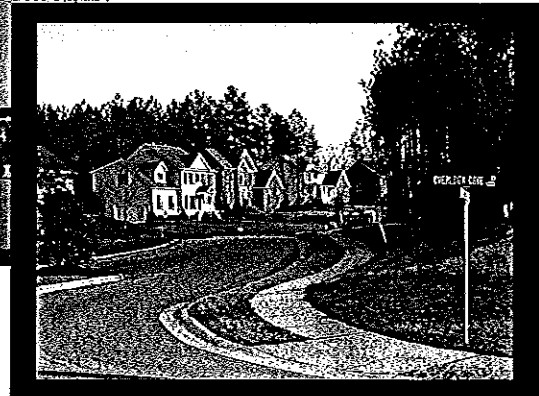


Westside Strategic Plan



Adopted by
Charlotte City Council
June 2000

Adopted by
Board of County Commissioners
August 2000

Volume I: Concept Plan

2000

Westside Strategic Plan

Volume I: Concept Plan

<i>Preface</i>	i
Participants.....	ii
<i>Executive Summary</i>	1
A Promising Future.....	3
Key Planning Challenges for the Westside	4
Summary Plan for the Westside.....	5
Conclusion.....	8
<i>Part I: Introduction</i>	9
A Glimpse of the Westside	11
Challenges for the Westside	11
The Study Area.....	13
Demographic Profile	14
Land Use and Zoning.....	15
Vision for Change	17
<i>Part II: Overall Plan</i>	19
1. Land Use	21
2. Image	33
3. Education and Schools.....	35
4. Economic Development.....	37
5. Neighborhoods and Social Disparities.....	39
6. Transportation	41
7. Public Facilities	45
8. Environment.....	49
<i>Conclusion</i>	51
<i>Land Use Maps</i>	inside back cover

Preface

In response to growing concerns voiced about Westside issues, City Council requested that the Planning Commission develop a strategic plan for the Westside to comprehensively address the area's many social, economic, and physical issues.

A 35-member citizens committee was formed to work with staff during the eight-month plan development process. Additionally, a 12-member citizens group developed specific land recommendations for areas impacted by airport noise resulting from the expansion of Charlotte Douglas International Airport, and their work has been included in this plan. Finally, a steering committee provided technical support and information to staff and the study groups.

The **Westside Strategic Plan** is in three parts:

- Volume I, this *Concept Plan*, identifies the issues and proposes objectives. It will be presented to the Charlotte City Council and Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners for review and adoption.
- Volume II, a separate *Implementation Plan*, contains suggested strategies for achieving the objectives. It is informational and is not an adopted document.
- In addition, an informational *Summary Document* is available that lists priority objectives and key strategies from the Concept and Implementation Plans.

This **Westside Strategic Plan** will be used to help City and County staff, the governing bodies, community-based organizations and others set priorities for their efforts on the Westside. It will be used as a guide for making policy and investment decisions. The plan is not intended to duplicate or replace individual neighborhood plans already adopted for the Westside. Rather, it builds on the previous planning by addressing gaps that must be fulfilled and updating plans where necessary.

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The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission thanks these citizens and staff for their invaluable input and commitment.

Executive Summary

Executive Summary

■ A Promising Future

The Westside is one of Charlotte's last development frontiers. The 145 square mile area extending from York County to the south, to Mountain Island Lake to the north, is rich with opportunity.

- Charlotte-Douglas International Airport, which is vital to Charlotte's and the region's economy, will be expanding in the next few years.
- Interstate 485 will be winding its way north, creating considerable development opportunities at its interchanges with the Westside's major thoroughfares.
- Already fast-growing employment centers in the Arrowood and Westinghouse Boulevard areas are expanding and providing new employment opportunities for residents.
- New upscale housing developments are emerging in Lower Steele Creek in the southwest, and along Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road in the northwest.

Significant changes are also taking place in the older, inner-city areas of the Westside. Several areas, in fact, are beginning to turn around.

- Neighborhood revitalization efforts are underway in First Ward, Dalton Village, Wingate, Seversville, Reid Park, Lakewood, Cummings Avenue/Lincoln Heights and several other communities.
- Business revitalization efforts are making progress along key corridors like Beatties Ford Road, West Boulevard, Wilkinson Boulevard, and Freedom Drive.

■ Key Planning Challenges for the Westside

Although the tide of change is building on the Westside, the area continues to have numerous challenges that must be addressed:

Land Use: *how* to maintain a good balance of land uses and ensure appropriate and well-designed development in Airport noise-impacted areas, around I-485 interchanges and other major intersections; along the Catawba River; and around industrial concentrations.

Image: *how* to change the negative image often associated with the Westside.

Education: *how* to improve the quality of education in and the condition of Westside schools.

Economic Development: *how* to retain existing employers and draw new jobs; businesses, and quality housing to the area, when competition in the region is so keen.

Neighborhoods: *how* to maintain stable neighborhoods; revitalize and improve conditions in the many fragile and threatened neighborhoods and areas showing signs of distress.

Transportation: *how* to improve the transportation system to better link people to jobs and provide transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Public Facilities: *how* to provide the same level of public facilities – such as parks, water and sewer service, libraries, and post offices – found in other parts of the community.

Environment: *how* to improve environmental quality – in particular, water quality and brownfield sites.

The focus of the **Westside Strategic Plan** is on addressing these eight challenges. A study group of citizens worked with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission staff to develop a plan of action to guide the Westside into the 21st century.

The following are the plan objectives relating to the above challenges, which, combined, form the overall plan for the Westside. Specific implementation strategies to address land use issues are included in this report, the Westside Strategic Plan's *Concept Plan*. Additional implementation strategies are provided in a companion document, the Westside Strategic Plan's *Implementation Plan*.

The plan complements and builds on district plans and other adopted plans within the Westside geography. Those adopted plans will be updated to reflect changes made as a result of the Westside Strategic Plan.

■ Summary Plan for the Westside

LAND USE

Objectives

- Encourage a compatible mix of land uses near the Airport and areas impacted by Airport noise.
- Allow for higher density housing in certain locations.
- Encourage more cohesive and pedestrian-oriented mixed-use developments at I-485 interchanges and at major intersections where feasible.
- Ensure that the retail centers proposed on adopted district plans are appropriately sized and located.
- Encourage consistency between proposed land uses and zoning.
- Encourage development that is a more pedestrian friendly, compact, village center in and around the Johnson C Smith University area

IMAGE

Objectives

- Develop and implement a public relations/image strategy that promotes the positive aspects of the Westside and aggressively markets development opportunities.
- Improve the overall appearance of the Westside, particularly in inner-city neighborhoods and along major roadway and rail corridors.
- Increase police visibility to reduce crime, and communicate reductions in crime to the public.
- Preserve landmarks, historic neighborhoods, and other local features that provide a sense of history and give a unique identity to the area.

EDUCATION/SCHOOLS

Objectives

- Construct new, state-of-the-art schools on the Westside and upgrade existing schools to ensure equity in education and facilities.
- Improve the academic standards and performance at existing schools.
- Help students who do not plan to attend four-year colleges by better preparing them for technical training and job placement after graduation.
- Encourage more students to stay in school.
- Increase teacher awareness of cultural differences among students.
- Make school buildings available to the community after hours.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Objectives

- Support City-Within-A-City (CWAC) business park development efforts.
- Address brownfield issues and encourage redevelopment of brownfield sites.
- Encourage creation of new business associations and support existing ones.

v Summary Plan for the Westside

Economic Development (continued)

- Encourage the development of well-designed mixed-use centers (with employment, residential, and retail components) on key sites throughout the Westside.
- Market available industrial land.
- Improve the quality of industrial development.
- Support pending state legislation to establish development zones and tax incentives.
- Continue to support and expand the City's Business Corridor Revitalization Program.
- Encourage improvements to the appearance of existing industries and businesses along corridors.
- Coordinate employment and training resources, and make them more accessible.
- Link residents to higher-paying jobs.
- Support Enterprise Community efforts.
- Provide better public transportation to job sites.

NEIGHBORHOODS AND SOCIAL DISPARITIES

Objectives

- Continue revitalization efforts in inner-city neighborhoods.
- Improve public housing communities, with the goal of residents being able to make a transition to private housing.
- Focus on improving conditions in areas showing signs of distress.
- Make neighborhoods safe.
- Increase homeownership.
- Increase the organizing and capacity-building skills of neighborhood leaders.
- Continue to maintain stable neighborhoods and encourage the development of a variety of housing opportunities of persons of all income levels.

TRANSPORTATION

Objectives

- Accelerate construction priorities of roadway projects, where possible.
- Landscape and improve the appearance of major corridors throughout the Westside.
- Ensure that new roads are built, and existing ones improved, to accommodate increasing traffic volumes.
- Reduce the impact of noise on existing and planned residential areas adjacent to I-485.

■ Summary Plan for the Westside

Transportation (continued)

- Provide local input into decisions regarding locations of median openings on thoroughfares.
- Support plans to establish the Wilkinson Boulevard/I-85/Airport Corridor and the I-77 North Corridor as future mass transit routes.
- Incorporate the use of High Occupancy Vehicle lanes in major roadway projects, when appropriate.
- Expand bus service to residential areas on the Westside.
- Continue to support and expand van and connecting bus service to major employment centers on the Westside.
- Provide adequate and safe bus stops and shelters throughout the Westside.
- Continue to support and expand the EZ Rider transportation system.
- Construct sidewalks and bike lanes on all roadway projects and investigate the feasibility of adding them to roads where pedestrians and cyclists are likely to travel (near parks, schools, shopping, etc.).
- Improve the safety of walking, driving and cycling on Westside streets at night by providing more streetlights.
- Improve conditions of rail crossings throughout the Westside.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Objectives

- Continue to renovate and upgrade existing parks and build new active recreational parks.
- Identify opportunities to accelerate construction of proposed parks, recreation centers, and greenways, where feasible.
- Consider developing greenways along the Catawba River, from I-85 south to West Boulevard, to link proposed parks along the river.
- Increase programmed activities for youth, teens, and seniors.
- Provide public water and sewer service to the entire Westside.
- Encourage development of additional libraries and post offices on the Westside, particularly in the Lower Steele Creek and Mt. Holly Road areas. Post offices and postal service should be developed and/or improved.
- Encourage Carolinas Medical Center, Presbyterian Hospital and other medical facilities to locate on the Westside.
- Support continued public ownership and operation of the Charlotte Coliseum. (*Study Group recommendation*)
- Evaluate options for ownership and reuse of the Charlotte Coliseum, and the economic impact, if and when a decision is made to build a new facility. (*Staff recommendation*)

■ Summary Plan for the Westside

ENVIRONMENT

Objectives

- Extend public sewer service to waterfront areas, to provide an alternative to septic tanks.
 - Extend water lines to areas currently not served by public water service, especially the Paw Creek and Rhyne Road areas where contamination from surrounding industries is possible.
 - Ensure that development along the waterfront is sensitive to the natural environment.
 - Encourage and facilitate redevelopment of contaminated industrial sites.
 - Monitor the airlines to ensure they comply with federal regulations for reducing airport noise by replacing Stage II airplanes with Stage III planes by the year 2000.
-

■ Conclusion

The Westside is a vulnerable part of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, yet opportunities abound for the future. This strategic plan attempts to address the major issues that confront the Westside and provide an overall plan to guide the area into the 21st century.

The plan will require considerable coordination between governing bodies and agencies, developers, employers, and residents. It is based on the premise that the *entire* Westside has the potential to be a thriving, attractive part of the community. To be effectively implemented, the plan must be considered as a "package deal." The various components of the plan -- image, education, economic development, neighborhood revitalization, land use, transportation, environment, and public facilities -- are all interrelated.

The window of opportunity for changing the course of the Westside's future will likely close within the next five to eight years due to the changes taking place on the Westside and in the region. Now is the time to take action.

Part I
Introduction

A Glimpse of the Westside

- Challenges for the Westside ■
- The Study Area ■
- Demographic Profile ■
- Land Use and Zoning ■

Vision for Change

A Glimpse of the Westside

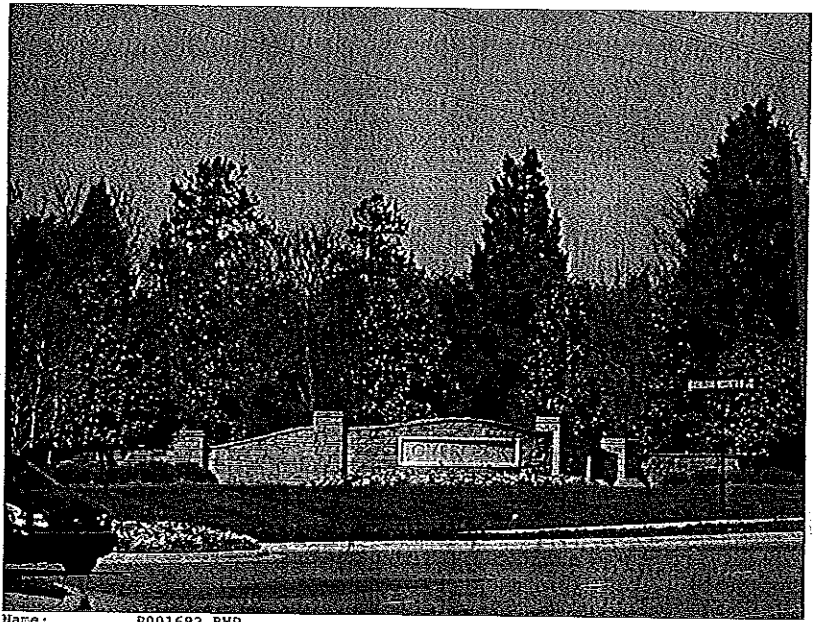
■ Challenges for the Westside

Like most places, the Westside has its positive and negatives. The difference may be in its extremes.

Some of the county's most expensive homes have been built along the lakes at either end of the Westside, while one of the

City's highest concentrations of public housing is located in the heart of the area along West Boulevard. In recent years executive office and business parks have been built along thoroughfares such as Arrowood Road and Billy Graham Parkway, while trucking firms and oil distributors continue to dominate older industrial areas in the northwest. It's a blend of the old and new, urban and suburban, white collar and blue collar.

With nearly 50 percent of its land vacant, the Westside is the city's last and largest development frontier



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The Westside is truly the most diverse area in the county. While it has its share of problems it also has many unique and attractive qualities. And with nearly 50 percent of its land vacant, the Westside is Charlotte's last and largest development frontier. All other largely undeveloped areas of the county have

been annexed by the six incorporated towns, or are in their spheres of influence. Therefore, the Westside is Charlotte's only significant opportunity for expansion.

This strategic plan focuses on the Westside's many opportunities and identifies ways to capitalize on them. It also addresses the problems – real or perceived – that often characterize the area. While the list of Westside issues is long, this plan takes a strategic approach, concentrating on eight key challenges.

Challenges for the Westside

Land Use: *how* to maintain a good balance of land uses and ensure appropriate and well-designed development in Airport noise-impacted areas, around the Outer Loop interchanges and other major intersections; along the Catawba River; and around industrial concentrations.

Image: *how* to change the negative image often associated with the Westside.

Education: *how* to improve the quality of education in and the condition of Westside schools.

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Transportation: *how* to improve the transportation system to better link people to jobs and provide transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

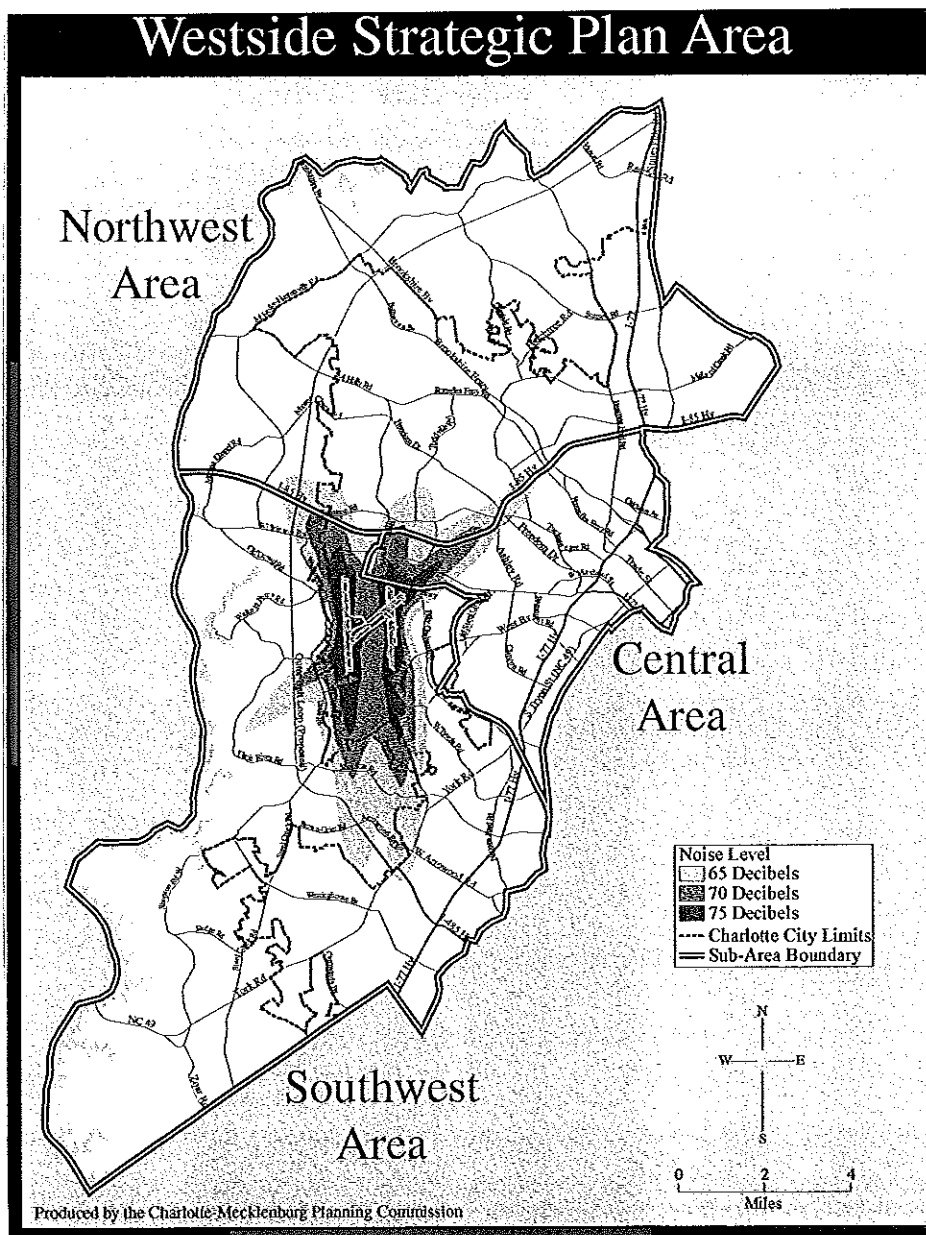
Public Facilities: *how* to provide the same level of public facilities -- such as parks, water and sewer service, libraries, and post offices -- found in other parts of the community.

Environment: *how* to improve environmental quality -- in particular, water quality and brownfield sites.

■ The Study Area

Opinions vary on the Westside's boundaries. For this plan, however, the Westside is the area generally bounded by the Catawba River and Gaston County to the west; York County to the south; Mountain Island Lake to the north; and Statesville Road, I-77/I-277, and South Boulevard to the east. This geography is comprised of approximately 145 square miles, or a little over one-quarter of Mecklenburg County's total land area.

Within the Westside are three distinct sub-areas -- the southwest, central, and northwest areas. These areas generally coincide with the Planning Commission's district plan boundaries. In the late 1980's the Planning Commission divided Mecklenburg County into seven districts or planning areas. Plans were developed and adopted by the City Council and/or Board of County Commissioners. The planning districts included in the Westside Strategy Plan's boundaries are delineated on the map below.



■ Demographic Profile

In 1990, the Census Bureau counted 119,425 people living in the Westside, or 23% of Mecklenburg County's total population. By 1996, the Planning Commission estimated this figure had increased to 132,739, representing a 10% gain in six years. A look at the census information reveals the following facts and figures for the area. (It should be noted that in many cases the figures for the central area skew the overall figures for the Westside. Also, because of changes that have occurred since 1990, some of the numbers are dated.)

The Westside in 1990

- ◆ **54.5% of the Westside's total population was African-American**, with the majority (83%) living in the central area of the Westside; this compares to 32% in the City of Charlotte and 26% in Mecklenburg County.
- ◆ **44,089 households lived in the Westside**, with 43% of the total households located in the central area, 32% in the northwest, and the remaining 25% in the southwest.
- ◆ **The Westside's overall median household income was \$26,923**, compared to \$33,830 county-wide and \$31,873 city-wide; the central area had the lowest median income with \$18,059 followed by the northwest at \$33,579 and the southwest at \$34,048.
- ◆ **Approximately 15% of the Westside's total families were living below the poverty line**, the majority of whom resided in the central area; 26% of all central area families were living below the poverty line, compared to 6% in the northwest and 8% in the southwest. The city-wide percentage was 8.3% and the county's was 7.2%.
- ◆ **21% of the total households on the Westside were headed by a female**; nearly one-third of the central area's households were headed by a female, followed by about 15% and 13% in the southwest and northwest, respectively. This compares to 3.7% in the city as a whole, and 3.1% in the county.
- ◆ **Of the 47,633 housing units located in the Westside, 56% were owner-occupied**; in the central area only 36% of the total units were owner-occupied, with 60% owner-occupied in the southwest and 73% in the northwest areas. City-wide, 62% of all units were owner-occupied; 56% were owner-occupied in the county.
- ◆ **68% of the residents 25 years and older had graduated from high school**; only 55% of central area residents had graduated, with 73% graduated in the northwest and 79% in the southwest. This compares to 81% in the city, and 82% county-wide.
- ◆ **11% of the residents 25 years and older were college graduates**; in the central area only 7% had degrees, compared to 13% in the northwest and 15% in the southwest. Overall, 28% of both city and county residents had degrees.
- ◆ **Unemployment was higher in this area, with a rate of 5.5%** as compared to Charlotte at 3.8% and Mecklenburg County at 4.2%. The central area's rate was the highest, at 7.6%, compared to 3.9% in the northwest and 4.4% in the southwest.

■ Land Use and Zoning

Nearly 50% of the Westside's total land area is vacant, with the largest amount of vacant land in the southwest. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of the total land area is developed with single-family homes, and industrial development consumers nearly 12%. *Table 1* indicates how all land on the Westside was developed (as of December 1996); *Table 2* reflects how the land was zoned.

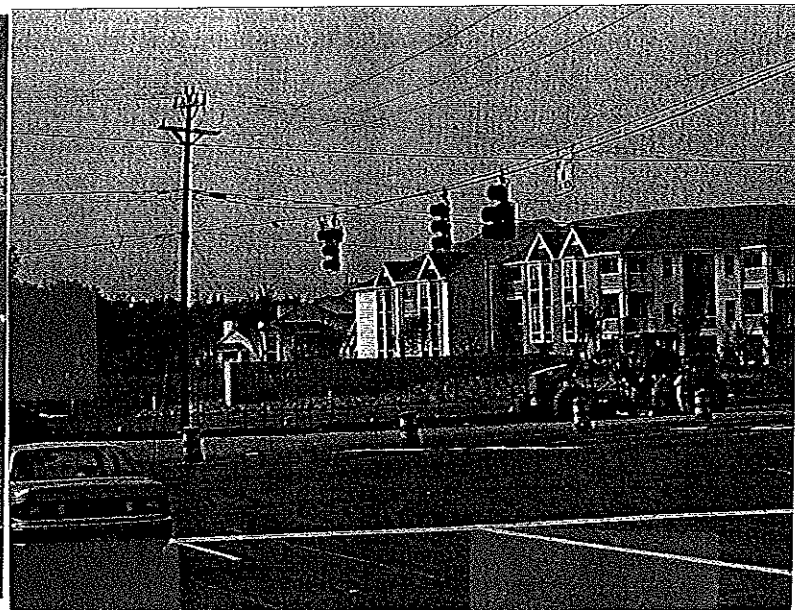
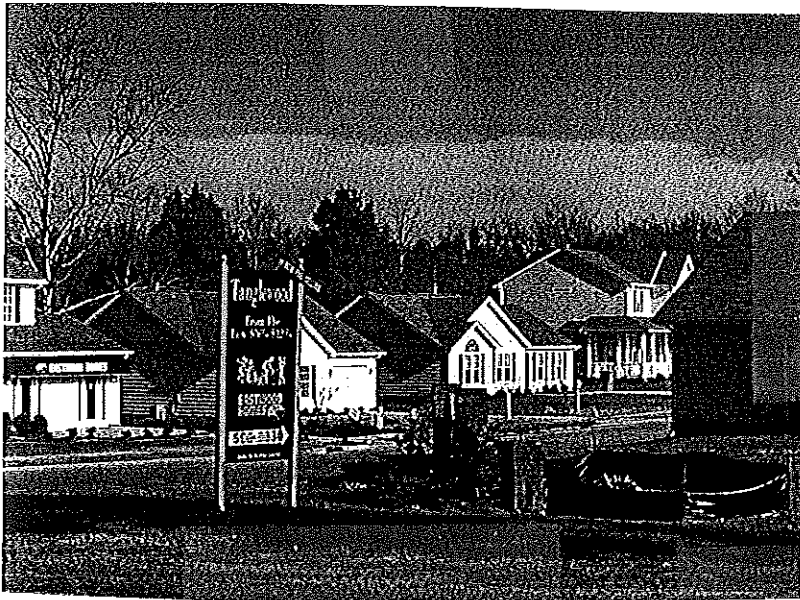
Table 1: How Westside Land Was Zoned in 1996

Land Use Category	Central %	North- west %	South- west %	Westside Total %	County Total %
Single Family	25.4	39.2	20.0	27.9	32.0
Multi-Family	6.8	1.4	1.6	2.1	2.6
Mobile Home Park	0.1	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.2
Office	1.4	0.5	1.2	0.9	0.8
Institutional	3.6	1.6	2.5	2.3	2.4
Industrial	23.4	10.2	10.5	11.9	6.0
Commercial	10.6	1.9	2.2	3.0	2.6
Open/Recreation	4.2	2.5	4.8	3.9	2.6
Vacant	24.3	42.4	56.7	47.6	50.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 2: How Westside Land Was Zoned in 1996

Zoning Category	Central %	North- west %	South- west %	Westside Total %	County Total %
Single Family	37.6	74.0	64.6	65.2	77.5
Multi-Family	16.4	5.0	3.3	5.4	5.1
Mobile Home Park	0.0	0.4	1.3	0.8	0.5
Office	1.1	0.6	1.0	0.8	1.7
Institutional	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.9	1.0
Industrial	36.5	16.2	23.5	22.2	10.2
Commercial	8.4	3.8	4.6	4.7	4.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission Single Family Plan Approvals and Zoning and Land Use estimates (June, 1997)



New residential development has accelerated in the suburban areas of the Westside since 1990. Subdivision plans have been approved for 11,000 new homes, or approximately 30 percent of the County's total approved between 1990 and the end of 1997.

In that same period, over 6,000 new multi-family units -- or nearly one-quarter of the county's total -- were approved for the Westside, the majority in the southwest. *Table 3* reflects residential approvals since 1990 for each of the Westside's subareas. Note that very little residential development has taken place in the central area.

Table 3: Housing Units Approved for the Westside, 1990-97

Area	Single Family Units	Multi-Family Units	Total Units
Central	37	825	862
Northwest	5,714	972	6,686
Southwest	5,323	4,280	9,603
Total	11,074	6,077	17,151

Source: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission

Vision for Change

Change is on the horizon for the Westside. And with that come both challenges and opportunities.

For example, in the next few years a new runway will be built at Charlotte Douglas International Airport, improving air service for Charlotte and the region, yet impacting how surrounding land will be used. Interstate 485 will be constructed, opening up new areas for develop-



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ment, yet increasing traffic and development activity on local thoroughfares. New jobs, homes and businesses will come to many of the undeveloped suburban areas, expanding opportunities and

choices for residents, yet placing more stress on the environment, particularly in sensitive watershed areas. And public and private resources will continue to be dedicated to improving the quality of life in the older, fragile neighborhoods and corridors, yet unemployment and crime, if not addressed, may slow progress.

In the next decade, the Westside has the opportunity to emerge as one of the most dynamic and diverse parts of Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

How the Westside deals with these and other changes will have a significant and long-term impact on the area's quality of life and its future economic stability. In the next decade, the

Westside has the opportunity to merge as one of the most dynamic and diverse parts of Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Through the collective efforts of neighborhood and business groups, non-profits,

churches, developers, and government, the Westside will be in a better position to deal with the many challenges that will accompany that change. The following vision for bringing about change on the Westside was developed as part of the strategic planning process.

Vision for Positive Change on the Westside

Land Use: The Westside's overall land use pattern will be balanced, allowing for a variety of quality commercial, employment, residential and open space uses.

Image: The Westside will establish and sustain a new, positive image, built on the area's strengths and diverse housing and employment opportunities. Preserving and protecting the area's distinct landmarks and vegetation will be critical to the Westside's image.

Education: The quality of Westside schools, both physically and academically, will be equal to the best schools in the county, and more Westside students will stay in school and be better prepared for employment and/or higher education.

Economic Development: New employers will continue to be attracted to the Westside, and existing ones will remain.

Neighborhoods: The quality of life in the now-fragile and threatened neighborhoods in the Westside will be improved and the areas stabilized. Existing stable neighborhoods will be maintained and preserved and new sustainable communities will be created.

Transportation: The transportation system serving the Westside will expand and improve, particularly linking people to job centers.

Public Facilities: The Westside will have the public facilities such as water and sewer, parks, libraries, post offices and medical facilities, to adequately serve residents and businesses.

Environment: A high level of groundwater and surface water quality will be sustained in all areas of the Westside, and adequate open space will be maintained.

Part II

The Overall Plan

The following are key issues and objectives of the Westside Strategic Plan as they relate to the vision for change. The objectives provide an overall *Concept Plan* or direction for the Westside. Specific implementation strategies are included in a separate *Implementation Plan*.

1	Land Use.....	21
2	Image.....	33
3	Education/Schools.....	35
4	Economic Development.....	37
5	Neighborhoods and Social Disparities.....	39
6	Transportation.....	41
7	Parks, Utilities and Other Public Facilities.....	45
8	Environment.....	49

Land Use

Plan Objectives

1

Nearly 50 percent of the Westside's land area is still vacant. However, as construction of I-485 continues to advance north in the next few years, and as water and sewer service is extended into new areas, the Westside will inevitably attract new development. It is Charlotte's last and largest development frontier and, therefore, must be planned carefully.

In the early 1990's land use planning for the Westside was addressed through the *Southwest, Central, and Northwest District Plans*. These plans identified where new residential, commercial and employment uses should locate, in addition to parks and greenways.

Since the plans were adopted, changes have taken place on the Westside. Charlotte Douglas International Airport is planning to add a new runway, which will affect noise levels and have an impact on surrounding land uses. Road alignments have shifted in some places. Boundaries and regulations for watershed protection have been established. And in several places, major rezonings have been approved that were inconsistent with the adopted plans, thus altering the land development pattern envisioned in the early 1990's.

The Westside Strategic Plan updates the district plans and provides the opportunity to address some of the land development conflicts or opportunities that have arisen in recent years and to identify strategies to deal with them. The land use recommendations adopted as part of the Westside Plan will take precedent over those in the district plans, where differences exist.

Key to Land Use Recommendations:

- **Airport Area**
 - A) Runway 18L Contour (Little Rock to Mulberry Church/Billy Graham)
 - B) Runway 18R Contour (I-485) to Little Rock)
 - C) Runway 23 (NE of Mulberry Church/Billy Graham)
 - D) Runway 5 (Dixie River to Steele Creek)
 - E) Runway 36L and 36R (Old Steele Creek to Billy Graham/Tyvola)
 - F) West of Olympic High
 - G) West of I-485
 - **I-485 Interchange Area**
 - **Retail Centers**
 - **Office/Industrial/Employment Areas**
-



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Key Land Use Issues, Plan Objectives and Recommendations

■ Airport Area

Issue: In 1997, Charlotte City Council approved the revised *Airport Master Plan*, which calls for a third parallel runway to be built between the existing airport and I-485, and for the extension of an existing runway. The expansion of the runways, and the impact of over-flights and noise on existing and future development, are major concerns.

The City Council asked Planning Staff to work with a citizens group to develop specific land use recommendations for the noise-impacted areas; these have been included in the Westside Strategic Plan. Recommendations were based on the 1996 DNL (Decibel Noise Level) noise contours. It is expected that by 2001 these contours may change.

Objective:

- Encourage a compatible mix of land uses adjacent to the airport and to areas most impacted by Airport noise.

Recommendations:

- Amend the *Southwest* and *Northwest District Plans* to reflect the following land use recommendations.

A. Runway 18L Contour (area to the northeast between Little Rock Road and Mulberry Church/Billy Graham Parkway)

1. Allow business/office park uses for most of the area bounded by I-85, Little Rock Road, Tuckaseegee Road and Mulberry Church Road (except for the commercial development at Little Rock Road). *The adopted plan recommends single-family development at this location. (See Map 1)*
2. Maintain the Sheets Circle neighborhood as single family residential until a buyout of the entire neighborhood can be accomplished. (This neighborhood is located between Little Rock Road and Toddville Road.) *The adopted plan recommends single-family development at this location. (See Map 1)*

B. Runway 18R Contour (area to the northwest between the I-485 Outer Loop and Little Rock Road)

3. Maintain the existing golf course in the area just east of the I-485 Outer Loop, north of I-85. *The current plan calls for a mixture of business/office park uses. (See Map 1)*
4. Allow business/office park uses in the western part of the area bounded by I-85, Little Rock Road and Tuckaseegee Road, and retain the Moores Park II neighborhood; additional single-family residential development would be appropriate to the east of the neighborhood, as these areas are outside of the 65 DNL noise contour. *The current plan recommends multi-family and a park. (See Map 1)*

C. Runway 23 Contour (area northeast of Mulberry Church/Billy Graham Parkway)

5. Allow multi-family development on land south of Tuckaseegee Road and east of Mulberry Church Road. *The adopted plan calls for single-family uses in this location. (See Map 1)*

D. Runway 5 Contour (area to the southwest between Dixie River Road and Steele Creek Road)

6. Considering the area's proximity to the river and its access to I-485 and to proposed transit services, this area could become the business/research park of the Westside. It could potentially become an area with a mix of upscale residential, business/office parks, light industrial, and commercial, in several well-designed, planned communities.

Considering the draft recommendations in the 2025 Integrated Transit and Land Use Plan that recommend large-scale employment and mixed use centers in or near transit corridors (Wilkinson Boulevard), additional non-residential development at the scale proposed in this area may conflict with this goal. Consequently, a more detailed economic development, land use, and design plan should be developed for this area. This plan should recommend a future land use pattern that will complement and not compete with community-wide objectives of making Wilkinson Boulevard a major transit corridor. (See Map 2)

7. Maintain a residential future for the far southwestern end of the contour because of its orientation to Lake Wylie. *The adopted plan recommends a park and low-density single family residential for this location. (See Map 2)*
 8. Allow a neighborhood retail center on the southeast quadrant of the interchange of the West Boulevard interchange with I-485. Office, light industrial, and business park uses are recommended directly south of the proposed new runway to the Dorcas Lane neighborhood. *The existing plan calls for single-family uses. (See Map 2)*
 9. The remaining area south of Dorcas Lane should develop with a mixture of single family and multi-family uses up to eight units to the acre, with the exception of the existing business-zoned property near the Steele Creek Road interchange. *The existing plan calls for single-family uses at a density of up to three dwelling units to the acre. (See Map 3)*
- E. Runway 36L and 36R Contours (area to the southwest and southeast respectively between Old Steele Creek and Billy Graham Parkway/West Tyvola Road and south to Sandy Porter Road)**

10. Business/office park and industrial are recommended at the long term land uses in the area bounded by Pine Oaks Drive extension, Steele Creek Road, Shopton

***Business/office park
and industrial are
recommended as the
long term land uses
in this area***

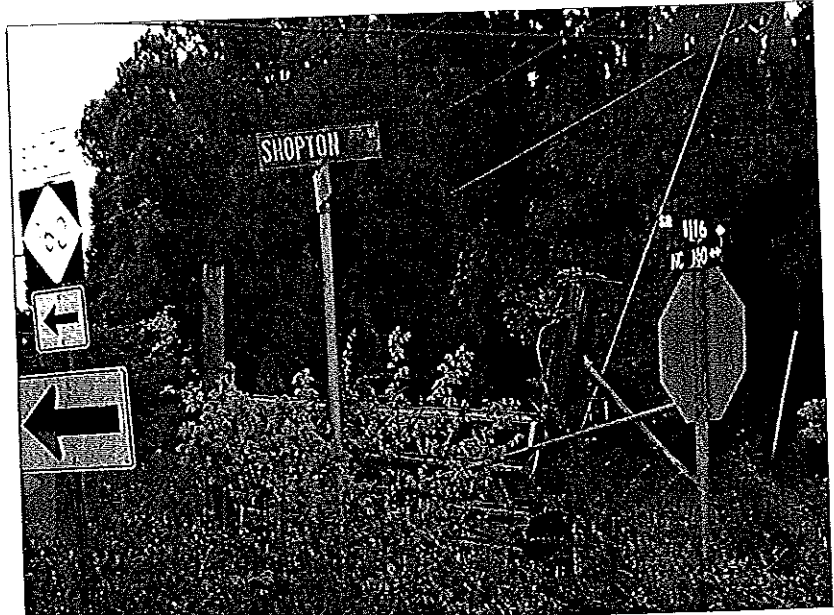
Road, and Coffey Creek. Two residential areas, Steelberry Acres and Eagle Lake, are within this area and are also within the 70 and 65 DNL contours. In the long term it is recommended that this area should remain as single family neighborhoods until a buyout of the entire area can be accomplished. No rezonings to non-residential designations should occur within or adjacent to these residential areas until the neighborhoods are bought as a whole by the airport or a private developer. *The current plan recommends a combination of parks, multi-family and low-density residential.*

(See Map 3)

11. Allow development of business/office park and industrial uses both south of Shopton Road (and west of Coffey Creek) to the Whitehall development to be compatible with surrounding development; the area is mostly vacant, with a scattering of single family homes. *The adopted plan recommends single-family development at this location. (See Map 3)*

12. The construction of I-485 will create a small area bounded by Sandy Porter Road, Brown Grier Road extension, and I-485, that is currently zoned residential. This area, which is directly across the street from Olympic High School, will also have access to an interchange to be built with the extension of Brown Grier Road. The area is too small for substantial residential development and a large amount of retail is already approved nearby. Therefore, office development is recommended for this area with a small retail component (not to exceed 25,000 square feet), if it is well integrated with the office component. *The current plan calls for this area to develop with a mix of multi-family and single family residential. (See Map 3)*

13. In the area between I-485, Shopton Road, Sandy Porter Road, and Steele Creek Road, the land currently includes both B-1 and R-3 zoning. Although this area is outside the noise contour, it is not recommended for residential development because of its proximity to I-485, to an interchange at Steele Creek Road, and to existing retail along Shopton Road. Retail uses should be confined to existing B-1 zoning, and the remainder of the area should develop in an industrial, business/office park fashion. *The current plan calls for single family development at this location. (See Map 3)*



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14. Allow business/office park and industrial uses in the area between Beam Road, Wilmont Road, Billy Graham Parkway and West Boulevard. *The current plan calls for office development in this location.. (See Map 2)*

15. Maintain multi-family on the large tract of land east of Coffey Creek (at the intersection of Shopton and Beam Roads) as proposed in the adopted plan. (See Map 3)

F. West of Olympic High School Complex

16. West of the school complex to Steel Creek, the land is primarily vacant and will have good access to I-485 via the Steele Creek road interchange. Since it is an area outside the noise contours and adjacent to the schools, it is appropriate to continue in residential use. However, the land near the interchange with Steele Creek Road, and adjacent to I-485, gives an opportunity for a mixture of office, business parks and

A planned development, with single and multi-family residential, office, business park and retail is recommended

convenience retail to develop. Since this property is largely in single ownership, a planned development that includes residential (single and multi-family), office, business park, and retail is recommended. A majority of the planned development should be devoted to residential uses. *The current plan recommends low-density single family uses. (See Map 3)*

17. Consider a combination of higher-density single-family housing (up to 8 units per acre), commercial and office uses for the area between I-485 and Steele Creek Road (just north of the Shopton/I-485 interchange). *The Southwest District Plan calls for this area to be developed at a density of 3 units per acre. (See Map 3)*

G. West of I-485 (Dixie Berryhill Area)

The area west of I-485 and the airport has long been recommended for residential development. It does not fall within the noise contours and has the luxury of miles of shoreline along the Catawba River and Lake Wylie.

There are approximately 5,000 acres of undeveloped land in this area. It is sparsely developed and almost all of the land is zoned for low-density residential use. This area is a prime example of untapped development potential that exists on the Westside.

Considering the area's access to the river and its access to I-485 and to proposed transit services, this area could become the business/research park of the Westside. It could potentially become an area with a mix of upscale residential, business/office parks, light industrial, and commercial, in several well-designed, planned communities.

18. One such planned development is recommended north of Walkers Ferry Road and south of Dowd Road. This would likely be the first planned development

to occur, due to the availability of large tracts of land that could be assembled. However, this transition should not occur incrementally. The transition should be allowed only when large tracts of land can be assembled and large-scale, well-designed, mixed-use communities are proposed to be developed. *The current plan calls for a combination of low-density single family and institutional uses in this location. (See Map 8)*

Detailed design guidelines and standards should be developed to encourage development of the highest quality. The guidelines and standards should encourage/require:

- (1) attractive and coordinated signage for the development
- (2) street trees planted along all streets
- (3) sidewalks on both sides of all streets
- (4) unified street and pedestrian lighting system
- (5) pedestrian-oriented building entrances and orientation
- (6) well-landscaped parking generally not located in front yard setbacks
- (7) pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between uses
- (8) architecture designed with scale and compatibility in mind
- (9) public and private open space and neighborhood-scale parks and common areas, and
- (10) a system of thoroughfares and connector streets that are interconnected and attractively landscaped.

Considering the draft recommendations in the 2025 Integrated Transit and Land Use Plan that recommend large-scale employment and mixed use centers in or near transit corridors (Wilkinson Boulevard), additional non-residential development at the scale proposed in this area may conflict with this goal. Consequently, a more detailed economic development, land use, and design plan should be developed for this area. This plan should recommend a future land use pattern that will complement and not compete with community-wide objectives of making Wilkinson Boulevard a major transit corridor. (See Map 8)

19. Other planned developments could possibly occur between Walkers Ferry and Mt. Olivet Church Roads to just south of the proposed U.S. 74 bypass road. These developments would also be a mix of upscale residential, business/office

This area is a prime example of the untapped development potential that exists on the Westside... it could become the business/research park of the Westside

parks, light industrial, and commercial. The long-range vision for the airport identifies a portion of this area to be developed as a master planned business park that would be a center for transportation and communications.

Considering the draft recommendations in the 2025 Integrated Transit and Land Use Plan that recommend large-scale employment and mixed use centers in or near transit corridors (Wilkinson Boulevard), additional non-residential development at the scale proposed in this area may conflict with this goal. Consequently, a more detailed economic development, land use, and design plan should be developed for this area. This plan should recommend a future land use pattern that will complement and not compete with community-wide objectives of making Wilkinson Boulevard a major transit corridor. (See Map 8)

20. Allow the development of business/office parks and industrial development west of I-485 and north of Old Dowd Road. The area is surrounded by industrial and business uses. *The current plan calls for multi-family in this location. (See Map 1)*
21. Encourage industrial in the northwest quadrant of Old Dowd and Sam Wilson Road. This area is surrounded by industrial uses and zoning. *The current plan recommends office use at this location. (See Map 1)*

■ I-485 Interchange Area (North of I-85)

Issue: Land use patterns have been established for development proposals approved for most of the I-485 interchanges on the Westside and at other key intersections. However, several interchange and intersection areas have not been tied to specific development plans, creating the opportunity to plan and design them as unified mixed-use centers.

Objectives:

- Encourage a compatible mix of land uses adjacent to the airport and to areas most impacted by Airport noise.
- Allow for higher-density housing in certain locations.

Recommendations:

- Amend the *Southwest District Plan, Mt. Holly Road Special Project Plan and Northwest District Plan* to reflect the following land use recommendations.

22. Allow for more intense residential development (mix of single family and multi-family, up to 8 units per acre) on both the south side and northeast side of the Moores Chapel Road/I-485 interchange. *The current plan calls for single family at a density of up to 6 dwelling units per acre in this location. (See Map 4)*
23. Allow retail/commercial development to occur in the northwest quadrant of the I-485 interchanges and Moores Chapel Road. Construction of the interchange will leave an odd-shaped remnant of land that will be surrounded on all sides with roads. This site will not likely be desirable for residential development. *The current plan calls for single family at a density of up to 6 dwelling units in this location. (See Map 4)*
24. Allow development of a mixed-use neighborhood center (residential, office and commercial) on the northwest side of the Mt. Holly Road/I-485 interchange, including higher-density housing transitioning to lower-density adjacent to the existing neighborhood to the west and north. *The Mt. Holly Road Special Project Plan calls for a neighborhood commercial center at this location. (See Map 4)*
25. Develop a specific land use and urban design plan for an urban village/town center mixed use development at the I-485 interchange with N.C. 16. *The current plan calls for a mix of office, commercial, multi-family, and business park. This area was defined as a Development Enterprise Area (DEA) in previous plans. A DEA is an area planned for intense mixed use and employment uses. These areas were designated as such to create incentives for large-scale planned developments in certain parts of the community. (See Map 5)*
26. Encourage development of a park/recreation area in the southern quadrant of the interchange at N.C. 16 and I-485. *The current plan calls for a mix of office and multi-family uses. (See Map 5)*
27. Due to the right-of-way needed for I-485, the land southeast of I-485 is not accessible and is essentially land-locked. The North Carolina Department of Transportation should be asked to donate this land to expand the greenway. The



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Plan for an "urban village/town center" mixed use development at the I-485 interchange with N.C. 16

greenway could then be extended to connect to the proposed park south of N.C. 16. *The current plan calls for multi-family and office uses in this location. (See Map 5)*

28. Allow for a more intense mix of residential development (single family and multi-family, up to 8 units to the acre) on the northwest and northeast quadrants of I-485 and Oakdale Road. The large lot single family uses that currently exist in this area will not likely last after the road is developed. This will allow for a more gradual change in the intensity of uses moving away from the interchange. *The current plan recommends low-density for single family up to 4 units to the acre. (See Map 5)*
29. Shift the neighborhood center from the interchange of Vance and I-485 to the intersection of Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road and Vance Road. The amount of land needed for the interchange at this location will not accommodate the proposed neighborhood center. *The current plan calls for single family uses at Vance and Mt. Holly Road. (See Map 6)*



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30. Allow for a more intense mix of residential development (single family and multi-family up to 8 units per acre) at the southeast quadrant of Vance Road and I-485. This will allow for a more gradual change in the intensity of uses moving away from the interchange. *The current plan recommends low-density for single family up to 4 units to the acre. (See Map 6)*

31. Allow office/business park and industrial uses to be developed east of I-485 and north of Pointe O'Woods Drive. The area is currently being developed with similar types of uses. *The current plan calls for office/research in this area. (See Map 6)*
32. Allow a mix of office/business park and industrial development for a tract of land south of Alexanderana Road and east of Vance Road. *The current plan calls for multi-family at this location. (See Map 6)*

■ Retail Centers

Issue: The revised *Northeast District Plan* changed the policies relating to the sizes of mixed use and retail centers. Adjustments are needed for the Westside's centers to reflect the policy changes. In addition, the locations of several new centers proposed in the district plans need to be reconsidered.

Objective:

- Ensure that retail centers proposed in the adopted district plans are appropriately sized and located.

Plans should be updated to reflect policy changes, existing development, and new market conditions

Recommendations:

33. Update the adopted district plans to reflect the new retail and mixed-use center classifications developed as part of the Northeast District Plan update. (The names and definitions of the centers changed to accommodate changes in the retail market. Increases in center sizes do not apply to existing centers.) *Not shown on Map*
34. Retail centers proposed along the future N.C. 160/Sam Wilson Road Connector should be contingent upon the final alignment of this proposed road and should be re-evaluated once a final alignment is determined. *(Not shown on Map)*
35. Replace the following centers in the adopted plans:
 - (1) delete a community-size retail center at Wilkinson Boulevard and I-485, and replace with industrial/office; *(See Map 1)*
 - (2) delete a neighborhood convenience center at Moores Chapel Road, northeast of I-485, and replace it with single family (up to 6 dwelling units); and *(See Map 4)*
 - (3) delete a neighborhood convenience center at the southeast corner of Sam Wilson and Moores Chapel Road, and replace with single family (up to 6 dwelling units.) *(See Map 4)*

■ Office/Industrial/Employment Areas

Issue: Market conditions and existing development have changed, and the plans need to be updated to reflect the change.

Recommendations:

36. Change the *Southwest District Plan* map to reflect an office future in the area between I-77 and Nations Ford Road. *The existing district plan calls for this area to develop residentially. (Not shown on Map)*
37. Change the *Central District Plan* map to reflect a change from retail to office/industrial in the Freedom Mall area between the I-85 service road and Allegheny Road, as recommended in the *Freedom Drive Corridor Revitalization Plan. (See Map 7)*

■ Mixed Use/University Village JCSU Area

Issue: The Johnson C Smith University campus is expanding and a vision for the area needs to be developed and implemented.

Recommendations:

38. Encourage further expansion and development in and around the JCSU campus to be done in a manner that promotes a mixture of uses, is pedestrian friendly, well designed and provides goods, services and entertainment opportunities for JCSU students and nearby residents. *(See Map 7)*

Image

Plan Objectives

2

The Westside is faced with many challenges, but the most difficult and perhaps most important one will be changing people's perceptions of the area.

Image problems have plagued the Westside for years, overshadowing investment decisions and depressing land values. The name "Westside" typically evokes an image of the older inner-city areas where higher than average crime rates and economic decline existed, where interstates have divided neighborhoods, and where large concentrations of public housing and heavy industrial zoning as well as "locally undesirable land uses" (LULUs) have been concentrated.

*The emerging story of
change and revitalization
needs to be told*

While significant social, economic and physical problems remain and must be dealt with on the Westside, many positive things are happening. The Westside's inner-city area is slowly being transformed, neighborhood by neighborhood, corridor by corridor. This emerging story of change and revitalization needs to be told, along with the equally important story of growth and change elsewhere on the Westside -- the story of high quality business development along Billy Graham Parkway, Arrowood Road and I-77, and of new, attractive residential communities rising in Steele Creek, along Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road, and around the area lakes.

Changing the Westside's image won't happen overnight. In 1994 the Charlotte Chamber's Airport Area Council initiated the term "City West." This term was quickly coined as the name of a coalition of neighborhood, business, and political organizations. Although the City West movement has made tremendous progress in helping to market and promote a more positive image of a portion of the Westside, more needs to be done. This strategic plan focuses on four key issues and objectives related to image: public relations, community appearance, crime and safety, and local identity.

Key Image Issues and Plan Objectives

■ Public Relations

Issue: The community lacks an organized and comprehensive plan and/or the resources to promote the Westside as a whole – and public relations are a key to economic development.

Objective:

- Develop and implement a public relations/image strategy that promotes the positive aspects of the Westside and aggressively markets development opportunities; phase this strategy to coincide with Westside improvements.



■ Community Appearance

Issue: The overall appearance of much of the Westside has been neglected. Landscaping along major roads is lacking and areas are not well-maintained. How an area looks is a major factor-affecting image.

Objective:

Improve the overall appearance of the Westside, particularly in inner-city neighborhoods and along the major roadway and rail corridors.

■ Crime and Safety

Issue: Even though much has been done to reduce crime in recent years, the fear of crime -- real or perceived -- remains. This affects business and real estate decisions, in addition to the quality of life.

Objective:

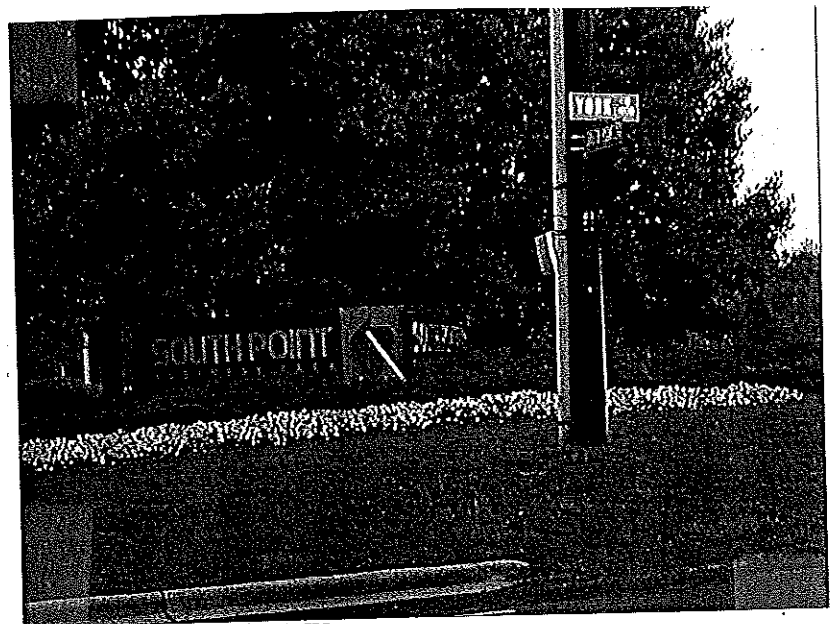
- Increase police visibility and communicate reductions in crime.

■ Local Identity

Issue: The Westside has numerous landmarks and other indigenous qualities that are threatened by growth and development.

Objective:

- Preserve landmarks, historic neighborhoods, street names, and other local features that provide a sense of history and give a unique identity to the area.



Education and Schools

Plan Objectives

3

In 1990, only 55 percent of residents living in the central area of the Westside had graduated from high school, compared to 81 percent in the rest of Charlotte. Lack of education is one of the most significant factors leading to unemployment, crime, and other social and economic problems found on the Westside.

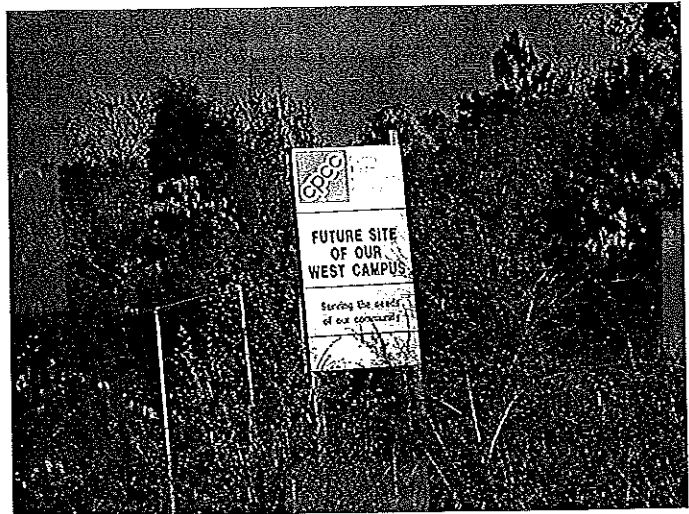
Equity of education provided and equity of the physical conditions of Westside schools were major concerns raised during this strategic planning process.

Eleven Westside schools have been identified as academically inferior and are on the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School's priority list for improvements. In 1997, Allenbrook Elementary was being managed by the State because of its poor academic ratings. While a number of excellent magnet schools existed on the Westside, many of these do not provide course offerings that appeal to Westside students; thus, the schools are heavily populated by students who live outside the Westside. This reduces the opportunity for area students to attend schools close to their neighborhoods. In addition, a number of Westside schools are old and poorly maintained.

Residents are not only concerned about the quality of education provided for students, but about the effect school conditions may have on attracting new residents and businesses to the Westside.

Fortunately, measures are being taken to address some of these issues. In the summer of 1997, the Future School Planning Task Force presented its findings to the Board of Education. While not mentioning specific schools, the task force strongly advocated that the Board bring the aging, inferior schools up to standard -- not only the physical condition of the schools but the academic programs and materials, as well.

It is clear that education has a direct impact on economic development on the Westside.



Since that time, another citizens committee has been formed to do more detailed planning for both new and existing schools. The outcome of this work could make a significant difference to Westside schools. Other projects underway include a new college campus -- Central Piedmont Community College's West Campus -- being developed at Morris Field Drive and Billy Graham Parkway, and Johnson C. Smith University in the Five Points/Beatties Ford Road area is undergoing an expansion of its campus.

It is clear that education has a direct impact on economic development on the Westside. More attention must be devoted to improving academic and physical conditions of the schools and to encouraging students to stay in school.

This issue is larger than can be addressed in this strategic plan; however, the plan provides some direction for improving the educational system on the Westside. School planners and the Board of Education should take these issues and the plan's proposals into consideration as they establish their priorities and plans in the future. Unless something meaningful is done to better educate Westside residents, the cycle of poverty will continue to repeat itself.

Key Education and School Issues and Plan Objectives

■ Quality of Education and Schools

Issue: A number of existing Westside schools are physically or academically inferior to other schools in the system, and the number of schools is not adequate to serve the growing population. In addition, the curriculum provided in some Westside schools does not fully respond to the needs and interests of area students, and a higher-than-average percentage of Westside students drop out of school.

Objectives:

- Construct new, state-of-the-art schools on the Westside and upgrade existing schools to ensure equity in education and facilities is provided.
- Improve the academic standards and performance at existing schools.
- Better prepare students who do not plan on attending four-year colleges for technical training and/or job placement after graduation.
- Make school buildings available to the community after hours.
- Encourage more students to stay in school.
- Increase teacher awareness of cultural differences among students.

Economic Development

Plan Objectives

4

Job growth in the Westside's suburban areas has been strong in the past decade and looks promising for the future, especially with the construction of I-485.

The Westinghouse Boulevard and Arrowood Road area is the largest employment hub outside of uptown Charlotte. Continuing to expand, this area currently employs an estimated 25,000 people. Over 17,000 people work at Charlotte Douglas International Airport and the surrounding area. Airport-related firms are growing in number, as are new office and business parks off Billy Graham Parkway and Tyvola Road. Further north, development along I-77 at the Reames Road and Sunset Road interchanges is providing new jobs in addition to those found in the older, established industrial areas.

The inner city lags behind suburban areas in job growth. Corridor revitalization, loans, job training, and new business parks are strategies for making the inner city more competitive.

With all these jobs, and the potential for more, why is economic development even an issue for the Westside? There are two main reasons. First, the older central area has not been able to attract a significant number of new employers, while some of the existing businesses are moving out. Secondly, many central area residents are unemployed or under-employed and, therefore, are not able to support their families.

As long as the central area and its residents lag behind, the entire Westside will suffer. A number of efforts are underway to deal with economic development issues in the central area. The major ones include:

- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Development Corporation's initiatives to develop City-Within-A-City business parks
- The Wilkinson Boulevard, Freedom Drive, West Boulevard, South End, and Beatties Ford/West Trade Street business corridor revitalization projects
- The City-Within-A-City (CWAC) loan program
- The Enterprise Community job development and employment and training efforts

While these and other efforts are slowly chipping away at the economic development challenges facing the central area, more must be done to create and retain jobs. And to deal with the area's unemployment and under-employment issues, the education and skill levels of residents must be elevated and the people linked to decent-paying jobs.

KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES AND PLAN OBJECTIVES

■ Business Development and Retention

Issue: It is difficult for inner-city areas to compete with suburban locations because of image problems, the challenge of assembling large enough tracts of land for new development and the high cost and red tape of dealing with contaminated sites (brownfields). In addition, competition with surrounding counties may draw employment-oriented development away from the seemingly strong southwest and northwest, resulting in the loss of potential jobs and tax base for Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

Objectives:

- Support CWAC business park development efforts.
- Address brownfield issues and encourage redevelopment of brownfields sites.
- Encourage creation of business associations, and support existing ones.
- Encourage the development of well-designed mixed-use centers that have employment and retail components on key sites, throughout the Westside.
- Market available industrial land.
- Improve the quality of industrial development.
- Support pending state legislation to establish development zones and incentives.

■ Corridor Revitalization

Issue: The major corridors that traverse the Westside are slowly being revitalized, but progress must continue. The condition of the corridors affects the neighborhoods and the business community.

Objectives:

- Continue to support and expand the Business Corridor Revitalization Program.
- Encourage improvements to the appearance of existing industries and businesses along corridors.

■ Employment and Training

Issue: Despite an overall low unemployment rate, the Westside's inner-city areas have high rates of unemployment due in part to the lack of (1) employability and job skills; (2) support in getting and keeping jobs, and (3) transportation to suburban employment centers.

Objectives:

- Coordinate employment and training resources, and make them more accessible.
- Link residents to higher-paying jobs.
- Provide better public transportation to job sites.
- Support Enterprise Community efforts.

Neighborhoods and Social Disparities

Plan Objectives

5



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In recent years the Planning Commission assessed conditions in all neighborhoods and/or neighborhood statistical areas in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

According to the assessment -- which considered social, economic, and physical conditions -- the Westside had an overwhelming majority of inner-city neighborhoods classified as "fragile," "threatened," and "showing signs of distress." Of the Westside's 35 inner-city neighborhoods, 16 were classified as fragile and 11 were considered threatened. Outside the inner city, several Westside residential areas showed signs of distress.

Through the City-Within-A-City (CWAC) initiatives that have evolved in recent years, many of these struggling Westside neighborhoods have seen major improvements, making them more desirable places to live. Resources have been devoted to:

- constructing new infrastructure (sidewalks, curb and gutter, and storm drains);
- providing low-interest loans and other incentives to encourage new infill housing and home ownership;
- reducing the influence of crime through community policing efforts;
- supporting neighborhood-oriented businesses through low-interest loans and other business opportunities;
- targeting code enforcement;
- providing localized public transportation ("EZ Rider");
- helping neighborhood and other community-based organizations strengthen their leadership and organizational skills.

Many struggling Westside neighborhoods have seen major improvements, making them more desirable places to live... but considerable work is yet to be done.

While these efforts have brought positive change to the Westside, considerable work is yet to be done. The *Westside Strategic Plan* strongly advocates continued support and resources to stabilize and sustain neighborhoods on the Westside -- not only in the inner-city or CWAC neighborhoods, but in those distressed neighborhoods outside CWAC, as well.

Additionally, attention must continue to be directed at maintaining established, stable neighborhoods throughout the Westside. If the Westside is truly to become a competitive place to work and do business, the area must continue to develop and maintain quality residential areas.

Key Neighborhood Issues and Plan Objectives

■ Neighborhood Revitalization

Issue: Even though much has been accomplished in the Westside's inner-city neighborhoods, much more work is needed to stabilize and sustain neighborhoods.

Objectives:

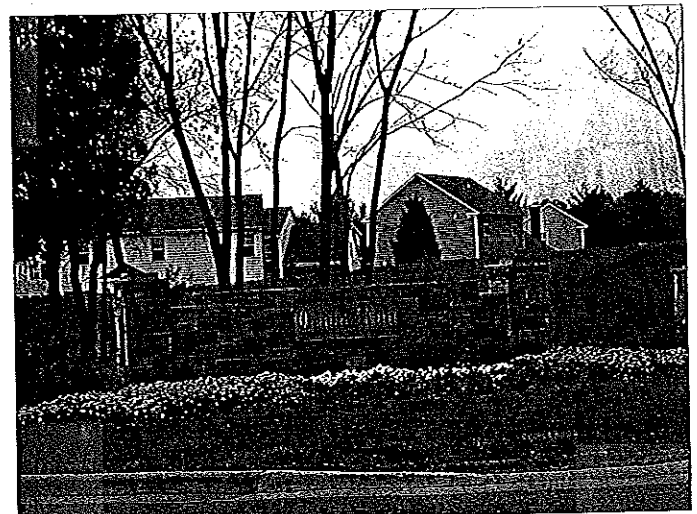
- Continue revitalization efforts in inner-city neighborhoods.
- Continue to redevelop public housing communities with the goal of enabling people to transition out of public housing.
- Focus on improving conditions in areas showing signs of distress.
- Make neighborhoods safe.
- Increase home ownership.

■ Maintain Stable Neighborhoods

Issue: A number of developed and developing residential neighborhoods on the Westside offer housing opportunities for people with a range of incomes. The stability of these areas must be maintained.

Objectives:

- Increase the organizing and capacity-building skills of neighborhood residents.
- Continue to maintain stable neighborhoods and encourage the development of a variety of housing opportunities for persons of all income levels.



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Transportation

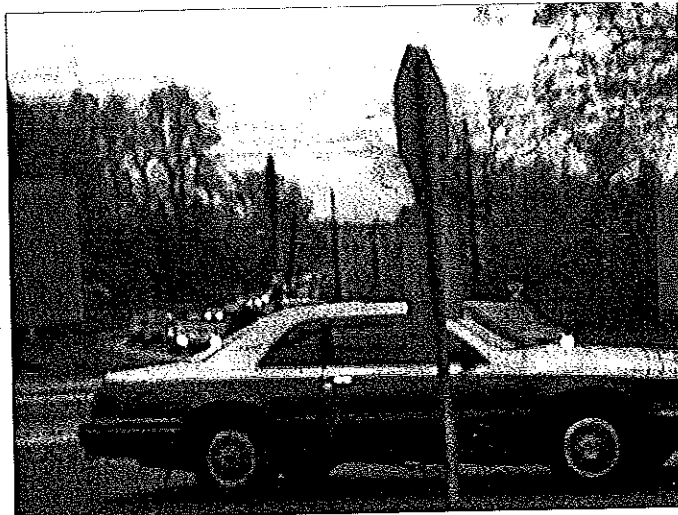
Plan Objectives

6

Transportation is one of the most critical issues facing Charlotte-Mecklenburg. In the next five years the traffic problems will increase, particularly for growing areas such as the southwest where the road system is not adequate to meet the growing traffic demands. Not only is traffic being generated from within Mecklenburg County, but incoming traffic from surrounding areas such as York and Gaston Counties is compounding the problem.

Roads such as I-77, I-85, N.C. 49 and the Brookshire Freeway cannot absorb the traffic, even with continual widening. Interstate 485 will provide some relief; however, it may also create more traffic congestion near the interchanges and on the corridors that feed into the highway.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg is addressing the transportation issue on a number of fronts. In 1997, the Charlotte City Council adopted a Five-Year Transportation Plan for Charlotte that focuses on establishing a multi-modal transportation system including public transit and transitways, road improvements, sidewalks, and bikeways. To help implement the plan, the elected officials successfully lobbied the North Carolina General Assembly to pass legislation permitting a county-wide referendum on a half-cent sales tax to be dedicated to public transportation.



In February 1998, a major planning initiative got underway to develop a specific land use and mass transit plan for Charlotte. The plan identifies transit improvements for five corridors, including two on the Westside -- the Wilkinson/I-85 West Corridor and the I-77 North Corridor. It also provides transit-oriented land development recommendations for the corridors, including potential locations for transit stations.

The *Westside Strategic Plan* does not attempt to create its own separate transportation plan. However, several issues and concerns specifically related to Westside needs should be considered as part of the larger planning initiatives underway.

■ **Roadway Improvements**

Issue: Increasing traffic volumes, and the lack of access to areas west of the airport, will necessitate an improved and expanded road system on the Westside.

Objectives:

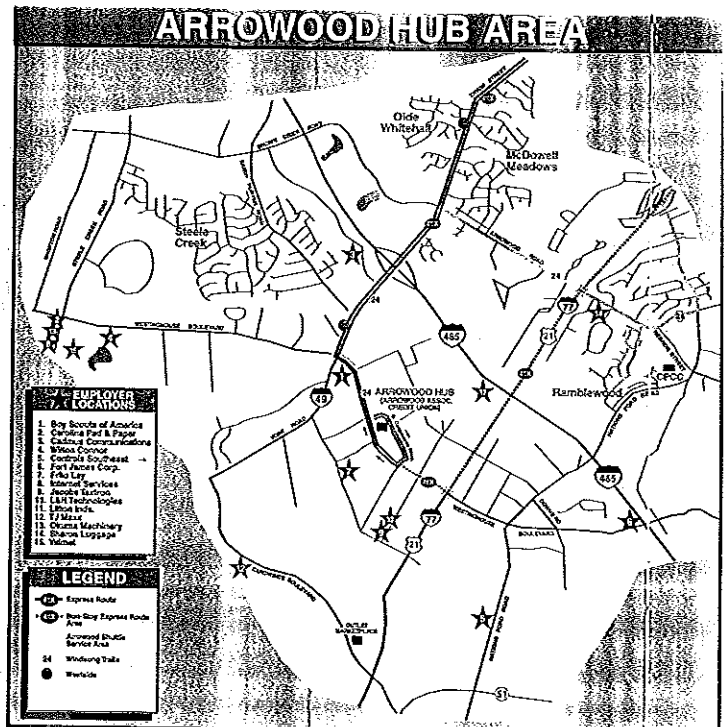
- Accelerate construction priorities of roadway projects, where possible.
- Landscape and improve the appearance of major corridors throughout the Westside.
- Ensure that new roads are built and existing ones improved to accommodate increasing traffic volumes.
- Reduce the impact of noise along I-485 on existing or planned residential areas adjacent to the roadway.
- Provide local input into decisions regarding locations of median openings on thoroughfares.
- Minimize heavy truck traffic in the residential areas in and around the Coulwood neighborhood area.

■ **Public Transportation**

Issue: Increasing traffic volumes cannot be absorbed by the existing road system; therefore, public mass transportation will also be needed. Also, the lack of public transportation has been identified as a major obstacle for inner-city residents seeking employment in areas where public transportation is not available.

Objectives:

- Support future mass transit routes.
- Expand bus service to residential areas on the Westside.
- Provide adequate and safe bus stops and shelters throughout the Westside.
- Continue to support and expand the EZ Rider transportation system.
- Incorporate HOV lanes in major roadway projects, when appropriate.
- Continue to support and expand van and connecting bus service to major employment centers on the Westside.





NAME: P000941.JPG

■ Sidewalks and Bike Lanes

Issue: The Westside is not pedestrian or bicycle “friendly.” It is difficult and often dangerous to get around on foot or on a bicycle.

Objective:

- Construct sidewalks and bike lanes on all roadway projects, and investigate the feasibility of adding them to roads where pedestrians and cyclists are likely to travel (near parks, schools, shopping, etc.).

■ Streetlighting

Issue: Many of the major thoroughfares on the Westside lack streetlights.

Objective:

- Improve the safety of walking, driving and cycling on Westside streets at night by providing more streetlights.

■ Rail Crossings

Issue: The Westside has numerous rail crossings, many of which are unsafe, aesthetically unattractive, and in poor condition.

Objective:

- Improve conditions of rail crossings throughout the Westside.



Parks, Utilities and Other Public Facilities

Plan Objectives

7

The Westside currently lacks some of the amenities and public facilities that affect quality of life. Equity of services was an issue that surfaced continuously during the plan process.

The Westside lacks the number and type of active recreational facilities found in other parts of the city and county. Water and sewer service is missing in some areas, which is slowing down development. Libraries, post offices, and medical facilities are limited or non-existent in some parts of the Westside. The only major public facility that is unique to the Westside (besides the airport) is the Charlotte Coliseum, one of the area's greatest assets -- and its future is in question.

The Westside lacks some amenities and public facilities... and is going through a "catching up" period

The Westside is going through a "catching up" period. Plans are in the works to provide more of the needed facilities. For example, the Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation Department recognizes the need for additional park space and in the next few years the Westside will see additional parks developed. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utility Department has plans to extend water and sewer to some areas of the southwest and northwest, and discussions are taking place regarding the location of a regional library and a regional post office on the Westside. Further, in 1997 Carolinas Medical Center built a family health services facility on West Trade Street, one of the first of its kind on the Westside.

It will take time and resources to elevate the public facilities to a level equal to other parts of the community. This strategic plan supports the efforts underway and recommends additional considerations.

Key Public Facilities Issues and Plan Objectives

■ Parks and Recreation

Issue: The Westside has two large passive recreational parks (McDowell and Latta); however, it lacks active parks with ballfields, tennis courts, and other active recreational amenities. Also, there are no developed greenways on the Westside.



Name: D001695 BMP

Objectives:

- Continue to renovate and upgrade existing parks, and build new active recreational parks.
- Consider developing greenways along the Catawba River (from I-85 south to West Boulevard), to link proposed parks along the river.
- Identify opportunities to accelerate construction of proposed parks, recreation centers and greenways, where feasible.
- Increase programmed activities for youth, teens, and seniors.

■ **Water and Sewer Service**

Issue: Water and sewer service currently is not available, and in some basins not planned, for areas along the Catawba River. Policies regarding the location of lift stations in these basins prohibit extension of service in some places. The lack of public infrastructure affects the development potential of the Westside and will likely encourage the use of septic tanks, which can threaten water quality.

Objective:

- Provide public water and sewer service to the entire Westside.

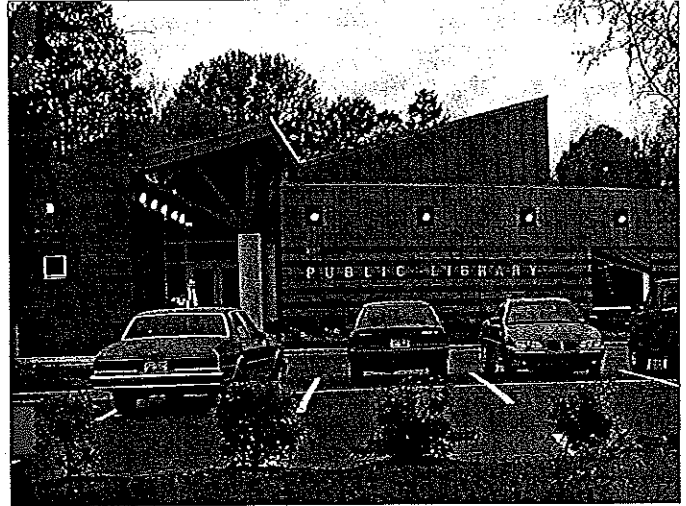
■ OTHER FACILITIES

Post Offices, Libraries and Medical Facilities

Issue: The Westside currently lacks post offices and the type of postal service offered elsewhere in Charlotte, as well as adequate libraries and medical facilities.

Objective:

- Encourage the County to develop additional libraries on the Westside, particularly in the Steele Creek and Mt. Holly Road areas. Postal service should be improved and new facilities should be built.
- Encourage Carolinas Medical Center, Presbyterian Hospital, and other medical facilities, to locate on the Westside.



Charlotte Coliseum

Issue: The future of the Charlotte Coliseum is in question, with discussions of eventually building a new, larger facility uptown. If and when a new facility is built, what should become of the current facility? The existing coliseum is viewed as a significant asset on the Westside and has been a catalyst for economic development.

Objective:

- Evaluate options for ownership of the Charlotte Coliseum and continue to use the facility as a catalyst to incent/encourage development on the Westside.



Environment

Plan Objectives

8

Through the years the Westside has been confronted with more environmental concerns than any other part of the community.

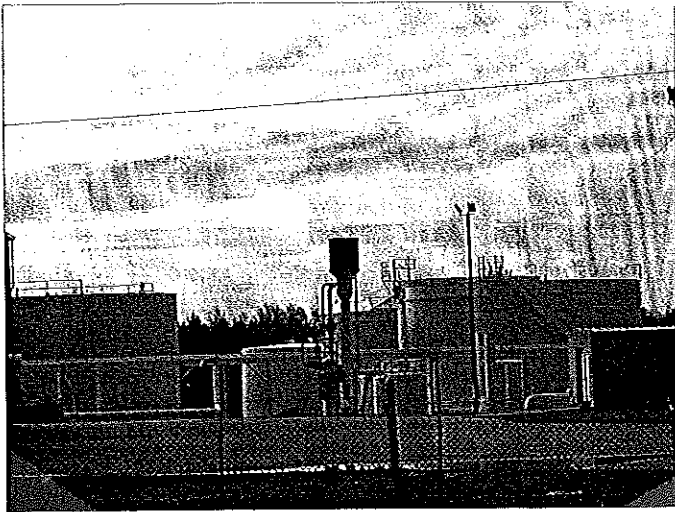
Watershed protection has been a major issue that continues to be discussed. Groundwater contamination associated with heavy industries, particularly in the Pawtucket area, has been a hotly debated topic. The number of hazardous waste sites on the Westside has also been an issue, particularly for redevelopment. In addition, significant concern has been expressed over solid waste transfer stations, quarries, and demolition landfills on the Westside. The relatively high levels of noise associated with the airport compound these problems.

Groundwater contamination and hazardous waste sites are among the continuing environmental concerns

Regarding water quality, the County adopted watershed protection regulations in 1995 that addressed development regulations for water flowing into Mountain Island Lake, Charlotte's principal source of drinking water, and areas along the Catawba River. Boundaries for different levels of watershed protection were delineated. The most critical area is in the northwest, north of Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road. Development is most restricted in this area. Minimum requirements for watershed protection are in place for land south of Mt. Holly Road to just below I-85, as well.

Concerns over groundwater contamination in the older industrial areas of the northwest have been under investigation for the last several years. Local and state environmental protection agencies have undertaken considerable testing to determine the extent and sources of the problems.

According to Mecklenburg County's Department of Environmental Protection, the problems in Paw Creek are being addressed. However, this is an area that needs close scrutiny in the future.

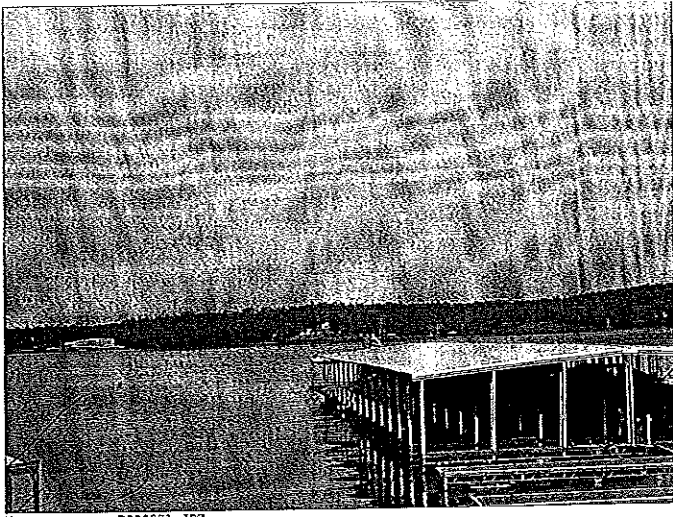


In 1998, area residents were successful in having elected officials evaluate and make changes to zoning regulations dealing with quarries, landfills, and other waste-related land uses. In the future, these types of uses will be more equitably distributed throughout Mecklenburg County rather than being concentrated on the Westside.

KEY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

■ Water Quality

Issue: The lack of public sewer service encourages the use of private package treatment plants and septic tanks, thus threatening water quality on the Westside. In addition, the lack of public water service in or near heavy industrial areas causes residents in nearby neighborhoods (such as Paw Creek and the Rhyne Road area) to use well water, which is vulnerable to groundwater contamination.



Objectives:

- Extend public sewer service to waterfront areas.
- Extend water lines to areas currently not served by public water service, particularly the Paw Creek and Rhyne Road areas where well contamination from surrounding industries is possible.
- Ensure that development along the waterfront is sensitive to the natural environment.

■ Brownfield Restoration

Issue: Many older, contaminated industrial sites exist on the Westside. For these sites to be redeveloped they need to be cleaned up. Site restoration is expensive and is a disincentive for potential developers.

Objective:

- Encourage and facilitate redevelopment of contaminated sites.

■ Airport Noise

Issue: In 1997, City Council approved the revised *Airport Master Plan*, which calls for a third parallel runway to be built between the existing airport and I-485 and the extension of an existing runway. The expansion of the runways, the impact of over-flights, and noise on existing and future development, are major concerns.

Objective:

- To help reduce airport noise, ensure that airlines comply with federal regulations on replacement of aircraft.

Conclusion

The Westside is a vulnerable part of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, yet opportunities abound for the future.

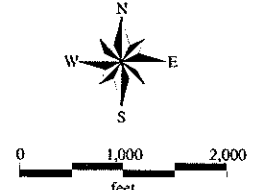
This strategic plan has attempted to address the major issues that confront the Westside and to provide an overall plan to guide the area into the 21st century. The plan will require considerable coordination between governing bodies and agencies, developers, employers, and residents. It is based on the premise that the entire Westside has the potential to be a thriving, attractive part of the community. To be effectively implemented the plan must be considered as a "package deal." The various components of the plan -- land use, image, education, economic development, neighborhood revitalization, transportation, public facilities, environment -- are all interrelated.

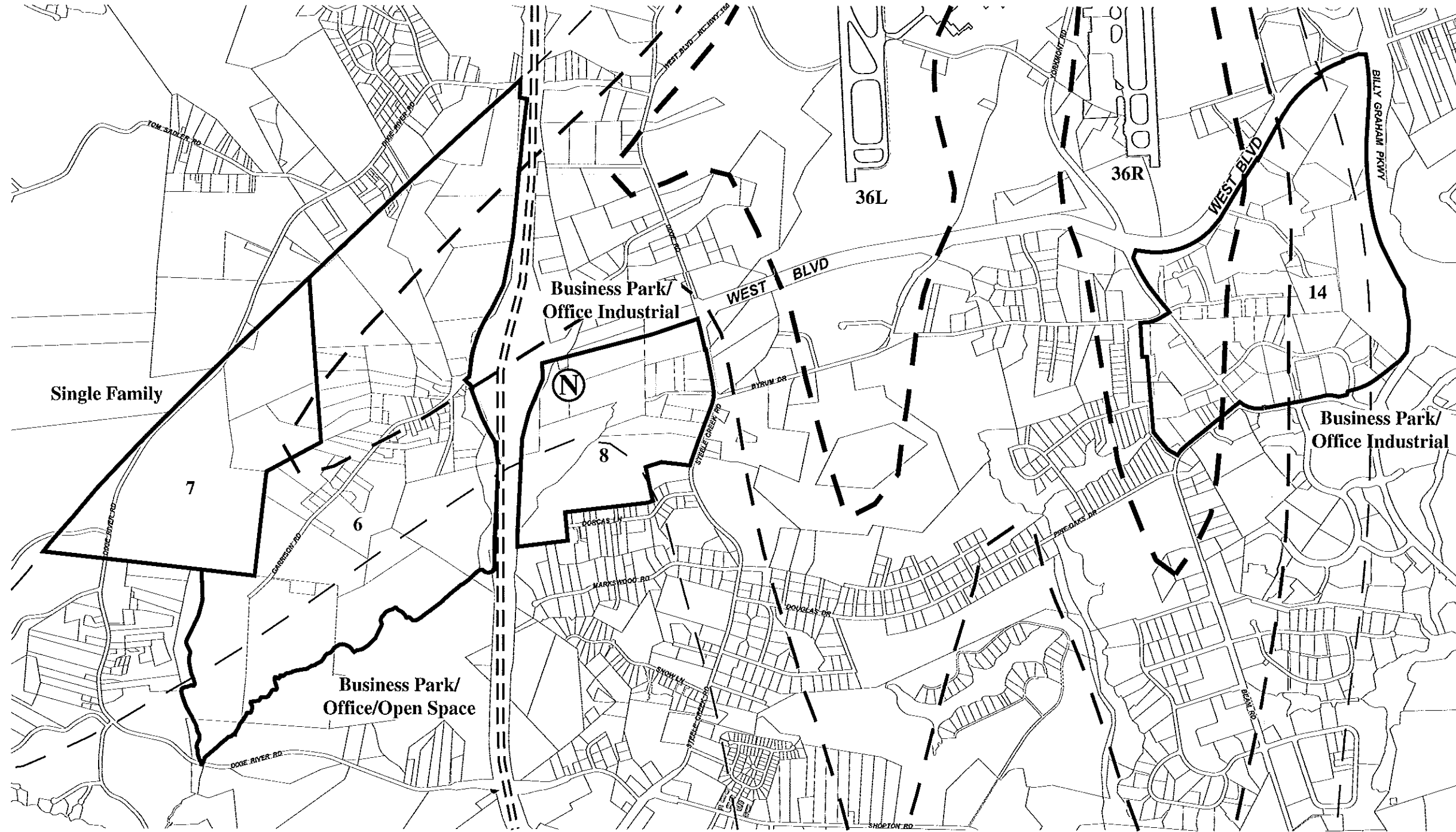
The window of opportunity for changing the course of the Westside's future will likely close within the next five to eight years due to the changes taking place on the Westside and in the region. Now is the time to take action.

Westside Strategic Plan Proposed Land Use



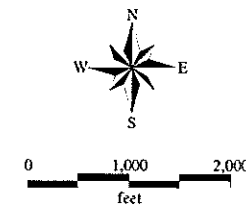
- Airport Noise Contour - 65 dnl
- Airport Noise Contour - 70 dnl
- Airport Noise Contour - 75 dnl
- Proposed I-485 Interchange
- Proposed I-485 Location
- Proposed Land Use Change Area





Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission.

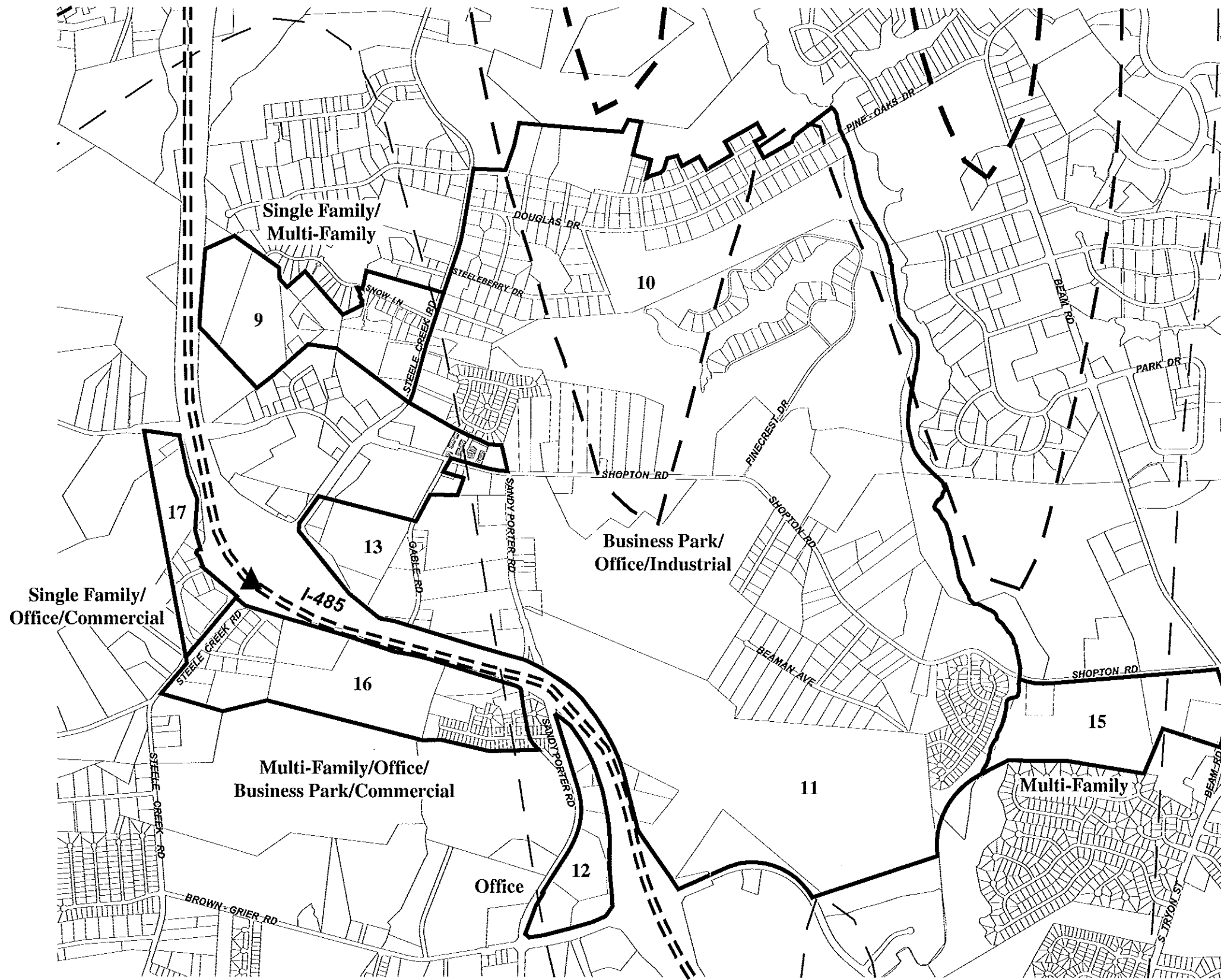
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- Proposed I-485 Interchange
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- Proposed Land Use Change Area



Date: December 10, 2001

Westside Strategic Plan Proposed Land Use

Map 2



Single Family/
Office/Commercial

Single Family/
Multi-Family

Business Park/
Office/Industrial

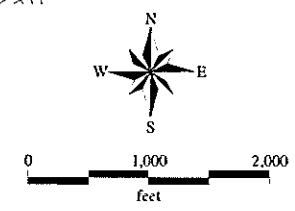
Multi-Family/Office/
Business Park/Commercial

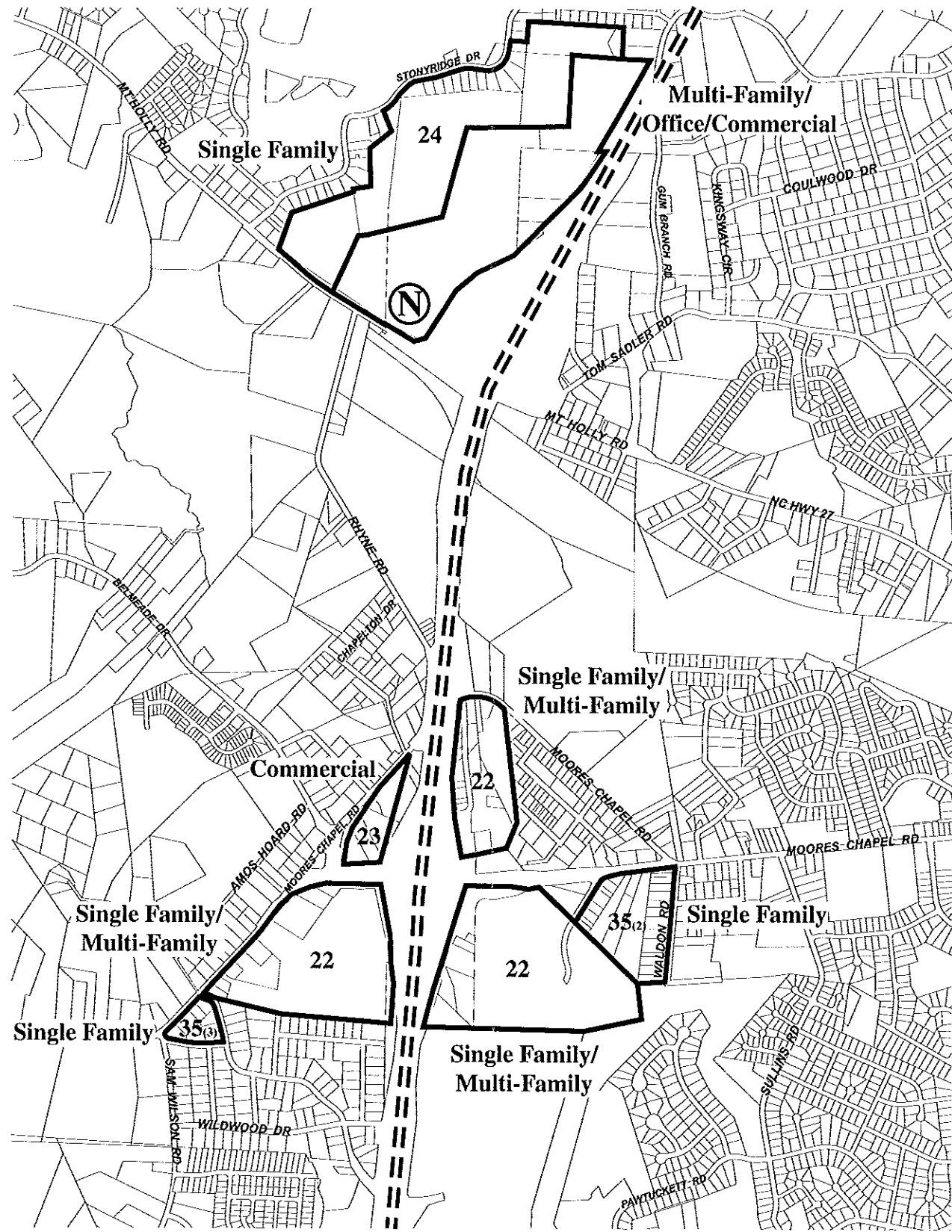
Office

Multi-Family

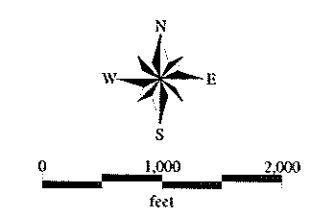
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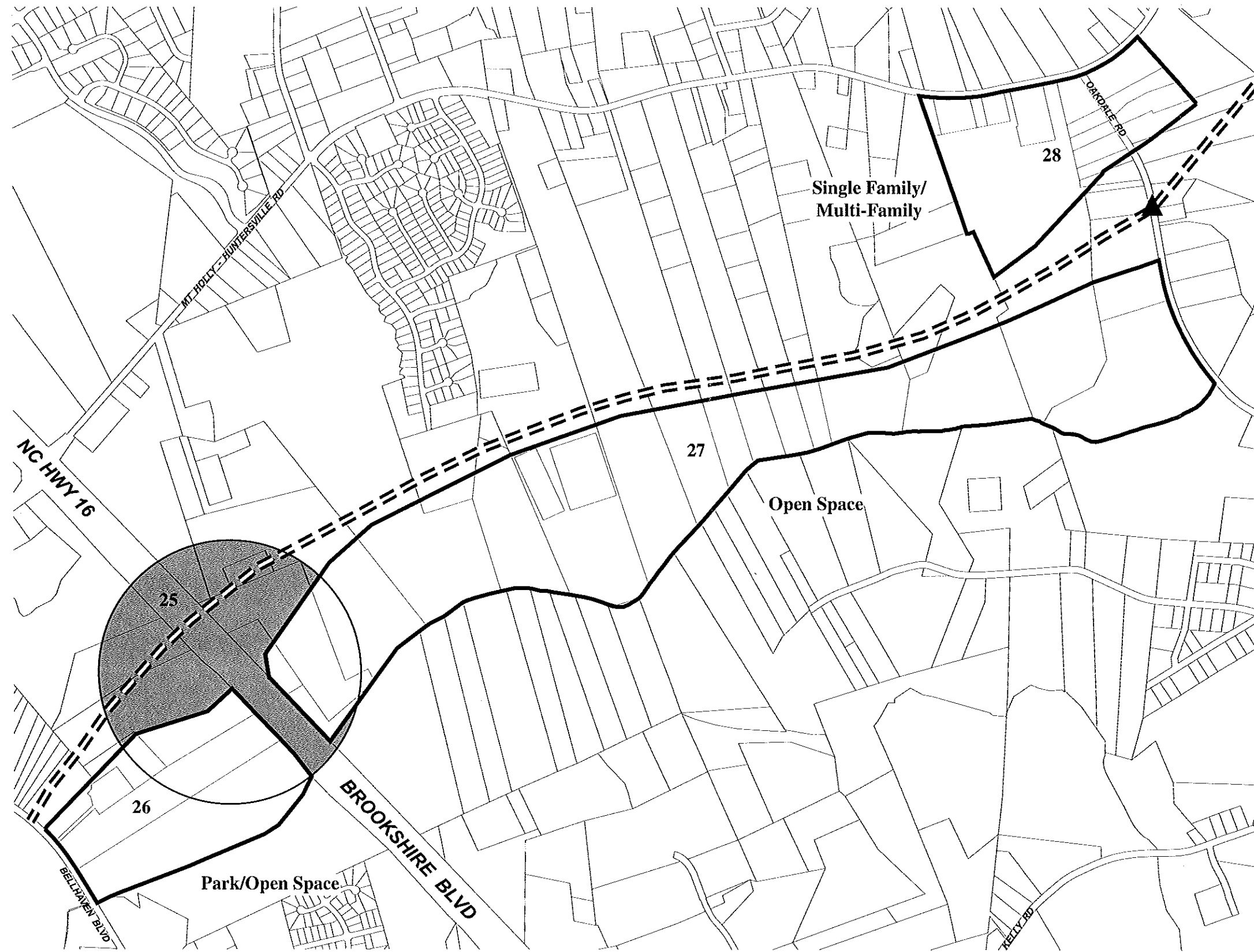
Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission.

Date: December 10, 2001

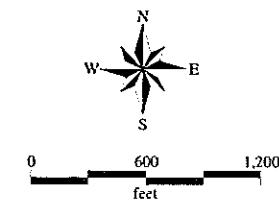
Westside Strategic Plan Proposed Land Use

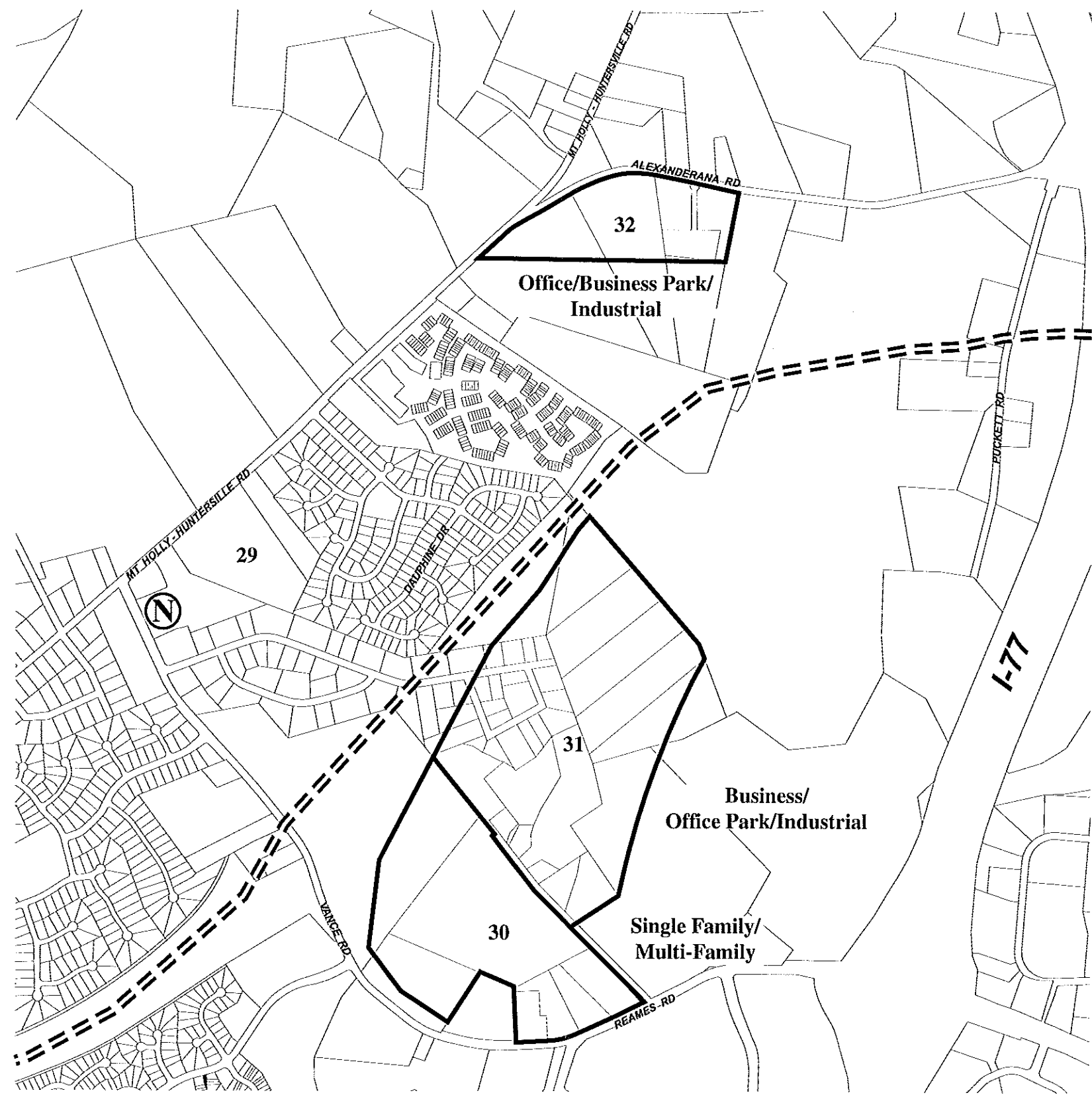
Map 4

Westside Strategic Plan Proposed Land Use



- Airport Noise Contour - 65 dnl
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- ▲ Proposed I-485 Interchange
- === Proposed I-485 Location
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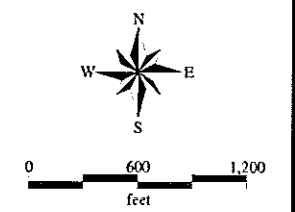




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- ▲ Proposed I-485 Interchange
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- Proposed Land Use Change Area



Produced by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission.



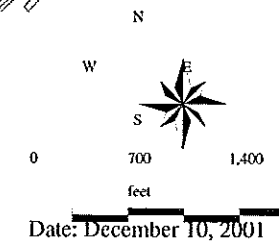
Date: December 10, 2001

Westside Strategic Plan Proposed Land Use Map 6

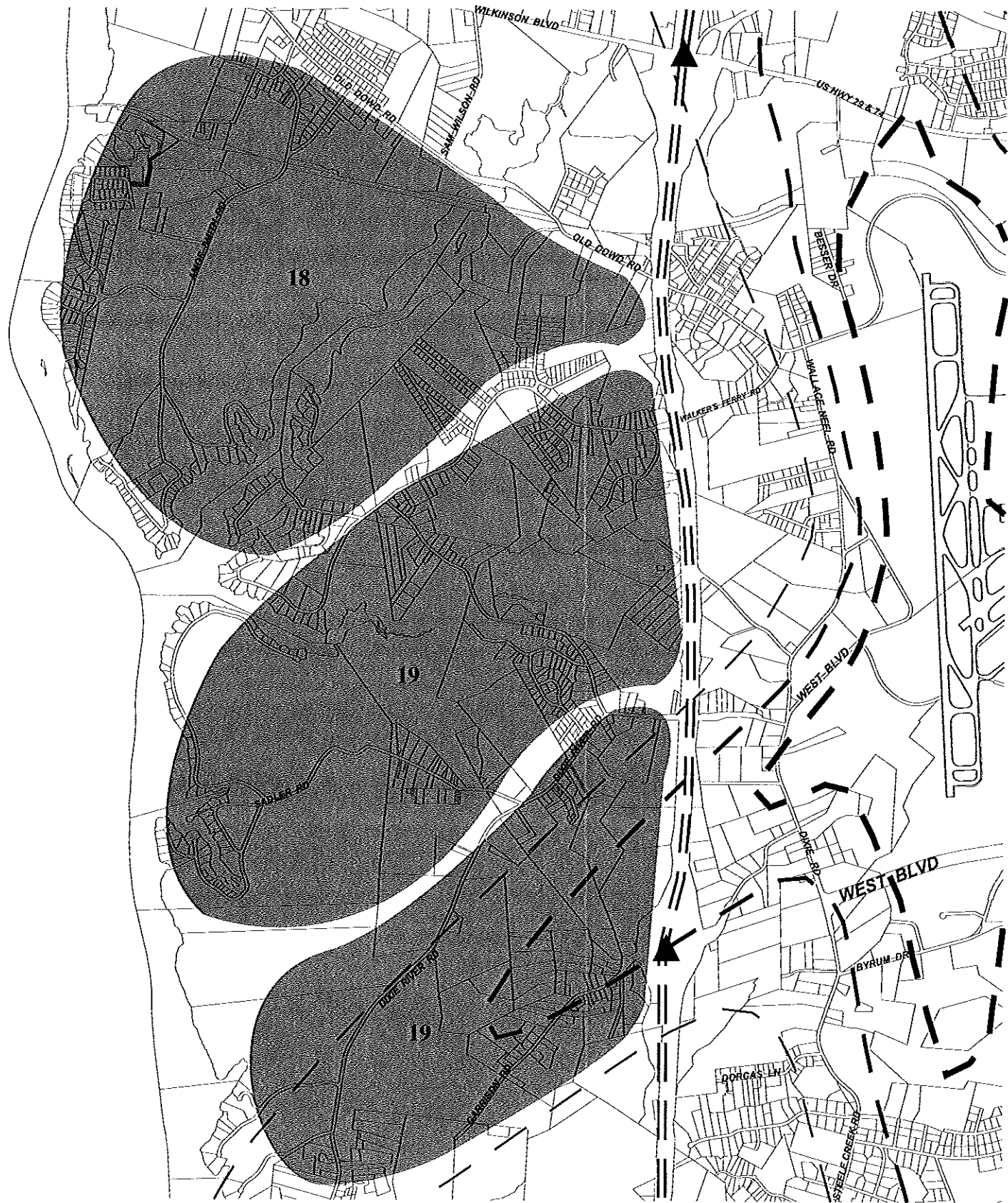


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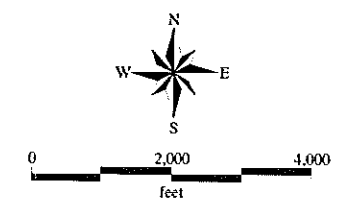
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Westside Strategic Plan Proposed Land Use



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Westside Strategic Plan Proposed Land Use

Map 8

Westside Strategic Plan

Volume II: Implementation Plan

<i>Preface</i>	i
<i>Participants</i>	ii
<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Strategies:</i>	
Land Use	3
Image	5
Education and Schools	9
Economic Development.....	12
Neighborhoods and Social Disparities.....	16
Transportation	20
Public Facilities	28
Environment.....	32

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission
Charlotte, North Carolina

Preface

In response to growing concerns voiced about Westside issues, City Council requested that the Planning Commission develop a strategic plan for the Westside to comprehensively address the area's many social, economic, and physical issues.

A 35-member citizens committee was formed to work with staff during the eight-month plan development process. Additionally, a 12-member citizens group developed specific land recommendations for areas impacted by airport noise resulting from the expansion of Charlotte Douglas International Airport, and their work has been included in this plan. Finally, a steering committee provided technical support and information to staff and the study groups.

The **Westside Strategic Plan** is in three parts:

- Volume I, this *Concept Plan*, identifies the issues and proposes objectives. It is to be presented to the Charlotte City Council and Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners for review and adoption.
- Volume II, this *Implementation Plan*, contains suggested strategies for achieving the objectives. It is informational and is not an adopted document.
- In addition, an informational *Summary Document* is available that lists priority objectives and key strategies from the Concept and Implementation Plans.

This **Westside Strategic Plan** will be used to help City and County staff, the governing bodies, community-based organizations and others set priorities for their efforts on the Westside. It will be used as a guide for making policy and investment decisions. The plan is not intended to duplicate or replace individual neighborhood plans already adopted for the Westside. Rather, it builds on the previous planning by addressing gaps that must be fulfilled and updating plans where necessary.

Participants

Westside Citizens Study Group

Central

Rickey Hall
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Gene Harwell
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The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission thanks these citizens and staff for their invaluable input and commitment.

Introduction



This document outlines the steps that should be taken to implement the *Westside Strategic Plan*. It will *not* be adopted by the elected officials; however, many of the actions identified will require future elected official approval and will be brought before them for approval on a case-by-case basis.

The Westside Strategic Plan focuses on eight key issue areas:

-
- 1** Land Use
 - 2** Image
 - 3** Education/Schools
 - 4** Economic Development
 - 5** Neighborhoods and Social Disparities
 - 6** Transportation
 - 7** Parks, Utilities and Other Public Facilities
 - 8** Environment
-

This document is the *Westside Strategic Plan's* Volume II -- the *Implementation Plan*. The first volume, the *Concept Plan*, identified general planning objectives for each of the above issue areas. Now, in the second volume, the following pages highlight the objectives and identify the strategies to implement them.

Land Use

Strategies

1

■ Land Use

Objectives:

- Encourage a compatible mix of land uses near the Charlotte Douglas International Airport and areas impacted by airport noise.
- Encourage more cohesive and pedestrian-oriented mixed-use developments at Outer Loop interchanges and at major intersections where feasible.
- Allow for higher density housing in certain locations, and rezone land where the allowed density is too high.
- Ensure that retail centers proposed in the adopted district plans are appropriately sized and located.
- Encourage development that is a more pedestrian friendly, compact, village center in and around the Johnson C Smith University area

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ Implement and adopt land use recommendations as identified in the *Concept Plan* (Volume I of this *Westside Strategic Plan*).
- ◆ Accelerate development of JCSU Village Concept and implementation of Project Catalyst Plan.

Objective:

- Encourage consistency between proposed land uses and zoning.



Implementation Strategies

- ◆ Support rezoning property west of Amay James Recreation Center from I-2 to R-4 to allow construction of a new subdivision of single family homes.
- ◆ Rezone a tract of land currently zoned R-17MF on the northeast quadrant of I-485 and Moores Chapel Road to R-5 single family.
- ◆ Support rezoning land at the southeast quadrant of Dalton Village Drive and West Boulevard to create a neighborhood commercial center.

Image

Strategies

2

■ Public Relations

Objective:

- Develop and implement a public relations/image strategy that promotes the positive aspect of the Westside and aggressively markets development opportunities.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Encourage the Charlotte Chamber, City West, and community groups to continue collaborative efforts to market positive changes occurring in the area.** This marketing effort would highlight proposed projects underway and would also emphasize unique assets (i.e., available vacant land, employment opportunities, and housing choices).
- ◆ **Develop a public relations/marketing plan. As part of it, develop a strategy to change the name of the Westside.** One option may be to extend the boundaries of "City West" to include all of the area defined in this plan as the Westside. Another option would be to change the name to West End or some other name that is more positive and represents renewal.
- ◆ **Market and promote the Westside's numerous assets,** such as the river, its lakes, and large passive parks (McDowell Park and Latta Plantation).
- ◆ **Encourage the media to highlight and report on more positive events in the area** (fairs, groundbreakings, etc.), to focus on the good that is going on as opposed to focusing on the negative. Also, consider using names of streets and roads, rather than just the Westside in general, when reporting crime statistics.
- ◆ **Market and promote the numerous sites identified in this plan that represent key development/redevelopment opportunities.**

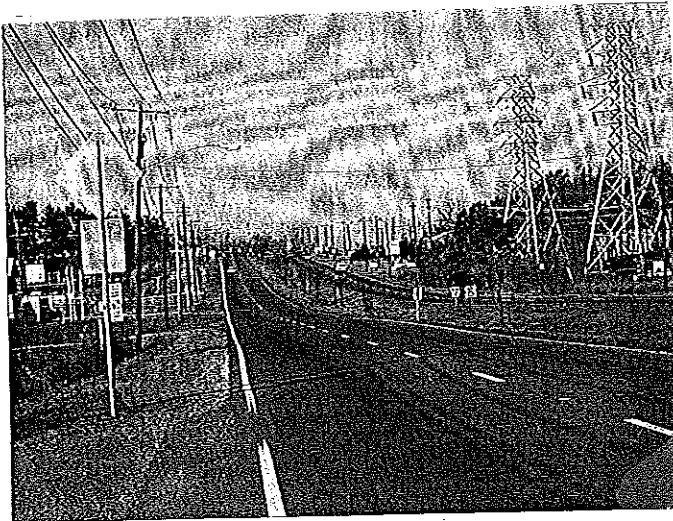
■ Community Appearance

Objective:

- Improve the overall appearance of the Westside, particularly in inner-city neighborhoods and along major roadway and rail corridors.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ Encourage an adopt-a-street program for all major and minor thoroughfares.
- ◆ Enforce ordinances that deal with appearance issues.



- ◆ Work with rail companies in the area to encourage regular clean-ups and maintenance of rail lines.
- ◆ Initiate streetscape/landscaping projects on key thoroughfares: Brookshire Freeway, Freedom Drive/Mt. Holly Road, Westinghouse Boulevard, Wilkinson Boulevard, West Boulevard, Steele Creek Road, Morehead Street, and Rozzelles Ferry. Also consider ways to reduce visual clutter by removing and/or consolidating overhead utility wires and billboards.
- ◆ Develop an extensive educational program that reaches businesses, and especially apartment complexes, about appropriate ways to containerize garbage and about the rules for roll-out garbage and bulky item pick-up.
- ◆ Consider applying City standards and ordinances in the unincorporated areas of Mecklenburg County regarding litter, trash, removal of junk cars and overgrown lots.
- ◆ Continue to restrict the use of new and existing billboards through the conditional rezoning process. This would be done through a negotiated process between the property owner and staff and would not be mandated but, rather, only request that the property owner includes such restrictions in their plan.

■ Crime and Safety

Objective:

- Increase police visibility and communicate reductions in crime.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Increase the number of police officers patrolling** in cars and on foot in the business areas, as well as in the neighborhoods.
- ◆ **Maintain traditional community-based policing efforts especially in the central portion of the Westside.** Community-based policing has been used a primary tool in the revitalization of the Westside, especially in the central area. It is suggested that this continue and resources be increased to fund additional community coordinator positions, bike patrol officers, and needed equipment. The personal relationships that develop among coordinators, businesses, and neighborhood groups, is an important crime prevention tool. *Community policing is desperately needed to ensure the plan is successfully implemented.*
- ◆ **Continue to publicize information regarding reductions in crime in key business areas** such as Arrowood/Westinghouse, Wilkinson Boulevard, Freedom Drive, West Boulevard, and Beatties Ford Road. Publicize these reductions through the media, business and community newsletters.
- ◆ **Consider developing a program similar to San Diego's "Safe Streets Now."** This program trains and empowers residents and business owners on nuisance abatement techniques. With this program, citizens learn to identify and document activity at properties causing nuisances, and bring civil charges against a property owner for non-compliance.

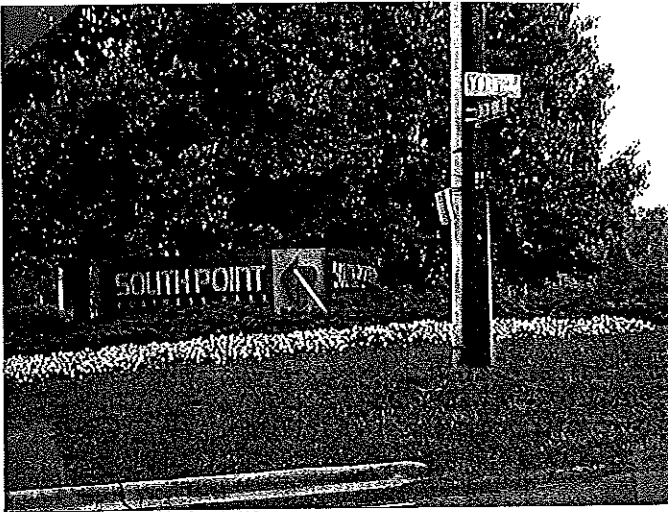


■ Local Identity

Objective:

- Preserve landmarks, historic neighborhoods, and other local features that provide a sense of history and give a unique identity to the area.

Implementation Strategies



Keep existing names for local roads -- such as York Road, Rozzelles Ferry Road, Buster Boyd Bridge, Mt. Holly Road, Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road, and others -- when portions of the road are annexed or roads are improved. If possible, the transition point for the York Road/N.C. 49 name change should be at the I-485 interchange.

Preserve local and historic neighborhoods like Washington Heights, Thomasboro-Hoskins, Paw Creek, and others that give the area its unique character.

- ◆ **Consider creating historic monuments, tours, and other means of celebrating the unique and diverse cultural heritage** of areas like the residential communities along Beatties Ford Road. Many of these neighborhoods, like Washington Heights, are some of the first streetcar suburbs populated by black professionals.

Education and Schools

Strategies


3

■ Quality of Education and Schools

Objective:

- Construct new, state-of-the-art schools on the Westside and upgrade existing schools to ensure equity in education and facilities.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Consider developing an educational village in the southwest,** similar to the one in the University Research Park. The educational village would consist of an elementary, middle, and high school. This cluster of schools potentially could focus on a variety of technical and other training opportunities related to employment needs at the airport and in the Arrowood and Westinghouse areas.
- 
- ◆ **Consider building a new high school in the northwest portion of the Westside.** The current high schools are overcrowded.
 - ◆ **Ensure that funds are expended and improvements made in a timely manner to Olympic High School and other schools on the Westside,** from funds identified in the 1996 bond referendum.
 - ◆ **Develop a plan and set priorities for improving the physical appearance and maintenance of schools on the Westside,** including buildings and grounds.

Objective:

- Improve the academic standards and performance at existing schools.

Implementation Strategies

- ♦ **Accelerate efforts to upgrade and improve the eleven (11) Westside schools designated as “Priority Schools” by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools:**

Elementary Schools: Thomasboro, Allenbrook, Westerly Hills, Berryhill, Statesville Road

Middle Schools: Ranson, Wilson, Coulwood

High Schools: West Mecklenburg, Olympic, West Charlotte

These schools have been determined to lag behind other schools in the system in academic achievement. Allenbrook Elementary was being managed by the State in 1997.

Objective:

- Help students who do not plan to attend four-year colleges by better preparing them for technical training and job placement after graduation.

Implementation Strategies

- ♦ **Locate the proposed Vocational Technical High School in the central area, preferably on a major corridor like Wilkinson Boulevard, Freedom Drive, Beatties Ford Road, or West Boulevard. (The school is currently proposed to be located off Freedom Drive.)**
- ♦ **Work with area businesses to create more apprenticeship and other work-based training opportunities for students on the Westside, and like them to sites in the Arrowood, Westinghouse, or airport areas.**

Objective:

- Encourage more students to stay in school.

Implementation Strategies

- ♦ **Develop more opportunities at magnet schools that are attractive for area residents so students can attend schools closer to their neighborhoods and be more likely to stay in school.**

- ◆ Investigate ways to change the current system that will allow students who are expelled to stay in school, rather than be turned loose on the streets. These students are the ones who don't want to attend school and are likely to be involved in criminal activity.

Objective:

- Increase teacher awareness of cultural differences among students.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ Increase diversity training and teacher awareness of cultural differences (e.g. language barriers and gestures) to minimize misunderstandings and unfair punishment of students.

Objective:

- Make school buildings available to the community after hours.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ Investigate ways to make school buildings more accessible and available to residents and community organizations, free of charge, for public meetings and other community events.
- ◆ Incorporate community meeting space in the design of the new CPCC campus being developed at Morris Field Drive and Billy Graham Parkway, and make the space available to community and business groups in the area.



Economic Development

Strategies

4

■ **Business Development and Retention**

Objective:

- Support City-Within-A-City (CWAC) business park development efforts.

Implementation Strategies

- ♦ **Pursue development of the first CWAC Business Park on Wilkinson Boulevard and consider developing similar parks on other corridors, such as Brookshire Freeway, West Boulevard, Statesville Avenue, Rozzelles Ferry, and Freedom Drive.**

Objective:

- Address brownfield issues and encourage redevelopment of brownfield sites.

Implementation Strategies

- ♦ **Undertake a comprehensive study of brownfield sites in the area to identify locations and develop strategies to restore and market sites for redevelopment.**

Objectives:

- Encourage creation of business associations and support existing ones.
- Encourage the development of well-designed mixed-use centers that have employment, residential, and retail components, on key sites throughout the Westside.

Implementation Strategies

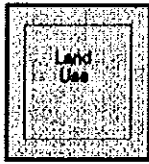
- ◆ **Organize business and merchant associations** in all major employment areas.
- ◆ **Encourage development of key sites on the Westside for upscale business parks and mixed use centers**, as identified in this plan's *Land Use* section:
 - west of Charlotte-Douglas International Airport;
 - Mt. Holly Road, N.C. 16 and I-485; and
 - the Homestead Village site.
- ◆ **Develop specific land use and urban design plans aimed at creating attractive pedestrian-oriented commercial/mixed use centers** at the following intersections:
 - Hoskins Road at Rozzelles Ferry Road;
 - Oakdale Road at Miranda Road;
 - Beatties Ford Road near Oaklawn Road; and
 - Mt. Holly Road and Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road.

Objectives:

- Market available industrial land.
- Improve the quality of industrial development.
- Support pending state legislation to establish development zones and incentives.

Implementation Strategies

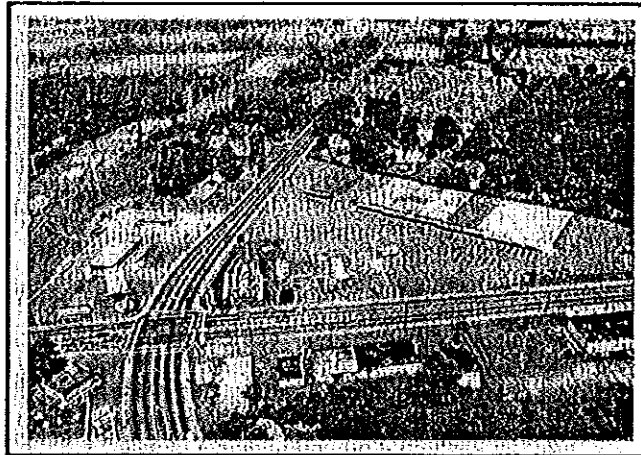
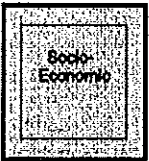
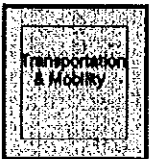
- ◆ **Develop strategies to market strategic locations** identified in this plan or future employment and business park opportunities.
- ◆ **Encourage the development of business parks, rather than stand-alone uses.**
- ◆ **Improve the appearance of existing industrial development** through the conditional rezoning process and other means.
- ◆ **Encourage adoption of state legislation that would provide tax credits for business expansion in qualifying neighborhoods** (tax credits up to \$4,000 per new employee and training credits up to \$1,000 per employee).



West Boulevard Corridor Plan



Prepared By: The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission
& The West Boulevard Corridor Team
Date: January 1998
Draft



■ Corridor Revitalization

Objectives:

- Continue to support and expand the City's Business Corridor Revitalization Program.
- Encourage improvements to the appearance of existing industries and businesses along corridors.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Implement Corridor Revitalization Plans** being developed for:
 - Freedom Drive
 - Wilkinson Boulevard
 - West Boulevard
- ◆ **Develop Corridor Revitalization Plans** for the following areas:
 - West Morehead Street
 - Statesville Avenue
 - Rozzelles Ferry Road
 - Brookshire Freeway
 - South Tryon Street
 - Tuckaseegee Road

- ◆ **Extend corridor liaison activity to support and help small businesses along corridors** like Brookshire Freeway, Rozzelles Ferry Road, West Morehead, Tuckaseegee Road, and South Tryon Street. This assistance should focus on business loans, marketing, merchandising, and façade improvements.

■ Employment and Training

Objectives:

- Coordinate employment and training resources, and make them more accessible.
- Link residents to higher-paying jobs.
- Provide better public transportation to job sites.
- Support Enterprise Community efforts.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Work closely with the Workforce Development Board to develop a strategic plan that considers locating satellite One-Stop Centers in key locations** along Freedom, Wilkinson Boulevard, Westinghouse Boulevard, Beatties Ford Road, and West Boulevard.
- ◆ **Survey labor forces and skills needs of major employers on the Westside, and develop training programs** at Central Piedmont Community College's Westside Campus; West and Northwest Enterprise Communities; the Urban League; and/or other training facilities.
- ◆ **Initiate a collaborative effort to develop a focused and comprehensive plan to deal with employment and training issues on the Westside.** This effort should involve the Charlotte Chamber's Airport Area Council, Enterprise Communities, the Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services, and employment and training providers. The plan should address support services, coordination of training and employment services, and job development and retention.
- ◆ **Investigate the alternatives available to link the job placement needs in the central area of the Westside with employment needs in the southwest area.**
- ◆ *See the Transportation section for strategies to provide better access to jobs.*

Neighborhoods and Social Disparities

Strategies

5

■ Neighborhood Revitalization

Objective:

- Continue revitalization efforts in inner-city neighborhoods.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Maintain an emphasis on the City-Within-A-City (CWAC) initiative that targets fragile and threatened neighborhoods for comprehensive improvements.**

This initiative should continue to focus on people (job placement, education, training, community organizing, and social services) as well as “place” issues (housing, infrastructure, and transportation).

Objective:

- Improve public housing with the goal of enabling people to transition out of public housing.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Support redevelopment of the following public housing communities: Dalton Village, Southside Homes, Fairview Homes, and Belvedere Homes.**



CITY WITHIN A CITY

The current strategy of creating mixed-income neighborhoods by combining market rate and affordable housing, should continue.

Objective:

- Continue to focus on improving conditions in fragile and threatened neighborhoods and in areas showing signs of distress.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ Give priority to the implementation of completed neighborhood and action plans.
- ◆ Develop and/or update plans for Wilson Heights, Washington Heights, Oakview Terrace, and Thomasboro-Hoskins.
- ◆ Consider designating the following areas as future neighborhood improvement areas:



- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| ◆ Ashley Park | ◆ Rhyne Road |
| ◆ Dalton Village | ◆ Smallwood |
| ◆ Eleanor Heights | ◆ Thomasboro-Hoskins |
| ◆ Enderly Park | ◆ Todd Park |
| ◆ McCrorey Heights | ◆ University Park |
| ◆ Oaklawn Park | ◆ Washington Heights |
| ◆ Oakview Terrace | ◆ Wesley Heights |
| ◆ Plato Price | ◆ Westerly Hills |
| ◆ Ponderosa/Wilmont | ◆ Westover Hills |
| ◆ Revolution Park | ◆ York Road |

- ◆ Conduct Neighborhood-Based Problem Solving efforts with neighborhoods in the Nations Ford/Arrowood Road and the Moores Chapel/Tuckaseegee Road areas. These problem-solving efforts would prioritize issues and strategies identified by residents and property owners.

Objectives:

- Make neighborhood safe.
- Increase homeownership.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Maintain traditional community-based policing efforts**, especially in the central portion of the Westside. This would entail keeping police coordinators assigned to specific neighborhoods.
- ◆ **Provide staff and funding sources to support and leverage Weed and Seed efforts**, and pursue additional grant funds to possibly extend the boundaries of this initiative.
- ◆ **Continue to support programs that create and encourage homeownership, especially in the central area.** This should include programs and incentives to attract a variety of income groups to the area.

■ Maintain Stable Neighborhoods

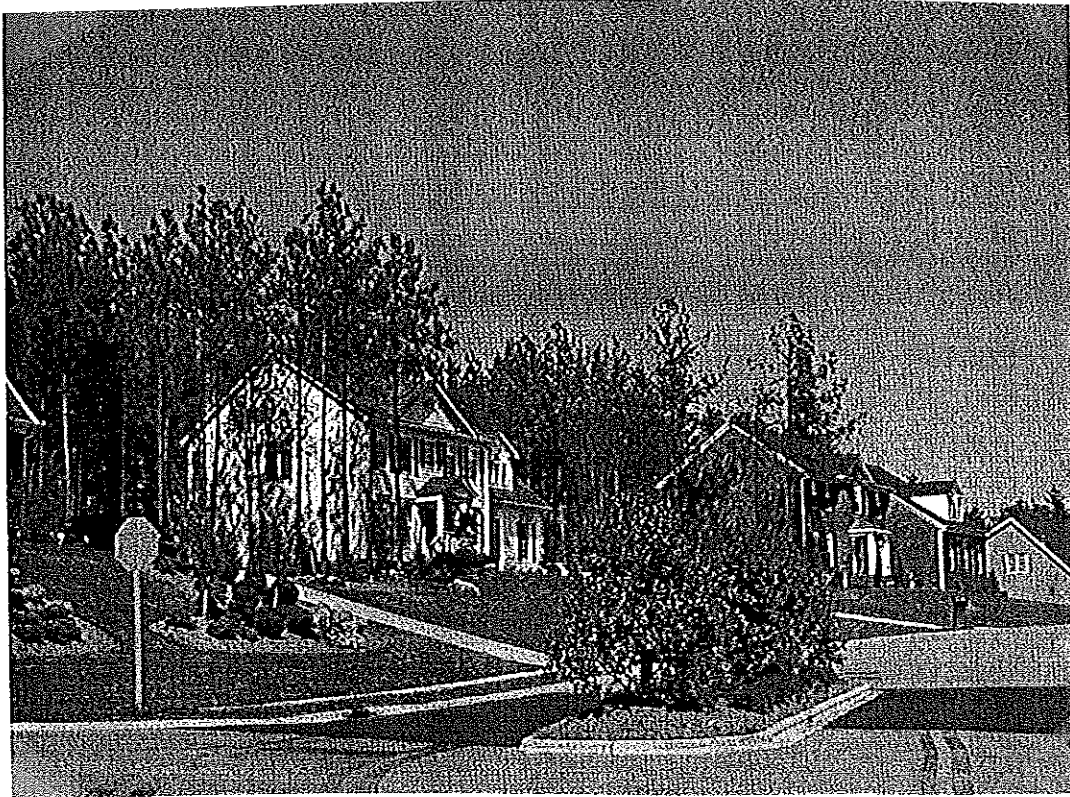
Objectives:

- Increase the organizing and capacity-building skills of neighborhood leaders.
- Continue to maintain stable neighborhoods and encourage the development of a variety of housing opportunities for persons of all income levels.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Extend neighborhood organizing efforts to areas outside CWAC** by identifying and providing services such as community organizing, problem-solving techniques, and information on accessing government and other services.
- ◆ **Consider extending the Neighborhood Matching Grants Program (NMG) citywide.** This would make all neighborhoods eligible to participate in the program. NMG provides grants to neighborhoods to develop various community projects in the areas of community safety, community organizing, beautification and education.

- ◆ **Encourage realtors to promote and market the variety of well-maintained residential neighborhoods on the Westside.** There are a variety of neighborhoods being built, particularly in the northwest and southwest that could attract people of all income ranges.



Transportation

Strategies

6

■ Roadway Improvements

Objective:

- Accelerate construction priorities of roadway projects, where possible.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ Accelerate construction of the following road improvements:

"Very High Priority" Road Improvement Projects

1. Buster Boyd Bridge (N.C. 49 at Lake Wylie)
2. Airport Entrance Road (new freeway)
3. Mt. Holly Road/Freedom Drive (widen to four lanes from I-85 to Catawba River)
4. Northwest Circumferential at CSX Railroad (between Valleydale Road and Mt. Holly Road; build interchange)
5. Billy Graham Parkway/Wilkinson Blvd. (modify interchange)
6. Steele Creek Road (widen to four lanes, I-485 to York Road)
7. Old Steele Creek Road (add turn lanes north of West Blvd. to the bridge)
8. Wilkinson Boulevard (median modifications from Suttle Avenue to Remount Road)
9. Arty Avenue Extension
10. Morris Field Drive (widen to four lanes, from Wilkinson Boulevard to Billy Graham Parkway)
11. Harlee Avenue/Stafford Drive realignment
12. South Tryon Street/York Road (Tyvola Road to Lake Wylie widen portion to four lanes (with median), portion to five lanes)

“High Priority” Road Improvement Projects

13. West Boulevard Extension (build two lanes from Wallace Neel Road to I-485)
14. I-77 (from I-85 to I-485)
15. Vance Road (widen to four lanes, from I-77 to Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road)
16. Billy Graham Parkway and West Boulevard (build interchange)
17. Billy Graham Parkway/I-85/Wilkinson Boulevard (modify interchange)
18. South Tryon Street (widen to four lanes, from I-77 to Yorkmont Road)

Objective:

- Landscape and improve the appearance of key corridors.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Design and undertake landscaping of the following corridors:**

Corridor Landscape Projects

19. Westinghouse Boulevard (from Nations Ford Road to N.C. 49)
20. Brookshire Boulevard/N.C. 16 (from Hovis Road to City Limits)
21. East/West Boulevard (from South Boulevard to I-77)
22. Rozzelles Ferry Road (from Trade Street to I-85)
23. Mt. Holly/Freedom Drive (from I-85 to Catawba River)
24. Tuckasegee (from Thrift Road to Ashley Road)
25. Steele Creek Road (from N.C. 49 to West Boulevard)
26. Morehead Street (from Mint Street to Wilkinson Boulevard)

- ◆ **Consider asking the N.C. Department of Transportation to add landscaping to all State-planned projects.** If NCDOT refuses, local dollars should be used to landscape these projects.
- ◆ **Consider adding planted medians as part of roadway construction and widening projects,** such as York Road and the Northwest Circumferential.

Objective:

- Ensure that new roads are built and existing ones improved to accommodate increasing traffic volumes.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **U.S. 74 Bypass:** Coordinate with Gaston County on the alignment and character of the U.S. 74 Bypass road as it enters Mecklenburg County, in order to enhance development opportunities, to provide access to riverfront property, and to increase accessibility to areas west of the airport.

Westinghouse Boulevard:

Recommend to the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization's Technical Coordinating Committee that the widening of Westinghouse be reviewed and assessed in the update of the *2015 Transportation Plan*.

- ◆ **Dixie River Road and Walkers Ferry Road:**

The N.C. 160 connector (or a similar north-south connector road) should function as the thoroughfare, and Dixie River Road and Walkers Ferry Road should remain collector roads.



- ◆ **N.C. 160 Connector:** The Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization's Technical Coordinating Committee should consider recommending a more definitive alignment for this roadway and/or define a similar north-south connector road. This roadway is needed to support and facilitate development of planned mixed-use developments west of I-485 and north of West Boulevard.

- ◆ **Replacement or Relocation of Wallace Neel Road:**
Relocate Wallace Neel Road just west of I-485.

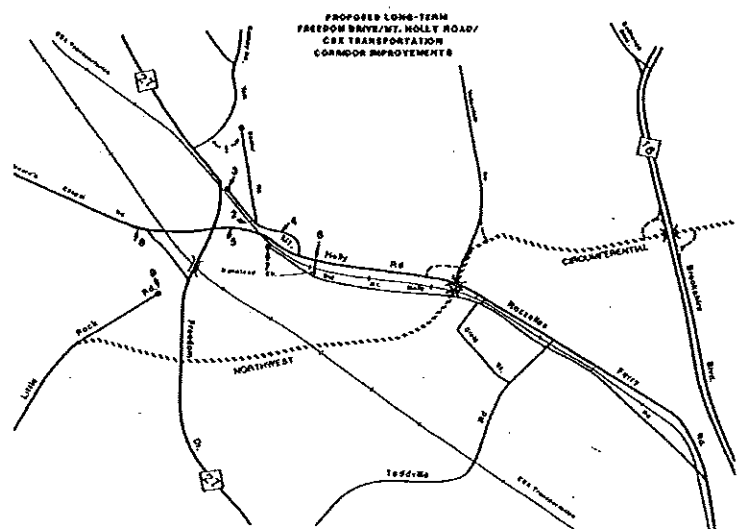
- ◆ **Archdale Drive/Shopton Road Connector:** The Southwest District Plan map should be updated to indicate the correct alignment of this proposed road extension. The alignment shown is inaccurate.
- ◆ **Extension of Carowinds Boulevard**
Recommend that the Mecklenburg-Union Metropolitan Planning Organization's Technical Coordinating Committee study the need to accelerate this project.
- ◆ **I-485 Interchanges:** Study and re-evaluate the design of interchanges at N.C. 16 and Mt. Holly Roads. The current designs of these interchanges may not be adequate to accommodate proposed traffic volumes. This study should also include an evaluation of where traffic signals should be placed at these interchanges.
- ◆ **Northwest Circumferential/Fred Alexander Boulevard:** Consider buying all the properties at the Valleydale interchange. Due to the design of this roadway project, several homes will not be purchased by the State and likely will not be desirable places to live once the road is built.
- ◆ **Proposed Road Connecting Shopton Road and Arrowood Extension:** Consider adding to the Thoroughfare Plan a connector road from Arrowood Road Extension (at the Brown Grier and I-485 intersection) to Shopton Road. This connector road likely would be developed-built facility constructed in conjunction with the development of the business park area. However, it should be indicated on the Thoroughfare Plan for planning purposes.
- ◆ **Radio Road Improvements:** Consider widening Radio Road between Oakdale Road and the entrance to Sunset Hills Golf Course. The project should include installation of trees and concrete curb and gutter.

Objectives:

- Reduce the impact of noise along I-485 to existing or planned residential areas adjacent to the roadway.
- Provide local input into decision regarding locations of median openings on thoroughfares.
- Minimize heavy truck traffic in residential areas in and around the Coulwood area.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Noise walls:** Request the State to add noise walls along I-485 where the roadway abuts existing or planned residential development.
- ◆ **Median cuts:** Work with the N.C. Department of Transportation to develop a process for local input into median cut locations.
- ◆ **Freedom Drive/Mt. Holly Road CSX Corridor Improvements:** To minimize heavy truck traffic traveling through the Coulwood residential area, consider making the following improvements as proposed in the Mt. Holly Road Special Project Plan:
 1. Realign Cathey Road at Tom Sadler Road, and extend to Mt. Holly Road; close Tom Sadler west of Mt. Holly Road.
 2. Close the Tom Sadler Road/CSX Transportation mainline crossing.
 3. Close Mt. Holly Road, east of Freedom Drive.
 4. Relocate Mt. Holly Road from Tom Sadler Road to Kenstead Circle.
 5. Relocate Mt. Holly Road from west of Kenstead Circle to the Old Mt. Holly Road and Freedom Drive intersection.
 6. Improve the Kenstead Circle/Mt. Holly Road and Old Mt. Holly Road intersections, in addition to the CSX Transportation mainline crossing.
 7. Close Old Mt. Holly Road, west of Kenstead Circle.
 8. Realign the Moores Chapel Road and Old Mt. Holly Road intersection.
 9. Close Little Rock Road, southwest of Freedom Drive.



■ Public Transportation

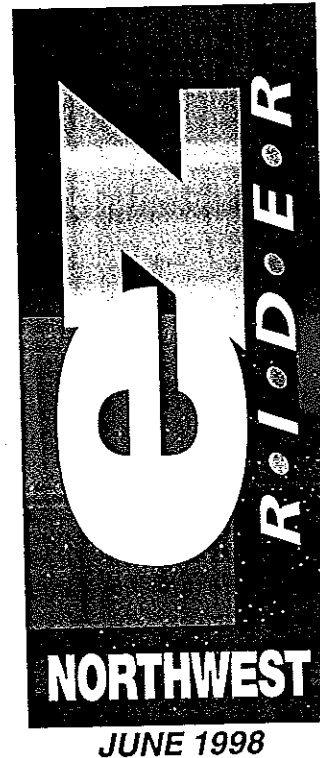
Objectives:

- Support future mass transit routes.
- Incorporate HOV lanes in major roadway projects, when appropriate.
- Expand bus service to residential areas on the Westside.
- Continue to support and expand van and connecting bus service to major employment centers on the Westside.
- Provide adequate and safe bus stops and shelters throughout the Westside.
- Continue to support and expand the EZ Rider transportation system.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Transitways:** Investigate the feasibility of establishing mass transportation for South Boulevard/Pineville and Wilkinson Boulevard/I-85/Airport as future mass transit routes. As part of this study, the City should also consider potential stations at Westinghouse Boulevard, Arrowood Road, and along Wilkinson Boulevard, which could be linked with circulating buses or vans to provide direct access to employment centers.
- ◆ **HOV Lane:** Include High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes in the plans for the future widening of I-485, and other major roadway projects where appropriate.
- ◆ **Circulator Service:** The Charlotte Department of Transportation (CDOT) should continue to work with employers in the Westinghouse, Arrowood, and Airport areas to provide van service linking with bus service, so that workers can get to job sites.
- ◆ **Bus/Vans:** CDOT and the Arrowood Business Association should work together to develop a demonstration project for providing regular bus or van service from Park-and-Ride lots in south Charlotte and central Charlotte (i.e. McMullen Creek, SouthPark) to employment centers in the Arrowood business district.
- ◆ **Transit Centers:** CDOT should consider making the proposed transit center for Arrowood the first priority among the proposed centers, as per the Five-Year Transportation Plan. CDOT should also consider developing sites at the airport and Beatties Ford Road area. The location and timing of the facilities should be contingent on the ability of CDOT and area employers to provide circulator service.

- ◆ **Upgrade shelters and make them safe:** A comprehensive survey of existing conditions of all bus shelters should be conducted to determine those that need to be replaced or upgraded. CDOT should coordinate with the Police Department to have police presence at major transit stops and at peak times to create a sense of greater safety during peak hours.
- ◆ **EZ Rider:** Initiate a study to expand and/or create new EZ rider routes to the Freedom Drive, Thomasboro-Hoskins, Todd Park, Wingate/Ponderosa, and Morris Field Drive areas, to link people to shopping, jobs, and the CPCC campus.
- ◆ **EZ Rider Vendors:** Give greater consistency to the operation of EZ rider service. The contracts for vendors change too frequently, making it more difficult to hold vendors accountable and to maintain consistent service. Consider having the Enterprise Community serve as the provider to the EZ rider service.
- ◆ **New Bus Routes:** Implement three new bus routes in the area to serve the Pawtucket area, Oakdale, and Coulwood. Other areas on the Westside should be considered as new routes are developed to link with the transit centers.



■ Sidewalks and Bike Lanes

Objective:

- Construct sidewalks and bike lanes on all roadway projects and investigate the feasibility of adding them to roads where pedestrians and cyclists are likely to travel (near parks, schools, shopping, etc.):

Implementation Strategies:

- ◆ **Work with the State (and/or provide local funds) to construct sidewalks and bike lanes on all roadway projects, and investigate the feasibility of adding them to existing roads such as:**

- Morris Field Drive, where the new CPCC campus will be built
- Freedom Drive, west of I-85
- Tuckaseegee Road
- Steele Creek Road
- Westinghouse Boulevard
- Arrowood Road
- York Road, to provide access to McDowell Park
- other roadway connections to the new district park to be developed off Winget Road, and other Westside Parks.

■ Streetlighting

Objective:

- Improve the safety of walking, driving, and cycling on Westside streets at night.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **The Charlotte Department of Transportation's streetlight installation policy should be amended to prioritize the installation of lights** based on the following criteria: (1) the classification of the road, highest to lowest, and (2) the year of annexation.
- ◆ **Access roads to schools and community facilities should be accelerated** ahead of projects on similar road classifications.

■ Rail Crossings

Objective:

- Improve conditions of rail crossings throughout the Westside.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Request a detailed survey of all rail crossings to assess overall conditions.** The request should be made of the N.C. Department of Transportation to work with rail companies in the area to assess such factors as appearance, lights, gates, etc., and implement needed changes.

Parks, Utilities, and Other Public Facilities

Strategies

7

■ Parks and Recreation

Objectives:

- Continue to renovate and upgrade existing parks and build new active recreational parks.
- Identify opportunities to accelerate construction of proposed parks, recreation centers, and greenways, where feasible.
- Consider developing greenways along the Catawba River, from I-85 south to West Boulevard, to link proposed parks along the river.
- Increased programmed activities for youth, teens, and seniors.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Continue to renovate and upgrade existing parks and build new parks** as proposed in the Mecklenburg County Capital Investment Program. Also consider building new parks in Oakdale (near Paw Creek Middle School) and off Brookshire Freeway and N.C. 16 (Shuffletown Racetrack).
- ◆ **Accelerate construction of recreation parks** at Wingate Neighborhood Park, Seversville Recreation Center, and Southwest Recreation Center (currently proposed to be located near Boulevard Homes).
- ◆ **Accelerate construction of greenways**, especially in the northwest portion of the Westside. Request that the State sell or donate land-locked parcels along I-485 between Brookshire Freeway and Oakdale Road to be used for recreational purposes, greenways, or open space.

- ◆ **Consider developing greenways along the Catawba River to link parks that are proposed between I-85 and West Boulevard.** This would provide a nice greenspace linking proposed parks and would complement mixed-use communities recommended west of I-485. Consider adding these proposed greenways in the Greenway Master Plan currently under development.
- ◆ **Change the methodology for estimating park needs.** Current figures include preserves and other passive areas that serve a larger geographic area and, as a result, understate the need for active park space on the Westside.
- ◆ **Encourage collaboration to develop and coordinate a comprehensive outreach initiative focusing on the needs of Westside disadvantaged youth, teens, and seniors.** This collaborative effort should include the Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation Department, the YMCA, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, neighborhood coalitions, churches, and other organizations. The initiative should consider traditional and non-traditional recreational, cultural, and educational programs and activities.

■ Water and Sewer Service

Objective:

- Provide public water and sewer service to the entire Westside.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ **Formalize the CMUD wastewater lift station policy** to allow the construction of sewer lift stations at interim locations in each basin draining and flowing into Lake Wylie.
- ◆ **Accelerate construction of proposed sewer projects** by moving them from the Ten-Year Needs Assessment to the City of Charlotte's Five-Year Capital Investment Plan, with the following priorities:
 1. Studman Branch outfall, lift station, and force main (CIP #53)
 2. Beaver Dam Creek outfall, lift station, and force main (CIP #38)
 3. Hamilton Smith Lift station and force main (CIP #37)

Consider adding the following two projects to the five-year Capital Investment Plan: Stowe Branch and Moores Chapel Road area.

- ◆ Accelerate proposed water construction projects, especially in the Rhyne Road area.
- ◆ Continue to pursue a partnership with York County for sewer service for the McKee Road and Thomas Road area.

■ Other Facilities

Post Offices, Libraries and Medical Facilities

Objectives:

- Encourage development of additional libraries and post offices on the Westside, particularly in the Lower Steele Creek and Mt. Holly Road areas.
- Encourage Carolinas Medical Center, Presbyterian Hospital, and other medical facilities, to locate on the Westside.

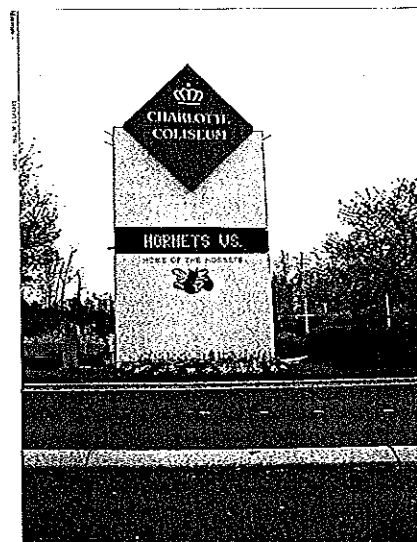
Implementation Strategies

- ◆ Coordinate meetings between the City and County Managers and the management of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Libraries, the U.S. Postal Service, and the hospitals, to discuss and plan for facilities to be provided on the Westside.
- ◆ The U.S. Postal Service should consider adding Saturday mail drop facilities throughout the southwest area. Similarly, the rural route mail service should be reviewed and eliminated if it is found to contribute to disparate or unequal levels of service in the southwest and northwest areas when compared to other parts of Mecklenburg County.

Charlotte Coliseum

Objective:

- Support continued public ownership and operation of the Charlotte Coliseum.



Implementation Strategies

- Evaluate options for ownership and re-use of the Charlotte Coliseum and continue to use the facility as a catalyst to incent/encourage development on the Westside.

Environment

Strategies

8

■ Water Quality

Objectives:

- Extend public sewer service to waterfront areas, to provide an alternative to septic tanks.
- Extend water lines to areas currently not served by public water service, particularly in the Paw Creek and Rhyne Road areas where contamination from surrounding industries is possible.
- Ensure that development along the waterfront is sensitive to the natural environment.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ Staff should encourage master planned developments, including a mix of development sensitive to the natural riverfront environment.
- ◆ Accelerate proposed water construction projects, especially in the Rhyne Road area.

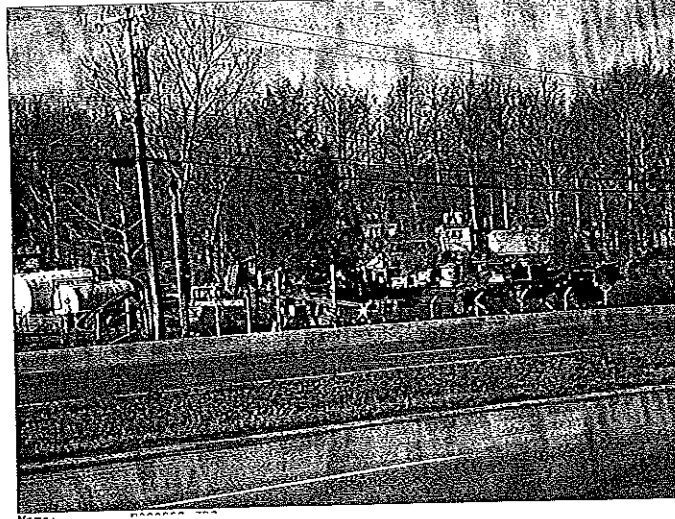
■ Brownfield Restoration

Objective:

- Encourage and facilitate redevelopment of contaminated sites.

Implementation Strategies

- ◆ Accelerate clean-up of sites identified on the County's priority list, especially in the 28208 zip code that has over 70 contaminated sites.



- ◆ **Develop a public information campaign that education prospective developers about the Brownfields Property Reuse Act, which encourages and facilitates redevelopment of abandoned sites contaminated by past industrial or commercial activity.**

■ Airport Noise

Objective:

- To help reduce airport noise, ensure that airlines comply with federal regulations on the replacement of aircraft.

Implementation Strategy

- ◆ **Monitor the airlines to ensure they comply with federal regulations to replace Stage II airplanes with Stage III planes by the year 2000.**

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission
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