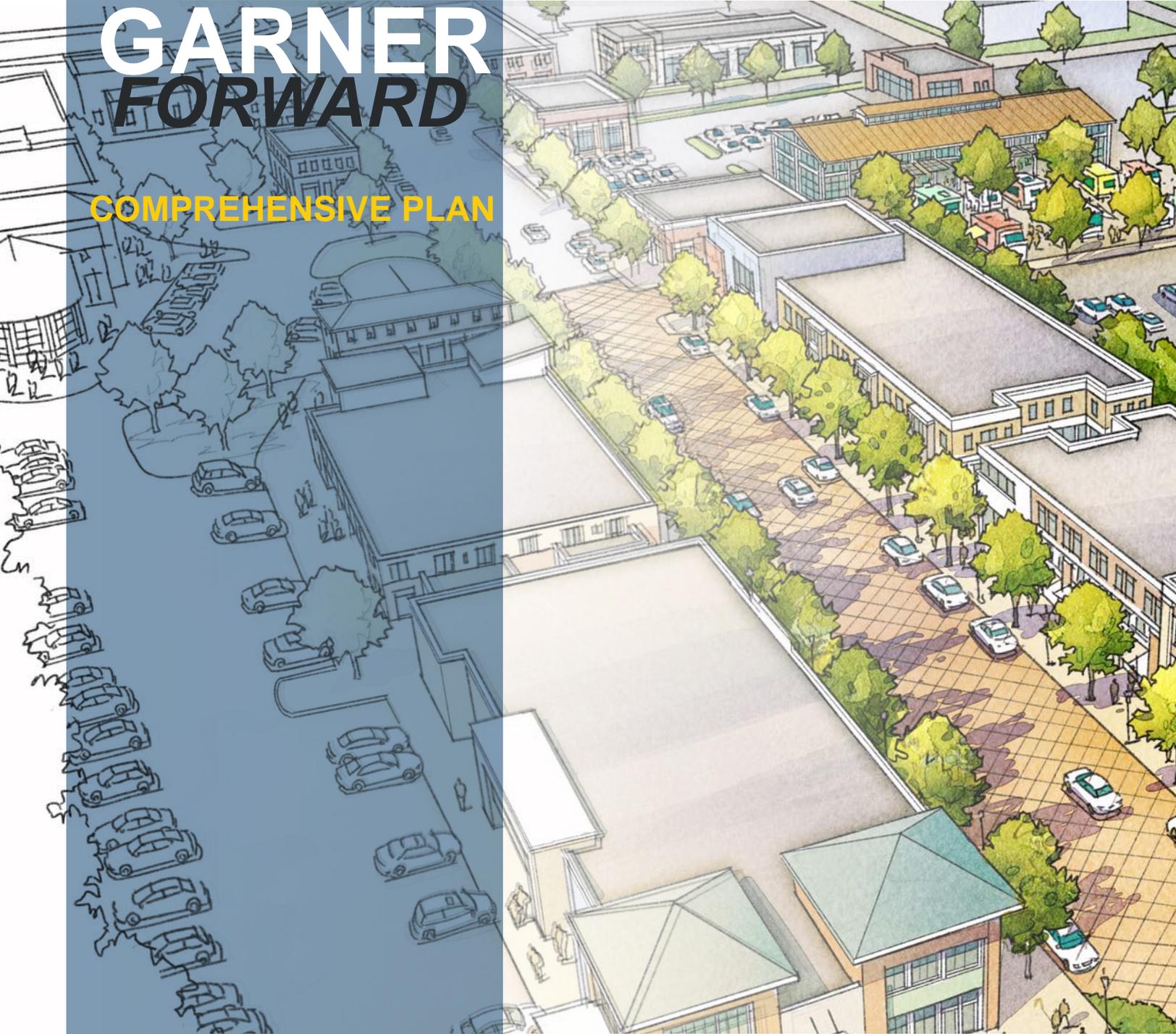


The best way to predict the future is to create it.

*Peter Drucker*

# GARNER FORWARD

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



DRAFT | 7.6.2017



**Garner Forward**

prepared by Stantec Consulting Services Inc.



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*FRONT COVER - Fifth Avenue Concept Design by Ashley Bonawitz, Stantec Consulting*



# AN INTRODUCTION

## TO OUR COMMUNITY

The Garner *Forward* Comprehensive Plan, using an extensive outreach effort, dedicated Steering Committee, and assemblage of subject matter experts, explores issues and directions for our Town.

Comprehensive planning, the process whereby a community hires experts to create broad directions for the community, has enjoyed a renaissance in recent years thanks in large part to the development of better, more informative technical methods. Technical analyses that used to be reserved for smaller, more detailed studies, coupled with an interest in making the plans more approachable in look and "feel" to the public, have started to change the image of the comprehensive plan. The Garner *Forward* Plan is really two plans: this document, which addresses land development and policy, and the Transportation Plan that focuses on specific mobility improvements.

The Comprehensive and Transportation Plans that comprise the **Garner *Forward*** process are very relevant and purposeful to Garner in several ways:

- This Plan is not "project-driven," but instead contemplates future land use, transportation, green space/recreation, utility, housing, and other issues together that result in realistic projects
- Provides an integrated pathway for decision makers who are asked to balance disparate community needs
- Allows the Town to assess current and anticipated market conditions, and how recent events like new transit subsidies and the advent of I-540 may change our thinking from the last plan (2006).

This plan starts with this introduction, then presents an understanding of key issues and goals before proceeding on to recommendations and implementation. This is a "living document" - ask our staff about how to make great things happen here.



Housing, Character, Transportation, Recreation, and Commerce are detailed in the planning documents

## A YEAR OF MOVING FORWARD

The contract with Stantec Consulting is executed, and Garner Forward begins. Website and survey launch.

5.16



Most of the data collection, including focus groups, is underway or completed. Existing Conditions Report begins.

8.16



First workshop (one day) occurs. Initial topic areas (goals) are developed and sent to Steering Committee.

10.16



Second workshop (three day) occurs. Conditions + Directions, economic reports completed.

12.16



First draft reports of the Comprehensive and Transportation plans are developed and submitted to the Town.

3.17



Public engagement completed. Final draft ready for Town Council review and adoption by or before this date.

10.17



The Garner Forward project essentially occurred on a one-year timeframe. This schedule allowed sufficient energy to be placed into public engagement, coordination

with the Steering Committee at seven meetings, technical assessments, development / refinement of report recommendations, and production of the draft and final reports.

# THE PROCESS OF GARNER FORWARD

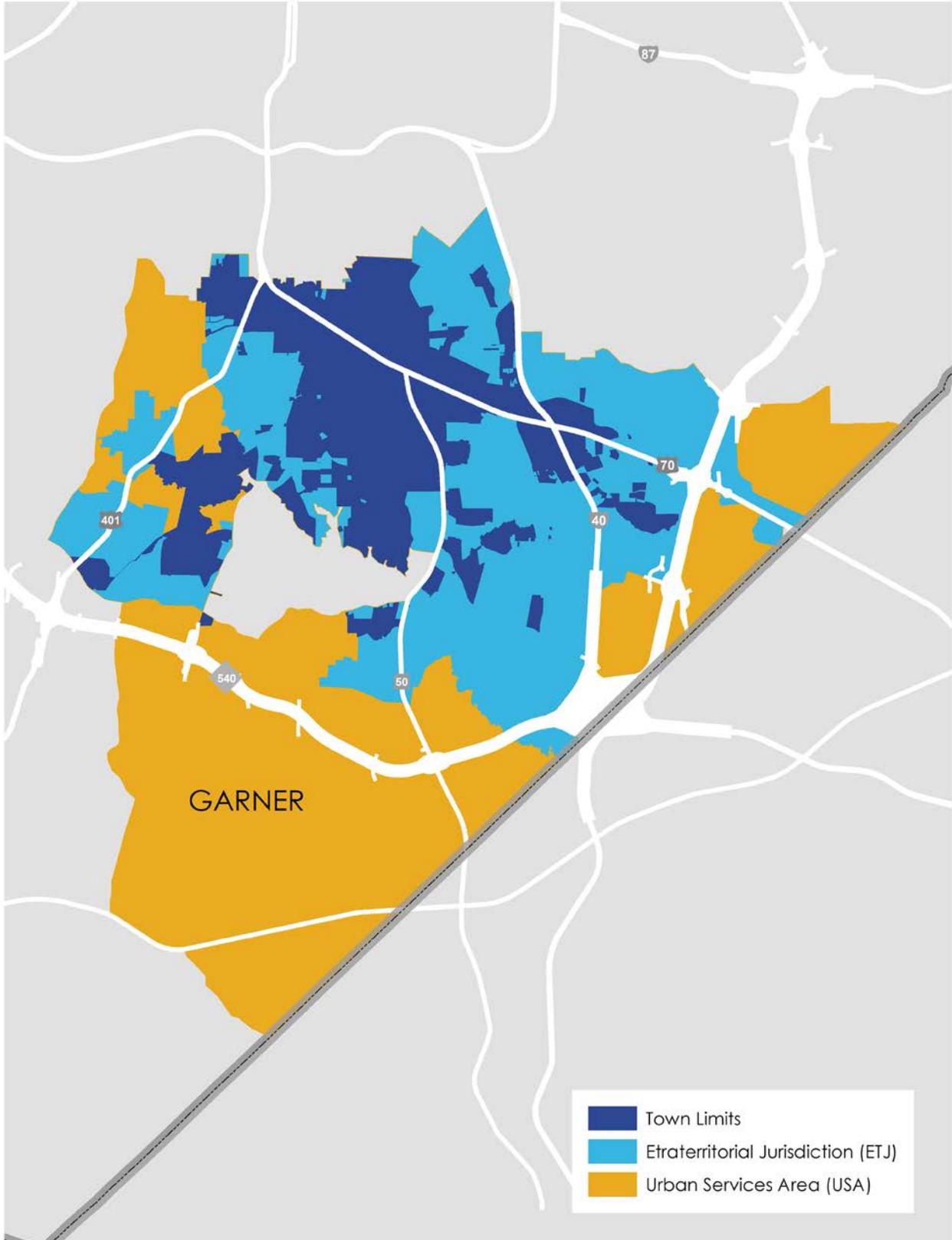
The process that produced a completely new comprehensive plan and a completely overhauled and updated transportation plan for Garner took about 15 months from the execution of the contract to final plan adoption.

The complete list of tasks is probably much longer than the public suspects, and most steps were collaborative efforts of the public, staff, consulting team, or some combination of everyone. Here is a partial list of the tasks and deliverable items in (roughly) the order in which they were completed. The items highlighted in blue were opportunities for the public or stakeholders (represented by the Steering Committee) to engage the process and project team.

- Development of document style sheet
- Contract negotiation and inception
- Launch of first (issues) survey
- Develop mapping of known infrastructure (greenways, roads, water, sewer)
- Review of past plans and policies
- Focus Group Meetings (9)
- Steering Committee Meetings (7)
- Development of transportation deficiency mapping
- Economics and demographics summary
- Conversion of key statistics into "info-graphic" images
- Conduct of first, one-day workshop and presentation
- Development of and changes to Existing Conditions + Directions Report
- Development and numerous refinements to future land use map
- Development of new and changes to existing land use place types
- Three-Day Workshop and Presentation
- Presentations to appointed and elected officials (4)
- Development of strategies, refinement across five topic categories
- Launch of second (feedback) survey
- Preparation of Draft Reports (Comprehensive and Transportation Plans)
- Preparation of Final Reports



Website, Award-Winning Plan Video, and Charrette (top to bottom)



# COMMENTS & CONTEXT

## OUR REGION AND OUR PLACE IN IT

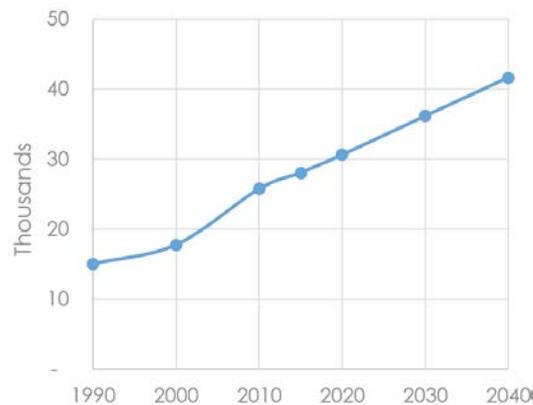
The Town of Garner is located in Wake County, one of the fastest-growing regions in North Carolina.

The Town of Garner is positioned in central North Carolina, south of the capital city of Raleigh. Due to its location near major transportation arteries it has maintained a small-town atmosphere while still enjoying the benefits of accessibility to metropolitan areas, universities, and Research Triangle Park.

Garner is one of Wake County's largest communities, both in terms of population and landmass. From 2000 to 2015, Garner experienced significant growth with a population rate increase of 58 percent, as compared to Wake County (63%), and North Carolina (25%). The most recent population estimate in December 2016 reported 29,000 residents living in the town.

The percentage of adults 55 years old and over in Garner (24.4%) is the highest of any

municipality in the county (Wake County, 20.2%). Following the trends of many other similar sized communities, the town is becoming home to an increasing number of empty-nesters.





Photography by: Michelle F. Howell

### **Natural Environments**

Lake Benson (pictured above) is a significant natural resource for the Town: a wildlife habitat, a water resource, and a popular recreational area. The Town of Garner manages over 271 acres of parkland for active use, with more than four miles of paved trails. The White Deer Park Nature Center, first proposed in the Garner Parks and Recreation 1998 Comprehensive Master Plan, was the Town's first nature park. The facility met community expectations to be environmentally sensitive, preserve significant natural area and wildlife habitats, and have a strong educational focus.

## HISTORIC AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS



### The Garner Railroad Station

Garner's origins are linked to the construction of the North Carolina railroad in the 1850's. Prior to its incorporation as a town, Garner was settled before the Revolutionary War as far back as 1756. It's status solidified when the North Carolina Railroad expanded through the area in 1847, causing significant economic and commercial changes with the the construction of a train station. The Town of Garner's Station was established in 1878 and the Town was officially incorporated in 1883.

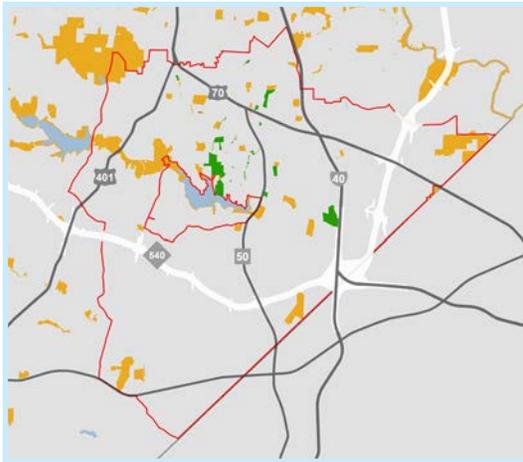


### Historic District and Landmarks

The Central Highway, now known as US 70, became North Carolina's first paved road in 1916. Garner's position along the Central Highway Project connecting the North Carolina coast and mountains enhanced its visibility and standing. This important historical link both connects Garner to other communities and divides the town itself. The old neighborhoods south of downtown are part of what establishes the small-town feel; and the larger estate homes along the former Central Highway reflect a time when affluent citizens desired a highly visible location along "fashionable" highways.

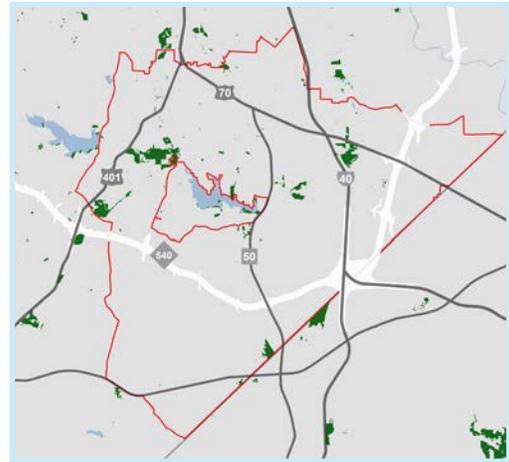


The Downtown Garner Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. Garner High School, the Banks House, the Train Depot and several Downtown buildings are recognized as Historic Landmarks by the Wake County Historic Preservation Commission.



**PARKS AND OPEN SPACES**

Garner's parks are depicted in green and Wake County's open space is depicted in gold.



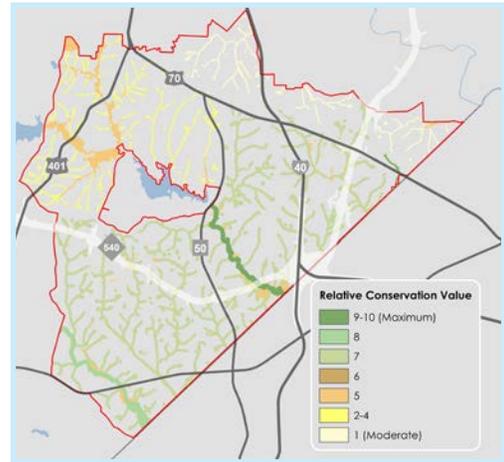
**RURAL FOREST PRIORITY LANDSCAPES**

Areas where forestry is an especially significant part of the rural landscape are depicted in dark green. Forestlands in these areas provide valuable benefits, such as the protection of critical water quality resources, wildlife habitat for threatened and endangered species, and viable economic options for landowners.



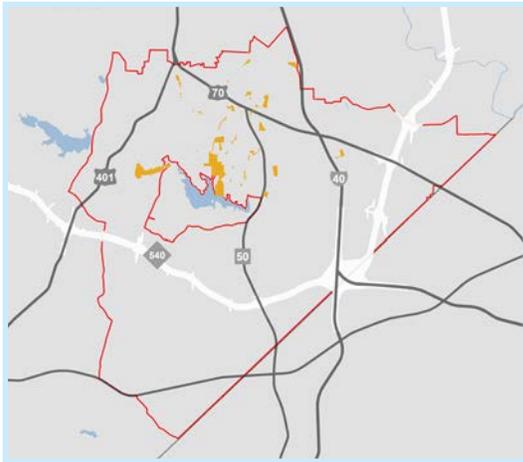
**NATURAL AREAS**

Natural Heritage Program Natural Areas (NHPNA) data depicted in teal identifies terrestrial and aquatic sites that are of special biodiversity significance.



**BIODIVERSITY/WILDLIFE HABITAT ASSESSMENT**

The North Carolina Heritage Program created the dataset to identify, evaluate, and prioritize areas that are important to maintain healthy and sustainable ecosystems statewide. Priorities for conservation of important biodiversity and wildlife habitats are depicted using a scale of 1 (moderate conservation value) to 10 (maximum conservation value).




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### TOWN-OWNED PROPERTY

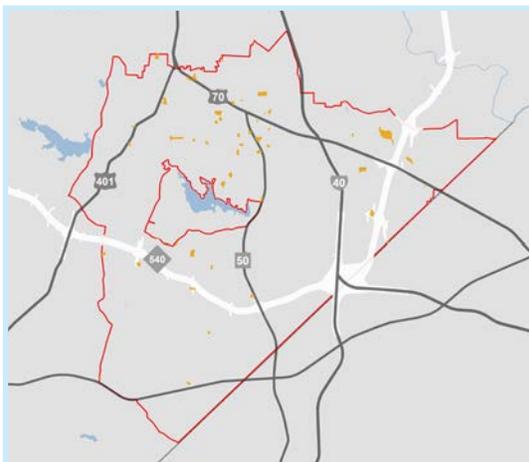
Of the 96 properties owned by the Town of Garner, 77 are vacant.




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### HISTORIC DISTRICT AND RAILROADS

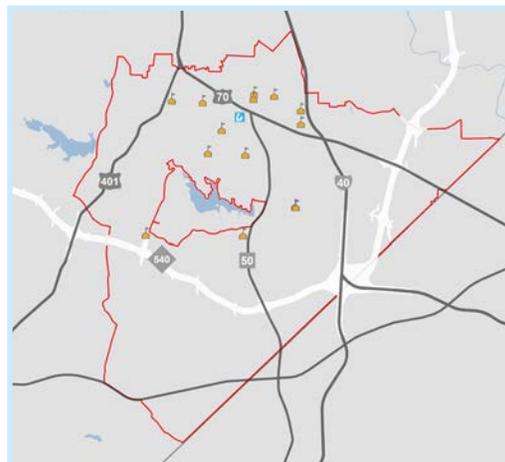
The footprint of Garner's history remains largely intact as a narrow strip of commercial building fronting the railroad tracks and Main Street. The Town's historic heart extends along the railway from Benson Road to New Rand Road.




---

### CHURCHES

There are 56 churches in Garner. Churches and other civic organizations provide many opportunities for collaboration and cooperation in the community. This network should be included as we plan, design, implement, and maintain recommendations with Garner Forward.




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### SCHOOLS & LIBRARY

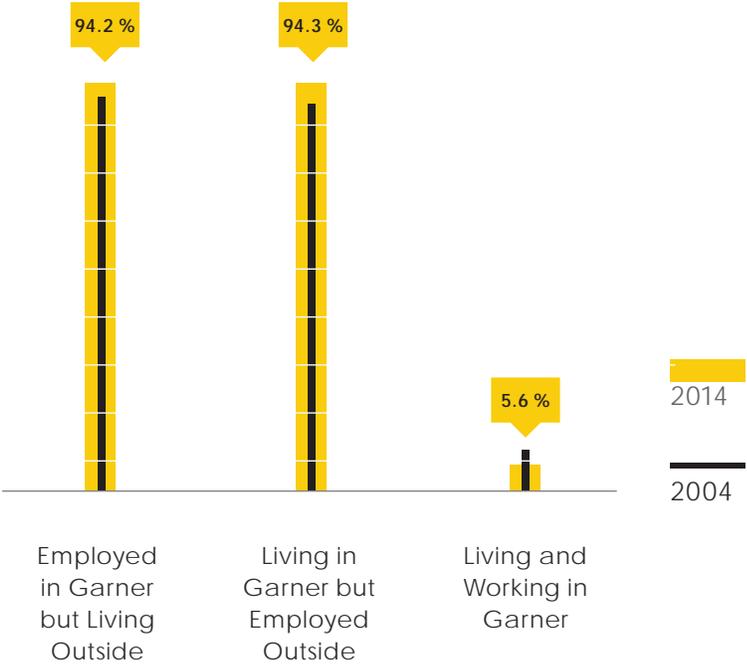
There are 14 schools and 1 library in Garner.

# ECONOMICS AND THE MARKET PLACE

Part of the Garner Forward process that helped to create a preliminary, future land use map is the way that regional and national economic trends are driving our own marketplace. The following pages highlight some key findings.

Todd Noell, founder of Noell Consulting in Atlanta, discussed some of these trends and their implications for Garner during the three-day workshop in December of 2016. These are some important notes from that talk and other data sources.

- Old Suburb: Executive housing - employees follow bosses.
- New Suburb: Walkable - offices follow employees.
- In-town and inner suburbs tending to steal market share from outer suburbs
- Housing: Many "Boomers" are now "Empty Nesters," and they want more walkable lifestyles
- Housing: Renting is still down, but Garner's owners have fared well compared to national experiences
- Office: Creative Buildings/Spaces and co-work locations are increasingly popular; medical office is a rare bright spot for mid-size communities
- Retail: Shopping absorption has been low in both Wake County and Garner since the Great Recession; experiential, pop-up, and fulfillment are key terms going forward
- Industrial: Regionally and locally the market is gaining strength; vacancy rates are low and the potential for new space is there




---

Live & Work | in Garner

---

<6%

---

Only about 5.7% of people employed in the Town of Garner also live inside the Town. Having more people living and working make for shorter commutes and a more diverse economy.

## Market Values

Part of the plan analysis involved conducting a two-stage market analysis, along with a third stage that evaluated the land uses chosen for the future land use map as well as the opportunity sites. These pages present some of the observations

of the local and national marketplace that undergird the land use planning and other assumptions used in **Garner Forward**.

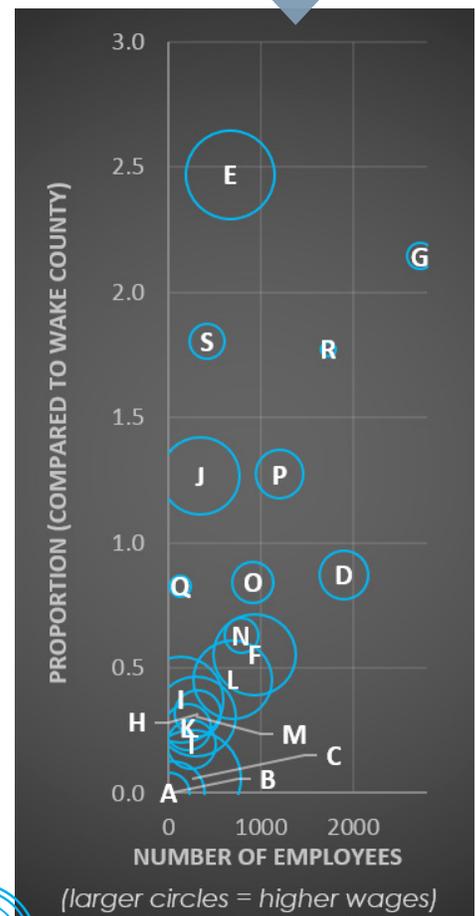
Full data sets are available upon request.

## Market Analysis completed in Garner Forward

Identified market trends and demographics  
(Scott Lane / Todd Noell)

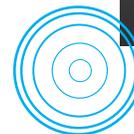
### Jobs in Garner

	INDUSTRY
A	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
B	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction
C	Utilities
D	Construction
<b>E</b>	<b>Manufacturing</b>
F	Wholesale Trade
<b>G</b>	<b>Retail Trade</b>
H	Transportation and Warehousing
I	Information
J	Finance and Insurance
K	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
L	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
M	Management of Companies and Enterprises
N	Administration & Support, Waste Mngmt., and Remediation
O	Educational Services
P	Health Care and Social Assistance
Q	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
R	Accommodation and Food Services
S	Other Services (excluding Public Administration)
T	Public Administration



While manufacturing had declined in importance to Wake County, it remains important to Garner both in terms of number of jobs and (especially) wages. Retail jobs are plentiful in absolute and relative

(to Wake County), but pay poorly. Professional, management, and administrative jobs are more rare in Garner than in Wake County as a whole.



Circle Size=Wages



Vertical=Proportion of workers (compared to Wake County)

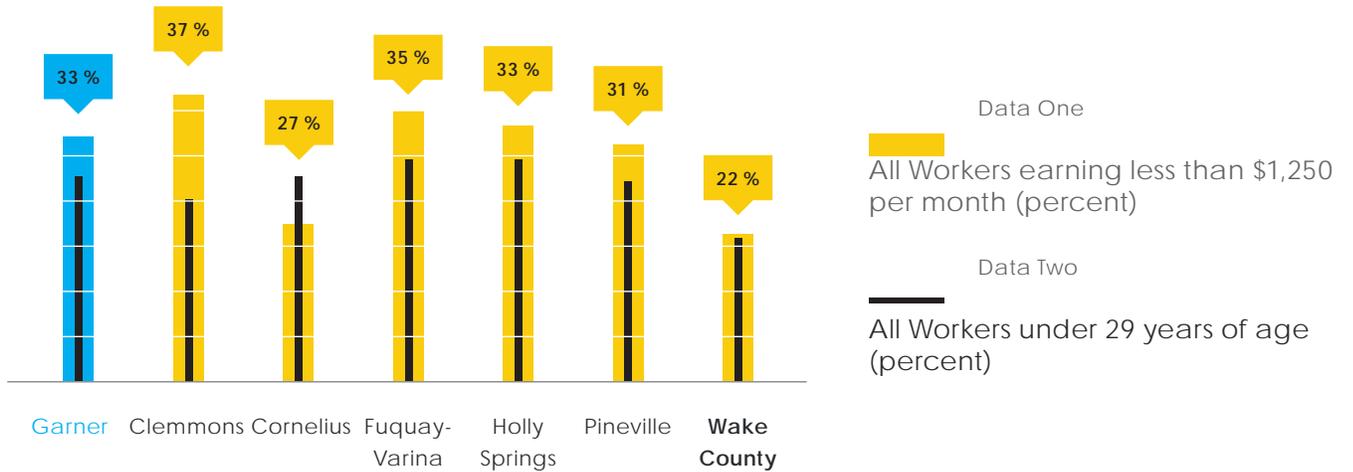


Horizontal=Number of employees

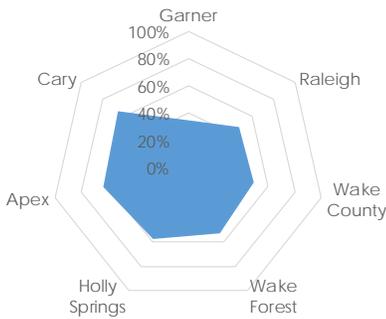
**+11%**  
2014 workers

**Garner Workers** | Earning less than \$1,250 per month (compared to Wake County)

11% more Garner workers (those people that work in Garner that may or may not be Garner residents) earn less than \$1,250 per month compared to Wake County workers



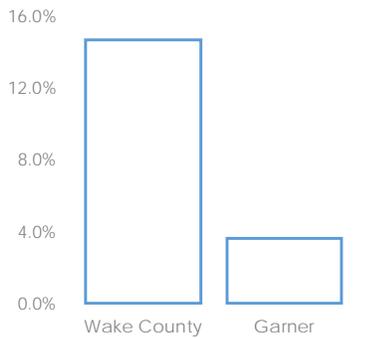
**Market Influencers**



**Higher Ed** | Bachelors Degree

**- 14.7%**

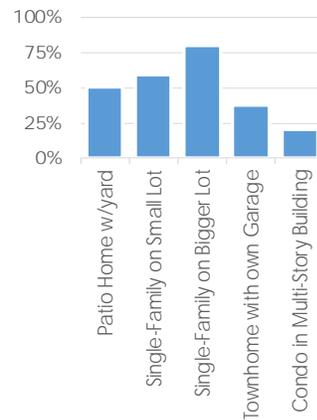
Only 35% of Garner workers have a Bachelor's Degree (or higher), fewer than other, nearby municipalities and Wake County



**Retail Space** | Vacancy Rate

**+ 11.1%**

Garner historically has lower retail vacancy rates than Wake County, and the most recent year is no exception



**Home Choice** | RTP Workers

**+80.1%**

While 80% of RTP workers like single-family homes on larger lots, the alternatives are catching up

## Evaluation Methodologies

A report entitled "Analysis and Forecast of Future Water and Wastewater Capacity Needs" prepared by Hazen and Sawyer (2011) calculated that the average daily per capita water demand (GPCD) was between 96-114 gallons after examining Garner's water use records from 2004-2009. Using the 96 GPCD figure as the lower limit and 114 GPCD as the upper limit, the water and sewer projections indicate that:

Sewer & Water Capacity completed in Garner *Forward*

Gary D. Hartong,  
The Wooten Company

Full report available in the Appendix

## Future Water and Sewer Demands

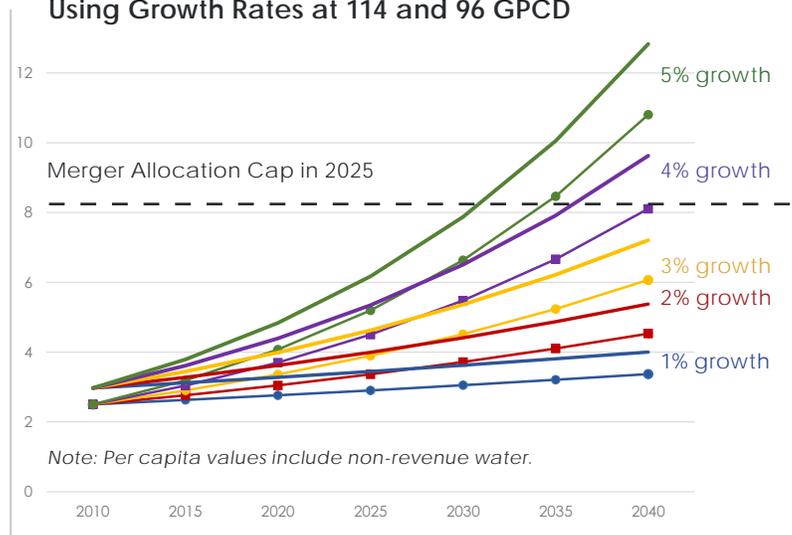
1. Garner will remain under the 2025 average day water merger allocation cap of 7.36 MGD and average day sewer merger allocation cap of 6.47 MGD through year 2040 when 1-3% annual population growth rates are applied.

2. At a 4% annual growth rate, Garner will exceed both the water and sewer merger allocation caps in 2035 using 114 GPCD and in 2040 using 96 GPCD.

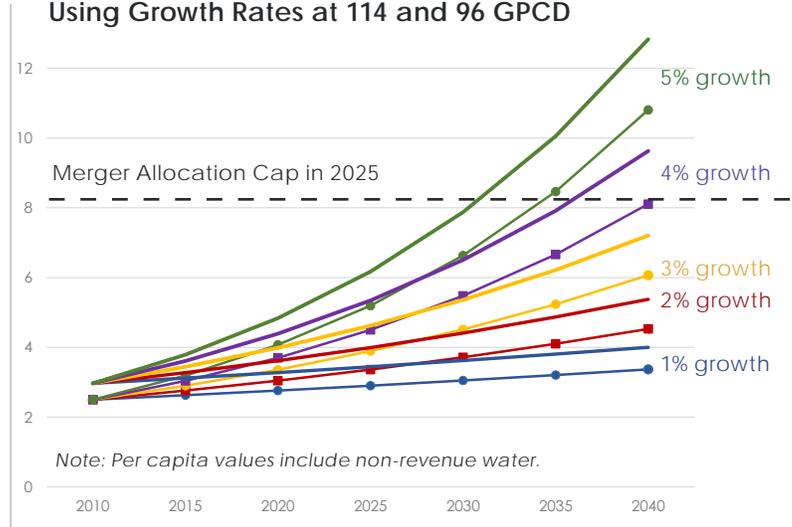
3. At a 5% annual growth rate, Garner will exceed both the water and sewer merger allocation caps in 2030 using 114 GPCD and in 2033 using 96 GPCD.

Note that the water and sewer merger allocation caps discussed do not account for Garner's allocation being limited to Raleigh's allocation after 2025 as stipulated in the merger agreement. Any allocation increase from Raleigh would delay the dates of the projected exceedances.

**Average Day Water Demand Projections Using Growth Rates at 114 and 96 GPCD**

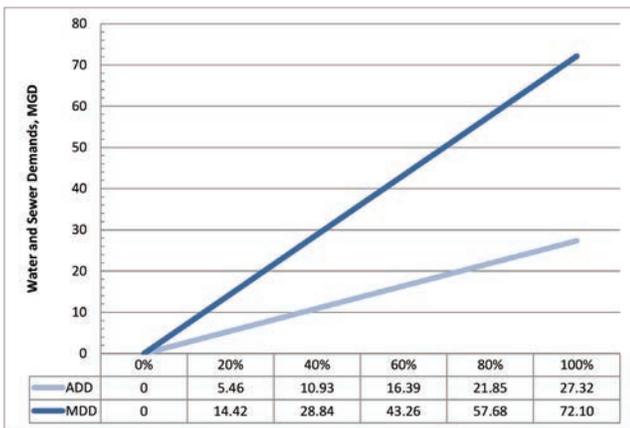


**Average Day Water Demand Projections Using Growth Rates at 114 and 96 GPCD**



## Capacity Needs Based on Future Land Use

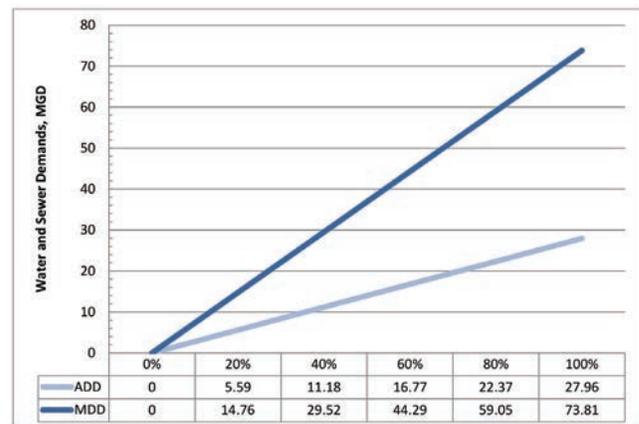
Future water and sewer demands are estimated by applying historical water and sewer customer consumption data (96 – 114 GPCD) against established land use/zoning categories. By assigning the estimated future water and sewer demands based on zoning classifications to the future land use categories for the 29,376 acres north of the I-540 corridor it is possible to calculate future water and sewer average daily demands (ADD) and maximum daily demands (MDD). The graph below approximates anticipated total water and sewer demands within the study area north of I-540 based on acreages and assigned flows.



Projected Buildout Flows by Newly-Assigned Future Land Use

While these flow projections seem aggressive when compared to the discussion and graphs on the previous page, those figures showed ADD is projected to be ~11 MGD in year 2040 at a 5% population growth. In comparison to the calculations below, 11 MGD is equivalent to 40% development of the entire study area. Therefore, full development of 29,376 acres is expected to push well beyond the 2045 planning time frame.

Both the ADD and MDD projections in the graph below also assume that 100% of the land use category will be developed. Given buffers, setbacks and other constraining environmental conditions, full development of each land use category is unlikely. Therefore, the projected ADD and MDD demands can be softened accordingly.



Projected Buildout Flows by Previously-Assigned Future Land Use

For comparison purposes, Garner’s previously-assigned land use data was also evaluated for nearly the same study area by assigning similar equivalent persons per acre, ADD of 96 GPCD and 2.64 peak to average flow ratio. The difference of 2,163 acres is accounted for in the additional study area west of US Highway 401 extending from Raleigh to Fuquay-Varina. The results reveal that the newly-assigned land uses decrease the projected ADD/MDD by an average of 2-3% which may likely reside with the 2,163 acres differential.

***Therefore, the anticipated ADD and MDD from the newly-assigned land use categories exhibit no appreciable changes to the ADD and MDD from the previously assigned land use categories given land use reclassification.***

# GARNER FORWARD

Our one-day workshop highlights

## transportation



1 Multi-modal connections within Garner (esp. to downtown) & Collector Streets design standards

2 Focus on mobility corridors & smaller type projects – Spot Safety

3 Complete streets – “close the gaps” & prioritize bike, ped & transit projects

4 Create one great success story - Pilot project

5 I-540 mainline, integrate connectivity & growth at nodes

6 Bond Referendum or Tax

## parks, recreation & greenways

**Garner Connectivity**  
Existing & future greenways

**Regional Greenway Connections**  
Garner & regional greenway networks



**Focus on SW Garner**  
Preserve open space

**School & Rec Connections**  
Active Transportation for all ages

**Reevaluation of N. Garner**  
Bike, pedestrian, & greenways

## land use & utilities

*measure & evaluate existing design rules, requirements & policies*

**embrace growth, but manage its location, timing & quality**

*design guidelines & targets for the plan*



# GARNER FORWARD

What we learned from survey and focus groups

## WANTED...FOR OUR TOWN



Make a Case for (Positive) Change.  
Continue Building the Brand.  
Education is the Future.  
Garner is a diverse Diverse Town with Diverse Housing Needs.  
Connectivity is Key.  
Public Transit Decisions.  
Land Development in the Wake of I-540.

# 46%

want more housing choice (17% thought it was unimportant)...



but limit apartments, and put higher-density in the right places



## WE LIKE NOW...

“The amenities in the Town’s parks meet the needs of those using them.”



“I was born and raised in Garner - it's home.”



77% agreed or strongly agreed that spending money on maintenance of public spaces and buildings was important

## Top 3 Things We Love about Garner:

- Small Town Atmosphere
- Proximity to Urban Amenities
- Low Cost of Living

Summary of One-Day Workshop & First Survey | Infographics

## communicating results

Infographics were used extensively during the planning process instead of charts and tables. This piece summarized the main outcomes of a one-day workshop and the first town-wide survey.

# Summary of Focus Group Comments

Stantec met with **focus groups** oriented towards a number of key themes relevant to the development of the Garner *Forward* Comprehensive and Transportation Plans: landscape, streetscape, and urban design; community services; bike, pedestrians, and greenways; economic development; planning commission; transportation/transit/streets; and town council / administration. These focus groups represent a good balance of detailed input and broad cross-section of inputs.

The following is a summary of the focus group meetings that was presented to the Steering Committee shortly after the first seven were completed.

**Make a Case for (Positive) Change.** Focus groups intend to preserve Garner's small-town feel and identity. Garner should be unique and not look like other places. Growth and development could threaten that atmosphere, e.g., White Oak's success may have come at the expense of older shopping centers: how do you attract a mix of people to these (revitalized) spaces? Garner should come up with a language that communicates the message that change is not always bad. The Town residents need to support local businesses in town such as family restaurants; bookstores; antique stores; small, arts-oriented storefronts. Currently, all major industrial areas are at capacity, but it would be great to have companies that can employ Garner residents; increasing A/B class office space, for larger and high-technology employers; light manufacturing, distribution centers, and industrial uses would be also viable and desirable to create jobs.

**Continue Building the Brand.** Focus groups claimed that Garner can use branding assets to attract businesses and potential newcomers: school quality/performance, general appearance of town, gateways, industrial land uses, parks, athletic facilities, etc. There should be village-type of development along with renovated homes, vertical or horizontal mixed-uses, and 'cool' activities centered on the downtown and other areas such as the US 401 / US 70 intersection, as well as along Timber Drive near the senior center complex. In addition, a couple of tracts of land (about 50-60 acres) just off US 70 could be used for future housing, office, and mixed use.

**Education is the Future.** The long-term growth and health of the community will be determined by how many young families move into the area – and those young families want to live where there are great schools available to them. Individuals and employers do not consider out-of-community schools when making location decisions, even though there are built-in opportunities to go to other schools. Garner should improve the quality and safety of schools; the Town needs more specialized schools with different points of emphasis (science, arts, and mathematics); middle and elementary schools should be separated from industrial sites; and having options like charter schools may attract new (types) of residents.

**Garner is a Diverse Town with Diverse Housing Needs.** We have to recognize that people of all races and incomes are present in the schools and throughout our community. Apartments are necessary for starter families to accommodate a diverse range of incomes. It is hard to find affordable housing in Garner, but it is also increasingly hard to find housing at any price point. Development of properties is hard because of wetlands, creeks, slope, and the high prices of construction. Sewer provision for lower-income housing has been a problem in the ETJ area, which precludes redevelopment of the smaller plots of land with better materials and design standards. The ETJ should not be allowed to

expand without a utility plan being in place; the Garner Forward Plan should tell us how to build new land uses only when utility services and transportation are there to support it.

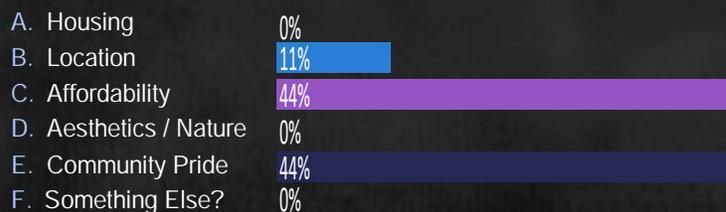
**Connectivity is Key.** Garner needs to connect people to the Town's major destinations such as parks, civic organizations, libraries, schools, shopping centers, older neighborhoods, the gaps between neighborhoods, etc. through sidewalks, trails, and greenways. This practice helps to promote health benefits and benefits to community spirit / cohesion that create a natural bond between people that is threatened in an era when the Town population is set to increase faster than in the recent past. This infrastructure requires maintenance and amenities to be called a success – comfort stations with water, food / vending machines, toilets, shower facilities, mile posting, and call boxes for emergencies. The focus groups also emphasized connectivity between the different plans and facilities within Garner as well as in adjacent cities and communities, especially greenways. As Raleigh develops their active transportation system, it becomes more imperative that Garner connects with that system to provide access to its citizens and capitalize on our town's proximity to Raleigh's downtown.

**Public Transit Decisions.** People want a way for grandparents to get to the store, or someone to get to the doctor. The Wake County TPAC (Transit Planning Advisory Committee) works on implementation and financing Garner's transit service at regular meetings in anticipation of a November bond referendum that could help finance major transit improvements. Commuter rail stations at Greenfield Parkway and Downtown, plus downtown bus service to US 401 are shown in this new plan. The BRT service will impact Garner via Tryon Road to Wal-Mart (15-minute service all day); a critical piece is how to get the "50% routes" funded (town is responsible for 50% of funding on these routes). The 50% routing should consider a White Oak-Downtown-Renaissance Station route.

**Land Development in the Wake of I-540.** Garner has very little east-west connectivity, in part because of wetlands that would be expensive to bridge. I-540 and ETJ expansion plans for Garner suggest that we are bringing in an area that cannot be easily accessed from anywhere else in Garner. We stand to make our roads worse with the additional development both within and without the Town. White Oak Road and US 401 between Ten-Ten and Swift Creek or Legend would have the biggest impact from the new development but the Town is unable to make that happen. How will Garner manage and control the land use around the interchange areas of I-540? The northern section of I-540 would be much more severe in terms of traffic without the Falls Lake restrictions; similarly, the Swift Creek watershed has placed some growth restrictions; it limits that area to be dense. Improvements to NC 50 and US 70 are still a very long way off and there is no funding source: hence, adequate land use planning is crucial.



*"What's Garner's Best Asset?"*



- Steering Committee

# OUR PEOPLE TOLD US...

A major part of the Garner *Forward* effort and resources went towards communicating with the public, either through representatives on the Steering Committee, in focus group meetings, workshops, or surveys.

To communicate there needs to be someone talking and someone listening - just not at the same time. The following are some of the important outcomes of what we heard during our outreach with all of these groups, and where we heard it from, including specific statements that

well represent the overarching point. The following pages summarize at a high level the comments we received from various sources: surveys, workshops, Steering Committee members, and even direct email "letters."

We Heard...	Focus Group	Survey	Steering Committee	Workshop
Housing choices are needed, but the location of apartments should be limited and chosen carefully				
I want to continue to live in Garner, for myself, my parents, or my children; take lifestyles for seniors seriously				
The combination of small-town atmosphere and proximity to urban amenities is great, and should be used as an asset				
"Smart Growth" to us means understanding the costs of new development in the future to avoid tax increases				
Respect existing neighborhoods, but still strive to revitalize areas and attract new retail and employment options				

We used all of our public input in some fashion to inform the Garner Forward Plans and process - the comments are reflected in everything from the issues and goals

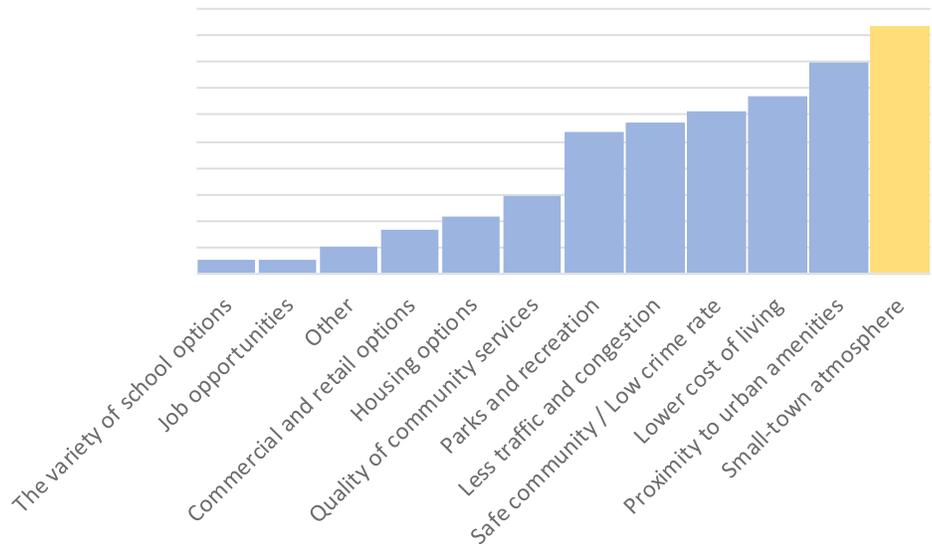
to the specific strategies that the plans recommend. **Thank you to everyone that participated.**

# Survey

The Garner *Forward* Issues Survey was completed by 1,140 respondents over a period of nearly three months (ending in August, 2016).

People - 93% of whom identified as Garner residents - were asked a variety of questions about transportation, development patterns, parks, and their types of concerns for the future.

## What are the top three reasons you live, or would like to live, in Garner?

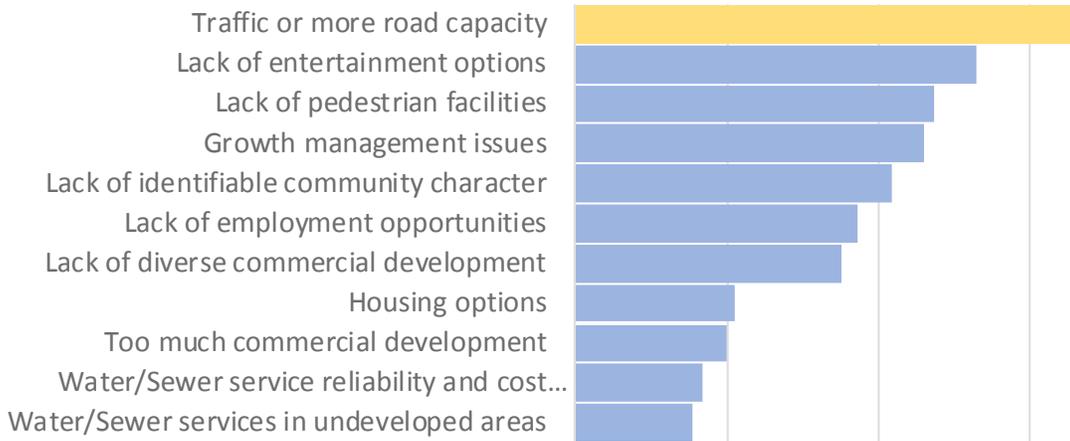


The **small-town atmosphere** of Garner was the most often-cited reason why respondents liked Garner. But the **proximity to “big city” amenities and a favorable cost of living** were other top reasons for being in Garner.

### YOU SAID IT...(Other Reasons to Live in Garner)

- Very racially mixed.
- Small-town atmosphere.
- Close to my workplace.
- Close to downtown Raleigh.
- Love Garner - been here for years and like how it is developing.
- Quiet, not crowded community.
- Good for seniors.
- Have always lived in this area. Grew up here and graduated from Garner High School.
- Small-town feel but not too far away from big town amenities when you need it, great schools, clean area, not everything & everyone is on top of you living!
- Family home.

## Which of the following do you think are areas where Garner faces challenges or shortcomings?



**Transportation** is a common vote-getter for this kind of question, in part because it is one that almost every respondent can relate to in their own lives. However, a **lack of entertainment options and pedestrian facilities** are important; “growth management issues” may not have been near the top of this list a few years ago.

Subject: Parks and Greenways

Message: I am happy to see the  
Town become self involved in our  
future.

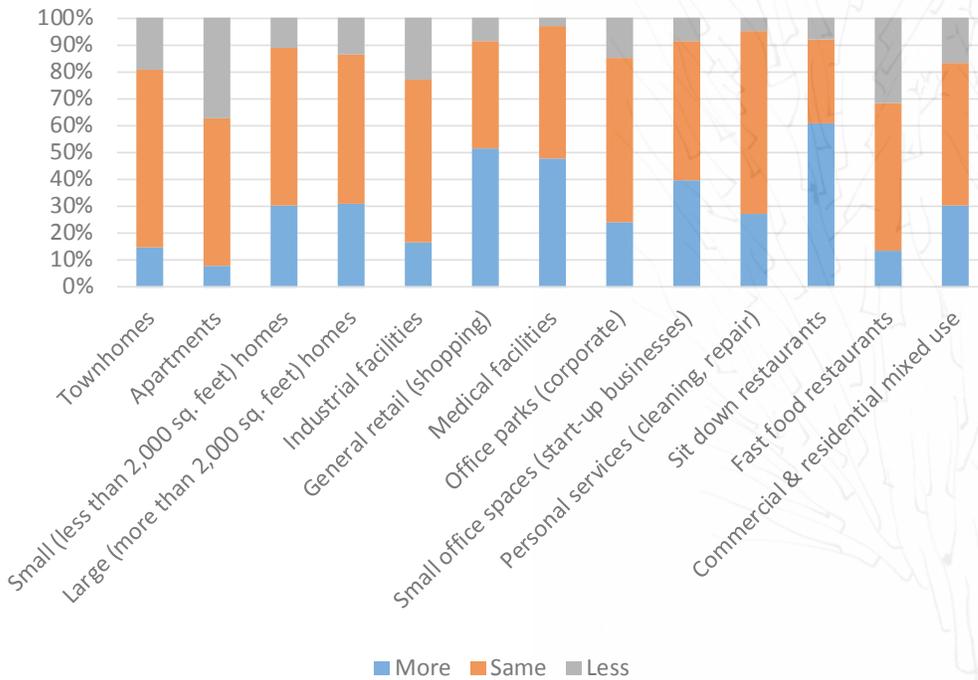
- Email Comment



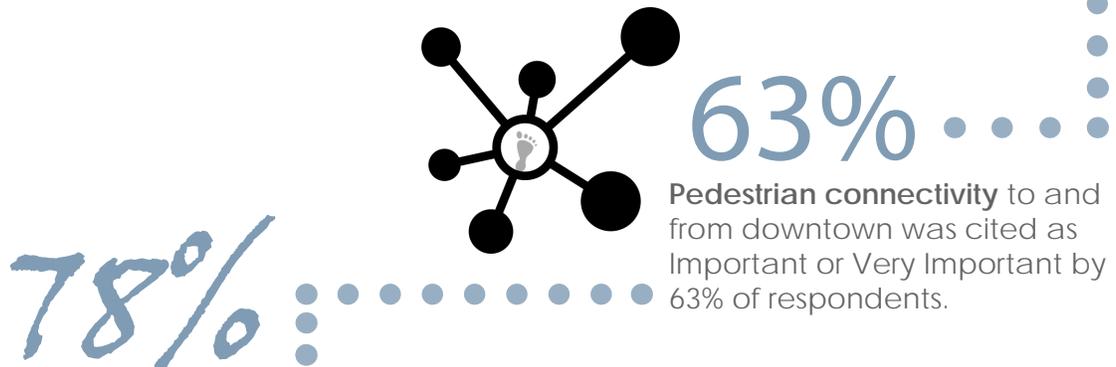
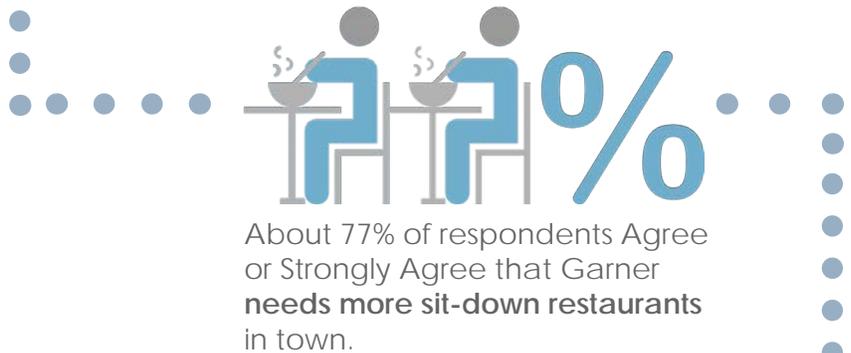
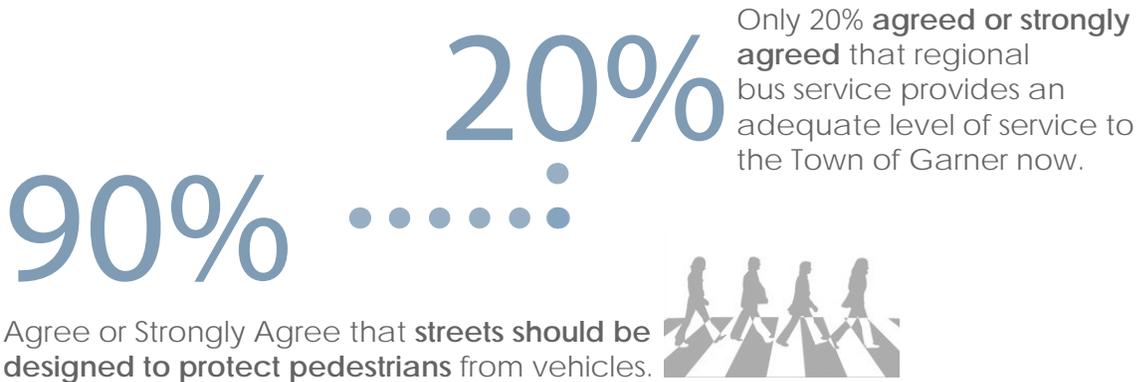
# Survey

(continued)

## How Satisfied are You with the Following?



Having **more sit-down restaurants, shopping experiences, and medical facilities** were viewed as favorable new land developments. Apartments and fast-food establishments: not so much.



78%

Seventy-Eight percent of people said that **tree canopy and open space preservation** are places that Garner should focus its time and attention (top vote-getter, closely followed by parks and enhancing the community appearance of buildings, public spaces, and facades).

## Summary of Issues Workshop (9.8.2016)

Two workshops were conducted for the *Garner Forward* project in order to allow people direct interaction with the consulting team members, foster team collaborations, and exchange information freely. The first of these workshops was held in the second week of September, and was a one-day affair meant to refine issues. The second was conducted over a three-day period in December of 2016, and was used to provide direct feedback on housing, transportation, development, utility, and land use topics. While a complete summary was made available to staff and the Steering Committee after the first workshop, the following are elements that were explored that related directly back to the overarching goals, individual topics, and directions for the rest of the *Garner Forward* process.

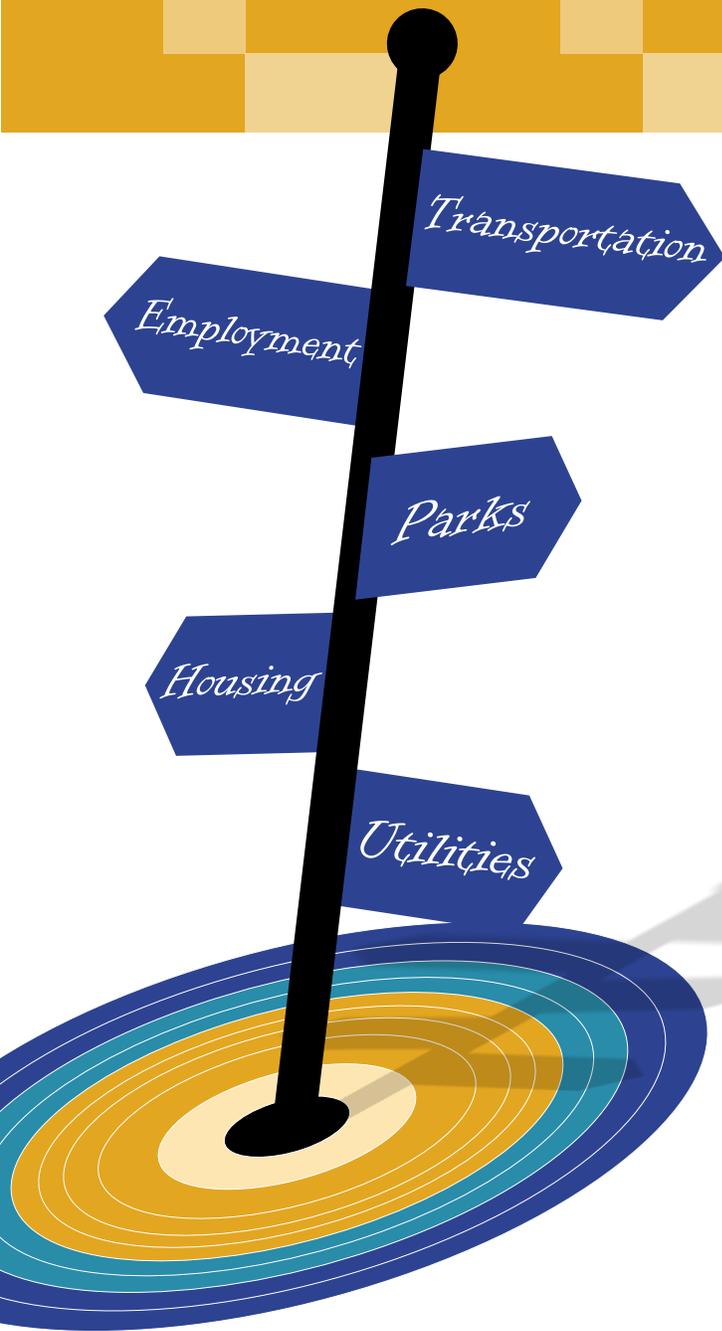
Get away from being a bedroom community and be more self-supporting (more employment, shopping) – **You've Got It All in Garner!** Look critically at the Node Concept and assign more design features and considerations of development densities and type Connectivity is crucial: east-west, to neighborhoods, parks, Wake Tech campus, downtown Raleigh Make a great street to show people what it looks like We need better design standards to improve the Town's appearance The historic downtown has full occupancy now so there is no space left except through redevelopment Water/Sewer will influence type, density, and location of development

the schedule for the first workshop (23 staff and 43 members of the public participated with us):

7:30am	Setup
8:00am	Scope & Findings Review / Brainstorming
10:00am	Break Out Groups □ Issue Refinement & Concepts
11:00am	Group Presentations and Review
12:00pm	Working Lunch: Preparing the Presentation
1:30pm	Presentation and Feedback: Goal Validation
3:00pm	Modifications to Subject Area Issues / Concepts
4:00pm	Plan Development Assignments and Review
5:00pm	Take Down
6:00pm	Public Open House



# HELP GARNER STAY ON TARGET



## WORKSHOP+PUBLIC REVEAL

September 8, 2016

6:00pm to 7:30pm

Garner Performing Arts Center  
(742 West Garner Road)

We love this Town, and we think its future deserves a lot of attention. We are inviting everyone to help us roll up our sleeves at a one-day workshop. The staff work will address all the comments we've received, identify key issues, and provide directions for our study team. At 6pm we open the doors to you to get your feedback before we begin to develop final recommendations.

Don't get left behind as Garner moves forward...



Garner Forward

Can't make it? Want more information?  
[www.GarnerForward.com](http://www.GarnerForward.com)

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A big reason that so much care and effort were dedicated to working with the public and team members was that the input from all of these efforts would lead to the overarching goals and objectives shown in the graphic on the opposite page.

Inputs were also checked repeatedly as the consulting team developed the recommendations in the next section of the Comprehensive Plan, and in the Transportation Plan as well.

**Building on and conserving the existing Character of Garner** will help the Town attract quality private development – which in turn helps Garner be in a better position to attract new development with favorable design qualities and amenities that can also build improvements to infrastructure that help ensure long-term financial viability in a “virtuous circle” of sustainable improvements.

- Balance Costs with Revenues
- Influence Design to Keep our Character and Improve Value
- Create a Healthy Brand
- Partner with Civic and Other Organizations, Public & Private
- Recommendations Need to Address Schools and Performance

**Housing for Garner’s citizens** not only should continue to adapt to changing market influences, but the location, quantity, and design quality of our housing will determine to a large degree how Garner will look in the future.

- Attract Young and Old Populations
- Use Design and Location to Create Good Multi-Family Places
- Refocus on our Centers, Including Downtown Garner and North Garner
- Anticipate Redevelopment Surge

The **Recreation Opportunities in Garner** do more for our community than just provide a place to play: they signify our commitment to being a healthy place; increase property values through association with green space; and connect great places to great neighborhoods along verdant trails.

- Identify and Invest in Outdoor Space
- Keep Adding Indoor Recreational Space
- Connect Us Internally with Open Space
- Connect Us with Regional Trail Network

**Commercial Development**, both in terms of retail establishments and office spaces, should be a reflection of what we in the community of Garner need to have nearer to us, not only what the marketplace wants today. Recognizing changing trends in shopping experiences, workplace flexibility, and how work, home, and fun can be integrated are important to creating great places within Garner, more job opportunities, and enhancing nearby residential properties.

- Attract Unique Commercial Establishments
- Align Development Code with Our Desired Ends
- Support Anticipated Increase in Office Needs
- Take Advantage of Work-in-Place Trends
- Understand Utility Demands Associated with Development

The **Transportation System in Garner** is crucial to more than just moving traffic: we must be able to move people and business products safely and efficiently. The extent to which we can achieve this objective depends in part on our willingness to commit Town-level resources to the solutions, but in places where we want to retain a sense of community then walking, biking, and public transportation may provide alternative ways of accessing nearby destinations.

- Use the Full Range of Congestion Management Techniques Available to Us
- Identify “Bang-for-Buck” Projects and New Funding
- Increase the Role of Transit, but Use Technology to the Fullest Benefit
- Prioritize and Defend Connectivity
- Create Great Streets - Start with One
- Celebrate Entry Points (Gateways)
- Manage I-540 as an Asset

**“Based on the team’s understanding gathered from over 1,140 survey results; numerous public meetings; past planning efforts; and meetings with the Steering Committee, Town Staff, and Consultant, the following are important issue statements and action items that the Garner Forward Plan must address to be successful.” - Garner Forward Conditions + Directions Report**

**Balance Costs with Revenues**

**Influence Design to Keep our Character and Improve Value**

**Create a Healthy Brand**

**Partner with Civic and Other Organizations, Public & Private**

**Recommendations Need to Address Schools and Performance**



Town attract quality private development – which in turn helps Garner be in a better position to attract new development with favorable design qualities and amenities that can also build improvements to infrastructure that help ensure long-term financial viability in a “virtuous circle” of sustainable improvements.

**Building on and conserving the existing character** of Garner will help the



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**Align Development Code with Our Desired Ends**

**Support Anticipated Increase in Office Needs**

**Take Advantage of Work-in-Place Trends**

**Understand Utility Demands Associated with Development**

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**Identify and Invest in Outdoor Space**      **Keep Adding Indoor Recreational Space**

**Connect Us Internally with Open Space**      **Connect Us with Regional Trail Network**

**Explore Public and Private Partnerships, including Neighboring Towns**

**Housing** for Garner’s citizens not only should continue to adapt to changing market influences, but the location, quantity, and design quality of our housing will determine to a large degree how Garner will look in the future.

**Attract Young and Old Populations**

**Use Design and Location to Create Good Multi-Family Places**

**Relocus on our Centers, Including Downtown Garner and North Garner**

**Anticipate Redevelopment Surge**

CLIENT: Steering Committee

PROJECT: Garner Forward 12.6.2016

**Use the Full Range of Congestion Management Techniques Available to Us**

**Identify “Bang-for-Buck.” Projects and New Funding**

**Increase the Role of Transit, but Use Technology to the Fullest Benefit**

**Prioritize and Defend Connectivity**

**Manage I-540 as an Asset**

**Create Great Streets - Start with One**

**Celebrate Entry Points (Gateways)**

The **transportation system** in Garner is crucial to more than just moving traffic; we must be able to move people and business products safely and efficiently. The extent to which we can achieve this objective depends in part on our willingness to commit Town-level resources to the solutions, but in places where we want to retain a sense of community, then walking, biking, and public transportation may provide alternative ways of accessing nearby destinations.



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Recreation doesn't always mean taking it easy. Groups that volunteer to create rain gardens, tree planting, soft trails, and do basic maintenance can help take care of our best places but they still require organization, tools, materials, and staff time to do a great job.

a listing of the primary recommendations in the  
Garner *Forward* Comprehensive Plan

# NEW TRADITIONS

The major impact of a comprehensive plan like Garner *Forward* is to express specific actions that a community can take to reach its goals. This section discusses those recommendations, but also reaches back to make sure that we respect past accomplishments and successes.

The following recommendations, as well as recommendations contained in the Garner *Forward* Transportation Plan, were all derived from an extensive engagement and staff process designed to identify issues and output potential strategies to address those issues.

During the planning process, five main categories of issues were developed and subsequently refined by the Steering Committee and staff:

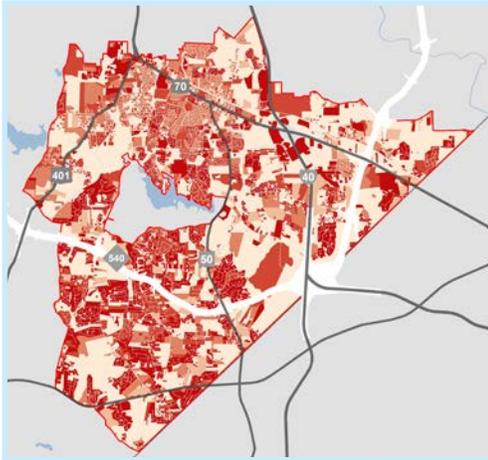
- Recreational Opportunities
- Housing and Living Arrangements
- Commercial Development
- Maintaining Character
- Transportation (summarized here and expanded in Transportation Plan)

Each of these five broad sections has an associated vision and several key objectives. The purpose of this chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is to further refine those objectives by identifying multiple strategies to make them happen; identify partners; and, where applicable, suggest costs.

The following section, "Conservation and Land Use," presents the future land use map as well as images used to develop, refine, and represent key concepts learned during the planning process.

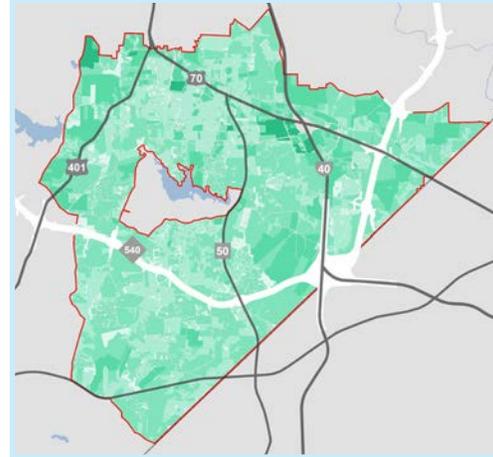


Recommendations stemmed from a combination of input from the **public**, **Steering Committee**, and **staff**



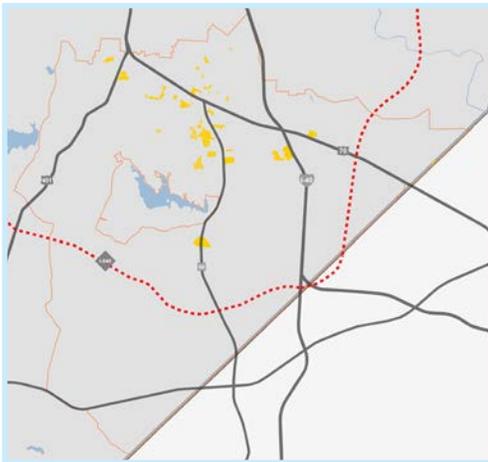
**HOUSING AGE** | year of construction

Structures in the middle of historic Garner and the secondary ring of development were largely constructed over 30 years ago; newer (darker areas) tend to be more scattered and further away from the town center and services.



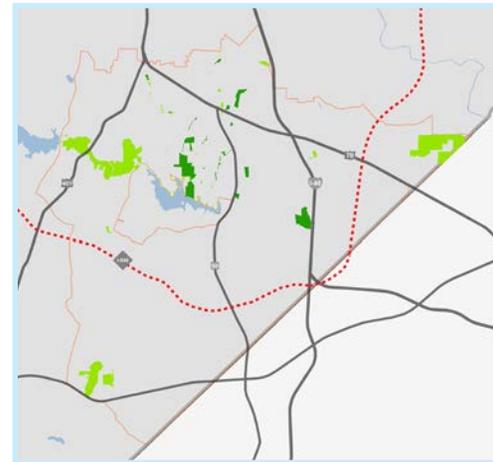
**SALE VALUES** | value of property

The most recent selling prices (land and buildings) indicate a strong preference for highways and traditional neighborhoods (darker areas indicate higher values). Note that this map figure is sales value relative to properties throughout Wake County.



**Multi-Family** | locations in Garner

The majority of multi-family developments in Garner have clustered around the US 70 corridor.



**Garner's Land** | owned by the town

Current properties that the Town of Garner owns (dark green) or Wake County has designated for parks and open spaces (light green) are focused away from future growth areas to the south.

# CONSERVATION & LAND USE

The over arching framework of the Garner *Forward* Comprehensive Plan is the development and continuing refinement of a land use map and set of strategies that capitalize and actuate the kinds of uses that the community wishes to see. Land use is therefore not a separate topic, but instead sets the table for all of the other topics including housing, character of place, transportation, and new development actions.

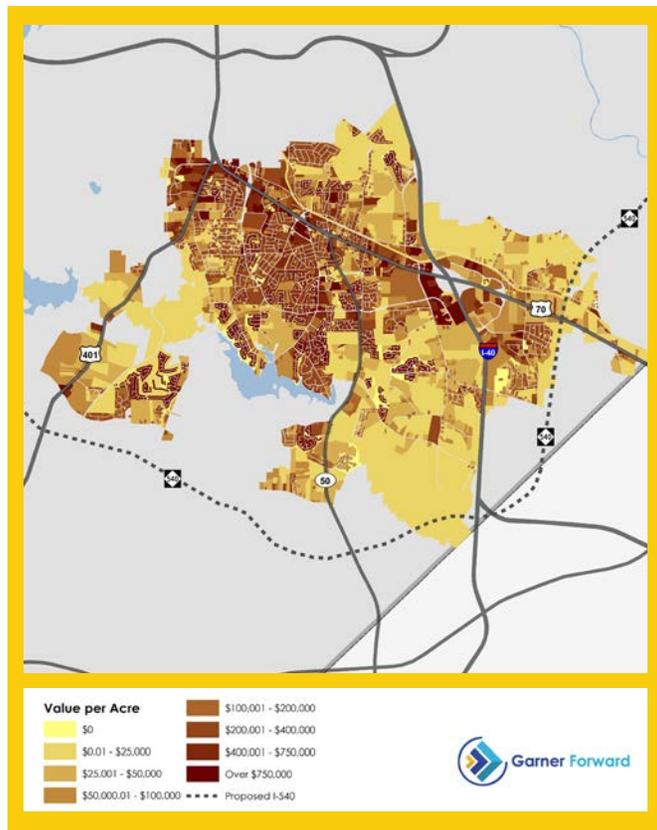
The following pages illustrate the proposed, future land use map and activity areas, as well as a secondary map that indicate where changes occurred from the previously adopted (2006) future land use map.

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## ASSESSED VALUE | value of land only

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Tax-assessed property values in Garner are often highest along commercial corridors, notably US 70 and US 401. However, when the size of the parcel is taken into account, a different picture emerges. As development begins to appear in the vicinity of the Southern Wake Freeway (NC 540) interchange areas (US 401, NC 50/Benson Road, Old Stage Road, US 70), the land values will increase in these areas as well.

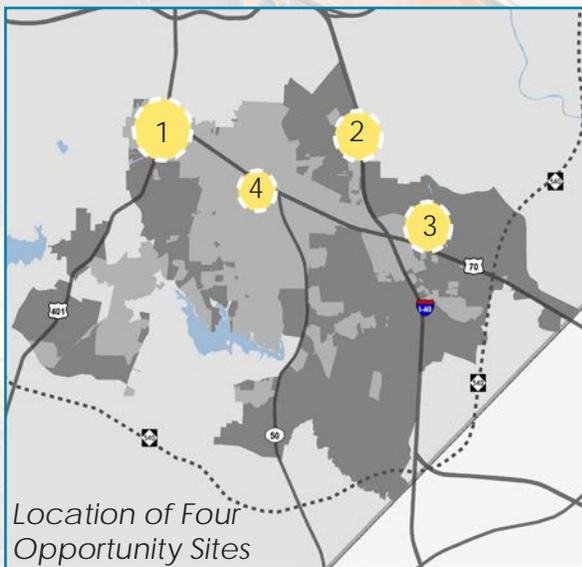


## OPPORTUNITY SITE RENDERINGS

The Garner *Forward* Steering Committee selected three locations that could substantially change over the life of the plan, and create opportunities for excellence.

The site renderings on the following pages are useful because they (a) help people visualize best practices that are recommended in the Garner *Forward* Plan, and (b) are not prescriptive, but conceptual ideas of how an existing place could develop - or redevelop - into something new. The specific details (buildings, streets, pedestrian and transit amenities) are not

important but are used to suggest the density, design, and use. The developments blend existing character with new elements inspired by viable economic and market trends. Three sites were identified initially by the Steering Committee, with a fourth added by the Design Team during the December workshop.





Southern Gateway Plan  
(J. Davis / Urban Design Center)



## SITE #1: GARNER STATION

Capitalizing on the Southern Gateway Corridor Plan (see graphic at top) completed by Raleigh and the Wake County transit strategy plan, the concept for the convergence of US 70 and US 401 emphasizes a massively improved experience for drivers, pedestrians and transit patrons. This last group is planned to be served by the southernmost (for now) terminus of a bus rapid transit (BRT) line that will connect Garner quickly to downtown Raleigh. The center-loading of the vehicles encourages development on both sides of the landscaped and walkable spine roadway.

## SITE #2: NORTHEAST GATEWAY

The entrance way of Jones Sausage Road into the north side of Garner is an untapped resource due to its access to the Interstate and proximity to major employers and distribution centers. Envisioned here as a place that both encourages the core industrial purpose *and* entices the visitor as a gateway to the rest of Garner.

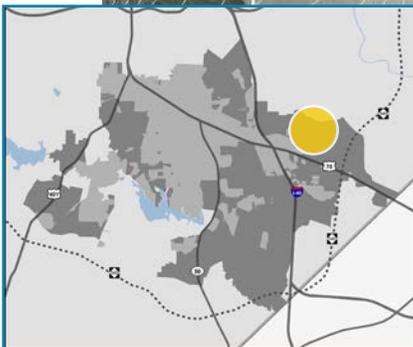
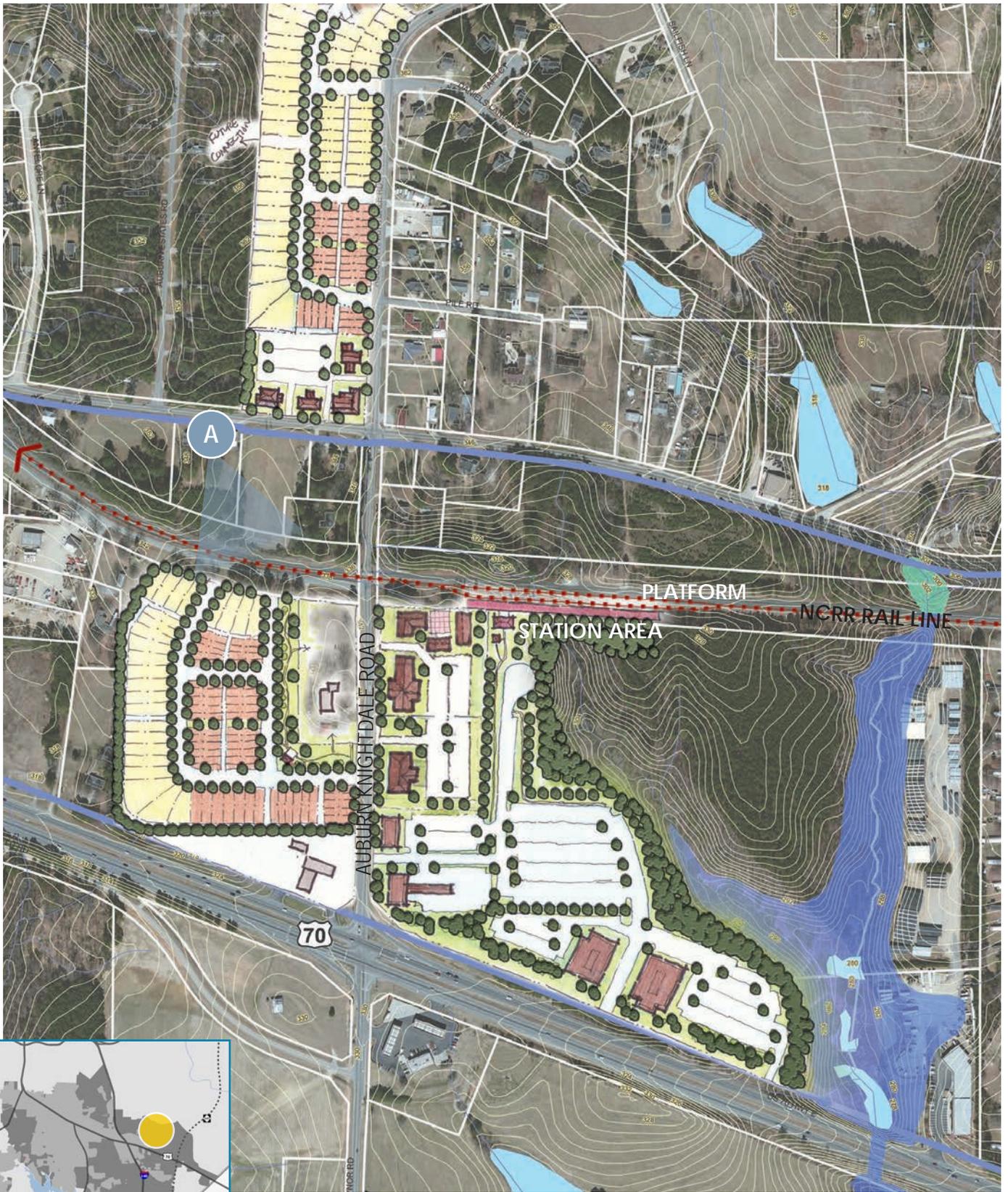


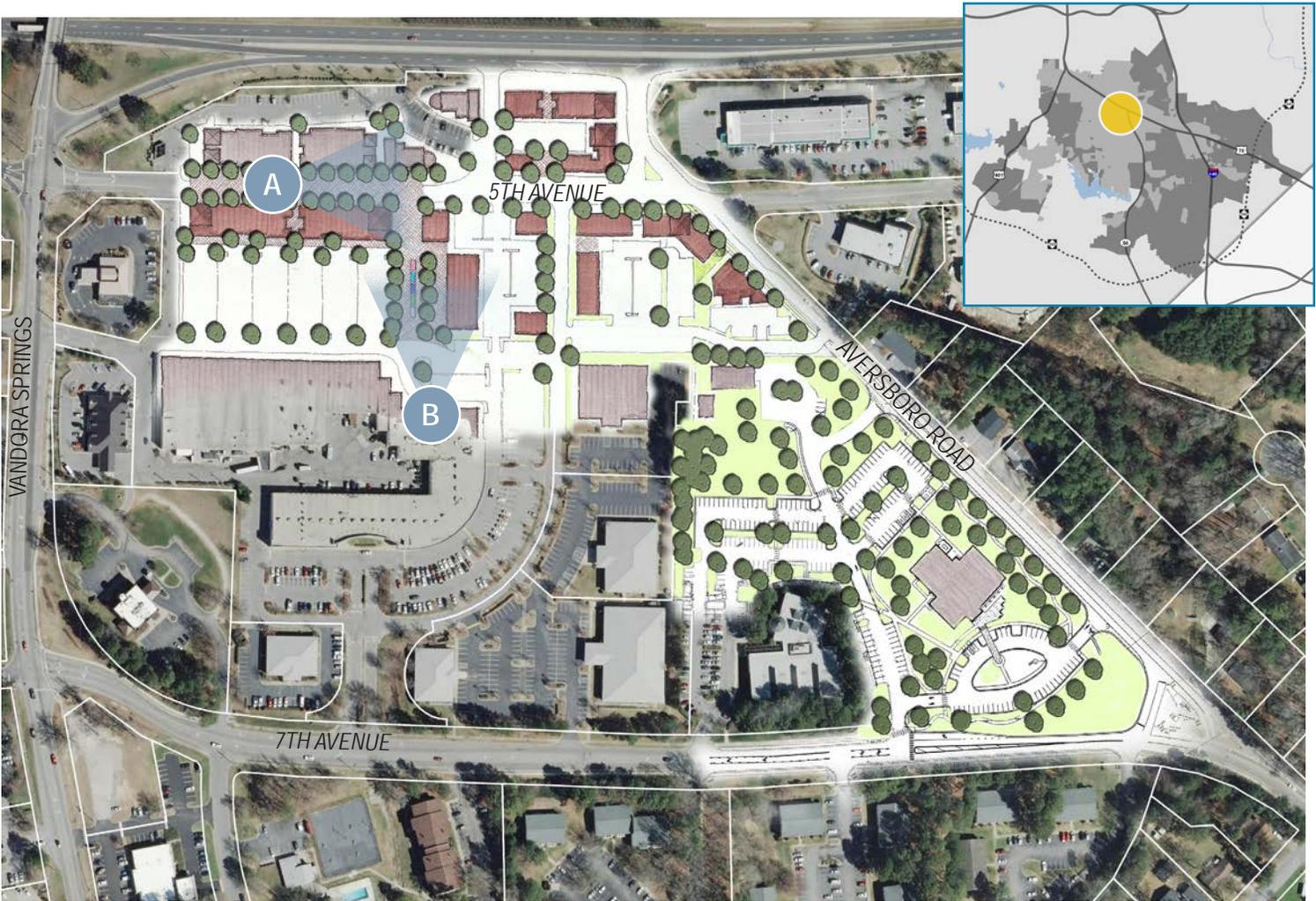


### **SITE #3: AUBURN STATION**

The presence of a potential eastern terminus of a commuter rail service makes the confluence of US 70, nearby I-40, and Auburn-Knightdale Road a premier location for context-sensitive development. The contexts are many: streams and floodplains crisscross the area;

nearby homes have long-standing histories with the community, and interesting topography make for a challenging area to visualize. However, shared parking can help provide space for the anticipated high drive-up access as well as spur commercial and even small office development.

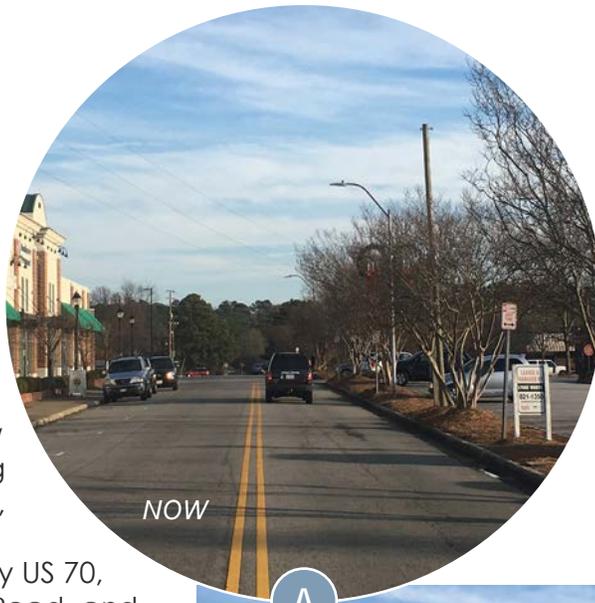




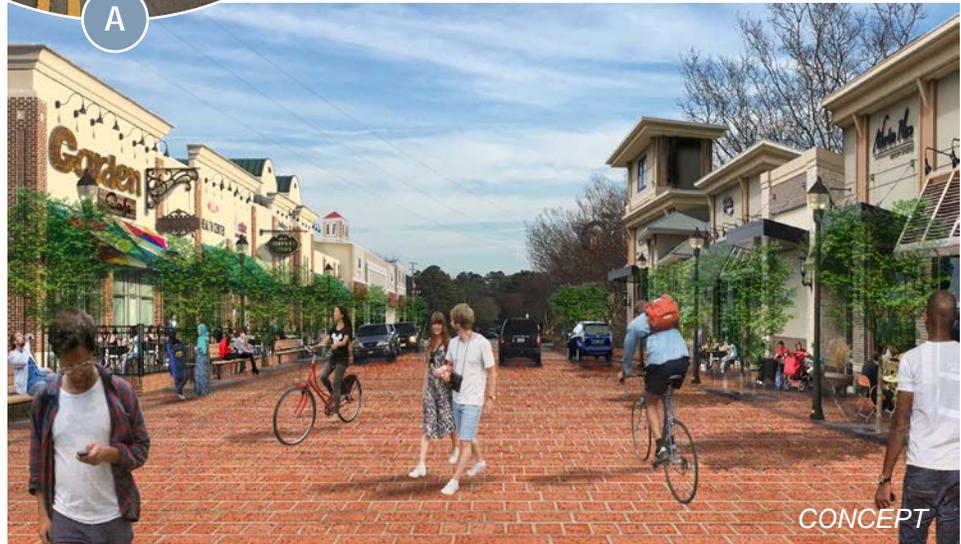
**SITE #4:  
FIFTH  
AVENUE**

Not one of the original three opportunity sites selected by the Steering Committee, this area bounded by US 70, Aversboro Road, and Vandora Springs was perceived as having too much potential to ignore by the design team.

Fifth Avenue has the potential to become a commercial center, pairing it with the historic downtown just to the north of US 70. Recent reinvestments in the buildings on the north side of Fifth Avenue and the construction of new and revitalized town hall and library nearby aid in the potential for creating a new gathering place that complements and supports the historic core. A pop-up marketplace capitalizing on the trend for experiential shopping and two-story developments with office or residential over retail can work in this environment.



A



The **recreation opportunities** in Garner do more for our community than just provide a place to play: they signify our commitment to being a healthy place; increase property values through association with green space; and connect great places to great neighborhoods along scenic trails.



# RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

- Identify and Invest in Outdoor Space
- Connect Us Internally with Open Space
- Keep Adding Indoor Recreational Space
- Connect Us with Regional Trail Network
- Explore Public and Private Partnerships, including Neighboring Towns

The Town created a Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Greenways Master Plan in 2007 to serve as a guide for the future expansion of parks, recreation facilities, and programs. This Comprehensive Plan draws from the goals of the 2007 Master Plan and offers additional guidance for meeting the objectives of the original plan. Due to rising land prices throughout Garner, the Town should act quickly to procure land, especially in the southern portion of the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) before new development increases land costs. The newly acquired areas could be designed for recreational athletic fields, open space, and greenways or for specialty facilities such as disc golf, mountain biking trails, or skateboard parks. In addition to large projects, small "parklets," splash pads, landscaped transportation corridors, and small connections between neighborhoods, commercial areas, and schools should be priorities to soften perspectives and communicate a human scale for pedestrians. The new recreation and community center, with three gymnasiums, kitchen, and showers, will be located downtown and provide a new, valuable resource to Garner's residents. The new center's success should be closely monitored in order to plan for new capacity, but working with private, community-based recreational centers can help postpone future need for additional public gyms.

- **PARKLET**
- **NOUN**
- A sidewalk extension that provides more space and amenities for people using the street. Usually parklets are installed on parking lanes and use several parking spaces.
- *"The parklet provides seating for pedestrians with large planters of tall shrubs to shield visitors from traffic."*

## Benefits Available from Adopting Recommended Policy or Practice.

	<p><b>HEALTH</b> supports community health and environmental quality</p>
	<p><b>ELEVATE</b> instills quality in appearance, design, or community</p>
	<p><b>FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY</b> adds value to people, businesses, and town</p>

supports us			practice or policy
			Invest in the maintenance of current parks and recreational facilities.
			Continue to implement the Town's Parks and Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Master Plan, but also prepare an update to this plan
			Designate potential locations for off-leash areas (OLAs), or dog parks.
			Hardwire greenway and sidewalk language into the development code to align open spaces and connections between projects that occur under different time frames.
			Support health related events. Design a 5k course incorporating the Garner bridges.
			Expand the existing linked open space system by acquiring other potential open space and/or "green fingers" along potential stream easements or utility corridors.
			Encourage the use of conservation developments to preserve natural features and green space.
			Increase the number of recreational facilities and fields for athletic events.
			Partner with athletic leagues to maintain and expand athletic fields.



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### Splash zone

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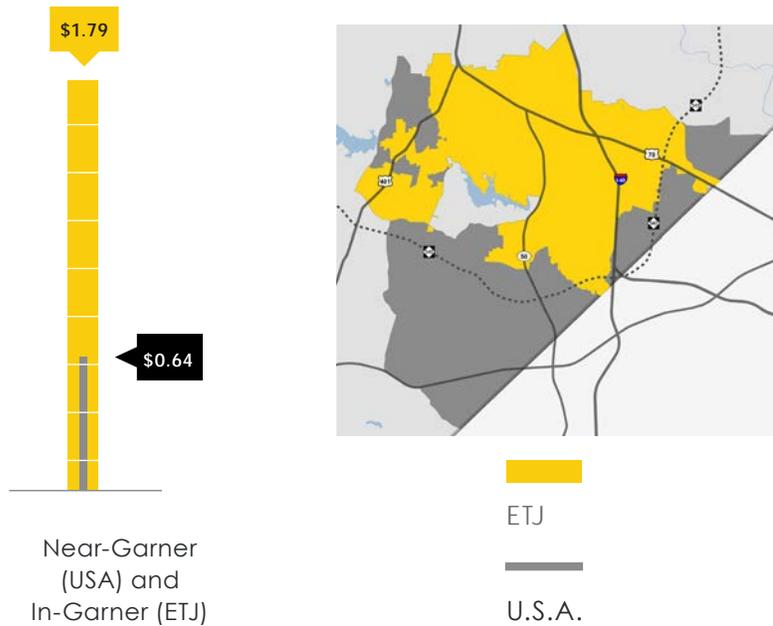
Not all recreational centers have to take up a field. The proposed Fifth Avenue commercial center is the perfect location for a "splash pad" - an interactive water feature that promotes play in the plaza and draws families to the area.

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### In the pocket

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Parks play a vital role in neighborhood life, providing a place for children to play and residents to meet. This includes pocket parks, areas of a quarter acre or less, that serve as small-scale breaks in the urban fabric.



Land value in v. around Garner

x\$2.8

The average assessed value of a square foot of land in the Urban Service Area (future planning) boundary around Garner is 64 cents. Inside the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (current planning boundary) the value is \$1.79, nearly three times the value. The difference in median (instead of average) values is even more dramatic.

Secure Open Space and Recreational Areas in the South of Town

As the large tracts of land in the south become developed (mostly as residential dwellings), the need for preserving green space and recreational facilities (both indoor and outdoor) will increase. Garner's biggest parks and new indoor recreational facility are located in the middle or south end of the current town limits, but they will ultimately be located well north of the future town geographic center as more southerly tracts in the Urban Service Area develop. The costs for procuring land however, is unlikely to decrease, making procurement a more immediate need in order to be cost-effective. Working with Wake County to procure open space that can be converted later is, ultimately, a cost-saving measure.

Review the AARP Livability Index (<https://livabilityindex.aarp.org>) and other tools to create a relevant evaluation to other peer towns.



Wake County and the Triangle Land Conservancy are potential partners.



Spending funds outside of the municipal limits isn't supported, ongoing coordination will help position the town for future opportunities as they arise.



### Develop a Public Arts Program

Public art can help enhance a "sense of place" in the public realm. Many towns and cities have incorporated sculptures, murals, and rotating gallery exhibits of local artists into their public arts program.



"I see what you mean."  
Public art in Denver, Colorado.

Participate in the formation of a citizen-led Art Advisory Committee to assist in the organization and implementation of a new Public Arts program



Potential partnership with Arts League of Garner, United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County



Larger projects can be potentially funded through community partnerships or a new art ordinance fee.



**Invest in the Maintenance of Current Parks and Recreation Facilities and Increase Programming**

Before expanding the park system, it is important that Garner restores and maintains the conditions of the Town's existing facilities. The culture of Garner can be promoted by increasing programming and holding more events and activities at the Town parks. In addition, having more people use the parks will make them safer and more attractive to citizens and visitors. To generate ideas and gain community support, the Town could host biannual or quarterly meetings for citizen focus groups, a Citizen Advisory Committee to recommend and organize programming. A possible new event would be a 5K charity run/walk that incorporates use of the three bridges in Garner.

Designate or hire staff to inventory current park conditions and explore options for additional programming.



Partner with local arts or health organizations to host events and activities.



Staff time for inventory, 20 hours a week for 5 weeks. Programming 5 hours per week.



**Preserve, Install, and Maintain Street Trees**

Street trees provide shade to pedestrians, encourage traffic calming by creating visual friction, and increase property values. Garner residents responded positively to the importance of protecting current and planting new street trees as part of preserving the character of the town. Investigate being a part of the Tree City USA program to document existing conditions and progress.

Preserve trees during the site review process. Install and maintain street trees along Town's neighborhood streets. Complete Tree City USA application.



Potential partnership between Planning and Zoning and Parks and Recreation

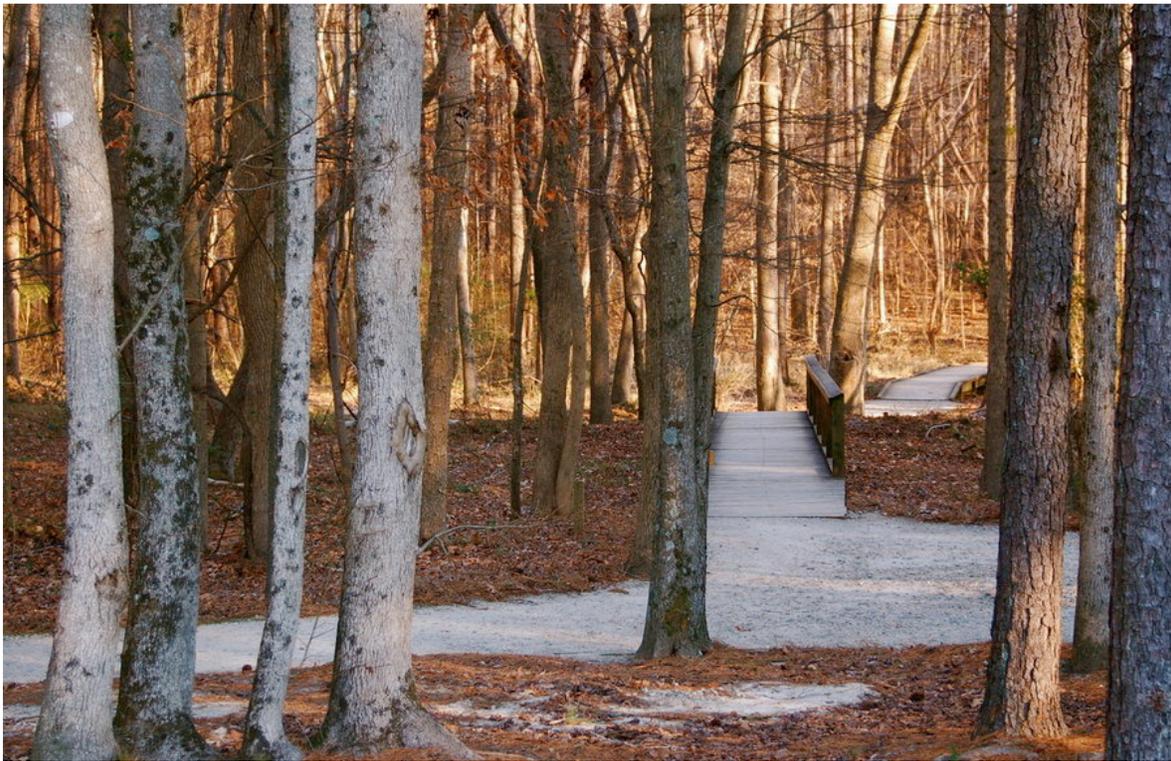


Street tree estimates range from \$500-1,000 per tree including the tree, labor for installation, and a tree or root guard.





White Deer Nature Center



Garner Trails

**Housing for Garner's citizens** not only should continue to adapt to changing market influences, but the location, quantity, and design quality of our housing will determine to a large degree how Garner will look in the future.



# LIVING SPACES

- Attract Young and Old Populations
- Use Design and Location to Create Good Multi-Family Places
- Refocus on our Centers, Including Downtown Garner and North Garner
- Anticipate Redevelopment Surge

The discussions of housing during the planning process were numerous and informative. Garner recognizes that its existing housing stock is aging and that it could be more diverse to attract younger residents and retain older ones. Garner has survived the resurgent demand for rental properties created by the Great Recession with its home ownership rates largely intact. The demand for rental units is unabated for the foreseeable future, however, making the location of well-designed and diverse types of rental developments a premier topic at the time of the Garner *Forward Plan's* creation. Demand for housing generally is increasing faster than new stock is being constructed, creating more redevelopment opportunities for the older homes in north Garner.

The younger and older residents - "Millenials" and "Boomers" respectively - share many of the same desires in a living space: proximity to shopping and services; an appreciation for greenways; and fun places to gather accidentally or meet a friend on purpose. However, these two age groups don't necessarily want to be doing all these things together. Therefore, living arrangements are, more than in recent history, tied very closely to non-residential factors: traffic congestion, mixes of nearby retail, quality schooling options, and walking / biking facilities.

● **OPAL**  
● ACRONYM  
● Older Person, Active Lifestyle

● *"Even though my parents are getting up in years, they still want to be really healthy and play sports. They are true OPALS."*

## Benefits Available from Adopting Recommended Policy or Practice.



**HEALTH**  
supports community health and environmental quality



**ELEVATE**  
instills quality in appearance, design, or community



**FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
adds value to people, businesses, and town

supports us		practice or policy	
			Emphasize growth areas for new types of housing styles, especially in walkable, mixed-use locations
			Favor master-planned, larger tracts over smaller, greenfield developments to maximize private contributions and amenities
			Allow and even encourage shared-use and mixed-use developments, including accessory dwellings
			Elevate the standards for multi-family housing, including exterior materials, open space requirements, and facades
			Favor infill housing, especially in North Garner to support the ongoing redevelopment that is already occurring
			Support neighborhood "brand identity" to create loyalty and an added sense of place; create a great neighborhood award
			Conduct yearly summits with developers to ensure that development reviews, practices, and regulations aren't discouraging desirable products
			Support more 55+ housing opportunities, both in attached and separated formats, especially those that are integrated with the parks and greenways
			Support affordable housing in new, multi-family and small-lot detached housing developments in part by increasing exemptions and in part by requiring more
			Evaluate housing proposals on a life cycle cost and revenue basis - know the ramifications for utilities and other downstream expenses

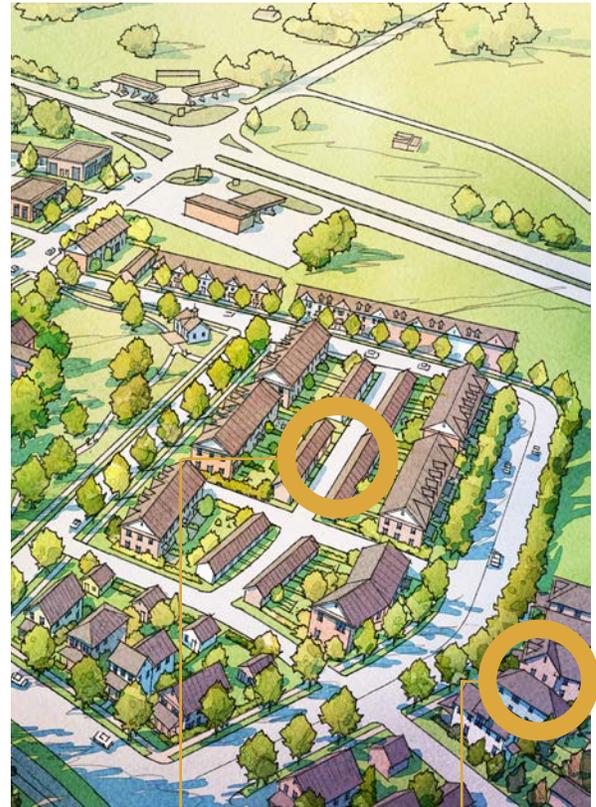



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**Fade to back**

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As infill development becomes more frequent, mixing housing types becomes important to maintaining peace with adjoining, older neighborhoods. Fencing, tree buffers, berms, and can also be used to create complementary, not controversial, developments.




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**A better driveway**

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Rear-loading driveways and alleys create better appearances and walking in front of homes, and allow trash removal to be kept out of sight. Often, the detached garage will create an enclosed yard to further enhance the feeling of privacy.

---

**Mixing housing types**

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Townhomes, ancillary units associated with main homes ("in-law suites"), single-family attached and detached homes can live compatibly where they are clustered and share similar design characteristics.

### Improve Design Outcomes with Form-Based Code

The subject of form-based code is brought up regularly in planning circles, and for good reason: by creating land use types that focus on design characteristics and qualities with less attention on narrow uses, the land development code can offer more flexibility, more proximate land uses, and increase the design values of a community. When this code is implemented (and revised after some experience with them in place) it helps create an "economic engine," more "place-based" than conventional zoning codes, and creates a more understandable, clear building code that reduces the conflicts that often accompany re-zoning or other development actions. The housing components should focus both on density and design, incorporating walking paths and landscaping as an integral part of every project.

Creating form-based code requires a professional, public involvement, and good communication with developers and the public. Hire a consultant to run the process.



Effective code development requires collaboration of staff, the Planning Commission, the public, and business interests. Collaboration is key.



Anticipate \$200,000 as a minimum for rewriting the Garner code. A targeted effort will cost less, but also do less. One-quarter staff position for 18 months.



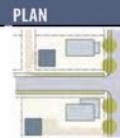
#### Form-Based Code: Housing

While still requiring some use limitations, form-based codes require common design standards for both block-level and unit-level to provide consistency and quality while allowing for diverse housing types.

-from Beaufort, SC

### 4.5 BUILDING TYPES

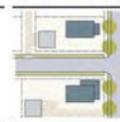
**1. Carriage House:** an accessory structure that provides small, flexible living spaces adjacent to a main house. These are often used for rental housing, and may be located above a garage or parking area.



PERMITTED ZONING DISTRICT(S)

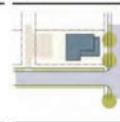
T3, T4, T5

**2. Single Family Detached House:** the predominant residential building type in Beaufort. This house sits on a private lot and can vary in size from a small cottage to a large mansion. Setbacks and frontage types vary by Transect Zone.



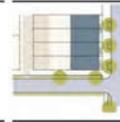
T3, T4

**3. 2-3 Unit House:** a house-form that seamlessly fits in to a predominantly single-family neighborhood, but contains multiple dwelling units. The units may be side by side, or stacked. They typically have separate entrances off of the street, but may share a common entrance. They are located under one roof and do not have parapets dividing the units.



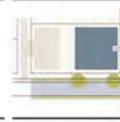
T3, T4, T5

**4. Rowhome:** these attached residential buildings contain more than three units in a row. Three or fewer is considered a 2-3 unit building. They may have parapet walls dividing the units, or be combined under one roof form. They are elevated above the street a minimum of 3' for privacy, and are typically accessed by stoops. They may also utilize the forecourt and porch frontage types.



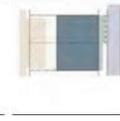
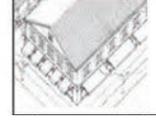
T3, T4-N, T5

**5. Apartment House:** these larger-scale buildings feature 4 or more dwelling units. They often occupy corner lots, or are located in combination to create their own blocks. The ground floor is raised a minimum of 18" for privacy. When located within a primarily single family neighborhood, these buildings should assume similar characteristics and setback as the surrounding buildings.



T4, T5, RMX, IC

**6. Livework/Mixed-Use:** these buildings feature a first floor commercial space at grade, with office or residential living above. They are typically attached but may be freestanding structures. The ground floor has a substantial amount of glazing and often utilizes the shopfront frontage type. They may be fee-simple structures, or condominium-style.



T4, T5, RMX, LI, IC

# Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) Recommendations

Today's modern codes are form-based – that is, they marry the public realm of streets and parks to homes and shops to create interactive spaces that people love. They are more responsive to the needs of changing demographics and more flexible for developers to respond to market demand. The combination of these elements are the building blocks of creating a more sustainable, more walkable, and more valued Garner.

## The Way Forward

### *General UDO Recommendations*

- Reorganize the document to improve navigation and provide additional and improved illustrations for preferred development patterns and elements.

### *Administrations and Approvals*

- Amend the Subdivision Approval standards to comply with the General Statutes.
- Amend Town Council and Appeals to comply with GS 160A-388.
- Consider converting Conditional Use District Zoning to Conditional District Zoning to streamline the process.

### *Districts and Uses*

- Reduce number of Single Family Residential Districts; classify by density instead of minimum lot size
- Create flexible Multi-Family Development to accommodate a wider range of housing choices,
- Remove Townhomes and Condominiums classification in compliance with state and federal laws.
- Permit smaller Overnight Accommodations, 30 or less rooms, to allow for boutique hotels and inns.
- Classify Retail Sales by the size of the structure rather than the type of good sold.
- Reduce Residential Setbacks requirements, particularly for front yards.
- Update Appearance Standards for Single Family and Modular Homes.
- Expand zero foot front Commercial Setbacks to other districts and include a maximum setback.
- Reduce open space requirements for PUD, PRD, and TNDs; remove requirement for rezoning/conditional use permits.

### *General Development Standards*

- Connect Tree Canopy to other preserved spaces; increase penalty to encourage compliance with full preservation requirement
- Encourage conformity of land uses for Street Buffers on both sides of the street.
- Create different Landscape requirements based on walkability of a district.
- Reduce parking requirements and place strict limitations on front yard parking.
- Amend Signs standards to follow recent Supreme Court rulings.
- Use ITE/CNU Manual on Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares to revise Streets standards.
- Reduce maximum length for Blocks to 300-600 feet and include strict limitations on cul-de-sacs.
- Require Sidewalks for both sides of all streets except for Low-Density Residential and Rural Lands.
- Include broadband access to internet as a minimum Utility Service
- Revise Open Space Dedication for single- and multi-family lots and correlate amounts with other open space standards

### *Design*

- Adopt a form-based code for building design standards.

### Establish Community Forums

People were extremely grateful to be a part of the planning process for Garner Forward, so continue that momentum by conducting annual summits to engage local people. Create more of an informal atmosphere by having food (or inviting food trucks) and establishing an ongoing rapport with Garner's residents. Each summit should have both an input (survey) and output ("what we're accomplishing") component. This can work well to establish a community hot line for maintenance concerns, new small-area planning exercises, or even future community planning districts and plans.

Create 2-3 community forum events, preferably outdoors and/or in locations that are convenient and known to the public.



Advertising is key: suggest working through civic organizations and churches as well to communicate the purpose and benefits of the event.



Providing food for participants will increase the costs, but space should be free or nearly so. Anticipate \$5,000 per event plus 60 hours of staff time.



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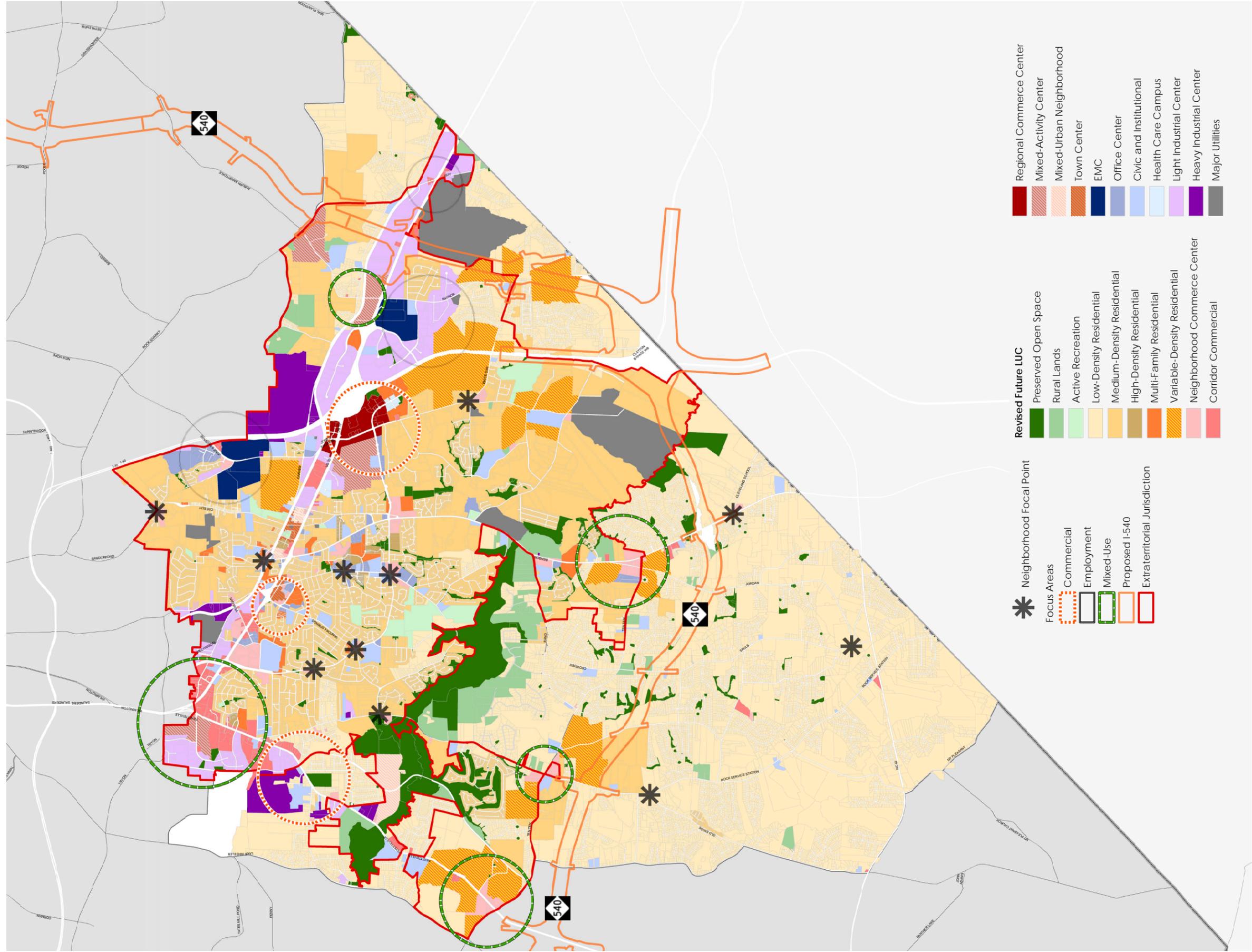
### Promote Multi-Family Housing in Select Areas

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM), see page highlights specific areas where multi-family living is appropriate. Being cognizant that multi-family developments planned, designed, and constructed in locations that are ill-suited for them often result in lower quality and seemingly out-of-place designs and densities that taint the prospect of future developments.

Beyond that, the form-based recommendation noted elsewhere in the Garner Forward Plan will present and encourage different styles of multi-family housing in a way that is more compatible with existing communities than is possible under the current zoning code used by the Town.

Adhere to the Future Land Use Map, and reflect on it as part of the discussion held at Planning Board and Council meetings during development review meetings.

Working with real estate professionals, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and private developers in a meeting atmosphere can result in a better articulation of the desired products and barriers to getting them.



**Garner Future Land Use Map (FLUM)**

## Garner Future Land Use Categories (LUC)

A new way of looking at Garner's potential.  
Focuses on density instead of lot-size.

### NATURAL & HERITAGE LANDS ● ● ● ● ●

■ **Preserved Open Space (POS)** These areas are typically undisturbed or undeveloped and have been protected from development by local, state, and federal agencies or by public, private, and nonprofit organizations. These lands may also include areas containing wetlands or flood plain areas where the potential for development is limited.

■ **Rural Lands (RUL)** The RUL designations are generally privately owned and operated for the primary purpose of agricultural production, forestry, and other low-intensity uses of the land not included in Preserved Open Space (POS). Lands in the RUL category may include voluntary agricultural districts and have homes and ancillary units on lots of not less than three (3) acres in size.

■ **Active Recreation (ACR)** The ACR designation refers to ballparks, recreation centers, parks, and other areas designated for public engagement in health- and community-focused activities. In some cases, stand-alone recreational facilities that charge fees (e.g., YMCA) are included in this designation, but lands and structures are generally public owned and open to the public.

### RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES ● ● ● ● ●

■ **Low-Density Residential (LDR)** The LDR category would be mostly traditional county-approved subdivisions – anything that could be sustained on individual well and septic – with less than two units per acre.

■ **Medium-Density Residential (MDR)** The MDR designation includes single-family, duplex, triplex, quadplex, and townhome-style residences with not less than two (2) and more than five (5) units per acre. Medium-Density Residential structures may also include auxiliary units detached from the primary house.

■ **High-Density Residential (HDR)** The High-Density Residential includes single-family, duplex, triplex, quadplex, and townhome-style residences at a density of not less than five (5) units per acre. High-Density Residential structures may also include auxiliary units either attached to or detached from the main residence.

■ **Multi-Family Residential (MFR)** The MFR category encompasses multi-unit, multi-structure apartment buildings, condominiums up to four stories in height. These developments are typically independent of surrounding land uses and not part of a larger project or a mixed density development. Higher densities / heights are addressed in the Mixed-Activity Center and Town Center categories.

■ **Variable-Density Residential (VDR)** The Variable-Density Residential category describes tracts where medium-density, high-density, and multi-family residential types (see MDR, HDR, and MFR category descriptions) may co-exist in master-planned developments.

## COMMERCE LANDS ● ● ● ●

■ **Neighborhood Commerce Center (NCC)** The NCC category emphasizes smaller commercial centers that are within close walking proximity (1/4-mile to 1/2-mile) of residential uses. Typical mixes of uses would be pharmacies, small offices, and individual retail establishments that share a common parking area and may have a small anchor such as a grocery store. Permitted uses should be conducted within an enclosed building. Uses with outdoor storage and outdoor sales display areas should be discouraged. Rare exceptions may include neighborhood garden centers or agriculture sales stands that are small-scale and compatible with the surrounding land uses.

■ **Corridor Commercial (CRC)** The Corridor Commercial land use category emphasizes commercial centers that have individual driveways and separated parking lots, unique signage, and differentiated building materials and styles along a major arterial roadway. These centers are less likely to have any foot traffic, and oriented towards the roadway with little accessibility from the rear or sides of the properties. Permitted uses may include operations with outdoor storage and outdoor sales display areas. For these uses, special emphasis should be placed on landscaping and screening. Uses along these corridors should be attractively landscaped and screened as these corridors are gateways into the community for the traveling public.

■ **Regional Commerce Center (RCC)** The Regional Commerce Centers are located exclusively along major arterials, and often within close proximity of another, crossing major arterial or freeway facility. These centers are auto-oriented, serving customers both local and from immediately adjacent communities with a mix of moderate- to large retail establishments, one or more of which is considered an anchor tenant. The individual stores may have their own, usually coordinated, storefronts and signage, or may be located inside a common building (e.g., shopping mall). Unlike Corridor Commercial, these centers often have shared parking, interior interconnectivity, and also shared driveways for ingress and egress.

## MIXED LAND USE CATEGORIES ● ● ● ●

■ **Mixed-Activity Center (MAC)** The Mixed-Activity Center emphasizes complementary land uses that collectively create a comprehensive, connected lifestyle approach to living, working, and shopping in close proximity. The development of these land uses has integrated sidewalk and pedestrian networks. Premium transit (e.g., bus rapid transit or passenger rail service) may support more intense developments from one to six stories in height; without access to premium transit (bus rapid transit on dedicated travelway or passenger rail services) height restrictions are set at 4-6 stories (if at least one full-depth floor is at least 75% dedicated to retail or office uses).

■ **Mixed-Urban Neighborhood (MUN)** The Mixed-Urban Neighborhood center includes older, predominantly residential neighborhoods adjacent to the Town Center category, or on the periphery of established, mixed-use areas. Although predominantly small-lot residential in character, individual offices, retail storefronts, and other sole-proprietor, low-traffic commercial uses located along collector streets (or higher categories of street) are part of the overall fabric of development that serve predominantly neighborhood customers within walking distance.

■ **Town Center (TNC)** Both the traditional downtown core (accompanied by historic overlay considerations) and other concentrations of development near transit stops, established government uses, and other diverse, mixed-use locations are part of the Town Center designation. Uses and buildings are located on small blocks with streets designed to encourage pedestrian activity. Buildings typically stand a minimum of two stories in height with residential units above storefronts served by rear-loading, shared, and / or on-street parking.

## BUSINESS LANDS ● ● ● ●

■ **Employment Campus (EMC)** The Employment Campus land use category is a master-planned employment center sharing parking areas, common access points, and managed oversight of tenants. The EMC tract may include support functions common to the businesses such as transportation/loading, meeting / office spaces, and warehousing facilities. Uses would be similar to the diversity of those found in the LIC category: light manufacturing, assembly, distribution, warehousing, offices, and so forth.

■ **Office Center (OFC)** The Office Center may have multiple, non-government tenants occupying a single building, adjacent spaces, or separate buildings accessed by 1-2 driveways from an arterial roadway. Workers tend to arrive in single shifts, and some retail activities may occur on the premises, although that is not the primary use. Buffering from adjacent uses is light, usually locating near transitional uses like moderate- to higher-density residential and mixed-use developments.

■ **Civic & Institutional (CVI)** The Civic and Institutional land use category includes government offices and schools, first responder structures, civic clubs, post offices, and faith-based organizations and uses.

■ **Health Care Campus (HCC)** A Health Care Campus includes various medical and medical-related uses, such as primary care, outpatient surgery, birthing centers, and other specialty medical services. They may be relatively large in scale, and may also include a hospital, teaching facilities, research, and rehabilitation centers along with associated clinics on one or more outparcels or on nearby, separately-owned parcels.

## INDUSTRIAL LANDS AND UTILITIES ● ● ● ●

■ **Light Industrial Center (LIC)** Light Industrial Centers support small to medium-scale, on-site manufacturing and production uses including warehousing, light manufacturing, distribution, medical research/laboratory, and assembly operations. These areas are almost exclusively found near major transportation corridors (i.e., highway, airport, or rail) to support delivery to individual customers or other transport, distribution, or manufacturing/assembly centers. Noise attenuation is seldom required, and buffering is typically vegetated landscaping to shield loading and temporary outdoor storage areas from nearby property owners.

■ **Heavy Industrial Center (HIC)** Heavy Industrial Centers support large-scale, on-site manufacturing and production uses, including assembly and processing; regional warehousing and distribution; bulk outdoor storage; and utilities. These areas are located near major transportation hubs (controlled-access freeways, Class I railroads, and/or airports with airfreight handling capabilities). Noise attenuation, wider/higher buffering requirements, and larger sites are more commonplace than in the LIC category.

■ **Utilities (UTL)** The UTL category may contain public structures and facilities; transmission lines both above and below ground; and supporting structures, vehicle parking/maintenance, and materials storage. Other uses may include wind / solar farms and associated maintenance and storage facilities.

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**Commercial development**, both in terms of retail establishments and office spaces, should be a reflection of what we in the community of Garner need to have nearer to us, not only what the marketplace wants today. Recognizing changing trends in shopping experiences, workplace flexibility, and how work, home, and fun can be integrated are important to creating great places within Garner, more job opportunities, and enhancing nearby residential properties.



# WORKING PLACES

- Attract Unique Commercial Establishments
- Align Development Code with Our Desired Ends
- Support Anticipated Increase in Office Needs
- Take Advantage of Work-in-Place Trends
- Understand Utility Demands Associated with Development

Perhaps no other facet of life is as fluid as work-place and consumer trends. Shopping center after shopping center struggles to keep customers and retain tenants while on-line retailing for some goods soars. The people working in those stores understand that a "living wage" is unlikely for them, and want to achieve a higher place in life through promotion, training, or returning to school: while traditional, four-year college students are declining in number, technical schools are seeing substantial increases in enrollment. A shared economy translates sometimes into shared workspaces, commonly known as co-working arrangements where the self-employed use rented space part-time for meetings and collaboration but don't need or can't afford a 24-hour space. Ironically, shopping experiences are mirroring this workplace trend, with the advent of "pop-up" retailing, where small companies or individuals showcase their wares, food, or services temporarily in the company of other like-minded entrepreneurs. The customer is also wanting an experience: walking, meeting people accidentally or on purpose, grabbing coffee or shopping is expected to happen increasingly all in the same physical space.

## CO-WORKING

NOUN

People employed in a single workspace with different employers to share ideas, knowledge, and resources

*"Jay is really serious about his new business idea; he just moved into a co-working space for six months to dedicate himself full-time to making it happen."*

### Benefits Available from Adopting Recommended Policy or Practice.



**HEALTH**  
supports community health and environmental quality



**ELEVATE**  
instills quality in appearance, design, or community



**FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
adds value to people, businesses, and town

supports us			practice or policy
			Support live/work arrangements in future UDO update, recognizing limitations imposed by traffic and parking
			Ensure that existing regulations aren't stifling new kinds of hybrid office, retail, industrial, and even housing combinations in commercial areas of town
			Don't wait for lightning to strike - proactively seek out the companies and businesses people want to see more of in Garner (e.g., restaurants, industrial)
			Partner with the Garner Chamber of Commerce for staff support to make some of the action items happen sooner
			Light up the bridges - using side / underneath, colored lighting will open up dark spaces and create signature gateways out of bridge crossings
			Work with the City of Raleigh to sponsor a bike share station in the historic downtown area
			Consider formal restrictions on "formula businesses," those that operate as chains with nationally standardized decor and operations
			Everyone - Chamber, Town, Economic Development, Public Works, appointed/elected officials - need to have a consistent message on desired developments
			Establish target measures that report on desired outcomes: three groceries within one square mile; number of non-chain commercial applications, etc.
			Report demand for utilities of new, proposed development at completion, full build-out, and in 20 years' time to ensure "no surprises" later on.




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**Create great space**

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Working with existing retailers can create opportunities for collaborative ventures - providing the streetscaping and partial facade financing in return for reuse of seldom-used parking is envisioned along Fifth Avenue.

Smaller, leaner, and cleaner manufacturing and industry, often mixed with offices and even ground-floor retailing, are becoming the most attractive options for many communities that want to have higher wages.

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**Industry as gateway?**

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**Park it in back**

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Requiring all or a high percentage of parking to be at the side or rear of buildings is preferred for creating enclosed spaces; limiting parking generally is increasing seen as an antidote to little-used commercial spaces.



### Create One Co-Work Space

There are terrific examples like HQ Raleigh, Design Box, and The Underground nearby. In some cases, co-work also becomes "co-live," as ground-floor entrepreneurs live and work for limited tenures inside the shared space. Job training and experts in relevant fields come into the space periodically to help solve specific or general problems - even standard business management. A Garner version might be oriented towards members of the workforce that have great ideas and are stuck providing for themselves and others with low-wage jobs that consume their time and energies.

Identifying and leasing space is not the first step, but a necessary one. Co-locating in seldom-used office or retail space may be one option.



The Chamber of Commerce and community groups, as well as subject matter experts to help novices manage their business are important partners.



Expect around \$12/square foot; perhaps \$60,000 per year, plus \$20,000 for maintenance. Tenants do a pay fee that will offset some costs.



### Establish a Cooking Studio / Farmer's Market

Residents want more and better restaurants; workers want better-paying jobs; and the town wants a signature gathering place. Assembling all of this in the vicinity of downtown and Fifth Avenue in a revitalized space, part of which would be open-air, can check all the boxes. Although not easy, private sector partnerships can help reuse some of the languishing retail spaces and absorb some of the up-front costs as well.



The partnerships are the most important step here; learn from other markets and experiences like the one in Grand Rapids ([downtown-marketgr.com](http://downtown-marketgr.com)).



The Chamber of Commerce and local retail-oriented landowners are crucial. Hiring someone to make this happen isn't unreasonable.



Costs vary from nothing if the right partnerships can be struck, to a more realistic negotiated purchase and redevelopment price of \$500,000 to launch.



## Develop the North

North Garner is undergoing and will continue to experience a major renaissance as development pressures from downtown Raleigh move south. Investing in streetscaping, maintenance, parks, and seeking opportunities for redevelopment of commercial and residential properties has happened and should continue to occur. The Garner Revitalization Association conducts events, outdoor movies, and other attractions - people that participated in Garner Forward said that they want to see more of all these things in the future. This task is somewhat easy - increase the financial support for, and collaboration with, the GRA. Establishing a once-a-month event (e.g., solidifying the pop-up market), creating a new playground, new music venue, making US 70 overpasses more walkable and inviting are all great joint projects.

Prioritizing projects is the challenge: projects shouldn't just make downtown better, but draw attention to it from the outside.



The GRA is an obvious partnership, but other business owners are collaboration targets as well.



The costs will vary by project; an additional \$50,000 annually, to be matched from other sources, is a good starting place.



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## Revisit and Revise Parking...Comprehensively

Parking and cars are a part of life for a while longer regardless of how automated the vehicle becomes. However, most parking sits empty most of the time. Sponsor a comprehensive parking study to consider the following, at a minimum:

- Parking maximums in some zones;
- Shared parking and relationships to transit;
- Technology impacts in the future;
- Opening up private and institution parking to metering;
- Revise the location of parking relative to buildings for new and modified developments;
- Do away with parking minimums entirely in some districts; and
- Allow for reductions in parking if other, multi-modal improvements are taken by the developer.

The first step is to undertake an internal review of parking-related issues and concession areas, then develop a scope of services tied to a budget amount and schedule.



Gathering input (not a steering committee) composed of developers and homeowners should happen early, even during the scoping phase, to get buy-in.



The typical study cost is approximately \$50,000 - \$75,000. Expect 8 hours of staff time on average per week for 8 months.



**Building on and conserving the existing character.** Garner will help the Town attract quality private development - which in turn helps Garner be in a better position to attract new development with favorable design qualities and amenities. That development can also build infrastructure to help ensure long-term financial viability in a "virtuous circle" of sustainable improvements.



# KEEP OUR CHARACTER

- Balance costs with revenues
- Influence design to keep within our character and improve value
- Create a healthy brand
- Partner with civic and other organizations, public and private
- Recommendations should address school performance

Community character includes the assortment of elements that make a place unique. It can attract business, visitors, and tourists and makes citizens proud to call their community home. Character is not an artificial creation but the result of preservation and enhancement of an area's natural and cultural features over many years. Garner resident's need practices and policies that ensures they will continue to enjoy their favored small-town atmosphere while still benefiting from new growth and development. Landscaping, material choices for exterior structures, bridge designs, streetscaping, greenways, lighting, wayfinding, gateways, and many other choices influence the overall character of the Town. Employing streetscaping, secure design principles, and more rural design treatments without unduly hindering development will help create a greater variety of places; and protect, conserve, and build upon the current places of value. Garner's schools are often cited as underperforming their peers in other parts of Wake County, which is accountable for restrictions on the quantity and types of housing constructed in recent years. While municipalities have little direct input into their school's funding or operations they can indirectly influence and contribute to improving performance.

## VIRTUOUS CIRCLE

### NOUN

A recurring cycle of events, the result of each one being to increase the beneficial effect of the next.

*The civic leader said, "We need to attract investment to create a virtuous circle in which increased economic activity leads to more investment, more investment leads to more economic activity, and so on."*



**HEALTH**  
supports community health and environmental quality



**ELEVATE**  
instills quality in appearance, design, or community



**FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
adds value to people, businesses, and town

supports us		practice or policy
		Market a healthy brand that celebrates the local flair of Garner and emphasizes the Town's positive evolution.
		 Promote design standards that enhance community appearance and maintain a unique sense of place
		 Encourage redevelopment and reuse of existing sites and buildings that are complimentary to the surrounding area
		Create a "historical and cultural" centerpiece. Use the Downtown Streetscapes plan to identify design treatments and strategies.
		 Display community values and pride through our architecture, landscape design, and public art.
		Promote open spaces and natural features such as major trees, streams, hills and woodlands.
		Promote coordination between neighborhood associations, municipalities, and communities to promote the preservation of each area's historic resources.
		 Design and build attractive and creative landscaped gateways that display the unique character of the place.
		 Develop an infrastructure improvement plan to address the appearance of railroad bridges and water towers.

focus group  
summary, 2016



"Garner doesn't want to be Raleigh, but we want to have the benefits from being near Raleigh and part of a metropolitan area while minimizing downsides."

#### On Display

Attractive and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes communicate a small-town feel and a human scale environment.

#### Come on In

By focusing on creating attractive and unique gateways Garner can attract new visitors and encourage people to return.

### Establish a Regular Evaluation Among Peers

During the planning process, one of the most popular topics was, "How do we compare to our peers?" Information can be time-consuming to obtain, but fortunately there are newer, on-line resources that can help expedite such comparisons. Particularly noteworthy is the AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) Livability Index. This index weighs numerous factors into seven categories (housing, neighborhoods, transportation, health, environment, engagement, and opportunity). Each category is given a 0-100 score and also produces an overall score. Most importantly, each category can be weighted as more or less important, and it allows direct comparisons to other places.

Review the AARP Livability Index (<https://livabilityindex.aarp.org>) and other tools to create a relevant evaluation to other peer towns.



Present the evaluation results at Council retreats, annual reports, and periodic strategy reports to create a culture of acceptance for peer reviews and progress.



Approximately 4 hours of staff time per evaluation period (plus an additional four hours initially to establish the best tool and scoring). Good intern task.



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### Create a Support Network for Public Schools

Schools are both the future recipients of *Garner Forward*, and our most prized asset today. Municipalities don't have a direct financial role enhancing public schools or their performance in North Carolina, but they can provide indirect support in a number of ways. A cooperative effort can create an open and reliable network between school administrators, town staff, and civic organizations. Bimonthly "in-reach" meetings involving the school, the Town, and community partners can determine school's individual needs and then apply resources to volunteer efforts to maintain/repair school grounds and landscaping; donate books and supplies; or work directly with teachers to enhance school curricula.

Assign staff person to coordinate initial project outline, contact civic agencies, and school contracts, and the first 12 month's of meetings and activities.



Work with civic organizations and churches (e.g., Rotary, Lion's) to create a sustained network of assistance with Garner's school administration.



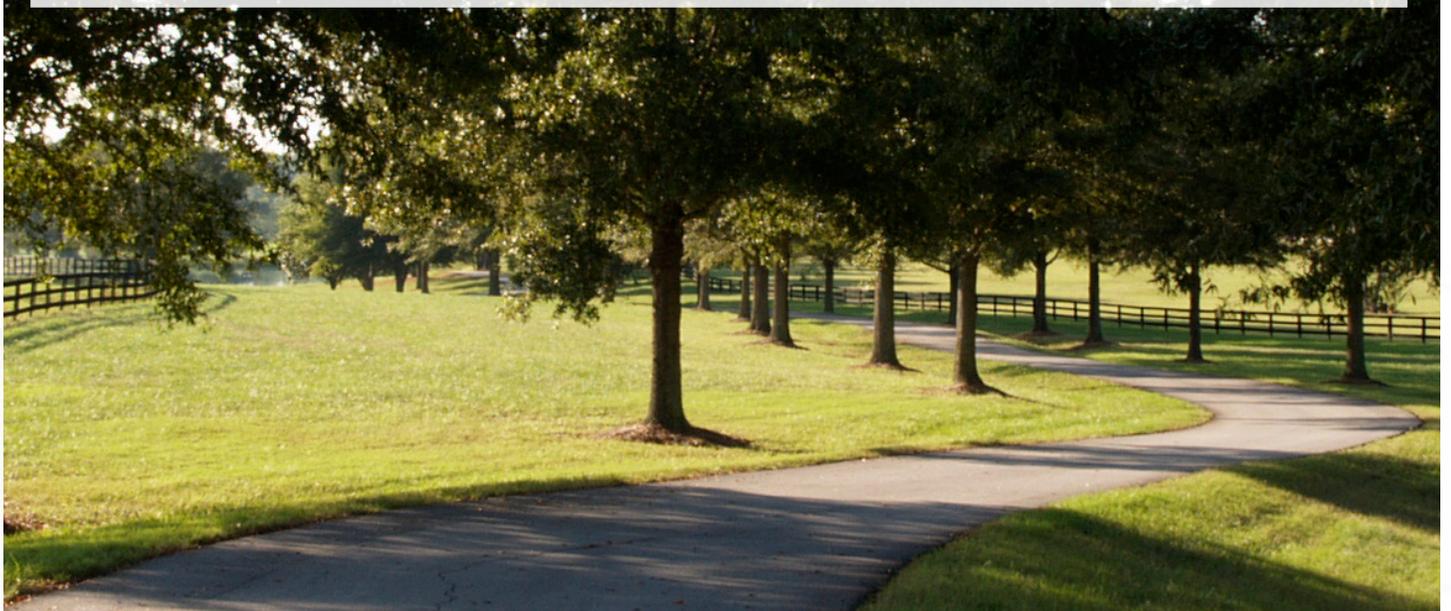
Approximately 5-10 hours of staff time per week (more initially) and, depending on projects, cap budget at \$5,000 per year for materials.



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**The Transportation System** in Garner is crucial to more than just moving traffic: we must be able to move people and business products safely and efficiently. The extent to which we can achieve this objective depends in part on our willingness to commit Town-level resources to the solutions, but in places where we want to retain a sense of community then walking, biking, and public transportation may provide alternative ways of accessing nearby destinations.



# KEEPING US MOVING

- Techniques Available to Us
- Use the Full Range of Congestion Management
- Identify “Bang-for-Buck” Projects and New Funding
- Increase the Role of Transit, but Use Technology to the Fullest Benefit
- Prioritize and Defend Connectivity
- Create Great Streets - Start with One
- Celebrate Entry Points (Gateways)
- Manage I-540 as an Asset

Transportation is the figurative glue that ties everything else together: land use, commercial opportunity, jobs, schools, parks and parking lots.

The Garner community's comments about transportation included traditional complaints about congestion but also focused more heavily on public transportation and the roles that walking and biking can play in our community. Technology is playing havoc with long-held views of how people access places and other modes like transit stops; even parking, the forlorn step-child of transportation, is undergoing transformative change from parking "apps" and challenges to the need for minimum parking standards that have left a sea of empty parking lots in prime real estate. Finally, the imminent I-540 construction has moved from far-off possibility to something that needs to be planned and protected.

The update of the 2010 Transportation Plan is under separate cover, but the following section completes the catalytic function of transportation for the other big topics in the Comprehensive Plan. Policy and program elements are covered here; look elsewhere in the Transportation Plan for specific infrastructure investments.

## ● PEER-TO-PEER TRANSPORT

● NOUN

● Process whereby strangers share rides, cars, or carpools, often on short notice and facilitated through technology

● *"Ellen frequently works as a driver for a peer-to-peer ride sharing company on the weekends to earn extra money."*



**HEALTH**  
supports community health and environmental quality



**ELEVATE**  
instills quality in appearance, design, or community



**FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
adds value to people, businesses, and town

supports us			practice or policy
			Adopt a complete streets mindset and approach to site and roadway design - does the proposal support all kinds of travelers, regardless of age or abilities?
			Develop a "green street" design standard as part of the Complete Street policy; Garner could benefit from less runoff, pollution, and street flooding
			Cover maintenance of sidewalks, lighting, and streetscape features first before building something new
			Support a partnership with a peer-to-peer ridesharing service to substitute for transit and first-mile/last-mile trips - this space is evolving rapidly
			Support "trunk line" bus services on US 401 and US 70; wait on financing circulator routes until place-to-place (P2P) and route-deviation options are exhausted
			Create a cool crosswalk someplace - many communities are celebrating their unique places with artistic variations of crosswalk designs
			Support school zone safety through enforcement of speeding laws, and support bicycle and pedestrian safety classes at local elementary schools
			Continue support for future commuter rail, with design, safety, and station enhancements when called upon to do so - if it supports the town's objectives
			Fill in gaps in sidewalks, greenways, and access to transit stops by establishing a rotating set-aside for these small construction tasks
			Work closely with other, land use-oriented decisions to ensure that capacity is managed and design standards are contemplated (e.g., UDO update)

### Strengthen Access Management

Access management covers a number of actions that are designed to promote safety by reducing collisions, and that in turn reduce the resulting non-recurring delay that accounts for up to 40% or more of all vehicular delay in an urbanized area. These measures also make biking and walking easier and safer since there are few conflicts with cars for them, too. N.C. municipalities may adopt standards more stringent than those of the state, including median openings, driveway-to-driveway distances, numbers of driveways allowed, distance between driveways and streets, and requirements for shared access between properties.

The Transportation Plan (and its 2010 predecessor) provides detailed guidelines, as do other publications. It's ready to go.



The NC Department of Transportation is the primary partner here in developing and finalizing these standards.



These standards should, with the help of examples from places like Cary and Raleigh, be done with about 200 hours of in-house staff time.



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### Establish a Connectivity Standard

The relatively poor east-west connectivity between major north-south roadways is only one aspect of connectivity, which can facilitate cheaper service deliveries, faster emergency response times, lower congestion, offer alternative routing for crash- or construction-related closures, and create more opportunities for walking and accessing new developments. Better connectivity can be had by more finely delineating a secondary street network (refer to the Transportation Plan) or by requiring a certain number of connections per linear footage of roadway. In downtown or mixed-use areas, maximum block lengths are preferred to generate more opportunities for high-quality, high tax-value developments.

This effort is probably best paired with the access management update to accomplish related tasks all at once, both of which can be done along with the UDO update.



Again, NCDOT is the premier partner, although more public engagement is warranted due to potential concerns about increases in traffic volumes.



Assume approximately 200 hours of staff time to complete this effort; somewhat more of which is done by working with neighborhood groups early on.






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**Working together**

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The new bus rapid transit station shown here can help support development opportunities and revitalize an area - if it is developed with appropriate transit-oriented design standards in place.

The Jones Sausage Road interchange with I-40 offers great economic potential for manufacturing, but also for creating a new gateway. An understated sign can help soften the "hard edges" created by roads and structures.

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**Sign of the times**

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**Walk it off**

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Even people that don't think much about walking or biking appreciate the landscaping, shared public spaces, street design, and building facades that invite active travel. No parking lot in sight.



### Conduct Small Area Plans

Working with the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, conduct small-area plans around future I-540 interchanges that integrate best practice-thinking about integrative land use and transportation strategies. These strategies should include economic development potentialities as much as the potential for reducing congestion and preserving capacity along the freeway and surface streets. Some small area plans can and should focus on highway capacity and traffic analysis (the US 70 / US 401 interchange), while others may emphasize land use and economic development objectives generated by the community - and always the community should help generate ideas to ensure good feedback, not push back.

Small-area plans should focus on details and engagement, taking about 6 - 12 months to complete. Have several lined up so that people know they are being treated fairly.



The public, elected officials, and key stakeholders like churches and employers are critical stakeholders, and should generate ideas, not just react to them.



The budget should be approximately \$80,000 - \$100,000 per plan, depending on detail, engagement, and graphics.



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### Adopt a Complete Street Policy and Guidelines

As the project team observed first-hand, people in the Aversboro Road neighborhood were supportive of re-thinking the role of their street as one in which walking, meeting people, streetscaping, and bicycling were as important as vehicular throughput. The 2010 Transportation Plan called for a similar measure by creating a "road diet" whereby a new turn lane replaces two through lanes to reduce crashes/delays, and opens the roadway up to more biking, walking, and aesthetic improvements. Aversboro isn't the only street with potential: other neighborhood streets and second-tier arterials can be similarly provided with better walking, biking, and architectural design elements to foster economic activity, increase property values, and increase the tax base. This strategy ties in directly to an oft-cited need to approve appearance and first impressions.

Adequate examples already exist; borrow heavily from Charlotte and NCDOT existing guidelines, but tailor to new land use codes and plan objectives.



Some coordination with NCDOT is recommended, but integration with a UDO update could satisfy other engagement objectives.



Expert help from consultants may be a good idea, but good resources already exist, as noted. Perhaps \$10,000 - \$20,000 to tailor an existing guideline.





Lake Benson Park Easter Egg Hunt.

# CREATING SUCCESS

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIPS

Implementing the recommendations detailed within this Plan will require strong partnerships with clearly defined roles and shared objectives. It is through such collaboration that these visions can be financed, designed, constructed and maintained for a better future for the Town of Garner. In order to create these new relationships, it is imperative to identify and engage all potential stakeholders and what they bring to the table.

**Wake County:** As a municipality in Wake County, Garner has access to the best amenities and support systems in the state. In collaboration with the GoTriangle and GoRaleigh Transit systems, Garner's growth offers increased ridership and long-term funding, while in turn, expanding these systems allows for increased connectivity through Town and access for its citizens. Additionally, this growth and increased connectivity can mutually benefit Wake County Public Schools through expansion.

**NCDOT:** At the state level, the North Carolina Department of Transportation plays a major role in planning and funding transportation projects at the state, regional, and city or town levels. The NCDOT is already very involved in the growth of Garner with the extension of I-540 and can be a critical partner in the design, construction, and regulation of transportation solutions in and outside of the Town.

**Neighboring Jurisdictions:** Through Garner's location, it has direct access to several major thoroughfares in the region; I-40, I-540, US-70, and US-401. These highways and neighboring towns and townships allow for the opportunity to collaborate on jointly led improvements throughout the region, possibly through corridor studies and economic development around key nodes, or the creation of new nodes to fill gaps in service along borders.

**Civic Organizations:** Groups focused on the local community can get involved with the development and implementation of the Plan and be vital to the success of a Plan and the adaptation of it's elements by the community. In joining the local government and designers, they will help the projects reach a wider audience while encouraging engagement and volunteerism. Community involvement and ownership will bolster relationships through and across neighborhoods and organizations.



These recommendations will require strong public/private and community relationships to bring them to fruition

The development of recommendations laid out in this Plan and accompanying documents begin and end with the needs of Garner. In balancing these needs with those of the stakeholders working with the Town in the important partnerships discussed previously, the recommendations can be sorted by necessity into an achievable sequential time frame.



# Implementation Actions and Priorities

This section provides concrete steps to transition the Comprehensive Plan from a document into action. Success depends on building essential partnerships, having clear implementation objectives and priorities, and consistently monitoring and updating the Plan to reflect progress and new developments. The Implementation Matrix is an essential guideline for outlining time frames and partnerships for each recommendation, policy, and practice proposed in the Plan.

In order to prioritize the Implementation Matrix the Town should convene a Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee, including staff from other departments. This Committee will be responsible for prioritizing the recommendations, establishing performance measures, and developing action plans.

Effective monitoring depends on quantifiable performance indicators that can track changes over time. It is important to establish a point of reference for comparison in order to observe progress. In addition to deciding on the performance measures the Committee should also select target values to demonstrate a rate of success or complete achievement.

Following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, zoning regulations should be amended to reflect the recommendations for the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and classifications in the Future Land Use Map.

All the Town's other plans for development, parks and open space, utilities, public services, and environmental preservation must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. To determine joint planning opportunities and uniformity with the Comprehensive Plan all Town departments will submit annually to the Town Manager and Planning Director a list of plans and studies for the upcoming year.



	Short-term	The task would be best handled within <b>1 - 5 years</b>
	Mid-Term	The task would be best handled within <b>5 - 10 years</b>
	Long-Term	The task would be best handled within <b>10 - 20 years</b>

The Implementation Matrix includes all of the recommendations, polices, and practices proposed in the Plan. Additional information can be found in the relevant topic chapters. The time frame is divided out by short-term actions to be completed within five years, mid-term actions within five to ten years, and long-term actions with ten to twenty years.

Time Frame	Recreation Recommendations	Partners
	Secure Open Space and Recreational Areas in the South of Town	Wake County, Triangle Land Conservancy
	Develop a Public Arts Program	Arts League of Garner
	Invest in the Maintenance of Current Parks and Recreation Facilities and Increase Programming	Local arts and health organizations
	Preserve, Install, and Maintain Street Trees	Parks and Recreation departments
	Increase the number of recreational facilities and fields for athletic events and partner with athletic leagues to maintain and expand	Athletic leagues
	Continue to implement the Town's Parks and Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Master Plan, but also prepare an update to this plan	Parks and Recreation departments
	Designate potential locations for off-leash areas (OLAs), or dog parks.	Parks and Recreation departments
	Hardwire greenway and sidewalk language into the development code to align open spaces and connections between projects that occur under different time frames	Integrate with partners in UDO update
	Support health related events and design a 5K course incorporating the Garner bridges	Local health organizations
	Expand the existing linked open space system by acquiring other potential open space and/or "green fingers along potential stream easements or utility corridors	Parks and Recreation departments
	Encourage the use of conservation developments to preserve natural features and green space	Private developers

Time Frame	Housing Recommendations	Partners
	Improve Design Outcomes with Form-Based Code	Planning Commission, the public, and business interests
	Establish Community Forums	Civic organizations and churches to help with public outreach
	Promote Multi-Family Housing in Select Areas	Real estate professionals, Urban Land Institute (ULI), and private developers
	Emphasize growth areas for new types of housing styles, especially in walkable, mixed-use locations	Integrate with partners in UDO update
	Favor master-planned, larger tracts over smaller, greenfield developments to maximize private contributions and amenities	Integrate with partners in UDO update
	Allow and even encourage shared-use and mixed-use developments, including accessory dwellings	Integrate with partners in UDO update
	Elevate the standards for multi-family housing, including exterior materials, open space requirements, and facades	Integrate with partners in UDO update
	Favor infill housing, especially in North Garner to support the ongoing redevelopment that is already occurring	Integrate with partners in UDO update
	Support neighborhood "brand identity" to create loyalty and an added sense of place; create a great neighborhood award	Neighborhood associations
	Conduct yearly summits to ensure that development reviews, practices, and regulations aren't discouraging desirable products	Developers
	Support more 55+ housing opportunities, both in attached and separated formats, especially those that are integrated with the parks and greenways	Integrate with partners in UDO update
	Support affordable housing in new, multi-family and small-lot detached housing developments in part by increasing exemptions and in part by requiring more	Integrate with partners in UDO update
	Evaluate housing proposals on a life cycle cost and revenue basis - know the ramifications for utilities and other downstream expenses	Local government offices, committees, officials, and developers

Time Frame	Commercial Recommendations	Partners
	Create one Co-work space and establish a Cooking Studio/ Farmer's Market	Chamber of Commerce, community groups, retail-oriented landowners
	Develop the north side of Garner	Garner Revitalization Association (GRA)
	Revisit and Revise Parking... Comprehensively	Developers and homeowners
	Support live/work arrangements in future UDO update and ensure that existing regulations aren't stifling new kinds of hybrid office, retail, industrial, and even housing combinations in commercial areas of town	Integrate with partners in UDO update
	Don't wait for lightning to strike - pro actively seek out the companies and businesses people want to see more of in Garner	Developers and business owners
	Partner with the Garner Chamber of Commerce for staff support to make some of the action items happen sooner	Garner Chamber of Commerce
	Enhance bridge crossings while lighting dark spaces and increasing safety	NCDOT, local government offices, committees, and officials
	Sponsor a bike share station in the historic downtown area	City of Raleigh
	Consider formal restrictions on "formula businesses," those that operate as chains with nationally standardized decor and operations	Developers and business owners
	Create a consistent message on desired developments	Local government offices, committees, and officials
	Establish target measures that report on desired outcomes: three groceries within one square mile; number of non-chain commercial applications, etc.	Chamber of Commerce, local government offices, committees, and officials
	Report demand for utilities of new, proposed development at completion, full build-out, and in 20 years' time to ensure "no surprises" later on.	Local government offices, committees, and officials

Time Frame	Character Recommendations	Partners
	Establish a Regular Evaluation among Peers	Conducted by Planning staff
	Create a Support Network for Public Schools	Civic organizations and churches (ex. Rotary, Lion's)
	Market a healthy brand that celebrates the local flair of Garner and emphasizes the Town's positive evolution	Chamber of Commerce, Garner Revitalization Association (GRA)
	Promote design standards that enhance community appearance and maintain a unique sense of place	Local government offices, committees, and officials
	Encourage redevelopment and reuse of existing sites and buildings that are complimentary to the surrounding area	Property owners
	Create a "historical and cultural" centerpiece. Use the Downtown Streetscapes plan to identify design treatments and strategies	Garner Revitalization Association (GRA)
	Display community values and pride through our architecture, landscape design, and public art	Arts League of Garner, local art organizations
	Promote open spaces and natural features such as major trees, streams, hills and woodlands	Local government offices, committees, and officials
	Promote coordination to preserve each area's historic resources.	Neighborhoods, municipality staff and civic organizations
	Design and build attractive and creative landscaped gateways that display the unique character of the place.	Chamber of Commerce, local government offices, committees, and officials
	Develop an infrastructure improvement plan to address the appearance of railroad bridges and water towers.	Railroad leadership, local government offices, committees, and officials

Time Frame	Transportation Recommendations	Partners
	Strengthen Access Management	NCDOT
	Establish a Connectivity Standard	NCDOT
	Conduct Small Area Plans	CAMPO, the public, elected officials, churches, employers
	Adopt a Complete Street Policy and Guidelines and keep that mindset for all future site and roadway proposals	Integrate with partners in UDO update
	Develop a "green street" design standard as part of the Complete Street policy; Garner could benefit from less runoff, pollution, and street flooding	NCDOT
	Cover maintenance of sidewalks, lighting, and streetscape features first before building something new	Local government offices, committees, and officials
	Support a partnership with a peer-to-peer ridesharing service to substitute for transit and first-mile/last-mile trips - this space is evolving rapidly	Ridesharing service (Lyft or Uber)
	Support "trunk line" bus services on US 401 and US 70; wait on financing circulator routes until place-to-place (P2P) and route-deviation options are exhausted	GoTriangle
	Create a cool crosswalk someplace - many communities are celebrating their unique places with artistic variations of crosswalk designs	Local civic organizations
	Support school zone safety through enforcement of speeding laws, and support bicycle and pedestrian safety classes at local elementary schools	Police department, Wake County schools
	Continue support for future commuter rail, with design, safety, and station enhancements when called upon to do so - if it supports the town's objectives	Wake County, NCDOT
	Fill in gaps in sidewalks, greenways, and access to transit stops by establishing a rotating set-aside for these small construction tasks	GoTriangle, NCDOT
	Work closely with other, land use-oriented decisions to ensure that capacity is managed and design standards are contemplated (e.g., UDO update)	Integrate with partners in the UDO update

## Updating & Monitoring this Plan

The Comprehensive Plan will be updated every five years to reflect development in implementing the recommendations. In addition, the Planning Department should prepare an annual report to assess the Town's progress and to set priorities for the coming year. The report will be submitted to the Town Manager, Town Council, and the public. Following the assessment, minor plan amendments can be proposed that address changing markets and priorities.

The Planning Department will be responsible for preparing the annual report on the Town's progress at the outset of the annual budget preparation process. The report should include progress of the performance indicators and action items for priorities in the coming fiscal year.

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan would fall under map changes or text changes. The Application Procedure is as follows:

1. A pre-application meeting with the Planning Director prior to the monthly submittal deadline.
2. Submit a Comprehensive Growth Plan Amendment Application with filing fee.
3. Planning staff review the application and prepare an analysis and summary to the Town Council and Planning Commission.
4. The Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the Town Council to approve or deny the request.
5. The Town Council holds a public hearing, then decides to approve or deny the request.

- **Amendment Criteria:**

- A change in the zoning code that creates an inconsistency with the land use map also constitutes a change to the land use map without further action

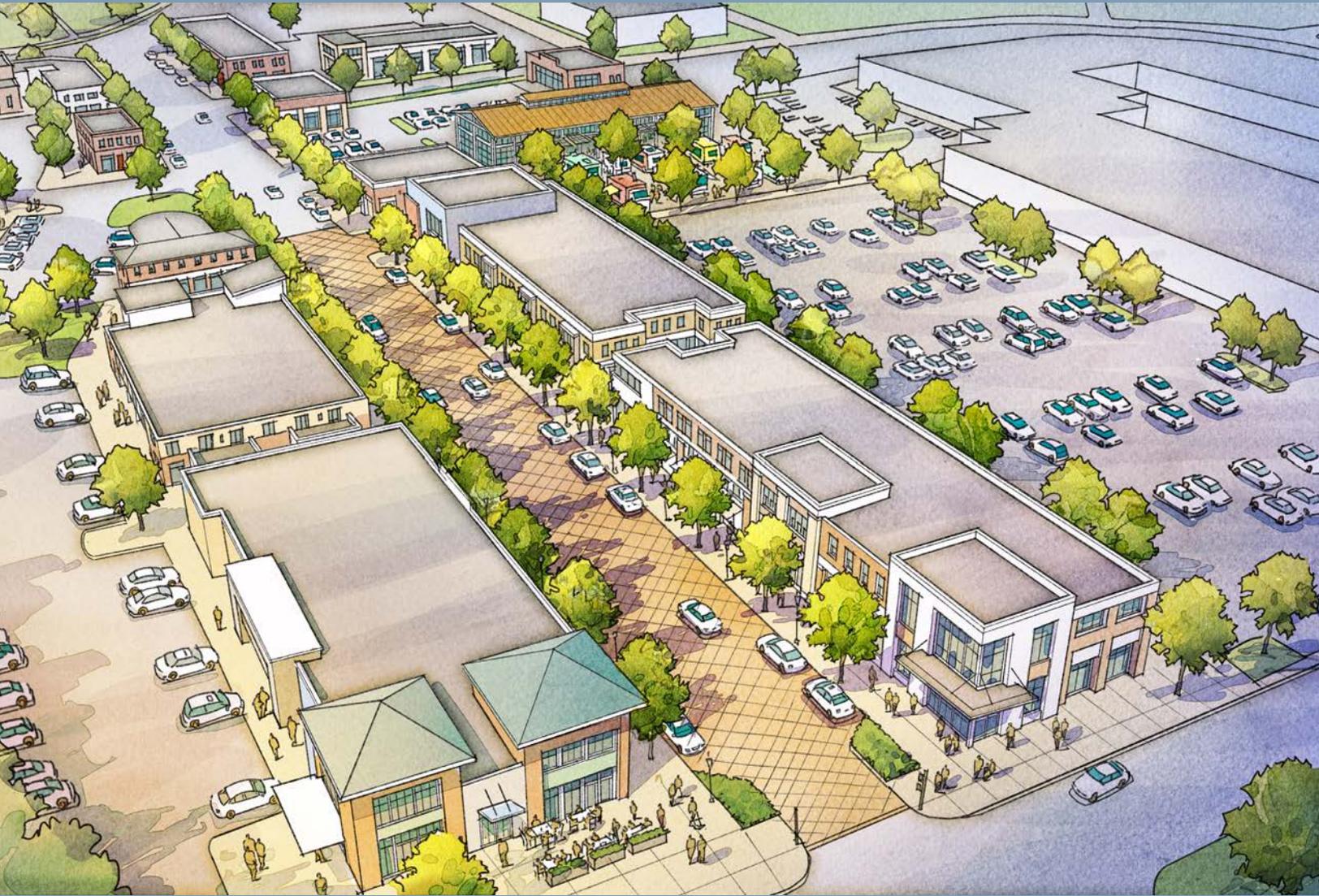
- Significant changes have occurred since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan

- Adoption of the amendment includes public policies established by the Town that are not reflected in the Comprehensive Plan

- Current policies or actions in the Plan inhibit other public policy objectives

- Will achieve substantial improvement in the quality of life for Town residents

- Ability to achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan will be increased, or will improve Town operations



*Fifth Avenue Concept*

*Hand rendered images: Zanetta Illustrations*

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