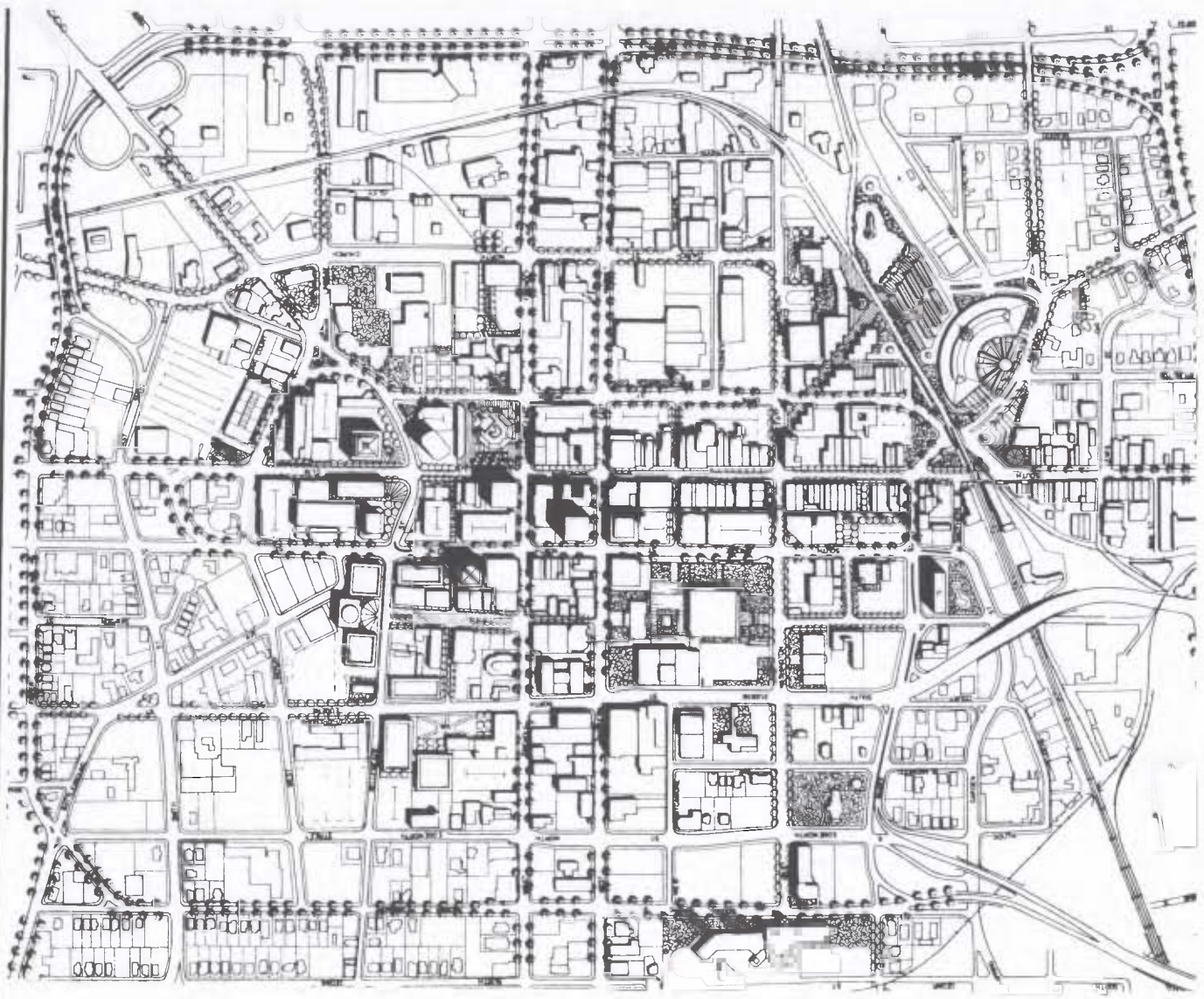


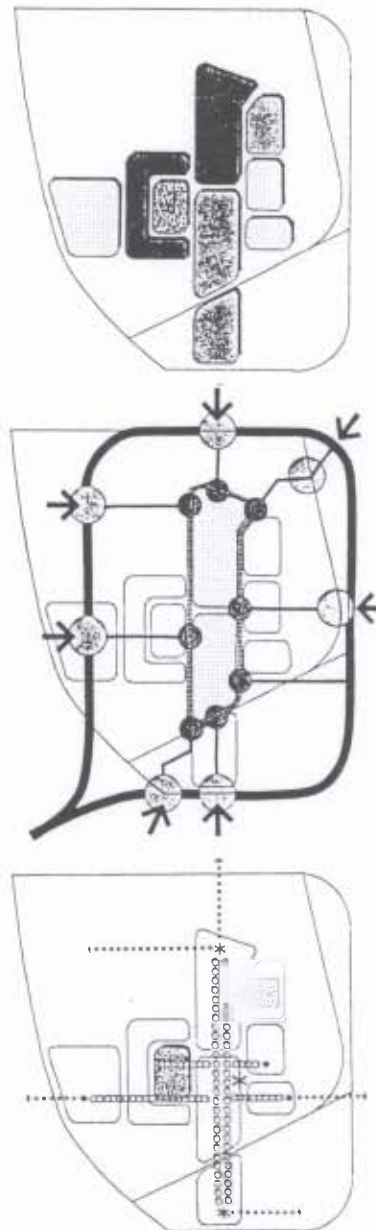
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CENTER CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Greensboro, North Carolina



CENTER CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Greensboro, North Carolina



August, 1990

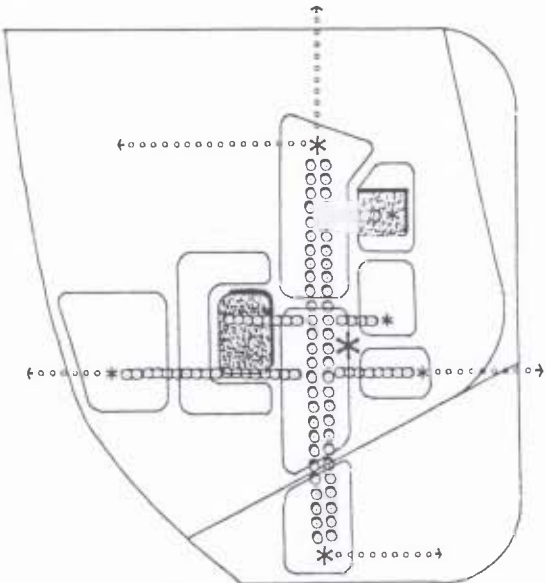
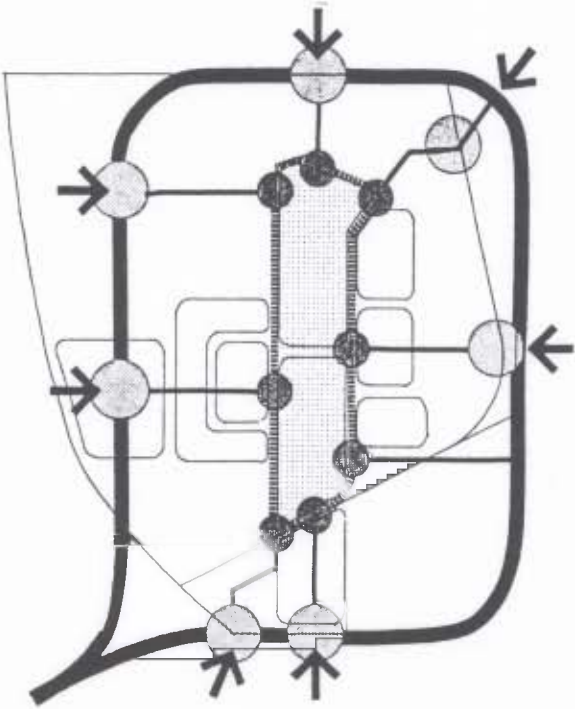
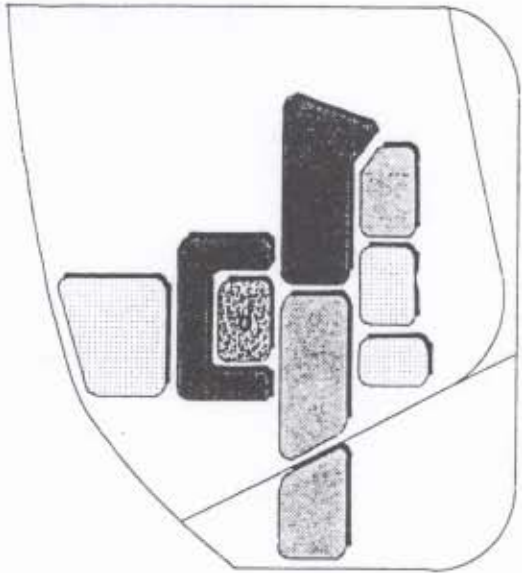
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introduction

Center City Development Plan
Greensboro, North Carolina

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the results of the *Greensboro Center City Development Plan*. It includes a review of recommended plans, projects and actions for improving and strengthening various aspects of the Center City study area.

The report includes four sections:

1. **Center City Goals and Objectives**, which describe an overall vision for the Greensboro Center City.
2. **Center City Concept Plan**, which provides a basic framework for future land-use, transportation and urban design within the Center City, based on local goals and objectives.
3. **Refined Plan and Development Strategy**, which describes a series of public and private projects and actions essential to implementing the Concept Plan.
4. **Implementation**, which summarizes estimated project costs and project financing, and outlines funding sources and implementation techniques for carrying out key plan and project recommendations.

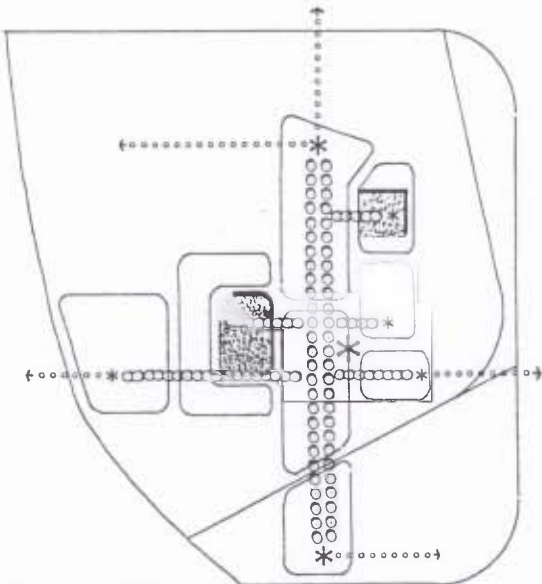
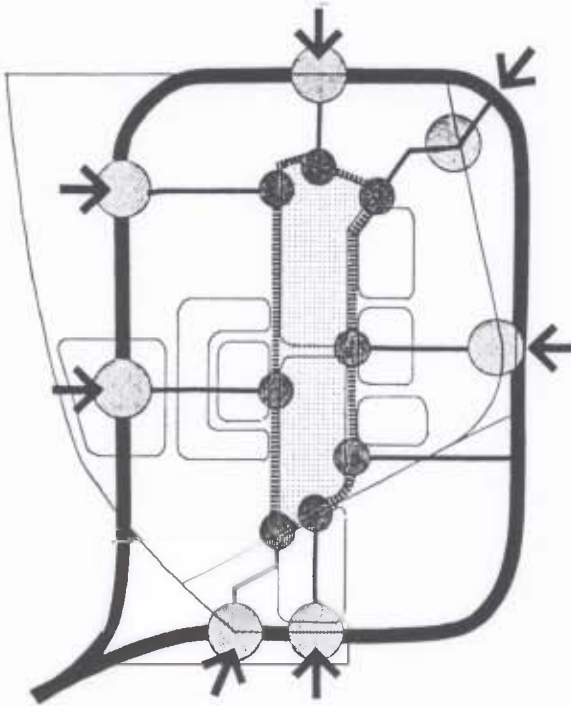
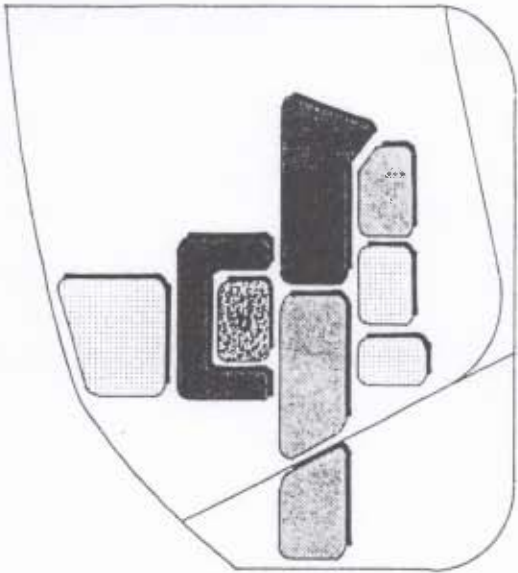
The material included in this report is the result of numerous meetings and discussions with City staff and the Center City Committee, and the report incorporates input and comments from numerous sources and individuals within the community. This final plan report is supplemented by a number of other working papers, memoranda and preliminary reports produced during the planning process. These include the *Center City Profile*, which documented existing conditions, issues and concerns within the study area, and the *Phase II Report*, which presented planning principles and standards, goals and objectives, and preliminary plans and projects.

Completion of this final phase represents an important milestone in the Greensboro Center City planning process. In addition to setting forth a concept plan and development strategy to build upon, it clearly lays out the range of projects and actions that must be carried out in the future if the plan and strategy are to be successfully implemented.

Achieving consensus on the broader planning and strategy framework established in this report is a significant threshold upon which to build. But it is not enough. To begin with, there are opportunities which may be captured, but these will require local initiative and effort. Secondly, the public and private sectors together must share in this vision of the new Center City if it is to become a reality. And finally, if historic preservation and building renovation are to occur on a meaningful scale, new development and amenity must lead the way.

Renewed vitality and confidence in the Center City can make it economically viable and strong. Adding grace and beauty makes it also exciting.

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1

goals and objectives

Center City Development Plan
Greensboro, North Carolina

CENTER CITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

To be effective, the Greensboro Center City planning program must respond to the special needs, values, and desires of local residents. Goals and objectives provide this specialized guidance. In essence, these transform collective community values into operational statements which can be used as guidelines for the planning program.

Goals and objectives each have a distinct and different purpose in the planning process:

- o *Goals* describe desired end situations toward which planning efforts should be directed. They are broad and long-range. They represent an end to be sought, although they may never actually be fully attained.
- o *Objectives* describe more specific purposes which should be sought in order to advance toward the overall goals. They provide more precise and measurable guidelines for planning action.

Collectively, goals and objectives indicate where a community wants to go and what it wants to become in the future.

Recommended goals and objectives are presented below. The *primary goal* for the Center City is supported by *categorical goals and objectives* for function, land-use, transportation, and the general environment.

PRIMARY AND CATEGORICAL GOALS

Primary Goal: *A strengthened Center City as the focal point of community identity and pride.*

Categorical Goals

1. Function: A distinct functional and symbolic identity for the Center City which emphasizes its special role within the Greensboro community.
2. Land-use: An overall system of land-uses arranged in a compact, compatible and orderly manner to reinforce and enhance the functions of the Center City.
3. Transportation: A balanced transportation system which provides for safe and convenient access to and circulation within the Center City and reinforces and supports surrounding land development patterns.
4. General Environment: An overall quality of environment which enhances the functions of the Center City and adds to the character and attractiveness of downtown living and business areas.

CATEGORICAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

FUNCTION

Goal: *A distinct functional and symbolic identity for the Center City which emphasizes its special role within the Greensboro community.*

Objectives:

1. Promote the Center City as a symbol of quality, character, and prosperity of the Greensboro community.
2. Enhance the Center City's role as a centrally located, multi-use center of communications and personal contact.
3. Establish the Center City as the site for special few-of-a-kind facilities and activities which serve the overall community.
4. Reinforce and revitalize Center City as a specialty retail and commercial center.
5. Capture identifiable and new market opportunities, both large and small, for retail, convenience commercial, and office development.
6. Promote new housing opportunities and extend the Center City as a residential environment.
7. Encourage other new facilities and activities in the Center City which could broaden and extend its functional role in the future.

LAND-USE

Goal: *An overall system of land-uses arranged in a compact, compatible, and orderly manner to reinforce and enhance the functions of the Center City.*

Objectives:

1. Promote more compact and distinct groupings of activities within the downtown, each containing land-uses which complement and reinforce each other.
2. Ensure that land-use activities offering the same or similar merchandise or service are grouped together.
3. Eliminate conflicts between individual land-uses which are not compatible.
4. Promote the improvement and rehabilitation of older deteriorating buildings within the Center City.
5. Encourage the preservation and improvement of historically, culturally and architecturally significant buildings and areas.

6. Promote desired new development on remaining vacant land, especially in in-fill locations.
7. Promote the redevelopment of selected marginal and underutilized buildings and parcels.
8. Protect adjacent residential neighborhoods from the encroachment of incompatible land-uses and the adverse impacts of downtown activities.
9. Promote the elimination of blight through rehabilitation or redevelopment.
10. Encourage active use of ground floor frontage on all streets in the Central City, but especially on Elm Street.

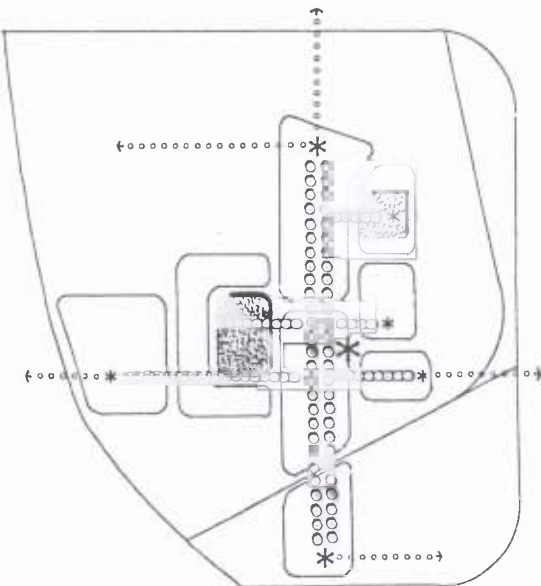
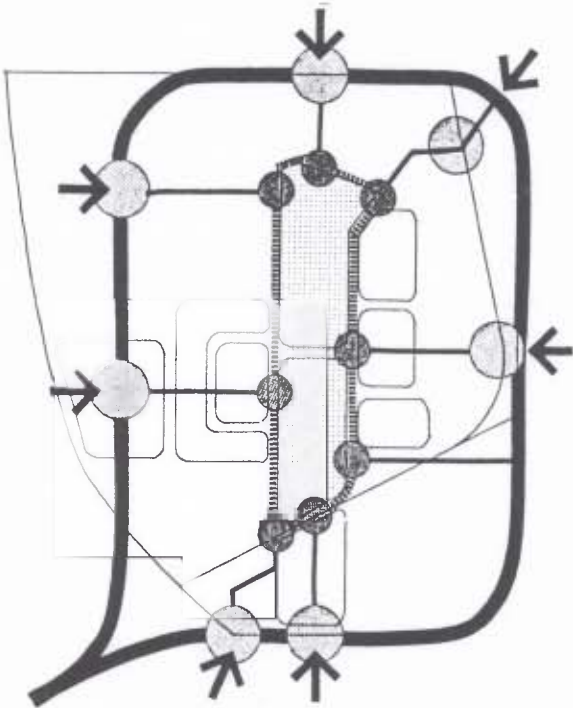
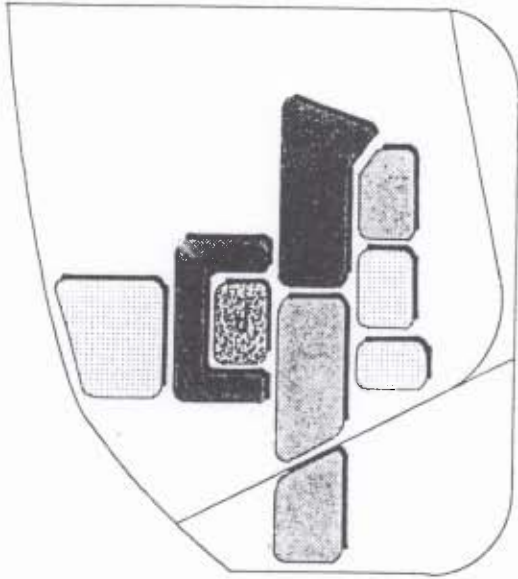
TRANSPORTATION

Goal: *A balanced transportation system which provides for safe and convenient access to and circulation within the Center City and reinforces and supports surrounding land development patterns.*

Objectives:

1. Provide direct and efficient access routes to the Center City area, especially from nearby employment and residential concentrations.
2. Establish a street classification system which defines the future traffic carrying role of all streets within the downtown.
3. Reduce localized traffic congestion.
4. Correct traffic operational problems which create high accident potential at certain locations.
5. Improve traffic signaling and control within and around downtown.
6. Ensure that all activity areas within downtown are served by adequate and convenient parking facilities.
7. Encourage the provision of adequate pick-up and drop-off facilities for shoppers and visitors, and for loading and service vehicles.
8. Eliminate the spill-over of downtown traffic and parking on adjacent local residential streets.
9. Minimize conflicts between different types of movement within downtown, including local and through traffic, service vehicles, and pedestrians.
10. Provide enhanced transit service to and within the Center City area.
11. Establish within the Central City area a transit exchange for all transportation systems.

5. Ensure that pavements, furniture, and landscape plantings within and adjacent to all downtown streets, alleys, and pedestrianways are functional, attractive and in good repair.
6. Encourage the enhancement of the design and location of downtown signs and graphics to ensure efficient communication and to improve the overall appearance of the area.
7. Utilize lighting systems to articulate the functions of various streets and activity areas, to accent features of special importance, and to promote vehicular and pedestrian safety.
8. Encourage the preservation and enhancement of Center City buildings and other features which emphasize the historic and cultural heritage of the area.
9. Encourage high standards of design in all buildings, spaces and public rights-of-way.
10. Ensure adequate infrastructure for existing and future development.
11. Encourage the generous use of landscaping and coordinated street tree planting throughout the Center City area.
12. Encourage consideration of all ecological systems (light, air, wind, ventilation) in all development plans in the Center City.
13. Strive for a pedestrian-friendly environment throughout the downtown area.



2

center city concept plan

Center City Development Plan
Greensboro, North Carolina

CENTER CITY CONCEPT PLAN

This chapter describes the Center City Concept Plan which has been prepared to serve as a guideline for the management, maintenance, growth and revitalization of the Greensboro Center City area. It includes overall long-range recommendations for land-use and development, traffic circulation, parking and urban design. The recommendations included in the Plan are based upon the following:

1. An evaluation of the background information collected during Phase I of the study, and summarized in the report entitled *Center City Profile*.
2. The needs, opportunities, and constraints which were identified for the Center City area. These were identified both for the greater area and on a sub-area basis.
3. Principles and standards for land-use, transportation and urban design.
4. Goals and objectives for the Center City.
5. An analysis of a range of choices in relation to specific evaluation criteria.
6. The review and response of the local citizen's participation process.

An overriding goal of this Plan is to assume the best use of the community's land and other resources in the Center City area. While this Plan is a tool to help meet that goal, it will depend upon a forthright, yet flexible, enforcement of local development regulations, continued strengthening of the area through the provision of public improvements and supporting facilities. Equally important, the Concept Plan must be adaptable to changing conditions over time and, as such, is intentionally more general than specific.

The preparation of the development concept for the Greensboro Center City was approached on two levels. First, a functional land-use and transportation framework for the greater central area was established with firm boundaries set between the central business district and surrounding neighborhoods and institutions. This served as a basis for establishing vehicular and pedestrian connections between the central business district and the neighborhoods and institutions, and for establishing policies for the protection of the neighborhoods and institutions from undesirable intrusion or encroachment. Second, a more detailed plan was prepared for the more intensively developed central business district.

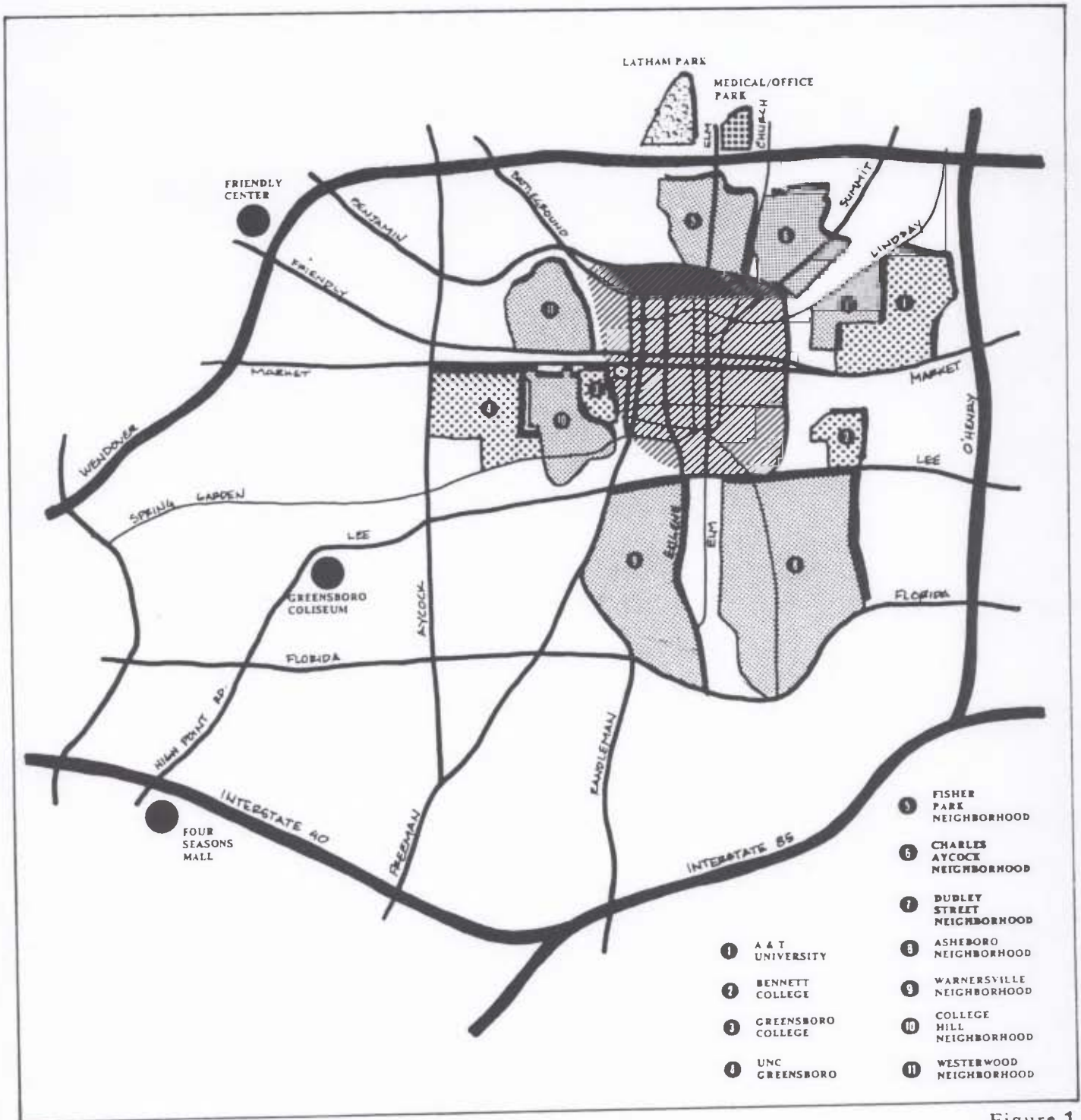
Finally, the Center City Concept incorporates recommendations and modifications from the Greensboro Center City Task Force that emerged through local workshops and discussions which were devoted to the evaluation of alternative plans, projects and strategies. Important features of this plan follow.

GREATER CENTRAL AREA

The greater central area is essentially contained within an even greater district generally bounded by Wendover Avenue on the north, O. Henry Boulevard on the east, Florida Street on the south, and Aycock Street on the west. Within this area is the Greensboro central business district, generally bounded by Fisher Avenue on the north, Murrow Boulevard on the east, Lee Street on the south, and the Southern Railway right-of-way on the west, just west of Cedar Street.

This more tightly configured central business district is surrounded by the following neighborhoods (see Figure 1: *Greater Central Area*):

- o Fisher Park Neighborhood, north of the central business district and generally contained within an area bounded by Wendover Avenue on the north, Church Street on the east, Smith Street on the south, and Wharton Street on the west. The Fisher Park Neighborhood is an officially designated Greensboro Historic District.
- o Charles B. Aycock Neighborhood, north of the central business district, just east of Fisher Park, and generally contained within an area bounded by Bessemer Avenue on the north, Summit/Dewey/Lindsay on the east and southeast, Fisher Avenue on the south, and the Southern Railway right-of-way on the west. The Charles B. Aycock neighborhood is an officially designated Greensboro Historic District.
- o Dudley Street Neighborhood, northeast of the central business district, generally contained in an area bounded by Lindsay Street on the north, Stedman Street on the east, Blueford, Dudley, and Friendly Streets on the south/southeast, and Regan Street on the west. While the area contains many architectural and historic resources, the area has not been designated as a Greensboro Historic District.
- o Asheboro Neighborhood, south of the central business district, and generally contained in an area bounded by Lee Street on the north, Bennett Street on the east, Florida Street on the south, and Arthington Street on the west. Asheboro is one of a few surviving older inner-city neighborhoods struggling to overcome detrimental and economic distress. It is the target of the City's infill housing program.
- o Warnersville Neighborhood, south of the central business district, just west of the Asheboro Neighborhood, generally contained in an area bounded by Lee Street on the north, Eugene Street on the east, Florida Street on the south, and Randleman/Freeman Mill on the west.
- o College Hill Neighborhood, west of the central business district, generally contained in an area bounded by Market Street on the north, the Southern Railway right-of-way on the east, Oakland Avenue on the south, and Tate/McIver Streets on the west. The College Hill Neighborhood is an officially designated Greensboro Historic District.
- o Westerwood Park Neighborhood, west of the central business district and north of College Hill, generally contained in an area bounded by East Lake Drive on the north, the Southern Railway right-of-way on the east, Friendly Avenue on the south, and East Lake Drive on the west. This area is not designated as a Greensboro Historic District.



GREATER CENTRAL AREA

Figure 1

North Carolina A & T University is located east of the central business district adjacent to and east and south of the Dudley Street Neighborhood. Bennett College is located to the southeast of the central business district, between Washington and Lee Streets on the north and south, and Martin and Bennett Streets on the west and east. The University of North Carolina- Greensboro and Greensboro College are both located just west of the central business district along and south of Market Street, flanking the College Hill Neighborhood on the west and east, respectively.

The physical plans for the close-in neighborhoods are largely dictated by existing features and patterns of development. The basic goal for each neighborhood is to protect and improve the existing residential areas so that they will be better places in which to live. This goal can be achieved through the combined efforts of physical plan changes, a public improvement program, and a housing program carried out concurrently in the neighborhood. Accordingly, the emphasis of the physical plan should be well-designed residential areas, with adequate public facilities, protected from incompatible land-uses and non-local traffic. The emphasis of the housing program should be on improved existing housing units in order to bring them to a long-term sound condition. These efforts should be supported by maintaining and improving public services and by improving existing public facilities.

The plans for these areas should recognize the self-contained character and identity of each neighborhood. These are positive attributes which lend themselves to maintaining a certain high-quality environment in each neighborhood. The plans must also recognize that close-in neighborhoods are more prone than most to intrusions from institutions and traffic from without their respective areas. Therefore, the boundaries of each must be clearly defined and the integrity of the neighborhoods must be supported by appropriate vehicular circulation, environmental changes, and connections to and from adjacent areas, including the downtown.

In summary, objectives for each neighborhood are as follows:

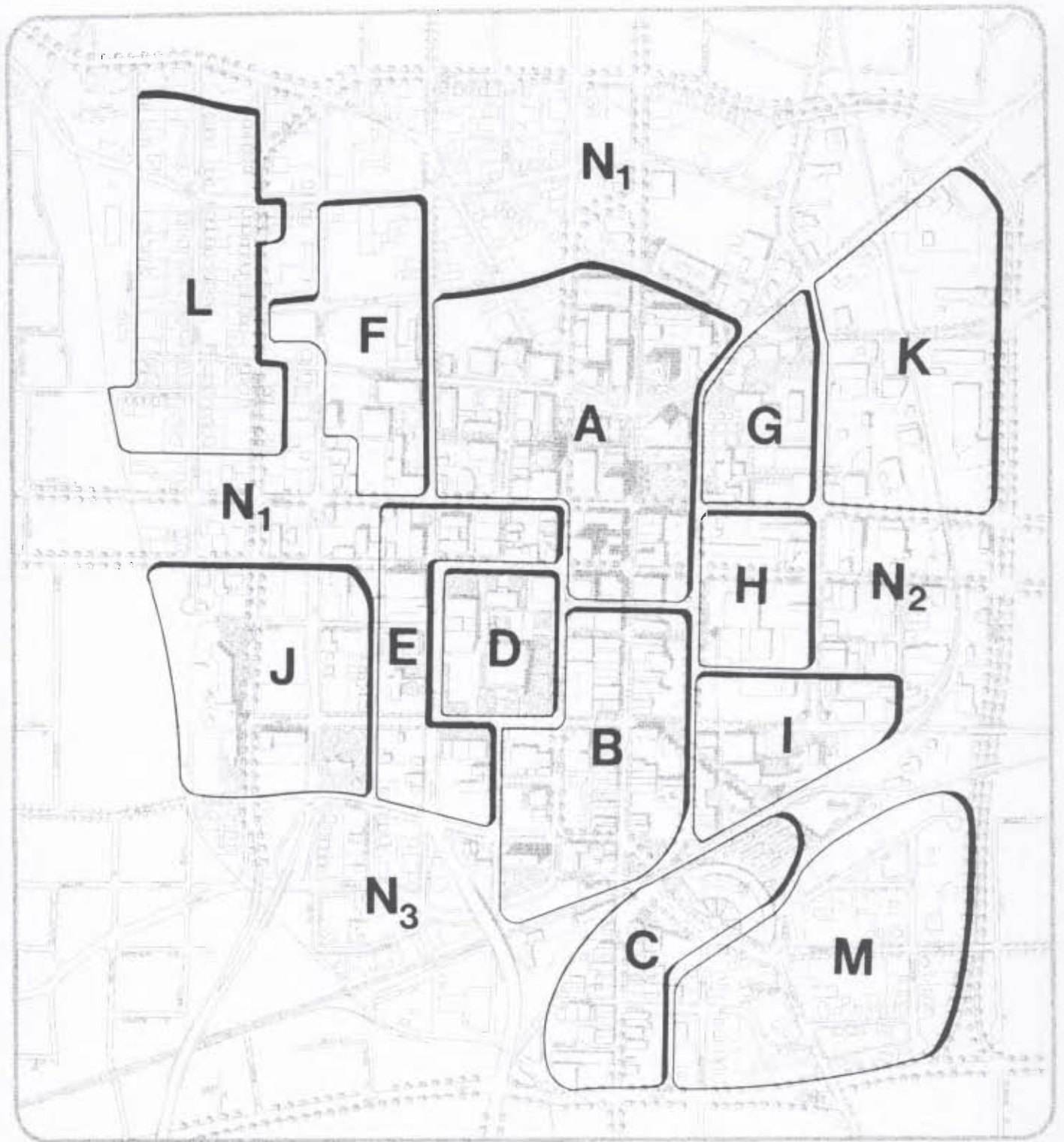
1. To preserve the residential nature of the entire neighborhood.
2. To maintain historic values in the neighborhood.
3. To encourage redevelopment and reuse of vacant properties with compatible land-uses which reinforce the neighborhood living environment.
4. To improve the usefulness of recreation and open space.
5. To improve the neighborhood image by controlling access and property reuse.

CENTER CITY CONCEPT

The overall development concept for the Greensboro Center City area is described below, including key features related to land-use and development, traffic circulation, parking, and urban design. This overall development concept provides a framework for the detailed description of specific development districts, presented in the following chapter of this report.

Land-use and Development

The Center City Concept includes recommendations for improving and upgrading existing land-use areas, and for promoting high-quality new development. These recommendations are focused on helping the City achieve the adopted goals and objectives described in Section 1, particularly those related to function and land-use. Area-wide recommendations are presented below, and are illustrated in Figure 2: *Development Districts*.



DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS

Figure 2

A	High Intensity Office	F	County Government Development District	J	Institutional
B	Retail and Commercial Core	G	Cultural Center	K	Auto-Oriented Commercial
C	Specialty Commercial	H	Secondary Commercial	L	Northwest Residential
D	Government Center	I	Service	M	Southwest Residential
E	Office			N	Mixed-Use

CENTER CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

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- o The strong north-south orientation of the Center City would be further strengthened and reinforced. Several major land-use districts would be focused along the Elm Street corridor, including, from north to south: a) the high intensity office district; b) the retail and commercial core; and c) the supporting retail district.
- o Several future development projects are recommended along the Elm Street corridor, including new high-rise office development, new housing, and retail development. New retail development could be developed within the framework of the existing historic buildings south of February One Place.
- o The Downtown Greensboro Historic District would overlay, at least in part, all three land-use districts along Elm Street, and would be enhanced to create a special image and identity for the entire area. Older buildings within the Historic District would be protected, rehabilitated and reused for new activities; new commercial construction would be more compatible with and sensitive to the existing historic context.
- o A new east-west dimension would be created within the Center City by promoting several new and improved land-use districts on either side of the Elm Street corridor.
- o To the west of Elm Street, the Governmental Center block would continue to be the focal point for governmental services. A new office district, containing both public and private office uses, would partially encircle the Governmental Center, with buildings oriented toward this major public open space area. Development would be intensified within the southern portion of this district. A new institutional district, characterized by a "campus-like" setting, would be located on the western edge of downtown. This district would include the existing public school, the two small colleges, Blandwood, and possibly new housing, and would provide an attractive transition between the commercial area and adjacent neighborhoods.
- o The eastern portion of downtown would also be strengthened by developing new land-use districts focused around significant existing uses: 1) the Cultural Center District, embracing the Museum, Art Center, and YWCA; 2) the Secondary Commercial area, focused around the newspaper complex; and 3) the Service District, organized around the new Human Services Center and the historic Depot, which would be rehabilitated and reused for new activities.
- o Major efforts would be undertaken to stabilize and improve the two small residential enclaves in the northwest and southeast corners of downtown. Within both areas, existing homes would be rehabilitated; infill housing would be developed; incompatible land-uses would be removed; environmental improvements would be undertaken; connections with other areas reinforced; and overall neighborhood character would be upgraded.
- o New in-town residential construction, including high-rise and low-rise housing, would add life and vitality to the downtown, and provide a new 24-hour dimension to the Center City. Several alternative locations should be considered: 1) on upper floors of historic commercial buildings along Elm Street; 2) in the area north of Friendly and west of Eugene; 3) along the northern edge of the study area between Fisher/Battleground and Smith; and 4) the Southside area, generally along and near Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, between the railroad and Lee Street.
- o Much of the peripheral portion of the Center City would continue to provide sites for a wide mix of downtown land-uses. Where possible, new functional groupings would be encouraged, such as the growing cluster of auto-oriented sales and service

facilities located in the northeast corner of downtown. In addition, these mixed-use areas would provide parking support for the close-in land-use districts, and provide expansion space for the higher-intensity districts. Overall environmental improvements would also be undertaken throughout these peripheral areas.

Traffic Circulation

The Center City Concept includes recommendations for improving access to and circulation within the Center City area. These recommendations are focused on helping the City achieve the adopted goals and objectives described in Section 1, particularly those related to transportation. Area-wide recommendations are presented below, and are illustrated in Figure 3: *Thoroughfare Concept*.

- o The existing street system would continue to provide good vehicular access to and circulation around the Center City area. Future improvements would be focused on clarifying and refining the existing street system, rather than on major modification or reconstruction.
- o The following streets would be designated and enhanced as primary approach routes to downtown: Elm Street (from the north), Summit Avenue, Friendly Avenue, Lee Street, Eugene Street, Freeman Mill Road, Spring Garden, Market Street and Smith Street. Secondary approach routes would include Lindsay Street, Washington Street, Gorrell Street, Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and Elm Street from the south. These streets would provide direct and convenient access to the Center City from all parts of the City and surrounding region.
- o The following streets, which encircle the Center City, would operate as part of a downtown "circumferential" system: Battleground/Fisher Avenue/Smith Street; Edward Murrow Boulevard; Lee Street; and Spring Street/Edgeworth Street. This circumferential system would provide for convenient vehicular circulation around the periphery of downtown, and also act as a by-pass route for traffic not destined for the heart of the downtown.
- o Elm Street would be de-emphasized as a traffic route within the heart of the Center City. Elm Street between Lee Street and Lindsay Street would become downtown's primary pedestrianway.
- o To allow Elm Street to be de-emphasized, the following streets would become part of a core "distributor loop," which would provide efficient one-way traffic flow around the periphery of downtown's high-intensity area: Davie Street, McGee Street, Greene Street, and Lindsay Street. This could include street modifications and realignments at both the north and south ends of the Loop system.

Parking

The Center City Concept includes recommendations for the location and design of key central area parking facilities. These recommendations are focused on helping the City achieve the adopted goals and objectives described in Section 1, particularly those related to transportation. Area-wide recommendations are presented below.

- o As much off-street parking as possible would be provided along Davie and Greene Streets, with access off the core distributor loop. Most of downtown's existing and proposed parking garages are located within this area, as well as a significant amount of surface parking. This parking pattern would be extended in the future.



THOROUGHFARE CONCEPT

Figure 3

- Primary Thoroughfare
- Secondary Thoroughfare
-** Proposed New Connections

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GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

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- o Parking would not occupy the ground floor frontage along downtown's primary pedestrian routes. If garages must be located along these routes, ground floor space should be used for shops, services, displays, or other pedestrian-oriented uses. In particular, parking should not occupy the ground-floor frontage along Elm Street.
- o All downtown parking facilities would be easily identifiable and accessible to vehicles and pedestrians. Parking lot signs would be simple in design and few in number. Parking lot signs could be designed in a variety of ways and may combine the use of words, graphic symbols and color coding. All public parking lot signs would have a uniform visual image, and while private signs may be more varied, it is desirable that they also be part of an overall community-wide signage system.
- o Where possible, several smaller, separate parking lots located within the same block would be combined and redesigned as a single unit. This will typically increase parking efficiency and capacity, and also facilitate overall appearance improvements and beautification.
- o The appearance of parking lots would be improved. The principal technique for parking lot beautification would be landscaping. Where possible, a landscape planting strip of a minimum of five feet in width would be provided around the periphery of commercial area parking lots, with even greater widths provided where parking lots abut residential properties. This would allow screening with trees, shrubs, flowers and/or ground cover.
- o The City would promote "shared parking" within the downtown. Shared parking refers to parking spaces that can be used to serve two or more individual land-uses without conflict or encroachment. If correctly implemented, shared parking can often reduce the total number of parking spaces required to serve a group of land-uses, as opposed to the number of spaces required to serve the same land-uses if they were separate and freestanding.

Urban Design

The Center City Concept includes recommendations for improving the overall image and appearance of the central area, and for making it a more convenient and desirable shopping, business, entertainment and living environment. These recommendations are focused on helping the City achieve the adopted goals and objectives described in Section 1, particularly those related to general environment. Area-wide urban design recommendations are presented below, and are illustrated in Figure 4: *Pedestrian Concept*.

- o The image and appearance of major downtown approach routes would be improved. Improvements would include new landscaping, lighting and signage.
- o The major entranceways to downtown would undergo major design improvements. Special landscaping would be applied in these areas to emphasize the entrance into and sense of arrival at the downtown area. Treatments would include distinctive plantings coordinated with other features such as special lighting, signage and pedestrian facilities where appropriate.
- o Elm Street would be enhanced as a special identity street throughout its length within the downtown study area. Many of downtown's most prominent buildings and landmarks are located along or near Elm Street, and it serves as the major development spine within the downtown. Even though the character of the street

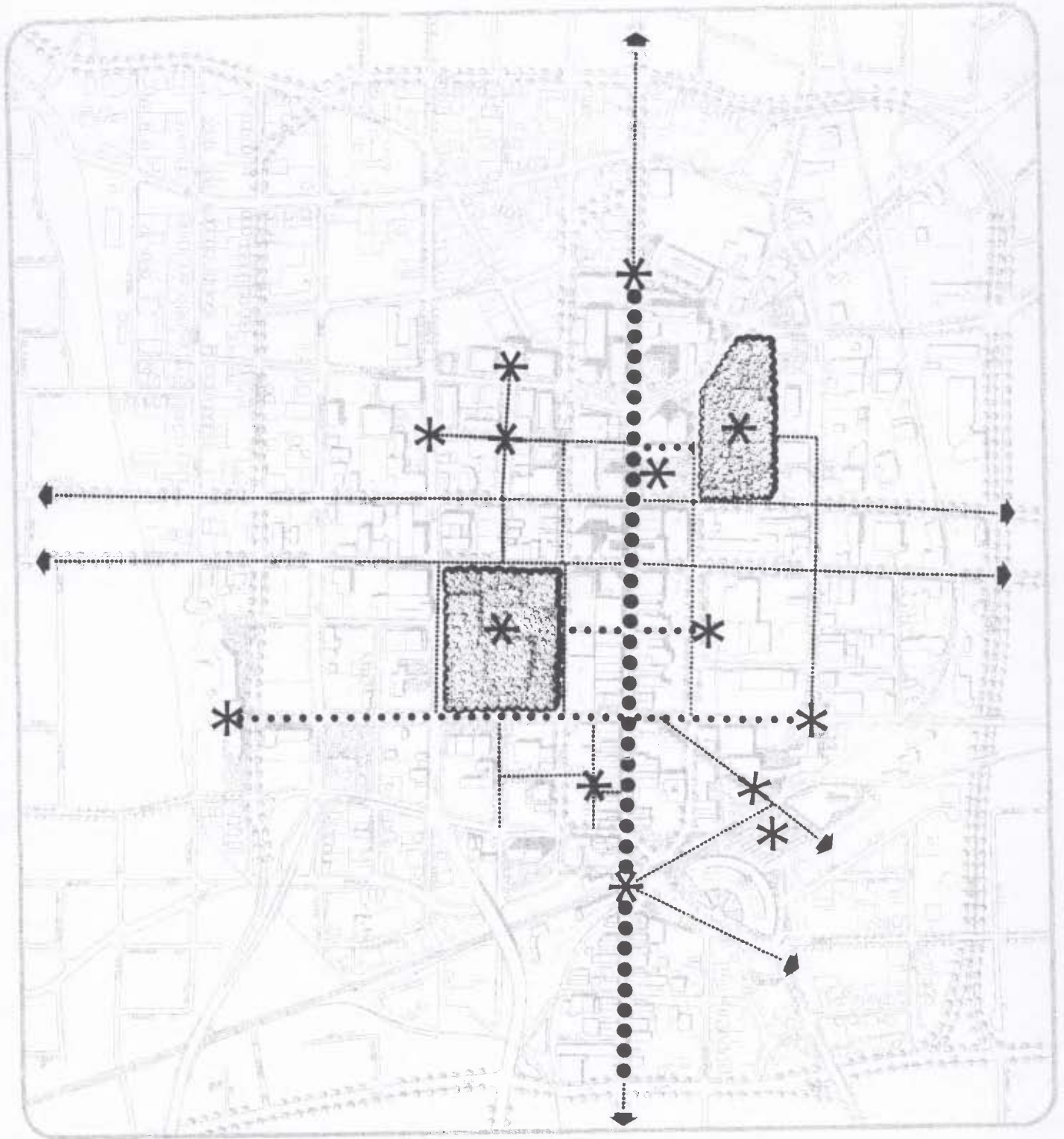


Figure 4

PEDESTRIAN CONCEPT

- Elm Street Pedestrianway
- Other Primary Pedestrian Route
- Secondary Pedestrian Route
- * Potential Focal Points

CENTER CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

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should continue to change as it passes through various land-use districts, special urban design techniques would be employed to give this route a continuous and special identity.

- o In addition to Elm Street, the following streets should be designated and improved as pedestrian routes: February One Place, Washington Street, and portions of Greene, Eugene and Market Streets. While each of these streets would continue to accommodate both vehicles and pedestrians, pedestrian movement would also receive attention. Potential design treatments include special sidewalk surface treatments, widened sidewalks (at least at corners and mid-block), landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting, street furniture, and other amenities.
- o A plaza would be developed as a major focal point for the downtown and as a centerpiece for the high intensity office district. It would serve as a "front door" to the cultural area to the east and as a major connection between the cultural center and the Elm Street uses. It would be a gathering place for people on a day-to-day basis and as a place for specialty events.
- o A plaza would be developed at Elm Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive to serve as the focal point for the revitalization of Old Greensborough. This plaza would also serve as a setting for the architectural and historic preservation efforts of Old Greensborough and as an attractive "gateway" into the downtown area from the south.
- o Mid-block pedestrian connections, perhaps utilizing alleyways or arcades through buildings, would connect Elm Street with adjacent parking facilities and land-use districts to the east and west. These connections would help make the core area more convenient for shoppers and business patrons.
- o The railroad rights-of-way within and around downtown would be more heavily landscaped with trees, shrubs and ground cover. Heavily landscaped areas along the rail corridors would help neutralize these major visual barriers, improve the appearance of downtown to entering motorists, and help distinguish several downtown subareas. Bridges would also be painted and maintained as required.
- o Older commercial buildings with special historic or architectural interest would be maintained, and sympathetic building improvements would be undertaken where required. This would include buildings within and outside the historic district. Attention would also be given to improving the back sides of older commercial buildings, which will be highly visible from the distributor loop and adjacent parking areas.
- o The underutilized rail trackage south of Washington and east of Elm would be reclaimed as a special planned development area which could accommodate a range of uses, possibly including a restored old train station, a new Amtrak station, a new ground transportation center, a city marketplace, and supporting landscaping, lighting and special amenities.

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DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS

The Downtown Development Concept organizes the Center City into fourteen compact land-use districts. Each district would be generally homogeneous in terms of intensity, scale, character, and the relationships between pedestrian and vehicular movements. Each would contain similar, compatible, and mutually supportive activities.

Specific recommendations for each district follow. These recommendations are focused on helping the City achieve the adopted goals and objectives described in Section I, including those related to function, land-use, transportation and general environment.

AREA A: HIGH INTENSITY OFFICE DISTRICT

The *High Intensity Office District* is generally bounded by East Lindsay Street on the north, Davie Street on the east, the mid-block line between Market Street and February One Place (from Greene to Davie) and Friendly Avenue on the south, and Eugene Street on the west. (See Figure 5).

The area east of Greene Street has been the focus of considerable office development and various public improvements during the past few years, and several new projects are currently underway. Development within this area has clearly established the Greensboro Center City as a regional office center. The area west of Greene Street is a logical expansion area to accommodate future office development, linking the area to the emerging Guilford County office campus west of Greene Street.

It is recommended that the High Intensity Office District be strengthened further and improved as the downtown's most intensely developed office and commercial area. Specific development objectives for this area include:

- o Permitted uses within this district should include offices, business services, hotels, restaurants, entertainment facilities, off-street parking and public open spaces.
- o This district should become the most intensely developed and highly active concentration of office and commercial activities within the Greensboro community. Zoning requirements and other development controls should promote multi-story, multi-use development.
- o While much of this district is primarily built up and established, several sub-areas could undergo more intensive development in the future, including the mid-block area on the west side of Elm Street between Friendly and Bellemeade; the south half of the block bounded by Friendly, Bellemeade, Elm and Davie; the triangular block bounded by Bellemeade, Lindsay and Elm; the blocks between Eugene and Greene Streets; and the surface parking lots along the frontages of both Greene and Davie Streets.

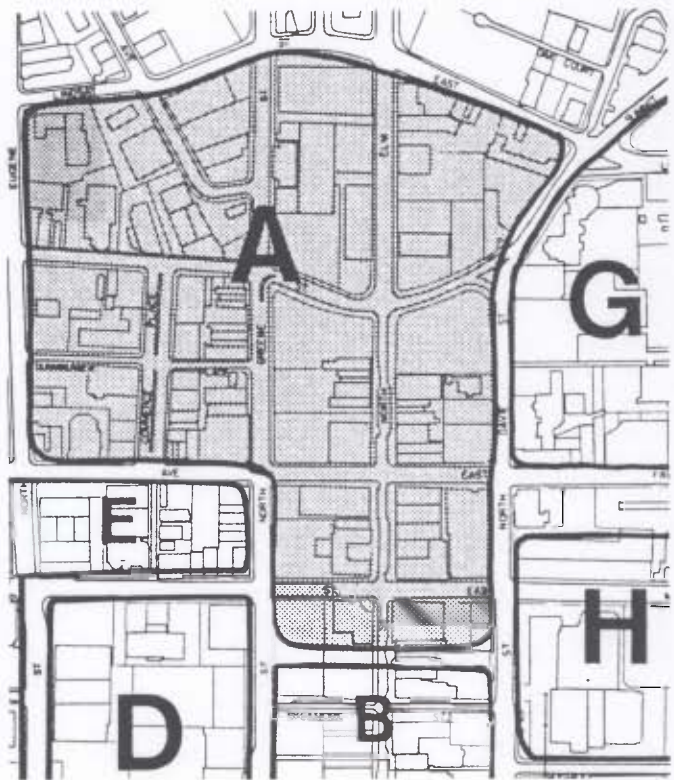


Figure 5
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT A

- o Even though this district should primarily be office in nature, it could provide an alternative location for a new enclosed retail "galleria" project, possibly in conjunction with new office or other mixed-use commercial development.
- o This district would also be appropriate for new hotel or conference center development. In general, these uses would be best located on the northern periphery of the district, with good vehicular accessibility and parking potential, perhaps in the triangular block bounded by Lindsay, Davie and Elm Streets. However, these new uses should also have pedestrian access and orientation to the Elm Street frontage.
- o Long-range expansion of this district should occur to the northwest, in the area generally bounded by Greene, Lindsay, Eugene and Bellemeade.
- o Existing older buildings with historic or architectural interest in the southern portion of this district should be rehabilitated or remodeled as part of an organized and concerted downtown revitalization effort.
- o Major deficient or vacant "non-contributing" buildings which cannot be rehabilitated or reused on an economic basis should be removed to allow for more appropriate new development.
- o This district should be the most visually prominent subarea within the downtown. Buildings within this district should dominate the downtown skyline. While multi-story development should be encouraged, the street level should also be distinctive, visually exciting and scaled to the pedestrian.

- o The most intensive development should be focused along the Elm Street frontage, to reinforce the visual and functional prominence of this major development corridor.
- o A central plaza or open space should be developed in this district to complement the surrounding high-rise development and to incorporate a setting of human scale and sensitivity compatible with and complementary to the Elm Street ground plane corridor. This plaza should be a gathering place for people on a day-to-day basis and as a place for special events.
- o This district should be reinforced as a pedestrian-oriented shopping and business environment. Even though several major traffic streets traverse or border this district, the design and orientation of buildings, landscaping, pedestrian amenities and streetscape components should promote pedestrian movement and help make the district a pleasant and exciting pedestrian environment.
- o Improvement of this district should promote the overall objective of re-establishing downtown as a 24-hour, multi-use center which offers an overall coordinated working, living, shopping and entertainment environment.
- o Parking should be provided along the eastern and western edges of the district with access off Eugene, Greene and Davie Streets, or selected east-west streets. Parking support for this district should also be provided in the mixed-use districts located immediately to the east and west.
- o To promote high intensity development, parking facilities within this district should be structures rather than surface lots. The street level of all parking structures within this district, particularly along Elm Street, should be used for shops, offices, services, display areas or other pedestrian-oriented uses.
- o The highest possible standards should be used to guide building and site design and construction within this district.

Within this district, private investments in new high quality office development should be encouraged and, where necessary, consideration should be given to reserving and acquiring sites for new office and mixed-use developments. In addition, near Lindsay and Elm Streets, a site of sufficient size should be reserved or assembled for a future hotel or hotel/conference center complex, across from the existing downtown Sheraton Hotel.

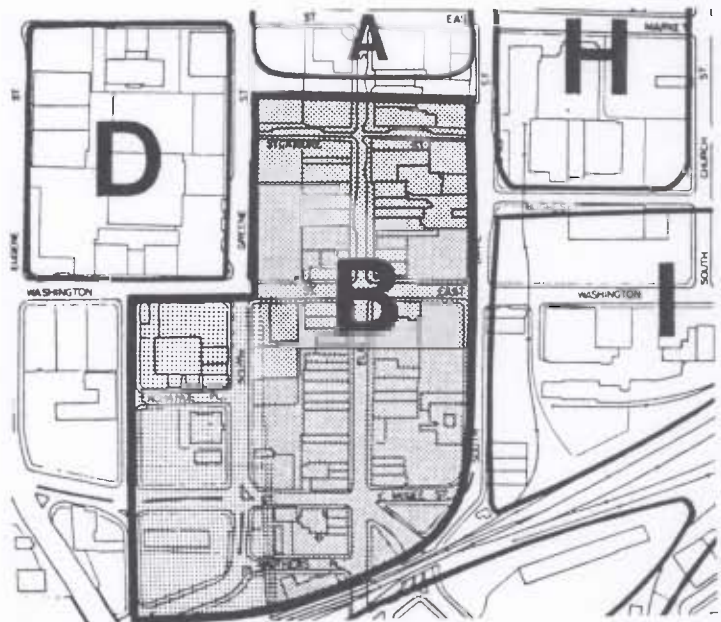
AREA B: RETAIL AND COMMERCIAL CORE

The *Retail and Commercial Core* is located in the geographic center of downtown, and is generally bounded by Davie Street, Greene Street, the railroad, and the northern frontage along February One Place. (See Figure 6). This district includes many of downtown's remaining retail activities, as well as the Carolina Theatre. Virtually all of this district falls within the Downtown Greensboro Historic District. This area should be improved as downtown's primary retail shopping area, consisting of existing historic buildings and sensitive new construction in an attractive and exciting pedestrian-oriented environment.

Specific objectives are summarized below.

- o Permitted uses within this district should include retail, offices, business services, restaurants, entertainment, off-street parking, and housing (above street level).

- o Retail uses should be strongly focused along the Elm Street frontage. To the extent possible, office buildings, public facilities and similar development should have retail or service uses on the ground floor along this frontage.
- o The existing storefront and adaptive reuse projects already completed along Elm Street should provide the focus for this district. Similar activities should be extended along the full length of Elm within this district.
- o A new enclosed retail "galleria" project, incorporating several older existing commercial buildings, should be considered in the northern portion of this district. Such a project might entail retaining storefronts and other facades, but also creating a multi-level interior shopping environment.
- o This district should be improved as a "theme" environment, building upon the attractive older buildings and unique historic quality of this portion of downtown. A special system of landscaping, lighting, signage and pedestrian amenities should be developed to reinforce this image.
- o This district should be a pedestrian-oriented environment. The design and scale of buildings, streetscape facilities and public improvements should all help promote pedestrian movement into and through this district, and to create a pleasant and exciting "people place."
- o While new infill development may be possible in certain locations, the rehabilitation of older buildings is preferable within this district. Special guidelines for colors, materials, signage, canopies and building entrances should be developed. Individual property owners should be encouraged to build upon the original character of their buildings rather than adding new fronts or other similar applications. Of special concern are the storefront levels, and the relationship of individual buildings to the street.



**Figure 6
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT B**

- o Improvement of this district should promote the overall objective of re-establishing downtown as a 24-hour, multi-use center which offers an overall coordinated working, living, shopping and entertainment environment.
- o Existing older buildings with historic or architectural interest should be rehabilitated or remodeled where possible. Several older buildings along Elm have already been rehabilitated. Of special concern are the existing Kress Building, with retail reuse potential, and the vacant Guilford and Southern Railway buildings, both of which have office reuse potential.
- o The Carolina Theatre is a key building in this district, the renovation of which will make a major contribution to an overall downtown revitalization strategy. Its renovation should be supported as an important part of this Center City Concept Plan.
- o Major deficient or vacant "non-contributing" buildings which cannot be rehabilitated or reused on an economic basis should be removed to allow for more appropriate new development.
- o The rear portions of older commercial buildings should be cleaned painted, repaired and otherwise improved. Many of these buildings are highly visible from surrounding streets and parking areas.
- o Parking should be provided along the eastern and western edges of the district with access off Greene and Davie, or selected east-west streets. Parking support for this district should also be provided in the mixed-use districts located immediately to the east and west.
- o To promote high intensity development, parking facilities within most of this district should be structures rather than surface lots. The street level of all parking structures within this district, particularly along Elm Street, should be used for shops, offices, services, display areas or other pedestrian-oriented uses.
- o Alleyways within this district should be cleaned up and improved. Surface repairs should be undertaken where necessary, particularly along alleys within the heart of downtown. While alleys should continue to serve service vehicles in the future, selected alleys could also be used as access routes to parking areas or as alternative pedestrian routes.
- o The highest possible standards should be used to guide building and site design and construction within this district.

Efforts to restore the retail base of the downtown should focus on this district. The proposed retail galleria will require that the City take a proactive position to evaluate the project's feasibility and to solicit and select a qualified developer. This project will require public financial participation and possibly the involvement of a local development corporation and local leaders.

Additionally, the feasibility of developing residential units in the upper floors of commercial buildings along Elm Street should be explored. While code requirements, particularly the need for sprinkler systems, may make residential conversion more costly in certain buildings, property owners should be encouraged to test the feasibility.

Finally, Guilford County now has control of the Guilford Building on Elm Street at Washington. The County should be encouraged to select a qualified purchaser to renovate the building for either residential or office uses. If necessary, incentives should be provided to ensure that the building is renovated to the highest possible standards.

AREA C: SPECIALTY COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

The *Specialty Commercial District* is located in the south-central portion of downtown, generally bounded by Lee Street on the south, the railroad on the north and west, and the frontage along the east side of Elm Street. (See Figure 7). This district, virtually all of which falls within the Downtown Greensboro Historic District, currently contains a number of small commercial establishments and several totally or partially vacant buildings. This district should be revitalized as a specialty shopping area in a historic, medium-intensity setting, strongly connected to the Retail Core to the north, and the residential area to the east.

Specific objectives are summarized below.

- o Permitted uses within its district should include retail, commercial services, restaurants, entertainment, offices, convenience commercial, and housing (above street level).
- o The existing storefront and adaptive reuse projects already completed along Elm Street should provide the focus for this district. Similar activities should be extended along the full length of Elm within this district.
- o While a range of uses may be permitted, this district should be oriented toward special one-of-a-kind shops, restaurants and similar activities. New uses should foster night-time activities.
- o This district should complement the Retail and Commercial Core, rather than detract from or compete with it. Its functional role should be clearly defined as a specialty district.
- o Improvement of this district should promote the overall objective of re-establishing downtown as a 24-hour, multi-use center which offers an overall coordinated working, living, shopping and entertainment environment.
- o Existing older buildings with historic or architectural interest should be rehabilitated or remodeled where possible. Several older buildings along Elm have already been rehabilitated.
- o Major deficient or vacant "non-contributing" buildings which cannot be rehabilitated or reused on an economic basis should be removed to allow for more appropriate new development.
- o This district should continue to be improved as an historic, turn-of-the-century "theme" environment, which would reinforce the unique character of this portion of the Center City. The rich inventory of historic buildings should be preserved and enhanced, with sensitive rehabilitation, facade improvement and reuse undertaken as required. All public and private improvements should complement and reinforce this special theme, including lighting, paving materials, landscaping, public and private signage, street furniture, building colors and materials, etc.

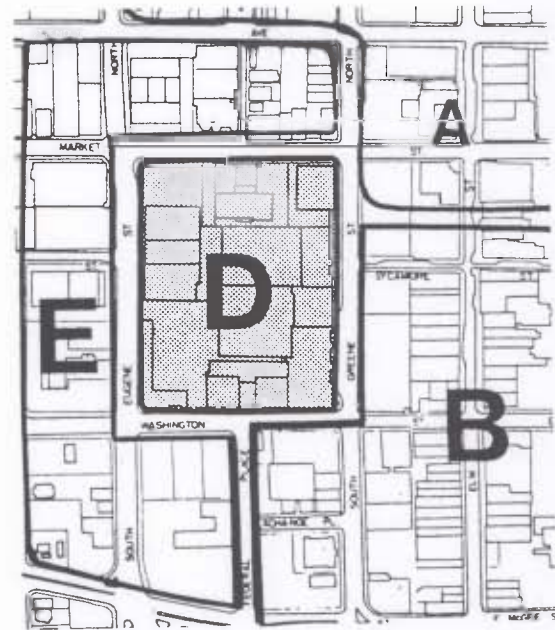


- o This district should be a pedestrian-oriented environment. The design and scale of buildings, streetscape facilities and public improvements should all help promote pedestrian movement into and through this district, and to create a pleasant and exciting "people place."
- o Generally at the intersection of Elm Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, a well-designed historic plaza and open space should be developed to serve as a focal point for the revitalization of Old Greensborough. This plaza and open space should serve as a setting for the architectural and historic preservation efforts of Old Greensborough, as well as become a source of community pride and identity. Its design should reflect the historic turn-of-the-century theme of the overall area. A plaza in this strategic location would also provide an attractive "gateway" into the downtown area from the south and southeast. In general, this plaza should be extensively landscaped, with a "soft" surface as opposed to "hard" paved surface, and become a setting for activities and events which are unique to the historic area. It might also include a gazebo, sculpture or other special architectural features. Additional recommendations regarding the plaza and surrounding area are presented on pages 51 to 53.
- o While new infill development may be possible in certain locations, the rehabilitation of older buildings is preferable within this district. Special guidelines for colors, materials, signage, canopies and building entrances should be developed. Individual property owners should be encouraged to build upon the original character of their buildings rather than adding new fronts or other similar applications. Of special concern are the storefront levels, and the relationship of individual buildings to the street.

- o The rear portions of older commercial buildings should be cleaned, painted, repaired and otherwise improved. Many of these buildings are highly visible from surrounding streets and parking areas.
- o While parking support for uses within this area could be provided in adjacent districts, most parking should be located within this district. Primary parking areas should be located behind the Elm Street frontages. The coordination and consolidation of parking areas should be encouraged, and property assemblage may be required for new parking development. Related alley improvements are also recommended. All parking lots should be paved, striped and adequately maintained. Parking lots should also be landscaped and screened where possible.
- o Alleyways within this district should be cleaned up and improved. Surface repairs should be undertaken where necessary, particularly along alleys within the heart of downtown. While alleys should continue to serve service vehicles in the future, selected alleys could also be used as access routes to parking areas or as alternative pedestrian routes.
- o This district also includes a large amount of unsightly and underutilized railroad property east of Elm Street which should be recaptured in the future. This area represents a major design and development opportunity for downtown Greensboro that could be reclaimed to accommodate a mix of uses complementary to the overall downtown environment, including, but not limited to, a new ground transportation center, a city "open air" marketplace, a new Amtrak station, and supporting pedestrian areas, landscaping and special amenities.

AREA D: GOVERNMENT CENTER DISTRICT

The Governmental Center District is located in the central portion of downtown, and encompasses the large block bounded by Market Street, Greene Street, Washington Street, and Eugene Street. (See Figure 8). This district is already fully developed, and includes city offices, the courthouse buildings, a bank, off-street parking, and downtown's largest public open-space area. It should be maintained and further enhanced as downtown's primary public service focal point, and be more strongly connected to other downtown districts.



**Figure 8
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT D**

Special objectives are summarized below.

- o Permitted uses within this district should include governmental offices and services, private offices, and public open space.
- o Pedestrian connections should be improved between this district and surrounding land-use areas. These connections should include February One Place and Market Streets to the east; Washington Street to the east and west; and Greene Street and Eugene Street to the north and south.
- o The existing public open space area should be utilized more extensively as the site of special events and celebrations, and be reinforced as the focal point for downtown pedestrian activities.
- o The area should be maintained as a landscaped campus setting, providing one of the most pleasant visual environments in the City of Greensboro.

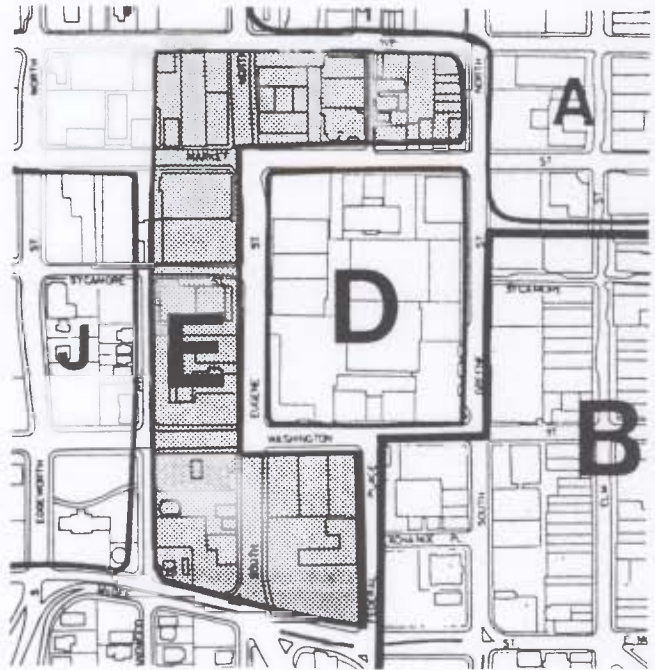
AREA E: OFFICE DISTRICT

The *Office District* is located in the west-central portion of downtown, and encompasses the blocks around the periphery of the Governmental Center. (See Figure 9). This district includes a number of important existing public and private office buildings, including Southern Bell, Independent Securities, the Federal Building, the County Law Enforcement Center and the Zenke Building, and other important uses. This district should be further intensified for public and private offices, providing a highly active frame for the Governmental Center.

Specific objectives are summarized below.

- o Permitted uses within this district should include public and private offices, institutions, business services, restaurants and off-street parking.
- o This district should become one of the most intensely developed and highly active concentrations of office and commercial activities within the downtown. Zoning requirements and other development controls should promote multi-story, multi-use development.
- o While this district is primarily built up and established, several subareas could undergo more intensive development in the future, including the south side of Washington between Eugene Street and Commerce Place; and scattered parcels in the block bounded by Market, Greene, Friendly and Commerce Place.
- o Development within this district should be focused toward the interior of the district, creating a strong visual "frame" for the Governmental Center. In addition, the development intensity along Washington Street should be increased, to reinforce this street as a major new pedestrian route and development corridor.
- o This district would be an appropriate location for governmental center expansion, including new law enforcement facilities. However, to the extent possible, active pedestrian-oriented uses should be located along key street frontages, particularly Washington Street.

**Figure 9
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT E**



- o This district includes several short street segments which offer special design opportunities for dramatic views and vistas, including Commerce Place, February One Place, Federal Place and Exchange Place. These visual corridors should be reinforced through streetscape improvements, the location and orientation of new buildings, and the placement of new visual focal points and open space areas.
- o Existing older buildings with historic or architectural interest in this district should be rehabilitated or remodeled as part of an organized and concerted downtown revitalization effort.
- o Major deficient or vacant "non-contributing" buildings which cannot be rehabilitated or reused on an economic basis should be removed to allow for more appropriate new development.
- o This district should be one of the most visually prominent subarea within the downtown. Along with the High-Intensity Office District, buildings within this district should dominate the downtown skyline. While multi-story development should be encouraged, the street level should also be distinctive, visually exciting and scaled to the pedestrian.
- o This district will likely continue to contain numerous off-street surface parking lots in the future. All parking lots should be paved, striped and adequately maintained. Parking lots should also be landscaped and screened where possible. More widespread use of parking structures should be considered in the future, to create additional land area for new building development. The possible joint use of parking facilities should be explored.
- o The highest possible standards should be used to guide building and site design and construction within this district.

AREA F: COUNTY GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The *County Government Development District* is generally bounded by Battleground Avenue on the north, Eugene Street on the east, Friendly Avenue on the south, and Edgeworth Street on the west, including the block bounded by Bellemeade, North Spring, Lindsay and Edgeworth. (See Figure 10).

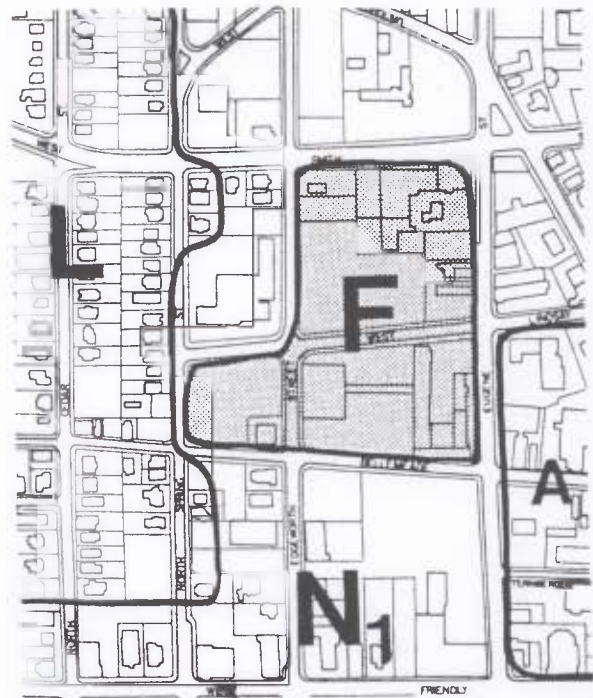
Guilford County already owns and uses significant portions of this area. The central block (Lindsay Street on the north, North Edgewater on the west, Bellemeade Street on the south, and Eugene Street on the east) contains the main offices of the Guilford County Social Services Department, and the principal operations of the Guilford County Mental Health Program. Parking lots and small office buildings surround the central block, and other County offices are in adjoining older buildings. All of the County uses are fitted into spaces originally intended for other uses. Additionally, there are other State and federal buildings in the immediate environment serving related functions.

Guilford County is in need of expansion space to accommodate its public health and mental health facilities. It is recommended that this area be strengthened and improved to serve as a downtown campus for Guilford County social service, public health, mental health, and related supporting facilities. The redevelopment of this area would provide a logical transition between the more intensely developed office, commercial and governmental uses to the east and south and the residential and less intensely developed areas to the west and the north.

Specific objectives are summarized below.

- o Permitted uses within this district should include county government offices and supporting parking and open space areas.
- o The development intensity should be of lower profile, with buildings not exceeding three stories in height, organized into a campus environment with generous set-backs and open spaces.

Figure 10
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT F



- o Parking should be provided in peripheral locations on the north, west and south sides. Structure parking, where needed, should provide above grade connections into principal buildings. Parking to be provided east of Eugene Street should be surface parking in the short term, keeping options open for shared structure parking with private office buildings to the east in the High Intensity Office District.
- o Development of the area should emphasize pedestrian movement around buildings, around the perimeter of the blocks, to parking areas, and to other adjoining land-use districts.
- o Development of a centralized pedestrian gathering area or courtyard should be encouraged to serve as a focal point of the campus, give the area its own identity, and serve as a connecting point for pedestrian linkages within the district and between other districts.
- o Development within this district should accommodate the adaptive reuse of the old Sears (Wrangler) Building for county office functions.

AREA G: CULTURAL CENTER DISTRICT

The *Cultural Center District* is located in the northeast portion of downtown, and is generally bounded by Summit Avenue, North Church Street, Friendly Avenue, and Davie Street. (See Figure 11). This district contains the Historical Museum, the Cultural Arts Center, the YWCA, and several commercial uses. It will also become the location of a new Central Library facility. While this district is already essentially developed, it should be further enhanced as a major public focal point within the downtown, providing an east-side equivalent to the Governmental Center. Some intensification should also occur.

Specific objectives are summarized below.

- o Permitted uses within this district should include public services and facilities, institutions, cultural facilities, entertainment and public open space.
- o The existing cultural facilities should be used as focal points for this new district, including the Museum, the YWCA and the Arts Center, all of which have recently undergone improvement or expansion.
- o This district has been selected as the location for a new Central Library facility, which would be situated along the west side of Church Street on the present Gate City Motors property. This new building and its site improvements should be carefully designed to become a major new public focal point within Center City, and be integrated with other facilities in the Cultural Center District.
- o This entire district should eventually be devoted to similar activities. While the area is essentially developed, remaining commercial properties along the Church Street frontage should be reused for cultural or institutional activities in the future.

Figure 11
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT G



- o This district should be improved as a downtown "campus-type" environment. Individual buildings should be designed as separate but related entities, and be carefully located on well-landscaped sites. The overall district should be characterized by a variety of attractive and distinctive landscaped open space areas.
- o This district should be a pedestrian-oriented environment. The design and scale of buildings, streetscape facilities and public improvements should all help promote pedestrian movement into and through this district, and create a pleasant and attractive setting for institutional uses.
- o Pedestrian connections should be improved between this district and surrounding areas. In particular, a new mid-block pedestrianway located between Friendly and Bellemeade, should link the Cultural Center District to the High-Intensity Office District to the west.
- o The general environmental setting for the Cultural Center should be improved. In addition to improvements within the district, peripheral development along Friendly, Church and Summit should be upgraded, including building improvements, screening and buffering, landscaping and lighting.
- o Improvement of this district should promote the objective of re-establishing downtown as a seven-days a week, 24-hour, multi-use center which offers an overall coordinated working, living, shopping and entertainment environment.

- o The Elm Street and Friendly/Market corridors provide strong pedestrian connections to the downtown from the north, south, east and west directions, making the Cultural Center District accessible to people on foot from surrounding neighborhoods. Additional pedestrian accessibility from surrounding neighborhoods is achieved on Summit and Lindsay Streets.

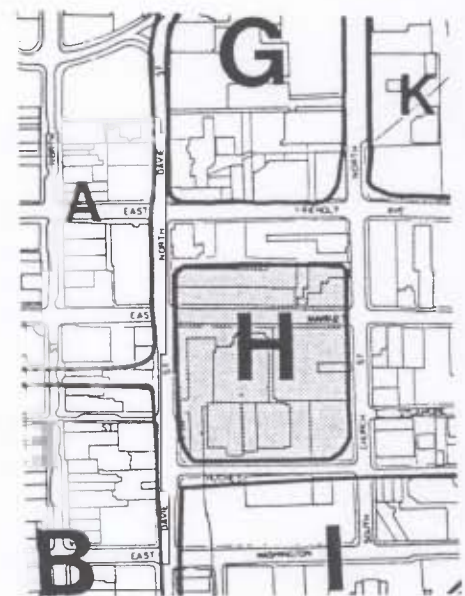
AREA H: SECONDARY COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

The *Secondary Commercial District* is located in the eastern portion of downtown, and includes the block bounded by Friendly Avenue, Church Street, Hughes Street, and Davie Street, as well as the south half of the block bounded by Market, Church, Friendly Avenue, and Davie Street. (See Figure 12). The principal existing use within this district is the Greensboro News and Record. While this district is essentially developed, overall environmental improvements and intensification should be undertaken, and the newspaper facility enhanced as a major downtown focal point.

Specific objectives are listed below.

- o Permitted uses within this district should include commercial services, secondary retail, convenience commercial, and off-street parking. Industrial uses might also be acceptable, provided they are compatible with the overall character of the district.
- o While this district is essentially developed, the north side of Market Street could be intensified in the future, particularly the northwest corner of Market and Church.
- o The Greensboro News and Record site should be more extensively landscaped, screened and buffered. Since the newspaper building terminates views along February One Place -- one of downtown's most dramatic visual corridors -- a new open space and vertical design feature should be considered in front of this building.
- o This district will likely continue to contain numerous off-street surface parking lots in the future. All parking lots should be paved, striped and adequately maintained. Parking lots should also be landscaped and screened where possible.

**Figure 12
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT H**



- o In addition to the provision of parking to serve uses within the district, this area could also provide parking support for other nearby activity centers. In particular, this district would be suitable for long-term employee parking to serve retail and office development located to the west.

AREA I: SERVICE DISTRICT

The *Service District* is located in the east-central portion of downtown, generally bounded by Hughes Street, Davie Street, Lyndon Street, and the railroad. (See Figure 13). This district includes the new Human Services Center and the Depot, as well as a range of low-intensity commercial and industrial uses. This district should undergo major intensification as a new eastern anchor for the downtown, providing sites for public and private services focused along the Washington Street corridor.

Specific objectives are summarized below.

- o Permitted uses within this district should include commercial services, housing, public services, offices, secondary retail, convenience commercial, and off-street parking. Industrial uses might also be acceptable, provided they are compatible with the overall character of the district.
- o This area should undergo extensive redevelopment and intensification to create a new eastern anchor for the downtown. Several locations are currently occupied by low-intensity development: the block bounded by Hughes, Church, Washington and Davie Streets; the east half of the block bounded by Church, Hughes, Lyndon and Washington Streets; and the eastern frontage along Davie Street.

**Figure 13
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT I**



- o New development should be focused along the Washington Street frontage, which should be improved as a major new east-west identity street and pedestrian route. A new design feature and visual focal point should be located near the railroad underpass to visually terminate this important new route.
- o The new Human Services Center should become an important focus for this district, and help define its new functional role and visual identity. This new facility includes a combination of adaptive reuse and new construction, an approach which could be used elsewhere in the district.
- o The historic Depot should be retained and rehabilitated. While a community use is preferred, a range of uses could be acceptable, including a new downtown transportation center, offices, and other public and informational services.
- o This district should be a pedestrian-oriented environment. The design and scale of buildings, streetscape facilities and public improvements should all help promote pedestrian movement into and through this district, and to create a pleasant environment.
- o The image and appearance of the railroad right-of-way should be improved. New building development and landscaping should help screen much of the embankment from views along Washington and Davie Streets. New landscaping should be undertaken along the railroad to "soften" the appearance of that portion of the embankment which continues to be visible. Special techniques should be used to lighten and otherwise improve the appearance of underpasses and other structural components, including painting, special signage and perhaps attractive new murals in selected locations.
- o This district will likely continue to contain numerous off-street surface parking lots in the future. All parking lots should be paved, striped and adequately maintained. Parking lots should also be landscaped and screened where possible. The joint use of parking facilities should be explored.
- o In addition to the provision of parking to serve uses within the district, this area could also provide parking support for other nearby activity centers. In particular, this district would be suitable for long-term employee parking to serve retail development located to the west.

A wide range of opportunities exists to help establish the character and strength of this district. This includes strengthening the market attraction of the old train depot as a community meeting, banquet and special events center. Over time, improvements should be made to this building to improve its operational efficiency and attractiveness, thus strengthening even further its marketability and utilization. The depot may serve a multi-purpose role and, in addition to operating as a community meeting, banquet and special events center, it may be combined with another use, such as a ground transportation center, permanent restaurant facility, etc. If activities within and around the depot intensify significantly, additional land for parking and other support services will likely be required.

Additionally, this area, when combined with Area C, *Specialty Commercial District*, represents an opportunity for reclaiming underdeveloped and underutilized rail trackage areas and creating a major new mixed-use development project comprised of a city marketplace, ground transportation center, new Amtrak station, and other supporting uses, unified in an

overall design theme and supported by pedestrian areas, landscaping, and special amenities. Track consolidation should be explored with the Southern Railway to determine future rail use and right-of-way needs and development opportunities of surplus lands.

Finally, if rail consolidation becomes a reality, consideration should be given to extending McGee Street to the upper level of the Depot area, which would improve access to this district and provide for additional off-street parking. Rail consolidation, coupled with an improved access road, would help to open this area up as a new development district in the downtown.

AREA J: INSTITUTIONAL DISTRICT

The *Institutional District* is located on the western edge of downtown, and is generally bounded by McGee Street, Blandwood Avenue, Market Street, and the railroad on the west. (See Figure 14). This district includes Weaver Center, Guilford Technical Community College, Rutledge College and Blandwood Mansion. This district should be intensified as a coordinated institutional area, containing new and expanded uses on a "campus-like" setting, and providing an attractive transition between downtown commercial areas and adjacent neighborhoods.

Specific objectives area summarized below.

- o Permitted uses within this district should include schools, churches and other institutions; public offices and services; housing; public open space; and off-street parking.
- o The existing institutions should be used as focal points for this new districts. The two existing colleges should be encouraged to expand within the area; other institutions located elsewhere within and around the City should be encouraged to locate within this area.

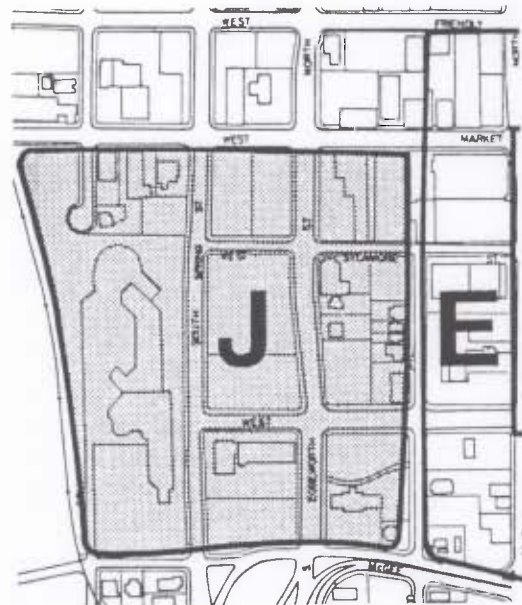


Figure 14
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT J

- o The development intensity of this district should be increased. Much of the district is currently used for surface parking, and some of this may be available for new building development. In particular, it would be desirable to locate new buildings along the Washington Street frontage, which should be improved as a major new east-west identity street and pedestrian route.
- o This district includes several short street segments which offer significant design opportunities for special views and vistas, including Blandwood Avenue and West Sycamore Street. The district should be designed to take advantage of these special opportunities.
- o This district should be a pedestrian-oriented environment. The design and scale of buildings, streetscape facilities and public improvements should all help promote pedestrian movement into and through this district, and create a pleasant and attractive setting for housing and institutional uses.
- o This district should be improved as a downtown "campus-type" environment. Individual buildings should be designed as separate but related entities, and be carefully located on well-landscaped sites. The overall district should be characterized by a variety of attractive and distinctive landscaped open space areas.
- o This district would be a suitable location for new in-town housing development. In particular, the block bounded by Sycamore Street, Blandwood, Washington and Edgeworth would be appropriate for additional housing.
- o Major environmental improvements should be undertaken in this district to create a distinctive entranceway for the downtown and to provide an attractive transition between the commercial area and the adjoining neighborhoods. Improvements should include new parkway trees, site landscaping, building rehabilitation, and careful control of new construction.
- o The image and appearance of the railroad right-of-way should be improved. New building development and landscaping should help screen much of the rail corridor from views along major streets. New landscaping should also be undertaken to "soften" the appearance of that portion of the railroad which continues to be visible.
- o Improvement of this district should promote the overall objective of re-establishing downtown as a 24-hour, multi-use center which offers an overall coordinated working, living, shopping and entertainment environment.
- o This district will likely continue to contain numerous off-street surface parking lots in the future. All parking lots should be paved, striped and adequately maintained. Parking lots should also be landscaped and screened where possible. The use of parking structures should be considered in the future, to create additional land area for new building development. The joint use of parking facilities should be explored.
- o In addition to the provision of parking to serve uses within the district, this area could also provide parking support for other nearby activity centers. In particular, this district would be suitable for long-term employee parking to serve retail and office development located to the east.

AREA K: AUTO-ORIENTED COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

The *Auto-Oriented Commercial District* is located in the northeast corner of the downtown, generally bounded by Summit Avenue, Edward Murrow Boulevard, Friendly Avenue, and Church Street. (See Figure 15). This district contains several auto sales and service facilities, including Lincoln-Mercury, Buick, Chrysler, Peugeot, and Volvo Trucks. This district should be improved and consolidated as a coordinated and identifiable auto service center, providing sites for new auto-oriented uses and activities.

Specific objectives are summarized below.

- o Permitted uses within this district should include auto-oriented sales and services, offices, related activities, and off-street parking.
- o Existing auto-oriented uses should be allowed to expand, and similar uses located elsewhere in the downtown -- as well as the surrounding area -- should be encouraged to locate in this district. The objectives should be to promote cumulative attraction and multi-purpose shopping trips within this subarea.
- o To the extent possible, individual buildings and businesses should be grouped and clustered, rather than be developed as isolated entities. The consolidation of parking areas, access points, signage, etc., should be encouraged.
- o Major environmental improvements should be undertaken in this district to create a distinctive entranceway for the downtown and to provide an attractive transition between the commercial area and neighborhoods to the east. Improvements should include new parkway trees, site landscaping, building rehabilitation, and careful control of new construction.



Figure 15
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT K

- o The image and appearance of the railroad right-of-way should be improved. New building development and landscaping should help screen much of the rail corridor from views along major streets. New landscaping should also be undertaken along the berm to "soften" the appearance of that portion of the railroad which continues to be visible. Special techniques should be used to lighten and otherwise improve the appearance of underpasses and other structural components, including painting, special signage and perhaps attractive new murals in selected locations.
- o This district will continue to contain numerous off-street surface parking lots in the future. All parking lots should be paved, striped and adequately maintained. Parking lots should also be landscaped and screened where possible.
- o In addition to the provision of parking to serve uses within the district, this area could also provide parking support for other nearby activity centers. In particular, this district would be suitable for long-term employee parking to serve office and commercial development located to the west.

AREA L: NORTHWEST RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

The *Northwest Residential District* is generally bounded by Battleground Avenue, North Spring Street, West Friendly Avenue, and Prescott Street, excluding the frontages along Battleground and Market. (See Figure 16). For the most part, this district consists of older residential buildings, many of which are showing signs of deterioration.

This older residential enclave has traditionally functioned separate and apart from the remainder of downtown. This area is also physically separated from other residential areas by the railroad and major arterial streets. Accordingly, this area does have a greater susceptibility to change and conversion, and is more vulnerable to the pressures and impacts of the adjacent commercial activities. The area currently includes a mix of single-family, two-family and multi-family uses, offices, and parking lots. Many of the residential units are in older, poorly maintained buildings. Specific objectives are summarized below.

- o This district should be maintained as a close-in residential area. It should be the focus for major housing rehabilitation efforts and also new infill housing development.
- o Permitted uses within this district should include single-family housing, multi-family housing, parks and open space areas, and institutional uses.
- o Existing single-family homes within this district should be allowed to remain. Homes in poor condition should be rehabilitated and remodeled as required.
- o In general, commercial or office uses should not be encouraged within this district. Over time, existing commercial uses should be phased out in favor of new housing construction. New commercial development or additional conversions should not be permitted in this district. (1)

(1) If the primary objective is to maintain this enclave as a residential area, future commercial development is not appropriate. Whereas some downtown districts might function well as mixed-use areas, continued non-residential development in this particular district would adversely affect neighborhood quality.

- o The relationship of this area to the residential areas to the west should be strengthened. This could be accomplished by improving the pedestrian connection from Bellemeade to the neighborhood to the west across the rail tracks, tying to Hillside in the Fairmont-Guilford area, or improving Guilford as a pedestrian connection.
- o Over time, vacant and underutilized lands and substandard buildings should be assembled for new, close-in medium-density housing.
- o Rehabilitation and/or land assembly efforts in this area should be supported with public improvements as necessary.
- o Significant overall environmental improvements should be undertaken to improve the overall image of this district, including landscaping and public rights-of-way improvements. Adequate screening and buffering should be provided between this district and adjacent commercial areas.
- o Related environmental improvements should also be undertaken in surrounding mixed-use areas, particularly along the west side of Prescott Street. Conditions in these mixed-use areas should not be allowed to adversely affect this residential enclave.
- o Attractive existing characteristics within this district should be preserved and enhanced, including the distinctive "green canopy" and the architectural diversity of the area.

Figure 16
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT L



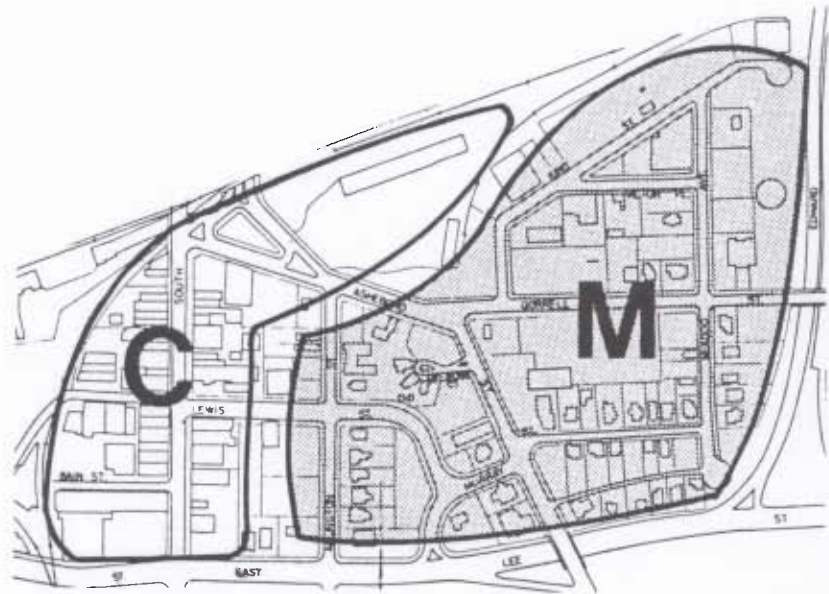
AREA M: SOUTHEAST RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

The *Southeast Residential District* is generally bounded by Edward Murrow Boulevard, Lee Street, Arlington Street, and the railroad. (See Figure 17). This area is currently characterized by advanced building deterioration, scattered vacant buildings and parcels, land-use conflicts, underutilization and other blighted conditions.

Specific objectives are summarized below.

- o This district should be maintained and upgraded as a close-in residential area. It should be the focus for major housing rehabilitation efforts and also new infill housing development.
- o This district has special significance as a gateway to the Center City, and as an entrance to the Asheboro Neighborhood. Major public initiatives, such as a local renewal project, should be considered to upgrade the condition and image of this area.
- o Over time, vacant and underutilized lands and substandard buildings should be assembled for new, close-in medium density housing. Several potential housing development sites have been identified by the City along and near Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive.
- o Where possible, internal local streets could be closed and blocks consolidated to provide for coordinated new housing development.

Figure 17
DEVELOPMENT
DISTRICT M



- o The existing industrial uses north of Gorrell Street should either undergo major building and site improvement, or eventually be replaced with new housing development. If this subarea is maintained for industrial uses, it should be extensively screened and buffered from the adjoining residential area.
- o Rehabilitation and/or land assembly efforts in this area should be support with public improvements as necessary.
- o Significant overall environmental improvements should be undertaken to improve the overall image of this district, including landscaping and public rights-of-way improvements. Adequate screening and buffering should be provided between this district and adjacent commercial areas.
- o Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive (formerly Asheboro Street) should be reconstructed as an attractively landscaped boulevard which would provide an important entranceway to the Center City. This should include redevelopment of adjacent parcels, an improved roadway alignment, and special streetscape treatment.
- o The intersection of Gorrell and Arlington Streets should be improved as a new gateway for the downtown. Special landscaping, signage and lighting should be employed to improve this intersection. This special streetscape treatment along Gorrell Street should be extended to the Bennett College area to the east to strengthen the pedestrian connection between these two areas.
- o Industrial expansion in this area should be discouraged. Over time, the relocation of these industrial uses to more appropriate locations in the City should be accommodated. Existing industrial uses should be screened with landscaping and appropriate and acceptable fencing. Industrially-oriented parking and storage should be provided on-site in screened settings.

AREAS N: MIXED-USE DISTRICTS

Much of the peripheral portion of the Center City study area is indicated in the Concept Plan as a "mixed-use area." These areas are currently characterized by a wide range of land-uses, including lower-intensity offices, secondary retail, commercial services, industrial uses, auto-oriented uses, and extensive surface parking.

Three separate, but similar mixed-use districts are indicated in the Concept Plan: 1) the southwest corner of the study area; 2) the east-central portion of the study area; and 3) the northern portion of the study area. (See Figure 18).

The Concept Plan includes general area-wide recommendations which should be undertaken in all mixed-use areas, and special recommendations and opportunities for each of the three separate subareas.

Area-wide Improvements

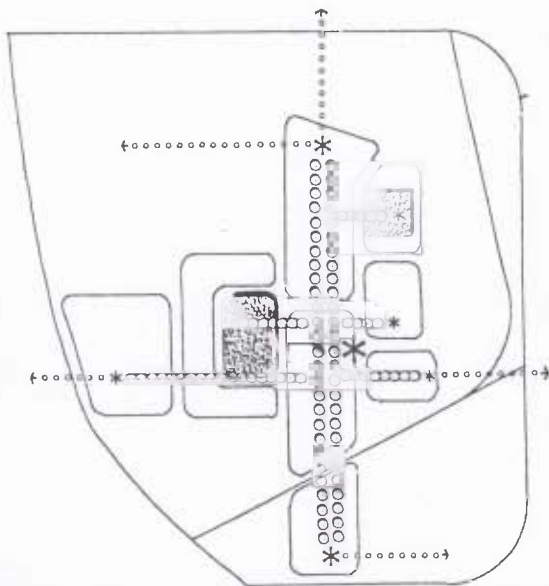
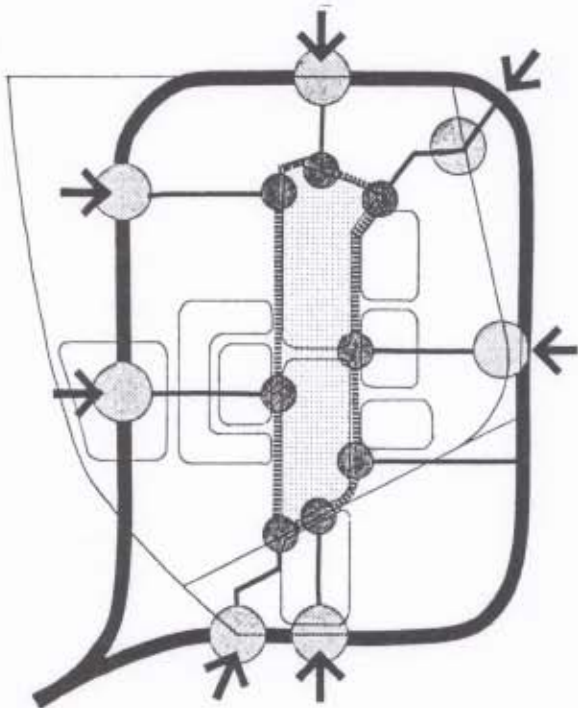
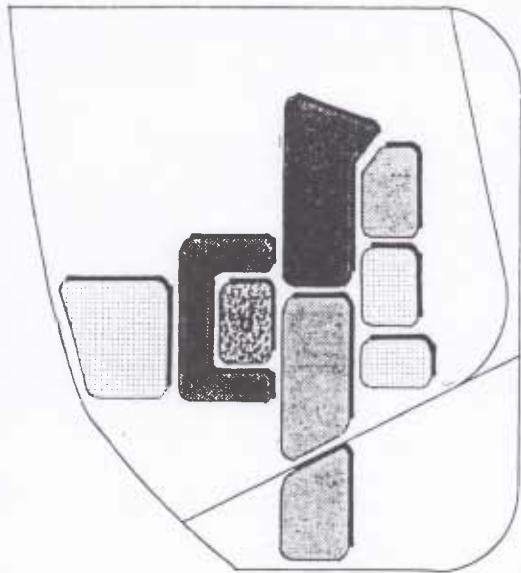
- o Permitted uses within the mixed-use districts should include offices, businesses and personal services, auto-oriented services, off-street parking, and institutional uses. Selected subareas would also be appropriate for housing.



Figure 18
DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT N

- o Existing older buildings with historic or architectural interest should be rehabilitated or remodeled as part of an organized and concerted downtown revitalization effort.
- o Major deficient or vacant buildings with little historic interest which cannot be rehabilitated or reused on an economic basis should be removed to allow for more appropriate new development.
- o Where possible, functional groupings of similar or supporting land-uses should be encouraged within the mixed-use area. For example, small clusters of offices exist in several locations, and these should be reinforced and extended.
- o Land-use conflicts should be eliminated. In general, scattered and isolated residential properties are not appropriate in the mixed-use districts. However, clusters of new and/or existing housing could be appropriate, provided they are large enough to create an overall "residential environment."
- o Area-wide environmental improvements should be undertaken in the mixed-use areas, including parking lot surface and screening improvements; building rehabilitation; signage improvements; site landscaping; and sidewalk and street surface improvements. Since the mixed-use districts occupy peripheral locations, they are highly visible from downtown approach routes and entranceway areas. Environmental conditions within the mixed-use districts should not detract from the overall image and appearance of the Center City area.
- o In many ways, the mixed-use districts should be viewed as support areas for the higher-intensity districts within the central portion of downtown. They should provide much of the off-street parking needed to serve high-intensity districts. They should also provide expansion space for the other districts, if this becomes needed in the future.

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3

refined plan & development strategy

Center City Development Plan
Greensboro, North Carolina

REFINED PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Center City Concept Plan establishes a framework to guide future public and private investments in the downtown. Achieving the adopted goals and objectives for the Center City, however, will depend upon the public and private actions to be taken, their timing and sequence, and how they come together to form an integrated and realistic strategy.

Actions that municipalities may undertake to stimulate renewed investment and growth in downtown areas fall into several broad categories. These include:

- o **Provision of public improvements and supporting facilities.** This includes basic infrastructure improvements, such as streets, storm and sanitary sewer lines, water mains, curbs and gutters, sidewalks, lighting, etc. This also includes surface and structure parking, streetscape improvements, landscaping, and the provision of public open spaces, plazas, and pedestrianways.
- o **Development of public buildings.** City municipal centers, fire stations, police, public safety facilities, libraries, convention and conference centers, transportation centers, and other municipal buildings are often used to aid in and stimulate the revitalization of downtown areas. These are often complemented by new federal, state and county buildings, which also add renewed strength to the downtown.
- o **Land assembly.** In addition to assembling land for public improvements and public buildings, municipalities may assemble land for purposes of redevelopment if it is within designated redevelopment project areas as set forth in State laws. The reuse of assembled property may be for either private or public purposes.
- o **Provision of incentives.** This may include, in addition to the incentives provided through the installation of public improvements, supporting facilities and public buildings, the provision of financial assistance to prospective developers to ensure the financial feasibility of their developments. The effect would be to lower the occupancy costs to the developer (and tenants) to the point of ensuring a reasonable rate of return on investment as well as providing sufficient advantage to encourage development in desired locations. This could take the form of tax abatements, writing down the cost of land, or providing direct public "gap" financing as part of a public/private participation plan.
- o **Streamlined permit and review process.** An important part of a redevelopment program is to ensure that the permit and review process is administered efficiently so that, from the developer's or investor's perspective, there is certainty with respect to the time required, the fees and other costs to be incurred, and the requirements to be imposed. Inordinate delays, changing guidelines and excessive impact or linkage fees tend to frustrate the process and discourage investment in new development.

- o **Marketing and promotion.** One of the least understood components of a revitalization strategy is marketing and promotion. Based on an agreed-upon concept plan and development strategy, the municipality's continued commitment to the downtown must be demonstrated through its willingness to market the downtown and specific sites in the downtown. The Greensboro area should be encouraged to invest in Greensboro's downtown. Moreover, residents of the city and region should be encouraged to use the downtown for shopping, living, entertainment and business and government services. And finally, assembled sites should be marketed to specific users. Marketing and promotional efforts are typically undertaken in conjunction with other agencies, such as the Chamber of Commerce, convention and tourism organizations, etc. Promotional activities also include festivals, parades and special events held in the downtown.
- o **Provision of safety and security.** Downtowns must be safe and secure for shoppers, visitors, residents and employees. Maintaining an effective safety and security program is essential to successful revitalization. Moreover, planning and design concepts should consider safety and security factors.

To be sure, there are other supporting actions to be taken that do not fit into the above broad categories. Principal among these is the administrative and management framework established to plan and create a redevelopment plan and strategy. Most successful downtown revitalization projects are those which not only have the support of both the public and private sectors, but also have in place public/private partnership organizations to either lead or assist in the implementation program.

DOWNTOWN PROJECTS AND ACTIONS

An important first step in building that partnership is to achieve consensus on a range of projects to be undertaken. These projects effectively would represent an initial program of public and private actions designed to stimulate private investment in new development and in the rehabilitation, renovation and adaptive reuse of existing buildings. With sufficient "critical mass," the private marketplace should then take over if the program is properly marketed and promoted. It must be remembered that the excitement of downtown revitalization comes not from the physical plan itself, but from the anticipation of the improvements and developments which are possible, and the kind of new environment which will be created.

A number of these action projects are already underway or imminent, including the construction of numerous office buildings, the restoration of the Carolina Theatre, development of the arts and cultural center, and the installation of the Elm Street pedestrianway improvements. Additionally, Guilford County is proceeding with plans for the development of a downtown social service and health campus, and is in preliminary negotiations with a private developer for the adaptive reuse of the Guilford Building. And finally, the City of Greensboro is evaluating its long-range capital improvements program to complete various public improvements proposed in this plan, including several recommended pedestrianway, landscape and open space projects.

Expansion of the central library in the downtown is also anticipated, complimenting the environment of the many nearby new office buildings. And special study groups have been organized to focus on the feasibility and desirability of specific high visibility projects recommended in this plan, including the reuse of the old train station on East Washington Street, a proposed retail galleria on Elm Street, and a business/educational conference center proximate to the Sheraton Hotel. Completing this agenda of action projects is a range of recommended private initiatives, including continued emphasis on historic and architec-

tural preservation (particularly in historic Old Greensborough), conversion of second and third level space in older buildings along Elm Street to residential and office uses, and coordinated new office and residential developments on key underutilized sites in the downtown.

Two additional projects are proposed to bring dramatic change in the image and character of the Greensboro Center City. These are high-visibility projects intended to enhance significantly the quality of the physical environment, strengthen community pride, and establish downtown Greensboro as the pre-eminent center of business, finance, culture, entertainment, and face-to-face communication in the entire region. These projects include (a) development of a central plaza, or open space, in the emerging office core, and (b) mixed-use redevelopment in the old train station area.

These projects collectively comprise a five- to ten-year action program for revitalizing downtown Greensboro. (See Figure 19). The project recommendations are focused on helping the City achieve the adopted goals and objectives for the Center City, described in Section I of this report. They are described in more detail below.

MAJOR PROJECTS ALREADY UNDERWAY

The following major projects are already underway:

1. **Elm Street Streetscape Project**

This important project represents renewed confidence in the downtown and is a clear statement of belief that the Elm Street corridor can be revitalized for retail, service, entertainment, restaurant, and supporting uses. This project should not be considered as a "stand alone" effort, but instead as an integral part of an overall, long-term program to revitalize the downtown.

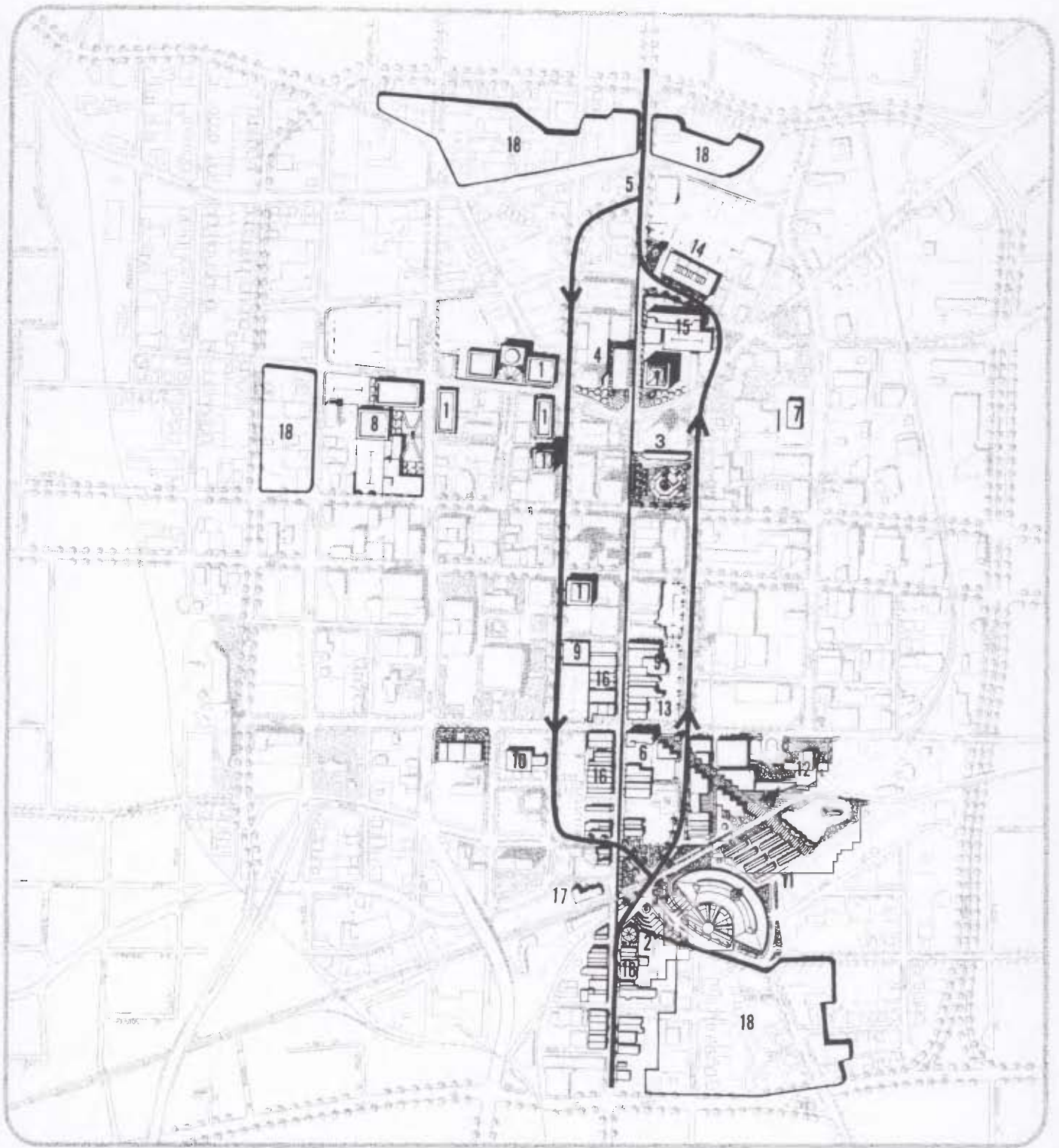
2. **Carolina Theatre**

Restoring the Carolina Theatre is an important part of the downtown revitalization strategy. However, it will be difficult to succeed as a "stand alone" improvement in the downtown. Restaurants, shopping, conference facilities, and other essential facilities are necessary uses in the downtown which can enhance the Theatre's marketability and enjoyment. The Carolina Theatre could become the focal point for a new downtown "theatre district" offering an exciting array of entertainment services. The goal should be to establish the downtown as a destination center for entertainment, cultural facilities, and dining and shopping. Thus, the uses are interrelated and become supportive of one another.

The Arts Council should be encouraged to continue in its efforts to restore the Carolina Theatre and return it to productive use. Similarly, the City should ensure that supporting activities are provided and encouraged.

3. **Central Library.**

The need for a new central library facility has been identified. Several alternative locations for the new library were identified and evaluated as a part of the Center City planning process, including expansion of the library's present facility at the intersection of Greene and Friendly. However, a site for the new library has recently been selected along the west side of Church Street, within the Cultural Center district. This new facility should be care-



ACTION PROJECTS

Figure 19

- | | | | |
|---|--|----|--|
| 1 | Potential Office Site | 10 | Carolina Theatre Restoration |
| 2 | Old Greensborough Plaza | 11 | Rail Consolidation & Farmers Market |
| 3 | O.Henry Plaza | 12 | Reuse of Old Train Station |
| 4 | Urban Arcade | 13 | Parking Lot Consolidation |
| 5 | Elm Street Connections to Davie/Greene | 14 | Conference Center |
| 6 | Adaptive Resue of Guilford Building | 15 | Potential Hotel Site |
| 7 | Central Library | 16 | Residential Reuse of Upper Stories along Elm |
| 8 | Guilford County Health Campus | 17 | Reuse of Southern Railway Building |
| 9 | Retail Galleria | 18 | Potential Housing Site |

CENTER CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Trkla, Pettigrew, Allen & Payne · Gieve Newman Anderson · Gorova/Stade Associates · Metro Economics



fully designed to become a major new public-use focal point within Center City, and reinforce and complement the emerging image and identity of the Cultural Center District.

4. Ground Transportation Center

A good ground transportation center (GTC) needs good vehicular accessibility and should be able to accommodate efficiently bus turnaround and stacking needs on site. GTC's also require sufficient on-site parking. Oftentimes, ground transportation centers are developed in conjunction with other uses or are incorporated into existing buildings with other established uses.

A GTC can make an important contribution to the downtown by improving bus transfer operations, intermodal connections, and providing airport shuttle service. The intermodal connections are typically taxi/bus but could also include connections with Amtrak rail service. The City has recently retained a consultant to test the feasibility of a GTC in the Center City. If proven feasible, consideration should be given to developing the GTC in the underutilized rail lands south of the train station, as part of a larger redevelopment project undertaking, or in the East Washington Street area, perhaps even in conjunction with the renovation of the old train station.

MAJOR PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN BY ENTITIES OTHER THAN THE CITY

Many projects contributing to the vitality of the Greensboro Center City may be undertaken by entities other than the City of Greensboro, although some may require City assistance. These include:

1. County Health Campus

Guilford County should be encouraged to develop a downtown campus for its social service, public health, mental health, and related supporting facilities. County facilities are already located in several buildings in the area north of Bellemeade, between Eugene and Edgewater Streets. Recent studies have shown that these County facilities could operate more efficiently in new buildings organized in a campus setting. Additionally, their orderly expansion could be better accommodated in a planned environment. A development of this scale would not only create a new land-use district in the downtown with its own identity, it would establish a logical transition zone between the higher-intensity office uses to the east and south and the lower-intensity residential and mixed-use areas to the north and west.

2. Retail Galleria

One of the more difficult projects to undertake will be the development of a retail galleria on Elm Street in the block containing the Meyers, Thalheimer and Kresge buildings. While the project is anticipated to be developed by the private sector, it will require local public financial assistance to make it work. Public intervention may be required in helping to assemble the land and in providing financial assistance to lower the occupancy costs to a level supported by tenant rents and gross sales.

The key to the success of this project will be in the tenant mix and identifying the appropriate retail and specialty shop niche to be filled in the Greensboro marketplace. "Formula" solutions should be avoided (e.g., packaged festival marketplaces). The galleria complex should be tailored to the Greensboro downtown environment and marketplace.

The retail galleria should be carefully designed and developed to complement rather than inhibit commercial intensification along the Elm Street frontage. The galleria should be characterized by an "open" design which is visible and accessible from Elm Street, and which is an extension of the Elm Street shopping pattern.

3. Adaptive Reuse of the Guilford Building

Guilford County now has control of the Guilford Building, located on Elm Street at Washington Street. The County should be encouraged to market the building for residential or office reuse. If possible, the first floor should contain street oriented uses, such as specialty shops, a restaurant, or commercial service activities. If required, incentives should be provided to ensure the project's financial feasibility. The reuse of this building is important not only because it converts an historically important building to a productive use, but also because it strengthens the downtown by adding to the employment or resident population.

4. Urban Arcade

New office development in the Southern Life/Sheraton block, bounded by Lindsay, Elm, Bellemeade and Greene, coupled with other existing development in the block, will result in an open space among the buildings which should be improved as an urban arcade. This arcade would serve to unify the development and provide a pedestrian focal point for all uses within the block. In particular, this arcade should provide a basis for reorienting the Sheraton Hotel to the other uses in the block and to Elm Street. The shop space in the hotel complex could be oriented to this arcade and provide for indoor and open air restaurant facilities. The siting of this arcade could also provide a basis for design solutions for the future redevelopment of the property on the east side of Elm Street. A setback or "matching" arcade on the east side of Elm Street would strengthen the relationship between the two blocks and enhance inter-block pedestrian connections.

5. Conference Center

The City of Greensboro has an investment to protect in the outlying Coliseum facility. The more cost-effective alternative of the City is to strengthen the Coliseum as a trade show and exhibition center serving the Triad region. The downtown, on the other hand, is the logical location for a multi-purpose business and educational conference/meeting center, particularly because of its proximity to nearby colleges and universities. The conference/seminar needs of major colleges and universities provide Greensboro with a unique opportunity for developing such a multi-purpose business and educational facility in the downtown area. Additionally, a conference center (perhaps in conjunction with a new hotel) requires less land and is not as imposing on the downtown and nearby neighborhood environments. Local business persons and local universities and colleges should be

encouraged to explore the feasibility of developing such a facility in the downtown in conjunction with the Sheraton Hotel ownership or with an outside hotel development company.

A downtown business and educational conference center should provide space for meetings, with large areas for plenary sessions and breakout rooms for smaller sessions. Modern facilities today include high-tech meeting rooms equipped with state-of-the-art audio-visual and teleconferencing equipment, and special sloped-floor seating for educational and instructional seminars. In addition to providing a contemporary meeting facility for business, local educational institutions could use such facilities in conjunction with research, continuing education, and scientific and policy symposiums.

The conference center should be developed near Lindsay and Elm Streets, in close proximity to the Sheraton Hotel.

6. Facade Improvements

A program of facade or "storefront" improvements is recommended for existing buildings along Elm Street and along intersecting east-west streets between Davie and Greene Streets in the historic district. It is recommended that the facade improvement program be a cooperative effort on the part of the City, private property owners, and perhaps other organizations as well. The City could assume coordination responsibilities for the program, as well as provide incentives and other assistance. Incentives may be provided to achieve a harmonious, coordinated treatment of building facades, respecting the architectural and historical qualities of each building and of the district as a whole.

7. Downtown Residential Development

Older, multi-story commercial buildings of the type along Elm Street and throughout Old Greensborough are typically characterized by functional and economic obsolescence, reflected primarily in the high vacancy levels of the upper floors. The reuse of these upper floors should be encouraged for residential purposes if market acceptance can be promoted and if renovation costs can be made to fit within marketable rent levels. This may be a long-term project completed incrementally over the years, but the first private efforts should be encouraged as part of the overall downtown revitalization strategy. Incentives should be considered to help overcome prohibitive costs and make such renovation possible.

Additionally, new infill housing should be encouraged in strategic locations in the Center City. Recommended initial areas include the five blocks between Fisher and Smith Streets in the northern part of the downtown, from Battleground to Smith extended; and between Edgeworth and Spring Streets, in the northwest part of the downtown, from Bellemeade to West Friendly.

Another location recommended for new housing is the Southside Neighborhood, located along and near Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive between the railroad and Lee Street. The City has identified several potential housing sites within this area, as well as other desirable infrastructure and improvement projects. It is anticipated that Southside would become the first of a multi-phase revitalization program for the larger neighborhood area bounded by Washington Street, Davie Street, Murrow Boulevard and Lee Street.

8. Reservation of Future Office and Hotel Sites

Several locations have been identified in the Center City Development Plan for new office and hotel sites. Their private utilization in accordance with the plan should be encouraged and, if necessary, assistance should be provided to assemble the sites if qualified private developers emerge. These include sites for new office buildings north of Friendly, between Eugene and Davie, and sites for infill medium density housing between Fisher and Smith, from Battleground to Church, west of Eugene, between Friendly and Bellemeade, and north of the Blandwood Mansion.

The underutilization or misuse of these sites and the potential residential sites should be prevented. Their development will eventually respond to the marketplace, so long as the City makes known its intentions with respect to their use, intensity of development, and incentives to be provided.

CITY OF GREENSBORO PROJECTS

Recommended projects for the City of Greensboro include:

1. Central Plaza

The "central plaza" is a proposed open space in the heart of the emerging office core north of Friendly Avenue. This plaza, which has been alternatively referred to as either O.Henry Square or Friendship Square, would comprise the equivalent of a full city block, bounded by Elm Street on the west, Friendly Avenue on the south, Davie Street on the east, and the Renaissance Center Development on the north.

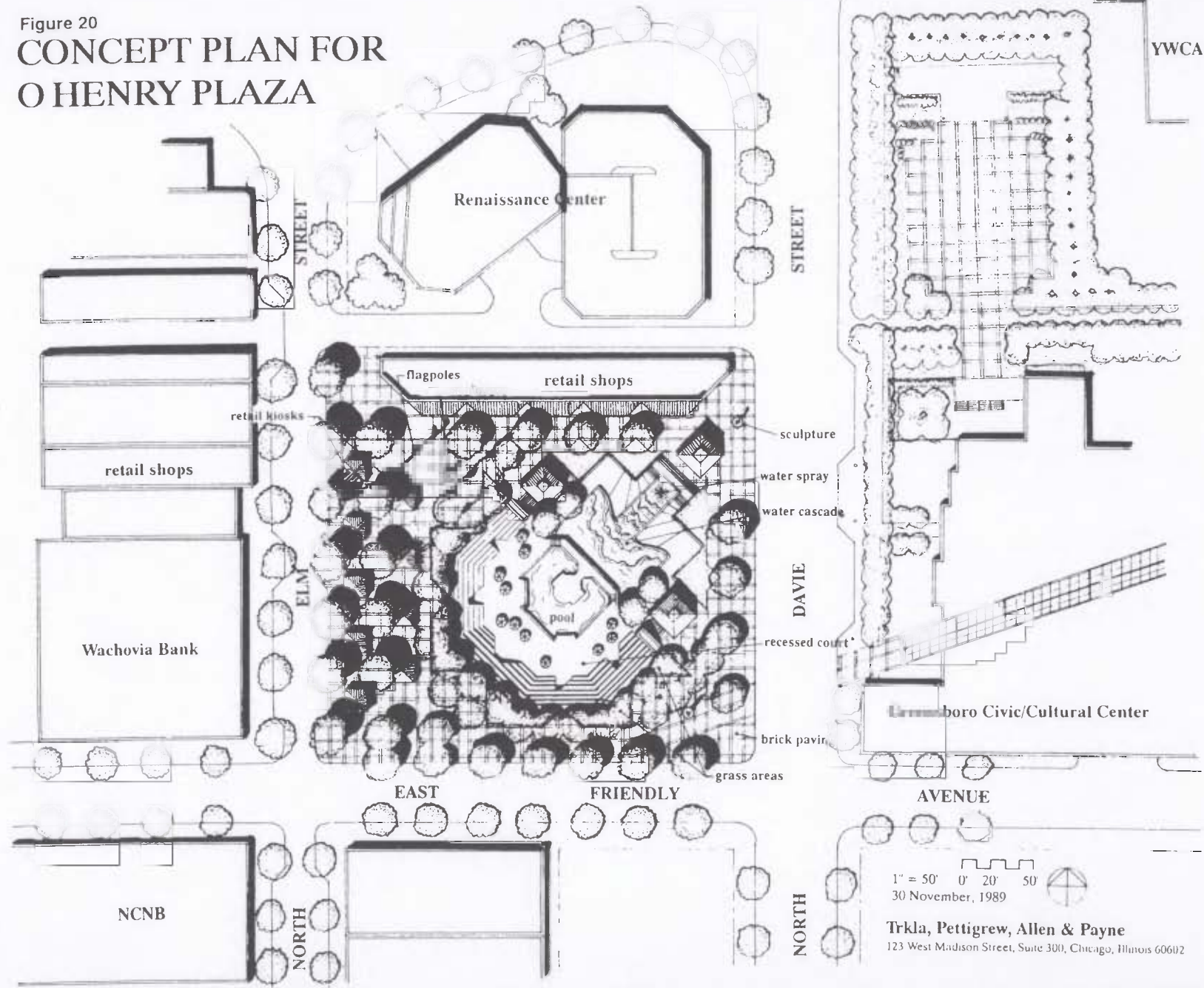
This plaza would be developed as a major focal point for the downtown and as a centerplace for the high intensity office district. It would also serve as a "front door" to the cultural area to the east and as a major connection area between the cultural center and the Elm Street uses. In addition to becoming a gathering place for people on a day-to-day basis, the plaza should be used for specialty events, such as concerts, displays, and art fairs.

As opposed to the "performance plaza" located on the east side of Davie Street, this "central plaza" would be designed for intensive and active daily usage for a wide variety of activities. Whereas the performance plaza would have a grass surface, peripheral landscaping and be essentially open, the new central plaza would have a paved surface and be equipped with a range of kiosks, shopping alcoves, umbrella tables, permanent seating areas, and other special portable features.

A proposed concept for this project is shown in Figure 20: *Central Plaza*, indicating one way that this plaza could be developed. This concept includes:

- o A major water feature introduced in a city which has no river, lakeshore, or seashore in the downtown. The suggested concept shows a fountain, cascade, and pool as a focal point for a sitting area.
- o A bowl-shaped space with seating for public events, rallies, concerts, and just leisure sitting, complimenting the adjacent arts center amphitheater.

Figure 20
**CONCEPT PLAN FOR
 O HENRY PLAZA**



1" = 50' 0' 20' 50'

30 November, 1989

Trkla, Pettigrew, Allen & Payne
 123 West Madison Street, Suite 300, Chicago, Illinois 60602

Train Station Area. As the concept plan shows, a diagonal pedestrian promenade is proposed to link the project with the Elm Street corridor at Washington Street, providing pedestrians in the office, retail, and government center areas with direct access to the facilities provided on this site. The pedestrian promenade and consolidated rail corridor create four development quadrants, as follows:

- o South Quadrant. This quadrant provides for the development of a new ground transportation center, Amtrak station, and city marketplace. The ground transportation center is shown in the shape of an historic "roundhouse," and would include intermodal transportation connections linking Amtrak (rail), inter-city buses, intra-city buses, taxis and airport shuttle services. The proposed structure, which would have primary access from Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, would also include approximately 350 parking spaces, space for a rail museum (including an outdoor train display), and indoor city market stalls.

The city marketplace could include both open air and sheltered space for a farmers' market, flea markets, antique shows and auctions, and other special city markets. Approximately 65,000 square feet of space is shown under canopy in this concept plan.

It should be noted that the City has recently selected a consultant to undertake a more detailed analysis and assessment of a Ground Transportation Center in the Center City area.

- o North Quadrant. This area includes a renovated train station for meetings, public events, and offices for not-for-profit organizations, and other possible new and/or renovated space linked to and adjacent to the old train station.
- o West Quadrant. This area shows an expansion of residential and supporting retail uses, linking the Elm Street corridor to this site. Other features shown include a Greensboro visitors' center and parking and landscaping to serve the Guilford Building.
- o East Quadrant. A major new outdoor or indoor recreational or cultural use should be introduced in the eastern quadrant, which would become an important new anchor for the Center City and a symbol and source of pride for

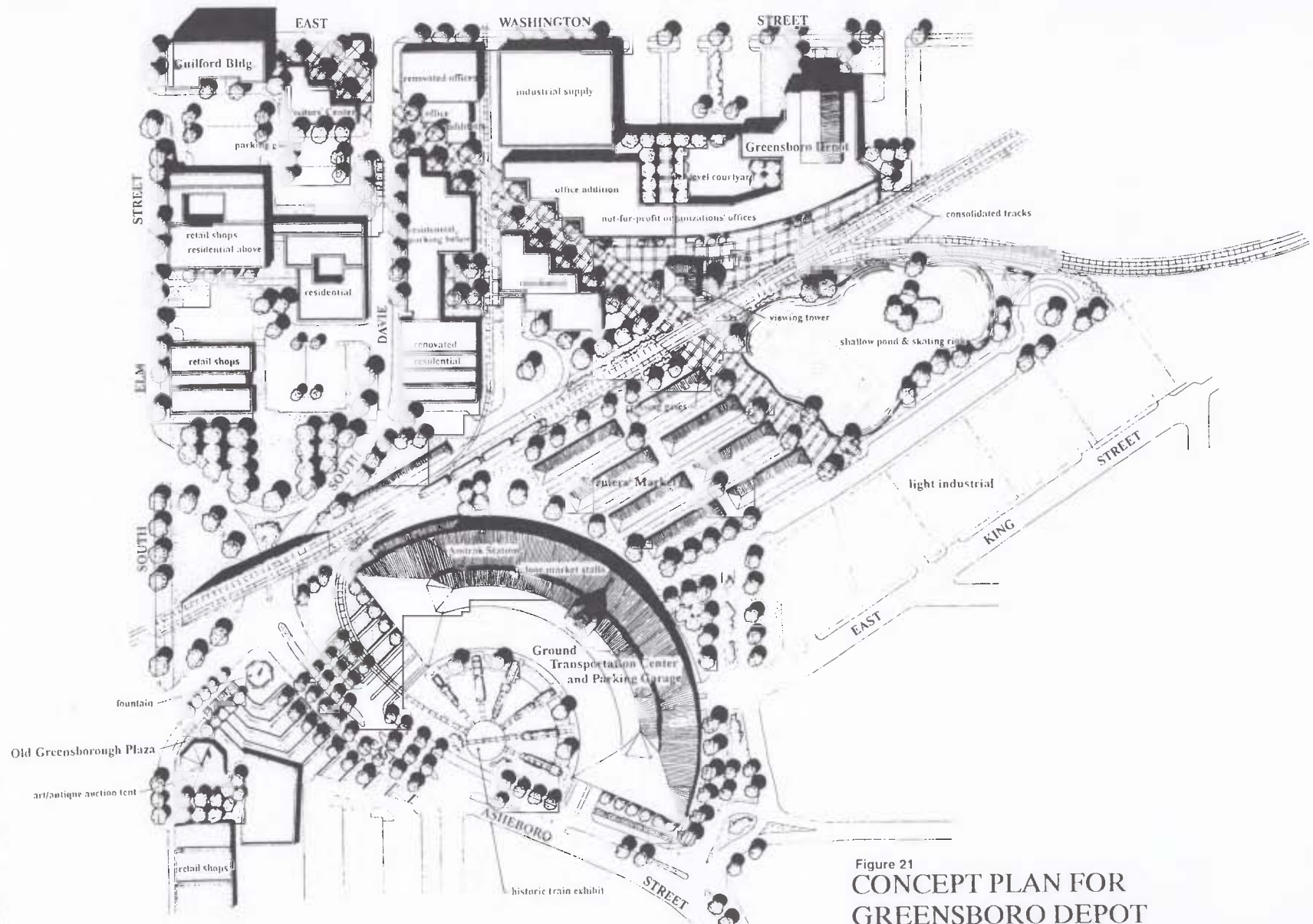


Figure 21
**CONCEPT PLAN FOR
 GREENSBORO DEPOT**

Trkla, Pettigrew, Allen & Payne
 123 West Madison Street, Suite 300, Chicago, Illinois 60602

1" = 80'
 0' 40' 80'
 30 November, 1989



the Greensboro community. The concept plan illustrates a new water element and surrounding open space area. A shallow pond is shown as an amenity which, in winter months, might be used as a skating rink. Additional features indicated in the concept include a viewing tower from which to view the Center City and surrounding areas.

Other recreational and cultural amenities could also be considered for the eastern quadrant. As an alternative to the water feature, an enclosed botanical garden or conservatory might be developed as a major new attraction for the Greensboro community. Another possibility is a new "activity park" on the rail yard properties, including a children's activity center; science/technology exhibits; public art; and activity indoor/outdoor recreational facilities.

Old Greensborough Plaza

Generally at the intersection of Elm Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, a plaza and open space should be developed to serve as a focal point for the revitalization of Old Greensborough. This plaza or open space should serve as a setting for the architectural and historic preservation efforts of Old Greensborough, as well as a source of community pride and identity. A plaza in this strategic location would also provide an attractive "gateway" into the downtown area from the south and southeast. In general, the plaza should be designed to reflect the special turn-of-the-century theme for the surrounding area, and become a setting for activities and events which are unique to the historic area. It should be extensively landscaped, and have a "soft" as opposed to "hard" paved surface. It could also include a historic gazebo, sculpture or other special architectural feature.

3. Elm Street Connections to Davie and Greene Streets

A significant investment is being made in the Elm Street streetscape program. A principal objective of this program is to create a pedestrian-oriented environment along Elm Street to provide a basis for the return of specialty shops, restaurants, etc. However, Elm Street carries significant traffic volumes within a limited right-of-way, while adjacent Davie and Greene Streets with significant capacity, are underutilized. Through traffic movements on Elm Street should be directed to Davie and Greene Streets to protect the investments being made on Elm Street and to enhance the potential for attracting ground floor pedestrian-oriented uses in the heart of the downtown. This can be accomplished by directing north-bound through traffic to Davie under the rail overpass at Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and diverting the south-bound through traffic to Greene Street near Lindsay.

4. Parking Consolidation

The Elm Street corridor should be supported by convenient and accessible parking along Davie and Greene Streets. Underutilized lands and existing surface parking areas should be consolidated into landscaped and lighted surface parking facilities, with pedestrian access provided at the rear of Elm Street businesses, as well as direct pedestrian connections to Elm Street, itself. The appearance of the backs of the buildings facing the parking should be improved, along with the provision of attractive rear entrances.

In the long-term, consolidated surface parking areas may be converted to structure parking, if the need arises. Expanded parking along Greene and Davie Streets, if attractive, convenient, and properly planned, can contribute to the increased use of these streets as downtown destination routes, thus relieving pressure on Elm Street, which should be more pedestrian-oriented in the heart of the downtown.

LONG-RANGE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMING

In addition to the targeted projects identified above, the City of Greensboro should incorporate downtown improvement projects into its Capital Improvements Program to be undertaken on a year-to-year basis, and encourage downtown private property owners, business persons and institutions to undertake supporting improvement and beautification projects to strengthen the open space environment of the Center City and to enhance the appearance of visible site improvements and facilities. Also, streetscape improvements should be made by the City on a year-to-year basis. These are described in more detail below.

Open Space

Open space can perform several important roles within the Center City. It provides areas for relaxation, as well as individual and group activities. It provides space for both organized and spontaneous public gatherings. It can also provide visual relief within the downtown and help define and articulate important areas of activity. This section includes recommendations for maintaining and strengthening existing open space areas, providing new open space in selected locations, and improving access to open space areas from the pedestrian circulation system. (See Figure 22).

1. This section incorporates the recommendations for Old Greensborough Plaza and the Central Plaza, discussed in a previous section of this report.
2. The Governmental Center block should be maintained as the major open space area in the Center City. This large, well-landscaped park currently provides a focal point for a wide range of individual and group activities, and provides a highly attractive edge for the high-intensity core. The recommended pedestrian circulation system should improve connections to this important block.
3. The provision of small plazas, courtyards and gardens should be encouraged as a part of new private development projects. An existing example includes the plaza in front of the new Southern Life Center. Other possibilities include interior courtyards, atriums, and roof gardens. It is important that these spaces be accessible and, where possible, visible from pedestrian routes.
4. The provision of new open space areas should be required as a part of any new residential development within the Center City. The size and character of these areas should respond to the special needs and requirements of the project. For example, the Gateway Plaza has a small open space area. New family housing would require playgrounds and active recreational areas.
5. Landscaped settings for downtown's major buildings are also an important part of the overall open space system, even though they may not be available for public use or recreation. Existing examples include Blandwood Mansion, Gateway Plaza, and several governmental and institutional buildings. While these are not desirable within the Retail and Commercial Core, landscaped settings should be encouraged around the periphery of downtown.

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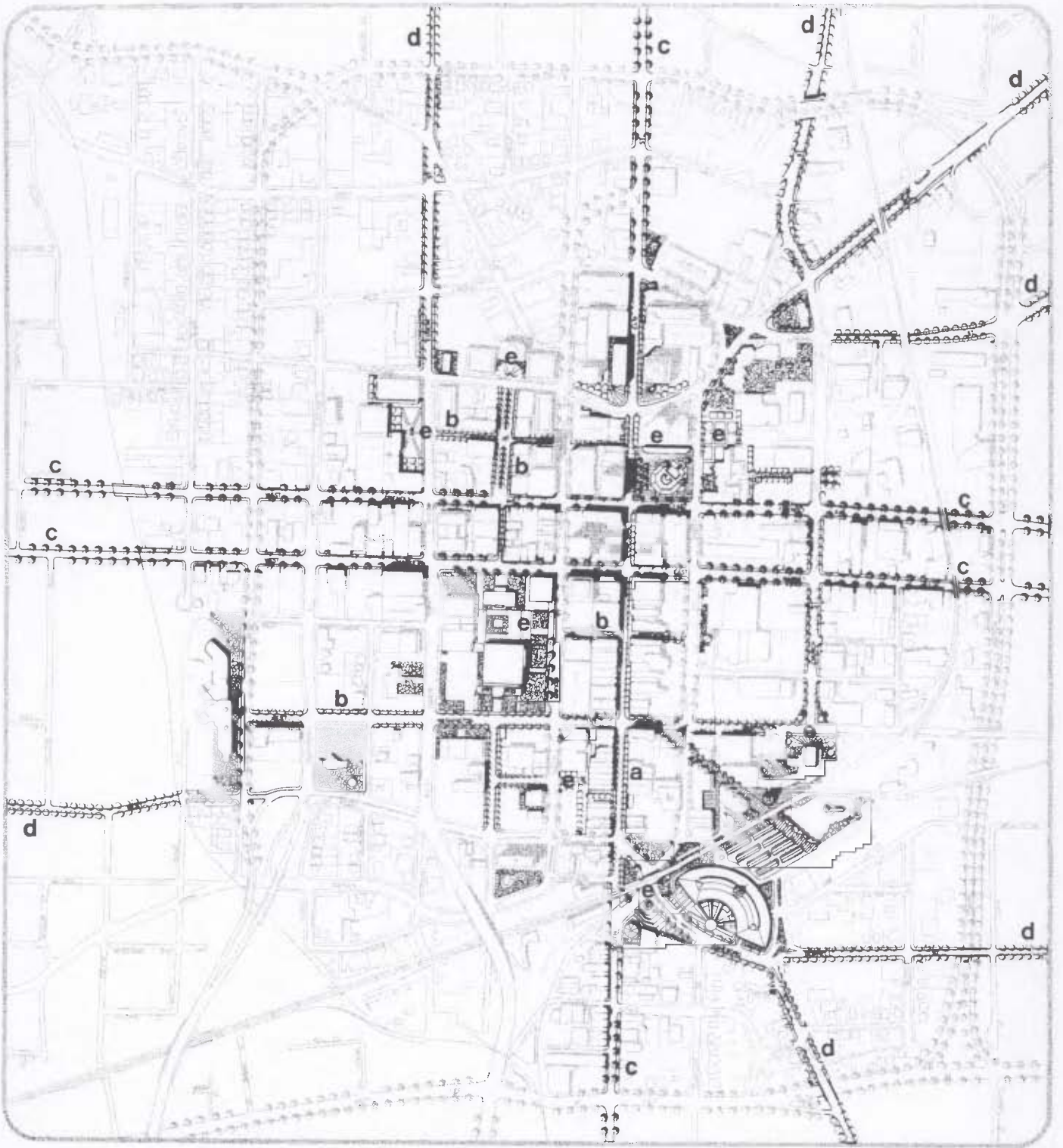
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PEDESTRIAN & OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Figure 22

- | | |
|---|--|
| a Elm Street Pedestrianway | d Pedestrian Connections to Neighborhoods |
| b Other Important Pedestrianways | e Plazas and Courtyards |
| c Major Approach Routes |  Landscaped Open Spaces |

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6. It is essential that all components of the public open space system be accessible from the pedestrian circulation system described in the preceding section, including key pedestrian linkages to adjacent neighborhoods. In addition, public open space areas should meet all applicable standards and requirements regarding access for the physically handicapped.

Site Improvements

The Center City contains a wide range of site improvements which perform necessary and essential roles within the overall area. However, if these are not adequately maintained, they can significantly detract from the overall image, appearance and character of the Center City. These include parking facilities, alleyways, the rear portions of commercial properties, loading and service areas, railroad corridors, outdoor storage yards and vacant lots.

This section includes general urban design policies and guidelines for improving the image and appearance of site improvements throughout the Center City area, and for encouraging more productive use of these areas and facilities in the future.

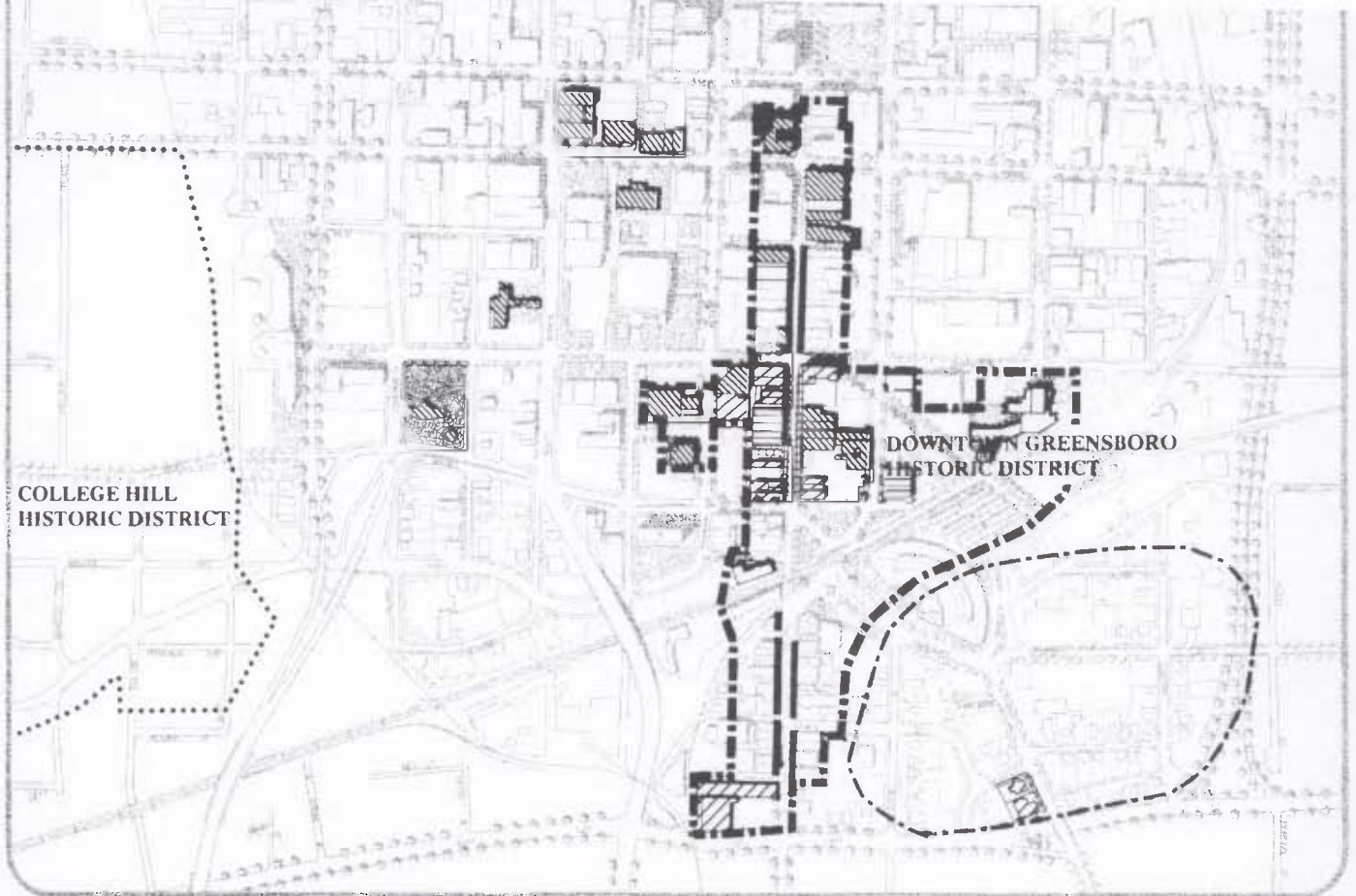
1. All off-street parking lots within the Center City should be paved, striped and adequately maintained. All lots should have surfaces in good repair. All lots should be designed to allow for proper drainage.
2. All parking lots should be easily identifiable and accessible to vehicles and pedestrians. Parking lot signs should be simple in design and few in number. Parking lot signs may be designed in a variety of ways and may combine the use of words, graphic symbols and color coding. All public parking lot signs should have a uniform visual image, and while private signs may be more varied, it is desirable that they also be part of an overall Center City signage system.
3. The exterior appearance of Center City parking lots should be improved. The principal technique for parking lot beautification should be landscaping. Where possible, a landscape planting strip of a minimum of five feet in width should be provided around the periphery of parking lots, with even greater widths provided where parking lots abut residential properties. This would allow screening with trees, shrubs, flowers and/or ground cover. Size and species should be carefully selected to avoid potential damage to vehicles and facilitate easy maintenance. Various architectural elements may also be used to screen, buffer and beautify downtown parking lots, including walls, fences and earth berms. The use of cyclone or other industrial fencing around parking lots should be avoided.
4. The appearance of parking lot interiors should also be improved. In addition to surfaces in good repair, interior landscaped islands edged with permanent curbing should be used to improve the appearance of larger off-street lots. All parking lots should be adequately lighted to deter crime and to encourage night-time usage.
5. Where possible, several smaller, separate parking lots located within the same block should be combined and redesigned as a single unit. This will typically increase parking efficiency and capacity, and also facilitate overall appearance improvements and beautification.
6. All parking garages should be compatible in size and appearance with other nearby buildings. Visual contrasts between parking facilities and adjacent land development should be minimized. The scale, mass, height, color and material texture of new parking structures should all be considered.

7. The street level of all parking structures along primary and secondary pedestrian routes should be used for shops, offices, services, display areas or other pedestrian oriented uses.
8. Alleysways within the Center City should be cleaned up and improved. Surface repairs should be undertaken where necessary, particularly along alleys within the heart of downtown. While alleys should continue to serve service vehicles in the future, selected alleys could also be used as access routes to parking areas or as alternative pedestrian routes. In general, alleys in the blocks between Greene and Davie Streets near the heart of the Center City have the most potential for pedestrian and access improvements.
9. In connection with alley improvements, the rear portions of commercial properties should also be upgraded, particularly those along Elm Street. Weeds and trash should be removed, and neglected facades improved where necessary. Improvements to rear facades need not be elaborate or expensive. Possible techniques include painting, restoring masonry walls, door and window replacement, and the provision of new signs and display areas. The provision of new rear entries to stores, shops and offices adjacent to alleys should be encouraged.
10. Loading and service areas should be easily accessible from the surrounding street system. Service access and egress should cause minimum disruption to traffic flow and pedestrian movement. Where possible, loading and service areas should be screened and buffered through the use of walls, landscaping or elevation changes. The shared use of loading docks and service courts by businesses in adjacent buildings should be encouraged.
11. The image and appearance of the railroad corridors that pass through the Center City should be improved. New building development and landscaping should help screen the corridors from views along adjacent streets. New landscaping should also be undertaken to "soften" the appearance of those portions which continue to be visible. Special techniques should be used to lighten and otherwise improve the appearance of underpasses and other structural components, including painting, special signage and perhaps attractive new murals in selected locations.
12. The condition and maintenance of outdoor storage areas and vacant lots should be improved. While these are not numerous within the Center City, several do exist in peripheral subareas. If outdoor storage areas are to be retained, they should be screened and buffered from views along major arterials and pedestrian routes. Where possible, vacant lots should be put to productive uses. Parking lots, mini-parks or small pedestrian areas should be considered. At a minimum, vacant and dilapidated structures and abandoned vehicles should be removed, trash and debris regularly cleaned, and grass mowed and maintained.

Historic Preservation









Whereas the Center City Concept includes a number of recommended projects and actions regarding new construction, it is essential that future improvement efforts also strive to maintain and reinforce the special historic image and character of the Center City. Recommended area-wide policies regarding historic preservation are summarized below, and are illustrated in Figure 23: *Historic Resources*.

- o The large number of historic buildings still remaining within the Center City area represents an important asset to the City as a whole, and a unique opportunity for the downtown. These historic resources not only help preserve a part of the City's special past and culture, but also help give the Center City area a distinct image and identity much different from most of today's downtowns. These should be preserved and enhanced as a valuable component of the Center City.
- o Significant progress has been made in recent years in preserving, improving and reusing historic buildings. The Carolina Theatre, Greensboro Court, Wafco Mills, and a number of other buildings have been renovated, many for totally different uses than they were originally designed. Preservation and adaptive reuse should continue to be promoted and encouraged within the Center City.
- o The significance of downtown's historic resources is not in individual landmarks but in its overall "ensemble." Even though Center City contains many buildings of architectural or historic significance, it is the large number of historic buildings in close proximity that makes the area unique. Therefore, future efforts should be on improving groups of buildings and overall building environments, as well as on individual structures.
- o Because these historic buildings are located in the heart of downtown, preservation must be coupled with economic vitality. In order to protect most historic buildings in the area, they must be reused for economically viable activities. In many cases, this may require significant interior and structural improvement as well as creative design. Preservation of large numbers of historic buildings as "museum pieces" will not likely be appropriate in the Center City.
- o Many of downtown's new buildings are not visually compatible with the historic character of the Elm Street area. Special design guidelines and standards should be prepared to insure that new construction within or near the historic district is more compatible and complementary in the future.
- o Streetscape and other urban design improvements are also important to the overall character and scale of the historic area. Street trees, plantings, lighting, signs and graphics, and street furniture should all be designed to reinforce and enhance the historic district.
- o While most historic buildings within downtown are located within the Downtown Greensboro National Register Historic District, other historic buildings and smaller clusters are scattered throughout the Center City. These are also important community resources, most are key features within various subareas, and they should also be maintained and preserved in the future.



HISTORIC RESOURCES

Figure 23

- | | |
|---|--|
|  National Historic District |  Local Historic District |
|  Historic Building - Improvements Completed |  Facade Improvement Potential |
|  Historic Building - Improvements Contemplated |  Historic Site |
|  Historic Building - Improvements Potential |  Historic Area Potential |

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Streetscape

Streetscape features, including lighting, landscaping, street furniture, and graphics can do much to improve the appearance of the Center City and make it a more pleasant place for people. Although some of these features already exist in Greensboro, they are not part of an overall, coordinated or visually attractive streetscape system. (See Figure 22: *Pedestrian and Open Space Plan*).

The following urban design policies and guidelines should be used to improve and upgrade streetscape features along key Center City streets, pedestrianways, open spaces, and site improvements.

1. While sidewalk widths should continue to vary according to their function and importance, a minimum of 12 feet is recommended for the primary pedestrian routes. A minimum of 10 feet is suggested for secondary pedestrian streets. Sidewalk widths should also be expanded above the minimum at certain key locations to provide sufficient space for trees and street furniture. A minimum width of approximately 16 feet will be required for these additional improvements. All sidewalks should have curb cuts or ramps for the elderly and physically handicapped.
2. Special sidewalk treatments should be used to define and articulate key downtown pedestrian streets. While a wide range of special materials and textures are possible, brick should be the main decorative paving material in the Center City. The use of brick is already well established, and brick pavers also reflect local traditions in building construction. Surfaces should be smooth enough to prevent tripping and allow ease of movement, particularly near intersections, yet varied enough to prevent slipping due to rain, ice, or snow. As primary pedestrian streets are improved, materials and textures should be mixed and contrasted to create exciting new surface patterns. Different surface treatments should also be used to distinguish and give character to major activity areas, including the High Intensity Office District and the Retail and Commercial Core.
3. Approach routes and major arterial streets should be lined with regularly spaced parkway trees, with high-branched, high-crowned forms which reinforce the sense of direction yet do not interfere with traffic visibility or control. These large trees should be planted in an area at least four feet by four feet and protected by a grill if planted in paved areas. Large street trees should not be placed in pots. Several tree types would be appropriate in the Center City, including the Norway Maple, Green Ash, Hackberry, White Ash, Redmond Linden, and Little-leaf Linden. Smaller trees and shrubs with special ornamental qualities, seasonal interest, flowers or fruit might also be planted at key points along primary pedestrian streets and at important public open space areas. Honey locust has been selected as the primary tree for the Elm Street corridor.
4. The roadways which connect Center City with nearby neighborhoods and institutions should be improved for both motorists and pedestrians. In addition to the primary vehicular approach routes, these include Eugene Street and Church Street from the north; Lindsay, Washington and Gorrell Streets from the east; Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive from the south; and West McGee Street from the west. At a minimum, improvements should include parkway landscaping, street lighting, special signage, and sidewalks in good repair. For those streets with heavy pedestrian usage, additional improvements should be considered, including special sidewalk surface treatment, pedestrian lighting, and street furniture and other pedestrian amenities at selected locations.
5. The railroad rights-of-way within the Center City should be more heavily landscaped with trees, shrubs and ground cover. Heavily landscaped areas along the rail corridors would help neutralize these major visual barriers, improve the appearance of the Center City to entering motorists, and help distinguish several important subareas.

6. Roadway lighting should optimize vehicular safety and also distinguish between the hierarchy of street types. While safety requirements and illumination levels will be similar, distinctions should be made in the type, color, and placement of luminaries to create a distinct character for each street type. Major and minor arterials should have a high and continuous level of illumination, with standards placed close to the curb. Mounting height should be approximately 30 to 35 feet above the roadway, with standards spaced three to four times the mounting height. While several light sources are appropriate for street lighting, high pressure sodium sources are most effective.
7. New pedestrian lighting should be provided along primary pedestrian streets, and at important junction points including crosswalks and bus stops. A much wider range of fixture designs and lighting characteristics will be possible in pedestrian areas, and pedestrian lighting should change in relation to different land-use activities. In general, pedestrian lighting can be most effective if mounted 10 to 15 feet in the air, with fixtures placed so that light overlaps at a height of approximately seven feet. Fixtures should be carefully placed so that they do not conflict with pedestrian movement. Incandescent, metal halide, and high pressure sodium light sources are appropriate for pedestrian areas. Special spotlighting and accent lights should be considered as a part of the Center City's public open space areas.
8. While lighting within each development district will be subject to the desires of individual businesses and developers, certain basic lighting guidelines should be established. Each major user should choose from a family of lighting fixtures in order to maintain unity and compatibility within their development area. In addition, each should provide lighting and fixtures compatible with those selected for adjacent public streets. Institutional lighting should be pedestrian-oriented and highlight selected landmarks, structures and landscape materials. Governmental facilities' lighting should be pedestrian-oriented, with spot lighting of key landmarks. Commercial and related areas should be primarily pedestrian-oriented, with highlights on landscaping and interiors. Residential lighting should be primarily pedestrian-oriented, with a low level of illumination and shielded fixtures. In general, the lighting of each area should be based on both safety and aesthetic considerations.
9. Careful consideration should also be given to the lighting of Center City parking lots. The most appropriate form of parking lot lighting is omnidirectional floodlighting equipment located along principal aisles in a way that eliminates shadows between cars. Metal Halide, fluorescent and mercury vapor sources are most appropriate. Because of poor color rendition, sodium vapor sources are not recommended for parking areas.
10. New street furniture, including benches, planters, kiosks, and trash receptacles should be provided in selected locations along primary pedestrian routes. Benches and seating areas should be placed near key activity points and near Center City housing areas. They should be close to activity areas, yet not directly within them. They should be sheltered or screened if possible and not too close to vehicular traffic. They should provide places for downtown patrons and employees to rest, converse, lunch, or simply watch downtown activities. Many materials and designs will be possible, but selections should be based on comfort and appearance as well as durability and economy.
11. Planters, which will be needed for small trees and shrubs, should also be used to define activity areas and pedestrian routes and screen downtown parking lots. Kiosks should be provided near key public open spaces within important subareas. These should be used to consolidate a number of required features, including mailboxes, pay telephones,

trash receptacles, newspaper vending machines, and drinking fountains. They could also contain bulletin boards for posting public notices, information regarding coming events, or downtown advertisements.

12. Commercial signage should be improved within the Center City. Existing sign regulations should be reviewed in terms of permitted height, size, location, number, and design characteristics. Projecting signs and roof signs are particularly objectionable within the Center City. Sign improvements could also result from cooperative efforts among downtown businessmen. Cooperation can eliminate wasteful competition and allow all signs to perform more meaningful functions.
13. Special efforts should be made to improve signage which is directed to the motorist. The City should undertake a comprehensive review of traffic related signs, controls and signals to determine which could be consolidated and which eliminated.
14. Special signs and graphics should also be used to define and articulate various streets, pedestrian routes and activity areas. Banners, already utilized in several areas, should be employed along arterial streets. Special signage should be used to upgrade the overall image and identity of the high-intensity areas, historic districts, and other key activity centers.

Highlighted streetscape projects are shown in Figure 24: *Streetscape-- Major Streets*, and Figure 25: *Streetscape-- Pedestrian Areas*. Key features include:

o *Approach Routes - Friendly and Market*

Friendly Avenue and Market Street are the most important east-west streets for people entering and leaving downtown by car. To identify downtown as a place of natural beauty, flowering trees are proposed between Spring Street on the west and Murrow Street on the east. Spaced 50 feet apart, the trees will create an image of beauty and will symbolize the City's commitment to supporting continuing development along these important arterials.

o *Approach Routes - Greene and Davie*

Greene and Davie are important north-south streets for people entering and leaving downtown by car. Flanking Elm Street, Green and Davie provide access to retail, office commercial, and business visitor parking. Because Greene and Davie are important streets for both automobile traffic and pedestrian circulation, some segments, notably the Civic Center, already have streetscape features. Along Davie Street at the Cultural Center, pedestrian streetscape features and trees should be planted. In front of the Carolina Theatre, the pedestrian environment can be enhanced with sidewalk widening and streetscape features. To tie these projects together visually, flowering trees are proposed along Greene and Davie between Bellemeade and McGee Streets. Spaced 50 feet apart, the trees will create a pleasant, shaded walking environment as well as an attractive driving experience for motorists entering and leaving downtown.

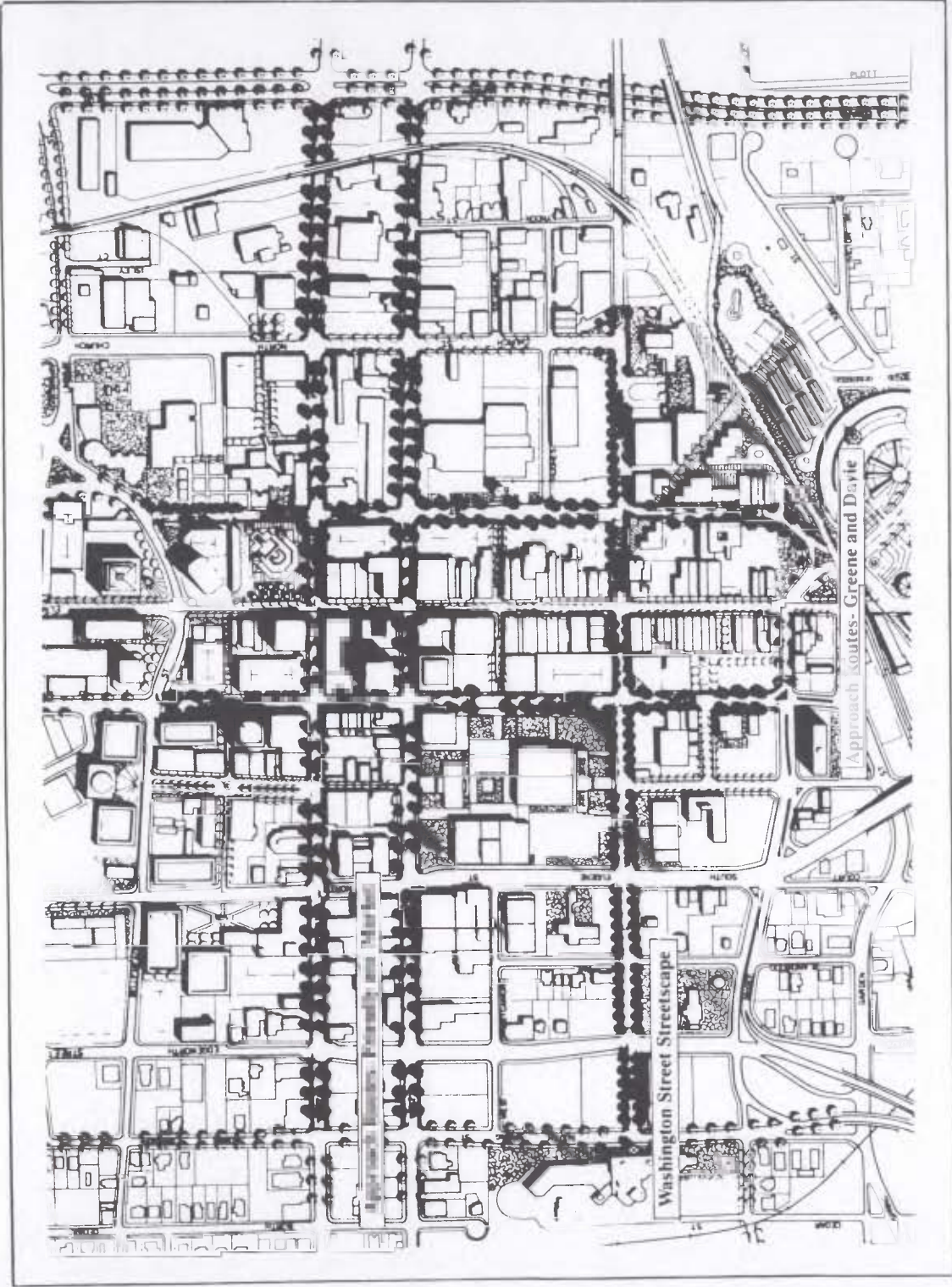


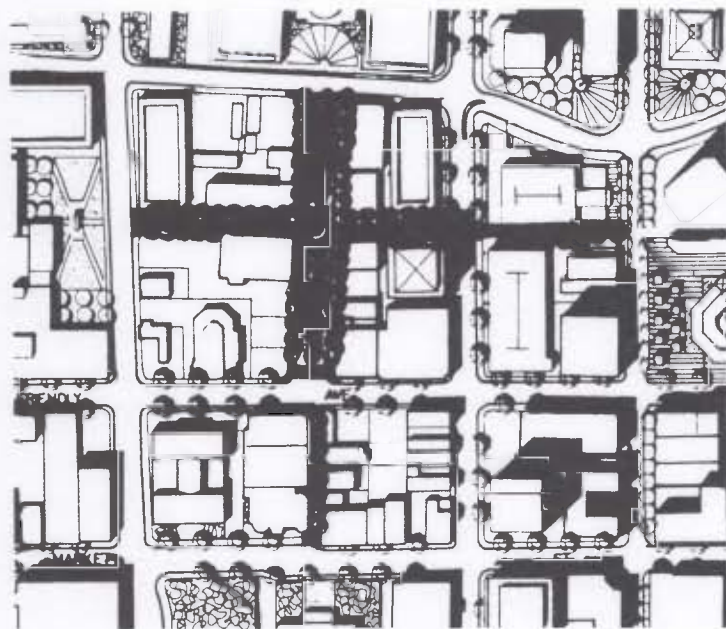
Figure 24

STREETSCAPE - MAJOR STREETS

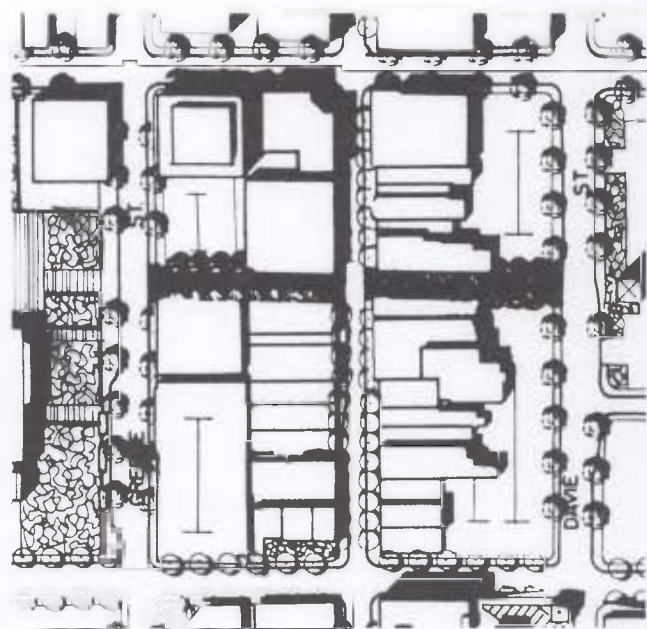
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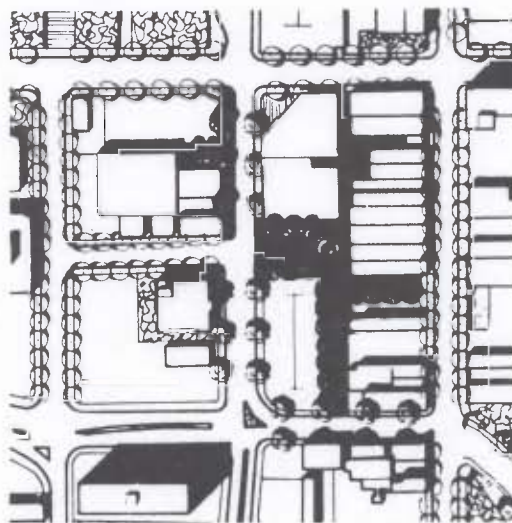


Commerce Place/Brennberger Walk



February One Place

Spring Garden Street and Plaza



Exchange Court

Figure 2b

STREETSCAPE - PEDESTRIAN AREAS

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o *Washington Street Streetscape*

Washington Street links major downtown civic facilities, including the Weaver Educational Center, the Guilford Technical Community College, the Zenke Building, the Blandwood Mansion, the Governmental Center, the new Law Enforcement Center, the Carolina Theatre, and the Greensboro Depot. To enhance these connections and to include further development in the southern part of Downtown, Washington Street is proposed to be landscaped with flowering cherry trees. Planted 50 feet on-center, from Spring Street to Lyndon Street, the trees will add beauty, identity and a formal edge to Washington Street.

o *Commerce Place/Sternberger Walk*

Commerce Place/Sternberger Walk is a unique precinct of professional offices and services in one to two story buildings connected by a boulevard with broad, tree-lined sidewalks. In the plan, Commerce Place is landscaped with a median of trees and flowers and a central focal point (e.g., a fountain). Parallel parking is retained along widened sidewalks in front of adjoining properties. Sternberger is redesigned as a pedestrian walkway from Eugene to Greene Street, extended to Elm in a second phase. Commerce is redesigned as a curbsless street between Friendly and Market to create a strong visual and pedestrian link between the professional district and the Civic Center.

o *February One Place Streetscape*

As a narrow, pedestrian-dominant street with only one traffic lane, February One Place is proposed to be relandscaped to reflect the quality of Elm Street improvements. A curbsless street with a pattern of concrete and precast pavers will give the street the appearance of a plaza. The drive lane and curb parking should be retained and delineated with bollards and pavement patterns rather than curbs, resulting in a pleasant driving experience and emphasizing the importance of the street as the main pedestrian path from the Government Center to the Elm Street retail shops and restaurants.

o *Carolina Theatre Entrance and Plaza*

Upon its completion, the Carolina Theatre will become a primary gathering place for Greensboro residents. Much of the activity inside the theatre can spill over into a cultural/theatre district if certain pedestrian connections and outdoor amenities are established. Removal of curb parking on the west side of the street and widening the sidewalk would provide an attractive outdoor area for arriving at the theatre, picking up tickets, and greeting friends before and after the performance and during intermissions. An adjoining parcel could be acquired and landscaped as a plaza/outdoor seating area and courtyard for a future building on the corner of Greene and Washington Streets.

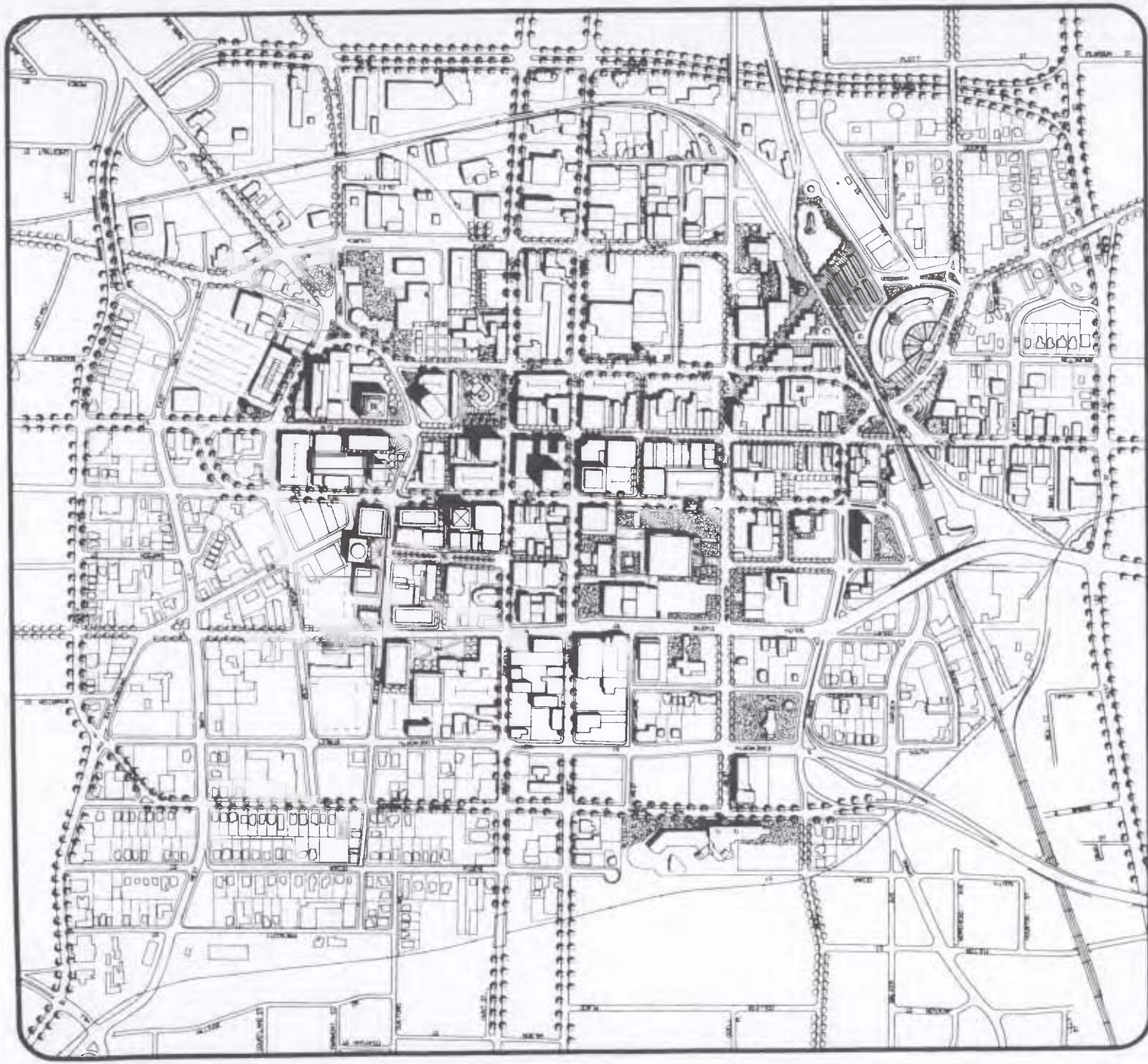
o *Exchange Court*

Exchange Court is a proposal to convert a network of parking lots and alleys between the Carolina Theatre and Elm Street into a small cultural/theatre district. The alleys and portions of parking would be relandscaped with colorful pavers, trees, historic light fixtures, and benches. The intended result is that new restaurants, shops, art galleries, and performing arts groups will be attracted to "back" space in the buildings along Elm and Greene, generating additional activity and establishing a cultural/theatre district for the City as a whole.

ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN

Figure 26: *Illustrative Site Plan* graphically depicts the key recommendations of the Greensboro Center City Development Plan. It indicates the plan and project recommendations related to land-use and development, traffic and parking, and urban design. It highlights important projects to be undertaken by the City, other public agencies and organizations, and the private sector.

The *Illustrative Site Plan* is intended to show recommended Center City improvement and development in a general way. While it does show the configuration of new buildings, site development, street and parking improvements, and pedestrian facilities and open spaces, these are shown for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to limit or constrain actual project design. However, the Illustrative Plan does present a strong image and vision of the Center City and describe the overall character and direction of the improvement and development recommended for the area. It also indicates the wide range of projects and actions that should be undertaken in a comprehensive and coordinated manner to improve all aspects of the Greensboro Center City environment.



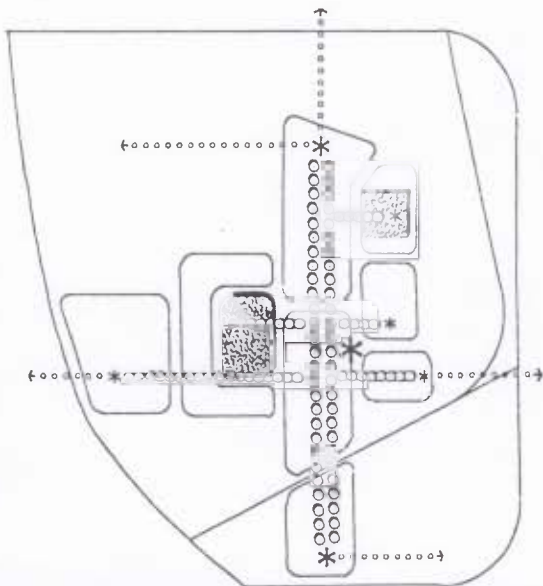
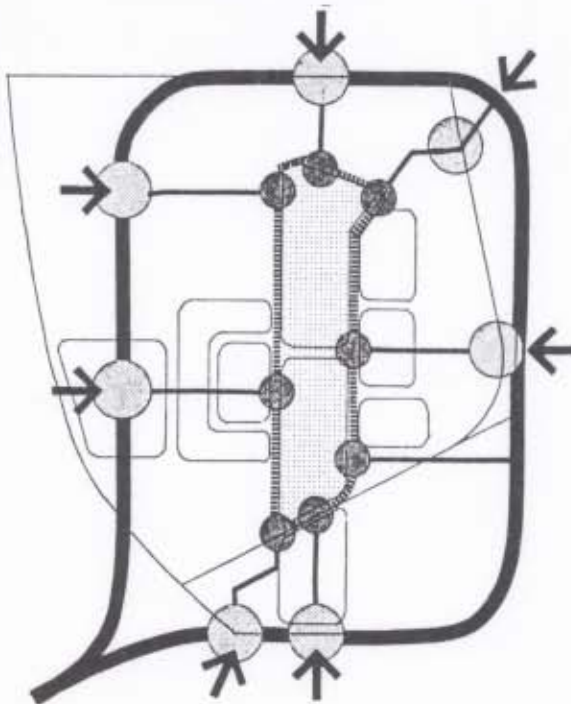
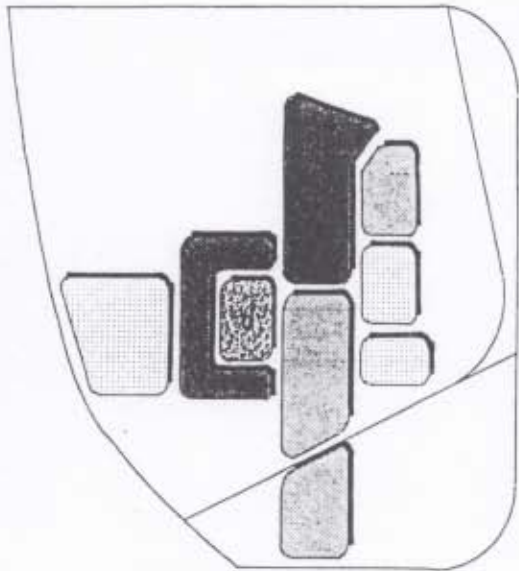
ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN

Figure 26

CENTER CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

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4 implementation

Center City Development Plan
Greensboro, North Carolina

IMPLEMENTATION

Downtown revitalization will require a very careful analysis of the costs involved and the sources of revenue to defray these costs. Additionally, the ability to finance a downtown revitalization program will depend upon the priorities to be established and the period of time that will be allocated to complete the range of recommended projects. This section discusses estimated costs and project financing in the context of an overall implementation program to revitalize the Greensboro Center City.

Greensboro's Center City revitalization is based on an over-riding commitment to build on the area's strongest asset, its rich inventory of older, historic structures, which collectively give the downtown its character. Proposals for new development, infrastructure, and landscaping and amenities should be supportive of and build upon an historic preservation rationale, which underscores this implementation strategy.

Finally, implementation begins with acceptance and adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and Development Strategy. After review and consideration of this plan (and after modification, if necessary), this Comprehensive Plan and Development Strategy should be given official status through the City's normal public hearing and adoption process.

ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS

Project cost estimates are based upon secondary source information for land acquisition, building construction, and infrastructure on a unit cost basis. They are intended to establish a reasonable magnitude of cost per project to aid in priority-setting and overall public policy evaluation of the recommended program. Principal assumptions include:

1. The action projects as proposed comprise a five to ten year program. A ten year horizon is recommended.
2. The revitalization of the Guilford Building will be privately undertaken, and any "write-down" or subsidy will be borne by Guilford County.
3. The health/social services complex will be developed by Guilford County and will not require City funding, other than incidental supporting public improvements.
4. Significant reinvestment will be made privately, either by developers, tenants, property owners, and/or donors. This includes (a) new development, such as office buildings, retail shops (e.g., in the central plaza), housing developments, etc.; (b) rehabilitation, including the residential or office reuse of upper floors in older buildings, historic preservation and other building renovation (e.g., the retail Galleria), and facade improvements; (c) certain site improvements, such as the "urban arcade;" and (d) restoration of the Carolina Theatre.

5. Federal funds are anticipated for a portion of the ground transportation center/Amtrak station, ranging from a 50-50 match to a 90 federal-10 local sharing plan, depending on the availability of federal funds.
6. The Elm Street connections and parking consolidation programs will be included as part of normal capital improvement programming over the next ten year period. However, streetscape and open space projects are broken out because of their high visibility and their non-traditional status in capital improvement programming.
7. The conference center will be built by local colleges and universities or built privately in conjunction with these institutions. However, it is anticipated that some public support may be required to make this project a reality.
8. The central library will cost approximately \$12 million, as previously estimated by the City and Library Board.

Potential City of Greensboro costs are summarized below on a project-by-project basis.

1. Central Plaza

Land Assembly

The developed half of the block is estimated to cost between \$1,875,000 and \$2,250,000, based on 37,500 SF @ \$50 - \$60 SF. Using the total of the higher range, land assembly costs for the central plaza are estimated to be \$3,200,000 (rounded).

Construction

Construction of the central plaza (plaza surface, recessed court, pool, water cascade, and landscaping) is estimated to cost \$30-\$40/SF, for a total estimated cost of \$2,250,000 to \$3,000,000.

TOTAL, CENTRAL PLAZA	\$6,200,000
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2. Mixed Use Development-- Train Station Area

Ground Transportation Center

The precise building program requirements for a ground transportation center (GTC) have not yet been developed. Typically, a ground transportation center is a more basic building, not requiring the finishing or appointments reflective of new Class A downtown office buildings. Assuming a GTC, including a new Amtrak station of 100,000 SF, a facility of this type, exclusive of land acquisition, is estimated to cost from \$5,000,000 to \$6,500,000, based on construction costs of \$50-65/SF.

o	City market- 65,000 SF @ \$10 (open air) =	\$650,000
o	Pedestrianway - 60,000 SF @ \$10 =	\$600,000
o	Plaza area at station - 6,400 SF @ \$20 =	\$128,000
o	Water element =	250,000
o	Old Greensborough Plaza - 40,000 SF @ 20 =	<u>\$800,000</u>
	Total	\$2,500,000 (rounded)

Summary- Mixed use Area

Assuming the high-end cost range for the GTC and parking, and a 50-50 federal/local match, the local share for these facilities would be \$4,812,500 which, when added to the supporting facility costs of \$2,500,000, totals \$7,312,500. (Not included in this analysis are two costs which may be offsetting-- land assembly and environmental mitigation. Typically, underutilized rail lands, other than in unusually good locations, do not command high values. Moreover, concerns over toxic wastes and the attendant costs to mitigate environmental problems may depreciate such properties to negative value levels. It is assumed for purposes of this analysis that the City of Greensboro and the Southern Railway may work out a little "no-cost" arrangement for the City. This, of course, must still be worked out.)

TOTAL, MIXED USE AREA **\$7,312,500**

3. **Retail Galleria**

The proposed retail galleria will require the adaptive reuse of that portion of the 200 Block south on Elm Street, between and including the old Montgomery Ward store and Kress Building.

Assuming a gross project cost of \$65/SF (land and construction),⁽¹⁾ the galleria is estimated to cost \$4,680,000. At an 80 percent loan to value ratio, the project could support a mortgage of \$3,744,000, if the income stream could support a value at least equal to gross cost. The difference of \$936,000 would represent developer's equity, presumably an imputed "as is" value of the property.

(1) This assumes no more than \$10.00/SF for land under roof.

As the following preliminary *pro forma* analysis shows, approximately \$1,440,000 in gap financing will be required, or approximately \$20/SF of development.

Gross Income	\$684,000 (1)
Expenses (at 41%)	282,680
Net Operating Income	401,320
Less 12% Return on Equity	-112,320
Maximum Available for Debt	289,000
Mortgage Supportable	2,300,000 (2)
Mortgage Required	<u>3,740,000 (3)</u>
Shortfall	(\$1,440,000)

4. Facade Improvements

To stimulate the improvement of storefronts, particularly along Elm Street and in Old Greensborough, a revolving fund of \$500,000 for low interest loans is recommended, plus an additional \$500,000 to be made available for grants or interest subsidies for hardship cases.

TOTAL, FACADE IMPROVEMENTS \$1,000,000

5. Conference Center

Although the conference center is proposed to be built by others than the City of Greensboro, some City participation may be required to make the project successful. For purposes of this study, it is assumed that 25 percent of the project may be publicly supported. The proposed 50,000 SF facility is estimated to cost approximately \$6,000,000, based on land costs of \$20/SF under roof and construction costs of \$100/SF.

TOTAL, CONFERENCE CENTER (25 PERCENT SHARE) \$1,500,000

6. Streetscape Projects

Proposed streetscape projects may be undertaken over a five to ten year period and budgeted for as part of the City's Capital Improvements Program. The specific projects are described in more detail in the preceding section of this report. Estimated streetscape project costs include:

-
- (1) 72,000 SF @ 95 percent occupancy, @ \$10/SF rent, third year stabilized. (Note: this estimate exceeds current downtown retail rental levels, but is less than shopping center rent levels.)
 - (2) \$2,300,000 @ 20 years @ 11 percent.
 - (3) Construction costs less land.

<u>Project</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
Commerce Place/Sternberger Walk	\$581,040
Commerce Place/Extension to Market Street	108,100
Sternberger Court (extension to Elm Street)	79,430
Approach Routes - Friendly	276,710
Approach Routes - Market	356,720
Gateway Streets - Greene	175,890
Gateway Streets - Davie	165,170
Carolina Theatre Entrance	73,780
Carolina Theatre Plaza	121,680
February One Place	283,170
Exchange Court	271,180
Washington Street	<u>293,870</u>
Total Costs:	\$2,786,740 or \$2,800,000, rounded

7. **Elm Street Connections**

Unit costs used for construction of the Elm Street connections were derived from discussions with the City Traffic Department. These costs include (a) \$2.90/SF for asphalt paving, (b) \$10.00/LF for curb and gutter, and (c) a mark-up of 55 percent for engineering, inflation, and contingencies. Right-of-way acquisition is based on \$20.00/SF for commercial properties, and \$15.00/SF for industrial properties.

North Elm Connection

The north connection is made from North Elm to North Greene Street, between Smith and Paisley.

Right-of-way acquisition-- 28,030 SF @ \$20.00/SF	\$560,600
Construction-- Asphalt paving, 18,000 SF @ \$2.90/SF = \$53,940 X 1.55	83,607
Construction-- Curb and gutter, 1,820 LF @ \$10.00= \$18,200 X 1.55	28,210
Total, North End Connection	\$672,417 or \$672,000, rounded

South Elm Connection

The south connection is made from South Elm Street to South Davie Street through the underpass between McGee and Asheboro.

Construction-- Asphalt paving, 8,500 SF @ \$2.90/SF= \$24,650 X 1.55	\$38,207
Construction-- Curb and gutter, 775 LF @ \$10.00/LF= \$7,750 X 1.55	12,012
Construction-- Island, abutment modifications, est.	100,000
Total, South Elm Connection	\$150,219 or \$150,000, rounded

Summary

Central Library	\$12,000,000
Central Plaza	6,200,000
Mixed Use Area Redevelopment	7,312,500
Retail Galleria	1,440,000
Facade Improvements	1,000,000
Conference Center	1,500,000
Streetscape Projects	2,800,000
Elm Street Connections	<u>822,000</u>
Total	\$33,074,500 or \$33,000,000, rounded

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OTHER ACTIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

The planning process does not end with this report. The following describes other actions and future studies which might be undertaken to further the planning and development process.

Parking Consolidation

The consolidation of existing parking areas could do much to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Center City parking system. The combination and redesign of existing lots would improve access and internal circulation, and provide additional parking spaces in many locations. Parking consolidation in some blocks would require only the remarking of existing surfaces, while more extensive redesign, repair and resurfacing may be required in other areas. Parking lot consolidation is particularly desirable along Davie and Greene Streets, adjacent to the high intensity portions of the Center City.

In most blocks, parking lot consolidation will entail utilizing the property of several different land owners, and will most likely require a high degree of cooperation on the part of individual merchants and businessmen. In general, parking lot consolidation could be implemented in the following manner:

- o The City could assume full responsibility for parking lot consolidation. The City could assemble land and undertake redesign as a public improvement project.
- o Parking lot consolidation could be undertaken as a private improvement project. Property owners and businesspersons within a block (or designated area) would share in the cost of redesign and repair of existing parking areas, perhaps with the support and assistance of a downtown business association or other organization.
- o Parking lot consolidation could be undertaken as a joint public-private endeavor. While affected property owners would share in the cost of the project, the City could provide assistance in the form of funding, design and engineering services, the provision of landscaping or other improvements, and/or other incentives.
- o If the City elects to pursue Tax Increment Financing or Municipal Service District designation for all or a portion of the Center City, parking lot consolidation could be undertaken as one of a number of public and private improvement and development projects within the larger district.

Zoning Regulations

Zoning recommendations for the Greensboro Central City are designed to fulfill two following objectives:

1. To protect sound existing development; and
2. To ensure that all new development achieves the desired objectives as to function, physical arrangement, access and parking provisions, design standards, and personal health, safety and convenience.

Greensboro's Zoning Ordinance provides substantial flexibility for development and redevelopment in the central area because of the extensive coverage of the *Commercial R* and *Commercial NR* districts. Although the land-use objectives of this plan could probably be achieved

within the framework of the existing zoning arrangement, the organization of the downtown into discrete development districts may be better served by more specific zoning district designations.

The following zoning modifications should be considered.

1. Consideration should be given to designating Land Use Area B: *Retail and Commercial Core*, and Area C: *Specialty Commercial District* into a *CBD Retail District*.

The CBD Retail District would be the compact shopping area in the heart of Central Greensboro, designed to provide a high quality of pedestrian amenities. Permitted uses would be those retail uses, which serve the specialty needs of the metropolitan and regional market (by virtue of their variety, quality, or specialization of merchandise), those retail activities which serve the daily convenience needs of employees and shoppers, and those specialty retail activities serving visitors and tourists. Retail use should be permitted at all levels, while offices, other services, and residential uses would be permitted above the ground floor level only.

2. Consideration should be given to designated land use Area A: *High Intensity Office District* as a *CBD Office and Service District*.

This district would serve as the high-intensity, administrative, financial and business center of the Greensboro metropolitan area. Retail trade and service uses would also be permitted in this district, although size limitations may be applied to all non-office uses.

Accessory parking per user should not be required in these districts; however, structure parking should be provided on a district-wide basis by the City or through public-private organizations such as the Greensboro Center City Corporation. Other recommendations include:

- o *Residential 60* district designation should be considered for land use Area M: *Southeast Residential District*. Zoning in the area today essentially follows the existing admixture of existing land-uses. A *Residential 60* district may help support the gradual infusion of infill medium density housing in this area, although some industrial uses may end up remaining as non-conforming uses.
- o Consideration should be given to downsizing the *Residential 60* designation in land use Area L: *Northwest Residential District*. This single-family enclave is vulnerable to change, and if protection of this district through property rehabilitation is to be achieved, a lesser zoning designation may be required.

Expansion of Downtown Greensboro Historic District

Consideration should be given to expanding the Downtown Greensboro Historic District to include all or most of the area between the existing district and Edward Murrow Boulevard, south of the Southern Railway railroad tracks and north of East Lee Street.

This area is not homogenous, and the older, historic residential structures are scattered and intermixed with industrial uses. The area should be studied to determine whether district designation could both preserve the residential structures and accommodate the orderly redevelopment of non-use within the area.

The heart of the implementation strategy, however, rests with the specific projects and actions described earlier in this report. The following section presents an overview of project financing alternatives.

PROJECT FINANCING

Financing downtown revitalization has changed dramatically since the Sixties, primarily as a result of the elimination of federal categorical grant programs such as urban renewal and neighborhood development. As a result, a wide range of creative and new financing techniques have emerged, bringing together local public and private organizations and private developers and investors.

Public financing involvement in downtown revitalization falls into several general categories:

1. *Public costs related to the installation of public improvements and supporting facilities and the development of public buildings.* This may include costs necessary to acquire land associated with such public improvements, and costs for engineering contingencies, and interest.
2. *Public costs involved in assembling land for private development.* Typically, costs borne by the public sector are those which are the difference between (a) the cost of acquiring the properties, demolishing the buildings, relocating the site occupants, and preparing the site, and (b) the disposition price received from the resale of the cleared land. This is referred to as the land "write down." Even though a substantial portion of the acquisition cost may be recovered through resale of the land, the full cost of acquisition is usually borne up front by the city. Bonding or some other form of financing may therefore be required in order to first purchase property at full market value, recovering the disposition proceeds at a later date.
3. *Public costs involved in providing incentives to private developers.* Providing needed public improvements and supporting facilities and assisting in the assemblage of land for new development are unquestionably forms of incentives which benefit private developers. However, where certain types of development are desired by the City on key sites in the downtown or elsewhere in the community, incentives or inducements may be required which are more directly tied to the project's financial feasibility needs. In such cases, the City (perhaps working through a public/private development entity) provides or causes to be provided financing assistance to ensure a predetermined but fair return to the prospective developer. This may, of course, overlap with and include the incentive base already provided through the City's provision of site improvements or supporting facilities or assistance in land assemblage.

Private investment in new or expanded development in the Greensboro Center City must first be based on market demand. While well-planned projects, effective promotion, and various mixed-use combinations may help to create augmented market demand, there must at least be a demonstrated base-line demand to elicit and sustain developer, lender, and investor interest.

Secondly, private investment in new or expanded development in the Greensboro Center City must be financially feasible, i.e., the rental or sales income derived from any given project must be sufficient to cover the project's operating costs and debt service, and still provide a fair return to developers and investors.

The element of risk in developing in the downtown must be clearly defined, including an assessment of profit potential and the tradeoffs between risks and rewards. These will be carefully considered by developers, lenders, and investors who could choose alternative opportunities for investment, e.g., investors may look at types of investments other than real estate, and developers may look at other locations in suburban environments or in other cities. Therefore, while a project on the surface may be considered financially feasible in terms of contemporary real estate standards, the perception of higher risks in the downtown may require that developers, lenders, and investors receive higher than normal returns.

There is no question that continued public investment in the downtown can be very helpful in improving the downtown area's overall investment climate. However, if the markets are not strong or if public policy considerations dictate public direction and management of private development decisions, a gap may emerge between the amount a developer normally finances and the total amount needed for the project. The question is then where do these "gap" monies come from? One option may be that these monies come in the form of private investments by local persons or corporations in the equity requirements of a project. These persons or corporations may be driven by a shared commitment in the revitalization goals of the Center City, and thus may forgo a return on the investment if the principal can be paid back over a period of years. If the projects involve historical preservation meeting the requirements of the 1986 Tax Reform Act, such equity investors may also share in the remaining tax credits still available under the Act.

But also, public funds may be used to fill this gap. The source of the public contribution may come from normal City revenue sources. The more common technique is to finance this local public contribution from the future value created by the development project. This may take the form of tax increment financing,¹ discussed later in this report, or public participation in the future revenues derived from the project. The latter could include sharing in net operating income after a guaranteed break point for the developer, or participation in value appreciation gained through the private refinancing or sale of the project.

While the City must play an important role in providing gap financing assistance, more communities are utilizing the services of downtown organizations or public-private partnerships to be involved in the financing and to interface with private developers, lenders, and local business interests. Several types of development organizations are typically involved in managing and financing downtown revitalization efforts: These are:

- o *Local Development Corporation.* Local development corporations are quasi-public, not-for-profit entities distinct from municipal corporations. Their powers are limited but they usually enjoy some tax advantages. Such an organization can be very effective when working in partnership with the city.
- o *Private Development Corporation.* Private development corporations are typically limited-dividend entities established by private parties under special state enabling legislation. While such entities in some states may be endowed with eminent domain powers, they typically lack the public accountability that city agencies possess.

¹Tax increment financing is not now permitted in North Carolina. However, there is renewed interest in the State to adopt the tax increment financing tool, even though previous efforts have been unsuccessful.

- o *Private Development Organization.* Private development organizations are typically not-for-profit organizations that act as a catalytic entity to initiate and coordinate projects. Such organizations have the ability to mobilize public and private resources, but have limited capabilities to implement long-term financing and rarely are politically accountable.

The role of Greensboro Center City Corporation could be enlarged to serve in this capacity in Greensboro. The purposes for which the corporation is organized are "to promote, encourage and assist the revitalization and economic health and stability of the general area of the City of Greensboro... including the downtown area, as a means of furthering the public health, safety and convenience... ". This includes the following specific purposes:

- o To engage in, promote, encourage or assist any "downtown revitalization project" (as defined in Section 160A-536 of the North Carolina General Statutes);
- o To promote, encourage or assist any community development, urban redevelopment, planning, historic properties, or any public enterprise, including projects, programs, and enterprises undertaken pursuant to Chapter 160A of the North Carolina General Statutes and any other applicable North Carolina General Statutes, and amendments thereto:
- o To acquire, dispose of, sell, lease (as lessor or lessee) real or personal property, and construct, convert, renovate, or expand public facilities, including but not limited to, public auditoriums and coliseums, and public parking garages and other public parking facilities;
- o To provide and perform services, facilities, functions and planning, promotional and developmental activities; and
- o To contract with the City of Greensboro and any other public or private bodies to provide or perform, or to assist in providing or performing, the services, facilities, functions, activities, programs, projects and enterprises referred to above.

If the Greensboro Center City Corporation is willing to accept an enlarged role in downtown revitalization efforts, it will eventually need staff and a development director or coordinator to administer the Corporation's activities. These activities could include solidifying local private sector involvement in developer solicitation and selection, marketing, negotiating, and financing, supported of course by the City's involvement in providing public improvements and supporting facilities.

The Greensboro Center City Corporation could play a major role in altering downtown market conditions to promote development. Together, the public and private sectors can alter the market by increasing the demand for the developed space, assisting in site assembly, providing innovative land use controls, investing public funds in downtown, providing special taxation policy, providing project improvements and public facilities, and sharing costs with the private sector. In turn, this should make the private sector more responsive to becoming involved in downtown Greensboro's development plan.

Another role the corporation could play would be to provide an umbrella organization and structure for retail entities in the downtown. This can be done through the implementation of a centralized retail management plan. Centralized retail management (CRM) is based on shopping center management techniques adapted for use in an established downtown retail area. It is a set of coordinated activities undertaken to establish a vital downtown retail environment

and increase downtown's share of the regional retail market. CRM entails the creation of an entity to coordinate functions such as marketing, promotion, maintenance, security, streetscape improvements, parking and leasing. This would be especially helpful in the Old Greensborough Historic District. Several existing organizations, such as Old Greensborough Preservation Society, Greensboro Merchants' Association, and the United Arts Council, are currently undertaking similar or related efforts and these should be closely coordinated with CRM.

CRM emphasizes the importance of achieving a retail mix that responds to a dynamic market and attracts a wide variety of shoppers. Accordingly, a significant objective is the development of a leasing plan and an agreement among property owners to carry out such a plan. A related objective is agreement among property owners and retailers to cooperate in business hours, advertising and the financing of joint activities such as maintenance and promotions. This agreement may be embodied in a master lease and common covenants administered by property owners.

CRM builds on many efforts to revitalize retailing in the downtown-- physical improvements to streets and facades, formation of merchants associations, organization of special events and promotions, and establishment of assessment districts to support enhanced maintenance and security. It packages them with the newer attention to control over retail mix and cooperation among downtown property owners. It seeks to create organization and financial arrangements to give some permanence to this cooperation. And, impelled by a shared vision of a renewed downtown, it aims to recreate the most basic of downtown amenities-- a vital, thriving retail marketplace. Among the cities where CRM has been successfully implemented are Neenah, Wisconsin; Eugene, Oregon; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Shelby, New York; and Hartford, Connecticut. Oak Park, Illinois has just adopted CRM.

To the extent possible, state and federal resources should be considered to aid in Greensboro's downtown revitalization program. The primary state tool for aiding downtown revitalization is the Municipal Service District Act of 1973. This Act establishes that the city council of any city may define any number of service districts in order to finance, provide, or maintain for the districts one or more services, facilities or functions in addition to or to a greater extent than those financed, provided or maintained for the entire city.

Downtown revitalization projects include improvements to water mains, sanitary sewer mains, storm sewer mains, electric power distribution lines, gas mains, street lighting, streets and sidewalks, including rights-of-way and easements therefor, the construction of pedestrian malls, bicycle paths, overhead pedestrian walkways, sidewalk canopies, and parking facilities both on-street and off-street, and other improvements intended to relieve traffic congestion in the central city, improve pedestrian and vehicular access thereto, reduce the incidence of crime therein, and generally to further the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience by promoting the economic health of the central city or downtown area. In addition, a downtown revitalization project may, in order to revitalize a downtown area and further the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience, include the provision of city services or functions in addition to or to a greater extent than those provided or maintained for the entire city. A downtown revitalization project may also include promotion and developmental activities (such as sponsoring festivals and markets in the downtown area, promoting business investment in the downtown area, helping to coordinate public and private actions in the downtown area, and developing and issuing publications on the downtown area) designed to improve the economic well-being of the downtown area and further the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience. Exercise of the authority granted by this Article to undertake downtown revitalization projects financed by a municipal service district shall not prejudice the city's authority to undertake urban renewal projects in the same area.

As indicated earlier, many federal community development programs have suffered substantial reductions in funding levels in recent years. Some agencies, like the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Economic Development Administration (EDA), have been reduced to a level of funding that has all but eliminated these programs. The days of generous federal financial participation are past and may never return. Careful monitoring of federal funding and program availability, however, may uncover discrete funding opportunities from time to time.

But most importantly, there is considerable uncertainty regarding the level and type of urban assistance programs which may be forthcoming with the new federal administration. Most urban observers believe that the new administration will be more responsive to the needs of cities than was the Reagan administration. Therefore, for purposes of the Center City revitalization strategy, dependence on federal funding assistance should not be considered at this time. However, this should not discourage Greensboro from seeking federal assistance, if and when new programs become available, or from using remaining but limited programs where needed or appropriate, such as UMTA funds for the proposed ground transportation center, or Section 202 financing for moderate income elderly housing.

The recommended development strategy identified a range of public and private actions to be taken to stimulate renewed investment and growth in the Greensboro Center City. These are discussed below in terms of their financing options.

1. The Elm Street streetscape program has already been budgeted for and financed.
2. The Carolina Theatre will be restored privately.
3. Projects to be undertaken by entities other than the City of Greensboro include (a) the County Health Campus, (b) the Guilford Building adaptive reuse, (c) the urban arcade, (d) residential/office upper floor reuse, and (e) new private office, hotel, or market-rate residential developments, where no land assembly or gap financing is required.
4. Projects to be undertaken with partial City funding include (a) ground transportation center (federal/local sharing), (b) retail galleria (possible City participation in gap financing), (c) facade improvements (possible City participation in revolving loan fund), (d) conference center (possible local participation), and (e) residential developments where land assembly or gap financing assistance may be required.
5. The City of Greensboro will essentially be responsible for (a) central library, (b) central plaza, and (c) the streetscape improvements. Additionally, the City will play a major role in the mixed use area redevelopment project, and a possible supporting role in the retail galleria, facade improvements, and conference center projects.

The two principal funding sources that should be considered to assist the City and to supplement any financial commitments the City and private sector may make to revitalize downtown Greensboro include:

- o *Municipal Service District.* As indicated above, this would entail the creation of the district for a designated area in the downtown to defray costs of public improvements, special events and promotions, and maintenance and security. This, of course, would involve reinvestment in the downtown on the part of property owners and businesses in the improvement district.

- o *Tax Increment Financing (TIF)*. This is a tool already used in over 40 states throughout the Country. It is a tool which allows a municipality to institute a revitalization program that will capture, as a funding device for paying for redevelopment costs, those real property taxes derived from the redeveloped property which exceed the real property taxes derived from the property prior to redevelopment. There is a need to remove whatever constitutional or legal barrier to the use of TIF that may exist in the State of North Carolina. The City of Greensboro is urged to join other cities in the State to work for the adoption of appropriate legislation. This one tool, more than all others, may be the most important to revitalizing downtown Greensboro.

The following Table, *Total Estimated Development: Size and Value*, summarizes the various developments that may occur within the Project Area. Assuming that all this development occurs and reaches full stabilization in terms of occupancy, income and assessment, a total of approximately \$76,880,000 in assessed valuation would be generated. Based on the most current aggregate tax rate of 0.012442 (or 1.2442 percent) for the City and County, this new value would produce approximately \$956,540 in real estate tax increments.

If tax increment financing were available in North Carolina, tax increment financing bonds could be sold and supported by this annual estimate of revenue. For purposes of estimating gross bond potential, the following assumptions are used:

1. Term of the bonds is twenty years.
2. Average annual interest on bonds is 9.75 percent.
3. All projects stabilize in the fifth year after bonds are sold.
4. Principal is retired over fifteen years, or years 6 through 20.
5. No capitalized interest.

Based on the foregoing assumptions, a gross bond amount of approximately \$7,000,000 could be realized. This amount could be used to reduce total project costs from approximately \$32,000,000 to \$23,000,000.

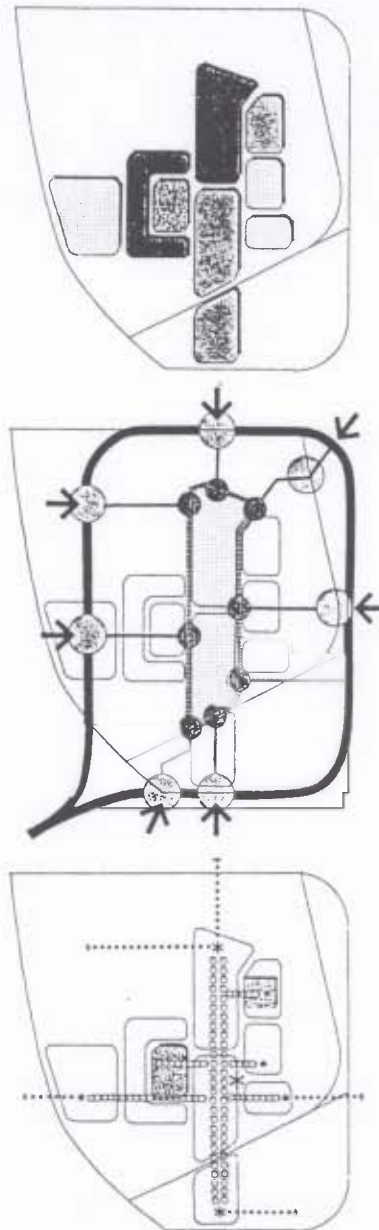
TOTAL ESTIMATED DEVELOPMENT: SIZE AND VALUE

12,000 SF retail in Central Plaza @ \$70/SF	\$840,000
72,000 SF retail galleria @ \$70/SF	5,040,000
30,000 SF private use in GTC @ \$50/SF	1,500,000
100,000 SF of rehabilitated upper floor space @ \$40/SF	4,000,000
400,000 SF of infill retail @ \$25/SF	10,000,000
400,000 SF of new office space @ \$90/SF	36,000,000
100,000 SF of Guilford Building reuse @ \$45/SF	4,500,000
400 new housing units @ \$37,500/DU	<u>15,000,000</u>
TOTAL	\$76,880,000

In the final analysis, the key is leverage. To be sure, there will be direct City involvement in the financing of downtown revitalization. The private and public sectors can create partnerships that bring their resources together in a synergistic manner, with incentives provided from improvement district assessments, service district taxes, tax increment financing (if ever implemented), and other state and federal assists, however limited the latter two may be. The future, enhanced tax and job base of the downtown cannot be excluded from this equation. The value captured through revitalization represents a payoff and future resource to make current and proposed investments justified.

CENTER CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Greensboro, North Carolina



August, 1990

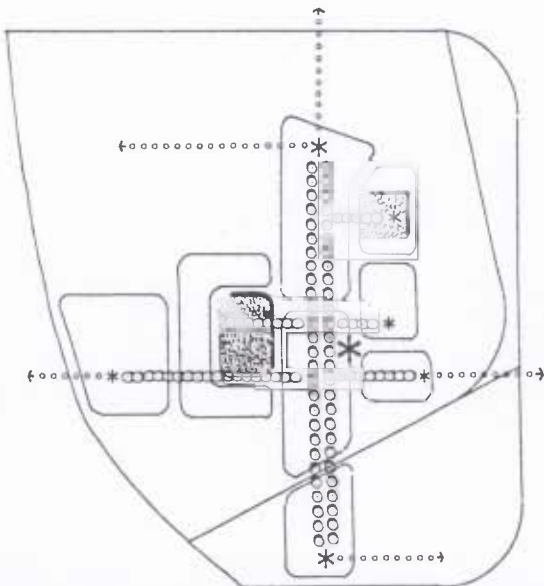
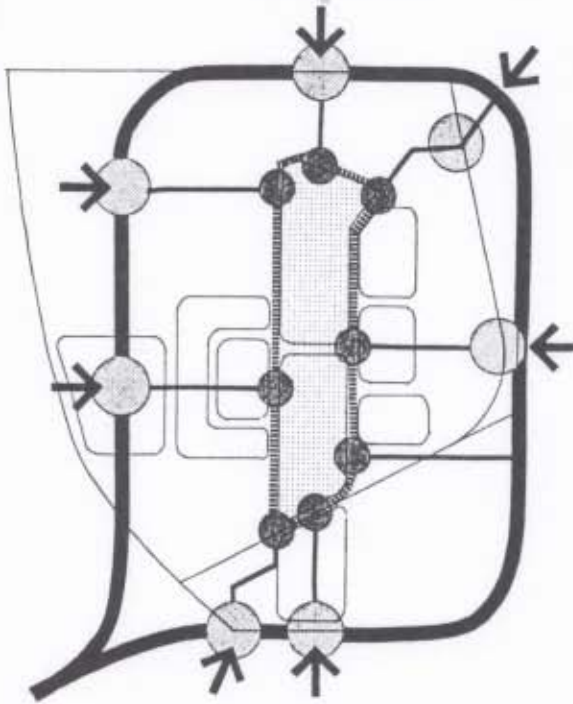
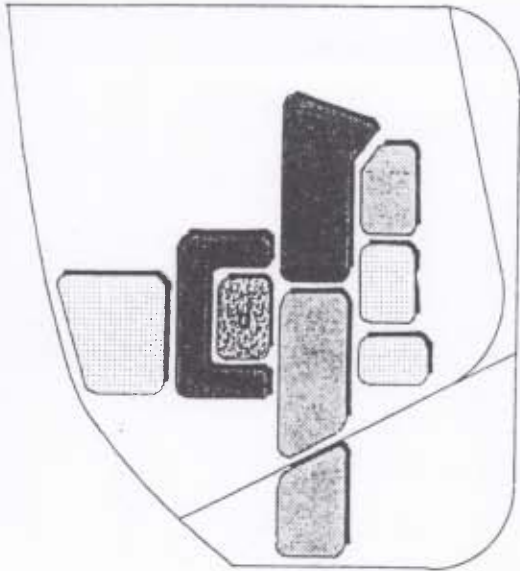
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introduction

Center City Development Plan
Greensboro, North Carolina

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the results of the *Greensboro Center City Development Plan*. It includes a review of recommended plans, projects and actions for improving and strengthening various aspects of the Center City study area.

The report includes four sections:

1. **Center City Goals and Objectives**, which describe an overall vision for the Greensboro Center City.
2. **Center City Concept Plan**, which provides a basic framework for future land-use, transportation and urban design within the Center City, based on local goals and objectives.
3. **Refined Plan and Development Strategy**, which describes a series of public and private projects and actions essential to implementing the Concept Plan.
4. **Implementation**, which summarizes estimated project costs and project financing, and outlines funding sources and implementation techniques for carrying out key plan and project recommendations.

The material included in this report is the result of numerous meetings and discussions with City staff and the Center City Committee, and the report incorporates input and comments from numerous sources and individuals within the community. This final plan report is supplemented by a number of other working papers, memoranda and preliminary reports produced during the planning process. These include the *Center City Profile*, which documented existing conditions, issues and concerns within the study area, and the *Phase II Report*, which presented planning principles and standards, goals and objectives, and preliminary plans and projects.

Completion of this final phase represents an important milestone in the Greensboro Center City planning process. In addition to setting forth a concept plan and development strategy to build upon, it clearly lays out the range of projects and actions that must be carried out in the future if the plan and strategy are to be successfully implemented.

Achieving consensus on the broader planning and strategy framework established in this report is a significant threshold upon which to build. But it is not enough. To begin with, there are opportunities which may be captured, but these will require local initiative and effort. Secondly, the public and private sectors together must share in this vision of the new Center City if it is to become a reality. And finally, if historic preservation and building renovation are to occur on a meaningful scale, new development and amenity must lead the way.

Renewed vitality and confidence in the Center City can make it economically viable and strong. Adding grace and beauty makes it also exciting.