

# **Newton Streetscape Improvements & North Newton Master Plan**

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**Allison Platt & Associates**  
**The Wooten Company**

# Starting Point

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- A committee of Downtown stakeholders completed a Streetscape Master Planning Document in 2010, and goals were formulated to guide design
- These improvements will set the tone for much of the redevelopment that will follow
- In order to succeed, streetscape improvements must make downtown shopping streets attractive for shoppers and efficient for traffic while honoring the rich history of the City
- Routes into the downtown must be resolved
- Redevelopment strategies for North Newton/Depot will be developed

# Why Improve Streetscapes?

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- Public improvements demonstrate to citizens, investors, and funding sources that the City is committed to positive change
- Public improvements generate private investment, improve community image, attract visitors and increase the tax base
- Streetscape improvements are more than cosmetic: infrastructure improvements are an essential part of the work
- Improving the downtown first creates synergy that benefits the entire community and generates revenue that allows the improvements to continue throughout the community
- Streetscape improvements are an investment with a proven benefit for all, not a cost or a benefit for a few

# The Value of Public Improvements

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- Streetscape and open space improvements must be viewed as **an investment, not a cost**. When the public invests in open space revitalization, the private sector begins to invest as well
- In New Bern (pop 27,000), ~\$500,000/block (54' ROW) x 8 blocks (**\$4 million**) resulted in **\$260 million** in private and public (State and Federal) investment. Tourism was **\$12 million** a year in the 80's; in 2007 tourism totaled **\$108 million**
- In Raleigh (pop. 404,000), a **\$10 million** investment in Fayetteville Street resulted in **\$5 billion** in private investment.

# Analysis

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- The plans that follow represent a process that helps us to understand the structure, strengths and weakness, and opportunities in the study area
- This analysis, combined with input from staff and citizens, will guide us in targeting the most beneficial areas for streetscape, parking and open space improvements
- We will also begin to develop recommendations for a larger area so that when the time is right for improvements, plans will be ready for further development
- In North Newton, we will look not only at street improvements, but also urban design improvements

# 1. Land Use

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- The Land Use map for the greater Newton area shows the central commercial area in red
- This downtown core area is surrounded mostly by housing, some of it historic
- The combination of historic housing and an historic downtown is a strong combination for creating a sense of place
- The County Government Center nearby is a destination and a positive force for downtown
- The predominance of auto-related and strip uses around the downtown core needs to be addressed

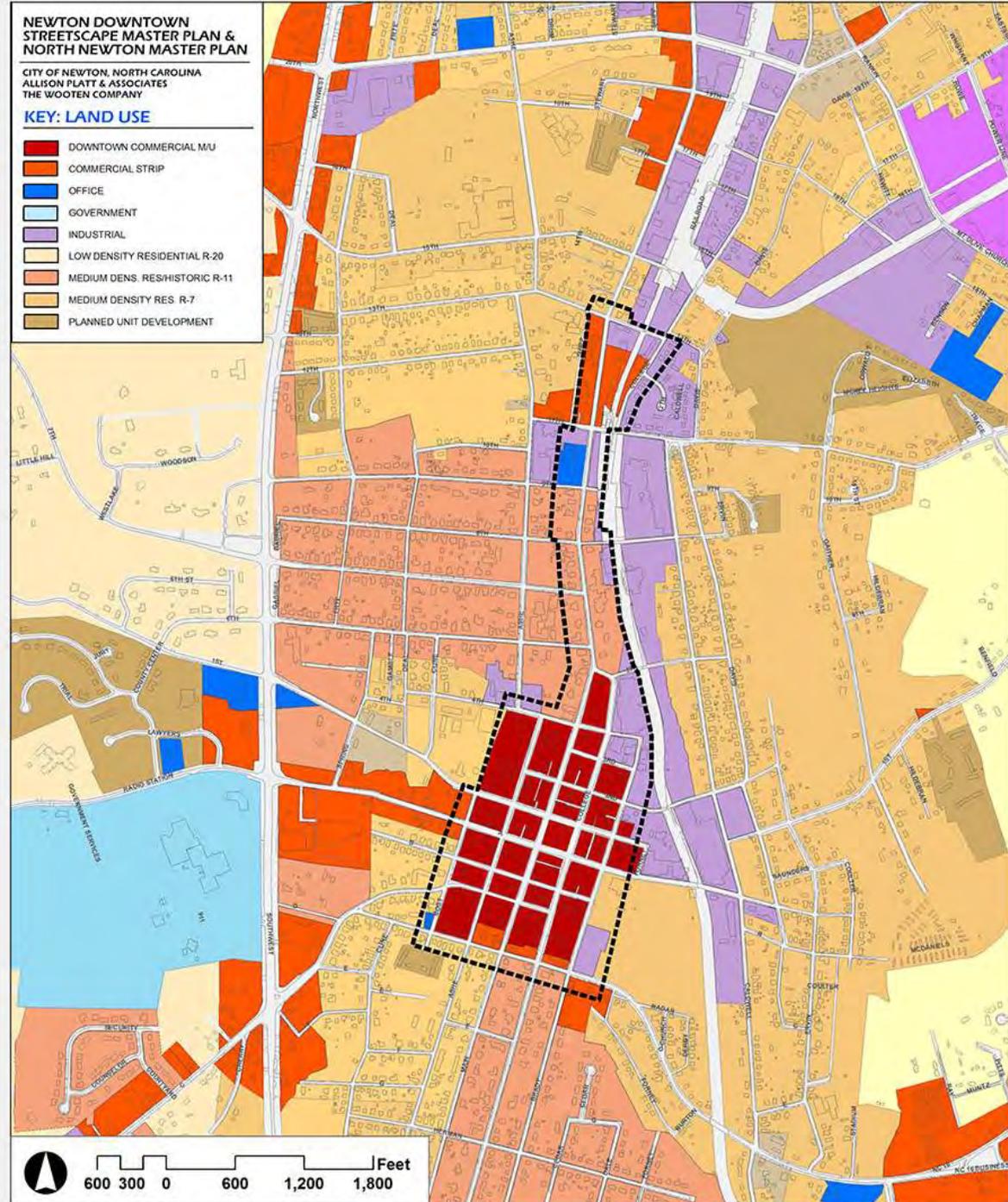
# 1. Land Use

## NEWTON DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE MASTER PLAN & NORTH NEWTON MASTER PLAN

CITY OF NEWTON, NORTH CAROLINA  
ALLISON PLATT & ASSOCIATES  
THE WOOTEN COMPANY

### KEY: LAND USE

- DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL MU
- COMMERCIAL STRIP
- OFFICE
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL R-20
- MEDIUM DENS. RES/HISTORIC R-11
- MEDIUM DENSITY RES. R-7
- PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT



# Downtown Buildings: The Square



# Downtown Buildings

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# Downtown Buildings

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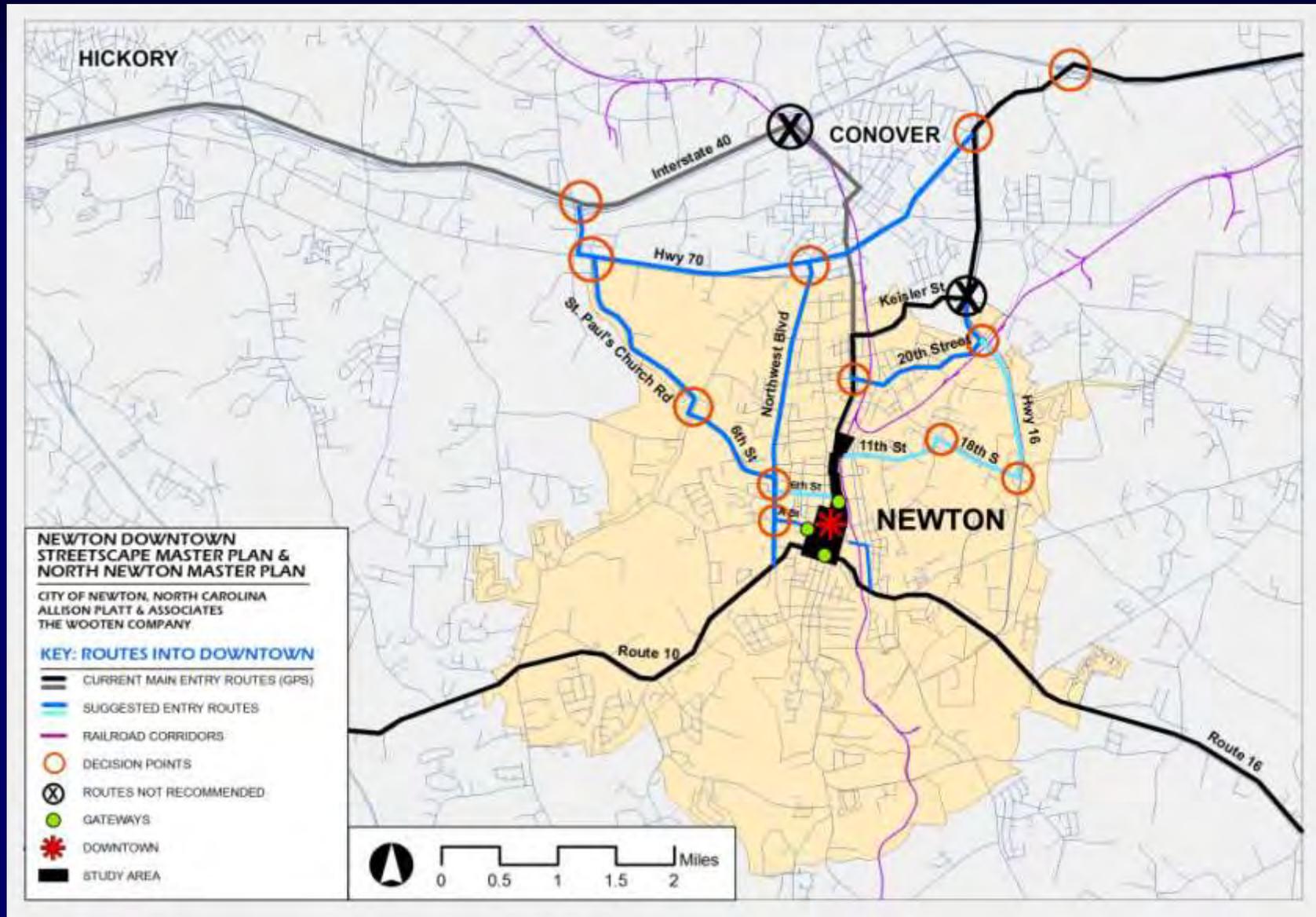


# Routes to Downtown

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- Although not part of our charge, it is clear that routes into the downtown from other areas are not clear-cut, and signage/GPS directs people onto routes that are not ideal
- The map on the next slide shows the directed routes in black. There are some problems with these routes
- More attractive routes are shown in \*\*\*.
- These changes can be as simple as working with the DOT and GPS services to change signage and redirect traffic (wayfinding will help with this)
- It may also involve some improvements to portions of the preferred routes over time

# 2. Routes to Downtown

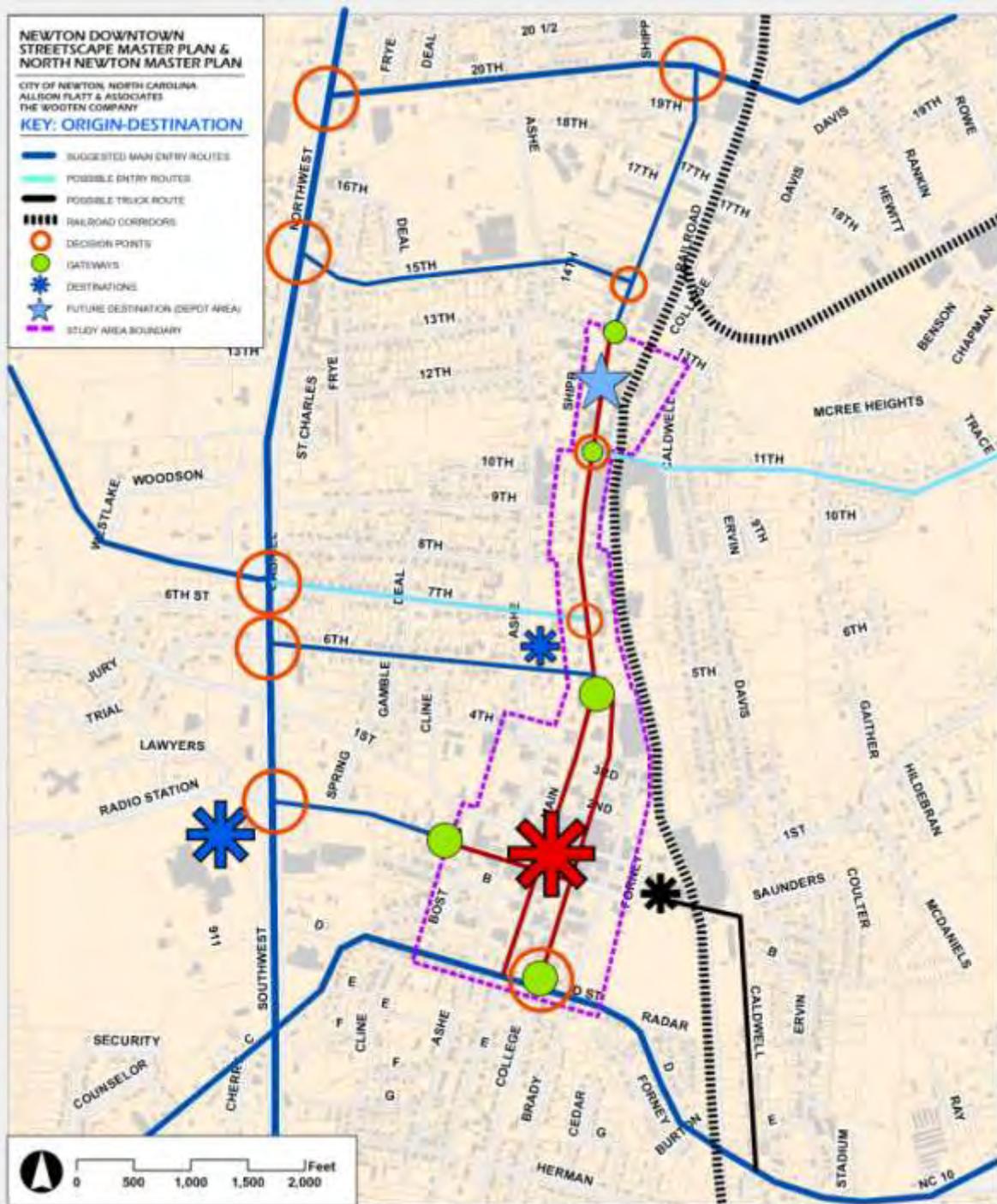


# 3. Routes to Downtown

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- An examination of routes into downtown at a smaller scale shows recommended decision points and routes in from all directions
- In many cases these routes are not flexible
- In areas where there are issues with the environment, these should be addressed as a higher priority, since these routes will establish the perception of the downtown even before arriving
- Appropriate routes for truck traffic should also be addressed

# 3. Routes into Downtown

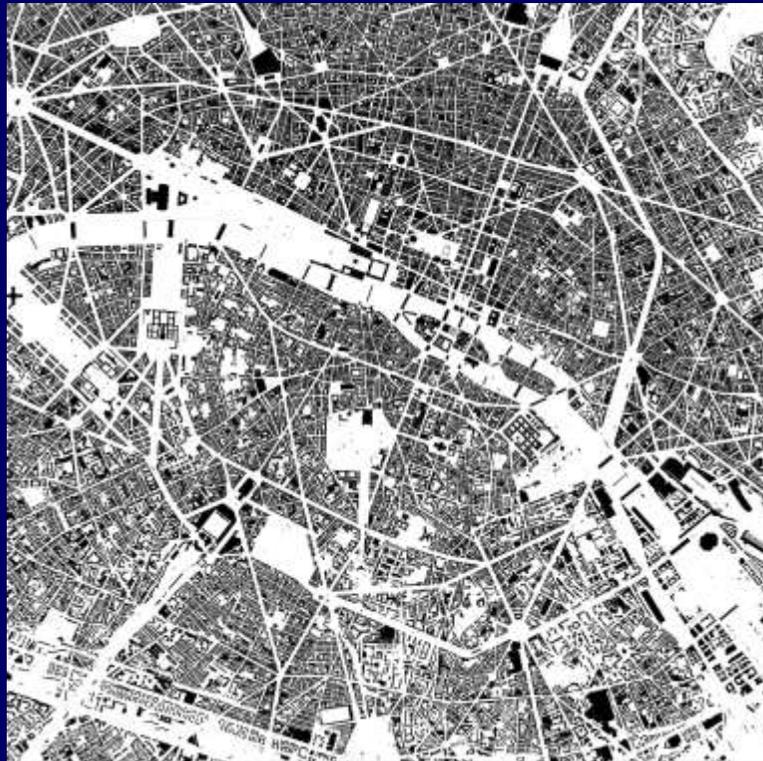


# 4. Downtown Pedestrian Value

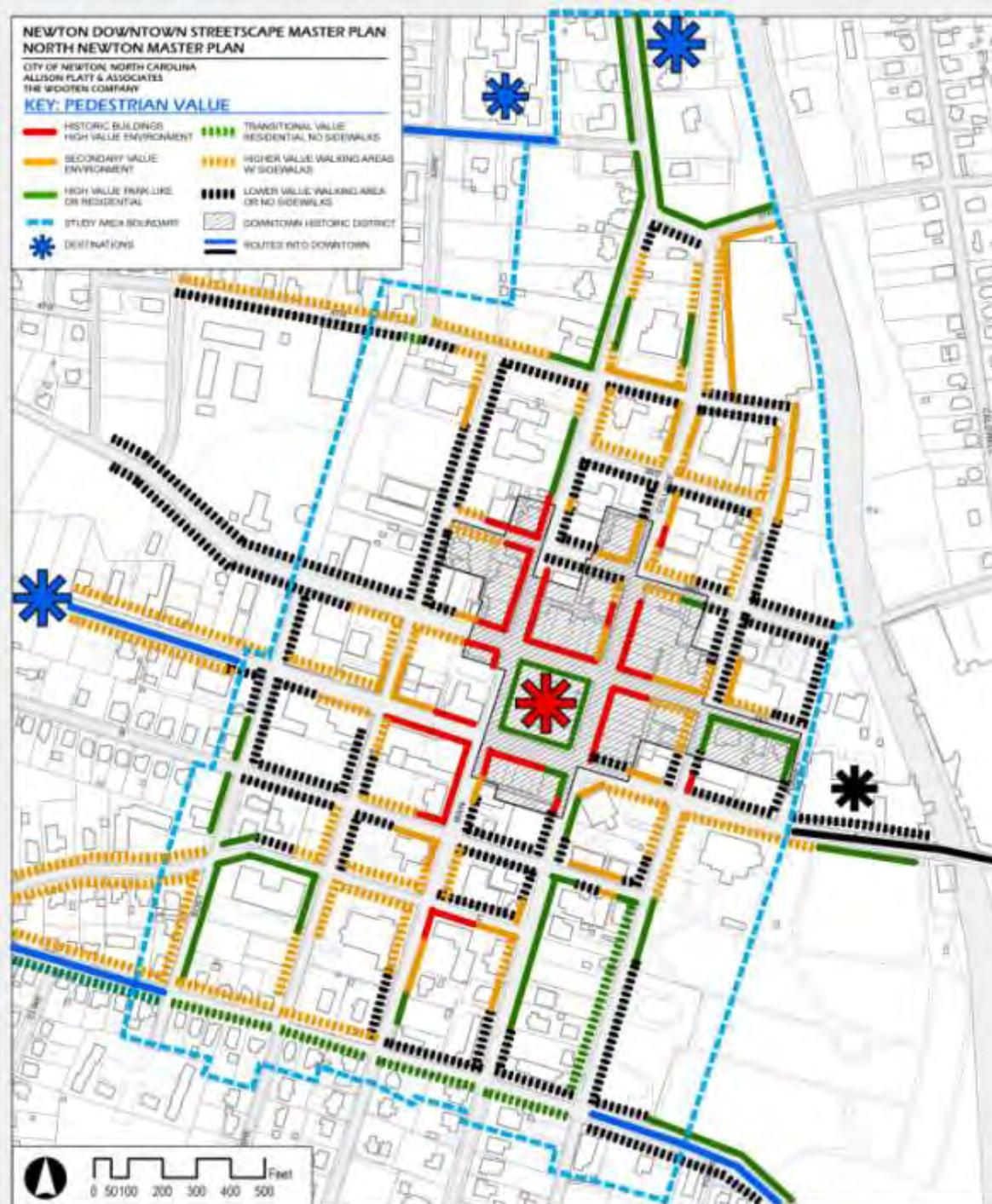
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- Pedestrian comfort is key to a successful downtown
- Ideally the visitor or resident is guided by an attractive route to the downtown, and once there, to well-marked and convenient parking
- From that point, there must be safe, attractive and interesting pedestrian routes throughout the downtown area. If these are lacking, pedestrians will tend to go back to their cars and drive elsewhere
- Pedestrian values rates a combination of quality architecture, pedestrian interest (shops, restaurants), available sidewalks, and appropriate screening

# 4. Downtown Figure/Ground



# 4. Downtown Pedestrian Value



# Downtown Streetscapes

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# Downtown Streetscapes



# Downtown Parking

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# North Newton

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- A master plan for North Newton (Depot area) is included in the scope of work
- Although recommendations will be made for streetscape improvements, we are also looking at land uses, parking, building conditions, and site planning to help formulate a redevelopment strategy
- It is hoped that the relocated Depot will form the basis/theme for redevelopment

# North Newton Building Quality/Type

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- There are many attractive historic buildings that are currently underutilized and marginally maintained
- There are also some building types and uses that are not in keeping with the goal of revitalization
- The following map rates the buildings in terms of real estate value, both intrinsically to the building itself and as it relates to the value of buildings around it
- Working on a plan for this area will probably require some market research. Appropriate urban design form can be recommended, but uses should be proven in order to attract development

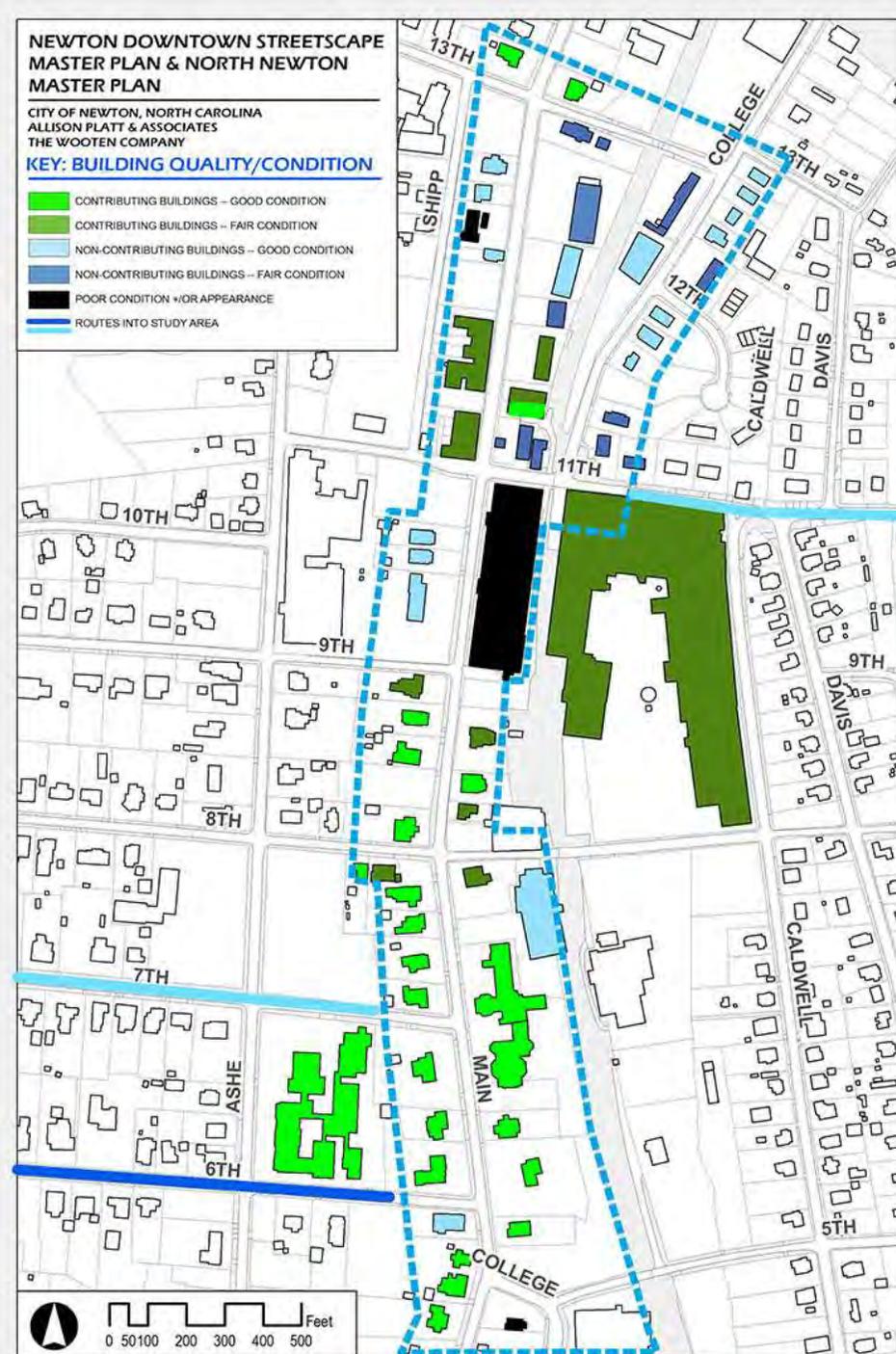
# North Newton Building Quality

## NEWTON DOWNTOWN STREETScape MASTER PLAN & NORTH NEWTON MASTER PLAN

CITY OF NEWTON, NORTH CAROLINA  
ALLISON PLATT & ASSOCIATES  
THE WOOTEN COMPANY

### KEY: BUILDING QUALITY/CONDITION

- CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS – GOOD CONDITION
- CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS – FAIR CONDITION
- NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS – GOOD CONDITION
- NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS – FAIR CONDITION
- POOR CONDITION +/OR APPEARANCE
- ROUTES INTO STUDY AREA



# North Newton Strengths

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# North Newton Challenges

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# North Newton Pedestrian Value

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- As with the downtown, pedestrian quality will be important to redeveloping this area
- Safe and attractive pedestrian routes from this area to the downtown will also be important
- The current trend toward strip development works against a comfortable pedestrian environment
- Narrow sidewalks and traffic volume make streetscape improvements challenging (rely on off-street parking only?)

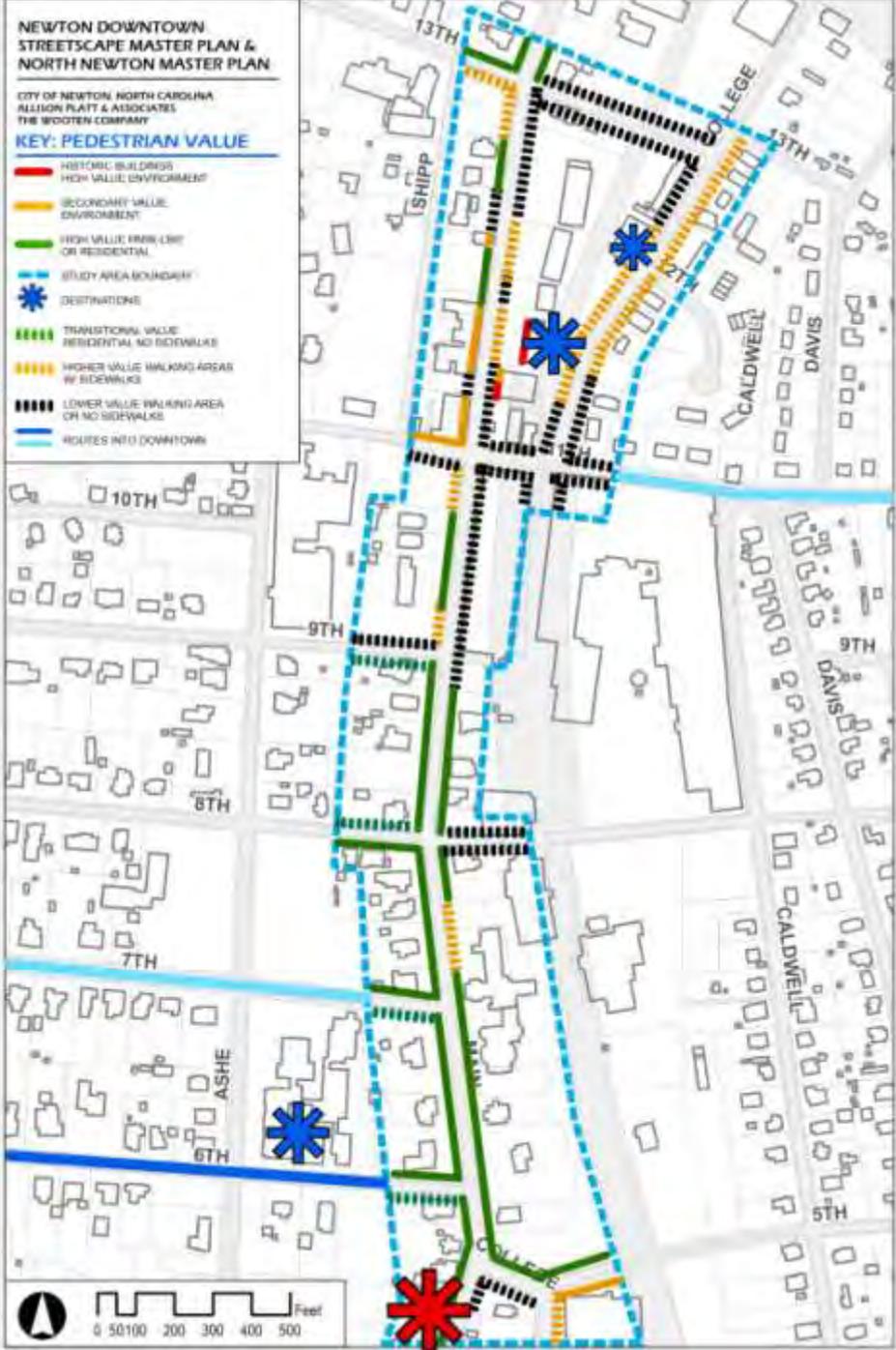
# North Newton Pedestrian Value

## NEWTON DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE MASTER PLAN & NORTH NEWTON MASTER PLAN

CITY OF NEWTON, NORTH CAROLINA  
MILLION PLATT & ASSOCIATES  
THE WOOTEN COMPANY

### KEY: PEDESTRIAN VALUE

- HISTORIC BUILDINGS  
HIGH VALUE GOVERNMENT
- SECONDARY VALUE  
ENVIRONMENT
- HIGH VALUE FIRM, LIGHT  
OR RESIDENTIAL
- STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
- DESTINATIONS
- TRANSITIONAL VALUE  
RESIDENTIAL NO SIDEWALKS
- HIGHER VALUE WALKING AREAS  
W/ SIDEWALKS
- LOWER VALUE WALKING AREA  
OR NO SIDEWALKS
- ROUTES INTO DOWNTOWN



# Streetscape Elements (1)

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- Streetscapes include many elements that help define character:
  - Sidewalk width
  - Materials (brick, concrete, stone, permeable, impermeable, colors, patterns, etc.)
  - Lights and furniture (benches, walls, trash receptacles, bike racks, etc.)
  - Landscape elements (trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals, planters)
  - Planning for utilities

# Streetscape Elements (2)

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- Streetscapes should be unique to your community and should reflect your
  - Distinctive architecture (e.g. the Courthouse)
  - History, including important events, people, and places (why established, important industries, Newton's stories)
- Streetscape should provide a setting for the architecture, not detract from it
- They should incorporate flexible elements to accommodate change and special events (Christmas lights, farmer's market, concerts, sidewalk dining)

# Materials



Seattle



Denver



New Bern



Portland

# Materials



York, UK

Greenville, SC



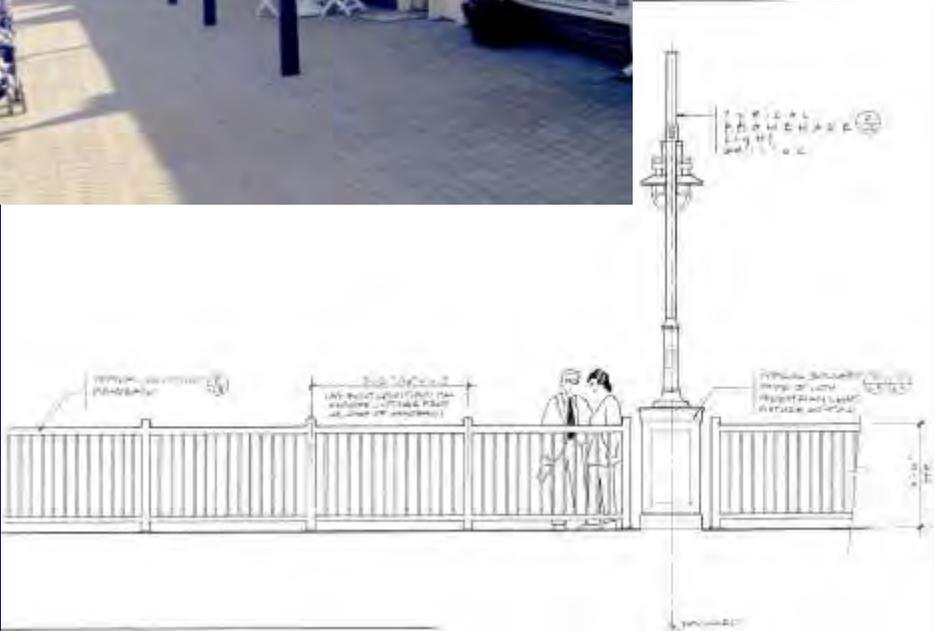
Ft. Lauderdale

# Patterns/Texture/Color

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# Fixtures

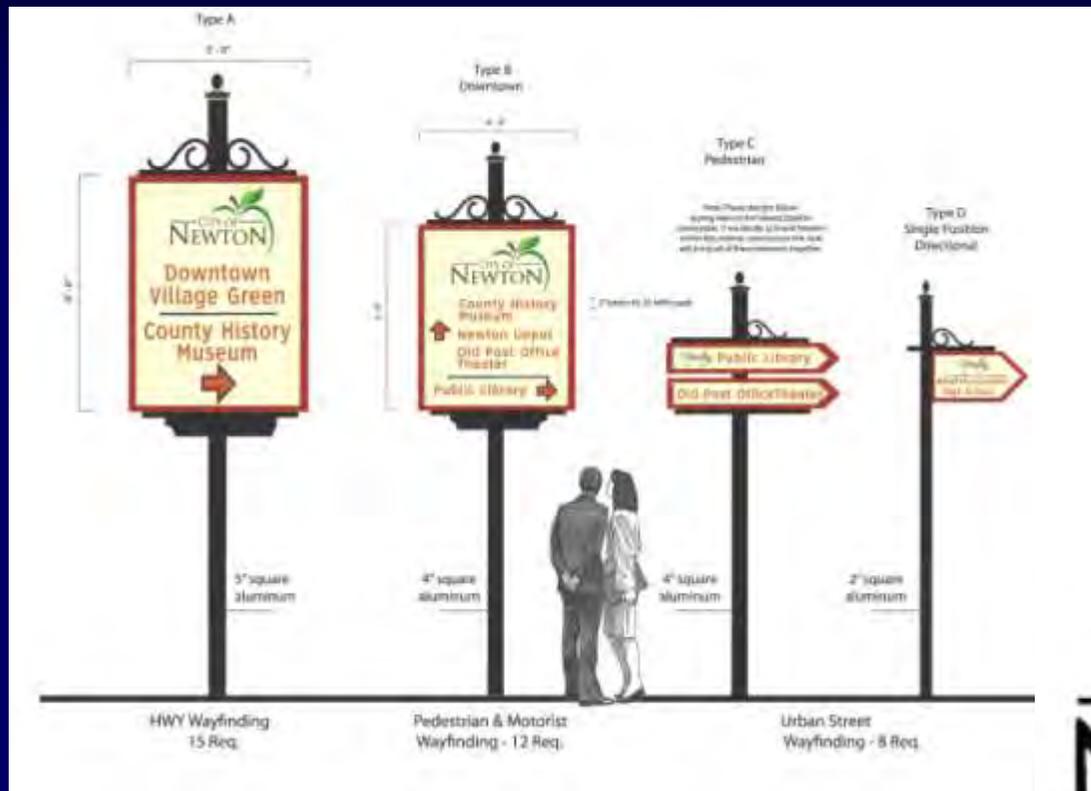


# Fixtures

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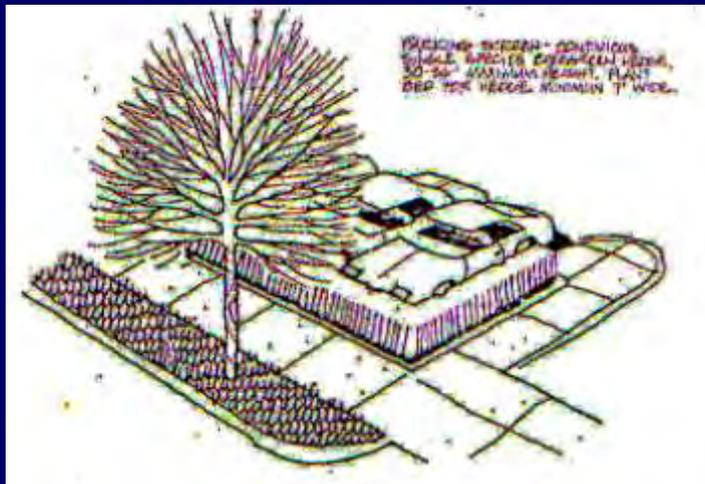


# Wayfinding/Branding



# Parking

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DESIGNING A PARKING LOT WITH A TREE  
SHOULD BE DONE IN CONJUNCTION WITH  
30-50' WALKWAY BEHIND PLANT  
SEE FOR MORE INFORMATION T. WOOD

# Amenities



# Amenities

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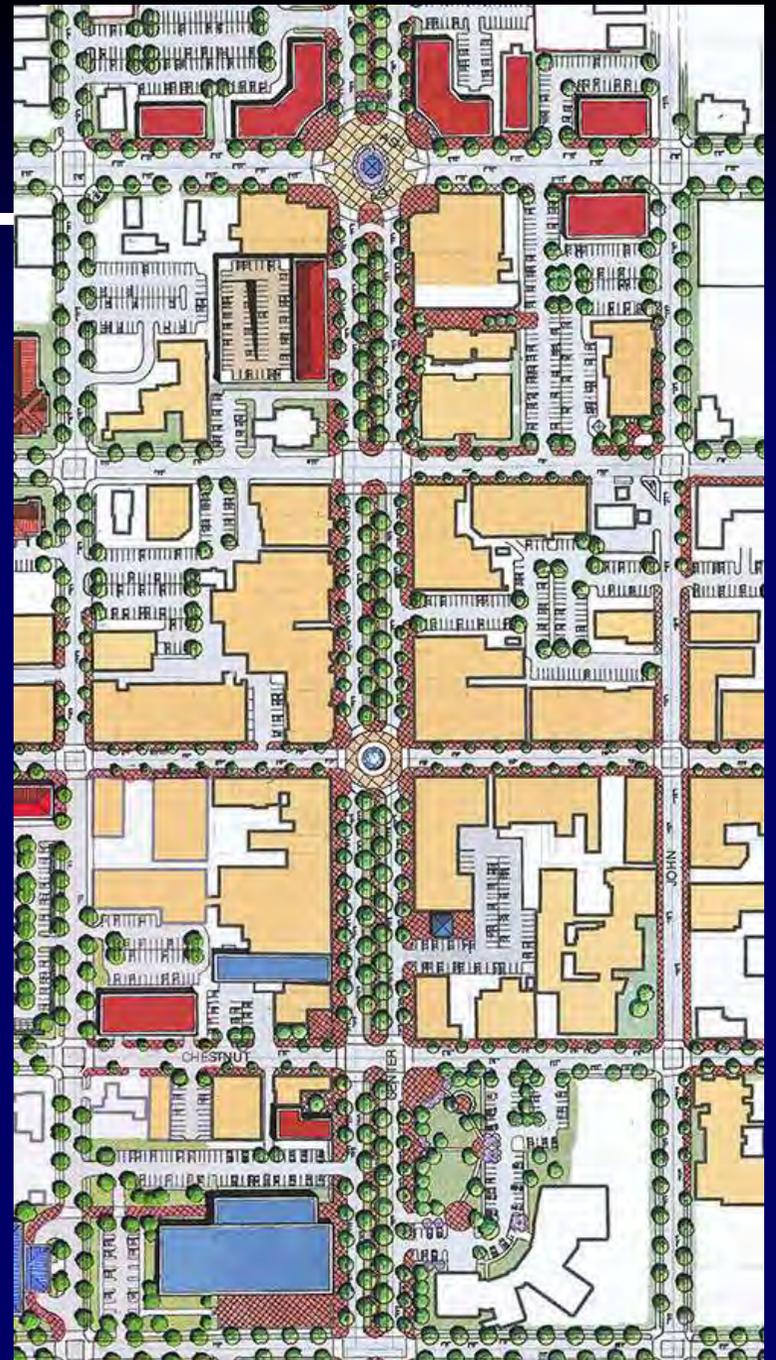


# Flexible Use

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# Concepts



# Helping Decide—Goldsboro, NC



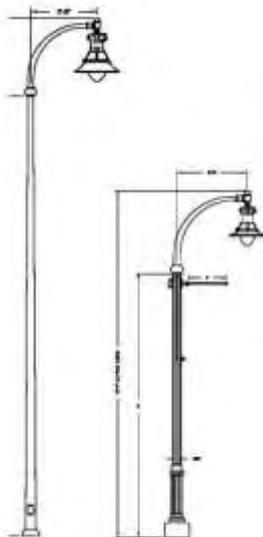
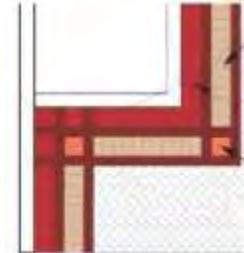
Preference #1: Bolden range of colors



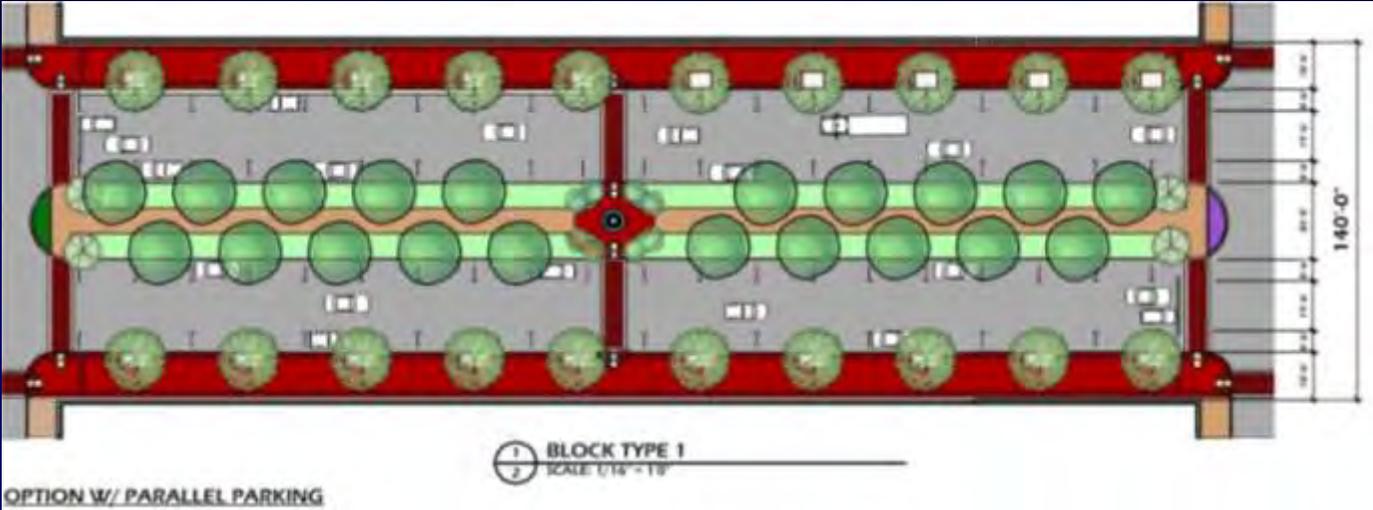
Preference #2: Borai range of colors



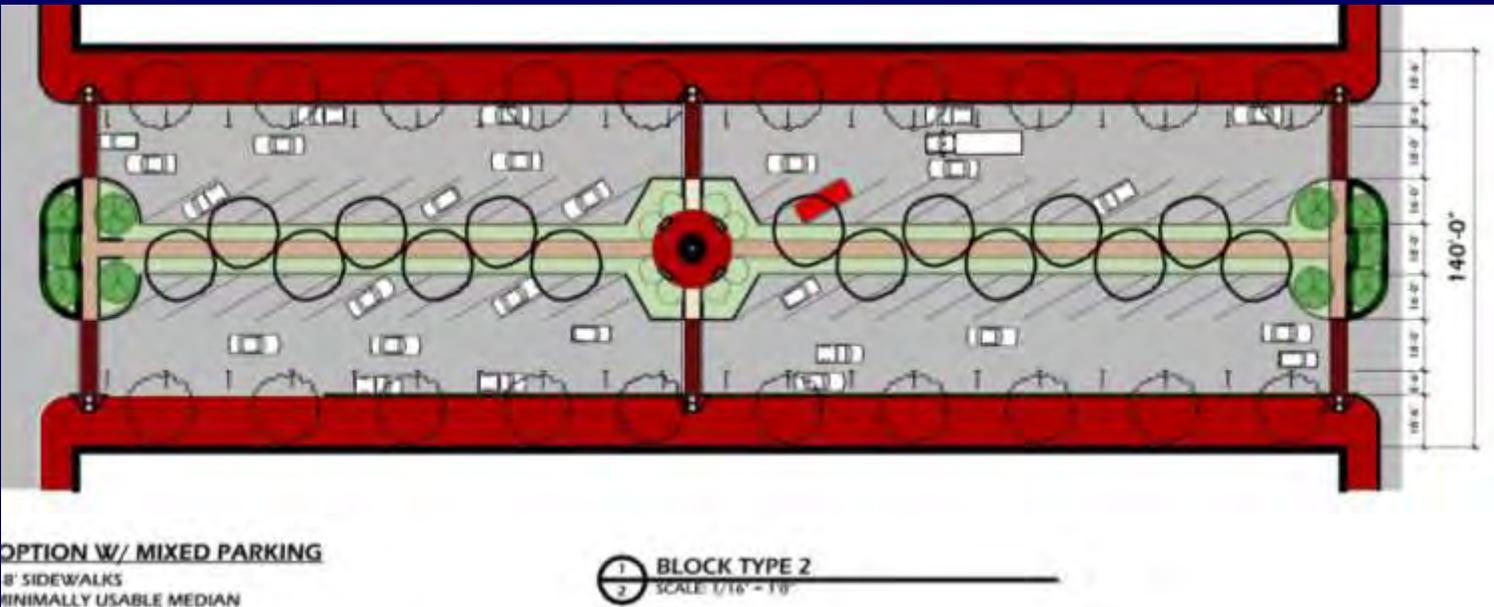
Preference #3: Pine Hall range of colors



# Concepts and Alternatives



OPTION W/ PARALLEL PARKING



OPTION W/ MIXED PARKING  
8' SIDEWALKS  
MINIMALLY USABLE MEDIAN

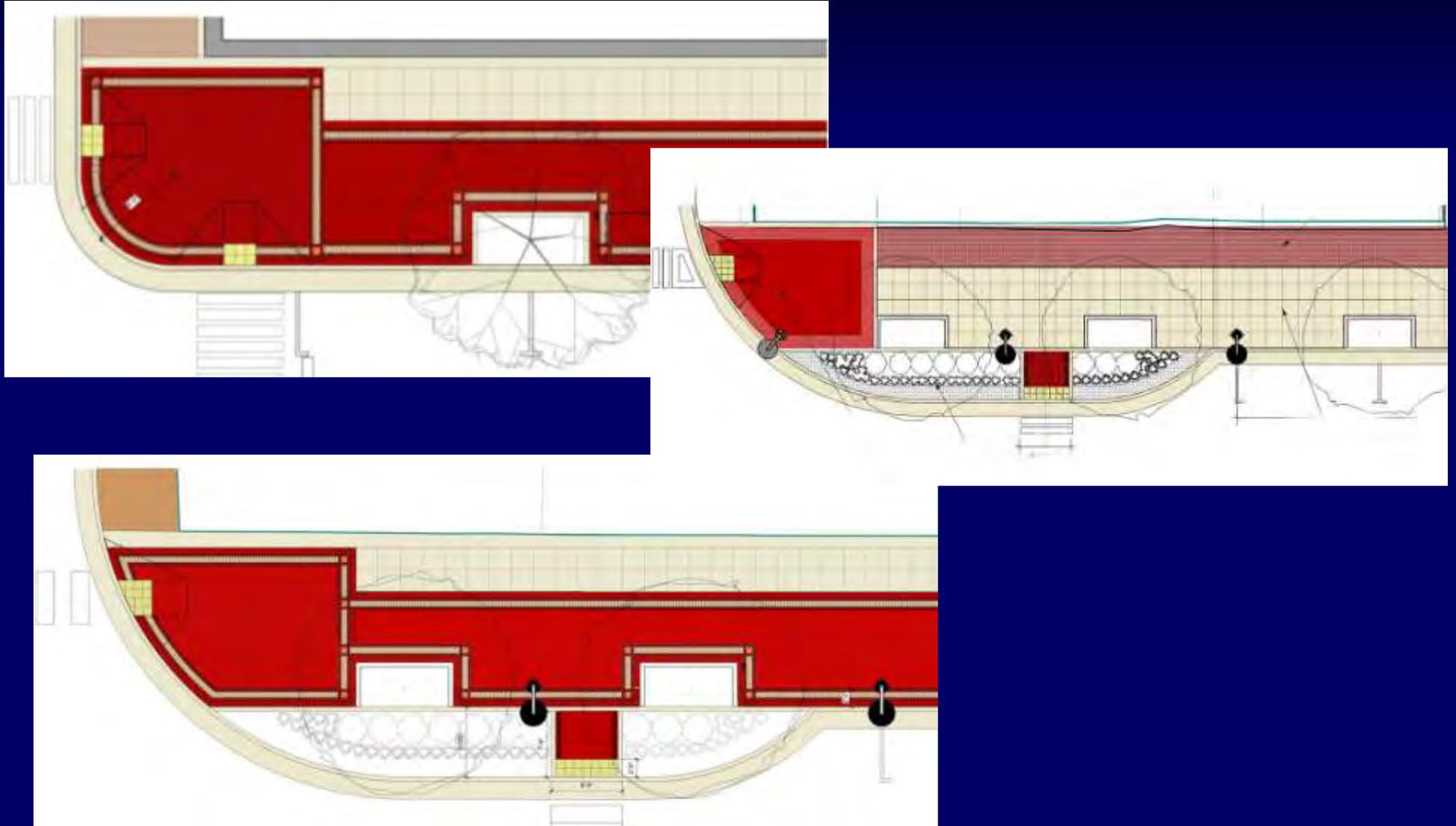
# Concepts and Alternatives

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# Concepts and Alternatives

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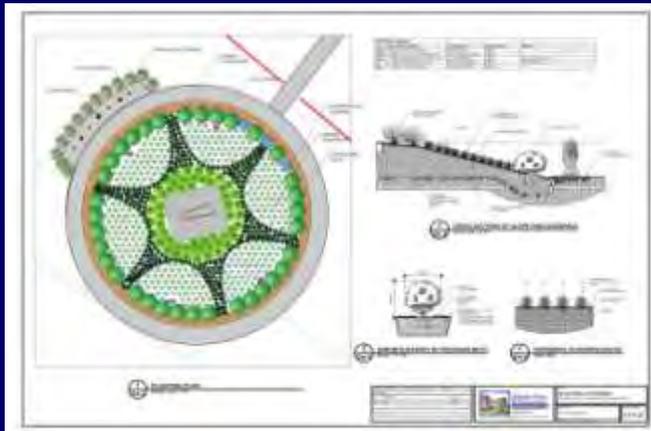
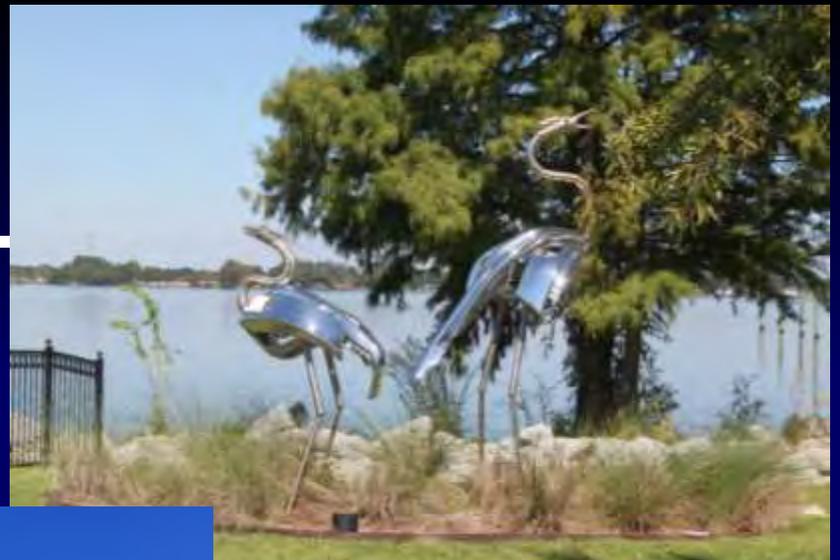


# New Bern: James Reed Lane

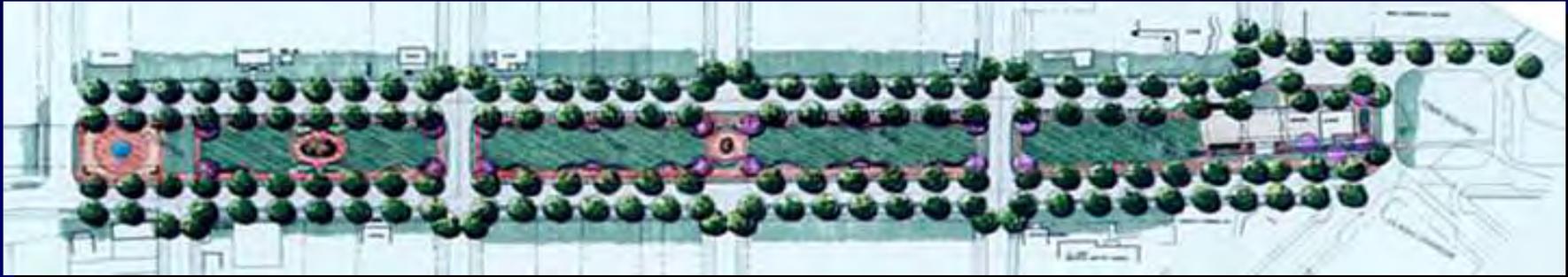
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# New Bern: Small Spaces



# Jacksonville, NC: Linear Park

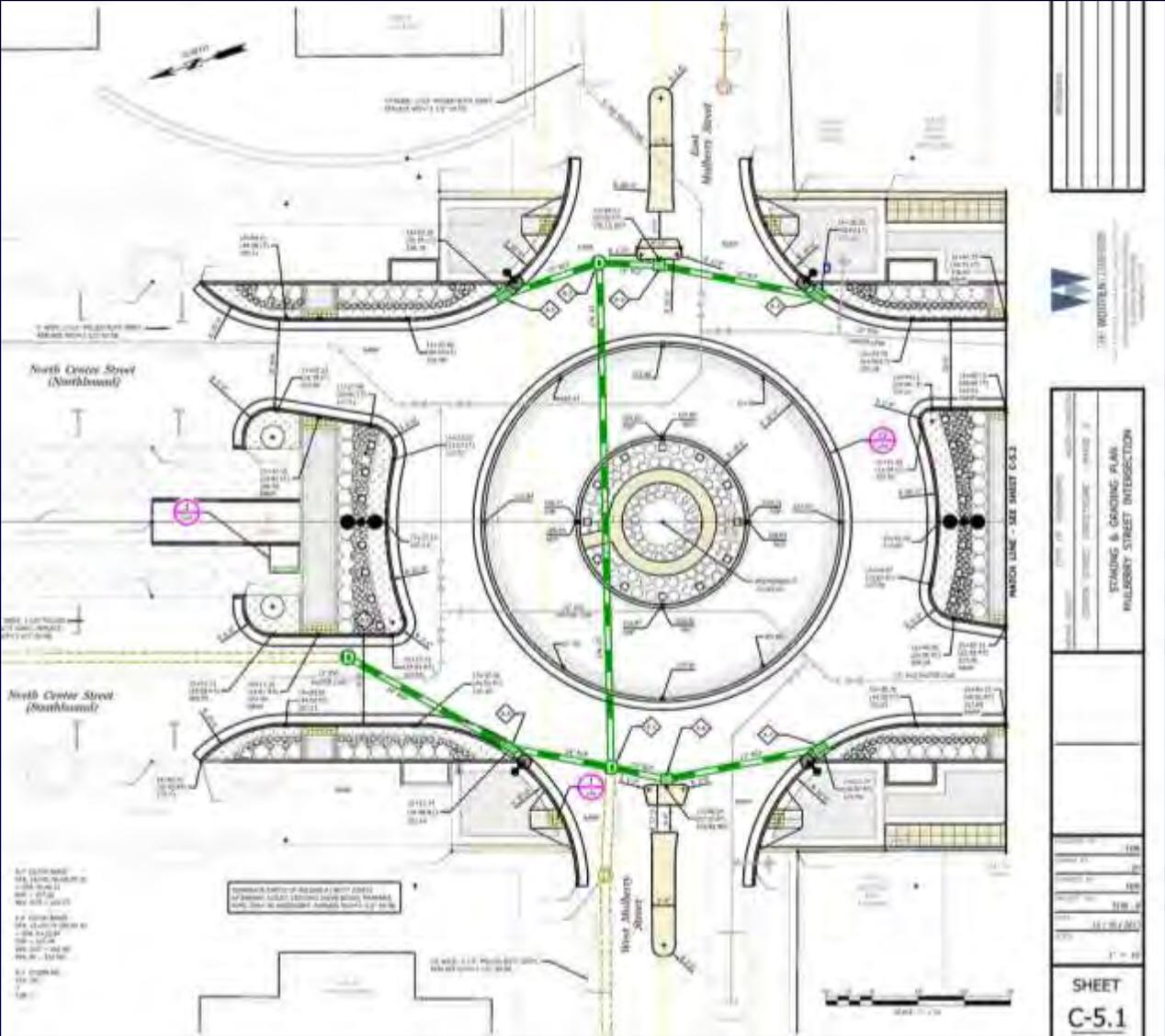


# Implementation: Details

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# Implementation: Utilities



# A relevant example: Georgetown, TX



# A relevant example: Georgetown, TX

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- If every person has a double, perhaps towns do as well.
- Georgetown, Texas, is the county seat of Williamson County, which was formed on March 13, 1848
- Georgetown was an agrarian community for most of the 19th and early 20th centuries.
- The establishment of Southwestern University in 1873 and construction of a railroad in 1878 contributed to the town's growth and importance. Cotton was the dominant crop in the area between the 1880s and the 1920s.
- Population growth and industrial expansion continued modestly in the twentieth century until about 1960 when urban expansion of nearby Austin greatly accelerated.

# A relevant example: Georgetown, TX

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- Population grew substantially with the addition of “Sun City Texas,” currently with 11,000 residents, allowing Georgetown to be named “Best Place to Retire” in 2007
- In 2008, Fortune Small Business Magazine named Georgetown the No. 2 best city in the nation to “live and launch” a new business.

# A relevant example: Georgetown, TX

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*In the 1970s, Georgetown's downtown was bleak and featureless. In an effort to modernize and compete with suburban retail development, building owners in the '50s and '60s obscured one of their most priceless resources – their retail buildings. The Texas-Victorian streetscape was plastered with stucco, aluminum covers, brick, and multiple layers of white paint. But community leaders had already begun taking interest and putting new stock back into their architectural heritage.*

*Georgetown's resurrected interest in its historic resources came at a time when the cost of borrowing money was soaring. Interest rates near 20 percent might have been a deterrent elsewhere. In Georgetown, every bank offered significantly lower interest loans for the renewal of the town's grand Victorian buildings and facades. And rehabilitation tax credit programs in the 1980s made investing in historic property an even more lucrative enterprise. By 1984, 40 rehabilitations were complete. A mere two years after its Main Street program was founded, more than half the Main Street district had undergone some kind of positive transition.*

# A relevant example: Georgetown, TX

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*In the city's historic neighborhoods, adaptive restoration has been widely practiced as well, with special emphasis on the private restoration of older homes. The city was recently named **one of the best places to purchase a historic house**. Today, Georgetown is home to one of the best preserved Victorian and Pre-WW1 downtown historic districts, with The Beaux-Arts Courthouse (1911) as its centerpiece. **Due to its successful preservation efforts, Georgetown was named a national Main Street City in 1997, the first Texas city so designated.***



# A relevant example: Georgetown, TX

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# A relevant example: Georgetown, TX



# A relevant example: Georgetown, TX

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# A relevant example: Georgetown, TX

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# A relevant example: Georgetown, TX

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# Is it time to renew Newton?

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# Looking Ahead (1): Streetscape

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- Launch website to allow public to view project progress and provide feedback
- Decide on routes into the downtown and North Newton
- Discuss recommendations for improving downtown urban design (design guidelines, zoning changes, signage)
- Define area for first streetscape improvements
- Decide on materials and improvement hierarchy (e.g. areas for full redevelopment vs. new concrete walks, phasing)

# Looking Ahead (2): Streetscape

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- Develop concepts/alternates/opinion of costs
- Present and discuss
- Develop preferred alternatives into conceptual drawings, refine cost estimates
- Present and discuss
- Prepare design development drawings and more detailed cost estimates

# Looking Ahead: North Newton

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- Develop street profile alternatives for this area
- Develop urban design concepts (organization of buildings, parking, streetscape)
- Define uses/consider market analysis/themes
- Present and discuss
- Develop preliminary master plan
- Present and discuss
- Final plan and recommendations

# Questions

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