

CORE AREA PLAN



Core Area Plan Draft
Recommended by the Planning Commission
July 27, 2010

City of Newton Core Area Plan

Mayor

Robert A. Mullinax

City Council

Anne Stedman , Mayor Pro Tem

Tom Rowe

Wayne Dellinger

Mary Bess Lawing

Bill Lutz

Robert C. Abernethy, Jr

Planning Commission

Ken Simmons, Chairman

Kent Elliott, Vice-Chairman

Stan Gabriel

Jimmy Newsome, Jr.

Donny Setzer

Jim Smith

Mark Stalnaker

Staff

E. Todd Clark, City Manager

Glenn J. Pattishall, AICP, Planning Director / Assistant City Manager

Alex S. Fulbright, AICP, Assistant Planning Director

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Chapter 1 Introduction

In 2002, the City Planning Commission determined to segment the City and its extraterritorial planning jurisdiction into six study areas. This was as an outgrowth of the completed and adopted St. Paul's Area Plan.

The Planning Commission prioritized and assigned numbers to these areas. The area that is covered by this Plan is designated small area #5 which adjoins the Eastside Area to the east and the Southeast area to the north. The staff has since renamed this to Core Area Plan. The purpose of the Plan is to address the issues that will influence land development patterns for the next ten to fifteen years. The biggest factors in the Planning Area are minimizing impacts of divergent uses within close proximity of each other; as well as dealing with issues that arise with infill development and redevelopment of developed areas.

The Planning Commission determined early on that the biggest planning challenge in this area will be balancing the relationship of industrial and residential areas. Characteristics of this study area is an area where development has been occurring for 150 years, and the opportunity for pristine sites are almost non-existent

The Planning Commission with the City staff evaluated statistical information, demographic information and held a drop-in workshop for all property owners within the study area. Issues were identified and

narrowed into focus points. The Plan itself consists of sections on transportation, utilities, economic development, environment, community character, and land use issues.

The Core Area is comprised of 2,161 acres of area within the heart of the City of Newton. The area contains 5,659 people residing in 2, 591 dwelling units. The document and the associated maps and tables are to be used as guidance for the City Council, Planning Commission and the general public in developing regulations and also in making decisions for how the area should develop in the future. These recommendations are based upon the guiding principles of smart growth which are:

1. Mix land uses
2. Take advantage of compact building design
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
4. Create walkable neighborhoods
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
6. Preserve open space and critical environmental areas
7. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

Chapter 2 Transportation

EXISTING CONDITIONS

While the Core Area became automobile centric, the transportation feature which was the most influential factor in dictating transportation and land use within the core was the rail road tracks. Rail's past dominance dictated the street pattern and pedestrian network and created the area's transportation network which exists today.

This section details the elements of the Core Area's transportation network, which consist of streets, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, transit, and rail.

STREETS

The Core Area's street network is made up of 48.64 miles of street. The City maintains 40.88 miles and the State 7.76 miles. The network consist of four (4) arterials, NC Hwy 16 Business, US 321 Business, NC Hwy 10, and NC Hwy 16, six (6) collector streets, 20th Street, A Street, Burris Road, North Rankin Ave, Keisler Road, and St James Church Road. The remaining streets within the network are local streets.

The existing street network has good north-south movement through the area with US 321 Business and NC Hwy 16 and east-west movement is provided by the collector and local streets. This network is shown on **Map 2-1, Street Classifications**.

The volume of traffic on the network varies from a few vehicles a day to 22,000 vehicles per day on US 321 Business, as shown on **Map 2-2, Historic Average Daily Traffic Counts**.

The volume and the perception of volume within the Core Area has been cause for the request for traffic calming devices and led to the City Council's adoption of a traffic calming policy in 2006. The only street to receive traffic calming devices has been West 7th Street between North Ashe Avenue and Northwest Boulevard which were installed prior to the adoption of the Traffic Calming Policy as a pilot project.

The planning area is located within the transportation planning jurisdiction of the Greater Hickory Metro Planning Organization (MPO). In an effort to meet future traffic demands and to reduce congestion, the MPO adopted a transportation plan in 1986 and updated the plan in 2001 and 2005. The MPO has completed a transportation plan for the region which was adopted in April 2010.

The following projects are recommended as a result of the transportation plan within the Core Planning Area and shown on **Map 2-3, Transportation Improvements**.

NC 10

NC 10 is an arterial that serves the southern part of Catawba County. Through travel makes up roughly 3 to 5 percent of the total traffic volume. Development along the corridor is sparse except for the section through the Core Area where it serves a mixture of residential and commercial businesses.

The section along the southern edge of Downtown has been experiencing extreme pressure created by a couple of factors. First, as a merged facility (NC 16 merges onto NC 10 at this section); traffic volume of this section has been heavy. The second factor is the high number of trucks that use the facility.

Constituting approximately 8 percent of the total traffic volume, these trucks slow down the travel flow considerably by creating queuing and turning problems at the major intersections within the area. Coupling with the poor design of the facility itself, these factors have made travel through this section of NC 10 very dangerous, especially during peak hours. Except for the section east of NC 16, travel pressure on the rest of NC 10 is expected to increase dramatically due to high growth rate in both external-internal travel and growing development along NC 10 corridor. The completed US 321 freeway has relieved some pressure on NC 16, especially truck trips, which also improved the section of NC 10 through Newton. The newly completed section of NC 16 should reduce the travel demand on the section of NC 10 through the Core Area by diverting

trips away from NC 10 and NC 16; however data to support this is not yet available.

The MPO thoroughfare plan recommends that the section of NC 10 between NC 16 and US 321 Business be widened to five lane cross section. The average daily traffic count of that section is in excess of the existing capacity.

NC 16

NC 16 is a major north-south arterial serving the Newton-Conover area and eastern Catawba County. It also serves as a valuable link to the Charlotte urban area and Alexander County. The existing cross-section of NC 16 varies from 2 to 3 lanes with a short segment in the downtown of Newton as a one-way pair. NC 16 merges with NC 10 south of Downtown and continues as combined routes until they split east of the Core Area. Inside the Core Area, this facility serves a variety of neighborhoods, commercial and industrial developments and government offices. The newly completed section of NC 16 will help divert some traffic off NC 16 Business through the Core Area. Nonetheless, the amount of traffic on the section of NC 16 Business within the Core Area will still warrant some improvements according to the MPO thoroughfare plan. First, the section south of NC 10 should be widened to a multilane cross-section. Second, a widening to 5 lanes will ultimately be needed for the section between the one-way pair in Newton and I-40 in Conover. Due to the right-of-way constraints, a 3-

lane cross-section will be sufficient at this time.

Southern Corridor

Currently, NC 10 is the only major east-west thoroughfare that serves the southern part of Catawba County. This 2-lane highway mostly provides for travel to and from the City of Newton including the Core Area. The Southern Corridor will facilitate the suburban travel as well as the inter-city travel between Hickory, Newton, Conover and Long View. The recommended Southern Corridor extends from the City of Newton on the east to the Town of Long View on the west. The corridor consists of the widening of Settlemyre Bridge Road (SR 1165), River Road at the US 321 South interchange and SR 1124 at the I-40 interchange. Between these roads are the new location segments. The recommended cross-section for this project is a 4-lane divided boulevard with a grass median. The section of Southern Corridor from US 321 Business to Ashe Avenue within the Core Area would be a 4-lane cross section.

A Street and Extensions

This facility extends from Old Conover-Startown Road to Coulter Avenue in eastern Newton. It provides for crosstown travel in Newton and serves a mixture of development along the corridor.

The proposed eastern extension will connect East A Street to the New NC Hwy 16 as recommended by the Eastside Area Plan. The western extension will connect the facility to Startown Road. The

combination of A Street and its extensions will create a continuous east-west facility serving the Newton area and connect the major thoroughfares in the area. It will also create opportunities for growth in the western Newton area. A cross-section of 2 lanes is recommended for the extensions. No new facilities would be built within the core; however the Core Area would benefit from a direct connection to Startown Rd and newly constructed NC Hwy 16 loop.

Keisler Road and Extensions

This 2-lane facility is located within the Core Area. Until recently, it was a dead-end road serving the industrial sites along its corridor. The City of Newton extended Keisler Road to provide access to a portion of the Old Broyhill Facility. The project was funded in part by CDBG-Economic Development Grant. A 2-lane cross-section is recommended for the extension.

20th Street and extensions (Catawba Valley Boulevard)

Catawba Valley Boulevard is located on the south side of the Valley Hills Mall extending from Robinson Road (SR 1146) to Startown Road (SR 1005). This 5-lane facility serves major commercial and residential developments and provides a connecting service between Startown Road and Robinson Road. The proposed extension will connect Catawba Valley Boulevard to Twentieth Street in Newton just west of the Core Area. This will create a major east-west facility paralleling US 70. The proposed road will also create an efficient route to link Hickory and Newton.

A 4-lane divided boulevard with a grass median is recommended west of Fairgrove Church Road. East of Fairgrove Church Road, a 2-lane rural cross-section is recommended.

PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLING FACILITIES

The Core Area has 25.3 miles of sidewalks. Notable locations void of sidewalks within the Core Area include the majority of US 321 Business and NC 10/16 west of South Caldwell Avenue as shown on **Map 2-4, Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**. There currently are no bicycle facilities or greenways in the planning area. There has been land that has been dedicated through provisions in the Subdivision Ordinance to be used for the purposes of greenways. The Catawba Valley Heritage Alliance has proposed a greenway loop around Newton, known as the Heritage Trail Greenway, a portion of which has been built from West 7th Street south to Radio Station Road and the section from Radio Station Road south to NC Highway 10 is underconstruction. The trail will allow the opportunity for cyclists and pedestrians to travel on a system of trails and greenways that would be off limits to motorized vehicles. This will give individuals an additional choice on what mode of transportation to use for employment, shopping, and recreation. In addition to greenways, the Greater Hickory Urban Area Transportation Plan indicates that new roads need to accommodate bicycles and that NC Highway 16 and Saint James Church Road needs to have travel lanes widen to accommodate bicycles. The City is participating in the

planning process for the Carolina Thread Rail, which is a regional trail system that when complete will connect Catawba County with the Charlotte Region.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Public transportation is provided by Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority, which services the Unifour area. The Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority doing business as Greenway Transit operates routes with service to points of interest in the Core Area as well as the remainder of the Hickory-Newton-Conover area. Service is provided weekdays 6:15 a.m. to 6:18 p.m. and Saturday 6:15 a.m. to 4:18 p.m. No buses operate on Sunday. The route within the Core Area is shown on **Map 2-5, Transit Routes**.

RAIL

The planning area is intersected by a rail line that runs from the main Norfolk Southern Line south to Maiden and terminates just northeast of the US 321 Freeway as shown on **Figure 2-1**. The line is owned by Norfolk-Southern from the main line to a point south of Commscope and the portion south of Commscope to the end of the tracks is owned by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).

Currently the spur is in service to Mid-State Mills. There are plans dependent upon the availability of funds for NCDOT to rehabilitate the line from Commscope south to Prison Camp Road and build a salt storage depot at their maintenance

well as travel within the planning area should be recommended to the MPO for inclusion as future thoroughfare plans. Often transportation projects are completed with little thought to the impact that they have on surrounding areas, The City should encourage the North Carolina Department of Transportation to be sensitive to the context of areas where new facilities and improvements to existing facilities are to be constructed.

The City should evaluate the current local street network which is typically not included in the regional transportation planning efforts. The City should identify improvements that need to be made to make the local street network within the Core Area safer and more efficient. The city should look at street conditions, street widths, and geometrics of intersections when doing such an evaluation, as these are factors that will facilitate the vitality of the area's older building stock.

The City should make efforts to reduce vehicular congestion by providing alternatives to the automobile. The City should look at its existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the Planning Area and determine a strategy to expand the existing system. These needs should be included in future developments. Plans for future thoroughfares should be included in developer's plans for new development and redevelopment of properties in the area. The City should make efforts to see that bicycle lanes, sidewalks, and landscaping are a part of future thoroughfares and are constructed where appropriate along existing roads. Greenways

should be planned so that they connect areas of density to areas of activities. These routes should be laid out so that they do not interfere with economic activity but compliment such development by providing alternate transportation and recreation opportunities for employees of existing and future establishments.

The existing public transit service should be monitored and changes to existing routes and new routes should be recommended as the demand and density warrants such changes. Transit service should be considered an additional choice and not a ride subsidy program. It should service the areas with concentration of residents or employees, as well as designations for services and retail. When viewed with this in mind, transit can reduce miles traveled and congestion.

The rail line that runs from the main line in Newton to a point south of Maiden should be recognized as an asset to the planning area as well as the region. With industrial sites with rail access along the main line being in short supply, sites along the spur will be a sought after as the use of rail to transport goods increases in demand. While undeveloped sites within the Core Area are virtually non-existent, there are ample opportunities for redevelopment. The increased demand of rail is largely due to the increase in fuel prices which has industry looking for ways to improve the efficiency of receiving raw material and/or shipping finishing goods. This line should be protected and activity that will enhance the viability of this line should be promoted.

POLICY STATEMENTS

- T-1.** In an effort to reduce congestion and maximize capacity of the transportation network, the City should develop an access management ordinance. The ordinance could address driveway spacing and widths; connectivity among adjacent development; and accessibility to streets within the Core Area.
- T-2.** In an effort to reduce the impact that large trucks may have in the Core Area, the City should review the Truck Routes Ordinance as needed to ensure that trucks traveling through the Core Area is minimized to appropriate routes, particularly when conditions change or as new transportation facilities are built.
- T-3.** NC 16 between 5th Street and Boundary Street should not be widened to a five lane cross section as per the Greater Hickory Thoroughfare Plan even though it is near capacity of the existing roadway design. If additional capacity is needed a continuous turn lane should be considered as it would reduce congestion due to left turn conflicts at various intersections and driveways and give the road additional capacity. This will avoid the adverse impact that widening to 5 lanes might cause.
- T-4.** Transportation in the Core should not be limited to the automobile, it should consist of a pedestrian and bicycle network that is focused on mobility and access. This can be achieved by the following:
- a.** The City should develop a detailed plan for pedestrian and bicycles facilities within the Core Area to improve access within the area.
 - b.** The City should require that new development incorporate sidewalks along new streets and existing streets. This should be done to reduce vehicle miles traveled by allowing pedestrian travel between adjoining developments as well as providing recreation opportunities to residents, commuters, shoppers, and employees in the area.
 - c.** Currently, the City requires that land/easements for greenways be dedicated to the City when property along any proposed greenway route is part of a major subdivision. This assists the City in the implementation of its plans for greenways. In addition to the existing ordinance requirements, the City should require that any development and/or redevelopment along any proposed greenway route be required to construct and dedicate the portion of green way on their property to the City.
 - d.** The City should recognize the vision of Catawba Valley Heritage Alliance's (CVHA) Heritage Trail Plan and work with them to implement their plan which includes trails and sidewalks throughout the City and the Planning Area. The City should work with CVHA to develop a long term plan which does not include

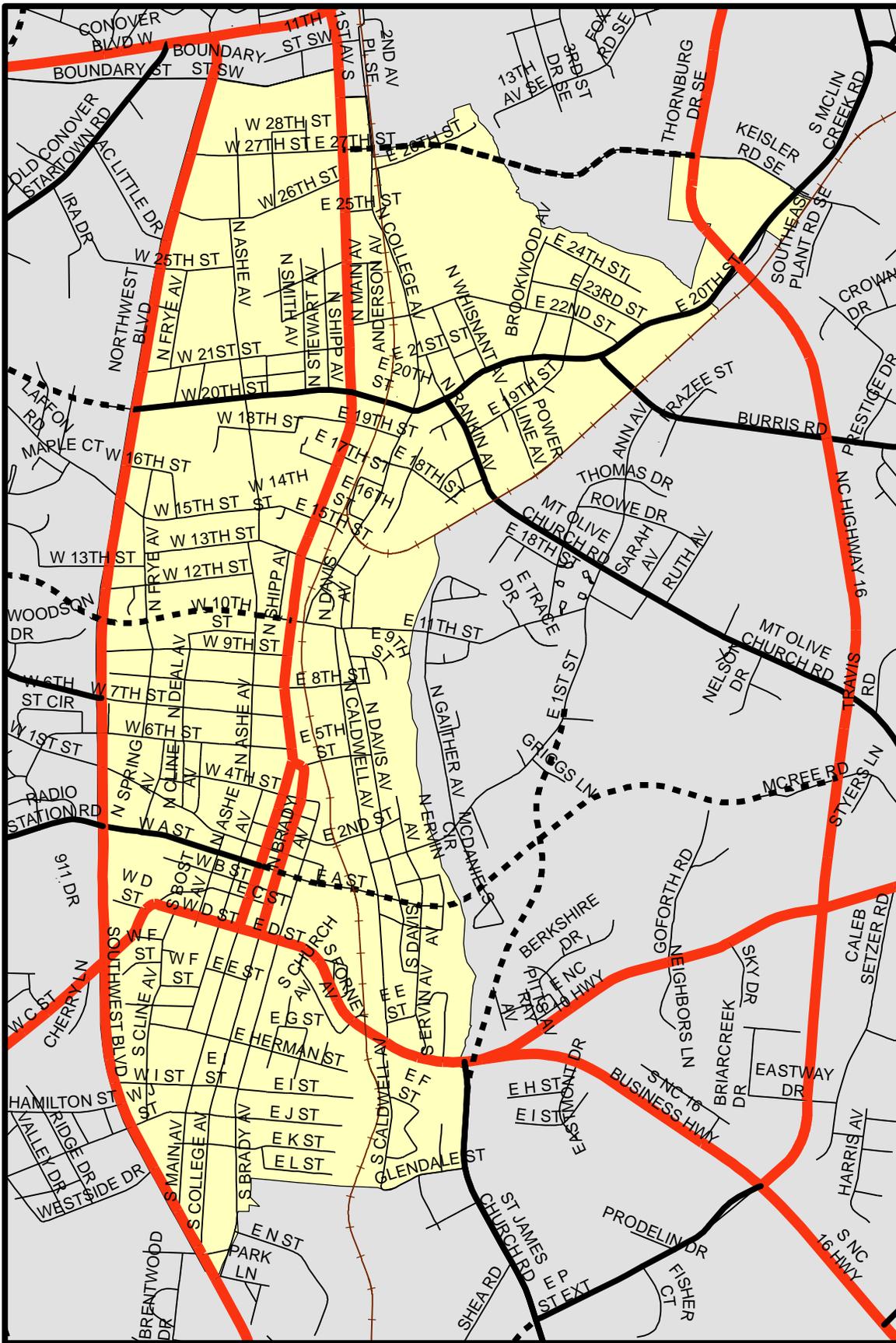
the use of the rail road right of way, while there are merits to using abandoned rail road right of way as trails; this is not a viable long term solution if the rail line is to be returned to service in the future.

e. Existing sidewalks within the Core Area should be in good repair, clear of trip hazards and other obstructions, and free from the encroachment of trees, shrubs, and noxious weeds to insure that they are safe for use. The City should educate property owners to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities to ensure their trees and shrubs do not impede pedestrians along adjacent sidewalks. In addition the City should prepare a maintenance and operation plan to ensure that the existing sidewalks within the Core Area are in maintained in a condition of good repair.

T-5. The City should monitor services that the Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority provides and recommend changes to routes and services as density and demand warrant. Services should not be limited to fixed route but could include such options as van pooling and shuttle service between various destinations and a fixed point on the existing transit route. This would allow the employers in the area to have access to a broader pool of potential employees and would allow the employee the opportunity to have an additional choice in how to travel to and from work.

T-6. The City should recognize the importance of the rail line that runs through the Planning Area and protect the integrity of that line so that rail service can be provided to sites within the Core Area. The availability of rail freight could decrease the use of trucks to haul freight, which could eliminate congestion and other negative impacts associated with truck freight..

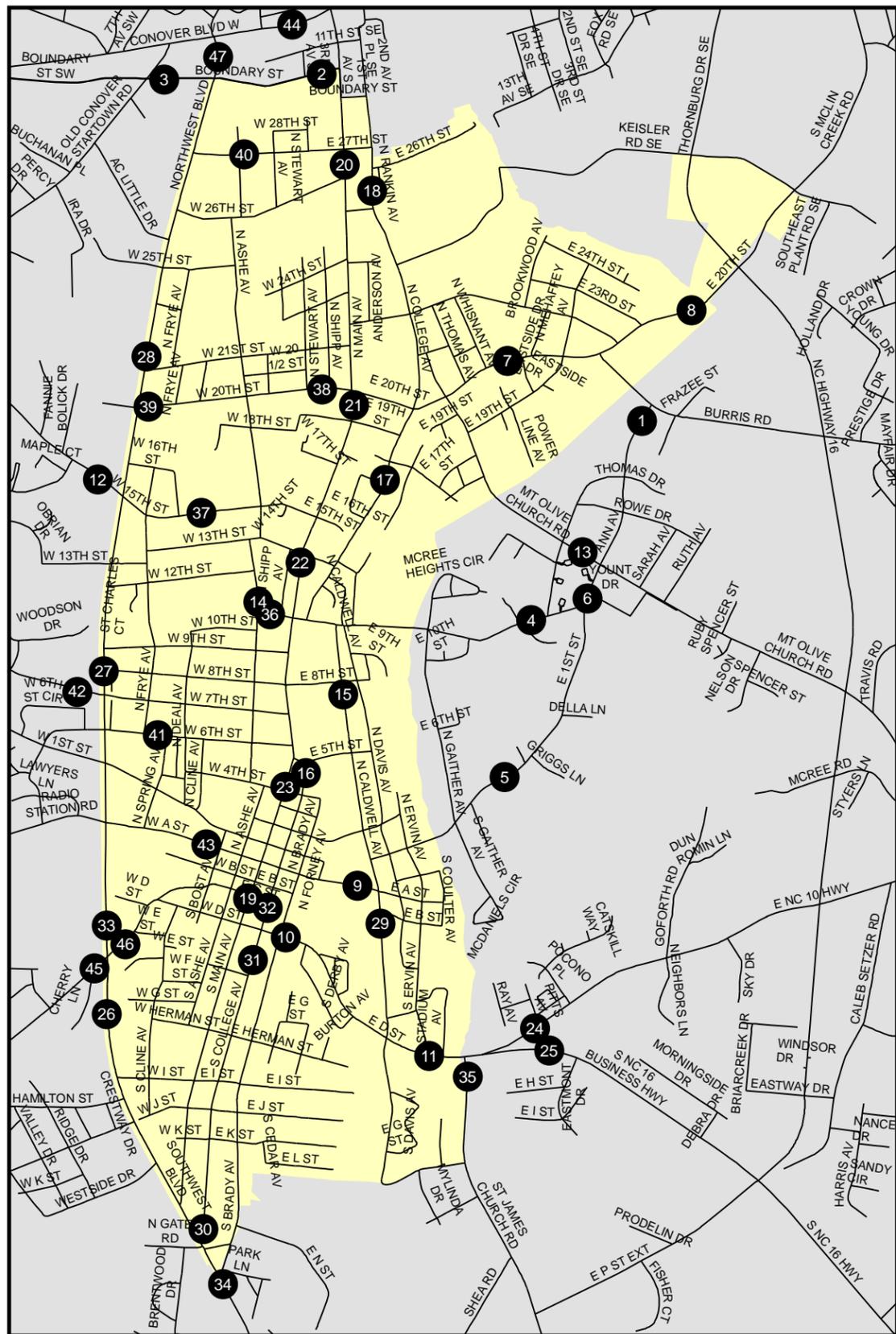
Core Area Street Classifications



Legend

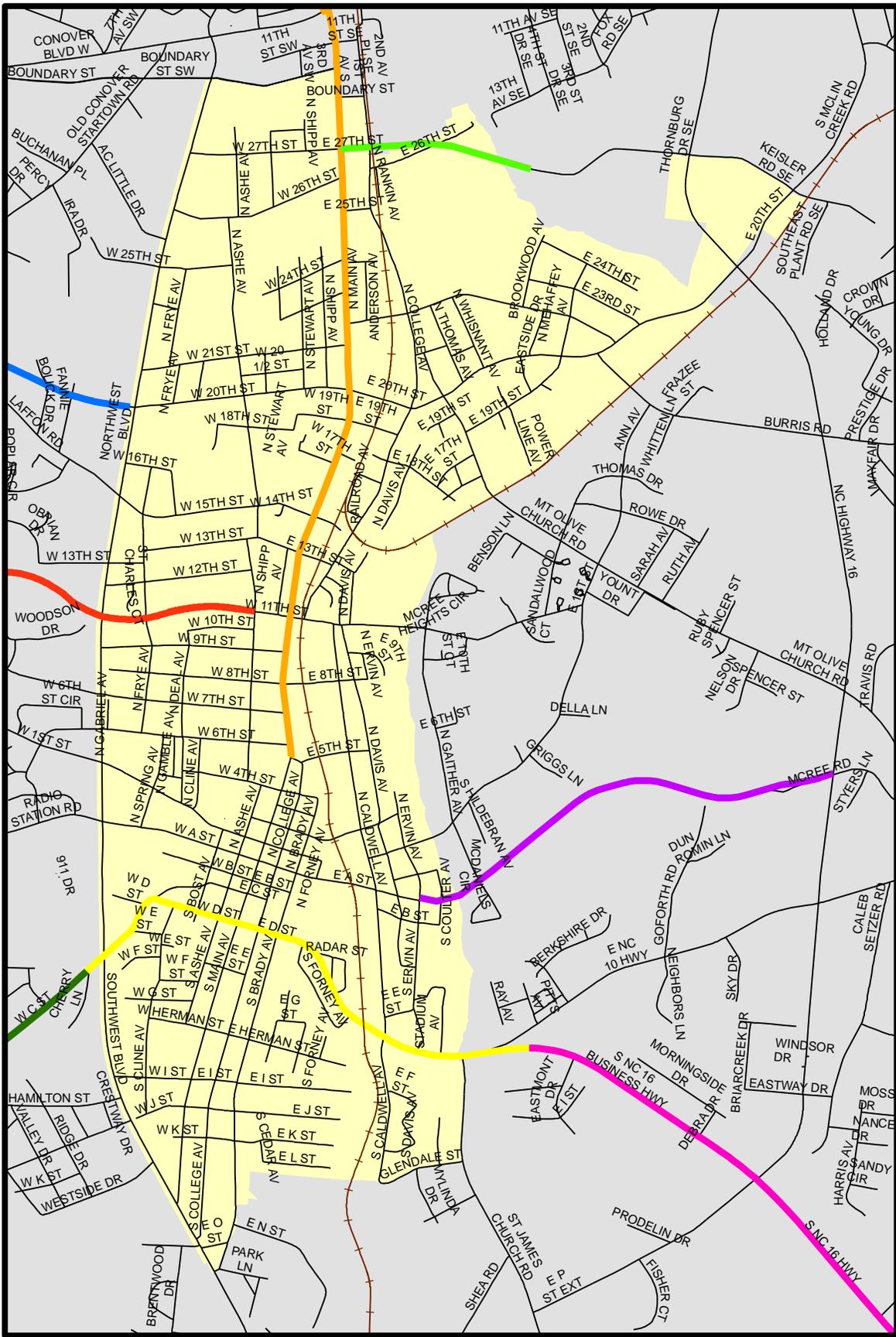
- Existing Arterials
- Existing Collectors
- - - Future Collectors
- Core Area Boundary
- Local Streets
- Rail Roads


 0.5 Miles



Map Number	Street	1992	1994	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005
1	Ann Ave.	1,900	1,900	2,000	1,800	1,900	2,200	2,400
2	Boundary St.	N/A	1,900	2,100	2,200	2,000	1,900	2,000
3	Boundary St.	N/A	3,700	3,700	4,000	4,200	4,500	4,200
4	E 11th St.	1,300	1,300	700	1,100	1,300	1,200	1,100
5	E 1st St.	1,900	1,800	1,700	2,100	1,400	1,500	1,400
6	E. 1st St.	3,300	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
7	E. 20th St.	5,600	5,600	6,600	5,600	6,100	6,100	5,800
8	E. 20th St.	6,100	6,100	6,700	6,300	6,200	6,400	6,400
9	E. A St.	2,200	2,200	2,300	2,400	2,100	2,000	1,900
10	East D St.	13,600	17,700	15,400	14,000	13,000	15,000	14,000
11	East D St.	15,500	17,800	16,300	15,000	15,000	16,000	N/A
12	Laffan Rd.	1,800	1,900	2,000	2,100	2,400	2,600	2,500
13	Mt Olive Church Rd.	6,200	5,500	7,000	5,900	5,800	5,700	5,600
14	N. Ashe Ave.	1,800	1,700	1,500	1,300	1,400	1,500	1,200
15	N. Caldwell Ave.	2,800	2,600	4,500	2,400	2,600	2,500	2,200
16	N. College Ave.	3,900	4,300	4,000	3,400	3,000	3,000	3,000
17	N. College Ave.	N/A	3,300	3,200	2,900	3,000	3,100	2,900
18	N. College Ave.	3,900	4,000	4,100	3,900	3,700	9,200	3,400
19	N. Main Ave.	5,400	5,800	N/A	4,400	3,100	3,100	3,400
20	N. Main Ave.	9,600	N/A	11,100	9,700	9,500	9,400	9,500
21	N. Main Ave.	9,300	10,300	10,500	9,100	8,800	8,600	8,500
22	N. Main Ave.	8,900	10,000	9,900	10,000	7,900	8,100	8,000
23	N. Main Ave.	5,400	5,400	5,100	4,200	3,800	3,800	3,800
24	NC 10 E	3,500	3,300	N/A	3,300	4,500	3,600	4,000
25	NC 16 S	11,900	11,900	N/A	9,900	9,800	9,800	9,400
26	Northwest Blvd.	9,700	10,900	11,600	11,000	11,000	13,000	12,000
27	Northwest Blvd.	14,200	N/A	19,200	18,000	20,000	N/A	20,000
28	Northwest Blvd.	16,900	N/A	21,300	21,000	22,000	N/A	N/A
29	S. Caldwell Ave.	4,200	4,100	N/A	3,200	3,400	3,500	3,000
30	S. College Ave.	900	1,200	1,000	780	610	690	700
31	S. College Ave.	1,400	1,500	1,200	980	870	950	1,000
32	S. College Ave.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,000
33	Southwest Blvd.	17,100	N/A	19,000	19,000	20,000	23,000	21,000
34	Southwest Blvd.	8,900	N/A	9,900	9,800	9,900	11,000	11,000
35	St James Church Rd.	3,900	4,200	3,600	2,700	3,200	3,500	4,600
36	W. 11th St.	1,100	1,400	1,200	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,000
37	W. 15th St.	1,600	2,100	2,100	2,000	1,900	2,000	2,100
38	W. 20th St.	8,300	9,600	9,300	8,700	9,500	9,200	9,000
39	W. 20th St.	N/A	7,800	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
40	W. 27th St.	1,700	1,900	1,800	2,500	1,800	1,800	1,500
41	W. 6th St.	1,300	1,200	1,000	1,000	920	990	980
42	W. 7th St.	5,600	6,800	6,500	5,800	5,800	5,800	5,600
43	W. A St.	4,700	4,700	5,200	4,200	5,000	5,400	5,300
44	W. Conover Blvd.	12,500	13,500	14,100	16,000	12,000	14,000	14,000
45	West C St.	7,900	7,200	8,500	9,300	9,400	12,000	9,900
46	West C St.	10,100	9,800	11,700	11,000	11,000	12,000	12,000
47	Northwest Blvd.	16,700	N/A	21,700	21,000	21,000	N/A	N/A

Core Area Transportation Improvements



Legend

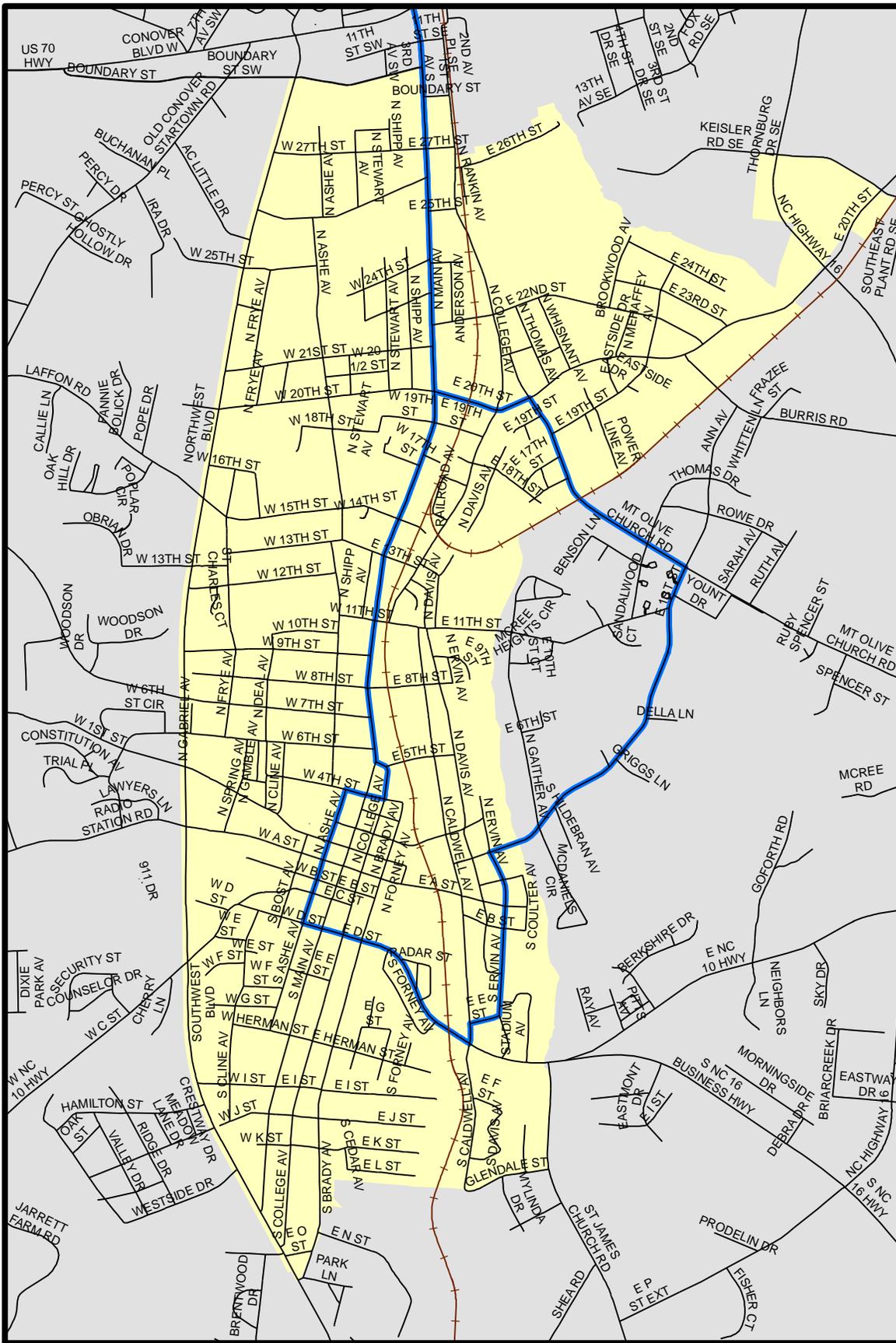
- Catawba Valley Blvd Extension
- East A Street Extension
- Keisler Road Extension
- NC 10 Widening to 4 Lanes with Median
- NC 16 Widening to 5 lanes
- NC 16 Widening to loop and beyond
- Southern Corridor
- Core Area Boundary



0.5

Miles

Core Area Transit Routes



Legend

- Core Area Boundary
- Greenway Transit Routes



0.5

Miles

MAP 2-5

Chapter 3 Utilities

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Water service is provided to the area by the City of Newton, which uses the Jacob Fork River as its water source and treats 3.2 million gallons per day (mgd). The water plant has an 8 mgd capacity. The water system is not just a distribution system; it also supports the City's Fire Department by providing water for fire suppression which is available in the form of fire hydrants located within the Planning Area.

The water system within the Core Area consists of 58.1 miles of lines, which is 30.9% of the entire system. During the period starting January 1st, 2007 to October 15th, 2009, 60% of the water leaks that have occurred system wide have occurred in the Core Area. This is likely due to the age of the portion of the system that is within the Core Area. The Core Area contains approximately 9 miles of water line that is less than 6 inches in diameter. To meet the standards set by the International Fire Code, a hydrant has to be fed by a 6 inch line or larger. The location of the water lines and hydrants within the Core Area as well as lines which are less than 6 inches in diameter is shown on **Map 3-1, Water System**.

Sewer service is available to most of the Core Area with trunk lines located within the Hildebran Creek, Town Creek, Snow Hill Branch, and McClin Creek basins. The location of the sewer lines within the Core Area are

shown on **Map 3-2, Sewer System** is treated at the Clark Creek Waste Water Plant which treats 2.25 million gallons per day (mgd) and has a capacity of 5 mgd. The apparent capacity that is remaining is more than half; however when that is adjusted for the allocated capacity and those entities' usage (the city has allocated space to Conover and several Significant Industrial Users), this capacity is 1.05 mgd and 0.487 mgd respectively.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

Utility accessibility can be a factor in dictating where new development occurs, specifically commercial, industrial, and higher density residential. Utilities can be used as a tool to guide growth to areas where higher intensity development is desired as well as a tool to pace development so that it occurs at the appropriate time. In addition, utilities need to be sized appropriately for current demand as well as anticipated future development. In most of the Core Area water and sewer lines are already in place, however the capacity of the existing lines could limit development that could take place in certain areas. It is possible that constraints of the water and sewer system could be more limited than the existing zoning. Land use decisions and Economic Development efforts should be tied to capacity in addition to other considerations.

The capacity of the sewer mains and outfalls in the area needs to be monitored and as capacity reaches 50% plans to increase the capacity of the line should be made. The biggest threats to capacity are the deteriorating condition of existing sewer lines, particularly the terracotta lines and infiltration. 43.1 miles of the 50.4 miles of sewer lines are terracotta which is prone to tree roots growing into and through the joints, which eventually cause blockages and overflows. The location of the terracotta lines within the Core Area are shown on **Map 3-2, Sewer System**.

Infiltration happens when stormwater and/or groundwater enter the sewer system; and once it enters the sewer system it must be treated. As a result of infiltration the capacity of the waste water treatment plant and the sewer lines are reduced.

40% of the system was studied in 2004, to determine the condition of the system and the amount of extraneous flow entering into the sanitary sewer system. The Study area was the southwest portion of the City's Sewer System which consists of the portion of the Core Area that is west of Main Avenue and east of Hildebran Creek. The report estimated that infiltration and inflow was in excess of ½ million gallons, which is ½ million gallons that the City currently treats, that it would not have to treat otherwise.

The capacity of the Waste Water Treatment Plant should be monitored as well and when the city's unallocated capacity decreases to less than 20%; then the City will need to make

plans to increase treatment capacity according to guidelines established by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

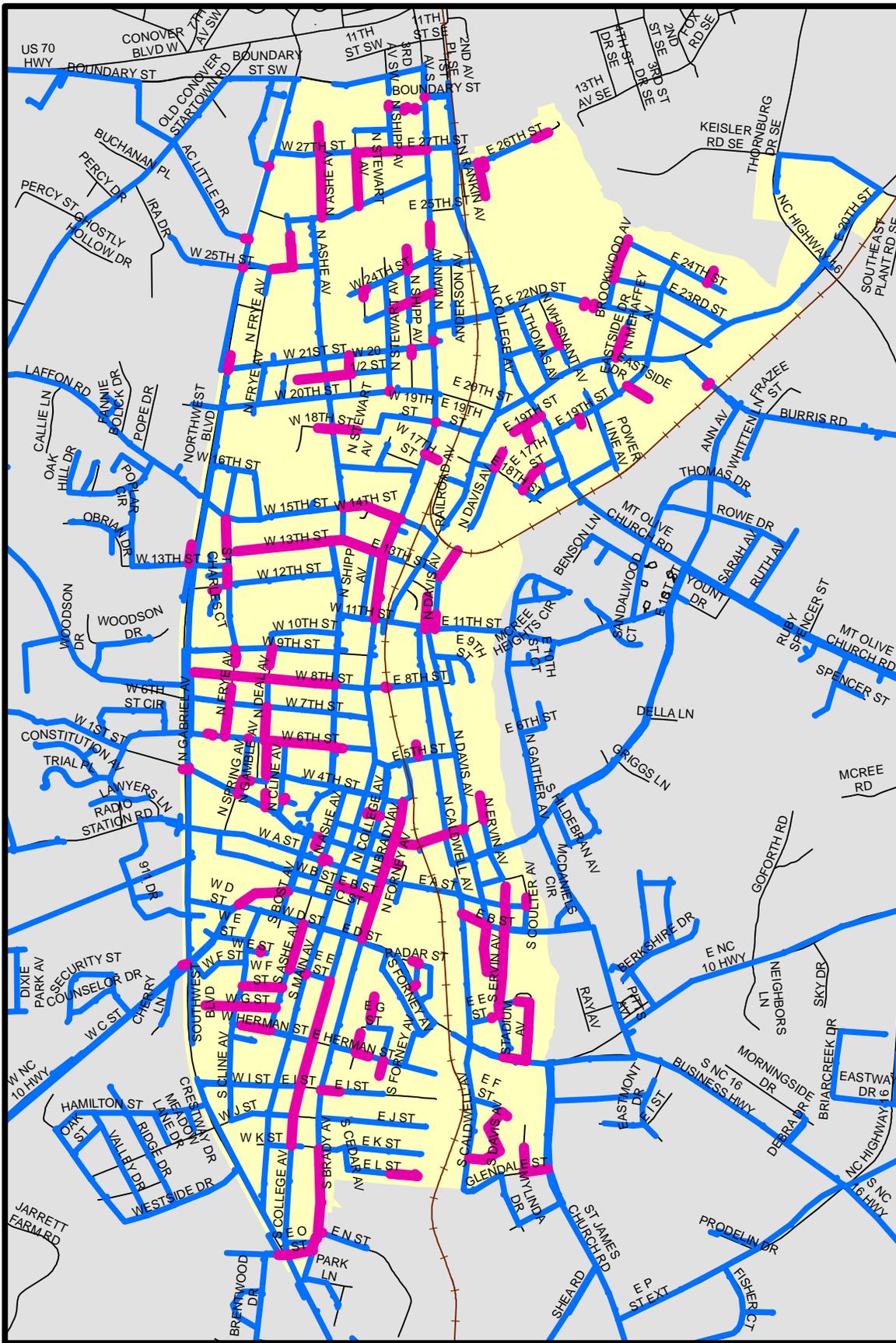
POLICY STATEMENTS

- U-1.** Land use intensity within the Planning Area should be dependent upon the accessibility of utilities and should be reflective of **Map 7-3, Future Land Use**.
- U-2.** The City should develop a comprehensive utility plan for the Core Area which would address the following:
 - a.** Identifying deficiencies in the water and sewer system, which would include lines that are deteriorated, undersized, and redundant, so that a true cost of replacement and repairs can be calculated and used to make informed decisions regarding the water and sewer system within the Core Area.
 - b.** Determining the capacity of the water and sewer system within the Core Area, this would include identifying the capacity of lines and associated facilities such as the plants servicing the systems, storage, and pumping facilities. Plans to increase or replace lines should begin when the capacity of the lines reaches 50%. Plans to increase the capacity of the Waste Water Treatment Plant and the

Water Treatment Plant should begin when the quantity of waste water and water treated exceeds 80% of the permitted capacity.

c. Marketing sites for development and redevelopment within the Core Area that have access to adequate utilities in an effort to grow the number of users of the City's water and sewer system without the need for costly system expansion..

Core Area Water System



Legend

- Water Lines
- Lines less than 6" in Diameter
- Core Area Boundary

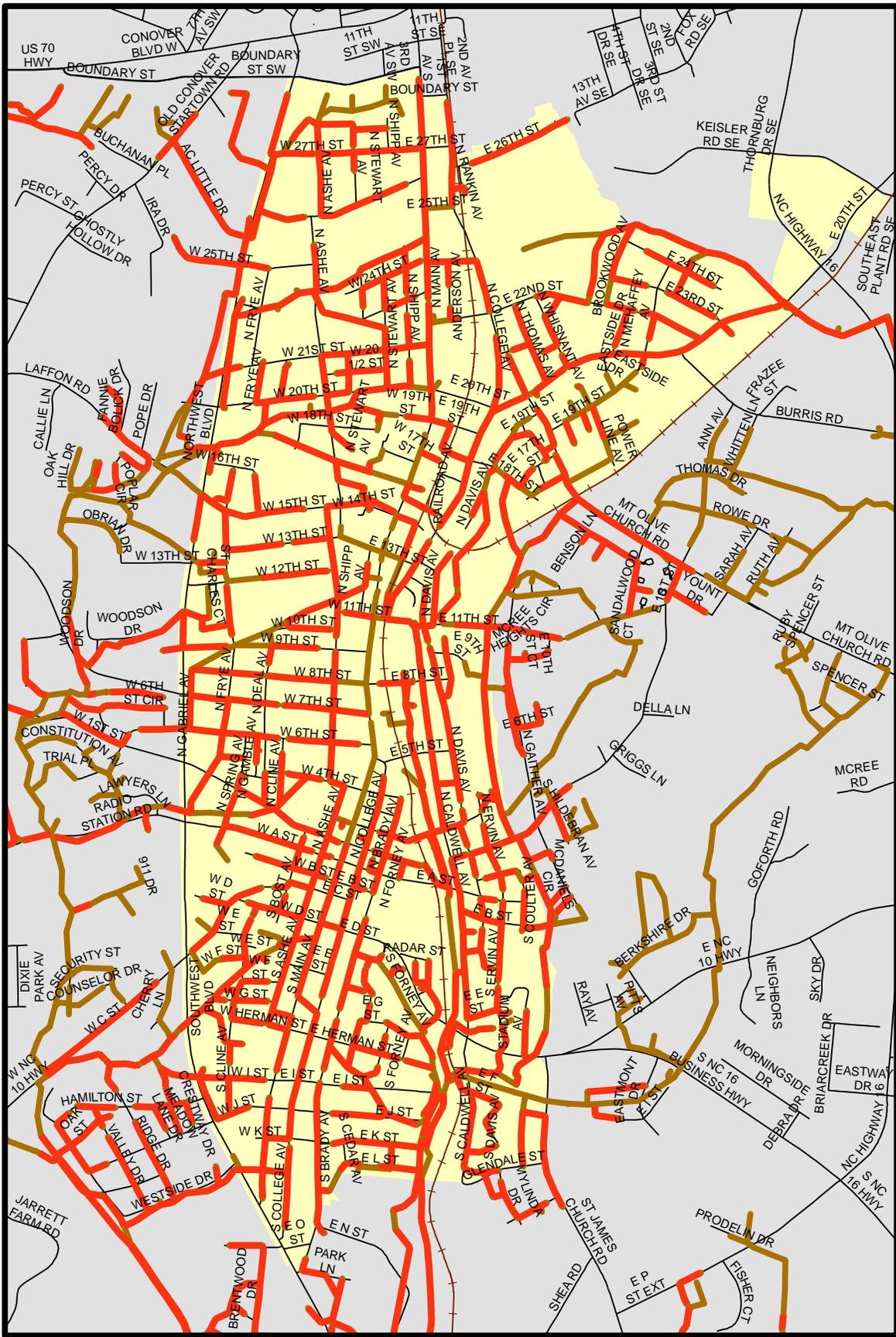


0.5

Miles

**MAP
3-1**

Core Area Sewer System



Legend

- Terracotta Sewer Lines
- sewer lines
- Core Area Boundary

0.5 Miles

Chapter 4 Economic Development

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Core Area is the City's most developed industrial and commercial area with a majority of the building stock being built prior to the 1950's. This has resulted in aging building stock and infrastructure, as well as conflicts between land uses.

INDUSTRIAL

The Core Area contains two distinct major industrial districts, one which is oriented along the main line and spur rail line, one that is located in the northern portion of the Core Area, and several other smaller minor districts that are scattered throughout the Core Area, as shown on **Map 4-1, Industrial Areas**. The rail oriented industrial district contains 1,472,336 square feet of manufacturing facilities with the average year built of the buildings being 1965. The non-rail industrial district contains 665,473 square feet and the average year built being 1972. The other smaller manufacturing districts contain a cumulative total of 52,281 square feet and the average year built is 1956. Most of the industrial space regardless of district originated as space for hosiery, textiles, or furniture manufacturing.

COMMERCIAL

The primary commercial areas within the Core Area, as shown on **Map 4-2,**

Commercial Areas fall into three categories Downtown Commercial District, Neighborhood Commercial Districts, and Commercial Corridors.

DOWNTOWN AND DOWNTOWN FRINGE COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

The downtown commercial district consists of the area that is bordered by East 5th Street on the north, East D Street on the south, Bost Avenue on the east, and Brady Avenue on the west. The fringe includes the commercial area extending westward along West A Street to 321 Business and the commercial area that extends to the east and west along D Street, including what was the old Yount Lumber Property which is located in the northeastern quadrant of the intersection of East D Street and South Brady Avenue. The Downtown area consists of 57.1 acres and the fringe area consists of 23.2 acres. The Downtown provides 1,430,892 square footage of office, commercial, and institution space of the projected 5,619,052 square feet of floor area that could be provided under the current zoning ordinance. The fringe provides 66,624 square footage of office, commercial, and institution space of the 356,167 square feet of space that could be provided under the current zoning ordinance. While vacancy information was not available, a large quantity of the second floor space of the two story buildings in the downtown

area is unoccupied and has been for a number of years.

Downtown Newton historically has been the location of County Government functions, as Newton is the county seat. However within the last 30 years most of the County Services have relocated out of the Downtown to the County Government and Justice Center located just west of US 321 Business and to other locations more central to the population center of Catawba County.

The Downtown serves as a central location for financial, insurance, and professional services; specialty retail; cultural facilities; and a number of City of Newton Government facilities. The western fringe along West A Street serves as an extension of downtown providing much of the same services as the Downtown and the eastern fringe along East D Street provides neighborhood oriented commercial and services to the surrounding residential areas.

The Downtown is designated as a North Carolina Main Street, which is a program administered by the North Carolina Department of Commerce to promote downtown revitalization based on economic development within the context of historic preservation, a concept developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation that has proven successful in more than a thousand smaller communities across the country. The North Carolina Main Street program helps towns to recognize and preserve their historic fabric, and, using

local resources, build on their unique characteristics to create vibrant central business districts that meet the needs of today's communities. The downtown has an active downtown development association which is active in the Main Street program.

North Rankin, South Caldwell, and North Newton Neighborhood Commercial Districts

The Core Area consists of three (3) neighborhood commercial districts which are as follows: North Rankin, a nodal district centering around the intersection of East 20th Street and North Rankin Avenue; South Caldwell, a nodal district centering around the intersection of East D Street and South Caldwell Avenue; and North Newton, which is generally bound by 13th Street to the North, 11th Street to the South, North College to the East, and North Ship Avenue to the West.

The North Rankin Neighborhood District contains 9.5 acres. The area provides 11,815 square feet of office, commercial, intuitional space of 122,332 square feet that is allowed by the existing zoning ordinance. The district is anchored by a convenience store and provides a variety of neighborhood services.

The South Caldwell Neighborhood District contains 3.5 acres. The area provides 14,602 square feet of office, commercial, intuitional space of 41,192 square feet that is allowed by the existing zoning ordinance. The district is anchored by a

convenience store and provides a variety of neighborhood services.

The North Newton Neighborhood District contains 8.4 acres. The area provides 57,052 square feet of office, commercial, intuitional space of 155,638 square feet of floor area that is allowed by the existing zoning ordinance. The district is anchored by a convenience store and provides a variety of neighborhood services. In addition to the neighborhood services that the district provides, there also are three auto service facilities located within the North Newton Neighborhood District that have a wider market that extends beyond the adjacent residential area. Within the district is the Newton Depot, which was moved to its current location. It serves as train museum and meeting space.

North Main Avenue and US 321 Business Commercial Corridors

The Core Area contains two commercial corridors which are the North Main Avenue Commercial Corridor which extends from the 1600 block of North Main to Boundary Street and the US 321 Business Corridor which extends from West 27th Street to a point just South of the West C Street Intersection.

The North Main Avenue Commercial Corridor contains 38.3 acres. The area provides 159,649 square feet of office, commercial, intuitional space of 756,098 square feet that is allowed by the existing zoning ordinance. The majority of the uses with in the North Main Avenue

Commercial Corridor have a Neighborhood market.

The US 321 Business Commercial Corridor contains 69.5 acres. The area provides 400,295 square feet of office, commercial, intuitional space of 1,176,631 square feet that is allowed by the existing zoning ordinance. Only the eastern portion of the US 321 Commercial Corridor is inside the Core Area. The majority of the uses within the North Main Avenue Commercial Corridor have a more regional market.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

Buildings built for manufacturing during the time period that the majority of the buildings in the Core Area were built do not meet the standards typically required by modern manufacturing practices and equipment.

Older manufacturing buildings offer a challenge for owners who compete with owners of newer industrial buildings in finding tenants for their facilities. Often times the owners of the older buildings are only able to get tenants that need space for warehousing or only a fraction of the space offered. By not being able to capture market rate for manufacturing space, this limits the property owner's abilities to invest in their property to make improvements.

Diversity is an important aspect of economic development in an area's economic base because it keeps the local economy from completely collapsing when

a particular industrial sector such as furniture or textiles suffers or declines. While the area has existing diversity, efforts should be focused toward attracting more diverse industry to replace the shrinking textile and furniture sector. Recruitment efforts should be targeted to the industry sectors designated in the **Newton Strategic Economic Development Plan.**

Efforts should be focused on quality growth instead of growth just for the sake of growing. Quality development will increase the stability of the tax base in the area as well as make the area more attractive for investment for both existing and new industries. Flexible regulations need to be in place to accommodate the needs of existing industries as well as attract targeted industries.

Access is paramount in the decision to locate a new business and expand existing business. The Core Area has good north/south access; however access is limited east to west especially between the Core Area and the newly complete Highway 16 and Startown Road. The Core Area has the advantage of having rail service within the planning area, which offers an alternative to truck freight to move goods and materials to and from facilities within the area. Efforts should be made to preserve these modes of access and capacity of these links.

While the function of the transportation network is important, the appearance of the network should be aesthetically pleasing. Providing landscaping at key

points will help create locations that will attract quality development.

The City's Commercial Districts are underutilized as there is large quantity of space allowed by the City's Zoning Code compared to the amount of existing usable space. This indicates that there is more Commercial zoned property than there is demand for commercial zoned property. With the Supply being larger than the demand, these areas could be used for undesirable and marginal uses, that would otherwise be located where land is cheaper.

POLICY STATEMENTS

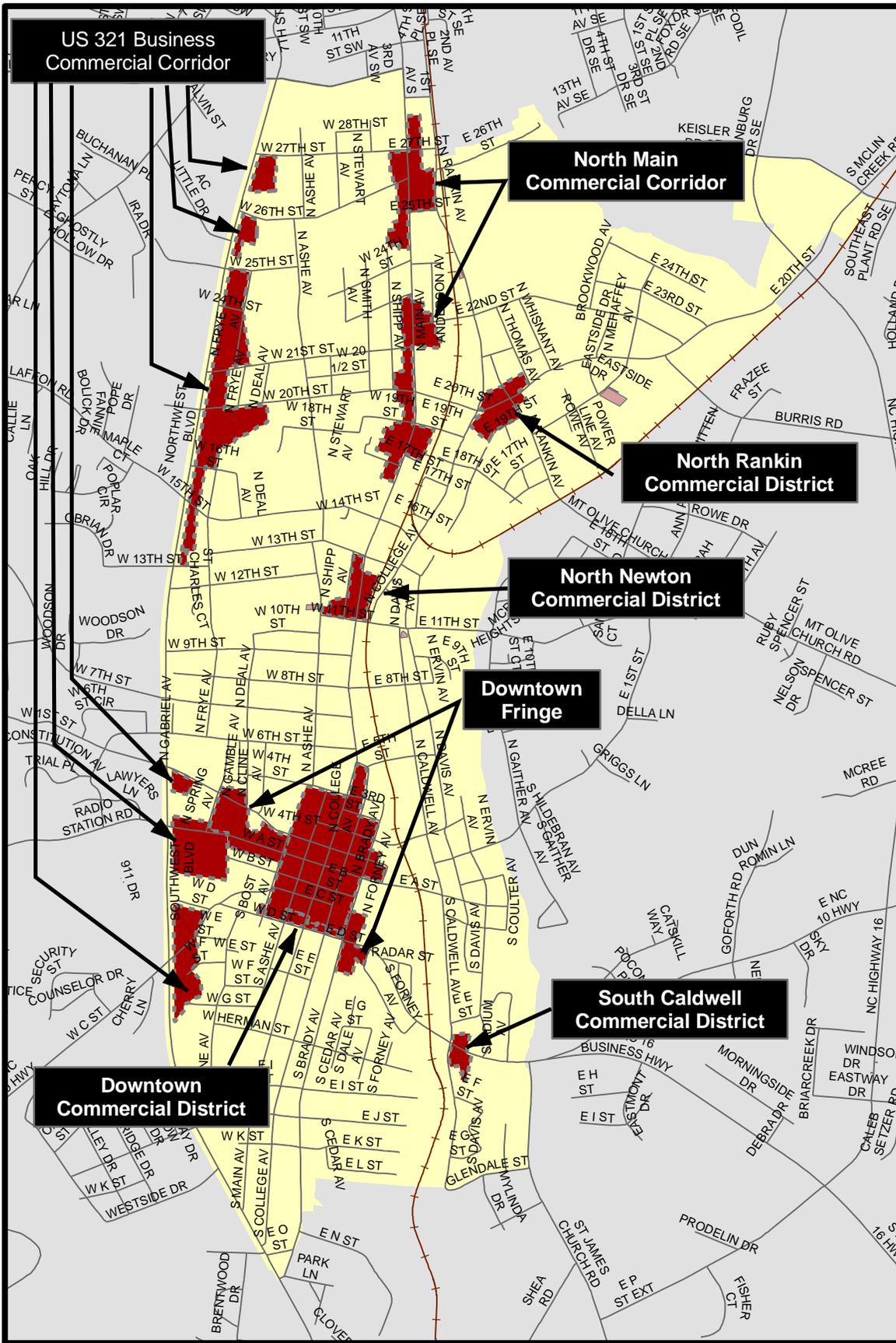
- ED-1.** Regulations should be developed which will encourage high quality development by requiring well designed industrial and commercial facilities that contribute to community character and incorporate strong architectural contributions to the community's character. This initiative could assist the City in attracting and retaining businesses; which could increase the Core Area's tax base and assist in offsetting the City's investment in the operation and maintenance of infrastructure and utilities.
- ED-2.** The City in cooperation with the County's Economic Development Commission should focus on recruiting business and industry that have minimum environmental

impacts to the quality of the air and water in the Core Area.

- ED-3.** The rail road and spur that runs through the Core Area should be preserved to insure that as demand for rail increases that sites with rail access within the area will be available to meet that need.
- ED-4.** The City should develop a landscaping plan that will place landscaping at key locations within commercial and industrial areas to create aesthetically pleasing routes to and from facilities within the area.
- ED-5.** The City should review all applicable City Ordinance and policies so that older manufacturing facilities can be utilized in a manner that is safe; effective; and efficient as opposed being left vacant and/or underutilized.
- ED-6.** Neighborhood Business Districts within the Core Area should be evaluated and studied to determine if the uses allowed, locations established, and size of these districts are appropriate. Recommendations with regards to the allowed uses, location, and size should be implemented following the study
- ED-7.** In an effort to encourage investment in the Core Area the City should explore the possibility of starting a Business Incubator to encourage entrepreneurship and startup of

new businesses. This could have either a manufacturing focus or a commercial focus. A commercial focused incubator could be located within the Downtown area and be a way to grow businesses that could occupy downtown space once they mature. A manufacturing focused incubator could be located in any of the manufacturing areas located within the Core Area and occupy space within one of the manufacturing areas when they mature.

Core Area Commercial Areas



Legend

- Major Commercial Districts
- Minor Commercial Districts
- Core Area Boundary



0.5

Miles

Chapter 5 Environment

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Core Area contains portions of four major drainage features and are shown on **Map 5-1, Hydrology and Topography**. These are Hildebran Creek, Town Creek, Snow Hill Branch, and McClin Creek basins. Hildebran Creek is located to the west of the planning area, and drains 1,143.2 acres or 53% of the Core Area. Town Creek drains a portion the eastern part of the planning area and drains 427.1 acres or 19% of the planning area. Snow Hill Branch drains the far southeastern portion of the planning area and drains 210.4 or 9.7% of the planning area. McClin Creek flows northeast of the Core Area, and drains 390.1 acres or 18%. The drainage from Hildebran Creek, Snow Hill Branch, and Town Creek flows into Clark Creek and eventually into the South Fork of the Catawba River. The drainage from McClin Creek flows into Lyle Creek then to the main stem of the Catawba River.

In 1972, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program was established under authority of the Federal Clean Water Act and then delegated to the North Carolina's Division of Water Quality for implementation within the State. Phase I of the NPDES stormwater program was established in 1990, and it focused on site and operations planning to reduce pollutant sources. Phase I covered six (6) municipalities with populations of 100,000 or more that owned or operated a

municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4). In 1998, Phase II of the program was created, coverage was expanded to smaller municipalities with populations less than 100,000 which are located in urban areas and own or operate an MS4, which included the City of Newton. The City of Newton applied for and was issued a Stormwater Permit under the Phase II NPDES program. The City is required to address the six (6) minimum program elements, which are Public Education and Outreach; Public Involvement and Participation; Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination; Construction Site Runoff Controls; Post-Construction Site Runoff Controls; and Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations. The Plan applies to the Core Area, as well as the rest of the City's jurisdiction. As a part of the permit, the City has adopted a post construction stormwater ordinance which requires that sites that disturb more than one (1) acre have to implement a stormwater management plan to treat the first inch of stormwater run-off from the site. The stormwater management plan is for stormwater quality and not stormwater quantity.

During the most recent Flood Study done by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in 2006, a 100 year flood plain was established along Hildebran Creek, Town Creek, and McClin Creek. 52.1 acres within the Core Area Plan is located within the 100 year flood plain.

The Catawba County Soil Survey has identified the prominent soils in the planning area as being the Cecil and Hiwassee series, which are suitable for development. There are some small pockets of Congaree, Chewacla, and Worsham series soils which are limiting to development. These soils are located in or along creeks and streams; and are prone to flooding and have poor drainage.

The elevation in the planning area ranges from 846 feet above sea level, located near where the Rail Spur exits the Planning Area to the South to 1,048 feet above sea level, which is near the intersection of North College and East 22nd Street. This is a difference in elevation of 202 feet which is reflective of the area's rolling topography.

The Core Area is scattered with stands of hardwood and evergreens among the existing development. These stands of trees are reflective of the trees that grace the streets and yards within the Core Area.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has set national air quality standards for six common pollutants, also referred to as "criteria" pollutants. These criteria pollutants are ozone, fine particle matter, lead, sulfur dioxide, carbon dioxide, and carbon monoxide. The Unifour area currently exceeds the standards for fine particle matter at the 2.5 micron level. Measures that states and localities may be required to take to control ozone pollution may include stricter controls on emissions from industrial facilities, additional planning requirements for transportation sources or other

programs like gasoline vapor recovery controls. A nonattainment designation does not mean that the area must curb its growth nor does it mean the loss of highway funds - two common myths associated with ozone and fine particle matter designation. The Unifour has been pro-active regarding air quality improvement efforts since 2000 when the area first learned that ozone levels may violate new standards. The Unifour Air Quality Committee (UAQC) meets monthly to address air quality issues. In December, 2002, the UAQC developed an Early Action Compact (EAC) agreement that was signed by all four counties, six municipalities, the NC Dept. of Environment and Natural Resources (NCDENR) and the US EPA. The intent of the EAC is for the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the Unifour Area to be developed sooner, the control measures implemented sooner and the 8-hour standard achieved in a more expeditious manner than under the normal SIP development timeline. The EAC implemented by the UAQC was successful in achieving the 8-hour ozone standard and is still working on the PM 2.5 issue currently.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

Efforts should be made to protect and preserve the water quality of Hidebran Creek, Town Creek, and McClin Creek and their respective tributaries. While there are no reported problems with Hidebran Creek, Town Creek, Snow Hill Branch, and McClin Creek; Hidebran Creek Snow Hill Branch and Town Creek

are tributaries to Clarks Creek which is listed as an impaired stream on the Federal Environmental Protection Agency's Draft 2008 Impaired Stream List as well as past list. Threats to water quality include but are not limited to storm water run-off from existing and new construction; failing septic tanks; unregulated point source discharge; and reduction of existing vegetation which stabilizes stream banks and filters out some pollutants. The impact of these threats should be minimized if not eliminated as they influence the amount of total suspended solids. The City's post-construction stormwater ordinance and erosion control ordinance regulates new development and redevelopment within the Core Area, which addresses most of the stormwater issues that would be generated by new development and redevelopment; however it does not address existing development. The City needs to gather samples in an effort to establish baseline data of streams within the study area so that specific problem areas can be identified.

In addition to stormwater quality, care should be given so that quantity issues associated with stormwater are minimized. This can be achieved by requiring new development and redevelopments to detain stormwater on their site and discharge the volume at a reduced rate to minimize the impact of the stormwater discharge.

The City maintains storm sewers throughout the Core Area; however the locations of the stormwater system that is City maintained, is limited to street right of

ways. Typically, the stormwater that is collected along a section of street is discharged at a low point within the City's Right of Way. This discharged stormwater flows along a path of least resistance to point where it enters a creek or stream. Due to an increased amount of impervious surface as a result of development and redevelopment, stormwater volume may increase to a quantity which is greater than the carrying capacity of the pipe, ditch, or other means of conveyance and cause localized flooding. The City does not have a scheduled maintenance program for its stormwater system, nor does it have dedicated staff for system repairs and maintenance. Maintenance and repairs on the stormwater system is performed as needed and is limited to projects within the City's easements and right of ways.

Care should be given to minimize flood hazards by respecting established 100 yr. flood plains through adherence to the FEMA Guidelines as well as the City of Newton Zoning Ordinance. In following and abiding by those regulations, flood hazard impacts can be minimized. In addition, wetlands should be protected because they are an important part of the local ecosystem in that they provide food and shelter to local wildlife; cleanse and recharge the local water table; and control flood waters.

Dense and diverse development patterns should be encouraged where appropriate in an effort to reduce the amount of time that residents of the planning area as well as those who work, play, and do business in the planning area spend on the road,

thus reducing the amount of particulate matter, ozone and other mobile source pollutants emitted into the environment. Although it is not practical to eliminate the automobile as a mobility option, efforts should be made to develop alternative modes of transportation, whether it is to recreate or to replace a trip that would be made ordinarily by automobile. Efforts should be made to reduce emissions of not only the automobile but other sources that deteriorate the quality of the air. Consideration should be given to the types of uses that will locate in the planning area. Efforts should be made to insure that new uses as well as existing uses are considerate of their surroundings and to the extent feasible, minimize their impact on neighboring uses by reducing or mitigating sources of light, noise, air, water, and other types of pollution.

POLICY STATEMENTS

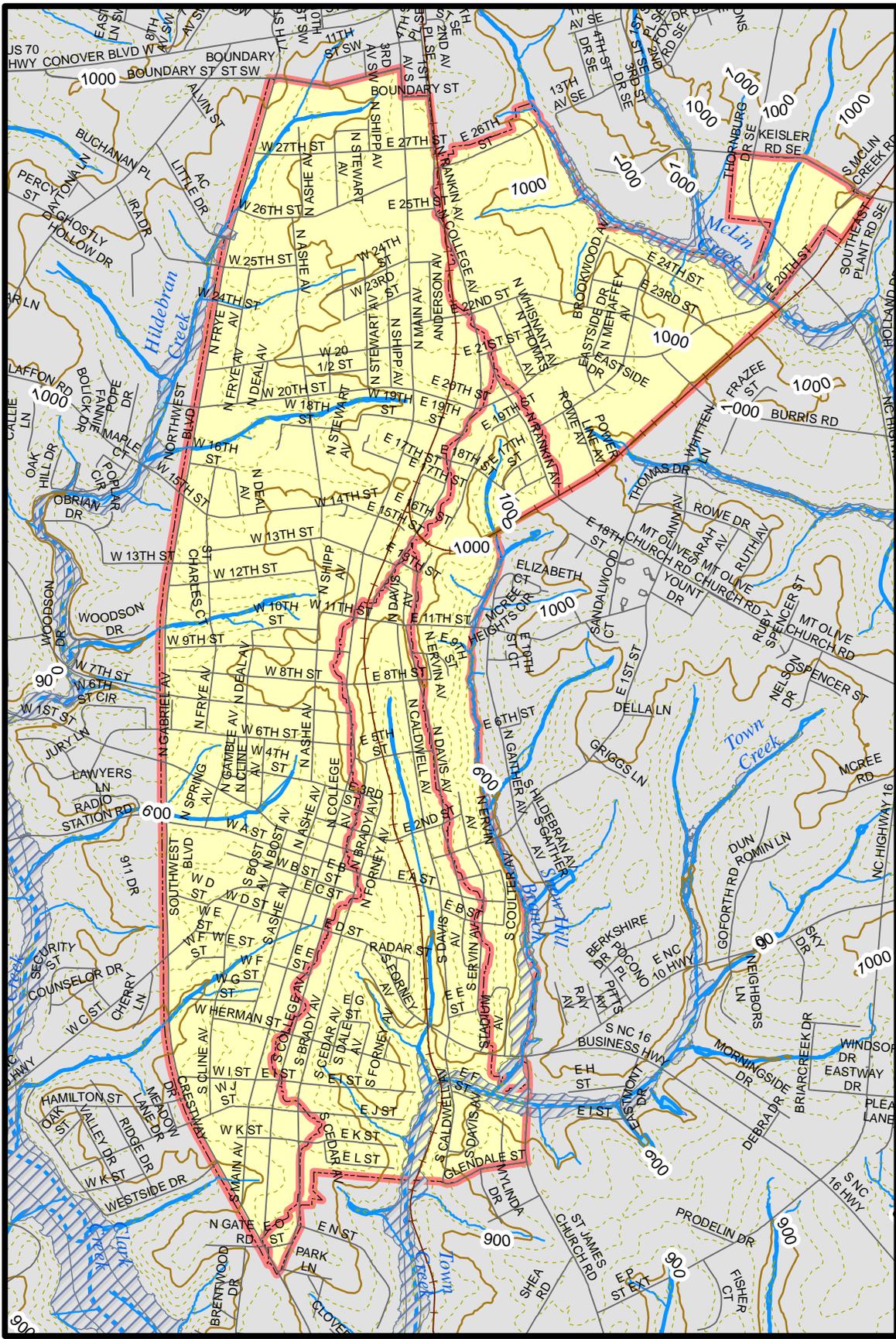
- EV-1.** Pedestrian and bicycle amenities, such as sidewalks, greenways, and bike lanes should be constructed to connect residential areas to schools, parks, employment, retail, and other residential areas in an effort to decrease the number of vehicular trips per day. Motor vehicle exhaust is a source of oxides of nitrogen and volatile organic compounds, which when exposed to sunlight can cause a chemical reaction that creates ozone.
- EV-2.** Flood Plains within the Core Area should be used as opportunities for passive recreation and active recreation as needed. Uses other than

open space, recreation, or greenways should be discouraged from being located within flood plains.

Development in flood plains eliminates the natural vegetation which filters out impurities and uses excess nutrients as water flows through the flood plain to the water body.

- EV-3.** The City should review its list of permitted uses and impose limits on those that adversely impact air and water quality. In addition the City should adopt an incentive policy that recognizes the importance of business that have minimum impact on the environment.
- EV-4.** The water quality in the Clarks Creek Watershed is regional in nature as the watershed extends across the jurisdictions which include the municipalities of Hickory, Conover, Newton, and Maiden; as well as Catawba and Lincoln Counties. The City should work with all jurisdictions located within the Clarks Creek Watershed to address the water quality issues.
- EV-5.** Stormwater issues are not limited to water quality concerns. The City should review and revise its stormwater related ordinances and policies to ensure that increases in stormwater volume due to development and redevelopment are manageable, as increases in storm water volume can be a burden on public and private infrastructure.

Core Area Hydrology and Topography



Legend

- 20' contour lines
- 100' contour lines
- 100yr Flood Plain
- Drainage Basin Boundary
- Water Features
- Core Area Boundary

0.5 Miles

N

Chapter 6 Community Character

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Core Area is 83% developed, it is the densest area of development within the City’s Planning Jurisdiction. The Core Area is more than twice as dense as the portion of the City outside the Core, see the table below.

Core Area Density Comparison			
	Core Area	City of Newton	City excluding the Core Area
2000 Population	5,659	12,659	7,000
2000 Area (In Square Miles)	3.4	13.1	9.7
Density (Persons per Square Mile)	1664.4	966.3	721.6

The housing stock ranges from homes that date back to the establishment of the City in 1855 to new homes and apartments being recently built, with the average year built being 1953. In 1960 single family homes accounted for 95% of the housing stock. 62% of the 956 dwelling units built within the Core Area since 1960 has been townhouse, apartments, or manufactured housing. As a result, the number of single family homes in the Core Area currently is 74% of the 2,528 existing dwelling units.

Most of the Core Area was developed prior to World War Two and includes a diverse mix of land uses common to urban areas that were developed prior to the dominance of the automobile. Commercial and industrial uses were often located in close proximity to residential uses, making it convenient for

people to get to jobs and to acquire necessary goods and services. Much of this original pattern of development has been maintained within the Core Area.

The Core Area contains a number of structures that have historic significance. The following sites are on the Nation Register of Historic Places:

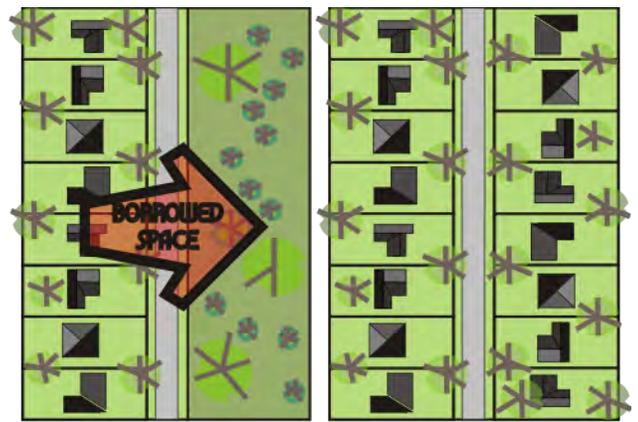
- Long, McCorkle and Murray Houses
- North Main Historic District
- Grace Reformed Church
- Self-Trott-Bickett House
- Foil-Cline House
- 1924 Court House

The following are buildings and areas with local historic significance according to the Catawba County Historical Association:

- The Old Newton-Conover High School
- The area that includes the location of the Old Catawba College and surrounding homes
- The Old Post Office
- Downtown Newton, specifically the buildings facing the square
- The Newton Depot
- The North Newton Commercial District

Signs are a part of doing business within the planning area just as they are anywhere. On-premises signs are located in front of industrial, commercial, and institutional facilities within the planning area. The City's Zoning Ordinance regulates size, height and placement. The height however is the same as the maximum height for structures and in some case could exceed 35 feet. Billboards occupy spots along NC Highway 16 Business and US 321 Business. Billboards are permitted in other locations within the planning area and high-traffic sites are desirable targets for these types of signs. In addition to billboards, other off-premise signs known as directional signs are often clustered around intersections pointing the way to businesses and other points of interest; while helpful they can often be distracting and potentially unsafe in that they could pose a problem with sight distance.

The Core Area contains Little Brook Park, Yount Park, Eastside Park and Northside Park which the City of Newton owns and operates. These facilities for provides for recreation and open space needs for the Core Area as well as the City as a whole. Other than the City Parks, there other park-like spaces that residents of the Core Area enjoy. This space may be owned by an individual, corporation, non-profit, or other government agency but it is not owned by the City. These areas may be developed or redeveloped and additionally access to these locations may be restricted or prohibited.



An illustrated example of “Borrowed Space” and what happens when the “Borrowed Space” is developed.

Figure 6-1 Borrowed Space

This might include playgrounds, play fields and/or open space around any of the schools or churches within the Core Area. This is also considered “Borrowed Space” and is illustrated in **figure 6-1**. It is open space but only while in its present state. When development in these locations occur this open space is lost.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

The built environment should be seen as a lasting legacy not just as a place to live or do business. New development should be attractive and developers should be considerate of what is around them as well as the potential of what could be built nearby. Development should be affordable but not at the cost of the residents in the area. Focus should be placed on type of materials, building placement, signage, landscaping and the character of the surrounding area.

Development or redevelopment activity in areas that are established or infill development needs to be sensitive to its context in terms of style, form, setbacks, bulk, and other features of the adjoining built environment. **Figure 6 -2** shows an example of a ranch home between two bungalow style homes. The ranch is not similar in style or character.



Figure 6-2 Infill Development

Existing structures within the area should be maintained. Property owners should be required to maintain their properties to a minimum level. Regular maintenance of buildings and properties adds to the aesthetic appeal of a property or area and can ultimately maintain and increase the stability and value of the property and surrounding area. The City, which owns and operates several facilities in the Core Area should be required to maintain their facilities so that they do not detract from the surrounding area.

The preservation of historic structures, both those on the National Historic Registry and those of local significance should be encouraged. Maintaining and protecting such structures is important from an historical perspective but also give the Core Area sense of place, as often newer buildings lack the character of those built in the past.

Although the automobile is the dominant form of transportation in the area and will be for the foreseeable future, effort should be made to reduce trips and provide alternatives. Connectivity of streets and adjacent development should be required as property develops and redevelops.

Sidewalks and greenways should be planned for and built as development and redevelopment occurs. In addition, new developments and redevelopment should be made to provide connection to the sidewalks and greenways in order to provide safe pedestrian access to and from buildings on site, the adjacent street, parking facilities, and adjacent development.

NC Highway 16, NC Highway 16 Business, and Highway 321 Business should be recognized as not only being invaluable for transportation within the Core Area and City; but as gateways into the City from areas to the north and south. While the appearance of the entire Planning Area is important, extra care should be given to ensure that the motorist traveling into Newton through the Planning Area see Newton and the Core Area in its most appealing light.

Parks and open space should be viewed by the City as infrastructure, just as is water and sewer. It is an amenity that in some cases can be provided by an entity other than the City; however there is no guarantee that the open space remains undeveloped or accessible to all Citizens in the Area.

POLICY STATEMENTS

CC-1. The City should develop regulations that require connectivity and

interconnectivity in new developments and redevelopments within Core Area. This will reduce the impact on the existing transportation system.

- CC-2. The City should require sidewalks to be constructed along both sides of all new streets and along existing streets for abutting new development. The City should require that greenways be constructed in all new development at locations as shown on **MAP 4, Pedestrian & Bicycle Facilities.**
- CC-3. The City should lobby the North Carolina Department of Transportation to include sidewalks, bike lanes, and landscaping on all projects within the planning area when these new or upgraded transportation facilities are recommended by this or other Planning documents.
- CC-4. The City should develop a design manual to serve as a guide for developers to build projects that are pedestrian friendly.
- CC-5. The City should consider revising *The 2001 Parks and Recreation Master Plan* to evaluating the need for parks within the Core Area. Also the revised plan should include recommendations on protecting and the preservation of openspace within the Core Area.
- CC-6. The City should adopt specific ordinance language to prohibit new billboards within the planning area.

CC-7. The City should create a way finding program, so that signs directing motorist to public facilities within the Core Area is consistent and uniformed.

CC-8. The City should explore the possibility of redeveloping the Old Public Works facility as a greenway park. Such a facility could serve to bridge the perceived barrier that is the rail road tracks by having connection to the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. The park could also have a wet detention pond which would provide a water feature for the park as

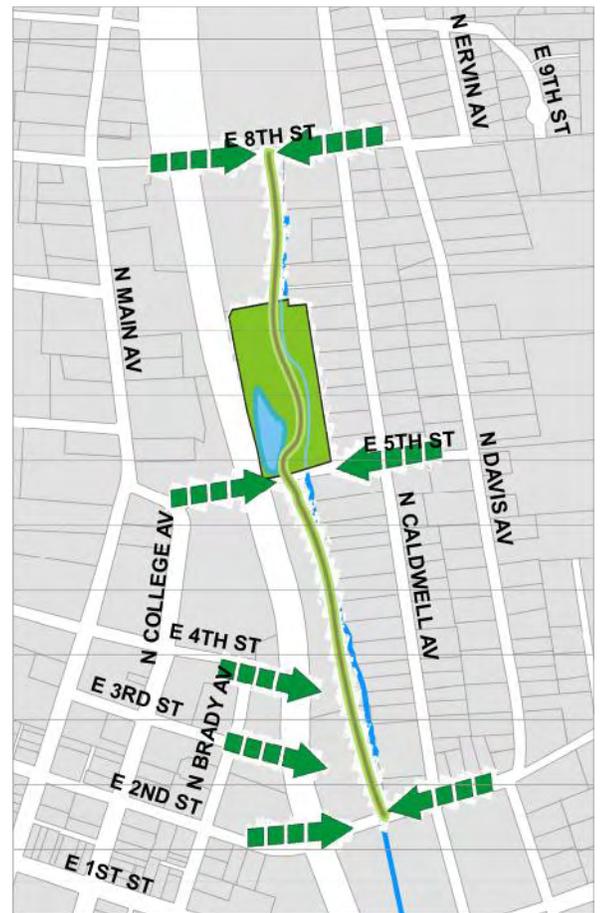


Figure 6-3 Concept plan for the Old Public Works facility

well as providing cleaner stormwater. A concept plan is shown on **Figure 6-3**.

CC-9. The City should develop appearance criteria for industrial, commercial, and residential developments that address type of materials, building placement, signage, and landscaping to insure that new development and redevelopment is compatible to its surroundings. This is important as the planning area experiences more “infill” development.

CC-10. The City should recognize that NC Highway 16, NC Highway 16 Business, and Highway 321 Business are often the first view or the only view that motorists have of the City. The City should develop a streetscape plan that will address landscaping, hardscaping, and other street improvement along these three corridors.

CC-11. The City should assist owners of Historic Properties in pursuing inclusion on the National Registry of Historic Places. In addition the City should support and encourage the efforts of property owners whose property is included within Historic Districts on National Registry of Historic Places in creating regulations for those historic districts.

CC-12. The City should install screening at its property and facilities within the Core Area where appropriate, specifically the Public Works Complex and the Old Public Works Facility, so as to reduce the

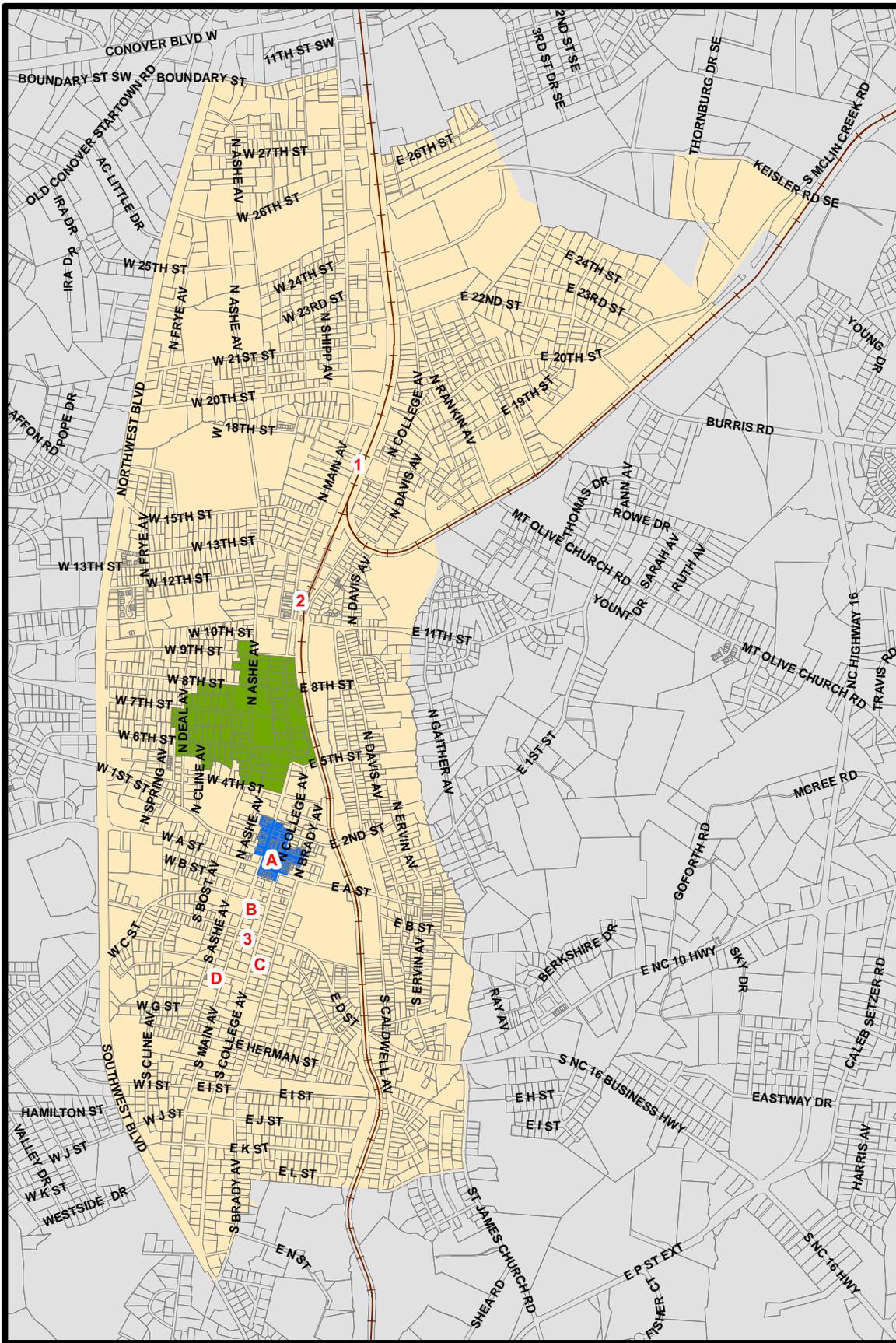
negative visual impact that those facilities have on nearby residents.

CC-13. The City should consider developing programs to improve the overall appearance of the Core Area which will encourage property owners, absentee landlords, residents and businesses to better maintain their property.

CC-14. The City should be more proactive in the enforcement of the Zoning, Nuisance, Junked Vehicles, and Minimum Housing Ordinances. Particular attention should be given to the maintenance of screening between divergent land uses and the screening of dumpsters and mechanical equipment.

CC-15. The City should identify maintenance and construction needs associated with its streets, sidewalks, drainage system, water system, and sewer system and address those identified issues based on availability funds and needs. Also the City should encourage residents, property owners, and businesses to report issues related to City Infrastructure to make the City aware, so that the City can address those issues as needed. The City should be aware of the perceived disparity of amenities when making infrastructure related decisions, as some residents within the Core Area believes that location dictates the City’s investment or lack of investment in the construction and maintenance of infrastructure

Core Area Historic Resources



Legend

NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC SITE

- A 1924 Court House
- B Grace Reformed Church
- C Self-Trotter Bicket House
- D Foil-Cline House

LOCAL HISTORIC SITE

- 1 Newton Depot – Original Location
- 2 Newton Depot – Present Location
- 3 Old Catawba College

DISTRICTS

- Long, McCorkle and Murray District
- North Main Avenue Historic District
- Potential Downtown Historic District

Core Area Boundary

0.5

Miles



MAP
6-1

Chapter 7 Land Use

EXISTING CONDITIONS

With most of the Core Area being developed prior to Mid-1940s, the area contains a diverse mix of land uses which is common to urban areas that developed during the same time period. The table below shows the existing land use by acreage and percent of the total area and is shown on **Map 7-1, Existing Land Use**.

LAND USE BY TYPE		
Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Residential	869.3	40.2%
Right of Ways	386.5	17.9%
Vacant Land	376.6	17.4%
Manufacturing	189.2	8.8%
Government & Civic	174.6	8.1%
Commercial	95.0	4.4%
Office & Institutional	70.0	3.2%
Total	2,161.2	100.0%

Residential

The predominant land use in the Planning Area is residential, which accounts for 40% of the total land area. Single family homes account of 74% of the 2,528 housing units in the Core Area. The majority of the single family homes were built prior to 1980s, single family construction increased by 6% between 1980 and 2009. The number of Apartments grew by 150% between 1980 and 2009 and accounts for 22% of the

total housing stock. The average age of all the housing units in the Core Area is 56 years. Related to the age of the structure the Core Area's average tax value for a Single Family House, Town House, and Manufactured Housing is \$87,000, \$67,000, and \$66,000, respectively. This is considered affordable based on the average household income for the Core Area, which is \$36,000.

NEWTON ZONING BY DISTRICT		
District	Acreeage	% of Total
Residential Zoning		
R-7	171.9	9.7%
R-7A	210.1	11.8%
R-9	386.9	21.8%
R-11	315.9	17.8%
R-20	49.2	2.8%
R-20A	7.3	0.4%
PD-H	39.6	2.2%
sub-total	1180.9	66.4%
Office and Institutional Zoning		
P-1	9.1	0.5%
sub-total	9.1	0.5%
Commercial Zoning		
B-1	15.0	0.8%
B-2	8.7	0.5%
B-3	43.1	2.4%
B-4	95.5	5.4%
PD-SC-C	6.5	0.4%
PD-SC-M	8.3	0.5%
sub-total	177.1	10.0%
Industrial Zoning		
M-1	221.6	12.5%
EM-1	119.4	6.7%
PD-IP	70.3	4.0%
sub-total	411.2	23.1%
Total Zoning	1778.3	100.0%

66% of the Core Area is zoned residential; however residential uses are allowed by right in 90% of the Core Area.

Commercial

95 acres, about 4% of the Core Area is used for commercial purposes. 177 acres, about 10% of the Core Area is zoned for commercial uses. The Commercial areas are shown on **Map 4-2, Commercial Areas**.

Industrial

Industrial uses account for 189 acres, roughly 9% of the Core Area. 20% of the zoning within the Core Area is industrial zoning for a total of 411 acres. Companies that have facilities within the Core Area, includes Lee Industries, Polymask, and Moretz. The Industrial areas are shown on **Map 4-1, Industrial Areas**.

Office & Institutional

Office and Institutional uses account for 3% of the Core Area for a total of 70 acres. Only 9 acres is zoned Office and Institutional; however office and institutional uses are not limited to office and institutional zoning.

Government & Civic

Government and Civic uses account for 174 acres of land. The Core Area's government and civic uses are shown on **Map 7-1, Existing Land Use**.

Vacant Land

376 acres or 17% of the total land area is vacant, much in small parcels scattered

throughout the Core Area. In some locations, the vacant land is not suitable for development due to steep slopes and drainage ways.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

Residential density should be based on availability of sewer and water; existing land use characteristics; and proximity to transportation and employment centers. This will enable the City to maximize existing facilities and plan for future needs as well as providing for a broad range of housing types within the planning area.

Commercial and industrial development should be located as shown on **Map 7-3, Future Land Use** and consideration should be given to availability of existing and proposed utility and transportation infrastructure. Care should be given to integrate commercial uses into the community maximizing accessibility and function as well as minimizing any adverse effects such uses might have on adjacent land uses.

Industrial facilities should be located in areas as shown on **Map 7-3, Future Land Use** and consideration should be given to the availability of existing and proposed utility and transportation infrastructure. The development, redevelopment, and reuse of existing facilities should be in a manner that maximizes the building or sites potential and reduces the adverse effect that such a facility/use might impose on the adjoining properties.

POLICY STATEMENTS

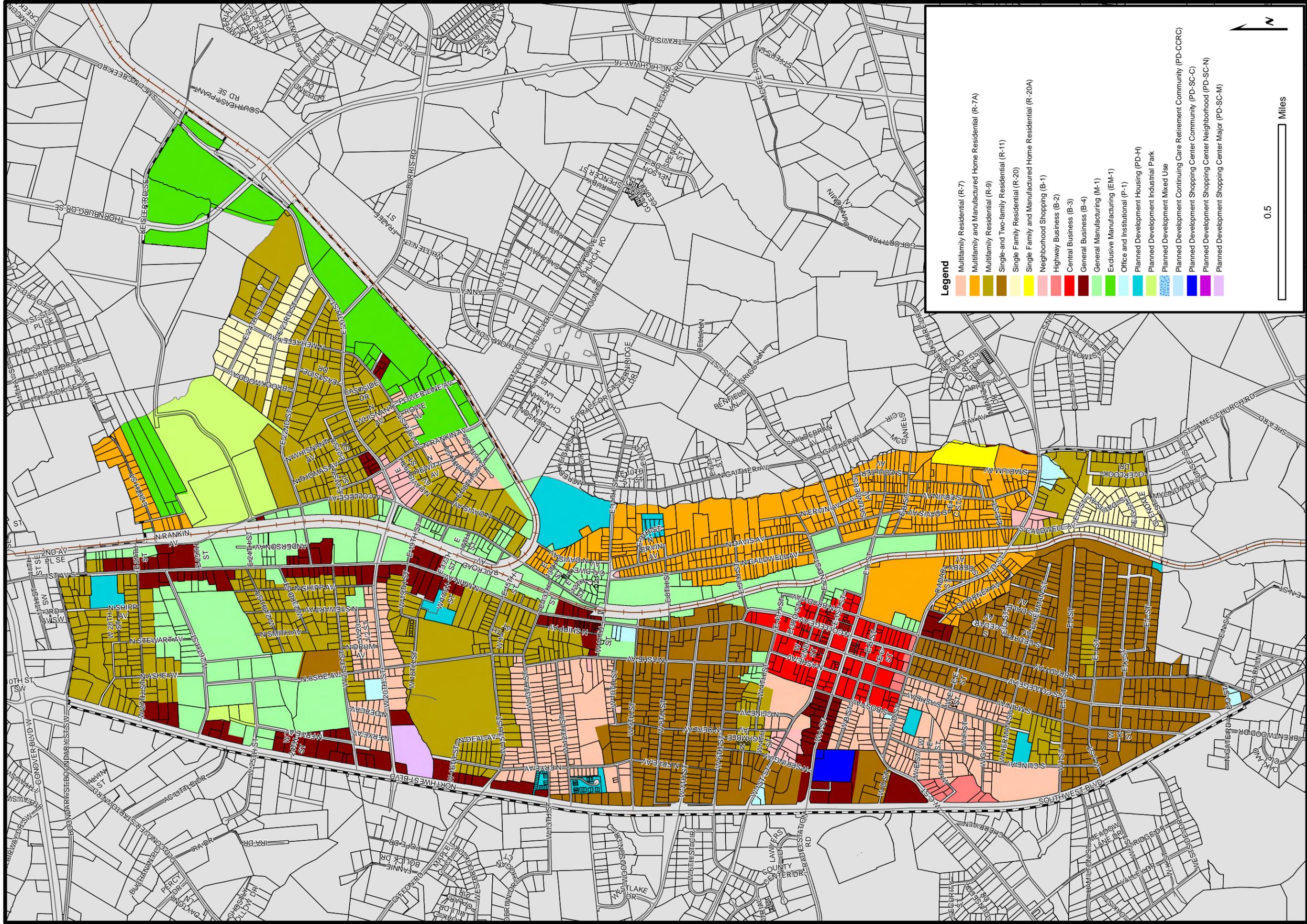
- LU-1.** Land use within the Planning Area should reflect the land uses and densities as shown on **Map 7-3, Future Land Use**. This map should serve as guidance when land use decisions are considered. Consideration of individual uses are as follows:
- a. Residential densities should be based upon the impact on existing land use patterns, availability of adequate utilities and proximity to major roads. A mixture of housing types should be encouraged to be placed in close proximity to industrial and commercial areas. The variety of housing types along with higher density provisions should support opportunities for affordable housing.
 - b. Commercial districts are to be nodal in nature as opposed to stripped out development. These areas as delineated are shown to complement existing land use patterns as well as taking into consideration existing land use activities. Commercial land use should be located in areas designated as **Commercial; mixed-use --residential and commercial; and mixed-use – industrial, commercial, and residential**.
 - c. Industrial land uses should be limited to the areas identified as **industrial** and those areas identified as **mixed-use – industrial, commercial, and residential**. The locations identified are traditional locations for manufacturing within

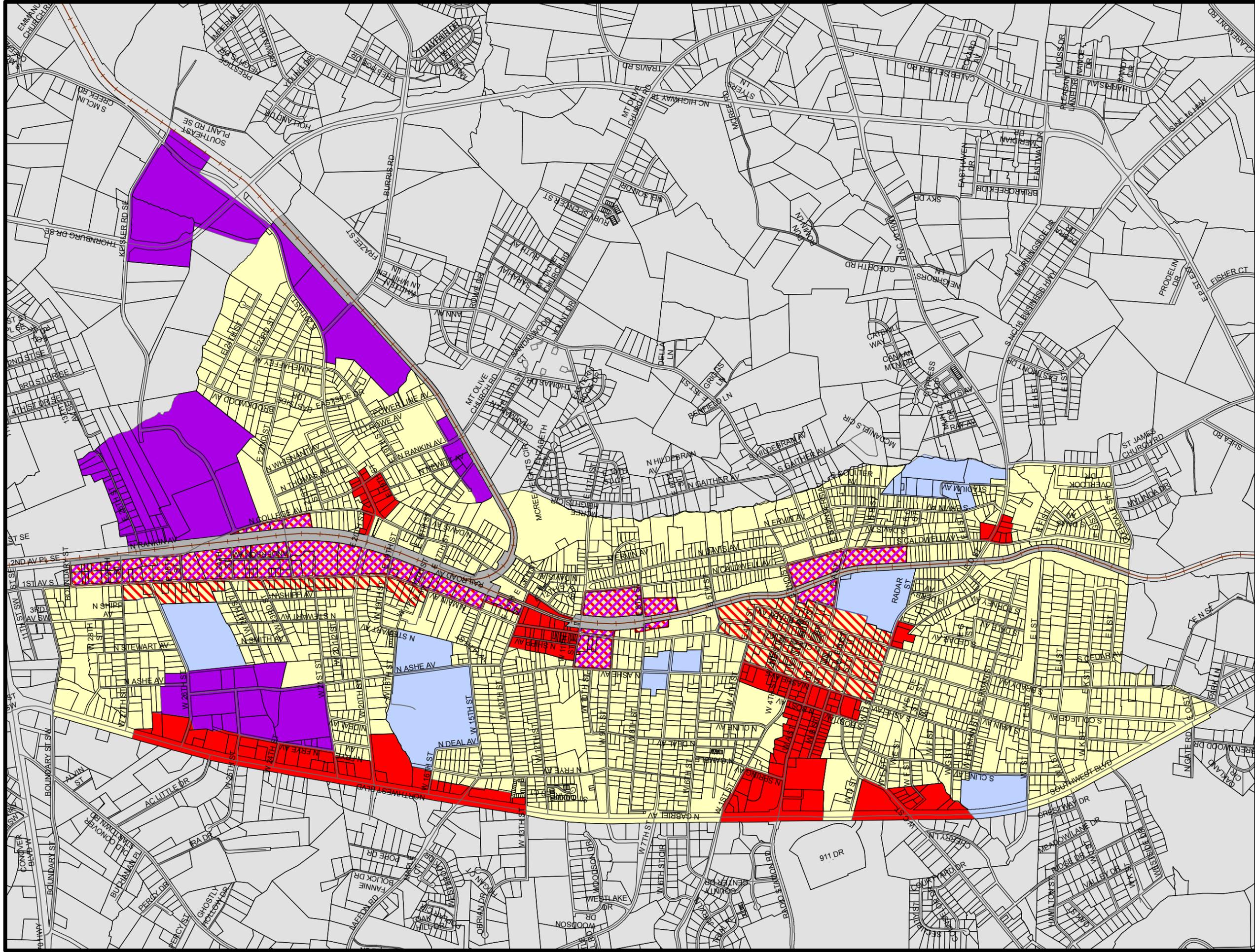
the Core Area, as well areas within proximity to these traditional areas.

- d. Office uses should be included in areas designated commercial; mixed-use --residential and commercial; and mixed-use – industrial, commercial, and residential. The location of such uses provide opportunities for support services to be located within close proximity of commercial and industrial customers and their employees, as well as nearby residents.

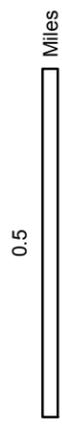
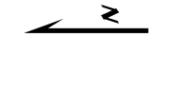
- LU-2.** The City should look at the uses allowed in the B-1 Neighborhood Business District and make changes as needed to ensure that the uses are compatible to the intent of the B-1 District and meets the needs of the neighborhoods that these districts serve.

- LU-3.** The City should adopt performance standards for areas that are designated as commercial; mixed-use --residential and commercial; and mixed-use – industrial, commercial, and residential uses on **Map 7-3, Future Land Use**. These standards should address parking, screening, buffers, hours of operation, lighting and signage for these areas to lessen the impact on these adjoining uses as existing structures and property in these areas transition to commercial, office, and industrial uses.





- Legend**
- Residential
 - Government and Civic
 - Mixed-Use – commercial, and residential
 - Commercial
 - Mixed-Use – light industrial, commercial, and residential
 - Industrial
 - Rail Corridor Protection



Core Area Future Land Use