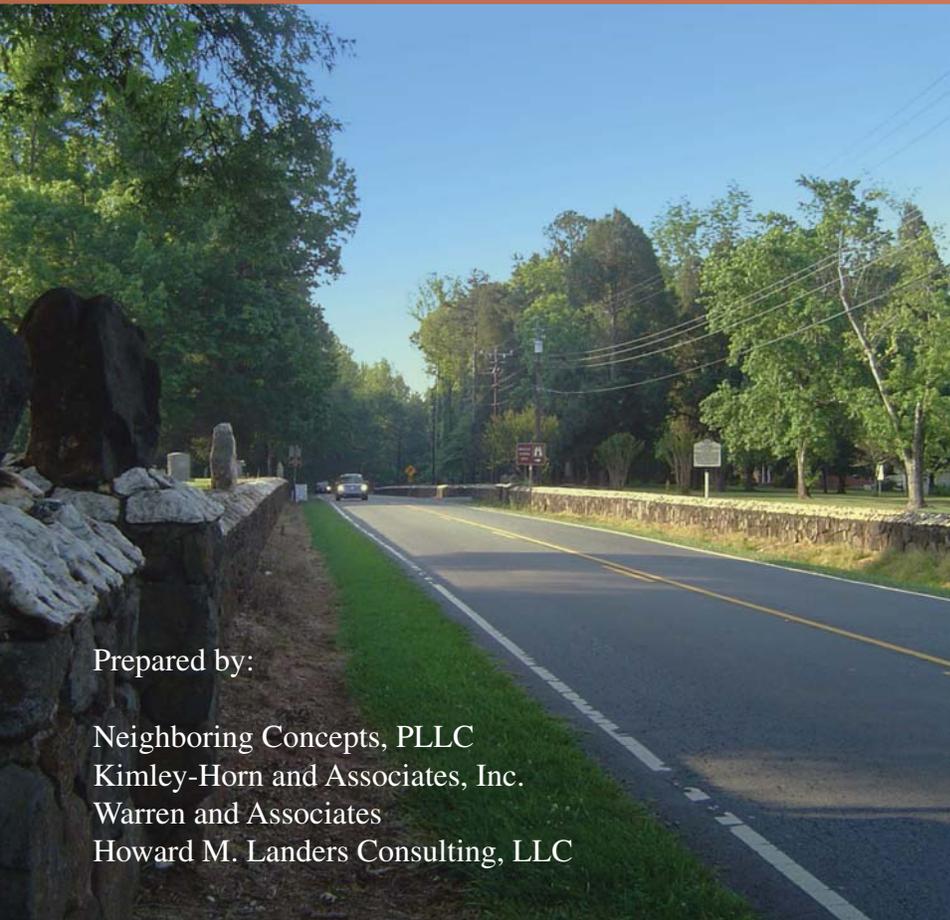


BEATTIES FORD ROAD CORRIDOR SMALL AREA PLAN



**Town of
Huntersville**
NORTH CAROLINA

Adopted by the Town of Huntersville
Board of Commissioners

September 17, 2007



Prepared by:

Neighboring Concepts, PLLC
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
Warren and Associates
Howard M. Landers Consulting, LLC

Beatties Ford Road Corridor Small Area Plan

Prepared for:

The Town of Huntersville, North Carolina

Prepared by:

Neighboring Concepts, PLLC
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
Warren and Associates
Howard M. Landers Consulting, LLC

Acknowledgements

Steering Committee

Don Adair
Gordon Lewis Barber
David Beard
John Binnie
Ben Griffith
Ann Harrison
Linda Kidd
Sarah McAulay
Jackie Mooney
Danny Phillips
Tom Snyder

Town Staff

Jerry Cox, Town Manager
Greg Ferguson, Assistant Town Manager
Jack Simoneau, Planning Director
Bill Coxe, Transportation Planner
David Jarrett, Public Works Director
Justin Carroll, Transportation Engineer
Betty Fentress, Parks and Recreation Director
Phil Potter, Chief of Police
Project Manager, Zac Gordon

Board of Commissioners

Kim Phillips, Mayor
Brian Sisson, Mayor Pro Temp
Charles Jeter, Commissioner
Teri Leonhardt, Commissioner
Sarah McAulay, Commissioner
Jill Swain, Commissioner

And also...

Marek Smith, Natural Resources Coordinator,
Mecklenburg County Division of Natural Resources
Christa Rogers, Natural Resource Specialist II,
Mecklenburg County Division of Natural Resources
Valerie Pierson, Latta Plantation Equestrian Center
Jeffrey Lineberger, Duke Energy Manager of the
Catawba-Wateree Comprehensive Relicensing
Agreement (CRA)



The Town of Huntersville is committed to preserving a small town quality of life, by embracing traditional town planning principles in an area with numerous cultural, environmental, and historical assets.

*Huntersville
Community Plan*

Table of Contents

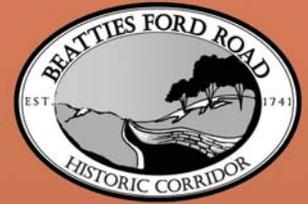
	Executive Summary	v
1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Background and Purpose	1
1.2	The Study Area	2
1.3	Previous Studies	3
1.4	The Planning Process	4
2.0	Historical Context	6
2.1	History of the Beatties Ford Road Corridor	6
2.2	Historical Sites and Historic Design Precedent	8
3.0	Planning Context	10
3.1	Town's Planning Framework	10
3.2	Established Zoning	10
3.3	Approved Planning Studies	12
4.0	Existing Conditions Analysis	14
4.1	Environment	14
4.2	Watersheds and Topography	16
4.3	Transportation	18

4.4	Infrastructure	22
4.5	Current Developments	22
4.6	Constrained Conditions Analysis	25
5.0	Market Study	28
6.0	Small Area Plan	30
6.1	Planning and Design Goals	30
6.2	Transportation Framework	32
6.3	Community Design and Land Use	44
6.4	Mixed-Use / Hamlet Centers	48
6.5	Open Space and Preservation	49
7.0	Implementation	64
7.1	Transportation	64
7.2	Land Use and Zoning	65
7.3	Open Space Preservation	67

Appendix A Market Study

Appendix B Maps

Executive Summary



In January 2007, the Town of Huntersville Board of Commissioners directed the Town's Planning and Transportation Staff to prepare a Small Area Plan for the Beatties Ford Road (BFR) Corridor, in response to community concerns about growing pressures for commercial development along the Corridor in the western area of the Town of Huntersville.

The primary goals of the small area planning process were to:

- Establish a long-term preservation vision for the corridor
- Define needed land use changes
- Influence the form/design of future commercial development
- Provide a framework for transportation improvements including road network, streetscape, bikeways, traffic calming and access management
- Integrate the open space network



"Ideally a small area plan with citizen input will deliver the best uses and needs for the area and incorporate some of the historical aspects of the BFR corridor, thus creating a win-win situation for the citizens of Huntersville."

*Terri Leonhardt,
Town of Huntersville Board
of Commissioners*

Planning Process

The planning process involved the following components to inform and guide the Town Staff's planning activity:

- Utilization of a consulting team of planners, traffic planners, engineers, and market economists to assist in the development of a transportation and land use framework for the Beatties Ford Road Corridor Study Area.



- Creation of a Steering Committee consisting of property owners, developers and other key stakeholders, encompassing a variety of viewpoints as well as long-term interest in the study area.
- Hosting of a three-day community charrette at Town Hall in which town staff, the consulting team, the steering committee and the general public worked cooperatively on the formulation of a vision plan for the BFRCSAP study area. The recommendations which came out of this process are summarized below.

Study Recommendations

The primary recommendations that were developed through the planning process and that are described in this report include:

Land Use and Design

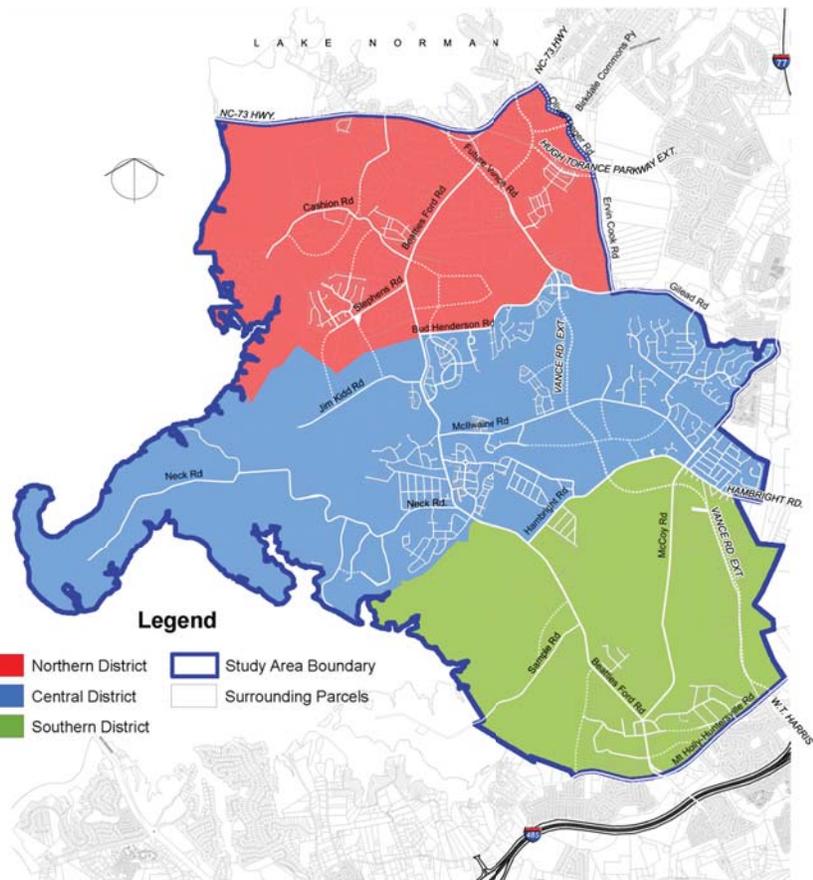
The following strategies shall guide the land use and design character of the study area:

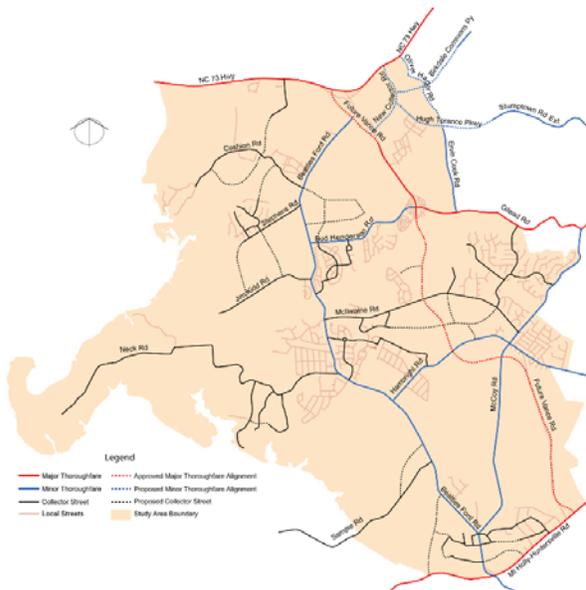
Land Use: In general, the study area will continue to develop as a low density, predominantly residential district, as



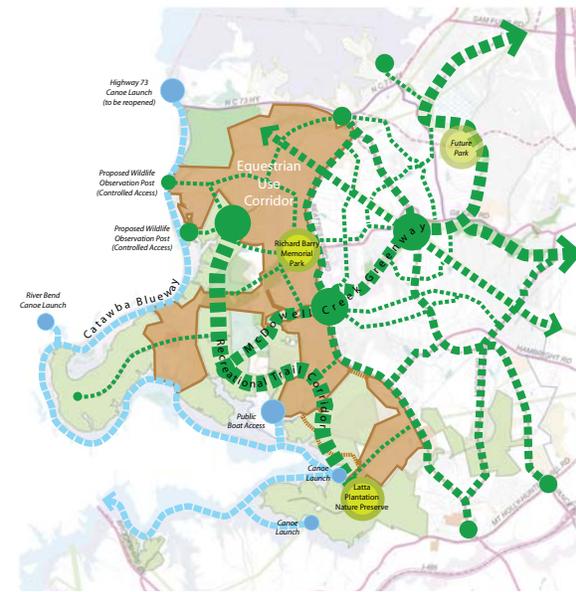
The Beatties Ford Small Area has a diversity of characteristics including natural, historical, and commercial assets. The study area was broken down into three planning districts for analysis. The Northern District of the small area plan is located between NC 73 and Bud Henderson Road. The Central District extends between Bud Henderson Road and Hambricht Road, and the Southern District is bordered by Hambricht Road and Mount Holly Huntersville Road.

Above are character sketches of BFRCSAP Districts, (top to bottom): rural character of Northern District; Neck Road plantation home (Central District); concept for a "hamlet center" in the Southern District.





Proposed Transportation System Improvements



Proposed Non-vehicular Network

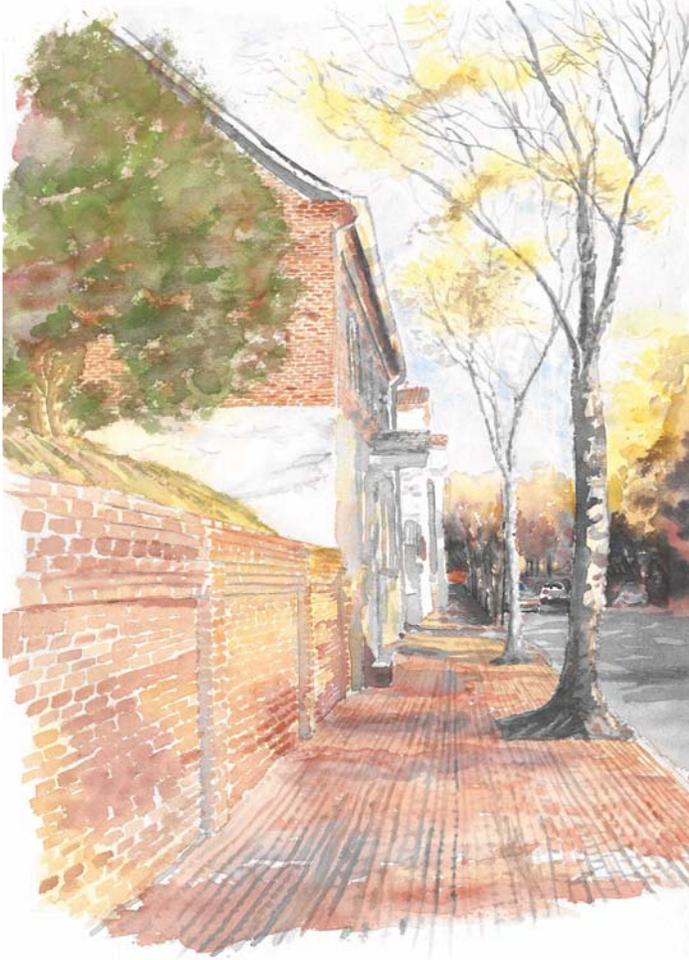
established by the Town’s overall planning framework. Commercial development in the study area will be focused at NC 73 and at Mount Holly – Huntersville Road, with another center at the intersection of Beatties Ford Road with Hambright Road. Commercial development at this location shall be restricted to the approved Latta Village development. Additional commercial centers to serve the Town west of I-77 should be anticipated within the Vance Road corridor as well as within the established commercial centers nearer to I-77.

Design: The design character of Beatties Ford Road as a historic rural road should continue with maintenance of an enhanced two-lane road, maintenance of a 100-foot wide natural buffer on both sides of the road (which will include multi-purpose trails), enhancement of the road through the historic walled section at Hopewell Presbyterian Church, and the use of appropriate traffic control measures at major intersections to regulate traffic flows. Employment of stone landscape features that reflect the character of the historic walls is encouraged at intersections, public facilities and other key sites within the corridor. The proposed roundabout at McCoy Road and the intersection of Vance Road and Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road shall receive more extensive gateway landscape treatments that include the use of stone features to define the entries into

the BFR corridor.

Residential Pattern: The lower density single-family development that is permitted under the Rural zoning district designation should be continued so long as critical viewsheds are minimally impacted, preservation goals are maintained, and watershed, green infrastructure and public right of way connectivity standards are observed. Public right of ways and access to river frontage, greenways and trails shall be provided. Similar guidelines should apply to subdivisions in the Transitional Residential district. Development should allow for the future realization of a continuous recreational trail corridor linking the preserves and preservation lands along the Catawba River. If located in the designated Equestrian Use Corridor (see Section 6.5.3.2) of the study area, equestrian related uses and easements for creating future equestrian trails and links should be accommodated to the extent possible.

Future Commercial Development: New mixed-use retail and office centers should be located at the north (NC 73) and south (Mt. Holly - Huntersville Road) ends of the corridor. For development at the southern end of the corridor, a "hamlet" development pattern is recommended. A hamlet can be defined as a discernible place with a focal point and boundary that maintains and fosters primarily



residential, institutional (i.e. places of worship, schools) or recreational activities. It is organized in accordance with a pedestrian scale. The commercial center approved by the Town at Beatties Ford Road and Hambright Road will represent an additional commercial node in the BFR corridor. Design standards for commercial development are to reference the rural and historical features of the Beatties Ford Road corridor, using (primarily) brick structures employing Neoclassical details in the style reminiscent of Federalist civic architecture (such as that of the historic churches in the area), and to employ a village-grid development pattern that can easily be adapted or transition between residential, open space, mixed-use and civic uses over time.

Public Uses: The BFR corridor contains a number of schools, parks, churches and other public and quasi-public uses that provide important services to the study area. All setback, design and transportation requirements of this study shall apply equally to public facilities.

Transportation

The transportation network of the study area should be enhanced through the following primary initiatives:

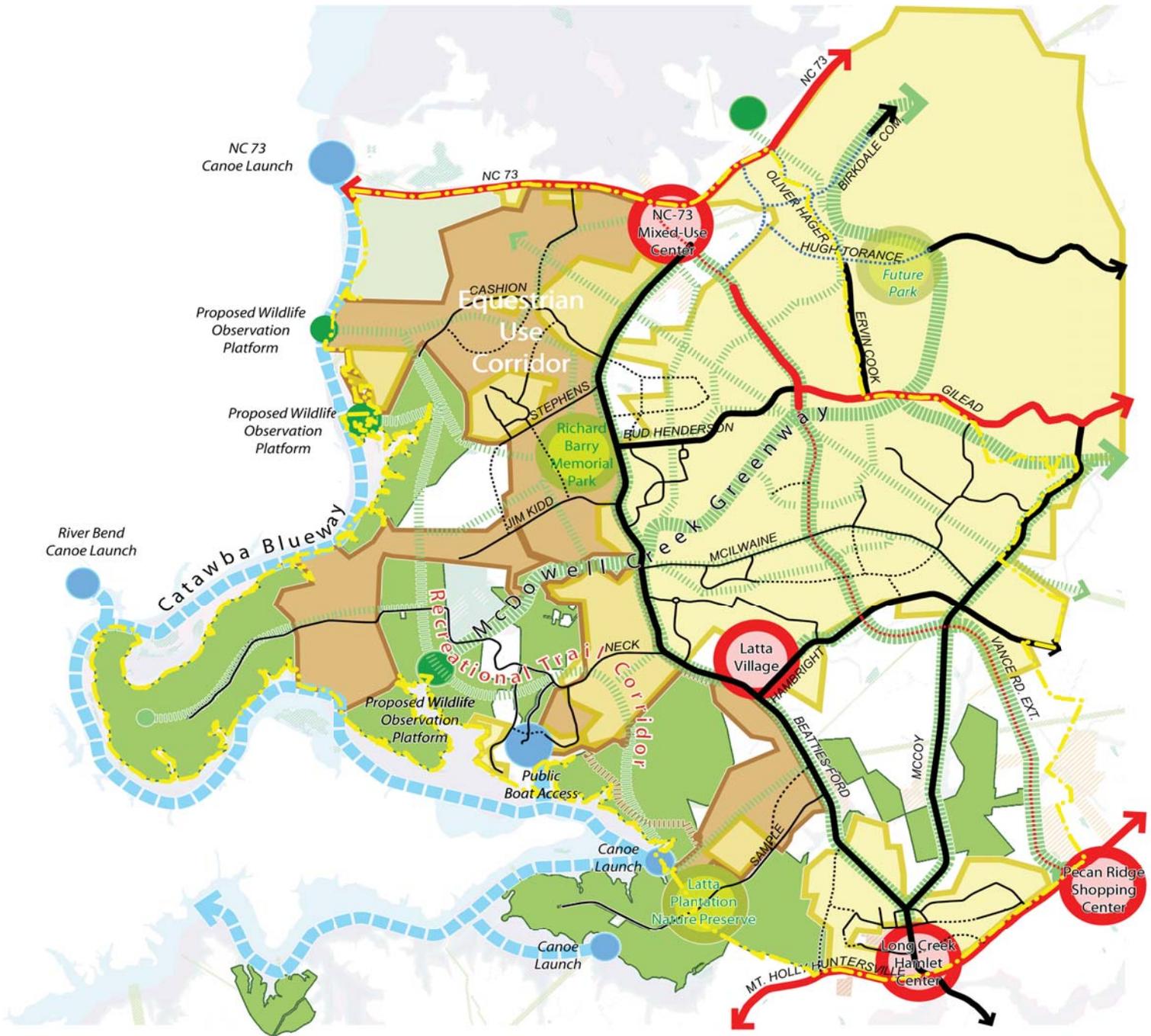
Beatties Ford Road: Maintain and enhance Beatties Ford Road as a two-lane roadway with the following operational and aesthetic features:

- Limited use of turn lanes at other intersections to facilitate traffic flow
- Design features that complement the historic setting and provide design continuity shall be utilized.
- Further research is needed to analyze the appropriateness of roundabouts, or other feature, at the intersections of Cashion Road, Bud Henderson Road, Neck Road, McIlwaine Road, and Hambright Road. A roundabout is proposed at the intersection of BFR and McCoy Road.

Vance Road: Continue to emphasize Vance Road as the primary Major Thoroughfare west of I-77. The recommended realignment of the northern end of Vance, in conjunction with the proposed realignment of Hugh Torance Parkway, is intended to direct both the east-bound and west-bound traffic from NC 73 southward onto Vance.

Hugh Torance Parkway: Relocate the alignment of Hugh Torance Parkway to work in conjunction with Birkdale Commons Parkway and Vance Road to provide a more integrated thoroughfare network in the north end of the study area while helping direct NC 73 traffic southward along Vance.

Connectivity: A connected street network that provides multiple routes of travel within neighborhoods will help relieve traffic on BFR and other major streets. As development of land parcels (and potential redevelopment in the future) continues within the study area, the street network of each development shall provide linkages to existing developments where the means exist and shall provide “stub-out” streets to property boundaries abutting undeveloped parcels. One improvement suggested is the creation of a new road connecting



Land Use

-  BFRCSAP Study Area Boundary
-  Residential Area / Subdivisions
-  Equestrian Use Corridor
-  Nature Preserve / Passive Open Space
-  Active Use Park
-  Mixed-Use / Hamlet Center

Proposed Transportation System

-  Existing Major Thoroughfare
-  Existing Minor Thoroughfare
-  Proposed Major Thoroughfare
-  Proposed Minor Thoroughfare
-  Existing Collector Street
-  Proposed Collector Street

Proposed Non-Vehicular Network

-  Primary Greenway / Trail
-  Secondary Trail
-  Blueway
-  Boat Access / Canoe Launch

Sample Road and BFR to the north of the current intersection of these two roads in order to improve traffic safety in the historic walled section of BFR.

Non-Vehicular Transportation: In addition to the multi-purpose trails to be located within the buffers on either side of BFR, other non-vehicular trails should be located along other roadways and within the extensive open space and recreational lands in the study area. The Greenways that are being developed by the Mecklenburg Park and Recreation Department are a critical part of the regional non-vehicular network that will be developed within the study area. Enhanced connectivity requirements for non-vehicular networks are to apply to all new developments.

Open Space and Preservation

Preservation of the rural character of the study area should continue and be enhanced through:

- The provision of broad buffers along Beatties Ford Road
- The continued protection, acquisition and management of conservation easements in rural land parcels, these occurring primarily in the threatened viewshed areas along Cashion, Linderman, Stephens, Jim Kidd, and Hubbard Roads.

Implementation

The following principle implementation strategies are recommended:

- Request that MUMPO consider amending the Thoroughfare Plan to:
 - Change the alignment of the Vance Road Major Thoroughfare corridor as shown on the Proposed Transportation System Map of this document (p. 34).
 - Change the alignment of the Birkdale Commons Parkway as shown

on the Proposed Transportation System Map.

- Change the alignment of the Hugh Torance Parkway Extension Minor Thoroughfare as shown on the Proposed Transportation System Map.
- Provide additional collector roads to offer alternative network options as shown on the transportation system map.
- Amend appropriate Town regulations as needed to codify:
 - The 100' buffer on both sides of BFR and define the design requirements for the buffers.
 - Incorporate connectivity standards for vehicular as well as non-vehicular circulation in the site planning process.
- Continue to integrate the Open Space and Recreation lands of the study area by:
 - Use of strategic land acquisition where essential to constrain further commercial development.
 - Enhancing the connectivity policy for transportation links (vehicular and non-vehicular) to ensure access to greenways, nature preserves and the Catawba River.
 - Continued coordination with public agencies (such as CMUD) and private non-profit or public land conservancy organizations to acquire additional environmentally sensitive lands and conservation easements in the threatened viewsheds.
 - Working closely with the Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department, the Mecklenburg County School Board and other agencies to expand recreational lands and services. Joint use of facilities shall be used as a major strategy for efficient use of public funds and to provide additional opportunities to reduce traffic.

