

TOWN OF MATTHEWS PROPOSED PROJECT FOR NCDOT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The Town of Matthews intends to prepare an application for NCDOT Enhancement Program funding for the following project:

Plan, design, and construct intersection improvements at Trade and John Streets, to include elements such as reducing width of the vehicular driving area at pedestrian crossings, revising pedestrian signals, replacing and/or improving the sidewalks, and providing improved signage for both pedestrians and drivers.

This intersection is in the center of the historic downtown, traditionally known as “the square”. The Town of Matthews adopted a Master Downtown Plan several years ago, and since then several residential and non-residential projects have been approved and constructed, increasing the need and desire for comfortable and safe pedestrian amenities. The first of seven Plan Principles of the Downtown Master Plan states the goal to “create and maintain a pedestrian-friendly environment”.

Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) has increased its presence with express and local bus routes being extended into and through the downtown. To do so, they must pass through this intersection, and potential passengers from both older neighborhoods and emerging new residential developments must cross through this intersection to get to and from bus stops.

The Town has been considering a variety of options for improving compatible vehicular traffic, convenient parking, and pedestrian safety along North Trade Street adjacent to this intersection. Dan Burden, with Walkable Communities, conducted a workshop in downtown Matthews in 2000, and recommended possible pedestrian-friendly improvements along downtown streets and intersections which can be incorporated into this project.

Downtown Matthews hosts a variety of events throughout the year, including Matthews Alive! over Labor Day weekend, Fourth of July celebrations and footraces, Art Fest in the fall, spring and autumn one-day festivals, and more that occasionally close portions of streets, and which bring large crowds of people. During the warmer months, the Matthews Farmers’ Market is open in the downtown area each Saturday, drawing people from a several mile radius. These pedestrians attempt to utilize the current pedestrian-activated signals at the Trade/John intersection, although they have not been properly functioning for some time. New signals and connections would encourage pedestrians to wait for a reserved “walk” time to cross the intersection.

Along with other downtown improvements, consistent signage is being designed and incorporated into streetscaping. Sign clutter and adequate information are a balancing act that will continue as downtown improvement efforts expand. Better signage indicating pedestrian crossing locations will assist both drivers and pedestrians.

NC DOT Transportation Enhancement Project
John St. and Trade St Intersection

