

## Community Tour Summary

Date:	01/22/2020
Time:	9:00am-12:30pm
Location:	Throughout the town's planning jurisdiction
Materials:	<none>

Town staff provided the consultant team a tour of community sites and character areas, with emphasis on history and potential, especially as each location related to currently adopted plans. This gave the consultant team an in-depth introduction to the community and its recent challenges and successes as well as opportunities and plans for future growth. The consultant team took notes and pictures. The following summary describes findings from the community tour.

### Landscaping

#### Tree preservation

1. Tree preservation and perimeter buffers are effective, but may pose a challenge when required in more dense development/redevelopment locations, such as downtown.

#### Buffering between incompatible uses

2. Opportunity exists for better communicating landscaping requirements where residential development abuts thoroughfares.

#### Landscaping regulations

3. Town allows median landscaping with agreement from HOA or POA to provide maintenance.
4. An opportunity may exist to streamline the landscaping regulations to simplify compliance and yet still maintain the high-quality outcomes.
5. Current regulations for street buffers only require trees – nothing smaller. Opportunity to enhance flexibility by requiring other types of materials.
6. Review standards for enhanced landscaping or signature features at neighborhood entrances.
7. Recognizing appropriate size limitations for trees by location (buffer strip, behind sidewalk, etc.) is important.
8. Explore the possibility of adding colorful (i.e. – non-green) landscaping elements to landscaping requirements, but only if it can be balanced by a reasonably low enforcement burden on Town staff.



### Transportation

#### Highway corridor overlays

9. Any proposed modifications must maintain high standards for appearance and use regulation along the corridor.
10. Further investigation may reveal an opportunity to streamline the corridor overlays and simplify compliance while maintaining the high standards of each corridor.

### Transit Oriented Development

11. Plans for future high speed or high-frequency transit locations need to be accompanied by context-sensitive development standards that support the vision of the Comprehensive Plan.

### Sidewalks

12. Sidewalk requirements are generally well-conceived and effective, but some review could provide enhanced nuance in certain locations.

### Highway 401 corridor

13. This area is poised for growth and has legacy uses constructed under pre-Town regulations.
14. This corridor is currently planned for an NCDOT super-street upgrade.



### Street connectivity and access management

15. Reducing individual driveways onto major thoroughfares will preserve traffic capacity and reduce congestion.
16. Review of existing connectivity standards is important to ensure new neighborhoods become part of the existing fabric.

## Planned Development Districts

### TND district

17. Has well-conceived standards, but is rarely (if ever) used and should be re-evaluated for relevance, appeal, and effectiveness.

### PRD district

18. Decoupling the PRD standards from the R12 district could bring clarity and refine guidance for new planned development projects.
19. Opportunity may exist to better communicate desired development quality in the PRD district.

## Nonresidential development

### Architectural design standards

20. Clarification of the architectural design requirements would benefit builders, business-owners, and the Town. Standards should include variations and design elements that accent the structure and contribute to the public realm.
21. Lighting standards – Need to incorporate LED standards
22. Town would like to standardize requirements such as transparency, rooflines, building offset. Currently each development makes their own design guidelines.



### Site design standards

23. Town satisfied with trash screening requirements

24. Currently lacking retaining wall height limits and development standards

## Downtown Garner and focal redevelopment sites

### Streetscape activation

- 25. Strong desire to activate the streetscape and add active uses like restaurants.
- 26. Opportunity exists to create vertical mixed-use standards, especially in the Downtown Core and Neighborhood districts.

### Development character

- 27. Need to review standards, especially for density/intensity, in appropriate focal locations. Allowing higher density in select locations can help achieve other Town goals.
- 28. Establishing focused high-density redevelopment standards for areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan will make these areas more attractive and more likely to transition/redevelop. In these locations especially, the market should determine density and building heights.
- 29. A neighborhood character district is one option to preserve the residential neighborhood on the east side of downtown.

### Streets

- 30. Alternate street cross-sections are needed for the narrow rights-of-way in the downtown area. Coordination with other Town departments, including Fire and Engineering, will be important.
  - 30.1. There are many narrow streets perpendicular to Main Street. Need to decide how to treat them, i.e. - will they require (or even accommodate) curb and gutter?

### Parking

- 31. Commercial conversion (especially for houses on Main) is problematic because of parking requirements, but opportunity exists for improvement and redevelopment

## Recreation requirements

### Active recreation

- 32. Currently there are no “active recreation” requirements for new developments, although open space provision is appropriate.

### Fee-in-lieu

- 33. The town has an active fee-in-lieu program for recreation.
- 34. Better coordination of new development with greenway construction and dedication is desirable.

## Stormwater and retention ponds

### Amenity sites and fencing

- 35. Opportunity to evaluate community receptiveness to transforming stormwater management facilities through enhanced landscaping, amenity provision, and reduced fencing standards.

## Signage

### Signs

36. Desire to encourage high-quality monument signs along roadways.
37. Opportunity to refine landscaping requirements for certain types of signs.
38. Need illumination standards for illuminated signs.
39. Need to incorporate new technology – e.g. LED bulbs.
40. Master sign plan regulation is problematic to enforce and may run afoul of enforcing property-owners association regulations.



### Other areas of note

#### Cluster mailbox units (CBUs)

41. Need to develop standards for site design, landscaping, lighting, and cover from the elements.

#### Temporary offices

42. Review standards for modular building use for construction offices and temporary home sales offices.