

# Next Steps and Guiding Principles

THE SMALL AREA PLAN presents an integrated long-term transportation and land use vision for the NC 73 (Sam Furr Road)/US-21 study area. This vision is built upon a framework of well-connected, pedestrian friendly and publicly inviting streets and open space, which in turn will attract high quality mixed-use development. The overarching goal of this plan is to integrate land use and transportation planning in a manner which will guide the community in finding a balance between regional transportation needs and development of the study area, while preserving and enhancing the Town's distinct heritage.

Like any plan, successful implementation will require the commitment and concerted efforts of Town leaders, landowners, residents, County and State government officials and other interested stakeholders. To achieve the plan's vision, the following next steps and guiding principles are recommended.

## PLANNING

### 1. Adopt the Plan

The Town Board should adopt this small area plan as an official planning document, thereby signaling its commitment to the vision and specific recommendations set forth in the plan. Adoption of this Plan will also serve to provide clear guidance to current and future landowners and developers regarding the manner of development envisioned for this area.

### 2. Rely on the Plan to guide future development

The Plan, as a companion to the Subdivision and Zoning Ordinances, should serve as a guiding document for future decisions



related to transportation and land use in the study area.

3. Modify existing regulations as needed for consistency with the Plan  
Modifications to existing land use regulations should be made on an as needed basis, consistent with the content and recommendations of the Plan.

LAND USE

1. Allow rezoning consistent with plan vision  
Requests to rezone property should be consistent with the transportation and land use vision and recommendations contained in this plan.
2. Focus development at NC-73/US-21 intersection  
To the greatest extent possible, development should be concentrated at the intersection of NC-73/US-21 and along the network of streets proposed by this plan.
3. Encourage re-development of the existing retail development located at the intersection of Sam Furr Road and US-21  
The plan proposes the re-development of the Northcross shopping center within the framework of a block structure, with buildings fronting on public streets, with parking situated to the rear and side. Additional network improvements at this intersection will also serve to reinforce a development pattern, which is consistent with the Town's land development codes, as exemplified by the Birkdale Village shopping area.
4. Encourage re-development of Rich Hatchett community as a mixed-use village, featuring commercial, retail and residential components  
At the discretion of property owners in the Rich Hatchett community, development within this community should include a mixture of commercial, retail, residential and open space land uses. The development pattern and building types within the community should be of a village scale and preserve the historic character of this community.

TRANSPORTATION

1. Pursue widening of NC-73 & associated improvements to US 21  
The Town should prepare the necessary planning document required to widen NC-73 from I-77 to the railroad tracks just past NC-115, in accordance with the designation of this project in the NCDOT

2006-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

2. Package transportation system improvements for inclusion in the State Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)  
The network improvements recommended as part of this plan should be packaged for consideration by the NCDOT as a multi-year TIP project. The implementation of network improvements/additions over time will allow for the road system to expand in a proportionate manner to allow for future growth and traffic associated with that growth.
3. Investigate alternative non-public revenue sources to fund network improvements.  
The Town should investigate various alternatives to the financing of transportation improvements solely through public funding. The use of both public and non-public funding would permit the apportionment of capital costs for transportation network improvements, based upon a formula that would assign a share of these costs to those who would benefit directly from these improvements. Alternative sources of transportation system funding would benefit the public in several respects. Road network improvements could be accelerated through the use of private funds, resulting in greater connectivity and increase road capacity. Non-public funding would also reduce the tax burden required to build these network improvements, freeing up public resources for other needs. From a fairness perspective, the use of non-public funding would permit the allocation of a portion of transportation improvement costs to those who would benefit most from these improvements, rather than total reliance upon public funding.
4. Require new street network to conform to plan recommendations  
As development occurs within the study area, require the construction and dedication of new public streets in conformance with the transportation framework presented in this plan.

5. Promote Expansion of Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes

The Plan calls for the expansion in the number of bicycle paths and lanes, as well as sidewalk connections between residential and commercial areas within the study area. In tandem with the improved street network and additional greenways, bike and Pedestrian connections are vital components for a truly integrated transportation system, which provides Town residents with a variety of options for a movement between residential areas of business, work and recreation.

OPEN SPACE

1. Extend McDowell Creek Greenway System  
The plan calls for the extension of the greenway system on the west side of I-77 between Birkdale Village to the south and Robbins Park in the north; and to the east of I-77 between Hampton Ridge in the south and Bailey Road in the north. These greenway extensions, along with proposed road network additions, are key elements in connecting residential, commercial and civic uses on both sides of the study area, and provide additional linkages across I-77.

2. Connecting existing greenways and open space

In coordination with the County and under the guidance of the Town Greenway Advisory Committee, the Town should seek to add links to the existing greenway/trails and open space system, with the goal of providing a network of open space that is both comprehensive and an integral part of the Town's non-vehicular transportation network.

PLAN UPDATES

On an annual basis, the Planning Board should review the recommendations contained in the Plan and forward any revisions that it deems appropriate to the Town Board of Commissioners for its consideration.