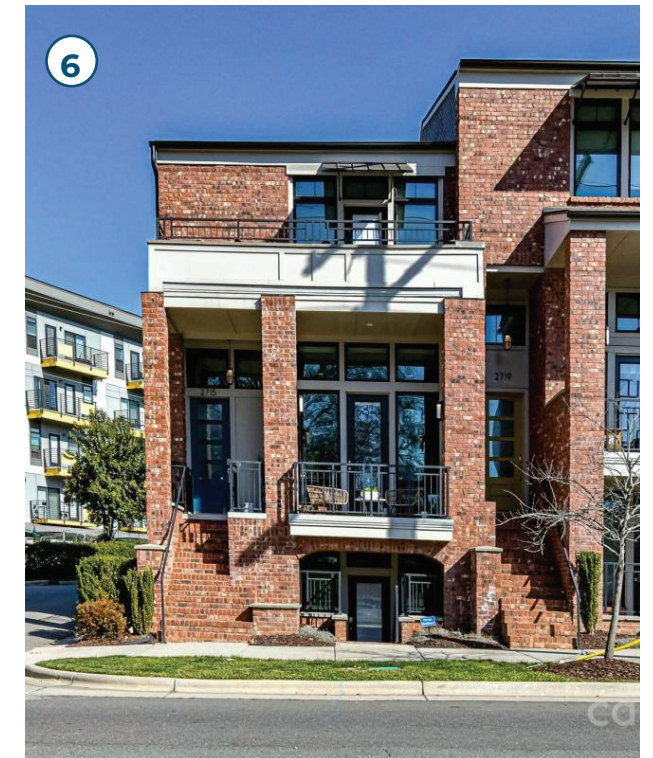
Infill development incorporates both commercial and residential uses | Canopy MLS

Neighborhood trails are located in "front yard" open space areas | Charlotte Rail Trail

Kanuga Street could accommodate a urban pedestrian path like in Indianapolis on the Cultural Trail | Rundell Ernstberger Assoc., LLC

Case Study

Greenville, SC

SWAMP RABBIT TRAIL

The Swamp Rabbit Trail is a popular multi-use trail that spans 22 miles, running from downtown Greenville to the City of Travelers Rest, traversing along the Reedy River, an old railroad corridor, and parks. Originally conceived as a 9-mile rail-trail, it is now a growing network of trails with sections in the community of Conestee, and the cities of Simpsonville and Fountain Inn.

This repurposed trail connects pedestrians and cyclists to various neighborhoods and parks, providing a recreational and commuter pathway. Varying from 8 to 12 feet wide, the trail features a paved surface for bicycles, skaters, and walkers, with an additional rubberized surface for runners. Amenities along the trail include lighting, picnic areas, benches, water fountains, restrooms, signage, and bicycle racks.

The Swamp Rabbit Trail has improved the lives of residents and visitors, and its success has been attributed to its scenic route and thoughtful integration of trail-oriented development. This has positively impacted the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the surrounding communities.

Swamp Rabbit Trail | Greenville Journal (above); Swamp Rabbit Trail | Simply Awesome Trips, Amanda Luhn (right)

Spartanburg Highway Focus Area

Concept

This aging commercial corridor has an opportunity to be reinvented to be more responsive to changing market conditions and the housing needs of the community. Redevelopment can give new life to an area where diminished business viability, evidenced by increasing vacancy rates, lower lease rates, and declining property values, is halted. Reinvestment is feasible, accomplished at a level of intensity that enables a mix of compatible uses that maximize utilization of the land and available infrastructure. The mix of uses recognizes the reduced demand for retail and office space due to changing consumer behavior (rising rates of online shopping) and remote working, and increasing demand for housing products that address affordability and lifestyle preferences. Existing uses, including some institutional and civic uses, are retained and integrated into the evolving fabric.


Figure 4.22 - Spartanburg Highway Concept

Legend:

1. Mixed Use Redevelopment
2. Residential Redevelopment
3. Townhomes
4. Car Dealership Showroom
5. Central Public Open Space
8. Streetscape Improvements

Birdseye View of Spartanburg Highway Concept

Elements

1. Sites along Spartanburg Highway are redeveloped to introduce mixed use development, maximizing the utilization of land and available infrastructure.

2. Commercial properties that are no longer competitive business locations are redeveloped for residential units that meet some of the current and future demand for apartments and condominiums.

3. Townhomes offer a sensitive transition to nearby single-family neighborhoods.

4. Existing auto dealerships transition to storefronts, following current trends. Land area devoted to surface lots is reduced, and sales occur increasingly through small showrooms supplemented by an online experience.

5. Public (and publicly accessible) open space includes greens, pocket parks, and plazas that can support informal gatherings of small groups as well as programmed events (i.e. farmers market).

6. The existing floodplain is maintained or reclaimed to allow for a functional green infrastructure system.

7. The floodplain and creek corridors lend themselves to potential extensions of the broader greenway network. Access points are located to improve accessibility to the paths that broaden options for pedestrian access to neighborhoods, business, churches, and schools.

8. Streetscape improvements change the aesthetic along this major arterial, making it an attractive environment for living, working, shopping, and dining.

Redevelop sites along Spartanburg Highway as mixed use| Southern Land Company
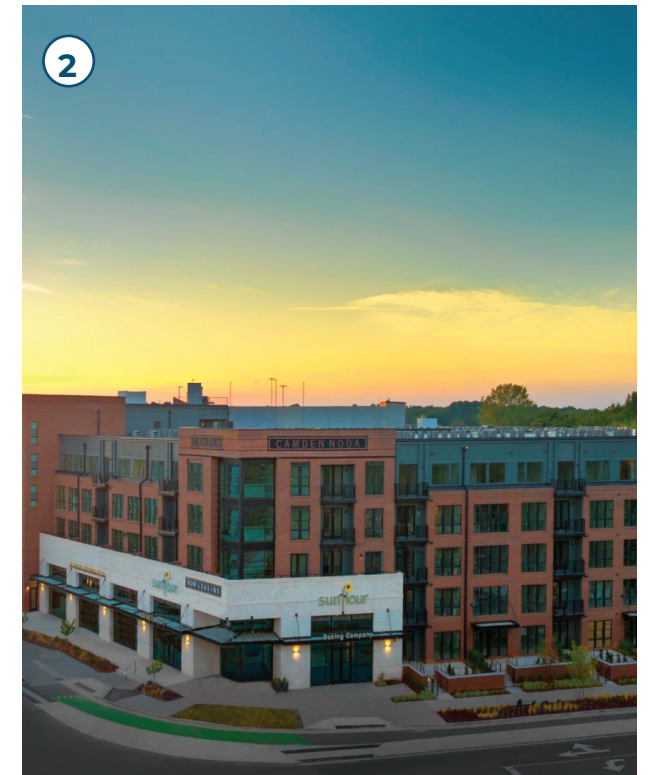
Redevelop commercial properties as locations for residential units | Camden NoDa

Townhomes offer a sensitive transition to nearby neighborhoods | Zillow

Existing auto dealerships transition to storefronts, following current trends like Lucid Motors in Boston, MA | Boston Magazine

9 The connected network of streets support the increase in traffic by distributing trips to parallel routes that are also more pedestrian- and bike-friendly.

10 Complete streets, in combination with the concentration of the various uses in a limited geography, help create a walkable/bikeable center.

11 Driveways along Spartanburg Highway are consolidated to increase safety and improve traffic flow on this major arterial.

Public (and publicly accessible) open space can support gatherings | City of Hendersonville

The creek corridors can become to extensions of the greenway network like the Crabtree Creek Greenway in Wake County, NC | Trail Link


Streetscape improvements change the aesthetic along major arterials | Hazelwood Construction Services

Case Study
Nashville, TN

8TH AVENUE
A rapidly evolving corridor connecting surrounding neighborhoods to downtown Nashville, 8th Avenue has experienced an explosion of growth and change over the last decade. Transforming from a 5-lane suburban arterial to a destination, with new multifamily residential and mixed use developments. In 2016 Metro Nashville in partnership with the City of Berryhill, kicked off a multi-modal study to assess the changing the land uses along the corridor and to develop recommendations to improve safety, quality of life, and economic viability along the street while also maintaining mobility and accessiblity for a variety of travel modes.
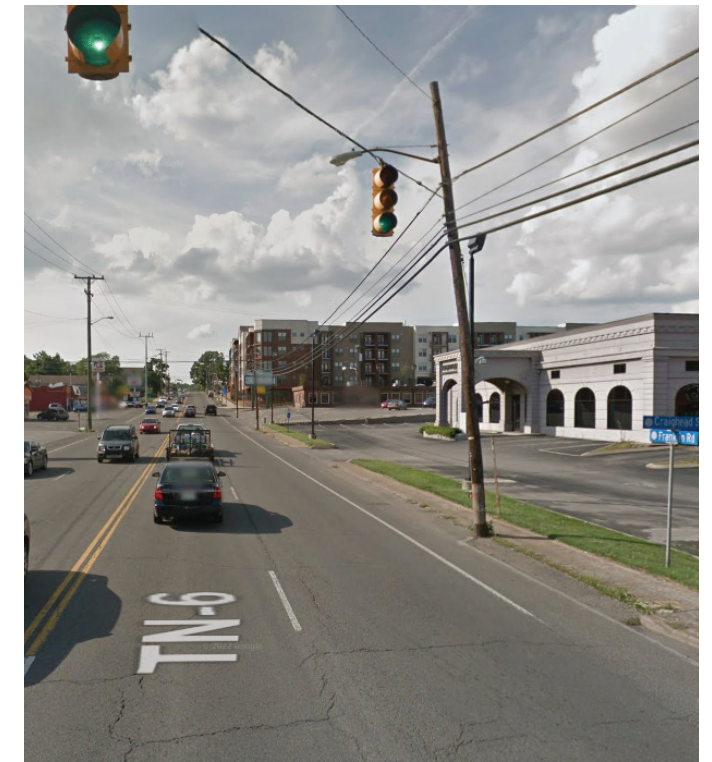
8th and Craighead Street in 2014 | Google Streetview

8th and Craighead Street in 2022 | Google Streetview